

# SOLDIERS OF THE EMPIRE

IMPERIAL GEOGRAPHIC SPECIAL



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Up about one thousand years ago, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, a president of a small country, in the small Earth of those dark times, said "if civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships - the ability of all peoples, of all kinds, to live together, in the same world at peace".

Peace. This word has much more meaning than we think, after all. It's the word we built an Empire upon. It's the word we keep saying everyday, in every region of space we live in.

But what is peace, after all? Maybe a good definition might be the one which involves the endless efforts of those brave men and women who risk they lives every day to keep the Empire at peace. Within and outside its borders.

Peace is made by people. For people. Peace is a state of mind. Peace is, ultimately, another way of saying humanity.

*Bantam Cumberly*

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# AUTHOR FOREWORD

I used to serve in the UEE Armed Forces. I met many brave men and women while I did and many more after. Navy, Army and Marines. The shield and the sword of the Empire. I have found that to become a part of this might and fury you have to be a special kind of person. A patriot.

Over the last millennium the meaning of patriotism changed. It's no longer about nation or government. It's about humanity, all of us united.



# Thomas Samson

Corporal, Army 56th Mechanized Regiment, Anti-Aircraft platform

Bases and ground troops need protection from airborne threats. Along with man portable AA launchers the UEE Army fields Anvil's latest self propelled AA platform, the Ballista.

## ***What made you join the Army?***

They got me with the vids. You know, the ones about seeing the universe. As a teenager that was as just like the movies for me. I joined right when I turned eighteen.

## ***And how was the reality?***

I definitely did not expect to be running in full armor so much. I have to be honest, the boot camp sucked. But I wouldn't trade it for anything.

## ***What is the best thing about it?***

It's not like the vids, it's much better. I have seen places I would have never seen on my own. And you find a sense of camaraderie. My team are the best people I know and I trust them with everything. And we are contributing to keeping everyone back home safe, that's the best thing.







## Dima Karavchenko

Private, First Marine Recon

On a path unknown someone has to go first. The bravest and perhaps the craziest. Scouts from the First Marine Recon are just that. When you send them into the storm, you know they will come out on time.

### ***Where are you from?***

We moved around a lot, military family. But my family started out on Earth, in the east Europe region.

### ***Why Recon?***

Swift, silent, deadly. We are the ones that light the path for others. It's dangerous but incredibly exciting.

### ***What's the best part of the job?***

The team spirit. I can't imagine going to battle with any other soldiers than my squad. I think it's something everyone feels about their unit. Whatever happens I know I can count on these guys to back me up.





## Robert Diaz

Starman, Navy 21st Bomber Squadron, Retaliator gunner

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From experience I can tell you hearing the air raid siren and then seeing the silhouettes of Retaliators in the sky is one of the most terrifying experiences for a soldier. A Retaliator can fight its way to the objective, drop a massive payload on it and fight its way out.

### ***Retaliator or Eclipse?***

Eclipses are awesome, so fast and stealthy. But when the fight breaks out I wouldn't trade the Tali for anything.

### ***Are you trying to become a captain on a Retaliator?***

One day maybe. It's a lot of responsibility. I'm not sure if that would be the right path for me.

### ***What's the biggest ship you took down?***

Wow, umm. A Caterpillar I think. You know, all the explosions look the same from where I sit.





## Kathy Odessa

Captain, 4th Marine Expeditionary Unit, Valkyrie pilot

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You can't throw marines from orbit. I'm sure they would like it but a more effective way would be to strap them into a ship and send them down in it. UEE field's Anvil's Valkyrie dropship for these tasks. Strong shields paired with guns and four powerful VTOL thrusters make for a formidable force on the battlefield.

***I've heard that you are the best dropship pilot in this unit. How does one become so?***

I wouldn't go so far as saying I'm the best. But I always get the boys in and out in one piece and that's good enough.

***What makes a good dropship pilot?***

Faith and insanity. You need to understand, the Valkyrie is heavy, she is not fast or nimble. And I have to dive it into enemy fire. That's where faith comes in. You need faith in your shields and your gunners if you want to make it out alive.

***Did you ever want to become a fighter pilot?***

Hell no. Those things are just seats duct taped to engines and guns.



# Ian Douglas

Staff Sergeant, 23rd Infantry Regiment, Platoon leader

A military's strength lies in the riflemen. But the platoon leaders are the backbone making sure the whole structure is stable. They know what's best for you, in battle, in training and anytime else.

## ***How long have you been in service?***

I'm coming up on ten years now. I made a career out of it and I couldn't be happier. Training and leading the young soldiers feels like the perfect thing. They are going to be the next generation of commanders. We need to train them right so I take this very seriously.

## ***Some people say that Army lost its purpose in space. Do you agree?***

No. We will always need the manpower for ground combat. Yes, we may need the Navy to cart us around, but on the ground we are the defining force.

## ***What makes a good soldier?***

Many things. Teamwork is very important, courage also. But mostly the willingness to lay down your life for your squad and for the people back home.







# Natalia Simmons

Specialist, 87th Squadron, Hammerhead chief engineer

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The military is a machine. And every machine needs people to maintain it to keep it running. Every branch has mechanics and engineers. But the ones in the Navy are by far the most ingenious and can repair almost any damage with limited supplies and time.

***You don't have the face of a typical Navy woman.***

Are you flirting with me reporter?

***That would be unprofessional.***

Of course. [laughs] You are a professional. A professional reporter, soldier, pilot, engineer, a survivor.

***You've done your homework. You should be in intelligence.***

[smiles]

***Did you always wanted to fix up Hammerheads?***

I dreamed of serving on a Javelin all the way through college. I did make it onto one. It was exciting at first. But it felt crowded and I never saw anything interesting. Serving on a Hammerhead on the other hand. We go out for patrols for weeks at a time and then refuel at a new location. I never thought I would see this many places.

***Where are you from?***

London. The original one. It's an incredible place. I lived there most of my life. Well, until I joined the Navy when I was twenty.



# Sarah O'Donnell

Captain, 4th Exploration Group, Pathfinder

Pathfinders. A name that that was used throughout history for people and machines that were somewhere first. Navy Pathfinders locate trade routes, resources and settlement locations for the UEE. They have to rely on limited resources and little to no help from others. They are the modern day pioneers.

## ***Do you ever get lonely out there?***

Yes. Sometimes I don't see another person for weeks at a time. But I never let that get to me. I have to stay sharp all the time.

## ***Why not work in the private sector?***

Because the Navy retirement plan is awesome. And I feel like corporations are very profit driven. While here I get a certain degree of freedom to pursuit what I think is best at the moment.

## ***Best thing about being an explorer?***

Almost everywhere you go you are the first and sometimes only person to be there. But of course that means that if something happens you are on your own to deal with it. You have to be an expert on improvisation.





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