

in the future? (Hint, hint.)

Anyway, I'm actually writing because of a cut scene in *Empire* that was not mentioned in your last issue. I'm talking about the scene in Luke's recovery room on Hoth when Luke reveals his feelings to Leia, and they almost kiss. You must know about this scene. I thought it was a fairly known lost *Empire* scene. I have even heard that part of this scene was in the original trailer. Was this scene too risqué to mention, did you forget about it, or am I just completely wrong in thinking that this was a cut scene?

ERICA CHAN San Antonio, TX

Erica, the scene is real—sorry we overlooked it. Pablo Hidalgo, internet content developer at Lucasfilm, points out that while the scene did not make Empire's final cut, it did end up in Marvel's comics adaptation of Empire, and even into an ESB coloring book. He also gave us a look at the fourth draft of Empire's screenplay, in which the near-kiss takes place right before Han Solo arrives in the medical center. In the scene, Luke explains that his near-death experience with the wampa "made me think about things," and puts his hand on Leia's cheek. Luke says, "Leia, you know how I feel about you..." They lock

eyes and their lips draw close, but just before they kiss, Artoo and Threepio burst in to visit Luke.

The moment is lost, and instead Leia tells Luke about the (cut) wampa attack, Luke tells Leia about his "feeling" that he needs to go away for a while, and Leia reacts angrily that Luke and Han are both planning on leaving. "First Han, now you—when am I going to learn not to count on anyone but myself," Leia asks, adding that she "was getting along just fine before I met you two moon jockeys." Soon after, the scene picks up with Han's familiar entrance, telling Luke he looks stronger than a Gundark—"that's

two you owe me, junior." By the end, Leia kisses Luke and storms out.

While cutting the near-kiss certainly makes sense in light of how the story developed, knowing what might have gone on before Han entered raises the tension level of the romantic triangle between Luke, Leia, and Han. Without the romantic moment Leia shared with Luke, it's easier to believe she kisses him solely to make Han jealous.

I WAS JUST HOPING you could clear up a problem with the information about the voice of Boba Fett. In *Insider* #49, you mention the character was voiced by Jason



(From left to right) Lauren Williams, Andrew Ramos, Erica Knight and Tony Ramos of Trona, California, smile for the camera.

from slot machines. While I always enjoy the character photos on the *Insider's* covers, I think it is great when you throw in a cover that is off-beat and whimsical. It reminds us that *Star Wars* is, among so many wonderful things, a playground for the imagination.

CHRISTOPHER HARBO
St. Peter, MN

I READ YOUR RECENT ARTICLE about the road trip to Death Valley with great interest. My ex-college roommate was a park ranger in Death Valley. I visited him several times. On one of these occasions his assignment was to assist a film crew shooting there. He told me to meet him and watch the fun, so we met up with him out near Desolation Canyon. He said the crew was very friendly and couldn't stop talking about the movie they

were working on, something called *Star Wars*.

We arrived at the site to find two or three 40-foot trucks. As we approached, a guy came out to meet us, and I remember thinking, "Here we go—he's going to chase us off." However, he seemed happy to see us and showed us around the site. All he could talk about was how great the movie would be—"I just saw the opening scene last week! This is going to be the best movie ever made!"

He took us over to a crate, really just a frame, about three feet tall. In it was what appeared to be a trashcan-sized device. He said, "What do think this is?" I thought it might be a light or something. It was all beat up—the paint was chipped and missing in places, scruffy looking. He says, "No, it's a robot!" Well, I look at that

thing and think, "What's he think I am, stupid?" So I smile back, nod and move on.

We watched them shoot the scene with the banthas. They had a hard time. The actor was supposed to run over and jump onto the animal, but it was so big, he kept slipping off. It was very comical. Also, the elephant's trunk kept coming out, almost on cue with the action call. They finally parked the elephant by a large rock so the actor could jump across to the saddle. After a while, we left.

The next day they were shooting the landspeeder. Well, that was even more comical. They were on the road that crosses the Devil's Golf Course, a formation of dry lake bed that looks like a large sponge. This time they had something that looked more like a robot, shiny and gold. But because of the camera angle they had only bothered with half the costume. Again, the "prop" speeder was very beat up. All the detail was painted on. I was told it was a '65 Mustang chassis with the shocks removed. I don't remember a mirror set-up as mentioned in the article, but as low an angle as they were shooting, they might not have needed it. Anyway, the vehicle had lost first and second gear, so they had to push it to get it moving. Then, stopping it seemed hard too!

Again we watched the circus for a while, then figured we had better things to do. We said thanks for allowing us to watch and left. As I walked away, I remember thinking, "Greatest movie ever? I

think I'll skip this one." I did go see the movie, not knowing it was that *Star Wars*. When R2-D2 came rolling down the corridor, I realized I was watching "The Greatest Movie Ever." Of course, I had to agree with the fellow who showed us around—I had made up my mind before the Star Destroyer had even come into view.

TOM EGILOFF Sacramento, CA



Aspiring Jedi Sue Dawe Underwood of San Diego, California, enjoys a few moments of meditation with R2-D2.