

ALTERNITY "THE LIGHTHOUSE" SESSION SUMMARY

07/04/2010

The Characters

Player	Character	Class	Status
Ernest	Cap. Ken Takashi	Diplomat (TO)	Absent
Tim	Haggernak	Combat Spec	Present
Bruce	Lambert Fulson	Free Agent	Present
Patrick	Lenny	Free Agent	Present
Ernest	Markus Oroszlan	Combat Spec	Absent
Patrick	Martin St. John	Tech Op	Present
Tim	Prof. Gerard Peppin	Mind Walker	Present
Chris	Rokk Tressor	Free Agent	Present
Bruce	Taveer	Tech Op	Present
Chris	Ten-zel Kim	Diplomat (TO)	Present

At the end of last session, the Lighthouse had starrisen into an area 5 lightyears from Hammer's Star in order to rescue refugees fleeing from the alien fleet in that system. When the heroes got there they found a small alien fleet (an Intruder, 2 Riddares, and some cutters) pursuing the refugees. Captain Takashi took the Lighthouse's fleet and fought the alien fleet, destroying it. Meanwhile a group of heroes on Professor Peppin's stealth yacht managed to capture one of the alien's officers, an ape-like alien they had never seen before.

Dealing With Refugees

Martin St. John had set the Lighthouse to accelerating as soon as it appeared in the area. However, the Lighthouse accelerates slowly, so the refugee ships catch up to the Lighthouse pretty easily. By the end of the space battle, the space station is going at a speed of about 6 hexes. Most ships can accelerate to this speed in a round or two.

The sensor ops staff definitely saw the Klick ships sending transmissions out, so there are presumably other alien ships in the area. Otherwise, the sensors team is scanning the area for more aliens or refugees. In the meantime the Lighthouse continues to accelerate hard, surrounded by a cloud of refugee ships, policed by Lighthouse fighter craft.

The Comms Officers coordinate with the refugee ships and determine there are about 30,000 refugees. We decide to leave them on their ships, but docked to the station. Confining the refugees to their ships also helps with security. Those refugees who need to be evacuated from their ships due to failing life support or extreme overcrowding, are placed in the Colosseum on deck 196. The Colosseum can seat 50,000 people, so it's well capable of holding a large squatter camp. Haggernak points out that the Stadium has limited entrances and exits, so it would be easy to lock down and police.

Taveer wants to require each of the refugee ships to hand over complete control of their ships to MINA. The refugees pretty much revolt in the face of this.

The refugees end up electing a representative to negotiate for them. Lavina McKasin is her

name. She understands the Lighthouse's fear about being compromised by aliens, but the refugees also fear alien infiltration of the Lighthouse. Still, we strong arm the refugees into allowing remote observation.

MINA cannot actually monitor all these people at once. So Taveer and Ten-zel Kim work together. Ten-zel has a VoidCorp product "Police State in a Box" which is run on a multiprocessor machine jury rigged by Taveer.

Haggernak deputizes a variety of locals, including Lambert Fulson. Lambert is delighted. Finally, a chance to get in on police corruption!

Peppin checks through the refugee lists for Justice Ethics people who can be brought in, processed, and deputized. He asks Takashi for permission, who agrees just to shut him up. Peppin has trouble doing the bureaucracy work, gets frustrated, and eventually opts to drink his frustrations away. He pulls in a grad student to do the work for him, and tells her "when you finish, feel free to put your name on it. Just below mine. Hand me that brandy, I'm going to the lounge."

Kroath Attack!

One of the airlocks open for processing, and Kroath begin to spill out of it. Each one is 2 meters tall and encased in organic armor that features pulsing veins of glowing liquid and semi-transparent nodules, as well as spikes, sharp edges and bony plates all over it. They are all carrying Kroath dark fusion weapons and filament chains, but two of them have rapid-fire dark plasma triguns.

Lambert quietly takes off his deputy badge and puts on a "I Heart Kroath" badge. Rokk Tressor slaps him in the back of the head and shoves him into the fight.

Lambert, Rokk, and two marines in Paladin Body Tanks are on the receiving end of the kroath rush. Altogether there are 7 kroath.

The marines are named Joe Bob and Susie Lee. Joe Bob has one last resort point, and Susie Lee has two. Patrick plays the role of Joe Bob and Tim plays Susie Lee. Ed plays the kroath.

Marine stats:

Paladin Battle Armor: Good toughness, 2d4 +1 / 2d4+1 / 2d4

Action check: 14+/13/6/3 (max actions 2)

11mm ch rifle: 14/7/3; d6+1 w / d6+3 w / d6+1 m

As the kroath come out and immediately take cover behind airlocks on either side of the hall, Lambert screams and empties his magazine at one of them. The kroath return fire. Joe Bob takes a wound and a couple stun.

Rokk fires a burst at a kroath, inflicting 5 wounds and 4 stun. Lambert runs for cover and fires blindly, missing the kroath. Joe Bob sounds the alarm and fires a burst fire on the wounded kroath.

The kroath all launch into a battle rage. They took barbarian levels! Crap!

One of the kroath rushes forward. It lashes at Susie Lee with a monofilament chain, but her armor absorbs nearly all of it. One of its buddies hits Susie Lee with a black plasma bolt. Again, the armor takes most of it. Another one hits Joe Bob with a glancing hit as well.

The heavy weapon kroath open up, and we learn that their tri guns do the same damage as the rifles, but have better range and can do autofire.

Joe Bob fires a bantam anti-personnel missile into the back of the hallway. He hasn't been trained in its use, and indirect weapons take a +2 penalty at short range. He spends a last resort point to make it accurate anyways. Susie Lee follows his example and fires a bantam as well. One of the kroath drops.

Lambert fires blindly down the hall and runs away. He misses anything worthwhile.

The kroath bathe the marines in dark plasma fire, who barely withstand the hits, only due to their heavy armor and their automated trauma packs.

Rokk sprays one of the kroath with autofire. It seems unaffected. Joe and Suzy both back up and fire another pair of Bantam rockets. Joe Bob asks “why did they give us atomic weapons and no training on them?” Susie Lee just shrugs and lights up the hallway with enough radiation to make the hallway glow for the next 2000 years.

The kroath finally gun down the two marines, but before they drop, they manage to launch one last poorly aimed pair of bantam rockets. This drops all the kroath. It also washes enough radiation over the two marines that Joe Bob expires and Susie Lee spends a long period in the infirmary.

Rokk notes down that the average Kroath can take 6 Bantam missiles before dropping.

After this, the security on the station gets even more paranoid, and slows down the processing of refugees to double-check every ship. Some suspect ships end up getting blown out of the sky by the station's fighters and lone escort.

The refugees say that the klick fleet appeared ten hours after they arrived, so it is likely that more ships will be showing up to find and destroy the Lighthouse within 10 hours.

The Ape-Monster Alien Captive

The B Team docks at the station with the ape-alien captive, and moves him to CIB holding. Peppin keeps the alien under sedation, and Lenny hangs out in the room. Markus and Ten-zel both have work to do, and wander off (Ten-zel is setting up Police State in a Box with Taveer, and Markus is back in his bar). There are also a couple marines standing by. The characters are worried about two issues: how dangerous the alien will be when it wakes up, and protecting it in case space vampires teleport into the room.

We bind the alien with carbon-fiber binders, which have a built in shock feature triggered with a command baton (Lenny holds it).

The alien awakes and stares at Peppin with it's luminous cat-like eyes. It calls Peppin a pitiful pink hairless thing. When Peppin tries to tell the alien his name, it says it will assign him a name when he is a slave of the I'krl Theocracy.

Peppin tries to read the ape's mind, but finds much greater resistance than before. Not only that, but he takes three stun from the brief contact, and takes a minute to get his breath back.

Peppin tries to start up a conversation with the arrogant alien, but it's mostly a non-starter. Finally, he tries coaxing it into accepting alcohol. As Peppin gets close to give the alien a drink, though, it suddenly lunges against its restraints and tries to scratch him. Peppin dodges back.

Haggernak shows up at this point. The prisoner seems glad to see someone who looks like a true person, not some pitiful mangy monkey-creature like Peppin, or weird tiny lizard like Lenny. Haggernak begins to talk to the creature and it says that it could talk to him, if Haggernak made the others leave. Haggernak has the other characters leave, wondering if the alien realizes they'll just watch the interrogation on a monitor in the next room.

Haggernak finds out the alien's name is Hox, and its race is the Bareem. Haggernak asks about the First Four (Peppin found out about the First Four from the alien's mind last session).

Hox immediately recites, “The First Barem—Warrior—lived by his Strength and Sinew. The Second Barem—Hunter—lived by her Stealth and Stalking, The Third Barem—Keeper—lived to protect his family and clan by Building and Binding. The Fourth Barem—Protector—lived to protect the families by combining what she learned from the Three and use all skills equally. The bareem are the children of the First Four, though the Fourth gains a special place as the mother of all bareem and thus we have aspects of all four in each of us. The Four taught us to remain strong to kill, consume, or control our enemies, thus leading to the present day.”

Haggernak finds that the Bareem apparently have a strong oral culture and will gladly spend hours telling tales. Haggernak shares tales from his own Weren culture as well, and soon the two are talking like old friends. Over the course of the next week, Haggernak plies all sorts of useful information out of the Bareem.

Races of the I'krl Theocracy

Sifarv – the masters of the theocracy; birdlike flyers, powerful paralyzing scream; warlike and expansionistic

Thaal – Priests of the I'krl (religion), brought the religion to the Sifarv. Even punier than humans, but with powerful minds, psionics. Lots of mind control.

Gardhyi – Exiles from their homeworld, the Thaal's spymasters

Bareem – First among the slave races, the Sifarv's enforcers

Klick, Kroath, and the Teln are lesser slave races / fodder races

Kadaran – weapons and ships are made by strange little bug creatures; they engineered the klick and kroath; somewhat outside of the hierarchy because they are all OCD scientists.

The Bareem does not recognize N'sss or Magus

Asked about the Medurr, the Bareem has heard of them, but knows little.

Other Important Info

One day, Haggernak enters with his fraal lieutenant Gayth Ahrian, and sees a storm of emotions cross the Bareem's face. He is somewhat horrified by “the heretic.” Haggernak determines that the Thaal and the Fraal are the same species, but different subspecies. (Note: the wanderer Fraal are not the Thaal; they departed after stardrives were developed; however, the Fraal are still likely to be a Thaal off-shoot)

According to Hox, the Slime / Bio Ships were created by the Kadarans, but the mechanical ships are Imperial Sifarv ships.

Hox was a sort of political officer, loyalty police. The Klicks were actually running the ship.

The Exeat is the name of the military force sent to the Verge, it has large but reasonably limited forces. The Empire back home has nearly limitless power, but is far away.

The external fortress ships have cathedrals, as would battle cruisers and other massive ships like carriers. The cathedrals allow the Thaal to focus their prayers and achieve interstellar travel. The smaller ships cannot travel this way.

The ghardhyi have their starweb, while the thaal convene with the I'krl to travel between stars. Presumably the Sifarv have their own FTL technology.

The clicks have their own scientists and will dissect humans just to learn more about them, probably gathering information for their kadaran masters.

Hiding the Lighthouse

10 hours after the klick battle... the Lighthouse is cruising at a speed of 60, constantly accelerating. (Bruce does some math, and determines that the Lighthouse is accelerating at 55 m/s^2 , or about 5.7 G's. The warships are accelerating at about 300 G's. Thank heavens for inertial dampeners)

There is some discussion about what to do with the station to avoid the klick fleets. We're moving ripping fast away from our jump point, and worried about pursuit. We can shut off engines and run silent and hope for stealth. We can also do full burn, and hope for speed.

We opt to fly dark after spending 17 hours at full burn (we figured a 20 hour turn around time on reinforcement, and we shut down three hours early to be safe).

Taveer manages to reduce the stardrive recharge interval to 56 hours, so we still need 39 hours before we launch again.

Taveer shuts down the station's energy outputs, getting an amazing result to make us hard to find. (They have a +5 difficulty to spot us). Martin St. John gets an ordinary, miss, and good success to spot the enemy (despite only using the mass detector to find them). The enemy never actually manage

to spot us, but we see their scout ships on occasion.

So we spend several days hiding in the darkness while Rokk Tressor (via Haggernak's weird warrior bonding) gets useful information from the Bareem captive. As soon as the stardrive is charged again, the Lighthouse jumps back into drivespace, headed for Argos.

Taveer's unsettling day

A geological survey worker (silver bell refugee) approaches Taveer. His family's ship got its stardrive burned out, and was working with a company on the Lighthouse to repair their stardrive. Now the people who took the drive to repair it are saying that they're having component issues, and it's looking to cost 50,000 credits. Taveer asks who is scamming them, and gets the names Lambert Fulson and Ten-zel Kim. Taveer decides to go investigate.

Meanwhile, Lambert is trying to convince Ten-zel Kim to go in on a scheme in which he takes components of stardrives and then gouges their owners. Ten-zel Kim is, however, busy running relocating gambling dens (complete with euphoric trace gasses in the room to keep the gamblers addicted to the experience). He agrees to let Lambert store stuff in the VoidCorp embassy (complete with diplomatic immunity). When Lambert moves his goods into the embassy, Ten-zel kicks him out and calls Haggernak to tell him about a mysterious pile of starship parts and he had no idea what to do with it. Haggernak agrees to check it out, hangs up, and then goes back to weird warrior bonding rituals with Hox.

Taveer calls Ten-zel up, who claims he has no involvement in Lambert's scheme. He refers Taveer to Haggernak. Taveer then calls up Haggernak, interrupting the homoerotic puppet games going on with the new alien. Haggernak simply transfers responsibility of the case over to Taveer's department along with some personal "Congratulations on your newly delegated responsibility."

Lambert gets a visit from Haggernak. Haggernak starts asking about this company offering to transport refugees. The discussion goes round and round, until Haggernak threatens to ground Lambert's ships with inspection duty unless Lambert sets more reasonable prices. Lambert folds, but is completely mystified that his attempts to bribe Haggernak failed.

Feed me, Lenny!

Lenny gets home, and there's three Blix in his apartment. What the hell? There's also a strange alien plant growing in the corner. He remembers leaving a goo spattered garment in that corner. Oh! The goo was from the Klick ship. Is this a klick plant?

The Blix seem to know how to care for the plant, and are pruning/caring for it. Lenny sets up a camera to monitor the plant, and otherwise leaves it alone. The blix come back the next day with some fertilizer. Lenny didn't even know the blix understood klick botany.

Lenny takes a sample from the plant, and takes it to the infirmary. He tries to get someone to analyze the plant, and near him Lambert is complaining loudly about an "injury" he took while being ejected from the VoidCorp embassy. Complaining louder than the legitimately injured refugees.

Lenny finally gets a hold of Dr. Paul Mutalis and asks him to analyze the plant. The doctor looks at the little lizard and asks why he brought this back from the klick ship... He is confused, and finally Lenny just bribes the man. This gets him to stop asking questions. Lenny finds he's purchased a referral to Peppin.

Lenny shows up at the Borealin embassy, and asks to speak to Peppin. Peppin gets a call rousing him from the banality of managing a small horde of refugees by a tiny lizard who wants him to look at some tree bark. The camera crew desperately asks him to see the lizard to alleviate the boredom. Peppin analyzes the cutting and determines that it's a weapon tree.

The next day the blix excitedly pull Lenny to the plant and carefully draw his hand to the plant. The plant seems to sense the T'sa's presence and extends a couple tendrils to grasp the lizard's hands. Lenny is inclined to pull his hand away, but it would damage the plant. Lenny clenches his teeth and

lets it hold his hand. Finally he lets go and leaves to wash his hand. He discovers five little puncture wounds on his palm, but they don't hurt. It all heals pretty fast.

In the five days in drive space, Lenny's plant grows closer to him. Also, it absorbs some of Lenny's DNA. By the end of the trip, Lenny finds recognizable weapon pods.

Starrise in Argos

The Lighthouse jumps on to Argos. Because of the Lighthouse's speed, we actually arrive at the same time (or earlier) as the heavier refugee ships (the large carrier type ships). Our refugees are also happy to go to Argos, in order to meet up with family and friends.

Argos is a developing system, which has terraformed oceans to support plankton and other small life. They will soon introduce larger sea life.

Taveer manages another fast recharge cycle on the drive, and the soonest we could leave the system is Jan 31.

Note on dates:

Hammer's Star Attack happened on Jan 15

Lighthouse arrived near Hammer's Star Jan 20

Left for Argos on Jan 23

Arrived on Jan 28

Klick Fleet, Space Battle!

17 hours after the Lighthouse arrives at Argos, a Klick fleet arrives. It has an Invader class ship (battle cruiser), one Intruder, 2 Riddares, and assorted support fighters (20). We spot the fleet 800 hexes out. That gives the Lighthouse 10 minutes to get a response ready.

We dump as many refugee ships towards the planet as we can.

We launch three waves of missiles at the approaching ships in scaling speeds so they hit the Invader simultaneously.

As the Lighthouse launches missiles, Ten-zel Kim gets a visitor! A girl appears in his room dressed in period 19th century garb, and says "Hello Daddy! I've been looking for you for so long!" Ten-zel thumbs his alarm button as fast as she can, but his security can't get through his door, it seems to be stuck. She tells him of the trials and tribulations she went through to reach him, full of magical creatures and fantastical lands.

Meanwhile, our missiles arrive and hit the Invader! We sent 3 zero-points, 13 high yield nukes, 16 MRB, and 16 plasma. The Invader manages to shoot down 11 of them, but the rest hit home, including two of the super-heavy zero-point missiles. The Invader's structure is still nominally intact, but the ship is basically dead. We could theoretically board the ship still, and probably find living defenders.

Back on the Lighthouse, the little girl is babbling on about unicorns and lakes and handmaidens. Ten-zel is very stressed by this, and he's going to indulge in some adult beverage... he takes one of his Efficient Engine doses. It makes him attentive and relaxed.

The rest of the external battle group gets into range. We send our destroyers and fighters, and an existing missile volley is directed at their Intruder. We fire another missile volley to follow it.

The Concord destroyers fire at one of their Riddares, and destroy it. Our escorts open up at their cutters, destroying one.

Their Intruder and Riddares open fire on the Bang. The Bang takes some damage and loses its computer core, taking a +1 to all attack rolls.

Our missiles hit their Intruder. The mix was 8 plasma, 8 mrb, and 8 high yield (they shoot down 17 missiles of the 24 missiles; we land 3 nukes, 2 mrb, and 2 plasma). They take light damage, and they lost their accommodations. Poor bug lounge!

Our fighters launch a volley of missiles as well.

Ten-zel notices the alarms are getting louder. He clicks on the screen and notices the tactical display showing a black clad knight and squire surrounded by 19 little goblins. A dead dragon lays behind them. There's a castle with lots of little knights and archers in front of it. However, it looks like our knights are no match for the black knight. Alice says this is a great story. The peasants are fleeing from their homeland, but the black knight is trying to kill them. But, luckily the wizard who lives in the castle has killed the black knight's dragon.

Ten-zel looks at one of his magazines, and it looks like a normal magazine, but printed in the 19th century.

The Hecatombe fires on the remaining Riddare, and the Bang fires on the Intruder. Amazing success! The escorts fire on the Intruder with their heavy plasma beams and the Lighthouse fires its 30 plasma cannons at the cutters, taking out 8 of them effortlessly. The fighters scramble against the cutters in a dogfight.

In return, the cutters take out two of our fighters.

The Intruder fires on the Lighthouse with its boson guns and scores solid hits! One of the Lighthouse's reactors goes down and the stardrive gets knocked out.

Ten-zel Kim sees all the lights flicker and come back on. The simulation shows the black knight attacking the castle. Alice says it's starting to look bad for the castle. Ten-zel asks Alice how she got on board. Where is your carriage? It's with my handmaidens, shielded by an invisibility spell I cast myself! Are the handmaidens older girls? Oh yes, they're fairies!

We destroy their remaining Riddare, and the next missile volley knocks out the Intruder's heavy plasma beams and remaining crew accommodations. The Intruder is shaken (+1 penalty to all rolls) and the missiles knocked out both it's reactors and did minor damage to its boson guns (+1 penalty to attack rolls).

All that's left is mop-up. One more missile volley finishes off the Intruder, and the remaining Concord fleet has no problem with the cutters.

The Lighthouse is left in orbit around Argos. Taveer gets an amazing success to repair the reactor and an ordinary success to repair the FTL drive.

Crazy XP!

6 xp for all characters!