

Finale: Debugging

Under orders from the dragon Bestenzuerst, the team makes its way to the baddie and the wasp spirit hive for the final showdown!

Some Days You're the Windscreen

How this goes will depend on lots of variable factors - whether or not the shadowrunners are on board, whether the team decides to approach full-tilt red-hot maximum power or pretend everything's normal and just bring in the Trojan big rig, whether they know they're going for insect spirits and are equipped as such or not, and so on.

Dominic Berger is in the warehouse area awaiting the arrival of his shadowrunners, along with four flesh-form security guards like we've tangled with before. He's got a building set aside for Bestenzuerst, with the intention that they back the truck up, unload her and when they're gone he can get down to some summoning of the queen spirit in this fine host body. Then he can lock it up for the weeks of incubation and when the merge is complete bring her up to the hive, in the top, incomplete storey of the office building.

When he realises something's wrong, he'll set the security guards on the attackers, shout villainous things and retreat up to the hive, throwing magic about appropriately. Once Berger is gone, Bestenzuerst can just breathe fire all over anybody who comes near the rear of the truck (don't bother rolling, they just die), but she's still not in much state for moving about or flying. Her orders are "BRING ME BERGER."

Here's a list of peoples' agendas:

Dominic Berger: In order of importance, protect himself, protect the hive, get a nice host body for summoning a queen, preferably Bestenzuerst, and if not, take her out because otherwise he's screwed.

Bestenzuerst: Get Berger, alive. Maybe keep him for study or something. Destroy the hive (if she has reason to suspect there is one) and clean up her business' premises.

The shadowrunners: Kill Berger, because having it known they turned on their boss like that won't do their reps any good, but if he's dead who's gonna tell?

DocWagon™ HTR team Medic-2I: Naturally this is mostly up to the players, but let's remember that Dominic Berger is a DocWagon™ client, and therefore contractually entitled to extraction, treatment and transportation to an appropriate medical facility.

Role-play out dissenting opinions, and see if compromise will be possible. Both the runners and the dragon will be willing to settle - runners like money and Bestenzuerst can assure them that she can have good word of them filter down to the right levels of society. DocWagon™ aren't legally allowed give out medical information, including location, but if they were to tell Bestenzuerst where Berger was being treated she could ensure he's picked up (by this team of runners, if they want the job) and never gets to make it known that the team broke the rules. And, of course, Berger can't exactly turn up in court saying "so there I was in my wasp spirit hive, when my kidnap victim turned on me and..." (but he can complain directly to DocWagon™ management).

Fry Hive

The insect spirits have fallen back to the building to defend the hive to the last. The team will have to fight their way through the defenders to get there. In total there are 12 flesh-form spirits (in host bodies), plus another 8 true-forms (free-roaming spirits). The unfinished office floor housing the hive is like the under-construction bits from Die Hard - exposed pillars, unfinished wiring, construction equipment and piles of materials lying about, pointy steel reinforcement rods protruding. It's close and somewhat maze-like. It can be accessed by one of two lifts, both programmed not to go to the top floors and so needing to be overridden, and two stairwells, one at each side.

The hive itself is in one corner and is a papery hive thing on a large scale, using the existing walls and piles of bricks and such where possible and its own material elsewhere. It's got a roughly human-sized entrance hole. Within it's warm and organic-smelling and

seems sort of alive. There are five pod-like sacs bulging in a manner that appears to contain humanoid shapes. They're guarded by three flesh-form soldiers and two flesh-form workers. It'll burn okay if anyone thinks to try that. Daniel Berger is pretty intent on preventing this though.

Releasing lots of insecticide on the top floor would make Bestenzuerst happy. Careful not to get it on you though, it's pretty lethal to humans too in large doses and can be breathed or even absorbed through the skin. Treatment is lots of atropine and a fast trip to hospital. Insecticide will take out true-form spirits but has no particular effect on flesh-forms, except the effect it has on their host bodies (takes a while to work up to it, but ultimately nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and eventually death). Any PC getting it on them who fumbles a HEA test will, over the coming minutes, produce tears and saliva before getting into the good stuff mentioned above.

Some fun things to do on the way up include people waiting in ambush in stairwells, jumping down on top of the lift, a true-form wasp spirit flying up the middle of a stairwell to attack in manifested form, a giant wasp-troll for kung fu action, the ambulance being able to shoot folks it can see by remote control ("knock him over to the window!") and so on.

If the shadowrunners are on board, Lemper will deal with true-form spirits in astral space and Klikk and Rip will be watching his back and leaving the team to their own thing unless they really need to help out. To run this more quickly and smoothly, deal with the encounters the team has and just describe what the runners are up to without rolling it out, letting them know that there's plenty of action for everyone.

Knight Errant will show up with heavy force and combat mages when the GM deems it appropriate, like when the worst is over or the players need back-up.

The Swat Team

Wrapping up depends on what happened, who was involved and what was agreed. Daniel Berger will, if able, put in a call to DocWagon™ if he's injured, and the dispatcher will ask if this team can respond. Bestenzuerst will want to be taken to the Metavariant Centre at Harborview for evaluation and treatment, although she's stable and slowly improving at the moment. Knight Errant will clean this place right up.

If Bestenzuerst is pleased with the team's efforts, each will receive a 20,000¥ certified credstick delivered to their places of residence by a parcel service, with no return address. She'll write a glowing if non-specific letter to the franchise owner and to the board of DocWagon™, which will earn them congratulations and easier career progression in the coming years.

Any injuries are dealt with as normal for on-the-job injuries, with the company picking up the tab as long as treatment is provided by their own clinics. Barring that, everybody's expected to be back in three days for their next scheduled shift.

The journalist's sim-sense recording is an absolute hit, once it's been edited down and certain aspects rendered unidentifiable, such as Bestenzuerst and Freedonia Manufacturing. It's the ticket to the big leagues.

DocWagon-2I gets rotated out of service in 2055 and replaced with a newer model of Citymaster. It's sold by auction to a group of shadowrunners, used in a run on an electrical sub-contractor involved in the construction of the Renraku Arcology, and destroyed by a team of Renraku Red Samurai.

Response Time

This can be minimalised - Berger can go down right then and there, Bestenzuerst can flame out the guards as colour and Knight Errant take the nest, in which case it's almost a descriptive epilogue. Important:

- Deliver the patient to the rendezvous
- Determine the aftermath based on decisions made