

= Mass Effect 2 : Lair of the Shadow Broker =

Mass Effect 2 : Lair of the Shadow Broker is a downloadable content pack developed by BioWare and published by Electronic Arts for the action role @-@ playing video game Mass Effect 2 . It was released on September 7 , 2010 for Microsoft Windows and Xbox 360 . The pack is included in the PlayStation 3 edition of Mass Effect 2 , which was released on January 18 , 2011 . Lair of the Shadow Broker introduces a new mission in which the player assumes the role of Commander Shepard , an elite human soldier who must help former squad member Liara T 'Soni to find an information dealer known as the Shadow Broker .

Mass Effect 2 : Lair of the Shadow Broker was announced to be in development on July 22 , 2010 . BioWare stated that some decisions the player makes in the pack affect the story of Mass Effect 3 . The pack received very positive reviews from critics , with an aggregate score of 87 out of 100 for the Xbox 360 version at Metacritic . Reviewers generally praised the narrative between the main characters and considered it the greatest downloadable content pack of the game .

= = Gameplay = =

Mass Effect 2 is an action role @-@ playing game in which the player controls Commander Shepard . Shepard 's gender , appearance , history and combat @-@ training are determined by the player before the game begins . The game features a variety of missions that the player must complete to progress . Mass Effect 2 : Lair of the Shadow Broker adds a new assignment that involves defeating enemies and interacting with NPCs . During the mission , Shepard is accompanied by two AI squad members that the player can indirectly control through orders . Combat takes place in real @-@ time , but the player can pause the action at any time to calmly target enemies and select different powers for the squad members to use .

At one point in the mission , a new temporary squad member , Liara T 'Soni , with a different set of powers joins the squad , and the player must choose who of the previous two members will remain for the rest of the mission . The relationship between Shepard and Liara can vary depending on whether they were romantically involved in the original Mass Effect . The mission includes two bosses and a chase scene in which the player must control a high @-@ speed vehicle through the skies of a city . The player may also find numerous in @-@ game upgrades that enhance aspects of the game 's weapons and armor .

After completing Lair of the Shadow Broker , a new location , the Shadow Broker 's Base , becomes visitable . Inside the base , the player can use several terminals with numerous functions . Some terminals show surveillance footage , dossiers on Shepard 's crew members , and a video archive which contains clips taken from around the galaxy . The player may also purchase mining manifests which are useful to mark mineral @-@ rich planets on the game 's Galaxy Map , and invest credits in various mini @-@ missions which allow the player to receive upgrades and resources from the Shadow Broker 's contacts , depending on the player 's personal alignment . The pack also adds five new achievements that are awarded for completing specific tasks , such as completing the mission on one of the two highest difficulties .

= = Plot = =

Mass Effect 2 : Lair of the Shadow Broker is set two years after the events of Mass Effect : Redemption . Elite human soldier Commander Shepard is sent on a mission to help former squad member Liara T 'Soni to find an information dealer known as the Shadow Broker . Liara asks Shepard to meet her at her apartment to discuss plans regarding the location of the Shadow Broker , but when Shepard arrives , the apartment is locked down , and agent Tela Vasir is conducting an investigation into Liara 's disappearance . Shepard and Vasir learn that Liara went to an office building to meet with an informant . Upon arriving at the building , Shepard and the squad fight their way up from the bottom while Vasir lands on the roof of the building and proceeds downward . When Shepard reaches the office , Vasir is already there and Liara 's contact is dead . Liara

suddenly appears , pointing a gun at Vasir . She says that Vasir was the one who tried to kill her , and that Vasir has the disk with the Shadow Broker 's location , having taken it from the dead informant . In the ensuing confrontation , Vasir escapes but is eventually hunted by Shepard and Liara , who manage to defeat her on the roof of a hotel .

Having recovered the disk from Vasir , Shepard and Liara learn that the Shadow Broker is located inside a massive ship near a planet called Hagalaz . Upon boarding the ship , they rescue Liara 's long @-@ lost partner , Feron , who was imprisoned in the ship 's prison cells after the events of Redemption . When they finally reach the Shadow Broker 's office , the Shadow Broker engages Shepard and Liara in combat . Shepard distracts the Broker , while Liara brings down a liquid that was contained in the ceiling onto the Shadow Broker . The liquid causes the Broker 's protections to malfunction , and he dies in the subsequent explosion . Liara now assumes the position of the Shadow Broker , and promises Shepard that she will turn the organization around . She also mentions that she will be able to provide Shepard with more information thanks to the Broker 's extensive networks .

= = Development and release = =

Mass Effect 2 : Lair of the Shadow Broker was developed by BioWare and published by Electronic Arts . During development of Mass Effect 2 , Bioware stated that downloadable content was becoming a fundamental part of the company 's overall philosophy . The pack was announced to be in development on July 22 , 2010 with the release of three brand @-@ new screenshots of the game . BioWare stated that the decisions players make in the pack would affect certain storylines in the then @-@ upcoming Mass Effect 3 . Animating the Shadow Broker 's face was a challenge for the developers . According to BioWare , the game 's default digital @-@ acting system " could not handle the stresses of the new face , so custom work had to be done to animate his multiple eyes and triangular mouth . " The pack was released on September 7 , 2010 for Microsoft Windows and Xbox 360 . Like Mass Effect 2 's earlier downloadable content packs Kasumi - Stolen Memory and Overlord , Lair of the Shadow Broker is freely included in the PlayStation 3 edition of the game , which was released on January 18 , 2011 . The soundtrack was composed by Christopher Lennertz , who previously penned the music for the Overlord downloadable content .

= = Reception = =

Mass Effect 2 : Lair of the Shadow Broker received very positive reviews from critics , who considered it to be the greatest downloadable content pack of the game . Dan Whitehead of Eurogamer considered Lair of the Shadow Broker " a solid , thrilling , satisfying addition to an already expansive universe ; one that leaves you on an appropriate note of hopeful melancholy . " He praised the amount of content in the pack , stating that it " adds far more to the game than some of its disappointingly slender predecessors . " Game Revolution 's Eduardo Reboucas said that the pack is " a blast , especially for fans who want to catch up with Liara and dissect the bits of story that were omitted in the main game . "

The narrative and story received high marks . Critics praised the fact that some decisions from the original Mass Effect impact the storytelling experience . Kristine Steimer of IGN stated that the storytelling " effectively communicates the strong bond between [Shepard and Liara] , even if they weren 't romantically involved in your game . " The graphics received similar praise . Brad Gallaway , a reviewer for GameCritics , noted that they " make the action feel like a more organic part of the story and engage the player in some superb atmosphere . " The Shadow Broker 's ship exterior was seen by some critics as the most impressive battle environment of the pack . Steimer remarked that " approaching the Shadow Broker 's ship is simply stunning as lightning storms envelope [sic] the massive vessel . "

Kevin VanOrd , a reviewer for GameSpot , praised the pack 's atmosphere and combat sequences , particularly in the second portion of the mission . According to him , " enemies attack at just the right pace , so individual battles never drag on too long , nor are they over so quickly that they end up

being unsatisfying . " He also highlighted the vehicle chase scene , comparing it favorably to Blade Runner and The Fifth Element , but also admitted that the controls in the Xbox 360 version of the game are not very precise . The bosses received similar praise , with Steimer stating that both of them " have unique traits that make them a formidable opponent . " The Shadow Broker 's base was highlighted as a valuable addition to the game . Whitehead noted that marking mineral @-@ rich planets alleviates the scanning , which was seen as a tedious feature in the main game . VanOrd concluded that Lair of the Shadow Broker is " worthy of your time (more than two hours) and your money . " The pack was nominated for Best DLC (downloadable content) at the 2010 Spike Video Game Awards , but lost to Red Dead Redemption : Undead Nightmare . It won the Inside Gaming Award for Best DLC .