

Tabletop Squadron Transcript, Prologue 4:

The Holonet Has You

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: Oh, and one more thing. There's a little bit of interference on the back half of this episode. I tried to scrub as much of it out as I could, but there were a few problems that we weren't able to get around. We're still learning about recording a little bit but I hope you'll bear with us. I think the episode turned out really well despite that. Enjoy.

##

NICK: Hi everybody! We're on Prologue #4 of Tabletop Squadron. This week I'm here with Hudson. Hi, Hudson.

HUDSON: Hello.

NICK: How are you this fine day?

HUDSON: I'm doing OK. I'm happy to be there.

NICK: Oh boy, I'm sure this is going to be good. And you brought us sandwich stuff so you're our new best friend so that's always good too.

HUDSON: Yeah.

NICK: Tell me a little bit about your character.

HUDSON: My character is a tall Gigoran slicer, precisely 2.1 meters in high. He has this long cream hair all over his body. Black eyes. Large dude. Kind of reminds you of a Wookiee.

NICK: Yeah, but white yeti-Wookiee mix thing, right?

HUDSON: Yes.

NICK: OK, cool. Let's go ahead and jump right into it then.

##

NICK: You are staring at a black screen with scrolling green text. As you click through the computer, you hear someone walking behind you. A quick keyboard shortcut changes to a dictionary page from the Holonet. You refocus your eyes on the reflection in the screen to see a librarian, a Corellian woman with sharp features and graying hair, glance at you, sniff, and return to her patrol. She's barely a step past your study cubicle when you hit the key combination and the computer flicks back to the scrolling text.

You're deep within the university database, looking for any skeletons in the proverbial closet for you to sell to the highest bidder. You find a file marked confidential. When you select it, the screen goes blank. You are left staring at a blinking cursor and then slowly a message types itself on the screen.

"Wake up, Tink." There's a long pause. "Collect the Rancor protocol. Upload to a data spike. Bring to the following coordinates." There's another long pause. "We will pay triple."

The camera flashes from the screen to your face and then does a long sweep in a tight circle centered on you. You are hunched over a holoscreen while sitting on a cramped stool in a cubicle. It comes up to about your chest. You can see above it. And you're in the middle of the Coronet University Library. It's accessible to the public, but you have to pay a small fee to get in.

So you've got this message on your screen saying "Find the Rancor protocol. Upload to a data spike and bring it to these coordinates and we will pay you for it. That's all you know."

HUDSON: Hmm, I wonder if I can type back.

NICK: You can try.

HUDSON: Alright, I try to type back saying, "Who are you?"

NICK: OK. It does the three moving dots and it says, "Unimportant. Finish the job. You'll find out more." Then there's another moving ellipsis and it says, "The Holonet has you." And then the screen just dies.

HUDSON: [sighs] "This again. OK. Well, it is triple the amount of money. I think I'll go ahead and do this," I say in my inner monologue.

NICK: OK. So you have a couple of options. Why don't you make me a—What knowledge skills do you have? Do you have any?

HUDSON: Knowledge... I have Underworld.

NICK: Yeah, make me a Knowledge Underworld roll. This one will be hard.

HUDSON: Oh OK.

NICK: So that will be three purples.

HUDSON: Three purples and my Knowledge which is Intellect which is 4.

NICK: So you get three greens and a yellow.

HUDSON: Oh, I have...

NICK: Oh, you fail.

HUDSON: I fail.

NICK: But with—how many advantages?

HUDSON: Two advantages.

NICK: So a failure with two advantages. Alright, so you've never heard of the Rancor Protocol before. You usually get hired—you do like small time hacking missions, right? That's kind of what your job is?

HUDSON: Mhmm.

NICK: OK. So you do data retrieval for—I won't say corporate espionage. It's like ma & pop stores espionage.

HUDSON: Yeah, yeah, like the lower, lower echelons of the underworld.

NICK: Like Bill's Discount Electronics Hut wants to know what Bob's Discount Electronics Hut is putting on sale next week, and you go find out.

HUDSON: Yeah.

NICK: Rancor Protocol sounds like it would be either a database with a lot of information on it or like a pre-built program that would do something. You're not sure. But with those advantages, you do know that you have a friend who might know more. You have a buddy who works in the underworld for one of the more successful mobsters in Corellia. His name is Ceily Mox. Generally you can find him in a nightclub that's in the seedier part of town. That's probably like five or six miles away from you.

HUDSON: OK. I make plans to go to that nightclub. I go get another coffee and then just look at my social media.

NICK: Hell yeah. We'll just say in our version of Star Wars, everyone's got a social media page.

HUDSON: Yeah!

NICK: What would Facebook for Star Wars be called? There's got to be a good pun there.

HUDSON: Holo-er. Like Tumblr.

NICK: Holo-er. Yeah, so that's the one like where you're trying to get with an AI or a droid. Spacebook seems obvious.

HUDSON: Spacebook, yeah.

NICK: We'll go with Spacebook. So you look up on his Spacebook page. He hasn't checked in in anywhere for a while, but there are a lot of pictures of him in speeder-version of family sedans, like Honda Civic-looking cars, really boring, Neon Centra-type speeders, doing gangster poses in front of them. But you can't figure out why he would be. You usually have met up with him in chatrooms. You met him IRL a couple of times. So you need to get to where he's at. You could walk but like I said, it would be a long walk. You could hire a cab or however you want to get there.

HUDSON: Yeah, I think I'm going to hire a cab.

NICK: OK, so you walk outside of the library. The computer lab you're in was in the basement so you have to go up these wide sweeping, marble white stairs. You trip on your way up and get another glare from a librarian as you go through. You're not really welcomed here, but since you pay your membership fee, they can't tell you you can't come in and no one's ever caught you doing anything that was against the terms of service but you like to use these computers because they're really anonymous because they're old. So that's why you hang out here.

Because Coronet University—oh wait. You're not a student there anymore, right?

HUDSON: I'm not a student there anymore. I dropped out.

NICK: Yeah, so you dropped out but since you still pay the membership fee, you get in. So you go up these stairs and get to the main floor and it's just like meters and meters of waist-high shelves on you that go throughout the building on the main floor. And there are some desks where librarians are doing researchy things. And you see glass doors leading out front. And the shelves don't have books on them. They have like glowing blue lights affixed to like sticks of some sort of metal because they're like holobooks so it's very pretty and futuristic-looking.

And so you go outside and it's a cold day in Coronet on Corellia. Corellia being like the equivalent of space-Texas in Star Wars. It's where Han Solo is from. And Coronet is the capital city. It's on an island in the middle of a big old lake and it's got a lot of big sweeping spire towers that go hundreds of stories into the air. And in the middle of the city is Coronet University, which is a lot of low dome buildings, a lot of white stone, green rolling grounds, oak trees that are losing their leaves. It's really pretty and you see a lot of students, almost all of them human, hurrying back and forth between buildings and generally going to class or studying or chilling on the lawn. One person's playing space-Frisbee with another person. It's idyllic.

You head outside. You walk to the edge of the grounds and you hail a taxi and you have no problems there except it's kind of hard to fit in the taxi. You have to crouch down. You have your knees by your ears. And you give the guy the address for this nightclub. Takes about 15 minutes to get there. Coronet's not a big city.

You get to the small club on the other side of town. It's a—looks like a one-, maybe two-story building. There aren't any windows on the outside so it's hard to tell. It's made of brick, not nice like where you just came from. There are some tenement buildings on either side that are a lot taller.

And standing out front is a really big bouncer guy and as you get out, he says, "Ah, Tink, what are you doing here? We told you not to come back." And he flexes real hard.

HUDSON: "I know, I know. There's just someone important I need to meet here."

NICK: "You're not supposed to see the boss. She doesn't see anyone like you."

And at this point, you see your friend Ceily poke his head out the door and kind of wave at you and he says, "I know he said someone important, but I think he's talking about me. Just let him in, dude."

HUDSON: "I hold my friends in high regard."

NICK: "I appreciate that. That's why we get along, man." And he pushes past the bouncer who doesn't move so he pushes on the bouncer and just kind of like pushes himself away. He comes out and gives you a secret handshake. What does your secret handshake with this guy look like?

HUDSON: It's going to be a fist bump to an explosion to a turnaround.

NICK: Nice. Not bad. He doesn't do very well on the turnaround part. He almost falls over. Besides that, you pull it off without a hitch. And he leads you inside this club. The weird thing about this club is it's a thin hallway that goes to the back of the building, which isn't that far. Maybe 40 meters. And to each side, there are a bunch of doorways with dancing lights. And as you walk down the hall, there are people in the rooms, even though it's like the middle of the day. There's people in there having a rave but you can't hear the music. Well, you can hear one song but the lights are all going at different paces and timing and people are dancing different ways so you can only hear one tune, even though there's obviously different music playing everywhere else. It's pretty loud and hard to talk.

And Ceily says, "What are you—what are you doing here? Why—why did you come to see me?" And you can't really hear very well. And he goes, "Hang on." And he leads you into one of the rooms towards the back and it's just quiet again. It's a lounge. There's just some leather chairs and like a table with some drinks that are pretty old, like someone had been in here and left. And he says, "Alright, yeah, I told you not to bother me at work, but what are you looking for? What are you trying to do?"

HUDSON: So I don't want to completely explain to him that the entire story in case he can swoop in and take this job from me. But I do explain that I'm looking for something called the Rancor Protocol and I can pay handsomely if I'm given that information.

NICK: "Alright, well, um standard fee, I guess. You can buy me lunch or something. You've helped me enough. I'm not going to charge you like crazy."

HUDSON: "Oh, that's great of you."

NICK: "Yeah, we're good buddies. It's pretty awesome." You take a moment to look at this guy. He's a blond, pretty scrawny-looking kid. He's got glasses on and a black vest and he fidgets a lot. And he puts his hands together and says, "So going after the Rancor Protocol, huh? That's pretty gutsy. I've heard of it. It's one of those things like..." Well, can't say holy grail, but "It's like the space holy grail of slicers. It says they've got a bunch of stuff on it that may be about the Empire. I heard it could have old transponder codes for the Jedi Order which is ridiculous 'cause that's like saying you could hack yourself to breathe in space. Jedi don't exist. I don't know what people are talking about. But I did hear a rumor that there's an old databank somewhere deep in the tunnels below the city. It's supposed to be full of all sorts of cool data. Maybe you could try there. They say it's in the deepest part of the tunnels."

HUDSON: "Hmm, that sounds great. Thanks so much for the information."

NICK: "You're welcome, friend." And you guys do your handshake.

At that point, you turn to leave and as you go out into the hall, the music's different. There's actually people in the hallway kind of changing rooms, jostling around, having a good time. You hear from the back of the building a mechanical voice say, "Ceily Mox, please report to the boss. Ceily Mox." And he goes like deadly pale. He looks to the backroom where there's a beaded hippie curtain over the door and that's it. And you can see a shadowy figure sitting on a big chair that looks almost throne like. He says, "Well, you'd better go. I have to look into this." And he kind of straightens his vest and looks like he's putting on a good show, but you can tell he's very, very nervous. He says, "So I guess I'll see you around." And he mumbles, "I hope." And he turns to go through the beaded curtain thing.

HUDSON: I walk away pretty quickly. Yeah, brisk pace.

NICK: You go back outside and as you are leaving, the bouncer refuses to move and he like shoulder-checks you on the way by and he goes, "Hey, look out, you alien jerk," and kind of glares at you.

HUDSON: "I respect that you have the right to tell me that I'm an alien jerk, but I don't appreciate that, sir."

NICK: "I don't know why you're talking to me about rights and things. I just know that you're ugly and you should get the heck out of here." And he like shoves you a little bit.

HUDSON: [sigh] "Alright." I walk away.

NICK: [laughs] Just so you know, every other character the first time someone has said "jerk" to them has shot that person so good job.

HUDSON: Yeah, I think I'm going to take a different path.

NICK: I'm sure that'll go well while you're with them. That's gonna go great.

As you're walking away, you hear the bouncer grumble under their breath, sounds something like, "Albino Wookiee," and he goes back to what he was doing.

So you are vaguely aware that there are tunnels under the city of Coronet that are ancient. Built by an aquatic species that live in this system. So there's Corellians that are humans. There's a couple of different species that live on different planets nearby that like water and swim and stuff and at some point in the ancient path, they built tunnels under the city. You know those exists. You're not sure exactly where they are and being told the "deepest parts of the tunnels" is not super specific, so how would you like to gather some information to figure out where you're going?

HUDSON: I think I'm going to go to this back alleyway I know about where there are some people where you can go there and find the information that you need.

NICK: Cool, so you're going to like the illegal gossips club situation.

HUDSON: Pretty much.

NICK: So make me a Streetwise check.

HUDSON: Streetwise, alright.

NICK: Do you have Streetwise?

HUDSON: I do not. I have Underworld Knowledge.



NICK: You can use Knowledge. So Streetwise would be to ask people. Underworld Knowledge would be do you know it already?

HUDSON: Got it.

NICK: So you could do an Underworld check first.

HUDSON: I'm going to do Underworld first just to get there.

NICK: OK.

HUDSON: So that's going to be one in Underworld, four in Intellect.

NICK: This one will just be average so two purples.

HUDSON: OK. Alright, I have...

NICK: Hey.

HUDSON: Two...

NICK: Two successes and an advantage? No.

HUDSON: Yes.

NICK: Wait, no advantages. They cancel out.

HUDSON: Yup, that's right.

NICK: So two successes. So you do know where the tunnels are. You do know where this gossip club is. And you have a decent idea of if your whole idea is to go down, there's parts in the middle of the city, which you're near, that you know would be a decent place to start. You could also go to the gossips club to see if you could get some more information if you wanted to.

HUDSON: Um... actually, I think I'm just going to pull out my datapad.

NICK: OK.

HUDSON: And I thought I was going to go to the gossipy club, but as it turns out, I start to get the feeling that I can just find out what I need through chat rooms on the dark web.

NICK: OK. The stark web? No. The...

HUDSON: I felt like it would just be called the dark web.

NICK: The dark web works.

HUDSON: The dark, dark...

NICK: The dark hole web?

HUDSON: Dark net?

NICK: Dark net? OK, so you want to—you're just going to do a Computers check then and see how deep you can go.

HUDSON: Yes.

NICK: And so since you're just doing this through a datapad through city Wi-Fi, it'll be an average check but you'll have a black die because you're kind of holed up and you're trying to do this on the fly. Do you have any abilities that might remove a black die?

HUDSON: That's what I was about to say. Codebreaker to decrypt communications, break codes. No, just codebreaker. That doesn't remove Computer. That just removes it if I'm decrypting something.

NICK: So we'll say it removes the black die, though, since you're not paying for the Wi-Fi you're using.

HUDSON: Ah, I see.

NICK: That was kind of what the black die was for.

HUDSON: A small chuckle that I was able to get around the Wi-Fi. Just a little victory.

NICK: Hey, that WAP2 thing that happens still has me nervous. Ooh... you fail.

HUDSON: I failed.

NICK: You failed bad. Two failures.

HUDSON: Two failures and no advantages.

NICK: Yep. So your web search doesn't really work. The websites that like to pass around urban myths about the tunnels or about items are hidden in them all run on Flash and your datapad can't run Flash. So you hack around it really well and you get to exactly where you need to be and it's just a blank screen with a little red X in the corner that shows you don't have the right hardware for it.

HUDSON: Yeah, well, I feel pretty defeated. I'm going to go get whatever the equivalent of an ice cream cone is.

NICK: [chuckles] OK. So you're just walking down the street thinking and you find a push cart with an umbrella with a guy—they're not like ice cream. They're like frozen... imagine a snow cone that's not made out of broken ice, it's just a solid piece of ice but it's flavored. So they're like little frozen ice sculptures shaped like different things in different flavors on like a stick.

HUDSON: Oooh. I go over there.

NICK: The guy just kind of nods at you and you've got what kind of flavors? So I guess you've got Jogan fruit and apples because that's a thing in Star Wars and mystery flavor and black. Black is a flavor. And they're all just shaped like different animals that are native to the planet.

HUDSON: I'll go with mystery flavor.

NICK: Mystery flavor? OK, it's a clear one. You take it and give the guy some credits and he rolls his cart off along the way and it tastes--

HUDSON: It's always pink lemonade.

NICK: It's always pink lemonade. [laughs] Yeah, mystery flavor is clear so you wonder "How do they get the flavor in there? It just looks like ice!"

HUDSON: It's going to be beyond my intelligence forever.

NICK: So you've got yourself an ice cream cone. What are you going to do next?

HUDSON: Walking down the street thinking to myself about what I'm going to do next, I decide I'm going to go back to that gossipy club area. Just try my luck there.

NICK: Sure, so turns out, you're in the right area anyway. Most of your local hangouts involve not walking too far. How convenient.

HUDSON: Although I'm enjoying this ice cream cone, I have to down it because it's not the kind of thing you walk into this area with.

NICK: How do you eat your ice cream cone through your weird breather mask thing that you've got?

HUDSON: What I do is lift it up and very quickly take a bite. And it kind of like hurts but the mask is used to being on me and I just like put it back on.

NICK: [laughs] OK, so you like mildly suffocate each time you want to eat something.

HUDSON: Pretty much unless I configure it to where I don't need to breathe, but for right now I do.

NICK: That's awesome. So you stand on the edge of this alleyway. There's only like a couple of people in there. You know that if you'd gone at, say, at night or before or after a major news event, there'd be eight or nine people hanging out in this alley. Right now there's just two. There's a Corellian with black hair like slicked back, in a leather jacket, smoking a death stick. Then there's a small Corellian woman with like dark bobbed hair and she's kind of crouched in the corner and she looks like she's fiddling with some little piece of technology against the wall. You don't know either of their names but you've seen them before. Like they're people who know things. Which one would you like to talk to?

HUDSON: I'll talk to the... you said Corellian?

NICK: Yeah, just human. You're on Corellia. They're human people.

HUDSON: Yeah, I go up and talk to the human.

NICK: OK, they're both human.

HUDSON: Oh, sorry.

NICK: The boy or the girl?

HUDSON: The girl.

NICK: OK, so the guy with the leather jacket, you walk past him. He's like, "Hey, what do you want to know?" You just shove him out of the way and he's like, "Hey!" and you just keep going to the lady.

HUDSON: "Nothing right now!"

NICK: [laughs] And the lady looks up and says, "What can I do you for?"

HUDSON: "I'm looking for some information on getting to the underground tunnels."

NICK: OK, so you need to roll me a Streetwise check.

HUDSON: Streetwise, got it.

NICK: Because the very definition of Streetwise is being able to ask people on the street for information without looking suspicious.

HUDSON: Alright, great, and what's the difficulty?

NICK: We'll say... hard. No, we'll say average. But you have a black die because it's the middle of the day and you just shoved somebody.

HUDSON: Yeah, that was not a smart move on my part. Alright, I...

NICK: Hey, you made it.

HUDSON: I made it but with two disadvantages.

NICK: With two threats.

HUDSON: Or threats.

NICK: So she says, "Well, I could probably help you out for a nominal fee." And you two haggle back and forth for a while about money or favors. You end up owing her a favor she says she'll call in at some point.

HUDSON: Yeah.

NICK: You learn that her name is Jo. That's it.

HUDSON: Jo.

NICK: Just Jo. J-O. She's very careful to spell it for you.

HUDSON: OK.

NICK: And you see that the piece of technology that she's been playing with is a thermal detonator that's been cracked open and she's playing with the explosives and changing the trigger device around. It's very dangerous and scary looking.

HUDSON: Have I introduced myself yet?

NICK: No, I don't know. Have you?

HUDSON: I don't think I have, but when I do, I give a fake name but I'm not very good at fake names so I say my name's "Rink."

NICK: [laughs] "Well, nice to meet you Rink. That's fine. I don't normally ask for my client's names, but I'll bear that in mind."

HUDSON: "I mean, you'll need to find me if you want a favor."

NICK: "That's fair. So the tunnels. There's a lot of things going on down there right now. Some of the swoop gangs have started trying to hide there." Swoop gangs are like biker gangs but their bikes fly. That's like the only difference. "There's some swoop gangs hiding down there right now. Some of them are trying to make glitterstim and CorSec..." That's Corellian Security, this planet's police. That's me talking, not her. She would assume you know what CorSec is.

HUDSON: [chuckles] Like, "I know what this is!"

NICK: Yeah. "CorSec has been launching sting operations down there so it's really kind of turned into a running turf war while they try to maneuver around who's going to own the tunnel, but I know a route you can take where you can avoid most of that. And you said you're just... Why are you going down there? What do you need?"

HUDSON: "I don't like to reveal my business."

NICK: "OK. Well, there are some entrances nearby that you could go in one and navigate, I guess. There's one main tunnel that stretches pretty much the length of the city and lots of off-shoots from there. I don't know what else what you would want to know specifically."

HUDSON: "Hmm, you know, what are you doing right now? Would you want to join me for this?"

NICK: "Absolutely not! I don't know what you're doing down there but I'm busy and I don't want to get shot so..."

HUDSON: "I mean, it is a little bit risky. I completely understand. Yeah, just point me in the direction of what you think is the best entrance and I'll be on my way."

NICK: "Alright so if you go down this alleyway and back behind that building..." And she gives you some directions. It's probably about a ten-minute walk and you leave and you follow the directions. And you end up, it looks like it would be an entrance into a sketch shop that's been closed for a while. And you open the door which isn't locked and there's just like a ladder leading down a manhole straight down where this storefront would be. So are you going to climb down?

HUDSON: I look every direction twice including up and down, even though there's just floor there, and then climb down.

NICK: If we were playing Deadlands, I'd make you make a sanity check right now but we're not so yeah, no one appears to be following—actually, make me a Perception check.

HUDSON: OK. Just in case.

NICK: Just in case.

HUDSON: Alright, so that's my... And what level?

NICK: Average is fine.

HUDSON: I need to reroll this one. It was on a thing. Oh no.

NICK: You passed. You just have some threats.

HUDSON: Some threats.

NICK: Wait. Did you?

HUDSON: Uh...

NICK: No, you failed.

HUDSON: I failed.

NICK: You failed. One failure. You don't see anything. I'm sure it'll be fine.

HUDSON: Great. I go down the ladder.

NICK: So the ladder goes a lot further down than you would expect. You've been in the tunnels just near entrances, looking for stuff. Occasionally building security will be tucked down there so you have to go

down and a block over to get to their electronics panel or whatever. But this one goes a lot deeper. Normally they start out just below street-level. And you climb down that ladder for a good three or four minutes and you get to the bottom, and the air is cold and damp and dark.

HUDSON: And there's no one around.

NICK: Not yet. It's also extremely dark. Do you have anything that lets you see in the dark? Or any lights?

HUDSON: I do. I have a... wait, wrong sheet. I have a light stick. I'm trying to find it on my sheet.

NICK: I mean, I believe you. If you have a glow stick, that's basically a flashlight.

HUDSON: I have a glow stick.

NICK: Great, so you turn the flashlight on and you look around. So the tunnel is almost low enough to be scraping your head because how tall are you? You said...

HUDSON: 6.1 meters so that's about 7 feet.

NICK: Yeah, 7 feet. You have to duck your head a little. If you stood up straight, it'd brush the ceiling and there's spiderwebs and things.

There's a thin walkway and then the rest of it would be filled with running water, but it's just got a tiny trickle at the bottom so there's like a four-foot down to the rest of it. You could walk down there or walk on the runway. That's up to you.

And that goes on for a ways and then the tunnel splits left and right.

HUDSON: Mhmm. I do the walkway. And after I go through the walkway, I don't really know whether to go left or right, so I have this—

NICK: Do you have Survival?

HUDSON: Let me see. I don't, but I have—sorry, I'm trying to think of the word. What are those dice?

NICK: Chance cubes!

HUDSON: I have chance cubes.

NICK: Oh, that's awesome.



HUDSON: And generally when I can't make a decision, I use chance cubes.

NICK: OK. So a chance cube is like a d6 basically with different color sides. We know this from Star Wars: Episode 1. And we also know the chance cube we see is like super unfair. It has like two blue sides and four red sides or like five red sides and one blue side. Is yours a fair chance cube or not?

HUDSON: It's a fair chance cube.

NICK: It's a fair one, OK.

HUDSON: It's deciding the fate of myself so I don't want to...

NICK: Right, right, that seems fair. So it's got a red side and a blue side and you roll it and it comes up—well, let's actually roll a force die, would you?

HUDSON: Sure. Oh my goodness. It just went diagonal on one of these. Let's try that again.

NICK: A dark side! So you get red and decide to go right. And as you walk, make me a Perception check please. This one will be average but with one black die because it's dark and damp and scary.

HUDSON: OK. I have a...

NICK: So it's a wash with a threat.

HUDSON: Yes, with a threat. That's what I was trying to think of.

NICK: Got it. So you're walking along thinking about... I don't know. What do you think about when you're on the job?

HUDSON: I think about if anyone's around me. I think about, yeah, just like the next step.

NICK: OK. So you're thinking about, OK, I got to find some way to go down. You've decided down is the direction you're trying to go because everyone, all of your information you've gathered said it's deep so you're looking for down. And as you walk, you walk straight into some swoop bike members who were crouched over a small fire on this walkway around the corner. So you turn this corner and you smack into them, physically bump one, and they look up and say, "What the heck are you doing here?" And they immediately go for blasters and you need to go for initiative.

HUDSON: Oh my... How do you roll initiative?

NICK: That would be Vigilance for you.

HUDSON: OK, so... Oh my. [laughs]

NICK: Not very Vigilant, are we?

HUDSON: Not very Vigilant.

NICK: That fits with the theme since Vigilant is like how well you respond to surprises and you walked into some people.

HUDSON: Yes.

NICK: Oh, you're extremely not Vigilant.

HUDSON: I have an advantage.

NICK: An advantage, yeah. So they're going to get to go first. One pulls a knife and the other one pulls a small blaster. And the guy with the knife is just going to swing a knife at you. So roll me two greens and two purples please. And he sucks. He fails. You manage to... how do you dodge this guy trying to stab you?

HUDSON: I pull out my vibroaxe and shift to my left so he misses me.

NICK: OK. Geez, you have a vibroaxe? [laughs]

HUDSON: Yes. That's actually pretty much the only weapon I have.

NICK: It's a good weapon. It's like bringing a bazooka to a fist fight but that's fine. So the other guy is going to beat you because you're struggling with the strap on your ax to pull it around, so he's going to try to shoot you. Roll me a yellow and a green versus one purple. So...

HUDSON: So...

NICK: Hey, he hit you. So you're going to take five damage minus your soak.

HUDSON: Minus my soak.

NICK: What's your soak?

HUDSON: Three.

NICK: Three, so you take two damage. This shot hits you like straight in the chest. And it sizzles some of your fur. It's uncomfortable but you're fine and you see them both look very nervous as you're standing there holding a vibroaxe and they just shot you and you're still standing there. And there's nowhere for them to run.

HUDSON: "Last chance to drop your weapons, gentleman."

NICK: Roll me an Intimidate. That's a skill. It should be.

HUDSON: I don't—

NICK: Coercion? I think it's called Coercion.

HUDSON: Coercion is here.

NICK: Yeah, roll me that. Against two purples.

HUDSON: Oh.

NICK: That looks like negative, ghost rider. That is a failure. So the guy with the knife says, "Last chance for YOU to drop YOUR weapon." And it's your turn so...

HUDSON: I'm going to have to vibroaxe the guy who just threatened me.

NICK: Sounds good. So that would be your Melee attack.

HUDSON: On this one, I think I forgot to ask you this, I think I only have a point in Brawl. Can I use Brawl instead?

NICK: Yeah, Laura asked me about that. That's fine. So for listeners at home, Gigorans are not actually a race in the Edge of the Empire yet so we're kind of reskinning the Wookiee stats that should be pretty much the same except instead of giving them a point in Brawl, we gave them a point in Melee. That's the only difference. So you should probably change that on your sheet.

HUDSON: Yep.

NICK: Melee attacks are always two purples.

HUDSON: That's right.

NICK: Unless they're not.

HUDSON: OK, so that cancels.

NICK: Well, you hit him.

HUDSON: Yep, I have a success and an—

NICK: Nope, just a success.

HUDSON: Just a success.

NICK: So you hit him. What is your damage on your vibroaxe?

HUDSON: My damage is Brawn +3.

NICK: So you do 6 damage to this sucker. You just bury your ax into his shoulder and he just drops. He's not dead, but he's bleeding a lot and he's on the ground. He's trying to scream but also trying not to be too loud. And you have a moment to think, "Huh? Why is he worried about making noise?"

And then the guy with the blaster is going to shoot you again. He runs up next to you and tries to put the blaster into your chest and he says—No, that would be stupid. He backs up from you because you have an ax. And he aims at you and says, "You killed my friend! And I'm going to kill you!" And he pulls the trigger. So that's a green and a yellow against two purples. Ooh... he hits you good.

HUDSON: Yep.

NICK: So that's three successes and a threat. So you can use the threat against this guy however you feel is appropriate, but the three successes are going to do—what's 2 more damage than last time? 7 damage.

HUDSON: Minus soak.

NICK: Yeah, minus soak.

HUDSON: So that's 4 more. I'm starting to get hurt here a little bit.

NICK: Yeah, you're bleeding.

HUDSON: Got a 17 total.

NICK: You're not in the best shape, but you're still standing. He looks very nervous about the fact that he shoot you twice and that you're still coming at him.

HUDSON: Yeah. So I'm going to go at him again.

NICK: OK.

HUDSON: And add a blue die for that.

NICK: OK.

HUDSON: Yeah.

NICK: You can take a blue die because the threat will be that he is more scared of you now than he was.

HUDSON: Yes. And the blue didn't help me at all with nothing.

NICK: You still rolled really well.

HUDSON: Yeah, that's a good roll. How many? That's two successes. I think that's it. No, and an advantage.

NICK: And an advantage. OK. So with two successes, it's the same as the other guy. How do you beat this guy?

HUDSON: I walk up to this guy and forward push my vibroaxe into his neck.

NICK: OK. So just *bloop* and his head pops off. Your vibroaxe when it's turned on makes this really high-pitched whining noise kind of like a dentist drill. It's not really loud, but it's—anyone who has ever dealt with vibro-weapons before, that noise makes them very noise.

HUDSON: Yeah.

NICK: That guy does not have time to be nervous because his head is now off and he plops to the ground and it's quiet again. Can you make me a Perception check please?

HUDSON: Alright.

NICK: It'll just be one purple.

HUDSON: Alright, a triumph. Oh. A triumph...

NICK: So a triumph is worth a triumph and a success. So you have a triumph, a success, and one advantage.

HUDSON: That's right.

NICK: You hear, after the noise of the fight fades, the stomp of boots coming toward you. With the triumph, you know that they're coming from the other direction where you went and you also recognize that those are CorSec boots. You have been chased by CorSec before. You recognize the sound. It's very distinctive.

HUDSON: I run.

NICK: Alright. You run. Are you trying to be sneaky or are you just trying to like book it?

HUDSON: Just trying to book it.

NICK: Alright, make me an Athletics roll to see if you can outrun CorSec people before they identify you.

HUDSON: And that roll is a...?

NICK: It'll be average, but you'll have a blue die because of the triumph. You heard them very early.

HUDSON: Wow, all of the... There we go. I have a...

NICK: Two successes and a threat.

HUDSON: Two successes and a threat.

NICK: Two successes and a threat. OK. So you make it off down the hallway. The threat is that you get lost while you're running because you're not paying attention to where you're going.

HUDSON: Oh no.

NICK: So you're not exactly sure how to get out of here now, but you absolutely out-distance them. As you turn a corner and another corner, behind you, you hear exclamations of surprise as these police officers find someone bleeding out and someone beheaded in the corridor. But they stop to investigate that and you get away.

So you are now deeper in the tunnels and no one is chasing you as far as you know.

HUDSON: I slow down a little bit.

NICK: OK.

HUDSON: Try to get myself together.

NICK: Sounds good. So you continue down this corridor and seemingly by luck or happenstance or some guy named Forest, you notice a spiral staircase inset in the wall. And you take that staircase down and you come out in this actually much larger corridor. It's probably ten meters across? No, probably twenty meters across. It's got like four 1.2 meter-wide walkways on either side and in the middle there's a large like canal full of water that's flowing, just not very fast. The water looks black and really smooth and you can see a little bit of current in it, but you can't see anything below so it's just water.

HUDSON: It looks deep.

NICK: Yeah, it looks deep. And you walk down that way for a while. Make me either a Perception or a Knowledge: Underworld check.

HUDSON: I'll do Perception.

NICK: OK, so make me a Perception check. As you're walking, you're being kind of hyper-focused on where you are. You found some stairs down. You figure there may be more.

HUDSON: Yeah, average?

NICK: Yeah, average is fine. Hey, you did it. Good for you.

HUDSON: Yeah.

NICK: So a success and a threat. Don't worry about the threat. I've got it covered. So as you're walking, you come to kind of an open area. That canal is still flowing. And you take a minute to lean against the wall and you realize that there's a very hidden kind of doorway right next to you. It's like if you took a normal doorway and rotated it into the wall like 60 degrees so you could only see a sliver of it, so there's a little notch and you can slide through and there's another spiral staircase down.

You take that spiral staircase for quite a while and when you get to the bottom, you're in a big cavern. And set up against the wall, you see an old databank. It looks like it's tucked into an alcove and it looks like a standard utilities databank. You've used things like this before to like mess with buildings, cut

security power, reroute sewer systems to mess with people, all sorts of little things. But you see this one has some strange markings on the side and looks probably 100 years old. It's kind of covered in like cobwebs and so it's like a big, six-foot-tall box that looks kind of like a standing closet and it's got the two big film wheels on the front with magnetic tape between the two and they've got cobwebs in there. And then there's a bunch of toggle buttons and switches. And then a small mechanical keyboard pops out of the metal you know and then there's a dusty, monotone... Monochrome? Is that what it's called?

HUDSON: Yeah.

NICK: One-color screen. That's set into it but the whole thing looks like it doesn't have power right now. So you walk over and analyze it. You see that stuff. Make me a Mechanics roll to see if you can get it running again.

HUDSON: Alright, that would be... an average?

NICK: Yeah. Oh, you're good at Mechanics.

HUDSON: Alright. We have one, two... two, wait, three successes and an advantage.

NICK: Alright. Yeah, that's a pretty good roll. So three successes and an advantage. You are pretty easily able—it wasn't plugged in so you plug it in and you're able to clear some of the dust out and those two wheels start to spin and groan to life and the screen pops on and you've got access. So what do you do now?

HUDSON: I explore through the files a little bit to see what's in there, what all the fuss is about.

NICK: OK, so make me a Computer check please.

HUDSON: Alright, we have two advantages and a success.

NICK: Nice. So you're able to get a pretty good feel for the architecture for this system very quickly. The system is a standard utilities archive, but very, very outdated. It's like multiple operating systems back. The only reason you know how to navigate it is because you used to play with these systems like out of curiosity. You find some surface level stuff and you find—how many advantages did you say you had?

HUDSON: I had three advantages.



NICK: So with that many advantages, too, you find the ways to control the canal a little bit but most of those functions are shut down. Like it looks like this thing doesn't have access to that anymore. You find a deeper archive that's password-protected and you also find access to some security cameras that you didn't know existed in these tunnels.

HUDSON: Mhmm.

NICK: So now what?

HUDSON: Well, no one told me I had to break this password so I'm just going to leave it here. I put a data spike in to take the data.

NICK: OK. Cool. So you just download the data encrypted still. Neat. With the advantages you've accumulated so far, you even without encrypting it, you're like 90% sure it's the right thing.

HUDSON: Yeah, I mean, I just try the top five most commonly used passwords on there.

NICK: OK, so what are the top five most commonly used Star Wars passwords?

HUDSON: Alright, so we're going to go with X-wing, TIE fighter, blaster, password, password1.

NICK: Password1. [chuckles] OK, those don't do it. But yeah. you download the data onto the data spike. This data spike that you had had multiple adapters on it so you find the one that fits into the whatever the Star Wars version of a USB is and pull it out.

HUDSON: Yeah.

NICK: So you've got the data. You've got access to some security cameras. What are you going to do now?

HUDSON: I'm going to look at the security cameras, see what the best way out is or if I could go out the way I came in.

NICK: OK, so that's a good idea since you're still kind of lost. You're not exactly sure how you came in. You use the cameras. You're able to trace your path back. As you're clicking through, you actually see a camera that is pointed on the door you found, that hidden door, and standing on that walkway next to that river, you see a Nautolan woman. She's being held up by a Corellian lady with dark curly hair. She's got a pistol pointed at the Nautolan woman and you can't hear what they're saying—there's no audio—

but they appear to be arguing and you also see a guy leaning against a wall, looking kind of out of it. The resolution isn't great so you can't exactly see what's going on.

But as you watch, there's a flash and like a quarter-second delay later, you hear the noise of a blaster going off. And then the Nautolan dodges the shot, grabs the lady, and like punches her. And they both go tumbling into the water.

HUDSON: Hmm, I run out to see what all that's about.

NICK: OK. So the staircase is pretty long, but you head up. By the time you get there, the scene's changed a little bit. The guy against the wall and the Nautolan woman are gone. When you look at the wall, you see that there's a streak of blood against the wall and the woman who had tumbled into the water with the Nautolan woman—ooh, do you know Xenology? Is that a skill you have?

HUDSON: No.

NICK: Roll me Xenology.

HUDSON: OK!

NICK: [chuckles]

HUDSON: What difficulty?

NICK: This one's going to be hard.

HUDSON: Oh my...

NICK: Dang, you're smart.

HUDSON: Yeah, so I actually...

NICK: You completely wash out.

HUDSON: Yep.

NICK: It's a failure. OK, well the Nautolan woman must have drowned because she was under water for that long and you haven't seen her.

HUDSON: Yep.

NICK: And the guy must have gotten away.

HUDSON: I don't know much about Nautolans. They probably can't live underwater.

NICK: Yeah, those head-tentacles, what do those do?

HUDSON: Flotations devices? I don't know.

NICK: [laughs] But the woman with curly hair, soaking wet. Her hair is plastered to her. She's just laying face up on the ground. You can't see her gun anywhere. What do you do?

HUDSON: I walk over to see if she's dead.

NICK: You feel for a pulse. It's fluttering. She seems kind of touch and go. Like she's probably okay... maybe? But you could do a Medicine check if you want to try and double-check.

HUDSON: Yeah, I'll double-check with a Medicine check.

NICK: Sure.

HUDSON: Which is a...?

NICK: Just average. Seeing how someone's visible state is.

HUDSON: I have two advantages.

NICK: OK, so you know that she's alive and with the advantages, so you fail. You're not able to stabilize her. You're not sure exactly how. But with the advantages, you're like pretty sure there's an 80% chance she'll be fine.

HUDSON: Alright. I don't really know much about medicine or saving someone's life so I kind of just push on her chest a little bit and slap her a little bit to see if she can wake up.

NICK: So water kind of bubbles out of her mouth and her eyes flutter open and she kind of looks at you and she mumbles something and she passes back out.

HUDSON: Hmm, I'm curious what was said, but--

NICK: It didn't sound like words.

HUDSON: Oh, mumbling?

NICK: Just grumbly, unconscious people words. Yeah.

HUDSON: I feel kind of bad because I don't want to just leave her here so I pick her up, throw her over my shoulder, and kind of like—I saw on that camera where that guy was, right?

NICK: Mhmm.

HUDSON: So I go look and see if I can find him in case they know each other.

NICK: So looking at the guy, you see the streak of blood starts at where his chest would have been and slides down onto the ground. Like he was already bleeding. He leans into the wall. Then he like slumped to his feet. Then a little later, there's a smear and a couple of little of dribbles of blood like he walked away.

HUDSON: Alright. Well, I guess this means I should be going then.

NICK: So you manage to retrace the way you came. On the cameras, you also saw riot squads of CorSec officers. You saw some more swoop bike gang members, kind of in little clusters. It looks like they've been playing cat-and-mouse through these tunnels for a while. They're all armed. They all look very upset.

But also through the camera, you saw another way to get back to the surface pretty quickly. It's actually in the direction that those little droplets of blood are. So you could rework your way back to the tunnel where you started or you could just try to find the nearest exit. It's up to you.

HUDSON: I'm going to rework my way back through the tunnels, but I'll still have her over my shoulder. I'm not going to just leave her there.

NICK: OK, that's fine. Make me a Stealth check.

HUDSON: OK.

NICK: To try and get out of here without running into any guards. This one is just average. They're not really looking for you and you're very—oh, you can have a blue die because of knowing the layout of the tunnels pretty well at this point.

HUDSON: Alright, so that is a failure and three advantages.

NICK: Where's the failure?

HUDSON: Oh, sorry. It's actually a success and an advantage.

NICK: A success and an advantage. You're able to pass everybody. The success is the lady... we'll get to that in a sec. So you've got this person over your shoulder. You're carrying her through the tunnels and you manage to make it back to the entrance you came in without any problems. There are a couple of tense moments with you ducked into an alcove and booted feet stomping by. Or there's a point where you're in and out a different hallway, like leaning against the wall in the shadows, which is not great for you because you're like a giant, white hairy blob so stealth isn't really your jam.

But you hear some swoop bike members say, "Yeah! And then someone cut Johnny's head off! These CorSec guys are getting real serious." Then they run off into the tunnel after that. So you're now the ghost of the Coronet tunnels. Good job.

HUDSON: Alright.

NICK: And you make it back out to the surface. The advantage is that this person kind of wakes up as the cold air hits her face. You're able to set her down and she can kind of stand. She looks very groggy.

HUDSON: "Who are you?"

NICK: "I'm not going to tell you that. Thank you for saving me, I'm assuming, because I'm alive. But no, I'm not telling you anything."

HUDSON: "I mean, I'm no hero but I did save your life so I kind of am a hero. You should probably get going to wherever you need to go."

NICK: "Well, thank you for saving me. If you ever need help, I guess I owe you." And she slips you a card with a comm number on it. "So call me if you need something, I guess." And she winks at you and she saunters off. She looks really cold because she's very wet.

HUDSON: I think to myself, "I have that favor from earlier, so I wonder if there's like a way that like if they ever ask me for a favor, I can transfer it to this favor."

NICK: I don't know. Maybe. We'll see.

So you take your data spike and you get another taxi and you get them to drop you off at the coordinates you learned at the public computer earlier. So the taxi lets you out and drives away. Do you tip the taxi driver or no?

HUDSON: No, I do not.

NICK: Do you not tip? Important character facts about Tink everybody. He does not tip.

HUDSON: He does not tip.

NICK: So the taxi driver drives away. You hear him grumbling to himself as he peels out, although on a speeder I don't know how you peel out because you don't have wheels but it's fine.

And you find yourself standing in front of a low, nondescript building that's between two Corellian spires. So they're these tall, giant skyscrapers that go to a point and there's another one and because they're like hundreds of stories tall, these bases are like quarter of a mile wide and stuck between two of them there's this small building. It looks kind of like a brick.

As you approach the building, you see that there's a door, although all you can really make out is a faint outline. When you get close, a robot eye on a stick pokes out of the wall. It stares at you for several seconds before declaring, "E chuta," and retreating back into the wall.

After a couple of seconds of waiting, the door slides open and you walk into a narrow, it's just all brushed steel hallway with doors lining the halls and one door at the end. It's probably a hundred yards away from you.

And as you walk in, the door to your immediate right is open and you see a protocol droid is standing in the door. He sets a small plasteel box inside a large transparisteel case. So these are Star Wars words. Plastic. Glass. OK. The lid slides shut automatically. As you watch, the box begins to rattle and a small paw punches through from the inside. The little gray box looks weak and cheap. You see a white rat-like creature about nine inches long with large fangs scramble out of the box. It immediately begins scratching at the case, leaving long white lines on the transparisteel.

The protocol droid shakes its head at the creature and says, "Oh my." Then perks up as it turns around. "Ah yes, you've arrived. Wonderful to see you, sir. I trust you have the data spike."

HUDSON: "Uh... I might."

NICK: "Well, if you can give it to me, we can move onto the next step." He like holds out a droid hand expectantly.

HUDSON: "First, who are you?"

NICK: "Oh, I am a protocol droid and I serve the person who hired you for this job."

HUDSON: "Which person?"

NICK: "I'm not at liberty to say. Surely you would imagine from the anonymity of the message that he would not want me sharing his identity so easily."

HUDSON: "Alright, I guess I'll trust you on this one." I hand over the data spike.

NICK: He takes the spike and just jams it into his neck. And there's a little flash of light and his eyes dim and then he says, "Excellent. You appear to have the data, though it appears it's still encrypted. We should be able to work with this." He points to a door that's at the end of the hallway. The last one and he says, "If you'll follow me, you'll be met with you compatriots." And he eases past you and waddles down the hallway.

At the end of the hall, a door slides open and you see a warm, wood panel room with an expensive looking boardroom table in the center. Sitting at the table is a Togrutan male and a Twi'lek female that appear to be in the middle of a discussion. Both are clutching tumblers of Corellian whiskey. They're like beginning to argue and the Twi'lek woman looks very annoyed and the Togrutan guy looks like he's really enjoying the conversation.

On the other side of the table, you see the same Nautolan woman as from the camera feed. And she's sitting there. She looks a lot dryer than you would expect and she's staring at the other two. Her expression is unreadable. You see a single empty chair at the table.

The protocol droid says, "Please have a seat and the master will begin shortly."

HUDSON: I go and sit down but I'm a bit taken aback that I just saw this woman on camera fall into a river and now she's here.

NICK: So as you sit, the Nautolan woman looks at you and nods politely. The other two are ignoring you. The door slides shut with an audible click.

The end. Ba-naaa~!

HUDSON: Ba-naaa~!

NICK: Cool.

[Hudson continues singing]

NICK: [chuckles] That's not the song I was thinking, but it works.

## Outro

CAMERON: Thanks for listening to Tabletop Squadron. If you enjoyed our show, please consider logging into iTunes and giving us a 5 star review. 5 star reviews help new listeners find the show. You can find more about Tabletop Squadron on our website: [tabletopsquadron.com](http://tabletopsquadron.com), or on our Twitter and Instagram: @tabletop\_squad.

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