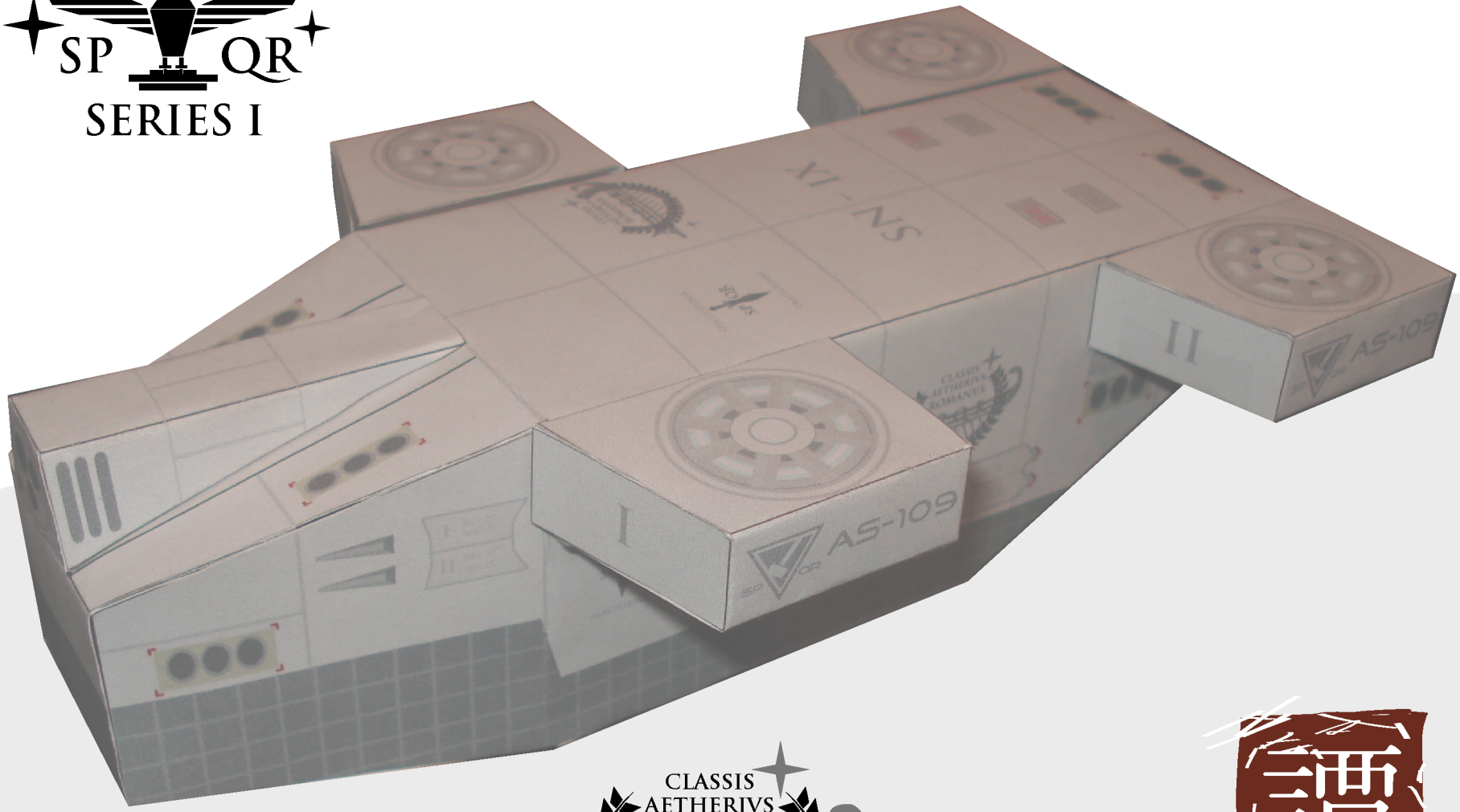
RESVRGAM

SP QR

SERIES I

#2
Icarus-Class Dropship



CLASSIS
AETHERIVS
ROMANVS
S-P-Q-R

BRYAN TAN
GRAPHIC DESIGNER
ROCKETMANTAN.DEVIANTART.COM

Log_A-113
03-09-2727_AUC

It is the 28th Century. The Roman Empire has expanded to cover the Eurasian Continent east of the Ural Mountains, and has settled a large portion of the Northeastern Woodlands in Terra Nova. Rome is in a shaky alliance with the Mongol Empire to the East, and is currently struggling to fight for its land in Terra Nova against the Antipodal Alliance. After an herbicidal bombing run went awry, 80% of the world's water supply has become dangerous to drink. The Rome-based Vulcan Corporation has begun a mass filtration program, though some see it as more of a water monopoly. At the same time, the world empires have colonized the Moon, and the first colonies have sprung up on Mars. Rome has 9 colonies there, the Mongols 3, and the Antipodals have taken over a Roman colony.

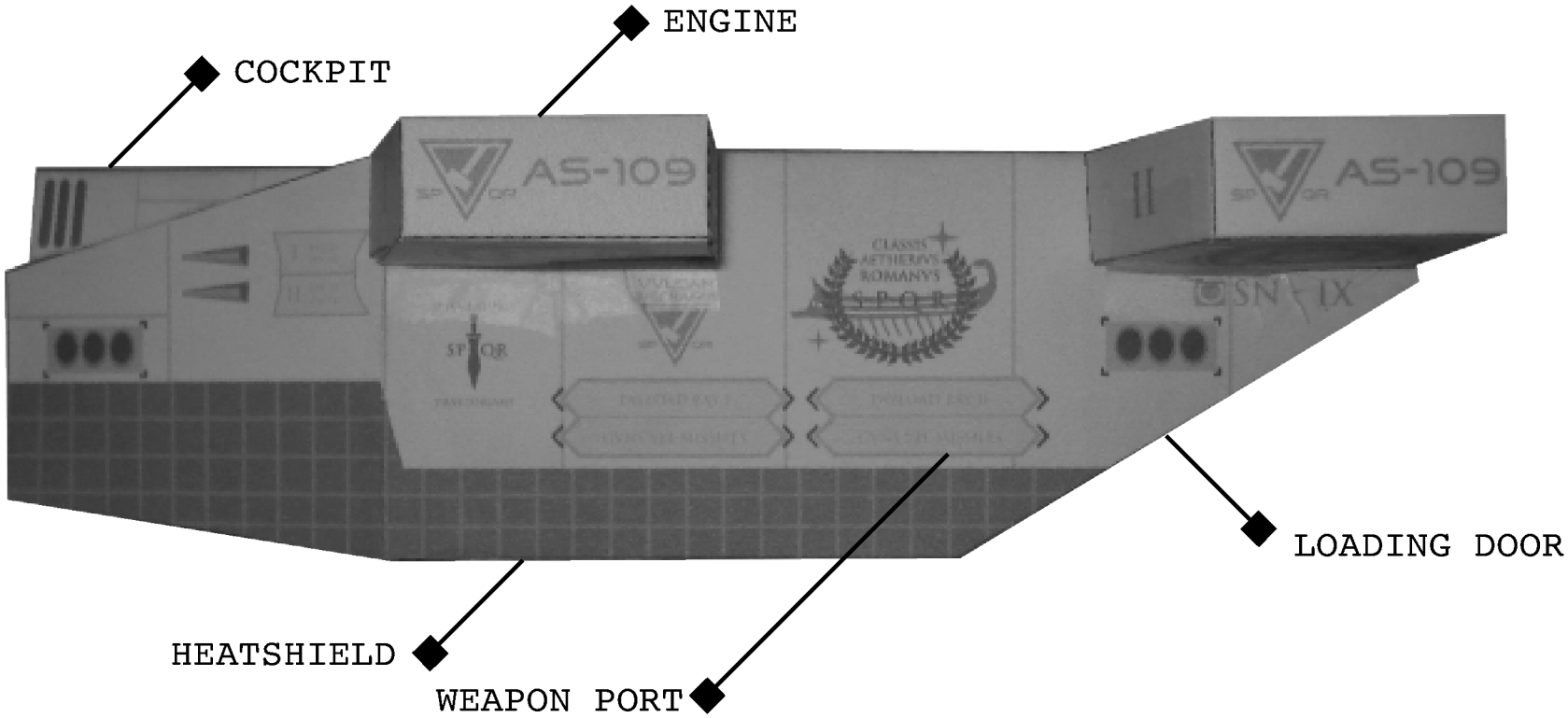
I am Mamercus Horatius Aloysius, Optio to Centurion Lucretius of the RESVRGAM, flagship of the Praetorian Fleet Classis Misenensis. We are on our way to Mars. Our mission: regain Vulcan Colony 39 in what will be the first conflict spanning two planets.

Gods help us.

S-P-Q-R
SENATVS POPVLVSQVE ROMANVS

RESVRGAM
LB-XXVII

CLASSIS PRAETORIAE
SP QR
MISENENSIS PIAE VINDICI



SPECIFICATIONS

LENGTH - 12.3m

HEIGHT - 3.28m

POWERPLANT - 1 x FN-2 NUCLEAR FUSION REACTOR

PROPULSION - 4 x AS-109 VTOL AEROSPIKE ENGINES

RANGE - 3 TERRAN ORBITS

ARMAMENT - 4 x BST 27 'BALLISTAE' MK IX AUTOCANNON
8 X PAYLOAD BAYS FOR:
- MISSILES, SNIPER RIFLES, AUTOCANNON

DEFENSE - CHAFF
FLARES

CREW - UNMANNED (DRONE MISSIONS); 1 PILOT (SPEC-OPS)

CAPACITY - 10 LEGIONNAIRES

DIV.	DWG NO.	ARCHITECT:	APPROVED:
SHIPBUILDING	XXVII	BRYAN TAN	05/18/2724

VVLCAN NAVALES SP QR

'ICARUS CLASS' GROUND-ATTACK DRONE

GENERAL OVERVIEW

"Mamercus, Report!" the Centurion barked. I immediately brought up the diagnostic readout on my HMD. It...wasn't good, to say the least.

"All but eight of our heat radiators are shot to hell, engine IV is black, engine III is down 60%, and our guns--"

"Damnit Optio, just tell me if we can continue supporting the carrier and the dropships!"

"Sir, our nuclear warheads are still online. I'll need your neural link to arm them."

A dialogue popped up to confirm the warheads were armed. Although the missiles were operational, I sent out repair drones to fix the guns. After all, nukes are nigh unpredictable.

With the adrenaline rush from the attack now gone, I became aware of my immediate surroundings. The panoramic viewscreen was cracked, certain panels either out of alignment or just dead static. Detritus of all sorts floated about the CIC, and through my helmet I could hear the blaring of the klaxons, crew scrambling below to repair the ship and secure the debris. We'd been knocked off our horse, but we were getting back up. Suddenly a neural message from the Centurion brought me back to the situation at hand.

"Sir, landing skiffs are in the Martian atmosphere, ETA Argyre nine minutes. Patching us through to Mars Mission Control."

The centurion took over as he spoke. "CAPCOM Mars this is Liburnian Two-Seven Heavy. We have a possible hostage situation at Argyre Resort, please advise."

"Two-Seven Heavy this is CAPCOM. We're looking over your sitrep transmission now. Confirm that you have four skiffs nine minutes from target, over."

"Roger that. Carrier Three Nine Zero has four skiffs inbound. One manned, three drones."

"Alright, we'll communicate with the stick being sent down there now. Standby for further messages."

The situation in the CIC was tense to say the least. We all gawked at the FLIR feed of the resort, anxiously watching the four small blips closing in on the target. All we could do was wait.

SPQR
SENATVS POPVLVSQVE ROMANVS

The War Room was filled with chatter. Officers ran about, chattering into their headsets, leaning over each others' shoulders and pointing at the softly glowing screens. Augustus Ostro chewed his nails as he watched the the large screen projected at the front of the room. Located three miles under the Martian surface, and protected up top by a grid of CIWS and KEWs, there was no way the bunker could be compromised. However, Ostro wasn't worried about his safety, for that was assured. Rather, he closely monitored the dropships hurtling through the atmosphere. A separate FLIR feed looked down into the transparent dome of the resort's main annex. People swarmed about, like ants around an anthill. They were being herded like sheep to the slaughter.

'But why would the Antipodals want to take a freaking /resort/ hostage of all things?' Augustus squeezed his cover pensively. The 'SPQR' laurel emblazoned on the front glittered in the red light as he rifled through his thoughts. He may be the legate of Mars (or as his friends jokingly called his post: 'Senior Regional Manager of Vulcan's Mars Branch'), but gods damnit he was an officer, too, and damned if he would allow his post to seem like one borne solely out of croneyism. Suddenly, it clicked. By the gods, his ties to the Vulcan corporation actually helped at a time like this!

"Centurion!" he yelled a little too excitedly. "Bring up the guestbook for the resort. Cross-reference it with the senior staff of Vulcan Industries and its subsidiaries. Argyre's a luxury resort, right? These assholes are probably there for something valuable... While you're at it, try to get a profile on the two jokers running the show by the reception desk."

The landing skiff hurtled through the upper atmosphere of Mars at supersonic speeds. Its squat, compact form cleaved through the air like a warm knife through butter, the thermal tiles glowing red. Inside the vessel, the ten-man team sat hunched in their G-Chairs, coping with the tortuous shaking of the ship and the crushing g-forces brought down upon them.

Unlike the more sophisticated Jumpships, which were armed to the teeth with all manner of artillery and equipped with better intertial dampeners, the Icarus Landing Boat was nothing but a composite ceramic hull with fusion airspikes and a few autocannons and missiles strapped to the sides. Hell, they weren't even meant to be manned! The passenger bay was a special modification meant for SpecOps troops. The vessel's compact and simplistic design allowed for rapid troop deployment - perfect for surgical drops.

The speed came at a price, however. Reentry in an Icarus was always a tricky affair. The small, spartan frame couldn't help but get tossed around as it hurtled through the atmosphere, the heat of reentry heating the crew bay to near-intolerable temperatures. No amount of specialized gear could keep the praetoriani within completely comfortable; it was their training which helped them deal with the dangerous maneuvers.

For Carius Maro, the drop was just one in a series of many. By now, drops meant a nice nap before a tiring engagement. As these dropships hurtled through the air, they periodically launched flares and chaff, screwing up any radar and heat-seeking missiles that may be out to destroy them. Not that there were any for this mission, of course. Sitrep from the RESURGAM showed that the only explosives were in the resort, and those would be taken care of by Carius and his men.

Suddenly his radio crackled, starling him out of his sleep.
"Decurio, this is Olympus station, do you read?"
"Yeah, I read ya..." Maro groaned, removing his helmet to rub his eyes.
"There's been a change of plans. Your primary mission is no longer to neutralize the terrorists. Instead you are to secure a Dr. Marcus. He is one of Vulcan's top scientists, and an invaluable asset to both the corporation and the security of the Empire. You are to prevent him from harm and capture by any means necessary."

Carius looked at his men. They nodded in unison, showing that they had received their orders. Gaius himself tilted his head back in resignation. He was trained to deal with situations briefed and planned out beforehand. Obviously his post required him to think on the fly, but even then the mission stayed the same. Drop in, complete the mission as briefed, and then head to the RV point for extraction. Simple, planned, and more-or-less expected. He wasn't a gods-damned infantry grunt; they were the blunt weapons of the Legion. As a Praetor Speculator, his men were more like a scalpel, meant for precise cuts and operations.

But no matter; one way or another, the Legion always got the job done.

"For the love of-- Is the computer even booting up yet?!" James yelled at his friend. He was getting antsy. After all, it wasn't easy keeping an entire resort calm when they were forced to stay in an atrium. He looked nervously at the sentry turrets aimed at the crowd. If anyone moved out of the preset perimeter, the vigilant robots would gun down the would-be escapee, though James hopes it wouldn't have to come to that.

"Alright, done!" Cain scanned the crowd of panicked people. With the turrets gazing down on the crowd, he had a clear view of his targets.

"Want me to run the facial recognition software?"
"No need." James replied curtly. Cain flashed him a look of confusion. "It'll take too long. Instead... DOCTOR MARCUS!" James hollered, just enough to be heard above the din of the crowd, but not loud enough to distract everyone. One head snapped in James' direction.
"Ya see? Simple." James smirked at his comrade, who simply rolled his eyes in response.

Before Marcus could react, James had his men march towards the hapless man, dragging the scientist up to the reception desk turned podium.

"ARBUTUS Dropship IX, this is Olympus Station, do you copy?"'
"Copy that, this is Decurio Maro, what is it now?"
"The terrorists have obtained the scientist, I repeat, the terrorists have our scientist. How close are you to the target?"
"We're just about to jump." Carius saw the pilot emerge from the cockpit, decked out in full combat gear. The entire cabin lurched as the dropship's breaking thrusters kicked in, slowing the ship down just enough to jump.

After a few seconds, the loading door swung open, and Carius barked out his orders, yelling at his men to /jump, jump, jump/. Maro jumped last, and as soon as his feet were clear of the ship, the squat aircraft maneuvered away, taking position with the other unmanned drones.

Carius didn't find himself falling so much as floating. Martian jumps were always agonizing for him; although it was interesting the first time around to fall at a much slower rate, Carius felt like a sitting duck as he fell at a meager acceleration of 3.7 meters per second. Nevertheless he could feel the acceleration, and after what seemed like an eternity, his braking rockets fired, slowing him down as he landed on the Martian surface. He immediately ditched the thruster pack, following his troop toward the resort, all of them bunnyhopping across the sands, using Mars' decreased gravity to their advantage.

Augustus stared in disbelief at the security feed, hands behind his head. The scientist was brought to the front of the crowd. Suddenly a gunshot rang out, startling everyone and diverting their attention to the two men who appeared to be running the show.

"ATTENTION, EVERYONE!" the apparent leader shouted. He had an intelligent look to him, with slim, clean-cut features, black, combed-back hair, and glasses which spoke of both cerebral intelligence as well as practical wit. Yet, it was the way he carried himself that left a bad taste in Augustus' mouth, leaving him to think nothing but 'by Jove, what a smug asshole'.

Dr. Marcus was forced to his knees with a swift kick to the backs of his legs. Almost immediately the leader lowered the barrel to the scientist's head.

"Tell them." the leader said curtly. "Tell them the big dirty secret of your company..."

'Oh fuck.' Augustus thought, eyes wide open. "Cut the audio!" he shrieked to his second in command. "Cut the audio for all personal below O5-Level clearance!"

Within the confines of his soundproofed observation suite Augustus watched the security feed intently.

"TELL THEM!" James pressed the barrel of the gun harder against Petrus Marcus's head, the scientist shaking in horror.

"Tell them what?!" the frail 70 year-old whimpered.

"What is your occupation..." James lowered a microphone to Petrus's mouth.

"I...I'm one of the lead engineers for Vulcan Consumer Goods..."

"And what do you engineer?"

"I'm in charge of the production of water filtration plants..."

"Why does the water need to be filtered?"

"Because 95% of the world's freshwater is unsafe! Why are you asking me these things; everyone knows this!"

"But does anyone know why? I think you do...after all, you're the kind soul who is helping us purify this 'unsafe water'...If I recall correctly, seven years ago there was no need for this mass filtration program..."

"What are you getting at?!"

"Tell the People what you and your cronies at Vulcan have done!" James roared.

"I...we..." Before Petrus could get another word out the sentry turrets began firing away, startling the crowd. James looked up, eyes scanning the area, trying to see past the smoke, tracer bullets, and panicking civilians.

"EVERYBODY DOWN!" a voice shouted, the hostages doing so immediately. One by one the sentry turrets were disabled, sputtering pathetically as they died. Smoke bombs clattered across the floor, filling the atrium with a thick grey fog. Red laser beams shone through, rubber bullets cracking down on anyone still standing. James tried to flee, but took a slug to the back of his head, with Petrus crawling away.

"YOU THERE!" a legionnaire shouted, his gun pointed at Cain. "STOP RIGHT THERE, LAY ON THE GROUND!"

"Stand back!" Cain brandished a trigger switch, a wire leading into his jacket.

"Fuck, Maro, this guy's got a bomb!" the legionnaire shouted into his mic.

'There aren't any civilians in the blast zone, get out of there now, Marcus!' Carius hollered.

Marcus immediately turned tail, shouldering his weapon as he leapt as far as he could.

Trying to see through the smoke, Cain felt the trigger in his hand, the black plastic warm in his grip and slick with sweat. He closed his eyes and took a deep breath. They may not have gotten the confession they wanted, but he sure as hell was going to leave a message.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and your staff they comfort me..."

Augustus jumped in his place as a flash sprung up in the middle of the smoke crowd. Through his earpiece he could hear the panicked shrieks of the civilians, followed by expletives from the task force.

'Guys, everything's alright! It was just one suicide bomber. I think all the other targets have been neutralized. Icarus drones are scanning the area.' the intercom crackled.

"Maro, report!" Augustus barked

"Sir, all hostages are safe, three of the five terrorists are accounted for. I think one of them may have been gibbed by that suicide bomber. The other one couldn't have gone too far, though; our drones are keeping an eye out for the guy."

"Alright, stand by until we're sure the situation has been dealt with. Support ships are on their way."

Icarus Drone IX scanned the resort, searching for anyone that might be the last terrorist. His infrared eyes saw a large mass of white blips in the reception area, with a few smaller clumps huddled in tight, obscure areas of the resort. But wait, there was a blip running towards some sort of blurry patch of sand...wait, that wasn't sand...it took a while to focus and think, but soon Drone IX recognized the strange construct to be a dropship not unlike himself. Of course, his analytical robotic mind had no time or reson to berate himself for missing it. Instead, the drone merely asked the ship above what he should do. A transmission coming from the cruiser told him to simply launch a tracker tag at the dropship.

Drone IX was more than happy to comply...or whatever the hell was the robot equivalent of happiness. He was merely doing his job; sticking to the mission was what he lived for, after all. He selected one of two tracker missiles in his payload bay, tucking it into his launch frame as he sped behind the dropship, making sure that the enemy wouldn't catch his scent. Once he got a lead, Drone IX opened his missile hatch, sending his little rocket friend on his way.

Tracker Rocket sped towards his target. Tracker liked what he was doing. Granted, he had never done anything of the sort before, but he just /knew/ that chasing that dropship was the best thing he could do with his life. He closed in, eager to succeed. One thousand meters. Nine hundred. Eight. Seven. Six. Oh boy, here we go... four... This is gonna be great! Three...Oh gods, passed the three-hundred mark, this is truly a milestone in my life! Two-hundred meters...ohhh boy so close! One hundred...

With robotic, unfeeling jubilation, the tracker rocket detonated the charge within its nose cone, sending forth a cloud of magnetic GPS trackers towards the dropship. To the crew onboard, the missile launch had been a fluke, having detonated near one of the flares; a close shave for the three remaining terrorists.

S-P-Q-R
SENATVS POPVLVSQVE ROMANVS

"Sir, the situation has been resolved. Trackers have been attached to the enemy dropship and coordinates are being pinged to Mars FLEETCOM." Augustus' 2CO reported.

"Excellent. Have the Strategic Sealift deal with the survivors. Bring Dr. Marcus back to Terra and freeze him during transit so he can be debriefed. I want RESURGAM and ARBUTUS to regroup with the Miseneum fleet back at Terra. Finally, send a news package back to Imperial news outlets. For all intents and purposes, this was a hostage situation undertaken by Fundamentalist terrorists. Their goal was simply to cause fear and panic. Delete all footage of Dr. Marcus. He is not to be referred to other than as a victim of this attack. Have the networks spin this story for about a week, make it seem like a tragedy and an affront to our way of life; you know the drill."

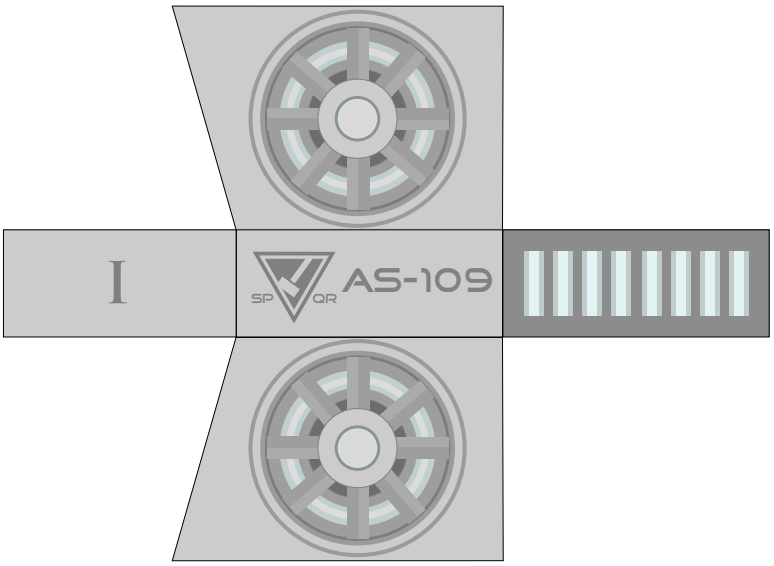
Augustus sounded the all-clear. His office once again opened to the rest of Mission Control, no longer sealed off from the lower-clearance personnel.

"Attention FLEETCOM personnel, this is Legate Augustus Ostro speaking. The situation has been dealt with. No casualties reported. Focus on cleanup, and good work, everyone."

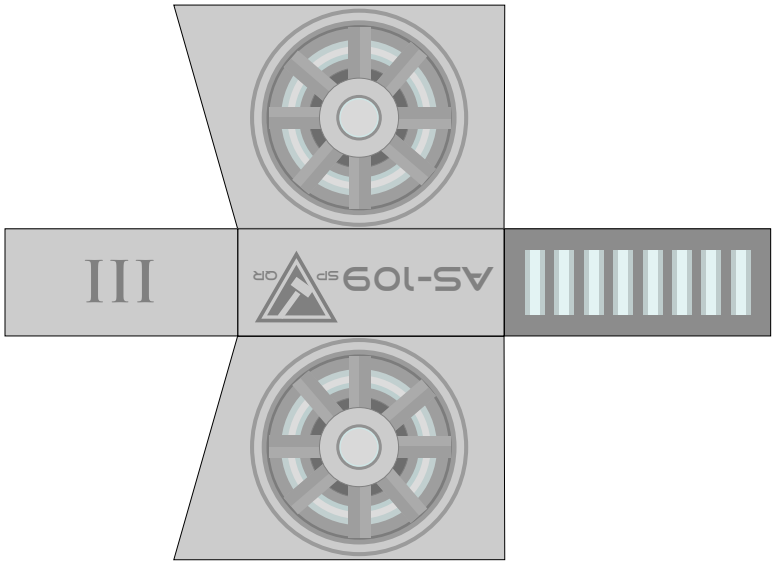
Cockpit Canopy

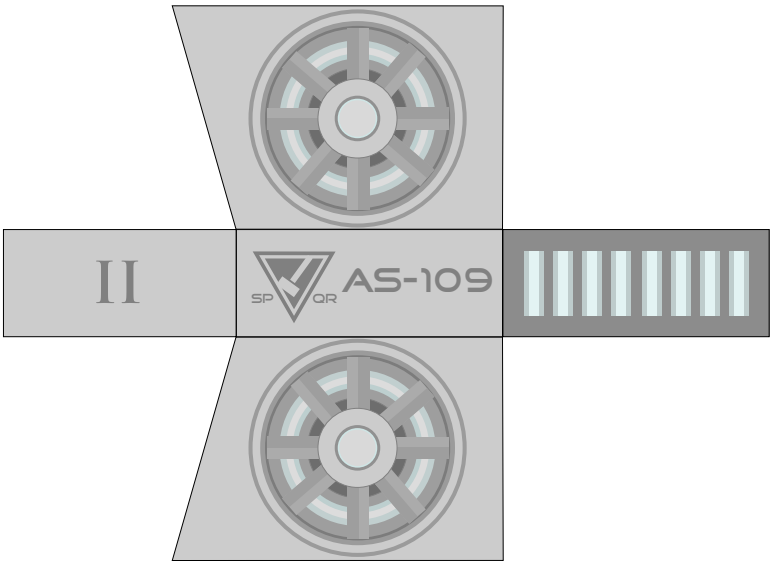
Copyright (C) 2014 Bryan Tan
rocketmantan.deviantart.com

Port Fwd Engine

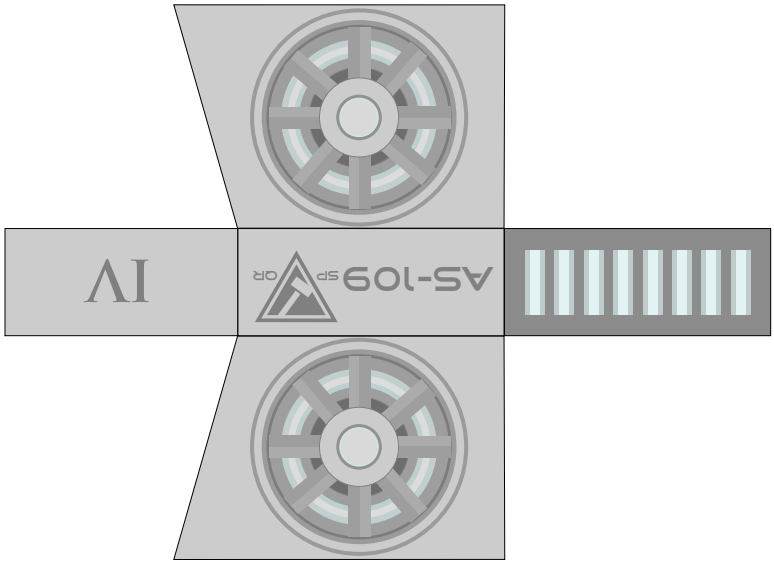


Stbd Fwd Engine

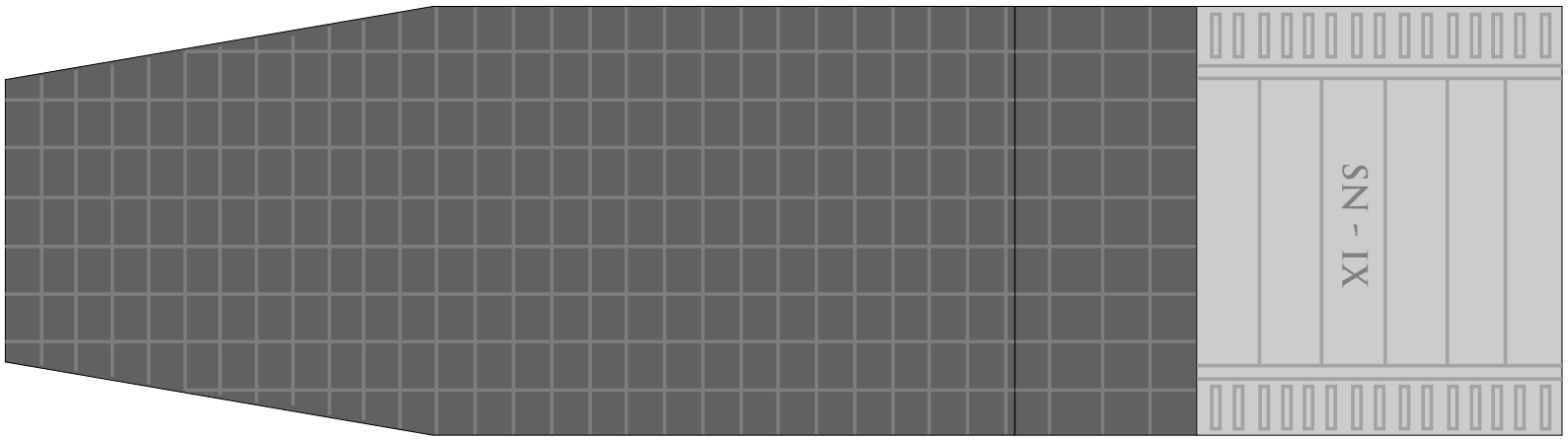




Port Aft Engine



Stbd Aft Engine



Heat Shield & Cargo Door

Copyright (C) 2014 Bryan Tan
rocketmantan.deviantart.com