



Meet the Daily Blogger Critiquing Leaked 'Axanar' Script

By  [Carlos Pedraza](#)

AxaMonitor reached out to the writer who launched a daily blog critiquing the *Axanar* script recently [leaked](#) by former chief technologist Terry McIntosh.



See also: [The 'Locked' Axanar Screenplay: A Review](#)

The site, [Axanar: The Sporkings](#), walks through the screenplay daily, roughly a scene at a time, commenting on the script producer [Alec Peters](#) called “fully revised and locked” just before he was [sued](#) by Star Trek’s owners for [copyright_infringement](#).

The writer, who goes by the pseudonym Kate Stark on Facebook, takes aim at fundamental weaknesses in the script by Peters and screenwriter [Bill Hunt](#), himself a critic of Peters’ [lack](#) of film production experience.

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Garth a Mary Sue?

What's a 'Mary Sue'?
 According to Wikipedia, a “[Mary Sue](#) is an idealized and seemingly perfect fictional character. Often this character is



recognized as an author insert or wish-fulfillment.”¹⁾

Mary Sue

The most glaring, Stark writes, is Peters’ making the role Garth of Izar, who can do no wrong as portrayed by Peters, a “Mary Sue” — a perfect character, vociferously and voluminously admired by all the other characters.

Stark consented to answer some questions about her blog project, and what she’s learned from reading the leaked script that was reportedly only 30 days away from filming when the lawsuit shut down production.

Critique Experience

AxaMonitor: You said on Facebook that you “cut your teeth” reading (and critiquing, presumably) Harry Potter, Lord of the Rings and Star Trek fan fiction. What was it about that writing that compelled you to learn the art of critique?

Kate Stark: There were a lot of reasons I got started with fan fiction. First, I was reading a lot of fan fiction. It was how we engaged with franchises we loved, particularly while waiting for the next installment.

Second, there were existing communities. I was able to find people from whom I could learn and with whom I could share. Finally, fan fiction was accessible. You didn’t need a graduate degree in literature to understand it, and the mistakes were exaggerated enough that they were easy for a novice critic to spot.

AxaMonitor: You said that these days you primarily critique published fiction. Do you do it professionally at all, or as an interested amateur? In what forums do you do that these days? What kind of debate/arguments do you find you get into? Are you seeing any of the same kinds of issues arising as you go through Axanar?

Stark: My critiques are those of an interested amateur. I’m not nearly talented enough in self promotion to make it a professional gig!

Back in the early-aughts many of these critiques happened on Live Journal. There aren’t as many of those communities anymore — most of the people who still do this style of



Kate Stark

Axanar: The Sporkings, ‘Admire the Sue’



From the *Axanar* script:

INT. STARFLEET OPERATIONS - WAR ROOM

The dog watch is on. The room is dark, with coffee flowing, screen-lit faces, and tension in the air.

Well, they got the coffee right. Otherwise, the writers once again demonstrate their ability to use jargon without understanding what it means. In this case, they’re using a naval term: “dog watch.”

However, the dog watch does not refer to the “earliest hours of the morning.” That’s midwatch or, perhaps, the first hour of the morning watch. The dog watches cover the afternoon to evening (1600 to 1800 and 1800 to 2000).²⁾

critique do it on their own websites — but there's one I frequented as a teen that's still reasonably active.

During the heyday of fan fiction critiques, you got a massive amount of drama. Most of us were teens, after all, and still developing a thick skin with respect to our work. Now, there's substantially less drama. It's very much like what you see with the Axanar Facebook groups. You have supporters in one group, critics in another, and they may occasionally snipe at each other, but there's little discussion. To my mind, that's unfortunate. Any work of art, whether skilled or unskilled, can invite multiple interpretations and the world is a better place through the discussion of them.

« What surprised me about the script is that I think it would have been a fun fan film had it been produced. » — *Screenplay critic Kate Stark*

'Very Happy' Critiquing 'Axanar'

AxaMonitor: You said the leak of *Axanar* made you very happy with its opportunity to examine whether the bill of goods Axanar donors were sold matched up with the reality of the screenplay's quality. Several posts into The Sporkings, are you still "very, very happy"? Are you having fun?

Stark: Oh, yes. I am still very, very happy. I look forward to the time I set aside for Axanar.

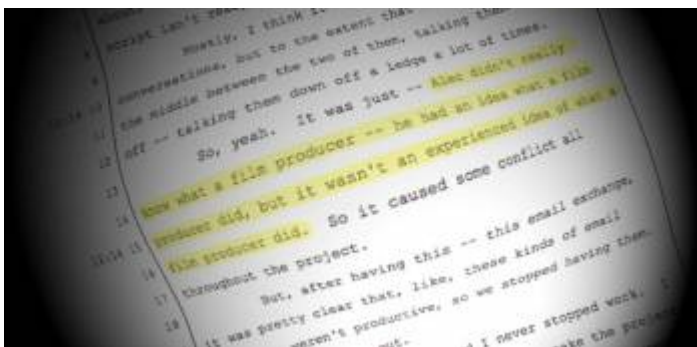
AxaMonitor: Critics of your analysis may claim you've had it out for Axanar for a while. Do you think you're being fair with your (sometimes savage) criticism of the screenplay?

Stark: I hope I'm being fair. I try to be fair. If I'm not giving the script credit where it is due then I'm doing a real disservice to the craft.

AxaMonitor: I assume you read the script all the way through before you started posting. More than once? What's your ratio of reading time to writing time for each post? Do you have a preferred time of day/schedule for your reading and writing?

Stark: I read the script quickly once when it was first posted.

My posts are very much stream-of-consciousness. As I read the scene, I write my responses. Sometimes it's a bit of snark and sometimes it's a more thoughtful analysis of what's going on. I may go back and clean up the post when I'm done, or I may just post the first draft. As it is, each post takes me between two and three hours to write. I do it at night after my work and chores are done.



LACK OF EXPERIENCE Alec Peters' co-writer on the leaked *Axanar* script, Bill Hunt, testified in the lawsuit he didn't think much of Peters' abilities as *Axanar*'s producer.

Script Quality

AxaMonitor: Was the script of the quality you expected given earlier reports? Better? Worse?

Stark: The quality of the script was right about what I expected given the earlier reviews.

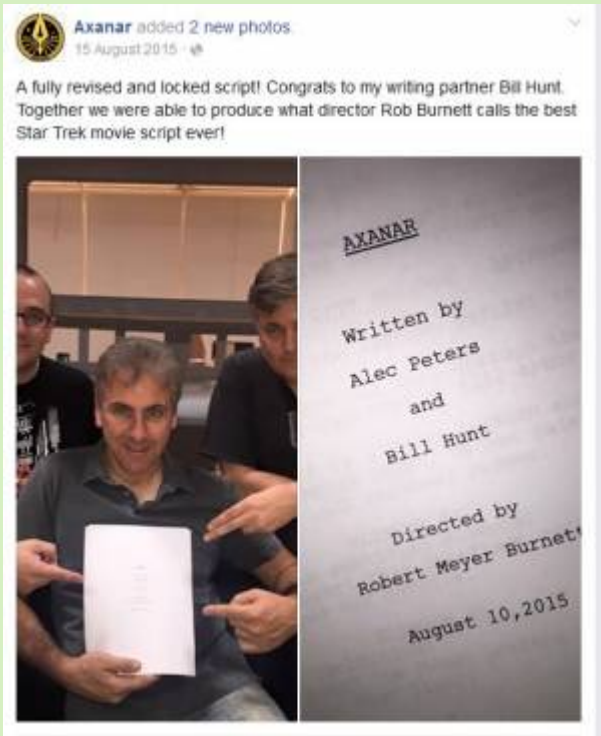
AxaMonitor: Has the script surprised you, either pleasantly or otherwise?

Stark: What surprised me about the script is that I think it would have been a fun fan film had it been produced.

'Axanar' Lite

AxaMonitor: How good are the prospects for [Axanar Lite](#)TM as a shortened version of this story in the faux documentary format of *Prelude to Axanar*? ³⁾

Stark: One of the consistent weaknesses in *Axanar* is that the script favors telling over showing. The faux documentary format of *Prelude* will turn that weakness into a strength. Additionally, I don't see any challenge in fitting the Axanar story into thirty minutes. The [version] 7.3 script is inflated by constant repetition, frequently we get the same information from both the Starfleet and Klingon perspectives.



The image shows a Facebook post from the 'Axanar' page, dated August 15, 2015. The post text reads: "A fully revised and locked script! Congrats to my writing partner Bill Hunt. Together we were able to produce what director Rob Burnett calls the best Star Trek movie script ever!". Below the text are two photos. The left photo shows a man (Alec Peters) holding a script, with others pointing at it. The right photo is a close-up of the script's title page, which reads: "AXANAR", "Written by Alec Peters and Bill Hunt", "Directed by Robert Meyer Burnett", and "August 10, 2015". A green download icon is positioned to the left of the photos.

DOWNLOAD the [f Axanar script](#) Alec Peters described in August 2015 as "fully revised and locked." (You may need to be logged for this link in the Files section of the [f AxaMonitor Facebook](#) page to work properly.)

Kharn the Undying

AxaMonitor: Given the loss of Richard Hatch and therefore no Kharn appearances to any appreciable degree in Axanar Lite™, how much does that threaten the integrity of the story?

Stark: Chang shares almost all of Kharn's scenes. The character could easily impart the same information, thus maintaining the integrity of the story.

Salvaging 'Axanar'?

AxaMonitor: So far, *Axanar* doesn't seem to hold up very well under serious scrutiny. Is there any hope for this story? What might you change in order to salvage the concept behind Axanar?

Stark: No, Axanar does not hold up to scrutiny at all. I don't see much hope for this story, even with a page one rewrite. The problem is that there's not much to salvage when you break it down. The characters are quite flat and the plot is thin.

If the writers wanted to tell the story of Garth of Izar and Axanar, they'd have to start by redeveloping the character of Garth. He has no real flaws and that, more than anything else, sucks the life out of this story.

Satisfying?

AxaMonitor: Were you an Axanar donor? Had this version of the screenplay been produced would you have been satisfied?

Stark: I was not a donor. I initially planned to donate, but was concerned with what people reported about some of [Propworx's](#) past [business practices](#).



MIGHT Axanar: The Sporkings' "Kate Stark" actually be infamous Twitter parodist [TampAxanar?](#)


Identity

AxaMonitor: Who are you really? Will we ever find out? Is there anything you're willing to share about the real life of "Kate Stark"?

Stark: I have a deeply uncomfortable relationship with the Internet. I love how it allows me to share ideas with people I will never meet in person. On the other hand, I dislike how much time it takes away from real life and how much personal information it puts in the hands of governments and corporations.

TampAxanar?

AxaMonitor: Finally, lucky question No. 13: Are you [Twitter](#) **TampAxanar**, the parody version of Peters on Twitter? (I had to ask...)

Stark: I'm not that clever. 

Keywords

[Script](#), [Screenplay](#), [Alec Peters](#), [Axanar](#)

1)

 [Wikipedia entry](#) on "Mary Sue," retrieved 6/28/17.

2)

"Admire the Sue," [Axanar: The Sporkings](#), Kate Stark, 7/8/17.

3)

The lawsuit settlement allows Peters to make two 15-minute episodes comprising the *Axanar* story; he must do so without any public crowdfunding.

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