

INT EMPEROR'S TOWER - THRONE ROOM

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Vader stalks the low-ceilinged area on the level below the throne, searching for Luke in the semi-darkness, his lightsaber held ready.

VADER

You cannot hide forever, Luke.

LUKE

I will not fight you.

VADER

Give yourself to the dark side. It is the only way you can save your friends. Yes, your thoughts betray you. Your feelings for them are strong. Especially for...

Vader stops and senses something. Luke closes his eyes and concentrates, with a hint of a smile. Vader's head turns, as if he smells an unfamiliar scent.

The Emperor sits up, looking concerned.

VADER

Sister! So... Leia is my daughter.

LUKE

Yes. We will never join the dark side. Why does the Emperor demand that you kill your own children? You were right that only together can we defeat him. It is not too late, Father. Join me. Join Leia.

EMPEROR (whispering)

Lord Vader?

The Emperor rises from his throne and stands at the top of the stairs.

EMPEROR (louder)

Lord Vader?

Vader backs out of the collapsed catwalk, and deactivates his lightsaber. Luke joins him, walking confidently, his deactivated lightsaber in his hand.

EMPEROR

What is the meaning of this? Lord Vader, kill this Jedi immediately.

LUKE

Can't you feel it, Emperor? My father has turned against you. You underestimated him.

The Emperor looks scared for a moment and then laughs.

Luke activates his lightsaber, calmly murderous. The Emperor raises his hands and bolts of electricity shoot out at Luke and Vader. Vader's lightsaber ignites and deflects the bolts into the floor and Luke does the same. Luke looks to his father and nods. He then somersaults up to the throne's platform. The Emperor turns, pumping electric bolts at each of them. Vader advances to the bottom of the stairs.

VADER

I am your servant, no longer, Palpatine. I have waited a long time for this.

Vader reaches out with a hand and the Emperor chokes, cutting off the electrical bolts. Luke, seeing his chance, rushes in for a killing blow. The Emperor waves his hand and Force pushes Luke across the platform and over the edge into the reactor shaft.

EMPEROR (choking)

Pitiful fool, you are not the first apprentice to betray me.

The Emperor snaps the Force choke with a hand wave and claps his hands together, creating a shock wave that knocks Vader down the stairs. Vader lands on one knee and looks up. He launches himself through the air, his lightsaber pointed at the Emperor. Before it can reach the Emperor, two crimson blades block it, a lightsaber having slid from each of the Emperor's sleeves.

Luke pulls himself up to the floor, re-ignites his lightsaber and runs toward his father. The Emperor and Vader are engaged in a furious lightsaber battle. The Emperor is using an entirely different form of dual lightsaber combat, one that uses lunges rather than swings and parries. Vader bats him away, but must give ground to protect himself.

Luke rejoins the fight, trying to box the Emperor in. But the old man is maniacal, forcing Vader to swing near Luke while keeping

them both on the defensive with outrageous thrusts. The Emperor is much more agile than he appears. Behind the three, space flashes green as the Death Star fires again and again at the Rebel fleet.

Vader and Luke back the Emperor to his throne as they learn how to work together. They coordinate their thrusts to keep the Emperor on the defensive and drive him back, step by step.

EMPEROR

Your family has always been your weakness,
Vader. Now it will be your undoing.

The Emperor leaps over Luke. Vader can do nothing with Luke blocking him from the Emperor. When the Emperor lands he does a complicated corkscrew attack on Luke with both lightsabers, aiming for his chest and legs. Luke parries the upper blow and leaps over the lower one. But this gives the Emperor an opening.

VADER

Luke, no!

The Emperor springs forward, using his elbows and lightsaber pommels to knock Luke over. Vader leaps to meet him before the Emperor's blades can cut down Luke as he falls. Vader buries his lightsaber in the Emperor's chest as the Emperor's blades slice through Vader's shoulder and chest armor. The Emperor topples to the deck, dead. Vader's respirator sparks and he crumples to the deck as Luke rushes over to him.