

Conflict Resolution

Initial Brief

BREAKING NEWS: Ace / Alta Negotiations To Begin - End To War In Sight?

A source in the Galactic Cooperation Peacekeeping Force, speaking to The Reporter under condition of anonymity, has indicated that peace talks have been tentatively arranged between the Altarian Battleship Her Glorious Command and the ACE cartel. Negotiations are expected to begin aboard Cooperation Battleship Firebrand TE-3 in the coming days, seeking to bring an end to the conflict that has consumed the moon Keter 6a 'Ace's World' for over a year.

Our source also claims that in addition to Altarian, ACE, and Firebrand representatives, the talks will also be attended by a delegation from the Mytenean Societal Corps, who have been working with the Firebrand to facilitate the talks. Elegy representatives are also expected; while their stake in the negotiations is unclear, rumours we reported last month suggested that Elegy Spectres were thought to be operating in the warzone.

More on this story as it develops.

—
Incoming Direct Message
Source Identifier: Mytenean Societal Corps
Accept transmission? y/n
Y

Message Begins

A pivotal moment for the Keter System is close at hand, but peace will slip through our fingers if we're not careful. We fear neither Ace nor the Altarians are being completely forthcoming with us nor each other. There's a risk that the talks will fail unless they open up.

While our negotiation team tries to solve this diplomatically, we would appreciate it greatly if you could visit both Ace's World and Her Glorious Command and see if you can shed any light on their respective situations by more direct means.

If you are available and willing, please meet us aboard the Firebrand to discuss further.

Message Ends

Characters

- [gunnery_sergeant_desiring_peace](#) - Phil
- [heightened_serendipity](#) - Tamsin

Summary

- Before heading out on the mission, both Heightened Serendipity and Desiring Peace seek information from their various contacts about what might await them. Heightened Serendipity vouches for Desiring Peace to her Elegy contact, Vyix 9a, and as a result the party both learn from them that there seem to be a lot more Elegy aboard the *Firebrand* than might be expected, and that something odd is going on. Desiring Peace, meanwhile, does not get any contact from Ace's High despite trying to find out through their usual channels if something is going on.
- Desiring Peace and Heightened Serendipity meet a negotiator from the Mytenean Societal Corps aboard *Firebrand*, where they are preparing for the peace talks that are due to begin soon. They are briefed that there is some concern about both sides of the negotiations, and they are being asked to go visit the key players and understand what's happening. In particular:
 - Ace's High seemed keen for the peace talks, and had been discussing openly with the MSC what she wanted and was willing to negotiate for, but has recently gone very quiet and is not even confirming whether she will definitely attend the talks.
 - Meanwhile, the discussions with the Altarians aboard *Her Glorious Command* have been.... confusing. The commander of the military forces, 16th Century Piercing Bough, has been the primary contact, and they have seemed reasonable in discussion - open to ending the war, certainly - but then they seem to change their mind, or walk back commitments they had previously made. There is concern whether the Altarians are taking these talks seriously.
- The party head first to Ace's World, where they find that Ace's High is not in her usual office, but appears to have gone to Fableland, so they head there. After dealing with the decaying corpse of a Fableland villager (and its other decay monster friends) en route, they arrive to find King Valiant and Blind Rising in deep discussion about the future of the village.
- It turns out that Fableland has had two offers for its future, one from the bandits under Wildcard Gilded and one from the ACE organisation:
 - The bandits think Fableland's citizens would be excellent at living in the Decay, being runners, outpost inhabitants, etc for the most organized 'rebel' towns. Blind Rising and the Adventurers' Guild are in favour of this option.
 - Ace's High has suggested that instead Fableland could become a tourist attraction under the ACE organisation, with its Tournament running year-round to attract outsiders. King Valiant is in favour of this solution.
 - As the party are leaving, a delegation from Wildcard Gilded arrives, and King Valiant turns down their offer in favour of the 'my tournament is the best thing ever' option. The bandits are, however, allowed to leave without violence, and are overheard to say they think some of the Adventurers' Guild might defect to them anyway rather than become nothing more than a tourist attraction.
- The party continue onwards, through the razormonkey-infested scrubland of Ace's World, until they find Ace's High holed up in a backwater casino in the backwater town of Royal Flush. The bouncers on the door initially refuse entry to Heightened Serendipity when she openly reveals that she is an Elegy operative, but she is able to slip in under cover of WARP when another patron arrives. Desiring Peace, meanwhile, has to deal with answering anti-Altarian riddles to be approved for entry by the bouncers.
- Ace's High is initially extremely concerned by an Elegy representative showing up in front of her, but the combination of Heightened Serendipity voluntarily putting down all their weapons, and Ace's High having worked with Desiring Peace before, gets them an audience with no violence kicking off. The party learn that Ace's High is still keen for the peace talks to go ahead,

but has heard that there is an Elegy contract on her head, so she is being extremely careful about who knows where she is and where she will be. She confirms that she does intend to attend the peace talks, but doesn't want anyone to know that ahead of time, to reduce the risk that Spectres can out-manoeuvre her. She is keen to move on, since if the party have found her here then others can, and asks the party to let her leave before them, which they do.

- The party return to the *Firebrand* where they meet Vyix 9a in person and explain that Ace's High seems to believe there is an Elegy contract out on her. Vyix 9a is not aware of any such contract, and suspects that this means the Chorister, who they already suspect and who is on the *Firebrand*, is going to try something. Vyix 9a asks the party to help them deal with the Chorister, for the good of the Keter System - although they cannot promise any more immunity to the consequences of standing in the way of an Elegy contract than 'well I'll be doing it too.'
- Meanwhile, the party go to carry out the rest of their original brief on *Her Glorious Command*, where some slightly bored (but very honourable) guards challenge them to 1-on-1 duels in order to prove their worthiness to be let on board, abiding of course by the but-of-course-everyone-knows-them Throne's Rules. After divesting themselves of large quantities of extra weapons, Desiring Peace wins theirs handily. Heightened Serendipity's ends in a draw as both parties yield simultaneously, but the guards decree this to be good enough and let them through with excellent good humour and a quantity of 'we should do this again some time'-ing.
- The party finds 16th Century Piercing Bough deep in discussion with what appear to be their military sub-commanders, none of whom seem particularly happy discussing the war situation. The party engage 16th Century Piercing Bough in conversation to try to find out why their position has seemed so inconsistent to the Mytenean Societal Corps. None of the Altarians seem willing to openly discuss whatever problems are happening, but there are strong hints that the ship's Mystics may be involved. Before further information can be gathered, however, the party (along with everyone else on board HGC) are summoned to a mysterious shipheart-to-shipheart combat. Desiring Peace takes the side of the ship heart Perfect Reverie, which says it is fighting to right an injustice, while Heightened Serendipity takes the side of the ship heart Her Glorious Command, which says it is fighting to defend the ship.
- The ship heart Perfect Reverie was the original *casus belli* when HGC shelled Ace's World to retrieve it. It turns out that Perfect Reverie is also aboard *Her Glorious Command* (the ship), and the conflict appears to have arisen when a trainee mystic connected to it asked it to modify the shape of the ship so she could get a stolen heirloom back. Desiring Peace and this mystic acolyte, whose name is 32nd Century Smallest Thorn, are the only ones fighting on Perfect Reverie's side, with most of the rest of the ship (including the Chief Mystic, X Worshipful Portent) arrayed against them on Her Glorious Command's side. Perfect Reverie loses.
- Upon emerging from the combat, almost everyone on the ship rushes to the 'cathedral' where the ship hearts are housed to find out what happened, and the party are able to follow along.
- Perfect Reverie and 32nd Century Smallest Thorn are being given a strong dressing-down by Her Glorious Command and X Worshipful Portent respectively. After Smallest Thorn is sent off to consider penance for her actions, the party gain an audience. The following things become clear:
 - Her Glorious Command has been training Perfect Reverie in how to be the best sort of ship heart (i.e. like Her Glorious Command). This appears to be because Her Glorious Command has taken an interest in how ship hearts function - not exactly a scientific interest, but certainly a philosophical one. Perfect Reverie appears very keen to learn how to be the best ship heart it can be.
 - The insistence that the war must continue is coming from the Chief Mystic and, by extension, from Her Glorious Command. This appears to be a combination of a) for the honour of Alta! but also b) Her Glorious Command having learned of the vault of ship hearts present on Ace's World, and wanting to continue its studies of ship hearts by getting hold of them. The military commander has therefore been stuck in the difficult

position of militarily knowing peace talks are necessary, but being contradicted by the mystics, and the Captain of HGC listens to the mystics (and outranks the military commander, Dynastically).

- The party consider whether Ace's High could be persuaded to offer access to the vault, but also suggest that if HGC really want to investigate how ship hearts do ship hearting, then Endeavour is.... there? Still floating in space? And would be quite useful if it could be persuaded back into being the ship heart of a spaceship?
 - Desiring Peace uses the Gambit skill to attempt to convince Her Glorious Command of this idea, and is aware that they have achieved some success (but also some consequence).
- With peace talks now imminently beginning, the party hurry back to the *Firebrand*. Heightened Serendipity steals some equipment from the shuttle they arrived on to turn into a WARP detector, which once per 30 seconds can be used to detect anyone hidden by a WARP call within the room that they are currently in. The shuttle is inoperable until this equipment is replaced.
- The party debrief the Mytenean Societal Corps negotiator who greets them upon arrival about everything they have learned on Ace's World and upon *Her Glorious Command*. The negotiator seems to think this will be very useful, and thanks them before rushing off to arrange chairs.
- The party also catch up individually with both Ace's High and Piercing Bough. Upon updating Ace's High about HGC's interest in ship hearts, Ace suggests to the party that she believes Wildcard Guided possesses a ship heart (hence how they lead such a large host of bandits outside of Ace's World's main civilisation), and if the Altarians wanted to take that for themselves then she wouldn't stop them. Observing this to be an interesting bargaining chip, the party take this information to Piercing Bough, who is grateful for another thing that might divert the attention of Her Glorious Command and its mystics.
- However, before the talks can start, two Elegy Spectres who were apparently here for the negotiations attempt to 'prune' Ace's High. One of these spectres is recognisable as Chorister Vitruvius to those with sufficient standing within the Elegy - including to Vyix 9a, who is also present and who promptly denounces this assassination attempt as not sanctioned by the Elegy. With party intervention, the assassination attempt is prevented. Chorister Vitruvius escapes, but the other Spectre - who seems to believe they were acting in accordance with a legitimate contract - is taken into custody by Vyix 9a.
- The peace talks then commence.

Aftermath

- Desiring Peace continues to develop networks of gambling rings across HGC and Firebrand, and generally works on becoming a well known and reliable figure among the rank and file of both ships.

Consequences

- BREAKING NEWS: Ace / Alta Peace Talks a Success! War is Over!
 - Our source in the Galactic Cooperation Peacekeeping Force has reported that peace has finally been agreed in the war between *Her Glorious Command* and Ace's World. HGC has agreed to no further military action against the ACE Organisation or its interests, and Ace's High has agreed to take no retaliatory action against HGC or other Altarians in system. The peace appears to be holding so far, and civilians on both sides have been sending us letters expressing their relief.

- The negotiations were, however, interrupted by an Elegy assassination attempt on Ace's High - but it seems that this was an *unsanctioned* assassination attempt? Drone video from the scene shows Spectres opposing each other, arguing over whether the contract was real or not? Is there an Elegy schism underway??
- On Ace's World, Fableland has chosen a future with ACE and will be transformed into a tourist attraction over the coming months. The Fableland Adventurers' Guild are angry with King Valiant about this.
- Once the peace talks are complete, *Her Glorious Command* is observed manoeuvring towards the location of *Endeavour*.

All Characters

- +3 Clout with the Mytenean Societal Corps
- +1 Clout with Vyix 9a

Desiring Peace

- -1 Clout with Her Glorious Command (ship heart)
- +1 Clout with each of *Her Glorious Command* (inhabitants of ship) and *Firebrand*

Heightened Serendipity

- -1 Clout with the *Firebrand* for temporarily breaking one of their shuttles

mission, gunnery sergeant desiring peace, heightened serendipity

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