

The Murder of the Seven Points

by Erik Yaple

The sun hangs low over the gentle hills in the west as the road leads you into a small, open city at the convergence of two rivers. As you head into the center of town, you spy a market and a small collection of buildings. Most of them look uninviting, with the exception of one tavern, from the eaves of which swings a sign labeled "The Boar's Head."

You enter, and an enormous half-orc asks you to leave any weapons with him. Seeing that he cannot be budged on this matter, you comply.

You step into the crowded main hall, and a grinning dwarf in a freshly stained apron rolls over to you. "I'm Rugar, and this is my place. What'll you have?"

Soon after a round of much-needed drinks, you're served a bland but satisfying dinner by the gigantic half-orc you met at the door. "Name's Denaz," he grunts, clearly doing his best to emulate Rugar's friendliness, even though he just doesn't seem to have it in him.

As you finish your meal, the door to the tavern suddenly swings open, showing a city guardsman standing in the frame. The room falls silent as he clears his throat.

"Good citizens! Beginning tonight, there will be a curfew enforced within the limits of our fair town. Any citizen found on the streets after sundown will be arrested. You are encouraged to make your way home immediately."

The dwarven bartender pokes his head up over the bar in the back of the room. "What's up, Callam?" he asks, a look of concern on his face. "You'd better have a good reason for sending my customers home."

The young man surveys the crowd intently for a moment before turning his attention to the dwarf. "Some of you have probably already heard. There's a killer on the loose in our town. Seven dead so far this week, with the last two killed only just last night."

The guard allows a horrified murmur to pass through the tavern before he continues. "In a town of this size, there just aren't enough people to properly patrol the streets. I need good people, strong and able, to lend me a hand with this."

With that, the guard's gaze suddenly focuses on you.

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Requires the use of the **Dungeons & Dragons® Player's Handbook, Third Edition**, published by **Wizards of the Coast®**

Murder of the Seven Points is a d20 System adventure booster designed for 3-5 characters levels 5-8. It can be played as a stand-alone adventure or dropped into any ongoing campaign setting.



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How to Use This Product

This adventure is designed to be easily dropped into your existing *Third-Edition D&D* campaign. It can be run in a single session, and it makes for an excellent evening's gaming. To prepare yourself to run it, you should read it completely at least once to familiarize yourself with the material. You may wish to photocopy the map in the center of the book for ease of use as well. The text on the back of the book can be read to your players to introduce them to the adventure. After that, you're ready to begin. Good luck!

Dungeons and Dragons®

This module requires the use of the *Dungeons and Dragons® Player's Handbook, Third Edition*, published by Wizards of the Coast.® You won't be able to run this adventure without it.



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DM Background

Murder of the Seven Points is an adventure designed for a group of three to five heroes of levels 5-8. After reading the Player Background (found on the back of the outside cover), read the module at least once to familiarize yourself with the various encounters before proceeding to play. As you go through this adventure, read any boxed text aloud to the players.

Use the following stats for any of the named fighters in the story, making adjustments only for racial type. This includes Rugar, Callam, Denaz, and any volunteers used in the posse.

Fighter: SZ M (humanoid); HD 4d10; hp 30; Init +4 (Improved Initiative); Spd 20; AC 14 (+4 scale mail); Atk: longsword +4 (1d8); Face 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10; AL varies; Skills: Listen +3, Spot +3, Search +3, Climb +2, Ride +2, Jump +2, Swim +2. Feats: Blind-Fight, Improved Critical, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (longsword).

Chapter One: Gathering a Posse

The young guard named Callam strides up to your table and plants both his hands flat down between the dirty plates from your just-finished meal. He looks each of you carefully in the eye, hunting for some hint of recognition. Seeing none, he speaks.

"I've never seen any of you before. You're new in town," he says slowly and carefully. "You couldn't have committed the murders. I need your help."

If the heroes fail to volunteer, they are free to pass on their way the next morning, but they've given up the opportunity to take part in this adventure.

Whether the heroes join up with Callam or not, two brothers by the name of Loab and Garl step forward. Denaz confers quickly with Rugar and then offers his services.

Once all the volunteers have been rounded up, Callam leads the patrol to the main square in the center of the town. In the middle of the square, there's a rough map of the town engraved into a bronze plate. The map is simple, obviously not to scale, and weathered.

On the map, Callam shows the posse the location of the murders. He points out where each of them occurred, in order – or so it seems. With a slight bit of confusion in his speech,

Callam transposes the third and fourth murder locations. He then leads the posse to the sites of last night's murders.

The Other Killings

Should the heroes ask about the previous murders, Callam tells them that each victim was cut from palm to palm, all the way up and across the neck. No obvious trails were left, as though the bodies were killed at the spot where they died. All were found face down and left to bleed straight into the ground. When the bodies were moved, they left behind a line of blood-soaked dirt.

Up until last night, the killer had been taking one victim every night. Then last night, there were two deaths. Callam fears that this means that the killer is stepping things up a notch, which is why he's finally decided to call in outside help.

The Other Victims

If the heroes ask about the persons killed, Callam gives them a brief summary of the victims. Feel free to embellish and add as much to these characters as you like.

Trauning: The first victim. The dwarven daughter of the most prominent merchant in town. She was to be wedded off to another merchant's son in a few months.

Baloca: The second victim. An overweight sloth of a man, known for being a slave master to his children, who worked his farmlands.

Jusnile: The third victim. A young girl, recently married. She was murdered near her family's farm, which is adjacent to the tower of an old half-elf who lives outside of town.

Kerrlie: The fourth victim. An older, elven woman in her elder years. She was known for her generosity and kindness around town. Her sons cared for her after the death of her husband, a local merchant who specialized in exotic herbs.

Hannil: The fifth victim. Husband to Jusnile, he was murdered not far from the spot where his wife was killed. An only child, he was to inherit a large amount of land from his ailing father. Hannil's father suffered a heart attack and died after receiving the news of his son's murder.

Chapter Two: The Red-Herring Murder

"It was right here that the last body was found," Callam states flatly. You can tell that this young man has yet to be hardened to the cold realities of death. He points down at a spot in the middle of the street where there lies a still-sticky pool of dark blood.

This is where a murder took place, although it has nothing to do with the others. The victim was a dwarf by the name of Mulson. He made his living as a farmer, raising livestock and harvesting crops. He moved into the area around 20 years ago with his wife Kalela, and they spent most of his days tending their acres on the outskirts of town.

He and his wife have fallen on hard times lately. Their livestock has dwindled, and their harvest was poor this year. The pair has been seen arguing in public lately, most notably

in an incident at one of the markets, in which Mulson actually raised his hand to his wife.

When the patrol arrives, the body of Mulson has already been taken away to be prepared for burial. The sun has begun to set, and citizens are moving about the street, trying to get home before the curfew.

Should the heroes inquire about the victim, Callam is able to fill in any details they might want to know about Mulson and his wife. While inspecting the scene, the heroes should come to notice (Search, DC 10) that there is a bloody trail on the dirt road, indicating that the body was dragged to the middle of the street.

The trail is not long, terminating after a few yards. It heads south toward Mulson's farm. The remainder of the trail has been obliterated by a full day's traffic.

If the heroes inquire about the murder method, Callam reveals that Mulson had been stabbed in the back repeatedly, probably with a good-sized knife. The dwarf's body was found dressed in his bedtime clothing, and he was lying atop a bloody bedsheet.

The obvious thing to do here is head out to Mulson's farm to question his wife.

Chapter Three: The Battered Dwarf

You follow Callam down the road until you reach a squat, little home on the edge of a farm. The guard knocks firmly on the door. After a moment, a heavysset lady dwarf answers the door, tears rolling down her bruised cheeks. Her hair is totally disarrayed, and one of her eyes is black and blue and swollen shut. When she sees Callam, she breaks into a wail.

The fact is that Kalela killed Mulson in a fit of rage. Yesterday, he beat her for spilling a can of milk that they could ill afford to lose, and that night, as Mulson lay sleeping in bed, Kalela stabbed him to death.

The distraught wife then wrapped Mulson's body up in the bed sheets and dragged him off into the city. With the rumors of the killing flying around town, the streets were deserted, and no one saw a thing. Kalela hoped that her husband's death would be blamed on the killer and that she would be left alone.

In her heart, though, she knew that someone would come by to question her about Mulson's death, and she just can't seem to stop crying about it. Getting the truth out of Kalela isn't all that difficult. As the questioning continues, she quickly reaches the point where she can no longer take the stress, and she confesses to the killing.

After Kalela confesses, read the following to the heroes:

As tears of grief pour from Kalela's eyes, Callam comforts her for a moment, then asks if he can borrow some torches so that he and the heroes can find their way back to town. The battered dwarf agrees, and Callam leads the heroes outside...

"I'll send someone for her in the morning," he says. "She's no threat to anyone else – now that her husband is gone. In the meantime, it's clear that she had nothing to do with the other killings. We've still got work to do."

Chapter Four: The Sixth Murder

Callam leads you quickly to the scene of the other murder that took place last night. When you arrive at the murder site, you see that stakes have been placed into the dirt road around a patch of blood-soaked ground. The crimson fluid stains the ground in a clear line. The street is almost empty, with only a few people hustling home after the curfew's deadline. Those that see Callam turn their curious gazes from the murder scene and quicken their pace home.

Any party member that casts *detect evil* senses a strong presence from the center of the roped-off area. If the caster makes a Spot check (DC 10), she sees the faint red glow of seven points arranged in a circle, with one of the points almost seeming to be two points that overlap each other.

While the heroes look over the site, Callam tells them about the victim. Winnian was an old man, about 80 years of age. He commonly told stories to the younger children at the market, while his daughters sold their crops and livestock. His farm does not lie far from his murder site. He had two daughters, who will now likely inherit the farm. The young ladies are out of town, visiting family. Winnian was killed by the same method used on the first five victims.

After the party has looked over the site, Callam breaks the patrol into two groups and asks them to walk the streets until he can relieve them after midnight. He assigns Denaz, Garl, and Loab to patrol the south end, and he asks the heroes to patrol the north end. After Denaz, Garl, and Loab take off, Callam pulls one of the heroes aside and tells them that Rugar has offered to give them free lodging until these troubles blow over, in return for them helping out. They should have a warm bed waiting for them at the end of the night.

Chapter Five: Citizens on Patrol

As you turn a corner, you see four men in the middle of the street up ahead. The one in the center is an old man who's close to falling-down drunk. The others are three young toughs who are preying on the old man's condition. They shove the drunken sot back and forth like a rum-soaked pinball, mocking him as they do.

Right before midnight, the heroes run into a trio of thieves harassing an old drunk. Assuming the heroes get involved, the trio stops picking on the man and turns to face the newcomers, being sure to keep a few yards between them and the heroes.

The leader of the thugs is a man by the name of Jallone. He's a large man, standing about 6' 4". His left arm is covered

Rogues (3): CR 4. SZ M (humanoid); HD 4d6; hp 20, 17, 14; Init +3; Spd 30; AC 17; Atk: longsword +3 (1d8); SV Fort +3 Ref +8 Will +2; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8; AL CN. Skills: Hide +2, Intimidate +2. Listen +3, Move Silently +2, Pick Pocket +2, Search +3, Spot +3,

in tattoos, and he carries a longsword. He and his friends Scratch and Milekae are known about town as bullies and troublemakers.

Scratch is a half-elf, and Milekae is a human. The two have been hanging around with Jallone for a good number of years. They are both sparsely tattooed and wear swords on their belts. The three **thieves (hp 20, 17, 14)** usually prey on drunks and outsiders who become lost after nightfall. Beyond putting a blade in a target's face, the members of the trio have never committed a truly violent act. They chose their targets for their helplessness, and about this, at least, they're rarely wrong.

If the heroes give him a hard time, Jallone questions the party's authority and makes fun of them. If the heroes draw their weapons and make a move toward arresting the trio, the thugs make a run for it. If the players come at the thieves barefisted, the lowlifes stand their ground and fight.

As the confrontation is ending, Callam shows up and either arrests or chases off the thugs. Then he relieves the party and sends them back to the tavern for some sleep.

Chapter Six: The Seventh Murder

You get back to Rugar's, and the dwarf lets you in with a grateful look. "Denaz and the others got back just a few minutes ago. They're already in bed. I've got your rooms made up already, so off you go." He leads you to a clean, well-kept place, hands you the key to the room, and bids you good night.

After what seems like scant minutes, you awaken to the sound of someone rapping on your door. You rise to answer it. As you open the door, Callam pushes his way in. He's not in the mood to argue about manners.

"It's happened again," he says. "Get yourselves together, and come with me."

Once the heroes are ready, Callam leads them out to the murder site. As they leave the inn, Rugar hands them each an apple and a bit of toast for breakfast.

On the way to the scene of the crime, Callam tells the heroes all about the victim. Marika was a single mother who was widowed three years ago when her husband was caught in a stampede of bulls. Despite her advancing years, she remained youthful and attractive. She sold her land and livestock to her neighbor Kyland and lived off of the lump sum. Marika spent her days caring for her son Lyn, who she was very protective of.

The victim was also a second cousin of Loab and Garl. Those two are busy consoling their family, but Denaz is guarding the crime scene.

When the heroes arrive at the murder site, Denaz greets them with a grunt. He points them over toward a body lying face down in a pool of blood so fresh that it still hasn't entirely soaked into the ground. A couple of other guards stand at the ends of the street, diverting foot traffic away from the murder site.

The murder was performed in accordance with the previous killings. Any party member that casts *detect evil* senses a strong presence from the center of the roped-off area, just like with Winnian, the sixth victim.

Any hero that makes a Spot check (DC 10) sees a child running from the nearby bushes toward the farmlands. Callam recognizes the child as Lyn. He yells for the heroes to follow him as he rushes after the child.

Lyn flees to his home. He witnessed the murder of his mother, which has left him too traumatized to speak. Lyn is a playful little scamp, known around town for getting into childish trouble. Chasing chickens through market is one of his favorite pastimes. When not getting into trouble, Lyn was usually found grasping his mother's hand or holding onto her skirt.

When Lyn reaches his yard, he disappears into the foliage around the place, momentarily losing his pursuers. Callam orders the heroes to split up and look for the child.

As the heroes search the property, one of them runs into Kyland, a kind, gentlemanly dwarf whose beard has been stained from chewing tobacco leaves. He knows the home and should be able to answer any questions that the players have about Marika and Lyn.

Kyland offers his assistance in finding the child. He opens the door to the home for the heroes and tells them that the child usually hides under a loose floorboard in his room, in a space too cramped for an adult to fit into. When the heroes pull up the board, they can hear the boy wriggling further away. If one of them sticks her head into the hole, she can see the child huddled there in the darkness, just out of reach.

The trick here is getting the kid out of his hideout with traumatizing him even more. This can be accomplished with a Diplomacy roll (DC 10).

Once Lyn is drawn out, he's still too scared to speak. The important thing is that the party sees the seven-pointed star drawn with blood onto the child's face. The words "HELP ME" are inscribed on the child's bare chest as well. (the killer drew them both.)

After a while, the heroes should realize that attempts to coax any answers out of Lyn are doomed. At that point, Kyland tells the heroes that he and his wife are more than willing to take care of the child. Callam approves of this as well.

After Kyland takes Lyn away, Callam leads the heroes back to the bronze map of the city, there in the central square. He marks the location of the seven murders. As he does this, Callam recognizes his earlier mistake of transposing the locations of the third and fourth murders.

The heroes should recognize the seven-pointed star being formed by the murders. Hopefully, they should find it obvious that the next murder will occur at the same location as the first. Callam recommends staking out that location tonight.

Otherwise, the heroes have another night on patrol ahead of them. In the meantime, Callam offers to buy the party a meal at the tavern.

Chapter Seven: Waiting at the Tavern

As you finish your lunch, you notice that Callam has taken out a pencil and is doodling on the table. You look over to see that he's drawn a seven-pointed star over and over again. "What in the stars are you drawing on my table?" you hear a voice grunt.

You look up to see Rugar glaring directly at Callam. The young guard freezes for a moment, instinctively covering his artwork with his hands. Shortly, though, he withers under the dwarf's gaze, blows out a deep sigh, and exposes his handiwork to Rugar.

The dwarf leans over, and his demeanor quickly shifts from irritated to intrigued. He pulls at his beard for a long moment and then turns to Callam. "Do you know what this is?" he asks.

The young guard shakes his head slowly. "Neither do I," grunts Rugar, "but I know someone who might."

The dwarf looks up at you each in turn. "Clean your plates, folks. I'll send Denaz around in a moment. He can take you to see Loremaster Syle."

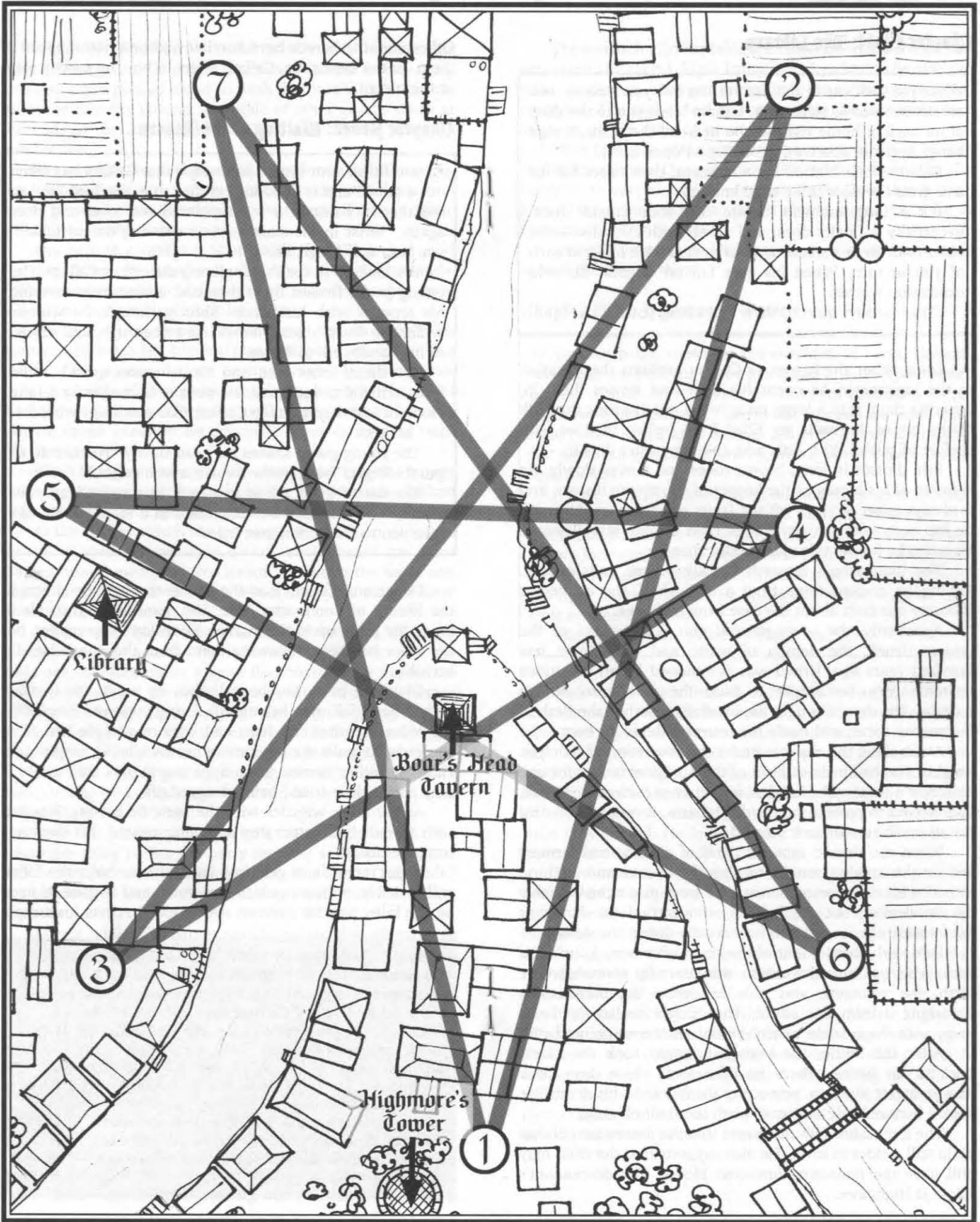
Denaz and Callam lead the heroes through the streets to the library of Loremaster Syle. Use some arbitrary rolls to break the party up in the market. They don't know it yet, but the killer has been following them from the Boar's Head – invisibly.

Once the party has been broken up a bit, the weakest feels a hand fall over her mouth. Using *improved invisibility*, the killer surprises the hero and tries to grapple her. If he succeeds, he pulls the hero into a nearby alley or empty stall. Have the other heroes make Spot checks (DC 20) to see if they notice their friend being dragged off.

As the killer wrestles with the hero, he hisses, "You and your friends had better stop snooping around. Let the cycle complete itself!"

If the target hero gets free and calls for help, the killer, still invisible, slips away into the crowd and is gone. If need be, the killer uses his *summon swarm* spell to cover his escape.

Highmore, male Half-Elf Sor8: CR 8. SZ M (humanoid); HD 8d4-8; hp 18; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atk: dagger +4 (1d4+1); SQ low-light vision, immune to sleep spells, +2 save against Enchantments; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will+6; Str 10, Dex 14; Con 9; Int 16; Wis 10; Cha 12; AL CE. Skills: Languages: Common, Elven, Knowledge: Arcana +10, Spellcraft +9, Move Silently +8, Hide +5, Bluff +12, Search +7, Spot +5, Listen +4. Feats: Still Spell, Quicken Spell. Spells: *alarm, daze, detect magic, dispel magic, expeditious retreat, hold portal, improved invisibility, light, mage hand, mending, nondetection, prestidigitation, protection from good, read magic, resistance, scare, spider climb, summon swarm, web*. Possessions: +3 dagger, boots of speed, 30 gp.



Chapter Eight: The Library

While the incident in the market has left you shaken, you are determined to soldier on. Callam leads you to the door of an ancient home right in the heart of the town. A sign hangs over the doorway, depicting an open book.

Callam steels himself for a moment, then raises his fist and gives the door three solid knocks.

It's a long moment before the door creaks open. Eventually it finally does, and an elf with eyes that seem older than the sea stands at the threshold. He looks at each of you in turn. When his eyes fall on Callam, his cold expression warms.

"Yes," he says quietly, "how can I help you?"

Once either the heroes or Callam explains the situation to the loremaster, he opens his door and invites them in, ushering them into a large main room which forms the bulk of the house. Its walls are filled from ceiling to floor with shelves of books. With little ado, the loremaster digs in.

Syle dresses in long, brown robes and moves slowly. He is proud of his legacy as the keeper of the town's history, and is always eager to show off the fruits of his labors. After all, he has been with the city longer than anyone else. There is no one who knows this place better than he.

The loremaster's research quickly proves enlightening. Pulling an ancient tome from a high shelf, the elf begins shooting out facts about the case from its pages.

Apparently, the seven-pointed star is a symbol of the demon Urneil, the demon of waste and bile. Some few hundred years ago, Urneil was summoned by an ambitious necromancer who sought to bind the demon to do his bidding. The demon fought the binding, absorbed the flesh of the necromancer, and made the usurper's body his own.

At the time, the city was under the protection of six elven knights who had been cast out of their original homes for one reason or another. The knights, in exchange for a place to live, had offered to protect the city from harm. It was a good deal for all involved – or so it seemed.

When the demon arose, a band of citizens and farmers led by the knights sought to slay the abomination. Those armed with only common weapons were dispatched quickly by the demon, but the knights who carried the *luminous blades* were able to fight and eventually defeat the demon.

During the battle, four of the six knights were killed. The fifth, who was also the eldest, was mortally wounded. The sixth, the youngest, was able to defeat the monstrosity, banishing it from this world. That knight sealed the beast away with the creature's own symbol, the seven-pointed star.

After the battle, the youngest knight took the eldest back to his home, where he died some three days later. The youngest lived on, protecting the city until his death. He took a human bride that gave birth to a half-elf child.

The loremaster tells the player that the descendant of that child still resides in town. He also suggests that the child may still have the remaining *luminous blades*. The descendant's name is Highmore.

The research also explains the ritual by which the demon was originally raised. Eight living sacrifices had to be made to raise the demon, each performed in order as the moon sailed overhead. The eighth had to occur where the first took place to complete the cycle of summoning.

After that, the text then gives an explanation of how to banish the demon. Once the demon is stricken down, the star needs to be carved into the demon's flesh. Once that is completed, the demon needs to be set ablaze, banishing it for at least another five centuries.

Callam knows where Highmore's tower is, and he's ready to lead the heroes there.

Chapter Nine: Highmore's Tower

As you reach the tower on the outskirts of town, Callam comments on how the place has fallen into disrepair since he was a child. "Few people see much of Highmore these days. Word has it that he's on his last legs and will soon lose even those. He's a kind enough old bird, if only a bit daft. But what can you expect from someone who's been alive as long as him?"

A long, tattered ribbon hangs outside the front door, and when Callam reaches up and pulls on it, it gives way, but not before ringing an off-key bell inside one last time. After a long moment, the warped, oaken door creaks open, and an elderly half-elf pokes his withered nose out. He extends his right hand to you as he blinks out at you with watery eyes unused to the sun.

"Yes," he croaks. "What do you want?"

Highmore's line is littered with the breeding of half-elves, humans, and elves. His left arm never fully developed after birth, and it just hangs next to his body, lame. He is a recluse who hardly ever comes out of his tower. He has a few assistants in the area who tend his fields and run the odd errand for him in exchange for a share of the crops. He is a frail half-elf, and he expects that his days are numbered shorter than what they should. He looks weaker even than usual, since a fever currently has a hold of him.

Any heroes looking outside around Highmore's property notice a large wagon of manure being moved from his fields out to the street. The manure is being taken to the site of the first victim. Unbeknownst to the people hauling the load, the demon requires it to manifest in. If the heroes ask about it, Highmore tells them that his assistants are taking the manure to market to sell as fertilizer.

If the heroes ask about the *luminous blades*, Highmore admits that he still has two of them, the ones belonging to the eldest and youngest of the knights. He offers them to the heroes to use on a temporary basis, as long as Callam is willing to vouch for them. Once that's over with, Highmore throws himself into a coughing fit. When he comes up for air, he asks his guests to leave him to his sickbed.

Chapter Ten: The Stake Out

As the sun sets in the west, Callam leads you out to the site of the first murder. "A dwarven maid named Trauning was killed here," Callam informs you. "She was the only daughter of Traunax, the most prominent merchant in town. She was to be wedded off in a few months to Himlurt, son of another merchant by the name of Braulurt.

"At first, I thought one of the fathers might have been against the wedding and paid for the murder... but it just didn't add up. The families loved each other and were looking forward to the merging of their brightest assets. But when the killings kept coming, I knew something was really wrong."

You can smell the site before you see it. The foul scent of fresh manure is in the air as you turn a corner and spy a number of guards setting up torches on stakes around the murder scene.

When the party arrives at the site, the guards are mulling over what to do about a broken wagon that dumped its load of manure all over the site of the first killing. The odor is especially foul and revolting, and none of the guards are volunteering to step forward and clean it up. Callam curses the luck, but he figures out loud that they'll just have to wait until the morning to worry about it. Night has fallen now, and he can't spare any men for the cleanup detail.

Then it's time for the heroes to settle in and wait. Nothing really happens until just before midnight. Dressed in the tunic of his ancestor, Highmore steps from the shadows and into the flickering firelight. He tells Callam that he's come to offer his assistance. Noting the look of determination in the half-elf's eyes, Callam welcomes him, stating flatly, "We can use all the help we can get."

A few moments later, as the moon hangs directly over head, Highmore asks if anyone else heard something. He then climbs on top of the mound of manure, peering intently into the surrounding darkness.

The half-elf then removes a knife from his belt, looks into the eyes of the heroes, says: "It was me. I'm sorry. It is almost over."

With that, Highmore plunges his knife into his throat and falls to his knees, bleeding into the manure.

Smoke, steam, and a strong stench of sulfur begin to rise from the pile. The rapidly pooling blood appears to be opening a hole into the earth. If any characters approach, Highmore looks up at them, and gurgles at them with his dying breath: "Let the cycle complete."

Characters getting too close to the pile must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or become stunned for 1d6 rounds. After a moment or two, Highmore's body slowly absorbs into the manure. A moment later, the manure begins to bubble and boil. From this frothing slop, Urneil the demon of bile and waste arises. (See the "New Monster" section at the end of this adventure for all about this foul creature.)

After the demon rises, the heroes are in for a real fight to take it down. At your discretion, some or all of the others

described in this adventure can pitch in to lend them a hand. At the very least, Callam and Denaz stand their ground. With a little encouragement, Loab and Garl stick around too, as well as up to five guards. [Use the stats for the thieves in Chapter Five for them.] Otherwise, they flee in terror.

Once the heroes have defeated the demon, they should mark its head with the seven-pointed star and set fire to the demon, thereby condemning the beast to oblivion once again for another 500 years.

Random Town Encounters

Lots of things can happen as your party travels through the town and market place. If you wish you may roll on the chart provided below to throw your party into an encounter.

Town and Village Encounter Table (Roll 1d6):

- 1. Wild Dogs (4):** CR 1. SZ S (animal); HD 1d8+2; hp 6; Init +3; Spd 40; AC 15; Atk: Bite +2 melee (1d4+1); SQ scent; SV Fort +4 Ref +5 Will +1; Str 13, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6; AL CN. Skills: Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +5, Wilderness Lore +1 (+8 when tracking by Scent).
- 2. Bandit:** CR 2. SZ M (humanoid); HD 4d6; hp 20; Init +3; Spd 30; AC 17; Atk: longsword +3 (1d8); SV Fort +3 Ref +8 Will +2; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8; AL CN. Skills: Listen +3, Spot +3, Search +3, Move Silently +2, Hide +2, Pick Pocket +2, Intimidate +2.
- 3. Lost Child:** CR 1/3. SZ S (humanoid); HD 1d6; hp 3; Init +4; Spd 30; AC 13; Atk: none; SV Fort +0 Ref +4 Will +0; Str 6, Dex 16, Con 6, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12; AL CG. Skills: Listen +3, Spot +3, Search +3, Hide +3. (Players returning the child to their parents will receive a reward worth 1d4 gp).
- 4. Beggar:** CR 1. SZ M (humanoid); HD 1d6; hp 6; Init +6; Spd 30; AC 15; Atk: Dagger +2 (1d4); SV Fort +1 Ref +4 Will +0; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8; AL CN. Skills: Hide +2, Listen +3, Move Silently +2, Spot +3, Search +3, Pick Pocket +3. * The Beggar will attempt to pick the pockets of any party member that has mercy on him and provides him with any moneys.
- 5. Dire Rats (6):** CR 1/3. SZ S (animal); HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Init +3; Spd 40, climb 20; AC 15; Atk: Bite +4 melee (1d4); SQ disease; scent; SV Fort +3 Ref +5 Will +3; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 4; AL N. Skills: Climb +11, Hide +11, Move Silently +6; Weapon Finesse (bite) * There is a small pack of these Dire Rats that live in the alley ways of the town. Guards usually keep their population under control but sometimes they get out of hand.
- 6. Merchant:** Occasionally, there is a foreign Merchant out on the streets. He specializes in exotic and magical items, but will only sell to characters of a Good or Lawful alignments (*except LE characters*). He never has more than 4 items at a time and generally sells the items as though they were their non-magical masterwork equivalent. It is recommended that you use the random magic item tables in the back of the DMG to find what items the merchant has on hand.

Urneil: Demon of Bile and Waste

Large Outsider (Evil, Chaotic)

Urneil is a demon of unspeakable filth. Its very presence can cause all but those with the strongest stomachs to flee. It resembles little more than a seven-foot-tall heap of shambling muck. Despite its appearance, the creature is surprisingly quick on its feet.

It's almost impossible for Urneil to sneak up on someone due to the thing's foul stench. Also, it squishes loudly as it walks.

Combat

Urneil knows that its time on this plane is likely limited. It wants to do as much damage as possible while it still can. It assesses any threat to it quickly, first taking out any spellcasters or anyone with a magical weapon. Anyone carrying a luminous blade is the creature's primary target. It remembers all too well how those swords were used to defeat him the last time around.

Should the heroes run away, Urneil pursues them relentlessly. He recognizes them as the greatest threat to its new reign of terror, and it wants to eliminate them as quickly as possible.



Hit Dice: 10d8+20 (65 hp)
 Initiative: +4 (Improved Initiative)
 Speed: 40ft
 AC: 17 (-1 size, +8 natural)
 Attacks: Bite +9 melee,
 2 claws +4 melee
 Damage: Bite 1d8+5,
 claws 1d4+2
 Face/Reach: 5ft. by 5ft./10ft.
 Special Attacks: Spell-like
 abilities, fear aura
 Special Qualities: Stench,
 damage reduction 10/+1,
 SR 22, regeneration 5,
 fire resistance 30, acid

resistance 30, ritual weakness
 Saves: Fort +6, Ref+4, Will+6
 Abilities: Str 21, Dex 10, Con
 15, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14
 Skills: Sense Motive +10,
 Spot +12
 Feats: Alertness, Improved
 Initiative
 Climate/Terrain: Any land
 or underground
 Organization: Solitary
 Challenge Rating: 8
 Treasure: None
 Alignment: Chaotic Evil
 Advancement: 6-8 HD (Large)

Fear Aura (Su): As a free action, Urneil can surround himself with an aura of fear with a 10-foot radius. This is otherwise identical to a 13th-level sorcerer casting a fear spell (save DC 19). If a hero successfully saves against this ability, it can't be used against her again for one day. Other demons aren't affected by this ability.

Spell-like Abilities: At will – *animate dead, desecrate, detect good, detect magic, dispel magic, magic circle against good (self only), suggestion, unholy blight, contagion*. These are all used as if cast by an 8th-level sorcerer.

Stench (Ex): The awful stink of death and corruption surrounding this creature is sickening. Those within 10 feet must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 17) or be wracked with nausea, suffering a -2 circumstance penalty to all attacks, saves, and skill checks for 2d6+8 minutes.

Ritual Weakness (Su): Once a seven-pointed star is drawn on the creature's head, it loses its fire resistance and can no longer regenerate fire damage.

Luminous Blades

These +3 longswords are the two remaining blades of the six elven knights. When a *luminous blade* is drawn, a pair of teeth bite into the hand of the wielder, doing 1 hit point of damage. The user's blood flows through the sword, and after a moment a blade of fiery energy erupts from the guard to the tip of the blade.

When a hero using a *luminous blade* strikes his opponent, he may suffer 2 hit points of damage in order to deliver an extra +2d4 damage to a creature. He may do this once per successful hit.

Caster Level: 11th;
Prerequisites: Craft Magic Arms and Armor; *flame blade*;
Market Price: 55,815 gp.



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