

# "THE LIGHTHOUSE" SESSION SUMMARY –

## OCTOBER 25, 2007

### **Attendance**

**Chris** (Rokk Tressor, Ambassador Ten-Zel Kim) hoots as he celebrates his birthday. It's unclear which exact birthday, but it's clearly in the double digits somewhere.

**Ernest** (Captain Ken Takashi, Markus Oroszlan) suggests they all go to "Aunt Julie's Country Bunker" for lunch. Oddly, the group takes him up on that. Then he reads them passages from "Fanny Hill."

**Peco** (Dr. Adun Zelnaga, Ambassador Ivan Stukoff) shows up after his regular Communist party meeting. But they call it "football."

**Patrick** (Ambassador Lenny, Martin St. John) brings a sammich. BUT NOT ENOUGH TO SHARE!!!

**Paul** (the GM) complains that it's been six weeks since we played last. "But at least that Bruce freak is out of town!"

### **Workplace Drama**

After escaping the clutches of the *Red Queen*, a demented AI in a star destroyer, the Lighthouse starfalls from Tendril to the nearby Ptolemy system. This system is trying to get recognized by any of the Old Space nations, which is difficult because it's basically overrun with space pirates, and the capital, Hurricane, is ruled by a pirate king named *Lord Hellas*. Even in the somewhat colorful Galactic Concord, that's still considered a

“warning sign.” They learned their lesson after admitting Turkey to the EU back in the day.

To refresh everyone’s memory, *Tanya Taneer*, a card dealer at the Corner, was moping around at work because her degenerate gambler dad, *Marloc Taneer*, was planning to bet big in the thalat (Space Texas Hold ‘Em) tournament held by *Jayzee Ravel*, and was likely to put their whole family in hock as a result. She shared this sad tale with *Markus*, the warlion bartender of the Corner. He took pity on the girl and decided to get some of his friends to help out – namely, *Lenny* the T’Sa ambassador and *Rokk Tressor* the station greeter (and undercover spy for the Concord Investigative Bureau – they’re like the CIA, but with less pussy attitudes about torture).

We know that Marloc has a weird mutant bodyguard who always is with him. He’s a pretty well connected underworld figure, but has a bit of a problem with the gambling. The tournament is going to be in the back room of a massage parlor, Jordiken’s Holistic Massage. “Nice!” exclaims Rokk.

Now, Marloc does some gun deals with Markus; no one wants him to be unhappy with the characters or go to jail once this is all over. So how do we save him from himself? After some discussion, we figure we’ll get him into a private game of thalat, have two of the PCs hustle him, then we’ll reveal the hustle and talk to him about bringing in Rokk as his accomplice to the big game. Ideally this would at least prevent him from losing real big.

As a backup plan, we figure we could have cops bust up the game. We’ll be in Ptolemy and there will be dicey pirate types aboard, so we could call up station security and say someone who’s really, really wanted (Rokk has the security no-fly list and can nominate some people) is there and local SWAT would come break the game up. We pre-record a distorted voice message to that effect. Windows 2500 does that out of the box!

Ravel and his crew have been trying to lure Marloc into the thalat game. Lenny convinces Ivan Stukoff the Thuldan ambassador to buy in too. “The more the merrier!” chortles Rokk.

We set up a back room at the Corner for the initial private game. Markus deals, Lenny is assisting Rokk, Ivan is playing but blithely unaware of the plan, and Marloc and his bodyguard *Kurval* round it out. “Let’s make it strip thalat!” suggests Lenny. “No one wants to see a naked lizard,” declares Markus. The rest of the players nod soberly.

The four players get going with their card game. Lenny gets busted out early trying to assist Rokk, while Rokk keeps pace with Marloc. Ivan does OK but his drinking starts to affect his playing. But then at the end, Marloc pulls out a big win! Markus and Rokk try to talk him into the PC-assist scheme, but he’s not quite sold. Markus says, “How about another game, and this time Lenny will assist Rokk to show you how it works!” Rokk and Lenny stand amazed at the boldness of the lie. They play another game, and Rokk kicks Marloc’s ass this time – Lenny doesn’t succeed on a single assist roll, but Marloc doesn’t need to know that. “Don’t you want your experience in the tournament to be more like that? What do you say, we get 20% of the winnings and you really clean up.” Markus looks very pleased with himself. Marloc signs up!

We also discuss buying off some of the girls at the massage parlor to perhaps spike some of the players’ handjobs or something. Lenny asks around and Anna Jordiken, the owner, is just offering the space; the place isn’t tightly affiliated with Jayzee in any way, so that might be a good option.

Markus and Lenny go into the massage parlor early – Markus knows some of the girls that “freelance” from when they come into the Corner. They get massages, though the T’Sa has to do without a happy ending. Markus convinces the girls to offer some extra

services to any tourney players who come in early; we give them some massage oil doped with “dumb juice” and otherwise request they sell them vodka enemas or the bad drugs, whatever is convenient.

The Thuldan Empire contacts Ambassador Stukoff and talks to him about convincing the Lighthouse to install some new experimental rocket launchers. They’ve been against this in the past, but with the station getting its ass kicked in two rounds by the Red Queen, maybe they will change their stance. He promises to look into it, and promptly forgets all about it.

As locals start to come aboard in the Ptolemy system, Rokk is checking everyone’s paperwork carefully at the gate. “This is the best fake paperwork I’ve ever seen!” he exclaims to one person. It appears that the vast majority of people in this system have space piracy touch their lives in one way or the other. He happily solicits bribes. The life of a ClB agent is a sweet one, he reflects.

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The tourney starts in a lovely back room of the massage parlor. Black sunglasses gleam on the competitor’s faces. Markus goes in as a second bodyguard for Marloc; Lenny, Rokk, and Ivan are all playing. In the initial round, Ivan and Lenny are at the same table, but Rokk and Marloc are at different ones. Everyone sucks, and basically Marloc, Ivan, Rokk, and Lenny all eventually wash out before the final round. “Looks like Tanya will be working here after this,” says Rokk glumly.

*Captain Cassaval* is an interesting pirate captain lady who also washes out of the tournament early. She approaches us and says, “I notice a number of you seem to know each other...”

“It’s a small station,” Markus replies.

“You know, if we were to split that pot, it would be a pretty good payday. You seem pretty good in a fight,” she says to Markus.

“I think you may be right,” says Markus, “and I happen to know there’s a secret airlock in the back of this place. I use it to move merchandise to buyers’ ships from time to time. If you were to have one of your men bring five spacesuits into it, we’d have a way out of here.”

“We would need a distraction – you could start beating guards down!” she offers.

“Well, I need to do business with some of the people in this room later – maybe we can use the cops as the distraction.” Lenny heads over and plants some fake police ID on one of the two armed guards at the game.

## **Cheezit, The Cops!**

Markus tells the rest of the group the airlock is behind the massage room with the “Caution – Space Herpes” tape over the door. We place the prerecorded call to the cops about how Rokk’s “person of interest” is conducting terror plots and half-and-halves in the back room of Jenniken’s Massage Parlor. Lenny goes to tell Anna that he’s gotten a tip that the cops are on the way. She locks down the front door right as the cops roll up and start banging on it.

“It’s a raid!” she yells to the assembled players. Lenny uses the opportunity to get near the light controls. People start pulling out concealed weapons. Rokk says, “Hey, that guy’s a cop!” and points at the armed guard with the planted ID. A bunch of weapons are trained on him; he points his mass rifle right back. Suddenly the power goes out, along with the lights and life support! Everyone who is armed just starts shooting. The

only light in the parlor is muzzle flashes as bullets spray the room. Rokk screams and dives behind the bar. “Did you do that?” Markus asks Lenny. “Not me!”

Markus, using his mutant night vision, leaps forward, head butts a guy and takes the bag with the payroll! Lenny runs for the airlock. He finds that with the power off, he’ll need to bypass the electronic lock. He bypasses it perfectly and the airlock whirrs open! Markus grabs Captain Cassaval by the wrist in the darkened room and growls, “Come with me!” and heads for the airlock too.

Rokk roots around behind the bar for a firearm, but in the dark he just keeps finding weird junk. “Is this a retainer? Who put pudding down here?” Stukoff starts wrestling with one of the rifle-wielding guardsman, but the man gets the gun free and shoots the ambassador right in the face. It’s an amazing hit for a raft of mortal damage.

Markus and the Captain catch up to Lenny and see the lights of a ship outside the airlock. “Where’s everyone else?” asks Lenny?

“I’ll go get them!” offers Markus.

“Here, leave the payroll with me!” Captain Cassaval says. She barely refrains from batting her eyelashes innocently.

“Uh – how about I leave it with Lenny. Lenny, don’t open the airlock till we’re all back.” Markus bounds back into the gambling parlor.

Ivan, no stranger to taking shots to the face, gets his hands on a loose mass rifle and shoots it into the air in the dark room, demanding that everyone drop their weapons! “The cops are in!” people cry, and start to comply. Markus grabs Rokk and Ivan, snags a saber from a display case, and heads back for the airlock. We pile into Captain

Cassaval's ship and close the airlock as Anna Jenniken comes running down the hall. We don't wait to find out why.

As the pirate cutter circles around, we see power coming back on all over the station. Captain Cassaval says she's heard of us and that we should join their pirate crew! We decline based on our other responsibilities aboard station, though Markus expresses that we're honored by the offer. She further proposes that she keep the whole payroll. We propose that she does not, and with a sequence of thinly veiled threats but without a fight, we finally agree to split the take 50/50. She drops us off on the station with five million Concord dollars. "Anytime you need a friend on the Lighthouse, look us up," Markus tells her. She salutes jauntily and they take off.

## **Law & Order: Questionable Intent**

Meanwhile, *Captain Ken Takashi* and *Martin St. John* are on the bridge of the Lighthouse when all the lights go out. "Mister St. John, get me auxiliary power!" barks Takashi. "On it, Captain!" He gets power back on and reports that the secondary capacitor blew out. Security reports there has been a murder down there too. "Go check it out! And send the administrators working that bullshit disturbance down at the massage parlor too!" Martin St. John says, "I'll look into it personally, Captain!" and hustles off.

Adun Zelnaga is on his way to the hospital to find the lab technician, *Lesallon Cor*, who accessed the Doctor's missing alien exoskeleton artifact right before it disappeared a couple session ago. He pulls the man aside, but he claims to not have seen anything and certainly not have taken the artifact. He interrogates him but the man seems to know nothing. When the lights go out, they squeal and hold each other tightly. All is forgiven.

St. John hustles down to the secondary capacitor. The station's security chief, *Jacqueline Witt*, is there. She claims they've found the culprit, a woman who is

unconscious at the scene, and arrested her for sabotage and murder. They haven't found any murder victim yet. "Well then, how do you know there's been a murder?" asks St. John.

"Uhhh – anonymous tip?"

"What is this, The Shield?"

Ambassador *Ten-Zel Kim* is doing some late night research, as he suspects one of his underlings is a mole for his superior back at VoidCorp. When the blackout comes, he pauses to make sure that it's not a LSD flashback. About an hour after the blackout, *Angela Quinn*, the Regency security agent the PCs helped on Bluefall last time they visited Aegis, calls him and tells him "Help! I'm being held on the Lighthouse for some kind of murder and sabotage!" Remembering how good she looks without a swimsuit on, he heads down to the jail immediately to help. He is allowed to talk to Angela. She says she doesn't have any memory of what happened after going to an alley outside the capacitor room to meet with a contact about an old case. There was an explosion and then she ran in to see if she could help and then - nothing. She thinks a leaking reactor gas KOed her and wiped her memory. A blood sample has been taken but he takes another with the hypodermic and vials he carries around in a little case. "I didn't know you were a doctor," she says. "Doctor?" he replies absentmindedly.

He asks for info on her contact, but she claims she doesn't know who it was. She got an encrypted message telling her to come there. "What old case was this about?"

"Well... It's probably not relevant. Something personal."

"Why were you on the station in the first place?"



“Uh, hunting down some personal information,” she replies evasively. He can’t get any more out of her, but he signs up as her lawyer and heads off to squeeze the cops for info.

## **CSI: The Verge**

The Concord administrators bring in Dr. Zelnaga and get him to try to ID a murder victim from some leftover ashes. He discovers it’s alien DNA, similar to the race of the engineer lady we brought with us from the Red Queen’s ship, *Jayna*. In fact, once he checks, it is her. “Noooo, not the hot alien chick!!!” the Captain laments when he hears this.

Martin St. John checks out the capacitor room via the sensor logs and security logs to find out what’s up. He finds evidence that some guy was sneaking around there earlier searching for something. He leaves before the explosion. Some of the cameras show the explosion and some don’t, a clear sign of tampering.

Ten-Zel Kim talks to Jacqueline Witt. “I’m counsel for Ms. Quinn.”

“We don’t like your kind around here,” she replies. Kim contemplates this – he’s not a Negro, so he concludes it must be either the lawyer thing or the pervert thing she objects to.

She says they found Quinn on the scene, with a weapon, and that someone had dumped a body in the incinerator, and that the body’s been IDed as the alien Jayna. “The only member of an alien race from a hostile ship who is also a technician was just wandering around the station with no surveillance?”

“Yep. And we have an eyewitness! She saw the crime from her office.” Witt won’t say who but does give a summary of the statement. “The witness looked out her office window and saw the suspect shoot the victim in the capacitor building.”

“I’ve known this person for a while and don’t think they would murder anyone...”

“Yes, a fool is often led astray by a pretty face!”

“Piggy says what?!?”

The trial is set for tomorrow.

Kim takes the blood sample to Dr. Zelnaga to get it checked for doping. It confirms her story, she was dosed with enough industrial chemical to be knocked out and have short term memory loss. Of course this doesn’t prove she didn’t kill Jayna. Kim contacts the Captain who brings him in on St. John’s findings. Some cameras have been tampered with and don’t show the guy, but also don’t show the explosion. We conclude the guy was really there and not inserted digitally.

*Administrator Wakefield* calls up the Captain to talk about the case. They agree that it’s an important case and should be handled delicately. The administrator says he’ll be taking over as judge, and the Captain concurs. The Administrator says that Quinn is actually a CIB agent, not just Bluefall security. This is news to the Captain. The Captain expresses that they should take the time to thoroughly investigate and maybe put the trial off a couple days. The Administrator agrees, and also agrees that the Captain should know who the witness is in order to run a thorough background check. Bureaucratic man-hugs are exchanged. The next stop after this is Aegis and it’ll take a five day starfall to get there. The Captain says he’ll check with the nominal CIB station

chief, *Jax Roland*, but really plans to check with the real CIB agent he knows, Rokk Tressor.

## **Cold Case Files**

Martin St. John confers with Kim and Zelnaga to share information. Zelnaga goes to examine Quinn personally and tries to psychically encourage her to trust Kim. She tells him that the contact said he had information about her father's murder 15 years ago. He was strangled by a security guard while trapped in an elevator during an earthquake. The case was thrown out on grounds of evidence tampering and the guard disappeared. The message she got claimed to have further info on that. She was here for that, nothing for the CIB or Bluefall security. The killer would be older than the youngish guy in the security tapes.

The Captain talks to Tressor on a secure line about Quinn. She's known as a good, skilled, flexible undercover agent but is also quite loyal to the Concord and believes she's helping the greater good. The Captain asks if she may have had CIB orders to kill Jayna. Rokk says that he's surprised no one took Jayna yet, and his theory would be that someone chopped off her arm, dumped it in the incinerator, and has her packed in a box to be thoroughly interrogated and/or dissected by some random stellar nation. The Captain asks Rokk to go check into all this, and that he hears the Thuldan ambassador got shot too and that might be related. Rokk sheepishly says "No... That was something else." The Captain sighs, rubs his forehead, and replies, "Say no more."

Kim and Zelnaga go to Jayna's room. It's already been searched by station security but since they have a clear theory of the crime they didn't care to spend much time on it. Kim hacks into her computer and finds a message she sent to the Captain! She found evidence there may be I'krl infiltrators on the Lighthouse. The message never got to the Captain, it got blocked somewhere. The I'krl are a bad guy stellar empire with various

species who allegedly bioengineered the clicks and kroath, and originated the Red Queen. They search the room and find an alien handgun. Or an alien sex toy. They're not really sure. They inform the Captain. "How am I supposed to know what it is!?!?" the Captain replies.

## **NCIS: Star Force**

They run a match on the face of the guy from the security camera and it's a fast food worker named *Montague Lemolin*. They see him and some other guys hanging out near the capacitor building recently. The Captain sends some Concord Marines with St. John to bust the guy's door down and render him. He is hauled to an undisclosed location with a sack over his head. They settle in for a good interrogatin'.

"What were you doing in the capacitor room?" St. John demands.

"Looking for the winning lottery ticket!"

St. John smacks him around a bit. He claims some girl dropped a winning sweepstakes ticket off a walkway around there. She was "like an angel." He and his friends met this girl and she dropped the ticket, and then asked for help with her rent..." Zelnaga checks his blood. He's not an alien and hasn't sniffed forgetty juice, but does take drugs from time to time. They do a sketch of the "angel." She looks very anime.

The Captain talks to Administrator Witt and tells her Wakefield said she had to give him the ID of the witness. She is very unhappy about that but the Captain does a good job of not giving a damn. It's *Norikei Vestergard*, an analyst who works at SecureTrust; she saw Quinn shooting someone, not sure who, and has a cell phone picture. He checks, but Vertergard looks nothing like the "angel" McBoy described.

Lemolin cops to searching around in the capacitor room in his maniacal desire to find the lottery ticket and perhaps parlay that into angel love. He didn't see anything while he was there except a motor cart. "It was blue... Maybe green." The Captain has the security cameras searched but between poor coverage and tampering it's not on there. It had to be from somewhere close, however, as the sensors on the larger roads don't show it. He calls the Concord Marine commander and tells him there may be disguised alien infiltrators on the station and to step up security. "Sir, yes sir!"

## **The Wire**

Kim tries to backtrack the message Quinn got from the contact. All he can determine, even with his leet hacking skills, is that it was professionally deleted. The Captain calls Rokk Tressor to get his buddies to search the sector for cars, not wanting to involve the flatfoots at this point – this has long since gone over the line to a military matter, he reasons. Rokk, Lenny, and Markus join the Doctor in the area of the crime, and after some searching, come across the motor cart. It appears to have come from a nearby business, "Advanced Electronics and Hobbies." It's a relic of the VR craze and now is a dumpy shop for hobbyists, like Radio Shack. Rokk searches the car but doesn't find anything interesting. Lenny looks for blood-stained fender dents or the like but also comes up empty.

Markus goes in the back and the rest go in the front. Rokk brutally interrogates the old store owner. He claims he took a drive yesterday and saw some chick stalking around out there; he describes Angela Quinn. We smell rat all over the guy. He keeps complaining "I'm just an honest store owner!" But we know there's no such thing as an honest hobby store owner. We sweat him. Zelnaga takes a blood sample and he's human. Lenny cracks the safe in the back and in it there's a note.

It reads, "It's time for you to take your final revenge. Here's how it will happen." It details a plan to kill an alien and dump her in the incinerator and frame Quinn. It claims he'll be protected "just as we always have." The doctor bags the note. The old guy gibbers and claims innocence. After more threats and psychic tampering, he does slip up and say "You'll never convict me!" The note says to sneak into the incinerator, bust a cap, get the unconscious Angela's prints on the gun and leave it in the incinerator with the body. We also find a gas mask which probably has gas residue on it. We compare a photo from Quinn's files of the guy who killed her father, and though there's many years of difference, we can tell it's this guy. Rokk says, "Let's disappear this guy." Adun says, "What guy? I just wandered in this shop and all this evidence was lying around!"

## **Denouement**

Rokk and crew take the old guy to a CIB holding facility, but no sooner do they lock him behind a cerametal cell door than all the cameras go black, it gets dark, and he disappears suddenly. They take the intel to the cops and Captain. Ten-Zel Kim is happy; he thinks this is more than enough to get Quinn off of the murder rap and perhaps get him some "thanks for saving me" trim. 5 XP for everyone!