

Tabletop Squadron Transcript, Prologue 2:
We Got Ourselves a Hostage

Transcript by Harrison (Twitter: @unabletowhistle)

Intro

[Cameron hums space music]

NICK: Hi everyone, and welcome to Tabletop Squadron, a Star Wars: Edge of the Empire actual play podcast. I'm Nick, your game master. For the past few years, my friends and I have been playing tabletop RPGs together and we decided to share our hijinks with you. For the first few podcasts, we're doing small individual arcs for our characters so you can get a feel for them before they start bouncing off of each other in Star Wars. Enjoy.

[Cameron laughs]

NICK: Hey, so the good news is we have a name for our podcast now.

STEVEN: Tabletop...

NICK: Tabletop Squadron! We didn't have a name before. Made the first episode kind of weird. I'm fully expecting to record over this but I'm not worried about it now. So welcome to Tabletop Squadron. This is Prologue #2 out of 4 before the main campaign starts. I am your game master, Nick. And with me today is Steven. Say hello to people, Steven.

STEVEN: What's up, people?

NICK: Yeah, that's obviously how you speak.

STEVEN: It kind of is.

NICK: And Steven, you are playing the character...

STEVEN: Sabos Niks.

NICK: Sabos Niks. And tell me a little bit about Sabos.

STEVEN: Well, Sabos is Togruta, but he is a unique Togruta. He's got four head-tails so he's a little bit odd. But he wasn't from the Togruta homeworld. He was actually a colonist. He was just a little bit different. He thought a little bit differently, didn't really fit in with the Togruta group.

NICK: OK, so a Togruta loner is what you are.

STEVEN: Well, not a loner necessarily. No Togrutas are loners. Just we're not the same as the main world Togrutas.

NICK: OK.

STEVEN: We act a little bit differently.

NICK: Different. Alright. So let's jump into it.

##

NICK: You are standing in front of a three-story civic building. It is made of white stone and covered in intricate but eerie carving. You are there to meet councilman Sacko, a local politician for the Spora district for the city of Coronet on the planet of Corellia. He reached out to you recently expressing interest in developing a trade agreement with your colony. Would you like to go inside?

STEVEN: Yeah, let's walk in and talk to Sacko.

NICK: Alright. So you walk in. It's a white granite facade all through the building. It's very sparse. There's a desk with a receptionist and they motion you to a lift and it brings you up to the third floor. The entire third floor is a penthouse office for this guy. It's very nice, but this guy is kind of small time. He's a council member for a small district of Coronet. It shouldn't be this nice. This guy has more influence than his rank would suggest, you gather from it.

So as you walk in, you see councilman Sacko. He stands up behind the desk and says, "Ah! I'm glad to have you here." And he looks at his desk computer real quick.

STEVEN: "Sackos! Sabos!"

NICK: "Sabos!"

STEVEN: "You can drop the S if you want to. Sacko, Sabo."

NICK: "Yeah, yeah. Right."

STEVEN: "Buddy!"

NICK: "What a weird coincidence."

STEVEN: "I know, right?"

NICK: "Yeah!" So standing in front of you is a human because you're on Corellia. He's a tall guy with dark hair, goatee, and he's wearing like politician's robes, so kind of like the flowy big sleeves with lots of extra cloth wrapped around.

So he welcomes you and pulls you down to a seat and says, "So, well, Sabos, you are next on my agenda. I was told you had some skills that I could use and that you were trying to create a trade agreement. What was that name of your little colony again?"

STEVEN: "Ah, you mean Osaron."

NICK: "Ah, yes, Osaron. Well, actually, I don't know why I said 'ah, yes.' I have never heard of it before. Is it near anything I would?"

STEVEN: "Not really. It's not too far away from the Togruta homeworld."

NICK: "OK. Well, great. So you're trying to get some trade started. And as a small district representative, there's only so much I can do. But I can get your foot in the door with the right people for sure."

STEVEN: "That would be wonderful. As you might know, I assume you're a well researched man, us Togrutans on Osaron are kind of a hunter-gatherer people, but we specialize in weaponry."

NICK: "Oh."

STEVEN: "Now that's not a threat."

NICK: [nervous laughter] "Right..."

STEVEN: "That's not a threat. We're just a little bit different than the cliquy social groups over on the Togrutan homeworld and those weird artists on their own colony. Kind of developed a more primitive lifestyle. Some of us are looking to venture out, though."

NICK: "Would you count yourself amongst that group?"

STEVEN: "I'm here, aren't I?"

NICK: "That's a fair point. So you're looking to trade in weapons."

STEVEN: "We're very good at weapons. We're looking to trade in more conventional supplies."

NICK: "OK."

STEVEN: "To kind of bring up our standard of living."

NICK: "Makes sense. Well, Corellia creates a lot of those things and I'm sure we can open some sort of agreement on that line. We have need of your resources and what you offer and I'm willing to deal. I can turn the city council in your favor, but I've been kind of tied up recently with some other business. If you take care of this for me, I will take care of your colony."

STEVEN: "I could definitely take care of your business. What type of business was that that I need to take care of?"

NICK: "You already said you would! Ha!"

STEVEN: "Oh, I certainly will."

NICK: "Well, you've had some reputation with other people that have dealt with somewhat of a fixer. Someone who just makes problems go away."

STEVEN: "I can indeed."

NICK: "Well, this is one of those." And he hands you like a scroll and it's sealed with green wax but the wax has been broken. You can make an Investigation check to look at it if you would like.

STEVEN: Yes, Investigation is Perception.

NICK: Oh, is Investigation not a skill on this game? Damn. I was looking for...

STEVEN: Astrogation.

NICK: No, not Astrogation. Let's see... Perception will work. Yeah, so you get a yellow and two greens. And this is a hard check so it's going to be three purples.

STEVEN: Purples. Do I get any of the blues?

NICK: Nope! You're in a well-lit, comfortable room. Unless you're on like drugs that enhance your vision.

STEVEN: I am indeed not.

NICK: Bummer. And you have an exact wash.

STEVEN: I don't see a damn thing.

NICK: The seal has been scratched up enough when the letter was open that you can't make out what was on it. I'm sure that won't matter.

STEVEN: "Seems like a good scroll. I'll take it."

NICK: "Well, you may want to read the contents first."

STEVEN: [chuckles] "Of course, of course."

NICK: He sits back and pops a cigarillo in his mouth and lights it while you read through the letter.

The letter reads: Sacko, a mutual friend recommended you to me for your services. You have a reputation as a shrewd negotiator and a quick businessman. I need you to go to the enclosed address. There you will find a contact of mine who will bring you to the location of the deal. It will be marked in the usual manner. Tell them you need a bouquet. They will lead you on. After you've secured the goods, please bring them to the enclosed location nearby.

And after you finish and you roll up the scroll, Sacko says, "Yeah, the deal's a little vague, but I'm sure you can figure out the details."

STEVEN: "Well, as you know, independent thinking isn't necessarily one of our strong suits with us Togrutan people. However, I am a specially skilled Togruta being from an independent-thinking colony."

NICK: "Well, that's good. That's part of the reason I've enlisted you in this endeavor."

STEVEN: "And I'm here."

NICK: "And you're here. Honestly, I don't really like to buy into that specist thing about well, 'Oh, all Rodians are bounty hunters and all Togrutans are just herd animals.' That seems against what we go for here on Corellia. Independence. And self-sufficiency."

STEVEN: "Strange."

NICK: "I don't think so."

STEVEN: "It's a strange quality among my people."

NICK: "And that's fine." Cool. So you have the letter. Do you have any questions for him?

STEVEN: "Could you elaborate on this bouquet?"

NICK: "Oh, yeah. So the bouquet, from what I read in the letter, that's just a signal phrase to tell..."

STEVEN: "Well, I assumed."

NICK: "The thing you're probably more curious about is them being marked in the usual manner. Usual manner is a green orchid that they'll have stitched somewhere into their clothes."

STEVEN: "I'm glad you specified. I was just assuming, blood like usual."

NICK: "Oh! Blood, yeah, no. [nervously stutters] That's—uh--so Corellia—you may not—have you been to Corellia before?"

STEVEN: "This is my first time on Corellia. It's a quaint little planet you have here"

NICK: "Yeah, well, it's like the third most developed planet in the Inner Rim."

STEVEN: "I mean, one could say."

NICK: "Yeah, I don't know. Being from the untamed plains of your colony, I could see how you wouldn't have much of a sense of scale. But this planet is pretty law-abiding. We have our own police force and military. It's called CorSec. Maybe you've heard of them. Corellian Security."

STEVEN: "I have."

NICK: "Yeah."

STEVEN: "This is what we structure our training after."

NICK: "Wow, then it must be pretty good because they don't put up with things so walking around with blood may not go real well on this planet."

STEVEN: "I mean, everyone's a little different."

NICK: "I wouldn't... If you were bleeding, you probably don't want to be seen by the police."

STEVEN: "No, you run into the forest."

NICK: "Right. Well, the forest is across the lake that surrounds this entire city. So I hope you're a good swimmer."

STEVEN: "I don't believe I am."

NICK: [laughs] As you suddenly look at your character sheet...

STEVEN: Yes, the character sheet does not reflect swimming.

NICK: [laughs] It would be Athletics. Do you have Athletics?

STEVEN: Negative.

NICK: Oh, so then no, you are not a good swimmer.

STEVEN: Togrutans aren't known for being especially strong.

NICK: [laughs] Oh yeah. They're really not.

"Alright, so any other questions for him?"

STEVEN: "I think I'm good. I'm going to look for a green orchid."

NICK: Green orchid, alright.

STEVEN: "Then I'll pick the flower and bring it back as part of the bouquet."

NICK: "So I can't help but read into some undertones. I just want to be explicitly clear: Please don't kill anyone involved in this negotiation if possible."

STEVEN: "Oh, no, this is a no-kill negotiation."

NICK: "OK. I'm not saying that things might not get rough. This is on the darker sides of things, but if you could avoid shooting any messengers or preferably civilians. I can't help but notice you have an extremely large rifle on your back."

STEVEN: "I think I understand where you're coming from."

NICK: "No, I mean there's a literal gun on your back."

STEVEN: "Oh, it's common on my homeworld."

NICK: "Oh OK. I thought we were talking about something else there for a second."

STEVEN: "Oh, my fourth head-tail?"

NICK: "Oh, it's a literal head-tail? I've heard Togrutans talk about the fourth head-tail before but it wasn't usually... [giggles] OK. Well, I'll be seeing you when this is over. Buh-bye!"

STEVEN: I do the head-tail flip.

NICK: You flip your head-tails haughtily.

STEVEN: Yes.

NICK: On your way out

STEVEN: All four.

NICK: So the address you get for the meet-up spot is only a couple of blocks away from here.

STEVEN: Oh, it's on the same planet.

NICK: Yeah! This is all local stuff.

STEVEN: Oh this sounds wonderful.

NICK: So, yeah, it's actually walking distance. So you head down the streets. If you could make me a Perception check please.

STEVEN: For sure.

NICK: Let's make this one average.

STEVEN: That would be a two purple.

NICK: That would be a two purple.

STEVEN: I got a victory.

NICK: You got a triumph. That's good.

STEVEN: Triumph, that's the one.

NICK: Yes. Three failures, a triumph, a success, and an advantage.

STEVEN: I have a success in there.

NICK: So you fail because your failures outnumber your triumphs. Triumphs are worth the triumph and a success so you wind up with a triumph, a failure, and an advantage, which is a weird Cameron-style roll. So you don't see the thing you're supposed to see, but you get a triumph.

OK, so as you're walking down the streets, you've got your hands in your pockets. It's like a brisk, early winter day, so your breath's kind of fogging. What are you wearing?

STEVEN: I have a standard padded armor.

NICK: OK, so like what does that look like?

STEVEN: Oh, you know, kind of a black vest.

NICK: A black vest, OK.

STEVEN: With some black pants.

NICK: Black vest, black pants.

STEVEN: Black boots.

NICK: Black boots. Are you shirtless under your vest?

STEVEN: Oh indeed. Togrutans are often depicted shirtless.

NICK: Oh cool, neat. So you're pretty chilly then. Is your colony a warm place?

STEVEN: That's a very good question.

NICK: [laughs] Now's the time to figure it out.

STEVEN: Now's the time to figure it out. My colony's a very neutral place.

NICK: OK, so it has four seasons.

STEVEN: I'm not sure four. It has two.

NICK: Two and a half seasons?

STEVEN: It's got warm and cold.

NICK: OK, so you're walking down the street--

STEVEN: Sometimes our head-tails sweat.

NICK: [chuckles] Gross. That's not an image I needed. Ugh.

So you're walking down the street and you glance around, just your hunter-finder instincts going off. It feels like you're being watched, but you can't really find anything or anyone specifically acting suspicious

and as you're going, there's a speeder-bus that lands and it lands perpendicular across the street and it blocks off all of the foot traffic. And traffic starts to backup. I wouldn't worry about it. But if someone were following you, they would have a hard time doing it because there's a bus in the way.

So the address leads you down an alleyway into a bar just on the edge of the respectable part of town. A tall dark man in a wide apron is polishing a glass behind a bar.

STEVEN: Ah!

NICK: You look around the room and see several tables with people huddling over drinks. The table in back has the chairs pushed back and abandoned drinks scattered over it. As you look at the room, a woman with dark curly hair shoulders past you.

"Excuse me, handsome, but I've got somewhere to be." You see her draw a pistol as she heads further down the alleyway.

Looking around the room, you see the bartender and a couple of drunks. You don't see your contacts. What would you like to do?

STEVEN: I'll go talk to the bartender.

NICK: Gonna go talk to the bartender? So you walk in. The bartender is polishing a glass with a dirty rag. Says, "Well, how's it going there?"

STEVEN: "Going pretty good. My first time visiting. What was her deal?"

NICK: "She's a little high strung. Got showed up by another one of the patrons. I imagine she's probably about to bite off more than she can chew." He like chuckles to himself a little bit and goes back to polishing the glass.

STEVEN: "Bite off more than she can chew, you say."

NICK: "Well I wouldn't worry about it too much."

STEVEN: "We're a nosy people."

NICK: "Oh are you? I don't get a lot of Togrutans in here."

STEVEN: "We're pretty far away out on the Outer Rim there."

NICK: "Yeah, well, she upset a friend of mine. I think she's going to go find out when you get into confrontation with that kind of person."

STEVEN: [chuckles] "I understand."

NICK: "She'll be fine."

STEVEN: "I'm sure she'll be fine."

NICK: "One way or the other." He sets the glass down. "But enough about my former contacts. What can I get you for?"

STEVEN: "Well, I'll have—well, what do you humans drink?"

NICK: "We have a tendency to go for things of the alcoholic persuasion. We've got—"

STEVEN: "I'm familiar with the alcoholic persuasion."

NICK: "We've got Corellian beer. We've got Corellian whiskey. We've got mixed drinks."

STEVEN: "What was the lady having?"

NICK: "Oh, well, she was drinking nothing particularly interesting, but that friend of mine was drinking a fallen star."

STEVEN: "A fallen star? That sounds unique."

NICK: "It's certainly fancy. You sure you want one of those?"

STEVEN: "Well, what does one of those run?"

NICK: "I don't know. Like 5 credits."

STEVEN: "Does it have any unique properties?"

NICK: "I mean, it's alcoholic."

STEVEN: "Sounds fine."

NICK: "Alright." He pulls out—he looks mildly irritated and you see why as he starts doing it because he pulls out 6 different bottles of liquor and three different shakers and he starts mixing them together.

STEVEN: [chuckle]

NICK: "It's a complicated beverage."

STEVEN: "I didn't realize when you suggested it that it was such an involved drink."

NICK: "No, it's fine. Just remember to tip your waitstaff." And he winks at you.

STEVEN: "I will."

NICK: He starts mixing this drink and you get it and it's in a glass that looks like a blooming flower and it's like very sparkly fizzy and as you smell, it smells kind of like stimulants so it's a pretty fancy, fancy drink.

STEVEN: "I enjoy my stimulants."

NICK: Great. You have some sips of that.

STEVEN: I make sure to tip him another 5 credits.

NICK: Yeah, that would be smart. He nods to you and says, "Well thank you. I appreciate your appreciation as it were." [chuckles]

STEVEN: "For sure, do you happen to have any time to lend your ear? This glass is very curious."

NICK: "Oh the glass? It's a traditional Corellian beverage glass for the fancier drinks."

STEVEN: "I understand. this almost reminds of something I was looking for. Do you know anything of a green orchid?"

NICK: "A green orchid? Hmm. Green orchid..." And he looks around the room and he thinks about it. "Oh, you mean like that?"

And a guy comes walking in the door and he has a green orchid on his vest.

STEVEN: "Yeah, it's a very pretty symbol."

NICK: "Well, I don't know a ton about that symbol. You may want to ask that guy."

STEVEN: "I might inquire with the fellow. I appreciate your patronage—no, I appreciate my patronage to you!"

NICK: "Yeah. I appreciate your patronage, too." Finger guns.

So the guy who walked in he's a blond guy with black vest and pants with a white shirt. So similar to yours but with a shirt on.

STEVEN: "I like your vest," I turn around and say.

NICK: He's leaning up on the bar next to you and he looks up at you. The bartender like waggles his eyes at you and scoots further down the bar. And the guy in the vest goes, "Oh, thanks. You've got a nice vest, too."

STEVEN: "I sure do. It looks like yours."

NICK: "Yeah, hey, I don't mean to be rude or anything, but I'm not really into aliens so..."

STEVEN: [chuckles] "I think you have the wrong idea, sir. I'm just here for the bouquet."

NICK: "Oooh. Ah, that was awkward. I'm sorry."

STEVEN: "Just a little small talk."

NICK: "Yeah."

STEVEN: "Sorry, this is a very good fallen star."

NICK: "Oh yeah, you had one of Gerfrederick's best, huh? Those are pretty good. I'm a fan."

STEVEN: "As you might know, this is a little bit different from the ales we drink on the Togrutan homeworld and especially over on Osaron."

NICK: "Oh so you're...?"

STEVEN: "It kind of hit me right up in the head, if you know what I mean."

NICK: "Yeah, I've been hit in the head enough to know myself. So you're from one of those colonies, huh?"

STEVEN: "Yes."

NICK: "What do you even do up on a colony? I've always lived in a city myself."

STEVEN: "Well, it's kind of a rural place. And those Togrutans that either don't fit in or that are elected to go to a colony or are born on a colony of course end up on a colony. I was a little bit too, oh, unique to fit in on the Togrutan homeworld."

NICK: "Interesting. Well, rather than any further questions, let's go!"

STEVEN: "Let's do this."

NICK: And he turns and walks out the door. So the man nods to the bartender and heads down and out of the way. As you walk outside, you hear some indistinct yelling and a speeder crashes at the end of the alley. It begins to smoke and you see two armed men climb out of the speeder. The contact says, "I think it's time to be going. There's an air speeder down the other way." And you all run.

STEVEN: Yes.

NICK: So you run to the end of the alley and there's another guy in a—it's like a four-seater sedan speeder. It's the Ford Taurus of Star Wars. Whatever that would be. And he slides in the back with you and he says, "Let's get going right now." And you are in the speeder on your way to where you were going. And he says, "So you don't really strike me as the type who would do these sort of deals on a normal basis. What brings you here?"

STEVEN: "Well, to be honest, I'm not entirely sure what the deal is. I'm very capable. I'm just helping out a friend."

NICK: "Interesting. Not really sure what this deal is specifically. I'm just kind of the between guy. But I hope it works out for you. You seem nice."

STEVEN: "I appreciate it. I'm just looking to better my people back on Osaron."

NICK: "Yeah, well, not sure how doing underworld dealings..." As you look out the window you see you're going to the worse and worse parts of town. "Not sure how doing underworld dealings will help with your colony, but I hope that works out for—you don't grow drugs on your place, do you?"

STEVEN: [chuckles] "Oh no, but you know, it helps to stay connected with the right people and every now and then, you have to get your hands a bit dirty."

NICK: "Oh OK. Now you sound like the kind of people I'm used to picking up."

STEVEN: "So you pick up a lot of politicians?"

NICK: "Well, maybe. I really can't say."

STEVEN: "I see."

NICK: And he just kind of like awkwardly clutches his hand together as you all continue on the ride. By the time, the speeder slows to a stop, you find yourself deep in what should be the red light district. It really looks like it. There's a lot of people on street corners, either holding little baggies of unidentifiable stuff or not wearing much clothes depending.

The speeder stops in front of a low dark building with strobing lights coming from within. As you step to the door, a huge man with slabs of muscles blocks your way. He looks you up and down. "You're here for the bouquet?"

STEVEN: "I am."

NICK: "Great. Well, head on in." And he steps off to the side.

STEVEN: I walk inside enthusiastically. I think I'm picking up flowers.

NICK: [laughs] As you enter the building, there are bright flashing lights and music. A narrow hallway. You see dancing in several rooms to the left and right.

STEVEN: "Ah, flashing lights. Conducive to flower growing."

NICK: [laughs] At the end of the room is a beaded curtain. As you pass through, you find total silence. The music cut off as if someone flipped a switch. Sitting comfortably on a couch in the otherwise bare room is a Geonosian. A Geonosian is like the weird bug people from Episode 2. She is of average height. She has brown, wrinkled skin and crisscross scars and one of her wings is tattered. Her head is kind of like bean-shaped and her eyes are kind of stuck out to the side on stalks. She's fiddling with a strange tube with a green light at the end. You see what might be a trigger mechanism. The tube beeps and the Geonosian shakes her head sadly before looking up at you.

"So, Sacko. You finally gave up on that high and mighty attitude of yours and you've come to deal."

STEVEN: "Yes, yes. I've come for Sacko."

NICK: "Right. If you want the goods, I want proof you can keep CorSec off my back for the next few weeks while things fall into place. Either you pay us the 10,000 credits or you offer me something else."

STEVEN: "Proof?"

NICK: "Yeah. So either you pay us so that we can deal with it, or you prove that you can keep CorSec off our back."

STEVEN: "Well, what do I need to do to prove that I can keep CorSec off your back, huh? I'm a pretty well-connected man as you might know, me, Sacko."

NICK: "Yes, you, Sacko. Obviously. With the way you are referring to yourself, you must be the person Sacko."

STEVEN: "Yes."

NICK: "Right, well, to be honest, I was hoping you would have just brought the credits. It'd be easier."

STEVEN: "Credits are a little bit hard to come by these days."

NICK: "I guess since you're making a deal for us to pay you, that would make sense. Well, tell you what. So you don't have any ideas on how to prove this, huh? So if I come up with the suggestion, it's not going to be fun."

STEVEN: "Oh, I wasn't looking for leisure."

NICK: "Well, that's good. I've got a couple of associates holed up down the streets. They're currently boxed-in by some CorSec people in a standoff. Get them out of the building and get them back here. I don't care who you hire to do it."

STEVEN: "Are you not a CorSec person yourself?"

NICK: "Oh, I think you might want to consider me the opposite of that."

STEVEN: "I see. Now your associates, could you describe them to me?"

NICK: "Well, yeah. They're both Corellian. There's a short guy with gray hair. He goes by Mouse. He's got a tattoo of a Sarlacc on his right shoulder—that's a pit monster with teeth. And there's a bigger guy that they call Morak and he's pretty—he's the big bald guy."

STEVEN: "Mouse and Morak."

NICK: "Mouse and Morak."

STEVEN: "So Morak is such a big feller, how are two small CorSecs keeping him in?"

NICK: "No, it's a squad of CorSecs, but you know, being big just makes it easier to get hit by a blaster. They're two of my best pushers but they're not the smartest guys."

STEVEN: "Oh, it's a squad of CorSecs."

NICK: "Yeah. The building's surrounding. We've got sort of what you might call a hostage situation going on."

STEVEN: "Is there anything your people are wanted for? I always try to prefer the negotiation attempts, if you will."

NICK: "Well, I mean, you could try that. It'd be pretty difficult to do, but I don't really care how you go about it. They're not wanted yet. If they get caught and searched, they probably will be."

STEVEN: "I understand. I'll protect their persons."

NICK: "Also if they get identified, they will be since they did shoot at some police officers just a minute ago."

STEVEN: "That might do it."

NICK: "Great. Well, go do that. Hire whoever you got to hire to get it taken care of."

STEVEN: "Alright."

NICK: "I know you, the esteemed councilman Sacko, wouldn't do anything yourself."

STEVEN: "I, the esteemed councilman Sacko, indeed do not do anything myself."

NICK: [laughs]

STEVEN: "I might even hire a Togrutan."

NICK: "Yeah, that is kind of weird that you're a Togrutan, isn't it?"

STEVEN: "Councilman come in many different forms."

NICK: "Yeah, well, whatever."

STEVEN: "It's a diverse day and age."

NICK: "I guess. I didn't ever really bother to look at who you were so that's fine."

STEVEN: "Nor I you."

NICK: "Well, that's good. Because it's pretty hard. I'm pretty identifiable here, you know, with my personage."

STEVEN: "As am I with my fourth head-tail." I flip it around and stroke it.

NICK: She goes, "Ugh! You can't just wobble that thing at people."

STEVEN: "I apologize."

NICK: [laugh] "Great, well get going. Marty out front will give you a ride down the street to where this is."

STEVEN: "Thank you."

NICK: "I'll have him send you far enough away that you can walk in or buy a phone if you're calling people."

STEVEN: "That sounds fine."

NICK: "Great."

So you head back out. As soon as you cross through the curtain, pounding music is still going. She stays in the room. And you head back out and Marty, the scrawny guy with the green orchid, is sitting by the car and goes, "Oh wow, you're back already?"

STEVEN: "Yeah, that was pretty good, wasn't it?"

NICK: "I mean... what did—never mind. I don't need to know." And he puts his hand up to his ear where he's got an earpiece in and says, "Yes ma'am. Yes ma'am, I'll take him. Well, get in the car. Tell me where we're going."

STEVEN: "Guess we're going to the building that she had specified."

NICK: "She seemed to think you'd be going back to your office."

STEVEN: "Well, I'm going to, well you know, see if I can get this handled."

NICK: "Alright. She just wants this done. Doesn't really care either way."

STEVEN: "I understand."

NICK: So you drive down the street. This time Marty is driving. You realize that he's not the best pilot. Like maybe there's a reason he's the guy that walks into the places to get people. He's kind of swerving. Cuts people off a couple of times. Stays way too long at a green light. People honk at him. It's not great.

But he sits you down probably fifty yards away from a dilapidated, it looks like an apartment building. There are several police speeders. They're green and white painted in CorSec colors. There are two in the front and you see the lights of at least one more in the alleyway behind this building and there are several CorSec officers. They're wearing body armor and they have blaster pistols out and pointed. One of them has a bullhorn and is yelling, "Come out! There's no reason to stay in there."

And you hear someone from inside say, "Come and get us, coppers!" And there's like blaster fire from inside the window. But it doesn't go outside the window so it's like they were far back in the room and they shot the wall. They didn't actually clear the window sill.

So there's that standoff going on. The building has alleys on either side and to the back. And a main street out front. There isn't like a cordon set. It's just the two cars and everyone else is just finding new ways to walk. This is the worst part of town so people know how to stay away from active police fights.

STEVEN: Is there an officer in control of the situation?

NICK: You would probably assume the guy with the megaphone is the one in charge.

STEVEN: Yeah, I'm going to walk up to the officer with the megaphone speaking Togrutan.

NICK: [laughs] OK.

STEVEN: Just saying, "Officer," over and over in Togrutan.

NICK: "Sir, this is CorSec business. Please stand back."

STEVEN: "Oh, do you speak Basic?" I say in Basic.

NICK: "Clearly, sir, I speak Basic."

STEVEN: "I'm sorry. This is my first time on this here planet."

NICK: "That's great. We're in the middle of something, sir."

STEVEN: "I think I might be here for what you're in the middle of." I show him my very official Osaronian diplomat ID.

NICK: [laughing] OK.

STEVEN: "I think I'm here for the same characters you are. We have an issue with him back on Osaron."

NICK: "Right, I don't see how you would have jurisdiction here, sir."

STEVEN: "Well, you understand I've just been sent to collect these two evildoers who have also done evil on Osaron."

NICK: "Right, well..."

STEVEN: "I don't have jurisdiction. I'm just trying to negotiate a deal."

NICK: "Alright, well, here's where I'm coming from."

STEVEN: "Sure, I don't doubt your jurisdiction. I see your blaster."

NICK: "Yes, I do call it Jurisdiction."

STEVEN: "Your megaphone." [chuckles] "Well I call mine Bob."

NICK: "Oh, what a great—Yeah, how did you get a permit for that? That is--"

STEVEN: "I'm a diplomat."

NICK: "Oh, yeah, I guess that makes sense, I guess. So I'm an officer of the law."

STEVEN: "Indeed you are."

NICK: "You're coming into my backyard. And you're telling me that you want to take away my perpetrators."

STEVEN: "I'm just saying if they're causing a problem, I could probably help you out."

NICK: "And how exactly do you purport to do that?"

STEVEN: "Well, we just have orders that we can take him back in maybe a different state if you catch my drift."

NICK: OK, go ahead and roll me either a Charm or a Deception.

STEVEN: Can I do a Negotiation?

NICK: Yeah, you can do a—well, if it's Negotiation, you have to offer him something.

STEVEN: I'm offering to fix his problems. I'm going to extract the perpetrators from the building.

NICK: OK. OK. Roll me a Negotiation. Let's see how this go.

STEVEN: This'll probably be hard, huh?

NICK: Yeah, we'll say it's hard.

STEVEN: Seems like a dumb thing to ask but I'll give it a go.

NICK: Walking up to a police officer and saying, "Hey, can I take that guy you're shooting at?"

STEVEN: Yeah.

NICK: Yeah. Wow, you succeeded.

STEVEN: It's weird, isn't it?

NICK: Yeah, with two threats. OK. I'm surprised.

STEVEN: "If you just allow me into the building, I think I can probably help you out."

NICK: "Alright, we'll let you into the building, but—" One of those threats is going to be, "you have to take Officer Schmidty with you." And there's a giant guy with a flechette rifle that shoots—it's basically like a space shotgun.

STEVEN: "I can do that."

NICK: And Schmidty goes, "Just get me the shot."

STEVEN: "Schmidty, pleased to meet you." I offer him one of my head-tails to shake his hand.

NICK: He does not do that. Because that's weird.

[laughter]

STEVEN: I apologize and reach out with a hand instead.

NICK: He very questioningly shakes your hand and says, "Sergeant, are you sure about this?"

And Sergeant says, "Well, you know..."

STEVEN: "Why else would I have come all this way to your fine planet?"

NICK: "Yeah, why else would this diplomat have come all the way to our fine planet but to try and get two drug dealers out of a building?"

STEVEN: "I'm just trying to resolve your issues."

NICK: Schmidty says, "Yeah, makes sense to me."

And the sergeant gets on the bullhorn and says, "Perpetrators, we have a negotiator coming up. A Togrutan. Don't shoot him please."

And they like stand back and let you go to the front door.

STEVEN: "Yeah, it would be fine if you didn't shoot. I'm really not even here to shoot anybody. Not sure about Schmidty, but trust me, I'm good."

NICK: "Don't tell them about me and Jurisprudence." [cocking sound]

STEVEN: "Oh, Schmidty is what I call my head-tail. I apologize."

NICK: "Uh... That's uncomfortable."

STEVEN: "Just the fourth one."

NICK: "So this is going to be the joke we make the whole time, huh? It's like a head-dick joke?"

STEVEN: "I believe so."

NICK: "Roger, I'll try to keep it in play."

STEVEN: Let's walk through this. What floor are they on? Are they on the first floor?

NICK: They're on the third floor.

STEVEN: The third. Is it a three story building? Well, let's walk into the first floor.

NICK: OK. The first floor. It's a pretty empty building. It's abandoned so where normally you would expect a small entryway and then a bunch of apartments off the first floor, it's actually just an open space. It looks like there was a fire in here at one point. The staircase does appear to be mostly intact and leads pretty much all the way up. The location you would expect the lifts to be is pretty just hollow tubes all the way up. It looks like on the second floor some of the rooms are more intact and on the third floor most of them are. Probably why they went up there is because there was more cover.

STEVEN: Well, I'm just going to wander around and look while doing so. Just wander around, look at the shaft button. "Mhmm, mhmm." Kind of observe nothing. But I'm going to use the time to try and get in Schmidty's head. So I'm going to do a cool. I'm going to try to be a little bit cool.

NICK: OK.

STEVEN: You know, "How'd you get on the force? Tell me about that nice gun of yours? You can see I've also got my weaponry."

NICK: "Oh, you mean Jurisprudence?"

STEVEN: "Oh, is that Jurisprudence?"

NICK: "Yeah."

STEVEN: "His was Jurisdiction."

NICK: "Yeah, Jurisprudence."

STEVEN: "Jurisprudence."

NICK: "You have to use her prudently. It's pretty important."

STEVEN: "Is that a shotgun blaster?"

NICK: "It's a flechetty? Flechette?"

STEVEN: "Yes."

NICK: "Is that how it's pronounced? Flechette? Probably, I don't know."

STEVEN: "We Togrutan are pretty trilly so I'm not really sure."

NICK: "We'll just call it flechetty for now."

STEVEN: "That'll work."

NICK: "Yeah, Jurisprudence. Yeah, been on the force for a while. Generally show up in these kinds of situations."

STEVEN: I'm still walking around looking up elevator shafts.

NICK: "So are we gonna go up there?"

STEVEN: "I mean, they're not shooting at us right now, but I'm trying to make sure we have a good understanding of the best way to get out of here if we have to get out fast."

NICK: "Well, I guess that makes sense. We've got stairs. We've got—"

STEVEN: "We do have stairs. We've got those elevator shafts. Those are interesting."

NICK: "Yeah, looks like..." He leans over. "Looks like there's a basement down there, though."

STEVEN: "What did these people do? They had some drug problems on my colony. Was that the same issue here?"

NICK: "Oh yeah, two-bit pushers. Drug runners. Dealers."

STEVEN: "I wonder if they hid anything in the basement."

NICK: "You know they might have."

STEVEN: "Let's go to the basement."

NICK: "O-OK..."

STEVEN: "I think we should go to the basement."

NICK: "OK, let's go."

Roll me a Charm or a Deception.

STEVEN: I have neither. I'm Cool. Can I Cool my way in to thinking we can go to the basement?

NICK: Sure.

STEVEN: That seems reasonable. I'm trying to be a police officer on the force.

NICK: OK. Schmidty's not that smart so this'll be an easy check. Are those all advantages? Oh no, you have a success.

STEVEN: A couple of advantages.

NICK: OK. So the success and two advantages means it does work. You guys go to the basement. You can use those advantages for any extra scene painting stuff you want, for anything extra you want him to do.

STEVEN: Yes, so here's what's going to happen. We're going to go down. Yeah, I'm going to hear a noise very convincingly.

NICK: OK.

STEVEN: Alright, so we walk down the stairs. "Shit, I think I heard something."

NICK: "Yeah! I think I heard it, too."

STEVEN: "I hope nothing in this basement is rigged to explode. What if they're trying to destroy the evidence? They did that back... Threw it out of their ship."

NICK: "We'd better back out of here and get the bomb squad."

STEVEN: "Oh no, not that type of bomb. They're not trying to blow anyone up. I think they're just trying to destroy the evidence."

NICK: "Oh."

STEVEN: "You know, like dye packets and things."

NICK: "OK, so that makes a lot of sense."

STEVEN: "What if their evidence is credits?"

NICK: "Oh?"

STEVEN: "What if they've hidden tons and tons of illicit credits."

NICK: "You're right. We should go secure any valuables first."

STEVEN: "That's right. So here's what I propose. I'm going to go check out what that noise was. You make sure there ain't nothing that's going to get out of this basement."

NICK: "Alright, I'll guard the basement."

STEVEN: "Well look—bro. Bro. Look around. Make sure no credits are disappearing."

NICK: "Oh, of course. If anything were to..."

STEVEN: "And I'm going to go check the first floor again."

NICK: "If anything were to be found, of course I'd report it to the evidence locker immediately."

STEVEN: "And your name's Schmidty?"

NICK: "Yeah."

STEVEN: "Sabos by the way. If you hear anything, I'll be just a floor away. Yell."

NICK: "Alright, Sabos. I'll give you a call."

STEVEN: "Perfect."

NICK: And he goes barreling down the stairs. [shotgun cocking noise] "Yeah, credits!" And he's peeking above and below everything.

STEVEN: Alright, well I'm going to use this time to haul ass up to the third floor.

NICK: [laughs] OK, so you go pounding up to the third floor. Up on the third floor, it actually is pretty much standard apartments. A bunch of the doors are fused open and there's black wiring hanging down because remember, this is Star Wars so they're not wooden swingy opening doors. They're all swooshy doors. Towards the corner to the right hand side, the side that'd be facing where the most police officers were, you see a door that's only about half open. And you hear some indistinct grumbling on the inside.

STEVEN: I'm going to go through the door.

NICK: OK. So you poke your head through. You see Mouse and Morak. You see them leaning up against the wall. They both have blaster carbines in their hands.

STEVEN: I come in, just my hands up. "I'm the Togrutan."

NICK: They point their guns at you for just a second.

STEVEN: I show them my head-tails. "I'm the Togrutan."

NICK: "OK, so why are you here?"

STEVEN: "Do you mind if we step away from the windows for a little bit? We've got a little bit of different business to take care of?"

NICK: "Well, I mean, that sounds nice and all..." This is Mouse talking.

STEVEN: Mouse.

NICK: "That sounds nice and all, but how do I know you don't have a whole squad of CorSec out there in that hallway?"

STEVEN: "Are you familiar with the bouquet?"

NICK: "Oooh!"

STEVEN: "I was sent on behalf of one of your compatriots."

NICK: "Right."

STEVEN: "Really I needed to prove to her that I was capable of taking care of some problems. You happen to be the problems, being surrounded in this building and all."

NICK: "The queen called us problems?"

STEVEN: "No, no, no, the problems are the CorSecs outside."

NICK: "OK, that's good. Because normally when she has problems those people end up on the bottom of the lake."

STEVEN: "That's the plan for the CorSecs outside. Our plan for you is to get out."

NICK: "Well, lead the way, Mr. Bouquet."

STEVEN: "Well, I might have gotten in here via a little bit of deceive some CorSecs per se."

NICK: "OK."

STEVEN: "So I'm not sure they're necessarily going to be happy to turn you all over to me."

NICK: "Probably not."

STEVEN: "I think I have a plan."

NICK: "Very confidence-inspiring."

STEVEN: "Well, here's what y'all are gonna do. I'm gonna walk in front of y'all and y'all are going to pretend that I'm your hostage. Something went terribly awry. Blasters pointed at me—put them on stun, though. And don't shoot me."

NICK: "Don't shoot you? Alright."

STEVEN: "And we're gonna walk out and see if we can get out that way. See if we can use a little bit of trickery to convince the officers they don't want a dead Togrutan diplomat on their hands."

NICK: "OK. I'm not a great actor, but Morak here's very convincing."

He just nods solemnly at you.

STEVEN: "You seem a very convincingly sized fellow."

NICK: He cracks his knuckles.

"Alright." They point their blasters at you and say, "Move it, scumbag!"

STEVEN: "Alright. Also, let's keep it quiet on the first floor."

NICK: "Alright, quiet on the first floor."

STEVEN: "Just trust me as I'm going out."

NICK: "Got it."

STEVEN: "And then we need to start playing as we leave the door."

NICK: So we'll do one of those side swipes to you're standing at the front door of this apartment building with Mouse and Morak pointing guns at you.

STEVEN: "Shh, shh!" I tell them.

NICK: And they're coming down the front stoop heading outside and the--

STEVEN: "Schmidty? Everything fine down there?"

NICK: "Oh yeah, everything's real good."

STEVEN: "Perfect. Keep looking."

NICK: "Alright, I'll keep looking."

STEVEN: "I'll be down in just a minute, Schmidty."

NICK: "Sounds great."

And as you walk outside--

STEVEN: "OK."

NICK: Yeah. As you walk outside, the sergeant has his bullhorn. You're about 30 feet from him. And he turns it on and--

STEVEN: "Sergeant, don't shoot!"

NICK: "Well, we're not gonna shoot but you don't appear to have fetched them particularly well. Where's Schmidty?"

STEVEN: "Schmidty's helping. He found some evidence."

NICK: "Great, but you're currently being held hostage."

STEVEN: "Togrutans aren't the strongest of fellows."

NICK: "Yeah, you're sure not strong," says Mouse.

STEVEN: "Yeah, well, I thought I'm a skilled negotiator."

NICK: "Clearly your negotiations have not gone that well."

STEVEN: "I would concur. Now these two fine gentleman, large gentleman--"

NICK: "Yeah, I'm real large!"

STEVEN: "Say they don't mean me anything harm, but they need to go talk to an acquaintance first. And I don't want to die and I don't think you want a dead Togrutan diplomat either."

NICK: "No, to be honest, I've been thinking about it since you went in there and this whole thing seems like a bad idea."

STEVEN: "I—uh, yeah, this was a bad idea. He's big."

NICK: Morak just nods solemnly and puts the blaster up against your head and kind of like dinks you in the back of the head with it. You get a glance and see his gun is absolutely not set to stun. Actually on the gun it has "Stun" and I guess it would say "Kill," but the Stun setting is Xed out. And it says like "Sissy" on it.

Moose says, "So this is how it's going to go. You're going to let us walk off down the street and you're going to give us a 15-minute head start or we kill this guy. And then we kill all of you."

STEVEN: "Don't kill me."

NICK: "And all of your friends."

STEVEN: "Officer, I assure you, they won't be hard to find. They are-- [laughs] Turns out they're a little bit..."

NICK: "Yeah, we'll be following at a safe distance."

STEVEN: "15 minutes."

NICK: OK, roll me a Negotiation.

STEVEN: "Just stay close on me, coppers, as close as they'll let you but don't shoot me."

NICK: "Hey, stop giving them ideas!" says Mouse.

Easy Negotiation since you've spent this entire scene setting this up. Yup, so it just succeeds.

So the sergeant waves everybody to holster their weapons. He takes his blaster and says, "Sorry, Jurisdiction." They say, "15 minutes," and he winks broadly at you.

STEVEN: "Sarge, Schmidty was last on the third floor."

NICK: "Right. We'll go fetch him and we'll be having a strong conversation about what it means to work with a partner."

STEVEN: "Yes, yes, his teamwork was not very good. He let me down."

NICK: "That's really disappointing. Schmidty's usually so on top of things."

STEVEN: "He seems like a very capable, physically capable officer of the law."

NICK: [giggles] Mouse says, "Shut up, hostage!" and hits you in the head.

STEVEN: "Ow!"

NICK: And starts shoving you down the street.

STEVEN: We can go to the car.

NICK: You're right. So as you're going, you about a block and everyone's watching you and you actually notice that there's like a sharpshooter that's been set-up on the roof and you can see a laser sight at the back of Morak's head. You turn a corner and the car is right there. And you see your contact from before and he's like, "Oh my gosh, I don't know what you did, but get in the car. Let's go, let's go, let's go, let's go."

So you speed off and then there is--

STEVEN: "Mouse, Morak, good acting. Morak, that was on kill."

NICK: Morak just nods at you and hits you in the head with the gun again and keeps it pointed at you.

STEVEN: "So to be clear, I was the one that got you out of this situation. Just saying."

NICK: Mouse like looks at Morak, looks at you, and is like, "You know, Morak's usually a good judge of character."

STEVEN: "He looks like a judge of character."

NICK: "Yeah, he doesn't trust you very much."

STEVEN: "I mean, isn't it natural not to trust someone who looks different than you, me with my four head-tails."

NICK: "Look, I don't really need a lecture on being accepting of different people, but that whole plan was pretty sketch. I'm very surprised it worked."

STEVEN: "Do you know how hard it is to get a squad of CorSec off your back? In that part of town? With two people that look like y'all?"

NICK: "Yeah, and we're still working on it." You look around and there are like three CorSec squad speeders chasing you.

STEVEN: "Ugh!"

NICK: And your original escort, the green orchid kid, goes, "Alright, well, it's time for me to earn my pay." And he punches it. There's a harrowing montage of cutting around corners, and flying under bazaars, and through lines of laundry hung out across alleyways. Both side view mirrors get knocked off of the speeder on the way. But he manages to lose them and then swing back to the club.

You walk in and there's the tall guy who asked about the bouquet. And you say, "Yeah, yeah, the bouquet." You walk in and you make it all the way to the back where the queen is. You bring Mouse and Morak with you.

She goes, "Well, Mouse and Morak, what a surprise. To be honest, I wasn't really expecting that to go as well as it did. I expected y'all to end up dead, which is kind of what I sent him to do, but great work. I don't have to train up any new people."

STEVEN: "I wouldn't exactly say it went well, but we are here."

NICK: "Yeah, well, Mouse, you and Morak go away. I'll deal with y'all later."

"Yes ma'am." They walk off. They go out the back and as soon as they hit the part where the music starts playing, Morak starts to bob his head to the tunes and they take a hard left into one of the dancing rooms. So they're going to enjoy what time they have left.

Your business associate says, "Well, this probably won't be the last time we deal together, Sacko or Sacko's representative, I suppose. I was thinking about it. I don't think you're Sacko."

STEVEN: "Sacko never does his own bidding."

NICK: "Yeah."

STEVEN: "I'm pretty close."

NICK: "Yeah, I'd imagine. He's definitely sent someone who was good. Doesn't even look like you used your gun. That's impressive."

STEVEN: "The gun is cool."

NICK: "Here's the deal. Take the box. Deliver it to the location. We're good. We'll take care of things Sacko needed. This is the last step. No problem."

STEVEN: "Where is the location?"

NICK: You had it on your little note.

STEVEN: Oh yes!

NICK: It was another thing. So you had to pick it up and bring it somewhere else.

"Now take this and get the heck out of my office."

STEVEN: "I will."

NICK: "By the way, for the next time that we meet, my name is Kettle."

STEVEN: "Kettle."

NICK: "They know me around here as The Queen."

STEVEN: "Queen Kettle."

NICK: "Yeah. No. Just Kettle, or The Queen."

STEVEN: "Ah, I see."

NICK: "It's one of those like name in quotation marks kind of things."

STEVEN: "Yes, The Queen."

NICK: "Yeah, that's good. I like that a lot. Now get the heck out of here."

STEVEN: "Yes, Queen."

NICK: You leave and take a taxi to wherever the next place you're going is. So this is actually back toward the nicer part of the city. The building that the coordinates or address leads you to is a low one-story building nestled between two high Corellian towers. As you approach, a robot eye on a stick pops out of the wall and it looks at you, looks at the box you're carrying and says, "E juta." And then slides backwards in. And the door, which is really more of a square seam than anything else, slides open.

You find yourself walking down an unadorned, durasteel hallway. A silver protocol droid that appears to be carrying a portly Selonian greets you. A Selonian is like an otter person-type thing. It says, "Oh, hello, sir." He takes the guy and tosses him bodily into a nearby room and codes a key on the wall and it slides shut. "It's good that you've made it. By the item you are carrying, I must assume you are Councilman Sacko. Wonderful that you carried out the master's request. As he hinted, this was an audition for a job. If you come with me, I can introduce you to the rest of your team."

And so he leads you down a hallway and a door slides open. You find yourself in a warm, wood paneled room. There's a Nautolan woman sitting in a chair, wringing out her head-tendrils. As she turns to look at you, she squeaks in her leather chair. She nods to you and gestures for you to have a seat.

STEVEN: "Yes, Nautolan."

NICK: And that's where we'll end it. Ba-naaa~!

STEVEN: Sweet.

NICK: Yeah, so there. That was good.

Outro

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