

MACE WINDU

"The Colony"

Written by

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A pilot based on characters created by George Lucas

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TEASER

EXT. FOREST - DAY

AERIAL SHOT of a vast forest as we fly through clouds before closing in on a huge TREE FELLER TRUCK that slowly carves its way through the landscape, leaving a broad scar in it's wake.

CLOSER IN, massive old-growth trees go down to angry spinning blades mounted on the front of the Tree Feller as it lurches slowly forward through the trees.

INT. TREE FELLER - CABIN - DAY

The DRIVER of the Tree Feller, a burly and weathered middle-aged man, stares through the windshield apathetically as a scene of violent deforestation plays out before him.

On the opposite side of the cab a grease marred PASSENGER is somehow nodding off as the entire cab shakes and lurches along.

Without warning, the forest suddenly ends and the Tree Feller emerges into a clearing.

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - DAY

AERIAL SHOT of a pristine clearing with an imposing ANCIENT TEMPLE at it's center.

Visible in the temple's courtyard, a monolithic, half buried AMETHYST KYBER CRYSTAL juts up from the ground at an odd angle.

The temple appears to have been built around the Crystal suggesting it's importance to a bygone era.

The door on the cab of the Tree Feller opens and the two colonists begin to climb single file down the long ladder to the ground.

EXT. ANCIENT TEMPLE - DAY

ANGLE ON The driver and passenger from behind as they walk towards the massive, cathedral-like structure in the clearing.

Beyond the main entrance to the temple, the luminescent, amethyst kyber crystal stands visible in the courtyard.

PASSENGER

I'm telling you... we should have called it in.

DRIVER

I just want to have a look first... That's all... You know we could become wealthy beyond our wildest dreams if we play our Dejarik right here.

PASSENGER

We're calling it in.

INT. ANCIENT TEMPLE - COURTYARD - DAY

The Driver and the Passenger, bathing in the glow of it, slowly circle the huge amethyst crystal while staring on, somewhat awestruck by it.

PASSENGER

Do you feel that?

DRIVER

Feel what?

PASSENGER

The radiation... like the warmth of daylight on your skin.

Suddenly, the Driver leans over and vomits.

PASSENGER (CONT'D)

Are you alright?

DRIVER

Let's get out of here.

PASSENGER

Yeah, I think you're right.

The Passenger puts the Driver's arm over his shoulder and the two quickly head away from the courtyard, back towards the Tree Feller.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

A vast expanse of stars fills the frame before Dividium Prime, a striking, cloud-shrouded, orange and blue planet rises into view.

EXT. DIVIDIUM PRIME - MOUNTAIN PASS - DAY

MEESHA, a Padawan of the Jedi Order hikes a wooded mountain pass with her orange and white ASTROMECH DROID R2L4.

A beautiful brunette woman of Indian ethnicity with striking blue eyes, Meesha wears brown on purple robes that seem to adhere to Jedi traditions while bending the rules for cultural heritage.

R2L4
(impatient)
Beep, honk.

MEESHA
It shouldn't be too much further
now L4.

EXT. DIVIDIUM PRIME - OLD REPUBLIC COMPOUND - DAY

Rounding a rocky outcrop, the two come to a huge precipice where a stone land bridge leads across to the remnants of an OLD REPUBLIC COMPOUND.

The compound, several stories tall, is a combination of ancient architecture and technological achievement.

A beat as Meesha takes in the scene before crossing.

At the halfway point of the land bridge, two ancient and GIANT GUARDIAN DROIDS, one missing an arm, step forth from huge alcoves at either side of what appears to be the entrance to the compound.

MEESHA
Get ready for some trouble.

The astromech droid moves behind Meesha so that she's between it and the giant droids.

R2L4
 (anxious)
 Whooo.

Blue laser blasts from the droid's shoulder mounted weapons begin to rain down on Meesha and R2L4's position.

Meesha's green lightsaber ignites and she immediately begins deflecting bolts back in the direction of the attacking droids.

Translucent energy shields pop into being on the droid's arms and they begin deflecting the laser blasts being returned by Jedi.

Meesha quickly dispatches the one-armed droid with its own deflected blasts as it struggles to defend itself.

MEESHA
 These droids... are surprisingly
 effective... for Old Republic
 technology.

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! Several un-deflected bolts open craters near Meesha and her R2 unit on the bridge.

The two press forward to more stable ground as Meesha continues to return the droid's laser barrage.

The giant droid takes one step too many to the edge of the precipice on the compound side of the battle.

MEESHA (CONT'D)
 You might want to watch...

In quick succession, Meesha expertly redirects three incoming laser blasts to the edge of the precipice where the guardian droid stands and sends it plummeting down the mountainside.

MEESHA (CONT'D)
 Where you step.

TIME CUT:

INT. OLD REPUBLIC COMPOUND - ENTRANCE CORRIDOR - DAY

Meesha and L4 progress cautiously down a hexagonal corridor with an anachronistic combination of high technology and ancient ruin.

R2L4
(concerned)
Whirr, whooo.

MEESHA
The shaft shouldn't be too far
ahead if the archives were
accurate.

After passing sealed doors on the left and right, the corridor ends at a blast door with a data conduit in the wall beside it.

L4 produces an interface appendage and adeptly mates it to the data conduit.

Mechanical gears at the point of interface spin around before the blast door abruptly opens upwards revealing a chamber ahead.

TIME CUT:

INT. OLD REPUBLIC COMPOUND - SHAFT CHAMBER - DAY

Meesha and L4 navigate a large hexagonal chamber with a shaft in the center, sunken into the floor.

The shaft is sealed by blast doors.

MEESHA
(looking around)
Can you use the data conduit to
open the blast doors?

R2L4
(sad)
Whir, whooo.

MEESHA
Then we'll have to improvise...
stand back.

Meesha's lightsaber blade blazes into existence as she steps towards the blast doors.

R2L4 backs away from the doors as Meesha slams her lightsaber, point first, into them.

Slowly, in a circular motion, Meesha cuts through the blast doors.

As she finishes the cut, the doors fall away, plummeting down the shaft before CRASHING LOUDLY somewhere below.

Meesha stands at the edge of the shaft.

MEESHA (CONT'D)
 (looking at R2L4)
 Stay here.

R2L4
 (relieved)
 Beep, beep!

Meesha closes her eyes in concentration and steps off the ledge.

She begins to slowly levitate down the shaft.

INT. OLD REPUBLIC COMPOUND - HALL OF THE HOLOCRON - DAY

Meesha floats down from a shaft in the ceiling of a massive chamber and touches down lightly atop the blast doors she destroyed.

Panning to the far end of the chamber, an altar-like pedestal displays a luminescent red square HOLOCRON floating and rotating just above it.

Meesha walks slowly towards the pedestal, taking in ancient sigils and technology that line the chamber's walls.

Reaching out cautiously, Meesha grasps the Holocron and removes it from the pedestal.

A beat before an intense RUSHING SOUND builds in the chamber as multiple slots begin opening along the walls.

Meesha slowly turns 360 degrees, assessing the situation in the chamber.

Another beat and a torrent of water begins rushing through the slots and flooding the room.

Hastily moving back to below the shaft that she descended from, Meesha force jumps straight back up it.

TIME CUT:

INT. OLD REPUBLIC COMPOUND - ENTRANCE CORRIDOR - DAY

Meesha and R2L4 hurriedly make their way back through the entrance corridor when suddenly, a lean, bald, pale figure drops from above into a crouch at the far end.

Moving stoically to a standing position, ASAJJ VENTRESS, wearing black and red Sith robes, ignites a pair of ruby red lightsabers.

REVERSE ANGLE on Meesha and R2L4.

Meesha positions herself in front of R2L4 and ignites her own fiery green blade.

MEESHA
(gaze locked with
Ventress)
Stay behind me.

R2L4
(compliant)
Beep, boop, whirr

VENTRESS
Hello... Sister.

MEESHA
You always know just where to find
me... don't you Ventress.

VENTRESS
Mother Talzin would be so
disappointed... to see what you've
become.

MEESHA
I left the Nightsisters behind me
long ago Ventress... you would be
wise to do the same.

VENTRESS
I believe you have something I'm
looking for.

Ventress force leaps almost all the way to Meesha in a single bound as Meesha closes her eyes in concentration and takes a step back.

Meesha's lightsaber, now floating vertically in front of her, suddenly lunges forward, seemingly of its own volition and intercepts Ventress, pushing her back.

The dancing green lightsaber hammers away at Ventress as the red Sith blades counter the attack.

Ventress, showing signs of frustration at her inability to progress past the dancing lightsaber, becomes overtly aggressive in her attack.

VENTRESS (CONT'D)
Your Padawan tricks are no match
for the power of the dark side.

MEESHA
(Still concentrating)
Really? I'm not aware of any
Padawan that knows these tricks but
me.

Red lightsabers begin smashing into walls and destroying consoles in the corridor as Ventress channels her rage into the fight.

The green lightsaber begins losing ground to Ventress's onslaught.

The whole time, Meesha stands in quiet concentration with eyes closed, seemingly oblivious to her surroundings other than Ventress and her lightsaber.

R2L4 moves back to the data conduit at the door, produce's an interface appendage and starts the gears turning once again.

Ventress continues to make ground, demolishing the corridor in the process up to just a few steps away from Meesha.

R2L4 (O.S.)
(excited)
Boop, Beep!

Suddenly, Fire suppression gasses start SPRAYING VIOLENTLY from the walls and ceiling along the length of the corridor, missing Meesha but forcing Ventress to lose ground to avoid getting blasted.

CLOSE ON Meesha, eyes remaining closed, as her look of concentration transforms into one of perseverance and willful effort.

Meesha's dancing green lightsaber begins to spin, slowly at first but then speeding rotations, as it continues to slam away at Ventress, over and over again; now a spinning wheel of death.

Now on her heels, Ventress is forced back to the compound entrance while avoiding streams of fire suppression and fending off the spinning green lightsaber.

MEESHA
(over her shoulder)
Let's go L4.

The fire suppression stops.

All in the briefest of moments, Meesha opens her eyes, summons her lightsaber back to her hand and force jumps to Ventress's location outside the compound.

EXT. OLD REPUBLIC COMPOUND - ENTRANCE - DUSK

Looking around, Meesha has trouble finding Ventress as L4 arrives beside her.

She taps something behind her ear and a small mic pops around to her mouth.

MEESHA
 (into the mic)
 Holocron is secure but we have Sith
 company.

CLOSE ON the HOLOCRON as it suddenly yanks out of Meesha's hand and flies straight into Ventress's grip above.

VENTRESS
 Thanks for retrieving that for
 me... Sisters should always share
 don't you think?

Meesha looks up and spots Ventress hanging from the parapets above the compound entrance, Holocron in hand, before disappearing onto the roof.

Meesha force jumps onto the roof in pursuit.

EXT. OLD REPUBLIC COMPOUND - ROOF - DUSK

Landing on the roof with agility and grace, Meesha is greeted by the front end of a SITH DEVASTATOR with its engines winding up.

From the front, the Devastator is a carbon black inverted triangle with a forward facing cockpit and a plethora of weapons under it's top mounted wings.

Igniting her emerald lightsaber, Meesha see's Ventress settling into the cockpit with an IG DROID, BUCKET HEAD manning the co-pilots seat above and behind her.

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! The forward-facing cannons on the devastator start firing and Meesha just barely dodges explosion after explosion as craters get blasted into the stone roof at her feet.

On her heels, Meesha's forced to reluctantly deflect a shot with her lightsaber where the force of the blast sends her to the edge of the roof.

Rising INTO FRAME behind Meesha from below, A REPUBLIC TROOP RUNNER piloted by MACE WINDU hovers with it's loading bay doors open.

The battle worn Troop Runner has a forward flight deck with side loading bay doors that allow for full access the ship's main deck. Ball turrets are mounted in the upper and lower decks of the ship and a single forward facing blaster provides an offensive option for the flight deck.

R2L4 is visible in a shallow astromech socket, already on the ship's main deck, along with four CORELLIAN PEACEKEEPERS that are gesturing for Meesha to jump.

MACE (V.O.)
(over Meesha's headset)
Were you looking for a lift?

Wasting no time, Meesha JUMPS from the republic compound roof into the Troop Runner's main deck as it takes off for orbit with bay doors closing.

INT. REPUBLIC TROOP RUNNER - MAIN DECK - DUSK

Donning combat gear, Mace's support crew, a squadron of Corellian Peacekeepers: ARKUS, KAMDAL, SCRON and PALLION welcome Meesha warmly to the main deck of the Troop Runner.

ARKUS: A middle-aged, burly, scarred and weathered combat veteran of many battles.

KAMDAL: A younger, thinner, more enthusiastic product of the same system that created Arkus.

SCRON: A skinny middle-aged engineer and mechanic with tremendous technical aptitude.

PALLION: A buff young pilot and munitions specialist first and a Corellian Peacekeeper second.

Patches on their gear declare "Defending 107th" and depict an ancient Corellian warrior brandishing a tower shield.

ARKUS
(placing his hand on
Meesha's shoulder)
Great to have you back.

MEESHA

(shaking her head)

The Holocron... I got it, but then we had some unexpected company and I lost it. Ventress has it now.

MACE (O.S.)

We can always get it back later but right now we need to get out of here... fast.

MEESHA

(head shaking)

Of all the people to lose that to.

Meesha moves toward the flight deck.

EXT. OLD REPUBLIC COMPOUND - ROOF - DUSK

The Sith Devastator rises from the roof of the compound, aligning its trajectory with that of the Troop Runner, before blasting off in pursuit.

INT. SITH DEVASTATOR - COCKPIT - DUSK

Ventress fidgets with controls in front of her while looking outwards in the vicinity of the Troop Runner.

VENTRESS

You're not getting away that easily.

INT. REPUBLIC TROOP RUNNER - FLIGHT DECK - DUSK

Mace acknowledges Meesha with a nod as she sits with familiarity in the co-pilots seat beside him.

MACE

We're no match for that Sith Devastator...

MEESHA

And we're not any faster either.

TIME CUT:

EXT. SPACE - DIVIDIUM PRIME - NIGHT

Dividium Prime, The clouded orange and blue planet, stands out in contrast against the backdrop of stars.

The Republic Troop Runner flies into frame followed closely by the Sith Devastator.

The two ships are locked in a continuous exchange of red and blue laser fire.

INT. REPUBLIC TROOP RUNNER - FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Mace handles the controls of the Troop Runner as Meesha manages the co-pilot's station.

MACE

Get on those countermeasures Meesh
or we're not going to have a ship
left to fly.

MEESHA

I'm working on it. I can't just
abandon the deflectors... Kam! I
could use a hand here.

INT. REPUBLIC TROOP RUNNER - MAIN DECK - NIGHT

Kamdal, wearing a headset, jumps into a pod at the rear of the ship that goes eye to eye with the pursuing Devastator.

KAMDAL

I'm on it.

Panning around the main deck from Kamdal we see R2L4 securely interfaced with the ship in the astromech socket.

Arkus mans a gun turret that hangs from the upper deck while Pallion mans one mounted in the lower deck.

Scron wrestles with wiring and sparks from an open panel with technical aptitude.

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

The Troop Runner and the Devastator continue their laser bolt exchange as they speed away from Dividium Prime.

Arkus and Pallion blast away as the Devastator spins evasively in pursuit, sending a spiral of laser bolts right back.

The occasional bolt from the Troop Runner that seems to land true, deflects off an invisible deflector just in front of the Devastator.

INT. SITH DEVASTATOR - COCKPIT - NIGHT

Ventress expertly pilots her ship with assistance from Bucket Head in the co-pilot seat.

VENTRESS

You couldn't hit the broad side of
a Corellian Corvette Bucket Head.

BUCKET HEAD

(heavily digitized voice)
This pilot has substantial skills
where evasive maneuvers are
concerned... but no need to worry.
The story always ends the same way.

Bucket Head pulls a series of three levers in succession above its head.

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

WIDE AS three rockets launch in quick succession from atop the Devastator and close in on the Troop Runner.

INT. REPUBLIC TROOP RUNNER - FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! An incoming ordinance alarm sounds throughout the ship, alerting Mace and Meesha to an unseen but imminent threat.

MACE

(glancing at a readout)
We have three seekers incoming.

MEESHA

Rear deflectors are in rough shape.
We might handle one hit... Kam!
Those countermeasures... now would
be a good time.

MACE

L4, if you can give us any more
speed we'll take it.

INT. REPUBLIC TROOP RUNNER - KAMDAL'S POD - NIGHT

Kamdal stares down three rockets as they wind and spin on an incoming trajectory.

KAMDAL
(into the mic)
Yes, no time like the present.

Grabbing the controls in front of him, Kamdal starts unleashing countermeasures.

Blasts of black flack start EXPLODING in successive increments behind the ship.

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

The flack from the Troop Runner takes out one of the rockets.

INT. TROOP RUNNER - KAMDAL'S POD

Kam pumps his fist.

KAMDAL
(excitedly)
Yes! One seeker down.

INT. REPUBLIC TROOP RUNNER - UPPER DECK TURRET - NIGHT

Arkus continues blasting away behind the ship at the two remaining seekers and the Devastator.

CLOSE IN on his display, Arkus finally gets a seeker in his sights and pulls the trigger. BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

EXT. SPACE - TROOP RUNNER - NIGHT

Laser blasts from Arkus's position in the upper deck turret shred a second seeker rocket.

INT. REPUBLIC TROOP RUNNER - UPPER DECK TURRET - NIGHT

Arkus reports the kill as the BEEP, BEEP, BEEP alerts continue incessantly.

ARKUS
(cooly)
Seeker two down but the third is
too low.

INT. REPUBLIC TROOP RUNNER - LOWER DECK TURRET - NIGHT

Pallion blasts away to the aft and struggles to get the seeker into the center of his targeting screen.

PALLION
C'mon... I should be able to get
it...

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

The Devastator blasts away at the Troop Runner while the seeker continues pursuit.

A beat before the rear deflector of the Troop Runner fails and the lower deck turret gets hammered by a laser blast.

INT. TROOP RUNNER - LOWER DECK TURRET - NIGHT

BLAM! Pallion's position is consumed by sparks from the blast.

INT. REPUBLIC TROOP RUNNER - FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Mace and Meesha pilot the Troop Runner with urgency, weaving and evading blaster fire while keeping just ahead of the last seeker.

MACE
Pallion!

PALLION (V.O.)
(weakly over the intercom)
I'm hit... lower deck turret is
out...

INT. SITH DEVASTATOR - COCKPIT - NIGHT

Ventress smiles as the combat continues to unfold.

VENTRESS
You're not getting away again
Sister...

INT. REPUBLIC TROOP RUNNER - FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Mace and Meesha continue to handle their stations with a frenetic pace.

MACE

Pallion... do you copy?

While Mace attempts to contact Pallion, Meesha retreats inwards, closing her eyes and losing herself in concentration.

ARKUS (V.O.)

(over the intercom)

That third seeker is still too low... I can't get it... brace for impact...

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

The last seeker, just as it's about to destroy the Troop Runner, veers off OUT OF FRAME.

INT. SITH DEVASTATOR, COCKPIT - NIGHT

Ventress's smile suddenly becomes a scowl as the reflection on her cockpit canopy reveals the seeker unexpectedly veering off course.

VENTRESS

What is happening!? Meesha!

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

WIDE ON the Devastator as the seeker arcs in a full circle, and begins closing in from behind.

INT. SITH DEVASTATOR - COCKPIT - NIGHT

Ventress begins to panic.

VENTRESS

Bucket Head! Countermeasures!

MEESHA (V.O.)

(in Ventress's head)

Goodbye sister.

VENTRESS

(screaming)

Meesha!

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

BOOM! The seeker slams into the back of the Devastator with a massive explosion.

The Devastator begins spinning out of control, leaving a spiral of smoke in it's wake.

INT. SITH DEVASTATOR - COCKPIT - NIGHT

Fire and sparks being consuming the cockpit as Ventress struggles for control of the ship.

VENTRESS
(coughing)
Fire suppression...

BUCKET HEAD
Fire suppression nominal.

Bucket head throws a switch and compressed gasses momentarily blast through the cockpit, quelling the flames.

INT. REPUBLIC TROOP RUNNER - FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Meesha returns from her meditative state as Mace puts a congratulatory hand on her shoulder.

MACE
Yes! Way to go Meesh!

ARKUS (V.O.)
(over the intercom)
Woohoo! Meesh! Was that you?

Kamdal and Scron appear with an injured and slightly smoking Pallion behind the flight deck doorway.

SCRON
That was too close.

PALLION
(waving away smoke)
I'll survive.

KAMDAL
Yeah Arkus, that was Meesha alright...
(turning towards Meesha)
Your telekinetic use of the force there is really quite something to behold Meesh.

MACE

(sarcastically to Meesha)
Agreed... Your use of that talent
has certainly raised my eyebrow a
time or two... now about that
Holocron?

MEESHA

(manipulating controls)
I'm bringing her about.

INT. SITH DEVASTATOR - COCKPIT - NIGHT

Ventress regains control of her Devastator.

VENTRESS

Status report.

BUCKET HEAD

Engines, weapons, deflectors
offline... life support, power,
thrusters all critical...
hyperdrive nominal, fire
suppression --

VENTRESS

Hyperdrive nominal?

BUCKET HEAD

Yes, it's usually the first thing
to go... it would appear that our
recent upgrades have paid off
handsomely.

VENTRESS

Plot a jump to the Salaban System.

BUCKET HEAD

Roger that.

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

The Troop Runner begins circling back around to intercept the
floundering Devastator but before it can take action, the
Devastator's hyperdrive kicks in.

Ventress and her Devastator vanish with a flash.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. REPUBLIC TROOP RUNNER - MAIN DECK - NIGHT

Mace, Meesha, Kamdal, Scron, Arkus and Pallion stand in a circle around a hologram of OBI-WAN KENOBI and MASTER YODA.

Pallion wears a sling on one arm and shows mild burn marks on his face and gear.

R2L4 watches from the shallow astromech socket behind them.

OBI-WAN

So Meesha, if I've got this right, you were able to get the Holocron from the Old Republic Compound but Ventress got the better of you shortly thereafter and you lost it?

MACE

If I may... In fairness to Meesha, if we had anticipated a Sith presence --

YODA

(gesturing)
Speak for herself, the Padawan learner can.

Mace gives Yoda a quizzical look.

MEESHA

It's fine Master Windu... Master Kenobi. I believe you summed it up accurately. We had a run in with Ventress that was quite unexpected and she got the better of me.

A beat.

OBI-WAN

There was another reason to call this meeting as you may have guessed. There's a fledgling colony out your way in the Ikamar System... population about 3600. We lost communications with them 10 days ago.

MACE

That would be ADOR. It's primarily a forest and ocean world...

(MORE)

MACE (CONT'D)
mostly uninhabited but there's a
Baridium mining operation there.

MEESHA
If we lost communications 10 days
ago, why are we only hearing about
this now?

OBI-WAN
Losing coms for a few days is not
that unusual out there. They have
weather that can interfere with
coms but an outage rarely lasts
more than a few days.

YODA
Routine, the outage likely is but
check on them, we would ask of you.

MACE
Pallion took a pretty good hit in
our skirmish with Ventress... and
the Troop Runner has seen better
days.

PALLION
(gesturing to Mace)
I'm good Sir... just say the word.

MACE
Alright then, let's plot a course
for the Ikamar System... We'll let
you know as soon as we've
ascertained the cause of the outage
and see if we can be of any
assistance.

YODA
May the force be with you.

The hologram disappears and everyone moves to their stations.

INT. REPUBLIC TROOP RUNNER - FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Mace and Meesha settle in to their seats once again.

MEESHA
Course plotted.

Mace reaches forward to the hyperdrive actuator.

MACE
(looking at Meesha but
speaking to all)
Let's get this done and then we can
all go home for some rest and
repairs.

Mace and Meesha are pushed back into their seats as Mace hits the lightspeed throttle and the Troop Runner shoots into hyperspace.

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

The Troop Runner blasts off into hyperspace.

INT. REPUBLIC TROOP RUNNER - FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

ZOOM IN as Meesha, appearing both mentally and physically fatigued, closes her eyes and exhales deeply.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

EXT. HOLDOON - LABOUR CAMP - DAY

A young and disheveled Meesha, not yet in her teens, runs through the dusty streets of a labor camp with a loaf of bread under one arm and her head on a swivel.

WIDE ON Meesha as her pursuer, a middle-aged BAKER wearing a smock and brandishing a rolling pin, closes in on her.

BAKER
Come back here you little thief!...
You're not getting away from me
this time!

Other downtrodden slaves in the street give Meesha a wide berth, looking to their feet and minding their own business.

Rounding a corner, Meesha sees two well armored separatist guards are on patrol and coming her way down the street.

In desperation she takes an abrupt turn, evading the guards but entering into an alley way that comes to an immediate dead end.

Spinning, she watches as the sweaty baker rounds the corner, cutting off any hope of a retreat.

BAKER (CONT'D)
 You're gonna get a whooping now you
 filthy little slave girl.

The baker winds up to take a swing at Meesha as she calmly closes her eyes in concentration.

About to swing, the baker is suddenly taken aback as he rises off the ground, dropping the rolling pin in his surprise.

BAKER (CONT'D)
 (confused and flailing
 limbs helplessly)
 What kind of trickery is this!?
 Guards! Guards!

The two guards Meesha took care to avoid, now round the corner in response to the Baker's distress, training their weapons on her.

GUARD #1
 What's going on here?

BAKER
 Shoot her!

GUARD #2
 (in confused disbelief)
 What? Release him at once!

Meesha makes a pushing gesture with her hands out in front of her and the Baker goes flying backwards, CRASHING into both guards and sending all three of them careening into a group of vendors at the far side of the adjoining street.

REVERSE ANGLE as Meesha emerges from the alley way, looking somewhat disconcerted from the encounter, before her eye catches something else of interest.

ANOTHER ANGLE as an unidentifiable HOODED BLACK FIGURE, just up the road from the recent carnage, seems to stare in her direction.

HOODED FIGURE
 (female voice)
 Well isn't that special...

Meesha hurriedly runs off as the guards, the baker and several distraught vendors get back up off the ground, still somewhat dazed from the encounter.

INT. HOLDOON - HOVEL - MAIN ROOM - DAY

A young woman, MEESHA'S MOTHER, tends to a small pot of stew atop a primitive wood stove in a shoddy but maintained two room hovel.

A kitchen nook and living area with the most basic of living essentials comprises one room, and a single small bedroom lies through the door to the other.

EXT. HOLDOON - HOVEL - DAY

A beat before young disheveled Meesha comes running around a street corner, loaf of bread still in hand, towards the nearby hovel.

Just before arriving at the front door to the humble home, she stops in her tracks, dusts herself off and takes a deep breath before approaching the door.

INT. HOLDOON - HOVEL - MAIN ROOM - DAY

Meesha walks through the front door and her mother greets her with a warm hug.

MEESHA'S MOTHER

(taking the loaf of bread)

What's this? Where did you get this Meesha?

MEESHA

I took it from the baker... in the market square.

MEESHA'S MOTHER

Meesha, you can't just take food like that. If you get caught there will be consequences... harsh consequences.

MEESHA

But I'm so hungry Momma... We're always so hungry and now we have something to eat... at least for now.

Meesha's mother puts her hands on Meesha's cheeks and looks lovingly into her eyes.

MEESHA'S MOTHER

Oh, my little love.

Brushing her hair aside, Meesha's mother kisses her on the forehead.

MEESHA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
 Promise me you won't do that again.

MEESHA
 But Momma...

MEESHA'S MOTHER
 Promise me!

MEESHA
 I promise.

TIME CUT:

INT. HOLDOON - HOVEL - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tucked into bed, Meesha looks lovingly at her mother while she reads her daughter a story.

The room is simply adorned with the most basic necessities of life and little more.

MEESHA'S MOTHER
 ...and so to the castle they
 returned, where they lived a long
 and happy life ever after.

Closing the book and laying it on a table beside the bed, Meesha's mother pulls up the covers to Meesha's chin, kisses her on the forehead and reaches over, turning out the simple bedside light.

INT. HOLDOON - HOVEL - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Meesha's mother quietly closes the bedroom door before walking over to the simple kitchen nook to do some evening chores.

A beat before BANG! BANG! BANG! A loud knocking at the front door startles Meesha's mother who quickly brandishes a nearby knife.

MEESHA'S MOTHER
 Who is it? What do you want?

GUARD #1
 Holdoon guard... open up.

Holding the knife at her side, so that the blade is semi-hidden up the back of her arm, Meesha's mother opens the door.

Two well armored guards brandishing blasters enter the house to either side of the door, making way for...

The HOODED BLACK FIGURE from the market place.

MEESHA'S MOTHER
(taking a step back)
Wha... what do you want?

The figure enters the house and after a beat, pulls back her hood with her hands.

A young, less battle hardened Asajj Ventress startles Meesha's mother with her appearance, prompting another step back.

VENTRESS
You have a daughter...

No response.

VENTRESS (CONT'D)
She stole something today in the market square... a loaf of bread that was not hers to take.

MEESHA'S MOTHER
I don't know what you're talking about.

VENTRESS
You're as bad a liar as you are a mother. We're taking her into custody.

Revealing the knife from behind her arm, and with a stony resolve that could challenge the entire separatist army, Meesha's mother stands her ground.

MEESHA'S MOTHER
It's time for you to go.

VENTRESS
Guards!

Both guards draw a bead with their blasters on Meesha's mother.

GUARD #2
Drop the weapon!

GUARD #1
Drop it now!

MEESHA'S MOTHER
Never!

With a show of stunningly agility, Meesha's mother swings open the bedroom door and spins behind it as a shield while Guard #1 fires a blaster shot into it, missing his mark.

Meesha's mother retaliates by plunging the knife straight into Guard #1's chest, sending him to the ground, before ducking behind the door once again.

Guard #2 takes a shot as well, also missing the mark as he fires through the door.

Meesha's mother, now grabbing the fallen blaster from Guard #1, spins back through bedroom door, closing it behind her, all in a single fluid move.

INT. HOLDOON - HOVEL - BEDROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Backing away from the door with blaster trained on it Meesha's mother glances to her daughter.

MEESHA'S MOTHER
Run baby! Run! The window. Run
and don't look back...

Meesha throws the sheets off and moves toward the window, but then looks back, lacking the resolve to leave her mother to her fate.

BAM! The door smashes open with a kick from Guard #2, Ventress standing behind him.

BLAM! Meesha's mother fires off a shot that misses the mark but flies a hair's breadth from Ventress's head behind the guard.

Ventress's ruby lightsaber ignites in her hand.

BLAM! Guard #2 fires a shot and hits the mark sending Meesha's mother to the ground.

MEESHA
No!

The guard trains his blaster on Meesha.

Meesha, now consumed with incomprehensible rage, raises her arm with an open hand and closes it into a fist with dramatic fury.

Guard #2's helmet crumples on his head like a tin can and he drops to the floor like a bag of Jawas.

VENTRESS
(standing in the doorway)
Bravo little child... bra --

Gesturing with a firm push, Meesha catches Ventress off guard, sending her flying violently across the room into the kitchen nook, lightsaber tumbling off into a corner and blinking out.

Gathering her composure quickly, Ventress summons her lightsaber back to her hand and then reaches her partially clenched free hand towards Meesha with a scowl.

REVERSE ANGLE on Meesha as she suddenly rises into the air, grasping desperately at her throat.

VENTRESS (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You're coming with me little one.
There's someone I want you to meet.

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. SPACE - IKAMAR SYSTEM - NIGHT

Partially shrouded in cloud, Ador, a blue-green world with two dark but luminous moons, dominates the frame.

The Troop Runner blasts out of hyperspace and continues on a course towards Ador.

INT. REPUBLIC TROOP RUNNER - FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Mace, wearing a headset, pilots the ship while Meesha monitors a data console.

MACE
(into the mic)
Ador colony, this is Mace Windu of
the Galactic Republic, do you copy.

MEESHA

(looking at the console)
Ok, so it looks like their uplink antenna is stationed just north of the colony.

MACE

Can we land there?

MEESHA

There's a landing pad there and it looks like it's clear.

MACE

We'll head there first and see if we can ascertain what's going on down there... there's nothing on the com link...

Mace fidgets with some controls on his console.

MACE (CONT'D)

Like, nothing... no ships, no people, no colony uplink. Weirdly quiet.

EXT. ADOR COLONY - COMMUNICATION BUNKER - DAY

The Troop Runner flies into a forested landscape and descends onto a landing pad outside the colony communications bunker.

A grassy landing field stretches a ways to the west before ending at a stand of trees.

The door to the bunker stands open and the outer walls are fortified with hastily made wooden spears.

INT. TROOP RUNNER - MAIN DECK - DAY

Mace and Meesha enter from the flight deck to join Kamdal and Arkus who are donning combat gear and weapons including large assault blasters and grenades.

MACE

Kam and Arkus, you're with us.
(then shouts)
Scron, I need you to stay here and keep an eye on Pallion and patch up the poor ship.

SCRON (O.S.)
(shouts back)
Roger that. The encounter with
that Devastator really did a number
on her. May take some time... good
luck out there!

EXT. ADOR - TROOP RUNNER - DAY

The loading bay doors on the side of Troop Runner open and Mace, Meesha, Kamdal and Arkus take in their surroundings as they walk down the ramp.

KAMDAL
It's so quiet.

MACE
No insects, no wildlife...

EXT. ADOR COLONY - COMMUNICATION BUNKER - MAIN DOOR - DAY

As the squad approaches the bunker, Mace gestures with hand signals for Kamdal and Arkus to secure the door.

Kamdal runs up, sweeps the door and puts his back to the wall on the far side of it while Arkus deploys his assault blaster with a flashlight attachment and goes in.

INT. ADOR COLONY - COMMUNICATION BUNKER - DAY

Inside the bunker it's dark and damp as Arkus's light is the sole illumination in the room.

Arkus eyes a light switch to one side of the door and throws it, but nothing happens.

Exploring with his light, Arkus sees that the bunker almost appears to have been ransacked.

There are drag marks and bloody patches visible along with claw marks on some of the walls.

Communications gear and colonists personal effects lie scattered about.

ARKUS
What is going on here?

INTO FRAME Kamdal appears behind Arkus, looking over his shoulder as he shines his light on a particularly nasty wall stain.

KAMDAL
Nothing good.

TIME CUT:

EXT. ADOR COLONY - COMMUNICATION BUNKER - LANDING PAD - DAY

Mace, Meesha, Arkus, Kamdal and Scron gather outside the loading bay of the Troop Runner.

KAMDAL
The bunker is clear and the perimeter is secure.

MEESHA
Communications won't be operational here anytime soon but that suddenly seems like the least of our concerns.

MACE
I advised the council and we've decided to assess the situation at the colony.

SCRON
Well, we can't fly the Troop Runner right now without the risk of engine failure thanks to that whole Ventress situation... I need a few hours and we'll be back in business.

MACE
Ok, you stay here with Pallion and get the ship running... Meesha, Kamdal and Arkus... we'll hike south to the colony along with L4. It looks like there's a path and it's only about a click away. Everybody... stay sharp.

TIME CUT:

EXT. ADOR COLONY - NORTH ENTRANCE - DAY

Mace, Meesha, Kamdal, Arkus and R2L4 cautiously approach a broad, metal grate stairway leading up to the open north doors of the colony.

The colony architecture is modular and practical in nature -- a series of near-identical buildings linked by near-identical corridors, all nestled away in the trees.

A landing pad is visible to the east side of the colony while an assortment of giant haul trucks are parked at a processing facility on the west side.

There's not a soul to be seen and it's deathly quiet. The doors appear to have been open for some time.

MACE

Where the heck did everybody go?

MEESHA

Not a soul to be seen.

ARKUS

Haven't heard a thing other than us since we left the ship.

KAMDAL

Yeah... I was noticing that too.

Mace gestures with hand signals for Arkus and Kamdal to secure the entrance and they move ahead to do so, turning on flashlights mounted under their blasters.

Mace, Meesha and R4 follow cautiously.

INT. COLONY - NORTH ENTRANCE - DAY

Arkus arrives at a half open door, his light highlighting a bloody stain on it.

Kamdal is right behind him.

ARKUS

(touching the door)
Bad things happened here too.

A beat as the squad makes their way through the door.

KAMDAL

Looks that way.

INT. ADOR COLONY - OPERATIONS BLOCK - DAY

The squad progresses through the north block where it appears colonists just up and abandoned their posts.

Daily management of the colony likely happened here including arrivals and departures from a landing field visible through transparent doors to the east.

An access corridor to the processing facility was managed on the west side.

As Arkus and Kamdal clear the block, a door to the south leads deeper into the complex.

ARKUS

All clear.

KAMDAL

Looks like the party's over.

MACE

Let's move along to the residential block... dead ahead.

ARKUS

I don't know if I like that choice of words.

MEESHA

(to Mace)

I... feel something...

MACE

(to Meesha)

I feel it too... like a disturbance in the force... the influence of dark side.

R2L4

(concerned)

Whooo...

Arkus arrives at the door to the residential block but it's closed and won't budge.

ARKUS

Well, at least one door still works here.

MEESHA

L4, try that door.

R2L4 rolls over to the door, taps into a DATA CONDUIT, and spins some gears before the door weakly opens.

INT. ADOR COLONY - CORRIDOR - DAY

A dislodged ceiling light maddeningly FLICKERS causing a strobe-like effect as Arkus enters through the north door.

The corridor stretches south into darkness but a barricaded door intersects it from the west just ahead.

Blaster marks and bloodstains stand out prominently in the vicinity of the barricaded door.

As Arkus and Kamdal approach the barricade it's apparent that it was breached from the inside, out into the hallway.

ARKUS

Whatever or whoever was trapped in there sure wanted out.

Arkus passes through the door followed by Kamdal.

KAMDAL

Whoa...

INT. ADOR COLONY - MEDICAL CENTER - DUSK

Arkus and Kamdal enter a seven station medical center that looks like it was ransacked and completely trashed.

A flickering holo-terminal appears to be semi-functioning here and a data conduit for a droid is inset in the wall beside the door.

Mace and Meesha enter behind Arkus and Kamdal.

MACE

Well, what-do-we-have-here?

MEESHA

(handling the terminal controls)

It's too bad Scron isn't here --

MACE

Let me have a look at that.

Mace attends to the terminal, adjusting some wiring and throwing some switches, while Meesha, eyeing something on the floor, retrieves a cracked but functioning data pad.

A beat.

MEESHA

(tapping the pad)

One of the last entries in the medical log here... shows 4 miners being admitted with an unknown illness.

MACE

Does it mention symptoms or how they might have contracted the illness?

MEESHA

It looks like they all fell ill around the same time after returning from a job at a place called Hoopac's Ridge... to the west.

Meesha continues tapping away at the data pad for more information.

MACE

The colonists... they would have carried comlinks right? Personal communicators?

Mace steps away from the damaged terminal and begins pacing in thought.

MEESHA

Yeah, all of the colonists. Not only do they carry them but I'm pretty sure they're required to have them at all times. It's mandated... for safety and security reasons.

KAMDAL

I think I might know where you're going with this.

MACE

We may not be able to contact the colonists on their comlinks but perhaps we can at least locate them?

MEESHA

Find the comlinks --

KAMDAL

-- Find the colonists.

MACE

L4, tap into that data conduit and see if you can find anything regarding locations of the colonist's comlinks.

L4 moves to the data conduit beside the door, produces an interface appendage and adeptly mates it to the conduit.

R2L4

(compliantly)
Beep, boop, whirr.

MEESHA

He says the conduit is barely functioning so this might take some time. The power to the colony is critically low.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. ADOR COLONY - COMMUNICATION BUNKER - LANDING PAD - DUSK

Two dark moons are visible in the sky as the sun dips below the horizon.

WIDE ON the Troop Runner as it sits idle on the landing pad with loading bay doors open.

Scron works on one of the engines with an arc welder, causing a cascade of sparks down the side of the ship, while Pallion moves to the transparent bubble in the upper deck turret.

A grassy landing field stretches away beyond the Troop Runner before meeting up with the forest's edge.

INT. TROOP RUNNER - UPPER DECK TURRET - DUSK

Pallion, intent on calibrating the gun controls inside the upper deck turret is unaware of three corrupted colonists now visible near the tree line at the far end of the landing field.

The corrupted colonists lumber about randomly, seemingly oblivious to each other before they catch Pallion's eye.

Pallion stares curiously through the turret, gathering his thoughts for a moment, before opening a channel to Scron.

PALLION
(without taking his eyes
off the colonists)
Hey, Scron... come take a look at
this.

A beat before Scron joins Pallion in the ball turret.

SCRON
What's up?

PALLION
(staring out the turret)
What do you make of that?

SCRON
Well... that's pretty damn
peculiar.

INT. ADOR COLONY - MEDICAL CENTER - DUSK

Mace continues to work on the holo-terminal while Meesha tries to find more information on her data-pad.

L4 remains tapped into the data conduit.

Arkus and Kamdal keep a vigilant watch over the rest of the room, the hallway and the exit.

SCRON (V.O.)
(over Mace's earpiece)
Mace, do you copy?

MACE
(Tapping behind his ear)
Affirmative, read you loud and clear.

SCRON (V.O.)
We've spotted what appear to be three colonists at the west end of the landing field... they don't seem to have a lot of interest in us though... or much of anything for that matter.

MACE
Ok, engage, but proceed with caution. Advise as soon as you learn anything.

SCRON (V.O.)
Roger that.

A beat before:

R2L4
(excited)
Beep, chirp, whirr!

Meesha, Arkus and Kamdal gather around L4 as Mace continues repairing the holo-terminal while lending some attention to L4.

MEESHA
Did you find the location of the communicators?

R2L4
(affirmative)
Beep, chirp.

MACE (O.S.)
 Can you overlay a map of the colony
 with regards to the locations of
 comlinks?

R2L4
 (affirmative)
 Beep, chirp.

R2L4 produces a two dimensional flickering projection of the
 Ador colony schematics.

MEESHA
 And the comlinks?

A beat before L4 overlays the comlink positions with relation
 to colony map.

The comlinks are roughly where you'd expect them to be if the
 colony were filled with colonists.

ARKUS
 Um, that can't be right...

KAMDAL
 They don't appear to be moving. Is
 this in real time?

R2L4
 (affirmative)
 Beep, Chirp.

MEESHA
 Yeah, it's real time.

KAMDAL
 It's like we're seeing ghosts.

MEESHA
 (looking up)
 Maybe they're above us?

MACE
 Or below us...

A beat before Mace's holo-terminal projects a recorded image
 of a PHYSICIAN surrounded by unconscious and restrained
 patients on medical beds.

PHYSICIAN
 Log 544... The patients exhibit a
 steep decline in cognition and a
 loss of... persona.
 (MORE)

PHYSICIAN (CONT'D)

Their nervous systems seem to be undergoing vast chemical changes resulting in convulsions and an inability to... suppress rage. The changes in the eyes seem to leave them susceptible to certain types of light, particularly ultra-violet A and B... triggering a sort of catatonic state --

POP! The image fizzles out as the fragile hardware fails in a puff of smoke.

MACE

I've got a bad feeling about this.

Mace briefly fans away smoke with one hand while tapping behind his ear with the other, causing a small mic to pop out.

MACE (CONT'D)

(concerned)

Scron. Do you copy?

EXT. ADOR COLONY - COMMUNICATION BUNKER - LANDING PAD - DUSK

Carrying ASSAULT BLASTERS, Scron and Pallion walk away from the Troop Runner, towards the lumbering colonists.

MACE (V.O.)

(just out of ear shot
coming from the troop
runner)

Scron. Do you copy?

Pallion, holding the blaster in one arm while nurturing his other, doesn't stray far from the ship while Scron approaches them cautiously.

SCRON

(waving his rifle)

Hello! Hey there. Are you colonists?

The three lumbering colonists, now aware of Scron's presence, turn towards him in a threatening manner, revealing luminescent, AMETHYST EYES.

PALLION (O.S.)

This does not look good Scron.

Scron stops dead in his tracks before taking a few steps back.

SCRON
(over his shoulder)
Blasters on stun!

Pallion, forgetting his injuries, levels his weapon at the colonists as they charge Scron at a full run.

PALLION
Watch out! Incoming!

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! Scron unleashes his assault blaster on the rushing colonists but stun has no effect.

He struggles to switch the weapon from stun to kill as the corrupted colonists are about to overtake him.

SCRON
(to his blaster)
C'mon!

At the last possible moment, BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! Three blaster shots from OUT OF FRAME knock Scron's attackers to the ground.

Scron taking a few more steps back, watches as the three corrupted colonists start to get back up from the ground.

Simultaneously, several more corrupted colonists come charging out of the forest towards the landing pad.

PALLION
(seeing it all)
Fall back Scron! Fall back!

Pallion looks towards the Communications Bunker where another dozen corrupted colonists crawl out from spaces underneath it and charge.

Tearing off his arm sling and jacked with adrenaline, oblivious to any pain or discomfort, Pallion wields his blaster like it was nothing with both hands.

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! Pallion lays down suppressing fire on the emerging colonists while falling back to the Troop Runner.

Scron, with a horde of corrupted colonists bearing down on him, turns and runs full speed to the Troop Runner but he's not fast enough.

The throng of attackers catch Scron, dragging him to the ground, clawing and biting.

Watching as Scron falls, Pallion goes into a frenzy, charging in to save his comrade with weapon blazing.

PALLION (CONT'D)
 (shouting full force)
 Not on my watch you walking piles
 of garbage! Arrrghh! You're mine!
 Die already!

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! Pallion takes down Scron's attackers one after another but more just keep piling on.

PALLION (CONT'D)
 No!

In his frenzy to save Scron, Pallion neglects the corrupted colonists charging at him from under the communications bunker which smash him to the ground and pile on.

INT. ADOR COLONY - MEDICAL CENTER - DUSK

Leaning over a broken terminal and wearing a look of concern, Mace continues to try to hail the Troop Runner over his ear piece.

MACE
 Scron, Pallion... do you copy?

Exasperated, Mace smashes his fist down onto the broken terminal.

REVERSE ANGLE and ZOOM IN as Meesha puts her hand to her head in some discomfort.

MEESHA
 (experiencing a headache)
 That feeling... from earlier...
 it's getting stronger.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. SERENNO - DOOKU'S PALACE - THRONE ROOM - NIGHT

Meesha and Ventress walk through a pair of sturdy sliding doors into a grand chamber decorated with eons old statues and elaborate paintings.

Reverse angle as COUNT DOOKU descends a set of grand steps that lead down from a rise where a tremendous green and circular stained glass window casts an eerie glow over the room.

Dooku, silver haired and well into the twilight of middle-age, wears fine quality robes of black on red and carries himself in a stately manner.

Four IG-100 battle droids armed with crackling electrostaffs stand nearby, ready and poised to defend their master from any threat.

Meesha and Ventress kneel down as Dooku approaches.

VENTRESS

Master, you summoned us?

Dooku motions for his two disciples to rise with a simple hand gesture to which they comply.

DOOKU

We have a problem that I believe the two of you are uniquely qualified to assist with.

MEESHA

By all means Master.

DOOKU

(begins pacing)

Our plans for the Republic are vast and complex... especially so as we close our grip ever tighter on certain factions that have proven... problematic to our cause.

VENTRESS

How might we assist my lord?

DOOKU

(continues pacing)

The Jedi Order has proven to be an inconvenient thorn in our side for as long as memory serves. Their leader has remained a staunch traditionalist who adheres rigidly to the Order's code and cannot be reasoned with because of this. Any sort of direct assault to rid ourselves of the Order, regardless of the size and capability of our forces... would be folly... It is in times like these when the precision of the scalpel is sometimes preferred to the brute force swing of the sword... I'm going to need you to be my scalpel.

MEESHA

Mace Windu...

VENTRESS

You need us to assassinate the
leader of the Jedi Order.

END FLASHBACK.

MACE

(moving to the door)

We need to get back to the ship...
let's get out of here... now.

INT. ADOR COLONY - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Mace, Meesha, Kamdal, Arkus and R2L4 emerge from the broken
barricade to the Medical Bay and begin making their way down
the hallway towards the north entrance.

Kamdal takes point and Arkus covers the rear as the light in
the ceiling continues it's maddening strobing effect.

Behind them, coming from the darker, farther reaches of the
residential and commercial block, comes the BANG of something
falling over.

Everyone stops in their tracks.

Arkus levels his weapon south down the hallway, illuminating
it with his blaster mounted light but revealing nothing.

ARKUS

What the heck was that?

R2L4

(anxious)

Whooo.

Mace joins Arkus to the south.

MEESHA

(placing a hand on L4's
head)

Not another sound L4.

MACE

(to Meesha)

Stay here... with Kam.

Side by side, Mace and Arkus make their way down the hallway but after a few steps GROWLING starts emanating from the darkness ahead.

A pair of GLOWING AMETHYST EYES appear, followed by another, and another.

Mace's blue lightsaber flashes to life as corrupted colonists charge them down the hallway.

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! Arkus opens fire on the attackers, dropping them to the ground as Mace takes the head off one that gets too close.

A beat before several of the bodies start rising from the ground again, despite grievous blaster injuries.

ARKUS

What the --

MACE

Go for the head.

Mace cleaves an attacker right through the head and torso while Arkus takes down two others with quick blaster bursts to their heads.

Another beat before the quiet is broken by increasing sounds of GROWLING and CHARGING from all around.

Meesha's lightsaber blazes on.

MEESHA

The noise...

KAMDAL

They're homing in on the noise.

Corrupted colonists come charging down both north and south corridors at the squad.

Guns blaze and lightsabers swing as bodies hit the floor.

Kamdal and Arkus each flood their respective corridors with a torrent of blaster fire causing bodies to pile up while forcing the remaining attackers to climb the dead, getting higher and closer.

Mace and Meesha expediently dismember or decapitate several attackers that make it through the barrage of blaster fire, but then...

ARKUS TAKES A CLAW RAKE TO HIS FACE, opening bloody lacerations from forehead to chin before Meesha lops the attackers head clean off.

MEESHA

Arkus!

Slumping against the wall, Arkus drops out of the action as the throng of attackers continue to pour in.

About to be overwhelmed, Meesha gestures towards the attackers with a palm out, pushing them back telekinetically and slowing their advance drastically.

A beat before she closes her eyes in concentration, leaving her lightsaber levitating vertically in front of her as Mace and Kamdal defend themselves behind her.

Once again with a look of willful perseverance, Meesha starts her lightsaber telekinetically spinning and sends it tearing down the corridor.

Another beat and all is quiet as smoldering bodies line the halls in the aftermath.

Opening her eyes, Meesha's lightsaber rockets back to her hand and she quickly starts tending to Arkus.

MEESHA (CONT'D)

That is one nasty wound.

ARKUS

I'll be alright.

Arkus, definitely not looking alright, tries to get up.

MEESHA

Let me see that.

MACE (O.C.)

C'mon... we need to fall back to the med bay.

Mace approaches and helps Arkus to his feet, putting one of Arkus's arms over his shoulder on one side while Meesha does the same on the other.

They start to make their way back to the medical bay but within moments, Arkus begins convulsing uncontrollably.

Laying Arkus back against the wall, Mace tries to stabilize him while Meesha tears off a piece of her robes, folds it in half and puts it on his forehead.

A beat before Arkus opens his eyes, now BLAZING WITH AMETHYST RAGE.

KAMDAL

What the...

Mace backs away wearing a grim expression as Meesha, although alarmed, still tries to help.

MACE

(touching Meesha's
shoulder)

He's gone Meesh... you gotta back
away... that's not Arkus.

Realizing that staying will not go well for her, Meesha reluctantly backs away as Arkus continues to convulse and starts to GROWL.

Mace ignites his lightsaber and hesitates just a moment before Arkus lunges for him.

SWOOSH! Mace takes Arkus's head off with a single swift blow.

MEESHA

Arkus... no.

Mace reaches down and takes Arkus's dog tags along with his assault blaster.

MACE

Lets get out of here.

EXT. ADOR COLONY - NORTH ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Mace, Meesha, Kamdal and R2L4 emerge from the open north entrance doors and descend to the field below.

Stars in the night sky coupled with pale light from two black moons cast an eerie illumination over the colony.

MACE

(on the move)

We need to get back to the ship...
advise Master Yoda and the rest of
the council of what's going on
here.

Spotting a handful of corrupted colonists ahead at the forest's edge, Meesha motions with her hand for everyone to get down.

Everyone but R2L4, who hides behind a nearby tree, complies with the order.

KAMDAL

(whispering)

Where were these colonists when we got here?

MEESHA

(whispering)

On the holo-display earlier... the doctor... noted the sick colonists were sensitive to certain types of UV light... triggers a sort of catatonic state. During the day, they probably seek refuge from sunlight.

MACE

(whispering)

We'll need to take them out as quietly as possible...

MEESHA

(whispering)

I got this.

Meesha, lightsaber in hand, stands and ignites the green blade.

With a powerful spinning throw, she sends it like a boomerang at the corrupted colonists.

THWAP! BAP! WHACK! In a perfect throw, the corrupted colonists fall to the ground, either beheaded or cut in half entirely before the lightsaber arcs back to Meesha's hand.

A beat before GROWLING suddenly emanates from behind them.

ARKUS

Oh no...

MEESHA

Looks like we've got some unwanted attention anyway.

Turning towards the colony entrance, amethyst eyes start appearing before corrupted colonists pour out from spaces under the colony north block.

Mace's blue lightsaber blazes in an instant.

MACE

Take 'em down!

Arkus opens fire on the throng of attackers while Mace and Meesha jump ahead into the fray with lightsabers swinging.

Corrupted colonists fall in large numbers as a seemingly endless swarm bears down on them.

REVERSE ANGLE on the forest edge as the commotion draws the attention of even more corrupted colonists -- charging out of the woods on the squad's rear flank.

Meesha, sensing the attack from the forest, looks over her shoulder.

MEESHA

Kam! Look out!

Jumping back to Kamdal's position just in time, Meesha quickly takes down the attackers bearing down on them from the forest with her lightsaber.

A beat and the battle is over.

Corpses are strewn everywhere.

Mace jumps back to Kamdal, Meesha and R2L4's position in the field.

MEESHA (CONT'D)

Oh no...

CLOSE ON Meesha as she examines a BLOODY TEAR in her robes.

MACE

No... no, no, no. Meesha!

Meesha falls into Mace's arms while Kamdal kneels respectfully close by, placing a hand on Meesha's shoulder.

KAMDAL

Meesha...

Mace fumbles at Meesha's wound, but his efforts to help are in vain.

MEESHA

Master... you have to kill me.

MACE

(emotional)

No... No!

MEESHA
 (serenely touching Mace's
 cheek)
 You have to do it Master.

A beat before Meesha is WRACKED BY CONVULSIONS, Mace hugging her close.

Kamdal stands again and backs away.

MACE
 (stroking Meesha's hair)
 Meesha...

R2L4
 (alarmed)
 Beep. Whirrrr!

KAMDAL
 General. You need to step away...

Meesha is suddenly still.

A beat before Meesha's eye's fly open, now blazing with amethyst fire.

In an instant she's on her feet again, only not the mindless, rage driven monster that the other colonists had transformed into.

Igniting her lightsaber, Meesha swings at Kamdal but Mace intercepts the blow as his own lightsaber flashes to life just in time.

The two begin circling each other.

MEESHA
 Oh, Mace...

MACE
 Oh, Meesha. What has happened to you...

MEESHA
 An enlightenment that you will very soon, come to understand.

MACE
 You've been here before Meesha, and you beat it. You rejected it.

The two exchange routine lightsaber blows with Mace's intent clearly to parry while Meesha looks for the kill.

MEESHA

The rage... and the hatred...
feeling it course through you...
There's nothing like it... nothing.

MACE

Fight your feelings Meesha... they
betray you... you know it's the
dark side...

Meesha continues to test Mace who parries more of her blows.

MEESHA

I am the dark side.

Arkus, not wanting to open fire but keenly aware of his fragility in the face of a lightsaber, takes several steps away from the skirmish while keeping his blaster leveled at Meesha.

KAMDAL

Mace?

MACE

(gesturing with his free
hand to Kamdal)
Hold fire.

Another quick lightsaber exchange.

MEESHA

It's all suddenly so clear... you
are a fool Mace. The Jedi embrace
only the smallest fraction of the
power of the force.

MACE

There are avenues of the force my
Padawan... dark places unseen...
that are better left unexplored.

MEESHA

To so willfully embrace weakness...
and disadvantage when the glory of
the dark side is right there...
within your grasp.

MACE

With the force... one must conduct
themselves in a moral and ethical
manner... or lose everything.

MEESHA

Self imposed limitations... they
are the greatest barrier to
grasping the absolute power of the
force... and for what!?

Noting that Kamdal has put a safer distance between himself and Corrupted Meesha, Mace signals with a nod and Kamdal opens fire on Meesha.

Deflecting a few incoming bolts, Meesha struggles to lash back at Kamdal as Mace and his lightsaber require all of her attention.

Mace's blows come too fast and she can't handle both.

MEESHA (CONT'D)

You won't live to see the dawn
foolish Jedi!

Meesha force leaps away from the fray.

She looks back, briefly locking gaze with Mace, before disappearing into the forest.

Mace turns his attention back to Kamdal and R2L4.

MACE

I need you to take L4 and get back
to the ship --

KAMDAL

But sir, you're not staying out
here alone.

MACE

(handing Kamdal his
blaster rifle)

Don't worry about me... if you
can't get ahold of me once you've
made it to the ship, I want you to
clear orbit and advise the council
what's going on... we need to
contain this... outbreak.

Kamdal throws the extra rifle over his shoulder.

KAMDAL

Where are you going sir?

MACE

Hoopac's ridge.

TIME CUT:

EXT. ADOR - HOOPAC'S RIDGE - MINING OPERATION - NIGHT

Meesha steps from a rudimentary forest road into a vast clear-cut swath of land where giant trees have been leveled in order to mine the earth and rock below.

Several massive HAUL TRUCKS, EXCAVATORS, and LOGGING VEHICLES dot the site along with processing and maintenance buildings along the northern perimeter.

The site appears to have been recently and suddenly abandoned.

Meesha, closing her amethyst eyes and taking a deep breath, outstretches her arms to her sides.

MEESHA

I can feel you...

Opening her eyes again after a beat, Meesha force jumps west, across the entire clearing, where a freshly carved path leads back into the forest.

EXT. ADOR - FOREST PATH - NIGHT

Kamdal and R2L4, using light from the moons and the night sky to guide them, make their way quietly back along the forest path to the Troop Runner.

KAMDAL

Scron, Pallion, do you copy, over.

Silence.

R2L4

(concerned)

Whoooo.

KAMDAL

Yeah, I don't like it either L4.

EXT. ADOR COLONY - COMMUNICATION BUNKER - LANDING PAD - NIGHT

Rounding a turn, the forest path opens into clearing where the Troop Runner sits visible with its loading bay doors open wide.

A handful of corrupted colonists shamle about the clearing mindlessly.

Kamdal motions with hand gestures for R2L4 to follow and takes cover behind a large tree near the main path.

KAMDAL
 (whispering)
 Over here L4.

R2L4 complies.

KAMDAL (CONT'D)
 (whispering)
 We're going to need a distraction.

Kamdal pulls a GRENADE from his bandolier.

KAMDAL (CONT'D)
 (whispering)
 Follow my lead... when this grenade
 blows... we've got to get to the
 ship as fast as we can, close the
 bay doors, and contact Mace.

Kamdal twists the grenade and then hurls it into the clearing as far away from them and the Troop Runner as possible.

BOOM! The grenade EXPLODES and although it catches the attention of the corrupted colonists for a moment, it seems to have only alerted them to a threat as they GROWL and look about, spotting Kamdal and R2L4.

R2L4 begins moving towards the Troop Runner but stops abruptly at the sound of GROWLING from behind them.

KAMDAL (CONT'D)
 (turning around with
 blasters at the ready)
 Hell.

Corrupted colonists charge out of the woods and up the path behind Kamdal and L4.

KAMDAL (CONT'D)
 (shouting)
 E... chu... ta!

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! Kamdal opens fire with both blasters simultaneously, laying waste to his attackers before turning and charging into the field with guns still blazing.

KAMDAL (CONT'D)
 (shouting)
 Get to the ship L4... go, go, go!

Corrupted colonists come charging out of everywhere as Kamdal makes his way towards the Troop Runner, mowing down one after another.

L4, noticing that the attackers are completely oblivious to it, starts to make a commotion to distract them from Kamdal while also rolling towards the Troop Runner.

R2L4
(loudly)
Beep! Honk! Beep! Honk...

A bright nav-light comes on atop L4 with head spinning madly followed by a blow torch from its chassis igniting on and off.

Despite L4's effort, The corrupted colonists remain oblivious and continue to charge the frenzied Kamdal who readily mows them down.

CLICK! CLICK! CLICK! One of Kamdal's blasters suddenly runs out of ammo.

KAMDAL
(throwing down the
depleted blaster)
Get to the ship L4!

L4 gives up on being a distraction and continues toward the Troop Runner.

Kamdal, last blaster still blazing, charges towards the Troop Runner as well, attackers falling all around.

L4 reaches the ship and looks towards Kamdal.

Kamdal, almost to the ship, stops cold in his tracks as corrupted Scron and Pallion come charging at him.

CLICK! CLICK! CLICK! Out of ammo, Scron and Pallion barrel over Kamdal and the remaining corrupted colonists pile on.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. ADOR - STARLIT CLEARING - NIGHT

Corrupted Meesha steps into a pristine, starlit clearing with an imposing ANCIENT TEMPLE at it's center.

Visible in the temple's courtyard, a luminescent, half buried AMETHYST KYBER CRYSTAL juts up from the ground at an odd angle.

Meesha walks towards the monolithic crystal.

TIME CUT:

INT. ANCIENT TEMPLE - COURTYARD - NIGHT

Corrupted Meesha walks the perimeter of the courtyard, inspecting the kyber crystal curiously from afar before circling in with a caressing hand.

MEESHA

There was a time... when mothers
spoke of you in fables to their
children...

Looking up towards the jutting end of the crystal, something catches Misha's eye.

MEESHA (CONT'D)

Myaka the Corrupter... Traveler of
the Celestial Night...

With agility and grace Meesha climbs to the top of the Kyber Crystal where a palm sized SHARD caught her attention.

MEESHA (CONT'D)

Emissary of the Void...

CLINK! Using the pommel of her lightsaber, Meesha breaks the amethyst shard off into her hand.

MEESHA (CONT'D)

Herald of the Dark Force...

CLOSE ON the AMETHYST SHARD in Meesha's hand as she closes her grip around it.

EXT. ADOR - HOOPAC'S RIDGE - MINING OPERATION - NIGHT

Mace steps from the forested path into the clearing dotted with mining vehicles.

Kneeling down, he takes note of recent footprints in the dirt.

ZOOM IN on Mace as he puts a hand to his face, somewhat lost in thought.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. CORUSCANT - HIGH COUNCIL CHAMBER - DUSK

WIDE ON the grand circular chamber that is the Jedi Council where sunset falls across a vast urban cityscape through towering arched windows.

Wearing traditional Jedi robes, Mace Windu stands with hands behind his back, staring out over the scene in quiet contemplation.

INTO FRAME Master Yoda appears, joining Mace at the window as the sun dips down below the distant buildings on the horizon.

YODA

Adjourned hours ago the council session was.

MACE

Lately, I'm finding myself thinking back to my Padawan years... under Master Cyslin Myr... it was a simpler time back then... not just for us but for the Jedi Order as a whole.

YODA

Need to work so hard one did not, to sustain a more stable and lasting peace in the Republic.

MACE

Fewer and fewer it seems are the victories that can be won with the swing of a lightsaber.

YODA

Obfuscation and trickery the tools of the dark side now.

MACE

We must stay vigilant. I feel fault lines shifting in the force... a growing, deepening rift.

YODA

Corruption, greed, hunger for power... run deeply through the senate they do.

MACE

A storm is coming and I can't say that we're ready for it.

Mace turns and leaves silently through the council chamber doors.

YODA

(still looking out over the city)
A storm indeed...

EXT. CORUSCANT - OPEN SKYWALK - NIGHT

ANGLE OVER an open, elaborate and statue lined Coruscant skywalk running high up between two towering buildings.

A beat before Mace Windu appears, casually walking with purpose and familiarity under the stony gaze of Jedi knights past.

He approaches a narrower archway that leads into the adjoining building at the far end of the skywalk.

INT. CORUSCANT - BUILDING CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Entering the archway into the neighboring building, Mace walks towards the far end where another archway opens into a speeder parkade.

Approaching the far archway, Mace stops abruptly midway through the corridor.

Sensing that something is not quite right he removes his lightsaber from his belt and takes it in hand, his gaze remaining trained on the archway ahead.

MACE

(speaking to no one)
So... you think you can best the Master of the Jedi order?

Dressed in her black Sith robes, Ventress drops down from above the doorway into the corridor, blocking Mace from entering the parkade.

VENTRESS

I'm not entirely sure that I can...
but I'm quite confident that we
can.

REVERSE ANGLE as Meesha, adorned in black and green robes, steps into the corridor from the archway Mace just passed through, blocking any possible retreat.

Mace looks calmly over his shoulder at Meesha.

MEESHA

Mace Windu I presume... we've heard
a great deal about you.

Meesha, casually igniting her ruby red lightsaber, begins walking down the corridor towards the Jedi Master.

MACE

I'm afraid you have me at a
disadvantage.

MEESHA

Meesha of Holdoon. Nightsister and
Acolyte...

ANGLE ON Ventress as she leaps to Mace in a single bound, red lightsaber igniting over her head, as she seeks to land a heavy blow.

Mace's own blue lightsaber blazes on in an instant as he gestures towards Ventress with an outstretched palm, sending her flying back, right through the archway she came through and into a parked speeder.

Turning in the blink of an eye, Mace and Meesha's red and blue lightsabers violently lock together as their eyes do the same.

MEESHA (CONT'D)

...and soon to be Jedi slayer.

The two exchange a series of blows while neither breaks their gaze with the other.

Suddenly, jarringly, Mace shakes his head.

MACE SEES QUICK FLASHES OF MEESHA'S LIFE

-- A child running from a baker with stolen bread

- Sending the baker flying into the guards in the alley
- Ventress and the guards entering her home
- Her mother defending her to the death
- Ventress stealing her into the night

BACK TO SCENE.

Sensing his hesitation, Meesha, using the force, pushes Mace half way down the corridor toward Ventress.

Mace, managing to keep his footing in the backwards slide, readies for another spring attack from Ventress.

Ventress, shaking off her encounter with the parked speeder, prepares to jump back into the fight.

MACE

(to Meesha)

This Sith Neophyte is not your ally... Meesha of Holdoon.

MEESHA

And you are?

VENTRESS

Neophyte?

Recklessly, Ventress leaps once again to intercept Mace with a blow, but with a spinning duck and a gesture, he sends her crashing into Meesha, both of whom go careening down the corridor.

MACE

Your mother was killed and you were kidnapped... all as a direct result of her actions... she is your enemy Meesha.

Ventress and Meesha rise from the floor, Meesha mildly distracted by the Jedi Master's words.

VENTRESS

(scowling at Mace)

Pay him no mind... he doesn't even know you.

Mace turns, taking advantage of the now open archway and dashes into the parkade.

EXT. CORUSCANT - SPEEDER PARKADE - NIGHT

Meesha and Ventress enter through the archway into the speeder parkade where vehicles and columns stretch in rows to either side.

Both Nightsisters scan the parkade but Mace is nowhere to be seen.

Ventress motions for Meesha to investigate one speeder row while she takes the other.

CLOSE ON Mace as he lies face up underneath a speeder.

MACE

Explore your feelings Meesha...
search your mind... you know the
truth I speak of. She will be your
undoing.

ON VENTRESS as she drops down on her chest, scanning under the speeders as best she can for any sign of Mace.

Ventress's POV as she sees only pavement.

ON MEESHA as she follows Ventress's lead and also crouches down, looking under the nearby speeders.

Meesha's POV as she comes face to face with Mace under the speeder that's right in front of her.

The now animated speeder flies straight at Meesha who jumps high into the air avoiding it.

CRASHING violently into an opposite speeder and totaling them both, Meesha lands atop the wreckage, lightsaber blazing.

With a swift gesture Meesha brings the two speeders on either side of Mace crashing together in an attempt to crush him, forcing Mace to likewise jump up and land on wreckage, lightsaber also igniting.

MACE (CONT'D)

You're love for your mother... and
her love for you... they were
incredibly strong. Feel that bond
again... push through your pain and
suffering.

Performing a back flip, Meesha simultaneously sends the two wrecks she was just standing on right back at Mace who tumbles evasively to the side as they crash into the wall where he was standing.

Still in a crouch and looking up at the last possible second, Mace parries an incoming blow from an airborne Ventress who sends him tumbling hard into a column.

Dazed and slumped against the column, Mace looks up at Ventress and Meesha now standing over him.

Staring into Meesha's eyes, Mace turns off his lightsaber and tosses it aside, perhaps resigned to his fate.

Ventress, scowling with hatred, winds up a blow to finish the job.

MACE (CONT'D)
(eyes still locked with
Meesha)
She will always love you Meesha.

Ventress's brings her lightsaber down hard, but Meesha's blade unexpectedly intercepts it.

VENTRESS
(looking in shock at
Meesha)
What treachery is this?

Meesha strikes several hard blows against Ventress forcing her to back away from the Master of the Jedi order.

MEESHA
He's right... you killed my mother.

On her heels, Ventress is forced backwards, parrying blow after blow coming down on her.

MEESHA (CONT'D)
And now I'm going to do the same to
you.

As the exchange continues a speeder levitates into the air and Meesha sends it smashing down at Ventress who narrowly avoids it.

VENTRESS
Don't fall prey to his Jedi mind
tricks Meesha. Finish the job!

Another speeder rises into the air and Ventress again tumbles to the side just in time as it crashes down at her feet.

MEESHA
You used me as a pawn and you
killed my mother to do it.

As lightsaber blows rain down on her and speeders fly through the air, Ventress, having had enough, backflips off the ledge of the parkade, disappearing into the night.

Meesha peers out over the edge.

A beat before INTO FRAME Mace appears behind Meesha.

Meesha turns towards Mace.

WIDE ON the two of them as their eyes lock and then another beat before Meesha extinguishes her lightsaber.

END FLASHBACK.

R2L4 (V.O.)
 (over Mace's ear mic)
 Beep, Whirrr.

Startled back to reality, Mace taps his ear piece producing the small mic.

MACE
 L4! Am I ever glad to hear from
 you... Where's Kam?

R2L4 (V.O.)
 (sad noise)
 Whooo...

MACE
 Damn it... did you make it back to
 the ship? Is the ship intact?

R2L4
 (affirmative)
 Beep, boop!

Rising back up and wearing a grim expression, Mace looks to the path where Meesha leapt earlier.

MACE
 Ok, listen up L4.

TIME CUT:

EXT. ADOR COLONY - COMMUNICATION BUNKER - LANDING PAD - NIGHT

Across the clearing, the engines of the Troop Runner fire up.

R2L4 is briefly visible in the main deck astromech socket while the loading bay doors close.

As the doors seal up the Troop Runner slowly rises up from the landing pad and then flies off to the west.

EXT. ADOR - ANCIENT TEMPLE - NIGHT

Beyond the main entrance to the temple, the amethyst kyber crystal stands visible in the courtyard.

In front of the crystal, Meesha levitates, legs crossed and in a meditative state, just above the ground.

INTO FRAME Mace appears before the entrance, Meesha visible between his legs.

MEESHA
(eyes still closed)
You should not have come.

Reverse angle on Mace, with forest behind him.

MACE
I couldn't leave without you.

MEESHA
Then you shall stay here with me.

MACE
No, I think you'll come with me.

Mace becomes suddenly aware of movement and GROWLING from behind him.

Looking partially over his shoulder, he sees two corrupted colonists come charging out of the woods towards him.

A split second and his blue lightsaber ignites in his hand.

With two quick swings of his blue blade a severed head and torso fall at his feet.

A beat before more and louder GROWLING emanates from everywhere around him in the surrounding woods.

Looking back at Meesha he watches as her blazing AMETHYST LIGHTSABER ignites, floating vertically, just a few steps in front of her.

Angle from above as a horde of corrupted colonists pour from the forest towards Mace.

Simultaneously, Meesha's Amethyst Lightsaber flies to intercept him.

Mace, parrying blow after blow from the dancing amethyst lightsaber, dispatches attackers, one after another, all at a frenetic pace.

Having to deal with too much too fast, Mace looks to the trees for a reprieve and force leaps part way up a nearby conifer.

Meesha's lightsaber, not missing a beat, is back on him immediately as the corrupted colonists take time to rush to the tree's base.

Meesha, no longer cross legged, levitates higher into the sky, with arms outstretched.

MEESHA

(facing Mace)

You have to do better than that Jedi.

Unable to land a blow against the keen Jedi Master, Meesha resorts to alternate tactics.

Meesha's dancing lightsaber swings clean through the conifer just below Mace but before it can fall, Mace strikes it himself as well; once, and then twice, and then again higher up, swiftly jumping up the tree.

The logs from the tree come tumbling down, crushing many of the corrupted colonists below before Mace drops, landing atop the carnage in a crouch.

MEESHA (CONT'D)

Oh! How so very clever Jedi... but you only delay the inevitable --

Meesha's dancing lightsaber is on him again in a flash as he parries her blows and cuts down corrupted colonists in a macabre dance of his own.

MACE

Or perhaps you underestimate your opponent.

Suddenly, the Troop Runner's engines ROAR as the ship flies down over the trees near the Temple.

Mace taps his earpiece while he continues parrying lightsaber blows.

MACE (CONT'D)

L4, The crystal in the temple courtyard... I need you to hit it with everything you've got.

R2L4 (V.O.)
 (acknowledging)
 Beep, whirr, beep!

Meesha turns towards the Troop Runner with alarm.

MEESHA
 (raising a hand)
 No!

The amethyst lightsaber flies from Mace like a blaster bolt towards the threatening Troop Runner, but stops suddenly just before impact, vibrating in place.

CLOSE ON Mace with eyes closed and hand outstretched towards the amethyst lightsaber.

REVERSE ANGLE back to Meesha.

MEESHA (CONT'D)
 No!... Impossible!

INT. TROOP RUNNER - MAIN DECK - NIGHT

Close on R2L4 managing the Troop Runner entirely from the astromech slot on the main deck.

R2L4
 (angrily)
 Honk! Honk!

EXT. ADOR - ANCIENT TEMPLE - NIGHT

Wide on the Troop Runner as BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! The amethyst kyber crystal takes hit after hit before being obliterated, along with half the temple, causing an amethyst shockwave that tears across Ador.

Meesha, seemingly knocked unconscious by the wave, begins falling from the sky as the corrupted colonists simultaneously drop to the ground.

Having lost her hold on the amethyst lightsaber, it flies to Mace's hand before he force leaps, catching Meesha in his arms.

MACE
 Oh, Meesha...

The Troop Runner touches down behind Mace and Meesha and the loading bay doors open.

Mace begins to weep as he holds Meesha close.

A beat.

The sound of COUGHING resonates from nearby.

Looking up, Mace watches as several of the colonists rise from the ground, shaken and disoriented but with eyes returned to normal.

With a look of surprise, he gazes back down at Meesha who serenely opens her beautiful blue eyes.

MEESHA
(disoriented)
Master, why are you looking at me
like that?

MACE
(with his hand on her hair
and cheek)
By the Order's grace Meesha! I
thought I lost you... I thought we
lost you.

Meesha wipes a tear from Mace's cheek.

MEESHA
(smiling warmly)
I'm not going anywhere Master.

EXT. ADOR COLONY - COMMUNICATION BUNKER - LANDING PAD - DAWN

Wind blows over tall grass shining in the morning sun when suddenly INTO FRAME Kamdal sits up.

KAMDAL
(spitting)
What the heck have I been eating...

As Kamdal wipes his mouth in disgust, Scron and Pallion also rise INTO FRAME behind him, looking worse for wear.

SCRON
Where are we?

PALLION
(examining his bites and
lacerations)
I'm going to need a med kit.

Kamdal tosses a med kit to Pallion.

EXT. CORELLIAN COLONIZER - NIGHT

ESTABLISHING SHOT of a CORELLIAN COLONIZER, a massive republic ship, leaving orbit around Ador with it's two black moons visible in the distance.

INT. CORELLIAN COLONIZER - MEDICAL WING - NIGHT

Kamdal and Scron lie on medical beds while Pallion floats in a nearby Bacta Tank.

A medical droid manages a nearby data console.

Mace and Meesha stand as visitors nearby.

SCRON

So they say all three of us should be back on track within the next couple of days.

MACE

Well, that's good news because we just got word that our old friend Ventress has turned up in the Salaban system.

MEESHA

Yes... her and I have a score to settle.

KAMDAL

The Holocron... we need to get it back.

MACE

And we will... but right now you all need to rest.

INT. CORELLIAN COLONIZER - BRIEFING ROOM - NIGHT

As doors to the chamber slide open, Mace and Meesha enter, approach the edge of a holo-ring, and touch a control panel.

A hologram of YODA, OBI-WAN KENOBI, ANAKIN SKYWALKER and PLO KOON appears in the center of the ring.

YODA

For your safe return from Ador, grateful we are. Unfortunate though, the circumstances surrounding your mission were.

MACE

Many colonists lost their lives because of the corrupting force of the Emissary.

PLO KOON

You have done a great service to the sector. With the Emissary now destroyed the colony can pick up the pieces... rebuild, a fresh start.

MEESHA

While I was one with the Emissary, although I have little recollection of it, I modified my lightsaber with a fragment from it.

ANAKIN

You should destroy it...

MACE

Interestingly, it seems to enhance a Jedi's ability to... sense a weakness, a fault line in the force, as it relates to objects and the others around you.

OBI-WAN

Are you sensing any sort of disturbance... or ill effects from the shard?

MEESHA

The sense itself... seeing the fault lines within the force, seeing the weakness in others... it in itself in a way is a disturbance... but it is in no way detrimental and has proven beneficial.

YODA

The shard, for now you may keep. Beneficial indeed, knowledge of this ability may be, for the council as a whole to explore.

MACE

I agree. We should endeavor to understand it...

(looking over at Meesha)

But you need to be wary of it as well.

YODA

Insidious, the dark side can be.
Advise Master Windu immediately you
must, if a shift to the dark side
you feel.

MEESHA

I will Master Yoda.

EXT. VISCERON - THE SALABAN SYSTEM - NIGHT

PANNING DOWN through a sea of stars, Visseron, a black and
white world of fire and ice rises into frame.

A beat before a SITH DEVASTATOR jumps out of hyperspace on a
trajectory towards the planet.

INT. SITH DEVASTATOR - COCKPIT - NIGHT

Ventress and Bucket Head navigate the ship towards Visseron.

BUCKET HEAD

Engine three is in the yellow but
all other systems nominal.

VENTRESS

We'll be fine for now.

EXT. VISCERON - ICE CANYON - DAY

The Sith Devastator flies through a massive canyon, twice as
deep as it is wide and getting deeper by the moment.

The ship drops lower and lower, slowing down as the
surrounding terrain transforms into a darkening ice cavern.

INT. SITH DEVASTATOR - COCKPIT - DAY

Ventress cranes her head forward to better see through the
Devastator's canopy while Bucket Head throws some switches on
the console in front of it.

VENTRESS

Lights, Bucket Head.

BUCKET HEAD

(throwing a switch)
Roger that.

Reverse angle as the Devastator's navigation lights flare on revealing the front end of an ancient sith dreadnought that dwarfs any star destroyer.

VENTRESS

And there she is... still intact
after so many eons.

INT. GIGANTIC ICE CAVERN - DAY

The Devastator flies alongside the Dreadnought, revealing it's massive size, before flying under it and up into a rectangular cavity in its underside.

INT. SITH DREADNOUGHT - DAY

Ventress, followed by Bucket Head, walks the length of a dark chamber of vast proportions, ending at an ornate throne with a raised dais before it.

Producing the SITH HOLOCRON, Ventress places it in a slot atop the dais that fits it perfectly.

A beat before the Holocron sprouts lines of red luminescence that run throughout the chamber, up the walls and along the ceiling.

The sound of ancient engines and power generators firing up breaks the silence.

EXT. SITH DREADNOUGHT - DAY

WIDE ON the Dreadnought as after eons of slumber, lights burst on all over the massive ship in batches until the vessel is fully illuminated.

INT. SITH DREADNOUGHT - DAY

Ventress examines and caresses the magnificent Sith throne.

Taking a seat she begins laughing lightly to herself.

Covering her mouth with her hand as if to stifle it, she starts laughing into it even more loudly.

Removing her hand she starts laughing again, so loudly now that it echoes maddeningly through the entire chamber.

END PILOT