



3rd Draft - May 2023

Title Card: "A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away..."

STAR WARS

- Episode I -

SCION OF THE FORCE

Opening Crawl:

IT IS A TIME OF ENDURING PEACE. FOR THOUSANDS OF GENERATIONS, THE JEDI KNIGHTS HAVE BEEN THE GUARDIANS OF PEACE AND THE CHAMPIONS OF JUSTICE IN THE PROSPEROUS GALACTIC REPUBLIC.

AGES AGO, THAT PEACE WAS DESTROYED BY THE EVIL SITH EMPIRE, WHEN THE REPUBLIC WAS CONQUERED BY THE VILE SITH LORDS. CENTURIES OF DARKNESS BEFELL THE GALAXY UNTIL THE JEDI ORDER FINALLY DROVE BACK THE FORCES OF TYRANNY AND DEATH.

NOW, THAT EVIL HAS SECRETLY BEEN RESURRECTED BY UNSEEN FORCES BENT ON REVIVING THE DARK PLAGUE THAT WAS ONCE DEFEATED LONG AGO....

ACT I

Scene 1

The blackness of space is pierced by a lone starfighter piloted by a Sith assassin named Maul. His ship very slowly closes in on its target: a secret deep-space fortress of the Galactic Republic. The ship slowly approaches and docks, unobstructed by any security. The hooded Maul, cloaked in shadow, wields a crimson-bladed lightsaber, its blood-red glow illuminating the darkness surrounding him as he cuts his way inside and forcibly boards the space station. The outpost's naive attitude and lax security conveys the comfortable but vulnerable state of the Republic. Soon the guards begin to realize what's happening, but the Sith lord quickly - and mercilessly - slaughters everyone. He leaves no witnesses. Maul then collects together

the Old Republic's secret reserve of various treasures including a massive, rare, red Kyber crystal. Then having gathered the spoils of his onslaught, Maul activates the station's main holo-generator, contacts his Sith master and presents his work – priceless valuables surrounded by newly slaughtered bodies. The large hologram flicks to life and the wrinkled visage of Lord Darth Sidious, his face even more obscured by his black hood, smiles as he sees what his student has accomplished. Sidious then asks Maul about his mental state. Maul replies that the rage of the dead Sith lords of Korriban have filled him with hate, which has allowed him to grow powerful, that the Jedi breed and maintain stagnation and repression, that the Sith will bring order and justice to the galaxy, the weak deserve to die, and those who oppose them are evil. Darth Sidious replies that his time on the Sith homeworld has successfully unleashed his full strength. He congratulates Maul, and declares his training complete, bestowing on him the rank and title of “Darth.” Finally, Sidious states that soon the Republic will fall, the Jedi will die and the Sith Empire will finally be restored. The newly promoted Darth Maul then activates the station’s self-destruct, loads his ship, then departs as the station is consumed in a massive explosion.

In the cockpit of Darth Maul’s ship, the console’s holo-generator flickers on and Sidious appears once more. Sidious: “Good work my young apprentice. You have proven yourself to me. Now I have a new mission for you.” The hologram of an older bearded, distinguished man appears. Sidious: “The King of Alderaan stands against us. He is our enemy. You will punish him for his defiance.” Close-up of Maul: “Yes, my master.”

Scene 2

Transition wipe: On the picturesque planet of Alderaan, Princess Aeri walks to her balcony railing and admires the sunrise on a particularly exquisite morning. She is greeted by her family’s personal protocol droid, C-3PO who helps her get dressed and ready for the day. Aeri is also warmly greeted by her pet and close companion, Zamber, a particularly cute and small chipmunk-like creature. She appears to be able to understand Zamber’s clicks and chattering as a coherent language, and they seem to speak like best friends. Just then, Queen Breha swiftly enters and without looking up tells Aeri to hurry up and dress quickly as the royal delegation from the planet Deshara have just landed. Aeri suddenly looks deflated and then mutters: “I have drydell lessons scheduled this morning, so I can’t make it. C-3PO can stand as my proxy...” But before she can finish her sentence, her mother cuts her off: “Aeri, your father and I have spoken to you about this many times. You’re a young woman now and it’s time to start taking your responsibilities seriously.” Aeri: “But I don’t want to marry him!” She pouts to herself under her breath: “I can barely stand to look at him...” Breha: “It’s just a formality, Aeri, purely ceremonial. No one expects you to have feelings for him, but we do expect you to fulfill your duty, not just to the House of Organa but to the people. We live to serve them, Aeri, not take advantage of them, or our station in life. We have to earn our privileged place in our society. Now hurry up.” The Queen steps out of her room and Aeri says to no one in particular: “Why can’t someone fly me away from this place forever...”

Scene 3

In the grand, sprawling main hall of the royal palace, a droid of the royal delegation announces the entrance of the royal family Shodon of the planet Deshara. As they walk with a stilted formality down the hall, we see the imposing King Bail Organa standing in front of his throne waiting to greet them. Aeri looks quite uncomfortable and fidgets in her formal dress. As they approach, we can see the visiting Desharans are a notably strange looking alien species. Aeri starts to panic a little and whispers to her mother: “Do I really have to kiss him?!” Breha whispers back in a forceful tone: “It’s tradition, darling. Just don’t think about it.” The delegation bows to the Organas and the Organas bow in return. The visiting protocol droid declares this ceremony as the first formal meeting of the two heirs, and the two rulers exchange pleasantries. King Organa proclaims the beginning of a strong, lasting alliance between their worlds, as he very proudly speaks of building the longest peaceful era in modern galactic history. Then, the Grand Regent of Deshara presents his son, the prince, who steps forward and climbs the steps of the dais, towards the princess. The Queen gently pushes the reluctant princess forward as she begins to squirm at the awkwardness of the situation and rolls her eyes. The prince, without speaking, leans forward, eyes closed and puckers his lips, waiting. Aeri turns to her parents,

desperately searching for a way out of this awkward custom, but instead her parents motion for her to reciprocate. Finally, after an uncomfortably long pause, she raises the back of her hand to his lips and winces. The prince is disappointed, kisses her hand, shrugs and steps back down. King Organa loudly clears his throat to try and move past any potential for a perceived insult to their guests. He steps forward and shakes hands with the Grand Regent, pledging his loyalty to their mutual alliance.

Scene 4

Queen Breha brings Aeris back to her room, with C-3PO giving chase. Breha is disappointed in her daughter and gives her a dressing-down. She exclaims how hard her father worked on brokering this alliance and how Aeris may have just jeopardized the entire agreement. Aeris protests that they're living in the past, clinging to ancient traditions. They have an escalating argument before Aeris finally admits that she doesn't want to marry out of obligation or a peace treaty, she wants to marry for love. Breha attempts to convince her that putting her duties and responsibilities ahead of her own wishes is the right and honorable thing to do, and to not be so selfish. This upsets Aeris, and she bemoans that her life is not really hers to live. Breha reminds her that she has reached the age of duty, and took the formal oath of service. Aeris lowers her head and nods and her mother hugs her and leaves. Aeris steps out to the balcony, looks to the distance and says to Zamber: "I just wish someone would come and take me away from all this..."

Scene 5

Another transition wipe brings us to the huge, towering junkyards of the outer-rim planet Varaxia, home to countless orphan slave children. Counted among them is a young teenager named Anakin. This particular night, the orphan boys are gathered around, listening to a story that Anakin has begun telling - the youngest boys sitting the closest, enraptured by his energized performance. It is a tale of an enormous, black, fire-breathing vox dragon with fire-red eyes and impenetrable scales as strong as steel, who terrorized the people and killed so many that no one dared oppose it. Until one day a slave boy had the courage to stand up against the vox dragon. This young hero crafted a make-shift sword and shield and he fought the dragon when no one else would. But then one of the rude, older orphans who often bullies the others interjects: "But then the slave boy was swallowed whole by the dragon!" He makes a mocking gesture of a jaw snapping shut towards the other boys, who are startled. The group of bullies all mockingly laugh. Anakin looks defeated for a moment, but then retorts: "But...the hero didn't die! He was too strong, and too powerful. And he and the vox dragon merged into one, and from then on, he was as powerful as the great black dragon, and he used his power to free all the slaves of the galaxy!" The younger boys cheer, but then the bullies ridicule Anakin for changing the story from the legend they know, and they scoff at Anakin as they climb back up to their lofts high among the junk stacks. Anakin's best friend, Deak, consoles Anakin and reassures him that he likes his version better. Suddenly, the slave drivers show up, and all the boys scatter to their quarters. Leading the slave drivers are Anakin and Deak's owner, Gardag - a fat, gruff alien who demands they get back to work. Gardag sternly reminds Anakin that there's a lot of money riding on tomorrow's race, and that he better be ready or else he'll feed him to his snarlers. Their reaction makes it clear it is no empty threat.

Scene 6

The two best friends head back to their make-shift motor shop, and resume working on Anakin's JetPod. They bond over the various enhancements they each added to ensure Anakin's victory at tomorrow's big race. Deak asks Anakin what's his secret, how does he keep winning? Anakin replies that it's almost like he can see the turns in advance, like...magic. "I know it sounds crazy...I- I can't explain it." Deak looks puzzled, but he trusts his best friend knows what he's doing. Deak assures Anakin that they're ready, and they wish each other goodnight. Deak walks away, and Anakin pulls out his own personal hover droid from his pocket - a rounded metal disc-shaped drone with blue highlights - and says to it, "RD-1, Show me the Princess again." The hover droid projects a hologram of a strikingly beautiful young girl. He looks on, in wonder for a moment, until we hear a voice teasing him: "Hey, Starkiller! Stop staring at that thing. No way a Princess is gonna let a junkrat slaveboy anywhere near her!" It's one of the bullies from earlier, spying on him from above. He makes a face and disappears back into the stacks. We can see that Deak is still lingering at the threshold. Anakin turns to

Deak, looking sad but ponderous, and confides in him: "There's a rumor the King of Alderaan is going to be there tomorrow. And if he's there...I mean...you never know." Deak looks at him like he's crazy: "Sure...and Gardag could wake up and decide to free us all tomorrow... Ha-ha, keep dreaming flyboy, ha-ha..." as he playfully throws a rag towards Anakin's face and leaves. Anakin then shuts off the lights and heads out to climb the highest junk tower in the stacks, while his hover droid floats along with him. Once he reaches his loft near the top, he reclines and watches wistfully as ships freely leave orbit in front of the planet's colossal rings streaking across the twilight sky, and we can feel in that moment just how deeply Anakin yearns to be free to explore the galaxy.

Scene 7

A luxurious, chrome starcruiser carrying the Alderaanian royal family arrives at Varix, the capital city of Varaxia, an outer-rim world with extreme inequality. They are greeted by a local concierge who leads them to their seating area. They are here to see the newly-famous JetPod racer "Starkiller." Accompanying King Bail Organa are his wife Queen Breha Organa, their teenage daughter Princess Aeri, their brightly polished protocol droid C-3PO, and the rest of their entourage, including two Jedi Knights – Vancinot and Malirad – the royal's personal bodyguards, encased in armor and armed to the teeth. It is unusual for a prominent royal family from a core world to attend a JetPod race, with its seedy reputation and illegality on most core worlds. However, King Organa insisted on seeing the hotshot rookie who is currently so revered, and also because JetPod pilots usually don't live very long. They are also under the protection of their Jedi Knights, and thus he believes they are safe from harm. We get a sense of the massive open-air arena and sky-track as the royals are escorted to their deluxe balcony seats. A cloaked figure is seen moving in the shadows, and he appears to perhaps be another villain like the one who destroyed the secret Republic outpost. A massive holo-reel plays overhead in the center of the arena, showing how dangerous JetPod racing is. The narration announces that this is the Galactic Championship race held only once a decade, and that "Starkiller" is the star rookie pilot with all the attention, but he is going up against the best racers in the galaxy. As the royals settle into their seats, they get a better look at the starting lineup, an odd collection of gear-heads and assorted ruffians tuning up their comically large engines. The shady-looking host suggests that their daughter, the Princess, offer the traditional kiss to the winner of the race, but she takes one look at the strange alien racers and is quite repulsed. He attempts to insist on the tradition, but is quickly rebuffed by the King, and then ejected by the bodyguards. But as she casually glances around, Aeri notices one of the pilots isn't so nasty-looking – young Anakin. As he removes his flight goggles we see our handsome hero revealed at the starting line, and for an instant their eyes meet. Anakin is visibly taken by her beauty, and she by his rugged appearance.

Scene 8

On the sidelines, near the starting launch area, Anakin and Deak continue to prep his JetPod, which they have spent all their free time continually improving. Deak notices Anakin has spotted the girl and asks: "Hey, is that her?" Anakin is dismissive, turns away and acts like he doesn't care: "It doesn't even matter, not once she finds out I'm a slave." Deak looks puzzled, wondering what Anakin is really thinking. He asks Anakin if he wins, will Gardag let him keep the winnings this time? Anakin reasons: "It's the galactic cup... This much money...this many people watching... They have to... they just-...have to." Just then, the greedy and ruthless Gardag suddenly appears, and threatens Anakin, demanding that he throw the race and let the rival Gulkar gang win, whom he points to across the launch area. We see the intimidating gang stare down Anakin, making threatening gestures. Anakin refuses, insisting that he's going to use the money to buy his freedom, Deak's freedom, free all the slave boys, and even buy the entire JetPod industry. His owner sarcastically says he hopes Anakin survives the race. Anakin insists he's going to *win* this race. Gardag yells that if Anakin places at all, he's going to give all the winnings to the Varix orphan's fund. Anakin protests: "That's just a front! It's run by the Hutts!" Gardag: "Exactly. I take care of Hutts, and they take care of me. That's business." Gardag activates Anakin's restraining implant, and Anakin falls to his knees in pain. Gardag: "Understand, Starkiller?" "Yes!" Anakin gasps in pain. Gardag: "Good. Now don't do anything stupid and you just might live through the day." Gardag storms off. Meanwhile, across the starting line, the rival JetPod racing gangs decide they've had enough of Anakin's winning streak and set out to fix the race by using dirty tricks, as we see them hiding and

loading weapons into their JetPods. The announcer blares, and the racers all move to the starting launch area and begin revving their engines, with slowly increasing intensity until the roar of the jets is deafening. Finally, the starting lights flash blindingly bright and all the JetPods explode out of the starting area.

It is an action-packed race - a break-neck roller-coaster ride above a variety of different areas of the sprawling mega-city - filled with countless reversals of fortune. Princess Aeris, to her own surprise, finds herself rooting more and more intently for our dashing young hero. The rival gangs use their dirty tricks to try and knock Anakin's JetPod out of commission early on, but he manages to out-maneuver them. Most of the racers crash in spectacular explosions. Then, in the final lap, the Gulkar gang-member releases smoke out of his exhaust and right into Anakin's direct path. Anakin is blinded, loses control of his JetPod, nearly crashes, and falls behind. Then, at the very last minute, Anakin pulls off a risky maneuver and sling-shots ahead of the Gulkar racer.

Scene 9

Despite all the odds stacked against him, Anakin barely survives and wins at the last possible moment. For winning the Galactic Cup, he has won 1 billion Republic credits. Anakin is about to accept the winnings in the winner's circle, but just then, he sees a blinding reflection shining in his face from the shadows. It's his owner and his gang of thugs, and they're holding a knife to Deak's throat. Deak looks utterly terrified. In order to save his best friend from being killed, Anakin announces that they should donate all his winnings to charity. The crowd cheers, but the pain of losing his freedom is visible on Anakin's face. Princess Aeris attempts to make her way to the winner's circle, but is dragged away by the Queen and their departing entourage. As they leave, the Queen, still reeling from all the deadly crashes, chastises King Organa for bringing their daughter to such a dangerous race. Anakin spots the Princess leaving, and taps the shoulder of the host alien we saw earlier, asking him "What about the winning kiss? Do I get to kiss a princess?" He laughs in his face, "Ha! You wish, slave rat!" Anakin is crushed but tries not to show it.

Scene 10

Anakin rushes back to the sidelines area to try and find Deak, but before he knows it, one of Gardag's thugs activates Anakin restraining implants. He collapses in pain and throws him into a speeder next to Deak, and they take them back to the massive junkyards. Once there, the surviving Gulkar gang members are lying in wait, looking for revenge. Gardag: "You cost all of us a lot of money you slaggin' junkrat." Gulkar gang leader: "First, we're taking it out on your JetPod." They restrain Anakin and smash his JetPod to pieces in front of him. "You thought you could cost us a fortune and just walk away?" Then the gang leader points a blaster at Anakin's head. But Deak throws himself at them in an attempt to save him. Anakin uses the distraction to try and free himself, but he and Deak are quickly surrounded and restrained again. But this time, Gardag steps in, saying "This'll finally teach that lousy runt a lesson!", activating Deak's neck implant at full strength, this time sending large electric shocks across his neck, face and flashing inside his mouth as he cries out. Anakin yells and struggles as he is forced to watch his best friend slowly tortured. But Gardag doesn't stop this time. Deak's screams are slowly replaced with silence as tears streaking down Anakin's face at the sight of his best and only friend electrocuted to death. "Don't be sad, Annie, you're about to join 'em", one of the Gulkar thugs plainly states as he lowers his blaster between Anakin's eyes. Just then, a flash of light and loud, deep "woosh" interrupts the attempted execution, and suddenly the Gulkar thug is missing an arm. The thug screams in horror at the sight of his arm lying on the ground. All the henchmen turn to see a cloaked figure standing in silhouette at the edge of the shadows, his loudly humming blue lightsaber pointed downward at his side. The gang is too stunned to react, and the cloaked man uses it to his advantage, quickly taking out the two thugs closest to him in one swift movement. The others attempt to fire at him, but he's too fast. Simultaneously, Gardag attempts to shoot the cloaked man, but Anakin takes his revenge by grabbing the blaster away from him before he can shoot at the mysterious stranger, turning it on him instead. Before we know it, all the thugs are on the ground.

The cloaked figure removes his hood and introduces himself. He is Obi-Wan Kenobi, a Jedi Knight and member of the Jedi Order. The man appears to be in his late 30's. He explains that he was sent to find and

investigate the young jet-racer with amazing abilities. Obi-Wan explains to Anakin that he is able to sense the turns in advance through the Force, giving him his amazing racing abilities. Anakin is confused, as he does not know what "the Force" is. Obi-Wan then explains that the Force gives Jedi their powers, and that Anakin is an individual strong with the Force, and offers him the chance to be evaluated as a potential Jedi. But Anakin is still mourning Deak's sacrifice, blaming himself for his death and failing to win their freedom. Obi-Wan tries to reassure him that it was not his fault, but Anakin's face betrays that he is not truly convinced. Surveying the damage, Anakin finds that his remote droid was also smashed in the battle. He takes what's left apart and removes its CPU, and fashions it into a necklace. Kenobi asks why he didn't use his winnings to buy his freedom, and Anakin explains that it was hopeless, the Hutts control everything and never would have let him keep any of the money no matter what. Obi-Wan then offers to remove Anakin's restraining implant, but Anakin insists it's impossible - any attempt to remove or disable it will kill you by detonating a small charge that severs the spinal cord. Obi-Wan explains that he can use the Force to safely diffuse his implant, which then allows him to slowly remove it with a small tool. Anakin reluctantly agrees, and they sit down at a nearby table. While working, Kenobi asks him how he came to be named "Starkiller," and he explains that it's just a nickname that the other racers gave him, and that his name is simply "Anakin". Obi-Wan: "Do you have a last name?" Anakin replies: "No. Just Anakin." Obi-Wan explains that "Starkiller" is the name of the most evil, most infamous dark-side user in history, and is a name that all Jedi fear. Anakin is again confused, and Obi-Wan explains the evil, corrupting nature of the Dark Side of the Force. Kenobi finishes and hands the implant to Anakin. He asks if he feels better, and Anakin remarks to his own surprise that, yes, he does. He stares at the bloody, black implant and remarks that it's been in his neck his entire life, and it's a strange feeling to hold it for the first time. Anakin asks Obi-Wan why he became a Jedi. Obi-Wan reveals that he was born into a family of wealth and privilege, but gave it up to join the Jedi when he discovered his family's wealth was gained from corruption, bribery, and exploitation, and swore an oath to never be corrupted and to serve the greater good. Anakin realizes that he has lost everything keeping him on Varaxia, and thus decides to accept Obi-Wan's offer to come with him to Coruscant, the galactic capital. Obi-Wan suggests that Anakin might want to take a new name if he is accepted into the Jedi order, just as he did.

Scene 11

Obi-Wan takes Anakin via speeder back to his medium-sized transport, waiting at the local space port and ready to depart for Coruscant. As they step inside, the pilot droid introduces itself as "PD-9C9" and welcomes them aboard "The Nova Rider." Obi-Wan asks if he's ever been in a prime-class starcruiser before and Anakin reveals that he's never been in space before, nor traveled through hyperspace, but that he's always dreamed of being a starfighter pilot. Obi-Wan remarks that he's already proven his piloting skills, and invites Anakin into the main cockpit. PD-9C9 activates the hyperdrive, and Anakin stumbles back in surprise at the sight of a galaxy of stars streaking before him.

TO BE CONTINUED...