

# MERCENARIES

There are a lot of galactics out there, and Barrayar has to deal with them in order to survive. The galactic viewpoint is represented here by a few of Miles' most trusted Dendarii . . . including one who was born Barrayar, but got away as soon as she could . . . and by perhaps his most deadly enemy still alive.

## ADMIRAL ELLI QUINN

456 points

Elli Quinn is the Admiral of the Dendarii Free Mercenary Fleet, and a former lover of Miles Vorkosigan. Her beautiful face is the result of plastic surgery to repair combat injuries that nearly killed her. She respects Miles, learned from him, and loves him, but she couldn't bring herself to become Lady Vorkosigan.

Elli Quinn was born in space, grew up on Kline Station (p. 48), and spent most of her adult life on ships. She signed on with the Oseran Mercenaries and stayed when they became the Dendarii Mercenaries. Elli was badly injured during the fighting around Tau Verde IV, her face erased by plasma-arc fire. Miles Vorkosigan paid for her plastic surgery on Beta Colony, and she has the most beautiful features money could buy. Unfortunately, when Elli returned to the Dendarii Mercenaries, she found this a handicap – she kept being propositioned rather than obeyed. She was forced to develop new techniques for command. This resulted in her becoming one of the most wily manipulators and spies in the mercenary fleet.

When Miles Vorkosigan (or rather, Simon Illyan) needed an investigation on her native Kline Station, Elli was chosen for the job. She performed brilliantly, and was equally successful on other missions, including a risky undercover job supporting the Dagoola IV evacuation (p. 50). She became Admiral Naismith's second-in-command, and eventually his lover, despite their earlier intentions not to fraternize between ranks. Elli was attracted to him not just because she admired and respected him, but because she knew he cared about more than her face. He had seen her when she had no face at all . . .

Elli was once blindsided by Mark masquerading as Admiral Naismith, and she has never forgiven him for Miles' death. She was almost as furious at Miles' own irresponsibility in keeping his seizures secret.

Lord Auditor Miles Vorkosigan (in his new position) could offer Elli the position of Lady Vorkosigan, but couldn't be Admiral Naismith for her any more. She didn't want to be trapped on a single planet for the rest of her life – particularly not Barrayar – and wouldn't sacrifice her career for him, however much she loved him. Miles understood this; indeed, he forced the choice on her. She became Admiral of the Dendarii Free Mercenary Fleet, and currently works with General Allegre of ImpSec, just as Miles once worked with Illyan.

Admiral Quinn is an energetic, vital woman who knows her own capacities and is justly proud of them. Her face

was the only gift that she received; the rest she earned through talent and dedication. She is responsible to the Dendarii, and leads them well. In personal terms, she has always disliked being on the defensive, and is something of a thrill-seeker, though she tries to suppress this now that she has other people depending on her. She is extremely stubborn. Admiral Quinn is likely to be looking for promotable talent among the Dendarii Mercenaries, given the recent shift in the command tree caused by her own promotion and the departure of the Bothari-Jeseks.

