

Tabletop Squadron Transcript, Season 1 Episode 39:
It's Raining Mercenaries

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Intro

NICK: Hi everyone, and welcome to Tabletop Squadron, a Star Wars: Edge of the Empire actual play podcast. I'm Nick, your game master. Every other Thursday our story follows a thief, a bounty hunter, and a slicer as they explore the galaxy helping a mysterious benefactor and each other.

First off, I want to thank our newest Patron, Kevin Lovecraft. Thank you so much for supporting the show. May the light side always shine upon you and yours.

In other news, we're back from GenCon and we had a blast. It was great to see friends of the show there and immerse ourselves in podcasting and gaming culture for a few days. Our Patreon-exclusive feed has a recording of our thoughts already published and will feature the panel we presented as soon as we get it balanced and edited. Thank you to everyone who dropped by and said hi. It was an amazing experience this year.

Music this week is MegaMetal by Loyalty Freak Music.

Now let's get into the episode.

##

NICK: Hello! Welcome to Episode 39 of Tabletop Squadron. I'm your host and game master, Nick. Everybody go around the table and say who you're playing today, starting with Laura.

LAURA: Hi, I'm Laura, and I'm gonna be playing Tink, a Gigoran slicer.

NICK: I feel like we've made that joke recently.

[laughter]

LAURA: It's possible. I have no concept of time.

CAMERON: Yeah, but Laura hasn't started the joke though, so it's a different funny.

NICK: Oh, okay.

CAMERON: Yeah.

LAURA: I'm Laura, and I'm playing Xianna'fan, a Twi'lek smuggler.

NICK: Oh, I forgot to say my random weird shit. ... Oh well.

LAURA: Say it now.

CAMERON: I didn't miss it.

NICK: Ohh! [hurt groan]

HUDSON: Ohh-ho-ho!

CAMERON: Ohh! There you go. There's your funny.

NICK: Geez.

LAURA: Well, Hudson and I missed it.

HUDSON: Yeah.

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK: Thanks guys. [fake sobbing] That made me sad. Up next we've got Hudson, because Cameron's off the show now.

HUDSON: Hi. I'm Hudson, and I'm playing Tink, a Gigoran slicer.

NICK: And up next we have Cameron.

CAMERON: Hello. I am Cameron, and I am playing Karma Nailo, the Nautolan bounty hunter.

NICK: Wonderful. The whole crew is back at it again. A kind of quick recap of what happened last time:

CAMERON: Do you need help?

LAURA: Do you want me to read my notes?

NICK: Yes.

LAURA: Possible girlfriends with Nolaa? Saw a Jedi once. It was cool. Girlfriend status achieved. Can flirt, fake wedding is okay. Secret tattoo.

CAMERON: I thought that was from the previous-previous episode.

LAURA: I have no idea, but that's where my notes stop.

NICK: Heh. The last episode was just so engaging.

CAMERON: The last episode, the Tallahassee Quagmire showed up. Xianna and Tink—

LAURA: Got trapped in a box.

CAMERON: --got trapped in a box, because they tried to break into the Tallahassee Quagmire.

NICK: That happened.

HUDSON: Not break in!

CAMERON: Uh yeah, break in.

HUDSON: I was trying to claim a room, if I recall.

NICK: Yeah. That's exactly what happened.

CAMERON: Mm-hmm, breaking in. Karma left a really bad Yelp review specifically naming the concierge who was mean to her. Then, had a lovely lunch, her, HK, and Tiny, and Carn Harn?

NICK: Carn Horn.

LAURA: Caaarn. CARN!

HUDSON: [laughs]

CAMERON: Carn Horn, our new Wookie friend, had a lovely lunch while Xianna and Tink slowly suffocated on the ship.

NICK: Yeah. Thank you for that recap. I was drawing kind of a blank there.

CAMERON: HK is gonna go to the little droid's room, and is great at taking phone calls.

NICK: Yup. He is now going to be the secretary/receptionist.

CAMERON: Mm-hmm.

NICK: Great. Before we start, let's go ahead and do the Destiny Roll!

CAMERON: Two light side~

HUDSON: One dark side.

LAURA: Two light side.

CAMERON: Ha~!

NICK: That's good. Alright, so we open with a close-up shot of Tiny's face. "Well, if you make it out of where we're dropping you alive, yeah, we can meet up and do something, but that would be a pretty big if." The camera zooms out with an action shot of the crew standing in the open cargo area of the

Tallahassee Quagmire. We can see a row of small sealed doors by the entrance, but the actual ship is pretty empty. There are exposed wires and metal supports everywhere as though everything that could be torn out to make space has been. Tiny, the captain of the ship, is leaning against the entrance to the cockpit. His co-pilot, Carn Horn, [car horn beep-beep] is digging in the walls presumably getting things ready for departure. The ship is dimly lit and feels strangely still and silent since it hasn't been powered on yet. Tiny looks you all over. "So, we'll be ready to take off again in about half an hour. If you need to fetch any gear for this or anything, you're going into a warzone, so I'd recommend against the bikini." He's looking at Xianna.

LAURA: "Well, I mean, I brought other clothes."

CAMERON: "And technically it's a one-piece. It's all connected."

LAURA: "It is a one-piece. It is all connected, just not in a way that I understand. It does take me a very long time to put it on."

NICK: Tiny blushes a little bit and is trying to not look for too long. "Wait. So, you have things with you? Where are you keeping them? I see your little beach bag, but—"

LAURA: "In the beach bag!"

NICK: "That's it?"

LAURA: "Yes."

NICK: "Oh. Okay."

HUDSON: What's the encumbrance?

[laughter]

CAMERON: Well, it is a big beach bag.

LAURA: "It has my coat which has a gun, and drugs, and some binders, and scanner goggles, and that is about it. Yes."

CAMERON: Karma fully suited up and HK grabbed his gun and we were just walking around the resort with it. [laughs]

NICK: Oh yeah. Nobody said anything. That's weird.

CAMERON: No.

NICK: Tiny looks around and says, "So, uh, big guy, the white Wookie, you got everything that you need?"

HUDSON: "Well..." I forgot if I have my vibro-axe.

CAMERON: [laughs] "Okay. We're all gonna walk back over to our ship real quick and double-check to make sure we have everything. We'll be right back. Come on, kids."

NICK: "Alright. Alright Carn, [car horn beep-beep] let's see if we can get this sucker moving."

LAURA: "But I brought everythiiiiing."

HUDSON: "A walk won't hurt you."

LAURA: "It might."

HUDSON: "I mean, I guess..."

CAMERON: "You can grab another tiki drink."

LAURA: [resigned] "Okay..."

NICK: [chuckles] We get the circle wipe that they use in Batman a lot and we see the crew walking across a very small parking lot to their ship, and then another circle wipe and the crew walking back. Everybody has all the gear that they're gonna need, standard adventure load out, unless there's extra stuff they want to grab. Anybody need extra stuff?

HUDSON: No. Oh, maybe.

CAMERON: I don't think so. I think I have all my stuffs.

NICK: So Xianna, do you just throw your coat on over your bathing suit for now, or did you switch back, or...?

LAURA: Nobody knows.

NICK: Oh yeah. That's fair. Wearing the coat. Cool. Everybody's well-armed. Carn Horn [beep-beep] the—

CAMERON: (boop-bwoop!)

NICK: You lock the ship...?

CAMERON: Yeah.

NICK: Carn Horn [beep-beep] the Wookie is elbow deep in the wall of the ship doing something and you get the [whooshing] of the ship turning on. He makes the Wookie noise, which I am not going to try to make.

CAMERON: [laughing] He pulls his pliers out of the wall and is like 'yay, it started.'

NICK: Yeah. [laughs]

LAURA: Is it now time for all of us to try making the Wookie noise?

NICK: I guess...

[various attempts and laughter]

NICK: Oh gosh. Yeah, so Tiny turns to you all and says, "Well, we've got two more crash harnesses up front if two people want to sit down up there, but we should probably get out of here. We'll jump to empty space and we'll explain what your entry plan is, and then we'll be in it. So, who's gonna sit in the cockpit?"

CAMERON: "I'm gonna sit up front." Karma runs up front.

NICK: "Great. Karma's got a seat. There's one empty seat, unless you both want to rattle around back here."

LAURA: "Ooh! I call dibs."

HUDSON: "I guess I'll run around back here."

CAMERON: [laughs]

LAURA: "You can run around."

NICK: Okay. Great. We get a shot through the open cockpit door. It's kind of like the Millennium Falcon where there's a slidy door that cuts the cockpit off, but they leave it open. There's Carn [beep-beep], Tiny, Xianna, and Karma all strapped in, and they take off and they fly up into the atmosphere, and they punch it and go to hyperspace, and we see the lights streak out, and we see Tink go 'WHOA...' as he flies and bounces into a wall, because there's nothing else to hold onto here.

LAURA & CAMERON: [vroom and zoom noises]

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: He rattles around a little bit and then gets back up. A little while later the ship snaps back into regular space. We get the Tallahassee Quagmire just floating in the star-speckled abyss that is the middle of nowhere, and Tiny unbuckles his crash harness and turns around. "So, what do you know about where you're going?"

CAMERON: "I remember it being a warzone...?"

LAURA: "Like, when we die?"

CAMERON: "No. Why would you get that, Xianna?"

LAURA: "I don't know. Just like, where are we going?"

NICK: "Harn!"

CAMERON: "The mission." [laughs]

LAURA: "What happens once we die? You know, where do we go?" Heh.

HUDSON: "I'm looking into that!" I yell from the back.

CAMERON: "He did ask me about that earlier."

HUDSON: "There's a lot of options!"

NICK: "Complaining Statement: No one offered me a seat."

CAMERON: [laughing] Oh no!

NICK: HK's clutching onto one of the crossbeams.

LAURA: "Well, because there were no more seats. I called dibs so there were only two."

NICK: "Clarification: At least I didn't smash around into the walls like Tink. I think that there may be permanent damage to some of the walls." There's dents in some of the wiring and things.

HUDSON: "It's your fault for tearing up everything and not leaving a seat for us."

NICK: "Look, it's a smuggling thing. Technically you all are cargo, so we could have just locked you in one of the smuggling compartments, but those seal and don't have air. No kind of smuggler would ever stick a live person into a cargo compartment with no air."

LAURA: "Um..."

NICK: That's funny, because Han Solo does that in some of the books.

CAMERON: Oh. I was gonna say that's funny because that's what happened to Tink and Xianna earlier.

LAURA: Yeah.

NICK: Yeah. That's also funny for that. "But yeah, no one would do that."

CAMERON: "Of course not."

LAURA: "Yeah... Okie."

NICK: "So, the planet we're taking you to..."

CAMERON: "Yes?"

LAURA: "It is?"

NICK: "It's called Fygo."

CAMERON: Let me see if I wrote this down.

NICK: "I'm assuming that Sentinel gave you some information?"

LAURA: "No. Can you spell it for me?"

NICK: "F-Y-G-O."

HUDSON: Moon mist.

NICK: No. I wish I hadn't named the planet this, but it's too late now.

LAURA: "Oh yes, that is the planet where the juggaloos live."

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: [laughs and groans] Oh poop.

LAURA: "They have a very unique white and black skin color. It is in like splotches on their face."

HUDSON: They have vibro-hatchets.

LAURA: "They all carry vibro-hatchets. It is a very loud and rambunctious planet."

NICK: "Oh no, you're thinking of the planet Faygo."

CAMERON: So, my entire set of notes for this mission was 'meeting the Tallahassee Quagmire, captain Tiny's ship.'

NICK: The end.

CAMERON: Apparently I just trusted that somebody was gonna tell me what was going on at this point.
[laughs]

NICK: That's fine. "So, sounds like you all don't remember much. The good news is I know a little bit about what's going on, so let me give you an update."

CAMERON: "Oh, that's good."

NICK: "So, planet of Fygo, currently under Imperial interdiction, at least one star destroyer currently bombarding one of the two main cities on the planet. It sounds like the person that you're supposed to go pick up is on the planet, in the city being bombarded. The problem with that, normally not too big a deal, sneak aboard a star destroyer, either blow the star destroyer up, steal some TIE fighters, sometimes you spray the TIE fighter really cool colors and it makes it stand out but it's your style and that's okay... but can't do that this time. There's an issue with the planetary defense shield. Somebody seems to have overloaded it, so there's no way in or out. Not great. Seems like the Empire and whoever is left of the city down on the surface are still fighting it out, but it's pretty difficult to get down there, unless you have drop pods." He wiggles his eyebrows at you all.

CAMERON: "Let me guess, you have drop pods."

NICK: "Yeah, I've got drop pods."

LAURA: "I was in a drop pod once."

NICK: "Really? How'd that go?"

LAURA: "Pretty good!"

NICK: "Yeah?"

LAURA: "Yes."

NICK: "Everybody came out in one piece?"

LAURA: "The people that needed to. Pretty sure."

NICK: "Oh."

LAURA: "Actually, I'm pretty sure everyone. I don't think anyone died on impact of the drop pod I was in."

NICK: [chuckles] "I think you get it. That's about the success rate we would hope for. Most of the time it's fine. It's not something people normally would use to land on a planet, because 99% of the time a space ship would be a better choice, but these babies have a lot of extra shielding and interference so they should be able to pierce the shields and get you down to the surface." He points over your shoulders and you see those small doors that were in the back wall. They pretty much hook up with what you thought were booster rockets on the back of the ship originally. 'Yeah, so when we get there we're gonna skim the surface of the shield and hopefully not get shot. You all basically just jump into those drop pods, launch them down, try to coordinate where you're going to land, and then from there you're on the planet. You can do whatever you need to do to pick this person up. Now here's the part where it gets a little tricky."

He opens a panel on the side of the cockpit and slides out what looks like a four-foot-long footlocker, and it looks pretty light, and it's got carrying straps and stuff. He flips it open and you see what looks like a row of briefcases with a few lights on them. "Ever seen one of these before?" He holds it up and it looks kind of like a backpack but just square, probably half a meter by half a meter, a lot of lights on it, and one button and that's it. He waves it around.

HUDSON: "Oh yeah. I've seen them. Are you an aspiring DJ?"

NICK: "Ooh. Close. Not quite. Good guess, though."

CAMERON: Heh. Laser tag.

NICK: [laughs]

LAURA: "Those are lock boxes for your drugs."

NICK: "No..."

LAURA: "Then I have no more guesses."

NICK: "I do like everybody's attempts to participate. We're off to a great start. So, these are stratopacks. Essentially, if you put them on and press the button it will put you outside of the atmosphere so that we can pick you up."

LAURA: "It is a reverse parachute! Got it."

NICK: "Yeah. Pretty much."

CAMERON & HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: "The thing, though, is it does have a small oxygen supply, but you'll probably—you won't be completely out of atmo, so you won't decompress for about three minutes. That should be plenty of time for us to pick you back up and whoever you're supposed to be bringing onboard as well. I would recommend all going at the same time so we only have to make one sweep, but if for some reason that's not possible these all have tracking beacons on them. That's why we get paid so much. It's sort of a specialty of ours we picked up after Quiggle died. We had to find something that—"

CAMERON: [giggling] "Like, two weeks ago?"

NICK: "Yeah. We had to find something to do, and most of the crew was gone so we couldn't do smash and grabs anymore, so I bought these stratopacks, and Sentinel paid for these drop pods, and now we've got a whole new business set up."

CAMERON: "Nifty."

NICK: "Yeah. It's been pretty good so far." You can actually see that even though it hasn't been that long, Tiny seems a lot more assured. He's got his big captain's hat on with the big feather.

CAMERON: He's actually a commodore is what he told me last time, so I think he has a commodore hat.

NICK: Yes. Sure. Whatever you want to call it.

CAMERON: It made a difference in Pirates of the Caribbean.

NICK: It did. That's true. You can see that the relationship he has with Carn [beep-beep] the Wookie is pretty strong, just from the way that they work the ship together, that they've bonded pretty quick and they've got at least this ship. If he's calling himself a commodore he may have more, it's unclear. "Yeah, so long story short, you're gonna use the drop pods, drop down to the planet, go find whoever you need, put one of these stratopacks on them, hit the button, and then we'll pick you up, and then hopefully we don't die, and then we'll come back here. Well, not here. We'll probably go back to that beach planet. It seemed pretty nice, and also your ship is there, so you'll need that."

CAMERON: "Mm-hmm! Yes."

NICK: "Questions, comments, concerns?"

CAMERON: "Who are we picking up?"

LAURA: "Exactly."

NICK: "Oh yeah. Pretty sure Sentinel told you, didn't he?"

CAMERON: I didn't write it down, so I'm gonna say no. [laughs]

NICK: Okay...

CAMERON: Karma is a very diligent note taker and would have written it down if Sentinel had told us.

NICK: I have recorded evidence of Cameron going 'we're gonna focus just on these beach episodes for now, you re-explain it later.'

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK: Anyway. "Oh yeah, I guess that would be important. So, you're supposed to be picking up some mercenary type, I heard. His name's Neato. Surely you've heard of him, he's pretty famous. Well, he was back in the day. I like to watch all those old war holos."

HUDSON: "Magneto is fictional, and really old, too."

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK: "No, not Magneto. That's just a Jedi that can only work on metal for some reason."

LAURA: "No, no, no. They did a new version and now he is kind of hot in a weird way."

HUDSON: "Oh... I mean, your body can only be made so much of magnets before you'd get unattractive."

LAURA: "I mean, you would think that, but..."

CAMERON: "You'd start repelling people."

HUDSON: "Hmm. I know a lot of people are 'attracted' to Magneto."

CAMERON: [giggles]

LAURA: "Yes, that is a kink. It is a known thing, you know? People like what they like. Some people want a man covered in magnets."

NICK: And some want the polar opposite.

CAMERON: [gasps]

HUDSON: [groans]

LAURA: Yes, a man's feet covered in magnets.

[laughter]

HUDSON: Keep that in.

NICK: [breathes] Ah... Tiny blushes again and spins around in his chair. "Anyway. Neato, he's an orange Rodian, really handy with pretty much every kind of weapon and tactics, a war veteran. Strong, capable, for whoever you're trying to recruit that would be a pretty good addition to the team. All I got was the name from Sentinel, but a lot of people know about him already. So, go find Neato, I guess."

CAMERON: Do I know about him already?

NICK: Probably not. He's not a bounty hunter or anything.

CAMERON: Can I google search him? We're not in hyperspace right now. We stopped.

NICK: Yeah, you can google search him.

CAMERON: I'm gonna google search him. 'Neato, mercenary'

NICK: Okay, so you get a lot of imagery. You get a lot of, they look like the old Star Wars posters where it's Luke, dramatically, shirt open, holding the lightsaber and stuff, but it's this orange Rodian with an eyepatch and scarred up battle armor standing on outcroppings with a disrupter rifle and a disrupter pistol in the other hand. In a lot of the images it seems in most situations that Neato ends up taking that dramatic pose at some point or another, but a lot of them there's an attractive male of various species clinging to his leg and looking up at him hopefully, so he seems to usually find someone to hang out with in these adventures as well. A long career starting towards the end of the Clone Wars onward, so he's a bit older.

LAURA: Would someone who maybe, I don't know, to put this into more of a technical thing, had points in Underworld be able to know who they were?

NICK: A little, with Underworld. The weird thing is he's kind of half underworld half not. I changed my mind. You have heard of Neato a little bit. Most of the stuff that he did happened towards the end of the Clone Wars or soon after and then he kind of dropped off. Usually, Neato filled the role that the green berets fill in the American military structure. You would pay this guy, drop him in somewhere, and his job was to teach a bunch of other people how to fight and just generally mess up whatever the political situation was. [chuckles] So, kind of a military advisor type, all around Resistance generator is kind of what he did.

LAURA: Cool, but mostly at the end of the Clone Wars?

NICK: Yeah, mostly at the end of the Clone Wars, not doing a lot now. Or, you could suppose that he either retired or that he was taking jobs further out of the way from a lot of common stuff.

LAURA: Oh yeah. I have heard of him. He is like super old, though."

CAMERON: "He doesn't look old in all this fan art."

[laughter]

LAURA: "I mean, he was doing stuff in like the Clone Wars. I was like a baby then."

CAMERON: "I was not."

HUDSON: [laughs] "Are you saying that she's experienced in age?"

LAURA: "Let me see."

NICK: "Yeah, yeah, we were all babies at one point."

CAMERON: [chuckles]

LAURA: So, Xianna was like 3 to 5 at the end of the Clone Wars, so that was slightly less than 20 years.

CAMERON: So Karma was like a teenager.

NICK: Yup. That was like the height of this guy's career, so you can infer he's probably like... between 45 and 60.

CAMERON: Cool.

NICK: Tiny cracks his knuckles and grabs onto the, I don't know, steering yolk? They use yolks in Star Wars, don't they? They use handles and junk. I don't know.

HUDSON: They use the kind of joystick or game stick that you'd use on a Windows 98 to play that airplane game.

CAMERON: [laughing] Picture the old-school flying joysticks.

HUDSON: Yeah, flying simulator joysticks.

NICK: Yeah, for sure. "So, what else do you need to know before we drop in? Because we're gonna start getting shot at pretty much as soon as we drop out of hyperspace again."

CAMERON: "Does Neato know we're coming? Has Sentinel had any contact with him at all? Do you know?"

NICK: "Um, I don't..."

CAMERON: "He's not great at explaining things to people."

NICK: "Yeah, although he did tell us the last time, just kind of with no context that he was working on that and trying to be better about sharing information, which is why I know as much as I do."

CAMERON: "Aw, guys, he listened to our feedback."

NICK: "So, what are we...?"

CAMERON: "So, did you know if he knows that we're coming or not?"

NICK: "I would say probably not. This place has been under siege for a couple of months from what I could figure out at least, so I don't know if Sentinel's been able to get any word in, but this guy is a mercenary, right? If he's getting offered enough of a payout you should be fine."

CAMERON: "Do you know what we're supposed to offer him? Would it be roughly what we were supposed to promise the last person?"

NICK: "Yeah."

CAMERON: "Okay, so 15,000."

NICK: "I would assume that whoever you're recruiting are all gonna be paid about the same, because if you pay one person a lot more than the others then they tend to, uh, kill each other."

CAMERON: "Huh."

NICK: "You know how it goes when two thirds of your crew just dies on some asteroid in the middle of nowhere on a normal day, just doing a routine handoff."

LAURA: "No."

HUDSON: "We only know about one fourth of our crew doing that."

LAURA: "Yeah, one fourth."

CAMERON: "Yeah."

NICK: [painful laugh]

CAMERON: [painful laugh] Tink!

HUDSON: A tear rolls down my face.

LAURA: "I feel like 25% is pretty good."

HUDSON: "Like it's a good thing?"

NICK: "No, but it's a good success rate."

LAURA: "It's a pretty good success rate. I have definitely been on missions that were, you know, two thirds failure. Never on an asteroid, so..."

NICK: "Well, I was, pretty recently actually. You may have been there."

LAURA: "Was I?!"

CAMERON: [chuckles] "Yup."

LAURA: "Oh! Okay."

NICK: "So, yeah, drop in, offer him enough money to recruit him... Ooh! One more thing. These drop pods will make it down through those shields with all of their specialized disrupter technology and everything, but if you activate a stratopack in the shield you will explode, when you hit the shield, because you won't make it back through the other side. What you're gonna have to do is get outside the shield at ground level. Now the problem with that is this planet has a really dangerous jungle everywhere that's not settled, so you may have to hike through that for a while, so I would recommend you don't draw too much Imperial attention because you don't want to go through that jungle being actively pursued by the might of the Imperial army. That would be my suggestion."

CAMERON: "This jungle, are the trees sentient?"

NICK: "What?!"

CAMERON: "Do you know? It's just a standard procedure question."

NICK: "No!"

CAMERON: "Okay. That's good to know. I'll just make a note of that."

NICK: "What?"

LAURA: "That is something we have run into in the past."

NICK: "What the hell are you talking about?"

LAURA: "The trees!"

CAMERON: "We were talking about vacations earlier. I do not recommend Unroola Dawn. But yeah, that's a totally standard procedure question, just good to know."

NICK: "Have you run into sentient trees before?"

LAURA: "I just said that!"

CAMERON: "Mm, yeah."

NICK: "I just am still trying to process it. Who—What?!"

CAMERON: "It's terrifying."

NICK: "I would imagine so. We should just bomb that planet from orbit. No one should go there."

HUDSON: "Well, why would we do that?"

NICK: "What, bomb a planet from orbit?"

HUDSON: "No, bomb that one."

CAMERON: "Aw, you can't just ignore his pun like that." [laughs]

NICK: Oh...

HUDSON: [laughs] Did you really ignore it?

CAMERON: Nicholas, that's so rude. That's not even Tiny.

NICK: I couldn't—I didn't catch it. Anyway. "So, what else do you need to know?"

CAMERON: "Do you know how we're supposed to track him down, or do we just look for an orange Rodian and ask if he's Neato?"

LAURA: 'I mean, there can only be so many orange Rodians with an eyepatch who go by Neato."

CAMERON: "But how big is this city that we're talking about having to search through?"

NICK: "It's a pretty big city. It has eight individual districts. It's pretty big. It's nestled by the side of a bay. I would assume, if Neato's doing what Neato is famous for doing, that he's probably entrenched with the local populous."

CAMERON: "Standing on a rocky outcropping with a handsome, young..." I don't know, let's pick a race. I'll just go with Selkath, because that's what I normally go with, "...just clinging to his leg while he stands and stares off into the distance dreamily?"

NICK: "Yeah, potentially, or putting holes in Imperials. He does that a lot, too."

CAMERON: "They're not necessarily mutually exclusive. You can do both."

NICK: "Yeah, that's fair. I would assume that if there's any resistance still going on in this city Neato's involved with it, so try to catch up with them? Also, my job is just to drop you off. I'm not really a tactics expert, so you all are gonna have to figure that part out."

CAMERON: "That's fine. I was just wondering, just trying to gather all of the information that you have."

NICK: "Makes sense."

CAMERON: "Because we haven't asked enough questions in the past, and it has kind of come back to bite us." [laughs]

LAURA: "He is an orange Rodian with an eyepatch named Neato. It cannot be that hard. Okay, are we ready to go?"

NICK: Tiny just nods and hits the hyperspace lever and you jump into space. HK grabs onto one of the support posts and Tink goes rolling down the floor towards the back. Tink, as you are kind of smooshed against the wall by your own inertia, one thing--

HUDSON: "Oof!"

NICK: Nice.

CAMERON: Good sound effect.

NICK: One thing that you would know, especially being a mechanical kind of guy, is that Star Wars ships have these things called inertial dampeners that make it so that you can do 100G turns and not feel them. This ship has inertial dampeners, or you'd be dead, but they are not turned up as high as they normally would be. Sometimes hotshot pilots dial it down so they can feel what's going on with their ship. Shrug. That's why you're getting thrown around. That's either damaged or turned down for some reason.

HUDSON: "WHOA~!"

[giggling]

NICK: As you are pressed up against the wall you can see into one of the drop pods, because the door has a little transparent steel window, and it looks very simple. It has a small joystick. It otherwise looks like just a solid tube with some light displays and a seat, and that's it. For you it looks like it may be a bit of a tight fit, Tink, because it's not very big.

HUDSON: "Hmm. This looks like a little bit of a tight fit. You got any bigger ones?"

CAMERON: "Can't hear you, Tink!"

HUDSON: "You got any bigger--?! Ugh. The drop pod looks a bit tiny, Tiny! Do you got any bigger ones?!"

NICK: "No, they just kind of come in the one size. Also, hold on, because things are about to get—" And you drop out of hyperspace and you go rolling.

HUDSON: 'Oof!"

NICK: You all are able to see the star destroyer sitting above the planet Fygo. You see the star destroyer first, because you also immediately hear a proximity alert from the dashboard and see TIE fighters starting to pour out of the star destroyer. The planet is closer than you would expect someone to hyperspace jump to. It looks like Tiny jumped right up to the gravity well and then was thrown out of hyperspace rather than doing a normal jump. TIEs are coming at you, but you can see that the planet of Fygo is a pretty nondescript planet. It's got two small continents and is otherwise just covered in blue oceans. You see a large, iridescent green bubble that extends all the way into space and is clearly visible. The star destroyer is floating over that and occasionally is shooting turbo laser fire at it, but it doesn't seem to be doing anything. That's basically all you get before Tiny immediately throws the ship into a barrel roll. [laughs] "Alright, you're gonna wanna get into those drop pods right about—" and the ship starts to shutter from taking TIE fire, "—right now."

LAURA: "Okay!"

NICK: "We didn't mean to get this close."

CAMERON: "While we're loading these, Tiny, how do we contact you to tell you to come pick us up?"

NICK: "The stratopacks have a homing beacon. It will tell us."

CAMERON: "Okay, it will tell you. So it'll activate when we go up"

LAURA: "Will it tell where we are?"

NICK: "When you hit it, it will tell us you're heading up. We'll try to be there when you hit space."

CAMERON: "Okay!" Climbing into a pod.

NICK: Yeah. Can I get Athletics checks from everybody to see how well you do climbing into this while the ship is flying all over the place and getting shot?

LAURA: Xianna was definitely gonna help Tink smooch into it.

HUDSON: Yay. Blue die?

NICK: Sure.

HUDSON: Because I only have three greens for this one.

CAMERON: One advantage. That is the saddest thing of dice...

HUDSON: One success.

LAURA: I rolled... nothing.

CAMERON: [chuckles]

NICK: Ho... Okay.

LAURA: Yup.

NICK: Okay! The shot is Tink, who was right by the drop pod, tries to get in and gets most of the way in but is having trouble getting settled, and Xianna, pretty agile, is able to skip across the floor and throws a shoulder into his back, and Tink settles in.

HUDSON: "Oof!"

NICK: The door slaps closed. Tink, you're able to get in and kind of familiarize yourself with the controls a little bit before it's time to actually drop. Xianna, after doing that, the ship inverts and you find yourself pretty far away from where you need to go and it takes you a long time to climb back into the drop pod. Karma, you have the same thing happen. You are able to get in just as Tiny says, "Alright, we're ten seconds to drop," and you realize you haven't had time to actually look at how this thing controls at all.

CAMERON: I want to use my advantage to know how this thing controls at all.

NICK: So, you'll know that, but the whole thing is because it took you that long you're gonna have some minuses in a second here.

CAMERON: That's fine, but I also have some pluses.

NICK: Okay.

CAMERON: [softly] I just, I have an advantage... It's important to me.

NICK: Okay. You have fuzzy dice in your drop pod.

CAMERON: [gasps] Okay! Good. That is worth an advantage.

NICK: That's your advantage. You have fuzzy dice. They look cool. Tiny says, "Alright, we're dropping in four, three, two, one..."

CAMERON: "Bye~!"

NICK: "Hit the—Hit the button. Hit the button! Hit the button!"

CAMERON: I hit the button.

[action music starts]

NICK: Tink hits the drop button. Karma and Xianna, it takes you a second to see the ignite button, but then we get the cool Power Rangers thing of the divided screen of everybody in their command chairs hitting the button. HK says, "Adulation: I have always wanted to do this," and hits the button, because he's been sitting in it for a while.

CAMERON: Oh yeah.

NICK: [laughs]

LAURA: Wait. Are we all in our own or are we all hitting separate buttons?

NICK: You're all in your own. They are single person drop pods. Very important.

CAMERON: HK figured out that there were seatbelts in the drop pods so he went and got into one of those on the second hyperspace trip. [laughs]

NICK: [laughs] Yeah. You all drop, and you have a small durasteel window above you that's in the door that closed over you, and you have a couple of screens right in front of your faces, and you drop. If you look up you can see the Tallahassee Quagmire just flying like a fly with vertigo, just all over the place, skipping off of stuff. [laughter] You see it hit the shield at one point and bounce off and it shoots sparks everywhere but the ship seems fine. When it does that, one of the TIE fighters impacts with the shield. You all go through the shield. There's a lot of turbulence as you go through, but you are heading down

towards the planet and you're able to cycle through some external cameras, and you get a pretty good look at Sart. You see it's a generally square-shaped city. On the east side of the city, taking up a good chunk of what would be the square, is a bay and you can see what looks like five modified Imperial landing ships with basically giant cannons, like artillery pieces strapped to the back of them, periodically bombarding the city. There's a lot of fires near the bay, but otherwise you can see it's divided into neat zones, so you can see some factories and the housing area and a market and things like that. That's about as much time as you have before... I need you all to make a Planetary: Piloting check, please.

CAMERON: [giggles]

NICK: Xianna and Karma, you have two black dice on this one.

HUDSON: What's the difficulty?

NICK: Difficulty is gonna be hard. These things aren't designed for agility or ease of use. They're mostly just designed so that you don't get smushed.

CAMERON: I have nothing for Piloting.

HUDSON: Failure and a threat.

NICK: [forebodingly] Alright, we'll see what happens...

CAMERON: [laughs] Oh no. One failure and three threats.

NICK: [laughs]

CAMERON: My pod falls prone. [dramatic bass noise]

NICK: [smiling] Yeah. We'll get to that.

LAURA: One threat.

NICK: You all failed?

CAMERON: Oh, we did so good.

HUDSON: [laughing] We crash into each other.

CAMERON: My yellow came up blank, which is just rude. [huffs]

NICK: Yeah, that's not great. So, as you're heading down, you aim for the middle of the city. I think that makes sense. You're less likely to end up hitting the shield again or ending up anywhere that's in trouble. You're falling in a tight cluster of four drop pods, and as you're going you all are looking at the external screens and trying to coordinate, and the systems are a little autonomous so that they've all marked the same landing point, because as the squad lands you want them to land together, and then your external cameras start to burn off in the atmosphere—which is not supposed to happen—and then one of the cameras focused on the bay sees one of those big artillery shells launch, and it's this giant

plasma bolt that's a big sphere, and you can feel it vibrating the air and see clouds evaporating as it goes by, and that goes through your flight path. It doesn't hit yours, but it creates this giant burst of turbulence and the pods all scatter. Nobody's falling where they're supposed to be falling. Everybody's kind of thrown around. There is a spinning and a spiraling and nobody can see what's going on, and you all crash to the ground, and all of you lose consciousness. There's a loud bang and that ringing noise in your ears when there's an explosion nearby... [smiling] and that's where we're gonna end the episode.

CAMERON: Great. [laughs]

ALL: Ba-naaa~!

LAURA: [drawn out] Diiing...

CAMERON: [confused laugh]

LAURA: I'm doing the ringing in the ears!

[laughter]

HUDSON: Oh! Momp. Momp.

Outro

CAMERON: Thanks for listening to Tabletop Squadron. If you've enjoyed our show please consider logging into iTunes and giving us a five-star review. Five-star reviews will help new listeners to find the show and will make the squad giggle like school children when we read them. If you're so inclined, you can also help support the show through our Patreon which can be found in the show notes, on our website, and basically anywhere we post things. We have all sorts of Patreon levels including some of my favorites: Bantha Buddy, Tarkin's Underwear Drawer, and Build-A-Beru which all have fabulous rewards and super great names.

Xianna'fan is played by Laura Penrod. She can be found on Twitter at @cheerio_buffet.

Tink is played by Hudson Jameson. He can be found on Twitter at @hudsonjameson.

Karma Nailo is played by me, Cameron Robertson. You can find me on Twitter at @midnightmusic13.

Our game master is Nick Robertson, and you can find him on Twitter at @alias58.

Our intro song is Space Jam by Pablo Ribot.

Additional music by James Gunter.

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