

= Scar (The Lion King) =

Scar is a fictional character who appears in Walt Disney Pictures ' 32nd animated feature film , The Lion King (1994) . The character is voiced by English actor Jeremy Irons , while his singing voice is provided by both Irons and American actor Jim Cummings , the latter of whom was hired to replace Irons when the former damaged his singing voice . Subsequently , Scar makes minor appearances in the film 's sequel The Lion King II : Simba 's Pride (1998) and The Lion King 1 ½ (2004) , in both of which he is voiced entirely by Cummings , as well as appearing in the Broadway musical adaptation of the film , in which the role of Scar was originated by American actor John Vickery .

Scar was created by screenwriters Irene Mecchi , Jonathan Roberts and Linda Woolverton , and animated by Andreas Deja . The Pride Lands ' reclusive heir presumptive , Scar is introduced in the first film as the conniving uncle of Simba and jealous younger brother of Mufasa . Originally first @-@ in @-@ line to Mufasa 's throne until he is suddenly replaced by nephew Simba , Scar decides to lead an army of hyenas in his plot to usurp the throne by murdering Mufasa and exiling Simba , ultimately blaming his brother 's death on his innocent nephew . Loosely based on King Claudius , the antagonist of William Shakespeare 's play Hamlet , Scar 's villainy was additionally inspired by German politician Adolf Hitler . As the character 's supervising animator , Deja based Scar 's appearance on that of Irons himself , as well as the actor 's Academy Award @-@ winning performance as Claus von Bülow in the film Reversal of Fortune (1990) . Before Irons was cast , the directors had considered offering the role to actors Tim Curry and Malcolm McDowell .

As a character , Scar has garnered widespread acclaim from film critics , who greeted Irons ' performance with equal enthusiasm . However , Scar 's violence , dark color palette and allegedly effeminate mannerisms were initially met with mild controversy , perceived by some as racist and homophobic . Nevertheless , Scar continues to be revered as one of Disney 's greatest villains by various media publications , topping The Huffington Post 's list and ranking within the top ten of similar lists published by Yahoo ! Movies , the Orlando Sentinel , E ! and CNN . Scar has also been ranked among the greatest villains in film history by Digital Spy and Entertainment Weekly .

= = Development = =

= = = Conception and influences = = =

The Lion King was first conceived in 1988 . The film was eventually pitched to Disney executives , one of whom was among the first to observe similarities between author Thomas M. Disch 's treatment and William Shakespeare 's play Hamlet . Although first citing these similarities as initially unintentional , director Rob Minkoff always felt that it was essential " to anchor [the film] with something familiar " . As directors , Minkoff and Roger Allers aspired to create " an animal picture based in a more natural setting , " describing the film as " More true @-@ life adventure than mythical epic . " Although not the first Disney film to have been inspired by Shakespeare 's work , The Lion King remains the studio 's most prominent example due to close parallels between its characters and Hamlet , while both stories revolve around main characters who struggle to come to terms with the reality that they must confront their treacherous uncles and avenge their fathers ' deaths . Scar is based on King Claudius , the antagonist of Hamlet . According to Slate , while Claudius is mostly " a second @-@ rate schemer ... consumed by anxiety and guilt , " Scar very much " delight [s] in his monstrosity ; " both characters are motivated by jealousy . Meanwhile , The Week observed that although both characters ultimately die , Claudius is killed by protagonist Hamlet while Scar dies " at the hand of his former hyena minions , and not Simba himself . " Additionally , the character shares similarities with Iago from Shakespeare 's play Othello ; both antagonists are skilled in exploiting their victims ' fears .

The original plot of The Lion King revolved around an ongoing rivalry between lions and baboons ; Scar , a baboon himself , was their leader . When this plot was abandoned , Scar was re @-@ written into a rogue lion , thus lacking any blood relation to Mufasa and Simba . Eventually , the

writers felt that making Scar and Mufasa brothers would ultimately enhance the story by making it more interesting . An abandoned character , at one point Scar owned a pet python as a sidekick . Because the film was originally intended to be much more adult @-@ oriented , Scar was to have become infatuated with Simba 's childhood friend and eventual love interest Nala , wanting the young lioness to rule alongside him as his queen and consequentially banishing the character when she refuses . This concept was to have been further explored during a reprise of Scar 's song " Be Prepared " , but both the idea and the song were ultimately completely removed from the film because they were deemed too " creepy " . To further emphasize the character 's villainy and tyranny , the writers loosely based Scar on German politician Adolf Hitler . According to The Jerusalem Post , Scar 's song " Be Prepared " " features goose @-@ stepping hyenas in a formation reminiscent of a Nuremberg rally . " This idea was first suggested by story artist Jorgen Klubien .

According to the directors , " [a] patronizing quality " was vital to Scar 's role in the film . Minkoff told the Los Angeles Times , " When Scar puts the guilt trip on Simba , that 's an intense idea ... probably something that is not typical of the other Disney pictures , in terms of what the villain does . " Additionally , Scar serves as a departure from previous Disney villains because they " came off at least as buffoonish as they were sinister " . Because Scar is the film 's main antagonist , supervising animator Andreas Deja believed that " villains work really well when they 're subtle " , explaining , " to see them think and scheme and plot is much more interesting than showing them beating somebody up . " By blaming Mufasa 's death on an innocent Simba , Scar ultimately triggers " a cycle of guilt , flight , denial and redemption , as the hero goes into self @-@ imposed exile before finally reconciling with his father 's memory , returning to face his wicked uncle and generally coming of age . " The character 's first line in The Lion King essentially summarizes the entire film , providing foreshadowing . It reads , " Life 's not fair is it ? You see I @-@ well , I ... shall never be King . And you ... shall never see light of another day , " subtly revealing the plot as well as " the reason why [Scar] decides to murder his own brother . "

= = = Voice = = =

English actors Tim Curry and Malcolm McDowell were originally considered for the role of Scar . However , the role was ultimately won by English actor Jeremy Irons because of his classical theatre training ; the directors had deliberately wanted Scar " to come across as a Shakespearean character . " Successfully recruiting Irons for the film was considered an unprecedented achievement for the studio because , at the time , it was rare for a dramatic actor of Irons ' caliber to agree to voice an animated character , especially immediately after winning an Academy Award . In fact , the Oscar @-@ winning actor nearly declined because , in fear of jeopardizing his successful career , he was " [h] esitant to jump from a dramatic role to an animated feature . " Prior to The Lion King , Irons was famous for starring as several villains and antagonists in live @-@ action films " geared towards adults . " Although he had starred in a children 's film before , the actor admitted that it did not mirror the success of The Lion King , a film that has since gained notoriety for its cast of well known , award @-@ winning Hollywood actors , which animation historian Jerry Beck referred to in his book The Animated Movie Guide as " the most impressive list of actors ever to grace an animated film . "

As directors , Minkoff and Allers " work [ed] very closely with the actors to create their performance . " Describing Irons as " a gentleman and a brilliant actor , " Allers revealed that the actor was constantly offering " extra interpretations of lines which were fantastic . " Producer Don Hahn recalled that Irons " really wanted to play with the words and the pacing , " specifically referring to a scene in which Scar , voiced by Irons , coaxes Simba onto a rock and tricks the young cub to stay there and await his father 's arrival alone , dubbing it " a father and son ... thing . " According to Hahn , " The comedy in [Irons '] inflection comes from Scar sounding so disdainful he can barely summon the will to finish the sentence . " Irons ' physical appearance and mannerisms served as inspiration for Scar 's supervising animator Andreas Deja , namely his flicking his paw in disgust . Critics have cited physical similarities between Irons and Scar .

In a reference to the role that earned Irons an Academy Award , Claus von Bülow in the film

Reversal of Fortune (1990) , the writers gave Scar one of von Bülow 's lines , " You have no idea " , which is uttered by Irons in a similar tone . According to author Rachel Stein of New Perspectives on Environmental Justice : Gender , Sexuality , and Activism , Irons relies " on his history of playing sexually perverse , socially dangerous male characters to animate his depiction of Scar . " On the contrary , Irons revealed to Connect Savannah that the similarities between the voices of Scar and von Bülow were largely unintentional , explaining , " Whatever voice came was arrived at by looking at the initial sketches , and from the freedom the directors gave me to try anything . " Irons concluded , " The fact that he may occasionally remind you of Claus , comes from the fact that they both share the same voice box . "

While recording Scar 's song " Be Prepared , " Irons encountered challenges with his voice . The actor reportedly " blew out his voice " upon belting the line " you won 't get a sniff without me , " rendering him incapable of completing the musical number . Consequently , Disney was forced to recruit American voice actor Jim Cummings , who had also been providing the voice of The Lion King 's laughing hyena Ed at the time , to impersonate Irons and record the remainder of the song . Cummings told The Huffington Post that " [s] unt singing " is actually something the actor continues to do regularly , having done the same for American actor Russel Means , voice of Chief Powhatan in Disney 's Pocahontas (1995) . Critics observed that Irons " fakes his way ... through ' Be Prepared ' in the grand tradition of talk @-@ singing , " drawing similarities between him and American actor James Cagney and English actor Rex Harrison . Deja revealed that , during a recording session , Irons ' stomach was grumbling . Deja joked , " The growling sound could be heard in his recording , so we had to record that part of his dialog all over again . " As a result of Irons ' prominent British accent , critics have compared both the actor and Scar to Shere Khan , the villain of Disney 's The Jungle Book (1967) , voiced by English actor George Sanders .

= = = Design and characterization = = =

The studio originally dismissed The Lion King as a risk because , at the time , it was believed that the greatest films starred people . Concerned about the novelty of the film , Disney CEO Jeffrey Katzenberg decided to divide the studio into two separate animated films , The Lion King and Pocahontas , the latter of which was dubbed " the home run " because it was expected to be the more successful of the two projects . Naturally , Disney 's more seasoned and experienced animators gravitated towards Pocahontas , while the studio 's newer animators were relegated to working on The Lion King , dubbing themselves the " B @-@ team " . However , Allers received Katzenberg 's decision positively as an opportunity for " newer animators ... to step up to leadership roles " , among them Andreas Deja , who became Scar 's supervising animator . Well known for animating several Disney villains , Deja summarized the experience as " more fun than drawing heroes " because " You have so much more to work with in terms of expressions and acting and drawing @-@ wise than you would have with a nice princess or a prince ... where you have to be ever so careful with the draftsmanship " .

Before becoming involved with The Lion King , Deja had already developed a reputation for animating Disney villains . Prior to animating Scar , Deja had just recently served as the supervising animator of Gaston and Jafar , the villains in Disney 's Beauty and the Beast (1991) and Aladdin (1992) , respectively . Initially , Deja had been considering the idea of animating a hero as opposed to a villain for a change , contemplating taking on the task of animating Simba instead . However , Deja soon relented upon learning that Scar would be voiced by Irons , feeling that it would be " fun " to animate a character voiced by such a prestigious actor . Meanwhile , Minkoff and Allers had already had Deja in mind for animating Scar long before the animator approached the directors about the position . The level anthropomorphism used in The Lion King exceeded that of any Disney animated film by which it was preceded . Because Scar is an animal as opposed to a human , Deja and the animators experienced certain challenges and limitations when it came to instilling movement in the character , and thus experimented with manipulating Scar 's facial expressions , specifically the way in which he tilts his head condescendingly , raises his eyebrows and lifts his chin . The animals were each drawn with certain human @-@ like attributes and characteristics in order

to help convey emotions and tell the story . Meanwhile , the studio recruited live lions for the animators to study while drawing . As the film 's villain , Scar is the only lion drawn with claws .

Owen Gleiberman of Entertainment Weekly described Scar as " a figure of both pity and evil , and of treacherous comedy " with " Irons ... filling this devious coward with elegantly witty self @-@ loathing . " As an animator , Deja believes that " If you have a great voice to work with , your work is half done . " Enjoying the way in which Irons " has a way with words and phrasing , " Deja deliberately based much of Scar 's appearance on the actor himself , specifically the shape of his mouth and facial expressions . Several of the actor 's physical attributes were incorporated into Scar 's design , with Irons admitting to recognizing his own baggy eyes in his character . Additionally , Deja studied Irons ' performances in the films Reversal of Fortune (1990) and Damage (1992) for inspiration , while refusing to watch Disney 's The Jungle Book while working on The Lion King in order to avoid being influenced by the film 's villain Shere Khan , a tiger .

= = = Music = = =

Scar sings the musical number " Be Prepared , " written by songwriters Elton John and Tim Rice , while contemplating Mufasa 's death plot and bringing the hyenas along . Described as the film 's " darkest " song , a " pompous , " " fascistic paean to usurpers , " the musical sequence depicts the lion " as a big @-@ cat fascist . " According to Business Insider , in addition to loosely basing the character on Adolf Hitler to further emphasize Scar 's tyranny , the filmmakers very much directly based his song " Be Prepared , " which references Nazism by having Scar 's army of hyenas goosestep while addressing them from a high ledge ? similar to the way in which Hitler would have from a balcony ? on the Nazi propaganda film Triumph of the Will (1935) , a film that documents Nazi Germany during 1934 .

According to Entertainment Weekly , the concept originated from a sketch by story artist Jorgen Klubien , in which Scar was depicted as Hitler . Although hesitant that Disney CEO Jeffrey Katzenberg would approve , the filmmakers ultimately decided to pursue it , describing the sequence as a " Triumph of the Will @-@ style mock @-@ Nuremberg rally . " The St. Louis Post @-@ Dispatch reviewed , " those goose @-@ stepping hyenas seem a little much in hindsight , " while Film School Rejects coined it a " hellish gathering . "

= = Appearances = =

= = = Film = = =

Scar debuted in The Lion King (1994) . The jealous younger brother of Mufasa , Scar was next @-@ in @-@ line to inherit the throne until his nephew Simba , Mufasa 's son , was born , replacing him . Determined to usurp the throne and become king himself , Scar devises a plan to eliminate both Simba and Mufasa . Cleverly trapping an unsuspecting Simba in a vast gorge , Scar signals his hyena minions Shenzi , Banzai and Ed to trigger a wildebeest stampede . Although Mufasa saves Simba , the king is greatly weakened , and thus unable to climb out of the gorge to safety . When a desperate Mufasa begs Scar for help , Scar instead throws his brother to his death below . Convincing Simba that he is to blame for Mufasa 's death , Scar advises the prince to run away and never return , then orders the hyenas to pursue and kill him . With his brother murdered and his nephew presumed dead , Scar returns to Pride Rock and tells the pride that both father and son are dead before becoming king .

Years go by as Scar squanders the kingdom 's resources and allows his army of hyenas to wreak havoc upon the Pride Lands , which turn barren . Meanwhile , an alive and young adult Simba is visited by Mufasa 's ghost , who encourages him to return to the Pride Lands and take his rightful place as king . Aided by his friends Nala , Timon and Pumbaa , Simba arrives at Pride Rock and witnesses Scar striking his mother Sarabi and confronts Scar , who demands that Simba admit to the pride that he killed Mufasa . As he prepares to throw Simba off Pride Rock and have him meet a

similar fate to that of his father , Scar , having grown over @-@ confident , whispers that he was the one who killed Mufasa . Enraged , Simba tackles Scar and forces his uncle to admit the truth to the pride , initiating a ferocious battle between the pride , Timon , Pumbaa and Scar 's hyenas . Scar tries to escape , but is cornered by Simba on the top of Pride Rock ; Scar begs for mercy and even attempts to blame his crimes on the hyenas , unaware that they are listening nearby . Simba ignores Scar and gives him one last chance to run away and never return . When Simba 's back is turned , Scar attacks him and they fight . Simba bests Scar in combat and throws him over the cliff edge and into a pit . Scar survives the fall , but is attacked and killed by the vengeful hyenas .

= = = Broadway musical = = =

The success of The Lion King spawned a Broadway musical based on the film , directed by Julie Taylor with a book written by The Lion King co @-@ director Roger Allers and screenwriter Irene Mecchi . American actor John Vickery originated the role of Scar . In one scene in the musical , Scar , during the song " The Madness of King Scar " , tries to seduce a young adult Nala and make her his queen . Nala however , rejects Scar 's advances and leaves Pride Rock .

= = = The Lion King II : Simba 's Pride = = =

Having perished during The Lion King , Scar 's appearance and presence in its sequel The Lion King II : Simba 's Pride (1998) is , naturally , quite limited in comparison . Story @-@ wise , however , his role remains vital . Upon Scar 's demise , a rivaling pride of lions known as the Outsiders decide to remain loyal to him . The pride is led by Scar 's most faithful follower , Zira . Since Scar had no children of his own , Zira 's son Kovu is chosen to serve as Scar 's heir . Simba banishes the Outsiders to the Outlands , and forbids his daughter Kiara from going there . She goes there anyway , however , and meets and befriends Kovu . Meanwhile , Zira trains Kovu to murder Simba , but when he becomes a young adult , he has a change of heart as he begins to develop feelings for Kiara .

Scar makes a brief cameo appearance in the film in one of Simba 's nightmares . In the nightmare , an adult Simba runs down the cliffside where his father died , attempting to rescue him . Scar intervenes , however , and then turns into Kovu and throws Simba off the cliff . Scar makes another cameo appearance in a pool of water , as a reflection , after Kovu is exiled from Pride Rock .

= = = Miscellaneous = = =

Scar makes a brief cameo in Disney 's animated feature film Hercules (1997) in the form of a limp lion skin coat worn by Hercules , parodying the Nemean lion . Scar 's supervising animator Andreas Deja also served as the supervising animator of Hercules . The character appears in the 1994 video game The Lion King . According to AllGame , Scar appears towards the end of video game as Simba finally " must defeat his Uncle Scar " and " stop Scar and reclaim what is rightfully his . " Scar plays a similar role in the video game The Lion King : Simba 's Mighty Adventure (2000) ; Simba 's climactic " battle with Scar concludes the first six levels of the game . " According to IGN , the video game features the voices of the film 's cast , including Jeremy Irons as Scar . Voiced by James Horan , Scar appears as a non @-@ player character in Disney 's Extreme Skate Adventure (2003) and Kingdom Hearts II as a villain who ultimately transforms into a Heartless as a result of the character 's own " hatred and jealousy . "

Scar also makes a brief non @-@ speaking cameo appearance in an episode of Timon and Pumbaa .

= = = The Lion Guard = = =

Scar is briefly portrayed in The Lion Guard film and series , which explains some of his backstory . When Scar was younger ? as per tradition to all second born children of the current reigning " Lion

King " ? he led The Lion Guard who protected " The Circle of Life " and was given a power called " The Roar of the Elders " which when used , causes the lions of Pride Lands past to roar with him . However , Scar vainly believed that with this power , he should be king instead of Mufasa and plotted to overthrow his elder brother . But when the previous members of The Lion Guard refused to help him do so , Scar used The Roar of the Elders to destroy them . Due to using The Roar of the Elders for evil , Scar lost his power completely and descended into madness and depression , becoming shriveled and horrible .

= = Reception = =

= = = Critical response = = =

Scar has garnered widespread acclaim from film critics , some of whom praised him as a better character than Simba . Author Peter M. Nichols wrote in his book New York Times Essential Library : Children 's Movies : A Critic 's Guide to the Best Films Available on Video and DVD that Scar " is the most interesting character in the film , " describing Simba and Mufasa " bores in comparison . " Janet Maslin of The New York Times called Scar a " delectably wicked " villain . Maslin went on to praise Irons ' voice acting , writing that the actor " slithers through the story in grandiose high style , with a green @-@ eyed malevolence that is one of film 's chief delights . " Leah Rozen of People described Scar as " a flawless realization of Irons ' special talent . " Gene Siskel of the Chicago Tribune lauded Scar as the film 's " best character , " jokingly describing him as " Irons ' Claus von Bulow with fur . " Similarly , ComingSoon.net 's Joshua Starnes hailed Scar as " the best part of the film . " Praising both Scar and Irons ' acting , Starnes continued , " He switches so quickly and easily from campy to deadly its like a showcase for how to do an over @-@ the @-@ top villain right . " Concluding that " Villains are often the most memorable characters in a Disney animated film , " Roger Ebert described Scar " one of the great ones . " James Berardinelli of ReelViews reviewed , " Gone is the buffoonery that has marked the recent trio of Ursula , Gaston , and Jafar , " writing , " Scar is a sinister figure , given to acid remarks and cunning villainy . " Berardinelli concluded , " The cold @-@ hearted manner in which he causes Mufasa 's death lets us know that this is not a lion to be trifled with . "

" Simba is also influenced by his delectably wicked uncle , Scar (Jeremy Irons) . Scar arranges Mufasa 's disturbing on @-@ screen death in a manner that both banishes Simba to the wilderness and raises questions about whether this film really warranted a G rating ... For the grown @-@ ups , there is Mr. Irons , who has been as devilishly well @-@ captured by Disney 's graphic artists (Scar 's supervising animator : Andreas Deja) as Robin Williams was in Aladdin . Bored , wicked and royally sarcastic , Mr. Irons 's Scar slithers through the story in grandiose high style , with a green @-@ eyed malevolence that is one of film 's chief delights . ' Oh , and just between us , you might want to work on that little roar of yours , hmm ? ' he purrs to Simba , while purporting to be a mentor to his young nephew . Scar , who also gives a reprise of Mr. Irons 's best @-@ known line from Reversal of Fortune , may not be much of a father figure , but he 's certainly great fun . "

A film that features the voices of several well @-@ known A @-@ list actors , namely Irons as Scar , Matthew Broderick as Simba , James Earl Jones as Mufasa and Whoopi Goldberg as Shenzi , The Lion King has since gone on to be acclaimed as " one of the most impressive arrays of voice talents ever utilized in an animated film . " Critics have repeatedly singled out Irons ' performance , praising it extensively : Cindy White of IGN called Irons ' performance " deliciously smarmy , " while Andy Patrizio of IGN wrote that Irons voices Scar " in perfect Shakespearean villain mode . " Rolling Stone 's Peter Travers hailed Irons for " deliver [ing] a triumphantly witty vocal performance that ranks with Robin Williams ' in Aladdin . " Peter Stack of the San Francisco Chronicle commended Disney for " nail [ing] the voice talents , " specifically Irons . The Philadelphia Daily News ' Bill Wedo described Irons ' voice as " silken , " while Graham Young of the Birmingham Mail hailed the actor 's performance as " magnificent . " Radio Times ' Tom Hutchinson wrote , " Jeremy Irons [is] a vocal standout as the evil uncle Scar . " Annette Basile of Filmink echoed Hutchinson 's statement , writing

that Scar is "voiced with relish by stand @-@ out Jeremy Irons ." The Guardian 's Philip French opined , " Jeremy Irons is excellent as the suavely villainous lion Scar . " David Sterritt of The Christian Science Monitor exalted Irons ' acting , describing him as " positively brilliant . " Also hailing the film 's cast as " incredible , " Desson Howe of The Washington Post highlighted Irons as a " standout . " Praising the film for successfully combining " grand @-@ opera melodrama and low @-@ comedy hi @-@ jinks , " the Orlando Sentinel 's Jay Boyar concluded that " One reason they work so well together is that even most of the serious sections contain an undercurrent of humor , provided ... by the deliciously droll voice @-@ performance of Jeremy Irons as Scar . " Mathew DeKinder of the St. Louis Post @-@ Dispatch felt that Irons successfully " handle [s] all of the dramatic heavy lifting . "

Even film critics who generally disliked the film tended to enjoy Scar 's characterization and Irons ' performance . Terrence Rafferty of The New Yorker wrote , " Among the celebrity voices on the soundtrack , two performances stand out , " namely , " Jeremy Irons , as the villainous lion Scar " who " does an elegant , funny George Sanders impersonation . " (Sanders himself had voiced Shere Khan for Disney in their 1967 version of The Jungle Book) . Stephen Hunter of The Baltimore Sun described Irons ' voice as " plummy @-@ rich with rancid irony . " Television Without Pity 's Ethan Alter admitted to enjoying Scar , praising the character as " a fantastic villain and easily the most fully realized of the film 's characters , thanks both to Jeremy Irons ' marvelously wicked vocal performance and some clever character flourishes on behalf of the animators . " David Denby of New York , who otherwise criticized the film , felt that " Irons ... sounds like he 's having a better time than he 's ever had in movies before . " In a rare lukewarm review , Anthony Quinn of The Independent felt that Irons ' performance was too campy : " more Liberace than George Sanders . "

= = = Accolades and legacy = = =

According to IGN , Scar , Simba and Mufasa have since become " household names thanks to the [film 's] enormous popularity ... but back in 1994 who could have predicted that these characters would enter the lexicon of Disney 's most popular creations ? " Scar is considered to be among Disney 's greatest villains . Desmond Ryan of The Philadelphia Inquirer reviewed Scar as " the most vivid villain in Disney features in generations . " On a broader scale , Scar is often revered as one of the greatest animated villains of all @-@ time . Entertainment Weekly included the character in the article " 10 Over @-@ the @-@ top Animated Movie Villains " , explaining , " you could only expect over @-@ the @-@ top when you pair such a grasping , conniving character with Jeremy Irons ' seductive voice . " Likewise , Digital Spy 's Alex Fletcher wrote of Scar in his article " Who is Disney 's greatest ever villain ? " that " The scene in which he lets Mufasa ... fall into a stampede of wildebeests left lasting emotional trauma on an entire generation . "

The Huffington Post ranked Scar first in its " Definitive Ranking Of 25 Classic Disney Villains " countdown . Similarly , BuzzFeed also ranked Scar first in the website 's " Definitive Ranking Of The Top 20 Disney Villains " list , with author Javi Moreno accusing the character of removing " the innocence of an entire generation . " Scar also topped About.com 's " Top 10 Disney Villains " countdown ; author David Nusair concluded , " There are few figures within Disney 's body of work that are as deliciously reprehensible and vile as Scar ... heightened by Jeremy Irons ' gloriously smug voice work . " Nusair also included Irons among the " Top 5 Celebrity Voice Performances in Animated Films " , acknowledging the fact that although the actor " has played a lot of villains over the course of his career ... none have had the lasting impact as Scar from The Lion King . " The Orlando Sentinel ranked Scar the sixth " greatest Disney villain of all time " . Similarly , Babble.com also placed the character at number six . Included in the website 's " 12 most famous Disney villains from worst to best " countdown , Yahoo ! Movies ranked Scar second best , while Moviefone ranked the character sixth . E ! ranked Scar fifth , with author John Boone writing that the character " plotted one of the most painful deaths in Disney history , so you know he 'll never be forgotten . " Animation World Network ranked Scar the sixth best animated villain .

CNN considers Scar one of " Disney 's scariest characters . " While ranking the character fifth , The Stanford Daily wrote , " From his habit of sadistically toying with his prey to his dumb hyena coven to

the way he leads the kingdom of Pride Rock into a period of starvation and sorrow , he 's a backstabbing dictator of an uncle . " Richard Crouse of Metro cited Scar 's " Long live the King " as the character 's " Most evil line . " Additionally , " Be Prepared " is often revered as one of the greatest Disney villain songs . Official Disney Blogs wrote that the song , with its " hyena backup singers , and the best bone @-@ rattling percussion of all the villains ' songs , " Scar proves himself " an expert crooner of villainous plots . " Aside from Disney and animation , Scar is often revered as one of the greatest movie villains of all @-@ time . Digital Spy featured the character who , according to author Simon Reynolds , " underlined the sheer blackness of his heart by ruthlessly killing Simba 's father , " among the " 25 greatest movie villains " . Similarly , in 2012 , Entertainment Weekly ranked the character the twenty @-@ fifth " Most Vile Movie Villain " ever , while Total Film ranked Scar sixty @-@ seventh in 2014 .

To @-@ date , Deja remains best known for animating several of Disney 's most famous villains , admitting to preferring animating villains over heroes . However , after The Lion King , Deja finally decided to take a break from animating villains in order to avoid repeating himself , subsequently refusing to animate villain Judge Claude Frollo in The Hunchback of Notre Dame (1996) in favor of working on Hercules from Hercules (1997) , along with Mickey Mouse in the animated short Runaway Brain (1995) . Comparing Scar to other villains that he has played , Irons said that he " measures very highly , " having " charm , " " Machiavellian qualities " and being " iconic in some of the things he says . "

= = Criticism and controversy = =

Scar became the first Disney villain to successfully explicitly kill someone . Like Disney 's Bambi before it , The Lion King ? dubbed the studio 's " darkest " film at the time of its release ? was unprecedented in terms of its serious themes , namely guilt , murder , treachery , revenge and death , specifically the on @-@ screen assassination of one of the film 's heroes . According to IGN , " The film 's story concepts of morality and mortality ... was new for Disney , " with The Washington Post predicting that " the death of the heroic Mufasa will be the most widely debated aspect of The Lion King , with people taking sides as to whether such things are good or bad for kids just as they did over the killing of Bambi 's mother . " Similarly , Variety opined , " a generation that remembers the death of Bambi 's mother as traumatizing should bear that experience in mind when deciding who goes to The Lion King . " Film critics and parents alike expressed concern that Scar 's violent ways would frighten and disturb younger viewers . Referring to Scar 's murdering of Mufasa , The New York Times questioned " whether this film really warranted a G rating . " Critics also cautioned Scar 's death ; Movieline warned audiences that the film " shows a fairy tale 's dark sense of justice , " for example when " Scar was eaten by his hyena allies after betraying them . " ReelViews ' James Berardinelli commented :

" Death , something not really touched on in the last three animated Disney tales , is very much at the forefront of The Lion King . In a scene that could disturb younger viewers , Mufasa 's demise is shown . It is a chilling moment that is reminiscent of a certain incident in Bambi . The film also contains a fair share of violence , including a rather graphic battle between two lions . Parents should carefully consider before automatically taking a child of , say , under seven years of age , to this movie . "

The Los Angeles Times warned that " The on @-@ screen death of Mufasa and a violent battle at the finale may disturb small children , " echoed by The Philadelphia Inquirer . However , film critics also felt that Disney 's treatment of Scar was at times too light @-@ hearted and comedic , with the Deseret News complaining , " a climactic battle between Simba and his evil Uncle Scar ... is [a] very bad choice near the end , as Simba and Scar battle in slow @-@ motion , a serious moment that seems unintentionally comic . " According to The Seattle Times , " Some critics have complained that the movie is too funny and good @-@ natured to accommodate the rather grim story it 's telling . " Considered " an odd mix of deadly seriousness and slapstick humor ... Simba fights Scar to the death " while " intercut with ... Poomba [sic] ... doing a parody of Travis Bickel . "

Although universally acclaimed , Scar has sparked considerable controversy regarding the

character 's appearance and personality , specifically his darker @-@ colored fur and alleged sexuality . The general public , however , appears to have remained largely oblivious to such concerns according to David Parkinson , author of *The Rough Guide to Film Musicals* . The *Washington Post* felt that " Scar clearly is meant to represent an evil African American because ' while Simba 's mane is gloriously red , Scar 's is , of course , black . " Meanwhile , Scar 's mannerisms and voice which , according to *Nightmare on Main Street : Angels , Sadomasochism , and the Culture of Gothic* 's author Mark Edmundson , resemble " a cultivated , word @-@ weary , gay man , " has been deemed homophobic by some commentators because , according to *The Independent* , " the arch @-@ villain 's gestures are effeminate " while , in addition to the film being " full of stereotypes , " the character " speaks in supposed gay cliches . " Susan Mackey @-@ Kallis , author of *The Hero and the Perennial Journey Home in American Film* , observed that Scar is " more effeminate [and] less brawny ... than " both Mufasa and Simba . Additionally , " Even though [Scar] would be expected to mate with one of the lioness , he is never seen intimated by any . " While Disney executives ignored these accusations , *Slant Magazine* defended the studio , explaining that Scar 's black mane is simply an example of " the animators ' elementary attempts to color @-@ code evil for the film 's target audience . " Similarly , author Edward Schiappa wrote in his book *Beyond Representational Correctness : Rethinking Criticism of Popular Media* that Scar 's voice was simply meant " to convey the sort of upper @-@ class snobbishness evinced by George Sanders 's performance as Shere Khan in *The Jungle Book* . " More recently , the possibility of an incestuous relationship involving Simba , his mate Nala , Scar and Mufasa has surfaced . According to Johnson Cheu , author of *Diversity in Disney Films : Critical Essays on Race , Ethnicity , Gender , Sexuality and Disability* , the fact that Scar , Mufasa and Simba appear to be the only male lions present in *The Lion King* suggests the possibility that either Scar or Mufasa is Nala 's father , which would in turn make Nala either Simba 's half @-@ sister or cousin .