

Tabletop Squadron Transcript, Season 1 Episode 45:
From Hootenanny to Afterparty

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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 lot of announcements this week, space friends, but I do want to take a second to let you know that we have a metric ton of bonus content hitting the Patreon feed over the next couple of months. Some of it may wander to the main feed at some point, but if you want to see what's been going on in the background of the plot or see some of your favorite side characters make new appearances I would strongly recommend you check out Tarkin's Underwear Drawer available only to our \$5 and up patrons.

Podcast music this week is Pink Fish Signs (Take Two) by GeeNerve, Drive Fast by Three Chain Links, and The String by 2L8.

So now, let's get into the episode.

##

NICK: Hello! Welcome to Tabletop Squadron, Episode 45. It's a pleasant day, more towards evening really. I should really think of things to say for this part. I've really run out of conversation topics. What's your favorite pet? I like iguanas. Alright... We're gonna go around the table and everybody say who you are and who you're playing today, starting with Hudson.

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

NICK: Wonderful. Up next we have Laura.

LAURA: Hello. I am Laura, and I play Xianna'fan, a Twi'lek smuggler.

NICK: And last but not least we have Cameron.

CAMERON: Hello. I am Cameron, and I play Karma, a Nailo—[laughs]

NICK: [laughs]

LAURA: A nylon bounty hunter!

CAMERON: Oh no! No, a Nailo, she is a Nailo, that's true, but that's her last name. [grinning] I play Karma Nailo, a Nautolan bounty hunter. I tried to just say my first name and it messed it up. [exasperated, giggling] I can't do it!

NICK: It's gonna be okay, Cameron. You're okay.

CAMERON: [giggling] No~!

NICK: It's gonna be fine. Okay, so before we get into the recap let's do the Destiny Roll~

HUDSON: Hai-yah!

CAMERON: Two light side.

HUDSON: Two light side.

LAURA: Two dark side.

HUDSON: Boo~

NICK: Yay.

LAURA: No~ Not my fault.

HUDSON: You rolled it.

LAURA: It's the dice's fault.

NICK: You have to just make some new ones, I guess. So, when we last played you were in a very large armed conflict against the Empire launching a big assault on the shield facility on the planet Fygo in the city of Sart. You were able to destroy four out of the five artillery emplacements and also slow the final one down pretty good, and it got stuck. You were able to basically stop the Imperial assault from the beach. Tink was ambushed by a whole bunch of stormtroopers. Xianna went and rescued him.

CAMERON: Grenade sandwich.

NICK: Grenade sandwich did happen, you're right. Specialist Kevin was struck down in the line of duty.

HUDSON: Rest in peace.

NICK: Yep, and then Karma split up from the group to go try to protect the shield facility, had a major Rambo moment shooting up the whole place and keeping the assault from getting too over the top, and everybody met up on an embankment and that's where the episode ended. Am I missing anything?

CAMERON: I do have a crit on me right now. I am Compromised, so I have an extra difficulty until the end of the encounter, on all of my checks.

NICK: Ooh, that's gonna be...

CAMERON: Yep, so I have an extra purple die here to remind myself.

NICK: Okay, that's good. So, we're gonna go ahead and get started. We open on the entire resistance force that the crew of the Afternoon Delight has assembled. We see everyone: Tink, Xianna, Karma, HK, Neato, Specialist Talon, and Smith and Weathers, all in smoky silhouettes on a mound of city rubble. The air is hazy and full of the sounds of blaster fire. A rumble shakes your feet as a single distant artillery cannon fires destroying a building. There is a hoard of stormtroopers in front of you working to fight their way into the shield facility. They have two operating cannons that are firing into the front of the building and you can see the structure starting to crumble. Occasionally return fire comes from the militia, but you can't tell how many there are or what their situation is.

Where we're gonna resolve this, because this is going to be the big, climactic, sort of Lord of the Rings running down the hill sort of fight thing, I want everybody to say what the thing they are contributing to trying to break this charge is. You will get a roll, and then we will put together how the scene goes based on how everybody does at their individual actions. So when you think of how you want to try to impact this being vastly outnumbered by superior firepower situation, speak up.

HUDSON: We're on top of the hill?

NICK: Yeah, there's a barricade built out of rubble and stuff and you all are standing on that looking out over the parade ground where you were originally except this time it's full of alive and dead stormtroopers and cannons, and most of them aren't paying attention to you, they're trying to get into the shield facility. The militia is currently losing, they probably need some help, because if they get into the shield facility they're gonna turn off the shield and then you will be exploded from space.

LAURA: Do they have any transport vehicles, ATSTs or anything like that?

NICK: They have those two kind of shielded cannon contraptions that they dropped, but they don't have any of the big walkers or anything like that, {because they don't wanna drop pod}—

LAURA: How—

CAMERON: But there were like 20 drop pods, right?

NICK: Yeah.

CAMERON (as Karma): Tink, can you rig up the rockets on a drop pod to launch into the stormtroopers?

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah, I think I could do something like that, but that doesn't exactly get us in, yet.

CAMERON (as Karma): No, we're trying to clear the way though.

HUDSON (as Tink): Ohh.

CAMERON (as Karma): A drop pod rocket. [laughs]

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh! How about this? Alright. Multiple ideas going on at the same time, here we go!

CAMERON (as Karma): Okay?

HUDSON (as Tink): We got the rockets launching. They're gonna be like "ahh, rockets!" and then try to run away a little bit, but some of them will run forward and try to get us so that they run away from the rockets toward us, so if we have enough shovels we dig under, or we find a sewer system.

LAURA (as Xianna): Okay. Shovel idea out, I do not want to do manual labor. Sewer system, maybe, I don't know if this place has a sewer or not.

HUDSON (as Tink): I mean, when you gotta go it has to go somewhere.

LAURA (as Xianna): Yes, but not necessarily in an underground sewer.

HUDSON (as Tink): Above ground sewers sound gross.

CAMERON (as Karma): Well, Sart has been under attack for like three months too, so I don't know how well the infrastructure is holding up.

HUDSON (as Tink): That's true.

CAMERON (as Karma): Also, we have this hill that we could duck behind and use as cover, which seems like a quicker solution to the digging or the excavating of the sewage system.

HUDSON: [laughs]

CAMERON (as Karma): But I like the creativity that's happening here.

HUDSON (as Tink): Thank you. I'm owed gold stars already, I feel like I just earned more.

NICK: As you're talking, you see that the smaller cannon platforms fire and a big chunk of the wall of the shield facility collapses in, and you can see a couple of militia members scrambling further back into the base as stormtroopers start to push forward in a final charge.

CAMERON: I would like to whip my rocket launcher off of my shoulder and shoot the cannon.

NICK: Okay.

CAMERON: That's my big firepower.

NICK: [chuckles] So, you're all talking strategy and long-term things and this happens, and you're like "I'm gonna slow this down."

CAMERON: What is the difficulty?

NICK: It's gonna be hard. You're at long range right now.

CAMERON: What if I run forward?

NICK: I mean, you could interrupt your conversation, sprint down the hill, and get to medium range before shooting. Yeah.

CAMERON: [laughing] Because it is at increased difficulty, so I'd rather not make a daunting check.

NICK: Yeah, So, in the middle of y'all's conversation that happens and Karma looks forward and says "one second," and runs off down the hill carrying a rocket launcher and takes a shot.

CAMERON: I'm guessing since it just shot I don't get my blue die for the fact that it's not engaged with me.

NICK: Nope, sorry.

CAMERON: Well...

HUDSON: [laughs]

CAMERON: I am gonna aim my rocket launcher, though.

NICK: Yeah, you can aim.

CAMERON: [rolls]

NICK: That's a lot of successes.

CAMERON: That's six successes, but three threats.

[laughter]

NICK: YAY! You had collected two rockets, right?

CAMERON: Yes.

NICK: I think this rocket looked a little different, like it had more stabilization fins on the back, it looked a little bigger. It slots into the rocket launcher just fine. So you drop down to one knee and you fire and this has a lot more kick than it previously did. With that many successes there's not even a need to calculate damage. There's a mini mushroom cloud as this thing explodes. Stormtroopers scatter everywhere. You've taken down this cannon, but also the kickback knocks you onto your back and you fall prone [dramatic bass noise] in the middle of this field, and a bunch of stormtroopers look at you as they see where the source of this explosion is from. I think they assumed they had killed you before. The fact that you just ran back down this hill again... So, there's probably about 25 stormtroopers that turn around and start to move towards you and fire at you.

CAMERON: I forget. If people are shooting at me, is it better to be on the ground because I'm harder to hit?

NICK: Yeah, they get a black die.

CAMERON: Okay. I don't get up, then.

NICK: Okay. You just stay down?

CAMERON: [laughing] I'm just like, sitting there, like whoops!

NICK: You roll behind a rock or something. Okay! That was step one, one of the cannons has been destroyed by a rocket launcher.

CAMERON: Was it the cannon by the 30 or the cannon by the 10?

NICK: We'll say it's by the 30, because a majority of them turned around and are now shooting at you.

CAMERON: Okay.

LAURA: Okay, so how difficult would it be to kind of go off to the side and loop around everything and then come back behind one of the shielded cannons, and say, sneak into it? Up inside the cannon, or just whoever is shooting it, I don't know.

NICK: Hmm... That's a good question. One thing in your advantage is you're already behind the cannons, because they're pointed at the shield facility. That would be good. There's only one left, you could loop around. What I would say is with a successful stealth roll you would be able to get close to it. It's like an open air thing. Imagine a really beefy motorcycle with a cannon strapped to the front of it. It's like a car with no frame, basically, like the bottom part with the moving transmission with the cannon on the front and with a bunch of shielding on the front. it's been stripped down. It's like if you took a tank and were like "this needs to be light enough to enter from orbit and not explode."

CAMERON: I'm picturing like a jeep.

LAURA: Okay, yeah. I at first was thinking of a different type of shielded cannon that's in Star Wars stuff. I know what you mean now.

NICK: Yeah. You would be able to get close to it. There are 10 stormtroopers around it, so I doubt you would be able to get into the driving position from it, but if you wanted to you could probably get to there.

LAURA: Okay, then I want to go to there.

NICK: Okay. Make me a Stealth roll.

HUDSON: It's just Xianna going?

NICK: Unless you want to go with her.

HUDSON: I have an idea to save karma.

NICK: Okay. We'll do Xianna, because I think as Karma ran down the hill Xianna took that moment and was like "I wanna go play with this" and ran off that direction. As all the PCs scatter to the winds all the NPCs look at each other and are like (confused noise) and do a shrug, and then start shooting.

CAMERON (as HK): Suppressing fire.

NICK: [laughs] Yeah.

LAURA: One, what difficulty, and then two, Xianna does pull out a bag of impact and takes some on her way.

LAURA (as Xianna): Okay, I'm going to go. Bye Tink.

NICK: Sneaking through a battlefield with special forces being very aware in the middle of a firefight I think is a daunting task, but if you succeed you will be right up next to the cannon in the middle of all these people, or wherever you wanna be in that situation.

LAURA: Daunting is four, right?

NICK: Yeah.

LAURA: Okay!

NICK: But I'm not going to flip a dark side point.

LAURA: Debating whether or not I want to flip one to get an extra green.

NICK: It might be a good idea, because if you get caught in this it's gonna be real bad.

LAURA: I'm gonna do it!

HUDSON: That's a good idea.

NICK: That's a lot of dice.

LAURA: Impact.

CAMERON: Yes.

NICK: [laughs]

LAURA: Okay, so I have a triumph with a success, four more successes, and an advantage.

NICK: Wow! Okay. I'm just gonna give you narrative control to kind of do whatever you want with that, because you also have a triumph, tons of successes... I think that you are able to loop around to kind of the edge of the battlefield, and there's a lot of smoke and haze in this area, and you just do the anime style vanish into the smoke and reappear in other places, and you are a ghost. What are you trying to achieve with your stealthiness here?

[funky, smooth action music starts]

LAURA: Xianna sneaks into some sort of coverage, maybe a large rock or boulder, and does the very classic thing of picking up a smaller rock and throwing it so everyone looks in that direction, and while the stormtroopers have now gathered into a smaller area, say maybe they're all engaged with each other spatial-wise if we were to assign it some sort of range, and are looking where the sound was near the cannon, Xianna throws two detonators at them.

NICK: Oh. Okay. That would be a ranged attack, light. We'll give you, I don't know, probably two blue dice for your amazing Stealth roll. You can use your triumph to just automatically activate the Blast if you want.

LAURA: Sure.

NICK: What is the damage on a thermal detonator? Do we know?

[music fades]

LAURA: Um...

NICK: Because we were using it narratively before.

LAURA: Ooh, I have frag grenades.

NICK: A thermal detonator does a lot more than a frag grenade does.

LAURA: Thermal detonator, Ranged: Light, Damage 20...

NICK: [bursts into laughter]

LAURA: ...Crit 2, Range short, Blast 15, Breech 1, Vicious 4, Limited Ammo 1.

NICK: Holy cow, and you wanna throw two?

LAURA: I'm throwing... Ooh, actually, I didn't realize it did 20 damage, 15 Blast, and Breech, and Vicious.

NICK: Yeah.

LAURA: I don't even remember what Vicious does.

NICK: It increases the Crit.

LAURA: I'm just gonna throw one.

CAMERON: Xianna knows how powerful they are.

NICK: If you threw two I was just gonna increase the difficulty of your attack by one and do the dual wielding rules, which would be very neat, but I think you would know a thermal detonator will kill anyone within the range.

[music resumes]

With all of your Stealth successes, you got them all to cluster not just by throwing a rock but by them seeing you and then you vanishing into the smoke and then running to investigate. You manipulated them quite a bit.

LAURA: Yeah. I did it so that they would all be in one area looking away from where I ended up.

NICK: Which is short range.

LAURA: Yeah.

NICK: Which means you have to throw it and run, because the blast radius is probably that big.

LAURA: Yeah. I mean, that's half the reason why I needed them to be looking the other direction was so that I could throw it and then just start booking it without having to worry about getting away stealthily, because give me a few extra seconds before, you know, they realize they're about to explode.

NICK: Yep, okay, it's short ranged so that's an easy ranged attack, light, and Blast is already activated because of your triumph from your Stealth, so that's immediately 15 damage.

LAURA: [smiling] Seven successes and two advantages.

NICK: Wow. Okay. Y'all are not going to find thermal detonators again for a while. [others laugh] I didn't realize that they took down ships. There were 10 stormtroopers in that general area. I think there are two operating the tank thingy, but the other eight are just vaporized. How many advantages was it?

LAURA: Two.

NICK: Two? Which is a crit. Do you want to also have stopped the cannon's advance or something like that narratively interesting with your advantages, or are you trying to hijack the cannon?

LAURA: I do like the idea of hijacking the cannon, so I think with everything I was able to draw them far enough away from the actual cannon that when I threw the detonator it didn't truly damage the cannon. There might be some singe marks on it but no actual damage.

NICK: We'll have you do like one attack roll to try to hijack the cannon / shoot it where you wanna shoot it, and we'll give you two blue dice on that for how distracting.

LAURA: Cool!

[music stops]

NICK: You are a one person ambush. We see Xianna do that, just making disastrous work of this military. The skill of this combat was not expecting small nuclear warheads to be involved, but that's very cool. Then we go to Tink. You said you were trying to help Karma?

HUDSON: Yeah. Just to make sure I'm clear on this, Karma's at the bottom of the hill and I'm at the top, right?

NICK: She's at the bottom of the hill and then a ways further forward.

HUDSON: Okay. I'm like:

HUDSON (as Tink): We need to save Karma!

HUDSON: I reach in my utility belt and throw out a frag grenade, and I yell as loud as I can towards Karma...

HUDSON (as Tink): This is for you! Hurt them with this!

HUDSON: ...and I do like a hook shot, a Kobe if you will, and throw it towards Karma.

CAMERON: [laughs]

HUDSON: Now does she hear me, or does she think I'm grenading her? Do I need to roll for that?

NICK: I don't think you need to roll. What do we think is more interesting? I do kinda like the idea of her not hearing you, because she's far enough away and you're in the middle of a war.

HUDSON: I just don't know how far away.

NICK: She's one range band. You can throw her one.

CAMERON: [laughing] It just- I don't hear it. I'm distracted because I just fell, I sit up slightly, and I see what Xianna's doing, and I'm like "oh my gosh..."

NICK: You're also very heavily under fire right now.

CAMERON: Yeah.

NICK: If the stormtroopers make an attack you might die, is where we're at.

CAMERON: Yeah, and then a grenade just shows up next to me, and I do the shy away from it and then realize that apparently all of Tink's grenades have pins in them, so I realize that the pin is still in it and I'm like "oh, hey, I've got a grenade" and I pick it up.

NICK: [laughs] Okay, so you have a grenade. You were like behind a rock that's about the size of your head trying to use that as cover.

CAMERON: Yeah.

NICK: So, what do we want the NPCs to do? I just want them to kind of act as a group.

CAMERON (as HK): Suppressing fire.

NICK: Do they just charge down the hill shooting and try to draw people off?

CAMERON: Yeah. Distract them so that not all of the guns are shooting at me. [laughs]

NICK: You all hear over the coms, you hear HK say:

NICK (as HK): Tactical Evaluation: Primary user under direct threat. Follow me.

NICK: HK just goes sprinting down the hill and starts shooting.

NICK (as HK): Suppressing fire.

NICK (as Neato): Suppressing fire!

NICK: Talon is just yelling and shooting, and Smith and Weathers are shoulder to shoulder running down the hill, so this group of your friends is running towards one of the original blown out cannon and are trying to make that for cover, and they manage to draw a decent amount of the stormtroopers' fire. Could you roll me a Force die, please?

CAMERON: Two dark side.

NICK: Oh no... Can you roll me – agh, this is so many stormtroopers – four yellows at a hard difficulty, because they're at long range. Yep...

CAMERON: Do they have a black die for my rock?

NICK: They're not shooting at you. This is the stormtroopers shooting at the group.

CAMERON: Oh, okay. Oh no~ Oh, okay... One failure, one triumph, three advantages.

NICK: Okay. The group is moving fast enough, and there's all the smoke, and it's difficult to see, so none of them get hit, but the stormtroopers rally and start to lay down normal fire. They're gonna have two blue dice at the next person they shoot at, and... What should their triumph be? I think their triumph is that a stormtrooper throws their own thermal detonator and blows up the rest of that cannon so there is no cover for this group. They're just standing in the middle of an open field now. That lays out the situation. I don't think we need to dice roll for the rest of this. I think we're going to be okay except for the stormtroopers are gonna get a shot at Karma before this is over.

CAMERON: [weakly] I would like to throw my grenade.

NICK: Yeah. We're just gonna make this into one last dice roll and it's going to be you all versus all of them and then let's just describe cinematically how this goes. Does that sound good?

HUDSON: Yeah.

NICK: Because mass combat in this situation isn't very interesting...

LAURA: Yeah.

NICK: ...as shown by suddenly in the rules we're able to kill 10 elite stormtroopers in one throw, which is very neat, or like you killed 35 with a cannon earlier. There's a lot going on. One, I need you to roll me another Force die, because let's find out how the militia is doing.

CAMERON: Hudson or Laura, you roll this one, mine didn't go well.

NICK: [laughs]

HUDSON: One Force die?

NICK: Yep.

HUDSON: Two light side.

NICK: Hey nice! As this is happening, 15-20 of the militia members – so the numbers are getting close to even at this point – come charging out of the shield facility, because you're divided the fire enough, and they take up position in the rubble and start to shoot back, so that's good, that's going well. I think it's just down to this last stormtrooper roll. It's gonna be four yellows versus two purples and they have two blue dice. Yup. Yes, they can have a black die because of your rock.

HUDSON: [snickers]

CAMERON: I would like to flip a light side point to make it harder to hit me. [giggles]

NICK: Sure. Yeah, seems fair.

CAMERON: So I upgrade one of the purples to a red, then?

NICK: Yep.

CAMERON: I'm sure it'll be fine.

NICK: This roll isn't just shooting at Karma, this is them fighting back, and we'll figure out how this goes.

CAMERON: Four successes and a triumph.

NICK: [inhales] Okay. The stormtroopers fall into a defensive position. They're in a ring shooting in every direction. Four successes and a triumph, so karma, you are going to take 10 damage because you are the one most exposed in this situation.

CAMERON: Oh no...

NICK: Yeah, and a crit.

CAMERON: [laughing] Oh no~

NICK: Because you are the main target. Everybody else kinda did support things. This is combat, this is your focus, but you were also the focus. Let's roll that crit and see how you do.

CAMERON: 62 plus 10 so a 72.

HUDSON: Hamstrung: Lose free maneuver until end of encounter.

[smooth electronic/techno music starts]

NICK: You get hit. It hurts. You're pinned down. You're exhausted. This has been a rough eight hours.
[laughs]

CAMERON: It's been a long, like, past 15 minutes for me.

NICK: Yeah. You're just moving slow, you've got that dramatic action hero limp. Tink, did you charge down the hill at any point? Are you still up on the hill?

HUDSON: Nope, just still up on the hill.

NICK: Okay, well you don't get shot then. Xianna, you're behind a cannon, so they don't shoot you. HK probably takes a hit. How much health does HK have?

HUDSON: 40 or something.

NICK: Oh no, not very much, he got hit earlier.

CAMERON: I did send HK with a droid repair kit, to Tink.

NICK: Yeah, he didn't use it.

CAMERON: So he has one on him.

NICK: Yeah. He is hit for, we'll say, 8 damage which puts him at 1 hit point remaining. He gets blasted up, but in doing so none of the NPCs are eviscerated. HK is laying suppressing fire, having a grand old time. You just hear over the com, besides people on this open frequency – and you also can hear the Imperial frequency, so it's just a lot of noise of people calling out shots and saying where the formations are and where targets are – and over all of that you just hear HK going:

NICK (as HK): [ascending wild laughter]

NICK: [breathes] So, Xianna, at this point how do you remove the operating stormtroopers from this cannon and then what do you do with it?

LAURA: How many stormtroopers are on this cannon?

NICK: Two. You have a fine gunner that is aiming and then a person whose job seems to be to do the big aiming and also the driving.

CAMERON: The gunner is real good looking.

NICK: Like the fi—

CAMERON: They fiiine.

NICK: Okay, great, thanks.

CAMERON: You're welcome.

NICK: Yeah. Yeah...

CAMERON: We can tell, through the stormtrooper helmet. They are a good looking individual.

LAURA: I'm thinking I would just shoot them at this point.

NICK: Okay. Yeah. You plug both of them in the back. They were very focused on trying to take that one last shot now that the militia has run out into the open. You're able to jump into this cannon. The aiming is done like the old World War II battleships where you have to crank the wheels to move the cannon around. [laughs] You have one for left and right and one for up and down.

LAURA: [laughs] We've figured out interplanetary travel but can't figure out how to make a cannon without hand cranks.

NICK: You know...

HUDSON: [laughs]

LAURA: Sometimes you just really need to hand crank a cannon, if you know what I mean.

[laughter]

HUDSON: They still sell trucks with the manual windows.

NICK: But also that's a very Star Wars thing, that the cannons have manual cranks. It was to strip weight for the drop pod thing. There you go. The electric aimers were heavy.

LAURA: Because the hand cranks weigh less?!

CAMERON: [laughing] {There's no lighter.}

NICK: Sure! Whatever.

CAMERON: I feel- No, I feel like no.

LAURA: I feel like that's wrong.

NICK: Is that what we're focused on in this massive set piece?

LAURA & CAMERON: Yes!

NICK: [laughs] I'm not taking it back. It's got hand cranks. What do you do with your cannon?

LAURA: I wanna shoot some stormtroopers!

NICK: Okay.

LAURA: Go pew-pew. Boom.

NICK: You shoot the stormtroopers right into the middle of the formation. You're able to fire a couple of times before the cannon just jams up and gets stuck and shuts down, but you pretty much shatter their formation. HK is just blasting at will into this group. Your group of supporters are also shooting. You hear Neato over the coms say:

NICK (as Neato): We've got the Imperials on the run now, chums. Let's turn this hoedown into an afterparty.

NICK: He's taking down troopers. Karma, I imagine you are also shooting into the group.

CAMERON: Yeah.

NICK: The militia charge out and the stormtroopers surrender. We get down to there's like four or five left including one with one of those shoulder flappies that show that they're important, and they drop their weapons and put up their hands.

NICK (as Stormtrooper): We- We surrender. There, uh... fight's over.

NICK: They put up their hands. Tink, were you just like cheering them on from the hill?

HUDSON: Yeah. I haven't moved from the hill.

NICK: [laughs]

CAMERON: He's triumphantly waving his axe around.

HUDSON: Yeah, just waving my axe.

NICK: Cool. The militia runs out of cover, takes the stormtroopers hostage, and you can see General Karthage with a very large bandage on her shoulder, just soot streaked through her face, and you can see most of her hair which was already cut very short singed down to the scalp on one side. She takes a cigar out of a hip pouch and just thrusts it into the fire of some nearby wreckage of the cannon and sticks it in between her teeth and walks towards you all, looking around. She has that stone-faced look of a commander looking at the end of a battlefield which has a lot of militia members on it, probably only about a third of them survived just at a glance. She walks towards Karma while kinda eyeing Xianna to see if Xianna's gonna get out of the cannon or not and does a gesture towards Tink up on his hill.

HUDSON: I run down the hill.

NICK: Xianna, do you come towards the group or do you stay in your cannon?

LAURA: Xianna had been so concerned with the cannon jamming up that she had been hitting it and cursing it and trying to unjam it, and even kicking it and hurting herself because she kicked it too hard with her foot that's missing some toes.

NICK: Aw.

LAURA: They're healed, but they're still a little sore, so she's jumping up and down on one foot just letting out a real good stream of curses in Rylothi? Twi'lek? Whichever one it is.

NICK: I believe the language is called Bib Fortuna.

CAMERON: [laughs]

LAURA: In Bib Fortuna-ese. She has not noticed that the stormtroopers have surrendered yet. [laughs]

NICK: [laughs] Okay. Great. General Karthage walks up to Karma as Tink comes puffing down the hill.

CAMERON: Karma slowly gets up off the ground.

NICK: Karthage reaches down a hand and grasps you by the forearm and pulls you to your feet.

CAMERON (as Karma): Thank you.

NICK (as Karthage): Well, it seems like we've made it out of this in one piece.

CAMERON: Karma looks down and checks.

CAMERON (as Karma): Eh? Oh yeah.

NICK (as Karthage): Maybe mostly in one piece. I don't know how to thank you all. Thank you for everything you've done. I don't know what happened, but the artillery stopped. Clearly you broke this massive charge. I don't think that the Empire is going to be able to make any sort of financial argument for this being worth it at this point.

CAMERON: Karma stretches and then hunches back over and holds her side.

CAMERON (as Karma): I think they probably should have given up a while ago, though, so y'all may wanna try and figure out something to do with that star destroyer.

NICK (as Karthage): Well, at least their ground forces have been decimated. We'll have some time to regroup. For now, I think at this point we're going to need to abandon the city. We'll take to the jungles, maybe head for another city, it's only a couple hundred clicks away, we'll probably make it, but we wouldn't have been able to leave without y'all's help so thank you.

NICK: Tink, at this point you arrive, and Neato and the rest of the crew arrives.

NICK (as Neato): Well, it looks like we've been successful, chums.

NICK: He climbs onto the little rock that Karma was using as cover and plants a foot successfully there, and just looks at Tink, and looks back at everybody else, and looks at Tink.

NICK (as Neato): If only there was some sort of dramatic pose to celebrate our victory.

HUDSON: I breathe really hard and put my hands on my knees.

HUDSON (as Tink): [huffing] Miss Karthage, can, um—

NICK (as Karthage): General.

HUDSON (as Tink): General Karthage, could I get a stim pack? And Hank is not looking good.

NICK: Hank's—

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK: [smiling] An arm is barely attached by one little strut, and his gun, the barrels are all smoking bright red like they've overheated. He puts the gun into the ground and steam rises up from it, and there's a big gaping char wound in his chest.

NICK (as HK): Assertion: I am damaged.

CAMERON (as Karma): Did you give Tink the repair kit that I sent with you?

NICK: I don't know how a droid would be able to roll its eyes when it's just lights, but you really get that impression. There's the shoulder slump and the head roll and everything.

NICK (as HK): I was a little busy... suppressing fire?

CAMERON (as Karma): That's a no, then? Do you wanna give it to Tink now?

NICK: HK is kind of behind Tink and off to the side a little and pulls from a back secured strap a mechanics thing and just throws it, and it hits Tink in the back of the head.

HUDSON (as Tink): Ow!

NICK: [laughs]

CAMERON (as Karma): Okay. That was unnecessary. There's no need for that.

HUDSON (as Tink): [whispering] Sorry!

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK: HK just stares stilly into space. I think at this point you hear from across the now quiet battlefield you hear Xianna say something triumphantly.

LAURA: You hear her like jumping up and down.

LAURA (as Xianna): Fuck yes! I did it!

NICK: [laughs] The cannon goes off and you hear the whistle of a plasma ball go flying by. It's over your heads by like 10-15 meters, but it's a little close, and it hits a building on the far side and the building starts to list and collapse. [explosion] Xianna, you look up and realize the battle seems to have been over for a while.

LAURA: Once the building collapses there's that moment of silence and you just hear very quietly in the distance Xianna being like:

LAURA (as Xianna): Oops...

[laughter]

NICK: It echoes slightly in the silence.

HUDSON: Can Neato jump on my back?

NICK: Neato's still waiting for someone to triumphantly grab his leg so he can do his pose.

HUDSON: Oh. I grab him and throw him on my back.

HUDSON (as Tink): For Neato's a jolly good Rodian, for Neato's a jolly good Rodian.

NICK: You grab Neato and toss him up on your shoulders and start singing.

NICK (as Neato): Whoa. Wait, hey. Hey chum, I, uh, really prefer for my dogs to be on the ground if you understand. I'm up in the air here. I don't know exactly what you—[stammers] Well... For Neato's a jolly good Rodian~

LAURA (as Xianna): For Neato's a jolly good Rodian~

[laughter]

NICK: Yep. So, I think we fade out from that scene. You all debrief with Karthage. Karthage is going to assemble any civilians that are left, all of the militia, and basically just evacuate the city during the quiet from this situation. You all are able to leave the city limits, and we come to you on the edge of the jungle, you've gone to the part of the shield that's the closest and you can see that this large blue-green shield stops about half a meter above the ground, and you know that if you can get outside of it that you can use your stratopacks, which you still have. We haven't talked about them in a while.

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: It's a big footlocker. I think you probably left them with the militia members when you went to do your big assault and then after it was over you picked them back up. You've had to hike outside of the city, but you do have Neato with you. We start the scene with Neato saying:

NICK (as Neato): Well, we didn't exactly win, but we didn't lose either. Close enough! Onto the next thing, right chums?

CAMERON (as Karma): Yup.

HUDSON (as Tink): Is Neato joining our team?

CAMERON (as Karma): Tink!

LAURA (as Xianna): No. Neato is joining the other team.

CAMERON (as Karma): Beta Squad!

HUDSON (as Tink): Ohh.

NICK (as HK): Plaintive Statement: You already have a sniper.

CAMERON (as Karma): Very true, HK.

HUDSON (as Tink): That's true.

CAMERON (as Karma): How are you feeling now that Tink fixed you with that repair kit?

NICK: It's just like a durasteel plate has been welded onto the front, but everything looks about the same.

LAURA: Just some duct tape.

NICK: Yeah. HK looks down, looks up.

NICK (as HK): I mean, I've been worse.

CAMERON (as Karma): That is true. You did have a hole in your chest when we first met.

NICK (as HK): How come I always get shot in the chest? You'd think some other part of me would take damage.

NICK: Sparks shoot out of HK's shoulder.

CAMERON: Karma points at the arm and then puts her hand down and thinks better of it.

CAMERON (as Karma): I mean, you're just, you're very wiry.

NICK (as HK): Ha. Ha. Ha.

CAMERON (as Karma): [nervous forced laugh]

HUDSON (as Tink): Your chest protrudes is what they're trying to say.

CAMERON (as Karma): Yes, funny pun, but also your chest is the largest piece to shoot for you mechanic-wise, so it kinda makes sense.

HUDSON (as Tink): Yes.

NICK: Neato throws an arm over Karma, avoiding her injuries, and an arm over Tink.

CAMERON: [laughing] Like puts his hand on Tink's shoulder.

NICK: Yeah.

NICK (as Neato): Well, now that this afterparty is well underway, how are we gonna get out of here exactly, chums?

LAURA (as Xianna): We crawl underneath the shield and then we hit the little buttons on the reverse parachutes.

CAMERON: We put on our backpacks.

HUDSON: I have a question out of character.

NICK: Sure.

HUDSON: How shiny and heavy are the medals we got from General Karthage?

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK: You didn't get any medals.

LAURA: No medals.

CAMERON: There was a very intense medal ceremony where all of these rebels that we didn't know showed up.

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: But you didn't get one, you just made an angry noise.

HUDSON: No ceremony where there's music and I'm walking down an aisle and then I just randomly go (sound resembling Chewbacca in final scene of A New Hope)?

NICK: Yup.

LAURA: You don't get a medal.

CAMERON: Yep, and Karma and Xianna get medals, and you and HK don't.

LAURA: Xianna becomes a general.

[laughter]

NICK: Oh no!

CAMERON: You can tell by the stripes on her pants.

LAURA: Or at the very least a captain at first, and then a general.

NICK: Yeah, I forgot about that. That's a poor organizational decision.

LAURA: [laughs] Yeah, it makes no sense.

NICK: Okay. You all crawl under the shield?

CAMERON & HUDSON: Yes.

NICK: We get a scene of you all slapping these—remember they look like stainless steel briefcases with just a big red button on them, and you strap them on like backpacks. You look like kids on the first day of school putting your shiny, new backpacks on. Neato slides into his and secures the straps.

CAMERON: Karma shifts her rocket launcher and blaster to the front so that she can put the backpack on. Leaves the sword to the back though, that'll work.

NICK: [laughs] Okay.

NICK (as Neato): So we hit these big red buttons and we go to space, huh?

CAMERON (as Karma): Yep, and then it lights a beacon, and the ship hopefully comes and picks us up, before we run out of oxygen.

NICK: HK says...

NICK (as HK): Assertion: That will not be a problem for me.

NICK: ...and hits the button over his shoulder. You see there's a pulse of blue light and HK is hovering about a meter off the ground, and then you hear a sound like an old ocean-going vessel sail unfurling, and then HK just shoots up into the air super-fast.

CAMERON (as Karma): Okay everybody, press the button, because we all need to be close.

CAMERON: Karma button presses.

HUDSON: I button press.

LAURA: Xianna button presses.

NICK: Neato stands there for a minute as you all shoot up into the atmosphere.

CAMERON (as Karma): Press the button!

NICK (as Neato): Well, sally forth into the great, blue beyond, eh?

CAMERON (as Karma): Press the button!

NICK: And hits his own button, and jumps and flies up. It's like reverse skydiving, so it's like the same speed as falling at terminal velocity but you're going up instead of down. The backpack isn't pulling you by the straps, it's like a field around you that's lifting you up, so it's not super uncomfortable, it's just a really weird feeling to see the ground falling away at this speed, but you don't really have any control, it's just happening.

You slow down as you get further and further up. You can see the curve of the planet. You can see the size of the continent that you were on that you remember from when you drop podded in. you come to the extent of what the stratopack can do for you. You're in a pretty tight cluster, because you rose straight up and the winds were consistent, and you float on the barest edge of the atmosphere. You can feel your lungs starting to burn from lack of oxygen and you can feel the tug of your skin pulling away from you in the low pressure. You're not dying, but you could make a good run at it if you were given enough time. You all hear your stratopacks beeping gently and you see a star dislodge from the distance and move towards you.

[occasional TIE fighter noises begin]

That's when you hear the howling of something much closer. A massive green bolt flies through the middle of your group, burning the air around you and scattering you apart on the buoyant field of your stratopacks. A TIE fighter blazes past, almost hitting you with its solar panels, and begins to come around for another run. What do you do?

[noises pause]

CAMERON: I shoot it with my rocket launcher.

[laughter]

LAURA: Okay! But before you do that, how hard would it be to time throwing, say, a detonator at it as it flies by?

NICK: I think that you would be able to. The hardest thing would be putting it in proximity timers. The detonators are really useful. At least in the video games you can throw them to explode on contact or explode on a timer, but the thing that would be hard is getting it into the TIE fighter's range and not being within the range itself, as you cannot run away, so it would be probably a hard throw. I would say it would also be a hard rocket shot, and I would let you two do that at the same time as it's coming back towards you.

[TIE fighter noises continue]

You're floating in space and Xianna goes for a thermal detonator and Karma pulls her rocket launcher up as the TIE fighter is doing that howling approach towards you. It's shooting at you, but not very close, because it's hard to aim a space plane at a person. They're not designed for that.

[upbeat hopeful music begins]

You can see the star destroyer floating in the distance and it's shooting turbo lasers into the inky blackness, so it's engaged with something else right now. You can see in the far distance the Tallahassee Quagmire, that weird croissant-shaped ship, spiraling through the turbo laser fire and heading towards you but it's gonna be a few minutes. So, make those rolls.

CAMERON: Is the encounter over?

NICK: Yes?

CAMERON: Okay.

NICK: Why?

CAMERON: Because one of my crits was an extra difficulty until the end of the encounter.

NICK: Yeah, I'll say the encounter is over. You had some brief denouement. Tink, do you want to hit it with an axe?

CAMERON: [laughs]

HUDSON: I'm good!

NICK: Okay.

HUDSON: I could lose my axe.

NICK: Yeah, that would be bad. You have extras, they're not as nice, though.

CAMERON: My rocket launcher has two successes, one advantage.

LAURA: Five successes and one threat.

NICK: Geez, okay.

HUDSON: [laughing] They both work?

NICK: Yeah, they both hit it, which is good.

LAURA: I'm all jacked up on impact!

NICK: Karma pulls up the rocket launcher and fires before the rocket has had time to lock on and it flies and hits just to the outside of the solar panel, and you know what happens when anyone sneezes on a TIE fighter solar panel, and it starts to spin and scream, mechanically.

[TIE fighter screeches]

CAMERON: [giggles, feigns a scream]

HUDSON: [feigns a scream]

LAURA: Spinning is a neat trick.

[laughter]

NICK: And it tumbles within Xianna's range of the thermal detonator, because the biggest limitation on the thermal detonator would be the short range, which means it's like right next to you all.

CAMERON: But luckily the TIE fighter hits it and then continues moving past us and carries the blast away.

NICK: Sure. It was very severely damaged but probably would have stabilized and come back, and Xianna's able to underhand chuck it and it sticks to the bottom of it, so you hear the [TIE fighter screeching] as the TIE fighter goes spinning away, and then it zooms in and you see the little ball beeping underneath it, and it flashes back and forth between those for a little bit, and then there's a silent ball of fire as it engulfs the TIE fighter and the TIE fighter is destroyed.

Good work. That was very cool. Normally in Star Wars you hear the explosion, but I think a silent ball of fire is cooler in this situation. You are all left hanging there kind of scattered through the atmosphere. You're probably within 40 or 50 meters of each other, because you got scattered by the shot. You have a minute in very low oxygen. You can see the Tallahassee Quagmire getting closer.

LAURA (as Xianna): Okay, well I am out of detonators.

HUDSON (as Tink): I have grenades, but mostly stun grenades at this point.

LAURA (as Xianna): I don't think that's going to help us up here.

HUDSON (as Tink): It could malfunction a ship.

NICK: You're floating in space, pretty far from each other, having this conversation on your coms, and the Tallahassee Quagmire comes scooping over the atmosphere, you can see it almost skidding over the air resistance as it gets close, and the bottom of it opens up and a large, round magnet starts to thrum, and you all get individually sucked into this small box one at a time. There's a couple of these small boxes, and you recognize it as the box that you and Tink got stuck in originally when you came in.
[chuckles]

LAURA (as Xianna): Oh hey, I recognize that box.

NICK: Karma and HK get pulled into one of these little phone booth situations by their stratopacks, and then Neato gets pulled into one, and then Xianna and Tink get pulled into another one. The ship

immediately starts to rattle with absorbed turbo laser fire and TIE fighters that you can hear, and you can hear Tiny's voice from over the ship PA system.

NICK (as Tiny): Quick, Carn [beep-beep], punch it, punch it!

NICK: And the ship jumps to hyperspace, and not soon after these little boxes open up and you all fall into this stripped down open area that is the main part of the ship. Neato sits up and rubs at his head.

NICK (as Neato): Wow, swanky conveyance you've got here.

CAMERON (as Karma): Oof.

HUDSON (as Tink): Ugh.

LAURA (as Xianna): That was unpleasant.

CAMERON (as Karma): [weakly] Hey Tiny.

NICK: Tiny turns around in his seat as he was finishing locking down the ship for a hyperspace jump.

NICK (as Tiny): But you lived. Everybody's back. Nobody's completely decompressed.

HUDSON (as Tink): Where's HK? Where's HK?!

LAURA (as Xianna): He is right there.

CAMERON (as Karma): [struggling] He's right on top of me.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh...

NICK: HK sits up and a couple of sparks shoot out of his head and he rolls off of Karma.

NICK (as HK): Apologies.

CAMERON (as Karma): It's okay.

NICK: HK does not get up. HK stays sprawled on its back, just on the floor.

NICK (as Tiny): Well, it looks like you were successful. Hi, I'm Tiny.

NICK (as Neato): Salutations, new chum.

NICK: And they shake hands. Neato starts to just stalk around the ship and rub on his shoulders where they're pretty sore. The stratopacks are all still stuck in those phone booths. You had to undo the straps to get out. Neato is making himself at home.

NICK (as Tiny): Well, so, we're jumping to a neutral point where we're going to drop Mr. Neato off. Huge fan, by the way, huge fan.

NICK: Neato just nods graciously.

NICK (as Tiny): And then after that we'll swing on back to the resort and you can pick up your ship and then you're off on the next thing. That was the extent of our payment was to pick you back up and drop you off. So, welcome to the Tallahassee Quagmire, fastest bus in the galaxy.

NICK (as Neato): Your ship looks like shit!

[laughter]

NICK: Neato seems unimpressed.

CAMERON (as Karma): Tiny, would you or Carn [beep-beep] happen to have any medical supplies on the ship?

NICK (as Tiny): Uh, I think Carn [beep-beep] has some supplies. He might be able to help. He picked up some weird textbook recently.

CAMERON (as Karma): Oh no.

NICK (as Tiny): Yeah... He really thinks that he's a doctor now, but I don't think it's like an actual book. It seems to focus more on how the doctor feels about how things went than the actual...

CAMERON (as Karma): Is it Becoming Medicine or Becoming Emotion?

NICK: Carn Horn [beep-beep] turns around and just goes:

NICK (as Carn): [deep groaning whine / Wookie noise]

CAMERON (as Karma): Oh, it's Becoming Emotion, okay.

NICK: [chuckles]

CAMERON (as Karma): Hey Tink.

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah?

CAMERON (as Karma): Do you have any medical supplies with you?

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh, let me see here. By the way, those books usually come in a set, you must have gotten it used, but it's still gonna be great for you.

NICK (as Tiny): I think Carn picked up the international edition. You're not supposed to buy those, but they are cheaper.

HUDSON (as Tink): That usually doesn't come with the CD and the access code you need.

NICK: [laughs]

CAMERON: [laughs] What?

NICK: Carn [beep-beep] slides a big canvas duffle bag over and you see nice bacta gear and things to patch you up.

LAURA: Xianna also has seven stim packs, but she is already curled up in a corner sleeping. She found a whole stack of pillows and a beanbag and has made what is essentially a nest.

NICK: I think, Xianna, they feel like a stack of pillows and a beanbag but it's actually like paper trash and wires and things, because this is a super uncomfortable ship.

LAURA: Yeah. [laughs]

NICK: That's like the one defining feature we have of it, but you are completely conked out. Do you have any medical advice as you help patch up your friends, Tink?

HUDSON (as Tink): Now with stim packs, you gotta fit as many as you can in one hand that you're planning on using and stab them all at the same time.

CAMERON (as Karma): Please, please, please don't stim pack me again.

NICK: [laughs]

HUDSON (as Tink): So, I read in my book, *Becoming Medicine* that—

NICK (as Carn): [deep groaning whine / Wookie noise]

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah! Yeah, exactly. So if me and someone else who has consumed that knowledge hold hands and get our energies together, so we aligned our energy, our Force auras, and that actually can heal you faster than normal stim packs, or they accelerate the stim packs, or you lose your appetite if you were really hungry. It's one of those three things.

CAMERON (as Karma): I thought we established that we were not using more stim packs.

HUDSON (as Tink): Why not?

CAMERON (as Karma): I have been stim packed twice today.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh, there's not a limit. You'd think there's a limit—

CAMERON (as Karma): No, there is.

HUDSON (as Tink): I mean, I've never seen one.

CAMERON (as Karma): Carn [beep-beep], you have so much bacta in this duffle bag. Please, can I just have some bacta?

NICK: Carn smiles wickedly and pulls a bone saw out of somewhere.

CAMERON (as Karma): No, I'm fine. I just have two crits. [laughs]

NICK: And that's where we're gonna end the episode.

ALL: Ba-naaa~!

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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