DDAL-ELW07

BLADES OF TERROR

An Eberron *Embers of the Last War* Adventure

What secret cargo is House Cannith hiding in an airship bound for Wroat? A simple heist at 30,000 feet turns deadly when a new threat rises out of the Mournland!

A Three-to-Four-Hour Adventure for Tier 2 Characters.
Optimized for APL 7.

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Adventure Primer

Your scientists were so preoccupied with whether or not they could that they didn't stop to think if they should.

– Jurassic Park

Background

Adventurers recently helped **ANTONIA D'MEDANI**, a dragonmarked **HOUSE MEDANI** spy, uncover a plot by **MERRIX D'CANNITH** to supply the radical **SWORDS OF LIBERTY** group with experimental and illegal warforged weapons. Antonia needs the adventurers' help again. She discovered that Merrix's second-in-command, **STERRYK IR'TYRAN**, is transporting something on a **HOUSE LYRANDAR** airship, with a mysteriously blank shipping manifesto. Antonia summons the characters to **CLIFFSIDE**, where the *PORTENT KING* cargo ship is docked in secret, and challenges them to reveal the cargo in an airborne heist.

Unbeknownst to the characters and Antonia, they weren't the only ones told about the delivery. Warforged assassins, agents of the **LORD OF BLADES**, were tipped off by Merrix's rivals in **CANNITH WEST** about the weapons' transport. Just as the adventurers think they've succeeded in their mission, the assassins intervene.

Episodes

The adventure is spread over four to six episodes which take approximately two to four hours to play. These episodes are introduced by the Call to Action.

- ***Episode 1: Suspense at the Cliff Hangar.*** The characters are recruited by Antonia d'Medani to investigate a cargo ship and discover what it is transporting for Merrix d'Cannith. This is the **Call to Action**.
- ***Episode 2: Cracking the*** *Portent King*. The characters prepare to infiltrate the cargo ship, the *Portent King*. They gather information, scout the area, or make other preparations to inform their plan. This is **Main Objective A**.
- ***Episode 3: The 30,000-Foot Heist.*** The characters execute their plan and sneak, con, or battle their way to the *Portent King*'s cargo hold. This is **Main Objective B**.
- ***Episode 4: Terror from the Skies.*** Just as success seems assured, a new threat appears. Warforged agents of the Lord of Blades arrive to assassinate everyone on board and crash the *Portent King*.

Bonus Objectives

This adventure includes two bonus objectives that the characters can pursue if they have the time to do so—earning additional **advancement and treasure checkpoints** in the process. These bonus objectives are found in this adventure's appendices, as follows:

- ***Bonus Objective A: Sneezes and Snitches.*** As the characters make preparations, they are discovered by crew members and must prevent the crew from revealing the heist. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix D**.
- ***Bonus Objective B: How to Train a Dragon.*** One of Merrix d'Cannith's experimental weapons—a mechanical dragon—has escaped its crate in the cargo hold. Can the characters tame or defeat it? This bonus objective is found in **Appendix E**.

Episode Sequence

Depending on your time constraints, play style, and environment, this adventure will take approximately two to four hours to play.

How Will You Play?

The duration of your session depends on how much of this adventure you utilize. At the very least, your session will last approximately two hours. However, if you wish, you can provide a longer experience for your players by pursuing the bonus objectives.

Main Objectives Only. To complete the adventure's main objectives, the characters participate in episodes 1 through 4 in order, however, you may include the opportunity to pursue bonus objectives.

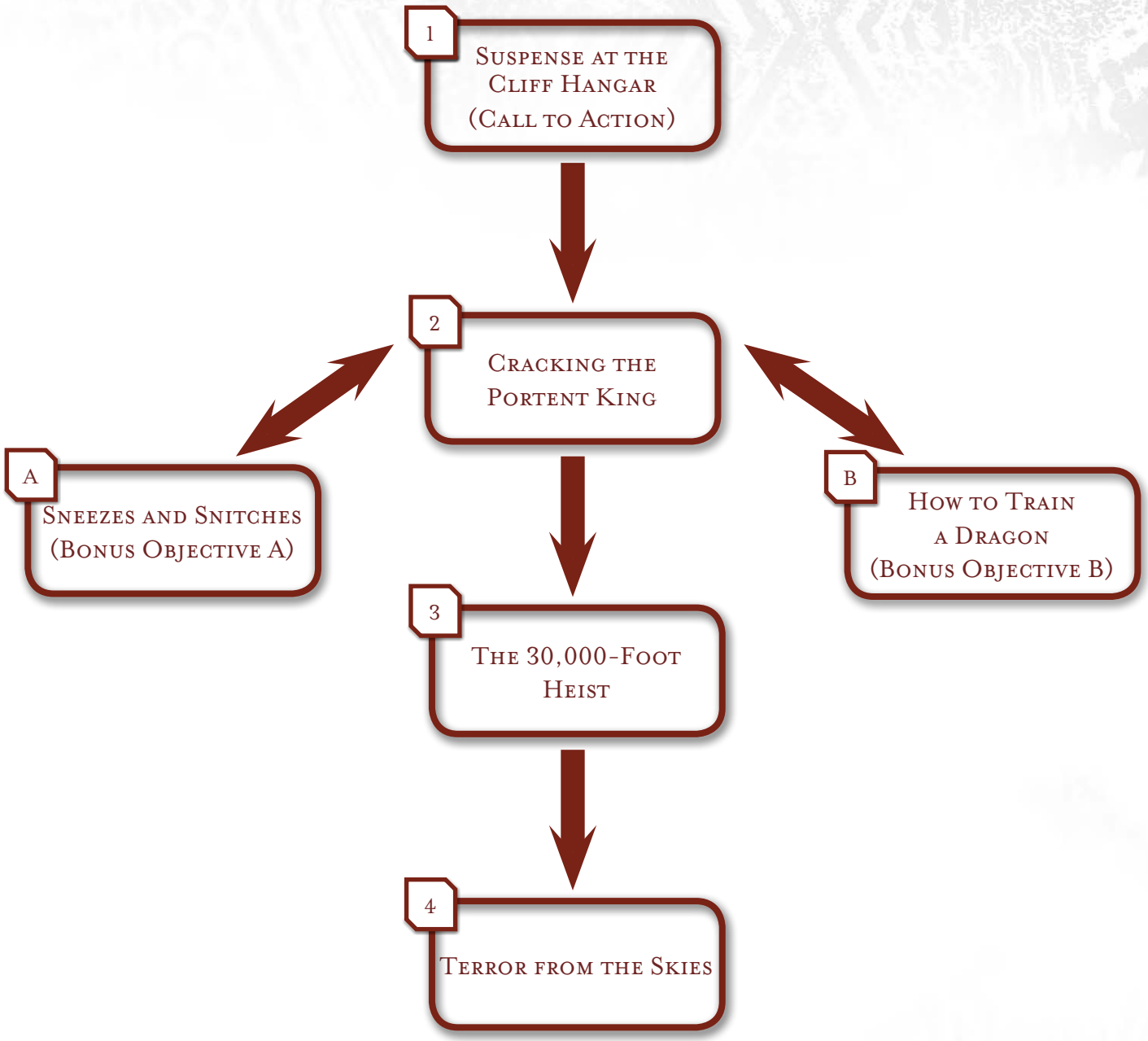
Bonus Objectives. You can extend this adventure by one or two hours by including opportunities for the characters to pursue the bonus objectives.

Objectives A and B branch off episodes 2 and 3 respectively and expand on those scenes by adding complications with which the characters must deal.



Adventure Flowchart

This section provides a basic understanding of not only the flow of the episodes, but also the outline of the different paths that your players may take in reaching their stated objective.



Episode One: Suspense at the Cliff Hangar

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

The adventurers receive an urgent missive from Antonia d'Medani to meet as soon as possible in Sharn's Cliffside ward, carved and built into the cliffs along the edge of Dura. As they approach the City of Towers' seedy waterfront district, they discover an airship—shining, sparkling, and new amid the grime—that doesn't belong, and a familiar half-elf spy challenging them to break in and find out why.

Playing Out of Order

If your party did not play *DDAL-ELW06: A Holy Visit*, then they might not have met Antonia d'Medani. The characters instead are answering a call for adventurers of unique skill and utmost discretion in exchange for magical goods and favor with House Medani.

Area Information

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. Cliffside is built on and into cliffs that drop into the Dagger River below. Magical cranes hoist cargo to and from ships docked below. Ramshackle taverns and boarded up buildings dot the cliff face with levitating lifts carrying people up, down, and between the balconies that hang over the docks.

Lighting. Magical cranes lift platforms in beams of bright blueish-white light that brighten the cliff face, otherwise it's dimly lit by overcast, drizzling skies.

Airship. Hovering next to one balcony is a gleaming bronze airship that contrasts starkly with the gray backdrop of Cliffside. The airship floats surrounded by a flaming circle. As the characters arrive, they observe the last of a series of large crates being loaded from the balcony onto the airship.



Creatures/NPCs

As the characters approach Cliffside, Antonia d'Medani—a young female Mark of Detection half-elf **spy**—whispers from the shadows of a nearby alley to draw their attention. From where she is standing, pressed against a building, the characters can observe the airship.

Objectives/Goals. Antonia wants the adventurers to help her find out what cargo is on board this airship.

What Does She Know? Antonia shares this information:

- The ship is the *Portent King*, House Lyrandar's newest airship that boasts mysterious defense systems and the safest transport for precious cargo.
- It is highly unusual a ship as grand as the *Portent King* is secretively taking off from a lower district like Cliffside.
- Sterryk ir'Tyran, the second-in-command to Merrix D'Cannith—one of the heirs of House Cannith—commissioned the ship to take something to Wroat, but that's all Antonia knows. The shipping manifesto is mysteriously blank!
- A group of adventurers (this party if they played *A Holy Visit*) helped Antonia uncover that Merrix was selling experimental warforged and other weapons to the Swords of Liberty, a group of radicals that wants to end the monarchy in Breland. If the cargo is related to Merrix, it's bad news.
- If the adventurers return to her with information about the cargo and anything else they discovered about Merrix, Antonia will reward them with magical rings from House Medani.

Roleplaying Antonia d'Medani

Antonia appears throughout the *Embers of the Last War* storyline. She is a half-elf spy in her midtwenties. She has a youthful face and wears her dark hair cropped in a curled bob.

Trait. I'm a born gambler who can't resist taking a risk for a big payoff, and I encourage others to do the same.

Ideal. It is everyone's responsibility to bring a little more fairness and happiness to the city.

Bond. I owe a large gambling debt to a certain back-alley gangster. There could be trouble for me if he calls it in.

Flaw. I worry that people don't take me seriously because of my youth, so I'm always trying to appear more mature and experienced than I really am.

Call to Action

The objective of this adventure is to discover what secret cargo Merrix d'Cannith is trying to transport on the *Portent King*.

Episode Two: Cracking the Portent King

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

Antonia d'Medani warns the characters they have minutes—no more than an hour—until the *Portent King* is sure to embark. Whether they sneak, battle, or con their way aboard, the characters must get on that airship. It's time to put together a plan to crack the *Portent King*. A brief opportunity for preparations can make or break the adventurers' plan.

Objectives

The adventurers must assemble a plan to infiltrate the *Portent King* airship.

Bonus Objectives

If you are playing Bonus Objective A in Appendix D, it can be inserted as characters progress through this episode.

Preparing for the Job

With limited time before the *Portent King* lifts off, each character has time for one activity to prepare for or inform the party's plan. Here are some examples of what they might do:

- ***Forging a Document.*** Characters proficient with a forgery kit can attempt an Intelligence check with a forgery kit. The result of their roll is the Intelligence (Investigation) DC to realize the documents are forged.
- ***Buying Equipment.*** Characters can purchase anything listed in chapter 5 of the Player's Handbook.
- ***Create a Disguise.*** Characters proficient with a disguise kit can attempt a Charisma check with a disguise kit. The result of their roll is the Wisdom (Insight) DC to see through the disguise.
- ***Gather Information.*** See "Gathering Information."
- ***Scout the Area.*** See "Scouting the Area."

Encourage Creativity!

Allow characters to perform other preparations as you see fit to encourage their creativity and roleplaying, and enable their plans whether they are meticulously, realistically thought out or outlandishly dramatic. This adventure can only continue if the characters get on the *Portent King*, so that might as well occur as cinematically as possible. Do the adventurers want to discover the *Portent King's* flight path, so they can leap onto it from a neighboring building? Do. It.

Gathering Information

If a character makes a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) or Charisma (Persuasion) check, the character learns one of the following pieces of information:





1d6	Information
1	There currently are twenty crew members on the *Portent King*, including the captain and Sterryk ir'Tyran. Six members of the crew are absent due to illness. The captain didn't want them to infect the rest of her crew.
2	The *Portent King* is helmed by a surprisingly young captain named Calypso d'Lyrandar. Despite her age, or perhaps to compensate for it, the captain is capable and stern and takes no nonsense, including from her clients. She was seen arguing with Sterryk ir'Tyran.
3	Four crew members were overheard bragging about the *Portent King's* security system making their guard duty easier. They also mentioned the captain insists on investigating any disturbances personally.
4	Sterryk ir'Tyran seems to be a controlling and easily angered man, questioning every action of the crew. Sterryk yelled at the crew whenever one of the cargo boxes was bumped.
5	Crew members were heard greeting each other with the phrase, "May the winds blow in your favor."
6	The ship's chef is a maelstrom of emotions. They were last seen storming on board while shouting about their missing sous chef, who's reported ill, and missing crates of ingredients crucial to their menu.

If a character fails this check by 5 or more, the character hears one of these false rumors:

1d4	Rumor
1	Captain Calypso d'Lyrandar is flattered by comments about her youthful appearance.
2	House Lyrandar bears the Mark of Storm, but some say Calypso did not inherit the family talent for controlling wind and waves.
3	Crew members greet each other with the phrase, "What's crackin', Kraken?"
4	The chef is furious they're missing a crate of mushrooms.

Scouting the Area*

Anyone deciding to case the area must make a Wisdom (Perception) check. The result determines the information they receive. These results are cumulative:

- ***Result of 8 or higher.*** There are two sets of stairs leading from the deck into the ship—one near the bow and one near the stern. There are eight portholes around the ship (four on each side) and a large glass window at the bow.
- ***Result of 10 or higher.*** Six crew members patrol the deck. Two of them display the ability to manipulate the wind.*
- ***Result of 12 or higher.*** Captain Calypso d'Lyrandar, Sterryk ir'Tyran, and two crew members descended the stairs near the bow of the ship. Ten crew members descended the stairs near the stern.*
- ***Result of 14 or higher.*** Four of the crew members who descended near the stern wear red uniforms, while the rest of the crew wears blue uniforms.*
- ***Result of 16 or higher.*** The character has observed the watch patterns of the crew on deck and gains advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks to bypass the crew's notice.

*Note that modifying the combat encounters in the following episode will alter these numbers.

Playing the Pillars

Combat

Patience, adventurers! Parties thirsty for blood can certainly rush to battle on the Portent King in the next episode, but they might find preparing in advance useful.

Exploration

Cliffside is abuzz with activity, and adventurers can scout the airship by casually taking one of the many levitating lifts, climbing the cliffs, or spying from an overlook in Dura above.

Social

As adventurers gather information, you can add context through simple scenes. Perhaps they speak to the bartender of the Cliff Hangar Tavern where the airship is docked, and the bartender overheard the Portent King's crew speaking.

Episode Three: The 30,000-Foot Heist

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

Aboard the Portent King

It's time for the adventurers to execute their plan. What could possibly go wrong? No matter how or when the characters board the *Portent King*, it's just in time for the airship to take off—leaving as planned or possibly lifting off to deter an attack if characters battle their way onto the deck—meaning the heist happens at an altitude of 30,000 feet.

Area Information

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The airship is built of sturdy, reddish-brown mahogany, which also panels the walls of the 10-foot-wide, 15-foot-high passageways below deck and perfumes them with a fresh-cut wood aroma. Bronze edging and other details add a luxurious touch extravagant for a cargo ship.

Doors. The doors are made of similarly sturdy wood with bronze handles. Except where noted, doors are unlocked.

Lighting. *Everbright lanterns* keep the passageways brightly lit. Although such lanterns also dot the upper deck, the lighting there is dominated by the orange glow of the fiery ring that circles and powers the airship.

Objectives

The adventurers must find out what the airship's cargo hold is transporting for Merrix d'Cannith and report back to Antonia d'Medani.

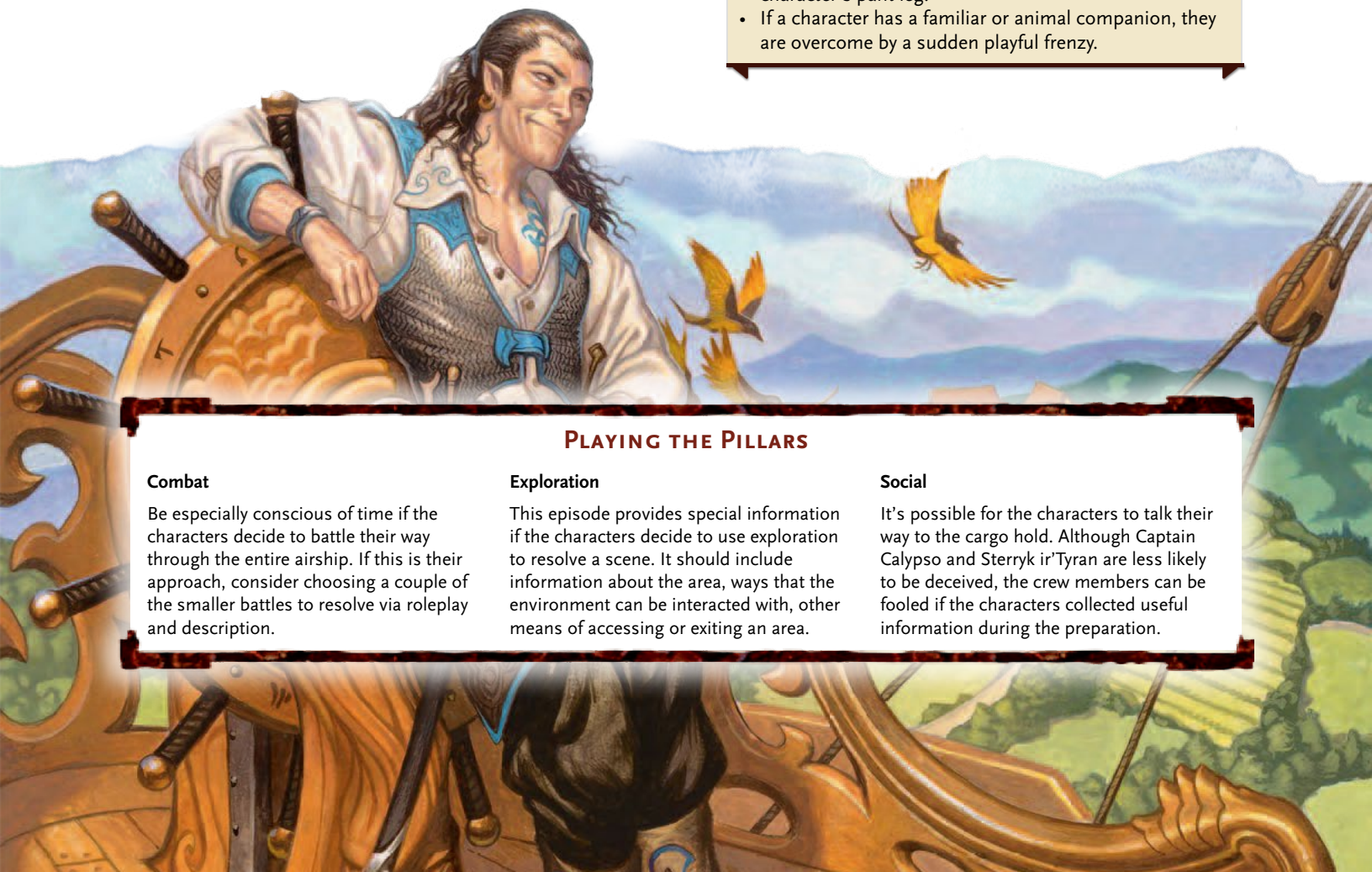
Bonus Objectives

If you are playing Bonus Objective B in Appendix E, it can be inserted when the characters reach scene E.

Sneak Complications (Optional)

Should the characters choose to sneak aboard the *Portent King*, you might call for Dexterity (Stealth) checks throughout their mission. Rather than having a failed check immediately disrupt their plans, you can optionally use these complications. Choose or randomly roll a complication, and allow the characters to roleplay or describe how they address the complication:

- A crew member in an adjacent room overhears the character(s) and calls out.
- The characters hear a crew member's footsteps approaching quickly.
- Something falls out of a character's pack.
- A character feels the irresistible urge to sneeze.
- A frightened mouse skitters out of a wall and up a character's pant leg!
- If a character has a familiar or animal companion, they are overcome by a sudden playful frenzy.



Playing the Pillars

Combat

Be especially conscious of time if the characters decide to battle their way through the entire airship. If this is their approach, consider choosing a couple of the smaller battles to resolve via roleplay and description.

Exploration

This episode provides special information if the characters decide to use exploration to resolve a scene. It should include information about the area, ways that the environment can be interacted with, other means of accessing or exiting an area.

Social

It's possible for the characters to talk their way to the cargo hold. Although Captain Calypso and Sterryk ir'Tyran are less likely to be deceived, the crew members can be fooled if the characters collected useful information during the preparation.

Scene A. Deck

The adventurers likely approach the deck of the *Portent King* just as it prepares to take off on its route. Before they can descend into its depths, they must first bypass the guards with trickery, stealth, or brawn.

Creatures/NPCs

Four **swashbucklers** (two at the bow and two at the stern, see Appendix B) and two **storm mages** (Appendix B) patrol the deck.

Objectives/Goals. These guards are the first line of defense for the *Portent King*. Their goal is to defend against intruders, investigate disturbances, and sound the alarm if anyone attacks the ship.

What Do They Know? The guards are not privy to important information about the trip and are unaware of the contents of the cargo. Knowing they're not entrusted with all of the captain's plans, the guards can be deceived into allowing the characters on board (with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Deception) check) if they display knowledge of the crew/ship.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak** or **Weak:** Remove two **swashbucklers**.
- **Strong:** Replace **swashbucklers** with **gladiators**.
- **Very Strong:** Replace **swashbucklers** with **gladiators** and add two **storm mages**.

Scene B. Helm and Captain's Quarters

Loud arguing can be heard through the door to this chamber. It sounds like someone is unhappy with their quarters and is insisting on being moved to the captain's quarters instead.

Creatures/NPCs

Captain Calypso d'Lyrandar (Appendix B) and Sterryk ir'Tyran (a **veteran**) are arguing at the helm as the characters approach this room, before the captain relents and Sterryk storms into her quarters and slams the door. Two uncomfortable **swashbucklers** are in this chamber witnessing the argument and assisting the captain in steering the ship.

Objectives/Goals. Captain Calypso d'Lyrandar and her crew's goal is to get Sterryk ir'Tyran and his cargo to Wroat safely; the captain, frustrated with Sterryk, wants to know more about what cargo she is carrying aboard her precious ship. Meanwhile, Sterryk wants to ensure this transport goes smoothly while demanding respect and star treatment from the crew.

What Do They Know? The crew members at the helm are aware of the ship's route and that the cargo was transported from the Kundarak Bank of Sharn, information they are willing to divulge to spare their lives. Additionally, Calypso suspects the cargo is a volatile weapon, having observed how Sterryk startled when the cargo was jostled. Both the crew members and the captain know that disturbing the cargo unleashes elementals hostile toward intruders, which is the ship's special defense mechanism. The captain carries a medallion that keeps her safe from the elementals.

Only Sterryk knows the true nature of the cargo: Merrix d'Cannith's experimental mechanical dragons. Sterryk is worried the dragons will accidentally activate. More loyal to Cannith South than he is fearful of the characters, Sterryk does not share this information willingly.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak:** Treat Sterryk ir'Tyran and the crew members as noncombatants.
- **Weak:** Treat Sterryk ir'Tyran as a noncombatant.
- **Strong:** Add one **swashbuckler**.
- **Very Strong:** Add two **swashbucklers**.

Treasure & Rewards

Calypso carries a *kraken medallion*. Any elementals bound to the airship will not attack the bearer of this medallion and can be dismissed by them.

Scene C. Galley

The galley is dominated by the ship's dramatic chef, who knows more than one would suspect.

Creatures/NPCs

Chef Alexi d'Lyrandar is berating a crew member who was roped in at the last minute to replace the sous chef, who called in sick. They are noncombatants.

Objectives/Goals. Chef Alexi only wants to feed the crew well. They are livid that half their ingredients were not delivered in time for the trip and seek spices or fresh produce. They'd also settle for some decent help. Meanwhile, the last minute sous chef would really like someone to trade duties with them.

What Do They Know? Alexi is the captain's cousin and knows more about the ship than most. If the characters can get Alexi to stop complaining, Alexi is quite chatty. They know their cousin Calypso is dying to know what's in the crates in the cargo hold. They know elementals are bound to the airship—both to power it but also to defend its cargo. They know Calypso carries a medallion that can subdue and control the elementals. They don't know why Calypso doesn't just peek at the cargo herself.

Alexi despises mushrooms and instantly dismisses anyone who mentions these "disgusting fruits of the dirt."



Scene D. Crew's Quarters

The night crew sleeps in the crew's quarters, resting up for their evening shift guarding the deck.

Creatures/NPCs

Four **swashbucklers** (Appendix B) are asleep and snoring loudly in the crew's quarters, although they can be woken by loud noises, shouts, or alarms.

Objectives/Goals. When awake, their goal is to defend against intruders, investigate disturbances, and sound the alarm if anyone attacks the ship.

What Do They Know? These crew members know the same information as those in scene A.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak** or **Weak:** Remove one **swashbuckler**.
- **Strong:** Add two **swashbucklers**.
- **Very Strong:** Replace **swashbucklers** with **gladiators** and add two **gladiators**.

Scene E. Cargo Hold

The cargo hold is stacked to the ceiling with tens of large wooden crates.

Creatures/NPCs

The entrance to the cargo hold is guarded by four guards dressed in red uniforms (four **gladiators**). Confident they'll notice any intruders, they are playing a game of dice when the characters approach. Should the characters disrupt the cargo in any way, two **air elementals** appear and attack.

Objectives/Goals. The guards' goal is to protect the cargo hold from intruders. The air elementals attack any creatures who disrupt the cargo, unless dismissed by the bearer of the *kraken medallion* (carried by Captain Calypso d'Lyrandar).

What Do They Know? The guards know there is an elemental defense system if someone gets into the cargo hold, and they perhaps are not as diligent as they would be otherwise. They do not know what is in the crates.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak** or **Weak:** Remove one **air elemental**.
- **Strong:** Add one **air elemental**.
- **Very Strong:** Add two **air elementals**.

What's in the Box?!

Each crate is marked with a House Kundarak Bank emblem and the same number etched underneath. A DC 10 Intelligence check reveals this to be a lockbox number, something in which Antonia d'Medani might be interested.

Characters can easily pry open or break the wooden crates. Each crate carries a mechanical dragon built from metal gears and plates. When the first crate is opened, the dragons' eyes begin to glow an ominous orange that can be seen radiating through the cracks of unopened crates as well. The dragons remain otherwise inactive.

Bonus Objective

If playing Bonus Objective B in Appendix E, insert it into this scene. One of the crates in the cargo hold is shattered open, as if something erupted from within.

Episode Four: Terror from the Skies

Estimated Duration: 30 minutes

Scene A. Swirling Blades

Just as the characters think they've completed their mission, they hear a loud crack of splintering wood and panicked yells and footsteps from above. The *Portent King* keels to the side, tumbles, and then starts to free fall. As the party races upward, the crew of the *Portent King* rushes past, ignoring them. It seems a much bigger threat has appeared.



Prerequisites

This episode triggers after the characters discover the Cannith cargo and resolve any bonus objectives.

Objectives

The characters must survive to tell their tale to Antonia d'Medani.

> The sounds of lightning and clashing steel erupt across the Portent King. The deck splinters under the weight of warforged that seem to fall from the sky, folding behind them wings made of blades and unleashing claws just as sharp. One of these metal giants turns to you, "You enslave our metal brethren as weapons to spread your chaos. The Lord of Blades brings you the chaos you seek. All flesh must die."

Creatures/NPCs

As the crew of the *Portent King* battles many of the warforged, the characters are faced with one **warforged assassin** (Appendix B).

Objectives/Goals. The warforged want to assassinate all non-warforged on the ship.

What Do They Know? Cannith West tipped off the Lord of Blades as to Merrix making new war machines to cause chaos.

Fighting in Free Fall

As the characters battle the warforged assassins, the *Portent King* crashes to the ground. Each round, the adventurers deal with a new complication or threat:

- ***Round 2.*** The airship begins a nosedive toward the ground. At the start of their turn, characters must succeed a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone and slide to the edge of the ship's bow, immediately ending their turn.
- ***Round 3.*** The airship begins to pick up speed. At the start of their turn, characters on the deck must succeed on a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check to hold on or else hover 15 feet above it as the ship plummets.
- ***Round 4.*** The airship accelerates toward the ground. At the start of their turn, characters on the deck must succeed on a DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check to hold on or else hover 15 feet above it as the ship plummets. If a character is already hovering, they instead must succeed a DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to stabilize or else spiral out of control, suffering disadvantage on saving throws, skill checks, and Attack rolls.
- ***Round 5.*** Pieces of the airship start to tear away. At the start of their turn, characters must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 18 (4d8) bludgeoning damage as they are struck by splinters of wood and shards of metal.

- ***Round 6.*** Surviving warforged fly away as the airship is poised to crash. If the characters haven't already made plans to escape, ask them what they do now.

A Note on Not Going Splat

The characters should feel the threat of falling 30,000 feet, but there are several ways to avoid complete annihilation from the fall. Spells like *feather fall* or *fly* are the obvious choices if characters have access to them, but allow for creative solutions such as building a makeshift parachute, seeking out flying "lifeboats", ripping wings off defeated warforged, etc.

Although the threat of the assassins is real, the intention of this adventure is not for the entire party to go splat at the end. As a last resort, allow crew members of the *Portent King* to help their "flesh brethren" with a well-timed, last second *feather fall*. Or perhaps their new friend in the hold helps out...

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak** or **Weak:** The **warforged assassin** starts with 70 hit points.
- **Strong:** Add a **warforged assassin**.
- **Very Strong:** Add two **warforged assassins**.

Scene B. Heist Accomplished

Having survived the attack by the agents of the Lord of Blades, the characters return to the City of Towers to report their findings to Antonia d'Medani.

Objectives

Report back to Antonia d'Medani.

Creatures/NPCs

As the characters return to Cliffside, Antonia d'Medani seemingly appears from nowhere, melting out of the shadows.

Objectives/Goals. Antonia is eager to learn what the characters found and debriefs them on their mission, asking many questions.

What Does She Know? Antonia isn't sure whether to be grateful the Lord of Blades intervened with the shipment, but she realizes there are others who see Merrix d'Cannith as a threat.

She is curious about Merrix's ties to the Kundarak Bank of Sharn. He must have a lockbox there! Antonia might call on the adventurers to investigate further.

Treasure & Rewards

As thanks for risking their necks on this mission, Antonia rewards them with patinaed copper rings cast in the likeness of a basilisk biting its own tail. These are *rings of X-ray vision* (Appendix F).

Adventure Rewards

Upon completing the adventure, everyone receives rewards based upon their accomplishments. These rewards include advancement and treasure, and may include special rewards, such as magic item unlocks, story awards or new downtime activities, as follows:

Player Rewards

The players receive the following for their efforts:
Advancement and Treasure Checkpoints
The characters receive **1 advancement checkpoint** and **1 treasure checkpoint** for each objective completed:

- ***Main Objective A:*** The adventurers must assemble a plan to infiltrate the *Portent King* airship.
- ***Main Objective B:*** The adventurers must find out what the airship's cargo hold is transporting for Merrix d'Cannith and report back to Antonia d'Medani.
- ***Bonus Objective A:*** Prevent the sick *Portent King* crew members on shore from alerting the rest of the crew to the characters.
- ***Bonus Objective B:*** Befriend the escaped mechanical dragon in the cargo hold, or turn it into pile of scrap metal.

Magic Item Unlock

Characters completing the adventure unlock:

Ring of X-ray Vision. This patinaed copper ring is cast in the likeness of a basilisk biting its own tail. This item can be found in **Appendix F**.

DM Rewards

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn advancement and treasure checkpoints as though you played the adventure, but none of the other player rewards.

However, this adventure may qualify for rewards earned by completing DM Quests. See the ALDMG (**Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide**) for more information about DM Quests.

Level Progression in Embers of the Last War

Between *Encounters in Sharn* and the *Embers of the Last War* story arc, the Adventurers League Eberron campaign has many play opportunities. If you plan to play regularly and take in the entire *Embers of the Last War* story, strongly encourage the players to use the Slow Progress option where they voluntarily halve the rewards received for playing. If you plan to play only some of the adventures, or not take part in the bonus objectives, the Normal Progression of rewards may be more appropriate. Because the *Embers of the Last War* adventures are produced as a serial, managing character level according to play style is important.

Appendix A: Locations & NPCs

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

- ***Antonia d'Medani (ANN toe nee uh deh meh DAW nee).*** Antonia d'Medani is a dragonmarked heir of House Medani and a spy. She is a clever-eyed half-elf in her midtwenties. Her sardonic demeanor belies an earnest desire to root out corruption—on her own terms.

  Personality: *I'm a born gambler who can't resist taking a risk for a big payoff, and I encourage others to do the same.*

  Ideal: *It is everyone's responsibility to bring a little more fairness to the city.*

  Bond: *I owe a large gambling debt to a certain back-alley gangster. There could be trouble for me if he calls it in.*

  Flaw: *I worry that people don't take me seriously because of my youth, so I'm always trying to appear more mature and experienced than I really am.*

- ***Cliffside.*** This small gritty ward is carved into the lower edge of Dura and overlooks the river docks below. It's rough and poor, filled with sailors and dockworkers. On the other hand, some people swear that Cliffside has the finest taverns in Sharn.

  Personality: *I've got to keep on moving. There's never time for rest.*

  Ideal: *The water and air are freedom—the freedom to go anywhere and do anything.*

  Bond: *The ship is what's most important—crewmates and captains come and go.*

  Flaw: *My layers of grime are measured in years.*

- ***Portent King.*** The newest of House Lyrandar's airships, the *Portent King* boasts extra security for the most precious of cargo. The *Portent King* is more luxurious than any cargo ship ought to be.

  Personality: *I like a job well done, and I'll look fabulous doing it.*

  Ideal: *A job is a job is a job.*

  Bond: *I will keep my cargo safe no matter what.*

  Flaw: *My pride will probably lead to my destruction.*

- ***Calypso d'Lyrandar (kah LIP soh).*** You might question how a 16-year-old girl is the captain of a House Lyrandar airship... until you meet Calypso. This fierce sailor takes no nonsense, commands her crew with terrifying calm and intelligence, and even controls the weather with her magic.

  Personality: *Are you going to gab all day or get to the point?*

  Ideal: *I'm committed to my crewmates, not to ideals.*

  Bond: *My ship and my crew depend on me, and I will not let them down.*

  Flaw: *I have no patience for the inept or cowardly. Emotions are a waste of time.*

- ***Sterryk ir'Tyran (STIR ick TEER ann).*** Sterryk is the regent of House Cannith who cruelly raised Merrix d'Cannith. The cold, calculating Sterryk broke Merrix's mind with harsh lessons, and manipulated the artificer into naming the regent Cannith South's second-in-command. Nothing is quite good enough for Sterryk and he has a lot of advice of how you could do better—whether you ask for it or not.

  Personality: *I know best, and everyone around me is an idiot.*

  Ideal: *If I can attain more power by serving House Cannith, no one else will tell me what to do.*

  Bond: *I will make Merrix d'Cannith the incredible leader he is destined to be.*

  Flaw: *I'm oblivious to the feelings of others.*

- ***Alexi d'Lyrandar (ah LEX ee).*** Alexi, who goes by they/them, is the beloved cousin of Calypso and the *Portent King's* head chef. They are a self-proclaimed culinary genius, although the crew might not agree. Alexi is just as likely to be cooking up some gossip.

  Personality: *My emotions change abruptly. I live my life at the extremes.*

  Ideal: *My culinary talents were given to me so I could share them with the world!*

  Bond: *My cousin Calypso bites off more than she can chew, and I'm here to watch over her.*

  Flaw: *I get unreasonably upset when people mention mushrooms.*

Appendix B: Creature Statistics

This appendix details new monsters that do not appear in the *Monster Manual*.

Captain Calypso d'Lyrandar

Medium humanoid (half-elf), lawful neutral

Armor Class 12 (15 with mage armor)
Hit Points 40 (9d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4
Skills Arcana +6, History +6
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Auran, Common
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Spellcasting. The captain is a 9th level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The captain has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt,* prestidigitation, ray of frost*, shocking grasp*
1st level (4 slots): *mage armor, magic missile,* witch bolt**
2nd level (3 slots): *mirror image, misty step, shatter**
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, fireball,* lightning bolt**
4th level (3 slots): *ice storm,* stoneskin*
5th level (2 slots): *cone of cold**
*Evocation spell

Sculpt Spells. When the captain casts and evocation spell that forces other creatures it can see to make a saving throw, it can choose a number of them equal to 1 + the spell's level. These creatures automatically succeed on their saving throws against the spell. If a successful save means a chosen creature would take half damage from the spell, it instead takes no damage from it.

Actions

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d6 - 1) bludgeoning damage, or 3 (1d8 - 1) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

Mechanical Dragon

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 133 (14d10 + 56)
Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Perception +2
Skills Perception +6, Stealth +3
Damage Immunities Poison, Psychic
Condition Immunities Blinded, Charmed, Deafened, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned
Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages understands Common and Draconic but can't speak
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The dragon makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) fire damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Green Fire Breath (Recharge 5–6). The dragon exhales a fiery green blast in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Spoiled Soup

Medium monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)
Hit Points 93 (11d10 + 33)
Speed 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (-1)	17 (+3)	7 (-2)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +5
Senses passive Perception 16
Languages —
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Grasping Tendrils. The soup can have up to six tendrils at a time. Each tendril can be attacked (AC 20; 10 hit points). Destroying a tendril deals no damage to the soup, which can extrude a replacement tendril on its next turn. A tendril can also be broken if a creature takes an action and succeeds on a DC 15 Strength check against it.

Actions

Multiattack. The soup makes four attacks with its tendrils, uses Reel, and makes one attack with its boil.

Boil. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (4d8 + 4) fire damage.

Tendril. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 50 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained and has disadvantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws, and the soup can't use the same tendril on another target.

Reel. The soup pulls each creature grappled by it up to 25 feet straight toward it.

Storm Mage

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with mage armor)
Hit Points 44 (8d8 + 8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +5, Persuasion +5
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Auran, Common
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Spellcasting. The Storm Mage is an 6th-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). They know the following sorcerer spells:

Cantrips (at will): *blade ward, light, message, ray of frost, shocking grasp*
1st level (4 slots): *feather fall, mage armor, witch bolt*
2nd level (3 slots): *gust of wind, invisibility*
3rd level (3 slots): *fly, lightning bolt*

Actions

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

Swashbuckler

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-lawful alignment

Armor Class 17 (leather armor)
Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Skills Acrobatics +8, Athletics +5, Persuasion +6
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages any one language (usually Common)
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Lightfooted. The swashbuckler can take the Dash or Disengage action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Suave Defense. While the swashbuckler is wearing light or no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Charisma modifier.

Actions

Multiattack. The swashbuckler makes three attacks: one with a dagger and two with its rapier.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Transmuter

Medium humanoid (any), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with mage armor)
Hit Points 40 (9d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4
Skills Arcana +6, History +6
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages any four languages
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Spellcasting. The transmuter is a 9th-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The transmuter has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, mending, prestidigitation, ray of frost*
1st level (4 slots): *chromatic orb, expeditious retreat,* mage armor*
2nd level (3 slots): *alter self,* hold person, knock**
3rd level (3 slots): *blink,* fireball, slow**
4th level (3 slots): *polymorph,* stoneskin*
5th level (2 slots): *telekinesis**

*Transmutation spell of 1st level or higher

Transmuter's Stone. The transmuter carries a magic stone they crafted that grants its bearer one of the following effects:

- Darkvision out to a range of 60 feet
- An extra 10 feet of speed while the bearer is unencumbered
- Proficiency with Constitution saving throws
- Resistance to acid, cold, fire, lightning, or thunder damage (transmuter's choice whenever the transmuter chooses this benefit)

If the transmuter has the stone and casts a transmutation spell of 1st level or higher, they can change the effect of the stone.

Actions

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d6 – 1) bludgeoning damage, or 3 (1d8 – 1) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

Warforged Assassin

Medium humanoid (warforged), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (darkwood core)
Hit Points 98 (15d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Int +5
Skills Acrobatics +8, Deception +3, Perception +4, Stealth +8
Damage Resistances poison
Condition Immunities exhaustion
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Common
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Assassinate. During their first turn, the assassin has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. Any hit the assassin scores against a surprised creature is a critical hit.

Evasion. If the assassin is subjected to an effect that allows them to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the assassin instead takes no damage if they succeed on the saving throw, and only half damage if they fail.

Sneak Attack. Once per turn, the assassin deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when they hit a target with a weapon attack and have advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the assassin that isn't incapacitated and the assassin doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Warforged Resilience. The assassin is immune to disease and has advantage on saving throws against being poisoned. The assassin does not need to eat, drink, breathe, or sleep, and magic cannot put them to sleep.

Actions

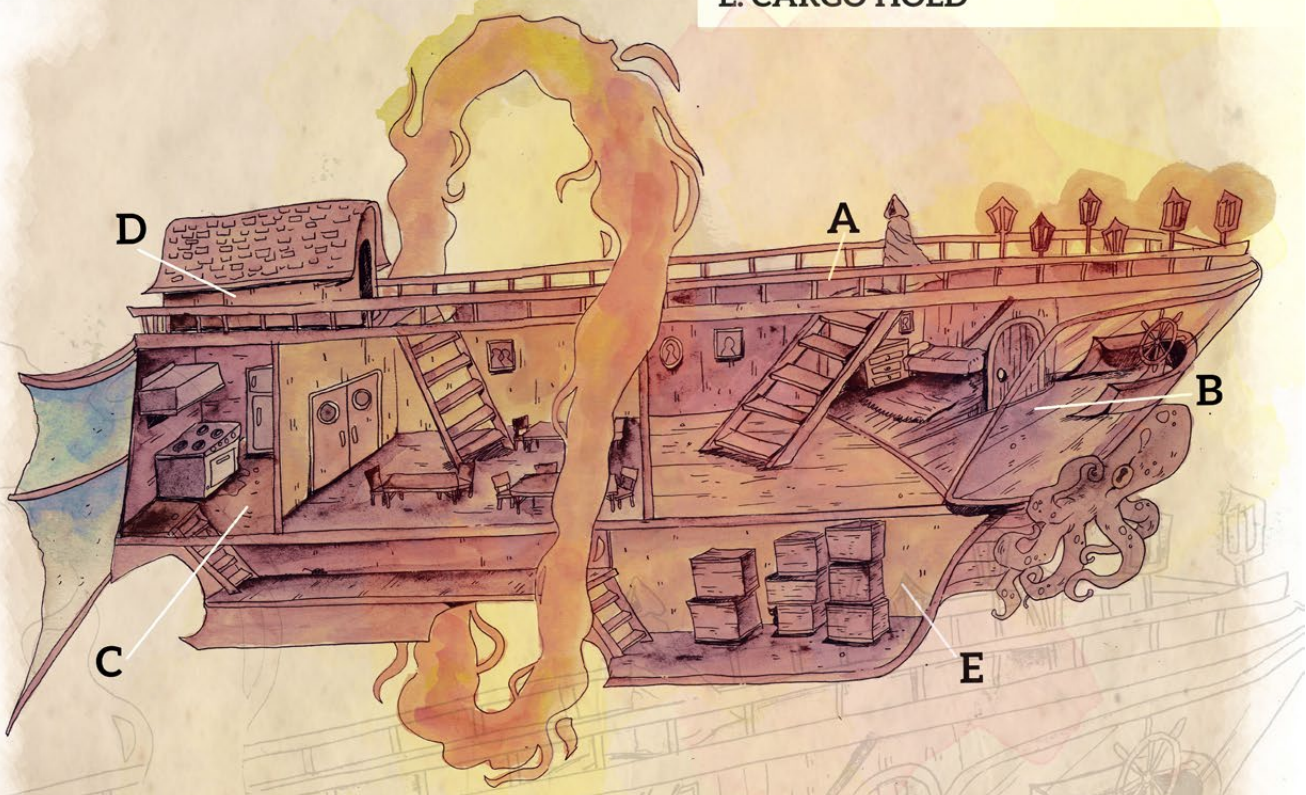
Multiattack. The assassin makes two attacks with their dagger claws.

Dagger Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d4 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 21 (6d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Wings of Death (Recharge 5-6). The assassin unfurls wings made of daggers that launch blades in all directions. Each creature within 30 feet of the assassin must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 25 (10d4) piercing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Appendix C: Map

A: THE DECK
B: THE HELM/CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS
C: THE GALLEY
D: CREW'S QUARTERS
E: CARGO HOLD



The Portent King

Latest ship in the House Lyrandar fleet.
State of the art construction.
Innovative cargo defenses.
The only way to transport what's precious.

Appendix D: Sneezes and Snitches (Bonus Objective A)

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

The adventurers are busy gathering information, scouting the *Portent King*, and mulling about Cliffside to put together a plan for the ultimate heist. Although most of the *Portent King*'s crew are busy getting the airship ready for launch, some sniffling members of the crew, heading home after reporting sick, notice the characters' unusual behavior.

Objective

Avoid the suspicions of the sick *Portent King's* crew members and prevent any from warning the rest of the crew.

Creatures/NPCs

The ship's sous chef (a **transmuter**, Appendix B) is heading home from Cliffside, dragging along a pot of **spoiled soup** (Appendix B) on a cart. Unknown to the characters—and the sous chef—the soup is full of squid tendrils ready to grab the characters and drag them into the pot.

Objectives/Goals. The sous chef suspects the characters are up to no good and interrogates them loudly with a congested, sniffly voice. He wants to know what they are up to and warn the captain of the *Portent King*. He starts out talking to gather as much information as possible. Then, if the characters try to stop him from warning the crew, he attacks.

What Does He Know? The sous chef knows the *Portent King* is transporting something very important and very secret for House Cannith. The sous chef knows he's already gotten at least five other members of the crew sick, and he's heading home before he further endangers their mission.

ACHOOOOOO!

Anyone starting their turn within 5 feet of the sous chef must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or become infected by sewer plague (see "Diseases" in chapter 8, "Running the Game," of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

If scaling this combat encounter, the sous chef calls for help from the other sick crew members. If characters start their turn within 5 feet of these creatures, they likewise expose themselves to the disease.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak** or **Weak:** Remove the pot of **spoiled soup**.
- **Strong:** Add two **swashbucklers**.
- **Very Strong:** Add three **swashbucklers**.



Appendix E: How to Train a Dragon (Bonus Objective B)

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

As the characters explore the cargo hold, they discover stacks of large wooden crates, one of which has been busted open from the inside. If they open the other crates, the characters discover they contain deactivated mechanical dragons. What, then, escaped the crate?! Gulp.

Objective

Don't get annihilated by a mecha-dragon.

Creatures/NPCs

The characters are stalked by a **mechanical dragon** (Appendix B) whose belly is a forge of green flame that lights its eyes and stokes its fiery breath.

Objectives/Goals. Accidentally activated early, the mechanical dragon curiously observes the characters to understand these strange two-legged flesh creatures. What are they? Why are they so soft and squishy and small?

What Does It Know? The mechanical dragon knows nothing. It barely knows its own strength, which makes it dangerous even when friendly.

Taming the Dragon

If the characters do not immediately attack the dragon, they can attempt to subdue the mechanical creature or even notice some details that will aid in this. Although specific checks are suggested here, reward creative solutions and roleplay. Ask characters to describe exactly what they do, and allow other skills or rolls to fit the characters' ideas:

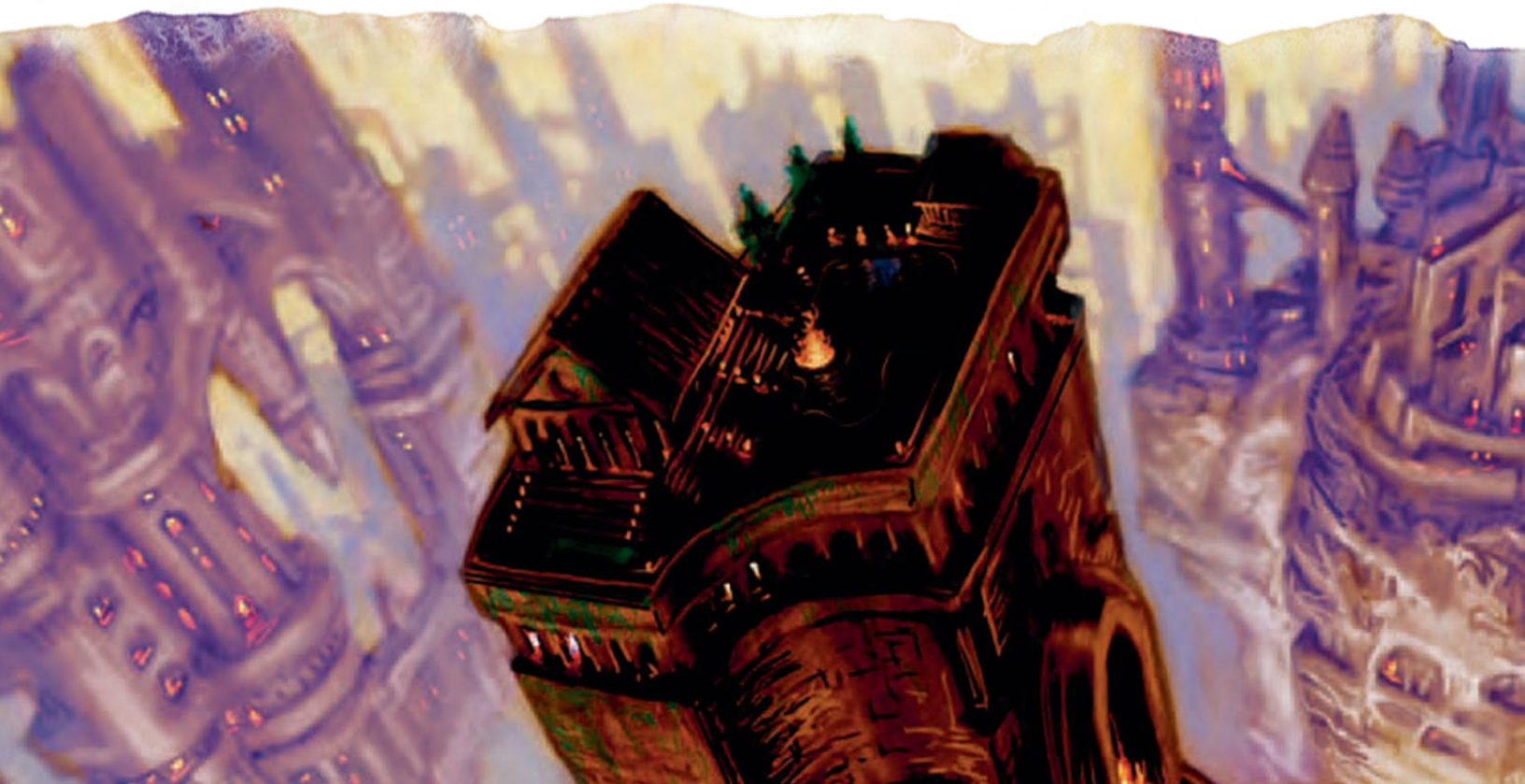
- ***Confused Construct.*** A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check notices that the mechanical dragon is not as menacing as it looks. A successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check or Wisdom (Animal Handling) check starts to earn the creature's trust.
- ***Dented Tail.*** The mechanical dragon smashed its tail when escaping its crate. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices this detail. A successful DC 15 Intelligence check made with tinker's tools repairs its tail—whilst another character succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check to distract the dragon—further earning the creature's trust.
- ***Inside Voices.*** The mechanical dragon realizes it can make noises and growls punctuated with glowing green flames, which could attract the attention of any guards the characters bypassed. A successful DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check to act like a (quieter) mechanical dragon convinces the dragon to mimic characters instead.

Feel free to add your own scenarios or challenges to tame the mechanical dragon. Once all scenarios have been successfully dealt with, the dragon obediently returns to its crate.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak** or **Weak:** The **mechanical dragon** has 100 hit points.
- **Strong:** Add two **swashbucklers**.
- **Very Strong:** Add a second **mechanical dragon**.



Appendix F: Magic Item

Characters completing this adventure's objective unlock this magic item.

Ring of X-ray Vision

Ring, rare (requires attunement)
Tier 2-4, 20 treasure checkpoints
Magic Item Table G, Dungeon Master's Guide

This patinaed copper ring is cast in the likeness of a basilisk biting its own tail.

While wearing this ring, you can use an action to speak its command word. When you do so, you can see into and through solid matter for 1 minute. This vision has a radius of 30 feet. To you, solid objects within that radius appear transparent and don't prevent light from passing through them. The vision can penetrate 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal, or up to 3 feet of wood or dirt. Thicker substances block the vision, as does a thin sheet of lead.

Whenever you use the ring again before taking a long rest, you must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion.

Appendix G: Dungeon Master Tips

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5th-10th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 7**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

New to D&D Adventurers League?

http://dnd.wizards.com/playevents/organized-play

New to the Annual Storyline?

http://dnd.wizards.com/articles/news/eberron-adventurers-league-embers-last-war-storyline

New to Being the Dungeon Master?

http://dnd.wizards.com/articles/features/public-dungeon-master

To DM an adventure, you **must** have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character whose level is within the adventure's level range. Characters playing in a **hardcover** adventure may continue to play too but if they play a different hardcover adventure, they **can't return** to the first one if they're outside its level range.

Preparing the Adventure

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiar yourself with the adventure's appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure–such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a Player or Dungeon Master but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character's adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer). The players fill out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for advancement and treasure checkpoints, downtime days, and renown. These values are updated at the end of the session.

Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet. If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player's character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array.

Point players to the D&D Adventurers League Players Guide for reference. If players wish to spend downtime days and it's the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now, or they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters' spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

Adjusting This Adventure

When combat is a possibility, the adventure will provide a sidebar that helps you to determine the best mix/number of opponents to provide them with to create an appropriate challenge. While you're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience and consideration.

To determine whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the result by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group's average party level (APL). To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the table below.

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition Party	Party Strength
3-4 characters, APL less than	Very weak
3-4 characters, APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than	Average
5 characters, APL less than	Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent	Average
5 characters, APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than	Average
6-7 characters, APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than	Very strong