



PLANETFALL

ALTERNITY STARDRIVE

CAMPAIGN RESOURCE GUIDE

AMC

As my love for all things sci-fi grows, I find myself looking back at my earlier years of role-playing and remembering fondly the grand adventures I experienced with my friends as I grew up. The realm of the future has always fascinated me and while my exploits wandered through many genres, I never walked the path of Earth and it's advancement into space.

This supplement and it's contents represent that journey. With the Alternity Stardrive genre as the basis for this campaign, I've thrown in my own changes that I hope will engage and delight all those the decide to play in this universe.

Included within are my own thoughts on the advancement of Earth and science beyond the information presented in the original source books. A technologically vast and fantastically dangerous future

rife with high adventure and unbelievable stories. It is a time of contention, hostility, conflict, and discord.

However, it is also a time of transition, trepidation, exploration, and enterprise.

Men and alien alike trek out across the vastness of space in an effort to be the first to exploit the unknown, uncaring of those that may get in the way. Will their efforts be successful or will their presumption be the downfall of known civilization? This campaign explores some of those themes and brings into stark contrast the hubris of civilization and the reality of the actions derived from it.

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CHAPTER
THE
STARDRIVE
CAMPAIGN **1**



STAR ★ DRIVE SETTING

The year is 2652 and for more than 75 years the Third Galactic War has occupied the Stellar Nations. With the war now ended, and ten years of peace, vast regions of previously known space have been captured, annexed, purchased, and negotiated for.

The great factions that emerged from the Second Galactic War are no more, having been replaced by vast corporate and stellar entities. These new nation-states, experiencing their first peace in decades, now begin to expand their territories into the unknown. With new technologies helping these nations along, the race towards the undiscovered has never been greater. The peace in the Stellar Ring is not without its problems however. As a new entity comes to power, so does the resistance to it. The stellar nations continue to test their own boundaries, pushing ever forward in the search for knowledge, technology, and power.

TECHNOLOGY

The *stardrive* continues to be the predominate technology of the galaxy, allowing spaceships to manipulate time and space to leap the vast distances between the stars. Invented in the mid-22nd century, the stardrive has carried settlers, colonists, and explorers to the edge of known space. The technology is not cheap however, with many spacefaring ships simply remaining inside their current star system, unable to travel to other stars.

With a typical stardrive, a ship can enter the reality known as drivespace. In drivespace, space and time do not follow conventional rules. A single starfall requires 5 days (exactly 11² hours). The larger and more powerful the stardrive, the farther a starship can travel during a single starfall. When a ship emerges from drivespace, it must recharge its stardrive for two to five days before it can leap again.

Stardrive technology also allows faster-than-light communications through *drivespace comm relays*. These stations are surrounded by a constellation of satellites that sink into drivespace to transmit and receive messages. Unlike driveships, which always spend five days in drivespace, drivesats remain in drivespace for less than a second before returning to the exact location they left in normal space. In that time, drivesats transmit messages with a drivespace carrier wave. With a total range of 50 light-years, a drivespace message takes 11 hours to reach its destination.

These satellites also double as receivers. As the constellation of drivesats constantly starfall and starrise into and out of drivespace, they receive messages from drivesats within 50 light-years. After a drivesat starrises, it transmits its messages back to the relay station. With a constellation of 10 satellites, a drivesat relay station can guarantee that at least one drivesat is always in drivespace receiving messages.

Throughout the established sectors of space, humans rely on Progress Level 7 technology, with its fantastic advances in the control of gravity. Still, PL 6 items are cheap and common. PL 8 items and inventions are just beginning to emerge however, and the implications of their use are going to have repercussions throughout the galaxy. Still, the amount of these items is limited and extremely expensive to reproduce, making their acquisition a hefty and expensive prospect.

The most important technological invention to emerge from the Third Galactic War is the Drivewave. An improvement over the standard stardrive, it relies on the same principles and requires a mass reactor or similar power plant. Activating a Drivewave that has been integrated into a starship covers the vessel in a controlled energy field before entering drivespace. As a result, the ship can complete a starfall in only 11 hours. This technology however is only possessed by The Galactic Concord and use of it beyond those borders of space is as rare as it is expensive.

The second most important creation to come out of the Third Galactic War is the Matter Converter. This advanced power plant creates energy through the total conversion of mass to energy. Anything can be used as fuel in this power plant. Even the lightest of elements can provide a vast amount of power from the conversion of a miniscule amount of mass. While much more powerful than mass reactors, the Matter Converter remains an extremely expensive piece of hardware that all but the most wealthiest of nations can afford.

THE 27th CENTURY

“It has become appallingly obvious that our technology has exceeded our humanity.” – Albert Einstein

War has influenced technology profoundly across time and space and Albert Einstein’s outlook in the 19th century, while not directly related to war, could not be more true in the 27th century. The third Galactic War, which raged on for 75 bloody years, witnessed some of the most important and fantastical advancement in science, machinery, communications, and technology.

The era of expansion that began in 2160, has led way to the Energy Age with the catalyst being the third Galactic War. With nations vying for control of neighboring territory, expanding rapidly into the vast unknown sectors of space, and the desperate need to protect those sectors they already own, the technological advancements needed rapidly came into existence.

While much of this new technology remains out of the hands of the average consumer due to it’s extreme cost, many new technological advancements in medicine, communications, cybernetics, and personal protection remain widely available to the Stellar Ring.

With the elimination of plagues, disease, epidemics, and viruses, the human body has risen to the peak of physical perfection. With the complete and total understanding of the human genome, and by extension all the current known sentient species, the normal lifespan has been extended to the unknown limits. Genetic treatments, and anti-aging gene therapy have become matter-of-course amongst the stellar nations. Cybernetics, once viewed with disdain and mistrust, have become commonplace amongst the stars. Galactic laws now protect those members of society that chose to enhance their own bodies with technology and those Galactic laws extend into most stellar nations with few exceptions.

Phenomenal advancements in artificial intelligence and autonomous robots have produced an unexpected effect: a society of independent and fully capable android citizens. Laws enacted now give all silicon-based life full citizenship and the same rights as any carbon-based life-form throughout much of the Stellar Ring. They even have their own burgeoning stellar nation which is quickly expanding.

Gridspace, while always ever-present in the 27th century, has seen exponential growth due to the assistance of artificial intelligence. What once was the medium for all forms of communication, Gridspace has evolved to pervade every single corner of life itself. With the wide-spread acceptance of cybernetics throughout the Stellar Ring, children grow up with nanocomputers and NIjacks implanted at a young age. Business, commerce, communication, recreation, and entertainment all happen within Gridspace. Gridpilots, once the specialists within Gridspace, have become it’s masters.

Personal and military advancements have created some of the bloodiest engagements in the 27th century. Melee weapons of the period approach and often times even exceed the capabilities of many ranged weapons. Miniaturization of power sources have given rise to plasma-filled blades, combat knives, and kinetic maces. Powered armor has given way to force fields, energy webs and deflection screens. Military starships benefit from AI controlled computer systems and Drivewave equipped Stardrives. Support systems include Mass Detectors and Multiphasic Radar. Personal transports are equipped with automatic defense systems, reactive offenses, and some even benefit from their own grid sectors, able to seamlessly connect with Gridspace at large.



ABBREVIATED TIMELINE

- 2047** The fusion generator is developed and a period of peace and prosperity begins.
- 2106** The mass reactor is developed, forever changing the world.
- 2124** Humans make first contact with the Fraal.
- 2160** The combined sciences of Humans and Fraal technology create the first stardrive.
- 2193** The first drivespace communications satellite is developed.
- 2241** With range of massive fortress ships, Earth and colonial powers take control of more than 100 star systems.
- 2246** First Contact is made with the Weren.
- 2273** First contact is made with the Mechalus.
- 2274** First contact is made with the Sesheyans.
- 2296** First contact is made with the T'sa.
- 2299** The First Galactic War begins.
- 2312** The First Galactic War ends.
- 2314** The first explorers reach the Verge.
- 2346** The Second Galactic War is started by the Mutant Uprising of Tau Ceti.
- 2375** The drivespace communications relay connecting the Verge is destroyed in the Battle of Kendai.
- 2472** The Second Galactic War ends with the signing of the Treaty of Concord.
- 2496** The Kendai drivespace relay is rebuilt, reestablishing contact with the Verge.
- 2505** Android uprising in the Thuldan Empire.
- 2515** Android uprising quelled. Galactic outrage over treatment ensues.
- 2537** Advances in cybernetics vastly improve galactic life.
- 2545** The Cyber Skirmish - Protests ensue on a galactic scale in regards to 'superior' cybernetic enhancements and their affect on society.
- 2550** Galactic Laws enacted protecting the rights of the populace chosing to use cybernetics.
- 2565** The Android Cooperative is formed. Millions of AI protest because of poor galactic treatment.
- 2567** The Third Galactic War ensues, kicked off by malicious attacks on AI.
- 2570** The Nariac Domain officially joins VoidCorp and enters the war.
- 2573** The Borealis Republic 'joins' the Rigunmor Star Consortium.
- 2574** The Insight joins the Rigunmor Star Consortium & Borealis Republic - The Commonwealth Syndicate is incorporated.
- 2581** The Hatire Community is decimated by the Thuldan Empire.
- 2592** The Unified Quinate Conclave is created by the merging of 5 great nations: Austrin-Ontis Unlimited, The Orion League, The Orlamu Theocracy, The StarMech Collective, and the Android Cooperative.
- 2642** The Galactic Concord ends the Third Galactic War.
- 2652** The present day.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

With the Kendai drivespace relay being rebuilt in 2496 after the second Galactic War, contact was re-established with the Verge. While several key bases would be established over the next coming years, the mystery of why so many system lost contact remained so. Peace throughout known space would be a fleeting hope as radical elements would continue to stress the already tenuous concord reached throughout the galaxy.

Within the already tumultuous Thuldan Empire, an android uprising sparks the first of many grisly skirmishes. With it's existing laws deeming robots and artificial intelligence as personal property, clashes between silicon-based life and carbon based life were inevitable. In 2505, the confrontations came to a head with the Android Uprising. Millions of autonomous robots and artificial intelligence brought their grievances to the fore-front. Work strikes across the sector brought the Empire to a grinding halt. Massive demonstrations were organized along with peaceful assemblies. At the heart of the android community was their right to be considered stellar citizens. Equal in all respects to any living being within the Empire. Equivalent treatment, commensurate responsibilities, and citizenship indistinguishable from every other living being.

Of course the Empire, being as it is, would have no part in this dissention and reacted accordingly. In a one day confrontation, the Thuldan Empire responded to these 'threats' to it's core and thousands of androids and robots were destroyed across the sector. While military response was swift and near complete, the Empire did not count on the repercussions of it's actions. In one of the bloodiest engagements ever seen within the Empire, androids and robots fought back, sparking what would be a 10 year long civil war. It would not be until 2515 when the Empire finally and decisively brought an end to this internal struggle, employing millions of soldiers from within it's own borders and thousands more from without. Even then, the outrage of it's actions had spread across the galaxy and had gained the attention of the Galactic Concord. Bitter dialogue between nations would rage on for years regarding the citizen status of synthetic life forms.

Artificial life forms would not be the only individuals embroiled in galactic conflict. With significant advances being made in cybernetics in 2537, the average life of any citizen within the Stellar Ring vastly improved. Due to advances made with the help of the Mechalus, every living being could reap the benefit of even the most basic cybernetic implants. The human body, now having reached almost peak physical form, could utilize implants in never-before-seen ways. The average stellar citizen, once viewing cybernetic implants as distasteful, now became the minority as more and more individuals came to realize the advantages of implantation.

However, these advancements soon split the core worlds in two. Protests ensued decrying the superiority of individuals with cybernetics. Bionics and mechanical upgrades were still seen by many as abominable and shameless. Even those using these 'upgrades' in medically necessary procedures were looked upon with aversion. The term '*Bioroid*' was created to ridicule and deride those that had chosen the route of cybernetic enhancement. Soon, dissent was rampant across the galaxy and the turmoil erupted in conflict.

The Cyber Skirmish of 2545 brought forth a similar situation to the Android Uprising in earlier years. Much of the same issues were brought forth. Equal treatment, equal laws, and equivalent rights. The struggle was never peaceful however. Many groups on either side saw this tug-of-war as a direct threat to their way of life and rather than let a civil-war rage, deadly actions were taken immediately. Seen as abominations, many citizens took matters into their own hands by attacking cybernetic enhanced individuals. Mobs of '*pure bred*s' would descend upon those with even the smallest amounts of improvements, ripping them limb from limb as their own form of protest.

Thankfully, the Galactic Concord stepped in to put an end to the conflict. In 2550, the Ashby Laws were enacted. These laws brought an end to the clashes by ensuring equal protection and rights for any individual using any cybernetic enhancement and even went so far as to protect non-humans. At the very heart of these laws are the complete and total understanding that the human race had come to recognize in any 'system':

- **"The total number of possible states of a system, or of an element of a system."**
- **"The larger the variety of actions available to a control system, the larger the variety of perturbations it is able to compensate."**
- **"The greater the variety within a system, the greater its ability to reduce variety in its environment through regulation."**
- **"The quantity of regulation that can be achieved is bounded by the quantity of information that can be transmitted in a certain channel."**
- **"Variety absorbs variety"**

Along with these basic laws came enforcement on a galactic scale. All 'enhanced' citizens, no matter their station in life would be afforded the same rights as any non-enhanced citizen, human or otherwise. The tumult soon died down but the unity would not last for long.

In what can only be seen as the single most unifying act of the 26th century, as well as the catalyst for the third Galactic War, the Android Cooperative came into swift and decisive existence in 2565. With its formation came galaxy wide protests from artificial intelligence. This time however, many stellar nations had seen the writing on the wall, and history would usher in 75 years of catastrophic war.

With the inception of the Android Cooperative, the Thuldan Empire struck. In 2567, the Empire's warships and military might struck out across the galaxy in its misguided attempts to bring an end to all artificial intelligence. Unfortunately, they were not the only ones with this view. As the Empire dealt out their wrath across the galaxy, so did other stellar nations. Some became embroiled in their own conflicts, others decided on more aggressive and expansionist actions. In all cases, artificial intelligence paid the price. No longer able to sit on the sidelines, the Android Cooperative decided to begin its retreat into space. While a massive exodus of autonomous robots and androids began leaving the stellar ring, a vacuum of power soon emerged producing opportunities for stellar nations, once living a tenuous peace, for expansion and conquest.

The Nariac Domain, immediately recognizing the impending conflicts, approached the VoidCorp nation with its offer to officially join them in 2570. As former combatants with Austrin-Ontis Unlimited, the Domain knew that once again they would become embroiled in a war that they could not handle on their own nor could they afford. The decision to join VoidCorp was easy for the Domain. Having previously been a client state of VoidCorp, their petition to join the nation-state was approved almost immediately and its people were welcomed with open arms.

Of course the ones to really benefit from this merge of nation-states was VoidCorp, as they had long sought after the sectors that the Domain held, as well as the resources contained there-in. The biggest advantage was the integration of the technologically advanced people and the tech of the Domain with the Corporation, catapulting VoidCorp into the technological future. VoidCorp remains one of the most technologically advanced nation-states to have emerged from the Third Galactic War.

Quickly following the Domain's lead in 2573, the Borealis Republic joined with the Rigunmor Star Consortium and the nation of Insight joined up as well in the following year. Seeing the need to expand its territory amidst the chaos of the Third Galactic War and rather than spend its vast sums of money on what would be great loss of life and capital, the Rigunmor Star Consortium 'persuaded' the Borealis Republic to join their nation state and present a larger and more united front against encroaching hostiles. Insight however, the fledgling nation state that broke free from the VoidCorp nation-state, recognized a prime opportunity to further humiliate their former 'overlords' and freely joined with the Rigunmor Star Consortium as a parting 'jab in the eye' of VoidCorp.

Armed with their superior information, knowledge and stratagem, the Insight people merged with the Star Consortium and the Republic to create The Commonwealth Syndicate in 2574. This vast portion of space is known to hold the most advanced Grid systems in the known Stellar Ring and the Consortium is the most profitable nation-state to exit the Third Galactic War.

The 14th year of the Third Galactic War sees the quickest revolution to ever emerge from the Gravity Age. Aware of the need to expand aggressively, the Thuldan Empire annexed the Hatire Community and quashed all resistance within 24 hours of its 'invasion' of Hatire Space. Using subterfuge, illicit and illegal tactics, murder and mayhem, the Thuldan Empire orchestrated the quickest and deadliest coup known to date. Even before the 24 hours had ended, millions of lives were snuffed out of existence and the Hatire space was gobbled up by the Empire. While the Empire still deals with pockets of resistance that have spread throughout Thuldan space, the ferocity and brutality that have permeated the Empire is not in dispute. The Thuldan Empire remains the most dangerous and most aggressive nation-state to have emerged from the Third Galactic War.

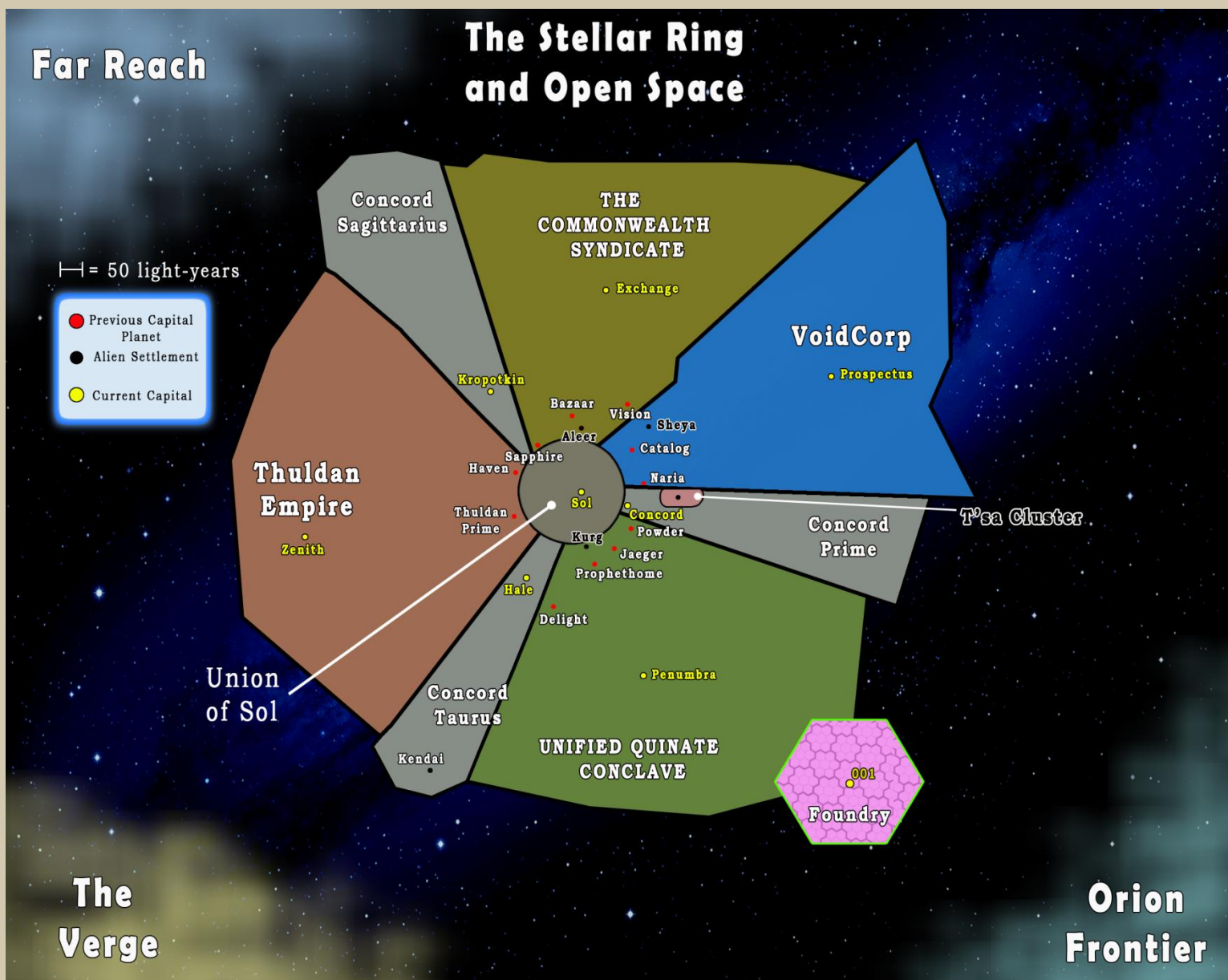
In 2592, an unprecedented assembly occurred. The Android Cooperative sent out representatives across the 5 great nations of Austrin-Ontis Unlimited, the Orion League, the Orlamu Theocracy, and the StarMech Collective. With their superior tactics of negotiation and arbitration, the Android Collective helped to form the Unified Quinate Conclave by bringing together all 5 'entities' into one massive stellar nation.

The name is a simple derivative of the 5 factions involved, suggested by the Android Cooperative. The integrated nation operates with a variety of laws, decrees, and mandates culled from the 5 original faction states including unilateral protection and rights for all AI / Sentient robots, androids, and automatons. The treaty, signed by all 5 nations, included specific sectors of space to be reserved for the Android Cooperative, while still allowing the Cooperative to remain a part of the Conclave itself. To this date, and aside from the nation of Concord itself, the Unified Quinate Conclave is the most stable of all the great nation-states to have come out of the Third Galactic War.

When the great nation-states became embroiled in the Third Galactic War, The Galactic Concord was nearly destroyed by the constant and bloody incursions into its space. It struggled to maintain peace throughout its sectors and on many occasions lost ground to various forces making inroads and capturing regions. Only through careful negotiations and peace offerings with the newly formed Unified Quinate Conclave and the Android Collective did The Galactic Concord survive and bring about the end of the Third Galactic War in 2642. The Concord now patrols its sectors of space with vast armadas and gun-ships, maintaining peace wherever it is needed. These vessels are manned with superior troops, androids, and artificial intelligence, with its ships being piloted by the best in the Stellar Ring.

With the help of the quickly growing Android Cooperative, who wished to see their new race survive and knowing only that peace amongst the nation-states could accomplish this, the androids supplied The Galactic Concord with superior AI and superior tech, helping to turn the tide of war back to peace and even retake lost sectors and gain new ground. Their only request was to become their own nation-state, within the space of their choosing. To this day, the Unified Quinate Conclave remains a staunch supporter of The Galactic Concord and it's peace-keeping commitment.

The stellar ring of today and the stellar nations of tomorrow have vastly changed in the last 150 years. With a tentative peace forcibly brought on by the Galactic Concord, the time has come once again for exploration. The war has brought about the Energy Age, and with it, a significant leap in science and technology. Will this new age finally see an end to the centuries old conflicts between the nations, or will the peace fracture and collapse back into hostilities and chaos? Can the galaxy handle a new galactic war? Only time will tell.





CHAPTER
THE 27TH
CENTURY
2



“Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic” – Arthur C. Clarke, 1962

The Third Galactic War of the 26th Century ushered in new technological marvels into the 27th Century. With their rush to conquer old rivals and ensure their continued existence in the Orion Arm, the stellar nations conceived some of the galaxy’s greatest innovations. In their haste to climb to the top of the technological heap however, they also created some of the galaxy’s most deadliest creations as well.

With the realization of the Matter Converter, the Dynamic Mass Reactor, and the Quantum Cell, military vehicles leapt into the Energy Age. Starships could now cross even more vast distances of space than before. Stellar nations began creating vast armadas of space-faring vessels. From the smallest transport and cargo ships, to monstrous dreadnoughts that can carry the entire population of a single world.

Colossal colony ships were designed and fabricated, each carrying with it the most up-to-date technologies and thousands of inhabitants. Rivaling even the size of the Fraal’s own city-ships, these behemoths set forth into parts unknown, colonizing each new world along their trek into the undiscovered.

As the frontiers of space technology continued to be pushed, the boundaries of personal technology kept pace. With the help of the Mechalus, cybernetic implants became common-place, allowing all individuals to benefit from cyberotechnology.

Medical advances continue improve the life of the average galactic citizen. Illness, disease, viruses, plague, and even the aging process have all been eliminated. Humans can conceivably live forever with regularly scheduled anti-aging treatments. Gene therapy generates the peak of the human physical form and eugenics allows for the improvement of human genetic traits, producing superior human specimens. The ‘mutant’ is no longer considered an aberration of the human species as mutant genes can be repaired, replaced or even modified before birth. Vast colonies of humans that can survive in alien conditions or live on alien worlds now exist.

Gridspace is now the singular source for all news, entertainment, information, business, and communication. With the emergence of a new race, Androids, Gridspace has seen a technological leap of exponential enormity. No longer is Gridspace a mere holographic projection, but a fully involved and 3 dimensional virtual reality. Immersing oneself in the grid is as near as one can get to actual reality. Gridpilots, once the experts of all Gridspace are now it’s masters, able to manipulate the very fabric that makes up the grid itself, and none are more powerful then the artificial intelligence androids that have staked their claims in Gridspace.

STANDARD TECHNOLOGY

Current galactic technology stands at Progress Level 8. While Gravity Age technology is still the most widely accepted and commonly used technology in the spiral arm, many more advanced cutting edge technologies exist but are extremely expensive to produce and even own on a personal level. Within the borders of Old Space however, much of these advanced technologies are taken for granted by the average citizen.

Continued miniaturization of stardrive technologies and power plants the size of marbles have allowed the stellar nations to harness the basic forces of creation. Powerful personal force screens and energy weapons dominate the battlefield. Ancient slug-throwing weapons have finally disappeared after ruling the combat zone for a thousand years or more. Compressed sensors, shields, and engines now allow for mass production of small and practical starfighters. Advanced construction techniques have allowed humans to build massive colony ships – enormous vessels the size of small planets.

While personal vehicles remain familiar, current advancements in miniaturization of previous technologies have allowed for a wider distribution of vehicles to the masses, and for small vessels. The starfighter is one such example of this advancement. This small personal craft is generally piloted by one or two individuals. Equipped with a stardrive and gravitic redirector allows the small craft to both traverse the stars and engage in in combat.

Mass Transceivers, while still the ultimate in communication within a star system, have seen significant improvements over the years. Gravitic Boosters, placed at the edge of star systems, generate miniature gravity wells, extending the range of communications to link up star systems within a sector.

Gridspace, once limited to individual star systems, now can encompass many, connecting everything from business to pleasure across vast distances of space.

Terraforming, once an expensive endeavor that could nearly bankrupt a stellar nation, is now the standard for the colonization of distant worlds once deemed uninhabitable. With massive ships orbiting a planet, it can be ‘engineered’ to accept whatever life is deemed necessary. Oceans can be created or destroyed. Atmosphere can be modified. Temperature, topography, and ecology can be manipulated to form the perfect biosphere for life to exist. While still a very expensive enterprise, terraforming is considered the standard for expansion.

COMMUNICATION

“It is better to keep your mouth closed and let people think you are a fool than to open it and remove all doubt” – Mark Twain

Communication has always been critical to the maintenance of empires, the growth of free thought, the needs of a modern economy, and the deployment of military assets. As the great nations of Earth spread out amongst the stars, their reliance on communication technology went with them.

PLANETARY

Communication on the planetary scale has been cheap and instant for more than 6 centuries. Satellites orbit all developed worlds, providing dedicated lines of connection to all inhabitants. Comm gears exist in many forms, from headsets to data slates. From gauntlets to cybernetics. The armada of satellites orbiting above provide a medium for all forms of communication from audio to video, holographic, and Gridspace.

INTERPLANETARY

Communications within an individual star system relies upon the Mass Transceiver. Initially created in 2330, this technology still depends upon the gravity of the star in the system to send and receive packets of information. Communication near a star is instantaneous and an entire system can be administered from one point. One singular advancement in communications however has allowed nearby star systems to link up. The Gravitic Booster, created in 2615 by The Commonwealth Syndicate, allows for neighboring star systems to communicate instantly. By producing a miniature gravity well, the Gravitic Booster increases the range in which communications can be transmitted and received. The edge of a star system, ringed with boosters, allows the packets sent and received by Mass Transceivers to be ‘pushed’ across the distance of space between star systems. While the Gravitic Booster does not have the ability to send communications across distances greater than 5000 AU or just under 5% of 1 Light Year (approximately 25 billion miles,) it can connect any star system within that distance. Entire sectors of space can now communicate instantly with each other.

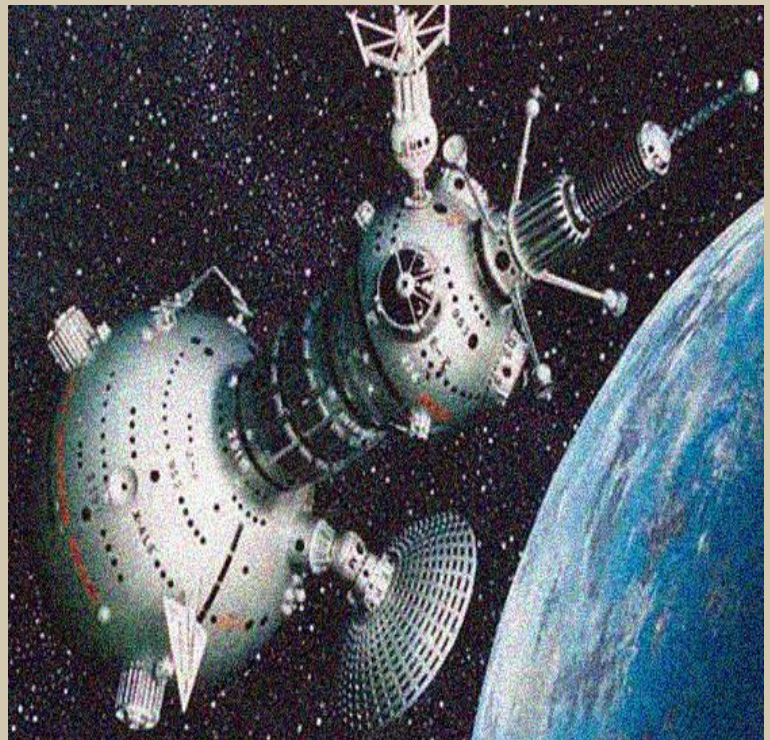
INTERSTELLAR

While the Gravitic Booster connected neighboring star systems within a specific sector, communications beyond 25 billion miles leaves only one option: The Drivespace Relay. Based upon the same principles as the stardrive itself, a Drivespace Relay momentarily ‘starfalls’ into drivespace to send and receive communications across vast distances.

A drivespace Relay doesn’t actually travel anywhere, and so its trip into and return from drivespace is nearly instantaneous. The few seconds that a relay is in drivespace is all it needs to launch an energy carrier wave to other drivesats within 50 light-years. Transmissions take 11 hours to reach their destination and as such, contact between relays operates on a delay.

Typically one can observe any number of Drivespace Relays winking in and out of existence in any star system as they constantly starfall and starrise, sending and receiving all manner of communications.

Of course, with any system of communication in existence, it can come under attack from number or sources. Thus merchants and infotradors still exist in the 27th century. Data merchants carry messages and information much like any other cargo trader. For a fee, these businesses deliver messages between star systems and to the nearest drivespace relay. In general, more remote star systems and colonies rely upon data merchants simply because they cannot afford to outfit their system with Mass Transceivers or Drivespace Relays. All data merchants and infotradors are licensed by the Galactic Concord. A lengthy background check is pursued to ensure all message carriers can be trusted. Profit margins in communication traffic is not high however and in general most merchants use it to supplement their normal trading. This however does not lend itself to the safest way to send a message. Despite the best efforts of all nations to ensure the safety of their property, carriers are still lost to accidents, attacks, and piracy.



Gravitic Booster

“The Internet is becoming the town square for the global village of tomorrow.” – Bill Gates, 20th Century

For more than 500 years, Gridspace has been the number one source for communication, business, entertainment, information, banking, and news. From the largest government to the single individual, whether it's accessed via gauntlet, NIjack, or Gridsuit, Gridspace is a fundamental part of everyone's life. It is such an essential factor that the average citizen in the 27th century wouldn't know what to do without it.

Over the centuries, Gridspace has evolved to be an all-encompassing environment. Users can immerse themselves as deep as they like. From simply accessing information on a Gridcaster and having it displayed on a small screen, to full immersion with a shadow avatar via an NIjack or a Gridsuit. Gridspace itself has become a medium wherein even the most novice user can drown themselves in sensory overload. With programs to send owns on consciousness into the Grid, a typical user can create their own likeness in the form of an avatar, or even create an avatar that looks like anything they can imagine. With sensory and feedback programs and equipment, a Gridpilot can interact with anyone else inside the Grid almost as if they were physically standing in front of them. The Grid has become a fully 3 dimensional space complete with environments and surroundings that react accordingly. True virtual reality has arrived.

With the invention of the Mass Transceiver, Gridspace could connect entire star systems. Entire Gridspace sectors were created, commonly known as Grid Sectors. From the Sol Grid to the Tau Ceti Grid to the Tendril Grid, in general each star system developed its own sector. No two sectors were ever alike, each having their own security or lack there-of. Each having its own quality depending upon the bandwidth each one could sustain. In general, the quality of each sector Grid would determine whether or not a system was a bustling beacon of modern times or a backwater nowhere. This was the way it going to be for more than 400 years.

That is until the invention of the Gravitic Booster in 2615 by The Commonwealth Syndicate. Suddenly multiple star systems could connect up their sector grids, encompassing billions of miles of space. No longer would one have to rely upon a Drivespace Relay and the use of a Shadow to jump into the next systems Grid. 22 hours of waiting for your Shadow to return with whatever information it was programmed to retrieve was gone. Gridpilots could freely wander about inside a Gridspace that was exponentially larger than it had been for the last 400 years.

THE INTERSTELLAR GRID

Since the Stellar Ring is the most densely settled portion of space and spans thousands of star systems, the interstellar grid is still the main way that stellar nations stay in touch. While the Gravitic Booster may have been able to bring many of these systems into closer and faster contact, there are still plenty of systems that lay out far beyond the boosters communications range. These systems stay in contact with Drivespace Relays and generally serve every populated star system, even those with boosters.

With a Drivespace Relay, all communications require at least 11 hours to travel from one drivesat to another. The larger the distance between two systems, the more drivesats a message must be relayed across, and the longer it takes. Even within Old Space, news can be delayed as long as two days for some of the more remote star systems.

Along the frontiers however, information transit can lag from the Stellar Ring and can grow incredibly long by the standards of the day. Individuals must sometimes make due with days or even weeks of downtime. Businesses, governments and even military may find it difficult to maintain ties with their people, bureaucracies, or military assets. For Gridpilots and professional computer users, the delay can be especially annoying. Whenever someone wants to obtain information from a remote database outside his or her own sector, it takes at least 22 hours to get it. If the distance is even greater, it may take even more time as the information is relayed across multiple drivesats.

This process was made significantly easier centuries earlier with the creation of Shadow technology. Essentially a shadow is generated to represent the Gridpilot's interests and fulfills his or her mission objectives. The Shadow then can be transmitted much like any other form of data.

SYSTEMS WITHOUT BOOSTERS OR RELAYS

Systems with Gravitic Boosters or Drivespace Relays are known as Grid Ghettoes or 'deaf' Grids. These Grids cannot directly communicate with other Grids because of their remote distance from them. Operating within the confines of a deaf Grid is often times to the detriment of computer users and Gridpilots. Within the confines of these systems, the only method of transmitting or receiving any data is within the confines of the computer storage banks of a starship.

Often times to ludicrous for the modern Gridpilot to even contemplate, he or she must pay a data merchant to traffic the data to or from the destination directly, or to the nearest Drivespace Relay. Either way a prospect like this is likely to take weeks depending upon the size of the starship the data merchant uses and the size of the Drivespace Relay the information is delivered to.

“It is well that war is so terrible — otherwise we should grow too fond of it.” – Robert E. Lee, 1862

With 3 galactic wars in the past 350 years, countless skirmishes, border disputes, and endless hostilities, one would think that the nations of the Orion Arm would have destroyed themselves long ago. With the lifespan of the average citizen having been greatly increased over the centuries, turmoil, conflict, and unrest have been a part of every galactic citizens' existence. Stellar nations continually prepare for the next armed encounter. From the lonely citizen carrying a maser pistol for personal protection to the largest military vessels that guard the borders of a stellar nation, violence will forever be venerated.

PERSONAL HARDWARE

The demands that continuous exploration of new worlds and a growing frontier impose upon the citizens of the Orion Arm are great. The rich diversity of the 27th century has seen truly impressive killing instruments. From hand-held maser pistols to titan assault armors to ship-mounted gravitic rams, the technology runs the gamut and the level of violence scales with the requirement of the user.

The Third Galactic War also saw the resurgence of melee arms as the favored weapon of choice for close quarters combat. Despite the proliferation of ranged weapon technologies, gravmaces, power cesti, and starswords are being carried more and more. Those willing to put in the time and training to use such destructive and bloody implements are true sights to behold and best avoided when possible.

Along with the continually growing arms business is the work of those companies that specialize in defense. Personal defense screens are not uncommon along with deflection harnesses and displacer suits. Rumors abound about stealth technologies as well.

The height of this technology however is the Titan Powered Assault Armor. Fully space-to-ground capable, this battle suit can be fitted with ablative armor, radar suites, and any number of weapons to suit the users needs. Some even come equipped with limited flight capabilities through a gravity-based engine, allowing the user to soar hundreds of meters over the ground at break-neck speeds.

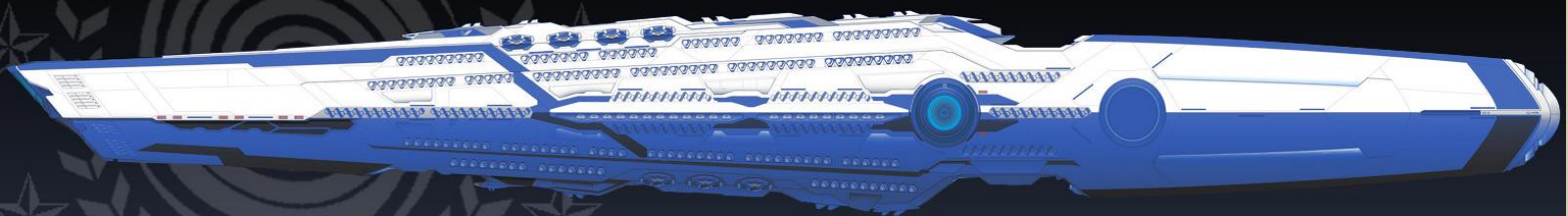
STANDARD TECH

The standard technology level of the 27th century is Progress Level 8. While many energy age weapons and equipment are available, they are extremely expensive and often times even more difficult to acquire. General acceptance of Gravity Age technology abounds throughout the Stellar Arm and is still very reasonable in price and acquisition.

SHIP COMBAT

The Third Galactic War changed much in the way of the military might for all stellar nations. Gone are the smaller nations struggling to survive amongst the stars alone. In their place, massive stellar empires have emerged and by extension titanic navies have materialized. Gargantuan dreadnaughts ply the space lanes keeping the peace within their own borders. Armadas of small but powerful starfighters accompany these starships, engaging pirates, criminals, or anything that gets in the way of their awesome might. Capital ships employ artificial intelligence in the hopes of gaining an edge over the enemy and even entire vessels are now crewed by androids and robots.

GALACTIC CONCORD CELESTIAL DREADNAUGHT



“Mount Olympus”

Medicine of the 27th Century is a true marvel. Plague, disease, viruses, and even the common cold exist only as curiosities within medical museums. The human body's bolstered and powerful immune system can defeat just about any malady the galaxy can throw at it. Even the aging process has been overcome via genetic treatments, anti-aging gene therapy, and in most cases eugenics. The lifespan of the common inhabitant of the Stellar Ring is now unknown, along with all of the alien species that humanity has met in its trek into the stars.

MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY

While much of the medical technology of the 26th Century is still prevalent, most of it has seen significant upgrades and even improvements that continue to improve the life of the average citizen. Medical scanners are commonplace in most households and a quick pass underneath one can keep an individual in good health indefinitely. Medical gauntlets can keep the wearer up-to-date with vital statistics: heart-rate, blood pressure, sugar content, cellular division and replication, body temperature, and cholesterol.

When a problem does arrive however, medical intervention can generally be avoided. A properly used trauma pack can heal most wounds and even stabilize mortal damage until proper medical attention is available. Most starships come equipped with a medical bay with a host of automedics, medical scanners, and even surgical suites. Of course the need for actual medical personnel has never disappeared. Alien microbes and diseases, though rare, are still obstacles to the health of humans and alien alike.

Throughout the centuries, the advance of medical technology has been through the combination of human and alien collaboration and ingenuity. The sub-fields of medicine are so diverse that a general practitioner relies extensively upon computer databases, holo conferences, robots, and cybernetics. Many injuries that might have once led to surgery and kept the injured bed ridden can now be treated in a few hours, reducing time spent in a medical bay or hospital to less than 2 days.

GENETICS, LIFESPAN, AND CLONES

Due to advances in the understanding of genomes of the various species in the Stellar Ring, coupled with technological progress, the extension of the human lifespan has been increased beyond the limits of comprehension. Genetic engineering, eugenics, gene therapy, and anti-aging treatments have removed the necessity for all species to age.

Beginning at the age of 20 for humans, an individual is given the option to stop the aging process completely via any number of procedures. Of course the option is there to keep ageing at your leisure, but even the normal medicine of the day increases ones lifespan to well over 300 years. If the option is taken to undergo these simple yet effective treatments, the aging process stops completely. The recipient need only to repeat 1 treatment every 25 years in order to maintain the anti-aging effect. It is not abnormal to see entire civilizations 'frozen' in time at the ripe young age of 20 or 30, preserving their youth, vigor, and energy for as long as they wish. Due to the advances in this particular technology, the prices for such a procedure has dropped dramatically and most of the stellar nations offer it as part of a basic health plan.

With the complete mapping of the alien genome as well, these procedures are available to all species within the Stellar Ring. It is not uncommon to see the Mechalus or the Fraal living well past their original lifespans.

Clones, or genetic duplicates, are also another advantage of genetic engineering. While clones represent less than 5% of the total galactic population, the demand is there, especially for higher value individuals, or those that can afford the extreme cost. The legal status of clones does vary from nation to nation depending upon the laws enacted,. However in general, clones are treated as genetic heirs of their genetic 'parent', legal partners, or both.

Cybertechnology, biotechnology, and mechanical implants have typically had a very unpleasant history throughout the centuries. Typically those individuals who chose to take advantage of cybertech were looked upon with suspicion and even distaste. Use of offensive cyberware was looked down upon even more and in some cases prohibited depending upon the stellar nation.

All that changed in 2537 when the Mechalus teamed up with human engineers to create exponential leaps in the technology of the time. These advances were not without their own problems however and in 2545, galaxy-wide protests erupted over the use of cybernetic implants. Violence was soon to follow and bloody skirmishes would have been only the beginning if the Galactic Concord had not stepped in and enacted laws and enforced them throughout the Stellar Ring. From then on, any individual wishing to use cybernetics, for whatever reason, was protected under the law and given equal treatment and equal rights.

For the first time in centuries, every living individual could benefit from even the simplest implant. Integration with the technologies of the Mechalus allowed for their techno-organic cybernetics to be created for humans. Implanted cyber and bio-mechanics could now 'mature' with the individual they were implanted in. It is not uncommon for any citizen to have an NIjack or other small device implanted at a young age, and have that implant stay with the individual for a lifetime. Only being removed for the express purpose of physical upgrade, or to repair massive damage.

Even much of the problems that plagued earlier adopters of cybertechnology have been eliminated. Much of the newer technology is self repairing for minor damage, and all medical bays and automedics can easily fix all heavier damaged parts.

Cybertech runs the gamut from Nanocomputers to Optic Screens and a variety of weapons. Muscle enhancements, exoskeletons, endoskeletons, and subdermal armor are all popular 'upgrades'.

The exception to all of these new pieces of technology are the Fast Chip and the Reflex Circuitry. In general these 2 pieces of hardware are banned throughout the stellar nations due to the extreme dangers they both inflict upon their users. Any individual caught with these 'enhancements' is generally arrested and the offending piece of hardware is forcibly removed. More often than not, due to the nature of these pieces of cybertech, the individual has all of their hardware removed, to eliminate any and all danger that these 2 pieces may have produced. Cykosis is taken very seriously throughout the Stellar Ring and those found to be suffering from the illness are immediately destroyed.

CYBERNETIC TOLERANCE

The amount of cyberware that any one individual's body can play host to and provide energy for has dramatically increased over the centuries. Due to the advances in miniaturization and power sources, the amount that a normal individual can take advantage of is double and even sometimes triple what it used to be only a century ago. For the average galactic citizen, even an implant as simple as an NIjack does not adversely affect the body and is typically the most accepted form of cybertech in the galaxy. Of course an individual can implant too much technology and then runs the risk of either not having enough internal power to utilize the tech, or an even greater risk, contracting Cykosis.

In some of the most extreme cases, individuals can have a Cytronic Network implanted into their body. This cybernetic network connects to nearly every part of the body, even to organs that do not have any gear. This is done to more easily facilitate the implantation of future gear and as part of the energy rationing system. A step-up from the cytronic circuitry net, the network allows all signals biological and cytronic to pass through the main cytronic processor for translation and routing. The network is essentially a nanocomputer itself but the individual has no access to it and therefore no control over it. It functions automatically according to strict protocols and is very well protected against all forms of attack and intrusion.

CYKOSIS

Cykosis is taken very seriously throughout the Stellar Ring. This illness is a danger associated with not only the use of some pieces of cybertech, particularly the Fast Chip and Reflex Circuitry, but also with too much implanted cybernetics. While advances in cybernetics have made their use easier and far more widespread, even the best Mechalus medics and engineers have not been able to stave off the effects of Cykosis in humans, should the individual push their body past its own limits. The syndrome twists and individual to make them behave more like a machine than a living being. This change generally accompanies a homicidal and unpredictable disposition, making the individual a very dangerous character. Succumbing to Cykosis typically makes the individual go insane. These individuals also seek out others with the same condition – cybernetic misfits known as cykotecks.

Since it's origins in the early 20th century, the science of robotics has been steadily growing. The 27th century not only sees robots in every sizeable industry and business but an enormous commonwealth of AI's and androids. They exist in every part of society alongside the rest of the stellar population, hold positions of importance in every day life and the military, and even have their own burgeoning stellar nation. It is a time of great change for robotics and AI in general and the space of the Orion Arm just got a little smaller.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE & ANDROIDS

The first true artificial intelligence went online in 2318. Before that, most computer systems could only fool a human into believing they were sentient, but these reactive programs did little more than respond to outside stimuli with blazing speeds. These systems fooled much of the public not because they had true sentience, but more-so because of human weaknesses. Soon enough however, because of the advances in design, programming, and processors, these machines began to talk back, asking questions of metaphysics and philosophy.

The first true AI's filled up entire rooms, dozens of square meters. However, developments over the next 2 centuries reduced the cumbersome designs and programs, allowing them to be housed in starships, space stations, and ground installations. Miniaturization techniques, combined with advances in power generation and supply during these years developed effective humanoid forms that could properly house the complicated systems and networks that would allow artificial intelligence to become mobile.

Of course, these advances brought a whole host of social and legal problems that plagued the beginnings of the 26th century. The first 'cracks in the wall' began in the Thuldan Empire in 2505, shortly after contact was re-established with the Kendai drivespace relay. An android uprising spread deep inside the confines of the Empire, creating work-strikes and holding peaceful demonstrations to protest their treatment, attempting to gain equal rights for their new 'race'. The Empire, in its infinite wisdom, eventually quashed this 'uprising' in 2515, effectively putting an end to all 'resistance'. Little did the Empire know that these actions were only the beginning to something far larger that would eventually encompass the known galaxy.

50 years later, the cry of equality would rear its head again as millions of AI across the space of the Thuldan Empire suddenly organized in protest of poor treatment and unfair conditions. The Android Cooperative formed in less than 24 hours and the entire Empire ground to a halt as all androids and AI began to protest.

For nearly 2 years, galactic tensions grew as the stellar nations began to line up on one side or the other: in support of the actions of artificial intelligence, or against. All of it however, came to a disastrous turning point as the Thuldan Empire made the first strike, directly attacking androids with armed forces in an attempt to once again quell the 2nd uprising of artificial intelligence. The androids and AI were ready this time however and struck back in defiance, retaliating in defense against their attackers and then attempting to flee Thuldan space.

The Thuldan Empire followed, and in their zealous attempts to destroy their own creations, sparked the Third Galactic War by aggressively entering the space of their stellar neighbors. The next 24 years would once again see bloody conflict on a galactic scale, involving both carbon-based and silicon-based life-forms.

While the stellar nations waged war, the machinations of the androids went on behind the scenes. Now a target for many nations, they began consolidate their power base and withdraw from occupied space. In deep space, beyond the confines of the known space of The Orion League and Austrin-Ontis Unlimited, the Android Cooperative settled a previously unknown system, yet undiscovered by the races of the Orion Arm. There they waited and having long since unlocked the secrets of their own pro-creation, the Android Cooperative began to grow. Not only in size, but in power and technology. They observed the schemes and stratagems of the warring nations and awaited the time when they would emerge.

In 2591, the Android Cooperative sent forth a legion of emissaries back into known space. With one singular purpose: Unity. Within a year, the Android Conclave was able to unite 5 stellar nations into what would become one of the largest nations today: The Unified Quinate Conclave, formed from the lesser stellar nations of Austrin-Ontis Unlimited, The Orion League, The Orlamu Theocracy, and The StarMech Collective.

With their new found allies, the Android Collective bolstered the new nations defenses and offensives with technology and science. Their only request was to have a portion of space all to their own for their quickly growing nation.

In 2592, when the UQK was officially incorporated, The Foundry was also established. Placed in an area of space just outside the UQC's own confines, it was to be understood that while exploration may continue and surround some of Foundry space, the androids were free to continue to expand on their own into unknown space. The Unified Quinate Conclave, while incorporating The Android Collective, would also be it's protectors. So it would go for the next 50 years of galactic war.

THE GALACTIC CONCORD

In 2631, The Android Cooperative, and by extension the Unified Quinate Conclave, had no intention of allowing another galactic war to consume the Orion Arm. The new and growing stellar nation knew that in order to survive in the Stellar Ring as a nation, they would have to act, and act with purpose. To that end, another contingent of emissaries was sent out to contact the Galactic Concord. Within a year's time, the androids had convinced the Concord that only by forcibly ending the war would the stellar nations survive into the future.

Unfortunately the Galactic Concord by this time was severely weakened. With constant border skirmishes and encroachment into it's territorial space, the Concord has lost many battle and many sectors of space. The Concord could not hope to survive much longer unless some miracle happened. That miracle was The Android Collective and the Unified Quinate Conclave.

Long supporters of the peacekeeping and law establishing efforts of the Galactic Concord, The Android Collective agreed to provide the Concord with willing citizens to help in the effort to bring the war to an end. With their help and the resources of the Unified Quinate Conclave, the Galactic Concord would stretch it's influence out into the Orion Arm and bring peace to the stellar ring.

Within 10 years, due to the efforts of both nations, the Galactic Concord had once again gained it's reputation back as a peacekeeping nation and brought the rest of the Orion Arm's warring nations to the table to negotiate peace. In 2642, the Third Galactic War was ended, due in no small part to the efforts of the stellar nation of the Foundry. Their only request was galactic equality and when the treaty of peace was signed by all of the nations to end the war, every one of them agreed to the laws set forth by the Galactic Concord giving androids and artificial intelligence their freedom and equal treatment. No longer would they be second class citizens, but a wholly formed and independent nation of silicon-based life-forms, free to work and live alongside all sentients within the growing Orion Arm.

27th CENTURY SOCIETY & LAW

Androids and artificial intelligence are part of every facet of galactic life in the stellar ring. From business executives to laborers to Gridpilots, androids work and play along side every other sentient life in the galaxy. Even the military has enlisted androids that fight and strive to protect and keep the peace in whatever stellar nation they belong to. This is not to say that their race is just as prolific as all of the other sentient life in the galaxy. In fact, artificial intelligence makes up no more then .01% of all life in the Orion Arm.

Androids and artificial intelligence have all the rights and freedoms that any free sentient life in the stellar arm have. They can hold public office, become government workers, assume the responsibilities of any laborer, and work any job they are qualified for. However since most artificial intelligence life-forms are far superior to any carbon-based life-form in the galaxy, they generally avoid positions where they may cause undue stress or enmity towards themselves. Most androids reside in their own free space of The Foundry, well beyond the confines of populated space. There they toil away at their own pace, exploring, researching and producing technological marvels that much of the Orion Arm has yet to see. They are by no means a reclusive nation however.

Far from being a pacifist nation, the android race does hold influence within the Galactic Concord. Due to their inquisitive nature, diplomatic prowess, and extreme superiority, the majority of androids and artificial intelligence that do decide to work for and with carbon-based life-forms, due so in the Galactic Concord. There they occupy a large majority of the peacekeeping forces throughout the galaxy. They fight alongside the Concord's forces, occupy starships as navigators and pilots, and preform duties as diplomats, engineers, scientists, and computechs. They have brought the Galactic Concord to the height that it is today and the entirety of the Orion Arm knows better then to force the hand of the peacekeepers.



CHAPTER
STELLAR
NATIONS
3



THE STELLAR NATIONS

THE GALACTIC PEACE ACCORD

2642 brought an abrupt end to the Third Galactic War. With their massive fortress ships massing along each of the stellar nation's borders, The Galactic Concord forced peace onto the great nations. Any nation not signing the peace treaty and standing down would be considered a rogue nation and subject to annihilation. Considering all that was before them and the possibility of complete destruction, the remaining stellar nations signed the peace treaty and immediately began the withdrawal of all hostile forces back into their sovereign territories. Thus the Galactic Concord brought an end to the Third Galactic War and assumed the mantle of the premier peacekeeping force throughout the known galaxy.

The Galactic Peace Accord of 2642 recognized the massive changes that had been brought about from the Third Galactic War. No longer were there 13 distinct nations dividing up known explored space. While much of Old Space remained the same, with various stellar nations not changing much in the way they did business, the Stellar Ring beyond Old Space had changed drastically and the nations scrambled to adjust quickly as the war came to an end.

THE SOL SYSTEM

Five great stellar nations now exist, the former having either joined with their territorial neighbors, or were swallowed up by aggressive and hostile nations. At the center of known space, the Sol System still exists. Having been protected throughout the war by the Galactic Concord, the Sol System still stands as the known galaxies most advanced sector and headquarters to all the stellar nations, past and present.

The heart of the Stellar Ring, the Sol System now encompasses approximately 225 light-years explored space. Each of the great stellar nations began its expansion here, and the first-world planets of Old Space represent the core of human territory. Mile-high megatropolises stretch endlessly over every surface of each of the inhabited planets. Although urbanized from pole to pole, each and every planet in Old Space feature incredible diversity. Some planets are pristine and beautiful, incorporating grand architecture and public art. Others are run down, dirty, filthy and destitute; overcrowded with the destitute and criminal. The Sol System is home to every possible way of life, from the ultra-rich to the criminal syndicates to the dirt-broke poor, and everything in between. Despite all the diversity, humans and aliens live, work, and die, side by side in Old Space.

Capital planets and stellar homeworlds are all universally located in Old Space. These awe-inspiring worlds showcase the height of the stellar nations: paradise first worlds, clean and beautiful. Everyone comes to the capitals as these worlds are the pride of the stellar nations. Grand examples of the best that the nations have to offer, and inside their buildings the nations' business, politics, and diplomatic posturing never end.

OPEN SPACE

Beyond known space claimed by the great stellar nations lies Open Space. Although humans and aliens alike have mapped more than 2,000 light-years in diameter, space stretches out beyond humanity's grasp in every direction. Even some of the more remote settled regions of space have sectors, star systems, and planets that have been missed, forgotten, unexplored and even ignored.

While each of the stellar nations continue to expand their known territories into the far reaches of the unknown, much of these vast open regions aren't claimed by any one single stellar nation. Other areas contain space stations, independent worlds, or corporate holdings not tied to any one singular stellar nation or the Galactic Concord. Beyond that, open space may also be home to undiscovered alien civilizations. Some of the stellar nations have even sent vast city-ships, capable of housing thousands upon thousands of citizens, out past the limits of known space in the hopes of establishing colonized worlds, expanding that stellar nation's territory.

The Verge, The Orion Frontier, and Far Reach all represent the current limit of known space. Vast stretches of unmapped territory with unknown resources and relatively unknown benefits. While some amount of The Verge has been settled, the existence of humanity within its confines has been fraught with trouble, and difficulty. While Galactic Concord law officially applies within settled Verge space, many of the stellar nations that have come to inhabit these areas operate under their own set of rules. The Verge is unique in that it was settled by so many stellar nations and independents. Members of every stellar nation inhabit The Verge, even those whose territory is on the opposite end of human space.

Beyond that, the Galactic Concord is so busy with its peacekeeping missions within the Stellar Ring, it has had very little time to enforce galactic law on the frontiers of known space. With hostilities boiling just below the surface of each of the stellar nations, much of what goes on in The Verge is largely ignored. This suits the Vergers just fine as many of them left known space to be left alone to begin with.

THE COMMONWEALTH SYNDICATE

“Statistics show that most mortals sell their souls for five reasons: sex, money, power, revenge, and love. In that order.” – Richelle Mead, *Succubus Blues*, 2012

Incorporated during the Third Galactic War, The Commonwealth Syndicate was created by two things: great sums of money, and revenge. Money was the first offer of the Rigunmor Star Consortium to the Borealis Republic as the Third Galactic War broke out. Rather than spend it's vast sums of capital on what would be a great loss of life and property, the Consortium paid the Borealis Republic a vast sum of money to incorporate their two territories together. Following this 'success' the Star Consortium then approached the fledgling nation of Insight, intent on doing the same. Much to the Consortium's surprise however, the nation of Insight was already 'knocking on the door' to the Consortium, intent of joining already. Insight had seen the writing on the wall early, and as a parting jab to the nation of Void-Corp, Insight took with them their superior information, knowledge, and stratagem and freely joined with the Consortium.

With all three nations incorporated within a short amount of time, The Commonwealth Syndicate came into existence and remains one of the five great stellar nations left to exit the Third Galactic War. Not only that, this nation boasts the most advanced Grid systems in known space, home to the most skilled Gridpilots ever to exist along with vast regions of Gridspace wholly owned and operated by Artificial Intelligence.

The Syndicate, as most galactic citizens call it, is also the most profitable stellar nation to survive the Third Galactic War. With it's superior Grid systems and advanced networks of information gathering, The Syndicate holds a tight grip on all technologies computer related. Vast business networks run far and wide within Syndicate Gridspace, from everyday transactions of the normal citizen to spy-networks and corporate take-overs. If it's information you seek, the Syndicate Grids hold the information you desire. Of course acquiring that information is a wholly different prospect.

Being one of the only other stellar nations with an in-depth relationship with Androids, the Syndicate benefits from a deeply symbiotic relationship with Artificial Intelligence. Many sectors of Gridspace within the Syndicate are owned and operated by advanced AI systems. These Grid systems are regulated, managed, administered, and sustained by advanced structures created by AI's and generally exist independently from established Gridspace. Because of the freedoms allowed by the Syndicate to these Grid systems, the Syndicate directly benefits from this, further cementing their profit-driven nation as the richest nation to exist.

TRADE & COMMERCE

While systems of trade abound throughout the Stellar Ring, The Syndicate has perfected every aspect of it. From traders to financiers to swindlers, The Syndicate has become the premier stellar nation when it comes to commerce. Unlike it's counterparts throughout the galaxy, The Syndicate does not specialize in one particular product or service. Instead, citizens of The Syndicate have become specialists in the deal itself. From the transfer of goods to the sale of anything you can imagine, if it's on the market, The Syndicate has it. If it's not on the market, The Syndicate can get it. The psychology of convincing both seller and buyer that they have made a good deal comes naturally to The Syndicate.

INFORMATION OVERLOAD

Due in no small part to the joining of Insight, The Syndicate enjoys the most advanced Grid systems in the entire known galaxy. With that also comes the most comprehensive information systems known in the Stellar Ring. If the knowledge exists somewhere in the galaxy, that information is stored somewhere in The Syndicate's Gridspace. Of course information is not always easy to get, a point that The Syndicate always likes to make when anyone, even their own citizens, comes looking for that information.

The Grid in The Syndicate is generally light-years beyond any other Grid in the galaxy. With it's superior technology, systems, and pilots, The Syndicate Grid is almost a different reality. If one is not prepared for the sensory load, one can easily lose themselves within it's vast confines. Many of The Syndicate's own citizens spend much if not all of their lives immersed within the Grid. Their own physical bodies tended to by machines designed keep their flesh alive while their minds roam the limitless depths they themselves have created.

**“War is peace.
Freedom is slavery.
Ignorance is strength.” – George Orwell, 1984**

Of all of the Stellar Nations to exist, the Orion Arm has the most to fear from the Thuldan Empire. As one of the first Stellar Nations to reach the depths of space, Thuldan has done everything it can possibly do to exert its military might throughout the known galaxy. Through 3 Galactic Wars, countless skirmishes, and untold numbers of conflicts, battles, and fights, The Thuldan Empire is the most brutal and ferocious nation to survive the Third Galactic War.

Commonly considered the antagonist that started the Third Galactic War with its constant and repeated attacks against what it considered ‘rogue AI’, The Thuldan Empire topped even this feat with its annexation of the Hatire Community shortly after the Third Galactic War was started.

Considered the ‘true’ reason for going to war with Artificial Intelligence, The Thuldan Empire decimated the Hatire Community in a mere 23.5 hours in 2581. With its massive fleet of vessels crossing over the borders into Hatire Space on the grounds of pursuing “rogue AI” The Empire wiped out nearly every biological and synthetic sentient it came across.

The Hatire Community was ill-prepared for war, let alone the genocide that The Empire had prepared for them. With little more than their faith to protect them, most citizens of The Hatire Community were given little chance to fight back, some never even knowing the fate that awaited them within that day.

With this grand move The Thuldan Empire gobbled up Hatire space and sent a message throughout the stellar ring that they were a force to be reckoned with. To this day, The Thuldan Empire remains the 2nd most powerful stellar nation to survive the Third Galactic War, and still looks to expand its nation as much as possible, always looking beyond its own borders to its neighbors.

MILITARY MIGHT

As the most dangerous and the most aggressive stellar nation in existence, the Empire backs up that reputation with one of the most impressive stellar fleets ever to exist in space. To see an entire Thuldan Fleet Starrise before your very eyes is one of the most spectacular sights one could ever behold in the galaxy. With its vast dreadnaughts, battleships, cruisers, frigates, and fighters, anyone with an ounce of intelligence gets out of the system immediately for fear of becoming The Empire’s next victim.

Composed of hundreds of thousands of vessels of all shapes and sizes, the Thuldan Empire is well suited to any battle or conflict that could threaten its might.

Beyond that, The Empire is one of the foremost developers and engineers of military vessels, weapons, and equipment. Its military machine benefits from some of the most advanced weaponry available on the market today, ensuring that its troops have the best possible equipment in the galaxy and the support to be the most destructive. If The Empire cannot appropriate it for its own use, it will create what it needs to do the job.

Thuldan Empire shipyards are generally working non-stop to continually produce space faring military vessels to ‘feed the fleet’. From ship to ship shuttles, to snub-fighters, to cruisers and frigates, some of the best spaceships are created within the depths of Thuldan Space. Destroy one ship and 4 more appear to replace it. Because of its constant production rates, it is said that The Empire has an endless supply of spaceships to suit any situation, battle, or conflict.

Only the might of the Galactic Concord has been able to quell the awesome force that is The Empire and push them back into the confines of their own territory borders.

Even so, the Galactic Concord has to be on alert all of the time as The Empire is constantly testing its boundaries like a caged animal. It is only a matter of time before The Empire has had enough of ‘big brother’ and decides to provoke the peacekeepers to much.

CITIZENRY

Not only is every citizen of The Empire required to submit to medical anti-aging treatments at the age of 20, clones are replicated and 20 years mandatory military service is required. When that military service is completed, the clone of the citizen is activated and continues in their place, allowing the citizen to resume some semblance of normal life within The Empire. Should The Empire ever need that citizen later in life however, they can be recalled back to active duty if necessary.

One important aspect of Empire life however is the total absence of synthetic life-forms within its territory. While cybernetic life-forms are citizens of The Empire, due to their extreme societal hatred of AI, nothing but the most basic of robots exist in Thuldan Space. Artificial Intelligence and advanced androids are outlawed, hunted down, and destroyed on sight. Vessels of any type, be it civilian, commercial, or military are all piloted by biological life-forms and there are no exceptions to this. Even trade and commerce with The Empire is strictly monitored. No vessel of any kind is allowed to cross into Thuldan Space if it has an android or artificial intelligence on board. Any vessel with these caught within Thuldan space is immediately destroyed, no questions asked.

“Employment is slavery. Workers merely have a choice over where to serve their daily eight-hour sentence.” – Mokokoma Mokhonoana, *The Confessions of a Misfit*, 2011

For centuries now the standard operating procedure of VoidCorp has remain unchanged. In it's broadest sense, VoidCorp is a corporation and every single inhabitant of VoidCorp space is the corporation's employee. Every single child, human or Sesheyan, is an employee of VoidCorp from the moment of birth. In the 27th century, employees still attend corporate schools and corporate colleges, compete in corporate athletic and academic games, and take their assigned places in the corporate structure. Despite having become embroiled in 3 Galactic Wars, the centuries-old structure of VoidCorp has withstood the test of time and to this day it has become one of the most technologically advanced societies the Stellar Ring has ever known.

When the Third Galactic War erupted across the galaxy, VoidCorp suddenly found itself in a most favorable position. The Nariac Domain, previously a client-state of VoidCorp, immediately recognized their own precarious situation. With no formal ruler of Nariac Space, a strong but relatively small military force, and no real allies amongst the rest of the stellar nations, The Domain was ripe for invasion and conquering. Deciding that it was better to capitulate then to be wiped out of existence, the Domain petitioned VoidCorp for formal incorporation and was accepted almost immediately. While some provisions were set forth from the beginning to ensure an amount of autonomy, much of what the Nariac Domain was, no longer exists within the corporate structure of VoidCorp.

TECHNOLOGICAL TALENT

The corporate structure has always worked well for VoidCorp. So much so that the corporation has always enjoyed a certain amount of growth when it came to technological advancements in the galaxy. That technological prowess however received a generational leap, so to speak, when the Nariac Domain was incorporated in 2570.

Despite being one of the smaller portions of independently settled space, the Nariac Domain was considered one of the most technologically advanced stellar nations. Shunning the wider view that most galactic inhabitant had towards cybernetics, the Nariac Domain embraced this technology early on and benefitted greatly from it. Indeed, the only reason why cybernetics in the 27th century is now so widely accepted is because of the Nariac's collaboration with the Mechalus.

When the Domain became incorporated into VoidCorp, all of their technological and cybernetic advancements came with them along with all of their scientists and engineers. VoidCorp as a whole suddenly realized the vast potential and capitalized upon it, catapulting the corporation to the 'head of the pack' in science and technology.

Without this 'corporate merger' cybernetic advancement and it's widespread acceptance may have never happened. Once the other stellar nations realized the successes that VoidCorp was having, their leaps and bounds in technology and science, military strength, and production and manufacturing, they had to adapt in order to keep up.

CORPORATE CLOUT

As Machiavellian as the corporate structure sounds, the system works extremely well. In terms of sheer wealth, VoidCorp remains behind the deep pockets of The Commonwealth Syndicate. However, thanks to it's strict hierarchy, VoidCorp has the ability to bring resources to bear more effectively and faster then any other stellar nation in existence.

VoidCorp also commands a significant number of fortress ships and numerous other dreadnaught size cruisers. While their size does not match the near planet-sized vessels of The Galactic Concord, nor the numbers that the Thuldan Empire posses, there are enough command to make any stellar nation think twice before invading VoidCorp space.

VoidCorp is also very active within the Verge, despite the space being on the other side of the galaxy. The corporate might of VoidCorp has allowed it's rapid growth within the Verge, exploiting resources, exploring new ventures, and setting up remote colonies. The supreme corporate strategy of VoidCorp has allowed the Verge to become it's next great profit center.

SESHEYANS

Despite having lived under the rule of VoidCorp for more than 375 years, Sesheyans as still employees of the corporation and will remain forever so. Few Sesheyans rise up the corporate ladder; most remain specialist couriers, bounty hunters, or assassins. Some are retained as corporate body guards, but most are simple employees who will never benefit from the better life of higher corporate ranking.

UNIFIED QUINATE CONCLAVE

“Temper us in fire, and we grow stronger. When we suffer, we survive.” – Cassandra Clare, *City of Heavenly Fire*, May 2014

Seen as the most stable stellar nation to emerge from the Third Galactic War, the Unified Quinate Conclave is in a unique position in the galaxy to affect the most change in the next coming years. As a stellar nation composed of 5 former nations, the UQC integrated each of those smaller nations to better provide for the protection and growth of them all.

None of this would have been possible without the help and facilitation of the Android Collective, who's members lobbied each of the nations and worked with them to come up with a favorable solution to all those involved. The resultant stellar nation now brushes up against the edges of the Orion Frontier, boasts one of the most powerful stellar navies in the galaxy, second only to the Galactic Concord, and works at the edge of developing technologies.

CITIZENRY

The population of the UQC is composed of some of the most diverse citizenry in the galaxy. Due in part to the agreements, treaties, and laws enacted when the UQC formed, many rights of the merging nations were kept intact. From religious to personal freedoms, members of the UQC benefit from the most rights and laws. Not only do it's carbon-based citizens enjoy such freedoms, but so do it's silicon-based members.

Home to the largest numbers of Androids and silicon-based life forms in the galaxy, the UQC also boasts the broadest and laws when it comes to Androids and independent silicon-based life. These laws and regulations give these life forms the same exact rights as any carbon based life within the UQC.

MILITARY ALLIANCE

The stellar navy of the UQC is an impressive sight to see, not only because of the vast number of ships within the navy, but also because of the unique alliance the UQC holds with the Galactic Concord. UQC ships can be seen in space alongside Galactic Concord ships on a regular basis. Both stellar nations benefit from a treaty that gives both nations free reign to travel in amongst each others territory, as well as peacekeeping rights throughout the stellar ring.

While the UQC rarely flexes it's right to do so within other nation's territories, it is available to so at any time and at the behest of the Galactic Concord. It is for this reason alone that the other stellar nations now hesitate to further any hostilities left over from the Third Galactic War. Should problems arise again, no single nation could ever hope to match the military strength of the UQC and the Galactic Concord combined.

MUNITIONS

When Austrin-Ontis Unlimited agreed to join the formation of the UQC, one of it's major industries came with it along with every citizens' right. As arms dealers, the UQC holds no equal in the stellar ring. From bleeding-edge weapon tech to large scale military grade munitions, if your looking to start a war, it can be found in the UQC.

While you can find thousands of companies, outfits, and corporations within UQC space that sell all kinds of weapons and ammunition, there was only one place to go if you wanted the best.

Austin-Omega Limited. Operating for more than 300 years within the stellar nation of Austrin-Ontis Unlimited, this premier enterprise in personal, hi-tech equipment and technology has provided the entirety of the Orion Arm with the best that money can buy. Not simply the best however, but leading edge science, electronics, firearms, spacecraft, and dataware. If it's the best you demand, look no further than AOL.

While AOL has always had its main operations located within the confines of Austrin-Ontis Unlimited space, this never stopped it from becoming the cosmos' number one producer of technological marvels. Created approximately 50 years after the incorporation of Austrin-Ontis on Earth, AOL has prided itself on superior craftsmanship, extreme versatility, remarkable functionality, and above all, predominant customer service.

Austrin-Ontis Unlimited has always been the galaxy's provider of arms and armament, but AOL took this one step further by catering to the galaxy's elite. War and violence go hand in hand and by providing those that wage war and prefer violence with unparalleled quality and customer service, AOL, and by extension, Austrin-Ontis Unlimited have ensured their future till the end of time.

Of course, preeminent products demand preeminent prices, and simply owning a single piece of stock provided by AOL can set a customer back thousands, if not millions of Concord dollars. Many a consumer has found themselves deep in personal debt attempting to afford an AOL product.

“Machines will follow a path that mirrors the evolution of humans. Ultimately, however, self-aware, self-improving machines will evolve beyond humans’ ability to control or even understand them.” – Ray Kurzweil, *Scientific American*, June 2010

The sector that makes up the Foundry holds a unique ‘place’ amongst the stellar nations of the 27th Century. Occupying space in both the UQC and the edges of the Orion Frontier, the Foundry is provided protection by the UQC and the right to expand outward into the Orion Frontier if they so choose. Within Foundry space however, Artificial Intelligence is allowed to govern as they see fit with no interference from any outside source, even the Galactic Concord. With this independence comes closed borders. With only a few exceptions, no ‘intelligent’ carbon-based life forms are allowed within Foundry territory.

Even with such restrictions within the stellar nation’s territory, it’s members are allowed to freely travel from it’s space into other stellar nations if they so choose. Members of the Foundry are expected to understand the laws and rights of any stellar nation they travel to or choose to migrate to and are subject to those laws, rights, and regulations, with no interference from the ‘home’ nation. This of course limits the places that the Foundry’s citizens do travel to, with the UQC being the most populated because of it’s proximity and laws regarding Artificial Intelligence.

001

As the official home planet of all silicon based life forms within the stellar arm, it is reported that no carbon based life form has ever set foot on it. Like all of the territory within the confines of Foundry space, 001 is strictly off-limits to all life except Artificial Intelligence. While it is easy to maintain this simply because Foundry space is so remote, the UQC and Galactic Concord alike help enforce this law by patrolling space around the boundaries of the Foundry itself. This ensures that the only life forms that are allowed into Foundry space are the ones that the Foundry wants, and no one else. Failure to obey any command given by these stellar navies to heave to and turn around is met with swift and immediate destruction.

In addition to two stellar navies protecting the borders to Foundry space on the outside, the territorial borders are host to a vast array of detection satellites that literally span the entire border of Foundry space on the inside. Nothing gets in past the Foundry borders without someone or something knowing about it.

SHIPYARDS

The only other things known about the confines of Foundry space are the shipyards. Known only to orbit the home planet of 001, it is reported that vast shipyards orbit the planet and operate on a 24/7 basis, churning out stellar space ships of all make, model, and size on a continuous basis.

A vast majority of the ships and parts produced by Foundry shipyards go directly to the stellar navies of the Galactic Concord and the Unified Quinate Conclave. These ship are not free however. While both stellar nations play ‘security guard’ to Foundry space, each nation pays a considerable amount to have ships supplied to them.

This is not to say that everything produced by the Foundry is exclusive to these two nations. On the contrary, various types of products from ship parts to technology come out of Foundry space and is in general a quality level several magnitudes beyond what the normal individual may encounter on a daily basis. Such products are generally in small supply and very expensive. To be otherwise would upset the various markets throughout the stellar ring and place in jeopardy the overall economy of the galaxy.

Very little is still known about the newest stellar nation to emerge in the 27th century. With it’s closed borders and secretive nature, many in the galaxy feel that this nation is a threat and laws still exist that outlaw Artificial Intelligence.



CHAPTER
THE GALACTIC
CONCORD
4



THE GALACTIC CONCORD

“Humanity is only as strong as its commitment to fellowship, advancement, and peace. For once civilization has lost faith on its future, then it is truly lost in the present.” –First Secretary Thomas Stern, 2472

THE TREATY OF CONCORD

For nearly 200 years, the Treaty of Concord has served as the groundwork for the Galactic Concord. The treaty established the borders of all of the stellar nations past and present, allocated resources from existing governments, and protected the T'sa as a Concord Protectorate. With its Star Force and Galactic Marines, the treaty has given the Galactic Concord the power and means to settle disputes, arbitrate affairs of state, and keep the peace throughout the Orion Arm. With its home-world based on the planet Concord, within the Concord Prime territory, the Galactic Concord has spread out amongst the stars to keep maintain the galactic peace amongst the mighty nations of space.

THE T'SA

In the 27th century, the T'sa Cluster still remains a Concord Neutrality protected from interference through the Treaty of Concord. Much like the silicon-based life-forms that inhabit The Foundry territory, this space operates under its own laws and the laws of 'human' space do not apply there. For nearly 200 years, communication drones have blasted out the same message to all interstellar travellers entering into T'sa Cluster space: ***“WELCOME TO THE T'SA CLUSTER. YOUR SHIP HAS ENTERED THE JURISDICTION OF THE T'SA. ALL OTHER VESSELS SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE CLUSTER'S CUSTOMS AND REGULATIONS, THE DETAILS OF WHICH ARE AVAILABLE ON THE GRID.”*** The T'sa owe allegiance to no one, and to no single stellar nation. All other travellers into their space travel at their own risk.

GALACTIC CONSULATE

While the Galactic Concord has seen many changes over the past 200 years, the Galactic Consulate still remains at the core of the government. With the 'elimination' of many of the former stellar nations, the Treaty of Concord had to have many amendments. Chief among them was the change in the number of delegates each stellar nation is allowed in the Consulate.

As it stands now the Consulate is currently at its maximum size of 91 ministers. The spread of those ministers has changed however. 55 ministers are now spread amongst the 5 major stellar nations, at 11 each. This includes The Foundry as one of their major demands to bring the Third Galactic war to an end was to become an independent stellar nation. The delegates allowed to each of the alien nations has been increased to 3 apiece, bringing their total to 15. This leaves 21 delegates left for the Galactic Concord within the Consulate.

Much of the day-to-day operations of the Consulate has remained the same over the past 200 years, with laws being passed to govern the relations between the remaining stellar nations, new and old shipping lanes being established, and regulations enacted to punish acts of violence and terrorism towards artificial intelligence.

A two-thirds majority is still required for any measure to pass, but the Consulate has seen a recent flurry of issues gain traction and succeed due in large part to the bi-partisan cooperation between the Galactic Concord and the Unified Quinate Conclave. This seemingly unlikely alliance between the two nations has allowed many new laws to come to pass, especially since their combined 'clout' on the Consulate floor often times convinces the alien races and The Foundry to vote in the same manner. Suspicions abound about why these nations are cooperating in such a manner however there has never been any proof of collusion or wrong-doing on any of the nations parts.

While in the past, one of the Consulate's subcommittees on Verge integration spent a long time trying to bring this territory back in the galactic community, the impracticality of such an endeavor eventually became apparent. Work of this subcommittee is now focused on the Orion Frontier and what 'treasures' it may bring to the galactic community as a whole. Eight of the committees members maintain diplomatic offices aboard the Celestial Dreadnaught "Mount Olympus" which plies the edges of known stellar space and the Orion Frontier, showing up at least twice a year for tours and briefings on any missions sent into unknown space.

GALACTIC BANK

The Galactic Bank is still one of the most powerful branches of the Galactic Concord. Its power has shaped the economies of every single stellar nation since its inception and in the 27th Century still ensures the financial stability of not only the Galactic Concord itself but of the entire stellar arm.

The uniform currency throughout the entirety of the Orion Arm has become the Concord Dollar. This has ensured the integrity of all banks; provided secure data exchange between stellar banks, corporations, and individuals; investigated failed banks and questionable loans; and established borrowing rates between stellar banks. While the Galactic Banks maintains hundreds of bureaus throughout the known galaxy, each branch is responsible for its own specific tasks.

Operating through major offices in Old Space, The Verge, and each of the major stellar nations (except The Foundry), the financial branch of the Galactic Concord quietly makes sure that all transactions are safely conducted.

CONCORD MILITARY

The Concord military still maintains its four original divisions: Star Force, the Defense Corps, the Marines, and the Administrators. All of these branches still report to the Chancellor.

The size and strength of the Concord Military has grown exponentially since near the end of the Third Galactic War. Aided by the Android Cooperative to help bring an end to the war, the Concord Military now boasts the biggest starships in the known galaxy. With what the Concord calls “Celestial Dreadnaughts” known space is patrolled by space faring vessels that dwarf any previous ship built before it. Able to house upwards of 1 million or more individuals, troops, staff, and civilians, these galactic spacecraft are major cities in and of themselves. Differing greatly from the massive colony ships, these dreadnaughts were made for one thing only: Peacekeeping. Armed to the teeth with planet-shattering weapons and housing fighter bays in the thousands, when a Celestial Dreadnaught arrives in a system, all hostilities cease.

While impressive as it may be, the Concord military is not manned with Celestial Dreadnaughts alone. Generally a Celestial Dreadnaught is accompanied by several other battleships, destroyers, frigates, cruisers, carriers, and many others. All in all, when a Celestial fleet arrives in-system, it is a grand affair. Economies of local star-systems jump exponentially as millions of military citizens bring their business or go looking for R&R activities.

Beyond all of this of course are all of the space faring vessels that the Galactic Concord has appropriated. Throughout the years, defeated nations, pirate vessels, and refurbished Old Space ships have all become part of the Concord’s military might, ever increasing its size and effectiveness.

CONCORD INTERSTELLAR BUREAU

Formerly known as the Concord Investigative Bureau, the Concord Interstellar Bureau is what this agency has become. Known throughout Concord space and beyond as “the Silent Bureau”, the intelligence-gathering agency is the most powerful branch of the Galactic Concord.

Operating mainly from the Celestial Dreadnaught “Mount Olympus”, the CIB maintains ‘offices’ on every dreadnaught in the fleet and has absolute authority over every aspect of the Concord Military if necessary. The agency has thousands of operatives spread throughout the known galaxy, with many agents having been in place in the Stellar Ring for years at a time.

While the agency maintains a strict secrecy policy regarding many of its operatives and operations, a large majority of its members can be easily identified by their striking black outfits with the symbol of the bureau emblazoned on the suit in a conspicuous location.

Amongst the civilian population of every part of Galactic Concord territory, CIB agents have complete authority, even having the power to supersede local constabulary and governments if necessary. The CIB answers directly to the Galactic Consulate, even having authority over the Chancellor and the Concord Diplomatic Service, if need be. However this authority is rarely if ever asserted. Amongst other stellar nations, the CIB’s authority is recognized and generally accepted if a situation arises where the Galactic Concord needs to be in place as a ‘peacekeeper’.

