



Shadowbane

Erik Scott de Bie

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"Shadowbane is a perfect example of what is right and enduring about the Forgotten Realms: a tale of companionship, perseverance, faith, and self-exploration. With a monster and a fight scene here or there, too, in case you need a kick in the pants. You'll read it in one sitting, and then come back to see what you might have missed."

~ Brian Cortijo (Realms Designer, Loremaster of Cormyr)

"If you like fast-paced, thrilling stories that explore the dark shadows and alleyways of cities in the Realms, and erupt into spectacular fights, in the company of wise-cracking heroes and anti-heroes, then a Erik Scott de Bie book is for you! SHADOWBANE takes the reader along for another ride with Kalen and Myrin, this time to lawless Luskan, and **it's an adventure worth reading and rereading many times! First-rate fantasy!"**

~ Ed Greenwood (Best-Selling Author, Father of the Forgotten Realms, Living Legend)

"With its relentless pace and scenes of chilling horror and savage combat, Erik Scott de Bie's fiction evokes the work of old-school sword-and-sorcery masters like Robert E. Howard and Karl Edward Wagner, and *Shadowbane* is his best book yet. Don't miss it!"

~ Richard Lee Byers, author of the **Forgotten Realms: Brotherhood of the Griffon** series

The city of Luskan has always been a den of pirates, thieves, and murderers. But lately, things have gotten much worse. A ship crashes offshore with nothing but corpses. Every day, people go crazy and brutalize those around them. And the only signs that even the most hardened criminals still walk the streets at night are bones.

Luskan's sister city, Waterdeep, has sent a detachment to quarantine the unclean city—to let the filth within die, rather than infect the rest of the Realms. But Myrin has slipped inside, declaring that she will save Luskan. Shadowbane follows, determined to save Myrin and therefore her pet city—even if he has to kill every rat in Luskan to do it.

Shadowbane features the triumphant return of popular, dark vigilante from *Downshadow* and carries forth the threads of the worlds-spanning Abyssal Plague series.

This expanded e-book also includes a brand-new short story, entitled "A New Purpose", as well as links to an existing prequel and an original e-novella, featuring characters from *Shadowbane*. Also included are links to background information on the Abyssal Plague series and sample chapters from other books in the series.

Shadowbane Details

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Author : Erik Scott de Bie

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From Reader Review Shadowbane for online ebook

Stephen Merlino says

Dark and Lively!

Grim and gritty, with relentless pace and action, high stakes, memorable characters, surprising twists. I much prefer DeBie's writing to Salvatore's.

Jan Niblock says

This book is full of twists and turns. You never know who is going to do what to whom, so it makes for a lot of suspense. The story keeps you on the edge of page throughout the entire adventure. You think you know what is going to happen and then are surprised because something else happens instead. Kalen comes closer to finding his true self but not quite there yet. I highly recommend this for anyone who likes fantasy (sword and sorcery) stories. For those who like or need a love interest, there is one but it does not take over the story. Instead it adds to the suspense.

Travis says

Shadowbane is the second book in the Shadowbane series with the first book being Downshadow, which is also the fourth book in the Ed Greenwood Presents Waterdeep series, and the third book is Shadowbane: Eye of Justice. The Shadowbane series is set in the Forgotten Realms setting of Dungeons and Dragons.

Shadowbane also ties into the Dungeons and Dragons world spanning event called The Abyssal Plague, and carries over the plague introduced in Bruce R. Cordell's Sword of the Gods novel. Erik Scott de Bie has written a number of novels set in the Forgotten Realms; Ghostwalker part of The Fighters series of stand-alone novels and Depths of Madness which is part of The Dungeons series of stand-alone novels. He wrote Eye for an Eye in Cobalt City Double Feature. He also has written a number of short stories for anthologies as well as offering free to download ones off his website, along with working on Dungeons and Dragons game designs and campaigns. Shadowbane was released as e-book only in September 2011 and is published by Wizards of the Coast.

After finding Kalen 'Shadowbane' Dren murdering the dwarf that kidnapped her, Myrin Darkdance ran away from him and hoping to find answers about who she is. However fate intervenes in the form of a shadowy woman who takes her away. Fortunately, Kalen is on his way to rescue her, after receiving a mysterious note with "Luskan" scrawled on it. As Kalen nears the deplorable city, he notices that it appears to be under quarantine as Waterdhavian guards surround the city. As he approaches the wall, he is recognized as the vigilante Shadowbane and is forced into a confrontation. As he struggles to get past the blockade, he learns that Luskan has a plague spreading around the city called "The Fury". After the brief struggle Kalen is able to enter the city, but in the process loses his sword, 'Vindicator'. Finally in the city of his birth, Kalen begins the search for Myrin and answers as to why she is in Luskan.

Criticisms:

1) Beginning. Shadowbane starts off confusing and quick. There isn't any 'refresher' from Downshadow that

helps in recalling what happened in the previous novel. While this isn't necessarily a bad thing, it doesn't help that so much is dropped on the reader that if they haven't recently read Downshadow they would most likely be lost. There's so much mentioned or brought up that it does become confusing and can leave someone lost. Even some of the main characters felt very vague. Thankfully, most things are explained as the story goes on but it is quite a jolt to realize that you can't recall who this person is or what happened. While being mysterious can be a good thing, here it just becomes slightly annoying when you get that lost feeling. While most things are explained, there are a few things that will just leave the reader wondering all through out the novel with relatively little to no pay off. As Shadowbane goes on, you learn of a person named Vaelis and of another character called the Horned One. These two characters never felt explored. In the case of Vaelis it can be written off as a painful memory for Kalen to recall, but it is a let-down that you never really get 'closure' to this character and what happened to him with Kalen. With the Horned One, he is continually mentioned and appears to have little pay-off at the end. However, it is obvious that he is meant to be a mystery, but there should have been something revealed about this character to make him more interesting, rather than frustrating. While these two people are mentioned or appear throughout the novel, the frustration starts at the beginning and just seems to grow as Shadowbane continues.

Praises:

1) Characters. Shadowbane has many, many things going for it and, first and foremost, is its characters. Everyone just felt real and developed. They were almost 'perfect' characters and you will be hard pressed to not root for the heroes and boo the villains. From the main characters to the minor ones, and even the bit players, everyone played their roles perfectly and even surpassed them. The main characters were just fantastic. Kalen, Myrin, Sithe, and Rhett were wonderful, simply put. You want them to succeed and you want the best for them. When it comes down to it this is Kalen's story and because of this he does get the most development and the most background into the character. He really grows from when you first meet him to something more. You can feel Kalen's struggle with his faith and fears, his feelings toward Myrin, and his thoughts about who exactly he is and what he wants to be. All the experiences he endures through the story really hammer out who he is and what he wants to become. As for Myrin, she may not have gotten much development, but there is a lot that you learn about her. She's still an interesting and complex character, but just lacked some development. Sithe felt like the most interesting character. She had the mystery, the badass attitude, and brought a lot out of every character she interacted with. She just felt like the complete package really. It does help that she comes off as a morally grey character. Rhett was the weaker of the main characters, but he still brought a lot to the story. He gives the reader a character to identify with and helps with Kalen's development while feeling like that's not all he gives the story. The other characters are just as good, helping the story move along and while keeping things interesting. Shadowbane's characters are just wonderful and helps making the story just as interesting.

2) Story. Shadowbane has a deep and intriguing story that keeps bringing you in. It's a simple story that has a lot of hidden meaning and deeper context that you will find the more you think about it. The simple premise and the deeper meaning helps in making Shadowbane hard to put down. It's one of those story's that you want to learn more about and don't want it to end. The story never feels stale, thanks impart to the characters and the action. It's really one of those story's that are hard to get into too much detail because of running into the chance of ruining the story for someone else. The less said the better Shadowbane is.

3) Action. Shadowbane is full of some intense action sequences. After every fight scene it's hard to not say "wow". The action felt amazingly choreographed and extremely easy to follow. It was just amazing to read. It's fast paced and really does leave you breathless at the end of a few fights. You really start to feel almost every blow, it has that tangible feel to it. Because of this, it makes the story even more hard to put down.

Side Notes:

1) The Abyssal Plague. As I mentioned in the background information on Shadowbane, it is part of The Abyssal Plague event. While you don't really need to read about the event, it may just pique your interest in

the event and how it started.

2) Luskan. The city just feels wrong. The descriptions will make you cringe every once in a while and it's surprising how bad this city has become. It's great descriptions at their best.

3) "A New Purpose". This is a short story included with Shadowbane and it tells of what happened after the events of Downshadow and how Kalen received the note pointing towards Luskan. It's a nice addition and gives you more of a Shadowbane fix, and helps in explaining some plot-holes.

4) Cover Art. Shadowbane has a very epic looking cover. Kalen is in a pretty awesome looking pose. He looks like an epic hero. The red hues in the background really help in drawing your eye to Kalen and makes him the focus, as it should be. It works and that's all a cover needs to do.

5) Appeal. Shadowbane is really hard to pinpoint who this story is for. Obviously it's for those who have read Downshadow and those who like to read Forgotten Realms fiction. However, I don't think a person coming into this story blind is going to like it, right off the bat. There is just too much Downshadow in this for those who haven't read that.

Overall: 5/5

Final Thoughts:

Shadowbane is a great novel that will leave readers wanting more, well those who have read Downshadow. The only issue is with how much you need to know from Downshadow right off the bat. At times it's increasingly hard to get into at the beginning, but as the story goes on, you become more comfortable with the things that happen. The characters are fantastic and makes Shadowbane so much fun. Sithe is the highlight, along with Kalen. Sithe is just amazing and badass. She brought a lot to the story. Kalen had a lot of well-earned development. It's great to see how far he comes and what he overcomes to get there. The story itself is simple, yet deep. It's a story that you will find hard pressed to put down for very long. Finally the action helps keep you in the story, while being intense and fun. The fights are beautifully done that you feel very swing and every hit. Shadowbane is a really good novel that delivers a lot of fun and excitement. It's just too bad it's only available in e-book form.

Stefan says

Shadowbane takes places roughly a year after Downshadow and Kalen is traveling to Luskan after receiving a cryptic letter from Myrin. Luskan is under quarantine due to a mysterious plague that is driving people to madness then killing them in a most gruesome way. We meet some surprising people from Kalen's past and find out more about Myrin. Erik's signature is his fight scenes are there are plenty in Shadowbane. They are so vivid they practically leap off the page.

I love books with anti-heroes and Kalen certainly fits that bill. He does not come off as the typical brooding warrior but as someone with a truly troubled soul having had to make some terrible choices. The setting of the book, Luskan, had a great feel, it reminded me of Batman No Man's Land.

Not only this a follow up to Downshadow but it is also part of the Abyssal Plague series which spans all the DnD worlds, Eberron, Forgotten Realms, Dark Sun. No previous knowledge of the Abyssal Plague is required to enjoy Shadowbane but if you would like more background you check out the extras found at the end of the ebook. This is also the first Wizard of the Coast book to be available only in ebook format.

I have been a fan of Erik's work since Ghostwalker and he keeps upping the ante with each new release. He is one of top Forgotten Realms authors and if you are looking for a great new read, give Shadowbane a try. You won't be disappointed.

Suzette says

I wanted to like this book but it was really kind of all over the place. Parts were pretty good, other parts were almost awful. The story was good but was put together in a confusing way. There were some things that were never really explained and while it was possible over the length of the book to get a general understanding it was never really completely clear. There were a lot of different bits that mostly came together but again, very confused. I won't go hunting for more by this author but if I was at loose ends and had one of his books available I'd probably give him another try. So, not so awful that I'd rather stare at a wall but not so good that I'd actively seek out more.

Edward says

Interesting characters, but some of the magic for the main characters felt off. Parts of it just didn't feel "D&D". Some of the interesting character development was too heavy-handed. I'm not an idiot, you don't need to hit me over the head with the villian's motivations and issues 3 times in the same paragraph. :) And I think it required too much knowledge of the previous book, but that's the nature of a series, I guess.

Other than that, though, it was a fun book. The descriptions of Luskan in particular were very evocative and had just the right sword & sorcery feel. It drew me right in. There was a lot of prose I liked here.

Justin says

Fast action and great characters. Fascinating look at a completely lawless Luskan.

Silas says

This was an interesting, gritty novel set in the Forgotten Realms. It follows a fallen paladin into crime-ridden Luskan to rescue an amnesiac mage (who doesn't really need saving). Along the way, we meet a Guardsman-cum-paladin and a genasi avenger. While the main character is essentially Batman, the story is well-told, and I felt that the mechanical changes to a new edition were explained well. I think I missed a novel before this, and I know there is one after this one, so I suppose there are more stories in this series. I'm interested enough that I might check them out.

Robert says

Disclaimer-If you read the review and feel there is a spoiler in it, please let me know and I will remove that section. Also, if you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask. Thank you.

Shadowbane by Erik Scott de Bie is the continuation of Downshadow. Other FR books by Mr. de Bie are

Ghostwalker from The Fighters series, Depths of Madness from The Dungeons series, Downshadow from Ed Greenwood presents Waterdeep, Shadowbane - Eye of Justice, and forthcoming (possibly) Shadowbane - Kingdom of Night.

The story in Shadowbane takes place a year after the events in Downshadow. Kalen Dren (Shadowbane) has left for Luskan in search of Myrin. Luskan holds some bad memories for Kalen and what he finds there is more than he could have expected, even for a city known for its filth and miscreants. After he discovers what has become of Myrin, he now joins in to save a city that may be beyond saving. Some sub plots involve an apprentice wannabe, past dealings with a gang leader, a complicated relationship, and a few more that lead to the next book.

First off, I want to say if you own a copy of this e-book or are thinking of purchasing it, there is a short story added after the book concludes. Read that first if you want to read the story chronologically as the short story takes place a few months prior to Shadowbane. The flow of this book is smooth and transitions nicely from moment to moment and never is the reader confused about what is going on, even in the height of all the action. The pace is nicely dispersed into break neck action and moments of rest where the reader can catch their breath for the next action packed scene.

Some criticisms:

1. The only criticism I have has nothing to do with the story itself. I love print books. I feel that WotC is pushing its best writers to the wayside by making them e-books only. Mr. de Bie is up there with the greats of the realms and deserves not only to have print books but hardcovers as well.

Some positives:

1. Epic. This book felt like an epic piece of storytelling as there is so much that happens in the mere 297 pages (according to my Nook) that when I was done, I felt as if I had read one of Brandon Sanderson's huge novels and didn't feel like anything was left out.

2. The characters were a joy to read and I felt I could really connect with all of them, even poor Rhett who always seems to be just on the edge of getting somewhere and then...denied. Every last character has their place and even the secondary characters fit well get their due screen time.

3. The language is done superbly and I'm not just talking about some of the language he gets away with which is tluining awesome - Mr. de Bie you can correct me if I used that one incorrectly - with but the words he uses to get his points across and give you the feeling you are right there in the worst city you have ever been to.

Overall this was an excellent novel and I'm looking forward to jumping right into Shadowbane - Eye of Justice. If you are looking for a good dark and gritty fantasy, this here is your ticket. However, if you have not read Downshadow, that comes highly recommended prior to delving into this one. I feel most fans of fantasy will like this one, even those who look for the huge epic novels can find enjoyment here.

Happy reading

-Dimndbangr

Erik de Bie says

I wrote this, so I'm biased. Hope you enjoy! :)
