

= Sozin 's Comet : The Final Battle =

" Sozin 's Comet : The Final Battle " is the series finale for the Nickelodeon television series Avatar : The Last Airbender . It was directed by Ethan Spaulding , Giancarlo Volpe , and Joaquim Dos Santos , and written by Michael Dante DiMartino , Bryan Konietzko , and Aaron Ehasz . Although the finale is split into four episodes , it aired as a two @-@ hour four @-@ part movie on July 19 , 2008 . Before the week of July 14 ? 19 , no episodes had been shown since November 30 , 2007 . The Saturday airing of Sozin 's Comet acted as a climax to a week of ten new episodes that concluded Avatar 's third season .

The finale focuses on series protagonist Aang 's non @-@ violent personality and his reluctance to kill Fire Lord Ozai . The finale also follows the exploits of many of Aang 's friends and allies , including Sokka , Toph and Suki 's struggle to destroy a Fire Nation airship armada , Zuko and Katara 's battle against Zuko 's sister Azula , and Iroh , King Bumi , and the Order of the White Lotus ' attempt to liberate Ba Sing Se .

Sozin 's Comet received positive reception from critics and fans alike . The initial showing averaged 5 @. @ 6 million viewers , a 195 % increase in ratings compared with ratings from mid @-@ July 2007 . The premiere of episodes 52 ? 61 throughout the week of Sozin 's Comet 's release received over 19 million views , of which 5 @. @ 6 million were from the premiere of Sozin 's Comet . At the 2008 Annie Awards , the director of the third part of Sozin 's Comet won an award for " Best Directing in an Animated Television Production " .

Although " Sozin 's Comet " is the series finale , Avatar : The Last Airbender has continued as an ongoing graphic novel series , taking place after the finale and before the sequel series The Legend of Korra , which has been published by Dark Horse Comics since January 2012 , with each annual story arc split into three parts .

= = Plot = =

= = = Part 1 : " The Phoenix King " = = =

Aang suddenly abandons his Firebending lesson with Zuko to have a beach party , causing Zuko to attack him in his frustration . Aang explains he plans to challenge Fire Lord Ozai only after Sozin 's Comet and its enhancement of Firebending have come and gone , due to his own self @-@ perceived lack of Firebending skills at the moment . When Zuko tells the group Ozai plans to use the comet 's power to burn down the Earth Kingdom , Aang resolves to face him before the comet arrives . Sokka decides to have a simulation fight against a scarecrow , but Aang refuses to kill it due to his pacifistic nature and non @-@ violent upbringing , and even berates his friends as they tell him that he may eventually have no choice but to kill Ozai .

That night , Aang sleepwalks to an island not to be found in the morning . After the group fails to locate him , Zuko takes them to June , a tracker who might be able to locate Aang . Meanwhile , Fire Lord Ozai proclaims himself to be ruler of the world , under the title " Phoenix King " , and declares Azula to be the new Fire Lord , setting off to burn the world and rebuild it under his new order .

= = = Part 2 : " The Old Masters " = = =

Zuko 's tracker , June , is unable to locate Aang , but he is reunited with his uncle , Iroh , who reconcile with each other after Zuko 's betrayal in Ba Sing Se . He and several other characters (Katara 's Waterbending master Pakku , Aang 's first Firebending instructor Jeong Jeong , Aang 's Earthbender friend King Bumi , and Sokka 's swordmaster Piandao) are part of an otherwise non @-@ aligned group known as the " Order of the White Lotus " , which plans to liberate the Earth Kingdom capital , Ba Sing Se , from Fire Nation rule . Zuko and Katara decide to fight Azula in the Fire Nation capital while Sokka , Toph , and Suki attempt to destroy the airship fleet .

Meanwhile , Aang awakens on a floating island . Frustrated with his inability to find a way to defeat

Ozai without killing him , he asks four of his past lives for advice . Unsatisfied with their answers , he asks the island for help . The island , which is actually a giant " lion @-@ turtle " , provides Aang with the power of energybending and leaves him on the Earth Kingdom shores while Ozai readies his airship fleet for takeoff .

= = = Part 3 : " Into the Inferno " = = =

The Comet appears in the sky , and Azula 's coronation takes place . Azula banishes nearly all of her subjects (including her Dai Li agents) in fear of betrayal , haunted by the actions of former friends Mai and Ty Lee in " The Boiling Rock , Part 2 " . Her paranoia and loneliness begin to drive her insane . Before she is crowned , Zuko and Katara arrive . Zuko accepts Azula 's challenge of an Agni Kai , or " fire duel " , because he feels that something is wrong with Azula and he does not want Katara injured . Just as Zuko is on the verge of defeating Azula , she shoots a bolt of lightning at Katara instead of Zuko . Zuko throws himself in front of her and intercepts the lightning , preventing Katara from getting hurt , but he gravely injures himself after he fails to correctly redirect the lightning .

Meanwhile , Sokka , Toph , and Suki hijack a Fire Nation airship , and use it to destroy many others , effectively stopping Ozai 's plan of incinerating the Earth Kingdom . In Ba Sing Se , the Order of the White Lotus , led by Iroh , lays siege to the Fire Nation forces within the city , with the sole intention of re @-@ conquering it in the name of the Earth Kingdom . Aang reappears and begins to duel the Fire Lord . However , when Aang successfully redirects lightning he intentionally aims it into the sky to avoid killing Ozai . Because of Aang 's pacifism , Ozai begins to gain the advantage .

= = = Part 4 : " Avatar Aang " = = =

Zuko lies on the ground twitching as Katara and Azula fight . After several minutes of running and being unable to gain the advantage at first , Katara freezes Azula and chains her to the ground defeating her . Katara then uses her waterbending to revive and heal Zuko . As a result of her defeat by two people she considers less than worthless , Azula 's mind finally snaps and she screams and sobs in fury , breathing blue fire out of her mouth , yet unable to escape her chains .

After a fierce battle , Ozai slams Aang into a rock , hitting the scar on his back from Azula 's lightning in the previous season and inadvertently releasing his locked seventh chakra , allowing Aang to enter the Avatar State . With the combined power of his past lives , Aang quickly overwhelms Ozai . Once Ozai is subdued , Aang refuses to kill him , instead locking him down with earth ; understanding the lion @-@ turtle 's meaning , he uses Energybending to strip Ozai of his Firebending powers , removing his ability to wage war . Then Aang raises and lowers the nearby ocean to undo the damage from the Fire Nation ; Sozin 's Comet vanishes beyond the horizon afterward .

The Order of the White Lotus liberates Ba Sing Se in the name of the Earth King . During his coronation , Zuko promises to aid the world in the postwar reconstruction . Sometime after the ceremony , Zuko visits Ozai 's prison and demands he tell him the location of the banished Ursa , Zuko 's mother . Zuko and Mai finally reconcile . Ty Lee joins the Kyoshi warriors , having bonded with them in prison and shared some chi @-@ blocking techniques . A final scene depicts the main cast gathered in Iroh 's new tea shop , the Jasmine Dragon , and with Aang and Katara officially confirming their genuinely strong and close romantic relationship with a loving hug and passionate kiss .

= = Production = =

Co @-@ creators Michael Dante DiMartino and Bryan Konietzko wrote the majority of the finale ; DiMartino wrote parts one , three , and four , and Konietzko assisted with parts three and four . Aaron Ehasz , co @-@ executive producer and head writer of the show , wrote part two . Ethan Spaulding directed part one , Giancarlo Volpe directed part two , and Joaquim Dos Santos directed

parts three and four . Dos Santos was nominated for an Annie Award for his directing of part three , " Into the Inferno " . Although Sozin 's Comet was originally written as a three @-@ part story , the creators noticed that the length had grown beyond what they had predicted from the initial script . To avoid pacing issues , they split the final part in two , adding several scenes to fill the remaining time .

Although Avatar is not considered anime because of its American origin , Tasha Robinson of the SciFi Channel observed that " Avatar blurs the line between anime and [US] domestic cartoons until it becomes irrelevant . " An IGN reviewer commented that Sozin 's Comet " had that classic anime @-@ look that I 've always loved to see when watching old anime movies . The story through the animation was perfectly done . " The special 's music was written and composed by " The Track Team " , led by Jeremy Zuckerman . However , unlike past episodes , a music track produced by a live orchestra was used , rather than one in MIDI format .

During the San Diego Comic @-@ con , it was announced that a reunion between Zuko and his mother , Ursa , had been arranged and made into a storyboard . However , it was dropped just before the finale was finished , as requested by show co @-@ creator Michael Dante DiMartino , who felt that it resolved Ursa 's disappearance in an unsatisfactory way and that wasn 't the way the story should be told .

The cast of Sozin 's Comet includes all of the key characters from season three . Protagonists Aang , Katara , Sokka , and Toph are voiced by Zach Tyler Eisen , Mae Whitman , Jack DeSena , and Jessie Flower respectively . Iroh is voiced by Greg Baldwin and Zuko is voiced by Dante Basco . Grey DeLisle and Mark Hamill voice the two antagonists , Azula and Fire Lord Ozai , respectively . The co @-@ creators also lend their voices to two minor characters in the third part , " Into the Inferno " .

Avatar : The Last Airbender borrows extensively from East Asian art to create its fictional universe . Four " bending " arts exist in the universe ; they are based on different styles and variations of Chinese martial arts : Baguazhang for Airbending , Hung Gar and Southern Praying Mantis for Earthbending , Northern Shaolin for Firebending , and T 'ai chi for Waterbending . Additionally , series borrows heavily from the Taoist concept of balance and order . The Avatar , an incarnation of a divine being , is supposed to maintain the world 's order .

Nickelodeon originally broadcast Sozin 's Comet from 8 : 00 pm to 10 : 00 pm EST on July 19 , 2008 . Just ten days later , on July 29 , the " Book 3 : Fire ? Volume 4 " DVD was released , which contained the four episodes as well as episodes 56 and 57 , audio commentary from the series ' co @-@ creators , cast , and crew , and a comic book .

= = Reception = =

Sozin 's Comet received many positive critical reviews ; Ed Liu of Toon Zone stated that it made Avatar " one of the finest animated television series ever made " , and IGN stating that this " film " deserved an Academy Award . Toon Zone praised the skill of the animation directors in designing the sweeping movements of the battle scenes , as well as the slower scenes , " including one moving reconciliation and the quiet coda that ties off many of the remaining loose ends of the series " . IGN reviewer Tory Ireland Mell wrote that she would " put it in the top ten films of all time " . She also praised the artistic skill of the designers , stating that the " whole dark tone was gorgeous to look at " , especially the " art of the Lion Turtle " . She thought that Sozin 's Comet lacked plot holes , as well as unnecessary plot devices , stating that the " story moved and kept us moving right along with it from beginning to end " . She gave Sozin 's Comet a 10 out of 10 " Masterful " rating .

Sozin 's Comet has received its share of criticism as well . Reviewers commented about the difficulty in understanding the voice of a new character : the Lion Turtle . The Lion Turtle was designed by Bryan Konietzko and character designer Jae Woo Kim . Bryan Konietzko disliked how the Lion Turtle turned out ; he felt that the art was not up to standards of the original design he had received . CraveOnline felt that because " the series was for children , the writers were at a loss of ideas to work around the murder angle , " and the decision not to kill the Fire Lord introduced " so many convenient plot twists [that] set us up for a humongous deus ex machina that allows the Fire

Lord to be thwarted without dying " .

The premiere of Sozin 's Comet averaged 5 @. @ 6 million viewers , 195 % more viewers than Nickelodeon had received in mid @- @ July 2007 . During the week of July 14 , 2008 , it ranked as the most @- @ viewed program for the under @- @ 14 demographic . The premiere of episodes 52 ? 61 throughout the week of Sozin 's Comet ' s release received a total of 19 million views , and Avatar reached Nielsen 's list of Top 20 Cable Results for the week ending June 20 , 2008 four times . It also appeared on iTunes ' top ten list of best @- @ selling television episodes during that same week . Sozin 's Comet ' s popularity affected online media as well ; " Rise of the Phoenix King " , a Nick.com online game based on Sozin 's Comet , generated almost 815 @, @ 000 game plays within three days . A video game loosely based on the third season , Avatar : The Last Airbender ? Into the Inferno , was released on October 13 , 2008 .

Joaquim Dos Santos won the " Best Directing in an Animated Television Production " caption in the 2008 Annie Awards for his directing in " Into the Inferno " . Additionally , music editor and composer Jeremy Zuckerman and the sound editing team were nominated a Golden Reel award for " Best Sound Editing in a Television Animation " for their work in " Avatar Aang " .