

# "THE LIGHTHOUSE" SESSION SUMMARY – MAY 30, 2007

## **System Briefing**

The Lighthouse, the Galactic Concord's huge spacefaring space station, is currently in the Aegis system, planet Bluefall. Aegis is at the center of the Verge, the frontier area of known space, and is very well defended as a result. Bluefall is a Class 1 planet mostly covered with ocean and islands – like a whole world full of Hawaii. Predictably, it's popular for vacations. It was colonized earlier but one day, everyone up and disappeared. It's been recolonized since. The Bluefall Regency is the main government but many islands are sold to stellar nations who treat their bits as sovereign property. There's some kind of native aliens, the Deepfallen, that live deep in the ocean trenches.

## **Character Briefing**

Ten-Zil Kem, VoidCorp ambassador (who is also an Insight mole, and foppish playboy) is on vacation on Bluefall, but is also on a mission. VoidCorp has something going on on Bluefall. Their new Grid (like the future version of the Internet) is preparing to come up. VoidCorp has done "something" to it – there's a guy that knows what and who has given a report to Insight, but he's very circumspect. This contact, Michael Teron, is out by one of the resorts, where his father runs a Thuldan research station. Kem wants to contact him.

Markus Oroszlan, bartender of the Corner (who is also an arms dealer, and a retired Thuldan Warlion) is on vacation on Bluefall. He is also always looking to set up some more arms deals. Most of the weapons he gets in the Verge are originally Thuldan sources. So he wouldn't be averse to hooking up with some locals who might be customers or suppliers. Warlions are genetically modified shock troops who have lion DNA in them, giving them great strength and stamina.

Dr. Adun Zelnaga, a fraal doctor (who is also a mindwalker) is using his vacation to do research on Bluefall and its alien lifeforms. Fraal are aliens, identical to the modern conception of "Greys." He's a gifted surgeon and xenomedicine expert, in addition to his psychic gifts. His nickname is "Frails," due to his exceptionally pathetic build.

## **After Action Report**

### **Hawaii Bound**

All three PCs have hotel rooms on Tricera Island in the Parr Archipelago, just south of the Thuldan installation. There's excitement over the new "A Grid" coming up, and there's holocameras posted all over to record the resort's action for marketing purposes. There's skin diving, beaches, hiking, fishing, sand volleyball, and other such resort activities. We put together an impromptu "Lighthouse team" for

the sand volleyball. Ten-Zil is happy to be on the same team as the warlion. The warlion wears a Speedo, the ambassador wears a banana hammock, and the fraal wears a Borat-style “over the shoulders” thong. Swim trunks are apparently not in fashion among Old Spacers. The fraal joins in the game despite his nine-year-old girl physique. We try out the Alternity mechanics by making Athletics rolls. We win the game, despite the doctor’s poor showing, and Ten-Zil is our star player! He poses with bikini-clad women on each arm for the cameras as the friendly new face of VoidCorp.

Some chick we meet at the game, Angela Quinn, says we should all rent a grav cruiser and go out on the water after the game. We bring sets of grav skis along. We get out there, anchor, and have some fun. She makes it clear it’s “bathing suit optional.” Markus stretches out to sleep in the sun. Ten-Zil chats Angela up. We discover that fraal do not have external genitalia.

An alarm claxon goes off from some warning buoys nearby. A high-powered skiff weaves into view, heads right for a buoy, and hits it and explodes! Ten-Zil starts the boat going in that direction and Markus looks for rescue equipment. Adun pulls out a medkit in preparation for some medical action and besides some trauma packs it has a stutter pistol and laser pistol in it, strangely. He hands those over to the warlion, who says, “This is my kind of medkit!” He takes the laser pistol, sticking it through his Speedo, and tosses the stutter pistol to the VoidCorper. Angela jumps on a gravski and says “Meet me over there!”

The skiff is listing and sinking when we arrive. “Adler’s Pride” is written on the blue hull in DNA helixes. It is obviously Thuldan in origin. Angela’s circling nearby. Some guy is groaning from the deck of the ruined boat. Markus leaps across the gap to the other boat, and slides down the inclined deck. There’s five guys on the boat, two obviously dead, two unconscious, and one moaning man strapped into the driver’s seat. He looks like a soldier, and he says weakly, “The doctor and his daughter, save them first...” Well used to Thuldan military discipline, Markus says “Right!” and turns from the soldier to attend to the VIPs. The fraal starts setting up a gangplank between the boats. Angela steadies the skiff. Ten-Zil drops anchor.

An old guy and young woman lie on the deck of the skiff with various horrid wounds. The warlion looks them over and realizes they’ll need trauma packs applied before they can be moved, and calls for the doctor. The doctor comes across and triages the three live victims and starts in on treating the girl. While the doctor works on the VIPs, Markus performs first aid on the soldier. Adun stabilizes the girl and then does a super job on fixing up the older guy, who starts coming conscious again. Then, Markus helps transfer them over to the boat. Ten-Zil and Angela maneuver the boats for our convenience.

We get the girl over to our boat but the pitch of the deck is getting worse as the skiff sinks. Markus slides off the deck into the water. Ten-Zil comes over to help out the others. He recognizes one of the corpses as the guy he was supposed to meet, Michael Teron. Angela asks Ten-Zil to toss her her camera. She says someone was on the boat that dived off when she got there, and she wants to go after them. Markus also dives down below the blue surface of the water. He spots sharks nearby, drawn by the sound and blood. Angela turns back and heads to the surface due to the sharks. Markus casts about,

looking for the diver. Ten-Zil checks the body of his contact, finding a 3D crystal storage device, and then helps the doctor move the old guy over to the boat.

Angela surfaces, yelling “Sharks!!!” Ten-Zil says “Get out of the water!” Markus looks around more for the alleged diver but sees nothing but the sharks. The doctor uses psychometry to “read” the emotional impressions left on the skiff, and gets a feeling of panic, but also that someone was looking for something and was interrupted.

One shark pokes in through the hole in the skiff’s hull and chows down on a dead body. Another makes a run at Markus, but a swift kick to the snout discourages it. He swims back up toward the surface. The rescuers are having to make progressively harder Dex checks to get around on the boat. Ten-Zil slips and goes in the water as he goes back to get the wounded soldier. The shark following Markus gets a big bite in on him. Another goes after the VoidCorp diplomat, but doesn’t get him. Angela and the fraal haul the soldier over into the boat.

Markus swims toward the boat and fires his laser pistol at the shark besetting the diplomat to distract it. He hits it, but the laser doesn’t do as much damage as you’d think – he looks closer and realizes that it’s one those damn cyborg sharks! He hauls himself up onto the deck of the boat, as does Ten-Zil (except he’s on the busted skiff). Then, one of the sharks fires a blue-green laser out of its eye at Angela, narrowly missing her. Another shoots the warlion! We all start screaming “THE SHARKS HAVE FRICKING LASERS ON THEIR HEADS!!!!”

Three cyborg sharks circle the area, and everyone but Ten-Zil is on the working boat. The fraal goes all Firestarter on one of the sharks and boils the water around it. Markus yells, “Ten-Zil, get over here! Angela, get the boat going!” A shark gets an amazing hit in on the warlion, penetrating one of his redundant hearts, and he goes down. Ten-Zil scuttles over to the ship. The fraal continues to cook the one shark.

The sharks break off, but the fraal continues to try to cook the one he’s locked on to, and it goes belly up. The other sharks grab it and take it with them! Ten-Zil grabs up Angela’s camera and snaps some shots of all this. Angela slams the throttle forward and the ship takes off!

Ten-Zil says “The warlion needs help! Doctor!” The warlion’s deviant internal organ system confuses the doctor, however, and he makes him worse. His chest wound bubbles merrily.

### **Pass the Tabu**

As the boat speeds back toward the resort, Ten-Zil, the doctor, and Angela compare notes. The boat had been laser-holed, the explosion shouldn’t have happened, and the diver had been looking for something but didn’t get it. “I don’t know what it all means, but it bugs me,” says Ten-Zil.

The warlion is still unconscious. Angela says the resort medical facilities probably won’t be up for this and the nearest major trauma center is like 300 km away. The wounded soldier says that there’s a trauma facility 5 km away at the Thuldan facility on Islvych Ishand (named after the wounded doc), and we manage to get the death-buoy defense code out of him. Stuart Granger, or “Buzz”, says he heard a

machine-like voice say “You know of me! You must be silenced! I will remain hidden!” when the attack happened. He heard the doctor and the dead contact, Michael, talking about an AI found in the new grid.

The com units had been offline and jammed (not that we tried to use them) but now one Agent Donald Gettys of the RIA (Regency Intelligence Agency) comes in over the comm promising help. His skiff pulls up to our boat; he has swim trunks and an open shirt, but looks more like Maxwell Smart than James Bond. He waves a badge at us. Angela pulls out her own badge, which is REC (Regency... cops or something). Apparently everyone here is a spook.

As we approach the island, we see white sand and palm trees and grasses imported from Earth or elsewhere – Bluefall is normally a black-sand kind of place. Ten-Zil has covertly made a copy of the 3D storage crystal he found on the stiff, and then gives the original to Angela and Gettys.

As we come up to the Thuldan defense buoys around the base, a robot voice contacts us for the defense code. Ten-Zil puts it in, and the voice says “Welcome home, sir.” He responds, “Yes, thank you, have drinks sent down to the pier. Oh, and medical attention! Send some of that too.” We park at a covered pier and breakwater. Medical personnel and bartenders attend to the group and load the wounded, including Markus, into two aircars and evac them to the infirmary.

The security chief, also a Thuldan warlion, Chief Garond, is agitated about the attack. The story of unprovoked boat explosions and sharks with laser eyes doesn’t please him. Agent Gettys demands that the Regency be kept informed, further annoying the warlion. Everyone yammers on interminably. The warlion especially wonders why the VoidCorp guy was nearby, and asks in thinly veiled terms whether he’s a spy. He pleads, “A naked woman brought me!” The captain tells people to go wait in their cabins, since no one can leave the island for a while “due to the storm.” Apparently a storm is coming in.

Ten-Zil chats up Angela, asking if she knows Agent Gettys. She doesn’t, and wonders what he is reporting back to his superiors exactly. She sneaks off after Gettys. Ten-Zil takes a cold shower and then reviews the data crystal. It’s encrypted. He sets up a cracking program and then looks around the cabin. There is light clothing and a gridcaster. He puts something on over his banana thong. Adun checks the Grid for news of cyborg shark attacks.

Angela comes back and says Stuart is jacked into the gridcaster and isn’t actually talking out loud, so she can’t overhear. Ten-Zil hacks in and eavesdrops. His virtual avatar is standing under the water. “Michael Teron was killed, but one of the people on the rescue boat found the file he had written that may have information that will compromise you.” A nonhuman, mechanical voice replies “You have done your part. I have the codes. I suggest you leave the island quickly.” End of transmission.

Angela gives Ten-Zil the laser pistol and keeps the stutter pistol. The doctor sleeps, since the guards won’t let him go to the medical facility and check on Markus.

Around dusk, Chief Garund comes back and tells the group that Dr. Vych is awake and wants to talk to the group. They go to his hut to get him, but Agent Gettys is nowhere to be found. They look out and

see him 25m away and running for the boat. Ten-Zil yells, "Yoo hoo! Agent Gettys! This way!" He keeps running. A couple guards shoot stutter pistols at the running man, LAPD style. Ten-Zil says "Hope he doesn't hurt himself. To the infirmary!" As they look around, the doctor spots an incoming sky-tank! Everyone agrees that this bodes ill.

A sky-car pulls up and the party piles in and hastily drives to the infirmary as the Thuldans get their island defenses into action.

### **The Tiki Caves**

Dr. Graves is attending to the warlion, Doctor Vych, and his daughter, who are all waking up after surgery. A bunch of new incision scars join the old ones across the big tattooed "IX" on Markus' chest. He inquires about his comrades, and Vych starts thanking him for the rescue. "Of course, sir!" says the warlion. Alarms start going off and security starts running around. Boats approach and start broadcasting that they are Thuldan Army and there's been some security breach and they're here to arrest everyone. Markus knows this is code for a sterilization operation, so no one's getting out alive.

Markus stands up and pulls all the tubes and wires out of his body with one firm tug. He growls, "Get me weapons." He has Dr. Graves get Dr. Vych and his daughter ready for evac while a security guy leads him to the armory. The armory contains a variety of battle jackets, render rifles, quantum rifles, sabot pistols, a chainsword, an autoflechette shotgun, a 11mm charge pistol, a CF softsuit, and a grenade launcher. He gears up with a huge weapons loadout.

Missiles hidden in the boathouse hit the air tank and blow out its main gun and jammers. The hydrofoils pull up and discharge a dozen Thuldan warlions onto the beach. The Thuldans aren't screwing around, they sent the best. The air car drops down in front of the manor door but the warlions are already getting close. They fire a little at the PCs but it's at too long range to be effective. Angela, Chief Garund, Ten-Zil and Dr. Adun run into the front door and the chief starts trying to get the blast doors closed. They slam closed as the warlions approach.

Markus, heavily armed, clanks into the front room as the others cower briefly behind the blast door. The warlions outside start trying to burn through the doors. Markus starts making a secondary barricade in the front room. Ten-Zil and Angela go up to the armory to get weapons and Dr. Adun goes into the medical facility to get a medical gauntlet and supplies.

Another team of warlions starts assaulting a second floor window. Garund suggests getting the doc's journals and notes for bargaining chips/blackmail/etc. He gets a couple security guards in place to protect the infirmary.

Ten-Zil goes to the doctor's office get the research material. Markus protects the front door and Angela joins him. Chief Garund, Dr. Adun and a couple security guards in the infirmary are preparing to evacuate the VIPs to an underground bunker.

The warlions breach the front door by burning a big hole in it, and Markus lobs a grenade from the grenade launcher right through it. The nearest warlion is blown apart and the other five nearby take grievous wounds.

The other group of warlions breach the window upstairs that leads to the infirmary. Dr. Adun turns on his psionic kinetic shield and hides in a corner.

Ten-Zil Kim beams all the data he has found to his office on the space station; without the airtank's jammers his wireless email works just fine. He calls for help but is told it'll be about an hour before he can expect any.

Markus, acting fast, lobs another grenade through the blast doors before the stunned warlions can react, blasting another two to kingdom come. The remaining three move in and fire their autoflechette shotguns, lightly wounding Markus. Angela shoots one with a laser pistol.

The other team of warlions uses grappling hooks to get up to the second floor and start to bust down the door to the infirmary. They burst in and shoot both security guards down in an instant. Dr. Adun concentrates on a warlion in the back carrying one of the shaped charges they used to get through the window, and uses his pyrokinesis to cook it off. There's an explosion! One of the warlions shoots him in the chest – his armor absorbs most of the impact but he's so fragile that he falls unconscious from the wound anyway.

Ten-Zil Kim comes down the elevator to help the rest of the combatants. He fires his sabot pistol into one of the warlions and then hits "elevator close." He goes down and comes out into the library on the first floor, where he finds a spot to snipe at the warlions in the entryway.

Markus vaults over the barricade and the chainsword buzzes. One of the three remaining warlions falls, spraying blood. The rest pull their combat knives and surround Markus, hacking at him.

Angela shoots at one of the warlions in the front room, only dinging him. They continue to slash with their knives, and cut into our warlion's massive frame. Again and again their knives dart out, as Markus swings the chainsword in a broad arc to keep them back. Ten-Zil's shot hits one from behind, felling it. Markus uses the opportunity to decapitate the last one. He sits down heavily and Angela and Ten-Zil apply some first aid to his many wounds.

The elevator opens – Chief Garund, Dr. Vych, his daughter, and an unconscious fraal are in it. "Get in!" they shout. We pile in. Markus lobs a last grenade into the first floor and we go down, down, down into an underground bunker. Dr. Vych passes out again.

The door opens and there's the smell of weapons fire and ozone. A ripped-open door reveals a somewhat desecrated command post. Chief Garund guards the VIPs while we sweep and clear. When we move in, we find a woman in a black jumpsuit who has murdered the techs on duty with a 9mm charge pistol. Ten-Zil Kim pops some shots off at her, but she puts a bullet right into him! Markus hoses a burst across the room, not hitting her but scaring her into shooting at him instead. He then follows up with a short burst, wounding her. They exchange gunfire for a bit; she consistently hits but Markus'

armor absorbs most of it. Markus and Ten-Zil put her down. We stop her bleeding, figuring we may need a hostage/info source later.

We hear more gunfire from down a spiral staircase. Peeking down the stairs, we see another saboteur fighting a cyborg of some sort, who looks a lot like the cyborg sharks, with blue eye-lens and everything. We pull back and consult with Chief Garund. "Any reason for me not to kill some cyborg dude?" asks Markus.

"Uh... No?" ventures Garund.

"All righty then!"

Markus thumps a grenade from the launcher down the stairs into the room, and charges down with the chainsword into the smoke. The saboteur has been reduced to a mound of blood jelly, but the cyborg shark guy is only lightly wounded. A mechanical voice comes from him saying, "You know of these RORL secrecy must be maintained!" Markus says "Leave now or there will be trouble!" Ten-Zil tries to talk the cyborg down but he refuses to listen. He shoots at the diplomat, wounding him. We take cover. Markus sails a grenade right at his feet. He fires back with laser rifled in both hands, hitting both PCs dead center and taking Ten-Zil and Markus down. As Markus falls he fires one last grenade from the grenade launcher, felling the cyborg.

We awake to the beautiful Angela reviving us. Captain Garund says, "So Mr. Kem, how do you feel about VoidCorp taking on some defectors?" He likes the idea.

We investigate the felled cyborg. Markus restrains him and Ten-Zil goes over him with a fine tooth comb. He has a memory harness with the ability to communicate to an AI, as well as other fun modifications. His gear seems of Nariac origin.

We go into the mini-sub. We take the unconscious saboteur and cyborg with us. Angela drives the sub. "Oops!" she says as she bumps the sub against the side of the tunnel, breaking off the comm antenna. As we pull away, the sabotaged airlocks stay open and the island base floods. We're OK with that. She manages to get us out of the aquatic tunnel and we speed for safety.

Markus turns to Ten-Zil Kem and says, "I think I need a new Speedo."

## **Reunion**

Some deepfallen are swimming friskily around outside the sub. Ten-Zil waves at them. He feels something touch his mind, and they all swim away. Sadly, the fraal doctor is still unconscious, so he doesn't get to meet them. Kem finishes decoding the memory crystal, and finds out that Michael Teron really was a psychic who can talk to machines. He made contact with one of possibly many AIs VoidCorp has seeded on the bottom of the sea. They are hooked into the new Grid. He doesn't tell anyone this, and plans to narc it out to Insight.

Ten-Zil Kim claims the cyborg has a self-destruct, though really he just wants an anti-VoidCorp Nariac psycho on the loose. We take the two aqualasers off the cyborg and blow him out the airlock. Markus asks if he can keep the weapons for his collection; they are specialized for shooting through water. Kem ensures that Angela has the 3d storage crystal so the Regency will have enough intel to blow up the VC AIs with some depth charges, and we put her to shore somewhere safe but inconvenient to give ourselves some time to get back to the Lighthouse in case the local intel agencies are in a rendition kind of mood.

Agent Gettys never returns.

We earn 8 advancement points for each character! That's a whole level. We rejoice.