

# SAGITTARIUS EYE

SPECIAL EDITION

S P  F A



ISSUE **12**  
August 3304

## Featuring:

History of Rocketry • State of the Empire  
The Third Race • Krait Mk II • Bad Science  
Commander Pingmonster • Co-Pawlets



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# EDITORIAL

Souvarine

## Issue 12 – the culmination of our first full year. What to say?

It's difficult to sum up the experience of building *Sagittarius Eye* over a full year in a few short paragraphs. A glance at the front covers of our earlier issues is enlightening: you can clearly see how the magazine has evolved over the months.

The first issue dropped on an unsuspecting Galactic community in September 3303. That first issue, the brainchild of Cmdr Whitmann and five or six collaborators, bears slim resemblance to what you hold in your hands. Members of the team have come and gone (mostly come – we now number nearly 60) and with new talent has come new ideas – fantastic new columns, like Mini\_Watto's *Hot Rodder* feature and Rasudin's memorable conspiracy theories, and new design directions. LexMoloch, our Art Editor, has driven the arresting and iconic visual style of the magazine since Issue 6.

Over the months we've been lucky enough to attract some exciting contributors. Paige Harvey and Will Flanagan have both written articles, and we've been very grateful for their support; and Allen Stroud, author of *Lave: Revolution* and organiser of LaveCon, has become a regular staff writer. Several other published authors have chipped in their talent and their time, as well as some of the Galaxy's best-known and most identifiable artists, like Mat2596, Moozipan, Ian Baristan and DMC\_Rulez.



One of the most significant developments has been our relationship with the SPVFA (Stellar Photography, Videography and Fan Art). They have become our video and image partners, sourcing all of our raw material for our Bulletin short news videos, as well as all the stock and article images for the magazine. This collaboration has brought us into contact with some truly brilliant and charming people, like Dan Fox and OrangePheonix, and demonstrably raised the quality of all our output. It is to these artists that our special feature this month is dedicated.

Our teams are a dynamic mix of professionals doing pro bono what they spend their days getting paid to do, and enthusiastic amateurs at all stages of life, learning new skills. It is this heady mix which makes *Sagittarius Eye* special. If you've been watching from the sidelines, would like to be a part of something exciting, but can't see where you'd fit in – get in touch. We'll find a way for you to help out.

## What does the future hold?

Issue 13 hits newsstands, as normal, on Thursday 13th September. As our production cycle is eight weeks long, it might interest you to know that most of the articles for it will have been written by the time you read this! Our team has never been larger, more packed with talent or more enthusiastic than we are today – so you can expect many more issues of *Sagittarius Eye* in future. At the time of writing we have so much material 'on ice' that we could come up with another five and a half months' worth of issues, even if nobody came up with a single new idea!

We have exciting ideas for growth, too. It turns out one magazine per month isn't enough for some people's creativity, so you can expect to see some interesting new projects coming out of the SAGi offices over the next few months. But everything we create will be, as it always has been, of the highest quality possible: by Commanders, for Commanders and about Commanders.

Personally, being involved with *Sagittarius Eye* has been the most exciting thing I've done since first climbing into the flight seat. The astonishing generosity of the people who work together to produce this magazine is humbling, and I'm consistently amazed by what they produce, totally for nothing and in their own time. Becoming friends with them has been a real honour.

Thank you all for your support over the last year, and for championing the hard work of so many people. Keep reading, and keep flying.

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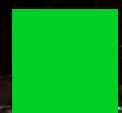
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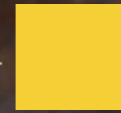
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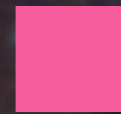
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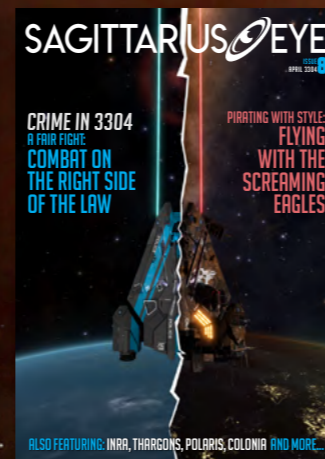
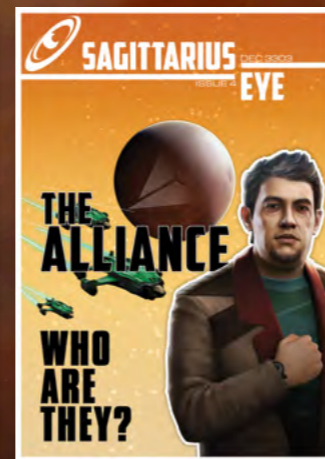
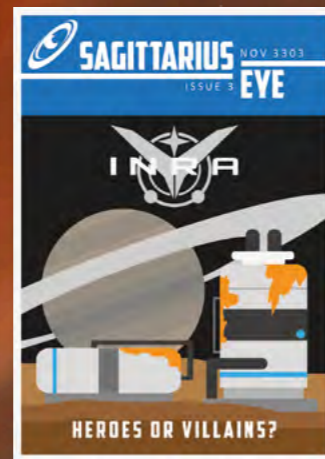
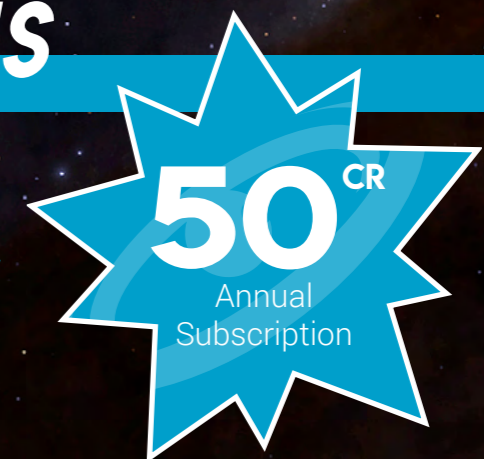


Photo: Nickweb85

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SAGITTARIUS EYE



# FELLOW TRAVELLERS: HISTORY OF ROCKETRY

“T-minus ten, nine, eight – ignition sequence has started – six, five, four, three, two, one, zero; and liftoff! The final liftoff of Atlantis! On the shoulders of the Space Shuttle, America will continue the dream!”

“Roll program Houston!”

“Roger roll Atlantis!”

The voice cuts to a controller: “Houston now controlling the flight of Atlantis. The space shuttle spreads its wings one final time for the start of a sentimental journey into history.”

This was the radio chatter of the last ever documented use of a Space Shuttle class ship by the superpower and precursor to the Federation, the United States of America. Looking at the footage of this black and white vessel soaring upwards from its launchpad, a 34th century observer is gripped by a peculiar sentimental attachment. The vessel spins and then heads on a vector towards orbit. It seems odd to watch this Viper Mk III-sized craft struggle to slowly climb its way out of the planet’s atmosphere.

No advanced Alcubierre Drive was there to move the vessel across spacetime. Rather, this vessel consumed nearly 680 tons of oxygen and 113 tons of hydrogen as it roared into orbit. Its fuel load was nearly twenty times the weight of the empty ship. With brute force and a sort of angry determination the shuttle punched its way up through the atmosphere in a manner altogether foreign to any contemporary pilot.

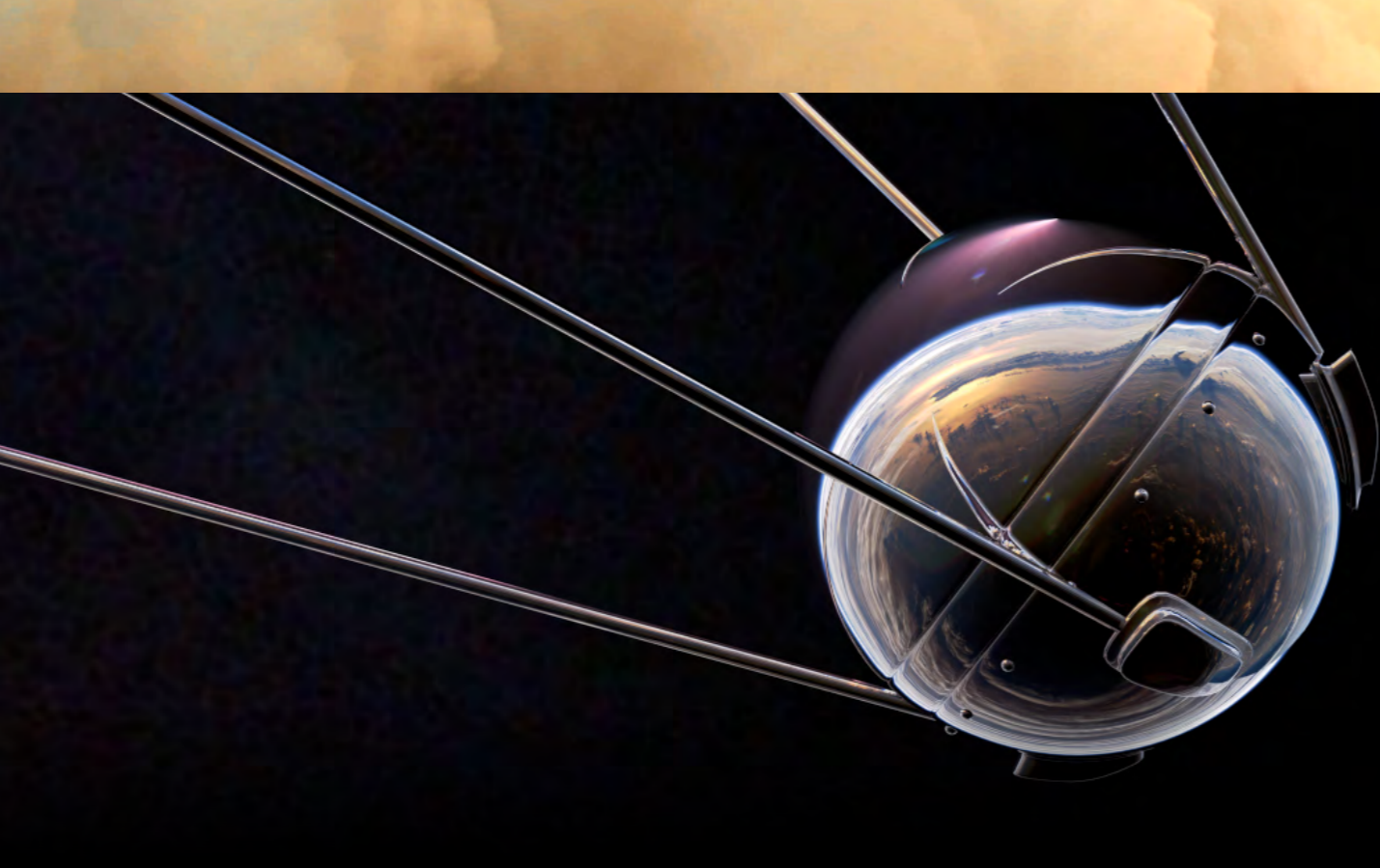
Such a vessel would have to endure immense aerodynamic forces and carefully manage the throttle

and auxiliary systems. Nozzles channeling thrust and combustion chambers at the brink of melting, this vehicle was, in a word, primitive. To call it a truly space-capable vessel is generous, yet this was the pride of a nation for almost thirty years. A heavy craft pushing its way into a low Earth orbit atop a jet of combusted hydrogen, oxygen and solid motor fuel.

Looking through the surviving recordings, data, documentaries, and blueprints one cannot but be in awe of our ancestors. With today’s frame shift drives and the incredibly efficient fusion reactors aboard every space-faring vessel, it is almost impossible to consider a time in which our species was restricted only to chemical rockets for transportation into outer space.

Space travel is today a mundane facet of our lives. The cosmos can provide fascinating sights, but ask any trader in Ceos or Sothis and they will point out how quickly the black sky becomes rather boring. And yet, for millennia space travel was a fantasy for our ancestors on Earth.





Historical archives point to 1957, just over 1,300 years ago, as the moment when mankind first ventured beyond our blue and green cradle. This achievement came in the form of a small satellite with a single radio transmitter, broadcasting a beep every few seconds to the Earth below. Named 'Sputnik', this little mass of metal and resistors was launched on the back of a primitive modified missile by a superpower known as the Soviet Union.

At a cursory glance of this part of human history it seems that, early on at least, this Soviet Union led the first several achievements of humanity in space: they successfully launched the first satellite, first dog, first man, woman, orbital object, and even the first orbital station in space. Truly this nation pioneered the first parts of human space travel, which explains today why the station Mikhail Gorbachev is named after the superpower's last president during this pioneering period.

However it was the United States that landed man on the moon and led the first space colonisation efforts on the moon and Mars. Watching old footage, it's incredible to see what we could achieve through brute combustion and simple Newtonian physics.

In effect humanity voyaged to the stars on its first generation ships using nothing more than combusted and superheated gases.

Today, a Cobra Mk III carries a few tons of hydrogen fuel in its tank. This hydrogen is then heated by the fusion reactor and ejected out of the rear of the ship, pushing the Cobra forward with a spectacular trail of vapours. This

**Named 'Sputnik', this little mass of metal and resistors was launched on the back of a primitive modified missile by a superpower known as the Soviet Union.**

simple physics gives our modern-day vessels plenty of maneuvering power. However, this method of propulsion is all our ancestors had – regardless of distance.

The bravery of astronauts and cosmonauts, as space pilots used to be called, extended to their willingness to deal with such limitations. These intrepid pilots boarded their vessels and burned 80% of their mass to get to orbit and beyond. This was humanity's reality – and limitation – right up into the 2100s.

Then came the moment that forever turned humanity into a spacefaring species. Legendary physicist Li Qin Jao, and a team of talented scientists and researchers, cracked the formula of hyperspace. In the wake of their discovery, the Federation created a system known as the 'Faraway Jump'. This was a primitive hyperspace system, yet even in its crude form it rapidly dispersed humanity across the cosmos.

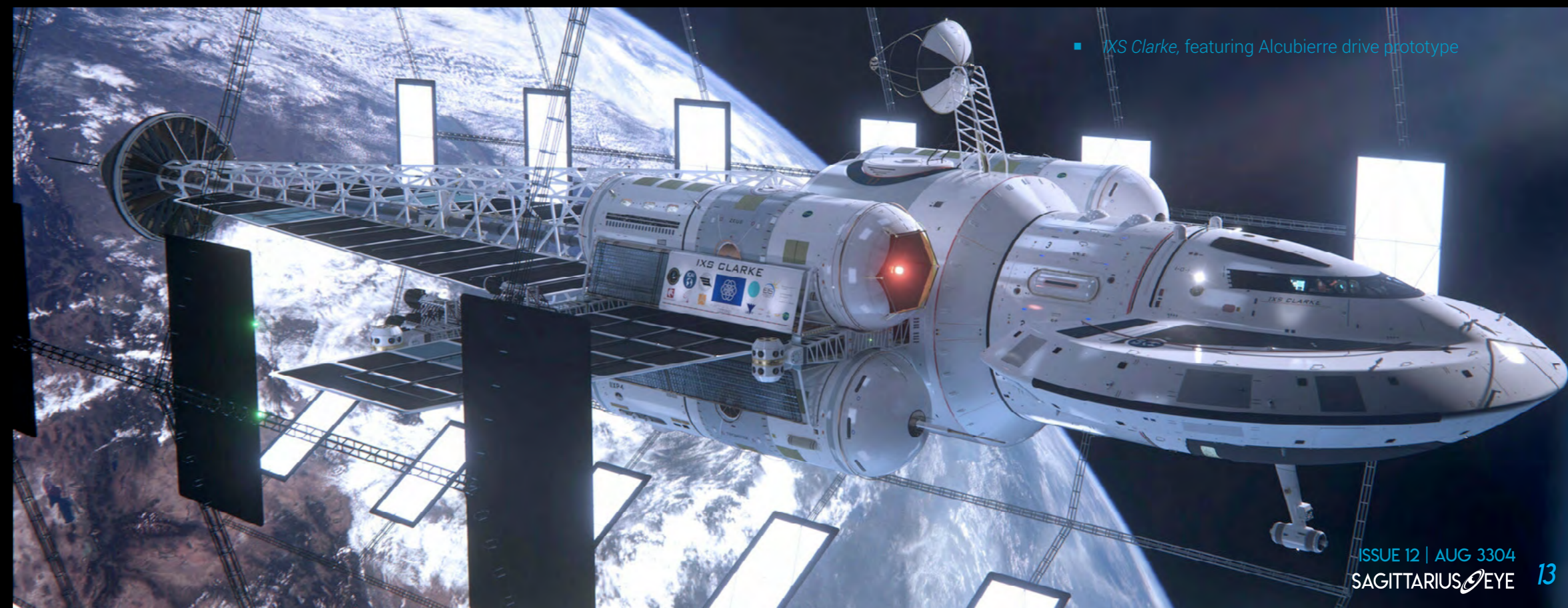
The Faraway Jump system used a series of installations to create temporary wormholes that allowed a vessel to enter through one installation and emerge at another moments later. From a technical and engineering perspective, this was a complex system that required a visit to both the initial start point and the final destination of the voyage to set the gates up.

In practice this meant that exploration ships using conventional chemical drive systems had to first reach destinations and then set up the complex series of satellites and installations to allow other vessels to utilise the system.

As complex as this system was, it was an enormous enabler for the Federation and it allowed robust space lanes to be set up. However, the cost and burden of maintaining the system began to weigh on the nascent superpower after the first few decades of use.

Millions of monitoring satellites had to be put in place, and the gates themselves were sensitive and complex to operate. A single jump took hours of calibration and coordination. In many ways, it is surprising that we as a species were so hungry for interstellar voyages that we simply could not wait for a better technology. From the 2140s right up to the 2800s, this was the only means of meaningful travel across the Galaxy.

From the late 2800s to the advent of the Galactic Cooperative's Quirium drives in 3125, there were a number of drive technologies that attempted to supersede the Faraway system. However, many of these prototype drives are lost to history. 'IGH drives' are a technology that crops up in research, but little is known about it.



■ IXS Clarke, featuring Alcubierre drive prototype

The Faraway system was finally decommissioned in 3125.

Quirium, backed by GalCop, provided nearly instantaneous voyages between stars and systems with far less necessary infrastructure than the Faraway system. During the reign of GalCop, Quirium drives, powered by an energy-dense fuel, propelled humans even further into space.

This foray into the Galaxy brought humans into tangles with the Thargoids, a fascinating facet of history beyond the scope of this article, and we soon learned about their hyperspace technology. Though still not well understood, the research into this technology was what laid the groundwork for the advent of the modern Frame Shift Drive (FSD).

However there was a phase between Quirium drives and the FSDs that we so ubiquitously use across our Galaxy today, called the 'Type 2b' drive. This came about shortly after the collapse of GalCop.

In hindsight, the collapse of GalCop can be considered a step back for our species comparable in form if not scale to the retreat of the Roman Empire from Europe. Much history, technology, science and culture was lost with the dissolution of GalCop's institutions – not least as the formats for information encodement were superseded. Amongst these, we lost knowledge of Quirium fuel. With a heavy sigh we reached for the stars again, powered by slower, shorter range drives.

Heavily modified versions of the Type 2b are still in wide use today amongst Megaships and military vessels. These drives did have one significant advantage over Quirium, and even today's FSDs: they allowed for massive vessels to make large jumps. Though they leave a 'hyperspace cloud' in space as the drive rips open a hyperspace conduit, their ability to move large amounts of mass allowed humanity to spread even further among the stars and to solidify its foothold there.

Shortly after the first Thargoid wars, humanity finally cracked the Alcubierre drive – the long-hypothesised but elusive secret to real faster-than-light travel in this dimension. With Galactic cooperation the technology was standardised across human space. By the late 3290s, 'supercruise' was established as the primary means of travel within star systems, rendering travel between worlds the work of minutes.

It is with respect that we must look at the history of humanity in space. Though it is tempting to smile at our quaint struggles with chemical rockets, it is far too easy to dismiss them as primitive people with primitive technology. But it was their relentless appetite to push forward that led our ancestors to board a cylindrical black and white rocket – nearly the size of a contemporary Anaconda – and lift off towards the moon.

This rocket was called the Saturn V. It is a magnificent sight, and everyone interested in our species' history should one day go look up archival footage of it lifting off from Earth. The slow climb, the intense kerosene and liquid oxygen-fueled F-1 engines, the ice breaking off from this breathing giant.

A crude, wasteful tool for limited aims? Certainly.

But nothing else captured the imagination of humanity or fueled the desire to go beyond and explore the final frontier as that magnificent Saturn V. This romance of space travel is something our contemporary society has all but lost. Today we complain about jump ranges and commodity prices, the cost of ammunition and the inefficiency of our power plants, and yet we seldom stand out on the lunar surface, by the historical Apollo 11 site, and just wonder how our ancestors did it. How they rode rockets, giant metal cans of exploding fuel, out into the black.

*Fellow Travellers: The History of Rocketry*

**Text:** Alexander Sepulveda

**Images:** NASA library, HRSchmitt (DeviantArt)

**Design:** LexMoloch

## A little lost?



### The Galaxy can be a dangerous place.

Plan on jumping to a new system? Before you plot your next trip, check with GalNet to assure your destination system is still safe. Thargoids are closer than you may think.



# IMPERIUM SINE IMPERATOR

## TROUBLED TIMES FOR THE GALACTIC EMPIRE?

■ The Emperor, Arissa Lavigny-Duval

The assassination of Emperor Hengist Duval in 3301 started a quiet political and social revolution within the thousand year-old Galactic Empire. In a follow-up to last month's feature on the superpower's history, guest contributor Elmrod Balaster takes a close look at the challenges facing the Empire today.

“ Emperor Arissa Lavigny-Duval is, for many, a compromise choice...”

After Hengist's assassination and the accession of Arissa Lavigny-Duval, several political powers have emerged, spanning the range from ultra-conservative to liberal progressive. While this is commonplace, the Empire, squeezed between an encroaching Thargoid presence and an ever-expanding Federation, seems to be paralysed by indecision when it needs strong leadership the most.

Emperor Arissa Lavigny-Duval is, for many, a compromise choice – the least divisive option to accommodate the various Imperial interests. Despite the unusual circumstances of her ascension (a late marriage between her mother and the Emperor, prior to his death, legitimised her as a member of the Imperial line), traditionalists welcome her commitment to law and order, while progressives grudgingly admit that she is less supportive of slavery than some older Senators. However her voice is heard infrequently on behalf of the Empire as a whole – and then, arguably, only when the strongest of words are demanded.

A recent incursion illustrates this apparent lack of leadership. Some months ago, Federal powers triggered turmoil in several systems under Princess Aisling Duval's control, resulting in many secessions. Ostensibly to buy Aisling time to recover, Arissa's forces expanded into the then-unclaimed border systems between Aisling's territory and the nearby Federal systems.

This completely frustrated Aisling's local lords and operatives, who had spent much time preparing those same systems, installing governments which would be receptive to Aisling's rule. Many of these new governments looked with equal favour upon Aisling and the Liberal Federation Shadow President Felicia Winters, seeing much in common in their progressive attitudes. So, when Arissa's forces moved into these border systems, many turned to Winters instead – to the detriment of the Empire.

How can the Emperor and the Princess Imperial have neglected to coordinate their efforts with their local lords, or even with each other? It is baffling that an episode like this could have been handled so poorly, leaving the Empire weaker.

This episode highlights a disturbing truth: the Emperor is not truly 'in power'.

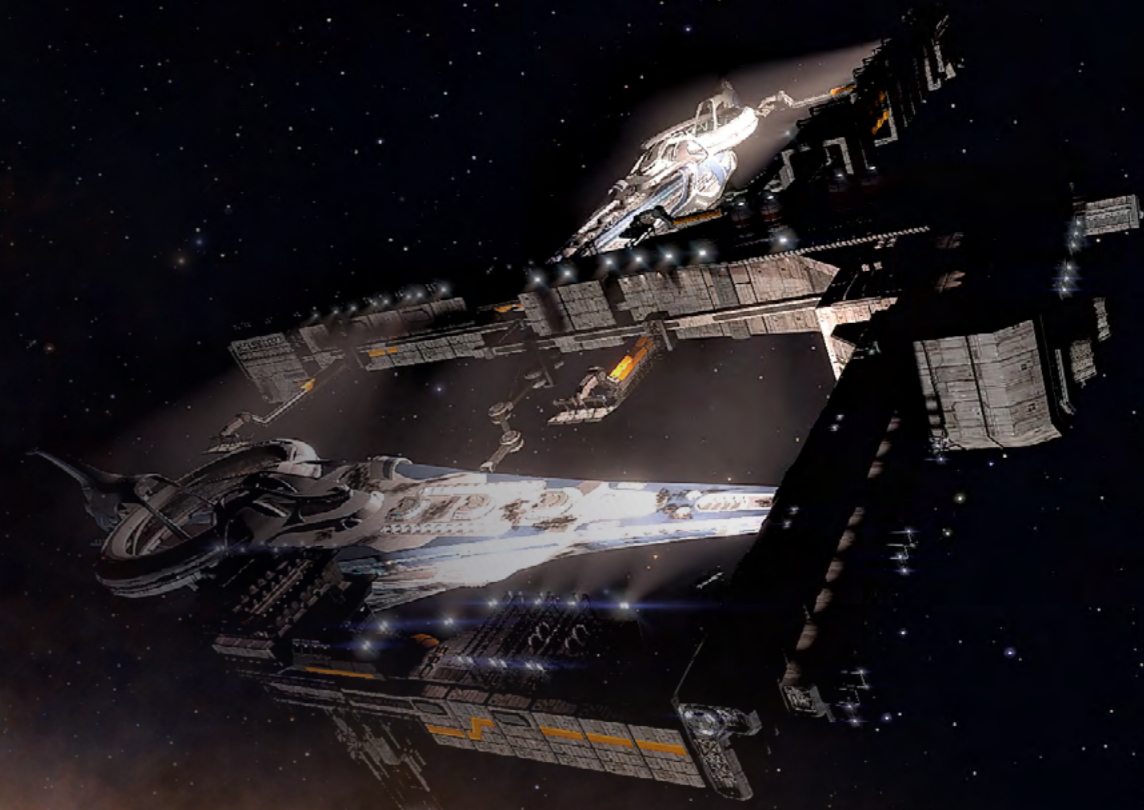


### Emperor Arissa Lavigny-Duval

Over 1,000 systems are under her personal control. Most of the recent Federal expansions have taken aim at her territory, probably to undermine her influence. She cooperates with Torval and Patreus, but her relations with Aisling are less well understood.



Controlled systems:  
80  
Exploited systems:  
1060



## THE MOST POWERFUL PEOPLE IN THE EMPIRE



### Princess Aisling Duval

Controlled systems:  
70  
Exploited systems:  
885

Spreading her progressive views from Cemiss, the Princess Imperial controls around 880 systems. Seen as the legitimate Emperor by many of her supporters, the young royal made it to the political stage by championing new thinking for the Empire. She is engaged to be married to a high-ranking Federation diplomat.



A stronger leader would have had the confidence to strategize with Aisling and the local peerage before commencing operations. The powers of patronage are vast: Arissa could have granted any of them fiefdoms, influence or money. Or, if necessary, commanded obedience. Instead, she remained silent.

The smell of laser fire still hanging in the air, Winters' smiling representatives sweep into newly exploited systems to give her new citizens hope. Corporations loyal to Winters can then be installed in positions of control and supplied with credits to create work and debt. Economic and social dependences are created, making a slow drift towards Federation control inevitable.

This, and many other examples, outline the problems that the Emperor faces. With the death of Hengist Duval, absolute power has faded and Her Highness seems more committed to balancing the interests of the four Imperial powers than to ruling a unified Empire.

It's an effective approach, if you believe that the end justifies the means. As a result of this very successful tactic, system after system falls to Federation rule.

### An Emperor's hesitation endangers the Empire

This Federal expansion is real and ongoing. What is the Empire doing about it? If the Empire has an obligation to be a cultural counterweight to the mercantile might of the Federation, action is necessary. History is replete with examples of indecisive empires being reduced to little more than vassals of more dynamic and progressive powers.

The Empire as an entity will likely not disappear any time in the near future, but it may simply continue to decline until it morphs under the yoke of Federation values and leadership. Ironically, after almost a thousand years, the Imperial way of life would not be destroyed in war; but slowly washed away by assimilation into the Federal system.

On a strategic scale, the Federal powers have been dictating the pace of change in the political landscape over recent months. Whenever they want to expand their sphere of influence, they expand. In well-orchestrated operations, tens of thousands of Federal agents, disguised as merchants or privateers, descend upon and prepare selected systems for Federal rule. Through trade, elections and wars, they install governments favourable to Zachary Hudson or Felicia Winters.

### It's all about the right propaganda

It might surprise some that, contrary to her public image, the Shadow President uses mercenaries to provide the brute force for her expansions. Plausible deniability is a tool used by many leaders, in the past and today.



### Admiral Denton Patreus



Controlled systems:  
55  
Exploited systems:  
745

As powerful as the commander of the Imperial Navy is, his goals are equally inscrutable. Governing around 740 systems from Eotienses, the relatively young Senator maintains his level of influence but is unable to expand, hindering his ambitions. Some wonder if he was appointed Admiral of the Fleet to secure his loyalty to the Emperor.



### Senator Zemina Torval

Controlled systems:  
50  
Exploited systems:  
620

The Grand Dame of the Imperial Senate has the power of the Empire's core industries behind her. Operating from Synteini, she controls 750 systems with just one goal: to keep the credits rolling, based on mining and Imperial slavery. She is recognised as the most conservative of Imperial powers.



# THE GALACTIC POWERS



4,830 billion humans, settled in 11,200 systems, live under the banner of the Federation, Empire or Alliance. An impressive 8,400 systems are independent, hosting 1,800 billion people.

Out of these 20,000 the superpowers control 8,000 systems, which are home to 5,400 billion people – or 81.5% of humanity.

	Zachary Hudson	Felicia Winters	Arissa Lavigny	Aisling Duval	Denton Petraeus	Zemina Torval	Edmund Mahon	Li Yong-Rui	Pranav Antal	Archon Delaine	Yuri Grom
Controlled	60	75	80	70	55	50	125	55	55	45	60
Total Control	135		255				125	215			
Exploited	840	1090	1060	885	745	620	1700	600	720	455	960
Galactic Total	1930		3340				1700	2735			

“ Why should the beloved Princess Aisling prefer a golden cage inside a reduced Empire...? ”

perial powers then fell away; making the Emperor’s political position pointless. Smaller powers such as Utopia, Sirius and even Delaine have found a way to co-exist with Federal interests; why shouldn’t an ex-Imperial power be able to do the same? Why should the beloved Princess Aisling prefer a golden cage inside a reduced Empire, when there are more opportunities available to her by operating on her own?

And this is where our hypothetical excursion into one possible dark future of the Empire meets another, brighter one, if the Emperor accepts the protean reality of 3304. Open dialogue about Imperial culture, bringing ultra-traditionalists like the Sovereignty and Senator Torval together with progressive interests like Aisling Duval and the Prismatic Imperium, could go some way to arresting this decline. Who, apart from the Emperor, could make that happen – and provide an appealing alternative to Felicia Winters?

## What is so different about the Galactic powers’ cultures?

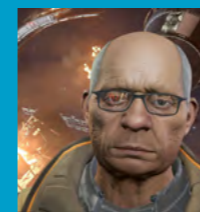
The bedrock of both the Empire and the Federation economies is slavery – but only the Empire has the courage to name it so. Imperial slaves dutifully fulfill their service to the Empire over several years, while Federal citizens work equally thanklessly under the yoke of self-imposed consumer debt. Many working conditions, especially on orbital cities, are poor, with limited opportunities to move or progress. Increasing numbers of Galactic citizens fail to see any real contrast between Imperial and Federation societies.

Continuing down the hypothetical path of cultural assimilation, one might not be surprised if the reduced Im-

## Re-establishing the balance of powers

Who knows what’s going on in the high chambers on Capitol, or in the Imperial powers’ other home systems? It is not easy to understand why the four Imperial superpowers act as disparately as they do. But unity of purpose and action is essential if the Empire is going to remain an effective counterweight to the growing Federation.

Anyone promoting the Empire’s interests should have a common agenda, united under the Emperor. Because if those who promote the Empire’s interests cannot agree upon who the ultimate arbiter of power is, then we no longer have an Empire at all.



**Prof. Elmrod Balaster Ph.D.**

Dean of the Einstein-Rose Institute for Political Science and Social Development, based in Achenar.

The institute was founded 400 years ago to influence political discussion in the Empire, outlining strategic worst-case scenarios preemptively.

## Imperium Sine Imperator

**Text:** Guest contributor Prof. Elmrod Balaster

**Images:** Orange Phoenix

**Design:** Hans Olo



# Painting a Thousand Words

with the

S P V F A

Painting a Thousand Words  
with the SPVFA

**Text:** DrNoesis

**Judges:** McNicholl, Souvarine,  
DrNoesis

**Design:** McNicholl



From the first efforts of early humans applying pastes of crushed ochre, charcoal and ash to cave walls, to petroglyphs, oils, watercolours, inks, and on to photographs and holograms, our ability to portray images through time is a hallmark of our species.

With the advent of interstellar travel, this drive has been given rich new material. With some 400 billion star systems and countless new worlds to explore, it is unsurprising that many individuals set out into the cosmos with a desire to record the things they find, from grand views of nebulae to secret vistas on distant worlds.


**...probably the finest collection of interstellar photography the Galaxy has ever seen.**

In December 3303 Commander JaeSynthetik, with like-minded pilots OrangePheonix and StarFox, created a gallery where these images could be collected and curated for the benefit of the spacefaring community: the Stellar Photography, Videography and Fan Art (SPVFA) gallery.

In less than six months, the group has expanded to a community of over a thousand, with thousands of pictures of such quality that many seasoned, professional photographers have looked upon them in awe.

We at *Sagittarius Eye* are incredibly fortunate to work in partnership with the SPVFA – the images their community produces never fail to amaze and enthrall. Picking between the material they provide for an article is a mixed blessing for us: we get to see many incredible pictures, but are only able to share a handful with our readers.

So this month, we celebrate the best of their work through this special feature. Split into five sections – Structures, Xeno, Action, Landscapes, and Celestial Bodies – we and the SPVFA have curated what is probably the finest collection of interstellar photography the Galaxy has ever seen.

We live in a stunning Galaxy. With this special feature we celebrate the unforgettable beauty of the cosmos we traverse, and salute the talents of those who capture it. 

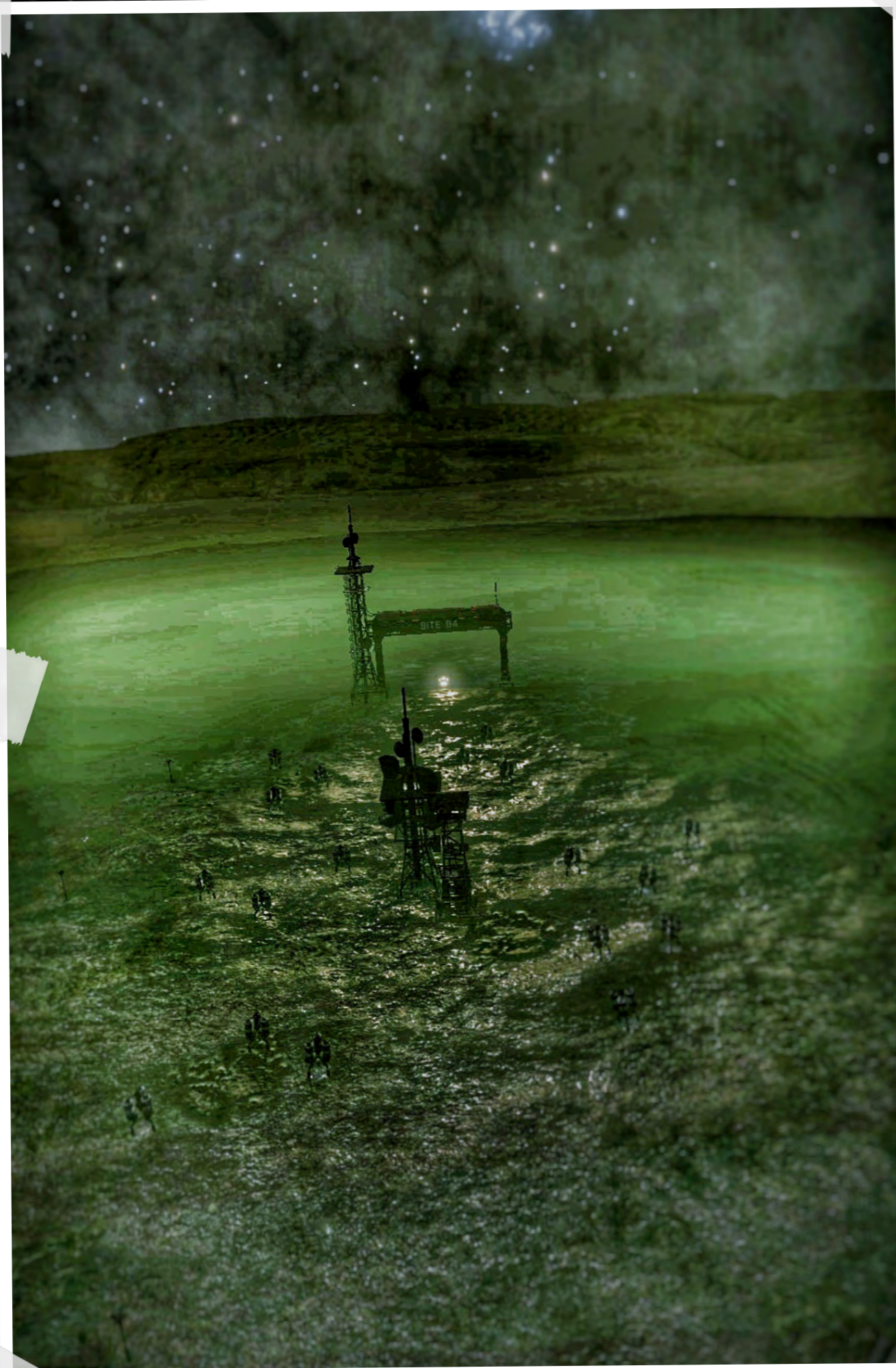


# XENO

The weird, the unknown and the other. Entrants were encouraged to submit images showing the evidence of alien life.

Contributors: Tolaak, SebastianWehmeyer, nickweb85, pSyren\_Farseer, MicHowes, OrangePheonix, KorVla







“Thargoid Scout Ship Crash Site on HIP 17125 A3A. I have seen a similar picture before on GalNet and had to convince myself personally of the incredible level of detail of the scout ships. Photographed in the right light, after some post-processing it is really indescribable how many details you get to see.”

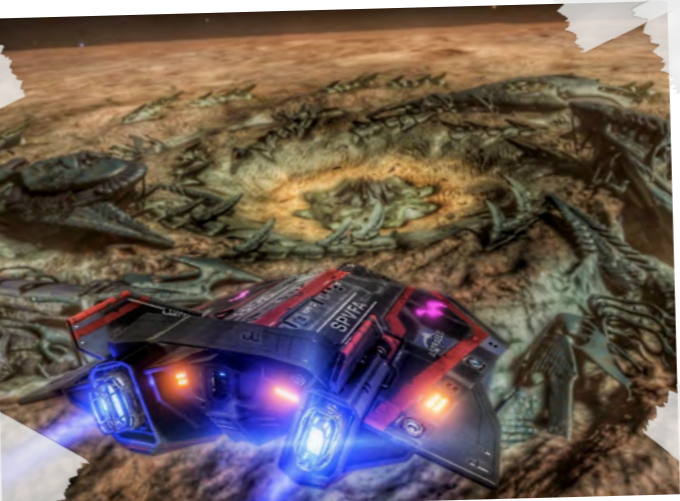
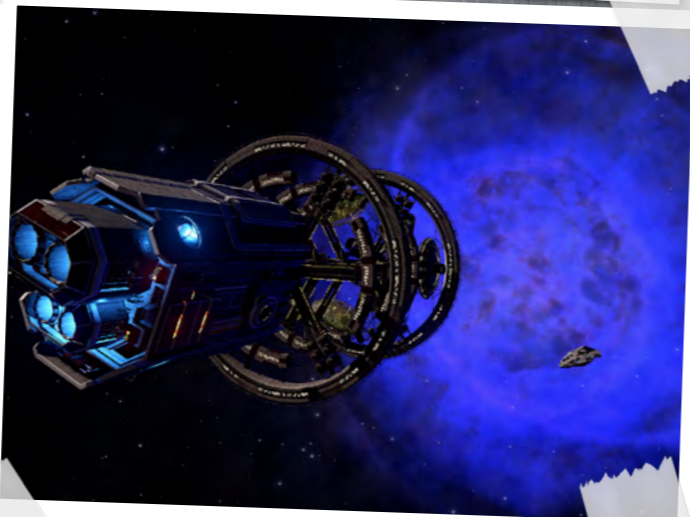
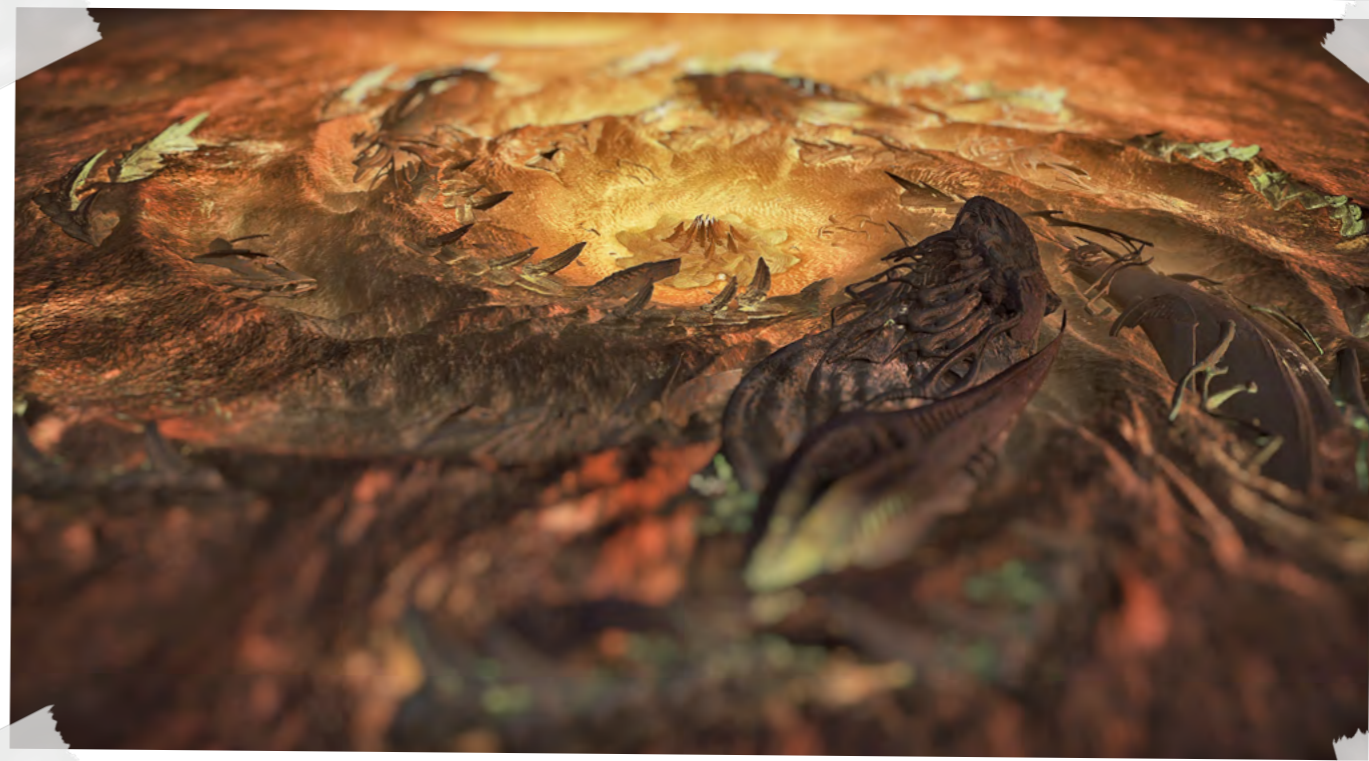
Winner: SebastianWehmeyer



# STRUCTURES

The marks of sentient beings upon the Galaxy, human or otherwise.

Contributors: StarFox, Timbo Haze, SebastianWehmeyer, pSyren\_Farseer, MicHowes, JaeSynthetik, KorVla

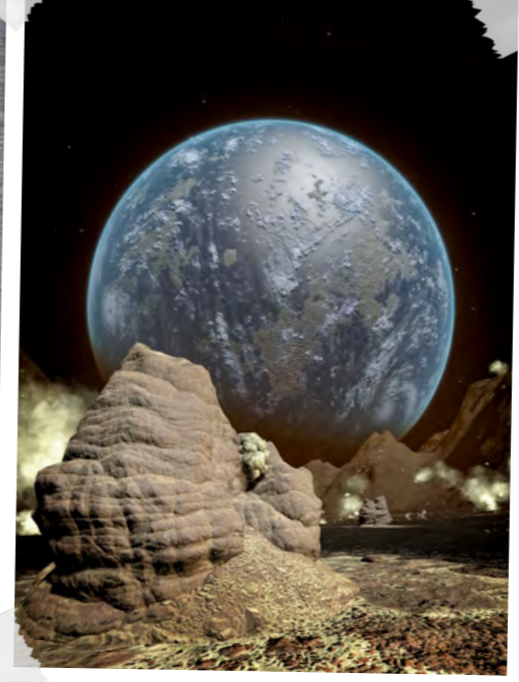
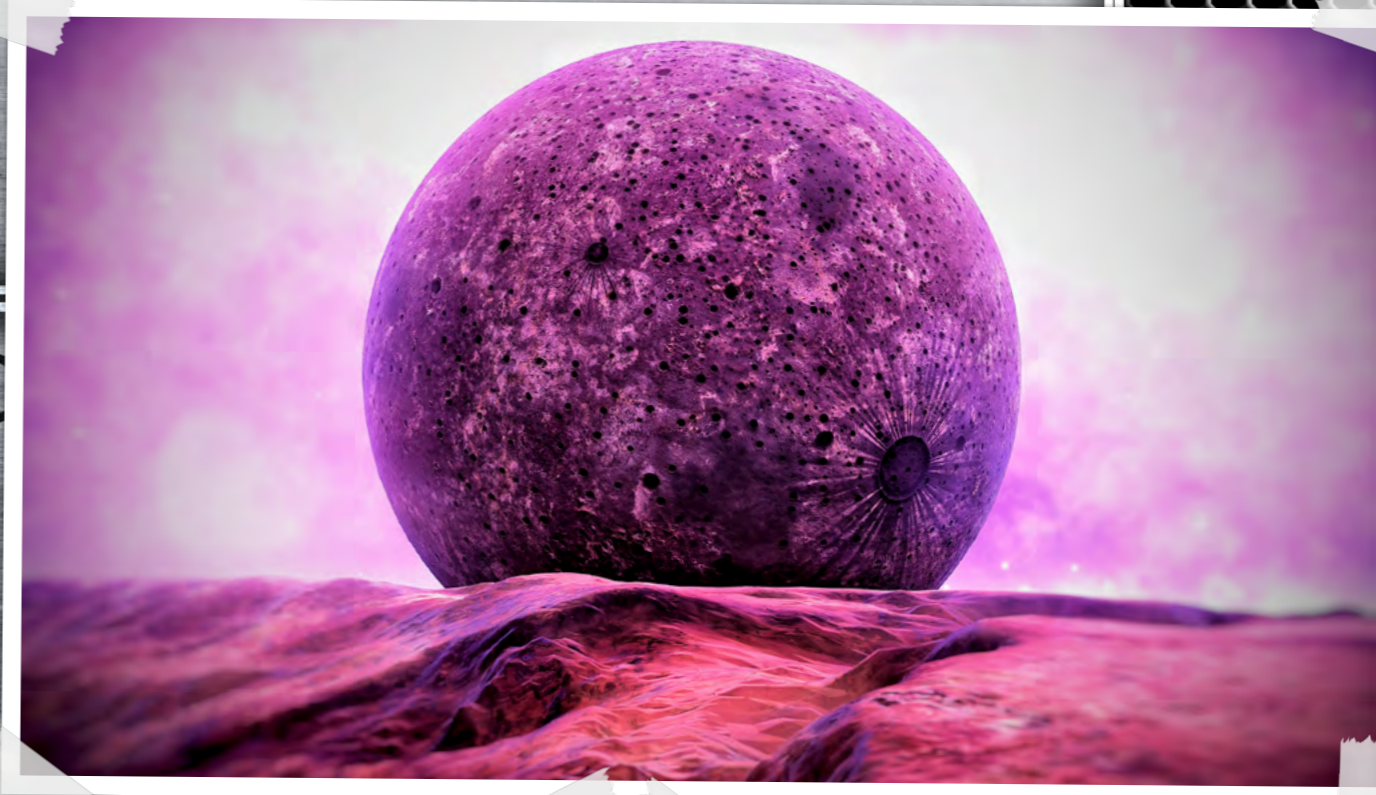


“

On my way through the Pleiades I came across the distress call of this attacked bulk class carrier. I was immediately impressed by the eerily beautiful atmosphere and had to capture it with my camera. The fog and smoke were not added, so it's another great example of what visual detail can be found in these dangerous signal sources.

Winner: SebastianWehmeyer

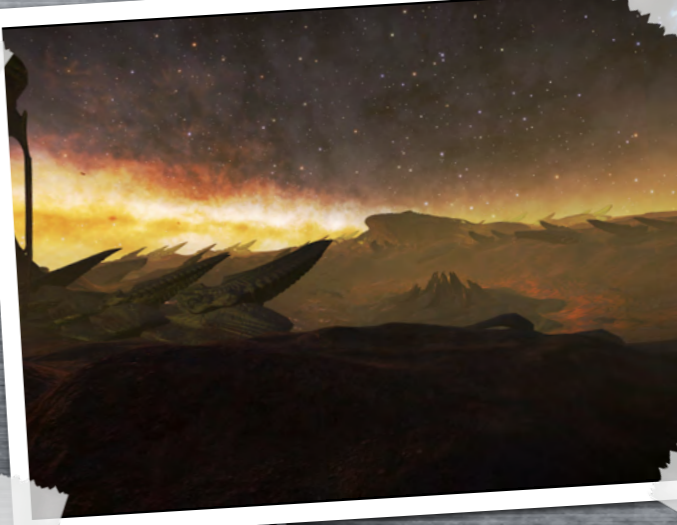




## LANDSCAPES

Places to watch the stars rise. Contributors were limited to images taken on planets and moons.

Contributors: StarFox, Zer0axis, JaeSynthetik, lolair Uaine, SebastianWehmeyer, pSyren\_Farseer





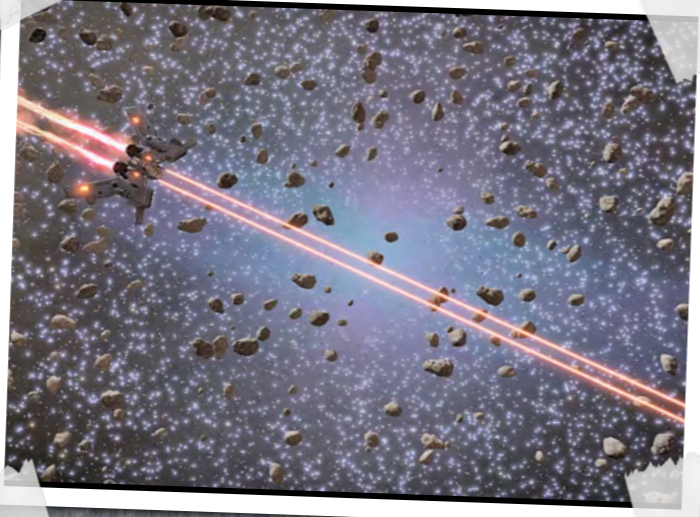
“ Though I may not recall where this shot was taken, I’ll never forget the striking view of this star shining through the vapors of these fumaroles, like the sun peeking through the clouds on a foggy morning. Of all the vantage points in this particular volcanic field, this shot stands out as possibly one of my favorites.

Winner: JaeSynthetik

# ACTION

Those fleeting, elusive moments of exhilaration, perfectly captured. These images are as much about time as they are about place.

Contributors: lolairUaine, ZacMck, SebastianWehmeyer, HVACKER, nickweb85, Raphael Vespertilio, pSyren\_Farseer, OrangePheonix





This is me fleeing from a pack of agitated Thargoid Scouts in my lightweight Hauler after attempting an inter-species photoshoot. It transpires that Thargoids are unable to sign model release forms due to their lack of opposable thumbs.

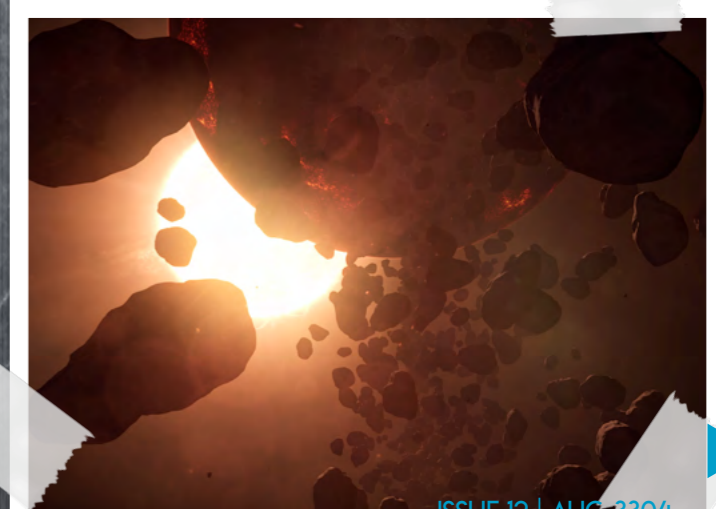
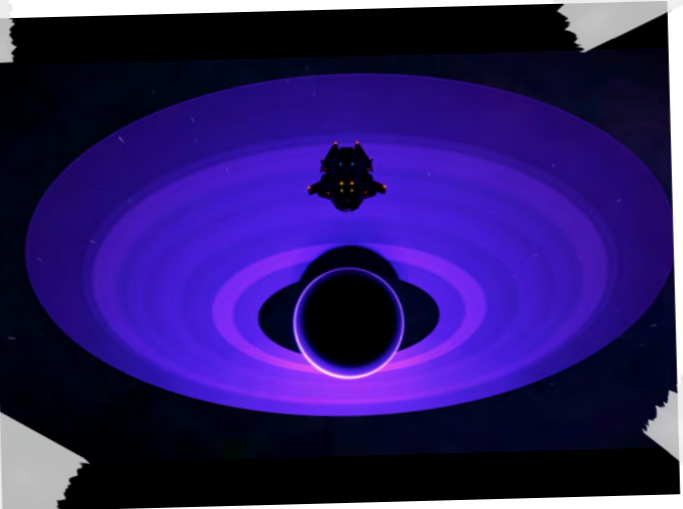
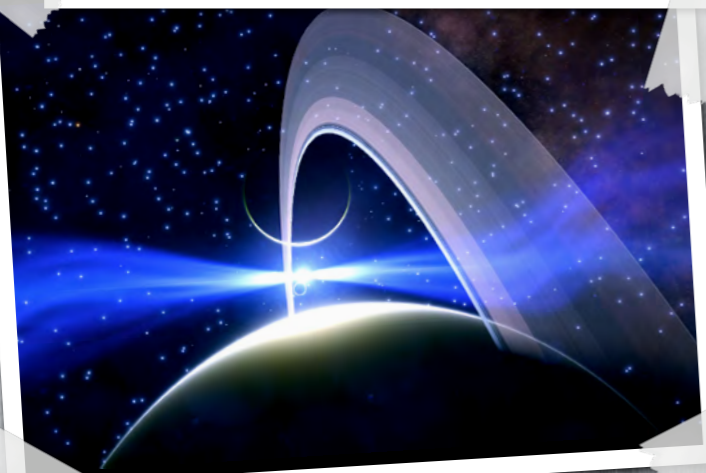
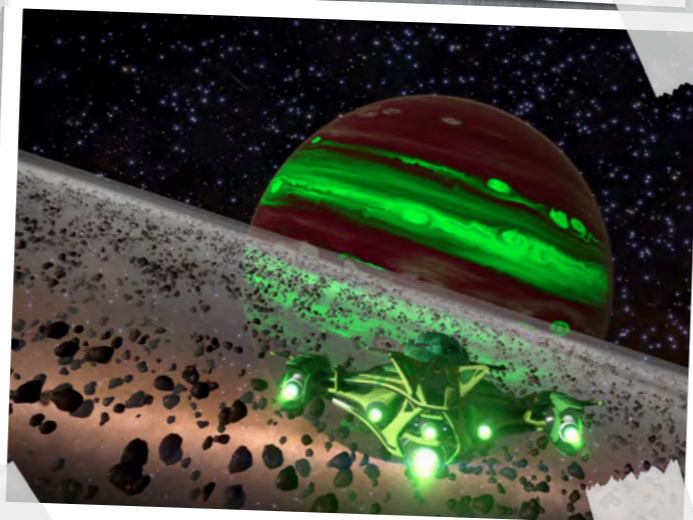
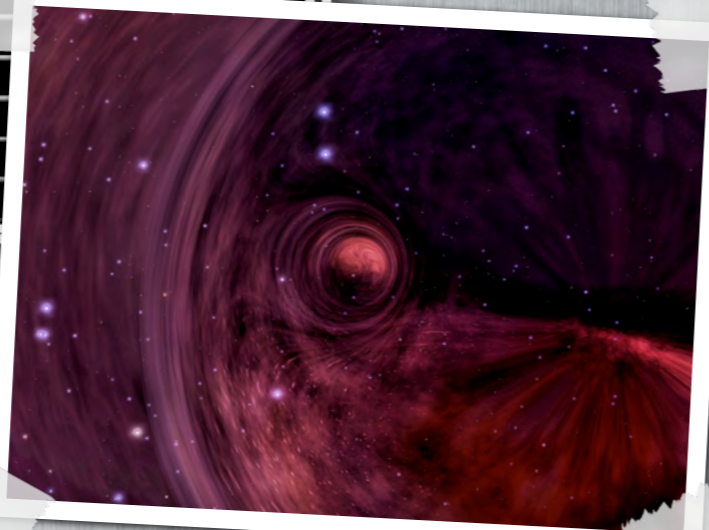
Winner: nickweb85



# CELESTIAL BODIES

Orbs in space. Stars, planets and moons in glorious technicolour.

Contributors: Chamarande, SebastianWehmeyer, StarFox, Zer0axis, HVACKER, pSyren\_Farseer, JaeSynthetik, TheOneWithNoLife

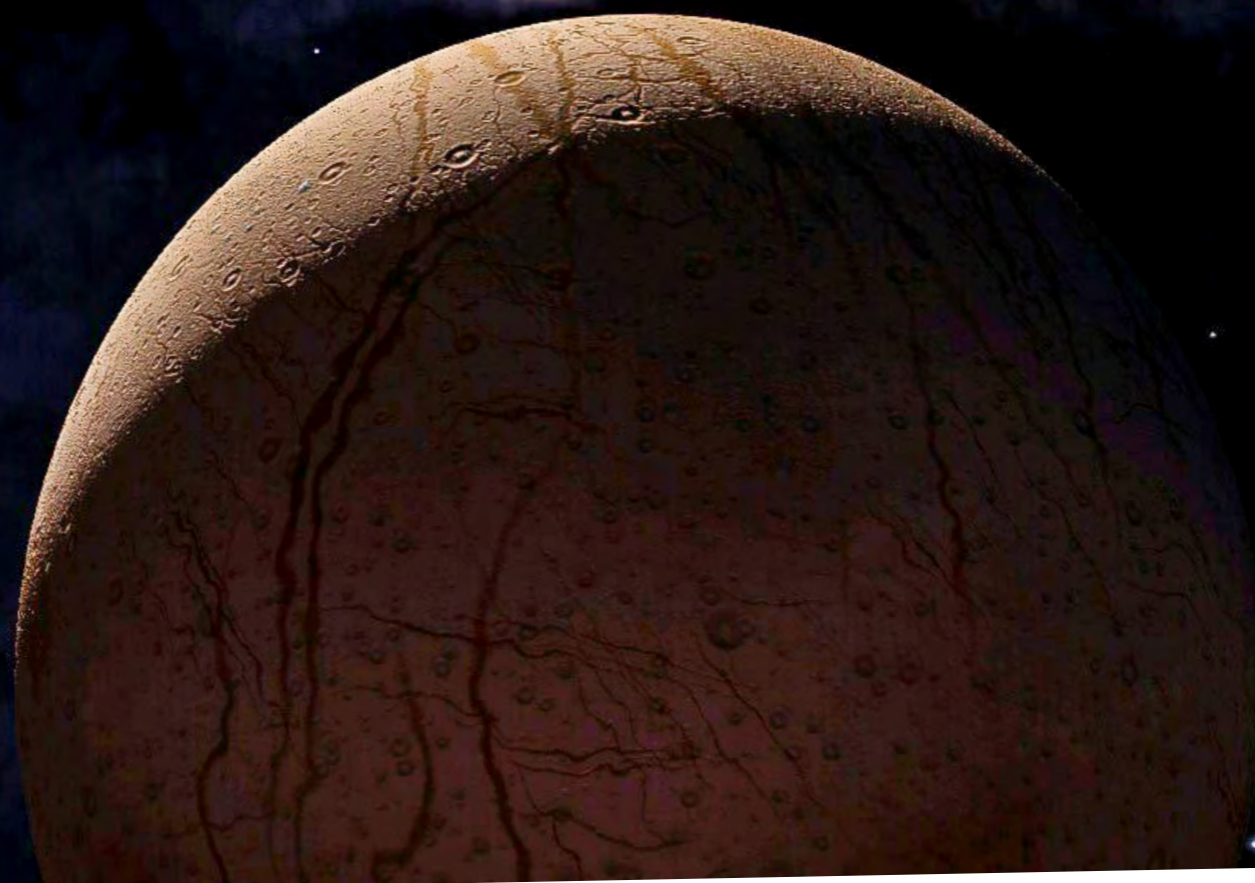




It was my first ever long range expedition. I set out to explore various nebulae, and had to make the Pelican and North America Nebulae a part of that journey. As I tend to do when approaching, I take shots from different distances – always looking for the perfect backdrop or foreground.

Upon coming into this unknown system I began scanning various bodies in search for active volcanism. Then I saw that shot, with the nebula perfectly juxtaposed with the moon, as if reaching over like a colorful halo.

Winner: JaeSynthetik







# THE THIRD ELDER RACE

In 2280 an alien artefact was discovered in the Sol system, birthplace of humanity. It is said to be very small, about the size of a child's palm. Almost nothing else has been revealed about it, except that it was found on Mars. The Federal Government has been silent on the subject for over a thousand years, yet multiple sources have confirmed the artefact's existence over the centuries.

In the light of our recent (re)discoveries of the Thargoids and the Guardians, it is time to revisit the Martian Relic and wonder if there could be another intelligent alien race out there.

## AND BEYOND

## The Ones We Know About

Over a millennium ago, in the mid-23rd century, the Duval family discovered and destroyed a primitive sentient race on Achenar 6d, now the Imperial capital, during the early days of space colonisation. This extinction was unintentional, mostly brought on by off-world bacteria, although it must be said that few colonists cared anything for the fate of these so-called 'primitives'. Back then, humans had yet to discover just how rare intelligent life is, and how precious a productive relationship between our two races might have been (see our article on the [history of rocketry](#)).

The very beginning of the Federation and Empire's tumultuous conflict was initiated by outrage on the part of the Federation at the colonists' genocide. For many centuries, this eradicated species was the only confirmed sentient alien race in the Galaxy. The lost race of Achenar remains one of the worst ecological disasters in the history of humanity.

Centuries later, we found ourselves engaged in violent contact with the second sentient alien race we had discovered: the Thargoids. Records on that early conflict are spotty after centuries of obfuscation, but we believe it occurred sometime in the last two hundred years and ended in a human victory when the Intergalactic Naval Reserve Arm exposed the Thargoids to a bio-weapon called 'Mycoïd'.

Obviously, the Thargoids were not quite eradicated and only withdrew from our sight to regroup, as our current interspecies war attests. Evidence of their existence is now incontrovertible in the form of the millions of war victims throughout the Pleiades and, increasingly, inside the Bubble as well.

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**While unintelligent life is plentiful in the Galaxy, sentient races appear to be surprisingly rare by comparison.**

They are a form of life that are totally unlike us, possibly insectoid in nature, and so alien in their mindset that there is no public record of any human-Thargoid communication to date. We might assume they weren't intelligent at all, if they hadn't developed massive space vessels and weaponry that, at least for the moment, exceeds our own. Some sources even suggest that we owe some of our technology to the Thargoids after capturing and reverse engineering theirs.

The most recent discovery of alien civilization in our part of the Galaxy has been the Guardian ruins and the artefacts discovered therein. The Guardians are probably the third most-discussed topic in the Bubble, after the Thargoids and Princess Aisling Duval's love life.

Like humanity, at the height of their civilisation the Guardians spread to many worlds in our section of the Galaxy and established colonies. Many of their ruins on barren moons are intact, and through the efforts of independent Commanders assisting the engineer Ram Tah we have uncovered much of their history and culture.

These records are publicly available and quite extensive, covering their culture, biology, language, technology, war with the Thargoids, and a brutal civil war that ultimately led to their destruction at the hands of their own artificially intelligent 'Constructs'. This long-dead, human-like sentient race fought the Thargoids over a million years ago and left a bounty of technology for us to harness, lessons to learn (or ignore), and, possibly, a race of murderous AI that we may have to fight in the future.

There we have it — the known list of sentient aliens: the Thargoids, the long-dead Guardians, and the primitive, extinct race of Achenar 6d. While unintelligent life is plentiful in the Galaxy, sentient races appear to be surprisingly rare by comparison. At the moment we only know of two that aren't destroyed — although that number may soon become just one if the Thargoids have their way.



- Guardian technology was so advanced that much of it has survived more than a million years relatively intact, at least on airless moons.

## The Ones We Don't Know About

There are, inevitably, rumours and unconfirmed stories of other forms of intelligent life. It's verifiably true that the powers-that-be in the Pilots Federation or Universal Cartographics have locked off at least eighteen vast sections of space encompassing tens of thousands of light years, not to mention more than a few individual star systems. Gossip amongst explorers has it that these areas are home to sentient aliens, but there exists no public proof.

Given what little is publicly known about it, the so-called Martian Relic might then be an artefact of either the Guardians or the Thargoids. We know both species ranged far in their day and could easily have landed (or crashed) on Mars a couple of million years ago.

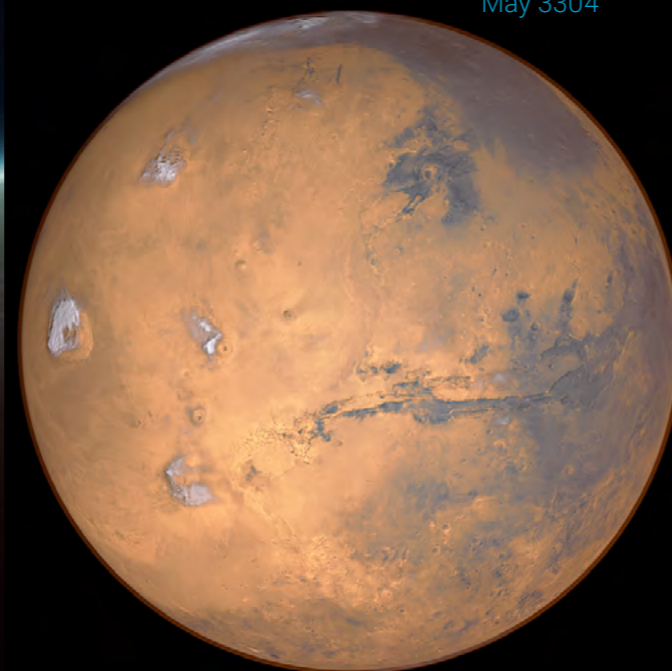
The main problem with this theory is that the Federation hasn't said anything about the Martian Relic at all; neither when the Guardians were discovered nor when the Thargoids returned to harass humanity last year. These would have been the perfect times to win points with voters and outplay rival powers. If done well, such a revelation might have granted the Federation new popularity and political influence on the Galactic stage.

For whatever reason, they chose to keep the artefact hidden. This may have been done to conceal from public knowledge that these powerful forces visited our solar system before we were capable of even traveling to the moon, but it is also possible that the Relic isn't an artefact of either of these two 'elder' races.

**It is also possible that the Relic isn't an artefact of either of these two 'elder' races.**



■ Mars  
May 3304



■ Mars  
June 2001

There's nothing to suggest that there aren't, or haven't been, many more sentient alien races in the thirteen billion year history of the Milky Way. Humanity, Thargoids and Guardians seem to share a small section of a relatively boring part of the Galaxy. There's plenty of room in the rest of the Galaxy for life to have reached sentience, like the ancient Achenarians.

It's a replay of the ancient Fermi Paradox; only now, we know part of the answer. Recent history shows that (at least) four sentient races have existed in the same part of the Galaxy in only the last two million years, and that number may be higher in other regions of space.

This publication has discussed before the possibility that the Thargoids act as a kind of 'great filter': in short, the Thargoids might eradicate any sentient life they come across, and any stragglers that survive might withdraw to defended enclaves or immolate themselves as the Guardians did. It's frightening to consider what might have happened if we'd met the Thargoids a thousand years ago, just as we were first reaching into space; even with present-day technology, we've already lost millions of pilots in this war.

The Martian Relic might well represent the remains of an as-yet unknown third space-faring alien species. It's certainly true that Mars once had life — the discovery of native fossils proved that as far back as 2100. But we know Mars didn't have a stable magnetosphere until it was terraformed in 2286, which makes it unlikely that complex life could have evolved there at any stage; and the Relic can't just be a harmless rock, or the Federation would have no need for secrecy.

What sort of species might this third elder race have been? We do know one thing: the Federation considers them to be important. If they didn't, there would be no reason to continue to conceal the Relic from the scientific community (except the superpowers' odious penchant for secrecy). It's conceivable that, in the early days of space travel when the Relic was found, the Federation wouldn't want to reveal hard evidence of sentient aliens even if they were benign and long-dead.

At this point, however, the revelation of another alien race would probably mean little if they were simply another long-dead solution to the Fermi Paradox. There must be some other reason why the Federation continues to restrict all information about this Relic.



## What Can We Guess?

Our ancient planetbound ancestors on Earth used to fantasize about meeting aliens. Ironically, many of these imagined scenarios were not dissimilar from our current nightmarish conflict with the Thargoids, although the Octagonal Menace has destroyed fewer public monuments than classical media would suggest. As we know that those in power are not sharing the whole truth about sentient life in the Galaxy with us — the complete lack of information about the Thargoids until their recent return is proof enough of that — we must speculate again.

**It's possible that our explorers might cross paths with alien adventurers out in the black, initiating first contact entirely by accident.**


While we know that the Guardians strongly resembled us in bodily form, it would be the height of arrogance to assume that the vast majority of sentient races in the Galaxy are also humanoid. It is therefore likely that most sentient races are as different from us as the Thargoids, or even more so. If the Thargoids are, as has been suggested elsewhere, the Great Filter of our section of the Galaxy, we may uncover evidence of other alien civilizations, like the Guardians, that grew too powerful for the Thargoids' liking and were destroyed. A breathtakingly large percentage of worlds, even in our small corner of the Galaxy, are yet to be thoroughly explored, after all.

As new technological developments propel us further and further from our ancestral homeworld, new sentient races must surely be discovered — perhaps long-extinct, or perhaps still confined to their home planets in various stages of primitive development.

Our leaders offer us clues in what they conceal from us. As discussed above, the Pilots Federation has sealed off vast swathes of interstellar space, perhaps in service to the Club or some other power to conceal the existence of other races from us until they believe we are ready. While

such powers may be thorough and authoritative, they are neither omnipotent nor infallible. Not even the Club can conceal the stars themselves, and as long as explorers continue to push the boundaries of what technology makes possible, we will one day exceed the limitations placed on us. It's possible that our explorers might cross paths with alien adventurers out in the black, initiating first contact entirely by accident.

The most easily-accessible evidence of alien life, however, is the Relic uncovered from Earth's closest planetary neighbour. The Federation still refuses to even acknowledge the Mars Relic's existence, but we live in a time where secrets and conspiracies are being exposed to the public eye. If faced with enough public pressure, the Federation might soon have no choice but to reveal their secret treasure.

Alternatively, brave investigators like the late Senator Kahina Loren might take matters into their own hands and snatch the Relic so that the entire Bubble might behold it and wonder what sign a third elder race might have left right on our doorstep. Whether we will have cause to rejoice at the discovery of new friends, quake at the news of a second hostile entity, or mourn at the loss of another great civilization, the Mars Relic is an important piece of our history that deserves to come to light — and maybe, in this time of upheaval and revelation, it might do so. 

*The Third Elder Race and Beyond*

**Text:** Louis Calvert, Rasudin

**Images:** SebastianWehmeyer, ZerOaxis, Ian Baristan, pSyren Farseer

**Design:** McNicholl

A character resembling the video game character Granny is shown in a futuristic, industrial setting. She has short, grey hair and is wearing a dark, form-fitting suit with a mesh-like texture. She is sitting in a chair, leaning forward with a determined and somewhat menacing expression, her mouth open as if shouting or speaking. Her hands are raised, with her fingers spread. She is wearing several rings on her fingers. A bright, glowing yellow and orange energy field emanates from her chest area. The background is dark with various mechanical components and glowing orange lights.

**IRONBLADE**  
PERFORMANCE ENHANCERS

SO GOOD  
GRANNY  
WILL KICK YOUR  
**ASS**

# KRAIT MK II

In October of last year, Falcon DeLacy released a teaser of an upcoming ship. Though no specifications accompanied it, the design and shape of the vessel were instantly recognisable. This was clearly a successor to Falcon's classic Krait Lightspeeder. Almost nine months later, the Krait Mk II was finally released to the public.

...a multi-purpose vessel – DeLacy's specialty.

## A Classic, Reimagined

The original Krait Mk I 'Lightspeeder' was manufactured during the 3100s. At the time, the ship dominated the small fighter scene. It was fast, manoeuvrable and very heavily armed. Millions of units were sold all across human space. The Mk II is designed as a bold re-imagining of the original. Though now in a much larger ship class – its new peers being ships such as Falcon's own Python – it retains many advantages boasted by the original: speed, agility, and firepower. But how does it hold up in the modern day?

Before even stepping inside the vessel you first notice the unusual design. Large sensor relays on the wings, a cockpit that's almost underslung, and a no-nonsense, simple exterior give the ship a very low profile. Many ships of its size paint a large target on their backs, particularly those with more aggressive aesthetics such as the Federal Gunship. The Krait, however, blends in to the surroundings. Despite being a new release, it almost seems as if it's been around forever.

The simple exterior hides an interior of classic Falcon personality. Don't enter expecting the clean polymer panels or minimalistic interiors of some of its competitors. Loose wires snake around the cockpit, held down by no more than a strip of duct tape. One of the access hatches can't be closed courtesy of a cable passing through.

Despite undoubtedly driving many an obsessive Commander mad, the clumsily-constructed cockpit feels, paradoxically, one of the safest to sit in. As ever when sitting at the helm of a DeLacy ship, its reliability can almost be felt by merely holding the controls. This is a vessel that is preceded by its formidable reputation.

One of the ship's main attractions is its multicrew capability. The ship is able to host two crew members – one manning turrets and missile racks, the other piloting a ship-launched fighter.

### The Mk II is designed as a bold re-imagining of the original.



### Outfitting

Upon taking the Krait into the shipyard for customisation, its specifications make clear its purpose. The versatile internal slots and excellent weapon mounts combined with the strong stock jump range are typical of a multi-purpose vessel – DeLacy's specialty. Given that this places it as a competitor to the Python, it seems an odd choice of vessel for Falcon to release, attempting to fill as it does a role already occupied by one of the shipbuilder's own products.

For the purposes of this review the Krait was given a standard multi-role loadout. Tests were performed on an engineered model, to reflect what is available to the modern pilot.

Due to the comparative sluggishness of the ship relative to smaller fighter-class vessels, a 'shield-tank' build was used. A reinforced prismatic shield generator with thermally reinforced and heavy-duty shield boosters grants thick shields with strong resistances. To further bolster defences, a pair of Class 5 shield cell banks and three of the new Guardian shield reinforcement packages were also installed, replacing cargo racks. Filling the remaining Class 6 slot, a large fighter hangar was installed.

Occupying the three large hardpoints were three plasma accelerators. A mixture of overcharged and efficient engineering allows maximum damage to be applied without causing significant heat problems. On the medium hardpoints, a feedback cascade railgun for shield cell disruption and a drag munitions packhound missile rack were mounted for utility. The packhound would come into its own with a dedicated weapons crew member.

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**As the old saying goes: "Jack of all trades, master of none, but oftentimes better than a master of one."**

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### First Impressions

As soon as the ship is released from the landing pad, one thing is noticeable: the sound. The large main thrusters growl when making small manoeuvres. Upon leaving the station and boosting, they roar and splutter, reminding this reporter of a Viper Mk III. This clamour is not just for show, however. The Krait's engines power it forward at an impressive speed, notably faster than most other ships of its size. A multi-role build of the ship can easily reach a cruise speed of about 390 metres per second and a boost speed of 530, with engineered thrusters.

Throwing rotation into the mix the ship offers an impressive performance. Its pitch rate comes in almost exactly halfway between the Python and the Fer-de-Lance, making it the most agile ship in its class by a large margin. This is evident when taking the ship for a spin in the asteroids: ease of manoeuvring throughout the rocks allows the ship to take cover, using the environment to its advantage. Pilots should be careful, however: it's easy to forget that it does not match the agility of some lighter medium ships.

### Mission Running

Once initial flight tests were done, the vessel was brought out on its first mission: a high-profile assassination. The mission was intended to be tackled by an entire wing, but the ship was sent alone for this task with two crewmembers aboard.

Upon dropping in, it was clear just how daunting this task would prove. An engineered Federal Corvette with full escort greeted the Krait. Not taking any chances to allow the target to escape, combat was initiated almost immediately.

The Corvette's overwhelming firepower was clear, but the Krait's thick shields – enhanced by Guardian shield reinforcement packages – stood strong, buying enough time to rout and destroy the Corvette's entourage. Soon all that remained was the warship itself.

The ensuing duel was long and punishing. Even with the backup of a fighter, the Krait struggled to lay down enough firepower to crack the shields of the Corvette. After what felt like an endless battle of burst damage and shield cells, the Corvette made a mistake, deploying a shield cell too late after a pass.

This granted an easy shot for the Krait, disrupting the shield cell with the railgun, and the Corvette's primary defences finally collapsed. This allowed the Krait's gunner to blow off the Corvette's weaponry with the packhound rack, before a precise volley of plasma accelerators gutted the ship's power plant.

Despite taking a battering and expending all its shield cells, the Krait had prevailed against a far stronger enemy. In the same situation, it is difficult to believe that a similar ship such as the Python would have been capable of this feat, due to its lack of a fighter bay and sluggish turning abilities. Although the Krait struggled to break the Corvette's shields, the class difference between the two ships must be taken into account – meaning the Krait has extremely impressive firepower for its size.

Many types of mission fall well into the Krait's capabilities, ranging from combat to smuggling. It struggles with trading missions that require a larger payload, though these are not usually tackled by multi-role mission-runners anyway, favouring dedicated haulage vessels. Excluding passenger missions, the ship is comfortably capable of performing the vast majority of available contracts.

One of the major components of its ability to perform such varied tasks is its impressive jump range. In full combat fit the ship is capable of well over 20ly jump range when engineered, and the addition of a Guardian frame shift drive (FSD) booster can send this well into the 30s. If the ship is stripped down it is an excellent exploration vessel, even allowing the pilot to bring a fighter along for the ride.







### Anti-Xeno Combat

Many pilots, in taking the war to the Thargoids' doorstep in the Pleiades, seek unusual combat builds to match the aliens' armaments and tactics. Most ships fail to suit both of these situations, but not the Krait. The mixture of hardpoint sizes and the ability to stack significant hull strength allows it to excel when engaging alien foes. Guardian plasma chargers and Gauss cannons prove particularly dangerous choices, allowing easy sniping of Thargoid 'hearts'. Not only does it excel in such combat, but its high jump range even in full combat loadout permits easy access to the Pleiades.

### Final Verdict

The bottom line on the Krait Mk II is clear to see: it has soared to the top of the medium multi-role field. Few other ships compare to its hugely varied capabilities. As the old saying goes: "Jack of all trades, master of none, but oftentimes better than a master of one." It's true, many other ships surpass its abilities in one specific field. An Asp Explorer can just out-jump it. Many heavy fighters can out-turn it. A Federal Gunship can outgun it. But nothing is capable of doing all these things simultaneously while also allowing for two crewmates and only occupying a medium landing pad.

**The Krait has extremely impressive firepower for its size.**

For those seeking a ship for everything at a reasonable price, the Krait, for now, is unmatched.



### Krait MkII

**Text:** Mini\_Watto

**Images:** DMC\_Rulez, ZerOaxis, OrangePheonix, SebastianWehmeyer, pSyren\_Farseer

**Design:** McNicholl

# ハイパースウィート LTT HYPER SWEET



ミツバチの糖尿病  
SO SWEET, IT GIVES  
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歯科医のための  
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## 走る脳の弓

### UNLEASH YOUR BRAINBOW SMEATON ORBITAL | LTT 9360 | スミートン軌道

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素晴らしい幸せな時間をもたらす可能性があります素晴らしい死は、あなたがより多くの魅力を異性にするか、あなたの繁殖力を高めることはありません。それを流出させてください。

# INTO THE BLACK

The Remarkable Voyages of Commander Pingmonster

It has often been remarked that interstellar explorers journey as much through their own thoughts and meditations as they do through space, and it's well-documented that many pilots claim to experience a 'Zen' moment at least once in their career.

Commander Pingmonster, an explorer holding the rank of Elite, can testify to this first-hand. He has visited thousands of star systems, mused over tens of nebulae, and watched a hundred different stars rise over alien worlds. We caught up with him at Adelman Station in the Cubeo system to find out exactly what it is that lures him into the black.

The Pleiades expedition of Spring 3303 had started as a scavenging and prospecting mission. However, while in the midst of Guardian and Thargoid artefacts and relics, Commander Pingmonster realised with cold certainty that we are not alone in this Galaxy. The expedition was a success and yielded a nice profit, but the insights he gained were worth far more than his payment from the engineer Ram Tah.

"These are messages sent to us through time. There is information in these obelisks that was left here for an advanced civilization to use, and we should do just that. The Guardians talk to us at these archeological sites... we need to listen," he explained.

During his time spent at a few Thargoid surface sites, he was able to scoop up materials dropped by Scavengers: a Thargoid carapace, a few Thargoid energy cells, Thargoid organic circuitry, and Thargoid technology components. He took a couple of days off from prospecting to study the Scavengers and their daily rituals.

*After two days of observing these enigmatic creatures, I have come to the conclusion that they are a combination of organic and mechanical elements, which is simply amazing. Also, it appears as if they care after and maybe even nourish the Thargoid eggs on the surface. Just as remarkable is the way they go about repairing the surface site with some sort of corrosion beam.*

This sort of analysis and commentary has come to define Pingmonster's career; not content to merely experience the Galaxy's less probable corners, he is a committed narrator. Visitors to his travelogue on the Pilots Federation forum can follow his expeditions to Barnard's Loop, the Orion constellation, the Heart and Soul Nebula, Colonia, the California Nebula and more.

His latest expedition was a high-water mark for his career as a pilot. The Beagle Point expedition of December 3303 kept him in the black for several months, and he travelled well beyond the eponymous star system to gather exploration data. Beagle Point is considered the ultimate milestone for any explorer, because to reach this system pilots must endure 65,279 light years of interstellar

“...these are messages sent to us through time.”

travel and cross dangerous regions of the Galaxy.

He chose his Asp Explorer *Kinnara* for the expedition, as he had experienced virtually no problems during two shakedown runs outside of populated space, and recent work with the engineers had successfully increased the jump range from the 20s to over 40 light years.

His first stop was Colonia. He took refuge for a day or so there, trekking through the Festival Grounds and the Eol Prou Nebula to test newly-installed equipment, and reacquainting himself with his fleet of ships hangared in the Colonies. From there he set a course for Beagle Point.

...a region of space that contained what appeared to be an uncountable number of black holes.



### Two steps forward, one step back

Before he had Sagittarius A\* behind him, however, a white dwarf pulled his ship out of supercruise, damaging several systems.

*Kinnara took some heat damage when we flew too close over the top of a white dwarf (entirely my fault). That scrubbed a few percent off systems here and there but, with dual AFMUs (auto field maintenance units) and plenty of materials in reserve, that is no problem at all.*

Unfortunately, days later a hard landing on a high-gravity planet caused significant damage to his ship and he was forced to return to Colonia for repairs.

**...gazing into the intergalactic void where there seems to be nothing at all, this Zen thing really kicked in.**

### Try, try again

In March this year he restarted the expedition. The journey went more smoothly this time and – by way of several more nebulae, white dwarfs, neutron stars and a thinning starfield – he arrived on April 13th at ZQ-L C24-0, otherwise known as Beagle Point.

There, he explored out beyond the remote system in search of the rare and exotic, and to test his own skills. It was here that he began to experience something akin to enlightenment:

*When I was on the dark side of a world beyond Beagle, gazing into the intergalactic void where there seems to be nothing at all, this Zen thing really kicked in.*

During the following week he added two hundred light years to the route and jumped even further into the black. He wrapped up the expedition with a prospecting mission on a rocky world that seemed devoid of any natural light. “This far out from Beagle you’re a long way from the Galactic bulge and an incredibly long way from everything else that is in the universe.”

During the long journey home, he spotted a black hole near the Scheau Blao Nebula while examining his Galaxy Map. There, he mapped over sixty black holes. However, further analysis of the star map revealed a tantalising anomaly: a thousand light years from his location was

a region of space that contained what appeared to be an uncountable number of black holes. He immediately jumped to the cluster to gather exploration data, and he remained there for several days, marvelling at his surroundings.

“Going out into the black and surveying a neutron star field that is a thousand light years across or a nebula containing over sixty black holes is an enlightening moment,” he explains. “Those are the reasons I explore.” Areas like these anomalies are few and are hard to locate, but the rewards are great. However, they are full of danger and many explorers have been claimed by the perilous gravity wells.

Pingmonster returned to his home system in June 3304, proud but exhausted, with a computer full of exploration data. There were no parades to honour his accomplishments, but commendations have never been the reason pilots explore. He concludes:

*Our rewards come from experiencing the reality of transgalactic travel and discovering who we really are, and the loneliness of the black is a unique experience.*

Pilots will always explore the cosmos, as far as our technology allows us. They will always venture out to find something new or to break a record, even if the only records they can break are their own.



*Into the Black: The Remarkable Voyages of Commander Pingmonster*

**Text:** J C Warren

**Images:** Pingmonster, pSyren Farseer, Timbo Haze

**Design:** Donald Duck

■ From Colonia to Beagle Point and Elite status: only some of the milestones of Commander Pingmonster's impressive exploration career.

## NEUTRON JUMP FERTILITY FEARS

'Neutron Surfing' could cause a decline in fertility amongst pilots, according to research released by a team at Cooper Research Center in HIP 19072 this week.



Text: DrNoesis ■ Design: MichNoll ■ Photo: Zer0axis

According to a survey of volunteers at the center, around 63% of pilots examined during the course of the study appeared to have suffered from a slight drop in fertility over the past year, after undertaking regular enhanced jet cone boost (eJCB) jumps from neutron stars as part of their ship's normal navigational routine.

Over the course of an affected pilot's lifetime, the cumulative effect of eJCB jumps is predicted to represent a **decline of between 3 and 5%** in pilot fertility levels.

Researchers speculate that the effect they have noted may be due to the way that exotic matter and radiation from a neutron star interact with a ship and its crew when passing through the frame shift envelope, leading to mutations in the DNA contained within affected pilots' sex cells, which lead to an increase in non-viable mutated gametes.

When questioned about the impact this could have on long-distance travellers who often rely on making eJCB jumps, scientists at Cooper Research Center issued the following statement:

*Whilst there is strong evidence for a causal link between fertility and neutron jumps, there is no need to call for an outright ban on neutron jumping. Instead, we would recommend that travellers avoid neutron jumping except when necessary, and that they consider utilising basic protection methods for their ships – such as using an energy shield, or installing denser armour and bulkhead material to assist in blocking dangerous radiation.*

Their report concluded with a call to the Alliance government to release further funding to the team, to enable them to continue their research in investigating the effects of eJCB travel on pilot health.



# LAKON



ICE COLD

## DIAMONDBACK SCOUT

RUN SILENT FOR DAYS

FROM \$64,320

Text: Toxophilite | Design: McNicholl | Image: Toxophilite, RubberNuke



## Co-Pawlets



Co-Pawlot name: Tallulah


Commander's name: Toxophilite

Designation: First Officer – Scanning & Analysis

First Officer Tallulah initially stowed away on board Cmdr Toxophilite's Diamondback Explorer, the Fatherhood ship *Wife's Asleep*, at Lee Orbital. She has since become an essential crew-member and recently been promoted.

When it became clear that mouse-catching duties were pretty much non-existent in a spacecraft, she developed a special interest in discovery and specifically SRV scanners. She would spend hours poring (or even pawing?) over signal readings and dance excitedly when a high level return was detected. Her dedication to her duties is exemplary – she rarely leaves her station, even to sleep.

Since taking up her post, the rate at which the *Wife's Asleep* crew are uncovering valuable metallic meteorites planetside has increased dramatically, making her company all the more valuable on Toxophilite's current expedition to Colonia. Only once has she hit the 'boost' button and pancaked them into a planet.

If you have a Co-Pawlet you'd like to share with the Galaxy, get in touch: [editor@sagittarius-eye.com](mailto:editor@sagittarius-eye.com) 

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