



The Empire Writes Back!

What if you were the star of the most famous movie in the world—and then you were exiled to the planet of the damned? It happened a short time ago in a galaxy not so far, far away. *Details* uncovers the secret correspondence between Mark “Luke Skywalker” Hamill and *Star Wars* creator George Lucas.

By JEFF MacGREGOR

Dearest George. I see in the papers that you are at last gearing up for the next chapter in our great intergalactic film saga. What wonderful news! Movie fans everywhere (and a few actors I could name, ha-ha!) have been impatiently awaiting this announcement for almost two decades. It's high time that the wholesome, exciting outer-space adventures of Luke, Leia, Han, and Obi-Wan were brought back to the big screen! No one knows better than I how busy you must have been these past sixteen years. Too busy even to answer my Christmas cards! For myself, I've been doing lots of legitimate theater since we last worked together (and getting unqualified raves, if I may say! Just last week the *Times-Picayune* wrote, “Hamill's charm remains undimmed by time or precipitous weight gain; his performance is every bit the toothsome equal of the prime rih au jus he accompanies”). I'm enclosing videotape copies of some feature films in which I've starred these past few years, if only to

remind you that I've broadened my range considerably since those innocent Skywalker days. Though my theatrical schedule is pretty hectic the next several months (next stop: Palatine, Illinois!), I'm sure I can make myself available for principal photography at your convenience. My agent is expecting your call in the next few days . . . please forward the contracts and script to him. I so look forward to working with you again, George! I don't mind telling you that *Star Wars* holds a special place in my heart, even in light of my many other successes. Between you and me, sometimes, late at night, after the applause has faded and the theater is dark and we've divvied up the tip jar with the busboys, it all seems so very long ago, and so far, far away.

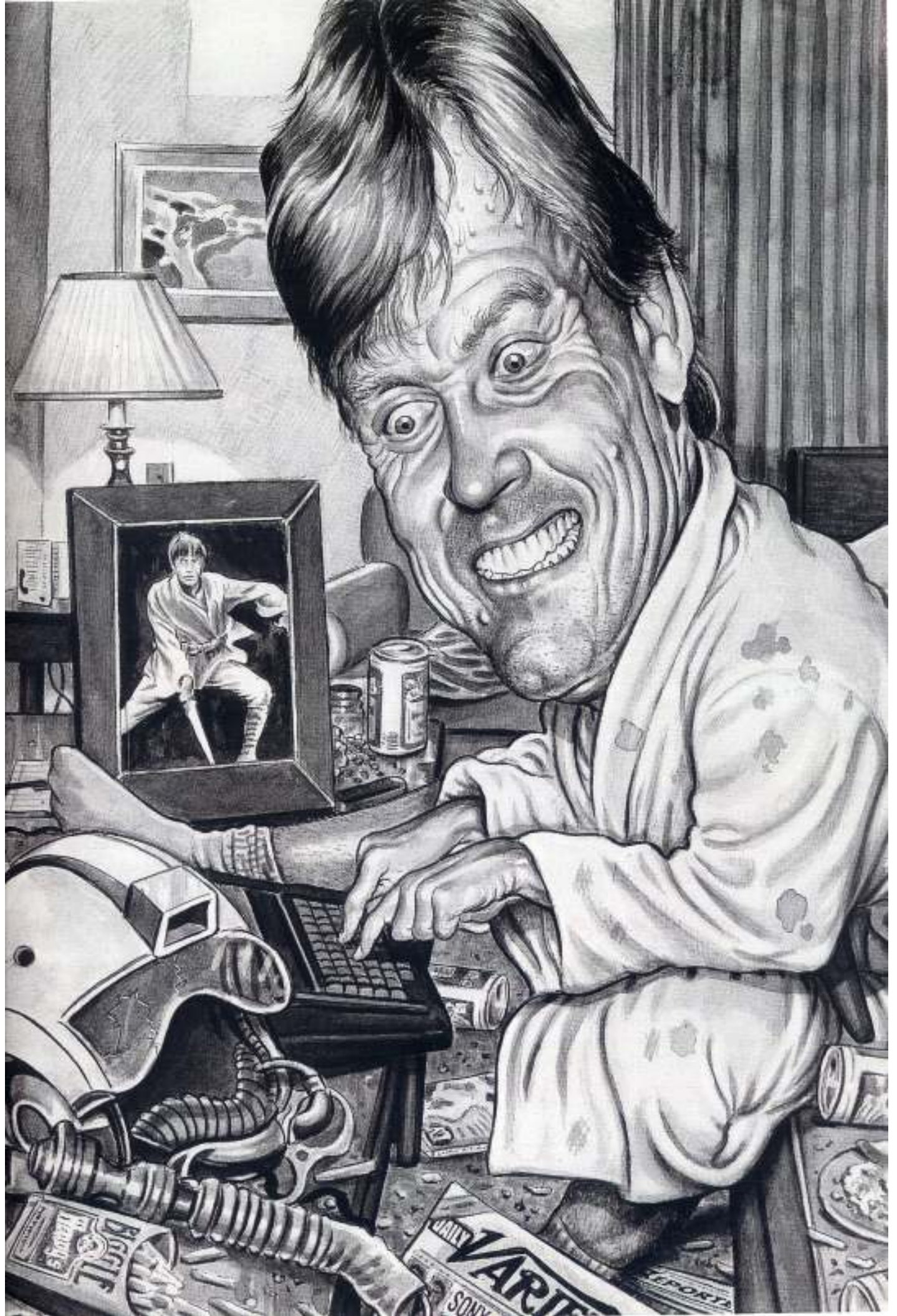
May the Force be with you!
Mark

Dear Mark, It was good to hear from you. Thanks for the videotapes. I hadn't seen *Corvette Summer* in years and had somehow missed *Black Magic Woman* and *Village of the Damned* altogether. In any

case, it's reassuring to know that you're still eligible for the Screen Actors Guild health plan. Sadly, though, the new movie is almost finished. I'm not sure where you read about it, but it must have been an old article, because we're in post-production already. The trailers have been in theaters for several months and are causing quite a stir. You see, Mark, this movie is a prequel to the ones in which you so ably starred, so your character hasn't even been born yet, storywise. I tried to get in touch with your agent to apprise him of this situation, but the only number I had for him rang at a Starbucks in Van Nuys. No hard feelings, I hope, and I wish you continued success in all your many endeavors. The Midwest is beautiful this time of year.

Best,
George Lucas

Dear George. You can imagine my surprise upon receiving your letter. Granted, the article I saw was perhaps a little dated (I was in a homeopath's waiting room in Escanaba, Michigan, having sustained a low groin injury while performing as



the lead tenor in the local production of *Naughty Marietta*), but I find it impossible to understand how you could make another *Star Wars* movie without Luke Skywalker. My many appearances at regional science-fiction conventions (StarKon, StarWest, ConStar, ConTrek, TrekKon, and SciWest-TrekStarCon I and III, to name a few) lead me to believe that Luke is the preeminent space-fantasy hero of our time. Thus, while I'm sure that you are indeed well under way with this latest installment, I have taken the liberty of forwarding a few story ideas that might allow for Luke's incorporation into the new picture. It's certainly not that I need the money or miss the global adulation... no, it is simply that I think society, now more than ever, needs a hero like Luke. Awaiting your answer, I send my best regards,

Mark Hamill

Mark. As I said, the new movie is all but finished. While I am not at liberty to reveal any story elements, I can tell you this: Ewan McGregor has the lead role. Very few of the original cast are returning as, again, the whole movie takes place years *before* Luke is born. All I can say is that we'll be concentrating on the early years of Anakin Skywalker/Darth Vader and Obi-Wan Kenobi—their Jedi training and so forth. I appreciate the time and effort you put into your suggestions, but frankly, we're not interested in a "flash-forward holographic musical number starring Luke and the dancing Banthas." Harrison and Carrie have made their peace with this, Mark, and I hope that you can, too.

George Lucas

George. "Very few" of the original cast? Just what the hell does that mean? I bet it's those goddamn droids, right? Probably Yoda, too. You always liked those fucking rubber puppets better than me! Harrison and Carrie have made their peace, huh? Well, they've both been working quite a bit, haven't they? Unlike some of us, who cling to our meager income only by endlessly touring the Rust Belt and performing *Equus* while the active seniors gum their Stroganoff! My God! I should have known you were playing favorites when you put Harrison in those cheesy *Indiana Jones*

pictures of yours. You two were always thick as thieves! And after all I did for you! Did I not win the battles of Yavin and Endor? Did I not struggle for months on the swamp planet Dagobah to learn the way of the Jedi? Did I not destroy the evil Death Star? Did I not give up my very hand for you and THEN BRING ABOUT THE DEATH OF MY OWN FATHER? Where's the damn gratitude, George? Maybe just a cameo? Why are you doing this to me?

Mark



Mark. As Yoda himself advises: "There is no why—clear your mind of questions." Stay away from the Dark Side, Mark.

G. Lucas

Mr. Lucas. It's bad enough that I'm being passed over for a project—a global franchise, you bearded ingrate—but please spare me the additional insult of the witless New Age quackery that passes for dialogue in your overwrought children's films. That you synthesized stolen ideas into a kind of sci-fi samurai/space cowboy soap opera does you little enough credit... don't compound the crime by pretending to believe in it, you hypocritical gasbag. I have my pride. At least I'm not flogging malt liquor on the dark planet like Lando Calrissian.

But I won't be held accountable for my actions if I don't at least get a walk-on in this thing, George. I have a lightsaber, you know. Don't make me use it.

M.H.

P.S. Just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed *Schindler's List*. Oh, no, wait, that was Spielberg, wasn't it? Well, still, your *Godfather* series was remarkable—oops, that was Coppola. I guess of all your contemporaries, you're the only one who's never made a movie for grown-ups.

Lister, Spaceboy. I'd hire Dorothy Hamill to play Luke Skywalker before I ever let you back on the lot. Stick to those self-deprecating guest shots on *The Simpsons*. Don't make me call my lawyers.

G. Lucas

George. As Ben Kenobi said to Vader: "If you strike me down, I shall become more powerful than you can possibly imagine." Plus, I know where you and your kids live. I'd hate to have to use the Force.

"Luke"

Dear Mr. Hamill. Pursuant to your ongoing correspondence with our client Mr. George Lucas, find enclosed a personal-services contract guaranteeing an as-yet-unspecified cameo appearance in the upcoming *Star Wars* film. The duration and nature of that appearance, and the remuneration for any services you provide shall be negotiated upon execution of that contract. Furthermore, the attached restraining order, duly executed by the State of California, stipulates that you never again write or call Mr. Lucas and that you maintain a distance of 500 feet from him in perpetuity. If you have any questions, contact us directly.

Cordially,

**Bouvier, Bickon, and Landseer
Attorneys-at-Law**

Dearest George. Sorry about the misunderstanding. Find enclosed two complimentary tickets to my upcoming production of *Arsenic and Old Lace* at the Yorba Linda dinner theater. Thanks for everything. I look forward to seeing you (from a distance, ha-ha!) in a few weeks.

Warmest regards,

Mark (Mr. Box Office) Hamill