

Tabletop Squadron Transcript, Xianna Interstitial 1, Part 1:
Proof of Mal Intent

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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.

Well everyone, as the galaxy continues to turn around us the crew of the Afternoon Delight is separated by time and circumstance. The next few arcs will focus on individual members of the crew with some amazing guests to help us tell stories. We hope you enjoy.

I want to take a moment to thank our newest patrons! ChaseMin, thank you for your extremely generous support of the show. The Rebellion is running pretty low on intel right now, so we got you this notebook and tape recorder. See if you can get out there and find us some clues on what the Empire is up to. Haley McAuliffe, thank you for your support of the crew. We got a message from Falx Urnstad. We don't know how he got our number, but he's requesting some sort of parlay and we don't know what it's about. Can you take a ship out there and see what he's up to? Look out for betrayal. And David Tulus, thank you as well for supporting the crew. It looks like there's some bounty hunters out there looking for us. We got you this bounty hunter license and a cool hat. Either make friends or take them out, your choice, but be careful.

Thank you again to all our patrons for taking care of us and helping us keep the squad in the skies, and thank you to all of our listeners for coming with us on this journey.

Music this week is Wirklich Wichtig (ID 211) by Checkie Brown.

So now, let's get into the episode.

##

NICK: Hello! Welcome to Tabletop Squadron, Xianna's Solo Adventure. I'm your hosting game master, Nick. Just jumping right into some things after the conclusion of Season 1, doing a little bit of exploration into our characters as they go off on their own into the galaxy. We're gonna go around the virtual table and everybody say who you are and who you will be playing today starting with Laura.

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

NICK: [smiling] God damn it.

[laughter]

LAURA: I will be playing Xianna'fan, a Twi'lek smuggler.

NICK: Oh gosh. I was gonna say, I did not write this for Tink. I don't know if this is gonna mess it all up. Okay, and up next we have Jo. Hi Jo.

JO: Hi! I'm Jo, and I will be playing Mal, the Zabrak hacker.

NICK: Ooh. Jo, thank you for guesting on the show~

JO: Thank you for having me.

NICK: Of course! Do you have any projects that you would like to plug? Where can people find you on the internet?

JO: I would like to plug Arms of the Tide. Arms of the Tide is a story where I play a flammable, purple, plant-wolf with depression, and if that doesn't sell you we have a lovable robot with a heart of gold and a fuckton of cats.

NICK: [laughs]

JO: Oh shoot! Am I allowed to swear? You all swear, right?

NICK: Yes.

LAURA: Oh, we swear a lot.

JO: Okay. I could've sworn that there was swearing, but the moment I did it I was like OH NO! [giggles]

NICK: Oh no, we fucking cuss, Jo. You're good.

LAURA: We are like 30% swear words.

NICK: [grinning] Anyway, do you have anything else that you would like to plug, Jo?

JO: Um, The ORPHEUS Protocol, which is horror, and it's run by the amazing storyteller Rob Stith who is also a friend, so I'm biased, but I'd recommend that. Well, I guess if a listener is interested in lots of swearing and incredibly rude jokes they can check out our Haven: City of Violence episodes over on One Shot.

NICK: Oh gosh, I forgot about those. Those are fun.

LAURA: They're all so good.

NICK: Yeah. I will definitely take a second to say that Arms of the Tide and ORPHEUS Protocol are the two shows that always jump to the top of my play list whenever new episodes come out. They are just fantastic, so anybody listening should listen to those. They are very good.

JO: Well thank you.

NICK: And also Haven: City of Violence is an experience.

[laughter]

JO: [grinning] Oh god, it really is.

NICK: It was really fun. I laughed a lot. It is confusing, in a good way. It is fun.

JO: That's good. There was a lot that was not cut that we thought was going to be cut.

NICK & LAURA: [laughs]

JO: But yeah, thank you for having me. Hopefully Mal will work out and have some fun.

NICK: So, before we get started, we need to do the Destiny Roll.

LAURA: Okay. ... Oh no. So mine came back two dark side points.

NICK: Off to a great start.

LAURA: And the other one for Jo came back with one dark side point.

NICK: [sinister laughter]

JO: Sweet.

NICK: Wonderful. Great.

LAURA: Sorry.

NICK: But the good news is nothing is going to go wrong, everything's gonna be perfectly fine, so you won't need those. Alright, so we ready to get started?

LAURA & JO: Yes.

NICK: Oh boy. We open on a dark and dusty bar.

[slow country western guitar music begins]

A single overhead fan spins lazily over the sparse clientele. Morning sunlight filters in through high, small windows. The building is built into the ground keeping out most of the heat. A bartender wipes the inside of a metal glass with a dirty rag, chewing on their lip and staring into space. At the end of a bar a Chadra-Fan is jumping up and down trying to get the bartender's attention but so far has had no luck.

Xianna, you enter the bar and take stock of your surroundings. You received an anonymous message through the kind of channels that mean the offer is legit. They wanted an expert for a rob and sabotage job. They don't mention pay, but they do mention rights to anything you can steal on the job. It's supposedly a good tip to a low-security gig, and let's face it, it's been about a month since the shipyard incident and you're getting bored. Your instructions were to sit at the booth in the back of the bar and wait for your contact. The booth in question is empty and easy to see. What do you do?

LAURA: I go up and get a drink from the bar first and then go sit down, wait, but I'm also definitely on my com channel texting emojis to various people.

NICK: Hmm. So two questions. One, what is your drink of choice in this small, dusty bar, and two, what is the most recent string of emojis you've sent to somebody?

LAURA: I do not have a fancy drink name right now...

NICK: [laughs]

LAURA: ...so I'm just gonna say a jogan fruit and vodka.

NICK: Is it like a cranberry vodka, so it's like jogan fruit juice?

LAURA: Yes. [laughs]

NICK: Okay. I was picturing like a sky vodka crossover where it's just jogan fruit flavored and is really chemical.

LAURA: Nah, it's just basically a cranberry vodka but with whatever jogan fruit is supposed to be.

NICK: Yep. The bartender definitely opens up a very dusty can of jogan fruit juice, and it comes out and looks mostly fine but pretty old. It tastes more like the interior of the can than the juice is supposed to, but the vodka's good.

LAURA: And then the most recent string of emojis is definitely just like eight peaches in a row to Nola.

NICK: [laughs] Yeah. I think Nola has been playing the game for a while of trying to come up with a different way to respond to peach emoji every time and has gotten into the ASCII art of Kirby flipping desks and things but more lewd. So, that conversation is going on.

LAURA: Yeah. She's just gonna sit there emoji-ing away until someone decides to come up to her, because she's not gonna put in the effort.

NICK: Fair. The camera does a pan around the bar and shows the Chadra-Fan, the little bat person who's probably like half a meter tall, still jumping and waving at the bartender who served you right away and is ignoring the Chadra-Fan. Then we get one of those clock wipes where it goes around to show the passage of time, and Xianna is still sitting at the bar. I think her posture has shrunk over time because it's been about 15-20 minutes at this point.

LAURA: Oh yeah, she is laying down in it, back, feet are now up resting on that back top rim of the booth cushions.

NICK: Nice. After 15-20 minutes someone else enters the bar. The Chadra-Fan finally gets the bartender's attention, grabs a drink, sees the person in the doorway and hides back behind the bar away from this new entrant. Jo, please describe your character for us.

JO: Okay. So, Mal is a Zabrak. They are one of the red-skinned base ones, and they have a halo of horns at the top of their head. They are wearing clothes with way too many pockets if too many pockets were such a thing to be had.

NICK: Nice.

JO: And they have a hood that they take off as they enter in the bar. I suppose that Mal would do a scan around to see if they recognize anyone.

NICK: Yeah. So Mal, you know who offered you the job and you know that they said you'd have a partner for help, and you can see a purple Twi'lek sitting upside down in a booth in the back of the bar. You know that booth is where you were supposed to meet. Do you approach?

JO: Yes.

NICK: Okay. You sidle up to this booth. Xianna, you are approached by a—How is Mal stature-wise, Jo? Are they tall, short, stronk?

JO: They're pretty medium, honestly, and they walk tall with their head up, but yeah, pretty medium.

NICK: Cool, so still taller than Xianna, probably. Xianna, you've been approached by a red skin Zabrak covered in pouches.

LAURA: Xianna, still upside down, does a little wave.

LAURA (as Xianna): Oh, 'ello.

JO: Mal gives you a nod.

JO (as Mal): [tentatively] Howdy. I take it you're here for the job.

LAURA (as Xianna): Yes. I am assuming you are as well.

JO (as Mal): Yep, that's the only thing that would get me down here on Tatooine.

LAURA (as Xianna): Cool. Do you want a jogan fruit and vodka? I found someone over on the other side of the bar who will buy them for me.

JO (as Mal): I'm good, thank you though.

LAURA (as Xianna): Okay.

JO (as Mal): I like to keep a clear head for the job, you know.

LAURA (as Xianna): Oh yes, uh, same. Definitely the same. Clear head.

LAURA: You can see there's five empty glasses on the table.

JO: I just nod at the glasses and slide into the booth.

LAURA: Xianna does pop back up into seated position.

NICK: Okay. As you sort of size each other up a third figure enters the bar. The Chadra-Fan pokes their head up, sees who it is, and throws their drink at the approaching person.

NICK (as Chadra-Fan): Kriff you!

NICK: They shout. The person ducks out of the way and shrugs magnanimously. As the door swings shut and the bright desert sun is blocked away you get a clear look at the new bar patron. He's a tall Zabrak man, a little over two meters. He has medium brown skin covered in lighter tan tattoos. He's wearing clothes that look like a fashion designer tried to codify smuggler vogue.

LAURA: [laughs]

NICK: Expensive materials beginning to fray at the hems, a dark vest, tight pants, and impractical boots. This is Falx Urnstad, former Imperial Regional Governor and aspiring smuggler. He approaches the booth where you are both sitting.

[music fades]

LAURA: Xianna is already waving.

LAURA (as Xianna): Falx~ Falx! We are over here. Hello~! I thought you were dead! Did you not die?

NICK (as Falx): The stories of my demise have been greatly exaggerated. My dear, dear friends.

NICK: He walks over and gestures widely. You can see the Chadra-Fan sitting at the bar just making anger eyes towards you now.

NICK (as Falx): Welcome to Tatoonie. I see you've made it alright.

NICK: He orders a drink, waving his hand.

NICK (as Falx): How are you doing this fine day?

LAURA (as Xianna): Good. Good. Um, did you know you were going to hire me?

NICK (as Falx): Oh, yeah.

LAURA (as Xianna): And are we, as you say, "cool?"

NICK (as Falx): You know, honestly, I'm a little surprised that you're not madder at me... last time we saw each other I sort of tried to frame you for murder. I thought I was gonna have to talk you out of stabbing me.

LAURA (as Xianna): Yes. I just feel like I, at some point... Did that happen? I'm pretty sure we charged an extreme amount of money to one of your accounts, so I thought you were going to be very mad at me.

NICK (as Falx): You what?!

LAURA (as Xianna): Yes, like a whole week vacation in a penthouse suite at some very fancy beach resort. I'm pretty sure it was a beach resort... No, yes, because we played volleyball so it must have been a beach resort.

JO (as Mal): You can play volleyball elsewhere.

LAURA (as Xianna): Well it was like in the sand, and there was water.

NICK: [chuckles]

JO (as Mal): Oh, that's a beach resort.

LAURA (as Xianna): So yeah, I think it was a beach resort.

NICK: The camera pans outside through one of the small windows and there's a forlorn looking volleyball net stuck in a sand dune and then cuts back inside.

NICK (as Falx): So, you said my account. Was that, like, one of my Imperial charge accounts maybe?

LAURA (as Xianna): I don't know. Tink did it. I just told him to charge it to you, so...

NICK (as Falx): Well, currently I am not super flush with cash anyway, so I don't know. Maybe that's some of the money that got seized by the Imperial government after some recent activities of mine.

LAURA (as Xianna): Yes, when you tried to murder another Imperial. We were there. We saw what happened.

NICK (as Falx): Not tried. I was extremely successful if I recall correctly, thank you very much.

LAURA (as Xianna): Eh, I don't remember so, but I see you are doing okay~

JO (as Mal): You look like shit.

NICK (as Falx): Hey!

LAURA (as Xianna): That is why I said okay, heh, and not good.

NICK (as Falx): These smuggler's clothes, it really helps you blend in these kind of circles, you know?

LAURA (as Xianna): [interrupting] No.

NICK (as Falx): I worked very hard assembling this outfit.

LAURA (as Xianna): No. You look like a tourist.

NICK (as Falx): YOU look like a tourist.

LAURA (as Xianna): How dare you.

NICK: [laughs] A martini is delivered by the bartender who also glares at Falx and then walks back behind the bar. He grabs it, takes a sip, and says:

NICK (as Falx): You know, I think this bar may make the worst space martinis in the galaxy.

JO (as Mal): You know, I think that he may have spit in it, so that could be part of it.

LAURA (as Xianna): Yes, I did see him do that.

NICK (as Falx): Hmm.

NICK: He takes a sip, looks contemplative, and then shrugs and continues to drink.

NICK (as Falx): Can't win them all. So, you're probably wondering why I called you both here. Great to see you, Mal, by the way. It's been quite a while.

JO (as Mal): Never long enough.

NICK (as Falx): Oh, come on now, normally our interactions are at least profitable.

JO: Mal cracks a smile.

NICK (as Falx): And besides, considering you're part of the reason I was able to get out from under the Imperial thumb, make this new identity, I figured that we would be able to have a working relationship at this point, especially since I'm about to help you make some money.

JO (as Mal): Well, money does make the universe go round. Let's get on it.

NICK (as Falx): Fine. So here's what's going on. Like I said, I'm really getting into the smuggler's life at this point. I'm gonna work towards being more of an independent business man than the Imperial side of things. It was definitely a me decision. It didn't have anything to do with anything else going on. I was trying to do a little smuggling into the Dune Sea. It was a really big contract and I got completely screwed. It turns out that the trash that I was hauling as cover wasn't actually covering anything. It was just trash. My pilot won't leave the ship and I didn't get paid enough to fuel up and leave. Can you believe that? Premiere smuggling tycoon Falx Urnstad is out of gas. It's terrible.

LAURA (as Xianna): I mean, that makes sense. You are very bad at smuggling.

JO: Mal rubs their nose to hide a smile.

NICK (as Falx): I am not bad—How would you even know I'm bad at smuggling? You haven't seen me be a smuggler. This is pretty new.

LAURA (as Xianna): I mean, you arranged jobs for us to do smuggling and they were bad.

NICK (as Falx): No, see, it's a common misconception. That was a betrayal that looked like smuggling—

LAURA (as Xianna): Yes.

NICK (as Falx): --and it went pretty well.

LAURA (as Xianna): It did not!

NICK (as Falx): I just didn't expect you to murder everyone. It went well for me!

LAURA (as Xianna): Well, it did not go well for us outside of the fact that we were alive at the end.

NICK (as Falx): You make a good point. I'm realizing that I should probably consider others more now that I don't have the backing of the Imperial government. That is something that I will take to heart. I appreciate your interest in my growth as a person, Xianna. that's really good stuff.

LAURA (as Xianna): You're welcome~

NICK (as Falx): You see that, Mal? I'm growing as a person.

JO (as Mal): Sure you are. It's one thing to say that you're gonna grow and that you're gonna change and it's another to actually do it. It takes a lot of work to commit to something.

NICK (as Falx): Hmm. I'll see what I can do. You know, I think this is a good first step. This is an honest contract, no betrayal, and I've got a hot tip. I'm gonna help you find somewhere to hit, and I just ask for a couple of small things in return. Doesn't that sound great?

JO (as Mal): It sounds like you got something.

NICK (as Falx): So... that trash I was talking about, I dropped it at a scrapyard on the edge of the Dune Sea and they only paid me scrap prices and threatened to shoot me before I could do anything about it. Obviously it's better to be alive and broke than dead and rich, but I think I have an idea for how to be both alive AND rich.

That scrapyard has a lot more security than it should really need. I know that they only bought scrap from me, but the rest of it doesn't make any sense. It's still not exactly an Imperial prison facility, you should be able to make quick work of it, but it did have armed guards, some surveillance, and droids. There's a lot there. It's got walls, it's secure, I think they might be doing more than just scrapping out there in the desert. I think there's money to be made.

LAURA (as Xianna): I mean probably.

NICK (as Falx): That's why I called you. I'm not sure exactly what's there, but it's there, and I know the two of you can get in and mess it up easy. All I want out of this is a container of their ship fuel and a lead on my next smuggling contract. The owner has to have contacts filed in there somewhere. It's worth more to me than whatever they're doing. If you bring me those two things you're welcome to whatever else you find there. Honestly, one of those security droids alone is probably worth more than your usual commission for a job like this. That's what made me suspicious in the first place.

So basically, go in, steal what you want, get me fuel and some new contacts, and get out. What do you say?

JO (as Mal): [reluctantly] Fine.

LAURA (as Xianna): What part is the part where you are going to betray us? I just want to know ahead of time so I can plan ahead.

NICK (as Falx): Mal had a good point. I really need to commit and show demonstrable change, so that's what I'm doing. No betrayal. Honestly, I'm a little worried you're gonna betray me and not bring the fuel back, but I didn't know who else to turn to, and apparently you owe me because you charged a ton of money, so...

LAURA (as Xianna): No~

JO (as Mal): Uh, no-no-no, you accused her of murder. She is allowed to take a month-long vacation, so really you still owe her three weeks.

LAURA (as Xianna): No, I did do the murder.

JO (as Mal): Oh!

LAURA (as Xianna): Well, not that murder, not the one he did and got arrested for or whatever, but I have done the murders in the past. Usually justified, though.

JO (as Mal): I mean everybody's done a few murders in the past. It's not that big a deal. You just need to own up or make sure there's nothing to connect you.

LAURA (as Xianna): Yeah.

NICK: Falx is looking reasonably concerned at the way this conversation has gone.

NICK (as Falx): I don't think I've ever done a murder—Oh wait, no, I definitely have done one murder.

LAURA (as Xianna): You just said that you did a murder like two minutes ago.

NICK (as Falx): Yeah, I'm realizing that now. Well, the thing is though, I didn't do the murder, it looked like I did the murder which was a mistake... Okay, so I—Is it a murder if you stab the guy and then he bleeds out?

LAURA (as Xianna): Yes.

JO (as Mal): Yes.

NICK (as Falx): Because I feel like I didn't kill him, the blood loss killed him, you know?

LAURA (as Xianna): No, that is a murder.

NICK (as Falx): Okay, so I've done a few murders. Okay, so we're all on the same page. I betrayed you, you charged a bunch of money, we're even. That means we're friends now, so we can just have a business relationship. I think this is gonna go really well.

LAURA (as Xianna): Yes. I mean, questioning a murder is more like if I poison a man and then while he is passing out he falls off a cliff, did I kill him or did he just fall off a cliff?

JO (as Mal): I'm pretty sure you still killed him, because he might not have fallen off of the cliff if you hadn't poisoned him.

LAURA (as Xianna): I mean, they were very clumsy.

JO (as Mal): Ehh.

NICK (as Falx): Wait. Did this stop being a hypothetical and start being a thing that you've done?

LAURA (as Xianna): No.

JO (as Mal): Wait. Have these been hypothetical?

NICK: [laughs]

LAURA (as Xianna): I definitely have never done this before. And besides, I think I am still legally dead, so none of my crimes count.

NICK (as Falx): That's definitely not how that works.

LAURA (as Xianna): If I am not in the system because they think I am dead then they cannot charge me for crimes.

JO (as Mal): They can put you back in the system. I've put people back into the system.

LAURA (as Xianna): Yes, but until I am back in the system they can't charge me. That is how that works. It's like if you commit a crime two times in a row it is double jeopardy and they can't charge you for the second one.

JO (as Mal): Yes, and if you and your spouse commit the same crime they can only charge one of you. Absolutely.

LAURA (as Xianna): Yes.

JO (as Mal): That is how the law works.

LAURA (as Xianna): That is why I got married one of the times.

JO (as Mal): Mm-hmm.

JO: [smiling] Mal just gives tiny nods.

NICK (as Falx): Oh kriff! I gotta get married, and then maybe murder someone. This sounds foolproof.

LAURA (as Xianna): Yes. I've been married like, six times?

NICK (as Falx): Huh.

LAURA (as Xianna): I mean, like all were fake under different names, but I mean, still fun.

NICK (as Falx): See, I can tell from this conversation that I picked the right people for this job. I'm feeling more confident every minute. I am so glad that you chose to meet me here in... this tiny, dusty cesspit.

LAURA (as Xianna): Tatooine?

NICK (as Falx): Tatooine is a dusty cesspit. I was trying to cast aspersions upon the bar, because it's a tiny, dusty cesspit.

NICK: The bartender makes a rude gesture and Falx returns it.

LAURA (as Xianna): I think they just don't like you.

NICK (as Falx): That just shows that they're not a good business person. Everybody likes Falx.

LAURA (as Xianna): No...

JO (as Mal): [coughs dramatically, clears throat]

NICK (as Falx): Mal, you—Mal. Come on now. You know that you love me.

JO (as Mal): It's real dusty in here. It must be [coughs] acting up. [coughs] Ooh, let's get to the scrapyard.

NICK (as Falx): Alright, I've got the coordinates right here. I'm gonna give them to you because I think we've all established that we're all trustworthy people and no one's gonna betray anyone.

NICK: He slides a small data pad across the bar. A little hologram pops up and you can kinda see where you are and the coordinates that it's leading to. It's probably an hour or so away by speeder from where you are now.

NICK (as Falx): Oh, and uh, one more thing before you go. These nerf herders, they played me for a fool. If you destroy their business, burn them out, smash the facility, whatever you have to do, I would see that as a personal favor. I would be happy to pay it back. It'd really help me sleep better at night knowing that they were done for.

LAURA (as Xianna): Okay, so a smash and smash and grab. Got it.

JO (as Mal): It's not B&E without a lot of B.

NICK (as Falx): If you run into a Devaronian, that's the guy who owns the place, his name's Garbo Daville. Whatever you can do to make his life miserable. If you can find him you'll probably find the files you're looking for. Besides that, that's all I've got. I was not there very long, but I leave it in your capable hands.

NICK: And he downs the rest of his martini.

LAURA (as Xianna): Cool. Were we getting paid for this job, again?

JO (as Mal): We're getting paid for whatever we take.

LAURA (as Xianna): Oh, okay, right.

NICK (as Falx): I'm negotiating for gas, so obviously I'm a little tight on cash right now, but the info's good, I promise.

JO (as Mal): Mm-hmm. Falx, if you would scooch your boot out of the booth so I can leave?

NICK (as Falx): Oh. Right. You sure you don't wanna just—Oh, yeah, that's fine.

NICK: He stands up and backs away.

JO: And I climb out of the booth.

LAURA: Xianna just downs whatever drink she has in front of her that's left, just shoves the empty glass into Falx's hand, and then saunters off.

NICK: He takes it.

NICK (as Falx): [stammers] Alright, well, I'll be right here. Just come find me when it's done. Don't forget that fuel. Very important.

LAURA (as Xianna): Okie.

NICK (as Falx): I don't have a ton of friends, so...

LAURA (as Xianna): Byeee. We definitely will not betray you because you are definitely not going to betray uuus.

JO (as Mal): I mean, if he tries we know where his ship is and can just take apart the pieces.

LAURA (as Xianna): Or we can just come back and punch him.

JO (as Mal): Can we at least shank him? A punchin' seems a little weak.

LAURA (as Xianna): Oh, I don't have any knives.

JO (as Mal): I have a scythe.

LAURA (as Xianna): I mostly just have handcuffs and guns.

NICK: So yeah, at the mention of the scythe, Mal, you have a vibro-scythe. Are you just wearing it across your back? Does it have a blade that switches out? What does this thing look like?

JO: It looks like just a scythe blade, and it's sheathed right now, but when Mal takes it out of its sheathe the handle pops out so that way they can actually hold and swing it.

NICK: Oh cool. That is the exact opposite of what I was picturing, and I really like it.

JO: [giggling] Thanks.

NICK: Okay. You have the location that you need to go to. It's kinda far. What is y'all's next move? Are you going to try to collect any more information? How are you gonna get there? What is the plan?

JO: So, my space ship actually looks kind of like a galleon, like a water sailing big ship thing.

NICK: Oh neat.

JO: And it even has the mast, but instead of sails that is where my ship laser/blaster things are, and I don't know boat... anatomy? Is it still anatomy if it's not a person? I don't know boat terms.

LAURA: Probably.

NICK: [laughs]

JO: But the butt/trunk of my boat pops open.

NICK: [cackles]

LAURA: Is that the aft?

JO: The aft?

NICK: Yeah.

JO: Are you sure it's not the ass?

NICK: Yeah, it's the ass of the ship.

LAURA: It's the ass of the boat, yes.

JO: [laughs] Yes. Okay. So, in one of my many pockets I have what is basically a garage door opener, and I take it out and I beep it and it opens up the aft of my ship, and on the very bottom of my ship is a smaller looking ship of the same model, and this one has actual sails on it, but instead of being made out of cloth they are made out of a thin and malleable metal so that way they are perfect for windy environments such as Tatooine.

LAURA (as Xianna): Oh wow, you are like, rich?

JO (as Mal): I mean, I have enough to get by.

LAURA (as Xianna): Oh hell yes. I call shotgun!

LAURA: Xianna runs and jumps in.

JO (as Mal): You kinda have to be shotgun unless you know how to drive.

LAURA (as Xianna): Well no, sometimes I like to sit in the back so I can lay down.

JO (as Mal): [giggling nervously] Okay, fair enough.

JO: And I ride out! There's kind of a little burst for takeoff as we launch out of the back, and I press the beeper as we zoom off into the sands.

NICK: Oh wow. Hey, you even have Piloting: Planetary, Jo. That's cool.

JO: That is cool.

NICK: You have skills to drive this boat. So, I'm picturing that there's like a long keel, that's the part that sticks out of the bottom of the boat, that sticks into the sand a little bit so that the ship, once you catch the winds, rides on that kind of at an angle, kind of like a hydrofoil for a water boat.

JO: Okay. Mm-hmm.

NICK: So, it hovers but cuts the sand and throws off a cool wake, and we get the ship riding into the double suns of Tatooine. Does it have seats or do you have to stand holding the rails? Does it have a steering wheel? What do the mechanics of this look like?

JO: So, there are seats. There are three rows of three-by-three theater style seats leading up to the helm, and that is how you steer the ship.

NICK: Wow, that's very cool.

JO: Yeah.

NICK: So, you take off. I think the fastest way to get to this scrapyard is – the Dune Sea is like a big, round geographic region, and the easiest way to get there will be to cut through the Dune Sea, not to go around through the rocky parts, especially with the type of ship you have, but that can be treacherous because it's full of all sorts of bad things, and also it's just big and sandy and if you get lost bad things can happen.

What I'm gonna need from you, Jo, is a Piloting: Planetary roll just to see how quickly you get there, if you have any issues, that kind of stuff.

JO: Sounds good. What is the difficulty on that?

NICK: We're gonna say the difficulty is average. You're good at this and a ship is designed for this so it's not particularly hard.

JO: Okay, so that is two purples, correct?

NICK: Yep, but I am gonna flip a dark side point, so turn one of those into a red for me, please.

JO: Aw, that's so mean, but now we have a light side point.

NICK: Ah yes, it's like the mechanics encourage a give and take nature or something. [laughs]

LAURA: Like there's a balance.

JO: Uh, no, I think that the Jedi just win.

NICK: [confused disagreeing noises and false starts]

[laughter]

NICK: You're not wrong.

LAURA: Jedi good, everyone's related.

JO: Yeah. Mm-hmm. I have an Agility 3 and I have Piloting: Planetary Rank 2, so I get two yellows and a green versus the purple and red. Correct?

NICK: Yep.

JO: Cool.

NICK: Absolutely.

JO: Well, your red die came up with two Xs which are bad, however one of my yellow dice came up with two successes, so that cancels each other out. The purple is blank, and then I have two successes and an advantage left over.

NICK: Wow, so you're good at this. You pilot straight there. Like I said, it's about an hour away. It was morning when you left. One of the suns is starting to get a little high in the sky as you approach. In the distance, nestled on the edge, you can see these big, rounded walls with bits of junk and broken speeders and a very tall crane poking up above it. You can see the walls themselves reach out into the first layer of dunes, but the back walls are nestled in the side of a cliff, and you see this scrapyard.

It doesn't appear to have any gates or anything, at least from the angle you're approaching. So, what do you do? You are far enough away that they probably haven't seen you or taken note of you. The world is your oyster.

JO: They don't have any gates... Can we see their entrance? Or it's just walls, walls, walls for walls of walls?

NICK: It's like one big, round wall. From the angle that you're at you can't see a gate or anything, but one thing you do see is a starship take off from inside the walls and fly away, so they have at least a landing pad inside, but from where you are now it doesn't look like there's an easy "walk in here" door.

JO: Okay.

LAURA (as Xianna): Okay, so do you want to actually get in there sneaky or do you want to just like, I don't know, throw some grenades at them? What were you thinking?

JO (as Mal): I like where your head is at with the grenades, but we can probably do more damage if they don't know that we're there right away, so I'm gonna go with some sneaking.

LAURA (as Xianna): Okie.

JO: That in mind, I'm going to park the ship behind a large sand dune slash hill thing for cover?

NICK: Yeah. You're right at the border of where the dunes start so you could park it there. You could also swing out into the rocks and make your way towards the cliffs that overlook the walls. There's plenty of cover for you to be able to kinda scout out the area without being seen. That is definitely an option.

JO (as Mal): Xianna, would you rather we park here or up by the cliff?

LAURA (as Xianna): Ooh, here.

JO (as Mal): Alright then.

LAURA (as Xianna): Not by the cliff. And for no reasons that connect to anything I mentioned earlier.

JO (as Mal): Uh-huh...

LAURA (as Xianna): Just stay away from cliffs.

NICK: [laughs]

JO: [smiling] I smirk as I turn the boat and move into a sliding park.

NICK: Do you do the thing where the ship drifts in a 180 to park really abruptly?

JO: Yes.

NICK: Sweet!

LAURA (as Xianna): So cool.

NICK: Okay. You are parked behind a dune. You can't see a ton from where you are, because you've broken line of sight. What is your plan? What are you going to do now?

JO (as Mal): We are not going to launch grenades... yet.

LAURA (as Xianna): Okay.

NICK: [laughs] A good start.

LAURA: Xianna is going to climb up to the ridge of the sand dune, pull her goggles down, and actually give the complex a good look, almost as if perceiving it, with perception.

NICK: Ohh, what an interesting idea. Go ahead and make me a Perception roll. I'll give you, because you have your scanner goggles, you can have a blue die, but it is going to be hard because it's not "can you see the citadel" it's "can you see important information."

LAURA: Okay, four successes and two advantages.

JO: Damn.

NICK: Wow, you're good at seeing things. You are able, from where you are, we'll say that you're good enough at this that you're able to actually look up towards the crane – it's like one of those skyscraper cranes that stick straight up and then hangs over – and you're able to look into the windshield of that and see the reflection down to get a pretty good view of what this place looks like.

Things that you see: The walls are probably 3-5 meters thick. They're really, really big. They're about 30 meters tall, so walls are pretty scary big. The actual interior of these are filled with giant, haphazard piles of junk ships and speeders. There is a medium building on the far side of the facility from you that looks like maybe some sort of sorting facility. There's conveyor belts going in one side and out the other. You can also see that there's a big space in the middle probably used for a landing pad. You see some fuel tanks, and you also see some figures stomping around outside the wall and some movement inside, but you're a little too far away to see exactly who they are. And you already saw that ships are kinda coming in and out.

From where you are you do not see an obvious entrance, but you do notice that on the side by the cliffs the wall is shaped a little differently. There may be some way to get in over there. You also think these aren't durasteel walls, they look kind of like adobe, like just thick rock and mud built kind of things. You could probably climb them if you had to.

LAURA (as Xianna): Okie, so there may be a door on the other side. I would give it a 60/40 chance though.

JO: Mal is going to point at the crane that Xianna used to get some reflection views on.

JO (as Mal): If you're feeling up to it we could hop on over, if you catch my drift.

LAURA (as Xianna): I think I do.

JO (as Mal): I'm saying we'll jump onto the crane and—

LAURA (as Xianna): Jump on the crane? Oh, okay, yes. Just making sure.

JO (as Mal): No, it's important to be on the same page, because it will be a little risky, but it does mean that they probably won't be guarding the entrance/exit when we need to boogie.

LAURA (as Xianna): That makes sense. So yes, let's do a perfectly safe jump onto the crane.

JO (as Mal): Perfectly safe. Yep.

JO: [laughs]

LAURA (as Xianna): And then once we get in there, how long do you want to stay sneaky?

JO (as Mal): Preferably as long as we can. I think I'd like to see if any of those junker ships they have is worth salvaging so that way we can load it up with the goods and ride it out.

LAURA (as Xianna): Yes, because if we want to take any fuel out those are heavy.

JO (as Mal): Yeah.

LAURA (as Xianna): And I do not want to carry any of them.

JO (as Mal): Again, if we can save a junker ship.

LAURA (as Xianna): I'm sure one of them will work.

JO (as Mal): I'm hoping two.

LAURA (as Xianna): Okay, so half plan. That's enough.

JO (as Mal): That's more than I sometimes go in with.

LAURA (as Xianna): It's more than what I usually do.

JO (as Mal): Oh, then we are ahead of the game!

LAURA (as Xianna): Great!

NICK: [laughing] Somewhere on the other side of the galaxy Karma gets a shiver down her spine at this. So, you are heading for the cliffs to try to do this jump. I think I am going to need a Stealth roll from you two to see if you can get over there without being detected by anything. This one will be average, because you're far away and there's rocks.

JO: Cool. I got two successes, everything else evened out, but I'll take it.

NICK: Nice.

LAURA: I have three successes and four advantages.

NICK: Wow... Okay.

JO: [laughing] We're using our luck early.

NICK: We're walking through the rocks real good. [laughs]

LAURA: Also, if it's just Perception, Skulduggery and Stealth, Xianna is incredibly good at those and not a whole lot else.

NICK: You manage to wind your way through these rocky cliffs. You're not on the dunes. You manage to climb your way up. You do have to scramble up some sheer cliff faces to get up on top close enough to this crane. It's one of those tall, skinny cranes with the long wide bits, so the back part with the counterbalance actually hangs very close to this cliff, and it happens to be angled in such a way that it's only about 2 meters, maybe a little more, from the edge of the cliff. I'm going to give you both the opportunity, with all of the advantages you have rolled with the Perception check and the Stealth check that Xianna got, first of all you're gonna get a much clearer view of this facility as you're standing up above it.

You see that it's actually arranged: The ship landing pad is in the very middle and has a cleared space all around it. You can see that there are some loading droids moving piles of scrap back and forth, so they're sorting. Things are going onto conveyor belts moving into that building in the back, and that the scrap is in sorted piles so there's one of burned out ship hulls, there's one of engines, there are a few junker looking ships that may or may not run scattered around. The whole thing is probably the size of an elementary school on the inside, so it's pretty big.

You can also see that near the landing pad there is a fuel dump, so there's a really big container containing ship fuel, you would assume, and some smaller barrels next to that. you can also see that along the walls there are search lights and some small blinking orbs that are probably cameras scattered around as well. The security, like Falx said, is a lot higher than you would have expected and that patrolling around the walls and a couple inside there are actually battle droids that are walking back and forth. Outside, in the desert heat, you do not currently see any organic life. It's all droids and cameras and things.

With all those advantages though, add two or three details to this that you're going to be able to take advantage of during this heist, some things that you notice before you try to infiltrate.

JO: I'm kind of tempted to say that some of the loading droids are in need of repairs, which shows that they're being worked to – I guess it wouldn't be the bone, but worked to the wire, and they're mistreated so we might be able to use that to our advantage by coercing them to revolt against these terrible working conditions.

NICK: Ooh, that's fun.

JO: Yeah. They're people, and they deserve to be treated nicely, and they're not being treated nicely.

NICK: Thank you. I agree. That's a great idea. What else we got?

LAURA: I would like it if we could see a central core camera that would indicate that all the other little cameras are being fed into that one, so if that one was destroyed it would probably cut all of the camera feeds.

NICK: Okay, yeah. The cameras all are wired, because Star Wars, that's fine, and they all connect to – Tink would call it a central server, but it's like a big ball that looks like a small version of a Doppler radar stuck on top of the building over there. If you were able to get on top of the roof of the building you could probably interface with it directly and shut all that down.

JO: Ooh. If only we had a hacker who would be able to do that. Hmm. [giggles]

NICK: If only. I think we can add one more detail if either of you can think of something that you would like to add.

JO: Besides one of the junker ships being in obviously better condition. I would prefer to pick the rattiest, ugliest of the junker ships that looks like it's not going to work but the interior is really good over one that looks really pretty and great.

NICK: We can spend the advantages that there are definitely some viable options inside. I think we'll have to discover exactly what those are when we get down there, but yeah. We'll say that you can see some of the ships haven't been covered in dust and the view screens are clean, so you know that some of them are functional and have been used recently.

Great. We see Mal and Xianna poking their heads up over the cliff. Xianna's got her scanner goggles focused down and Mal is nearby. Does Mal have electro-binoculars or anything like that?

JO: Mal is actually using what to us looks like a cellphone to view in what is essentially a camera function and zoom in on certain things.

NICK: Oh cool.

JO: That's how I find my glasses when I can't find my glasses, I use the camera function on my phone.

[laughter]

NICK: Oh, that's such a good idea. That has never occurred to me before.

JO: [smiling] Oh, so yeah, if you ever misplace your glasses your phone will have them in focus.

NICK: Hey~! So, you observe these things and you are scouting out and pointing to things and pointing out different options, and you realize that the only thing to do now is try to actually get into the base. Like I said, the back of the crane arm is within jumping distance if a little far. It is also slightly below the lip of the cliff so you don't have to jump up or equally. You'll be able to fall down to it a little. What do you do?

JO: I will jump first.

NICK: Okay.

JO: I'm just gonna, not a full running jump, but I'll go back a couple paces, brace myself, I'll even do a jump or two and then rush in and jump and aim to do a roll onto the crane.

NICK: Okay, so that's going to be an average Athletics check for you, but I am gonna flip another dark side point to upgrade one of those. [laughs]

JO: Uck! [laughs, wincing] Okay.

NICK: You think that's bad, wait until we see Xianna try to do an Athletics check here in a second.

JO: Well...

LAURA: Yeah... I just, I heard you say Athletics, so...

NICK: [laughs]

JO: [laughs] Oh goodness... Okay, that's two threats and four successes.

NICK: You have plenty of successes. I think you clear it by a wide distance. The threats are that you land and you roll and you don't make any noise as you land, because you were successful with that, but that the crane does shake a little and the electromagnet on the far side starts to wobble and the shadow down below is moving back and forth, and a couple of droids notice. None of them look up, but they are kind of alerted to the situation and just kinda looking around. So Xianna, you are up.

LAURA: Any way I can argue for a Coordination check?

NICK: See, I knew you were gonna ask that.

LAURA: Almost as if I have many points in Coordination and none in Athletics.

JO: I was gonna say, I think I might have a way to reason this.

NICK: Okay, I'm listening.

JO: Okay, so in one of Mal's bajillion pockets there is rope, enough rope to throw back up to Xianna so that way really all Xianna has to do is like make it to the other end of the rope, and so she could tie it to something if she wanted to tie it to something, or she could just use that to jump and hope that I'm strong enough that if she doesn't make it I can pull her back on.

NICK: I am fine with using the rope either of these ways. If you tie the rope down and tightrope walk, that's 100% Coordination, or you can tie a safety line and we see what happens from there. Up to you, Laura.

LAURA: Okay yeah, that would be preferable, and Xianna does go:

LAURA (as Xianna): So I did lose some toes on one of my foot the other month, uh, jumping is not great. Should have mentioned that.

JO (as Mal): Okay, well...

JO: And I pat down some of my pockets and I open one, and that isn't the right one, and I open another and that isn't the right one, but the third one!

NICK: [laughs]

JO: Third time's the charm, and I have some rope with two weighted ends, and I will hold one of the weighted ends and throw the other to Xianna.

LAURA (as Xianna): Okay. Great. This is going to work much better, because I think I might have just, I don't know, fallen.

JO (as Mal): Well, I kinda need a partner for this job, so...

LAURA: Is there a rock or anything that it could be tied to?

NICK: Yeah, there's rocky protrusions that look totally secure.

[sounds of heavy winds begin]

LAURA: Xianna ties it around the most secure looking rock and then also starts digging around in their pockets a little bit, goes into one of the more invisible pockets, pulls out a little baggie, and does snort it.

LAURA (as Xianna): Oh. I would have offered you some, but you already jumped, so... oopsies.

JO (as Mal): I'm good~ Clear head.

LAURA (as Xianna): Yes. Again, exactly. I am so glad we are on the exact same page.

[heavy winds fade]

NICK: So Mal, your partner that you are about to place your life in their hands just did a bunch of drugs before this. How do you feel about that situation?

JO: Different people have different definitions of clear heads.

NICK: Clearly. [laughs]

JO: And if I need somebody murdered, besides myself, Xianna would probably be my pick right now, and we might have to murder some people, so beggars can't be choosers.

NICK: Okay.

LAURA: So what would be the difficulty to then crawl down the rope? I'm trying to think of the right word, but like, sloth crawl? Yeah, like hand over hand with the feet looped up over the rope, so not tight-walking but like a sloth. [laughing] That's the only way I can think of it.

NICK: [laughs] That would just be an average difficulty. That's pretty straightforward.

LAURA: Okay. Three successes, one advantage.

NICK: Alright. You're able to get across very easily. You manage to even not shake the crane any more. We get a cool zoomed in shot of Mal reaching their arm down and doing the super-cool action hero forearm grasp and helping Xianna climb up onto the crane, and we get a cool sweeping shot of you both silhouetted against the dunes in the far distance in one of those panoramic movie shots that just show off that they obviously traveled somewhere to do the onsite filming. And, you are on a crane. You are probably roughly 200 meters above the ground. Now what?

LAURA (as Xianna): Okie. Thank you for helping. Do you want to just drop down, or... what now?

JO (as Mal): I was thinking we would ride the crane down and get around there, unless we can somehow get the crane over the top of the building so I can take out the cameras, but it's gonna be a little hard to not be noticed doing that.

LAURA (as Xianna): True. Yeah, let's just ride it all the way down. That seems fun.

JO (as Mal): I think fun will be when we get the grenades.

LAURA (as Xianna): Oh, okay, okay.

NICK: So when you say "riding the crane..."

JO: [giggles] We're just gonna ride it like a slide?

NICK: Hmm.

JO: Or because the crane looks like a T-shape what is on the other end of the T?

NICK: On one end there's the electromagnet that slides down, on the other end there's a big, blocky counterweight, and that's actually what you jumped to that was holding it over.

JO: Okay.

NICK: There is also a control cockpit up there where presumably anyone operating the crane would be, and there's controls in there that you could potentially get into and do things with. Then there is a ladder climbing down, and the rest of it is pretty much scaffolding.

LAURA (as Xianna): Okay, Mal. I am assuming since we have jumped onto the crane, and no one did anything, there is no one in the little crane box, so we could go and get in it and move the crane around, but they might notice the crane moving around.

JO (as Mal): They probably will notice the crane moving around.

JO: We have exchanged contact information on the ship ride over and definitely have a means to communicate with each other if we end up separated.

NICK: Oh yeah, absolutely.

JO: Cool.

JO (as Mal): How do you feel about dividing and conquering?

LAURA (as Xianna): Always a good plan. Nothing bad ever happens by splitting up.

JO (as Mal): Ehh, I appreciate your faith, because our choices are we can both go to the crane box and there's a good chance that we will then have to fight out of the crane box, or one of us could go to the crane box and the other – preferably myself unless you're good with computers – could use the crane arm to get over there...

JO: And I point to the big, wired camera dome thing on top of the building.

JO (as Mal): ...and disable the cameras and then come back to you.

LAURA (as Xianna): That works.

JO (as Mal): Do you know how to drive a crane?

LAURA (as Xianna): Oh, absolutely not, but I will try. I am sure I will figure it out.

JO (as Mal): I have complete faith in you.

LAURA (as Xianna): It will be fun! Okay, let's go.

JO: [nervous laugh] Okay, I'm gonna get ready to ride the magnet rope over to the camera hub when Xianna's in place.

NICK: Mal, as you are walking past the control box and Xianna is – I won't even make Xianna roll to pick the lock to get into it, because it's super simple – as Xianna's getting into the cockpit, roll me a hard Computers check, would you?

JO: Me? Okay.

NICK: Yep. Something you may or may not notice as you go by.

JO: Okay, three yellows versus three purples. I'mma be a little upset if I don't get a success.

NICK: [laughs]

JO: One success and one threat.

NICK: Nice. Okay. As you're walking by, I think Xianna settles into this really well-worn chair and starts flipping levers and switches and things start to boot on. Xianna, you're just touching stuff, you're not exactly sure what you're doing, but it looks very professional from Mal's point of view. Mal, as you look at it, you realize that this crane is surprisingly modern, in fact it looks like it has a rudimentary droid brain in it and can do some self-controlled things. Actually, you think if you took a minute with it you might be able to control it remotely, which would mean that you could potentially both ride it as you drive it from your data pad, if that was a thing that you wanted to do.

JO: That would be a thing that I would like to do.

LAURA: That sounds good.

JO: I'm gonna start basically mid-step as I'm walking by, this kicks in, and I pause for a moment in the middle of my step and walk backwards a few paces to actually look and confirm before I knock on the door as I open it.

NICK: Right before you open the door you see that there's a big hologram pop-up that has appeared before Xianna's face that says Warning: Disabling all failsafes, This is extremely unsafe, and Xianna's hitting the Yes button without reading all of these warnings going by.

JO (as Mal): [nervously and abruptly] Heyyy!

LAURA (as Xianna): Oh, 'ello.

JO (as Mal): Uh, Xi, uh... Xianna, I mean. This is actually, uh... Please don't touch that one.

NICK: [giggles]

LAURA (as Xianna): Oh, okay, sorry.

JO (as Mal): I can control this remotely. It's a lot more modern than anything I was expecting to find here, which is ironic.

LAURA (as Xianna): Oh, that's good, because I have no idea how to operate this thing.

JO (as Mal): That's fine. It's complicated. If you just give me one sec.

NICK: Xianna leans over while she's talking to you, Mal, and hits something, and the light above the cockpit just pops like a balloon. [laughs]

LAURA (as Xianna): Oopsies~

JO: I'm gonna push the button next to it to turn it off. Ahem.

NICK: [laughs]

JO (as Mal): It's all good. No worries. No worries at all.

JO: I'm going to pull out the thing that looked like a phone that does camera work and an actual data pad and I'm going to connect them together, and then I'm going to take a wire from my data pad and I'm going to plug the micro USB into the crane.

NICK: feigning incredulity] Jo, this is Star Wars, it's a space micro USB. [laughs]

JO: Okay, so it's a micro USB-C! [laughs]

NICK: Yeah. [laughs] You've never seen Anakin go 'damn it' and flip the cable over and over again trying to plug something in. It just doesn't happen.

JO: Yeah, well that's because everything has converted to using the same adapter.

NICK: Unbelievable.

JO: [laughs]

NICK: It completely ruined my immersion when they did that. it's never gonna happen. So, roll me a hard Computers check again to establish a wireless connection, but you're gonna have to add a black die to it because this is Star Wars and Star Wars doesn't like wireless stuff, so you're gonna have to jerry-rig some sort of antenna that will keep you connected to it.

JO: Sounds good. Oh, that's a lot of threats. Okay. That is two threats and a success, but a success is a success.

NICK: Yeah! You got it. Don't worry about those threats. I'm sure they'll never come up.

JO: [chuckling, suspicious] Uh-huh...

NICK: Yup. But you are able to definitely get controls. We see an over-the-shoulder shot of Mal holding their data pad and a quick display pops up that has basically left, right, up, down. It's the basic controls on a touch pad. So now you have remote access, and we see the crane shift a little as you make sure everything's attached.

JO (as Mal): Alrighty Xianna, are you ready to cause some trouble?

LAURA (as Xianna): Oh yes. I think I have already started causing the trouble.

JO (as Mal): Well, that was fixable trouble. I'm pretty sure the job was to cause some unfixable trouble.

LAURA (as Xianna): Yes! I saved my grenades.

JO (as Mal): [laughs] I'm looking forward to it.

JO: I'm going to get out and start making my way on over to the magnet part.

NICK: As the two of you leave the cockpit and work your way down, the wind is blowing pretty hard, you have to move kinda slowly to make sure you keep your balance, but the camera stays behind for just a

second on a blinking yellow light that looks kind of urgent inside the crane. But besides that, everything's good. You're able to work your way to the end and grab onto the control cable. We'll say since you have control of it that the electromagnet's up enough that you can actually very easily climb down and stand on it. What are you gonna do?

JO: I'm gonna swing it as quickly as I can to be over the dome. I'm going to tell the crane to swing as quickly as it can while it drops the magnet and heads in the direction of the camera, because I basically want to do it as quickly as possible. As it's going down I look to Xianna and I say:

JO (as Mal): You're probably gonna have to jump.

NICK: [laughs]

LAURA (as Xianna): [stressed] Ohh, I'm not good at the jumping.

JO (as Mal): Well, you can hold on and stay.

LAURA (as Xianna): Okay, I will jump.

NICK: Okay, so are you doing like a drive-by with the crane and jumping off?

JO: [smiling] Yep!

NICK: Oh gosh. Okay!

JO: [laughs] Go big or go home, Nick!

NICK: Hey, I'm for it. You're making my life easier. Go ahead and both of you roll me, I will take Athletics or Coordination this time, to jump off at the right time. The reason I was dead-set on Athletics before was because it was like a standing long jump which is very much just a straight thing...

LAURA: Yeah.

NICK: ...but falling can be a Coordination thing for sure.

LAURA: What's the difficulty?

NICK: This one's gonna be average.

LAURA: Okay.

JO: Okay.

NICK: We'll say you're not moving fast enough that it's a life risk, probably.

JO: Success! And a threat. God damn it.

NICK: [laughs]

LAURA: I got one success and three advantages.

JO: Oh good, you could counteract some of the threats I've collected.

LAURA: Heh.

NICK: There have been a lot, haven't there?

JO: I've gotten so many threats!

NICK: So, you jump off of the crane, you are able to land... With a success and a threat, Mal, you land but not super gracefully, and you roll to take some of the impact off, and the roof of this building is slightly slanted, and you end up rolling all the way to the edge of the roof and just barely catching yourself, and one of your legs is hanging over the side. It's not like you're at risk of falling off, but it was super-duper close.

JO: Mm-hmm.

NICK: And some dust and rocks and things tumble off of the roof and land on the ground, but it doesn't look like there's anyone nearby. Xianna, you do whatever the opposite of falling prone is. You land very stably.

LAURA: Three-point superhero pose.

JO: Yeah.

NICK: Well, so you're moving fast enough, you do the superhero pose but like the anime where you slide with the inertia a little bit and it kicks up a cool, really low dust plume.

LAURA: Nice.

NICK: Yeah.

JO: I'mma pick myself up off the roof and climb on up to the dome.

NICK: Cool. So you're at this server ball, essentially, and you can see from where you're at, you're pretty much out of sight, this building's wide enough that it covers sight lines from the ground, but you can hear that there's starting to be activity on the ground. You can hear some droids speaking to each other in binary, just like beeping and clicking as they're moving around, and it seems like more activity than when you first started observing. You can see that the cameras along the walls are starting to pan back and forth. None of them are pointed at you, but you're definitely on a bit of a time limit here. Are you trying to hack into the server and turn them off?

JO: Normally I would 'yes and' you, but I'm very tempted to just break it with my scythe.

NICK: Hey, do it, I'm down for that.

JO: Okay. I'm going to grab the small bit of hilt on my scythe in order to pull it out of its sheathe, and with a quick flip the entire handle of the scythe comes out, and I'm just gonna give it a nice, big chop.

NICK: Alright. It's an immobile, large target and this is a vibro-scythe which means it gets this slight blue haze around it. This isn't combat, but to see how effective you are at slicing this into one piece I want an attack roll anyway. Make me a Melee check that's just average.

JO: Okay. Ha-ho! Only one threat! [laughs]

NICK & LAURA: Nice!

JO: But I got successes, I got three successes.

NICK: Okay, so you just anime slice through this thing and bisect it diagonally and there's a long pause and then it slides almost silently to the ground. There is no sound of grinding metal because you've cut it so smoothly. This scythe, Xianna is really scary and you've never seen anything like it. The only thing you've seen do that kind of damage is Tink's vibro-axe, but this is so much cleaner, a more elegant weapon from a civilized age. But then as the ball is sliding it slams to the ground with a heavy thud and you can hear the droids down on the ground start to increase in frequency and on the far side you can see them start to fan out and look for stuff. But all the camera lights go out.

JO: Cool. Well, I guess it was about time for the threats to start catching up with me. I was so distracted by the threats that I forgot that I had successes on that roll. I'm gonna look to Xianna.

JO (as Mal): Well, time's a-tickin'. Where do you wanna hit first?

NICK: End of episode.

Outro

NICK: Thanks so much for listening to Tabletop Squadron. If you enjoyed our show, please consider logging into iTunes and giving us a five-star review. Five-star reviews will help new listeners find the show, and every time we get one the squad does an adorable dance. 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 else 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.

Mal is played by Jo Welsh-Wilson. You can find them at @Fallin_Forone on Twitter and on their podcast, Arms of the Tide, at @ArmsOfTheTide on Twitter, where they play a flammable plant wolf with depression.

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

Our game master is me, 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.

Follow the podcast on Twitter and Instagram at @Tabletop_Squad, and join our Discord and share all of your food and cute pet photos with us. We also sometimes talk about Star Wars. You can find the link to join our Discord on our website and in our pinned tweet. See you next time.