

Summary of last time, for Steve and Kelly

So, a month ago in Adventure 8, you saved a corpse-like man named Haas from a mob at Werner's sanctuary. Haas told you he had been killed and resurrected, and sought revenge. Two weeks ago, in Adventure 9, the party -- including Beowolf and Prosper in absentia -- went with Haas and exacted revenge on his killers. The killers turned out to be a gang of homeless living in an alley across from the Mooncalf, the hostel where Kasskar lives.

Just based on alignments, Beowolf participated in this revenge killing but Prosper did not. Would either of you like to retroactively change that decision?

Then, the party went to the hospital looking for Haas' resurectors. They were attacked by Ignatius, another resurrected man controlled by cruel-looking probes in his head. They survived the attack, but during the fight a few disturbing men (show the pictures) came into the room where you were fighting, and took out another body on a gurney, and ran away with it. And that's where we left off.

Any other questions before we get started?

The Brothers Volker: Alaric, Gerholt, and Harlan

Now that the din of battle has ended, you can hear intense screaming coming from the opposite door -- the door the two necromancers and run through and locked behind them. The screaming person is saying: "Oh my god! Don't cut my skull! Please don't cut my head open!" You think those two guys are maybe cutting another patient's head open to make another controlled zombie like Ignatius. Of course Haas is totally focused on the screaming and going in to attack the necromancers.

Kasskar can try to open the lock. **It will be a harder than normal opening because of the distraction of the extreme screaming. But if another character helps sooth Kasskar while he tries to pick the lock, we can lower it back to normal difficulty.**

When they get into the room, it looks like another lab. There are twenty gurneys or so scattered around the room, with many along the walls, and most have bodies on them. Several of the bodies along the walls have wires running from the room's windows to their bodies. The disturbing men are necromancers working together around a gurney against the far wall with the screaming man on it, and then are several orderlies assisting them.

The Volker Brothers

For meta-gaming reasons that will become apparent in "Steal the Bacon" below, Alaric has the same character stats, powers, etc. as Beowolf.

Orderlies

There should be as many orderlies as characters, but they'll focus on one PC trying to syringe him. They have improvised weapons -- a leather strap, a big respirator tank, a bonesaw -- but each provides the normal attacks for the Iron Circle Enforcer below. But, cut the Iron Circle Enforcer's damage to 1d6 + 7 for Heavy Flail, 1d6 + 6 for flail sweep.

Iron Circle Enforcer	Level 3 Elite Brute	
Medium natural humanoid	XP 300	
HP 108; Bloodied 54	Initiative +2	
AC 15; Fortitude 16; Reflex 15; Will 14	Perception +1	
Speed 5		
Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1		
Standard Actions		
⊕ Heavy Flail (weapon) • At-Will		
<i>Attack:</i> Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC		
<i>Hit:</i> 2d6 + 7 damage.		
← Flail Sweep (weapon) • Recharge when first bloodied		
<i>Attack:</i> Close Burst 1 (creatures in the burst); +6 vs. Fortitude		
<i>Hit:</i> 3d6 + 6 damage, and the target falls prone.		
Triggered Actions		
‡ Smash Back (weapon) • At-Will		
<i>Trigger:</i> An enemy hits the enforcer with a melee attack.		
<i>Attack (Immediate Reaction):</i> Melee 1 (the triggering enemy); +8 vs. AC		
<i>Hit:</i> 2d6 + 7 damage, and the enforcer gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls against the target until the end of its next turn.		
Skills Athletics +10, Intimidate +7		
Str 18 (+5)	Dex 12 (+2)	Wis 10 (+1)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 11 (+1)	Cha 13 (+2)
Alignment evil	Languages Common	
Equipment black surcoat embroidered with a red-trimmed gray circle, chainmail, heavy flail		

Their other powers include a special Grab and a Sringe attack:

Grab Disturbed Patient

- Normal Grab is described on page 290: standard action, STR vs. REF, immobilizes the character.
- The orderlies can have +3 strength bonus.
- A successful Grab Disturbed Patient also grants combat advantage to other attackers.

Sringe attack

- Makes player unconscious, plus +5 ongoing poison damage

Lebrect

While the party is winding down its fight with the orderlies:

As you're fighting, you're momentarily unsettled by a thunderclap that seems to be right outside the building, and lightning lights up the windows around the top of the room. An electrical charge lights up a bundle of wires going from one of the windows to a body on one of the gurneys, and the body is racked with the electricity and rattles on the gurney. A few seconds later, the person -- a woman of about 17 with girlish dimples -- wakes up and swings her legs over the side of the gurney, sitting up.

You see that she's dressed in a one-piece white lace dress that's close to her body with spaghetti straps, almost like a slip or even a negligee (but it's a dress). She looks down at her own body as if it's not her own. She touches her face, and she looks at her bare arms and hands. She notices that there's a bracelet of flowers on her wrist, and stares at it, not knowing what it is. Then her stare seems to start it on fire. It burns to a crisp and the cinders fall away, leaving a black burn mark on her wrist.

Then she looks up at the scene around her. The characters can do an Arcana check to get a little information about her (e.g., level). Then, one of the orderlies makes some minor body motion or something and with a look she sets off a shock wave from sends everyone and everything in the room blasting against the walls. The characters all go unconscious.

Steal the bacon

Beowolf:

- You wake up, sore from being slammed against the wall.
- You're not sure how long you've been out.
- Among the other clutter that was thrown into the walls, there's a gurney turned over on you, which you grumpily throw off of you.
- You open your eyes, and initially it looks like everyone else is still out.

But then, getting up on one elbow to look around, you're disturbed to notice that one of the experimenters you're hunting is lying only about 5 feet from you. Simultaneous with you,

- He's been waking up, sore from being slammed against the wall, seemingly not sure how long he's been out.
- Among the other clutter that was thrown into the the walls, there's a gurney turned over on him, which he grumpily throws off of him
- He opens his eyes, and initially it looks to him like everyone else is still out.
- He's getting up on one elbow to look around, and he's disturbed to notice Beowolf waking up about 5 feet from him.

You both look down, and see there's a cruel-looking bonesaw exactly half way between the two of you, just out of reach. Roll initiative to see if you can get the saw before the experimenter, Alaric.

Warren

If the players talk to Warren after the fight, he'll tell them from his stupor that he wants to go to Hereward, this will reinforce the idea in Haas also, and Haas can explain it to the characters...how he went to the park where there's a ghost information/rumor marketplace.

They can bring Warren along or not.

Gramercy Books

When the players are finished at Meade, Haas asks the party to go with him to the safe house that the midwife Wren suggested. When the party arrives at the address Wren gave Haas, they see that it's Gramercy Books, an upscale-looking store in the financial district. There are a few windows in the narrow storefront with lamplight coming out of them. If you peek in the window you can see Wren huddled around a little table with three men, talking.

When the party knocks, Wren comes to the door. She looks at the party's faces to verify they're who she expects, then lets them in and closes the door behind them.

She introduces the party to the three men -- Aliester, Indvik, and Mari. Wren has explained everything to the men, but they're amazed to actually see Haas. They ask him all sorts of questions about his state: Is he cold? Can he breathe? Is the body his own body?

After they've sated their initial curiosity, they become quiet. The three men exchange glances among each other. Indvik goes to lock the front door, then Aliester leans closer to Haas and asks in a soft but urgent voice: Did you go to the hospital to get revenge? Did you find the necromancer?

After they hear the story, they say that since Haas trusted them, they'll trust him with their own secrets. They say the necromancers are the Volker Brothers, members of their own order, the Oracle. The Oracle is an ancient organization -- that often has to operate in secret -- that summons shades for prophecy. A few years ago the Oracle raised a powerful shade named Lebrecht, and Lebrecht wanted to possess a human body to experience vice and addiction. Lebrecht gave the Volkens information and persuaded them to do this abomination. It must have been Lebrecht that you saw possess the girl's body. They shudder to think what Lebrecht is going to subject it to.

They ask Haas what he wants to do in his last hours, before the body becomes moribund. Haas says he wants to go to Hereward, which causes a stir among them. They say that they don't

know if Hereward actually exists, or how to get there, but they can maybe raise a shade that can tell them.

At this point, the Oracle men finally acknowledge the rest of the party. Aliester says: "Beowulf, Kasskar, Aeris, Prosper, we know you. You sailed with the Hedgepeth and brought a fortune in greencake back to Hollin. We call greencake Soma. Kasskar, I have something else here you might find interesting."

He goes over to a bookshelf and swings it out from the wall. Behind, there's a door decorated with an elaborate tessellated pattern. Instead of a door knob, it has two fist-sized holes with a large lever next to them. Aliester says it's called a niche door. When you put your hand into the correct hole and turn the handle inside, the hole will close on your arm as you turn the handle. When you've turned the handle all the way, it snaps into place and you can't remove your arm. You pull the lever with your other hand, your hand is released, and the door opens. If you put your arm into the wrong hole, this procedure will break your arm into a hundred pieces. It's an ancient and time-tested device -- the most a perfect locksmith or thief can determine from inspection is that there's an exactly equal chance of each hole being the correct hole.

He asks Kasskar if he'd like to try it. If not, no hurt feelings, he'll open it.

The party goes into the door where they find a spiral staircase. As they go down the spiral staircase, Aliester tells them they're going from the bookstore to the library -- the Oracle library. And the Oracle library is *massive* -- hundreds of thousands of volumes, with the hallways lit by gas lamps. They go down about 10 levels of library to a small tunnel.

The first demon who appears is essentially my silently intimidating "balrog" -- a man size demon of darkness with a whip and a sword. He can appear in the pit, then gracefully jump to the lip of the pit to attack the characters. He should have a power "Silent Warning" that gives him combat advantage on everyone.

The *Odyssey's* passages contain many descriptive references to necromantic rituals: rites must be performed around a pit with fire during nocturnal hours, and Odysseus has to follow a specific recipe, which includes the blood of sacrificial animals, to concoct a libation for the ghosts to drink while he recites prayers to both the ghosts and gods of the underworld.

Lesser Fire Demon		Level 8 Skirmisher
Medium elemental humanoid (demon, fire)		XP 350
HP 88; Bloodied 44		Initiative +11
AC 21; Fortitude 19; Reflex 21; Will 19		Perception +6
Speed 8, fly 10		
Resist 15 fire; Vulnerable 5 cold		
Standard Actions		
⊕ Fiery Touch (fire) • At-Will		
<i>Attack:</i> Melee 1 (one creature); +13 vs. Reflex		
<i>Hit:</i> 3d6 + 5 fire damage.		
‡ Leaping Flame (fire) • At-Will		
<i>Effect:</i> The fire demon shifts 5 squares and can make the following attack once during this shift.		
<i>Attack:</i> Melee 1 (one creature); +13 vs. Reflex		
<i>Hit:</i> Ongoing 15 fire damage (save ends).		
Move Actions		
↳ Drawn to Fire (teleportation) • At-Will		
<i>Effect:</i> The lesser fire demon teleports 10 squares to a square adjacent to a fire that fills at least 1 square, or adjacent to an enemy that is taking ongoing fire damage.		
Triggered Actions		
↳ Flickering Flame • At-Will		
<i>Trigger:</i> An attack misses the demon.		
<i>Effect (Opportunity Action):</i> The demon shifts 1 square.		
Str 13 (+5)	Dex 21 (+9)	Wis 15 (+6)
Con 16 (+7)	Int 8 (+3)	Cha 12 (+5)
Alignment chaotic evil	Languages Abyssal, Common	