

STAR WARS EPISODE II: ATTACK OF THE EMPIRE

Written by

James Schanep

Based on Characters Created by George Lucas

DISCLAIMER

This project is for educational use as a writing exercise and learning aide. As such, though Star Wars, characters, and elements are owned by Disney/Lucasfilm, all new material added belongs to James Schannep. This film criticism was written for the express purpose of story analysis and as a writing exercise. I would encourage everyone to purchase a legal copy of both Star Wars trilogies for comparison, as well as to ensure no profit is lost from the Reboot the Prequels venture. Please see www.jamesschannep.com/starwars for more information as well as the end of this PDF for a detailed analysis on the story itself. Fair use intended. Please distribute with proper attribution.

For George

FADE IN:

OPENING CRAWL: A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away...

STAR WARS

Episode II: Attack of the Empire

The galaxy is overrun with fear, confusion, and hopelessness as former alliances explode under brutal surprise attacks from lingering cloned leadership.

The Mandalorians have scattered to the outer rim, many seeking their own fortune as bounty hunters, but a splinter group has rallied behind the dread assassin Maul and his clone army.

The Senate, racing to discover a solution to end the conflict once and for all, has named Palpatine LORD PROTECTOR of the Republic until the end of the Clone Wars....

EXT. GALAXY - PLANET ALDERAAN

The familiar blue ball hangs serenely in space.

Has anything changed since we last saw it?

A REPUBLIC TRANSPORT (Imperial tri-wing Shuttle precursor)
SCREAMS past us towards the planet below.

INT. REPUBLIC TRANSPORT - MEDITATION CHAMBER

A circular room, shrouded with shadows.

A DARK FIGURE sits cross-legged, meditating. A single spotlight illuminates the space before him.

Here, various electronic components and a WHITE CRYSTAL float in mid-air. The circuitry orbits the crystal.

The whole thing comes together, building itself into...

ANAKIN'S LIGHTSABER.

The door suddenly slides opens, bathing the room in light from the hall.

OBI-WAN KENOBI (40s) enters.

Two years older now. Still clean-shaven. His grey Republic uniform adorned with a few more medals and rank insignia.

KENOBI

Anakin, we're on final approach
with Alderaan.

The figure claims the lightsaber and rises from the shadows to reveal his identity: ANAKIN SKYWALKER (20s/30s).

The last two years have given him a darker, more mature countenance. Stoic, calm.

A Jedi.

ANAKIN

I know.

Anakin wears a tank-top undershirt, evokes Luke on Dagobah. Shows off a nasty keloid scar from his shoulder wound.

Takes his officer's coat, hanging nearby, puts it on.

Stiffness in that shoulder.

KENOBI

I can sense the battle at Dathomir
is still troubling you, but we did
all we could for the Chancellor.

ANAKIN

I know, Master.

Anakin slowly, purposefully buttons the jacket. His military uniform is black, much like a future Imperial officer's.

Obi-Wan tries for eye-contact; doesn't get it.

KENOBI

Alderaan is beautiful this time of
year... Lara and Bail will be
pleased to see you.

ANAKIN

I know.

KENOBI

I'm sorry, Anakin. I didn't realize the extent of your feelings for her when I assigned you to track down the separatists together...but you handled your emotions well, even if things between the three of you have felt...uncomfortable since then. I'm here for you to confide in, whenever you need me, but I think it's wise to keep these sentiments in check. Lara has a duty. This marriage between House Amidala and House Organa will bring a measure of much-needed stability to the Republic.

ANAKIN

Ben...I know.

KENOBI

Well, what don't you know?!

Anakin makes eye-contact for the first time.

A beat, then he suddenly explodes with anger and passion.

ANAKIN

I don't know why we're not tracking down Maul! We're wasting our time while the galaxy suffers!

KENOBI

Anakin, we've been over this a thousand times. Every bounty hunter in the galaxy is looking for him. Lord Palpatine believes--

ANAKIN

Then Palpatine is a fool! Every Mandalorian bounty hunter we send at Maul either joins him or dies!

KENOBI

Anakin, you're letting your emotions cloud your judgement.

ANAKIN

I'm not afraid of him!

Kenobi's brow rises, gives a knowing look.

ANAKIN (CONT'D)

I'm not. Not anymore. We should be training for battle, yet every time I suggest it, all you want to do is meditate. Do you think this conflict will resolve itself? What do you think Maul is doing while we look for 'another way?' Don't you remember? He almost killed Lara and he almost killed you and we've done nothing save for letting him grow more powerful. And now look! He's killed Master Sifo-Dyas and his apprentice. Master Agen Kolar too. Who knows how many more. How many Jedi must die before you're willing to act? This isn't diplomacy, this is cowardice!

Obi-Wan is genuinely hurt, but hides it well.

He pauses a beat, lets the moment hang in the air.

KENOBI

I'm going to let you regain control of your feelings. I'll be at the front of the ship.

Kenobi turns to leave.

Anakin looks contrite.

Steps forward. Still has his leg-brace and limp.

ANAKIN

Ben, wait. I'm sorry. This frustration--I just feel so...helpless. I thought by joining the Republic again it'd be easier to stop him. But--forgive me, Master. This is a day of celebration.

Kenobi nods. Puts a hand on Anakin's shoulder.

KENOBI

Yes, it is. Let's focus on the present, hmm? Remember to be mindful of where you are and what you're doing. We need these small victories to keep us going during trying times.

EXT. ALDERAAN - PLANET SURFACE - ESTABLISHING

A beautiful day on a beautiful planet.

Those are the only kind of days they have here, it seems.

Waves crest, sending gentle spray against man-made islands.

The Republic Shuttle flies down, coming to

EXT. ALDERAAN - DOCKING BAY

The same one from two years ago. Changed, slightly.

Still a major hub of alien commerce.

The tri-wings of the shuttle fold for landing.

EXT. ALDERAAN PALACE - COURTYARD

The courtyard where Clones once slaughtered Royal Troopers.

No explosions, no battle.

A wedding.

The courtyard, filled with spectators and subjects.

You should be feeling a kind of nostalgic *deja vu* right now.

A stage has been erected for the event, on which stands BAIL ORGANA (30s) dressed in Kingly garb. Still has that cape.

ZEE-SQUARED (droid), hovers at his periphery.

There are two PRESIDING OFFICIALS, ancient men in ornate costumes and headdresses. One for each house.

They hold the scepters and extra familial crowns from the coronation event at the end of the last film.

The Presiding Officials do their thing, lips moving with speech, but the scene is SILENT.

LARA (20s), walks up the aisle. Family crest (future Rebellion symbol) embroidered on the bust of a wedding gown.

WEDDING - REACTIONS

People in the crowd smile and cry.

Soldiers and pilots from the previous film stand tall, proud.

Alien and human military men and women, uniforms pressed.

Lord PALPATINE (50s) wears gaudy robes.

Escorted by PRAETORIAN GUARDS with Mandalorian tech. Similar to the red, Imperial guard from the classic trilogy.

Kenobi watches the ceremony, hints of a smile on his face.

Anakin has the opposite reaction: cold, detached. His face, hard. Muscles in his jaw, pronounced; clenched.

The Presiding Officials finish, interlocking the existing crowns with the ones from the scepters.

Perfect fit.

Lara and Bail KISS.

The crowd explodes with CHEERS, and sound returns.

Bail raises Lara's hand with his own, grinning like a man on the happiest day of his life.

Lara smiles too, though not the same. Closed mouth, no teeth. The smile someone gives when waving hello to a neighbor.

This is not joy; this is duty.

Kenobi applauds the union, looks to Anakin, who stares forward--hands at his side.

FIREWORKS explode in the sky above.

X-Wings fly by in salute.

INT. STAR SLAYER - BRIDGE

MAUL (20s) in his black robes, watches the planet.

The FIREWORKS, barely visible above Alderaan.

Colorful flashes.

MAUL

That's the signal. Prepare your
attack.

A MANDALORIAN ADMIRAL nods, turns to his LIEUTENANT.

MANDALORIAN ADMIRAL
 Maximum power to the cloaking
 system. Throttle at minimum. Have
 the attack fleet prepare to execute
 diversion tactics.

The Lieutenant nods, turns back.

Maul continues watching the celebration.

EXT. ALDERAAN PALACE - COURTYARD - RECIEVING LINE

A human/alien band PLAYS on the stage. It's lively, yet a
 classy wedding performance. No CGI dancers.

Lara and Bail shake hands or return bows to passing guests.

Zee floats at Lara's side.

Obi-Wan and Anakin make it to the front of the line.

KENOBI
 Majesties, that was a beautiful
 ceremony.

LARA
 General Kenobi, Commander
 Skywalker, so glad you could come.

Anakin looks past her, shakes Bail's hand.

Zee BEEPS, noticing the slight.

ANAKIN
 Did you think your Royal Pilot
 would miss it, King Bail?

BAIL
 You left some mighty big shoes to
 fill, Anakin, though Scol has taken
 to the job quite nicely.

Lara takes it in stride, tries for a joke.

LARA
 Despite a lack of feet.

Kenobi and Bail give a forced smile.

Palpatine arrives.

PALPATINE

Well done. Well done! House Organa has provided the perfect model for how systems can and should recover from the terror of the Clone Wars.

LARA

We strive for peace, to return to a time when the Republic no longer needs a Lord Protector.

His face falters slightly, leaving an awkward moment.

A hint of a smile on Lara's face.

Bail CLEARS his throat.

BAIL

Lord Palpatine, as certainly the busiest man in the galaxy, thank you for making time for us.

PALPATINE

Of course.

(to Lara)

Peace is...always the goal, my dear, though seldom enjoyed by those who fight for it....

Anakin nods.

ANAKIN

Well put, Lord Palpatine.

Zee BEEPS a *what?*-sound in response to Anakin aligning in the conversation against Lara.

The tension is palpable in the group.

KENOBI

Ahh, where is Scol, anyhow? It's been far too long since I've seen that rascal of an arthropoid.

LARA

In the reception hall. You'll be seated with him at our table.

BAIL

All of you are, in fact. But we've got quite the line building up here. Shall we continue catching up over dinner?

INT. ALDERAAN PALACE - BANQUET HALL - LATER

A large feast, fit for a Royal Wedding.

The head table seats Bail and Lara, Scol, Anakin, Obi-Wan, Palpatine, and several politicians (REBELLION LEADERS) whose faces we'll see again leading the Alliance one day.

Palpatine sits next to Scol, barely hides his disgust at the way the alien SLURPS his food.

The rest of the gang eats in silence.

Obi-Wan tries to break the ice, light-hearted.

KENOBI

Scol might be too modest to say so, but it is a great honor for him to attend this ceremony, Majesty. In Reef culture, you're born on a ship, then leave only for one of three reasons: to claim a ship of your own, to find a mate, or for an event of life or death importance. The fact that he's here, for you two, should not go understated.

Scol CLICKS something to show his loyalty to Bail and Lara.

ANAKIN

It is a wedding, Ben. Perhaps he's hoping to accomplish that second task.

Stunned silence.

Anakin grins.

Kenobi flushes and Scol CHIRPS with alien embarrassment.

Bail laughs good-naturedly and the rest of the table follows.

The ice, broken.

PALPATINE

So, tell us, what's next for King Bail and Queen Lara Organa?

BAIL

A honeymoon. Though I'm afraid I can't say where....

Anakin's smile drops.

PALPATINE

A surprise for your bride?

LARA

For security, my lord. Though our planets have successfully averted war, Maul and his clones remain a constant threat.

BAIL

And we've got bounties on our heads so high, even we couldn't pay them off.

PALPATINE

Say no more. That's probably for the best if no one knows. Although we've forced Maul back into hiding, the threat of the Clone Wars has not abated yet.

LARA

How could we forget? Why, wasn't it just a month ago that you 'discovered' Senator Jace Antilles was a clone? Incredible. That was...right after he put forth a vote to veto the Lord Protectorate's emergency powers, if I recall.

BAIL

(low)

Lara....

PALPATINE

Yes, that's right. They see me as a threat as much as you, Highness. You aren't the only ones living under a death mark. Maul will stop at nothing to destroy our Republic and cut our strength from under us.

KENOBI

Perhaps, in that light, it might be wise to look for a more direct approach to Maul? Drawing him out hasn't yet produced the results we're hoping for.

Anakin looks up with renewed interest.

PALPATINE

Your apprentice has already voiced your concerns to me, General Kenobi.

Obi-Wan turns to Anakin, but Skywalker doesn't shy away from his gaze. No shame. Defiant.

PALPATINE (CONT'D)

No one wants to be rid of Maul more than I do, but we must show patience. He will emerge, in time.

ANAKIN

He already has. Just ask the Jedi he's killed.

PALPATINE

Yes, that is a tragedy, and it would be best to fight fire with fire, but how? No one but a bounty hunter can get close to Maul...

Something sinks in on Anakin's face, he looks away. Holding back his frustrations. Deep in thought.

PALPATINE (CONT'D)

...time has proven that.

KENOBI

There is no better tutor than time; if we listen and learn from its stories. Master Yoda once told me of an ancient order who would take those sensitive to the Force from their homes as children. It started as a noble effort, a temple who would try to teach them the ways of the Jedi, but their young minds couldn't handle it. Knowledge without wisdom is a potent and dangerous combination.

PALPATINE

I know the stories, Kenobi. My Master told them to me as well.

KENOBI

Doesn't it remind you of someone? Of Maul?! He is the epitome of knowledge of the Force without the wisdom to understand it.

LARA

I've never heard this story. What happened to the children?

PALPATINE

They grew powerful in the ways of the Force, but without humility that power transformed them into monsters. They looked down on the common people, those who did not share their experience and strength. Decided the powerful should rule the powerless. The eldest of the group, one who would later call himself the Grandmaster, turned the others against their Jedi teachers and murdered the elders as they slept. Calling themselves the Sith, these creatures took charge of the temple and abducted more children. Desiring even more powerful successors, the Grandmaster of the Sith tortured these younglings, forcing them to call out to the Dark Side for help.

KENOBI

This second generation went insane. Raised in the darkness. Nurtured by fear and craving chaos.

ANAKIN

Surely that's just a story, Master. Another one of your parables. If such a group existed....

PALPATINE

Don't be so certain, Skywalker. Jedi teachings were widely available, once. There were temples that trained as groups. It's part of why we operate in secrecy now. One master, one apprentice.

KENOBI

The story goes, that the rest of the Jedi banded against the Grandmaster.

(MORE)

KENOBI (CONT'D)

The Sith saw their fellow disciples of the Force as misguided allies, not as enemies, and felt as though they could convince the Jedi to join in their madness to create an all-powerful ruling class. They invited the Jedi to a feast hosted inside their temple, where they were ultimately defeated. Their lust for power was their undoing.

PALPATINE

One of the lessons of the story, according to my Master, is to never underestimate your enemy. If the Sith had turned their hatred against the Jedi at the outset, we might be telling a very different tale today, Highness.

Silence.

All exchange uneasy glances.

Thoughts go inward.

BAIL

A fascinating tale, though perhaps not the best for a wedding feast.

Obi-Wan and Palpatine murmur apologies.

Lara squeezes Bail's hand.

Anakin's eyes lock on the gesture, he swallows hard.

Bail holds onto Lara, takes his drink in the opposite hand, and rises for a toast.

BAIL (CONT'D)

I'd like to tell another story.

Bail turns towards GENERAL MAGNUS (60s), the Royal General from the previous film.

BAIL (CONT'D)

General Magnus, have your men bring out my wedding gift, if you please.

General Magnus nods, rises from his table, steps towards the rear, pulls out a comm-link.

LARA

Oh, Bail. I thought we weren't doing gifts?

BAIL

(gives a speech, louder)

When I first met Lara, we were only children, with no concept of what our birthrights meant. I had the inane concept that being royalty meant everyone else had to listen to what I said.

The crowd LAUGHS.

General Magnus puzzles over his comm-link. Asks to borrow one from someone else nearby. That one's no good either.

What's going on? Are they both broken?

BAIL (CONT'D)

Yet Lara knew the truth of it, even back then. What it really means: that as royalty you have to listen to what everyone else says.

Bail raises his glass--

By now there's a ruckus surrounding the Royal General.

MURMURS through the crowd.

BAIL (CONT'D)

General, is everything all right?

GENERAL MAGNUS

Your majesty, we're having a comm outage. It's like we're--

ANAKIN

Being jammed.

A wave of panic rolls through the banquet hall.

EXT. GALAXY - PLANET ALDERAAN

Several STAR SLAYERS emerge from hyperspace.

Smaller ATTACK SHIPS too.

Precursor TIE FIGHTERS pour out.

X-Wings move to intercept.

INT. X-WING - BLUE LEADER - COCKPIT

TENNER (20s), the X-wing pilot who assumed command of Blue Squadron in the last film, flies at the threat.

She's still fresh-faced, but more confident now.

Keys in her radio:

TENNER

This is it, Blue Squadron. S-foils
in attack position. Fortune favor
the Kingdom!

INT. X-WING - BLUE 6 - COCKPIT

Blue 6's Pilot, KEELIE (20s), still has his 1970s 'stache.

KEELIE

At least Maul's predictable.

TENNER (V.O.)

Cut the chatter, Blue Six.

KEELIE

Copy, Blue Leader.

EXT. GALAXY - PLANET ALDERAAN

TIE fighter precursors engage with X-Wings in a bright display of green and red laser fire, respectively.

But those Star Slayers and attack ships, unchallenged.

Until several REPUBLIC COMMAND SHIPS arrive from hyperspace.

Reinforcements!

INT. REPUBLIC COMMAND SHIP - BRIDGE

ADMIRAL C'ANN gives an alien grin from his command seat.

ADMIRAL C'ANN

Not this time, you Mandalorian
Bastards! Lieutenant, tell your
ships priority is to keep those
Star Slayers back.

INT. STAR SLAYER - BRIDGE

The Republic Command Ships keep popping into view as they emerge from hyperspace.

Maul is no longer here to witness it.

The Mandalorian Admiral turns towards one of his aides.

MANDALORIAN ADMIRAL

They think they've sprung a trap.
No matter. All we need to do is
punch a hole through their
defenses. Keep all power on our
cloaking systems.

EXT. ALDERAAN PALACE - DEFENSES

A Royal Trooper LOOKOUT stands guard atop a lookout tower, almost the exact same setup as the Rebel Base in *A New Hope*.

His handheld scanner aimed skyward.

LOOKOUT SCANNER - POV

Faint flashes on the skyline from the space combat.

Then a RIPPLE across the sky.

It's the cloaked Star Slayer.

The scanner highlights the ship--FLASHING ALARM.

EXT. ALDERAAN PALACE - DEFENSES

The Lookout lowers his scanner.

LOOKOUT

Fire at position...two-naught-
naught-six!

Below, a trooper with a HEAVY CANNON does just that.

The laser hits seemingly nothing, then the Star Slayer materializes into view. Cloaking device disabled.

The Star Slayer turns, banking sideways.

An enormous TROOP TRANSPORT warship detaches from the docking section beneath the Star Slayer and continues on.

HEAVY CANNON TROOPER
Warn the King. Go!

A FRANTIC SOLDIER behind him turns, runs.

INT. ALDERAAN PALACE - CORRIDOR

We follow the Frantic Soldier on her run through the palace.

Past the kitchen and the wedding cake.

Past the armory with Troops gearing up.

Past those wheeling Bail's wedding gift on a cart.

The Frantic Soldier dodges people, leaps over obstacles, and generally moves like her name implies.

INT. ALDERAAN PALACE - BANQUET HALL

Suddenly a door bursts open and the Frantic Soldier enters.

FRANTIC SOLDIER
(huffing)
They've broken through!

KENOBI
Anakin, get the King and Queen to
safety, I'll handle--

BAIL
Maul?

KABOOOOOM!!!

The wall EXPLODES inward. Part of the ceiling COLLAPSES.

Lara pulls Bail away.

Anakin flips the table, all use it for cover.

The enormous Troop Transport warship breaches and lands.

Through the dust cloud comes a silhouetted outline of Maul.

Red lightsaber glows in the haze.

Robes of black, crown of thorns.

The Royal Guard now FIRES at the intruder.

Their blaster bolts DEFLECTED.

Dozens of MANDALORIAN Soldiers rush in, firing at the Royal Guard and civilians alike.

The Mandalorians quickly defeat the outnumbered Royal Guard.

Through the haze, Maul's red and black features materialize.

He locks onto the head table, sneers a fearsome grin.

Obi-Wan's blue lightsaber IGNITES.

Anakin's blue lightsaber CRACKLES into being a beat later.

KENOBI

Anakin, didn't you hear me?

Maul adjusts his stance, turns his oddly-long-at-the-hilt lightsaber to the side, a second red blade BURSTS out.

The double-sided lightsaber, for the first time.

ANAKIN

I did. But it looks like you're going to need some help.

Obi-Wan turns to see Bail and Lara run out of the banquet hall through the back door with Scol and Zee.

Looks at Anakin, already walking towards Maul.

Sighs. Starts forward to join the fight.

KENOBI

Together, then. Remember to calm your mind, and we can take him. Use our numbers to our advantage.

ANAKIN

Relax, I've got a good feeling about this.

Fear on Obi-Wan's face. Fear for Anakin.

Skywalker twirls his lightsaber, keeps forward. Grinning.

Too confident in his new Jedi powers.

BANQUET HALL - PERIPHERY

Our odd-couple, human Mandalorians, ROSE and GUILD (20s), watch the Jedi from the base of the Troop Transport.

ROSE
Hey, what are you doing?

GUILD
C'mon. Look!

Kenobi and Anakin encircle Maul.

ROSE
We need to get the target.

GUILD
A few seconds. Tell me you don't
want to see Maul take on two Jedi?

ROSE
Yeah, okay. Just a few seconds....

BANQUET HALL - CENTER

The Epic 2-v-1 fight track (DUEL OF THE FATES) plays.

Anakin looks to Obi-Wan, then to Maul.

ANAKIN
I've been waiting a long time for
this moment.

Maul grins, waves for Anakin to come.

Anakin runs forward. Lightsabers CRASH together.

Kenobi comes at the rear, but Maul deflects the blow without
even looking back.

Blocking Anakin again, Maul KICKS Kenobi. Hard.

The Jedi take a step back.

MAUL
So much fear. Thank you...thank you
for this.

Anakin ROARS, lunges in.

A blur of attacks, Maul knocking each away with alternating
sides of his double lightsaber.

Obi-Wan looks for a way in, but can't find it.

Anakin presses Maul, pushing him back towards a wall.

When he's nearly pinned, Maul LEAPS over Anakin, flipping.

One side of the red blade blocks Anakin, the other goes for a spinal sweep once Maul finds his feet.

Anakin's eyes go wide. Knows he's been bested, but--

SIZZLE-CRASH!

Obi-Wan intercepts the blow.

Pushes Maul back with his own series of attacks.

Anakin shakes off his disbelief.

Runs back into the fight.

BANQUET HALL - PERIPHERY

Rose and Guild continue watching the battle, blasters in hand. Masked faces somehow betray their open-mouth gaze.

ROSE

I can't believe they're still
alive....

GUILD

You don't think--you don't think we
should help him, do you?

ROSE

Oh yeah, Maul would shower us with
gifts. Medals. Women. A parade in
our honor. The footsoldiers who
stepped in and finished off his
greatest opponents. I imagine we'd
all be best friends after that.

GUILD

Okay, shut up.

ROSE

We need to get the target.

GUILD

Look at him go!

The Jedi and the madman fight in the b.g. An amazing display.

BANQUET HALL - CENTER

Maul does an incredibly athletic flip-kick, creating space between himself and the two Jedi.

We've never seen anything like this in the *Star Wars* universe, and neither have the Jedi. Their shock is evident.

Anakin and Kenobi pant for breath.

Maul seems fresh.

ANAKIN

We've got you outnumbered.
Surrender now and we'll show mercy.

MAUL

Mercy?

KENOBI

Yes, that's right. You're confused;
you need help. We can help you!

Maul sneers.

MAUL

If you'd show me mercy, that means
I haven't been trying hard enough.

Now Maul pushes the attack, trying to separate one man from the other. Looking for a weakness.

It's a brutal attack.

BANQUET HALL - PERIPHERY

Rose pushes Guild along.

ROSE

We have to go! Think of Maul's
response if we don't get the
target....

GUILD

Argh, fine!

BANQUET HALL - CENTER

Now all three fighters pant with exhaustion.

Maul pushes through.

ANAKIN

Just...give up...already....

MAUL

The Dark Side gives me strength.
 You think you have me outnumbered,
 but I have your fear on my side!
 I've kept the lightsabers of your
 Jedi friends as reminder of their
 failings. Soon yours will join the
 collection on my throne!

ANAKIN

Murderer!

Anakin stands tall, comes in for another attack.

Obi-Wan looks to one of the rear entrances of the palace
 where fresh Royal Soldiers arrive, setting up their cannons.

KENOBI

Anakin, have patience!

MAUL

You, your master, your Queen.... It
 is not murder to put a wretched
 creature out of its misery.

ANAKIN

Then I will grant you death. That
 is the mercy I will show!

KENOBI

Anakin!

His shouts fall on deaf ears.

Anakin rushes forward, does his own flip over Maul's head.

But the fiend knows the move better.

Maul swings as Anakin jumps, taking his opponent's legs just
 above the knees. CHOPPED OFF.

Anakin falls in an awkward heap.

SCREAMS in pain.

KENOBI (CONT'D)

No!!!

BANQUET HALL - TROOP TRANSPORT

Rose and Guild escort Palpatine and his red Praetorian Guard
 onto the Troop Transport; their captives, shackled.

They turn back at the screams.

GUILD
Great, we missed it!

BANQUET HALL - CENTER

Obi-Wan comes to Anakin's side, crouched over his apprentice, lightsaber still ready at the defense.

Maul comes forward....

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

The Royal Troopers blast at Maul and the Mandalorians with their huge cannons.

Bail is here, leading the attack.

BAIL
Focus on the assassin, Maul!

Maul deflects a bolt, but it's too powerful to control. Skids back on his heels under the force of the blaster cannon.

Dashes back, onto the Troop Transport. Boards.

Kenobi deactivates his lightsaber.

KENOBI
Anakin, stay with me. Calm your mind, push out the pain.

Anakin groans. Gritted teeth.

The Mandalorian Troop Transport closes its ramp, takes off.

Last few cannon BLASTS send it away.

Then the fighting stops.

Bail rushes to Kenobi and Anakin.

BAIL
Is he all right?

Obi-Wan doesn't answer.

Bail turns to his troops.

BAIL (CONT'D)
Get me a medical droid, now!

Through the same wall-hole, the BASIL ARCADIA flies in.
Lands, ramp down.

KENOBI
Let's get Anakin on the ship. Help
me with him, Bail.

EXT. SKY ABOVE ALDERAAN PALACE

The Troop Transport reattaches itself to the Star Slayer.
The larger ship turns and heads to space.

EXT. GALAXY - PLANET ALDERAAN

The Star Slayer comes from the planet, past the Republic
ships and planetary defenses.

Rejoins the Mandalorian attack force.

They all retreat to hyperspace.

The Basil Arcadia flees the planet as well, albeit in a
different direction.

INT. BASIL ARCADIA - LOUNGE

Anakin lies strapped to a floating hover-gurney; a medical
droid works on him.

Bail and Obi-Wan by his side.

Zee floats nervously nearby.

BAIL
He's stabilized.

Obi-Wan nods.

Touches Anakin's shoulder, then walks to

INT. BASIL ARCADIA - COCKPIT

Scol and Lara fly the ship, she still in her wedding gown.

LARA
Why Corruscant? Wouldn't it have
been faster to treat him on
Alderaan?

KENOBI

There's a new technology. We can rebuild his legs.

LARA

Mandalorian?

Obi-Wan nods. Scol CLICKS and TITTERS his disapproval.

KENOBI

I'll look after Anakin. Once you drop us off, continue on to your Honeymoon destination--

LARA

Are you kidding, Ben? Maul has attacked my friends, my family, my people. A direct attack on the Royal Palace on our wedding day is too bold to ignore!

KENOBI

That's why you must go. Show no fear in the face of terror. We'll keep the focus on Palpatine's kidnapping. I'll speak to the Senate about a ransom.

LARA

Ransom?!

KENOBI

What other reason could Maul have for taking the Lord Protector alive? Surely he couldn't think of cloning him, that would be the first thing we'd suspect.

LARA

No, I wouldn't think so. Besides, all the cloning facilities were destroyed with the Mandalorian homeworld. But...money? That doesn't fit. There must be some other motive.

KENOBI

I'm going to do some digging. I suspect Palpatine's motivations go beyond the welfare of the Republic.

LARA

I've sensed it too. The man hides his feelings well. Too well.

EXT. CORRUSCANT - GOVERNMENT PALACE - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

The Basil Arcadia lands on the rooftop docking platform.

Ramp lowers.

Anakin's floating gurney hovers out.

Bail, Lara, and Kenobi at his side.

Towards the building's rooftop lift.

LARA

You're going to be okay, Anakin.
Next time I see you, you'll be
feeling better than ever, watch.

ANAKIN

You...you're leaving...?

Lara's eyes glisten and her lip quivers, but she holds it in.

LARA

We'll be on Trictara. If you need
anything, send word and we'll come
immediately. I'm sorry, Anakin.

ANAKIN

Sorry....

LARA

Hey, don't I still owe you a drink?
We'll be together again before you
know it.

Bail and Kenobi exchange a look, Lara senses it.

LARA (CONT'D)

We all will be. You'll land on your
feet--brand new ones.

She smiles, laughs a sad laugh.

Anakin nods, vacant.

Massive painkillers sinking in.

Bail pats his shoulder.

BAIL

You stay strong....

Zee WHIRS, sad.

The gurney floats into the open lift tube.

KENOBI
Go on, I've got him.

The doors close.

Bail, Lara, and Zee leave.

INT. LIFT TUBE

Obi-Wan rests his hand on Anakin's shoulder.

ANAKIN
(delirious)
How...how did he...beat us? So
much...power...the power....

KENOBI
Shh. Easy. Soon enough you'll be
back in the fight.

Obi-Wan takes Anakin's lightsaber.

Even in delirium, Anakin's eyes follow the weapon.

KENOBI (CONT'D)
Until then, I'm going to hold onto
this. You just focus on recovery.
You're going to be okay.

Anakin GROANS.

INT. GOVERNMENT PALACE - EXPERIMENTAL MED BAY

A lift opens, out steps Kenobi.

Anakin's gurney floats with him.

The place is a treasure trove of new technology.

It's not obvious, but all the makings of DARTH VADER'S SUIT
are in here somewhere, dispersed in the b.g.

DOCTORS and MEDICAL DROIDS await.

Kenobi escorts Anakin's gurney forward.

They get to work on him right away.

Needles probe into his legs, reviving cauterized flesh.

Anakin SCREAMS with pain.

Equipment RUMBLES in response.

Anakin, in delirium, BLASTS a droid away with the Force.

The doctors back away in fear and confusion.

Obi-Wan rushes forward, puts a hand over Anakin's face.

Concentrates.

Anakin stops his writhing. Calms to merely a whimper.

Like someone having a nightmare.

The Lead Doctor nods to Kenobi.

Obi-Wan steps away.

Holds back, watches. Eyes well with tears.

Nothing more he can do.

Closes his eyes, turns away.

Back into the lift.

The doors close, as laser cutters lower towards Anakin.

EXT. GALAXY - PLANET TRICTARA

A yellow ball in space, covered in boils like festering wounds on rotting flesh.

EXT. TRICTARA PLANET SURFACE - ESTABLISHING - DAY

The planet is stark, yet beautiful up close.

Brilliant, steaming pools dot the landscape, ranging from emerald green to sunburst orange and everything in between.

Nothing much grows but the thermal vents are majestic.

Following the "single environment planet" model this a planet of boiling hot pots, like Yellowstone National Park.

EXT. TRICTARA - HONEYMOON BARGE - BALCONY

Lara and Bail lean against a railing, elevated above the surface of the planet.

It's the upper-deck of a speeder-barge type ship.
 Zee floats off to the side, giving them privacy.
 A geyser SPRAYS in the distance.

BAIL
 Beautiful, isn't it?

LARA
 Yes, but equally deadly.

Bail looks at her. She's both those things, too.

BAIL
 Worth the danger.

LARA
 That thin crust can easily break,
 sending you cascading into water
 superheated to hundreds of degrees.
 It's why no one lives here.

BAIL
 Makes for a nice getaway spot,
 though.

LARA
 Yes, it does.

BAIL
 How do you know? About the thin
 crust, I mean. I didn't think you'd
 been here before.

LARA
 I haven't. I...here, watch.

Lara closes her eyes, puts out a hand. Feels.
 Part of the surface crumbles into a hidden pool beneath.
 Sends up a plume of steam.

BAIL
 Wow, you can just feel the surface
 for weakness like that?

LARA
 Yes, but not how you think. I'm not
 reaching and touching, I'm allowing
 myself to be touched first. That's
 the secret. That's how I knew where
 the weakness was.

(MORE)

LARA (CONT'D)

The spot was waiting to crumble, so I simply encouraged it, in a sense.

BAIL

Hmm. Doesn't sound much different from politics.

She smirks in response, first hint of a genuine smile.

They go silent for a time, watching the geothermal activity.

BAIL (CONT'D)

Lara, I wanted to thank you--

LARA

Don't.

BAIL

What?

LARA

Don't thank me for marrying you, Bail. I made my own choice as much as you did. We can do a lot of good from our positions. It would be wrong to ignore that responsibility, wouldn't it?

Bail looks at her, his eyes saddened.

BAIL

Let's go back inside, okay? The sulfur is starting to get to me.

LARA

Go on ahead. I'm going to stay out a bit longer if you don't mind.

Bail nods, turns and leaves.

Lara looks out to the area she "touched" with the Force.

More steam erupts from the spot and a creature--an enormous TARDIGRADE--berths forth from the crust.

Here, we see only the odd, bulbous nozzle-shaped face, the pudgy armored head, and its forelimbs.

This is the *Star Wars* version of the extremophile "water bear" [go ahead, give it a Google].

Like an alien hippopotamus in size and attitude.

The Tardigrade seems displeased at the lack of a meal.

Sinks back beneath the planet's surface.

Lara watches the watery hot pot settle, then turns.

Heads inside the barge.

EXT. CORRUSCANT - CANTINA ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Kenobi steps out from a Taxi speeder onto a platform built into the side of one of the skyscrapers.

A rough bruiser stands out front, a BOUNCER ALIEN.

Obi-Wan waves his fingers.

KENOBI
I'm expected.

The Bouncer nods, allows Obi-Wan to pass.

Kenobi walks into

INT. FOREST CANTINA - LOUNGE

A lush, dense forest.

Insects CHIRP and birds SING.

Kenobi turns back, sees the doorway and the city outside.

The entrance is built into a tree trunk here; a tunnel.

Smiles, slightly.

Continues on, stepping over rotting logs.

There are some huts and tree houses set up or away from the middle. Recessed for privacy.

VIPs entertain guests here, some notice him. Turn away.

An officer of the Republic, not a welcome sight here.

Kenobi follows a ROILING STREAM until he finds the WATERFALL.

Takes a breath, steps into the waterfall.

The hologram distorts as he steps through it into

INT. FOREST CANTINA - PRIVATE ROOM

A cavern.

The seats carved into the walls look comfortable enough.

A table with three drinks.

An open seat for Obi-Wan.

Waiting here are two more Jedi: QUI-GON and MACE WINDU (50s). They're dressed like space cowboys, not hobo monks.

Qui-Gon rises, reaches out a hand to shake.

KENOBI

Qui-Gon, my word. It does me well to see you again. I haven't seen you since, when?

QUI-GON

Since you left home and joined the military, brother. I was just telling Mace Windu here about our reckless youth.

MACE WINDU

Your reputation proceeds you, General Kenobi.

They shake hands.

Obi-Wan sits.

KENOBI

That was a long, long time ago. Thank you both for coming.

QUI-GON

How is your apprentice?

KENOBI

The operation was a success. I'm told there's absolutely no recovery time. Supposedly, he'll be up and walking the moment he comes to. The things we can do with Mandalorian technology.... Truth of it is, I'm more worried about the scars on his mind after a defeat like that. Too often his thoughts go to battle.

The men nod, understanding.

MACE WINDU
And Lord Palpatine? Any news?

KENOBI
I spoke with the Senate. The Republic is in quite a state, as you might well imagine.

MACE WINDU
That's what happens when you give one man so much responsibility.

Qui-Gon leans back, strokes his beard.

QUI-GON
Yes...once he revealed his ability to root out the clones, he became the sole authority on who is and who is not a traitor. Yet somehow it seemed better than the alternative, I'm sure.

KENOBI
That's why I've asked you to come. You are both contemporaries of Palpatine, are you not?

QUI-GON
In age, I suppose.

MACE WINDU
Possible, though I couldn't say for sure just how old he is.

KENOBI
I thought you shared the same Master?

MACE WINDU
Me? No. I'd always heard he trained with Yoda.

Obi-Wan smiles at the thought of his old master.

KENOBI
I can assure you, that was never the case.

QUI-GON
I would have said we should consult with Plo Koon, but that's no longer possible.

KENOBI
No, when did he...?

QUI-GON
Last night, on Bankor. I only heard
about his murder this morning.

KENOBI
On Bankor? That's so far outside
the core systems.

QUI-GON
Seems Maul goes far and wide.

KENOBI
Yes it does...though I would have
thought he'd have been preparing
for the assault on Alderaan.

MACE WINDU
Are you sure Palpatine wasn't
trained by your old Master? Yoda's
trained more Jedi than any of us.

KENOBI
Yes, I'm certain. Why do you ask?

MACE WINDU
He told me so himself.

KENOBI
What? Palpatine told you he trained
with Master Yoda?

MACE WINDU
That's what I'm telling you. It was
years ago, but yes.

QUI-GON
Can't you ask Master Yoda?

KENOBI
(distant, lost in thought)
No...he's still in his self-imposed
exile. Atoning....

QUI-GON
Never did have a taste for
politics. Wisest of us all.

MACE WINDU
Why would Palpatine lie about who
trained him to be a Jedi?

The pair of Jedi exchange a look.

Kenobi takes his cup from the table, sips from it.

Deep in contemplation.

His face tells us: Why indeed?

EXT. GALAXY - PLANET MUSTAFAR

A red ball in space.

Glowing with dim energy.

More like an ancient star than a planet.

EXT. PLANET MUSTAFAR - ESTABLISHING - DAY

The sky, blotted out with black clouds.

Lighting and thunder CRACKLES.

This is a volcano planet.

Lava flows freely.

A black CASTLE FORTRESS built atop a river of fire.

TIE precursors fill the sky above.

Only two colors exist on this harsh landscape: red and black.

Who would choose to live here?

INT. MUSTAFAR - CASTLE FORTRESS - THRONE ROOM - DAY

Mandalorian Troopers line the walls.

A pair of SERVANT CLONES (20s) enter. Copies of the same original woman, dressed in robes, with serving trays.

The one with the drink tray has a facial deformity.

She serves Maul, who sits at the seat of power.

The throne, something that belongs in a fantasy novel.

Set into the armrests: a lightsaber on each side.

From those he's slain.

Maul takes the drinking goblet from the tray, puts out a hand, examines the clone with the deformity.

Runs his thumb over her face.

Stops. Leans back. Sips.

Clenches his fist.

She looks like she's getting a massive migraine.

Flushes red. Drops the tray.

PALPATINE (O.S.)

Enough.

Maul releases her.

She reclaims the tray.

Stumbles away.

MAUL

Where is he?!

Palpatine stands off to the side, looks out a window.

His Praetorian guard are here, too.

The other clone-servant offers him food from her tray.

He dismisses her with a gesture.

She bows, leaves.

PALPATINE

He will come, I have foreseen it.
Do you doubt me?

Maul looks contrite.

MAUL

No, my Master.

PALPATINE

Good. Suppress your feelings. You will need your full strength, once the time is right. The events are already in motion...go now, commune with the ancestors. They will remind you of the truth once more.

Maul rises from the throne, bows, and leaves.

Palpatine takes the throne for himself.

Rubs his pale fingers across the lightsabers inlaid on the arm rests of the throne.

Smiles, as if to say, "I know something you don't."

INT. CASTLE FORTRESS - CORRIDOR

Rose and Guild walk down the long corridor. On patrol.

ROSE

Have you ever tried gondark? Not for me.

GUILD

It's about the difficulty in killing it, not in the quality of the game.

ROSE

Shh, shh! Look.

Maul comes around the distant corner.

His ire, higher than normal.

GUILD

Keep walking, it'll be fine.

Maul approaches. Rose and Guild give awkward nods.

Maul sneers. More a primal fang display than a smile.

But the moment passes. Continues past them around the corner.

They pick up their patrol once more.

GUILD (CONT'D)

See? He only tortures the clones.

ROSE

Very comforting.

GUILD

What do you care? Clones aren't people.

ROSE

That's literally all they are. Recycled....

GUILD
Don't think about it.

ROSE
Easy for you to say.

GUILD
What's that supposed to mean?

INT. CASTLE FORTRESS - MEDITATION CHAMBER

Maul enters a dark room. Lit only by lava flow.
Sith artwork, carved into the walls.
Clearly an evil place.
Maul strips off his outer robes. Bare chested.
Red and black, all muscle and battle scarring.
Even more terrifying than before.
Kneels before the artwork.
Eyes focused in the dark.
Body tense, trembling with potential.

MAUL
Ancestors, show me what rage truly
is. Claim revenge, through me.

EXT. CORRUSCANT - GOVERNMENT PALACE - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

VADER'S TIE FIGHTER, the prototype in the previous film Anakin stole from the Mothership, sits docked.
A group of six fearsome BOUNTY HUNTERS wait nearby.
BOBA FETT stands with two other MANDALORIANS: JANGO with his chrome and blue armor with dual pistols, and KADRICK, whose stature suggests his orange armor houses a Wookiee within.
The other three bounty hunters, recognizable from *Empire Strikes Back*: the droid IG-88, tall and thin and menacing. BOSSK the lizard-like Trandoshan who wears an orange flight suit, and DENGAR (30s), an armored human who wears no helmet.
The gang's armor and gear seems less used here, newer.
High winds tug at loose cloth.

The ramp on the TIE comes down.

Red lights grow from within.

From the fighter steps the proto-version of DARTH VADER, an early embodiment of the character. Something between a Mandalorian, a samurai, and the final product.

No cape, no breathing apparatus, nor chest gadgets.

But instantly recognizable. Halfway there.

This is the battle-ready version. Blaster rifle, pistol, thermal detonators and other gadgets.

Vader looks the bounty hunters up and down.

They return the gesture.

DENGAR

This better be good.

Vader speaks with a modulated voice, not quite what we're used to, but on its way.

VADER

As I said in my message, I have the location. You help me get through the defenses, and we will split the bounty. But leave the target to me.

Dengar laughs.

Looks to the others.

DENGAR

Can you believe the nerve?

Draws his blaster pistol.

DENGAR (CONT'D)

Never heard of you. None of us never have. This is a business of reputation, get it? You got lucky, finding the location however you did. But I'll give you a better offer. Give the coordinates to us now, and I won't disintegrate you here on this rooftop.

Vader simply stares at him.

The large, shiny black eyes of his helmet give away nothing.

But Dengar isn't backing down.

An uneasy standoff.

The other bounty hunters exchange looks.

Like a pack of wolves, watching to see who might stand up to be Alpha. Looking for weakness in the pretender.

Their body positions shift, preparing for a fight.

Bossk CROAKS something in his alien speech.

IG-88 scans, calculating.

Dengar's eyes dart towards the pistol on Vader's hip.

Vader slowly raises a hand; the group's rifles quickly track the move. The Mandalorians, fastest on the draw.

But the gesture is too slow to be a threat and no one shoots.

What is he doing?

Vader positions his fingers as if to show "I'm this close."

Then Dengar starts to CHOKE.

Reaches up to his neck.

Choking, straining, eyes wide with disbelief.

Falls to his knees.

Vader holds him in the Force Choke, turns to the others.

VADER

Any other negotiations?

Rifles go away.

Boba Fett nods his appreciation.

BOBA FETT

Now that you've got a reputation,
what do we call you?

VADER

Call me...Darth Vader.

INT. CORRUSCANT - GOVERNMENT PALACE - LOBBY

A pair of the red PRAETORIAN GUARD stand outside of Palpatine's office. One in front of each double-door.

Obi-Wan Kenobi approaches.

KENOBI

Excuse me.

The guards give no response.

Kenobi waits a minute, shrugs, then pushes forward.

They cross their staffs in front of the doors.

Block his path.

PRAETORIAN 1

The Lord Protector is away.

KENOBI

Yes, I'm aware. He's been kidnapped, you know.

He waits, but the guards say nothing.

KENOBI (CONT'D)

In fact, I was there when it happened. I need to access Palp-- the Lord Protector's archives.

PRAETORIAN 1

That's not possible.

KENOBI

You do know I am a General?

No reaction from the guards.

KENOBI (CONT'D)

It might mean the difference in saving his life.

PRAETORIAN 2

No one is allowed in, regardless of the circumstances.

Obi-Wan waves his fingers.

KENOBI

You can make an exception.

PRAETORIAN 2

No...we can't.

KENOBI

I see. Only the best of the best
make it into the Praetorian Guard.

PRAETORIAN 1

Please don't insult yourself by
offering a bribe.

KENOBI

Well, then I'm sorry.

PRAETORIAN 2

That's fine, just--

Obi-Wan claps his hands together and the two guards SMASH
their helmets against one another in response.

They slump to the ground.

Kenobi steps over them, heads inside.

INT. GOVERNMENT PALACE - PALPATINE'S CHAMBERS - SAME

Shuts the doors behind himself.

LOCKS them.

Proceeds to snooping around.

Obi-Wan moves quickly, frantically even, but finds nothing.

Until--

As he touches something on the desk, a hologram juts out.

A kneeling DIPLOMAT.

DIPLOMAT (HOLOGRAM)

Lord Protector, your shuttle is
ready. Safe travels to Alderaan.

Kenobi moves around to the desk, takes a seat.

Uses a trackball to scroll through the hologram archives.

Men and women flash across the projection area as he scrolls.

Stops. One that jumps out, the figure unmistakable.

Maul.

MAUL (HOLOGRAM)

Once the celebration ends, we will jam their communications while the infiltration ship takes position. Then we will start our attack.

Horror on Obi-Wan's face.

He scrolls further back. Stops on Maul again.

MAUL (HOLOGRAM) (CONT'D)

The Jedi who calls himself Sifo-Dyas is no more. So little was his fear that it's like he welcomed death. Hardly worth the--

Scrolls further.

More men and women pass, searching for Maul.

Finds another, stops.

MAUL (HOLOGRAM) (CONT'D)

The last of the cloned planetary leadership are in place. Everything according to your plan, my Master.

Slides the trackball once more.

This time finds a MANDALORIAN EMISSARY.

MANDALORIAN EMISSARY

Governor Palpatine, we'd like to meet with you for a business proposal for your Republic Senate. We Mandalorians pride ourselves on our technological advancements and would like to offer our newest innovation to the Republic directly: Cloning. A large scale operation, ready immediately--

Kenobi continues scrolling.

Obi-Wan can hardly believe what he's seeing. The Mandalorians came to the Republic first? Palpatine's betrayal is almost too great to fathom.

Slides the trackball.

Maul again. Except...there's something off about him.

This hologram looks a bit different than the others. Older, somehow. Fleshier, but more imposing. Certainly more evil. Wears a hooded cloak like the future Emperor.

MAUL? (HOLOGRAM)

At last we will reveal ourselves to the Jedi. At last we will have revenge.

COMMOTION sounds outside.

TROOPER (O.S.)

What's going on here? Secure the building. No one in or out. And call for backup!

Obi-Wan flips the holographic playback off, gets up.

BAM!

Someone SLAMS against the door. Trying to break it down.

They're coming in!

A hand on his lightsaber, Obi-Wan looks out the window.

EXT. GOVERNMENT PALACE - VIEW DOWN - NIGHT

Dizzying heights.

Speeders whiz by.

So high up, distance simply fades to black.

No end to it.

INT. PALPATINE'S CHAMBERS

Kenobi looks back from the window to the door.

No other way out.

INT. LOBBY - SAME

Several Mandalorian Troopers pull away the unconscious Praetorian Guard. Even more press to enter the office.

Rifles drawn.

They finally BREAK the doors down.

INT. PALPATINE'S CHAMBERS

The doors BURST open.

Troopers rush inside.

Fan out to secure the room.

No sign of Obi-Wan.

Their attention goes to the OPEN WINDOW.

INT. TAXI SPEEDER

A WEALTHY COUPLE (50s) ride in the back of the craft.

BAM!

The Taxi bounces as something hits the top.

The DROID DRIVER waves its arms and BEEPS curses.

A pair of boots swing into the open rear window.

The Wealthy Couple scoots over to make room.

Kenobi lets himself in.

KENOBI

Hello. Mind if we split the fare?

EXT. TRICTARA - HONEYMOON BARGE - DUSK

A GEYSER blows, distant.

The last glimmers of daylight disappears below the horizon.

The Honeymoon Barge is huge, like a luxury yacht.

Floats peacefully through clouds of steam and sulfur.

Lights illuminate the interior.

INT. HONEYMOON BARGE - DINING

A twenty-foot dining table.

Lara and Bail sit on opposite ends.

A fantastic meal of unrecognizable colorful substances.

They eat in silence.

Zee sits nearby, plugged in and charging. A soft glow gives the droid the feel of a dog curled up by the fireplace.

There are other people here too. Several diplomats at the table; those same various future Rebellion Leaders.

Royal Guards stand at the ready along the walls.

Yes...this is their honeymoon.

LARA

Let's say Maul is defeated. Will that end the Clone Wars?

REBELLION LEADER 1

I would assume so.

LARA

But we don't have established win conditions, do we?

REBELLION LEADER 1

No...I suppose not. But what else would end war if not that?

BAIL

Therein lies the problem. In theory, Maul could have stayed hidden forever and the Republic would have remained under martial law in perpetuity.

REBELLION LEADER 2

Until we raised another vote.

REBELLION LEADER 3

So why kidnap Palpatine? Why not wait him out of office?

REBELLION LEADER 1

That would be a missed opportunity. Now that there is a single seat of power, that seat becomes a target.

LARA

For assassination, sure. But if you want to exert influence, you kidnap someone close to the leader, not the Lord Protector himself.

BAIL

Or resort to simple blackmail.

REBELLION LEADER 3
 Not in this case. Lord Palpatine
 has very little personal history.
 No scandal whatsoever.

LARA
 Which means he's hiding something.

BAM!

The cabin SHAKES; dishware RATTLES.

REBELLION LEADER 2
 What was that?

REBELLION LEADER 1
 Thermal activity? Could we have hit
 a geyser?

BAIL
 I've got a bad feeling about this.

The ranking soldier, a ROYAL CAPTAIN, on the move.

ROYAL CAPTAIN
 Stay here. I'll check what my men
 are seeing upstairs.

He leaves.

Lara and Bail get up from their seats.

Bail retrieves a blaster pistol hidden under the table.

EXT. HONEYMOON BARGE - NIGHT

The barge in the moonlight.

No sign of trouble.

A ROYAL GUARDSMAN moves cautiously, rifle shouldered.

Walks slowly towards smoke at the rear.

Two other guards, one to each side.

Around the equipment, aim--

Nothing.

Just a blasted panel.

ROYAL GUARD 1
Engine's blown.

They relax at the realization that it's not an attack.

His companion bends down, finds a scrap of a metal.

He looks closer: A piece of a thermal detonator--the Mandalorian symbol, blackened.

ROYAL GUARD 2
What the...?

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

Boba Fett and Jango fire from above, kept aloft by JET PACKS.

The first two guardsmen easily killed, taken by surprise.

The third hides as the bounty hunters land on the deck.

Kadrick, the giant Mandalorian, stalks the survivor.

Picks the Soldier up, throws him overboard.

The man gives a WILHELM SCREAM. Several seconds later, he hits the deadly planet surface.

SPLASHES and SCREAMS in the thermal pool.

TARDIGRADE

Launches up from below the surface, GRABS the soldier.

Silences the man's screams; pulls him under.

EXT. BOUNTY HUNTER SKIFF 1

Vader and IG-88 watch the barge in the distance.

VADER
Keep on them. Draw the target out
to us.

EXT. BOUNTY HUNTER SKIFF 2

Opposite side, Dengar and Bossk watch the action.

Denger aims a body-length blaster rifle.

Looks down the scope.

DENGAR'S POV

Cross-hair scan over the Mandalorians.

They duck behind equipment panels.

Taking blaster fire.

The targeting reticule scans over, sees several Royal Guard.

They fire at the Mandalorians across the ship.

Can't get a clean line of sight on them.

They're at a doorway under the observation deck.

The Royal Guard Captain is with them.

EXT. BOUNTY HUNTER SKIFF 2

Dengar looks up from the rifle.

DENGAR
Get us 'round them.

Bosk CROAKS something alien.

Activates the controls, pilots the vehicle.

The skiff moves.

Dengar aims.

INT. HONEYMOON BARGE - DINING

The sounds of BLASTER FIRE fills the dining hall.

REBELLION LEADER 3
It must be Maul!

REBELLION LEADER 1
How did he find us?

Lara goes to a weapon cabinet at the wall.

Opens it, reveals a dozen blasters.

Takes a pair to hand to Rebellion Leader 2 and 3.

LARA
I'm going up, Bail you stay here.

BAIL

Absolutely not, Lara. Those are my men too.

REBELLION LEADER 2

What about us?

LARA

I suggest you prepare to defend yourselves.

BAIL

And barricade the doors.

REBELLION LEADER 1

I've never shot at anyone in my life. I'm not about to start now!

LARA

Then may the Force be with you.

EXT. BOUNTY HUNTER SKIFF 2

Bossk repositions the vehicle.

Dengar looks through the rifle scope.

DENGAR'S POV

The scene is moving, but there's finally an open shot.

BLAM!

The Royal Captain flies back, hit.

Other Soldiers look about, surprised at the secondary attack.

Dengar aims at another.

EXT. HONEYMOON BARGE

Bail and Lara come out of the doorway beneath the deck.

Arrive just as another Soldier is BLASTED away.

The Soldier falls back over the deck and a Tardigrade ROAR from below signals his fate.

Lara's green lightsaber IGNITES.

They turn, the Soldiers fire into the open night.

DENGAR'S POV

Their blaster bolts come this way, but not directly.

Dengar lines up a shot on Bail.

EXT. HONEYMOON BARGE

Lara's eyes grow wide.

She turns, just in time.

DEFLECTS the blast away from Bail.

EXT. BOUNTY HUNTER SKIFF 2

The deflected blaster bolt comes right back, hits Dengar's rifle directly in the scope.

The rifle EXPLODES and Dengar falls back.

Shrapnel in his face, lies on his back.

Dengar GROANS.

Bossk looks back at him, then at the barge.

Drives the skiff away.

EXT. BOUNTY HUNTER SKIFF 1

Vader pilots the craft.

VADER

I told you, leave the target to me.

EXT. HONEYMOON BARGE

Bail nods at Lara, leads the charge towards the Mandalorians.

BLAM! BLAM!

They fire at the three bounty hunters, pinned down.

The Mandalorians return fire from behind cover.

Lara deflects bolts with her lightsaber.

The Royal Soldiers press forward.

Kadrick activates a thermal detonator.

Steps forward, throws it.

Jango provides cover, firing his pistols in quick succession.

Lara puts out a hand and the explosive device falls back at the enormous Mandalorian's feet. He looks down.

BOOM!

Kadrick, thrown over the side by the explosion.

The Tardigrades ROAR with greedy hunger.

But the other Mandalorians's focus turns past the royals.

BLAM! BLAM!

Blaster fire from behind.

Lara, Bail, and the Soldiers turn back.

Vader and IG-88 stand at the top of the deck.

Lara, Bail, and the Soldiers, now exposed in the center of the honeymoon barge. Enemies on both sides.

The assassin droid stands tall, head swivels.

Weapons up.

BLAT-BLAT-BLAT-BLAT-BLAT!

Rapid fire.

Vader gives a signal and Boba Fett rushes forward.

Lara goes for the assassin droid.

She deflects bolts into IG-88, but the assassin droid keeps attacking despite sustaining massive damage.

Bail keeps Boba Fett and Jango pinned down.

Vader raises a clenched fist; a reflex action just before a Royal Soldier fires at him.

Another Royal Soldier RISES in response, blocks the shot.

Human shield.

Vader flings the corpse with the Force at the other Soldier, knocking both men over the side of the barge.

The Tardigrades ROAR.

Lara looks at Vader, stunned.

Genuine shock.

IG-88 finally turns, takes cover.

SMOKING from damage.

LARA

A Jedi?

Lara makes an impressive leap to the deck, in pursuit.

Vader backs away, not looking to engage her.

He SHOVES out with a blast of Force energy.

Crates and panels nearby and behind her FLY BACK under the hidden blast, but she continues forward unaffected.

Vader takes out his pistol.

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

Fires in quick succession, still backing away.

Lara deflects the bolts back at him.

He slaps at them with his free hand, batting the blasts away.

BAIL

Now that Lara's gone, he's unprotected....

Jango exchanges fire with Bail, both taking cover.

Boba Fett lands behind Bail, flanks him with his jet pack.

The bounty hunter adjusts a setting on his rifle, aims.

A Blue STUN RING hits Bail from behind, seizes and falls.

EXT. BOUNTY HUNTER SKIFF 2

Bossk pulls up next to the honeymoon barge.

Boba Fett and Jango fire up their jet packs.

Boba Fett pulls Bail towards the skiff, dangling unconscious.

A Tardigrade LEAPS up, full caterpillar-like body BURSTS from the scalding water up towards the king.

Boba Fett swerves, pulls Bail from the beast.

Jango FIRES his blasters down at the creature.

Barely escapes its grasp.

EXT. HONEYMOON BARGE - SAME

Lara faces Vader, her lightsaber at the ready.

He backs up, hits the far rail.

Can go no further.

VADER

I do this for the good of the
Republic, Highness. One day you
will understand.

She steps forward, face hard.

His comm link BEEPS to life.

BOBA FETT (V.O.)

Darth Vader, target acquired.

Lara turns back, sees Bail's body loaded onto the Skiff.

One last look to Vader. He stands stock-still.

She sprints towards the side where Bail was taken.

Takes a huge running leap.

Unnatural, superhuman.

LARA

No!!!

Slams against the rail.

Boba Fett secures Bail on the skiff, Jango pilots.

Too far away to jump after them.

Boba Fett offers a cocky salute. The skiff speeds off.

Lara turns back, just as Vader's own skiff pulls away.

The smouldering IG-88 jumps on. Barely intact.

The bounty hunters leave the barge with its wrecked engine.

The Tardigrades CRY for want of the lost meals.

Lara deactivates her lightsaber, admitting defeat.

For now.

The determination on her face says this is far from over.

EXT. GALAXY - PLANET TRICTARA

The Basil Arcadia BLASTS from the planet surface.

We follow its trajectory.

Out into open space.

INT. BASIL ARCADIA - COCKPIT

Lara and Scol pilot the ship.

Zee floats in, rushing. BEEPS excitedly.

Lara turns back.

One of the Rebellion Leaders arrives just behind the droid.

REBELLION LEADER 1
It's General Kenobi.

LARA
Scol, can you handle things solo
for a minute?

Scol CHIRPS that indeed he can.

Lara heads back to

INT. BASIL ARCADIA - LOUNGE

Where she's met by the other two Rebellion Leaders and a hologram of Obi-Wan Kenobi. She's barely holding it together.

LARA
They took him, Ben. Bail's gone.

KENOBI (HOLOGRAM)
What happened? Did you face Maul?

INT. CORRUSCANT - KENOBI'S OFFICE

This is less of his "work home" and more a place to have private holographic conversations, like this one.

Lara's hologram appears before him.

LARA (HOLOGRAM)

Not Maul. Bounty hunters. I don't know how they found us on Trictara, but they--they got Bail.

KENOBI

He's...tell me exactly what happened, Lara.

INTERCUT BETWEEN LARA AND OBI-WAN

LARA

It was a highly organized team of assassins. Three Mandalorians and four others. Jango and Boba Fett. IG-88. Bossk. Dengar. Big names in the mercenary trade. We lost a score of soldiers and only took out one or two of theirs, I can't be sure how many.

KENOBI

Where are you now? Where are you headed?

LARA

Scol intercepted their transmissions leaving the planet. Rendezvous point is the Corellia system. The lead was somebody named Darth Vader, but I can't find a record of a bounty hunter with that name. Or any records on him, for that matter.

KENOBI

A new mercenary looking to get a name for himself, no doubt.

LARA

It isn't just that, Ben. I can't explain it, but...the Force was with him.

KENOBI

(cryptic)

Only a bounty hunter can get close
to Maul....

LARA

Right! If we can cut them off on
Corellia, we can find Maul. Bail
didn't die in vain. We will--

KENOBI

If Darth Vader is one of us, a Jedi
seeking out Maul--

LARA

A Jedi would never use the Force
for profit. Unless...he's another
fallen Jedi. He'll want to join
with Maul! Said something about the
good of the Republic, but--

KENOBI

Lara, Maul is not simply a Jedi
fallen to the Dark Side. During my
investigation, I've found evidence
linking Palpatine with Maul.

LARA

They're working together? Are you
sure?

KENOBI

Not just working together.
Palpatine is Maul's master. I've
seen the recordings myself.

LARA

Then we have what we need. Show
your proof to the Senate. The
galaxy will rally behind us to
unseat Palpatine and defeat Maul!

KENOBI

Lara....

LARA

Tell me you have the recordings.

Obi-Wan looks away.

Zee BUZZES in her ear. BEEP-BOOP-BEEP.

LARA (CONT'D)

Yes, Zee, that's why you should always have a droid with you.

KENOBI

We'll get the evidence. Together. Come back to Corruscant.

LARA

Ben, there's no time! Without Bail, this alliance between our planets will surely fail. I will find Palpatine and Maul, and we will finally end these Clone Wars.

KENOBI

I know you cared for Bail, but don't let it cloud your judgement. We need the Senate's authority.

LARA

(dark)

A Queen doesn't ask for permission.

KENOBI

No, Lara! You must listen to me. I don't think Palpatine is a Jedi at all. No one knows who trained him. If he is a remanent of the Sith, training his whole life for revenge, you cannot take on Master and apprentice alone. Promise me, promise you'll come back to Corruscant and we'll face them together when the time is right.

LARA

...I promise.

KENOBI

And right away. I'm being specific. Come back to Corruscant straight away, Lara.

LARA

Okay, Ben. We're on our way.

He smiles, lightly.

KENOBI

May the Force be with you.

LARA

May the Force be with you.

INT. KENOBI'S OFFICE

Lara's hologram disappears, and Obi wan leaves.

Heads out into

INT. GOVERNMENT PALACE - CORRIDOR

Down the hall.

Enters a lift. Doors close.

INT. GOVERNMENT PALACE - EXPERIMENTAL MED BAY

The doors open.

Kenobi heads out, but the place is oddly silent.

No doctors, no medical droids, no Anakin.

[When fans later comb through screenshots, they'll notice the missing pieces of Darth Vader's proto-armor from the b.g.]

Obi-Wan eventually finds a single MEDICAL DROID.

KENOBI

Where is Commander Skywalker?

MEDICAL DROID

I'm sorry, but that patient has checked out, Sir. Departed in pursuit of King Bail Organa of Alderaan, I believe.

KENOBI

Blast it, Anakin.

INT. SPACEPORT CANTINA - NIGHT

The classic *Star Wars* hole-in-the wall bar.

Could be on any planet in the Galaxy.

In fact, there probably is one just like it on most planets.

Full of pilots and smugglers and aliens.

Anakin sits alone at the bar.

Wears his blue flightsuit from long ago.

Blends in perfectly.

Nurses a drink, but finally hits the end.

Holds his finger up for one more.

EXT. GOVERNMENT PALACE - ROOFTOP DOCKING BAY - NIGHT

This sure is a popular landing platform.

The Basil Arcadia arrives.

Obi-Wan, there to greet it.

Ramp lowers.

The three Rebellion Leaders emerge.

Kenobi nods in greeting as they pass.

Waits.

Finally, Zee-Squared floats out.

Obi-Wan barely sees the droid.

Looks past for Lara.

Her HOLOGRAM pops out of Zee's memory banks.

LARA (HOLOGRAM)

General Kenobi, you've trained me well.

KENOBI

No....

LARA (HOLOGRAM)

Which is why you know I must do what I feel is right. Please know that I did return to Corruscant straight away, as promised. Long enough to find another ship, at least. Perhaps it's meant to be, as you were on the way to my final stop. Now Zee-Squared can help you download Palpatine's archived recordings while I go in search of this Darth Vader.

KENOBI

Blast it, Lara!

EXT. GALAXY - PLANET CORELLIA

Very much an "Earth-like" planet. Blue and green and cloudy.

This side of the planet is dark; night.

A line of starships enters and exits.

And a Y-Wing exits hyperspace nearest us.

INT. Y-WING - COCKPIT

It's Lara, in her white flightsuit from the previous film.

She flies with determination.

Keys in the radio.

LARA

Coreellia Control, this is Queen
Lara Organa of Kharkaara and
Alderaan, with an urgent request. I
need to know where a gang of bounty
hunters touched down in the last
few hours.

CORELLIAN CONTROLLER (V.O.)

(radio, filtered)

Who is this? Is this some kind of
joke?

LARA

Transmitting emergency clearance
code now.

A silent beat.

CORELLIAN CONTROLLER (V.O.)

(radio, filtered)

Uhh, wow, your Highness, we--

LARA

Darth Vader. Boba Fett. Dengar. IG--

CORELLIAN CONTROLLER (V.O.)

(radio, filtered)

Ma'am, you don't want to go down
there, that area is--

LARA

Controller! What is your name?

CORELLIAN CONTROLLER (V.O.)
 (radio, filtered)
 This is C-3-C Cymanthia, Ma'am.

LARA
 Your concerns have been duly noted,
 Controller Cymanthia. Now then:
 What. Docking. Bay?

CORELLIAN CONTROLLER (V.O.)
 (radio, filtered)
 ...sixty two.

LARA
 Thank you. Starting my final
 approach now.

EXT. Y-WING

Banks, dives down towards the planet surface.

EXT. CORELLIA - DOCKING BAY 62 - NIGHT

Vader's TIE is here.

Next to it, Dengar's ship, PUNISHING ONE; a rocket inset on the right side of a crescent moon.

Bossk's HOUNDS TOOTH is the largest, the body like a flying stapler designed by a heavy metal industrial coppersmith.

The final in the group: IG-88's insectoid craft, IG-2000.

No sign of Boba Fett's iconic SLAVE ONE from *Episode V*.

Lara's Y-Wing lands in the center of the ships.

The docking bay dimly lit, preserving some of their mystery.

Lara exits her Y-wing.

DOCKING BAY - PERIPHERY

Small shops set into the walls.

Street food, etc.

Lara tries in vain to find information.

LARA
 Excuse me, I'm looking for someone.

LARA (CONT'D)
Can you help me find--

LARA (CONT'D)
Do you know where I can ask for
information?

But the aliens and humans avoid her.

Some mutter CURSES as they leave.

She's out of her element.

HOTEL MANAGER (O.S.)
You look lost, poor thing. I could
maybe help you find your friends.

Lara turns to a service window in the wall.

An alien HOTEL MANAGER, blue with four arms and a deep voice.

LARA
Why would you help me?

HOTEL MANAGER
I rent rooms hourly, daily, or
weekly. Business is slow.

LARA
I'm not looking for a friend. I'm
looking for a bounty hunter.

HOTEL MANAGER
Ah. That'll only cost you the daily
rate. You'll find several such
soldiers of fortune just down--

LARA
Not just any bounty hunter. A gang.
Darth Vader, Boba and Jango Fett,
Dengar, Bossk, and IG-88.

HOTEL MANAGER
Well, top-tier job, eh? Should've
asked for the weekly rate, heh-heh.
Sorry, I'm not fool enough to offer
information on the Fett boys, but I
can tell you that IG-88 and Dengar
have been hanging around nearby.

LARA
Okay, give me the room.

The Hotel Manager's brow rises.

LARA (CONT'D)

I'm paying for it, aren't I? And
I'm not leaving until I find who
I'm looking for, so....

HOTEL MANAGER

S'pose that's fair enough. Payment
is due in full, up front. And just
you be careful, yeah? Ever since
this became a Mandalorian outlaw
hub, well, you know how those
unsavory types can get.

Lara digs into her pilot's vest.

The Hotel Manager watches greedily.

Grins at the stack of credits she produces.

LARA

That's no problem. Here, should be
more than enough. Keep the extra, I
don't want any local trouble.

EXT. CORELLIA - SPACEPORT ALLEY - NIGHT

This is the planet's "red light district."

Homeless aliens and humans take up alcoves and doorways. As
much reference to drugs and prostitution as Disney allows.

Not a place for a Queen to find herself alone, at night.

A "chop-shop" of illegal armaments sits open.

SPARKS FLY, drawing Lara's attention.

The assassin droid IG-88 undergoes repairs.

Its head swivels towards her.

Red, lifeless, electronic eyes BLINK with menace.

But it stays put.

Lara continues on.

She turns to the face front--

Nearly bumps into the reptilian Bossk.

Bossk CROAKS something in his alien tongue.

Lara steps back, hand on her lightsaber.

But Bossk isn't looking to fight. Brings up a chunk of meat to his saurian mouth. Rips a chunk of flesh off.

DENGAR (O.S.)
You're too late.

Lara turns, sees Dengar come out of the "chop-shop."

He now sports a bandaged eye from where she deflected his blaster bolt into his rifle scope.

DENGAR (CONT'D)
Boba Fett is collecting the reward. But what you will find, and this you can count on, is yourself in a whole heap of trouble. Just sashaying your way through a place like this? What with that nice, firm, supple... bounty on your head. Maybe you don't realize just what you're gambling with, coming down here with all the lowlifes and degenerates...?

LARA
Put a hand on me and you lose it.

DENGAR
That's a wager we'll have to settle another time. A condition of payment, we leave you alone. That part wasn't...negotiable.

Dengar rubs his throat with the thought.

Bossk finishes his snack, CROAKS something to Dengar.

Dengar nods.

The reptilian Trandoshan tosses the bone of his snack to a vagrant alien, who happily takes the scraps.

The alien bounty hunter leaves.

Dengar moves the opposite way, further down the alley.

Lara follows.

Looks over her shoulder; Bossk disappears behind her.

LARA

This Darth Vader, he's working with Maul?

DENGAR

No. The Fetts. They're already taking your King to the drop-off point. Before you ask, I don't know where. Bossk and I, we wasn't...entrusted with that knowledge.

Lara senses the truth of it.

Dengar continues on, stops at an alien "cat house" and says something to the door in the Twi'lek speech. No subtitles.

Dengar turns back to Lara.

LARA

Where is Darth Vader?

DENGAR

Here. Far as I know.

She looks up at the "cat house." Dengar grins.

LARA

Here, in the city?

DENGAR

When's you gonna offer me that bribe, huh?

LARA

Tell me where to find him, and I won't ruin your night, how's that?

Dengar smirks.

DENGAR

Try the local watering holes. Might be that he's there, chumming up with more of those Mandalorians. Couldn't say for myself, seeing as drink ain't one of my vices.

The "cathouse" door slides open and a pair of tentacled alien prostitutes step out. A Twi'lek and a Togruta.

DENGAR (CONT'D)

Speaking of which.... You take care of yourself now, Highness. Until we meet again.

LARA

I look forward to it.

Dengar offers a nod, though his gaze flicks past Lara.

The alien prostitutes usher him inside the building.

Lara turns to face Bossk and three other BOUNTY HUNTERS.

Blaster rifles raised.

BOUNTY HUNTER 1

It's her all right.

Bossk CROAKS something from the rear.

BOUNTY HUNTER 2

You'll get your cut.

LARA

Before we go any further, do any of you know where I can find the bounty hunter Darth Vader?

BOUNTY HUNTERS (UNISON)

Who?

LARA

Thanks. That's going to make this a lot easier.

Bossk CROAKS again, urgent.

BOUNTY HUNTER 1

Right. Hand over your lightsaber weapon first.

LARA

Okay, here you go.

Lara takes out her lightsaber, tosses it.

Bounty Hunter 1 puts up his hands to catch the weapon.

Lara flicks her fingers, ACTIVATES her lightsaber in the air.

The green blade SLICES HIS HANDS OFF.

He SCREAMS, falls to the ground.

The other two Bounty Hunters look back to Lara, who leaps, runs on the wall for two steps, and KICKS Bounty Hunter 2.

It's a powerful blow to the man's head.

She lands, hand outstretched, and her lightsaber returns.

Just in time to DEFLECT Bounty Hunter 3's blaster fire. He falls down from the returned shot.

Lara turns towards Bossk, who backs away.

He dashes inside the "chop-shop" and hits the door controls.

The garage CLOSES quickly.

Lara turns off her lightsaber.

Secures the weapon, continues down the alley.

THUNDER CRACKLES, distant. Then the light PATTERN of rain.

Bounty Hunter 1 GROANS on the ground, cradles his torn limbs.

INT. SPACEPORT CANTINA - NIGHT

Anakin still nurses that drink.

But then he senses something, looks distant.

Sits erect. Face folds. Confused by his own thoughts.

ANAKIN

Lara...?

A COMMOTION erupts from behind and he turns.

Lara holds a PINNED MANDALORIAN against a wall, arm twisted painfully behind his back.

Like a cop with an unruly suspect.

LARA

Where is he?!

PINNED MANDALORIAN

You're crazy, agh! I don't know who you're talking about!

LARA

Then you're no good to me!

PINNED MANDALORIAN

Wait, I'm telling the truth!

She takes the Mandalorian, SLAMS his helmet against a table.

Knocks the man out cold, sends drinks splashing.

Lara turns, approaches the bar.

Slaps a few coins on the counter.

LARA

That's for your trouble. There's more if you can tell me where to find--

ANAKIN

Lara?

She turns, not having noticed him. Surprised.

Rushes forward, almost like she's going to attack.

Gives him a big hug.

LARA

Anakin?! How did you...did Kenobi send you? Scol and his big mouth--

ANAKIN

No, no. I came here on my own. What are you doing here?

LARA

Tracking him down, same as you.

ANAKIN

Who?

LARA

Darth Vader.

ANAKIN (CONT'D)

Bail?

They don't bother to clarify.

Nod in agreement.

LARA

It's good to see you. And look at that, no need for the leg brace!

ANAKIN

Want me to get up and dance?

She smiles.

Anakin flags down the bartender.

ANAKIN (CONT'D)

Two more.

LARA
Put your credits away. I'm buying.

ANAKIN
(grins)
Finally....

LARA
Not going to let you hold that over
my head forever.

She sits next to Anakin.

Takes a drink when the bartender arrives.

Almost spits it out.

Anakin laughs.

LARA (CONT'D)
Wow, that's strong. What's in
there, battery acid?

ANAKIN
House specialty. They call it a
"memory wipe." Do you like it?

LARA
Sure. I think I'll take some home
with me. Worst case I can use it to
clean the carbon scoring off Zee.

She downs the drink.

The bartender provides another.

Anakin's brow rises, impressed.

LARA (CONT'D)
So, do you have a lead on him?

ANAKIN
Vader? He's...he's here. Waiting
for the Mandalorians to confirm
Maul's location for the bounty.

LARA
Do you know where, exactly?

ANAKIN
Vader's not the target. I'm going
after Maul. If we work together,
you and I--

LARA

Vader took Bail from me. From us.
Don't forget that's the reason why
we're here.

Anakin breaks eye-contact.

Speaks more to his drink for the next line.

ANAKIN

What if Vader wants the same as us?
What if his motives are pure?

LARA

He's a bounty hunter! A Jedi who
uses the Force for profit is no
Jedi at all. Remember what Master
Yoda said--

ANAKIN

Master Yoda! Don't make me laugh.
Do you honestly believe he even
exists? Some fount of wisdom who
stays out of political life under
the guise of 'awaiting the will of
the Force?'

Lara downs the rest of her drink in frustration.

ANAKIN (CONT'D)

He's nothing more than a teaching
aide. A parable. You'd do well to
remember, for Obi-Wan, the truth is
as flexible as the will of the
Force itself.

LARA

What's that supposed to mean?

ANAKIN

What if the Force is merely a tool?
What if it's really us who are
meant to provide the will?

LARA

Anakin, don't talk like that.

ANAKIN

Obi-Wan is a master of deception.
Though I suppose you learned those
lessons long ago, your Highness.

Anakin grabs his cocktail, but she puts her hand atop his.

LARA

I think you've had enough.

MANDALORIAN PATROL (O.S.)

There, at the bar. Blast her!

They turn back at the shout.

Four Mandalorian Soldiers on Patrol rush forward.

Lara jumps to her feet, ACTIVATES her lightsaber.

Anakin throws his drink at the closest Soldier.

SHATTERS against his helmet.

Lara DEFLECTS a blaster bolt.

Anakin IGNITES his lightsaber, cuts down the next Soldier.

They back away, deflecting blaster fire.

Out the back into

EXT. CANTINA - ALLEY - NIGHT

Heavy downpour of rain.

Lightsabers SIZZLE against the wet.

They deactivate them, run.

Several more Mandalorians give chase.

Anakin's new legs are fast.

Lara barely keeps up.

Anakin gives a FORCE PUSH, knocks a Mandalorian Soldier back into several others. They're down, but they clog the route.

LARA

This way!

She ducks into a different alley.

Anakin follows.

EXT. SAFE HOUSE - ALLEY

They run, still with a brief lead over the Soldiers.

LARA

Over here, I rented a room.

There's a single door and window built into the wall.

She uses a pass, unlocks the electronic door.

They go inside.

MANDALORIAN PATROL

The Soldiers rush towards the same alleyway, but when they pass the safe house entrance, it's only a bare wall.

The Soldiers continue on.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - SAME

Lara holds one hand to her head, the other to the door.

Anakin looks out the window.

ANAKIN

It worked, they're gone.

She just made the door and window disappear as far as the Mandalorians are concerned, impressive, but it took effort.

Lara lowers her hands.

Pants for breath.

Anakin taps the window, which tints to black. Turns.

Both she and Anakin, soaked through from the rain.

Hair matted, clothes clinging.

But they smile. Caught up in the moment.

They're in a spaceport hotel room.

Not much more than a bed and a bathroom.

ANAKIN (CONT'D)

Do you ever wonder...? If we'd met under different circumstances?

LARA

Anakin, there's no point in dwelling on what could have been.

ANAKIN

If you weren't Royalty. Or, perhaps
if I was....

LARA

Please....

ANAKIN

Do you love him?

She turns away, her back to him.

LARA

Of course I do. Did.

He swallows a lump in his throat.

ANAKIN

Tell me the truth, Lara. Tell me
the truth and I'll never ask again.

Lara turns around, sharply.

Her eyes say, "don't you know?"

LARA

No. I did not marry for love. But
you're missing the point. I had a
duty, and a responsibility--

Anakin crosses the room at the "no."

Purposefully, quickly. Forceful.

Takes Lara in his arms.

They KISS.

But she pulls back.

LARA (CONT'D)

Wait.

ANAKIN

Let go of duty and responsibility.
Tonight. Just for tonight.

LARA

Anakin....

They kiss again.

Deep and passionate and forbidden.

Hands through wet hair, tugging at clothing.
 Towards the bed, united in frenzied purpose.
 They fall to the bed and make Luke and Leia.
 Sweet, sweet Luke and Leia.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - LATER

Anakin and Lara lie in bed, her head on his bare chest.
 Runs her hand over his shoulder scar.
 Finds another ancient wound on his ribs.

LARA
 How'd you get that one?

ANAKIN
 What, that? That's one of my
 oldest. Got it when I stowed away
 on a spice freighter. Lucky I
 wasn't crushed to be honest. I was
 only, mmm, fourteen?

LARA
 Wow, I can't even imagine. You
 know, I spent so much time trying
 to hide who I was, not wanting to
 be treated like a Princess, that I
 must have conditioned myself never
 to talk about the past.

She sits up.

LARA (CONT'D)
 Okay, tell me about your father.

ANAKIN
 Not much to tell. I never knew my
 parents. I think something...
 happened...to them. My foster
 parents would never tell me, but I
 could tell, I just knew, whatever
 it was, must have been tragic.

LARA
 Any brothers or sisters?

ANAKIN
 Step-sister. Foster parents' real
 daughter.

(MORE)

ANAKIN (CONT'D)

A few years older than me. Beru was nice enough, but somehow content to live on that lifeless rock. Just before I left she married some moisture farmer, Owen something. Lars. They made their life there, if you can call it one. Ever heard of an outer rim planet called Tatooine?

LARA

No, I don't think so.

ANAKIN

There's a reason. Left soon as I could and never looked back. After I stowed away I lied about my age, made up a fake name, and ended up working a few years as a navigator on that spice freighter before I joined with the Republic.

Lara's eyes glitter with excitement.

LARA

You changed your name? How exciting! What to?

ANAKIN

Anakin Skywalker, of course. I've been using it ever since.

LARA

Wait...what? Then what's your real name?

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!

Lara's comm-device flashes.

Important incoming message.

She takes the sheet from the bed, wraps it around herself.

Sits up, goes to answer.

This reveals Anakin in his undershorts, and his new legs.

Black and mechanical. Matte finish, like a combat knife.

Lara holds a flat disk, like a makeup compact, and a hologram appears on its surface. That of a Rebellion Leader.

She shifts her position.

Makes sure Anakin is invisible behind her; eclipsed.

REBELLION LEADER 1 (HOLOGRAM)
Majesty, I'm sorry to wake you. I
know you said only contact in
emergency, but I have news--

LARA
Yes, what is it?

REBELLION LEADER 1 (HOLOGRAM)
King Bail. He's on Coruscant.
That's all I know, but he's alive,
uninjured, and safe.

LARA
He's alive!? But I saw....

REBELLION LEADER 1 (HOLOGRAM)
One more thing. Have you seen
Commander Skywalker? General Kenobi
is asking about him.

She looks away.

LARA
I...no. I haven't seen him. Sorry.
But I'm on my way. Tell Bail I'll
see him soon!

Ends the transmission.

Keeps her back to Anakin.

LARA (CONT'D)
He's alive, Anakin. I, we--

ANAKIN
Darth Vader. The bounty hunters
must have let Bail go. If they only
needed him as an introduction to
Maul, then once they got the
location they could have released--

LARA
It doesn't matter, I have to go.

She's up, dressing.

He stays in bed.

ANAKIN
I guess that's that, then.

LARA
What's 'that?'

ANAKIN
You, me. Last night.

LARA
Right. We're Jedi, Anakin.

ANAKIN
If only it were so easy. Just wave
your fingers in front of my face,
and I'll forget I ever saw you.

She gets ready in silence.

He gets up as well, starts to dress.

Uses too much strength in his movements.

Reveals his pent up anger and frustration.

ANAKIN (CONT'D)
Fine. Guess it's better this way.

LARA
What do you want me to do, Anakin?
Forget my responsibilities? Forget
that I'm married? That I'm a queen?
I don't have that luxury.

ANAKIN
You did forget! If only for one
night. I saw it. You were free. You
were finally yourself, for the
first time.

They're finished dressing.

Just arguing, now.

LARA
I thought he was... I was being
selfish. A Jedi has to--

ANAKIN
Then I don't want to be a Jedi!

She freezes at his words.

LARA
Don't ever say that.

ANAKIN

Why not? Where has all this damned training gotten me? What has it gained us? We're nowhere closer to--

LARA

Stop it! You don't mean that. Where is this coming from? Take a moment to listen to yourself. You don't really want to run away, I know you want to end this war as much as I do. This galaxy is bigger than just you and me, Anakin! Don't you get that? Yes, okay. I talk a lot about duty and responsibility, but its also loyalty. Trust. Can you really trust someone who can't keep their commitments? If you want to live in a world where everyone ignores their obligations and does what they please, take a look at Maul. Because that's where you'll be.

Anakin looks away.

She knows she went too far.

Doesn't know how to fix it.

LARA (CONT'D)

Come back to the capitol with me. Together, when the time is right, we will face him--

ANAKIN

No, the time is now. And it will always be right now. I'm leaving. To the outer rim, to find Maul. I'm not coming back until it's finished. Trust in that. And maybe what I need to do isn't the Jedi way, exactly. But it is the right way, Lara. Do you understand?

She doesn't respond at first.

Thinks about it.

LARA

You must do what you feel is right. That's all any of us can do.

ANAKIN

Okay, Ben.

She turns to leave.

ANAKIN (CONT'D)

Wait! I'm sorry. I...I love you.
Ever since we met. I never said
anything, but....

She stops at the door, her back to him.

Shoulders sink, defeated. Tired of arguing.

LARA

Don't. It will be easier if you
don't love me. Hate me if you must,
but last night--last night can't
ever happen again.

She waits for response, but he doesn't give one.

Then she's gone.

His eyes well with tears and one escapes, down his face.

Grits his teeth....

PUNCHES the wall.

Again, and again. Both fists POUND.

SCREAMS with rage.

EXT. SAFE HOUSE - ALLEY - NIGHT

The ground, wet from the rainstorm, now passed.

Another Mandalorian Patrol arrives.

Anakin's MUFFLED SHOUTS come from within.

The Patrol Captain taps on the door.

MANDALORIAN PATROL

Hey, what's going on in there?

The door slides open.

The Patrol Captain grabs at his own throat, FLIES back
against the far wall. SLAMS against it.

The other Mandalorians draw their rifles.

Anakin steps out, blue lightsaber at the ready.

Blood drips off his fists.
The Soldiers FIRE, but to no effect.
He simply ABSORBS the blaster bolts.
Slices them down with ease.
The last man turns and runs.
Anakin puts out a hand.
PULLS the Soldier in and cuts him across the back.
Dead, all of them.
Anakin deactivates the lightsaber.
Closes his eyes.
Takes a deep breath.

FLASH TO:

INT. SAFE HOUSE - REALITY

Lets it out.
Anakin opens his eyes.
The "vision" is over.

ANAKIN

No, Lara. I cannot hate you. But
you're right. Love...love is a
luxury, a gift, enjoyed by those we
protect and fight for.

Lara looks surprised at his change of heart.

ANAKIN (CONT'D)

We have our responsibilities. I'll
control my feelings. Put my duties
first, like you. Goodbye, Highness.

She waits a beat.
Gives a slight nod.

LARA

Goodbye, Commander.

Lara turns and leaves.

INT. CORRUSCANT HOSPITAL - RECOVERY ROOM - NIGHT

As a contrast to the basement experimental medical bay, this is a top-level hospital suite reserved for royalty.

Stunning views of the night skyline.

Bail Organa sits on a bed, holding court with advisors.

A chair next to him for Lara, empty.

A ROYAL AIDE enters.

ROYAL AIDE

Your Majesty, General Obi-Wan
Kenobi is here to see you.

Kenobi enters a beat later.

BAIL

Ben!

KENOBI

Bail, it does me well to see you.

They embrace.

BAIL

Seems like every time we part ways
I get kidnapped. I ought to forbid
you to leave my side!

KENOBI

How did you manage to escape this
time, Highness?

BAIL

I didn't. Their leader, some new
bounty hunter called Darth Vader,
he told the others to escort me
back here for payment. Once they
got the location for Maul, they
just...let me go.

KENOBI

Did you happen to hear the name of
Maul's base?

BAIL

It's on the Mustafar system.

KENOBI

I have to go, Bail. Don't tell Lara
where to find us, please.

BAIL

Us?

KENOBI

Scol will take me. Darth Vader is going to get more than he bargained for. Palpatine and Maul are united.

Bail shakes his head.

BAIL

Be careful. The other bounty hunters were afraid of Vader and those mercenaries fear no man.

Kenobi nods, bows.

INT. VADER'S TIE FIGHTER - COCKPIT

Vader flies landing approach onto Mustafar.

The skyline, full of TIE precursors.

The castle waits below.

Illuminated by the red glow of lava.

EXT. MUSTAFAR - CASTLE FORTRESS - NIGHT

Darth Vader's TIE fighter lands near the entrance to the castle, on a section of rock atop the lava fields.

This is an ancient landing platform, complete with steps carved into the lava rock.

A Mandalorian Company waits below, rifles ready.

Darth Vader emerges.

None of his bounty hunter gear or weapons.

Hands raised, barely. A casual gesture. Down the steps.

VADER

I am unarmed.

The Mandalorian COMPANY COMMANDER steps forward, rifle up.

COMPANY COMMANDER

Where is King Bail Organa, bounty hunter?

Vader waves his hand.

VADER
You don't need him.

The Company Commander turns back to the troops.

COMPANY COMMANDER
We don't need the King.

VADER
(to Company, louder)
Your honored guest has arrived.

The Troops turn in a unison motion, half left, half right, parting down the center. Creates a walkway.

Vader just did the Jedi Mind Trick on the whole Company.

COMPANY COMMANDER
The Mandalore will be pleased to see you.

Darth Vader's Theme Song (THE IMPERIAL MARCH) plays as he marches up the lava field, the Company at his sides.

Rose and Guild stand on a castle balcony, watching.

GUILD
Did he...?

ROSE
Just go with it.

INT. CASTLE FORTRESS - CORRIDOR

Vader marches through the castle, Soldiers snapping to Attention as he passes.

INT. CASTLE FORTRESS - THRONE ROOM

Maul sits atop the seat of power.

Vader enters, alone.

MAUL
So you're the bounty hunter who worked so hard for an audience.

VADER
My name is Darth Vader.

MAUL
(to his guards)
Leave us.

The Mandalorian guards at the sides of the room leave.

Vader and Maul hold a staring contest.

MAUL (CONT'D)
You're not afraid of me. No...you
hate me. Even better.

MAUL (CONT'D)
Yet you come unarmed. How
curious....

VADER
You earn no more trophies today.

Maul sneers his evil grin.

Looks to the lightsabers inlaid on the throne.

Vader follows Maul's gaze, reaches out.

One lightsaber dislodges, FLIES back into Vader's open hand.

Maul rises from the throne, reaches out to stop it, fails.

Vader repositions himself and the green lightsaber IGNITES.

Attacks!

Maul barely ACTIVATES his red saber in time to block.

CRASH! CRACKLE! SIZZLE!

Surprise on the fiend's face as they hold sabers together.

Then a lewd sort of joy.

Maul laughs with pleasure.

Vader slashes again at Maul, who parries each attack.

Palpatine comes from the window, around the throne, sits.

PALPATINE
Good...good....

Vader gets some distance between himself and Maul.

VADER

Lord Protector? How is it that you are not a prisoner?

PALPATINE

I knew you would come. I have foreseen this. And yet, already you call to the Dark Side for strength. A surprise, but a welcome one. You have a great destiny, if only you'll accept it.

VADER

You...you're working with him?

MAUL

Fool. I'm not working with him. He is my Master. And soon he will be yours as well. We will show you the true power of the Dark Side!

Maul gives a BATTLE CRY, attacks with renewed ferocity.

Vader falls back, weakened by his own surprise.

PALPATINE

I can feel it flowing through you. Yes, the Dark Side has made you powerful, but you have not yet fully embraced its call.

Maul delivers brutal strikes.

It's all Vader can do to keep him at bay.

Realizes this plan has been a terrible mistake.

A Trap.

Looks back towards the exit and escape.

MAUL

No! Do not slip back into fear. Hold onto your rage. Keep it at your center.

PALPATINE

The Jedi fear the Dark Side. They hide their feelings. We are free, because our anger, our fear, is a part of us. We are not surprised when it overwhelms us. In fact, it cannot, because it is ever present. A constant friend and ally.

VADER
The stories...they're true?

MAUL
Yes, the Sith have returned!

Maul toys with him now.

Even so, Vader only just barely holds his ground.

Palpatine runs his fingers along the second lightsaber inlaid on opposite arm rest of the dark throne.

PALPATINE
You knew of Maul's trophies.
Devised to use them against him.
Cunning.

MAUL
He will do well against the Jedi.

VADER
Never.

PALPATINE
(laughs)
It has already begun! You cannot
stop it now. You must embrace your
destiny, or be destroyed by it.

MAUL
We will have your power for our
own, one way or another. You may
not lose your lightsaber to my
collection, but two will grow to
four. Multiplying until there are
none left to reap.

The fighting sends the pair up the stairs, on a course to orbit around the throne.

Vader sneaks a glance to the second lightsaber.

VADER
Only two?

MAUL
Are you so eager to join them?

VADER
I'd heard tale of at least three
more slain.

PALPATINE

Yes, there is another.

Palpatine closes his eyes.

Confusion strikes Maul's face.

They fight around the back of the throne, then come in an arc back towards the stairs.

VADER

Another?

PALPATINE

My Master. The Grandmaster.

Opens his eyes.

PALPATINE (CONT'D)

He holds a deep-seated hatred for the Jedi.

MAUL

You told me that the Grandmaster was dead.

PALPATINE

I told you a great many things. He did not want you to know, but he lives still. And collecting Jedi trophies is only one of many traits that he shares with his clone.

Both warriors stop, their lightsabers held still.

It's a long pause.

The only sound, the BUZZING of the weapons.

A smile sits on Palpatine's face.

Maul's own countenance grows tormented with the realization.

MAUL

No....

PALPATINE

Oh, yes, it is true. Don't act so surprised. You've always known, deep down. Your hatred of clones stems from a hatred of self. The way you torture them for pleasure....

MAUL

Lies! You lie! Why--why do you say these things, Father?

PALPATINE

(laughs)

Father? No, no. You were an experiment, nothing more. You were practice for what's to come. For him. You are no longer of any use to me! Don't you see? The very sight of you sickens me. How I have longed for this day. To be free of you. You are an abomination. Your very existence is an insult. A trial, imposed on me by the Grandmaster himself.

Maul ROARS with betrayal and pain.

Attacks Vader with savage intensity.

Vader intercepts the blow, but falls back.

Down the stairs.

His lightsaber deactivates as he falls.

Maul ACTIVATES the second side of his lightsaber.

Now fighting dual-sided.

Maul LEAPS from atop the stairs, slashes at Vader.

Vader ACTIVATES the green saber, just in time to block.

Maul strikes again and again with both halves.

A frenzied display.

MAUL

I will kill him for you! He is the imposter, you will see, Master! We don't need him. You will accept me. I will prove my strength.

Palpatine LAUGHS.

Maul fights harder.

Vader backs away in a circular ark, back towards the stairs.

PALPATINE

You see? If you do not strike him down, Maul will surely kill you. Or you can take his place by my side and learn the true nature of the Force! But only if you call out to the Dark Side for help.

Maul, overcome with rage and sorrow.

Grits his teeth so hard his mouth overfills with BLOOD.

He SCREAMS out with foamy red spittle.

MAUL

No! I have the power of the ancestors! The Sith give me their strength!

A flurry of red blades come at Vader.

He's forced back up the stairs on the defense.

PALPATINE

Do not resist the call of the Dark Side. It already flows through you, I can feel it. I can hear it calling your name, Darth Vader! Embrace it! Only then will you find the strength to defeat Maul. What you have been taught is a lie. Without the Dark, you're only using half of the Force. Call out and realize your full potential!

Maul knocks Vader back.

Stumbles, falls.

Vader on his back, reclining at the top of the stairs.

Maul slashes, but Vader is able to parry him, even prone.

Maul FLIPS, over Vader's head, lands at Palpatine's side.

Vader turns, kneeling on the stairs before the throne.

Raises his lightsaber for defense.

Maul goes for the final strike.

Lightsabers CLASH and meet.

But Maul has the high ground, leverage.

Maul uses raw strength, pushes Vader's own weapon down.

Vader holds his saber with both hands, in such a way that the hilt points at Maul and the blade extends over his own back.

His kneeling form, and the raised hands, give an image of one begging in supplication.

But no mercy to be found here.

Slowly, inch by inch, Maul pushes the weapon towards Vader.

It's a battle of raw strength, one Maul is winning.

PALPATINE (CONT'D)

The Force wants to help you. Let
it! Give into your hatred and
receive unfathomable power!

Vader's own weapon slowly gravitates towards his helm.

Maul will surely win. Only a few moments left.

Palpatine's eyes go towards the other lightsaber inlaid on the throne as if he senses something. His hand covers it.

Lifts his hand.

Darth Vader ROARS, calling out to the Dark Side.

The second lightsaber FLIES forward.

Vader puts out a hand to catch it.

The clash of sabers held with the other hand now DIG INTO HIS HELM, but just barely. And only for a moment.

But the damage is immense.

Vader catches the other saber, which illuminates orange.

Slices Maul across the abdomen.

Cuts both the double-saber and Maul in half.

Vader rises to his feet with the move.

Maul's brow lifts, confused. Drops the pieces of the ruined double-bladed saber. Then his face goes slack.

Maul tumbles down the stairs...in two pieces.

One on either side of Vader.

INT. BASIL ARCADIA - LOUNGE

Obi-Wan falters, sits down.

A hand over his face.

Looks like he's going to be sick.

KENOBI
We're too late.

Shakes his head slowly.

Rises, walks towards the cockpit.

INT. CASTLE FORTRESS - THRONE ROOM

Vader looks down at Maul.

At what he's done.

Vader's helm, nearly cleaved. A huge GASH runs over his left eye, curling back over his crown to the rear of his head.

This scar matches Vader's head in the Original Trilogy.

Molten helmet runs down the front like a black tear.

Palpatine clasps his hands together with joy.

PALPATINE
Wonderful! Magnificent!

But Vader isn't finished yet.

He steps forward, crosses the pair of sabers, and puts them around Palpatine's neck like garden shears.

PALPATINE (CONT'D)
Wait! I had no choice!

VADER
No choice?!

PALPATINE
The Grandmaster, he told me I must join him or die!

VADER
Then you should have died! Look at what you've done. You've created all of this disorder and chaos!

PALPATINE

No! You must listen. This was never my idea. We want the same thing, you and I. Order and rule of law must prevail! We have a duty to the to the galaxy!

Vader holds his position.

Palpatine says no more.

The lightsabers turn off.

Vader turns, throws the weapons down the stairs.

VADER

Yes, I have a duty. I will let the Republic deal with you.

Starts to walk away.

Puts a hand up to his helm.

Feet unsteady.

Palpatine LAUGHS.

PALPATINE

What Republic?

Vader turns back, but Palpatine's laughter only grows.

Maniacal, supervillain laughter. The room SWIRLS.

Vader steps towards him, then....

COLLAPSES.

EXT. BASIL ARCADIA

The familiar ship flies from space, towards Mustafar.

INT. BASIL ARCADIA - COCKPIT

Obi-Wan watches as Scol pilots the ship down towards the red planet below.

They arrive on the outskirts of the castle.

Close enough to see the Mandalorians loading Vader's unconscious body onto a tri-wing Imperial precursor shuttle.

Palpatine and his Praetorian Guard are with him.

Scol CLICKS something.

KENOBI

No. Turn the ship around, Scol. We must return to the Capitol and warn the others. We're too late.

A cloud of TIE fighter precursors fly towards them.

Scol CLICKS again, pulls at the controls.

EXT. BASIL ARCADIA

The ship flees.

Back towards space.

The TIE fighters let it go.

INT. GOVERNMENT PALACE - EXPERIMENTAL MED BAY - LATER

Vader lies on a table, unconscious.

Wears a new helmet.

This one, much closer to the classic version.

As he stirs, the table rotates. Sits up with him.

Vader steps off.

He wears his CAPE now.

Looks 75% like the Original Trilogy Darth Vader.

Touches the "face" of his helmet.

Touches himself on the chest, arms.

Reorienting.

A Medical Droid guides him.

MEDICAL DROID

This way, please.

Takes Vader towards the lift.

The pair of Praetorian Guards here snap to attention.

He steps inside the lift.

PRAETORIAN 1/PRAETORIAN 2
Lord Vader.

He looks back, as if confused.

But the doors shut.

INT. GOVERNMENT PALACE - SENATE CORRIDOR

The lift opens here, Vader steps out.

A pair of IMPERIAL OFFICERS greet him.

Escort him down the hall.

IMPERIAL OFFICER 1
Lord Vader, excellent. You've
awoken just in time.

VADER
Where am I?

IMPERIAL OFFICER 2
Your injuries required special
treatment at the capitol. You're on
Corruscant, just outside of the
Imperial Senate.

VADER
The...what?

More personnel greet them as they pass.

It's all "Lord Vader" and "M'Lord" from everyone.

There are Mandalorian Troopers among the officers.

At the end of the hall, through an open passageway, the
Senate lies ahead.

IMPERIAL OFFICER 1
They're waiting for you, Lord
Protector.

Vader turns back.

IMPERIAL OFFICER 2
Go on, M'Lord.

INT. SENATE CHAMBERS

Vader walks forward to thunderous APPLAUSE.

Palpatine stands before him, on one of the hovering senate platforms, this one docked.

Two ADVISORS behind him.

Hands open.

PALPATINE

Lord Vader, you're just in time.

Like in a dream state, Vader extends a hand.

Palpatine takes it and Vader steps on board.

The hover platform rises.

Out to the center of the Senate floor.

Vader still looks about, in awe.

SENATE CHAMBERS - EAVES

Bail, Lara, and Kenobi watch the address from the periphery.

Zee floats nearby.

BAIL

With Maul gone, Palpatine must finally relinquish his emergency powers.

LARA

Have you ever known a man like him to voluntarily give up power?

KENOBI

He is to name himself Emperor.

Both look to Obi-Wan.

LARA

Republics don't have Emperors.

KENOBI

No, they do not.

BAIL

Even Palpatine isn't that bold....

SENATE CHAMBERS - CENTRAL PLATFORM

Palpatine speaks above the applause, on the PA.

PALPATINE

It is with great honor that I
present to you the hero who
defeated Maul and brought an end to
the Clone Wars--the first Lord
Protector of the Galactic Empire--
Darth Vader!

Now the APPLAUSE grows out of control.

Vader's black, shiny eyes reflect the immense response.

SENATE CHAMBERS - EAVES

Zee WHIRS with sadness.

Bail, Lara, and Kenobi watch in silence.

They all have the faces of people who have been defeated.

SENATE CHAMBERS - CENTRAL PLATFORM

Palpatine puts his hands up to calm the mob.

PALPATINE

The Republic was weak.

That does the trick. The applause dies quickly.

PALPATINE (CONT'D)

It is a hard truth, but a truth
nonetheless. Look around you!
Remember the disorder and chaos?
Was this brought forth merely by
clone imposters, a band of
mercenaries, and an assassin? No...
Maul only showed us the failings of
bureaucracy. He was but a dark
mirror. A reflection of our
cowardice. The Republic should have
defeated him years ago. Inaction is
the same as accomplice here. But
never again! With its standing
army, the first Galactic Empire
will usher in a new era of peace
and security!

The BOOMING APPLAUSE hits a new high.

SENATE CHAMBERS - EAVES

Lara, Bail, and Obi-wan: the only three who do not cheer, or so it seems.

LARA

So this is how liberty dies. With
thunderous applause.

Kenobi grabs the rank insignia on his uniform.

RIPS it off, throws it to the ground.

Turns and walks away.

Lara and Bail watch him go, then turn back to the Senate.

A full, standing ovation that carries on and on.

EXT. GOVERNMENT PALACE - COURTYARD

The APPLAUSE merges into MARCHING Soldiers.

Mandalorians in formation on the Capitol.

Rose and Guild are here, though not in the formation.

They watch the Soldiers march by.

GUILD

Guess we're part of the Empire now?

ROSE

I think everyone's part of the
Empire now.

EXT. GOVERNMENT PALACE - BALCONY

Vader and Palpatine overlook the courtyard.

A better view of the Soldiers below. Not just one platoon,
but many. Hundreds of Soldiers.

The Mandalorians, more uniform than we've ever seen them
before. Soldiers of the Empire.

PALPATINE

You see? We truly want the same
thing. Order. Peace. Prosperity.

VADER

I never agreed to be your Lord Protector.

PALPATINE

The strength it took, to embrace your true self, you must show the galaxy the way. The Republic lacked strong leadership. You can feel the Force calling out to you, can you not? You're powerful for a reason, Lord Vader. Together...we will fulfill your destiny!

VADER

What 'destiny'? You rule the galaxy as an Emperor. Unopposed. What more could you want?

Palpatine tries to hide his smile.

PALPATINE

You must understand, I only trained Maul to study the Grandmaster, to learn how to destroy him. The man is pure chaos, like his clone. I have been biding my time, waiting-- for you, Darth. Together, we will unite the galaxy, and use it against him. Only together can we destroy the Grandmaster and restore order to the galaxy. I have foreseen it.

Vader says nothing.

PALPATINE (CONT'D)

I can feel your hatred. I feel it as much as my own, how the Grandmaster has made me feel for so long...but we must put aside our feelings and do what is right.

VADER

He...must be powerful.

PALPATINE

Oh, yes. There is so much more to the nature of the Force that you do not yet understand. I will teach you, if you let me.

The Basil Arcadia rises from a distant docking platform.

Vader watches.

Palpatine notices. This was his intent, clearly.

PALPATINE (CONT'D)

You must choose. Kenobi and the others won't understand what we're about to do. Their rigid, dogmatic views. They don't understand that the nature of the Force can be fickle. There is not merely a Dark Side and a Light, the true nature of the Force is grey. You've seen that now, haven't you? Calling out to the Dark Side for strength--the strength you required to conquer a greater evil?

VADER

I did what I must only for the good of the galaxy.

PALPATINE

Yes, my friend. What we do, we do for the galaxy. Sometimes the best way to serve is to lead. The galaxy needs a strong hand to guide it. What the galaxy needs...is an Empire.

VADER

We will defeat the Grandmaster for the good of the galaxy...for the good of the Empire.

PALPATINE

Yes! Kneel before me, your Emperor, and we will bring Peace and Justice to the galaxy. The power you felt could be just the beginning, if only you will call me Master.

Vader pauses. Watches the Basil Arcadia leave the planet.

Deep in thought.

VADER

Show me the true power of the Force...

Vader kneels before Palpatine.

VADER (CONT'D)

...my Master.

INT. BASIL ARCADIA - COCKPIT

Scol flies with Lara as copilot.

Bail and Kenobi stand behind them.

Just like the good old days.

Zee BEEPS absently.

KENOBI
Where will we go?

LARA
Home, for now.

KENOBI
That's it? Palpatine has won?

BAIL
No. We will find others to unite in
the face of tyranny.

KENOBI
How can we, now?

BAIL
The galaxy has been bound together,
shackled, in the form of an Empire.
There will be those who will stand
with us to free themselves of those
chains.

KENOBI
United in resistance?

LARA
United in rebellion.

Scol CLICKS in agreement.

Zee BEEPS: We can do this!

BAIL
I only wish we had Skywalker with
us. He would never quit fighting.

KENOBI
Indeed he would not. I failed him,
but he's not gone from us. I can't
believe it, I won't believe it.

LARA
I fear Anakin is lost....

KENOBI

No. He will return, when he is
ready. Until then....

Obi-Wan looks away, knowing the truth of it all.

Steps back, out of the cockpit.

Bail puts a hand on Lara's shoulder.

Stars fly by in the windscreen.

FADE OUT.

END CREDITS OVER STARS

THE END

Keep going, there's more to be read...

Welcome back! This screenplay assumed you were intimately familiar with *A New Menace* and these notes will jump right in accordingly. After the events of the new RT Episode I, there are quite a few story changes to keep up with. Sure, I'll re-emphasize certain points and mention callbacks from the prior film, but overall, if it's been a while since you read my Episode I, it might be worth a "second viewing."

To refresh....

OT = Original Trilogy, AKA, Episodes IV - VI.
 PT = Prequel Trilogy, the existing films that I'm rebooting.
 RT = Reboot Trilogy, these new Episodes I - III.

This guide is annotated to the page numbers of the RT, explaining my story choices. I learned an incredible amount about world-building, characters, their relationships, and analyzing story during this exercise. Hopefully I can pass some of that onto you via this guide.

STAR WARS Episode II: Attack of the Empire

Page 1

Title: The title changed between drafts. As "A New Menace" was born of a portmanteau of "The Phantom Menace" and "A New Hope" so too is "Attack of the Empire" a linguistic blend of "Attack of the Clones" and "The Empire Strikes Back." I felt this better stated my goal: Return the Prequel Trilogy to the tone, feel, and world of the Original Trilogy.

The Opening Crawl tells us much has changed between movies. This is true between Episodes IV and V as well. Roughly 18 months to 2 years takes place between stories, and I've continued that tradition here. The crawl tells us why it's Clone Wars (plural) and not Clone War (singular). There are many battles on many different systems over the course of many, many years. The Mandalorians are slowly adopting a role we assumed they had all along: Bounty Hunters. And Maul remains a threat.

I also introduced the concept of a Lord Protector. I always found it interesting that Vader didn't have a rank in the Empire (unlike Palpatine who was, go figure, the Emperor) and instead had a title: Lord Vader.

The final image on the page, of Anakin constructing his own lightsaber via the Force, does several things: It shows us how far he's come in his Jedi training, it gives us this iconic weapon that now spans three trilogies, and it foreshadows a major event from Episode III. You'll see.

Page 2

A lot has changed since we last saw these characters. Indeed, with the present output of Disney *Star Wars* movies, I've left ample room for "between movie" stories. Anakin and Obi-Wan have had many adventures, and Anakin carries scars from the past. We don't know what has happened between the two of them, or between himself, Lara, and Bail, but we can feel we've missed quite a bit of character growth that we're now witnessing the aftermath to.

Page 3

I rewrote this top paragraph of dialogue several times. It was incredibly difficult to decide what needed to be said for comprehension vs. what should be left unsaid for subtext. In the end, I decided it was best if Obi-Wan acknowledge Anakin's feelings for Lara. Anakin then projects those frustrations onto their inability to find Maul. That's the subtext. That his frustrations with an inability to find romance with Lara have shifted towards battle frustrations.

Page 4

"Adventure, heh. Excitement, heh. A Jedi craves not these things." - Yoda.

This shows just how similar Anakin is to Luke from the Classic trilogy. They both view inaction as cowardice.

Page 5

Here we see the further changes from the last film. Lara and Bail marry to secure their political alliances. This is an early embodiment of one of Episode II's major themes: Duty.

Page 6

Palpatine publicly embraces his role as Lord Protector. And then of course there is Maul, whose singular purpose hasn't changed a bit in the intervening time between episodes.

Page 7

The CGI dancers will have to wait until the special edition, sadly. But this scene tells us that while externally, things are progressing (everyone has received a promotion or a strengthened alliance), internally the conflicts are worse than ever. Kenobi fears for Anakin's emotions, Anakin pines for Lara, as does Bail, both unrequited. Lara thinks she's doing the right thing, but blocks out how she feels completely.

Page 8

Only Palpatine is outwardly mocked, though he's the most at peace internally. An early hint at the alliance between Anakin and Palpatine, as well as some foreshadowing at what drives them together (Lara).

Page 9

The Rebellion Leaders in this trilogy, though unnamed, could be characters from *Rogue One* such as Sol Guerra if Disney wanted this reboot to perfectly match their films. That is, those Rebellion Leaders who survive through Episode III....

A bit of humor at Scol's expense, then talk of Lara and Bail's whereabouts. Further foreshadowing with the hidden location and the idea that they're wanted by bounty hunters.

Page 10

Hints of Lara's later involvement with the Rebellion against Palpatine, as well as conflict between our characters. Quite a wedding reception.

Page 11

Here we briefly foreshadow Anakin's transformation as a bounty hunter, and get an exposition dump in the form of a story told from two perspectives. This is as much an origin story for the Sith as it is a dig on Lucas's concept of "younglings."

I always interpreted Yoda's refusal to train Luke for being "too old" as just another in a long line of excuses that he offers for not wanting to train someone he senses darkness in; not because he literally used to train four-year-olds.

Page 12

The Grandmaster, though mentioned briefly in Episode I, is a concept fleshed-out in Episode II before being fully realized in Episode III. If he is one of the first Sith, perhaps the most powerful, he is truly a threat to be reckoned with. That would also imply that Palpatine (as his apprentice) would be one of the second-generation kidnapped and tortured, thus explaining his hatred for his own master and apprentice alike. There's also a strong suggestion that Yoda might have been involved. More spin-off movie fodder? Hmmm....

Page 13

As the scene moves back towards wedding celebration, we also return to the theme of duty.

Page 14

Bail can't see "what's happening in the background." A flaw that will define his character.

Page 15

Blue Squadron returns for another movie. We also get our opposing Admirals from Episode I. At the moment, I'm bringing all the elements from the first movie to a head here in the second. Trying to wrap you up in something familiar before I jar you loose with the stark differences.

Page 16

A neat (I think) use of that scanner from *A New Hope*. Cloaking technology is dangerous, but not all-powerful.

Page 17

A rough existence for Alderaan's defense force. Seems like Maul always wants to break in.

Page 18

The first hint about what's different in this movie. Remember Anakin's reaction with fear last time? He's a changed man.

The double-sided lightsaber. Yes, I know we're all familiar with Maul's iconic weapon. But imagine, if you can, what it would have been like to realize it had a second half only in the second movie!

This scene accomplishes the same goal that Lucas tried to do in the battle against Dooku. But, rather than fighting an old man with a crooked lightsaber, the Jedi fight a threat to be reckoned with. A powerful Sith they have a history with. Anakin also reverses the classic "I've got a bad feeling about this" line, to his own detriment.

Page 19

"Duel of the Fates" has got to be the best part about *The Phantom Menace*. In fact, I loved that element so much that I almost gave that title to this movie. So, here, we get the 2-v-1 fight that is often lauded as the best part of the PT.

Page 20

Rose and Guild continue to provide comic relief. It's a tight-rope act, keeping the tone playful and serious in *Star Wars*, but they're "us" here: Just excited to see a kickass duel.

Page 21

If Vader is seduced by the power of the Dark Side, and continuously tells others that they just don't understand said power, that means Anakin must receive a first-hand demonstration. Here's just a taste. He's trained for nearly two years as a Jedi, only to get his ass handed to him.

Page 22

Not everyone has to lose a hand....

Page 23

Despite having your wounds cauterized, I imagine you'd still be in mortal danger after losing your legs. Not to mention the pain.

Page 24

Mandalorian technology, the technology of the future Galactic Empire is slowly becoming ubiquitous.

Anakin gets to receive the newest and best prosthetics, not some clunky, gold, claw arm that looks like you won it from your ski-ball raffle tickets (as was presented in the PT).

Page 25

We see here our heroes are more internally divided than ever. This is the true power of the Dark Side and the Sith. They destabilize and allow your own weaknesses and insecurities to grow and flourish.

This is a bit "on the nose" but Lara tells us something important: No more cloning. What's done is done.

Page 26

An important cue: Lara tells Anakin and Kenobi the location of their honeymoon. No one else knows.

Page 27

There's a lot happening on this page. Anakin wrestles with the power of the Dark Side, Obi-Wan takes a pre-emptive strike by claiming his apprentice's lightsaber, Vader's suit appears for the first time (albeit in pieces) and the painful existence that is Darth Vader begins with this surgery.

Page 28

Already, the tragic arc of this trilogy has begun. From Anakin's defeat and robotic surgery, to Lara and Bail's inability to connect emotionally. Some honeymoon, right? Although, I would personally like to visit Trictara.

Page 29

Though this scene is largely explaining the nature of the Force, I tried to do so in such a way that actually adds more mystery than shrinking the universe. Lots of subtext here, too. Bail and Lara aren't necessarily discussing planet surface crust.

Page 30

Seriously, Google "Tardigrade water bear" and check out how awesome those things are.

Page 31

In a planet-wide city, people with the money to do so can find an oasis. It also shows the artificial nature of the capitol and how even daily life is duplicitous.

Page 32

Qui-Gon and Mace Windu were just used as shorthand here. They're Jedi you'll remember, so I don't have to take the time to introduce new characters. A bit of a trick on my part, admittedly, since Kenobi's fond memories of the pair will piggy-back on your own. But we jump into the scene faster this way.

Page 33

While learning (a little) about Obi-Wan's history, we learn that Palpatine strangely doesn't have one. Sure, those familiar with *Star Wars* know he's an evil dude, but this is where my "he's a Jedi" trick from Episode I pays off. He isn't. In fact, he's something much worse.

I also envision this trilogy as an introduction to a new generation of fans. This trilogy would work when viewed either chronologically or sequentially with the OT.

Page 34

The idea that Maul is killing a lot of Jedi, so much so as to seem impossible, is a set-up designed to pay off at the end of the movie. Upon re-visiting this scene, you would learn that it was actually the Grandmaster who slayed Plo Koon on Bankor. And again, I saw no need to make up a new Jedi name for this scene.

Isn't it nice not to have Yoda on Corruscant? By the way, I altered the traditional spelling of this planet in order to separate its portrayal in the PT from how I show it in the RT. Dark, no sunlight, ever. Dangerous. Not clean and slick.

Page 35

This scene's setting on Mustafar was added after the location ended up in *Rogue One*. Continuity is paramount in this project, and now Vader has a reason to take a bath inside the castle there.

Page 36

Though our villains plot and plan, Maul has the same impatience as Anakin. Funny, that....

Page 37

While this scene is designed for levity, it also tells us something important: Maul hates clones.

Page 38

The first new scene shows us a bit more about the Sith.

The second ties in Vader's associations with bounty hunters in *The Empire Strikes Back*. It also makes this scene a bit less of a fan service (though it certainly is that) because it establishes Vader's relationship with these particular bounty hunters, thus giving a reason for him to contact the same group in the future.

Page 39-40

The first look at (and mention of) Darth Vader. Perhaps the most ambitious goal of this reboot is to show old fans how Anakin became Vader WHILE preserving this mystery to a new generation of fans.

If you'd never seen *Star Wars*, you might be wondering just who this new bounty hunter is. You wouldn't necessarily know that he's Anakin.

I also decided that rather than Evil Checklist item #10: Become a Darth, I would create a plausible reason for Anakin/Vader to use a pseudonym.

Page 41

The Emperor's personal Red Guard were a great bit of character design in the OT, and were ripe for fleshing out in this trilogy. Though they prove little obstacle for Obi-Wan in this instance.

Page 42

Remember when Lucas wanted Kenobi to investigate? He had him go to a 50s diner and a library (yawn). Instead, the RT shows Kenobi doing some sleuthing and uncovering a larger mystery than who used what poison dart (or something).

Page 43

Here Kenobi learns what we already knew: Palpatine is working with Maul.

Page 44

But we also learned just how far back this plot goes (to the Mandalorians hoping to work with the Republic!) and see a huge foreshadowing moment. This final "Maul" hologram is in fact the Grandmaster, and he delivers the iconic revenge line. Note: A good reboot has a certain amount of recall from the original material. Though, admittedly, my call-backs to Lucas's prequels are intentionally limited.

Obi-Wan has seen Palpatine's betrayal, though he cannot share what he has seen with others. He had to run before he could get the full picture or take evidence.

Page 45

A bit of humor up top (with a jab aimed at the jump-and-fly nature of the PT scenes on this planet).

The next sequence returns us to the duty-bound royals.

Page 46

Why kidnap Palpatine? Good question....

Page 47

Bail gets the iconic "bad feeling" line here.

Page 48

Jango Fett had a great character design, one I did not want to abandon. Rather than being the "father" of Boba Fett (and all the Stormtroopers), I kept them as likely brothers.

Boba will be the last of a great tribe (while others join the Stormtrooper ranks) by the time we see him in the next trilogy. What became of Jango? Perhaps he could have his own spin-off film (noticing a theme here?).

The Wilhelm Scream has a great history in film and *Star Wars* in particular.

Page 49-50

While this battle draws obvious parallels to Jabba's Sail Barge, it's from a completely different perspective.

Those parallels are in no small part an allusion to Lara as Luke's mother.

Page 51

Dengar is seen briefly in *The Empire Strikes Back*, shown with old scars on his face. There are quite a few "old scars" formed in this story. We also get some conflict among the attackers here. Drama is conflict!

Page 52

Kadrick was a fun creation (that of a gargantuan Mandalorian), but there must be casualties.

Page 53

Gee, why doesn't Vader have a lightsaber if he's a Jedi?

Page 54

Just like in the last movie, Lara's superhuman Jedi abilities are best countered with her need to help ordinary non-Force-users like Bail.

Page 55-58

I spent a lot of time turning the conventions in Episode I over onto their heads in Episode II. Here, you get a reversal of the scene where Kenobi promised Palpatine to return to Corruscant. Lara does this here. Our hero wants to go after Maul/Bail while the "government" at the capitol says no.

We also get a major clue that Obi-Wan knows Vader's true nature, and his motives. If this is so, it means Kenobi also tacitly condones his behavior.

A major edit late in my rewrites, after a note from my friend Kristi, I decided to have Lara believe Bail is dead, rather than kidnapped. That makes her later rendezvous with Anakin less of an infidelity, and more of an understandable moment of grief/weakness.

Page 59

Obi-Wan's fears are confirmed when he sees Anakin has checked out "in pursuit of Bail." While this could be taken to mean he's looking for those who attacked Bail, the more astute of you will realize it means he is indeed the one who lead said attack. The bracketed parenthetical of course tells the full story, though that would be seen on a subconscious level in the final product of a movie.

Page 60

Of course, Lara learned deception from the best. Kenobi is finally on the receiving end of flexible truth.

Page 61

Lara in her white flight suit (as well as Anakin in his blue), gives us a brief regression to the more innocent and playful Episode I. Even if she is pulling rank rather than blending in.

Page 62

Fun fact: This was one of the last scenes added to the script. Hence the docking bay's number is the same as the page number in the script. Like George, I usually pick numbers and call-signs that have some personal relevance. Also like George, I can be lazy at times. As for the bounty hunter ships, someone took a lot of time to name and design them, so I kept what I found online. Worth a Google if you want to picture them.

Page 63

For those who want more familiar faces in the RT, the Alien hotel manager could easily be "Dexter Jettster" from that 1950s space diner in *Attack of the Clones*. Sure, why not?

Page 64

This sequence was almost set on Corruscant. I liked the idea of exploring the city-wide planet more. Seeing some of the underbelly. But in the end I decided to keep it as a separate location. Why? Although, logically, you could easily stay hidden on a *city-wide planet*, that's not the norm in *Star Wars*. Cities aren't huge. Planets aren't huge. The galaxy is what's huge. So, I didn't want Obi-Wan and Bail to seem "just up the street" during this sequence.

Page 65

When adding this sequence, I wanted Lara to fight Boba Fett and maybe give him his helmet dent. But, alas. The story didn't support it. What flowed, what felt most logical, was this encounter with Dengar. Writing lesson: The story must dictate which ideas you use, not the other way around.

Page 66

I also felt that adding some sexual references here would subconsciously prep your brain for "what's to come" with Anakin and Lara in a few minutes.

Page 67-68

Brian, who helped me out quite a bit in the early stages of story development, said I needed to show off Lara as a badass more in this movie. Here you go, Brian!

Page 69

In their old wardrobe, in a familiar set, their relationship more easily regresses to the fun and games of Episode I. That whole "you owe me a drink" is a callback to the last script.

Page 70

And, man, if this reboot ever takes off...you know "memory wipe" will become a real cocktail, right? Or, at least a writer can dream.

Page 71

What exactly is the Will of the Force? Is it, as Anakin suggests, something you yourself provide? Or does it sit more along with what's presented in Episode VII where the lightsaber seeks Rey out? Is there a separate will for the light and for the dark? Or two sides of the same entity? These are questions I don't necessarily want to answer, not definitively at least. Part of the joy of *Star Wars* is that you get to participate as an audience member. The PT took that away. I'm bringing it back.

Here we also see that Anakin doesn't believe Yoda exists. That adds some mystique to the character we'll meet in *The Empire Strikes Back*, as well as gives a plausible reason why Vader and the Emperor aren't hunting for him. Indeed, Vader even tells Luke "Obi-Wan has taught you well" when they duel together *after* Luke has had his training with Yoda.

Page 72

The Mandalorians here are performing an odd dance. Are they bounty hunters? Or more like Stormtroopers? To add to your confusion, I call them Soldiers. That's intentional, as you're caught up in the shift from the era of the Mandalorians and Republic to the era of the Empire.

Page 73

Lara's "Force invisibility" is a new twist on the Jedi Mind Trick. I like the idea that there are dozens of other Force powers out there that we just haven't seen yet. Or, new ways of using the old.

Page 74

Perhaps the biggest change in my prequel trilogy, is the nature of Luke and Leia's parentage. Rather than being from a marriage, one that was essentially ruined by the nature of the Jedi, they come from a moment of passion. A forbidden love in its own right. Were they simply a mistake? Or was this the Will of the Force? Perhaps...it's complicated?

Page 75

For about one minute, Anakin gets what he wants.

Remember the idea that Luke believes his father was a navigator on a spice freighter? Why not make Owen and Beru a real aunt and uncle? They may not be blood relatives, but this bond seems more likely than what was presented in the PT. And no "virgin birth" obviously.

Page 76

In addition to giving all the reasons Luke is safe from Vader growing up on Tatooine, this scene offers an interesting question. What if "Anakin Skywalker" was a false name, and "Darth Vader" was his true self all along? So, when he stops suppressing his own desires, he adopts his formerly suppressed name once again.

Page 77

Easter egg: Lara asks Anakin his real name on the last page, then has a conversation with a hologram. But what's the first thing Anakin says to her? "Darth Vader." He told her the truth! But, perhaps she takes the idea of duty too far? So much so as to be blinded by it?

Page 78-80

Probably the most rewritten scene in the trilogy. Took a lot to get this "right." To balance out the characters' ideals with their actions. What they say with what's left unsaid. And how it will define them in the future.

Page 81

This "vision" sequence would be a first for *Star Wars*. What did we see here? Was this Anakin imagining the future? Was this him suppressing his emotion? Was it embracing the Dark Side and controlling it? Perhaps a mix of the above.

Page 82

The image of Bail Organa next to an empty seat where Lara should be, is major foreshadowing.

Page 83

This stark lava planet isn't where Anakin and Obi-Wan will duel, but another fan-favorite hypothetical. Who would win between Maul and Vader? Let's find out.

Page 84

Chills, amiright? Lara could never realize what she's done, but now Darth Vader has taken a crucial step towards embracing his destiny.

Page 85

Took a bit of mental gymnastics, but I was pleased with this fun way I devised to have a lightsaber fight while Obi-Wan holds Anakin's lightsaber. Remember, technically, new viewers won't necessarily know that Anakin and Vader are the same person. Showing Vader with Anakin's lightsaber would shatter that illusion.

Page 86

Clearly, obviously, this scene is meant to mirror *Return of the Jedi*. By showing Palpatine's plan "work" here, we then up the stakes for Luke on the second Death Star. Though, there are crucial differences to be found.

Page 87

Maul is completely fulfilled, if only for a minute.

Page 88

My "big reveal" - Maul is a clone! A copy of a much more powerful Sith Lord. The Grandmaster. The Dark Lord of the Sith. Did it work? Are you stunned? Maul certainly is.

Page 89

Maul at full rage, for the first (and last) time.

Page 90

"I have the high ground!" - A bit of a prequel jab. Couldn't help myself.

Page 91

Another wrong, IMHO, that I "righted." Vader should not become Vader all at once. These wounds should be accumulated over a lifetime of serving the Dark Side. Slowly, he should become more machine than man. It makes his existence all the more cursed. If the Force flows through living things, his greed for more power slowly becomes his own undoing.

And, yeah, looks like Maul was always destined to end up in two pieces.

Page 92

Here's a major revision in my RT. Minor SPOILER for Episode III: Obi-Wan and Anakin/Vader don't get their duel in the prequels. Instead of the duel in *A New Hope* being, "Remember how young we once were when we fought? Look at us now. We old." It becomes the duel that needed to happen. That they've been waiting for, or at least Vader has, for years and years and years. Killing Jedi between the two trilogies, hoping to find Kenobi. Until, they meet at last....

Kenobi is meant to be a flawed character as well. By now, it should seem obvious that he's made huge mistakes. Most likely, he should have kept training Lara rather than taking on Anakin. None of them were ready for it. He doesn't become the wizened man we know from the Original Trilogy until he's been meditating in the desert for 15 years. Even though he gets to be the teacher he was always meant to be with Luke, he still passes Luke off to Yoda. Obi-Wan is just a Jedi. Yoda, on the other hand, is a master.

Page 93

Episode II's theme of "Duty and Responsibility" finally realized in the worst possible way.

Page 94

Did you think you'd get Darth Vader before Episode III?! The best villain in cinematic history. I'm not going to waste my precious little time with him. Aha, but is he fully Vader yet? Or is this still part of his ruse? Time will tell.

Page 95

Not only do we get "Lord Vader" but we get the Empire!

Page 96

"Republics don't have Emperors" - Does Vader/Anakin think he's doing the greater good? Is this duty? Or does he find power just as seductive as his Emperor?

Page 97

Palpatine is fully content, though he gets more than a minute. Perks of being the puppet master.

Page 98

Lara takes Padme's iconic line here. The other nod I give to Lucas in this script. Remember, this reboot comes from a place of love. Hate leads to suffering and all that.

Page 99

Darth is a name. Though Maul, like the Grandmaster, is nameless. Only known by their actions.

Page 100

Has Palpatine duped Vader? Or does Vader know full well what he's accepting?

Page 101

Though we have Darth Vader and the Empire now, we still have a long ways to go before we synch up the RT with the OT. We still need a Rebellion.

Page 102

A similar ending to Empire Strikes Back, though don't think this is the "dark volume" of this trilogy. The prequels, by their nature, must be tragedy.

Final thoughts.

-My scripts are still short, my writing is still lean. Action tends to take more time on screen than it does on the page.

-I know I promised Maul would live on to be the trilogy's villain, but I think he does in essence. We're now poised for the introduction of a much more powerful version of the character.

-Hope you enjoyed! Episode III will be released soon. Subscribe to my blog or follow me on social media and you won't miss the release date.