

Sous-Commandant Xavier \ Xavière Beauregarde

Delegation: Allied Southern Territories

Nationality: Southern Republic

The world, you well know, is not black and white. There is no good nor evil, everything is shades of grey, and none of those too dark nor light either. For much of your life you had the luxury of being able to deal with things in the open-minded way your cosmopolitan upbringing taught you, which made you well-liked for your wisdom. But now there's a war on, and there's little room for seeing things from the other guy's side. To make it through times like this, a thinking person needs a code to live by, and yours is that code which makes Terra Nova in general and the Southern Republic in particular what they are – honour.

Your mother Anabel, a native of the Southern Republic city-state of Aquitaine on the fringes of the Badlands, worked as an expeditionary geologist for a mining company. Her work took her all over those vast deserts, and you were raised on tall tales of her adventures and the fascinating characters she encountered on her travels. One such tale relates to how she met your father Milan, at the time a struggling farmer trying to make ends meet on his homestead. Tiring of constant travel, of living out of the boot of an off-road truck, she fell in love with the quiet tranquility of the farm, and with the nobility of a one-man struggle against the elements without the resources of an entire corporation as backup. Although not, she would say in wistful retrospect, with your father – although at the time she thought she had. She gave up her job for a simpler life, and it was here, out in the Badlands, that first your sister Elise and then yourself were born.

After the War of the Alliance she left, returning to Aquitaine with you and your sister. With a wide circle of friends ranging from next door to the Badlands to the North itself she was constantly on the go, but was happy and always found time for you and Elise. So much of what you consider important to know in life you learned from her – not to judge or label people, to look for the validity in others' points of view, and to treat yourself and others with honour. You had a happy childhood, a group of three best friends bound by blood.

At the age of fifteen cycles, you fell in love. Gershwyn Silva, a girl at school from the Western Frontier Protectorate, with flowing purple hair and a bright open smile, captured your heart, and you hers. The animated twinkle in her eyes when she talked about her love for her family always delighted you, for in the Southern Republic there were few who understood the bond you felt with your own family, and when you overheard her telling her father something about you and saw she had that same twinkle, you knew that this was something truly special. Unfortunately the political climate was turning from the optimistic spirit of cooperation that followed the War of the Alliance, turning back to the mistrust and suspicion that had gone before. No longer feeling welcome, the Gershwyns moved back to the WFP. Both you and Silva were heartbroken, and promised to write to one another everyday. Before long though the government started openly monitoring email sent north, and soon after you stopped getting responses from Silva – you assumed that the WFP government was putting a stop to such transmissions. Through it all though, your mother and sister supported you as much as possible – you felt you would have gone insane without their help.

Things started to turn sour when Elise went away to college in Newton. She seemed to be enjoying herself, although she had become quite political – something the establishment in the Southern Republic frowns upon. The last thing you heard she was dating a guy called Ual, who shared her convictions about freedom of expression, and then she just disappeared. Such things do happen from time to time in the Republic, but it's generally assumed that this is only in particularly dangerous, radical cases. Elise wasn't involved in that, was she? It couldn't have been the government – but then where is she?

Your mother was devastated. She started turning to her friends and contacts to try and find out about Elise's fate. She was unsuccessful, warned not to endanger herself by making too much noise. But she was obsessed. For an entire cycle you saw little of her, and when you did see her she was buried in her research. Her friends were running short on patience and she had used up most of her favours. Frustrated by the events of recent cycles and with nobody left to turn to, you sought an exit.

The MILICIA Academy provided that exit. You were admitted to study as an officer cadet, and thrived on the discipline and structure. After studying artillery and landship tactics you were posted aboard a landship as a junior fire control officer. Competent and popular, you rose through the ranks, and after a few cycles of war found yourself the Executive Officer of the Alexander class frigate *Revanche*. But as well as promotion, the War has brought dilemmas.

You don't make an omelette without breaking some eggs, and you certainly don't make a successful career as a fire control officer without laying some heavy artillery down. The problems this town, Matters' Folly, are having are ones you can certainly understand – more than once you've fired on civilian towns that were harbouring enemy troops, as legitimate military targets. But that was just following orders. Since being appointed XO you have actually ordered a similar strike yourself, and you don't feel at all good about that. Innocent civilians died – you killed them – for the crime of having their homes in between the North and the South. If this is fighting the good fight, it feels pretty dirty and sickening.

Adding to your troubles is the news two seasons ago that your mother has been arrested on suspicion of treason. Since going away to the academy you had had little contact with her, although when you returned home on leave you found her to be as obsessed as ever, or even moreso. She had lost a lot of weight, rambled about the government and vague notions of conspiracies and paid little attention to your presence. And so she must have trod on the wrong toes, and is gone. You harbour little hope of seeing her again.

With these pressures and circumstances mounting on you and little idea of how to proceed, you were unsure whether you might not be following your mother down the path of insanity, when you remembered what you'd learned, in school and from your mother, about honour. You were seeing a whole new reason for such a code – when you're in too deep to be able to see where the correct way to turn lies, a code gives you something to work from. You'd always striven to live an honourable life, as the Republic expects of its citizens, but now a new side of it had awakened within you.

It's put a lot of things in perspective. You're fighting the War to defend your country – there is no doubt that that needs doing, especially since your hometown of Aquitaine was attacked by a Northern landship battlegroup – but there can be an honourable way of doing that. You know the Northerners are not monsters, regardless of what your more insular comrades may think. The solution to an enemy force in a civilian town is simple – both sides send forth their duellists, and the losing side withdraws. No loss of life, no harm to the civilians, and honour is maintained. You're Terra Novans, not Earthers, and you can fight a war like civilised beings, not packs of sun-crazed dawgs.

New perspectives have combined with an enforced realisation of how fragile and valuable and rare good relationships are. Silva is out there somewhere, and you're not going to just accept it anymore. Maybe she'll want nothing to do with you, maybe she's married or dead, but you're not going to let the fact that your confederacy is at war with hers stand in the way of what you're increasingly coming to believe is true love. You don't know how you're going to find her, but you won't stop trying until you do.

When a military representative to attend these negotiations was sought, you were surprised to find that you were chosen, and more surprised to learn that the reason was that you had an inside track – your father,

Milan Kopier, is on the town council. Never mind that you haven't seen him in over twenty cycles, the Army cares little for common sense. Likewise, you're unsure if they're taking into consideration that your mother was recently apprehended – is your being sent here some kind of trick or trap, or are they assuming it's irrelevant, or is it just lost in the bureaucracy? Regardless, your mission is to try to win the town's allegiance for the South, although you're supposed to do it by playing henchman to this sleazeball diplomat. To nod and smile at his lies, to bark when he says to. There's no honour in playing things that way. Your opponents here are human beings, not just potential useful assets, and deserve to be treated with respect.

It's time to take the barnaby by the horn and do the right thing here. You can prove that battles, both physical and diplomatic, can be fought without lies and trickery. Perhaps you can manage to sneak some letters to Silva! And just maybe you can bring this damn war a little bit closer to being finished. It was started by politicians, for politicians, and there's not much honour in fighting for that.

About Your Delegation <

- **Ual Guyet** – A smarmy high-flying diplomat based out of the AST's Peace River embassy, who's technically commanding this mission. No doubt he's been highly trained in how to lie.
- **Emir Lavezzo** – A real Emir, on a morale-building tour of the front lines. You don't know why an Emir is on a mission like this one.

About Others You Know <

- **Milan Kopier** – Your father, who you haven't seen since you were a kid. He was nice enough, as far as you can remember, although quiet. Word has it he's rich now, owns the water company.

Resources <

The *Revanche* itself dropped the delegation to the pick-up point and is holding there awaiting your return or further information. The rest of its battlegroup, should it matter, is 18 hours away.

Goals <

- Win the loyalties of this town for the South. If that's impossible, the second choice is Peace River. Port Arthur would of course be preferable to the North having it, but continued independence would be better than that.
- Whatever you're doing regarding these negotiations, do it honourably! Try to get the rest of your delegation behaving honourably too – Ual Guyet is from the Republic too and so should respond favourably, although the Emir is a harder one to read. Likewise you can shame members of other delegations into acting with honour.
- See if you can contact somebody who might be able to get some letters you've brought with you to Gershwyn Silva. Carefully, you never know who might be watching...
- Find out what you can about why you were chosen for this mission – again, you'll need to be careful.