STAR WARS: Iniquity
by Joe Mignano

[Narrator]

Yavin IV. One month after the destruction of the second Death Star.

[Echo, Yoda voice]

"Rejoice for those around you who transform into the Force... Train yourself to let go of everything you fear to lose."

[Anakin]

Yoda said those words to me once, when I was still in corporeal form. His words bothered me, because of my struggle. Someone I didn't want to lose was going to die, and I had to do <u>something</u>. I couldn't bear to listen to Yoda's words.

It was Palpatine who told me what I wanted to hear. And, naïve newcomer to the dark side that I was, I believed him. I thought it to be the truth. All of it. I truly felt that Darth Sidious and the mysterious secrets of the Sith could help me, and I was willing to do anything to ensure that I got that help. I believed everything he taught me, right down to believing that the Jedi I'd proudly been serving most of my life up to that point had been corrupted by evil, and that their elimination was the only way to ensure peace. In so doing, my wife would be saved, even at the cost of other lives. Back then, I didn't care how many lives would have to pay in order for her to live.

[Music change, somber mood]

When my mother died, I slaughtered dozens of Tusken raiders out of sheer anger. But that pales in comparison to the hundreds of Jedi that I went after with my Legion of troops, at the order of my new master, whom I blindly but willingly followed. I actually thought that I was doing the right thing; I didn't want to lose your mother like I'd lost mine.

Later, when I found out that you'd survived, and that I had a son, I only wanted to protect you, like I wanted to protect her, not destroy you. That was why I asked you to join me, when you found out for the first time that your father was still alive.

[Soft Vader breaths in background during last line above, mixed with background music, then short pause during music]

You made me realize my transgressions, Luke. You lifted the veil of the dark side that the Emperor covered my eyes with. You saved me. At the very end, when my "master" was about to destroy you, I couldn't bear to lose you, just like I couldn't bear Yoda's advice, the thought of letting your mother go. All of that played in my mind as I watched the lightning leap from his fingers toward you. I realized at that moment that I had lost everyone I'd loved in life, and that Sidious was responsible for it; I wasn't about to let that happen again.

I loved you son, I always did. But that can't undo all of the horrible things I've done. I betrayed the Jedi. I betrayed everyone.

[Narrator]

The spirit of Anakin Skywalker bowed his head, in utter remorse.

[Music change – Slow, haunting, slight crescendo]

[Narrator]

Luke stood up, and for the first time since he saw the face of his father in person, since Anakin's final few breaths, Luke looked into the eyes of the man that used to be Darth Vader.

"Father," Luke said. "I am a Jedi. I forgive you. And I love you."

Anakin's head rose again, shimmering in the glow of the living Force as he proudly gazed upon his son.

[Slight pause while music plays]

The Force spirits of Yoda and Obi Wan appeared a short distance away, nodding their approval. A farther distance away, the lush landscape and forrest that surrounded the fortress Luke was building to train new Jedi students also glowed. Luke Skywalker felt the overwhelming sense of joy in the force, as if thousands of souls suddenly cheered in celebration.

Now, the circle was truly complete, and balance had been restored.