

# Making Peace on Kandok

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## CHAPTER 1

### Flexball

Morga, Gold, and Jones were at the sports arena on New City. It was the biggest flexball game of the year. They were rooting for their team the Big Dippers. But some of the talk was not about sports.

“Did you hear about the civil war on Kandok?” said a fan sitting behind Morga.

Another fan behind Jones answered, “Don’t worry, it’s a distant world. They’ve been at it for a thousand years. They never even hurt each other.”

“No, but they wreck everything around them.

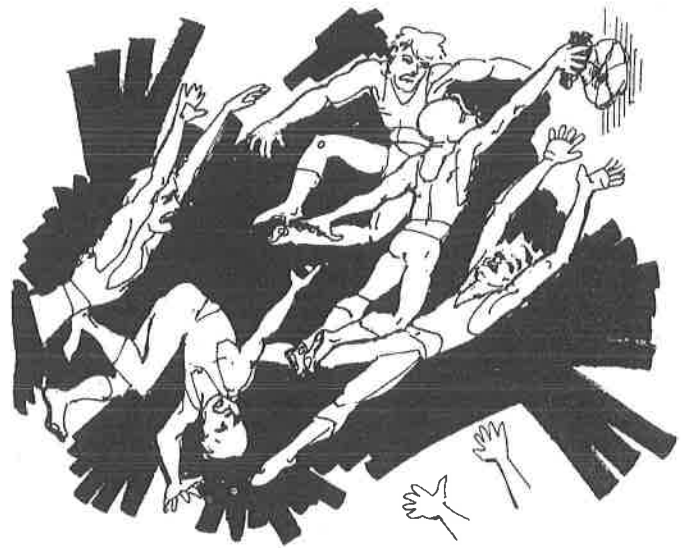
And now they're wrecking everything in the belt!  
It's costing too much money," said the fan.

Someone scored. Soon it was the last exciting  
minute. The crowd was yelling and screaming.

All the fans were belted into the seats so they  
wouldn't bob and hit the ceiling. Only flexball  
players were allowed to hit the ceiling. And that  
was so they could get past a guard and *hole* the  
flexball into the tiny goal.

If players squeezed the ball into the goals in  
the walls, they scored two points. But if they scored  
goals in the corners, they got three. Jones, Morga,  
and Gold cheered until their throats were sore.

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Quick as a flash he slipped it into the wall for two



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points. The crowd went wild.

“We need three more points,” yelled Jones.

“Three more points, three more points,” yelled the crowd.

Then a player grabbed the next pass and rushed to the wall. He could have *holed* the ball for two, but knew he needed the goal in the corner to win.

So he passed the ball to another team member. Fast as lightning the ball changed hands from one team member to another. At last one Big Dipper player *holed* the ball into the corner for three points. The crowd went crazy!

The buzzer sounded and the game was over.

“We won, we won!” cried Morga.

“And I bet on the winning team!” cried Gold.

“Then you pay for everyone’s dinner,” said Jones, popping out of his seat with a laugh.

Jones thought New City flexball teams were not so good as the pro teams he had played with in deeper space before he hurt his knees. But this game had been good. He had enjoyed it. Too bad it would take an hour to get out of the crowded arena. And too bad the fans behind them had started talking about the Kandokian war again.

“Kandokians don’t come this way very often. In fact, I don’t think I’ve ever seen one before. It’s that long cloak they wear that gives them away,” said one of the fans.

Someone else spoke up, “Yeah? Well, I’ll tell you what happens. When any two Kandokians

meet, they strap these things on their hands and start smashing.”

“I can’t believe that,” said another voice.

The loud one said, “Yeah? Well, let me warn you. If you see two Kandokians in long cloaks instead of jackets, it means war. Then move! Hide everything that breaks!”

The man in the long cloak behind Jones said, “They talk about us as if we’re animals!”

Morga pointed. “Look. There’s another guy in a cloak. He’s coming toward us!”

Gold put his arm around the guy in the long cloak behind Jones. “Say, friend, have you seen our Casino? Come with me.”

Morga started walking backwards. “Jones,

how hard would you have to push me to knock me over?”

Jones said, “Oh, about this hard,” and gave Morga a shove. Morga fell backwards right into the guy in the war cloak walking towards them.

“Oh, I’m sorry, did I bump you?” asked Morga. He turned the man around and brushed him off. He could feel something in one of his cloak pockets.

“Stop that! I’m fine!” said the Kandokian angrily. He was so tall he could see over all the people in the crowd.

Gold and the other Kandokian were no longer with them. They were heading to a different exit.

For the moment, everything was fine.

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## CHAPTER 2

### Friends

A little while later in the Casino, Gold sat the man from Kandok at a table. He showed him how to play the games. They won a lot of money and talked about life. Soon they were friends.

A group of PM's were nearby. They seemed to be watching Gold and the Kandokian. PM's were Personal Mercenaries who had been hired by the owner of the Casino to protect things. But as it got late, and nothing happened, the PM's went away.

Gold looked at his new friend. He liked him.

How could such a nice, honest guy be a problem? Just then, the other Kandokian came in with Jones and Morga, and things began to happen.

The Kandokian with Jones took one look at Gold's friend and said, "Varlet, I will bend you."

Gold's friend got slowly off the stool and stood to face him. "Knave, I will bend you worse."

Morga leaned over to Jones. "Varlet? Knave? Wow! These guys must be from a different time zone."

To his surprise, the Kandokians turned to them. Gold's friend explained, "No, that is the rule. The one who calls first gets to be Knave. The other is Varlet."

"Yes. Next we circle and honor all we will

bend. Then we make war," said Knave. They began to circle each other.

"They stop a war to explain things?" asked Jones.

"Yeah, and they keep score! You better run or take cover," said a man behind a table.

"I will bend you with the strength of ten!" said Varlet. With that, he pushed his cloak off one shoulder. Everybody tipped over tables and ducked for cover. Varlet pulled something from his pocket.

"Duck! He's got a *smash!*" cried a man.

Varlet put the smash on his hand. It was old and covered with designs. Jones thought it looked like something that should be in a museum.

"I will bend you with the force of fifteen!"

said Knave. He, also, put a smash on his hand. Then, together, the fighters turned and looked around the room. They made movements with their arms and said strange words in their language.

"I've never seen a fight like this," said Morga.

"Knave, I will bend you with the force of twenty!" said Gold's friend.

"I don't think so," said the owner of the Casino. A group of PM's ran in and grabbed the two Kandokians.

"Let go, or you will bend our honor! If our honor is bent, we cannot rule what we do," cried Gold's friend.

"Take this one out the front door, and that one out the back," said the owner of the Casino. The

PM's split up the Kandokians and headed for the doors.

Gold's friend reached out and cried, "My friend, please! I warn you. Do not let them do this!"

Gold felt bad, but didn't know how to stop them.

His Kandokian friend looked at him with hurt in his eyes. Then the hurt turned into anger. With a loud cry, he broke loose and knocked the PM's across the room.

Next he raised his fist and brought the smash down hard on one of the big game tables. It broke into a thousand pieces. Then he smashed a whole row of game machines and rushed to the door.

The PM's got to their feet and ran after him.

Gold's friend turned to them and cried, "My honor is bent! I smash you with the force of eleven hundred!"

With a terrible nose, he hit the wall. The wall bent in the middle. In a cloud of dust, smoke, and noise, the whole side of the Casino caved in.

"Grab him," cried the owner, going crazy.

But people were running around screaming. Alarms went off. Water squirted from the ceiling to put out the fires.

"Too late. He's gone," said one PM, coughing.

The owner turned to Gold in a rage. "You! You are going to pay for all this damage! And you are going to pay for these PM's. You are now their boss. They will take orders from you!"

## CHAPTER 3

### Old Wars

“We shall find your friend,” said the captain of the PM’s to Gold. Now that Gold was their boss, they would work hard for him.

“O.K. Just hand me another ice pack and then get to work,” said Gold. He put it on his eye where the owner of the Casino had hit him.

The PM’s were camped out in little pointed tents all over Asteroid Seven. Gold kept them busy doing laundry and looking for space fossils.

The PM corporal came in. “No progress yet,

sir,” he said to Gold.

“That’s fine, Corporal, keep looking,” said Gold.

The corporal saluted and went out.

Gold groaned and held ice on his eye. He felt bad. The Kandokian war was now out of control. Other Kandokians had joined the two fighters after Gold had bent their honor.

Both sides of the Kandokians had gone wild and broken everything in sight. By this time they were all on the InterGal *Ten Most Wanted List*. Everybody in the belt was mad. Something had to be done – and soon.

Gold heard Jones and Morga in the outer room of the camp house hanging up their mining suits.



Soon they walked in. Jones grabbed a chair and sat down.

“Gold, we need to do something about the PM’s,” he said.

“Yes. My socks have been washed so many times, they’re full of holes,” cried Morga.

Gold put more ice on his eye. “They are costing me all the money I saved to buy the Casino! It’s not my fault there’s nothing for them to do!”

Just then, a voice on the speaker said, “Hi, guys, this is the Orion. There sure are a lot of PM’s camped all over your asteroid!”

“It’s Chandler! Come on down,” said Morga.

The Orion landed, and Chandler walked in.

“Hi, Jones,” said Chandler.

“Hi, Chandler,” said Jones.

“Found your Kandokian friend yet, Gold?” she asked.

“No,” groaned Gold.

Chandler said, “What you should do is cut to the chase and solve the problem!”

Gold raised his head and looked at her out of his good eye. “And how would I do that?”

She said, “Simple. Send the PM’s to make peace on Kandok! Without that war, their honor wouldn’t be bent and they wouldn’t break things. They’ve got to start thinking about paying for all the damage they’ve caused.”

“She’s right, Gold,” said Morga.

“O.K. It’s a great idea! I’ll do it!” Gold said.

He pushed a button on his phone. "Gold to PM captain. Come in, please."

"Wow! That will be a huge job for the PM's," said Jones.

Gold laughed. "I know. An impossible job! But at least they'd be out of here. Captain? Could you come in, please? Thank you." He turned off the phone.

"But, Gold, perhaps the PM's *could* make peace on Kandok. They're very good at what they do," said Morga.

"Come on, Morga. Kandok has been at war since time began," said Gold.

Just then, the corporal of PM's came in and saluted. "Sir, I believe I found something. It was

near the mine."

"One what?" asked Gold.

"A fossil, sir." The corporal gave Gold a small flat rock. It was shaped something like a butterfly.

"Look at that!" cried Morga.

"Wow! A fossil way out in space!" said Jones.

Gold looked at the rock. "I don't believe it. A fossil isn't possible!"

"What's our next move?" wondered Morga.

"If the PR's can find a fossil this far out in space, maybe they really can make peace on Kandok like Morga says," said Chandler.

"Then let's talk to them about it," said Morga.

## CHAPTER 4

### Secret Talks

The PM captain said, "Yes, we are good at making peace. We choose one side and beat the other."

But Gold said, "No, Captain, that would be like a flexball game with only one team. You must think of another way, a new way that would make everybody happy."

All the PMs went to the Big Library at the MAC, the Moon Administration Center, to find out what to do. Gold did not hear from them for two weeks. Then the captain called.

He said, "Good news, sir. We have found your Kandokian friend. His name is Dak. He will bring the Kandokian leaders to meet and talk peace. We will all sneak into the big satellite warehouse near Jupiter's moon. We can have a secret meeting there. You must come."

"Are you crazy, Captain? That whole warehouse is filled with things worth billions of dollars! You can't bring Kandokians in there! Plus, it belongs to the Casino owner who hit me in the eye!" cried Gold.

"It is too late to call it off, sir. Both sides will be there, with all their men – tonight."

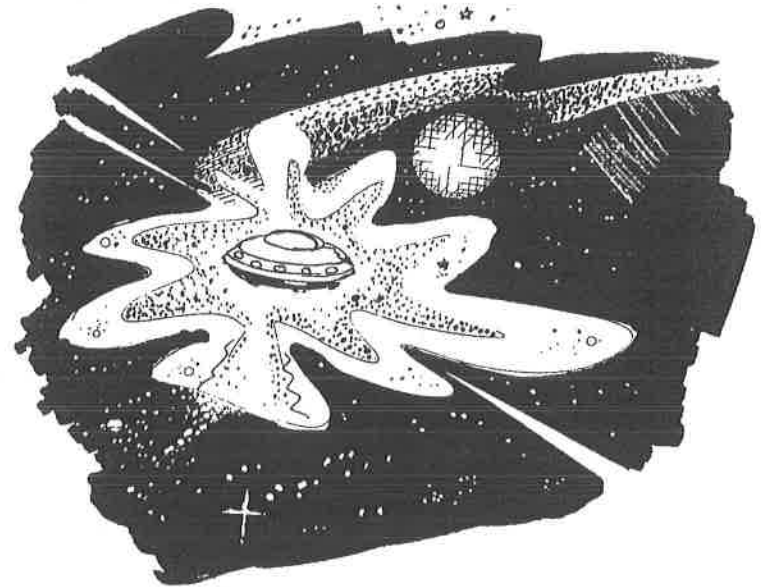
Gold groaned. Then he called Jones and Morga.

Jones said, "Well, if we want peace on Kandok, we'll have to go."

They called Chandler. She came at once and took them to the big satellite warehouse near Jupiter's moon.

The satellite warehouse was built in the shape of a round ball, but very, very big. It was so big, there were clouds inside it. Around the walls were placed square rooms filled with valuable things to buy. Hundreds of floating forklifts were parked in the rooms as far as anyone could see.

In the center of the warehouse was a huge floating loading dock. It had gravity so workers could walk around. Many more forklifts were parked by piles of boxes on both ends of the dock.



*The satellite warehouse was like a round ball, but very, very big. It was so big, there were clouds inside it.*

The two Kandokian leaders were standing on the floating dock with all their men. Gold's friend, Dak, stood beside his leader on one end. The other Kandokian leader stood on the other end. Every Kandokian wore a war cloak.

"I'll bet there's a smash in the pocket of each cloak," said Morga.

"Yep. If even one of them gets mad, it's going to be bad," said Jones.

"Yeah. The Casino owner will come after Gold!" said Morga, laughing.

Gold didn't laugh. His stomach began to hurt. "Where are those PM's? I don't see them," he said.

"Over there," said Morga. He pointed to a doorway. A line of cars with open tops drove in and

circled the middle of the dock. The PM's were sitting in them, dressed in new uniforms. Other PM's were dressed as a band and marched behind them and played a happy song.

"Are they nuts? What are they doing?" cried Gold.

"You told them to try to make peace," said Jones. "This is their way of doing it."

"Look, here come some referees. I'll bet they're PM's, too," said Morga.

A dozen PM's in striped shirts walked out to the middle of the dock. One blew a whistle. It was the PM captain.

The PM corporal walked up to Gold. "Sir, we have found that love is stronger than war. Our plan

is to make the Kandokians love!”

Gold groaned. “You can’t make people love.”

“Yes, we can, sir. They are nice people. They told us they would like to give love a chance.”

The captain of the PM’s waved at them.

“I think he wants us to go out there and stand in between those two armies,” said Morga.

“It’s O.K. Kandokians don’t hurt people, just things,” said Jones.

Gold cried, “No, it’s the Casino owner who hurts people. And he’ll hurt me if he finds out about this meeting! Come on!”

He walked out to see the captain. Jones and Morga followed.

## CHAPTER 5

### Honor

When Gold, Jones, and Morga got out on the field, the PM captain turned to the Kandokian leaders. He said, “Welcome, honorable Kandokian leaders.”

The corporal handed the captain a tray. On it were two things. The first was a small branch from a tree. The second was a pretty white bird.

“As a sign of peace, we give you the olive branch and the dove of peace,” said the captain.

The Kandokian leaders looked at the branch and the bird. They seemed puzzled.

"I don't think they know what signs of peace are for," said Morga to Jones and Gold.

The Kandokian leaders turned and looked at each other. After a moment, the first leader ate the branch. The second leader reached for the bird. But it flew away before he could catch it.

The captain looked nervous. He started talking, "We really want to give you the gift of love. With love, you two great leaders from the great planet Kandok can end your war forever."

The first leader said, "We already love each other. We are brothers! We are all in the same family on Kandok."

The captain looked surprised. "But you always seem to be at war."

The second leader said, "That's because we love to have war. We would never have war with people we do not love." They patted each other on the back and smiled.

The captain said, "But why have war at all?"

The two Kandokian leaders turned to him with wild eyes. They both said, "For *honor!*"

Gold's Kandokian friend, Dak, explained, "Honor is the most important thing on Kandok. And the way to build honor is *war!*"

At that, the two armies turned to each other. They pushed their war cloaks from their shoulders and pulled smashes out of their pockets. "Bend, bend, bend!" they shouted. It was the war cry.

Gold ran out in between them. "No! You can't

go on smashing things here.”

“But why not? This looks like a fine place of honor,” said the first leader.

“No, it’s not a place of honor at all! It’s a place of money, greed, and business! I just don’t understand you people,” cried Gold.

Six Kandokians wheeled a forklift out into the middle of the dock. They looked happy. “Bend, bend, bend,” both armies shouted.

Gold ran to the leaders. “No, no, you can’t break that. It’s not yours. Put it back. Please!”

But the Kandokians did not listen. Dak’s leader raised his smash. His army shouted the war cry.

The other leader raised his smash. His army

shouted the war cry louder. “BEND, BEND, BEND!”

Gold turned to the PM captain. “Do something. Quick!”

The captain gave a signal. The band began to play another peppy tune. But it did not stop the Kandokians. “Bend, bend, bend,” they sang.

Gold yelled, “Stop! You’ll break everything!”

Suddenly, they stopped. But it wasn’t because of Gold. The second Kandokian leader pointed to the forklift and said, “Surely, this fine thing would bend me with a force of more than twenty.”

The Kandokians rushed out with score cards. Two more rushed out with tools and measured the forklift. They talked and wrote things down.



One said, "Yes. It adds up to twenty-five."

"All right. Back to your places. We will begin again," said the first leader.

Morga looked at them with surprise. "Wow! They sure have a lot of strange rules for a war."

Gold looked as if he would faint. Then he looked as if a light had clicked on in his mind. "You're right, Morga! That's it!"

"What's it?" asked Morga.

"That's how to make peace on Kandok!" cried Gold.

"You'd better hurry," said Jones. He pointed to the entrance of the warehouse. A cart floated in to land.

"It's the Casino owner's men!" cried Morga.

## CHAPTER 6

### Business

The Kandokians did not see the cart coming in. They were busy with their war. "Bend, bend, bend."

Gold pushed Jones out in the middle of the dock between the two armies.

All war cries stopped. All the Kandokians turned. Dak came forward. "Time out. You have questions?"

Gold said, "This is Jones, the famous flexball player. He is the best pro in the Dog Star League! He wants to learn Kandokian war."



*Gold said, "This is Jones, the famous flexball player. He is the best pro in the Dog Star League! He wants to learn Kandokian war."*

"I do?" asked Jones, surprised.

"He does," said Gold, kicking Jones on his leg.

Dak's leader looked at Jones more closely.

"Yes, I remember you, Jones. We will be honored to teach you Kandokian war. But you have to learn the rules."

Jones said, "Um . . . O.K., sure! Tell me about these nice designs on the smash. Do they mean something?"

The first leader said, "Yes. These designs send a fighter's path of honor one way. It will tingle when it gets to a sharp point."

The other Kandokian leader smiled and handed Jones the smash. "Would you like to try it?"

“You mean, break the forklift?” asked Jones.  
He looked at Gold.

Gold looked at the Casino owner’s cart. It had landed. The owner and his men were walking towards them.

Gold gulped and said, “Go for it, Jones.”

“Are you sure?” asked Jones. He looked worried.

“I’m positive. But keep your fingers crossed.”

Jones nodded and placed the smash on his hand. “Wow! It makes me tingle,” he said.

The Kandokians laughed. “Your honor is all going one way now. Into a sharp little point.”

The Casino owner walked up to Gold. “Get out of my way. What is going on here?” he asked.

Gold smiled. “Hello! What a surprise! You’re just in time to see a new business start.”

The owner frowned. “It better be good, Gold!”

“You’ll love it,” said Gold. He was sweating.

“Bend, bend, bend,” the Kandokians shouted.

Jones raised the smash and hit the forklift. It broke into twenty-thousand pieces.

Everybody cheered. The band played. “Bend, bend, bend!” sang the Kandokian armies.

Everyone was happy but the Casino owner. He charged forward. “Out of my way! Let me see that!”

Everyone got out of his way. He walked up to Jones. He ripped the smash from Jones’s hand and shoved it in his own. With surprise, he said, “Hey!

It tingles!”

Gold stepped forward. “Kandokian leaders. I want you to meet my leader, a great man of business.”

“Are you a man of honor?” asked Dak’s leader.

“You bet. Now show me how you broke that forklift into twenty-thousand pieces,” said the owner, with a wild look in his eyes.

The Kandokians brought out another forklift. But the Casino owner only shook his head. “Not that. I want a bigger one. Get me the biggest forklift you’ve got!”

Some men wheeled out the biggest forklift in the warehouse. The Kandokian leaders first showed

the owner how to honor it and then where to hit its point of honor. The owner raised the smash and brought it down on the great big forklift. It broke into thirty-thousand pieces.

The band played. The Kandokian armies and the owner’s men sang, “Bend, bend, bend!” The Casino owner was the loudest of them all.

Dak’s leader patted him on the back and said, “This man has great honor!”

The owner put his arms around the Kandokian leaders and said, “Better than that, I have money and brains! How would you like to go into business with me?”

The Kandokians shook their heads. “No thank you. Kandokians will do nothing that will stop our

war and bend our honor.”

“I’m not talking about stopping your war. I’m talking about making more war. Bigger war, better war! If we work together, your war can be bigger than flexball!”

“Plus, you could pay all your debts. Think of all that honor,” said Gold.

The Kandokians did not answer.

The Casino owner said, “I know! We can make special things for you to break, fantastic big things that will build much more honor than any of this junk!”

The Kandokians looked at each other.

## CHAPTER 7

### Peace

Six months later Chandler’s ship, the Orion, circled Asteroid Seven and landed. Chandler called out, “Come on, guys, we don’t want to be late for a war!”

“But I don’t know what to wear,” said Morga, looking through his closet.

“I’ve got new boots with red lights in the toes,” said Chandler proudly.

“I like them. They’re nice,” said Jones.

They got in the Orion and flew into deep space

and landed on the Planet Kandok. They followed signs that said, "War – This Way." Soon they were at the big new sports arena.

Gold met them at the main door and took them to seats right up front.

"Wow, this is nice," said Morga.

"It's bigger than the sports arena on New City," said Jones, looking around.

The lights went down and a drum rolled. Dak's voice boomed out on the loud speaker. "Ladies and gentlemen! Welcome to the grand opening of the Great Kandokian War!"

Bands started playing. The two Kandokian armies rode out on giant carts and circled the field. They wore new bright war cloaks and big fancy

helmets. The crowd cheered wildly.

"Bend, bend, bend!" shouted the Kandokian armies. "Bend, bend, bend!" shouted all the fans.

Gold said, "They're not going to bend anything ordinary. Everything has been made by very smart men from different companies. Prizes will be given for the ones the crowd likes best!"

"And now, the Fighting Forklifts," said Dak's voice. Fancy forklifts with bells, whistles, and spinning lights entered and circled the arena.

"Next, the Bashing Bulldozers!" Big fancy bulldozers that blew bubbles and roared circled the arena.

"And, last but not least, the Parade of Pinchers," said Dak's voice on the loudspeaker. Tall

robots with big steel claws that sparked and snapped bounced in on three giant wheels that could spin in all directions. The crowd went crazy.

The music played again. Dak's voice boomed out. "And now, for the first match. Men bending fighting forklifts!" The armies raised their smashes.

"Varlet, I will bend you!"

"Knave, I will bend you, worse!"

"Bend, bend, bend!"

"This is exciting," said Chandler.

"It's fantastic," cried Morga.

"Come on, First Army! Thirty points," cried Jones.

War was now a ton of fun on Kandok!

