

STAR*DRIVE SESSION SUMMARY

09/13/2009

Attendance

Paul tells the others, “I don’t want my name to be Serpent Jones for real. That just sounds too much like my porn star name.”

Chris (Ten-Zil Kem and Rokk Tressor) offers, “I don’t see why that would be a problem at all. I mean, look at my name! I go through life like this, and the only problem I run into is the occasional pizza delivery gal flinging herself at me.”

Peco (Adun Zelnaga and General Ivan Stukov) looks like he could only wish that he had such problems.

Bruce (Taveer and Lambert Fulson) shudders. Soon people will start to ask about his relatives Back East. The... other relatives, the ones who really like the sea.

Ernest (Markus Oroszlan and Ken Takashi) attempts to defuse the conversation by asking everyone, “So, did you see Henry Rollins molest Peggy Bundy on television last night?” He is confused when this contribution doesn’t seem to have the effect he’d hoped for.

Chris glances over Bruce’s shoulder and offers, “You don’t seem to be slandering us nearly as vigorously as has been your normal practice. Are you sure you’re feeling okay?”

Patrick (Martin St. John and Lenny) arrives to find everyone arguing experience point totals with the sort of vehemence and foul temper normally associated with Presidential addresses to Congress. He slinks to his seat as quietly as possible.

<i>Character</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Spec / Level</i>	<i>Description</i>
Lambert Fulson	Bruce	FA3	Rigunmor Trader
Taveer	Bruce	TO3	Lighthouse Chief Engineer
Martin St. John	Patrick	TO3	Lighthouse Head Pilot
Lenny	Patrick	FA3	T’sa Ambassador
Ten-zil Kem	Chris	D3	VoidCorp Ambassador, dressed like a 1980’s Space Pimp

<i>Character</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Spec / Level</i>	<i>Description</i>
Rokk Tressor	Chris	FA3	Concord Intelligence Officer
Markus Oroszlan	Ernest	CS3	Thuldan Warlion
Ken Takashi	Ernest	D (TO)3	Star Force Captain
Ivan Stukov	Peco	D (CS)3	Thuldan Diplomat and Retired General
Adun Zelnaga	Peco	MW3	Fraal Mindwalker Doctor Guy

To Recap from Last Session

A mysterious girl-child appeared in *Ten-Zil Kem's* quarters, an event that caused him no small dismay ("I'm a hedonist, not a pervert!"). She confessed her undying love to him, then tried to kill him with a knife. She also claimed that she would kill all his friends, which confused him because he thought he had no friends. Then she vanished into thin air.

Moments later, an unidentified alien warship showed up and effortlessly subdued both the *Lighthouse* and its attached fleet elements. *Captain Ken Takashi* was forced to surrender after only two rounds of combat. In answer to the *Red Queen's* demands, the command crew headed over to the alien ship. Among other things, she wanted the characters to help rescue Alice. Once on board, the crew is ambushed by kill-bots and is forced to flee back to their shuttle. They manage to destroy a couple of the kill-bots with ship weapons; investigation of a destroyed kill-bot revealed (unsurprisingly) that it was extremely well-equipped.

While the characters hide in their shuttle, the Red Queen's ship drops into drivespace. And Ten-Zil Kem continues to have hallucinations. On that promising note, we return to our beleaguered heroes.

Alice Reappears

Alice appears and addresses Ten-Zil Kem, "I am so glad that you and your friends have decided to help me! I love you so much! And I need you to rescue me! But the Red Queen is angry! She has four ogres and she has awakened her magicians!"

Captain Ken Takashi asks, "So, how do we rescue you from the Red Queen?"

“I am a princess of the realm and when you rescue me I will replace her! Here, I have a map of the magic castle!” *Taveer* is quite alarmed when the shuttle’s systems light up. He finds that a detailed map of the eleven-deck alien vessel has now been downloaded into the main computer, apparently translated from the original alien. He reports that there are two AI installations on the ship: a massive one near the top decks, and a small one in the depths of the engineering chambers. *Ten-Zil Kem* has eyes only for the two decks worth of bomb bays and the extensive missile magazines.

“There are magic weapons stored here!” *Alice* points out several storage rooms. “They will help against the armored knights and the ogres! There are many powerful weapons there!”

Adun Zelnaga complains, “Is the shuttle computer always this slow?”

Ten-Zil Kem points out, “It’s always this slow when I’m not using it to look at porn. But then, I’ve got a special accelerator subprocessor installed for that.” *Taveer* shudders.

Captain *Takashi* reminds everyone that they’ve got some energy grenades that have already proved effective against the kill-bots.

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Damage</i>	<i>Blast Radius</i>
Energy Grenade	d6+1s / d6+1w / d4m	2m / 4m / 6m

The Most Clever Plan

The characters examine the deck plans and determine that there is a Fire Control center right off the hangar bay. It has no other access points so should only be manned by as many kill-bots as were originally stationed there. The room should have a terminal for the main computer that *Taveer* can hack into.

Captain *Takashi* organizes some cover for the hangar bay doors and distributes six grenades to each character. He wishes everyone luck as they disembark from the shuttle and take up positions.

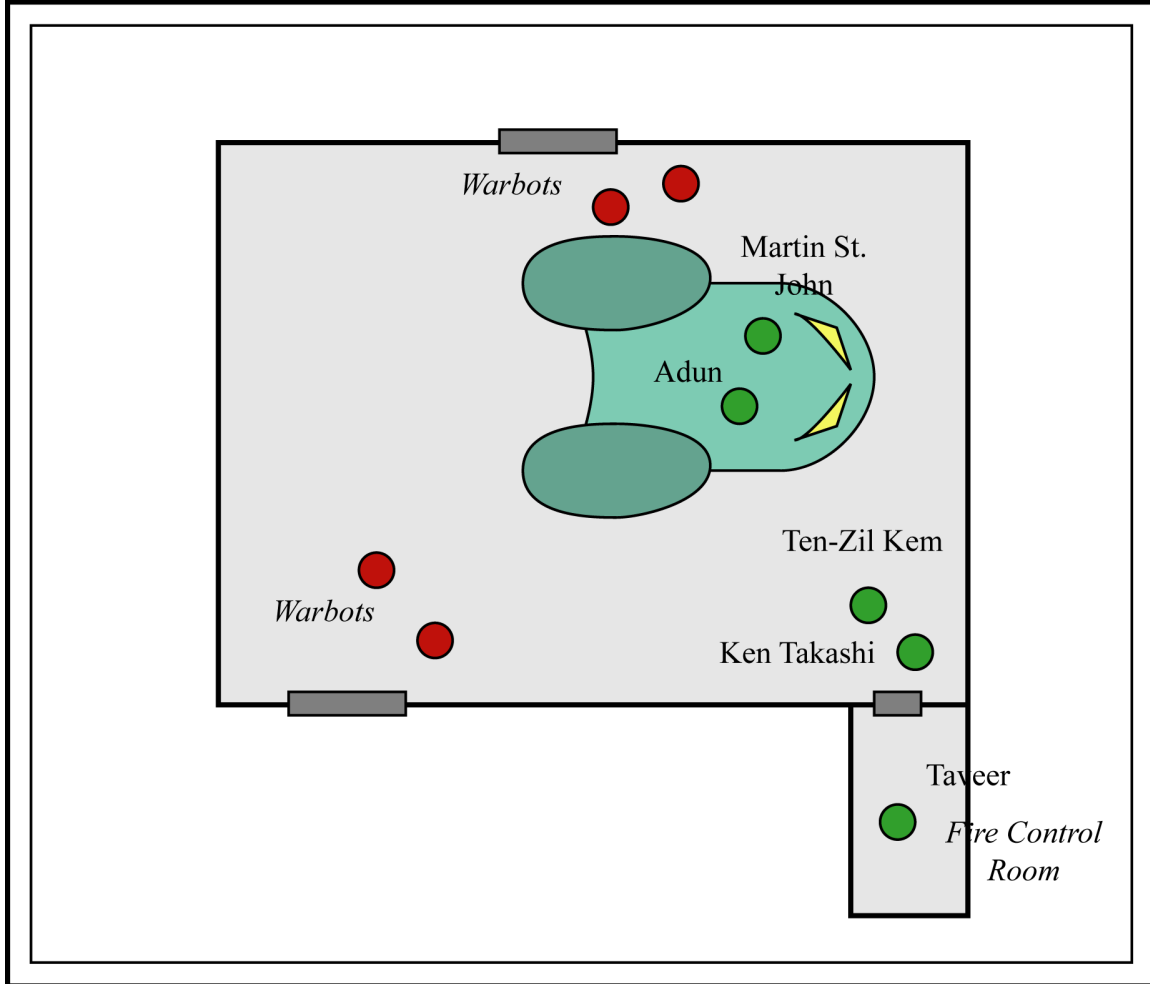
It takes *Taveer* four minutes to winch the Fire Control room door open. He finds the room empty except for glittering banks of computer panels. He exclaims, “How can you call this empty! This room is full of wonder and beauty!” He enters and plugs in to the computer system.

Captain Takashi points out, “We’d better block the door so it doesn’t crush us!” He is maneuvering a crate in place when his prediction is borne out: the door closes with bone-crushing force. Captain Takashi flings himself back as his flimsy crate is crushed flat. He announces, “Don’t worry! None of my bones were crushed!”

The others don’t seem to be that worried about the state of Captain Takashi’s bones.

At this point, the hangar doors slam open and four warbots thunder in. Captain Ken Takashi starts flinging energy grenades as if his life depends upon it (which actually it does). He takes a couple of laser hits in the process. Taveer, trapped in the Fire Control room, starts the slow and painful process of hacking into the computer.

Warbots in the Hangar Bay



Ten-Zil Kem observes that he is trapped behind crates as four warbots move in. The fact that the heroic Captain Takashi continues to draw fire right next to him doesn’t

improve his mood. He resolves to fling an energy grenade then act as though he had been shot. “Aah! Ow! They got me!”

Captain Takashi is disgusted, “Ten-Zil goddammit! Get up and die like a man!”

The warbots respond by raking both Captain Takashi *and* Ten-Zil Kem with their lasers. Ten-Zil Kem screams out, “You’re cheating! You don’t shoot at dead people!”

Martin St. John slews around the shuttle’s antipersonnel guns and blazes away at a kill-bot, missing every time.

Captain Takashi flings another energy grenade, scorching the exterior of two warbots. Ten-Zil Kem decides that this is for the birds. He wraps up all of his remaining grenades and flings the bundle at the feet of a warbot. He calls out, “Adun Zelnaga! Pull the pins!”

The fraal doctor obliges, using his mysterious psychic powers to activate the grenade bundle. There is a tremendous warbot-shattering kaboom and one of the warbots falls in pieces. The other is moderately damaged. All are cheered, except of course for the surviving warbots.

Then Captain Takashi fumbles a grenade and wounds himself and Ten-Zil Kem with it. He falls unconscious, which allows Ten-zil Kem to take his remaining three grenades and fling them at the last group of two warbots, knocking both of them out.

Adun Zelnaga uses his psychic powers to make the last warbot’s head catch on fire. Then he answers Ten-zil’s alarmed cries of, “The Captain’s down! I think he’s hurt!”

Hacking Isn’t Everything It’s Cracked Up to Be

Taveer spends the next thirty minutes failing to hack into the ship mainframe. The end result is that the entire Fire Control room gets shut down and locked out by the main computer. Ten-zil Kem breaks his way through the door and rather gently suggests to the dismayed mechalus, “You realize that if you’ve got a good computer gauntlet you can get a bonus to your rolls? Those things aren’t just for color. See mine? I’ve got one like that, and it’s engraved. See all the rhinestones?” Taveer isn’t cheered much by this.

Ten-zil Kem calls out, “Alice!” He gets her to show up in the deactivated Fire Control room.

Adun Zelnaga asks her, “Can you help us take control of one of these robots? Or tell us the best route to the Queen?”

“I cannot help you with these things. The Queen is in complete control of her castle.”

Ten-Zil Kem tries again, “Can you tell us how many guards there are in the supply room corridor?”

“There is one guard there. He is just there to alert them if you go that way.”

Captain Takashi speaks up from where Adun Zelnaga is treating him, “Where are the ogres?”

“The ogres are in the Queen’s throne room.”

“Of course they are. Where are the wizards? Are they fleshapods like us?”

“I do not know, they move around through mysterious means.”

While the others talk to Alice, Taveer puts together a remote control for one of the robots using parts scavenged from the others. He attaches his sensor gauntlet to the robot’s head to provide a way to send a jamming signal through to keep the robot sentry from calling in reinforcements.

Gearing Up

Captain Takashi sends the remote-operated robot in to destroy the sentry. The sentry robot doesn’t seem to respond at all to the characters’ hijacked drone, even though Taveer painted, “Ho Ho Ho Now I Have a Robot Too!” on its front carapace.

Captain Takashi runs the hijacked robot in and starts shooting at the sentry. Unfortunately, the hijacked robot shuts down before he is able to do any real damage to the sentry warbot. Captain Takashi finishes the job by flinging a bundle of six grenades at it. There isn’t much left except blackened armor fragments when the smoke clears.

Taveer overrides the software on the supply room door and lets the characters in. The supply room contains all sorts of interesting things, most of which the characters are unable to identify. They are able to come up with some weapons equivalent to heavy maser pistols and heavy maser rifles, plus 20 charges of plasma jelly.

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Acc</i>	<i>Md</i>	<i>Rng</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Damage</i>
Alien heavy maser	-1	F	20/40/60	En/G	d6+1w/ 2d4+1w / d4+1m
Alien heavy maser rifle	-1	F/B/A	40/200/500	En/G	d8+1w / d12w / d6+1m

Ten-zil Kem notes that maser guns are not that common in VoidCorp so he makes a point of stashing a couple of extra guns in the characters' ship.

The Complicated Plan

The characters put together a fantastically complicated plan to weld the hangar doors shut, to use plasma jelly explosive charges to blast through one bulkhead into the Damage Control room, to rush a bulkhead door in using anti-grav lifters to block the Damage Control door, then to take an elevator up to the Crew quarters, and then to burn through another bulkhead into the AI chamber. Simple!

The initial effort to blast through into the Damage Control room works beautifully. Captain Takashi welds the Damage Control room door closed while Taveer jury-rigs the lift door and cracks the shaft. After more effort than really seems necessary, the characters climb into the Crew Quarters.

The Crew Quarters

The characters are quite surprised to see two figures in black jumpsuits retreating away from the lift. Martin St. John yells, "Hey! Come back!" until he realizes that they have strange gray skin and tentacles in place of arms.

Taveer heads towards the next lift to jury-rig it while Captain Takashi examines the Crew Quarters. He finds some cryo-chambers. The whole area looks a lot more comfortable than the other ship chambers, as if it were built for sentient habitation.

Captain Takashi follows the alien crew. He finds a group of six of them, armed with mysterious weapons. He addresses them with the Universal Sign for Peace (and Probing). One of them speaks in an alien tongue, which his communicator translates as, "Release your weapons if you want to keep breathing! We have you covered!"

"We are here to help! Your computers have gone crazy!"

"Who are you? You are not the thaal!"

"I am Japanese, a Captain of the Galactic Concord."

"What is your relationship to the I-krl?"

"We do not know of them. The Galactic Concord has many worlds in this sector of space. We think that you are either way off course or have been frozen for a long time. The only aliens around here are the Klix and the Kroath."

He can eventually tell that the aliens do not believe him. “We do not believe what you say. Gather your compatriots and disarm them as well. We will take you prisoner until we understand what is going on.”

“But we are trying to help you!”

“If what you say is true then you are our friends. But we do not trust you.”

“Say, do you have a clock or a calendar around? Do you have any starmaps?”

“Show us starmaps.”

Captain Takashi projects a map from his commo gear. It is clear that the aliens recognize nothing on the map. The lead alien tells him, “We must be far from home and far from the danger of the I-krl. But you know of the Kroath and the Klix.”

“Is this your ship?”

“This is an automated warship. We are technicians, here to solve problems the regular maintenance bots cannot handle.”

“I think this would qualify as something the maintenance bots cannot handle. Do you have a way to deal with AI malfunctions? Our plan involved using explosives to burn our way into the main AI chamber.”

After some negotiation, Captain Takashi convinces the lead technician *Jaina* to deactivate the traps leading to the main AI room and then identify the proper data column to destroy to shut down the Red Queen. On the way, he learns that the I-krl are an expansionist multi-race conglomeration who seek to subjugate all races they encounter. They tend to transform those species they encounter into their shock troops: both the klix and the kroath were once peaceful creatures.

The Road to the Red Queen's Throne Room

The characters take the elevator up to the next level with Jaina while the other five technicians head to the secondary AI chamber. The characters get to the security hatch leading to the corridor adjacent to the AI room. Jaina punches in her code and it doesn't work. Martin St. John comments, “Oh no, we just sent the other five guys to their doom.”

Then the ship decides to decompress the area and to shut down the artificial gravity. The characters are prepared and put their masks on. Jaina is already wearing an e-suit and is likewise prepared. Adun Zelnaya and Taveer fail to grab hold and are

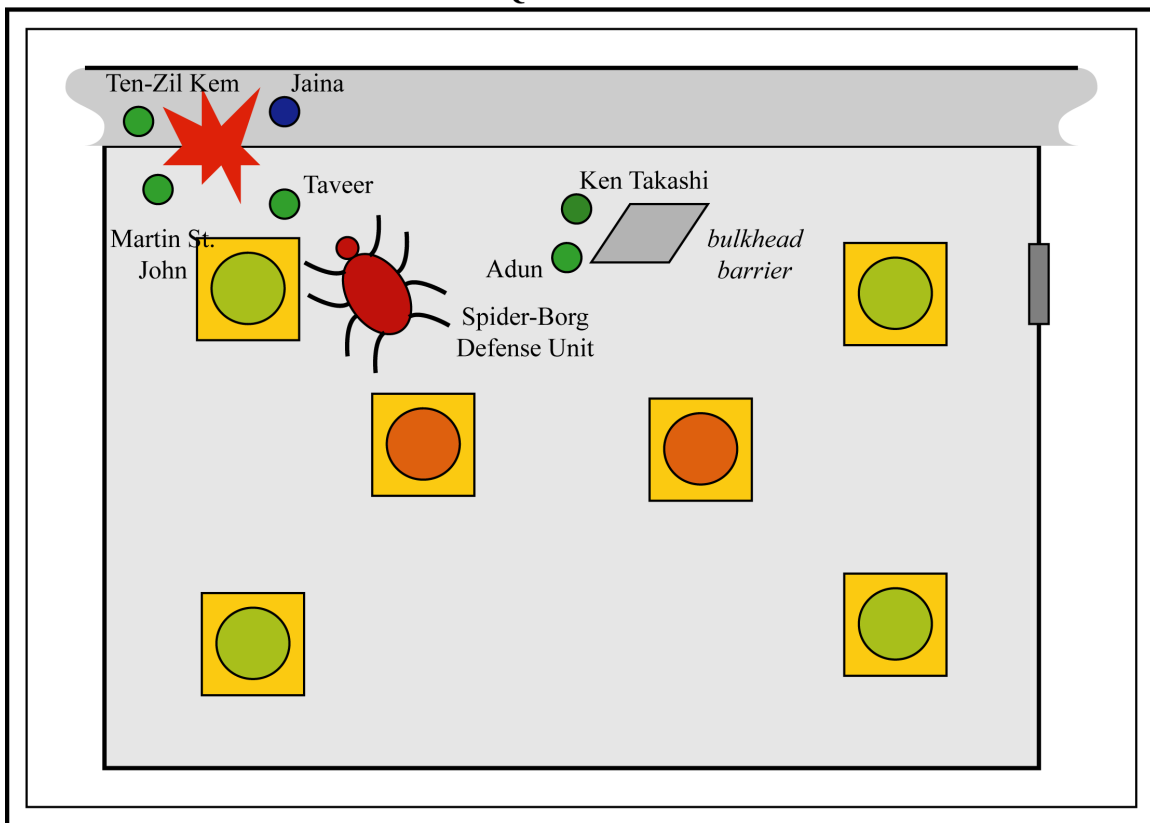
dragged down the hallway towards drivespace-tinged doom. Adun Zelnaya is able to use his teleportation to get to safety. Martin St. John ties a rope to Ten-zil Kem's ankles. The VoidCorp ambassador is able to grab Taveer and drag him away from the airlock.

The characters open the final door. Captain Takashi floats in and sets the plasma jelly charges to open the chamber. The characters peer in and see six AI processor cores, plus a horrible spider-like defense unit linked to the processor cores by a thick bundle of cables.

Martin St. John takes a couple of shots at the spider-borg as it closes upon Taveer and carves him apart.

Captain Takashi and Adun Zelnaya shove a bulkhead with a couple of grav-lifters at the spider-borg. They push right past the creature and shove the bulkhead down the chamber, moving towards the door. They understand that they must block the door before the Red Queen summons in her ogres.

The Red Queen AI's Chamber



Ten-zil Kem identifies the critical computer column in the chamber. He flings a cluster of grenades at it, then shoots out the last few blinking lights. As soon as the last light goes out on the column Ten-zil howls out, “I rule!”

And then all the power in the ship goes out.

Jaina admits, “The AI must have set a deadman trigger to shut down the ship when it went down.”

The characters swiftly determine that they cannot reach the other five technicians. After a few minutes, the electronics start coming back on line. Ten-zil Kem comments, “I cannot wait to be reunited with my true love Alice! I will never lose faith in her!” Sure enough, she appears forthwith.

It turns out that Alice killed the five technicians who went down to shut her off. Very tragic, that.

Let's Have a Wedding

Captain Takashi immediately proposes that the characters organize a wedding for Alice and Ten-zil Kem. Taveer suggests that he can make a new jacket for Ten-zil, lined with plasma jelly “just the way he likes it”. The characters and Jaina spend some time discussing how to handle the potentially crazy AI-controlled ship.

Starfall

The alien ship breaks out of drivespace after five days. The characters are quite glad to see that the *Lighthouse* shows up within a few minutes, having tracked the *Red Queen* through drivespace. Ten-zil Kem does his best to persuade Jaina to join him on the *Lighthouse*, offering the great cuisine, the beautiful gardens, the fantastic drugs, and the fact that people on the *Lighthouse* haven't died in a nuclear holocaust. When telling the truth doesn't seem to be working, he turns to outright lies, which do the job.

The characters proceed to unload their “trash” from the shuttle (specifically, the high-yield nuclear weapon they brought with them) and depart.

Everyone watches as the *Red Queen* shudders in a blossom of thermonuclear flame. Just to be certain, Captain Takashi orders a missile volley. He watches with some consternation as the ship simply vanishes, never to be seen again... maybe.

The End of the Session

Ken Takashi, Ten-Zil Kem, Martin St. John, Adun Zelnaga and Taveer each gain ten experience points. The other characters gain five experience points, because it's always stressful when the fortress-ship you're on is torn up by alien ray-guns.