

"THE LIGHTHOUSE" SESSION SUMMARY –

SEPTEMBER 6, 2007

Attendance

Paul, the Star Slammer (GM) declares that he has finished statting up all our spaceship assets, so it's time to blow them up in some spaceship combat. Then he suffers a mild stroke and can only speak in an offensive faux Chinese accent thereafter ("My plinter is bloken!").

Ernest (Ken Takashi, Marcus Oroszlan) silently sits and judges others.

Chris (Ten-zel Kim, Rokk Tressor) saw Mike Judge's new movie Extract this week, and it has left him feeling vaguely under the weather. He bakes obsessively as we game.

Peco (Adun Zelnaga, Ivan Stukoff) sneaks in late from his Sunday morning Communist Party meetings. It's just like church!

Bruce is missing in action. We have reason to believe that the reason is that a Korean dominatrix is refusing to unchain him from a radiator.

Patrick is also missing in action, but he told us ahead of time so the reason is much less scurrilous.

Paul hands out plot cards, and we all faithfully do a one page writeup of how we want it to play out. I get "Helping someone out: An NPC needs your help with something" and I assign it to Markus and spin a tale of some waitress chick whose father is a degenerate gambler and she wants Markus to stop him from losing the whole family's money at a Thuldan Hold 'Em tournament in the Corner. This is tricky because the guy isn't some

mook; he's connected and is sometimes involved in Markus' gun deals, so he can't alienate him by just barring him from the bar or tournament.

The Windup

Ten-zil Kem is returning to his ambassadorial suite looking forward to getting in his zero-g Jacuzzi, but when he enters someone has redecorated with a bunch of stuffed animals and creepy looking dolls on all the shelves. He immediately stomps off and drags his assistant Shane back to fix the problem, but when they return, everything is normal. Ten-zel sends Shane off and starts looking up contraindications of all the drugs he's taken in the last week or so.

Adun Zelnaga has received a package from Bluefall, from Ann Wolfitz. It contains a cyber endoskeleton of unusual make. He checks it over for obvious signs of previous use (like gobbets of flesh attached to it) but finds none, and looks for a note or other explanation. There is a recorded message from Ann, asking him to arrange a surgery to install the skeleton into "someone" on the Lighthouse. She is coming and will be doing the actual surgery. He launches into research!

Markus is working at the bar and he notices one of the waitresses, Tanya, is sitting with her head down at a table instead of working her shift up in the casino. He goes over and says, "Hey, Tanya, what's the holdup?" She replies, "Oh, I'm sorry, I'll get back to it, I need a minute." "Uh... Is there anything I can do?" asks the warlion uncomfortably. "No, I'm fine, thanks." "Uh... OK, great." Markus returns to polishing glasses. She pulls herself together and heads up the lift to the casino.

Tanya's the daughter of a rich arms dealer Markus deals with from time to time, Marlok Taneer. Markus thinks of this because shortly after Tanya goes up, he comes down the loft from the casino. He's an older, boisterous man, who is always with his bodyguard, a disagreeable guy who's pop-eyed like Marty Feldman. He tips Markus and asks for some

"Thaluvian Monkey Nebula whiskey, straight up, like a man!" He confides in Markus that he's in a hot thalot (space card game) tournament being put on by Jayzee Ravel coming up in a couple days.

More Scottish Foreplay

A couple days later Ten-zel has another unfortunate decorating experience. Besides the stuffed animals, this time it's decorated in nineteenth century French. A girl dressed in antique Earth clothing comes out of a door. "I'm so glad you're here! I've waited for you for so long!" "Great... so who sent you?" Ten-zel mentally reviews his recent hooker purchases but can't remember any of this sort. "Sent me? I am sent by the wings of Cupid!" Ten-zel offers her a drink. "I'm too young for that!" she exclaims. Ten-zel spews whiskey all over the place when he hears that. "Well, it's been great, how about we go for a walk..." He tries to show her out and the girl freaks out and pulls a knife on him!

"You don't want to do anything rash," Ten-zel says as he feels around for a security button. The girl lunges! She stabs him deep in the chest. He runs to the desk and pulls out a stutter pistol and stuns her. "I'll never forgive you for this! I'll kill you! I'll kill you all!" and she disappears along with the dolls. Sadly, his chest wound remains. Security shows up quickly and takes him to sickbay.

Adun checks on the weird exoskeleton and it's missing! He investigates and discovers that the door records indicate that Adun had accessed the lab yesterday, but he doesn't remember that. The lab's biometric sensors would have taken a pretty smart chap to defeat. After a search, he finds some trace DNA evidence. He runs it and violates all the 26th century's HIPAA rules by cross-referencing it against the station medical database. It belongs to Lesilon Kore, a medical student from Galvin.

Markus is contemplating Tanya's sudden bouts of absenteeism. More people are talking about the thalot tournament. It's being held in a private back room at Jordiken's Holistic Massage. Anyone who knows the right people and has a large stake can get in. Markus thinks, "Who do I know that's a degenerate gambler?" Rokk Tressor comes to mind. Next time Rokk comes in the Corner Markus hits him up and tells him about the tournament. Rokk says that he's more the "game with friends" level of gambler and less the "10,000 credit stake" level of gambler. Tanya goes moping by. Markus says, "She's been slacking a lot lately." Rokk begins to brainstorm. "Is she stealing from you? On drugs? Pregnant? Maybe she's sad because her father is going to get her saddled with a huge family debt from his degenerate gambling." Markus looks at Rokk in amazement.

Ken Takashi is on the bridge. The Lighthouse is in orbit around Alaundra in Tendril to meet with the Monitor, the ship that ferries back and forth between the Verge and Old Space. The capital of the system, Babel, is there. They have a space elevator! Anyway, Ken is reading the latest security report on the most recent depravity to come out of Ten-zel Kim's section of the ship when the sensor operator reports a ghost contact. It doesn't show up on mass or EM scanners but shows up on visual. "On screen!" he commands. It looks like a very heavily armored and armed warship! He sounds general quarters and orders the comm officer to hail the ship.

The klaxons blare just as Ten-zel is dealing with security and Adun has discovered the medical student's theft. Markus presses a button and a blast door comes down in front of the liquor in back of the bar and fills the space with quick-hardening foam.

On the screen back in the bridge appears an irate woman in antique garb. Her face is covered in white makeup and bright red lipstick. "Unidentified ship, please state your business," says the Captain in his best official voice. "Surrender your ship to me!" she demands. "Uh, I don't think that's going to happen..." replies Captain Takashi. "Then

DIEEEE!” screeches the woman and cuts the connection. “The ship is approaching!” reports the sensor officer.
“Scramble fighters!”

The Pitch

The bridge is in a frenzy as the station launches its complement of ships. Ken barks orders. “Get in touch with Babel and ask them if they know who this crazy broad is! Interceptors on line! Hail that ship again! Lock down all public areas! Get any Concordan PCs to the bridge!” The mystery ship opens up with a battery of 16 quantum cannons on the Lighthouse with amazing accuracy, pounding the crap out of it. The Lighthouse tries to fire missiles, but all their missiles are set to target mass and the opposing ship is still showing no mass. They refuse to respond to hails. Repairbots swarm into action but they aren’t anywhere near keeping up with this magnitude of damage to the station.

The Lighthouse’s complement of two destroyers, four escorts, and sixteen fighters madly accelerate and try to intervene in the massive display of firepower going on. The enemy ship launches a dozen fighters and opens fire on the destroyers. The destroyers are nearly destroyed outright. Half of their systems are disabled. It takes about 45 minutes to resolve each salvo from this damn ship. Our attacks are all fruitless. We surrender so that there is no more die rolling inflicted on us.

Then a voice speaks to Ten-zel. It is “Alice” and she’s been captured by the “Red Queen.” She demands that he rescue her so that she can reclaim her kingdom! He asks for more details and they are not forthcoming. He calls the bridge. “Hey Captain, Alice says the Red Queen has captured her...” “This is all your fault somehow isn’t it Kim! Get your ass to the shuttle bay!” We load up a nuclear warhead into the shuttle and get underway. Ten-zel and the Captain debate what is going on.
“What did she want?”

“For us to come over and surrender.”

“Did she ask for me specifically?”

“No, but I figured you were involved. Why, do you think the Red Queen and Alice are the same person and she wants to haul you off to marriage land?”

“That sounds horrible!”

“Want a cyanide pill?” <offers pill>

“Uh, no thanks....”

“That’s okay, it’s just a Tic Tac anyway.”

Ten-zel glares at the captain for the rest of the shuttle ride.

As we approach, the ship still doesn’t show up on scanners. It’s way past normal stealth technology. When we dock we’re in a big dusty hangar. No one’s there. The Queen’s voice says, “Come through the hatch!” We flip on the nuke, connect it to the Captain’s communicator, and go in. We go through an ugly bulging passageway. There is writing in an unknown language, lubricant, and an ionized smell. We go down an elevator. When the elevator door opens, tentacled war-bots spill out from many hatches and start shooting at us. One hits the captain, badly wounding him. Ten-zel shoots the elevator control panel and the power goes out to the elevator; it falls several stories and lands with a crash. Everyone is badly injured. The Lighthouse comes over our communicators, saying “Captain! The ship is powering up its stardrive!” and with that there is a lurch as we enter drivespace.

We crawl out of the wreckage. Ten-zel opens up a crawlspace nearby and we clamber up into a maintenance tube. It goes over a room with the climate control machinery, a secondary battery room, a shields room... We go into the climate control room to access a computer terminal. Ten-zel messes with the terminal but can’t get to much. He sets the climate control so that it keeps running even if someone turns it off at the Captain’s urging, so that the robots can’t flush us out by turning off climate control.

Adun levitates up the elevator shaft and looks out into the hallway. The robots are gone. He zaps a sensor turret with his pyrokinesis and then the robots swarm out again. He zips back down just as they start lasering at him.

Ten-zel bypasses the door to the hangar bay and Ken shoots the sensor array. We rush to the ship before the security robots get there, and fire at them with the shuttle's antipersonnel weapon. Three get blown up before they pull back. We sit in the shuttle, safe for the moment, and discuss.

We investigate the robot. It has blades, manipulator tentacles, laser turrets, grenade launcher, and Good quality alloy armor. It hovers using gravity induction. Its sensor package includes video, thermal, audio, and motion sensors. They communicate using radio but can move and fight independently. In other words, perfect. We sic Ten-zel on figuring out their programming.

From the three destroyed robots, we take their load out of energy grenades: they do a blast of radius 2/4/6 for d6+1s/d6+1w/d4m.

Things to possibly do to save our bacon:

1. Figure out how to jam their comms
2. Figure out how to reprogram them
3. Figure out how to get the lasers off them

A Swing and a Miss

Since our engineer isn't here this week, we stare sadly at the task and then quit.