

Call #1, 8:07 a.m.: Beware My Sting

“DocWagon 21, DocWagon 21, respond via emergency traffic to a two-patient MVC outside Stuffer Shack at North-West 85th and Palatine. Patients are a gold contract 37-year-old elven female, no known allergies, cyberware installed, and a gold-contract magically active 41-year-old human male, no known allergies. Technical extrication may be required.”

This call introduces the players to Dominic Berger, the wasp shaman, although as far as they know at this point he’s just another patient. It also sets up the theme of wasps. It can also be used as on-the-job training for the players - encourage them to use the assessment cheat sheet by the numbers.

History

Olwyn Berger was driving her (evil!) husband Dominic in her '49 Ford American east through rush-hour morning traffic when she was stung by several wasps which had followed him, a kindred spirit. Although she had had a mild allergic reaction to a wasp sting as a child, it hadn’t arisen since and was not noted on her medical records. The sting provoked an extreme allergic reaction, initially causing an intense fit of coughing. This, combined with frantic hand-waving to swat at the wasps, caused her to lose control of the vehicle, which ran off the road and into a parked car in the car-park of a Stuffer Shack. She was protected from the crash by the car’s safety systems, but Dominic sustained a minor head laceration as his expensive-watch-clad wrist was knocked into his forehead by the impact. Both independently activated their own DocWagon™ bracelets.

Initial Assessment

The team arrive to find a burgundy Ford American smashed head-on into the side of a parked and empty Chrysler-Nissan Jackrabbit, with enough force to write off both - the crumple zones are crumpled and there’s bits strewn about, although there’s no internal damage to the windscreen indicating a head trauma. The American turned a bit before

coming to a halt and now the passenger side door is pressed up against the Jackrabbit. Traffic isn't a problem because it's off the road. The patients are in the American and unable to get out due to deformity to the body - they'll need to be cut out. The side window can be smashed and removed first to allow some access to the patients (this will cause a wasp to fly out), and the driver's side rear door can be pried open allowing access to the back seat. The male patient is bleeding from a cranial laceration and the female patient appears to be in acute respiratory distress, leaning forward, rubbing at her arms and chest and gasping.

On Scene

There's not much to be had from searching the patients or the car, except a personal secretary and portable computer with the Freedonia Manufacturing, Inc. logo on them.

Patient: Olwyn Berger

Olwyn is a slender, red-haired elven woman in her late thirties, dressed in fashionable clothing. She wears four earrings in each ear.

Olwyn's condition has progressed into anaphylactic shock - system-wide problems caused by a massive and exaggerated reaction to a foreign protein. She needs immediate intervention to save her life.

An assessment should consist of a SAMPLE history (which can be conducted while doing other stuff), counting pulse and respirations, measuring blood pressure and blood oxygen saturation. When queried, Olwyn will gasp her answers in clipped sentences, complaining all the time "I can't... breathe..."

Signs & Symptoms: "It's like... my throat... closing up..." Olwyn is scratching at her body, which if exposed reveals a rash and some hives (urticaria). Her face and neck appear somewhat puffy, and there is a mark from a wasp sting on her cheek.

Allergies: "I'm allergic to... wasp stings..."

Medications: "Just a... vitamin supplement..."

Magic: "No... my husband... is a... shaman..."

Modifications: "My eyes, and... datajack..."

Pertinent Past History: "Had a... little... reaction to... a wasp sting... when I was... a child..."

Last Oral Intake: "Breakfast about... an hour ago..."

Events Leading Up: "I got... stung, and... lost control..."

Respirations: Fast and laboured

Pulse: Fast but not alarmingly so

Blood pressure: Low!

Pulse oximetry: 82% - low!

Blood glucose: Within normal limits

The most immediate concern is the breathing difficulty, so she needs high-flow oxygen. Application of an anaphylaxis patch from the jump bag (slap it on her thigh or upper belly) should sort her out, releasing its payload of adrenaline and anti-histamines. Within a few minutes she'll be breathing easier, and although she still needs transport to a clinic to be fully checked out, there's no further complications.

The obvious mistake to make here is assuming her problem is caused by the crash, rather than the crash caused by her problem. A bad Assessment roll will have the medic looking for signs of trauma, assuming a possible fractured rib puncturing the lung and causing a build-up of increasingly pressurised air within the chest cavity (tension pneumothorax). The treatment is a needle in the upper chest on the offending side to valve out the air, but finding the correct side requires using a stethoscope to hear where there's no breath sounds, and she has (wheezy) breath sounds on both. It'd require a complete botch to go ahead with this procedure. Otherwise she'll go downhill - breath rate falls, pulse rate falls, blood pressure falls more, skin starts to turn blue from lack of oxygen - and if these symptoms aren't treated (assisted breathing with a ventilator and an infusion of intravenous fluid oughta do) she'll crash and they'll arrive at the clinic doing CPR.

Patient: Dominic Berger

Dominic is a fit, tanned human man in his mid-forties with brown hair which is greying at the temples. He's wearing a fairly expensive business suit and an ostentatious watch.

Dominic cut his forehead when an airbag deployed and knocked his watch arm into his face. Although the right side of his face is soaked in blood, the laceration isn't deep or serious and he's in no danger (but it certainly looks bad until checked out closely).

Dominic is far more concerned for his wife than for himself, since he doesn't know what's wrong with her. He'll angrily refuse care, demanding that medics look to Olwyn and that he's fine. If pressured he'll be a dick, using phrases like "jumped-up bus driver" and "wanna-be Boy Scout first aider". He does want out of the car though, but can't get himself out with the deformed dashboard and door pinning him in.

Signs & Symptoms: "I don't know, I hit my head or something, it's fine, just get me out of here!" He's struggling to move the dashboard or wriggle out from under it. The right side of his face and his shirt collar are soaked in blood, and there's a laceration of maybe three inches just below his hairline.

Allergies: "What? Why aren't you doing something to help my wife? You're supposed to have all this drek on file anyway." He has no allergies, but the records aren't always completely accurate so medics are supposed to ask every time.

Medications: "No, nothing! Stop asking me stupid questions and help us!" He sometimes takes cocaine, but won't admit to this in front of his wife.

Magic: "Yes, and I hope you're not going to force me to use any of it." He's a shaman - of wasp! But he won't go telling anyone that bit of juicy info.

Modifications: "Of course I haven't, you idiot, I already told you I have magical abilities."

Pertinent Past History: “Yes of course I’ve hit my head before! I’ve had enough of this bulldrek, I’m cancelling our contracts and moving over to CrashCart as soon as I get out of here.” Nothing significant.

Last Oral Intake: “WHAT’S WRONG WITH MY WIFE?”

Events Leading Up: “Fragging hell. WE WERE IN A CAR CRASH.” If approached correctly he can describe his wife losing control by waving her arms, but is cagey about talking about wasps lest he let too much information slip.

Respirations: Fast but within normal limits

Pulse: Fast but within normal limits

Blood pressure: Slightly elevated

Pulse oximetry: 99% - fine

Blood glucose: Within normal limits

This is primarily a role-playing encounter, testing the medic’s ability to remain professional and deal with a belligerent patient. Explanations of the reasons for doing things and pointing out what’s in progress will help - he’s mostly just worried, the fact that he’s the bad guy doesn’t figure into it. The bleeding will be stopped by direct pressure - pressing on the wound with the palm of a hand will suffice, until there’s an opportunity to wash it out with a bottle of water and bandage it. It’ll need a doctor to look at it though to clean it properly and seal it up.

Although his injuries are minor, they could be much worse based on the mechanism of injury, and a poor Assessment roll will fail to check for leg injuries, internal injuries or symptoms of traumatic brain injury. That’ll get the medic chewed out by their shift supervisor when the paperwork goes through. The alternative is taking full spinal precautions; holding his neck still, strapping him to a spinal immobilisation board and so on. He’ll be refusing this vehemently and has that right. Anyway, this is a hard one to mess up medically, he’ll be fine whatever happens.

Extrication

The only way to access the car to begin with is through the rear driver-side door. The front door is mangled and the right side of the car is pressed up against another vehicle. Windows can be smashed and pried away easily (but be sure to tell the patients to guard themselves, or you may be looking at more injuries). The driver's door can be removed within two minutes with an Extrication roll against 3.

Getting to the right side of the vehicle will require removing the Jackrabbit, which is best done by securing it to the ambulance and dragging it a few feet, having first ensured there's nothing binding the two wrecked cars together, but there's limited room to manoeuvre with other cars parked around. Freeing Dominic will take some time, first popping the door and then dismantling the dash. Mind his legs!

Load & Go

The most appropriate destination is the nearest DocWagon™ clinic. Daniel can be persuaded to go, since he doesn't have a car anymore and he wants to stay with his wife anyway. The journey is uneventful.

Response Time

To expedite this scene, die rolls can be kept to a minimum (not cut out entirely though), and the extrication difficulties glossed over somewhat. The important parts are:

- Olwyn's life-threatening condition that initially looks like a result of the crash
- Making Dominic recognisable when encountered later on

- Introduction of the wasp theme