*Xaire*!

You are about to play a short, fun, intense game set in Athens in 403. Big ideas are going to collide, surprises will happen, skill and luck will play a role, and you are going to have the chance to change history – *but should you*?

Everything you need to know is in this packet. You don’t need to do any outside research, all the relevant information is here. You don’t need to study the information here too diligently to have a good time, read it over once or twice and you’ll be all set.

Here’s what you should to:

1. **KEEP THE CONTENTS OF THIS PACKET A SECRET!!!!! DON’T TELL ANYONE YOUR CHARACTER INFORMATION BEFORE THE GAME BEGINS!** Everyone has a different character, everyone has secrets. You want to keep your information secret so nobody has an advantage over you.
2. Print a copy of this packet. You’ll need some parts of it for the game itself. There is an introduction, a big letter, your individual role sheet. Some characters may have a couple extra secret documents here as well.
3. Read the contents of this packet once or twice before the game starts.
4. When you enter the game-room, find other people with the same big letter as you and sit with them. They will be your team. 2 things:
   1. The roles are not equally distributed – if you see another group with more people than you, don’t worry about it. The game has been carefully calibrated, this is all part of the plan. Everyone can win the game regardless of what role they are in.
   2. If you have a K, M, P or L, you will not have a group, come find the game-master at the beginning of the game, or, if possible, right before the game begins. You’ll recognize the game-master because he’s a big, goofy looking guy with brown hair and blue eyes in a black suit. He will likely be shouting instructions.

***This is going to be so much fun!***

-GameMaster Chrol

**Introduction to Athens Besieged: Debating Surrender**

When you walked through the doors today, you probably thought you were entering a classroom. You were wrong. Instead you passed through the Dipylon Gate into Athens. You also moved 2500 years back in time. The year is 405 BCE; the month is December. The walls you can touch are the 18-foot-high stone walls of ancient Athens (shown below). Beyond those walls, stretching as far as the eye can see, are the tents and campfires of the Spartan army, joined by armies from Thebes, Corinth, and other city-states that have long sought to destroy Athens. For 27 years they have sought to climb over the walls of Athens. For 27 years they have waited to slaughter the men of Athens and enslave its women and children. For 27 years they have prayed to destroy Athens and annihilate its democracy.

Now, at long last, their dream—and your nightmare—may become a reality. Sometime soon, perhaps one month from now, perhaps more, Spartan soldiers and their allies will march into Athens and supervise its surrender.

And then the horrors will begin. If you are a man, you will likely be butchered by the Spartans, cut down like a pig in a pen. If you are a woman, you and your children will be seized as slaves.

How did it come to this?

The Great War began 27 years ago. Athens had become a mighty empire, collecting annual tribute from hundreds of city-states throughout the Aegean. Sparta, alarmed by Athenian power and its aggressive democracy, invaded Attica and marched on Athens. Believing the Spartan army to be invincible, Athenian generals ordered its soldiers to retreat behind the protective walls of Athens. Most citizen-farmers, too, streamed through the gates to safety, bringing their families, slaves, cattle and as many household goods as they could carry. While the Spartans ravaged the countryside and probed your walls, the Athenian fleet, sailing from Piraeus, raided the coast of Sparta, burning and plundering Spartan towns and cities.

Nearly every year brought another Spartan invasion of Attica—as well as Athenian raids on the Spartan coast. The walls around you form a protective corridor, encircling Athens and extending all the way to the port city of Piraeus (see map, next page). You are now within these walls (the white area on the map). Throughout the war, ships carrying grain from the Black Sea, Egypt and elsewhere have docked at Piraeus. That all changed a few months ago, when the Spartans caught the Athenian fleet by surprise and destroyed it. The gods, who so long favored Athens, have dealt her a cruel blow.

Spartan ships ring harbor of Piraeus. No grain ships can get through. And just beyond the great walls, the Spartans lie in wait, sharpening their swords and spears. Lysander, their victorious general, is brilliant and brutal. He demands that Athens surrender immediately: If Athens tears down the North Long Wall, he says he will not slaughter Athenian men or sell the women and children into slavery.

But if you tear down the Long Walls, the Spartans and their bloodthirsty allies will be able to march into Athens and commence the slaughter. When Lysander defeated the Athenian fleet a few months ago, he similarly promised to spare those who surrendered. Instead he lined up the 4000 Athenian sailors along the beach and hacked them to pieces. Rumor has it that he even ordered his soldiers to stab victims in the soft parts of the abdomen, lest his men’s blades become dull from striking the ribs or necks of victims.

Now the public granaries are empty. Most Athenians have set their slaves free, letting them slip over the walls at night. Some Athenian citizens have tried to escape, too, pretending to be slaves. But their lilting Attic accent and soft hands give them away. Each morning you see their bodies, hacked beyond recognition, just beyond the walls.

Now you must make difficult decisions. Though there are no good options, there is some hope.

A few weeks ago Theramenes (theh-RAH-meh-neez), one of Athens's most respected leaders, told the Athenian Assembly that he had some "secret" knowledge that could save the city. The Assembly authorized him to negotiate with Sparta and he left on this mission. Nothing more has been heard from him. Many expect him to walk through the gates at any minute, carrying a treaty that will deliver Athens from calamity.

But what if he fails to return? Or returns without a treaty? What if the treaty authorizes the elimination of the Athenian democracy? What if Sparta and its allies, after signing a treaty, go back on their word and kill all Athenian men? What should Athens do?

You must find a solution, and persuade the Assembly to adopt it. You must speak, because some 500 Athenian citizens hang on your every word and vote exactly as YOU do.

O **Oligarchic Faction**

**(all of you have a big “O”)**

To win: **You must:**

1) Remain alive until the end of the game (probably April, 404 BCE). The game begins the previous December. At the end of that and every successive month, you must take part in the Starvation Lottery. Perhaps the Gamemaster will use marbles or some other random procedure to determine who perishes.

Special note: If you perish, the Gamemaster will give you an envelope. It will contain a ticket to give the boatman who will ferry you across the River Styx to Hades. Take the envelope, read its contents, and leave the room. What happens beyond, no mortal knows.

2) Negotiate a surrender that saves Athens, abolishes its democracy, and installs your faction as rulers of Athens.

Unlike most Athenians, you probably won’t starve—at least not right away. If you are a wealthy oligarch-- **Callias**, **Crito**, or **Xenophon**--you have hidden large stores of food. If you don’t have any hidden food, the wealthier members of your faction may give you some.

**Warning! If you fail to speak in the Assembly—even briefly—the GM may confiscate your “I’ve Got Food” cards.** As time goes by, the supply of food diminishes. If you don’t have food, prove your indispensability to your faction by giving persuasive speeches and good advice.

**Two-Phase Strategy: First: Oppose Surrender, to weaken the Democrats: Then Negotiate to Install Athenian Oligarchs as allies of Sparta**

**December (Month 1) and January (Month 2): J**oin with the pro-democracy leaders to speak and vote against surrender! The democratic leaders oppose surrender in principle. These zealots care more about their democracy than the lives of their women and children. By voting with them in December and January, many of the democratic zealots (and their supporters) will die of starvation. Most of your faction, sustained by hidden stores of food, will survive. With the passage of time, the democrats will lose members—and their ideas will be exposed as idiocy.

**February (Month 3) and March (Month 4): NOW call for Compromise! Propose that the Assembly form a 3-person negotiating team (composed of oligarchs!) to propose your surrender terms with Sparta.** If the Assembly refuses to negotiate in February, revisit the issue in March. Once the Assembly votes to send a negotiating team, send your negotiators, carrying a white flag of truce (a napkin?), to negotiate with the Spartan and allied commanders beyond the walls.

**April (Month 5): Prepare the Assembly to accept suitable surrender terms. Vote to end the Assembly, to destroy the Long Walls, and to ally with Sparta. Move fast. Soon EVERYONE will be dead!**

Note: Every member of your faction has a distinctive argument to raise publicly in the Assembly. Each should share it with the whole faction. **Player 8 (Miltiades)20 [mil-TYE-a-deez]: Oligarchic Faction**

20 Miltiades is a real historical person, and a key figure in *The Threshold of Democracy.*

You are an old man, and a well-to-do landowner. (Because of your wealth, you have hidden plenty of food: You need not worry about the Starvation Lottery, unless the democrats send squads looking for hoarded food.) You opposed the Great War from the outset: you knew Sparta would win. Now the war is over and your goal is to save Athens from complete destruction.

**Dispensing Food:**

This game will likely last five months, at most—from December, 405 BCE through April, 404 BCE. Because yours is a wealthy family, you have hidden enough food to supply you and your family: This food is found in the attached slips (“I have food” for December etc). Detach these slips (tearing along the dotted line). Be sure to keep one for each month for yourself (it covers your family, too). When the Gamemaster signals for everyone to draw marbles, give the GM the appropriate slip: it will exempt you from the Starvation Lottery for that month.

**Note:** Hold onto your food slips: hungry people may try to steal them; and remember: If you fail to speak in the Assembly during any month, the GM may disallow your slips and confiscate others. Be sure to speak up during each Assembly session!

For most months, especially early on, you will have **extra** hidden food (“I Have Food” slips). **You can give these to anyone you wish**—BUT ONLY IF THEY HAVE SPOKEN DURING THE PREVIOUS ASSEMBLY MEETING.

**YOUR SPECIAL ARGUMENT:**

**During December (Month 1) and January (Month 2), you should speak against surrender:** Athens should wait for the return of Theramenes (theh-RAHM-ih-neez): maybe he has worked out a deal with Sparta. He is a capable general whom the Assembly previously authorized to negotiate with Sparta. He said that he had secret information that would persuade Sparta to agree to a reasonable treaty with Athens. Athens must not surrender until it has heard from him!

**In February (Month 3): You call for compromise: Forming a 3-person team to negotiate surrender:**

Your NEW argument: If Theramenes has still not returned, either he has no intention of doing so, or the Spartans have executed him. Therefore the Assembly should send a delegation to make a deal with Sparta. You should propose the following law:

“That the Assembly authorize three persons to negotiate a treaty with Sparta to end the war.” And then you will propose to work out a deal to save Athens and eliminate its democracy.

**In March (Month 4) and April (Month 5):** You hope to negotiate with Lysander to save Athens but eliminate its democracy (by forming a ruling council controlled by oligarchs such as yourself, backed by the Spartan army).

**“I Have Food” Card: DECEMBER 405 BCE**

**This slip exempts bearer from the Starvation Lottery for the given month.**

**Submit it to the Gamemaster (GM). Source of card: Miltiades**

**WARNING! GM may disallow this slip if the bearer has not spoken in the Assembly during this month.**

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**“I Have Food” Card: JANUARY 404 BCE**

**This slip exempts bearer from the Starvation Lottery for the given month.**

**Submit it to the Gamemaster (GM). Source of card: Miltiades**

**WARNING! GM may disallow this slip if the bearer has not spoken in the Assembly during this month.**

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**“I Have Food” Card: FEBRUARY 404 BCE**

**This slip exempts bearer from the Starvation Lottery for the given month.**

**Submit it to the Gamemaster (GM). Source of card: Miltiades**

**WARNING! GM may disallow this slip if the bearer has not spoken in the Assembly during this month.**

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**“I Have Food” Card: MARCH 404 BCE**

**This slip exempts bearer from the Starvation Lottery for the given month.**

**Submit it to the Gamemaster (GM). Source of card: Miltiades**

**WARNING! GM may disallow this slip if the bearer has not spoken in the Assembly during this month.**

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**“I Have Food” Card: APRIL 404 BCE**

**This slip exempts bearer from the Starvation Lottery for the given month.**

**Submit it to the Gamemaster (GM). Source of card: Miltiades**

**WARNING! GM may disallow this slip if the bearer has not spoken in the Assembly during this month.**

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**“I Have Food” Card: DECEMBER 405 BCE**

**This slip exempts bearer from the Starvation Lottery for the given month.**

**Submit it to the Gamemaster (GM). Source of card: Miltiades**

**WARNING! GM may disallow this slip if the bearer has not spoken in the Assembly during this month.**

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**NO EXTRA FOOD CARD FOR FEBRUARY, MARCH OR APRIL AND BEYOND**