

Tabletop Squadron Transcript – Season 2, Episode 8:
The Ball Slappers Strike it Home

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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 hunt for galactic treasure, staying away from a bitter rival and growing closer together.

We don't have very much to talk about this week, but I do want to take a second to thank all of you for your continued support. Your podcast reviews and Patreon support help us to keep going and grow the show, and each one of them is so, so appreciated. Thank you all for being with us on this adventure.

Music credit and content warnings are available in the show notes this week.

So now, let's get into the episode.

##

NICK: Hello! Welcome to Tabletop Squadron, Season 2 Episode 8. I'm your host and game master, Nick. It's a beautiful... day.

CAMERON: [laughs sarcastically]

HUDSON: Nah, it's hot.

NICK: It's a hot ass day.

LILIT: That is a lie.

NICK: I mean, the sun is out. That's nice, right?

HUDSON: I like it to be dreary.

CAMERON: [giggles] All I can think of is "Good morning! It's a beautiful day! The sun is shining. The birds are singing. The tank is clean. [gasps] The tank is clean!"

[laughter]

NICK: I was not expecting Finding Nemo to come up.

CAMERON: Me neither! But that's where my brain went when you started talking about the weather.

NICK: Great. Well, everybody, let's go around the table, introduce yourself and say who you're playing today starting with Nemo. ... And by that I mean Cameron.

CAMERON: I don't think I'd be Nemo.

NICK: Oh, you'd definitely not be Nemo.

CAMERON: Okay. I am Cameron, and I am playing Karma Nailo, the Nautolan bounty hunter, and...

NICK: And up next we've got Lilit.

LILIT: Hello. I am Lilit, and I will be playing Xianna'fan, a Twi'lek smuggler.

NICK: Great. Last but not least we've got Hudson.

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

NICK: Fantastic. Before we get into things, let's do the Destiny Roll!

CAMERON: I got two light side.

LILIT: I got two light side.

HUDSON: I got a dark side.

CAMERON: Hey-hey.

NICK: So we got four light side and one dark side?

CAMERON: Indeed.

NICK: Okay. When we last left off you had managed to assemble a crack team of volleyball experts for your prison yard gamble to try to secure materials for a riot and subsequent breakout. We last saw you as you took the court... net?

CAMERON: We took to the sand!

NICK: As you took to the sand for some volleyball out on the prison yard. HK is your referee. The ball is torn and old and worn and maybe has a little bit of metal peeking through parts of the skin. We see Tink and Xianna and Karma and Blue and Ziller and Tadzi'texa all lined up on one side, and you walk to the net to shake hands with the opposing team, and... who's the opposing team? Y'all got any ideas? Like, I could make one, but just curious if we want anybody specific to show up. I was gonna make Ziller be one of the opposing teams, but y'all recruited him, so...

HUDSON: This is the first in a tournament, right?

NICK: Yeah. You've got three or four rounds that you're gonna have to do.

HUDSON: Okay. So for this team, can it be a group of elderly prisoners?

NICK: Sure.

HUDSON: And then they can be called the Pecan Sandys, because they're sand.

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK: That is very good. Also, Filbert is definitely on that team.

HUDSON: [laughing] Filbert's on the pecan Sandys?

NICK: Yeah.

HUDSON: How old is Filbert?!

NICK: Like a bajillion years old.

HUDSON: [laughs]

CAMERON: Filbert's a Yoda.

NICK: Yeah.

HUDSON: Oh, that's right, that's right. Okay, I forgot that.

CAMERON: They either come in baby or in old.

NICK: There's no middle ground.

HUDSON: [laughs]

LILIT: Is Filbert like middle-aged?

NICK: I think he's like reasonably old. It's hard to tell. He has white hair.

LILIT: So maybe like 700.

NICK: Yeah, somewhere in there.

LILIT: Because Yoda's like "peace out, I'mma die" old.

NICK: Yeah, and he's not that old, but he's not a young whipper-snapper by any means.

[quirky and jaunty music begins]

HUDSON: So the team walks out, and it's fucking hot outside, right?

NICK: Yeah.

HUDSON: Okay, and they're wearing leather jackets for some reason, and like dark shades to look cool.

NICK: [laughs]

CAMERON: I particularly like the look of the prison jumpsuit with a leather jacket over it.

NICK: Yeah, it's not a bad look actually. So they come out and it's all much older prisoners. You see a lot of wrinkles. You see a lot of gray hair. Leading the way is Filbert at his great height of 1 meter tall, and he pulls his sunglasses off and tosses his leather coat.

CAMERON: His sunglasses?

NICK: Yeah, he's wearing sunglasses.

HUDSON: Yeah, they're all wearing sunglasses.

CAMERON: God, they're so cool!

NICK: Yeah, and tosses his sunglasses and coat out of the court.

NICK (as Filbert): Oh well hey! Looks like we're gonna be playing some volleyball together. That's a lot of fun.

NICK: Each of you needs to describe one of the other elderly prisoner volleyball players. [laughs]

HUDSON: [laughs]

[quirky music ends]

CAMERON: I think one of them has to be a Herglic, because we've established that there's a weirdly high percentage of Herglics in this prison. It's a humpback whale Herglic.

NICK: Wow, that's what I was gonna say.

CAMERON: Ha! Because they look old, right?

NICK: Yeah!

CAMERON: See! We should get married~

NICK: [smiling] Okay.

HUDSON: [chuckles]

NICK: I do!

CAMERON: [laughs]

HUDSON: One of them is a Tusken Raider with a hunchback, and they grumble to themselves and move closer and try to stare people down, but they're wearing sunglasses so it doesn't really work because no one really catches eye contact because you can't catch eye contact with sunglasses.

NICK: Well and they're wearing sunglasses over their goggles that they have.

HUDSON: Yes they are.

[laughter]

NICK: Great. Lilit, do you have anyone you would like to add to the volleyball team?

LILIT: There is a very old Human lady that has bright purple hair and is just covered in tattoos.

NICK: Cool!

HUDSON: My idea was one of them would walk up and have like a grimace on their face and start snapping their fingers in rhythm, but then someone would try to call their name and they wouldn't hear them, and they'd be louder.

NICK: [splutters]

HUDSON: "Jezzy! Jezzy, stop that!" And he keeps snapping his fingers, trying to be really intimidating. It doesn't work. Can't hear him either.

NICK: It's a Dug, so they're snapping their feet fingers too, so it's weird.

HUDSON: Yeah.

CAMERON: Egh...

LILIT: Corellian-Side Story is next week!

[laughter]

CAMERON: Anyone who's seen West Side Story knows that snapping as you approach the opposite gang is the most intimidating thing you can do.

NICK: And then the last one is just Burt Reynolds with a mustache chewing some gum looking a little confused. It's just a Human with salt and pepper dark hair and a jumpsuit.

HUDSON (as Tink): Guys! Guys! That's Burt Reynolds!

LILIT (as Xianna): Who?

CAMERON (as Karma): Who?

HUDSON (as Tink): Burt Reynolds, the holo actor.

LILIT (as Xianna): I don't know him.

HUDSON (as Tink): No, that's... In all those movies!

LILIT (as Xianna): Which ones?

CAMERON (as Karma): [smiling] Which ones?

HUDSON (as Tink): Well the only movies I've seen him in are all the Gator series.

NICK: You all approach the net to shake hands. While these prisoners seem older than you a few of them seem pretty tough, kind of the same look that Filbert has of somebody who's been in the system a long time and knows how to get through it, and Burt Reynolds snaps his fingers and pops his gum and winks at y'all's team and says:

NICK (as Burt): Meet the bayou's baddest good old boy.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh! He said the thing! Y'all don't know this? Really?!

LILIT (as Xianna): No, no idea.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh my god, he said the line! Ugh.

CAMERON (as Karma): I kinda missed what he said. I'm sorry. Can you repeat it for me?

HUDSON (as Tink): He said "I'm the gator's baddest good old boy." You know, the thing?

CAMERON (as Karma): The what?

LILIT (as Xianna): No, I do not. Tink, nobody watches the weird movies you do.

HUDSON (as Tink): I don't watch many movies at all, but that series was life changing.

LILIT (as Xianna): I've just never heard of it.

CAMERON (as Karma): Yeah...

HUDSON (as Tink): The Gator Trilogy? Ugh.

CAMERON (as Karma): What's a gator?

LILIT (as Xianna): Do you mean the Gators Trilogy? With the giant gators? You know, the first one is just Mega Gators, and then the second one is Gatornado.

[laughter]

LILIT (as Xianna): And then the third one, Gator VS Mothra.

HUDSON (as Tink): That is not what I'm talking about. That is a very different series I'm assuming.

NICK: HK has been watching you all as you shake hands under the net and walks to the center.

NICK (as HK): Alright, assume your positions. The game will begin momentarily. I definitely know the rules to volleyball.

NICK: We get the shot of your six person team huddling, and the camera angle is up looking up to you all, and you need to assign positions to everyone. Now, the thing about that is you need a Defensive Specialist who rolls Leadership, you need three Blockers who will be rolling Athletics, and you need two Setters who will be rolling Coordination. So who's doing what?

LILIT: I should be rolling Agility.

NICK: Xianna is a Setter. Okay.

HUDSON: Oh, oh, okay. Yeah. So, I have Coordination. Can I do the other one?

NICK: You could, or you could do the Athletics, or you could do Leadership. Up to you.

HUDSON: Let's not do Athletics or Leadership. Let's do Coordination. [laughs] That's a better chance.

NICK: Okay. Tink and Xianna are the Setters. Karma, what are you doing?

CAMERON: I think I'm probably a Blocker.

NICK: Yeah, probably.

CAMERON: Because that's Athletics, yeah?

NICK: Yeah, so that leaves you with Blue, Ziller and Tadzi, and they all just kinda look at the three of you because it's your team. Where do you want them to go?

CAMERON: I think Blue's a Blocker.

NICK: Okay.

CAMERON: For the other two I'm torn, because I feel like Ziller would be good for the Defensive Specialist because he was the leader of a gang, so surely he has some leadership skills.

HUDSON: That's what I was thinking.

CAMERON: But I don't know if Tadzi's a good Blocker, and they did express concern about their health.

NICK: Y'all have to make a call.

HUDSON: I think Ziller should be lead.

CAMERON: Yeah. We can rotate around in between games too.

HUDSON: We'll see how this one goes.

NICK: One might even say that would be a good idea, because the people up front might take some damage in this. Okay, so we see you all assigning positions. Tink and Xianna are Setters, Karma, Blue and Tadzi are Blockers, and Ziller is the Defensive Specialist.

NICK (as Ziller): Great. I'll make sure we're all in the right place, brothers.

NICK: And does two thumbs up and just can't help but glare at Xianna and Karma a little bit, but then winks at Tink. So, here's the other thing. Would anybody like to try to hurt somebody on the other team?

LILIT: Okay, so there is a question.

NICK: Okay.

LILIT: If Xianna was going to crush up a bag of flaming hot Spunyunns and use that pocket sand style to throw into somebody's eyes, would that be considered hurting someone?

NICK: Okay, so let's do it this way. I'm gonna tell you how the rules work and then we're gonna modify it for that. So, you basically have to pick how overt you wanna be on a scale from one to five. Five would be like you walk under the net and go stab someone, one being super subtle, and then that changes the difficulty of your attack roll. If you say I'm walking over to stab someone, it's a simple check, like you're absolutely gonna wreck their mess, but if you say it's a one it's super sneaky, you're not gonna get caught most likely, but it's gonna be a daunting check.

CAMERON: Oof.

NICK: Then based on how sneaky you are that's how difficult the Stealth check is, so it's reversed, so like a five the Stealth check is daunting, a one, the Stealth check is simple, so it's like you have to set the balance between the two. If you get caught on a Stealth check you can get sent to solitary if you're killing somebody or made to sit out of the game if you're getting caught. So like, if you get caught blowing painful powder in someone's eyes they'll probably take you out of the game. If you get taken out of the game you don't get to roll dice to contribute to the pool.

CAMERON: Is five formidable?

NICK: Yeah, so it's only four difficulty, it's not five.

CAMERON: Oh okay.

NICK: That's basically it. So anyway, jumping back into it, you would still have to do a set how subtle you were trying to be with it, but I would let you roll a Skulduggery check instead, and instead of doing damage, depending on how the Skulduggery check did, it would give black dice to the other teams roll, if you would like to do that.

LILIT: That is a thing I will like to do. Yes.

NICK: Cool, because the only way you're gonna hurt people is Brawl or Melee, and that's not gonna go well for you.

CAMERON: [laughs]

LILIT: [weakly] Yeah...

NICK: Okay. How subtle are you trying to be, one to five?

LILIT: Like a two.

NICK: Like a two?

LILIT: But, before this happens, Xianna goes up behind Tink and says...

LILIT (as Xianna): Ooh, Tink, block me for a second.

LILIT: ...and hunches behind Tink, and one, just whacks a spot on the jumpsuit and you hear the pop of the bag...

[laughter]

LILIT: ...and has now crushed up those Funyuns, and then two, reaches deep into the jumpsuit and pulls out a small bag of impact, because I think she has like one bag left.

NICK: Okay. Now Lilit, before you do impact, this is a three or four round tournament. If you do it in round one you're gonna be out...

LILIT: Ooh.

NICK: ...and you'll be jonesing by the time you get to the end of the tournament.

LILIT: Wait, do I have one bag or two bags?

NICK: You also promised to pay somebody some impact earlier, so that could be a problem.

LILIT: Yeah, okay. So I'm gonna save that bag.

NICK: Okay.

LILIT: But yeah, so anyways, she smacks the bag, crushing it up, and gets some in her hand. Do these jumpsuits have pockets?

NICK: Yeah.

CAMERON: Yeah.

LILIT: Puts her hand holding this crushed up Funyun, flaming hot Spunyun dust, and is like holding that in her pocket, and will casually walk up to one of the people and try to fling it in their eyes but in a way where it just kind of looks like she's moving her hand up to then go itch her head or a lekku.

NICK: Okay. Make me an easy Stealth check. It feels kind of silly to even ask that from you, but that's okay.

LILIT: Yes. Two successes, two advantages.

NICK: Okay, so you're good there. You wanna use the advantages to give you some blue dice on your Skulduggery check?

LILIT: Yes.

NICK: Cool, so your Skulduggery is going to be hard.

LILIT: A triumph with a success, another success, and an advantage.

NICK: Wow. Do you wanna use your triumph that you mess up someone's eyes so much that they're basically out of the game? Like, that's a crit, so you could do that if you want.

LILIT: You know, yeah. The powder gets in their eyes and irritates it enough that their eyes are too watery and sore to really see much of anything, and they're pretty much not gonna be able to be of any use in the game.

NICK: Cool. Who did you attack with this?

LILIT: Oh, yeah... Well probably someone that would have been standing towards the front.

CAMERON: [giggling] Take Filbert out of the game.

HUDSON: [laughs]

CAMERON: The only named character on the other team besides Burt Reynolds.

HUDSON: No-no, Jezzy.

LILIT: Oh! Filbert would actually be one of the easier ones to take out, because he's so short. He would have been really easy, because you barely have to take your hand out of your pocket. She can just do a quick little hand motion and then be like yep, not doing anything, and walk away.

NICK: Yeah. You're standing at the net getting ready to start—most of these checks will happen throughout the game, but this one you do right at the beginning—and you just dump a bunch of flaming hot Spunyun dust into Filbert's eyes as he sets up in the middle, and he goes...

NICK (as Filbert): AGH! [stammers] My eyes!

NICK: ...and just starts walking off of the court, and HK says:

NICK (as HK): The game will commence shortly. Please return to your position.

NICK (as Filbert): Quiet there, tin man. I can't see.

NICK: And sits down in the dust rubbing at his face and is like crying pink and it's not good.

LILIT: Xianna has the rest of the bag and is lifting it up to pour all the rest of the dust in her mouth.

LILIT (as Xianna): Oh no, Filbert! Did something happen to your eyes? Such a tragedy. Oh no...

NICK: [laughs]

CAMERON: [laughing] Karma turns to Tink.

CAMERON (as Karma): You know, sometimes I understand why people shoot her.

NICK: [laughs]

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah, I can see it.

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK: Karma or Tink, do you try to do any violence?

HUDSON: I get this serious look on my face and I turn to Karma.

HUDSON (as Tink): I'm gonna hurt these people.

CAMERON (as Karma): Good!

HUDSON (as Tink): Hey Jezzy! You old bastard, you suck!

HUDSON: And I try to hurt their feelings.

NICK: So instead of doing violence I'll let you do psychological attacks, I guess. Roll... Coercion?

LILIT: Leadership!

[laughter]

NICK: I think it's Coercion.

HUDSON: If it's Coercion this will be the worst roll ever. What's the difficulty?

LILIT: Yeah, that's the only thing I can think of.

CAMERON: Piloting: Planetary?

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: Average.

LILIT: A reverse Charm.

HUDSON: So we're going one green die versus two purple, everybody. [laughs]

CAMERON: [gasping laugh]

NICK: You wanna flip a light side point?

HUDSON: No, because I kinda wanna know what happens. So if this doesn't work does it hurt me? Is that what's going on?

NICK: No. This person's gonna probably try to hurt you.

HUDSON: Oh, okay. No light side. I'll roll the dice. Okay, a success and two threats.

[laughter]

NICK: Oh, interesting. You see the Dug who had been snapping at the net earlier brush a tear away from their face and grimace at you, and they seem a little distracted by your hurtful words. Then, you also notice them pull a shiv out of their jumpsuit, check the blade, and put it back.

HUDSON: Ooh.

NICK: Hmm, I wonder what that'll do. Karma, do you have any violence that you would like to inflict or are you just gonna play volleyball?

CAMERON: I actually have an important question about my character sheet before we start this thing where I could get stabbed. I think I got hit earlier when I fought with Ziller.

NICK: Yep, you sure did.

CAMERON: Are those wounds gone? Because it's been over four days. I just had 2 wounds.

NICK: Let's say over four days, yeah, you're back to full health. That's fine.

CAMERON: Okay. Cool, that seemed important. I don't think I'm going to attack at the moment, but I take a defensive stance. If anyone comes after me with any weapon I'm going to try to take the weapon.

NICK: Okay.

CAMERON: Because I will be far more efficient with a blade.

NICK: Okay, we'll see how that goes. Alright, so everybody roll your checks, please, but you do get two blue dice, because Ziller's actually very good at strategy.

CAMERON: Huzzah. Karma has two successes and two advantages.

HUDSON: I ended up with a success and four advantages, but I had four failures that got cancelled.

CAMERON: Dang.

NICK: Wow.

LILIT: Six successes and one advantage.

NICK: Wowza. Hold for math.

HUDSON: [hums Final Jeopardy tune]

LILIT: [hums elevator music]

CAMERON: [chuckles]

HUDSON: [joins Lilit in humming elevator music]

LILIT: [continues elevator music]

HUDSON: [hums Mii Channel tune]

[everyone contributes parts to the Mii Channel tune, laughing throughout]

NICK: Cameron, can you roll me a yellow and two greens at hard difficulty, please?

CAMERON: Sure. Two successes.

NICK: Two successes. Tink, you take 8 damage as the Dug that you {ascended} earlier stabs you in the stomach.

[beach party music begins]

HUDSON (as Tink): Oof!

NICK: And also roll me two yellows and a green? Versus hard difficulty.

CAMERON: [snickers] Two successes with five threats.

NICK: Five threats?!

CAMERON: All of the purples came up threats.

NICK: Okay. So through the course of the game, Burt Reynolds manages to throw several elbows into Tadzi, and they do not enjoy that very much. They take a certain amount of damage, and you can see one of their eyes swelling up, but towards the end Burt turns around to celebrate with his team and Tadzi kicks him in the back of the leg and he falls prone.

[dramatic bass noise]

But the game is kind of a blow-out. Y'all destroy them pretty handily, especially Xianna is just everywhere, all over the net, in the background, just anything that gets hit towards them Xianna is there to knock it back up and is able to set Karma and Blue up for some really just stunning spikes. You all dominate. You're able to finish it in two sets. They don't really have a lot of chance to do anything back. You win the game, and HK has you all come to the net to shake hands.

CAMERON (as Karma): Good game. Good game.

NICK (as ???): Good game. Good game.

CAMERON (as Karma): Good game. Good game.

NICK: Tadzi looks like they're thinking about stabbing Burt, and Blue puts a massive hand on their shoulder.

[beach party music ends]

NICK (as Blue): Not now.

NICK: Tadzi nods determinedly, and Burt looks slightly nervous. Filbert is still sitting on the sidelines rubbing at his eyes because he can't really see.

NICK (as Filbert): Now all I seem to be able to see is a big light and some shadow.

NICK: And then the Pecan Sandys are defeated by the Ball Slappers and are led off of the court.

HUDSON: I yell at Burt from a distance.

HUDSON (as Tink): Burt! Burt, I loved you in Gator!

NICK: He winks at you and does finger guns.

NICK (as Burt): You get it, because uh... it's a big hat. It's funny, because it's big.

NICK: And then walks away.

[laughter]

LILIT: Xianna's just sitting there like:

LILIT (as Xianna): I think I am more confused than when we started.

CAMERON (as Karma): What's happening?

NICK: So, the next game is against two other teams. You're able to go sit in the shade for a little bit. You're all kinda sweaty. Tink, you're bleeding a little bit from where you got sliced. It's not a deep cut, but it opened you up. You have a little time to talk and strategize before your next game.

CAMERON (as Karma): Okay, out of the six of us, who is currently armed?

LILIT (as Xianna): I just have bags of Spunyun.

CAMERON (as Karma): Which are very dangerous.

HUDSON (as Tink): I have three shivs.

CAMERON (as Karma): You have three shivs?!

HUDSON (as Tink): I have three shivs.

LILIT (as Xianna): Oh wow!

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah.

CAMERON (as Karma): Why did you not pass those out?!

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh no, Ziller gave them to me.

NICK (as Ziller): Where did you get shivs? I didn't have any shivs, brother.

HUDSON (as Tink): [chuckling] Wait, was this a dream? Who gave me shivs?

NICK (as Ziller): Show us the shivs.

HUDSON: I pull out straws.

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK (as Ziller): I can see why you would be confused, brother, because they're long, straight and dangerous, but that's a straw.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh...

LILIT (as Xianna): I mean, you could use them to poke somebody in the eye.

CAMERON (as Karma): I mean, does it still count as a melee weapon though?

NICK (as Ziller): I think, definitely, that would not count as a melee weapon.

CAMERON (as Karma): Dang!

[laughter]

HUDSON (as Tink): I'm sorry y'all, I hope this wasn't too disappointing, but if we get celebration drinks later I'm ready.

NICK (as Tadzi): I have like three or four shivs. Do you need one?

CAMERON (as Karma): Yes please~

NICK: Tadzi pulls their jumpsuit open a little and just starts pulling out—it looks like a sharpened CD-ROM, and a vibro-spoon with the handle sharpened down to a spike, and just a straight icepick.

NICK (as Tadzi): Take your pick.

CAMERON (as Karma): I want the icepick.

NICK (as Tadzi): Alright. That's a good one. Don't get it confiscated. I had to do a lot to get that.

CAMERON (as Karma): I won't, hopefully.

NICK: And they spin the icepick on their fingers and hand it to you hilt-first.

CAMERON: Huzzah. I put it into my jumpsuit.

NICK (as Ziller): So that went pretty good, but Xianna, I think you were moving a little too much. Remember, this is a marathon not a sprint.

NICK (as Blue): Also, if I could get the ball more I'd really like to work on giving people concussions with my attacks. I think that's very important.

LILIT (as Xianna): Ooh! That is a good plan. Not the me having less energy part, don't worry about that, but giving you the ball to give people concussions, very fun, in like a terrible long-term damage kind of way.

NICK (as Ziller): Tink, I noticed that you did exactly as well as we thought you might, and I appreciate you. I think maybe after this we should go try to meet up with Big Jeyb for no reason. Maybe you'll have interested him with your athletic prowess.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh... yeah, that's actually—yeah, Big Jeyb told me he wanted to hear about the game after it was done, and he even taught me a move, the Pick and Roll.

NICK (as Tadzi): When did you meet Big Jeyb?

HUDSON (as Tink): Uh... Uh... The other day.

NICK (as Tadzi): Oh okay, that makes a lot of sense. Well, hopefully you do know Big Jeyb, because if you claim that you do and you don't, those type of people tend to end up ventilated in the back room of the kitchen.

HUDSON (as Tink): Nah, me and Jeyb, you know, we, we uh... we're acquaintances at least.

CAMERON: [chuckles]

NICK (as Tadzi): Okay. I'm sure that'll be fine.

HUDSON: [chuckles]

NICK: We pan away from the bleachers in the shade where you all are sitting and binding your wounds, and we see another volleyball game going on. One of the Blockers falls to one knee from some inexplicable wound that has appeared in their side, and one of the teams is defeated as they slowly run out of players and the two remaining players aren't able to get to the ball fast enough. HK calls you all over, and it is time for the second game.

NICK (as HK): Welcome to the quarterfinals. Congratulations.

CAMERON (as Karma): Thank you!

HUDSON (as Tink): Thank you.

NICK (as HK): Or no, these would be the semifinals, because there's only one more game after this. Um...

HUDSON (as Tink): I trust you, HK. It's whatever you want it to be.

NICK (as HK): And I already ate all the Spunyuns... so it doesn't really matter.

CAMERON: Karma looks confused.

NICK (as HK): Because I'm a droid, that would be confusing, wouldn't it?

CAMERON (as Karma): Indeed.

NICK (as HK): Welcome to the semifinals.

[laughter]

NICK (as HK): Congratulations on making it. Your performance awarded you a bye game because we had an uneven number of teams. Please take your positions for the next round.

NICK: You all turn away from HK to see the other team. What do we want this team to be?

LILIT (as Xianna): Ooh! We had a bye game. Do you think other people got straight games?

HUDSON (as Tink): Ah! I see what you did there.

[laughter]

LILIT (as Xianna): I hope our next one is a gay game.

HUDSON (as Tink): A gay game?

LILIT (as Xianna): Yes.

HUDSON (as Tink): I mean, it's already in the name.

LILIT (as Xianna): You are right. Anyways.

LILIT: This team...

NICK: Yeah, what do we want?

LILIT: They have to have a theme.

NICK: Obviously.

LILIT: It is a team of Chadra-Fans.

NICK: [chuckling] Oh no.

CAMERON: [giggles]

LILIT: I think that's funny.

HUDSON: What's Chadra-Fan?

LILIT: Little bat people.

NICK: They're Chadra-Fans, but it's actually 12 Chadra-Fans and they're standing on each other's shoulders.

CAMERON: They're Chadra-Friends.

NICK: Chadra-Friends! That's the name of the team!

CAMERON: Yay!

[laughter]

NICK (as HK): Thank you for coming, Chadra-Friends, the reigning champions of the north cell block.

LILIT: Okay, but important question.

NICK: Yeah?

LILIT: Are they obviously two Chadra-Fans standing on top of each other in separate jumpsuits or did they get big jumpsuits to hide the fact that it is two different Chadra-Fans per unit?

NICK: So I was picturing they're just standing on each other's shoulders. I don't know where they would have got big jumpsuits, but we could do that bit if you wanna do that bit.

LILIT: Laundry.

NICK: Yeah. Maybe they all work in the laundry. Okay. You see six abnormally tall Chadra-Fans.

LILIT: [chuckles]

NICK: And you hear what sounds like a twelve-voice squeaking chorus say...

NICK (as Chadra-Fans): We're gonna win!

NICK: ...and they twitch their little noses at you. We get another scene of you all huddling up preparing for the game. How do you assign positioning? Same?

HUDSON (as Tink): I think we should do same this game then switch it up next round based on more evidence.

LILIT (as Xianna): I mean, I see no reason to switch things up.

CAMERON: How is Tadzi looking?

NICK: Tadzi doesn't look great. They grimace and say:

NICK (as Tadzi): Yeah, I can take front line again if you want. As long as nobody goes after me too hard I should be able to make it.

LILIT (as Xianna): What if we switch you with somebody else and you can go into the back, just in case you get stabbed again.

NICK (as Tadzi): Yeah, I would rather not get punched anymore, I'm kind of seeing double here, but it's up to you.

CAMERON: Yeah. I think the person to switch out would be Tink.

HUDSON (as Tink): Put me in, coach!

CAMERON: Because you're far more brawny than Xianna for the Athletics check.

LILIT (as Xianna): You are already in. We are just moving you around.

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah, put me in, inner. Put me in deeper.

CAMERON (as Karma): We're putting you in front.

HUDSON (as Tink): There we go. That's what I was looking for.

CAMERON (as Karma): There you go.

HUDSON (as Tink): I just said inner, like in more.

[laughter]

CAMERON: More in.

LILIT (as Xianna): Yes.

NICK: All the way.

CAMERON (as Karma): You are also now the middle person in the front. There you go.

HUDSON (as Tink): Alright.

NICK: Great. Is anybody trying to cheat or be violent?

CAMERON: Probably, now that I have a weapon, yes.

NICK: Okay. How overt are you being?

HUDSON: I think it's pronounced "oveh."

NICK: [chuckles] Thank you, Hudson.

HUDSON: [laughs]

CAMERON: I'm being a good sneaky, like a, like...

HUDSON: Do decimals to make the math harder. Three and a half.

CAMERON: Like a three and a half sneaky. Um, a four would be hard difficulty, right?

NICK: So you wanna do a two.

CAMERON: Okay.

NICK: Which would make it a hard Stealth check.

CAMERON: Cool. Yes.

NICK: But would make your attack be easy.

CAMERON: Yes, that. And I have 2 ranks of Stalker so I get two blue dice to my Stealth check.

NICK: Nice.

CAMERON: And then, are y'all cool if I flip one of the light side points to upgrade?

LILIT: Sure.

HUDSON: Yeah.

CAMERON: I will do that. Fascinating... So, five advantages and a triumph.

NICK: But no success?

CAMERON: But no success! [laughs] The failures and successes completely evened out.

NICK: So, with that, you're gonna get seen by HK. Would you like to spend the triumph that he just decides not to remove you or anything?

CAMERON: Yeah.

NICK: And then do you want to have the advantages be blue dice added to other people on the team to do stuff? Does that work for you?

CAMERON: Yes. Yes.

NICK: Okay. So, you, throughout the course of the game, get close to other people and go to stab them, but you have the most dangerous weapon that you can probably get, so they keep taking dives out of the way and yelling really loud, and it makes HK look, and you were going to stab someone in the quad and you make eye contact with HK and he says...

NICK (as HK): Subtle Gesture: Wink.

NICK: ...and your triumph means that you don't get caught.

CAMERON: [laughs] I was gonna say, every time I make eye contact with HK I wink, so.

NICK: Yeah. HK just decides not to call that. So everyone on the other team is so focused on not getting stabbed by Karma, it should be stealthy because the knife is being very subtle, the icepick isn't flashing in the light or anything, but Karma has also assumed a very obvious fighting stance rather than a volleyball stance, and that's why the stealth has failed. Just, you look at her and go oh, she's probably looking to fight someone, and Karma isn't really looking at the ball that much.

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK: So everybody else will have a blue die because of that advantage. You can either spend the blue die on your roll to play volleyball or on a violence roll if you wanted to be violent, either way. Xianna or Tink, do either of you want to be violent?

HUDSON: I'm saving my violence for the last game, I think.

NICK: Okay.

LILIT: I don't think Xianna has anything more to be violent. She's gonna play normal this time.

NICK: Wow. Okay. So the two of you will get two blue dice added to your other rolls. Tink, you're rolling Athletics, Xianna, you are rolling...

LILIT: Coordination.

NICK: ...Coordination, and Karma, you are rolling Athletics again. Oh yes, and you all have two additional blue dice because of Ziller's defensive guidance.

HUDSON: Holy crap. The blue were all blank.

LILIT: All four of my blue dice came up blank!

NICK: Aww.

LILIT: It's okay. That still leaves me with six successes and one advantage, so...

NICK: Geez.

CAMERON: Karma has three successes and three advantages.

HUDSON: Three successes and one advantage.

NICK: Wow! Y'all got good at volleyball.

HUDSON: I've been practicing, as I said.

CAMERON: We were using the think method.

NICK: [laughs] So, bad news for Karma.

[beach party music returns]

The brawniest of these supposedly double-height... as the game goes on they start to lose very early, again Xianna is all over the court setting it up, Karma is just idly twirling an icepick when no one's looking and just making everyone nervous, they're all looking at that, and the Chadra-Fan across from Karma just walks under the net and pulls out a length of chain and just swings it at her head. You were not expecting this. I need you to roll two yellow and a green at simple difficulty.

CAMERON: Simple is nothing?

NICK: No purple dice.

CAMERON: Can I Dodge in volleyball?

NICK: Yeah, you can Dodge.

CAMERON: Cool, I wanna Dodge.

NICK: So you can add one purple.

CAMERON: I can add one red.

NICK: Oh, because you can Dodge twice.

CAMERON: Because I can Dodge twice.

NICK: Great.

CAMERON: One success, two advantages.

NICK: One success, two advantages. So you take 7 damage as the chain smacks into the side of your head. It hurts, and the Chadra-Fan was not sneaky, and you hear HK make a whistle noise. HK doesn't have a whistle, it just looks like he broadcasts a recording of a whistle noise, and he holds both hands up towards the sky pointing his little fingers and then points both the fingers at the Chadra-Fan who's on your side of the net, and the entire rec yard falls quiet, and then the laser turrets in the guard towers make a whining noise, and then as if from four directions at once these massive turbo laser sized bullets smash into the Chadra-Fan that tried to attack you, and they collapse to the ground.

[beach party music ends]

You see as two guards come to drag them away to solitary that multiple Chadra-Fan fall out of the jumpsuit and are carried under the arms, and there were three of them in there.

CAMERON: [laughs] Because it was the buff one.

NICK: Yeah, because it was the buff one. The other Chadra-Fan try their best, but after that their motivation is mostly broken and they just aren't able to keep up with the onslaught that you all do of just playing volleyball and having one person try to stab them.

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: They just didn't seem to be ready for that strategy. You win again quite handily, and the game is called. As the game ends the Chadra-Fan all pile out of jumpsuits, and you see that all of them were at least two Chadra-Fan in the jumpsuit and walk away dejectedly. The ones that were the head and arms are dragging the jumpsuits behind them like a big cape and look sad.

CAMERON: Aw.

NICK (as HK): Congratulations. Wonderful job defeating the Chadra-Friends. They are a mighty opponent. We are most impressed. As members of the Kajim Regional Incarceration Facility we hope that this has raised morale. You will be qualifying for the finals. Let's wait and see who that will be.

NICK: You go back over to the bleachers and you watch another game going on.

CAMERON (as Karma): Oof.

CAMERON: Karma is stretching out whatever got hit with the chain.

NICK: Yeah, so it's like the side of your head, so there's like a raising welt in the pattern of the chain on the side of your head and towards two of your lekku.

CAMERON: Yeah. She's separating out head tentacles to find the damaged ones and make sure they're not touching each other so that they don't sting.

NICK: Yeah, they got you pretty good.

CAMERON: Eh.

NICK: They got you.

CAMERON: [laughing] They got me.

HUDSON: Is there one team that's clearly gonna win for the game we're watching?

NICK: Uh-huh.

HUDSON: Okay. The team that's clearly going to win, near the end of it as the game ends or as the game is about to end, I sit up a little bit, like not stand up completely in the bleachers but sit up a little bit, and I point over to the opposite end of the rec yard and I say:

HUDSON (as Tink): [gasps] That person's trying to escape! Look! Look!

HUDSON: And everyone should turn and look, and that's when I throw a shiv at one of the best players on the team that's about to win.

CAMERON: [laughing] Oh my gosh. You have no Ranged: Light!

HUDSON: [chuckling] I know.

NICK: You also don't have a shiv!

HUDSON: Oh wait. I thought I did.

LILIT: You have a straw!

[laughter]

NICK: You could take one from Tadzi. Like, they will absolutely give you one if you explain what you're going to do.

HUDSON: Alright. Alright.

HUDSON (as Tink): Tadzi, I need a shiv.

NICK (as Tadzi): Why? There's no one over here.

HUDSON (as Tink): I have a plan. I'm gonna hurt one of the players from the team that's about to win so that we don't have to be... It'll be less suspicious this way. They won't think it was someone from the audience doing it.

NICK (as Tadzi): Dope. What creative thinking. Here you go.

NICK: They hand you the one that's the rounded CD-ROM that's been sharpened.

NICK (as Tadzi): This one flies pretty well. Just be careful.

HUDSON (as Tink): Nice.

NICK: So, make me a Deception check.

HUDSON: Oh thank goodness, I have something in that.

NICK: You've put a decent amount of points, because you keep trying to social engineer your hacker rolls.

HUDSON: Yeah.

NICK: This one's going to be average, but flip me a dark side point.

HUDSON: Oh... One success.

NICK: Hey! Okay. Good for you.

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: You stand up, and what do you yell to try to make everybody look the other direction?

HUDSON (as Tink): Hey look! That Herglic's trying to jump the fence!

[laughter]

NICK: Everyone turns, and the turrets turn, and you see a Herglic with a—Gosh, there's so many Herglics here.

CAMERON: It's weird.

NICK: You see a Herglic with the orca pattern just standing over within ten meters of the fence but clearly not, and the orca Herglic goes...

NICK (as Herglic): What...?

NICK: ...and then a bunch of guards run and try to tackle them but just kinda slam into them and are just hanging off of the Herglic, and the Herglic shrugs, shedding guards, and says...

NICK (as Herglic): I'm just—Oh, okay.

NICK: ...and lays down and puts their arms out so that they don't get stunned by the giant scary lasers. In the time that's happening and everyone's looking at it, go ahead and make me a Ranged: Light check to throw this shiv.

LILIT: [chuckles]

HUDSON: Ha! Alright. What's the difficulty?

CAMERON: [giggles]

NICK: Probably hard? Because you're at long range? You're not that close, unless you wanna like run forward and be closer, but that means they're more likely to know it was you.

HUDSON: Nah. No, I'll just do it this way.

CAMERON: Do you wanna flip a light side point? We have four.

HUDSON: You know what, I will flip a light side point though. Yeah.

NICK: Great.

CAMERON: [laughing] That would be good.

HUDSON: So I turn one of the greens to a yellow with that, right?

CAMERON: Yup.

NICK: Mm-hmm.

HUDSON: Three successes, four threats.

CAMERON: [laughs] You did it.

NICK: Good for you!

HUDSON: [laughs]

CAMERON: Wow.

LILIT: Very nice.

HUDSON: "First of all, good for you!

NICK: Yeah.

CAMERON: Yeah.

NICK: Second of all, you've been looking into the sun, it's kind of hard to tell what this team is, but there's one team that's clearly working very carefully and they're organized and they all seem to be set up to funnel the ball to a really big figure that's silhouetted.

[heavy techno music begins]

You throw this blade, and as you do you slip out of the bleachers and fall on your side, and you fall prone.

[dramatic bass noise]

You see this thing just hurl straight towards one of the silhouettes. There was a smaller figure, not the one that everyone was funneling hits to but somebody that you identified was working as a Setter and was just like lightning. It was like watching Xianna play. They were just everywhere. They were quick, they were fast, and you figure if that person's out the rest of that team will probably not be as successful.

This thing flies and hits the shadow. We see the sun which is starting to get towards later afternoon now glint off of it with a spark, and there's a wet thunk as it sinks in between the shoulder blades of this person. As that happens there's this moment of silence... and the sun dips below the walls, and the silhouettes go away, and you see that this team is actually one that you've heard of before. It's Whale of a Tail.

[laughter]

NICK: It's Big Jeyb's team.

CAMERON: Oh no.

HUDSON: Ohh!

NICK: And you appear to have just thrown a shiv into Endo...

[laughter]

NICK: ...who is the Tognath second in command of Big Jeyb's team. You see Endo, this insectoid mammalian creature with coin-looking eyes and just a really discomforting face slowly turn around. I don't know if you've seen Endo yet, but you can feel the murder rising off of them.

[heavy techno music ends]

He reaches into his back, pulls out the shiv, and it's glistening with green almost-glowing blood in the, now, shade. HK looks at Endo and says:

NICK (as HK): Penalty. You are holding a weapon. You will be removed from the remainder of this game.

NICK: Endo looks at HK and says...

NICK (as Endo): Good. I need to bind my wounds.

CAMERON: [as a chuckle] Ugh.

NICK: ...and just starts walking off of the court dripping green blood behind him. You see him slot the shiv into the weird mouth mask that he's wearing, and when he pulls it out it's clean, and he just points a finger at you, Tink, where you're lying next to the bleachers.

NICK (as Endo): I'm gonna remember this.

NICK: And that's gonna be the end of the episode. [chuckles]

ALL: Ba-naaa~!

CAMERON: Yikes. [laughs]

Outro

CAMERON: Thanks for listening to Tabletop Squadron. If you enjoyed our show, please consider leaving a review on your podcast listening app of choice. Reviews will help new listeners find the show, and every time we get one Nick lets the squad have a blue die.

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

Tink is played by Hudson Jameson. He can be found on Twitter at @hudsonjameson.

Karma Nailo is played by me, Cameron Robertson. You can find me on Twitter at @midnightmusic13.

Our game master is Nick Robertson, and you can find him on Twitter at @alias58.

Our intro song is Space Jam by Pablo Ribot.

Additional music by James Gunter.

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