

Tabletop Squadron Transcript – Season 2, Episode 16:  
Vertical Thinking

Transcript by Tyler (Twitter: @Tyler\_MoonSage)

## 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 want to start off by thanking WillScarlet7362 for your kind podcast review. Thank you for helping others to find the show.

Next up, I have some new patrons to thank.

Crystal Baker, thank you so much for supporting the show. The squad is actually pretty desperate for some heavy weapon support. Karma left a rocket launcher lying around here somewhere. Grab that and some ammo and head out, will you? They'll probably be fine, but a few more missiles couldn't hurt, right?

Raul Castro, thank you for supporting us. I do have a special assignment for you. Kettle the crime lord seems to have been collecting things behind the scenes for quite a while. Could you make friends with her and figure out what's going on? She won't return my calls anymore.

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 16! Our Season 2 can drive now! Everyone's all very excited about the party, but I did get them a used bicycle for their birthday, so Season 2's a little grumpy about it, but you know, eventually they'll be able to get their own transportation. I'm your host and game master, Nick! Thanks for coming. Let's all go around the table and everybody say who you are, who you're playing, and if you spent any experience from the last time let me know what you spent that on, starting with Hudson.

HUDSON: Hi. I'm Hudson, and I play Tink, a Gigan slicer. I didn't spend any of my experience points because I'm a hoarder.

NICK: Good for you! I like that you stick to your guns, even if you don't have any training in guns. Up next we've got Lilit.

LILIT: Hello. I am Lilit, and I will be playing Xianna'fan, a Twi'lek smuggler. I also did not spend any points, but it's because I'm saving them... for something.

HUDSON: For marriage.

[laughter]

LILIT: No, for something. I'm not sure yet.

HUDSON: Oh.

LILIT: Maybe I'll buy a nice hat. [chuckles]

HUDSON: [laughs]

LILIT: Or a giant burrito. Who knows?

HUDSON: Ooh.

NICK: So if you only have a couple of experience points the pro strategy is to spend those on those little erasers and use that to make sure you use as many as possible, because you always think like "hey, I'm gonna save my experience until I come back next time," but you never manage to keep them until the next time you come back.

LILIT: My brother and I had SO many Chuck E. Cheese tickets.

[laughter]

LILIT: So many. I think it was just one of those weird shitty things that my mother did, but she like never wanted us to spend the tickets, and she was always like "well no, you gotta save them so you can buy something bigger," and we were like yeah, but we wanna use them now, because we're children and we will not be children forever, mother!

NICK: [laughs]

LILIT: Our childhood is fleeting and will be gone in a few years and we won't be able to use and consume the Chuck E. Cheese tickets! Let us use them now~!

CAMERON: We always cashed in our tickets for the sticky hands and candy.

HUDSON: Oh yeah.

LILIT: So we had a gigantic fucking bag of Chuck E. Cheese tickets, and I don't think we ever got to actually spend them.

NICK: And now they're bankrupt.

LILIT: Yeah, and now I am way too old to enter a Chuck E. Cheese.

NICK: Well, you have to borrow a kid.

LILIT: Yeah. I have to go find a child to bring with me.

NICK: [grinning] And last but not least we have Cameron.

CAMERON: Hello. I am Cameron, and I am playing Karma Nailo, the Nautolan bounty hunter, and I did spend my experience...

NICK: Ooh~

CAMERON: ...because I finally had enough to get the things that I wanted. So, on my Marauder talent tree I bought a rank of Heroic Fortitude. I can spend a Destiny Point to ignore effects of critical injuries on Brawn or Agility checks until the end of the encounter.

NICK: Oh cool.

CAMERON: I also bought another rank in Toughened, so my wound threshold went up by another 2.

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

CAMERON: One dark side.

HUDSON: One dark side.

LILIT: Two light side.

NICK: Hey, good job, Lilit.

CAMERON: Yay Lilit~

NICK: So that's two and two?

CAMERON: Yup.

NICK: Wonderful. When we last left off you all had been in a high-speed running dogfight through the Typhonic Nebula, and you were being chased by Endo the Tognath who had somehow discovered where you were, and you were able to disable his ship and destroy some of his compatriots, and you were just now swinging in to land on this small uncharted moon that Sentinel provided you the coordinates for. So that's where we're gonna kick it off.

You find yourself on a small moon in the Typhonic Nebula. You've disembarked and are heading towards a small square building on the northern pole of the moon. The ground beneath you is dusty, nondescript and gray. The sky above you is a roiling green. The door into the building is a simple staircase leading down. So, we open on the four of you standing before this dark creepy staircase leading down into this small moon. The three of you are wearing breathing masks and HK is not, because HK doesn't breathe.

{Transcriber's Note: When speaking in character, the players' audio has an effect to sound like they are speaking through spacesuits.}

HUDSON: Tink turns to the group and says:

HUDSON (as Tink): Does the sky look roil and green today?

CAMERON (as Karma): Yes?

NICK (as HK): That is because this moon is inside a nebula which is made of space gas.

LILIT (as Xianna): I feel like there is a joke in there somewhere...

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah, I was trying.

LILIT (as Xianna): ...but I'm just not thinking of one right now.

NICK: The darkness of the staircase seems to beckon you onward.

HUDSON (as Tink): I'm feeling really beckoned right now. Let's go.

LILIT (as Xianna): Who wants to go down first? It is dark.

CAMERON (as Karma): I will.

CAMERON: Karma pops up her carbine and points it down, because it's got heat vision, and starts walking down.

NICK: I mean, you have glow rods, too. Like, you could just have light.

CAMERON: But it's more fun to do the gun.

NICK: Well you can do that too.

CAMERON: Okay. Then she does the cool thing that you always see in the crime—if you have the flashlight on top of the giant gun and you're running around corners.

NICK: Cool. So you're taking point?

CAMERON: Yeah.

LILIT (as Xianna): Okay Tink, then you go.

HUDSON: I get glow sticks and I start going...

HUDSON (as Tink): Unce! Unce! Unce!

HUDSON: ...and start flipping them around.

NICK: No! It's a common misconception. Glow rods in Star Wars...

LILIT (as Xianna): Ooh, ooh, ooh! Is that what we are doing now?

[laughter]

NICK: ...are just flashlights. They're just called glow rods because it sounds more spacy.

CAMERON: Does it though?

LILIT: Turn around and Xianna's already in a mesh outfit.

[laughter]

NICK: [groans and sighs trying to compose himself]

LILIT: Candy necklace. Those big fuzzy boots. You don't know where any of it came from, but... [laughs]

CAMERON: That's just what she wears under the coat.

HUDSON: Little do we know that my skill in using those light-up yoyos and flinging them around everywhere will come in handy at the final boss.

NICK: [laughs] The final boss is just busy staring at their hands.

LILIT: Glow rods are not glow sticks, they are just a stupid Star Wars term for flashlight.

HUDSON: Oh...

NICK: You can have glow sticks if you want, though. [laughs] Cool, so you head down the stairs I guess.

LILIT: Xianna just pops on her night vision goggles.

NICK: Karma has her heat vision, HK has his advanced robotic eyes, Xianna has scanner goggles, and Tink has a flashlight.

HUDSON: Yep.

NICK: You head down into the darkness.

[dramatic and suspenseful music begins]

You descend for a long time before coming to an empty room deep within the moon. Your breathing masks show that the atmosphere here is breathable, and you can see the faint outline of a door but otherwise it appears to be a solid wall.

HUDSON: I try to open the door-like figure.

NICK: You push on the door. It sure feels like a solid wall. Some deep-seated feeling in you makes you think that you're going to have to investigate the area and find some way to move forward.

LILIT: Xianna turns to HK.

LILIT (as Xianna): HK, can you just shoot the door open? Ooh! Do we have any thermal detonators? We could just blow it up.

[dramatic and suspenseful music ends]

CAMERON (as Karma): I thought you were about to ask him to go into Investigator Mode and I was gonna be so upset.

[laughter]

LILIT (as Xianna): Oh no, I would never do that to our friend HK. That is a fate worse than death.

NICK (as HK): Thank you for understanding how horrible that was. But yes, absolutely. Suppressing fire.

NICK: [gun power-up and firing noises] And HK starts shooting at the wall. The wall is blackened by the impact of blaster bolts. The sound of this large caliber weapon being fired over and over again is super loud in this small enclosed underground space. It appears to be taking little chunks out of the wall, but it seems otherwise like a solid piece of stone, so this may take a while.

CAMERON (as Karma): Alright, this seems like it may take a while. I guess we wait.

NICK: [more gun firing noises]

CAMERON: [laughs]

LILIT (as Xianna): I guess we will all go up and have a picnic on the ship while HK slowly chips away at this wall.

HUDSON (as Tink): No-no-no, we'll run out of bullets, and we might need those for real killins later.

CAMERON (as Karma): Bullets?

LILIT (as Xianna): No, we will all save our own bullets, and besides, nobody has a slug thrower here. We are all using lasers.

HUDSON (as Tink): Slug thrower?

LILIT (as Xianna): You know, like one of those super, super old guns with the bullets.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh...

NICK (as HK): It's fine. I have extra power packs. If you want to go and engage in the organic predilection for "tea parties" I will give you a com call when I am done.

NICK: [more firing noises]

LILIT (as Xianna): Yes. We can make those little cucumber sandwiches and have like scones and little cups of tea and we will put fun hats on. [gasps] We will get a tiny, tiny little hat for Creamsicle! And we will give Creamsicle...

HUDSON (as Tink): If you all think this is gonna work I'm not gonna stop anything.

LILIT (as Xianna): We will give Creamsicle their own cup of tea, but we will have to go find a doll set somewhere on the ship – I'm sure there is a doll set somewhere – and then we can make a tiny little cup of tea and tiny, tiny sandwiches and scones, and it will be very cute.

NICK: [grinning] So we cut away to the three of y'all and Creamsicle.

CAMERON: [laughs]

NICK: You're out on this barren moon. There's been a clear bubble erected around it so that you don't have to try to drink through your breathing masks.

[delicate piano music begins]

You have a little checkered blanket laid out, and somewhere from the kitchen there's a tea set and people are wearing little party hats. From the staircase leading down you can just see bright flashing green lights and hear lasers echoing.

[laughter]

LILIT: So we definitely have a checkered picnic blanket on the ground. Xianna has gone back to the ship and found a little summer cotton dress kind of a thing, has a big hat with a big giant ribbon and bow and little flowers on it. Tink has a matching hat.

HUDSON: I have a picnic vest on.

LILIT: Yes. It's very cute.

NICK: Please define picnic vest.

HUDSON: So you know how there's a red and white checkered mat we're gonna be sitting on for a picnic?

LILIT: Uh-huh.

HUDSON: My vest is just the same thing, same material too.

CAMERON: Oh!

NICK: Oh, okay. Okay cool, cool.

LILIT: Yeah, and somewhere on the ship we did find a dollhouse that is the appropriate scale for Creamsicle.

CAMERON: And for some reason we had a full silver tea service set in the kitchen, because why wouldn't you on a party boat.

LILIT: Yeah, it's a fancy party yacht, so there's a tea set somewhere, and of course there was a fancy child at some point on the ship who had a fancy doll house with little tiny cups, and so Creamsicle has her own little setup. We have a tiny little box, it's probably just a fast food box of some sort, but we've turned it into a little picnic table for Creamsicle.

NICK: We see you all sitting under this atmosphere bubble. You've dressed up.

CAMERON: Karma is wearing her armor and has just added a Pride and Prejudice style bonnet. Over head tails. It doesn't super fit, but... it's working. It's got a ribbon to tie under her chin so it's fine. It'll stay on.

NICK: This is a surprisingly warm and gentle scene of the three of you all relaxing with your pet rat, and the camera pans away to show this desolate and foreboding moonscape and then pans back to this nice warm bubble of tea party. Who's pouring the tea?

HUDSON: I am, pinky out.

NICK: Lovely.

HUDSON (as Tink): Hello. Would you like tea?

LILIT (as Xianna): Tink, you do not have to do a fancy voice, but yes, I would like some tea, thank you.

HUDSON (as Tink): Chip, chip, cheerio.

LILIT (as Xianna): I don't... Why?

HUDSON: I pour the tea with my pinky out.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh-ho-ho.

LILIT (as Xianna): Okay... I'm going to get a little cup for Creamsicle. I don't know if she can even have the tea, but you know, it's for the aesthetics.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh Creamsicle, do you prefer chamomile or light green?



LILIT (as Xianna): Wait. Why the fuck did we bring chamomile?

CAMERON (as Karma): Why did we pick green tea?!

LILIT (as Xianna): That is like a sleepy time tea. I like green tea!

CAMERON (as Karma): I need caffeine~

LILIT (as Xianna): It's the chamomile that can fuck right off. That is for when you are going to sleep and we are about to go do whatever it is after HK finishes his job.

NICK: The camera pans over to the nearby staircase and you see the flashing green lights and hear [firing noises].

HUDSON: [laughs]

LILIT (as Xianna): We should have brought a robust morning breakfast tea.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh, we have breakfast tea, but it has elements of this morning's breakfast in it. I actually made a spill this morning.

CAMERON (as Karma): ... What?

LILIT (as Xianna): That is not how you make a breakfast tea. It's just a certain type of tea.

HUDSON (as Tink): No-no-no, I brewed the breakfast tea, and then I was eating breakfast and I tripped and all of my breakfast went into the tea.

[piano music ends]

LILIT (as Xianna): How many teapots do we even have?

HUDSON (as Tink): Two.

CAMERON (as Karma): Well, so there's this one, there's the kettle... I guess you technically could make tea in the caf pot.

LILIT (as Xianna): Wait, so we have a pot of chamomile, a pot of green tea, and then somehow a third pot with the breakfast-breakfast tea.

HUDSON (as Tink): Yes.

LILIT (as Xianna): But if we only have two teapots what is happening?

HUDSON (as Tink): The third one's in a carafe.

LILIT (as Xianna): Oh, a carafe. Okay.

HUDSON (as Tink): Yes.

LILIT (as Xianna): Maybe we should have just boiled hot water and then everyone have their own little teabags and tea strainers and stuff.

HUDSON (as Tink): Ah, quite right, quite right.

NICK: [laughs]

CAMERON (as Karma): Well, uh, Xianna, would you like some sugar?

LILIT (as Xianna): Ooh, yes please.

CAMERON (as Karma): One lump or two?

LILIT (as Xianna): One, and then I put a little squeezey of lemon.

HUDSON (as Tink): Whenever I squeeze lemon it gets in my eye.

CAMERON (as Karma): Aim it the other way.

LILIT (as Xianna): Yeah. You can't aim it towards yourself.

HUDSON (as Tink): Well, I can't see it being squeezed unless I'm looking.

CAMERON (as Karma): [stammers and sighs]

LILIT (as Xianna): [stammers] You... You put it in your hand, you make sure it is facing the right way, and then you point it away from yourself.

HUDSON (as Tink): I'll try that next time.

LILIT (as Xianna): Maybe we just buy you the pre-squeezed lemon in that little tiny bottle.

HUDSON (as Tink): [gasps] The one that looks like a lemon itself and so it's like self-referential? Yeah!

LILIT (as Xianna): Yeah.

CAMERON (as Karma): Mm-hmm.

LILIT (as Xianna): Maybe that would just be easier for you.

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah, probably. I mean, quite hitherto, yes-yes, yes-yes.

CAMERON (as Karma): Quite right. Quite right.

LILIT (as Xianna): I don't know if that word means what you think it means, but okay.

HUDSON (as Tink): What, hitherto?

LILIT (as Xianna): Yes.

HUDSON (as Tink): It's one more than hither-one.

[laughter]

HUDSON: Ha-ha!

NICK: You get a com call and you hear:

NICK (as HK): Proclamation: The doorway has been demolished. By your leisure, organics.

LILIT (as Xianna): Ooh, okie!

LILIT: Xianna grabs a tea sandwich and shoves it in her mouth and then puts the rebreather on top of it.

CAMERON: [laughing] Karma unties the bonnet and sets it on the ground and gets up.

CAMERON (as Karma): Thanks HK. Creamsicle, do you wanna stay here and keep having tea?

LILIT (as Creamsicle): Cheep-cheep. Cheep-cheep-cheep. Cheep.

CAMERON (as Karma): Okay, she's eating the sandwich so I'm gonna assume yes.

NICK: So, you leave the spread out for Creamsicle who looks happy as a loth-rat at a picnic, and you head down the now echoing silent staircase. It seems so quiet now that it's not being actively bombarded by heavy weaponry. You get to the bottom of the staircase, crunching your way over shattered pieces of pottery and symbols that were etched into the walls and keyholes that were near the hinges and all sorts of interesting things.

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: There's a smoking hole that seems to lead deeper into the moon, and HK's blaster, the barrels are all glowing brightly with heat, and HK says:

NICK (as HK): Normally I am not much for excavation, but that did work out some stress. Thank you.

HUDSON (as Tink): No, thank you, HK.

CAMERON (as Karma): Uh-huh. Thank you, yeah.

NICK (as HK): Well, whoever wants to continue onward. Maybe there will be more walls to shoot.

CAMERON (as Karma): Possibly.

LILIT (as Xianna): Ooh!

CAMERON: Karma steps over rubble and starts continuing forward.

CAMERON (as Karma): There's a whole lot of pottery in here.

CAMERON: Crunch.

NICK: Yeah.

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: There's just like shattered pots.

[dramatic and suspenseful music returns]

So, you continue down this other hallway, deeper into the moon. The planetoid is very small. This moon is not that big. You worry that if you continue much deeper you'll go through the core and have to deal with the gravity changing on you.

You come to another chamber, and in this chamber it's a large round room, and suspending in the middle is a ceramic ball on a thin cable. There are multiple holes in the walls around the room that look to be about the size of the ball with different symbols etched above them. If anyone wants to try and read these they are gonna need to make a Knowledge: Lore check, or Knowledge: Education.

[dramatic and suspenseful music ends]

HUDSON: Heh, I have nothing in both.

LILIT: I have Outer Rim and Underworld.

CAMERON: Yeah, I've got Underworld.

LILIT: I have Skulduggery?

HUDSON: I'll try to read it.

NICK: Yeah, it's a hard check, but you have like 4 Intellect don't you? So you should be okay.

HUDSON: Yeah.

LILIT: I only have a 2 Intellect, so...

CAMERON: Same.

NICK: Okay, so it's going to be a hard check, Hudson.

HUDSON: First I turn and I say:

HUDSON (as Tink): What kind of sports arena is this?

HUDSON: Two failures and four advantages.

NICK: Oh, well...

HUDSON: I get the gist of it without knowing anything about it.

NICK: [as a chuckle] Yeah.

CAMERON: You know exactly which kind of sports ball arena this is.

NICK: Yeah, so this appears to be some sort of ritualistic room, maybe a test. You recognize that the symbols are in an ancient Jedi script, but you don't know how to read that ancient Jedi script, so you can just see that there are five individual symbols that all appear to be different. They must be different words and somehow a solution to this puzzle, I mean, and somehow lead further in.

CAMERON: [laughs]

HUDSON: Hmm.

LILIT: What about a Perception or Skulduggery check?

NICK: That could probably help you out in this situation. I would say Perception for this, because you're still trying to figure out what to do here.

LILIT: Okay. Can I have a blue die from Tink's? I mean, he had four advantages. I feel like I could maybe have two.

NICK: Sure. Yeah, there's a lot of advantages.

LILIT: Would maybe this be considered disabling a security device or opening a locked door?

NICK: [reluctantly] Yes.

HUDSON: Let's get as many blue dice as we can.

LILIT: Oh wait, that's remove a black die. There were no black dice.

NICK: No.

LILIT: That is two successes and four advantages.

NICK: So, you can't read what the symbols are, but you know that in these kind of situations it doesn't really matter. They're just gonna try to confuse you, right? It looks like if the ball was able to be pushed with a consistent force of some kind that it would be able to swing and just barely settle into these different holes, and one of them must lead onward. You figure probably four out of five are some sort of booby-trap that would hurt you. You don't know if they're all functioning anymore, but you know that there is definitely one that is the correct one.

LILIT: After looking at these for a while, Xianna turns around to everyone else.

LILIT (as Xianna): Okie. Doesn't our ship have some sort of heat sensor?

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah, I think it does.

LILIT (as Xianna): Okay. What if we bypass all of these stupid tests and we use the heat sensor to figure out where the room is and we just like... shoot a tunnel down to that room.

HUDSON (as Tink): Like from above?

LILIT (as Xianna): Yes, so that way we don't have to do these tests, because I don't want to have to think anymore. That is too much work.

HUDSON (as Tink): I mean, shooting has solved our problems this far.

LILIT (as Xianna): It got us into this room.

HUDSON (as Tink): If we're just gonna bypass this door why don't we bypass all of them?

LILIT (as Xianna): Exactly ! That is what I am saying. We just skip all of these things, we go back to the ship, use the heat sensor or the scanners, whatever we have up there, find where the last room is and then just shoot our way directly into that room.

CAMERON (as Karma): Like shoot through with the ship into that room?

LILIT (as Xianna): I guess, or if we have like grenades or detonators. We just shoot a tunnel down to that room, unless you want to solve puzzle after puzzle.

CAMERON (as Karma): My main concern with just using the ship to create a tunnel is that we're then gonna collapse that room, and we need the thing that's in that room. The shooting doesn't seem the safest way to get into the room.

LILIT (as Xianna): No, you just do like a controlled demolition thing.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh yeah...

NICK: HK cocks his head.

NICK (as HK): We could use the turret lasers to dig close and then be more careful at the end to prevent collateral damage.

HUDSON (as Tink): Sounds like HK's onboard.

LILIT (as Xianna): Ooh yes. We dig the tunnel so it ends up at the side wall, and then we just set a small detonator for that side wall, and then it's like a door and we just walk in.

HUDSON (as Tink): I wonder how many more of these rooms there are.

LILIT (as Xianna): It doesn't matter, because we can just bypass all of them.

NICK (as HK): Probably like four or five.

[laughter]

LILIT (as Xianna): And not have to do any of the puzzles inside of them.

HUDSON (as Tink): Huh. Can I keep this ball that we found, though?

LILIT (as Xianna): Sure. I don't see why not.

NICK: It's hanging from a cable from the ceiling, so do you try to like cut it down?

HUDSON: Yep, I try to cut it down.

NICK: Okay. You manage to, and as you cut the cable with your vibro-axe it retracts with the sound of cutting high-tension wire up into the ceiling, and you can hear stone deadbolts sliding shut somewhere deeper in and in the walls. You now have a small ceramic ball.

HUDSON (as Tink): Ooh. Alright, now we really can't go further it looks like. We should forget about that plan.

CAMERON: [laughs]

LILIT (as Xianna): I mean, yeah, we weren't going to do that anyway so it didn't matter.

HUDSON (as Tink): Alright, we're doing the bypass plan.

LILIT (as Xianna): That is good, because I need to change out of this sundress anyways.

[laughter]

NICK: So you all traipse back up the stairs, HK looking around to see if there's anything still worth shooting down here which there isn't, and we see you all climbing back into the ship. Karma, I'm assuming you jump into the pilot seat and start firing up the sensors?

CAMERON: Yup.

NICK: To operate the sensors I'm going to need either you to make a Perception check with two black dice to calibrate it or Tink could make a Mechanics or Investigation check and man the sensors.

HUDSON: I'll do a Mechanics I think.

NICK: So Tink, you're able to plug into the main sensor hub and calibrate it to try to pierce down through all this stone. It is a daunting check, that's four purples, with two black dice because that's not what this thing is designed to do.

CAMERON: Can he have a blue die because I know how the ship actually works?

NICK: Yeah, you can have a blue die. It can be a collaborative check.

CAMERON: [laughs] Assist.

HUDSON: I got two successes, two advantages.

[electronic music begins]

NICK: Nice. So, we get a wireframe grid that gets projected as a hologram into the ship. It's on the various terminals around the ship, and it guides Karma very easily to the best point. You can see that this staircase leads deeper and deeper into the moon, past the center of the moon and even a little further in, but it's small enough and the scanners also indicate what the moon is made out of is not dense enough that it would stop the blaster fire, so you could conceivably dig a tunnel with your weapons through the moon... skipping the interesting and lore-steeped puzzles within.

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: [pained, smiling] Which if that's what you wanna do, I guess that would be a Gunnery check with two blue dice because of the advantages and another blue die because the ship's positioning is perfect.

LILIT: I would have four green. I still haven't bought a rank in Gunnery. I should though. What would be the difficulty?

NICK: At this point it's just hard.

LILIT: And aiming.

NICK: Oh yeah, you can aim I guess.

LILIT: Ha-ha! Nothing?! There were so many blank dice!

NICK: Oh, so it's a wash, huh?

LILIT: So it's a wash.

NICK: So, Karma, you position the ship on repulsers and you hear the turret that Xianna's operating spring to life. With no successes but also no failures or threats the blasters just take a while to heat up, and you can see Xianna's having a little trouble compensating for the various stones underground and the different textures of the earth are making it harder to dig a straight tunnel. It takes a while, like 45 minutes of shooting down through here. It just doesn't go as easily as you would want it to.

LILIT (as Xianna): Tiiink.

HUDSON (as Tink): Yes?

LILIT (as Xianna): Can you bring me another cup of tea?

HUDSON (as Tink): Sure. What do you think this planet's made out of, cheese? What's taking this so long? I mean like a hard cheese.

CAMERON: [snickers]



LILIT (as Xianna): No, if it was cheese it would be so much easier. And also planets are not made out of cheese, they are made of like rocks, and lava, and dirt...

HUDSON (as Tink): Not even Cheese Planet is made of cheese?

LILIT (as Xianna): Cheese Planet is not real.

[electronic music ends]

NICK (as HK): You take that back, Xianna.

LILIT (as Xianna): No! I will not. The Cheese Planet is not real, and it is time that Tink understood that. He is not a child!

HUDSON (as Tink): [sobbing] First Cyber Claus and now this?!

[laughter]

LILIT (as Xianna): Cyber Claus isn't even a real thing! You made it up!

HUDSON (as Tink): No! It was in my family!

LILIT (as Xianna): I don't know what your family's deal was, but that is not a thing anywhere.

HUDSON (as Tink): [dejected] Fine. Here's your tea.

LILIT (as Xianna): Thank you.

NICK: We get a montage of Xianna just tapping the fire button on the turret. Remember that the turret on the ship is a really comfortable recliner that doesn't move and the turret moves around you. So Xianna's jiggling her leg impatiently as they slowly carve this tunnel down.

CAMERON: We cut to the cockpit. Karma's got her feet up on the dash and has a plate of cucumber sandwiches and is just munching down since the ship's not moving. [laughs] She just has it set in hover.

NICK: Yeah. So we can see through the cockpit over Karma's newly abyss sea dragon scaled boots to this larger and larger cave that's being dug into the ground with flashing turret fire as you eat some sandwiches and kind of basically watch the fireworks. After way, way longer than you had thought this would take, but with no personal risk to you or any need to think very hard or anything, your sensors indicate that your carved weapons tunnel has gone as low as the furthest chamber in this moon. It also has indicated that at some point this moon will now break apart, because you've carved a giant hole through the middle of it, but that's not gonna happen for a while. There's no pressing issue there.

LILIT: We'll just fill the hole back in.

HUDSON: Oh yeah.

CAMERON: [laughing] If we push the rocks back into the hole before we leave it'll be fine.

NICK: What?! [laughs]

LILIT: I don't see why not.

NICK: [grinning, indignant] Because you dug the hole with lasers! There's no dirt anymore!

LILIT: The dirt evaporated?!

NICK: Sublimated, yes.

LILIT: I don't know if it works that way. We'll fill it up with concrete.

HUDSON: [laughs]

NICK: [grinning] Okay fine.

LILIT: I don't want us to be responsible for the destruction of an entire moon.

NICK: It's a small moon.

CAMERON: We'll go get all of the rubble from the door that HK blew up and we'll carry that over and drop it in the hole.

NICK: [long exhale] If y'all want to try to figure out a way to stabilize the moon after you get the artifact you can. That's okay.

CAMERON: Does anyone have any duct tape?

NICK: [chuckles] Oh my gosh. So, the next thing we see is the Afternoon Delight settling back down into the landing pattern prints from before and the four of you disembarking again, breath masks on, again. In the distance we can see the little bubble that you had set up with the tea party sitting forlornly over by the now abandoned stairs.

There's smoke rising from this new crater that you have dug. It's like a very straight tunnel at a sharp angle on the way down. You get the impression that if you had been a little bit more careful with the shooting it probably would have been an easy walk, but the gradient's very steep so it's gonna be a little difficult to climb down. I'm gonna need Athletics checks from everybody.

CAMERON: Okay~ What difficulty Athletics check?

NICK: Hard. Xianna's gonna have a rough time. Someone might wanna help Xianna. [laughs]

LILIT: What if we tie ropes to each other?

NICK: yeah, that would be a good idea.

LILIT: If I did that, would I get blue die?

NICK: Yes.

LILIT: Ha-ha~ Okay, so that is a triumph without the success and a threat.

CAMERON: One success, two advantages.

HUDSON: Do I get blue die too?

NICK: Sure. You're tied to it. I'm assuming Karma was lead climbing, so...

CAMERON: Probably.

HUDSON: One success.

NICK: Okay. So Karma, you start climbing first. I think Xianna is in the middle and Tink is last. Xianna, you're really struggling, and you slip and fall a couple of times. The ropes catch you. You don't really get hurt, but it definitely slows you down, and you have pretty much no style points on this thing. By the end you're breathing hard, you're scraped up, it's a little embarrassing.

LILIT (as Xianna): [groaning and seething] Oh shit. I should not have worn the tea hat down here, but I look too cute in it.

HUDSON (as Tink): Get good!

LILIT (as Xianna): It just obscures my vision too much, and it throws off my balance because it's so big, but I look so fucking cute in it I didn't want to take it off yet. Like, what if there's a good selfie spot in this room?

HUDSON (as Tink): You make a good point, but—

CAMERON (as Karma): With the lighting down here I highly doubt there's a good selfie spot.

LILIT (as Xianna): I mean the lighting down in the tunnel, yes, but like... what if there is a good spot in the room? Because sometimes those treasure rooms have very good lighting.

HUDSON (as Tink): Where would you even share this photo without us getting caught?

LILIT (as Xianna): ... OnlyFans.

[laughter]

HUDSON (as Tink): Only Chadra-Fans only has Chadra-Fans.

LILIT (as Xianna): Because then it's not really public. They have to pay me to get it.

HUDSON (as Tink): You have a point.

LILIT (as Xianna): And the cops can't pay me for photos.

HUDSON (as Tink): They have to say if they're a cop.

HUDSON: [laughs]

CAMERON: [laughs]

LILIT (as Xianna): Yeah. I have it right in my bio that you have to say if you're a cop, and if you're a cop you can't buy my photos.

CAMERON: [exasperated exhale]

NICK: [laughs]

LILIT (as Xianna): So like... they can't get them.

LILIT: [giggles]

NICK: Lilit, would you like your triumph to be that the lighting in the treasure room is like really, really good?

LILIT: [smiling] Yes.

[laughter]

NICK: Okay. So, you get to the bottom of this dug tunnel. There's a lot of melted glassy rock that is just cracking as it cools down at the base, you know, like when you dig with war weapons. It's not particularly good on the environment or comfortable to use, but you did make it down. You can tell from the scans that the far wall is right on the other side of this final room of this facility that you have bypassed. You're gonna need to do something to get through.

LILIT (as Xianna): Do we have any detonators left?

CAMERON (as Karma): That seems like a very bad plan with us trapped in the tunnel that it's all gonna come boom out of.

HUDSON (as Tink): That's true.

LILIT (as Xianna): Oh, you're right, we would have to go up and then set them off. We could get like a half size, a tiny little one, and so it just goes through the wall.

HUDSON (as Tink): Just cut it with a vibro-knife.

LILIT (as Xianna): Ooh, wait! I think I have a grenade left. So we could go halfway up, or like, we walk up the tunnel a little bit and then we just throw the grenade down at the wall, and then it should just blow up just the wall. That makes sense, right?

HUDSON (as Tink): Foolproof!

CAMERON (as Karma): Tink, can you try hitting it with your axe first?

HUDSON (as Tink): Hiyah!

HUDSON: I try to hit it with my axe.

NICK: Roll me an attack. You can have a blue die, because it's a wall. Pretty easy to hit.

HUDSON: Four successes, five advantages.

NICK: Wow. Yeah. So you're able to carve through this wall like a hot sword through paper. Describe how you open a doorway into this treasure room.

HUDSON (as Tink): Hey guys! I got to slice through this door like a hot sword through paper. You know, that thing everyone says?

CAMERON: [laughs]

LILIT (as Xianna): Oh yes, that very popular saying.

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah.

NICK: [laughs]

LILIT (as Xianna): Some people think it is like a hot knife through butter, but it's not.

HUDSON (as Tink): It's really not. That's not the origin at least.

LILIT (as Xianna): Yeah, because the hot knife would just melt the butter and then you would just have melted butter.

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah, but through paper... yeah.

LILIT (as Xianna): But through paper nothing is getting melted, so it works perfectly.

HUDSON: [laughs]

[smooth and slinky music begins]

HUDSON: As sweat glistens down my dirty body I walk toward the wall, both hands gripping the axe, twisting against the handle, and I slice across my chest with full force and let out a grunt as the axe glistens against the wall.

NICK: So you're able to sensuously cut your way through this doorway.

[smooth and slinky music ends]

We see a quiet camera shot of this square kind of Spartan room, and then one of the side walls blows out and Tink comes stomping in caressing his axe. You all are standing at a new entrance to a simple room.

The walls that you just came through have threadbare tapestries that look to have been cheap to start with and not treated well by time. Scattered around the room are what look like to be handmade clay pots and platters, some of them broken from the flying rocks. There are hanging circular lights in each corner of the room that have the perfect white balance so everything is clearly illuminated and very flattering in angle. You can see in the corner there is a pottery wheel covered in dust, and seated opposite of the wall that you just cut through, on an aged and dusty cushion, you can see a desiccated body.

The corpse looks like it's been there for years and years, the skin stretched tight under clothes that look very similar to what Sentinel wears. Normally seeing a corpse like this would be creepy, but even in this dark pit in a terrifying nebula after a running dogfight the room feels peaceful. The mummy looks content, sitting in a meditative pose on its old cushion. Nestled in its hands you can see a sphere about the size of a softball. It looks to be glowing from within and looks to be the only thing in this room without a trace of dust on it.

LILIT (as Xianna): Ooh, ooh, I know this one. We have to find the correct little cup for the water, because if we don't find the correct one we'll become all old like that dude.

LILIT: Xianna's in a corner taking selfies.

LILIT (as Xianna): Tink, you go touch the dead body.

HUDSON (as Tink): I'd actually like to pick up that orb, and luckily...

HUDSON: I pull out the ceramic ball from earlier.

HUDSON (as Tink): ...I can replace it with this just in case it's some kind of weird thing where it needs to be holding a ball.

LILIT (as Xianna): Oh, in case... Yeah, in case the ghost gets sad that they don't have a ball anymore.

HUDSON (as Tink): It's a dead body not a ghost.

LILIT (as Xianna): Well I'm sure the ghost is still inside the dead body or this room.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh.

NICK: [makes whooshing noises]

LILIT (as Xianna): Because sometimes the ghosts are still attached to the dead body.

HUDSON (as Tink): Ooh, as I get closer, this uh... this doesn't feel right. It feels like emptiness with indigestion with a little bit of shakiness.

LILIT (as Xianna): Oh Tink, did you eat the smoked fish and cream cheese tea sandwich?

HUDSON (as Tink): No, no, I think HK had that one.

CAMERON (as Karma): What?

LILIT (as Xianna): HK cannot eat.

HUDSON (as Tink): What did he do with it then?

NICK (as HK): I cannot eat.

HUDSON (as Tink): HK, what did you do with it?

CAMERON (as Karma): Whoa HK, when did you come down this tunnel?

[laughter]

LILIT (as Xianna): Sometimes he just picks them up and then throws them away.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh, well... No, I didn't eat it though.

LILIT (as Xianna): Because I don't think you are supposed to have the fish anymore either.

HUDSON (as Tink): That would have made sense, but o, it just feels weird. Never mind.

LILIT (as Xianna): Wait. Let me come over and see.

LILIT: Xianna walks over, holds their arms out, and she just kinda walks around and spins a little bit.

LILIT (as Xianna): I think there is a draft in this area.

HUDSON (as Tink): Ah, okay, that must be it.

HUDSON: So I pick up the orb and I replace it with the ceramic orb that I cut from the wire earlier.

NICK: Make me a Coordination check.

CAMERON: [snickers]

NICK: This one's going to be average.

HUDSON: One success.

NICK: Nice. So you're able to crouch down low in front of these hands that are holding this orb and very quickly swap the glowing orb for the ceramic ball you took from the earlier room, and nothing happens. The meditating mummy just continues to hold the ball. It's fine, probably. You do feel more energetic holding the glowing orb. You feel just... better. You're not sure what exactly it is.

HUDSON (as Tink): I don't know exactly what this is, but... Oh! When you look at this dead guy do you think, like, do you get a craving for banana taffy? Am I the only one?

CAMERON (as Karma): What?

LILIT (as Xianna): I did want a banana pudding.

HUDSON (as Tink): But like, you see the skin, you know how it's like stretched?

CAMERON (as Karma): No!

LILIT (as Xianna): Oh no. That is not... not at all. No.

NICK: [laughs]

LILIT (as Xianna): No, I just wanted banana pudding because I like banana pudding.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh, I don't know, something about this body just... man, I just want some taffy.

CAMERON (as Karma): That... That's disturbing, Tink.

LILIT (as Xianna): That is weird.

HUDSON (as Tink): It's not like I want to eat the body, it just reminded me. It just... something about it.

LILIT (as Xianna): That is weird, Tink.

HUDSON (as Tink): Whatever.

LILIT (as Xianna): Even for you. That one is weird. I don't... Maybe you should just think about why you made that association.

CAMERON: Karma's just walking around the room picking up pieces of pottery that weren't smashed by the rocks flying in and examining them and setting them back down, just looking for the perfect piece to take back to the Afternoon Delight.

NICK: Some of them got smashed as you blew through this wall, some of them it looks like fell off of shelves and broke as the entire moon was shaken by your bombardment, but there are quite a few still together. What is the perfect piece that Karma finds? This piece of presumably Jedi pottery.

CAMERON: I want just like a really big turkey serving plate.

NICK: Okay.

CAMERON: Just like a massive oval plate.

NICK: Big honkin' platter.

CAMERON: Yeah.

NICK: What color is it?

CAMERON: Um... it's like a nice sky blue.



NICK: Okay, so it's got a good glaze on it.

CAMERON: Mm-hmm.

NICK: Which is interesting because there's no kiln in here ,but—

CAMERON: Shh! It's fine.

LILIT: You know pottery can be made and then brought into another room~

NICK: What? Nuh-uh.

HUDSON: [laughs]

CAMERON: The kiln room was one of the ones that was in between the second room and this room.

NICK: It was actually. You have the orb and you have this large serving platter. So, you begin your climb back up the tunnel. Xianna, you struggle again, but you got some really good selfies out of it, a triumphantly well-lit selfie even. So as you climb out of the tunnel you can feel the moon's orbit having shifted a little bit like a strange momentum in your ears, and you know from the scanners that eventually this moon's gonna rattle itself apart because of the hole that you dug through the core.

LILIT (as Xianna): Ooh wait, Karma.

CAMERON (as Karma): Yes?

LILIT (as Xianna): Do you know anyone who works in like construction or... could like go fill that hole up with some cement so there is not just a giant hole on this little moon?

CAMERON (as Karma): We can probably find a service in the space yellow pages.

LILIT (as Xianna): Or just like fill it up with the similar dirt. It doesn't have to be concrete.

CAMERON (as Karma): Yeah.

CAMERON: As we reach the lip of the tunnel and are now back on strong land Karma kicks a few rocks down into the tunnel that were thrown off by the initial laser blasts, filling in with what's there, but there's not enough material here anymore.

LILIT (as Xianna): Because apparently the ship lasers do not just blow up the dirt and throw it around, it "sublimates" the dirt or something, so there's no excess dirt to fill back into the hole, so we have to get dirt from somewhere else to do it.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh, do you need something to fill this hole?

CAMERON (as Karma): Yeah. That's what we're talking about.

LILIT (as Xianna): Yes, but also not in that way, but also yes.

NICK: [laughs]

HUDSON (as Tink): I didn't wink, you winked.

LILIT (as Xianna): I winked when you said it, yes.

[laughter]

HUDSON (as Tink): So, luckily, I have a friend, Donny Donaldson, who could absolutely fill this hole. They're a contractor and they have a lot of space dirt.

LILIT (as Xianna): Ooh! I don't know if there are any living things on this tiny moon but like theoretically we do want a similar type of dirt.

HUDSON (as Tink): Similar type of dirt...

LILIT (as Xianna): So as to not throw off the whole ecosystem or whatever.

CAMERON (as Karma): If you want to stabilize it, it needs to be similar to the rock so that it actually stabilizes it and it serves the purpose of filling it back in to equalize the mass again.

LILIT (as Xianna): Yes, a similar mass, what Karma said.

HUDSON (as Tink): Do you want me to just give Donny a call?

CAMERON (as Karma): Yes.

LILIT (as Xianna): Okie.

HUDSON: I just call Donny, like on the spot.

[quirky music begins]

LILIT (as Donny): Uh, 'ello, this is Donny Donaldson.

HUDSON (as Tink): Donny, 'ey! This is Tink. How's it going?

LILIT (as Donny): Oh hey Tink. How's it goin'?

HUDSON (as Tink): [chuckling] That's what I asked you.

LILIT (as Donny): Well, you know, you just say it back.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh, psh, you know I was never good with small talk. Anyways. So uh, I got this hole that needs to be filled, you know what I mean?

LILIT (as Donny): Oh, I know what you mean, but also just to clarify, you do mean a construction hole that I would then fill with dirt and/or concrete?

HUDSON (as Tink): Yeah, that. Exactly.

LILIT (as Donny): Okay. I can do.

[laughter]

LILIT (as Donny): I mean, I could help you with the other problem, but you know, that one would just have to be off the books if you catch my drift.

HUDSON (as Tink): I love how little information that you need from me before you agree to a job, Donny. This is why we're friends.

[laughter]

LILIT (as Donny): I mean Tink, I've known you for so many years.

HUDSON (as Tink): I know. We go way back.

LILIT (as Donny): We go way back. So far back.

HUDSON (as Tink): Alright, what I'll do is I'll just ship you the...

LILIT (as Donny): You know what, all you gotta do is just give me a pin of your location and then I'll come over there.

HUDSON (as Tink): Well we're not gonna stick around that much longer, but I can send you some pics.

LILIT (as Donny): You can just, you know, wire me the money, and you know, drop a pin for the location, and I'll just head on over there, fill up this there hole, and you know... we don't even need to meet in person. If it's just filling a hole I can do that in my sleep.

HUDSON (as Tink): I believe it. I believe it. Just real quick, don't mention to anyone that I called you, you know? Just put something else down on the books, not my name.

LILIT (as Donny): Well you know, doctor-patient confidentiality.

HUDSON (as Tink): ... Yeah!

LILIT (as Donny): Seeing as how you are my doctor.

HUDSON (as Tink): Yes, that's right!

LILIT (as Donny): It works both ways. It works both ways.

[laughter]

HUDSON (as Tink): You're right. How could I forget?

LILIT (as Donny): So uh... did you want dirt or concrete for this there hole?

HUDSON (as Tink): Karma, do we want dirt or concrete for this there hole?

CAMERON (as Karma): Probably concrete.

HUDSON (as Tink): Probably concrete, Donny.

LILIT (as Donny): Gotcha. Gotcha. Okay, uh, well do you mind if I do partial dirt and then concrete on the top?

HUDSON (as Tink): That sounds fine.

LILIT (as Donny): Or do you want concrete all the way up there?

HUDSON (as Tink): You know, I think I'm gonna go with, uh, do the combo mix.

LILIT (as Donny): Okay-okay. You know, just checking, that combo mix will save you a few bucks, you know.

HUDSON (as Tink): Well Donny, this has been great interaction, but I think I gotta go. I'll send you that ping with my coordinates and a couple pictures so you can be ready and know where to put the dirt.

LILIT (as Donny): Thanks. Thanks, and once I get those I'll get you an estimate and then I'll head on over there, fill that hole up for ya real nice.

HUDSON (as Tink): Oh, you always do a nice job, Donny. Thank you so much.

LILIT (as Donny): Well, you know my company motto...

[quirky music ends]

...Donny Donaldson, I'll fill your hole.

[extended laughter]

NICK: And that's the end of the episode!

ALL: Ba-naaa~!

NICK: Shit!

[laughter]

## 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.

If you're so inclined, you can also help support the show through our Patreon which can be found in the show notes, on our website, and basically anywhere else we post things. We have all sorts of Patreon levels including some of my favorites, Bantha Buddy, Tarkin's Underwear Drawer, and Hot tub hangout, which all have fabulous rewards and super great names.

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.

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