

# **Shad Kolkman**

**Delegation: Matters' Folly**

**Nationality: Badlands**

Whether nice guys actually finish last or not is still open to debate, but you've been doing alright so far with it, at least on the surface. Your parents also were difficult to describe without using words like nice, generous, or lovely – selfless to the last, it was from them that you inherited your disarming humanity. Growing up out in the Badlands on their homestead, ranching springers and raising waterroot, it seemed like simpler times to now. Your father was still alive then and your brother was around, and the four of you would spend days at a time herding the springers and sleeping out under the stars. Things got complicated when the War came.

Although North and South had clashed in the area before, nobody had seen anything like the War of the Alliance. GREL supersoldiers with high-tech equipment cut through Terra Novan lines like knives through butter, and your parents took in some wounded to care for them. That's pretty much how you remember growing up during the War – the news on the trideo telling of far-off, abstract battles, but the effects of war being right in your face, you having to step over them to go to school, helping feed them and talking to them and writing letters for them to their loved ones back home that probably never reached their destinations. One of the wounded, a Gear pilot from the Northern Lights Confederacy, told you about the Gentle Prophet and the religion of Revisionism. Her words made sense to you, and you became a Revisionist. So did your elder brother Deet, who left to join the NorLight Army.

After your liberation by the Peace River Army and the end of the War, things started to return somewhat to normal. Deet had survived, but had settled in the NLC and married. You started growing the herd again and having finished in the tiny school in the near ghost-town of Matters' Folly your responsibilities increased on the farm. When your father died in a freak tempest things got tougher. You and your mother were unsure how you were going to survive, until the Gentle Spirit sent you a saviour in a most unlikely guise – an Isabella-class GREL looking to work in exchange for food and shelter. Your mother instantly took her in, to your surprise – didn't these creatures cause all the suffering you'd witnessed?

Over time though Soldier Varia became your best friend. Genetically engineered as a combat medic, she knew little else and found it very difficult to learn new skills. Still though, she did eventually figure out how to treat springers. She'd been chased out of town after town, narrowly escaping with her life from mobs of angry Terra Novans several times, and spoke sometimes of the problems facing her kind left behind on your world, many unable to perform any trade except to fight and kill. But you could see she was trying to overcome her limitations, and you came to respect that far more than you cared about who was on which side during the War. Before moving on, she recruited several other GRELs who wanted a chance to find peace on your remote farm. They work hard and keep to themselves and are grateful for their shot at a normal life, although you fear to think what would happen if anybody ever found out about them.

With your mother overseeing the agricultural end of things, this gave you plenty of time to spend in town, and with your farm showing a deal of success and your natural knack at treating everybody kindly gaining you a reputation as a decent person to settle disputes, you soon found yourself leading the farmers' committee, and as a result automatically placed on the town council. You have made many friends in the town, now a thriving trade centre since the discovery of water on Milan Kopier's land, and are pretty much universally liked. Things aren't all perfect, however.

For several cycles you've been dating Marshal Maxine Hadland and are head-over-heels in love with her.

Unfortunately you're unsure whether the feeling is mutual. She says she loves you too, and apologises tearfully afterwards for her abusive outbursts when she's been drinking or is stressed, but after all this time you don't know what to think anymore. There's no doubt that she's amongst the most sensitive and caring people you've ever met, and she's confident and self-assured with it. She's a bit wild though and you suspect that's causing her pain somehow, pain which she unintentionally takes out on you. You're wondering whether or not asking her to marry you and settle down would calm her.

The other problem is the age-old one of land. When Milan Kopier's parents moved to the area, your parents gave them the use of some land suitable for growing johar grass on that they weren't using. The Kopiers found their feet, but with the problems of the tragic death of Milan Kopier's parents, the War and your father's death they never asked for it back. Now since Milan found water on another part of his land and become the richest man in the area without having to farm, he's let the rest of the land he controls go wild, not tending it or even visiting it. You could make good use of this land he's ignoring and since it belongs to your mother you've politely asked for it back. Kopier refuses flatly. This is the only argument of its type that you've been unable to solve with your diplomatic knack and it's become increasingly heated as time progressed. Kopier is a smart man and has had a tough life for sure, but the land is doing him no good at all and is merely causing him trouble because you keep hassling him for it – why hang onto it? It seems completely irrational.

And now to protect it from further destruction caused by the warring Poles, the town is forced to ally with one of the big powers. If that's the way it's gotta be, that's the way it's gotta be, and you think the best of the lot would be Port Arthur, the Earth city. They would be keen to trade for food and could make the farmers of your area prosperous indeed – and furthermore maybe you could gain greater acceptance for GREs, meaning amongst many other good points that your GRE friends on your own farm wouldn't have to hide away there in secret anymore. Not an easy one to explain to your colleagues on the town council when you make your case, of course, but then nobody said life is easy for a nice guy.

### About Your Delegation <

- **Mayor Dellasanta** – A very competent mayor, who holds the council together well. His wife is dead and his kids have abandoned him though, he doesn't seem to be so good at running his life as he is at running the town.
- **Marshal Hadland** – Your beloved Maxine, some cycles your elder and a somewhat troubled soul but together you can take on the world. She's the only one here who knows about the GREs on your farm, but you trust her implicitly.
- **Milan Kopier** – Owner of the water company and richest man in the area. His parents were killed during the Judas Syndrome by battling Northern and Southern units, leaving him to tend the farm alone, and his Southern wife abandoned him suddenly taking their children with her back to the South. You feel very sorry for him, although he seems to be being rather unreasonable about your land.
- **Rabbi Gonzales** – The town's Jerusalemite preacher, representing the religious beliefs of the vast majority of townsfolk. A good guy, unfortunately seems to disapprove somewhat of your own religion.
- **Frank** – The ever-reliable caravan trader who can get anything the town needs, fast and cheap.

### About Others You Know <

- **Marna Kounkel** – An adventurer from Peace River whose sister was married to Mayor Dellasanta. He was visiting the town when an old enemy started shooting at him and his sister was killed, and you were injured, but it wasn't Kounkel's fault – he was acting purely in self-defence and dealt with it as best he could. The Mayor is probably still bitter though.

## Resources <

Although they're a secret and are striving for inner peace, you can call on a handful of GREs who work on your farm. They're not armed but even so if the stories you've heard about GREs are to be believed, that won't make much of a difference once they get going.

## Goals <

- Try to get the town allied with Port Arthur, for the good of all – the farmers you represent, the town you help control, and your GREL friends.
- Get your land back from Milan Kopier! You don't know what motivates him so you're not sure how to go about that, but you're willing to negotiate, or force the issue politically with the town council if necessary. You don't want to have your parents' generosity taken advantage of now that it's not needed anymore.
- Sort out things with Max (Marshal Hadland). You've bought a ring and everything and have been carrying it on you for weeks waiting for the right moment and for your own mind to be fully made up.

## Additional Player Info: Shad Kolkman <

Always seeing the best in everyone, Shad is an eternal Mister Nice Guy. He'll try to settle any arguments or disputes he notices going on in such a fashion that everybody's as happy as possible, emphasising the good points of his suggested course of action and the benefits of whatever amount of compromise is necessary. Obviously life would be better if everyone could be friends, and Shad tries to make that a reality wherever possible.

Revisionism is a purely Terra Novan faith, founded by Mamoud Khodaveri, the Gentle Prophet (after his death it split into two factions, Massadan Revisionism led by his son, and Sorrento Revisionism led by his best friend and main follower, Nathani Reiss). It preaches the usual be-nice-to-each-other stuff, and encourages conservatism in regards to stuff like how much clothing is enough. Bandy about phrases like Gentle Spirit and Gentle Word and you're on the right track. Jerusalamism is a fusion of Christianity, Islam and Judaism, and the primary religion in Matters' Folly, although a distinct minority on Terra Nova as a whole.