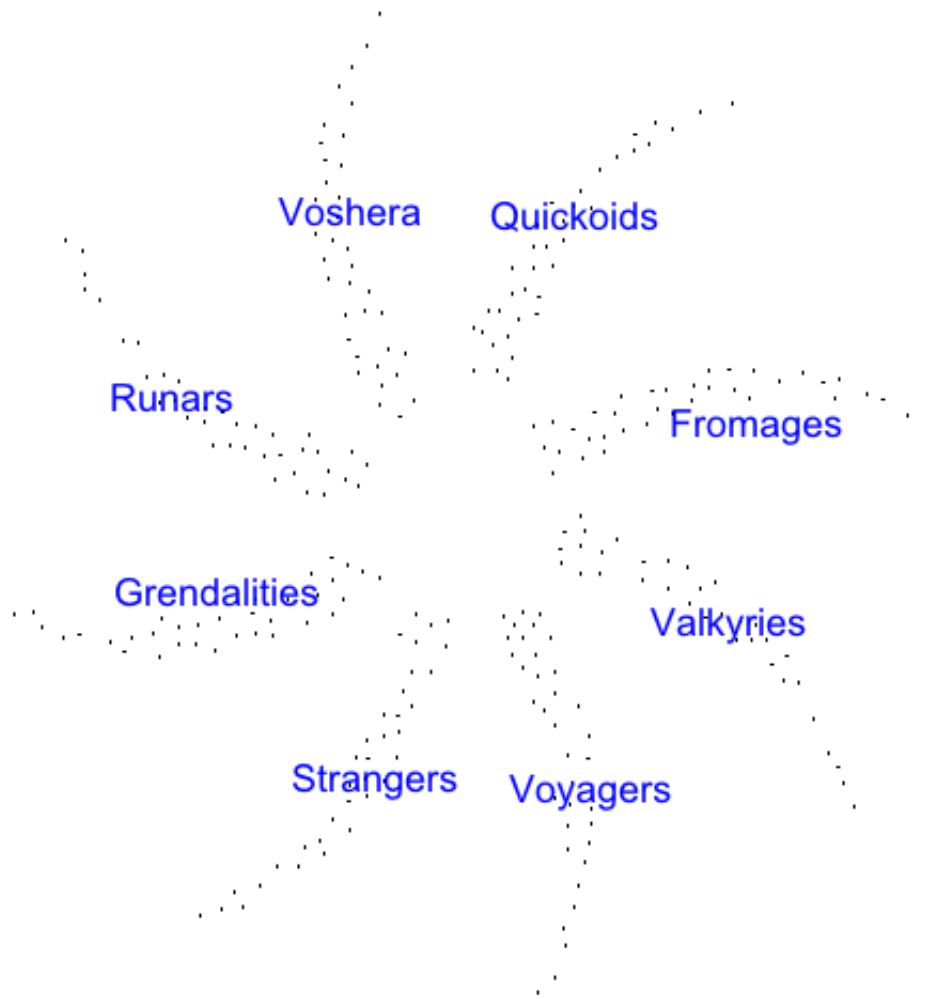


The history of the Voshera, by CRæbild, Primarch of the Voshera.



Contents:

Chapter 1: The Long Road.....	2	2464:.....	11
2400:.....	2	2465:.....	12
2450:.....	3	2466:.....	12
2451:.....	3	2467:.....	12
2452:.....	3	2468:.....	12
2453:.....	4	2469:.....	13
2454:.....	6	2470:.....	13
2455:.....	7	2471:.....	14
2456:.....	7	2472:.....	14
2457:.....	8	2473:.....	15
2458:.....	8	2474:.....	15
2459:.....	9	2475:.....	17
2460:.....	9	2476:.....	20
2461:.....	9	2477:.....	20
2462:.....	10	2478:.....	21
2463:.....	11	2479:.....	21

2480:	22	2502:	41
2481:	22	2503:	42
2482:	23	2504:	43
2483:	25	2505:	44
2484:	26	2506:	44
2485:	26	2507:	44
2486:	26	2508:	45
2487:	27	2509:	46
2488:	27	2510:	47
2489:	28	2511:	47
2490:	28	2512:	47
Chapter 2: Preparations for war	28	2513:	48
2491:	28	2514:	48
2492:	31	2515:	49
2493:	32	2516:	49
2494:	35	2517:	50
2495:	35	2518:	50
2496:	37	2519:	51
Chapter 3: War with the Fromage-Valkyrie		2520:	51
Alliance and their vassals	38	2521:	52
2497:	38	2522:	53
2498:	39	2523:	53
2499:	39	2524:	53
2500:	41	2525:	54
2501:	41		

Chapter 1: The Long Road

The road of colonization, infrastructure build up and research is a long road. Fortunately we managed to spend it in peace, as can be seen in this chapter.

2400:

We find ourselves on Red Ball and are allied with the Quickoids from Schubert. Our alliance occupies the two northern arms of the galaxy, and we know there are three other alliances out there, each occupying two adjacent arms of the galaxy: The Strangers / Voyagers, the Fromages / Valkyries and the Grendalities / Runars. We know nothing of the three other alliances yet, other than the names of the races.

We find ourselves good at changing the environment of planets, and our allies can breed even on freighters, they do not need planets to breed.

All races in the universe will be dormant for the next 50 years, unable to change the commands we have given our ships, and unable to change the orders for production and research we give now. We have chosen to concentrate our research on becoming better at changing the environment of planets, and the Quickoids will concentrate their research on learning how to build the biggest possible freighters, as well as other ship types.

We have sent out our Smaugarian Peeping Tom to see what the other planets in our arm of the galaxy are like, as well as as many planets in arm 7 as it can manage, and we will colonize Burgoyne in arm 1 in the hopes that we will find that a nice place to live.

After looking over a few planets to do something during the wait, our Change of Heart will greet the Quickoid colonists at Karhide when they colonize it with hopes Karhide will be a nice place for them to live, so our Change of Heart can help them make Karhide a better place to live.

2450:

Now that the long wait is over, we have become much better at making planets nice to live on for ourself and our friends, and we have learned much about our arm and arm 7. Arm 7 holds Resort, the homeworld of the Runars, but while they will find planets we like are not to their liking, their ally will most likely want those worlds in arm 7. We can see that the Runars prefer planets with low to medium gravity and a narrower range of medium to high radiation, and do not care what the temperature is.

We have learned much from analysing what happened during the long sleep. We have learned that the Runars must be the kind who build all kinds of stargates and can send cargo and colonists through them, and the Fromages must be the kind who excel at nothing but are good at everything.

While Burgoyne was not so nice a place to live when we colonized it, we have later learned to make it a nice place. Unfortunately the Quickoids had no such luck with Karhide, but we have found that Ship Shape is a nice place for them to live even now, and Ship Shape will be perfect for them once we have helped them improve it.

We will be building ships to colonize some of the planets we have found to be very good for us, and more Change of Heart ships to help the Quickoids, as well as ships to help the Change of Heart ships with fuel for making longer trips at high speed.

2451:

We have now learned to build better scanners, and have improved our planetary scanner on Red Ball. We have also built the ships we planned to build, and are sending them out on their planned missions to colonize Angst, Clausewitz, Whistler's Mother, Andante and Cirrus, and to send more of our colonists to Burgoyne which proved to be such a nice place to live. Those heading out in our arm are also carrying germanium along to allow our colonists to build factories without first to have to build mines.

We have also designed a new scout type, making use of the better scanner we have learned how to build, and we will build a good number of them to be launched next year.

Deciding how much to spend on research and how much to spend on building ships has been a problem, but we feel we have planned the correct balance.

2452:

We have now colonized Angst, Clausewitz and Whistler's Mother, and we dropped on Karhide. Angst and Clausewitz could be turned perfect for us with our knowledge, so they are very good places to live. The Quickoid colonists on Karhide did not seem to like our arrival, but we had the approval of Quickoid High Command to kill the Quickoid colonists there. Or conquest of Karhide gave us some useful knowledge about propulsion, saving us some research.

The commander of our fleet heading for Burgoyne and Cirrus seemed to have received incorrect orders, so he had set out at only warp 5 instead of warp 9. He has received corrective orders now.

We built 20 scouts with our new Possum scanners, they have now been sent flying out to keep an eye out for other ships. We will transfer them to the Quickoids one year out from Red Ball, as the

Quickoids technicians have some trick with scanners to double the range, and that is obviously useful.

We also built more colonizers and freighters, and are sending them to colonize Lever, Kalila and Redemption. Kalila and Redemption promises to be perfect places for us to live when our colonists arrive there.

Our colonists on Burgoyne have built a small station in orbit. No actual facilities of any kind, but it is able to receive ships sent from the Quickoids to teach us technology, which is what we built it for.

Our friends the Quickoids tells us they lost a scout at Planet X, apparently that is the HW of the Fromages. The Fromages shot down that unarmed scout, hopefully by mistake.

We have sent a friendly greeting to our neighbour the Runars, we wrote:

Greetings to the Runars,

Thank you for kindly refueling our scout while passing by when our conscious minds were taking a bit of a nap. We are glad we could return the favor. We would enjoy peaceful coexistence if you are interested in a non-aggression agreement. We feel that there is quite enough room to grow in our own arm and have no short term interest in expanding into your realm. Please let us know if this sounds reasonable or if you have some other suggestion that could capture our interest. For more efficient communication, you can also contact us by e-mail at woliv@craebild.dk and rolfverberg@gmail.com.

Craebild, Primarch of the Voshera, speaking for the Voshera/Quickoid alliance

Our ally the Quickoids have likewise sent a friendly greeting to their neighbours the Fromages / Valkyries alliance:

Greetings from the Voshera/Quickoid alliance,

We were saddened to see that our Smaugarian Peeping Tom that entered orbit around Planet X was destroyed. It was an unarmed ship on a peaceful mission to seek information about our neighbors. We do not consider the destruction of that vessel an act of war, we will assume that it was a mistake that will not happen again, and we promise in good faith that we will not destroy any unarmed scouts that enter our space. We do not welcome armed scouts in our arms unless we can come to a more detailed mutually beneficial agreement, and we welcome any suggestions that you may have to start a dialogue with that goal in mind. You can contact us by e-mail to woliv@craebild.dk and rolfverberg@gmail.com.

Hopefully we will receive friendly replies from both alliances.

2453:

As the new Spree class scouts we built were transferred to the Quickoids their technicians doubled their scan range, and they now scan quite some area. Among other things they discovered a wormhole in deep space, located between our arm and the Quickoid arm, the Quickoids will send a scout through to see where that wormhole leads. They also spotted a ship belonging to the Strangers, and our analysis of the design tells us that the Strangers know nothing of ramscoops, and have no advanced knowledge of engine efficiency.

We have now colonized Andante, and we could also turn Andante into quite a pleasant place to live.

It seems our researchers did not quite understand what we intended with our research orders, so we did not learn how to build stargates this year, but that problem should be remedied next year.

We are sending out more colonists to the planets we have colonized, and to the four planets we will be colonizing next year. Our colonists know quite well that they will be nice places to live too, and they will have much more space there than on crowded Red Ball.

The Fromages have replied to us and the Quickoids with this message:

Greetings, neighbours!

We apologise for the destruction of your scout, which was quite accidental - we have suffered a modest incursion by the Runar, and we were building to remove their destroyer before it caused any damage. Either way, we have no objection to your resuming scouting of our space. I also agree that armed scouts are bad, to this end I will scrap the destroyer orbiting Esther (it was there for initial scouting purposes & ran out of fuel, so why risk an incident.)

We are certainly open to further developing our relations, although we are not sure what sort of ideas you have in mind. Suggestions welcome. With an SS race in play, any intelligence is always welcome, before we bump into their armageddon nubians! We note the Strangers (Space Dem) in the south are already setting up their minefields, so you might want to send scouts slowly in that area!

Sincerely,

Blue Stilton of the Fromages (cc'd to the Valkyries)

A most favourable response, indicating that a treaty was quite likely, so after conferring with us, the Quickoids replied with this message:

Dear Neighbors,

Apologies accepted, we already figured out it was one of those common early mishaps. We also express our gratitude towards your offer to dismantle your destroyer at Esther. We were delighted to see a computer registration of a friendly ship passing by a number of year ago (unfortunately our command center was in a cryogenic state for quite a long period of time, otherwise a warmer welcome would have befallen your crew), but we were getting somewhat worried about the fact that we lost track of it after the initial contact.

We are also quite pleased about the freely shared information on our Southern neighbors. It did indeed create a certain level of anxiety. You can rest assured that we will keep our eyes open and that we will gladly share any intelligence gathered by our scouts in that area.

We have some intelligence about the Runars that could be of interest to you. Their PRT is most likely IT and they seem to dwell well on worlds with low to medium levels of gravity and high levels of radiation. Their tolerance to varying surface temperatures seems beyond what we consider conceivable. It is almost as if they couldn't care less about it.

As a gesture of goodwill and an offer to peaceful coexistence we would welcome a Non-Aggression Pact between the Voshera/Quickoid alliance and the Fromages/Valkyries alliance with the following clauses:

- 1) The four parties to the NAP must have each other set to neutral or friend, and have battle orders set to attack only enemies or specific races not covered by the NAP, except for minefield sweeping as outlined below.*
- 2) A mutually accepted border along a line passing through a point halfway between Nova and Flutter Valve and point halfway between Orion and Clotho.*
- 3) Only unarmed ships may pass the border.*
- 4) No colonization efforts from either party across the border.*

5) No minefields with their center on the other side of the border. Minefields that extend far enough to affect shipping can be swept by the other party, but such sweepers should be stationary and the intent to sweep the minefield should be announced in advance to avoid misunderstandings.

6) Passage of the border by armed ships or changes of battle orders to attack the other party can first occur in the fifth year following receipt of an in-game message canceling the NAP by all parties to the NAP

We are looking forward to your, hopefully positive, response. If any items in our offer are unacceptable, we will gladly discuss any counter offers.

The Voshera/Quickoid alliance

The message from the Fromages leads us to assume that the race whose ships are very difficult to detect must be the Voyagers, as we do not think it likely the Fromage/Valkyrie alliance can have detected ships of the Grendalities at this time to confirm them to be such a race.

2454:

Our engineers have managed to change the very nature of Whistler's Mother, increasing the natural temperature so we can keep Whistler's Mother even better to live on.

We have now colonized Cirrus, Lever, Kalila and Redemption. Cirrus, Lever and Kalila could be turned perfect, and Redemption is not much poorer.

It worries us that we have not received any reply from the Runars, don't they want to talk with us, or is it that they do not want to enter a treaty because they want to attack us ?

We and the Quickoids also received a reply from the Fromages about our offer of a NAP, the Fromages replied:

Hello Neighbours,

We wish to that you for your kind off of a NAP and to accept. I think that a mutually safe border will allow us all to expand peacefully and focus our energies elsewhere. Therefore we wish to accept, on behalf of both ourselves and the Valkyries, the fair terms of your NAP. I suggest we all meet over a nice fondue pot for a signing ceremony.

Just as another friendly heads up, there is currently a stable wormhole doing the rounds halfway between Clotho and Orion, right on our new border. This could lead to all kinds of abominations like spray cheese in a can coming through that at any point. I suggest getting some minefields in place sooner rather than later to prevent such travesties.

To a peaceful and prosperous future,

Blue Stilton of the Fromages

Our reply, sent by the Quickoids on behalf of our alliance, was:

Dear Blue Stilton,

We are very pleased with your acceptance of the NAP and would gladly drop by on a fondue party to celebrate the signing of the treaty. In fact, we fondly remember a distant past (before embarking on the space adventure that got us to this place) when cheese was readily available. Unfortunately, our chief commanders would not allow us to bring any moldy items onto our voyage. Settling for non-moldy varieties like prepackaged American cheddars was simply not an option after growing up on Stilton, Gorgonzola and Roquefort. The memory still pains us to no end...

Thanks for the info on the wormhole at our shared border. We will send scouts to examine the area and will plan on laying some minefields in the not too far future. It would indeed be quite unpleasant to have unsolicited items come through without our knowledge. We jumped a wormhole in our territory that ended in the far South. We will explore the area and keep you posted.

To a peaceful and prosperous future indeed!

2455:

Our research is going apace, and we are also receiving tech from the Quickoids.

We have now detected a ship belonging to the Voyagers, but that ship was detected near the extreme range of the Spree detecting it, so the Voyagers are apparently not the kind of people whose ships are very difficult to detect as we had assumed from the message from the Fromages.

The Quickoids attempted to colonize Brin, but so did the Runars, and the Runars colonized in considerably greater numbers, killing all the Quickoid colonists. Seeing that the colonists on Brin were Runars and not Quickoids as planned, our technicians aboard our remote terraforming ships in orbit of Brin did not make Brin a nice place for the Quickoids, but instead made Brin most unpleasant for the Runars. The Quickoids will be dropping their colonists from their freighter orbiting Brin, they should have no problem removing the Runars. It is regrettable that our orbiting remote terraforming ships cannot make Brin a nice place for the Quickoids before some of them are killed by the unpleasant environment we have created, but we will of course work to improve Brin for the Quickoids as fast as possible.

The Quickoids have also sent a message to the Runars through the slow system of interplanetary messaging, saying:

Greetings from the Voshera/Quickoid alliance.

We see that one of your colonization captains must have received incorrect orders and colonized Brin. We regret the necessity of having had to forcibly remove the colonists from Brin and assume that such mistakes will not occur again. We hope that you will agree to a non-aggression pact outlining the border between our respective areas of interest and allowing free travel by unarmed scouts. We feel that there is quite enough room to grow in our own arms and have no short term interest in expanding into your realm. Please let us know if this sounds reasonable or if you have some other suggestion that could capture our interest. For more efficient communication, you can also contact us by e-mail at woliv@craebild.dk and rolfverberg@gmail.com.

Hopefully the Runars will respond favourably, ensuring a peaceful border with them, too. If they do not, we may have the unpleasantness of a border conflict forced upon us by them and their ally.

2456:

For some reason our techs did not learn the expected technology from the Quickoids to allow us to build better scanners, so we are now trying to research it ourself, instead of waiting for them to try to teach it to us again. As it appears we are going to be at odds with the Grendalities soon we will need very good scanners.

The Quickoids conquered the Runars on Brin, and the Runars did not have additional colonists to follow up, so the Quickoids are holding Brin, and our orbital terraformers are working on turning Brin into a nice place to live for them.

We have finally spotted a Grendalities ship, and they seem to be the kind of people whose ships are very difficult to detect, confirming what the Fromages said about there being such a race about.

We have also spotted more ships belonging to the Voyagers, and our analysis of their designs lets us conclude that like their allies the Strangers they know nothing of ramscoops and have no advanced knowledge of engine efficiency. With both members of their alliance relying on engines that require fuel even at low speeds and no advanced knowledge of engine efficiency they must find fuel a limiting factor for their ships.

2457:

Our researchers have advanced our knowledge of matters relating to energy, allowing us to build a new type of ship scanners which can tell us about planetary conditions and orbiting ships from a distance. We will of course be building scout ships with these scanners, our engineers call this new ship type the Shou class. While the Quickoid technicians can also improve the scanning range for detecting ships in deep space for these new scanners, they cannot improve the range at which planetary conditions and orbiting ships can be detected. They know better than to fiddle with that part of the scanner systems, though, so that ability will not be lost because they increase the deep space range of the scanners. Nevertheless we will still be keeping at least some of the Shou class scouts, as it is only with our own technicians operating the scanners that we can learn what planetary conditions other races prefer by scanning their worlds, and knowing that can be quite useful.

We have also learned more about building things from the Quickoids, among other things we have learned to build a new type of ship hull called frigates. This hull is a good hull for building minelayers, so our engineers have designed a minelayer ship class they call Macbeth, and we will be building some of them. With the continued lack of response from the Runars and Grendalities we fear their inclinations towards us are less than friendly, so it seems prudent to lay some minefields to slow down any of their ships that try to enter our space, especially with the Grendalities' ships being so difficult to detect.

We have launched colonization fleets to colonize Curley, Mother, Leo and Juniper. Those four planets are the last four planets in the two arms belonging to our alliance which we can turn perfect for our race, so after colonizing those four planets we will build up our current colonies for a while before colonizing any new planets.

Our engineers need all the available resources at Red Ball for building ships, so we will not be doing any research this year, but we still expect to learn more about building things from the Quickoids, and we are building ships for the Quickoids to teach them about life sciences, a field which they apparently know nothing about at all.

2458:

Our engineers have managed to change the very nature of Cirrus, increasing the natural temperature. An unnecessary effort as Cirrus was already perfect.

The Quickoids have delivered 2300 kT germanium to Red Ball, a quite welcome delivery. We then loaded 500 kT each of ironium and boranium to their freighter on their request, and the captain of the freighter invited the loading crew and dignitaries from the planet to a party. Everyone quite enjoyed the party and we will welcome future Quickoid freighters.

We have now built the first of our Macbeth class minelayers and Shou class scouts, and they have been sent out to their respective tasks. The Shou to look around in the six arms not belonging to our

alliance, as well as some to keep an eye out for intruders in our two arms, and the Macbeths will be laying minefields to discourage would-be intruders.

We have now colonized Tattoo. Not a perfect planet, but very close. Tattoo is also very close to the Runar arm, hopefully our colony there will discourage the Runars and Grendalities from colonizing Tattoo.

2459:

We have now colonized Curley, another world we could turn perfect for ourselves. When Mother, Leo and Juniper have also been colonized we will have 16 planets, 10 of which are perfect, with the worst of the remaining ones 85%. Quite nice prospects for our growth.

The Quickoids transferred two of their Breeder class super freighters to us at Red Ball. They had intended to transfer three, but one of them was lost to the void when gating from Schubert to Red Ball. The two that came through were damaged, but we can repair them as we make use of them.

We have built more Macbeth and Shou class ships, and we have sent them out. The Macbeths will of course lay minefields to further protect our arm against possible intruders, and the Shou will be spread out along our arm and the Quickoid arm, plus 8 that will be flying out along the Runar and Grendalities arms, never moving together so that they can only be targeted one at a time.

The wormhole between our arm and the Quickoid arm has now degraded to mostly stable, so it is no longer certain to remain in its current location, though our scientists tells us it is very unlikely to jump to a new location any time soon.

2460:

We have now colonized Mother, which leaves only Leo and Juniper before we have colonized all planets in our and the Quickoid arm that can be turned perfect for us with our current knowledge.

Our engineers have managed to change the very nature of Redemption, increasing the natural radiation. An unnecessary effort as Redemption was already perfect.

The Quickoids have spotted a Voyager ship type where the hull mass can lead only to one conclusion. The Voyagers are the kind of people who excel at changing the environment of planets like we are ourselves.

The two Shou class scouts we sent to the south through the wormhole arrived in the south. The southern end of that wormhole remains in roughly the same location, but our scientists tells us it can jump to a new location any year now, as it is extremely volatile. Our two Shou class scouts will look inwards along the Stranger and Voyager arms, though it will take the one heading for the tip of the Voyager arms 5 years to get there.

The first of our Macbeth class minelayers have started laying minefields, and the 7 additional Macbeths we have built this year are heading out to speed up the minelaying process.

2461:

Leo and Juniper have now been colonized, the last two planets in our and the Quickoid arm which we can turn perfect for us with our current knowledge.

Our engineers have managed to change the very nature of Angst, increasing the natural temperature. Again an unnecessary effort, as Angst was already perfect. It would be nice if our engineers managed to improve the natural environment conditions in a place where it would make a difference.

The wormhole between our arm and the Quickoid arm jumped, despite being mostly stable, while the southern end of that wormhole still stays in the same place despite having been extremely volatile for a while now. That was a most unexpected turn of events. The Quickoids are sending the Spree scout they have in the south to the southern end of the wormhole in order to investigate where the other end jumped to, hopefully that end of the wormhole won't jump before that Spree has gone through.

Our Shou sent to investigate the Stranger arm from the outer end has found that there is a Grendalities colony on Radium, most likely without the acceptance or knowledge of the Strangers. The Fromages can also see that Grendalities colony, so the Strangers and the Voyagers are most likely the only races who don't know it is there, while they are also the ones most likely to be displeased by the presence of that Grendalities colony.

We can see from the Grendalities colony on Radium that the Grendalities prefer planets with medium to high gravity and temperature, and they do not care what the radiation is. It would seem there are many planets which neither the Grendalities nor the Runars will ever find liveable.

As it seems likely that the Stranger/Voyager alliance are unaware of the Grendalities colony on Radium we have decided to tell them about it, so we are sending this message to the Strangers and the Voyagers:

Greetings to the Strangers and Voyagers from the north.

One of our scouts on a peaceful survey of the universe has found something that might be of interest to you: The Grendalities has colonized Radium near the southern tip of the arm of the Strangers, with a current population of about 134.400 colonists. As it appears unlikely to us that they are there by your invitation, we felt that you should know. If you wish to engage in further communication you can reach us faster by e-mail at woliv@craebild.dk and rolfverberg@gmail.com.

Craebild, Primarch of the Voshera, speaking for the Voshera/Quickoid alliance

It will be interesting to see what kind of reaction that message produces.

The Macbeth fleet at Calcium will be taking a break from minelaying for a year, and the ones at Rickover will be moving to Angst to lay a minefield there in order to have a minefield centred at Angst. It is better to have two smaller minefields than one large minefield.

Also, the Quickoids have sent this message to the Fromages and the Vakyries, to share some information that could be of interest to them:

Dear Neighbor,

You might already know it, but if not we figured that you would value the info that the Voyagers are CA. Also, the Strangers have 20 beamer FF's and 1 (most likely) Jihad CC heading for Pickles and 9 other (most likely) Jihad CC's heading for Scheherezade. Just for your information as well, the Voshera will have some scouts arriving in your territory by the time that you read this. They are unarmed as per our agreement.

With best regards,

The Quickoids/Voshera alliance.

2462:

We have now learned what kind of planets our neighbours the Fromages and the Valkyries prefer, the Fromages prefer planets with gravity in the lower half and temperature in the upper half and do not care about the radiation, while the Valkyries prefer planets with gravity and radiation in the

upper half and do not care about the temperature. It seems they will never be able to terraform about one third of all planets to be habitable to either of them.

We have also learned that the Strangers prefer planets where all three environment factors are centre to very high.

Our Shou class scout surveying the Fromages arm has had to slow down, as the Fromages have minefields around at least some of their planets. We are on good terms with the Fromages and the Valkyries, but they are not so friendly as to make it safe for us to fly through their minefields at high speed.

The Macbeths at Calcium and Rickover will be taking a break from minelaying to ensure that there are three minefields instead of two, they will resume adding mines to their minefields next year when the Macbeths at Angst have established their minefield.

We have sent a Tuolo out to make a round to visit our Macbeth fleets. Our Macbeths use large amounts of fuel when they travel, so some of them are very low on fuel, and all of them can use refuelling.

2463:

This year our engineers lowered the natural gravity of Lever, again an unnecessary effort.

The Fromages replied to the Quickoids with this message:

Thank you for the heads up. We shall make appropriate plans...

Your scouts are safe, we shall be returning the favour in the near future. :)

While we appreciate the sentiment, we doubt it is safe for our scouts to travel at high speed through Fromage and Vakyries minefields.

Our colonists are beginning to travel back to Red Ball now, to bring our production capabilities there to maximum production, and we are also beginning to send colonists out from Burgoyne.

One of our Shou scouts had the misfortune of encountering a Stranger minefield at high speed, and was destroyed. While the remains of the pilot could of course not be recovered, a commemorative service was held in his honour.

2464:

This year our engineers increased the natural gravity of Tattoo, again an unnecessary effort.

We have received this message from the Strangers:

Greetings!

We have seen Strange and hopefully it will be "removed" this turn.

Our main threat seems to be the Fromage at present. But I am sure we could work something out that is to our mutual benefit.

The Strange One

Strangers

The Strangers do not have anything to offer us and do not pose a threat to us, so we do not think there is any reason to build better diplomatic relations with them at this time. The Strangers probably think we consider the Fromages a threat to us, but they do not pose a threat to us because of our treaty with the Fromages.

Our scientists have learned how to build a new type of planetary scanners that can detect ships in orbit at a range of 160 ly, so in addition to having improved our current planetary scanners to that type we will also be building some more planetary scanners.

2465:

This year our engineers increased the natural gravity of Redemption, again an unnecessary effort. The Strangers made an unprovoked attack on one of our Shou scouts in the southern end of their arm, destroying our scout. Hopefully the captain of that Purple Balls class cruiser had misunderstood his orders, and we are sending the Strangers this message to that effect:

Greetings to the Strangers from the Voshera.

We see with regret that you have destroyed one of our Shou class scouts, surely your captain on that Purple Balls class cruiser must have misunderstood his orders. We have other Shou class scouts on similar peaceful surveying missions, and it is our hope that no more such mistakes will occur.

Craebild, Primarch of the Voshera

We have now learned that the Voyagers prefer planets where all three environment factors are low to just short of centre, and they have the same skill at changing the environment of planets as we have.

We have now colonized Devon IV. So far only with a small population, but we will be sending more colonists there from Burgoyne and Cirrus.

2466:

This year our engineers decreased the natural radiation of Burgoyne, and this time they at last made an improvement that could be felt. The colonists of Burgoyne celebrated their success with a planet-wide party in their honour.

This year we colonized Verdi, 14 Coli, Status and Eden, also only with small populations so far. Our colonists now have a number of planets to move to as the limited space on our existing colonies starts to be felt.

2467:

The Grendalities deliberately attacked one of our Shou class scouts near Snots in their arm, despite the fact that we have done nothing to provoke them.

Our engineers were busy changing the natural gravity of three of our colonies, decreasing it on Andante and Karhide while increasing it on Cirrus. On Karhide that improved the environment, much to the joy of the colonists there.

2468:

Our engineers were again busy changing environments, decreasing the natural gravity of Curley and decreasing the natural radiation of Leo and Devon IV. That did not improve the environment of any of those planets, though.

The Grendalities shot down 5 of our Shou class scouts at locations in their arm and the Runar arm. Now we no longer have any scouts in the Grendalities arm, though we still have some in the Runar arm.

2469:

This year our engineers increased the natural gravity of Devon IV, but that did not improve the environment.

We have received this message from the Fromages:

Greetings,

We were just wondering how life is progressing in the north of the universe? We are greatly enjoying the peace on our northern border, your respecting of the NAP is much appreciated, long may it continue!

As we look over our fields of maturing cheddar, we were noticing that between our alliances there must be a great deal of duplication of effort while devising improved pasteurisation techniques. We were therefore wondering if you would be interested in initiating a technology exchange for mutual benefit?

Let me know,

Blue Stilton of the Fromages

Their message came a little late for us to reply this year, and it seems to us they do not have much to offer, as our technology exchange with the Quickoids effectively prevents us from gaining any gift technology from the Fromages or Valkyries.

2470:

This year our engineers decreased the natural radiation of Burgoyne and Mother, and the colonists of Burgoyne were overjoyed to see their environment improved a second time.

The Quickoids sent this reply to the Fromages and Valkyries:

Dear Neighbor,

Life is progressing at a steady and peaceful pace up North. May our NAP live long indeed!

Sorry for the delayed response. We had to confer with each other and with our colonization officers back home. As you might remember, much to our displeasure, they had quite strong feelings about bringing aboard anything to do with a decent chunk of cheese, particularly the moldy (and in our humble opinion, the best) varieties. Unfortunately, despite our successful integration with the local flora and fauna at our new found colonies, they maintain that point of view. As they are our only reliable chain of supply of off-planet luxuries and interplanetary transport, we cannot (as of yet) revolt against our superiors. Hence, regrettably we have to pass on your offer of exchanging advanced technology at this point. We stress that this will not affect our current good relation from our point of view and hope that you will return the favor. As a gesture of goodwill, we note that the endpoint of the wormhole at (2133,1618) has recently jumped to an as of yet unknown location. We are on our way to investigate this further, but noticed the recent emergence of a Grendalites Scout. This could imply that the unknown endpoint might be located inside or close to their territory. Let this be a warning to keep an eye out on your back-door. They are known to be quite hard to detect, even with advanced scanner technology.

May you always find cheese and crackers,

The Quickoids and Voshera alliance.

2471:

Our Engineers made other changes in environments this year, increasing the gravity of Redemption, the temperature of Rickover and the radiation of Juniper. On Rickover that caused a slight improvement in the environment which the colonists were understandably happy about, though an improvement in the gravity or radiation would have made them even happier.

The technology information sent to us by the Quickoids means we have now learned how to build better stargates and very large warships. With the new stargates we can gate ships three times as heavy twice as far. We are of course upgrading the stargates we have, and with this new type of stargates we will also be building more stargates in the future.

2472:

Our engineers decreased the natural radiation of 668 and Bfe, which slightly improved the environment of Bfe to the joy of the colonists.

We received this reply from the Fromages:

Dear Neighbours,

*We understand completely if you wish to avoid partaking of a tech trading agreement and we are happy to maintain our current relationship. Your quarantine concerns are, of course, entirely unfounded due to the strict controls we place on our products - following the bad publicity from earlier exports, we now make our cheesemakers wash their hands ***twice*** a year, which exceeds the latest interplanetary standards. But I understand that health fears can be hard to overcome.*

We also thank you for your kind words relating to the Grendalites. They are a tricky bunch, who have now twice violated agreements with us. I think we can agree that once is an accident, twice starts to look a little bit more like deliberate malice. This is a very disconcerting state of affairs for us, as we had just signed a NAP with them and they unilaterally broke it just 2 years later. I think you must agree that having a very hard to detect race whose leadership shows no respect for the rules of interplanetary diplomacy is hard on all of us in the galactic community. I suggest that any agreements you may have with them or their allies be treated as "suspect", possibly even "completely worthless".

Sincerely,

Blue Stilton of the Fromages

There has now appeared a trader who suggest that we approach him with minerals to gain technology or parts that could help us. This "Mystery Trader" has appeared far to the southwest and is travelling on a eastward route, heading slightly south, too, so he is not coming anywhere near our space or the Quickoids space, but we hope we can use a wormhole to get near, or that the trader decides to head up near us.

We have received the following message from the Grendalities:

Hi Christian,

Is your team interested in an Alliance to kill the team of Fromage and Valkyries? With the Voyagers and Strangers dropping out of the game they are quickly consuming Voyagers and Strangers arms. My team mate and I are fairly low in players rankings and have no hope of winning this game.. but for personal reasons I would like nothing more than see the Fromage die. I have gates in the Strangers arm that you could use if you like. Please let me know.

*Regards,
Tracey (AKA NeoGrendal)*

2473:

Our engineers decreased the natural temperature of Kalila and Xenon, and the natural radiation of Angst. On Xenon this led to a slight improvement in the environment – The most that could be hoped there, as the environment of Xenon is already pretty good.

We have now colonized Lyra and Clotho, the last two planets in our and the Quickoid arm which we can turn habitable with our current ability to alter the environment, and which also offers a better environment for us than for the Quickoids.

Unfortunately it turns out that we cannot use a wormhole to get near the path of that “Mystery Trader”, so hopefully the trader decides to head up near us.

We have built a good number of new ships of a class we call the Swoop class, they are scouts with a better type of scanner than our Shou class ship, they detect ships in orbit and the environment and population of planets at twice the range of the scanners on our Shou class ships, and also detect ships in space at greater range. We will be handing over all of the ships in this batch to the Quickoids, as they want more scouts with better scanners, but we may build ships of the Swoop class for our own use, too.

We have sent the following reply to the Grendalities:

Dear Neighbours,

First of all The Quickoids sends their apologies for shooting down your scouts, they were a reaction to the reception our scouts recently received in your territory. The Quickoids sent out retraction orders too late after receiving this message to avoid it. We are indeed interested in cooperation, the strength of the Fromages/Valkyries alliance has not gone unnoticed to us. We are all rather fond of cheese, but it may be obvious that that reflects the genuine article...

Your timing is rather perfect at this point, since there is actually a wormhole that connects the region of the outer Quickoid arm with the outer Stranger arm. The offer of using gates is very helpful, and we would gladly use it, but we would also need to get colonists over and this wormhole could accommodate that rather well. We are aware of your colonies in the outer Stranger arm, but were wondering if there are some worlds left that could be habitable to us (we have rather broad tolerances to the elements). As of our last reports, Strange and Dingly Dell come to mind. In addition to that we will of course have to set up some well defined terms of our treaty, but that should be feasible in little time through this means of communication.

We would like to suggest a ceasefire between our alliances for the duration of our negotiations, and we have already given orders not to fire on ships of the Grendalities and Runars.

With highest respects,

Craebild, Primarch of the Voshera, speaking for the Voshera-Quickoid alliance

2474:

Our engineers decreased the natural radiation of Eden and Devon IV, which did not change the environment, and they increased the natural radiation of Snuffles, which did nicely improve the environment there.

The Quickoids received the Swoop class ships we gave to them, and their technicians doubled the range at which they can detect ships in space. As expected their technicians could not understand the circuits that allows the scanners to detect ships in orbit and the environment and population of planets, but they knew better than to fiddle with things they do not understand.

As we were getting concerned about the lack of reply from the Grendalities to our message, we sent this message to them:

Dear neighbours,

We have been waiting with interest for your reply to our message, but no reply seems to have arrived. Has your reply somehow been lost in transmission ?

With highest respects,

Craebild, Primarch of the Voshera, speaking for the Voshera-Quickoid alliance

Proving our concerns well founded, the Grendalities promptly replied:

Dear Primarch,

It seems an overactive filter has blocked your message. We are very glad of to hear from you. At this moment we are going to stop all hostilities between us.

In the question of inter-settling I believe we can agree to it in the Strangers arm at first, but an NAP would have to be signed first.

Also, I know for a certainty that you can have the planet Stranger. Let us compare notes on the others, would you consider sending remote terraformers to some of our planets? I can also trade some penetrating scanning scouts for some if you are willing.

Warm Regards,

NeoGrendal, Speaker of the Runar-Grendalite Combine

After conferring with the Quickoids, we sent this suggestion for a NAP to the Grendalities:

Dear Neighbours,

As a gesture of goodwill and an offer to peaceful coexistence we would welcome a Non-Aggression Pact between the Voshera-Quickoid Alliance and the Runar-Grendalite Combine with the following clauses:

- 1) The four parties to the NAP must have each other set to neutral or friend, and have battle orders set to attack only enemies or specific races not covered by the NAP, except for minefield sweeping as outlined below.*
- 2) A mutually accepted border along a line passing through a point halfway between Brin and Wingnut and a point halfway between Utopia and Peekaboo.*
- 3) Only unarmed ships may pass the border, except as outlined below for intersettlement in the Stranger-Voyager arms.*
- 4) No colonization efforts from either party across the border, except as outlined below for intersettlement in the Stranger-Voyager arms.*
- 5) No minefields with their center on the other side of the border, except as outlined below for intersettlement in the Stranger-Voyager arms. Minefields that extend far enough to affect shipping can be swept by the other party, but such sweepers should be stationary and the intent to sweep the minefield should be announced in advance to avoid misunderstandings.*
- 6a) There shall be intersettlement in the Stranger and Valkyries arms, with planets divided so that planets Which which fits either of the descriptioins under 6a1 or 6a2 will be settled by*

the Voshera-Quickoid Alliance while other planets will be settled by the Runar-Grendalite Combine.

6a1) Planets with gravity above 1g and temperature below 0C.

6a2) Planets with gravity below 1g and radiation below 50mR.

6b) Planets that should be settled by the other party according to the rule above can be settled by mutual agreement.

6c) Traffic within the Stranger-Voyager arms as defined by space south-east of a line passing through a point halfway between Leviathan and Hoe and a point halfway between Oh Ho Ho and Steeple is allowed for all four parties to this treaty by any ships. The passage of armed ships through the home space of the other party to this treaty can be allowed on a case by case basis.

6d) Minefields can be laid but can be swept where they interfere with shipping. Such sweepers should be stationary in deep space and the intent to sweep the minefield should be announced in advance to avoid misunderstandings.

7) Passage of the border by armed ships or changes of battle orders to attack the other party or other violations of the terms above can first occur in the fifth year following receipt of an in-game message cancelling the NAP by all parties to the NAP.

We will of course welcome suggestions for modifications or additional points, and/or further discussion.

We have unarmed scouts currently in the Stranger-Voyager arms, and more heading that way. We hope that will not be taken ill.

With highest respects,

Craebild, Primarch of the Voshera, speaking for the Voshera-Quickoid alliance

Their response was quite positive:

Greetings,

I agree to these terms, but I must confirm with my ally on the particulars of the inter-settlement. I believe your suggestion on habs is expectable, but I must confirm. In the mean time I suggest you send your scouts and I will make sure our orders are updated to reflect an interim neutral status for this next turn, with battle orders set to enemy only.

Add as a sign of good will I pledge the planet Stranger to you no matter what.

Warm Regards,

NeoGrendal, Speaker of the Runar-Grendalite Combine

2475:

Our Engineers increased the natural gravity of Leo and Angst this year, but that did not improve the environment of either planet. It would be nice if our engineers were better at choosing the correct factors for improving the environment of our planets.

The Quickoids had an unfortunate event this year, fundamental changes in the environment of Tough Luck permanently altered the planet's gravity. While that did deteriorate the environment of the planet, Tough Luck remains a pretty good place to live for their colonists.

While conferring with the Quickoids and considering our response to the last message from the Grendalities, we received this message from the Grendalities:

Greetings,

I'm still waiting for a confirmation from my Ally, but we will need a couple of exceptions to the planets. We are currently invading a couple of Stranger / Voyager planets this year.. Clover and Orange. Next year we will be hitting Lingo and Fox Trot. We are rapidly trying to secure this central section of the Arm before the fromage/valkry do.

*Regards,
NeoGrendal*

We have then sent this response to their messages:

Dear neighbours,

We are pleased to hear that our suggestion meets your approval, and that our scouts are welcome in the south.

We have noticed that our juridical department has made a grave error, part 6a of our NAP suggestion reads "There shall be intersettlement in the Stranger and Valkyries arms...", but that should of course have been "There shall be intersettlement in the Stranger and Voyager arms...". We hope you will understand that this was an error, and that the terms of course refer to the Stranger and Voyager arms.

In connection with our scouts in the south, we would like to inquire whether there are any minefields in the southern part of the Stranger arm they should slow down for. Our scouts would find it most inconvenient to encounter a minefield at high warp speed.

When you try to confirm the terms of the NAP with the Runars you might point out that the division of planets we suggest is the division of planets in equal shares that is most beneficial to the Runar-Grendalites Combine, with the possible exception of some extremely complex setups.

As one example, with the suggested setup any planet that is near perfect without terraforming for the Runars or the Grendalites falls within the planets allocated for the Runar-Grendality Combine, while there could well be a number of planets that are near perfect without terraforming for the Voshera or Quickoids that would not fall within the planets allocated for us.

If there are planets in the Stranger and Voyager arms colonized by you or the Runars to prevent their takeover by the Fromage-Valkyrie Alliance that falls within the planets allocated to us, which we wish to take over, then we are of course willing to compensate you for your trouble, such as by terraforming one or more nearby planets to accommodate the colonists who have to evacuate the planet that is to be transferred to us. We will of course not attempt to invade such a planet except by prior agreement or clear out leftover colonists who refuse to leave despite your orders to vacate the planet.

*With highest respects,
Craebild, Primarch of the Voshera, speaking for the Voshera-Quickoid Alliance*

In response we later received this from the Grendalities:

Greetings,

We agree to this agreement with one addition. There is no mention of an exist clause. We have no intention of exercising such a clause but it is always prudent to have one. Here is what we suggest:

8) *A minimum term of 30 years once the agreement is signed, after which a 5 year notice is required before the agreement can be terminated. The notice must be given as an in-game message and to last 5 years after receipt.*

*Regards,
NeoGrendal*

It would seem that they had not understood part 7 of our suggested terms as an exit clause, so we modified part 7 of our suggested terms and sent them this message:

Dear Neighbours,

We see you did not mention any minefields in the southern part of the Stranger arm, are there any minefields our scouts should slow down for ?

Part 7 of our suggestion was meant as the exit clause, though it was perhaps not so clear that this was the case. We have replaced part 7 in our suggestion with your suggested part 8, and expanded it a little for clarification. Is the treaty acceptable as follows ?

1) The four parties to the NAP must have each other set to neutral or friend, and have battle orders set to attack only enemies or specific races not covered by the NAP, except for minefield sweeping as outlined below.

2) A mutually accepted border along a line passing through a point halfway between Brin and Wingnut and a point halfway between Utopia and Peekaboo.

3) Only unarmed ships may pass the border, except as outlined below for intersettlement in the Stranger-Voyager arms.

4) No colonization efforts from either party across the border, except as outlined below for intersettlement in the Stranger-Voyager arms.

5) No minefields with their centre on the other side of the border, except as outlined below for intersettlement in the Stranger-Voyager arms. Minefields that extend far enough to affect shipping can be swept by the other party, but such sweepers should be stationary and the intent to sweep the minefield should be announced in advance to avoid misunderstandings.

6a) There shall be intersettlement in the Stranger and Voyager arms, with planets divided so that planets which fits either of the descriptions under 6a1 or 6a2 will be settled by the Voshera-Quickoid Alliance while other planets will be settled by the Runar-Grendalite Combine.

6a1) Planets with gravity above 1g and temperature below 0C.

6a2) Planets with gravity below 1g and radiation below 50mR.

6b) Planets that should be settled by the other party according to the rule above can be settled by mutual agreement.

6c) Traffic within the Stranger-Voyager arms as defined by space south-east of a line passing through a point halfway between Leviathan and Hoe and a point halfway between Oh Ho Ho and Steeple is allowed for all four parties to this treaty by any ships. The passage of armed ships through the home space of the other party to this treaty can be allowed on a case by case basis.

6d) Minefields can be laid but can be swept where they interfere with shipping. Such sweepers should be stationary in deep space and the intent to sweep the minefield should be announced in advance to avoid misunderstandings.

7) A minimum term of 30 years from the time this agreement is signed shall pass before cessation of the NAP can be announced, and this cessation announcement must give minimum 5 years notice before the agreement can be terminated. The announcement must be given as an in-game message to all parties to this NAP. The 30 years minimum term means that if the treaty is signed in 2476, then the announcement can first be sent in 2506, which means that it is received in 2507. Five years notice from an announcement sent in 2506 and received in 2507 means that the first orders in violation of these treaty clauses can be given in 2512, so the first actions in violation of these treaty clauses can occur in 2512.

*With highest respects,
Craebild, Primarch of the Voshera, speaking for the Voshera-Quickoid Alliance*

The Grendalities gave this welcome reply:

*Dear Neighbours,
We agree, and there are aren't any minefields in the southern part of the arm to speak of.
Regards,
NeoGrendal*

With their signing the treaty in 2475, one year must be subtracted from the years given in the example to see what the earliest year of hostilities can be without violation of the NAP. This means that the earliest hostilities can occur in 2511 if an announcement is sent in 2505.

2476:

Our engineers were busy this year, increasing the natural temperature of Bfe and 668, decreasing the natural temperature of Lyra, increasing the natural gravity of Juniper and decreasing the natural radiation of Nada. They also proved better at picking the correct environment factors to change, they nicely improved the environment of Bfe, 668 and Lyra, much to the joy of the colonists of those planets.

In preparation for the foray into the Stranger and Voyager arms we are building a new design to be used as a colonizer ship, called the Calgary class. It is based on the Galleon hull with shields, maneuvering jets and jammers to make it as likely as possible to survive an enemy attack.

2477:

This year our engineers increased the natural temperature of Eden and decreased the natural radiation of 90210. This slightly improved the already very fine environment of Eden, while the environment of 90210 was not improved, though it could have been improved a good deal if they had increased the natural temperature instead.

Despite our NAP with them, the Fromages attacked a Quickoid Swoop class scout near No Play in the Runar arm. None of the ships involved took any damage, though. After conferring with us, the Quickoids sent this message to the Fromages:

*Dear Neighbor,
I looks like we had an unexpected deep space encounter. Although no damage was done, we cannot help but wonder about the reason for the attack on our scout. At first we were worried that an error might have occurred at our end, but checking the in-flight records of the vessel in question showed no erroneous battle orders or mutual relation ship status. Maybe the captain of your vessel was away from the bridge (a cheese party perhaps?) at the time of the encounter?*

We assume that this was an innocent mistake, likely caused by the fact that the encounter happened in enemy territory. However, we find this to be a good time to discuss another potential point of debate. As it turns out, the boundary as listed in the NAP may not be explicit enough. We never intended the terms to apply for the space outside our home territory. Taking the agreed boundary literal, would do just that though. It would put the Runar/Grendalite territory at the same level as our home territory and the Voyager/Stranger territory at the same level as your home territory. I think this incident proves that we have to address this potential point of debate. We suggest to apply the border clause, the ship maneuvering clauses and the minefield laying/sweeping clauses in the NAP only to our respective home territories (as defined by the arms of our respective Home Worlds). We would gladly maintain the first clause as is: "The four parties to the NAP must have each other set to neutral or friend, and have battle orders set to attack only enemies or specific races not covered by the NAP, except for minefield sweeping as outlined below."

*With our deepest respect,
The Voshera/Quickoid alliance*

The Fromages immediately replied:

Dear Neighbours,

I apologise for the battle, and for not apologising earlier for the battle. It was a blunder - I forgot to change my "chicken" orders to enemies only. I have now gone through and changed them all appropriately.

I only just looked at my turn now as my ally reminded me I had 6 hours to the deadline and I have to run out. Real life, sadly, intervenes on stars.

I'll get back to you next turn about extending the area of the NAP (or whatever the gist of it is -sorry, very rushed, only had a chance to skim your email!)

The Quickoids reply that was:

No problem, we look forward to hearing from you. Now, I gotta finish my turn too... real life also threw a curve ball at us...

Thus we await the reply from the Fromage-Valkyrie Alliance regarding which interpretation of the terms of the NAP should prevail.

2478:

Our scientist have made advances in the field of electronics that allowed us to upgrade our planetary scanners to a new type. Our planetary scanners can now detect non-cloaked ships in space at 400 ly and in orbit at 200 ly.

Our engineers decreased the natural radiation of Rickover and Lyra, decreased the natural temperature of 14 Coli and increased the natural radiation of Juniper. On Rickover and 14 Coli this gave slight improvements in the environment, but they did not improve the environment of Lyra or Juniper. On Juniper they could not have improved the already perfect environment.

2479:

This year our engineers decreased the natural temperature of Calcium and the natural radiation of Rickover, nicely improving the environment of both planets. They also increased the natural gravity of Snuffles, but that did not change the environment there.

Technology exchange from the Quickoids taught us to build better engines and a better type of maneuvering thruster, so our scientists have designed two new ship types, the Maastricht class missile battleship and the Bari class attack beamer. We will of course be building ships of both types.

2480:

Our engineers increased the natural gravity of Redemption with no luck at improving the environment of Redemption, and increased the natural radiation of Snuffles causing an enjoyable improvement in the environment there.

We have built 15 Baris and 10 Maastrichts this year, and we are confident they will prove unwelcome surprises for anyone who tries to oppose us.

As the Quickoids wish to be certain to colonize at least one planet in the Stranger arm, they have sent this message to the Grendalities:

Dear Neighbor,

We are looking for a place to settle in the Southern hemisphere and our eye fell on Dingly Dell. According to our agreement that planet would belong to us, although we do of course have to offer you compensation for having to vacate it. We could pay you for vacating Dingly Dell by terraforming Tchaikovsky. Even a mere handful of the Voshera remote terraforming ships can turn Tchaikovsky habitable to your race in a single year and there are 20 of those ships in the south right now, with 20 more arriving through the wormhole next year.

Tchaikovsky may be further away from your race's ideal conditions than Dingly Dell, but the Voshera can turn Tchaikovsky into a better planet than Dingly Dell could ever be on your own effort. On top of that, terraforming is a time consuming and costly endeavor, as your colonists on Dingly Dell must have found out by now.

We will of course not land any colonists on Dingly Dell without your agreement, and we will of course give your colonists on Dingly Dell time to vacate the planet before we land, unless your people wish to stay and enjoy our hospitality.

We will also of course also be glad to consider an alternate request, if there is something else you might want that we can offer. Another option could be for us to terraform Radium, your colonists there will surely appreciate a better environment in just a few years, and it is within the capabilities of the Voshera to turn Radium into a perfect planet for your race.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Hopefully the reply from the Grendalities will be favourable.

2481:

Our engineers increased the natural gravity of Angst, increased the natural radiation of Karhide and decreased the natural temperature of Devon IV and Adams. This clearly improved the environment of Karhide and slightly improved the environment of Devon IV, but the environment of Adams was not improved, and Angst already had a perfect environment.

The Grendalities have not replied to our message yet, so the Quickoids have resent it through the slower but more certain means of internal messaging.

2482:

This year our engineers decreased the natural radiation of Angst, Cirrus and Burgoyne and decreased the natural gravity of Where. This did not cause any improvement in the environment of those four planets, though that is no surprise in the case of Angst and Cirrus, as they already had a perfect environment.

Our scientists have made advances in the field of electronics, allowing us to build better planetary and ship mounted scanners, and allowing us to build a better type of jammer to protect our ships from enemy torpedoes and missiles. The better ship mounted scanner type has twice the range of the previous type of advanced scanner for detecting ships in orbit and planetary condition, and a 36% increase in range for detecting ships in deep space. Our engineers have designed a new scout class with the new type of scanner, the Serious class. They also designed the Serious scouts with a larger fuel tank, but they still use our earliest ramscoop engine type. With the larger fuel tank the Serious class scouts can travel for more than 20 years at warp 9, and those older ramscoops are much cheaper than the newer types.

We received a reply from the Grendalities, they said:

HI All,

I'm sorry I missed this turn. I've been very sick the last several days, I went to the hospital the other day and I lost track of when this turn was due. I'm feeling a lot better and should be good to go. I'll have my turn in today.

Notes:

- 1. DIngly Dell will have freighters in orbit next year to evacuate it.*
- 2. Tech trading... is you alliance interested?*
- 3. MT coming south... will your alliance tell us what it is giving out once you meet it?*
- 4. The fromage are fielding BB's... are you interested in designs of them.*

*Regards,
Tracey*

A favourable reply, though they do not state what they want in recompense for vacating Dingly Dell.

We sent them the following reply:

Dear neighbor,

We have considered your notes and discussed a reply with the Voshera. We have the following answers to your suggestions:

- 1. We are most pleased to hear that you allow us to colonize Dingly Dell, but we see that you have not offered a suggestion to compensate you for vacating it. The Voshera can remote terraform Radium to a perfect environment for your race (something you can never do on your own), and they can do so in a single year by sending 12 of their remote terraforming ships to Radium. Should you reply with your acceptance soon enough, you will find Radium a perfect planet next year (i.e. in 2483).*
- 2. Both the scientist of the Voshera and our own scientists are busy exchanging technology between our races, so they have no time to examine additional gifts from you. This means that exchange of technology between our alliances is not feasible at this time, but that does not imply that such exchange can not happen at a later time.*

3+4. It seems to us that disclosing to us the BB design(s) of the Fromages in exchange for telling you what the MT coming down from the north has to offer is quite an agreeable exchange. We will of course have to trade with that MT ourselves before we can tell you what that MT has to offer, but we plan to complete the first trade in 2484, which should be several years before you can perform any trade with that MT.

Should you accept these terms, the Voshera would greatly appreciate it if you would be kind enough to consider them friends while they visit Radium for terraforming purposes. That will allow the remote terraforming ships and their accompanying SFX ships to refuel at your starbase.

In order to give the Voshera time to adjust orders and make sure that the terraformers can reach Radium next turn they will have to know your answer by June 21st before 22:00 GMT. They might be able to give the necessary orders if they have an answer by 05:00 GMT on June 22nd, but that is uncertain at this time. Any later than that will delay the appropriate actions by a year.

*We look forward to hearing from you.
The Voshera/Quickoids alliance.*

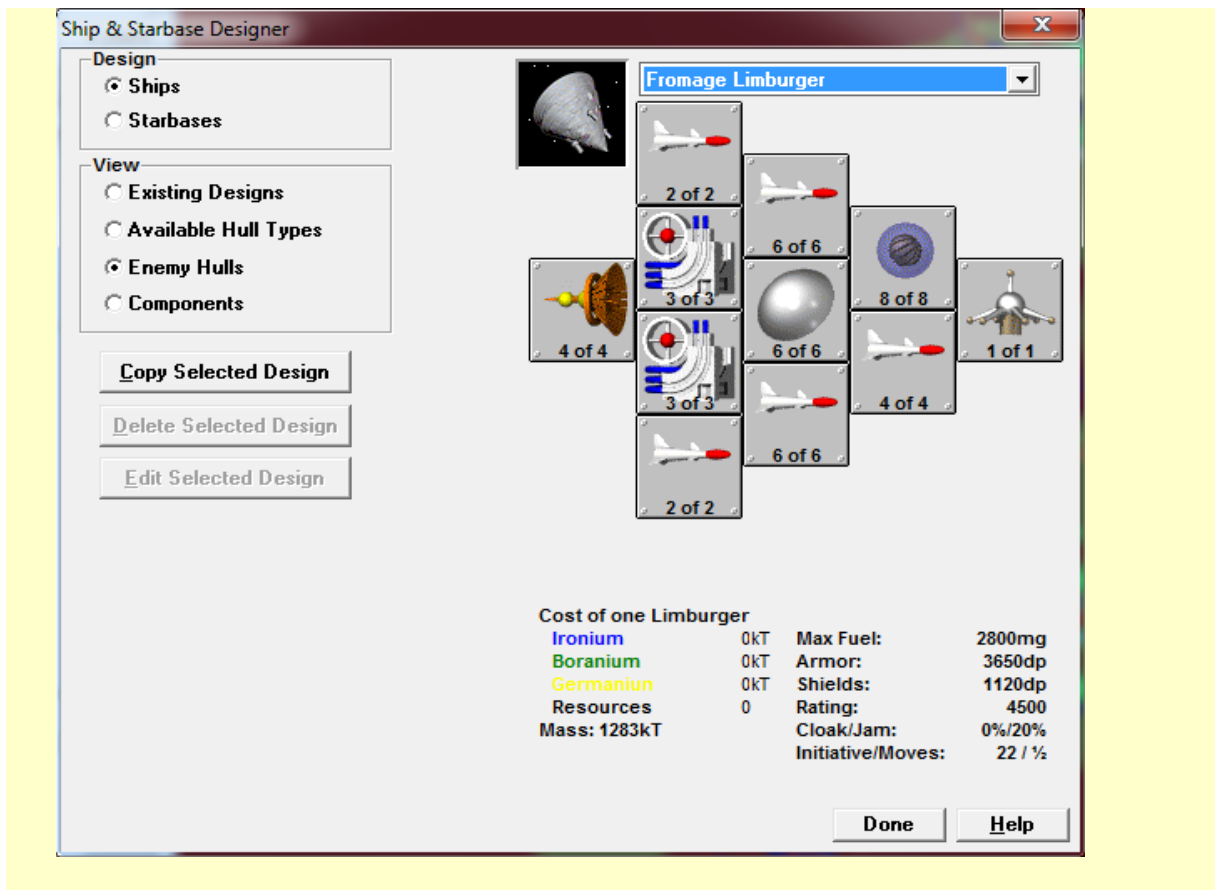
The Grendalities replied swiftly with this message:

Greetings,

Here are my replies:

- 1. I would like to get Tchaikovsky Terraformed.*
- 2. We understand the on the question of technology.*
- 3. Attached are the Fromage designs.*

*Regards,
NG*



The Quickoids gave this reply:

As terraforming Tchaikovsky was in our earlier offer as an alternative to Radium, I'm sure that the Voshera can accommodate that as well. I will confer with him and confirm asap.

Thanks for the design, we will notify you about what the MT has to offer as soon as we have interepted it ourselves.

The Quickoids council of intergalactic affairs.

And after quickly conferring with us they sent this to the Grendalities:

Dear Neighbor,

The Voshera have confirmed their ability to terraform Tchaikovsky. Their remote terraformers will arrive next year and you should find that it will have a much more tolerable climate by then :-)

With our highest respect,

The Quickoids council of intergalactic affairs

2483:

This year our engineers increased the natural temperature of Curley and Rickover, decreased the natural temperature of Status and increased the natural gravity of Bfe. This lead to slight improvements in the environment of Rickover and Status – And Curley could not be improved as they already have a perfect environment.

2484:

Our engineers were busy this year, increasing the natural radiation of Redemption, Curley, Tattoo and Whistler's Mother, increasing the natural gravity of Xenon and increasing the natural temperature of Clausewitz and Nada. Unfortunately this only led to slight improvements in the environment of Xenon and Nada.

A large number of our remote terraforming ships went to Dingly Dell with the intent to improve the planet for the new Quickoid colony there. However, there had been a small misunderstanding, so the Grendalities had left behind a small population, which meant the colonization did not take place. Seeing someone else than our friends the Quickoids there, the crews of the remote terraformers proceeded to degrade the environment of Dingly Dell to the best of their abilities, which the remaining Grendalities colonists probably did not find comfortable.

The Quickoids traded with the Mystery Trader passing our way, and gained technology in a variety of fields in exchange for the boranium delivered to the Mystery Trader. As per our agreement they then sent this message to the Grendalities:

Dear Neighbor,

As promised, we are pleased to inform you that the MT hands out technology in exchange for the appropriate amount of minerals.

We can recommend checking the website <http://craebild.dk/Stars!.html> for details about trading with the MT, although we are quite convinced that you are fully up to date :-)

Thanks for leaving some pop at Dingly Dell. That will save us disassembling a colonizer. We will land there this year and will of course treat the remaining colonists with the respect that they deserve. We hope that they like our way of life, although the climate swings that they are going through right now and the next few years might be a bit rough on them...

Cheers,

The Voshera/Quickoids alliance.

2485:

This year our engineers increased the natural temperature of Karhide and increased the natural radiation of Adams. Only Karhide was improved because of this.

This year we traded with the Mystery Trader, also gaining technology in a number of fields, in addition to the research we did ourselves. Among other things this increased our knowledge about changing the environment of planets, so our engineers improved the environment of those of our planets that were not already perfect.

This also means we will be building a large number of remote terraforming ships to improve the planets of the Quickoids as quickly as possible.

2486:

This year our engineers decreased the natural radiation on 668, increased the natural gravity on Ozone, decreased the natural gravity on Whistler's Mother and decreased the natural temperature on Adams. This improved the environment of Whistler's Mother a little, but it did not give any improvement in the environment of the other three planets – Though Ozone already has a perfect environment, so the environment on Ozone could not be improved.

2487:

This year our engineers decreased the natural temperature of Strange, decreased the natural radiation of Lever, decreased the natural gravity of Pirate and increased the natural gravity of Tattoo. This did not improve the environment of any of those planets. On Pirate it would have been a far better idea if they had done something about the temperature, which is uncomfortably high.

2488:

Technology exchange from the Quickoids has taught our engineers to build a new type of ramscoop, classed as a Trans-Galactic Mizer Scoop. This new type of ramscoop can travel safely at warp 10, and will collect fuel if travelling at warp 8 or less, so any new ships equipped with that type of engine will be able to reach their destination fast, and will not run out of fuel easily.

Our surveyors on Juniper have found they were not thorough enough in their initial survey of Juniper, they have found that there are additional deposits of ironium, substantially increasing the amount of ironium that can be mined at Juniper.

Our engineers have decreased the natural gravity of Calgary, increased the natural gravity of Green House and Angst, decreased the natural temperature of Lyra, Burgoyne and Juniper, increased the natural temperature of Snuffles and decreased the natural radiation of Bob. Green House and Lyra were the only planets to gain improved environments because of that, but half of those 8 planets had perfect environments already. Bob could have been improved considerably if our engineers had improved the temperature, as that is uncomfortably high.

One of our surveillance ships has discovered that Voyager orbital terraforming ships are terraforming Crow for the benefit of the Fromages, so we must conclude that the Stranger-Voyager alliance is now allied with the Fromages-Valkyrie alliance – Probably as subject races under the command of the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance, as the Stranger-Voyager alliance clearly do not have the power to be an equal partner with the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance.

As we felt this information would be of interest to the Runar-Grendality Combine we sent them this message:

Greetings neighbours,

We have found some information which we feel is of interest to you.

Our intelligence analysis teams have discovered that the Voyager remote terraforming ships at Crow in the Stranger arm are improving the planet for the benefit of the Fromage colonists on Crow, indicating friendly relations between the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance and the Stranger-Voyager alliance.

Our scouts have also found that there is a stable wormhole at 1152,1968 (about 81 ly north of Kennedy) with it's other end mostly stable at 1627,1039 (about 72 ly north-west of Strike 3). With the strong Fromage-Valkyrie presence in the former Voyager arm and the fact that the Vakyries possess highly advanced gates, that wormhole might be used by the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance to launch an attack on you.

We apologize for the delay in communicating these facts to you, but some matters of real life got in the way.

2489:

This year our engineers increased the natural temperature of Clausewitz and decreased the natural temperature of Juniper. As both planets already had a perfect environment there was no improvement, and the fact that our engineers only modified the natural environment of two planets suggest they were a little lazy this year.

2490:

Our engineers were less lazy this year, but their work on the environment of our planets was ineffective, they didn't improve the environment of a single planet. They increased the natural gravity of Redemption, Leo and Tattoo, increased the natural radiation of Pirate and Adams, decreased the natural gravity of Adams and decreased the natural radiation of 14 Coli.

Our invasion battle exercises with the Quickoids on Flapjack taught us an advance in weapons technology – An unusual thing, as we would normally have better weapons technology than the Quickoids, but they got some weapons technology from the Mystery Trader we traded with.

We have now colonized two more planets in the Stranger arm, Steeple and Tierra, strengthening our presence there. Two more planets which our expertise at altering the environment made perfect for us.

Chapter 2: Preparations for war

It was of course inevitable that we would have to go to war in earnest, so now the preparations start.

2491:

Our scientists have now perfected our skill at altering the environment of planets, and our environmental engineers have of course applied that new advance to all planets that were not already perfect. The result of that is that 30 of the 43 planets we inhabit now have a perfect environment, and the worst two planets (not counting Flapjack which we use for invasion battle exercises with the Quickoids) are at an environmental quality of 62%.

We are now concentrating our research on weapons technology, and making extra effort towards that, as we expect to need that soon.

Our engineers were lazy again this year, only increasing the natural temperature of Tierra and increasing the natural gravity of Clausewitz. Both planets already had a perfect environment, so there was no improvement possible.

One of our remote terraforming fleets passed Hollywood on it's way to another Quickoid planet much more in need of remote terraforming, but they improved the environment of Hollywood in passing, to the joy of the inhabitants of Hollywood.

While we have been enjoying peaceful relations with the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance since we entered our NAP with them in 2454, we have decided that we can not longer tolerate the expansion of the Fromages and Valkyries all over the galaxy, so we have sent them this message to cancel the NAP:

Greetings neighbours.

As we also have interests in colonizing planets in the arms formerly belonging to the Strangers and Voyagers, and it seems this must inevitably lead to conflict between our two alliances, we hereby formally cancel the NAP between the Voshera-Quickoid alliance and the

Fromage-Valkyrie alliance, as per clause 6 of the NAP. As you receive this in 2492, the terms of the NAP means hostilities can occur in 2497 without violation of the NAP.

Best regards,

Craebild, Primarch of the Voshera, speaking for the Voshera-Quickoid alliance

Part of our reason for cancelling that NAP was this message from the Grendalities:

Greetings,

The information provided in the this email is strictly meant as informative and is not a request for help, although help is welcome.

As it stands neither the Runar or myself don't have any means of stopping the Fromage/Valkyrie from sweeping over us.. their economy and technology surpasses us enough that we are nothing more than a minor annoyance to them. It also doesn't help that the strangers are fully in there camp as an ally. The Runar and myself have tried to commit some holding actions but we have both suffered heavy losses in the last couple of years. Here are designs of current warships being fielded by the Fromage/Valkyrie:

The screenshot shows the 'Ship & Starbase Designer' window. On the left, there are controls for 'Design' (Ships selected, Starbases unselected) and 'View' (Existing Designs, Available Hull Types, Enemy Hulls selected, Components unselected). Below these are buttons for 'Copy Selected Design', 'Delete Selected Design', and 'Edit Selected Design'. The main area displays a ship design for 'Valkyrie Brynhildr' with various components and their counts: 2 of 2 (top), 4 of 4 (left), 3 of 3 (middle-left), 3 of 3 (middle), 6 of 6 (middle-right), 6 of 6 (right), 8 of 8 (right), 4 of 4 (right), and 1 of 1 (far right). At the bottom, the 'Cost of one Brynhildr' is listed: Ironium 0kT, Boranium 0kT, Germanium 0kT, Resources 0, Mass: 693kT. Other stats include Max Fuel: 2800mg, Armor: 5520dp, Shields: 1400dp, Rating: 6739, Cloak/Jam: 57%/66%, Initiative/Moves: 10 / 2, and Scanner Range: 84 / 42. 'Done' and 'Help' buttons are at the bottom right.

Cost of one Brynhildr	
Ironium	0kT
Boranium	0kT
Germanium	0kT
Resources	0
Mass:	693kT

Max Fuel:	2800mg
Armor:	5520dp
Shields:	1400dp
Rating:	6739
Cloak/Jam:	57%/66%
Initiative/Moves:	10 / 2
Scanner Range:	84 / 42

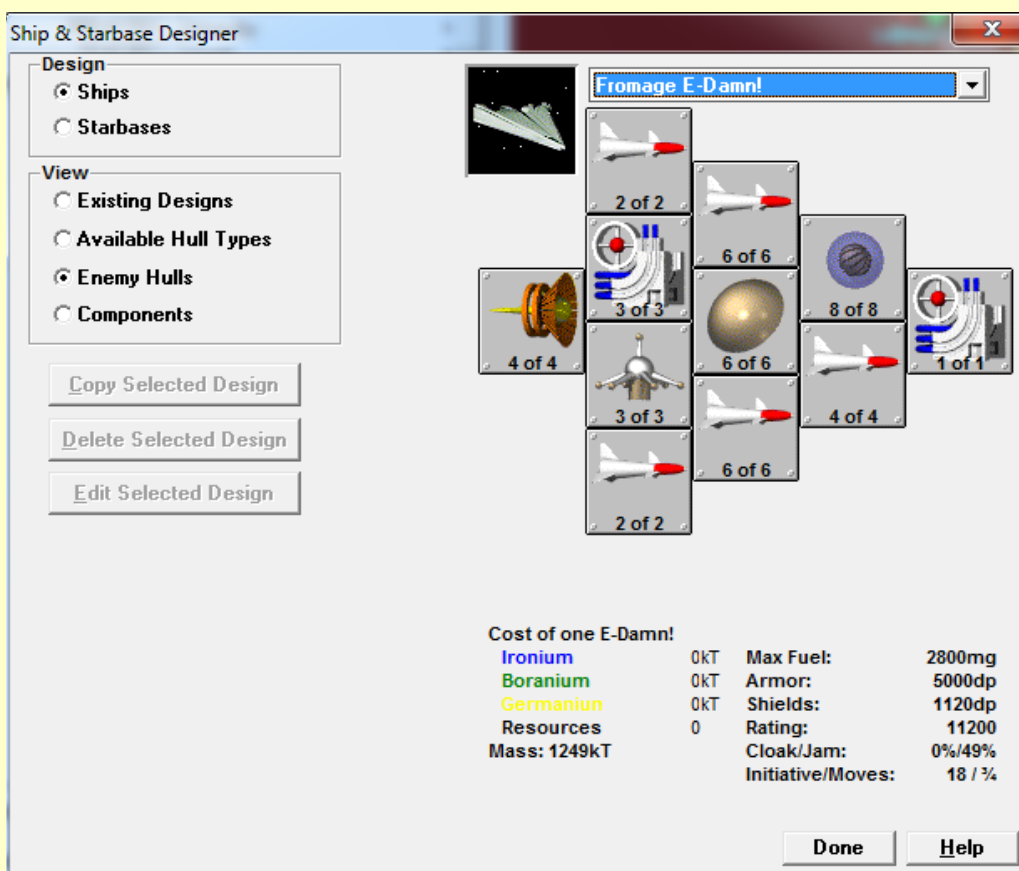
Regards,
NeoGrendal

Our reply to the Grendalities and Runars was:

Greetings neighbours,

It is possible for us to help you. We seem to have superior technology to the Fromages and Valkyries in some fields, though apparently not in weapons technology at the moment, as we have been concentrating our research in other fields for the last few years. We also suspect that our production capacity equals or exceeds that of the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance and their Stranger-Voyager allies.

We can assist with warships, and as we (the Voshera) have just perfected our ability to alter the environment of planets from orbit we can considerably improve most of your planets, improving your production capability. However, our remote terraforming fleets are currently busy terraforming Quickoid planets, so it will be a few years before they can visit your



planets - The 40 remote terraforming ships currently at Strange can pay a visit to your planets sooner. We did not plan to use them for Quickoid planets as they cannot safely gate to our arms, but they can hopefully safely gate to planets in the Grendalities arm, and from there to the Runar arm. Which of your planets have 300/500 gates? I should be able to send them where they can make the best improvements, but Snack is the only planet in the Runar arm safely reachable from Strange that might have a 300/500 gate..

In exchange we ask that our NAP is upgraded to a full alliance treaty, and that we are permitted to colonize currently uninhabited planets in your two arms - And perhaps some colonized planets you have not developed much. The primary changes to our treaty would be that all four races must have the others set to friend, and that we are permitted to colonize some planets in your arms. We will need to settle on the precise changes, including a list of

the planets in your arms we are allowed to colonize. A full alliance will preferably also include exchange of intelligence files at some level, either .m# files (including passwords) or .p# and .f# files, to allow the other party to see what facilities are available at which planets, and to see any enemy ships not detected by themselves.

I should note that I have not conferred with the ruler of the Quickoids about the precise wording of this message, as the ruler of the Quickoids is currently out of communication due to RL commitments, but the ruler of the Quickoids agrees that a full alliance between our races is advisable, and I do not think there is anything in this message the ruler of the Quickoids will disagree with. I did confer with the ruler of the Quickoids about the general conditions for our future alliance with you before he went out of communication.

They soon after replied:

Greetings Neighbor,

I agree to all that you suggest. Mostly because I don't think we have a choice. I will get confirmation from my ally, but as of now you are set to friend and have free access to my gates.

I will get you the gate information as soon as I can.

*Regards,
NeoGrendal*

The Runar replied similarly:

I agree as well.

*Thanks
Runar*

Our response to this was:

Greeting neighbour,

We welcome your message that you are willing to enter a full alliance, that will surely prove to the advantage of all four of our races.

We are sending remote terraforming fleets to Chaos, Olympia, Kappa, Sulphur and Toroid - Hopefully you have 300/500 gates at those planets. Each fleet is 8 remote terraforming ships and two super fuel exports, so each fleet can do 16 stages of terraforming per year - And while I haven't checked the numbers, I don't think any of the fleets will be taking more than two years to terraform a planet.

They replied with this message – Too late for us to change our orders for the remote terraforming ships:

At this time none of those planets have 300/500 gates but they will next year so you should wait one year.

2492:

As our ships followed their orders it turns out that Sulfur did have a gate, though not of the 300/500 type, so that fleet of remote terraforming ships suffered some damage. We sent this message to the Grendalities (copied to the Runars and Quickoids, of course):

Greetings neighbours,

It seems Sulphur did have a gate, though evidently not of the 300/500 type. Can you forward our congratulations on their change of climate to the presumably celebrating colonists of Sulphur ?

The fleet that visited Sulphur is heading on to Paradise to make that planet match it's name for the environmental preferences for your race. They cannot do that in one year, though, they will need to stay around at Paradise for two years.

Our engineers made a slight improvement to the environment of Bfe and improved the environment of Pirate a fair bit, but Clausewitz, Eden and Devon IV were already perfect, and they didn't improve Romeo either. What they did was to increase the natural temperature of Bfe, decrease the natural temperature of Pirate, increase the natural radiation of Clausewitz, decrease the natural radiation of Romeo and Devon IV and decrease the natural gravity of Eden.

We have received this message from the Grendalities:

Greetings Neighbors,

Sulphur, Chaos and Diddley all now have 300/500 gates. At present my homeworld of Gladiolus is currently being bombed.. I expect to lose it next year. I do appreciate the upgrades in climate what I need most help in is stopping the current fleet over Gladiolus.

I have just this year started building robber baron enabled rogues. As I lack the means in building battleships fast enough to stop the Fromage, I will make as many RB's as I can to use in stripping enemy worlds even if I have no worlds left to call home.

*Respectfully,
NeoGrendal*

The Quickoids replied with this message:

Greetings Neighbors

I think we can make sure that you'll have worlds to call your own :-)

We should be able to start assembling a fleet next year. The reason for the bit of delay is that this will allow us to use the latest technology in a much more efficient manner. For the ships to be both effective and gateable we need one more year of research after which building enough ships to liberate you from their Fleet should only take another year or two.

Hang in there for a bit and more effective assistance will be on the way soon.

The Quickoids.

2493:

This year our engineers decreased the natural temperature of Pirate again, again improving the environment a fair bit. They also decreased the natural radiation of Angst, which was already perfect, and decreased the natural gravity of Eden to a natural gravity of 1 g, so Eden now has a naturally perfect gravity, requiring no terraforming of gravity. That of course could not improve the environment of Eden, even if Eden hadn't already been perfect.

We received this message from the Fromages in response to our cancellation of the NAP with the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance:

All hail neighbours,

Your message has been received. Our religious leaders are preparing the finest wax rinds for the many who will lay down their lives in the upcoming struggle.

Cry havoc, and unleash the cammenbert of war! (after a 4 year delay, of course, to allow digestion of the previous courses)

Sincerely,

Blue Stilton of the Fromages.

Our remote terraforming fleets have been improving 10 Quickoid planets this year, 5 of which reached a perfect environment for Quickoids because of that. The Leader of the Quickoids had this to say about our question about how the celebrations were going:

Everybody is quite excited. It's getting hard to get them to do a proper day of work. Only those in the academia are oblivious in their ivory towers, so I will just do research for a few more years and let them party.

As our remote terraforming ships are finished at the planets they are at now, they will of course be moving on, so other Quickoid planets will be celebrating next year.

Preparing for the expected war with the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance, we have designed three new ships. The Barena class beamer battleship, the Barracuda class sapper battleship and the Net class chaff drone. We are producing them in numbers, and the production from this year will be transferred to the Grendalities to help them fight the Fromage and Valkyrie invaders in Runar-Grendalities space. The “exit clause” of our NAP with the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance prohibits us from directly attacking Fromage and Valkyrie ships until 2497, but there is no clause in our NAP that prohibits us from selling or giving ships to another race. The Runar-Grendality Combine will surely appreciate receiving a fleet of battleships well beyond what they can produce with their own technology.

We have sent this message to the Runar-Grendality Combine to inform them of our intention to transfer ships to them, and to formalize our alliance treaty with them:

Greetings neighbours,

We will be transferring ships to the Grendalities in 2495, so you should have 3 vacant design slots at that time. The ships we will be transferring are 6 sapper battleships, 22 beamer battleships and 850 chaff drones. While the beamer battleships are of a superior design to the Valkyrie Brynhildr battleships, the force we are transferring is not sufficient to take out the main Fromage-Valkyrie fleet in your space. We suggest that you split up the ships and give them orders to primarily target bombers and freighters, that way the Fromages and Valkyries cannot harm your planets, and the ships lost can be replaced later. We are transferring the ships to you because the terms of our now cancelled NAP with the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance prohibits us from directly attacking Fromage or Valkyrie forces until 2497. We will send in fleets to take care of the Fromage-Valkyrie fleets in your space as soon as possible.

We will of course need to know where you want those ships. It has to be a planet with a 300/500 gate which will not have any Fromage or Valkyrie warships in orbit in 2495, to avoid discussions of possible violation of the exit clause of our now cancelled NAP with the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance.

We notice from the Valkyrie Brynhildr design that the Mystery Trader who passed through the south some years ago must have been giving out the Langston Shell technology. If you acquired that technology from that Mystery Trader or through subsequent battle, then we

would greatly appreciate it if you would trade that technology to us. You can see the specifics about trading such technology at <http://craebild.dk/MT.html#TrdMTPrts>, you do not need to send you librarians hunting through your archives for that information.

These are the terms we suggest for our alliance, modified from our NAP:

1) The four parties to the treaty must have each other set to friend, and have battle orders set to attack only enemies or specific races not covered by the treaty.

2) A mutually accepted border along a line passing through a point halfway between Brin and Wingnut and a point halfway between Utopia and Peekaboo shall be observed, except as outlined below.

3) (removed).

4) (removed).

5) (removed).

6a) There shall be intersettlement in the Stranger and Voyager arms, with planets divided so that planets Which fits either of the descriptions under 6a1 or 6a2 will be settled by the Voshera-Quickoid Alliance, while other planets will be settled by the Runar-Grendality Combine, except as noted for conquest in 6b.

6a1) Planets with gravity above 1g and temperature below 0C.

6a2) Planets with gravity below 1g and radiation below 50mR.

6b) Planets that should be settled by the other party according to these rules can be settled by mutual agreement. Planets in the Runar and Grendality arms that are uninhabited as of 2492 can be settled by the Voshera-Quickoid Alliance, as can the planets Kumquat, Braddock, Lopsided and Montgomery. Planets in the Stranger, Voyager, Fromage and Valkyrie arms which are taken by force can be held by the race taking the planet. Should a planet properly belonging to a party to this treaty already be inhabited by another party to this treaty, then the race wanting to colonize that planet will give due warning to allow the race inhabiting the planet to remove their colonists.

6c) (removed).

6d) (removed).

7) A minimum term of 30 years from the time this agreement is signed shall pass before cessation of the treaty can be announced, and this cessation announcement must give minimum 5 years notice before the agreement can be terminated. The announcement must be given as an in-game message to all parties to this treaty. The 30 years minimum term means that if the treaty is signed in 2476, then the announcement can first be sent in 2506, which means that it is received in 2507. Five years notice from an announcement sent in 2506 and received in 2507 means that the first orders in violation of these treaty clauses can be given in 2512, so the first actions in violation of these treaty clauses can occur in 2512. This 30 year limit is counted from the original signing of the treaty in 2475, not from these treaty changes in 2493.

8) Information shall be traded in the form of .p# and .f# files sent to the other parties of the treaty, except where .m# files are already shared, and information on known enemy ship designs shall also be shared.

9) We hope these terms meet your approval.

The Grendalities immediately answered:

I agree... The best planet is corner.

We replied to them with this message:

We will send the ships to Corner, then. We assume there is or will be 300/500 gate at Corner for them to arrive at.

Both battleship types are slightly over 300 kT, and some of our production planets are more than 500 ly from Corner, so most of the battleships will be damaged from gating to Corner, and it might not be all of the ships that make it to Corner. The probability of loosing a ship to the void is low, though, the ship that is most likely to be lost to the void only has a 1 in 44 probability of being lost to the void.

The crews of those battleships are of course volunteers, and aware of the risks they are taking.

2494:

Our engineers did not manage to improve the environment of any planets this year, though they decreased the natural radiation of 668, decreased the natural gravity of Calcium, increased the natural gravity of Bob and increased the natural temperature of Andante. Of those four planets only Andante already had a perfect environment, 668, Calcium and Bob could have been improved if our engineers had chosen the correct environment factor to modify.

We built the ships promised to the Grendalities, and they will be transferred to the Grendalities at Corner in 2495 – Assuming there is a gate at Corner. As the Grendalities are such experts at cloaking we cannot detect whether there is a starbase at Corner. Of course, the Grendalities have no reason to lie about there being a gate at Corner. It is clearly in their best interest to receive those ships. Aside from the fact that those battleship are technologically superior to anything the Runar or Grendalities can build, the Runar and Grendalities cannot build so many battleships in such a short time.

2495:

Our engineers increased the natural temperature of Bfe, slightly improving the environment there. They also increased the natural gravity of Angst, decreased the natural gravity of 14 Coli and decreased the natural temperature of Juniper and Adams, but those four planets already had a perfect environment, so their environment could not be improved.

We sent a message to the Runar-Grendality Combine, as follows:

Greetings neighbours.

We trust your fleet command are pleased with the addition to your fleets you received at Corner this year. The crews that delivered the ships will of course instruct your crews in the operation of the advanced weapons and other equipment on those ships. It turns out that one of the ships was lost to the void due to gating an unsafe distance, but that was one of the 850 Net class chaff drones, so that is no serious loss.

We would appreciate it if you inform us which Fromage and Valkyrie fleets you target next year, so we can have observer ships at those battles. While we cannot engage the Fromages or Valkyries next year, we might learn something interesting from observng those battles.

As we have mentioned we are sending drone ships carrying advanced weapons technology to your two races, so your scientists might learn how to build better weapons. We are sending them to Resort and Corner, as the Runars surely have a 300/500 class gate at their

homeworld, and we know there is one at Corner. If you wish those drone ships sent to other planets, then please tell us where you want the ships sent to.

We have included .p# and .f# files for our races in accordance with section 8 of our alliance treaty, can you please send us .p# and .f# files for your races in exchange ?

Our alliance treaty also asks for the exchange of enemy ship designs, but recent battles where we have had ships present has shown us what designs the Fromages and Valkyries are using, so you do not need to send us any enemy design specifications unless you have observed ship types that were not involved in battles we observed last year.

We will unfortunately not be able to engage the Fromage and Valkyrie fleets in your space in 2497, we need to build more ships to ensure a decisive victory. However, by our calculations 2498 will prove a bad year for Fromage and Valkyrie fleet operations - The first of many bad years.

Our scout at Corner has observed that you have battleships of our own. While you are not required by our alliance treaty to do so, we would be pleased if you would enlighten us as to what design they are. That would allow us to offer advice as to whether you should include those battleships with the fleets you send against Fromage-Valkyrie fleets or whether you should keep them at home.

With highest respects,

Craebild, Primarch of the Voshera, speaking for the Voshera-Quickoid Alliance

The Grendalities fleet command are surely crying with delight at seeing the ships they now control.

The Grendalities gave this reply:

Greetings neighbours.

We are very pleased with the ships. At the moment no enemy fleet is in range, so we are moving to Paradise. It is possible that enemy may come to that planet. I also suspect they may attack Toroid.

The Tech transfers to Corner and Resort are fine.

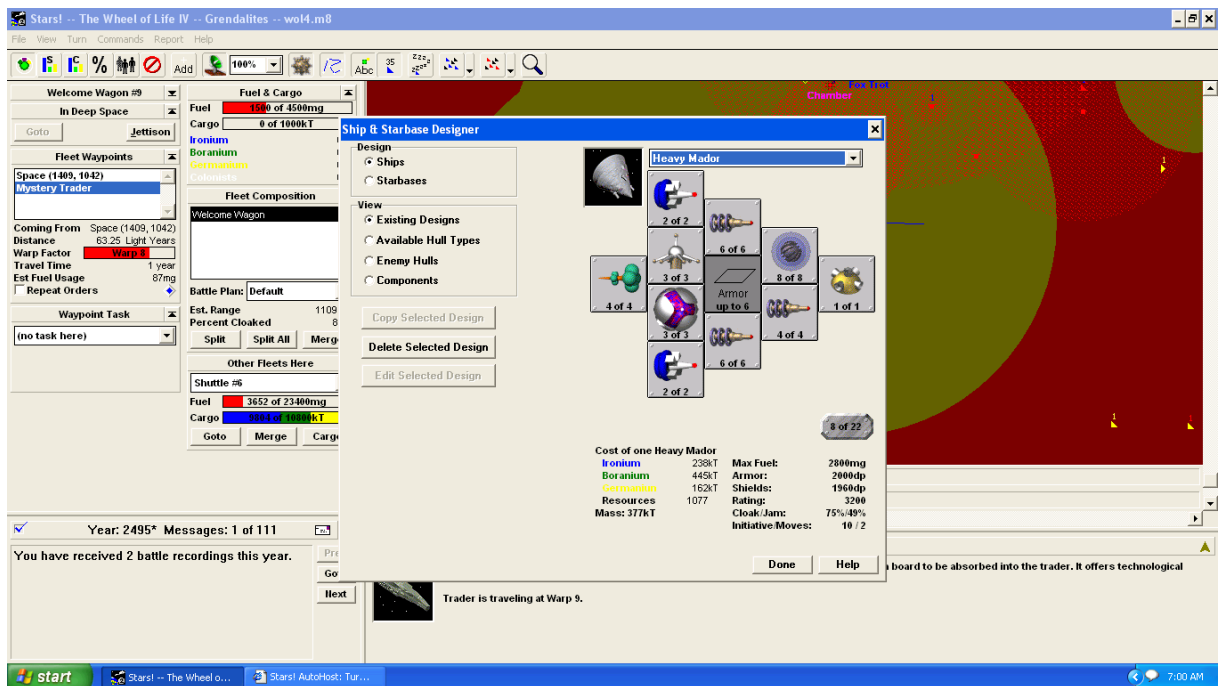
“We will unfortunately not be able to engage the Fromage and Valkyrie fleets in your space in 2497, we need to build more ships to ensure a decisive victory. However, by our calculations 2498 will prove a bad year for Fromage and Valkyrie fleet operations - The first of many bad years.”

Ok we understand.

Attached is my BB desisn.. I have only a couple of these and can only make a few each each year. I have instead been producing RB Rogues to be used in stripping enemy planets as we lay siege, and to recover my lost minerals at lost planets.

Regards,

Tracey



2496:

Our engineers increased the natural temperature of Green House and Snuffles, and increased the natural environment of Where. This did not cause any improvement in the environment, but Snuffles and Where already had a perfect environment.

We received this message from the Fromages:

Just to confirm the schedule for our upcoming rampaging mutual violent acts of extreme unfriendliness, are we in agreement that we change each other to enemy and can start ordering attacks now? Or is there 1 more year?

The Quickoids sent them this reply:

Nope, feel free to use excessive violence and extreme unfriendliness

Of course we have only agreed to cancel the NAP, not necessary to a requirement to set each other to enemy. You are more than welcome to set us to friendly. We can of course not guarantee to return the favor, despite or maybe because of our tast for good cheese.

Cheers, Rolf.

The Fromages reply was somewhat sarcastic:

This is perfectly true. To this end we will leave a gate open to our "secret paradise". We would suggest that all your cloaked ships are sent to this special happy place where they will be welcomed by our specially equipped cheese graters...

To which the Quickoids replied:

What cloaked ships?

The Fromages perhaps understood the humour in that comment, as they replied:

They're behind you!

With equal Humour, the Quickoids replied:

Oh no, not the cheese grater!

The Valkyries then interjected:

Cheese graters?!? I didn't realise we had the tech for that.

And the reply from the Quickoids was:

Wanne trade, we also have meat grinders and juicers

This ended that little discussion.

We sent a message to the Runars, as it seemed there had been some miscommunication in their empire:

Greetings, neighbours,

Some of our ships tried to gate to Tiger's Tail and Resort, but were denied use of your gates as your crews manning those gates apparently did not consider our ships to be friendly ships. Could you please correct that miscommunication of orders ?

The ships in question are technology exchange drones to help your race with weapons technology and remote terraforming ships that will improve the environment of Tiger's Tail to be as perfect as the environment of your home world Resort, so in our opinion those ships should be welcome as friendly ships.

With highest respects,

Craebild, Primarch of the Voshera, speaking for the Voshera-Quickoid Alliance

Their reply was:

My apologies to our neighbors - our minister of state has been removed from office and immediately shot for his incompetence. In the ongoing investigation, it appears that orders were handed off and completed just in time to miss a turn. His lack of sight into this happening has been corrected and those gates are now immediately open to travel.

Thanks!

Runar

Chapter 3: War with the Fromage-Valkyrie Alliance and their vassals

With the required period of still peaceful relations after our announcement that we wished to end our NAP having passed, warfare obviously broke out.

2497:

For this year and 2498 the leader of the Quickoids handled the affairs of the Voshera, as the Primarch of the Vosher enjoyed a long planned vacation. It was of course an unfortunate time for the Primarch to go on vacation, but the vacation had been long in planning and could not be changed.

There were 15 battles this year, though none of them of great consequence.

Our engineers increased the natural temperature of Venus and Andante, and decreased the natural radiation of Curley. This gave a slight improvement to the environment of Venus, but Curley and Andante were already perfect.

The Quickoids sent this message to the Runar-Grendality Combine:

Dear Neighbors,

Attached are our planet and fleet reports. I'm trying to figure out the best course of action against the FroValks. Could you send me your reports? I'm debating whether to target their fleets at Gladiolus or to planet hop. Any suggestions or requests are always welcome

*With deepest respect,
The Voshera/Quickoids alliance.*

They had of course attached our latest intelligence reports on planets and fleets.

The Grendalities replied:

Greetings,

I have the orbit of Gladiolus. Bart is the current Fromage staging point. Please see my reports.

*Regards,
Tracey*

They had attached their intelligence reports on planets and fleets for our analysts to look over.

2498:

This year we were only involved in 6 minor skirmishes with enemy ships.

Vakyrie bombers bombed Venus, killing all of our colonists there. The first planet lost in this war, but sadly we cannot expect it to be the last. The loss of their lives will be mourned not only by their relatives, but by all members of our race.

Our engineers decreased the natural temperature of Curley, decreased the natural gravity of Lever and increased the natural gravity of Tattoo. As all three planets were already perfect, that did not improve the environment of any of them.

2499:

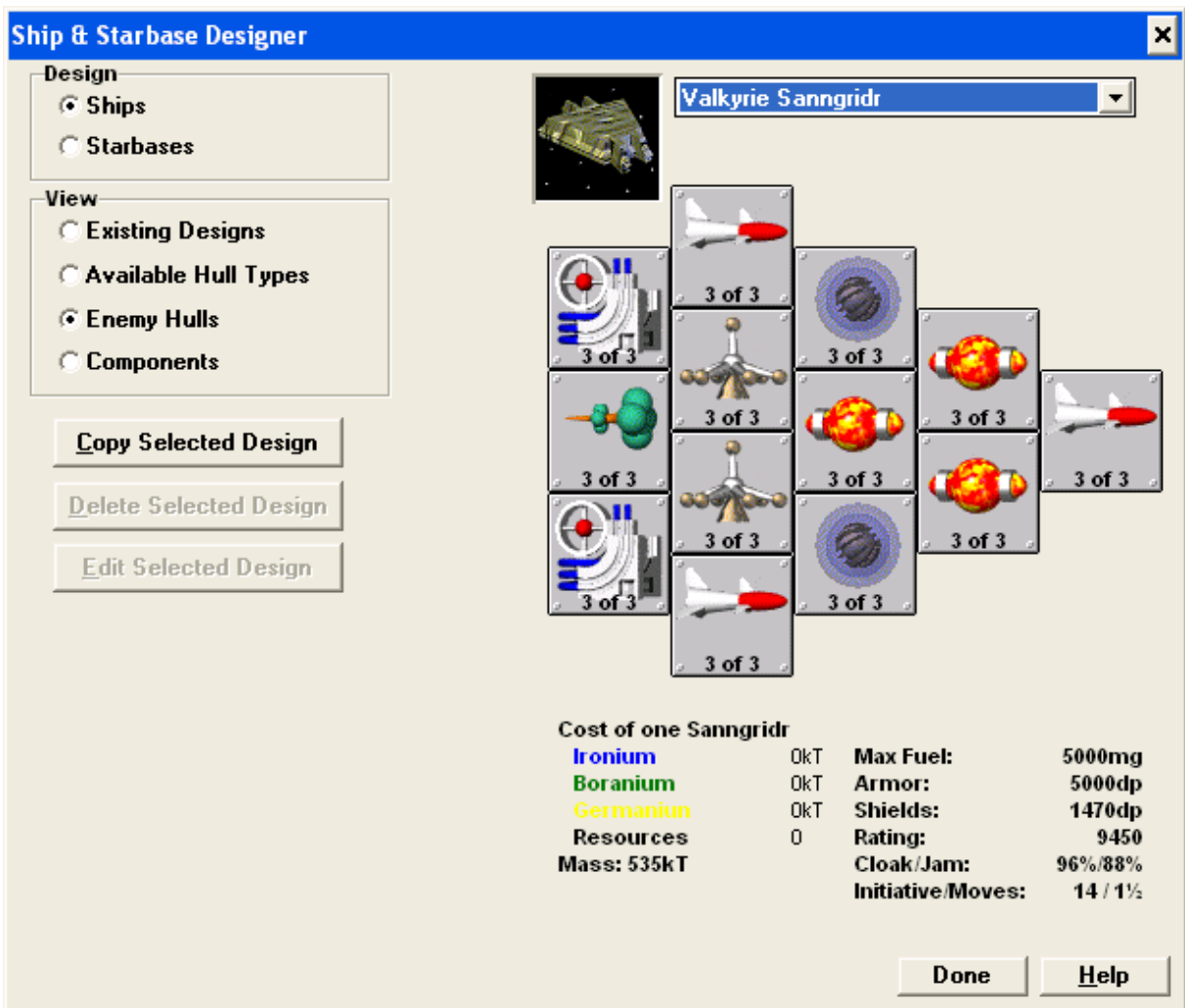
Only 5 battles this year, and very few losses on to either side. We learned more about what ships our enemies are deploying, though.

This year our engineers were busy, Increasing the natural gravity of Kalila, decreasing the natural radiation of Lyra and Nada, increasing the natural radiation of Clausewitz, decreasing the natural temperature of Burgoyne and increasing the natural temperature of Rommel. This gave a nice improvement in the environment of Rommel, but no improvement on any of the other planets – But Kalila, Clausewitz and Burgoyne were already perfect.

The Grendalities sent us this warning:

Dear Neighbors,

My fleet was ambushed by a stack of 50 of these. Currently the fleet is over the planet Grep. Beware.



The Quickoids replied:

Ouch. Yes, we spotted their first Nubians this turn, so we knew they had the tech.

I didn't spot such a large stack yet, so I hoped that they only just started building them. Lucky for us I have recently gotten the TD, so their cloak will not be as effective. I just haven't deployed them very far beyond our own arms yet.

They seem rather fond of cloak, so I think I will be deploying more of those TD scouts very soon... And you will have the benefit of them as well through the f and p-files (that we still owe you for this turn...).

Thanks for the warning, very valuable info indeed!

The Quickoids.

We sent this message to the Runar-Grendality Combine after considering the possible outcomes of our imminent battle at Chaos:

Greetings, neighbours.

We think it highly likely that we will be engaging Fromage, Valkyrie and Stranger warfleets at Chaos next year, and by our analysis it will be greatly beneficial to us if there are no more than 4 races involved in that battle, so we would ask you not to send any ships to the Chaos system next year.

The benefit we will gain is that if there are 4 or fewer races involved in the battle, then the enemy beamers cannot fire on our Net class drones in round one, which gives our main line ships two rounds to fire on the enemy main line ships without receiving serious return fire instead of one round, and two rounds of free fire is obviously better than one round of free fire.

We hope you understand our desire to keep our main line warships unhurt while killing the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance warships, even if that means that you cannot attempt to gain technology from the battle by having a scout ship present.

*With highest respects,
Craebild, Primarch of the Voshera, speaking for the Voshera-Quickoid Alliance*

The reply from the Grendalities was favourable:

OK, I understand and will stay clear.

2500:

8 battles this year, 2 of which were important. At Chaos, the battle did not go as we had hoped, we lost all of our ships as our enemies brought in a stronger force than we had anticipated. However, we did manage to destroy a lot of enemy ships, so we certainly hurt our enemies there. At Steeple we managed to destroy all enemy ships except for 10 bombers with only minor losses to our fleet.

Our environmental engineers were quite idle this year, they did not change the natural environment parameters of any planets.

We have started production of a new class of ships called the München class. Battleships are armed with Armageddon missiles, equipped with Battle Nexus computers and powerful jammers. We have great hopes these ships will prove a nasty surprise for our enemies. We are also building Barena and Barracuda class ships in numbers and Net drones in large numbers.

2501:

11 battles this year, though only one of major importance. At Devon IV the Fromages attacked us with a superior force, destroying the ships we had just built there and the starbase in orbit at Devon IV. This lost us 2 of our newly built München class ships, as well as some lesser ships.

Our engineers went to work again, increasing the natural temperature of Redemption, decreasing the natural gravity of Lyra and Karhide and increasing the natural gravity of Snuffles. This led to a slight improvement in the environment of Lyra, but the other three planets were already perfect.

We are sending all the warships we have built to Cirrus to merge them into a single strike fleet. Unfortunately none of our planets are currently capable of building more München class ships, but we are building more Barenas, Barracudas and Nets.

We have also started colonizing planets in the Runar arm, as allowed by our alliance with the Runar-Grendality Combine.

2502:

8 battles, but only two of importance. At Quick Lick our only participation was a single Net class drone, which was destroyed, as was the Runar force of 23 beamer battleships, 1 colonizer freighter, 7 minelayer frigates, 17 missile cruisers, 690 chaff drones, 19 freighters and 1 SFX. An unfortunate day for our allies the Runars, but they were ambushed by a fleet of 50 Valkyrie Sanngidr, which as reported by the Gredalities are heavily cloaked missile nubians. The other important battle occurred

at Devon IV, where our courageous colonists had built a new starbase. The Framage forces in the system shot down that starbase before the starbase could destroy more than a few of their Cottage Cheese class drones.

The Fromages proceeded to bomb Devon IV, destroying most of the defences and other installations, but not killing many colonists. Our defences on Devon IV intercepted most of the bombs.

Our engineers were unable to improve any of our planets, though they did try. They increased the natural radiation of Inifinity Junction, Pirate and Andante, decreased the natural radiation of Ozone to be naturally perfect for us and decreased the natural gravity of Status. Andante, Ozone and Status were already perfect, Infinity Junction and Pirate could have been improved if our engineers had chosen a different environmental parameter to modify.

2503:

15 battles this year, the most important being at Strange, where a combined force of Fromage and Starnger fleets attacked us and the Quickoid ships in orbit, destroying our starbase at Strange and all of our Quickoid warships, though some auxiliary ships managed to disengage from the battle.

Our engineers decreased the natural gravity of Demski and increased the natural radiation of Adams. This gave a nice improvement in the environment of Demski, but Adams already had a perfect environment.

As our remaining warships in the south are too few to fight the Fromage and Stranger ships there, we have made this request to use the Grendalities gate at Radium (copied to the Runars and Quickoids, of course):

Greetings neighbours.

We have a number of warships in the south of the Stranger arm, which we would like to send elsewhere. At the moment they are not safe down there. For that purpose we would like to use the stargate at Radium, if you will permit that. You should be warned that that involves a risk to the starbase at Radium, as well as any of your ships that remain in orbit at Radium. If the Fromages and Valkyries send warships after the warships we send to Radium with sufficient speed that those Fromage and Stranger warships also reach Radium, where they will then probably destroy both the starbase at Radium and any ships you still have in orbit at Radium - Along with our warships, of course. Do we have your permission to use the stargate at Radium ?

With highest respects,

Craebild, Primarch of the Voshera, speaking for the Voshera-Quickoid Alliance

The Grendalities promptly replied:

HI All,

You have free access to my gates... no questions asked.

On another note I am sorry I missed the last turn I was abroad for a family wedding and should have asked for an extension.

Regards,

Tracey

As we have a Calgary class colonizer galleon and a Breeder class freighter in orbit at Strange, we are evacuating half of the colonists from Strange to send them to orbit at Tchaikovsky, which

belongs to the Grendalities. That way we might be able to recolonize Strange, as we expect to lose Strange soon.

We are also sending all of our Barenas and those of our Baris in the south to Radium in the hope that we will be able to gate them to Cirrus from there next year.

As our assembled fleet at Cirrus seems to be sufficiently strong now, we are sending it against the Fromage fleet at Eden. We are only taking 3000 of our Net class drones along, though, sending the rest to Karhide to keep them in reserve.

We are also building some Barenas, as we expect to take losses in our upcoming battle with the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance, and as we do not wish to spend resources on what would be essentially useless research.

2504:

11 battles this year, two of which are of note. A clear victory at Devon IV and a defeat at Radium.

At Devon IV we met a stronger Fromage force than expected, but the results were hardly what the Fromages had hoped for. We lost only the 3000 Net class chaff drones and 26 Barracuda sapper battleships we had in our fleet, the rest of our ships were never fired upon, while the Fromages lost all of their ships. There was also a Valkyrie fleet in the system, but that Valkyrie fleet only consisted of bombers, a remote mining ship, freighters and SFXs, of which they lost the remote miner and the bombers. Our München class missile battleships proved rather ineffective, as our Barenas did not close with the Fromage Cottage Cheese chaff drones until after all other enemy warships had been destroyed. It seems we may have to revise our battle orders before our next encounter with the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance. The Fromage Stinking Bishop class beamer nubiars did not prove very effective in this battle either, though it had proven effective in earlier battles. The Fromages lost 70% of their Stinking Bishop class ships before any Stinking Bishop class ship fired. The debris from the battle dropped to Devon IV where it will be used for rebuilding the infrastructure of the planet – The debris from the battle amounted to about 4700 kT ironium, 6300 kT boranium and 6200 kT germanium. By our estimate we destroyed 3 years of production for the Fromages while losing only one year's production ourselves – And we could have lost even less if we had used a more appropriate combination of ship designs.

The battle at Radium did not go as well, the forces we and the Grendalities had present in the system were insufficient to prevent the Fromage fleet from annihilating our fleets and the Grendalities starbase, as well as the single Quickoid drone observing the battle. We did manage to destroy the two Stranger minelayers, 12 of the 18 Fromage Stinking Bishop class ships and all of the Fromage chaff drones, though.

Our engineers were unable to improve any of our planets, though they increased the natural gravity of Infinity Junction, decreased the natural gravity of Verdi and Clotho and increased the natural radiation of Snuffles. Verdi, Snuggles and Clotho were already perfect, and on Infinity Junction they would get better results if they increased the natural temperature instead of fiddling with the gravity, or the radiation as they did two years ago.

The warfleet that won at Devon IV is staying where it is, except for a few of the Barenas that are going hunting. Some of the Barenas we built this year are also heading for the south of the Quickoid arm to go hunting, while the rest, along with 1500 Nets, are going to merge with the warfleet at Devon IV. We do not expect any major attacks from the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance during the next few years.

2505:

18 battles this year. At Strange the attacking Strangers fleet won, as they destroyed our starbase and three Barenas, but they did lose 16 Flitzr Jihad missile destroyers and 390 chaff drones. The Barenas that went hunting in the south of the Quickoid arm proved more than a match for their targets – Except for two Valkyrie Geiravor cruisers that chose to flee, but they seem to be fleeing into minefields belonging to us and the Quickoids, so they will most likely not be fleeing much longer.

This year our engineers increased the natural temperature of Curley, increased the natural gravity of Bfe, decreased the natural gravity of Burgoyne and decreased the natural radiation of Devon IV. Of the four planets only Bfe could have been improved, if they had chosen to increase the natural temperature instead.

2506:

20 battles this year, mostly minor skirmishes. One of our Barenas was drawn to Flutter Valve by the ship it was pursuing, where it met the fleet the Fromages are assembling there. Our Barena was of course greatly outmatched, but we observed a new ship type the Fromages are fielding, the Stinkier Bishop. The Stinker Bishop is an upgrade of the Stinking Bishop, with better shields and jammers but otherwise the same design. In addition, we had a Net drone to observe the battle at the Grendalities planet Corner, which was attacked by a major Fromage-Valkyrie alliance fleet, which subsequently bombed Corner, killing all Grendalities colonists there.

The Valkyries bombed Steeple, killing most of our population there, and the Fromages then sent in troops to take over the planet. The Valkyries also bombed the Quickoid planet Dingly Dell, killing all colonists there, but neither the Fromage or Valkyrie fleets there had troops to land on the planet.

Our engineers were busy this year, though not very effective. They increased the natural temperature of Curley, decreased the natural gravity of Lyra and 14 Coli, increased the natural radiation of Andante, increased the natural gravity of Ozone and decreased the natural radiation of Rommel. The environment of Lyra was slightly improved, but Curley, Andante, Ozone and 14 Coli already had a perfect environment, and they would have done a better job on Rommel if they had increased the natural temperature instead of decreasing the natural radiation.

Our researchers have found out how to build a new type of shield called the Elephant Hide Fortress, and the Quickoids have helped us learn how to build a new type of hull called the Nubian hull. With these new advances we have started production of a new ship type called the Milan class. Armed with Armageddon missiles and Omega torpedoes, protected by jammers and beam deflectors, as well as good shields and the superior armour of the Nubian hull, the Milan class ships should prove an unpleasant surprise for our enemies. They are slightly too heavy to safely gate, but the damage taken from gating them is minimal, and the chance of losing a ship to the void is also acceptable. The Milan class ships may not be that powerful individually, but they are cheap enough to build in large numbers.

2507:

12 battles this year. The Fromages attacked Devon IV with a single Cottage Cheese chaff drone, presumably to learn what we had in orbit there. The drone presumably did send information about what it found to the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance high command before it was destroyed by the massive warfleets assembling at Devon IV. The Fromage-Valkyrie alliance also attacked Strange, destroying the München class battleship we had sent there and the minor starbase we had there, though we managed to destroy 2 Emmenthal missile cruisers and 1 Goat Cheese galleon

overcloaker/freighter. The Fromage-Valkyrie alliance proceeded to bomb away all colonists on Strange, but they did not drop any troops to take over the planet. The Fromages also sent a Goat Cheese galleon overcloaker/freighter to Calcium, where they encountered one of our newly built Milan class ships. The Fromage Goat Cheese did not stand any chance, of course, but unfortunately it presumably sent information on the Milan class to the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance high command before it was destroyed.

Our engineers were busy again this year, but quite ineffective. They decreased the natural gravity of Pirate, Whistler's Mother and Verdi, decreased the natural temperature of Leo, Status and Clotho and increased the natural radiation of Snuffles. Pirate was the only of those 7 planets that wasn't perfect already, and they should have been decreasing the natural temperature of Pirate instead of decreasing the natural gravity in order to improve the environment of Pirate.

The Fromages and Valkyries seem to be withdrawing warships from the Grendalities arm, surely to the joy of the Grendalities, and from the planets in the Fromage arm that are closest to the Quickoid arm. It seems they correctly anticipate an imminent attack.

The Quickoids sent this message to the Runar-Grendality Combine on our behalf (after we had sent them the suggested text), with the mentioned intelligence reports attached:

Greetings neighbours,

It seems we have been remiss in sending you our .p# and .f# intelligence files, we have attached ours for this year. We would appreciate it if you would send us your .p# and .f# intelligence files.

It is also of particular interest to us whether you have any gates at Tchaikovsky, Radium or Smorgasbord, as we would like to send some ships down there to cause the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance and their vassals some more trouble on that front.

Speaking of fronts, we destroyed the main Fromage-Valkyrie alliance fleet invading the Quickoids arm a few years back, and the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance seems to be moving warships away from the inner part of the Fromage arm, in correct anticipation of an imminent attack there. We should also be able to send a major attack fleet into the inner Gredalities arm in a few years, so the Grendalities should fairly soon be able to recolonize some of their lost planets there.

With highest respects,

Craebild, Primarch of the Voshera, speaking for the Voshera-Quickoid Alliance

2508:

8 battles this year. The 3 Barenas attacking Spitfire with hopes of destroying the Valyrie starbase there only managed to destroy 81 Valkyrie Fallen Varrrior class chaff drones before they were shot down by the Valkyrie starbase, but they told us what type of stargate they had there.

This year our engineers decreased the natural temperature of Mother and Pirate, increased the natural temperature Eden and decreased the natural gravity of Verdi. On Pirate they picked the correct environmental factor to change this year, giving a nice improvement of the environment, but the other three planets were already perfect.

The Quickoids sent this message to the Runar-Grendality Combine:

Dear Neighbor,

We managed a nice surprise at Smorgasbord last year, but couldn't prevent them from destroying your base. We are strong enough there right now to deal with what's still out

there, but we would like a means to get out or reinforce. Could you setup a new base with gate?

We will attack their core this year, so that should ease the pressure on the outer regions. We've already seen the Sanngridr in your arm withdraw from your front line, likely to come to the aid of their own forces :-)

*With highest respect,
The Quickoids.*

The Grendalities answered:

Attached are my files. At this time I am building some highly cloaked DD sweepers to start chipping away at their minefields. I can also build some more 98% cloaked scanning ships, let me know how many I should build and where you would like to see them go.

I fear that I am going to lose my entire arm shortly.. so for any tech I would suggest sending the ships to No Play. In my arm I still have a gate at Devo.

In reply to that the Quickoids wrote:

Attached are my files. At this time I am building some highly cloaked DD sweepers to start chipping away at their minefields. I can also build some more 98% cloaked scanning ships, let me know how many I should build and where you would like to see them go.

I think our reports are worst in your own arm and in the Stranger arm. I have TD scouts now that help a lot, but they're not in place everywhere yet.

I fear that I am going to lose my entire arm shortly.. so for any tech I would suggest sending the ships to No Play. In my arm I still have a gate at Devo.

Yes, it does look rather grim, doesn't it. We will attack their heartland this turn. Hopefully it goes better than our attempt in your arm a while ago. We're better prepared for that stack of missile Nubs now (and to spot them before it's too late...). Depending on how that goes, we might send over a stack to Devo too to put pressure from behind, just like I did last turn at Smorgasbord.

The p-file says that you have a gate at Radium, so that's good. I will keep most of the Nubs in orbit of Smorgasbord, so that planet should be fairly safe if you want to put up a new gate. I will also try to sweep the area, including the fields near and around Radium.

Cheers, Rolf.

2509:

7 battles this year. The battle at Flutter Valve wasn't that interesting, the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance offered only token resistance. Their starbase managed to destroy 64 of our Net class chaff drones, then our Barenas removed all shields from the Fromage ships that were mounting shields and our Münchens then destroyed all Fromage ships as well as their starbase.

This year our engineers managed to improve the environment of Bob a fair bit by decreasing the natural temperature. They also decreased the natural gravity of Chennault and Devon IV and increased the natural temperature of Clausewitz, but increasing the natural temperature would have been a better choice on Chennault, and Devon IV and Clausewitz were already perfect.

2510:

Only 5 battles this year. The Fromage-Valkyrie alliance only gave token resistance at Spitfire, so our main fleet only lost a few Net chaff drones. The Fromage-Valkyrie alliance did not send any ships against Flutter Valve, so our Macbeth minelayers were not shot down. The Valkyrie Sanngridr missile nubian that attacked Rommel did not have orders to primarily target the starbase, so it only shot down 3 Macbeth minelayers and a few Net chaff drones before it was destroyed by the missiles from our starbase. There were also some Quickoid Oops nubian beamers at Rommel, but the Valkyrie Sanngridr was destroyed before they had a chance to fire on it.

This year our engineers managed to improve the environment of 90210 slightly by increasing the natural temperature, but they had no such luck by increasing the natural radiation of Infinity Junction, increasing the natural temperature of Andante, decreasing the natural radiation of 14 Coli and decreasing the natural temperature of Adams. On Infinity Junction they would have had more luck if they had increased the natural temperature, and Andante, 14 Coli and Adams were already perfect.

By analysing some ships scrapped by the Quickoids at one of our starbases our scientists learned to build a new type of shield called the Complete Phase Shield. One of our fleets also traded with a Mystery Trader, and received plans for a ship part called the Mega Poly Shell. A part that both armour, shield, cloak, jammer and scanner. It would have been a quite useful part if we had learned how to build it earlier, but now it is not much use for ships, as we can use ordinary jammers and cloaks to better effect, and the armour, shield and scanner capabilities are negligible.

The Fromage-Valkyrie alliance are clearly avoiding our warfleets, and we are building more warships to send against them. By our estimates we and the Quickoids can build more warships per year than the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance can, and our warships are superior designs, so in our estimate the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance are merely delaying their inevitable defeat.

2511:

5 battles this year. The Fromage-Valkyrie alliance did not try to oppose us beyond some minor ships that were easily destroyed with negligible losses.

The Quickoids invaded Flutter Valve, so Flutter Valve is now theirs, and our remote terraforming ships made Flutter Valve a quite comfortable place for them to live.

Our engineers increased the natural gravity of 668 and Angst, decreased the natural radiation of Romeo and increased the natural temperature of Rommel. This gave a fair improvement of the environment of Rommel, but Angst was already perfect, and they would have had better luck increasing the natural temperature of 668 and decreasing the natural gravity of Romeo.

2512:

3 battles this year. The Fromages and Valkyries clearly do not want to engage us in battle, though that is understandable. The odds are not in their favour.

The Quickoids have invaded Tweedledee and Spitfire, finding plenty of intact mines and factories (more factories than they can operate). On Spitfire they also found large stockpiles of minerals, much to their joy.

Our scientists have increased their knowledge of energy technology, allow us to build a new type of planetary defences called Neutron Shield defences. Those advanced defences will help protect our planets against enemy bombardment, though it seems that our planets are unlikely to be bombarded

in the near future, as the Fromages and Valkyries do not want to engage us in battle even to protect their own planets.

Our engineers have decreased the natural gravity of Lever, increased the natural temperature of Green House and decreased the natural temperature of Leo, but that did not improve the environment of any of those planets. On Green House they would have done better to increase the natural gravity, and the other two planets are already perfect.

2513:

2 battles this year. At Flutter Valve a couple of Fromag Stinkier Bishop nubian beamers and a single Cottage Cheese chaff showed up. As we and the Quickoids had hundreds of nubian beamer and torp/missile ships there, those Fromage ships were quickly vaporized. At Quixote the Fromages and Valyries met our attack fleet with some ships of their own, including a new Fromage design specifically designed for shooting down our remote terraforming ships by using orders to fire on unarmed ships first, and the Valkyrie ships had the same orders. The Fromage and Valkyrie ships managed to destroy the remote terraforming ships we had there, along with the few chaff we had brought along and two of our München class missile battleships. We managed to shoot down all of their ships along with the Valkyrie starbase, though, so it wasn't a loss to us.

Our engineers have decreased the natural gravity of Calcium and Aqua and decreased the natural temperature of Status. On Calcium and Aqua they would have done better to respectively decrease and increase the natural temperature, and Status is already perfect, so they didn't manage to improve the environment of any of those three planets.

We have designed a new type of remote terraforming ship that can disengage from battle fast enough to be protected from enemy missile fire by unarmed chaff drones and the type of unarmed chaff drone needed to protect them, but as our production systems can only handle a limited number of ship types at any given time we cannot start production of either type of ship yet.

2514:

4 battles this year. The Fromages attacked with a single nubian missile ship (their new design with many Jihad missiles and Battle Nexus comps) at Flutter Valve and Tweedledee, destroying the Quickoid starbases at those planets, and the Valkyries attacked with a single missile nubian at Spitfire destroying the Quickoid starbase there. Our attack on Homer destroyed the Fromage starbase there, and we lost only a few Net chaff drones in that battle.

Our engineers were busier this year than they have been lately, as they increased the natural gravity of Infinity Junction, Tattoo and Cirrus, increased the natural temperature of Verdi and Where and decreased the natural temperature of 14 Coli. They did not manage to improve the environment of any of those planets, though. On Infinity Junction they would have had better luck if they had increased the natural temperature, and the rest of those planets are already perfect.

We sent this message to the Runars and Grendalities, with the mentioned intelligence reports attached:

Greetings neighbours,

We have attached our .p# and .f# intelligence files for this year and we would appreciate it if you would send us your .p# and .f# intelligence files.

We would also very much like to know where your two races have stargates, and which types of stargates that is. We can of course learn that from your .p# intelligence files, but a list would be easier.

As we (the Voshera) have little more we can help the Quickoids to learn about by sending them ships to study, we will soon not be limited by what we are sending the Quickoids for such technology exchanges, we will be able to send you technology exchange ships for the technologies you need - Within reason of course, we cannot have too many different ship designs at the same time. In that connection we would like to know how advanced your technology is in each field of research, and which technologies you are most interested in learning about.

You might also take a look at the ships currently in orbit of Abrams. Some of those ships will be heading for the Grendalities arm to cause trouble for the Fromage and Valkyrie invaders there, and there will also be more ships coming that way. We trust that trouble for the Fromage and Valkyrie invaders is something you will appreciate.

With highest respects,

Craebild, Primarch of the Voshera, speaking for the Voshera-Quickoid Alliance

2515:

8 battles this year. Our remaining 9 München class missile battleships attacked Baggy, hoping to destroy the Valkyrie starbase there, but there were too many Fromage and Valkyrie warships there this year, so our Münchens and the Net chaff drones we had along were killed. In other places we lost a few minelayers and the Fromages and Valkyries lost some ships, including a few main line warships.

This year our engineers increased the natural gravity of Kalila and Angst, decreased the natural gravity of Demski and Pirate and decreased the natural radiation of Curley and Clotho. That gave a good improvement of the environment of Demski, but on Pirate they would have done better to decrease the natural temperature, and the rest of the planets are already perfect.

We have now built enough of the new remote terraforming ships to replace the obsolete design, but we are still deploying the obsolete remote terraforming ships as their crews have volunteered to perform suicide missions. This also allows us to postpone deploying the new remote terraforming ships in war zones until we have enough of the unarmed chaff drones to protect them.

2516:

5 battles this year. Not unexpectedly we lost the few ships we had at Strange, and the Fromages also managed to destroy the remote terraforming ships we sent to Siberia before their own ships were destroyed by the Quickoids, but those were of the obsolete type, so that did not matter much. We also lost some of the obsolete remote terraforming ships at Iceball, but we managed to kill all enemy ships there.

Some of the obsolete remote terraforming ships also visited Denikin, which belongs to the Quickoids. Their colonists appreciated the visit, as our remote terraforming ships changed the environment from a hellhole requiring environmental suits to a perfect environment.

Our engineers increased the natural temperature of Infinity Junction and Winkle, increased the natural radiation of Redemption, Clausewitz and Where, decreased the natural temperature of Status and decreased the natural radiation of Verdi. This gave slight improvements in the already nearly perfect environment of Infinity Junction and Winkle, while the rest of the planets are already perfect.

The Grendalities replied to the message we sent two years ago:

Hi All,

Attached are my files. I am going to build heavily cloaked scanners that I can transfer to anyone who wants them... just let me know when and where to send them.

*Regards,
Tracey*

The Quickoids then sent this to the Runar-Grendality Combine, partly in reply:

Dear Neighbors,

Thanks, here are our files. Could we also receive the Runar planet/fleet info?

As you can see, we're making some progress in your inner arm

For your information, we intercepted the MT and it's handing out the Multi Function Pod. Not the most useful item in this phase of the game, but not the worst either. Should you wish to intercept the MT using our gates (for the Runars that is), you're of course more than welcome. Any planetary orbit in the Quickoids arm should be quite safe in the near future.

*With deepest respect,
The Voshera/Quickoids alliance.*

Shortly after that the Runars replied with their intelligence files:

I will definitely look at intercepting

Also, here are my files - as small as they are Are there places I should build a better gate for you?

2517:

5 Battles this year. At Flutter Valve it seems our Net chaff drones did not have appropriate orders, so they closed with Fromage-Valyrie beamer ships, getting them shot down fast. Fortunately the Fromage-Valyrie ships were more interested in the Quickoid starbase and ships, so our Milans shot down a good number of Fromage-Valkyrie main line ships before our Milans disengaged. The attack on Notorious did not go as planned, as our Milans were stopped by a minefield so only our Net chaff drones arrived at Notorious, where they were of course shot down. We also lost a few of our Macbeth minelayers.

Our engineers increased the natural gravity of Infinity Junction, increased the natural temperature of 90210 and Where and decreased the natural temperature of Adams and Clotho. This gave a slight improvement of the environment on 90210, but on Infinity Junction they would have had better luck increasing the natural temperature, and the rest of the planets are already perfect.

2518:

7 battles this year. Both at Siberia and Fubar the Valkyries managed to build a small starbase of the Orbital Platform type which managed to destroy 12 of our Net chaff drones before it was itself destroyed by our Milan missile ships. At Notorious we lost 5 of our Milan missile ships after they destroyed the Valkyrie starbase there and some enemy ships. We also lost some of the obsolete remote terraforming ships and some fuel transport ships in other battles.

Our engineers decreased the natural temperature of Kalila, increased the natural gravity of 688 and Green House, increased the natural temperature of Clausewitz, decreased the natural gravity of

Romeo and decreased the natural radiation of Status and Nada. This gave slight improvements in the near perfect environments of Green House and Romeo, but they would have done better to increase the natural gravity on 688 and decrease the natural temperature on Nada. The remaining planets are already perfect.

2519:

6 battles this year. At Bart the Fromages had sent a large fleet to protect their allies the Valyries, but our Milan missile ships destroyed the Valkyrie starbase, a Valyrie beamer nubian and some Fromage chaff first. Our loosing the few Milan missile ships and the few hundred Net chaff drones we sent there wasn't unexpected. The Fromage-Valkyrie also managed to destroy some of our obsolete remote terraforming ships at Siberia and Fubar. At Denikin the Fromages had hoped to destroy the Quickoid starbase, but they had no such luck. Our Barena beamer battleships and Milan missile nubians killed the Fromage beamer nubians before they fired a shot.

This year our engineers increased the natural gravity of Foamytap and Bob, decreased the natural temperature of Demski and Lever, decreased the natural gravity of Curley, increased the natural radiation of Aqua and increased the natural temperature of Snuffles. This gave a good improvement of the environment of Foamytap, and they would have improved the environment of Demski, Aqua and Bob if they had chosen the correct environment factor to improve. The last three planets were already perfect.

We sent this message to the Runar-Grendality Combine:

Greetings neighbours.

We have been sending you ships to help your two races improve your technology with propulsion systems, but we are wondering how long we should continue sending you that type of technology. How far are your races with that type of technology ? We are also wondering what type of technology we should send you next. We suspect the Runars might appreciate advances in construction technology to allow them to build better stargates, and both of your races might appreciate advances in construction to help you to build better hull types, but what do you want next ?

You may also have seen that the Fromages and Valkyries are suffering some setbacks in the inner Grendalities arm - For example, the Valkyries would have considered Leviathan a prime vacation spot until this year if it wasn't in a war zone, but now environmental suits are in high demand on Leviathan, as the environment is now most unhealthy for the Valkyrie colonists.

With highest respects,

Craebild, Primarch of the Voshera, speaking for the Voshera-Quickoid Alliance

2520:

2 battles this year. All we lost this year was a couple of Net chaff drones, but others were not so lucky.

Our engineers increased the natural temperature of Insane, Chennault and Verdi, decreased the natural temperature of Mother, decreased the natural radiation of Rickover and decreased the natural gravity of Rommel. That gave a slight improvement in the environment of Insane and good improvement in the environment of Chennault, but on Rommel increasing the natural temperature would have been better, and the remaining planets are already perfect.

There was some communication between the four races of our alliance, with all messages sent to all others in the alliance, of course.

From the Runars:

I am at 15 24 21 14 14 9 in year 2520. I could use con research instead of prop from now on.

There are still some Valkyrie nubs running around - a fleet of 12 just attacked Discovery and took out my base there.

Runar

From the Quickoids:

Yeh, and there is a much larger number of Nubs in the inner Grendalites arm right now. We're playing a cat and mouse game

From the Runars:

Sorry... Did not mean to say that your efforts in progress are not being done correctly. It was meant as a FYI point of information - certainly no expectations of sending fleets in support. If they have the ability to have side fleets taking side duties from the main combat arena, then how can I help?

I am more looking at how I can build gates to help, but I am not sure there are enough planets available for me to do that in your arms. I am open and willing to do what I can!

Runar

From the Quickoids:

I was just kidding, my Dutch nature... and also warning you that more might be on the way

From us:

Greetings neighbours.

I can see that advances in construction will be more use to you, so that is what I will be building for you and the Grendalities from now. There are two more batches of Prop tech scrappers coming your way, as they have already been built, so with a little luck you will get TS10 engines, which you can surely use. They are much lighter and cheaper than IS10 engines, and they use only half as much fuel.

I assume you will not be researching construction on your own, so the first two batches of construction technology scrappers will be intended to bring you to construction 16 - Or will you be researching one or two levels of construction technology on your own over the next couple of years ?

With highest respects,

Craebild, Primarch of the Voshera, speaking for the Voshera-Quickoid Alliance

From the Runars:

My research will give me con15 this year - and then I will switch back to weapons. Only 1 set of con16 should be required.

Thanks!

2521:

2 battles this year. A fleet of 3 of our minelayers were destroyed and we witnessed that a Fromage frigate was destroyed.

Our engineers did not do much this year, they increased the natural temperature of LGM 2, decreased the natural temperature of Mother and 14 Coli and decreased the natural radiation on Burgoyne. On LGM 2 they would have had better luck increasing the natural gravity, the other three planets are already perfect.

2522:

We had no battles this year, but the Quickoids had some. No serious losses, though.

This year our engineers increased the natural temperature of Chennault and Ozone, decreased the natural radiation of Bfe and Calcium, decreased the natural temperature of Devon IV and Adams and decreased the natural gravity of Rommel and 90210. This resulted in a slight improvement in the environment of Chennault, but no other improvements. On Bfe, Rommel and 90210 they would have had better luck increasing the natural temperature, while on Devon IV decreasing the natural temperature would have been best. The rest of the planets are already perfect.

2523:

2 battles this year. The Fromage-Valkyrie alliance suffered far more than we did, as we only lost Net chaff drones and auxiliary ships, while they lost a fair number of main line warships.

This year our engineers decreased the natural radiation of Curley, increased the natural gravity of Xenon and Adams and increased the natural temperature of Andante. As all four planets are already perfect they did not improve the environment anywhere, but now the natural radiation level of Curley is perfect for us.

Our scientists completed researching the last technology possible this year, so they started working on producing useful minerals out of useless materials. That work does not produce many minerals for the effort, but it is better than wasting time doing nothing, and they did produce 569 kT of each mineral.

2524:

4 battles this year.

At Spitfire the Fromage-Valyrie alliance attacked with large fleets, while we only had a fleet of 355 Milan missile nubians and 5762 Net chaff drones, and the Quickoids had a small starbase and a few Nuisance ships of theirs. The Fromage-Valkyrie alliance started by destroying the Quickoid base and ships before they could fire, and then attempted to engage our ships, but our ships had orders to retreat and disengage, so the Fromage-Valkyrie alliance only managed to destroy a few of our Net chaff drones before our Milans had disengaged, and they then destroyed the rest of the Net chaff drones after our Milans had disengaged. Our Milans destroyed a number of Fromage ships before they disengaged, in total 1065 Cottage Cheese chaff, 21 'Fro Mage sapper nubians, 1 Emmenthal missile cruiser and 13 Gouda sweeper frigates.

At Quick Lick and Diddley small fleets of our Milan missile nubians destroyed a few Fromage and Valkyrie beamer nubians and auxiliary ships, and the Valkyrie starbases at those planets. Our Milans did not suffer any damage.

Our scientists produced 853 kT of each mineral out of useless materials, as they could not find more beneficial uses for our resources.

Our engineers were not very active this year, they decreased the natural gravity of Mother and increased the natural temperature of Rommel. Mother was already perfect, but now the natural gravity of Mother is perfect for us, and they improved the environment of Rommel a fair bit.

We colonized Lead Pants in the Grendalities arm this year, and our colonists found mines and factories left behind by the previous owners of the planet. Three times as many mines as our colonists there can operate, and half the factories they can operate, so they have immediately put much of that infrastructure to good use.

2525:

1 battle this year. A Valkyrie beamer nubian went close to some minelayers and beamer nubians of ours, but the Valkyrie beamer nubian disengaged before we could fire on it. In addition, the Fromage and Valkyrie main fleets attacked Nova, where the Quickoids had a few ships and a starbase, destroying the Quickoid ships and starbase there.

We colonized Chaos and Clatsop in the Grendalities arm this year. There were no installations left behind by their prior owners, though.

This year our scientists produced 959 kT of each mineral out of useless materials, as they could not find more beneficial uses for our resources. They would much rather have helped build more ships, but at most of our planets there were not enough minerals.

Our engineers were busier this year, but no more effective in improving environments. They decreased the natural temperature of Bob which cause a fair bit of an improvement of the environment there, but decreasing the natural radiation of Insane and Kalila, increasing the natural gravity of Clatsop, decreasing the natural temperature of Demski and increasing the natural temperature of Whistler's Mother did not improve the environment of any of those five planets. Kalila and Whistler's Mother were already perfect, while they could have improved the environment of Insane by either increasing the natural temperature or decreasing the natural gravity, and increasing the natural temperature of Clatsop or decreasing the natural gravity of Demski would have improved those planets.

The Valkyrie colonists on Diddley surely enjoyed their perfect environment until now, Diddley would have been a prime holiday planet if it wasn't in a war zone. Until now, that is, as some of our orbital terraforming ships altered the environment of Diddley this year, so now the Valkyries need environmental suits when going outdoors on Diddley. They probably don't enjoy that.

The Grendalities sent us updated intelligence files and an offer of ships:

Hi All,

Here is my reports. Also, if you have an open slot I will transfer cloaked RB scouts to you.

Regards,

NG

After a little discussion about it, the Quickoids sent this reply:

Sorry for the late reply. My internet modem broke, so the past week my internet was not working at home.

We thank you for your intelligence report files and your offer of cloaked RB scouts. The Quickoids have a vacant design slot that we can use to receive such ships, so please transfer them to them. While the Voshera also have a vacant design slot at the moment, they expect to need that design slot for another ship type soon.

Best wishes,

The Quickoids/Voshera Alliance.

The Runars sent us this message:

I now have any/800 gate capability - almost enough to get across the galaxy. If you would like for me to colonize a world and build a gate for you, please let me know where would be best. My habs: 0.18-1.36G, immune, 56-90mR

The Fromage-Valkyrie alliance then sent us this message, before we could reply to the above message from the Runars:

Dear Ever-Closer Neighbours,

Due to your ability to project power throughout the entire known universe, comprehensive scouting, massively greater number of nubians and, most importantly, your severe constraints on the raw milk supplies necessary for the continued cheeseiness of universe, we (both ourselves and the Valkyries) formally offer our surrender to the Quickoid/Voshera alliance.

We humbly request that the following terms be honoured, for the sake of peace:

(1) Forgiveness is offered for the recent strange time dilation in the universe, and for not offering our surrender before the strange pause.

(2) Whilst I understand that all male Cheeses of fighting age (a nice mature 10 years, I'd have thought) must be interred/sent to the Great Fondue Pot in the Sky, we request that the young innocent curds be allowed to escape the universe on the next passing Mystery Trader.

*Yours humbly,
Blue Stilton of the Fromages
and*

(out of character: basically, we have no chance to stop you now, you are waaaaaaaaay ahead in nubians, stealth fleets, scouting, chaff, population, and production of all of the above, and can take planets off us at will while we can do nothing to even really slow you down. Sorry we didn't stop this before the break, but sometimes looking at hopeless situation afresh makes you realise just how hopeless it is!).

The Quickoids then replied:

Dear almost-on-top-off-us-know Neighbors,

I think I can agree to this outcome, although I would gladly demonstrate it Our scout reports show that we build more than you each turn.

I assume that you're running a bit low on minerals, since resource wise, you should be doing better than me (I'm stuck in 4th place and have been for a long time, not a surprise of course being -f). We anticipated mineral shortage later in the game and have picked our settings accordingly. I can keep building at my current rate for a bit longer...

Of course, I have plenty of pop in orbit, so resources won't be a problem either, I won't be needing factories anymore, so I can sneak attack and destroy a planet in one turn. I have already demonstrated that and have just gotten another fleet prepped and ready to go. I guess those are what you refer to as the stealth fleets

The Voshera do need their factories, but they haven't quite enough minerals to entertain the current ones, so they can do without needing to expand. They are in 1st place with at least 20% higher score than 2nd.

We have also pretty much taken over the Grendalities arm, so that will help us quite a bit. I don't think you can avoid that without losing the balance at your core territory.

I think the outcome will indeed be inevitable.

Cheers, Rolf.

The Voyager-Stranger alliance and the Runar-Grendalities alliance also surrendered to the might of the Voshera-Quickoid alliance, so from here on the history of the Voshera will be a history of peace and prosperity as the Voshera-Quickoid alliance rule the universe.