

STAR*DRIVE SESSION SUMMARY

12/19/2010

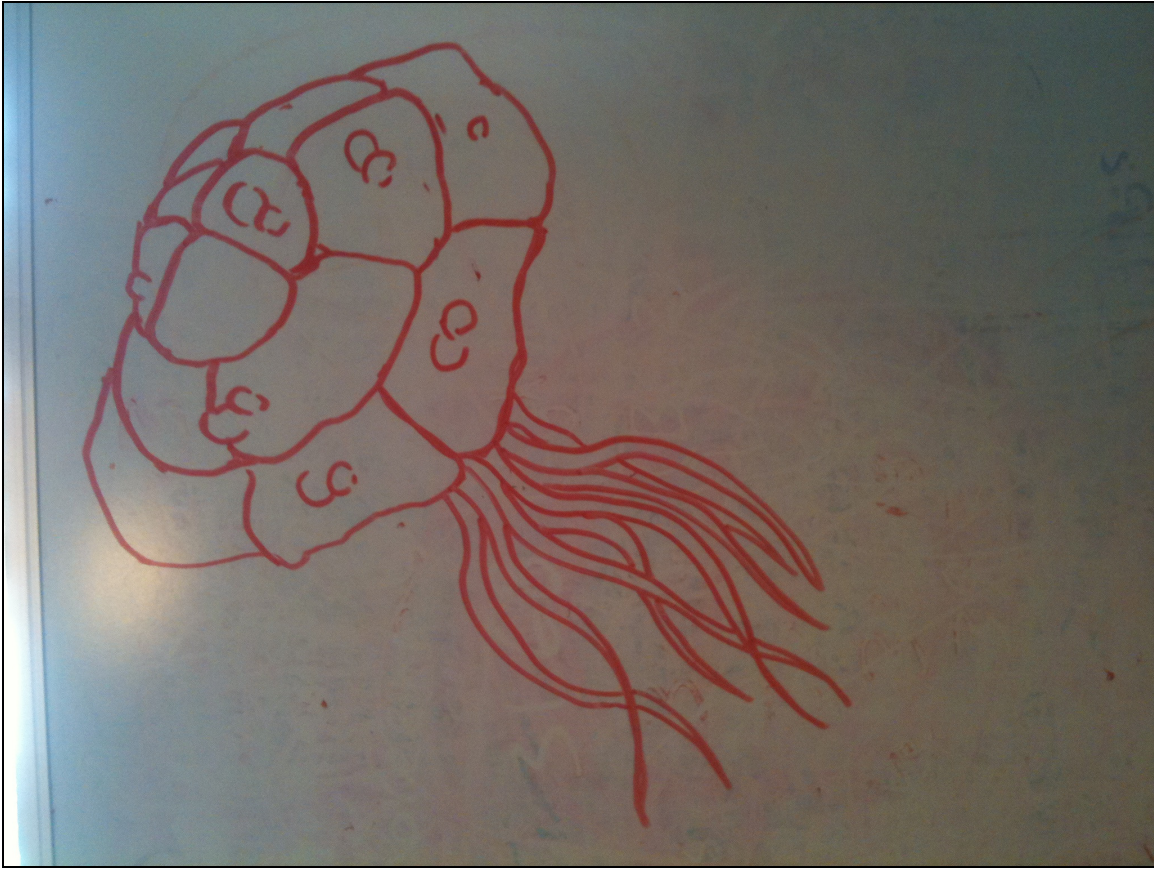
Attendance

<i>Player</i>	<i>Character</i>	<i>Deal</i>	<i>Status</i>
Bruce	Lambert Fulson	Rigunmor Guido Free Agent	Present
Bruce	Taveer	Mechalus Concord Engineer Tech Op	Present
Patrick	Martin St. John	Concord Naval Officer Tech Op	Present
Patrick	Lenny	T'sa Ambassador Free Agent	Present
Chris	Ten-zil Kem	VoidCorp Ambassador Diplomat (TO)	Present
Chris	Dreth	Pict Warchief Combat Spec	Present
Ernest	Markus Oroszlan	Warlion Bartender Combat Spec	Absent
Ernest	Ken Takashi	Concord Naval Officer Diplomat (TO)	Absent
Tim	Gerard Pepin	Borealin Ambassador Mind Walker	Present
Tim	Haggernak	Weren Concord Administrator Combat Spec	Present

The Current Situation

The A-Team characters are still working their way through an I-kr1 laboratory ship in the Hammer's Star system, hoping to rescue the Admiral who commanded the destroyed defense forces overcome by the Externals Fleet. *Taveer* has rigged the ship's landing bay doors to explode. He figures this will come in handy soon enough. At the end of the last session the group found the ship's mass reactor. *Taveer's* best guess was

that it is less efficient than similar Concord designs, primarily based upon its size as compared to the overall size of the laboratory ship.



I-krl Laboratory Ship

Captain Ken Takashi takes the one wounded Marine back to the ship and sends a replacement (healthy) Marine to join the rest of the group. Drest Talgorin observes, “That’s a good way to have single troopers wandering the ship and blundering into the Alien Tentacle Sucker room, where they’re never heard from again.”

Taveer complains, “I missed the Alien Tentacle Sucker room!”

Drest corrects him, “Nobody misses the Alien Tentacle Sucker room.”

The Laboratory

The characters break into a large chamber on the second deck of the ship. They find themselves staring into an alien laboratory. Klick technicians labor over alien equipment displays as three kadarens supervise. Four cyberenhanced bareem bodyguards with their shoulder-cephalopod guardians stand watch.

Martin St. John opens up with his heavy maser pistol, singeing a bareem guard. He explains, "I'm holding the maser pistol sideways, gangsta-style! That way, I get a better rate of fire, plus I look really cool!"

The bareem recognize that someone is shooting at them and turn on their cephalopod defensive fields. The klick technicians turn on their bioweakness fields and swarm the characters. *Martin St. John* mourns, "I should have shot a klick!"

The marines open fire on the advancing klick technicians with their charge rifles. One of them screams, "Yaaaaaaa! Bughunt! Bughunt! Bughunt!" as he empties dozens of rounds into a technician's body. By the time the echoes of gunfire die down, three of the klick technicians are down and dead.

Drest announces, "Bantam rocket! Hahahahaaaa!" He sends a bantam antipersonnel rocket into the midst of the bareem. This is *Alternity*, of course, so the radiation burst from the rocket just makes the bareem slightly sleepy.

The bareem respond by howling and charging. Mostly, they charge *Drest* because he's the one with the rocket launcher on his shoulder. *Drest* howls out, "I am the most mighty! I am the greatest! But I could really use just a bit of backup here!"

The hammering sound of charge rifles firing full auto resumes, eliminating the last two klick technicians. *St. John* calls out, "Careful over there! The floor is sticky!"

Drest points out, "We're in a klick ship! *Everything* is sticky!" He pulls out his vibroblade and saws his way through one of the bareem, chopping away limbs and organs. The creature falls, but then his cephalopod's instant-healing effect brings him back to his feet. *Drest* notes that the bareem is practically glowing under the influence of the chemicals coursing through its veins. He strikes again, shearing through the creature's carcass and delivering desperate injury, but it continues to stand (albeit only barely). *Drest* is completely amazed at the quality of I-krl emergency medicine.

A squad of marines plus *Taveer* concentrate fire on one bareem. *Taveer* is more than a little bit surprised when his last tri-staff strike takes the creature down.

Drest is not amazed. He and *St. John* turn their attention to the next bareem in the line. They wear the creature down until it runs out of "medicine" and collapses.

Seeing that the marines are reloading, the kadarens break from cover and run. One of them leaps for a peristaltic elevator tube that sucks him up to the next level.

Which really sounds dirty. The second and third kadarens roll themselves up into trilateral balls and more roll than run at Taveer and one marine, brandishing horrible curved injector weapons. Taveer gets injected! He feels himself turning into a kroath! Another kadaren rushes up to a marine and injects him too! The marine swiftly breaks into a burning fever (“I got the fever! I got the remedy!”).

A marine makes a head shot on a fleeing kadaren, killing the creature instantly. Martin St. John muses, “That’s like the second time that guy’s made a shot like that, we should keep him around.” Another marine guns down the kadaren who injected the marine. Kadarens clearly do not stand up well to automatic weapons fire.

A few final bursts eliminate the last few bareem, leaving the characters to deal with Taveer and one marine turning into kroath. The other characters pump amazing quantities of drugs into their veins, enabling them to overcome the poison though both have taken mortal wounds and are unconscious. A bit more medical care is sufficient to bring Taveer back to consciousness.

Where Is This Place?

Taveer examines the equipment in the floor trenches. He decides that this is a machine shop – most of the items in the trenches are disassembled biomechanical devices. He is unable to identify function in most cases.

Up the Peristaltic Elevator

The characters steel their courage and launch themselves up the peristaltic elevator. They find themselves in a large circular chamber. Klick technicians encased in equipment consoles ring the edges of the chamber. There is a massive brain integrated into a complex array of equipment and tubes in the center of the chamber. A smaller brain mounted inside a mobile equipment rack is connected to the big brain.

Dreth observes, “I think we’ve found the Admiral.”

The surviving kadaren is fiddling with controls on the side of the mobile brain case.

Haggernak booms out, “Cease your actions and you can live, bug!”

“Live, but under what conditions?”

“We really treat our prisoners pretty well.”

“How did you find this place?”

Taveer observes, “We came up the elevator...”

The kadaren clarifies, “How did you find this ship?”

“It was hanging in space! How hard could it be to find?”

The kadaren seems frustrated, “*One ship!* One ship in a huge fleet!” The characters notice that while he has two eyes focused on the characters, the third is focused on the mobile brain carrier. Several of its manipulator arms are working on controls.

Haggernak booms, “Three eyes, all on me!”

Dreth isn’t willing to put up with this kind of disrespect. He shoots the creature, albeit not fatally. The creature squeals, “You shot me! I’m shot!” Haggernak restrains the thing. Dreth notices that even while the thing surrenders, its third eye is checking status monitors. He beats the thing unconscious.

Hello, Admiral!

Taveer manages to link the portable brain carrier into the vocoder on his computer gauntlet, allowing the characters to talk to *Admiral Rastaad*. The last thing the Admiral remembers is ramming his ship into an alien vessel. From his point of view everything is just dark. Taveer figures out how to disconnect the Admiral’s brain carrier for transport.

After a bit of discussion on whether to try and bring along the big brain as a prisoner, Haggernak points out that it is floating in a tank containing thousands of gallons of fluid, and there isn’t enough space in the characters’ ship for it. Taveer gets the job of stringing plasma jelly charges all around the tank, but not before Haggernak knocks a hole in the side of the tank. Everyone is knee-deep in brain fluid by the time they leave the ship.

The characters do take the unconscious kadaren as a prisoner, with enough zip-ties that it can’t cause any trouble (this makes two!). They also have the half-vivisected weren they rescued.

Away Into the Darkness

The characters make a safe getaway on the *High Tolerance for Curiosity*, accompanied by the admiral's brain, 2 kadaran scientists, and a partially-vivisected

weren. During the trip they decide to wake up the head kadaran scientist and interrogate him.

Why the Kadarens Are Dangerous Monsters

As soon as the kadaran becomes conscious the creature becomes a welter of activity. It seems that kadarans have a hard time being still. One of his three eyes focuses on his interrogators while another eye whips around analyzing the ship's interior, and the third eye and hands begin trying to manipulate the zip-ties. The characters warn the kadaran to be still. The kadaran responds with a torrent of questions about the characters, their cybernetic modifications ("Are you trying to turn yourselves into non-living constructs?"), and their ship. Haggernak is not falling for this trick again and he insists that the kadaran is the one who needs to answer questions.

The kadaran starts to answer questions. Its name is *Apsol Arxith* (Apsol is an I'krl naval rank equivalent to Captain). Seeing his apparent ability to do three things at once, Haggernak asks if he has 3 brains. The kadaran explains that he is able to efficiently compartmentalize his mind to do multiple parallel tasks. This allows any single kadaran to operate as if he were a whole team of scientists. He points out that the current conversation with Haggernak doesn't take up his full mental capacity by any means. This annoys Haggernak, who feels that his conversational skills should be more than sufficient to occupy more than one-third of anyone's attention.

Haggernak asks if the kadarans bioengineered themselves. Apsol Arxith answers that kadarans are their own crowning achievement. They have worked tirelessly over centuries to improve themselves and make themselves more efficient. They would be happy to help humanity similarly. The characters reject the offer, explaining that their various species find their own limitations to be endearing.

It is at this point that Haggernak concludes that Taveer must be kept away from the kadarens at all costs. His mind is troubled by ongoing images of a bio-computer construct of Mina consuming everything living in the *Lighthouse* as Taveer cackles in the background about how beautiful she is.

The characters ask why the admiral's brain was hooked up to the big brain. The kadaren explains that Admiral Rastaad died during the crash of his flagship but dedicated kadaren xeno-medico-technologists managed to recover his brain and part of his spinal

column. They put the parts in cryostasis to keep them fresh until they could reanimate them. Traditional methods of interrogation and psionic manipulation were proving ineffective so the commanders handed the brain to Arxith to find a way to interrogate it. Arxith had merged the admiral's brain with the lab ship's brain so he could directly access the admiral's memories and skills. Haggernak asks if the kadaran thinks the admiral could get control of the ship's brain, and the kadaran insists that could never happen ("Did you see the size of the ship's brain?"). The kadaran still doesn't know that the admiral managed to send a distress call through his ship's communications array.

Other projects the Apsol oversaw included the project to amplify the klick bioweakness field, efforts to analyze human weapons and culture, and efforts to make kadaran technology compatible with human (and weren, mechalus, etc.) biology. Up until recently, the kadaran had few human specimens to work with, only those few that the gardhyi had brought back.

Drest asks about what sort of projects the kadaran might pursue on behalf of humanity. Apsol Arxith seems to have no problem working for humans as long as they present him interesting projects. In fact, he seems to have no loyalty or morals whatsoever ("we removed those problems for the sake of efficiency"). He asks about a way to cure kroath, but the kadaran tells him that fully-converted kroath are already dead and their brains have been metabolized. He asks about a way to immunize against kroath infection. The kadaran points out that the thaal priests had the original kroath project team build a safeguard into the kroath so that thaal (and by extension, fraal) are immune. Apsol Arxith theorizes that there might be a way to build on this immunity by injecting humans with fraal DNA. He looks at the human characters hungrily, already sizing them up for their suitability as research subjects.

What About the Theocracy?

The PCs spend some time interrogating Arxith about the Ikrl Theocracy. The Theocracy controls about 120 inhabited systems in the Perseus arm of the galaxy. The sifarv rule the colonies in name, but they answer ultimately to the church, which is controlled by the thaal. The thaal homeworld is Ahjaarl, but they also claim the original birthworld of the Ikrl space gods, Kaarl. These lie deep in Theocracy space and have

never been visited by outsiders. The sifarv and bareem come from the same system, but their homeworlds (Saaeril and Toal III) are not that influential. Their most important systems are a cluster called the Aerie. Kadarans blew their homeworld up (oops!) but can be found on various scientific installations and three laboratory planets. There are not very many gardhyi total, but they are individually immortal and powerful, so they also control 3 systems.

Haggernak is relieved to find out that the I'krl Theocracy is not as huge as previously suspected. It is only a bit bigger than one of the stellar nations. Martin St. John answers, "Yeah, it's a great comfort to know that after the aliens wipe us all out in the Verge, and the stellar nations get off their ass, they'll be able to conquer the I'krl."

An influential thaal priest named *Ython Kadar* is the one leading the I'krl Exeat that is currently attacking the Verge. He had a religious vision that he must take his forces into the Verge and convert the area to the I'krl religion. The PCs speculate on whether it was an authentic vision or a cynical grab for power.

Home Again, Home Again, Fiddle-dee-dee!

The session ends with the characters returning to the Lighthouse. They transfer Admiral Rastaad's brain into human life support mechanisms. The doctors hook up electrodes to allow him to have limited communication and start working on a way to transfer him into a robot body. Apsol Arxith is stuffed into a cell somewhere with a rubick's cube to keep him entertained.

Each character gains six experience points.