

Tabletop Squadron Transcript – Season 2, Episode 9:
Bump Set Stab

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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.

I have one new announcement this week. We are adding a new periodic segment to Tarkin's Underwear Drawer, our bonus feed for \$5 and up patrons. We will be answering fan letters in character for patrons who write in. If you have any questions or want advice from a character or an NPC, and you're a \$5 and up patron, send your letters in to TabletopSquadron@gmail.com or through a Patreon message. Feel free to submit as many letters as you'd like, and we'll be answering them in short segments to publish to the Underwear Drawer in the coming months.

Thank you again for your podcast reviews and Patreon support. It helps us to keep going and to grow the show.

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, Episode 9! I am your host and game master, Nick. Welcome back. Things are hopefully settling down a little bit, moving along in life well and good, and if not... eh, same. Let's go around the table and everybody say who you are, who you're playing today, and if you spent any experience since the last time we played why don't you go ahead and tell us what you spent that on, starting with Cameron.

CAMERON: Hello. My name is Cameron, and I am playing Karma Nailo, the Nautolan bounty hunter. I bought another rank in Stealth.

NICK: Ooh.

CAMERON: So that I can murder volleyball better and more sneakily.

NICK: That makes sense.

CAMERON: Mm-hmm.

NICK: Wonderful. Up next we've got Hudson.

HUDSON: [in a drawling accent] Howdy-ho partners. My name is Hudson, and I'm playing Tink, a Gigoran slicer. I've used my experience to get 2 levels in Charm. I'm up to level 2 now, because I wanna charm the hell out of that volleyball.

NICK: [chuckling] That makes a lot of sense. Welcome to, apparently, alternate reality Hudson based on what that sounded like.

HUDSON: I'm a soft-spoken western gentleman.

NICK: I guess so.

LILIT: If you say so.

[laughter]

NICK: Sure!

CAMERON: Sure.

NICK: Last but not least we have Lilit.

LILIT: [in an exaggerated version of the accent] Well I'm just a southern chicken.

HUDSON: [laughs]

LILIT: I don't know much about lawyer stuff...

HUDSON: [laughs]

LILIT: No. Anyways. I am Lilit, and I will be playing Xianna'fan, a Twi'lek smuggler, and I bought a new talent tree.

NICK: Ooh.

CAMERON: Oh-ho-ho!

LILIT: I bought Charmer and was able to get a rank of Smooth Talker in it. When first acquired you must choose Charm, Coercion, Deception or Negotiation. I chose Deception, so now my Smooth Talker is set for Deception from now on. When making checks with that skill, spend a triumph to gain additional successes equal to ranks in Smooth Talker.

NICK: Oh, cool.

HUDSON: Hey Lilit.

LILIT: Yes?

HUDSON: Would you say that you've been hit by, been struck by—

LILIT: A smooth criminal?

HUDSON: —a Smooth Talker talent tree?

LILIT: No.

[laughter]

LILIT: I would not.

NICK: So, before we get with the recap, let's do the Destiny Roll~!

CAMERON: Two light side.

LILIT: Two light side.

HUDSON: One dark side.

NICK: Nice, so four light side, one dark side?

CAMERON: Yup.

NICK: Not a bad start. So to recap where we last left off...

Last time the squad defeated two separate volleyball teams, the Pecan Sandys, which was a team of older prisoners in leather jackets, and the Chadra-Friends, a team of Chadra-Fans standing on each other's shoulders in big prison jumpsuits. Watching another of the volleyball games, Tink borrowed a shiv and threw it at one of the competing teams and managed to hit someone.

Unfortunately, you all realized that someone was Endo the Tognath, second in command of Big Jeyb's organization. He was pulled out of the game for holding a weapon and is binding his injury, but he does know that Tink threw a shiv at him and he's not thrilled. That's pretty much what happened last time.

We open on a scene of volleyball prowess. The team of prisoners is attempting to hold their own against Big Jeyb and his team, Whale of a Tail, but having a tough time. Even though it is a five versus six game, the talent and athletic prowess of the Herglic's organization is making quick work of the enemy team. You see Endo with a green-soaked bandage on his back go and talk to HK who is refereeing, buying Jeyb time to grab one of the other team by the head, lift them up, and crush their face with his massive hand. They fall to the ground unconscious. HK sees them laying on the ground, their nose leaking blood, and says:

NICK (as HK): What an unfortunate accident. It appears the competition proved too much for them.

NICK: Soon after, Jeyb slams a spike over the net leaving a mushroom cloud of sand and a slightly smoking crater on the opposing side. The game ends, and a short break is called while HK rounds up prisoners to fill in the new hole in the court. You all have observed this, and you know that your next game will be against Big Jeyb and team.

HUDSON: Easy-peasy, right?

CAMERON: What's the makeup of Big Jeyb's team? So, Big Jeyb's a Herglic, Endo's a Tognath, who else is on that team?

NICK: Big Jeyb's team, Whale of a Tail, has a very scary-looking Human. They look very fast and very sharp was the only way you can think about it. They have a Bith, one of those lightbulb-headed aliens with the weird little squeaky mouths. What else do we want to be on there? Anything y'all wanna see?

CAMERON: A Selkath.

NICK: Oh come on.

[laughter]

NICK: Cool, they have a Selkath who appears to be suffering mightily in the heat and sand, being an amphibious alien.

CAMERON: [chuckles]

NICK: And a...

CAMERON: A Besalisk.

NICK: Yeah, let's do a Besalisk, those are fun, which is a four-armed brawny alien that looks like it has kind of a turkey head. They are usually bad news and pretty strong and combative and scary. So, it's a strong team. They look to have a varied level of skill and organization in a way that will be hard to identify any particular weaknesses.

Y'all are sitting beside the court. There's been a break as you see people trying to scramble and fill the sand back in so the next game can happen, and you have a little time.

CAMERON (as Karma): So Tink.

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah?

CAMERON (as Karma): While I must say, that was a very impressive throw...

HUDSON (as Tink): Mm-hmm. Thank you!

CAMERON (as Karma): ...and I'm greatly shocked that it was successful, so can't fault you there, however I feel like that may not have been the smartest move having met that guy before.

HUDSON (as Tink): I think that it was a strategic move, and we're gonna see how it plays out in the end.

CAMERON (as Karma): I feel like it's gonna end up with you getting shanked.

LILIT (as Xianna): We also could have used the shiv on somebody else.

HUDSON (as Tink): I mean, it would take, like, a bunch of shivs to kill Big Jeyb. He's big.

NICK: [splutters]

LILIT (as Xianna): Well not if you aim well.

HUDSON (as Tink): Uh... yeah, I guess if you go right for the c-carotin vein.

LILIT (as Xianna): That is not a thing.

CAMERON (as Karma): The what?

HUDSON (as Tink): No, it's the carotin vein. It's the one that has the most blood going through it.

NICK: Ziller leans down from where he's sitting on the bleachers where you all are.

NICK (as Ziller): Hey brother. We talking about killing Big Jeyb?

HUDSON (as Tink): Uh, anecdotally, yes. I was talking about killing Big Jeyb with many shivs.

NICK (as Ziller): Yeah, I think Tink has a good point. With a Herglic like that, probably the only way to bring him down with weapons available would be maybe hitting him in the carotene artery.

CAMERON: [snickers]

HUDSON (as Tink): That's almost what I said. I was wrong, it's the carotene artery. Sorry everyone.

LILIT (as Xianna): I don't think any of that is right.

HUDSON (as Tink): Are you a doctor? I'm sorry, did you study?

LILIT (as Xianna): No, but I have stabbed people before.

CAMERON (as Karma): I didn't think I was that far off in my Herglic anatomy, but it's been a while since school, so maybe I'm forgetting something, but that doesn't sound familiar to me at all.

LILIT (as Xianna): No.

HUDSON (as Tink): Just trust me on this one.

LILIT (as Xianna): No.

CAMERON (as Karma): Okay.

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: Tadzi is standing near Xianna.

NICK (as Tadzi): So if it's a carotene artery, does that mean it's filled with fingernails? Because that's gross.

CAMERON (as Karma): Blue, do you know what the kriff Tink and Ziller are talking about?

NICK (as Blue): I'm gonna be honest, I have no idea what they're talking about. I think they're making it up.

CAMERON (as Karma): Okay. That makes me feel better.

NICK: Yeah, so you are all standing around, and Tadzi looks to Xianna and says:

NICK (as Tadzi): Xiann, any ideas on how to get past these? This is gonna be pretty hard.

LILIT (as Xianna): I was kind of just hoping that the power of friendship would pull us through this game.

CAMERON: [snickers]

LILIT (as Xianna): Maybe some light cheating. Can we bribe the referee?

NICK (as Tadzi): Do you have something that assassin droid is interested in?

LILIT (as Xianna): Possibly. I don't know. I will have to talk to them.

NICK (as Tadzi): Okay, well there's not much time until this game. If you're gonna try to bribe the ref I'd do it soon.

LILIT: So Xianna gets up and starts sauntering over to HK.

NICK: HK is talking to Big Jeyb over by the net, and HK says:

NICK (as HK): Calming Statement: The rules were being upheld. Your second in command was holding a weapon. Their removal followed the letter of the law. That is my job as referee, and also theoretically as a prison guard. Thank you.

NICK (as Jeyb): That's a pile of bullshit. I hate you so much. I'm going to make sure that you don't have a job anymore, because they don't hire droids that don't have a head. I'm implying I'll kill you.

NICK (as HK): Threat acknowledged. Please prepare for the next game.

NICK: And Big Jeyb stomps off, shaking the ground.

LILIT (as Xianna): HK~! HK.

NICK (as HK): Reluctant Greeting: Hello Xianna.

LILIT (as Xianna): I have a proposition for you. What if you rule things in our favor and help us win the game and make sure that the other team, a Whale of a Tail, loses?

NICK: HK slouches a little and puts his hands on his hips.

NICK (as HK): What's in it for me, Xianna?

LILIT: Xianna reaches up and puts two hands on the side of HK's face and leans in really close and whispers.

LILIT (as Xianna): We will riot, and you may kill so many people.

CAMERON & HUDSON: [chuckles]

NICK (as HK): Processing. Processing. Process—Wow, it seems like my ocular sensors are starting to malfunction. I just can't get a clear view of the court. It seems to only be on the left side, though. Hmm, interesting. That seems to be the side the Ball Slappers are assigned to. Hmm. Oh well, it's probably nothing.

NICK: HK begins to whistle mechanically and turn around.

LILIT (as Xianna): Bye HK~ We will meet up with you later.

NICK (as HK): Do not fraternize with the guards, prisoner, or I will be forced to stun you, again.

LILIT (as Xianna): Okay. Bye guard who I do not know at all. Bye~

NICK (as HK): Thanks Xianna.

CAMERON: [laughs]

LILIT: Xianna skips back to where everyone else is sitting.

LILIT (as Xianna): Okie! I have worked out a deal with HK, and he is always going to make rulings in our favor and help us win, so that is my contribution to this. Everyone else needs to carry their own weight.

NICK (as Blue): Was that a dig at your Herglic teammate? Because that seems kind of low, even for you, short stuff.

LILIT (as Xianna): No, it was not. I forgot that we even had a Herglic on our team.

[laughter]

HUDSON (as Tink): Wait. Why aren't you remembering all our teammates? What, are you not a team player?

LILIT (as Xianna): Maybe.

NICK (as Tadzi): Xianna, we're literally standing right here.

CAMERON (as Karma): Blue is an integral part of our team.

LILIT (as Xianna): I am sorry, Blue. I did not realize that everyone here was on the team. I am so sorry. I thought maybe you were like a team manager or something of that nature. I do apologize.

NICK (as Filbert): Nah, she's got a good point! I'm not on the team, and I've been standing over here too.

HUDSON (as Tink): Ugh...

LILIT (as Xianna): Ugh... God damn it.

CAMERON (as Karma): Well yeah, because you're a talent scout, right though, Filbert?

NICK (as Filbert): Yup, looking for the next big thing. Looks like the Pecan Sandys' heyday has passed.

LILIT (as Xianna): They are so old.

CAMERON (as Karma): You do have very good jackets, though.

NICK (as Filbert): Well thank you.

LILIT (as Xianna): I did not mean it. I'm sorry.

NICK (as Blue): It's okay, apology accepted, and I look forward to destroying the other team with you.

LILIT (as Xianna): Good. What is everybody else's plan for helping us cheat?

CAMERON (as Karma): I'm going to icepick people.

LILIT (as Xianna): Wonderful, A+.

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK (as Tadzi): Solid plan.

LILIT (as Xianna): Tink, what do you have?

HUDSON (as Tink): Well, I was gonna dig holes to make booby-traps, but I'm starting to think that I would get caught very quickly.

LILIT (as Xianna): On our side or their side?

CAMERON (as Karma): What side of the court?

HUDSON (as Tink): Their side, like they take a few steps forward, fall in, can't get out. Hole's too deep.

LILIT (as Xianna): You would need to be doing that now. They're already filling in the court.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh...

CAMERON (as Karma): I don't know if you're gonna have time for that, buddy.

HUDSON (as Tink): Alright, bad plan. Uh... Does sand getting wet make bad play for them?

LILIT (as Xianna): I mean, it's not ideal. Are you going to pee on their side of the court or something?

CAMERON: [chuckles]

HUDSON (as Tink): Nooo... I was going to use another liquid source, of course.

CAMERON (as Karma): Of course.

LILIT (as Xianna): Sure, if you say so.

NICK (as Tadzi): That's concerning. Why did you call it a liquid source? Nobody calls wet things liquid source. I'm very upset.

CAMERON (as Karma): I guess if the sand got wet it would decrease the amount of shock that was absorbed when people jumped back down, which could cause some knee injuries.

NICK (as Ziller): But they'd also have more traction, brother. That could be an issue. They may be able to move faster if you pee down the court.

CAMERON (as Karma): True, but just happenstance, if it was pee and it smelled really bad too or was a chemical weapon...

HUDSON (as Tink): [softly] Oh...

NICK (as Ziller): Oh yeah, well that would just be if me and Tink did it. It's a very well-known trait of Gigorans that our pee is caustic and horrifying.

CAMERON (as Karma): Yeah. Uh-huh. Yeah. How quickly would blisters form on their feet? I don't know... No, they'd be wearing shoes. What if they fell on it?

NICK (as Ziller): Well, so it is a pretty basic substance, so it's pretty slippery.

CAMERON (as Karma): But you just said that they would have more traction! [laughs]

HUDSON (as Tink): You also used the word caustic.

NICK (as Ziller): No, if you wet it down with a different liquid source it would be more traction.

HUDSON (as Tink): Ohh...

CAMERON (as Karma): Oh! Okay. I'm just gonna back out of this conversation. Y'all can keep going.

NICK (as Ziller): Yes, I am also uncomfortable with us talking about my urine.

HUDSON (as Tink): My only other idea involved hot air balloons and crossbows, and in no way can I get that in the next few minutes.

LILIT (as Xianna): That is not how that works.

NICK: So, Blue gathers you all around into a huddle.

NICK (as Blue): So, it's about time that we pick who's gonna play what this time. I know last time Tadzi took some hits. Karma, you're swelling up a little bit where you got hit.

CAMERON (as Karma): Oh, no, I'm fine.

NICK (as Blue): Oh, wonderful, great then.

CAMERON (as Karma): It's just a flesh wound.

NICK (as Blue): We just need to know who's going to do what. I volunteer to be a Blocker again. No problems there. Ziller seems to have been pretty effective as a Defensive Expert, he's got some good advice, but you all make the call, you all convinced us to play.

LILIT (as Xianna): I do not remember what position I was last time.

CAMERON (as Karma): I believe you were a Setter.

LILIT (as Xianna): Did I do good?

CAMERON (as Karma): Yes.

LILIT (as Xianna): Then I should just do that again.

CAMERON (as Karma): Agreed.

HUDSON (as Tink): As the leader of this team, I will delegate part of my responsibilities to Karma to pick the rest of the positions.

[laughter]

CAMERON (as Karma): So, thinking through this, the Blockers are basically there to serve as the front line and to try to make it so that the Setters don't get injured. I don't think there's any way that Tink is not going to be attacked during this game, as he did throw a shiv and piss off the other team already, so I'd say putting him as a Blocker makes a lot of sense, because he's gonna get hit anyway. Like, if we keep what we had last time of Tadzi and Xianna being the Setters, Ziller do Defensive Specialist, and the rest of us be Blockers, that's probably how most people are gonna be attacked anyway.

NICK: Tadzi looks at you with respect in their eyes.

NICK (as Tadzi): Dang Karma, that's stone cold.

CAMERON (as Karma): Well, I'm not concerned really about me and Blue. I think we're fine, as we've established us being very strong.

HUDSON (as Tink): [indignant] I'm strong.

CAMERON (as Karma): I know, but you didn't work out with me and Blue, so you don't have the same strong rep going.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh, I got it.

CAMERON (as Karma): And I know, Tadzi, when you agreed to join the team one of your top priorities was not dying, so, you took a few hits, I think putting you as a Setter—you're very coordinated, I've seen you move, so I think you're good staying there, and then hopefully you don't get hit again so that you get out of this without any big issues.

NICK (as Tadzi): I'm a big fan of not getting hit, don't get me wrong, just to go "hey, I think our friend's in danger, let's put him where he's easier to hit to serve the team," that's just some solid logic but not some solid caring about people. I'm just impressed, that's all.

CAMERON (as Karma): I have a lot of faith in Tink. He is a doctor.

HUDSON (as Tink): I am a doctor.

LILIT (as Xianna): We have to stop telling him that. He is not, and the longer we keep telling him he is the worse it's going to get, and he's going to start talking about carrot arteries and stuff.

HUDSON (as Tink): Carrot arteries? That's the combination of medical practice and cooking, and I'm not there yet. I'm going into that field.

CAMERON (as Karma): What? What? No.

LILIT (as Xianna): What...?

HUDSON (as Tink): Carrot arteries.

CAMERON (as Karma): No.

LILIT (as Xianna): No...

CAMERON (as Karma): Anyway. Ziller does work in the clinic, so I'm assuming Ziller at least has some training.

NICK (as Ziller): Mostly they just make me carry heavy stuff, but I do appreciate the vote of confidence.

CAMERON (as Karma): If it comes to carrying Tink, he is heavy, and there you go, that's your skillset.

NICK (as Ziller): Hey, whatever helps you sleep at night putting our brother Tink in danger, you go right ahead.

NICK: It sounds like Xianna and Tadzi are going to be Setters, Tink, Karma and Blue are gonna be Blockers, and Ziller will be the Defensive Specialist again. Is that your plan?

CAMERON: Yes.

HUDSON: Yes.

NICK: Okie-dokie.

CAMERON: Before we leave our huddle, who is still armed? I have an icepick. I know Tadzi had a selection of...

HUDSON: Shivs.

CAMERON: ...sharp pointy objects.

NICK: Yeah.

NICK (as Tadzi): I have one left. It's a sharpened vibro-spoon. Tink threw the other one. I only had three, and I don't think anyone else had any weapons.

CAMERON (as Karma): Tink, would you like to replace your sharp stabby object as you are a melee expert so having one would probably be beneficial to you?

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah, let's do it, I'll take one.

NICK: It's the handle of the spoon that's sharpened, not the scoopy part of a spoon. Technical term, scoopy part.

CAMERON: Oh yeah.

NICK: Tadzi hands it towards Tink, and as he goes to reach for it they pull it back.

NICK (as Tadzi): Now Tink, are you gonna throw this one away? Because finding these is actually not super easy. I spent a lot of time, and you just gave a weapon to the other team. Granted, you did it pointy-end-first, which was pretty cool, but I want this back.

HUDSON (as Tink): When you fight with shivs and other type of weapons, sometimes you lose the weapon in the enemy.

NICK (as Tadzi): You didn't answer my—Are you going to give this back to me? Because I want it back.

HUDSON (as Tink): Philosophically speaking...

CAMERON: [laughs] Gosh.

HUDSON (as Tink): ...is it really yours in the first place, or is it the universe's?

CAMERON (as Karma): It's Tadzi's.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh.

NICK (as Tadzi): Xiann, can you please make sure that your big hairy friend gives me back my stabbing spoon?

LILIT (as Xianna): [weakly] Tink.

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah?

LILIT (as Xianna): [more pointed] Tink.

HUDSON (as Tink): Yes Xianna?

LILIT (as Xianna): You have to give it back.

HUDSON (as Tink): What if I use it?

CAMERON (as Karma): Then hold onto it.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh...

CAMERON (as Karma): Stab in, pull back out. Keep a hold on it.

LILIT (as Xianna): You don't have to throw it. You can just hold it in your hand, and do the stabby, and then keep it in your hand. Or, you throw it, do the stabby that way, but then you go get it afterwards.

HUDSON (as Tink): Hmm.

CAMERON (as Karma): But please don't throw it, that should not have worked last time.

HUDSON (as Tink): It was pretty cool though, right?

CAMERON (as Karma): It was very cool, but that should not have worked.

NICK: We flash back to the blade tumbling through the air in slow motion and sinking deep into Endo's back, and a slight mist of green blood, and we jump back to the present.

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah, that was badass.

NICK: [laughs]

HUDSON (as Tink): Alright, you get the shiv back when I'm done.

NICK (as Tadzi): Thank you, Tink. I respect you as a combatant and a volleyball player... and a doctor, I guess.

LILIT (as Xianna): Eh.

HUDSON (as Tink): Well thank you. I don't get enough respect as a doctor.

CAMERON (as Karma): There may be reasons for that. Anyway, let's volleyball! [claps]

NICK: [smiling] We end with Karma saying "anyway, let's volleyball," and clapping, and there's a delayed clap from everyone else out of sync as they try to break the huddle, and it doesn't go very well.

[laughter]

NICK: You set up on the left side of the court. You notice that one of HK's ocular sensors is blinking rapidly. Either it's malfunctioning or he thinks that's how winking works. It's hard to tell. You all set up with Karma, Blue and Tink in the front, Ziller stuck in the middle, and Tadzi and Xianna kind of on the outliers towards the back, ready to go, and before we roll to see how this volleyball game goes, who is going to be violent?

CAMERON: I am violencing.

NICK: You are violencing with your icepick?

CAMERON: Indeed.

NICK: How sneaky are you being?

CAMERON: Medium.

NICK: Like a three out of five?

CAMERON: [chuckling] Yes.

NICK: Okay, so that's an average Stealth check, please.

CAMERON: [chuckling] Medium sneakitude.

NICK: But you can have two blue dice, because HK is very much not looking.

CAMERON: And I can have I believe another two blue dice for my Stalker talents. Actually, I wanna do a hard Stealth.

NICK: Okay.

CAMERON: I'mma be even sneakier.

NICK: Okay.

CAMERON: Nice. Two of those purples came up blank. [laughs] Six successes, four advantages.

NICK: Wow! Good job.

HUDSON: Wow.

NICK: You are completely not seen, probably not even by the other team very well. Nobody notices that you're actively assaulting the other team, and you are not sacrificing any sort of efficacy of your attack in an attempt to not be seen. You are just very good at both, and you can have, with those advantages, an extra two blue dice for your violence roll, which will be made at easy. You can do a Melee attack, I would assume you would want to do.

CAMERON: Yeah, I think an icepick is Melee.

NICK: Cool.

CAMERON: Can I have another blue die because whoever I'm stabbing hasn't stabbed anyone else yet?

NICK: Well this is throughout the course of the game.

CAMERON: [giggling] Can I stab them first?

NICK: I mean, if you wanna do it right at the beginning, yeah, I'll give you a blue die. You had enough stealth advantages that I don't think you have to wait for your moment.

CAMERON: Yeah, I wanna take someone out like immediately.

NICK: Okay.

CAMERON: Do-do-do, and that purple came out blank. Lovely. Five successes, two advantages, and a triumph.

NICK: Oh. Well. Two advantages is enough to crit with an icepick. A triumph is enough to crit, again. If an icepick is +1 damage, how much damage is that total?

CAMERON: Nine.

NICK: Nine damage and a crit with +10.

CAMERON: I have 3 ranks of Lethal Blows.

NICK: So +40 to the crit roll?

HUDSON: Ooh.

NICK: Go ahead and roll your +40 crit.

CAMERON: That is a 19.

NICK: Plus 40.

CAMERON: Mm-hmm.

NICK: So 59.

LILIT: On a 59 that is Agonizing Wound: Increase difficulty to Brawn: Agility checks until the end of encounter.

NICK: Ooh, so you don't take this opposing player out, but you are going to hurt them very badly and very much impact their performance. They will have to go to the clinic after this. They manage to stay up, but only because they're more scared of Big Jeyb than they are of you. Which one are you attacking? Out of the front line it's Big Jeyb, the Selkath and the Besalisk.

CAMERON: I'm gonna do the Besalisk.

NICK: The Besalisk? Yeah.

CAMERON: Yeah.

NICK: Cool. Is anybody else cheating or doing violence?

HUDSON: I'm saving my violence for defensive actions whenever someone inevitably comes after me.

NICK: Okay. So to do that, why don't you make me the Stealth check and pick how overt you wanna be at using your shiv to defend yourself, and I'll make that so that when people try to attack you that they have a lot of minuses if you do well.

HUDSON: Oh, okay. I'm gonna make it three purple.

NICK: Okay, and don't forget you get two blue dice because HK is not really looking.

HUDSON: Yeah.

NICK: Okay.

HUDSON: One advantage. Heh.

NICK: So, throughout the course of this match you're going to attempt to defend yourself. I think you lose the shiv very quickly. You're not going to be removed from the game, because you didn't fail, but also because the other team also helps the fact that you have a weapon stay hidden because a valid defensive strategy for you would have been to be caught with a weapon so they take you out of the game so you don't get hurt, so they also make sure no one sees it, and that's gonna give them some advantages trying to attack you here.

HUDSON: [laughs] Alright.

NICK: That'll be bad. Xianna, are you just straight playing volleyball or are you trying to do anything?

LILIT: Xianna's going a similar route to Tink and will mostly be playing straightforward volleyball but also be on the defensive and paying more attention to not getting hurt by the other team than doing anything to them.

NICK: Okay. Yeah, this is a good idea for you, because if anyone tries to attack you it will be with Melee and that'll be bad for you.

LILIT: I will do three for a hard check.

NICK: Okay.

LILIT: So this is two failures and seven advantages?

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK: What?!

LILIT: So I am going to use my talent, Natural rogue, and once per session reroll any one Skulduggery or Stealth check.

NICK: Yeah, you probably don't wanna go to solitary right now.

LILIT: Oh, much better. Okay. I like this a lot more.

NICK: [laughs]

LILIT: One triumph with a success, three additional successes, and an advantage.

NICK: Wow, okay. With that level of a Stealth check on this, do you want to just make it that no one is able to get near you because you're so quick on your feet and everything? You will not be attacked this round at all.

LILIT: Yes.

NICK: Okay.

LILIT: Nobody is able to get near me, and through the power of friendship and perseverance Xianna is able to play at a level that was not previously thought of before.

CAMERON: [laughs]

LILIT: Just perfect form, pure precision and athleticism. Peak performance.

CAMERON: Such focus.

NICK: So, now that we have all set our violence levels and Xianna has violence defensively to a point where she is almost impossible to find on her side of the court, I need everybody to roll their volleyball checks! For the Blockers, Tink and karma, I need you to roll Athletics. For Xianna, I need you to roll Coordination. All of these checks will have two blue dice added because of Ziller's expert leadership, and let's see how this turns out. Average difficulty.

CAMERON: Okie-doke.

HUDSON: Ooh.

LILIT: Xianna's volleyball check is a triumph with a success, three additional successes, and five advantages.

NICK: Wow!

CAMERON: Karma's check is three successes and an advantage.

NICK: Very good.

HUDSON: Two advantages.

CAMERON: [softly] Oh buddy.

NICK: Oh buddy. Well sir.

HUDSON: Rip.

LILIT: F.

[jazz music starts setting a dangerous mood]

NICK: So, this volleyball game is fiercely competitive, and by fiercely competitive I mean it's basically just a straight fight. The ball often times gets hit high into the air where it disappears into the rapidly spreading darkness as the sun has set just before this game started. While it's in the air you all are attacked and forced to defend.

Xianna, whenever you can tell the other team is about to try to run under the net to do something you manage to be on a different part of the court. There is probably a point where Xianna is on the enemy's side of the court because all of the enemy team is on your side of the court. It's like you're orbiting, they can never get near you, and you are all over the place just kicking butt and taking names. You are very, very good at volleyball.

Karma, you destroy this Besalisk. [laughs] At the beginning of the game, Ziller goes for the first serve and as everyone's watching the ball in the air you pull this icepick out and just jam it into the Besalisk's quad and rake it up his side. You tear open his prison jumpsuit and several layers of muscle and skin, and he drops to one knee, and he's bleeding pretty heavily. HK sees that, and you hear him go...

NICK (as HK): [robotic casual whistling]

NICK: ...as he whistles and doesn't pay attention. The Besalisk is unable to contribute to this. You have inhibited his athletic ability enough with this really bad injury that he can't really do much. He hits the ball a couple of times, but he's not able to help set anything up. He's not able to attack anybody. You pretty much completely negate this one from the fight. So good job.

Tink. Old buddy old pal. So, you're trying to play volleyball [laughs], and I think we see Tink's extremely nervous face as the volleyball game begins, and Endo, the Tognath that you threw a shiv at last game—

HUDSON: Successfully targeted a shiv at.

NICK: Yes you did.

CAMERON: [chuckles]

NICK: You hit with a shiv, this is true, and he is painfully aware of that fact. It seems like no matter where you set up on the court he sets up across from you. You've switched with Blue a couple of times, you've switched with Karma once or twice, and even the injured Besalisk will limp out of the way to allow Endo to set up across from you. You get the feeling very early on that he's probably going to try to kill you.

[jazz music ends]

Cameron, if you could roll me three yellows and a green versus a hard difficulty check, please, and if you could also give him a blue die... and you know what, flip my dark side point, let's make that four yellows.

CAMERON: Oof... Two successes, an advantage, and a triumph.

NICK: Ooh, okay. I need you to roll me a crit +20, please.

CAMERON: Fifty-four, so 74.

LILIT: A 74 is Hamstrung: Lose free maneuver until end of encounter.

NICK: Okay, so Hudson.

HUDSON: Yes?

NICK: Tink takes 8 damage, but this is Pierce 4, so you lose 4 Soak. So throughout this volleyball game Endo is just always next to you. It doesn't really matter where the ball is, it doesn't really matter what's happening with the game, Endo has just pretty much negated you and him from this game. You make eye contact with his weird coin eyes a couple of times.

NICK (as Endo): I told you I'd remember this.

NICK: And about halfway through the game he plants what feels like some sort of rod of burning flame—you're not sure exactly what it is—into your side and drags it down through your leg and manages to short it out. This is your robotic leg. So, it's still functioning, but it's definitely having some problems. As he pulls back, you can see him sheathing what basically looks like a length of rebar that has a battery stuck to it.

HUDSON: [chuckles]

CAMERON: Ooh, I want it.

NICK: It's like a burning prod that he shoved into your side, and it hurts really, really, really, really bad, and you are not able to contribute much to the game at all.

HUDSON: Ow.

NICK: And as the game continues on, you all are losing. You all are not able to do much with this. Sure, Karma was able to stop the Besalisk from really contributing, but Big Jeyb is a force to be reckoned with, and Endo, after having stabbed Tink, is almost as quick as Xianna is everywhere, and the last thing we see is Tink setting up to try to block a spike from Big Jeyb and the ball hitting him in the face and the ball driving Tink backwards without bouncing off of him into the ground. Again, there's a mushroom cloud of sand...

[over-the-top explosion noise with sand settling]

...and HK says from his point on the sidelines:

NICK (as HK): Unfortunately there is no way that I can declare Ball Slappers the winner. Whale of a Tail has won by two sets.

NICK: You all gather what the rest of your team is looking like, and everybody is a little bruised. Xianna isn't, Karma isn't, but Blue definitely took some hits. Tadzi is still trying to recover from the last one. Even Ziller looks like he's been pretty beat up. You all lost the game.

NICK (as HK): Whale of a Tail is the winner. I am regretful to award them this bucket of prison hooch, and these packets of flaming hot Spunyuns, and this drastically reduced amount of credits.

NICK: HK pulls out a sack and drops it down. He called it a bucket of prison hooch, but it's like a keg of hooch. It's actually quite a bit.

NICK (as Jeyb): All according to plan. Good job, Endo, for making the other team so intimidated. You'll always be my number two.

NICK: They pick up the stuff and they start to walk away as the rec yard is closing for the night.

CAMERON (as Karma): Hey y'all, I think I wanna kill Endo.

LILIT (as Xianna): Okie. What if we kill Endo and Jeyb and Falx all at once?

CAMERON (as Karma): All at once?! [laughs]

LILIT (as Xianna): We invite them to a party and kill them all at the same time. We make it look like some sort of fight. The murder passion... A passion murder! A murder of passion! Some sort of argument and they all stab each other and they died.

CAMERON (as Karma): I can't see any possible reality where Falx wins or injures Big Jeyb and Endo, actually.

LILIT (as Xianna): Well yes, we would make it look as if Big Jeyb and Endo stabbed Falx and then stabbed each other.

CAMERON (as Karma): Why would they do that, though?

LILIT (as Xianna): There's a lot of reasons why people might stab Falx. He is annoying—

CAMERON (as Karma): Oh no, no-no-no, I wasn't asking about that part. That part made sense. [laughs]

LILIT (as Xianna): A love triangle.

HUDSON (as Tink): We can start rumors.

LILIT (as Xianna): We start a rumor that they are all in a love triangle, and like a real love triangle, not a bullshit one where it's really a V, like they are all actually in love with each other all three ways which makes a real triangle.

HUDSON (as Tink): Hmm.

LILIT (as Xianna): I hate it when it is two people in love with the same person. That is a V shape!

CAMERON (as Karma): Yup, not a triangle.

LILIT (as Xianna): You know, that letter V that is in Aurebesh.

HUDSON (as Tink): No, it can be a Y.

LILIT (as Xianna): That is four people, and three of them are all in love with one person.

CAMERON (as Karma): The Y is what happens when you have three people in love and then the one on the bottom of the Y is gonna be the one that gets chosen.

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah, one person.

CAMERON (as Karma): Because there's gonna be some bullshit reason why the top two can't be the chosen one, like they're gonna do something dumb and there's gonna be a dumb reason the author uses for why they can't love them anymore.

NICK (as Ziller): Oh, it's like when there's the Shistavanen and they're really the good person, but then they decide to go with the strange creature that's immortal instead?

CAMERON (as Karma): What?

LILIT (as Xianna): Yes, that is correct. But yes, so we would just make it look like it was a real full triangle and they were all in love with each other, and then Falx did something stupid. We don't really need to figure out why Endo and Jeyb stabbed each other. We can just make it up.

CAMERON (as Karma): I don't like the idea of fighting them all at once, because I saw how Jeyb and Endo were in that volleyball game, and I think the three of us versus one of them is gonna be a better idea than trying to fight both at the same time.

LILIT (as Xianna): Well we don't have to kill all of them at the same time, so we stab Falx, and then we invite Endo into the room and we stab Endo, and then we invite Big Jeyb into the room and we stab Big Jeyb. We do it one at a time!

CAMERON (as Karma): I don't feel the need to kill Falx. I don't...

NICK (as Ziller): This is a great plan, brother. Can I just suggest that we kill Jeyb first and then we can kill other people after that?

LILIT (as Xianna): Ooh yes, get the worst one out of the way.

CAMERON (as Karma): No, see, I really wanna kill Endo first.

NICK (as Ziller): I could accept killing Endo and then Jeyb, and then we'll figure out the whole Falx thing a little later.

CAMERON (as Karma): I'm feeling rather murderous, and this is kind of weird for me, but I really want Endo's weapon before I try to fight Big Jeyb.

NICK (as Ziller): Oh, that's a good point.

CAMERON (as Karma): Because that sounded and looked really powerful when he stabbed Tink. Also, Tink, how are you doing?

HUDSON (as Tink): [groans] Uh... leg no work. Um, pain, and suffering?

CAMERON (as Karma): Hmm.

NICK (as Ziller): Well, the good news, brother, is it looks like your leg cauterized, so that's nice. You're not bleeding everywhere.

HUDSON (as Tink): At least it didn't hit the carotene vein.

CAMERON (as Karma): That's...

LILIT (as Xianna): Where do you think... I don't—I don't even understand what that is about.

CAMERON (as Karma): [defeated] Whatever.

HUDSON (as Tink): It's by my juggler vein.

[laughter]

LILIT (as Xianna): I don't think that is a thing either, but—

HUDSON (as Tink): The jugular?

LILIT (as Xianna): You said juggler.

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah, the juggler.

CAMERON (as Karma): No... the jugular?

HUDSON (as Tink): Juggler.

CAMERON (as Karma): ... No.

LILIT (as Xianna): Okie.

NICK: [laughs]

LILIT (as Xianna): Maybe you should just go to the infirmary.

HUDSON (as Tink): Why would I want to light anything on fire right now?

CAMERON (as Karma): Maybe you should go to the clinic, where the doctors live.

LILIT (as Xianna): Tink, I swear to god, I will hurt you even more than you already are. You know what I mean. The infirmary.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh, oh, yeah, okay, where you go to get better.

LILIT (as Xianna): Yes.

HUDSON (as Tink): I'm a little out of it, but I would say... yes, I can make it, I think.

LILIT (as Xianna): Good.

CAMERON (as Karma): It's probably a good idea to heal up prior to trying to attack anyone else.

NICK (as Ziller): Um... About that, uh... What if we were on some sort of, like, time commitment to do something like that and it needed to happen tonight?

CAMERON (as Karma): Well I would say that it's very silly to make a time commitment right after a murder volleyball game.

NICK (as Ziller): Maybe we didn't make the time commitment, but maybe Tink already promised some very powerful people that Jeyb was going to die tonight and that Tink needs to be involved.

CAMERON (as Karma): Are you implying that Falx is a powerful person?

NICK (as Ziller): Tink, you told them?!

HUDSON (as Tink): What? I've said that Falx is a power top, but that's my opinion.

[laughter]

LILIT (as Xianna): Really? Are you sure about that? Because I just... I'm not getting that same vibe.

HUDSON (as Tink): It's speculation on my part.

LILIT (as Xianna): But I mean I guess you can't for certain tell just by looking at someone, because it's like very personal information, and you know, you can't just look at a person and tell those things.

HUDSON (as Tink): Very true. Very true.

LILIT (as Xianna): Because that is just stereotyping... but I'm just not getting those same vibes.

HUDSON (as Tink): Hmm. Well, either way, yeah I might have told them.

NICK (as Ziller): [disappointed] Tink.

LILIT (as Xianna): I am not sure who was told what information at this point and what information was told to these people, I just feel like whatever was told to whichever people it was incorrect.

CAMERON (as Karma): Ziller, I don't think you can blame Tink for telling us that Falx is here, because we're all great friends and we go way back.

NICK: As you are having this conversation, the six of you are pretty much the stragglers heading back to the cell blocks. You are being tracked by these large stun laser cannons. Tadzi and Blue are looking uncomfortable. Ziller is talking animatedly.

NICK (as Ziller): Well, if it's all on the table, we need to kill Jeyb or Falx is going to make us disappear.

LILIT (as Xianna): Well so Jeyb wants us to kill Falx, which is why I suggest we just kill all of them.

HUDSON (as Tink): Well now that makes more sense.

CAMERON: [laughs]

LILIT (as Xianna): That is what I'm saying. If they are all dead, no one can be mad at us.

NICK: [smiling] And I think that's where we're gonna end the episode.

CAMERON: [laughs]

ALL: Ba-naaa~!

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 to find the show, and every time we get one the squad gets warm fuzzies.

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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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