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Recap: The Mandalorian Season 1, Episode 8 - The Redemption

2019-12-29 14:00:00 by [Chris Compendio](#)

So anyway, they started blasting

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When looking at the individual episodes of a television show, especially with a property so carefully-managed like *Star Wars*, it's hard to find any sort of distinct authorship in the filmmaking of any of them. So imagine my surprise when I realized that Taika Waititi, of all people, was directing the season one finale of *The Mandalorian*.

I shouldn't be surprised by how perfect that turned out to be.

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After the [last episode's](#) cliffhanger left us all stressed out for nine days straight, this episode began in a very *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern*-like manner with the two Scout Troopers, fresh off of murdering poor Kuill and kidnapping The Child/Baby Yoda, having a casual convo. They joke about the brutality of Moff Gideon, comically miss a few simple shots, and give the Child a few punches; it's bizarre and a bit cartoony, but I suppose it helped to cool us down.

In comes IG-11, the Waititi-voiced assassin-droid-turned-nurse to the rescue. Sure, the droid is now programmed for nurturing and not for murdering, but murdering these Troopers was quite necessary to nurture the child. It's a satisfying scene, and it begins to solidify IG-11 as the real and quite possibly overpowered hero of the episode. Taika Waititi has never come across as someone with vanity, so I assume this was just him having fun with it.

Less fun and more grim is Giancarlo Esposito as Moff Gideon, who speaks with candor and enunciation not too much unlike Gus Fring. Whether he is using brute force or verbal threats, both techniques against his enemies are carried out with such precision in a way I really appreciated. To watch Gideon completely unravel Cara Dune, Greef Karga, and Mando (who we now know to be named Din Djarin) by reciting their backstories was quite thrilling.



It feels more like exposition, because rather than adding some footnotes and factoids about their characters, it enhances their development by justifying their character actions and decisions throughout the series—look to the case of Cara Dune, whose tough exterior and hatred for the Empire is explained with one line describing her background in Alderaan, adding context to everything we've seen of her before and making it all the more powerful.

And then IG-11 comes in to crash the party, offering a number of Stormtroopers with his own droid precision. It's a rousing battle sequence, but my only criticism is that it becomes hard to track the geography and placement of all of the characters, not to mention that I had no clue just how many troopers were on the field; were they really able to kill off every single one of them?

Gideon severely injures Din, and the group retreats. Enter the Incinerator Trooper, a unit that I found out later debuted in *The Force Unleashed* video game, and The Child finally gets a moment of Force badassery. With everyone but IG-11 leaving a dying Din by his own insistence, he finally allows his helmet to be removed, reminding us all that yes, that is in fact Pedro Pascal (most of the time) under the helmet. It's a wonderfully understated moment.



IG-11 heals Din with some bacta, and the group reconvenes in the underground tunnels, but to our disappointment, the rest of the Mandalorians have been apparently killed (though I certainly hope that most of them made it out) after the big skirmish in [episode 3](#). All who's left is the Armorer, who tells Din that the Child is his foundling, and that they are a clan of two—basically, season 2 will be about him finding the rest of his species. Din also receives his jetpack, but it is said that he isn't quite ready to use it yet.

As they make their escape through a lava tunnel, IG-11 makes a heroic sacrifice, walking through the lava and self-destructing in a way that made the whole scene look like the end of *Terminator 2*, while at the same time seemingly destroying Din's droidphobia. The final boss battle is Moff Gideon, who attacks the crew in his TIE Fighter, and the previous dialogue about Mando needing training for his jetpack is instantly moot when he decides to use it to crash the fighter with some explosives.

It was a thrilling 40-something minutes through and through, but the end was just Din, Cara, and Greef standing around with some generic wrap-up dialogue like the end of a sitcom episode. Din goes off on his way with the Child, not to be seen until [next fall](#). And of course, Moff Gideon predictably survives, but the use of the Darksaber was a truly shocking twist that adds a whole lot of intrigue for next season. Judging by his desire to capture Baby Yoda, his attire and armor, and his lightsaber-like weapon, I'm guessing that this dude is a Sith-wannabe.

And that's *The Mandalorian* season 1, which basically felt like a pilot season. It dipped in and out in terms of engagement, but it'll be a stellar binge for anyone who hasn't started it yet. Now I'll have to use this Disney+ subscription to go through all of *The Clone Wars* and *Rebels* to see what the hullabaloo over this Darksaber is.



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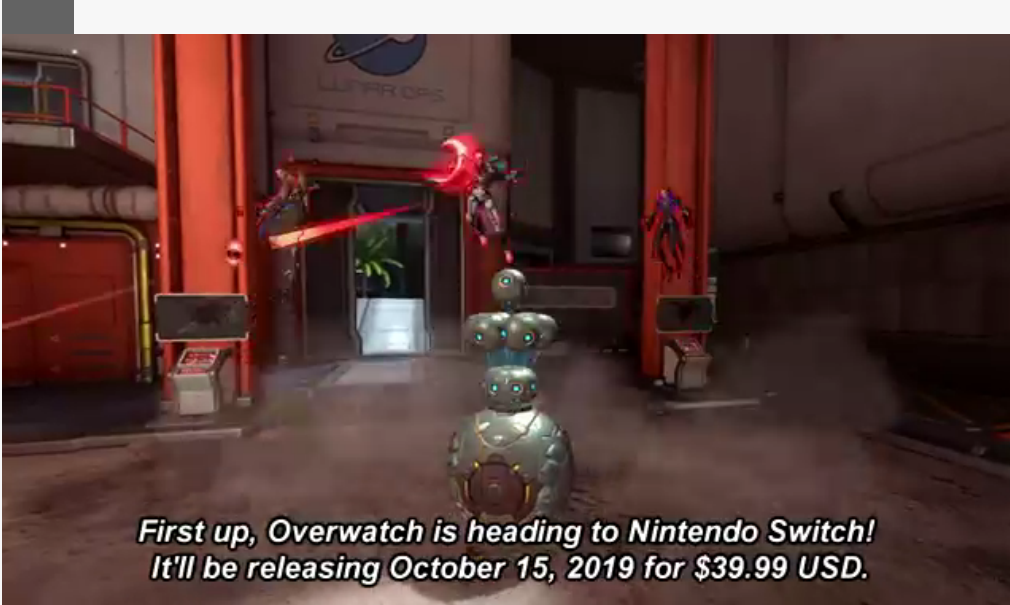
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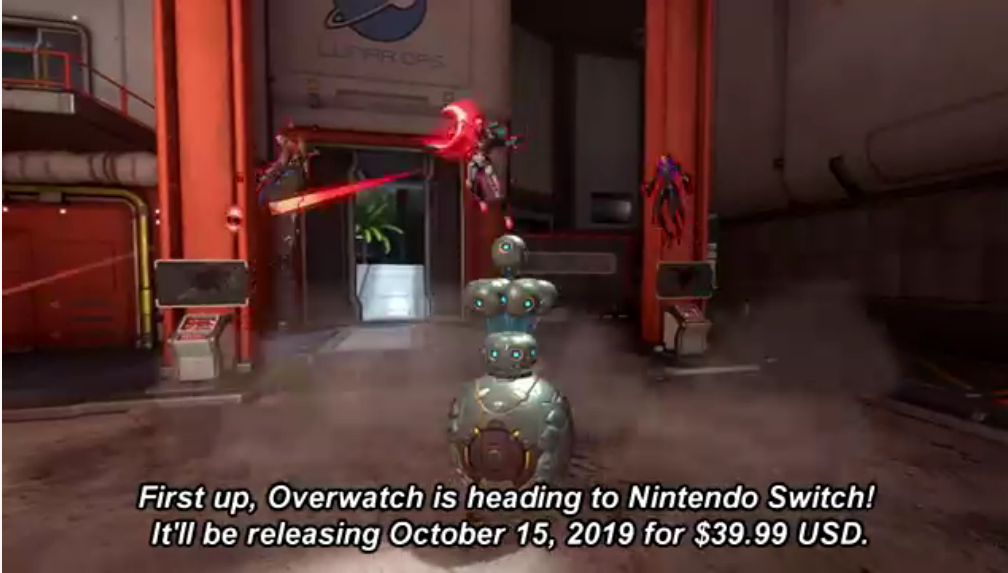
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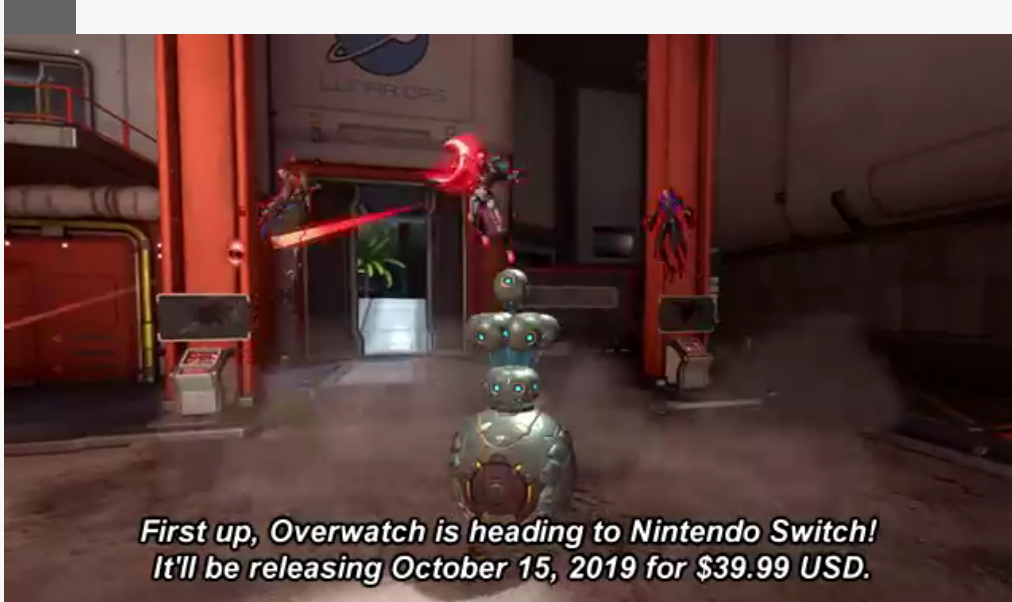
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Parasite wins Best Ensemble Cast at the Screen Actors Guild Awards

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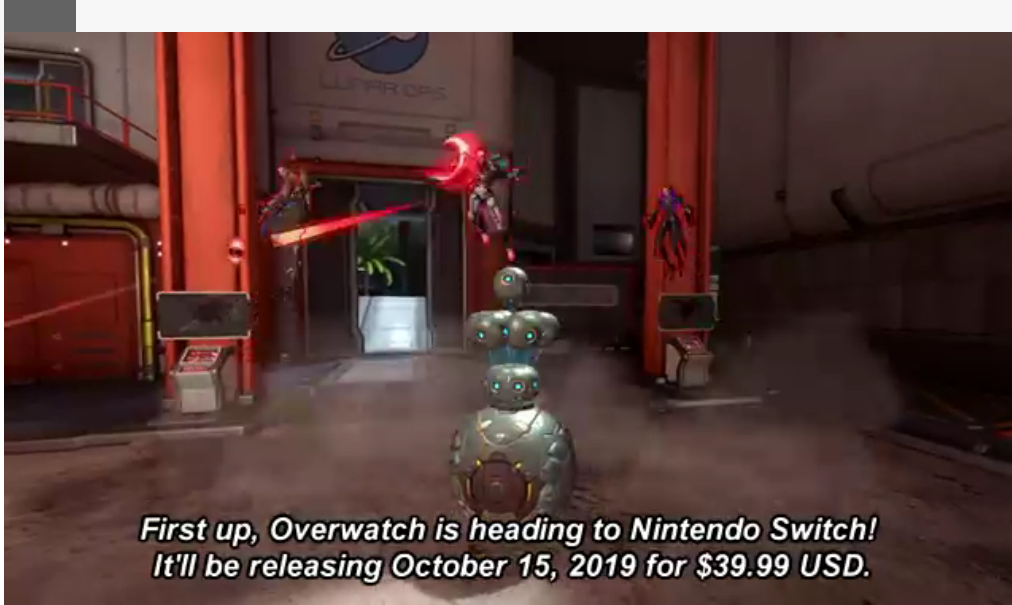
I don't have many regrets, but if I had one that's been kicking me for the past few months, it would be my review for *Parasite*. When I first saw the movie I enjoyed it, but didn't love it like most other critics, but the longer I've spent away from

the movie, the more and more I enjoy it. *Parasite* is a brilliant satire and the fact that it's been able to earn heaps of critical praise despite a very real language barrier is incredibly impressive. Consider this me formally saying that my opinion has changed on it and that now I'm a Bong fan for life. After all, it's not often that a foreign language picture is able to make history in the way that *Parasite* is currently doing.

Adding on to its historical importance, Bong Joon-Ho's thriller made history last night at the Screen Actor's Guild Awards not once, but twice. First, *Parasite* has become the first foreign language feature to be nominated for its most prized award, Best Ensemble Cast. Not only that, but *Parasite* was able to take that award, becoming not only the first South Korean movie to win a SAG award, but also the first foreign language movie ever to win the Best Ensemble Cast in the award's 26 year history. And like a

great dad, Bong Joon-Ho sat in the crowd with recording his cast accept the award with a smile beaming across his face.

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