

## Background of Baroness Messalina Kitiara of Regina

Baroness Messalina Kitiara of Regina, usually just called "Kit" by her Friends, originally joined the imperial Scout service to avoid the hassles of social life and politics back home, neither of which held much interest for her. She had never been too good at dealing with people and preferred the simple, logical technology of machines to the complicated emotional confluxes of human interaction.

That is also the reason why she did not go for a career as an officer in the military (which would have been easy for someone of her standing to achieve), but rather joined the much less formal and hierarchical Scout service as a simple recruit.

Her first service period was far from easy. Her superiors and colleagues had some reservations about the "highborn aristocrat that didn't know how to get her hands dirty" and made their opinion known in no uncertain terms (in the process further alienating Kit from other humans). Also she was almost killed during a fight with pirates. Nevertheless she was determined to pull the thing that she had started through, at all costs if necessary. So she gritted her teeth, pulled up her sleeves and got to work with a vengeance.

She trained as a pilot, engineer and navigator, easily mastering the associated skills and through diligent work, discipline and skill eventually earned the acceptance and respect of her colleagues.

Her family was not so happy to see their daughter covered in oil digging through some dirty machinery alongside "lowborn commoners" and Kit had some terrible arguments with her father about this question. Her stubbornness prevailed and she joined the scout service for a second term. Her Family eventually accepted her decision, but the relations remained slightly sour and Kit was never too eager to visit her Family when she got shore leave near her home.

She DID love her job though. Starships, technology, traveling, exploring new worlds and just plain doing a good day's work. She improved her skills and over the next couple of service periods got a reputation of not only being a crack pilot but also being able to patch up a damaged starship with little more than bubblegum and band-aids.

A chain of local crises and new discoveries made the scout service extend her service for another, and another and yet another service period above and beyond what is usual. Her skills and experience made Kit a very valuable crewmember, especially since she had also started studying medicine during the last service terms and had become nearly as good at patching up people as she was at patching up starships. Kit could have issued a veto against her additional drafts, but she never did.

But eventually, after 9 terms of service, with 54 years having left their tracks on her body, she was finally discharged with great honors and a good pension that would enable her a comfortable retirement even without returning to her family.

But after a couple of months of just traveling around to do some sightseeing and trying to relax, Kit realized, that retirement just wasn't for her. Having nothing to do made her irritable and extremely dissatisfied. Also she was bored out of her mind, and most civilian activities involved getting together with lots of other people, which still wasn't very high on Kit's agenda (The worst experience in this regard was when a "helpful" travel agent placed her on a pleasure cruise with other high-status retirees. Being on a spaceship with absolutely nothing to do but socialize with other old people who knew nothing about technology, space travel or real work almost drove Kit mad).

So she called up some of her old contacts she had made during her time with the scout service (many of her old colleagues had left the service years ago and established "civil" lives somewhere) and let it be known that she was available for hire.

Considering her qualifications, the offers did not take long to come, in spite of her advanced age.

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Character:

Kit is not someone for socializing. With other people she is polite and honest but gruff, especially if they get on her nerves (which is easy to do if you try to talk about anything not related to her job or to serious problems). She is also thick headed and once she has made up her mind about something, it is next to impossible to steer her from her course. She doesn't talk much unless she really feels that she has something to say, if she does though, you should better listen!

But for all her irritable personality, she is an absolute professional when it comes to her Job. The same thick headedness that makes her unpopular among other people also insures that she will finish what she starts and finish it well, no matter how much effort it takes and how many problems crop up along the way. She is a very talented pilot and engineer and she is used to handling everything herself if need be. She is self sufficient and easily adapts to changing situations.

Her long experience ensures that in some way she has "seen it all" and has weathered many a crisis. That means she usually stays calm and concentrated on her job no matter what happens.

Even though she is not very sociable, she does care about the people around her and will quickly offer a hand to someone in need or tutor some "young hothead" (and he could do worse than listening to the grumpy old woman). On those very rare occasions when she actually does loosen up somehow, she can tell some interesting stories.

She is neither eager about nor very good at leading people and prefers to have someone else in command when part of a larger team. She will support any commander, unless she thinks that he is really incompetent (in which case she would do her very best to tell him in no uncertain terms how he should do things better).

(In short: Think of her as something of a grumpy old space-traveling dwarf and you've got a pretty good picture)