

Tabletop Squadron Transcript, Season 1 Episode 42:
Infiltration Station

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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.

Not a ton of announcements this week, space friends, just a friendly reminder that if you leave a review for the show on iTunes or back us on Patreon I'll read your name in the intro and say something nice about you.

Music this week is Susie the Cat - Boss by Checkie Brown and The Third man Theme by Rat City Blues Brass.

Now let's get into the episode.

##

NICK: Hello! Welcome to Episode 42 of Tabletop Squadron, the answer to life, the universe, and everything. I'm Nick, your host and game master. We're gonna go around the table, everybody introduce themselves and say who they're going to be playing today, starting with Hudson.

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

NICK: Ooh~ Up next we've got Cameron.

CAMERON: Hello. I am Cameron, and I am playing Karma Nailo, a very smart mouse.

NICK: Oh, I get it.

CAMERON: Yeah.

NICK: Because you're referencing the classic Douglas Adams novel.

CAMERON: Indeed, I am.

NICK: Wonderful.

HUDSON: Oh—Is that the... little house on a prairie?

NICK: Yep, you got it.

[laughter]

LAURA: Holy shit, Hudson!

CAMERON: What?!

LAURA: What?!

HUDSON: [laughing] I was joking.

CAMERON: Okay, that's Laura Ingalls Wilder.

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: And last but not least, we've got Laura.

LAURA: I'm Laura and I play Xianna'fan, a Twi'lek smuggler. I was gonna say 'and thanks for all the fish,' but I feel like just nothing can go after what Hudson just said,, [laughter] so it doesn't seem funny anymore.

HUDSON: I ruined it.

LAURA: You did.

NICK: No, you made it best.

HUDSON: [laughs]

LAURA: I don't know...

NICK: So, before we get started with the episode, let's go ahead and do the Destiny Roll!

CAMERON: One dark side.

HUDSON: Two dark side.

LAURA: Two light side.

CAMERON: Thank you, Laura!

NICK: Why? What's wrong with some dark side points?

CAMERON: I just don't want all dark side points, because we're actually gonna roll this episode.

NICK: Maybe!

CAMERON: We're probably gonna get shot at, so we have to roll this episode.

NICK: Maybe.

CAMERON: Probably.

HUDSON: We need more planning time.

CAMERON: [chuckles]

NICK: So, jumping into what happened last episode... You walked across town with Neato, found the resistance militia in the city of Sart over by the shield generation complex, came up with a battle plan, decided that Tink was going to split up with a group of engineers to try and do something technology related, and Karma, HK, Xianna, and Smith, and Weathers, the two Sartian Human commandos, were going to try to go behind enemy lines and blow up the enemy artillery and maybe steal one.

CAMERON: Yeah. Let's steal their cannons.

HUDSON: And Neato's with me.

NICK: And yup, Tink has Neato. Am I forgetting anything?

CAMERON: The general was not impressed.

NICK: No. General Karthage was not impressed.

HUDSON: We're an S-Corp, right?

NICK: [laughs]

CAMERON: We are an S-Corp. ADD Enterprises, Afternoon Delight Depot.

NICK: Karma and Xianna and Hank and Smith and Weathers, as they walk into a large white canvas tent, there are weapons racks on the walls, and Smith and Weathers grab a couple of heavy blaster pistols and start slotting them into their belts. Weathers says, "Look, grab anything you think is important." He grabs a big backpack and starts putting satchel charges in it. "Obviously we're gonna need these, but the world is your oyster. We're only getting one shot at this. Smoke 'em if you got 'em, as the general would say."

CAMERON: "All of y'all, rebreathers, we're going swimming. HK, not you, no rebreather."

NICK: "I will not need one as I do not have lungs and I will not be going in the water."

CAMERON: "Correct. Somebody's gotta cover our exit."

NICK: "Okay."

CAMERON: [laughs] "Thank you for the acknowledgement, HK."

NICK: "Acknowledged." Xianna, do you grab anything special? Basically you can ask for any kind of weapon you want and it's probably in this tent. They have military grade hardware here.

LAURA: Xianna grabs some grenades...

NICK: Okay.

LAURA: ...that are already on my character sheet, so I'm just gonna wipe away the little line through them. Ha-ha. Then, some thermal detonators?

NICK: Sure.

LAURA: Can I have four?

NICK: Sure.

LAURA: Cool.

CAMERON: Hello, yes, I would like a rocket launcher, please.

NICK: There is one.

CAMERON: Is a rocket launcher Ranged: Heavy?

NICK: Yeah.

CAMERON: Okay. [laughs]

HUDSON: But there's no rockets, just potatoes.

CAMERON: Aw, that's fine.

NICK: [laughs] Yeah, there's a rocket launcher with one extra rocket. It looks kind of like a stinger missile launcher looks, if you know what that is, but basically it's a big tube. You know those carpentry angles they use that's like a metal ruler with a crossbar with the level in it?

CAMERON: Yes. Yeah.

NICK: That's basically what this rocket launcher looks like, just make it swooshy and silver and blue.

CAMERON: Okay, and if it has an extra rocket then I would have two rockets total?

NICK: Yep, two shots, that's all they have. There's a few blank spaces where you can see there were a couple more of these, and Smith walks up and shakes his head. "Yeah, a couple of the other commandos thought they could take out the artillery from the edge of the bay and we never saw them again. I guess it didn't work since we're still getting bombarded."

CAMERON: "Alright, well be on the lookout for those rocket launchers. I would like more rockets if we see them."

NICK: "Okay. I'll see what we can do."

CAMERON: "Just as we're walking, just keep an eye out."

NICK: HK looks at the walls and says, "Evaluation: I have no need for these organic weapons as I am already fully equipped." His gun barrel spins a little bit in his hands and then he just kind of goes back to standing there. They all grab rebreathers. Do you want anything else?

CAMERON: Do they have any visual equipment?

NICK: They've got like electro-binoculars and stuff.

CAMERON: Yeah, let's grab a pair of binoculars.

NICK: Sure.

CAMERON: Just for viewing.

NICK: Xianna already has her scanner goggles.

LAURA: Yes. Xianna's also like, on some of her pockets that, sometimes you can see the pocket, sometimes you can't, but it looks like she's zipping some of the pockets up. Heh. Although I guess zippers don't really exist in Star Wars.

NICK: She's just running her fingers along them and they're sealing, however that works.

LAURA: She's sealing her pockets in some way.

CAMERON: She's closing up the Ziploc on all of her pockets. [laughs]

LAURA: Yeah, she's sealing them because she does not want the granola bars in her pockets to get damp.

CAMERON: That would be gross.

NICK: Yeah, her concern is the granola bars.

LAURA: Well yeah.

CAMERON: Yeah.

LAURA: And also all the drugs.

NICK: [laughs]

LAURA: You know, and the binders. You don't want them rusting.

CAMERON: And you don't want the fuzzy binders to get wet.

LAURA: Yeah, because it's really hard to dry them and not get the fur matted in a weird way. If you've ever thrown a fuzzy blanket into the dryer and it gets matted it's just never fun.

CAMERON: Mm-hmm.

NICK: So, you trot back outside. Weathers has his backpack with satchel charges, he's got his two pistols and his carbine, he looks pretty much set to go. Smith has the same general load out but he doesn't have a back pack on. They slap a couple of scout helmets on, so they're the ones that have the plasteel rings and then the soft cover on the top, because that makes sense for a helmet.

CAMERON: Yeah.

NICK: It's Star Wars. It's like the ones that they wore on Endor. They buckle them on and they don't salute, but they stiffen straightly like they were going to salute and then remember that you're not the boss of them. "Alright. What's the plan?" We're gonna cut away to Tink and Neato as they walk into this very large shield generator facility.

So, the whole facility, Tink, is metal gangplanks and ladders, and there's a big, glowing electric core that's in the middle. It's got spinning concentric rings in a blue-green light in the middle. It's some sort of reactor. You can see 70s style computer panels lining it at various levels. You can see a group of engineering looking types a few levels up on one of these gangplanks. You can't hear them over the hum of the generator, but they're obviously having an argument and pointing at it. Neato says, "Well, it looks like it's time to go find us some patsies, chum."

HUDSON: "Alright. They look patsy enough to me."

NICK: "Lead on, McDuff."

HUDSON: I walk up the stairs toward the engineers, and when I get close enough I say, "Alright twerps, we're going in!"

NICK: "Hey...! What? Who are you?"

HUDSON: "Sorry, sorry, bad start. I'm Tink, and—"

NICK: 'The Gigoran slicer~'

[laughter]

HUDSON: 'I'm Tink, the Gigoran slicer~!'

NICK: [laughs]

HUDSON: "I'm Tink. As you can see, I'm a Gigoran, not a Wookie, a Gigoran. Get it right."

NICK: 'I thought he was a Woo—" "Shut up, man!"

HUDSON: "Nope. Nope."

CAMERON: [whispering] White Wookie. White Wookie.

HUDSON: "I'm a Gigoran, and I'm a slicer, and I'm here to recruit the cream of the crop to help us on our mission!"

NICK: Well, I don't know about that. our job is to keep the generator running so we don't get bombed into our component atoms from orbit."

HUDSON: "That was your job. Now it's not."

NICK: "Under whose orders?"

HUDSON: "Neato?"

NICK: "... What?"

HUDSON: "Tell them whose orders it's under."

NICK: "Yeah! It's under the orders of the main fizz bang, the leader, the generalissimo."

"... What?"

"General Karthage. She said we can take two of you on a mission that totally won't result in our impending demise."

HUDSON: "Who wants to come~?"

NICK: "My job is to replace the batteries..." It's a very small person with big, thick glasses that was talking, and he climbs into an air vent and disappears.

HUDSON: "Not you, punk! Oh—They're gone."

NICK: So you're left with three engineers. They're all Human. There is a very skinny, lanky man with blonde hair and what looks like he's trying to grow a mustache but it won't grow out. He's the one that was talking to you originally. There is a very, very pale man with long, long, long dark hair that goes down to his waist. He is studiously studying his fingertips and won't make eye contact with you. Someone shoves him to the side and says, "I volunteer." There is an average height woman wearing what looks like padded scientific armor, so it's like battle armor but it has extra pockets and things and you can see technology stuck in different places. 'If we're finally gonna push the Imperials out of our city, I want in.'" She starts to salute, realizes none of you are military and stops. She grabs the guy with the wispy mustache and says, "So is he!"

"Wha--? Uh... Crap." [chuckles]

HUDSON: "As Neato would say, I like your moxie!"

NICK: 'Yes! They're mo—Aww, you beat me to it."

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: So, she straps on a helmet and says, "Specialist Talon reporting for duty, and this is Specialist Kevin."

HUDSON: "Ha!"

NICK: "Yep. My name's Matt Kevin. Thank you. It's a family name."

HUDSON: "It's a... It's a name."

NICK: "Well, I guess you said you said you needed two. That's us. We'll just leave the other two here. Hopefully the generator won't explode."

HUDSON: "Get some pep in your step. Come on."

NICK: "That's MY line!"

HUDSON: "Listen, you're rubbing off on me."

NICK: "We could sit here bumping gums all day, but we found ourselves a real button man, a real ringer. We're gonna go out there and take it to the Imperials."

Specialist Talon goes, 'Umm... What?' She looks at Tink.

HUDSON: "Listen. Neato's gonna say stuff, and you won't always understand it, but just know it's 110% positive energy."

NICK: "Either way, grab your heaters and let's go!"

She says, "What?"

"Heaters. Your boom sticks. Your death dealers."

"Oh, my gun?"

"Yeah! Grab your heaters!"

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: She goes and she grabs what looks like two service pistols off of a workbench and tosses one to Specialist Kevin who almost drops it but slots it into what looks like a work belt that just happens to have a pocket that fits a blaster pistol in. Talon says, "Okay, we're ready to go, but you still haven't said where we're going or what we're doing." And we're gonna cut back to Karma, Xianna, and HK. Did you all leave the camp?

LAURA: Probably.

CAMERON: Yeah.

NICK: Alright. You're walking, or I would assume you're like hustling through the alleyways.

CAMERON: Yeah. We're doing the video game run while you squat so that no one sees you.

NICK: Yeah, from cover to cover, and covering each other, right?

CAMERON: Yeah. Doing all sorts of weird hand signals.

NICK: There's just a lot of waist-high walls that you can dramatically slam your backs against into and then peek over for cover.

LAURA: There's definitely a shot of someone doing an actual hand signal of 'okay, two of us are gonna move ahead,' and then Xianna looks to everyone and does a hand symbol and then moves, and everyone's like 'that didn't mean anything. Right?'

NICK: [laughs]

CAMERON: [laughs] 'Wait. Where is she going?'

LAURA: 'I'm pretty sure that was something highly inappropriate she just did. What?!'

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK: [laughs] Weathers goes, "Was that aimed at us, or is she just talking about her plans after this?"

CAMERON: "Definitely the plans after this. Come on."

NICK: 'Oh, okay.' They take off.

You're hustling through these alleyways and HK says, "Tactical Evaluation: We are beginning to approach enemy incursions. What is the plan?"

CAMERON: "So we need to get to the cannons. We need to get behind the line and then go take a swim."

LAURA: "Are we going to sneak past them or shoot our way through? My vote is sneak, but um..."

CAMERON: "I mean... I like sneak, killing if necessary. I would like to not draw more troops to this area."

NICK: So, Weathers jogs up, and you're peeking around a corner, and you're beginning to see single scouts riding swoop bikes around. They're a lot closer than they were before. Weathers ducks back around the corner. "So, are you planning on swimming with that rocket launcher, or...?"

CAMERON: "Yeah."

NICK: "Okay... if that's the plan." Go ahead and roll me a Stealth check, please.

HUDSON: First roll in the last two and a half hours of this campaign!

CAMERON: Nice!

NICK: Hey, you know, we're telling stories here... and sometimes I forget the dice exist.

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: I'm gonna start making you roll Education to understand what Neato's slang means.

[laughter]

LAURA: What was the difficulty?

NICK: This one's gonna be hard. You are trying to get past military patrols. Also, I wanna flip a dark side point. Upgrade that difficulty for me, please. Two purples and a red.

CAMERON: Okay. Can I give us a blue die? I can see heat signatures through walls with my scope on my blaster.

LAURA: And I have scanner goggles.

CAMERON: To assist with just avoiding things around corners and stuff.

NICK: Let's do it this way. You won't have the blue die, but if you with your heat scope and Xianna with her scanner goggles are taking point and telling people when to go and not go, I won't make the other three roll.

CAMERON: Okay. That seems fair.

NICK: Because HK will absolutely fail that check.

CAMERON: Yeah, okay.

LAURA: Okay.

NICK: Does that seem like a fair trade?

CAMERON: Yeah.

NICK: Okay.

CAMERON: Karma has three successes and one advantage.

LAURA: One success, one advantage.

[smooth digital jazz music starts]

NICK: Nice. You are pretty capable of getting around these stormtrooper patrols. They are not expecting a small unit to be moving towards them. They're expecting organized and large resistance. So, describe to me you sneaking as a group past several patrols of troops in quick succession.

CAMERON: As you mentioned, HK is not sneaky, so I think it's Xianna and Karma are being incredibly sneaky and talented and moving like ghosts, and Smith and Weathers have a lot of training, they're doing good at the same time. We keep getting lucky with like, a loud noise happens as HK clunks across an alley or something. We have to walk on metal where his metal feet would make a lot of noise, but stormtroopers are walking past at the same time so the feet sounds, like...

LAURA: Or timing it to a cannon blast, or just doing that really typical thing of Xianna picks up a rock on the ground and throws it so the stormtroopers look a different direction so that they can have HK just walk by.

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK: Heh. Okay. You do that. You end up... The bay is surrounded by a wide boulevard, and there's a low brick wall, and then sandy sloping beaches that go down to this quiet bay. You notice that you're able to get to the far side of this road and you are in a small café up against the walls behind a shattered window, and you all crouch, and you get a call directly to your com units from HK so it's not out loud but you can hear it. "Irritated Statement: We've been doing a lot of sneaking and not a lot of ventilating organics."

LAURA: "Well—[exhales] Hank, you have to sneak first and then kill later."

CAMERON: "If you had a sword this wouldn't be an issue. Swords are quiet, as long as the screaming doesn't—You know, swords aren't that quiet, but swords have the ability to be quiet whereas your blaster does not."

LAURA: "Wait. Karma, do your swords scream?"

CAMERON: [laughs]

LAURA: "Swords are pretty quiet I feel like."

CAMERON: "No. I was more talking the people that you were... stabbing."

NICK: "Verification: Vibro-blades do make an extremely high-pitched whining noise."

CAMERON: "But it's—"

LAURA: "Okay, but would you classify that as like a scream?"

CAMERON: "And it's still quieter than a blaster."

NICK: HK just kind of bobbles his head like 'yeah, I guess you got a point.'

[music fades out]

You look up over this shattered windowsill and you see that two of these sort of modified artillery platforms have actually made beach landing and the other three are probably still 100 meters out in the

water but are slowly moving forward, so these are slowly grinding their way up the beach. They're maybe going like 3 kilometers an hour. It's not very fast, but they are moving and then pausing to fire periodically. From here, the noise of them firing is extremely loud. It leaves your ear cones ringing, Xianna, and people with ears, they are ringing. HK's audio receptors are ringing. Whatever.

CAMERON: [laughs]

LAURA: The phones are ringing. The bells are ringing. Everything is ringing.

NICK: Yeah. It's very ringy. So, you're able to see that these artillery platforms, two of them have made beach fall. There are probably about ten stormtroopers scattered around. They're more focused on trying to make sure that the sand doesn't gum up the repulsers. It has a full contingent of repulsers that you would see a star ship using, but they seem to be misfiring, not at full power, and they're barely keeping these things off the ground at all. If there is a sand castle, this thing will crush the sand castle because it is too low. So, Weathers ducks back down, you can see sweat streaming down his face, and he says, "So, we're here. You gonna use that rocket launcher and then we run, or what?"

CAMERON: "Yes. Okay, let's split up the explosives, because they're all in the backpack right now. Everybody take some. These are to blow up the ones in the water. We split."

NICK: "Okay." They pass them out. There's enough for everybody to have two. Do you give some to HK too?

LAURA: Well, we don't want him to feel left out.

CAMERON: "HK, do you want some? You could go place them somewhere on land."

NICK: HK looks at you all. One of his optical sensors blinks out and then blinks back on. "Humorous
Laugh: Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha."

CAMERON: "Okay, so that's a no. Alright."

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: "Yes."

CAMERON: "Oh, yes? It's a yes?"

NICK: "Yes. Please give me the explosives."

CAMERON: "Oh okay."

NICK: "I will take all of the explosives."

CAMERON: "No, not all of them. We need some, too. Sharing is caring, buddy. We've talked about this."

NICK: "Acknowledged."

CAMERON: "Here you go. Here are your bombs."

NICK: "Ha, ha, ha." He straps them to his waist.

CAMERON: "Okay. We do need to work on your evil laugh. We can work on that later. Alright, so you three," she says pointing at Xianna, Smith, and Weathers, "if y'all wanna go take the farthest two of the water ships and blow those up, as soon as I fire this rocket launcher they're going to know where I am, so if y'all wanna get in the water now before everyone turns around and looks at me, that might be a good move. I will try to take out the two on land and then swim to the one in the middle."

LAURA: "Okie." How far are we from the water?

NICK: It's probably 30 yards of beach.

LAURA: Okay.

NICK: No one is particularly looking at you all, and you are not directly in the path. You're able to get further off to the side. I would either need another Stealth check or a force die roll on is anyone looking at you.

LAURA: I'll do another Stealth.

NICK: Okay. It's the same difficulty. It's hard, with—How many dark side points do I still have?

CAMERON: Two.

NICK: Yeah, we'll flip that again.

LAURA: I don't fall prone, so we're good there.

NICK: Aww.

CAMERON: [chuckles]

LAURA: Four successes and a threat.

NICK: And a threat. Just one threat?

LAURA: Just one singular threat.

NICK: One lonely threat.

LAURA: The water is very cold.

[laughter]

LAURA: Xianna sneaks onto the beach and then starts getting into the water and then just yells back as she starts running back up the beach. "No it is too cold! Too cold! No, no, no!"

CAMERON: [giggling] I was gonna say your head tails shrink.

NICK: [groaning and laughing] That's not how those work.

CAMERON: [laughs]

HUDSON: [laughs] That's only Sabos's.

NICK: Ugh...

CAMERON: [laughs] Ew.

NICK: So for your threat we'll say Xianna and Weathers and Smith all run down the beach, you dive in. Xianna, as you dive in, the water hits your rebreather that you have tucked into your mouth and you take your first breath and it tastes very ozoney as you breathe in.

LAURA: Yeah, yeah, okay. Cool.

NICK: Like, the balance is maybe off on it or they hadn't scrubbed the filters, I'm sure it'll be fine, as you swim deeper into the water, but you're able to make it all the way through with no problems. So Karma, did you stay on land and then you were gonna shoot the rocket?

CAMERON: For the moment, yes.

NICK: Okay.

CAMERON: "Okay, HK, I need you to serve as a distraction."

NICK: "Affirmative."

CAMERON: Okay. You said that there were two that were coming up on land? They were kind of slowly making their way up the beach?

NICK: Yeah.

CAMERON: Okay.

NICK: And the other three are approaching land, they're just further out.

CAMERON: They're just still in the water. Okay. "So what I wanna do, I'mma need to shoot one of these and then I'm gonna need to reload the rocket launcher before I can get to the second one, so I will shoot the far one, then if you could lay cover fire while I get the reload happening I'll shoot the second one.

NICK: "Affirmative. Would you like my tactical placement in the same building or just setup a crossfire?"

CAMERON: "Probably crossfire."

NICK: "Affirmative." And he just takes off. He runs out of the building. He stays pretty low, he's pretty quiet. Xianna, you can still hear, over the coms you hear a crackle of "Tactical Statement: Give me 45 seconds to create a crow's nest." You see him start climbing up an interior building staircase.

CAMERON: I think we probably patched Smith and Weathers into our group coms as well so that when they're in the water they're not accidentally blowing up one of the cannons while the other person is still right next to it.

NICK: Yeah. From Smith and Weathers you just hear, [long inhale] bubble-bubble-bubble.

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK: Because you can't talk underwater, that's hard, but they can hear.

CAMERON: Yup, but they can hear.

NICK: Yeah. We're gonna cut back to Neato, Tink, Talon and Kevin. So, you are leaving the military camp and Neato says, "So, what was the schematic again? What's the plan? What's the fizz bang? What's the wizzle-wozzle?"

HUDSON: "I was hoping that we could collaborate on that."

NICK: "Not inspiring a heaping helping of confidence there, chum."

HUDSON: "What I meant to say was, we're going in!"

NICK: "What does going in mean, exactly?"

HUDSON: "Well, I'm glad you asked, I was ready for this moment. What we're gonna do is jam their communications, Step 1. Step 2, shut down all of their weapon systems. Step 3, profit."

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK: Kevin goes, "Man, I like the profit part. Are we privatizing here? What's going on?"

HUDSON: "We're an incorporation as I might have mentioned earlier."

NICK: "S-Corp, right?"

HUDSON: "yes. Yes!"

NICK: "Okay." [laughs]

HUDSON: "You could be a part of it too if this goes off well."

NICK: "Nah, this is starting to sound a little pyramid schemey."

HUDSON: "if you want to come to my house I'll talk to you about Tupperware, but now is not the time."

NICK: [laughs] Talon says, "Hey, if we could focus, we're going into a life or death situation here. If your goal is to try to attack the electronic infrastructure of the Empire, the only bet we have is the technological sector to the west of the bay. I'm assuming that's where you're taking us."

HUDSON: "Yes, that's exactly where I'm taking you and you're actually incorrect; life, death or purgatory are the three options."

NICK: [laughs] Talon and Kevin fall into step behind you and Neato, Tink, and Neato says, "Alright, let's get to stepping, chums," and you take off into the city. Are you trying to be sneaky? Are you trying to be fast? What is your plan here, Tink?

HUDSON: We're trying to be fast and sneaky!

NICK: Alright, roll me a Stealth check, then.

HUDSON: What's the difficulty?

NICK: It's hard. Flip me my last dark side point there.

HUDSON: You're right it's hard.

NICK: God damn it. That was good! [subtly sarcastic]

HUDSON: So it's a red?

NICK: Two purple and a red, but what we'll do is I'll give you a blue die for Neato being with you, because he is very good at this and he is used to being with people who are not as good as him, namely Talon and Kevin, so he'll help you compensate.

HUDSON: Hold on, I gotta parse this...

NICK: [chuckles]

HUDSON: A triumph with two advantages. [laughs]

NICK: Yep... Well... Um, good. Great. Okay... So, with your triumph, would you like to spend the triumph that you see them before they see you?

HUDSON: Yes.

NICK: Okay. You are running along this alley and Neato stops to help Specialist Kevin get up after he's tripped, and he turns and he goes, "Wait, that alley has an ambush."

[laughter]

[slow plucky music starts, turns into peppy jazz]

NICK: You turn around and there's four stormtroopers who are setup with sandbags and guns in the alley that you turned down. They're not touching their guns, they're leaning against a wall talking. That's the triumph, so they don't just shoot you in the face immediately. But yeah, we're gonna need you to go ahead and roll initiative. You'll get one action before they start doing stuff. The current layout, you're in the head of an alley, they see you, they're not next to their weapons. You've got Specialist Talon right behind you and then Neato and Specialist Kevin are about 20 meters behind you.

HUDSON: So Vigilance?

NICK: Yep.

HUDSON: Okay.

CAMERON: What do the other buddies need to roll?

NICK: Neato is two yellows and a green.

HUDSON: Three successes and an advantage, unless there's difficulty, which I don't think there is in initiatives.

NICK: Nope, there isn't.

HUDSON: Okay.

CAMERON: Neato has four successes, one advantage.

NICK: Oh shit. The two kiddos are both a green and a yellow.

CAMERON: Kiddo 1 is two successes, one advantage.

NICK: We'll just have them both go on that one.

CAMERON: Okay. What are stormtroopers?

NICK: There's four of them, so... These are shore troopers, so two yellows and a green. They'll go as a group.

CAMERON: Three successes.

NICK: Ooh boy. Neato goes first, then Tink, then stormtroopers, then the kiddos. Alright, so Neato goes, "Wait, there's an ambush down there!" and like drops Kevin, because he was half holding him up, just lets him go, he falls flat on his face. He goes running around the corner and he does a baseball slide and pulls his rifle up and goes to shoot between you and Talon and try to hit them. I'm going to need three yellows. It's an average difficulty, because he's medium range, but add a black die because he's shooting through his friends and doing a super cool thing.

HUDSON: [laughs]

CAMERON: Can he aim for a blue die?

NICK: Sure.

CAMERON: Two successes, one threat.

NICK: Two successes, one threat.

CAMERON: Yes.

NICK: So, his rifle does, we'll say it does 10. He shoots through two of them and they disintegrate into dust, and he keeps sliding and slams up into the wall of it, because he basically bet it all on being able to do that before anything happened. "Take that, you Imperial fucks."

[snickering and laughter]

NICK: It's Tink's turn.

HUDSON: Alright.

NICK: The stormtroopers are currently scrambling towards their weapons. Two of them are dust.

HUDSON: As I am very skilled in melee, is there any way I can get around them to get behind them?

NICK: They're like in a dead end alley with cover lined up, but you're at medium range, so you could go medium to short and short to engaged if you spend a strain to do a double maneuver, so you could get right up on them. Behind them, not so much, but you could get within melee range of them.

HUDSON: That's fine. I would like to get within melee range of them.

NICK: Okay. So, describe how you sprint down this alley at these dudes.

HUDSON: So, scream at the top of my friggin' lungs, run with my axe in the air, and go and whack one of them.

NICK: Okay. Do you like jump over the cover or just stand in front of it and do a long swing?

HUDSON: I jump over—You said the cover, you mean like the sandbags or whatever?

NICK: Yeah, yeah.

HUDSON: I jump over the sandbags, do a summersault, and then whack sideways.

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK: Nice. Okay.

HUDSON: So I took a strain.

NICK: Yep. That's fine. So, go ahead and do your attack then. Difficulty is average. You know, you would think that stormtroopers would have Melee Defense considering that they're usually fighting technologically inferior planets to them. That's why the Ewoks wrecked them so bad, because they have no melee defense.

LAURA: Yeah.

HUDSON: Three failures and three advantages.

CAMERON: What?!

NICK: Huh...

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: I'm gonna be honest. I thought this fight was gonna be over very quickly. Um...

HUDSON: Not quite. I get captured, apparently.

[laughter]

NICK: So, you fail. You try to hit them and they just are actually pretty good at hand-to-hand combat. The two of them spread out so they're on either side of you.

CAMERON: It's hand-to-axe combat.

NICK: Hand-to-axe combat, my bad.

HUDSON: [snickers]

LAURA: Get it right.

CAMERON: Gah.

NICK: Gosh! There's a whole chapter about hand-to-axe combat in Edge of the Empire. [laughs]

CAMERON: Exactly.

NICK: So, they spread out. One of them gets behind you and basically just interferes with your swings as you try to attack, and they work really well as a team. It's like they're some sort of trained military unit or something. Who'da thunk? Now it's the stormtroopers turn, and they are going to shoot at you a whole bunch.

HUDSON: Bring it.

NICK: They're a green and a yellow. It's easy difficulty because he's at engaged range to them, and they have carbines so they don't lose difficulty for being that close. They're gonna aim... Yep.

CAMERON: One success, one advantage.

NICK: Well, that's 10 damage, Tink.

HUDSON: [pain groans]

NICK: They just pepper you with bullets. Don't forget to subtract your soak.

HUDSON: Oh, thank you.

NICK: You're welcome.

HUDSON: Wait, 10 damage, so I get 7 damage, so 10 is what's left. Ugh.

NICK: Yeah, that's bad. Don't charge gunning placements with an axe and no armor maybe, but also keep doing it because it makes me happy as a GM.

HUDSON: Alright!

NICK: Yeah! So, they shoot you a bunch, and the two specialists are just like 'ahh, what are we gonna do,' because their thinking is if you and Neato die they're stuck behind enemy lines without really any idea of what's going on.

HUDSON: Typical specialist.

NICK: [laughs] Right. So, Specialist Kevin ducks behind a corner and takes cover and doesn't do anything.

CAMERON: [huffs]

NICK: Talon draws her blaster pistol and runs up to close range with them and ducks behind a crate, so she uses her maneuver to take cover, and she pops up and she shoots at the stormtroopers. She yells, "Tink, get down!" and starts spraying.

HUDSON: I get down.

NICK: Yeah.

HUDSON: Get down tonight~

NICK: [laughs] So she is a green and a yellow.

CAMERON: Three successes, one advantage.

NICK: Dang. How much does a light blaster do, 5?

LAURA: Five.

NICK: Aw, she almost gets two. So, she shoots and she hits the one that was about to shoot Tink again in the back of the head, and the stormtrooper just drops and there's just one left. It is Neato's turn again, and we just get a shot of, he's still leaning against the wall, he brings his blaster rifle back up, and we get

the slow motion deep breathing and heartbeat noise, the [heart beats, pulsing, laser fire] and he shoots the last stormtrooper, hopefully.

CAMERON: Four successes, two advantages?

NICK: Dang! That last stormtrooper, Tink, you start to duck when Specialist Talon yells at you to duck and you're singing some sort of anachronistic disco-related song while doing it, and Neato, the bolt from his disrupter rifle almost parts the fur on the top of your head and hits the stormtrooper. He gauged how fast you were ducking and fired to hit as soon as you were out of the way. The stormtrooper, you get a second of him going "Ahhh" and you lock eyes through the helmet of this stormtrooper, and then you watch from the chest out as he just turns to a hollow yellow outline of himself, and then that dissipates and then there's a small cloud of dust and the stormtrooper is gone.

Neato stands up and says, "Wow, you're one tough cookie, Tink. I haven't seen somebody take that many blaster bolts since the Clone Wars."

HUDSON: "I sure can take a blaster to me."

NICK: "That's not something to be proud of, friend."

HUDSON: "Oh, I mean, like I'm resilient."

NICK: "Right, well uh, maybe next time don't get shot." He pats you on the shoulder where you've been shot and it hurts.

HUDSON: [groans]

NICK: "Alright. Maybe I should take point," and you continue to jog off. We get a time lapse circle wipe, and Tink and the specialists and Neato all are jogging up the steps and it looks like a university building. As you go in Specialist Talon says, "Yeah, I used to go to school here. The government equipment is on the second floor." You jog up and you find basically slicer heaven. There's a whole bunch of terminals and signal boosters and everything that you could use.

CAMERON: Beanbag chairs.

NICK: Beanbag chairs. Talon says, "We can run support for you. we have signal interceptors and broadcasters up on the roof of the building. You can control them all from here. It's your go. What are we gonna do?"

HUDSON: I look like a kid in a candy shop. I look around, and I try to figure out what to do first.

NICK: Heh. There's a bunch of terminals but one big master terminal with an extra-large screen.

HUDSON: I go to that one.

CAMERON: [giggles]

NICK: Yeah. It's password locked.

HUDSON: "I can get through this one," as I roll for hacking.

[laughter]

HUDSON: What difficulty is it to get into this computer?

NICK: Hard. It's a pretty decent system.

HUDSON: Before I do that, outlaw data breaker adds two blue dice for me. I'm just making sure I don't have anything else I can use...

NICK: This is a security defense system, but that just removes black dice I think.

HUDSON: Exactly.

NICK: And I didn't give you any because you're in hacker heaven.

HUDSON: Five successes, one advantage.

NICK: Oh. Yeah, you're in. you just make it look easy. You plug your data breaker in and run a routine and turn to talk strategy with Neato and it just runs in the background. You don't even have to think about it.

HUDSON: Nice.

NICK: Neato says, "So, you're going for the old electronic warfare. Not really my cup of tea, but I'm sure you can figure it out. If you could turn off the weapon systems, great. If you can interfere with the star destroyer up above, even better."

HUDSON: "Listen. Did you even hear my plan? What was the first step?"

NICK: "I'll admit that I only paid attention to Step 3."

HUDSON: "Talon?"

NICK: [Neato] "Kill the Imperials!"

HUDSON: "That's not—Talon, what was the rest, what was the first step of my plan?"

NICK: "Step 1 was take down their communication."

HUDSON: "Correct. You get a gold star."

NICK: "Step 2 was take down their weapon systems."

HUDSON: "Yup."

NICK: "Step 3 was..."

She looks at Neato and he says, "Profit~!"

HUDSON: [laughs] "That is all correct! You all get high-fives from me."

NICK: As you say that, the password lock screen disappears off the terminal behind you and says 'Welcome, master user.'

HUDSON: "Score."

NICK: [laughs] And we are going to cut back to the beach. So, we get a sweeping overhead shot of these buildings that have been combed and burned out, but you can still see the hint of the idyllic city that they were before. Laying on top of a building a couple of blocks over from Karma is Hank. He is down on his front with the sniper rifle posted up on the top of the building. You can see that the rotating barrels of his rifle have retracted in and the main barrel has extended out quite a bit. There isn't a scope on it that you can see, but there is a glowing, looks like Kit from Nightrider, a yellow progress bar that's going up the front of the rifle and disappears and just is continually doing that, and Hank's ocular receptors are turned off. He is aimed towards the stormtroopers. The camera zooms down to Karma who has her rocket launcher aimed out of the shattered window at these weapons platforms and the stormtroopers outside. Then it zooms to underwater where Xianna and Weathers and Smith are all swimming and are just now starting to approach the other weapons platforms. The swim wasn't too long because they're also moving towards you. Xianna, what are you doing?

LAURA: Swimming~

NICK: Kay. So you approach these weapons platforms, and...?

LAURA: So, the thermal detonators, would we be able to just place them like right above the water line and they work, or how high up would we need to place a detonator for it to be effective?

NICK: Do we think thermal detonators in this universe work like they do in some of the books where they're actually nuclear warheads or do we think they work like they do in the video games where they're just reasonably effective grenades?

LAURA: Por qué no los dos?

NICK: Small nuclear warheads. Affirmative. Okay. Yeah, you could put them like on the water line or even underneath and they would work. Underneath the explosion wouldn't be as big, but you would assume it would rupture something.

CAMERON: Make it sink at least.

LAURA: Yeah.

NICK: You could also roll me a Skulduggery check to...

LAURA: Figure out the best placement?

NICK: Yep.

LAURA: I can do that.

CAMERON: While she's putting that together, I still have wounds from when we fell. Yes?

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: Yeah. You all have those wounds.

CAMERON: Okay.

NICK: You didn't, like, go see a medic or anything.

CAMERON: Just verifying.

LAURA: Yep.

NICK: I'm actually surprised Xianna didn't just whip out the stim pack. She usually does.

LAURA: Well no, because it heals 5 wounds and she only has 3, so that's not an effective use of a stim pack.

NICK: [laughs]

CAMERON: Yeah.

LAURA: Despite being Xianna, she still sometimes is pragmatic and understands resource management.

CAMERON: [giggles]

NICK: That's very efficiency minded of you.

LAURA: What was the difficulty?

NICK: Hard. You're trying to take out military grade hardware.

LAURA: Okay! [laughter]

NICK: I mean, you all are all at the point where if I'm having you do the thing you're good at it doesn't really matter what difficulty I set because you're probably going to succeed.

LAURA: Two successes and two advantages.

NICK: Yeah, so you're able to designate where to put these thermal detonators on these weapons platforms. I think with the thermal detonators you're able to easily assure that two of these artillery

things are well covered with that and the satchel charges. Are you hoping to stop them from moving or straight sink them?

LAURA: Straight sink them.

NICK: Yeah. You'd be able to, with 100% surety, sink two of them. The third one, you have some satchel charges and stuff left over but you're not sure if it's enough to actually take it down, between the three of you.

LAURA: Okay. I guess we're going to completely destroy two and then do what we can with the third.

NICK: Okay. You're able to do that. You can actually see as you're doing this, we get the view of the three of you splitting up and placing your charges, I think Xianna takes point as far as pointing at where everything goes, and you can see that there's a very clear line from where the water of the bay is very deep and where the beach begins, and if they cross that, even if you sink them, they're gonna stay above water enough that they can still bombard the city and you're rapidly approaching that line. So, as you get to the third one you're able to put some on there, and then the choice is either to swim out of the blast range of when you set these off or stick around and try to arrange them just so on the third one to try to sink it, and I think you probably decide to swim away, right, so you don't explode??

LAURA: Yes.

NICK: So, you wave them off and they look at you like 'no, we can fix it,' and you wave them off. We get a lot of frantic underwater gesticulation. You swim to the deeper water and you get out of the blast range, and we get this three-part panel of Xianna and her two hunky commandos treading water and all three of them are holding detonators and they're counting down on their fingers from five, and Karma with her rocket launcher and it's got a scope that's blinking and the light goes red and she has it locked on one, and Hank has his rifle trained on a stormtrooper and the targeting reticle blinks red, and Tink cracking his fingers in front of this master computer and saying 'alright, let's make some problems...' and that's where we're gonna end the episode.

CAMERON: [laughs]

ALL: Ba-naaa~!

LAURA: ... Leeloo!

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

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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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