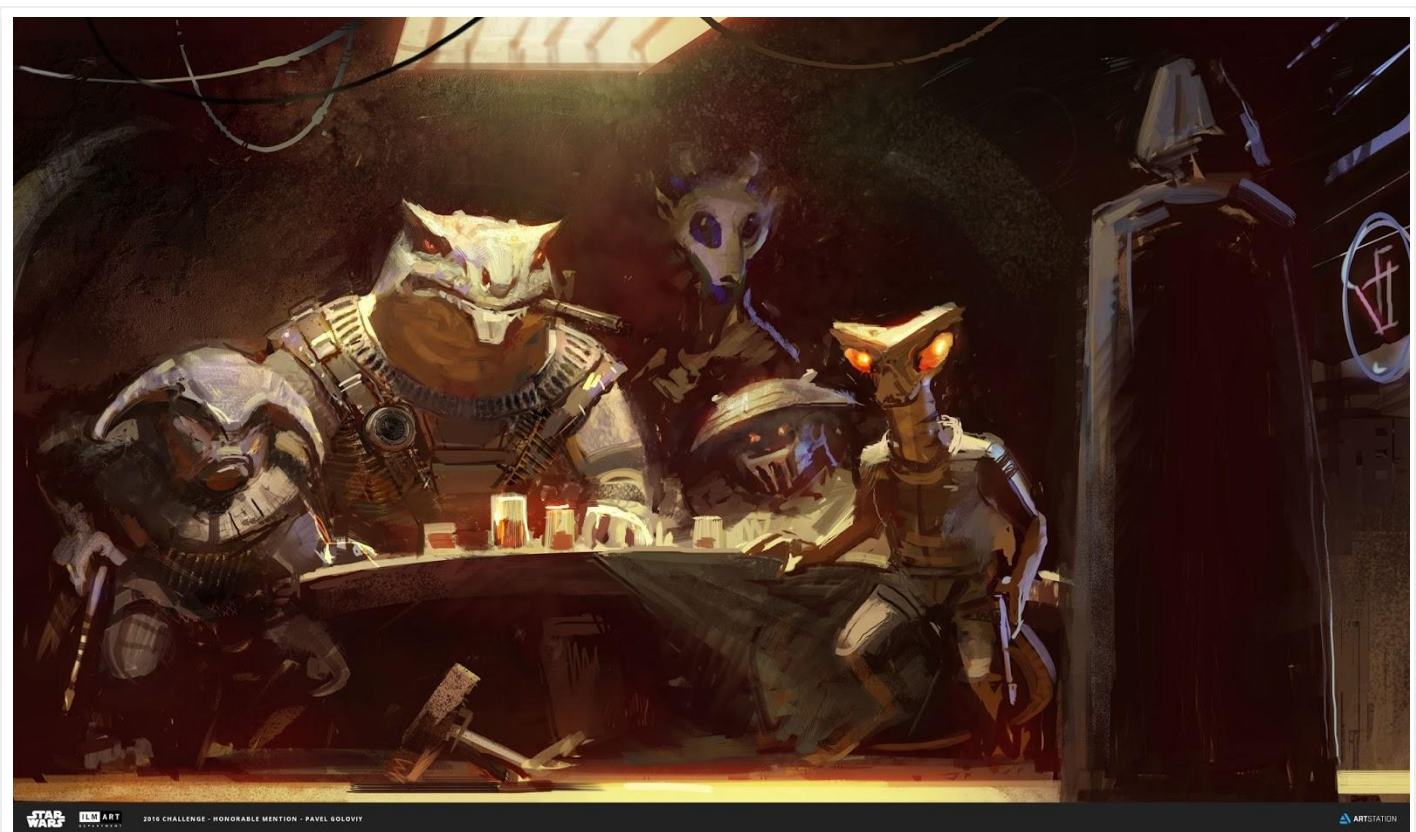


Species: the Renlars

Renlars are bipedal scaled sentients. They have flat, wide faces and large mouths filled with peg-like teeth. Completely filled - their tongues move between a maze of stumpy grey teeth like a snake through grass. Their eyes are bright and set very far apart. They lack hair or visible ears. They are tall and broad, like a Wookiee, but slightly bent. Their limbs are thinner than you might expect, and end in clusters of clawed digits.



The End: Keyframe 2 by Pavel Goloviy

Renlars, despite their fearsome appearance, are not monsters. They can speak Basic and pick up other languages... They resort to violence no more than your average sentient. If thoroughly provoked, they will happily claw you apart. They favour robust, high-powered weapons adapted for their hands and eyes. Renlars find work in many industries, but are rarely pilots. They get dizzy easily and tend to break control sticks when stressed.

All Renlars are mildly Force sensitive. They can sense, with remarkable detail, the emotions of other nearby Renlars. The emotions of other species are mysterious to them. They either feel nothing, or interpret strong emotions as "noises" or "bad tastes". The fear, grief, rage, and love of other species have no effect on them, for the most part. The emotion they describe as "frustration of nearly completing a difficult math problem only to discover you have made a fundamental error" sounds like pleasant brass bells. Many Renlars enjoy visiting universities. The wealthiest of their species keep court mathematicians, who are brought out for display purposes when other Renlars are visiting, and are otherwise used as alarm clocks or background entertainment. Renlars do not believe that their abilities are supernatural.

Renlars do, however, have supernatural beliefs. They are all firmly convinced of the existence of ghosts.

Renlars believe that, when a sentient creature is killed, they linger as a spirit. This spirit is usually quite weak. It will follow the person who killed it around and bother them in their dreams, spoil their eggs, spill their yeggis, and make their shots miss. This doesn't happen to other species, because other species aren't interesting enough to follow. Only Renlars are haunted. The kills of other species just hang around or dissipate.

There is a way to avoid being haunted. Renlars must - and this is a "must", they'll do their best and will be very unhappy if prevented - eat the flesh of a creature they've killed. They are permitted to cook it, transport it, or delay up to six hours. If they don't, the spirit will haunt them. They eat so that the spirit can enter the Renlar's "spirit-bladder" or "-gland", and reside there in comfort and happiness. Renlars believe that they are so excellent and blessed that ghosts *really* want to help them and be inside them, and, if a ghost is prevented from doing so, they curse the Renlar who spurned them.

The idea of what counts as a "kill" is nebulous. A Renlar who blows up three Stormtroopers with a grenade need only eat one bit of flesh; their deaths were linked, producing an aggregate (and more potent) ghost. The same thing would apply if a Renlar shot down a starship.

For a fee, Renlar shamans will dismiss your ghosts. Powerful shamans can even talk to them, or convince them to enter your spirit-gland, or turn your own ghosts against you. They are widely feared. The only Jedi to study the Renlars reported, in a very terse letter, that they are "most likely correct" about being haunted, although "they seem to be doing it to themselves."

Renlar shamans, upon hearing of the destruction of Alderaan, created a secret monastery. For a fee they will resettle ghosts of your choice on the "ghost" of Alderaan (planets, some starships, and occasionally droids also have ghosts). Renlars didn't have an afterlife, unless haunting someone was part of it, until they found out about Alderaan. A ghost planet full of pacifists sounds like an excellent place for a Renlar to spend the afterlife eating other ghosts, building cities, or raising clutches of ghost-eggs.

Renlars are monogendered. They can produce eggs (by vomiting them up). The eggs are delicious - Renlars don't have a problem with you eating their eggs, provided you don't have a problem with them eating your species. Cannibalism in Star Wars is kind of a grey area. Most people are too busy to wonder if their dinner's last words were "Moo!" or "I swear, I've got the money!"

In any case, if properly incubated, a new Renlar will hatch in about sixteen days. They take years to grow to full sentience and ability, and they smell like ammonia and seaweed for the first decade of their long, scaly lives.

If a Renlar likes you, you might be asked to "contribute" to their egg. They don't want anything liquid or soluble in benzene from you, so this isn't the usual "contribution". Hair, nail clippings, or dried slime-flakes will work. The items will be swallowed and incorporated into the baby Renlar's head-crest, which falls off once they break free of the egg. There's no limit on the number of "contributors", so a Renlar might ask several close friends or lovers for assistance. "You must have had a mighty head-crest," is a Renlar way of saying, "You are awfully big."