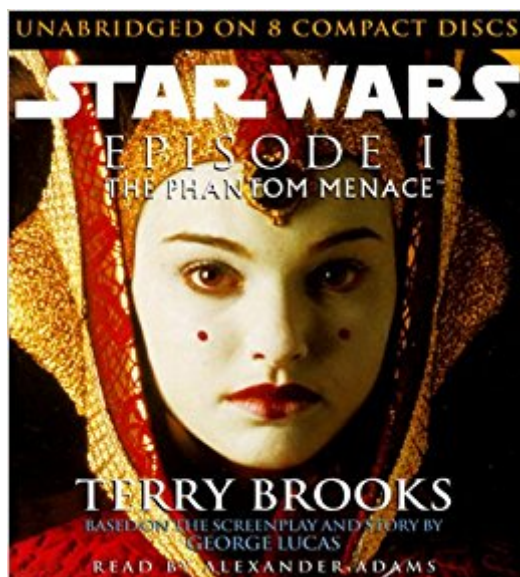


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Star Wars, Episode I - The Phantom Menace



Synopsis

In barren desert lands and seedy spaceports . . . in vast underwater cities and in the blackest depths of space . . . unfolds a tale of good and evil, of myth and magic, of innocence and power. At last the saga that captured the imagination of millions turns back in time to reveal its cloaked origins--the start of a legend--the story of STAR WARS. Based on the screenplay by George Lucas, this novel by master storyteller Terry Brooks probes the depths of one of the greatest tales of our time, providing rich detail and insight into the minds and motives of the characters--and shedding bold new light on Lucas' brilliant creation.~ ~ ~ A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away, an evil legacy long believed dead is stirring. Even the Jedi are caught by surprise, their attentions focused on the political unrest between the Trade Federation and the Republic. Now the dark side of the Force threatens to overwhelm the light, and only an ancient Jedi prophecy stands between hope and doom for the entire galaxy.~ ~ ~ On the desert world of Tatooine, far from the concerns of the Republic, a slave boy works by day and dreams by night--of being a Jedi Knight and one day traveling the stars to worlds he's only heard of in stories . . . of finding a way to win freedom from enslavement for himself and his beloved mother. His only hope lies in his extraordinary instincts and his strange gift for understanding the "rightness" of things, talents that allow him to be one of the best pod racers on the planet.~ ~ ~ In another part of the galaxy, the Jedi Knight Qui-Gon Jinn and his apprentice, young Obi-Wan Kenobi, are charged with the protection of Amidala, the young Queen of Naboo, as she seeks to end the siege of her planet by Trade Federation warships. It is this quest that brings Qui-Gon, Obi-Wan, and the Queen's beautiful young handmaiden to the sand-swept streets of Tatooine and the shop where the slave boy Anakin Skywalker toils and dreams. And it is this unexpected meeting that marks the beginning of the drama that will become legend . . . An incredible audio production complete with original Star Wars music and sound effects.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Alexander Adams, the actor who reads this full-length novelization of Star Wars, Episode I: The Phantom Menace, actually manages to do Jar Jar better than Jar Jar himself. Although he does sound a bit like a well-meaning dad doing an impression of the gangly amphibian for his kids, that added bit of restraint and unaffected goofiness actually works. Likewise, Adams's voice--all earnest and NPR-smooth--does good service to the rest of the cast, especially with Jedi teacher Qui-Gon Jinn and (surprisingly) Queen Amidala. (Only Anakin proves a little hard on the ears at first, perhaps a little too nasal.) The book's narrative receives the same competent treatment as the dialogue, with the added oomph of both John Williams's stirring score--woven in unobtrusively--and short suites of Lucasfilm sound effects that accompany every spike in the action, whether it's R2's beeping or the metallic bang of blaster fire. Modern marketing has made movie novelizations a necessary evil and hence suspect, but Terry Brooks proves a deft embellisher of Lucas's well-loved epic, skillfully splicing in scenes and dialogue to fill out the breakneck, foreshadowing-filled story line of Phantom Menace. But that shouldn't be surprising: Brooks has long been the equal or better of Lucas when it comes to storytelling, most notably in his long-lived Shannara series, which began with *The Sword of Shannara* back in 1977, the same year *Star Wars* hit theaters. (Running time: 9.5 hours over eight discs) --Paul Hughes

"Fans expecting a typical movie novelization--one that simply parrots the screenplay for Episode I--will be pleasantly surprised. Brooks, with Lucas' cooperation, has created something else altogether; a larger story that includes all of what you've seen onscreen, but also delves deeply into the history of the galaxy and the life and mind of Anakin Skywalker."--*The Star Wars Insider*"BREATHLESS . . . FILLED WITH ACTION FROM PAGE ONE."--*The New York Post*From the Paperback edition.

I'm going to come right out and say it without a lot of puttering around: I was disappointed by this book. That's not to say I didn't enjoy it for what it was, but it left a lot to be desired for me. I go into novelizations expecting more depth and

substance to the cinematic counterpart, and occasionally slightly better dialogue and expansion on pivotal events. That's not the case with this one. The biggest problem I had was the dialogue; nearly every spoken line was taken directly from the film. Read: cringeworthy (Anakin's especially, just as in the movie). I will admit that it was better to read it than hear it, so maybe that's why I was able to not roll my eyes as much. The book also suffers from repetitive descriptions. Do we really need to be told every other page that Panaka and Windu are dark-skinned? Or that Jar Jar has a "billed face"? Or be reminded of the characters' full names each time the scene changes? I may be speaking out of bias (because I've come to adore Qui-Gon and Padme), but I also felt that a few key scenes were glossed over too quickly. The rift between Qui-Gon and Obi-Wan when the Master decided to train Anakin, Qui-Gon's death and its impact on Obi-Wan and Anakin, and Anakin's separation from the mother he loved so fiercely; both were extremely important, yet with a few words they were over and done with, each character seemingly fine with life mere moments after the events. Obi-Wan at this point is still very much a slave to his emotions and that feeling of betrayal was something significant for him, even when Qui-Gon explained that he thought his Padawan ready to become a Knight. It also would have been nice to have seen Obi-Wan have more time to get a handle on his rage and grief at losing his Master and life-long friend, or to give Anakin a few paragraphs of struggling to overcome his separation anxiety from the only life he'd ever known and the only person he'd ever loved. Speaking of moving too quickly, I still don't like how fast Anakin's and Padme's relationship developed. Paralleling Rose and the Doctor's shift in affections changed in Doctor Who, one moment Anakin and Padme are friends, the next they're in love? I understand the love-at-first-sight motif and the love-stronger-than-anything device and their prevalence within Anakin's life story, but this book did nothing to ease that transition that made me scratch my head during the film. Although I do have several complaints, there are a few good things that I did like. My dislike of Jar Jar was lessened thanks to Brooks going deeper into his emotions and insecurities. I also greatly enjoyed Maul's appearances, brief as they were, because of the further insight afforded to him; I never really felt connected to him during the movie, so it's through the books that I've come to like him. Brooks didn't disappoint me on that front. Overall I felt that this particular attempt at a novelization fell short of what it could have been. If it had been given twenty additional pages of insight into the various characters and the emotional trauma they were subjected to throughout the

story I would have rated it higher. I don't know how much of that was because of contractual obligations or simply Brooks' style, but in the end it doesn't matter; this was a mediocre adaptation at best, sad to say.

While I am familiar with the story of the Phantom Menace, the novel did include enough details and additional scenes to make it interesting. Author Brooks did an admirable job describing the details. He even made the pod racing interesting, despite being my least favorite scene in the film. I read/listened to this book using immersion reading. The audio book did not feature either Marc Thompson or Jonathan Davis. It featured a new voice, Alexander Adams. Adams approached these from a more traditional, straight forward approach, reading the text and doing a few character voices. His Jar Jar was quite good and the narration was pleasant. Not much in the way of extra scenes, but the book does include a mini interview with the author and a great short story from James Luceno about Maul and a timeline of Star Wars books along with samples from books in different eras.

I was so excited to read this before the movie because I wanted to know what was going to happen and couldn't wait for the movie to come out. I was also impressed that unlike the Star Wars trilogy that had been released bound together, this actually read like a real book and not like a screenplay trying to pretend to be a book.

Not really sure why I decided to start reading Star Wars novels, this one seemed like a decent point to start. It was fun!

Amazing. Great movie for the entire family and glad these will continue on!

Love it!

There are extra scenes that are not in the movie, characters' thoughts are revealed and there is extra dialogue. I liked the movie but the book gives insights into characters, actions and scenes that are not possible in the movie. There is a good pace to the book and I found it enjoyable. This edition also has a short story Darth Maul: End Game. This expands Darth Maul's backstory and fills in gaps in the film with what he was doing 'offscreen'. In this story we see more of Darth Sidious and what he expects from Darth Maul. This is also an enjoyable story.

Many of the hundreds of reviews I've read on this book point out the flaws of the movie or express something of disappointment. The films themselves were forced to squish a lot of plot-themes into a relatively short time allocation. All of the characters have rich backgrounds, and for Lucas to pick and choose what highlights from those backgrounds he was to show in the movie was, in my opinion, a wise selection, if only for the sake of continuity and fluidity. It is not difficult to understand why Anakin was introduced so far into the movie- the story is not about him, at least not him alone. The ultimate theme is the struggle between good and evil, the balance between the light and the dark, heaven and hell- the abstract reality of the uniting of opposites- and the intimate relationship this has with the lives of the characters and the society in which their lives take place. I agree with many who say that the Star Wars saga is the myth of the technological age. I look forward to reading this novel, and the many more I have to look forward to will expand this modern myth to infinite depths. I wonder if Lucas will end up producing a follow-up trilogy to Luke's involvement?

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