

THE OPENED MIND



AN INTRODUCTORY PSIONIC ADVENTURE FOR 1ST LEVEL CHARACTERS

BY ERIC HINDLEY



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ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

THE OPENED MIND

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to psionics!

This adventure is intended as a first taste of the system of psionics and power points, as presented in *Ultimate Psionics*. It is intended for four 1st level psionic characters and is meant to highlight different aspects of psionics to let you and your players learn about this subsystem of the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*. You will need *Ultimate Psionics* to run this adventure, as there are many aspects of psionics included within its pages.

Sample characters are given at the end of the book if your players are unfamiliar with psionics, giving a balanced and well-rounded party using the psionic classes found in *Ultimate Psionics*. If you decide to use your own characters instead of the sample characters provided, each member of the party should have some level of psionic ability, whether that is a psionic race, psionic class, or a feat like Wild Talent from *Ultimate Psionics*. The creatures in this adventure respond differently to psionic versus non-psionic characters and there is an expectation that the players are using psionic options.

The Opened Mind is not only intended as an introductory adventure, but also as a springboard for a psionic campaign. The end of the adventure is intentionally left open for further development by you, the GM, to continue the story based upon the players' choices.

With that being said, let's explore the mystery of Jace's Stanchion and the nefarious creatures who dwell outside its walls!

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

At the heart of the town of Jace's Stanchion lies a terrible secret. When the founding fathers first entered the Wildwood, they met and befriended a native tribal race known as the hanoshafyr. These kudu-men were peaceful and aided the newly arrived humans in their search to find a place to establish a settlement. A prominent butte located deep in the heart of the Aphotic Wildwood provided a land fit for building that would not damage the woods and had its own freshwater source and arable land.

At the head of these settlers was Jace Meldarion, a powerful psion and a charismatic leader. Under his wary guidance the town was established and with the help of his talents expanded rapidly. While the town has ready access to most of the raw resources it requires, Jace made the decision to mine into the butte in an effort to compensate for the town's

primary shortcomings: stone and ore. The initial houses built on the site were little more than wood and earth huts. Without metal, the citizens were deeply affected by the loss of tools, often times being forced to do without until the town could spare the resources to make an excursion for trade.

The quarry work that soon followed revealed a large swathe of mineral rich rock beneath their newly founded village. Small pieces of this basalt-like material were quarried to provide a hard substitute for metal in the simple tools and weapons employed by the settlers. While not as pliable as steel, workable farm implements and simple weapons like picks or axes could be fabricated from the stone. The locals took to calling this material phrenoric ore, as it had some latent psionic qualities. Eventually, Jace learned that the stone could be easily shaped by those with psionic talent, and he set his family to slowly replacing the buildings and crafting much finer phrenoric tools.

Excavation continued for years, until the workers' tunnels pierced deep within the butte, revealing long abandoned passages. Opening the caverns unleashed a terrible force into the world. This evil began a slaughter so complete that it could only be staved off by the immediate actions of Jace himself. Drawing on all of his vast psionic talent, Meldarion was able to fabricate a wall of ectoplasm thick enough to stave off the wave of destruction that came pouring out from the depths below. It became quickly apparent, however, that a more permanent solution had to be found. With intense research and a heavy heart, the founding patriarch was able to construct a modified cognizance crystal that would funnel power slowly from a psionic source: in this case, Jace himself. These containment chambers came to be called stanchions, thus giving the town its name. Jace was sealed into the first of these columns, its ingenious design sustaining him via psionic repletion even as it drained his power to fuel the wall. The duty of constant watch over the wall was remanded to House Meldarion as they assumed responsibility for the safety of their neighbors.

Unfortunately, while the details surrounding the nature of the horrors have been lost to time (and the ultimate fate of this evil exceeds the scope of the adventure), the assaults from below have never ceased and instead continue to grow in power. The wall has been slowly eroded over time, needing reinforcement again and again. More of Jace's descendants were called into service as auxiliary power to supplement their ancestor's sacrifice. Over decades, this act became known as the Oblation of Jace (later shortened to the Oblation). Each time the barrier

weakened, another psionically gifted descendent was offered to ensure the town's defense, repeating Jace's sacrifice. Unfortunately, the ectoplasmic walls continued to degrade, allowing the eldritch horrors below to push further up from the tunnels towards the surface. The erosion of the Oblation has required greater and greater reinforcement, slowly reducing the town's access to its most valuable export, the lucrative phrenoric ore.

The most terrifying aspect of the stanchion's creation is that while their sacrifices slumber through the constant draining, they continue to age and eventually perish. Once a lifetime is slumbered away, the pillar must remain as a conduit for the future sacrifices. Over the years, as the sacrifices grew, the numbers of House Meldarion dwindled until the line of Jace ended. Rather than allow the town to fall into ruin, the knowledge of the Oblation was passed over to Delandi Duarran. While the Duarran gifted blood did not run as deeply as House Meldarion, Delandi refused to allow her descendants to take up the mantle of sacrifice. A skilled telepath and a charismatic business woman, the leader of House Duarran began to pull individuals from the various families of the village that possessed even the tiniest spark of psionic power. Walling up these sacrifices required the modification of memories of those who had known the person taken. While this worked for another century, it soon became evident that for the Oblation to continue, people from outside the town itself would need to be harvested.

It was at this time that House Duarran turned their attention back to their primitive neighbors, the hanoshafyr. They developed a method to psionically brand the creatures and bend them to their will, using the hanoshafyr to locate and herd potential replacement psions to Jace's Stanchion.

The current leader of House Duarran is Odafin, Delandi's grandson. His family controls the supply of Jace's Stanchion's primary export—the precious phrenoric ore. Likewise, they are responsible for orchestrating the caravans which bring in psionically gifted caravan members. The caravan traders are psionically programmed to believe that the talented pilgrims are the only way to ensure the safe arrival of the trade goods, thus preventing them from being able to share the caravan's true purpose with any new hires they acquire. In this way, a steady supply of sacrifices to lock away into stanchions is ensured for the residents of Jace's Stanchion. Most of these gifted individuals are encouraged to stay in Jace's Stanchion, even if it requires some psionic coercion. Those that resist are entombed in stanchions as soon as possible,

adding their psionic power to the Oblation.

While this course of action was acceptable to Odafin and his family, it has become increasingly loathed by the rest of the village. House Duarran is now forced to constantly modify the memories of the townspeople, lest they band together to revolt against the psionic tyranny. While the reprogramming allows for a blissfully ignorant life, it has never been able to remove the constant, building sadness that rests in the heart of every citizen. Even worse, the ever creeping ectoplasmic wall of the Oblation has now expanded to the point where it has nearly cut off all access to the mines, forcing House Duarran to find an alternative to the current status quo or deal with whatever terrible power was locked away all those years ago.

Additionally, the hold House Duarran had over the hanoshafyr has ebbed, and the creatures have been driven mad over time. They now attack seemingly at random, though an innate sense of duty makes them reluctant to attack psionic creatures.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs have been hired to guard a doomed caravan to remote Jace's Stanchion, a psionic bulwark that stands against an ancient threat. Once there, they slowly unravel a deep mystery. They learn that the town bears a dark secret—they have been kidnapping psionic people to place in pillars designed to augment the psionic barrier that the town harbors. With this knowledge in hand, they go to confront the corrupt ruling house of Jace's Stanchion.

BOXED TEXT

Text to be read aloud to players is presented in a box like this.

THIRD DAWN

If using this adventure in the *Third Dawn Campaign Setting*, Jace's Stanchion is found in the northern portions of the continent of Femon, west of the Barony of Soliel.

CHAPTER 1 THE STANCHION

A Narrow Escape (CR 6)

It was supposed to be an easy job— escort a wagon full of grain to a remote outpost through a relatively barren marshland. But things have only gone from bad to worse as the journey has worn on. First, one of the guards vanished in the night. Then the creatures appeared—man-like things with the heads of nightmarish antelopes and a ferocious hatred of intruders. Days of ceaseless attacks have finally taken their toll on the caravan. The strange creatures have attacked the traders and their guards mercilessly, each attack taking a few of the guards with it. In this latest attack the creatures managed to cripple the convoys' horses, leaving the cart a shattered wreck. The caravan master points to a path ahead and shouts, "the trail to Jace's Stanchion lies that way! We'll have to fight our way through!"

The wreckage of the caravan provides cover and acts as difficult terrain for anyone within it. Alongside the PCs are the remnants of the caravan: 6 more guards (see Event 1 for more details on four of these) and the caravan master. These characters can be seen and heard, but need play no part in the battle. In fact it's best if they are fighting just "off-screen". As the battle rages, have these extra guards and the caravan master fall back towards Jace's Stanchion. A 20-ft path down the center of the woods provides a clear route to follow; underbrush on both sides is both difficult terrain and provides concealment, granting a 20% miss chance for ranged attacks.

Creatures: A dozen hanoshafyr (hp 13; pg. 18) have surrounded the survivors of the caravan. Half of these creatures stand in the way of the PCs' escape, the rest can be used as reinforcements as necessary. They will focus attacks on non-psionic creatures first, but only deal non-lethal damage to any psionic character, taking a -4 penalty on attack rolls to do so. This should be an overwhelming number of attackers; feel free to rapidly add more NPC reinforcements in order to drive this point home. The goal for the players should be to escape to Jace's Stanchion, not butcher all the monsters. The creatures will not pursue the PCs into Jace's Stanchion—the caravan master explains that this must have been a desperation attack outside of the area normally patrolled by the local militia. Once

all of the player characters have escaped the map or been subdued, they can proceed to Jace's Stanchion without further encounters.

Development: If any (or all) of the PCs are subdued by the hanoshafyr, the creatures will capture them for House Duarran and they will awaken in the Absent Eidolon Tavern. They will be told that it was a close fought battle and luckily they were rescued by a patrol of the local militia. The adventure can then proceed as normal. Once all of the PCs have escaped, proceed to the next section. If the PCs successfully escape to Jace's Stanchion without fighting the hanoshafyr, award them an ad hoc XP award as if they overcame a CR 3 encounter. Otherwise, award them experience according to how many they managed to defeat before the combat ended.

ENTERING JACE'S STANCHION

When the PCs begin to explore the town, read or paraphrase the following. A map of Jace's Stanchion can be found in the Gazetteer (page 18.)

The buildings of Jace's Stanchion tend to be single story affairs. With a foundation of stone that must be drawn from the local quarry, the floors have puzzle-like tiles that have been placed together for added stability and do not seem to use mortar. The walls of many buildings are constructed of heavy, knotty logs, seemingly at odds with the ingenious stonework. The roofs are composed of thin, geometric stone shingles, interlocking almost like a turtle shell, supported by thick wooden columns. These shingles are expertly crafted phrenoric ore. All buildings look solidly made and in good condition, obvious pride has been taken in their appearance. Surrounding a central court built around a statue of an impressive-looking man are the tell-tale signs of a blacksmith, tailor, stonecutter, and general store.

As the players investigate further, the people seem pleasant enough. While they do not go so far as to wave at the survivors of the battered caravan, they do offer sad smiles of sympathy. Fully 90% of the village is human (see Gazetteer), and non-human characters can expect to get odd reactions and dubious stares.

There is little in the way of livestock in the village. While the caravan passed flocks of sheep early in its journey, here there are only scattered chickens and the odd pig. There are also no sounds of dogs, cats or other typical domestic wildlife. There are many window planters with various herbs and the occasional flower growing from them. Asking

around town reveals the following information with the appropriate skill check (a Diplomacy check to gather information can be substituted for any of the following):

Information About the Creatures

Skill	DC	Result
Knowledge (local)	11	They are called the hanoshafyr by the residents of the mesa; they have existed since the founding of Jace's Stanchion. Though the beast men are spoken of quietly, you detect as much reverence for the creatures as fear.
Knowledge (psionics)	16	You can think of no race similar to these that possess powers of the mind. While these creatures seemed savage, they recognized the manifestation of psionic power. More than likely they harbor no psionic ability themselves, but they may have been able to rudimentarily detect who was psionic prior to an attack. This could account for the devastating losses of mundane travelers
Knowledge (nature)	16	Something that may not be obvious to others not skilled in natural lore is that not a single one of the beasts bore trophy or decoration. No beads, no feathers, nor grisly parts from a foe adorn their frames. In fact, apart from crude clubs there are no harnesses or belts for carrying weapons or tools and they attacked without even throwing stones. They are either completely mindless or there is a specific reason for this.
Knowledge (psionics)	16	The strange rune emblazoned on the chests of the creatures may have something to do with their ability to detect psionic creatures, though it is likely not a natural part of the creatures.

Information About the Townsfolk

Skill	DC	Result
Perception	11	You can see striking similarities in features between the residents of the Stanchion. While you detect no signs of inbreeding (a DC 14 Heal check will verify this), you can see that the sum total of the populace comes from a small handful of extended families.
Perception	16	The only place where you see guards of any sort are in the compound of House Duarran where caravans come in to begin trade negotiations. The estate is walled and has a tower on its premises. You have counted at least a dozen armed guards that protect the estate and any goods that come into the Commission. If people are asked about the lack of town guard, most people seem confused for a moment before abruptly stating "House Duarran keeps us safe."
Perception	16	In the merchant's stalls, you notice items for sale that would not have been made here. Perhaps these were items that were bartered for and are now in excess. All of them are aged and some are in disrepair. <i>Note:</i> There is very little trade that actually occurs with Jace's Stanchion. An inquisitive player may directly ask if some of these items were recovered from the caravan they came with. The answer will be yes, though a DC 18 Sense Motive reveals this to be false. Any attempt to press the issue yields no helpful information.
Sense Motive	11	The locals seem removed from the conversations they have with you. Not intentionally, but they have a difficult time staying in the moment and often will drift away by falling into silence.
Sense Motive	16	The locals use no definitive statements of time. They refer to general terms, but nothing more specific than 'soon' or 'in the evening'. They laugh it off as losing track of the day if cornered into admitting that they do not know what the date is.
Sense Motive	18	There is a pervading sense of sadness or fear that sits in the eyes of the townsfolk. When pressed, they seem genuinely ignorant of it. To pry further would be perceived as disrespect, but the haunted look is always there when the conversation lulls and their attention drifts.

Event 1—Missing Companions

THE ABSENT EIDOLON TAVERN

Near midday after the party has entered Jace's Stanchion, a strange thing happens. This allows players have some time to wander around on their own, maybe to shop around and explore and make as many skill checks or other rolls as needed.

There were four other guards beyond the players that survived the expedition; they are cliquish and had obvious ties to one another before their time on the caravan. They depart early in the morning, soon after breakfast. While polite, it is obvious that the journey has shattered any trust they may have for companions outside of their group. All four are clearly psionically gifted. Two of them are obviously related: dark haired, strapping youths with a penchant for blade work. The older brother, Morris, grew in size during combat before and fights with a two handed sword. He is a sombre man and has said little during the trip to Jace's Stanchion. His younger sibling Simon fights with knives, favoring a well-made blade with an ornate hilt. He has even been known to conjure knives from thin air. He is only slightly more talkative than his brother, willing to answer the odd question and make a lewd joke if the situation warrants it.

The remaining two members of their party seem to be a married couple, a red-headed woman named Syonne and a heavily-bearded, laughing man named Bertrand. Each of these warriors has been seen to conjure shards of crystalline earth to hurl at their opponents. Syonne is the leader of the small band, her haughty manner influencing every decision and her commanding nature brooking no arguments from the other three. Bertrand is quick with a joke, eager to please Syonne and diffuse situations that may get out of hand from her overbearing tendencies.

Only half of their number return for lunch; the brothers are not accompanying the psions despite the four being nigh-inseparable throughout the journey to Jace's Stanchion. Syonne and Bertrand both are talking about settling down in Jace's Stanchion, mentioning that it seems like a wonderful place to settle down and raise children. When prompted with questions, the remaining mercenaries look strangely at their interrogators, oblivious to the fact that that they had traveling companions or that Jace's Stanchion is anything less than idyllic. Arguing will only drive the pair away from speaking with the party further as their psionic conditioning causes them to ostracize themselves further.

If queried as to their whereabouts this morning, they merely state that they were browsing the town,

but cannot be more specific than that. If asked specifically about visits to any given location, they cannot remember if they have been there. Inquiries trying to follow their trail reveal that they visited the mines (with a DC 16 Diplomacy check). Alternatively, their path can be followed with a DC 16 Survival check.

If the PCs can follow the trail of the adventurers or successfully question the town about their movements award them experience as if they'd completed a CR 2 encounter.

Event 2—A Tale of Three Widows

STONE TOWER TAILORS

Run by three generations of Belamy women—Margerite, Beranice and Trixie—this seamstress trio handles the town's sewing and leatherworking needs. Widowed through abandonment, all three women harbor a deep distrust of men and gaining information from them will be difficult without a female mediator.

Margerite is a striking woman of seventy, her clear eyes and silver hair showing that she still has plenty to offer the small town. She lets her daughter and granddaughter do most of the talking in the small shop, but is willing to chime in when she thinks they're "telling it wrong" or "skipping the best part".

Beranice is the main proprietor of the shop, a stout woman in her mid-forties with cold grey eyes and black hair just starting to grey. She is slow to joke with anyone about her business or the town, preferring to "get to the point" and "not waste time jawing when there's work to be done".

Trixie is the youngest of the three, having just passed her twenty-second birthday, though her sad eyes and a streak of grey hair make her look older than she is. She chews her lip as she talks to strangers, obviously uncomfortable with "telling family secrets" or "going behind ma's back" if she is cornered with questions, especially those that Beranice wouldn't answer.

The Stone Tower Tailors believe that they export much of their work due to its incredible tensile strength, something they attribute to a secret family process that instills the very fabric with the strength of stone. Their most exported item is a 100' cloth rope that weighs 5 lbs, has 20 hit points and can't be burst with less than a DC 30 Strength check. These can be purchased here in town for 75 gp, but only if the ladies are made friendly.

A DC 12 Knowledge (psionics) check will reveal that subtle psionics were used in all manufactured goods

in the shop—too subtle to be revealed by a *detect psionics* power without a DC 20 Spellcraft check. While most of the clothing sold here would be impractical for adventuring, they do sell a variety of fine heavy cloaks and a wine-colored robe that functions as masterwork padded armor. Men are charged 50% more than women on all items—the cost difference is described as “tailoring fees” as the women claim that the robes are easier to fit to a female frame.

The women begin with a reaction of unfriendly to men and indifferent to women. A successful Diplomacy check made to raise the women’s reaction to friendly will open up the opportunity to learn about the perceived abandonment of the three women. When the women are convinced to talk to the party, they each tell a story of how they were left by their respective husbands. A DC 15 Sense Motive check used during this conversation will reveal that the women’s anger towards men seems forced, but the sincerity in their eyes conflicts that message. All three women will reveal that they cannot understand why their men left as their lives were quite happy immediately beforehand.

Backstory: Each of the three women had their spouses removed over time and placed within the warding pillars. Margerite’s husband was taken some 30 years ago; Beranice’s husband was taken 20 years ago, when Trixie was still young. The most recent of these, Trixie’s newly betrothed Cyrril, was taken mere months ago and the man may still be retrievable if the party acts fast.

In addition, the ropes that they take pride in exporting are actually used to secure victims within the columns. They are used primarily because they will not rot and the actual process of weaving the

ropes draws on an old psionic ritual that reinforces the memory modification process within the town. Each of the women has learned the secret of the ropes over the years, but each has been made to forget key specifics regarding the process to better preserve the secret.

Although their memories have been stolen from the women, they know in the recesses of their hearts that their handiwork played a part in their loved one’s demise. While it is not possible to restore that memory in this stage of the adventure, it is important to understand that the bitterness that fuels this family’s distraction, and also enables the life at Jace’s Stanchion to continue.

Forcing the women to consider the oddness of their plight and question the sorrow of lost love they feel behind that bitterness will reward the PCs experience points as if they’d completed a CR 3 encounter.

Event 3—Stonecutter’s Dilemma

TWIN MILLS MASONRY

This shop is run by a father and son team who produce much of the stonework here in town. The elder stonecutter, Gregor, is a solidly built man in his late fifties; years of hard work have left him as solid as the stone he shapes. His thick beard and hair are still a vibrant red, a few strands of silver just creeping into his mustache. Falnor looks much like his father, though he is slighter of build and grey has not yet touched his hair. Gregor does most of the rough quarry work, cutting larger stones down into more manageable pieces as well as cutting stone for brick and tile work. Falnor is a specialist in decorative pieces, focusing intently on fine sculpture



Beranice



Margerite



Trixie

THE OPENED MIND

work and other intricate details. One of their main tasks in town is to craft the shingles that adorn the buildings, replacing them as they wear over time. More importantly, though less well known, they also manufacture the hollow pillars that reinforce the ectoplasmic wall. This takes a coordinated effort from both men, a task they seem to secretly relish despite their outward hostility. It is most likely one of these pillars they are working on when the PCs arrive.

Gregor and Falnor can be heard before they are seen; the pair loudly arguing over some petty and baseless matter as they work. It is obvious that there is a rift between them, though it is rare for them to share the source of this disagreement with others. It is far more likely that one of the two, likely Gregor, will let something slip like “what would your mother say if she saw this sloppy work” or “mind your manners, boy, you were raised better”.

These arguments are fueled by the disappearance of Gregor’s wife, Sissel, who ran off with a guard from one of the caravans that visited Jace’s Stanchion a few years ago. Since this disappearance, the family has been fractured as both men blame the other for her departure.

A DC 18 Perception check made in the shop will show a glimmer of something metal in between the rapidly moving waterwheels that power the stone grinding tools. The paddles that intermesh here have buried something into the rock silt. Retrieving the item proves to be a surprisingly challenging ordeal. A DC 18 Acrobatics check will allow a character to ride the water wheel safely down to the glimmer. A DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) check will allow

a character to see that there is a missing paddle in the water wheel, granting a +4 circumstance bonus on the Acrobatics check. A DC 10 Swim check allows the character to make it down to the gleaming object. Once the item in question is retrieved, it is simple to see that it is a wedding ring, still lodged on a finger bone. If a character spends another few rounds searching the silt, it will turn up the near complete remains of a human, long since decayed in the bed of the river.

At the sight of the ring (or the bones), both men break down. If questioned about the ring, neither man can say where it came from or why it has such an effect on them. A DC 20 Knowledge (psionics) check will determine that the men have clearly had their memories tampered with.

Backstory: The bones belong to Sissel, who was killed when soldiers from House Duarran attempted to capture her. Her family defended her, but their memories have been altered and they believe that she ran away with a caravan guard.

While it will not be possible to restore their memory at this time, a partial story of her demise can be pieced together by astute PCs with these simple clues. This is the one of the many reasons that Stanchion’s inhabitants bear an unknown sorrow: while their memories were stolen, their pain remains and cannot be healed until that fact is understood.

Award the PCs experience as if they’d completed a CR 4 encounter if they deduce the secret story of the Foundry.



Gregor



Falnor

CHAPTER 2

THE BASALT MINES

Eventually, the PCs should want to investigate the mines. Strangely, the mines on the outskirts of town don't seem to be active anytime the player characters visit. The mining camp is well-inhabited, with plenty of miners whiling the time away playing cards or throwing dice. If any of the workers are questioned, they shrug and say that the work comes and goes and they are sure they will be back to work within the week. They seem listless and continually distracted; their minds have been perpetually rewritten with psionic powers and are little better than puppets at this point.

1. Mine Entrance (CR 1)

The entrance to the basalt mines is blocked by a massive iron-wrought gate. A crude chain and padlock are wrapped around the bars, preventing easy access.

During the day a pair of guards watches from just outside the gates to the mine. The rust color of their tunics marks them as soldiers of House Duarran. They are alert and constantly grinning as if a hidden joke has been shared between them when the PCs approach.

Halek and Sventa are the nephew and niece of Odafin Duarran and their resemblance marks them as siblings. Like most of the folk in their family, they are shaven of pate and face but tell-tale signs of ginger hair can be seen on the lazy, growing stubble of Halek's chin. They are initially unfriendly in attitude.



Sventa



Halek

The guards will rudely tell the players that the mine is closed and for their own safety they cannot be allowed entry. While the guards are tight-lipped and won't reveal anything, a careful eye will reveal much. A DC 15 Perception or Survival check will reveal that other than the odd footprints easily explained by the casual pacing of the guards, there has been no real activity here in months. There are no signs of heavy stone being dragged from the entrance and no wagon ruts from carts laden with stone.

Conversation with the guards can reveal much. A DC 12 Sense Motive check shows that the pair seems more interested in keeping people away from the mines to hide something, rather than to protect them. A DC 14 Sense Motive check reveals that the guards here are much more lucid than most people in the village—they bear none of the detached demeanor so common in Jace's Stanchion. If the players are following the trail of the missing caravan guards, Halek and Sventa both will claim that no one has come or gone from the mines as they are closed (a lie detectable with a DC 16 Sense Motive check). Both siblings are extremely racist and will pepper their answers with derogatory slang against non-humans. Their contempt is obvious for the players, regardless of race, and while they seem interested in thrashing the visitors, they will not engage in combat unless forced. If forced into combat, the guards will swear often and respond with only nonlethal damage, while the miners nearby will blithely ignore the combat in a psionically induced daze. The pair is rather lax in their duties and a cunning party can bribe the guards with 75 GP a piece if they are made indifferent or attempt a Bluff check against a DC of 20. The mine gates are locked with a simple lock and chain (Disable Device DC 14).

HALEK AND SVENTA

HOUSE DUARRAN GUARD (2) CR 1/3

XP 135 each

Male and female human warrior 1

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; **Senses** Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +2 shield)

hp 6 (1d10+1)

Fort +3, **Ref** +0, **Will** +0

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee sap +3 (1d6+1 nonlethal) or short sword +2 (1d6+1, 19-20/×2)

Ranged light crossbow +1 (1d8, 19-20/×2)

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 11, **Con** 12, **Int** 9, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 12

Feats Alertness, Weapon Focus (sap)

Skills Perception +3, Sense Motive +3

Languages Common

Gear sap, short sword, light crossbow, 20 bolts, scale mail, heavy wooden shield, 10 gp

There are a number of items of interest on the scene; if the guards are removed or have their Perception checks beaten by a player's Sleight of Hand check then items can be taken. The miners completely ignore any activity of any kind by the players unless addressed directly. Acquiring any item immediately agitates the mine guards, dropping their attitude by two levels unless the item is immediately replaced. This shift will start combat if the players haven't improved Halek and/or Sventa's initial attitude.

The possible items the players can take include 6 *Zerathi chisels* (page 19) and 3 *Zerathi picks* (page 19), as well as a dorjes of *detect psionics* (27 charges), and a power stone of *sensitivity to psychic impressions*. The *Zerathi picks* are larger than the other items, and should give the guards a +3 circumstance bonus to Perception if a player attempts to steal one unnoticed, barring clever manoeuvring on the PC's part. There is also a mining cart containing approximately 400 lbs of phrenoric ore, but players can remove no more than 1 lb of material per Sleight of Hand check made.

The mines beyond the gates are well-maintained and expertly excavated. Wooden beams reinforce the tunnels every 5-10 feet. There are no light sources within the mines, though a full lantern sits near the

main gates. The humidity is quite high in the caverns and the odd pool of clean water dots the corridor floor. Despite the humidity, the temperature is unnaturally even and pleasant in all of the tunnels – characters who prefer cool environments believe it to be cool and refreshing, while characters looking for warmth will feel it most comfortably.

If players wish to acquire phrenoric ore through honest means, they may make attempt to quarry phrenoric ore throughout the mines. All of the easily available phrenoric ore has been mined; as a result, players must make Profession (mining) checks using the standard rules for Profession. Each check will require one week of work to produce any meaningful amount of material; should a player have the time in-game to make such a check, they are able to produce 1 lb of phrenoric ore per gold piece earned on their Profession (mining) check. The amount of time it takes is likely prohibitive given the current state of events in the adventure, but advise players of this if they ask.

2. Branching Tunnels (CR 1)

The passage here splits into two exploratory tunnels. Fragments of a marble-like substance still occasionally dot the hewn stone walls.

The north branch of this tunnel shows less signs of the marble that made the mines so famous. The northern tunnel itself ends a few yards past area 4 as the miners lost interest and followed the other path that led to better riches. A DC 15 Survival checks shows signs of recent activity down this passage.

The west branch leads to the main mines and has been trapped as it leads into area 3 with a simple glyph that sets off an alarm which emits a piercing shriek that stuns intruders and summons the monsters from area 3. The hanoshafyr themselves avoid triggering the trap by whistling a simple signal that allows them to bypass it.

TRAP: SHRIEKING ALARM

CR 1

XP 400

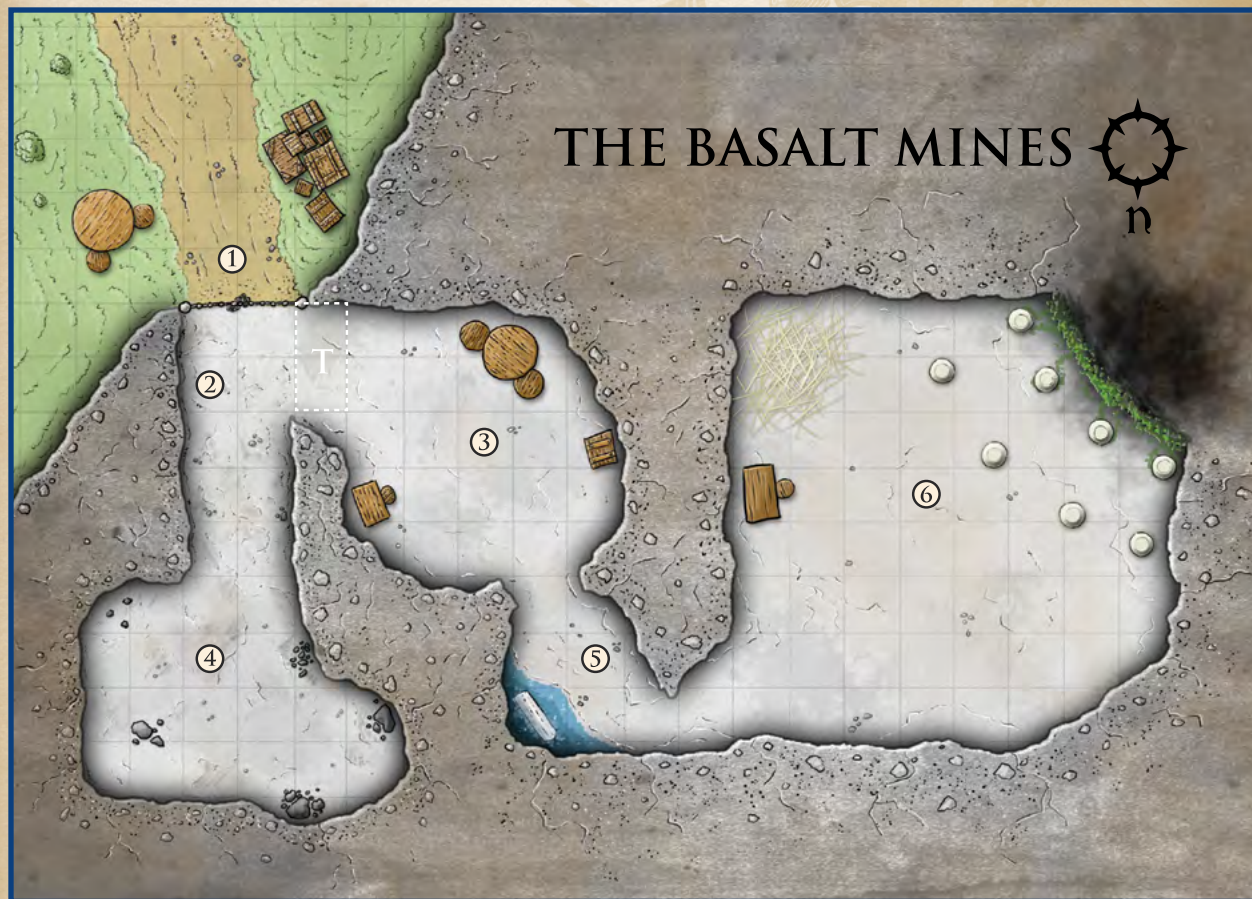
Type: Psionic; Perception 18; Disable Device 18

Effects

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect Stun for 1 round (DC 14 Will negates);

multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft. burst) and emits a noise loud enough to be heard within 150 feet. This can be heard outside at entrance of the mine due to echoes.



3. Guard Chamber (CR 3)

This large chamber shows signs of habitation, though the furnishings are crude at best.

This room is surprisingly clean despite being inhabited by what appear to be savage creatures. This is due to the use of a psionic item for sustenance, rather than traditional food and water.

Monsters: 2 hanoshafyr (hp 13; pg. 18) inhabit this chamber. They are fed via a *repletion goblet* given to them by House Duarran (which is in area 6). They attack anyone not bearing an obvious emblem of House Duarran, fighting such intruders to the death. If the player characters happen to have such an emblem, the creatures simply kneel and bow their heads as they pass.

4. Signs of Struggle

Muddy footprints show that someone has been active recently in this small chamber. The walls bear signs of exploratory mining.

When the original miners realized a viable phrenoric ore vein did not continue down this path, they soon gave up digging this way. The tunnel is still well kept and used as a storage area for scrap lumber, nails, and other items needed to reinforce new tunnels.

This is where the other companions that accompanied the PCs were exploring before they were subdued and kidnapped by House Duarran (See Event 1). A DC 12 Survival or Perception check turns up signs of a struggle and distinct prints from at least 4 different people; exceeding the DC by 4 or more reveals monstrous footprints in addition to the boots of humans. These can easily be confirmed to belong to the hanoshafyr, if the PCs make a DC 16 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check. The missing companions are being held at House Duarran, and the players will make any future rescue attempts at that location. There is no evidence at this location that suggests

where the losers of the struggle here ended up, however, and so players should be encouraged to do further investigation for clues.

XP Award: If the PCs can figure out what transpired here, award them experience as though they overcame a CR 1 encounter.

Treasure: A DC 18 Perception check turns up a masterwork dagger that had been kicked under a nearby pile of rubble. The blade can be easily recognized as having belonged to Simon, one of the missing caravan guards.

5. New Arrival

A strange cylinder of hewn phrenoric ore lies in a pool of water here. Thick footprints surround it, but there is no sign of the creatures that may have left the tracks.

This obelisk was to have been delivered by the hanoshafyr to reinforce the gate but the leaking energies drove them mad before they could place it. Whatever force drove the hanoshafyr mad is no longer present in this area. A DC 14 Perception check reveals that the column is hollow, though not empty. This column can be destroyed with a DC 18 Strength check. It has a hardness of 9 and 40 hit points, being two inches thick. A player attempting to break this stanchion with a *Zerathi pick* or *Zerathi chisel* gains a +2 circumstance bonus in addition to any and all other modifiers. It has been freshly made, with little standing dust asides from the mud caked on the side lying in the pool, and bears an engraving in Common indicating it was produced at Twin Mills Masonry. If the players return to the stoneworkers with questions, the father and son team will be unable to answer questions regarding the pillar due to a psionic block placed by the Duarrans. However, they will recommend that if the players really want to know what's inside, they can just break the pillar open; the Sturgis clan doesn't care what happens to the pillars once they're inside the mine since they never see the stanchions again.

Development: If the players destroy the stanchion, they discover the unconscious body of Cyrril Ambrose, husband of Trixie Belamy (see Event 2, pg 6). He is not dead, though he will need immediate attention if he is to survive; a Heal check (DC 16) or any effect that restores HP will suffice. Cyrril is also starving, but unless players leave him to die, he'll survive. He has been bound by ropes that were crafted by his own wife, a fact he knows but is reluctant to discuss. His memory is still intact and he can explain that he was

subdued by thugs from House Duarran and placed here, though he does not know why.

XP Award: If the PCs free Cyrril, award them experience as if they'd completed a CR 2 encounter. If they bring him back to Trixie, this will trigger a mental breakdown amongst the Belamy women as they try to reconcile reality with their psionically altered memories. Players who attempt to help the family make sense of the situation after bringing Cyrril home gain additional experience as if they'd completed an additional CR 2 encounter, regardless of how it turns out. In this case, it is the thought that counts.

6. The Oblation (CR 4)

A wall of ectoplasm blocks any further progress into the mines. Waves of green slime are pressed against the ectoplasm, blocking further sight into the mines. A series of phrenoric ore columns stand guard in rows, with the encroaching slime seeming to slowly reach out, threatening to engulf them. To the northwest, a crude nest has been made out of straw, while a small desk and chair sit nearby with some scattered papers laying upon the surface of the desk. Just as you finish taking in the room, three of the antelope-headed creatures attack.

This is the ectoplasmic wall put in place by Jace all those years ago. The pillars have done a stellar job of reinforcing the barrier until recently. Whatever the menace is that the wall has been holding back has been eroding it away from the far side, a fact that can be revealed by a DC 20 Knowledge (Psionics) check. This check will also reveal the ties between the stanchions and the Oblation. Whatever is leaking through the weakening wall has driven the hanoshafyr here mad.

If any of the stanchions are examined in detail (especially if the PCs also have access to the example in area 5), a DC 15 Knowledge (psionics) reveals their dark nature. It becomes obvious that the item feeds off the latent psionic energy of those trapped within and siphons that energy into the Oblation. Unfortunately, the majority of the trapped psionic individuals are beyond saving at this point; they have been attached to the stanchions for far too long. They can be broken into in the same ways as the stanchion in **Area 5**, but their occupants expire immediately after being freed. As the players are not likely to have the ability to raise the dead at this point, describe how peaceful the freed psionic individuals appear as they are released from their imprisonment.

More important is the fact that breaking any

CHAPTER 3

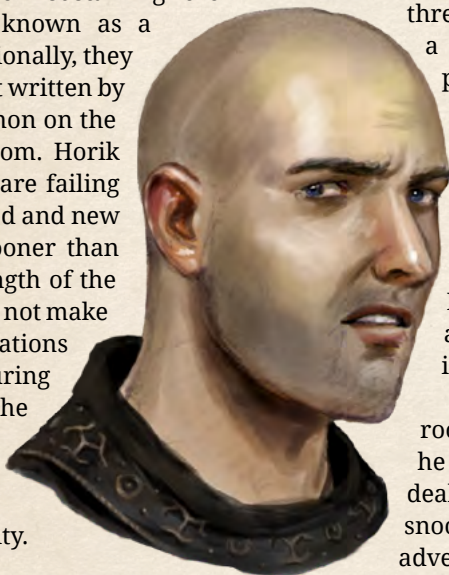
HOUSE DUARRAN

of the stanchions in this room will weaken the ectoplasmic barrier (unlike the stanchion in *Area 5*, which was not yet connected to the barrier). The slime will rage fiercely if the players strike any of the stanchions, threatening to encroach the room. For each stanchion the players break, move the wall of slime 5 feet further into the room. This act needs to be immediately and obviously detrimental to the players, as they are weakening the shackles that bind an evil far beyond their current strength.

Monsters: Three enraged hanoshafyr (hp 13; pg. 18) attack as the PCs enter this room.

Hazard: Any psionic character must make a DC 12 Will save or be sickened as long as they remain in the room. Any character that fails complains of a faint buzzing sound from behind the ectoplasmic wall, a side-effect of the failing Oblation.

Treasure: A DC 15 Perception check will turn up the device that has been sustaining the hanoshafyr—a simple item known as a *repletion goblet* (pg. 19.) Additionally, they will find an observation report written by a one Horik Duarran in Common on the stanchions present in this room. Horik indicates that the stanchions are failing faster than previously expected and new sacrifices will be required sooner than expected to increase the strength of the Oblation. Although Horik does not make any immediate recommendations on how to go about capturing able psionic individuals, he does suggest that the heads of House Duarran be less discriminating and focus instead on quantity over quality.



Horik Duarran

The party will likely eventually make their way to House Duarran to confront the ruling house about the inconsistencies in the town. There are number of ways that players can go about this; feel free to allow the players some creativity in their approach. Since Odafin is away from Jace's Stanchion at this time, the guard patrols are light and no hanoshafyr are present within the house itself. If players try to sneak into the area, have them make contested rolls against the two guards that are on duty (use the mine guard statistics in *Area 1*, pg 9).

Once inside, sneaky players can search with relative impunity as the guards do not notice activity inside the house due to psionic dampening. The house has three bedrooms, a main room, a kitchen, a study, and a private drawing room. If players look for valuables within the house, a successful DC 18 Perception check finds a small cache of valuables worth 250 gp, but nothing of significant value is prominently displayed. The house does not seem to contain any documents that might be used against House Duarran for their actions, as anything of that nature is locked away in the private drawing room.

Horik himself is in the private drawing room and does not patrol the house as he is busy trying to determine how to deal with the caravan guards he captured snooping around the mines earlier in the adventure (see Event 1 on page 4 and *Area 4* on page 11 for details). If the players open the door to the study, he is surprised but conducts himself in a business-like (although agitated) manner. The private study is a 10' by 10' room with only a small desk in the corner and bookshelves along the walls.

If the players choose to confront House Duarran directly, the gate guards will inform the players that Odafin is away from Jace's Stanchion on business. His nephew, Horik, has been left here in his stead, and the guards will quickly admit the players if they indicate that they are happy to speak to him for any reason. Players may be surprised at how easy this seems, but the guards are not interested in trouble and know that Horik can handle himself. The young noble has no idea how to handle the situation, but has enough common sense to bring the PCs into a private drawing room to talk.

THE OPENED MIND

Horik is a brutish, bald-headed man that seems to be rather enamored of a stout war hammer at his waist. His hands drift to the weapon perpetually as he talks. He is quick to explain with confidence exactly what has been going on in Jace's Stanchion, especially if the players present the report found in Area 6 (page 12) of the mines, assuming that his family will come soon enough to his rescue and deal with the interlopers, erasing any memories of things he might tell them. So long as the players do not accuse House Duarran of anything unseemly, he handles with them as he would a potential client. Horik has no plan to make a deal with the players, however; he only wants to figure out how he can delay and/or capture the players and subsequently squash any problems they have uncovered.

If the PCs make any accusations against the skittish young man, he immediately flies into a rage and demands that they leave. If the party does not immediately comply, he summons his aegis armor and attacks. It is very likely that he will become agitated if the party makes any kind of connection between the memory modifications in town and House Duarran. Three rounds after combat begins, a pair of House Duarran guards (see mines, Area 1) arrives to try to end the battle.

HORIK DUARRAN

CR 3

XP 800

Human aegis 3

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge)

Hp 28 (3d10+9)

Fort +5, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities form astral suit; **DR** 2/—; **Resist** fire 5

OFFENSE

Speed 25 ft.

Melee masterwork war hammer +9 (1d8+9/x3)

TACTICS

Before Combat When Horik senses things are bad, he draws his war hammer and manifests his astral armor.

During Combat Horik swings his hammer in both hands and uses Power Attack to put down foes as quickly as possible.

Morale Horik may not be bright, but he is not suicidal. He will surrender (dismissing his astral armor) if reduced below 10 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 18

Feats Dodge, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (war hammer)

Skills Acrobatics +2, Autohypnosis +6, Craft (armor) +0, Knowledge (engineering) +7, Sense Motive +3, Spellcraft +7, Swim +4

Languages Common, shafyr

SQ astral repair, customization points (5; energy resistance (fire), psionic attacks, push, speed, stalwart), invigorating suit, reconfigure, wealthy

Gear masterwork war hammer, *boots of stomping*, *crawling tattoo of concussion* (2), *lesser psionic restraints*, *dorjes of entangling ectoplasm* (46 charges), 200 gp.

Normal the above abilities reflect Horik with his aegis armor activated and using Power Attack.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Astral Armor: As a move action, Horik can construct a set of astral armor that functions as masterwork chainmail. At the beginning of this encounter he has likely already done so.

Astral Repair (Ps) Restore 2 points to damaged item touched.

Brawn Horik gains a +2 enhancement bonus to Strength while he is wearing his astral armor. This is already factored into his given statistics.

Improved Damage Horik deals an additional 3 points of damage with his war hammer while his astral armor is active.

Invigorating Suit (Su) Horik gains a +4 psionic bonus to the following checks and saves while his astral armor is active: Swim checks made to resist nonlethal damage from exhaustion; Constitution checks made to continue running; Constitution checks made to avoid nonlethal damage from a forced march; Constitution checks made to hold breath; Constitution checks made to avoid nonlethal damage from starvation or thirst; Fortitude saves made to avoid nonlethal damage from hot or cold environments; and Fortitude saves made to resist damage from suffocation.

Psionic Attacks Horik's attacks are considered magic while wearing astral armor. He also treats any weapon wielded as a masterwork weapon if it is not already.

Push: Horik can push creatures away with a successful attack. Whenever he makes a

successful melee attack, he can attempt a free combat maneuver check. If successful, the target of the attack is pushed 5 feet directly away from him.

This ability only works on creatures of a size equal to or smaller than Horik. Creatures pushed in this way do not provoke attacks of opportunity. If there is insufficient room for the target to be pushed away, the attempt automatically fails.

Speed Horik's base land speed is increased by 5 feet while his astral armor is active.

Stalwart: As long as Horik is wearing the astral armor, he ignores partial effects when he makes a successful Fortitude or Will saving throw.

Wealthy: Horik has far more resources than a creature of his level normally possesses, and his CR is raised by 1 to account for it.

After the combat, Horik will capitulate to any demands that the players make of him (assuming he survived). He fully expects that his family will bail him out of any trouble he's gotten into ("You don't know who you're messing with!"). Players who wish to rescue the kidnapped caravan guards can find a key in Horik's top-left desk drawer. This key unlocks a back closet accessible from the drawing room that Horik brought them to, and both of the caravan guards are unconscious inside. Once the players successfully exit House Duarran the adventure is concluded.

AFTER THE ADVENTURE

This adventure is designed as a spring board for a psionic campaign. How the party approaches House Duarran will influence how they are regarded in Jace's Stanchion for the immediate future. If they had a hostile (or even violent) encounter with Horik Duarran, they are unlikely to be able to convince the rest of House Duarran of their good intentions. When Odafin returns he is infuriated by the transgression and immediately seeks to punish the intruders. He will seek to make the lives of the PCs incredibly difficult if they remain in Jace's Stanchion and especially painful if they try to unravel the plot that he has masterminded.

The townsfolk may be more receptive to the players, especially if they have uncovered the secret of the Twin Mills Foundry or rescued Cyrril from his psionic prison. A revolution could easily see House Duarran deposed, though if the supply of fresh psionic creatures is cut off, Jace's Stanchion will once again

have to deal with the original evil that Jace Meldarion raised the Oblation to deal with in the first place.

POSSIBLE CONTINUATIONS

1. The phrenoric ore mine would be quite viable if it weren't for the eldritch horror bubbling up from the depths; there is approximately 7000 gp worth of phrenoric ore available in the currently accessible veins. Odafin is aware of the dwindling supply, but lacks the power necessary to extend the ectoplasmic barrier further into the mines. Perhaps Odafin has left to recruit adventurers, buy weapons, and otherwise garrison Jace's Stanchion in preparation for a push into the darkness? In this case, players may find themselves allying with the lesser of two evils in an attempt to clean up the mines.

2. A lone and decrepit hanoshafyr approaches the players, begging them to release his comrades from the grip of House Duarran. He explains the weakness of the hanoshafyr people, and offers the player what's left of his life if they will break House Duarran. This requires killing not just Odafin, but every living member of the Duarran family! Furthermore, the enslaved hanoshafyr must spend time away from psionics in order to reclaim their sanity. This will require the players to build some kind of pen or prison to keep the newly freed hanoshafyr from going on a masterless rampage. Woe to any players who think they can lock the crazed hanoshafyr in the mines however, for the evil within is more than happy to gain pliable slaves...

3. As an extremely small and insular community, Jace's Stanchion is always looking for new blood to help bolster the population. If the players are unable to reunite Trixie and Cyrril, she will definitely be looking for a new husband once her mourning is complete. This presents an opportunity for romance should players be interested in roleplaying that experience. Players may also attempt to woo members of House Duarran in an attempt to gain power in the community. This particular adventure continuation is also something to consider if players want to claim the community as their own. In fact...

4. With Odafin out, shrewd players may note that the town is lightly defended. Not including Horik or the Guardmaster, there are only 12 total defenders in the town at the start of the adventure. Players who dispatch these individuals have the village at their mercy; all of the remaining inhabitants have various degrees of psionically induced fugue and are easily manipulated. If the players secure Jace's Stanchion, Odafin may have a nasty surprise waiting once he returns...

GAZETTEER

JACE'S STANCHION

Perched atop a butte at the heart of a wild patch of swamp land, a wide switch-backed path winds its way to the sleepy mining town.

JACE'S STANCHION

LN village

Corruption -5; **Crime** -2; **Economy** -1; **Law** +2;

Lore +0; **Society** -3

Qualities insular, superstitious

Danger +0; **Disadvantages** cursed

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government autocracy

Population 70 (63 humans, 6 dromites, 1 half-elf)

NOTABLE NPCs

Lord Odafin Duarran (LE male human psion 6)

Guardmaster Enriech Sort (LN male human psychic warrior 3)

Sister Simene (N female human vitalist 2)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 500 gp; Purchase Limit 2,500 gp;

Manifesting 1st

Minor Items 2d4 + 10 *Zerathi chisels*, 6 *Zerathi picks*;

Medium Items 1d4; Major Items —

LOCATIONS

1. The Absent Eidolon: A silhouette of a bizarre monster marks the sign out front of this tavern. It is run by Berian Delarme, his wife Delia and his daughter Adele. Berian runs the bar, Delia cooks and Adele acts as the lone serving girl. The common room doubles as a makeshift boarding house, though the two-story wooden building is a far cry from a true inn. The second floor has a pair of bedrooms, one is for Berian and Delia, and the other is for Adele. Adele's room is occasionally rented out to wealthy visitors at three times the normal rate, forcing the girl to spend the night in her parents' room.

2. Stone Tower Tailors: This single-story building houses three generations of Belamy women, each one a widow through abandonment. They weave and sew, creating much of the clothing in Jace's Stanchion, and have a specialty product known as Belamy Rope. This is a 100 foot cloth rope that has 20 hit points and requires a DC 30 strength check to break. A Belamy Rope costs 75 gp. They sell mostly

clothing impractical to adventurers, though they do have a sturdy set of masterwork padded armor. They begin with an unfriendly attitude toward men and an indifferent attitude toward women. This extends to a +50% premium on their prices for any male character who fails to make them at least friendly.

3. Twin Mills Masonry: Gregor Sturgis and his son Falnor run this foundry, which is responsible for most of the stonework in town. A large paddlewheel powers their machinery. Some jewellery and statuary is available here, plus construction materials. Players can acquire various tools and building supplies at this location, as well as purchase *Zerathi chisels* and *Zerathi picks* (see page 19). Gregor is a massive man, specializing in stonemasonry for architecture, while Falnor is a skilled stonecarver and gem cutter. They often squabble over which task is more important, though a DC 15 Sense Motive check is enough to see this tension runs deeper than simple work.

4. Basalt Mines: These mines are the source of the psionic phrenoric ore and House Duarran's prosperity. They are guarded day and night, usually by a pair of House Duarran guards. This is also the site of the Oblation.

If players wish to acquire phrenoric ore through honest means, they may make attempt to quarry phrenoric ore throughout the mines once they have acquired House Duarran's blessing (or eliminated the House altogether). All of the easily available phrenoric ore has been mined; as a result, players must make Profession (mining) checks using the standard rules for the Profession skill. Each check will require one week of work to produce any meaningful amount of material; should a player have the time in-game to make such a check, they are able to produce 1 lb of phrenoric ore per gold piece earned on their Profession (mining) check. Players attempting this check unskilled can only acquire 1 lb of phrenoric ore per week, no matter how well they roll.

5. House Duarran: This large manor house and surrounding estates are the home of the ruling family of Jace's Stanchion. At any time there are half a dozen guards patrolling the grounds and a pair of guards stationed at the gate. Most of the time visitors are declined; the players get an exception as part of the adventure's events.

6. General Store: This simple, large building has a front room that serves as a storefront and a small office in the rear. Most supplies for travel or mining are readily available, though in limited quantities. Food is mostly non-perishable-smoked meats, pickled vegetables and hard breads are common. Fresh meats and produce fetch prices 3-5

times what is normally listed as the surrounding swamplands are not conducive to traditional farming techniques. A particularly skilled naturalist can sell foraged goods at the list price instead of cost, and business opportunities exist here for anyone who can grow fresh produce cheaply in the uncooperative swamplands.

7. Simene's Clinic: This small building stands empty most of the time. It is tended by Sister Simene, a quiet reserved woman who seldom speaks. It is occasionally used as a meeting hall, a wedding chapel and a funeral home. There is considerable iconography in the clinic, though it does not seem to be consecrated to any god in particular. The lack of divine worshippers in the area has not gone unnoticed by House Duarran however, and they monitor the clinic when outsiders visit in order to better manipulate current and future visitors.

8. Town Square/Market: This square is dominated by a fine marble statue of Jace Meldarion. A scattered few wagons and market stalls sell semi-exotic cloth, fresh fruit and other rare commodities for the community. Most of the stalls charge 200-300% of the listed price for their wares. Almost all of the magic/

psionic items that are for sale in the community are found here, with the exception of the *Zerathi picks* and *Zerathic chisels* at Twin Mills Masonry.

9. The Colony: A small family of Glimmer caste dromites led by their patron Nisk Stone run a small indoor garden, cultivating rare plants using their psionic powers. They occasionally find themselves at odds with House Duarran and their human-centric views, but so far Nisk has kept his clan out of trouble. This is by far the best source of vegetables, spell components, and various other sundry goods in Jace's Stanchion, if you can persuade the insular creatures to trade. Although initially unfriendly, the dromites will shift their attitude to friendly if they are given an artistic performance or craft (DC 18 Craft or Perform skill check of the player's choice), and happily offer instruments or materials for a single attempt if the players wish to entertain the Colony. They have the least exposure to outsiders, tending to reside within the walls of their home, and as such have received the least amount of psionic memory modification of all the residents of Jace's Stanchion.



BESTIARY

HANOSHAFYR

This antelope-headed humanoid holds a club in both hands. It stamps its feet against the ground in eager anticipation of violence, and a glowing symbol blazes on its chest.

HANOSHAFYR

CR 1

XP 400

LN Medium monstrous humanoid (psionic)

Init +2; **Senses** *detect psionics*, darkvision; **Perception** +4

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 13 (2d10+2)

For +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities ferocity

Weaknesses psionically impressionable

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee club +4 (1d6+2) and gore -1 (1d6+2)

Special Attacks gore

Psi-Like Abilities (CL 1st; concentration +2)

Constant—*detect psionics*

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 8, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4 (+6 bull rush); **CMD** 16

Feats Improved Bull Rush

Skills Intimidate +8, Survival +5, Climb +6, Stealth +6,

Perception +4, Swim +6; **Racial Bonus** +4 Intimidate

Languages Shafyr

Gear club

ECOLOGY

Environment Any swamp

Organization Solitary, Pair or Herd (3-20)

Treasure Standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Duarran Brand (Ps) The glowing glyph on the chest of a hanoshafyr grants them their *detect psionics* psi-like ability, makes them completely subservient to anyone openly wearing a symbol of House Duarran and gives them a psionic power point reserve of 1 PP (allowing them to use psionic focus and other devices that require power points).

Psionically Impressionable (Su) A hanoshafyr who fails a save against a psionic effect receives an untyped

saving throw penalty against the same effect from the same source by 1 for each failed save. This penalty has no stacking limit, but will decrease at a rate of 1 per month if the hanoshafyr is not subjected to the psionic effect from the same source during the month.

The hanoshafyr are lightly furred monstrous humanoids with the heads of kudu or antelopes. They only have one set of legs, and are thickly muscled creatures. They are easily conditioned by gifted psions to hunt down and capture psionically gifted targets. They possess an innate knowledge of which creatures possess psionic capabilities and track such creatures as directed by their masters.

It is unclear whether the hanoshafyr were an indigenous humanoid race corrupted by House Duarran to do their bidding or if they were bred by the psionic masters of that house. Either way, the hanoshafyr haunt the swamps surrounding Jace's Stanchion and are a key part of the program to upkeep the wards against the evils in the basalt mines.



PSIONIC ITEMS

Presented below are psionic items that are used in this adventure.

BOOTS OF STOMPING

Found in *Ultimate Psionics*

CRAWLING TATTOO OF CONCUSSION

Found in *Ultimate Psionics*

PHRENORIC ORE

HP/inch 20; **Hardness** 9

Cost 1/2 normal; **Weight** 3/4 normal

DESCRIPTION

Phrenoric ore is an uncommon material that has been found in rare abundance within the mines of Jace's Stanchion. Although normally tougher to work than stone and prone to shattering, it responds well to psionic manipulation and becomes more resilient when infused with even the smallest amount of psionic energy. Craft and Spellcraft checks made with phrenoric ore are reduced by 4 if a psionic power or effect is used. This weakness extends to more violent manipulation; the effective hardness of phrenoric ore is reduced by the manifesting level of any psionic power or effect used against it, to a minimum of 0 hardness. Phrenoric items possess the *fragile* quality unless one power point was expended as part of the item's creation; the *fragile* quality can be removed with a DC 16 Skill check appropriate to the item's creation and the expenditure of one power point.

PSIONIC RESTRAINTS, LESSER

See *Ultimate Psionics*

REPLETION GOBLET

Aura faint psychometabolism; **ML** 3rd

Slot —; **Price** 6,000 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This goblet is formed from a basalt-like stone permeated with veins of violet crystal. The bearer can expend 1 PP (or one use per day of a Psi-like ability) in order to sustain his body without the need for food or drink. The *repletion goblet* can be used by any number creatures per day, though each creature must provide its own PPs.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *sustenance*;
Cost 3,000 gp

ZERATHI CHISEL

Aura faint psychometabolism; **ML** 3rd

Slot none; **Price** 552 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

This masterwork chisel is made of psionically reinforced crystal and is named after its creator, the egoist Zerathi. When used as part of a Profession or Craft check against a stone target, this chisel provides an additional +2 psionic bonus to that check in addition to the normal masterwork tool bonus, and the hardness of any stone object this chisel is used against is considered 2 less. If used as an improvised weapon it counts as a magical dagger, but does not confer any other combat benefits.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *hammer*; **Cost** 276 gp

ZERATHI PICK

Aura faint psychometabolism; **ML** 3rd

Slot none; **Price** 554 gp; **Weight** 5 lb.

DESCRIPTION

This masterwork pick is made of psionically reinforced crystal and is named after its creator, the egoist Zerathi. When used as part of a Profession or Craft check against a stone target, this pick provides an additional +2 psionic bonus to that check in addition to the normal masterwork tool bonus, and the hardness of any stone object this pick is used against is considered 2 less. If used as an improvised weapon it counts as a magical heavy pick, but does not confer any other combat benefits. The advantage of a *Zerathi pick* over a *Zerathi chisel* is that it can be wielded with two hands.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *hammer*; **Cost** 277 gp

NEROLI



FEMALE HUMAN CRYPTIC 1
ALIGN LG INIT +2 SPEED 30 ft.

ABILITIES

STR 10
DEX 14
CON 13
INT 16
WIS 12
CHA 10

DEFENSE

HP 10
AC 14
touch 12, flat-footed 12
Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +3
Special Qualities pattern designs, trapfinding, trapmaker

OFFENSE

Melee quarterstaff +0 (1d6)
Ranged disrupt pattern +2 touch (1d6+3)
Base Atk +0; CMB +0; CMD 12
Special Attacks disrupt pattern
Power Point Pool 2
Cryptic Powers Known
(ML 1st; concentration +4)
1st - kinetic legerdemain
0th - detect psionics, ectoplasmic trinket

SKILLS

Acrobatics +6
Appraise +7
Autohypnosis +5
Disable Device +9
Knowledge (psionics) +7
Perception +8
Spellcraft +7
Stealth +6

FEATS

Skill Focus (Perception), Skill Focus (Disable Device), Scribe Tattoo



Combat Gear power stone of chameleon, power stone of locate secret doors; **Other Gear** quarterstaff, leather armor, 45gp

Neroli has a background steeped in mystery; growing up analysing the world around her, each layer observed making way to new layers of secrets. Over time, she learned to manipulate this knowledge and to understand the patterns of the world and, at times, how to unravel those patterns. Neroli adventures to see more of the world and to better understand how the many different patterns within it combine into a greater pattern. It is her belief that by understanding how each pattern joins together that she can best understand her own place within the world.

ARRIS



MALE FORGEBORN SOULKNIFE 1
ALIGN LN INIT +2 SPEED 20 ft.

ABILITIES

STR 16
DEX 14
CON 14
INT 12
WIS 10
CHA 6

DEFENSE

HP 15
AC 17
touch 12, flat-footed 15
Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +2
+2 vs. disease, exhaustion/fatigue effects, fear effects, mind-affecting effects, and poison
Special Qualities half-construct traits, slow and steady, source crystal

OFFENSE

Melee mind blade +4 (2d6+4/19-20) or cold iron dagger +4 (1d4+3/19-20)
Ranged javelin +3 (1d6+3) or cold iron dagger +3 (1d4+3/19-20)
Base Atk +1; CMB +4; CMD 16
Special Attacks form mind blade, shape mind blade, throw mind blade
Power Point Pool 2

SKILLS

Acrobatics +4
Autohypnosis +4
Climb +5
Perception +4
Swim +5

FEATS

Power Attack, Psionic Body, Psionic Talent



Combat Gear cold iron dagger, 3 javelins, 2 thunderstones; **Other Gear** chain shirt, backpack, bedroll, belt pouch, block and tackle, crowbar, explorer's outfit, flint and steel, hammer, hooded lantern, 3 flasks of oil, 50 ft. 3 pitons, hemp rope, shovel, 4 days trail rations, waterskin, whetstone, 2 gp, 7 sp, and 9 cp; **Encumbrance** 48 lbs.

Arris adventures for a number of reasons. First, it allows the chance for combat against a wide variety of creatures, both humanoid and otherwise. Second, he can fight with a group of varied races, learning how each contributes and coordinates with the others. Finally, it allows him the prime opportunity for increased martial ability and mastery of his mind blade. It is the last that Arris truly enjoys. For now, he loyally serves his party with his skill. Eventually, he will return to his own people.

XERDILAC



MALE NORAL VITALIST 1

ALIGN NG INIT -1 SPEED 30 ft.

ABILITIES

STR 12
DEX 8
CON 15
INT 12
WIS 16
CHA 13

DEFENSE

HP 11
AC 12
touch 9, flat-footed 12
Fort +4, Ref -1, Will +5
+2 against disease and mind-affecting effects

Special Qualities
low-light vision, gift of tongues, symbiotic surge 1/day

OFFENSE

Melee spear +1 (1d8+1/x3)
Ranged light crossbow -1 (1d8/19-20)
Base Atk +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 12
Special Attacks disrupt pattern
Power Point Pool 6

Psi-like Abilities

(ML 1st; concentration +4)
1/day - *mind thrust* (DC 12)

Vitalist Method Guardian
Collective 3

Vitalist Powers Known

(ML 1st; concentration +4)
1st - *biofeedback, sense link, suppress compulsion*
0th - *detect psionics, induce pain, toughen*

SKILLS

Autohypnosis +7
Diplomacy +6
Knowledge (local) +5

FEATS

Psionic Talent^B, Toughness



Combat Gear spear, dagger, light crossbow and 10 bolts, 2 flasks of acid; **Other Gear** studded leather armor, backpack, bedroll, scholar's outfit, 5 sunrods, 4 days trail rations, waterskin, wooden holy symbol, and 1 gp

Trained in the revered role of vitalist, Xerdilac is torn between dedication to his people and chafing under the moral strictures of noral society. He believes that, for the greater good, sometimes laws must be bent and exceptions made for circumstances, including the use of coercion and violence in extreme cases. When the opportunity came to go abroad, Xerdilac jumped at the chance. He's thrilled to be able to interact with members of other races, see how they live and rule themselves. The experience he gains will be valuable to him and to the noral community, and he hopes to use the prestige of his adventuring career to secure a place in government, where he can make changes he feels will better the community.

EDRIELLE



FEMALE ELAN PSION 1

ALIGN LG INIT +4 SPEED 30 ft.

ABILITIES

STR 8
DEX 10
CON 14
INT 17
WIS 13
CHA 12

DEFENSE

HP 10
AC 14
touch 10, flat-footed 14
Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +3

Special Qualities
Repletion, resilience, resistance

OFFENSE

Melee dagger -1 (1d4-1/19-20)
Ranged light crossbow +0 (1d8/19-20)
Base Atk +0; **CMB** -1; **CMD** 9
Power Pool 4

Telepath Powers Known

(ML 1st; concentration +4)
1st - *ectoplasmic sheen, empathic connection* (DC 14), *mind thrust* (DC 14)
0th - *detect psionics, lesser fortify, missive, my light*

SKILLS

Diplomacy +5
Knowledge (psionics) +7
Perception +2
Sense Motive +5
Spellcraft +7

FEATS

Improved Initiative, Psionic Talent^B, Scribe Scroll



Combat Gear dagger, light crossbow and 10 bolts, *power stone of force screen, power stone of float*; **Other Gear** chain shirt, backpack, bedroll, belt pouch, explorer's outfit, flint and steel, 4 days trail rations, waterskin, 2 gp, 7 sp

Edrielle focused her psionic studies in the field of telepathy, learning how different individuals interact and to alter perceptions and moods to try to minimize conflicts. Her abilities allow her to convince a complete stranger that she is a trustworthy ally, using diplomacy and telepathic manipulation to achieve her goals, preferably without any bloodshed.

THE OPENED MIND

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