

Recap: The Mandalorian Season 1, Episode 7 - The Reckoning

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Gang's all here



After episodes of world-building, character-building, and who-knows-what-else, *The Mandalorian* season one finally rounds back to the inciting incident for the show. I've been suspicious of this show gathering all of these prominent guest stars for one-offs, and the only solution seemed to be to bring them all back together for the end—I'm glad to have been right.

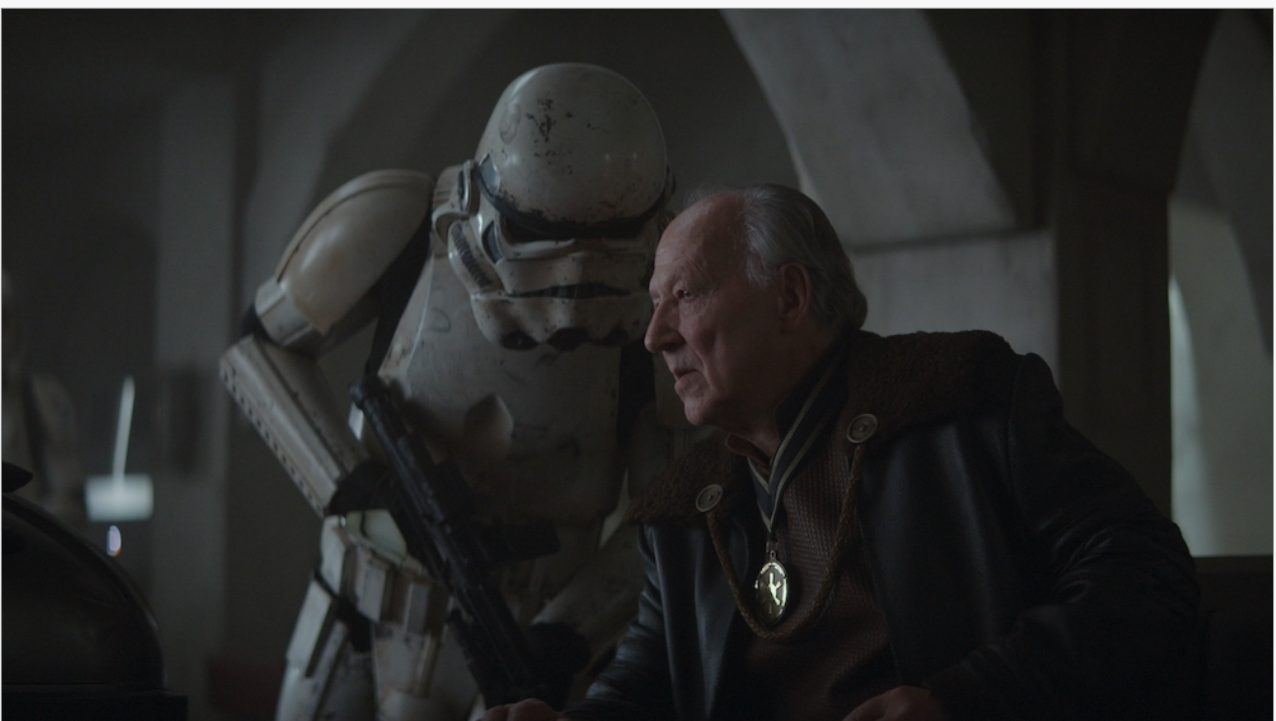
Unlike [last week's](#) crew of unbearable do-no-gooders, the squad that Mando bands together is much more palatable. It certainly helps that all of these characters earned that goodwill from their respective appearances. What results is a television episode that is genuinely thrilling and unpredictable.



Mando is hailed by returning character Greef Karga, played by Carl Weathers, who projects and enunciates as if he's eternally auditioning for Shakespeare in the Park. Werner Herzog's Client character has established a tiny Imperial stronghold in Karga's town due to Mando's actions, and Karga is enlisting Mando to off him with the Child/Baby Yoda as bait in exchange for clearing his name with the Guild.

Clearly a trap, Mando gathers some of his old buddies: first is Cara Dune (Gina Carano), whose biceps are essentially lethal weapons, jumping in as someone who has a grudge with anyone still affiliated with the Empire. Then there's Kuiil (Nick Nolte), Mando's first ally from the show, who also happened to repair and rehabilitate the assassin droid IG-11 (Taika Waititi).

The revelation of this is followed by what is probably too long a montage of Kuiil fixing up and training the robot, with some voice-over narration; this could've just been a line or two, but the show spends several minutes making sure that you know that this robot is a good boy now. Kuiil reluctantly joins the crew, and Mando reluctantly lets IG-11 hop on too.



We get some tension in the Razor Crest, with Mando being distrustful of the droid, Cara chewing Kuiil out for his previous servitude to the Empire, and Baby Yoda surprisingly getting dark by Force choking Cara as she competes in arm wrestling with Mando. There's a brief panic, and while Kuiil probably knows what is going on, the show strangely goes out of its way to avoid saying "the Force" out loud.

Once they land, they meet up with the over-acting Karga and a bunch of no-name bounty hunters, and a fragile alliance is formed. The crew gets attacked overnight by Mynocks, which felt like a strange pivot, but among the chaos, we see that Baby Yoda (as hinted in [episode two](#)) has some Force healing abilities.

It was this moment that prompted Karga to go back to whatever sense of honor he may have had, offering the no-named bounty hunters and informing the lot of them that it was a trap—now, they'll have to Stooze their way through some sort of scheme in order to kill Werner Herzog and get the Child safe. Seeing how this was the penultimate episode of the series, I was bracing myself for it all going wrong.



That indeed ended up being the case, but I was actually taken aback by how spectacular it all went up in flames. The entrance of Moff Gideon, with the swift execution of Herzog's character and his dirty and destitute Stormtroopers, provided some shock. And it's near-impossible to go wrong with Giancarlo Esposito, who seems to be appearing in every "prestige" show these days (*Better Call Saul*, *Westworld*, *The Boys*). How does that man have time?

And then there is Kuiil's race back to the Crest with the Child, a tense sequence for sure. We're so used to movies and television, Disney fare especially, reverting to cliché. This episode is shot (by returning director Deborah Chow) and edited expertly to keep the audience guessing, and the result is a harrowing and tragic cliffhanger.

Technically, one could probably skip episodes 5 and 6 in their entirety and still understand what's going on here. Like I've been saying, *The Mandalorian* doesn't feel anything like a traditional television show, instead taking an anthology or vignette approach. This episode definitely feels like modern "Golden Age" serial television, and as much as I like the traditional approach, I think that *The Mandalorian* benefits from feeling more contemporary.

As long as the baby is okay.



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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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