

## **Resket**

**Anatomy:** The Reskets are a species of flightless, ratite birds with lengthy legs and necks. These heavy avians are capable of running at incredible speeds at both the short and the long term, despite their towering stature (nine feet tall on average); even in longer intervals, humans couldn't compete with a Resket's running. Their kicking ability with these two-toed legs can pack a powerful punch, without factoring in their sharp talons. Their wings have shrunk over time to be primarily used as manipulators, and are nifty for balance or fanning themselves in the heat. Their wings can also be extended as part of their interpersonal displays, or for making themselves appear larger as a form of intimidation.

Pink feathers and skin were considered the most attractive to the Reskets' ancestors, and over time, their coloration became a permanent pink, with varying shades and intensity. It's only the bulk of their body that is covered in feathers, while their necks and legs are not. Their tail plumage can deviate from the pink coloration, morphing into whites, browns, or blacks. They lay massive eggs, several at a time, with standard practice being to keep them in communal nests; while modern technologies track parentage officially, female Reskets can tell their eggs apart from others by sight, to know which ones to incubate.

In addition, Reskets have large eyes, which give them the best vision of any Consortium species. It's a common, but untrue, quip that the Reskets have bigger eyes than brains. Combining this with their towering height, they can see enemy forces coming from far away on the battlefield, and are unrivaled as scouts without tools to aid the others. Their heads are rather small compared to the rest of their body, with the eyes and wide beaks taking up the majority of the space. Their beaks have a darker, dimmer hue than the rest of their form, often looking somewhat purple.

**Diet:** Omnivore

**Blood color:** Pink

**Homeworld:** Tanet

**Population:** 13 billion

**Habitat, Temperament, and Evolution:** The Reskets thrive in open spaces, from woodlands to savannahs. They can survive amid vastly fluctuating climate conditions, with one of their largest ancient settlements, Caidino, taking up residence in the punishing Benem Desert—where temperatures would range from blistering heat to below freezing temperatures. Their primary adaptations gear them toward arid environments; to this day, the most frigid parts of Tanet are not settled by Reskets. (Jaslips have taken up residence on the poles, but not without some irritation from the locals).

A Resket's temper flare-ups are notorious as something to be avoided, with them often holding grudges for years; despite objections from the other Consortium species, physical dueling is still legal on Tanet. The tradition traces back thousands of years, with weapons typically being prohibited. Duelers are able to wager their material possessions. In past eras, they could even wager their children (with the winner taking custody of the other's kids), though this aspect has been outlawed in the modern day. Even in happier moods, they're known for being "no nonsense" and predisposed to authoritative professions.

The Reskets' evolution to become their world's dominant species was a long process, with their non-sapient cousins having been present for over a hundred million years. This is a much lengthier journey from origin to sapience than the average sophont. Their systems are hardy in part due to their ancientness, surviving multiple shifts; for example, their immune system is exceptional at fending off diseases. They rarely get sick, another reason they make excellent soldiers.

**Spacefaring History:** The Reskets were a middle-of-the-road contact for the Krev. The mission of peaceful exploration on Avor was a far cry from Tanet's history of infighting, small and large scale, but the two species often balanced each other out—the Krev's scientific focus paired well with the Resket's risk evaluation and strength. Tanet, which had been a simple post-industrial civilization, benefitted from the aliens' advanced technology and the newly-opened trade routes more than anyone. They could receive goods merely as on-ship security or official border guards to ward off privateers, playing a large role in the safety of interstellar routes.

After the discovery of the Federation, the Reskets were the first to select their specialization, with their obvious strengths; there was some leeriness over allowing an aggressive species to lead the military of a defensive organization, but the avians were happy to turn their attention inward. They are considered the enforcement agency of the Consortium, functioning in a role of both infantry and security—putting down insurrection, domestically or abroad. Their largest military action was against Esquo, in a years-long campaign to relocate Jaslips that ended in their retreat, as they were not suited for the cold. Climate proved their sole weakness, aside from close-quarters combat.

Many Reskets harbor resentment against the Jaslips for the embarrassment. Their government has a policy of launching "surprise" inspections against Tanet's Jaslip enclave, Esquo's Image. As the Trainers of the Consortium military, many try to pressure Jaslip recruits into dropping out, especially those from Esquo's Image or Esquo's Fighters (a Smigli enclave composed of the relocated).

**Culture:** Resket culture is largely honor-based, with an expectation to defend one's reputation, to be straightforward, and keep promises at all costs. During their wars, commanders would often send word to the enemy of a neutral location they intended to wage a battle, and ask for their foe to furnish an equivalent number of soldiers for a head-on clash. Reskets who are known to utilize underhanded tactics or to lie are socially shunned, with modern renditions

utilizing public shaming campaigns on the internet that'll make someone persona non grata across Tanet.

Respecting hierarchy is also something that is considered essential, though rapid upward mobility is possible for those who prove themselves through acts of valor. Martial arts are a popular activity, and often a way to gain the respect of a superior is to defeat them or their chosen representative (for the old and infirm) in a sparring contest, even in non-military professions. It is considered a Resket's duty to follow the orders of those above them in the hierarchy; family is also important, with social expectations to consult and listen to parents and grandparents about decisions even in adulthood. A couple cannot be legally married without the approval of a direct relative, as long as one is alive.

**Languages:** The Reskets still have a wide swath of languages, though for official communications and as a lingua franca, they use Caidi—a language descended from one of the most influential ancient cultures. Smaller tongues, often spoken by only a few thousand people, have been dying out at a faster rate since first contact. It's considered a goal of historians to upload these languages into translator matrixes for cultural preservation.