

winterson.com

hi reddit

about me



who: jeremy
where: varies- see below
why: not
email: [me](#)
flickr: [here](#)

about you



where am i now

- To Thailand and back again [52 days ago](#)
- Hong Kong [74 days ago](#)
- Marlow, England [75 days ago](#)
- Oxford, England [80 days ago](#)
- Cornwall, England [88 days ago](#)
- London, England [89 days ago](#)
- To US and back again [91 days ago](#)
- Hong Kong [91 days ago](#)
- Shanghai [105 days ago](#)
- Into China and back again... [120 days ago](#)

[follow me on Twitter](#)

previous posts

- [winter sunrise](#)
- [world's shortest moving walkway?](#)
- [happy new year 2009!](#)
- [playing with small trucks is strictly forbidden](#)
- [the communist entertainment room around the world](#)

Be in Europe stay at home

Movies Series Music Travel Fashion Wholly subtitled in English

Video & Audio Transcripts

100% USA for Highest Quality 25% Off for 1st 3 Months!

Ads by Google

1 . 2 7 . 2 0 0 9

episode iii, the backstroke of the west redux

a couple of years ago when i was living in shanghai i bought a [revenge of the sith](#) dvd off the street. it came with hilariously mangled subtitles that ranged from somewhat close to what the actors were saying to far, far away...

i've been meaning to update the [blog post I wrote](#) ages ago to add in more scenes and upgrade the quality of the photos (they were digital camera pics and in some pics you can see my old tv) but of course you know how it goes- one [never has the time](#).

so now that it's chinese new year and i have a few days off work, i finally present to you as a new year's present...

episode iii, the backstroke of the west redux



the dvd menu looks pretty normal, aside from a rather evil-looking yoda.

[boooooooooooooooooooooom....](#)
[the yangyuan huating commerce hotel](#)
[no.8](#)
[mac attack](#)
[the flying condo](#)

blogs

thailand

- [andrew.biggs](#)
- [brain.farts](#)
- [corkscrew.balloon](#)
- [gnarly.kitty](#)
- [issan.style](#)
- [pisa's.random.rambling](#)
- [stuart's.life.and.travels](#)
- [thai.blogs](#)

other places

- [gaijin.smash](#)
- [wangjianshuo's.blog](#)
- [hong.kong.phooey](#)
- [lost.in.translation](#)
- [gomacau.blog](#)

friend blogs/sites

- [alexbrooke.com](#)
- [initiae](#)
- [marc.shultz.photography](#)

links

boredom killers

- [boing.boing](#)
- [daily.astronomy.pics](#)
- [digg](#)
- [how.stuff.works](#)
- [live.science](#)
- [internet.movie.database](#)
- [maddox](#)
- [metafilter](#)
- [reddit](#)
- [snopes](#)
- [the.onion](#)
- [the.smoking.gun](#)
- [the.straight.dope](#)
- [wikipedia](#)
- [ytmnd](#)
- [zug](#)

etc



to experience backstroke of the west one has to go to the subtitle menu and select 'english'.



the beginning scroll is mistranslated, even though the words are right up there on the screen.



star war (just one).



yup.

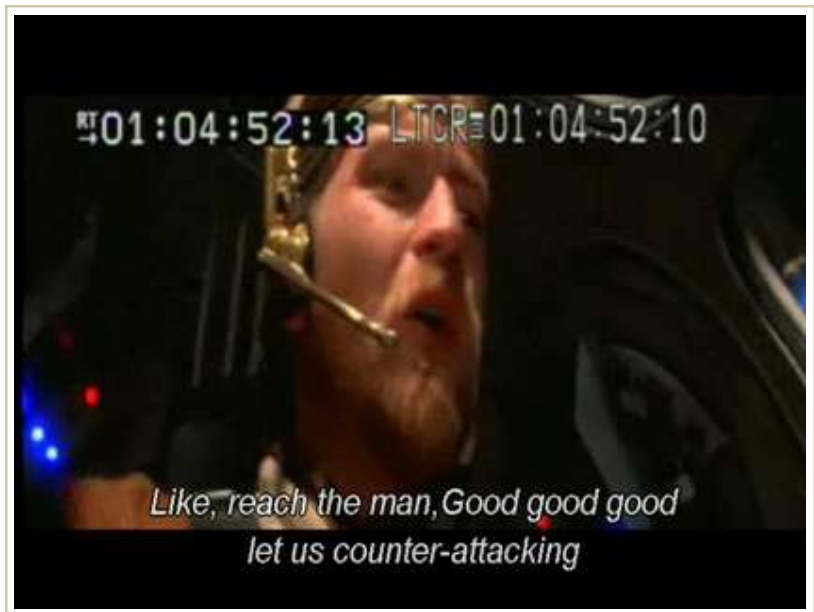
click play to see the full intro scroll.



anakin: "this is where the fun begins"



anonymous doomed fighter pilot: "they're all over me!"



obi-wan, space battle strategist.



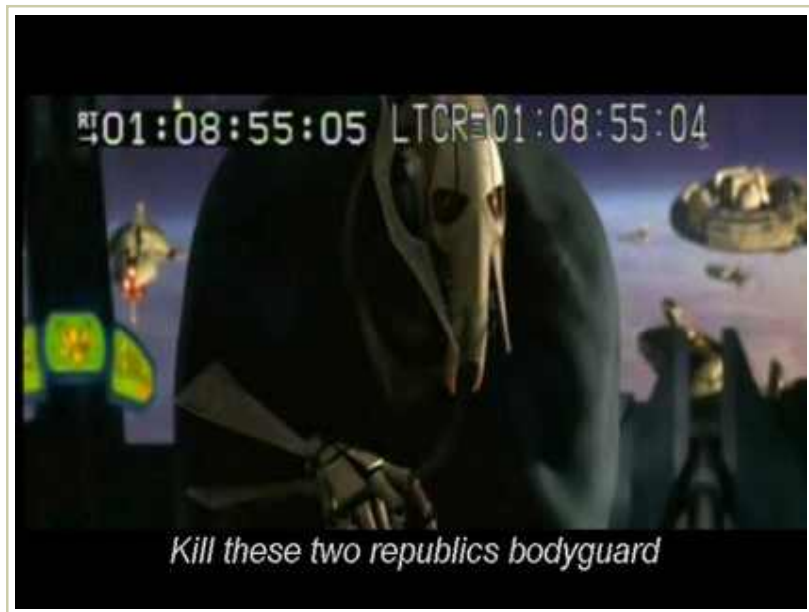
the battle was going well until the disgusting thing showed up.



obi-wan really hates that disgusting thing.



obi-wan teaches r2 how to beat the disgusting thing.



a quick pause in the caption commentary. for a while i couldn't figure out how the captions got so mangled- i thought maybe it was done by computer, but in some cases like this one the captions make sense but have no relation to what is going on. general greivous is actually saying, "just as count dooku predicted"...



...and here anakin says, "destroyers!" (meaning [destroyer droids](#)). after watching the movie again i figured out that a chinese pirate had originally tried to listen to the movie in english and wrote in chinese what he thought he heard- this was then translated back by machine into english. so in this case mr. pirate heard 'destroy' and thought anakin was talking about destroying the droids...



...and the best part of it all is that some stuff is completely made up, like in this case the droids in the elevator are just mumbling but mr. pirate decided to make something up about not pushing (which is extra-funny if you've ever lived in china!). so a random pirate in china decided on the fly that not only could he translate but he could *improve* on lucas's script. brilliant stuff, and this explains a lot of the seemingly random things.

anyway, back to the movie.



obi-wan grows impatient with r2.



the chancellor warns obi-wan and anakin that count dooku is... big.



obi-wan explains that it's no problem.



count dooku doesn't like anakin.



count dooku really doesn't like anakin.



chancellor palpatine explains something to anakin about obi-wan.



general grievous receives some bad news.



the general considers how he should punish his troops.



"anakin skywalker"



anakin taunts general grievous.



the general fires off a snappy comeback.



grievous orders his troops to turn anakin and obi-wan into filet-o-fishes.



yes, that's right, crispy golden brown batter!!!



a random hair styling tip?



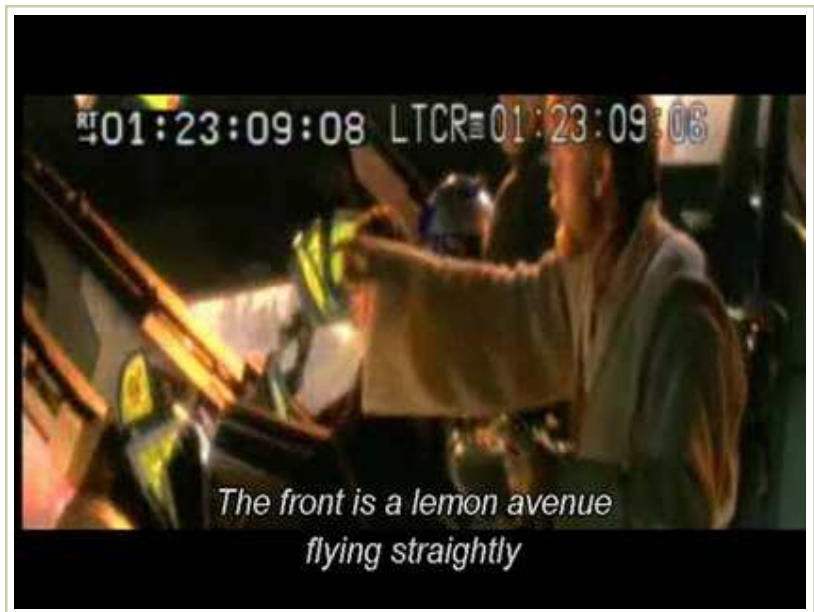
the translator liked elephants.



he liked elephants a lot.



oh no, anything but that!



we gonna rock down to, lemon avenue.



anakin is fed up with politicseeses.



anakin: "that's wonderful" (in reply to padme saying she is pregnant)



padme the homemaker.



hallelujah!



yoda: "premonitions? premonitions?"



that sounds like something yoda might actually say.



anakin is haunted by dreams.



the elephant needs anakin. um, yeah.



troopseses!



obi-wan asks anakin to spy on the chancellor while he does certain activities.



the chancellor explains to anakin that dath plagueis was strong and big.



and he became even stronger and bigger.



but he wasn't big or strong enough to stop himself from being killed by... land... so he could go to bed... yep.



anakin delivers some good news to obi-wan.



but obi-wan explains that anakin is allah gold and therefore there's a problem with him being part of the presbyterian church.



"may the force be with you"



obi-wan asks for directions.



anakin starts to fall out with the presbyterian church.



how romantic.



tion medon: "what brings you to our remote sanctuary?"



tion medon: "on the tenth level, thousands of battledroids"



obi-wan: "hello there!"



grievous tells his troops to back off, he'll take care of obi wan.



... but is it big?



the chancellor delivers anakin some bad news.



who you tryin' to get crazy with esse? don't you know i'm loco?



me am a civilization person too!



"i think chancellor palpatine is a sith lord."



mace windu reads the chancellor his rights.



palpatine: "no... no... no..."



palpatine: "unlimited... power!"



anakin bargains for the life of his cuckoldry.



palpatine: "darth vader"



"rise!"



the emporer tells anakin... umm... something.



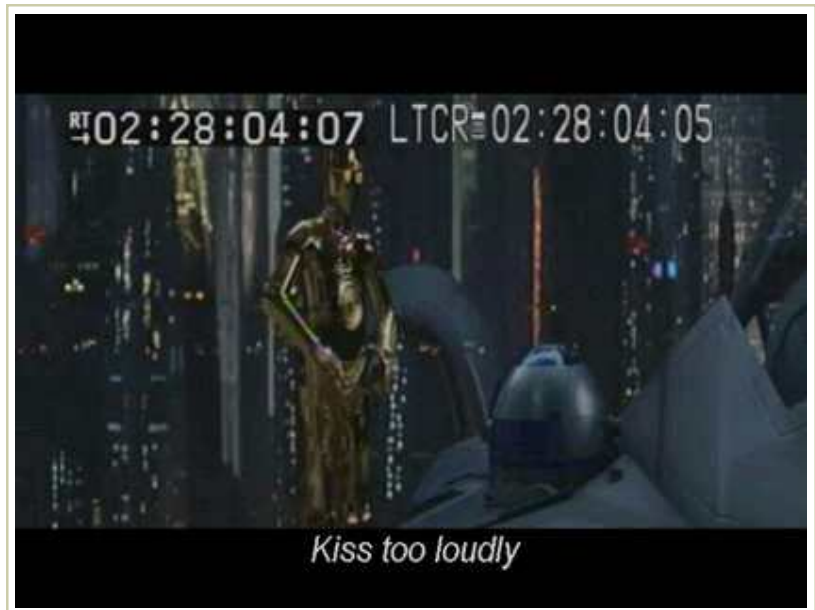
anakin: "i agree."



ok- the bottom conveniently



yoda: "goodbye chewbacca."



c3po tells the amorous couple to get a room.



padme: "no thank you, c3po."



obi-wan: "who could have done this?"



the emporer announces that he's going on workers' comp leave.



did he change it to, 'password'?



palpatine to anakin: "you have done well, my apprentice"



obi-wan tells yoda that anakin is like his brother... and an elephant too.



the dark side is gobbling.



padme: "3po will look after me."



how about a snickers?



padme confronts anakin- he has been sleeping around!



umm... uhh... what affair. that wasn't me. i barely know that girl.



anakin tells padme to forget the girl, because he is now both strong **and** big.



in fact anakin is positively huge and herculean.



padme doesn't want big and strong. she also doesn't want to walk on a road meant for running about.



lier!!!



padme: "no!!!"



obi-wan has heard enough.



yoda pays a not-so-friendly visit to palpatine's office.

this doesn't really have anything to do with backstroke of the west, but i love the way he walked into the room.



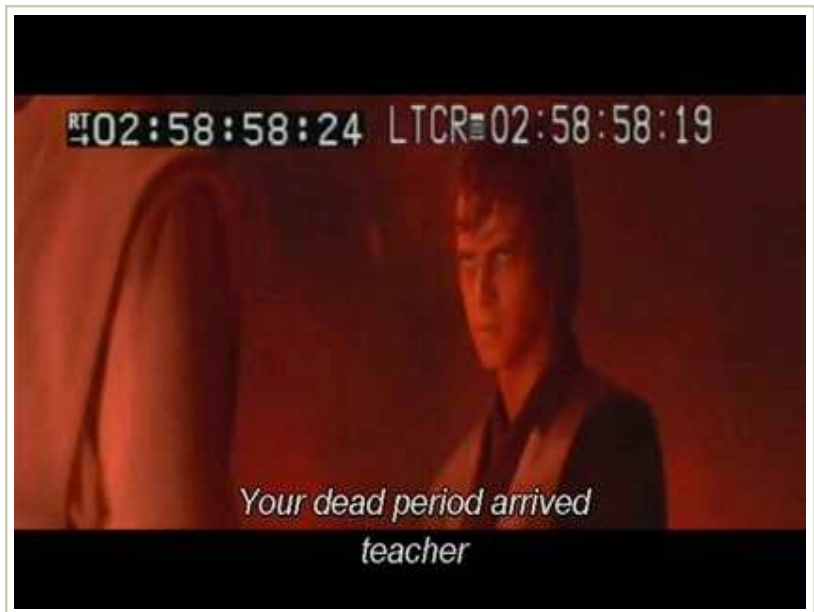
palpatine has a pet name for yoda.



palpatine now reveals his true ambitions- to be the biggest and strongest!



that's just too much for yoda- he's heading for tijuana.



meanwhile anakin taunts obi-wan...



...but obi-wan stands on higher ground...



...and proclaims his love.

watch it!

February 10, 2009 9:21 PM

 **an tone said...**

thanks for this, it's just hilarious--

I also recently watched a boot-leg Japanese TV drama on dvd which provided Chinese, English and Japanese subtitles. I believe the Japanese subtitle is a bonus track because it is all porn dialogues and has nothing to do with the drama.

February 18, 2009 5:18 PM

 **Jensaarai said...**

"Dot not want."

Epic. So many epic translations. This is amazing, I wish I could see the whole movie.

February 20, 2009 9:14 AM

 **jeremy said...**

Hi Jensaarai, someone uploaded the movie (in 10min clips) to Youtube. Check it out-
<http://www.youtube.com/user/BackstrokeOfTheWest>

February 20, 2009 9:46 AM

 **Total Ulla said...**

OMG - that was soo funny!!

March 15, 2009 6:23 AM

 **Anonymous said...**

Wow! ok ive never watched star wars...but thats fucken helarious!!! lol

March 19, 2009 8:00 PM

 **Freddie said...**

Someone tried mating the Backstroke of the West subtitles with Episode IV, with quite funny (and bizarrely homoerotic) results.

<http://dbowgett.users.btopenworld.com/>

March 25, 2009 7:43 AM

 **hennwei said...**

EPIC WIN! lol.

this is the best form of copy protection.. bad subs! lol!

March 26, 2009 2:16 PM

 **Lambda said...**

"I can't walk with you on a road meant for running about" is pretty deep.

Also, I love the way the plot is changed to the horrific consequences of the desire to be big and strong.

April 9, 2009 4:04 AM

 **Padme the Rice Getter said...**

Your Chinese-English-subtitled-English is my hero. <3 Allah and Presbyterian bring gold to the big and strong. Praise.

[April 16, 2009 2:35 AM](#)

 **Stalker Fairy said...**

I really really *love* your comments. Notably your "Big" comments:

"The dark power is more and more strong"

...but is it big?

I noticed in this new version, you took out an image or 2 about the Darth Plaguies. Was the "dint" comment still in this one?

[April 17, 2009 12:54 AM](#)

 **Anonymous said...**

Hey, just wanted to let you know:

The constant elephant comments are mangled Chinese translations. The phrase "it seems like" or "looks like" would be translated as "good elephant" if the translator went character by character, instead of for the actual meaning. The same is true for the over use of the word "fuck", in Chinese the character for "to do" means "fuck" in slang, therefore it often ends up mistranslated :)

[May 1, 2009 1:34 AM](#)

 **JP said...**

I saw the movie a couple of days ago. Constant fun - didn't get boring even after 2 hours. Thanks to Anonymous above for explaining the Good Elephant. As far as I could understand, Jedi is translated as "Hopeless Situation", Obi-Wan is called "Ratio Tile" and Anakin is called "Gold", sometimes "Allah Gold". I guess that depends on whether or not they include Skywalker.

[May 4, 2009 3:17 AM](#)

 **Jeremy said...**

@stalker fairy - thanks! i left out the dint part for this update as i thought it was a bit boring/weird but it's certainly still there in the dvd.

@anonymous - thanks for the 'elephant' explanation. makes sense!!!

[May 4, 2009 10:40 AM](#)

 **Anonymous said...**

this is hilarious! worth every cent in RMB

[May 6, 2009 9:30 PM](#)

 **TheSkorm said...**

I'm guessing that someone has converted it very roughly to Chinese (or other) and then a computer has translated it back to English.

[May 14, 2009 6:58 PM](#)

 **Anonymous said...**

I think this is the funniest thing I have ever seen!

[May 24, 2009 12:05 AM](#)

 **Anonymous said...**

I was laughing so hard that I was crying. What an improvement on some of the dialogue- priceless.

May 24, 2009 12:18 PM

 **Mr. Harris said...**

Ha ha! Do not want!

May 28, 2009 1:31 AM

 **Anonymous said...**

I have never laughed so hard at subtitles EVER. My favorite was "I was just made by the Presbyterian Church" Was he hiding from them and they just found him? Did he mean it literally, the Church created him? Were his parents were Presbyterian?

Love a good mystery.

Thank you SO much for sharing this!

May 29, 2009 8:08 AM

 **Anonymous said...**

haha! my friend told me about this an i love it! i wanna know where i can get a dvd like this!

June 22, 2009 1:57 PM

 **Anonymous said...**

Just wanted to say thank you very much for doing this, I'll be heading off to work with a massive grin today.

June 26, 2009 3:51 PM

 **Anonymous said...**

I saved this to my fav, reading it over and over again, and can't stop laughing... By the way, elephant wish big and strong no ratio tile do want :)

June 28, 2009 8:16 AM

 **Shalom said...**

Never. Gets. Old!

July 17, 2009 4:11 AM

 **luke said...**

this is HELLarious!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! holy shit mannn! esp the talks about elephants, behind, and other unimportant things =D

August 6, 2009 8:50 AM

 **Anonymous said...**

This is incredible indeed, sure makes me laugh!

Truly epic translations!

August 23, 2009 9:14 PM

 **Aneta ?ižmáriková aka Riddick said...**

This is un-fucking-believable! I laughed all along... fantastic... no words can express, how is THIS hilarious - together with your witty commentaries, Winterson ;-)

LOVED IT!

And I think my elephant ate my pudding meanwhile and only rice he left! Holy presbyterian church!! :-o

September 10, 2009 5:57 PM

 **Ruby said...**

Brilliantine!

There's no real word for 'no' in Chinese, so 'bu yao'- not want, or do not want, makes sense I guess- would sound brilliant in the original dramatic tone of voice though...

Also, 'skin' in Chinese is 'pi' (read 'p'), so probably some part of c3po's name.

Going to look up how to say "Presbyterian Church" in Chinese now though- could it be that the church actually was the dark side all along?

I love Chinglish. Endless accidental humour, created in translation rather than lost...

September 14, 2009 2:17 PM

 **%20 said...**

??????

Thee Dialog Continue.

2005????????????????????

In 2005, the backstroke of the west subtitler began a cross cultural conversation.

?2009????????

In 2009 a response has been formulated.

?20 ?? '????????' ???/?????????????????

/????/????????????????????????????????

%20 introduces 'Thee Backslacpkipng With Media' a media analysis/video archeological proof of concept of a future video media search/cut-up/recompile system as applied to all the Star Wars media distributed around the release of the movie which acted as the backdrop to the backstroke.

http://www.noneinc.com/tBSWM/tBSWM_FAQ.html

?????????????????DVD????????????????????????????????

To fully appreciate the subtitle subterfuge, you'll have to download the full DVD, but to gain an understanding of this presentation, preview any chapter here: (Play options are on the right)

http://www.noneinc.com/tBSWM/tBSWM_FAQ.html#DVDChapter

%20

???? Corporate Shill

????? Consumer Whore

???????? Wannabee Cultural Chimera

September 17, 2009 9:53 PM

[Post a Comment](#)

[<< Home](#)