

# JUMP POINT

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## FROM THE COCKPIT

### GREETINGS, CITIZENS!

Summer is here and that means... well, for **Jump Point**, it means pretty much the same things you're used to: spaceships, game developers, lore, and concept art. We've got a nice selection this month that I hope you all enjoy, filling in some of the 21st and 30th century blanks about some of the latest additions to *Star Citizen's* universe.

Our first big story this month is about a small, versatile vehicle that surprised everyone with its success. I'm speaking, of course, of the brand-new Drake Mule that was introduced during last month's Invictus Launch Week event. I had a chance to speak with Concept Art Director Paul Jones about the Mule and it's exactly the kind of interesting *Star Citizen* success story I love: it came about not because anyone needed it but instead because he had been playing around with mini-vehicle designs! Check the article for all the details, but I'm hoping this is just the first 'mini rig' for *Star Citizen* (my fellow very old nerds will remember those!).

Next up, we're putting some fresh eyes on the history of Roberts Space Industries itself. You may remember that in April we refreshed the MISC portfolio that appeared in the pages of this magazine about eight years ago. Well, this month we're following that up with a similar revamp of the RSI portfolio, one of the first in-fiction portfolios we ever published. It was pretty neat to look back on it, finding that the bulk of the original article focused not on the current spacecraft (it didn't even mention the Constellation!) but instead the company's eight-

plus centuries and the vision behind its work. We've had a lot of new spaceships imagined since then but our core values remain the same... so hopefully this new version contains the best of both worlds!

This is a Whitley's Guide month and by popular demand we're jumping ahead and looking at the history of another of *Star Citizen's* latest ships, the Anvil Legionnaire. You probably remember the Legionnaire concept from just last month where we talked all about how it came to be (and shared some frog-looking early concept versions). Well, it turns out the people want more Legionnaire... so flip out down towards the end of this PDF to learn how it came to be in the distant future.

Last but not least, we're doing our part for First Contact Day and Alien Week with a very special short story about the Banu. Of course, by the time you read this, First Contact Day and Alien Week will be over and you'll already have more information about *Star Citizen's* alien cultures than you can shake a Defender at... but I think you'll still want to make some room in your lore brains for this one!

That's all for June (can you believe the year is half over?!) and I'll close out by wishing you a happy and *Star Citizen*-full summer. I'll see you in July... through the next **Jump Point!**

Ben

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# MAKING THE DRAKE MULE



**KEY CONTRIBUTORS :**  
ART DIRECTOR - PAUL JONES  
CONCEPT ARTIST - GREG CHRYSAPHE  
VEHICLE DIRECTOR - JOHN CREWE

Specifications and appearance are subject to revision during development.

## INTRODUCTION

The very first time players took control of a vehicle in the 'verse, it was not in the cockpit of the nimble Hornet, the hardy Freelancer, or the mighty Constellation. In fact, the momentous occasion involved neither lasers nor thrusters, ballistic cannons nor missiles: the initial playable vehicle in *Star Citizen* was the humble Greycat PTV! Introduced as a surprise addition to *Star Citizen*'s first public release, the Hangar Module, in August 2013, the PTV (typically referred to as the 'Greycat' at the time) was meant as a means for owners of multiple ships to quickly travel around their hangar environments.

To say that *Star Citizen*'s early players were excited by the Greycat would be an understatement. With early gameplay consisting only of ways to explore their ships, players quickly turned to the PTV as a source of entertainment.

Whether stuffing them into Constellations, racing them around the hangar, or trying to cram them in elevators and bounce them onto 300is, the tiny car was very briefly the game's true star. Future patches to the hangar setup would even introduce an obstacle course for the little vehicles. The PTV would go on to set a number of historical firsts, including being *Star Citizen*'s first vehicle with changeable skins and being the first to spend an entire patch randomly shooting off in different directions and exploding.

As *Star Citizen* has developed from closed-off hangars to near-endless planets, the Greycat has continued to play a role, moving players from place to place in cities and across terrains... and being transported around the Stanton system by players who are still finding new places and ways to cram them where they aren't expected. Meanwhile, *Star*

*Citizen*'s designers took an early lesson from the little vehicle that could: it's not always the most complex feature or the hottest, most powerful spaceship that truly engages players the most. It's always good to look for opportunities to add smaller things that will help define the texture of the world and let players build their own adventures.

## LIGHTNING STRIKES

As *Star Citizen*'s vehicle concept director, Paul Jones has worked on a LOT of space vehicles. He's done more than his fair share of designs and has shepherded hundreds of ship concepts from his team members into dozens of different final designs. There's no easy way to measure but there's a strong chance he's helped design more individual space vehicles than

anyone else in the world. From light fighters to giant mining ships, his touch is felt in everything that flies or drives in the 'verse. So, what does he do with his free time when he's not developing one of *Star Citizen*'s design briefs?

He designs more space vehicles, of course! The vehicle that would become the Drake Mule began life as the Drake Mini, one of a collection of 'minis' from different manufacturers that Jones developed himself, each inspired by the original PTV. Every one of the vehicles would have to function with only a small chassis. For Drake, he attempted to create a miniature truck capable of picking up and hauling roughly one SCU of cargo (though the amount wasn't intended, it was ultimately a happy accident). This was the exact reverse of how such vehicles normally come to be: the pipeline starts with *Star Citizen*'s designers who determine a need for a given ship.

They can either specify a great amount of detail (such as manufacturer, exact dimensions, upgrades supported, and so on) or they can give the concept artists more freedom to imagine. But the schedule is tight and the team is typically always working at capacity, so it's rare for vehicles to come about any other way. And for his part, Jones' work was intended only as an exercise and not because there was a specific need for a Drake truck or any of the other vehicles he imagined.

Jones' design, a six-tired mini-truck with a cargo container embedded to the rear of a flat-faced crew cab, was the result of just one day of work. The little grey-and-black rendering with a small Drake logo on the side and an untextured cargo container in its storage stood out as a very neat, compelling design. Jones shared his extra work with Lead Vehicle Designer John Crewe, who also took a liking to it. Crewe shared the work with Chris Roberts, who gave the go ahead for the Drake Mini to be added to the concept schedule for summer 2021. Jones notes that this is something special about Cloud Imperium Games; on many projects, it's not possible for an artist to introduce things to a game in this way. Next, the pre-concept would go to the Vehicle Design team, who would spec out its functionality and produce a brief that would then return to the Concept Art team.

## DESIGN

With an early visual of the Mule already available, the job for *Star Citizen's* Vehicle Design team was made somewhat easier... but not entirely! Before developing the Mule any further, it would be imperative to find a role for it in the larger universe. Simply looking cool isn't enough for a *Star Citizen* vehicle – the designers had to focus on how it would be used by players and how it would fit into the lore of the universe. Luckily, the Mule's concept art already did some of the work: it would carry cargo from place to place on planets and could be stored aboard smaller spacecraft. With that already decided, it was apparent that it would need to be able to load that cargo with a mechanism of some sort, a decision that would also need consideration from Animation.

Still, as *Star Citizen* design briefs go, the Mule's ended up being extremely simple. The description reads only that the vehicle is "a rugged, 6x6 wheeled, single-person cargo transporter" and is accompanied by a series of complex specifications that would define its size and needed components. Initial plans called for a single utility mount for a tractor beam, a position for a flare/chaff launcher, and a weapons rack. The Concept Art team would need to figure out how to factor these and all of the standard small-vehicle components into a relatively compact space. Finally, Design also made the request that the concept artists attempt to fit it into the Drake Vulture if possible.

## CONCEPT

With that, the responsibility for the Drake Mule was once again with Concept Art Director Paul Jones. The team would have roughly a month and a half to work up the Mule, which was more time than Jones expected would be necessary. To narrow down the design, Jones chose Concept Artist Greg Chryssaphes. He would flesh out that first afternoon's work on the appearance of the Mule and would make sure it had everything needed to function in-game. Chryssaphes is a veteran of nearly a dozen major vehicles like the Liberator and Scorpius, with a particular focus on distinct ground vehicles, including the HoverQuad and G12 Rover. Jones provided reference for the development including the Vulture, the ROC mining vehicle, some specific design elements of the Caterpillar, and a small variety of real-world military vehicles.



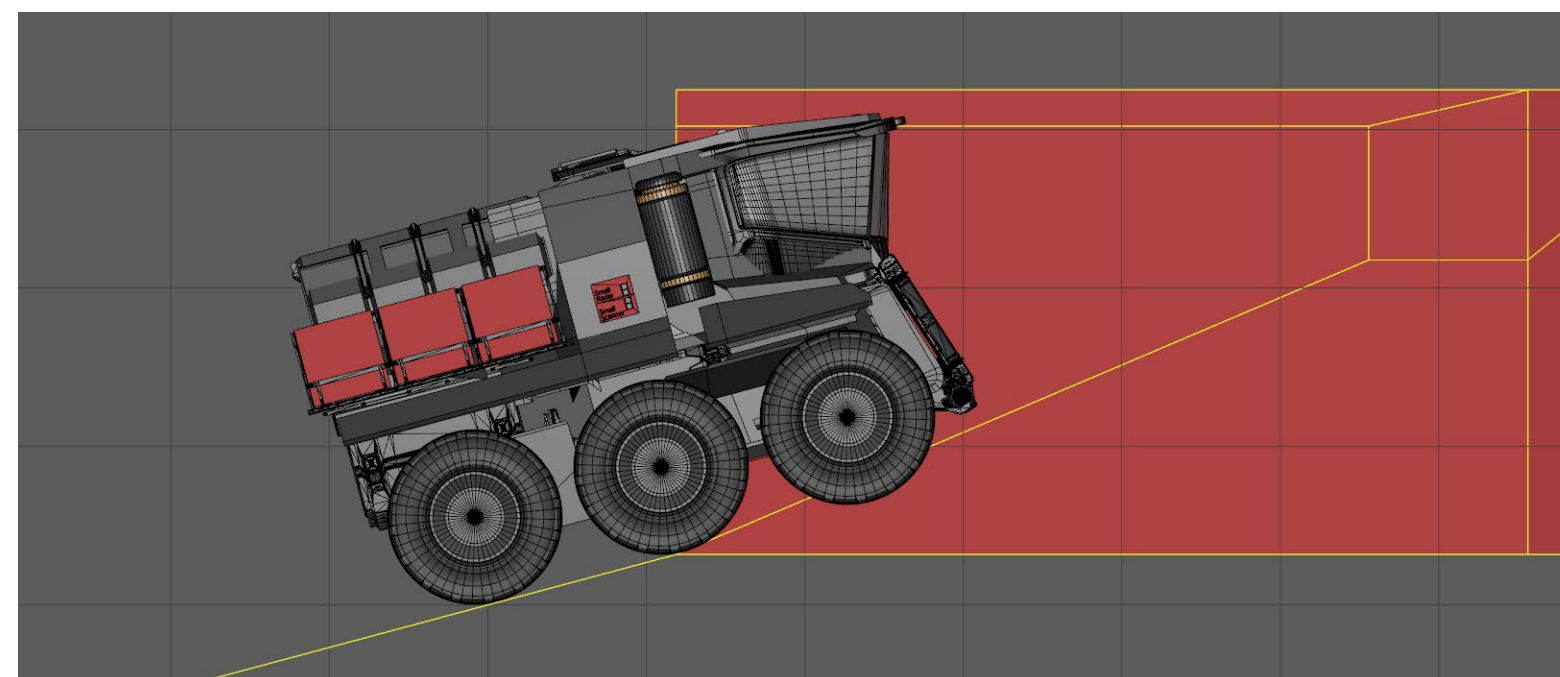
The original Mule model had been kit-bashed, with part of the Corsair as the side panels, the chassis of the ROC, and several Vulture components. Chryssaphes would start by building a new model with custom-designed components. Jones says he had a great feel for the project right from the start as he adapted the original idea, rationalizing some of the shapes and working to establish its overall functionality. The concept process would take the Mule in several different directions but, in the end, the finished vehicle would look very much like both Jones' original concept and Chryssaphes' very first passes.

He began by developing several different versions of the base design plus a grid of alternate takes, which included Mule dump trucks, a lowrider, and a version that pulled a second cargo container on a rear car. The major focus of the work at this point was determining how cargo would work. The first design had boxes on top of the vehicle that looked good but proved too difficult to animate in a reasonable way. Jones and Chryssaphes tried several different animated sequences for

moving the cargo containers into place, including one that functioned like a forklift, carrying the container over the front windshield and onto the back of the roof. Although the ideas were unique, they seemed too elaborate for the concept and the team ultimately settled on one that lifts the case into a rear cabin.

With this decided, the next major focus was on the vehicle's branding. Jones felt that some of the new concepts went in the right direction but that others felt off-brand for Drake, heading more in the direction of Roberts Space Industries or Aegis, including one he liked but thought was too futuristic; the Drake mini vehicle of tomorrow's tomorrow. While this look was tempting, Jones wanted to keep with traditional Drake styling. This meant looking at giving it more bolt-on pieces and making it feel less "well-constructed" (sorry, Drake fans). The end result was a vehicle that looked less smooth and factory fresh and more world-weary, ready for service alongside the likes of the Cutlass and Vulture.





Chryssaphes took another pass at the overall vehicle with the thoughts of simplifying the loading mechanism in the process, attempting to take it in some radically different directions. These included longer, flat vehicles that resembled modern airport support vehicles, and a functional dump truck. Jones liked the look of these, noting that it would be simple to develop them further in the future, but felt that the off-centered, airport-style vehicles weren't on-brand for Drake. Another version had distinct prongs which, again, impressed but didn't feel like Drake because of its core angular shapes. Jones wanted the design to be industrial with a more squared-off cab.

Jones then took a pass himself, adding air filters and bolt-ons. It was closer than ever, but still felt too smooth overall. The result was

another grid of options from Chryssaphes that was quickly narrowed down to three variants Jones considered extremely close, with the major difference being the suspension and cargo placement. These were studied in a couple of different color schemes inspired by other ships, one darker and lighter to show off the details on the exterior differently.

Next, the Design team wanted the concept artists to determine what it could theoretically fit into (knowing full well that *Star Citizen's* fans would eventually be doing that and more). To that end, with the goal of shrinking it to fit into the Vulture, the team performed exactly the same kinds of experiments that players are repeating today, placing the Mule concept model into other available ship meshes.



This process also helped develop out the tires, inspired by a selection of real-world giant tire examples Jones provided. Tests were needed to make sure the Mule could turn properly and especially what it could traverse; could it, for instance, drive up the 15-degree ramp of a Caterpillar? Looking at the current concepts, Jones felt there was still a little bit too much Greycat that had been carried over from the Mule's original inspiration. He asked for bigger, chunkier treads, and finally felt the concept was just right. From here on, the process would be to add further details rather than to determine the look.

With this stage of concept passed, the Mule was in great shape. Chrysaphes worked out the animations for the suspension, aiming to keep the system as basic as possible in the spirit of the simple vehicle. He also developed out the concept for the cockpit, arguably the cutest in Drake's lineup. John Crewe, acting as lead for the Mule as well as overall vehicle director, connected with the concept designers to help flesh out the cockpit. Crewe asked that the new cockpit be based on that used on the ROC, should include at least two MFDs and one 2D radar in view and, if possible, one or two additional MFDs outside the core view. From there, the final styling pass went quickly and the team opted to leave further details of the cabin to the implementation group that was well familiar with the style guide for Drake interiors. Finally, Jones finished out the concept pass with a large selection of paint jobs, taking the opportunity to explore some crazier ideas like a gold Concierge version, a police Mule, a graffitied look, and a reflective rainbow. With a vehicle with such a simple design, coming up with small variants and slightly different looks was a quick prospect.



## RELEASE

The *Star Citizen* community got their first look at the Mule during the virtual CitizenCon 2951, when it was shown as one of three possible vehicles being considered for development. Little did the community know that the vehicle would go through a concept pass and then move to the designers and programmers on the Implementation team for a straight-to-drivable launch early the next year. Rumors spread in early 2022 that the Drake Mule would appear in an upcoming build and

this proved to be absolutely true with the May launch of Alpha 3.17.1 and Invictus Launch Week. Like its ancestor, the PTV, the Mule was intended to be a fun distraction in a patch that included a giant event and a flyable combat ship, the RSI Scorpius. And like the PTV, the Mule again stole the show, with *Star Citizen* players quickly putting it through its paces, testing exactly which currently available ships they could fit into, and starting to transport Mules throughout the Stanton system.

## DRAKE MULE SHIP PAGE

<https://robertspaceindustries.com/pledge/ships/mule/Mule>

## SHIP PRESENTATION

<https://robertspaceindustries.com/comm-link/transmission/18659-Drake-Mule>

## Q&A

<https://robertspaceindustries.com/comm-link/engineering/18685-Q-A-Drake-Mule>



# RSI<sup>®</sup>

ROBERTS SPACE INDUSTRIES

## INTRODUCTION

Way, way back in 2013, *Jump Point* featured the first portfolios of *Star Citizen's* various ship companies. These introduced countless details to the game world, some of which went on to become major parts of the living universe (like the Hull series or the Starfarer Gemini). We've updated the RSI Portfolio today in honor of the launch of the Scorpilus fighter. This updated version keeps the original story of RSI – something extremely relevant to the history of *Star Citizen!* – and then adds timeline-order coverage of the over-a-dozen new designs and variants introduced in the time since we last examined the brand.

## ROBERTS SPACE INDUSTRIES

Roberts Space Industries is the United Empire of Earth's most storied spacecraft developer. Officially founded in 2038, Roberts Space Industries has maintained a strong focus on making private spacecraft ownership possible dating back to its development of the first commercial quantum

drive ship. From the Aurora, the most produced civilian spacecraft in history, to the Orion mining platform to the Bengal fleet carrier with dozens other ships in-between, RSI's output is ever-present in modern society.

## THE BEGINNING

While most corporate endeavors begin with a dream and a single product, entrepreneur Chris Roberts' dream was to create a culture that would foster creativity and innovation – one that would change with the times and continue to look to the future. His goal was nothing less than a company that would stay consistent and relevant in the marketplace regardless of whether it was next week or a thousand years down the line.

The great irony was that, although the company became synonymous with a wide array of spaceships and terraforming, the 'Space' in Roberts Space Industries was an aspirational reflection of where Humanity could evolve to rather than the company's actual focus. The first product RSI released in 2043 was actually a hyper-efficient battery converter for

ground-based civilian vehicles.

Earth of the 21st century was a vastly different world than we know today. Although Humanity had traveled to space, it was a rare event and so cost-prohibitive that it was only possible for a few of the various ruling provinces of the era. The truth was that Earth was reaching a critical mass of overpopulation. Numerous wars erupted across the planet as the populace faced food, water, and energy shortages.

Roberts looked for innovators from a variety of disciplines to join his team in an attempt to alleviate some of the issues of the day. Some of RSI's initial products ranged from a compact water-purification system to an energy-efficient power network. There was even a small expansion into cricket farming.

Although his company found modest success in these endeavors, Roberts refused to be complacent and continued to seek out greater innovations. In 2061, while studying a recent crop of doctoral dissertations from

a prestigious engineering school, he came across the work of Dr. Scott Childress, whose thesis envisioned exciting work in the field of more affordable engine systems for spacecraft.

The prospect of making space travel more accessible reawakened a lifelong dream. Roberts quickly met with the fresh graduate and put together a team to help translate this dream into the real world. Although the process was not without its setbacks, in 2075 Roberts Space Industries unveiled its prototype Quantum Core Engine. Suddenly, space travel didn't seem that fantastical anymore.

## BUILDING WORLDS

The implications of this technology were immediately recognized around the world. Exploration missions were suddenly feasible, as piloted vessels could now push further into the solar system. Various states (called 'countries' at that time) that previously couldn't afford space travel were suddenly able to embark on missions of their own as well.





Roberts knew that although making space more accessible was a giant leap forwards for our species, it still didn't solve Earth's teeming population, which was reaching critical mass. He pulled together a dedicated team from RSI's various subsidiaries to begin its most ambitious project yet: terraforming a planet. This scientific conundrum became Roberts' obsession until he passed away in 2108.

Though terraforming remained elusive in Roberts' life, the new CEO continued to practice his corporate philosophy of seeking out innovators and finally, though it would take two generations of team members and almost forty years, RSI unveiled a technological breakthrough on 2113:04:21 that would lay the groundwork for terraforming a world. With a potential solution in sight, governments of the world, corporations, and scientific minds came together to create a global collective focused on terraforming Mars (which at the time was completely uninhabitable). Finally, there was hope of relieving Humanity's desperate population problem.

This project lasted decades and faced an incalculable loss when an accident, known as the Mars Tragedy, caused the deaths of nearly five thousand early settlers. During the glacial pace of the project's sprawling scope, the chairman's policy of project diversification yielded another spectacular achievement. Responding to issues faced by the terraforming division's efforts to transport resources to Mars, RSI's Astro Development Team created the Zeus, the first commercially available spacecraft.

With Roberts Space Industries now at the forefront of spacecraft and terraforming tech, the company had firmly bound itself with Humanity's development. As decades turned into centuries, terraforming technology would continue to be refined and RSI would expand further into ship development. It seemed like the company was incapable of going anywhere but up. However, it turned out that the biggest threat wouldn't come in the form of alien wars or maintaining market relevance; it would come in the form of Human nature.

## THE DARK AGE

For many, the ascension of Ivar Messer to Prime Citizen was a welcome change. At the time, the UPE had well-documented scenarios where endless bureaucratic debate completely stalled the government's ability to do anything, so cutting through the dialogue in a single direction wasn't seen as particularly ominous.

Unfortunately, Messer consolidated his power over the years and subtly removed any checks that could challenge him, making it difficult for most people of that time to realize exactly what was happening. As his son took over the title of Imperator, the Second Tevarin War provided a perfect opportunity to remind the public why they needed decisive leadership.

As the Messers became more and more ensconced in their positions, RSI lost its military contracts to Aegis Dynamics, the manufacturer that created the weapons of war favored by Ivar Messer. Several of RSI's divisions still worked closely with the scientific bureaus and terraforming oversight committees but, as a whole, the company converted into a primarily commercial and civilian corporation.

That wasn't to say that RSI was immune from the Messers' wrath. In 2757, the shocking death of Anthony Tanaka reverberated through the Empire. Although the event was never mentioned in news cycles, footage of the twelve-year-old boy's refusal to work and subsequent execution on a factory floor still made its way through underground activist channels.

RSI CEO Avel Gedima was one of the few prominent public figures who not only acknowledged the sad death but ordered a complete evaluation of all RSI facilities to make sure that they were adhering to all health and safety standards. A few months later, Ulysses Messer X released "damning and incontrovertible evidence of corporate malfeasance" to the NewsOrgs, claiming that Gedima had embezzled imperial finances for personal use. The case languished in the courts for years but the constant barrage of 'evidence' forced Gedima to step down.

## AFTER THE FALL

In the wake of the revolution that toppled the Messers, the Empire experienced a period of free fall. The newly installed Imperator Toi and the restored high advocate and high secretary were busy trying to ferret out the rotten elements of the government, while the various planets seemed to turn on each other. For a while, accusations of having collaborated with the Messer regime became the weapon of choice. Some of these charges were legitimate but the unscrupulous used the accusations to escape debts or finally resolve feuds with their enemies. While Aegis Dynamics felt the brunt of the people's fury and were commonly cited as symbols of tyranny, it wasn't the only manufacturer to suffer from these witch hunts.

As a company, RSI hadn't exactly prospered under the Messer's rule, but it had maintained its status as a prominent shipbuilder. Several historians of the era asserted that while RSI didn't actively promote the Messer agenda, it consistently failed to use its considerable influence to decry it.



In response to these allegations, RSI established the Future Foundation, a specific division of the company devoted to charitable foundations and grants, and announced that, for the first time since the founding of the company, it was going to add a new tenet to Chairman Roberts' original list of corporate philosophies: Stand for Good.

**THE MODERN AGE**

From civilian ships like the Aurora all the way up to cutting-edge military vessels like the Bengal carrier, Roberts Space Industries continues to be a constant force of innovation in the vast corporate landscape. Meanwhile, the Future Foundation awards millions of credits a year to help promote education, fund new research, and even provide housing opportunities.

By sticking to the core concepts outlined by a visionary entrepreneur almost a thousand years ago, it's clear that RSI will be a fixture in Human development for a long time to come.



**PERSEUS**

The Perseus gunship is Roberts Space Industries' oldest currently produced design. The original Perseus was first manufactured in 2528 by RSI for the United Planets of Earth and was intended for blockade duty as well as high-value transport missions and served in that capacity with relative distinction. Perseus construction continued for roughly two centuries, although the design was not heavily favored by the Messer administration that ruled for much of that time. Nevertheless,

the Perseus proved to be so resilient that examples of the class were still in service through the fight with the Vanduul, including the UEES Achilles, which destroyed two enemy destroyers during Operation Mandrake. As a result of the Achilles' success, the UEEN successfully lobbied RSI to resume production of the design. In 2950, the company began offering a civilian model of the Perseus with a broader set of intended roles.

**AURORA**

The Aurora is RSI's flagship civilian spacecraft program, generally considered to be the pinnacle of the company's pro-civilian development thrust and the present-day ancestor of the early Zeus that established the company's dominance. The Aurora is an affordable, single-seat spacecraft designed to support industry standard modular components and with a general focus on light cargo. First introduced in 2659, the Aurora has undergone dozens of generational improvements over the years and many Aurora variants have been offered; the current lineup consists of five and includes the DX deluxe model, LN military version, and the CL ranged edition.



**ORION**

By the first half of the 27th century, RSI had established a successful corporate identity intended to avoid becoming overly involved in the ruling Messer government. The brand's development groups largely avoided military contracts or projects that could be adapted for combat purposes, instead focusing on civilian designs. This culminated in 2650 with the launch of the first Orion mining platform – a large-scale mining spacecraft intended to bring industrial-class mining operations to independent civilian operators. The Orion differed from many other RSI spacecraft in both its specificity and its large size (and relative cost), but it continued to follow the company's civilian-first ethos. Even more importantly to the company leadership of the time, the Orion meant that its large shipyards were producing peaceful mining craft instead of new military destroyers.



**CONSTELLATION**

If the Aurora is RSI's flagship, the Constellation is its crown jewel. While the Aurora attempts to make spaceflight available to every Human, the Constellation aims to make extended duration spacecraft and dedicated space work within the realm of reason to most. A true multi-crew ship, the Constellation has existed in some form or another since the early 2700s. The modern Constellation is a significantly modular ship that can be adapted to carry everything from a luxury interior to an internal launch bay capable of supporting a Kruger P-52 Merlin. The ship supports countless off-the-shelf components with a significant number of weapon hardpoints. RSI offers several Constellation variants, including the 2944 Constellation Phoenix, a luxury-focused model that has generated a great deal of discussion.



**APOLLO**

The Apollo is a role-specific RSI spacecraft first introduced in the early 29th century. While not produced consistently since that time, the Apollo did earn a reputation as a reliable medical transport and was recently brought back into service with more advanced options. Where the Apollos of the 2830s were focused largely on quick patient transports, modern Apollos are a miniature hospital unto themselves, with medical features that would have been unimaginable when the ship was first introduced. Competing with Drake's sparse Cutlass Red, the Apollo is seen as the more sophisticated option for smaller medical missions. RSI offers a significant portion of Apollos produced at cost to rescue-focused operations.



**BENGAL**

With the fall of the Messers, RSI leadership began making a tentative outreach towards the military to offer increased support. Military planners, meanwhile, were interested in additional ways to avoid continued reliance on Aegis Dynamics for new spacecraft designs owing to its association with the Messer-era military. In the end, the military was grateful for the support of the large spaceyards RSI had developed to produce the Orion and other large ships, ultimately choosing the company as prime contractor for the new Bengal-class fleet carriers. The project would heavily involve RSI with the military for the first time in centuries and would leave a distinct RSI brand on the modern Navy, which is built around Bengal battlegroups. RSI continues to revise and produce Bengals today alongside support for additional military carrier platforms.

**MANTIS**

The Mantis is a role-specific spacecraft built around a skunkworks-style effort that resulted in the development of the Quantum Enforcement Device (QED), a component that pulls other relatively nearby ships out of quantum travel. RSI's engineers first adapted a Constellation testbed to use the QED and then ultimately developed the Mantis around the device. The Mantis is offered primarily to Advocacy and other law enforcement groups for piracy interdiction efforts.



**POLARIS**

RSI introduced the Polaris corvette in 2946 in a split military contract that allowed sale of the ship directly to the fleet, civilian defense groups, and others that could use an armored transport ship. The Polaris was intended to fill a needed gap in the UEEN's order of battle just below the Idris freighter; by adding a dedicated corvette-level ship, the Navy could affordably conduct greater interdiction operations in situations that might not need direct short-range fighter support. Polaris have quickly entered military service in great numbers, serving on their own as part of patrol squadrons and as part of larger fleet screens.



**SCORPIUS**

The Scorpion heavy fighter is RSI's newest wholly original spacecraft design. Initially visualized by the RSI R&D team at Killian as part of a bake-off style competition for an undetermined military contract, the Scorpion is a departure from the norm for RSI in that it is a highly capable, highly complex combat-focused design. Introduced at the Intergalactic Aerospace Expo in 2951, Scorpion deliveries began the following year and the design has quickly proven itself in combat against a variety of marauders. Critics charge that the sale of the Scorpion directly to civilians instead of as an offshoot of a military production model is evidence that the company is going back on some of its longest-stated objectives, while many see it more as evidence that, for many civilian concerns, the universe is simply becoming an increasingly dangerous place.



THE  
ANVIL AEROSPACE  
LEGIONNAIRE

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY



DEVELOPMENT HISTORY



The Anvil Legionnaire boarding ship is the result of a lengthy development process inspired by a disaster of failed military intervention. In April 2918, an unregistered Drake Caterpillar armed freighter was identified as the suspected flagship behind a series of pirate raids. A pair of armored shuttles carrying a platoon of marines was dispatched to intercept the ship after it was tracked to a position in deep space. The action proved to be a disaster: the shuttles docked correctly but the Caterpillar maneuvered unexpectedly. Half the boarders were thrown into space before they could enter the freighter and the rest were left unprepared for the enemy combatants on board. The failure of the operation was compounded the next day when the pirates attacked and captured the Hull C freighter Shelby's Donut using the armored shuttles that had been left behind, making off with a valuable cargo of mineral ore and killing two of the crew. The incident was widely reported in the media and generated a sense of shock that what should have been a simple boarding and seizure operation could go so wrong. It was immediately clear to the military that a public response would be necessary.

The major spacecraft manufacturers didn't waste a moment. Fully expecting that the UEEN would put out a bid process for an improved boarding ship, Roberts Space Industries, Aegis Dynamics, Drake Interplanetary, and Anvil Aerospace began working up concepts aimed

primarily at avoiding the dangerous EVA that was the clear weak spot of the previous process. A month later, all four parties were concerned by the military's actual request: rather than asking for bids for a new ship, the Navy put out an all-call for ways to improve boarding. The proposal specified that it would consider any type of implementation, from improved space armor to third-party docking equipment all the way up to the introduction of new spacecraft. Roberts Space Industries immediately dropped the project, seeing the process as more public relations than they would have preferred. Drake adapted its design into an inexpensive modular docking ring, leaving Aegis and Anvil as the only ship designers involved.

Dozens of other corporations and private inventors proposed countless boarding ideas that included everything from light systems intended to blind an enemy crew during boarding to armored, disposable torpedoes that could be shot through the hulls of enemy ships. Despite the public circus surrounding these and other ideas, Anvil remained confident that it could earn a production contract for a new ship. To design the Legionnaire, originally chosen as the code name complete with a story that Anvil was helping develop out the military capabilities of Roberts Space Industries' Aurora LN, the company tapped Grott Taylor, a lead engineer who had recently been lured away from MISC with

the promise of his own project. Taylor was somewhat unusual for a military-focused Anvil designer because he was staunchly opposed to war in general, regularly speaking about the helplessness he felt about the role spacecraft manufacturers played in propping up the Messer administration. He particularly hated the propaganda of the era, often remarking on his disgust of seeing silhouettes of assault craft and bombers calling for force to be used against other Humans.

In spite of these beliefs, Taylor considered himself the right man for the job: perfecting boarding craft would save lives by protecting the soldiers involved and by allowing the crews of large ships to surrender instead of supporting a system designed to destroy as much equipment as quickly as possible. He went to work immediately, starting from the plans for classic planetary assault ships and working laboriously to adapt every piece to space-to-space docking maneuvers. His intricate pitch worked better than anyone could have hoped: in early 2919, the military put a hard stop on the previously public boarding ship improvement process. Engineers in the project were forced to pause overnight to receive higher-than-expected level clearances, something that confused everyone involved at Anvil.

The reason for the secrecy, under which the rest of the Legionnaire's

development was conducted, has officially remained classified, although third party reports suggest it was because the Navy unexpectedly made available a partially complete Vanduul Cleaver boarding ship for the team at Anvil to examine during the development process. Anvil corporate and military public relations sources continue to deny this, stating that the Legionnaire is a completely Human engineering effort. The first Legionnaire prototype flew the next year with a full squadron of production test models being activated in 2922. The ship, a two-deck armored design that could dock directly with another craft's hull, proved promising very early on. In late 2922, the UEEN established a transition training program for existing landing craft pilots willing to switch to a dedicated boarding unit and, by 2925, the ship had formed the centerpiece of the Navy's newly developed interception tactics package.

**SERVICE HISTORY**

Anvil's work – whatever it entailed – quickly made its value known. As Legionnaires entered service in ever-greater numbers, dozens of new units dedicated to docking operations were formed. Legionnaire's that made it to the front lines found themselves operating constantly, a key tool for anti-piracy interdiction and a valuable asset that needed to be kept 'hot' in the event that they might be needed for larger battles. Within eight months, the fleet support arm was fully stocked with its





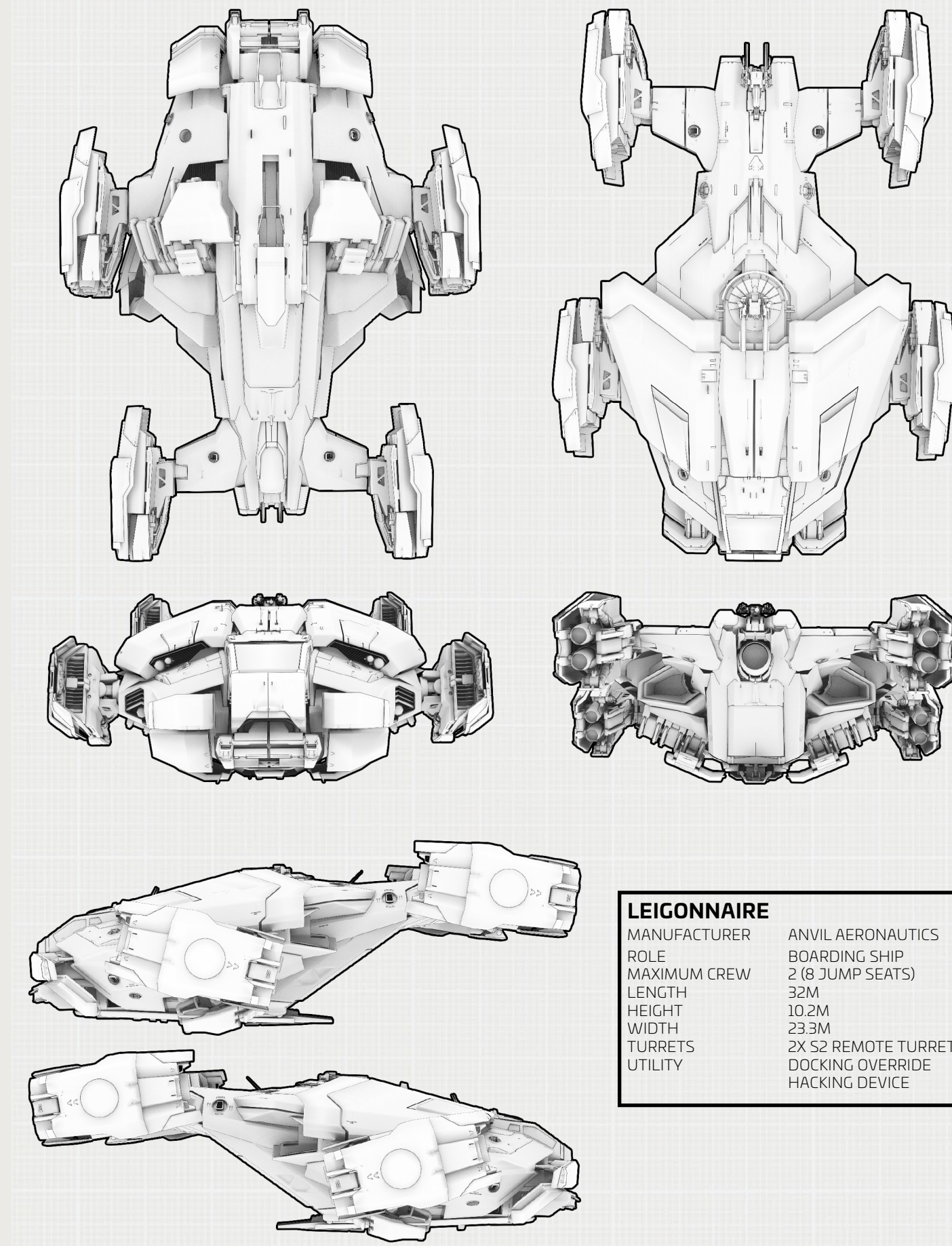
original purchase order and planners were already demanding that be tripled or quadrupled. Pilots and crew, meanwhile, raved about the ship's careful interior design and its bulky, protective armor that seemed so obviously intended to keep them as safe as possible. Once again, Anvil had threaded the needle between the needs of UEEN command and those of the pilots responsible for operating the craft.

In 2932, the Legionnaire earned its legendary status in, of all things, a major system failure. A marine detachment undergoing advanced boarding training at Camp Taggart on Earth had been assigned a single, early production run Legionnaire for practicing operations. The spacecraft had spent several days ferrying troops eight at a time to an orbital platform for full-kit training against an aggressor unit. During the return from a training run, the unit's Legionnaire suffered a massive explosion that was later attributed to improperly stored external munitions. Nearly a third of the ship was blown off in a moment midway through re-entry, causing the kind of total system failure that would have doomed most other spacecraft. Every single alarm that still functioned went off, with the interior systems desperately attempting to rework themselves for a rapidly changing flight model. The Legionnaire itself, however, proved to be extremely hardy in action, with the pilot and co-pilot managing to land the remaining portion of the ship without harming any of the marines aboard. Both were cited for their heroism, though both stated that their survival was owed fully to the ship itself. The crippled boarding craft famously crash landed amidst a field of strawberry bushes, resulting

in a famous photograph of armored marines snacking on the fruit while resting among the wreckage waiting for recovery.

The UEEN model of the Legionnaire has also become celebrated for a flight maneuver that has become the goal of its top pilots. Called "the kiss," this crowd-pleasing maneuver involves two Legionnaire that approach each other seemingly at full speed, carefully maneuvering so that they stop with their boarding collars touching front-to-front. The maneuver takes thousands of hours to perfect and has become a favorite of professional military demonstration squadrons. Active-duty Legionnaire pilots are known to practice it in simulators somewhat furiously with the goal of earning the small, heart shaped patch that crews informally distribute to those who have completed it successfully.

In 2952, Anvil activated the portion of its contract that allowed same-class sales to civilians. The result was presented at the 2952 Invictus Launch Week event in the Stanton system, promising private crews access to a military-spec boarding ship that could be adapted both for combat missions and to generally reduce the danger of ship-to-ship docking in other pursuits, such as mining and freight transfers. In spite of this potential for even more non-combat uses of the ship, Legionnaire designer Grott Taylor found himself particularly unhappy standing on the convention floor at Orison amidst exactly the military propaganda he had long despised, much of it now bearing the distinct armored silhouette of his boarding ship.



LEIGONNAIRE	
MANUFACTURER	ANVIL AERONAUTICS
ROLE	BOARDING SHIP
MAXIMUM CREW	2 (8 JUMP SEATS)
LENGTH	32M
HEIGHT	10.2M
WIDTH	23.3M
TURRETS	2X S2 REMOTE TURRETS
UTILITY	DOCKING OVERRIDE HACKING DEVICE



# DIVESTMENT

"Everything is auspicious!" Essosouli Njo proclaimed in Banu. The gathered Merchantman crew turned their attention toward the elderly Banu standing behind a table with an ornate lockbox in the center. As the crowd eagerly pressed in closer, Jaclyn, the only Human in attendance, remained against the back wall. With Njo's typical speaking volume being just shy of yelling, she could hear fine from back there and was too nervous to even glance at the lockbox knowing that her fate waited inside.

"Joy is abundant within me today because all of you are here to celebrate my divestment. With Cassa's blessing, I have reached 275,000,000 beats," Essosouli Njo continued to rapturous applause. Though Jaclyn spoke decent Banu, her mind still translated everything into UEE standard, which often left her a moment behind other souli members. "I've gained much during that time and have squandered more than I care to admit. Still, I'm proud that this Souli is one of rewarding work, delectable meals, exciting journeys, and so, so much more. If you are here with me today, know that I have valued you. All of you have enriched my life, and I hope you can say the same about me."

Jaclyn sure could. She looked up and briefly locked eyes with Essosouli Njo. They had first met at a refugee camp in Charon. Njo had contracted with a UEE non-profit to manufacture and distribute its foodstuff as free rations to those displaced by the civil war. Jaclyn, her parents, and younger siblings had fled to the camp when their hometown had

become a battleground. With nothing to do and sick of feeling helpless, Jaclyn offered to lend a hand distributing the provisions. Njo accepted not because they needed the help, but because they wanted to help her.

Despite being a welcome distraction, Jaclyn couldn't stop worrying about what the future held for her family. Essosouli Njo consoled Jaclyn, listened to her concerns, and offered to pay her to taste-test new flavor combinations for Human foodstuff. When Jaclyn joked that their souli could use a full-time Human food tester, Njo offered her a contract on the spot. As much as Jaclyn wished she could accept, she wasn't willing to leave her family unless the salary was enough to get them out of the camp. After thinking for a moment, Njo mentioned there was another way she could fill that role and help her family. Following lengthy discussions with Essosouli Njo and her family, Jaclyn signed a contract making herself indentured. She would work for their souli for a specific number of beats and, in exchange, her family would be paid enough credits up front to flee Charon.

On the fateful day Jaclyn left her family and Charon III for the first time in her life, Essosouli Njo invited her to ride in his beloved Defender to Kins. Only later did she learn that, outside of Njo and his personal pilot, very few souli members had ever been allowed aboard. Still, short excursions together in the Defender became their tradition. Jaclyn would talk honestly about the souli's current Human food options and Essosouli

Njo taught her the secret to negotiating a fair but profitable contract.

One day Jaclyn asked Essosouli Njo about a clock in their office that counted up. That's when she learned about divestment, a ceremony celebrating a Banu reaching 275,000,000 beats or just shy of 44 standard Earth years, with a beat being equal to five seconds. Divesting Banu retire to enjoy their final beats as they see fit. At the efanga fo ktambo divestment ceremony, they gift most of their possessions to family and friends, with essosouli's traditionally bestowing the bulk of their belongings to the Banu who they want to take over the souli. While souli members can decide whether they want to stay, those indentured to the souli do not. Their fate rests with the new essosouli, who could keep their contract or sell it.

Essosouli Njo picked up the lockbox and briefly considered it, then began gracefully rotating it while subtly tapping sections in a specific sequence. "Within this lies my life's work. This souli is what made my beats meaningful. Building it brought me great pride but, most importantly, it brought me a community to share its success with." The lockbox opened revealing a chip containing the souli's most important recipes. Essosouli Njo took it in their hands. "That's why even though I must go, I hope this souli reforms in a similar way. Because while we've made delectable food here, we've done more than that. We've created a community that deeply cares for each other and those pulled into our orbit. I know this souli can continue to spread more good through the universe. That's why I hope Malga will accept the command of this Merchantman and all responsibilities therein."

The room erupted in celebration. Jaclyn braced herself against the wall

from the sound and fought off a dizzy spell as all the blood fell to her feet. When she joined the souli, most members welcomed her warmly but some clearly resented her unique relationship with Essosouli Njo, including Malga. Now her future lay in their hands, as the souli would clearly reform around them. Malga was well-liked and the logical choice, but Jaclyn has also once overheard them remind a friend that a contract for a Human indentured would sell lightning fast. Jaclyn slunk toward an exit as Njo proceeded with gifting more of their possessions.

"And how could I ever forget Jaclyn," Essosouli Njo bellowed from behind the desk, stopping her dead in her tracks. "Your honesty and insight have brought us all so much. Teaching you was a great joy, but learning from you was even better. Because of those cherished beats, I give to you my Defender."

For a second, Jaclyn thought the room might've depressurized because it fell deadly quiet. Never before had she experienced such silence while surrounded by Banu. Essosouli Njo smiled warmly at her and continued, "Though I want nothing more than for this souli to stay together, I know some will be called to leave by Taernin. Jaclyn, I can't say if Taernin calls you, but you deserve the right to find out for yourself. That's why I am also paying the balance of your indentured contract and giving you just enough wealth to start a journey. The rest I expect you to earn on your own."

The crowd cheered and surrounded Jaclyn to congratulate her good fortune. Completely overwhelmed, there were no words to capture how she felt. Much like Essosouli Njo, Jaclyn's life had just changed. Her future once again was unknown, and it both terrified and excited her.



# REPORTING FOR DUTY!

*Sakura Fun*

CLARK DEFENSE SYSTEMS



The Sakura Fun line of bobbleheads welcomes three new soldiers into their ranks. Geared up in official miniature suits of CDS' ORC-mkX armor, these dangerously cute warriors make ideal cockpit companions when placed on your ship's dashboard.

