

CINEMATIC CLASSICS

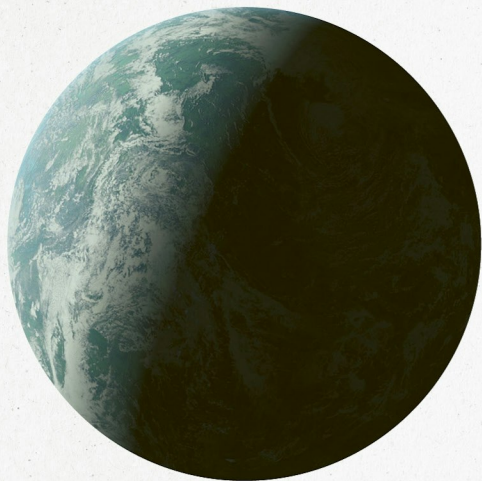
25TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION



**STAR
WARS**TM

EPISODE I

THE PHANTOM MENACE



The planet Naboo, as seen from orbit. BRIAN FLORA / DIGITAL MATTE PAINTING

For over a thousand years, the Galactic Republic had known peace, under the guidance of the Senate and its Supreme Chancellor, and aided by those noble guardians of truth and justice, the Knights of the Jedi Order.

But then a new danger arose. Angered by some of the Senate's decisions, a powerful group known as the Trade Federation invaded the peaceful world of Naboo. Their battleships orbited the planet, preventing any other starships from landing. They were determined to force the Senate to listen to their demands.

In the Republic capital on Coruscant, senators from across the galaxy debated the problem, and argued over how they should respond. But Chancellor Valorum knew that the matter was too urgent. Acting in secret, he sent two Jedi to Naboo to speak to the Trade Federation and reach an agreement.

One of the Jedi was a wise and experienced master named Qui-Gon Jinn, who had been a member of the Jedi Order for many years. The other was his youthful apprentice, or Padawan: Obi-Wan Kenobi, who had been raised in the great Jedi Temple on Coruscant.



A costume concept for the Jedi Knight, Qui-Gon Jinn. IAIN McCaig / PENCIL

The two Jedi took a small cruiser to Naboo and landed inside the huge Trade Federation battleship. There they were greeted by a silver protocol droid who took them to a small chamber to await the arrival of the head of the Trade Federation, Viceroy Nute Gunray.

'I have a bad feeling about this,' Obi-Wan told his master, sensing danger. The Jedi were able to use a mystical energy field known as the Force to heighten their abilities.



A costume concept for the Padawan, Obi-Wan Kenobi. IAIN McCAIG / MARKER

But Qui-Gon told his Padawan to stay focused. 'Keep your concentration here and now, where it belongs.'

Obi-Wan wondered how the viceroy would react to the arrival of two Jedi on his ship. Would he be frightened, or would he be angry? But Qui-Gon wasn't concerned. 'These Federation types are cowards,' he said. 'The negotiations will be short.'

Qui-Gon was correct. Nute Gunray was a coward. On the battleship's main bridge, the viceroy had just learned that the two ambassadors were Jedi. Shaking with fear, he sent a transmission to a mysterious figure known as Darth Sidious and asked him what to do.

'We must accelerate our plans. Begin landing your troops,' Sidious commanded. As for the Jedi, Sidious told the Viceroy to have them killed

immediately! Gunray was shocked, but he was even more afraid of Sidious than he was of the Jedi. He agreed to do as his master ordered.

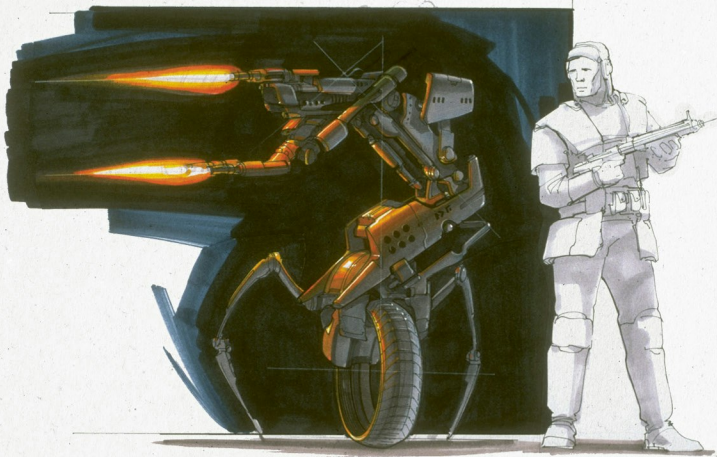
Without warning, a blast of laser fire destroyed the space cruiser that had brought the Jedi to Naboo. Sensing their peril, Qui-Gon and Obi-Wan leapt to their feet and drew their lightsabers. They each took a deep breath as deadly poison gas flooded into the sealed chamber.

Outside the locked room, a squad of Trade Federation battle droids had been sent to make sure that the Jedi were dead. But when the doors opened the Jedi burst out, using their lightsabers to repel the droids' blaster fire. With the help of the Force, they quickly defeated the droids and went in search of the treacherous viceroy.

On the bridge, Nute Gunray cowered in terror. As Obi-Wan fought off the battle droids, Qui-Gon used his lightsaber to try to cut through the thick metal blast door to the bridge.

Concept art for the Neimoidian Viceroy, Nute Gunray. IAIN McCAIG / MARKER





Concept art for droideka 'destroyer droids'. DOUG CHIANG / MARKER

But when they were attacked by a pair of heavily armed and shielded droidekas, the Jedi were forced to retreat.

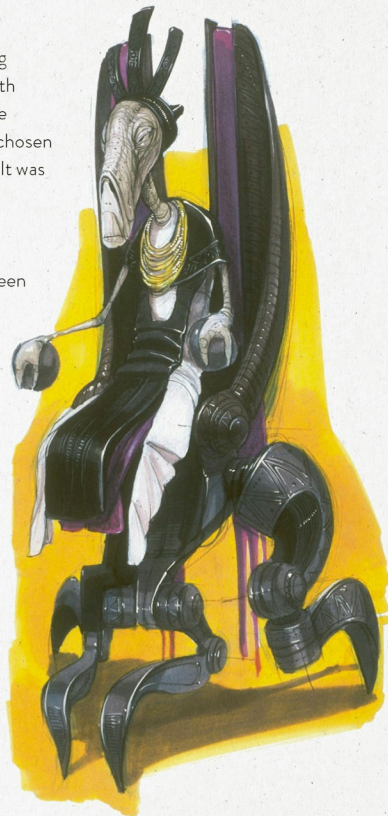
Sneaking through the ventilation shafts, the Jedi were able to reach the ship's hangar, where they found thousands of battle droids preparing to land on Naboo. Qui-Gon decided that they should slip aboard one of the landing craft, travel down to the planet and warn its people of the Trade Federation's plans.

'Well, you were right about one thing, Master,' Obi-Wan said with a smile. 'The negotiations were short.'

In the grand throne room of Naboo's Royal Palace, the young Queen Amidala was speaking with her advisors. Despite her humble background, Amidala had been chosen to rule by the people of Naboo. It was a responsibility that she took very seriously.

Viceroy Gunray had told the queen that the two Jedi never arrived on his ship. Now she had received a transmission from Naboo's Senator Palpatine, a very clever man whom the queen trusted completely. Palpatine said he was sure the Jedi had made it, but before he could say any more the signal was cut off.

'A communications disruption can only mean one thing,' insisted Governor Sio Bibble. 'Invasion!'

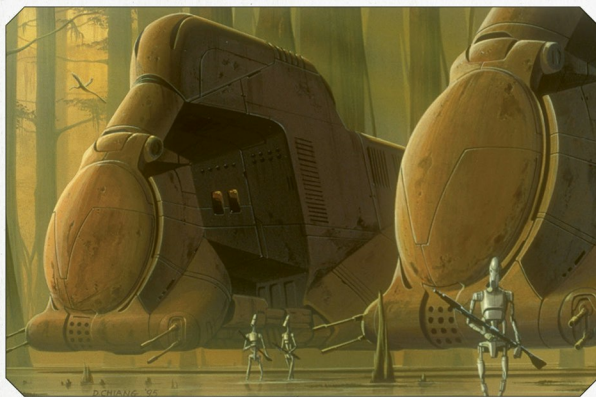


Concept for Nute Gunray featuring a Neimoidian walking chair. DOUG CHIANG / MARKER

But Queen Amidala was reluctant to believe him. 'The Federation would not dare go that far,' she said. 'I will not condone a course of action that will lead us to war.' Little did she know that the war had already come.

In the forests of Naboo, the droid army had begun landing their ships and unloading their huge multi-troop transports. The noise of their arrival terrified the local wildlife, sending herds of animals crashing through the trees. Running alongside them was Qui-Gon Jinn, who had stowed away aboard one of the droid ships.

Ahead of him Qui-Gon saw a peculiar being, waving his arms fearfully as he tried to avoid a speeding troop transport. Qui-Gon grabbed him and



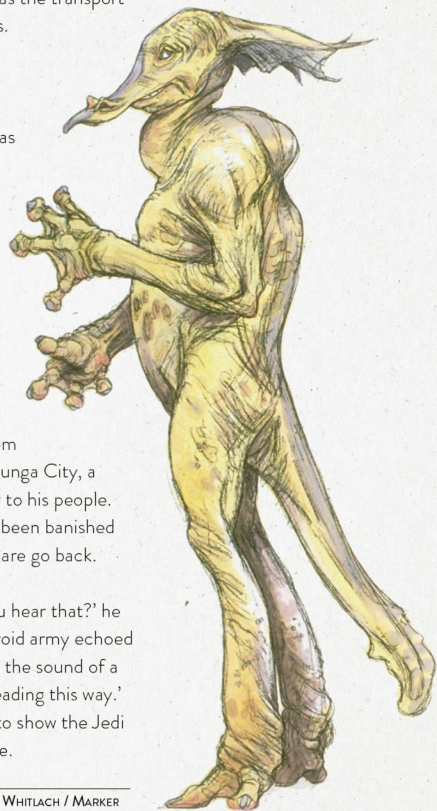
Trade Federation Multi Troop Transports on Naboo. DOUG CHIANG / ACRYLIC ON ILLUSTRATION BOARD

pushed him to the ground as the transport thundered over their heads.

The being was a Gungan, a long-eared native of the planet Naboo. His name was Jar Jar Binks, and he was very thankful to Qui-Gon for saving his life. He swore that from now on, he would be Qui-Gon's servant.

As Obi-Wan joined his master, Jar Jar informed them that the safest place to hide from the droid army would be Gunga City, a secret location known only to his people. Unfortunately, Jar Jar had been banished from the city and did not dare go back.

Qui-Gon frowned. 'Do you hear that?' he asked, as the roar of the droid army echoed through the forest. 'That is the sound of a thousand terrible things heading this way.' Jar Jar gulped and agreed to show the Jedi the way to his former home.



Concept for Jar Jar Binks. TERRY WHITLACH / MARKER