

Baroness Lucinda Dulcinea

Stigmata Garrison Commander

Born on Byzantium Secundus to a highly praised family of Hazat diplomats, Baroness Lucinda Maria Portavia Dulcinea grew up tutored in honor and cultured bearing. Her family had long been one of the Hazat's main ambassadors to the regent, and her great-great-grandmother Felicia Maria Lysteria Dulcinea once came close to holding the seat of the regency. Although the Known Worlds were suffering the Emperor Wars during her youth, the courts on Byzantium Secundus always maintained a strong veneer of etiquette even before the fiercest hatreds. Lucinda grew up playing in the sprawling halls and palaces, and her playmates were the children of Decados, Hawkwood, Li Halan and al-Malik ambassadors. Too young to fully realize that their families' interests were often in conflict, these children developed close ties to each other that were put to harsh tests during their adult years, as the Decados and Hazat joined to resist Emperor Alexius's bid for power. Indeed, Alexius had visited the palaces as a young boy, and Lucinda often played hide-and-seek with him in the great gardens. As they both grew older, his visits became less frequent following his father's death, and she missed him, for even then she recognized that there was something different about this young Hawkwood. Her admission into the Aragon Military Academy effectively ensured that neither saw the other again for many years, although she strived to become a skilled tactician, hoping word of her accomplishments would reach Alexius and impress him.

By her coming-of-age ball, she was already renowned as a master swordswoman and delicate diplomat. Her childhood friends, who once called her to play or come ride with them, now sought to woo her. But the object of her first crush was not among them, for Alexius was even then preparing to make his bid for power after his uncle Darius. Like most nobles, she sought glory in military service, choosing to lead an infantry company. Her battlefield tactics led to quick promotions, and she soon commanded a legion — one of those chosen to invade Byzantium Secundus.

Her assault lander fleets and its escorts were harried at the jumpgate, however, and never made it to the planet for her house's disastrous defeat. Her ship was captured and she was brought to Byzantium Secundus for ransom — or so she thought. Instead, once the battle haze cleared and Alexius' power was cemented, the Emperor called her to him, in the great gardens of the Imperial Palace.

This time there was no hide-and-seek, for the Emperor's entourage stood thickly about him. He spoke with her about the past, and slyly questioned her about issues of honor, such that she didn't realize until the interview was over that she had been put to a test.

He offered her the choice post of Stigmata Garrison Commander, one of the prime political awards traditionally handed out by regents to their most important allies. She knew then that the Emperor was not just a master tactician but a canny politician. Her honor meant that she would serve in the role with integrity, putting the defense of Stigmata before her own house's interest. In such a way, Alexius honored her defeated house, telling all that the Hazat were indeed worthy combatants, but he also kept them in line. A hot-headed Rolas or Eduardo might take the might of the Garrison and use it for Hazat purposes, but Lucinda would never toy with such power, especially not to betray one who had once been the object of her fantasies.

She has served since with note, and many soldiers say she is the best commander the Garrison has known since the Emperor Wars broke out, even though her tactical skills have constantly been put to many challenges — Symbiots do not behave the way most armies should. She knows, however, that her time as Garrison Commander is coming to an end. While Alexius does not doubt her loyalty, he knows that her own house's interest must eventually be fulfilled. He wishes to put an Imperial vassal in charge of his legions, but she won't let that happen until he satisfies his debt to her. She served him well when others would have used the position to backstab him, and now she expects reward — Alexius must commission her to lead raids into Kurgan barbarian space, and thus open new worlds to her house.

Quote: "Yes, captain, I know that the Symbiots have broken through the Fifth legion's column. But my order still stands — fall back. When the creatures follow the troops from the woods and are on the open plain, radio the Muster cruiser to unleash its heavy blasters. I am confident that your plotters can provide the correct coordinates without hitting our own men..."

Appearance: Lucinda's raven-black hair is almost legendary; many bards (hired by her childhood suitors) have sung epics about her and the "shroud of night that frames the luminous stars of her eyes." She rolls those eyes at the mention of such overblown bardic excess, but secretly smiles at it. Longevity drugs have kept her looking 20 years younger than her actual age.

Entourage: She is ever accompanied by an elite bodyguard of intensely loyal Hazat dervishes, along with more traditional noble hangers-on (accountants, scribes, etc.).

Roleplaying Notes: Lucinda is an honorable but pragmatic person; while she sticks to her word no matter what, she is very careful about giving it. Her choice of words is carefully considered, although her conversational skills hide this fact, making her seem ever spontaneous and forthright. She is somewhat condescending to non-nobles, unless they are soldiers, in which case she provides utmost respect.

Name: Lucinda Dulcinea		Race: Human		LEARNED SKILLS <i>LVL</i>	
Gender: Female		Alliance: Hazat		Arts (Music) 2	
Age: 50s		Rank: Baroness		Bureacracy 3	
				Drive Aircraft 3	
				Drive Landcraft 4	
				Etiquette 7	
				Focus 5	
				Inquiry 5	
				Lore (Symbiots) 6	
				Lore (Stigmata) 7	
				Physick 3	
				Read Urthish 5	
				Remedy 5	
				Ride 5	
				Social (Leadership) 8	
				Stoic Body 7	
				Stoic Mind 6	
				Survival 4	
				Tech Redemption (Mech) 2	
				Warfare (Military Tactics) 8	
				Xeno-Empathy 2	

CHARACTERISTICS		NATURAL SKILLS	
Body	Mind	Charm (3)	6
Strength (3) 5	Wits (3) 8	Dodge (3)	7
Dexterity (3) 7	Perception (3) 6	Fight (3)	6
Endurance (3) 7	Tech (3) 4	Impress (3)	7
		Melee (3)	8
		Observe (3)	6
		Shoot (3)	7
		Sneak (3)	4
		Vigor (3)	7
SPIRIT			
Extrovert (3) 8	/ 4 (1) Introvert		
Passion (3) 6	/ 5 (1) Calm		
Faith (3) 6	/ 4 (1) Ego		

COMMON ACTIONS		BLESSINGS/CURSES	
Action	Goal	+/-	Trait Situation
Giving orders	16	+2 Calm	Disciplined in combat
		-2 Calm	Vengeful when honor impinged

COMBAT		STR bonus: —		Init Goal DMG RNG	
Action					
Wireblade	8 15 8d			Martial Fist	6 13 3d
Blaster Pistol	7 14 7d			Martial Kick	5 13 4d
Parry	8 17			Martial Hold	5 13 3d
Thrust	10 15			Block	+3 successes to resist
Slash	6 15 +1d			Martial Throw	4 13 3d
Draw & Strike	6 15			Drop & Kick	4* 15 4d
Disarm	6 14			Leaping Kick	4 12 6d
Off-Hand	no off-hand penalties				
Parry/Riposte	8 17/14				
Athletic Strike	5 13				

SHOTS (10 /clip)	
VITALITY	00000000000000000000
Wound penalties: -10 -8 -6 -4 -2	
WYRD	00000000000000000000

VICTORY CHART	
Successes	Pts
1-2	0
3-5	+1
6-8	+2
9-11	+3
12-14	+4
15-17	+5
18	+6
Critical success	= x2

Lord Admiral John Syngen-Wilkes

First Lord Admiral, Imperial Fleet

John Syngen-Wilkes was born the second son of Lord Wesley Syngen-Wilkes some 13 years before the beginning of the Emperor Wars. Lord Syngen-Wilkes had little land and John stood to gain none of it, so he pleaded with his father to get him a position in the Hawkwood fleet. Lord Syngen-Wilkes had little influence, but in times of war he was able to get his son onboard the frigate *Raisonnable* as a midshipman.

The young cadet spent all his time studying the workings of the ship and quickly attracted the eye of his captain. After a particularly costly battle with the Decados, the captain gave John command of the prize frigate *Zmei* and ordered him to return the captured ship to the nearest prize court. Here midshipman John Syngen-Wilkes first proved his superlative abilities. The Decados frigate had been in contact with a nearby stealth ship during the battle, which now lay in wait for the *Zmei* to separate from *Raisonnable*. The stealth ship appeared and battered the *Zmei* on the first volley. Syngen-Wilkes ordered full stop and told his pilot to keep the broadsides pointed at the enemy. There was only a skeleton prize crew aboard, so Syngen-Wilkes ran down to the gun decks and manned the guns himself. Firing from behind the cupolas he could not aim, but he convinced the stealth ship that he had a full crew, and it retired from the conflict.

Syngen-Wilkes reached Delphi with his prize and passed the lieutenant's test while there. The war created desperate times and the Admiralty gave the fresh lieutenant command of the explorer *St. Vincent*. Again, he proved the master of adversity when his ship came across two frigates locked in a deadly boarding action. One was Decados, the other an al-Malik ship. Since the al-Malik were temporary allies at the time, Syngen-Wilkes immediately rammed his small explorer into the side of the Decados frigate and sent his few boarders away. They proved enough to turn the tide and he earned the al-Malik Star of Valor. Unfortunately, flying debris during the impact cost him his right eye.

Syngen-Wilkes made Post Captain before the end of the war and decided then to move into the Imperial Fleet as a rear admiral. Since he was with Alexius' force at Stigmata, he took command of the Stigmata Fleet. In numerous engagements since then, he proved Symbiot ships could be defeated and not merely chased off. He favors close range engagements and is fearless in combat. In one of his more famous battles against the Symbiot, a Symbiot lightning gun blasted into his flag ship, showering hot metal on the occupants. Lord Syngen-Wilkes lost his right arm to the shot, but immediately stood and ordered the ships to close for the kill.

Emperor Alexius appointed him First Lord only five years ago when the previous First Lord retired. The Emperor needed someone dynamic to support the possible crusade into barbarian space and Lord John Syngen-Wilkes fits the bill.

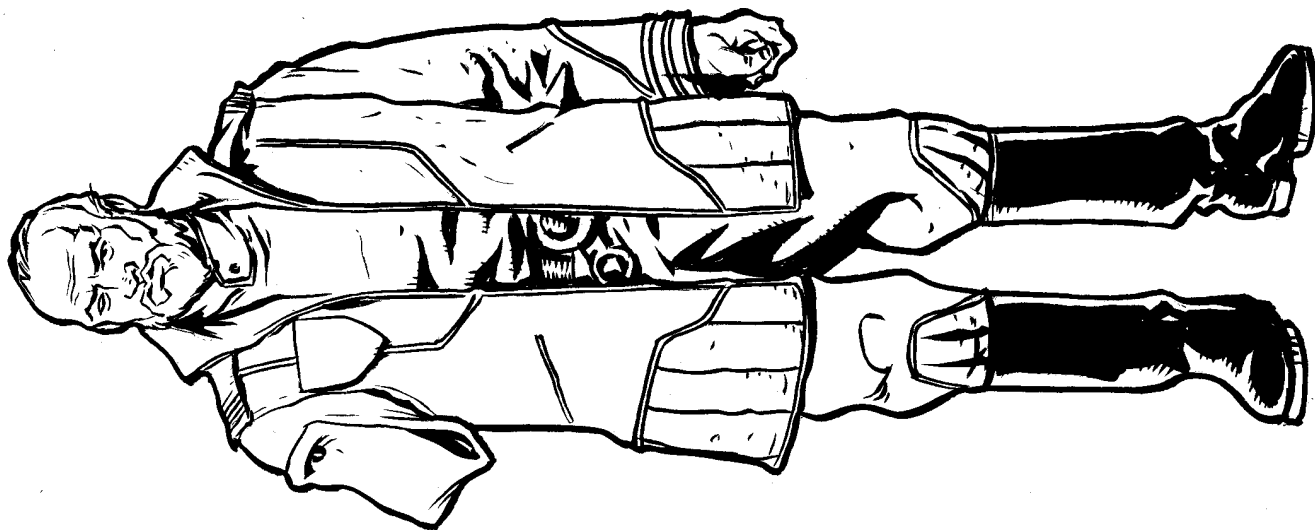
Race: Human

Quote: "Damn the arm! Take us in for the kill!"

Description: Lord Syngen-Wilkes is far from attractive. He wears a glass eye (right), and his right, armless sleeve is neatly pinned to his shoulder. (He refuses cybernetic replacements on religious grounds.) His face shows many scars from the flying burning metal of battle. He is a fit, graying old man otherwise. He always wears a sharp uniform and an array of medals.

Entourage: Lord Syngen-Wilkes has aides constantly by his side, whispering new information or listening to his commands and then running off to complete them.

Roleplaying Notes: Lord Syngen-Wilkes is used to command and the power it gives him. He does not deal well with civilians who do not rush to follow his orders. He hates to be questioned and often throws a rage of curses at anyone who does (and orders a flogging if they are in the Imperial Fleet!). His current passion is the potential crusades into barbarian space, but he knows much about Symbiots as well.

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