



Mando and the Baby Yoda/the Child are traveling with a bit more urgency now, aware that other bounty hunters are on their trail after a close call in the previous episode. After visiting a number of unfamiliar planets in the past, our duo, in need of ship repairs, finally lands on a world that even the most casual *Star Wars* viewers should recognize.

With almost the whole episode taking place on Tatooine, with special attention to Mos Eisley, *The Mandalorian* delves more into fan service than it had before. Mando lands in a shipyard tended by none other than Amy Sedaris, who is a bit out of place but still adds levity that the show has been missing; there's also those annoying little pit droids from *The Phantom Menace*.

In the cantina, the bar that previously kicked droids out ironically now has a droid as a bartender. Mando looks for work to pay off his repairs from Sedaris's character, but instead runs into young bounty hunter, aspiring guild member, and low-key moron Toro Calican (Jake Cannavale), who by the way, is sitting where Han Solo did in that infamous "Han shot first" scene. Subtle, I guess?



Calican is after mercenary Fennic Shand, played by *Mulan* and *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* star Ming-Na Wen, and he hopes that her capture will serve as a winning audition for the guild. Mando declines to help out, and then decides to do so, for some reason that didn't quite register to me.

Seriously, why? Sure, this Calican dude is a dope that doesn't seem much like a threat, but seeing how he's playing with the very organization that was out for his throat at literally the beginning of this very same episode, doesn't that indicate that things could go very awry down the road? You spent like, two entire minutes looking for work.

But whatever, Mando goes with it anyway. They get on speeder bikes and the show makes sure that you know that Calican saw Amy Sedaris with Baby Yoda, as if the episode wasn't telegraphing enough already. We get a scene of Mando negotiating with Tusken Raiders, an example of him using his brains over brawn (though I'm disappointed that they don't solely communicate with yells and holding spears above their heads), and they get into a *Hurt Locker*-style sniper stand off with Shand. Mando at one point even mentions that they have the high ground, which may be a coincidence, but I think that was Filoni thinking he was sly.



After another scene of the Mandalorian being all clever, using some flares to get to Ming-Na, we finally get to see space *Mulan*/Melinda May in action! For like, a full minute, that is. It's a short fight sequence that is hampered by the fact that it's in the dark, and it ends just when you think it's going to get really good.

Mando has to go get a slow-ass animal as transportation, giving Shand ample time to convince knucklehead Calican to defy logic and try to take on the heavily-armored and skilled Mandalorian. He shoots Shand unceremoniously, ridding him of any backup contingency should he fail to catch Mando, and ends up dying at Mando's hands in a stand-off where Mando employs the exact same flare maneuver.

So Mando and Baby Yoda, who has been coming across as nothing more than a prop for most of this series now, take their leave, and besides a shot of an unknown figure approaching Shand's dead(?) body, there's nothing to set up the story to come, rendering this episode pretty useless.

Look, I get it—this show is a Western and all, and I still very much dig the tone and style of these episodes. I never really imagined how a live-action *Star Wars* show would be structured, and perhaps going with a more traditional long-term arc with hour-long episodes might have been too standard. But it's hard to know if these episodes are really worth our times the more they do "anthology-style" episodes such as this one.

And how dare they waste Ming-Na Wen like that.



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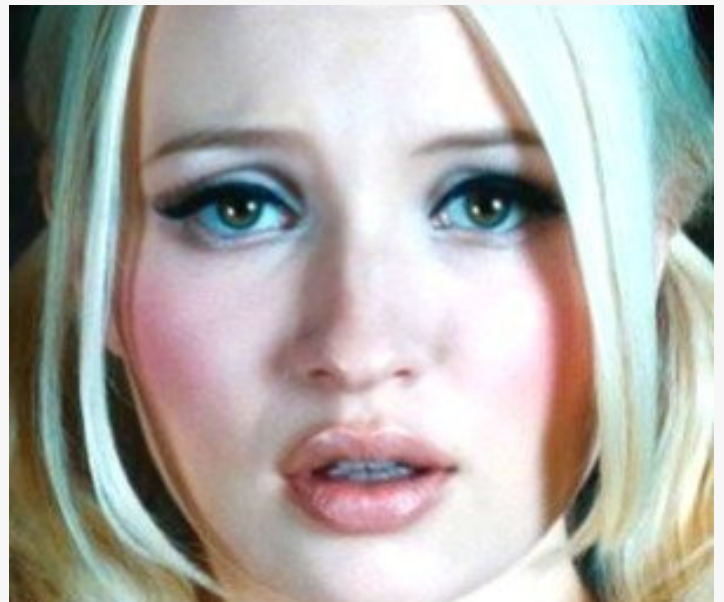
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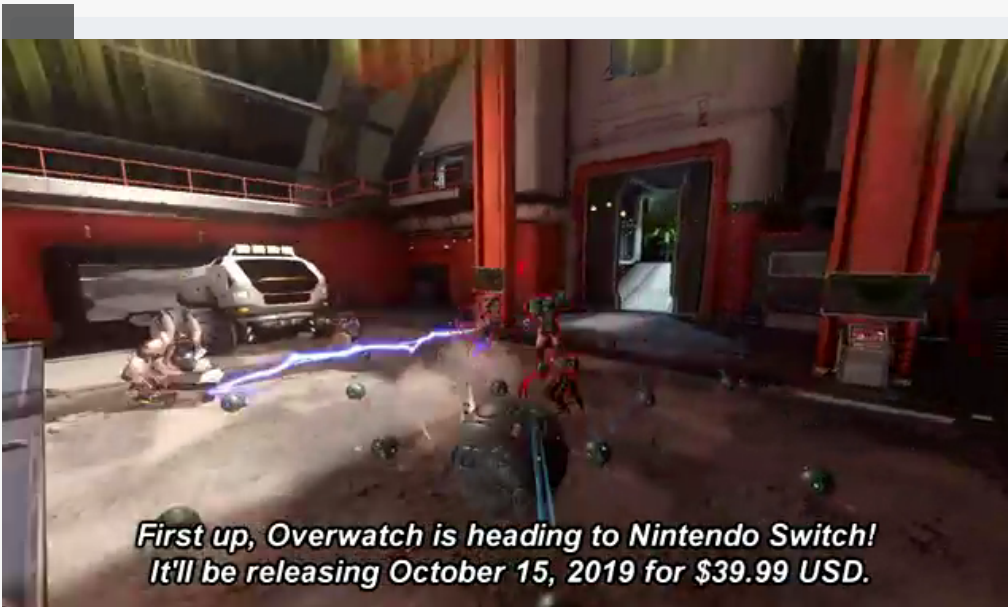
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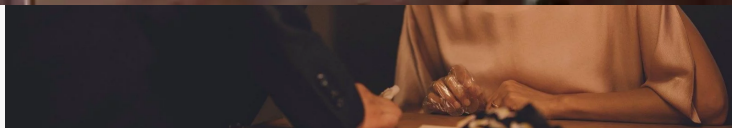
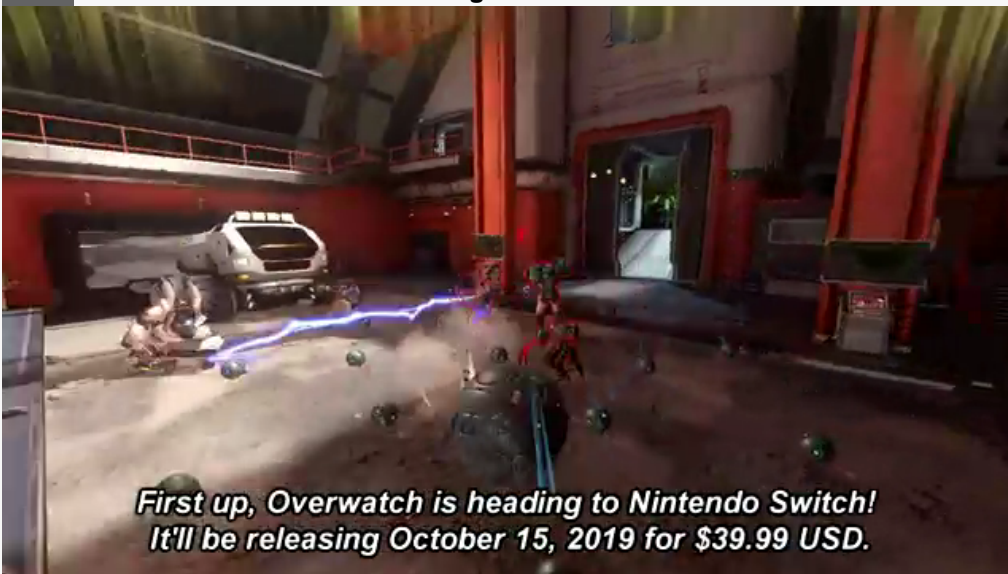
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Best Ensemble Screen Actors Guild Awards

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regrets, but if I had one that's 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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