Integration

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Summary

The dark fic JangoObi AU where the Mandalorian empire didn't fall (Revan wasn't a thing and their momentum kept going, essentially) and now we are in the prequel age, which literally no one asked for but you're all getting anyways.

Obi-Wan is on a basic evacuation mission when he has to ward off the Mandalorian forces himself, resulting in his capture. He wakes up to find himself an unwilling participant in one of the more intense integration programs.

Now, he must try to escape out of a seemingly inescapable system and hold on to his own identity in the mean time, while going through the program designed to break those like him into Mandalorians.

To top it all off, he seems to have caught the attention of the Mand'alor himself, Jango Fett.

Fic not betad.
Okay, putting this here.
This is a DARK!IFIC. As the story goes on, the text will address/condone this less and less because some of the characters (all of like, two) stop thinking about how it's bad/get used to it (Stockholm syndrome). All of the other characters are for it or end up dead/quickly out of the way.
The integration program is somewhere between brain-washing, grooming, and non-consensual intensive behavioral therapy, so if that sort of thing isn't for you, please do yourself a favor and don't read.
If there's anything else that you think should be tagged, please leave it in the comments.
“Master, they’re gaining on us! What should we do?” came Anakin’s slightly panicked voice over the coms.

“Keep calm, Anakin. We stick to the plan as much as possible, just … perhaps a bit faster than we had hoped we would need to go,” Obi-Wan could feel sweat gathering underneath his mustache even as he reassured his padawan.

He and Anakin were currently trying to finish evacuating a trading settlement from a frontier moon. The republic had received news of Mandalorian Empire forces moving in and the Jedi Council had elected to send Obi-Wan and Anakin. Usually This sort of mission would have had two knights, but Anakin was only a few months away from taking his trials, so the master-padawan pair was sent. The council already considered them one of the most efficient teams in the order and Obi-Wan suspected that even once Anakin was knighted they would be sent on majority of their missions together.

Of course, the mission would go tits up. They were supposed to have finished the evacuation a day or two before the Mandalorian forces got to the moon, instead the enemy had shown up a few hours before the evacuation was finished.

“Master, I don’t think our little caravan is going to make it if we stick to the plan,” Anakin said over the coms, to anyone else, Anakin would sound perfectly calm, but Obi-Wan had practically raised him, could hear the slight trepidation in his voice.

Obi-Wan took a breath in, “Right, then. Anakin, you lead the caravan to the start of the hyperspace route, I’ll about-face and try to hold them off.”

“All due respect, master, but shouldn’t I hold them off? I’m the better fighter pilot, you’ve said so yourself,” the reply came a second later, and Obi-Wan thought he could hear a bit of concern and Anakin’s protective fire underneath the cockiness in that response.

“You’re already at the front, I’m already at the back, and we don’t have time to waste. Com me once you finish getting them all sent off and I’ll disengage. Then we’ll retreat together,” Obi-Wan made sure to use what he knew Anakin called his “iron logic” tone in private to end the debate before it could go further and began turning around.

“Yes, master,” Anakin’s response was less of a grumble than Obi-wan would have expected. He considered that a small but valuable victory amongst all the things not going well today.

Obi-Wan found himself quickly facing a small squad of ten Mandalorian ships. He fired at them, shots bouncing off their shields, and three rolled away; scout ships, not equipped with enough firepower for a real battle.

There were, unfortunately, still seven ships to hold off. Obi-Wan could see that two were very heavily armed, the other five less so, but with the sort of boarding apparatus that he had only really seen on pirate ships. Obi-Wan found himself suddenly grateful that his ship only had some cargo and droids, no other people, as he became aware that he may be dealing with close-quarters combat soon.
His suspicion became reality a few minutes later. He had managed to break through the shields of one ship, and was close on several of the others. He had also focused too much on doing so and had lost track of two of the ships. One managed to forcibly attach itself and Obi-Wan felt his ship jerk. Alarms began blaring as one of the entrances to the ship was bypassed and the intruders began boarding.

Obi-Wan quickly prioritized, muttering under his breath “Inform Anakin, destroy flight plans and nav console, grab that info case in bay C if possible, escape pods. Vents will probably be best,” as he called Anakin.

“Master?” Anakin sounded half full of dread, half full of hope. Obi-Wan wished he could have delivered better news.

“Anakin. I’ve been boarded, I’m going to destroy the flight plans then try to escape in a pod. How close are you to being done?” Obi-Wan kept his voice steady as well as his hands as he unbuckled and shut down his computers, patting his hip to double check that his lightsaber was still there.

“We should be done in six to eight minutes but, master, it will take me ten to get to you, maybe more…” Now Obi-Wan could clearly hear the desperation he had felt growing on Anakin’s side of their bond since they had split up.

“We’ll just have to make do, us per usual. May the force be with you, Anakin,” Obi-Wan said determinately.

“And with you, master,” Anakin recognized it as the same determination Obi-Wan had before putting himself in an almost hopeless, dangerous situation which he was resolved to take care of himself.

Obi-Wan erased the data in the steering console, silently thanking Anakin for making sure he could do so thoroughly, then took the grate off the vent with the force. As he hauled himself up into the vent and replaced the grate, he could hear the faint pounding of feet. The Mandalorians were about two hallways away. Obi-Wan took a deep breath in and exhaled, calming himself, then started crawling.

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Jango’s day had been one of his better ones recently. He hadn’t gotten to go on any campaigns far enough lately for them to be interesting, all of his short excursions had been to worlds already so afraid of Mandalorians that few on the planets wanted to put up any sort of fight. He had expected a little bit of excitement from the trading moon. It would have had great inventory, information, a strategic position, and, given how many mercenaries, smugglers, and fighters these places tended to have, it should have had a good fight.

Instead, they had found an almost abandoned moon, and the lack of supplies was a small blow, but they had gotten some excitement.

The caravan evacuating had been surprisingly well-organized, and far more maneuverable than any of them had been expecting. It was a fun chase, then the caravan started pulling away and he and his squad prepared to start seriously pursuing it. Then the last ship, smaller compared to most of the others, pulled away from the caravan and turned around. It looked like it was part-way between a
freighter and fighter and could be manned by one pilot. Jango recognized it as one of the republic’s newer models of “rescue ships” as they were calling the class.

Someone made a comment about puppies playing with wolves over the coms, then the ship started firing. The three scout ships in the squad rolled away, as per procedure, and Jango heard at least one of the pilots growl at that. Whoever the pilot of the enemy ship was, they were pretty good, managing to seriously damage and almost disable their shields before Effao Strirs managed to get her ship attached, beginning the boarding process.

“No killing unless you have to, the pilot at least is worth an integration program,” He spoke into the coms.

“Roger that,” was the short reply. Jango could hear the same smile in Effao’s voice that was threatening to overtake his face. The chase had been fun so far, the rest of the hunt would hopefully match.

Jango maneuvered his ship on the other side of the rescue ship, letting his equipment attach him much more smoothly than Effao’s. Whoever was inside might not have even felt him attach. He saw the six commandos on the ship with him put on their helmets and go towards the door in the security holo. As soon as the docking signal turned green, they left, boarding the other vessel.

Jango boarded a minute later to find plain hallways with plain doors, simply and pragmatically marked, then switched on his com, “I’m on board,” was all he felt he had to say.

“Cockpit’s empty. Kark is restarting the computers to try to figure out where the rest of this person’s friends are going,” Effao replied.

“I wouldn’t bother checking, just input coordinates for the flag ship. Someone did a complete clean wipe of the nav comp. Destroyed the hard drive too. There was a spare one nearby, though, never used, so the ship can still fly,” Lovun said, somehow managing to sound mildly annoyed and impressed without exhibiting much emotion. He really had deserved the promotion, Jango thought.

“Well kriff them, then,” was Kark’s automatic reply. There was laughter over the coms from everybody onboard. Even Jango chuckled a little bit.

“Two of you start going through any storage bays and taking inventory. Four of you guard the escape pods. Everyone else should be looking for our pilot and anyone else on board,” Jango commanded once the giggling had died down. “And Effao, inform the others of our situation before joining them. Las, I want you to set up a thermal lifeform scan in case this one’s as good at hiding as they are at wiping,”

“Yes, ‘Alor,” was the near simultaneous response.

Jango got to tour almost the entire ship before he found himself in the escape pod bay. It was near the engine room and Jango could hear some muffled bumps intermittently coming from the walls.

“Is anyone having any luck at finding our pilot? Because all the escape pods are here and that flying definitely wasn’t a droid,” he sighed. The four in the room with him shrugged.

“Sorry, ‘Alor, but no luck yet. Our ghost pilot is either an actual ghost, found a ridiculously good hiding spot, or is somehow moving while avoiding detection,” Effao was always blunt, even when saying things people didn’t really want to hear. Jango had always liked that.

“Thermal scan?” Jango sighed again, this was taking up almost an hour and a half, it usually only would have been a half hour to find them.
“As I said, the battery pack died, should be charged in two minutes. I’ll have that scan as soon as it’s done,” Las huffed. Xe’d been a little put out when it wouldn’t work earlier, swearing that xe always made sure to charge the batteries.

Jango looked up, praying to the gods for patience, and was about to reply, when he realized something, “Found them,” he stated, “Kanvined, walk quietly and stand by the door. On my mark, shoot at the vent.”

There was a groan over the coms, “The vents. Of kriffing course. How did we not think of that?” Kark had gotten bored of hovering the rescue ship near the flagship a while ago.

Jango raised his hand and was about to give Kanvined the signal, when the vent cover flew off and smacked into the far wall, followed by a beige blur. A human in Jedi robes rolled twice on floor and bounced up, using his and the others’ split second of surprise to steady themselves and take stock of the room.

“Kriff, Jedi!” Kanvined hissed, informing the other Mandalorians onboard.

“Don’t let them get into an escape pod. Incapacitate and capture if possible,” Jango ordered, drawing his blaster.

He almost managed to get a shot past the Jedi’s guard, but the Jedi dodged, igniting a blue saber before deflecting the next round of volleys.

“Osik, that’s Kenobi!” Vojunn exclaimed from across the room, identifying the man.

“Keep him surrounded, he doesn’t have much room to move in here. And see if you can keep getting him to deflect blaster shots into the escape pods,” Jango barked out.

Unfortunately, Kenobi seemed to recognize that he was damaging his own escape a few seconds later and proceeded to begin deflecting blasts into the ground, rather than keep trying to hit the commandos. No one seemed to be getting anywhere in the fight.

Vojunn was the first to try non-blaster combat. Extending their vibro-spear and trying to swing a shallow slice across Kenobi’s back. Kenobi, the damn Jedi, turned like he knew it was coming and hooked the bes’kar spear head with his saber, pulling Vojunn and switching places with them.

The Jedi got into a defensive stance in the corner, eyes flitting over to the escape pods nearby as the rest of the commandos kept firing on him.

“The closest intact pod is six meters away from him. Give him a hard opening and I’ll zap him,” Jango was once again grateful for all the cheats a Mandalorian suit of armor was in various situations. External mute made strategy making so much easier.

The Jedi took the bait and Jango moved in, grabbing one wrist and the other shoulder, elbow bracing against the Jedi’s forearm to prevent him from using his saber. He got a second or two of the electric attack in, hearing the Jedi swallow a cry into a grunt, before he felt a boot connect to his chin, one of the less protected parts of him in his armor.

Okay. So the Jedi was bendy.

And acrobatic.

Jango saw Kenobi flip over him and he turned around, still a bit off balance, watching Kenobi take a step towards the other escape pods; only for them all to eject. The Jedi stopped short and Jango
looked over to the control panel by the door. As expected, Effao was standing there, probably
smirking under the helmet.

“We’re right by the flagship, and now he can’t escape. Seemed most efficient,” she explained.
Definitely smirking.

“‘Alor, Kenobi is the only sentient on board besides us. He must have been the pilot and the wiper.
Kark said all of the droids have been off for the last eight hours,” Las informed Jango.

Jango smiled to himself for the good catch before turning off his external mute, “Are you gonna
come quietly now? You have no escape pods, we’re right outside the flagship, about to dock, and
there are six of us against one of you, plus all of the others on the ship,” he used a voice that spoke of
someone used to being in command, but also used to fighting and taking his goals, full of strong will.
It often startled or unsettled people. Jango wanted to see how the Jedi would react.

Kenobi appeared unaffected by the voice, but looked around and analyzed the room, seeming to mull
over the reasons Jango had given him. The Jedi closed his eyes, took a deep breath in and exhaled,
straightening and deactivating his lightsaber.

“I suppose that would result in fewer injuries for everyone involved, wouldn’t it?” He said, a
sardonic smile on his lips as he slowly bent down and rolled his lightsaber in the direction of Effao
before standing up again.

The Jedi had been captured before, Jango knew from military reports, but seeing Kenobi’s
mannerisms of surrender presented this fact for everyone to see.

Jango stepped up to the Jedi, taking one of his fast-acting sedative pills from its belt pouch and
holding it out to him.

“Really?” Kenobi asked in a slightly exasperated, almost bemused manner, with an eyebrow cocked,
before taking the pill from Jango’s hand. He hesitated for a moment, face twitching into a grimace,
before popping it into his mouth and swallowing.

Kanvined came up behind the Jedi and clipped restraints on his hands in the back. Effao and two of
the others left to start prepping to unload. The rest of Mandalorians and the Jedi stood waiting in the
room for a minute before the Jedi dropped, Kanvined threw him over his shoulder and filed out
behind Jango.

"He’s got a good mind and is decent at combat. Definitely worth the integration program," Jango
thought to himself. He reached up and rubbed his sore jaw, there was probably a bruise already
forming. "Yeah, definitely worth it."

Chapter End Notes

Bunch of OCs in this chapter, which is going to be a thing for the rest of this fic, I just
used an online name generator. And yes, Kanvined is a Twilek name. I used the Twilek
generator for him. He was put through an integration program instead of being raised
Mandalorian so he has a non-Mandalorian name.
It would have taken Anakin twenty minutes to get to Obi-Wan when he last called. But
the boarding commandos got the rescue ship to the flag ship before Anakin even had a
chance at catching up to them, at which point Anakin had to retreat.
Jango hasn’t gotten to go on long (read: exciting) campaigns because he keeps having to take care of things back on Mandalore. Running an empire takes a lot of time, folks. Jango and most of the commandos bring the sedatives for the sake of capturing folks easier. Jango is a pragmatic hunter more than a bronze age hero to me, so no “I must beat my opponent in honorable battle” nonsense is going to come from him. If it works and isn’t morally repugnant, use it.

Obi-Wan did manage to get that case of info from bay C, it’s currently in the vent. He left it up there when he realized he was going to have to fight at least two Mandos (all he could see). He’s currently hoping they don’t find it since he was beaten. It has no relevance for the overall plot of this fic.

Jango realized that the muffled bumps weren’t from the near-by engine room, but from Obi-Wan in the vents (he was trying to maneuver himself around the info case).

Las did charge the battery pack. Obi-Wan was coming back from bay C when he saw what was going on and used the force to tamper with the battery. (Does the force work like that? Probably not. Am I ignoring that the force doesn’t work like that? Yes.)

Obi-Wan grimaced because he hates any sort of drug or medicine, that’s it. He always does this.

Also, Obi-Wan is so used to getting captured (trouble magnet) that he knows exactly what to do even before his captors ask. It has actually unsettled his captors sometimes enough for him to then immediately escape (after grabbing his lightsaber again, of course).
The one where he wakes up in a new place

Chapter Notes

Previously:
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See the end of the chapter for more notes

Obi-Wan came to full consciousness quite suddenly. His first thought was that the sedative was far more effective than he had thought it would be. The second was that he could feel he was alone in whatever space he was in. The third was that he could also feel something unusual on his wrists. Raising his arms to his face, Obi-Wan opened his eyes and saw a cuff on each hand. They weren’t attached together and looked like rings of white plastic with a cut out section in the middle, which was filled with a blue colored band of energy. He tried to use the force to remove them to no avail.

He sat up. As far as his experience with prisoner cells went this one was luxurious. He was sitting on a decent mattress on a cot with plain but clean sheets. The walls were plain but finished and the floor had mildly worn industrial carpeting. The room’s vent was far too small for him to fit through. There was a small table with a drawer besides him and three doors on two of the walls. There was also a data pad on the table.

Obi-Wan picked up the data pad and tried to turn it on as he walked to the door on the far wall. The door wouldn’t open even with the force and the pad needed a password. Obi-Wan wondered what the point was of giving him a pad he couldn’t access.

The other two doors did open. One to what appeared to be an empty closet and the other to a refresher. The refresher seemed to be stocked with all of the basic human hygiene products, plus a cup, which Obi-Wan filled at the sink and drank from. Walking back into the cell (room? It really didn’t seem much like a cell), Obi-Wan spotted his boots at the foot of the cot. He put the data pad and cup on the table and walked over to check on his boots.

Obi-Wan tsked. They had removed his emergency knife from its sheath inside the right boot. Obi-Wan had no weapons, no way of getting out, and no idea what laid outside the room even if he did. He sat down crossed legged on the floor and decided to meditate.

A few hours later, the inoperable door opened. Obi-Wan quickly pulled himself out of his light meditation as an armored Mandalorian stepped into the room, hand resting on their undrawn blaster. Obi-Wan quickly slid on and fastened his boots before standing.

"Out into the hallway.” Perhaps it was because of the helmet, but the slightly muffled voice was completely neutral in tone. Obi-Wan couldn’t decipher any sort of emotional state or intent from it.

Doing as he was told, Obi-Wan was met with a long chain gang of various species in the hallway, led at the front by another Mandalorian. A third came up to him and grabbed one of his hands, using a stick-shaped device to pull the blue energy out of the middle of that hand’s cuff, creating a sort of rope. The Mandalorian then used the stick to attach the rope to the other cuff. Obi-Wan decided that it would not be a wise move to struggle here; he had far too little information. Finally, the rope
between the two parts was pulled and connected to the rest of the chain gang. Obi-Wan was now
directly behind the Mandalorian apparently in charge of leading them.

The one with the stick device stepped up beside their comrade as they all began walking. Obi-Wan
heard the one who had come into his room step in line at the back. They collected five more beings
before they were led into what Obi-Wan could only describe as a lecture hall. Another being, not in
armor or chained, walked in and the door closed. Obi-Wan heard it lock as the being, Obi-Wan’s
best guess for their species was Theelin, walked behind the podium at the front of the room. The
chain gang’s leader tapped out a sequence on their gauntlet and the ropes of energy dissipated.

“Take a seat. I will be your primary instructor for the time being. My name is Phas Wudo,
she/her/hers.” Wudo, apparently, said, using a tone not unlike the one Obi-Wan would use when
teaching a class of initiates at the temple. Obi-Wan’s hand twitched towards where his lightsaber
usually was as he made his way to a seat, a suspicion forming in his head. He had heard of the
Mandalorian empire forcefully inducting conquered peoples into their society and wondered if
perhaps they had a program for captured individuals as well.

“You think I’ll be listening to a fucking Theelin bitch! You—” the only Karkodon in their group, who
had been snarling at a low level volume since Obi-Wan could hear him, appeared to be trying to
threaten Wudo. He did not get far.

“You think you want to rethink what you’re saying?” The Mandalorian who had entered their rooms
quickly moved right in front of the Karkodon, blaster aimed directly at his chest.

The Karkodon snarled and raised his arm, apparently he was stupid enough to try to attack. The
Mandalorian fired before he could, an electric shock hitting the Karkodon and dropping him to the
ground. Phas Wudo sighed and rummaged for something under the podium.

“In our empire, any and all species are welcome. If you are still learning this, then I daresay you will
need private, remedial lessons before you are ready to learn more about our culture,” this time her
voice was closer to a reprimanding crèchemaster’s. Wudo found what she was looking for and
approached the Karkodon on the floor. She took out a syringe and inserted it, injecting whatever
drug was in it.

The guards and their teacher went back to their original positions as the Karkodon slowly stopped
moving and fell unconscious. A few moments later, the door opened again and two more
Mandalorians came in and scooped up the Karkodon, carrying him out.

“Well, as I’m sure you’ve noticed, not cooperating is very ill-advised given your situation,” Wudo
seemed to be mildly amused. Obi-Wan supposed that the previous scene had happened enough times
that she was no longer phased by it and found her amusement in the futility of them resisting at this
point.

“If you have not put it together yet, you are currently at the beginning of your integration program for
the Mandalorian Empire. As I said, I am your primary instructor for the time being. My name is Phas
Wudo, she/her/hers. I will mainly be teaching you our people’s culture, history, and social structure,”
Phas continued where she had left off before the interruption, “Today we will go over the format of
the integration program, set up an account, which will allow you access to the data pads that are in
your rooms, get you clothes, and have all of you checked on by the medics. Will anyone be needing
medication at some point today? Or will it be fine to tell our medics later?”

There was a moment where no one moved before a Mirialan to Obi-Wan’s left raised their hand, “I
contracted Nebellia a few weeks ago, I’ve been taking two standard doses every day at noon,” their
voice sounded hoarse.
“We shall try to get your dosage to you, then,” Wudo replied, “Now, let’s get started, shall we?”

It took what Obi-Wan considered a short time to go over the format of their “integration”, though some in the lecture hall seemed to get restless part way through. Eventually they were chained up again and led to a cafeteria for lunch where they were allowed to sit wherever they wished and the Mirialan was delivered their medicine.

Obi-Wan was sitting across and one over from them and watched them swallow the doses. They had not been told that they could not talk to each other. “I am Obi-Wan, he/him/his. You are?” he tried to keep his voice friendly and unobtrusive, the more allies he could make the better.

They looked at him for a moment then replied, a bit stiffly, “Wenuve, she/her/hers. You’re a Jedi, aren’t you?”

“Yes. Yes I am. Does that trouble you?” Obi-Wan remained serene and tried to be nonabrasive, if he could not make an ally, he at least did not want to make an enemy.

“Jedi are more likely to give mercenaries trouble than aid,” Her voice was steel.

“Not without reason, you must admit. And I never go after mercenaries unless they’re actively planning or committing crimes. There are a number Jedi who think similarly,” Obi-Wan responded, honesty was the best policy in this situation. “Also, I think our positions right now might make me almost willing to work with a Sith.”

“Already planning escape? You work quickly,” Wenuve chuckled out under her breath.

“Still gathering information. Our prospects aren’t looking too good right now, though.”

“Oh? Come on, I’ve seen a few gaps someone could use to get away already.”

“But how far could you go? Out “teacher” has obviously dealt with those like our Karkodon friend from earlier innumerable times, we don’t have access to weapons, there are armored Mandalorians all around us who, if they interact with us, never do it alone, and we have no idea where any exit is, let alone a way off whatever planet we’re on,” Obi-Wan accidently let some concern slip into voice, though he wasn’t sure his companion had noticed.

“Huh. Kriff, when you put it that way…” Wenuve apparently hadn’t really been thinking this through, perhaps she had been lucky enough to not get captured much in the past, “Wait, planet? They took me on Fest, where did you get taken from?”

“Space. A few systems away from you, near Vaal.”

“Kriff.”

“Quite. Also, as far as escape goes, it is often foolhardy to assume that you’ve planned an original escape plan unless it’s a stupid one.”

“Line up!” The order came from one of the Mandalorian guards behind Obi-Wan, though he wasn’t sure which one.

“stupid escape plans?” Wenuve whispered as they deposited their trays and started walking towards their chain leader.
“People are always finding new ways to be stupid,” Obi-Wan whispered back. Wenuve snorted and smirked at that, apparently amused.

They were led back to the lecture hall and took what Obi-Wan approximated to be a little over half an hour to set up accounts for everyone. After that, they were led to the quartermaster.

Since they only needed clothes at the moment they were led directly to a back room full of them and were told they could pick three outfits plus a set of sleep clothes. The clothes appeared to be confiscated from a number of the Mandalorians’ operations given the varied, miscellaneous nature of the collection.

Obi-Wan managed to find an entire set of Jedi clothes in light tan and beige, a second obi, and another outer tunic. He made do with what else was there, trying to find clothes reminiscent of the traditional Jedi style, but still looked more like a rogue or a pirate then he would have liked. He found a slightly big, relatively soft shirt and leggings for his sleep clothes.

Wenuve smirked and laughed silently at him for the last minute or so while he kept searching for anything that wasn’t synth-leather or something equally un-Jedi-like. Finding clothes that kept up her mercenary aesthetic had been comparatively quick, and once she found the bins of scarves and hats, she easily selected the items to let her make more headdresses.

Once everyone was done, they gave their selections to the quartermaster to be delivered and were again chained then led to another location. Obi-Wan had the beginnings of a map in his head, but was still quite unsure in what direction any exit was in or what would be beyond it.

When they stepped into their next location Obi-Wan felt his nose instinctively scrunch up. The healer’s ward – no – medic’s area. Obi-Wan remembered that was what they called it here. Regardless of what it was called though, the fact remained that Obi-Wan didn’t like it. There were five doctors who were to examine them, each with one either apprentice or nurse, Obi-Wan wasn’t quite sure which. One of the doctors was a Mon Calamari and, oh, if that didn’t make Obi-Wan miss Bant.

The chain gang was unlinked again and they were shuffled into five even lines. Obi-Wan was the fourth of six in his line. Of course, Obi-Wan was put in the line with the Mon Calamari doctor, the universe loved to laugh at him like that after all. As the first member of each line stepped into their doctor’s area the assistant for each would pull a curtain around, giving some privacy to their patients.

Obi-Wan spotted Wenuve in the farthest left line, she was looking straight ahead with her head held high. She glanced over at Obi-Wan and gave the barest of nods, which Obi-Wan returned. It appeared that Wenuve might become an ally after all. Wenuve went back to looking straight ahead and Obi-Wan continued discreetly glancing around the room. It was a well-equipped, sanitary, standard infirmary of fairly big size. Nothing of particular note that he could see, though he registered in the back of his head that there were plenty of surgical tools which could potentially be used as weapons or pilfered as tools.

As each member of the first group finished, they came out from the curtain and the next person in line would go into the curtained area. The finished members of their group were herded to line up against a wall.

Eventually it was Obi-Wan’s turn. He entered the curtained area and sat on the examination table as the doctor’s assistant, who appeared to be human, closed the curtain.
“I’m Dr. Mago, I’ll be examining you today. That is my assistant, Zunta,” the Mon Calamari said as they tapped on a data pad. Obi-Wan presumed they were making a new profile for him. “Take off your shirt,” it was a curt order. Obi-Wan found that Dr. Mago’s clinical, business-like demeanor, though cold, was not the worst he had dealt with.

Dr. Mago hummed and narrowed their eyes as they studied his bare torso. They tsked and muttered under their breath something that sounded suspiciously like “well muscled but too skinny, probably needs more food” as they typed something out on the data pad.

“How’d you get the bruises on your elbows?” Dr. Mago asked.

“I was crawling around in vents right before I was captured,” Obi-Wan replied after a moment. Dr. Mago seemed a bit amused by this, though Obi-Wan could only tell in the force.

The examination included the basics; blood pressure, breathing, hearing, etc. as well as taking a blood sample. All throughout the examination, Dr. Mago, and sometimes Zunta, would ask questions about his medical history. Obi-Wan tried to answer as best as he could. If they were so willing to give Wenuve her medicine Obi-Wan imagined that they going to try to keep them all as healthy as they could. Unfortunately, Obi-Wan had lost track of a lot of his injuries and illnesses. Dr. Mago seemed a bit exasperated by this, but not unused to it.

He at least remembered which inoculations he was due for, and received them. Dr. Mago gave a miniscule smile with some mirth when Obi-Wan’s eye twitched upon seeing the multiple syringes.

Zunta snickered and asked “What? Are you afraid of shots?”

“Zunta.” Dr. Mago reprimanded. Zunta hunched in on themself, it seemed this was a frequent problem for the child. It reminded Obi-Wan of Anakin when he was younger.

Obi-Wan sighed theatrically, “If you must know, I detest medical attention. The healers at the temple claim I’m even worse than my master was at showing up for appointments,” Zunta gave a small grin in response.

“Hm… You’ll be on our vigilance list, then. No one gets to play truant around here,” Dr. Mago said, typing on their data pad.

Obi-Wan did nothing but blink for a moment. He had not thought that admission through thoroughly. “Drat.” Zunta snickered again, this time without reprimand.

Eventually everyone finished up their examinations. The last being, the Karkodon from earlier, came out from the curtain and was led to a specific spot on the wall. As they began re-chaining them, Obi-Wan realized that they were in the same order from that morning when they were led from their rooms to the lecture hall. Obi-Wan recalled that when they had become unlinked throughout the day the energy from the front of the line would drop first and then go down the line. It would seem that the chain could only be broken from the front and that energy was constantly running through. Like an electric current whose source was the device their leading Mandalorian was holding.

Indeed, as they deposited members, they started in the front. The Mandalorian with the stick device bringing it out again to connect the person second in line directly to the leading Mandalorian, leaving the former first in line in a splintered position to the rest of the chain.

They would be released from the leader, then the door to their room would be opened, their wrists disconnected, and they would be shove into the room before the door was closed. Obi-Wan could
faintly hear the doors automatically lock.

After the first five were deposited, they entered Obi-Wan’s hallway. Obi-Wan noticed now that it looked a bit disused and, unlike the other hallways, was a dead-end instead of throughway. His door was almost at the end of the hallway.

He ended up stepping forward into his room before he could be shoved, timing it by feeling with the force. Obi-Wan heard the chain gang walk back up the hallway as soon as his door closed. Obi-Wan also heard his door’s locks activate. They sounded a bit different than the other doors’. He wondered if that was why he couldn’t use the force on the door. If that was so, the dead-end hallway was also probably for force users. Which would mean that he was the only force user in his group.

Obi-Wan spent some time reflecting on the information he had gathered today and realized if he wanted to attempt escape he would need to see more of the facility. Seeing the package of clothes on his bed, Obi-Wan occupied himself for a bit by putting them in the closet then taking a shower, coming back out and putting on his sleeping clothes. He had chosen well; they were quite comfy.

He decided he might as well do his “course work” for tomorrow in order to avoid any possible punishments. And force, if that didn’t make him feel like a padawan again, “course work”! At some point, a slot at the bottom of his door opened and a tray with dinner was slid inside before the slot closed again. Obi-Wan ignored it for a few minutes and completed the last bit of reading for the next day before eating it.

“Force, this is a fine mess you’ve found yourself in this time, Kenobi. How are getting out of this one?” He muttered to himself.

Chapter End Notes

Once again, online name generators for the OCs
Also, there is a lot of rudimentary wookiepedia searching going on here. So I’m hoping things are accurate, but they might not be and I have no illusions about not understanding whatever nuances should be going on. Please just go with it.
Basically, Obi-Wan, Wenuve, and the others are seen as high-value recruits for some reason or other, so they’re in a special program for “Extraordinary Individuals Who are Not Completely Willing to Become Mandalorians” compared to most initiation programs which are usually for “Members of a Conquered Group Who’d Rather Not be Slaves or Want in on the Plundering”.
Yes, the Karkodon is supposed to be the unnamed Karkodon prisoner from the Rako Hardeen arc.
You may have noticed some pronoun things going on these first two chapters. Basically, in this fic, if a being doesn’t state their pronouns, it is a galactic standard that the polite thing to do is use they/them/their.

Here’s the format of the integration program if you’re interested (wookiepedia didn’t have any details, so this is just me making stuff up):
Phase 1: Heavily monitored, recruits learn about Mandalorian culture, history, and society, there is combat instruction or practice time depending on the individual’s skill level, start learning Mando’a, movement of recruits is heavily restricted
Phase 2: less direct monitoring and less restricted movement, recruits are given a tracker (usually bracelet or anklet), they continue lessons which also become more practical “go
socialize like a Mandalorian” sort of classes, and they also start specializing in something, usually working closely and learning from a full Mandalorian

Phase 3: Unless they specialized in something that has no involvement the military (highly unusual), phase 3 has the recruit assigned to a unit which starts out doing small, domestic missions, a senior member of the unit is the recruit’s handler who is supposed to keep an eye on the recruit and track their progress, the recruit also goes home with their handler and helps raise whatever kids are in the handler’s family

Phase 4: Eventually the handler submits the recruit’s profile to a review board and they hold a committee on whether or not the recruit is fully integrated (including meeting the Resol’nare to a satisfactory level), if the answer is yes then the recruit is called in to be interviewed and is basically sworn in as a Mandalorian

Phase 5: the new Mandalorian stays with their former handler until they are financially independent and find a new place to live

Side notes for this procedure:

During phase 1 Mandalorian officers and officials basically have permission to check out the recruits like library books and have them help with various duties, or just talk to them (this will be relevant later), technically this also continues until full integration, but after phase 1 it’s more like summoning the recruit than checking them out

Phase 1 can take anywhere between a few months to a few years, same with phase 2, although that’s usually shorter

This format is only for the high profile individuals that the Mandalorian empire really wants and who are not there by their own will, the other programs are less rigorous/involved/immersive/personalized

Phase 5 is sometimes not really a thing. It’s quite common for a recruit to really bond with their handler and stay in the handler’s clan and even immediate family. So they often don’t move out and pool their finances with the rest of their Mandalorian family.

If a recruit does not make progress and refuses to cooperate for long enough, the Mandalorians will “remove” them from the program by either a) enslaving them or b) killing them (if they are too dangerous or annoying).
The one where he officially meets him

Chapter Notes

Previously:
“Force, this is a fine mess you’ve found yourself in this time, Kenobi. How are getting out of this one?” He muttered to himself.

The first phase of their “integration” quickly settled into a pattern. They were escorted down the same hallways every day. They would go to same classes. First was History, then Culture (which sometimes felt more like etiquette). After the first two blocks, they were escorted to lunch, where he and Wenuve usually exchanged information before being escorted to the training arena, which Obi-Wan still thought of as the salle.

The first day of combat training had been proficiency tests. Obi-Wan had passed all but his blaster test. Wenuve was being forced to pick up a melee weapon. They were all kept in the main arena for all of the classes, but if they were not being given a lesson they could work on whatever else they wanted so long as it was militant. Obi-Wan found a sword of a good weight and size and usually practiced katas.

After combat practice and training they were allowed to shower and went back to the classroom for Geography and Mando’a. Unlike their first day, they also ate dinner in the cafeteria. He and Wenuve usually tried to exchange more information, but since they weren’t gaining much in the way of escape plans they usually ended up trading stories instead. It turned out that Wenuve was a bit of a gossip.

“So apparently Alono growls at Nel as he walks away but I was watching at the same time from across the room and I’m telling you, Alono was checking out that ass. The second one of them is in phase two and gets to move around, they’re fucking. The UST is getting ridiculous,” Wenuve was laughing heartily.

“As ridiculous as Firrut’s first attempt to best you with an electric whip?” Obi-Wan replied with a small, wry smile.

Wenuve’s laughter boomed across the room, drawing some attention before people went back to their own meals. Their guards were used to them at this point.

“But not quite that ridiculous,” Wenuve was finally calming down, “You were right, by the way. That trident does suit me. How’d you know to suggest it?”

“I had to fight a Chiss once with a very similar build to yours. Xe handled a trident quite well. Xe also had a rather… explosively aggressive personality like yours,” Obi-Wan added, with the hope that Wenuve wouldn’t be insulted. Her temper was quicker to heat than Anakin’s. But also quicker to cool. Apparently, they had already had three fights in these first two weeks.

Wenuve gasped and dramatically grabbed her chest, exclaiming “I am insulted. Revolted. How dare you imply that I, Wenuve the mercenary, founder of the Pyro-Pugna Merc Company, am explosive or aggressive! How dare you!” she burst into another round of laughter that continued through them.
being called to line up again. Even after they were chained and began walking, Obi-Wan could still hear her sniggering.

Obi-Wan was glad that Wenuve and him were friends now, at least until they escaped. It was easier to deal with having Mandalorian propaganda shoved down their throats day after day if you spent your meals reminiscing about the galaxy outside with someone else.

Once Obi-Wan got back to his room he began his usual night routine. He usually did his “course work”; as it turned out, they were punished if they didn’t do it. Then showered, meditated, and finally went to bed. Tonight, however, Obi-Wan only got part way through meditation before there was a knock on his door.

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“How is the newest group doing? This set of thirty started four weeks ago, correct?” Jango asked. He and Mujiita Orrad, Minister of Resource Relocation, were walking down a hallway from a meeting. Jango was heading to his room to finish up the day’s paperwork and Mujiita to his office for the same reason.

“And a day. Decently well, mainly the usual resistance. However, there is a Karkodon that’s giving us particular trouble, I’m afraid. Ms. Wudo has been saying he might need to be removed,” Mujiita’s voice always sounded a bit snobby, but right now he sounded put upon by his own duties. It felt rather condescending, really.

“How much trouble has the Jedi been giving you?” There was a reason they only ever needed one hallway for trained force-users, they were usually too much of a pain to keep around.

“The Jedi? Oh, Kenobi. Absolutely none so far. He actually seems to have adapted the quickest. Ms. Wudo says he could have been a fine archivist. Apparently he has a mind for history,” Mujiita paused both his mouth and his steps and bit his lip. Jango noticed that they had stopped right at the entrance to the force users’ hallway.

“Actually, he apparently has been too calm about his… situation. There has been no resistance and he keeps this “serenely blank” face on at all times. It’s been putting the chaperones on edge,” he finally admitted. Jango was silent for a moment. Mujiita started to squirm.

“I see. Make sure the next time the Karkadon goes to remedial someone tells him what exactly we mean by “removal” from the integration program,” Jango ordered.

“Yes, ‘Alor” was Orrad’s response. It was curt. Jango thought he detected an undercurrent of distaste in the response, perhaps for the Karkodon. He narrowed his eyes slightly and waited for Orrad to skitter down the hall, then turned to look down the other hallway.

Was the Jedi trying to play the long game? Make it to phase three and escape then? Trying to get them to relax security on him by not being a troublemaker? Jango stepped down the hallway towards the Jedi’s door, determined to find out.

Jango knocked twice before opening the door. It was only polite to give warning and the better mood he kept the Jedi in the more likely he was to answer questions.

Former Jedi. He’d have to watch his language.
Stepping in, Jango saw the ginger sitting on the floor, eyes closed, apparently meditating. Jango cleared his throat. He heard two clatters and focused on the source. The data pad and cup, the latter of which was currently rolling on its side on the table. Were they floating when Jango had come in?

Jango looked back to Kenobi and took two steps. The Jedi’s brow furrowed. Suddenly Kenobi breathed deeply, which caused Jango to realize that the former Jedi had appeared to be barely breathing, still as a statue, when he had walked into the room. Kenobi continued twitching slightly, his muscles looked to tense for a moment before he exhaled and relaxed, his eyes fluttering open.

“Oh. Hello.” it was almost cute to see a Jedi confused, especially when he was blinking up at Jango, who wondered how surprised this Jedi- no- former Jedi must be to actually show some on his face.

“Hm,” Jango responded. The other scrambled to his feet, his face quickly slipping into what Jango supposed was the “serenely blank” face. He could see how seeing that face from the first day would be unusual enough to be disconcerting. “Just wanted to see how our force user was settling in. Although I hear you’ve been playing pretty nice.”

“Hm… So there are no other force users in the program currently. Good to know,” Kenobi stroked his beard while remarking this. Jango found himself mildly annoyed for giving away information.

“Not at the moment, no. We often find that they aren’t worth the trouble, floating cups and all those annoyances.”

The Jedi stared back blankly at Jango for a moment before realization dawned on his face. “It was floating? Oh dear, I had not meant to go into so deep a meditation.” He bit his lip, which Jango absently noted was not quite as annoying on his face compared to Mujiita’s. “Thank you for breaking me out of it then, Dr. Mago was quite clear last week that I needed to sleep more. There seemed to be some vague threats in her voice.”

There was an offer in the voice. Obi-Wan Kenobi, Negotiator of the Republic, was offering cooperation, information for information. Usually, Jango wouldn’t accept the deal, wouldn’t engage in that sort of conversation. He could figure things out with his resources, he was very much in control. In comparison, the former Jedi didn’t have anything, not even the chaperones; who weren’t supposed to talk to new initiates. But he wanted to get into the other’s head a bit. And this would be the easiest way…

“So what do you even do in meditation, if it’s not just advanced sleep?” he asked. It wasn’t like the Negotiator would have anywhere to use any gathered information.

“Reflect, calm oneself, release emotions into the force, gain perspective,” He’d obviously answered that question before.

“Is that why you haven’t been causing trouble? You’ve just released all of your emotions so you don’t feel?” Jango fired off the question before Kenobi could ask something.

The eyes narrowed a fraction, so small that Jango almost missed it, “I was unaware Mandalorians gave high rank to those idiotic enough to actually believe rumors like “Jedi don’t feel”,’ and there was the condescending tone Jango associated with Jedi. And Mujiita. Jango really got annoyed at him for that.

“Why are you assuming I’m high ranking? Rumors?” Jango replied, his voice flat with dry humor.

The former Jedi snorted “I have been paying attention, you know. The only ones who get to open that door,” the Jedi sat down on the bed, crossing his legs and nodding at the door behind Jango, “are
those of high enough rank to “request recruits”, or our guards, none of which have your build.”

“Not to mention you make them uncomfortable, so they wouldn’t want to come in here unless they had to,” finally Jango could get at one of his actual goals in coming here. This one had really earned the moniker “Negotiator”. Probably talked most politicians in circles.

“Uncomfortable? And pray tell, what about me doing what they say makes them uncomfortable? It’s not as though I’m the only one who follows their orders,” and now he had crossed his arms as well.

“I believe the phrase used was a “serenely blank” face. Apparently, you have it on almost constantly. Reminds the chaperones of a mannequin, but you’re supposed to be alive. Show emotion or something like that? And since you were a Jedi they expected extra resistance, not a puppet without strings,” Jango thought Kenobi’s eye might have twitched when he said “were a Jedi”, but other than that the “serenely blank” face was immobile. Jango could see why some might consider it unsettling when they expected disgust or desperation.

Kenobi took a deep breath in and exhaled; Jango let himself lean against the wall next to the door.

“I am still a Jedi and a Jedi remains calm in all situations. We do not allow our emotions to control us. As I’m sure you know, I’ve been captured many times and gotten quite used to this sort of thing. This time shall not be any different,” they were statements. Measured. Calm. Jango growled.

“Except this time, you’re not getting away. You’re in one of the most advanced integration programs. Everyone who leaves it does so as full Mandalorians. There is no way you could get out of our territory if you try escaping beforehand. If you think you can make it far enough into the program to be given missions before you recognize you’re Mandalorian you’re wrong. You became a Mandalorian the moment you entered this room, it’s only a matter of time before you realize that,” Jango also kept his statements measured and even, but they were also filled with command in every syllable.

“You know, I’m curious. Mandalorian culture puts extreme emphasis on independence, yet you force many to conform and become part of a system they did not choose. Don’t you think that’s hypocritical of your own views and morals?” The tone was still calm, but much colder and with durasteel behind it. Good. Jango’s words had had some effect.

“We make sure everyone in the empire has the tools to survive and thrive as themselves. Sometimes this means taking them out of their comfort zones and telling them point blank they have to adapt to the world around them,” This should turn into a nice philosophy lesson for the Jedi.

“A world that you twisted and forced on them,” Kenobi was obviously thinking of some memories with the curt reply.

“Well we have the right to exist with our own culture, don’t we? Isn’t that one of the Jedi values you grew up with?”

“Certainly it’s one of our values, but that doesn’t mean you get to overwrite other peoples’ rights just to exercise your own in such an abusive manner,”

“It’s war. Rights are always given up for war, as you know well. Their rights are fully restored the second they truly become Mandalorians. Can you say the same of the Republic?”

“Our democracy is being attacked by two empires. We have not had that option for many lifetimes now.”

“Perhaps if the Republic adapted enough to have a numerable and competent fighting force, they
would have finished a war, or actually scraped the corrupt politicians out of power. At least here our government actually provides what its citizens need,” Kenobi’s jaw actually tensed at that.

“Perhaps a dictatorial, one person leadership just thinks they provide what their people need.”

Jango laughed. “Didn’t you say were paying attention? Our empire is a meritocracy full of service leaders, open communication, and efficient ways to exchange power.”

Kenobi uncrossed his legs and leaned forward, elbows resting on his thighs as he steepled his fingers, “I was paying attention. Your empire is a militant, genocidal, non-negotiating threat to the galaxy, Jango Fett.”

Jango straightened up, a bit surprised. “So you figured that out, huh?”

“You look a bit different than in the few holos we have of your actual face, but yes, I figured it out when we were talking about meditation.”

“Heh, so you are smart. I was worried that the face of the Republic’s war effort was just a pretty face.”

“A Jedi is always more than just their face. And as I’ve said, I am a Jedi. And I shall remain a Jedi for as long as I live.”

Jango snorted at that. “And as I’ve said, you won’t last that long. No one does. By the time you’re given enough freedom to escape you’ll be a Mandalorian and recognize that too. Or have you actually found an escape plan besides “wait it out”?”

The former Jedi chewed on his lip, looking a bit apprehensive; apparently that was his plan, and apparently he hadn’t found anything else yet. Apparently, he also had a myriad of micro expressions. He’d tell the chaperones to look for that to calm them down.

“Well, I’m glad to hear you’re settling well. I’ll let you get to sleep. You do have classes tomorrow, after all,” Jango made sure Kenobi could hear the smirk in his voice as he turned around and left the room, the door automatically locking behind him.

Jango walked back down the hallway, a predatory smile plastered on his face. It had been a long time since anyone had been willing to trade barbed words with him, especially without being condescending. Kenobi was a little haughty, sure, but talked like he assumed Jango was on his level, not above or below. It was refreshing.

Chapter End Notes

Pyro-Pugna Merc Company is made up. Pyro meaning fire, Pugna being the beginning of the word “pugnacious” (likes to fight) Minister of Resource Relocation basically deals with “we captured a planet and now have all this loot/supplies. How/where do we distribute all of this?” I made up this position Jango knew it was Obi-Wan’s door because it’s a disused hallway, only one door has obviously been in use recently, ergo that’s Obi-Wan’s door Sassy debates are harder to write than I thought they would be Do these notes make sense?
The one where he maybe starts to worry

Chapter Notes

Previously:
Jango walked back down the hallway, a predatory smile plastered on his face. It had been a long time since anyone had been willing to trade barbed words with him, especially without being condescending. Kenobi was a little haughty, sure, but talked like he assumed Jango was on his level, not above or below. It was refreshing.

“So he just leaves after that? Why’d he even come in, then?” Wenuve hissed. Obi-Wan had asked her to lean in and keep their voices low today. The guards seemed to be paying them a little more attention than usual, but Obi-Wan wasn’t sure if that was because they were being visibly secretive or if it was a continuation of an ongoing trend.

Jango Fett had visited his room two days ago and since then, despite the helmets, Obi-Wan could have sworn that he felt their guards watching him in particular. It was a bit unnerving, to be honest. It also lowered any chances they had to plan, let alone actually attempt, an escape.

“I think he was after information. Seems most probable. He did try to enunciate that I would *not* be escaping, though. But he opened with questioning why I hadn’t been causing trouble like they expected.”

“Please, you may get into trouble but you don’t cause it,” Wenuve rolled her eyes.

“What’s that supposed to mean?” Obi-Wan was genuinely confused at why Wenuve would say that.

“It means Hondo Ohnaka likes to talk,” why was everyone smirking at him lately?

Obi-Wan put his face in his hands and groaned. He didn’t see a guard and some of his fellow recruits startle at the display. He did hear Wenuve snicker, though.

“Yes. Ohnaka seems to have that effect on everyone. Did you really fall into a gundark nest?”

“Which time?” Obi-Wan finally lifted his face from his hands, a small scowl on his face.

“Yo – you fell in, m-managed to fall into a gundark nest. A gundark nest. Multiple times?!” Wenuve was having trouble asking her question while laughing that hard.

“Yes. I believe I’m up at six times now. And only twice was I somewhere that was actually supposed to have gundarks,” Obi-Wan arched a brow, even he found his bad luck with gundarks ridiculous.

“Holy! – you know, you actually do have a lot of expressions. Don’t get why the “chaperones” are unsettled,” Wenuve had finally started calming down and leaned back in towards him.

“I think that I have a perfectly normal range of expressions. I just don’t bother showing them to my jailers unless I think it’s useful.”

“Most folks don’t control their face that much. And – hey! – you showed like no emotion when we
first met. Like a diplomat smile, that was it!” Wenuve actually did appear to be mildly offended, but was finally back to whispering.

“I had my guard up. I didn’t know how friendly or aggressively you would respond.” Obi-Wan lifted his hands in a placating manner. “Regardless, you haven’t heard of anyone else getting high profile visitors?”

“The only other of our unit that’s had any visitors is that Bothan, Disk. Apparently yesterday some barely ranked enough officer made her help their squad move supplies to the cafeteria. But no one else but you has actually had personal attention. You?”

“I didn’t even know about Disk. So if I’m the only one, do you think that it’s just because I’m a Jedi?” Obi-Wan stroked his beard as he pondered the thought.

“Hope so, or else ‘cause you’re the teacher’s pet,” Wenuve grunted, “You actually might want to watch that. You’re basically the only ace student of our unit, it seems like you actually are adapting to and learning how to be Mandalorian quicker than anyone else.”

“Actually, I think that you’re further along in this so called “integration program” than I am,” Obi-Wan made sure that his concern could be heard in his voice.

“What,” Wenuve’s tone was hard, her temper flaring just a bit in the force.

“You just called our group a “unit”, for the past few days you’ve said “this culture” instead of “their culture” or “Mandalorian culture”, which was how you referred to it at the beginning, and sometimes you speak basic like you’re still using the rules of Mando’a. I may be remembering the most about Mandalorian culture but I’m also making sure that I keep thinking of it as a separate thing, not even allowing it to invade how I speak,” Obi-Wan explained.

Wenuve’s face twitched for a few seconds before she started growling. Obi-Wan saw a guard behind her shift their hand toward their blaster. He quickly reached across the table and put his hand on her forearm, causing her to still and stop growling for a moment.

“It will be okay. You are now aware, and that gives you the power to prevent yourself from further integrating into the mindset they want,” Obi-Wan tried to be as soothing as he could.

“Oh fuck you, you Jedi pi-“ Wenuve started angrily before she was interrupted.

“Line up!”

Wenuve was apparently too angry to speak to with Obi-Wan for the rest of the day and the next one.

Obi-Wan was doing his course work when his door opened again. He reflexively uncrossed his legs and looked up, ready to move in case of attack.

Instead, he raised a single brow as a silent question at the intruder.

“Came to ask you some questions,” Jango’s voice was just as gruff as last time, but with a deep enough timbre to it to be soothing instead of grating. Obi-Wan nodded his head in assent to the statement.

“Let’s start with the Karkadon in your class, Mirk. What can you tell me about him?”
“Certainly not as much as you could know. Or do you not know how to read files?” Obi-Wan wasn’t sure he should be quite so sassy, his tongue had worsened his trouble before, even if it usually saved people from trouble. But he was annoyed at the lack of progress towards escape, at how much Wenuve was hurting right now, and he hadn’t meditated since the night before.

“He’s been causing Phas and your chaperones a lot of trouble. But they aren’t involved in the social climate, you are,” Fett’s voice was cold, harsh. Best not to play too much, then.

“I honestly don’t know too much. In case you haven’t been told, my fellow inmates don’t interact with me unless they have to, with Wenuve, one of the Mirialans, as the only exception,” Obi-Wan replied after a moment, placing his pad beside him. “However, while they will tolerate interacting with me, no one particularly wants to work with Mirk. And Genya is downright afraid of him, though that’s not too surprising. Genya always seems to be too wired for their own good, almost paranoid.”

“You know paranoid’s just a bad translation for prepared. Also, they’re your classmates, not inmates. Has the social situation always been like this?” Obi-Wan felt like scoffing at the reprimand.

“I picked the words I intended. And at first we were all a bit wary, I think. He had shown himself to be aggressive from the beginning, and perhaps a bit… prejudiced, as it were. Some tried to test the waters over the next few days and he proved to continue to be unpleasant. I don’t know if his attitude has changed as no one, myself included, has attempted to strike up a friendship since. He certainly still looks grumpy from far away,” Obi-Wan wasn’t quite sure what Jango was trying to get at with this line of questioning.

“So he doesn’t play nice with his peers either. How unfortunate. Have you noticed any redeeming qualities about him? Besides the fact that he’s got a strong jaw?” Ah yes, the age old Karkadon joke.

“Every sentient being has something considered good and something considered bad inside them, it is the nature of sentience. Whether one’s able to see more good or bad in another does not determine the other’s worth.”


“From a certain point of view, he is a passionate being that believes in his own ideas and refuses to bend to others’ wills; qualities that can be considered positive in many cultures, including Mandalorian,” Obi-Wan countered pointedly.

“Mandalorian culture also necessitates helping your comrades and helping to raise the next generation. As is, I wouldn’t let him on the same street as a kid.”

“I see, that is rather unfortunate for you, isn’t it? You put in all this effort and the man won’t even conform. Might I ask why you care about the social status of one captive?”

“Recruit. The commando who recommended Mirk for the program is pretty hit or miss with this sort of thing. No high hopes for him after the incident on the first day. Also, it’s more unfortunate for Mirk. His file is going to committee for removal in two days. Thought a former Jedi, still wrapped up in those ideas, might have a few good words to put in for him,” If Obi-Wan could have put an emotion to Jango’s voice, it would have been tired. As it was, however, Jango’s tone was as neutral and emotionless as could be.

“I see,” Obi-Wan was conflicted at the thought that he might have just contributed to a man’s possible death, but at the same time, if their captors were going to decide to kill Mirk he could do nothing; and probably hadn’t had much influence on their decision anyways.
They were surrounded by silence for a few more moments. Obi-Wan was tempted to make small talk as if they were at a state dinner. It would probably annoy Fett, but Obi-Wan doubted this visit would end sooner or even without injuries if he pushed too far. In the end, Fett broke the silence for him.

“So Wenuve. The Mirialan. I hear that she and you had some sort of fight.”

“Once again, can’t you read? If this has made it onto whatever report then I’m sure the fights before this did as well.”

“I can read and even listen. Those fights weren’t like this one. What happened?” Obi-Wan locked his jaw, refusing to speak. “I’m not leaving until you tell me, you know.”

Obi-Wan chewed his lip for a moment before sighing in defeat. The other already knew he was trying to play the long game. And he really did need to meditate.

“She was worried that I was “integrating” too fast as I’m apparently “the only ace student in our unit”. I informed her that I was more worried about her since she had begun to speak in such a manner that indicated she was seeing herself as more and more Mandalorian. Which is probably how half of this program works. She has a temper, she is upset, and apparently we’re fighting because of it now,” Obi-Wan made sure to glare at the other with all the iciness he could muster to show he was displeased, both with the situation and with sharing it.

“Wow. You really are more than a pretty face,” and now the man was smirking. That made Obi-Wan attempt to glare even harder.

“You don’t seem too upset that you have “recruits” figuring out how this program works.”

“There are occasionally folks who figure it out. Doesn’t change that they integrate eventually. Can make it longer to make a breakthrough, but after that… After that, it goes so much quicker. They usually end up as some of our best,” Obi-Wan started a bit at the explanation, recrossing his legs.

“I would think that, having had to have been beaten down even more than the others, they would be less effective at whatever they do afterwards,” Obi-Wan was now tense, he had presumed he had been toeing the line for removal, not falling down a path his captors would consider particularly beneficial for them.

Jango pushed himself off the wall and stalked towards the bed, “You would think that. But here’s the thing, the people who figure it out, like you, are the folks who are constantly thinking,” Jango reached the bed and leered down at Obi-Wan, “They soak up all this information about Mandalorians and our culture. And even if they’ve removed themselves from it at the start, they’ve thought through so much of it that once their brains switch tracks to thinking of the being as Mandalorian they’re most of the way integrated.” Jango put a knee on the bed to be more directly over Obi-Wan, who instinctively leaned back, “Believe it or not, fact remains that you’ll integrate, and once you do, you’ll likely flourish as one of us, just like those before you.”

Kriff.

“Well, I have been known to have unprecedented luck with regards to having plans screw up. I dare say that there’s a good chance that I’ll be a wrench in these plans as well,” Jango froze for a second, seeming to not have expected Obi-Wan’s words, before his smirk returned even bigger than before.

“We’ll see about that, Wer’cuy Jetii. Good night,” with that, Jango about-faced and strode out of the room.
Wenuve is really upset with herself and the Mandalorians right now. She knows she has a temper and is avoiding Obi-Wan until she can talk without blowing up. She’s fine with yelling at the guards or the others in the group because she doesn’t really care about them.

Mando’a:
Wer’cuy – it was ages ago, from wer – eon and cuiyir – exist; Jetii – Jedi. Existed as a Jedi a long time ago. Basically the best I could do to say former Jedi. Jango wants to keep reminding Obi-Wan that he’s a Mandalorian now, not a Jedi.
Previously:
“We’ll see about that, Wer’cuy Jetii. Good night,” with that, Jango about-faced and strode out of the room.

All right, I'm giving up on this chapter. I can't make certain parts of it work as well as I want, but they're very important for the plot so ya'll are going to have to swallow the bitter pill so we can get to the good bits. Sorry and marginally enjoy what you can!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Hey,” Wenuve sounded tired, and perhaps a bit wary, as she set down her tray.

“Hello. Welcome back,” Obi-Wan’s voice was level, calm, and as welcoming as he could make it.

“So according to Genya, we’re going to a feast tonight instead of having dinner here,” Wenuve seemed a little sheepish and uncertain, like she wasn’t sure if Obi-Wan was going to strike out at her or not.

“And does Genya know why there’s a feast?” Obi-Wan quirked an eyebrow, an expression Wenuve had told him she found amusing. She smiled slightly for a second before the expression disappeared.

“Apparently it’s, like, some sort of domestic state dinner. With a bunch of the clan heads or second in commands, I think?” Her posture relaxed and she started to pick at her food.

“I suppose it makes sense to start getting us to interact with more Mandalorians there, then. And they’ll all be very good fighters, armed, and far outnumber us,” Obi-Wan’s voice was dry and a bit exasperated, “If this is true, then when are planning on telling us?”

Wenuve shrugged, “Geography maybe?” she snorted before they fell into their usual routine of trading facts and Wenuve sharing gossip. Obi-Wan felt relief at having reconciled with her.

He also snuck a few glances over Wenuve’s shoulder at Mirk. He looked the same as usual, but Obi-Wan couldn’t forget that he was going to be reviewed for removal by a committee later. Or had it already happened?

They had been told right before geography and had focused on manners from different areas of the empire. There was less variation than Obi-Wan would have expected.

After a shorter Mando’a lesson than usual, one where they worked mainly on greetings and other small pleasantries, they were chained and led out of the room as usual. This time Ms. Wudo came with them.
“As you have only begun learning Mando’a, you may converse in other languages at this dinner, however you must begin conversations with greetings in Mando’a. Also, I encourage you to try speaking Mando’a when you can and listen in on surrounding conversations for comprehension practice. All Mandos attending know that the bracelets indicate your status as new recruits and will not be offended by any missteps in Mando’a,” she explained as they started down a new hallway.

Obi-Wan tuned out most of what she was saying for the rest of the trip, it was just a brief overview of the Mando’a and introductory manners. He knew the greetings and his diplomatic experience made him pick up correct customs quickly. What he didn’t know was where they were. They had gone into a new area and Obi-Wan was determined to remember this part of the building.

Eventually they came to a large set of doors and were led inside. Once the doors had closed, they were unchained and apparently free to roam around. The room was large, with the furniture arranged spaciously. There were six long tables with benches that ran parallel for three-quarters of the room, with a seventh, shorter, table perpendicular at the front of the room and an eighth at the back that ran the whole way across the room, it looked like that was where the food would be served, most likely in buffet style.

There were easily over a hundred Mandalorians in the room and the ones nearby turned to look at their group. Obi-Wan noticed that some were looking at him with surprise and some were glaring. He supposed that was to be expected; he was wearing a full set of Jedi robes today.

Obi-Wan quietly shuffled over to a wall and leaned against it. He doubted anyone wanted to talk to the Jedi and was quite content to just watch the mingling before dinner. He saw Wenuve try to make it to him but she was intercepted by a Twilek who appeared to initiate a conversation. It appeared they were serious about trying to get them to interact with actual Mandalorians. It was dawning on Obi-Wan how sophisticated and controlled this entire program was. He and Wenuve really were disadvantaged.

“Olarom,” Obi-Wan turned his head to the side. There was a blonde human on his other side, quite beautiful, dressed in finery vaguely reminiscent of a senator’s. They inclined their head in a small nod.

“Su’cuy, Mando’ad,” Obi-Wan bowed to about forty five degrees, keeping his eyes up.

“Satine Kryze. She/her/hers. Heir of the Kryze clan. Minister of Mandalore Internal affairs,” she introduced herself with the confidence of someone used to being important. She had probably been born into her roles.

“Obi-Wan Kenobi. He/him/his. Currently a part of an integration program, as I’m sure you’ve noticed,” Obi-Wan moved his wrists up a bit to indicate the bracelets on them.

“Certainly. But a Jedi is a rare sight in those programs, let alone such a high profile one. Pray tell, how did they manage to induct you?”

Obi-Wan wasn’t sure what to make of Satine. She spoke like a senator from the Republic. She didn’t make sure her language implied that Obi-Wan was Mandalorian, had called him a Jedi. Not ex-Jedi or raised by Jedi, just a Jedi. In a dinner given for treaty negotiations, Obi-Wan would have read her as a politician trying to claim to be on his side. Here, he had to suspect it was a trap. He found himself slipping into his diplomatic, Negotiator persona.

“I was running an evacuation mission and was the rear guard. I turned back to protect the caravan and eventually found myself in the custody of several commandos,”
“Goodness, must have been a bit of a fright,” Obi-Wan paused at that response.

“Not particularly. I was prepared for such a situation. I was the only one on the ship and the caravan had a better chance of finishing evacuating with me, ah, “aggressively defending” it rather than trying to stay at the back. It is called the rear guard for a reason after all,” he joined Satine in chuckling at the last bit. She was definitely a politician. Obi-Wan wasn’t sure what to make of that in a Mandalorian.

“Perhaps not so frightening then, if you knew you were just doing your duty to keep your charges safe,” it did not seem like a particularly Mandalorian sentiment, given he was Republic-aligned.

“When I chose the path of a Jedi I accepted that I would be entering situations that republic citizens may be scared of,”

“How noble,” Satine opened her mouth to say something else, but appeared to see something over Obi-Wan’s shoulder, “Ah, Mujiita!” she called out, raising her hand.

A man who seemed far less muscular than most of his comrades walked over to them, bowing slightly to Satine in greeting and receiving the same bow in kind.

“Mujiita, may I introduce Obi-Wan Kenobi, one of the newer inductees for the integration program. Mr. Kenobi, may I introduce Mujiita Orrad, minister of resource relocation,” Mujiita gave a slight nod of his head and Obi-Wan gave him the same style bow he had given Satine.

“Olarom.”

“Su’cuy, Mando’ad.”

“I must say, I was quite surprised when I first got your paperwork. It is rare for-“ Mujiita attempted to begin some sort of conversation. Obi-Wan noted that his voice was a bit snobbish in tone as he was interrupted by a call from the far end of the hall.

“Food’s ready! Come and get it!”

Obi-Wan eventually managed to get a plate of food and a glass of water. He did not want to risk getting drunk amongst his abductors and enemies. He attempted to find Wenuve in the chaos, it looked like they were allowed to sit where they wished. He eventually spotted her; she had a free spot to her left still, a Wookiee already sitting on the right. Obi-Wan made it a few steps when the Mandalorian who had talked to Wenuve when they first came in took the seat on her left. Obi-Wan stopped and looked around for a free seat, preferably at the end of a table or near those who didn’t seem chatty.

“Olarom,” Obi-Wan turned to find a human with a small child clinging to their back.

“Su’cuy, Mando’ad,” Obi-Wan still managed the forty five degree bow with his hands full.

“If you wouldn’t mind joining me and my little one?” the child peeked up at him, shy, but in awe and curious of a new thing in a way that came so naturally to children.

“How could I say no to such a lovely little face?” The child smiled at him before burying their face in their parent’s neck, whose mouth quirked up into a small smile for a moment.

Once they found their seats and the child was situated between them, they gave proper introductions.

“Effao Strirs, she/her/hers.”
“Obi-Wan Kenobi, he/him/his. And this little one is?” He smiled down at the child between them.

The child looked at their mother, who nodded and gestured towards Obi-Wan, encouraging the child to answer. She looked at him with large eyes.

“Kurri Strirs, she/her/hers. I’m six.”

“Pleasure to meet you, young one. Six is a very good age to be. Obi-Wan Kenobi, he/him/his,” He gave her the respectful forty-five degree bow, to which she giggled before her mother gave her a piece of bread and her attention was fully drawn to food.

“Good job. She’s usually very quiet, quite shy... I was actually on the mission that got you, you know,” It was a blunt statement.

“Really? Were you one of the ones who boarded my ship?” returning the bluntness seemed like it might be a good course of action.

“Mine was the first one to attach to you. Sorry if I roughed you up a little, but you didn’t make it easy,” her smirk might have indicated that she was, indeed, not sorry at all.

“Can you blame a person for not wanting to be boarded?” She laughed a bit at that.

“No. No, I can’t,” she turned to look directly at him before continuing, “I gotta say though, I was surprised to see you still standing and fighting when I got to the escape pod bay.”

“Were you the one who jettisoned them, then?” Effao nodded her head in affirmation, “Smart move.”

“Thank you! And I must say, it was refreshing to find out you were more than just a pretty face for the republic!” Obi-Wan blinked at that.

“Did the rumor that I’m a hired actor from Alderaan get all the way over here? Sorry, just, you’re the second Mandalorian who’s said they didn’t expect more than a pretty face,” It was one of the more ridiculous rumors floating around the republic, but it was more a joke that no one genuinely believed at this point.

Effao spit out her drink, some sort of wine Obi-Wan believed, which attracted grumbles from across the table, then started laughing

“Th-there are people in-in the Republic. Who think that yo-you’re a…” she couldn’t even finish for laughing so hard.

“Who think I’m an actor from Alderaan? I think at this point it’s a joke no one believes anymore, but, at some point in the past? Yes, some really thought that,” Obi-Wan quirked a brow at Effao and she fell into a fresh round of laughter, some of those around them were also laughing, albeit not as openly.

Obi-Wan looked down at Kurri, she had been quiet while her mother caused a small ruckus, he supposed she must have been used to it. However, instead of the small smile or embarrassment he expected, Kurri appeared to be in what a Jedi would call a meditative trance. Obi-Wan paused at that thought and felt out through the force. Yes, Kurri was force sensitive. He could tell now that he’d actually looked.

“Kurri!” Obi-Wan’s head snapped up to look at her mother, who sounded quite distressed. The Mandalorians around her sobered quickly as Effao hesitantly reached out and gently shook her
daughter, obviously afraid. The whole hall went quiet as Effao kept calling daughter’s name.

Suddenly, Jango Fett was there, carefully extracting Effao’s hands off her child. “Effao, you know that can make it worse.”

“But sometimes it makes them come back!” She shouted back.

“And sometimes they come back on their own!”

Obi-Wan thought for a moment before closing his eyes and reaching out into the force again, focusing on how it moved around Kurri. She was having a force vision; it could be dangerous for one so young to have a strong vision without anyone to help their mind back out of the force. Obi-Wan waited until he could feel the current the vision flowed in on ebb away from Kurri, then opened his eyes to see Effao crying, Kurri not responding to any of her calls.

“Kurri, come back,” Obi-Wan imbued his voice with the force and reached out to Kurri’s presence with his own mind. Jango and Effao stared cautiously at him, not sure if he was a danger or not. Obi-Wan couldn’t assuage their anxiety yet, Kurri was becoming trapped in her own mind, obviously disturbed by whatever the vision had shown her.

“Kurri,” she took a shaky breath in and started to spasm, hyperventilating. Obi-Wan caught her arms, holding her still. Her body was responding to the physical world now, that was good. Some of the Mandalorians started to move like they were going to remove Obi-Wan from the area. Jango motioned for them to stay put. Obi-Wan was glad he could focus on Kurri.

“Kurri, it’s not real. It may be, in the future, but it is not real. Not here. Come back.” He kept his voice calm, the gentle command voice that any knight who helped out in the crèche ended up learning. The spasms began to die down.

“Dead! She’s dead!” Kurri was crying, shivering. “I saw- I saw her die from a hut’uun’s knife! She’s dead! Buir’s dead!” Obi-Wan saw Effao stiffen at that. He reached out his hand to her and when she gave her hand he moved it to rest on Kurri’s arm.

“No, she isn’t. She’s right here. You can feel her. It wasn’t real, Kurri. Come back. It wasn’t real,” Kurri still hadn’t opened her eyes.

“Kurri, you are here. Not there. She is not dead. Come back,” Obi-Wan commanded. Slowly Kurri opened her eyes halfway.

“Good. Tell me one thing you see, one thing you feel, and one thing you hear,” It was a rudimentary grounding technique, but Obi-Wan got the sense that none of the adults here knew to do even that, let alone Kurri herself.

“I-I can see my legs. I can feel Buir’s hand. On my arm. I can hear your voice. It’s… calming,” Her hyperventilating was slowing down, “But she’s going to die, isn’t she?!” Kurri started crying as she worked herself up again.

“That hasn’t happened yet, Kurri. It… it doesn’t have to happen. Take some deep breaths. In, two, three, out, two, three, four, five, six…” Obi-Wan repeated the breathing sequence a few times while Kurri breathed, “Tell us what you saw,” Obi-Wan wasn’t sure how different a non-temple raised youngling was from those in the crèche with visions, would she be able to tell them anything?

“I- Buir was running down a hallway, there was information. A data stick. She had to get it somewhere. Someone stabbed her in the back. She fell down. They left. She died!” Kurri turned
towards Obi-Wan sharply as she started crying again. But Obi-Wan was calmer now. Kurri seemed to be grounded back in the present, out of danger. He smiled reassuringly at her and started stroking her hair from forehead back, like Grandmaster Yoda had done for him many times.

“Is your mother strong?” Kurri nodded at that, “Smart? Observant?” more nods, “Then why don’t you tell her what to avoid? Then your strong, smart, and observant mother will take care of it,” Kurri’s eyes brightened with the child-like innocent belief that her parent would be able to handle everything.

“Buir, when you’re running information down a hallway, please don’t let the hut’uun backstab you,” Kurri climbed onto her mother, arms around her neck. Her voice was still trembling as she talked to her mother. Obi-Wan noted that many of the Mandalorians had sat back down.

“Ni suvari, n’baati,” Effao copied Obi-Wan’s stroking motion. Kurri fell asleep within a minute. When a few Mandalorians started moving again in concern she called out softly “She’s asleep, none of you shabuire wake her up,”

People went back to their own meals, though glances were frequently cast their way.

“She hasn’t slept this soundly in weeks,” Effao commented, still stroking Kurri’s head.

“Weeks!” both Jango and Effao looked at Obi-Wan with surprise, they probably hadn’t expected such an openly incredulous tone from him.

“Yes. She wouldn’t say what was in her dreams, just didn’t want to go back to sleep. Does this motion mean something in particular?” Effao sounded tired.

“Symbolically? No. But I always found it particularly soothing after a vision. I believe the others in the order do as well,” Obi-Wan was beginning to suspect that they had no resources for dealing with visions here, which could be very bad for the health of the seers.

“My daughter is not a Jedi,” Effao growled. Apparently anything force was automatically Jedi or Sith here. Terrific.

“I never said she was. Nor did I say she was a Sith. She is force-sensitive. That is just a way of being. Since she is force sensitive it is possible for her to sometimes get force visions. They can be dangerous if you can’t control yourself in the force.”

“Force sensitive!”

“Yes. Like I said, it’s a way of being. She can’t help being force-sensitive any more than you can help being not,” Effao ground her teeth for a few moments before responding again.

“What do I do if it happens again?” Obi-Wan thought on that for a moment. How would a non-force sensitive deal with someone having a vision?

“I suppose, when it happens, you would have to wait until it seems like she is preoccupied in her own mind, instead of nowhere at all, then do what I did. Remind her that the vision has not happened, ground her in the physical world, then talk through the vision.”

“Preoccupied? Nowhere at all? How the hell does that work?! It doesn’t make sense!” Effao hissed out. She had switched to rocking Kurri. Jango was still standing there, Obi-Wan wasn’t sure why, but it was convenient.

“I have spent my entire life dedicating myself to the force and its will. I do not know how to quickly
explain something so integral to someone so unfamiliar with the force,” Effao looked tempted to shout at him, Obi-Wan continued before she could, “However, I do have free time in my daily routine that I could use to type up a detailed guide for you and Kurri. I could probably get it done within five days. Would that be acceptable? Or allowed?” He directed the last question to Jango Fett. This sort of scenario hadn’t been covered in the program’s rules.

“It’s fine. Make it so that it can be distributed to the other kids and their families, though,” the Mandalor’s voice was neutral, but commanding.

“Ni suvari,” Jango smirked at Obi-Wan’s use of Mando’a and walked back to the table at the front of the room. Effao and Obi-Wan sat down and finished their meals quickly and quietly. Eventually, most everyone had finished and Jango stood up at the end of the hall.

“Right. Stomachs are full, let’s get down to business. Recruits in the integration program, line up at the door you came in,” His voice boomed around the hall.

Obi-Wan stood up, only to feel a small tug on his sleeve. He looked down at Effao, she mouthed “thank you” at him. He returned it with an acknowledging nod and a small smile.

They lined up at the door, automatically in order now, and were chained up once again. As they walked back, Obi-Wan found that he could remember the hallways reversing their first path in his head to predict the turns. There was hope for escape.

After he got back to his room and showered he did a small meditation but found himself unable to go deep into the trance. Instead he found himself toying on his data pad before bringing up a new document. He decided it would be prudent to make a rudimentary outline of what he was writing for Ms. Stirs before sleeping.

Chapter End Notes

Once again, random name generator for OCs
I AM COMPLETELY BS-ING THE METHODS OBI-WAN IS USING TO DRAW KURRI OUT OF THE FORCE VISION! SOME THINGS ARE BASED ON WHAT HELPS ME CALM DOWN AFTER PANIC ATTACKS AND/OR DISTRESSING OBSESSIVE THOUGHTS, BUT IT IS A MADE UP PROCEDURE!!!

The Mandalorians start moving towards Kurri & them because they think she might have died when she fell asleep
Obi-Wan is being very helpful in this chapter because it’s a kid that’s in trouble and he morally has to help her, especially since she’s suffering from violent visions like he did when he was little
He also uses Mando’a at the end because Satine basically got him stuck in diplomat mode for the whole night, and the wise diplomat pleases those in charge until their position is secure. This will come back to bite Obi-Wan eventually. The tendency to be flexible for the sake of positive communication is good for negotiation, but not so good for avoiding what Jango illustrated last chapter.

Mando’a:

Olarom – Welcome
Su’cuy, Mando’ad - hello, child of Mandalore | What I decided was a polite greeting.
AKA I don’t know what I’m doing I’m just making this up as I go along. HELP.
Hut’uun – coward
Buir – parent/guardian
Ni suvari, n’baati – I understand, don’t worry
Shabuire – jerks, but much stronger
The one where he gets a job

Chapter Notes

Previously:

*After he got back to his room and showered he did a small meditation but found himself unable to go deep into the trance. Instead he found himself toying on his data pad before bringing up a new document. He decided it would be prudent to make a rudimentary outline of what he was writing for Ms. Stirs before sleeping.*

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Jango was making his way towards the force-sensitive recruits' hallway, his pace a bit slower than usual, giving him time to replay and analyze the events from yesterday.

The former Jedi had come in with the rest of his group. It had been easy to spot him once they were unchained. The rest of the Mandalorians had given the man with the Jedi robes a wide berth. Jango was going to approach Kenobi himself when Satine had intervened first.

Jango remembered the displeasure he had felt at that. It was stronger than he would have expected. Satine had an odd head, sometimes reminded him too strongly of Republican or Sith politicians, but she was damn useful for dealing with the bureaucracy and paperwork. His displeasure had increased during their conversation, they had appeared to fall into an easy, almost friendship.

Then Mujiita had joined them and Jango felt the headache he associated with the man come up. In contrast to Satine, Mujiita had proven time and time again to be inefficient at bureaucracy considering his position.

As dinner had been called Jango remembered impulsively grabbing Effao and asking her to eat with Kenobi. When asked for a reason, Jango had bullshitted a response about wanting to see how Kenobi, being a former Jedi, interacted with kids and knew she wouldn’t let him get away with anything. Effao didn’t seem to believe him, but didn’t deny the request. Jango had gotten his food and sat down at the head table.

Eventually he had spotted Effao and Obi-Wan a third of the way down on a table to his right, little Kurri sitting between them. He had been surprised at what he had seen. Obi-Wan showed more emotion to the child than he had been expecting. Obi-Wan had also appeared to be surprisingly at ease interacting with a child. It had looked like Effao approved.

Obi-Wan managed to get Effao and those around him to laugh, which had been nice. What was not nice was when Kurri had had her “force vision” as Kenobi had called it. Kurri appeared to be deep enough that Jango was worried she would end up comatose or dead. It had happened before. Kenobi, though, had somehow managed to bring her back.

Then he had offered to make a guide for Effao. Apparently Obi-Wan was already Mandalorian in one way: children were to be taken care of. Jango planned to use that in whatever way he could. If the other children they had lost could be saved, then he would get Obi-Wan to help. Given what he had already offered, it shouldn’t be too hard to do so.
Eventually, he found himself in front of Obi-Wan’s door. He stood outside for a moment, he had to play this right.

“Are you coming in?” Jango tsked at the muffled voice coming from the other side of the door. Damn Jedi. Former Jedi.

He stepped in. Kenobi was sitting cross-legged on the bed, data pad in hand and back against the wall. He was in his sleep clothes.

“Let me guess, the force?”

“You know, I actually have these amazing things called ears,” Kenobi raised a brow in amusement, he tended to do that a lot. The former Jedi certainly had a wit, usually exhibited in his sass. Jango thought he might have found great amusement in it himself if it was ever directed at someone besides him. As it was, half the time it was amusing and half the time it was annoying. Right now, it was annoying.

“Are you working on the guide?” Jango was aiming to take control of this situation.

“I’m attempting to, yes,” Obi-Wan’s answer turned into mumbling as he looked down at the data pad again.

“Attempting?”

“I must admit that I’m a bit uncertain how much or little I should be putting in here. I have no idea how much Ms. Strirs, let alone the general Mandalorian population, knows about force mechanics,” he started stroking his beard at that, the stroking seemed to be a habit when Kenobi was thinking.

“Put in as much as you can. Most folks here just know that the force is some weird shit that lets Jedi and Sith do weirder shit. And makes them weird. An invisible helper that makes people insane, basically,” Jango shrugged once he had taken up residence at his usual spot on the wall.

“Good grief. That’s-” Kenobi pinched his nose and groaned, “This is going to be a bit more work than I expected, then.”

“Actually, I came here to request you do a bit more work,” Kenobi quirked a brow in question that, “Kurri’s not the only force sensitive kid around here, nor the only one we’ve almost lost to it. I want you to teach them to control it enough so they’re safe.”

Kenobi stroked his beard again for a few moments before replying, “You. Want a Jedi. To teach your young. To use the force?” his voice was a bit cautious and incredulous.

“Wer’cuy Jetii. And yes. You’re the only trained force user I’m aware of here. And there’s no way I’m letting any Sith get near the kids. Besides, you’re smart. I’m sure you can figure out that Jedi philosophy will not be approved curriculum,” Jango sneered out that last bit.

“That would be impossible. I have been trained as a Jedi my whole life. We interpret the mechanics of the force in what you would consider a Jedi lens. I cannot get rid of that.”

Jango sighed at that. The former Jedi was taking his demand a bit too literally. “Look, I just don’t want you saying osik like “we are born to serve the force’s will” or teaching them to rely on the force. I just want them to have enough understanding and control that they aren’t going to die from a vision.”
“I should be able to manage that. In the case that I can’t explain without using Jedi teachings, may I phrase things like “the Jedi believe that happens due to this”? or do I have to not answer at all?” Now he was just tapping his beard.

“You’ve agreed to do it, then. And yes, that would be acceptable,” Jango made everything a statement. He was going to take Obi-Wan’s words as agreement, regardless if Obi-Wan had meant them as such or not.

“And when, pray tell, would I be doing this? My free time is a bit late for good younglings to be up,” Obi-Wan chuckled. The laugh did not reach his eyes.

“Think you can get over seven-hundred on your geography exam?” Kenobi nodded, “Then you’ll do it when you would have had geography, usually after passing a course, we’d supplement with extra lessons in whatever you have trouble with, but in this case, you’ll just be teaching.”

“That would work, yes. The exam is in six days, we get our results the next day. Presuming I pass, when would I start?”

“How long do you need to make a curriculum?”

“If I’m still doing the guide… I would need two days after the exam, I think.”

“Good. You’ll start three days after your results are recorded. We need to find the kids whose parents are willing.”

The conversation was over, but Jango remained at the door.

“Is there something else?” Obi-Wan asked after a moment. Jango didn’t respond. He was thinking of what had happened after Obi-Wan had saved Kurri, at the end of the conversation where he first said he would help.

Jango was thinking that there was an extra way to use the scenario to start getting Obi-Wan further integrated. But he wasn’t sure how to fit it in the conversation, especially now. Luckily for Jango, he didn’t have to. Obi-Wan broke the silence.

“Mirk wasn’t in class today,” Obi-Wan looked down as he said it.

“Ni kar’taylie,” Jango’s response was business-like, curt, and he made sure that he put emphasis on the Mandalorian sounds that weren’t really natural for basic-speakers.

“He was… removed, then?” Obi-Wan kept his face blank, but Jango thought he heard… some emotion in his voice. Still, Jango wanted to hear something specific from Obi-Wan so he kept silent, quirking a brow at Obi-Wan. Only half in mockery, the other half because the gesture actually felt appropriate.

Obi-Wan looked at him for a moment, before sighing, his next words were uncertain, but Jango was pleased to hear them. “Tion gar rute’habiöbe Mirk?”

“Elek, mhi rukyr’amu kaysh,” Jango saw Obi-Wan take a half second to translate Jango’s words, before closing his eyes, his brow furrowing. He was probably grieving lost life or some other Jedi nonsense. Perhaps even feeling a bit guilty.

“It would have happened eventually anyway; no matter what you said. You’re getting along well in Mando’a. Jate ca, wer’cuy Jetii.” Jango used the sort of voice he used on the older children when they finally started to master a difficult combat move.
He saw Obi-Wan’s jaw tense at that and smirked as he walked out of the room. Yes, the former Jedi was coming along nicely in his studies. Even if he knew what they were doing, Obi-Wan could only last so long surrounded by nothing by Mandalore before he integrated.

Chapter End Notes

Mando’a:
Wer’cuy Jetii – Former Jedi
Osik - dung (impolite) | AKA shit
Ni kar’taylie – I know
Tion gar rute’habiöbe Mirk? – Did you remove Mirk? | This is the best I could do, if it’s awkward, oh well, Obi-Wan’s still learning. Let’s just say he’s still awkward at speaking Mando’a.
Elek, mhi rukyr’amu kaysh – Yes, we killed him
Jate ca, wer’cuy Jetii – good night, former Jedi
The one where he meets the kids

Chapter Notes

Previously:
He saw Obi-Wan’s jaw tense at that and smirked as he walked out of the room. Yes, the former Jedi was coming along nicely in his studies. Even if he knew what they were doing, Obi-Wan could only last so long surrounded by nothing by Mandalore before he integrated.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Nine-hundred and sixty-eight. Qui-Gon would have been proud of that. Wenuve tried to peek over to look at his score.

“Eight hundred and ninety-one. What did you get?” She asked as she shoved her data pad in his face. He gently pulled it down before sliding his pad toward her.

“Fuck you! How?!” Obi-Wan was tempted to tell her to close her mouth before something flew in.

“Well, I was particularly bad at astro-nav when I was a padawan. But I had to pass to be a Jedi. I earned that grade through years of suffering, that’s how,” Obi-Wan was really coming to enjoy Wenuve’s company, he hoped that they would be on relatively friendly terms once they got out of here.

“But the, like, “logic through the terrain” questions and planetary towns parts? How can you remember all those?!”

“You do remember I’m a diplomat who’s spent a good deal of time leading battles on various planets, correct?” He asked, sending a light, lopsided smile to her.

“Eh, sometimes. Most of the time you’re just the prissy guy who likes beige and drinks too much tea,” Wenuve grinned back at him.

“I drink a perfectly fine amount of tea, thank you very much!”

Passing the exam meant that he was going to be teaching Mandalorian children. The military strategist in him was cautioning him to not teach them enough to be a threat. The part of him that had spent hours in the crèche, teaching initiate classes, and training Anakin, made him want to give these children some of their force heritage. It seemed that the Mandalorians had forsaken all things related to the force.

Obi-Wan couldn’t imagine living like the force was a potentially dangerous annoyance. To him, it was… his life, one of the best things about living was feeling the comfort of the force flowing through him.

But force-trained Mandalorians would spell a lot of trouble for the Republic…
In the end, he was still a prisoner, he didn’t have much choice. Besides, chances were that the children, and their parents, wouldn’t want to learn more than how to safely suppress certain side effects of being force sensitive anyways.

With those thoughts in mind, Obi-Wan found himself being led by two new guards away from the rest of his group a few days later. One of them was a blue Twilek, if the lekku coming out of the holes in the helmet were anything to go by, and the other had a helmet that led Obi-Wan to believe they were a Togruta. Looking at the color of their armor, Obi-Wan wondered if they had been part of the group that had boarded his ship, as well as if the Twilek had been the one that talked to Wenuve at the feast.

Obi-Wan was still trying to figure out their identities when they stopped outside a door. The probably-Togruta typed out a sequence that Obi-Wan quickly memorized before the door opened and Obi-Wan was led into the room. The two guards followed him in, the door shutting behind them as they took positions on each side of the door.

They were in a classroom that looked like it could comfortably sit twenty-four students, plus the teacher’s desk at the front of the room. The room had three rows of tables, split down the middle to make an aisle. It would do for theoretical lecture, but Obi-Wan hoped that for the practical aspects of what he was going teach, they would be allowed to rearrange to sit in a circle on the floor.

It looked like he was going to start with seven students for now. They almost filled up the first row. Obi-Wan observed them as he walked behind the desk.

Kurri was the first seat on the left side of the aisle. There was a Theelin on the other side of the aisle who looked to be a bit older; perhaps nine? Besides the Theelin were a Falleen and a Verpine, who appeared to be twelve or there about, and had stopped their conversation when he had first come in. Right next to Kurri was a Tarasin that couldn’t be older than four, which caused Obi-Wan to raise his brows. The last two on the end looked to be Kurri’s age, another human and a Zabrak.

Once Obi-Wan got behind the desk, he took another moment to survey his students. “Right, well, you all know why we’re here, I suppose?” they all nodded in response. “Good. For today, we’re going to begin with introductions, then we’ll go over what you know and need to know, and what I have planned, then we’ll adjust the curriculum as needed. Let’s start on that side of the room. Please state your name, pronouns, age, and any experience you have with training your force abilities, as well as anything else you think I should know,” Obi-Wan gestured at the Verpine, who sighed in a put-upon manner, to begin.

“I’m Trox Wuzlon, he/him/his, twelve as of two days ago, no training, I don’t want to be here,” Ah, the moody preteen. Obi-Wan should have expected it.

“Be Litt, xe/xem/xers, also twelve, also no training,” the Falleen had a smile in xer voice, apparently amused by xer age-mate’s behavior.

“Murka Spac, they/them/their, I’ll be ten in two days, I, um, taught myself to not float things while asleep?” The Theelin looked a little shy at their last admission.

“Um… again?” Kurri asked. Obi-Wan nodded. “Kurri Strirs. She/her/hers. I’m six. You taught me some things the other day and Buir and I have been reading your guide.”

“Put! I’m four!” the Tarasin seemed quite happy about this. When they didn’t say anymore, Kurri hesitantly reintroduced the youngest of the group. “He’s Put Kratun. Uh... he/him/his... obviously. Four years old like he said. I don’t think he has any training...” Obi-Wan nodded his head to her in thanks.
“Sarduc Gok. Seven. He/him/his. No training,” Obi-Wan thought the other human was trying to glare at him in an intimidating manner, but if that was the case, it wasn’t working well.

“Hi! I’m Kas Shull! She/her/hers! I’m six like Kurri! I have no idea what I’m doing and your hair is pretty!” Obi-Wan was certain that was the happiest a Zabrak had ever greeted him.

“Thank you Ms. Shull. I have been told it has a captivating color.” Kas grinned back at him agreeing with her. “My name is Obi-Wan Kenobi, he/him/his. I have spent practically my entire life training and practicing as a Jedi and am now tasked with teaching you all to control your abilities,” the children shifted uncomfortably at the mention of Obi-Wan being a Jedi. Most of the room, except for Kurri, Kas, and Put, was glaring at him as well.

Obi-Wan sighed, “Look, I understand that being associated with a Jedi is not something you all would have chosen if there was a better option. But there isn’t. Also, I am not going to teach you to be Jedi. I am going to teach you to control your force-sensitivity. I just so happen to have my training in the Jedi school of thought; instead of Sith or Dathomirian Witches or Tyia or some other group of force-users. If you think something is Jedi nonsense, fine. But can you all at least try to learn enough to keep yourselves safe?” Obi-Wan enunciated the word safe. That was the whole reason for this after all, why he had agreed. Keep the children safe.

The glares softened. Obi-Wan sighed again.

“Thank you. Now, as I said today we’re going over what you know and deciding what you need to cover. Can anyone tell me anything about what the force is in general, or force abilities?” Trox raised a hand. “Mr. Wuzlon.”

“The force is a weird thing we have to feel that means we’re probably going to go as insane as a Jedi or Sith. If one of the “force abilities” doesn’t kill us first.”

“Oh, for force’s sake,” Obi-Wan pinched his nose and muttered under his breath at the response. This was going to take a long time…

Eventually the class was over and the children left. As the guards started chaining him back up again, Obi-Wan remained deep in thought. He would have to start with getting the younglings to see the force as something to be wary of, but not feared or hated. He wasn’t sure how long that would take.

He had always been raised to think of his force-sensitivity as a gift. Perhaps if he tried to get the children to see it as something useful? Useful for their clans? Mandalorians put a large importance on their ability to help their families. They would have to learn to meditate and keep themselves in control. That would be useful in problem solving or combat situations. First off, though, he would have to teach the kids basic mechanics of the force.

Obi-Wan was lead back to the usual lecture hall. Everyone looked to the door as it opened. Obi-Wan was unchained and he made his way to his usual seat. He thought he heard Disk, the Bothan sat behind him, murmur “remedial lessons? Looks like someone’s getting removed,” Obi-Wan did not grace the comment with an answer. Wenuve glanced over, a bit concerned. Obi-Wan realized he had forgotten to tell her that he was now teaching some Mandalorian children.

Obi-Wan was mildly distracted in Mando’a lessons, but spoke well enough to avoid reprimand.

They eventually were led to the cafeteria for dinner. Obi-Wan distractedly picked a few items and
followed Wenuve to some seats.

“Are you in remedial?” Wenuve’s question shook Obi-Wan back into awareness.

“No. No, I-“ Obi-Wan absently reached for where his padawan braid used to reside. Even after all these years, it was a habit he still did sometimes when he was very stressed or distraught. “I have been… drafted, as it were, to teach some force sensitive children to control their abilities.”

“What you did at the banquet?”

“Yes. Some force abilities are dangerous for young beings if they have no training and no one to help them.”

“But you were a Jedi. Are you actually planning to help Mandalorians?”

“I am still a Jedi. And they are children. I’m not going to teach them to destroy Republic tanks or anything like that. They just need to know how not to die from a strong force vision. I’m the only one here who can teach them,” Obi-Wan’s voice was much harder than he had intended. He reprimanded himself mentally for it.

“No need to get so defensive. Jeez.” Wenuve held her hands up in a placating gesture, her eyes widening a little bit.

“Apologies for my outburst. I just…” Obi-Wan sighed, “Today was the first day I was teaching them and I have now come face to face with the fact that they have no idea about how the force works at all.”

“Well neither do I. And I’ve been alive longer than any of those kids,” Wenuve raised a brow and folded her arms.

“But you’re not force sensitive. It would be like… if you were to be one of the few beings able to hear, but no one ever explained to you how it worked and you thought you should be able to get on just fine without paying attention to that sense at all,” Obi-Wan explained.


“Exactly. A quintessential sense to how you experience life. Force sensitivity is in many ways, just an extra sense! Actually… That’s a good analogy, I’ll have to make sure I use it with the kids.” Obi-Wan began stroking his beard as he thought on that.

“You really want to teach these kids, don’t you? Were you like this back at your temple?”

Obi-Wan thought on that for a moment. “I mean, I was one of the more willing knights when it came to volunteering in the crèche or teaching classes for the initiates and Padawans. I suppose I just see it as a good way to help people. By teaching them, I mean. And children are very sweet, very earnest. It was refreshing after a diplomatic mission full of politics to come back to the bright simplicity of the crèche.” Obi-Wan smiled fondly at the memories.

“I should be getting back to them. And my own padawan. I think I’m starting to grasp the logic behind this facility’s layout,” His smile dropped, as did Wenuve’s expression at his reminder that they were supposed to be planning escape. They spent the rest of dinner trying to glean new connections from the bits of information they had.

Dinner eventually finished. They went back to their rooms. Obi-Wan finished his work and sat down to meditate. It was hard this time. He had quite a bit of turmoil inside of him. He made peace with a
good amount before he decided he had done enough for the night.

He got up to go to the fresher and shower when he heard a knock on his door.

Chapter End Notes

Fun fact: In classical literature (Latin/Greek stuff) there's a literary tropos called "Locus Amoenus" (a really nice place, usually a pastoral paradise) that can be inverted to be a "locus terribilis" or a sinister double; where danger is hidden in the seemingly elysian setting.
Obi-Wan tensed for a moment, waiting for the person, likely Jango Fett again, to open the door. The door didn’t open, though. Instead, there was another knock.

“Yes?” Obi-Wan called out, curious and a little cautious. The door opened to reveal Satine Kryze. She was wearing an outfit that seemed to be Mandalorian underneath. But the overcoat was an odd mix between what Obi-Wan would wear in cut and what his friends Padme or Bail would wear in material and decoration.

“Mr. Kenobi, would you accompany me for a bit?” A politician’s voice. Looking over her clothes again, Obi-Wan supposed it was a politician’s outfit as well.

“Of course, my lady,” Obi-Wan slipped on his boots and walked toward the door, taking Satine’s offered arm.

As they walked down the hallway, Satine commented, “I must say, it is refreshing to spend company with someone who actually has manners.”

“Thank you. Although, I must say that I can hardly believe such a lovely lady’s presence would not inspire the best manners from those around her,” Obi-Wan had automatically slipped into Negotiator mode. Internally, alarms were blaring in his head. This was not the behavior of a Mandalorian official. Satine was playing at something and Obi-Wan had no idea what it was or how much extra danger he was in.

“My, what a charmer you are,” Satine laughed lightly as they took a turn into a hallway Obi-Wan was unfamiliar with.

“Might I enquire as to where we’re going? I presume you are seeking some assistance with something,” hopefully Satine would answer. Obi-Wan did not like how little information he had.

“Ah yes, unfortunately, the offices are a bit far from your room. There are some matters that I believe would benefit from having some input from someone with your experience,” That seemed a bit more in line with how high ranking Mandalorians were supposed to treat them.

Eventually, they stopped in front of a door a few levels up from Obi-Wan’s hallway. This area of the facility was more open, with wider hallways and even some recreational and lounge areas. Satine scanned her hand on a pad outside the door and guided Obi-Wan inside once it opened.

Obi-Wan was surprised to find not an office, but a conference room of sorts, with multiple Mandalorians inside. Obi-Wan recognized Mujiita Orrad from the banquet, and he thought that a few of the others might have been at the banquet as well, but he wasn’t sure.

“You’re the Jedi, then?” asked a Kage.
“Obi-Wan Kenobi. He/him/his. How may I be of service?” Obi-Wan gave the forty-five degree bow and internally winced. Offering his service might not have been the best way to go about… whatever this was.

“Well…” The Kage glanced at a jammer on the table, making sure it was on. Its presence was curious. And foreboding. Had Obi-Wan managed to unintentionally walk into danger again?

“According to your file, you are attempting to play the long game in order to escape. Does this still hold true?” Mujiita’s question sounded more like a demand.

Obi-Wan was silent. He would probably be punished for speaking his true thoughts on the integration program, but why ask a question like that in the first place? He obviously couldn’t answer honestly. And it seemed like a disruption to the usual pattern of Mandalorian immersive propaganda. He felt a hand on his shoulder. It was Satine.

“I assure you, Obi-Wan, you will not be punished for any answer you might give,” Satine’s face was showing kindness, warmth. Obi-Wan did not know her well enough to tell if the warmth was a mask or if the politician’s face was the only mask she had worn tonight. Still, they had on file that he was trying to escape. It seemed safe enough…

“Yes, I am indeed intending to “play the long game”, as it were,” Obi-Wan stood up straight and kept his voice level. He slipped his face back into what his main “chaperones” called serenely blank. The others in the room did not seem disturbed by it.

“Good. Any chance, as a Jedi, that you want to help others escape becoming forcefully Mandalorian as well?” a Keshiri in the corner posed the question. Obi-Wan narrowed his eyes suspiciously at calling him a Jedi, and the use of the word forcefully.

“I… Pardon, but what is all of this about?” Obi-Wan felt around with the force. The door was locked; it would take him two seconds to get it open. Satine was next to him, everyone else was away from them and the door. There was no one out in the hall. He’d gotten out of tighter spots if things went too wrong.

“In short? This is a coup-de-tat. We’re aiming for a pacifist Mandalore,” Satine broke the silence after a moment. Her pronouncement was met with quiet outcries. Obi-Wan’s eyes widened as he stared at Satine in shock. Pacifist Mandalorians? It seemed impossible. But if these people were earnest, Obi-Wan would definitely want to help.

“Oh, come now. We already agreed to bring him into the fold if he proved “unintegrated”. He’s a trained diplomat trying to keep himself safe. He wasn’t going to say anything more incriminating than that!” Satine apparently had actually thought through Obi-Wan’s position.

The grumbling died down and they all sat down. Satine took a seat and gestured at the chair next to her for Obi-Wan. He took it and looked around the table, taking in all of them.

“Is this everyone involved, then?” It seemed small for a coup-de-tat, but if they were all as high ranking as Mujiita and Satine it had the possibility of working.

“Yes, though we all have some loyal underlings. We thought it would be best to get introductions over with all at once,” Mujiita explained. His tone still seemed snobbish. Obi-Wan wondered if he just needed a decongestant.

“I am Bron Varr. He/him/his. File Distribution Head Supervisor,” said the Kage. A bit cold. Obi-Wan suspected that he did not particularly want Obi-Wan in on this.

“Tek Skud. He/him/his. Minister of Trade,” Obi-Wan looked at the Icarii and wondered just how much trade the Mandalorians did. They didn’t like Hutts, fought the republic, and were only sometimes actually allied with the declining Sith empire.

“Famma Porr. She/her/hers. Head Judge of the 25th District Civil Court,” a Zygerrian. Obi-Wan didn’t let the discomfort of his memories show.

“Vissul Hud, He/him/his, Chief of Staff for HQ, which would be here,” Obi-Wan looked a bit impressed at the Keshiri, but he wasn’t sure the man caught it.

“And I’m Ife Skers. She/her/hers or they/them/their. I am the Head Events Coordinator for the HQ, technically head of one of the security subdivisions.” The rattataki gave a kind smile that Obi-Wan wouldn’t have associated with the head of a security force.

So they had a chance. These were people in power. And it sounded like they had access to many different branches of the government.

“Sounds like you actually have a good chance, then.” Obi-Wan gave a small smile. Most of the conspirators smiled back, some chuckled lightly as well. Varr snorted.

Satine lead him back to his room after almost two hours. Obi-Wan’s head was full of thoughts of all the planning they had done so far.

“Obi-Wan?” Satine questioned his silence.

“Matters that would “benefit from having input from someone with my experience”, was it?” Obi-Wan chuckled lightly. He felt better than he had in a while.

“Yes. Well, you do have a lot of experience with planning tactics. You were a general, weren’t you? And you’re a trained, successful diplomat. You know a bit of politics and government.”

“I am technically what one would call an accomplished general, yes. And I suppose I am a bit experienced in politics…” They had arrived at his door. “Thank you, Satine.” He smiled at her.

“No. Thank you, Obi-Wan. I am so glad you’ll be helping us.” Satine smiled back and opened his door. “Unfortunately, you do have to remain in here,” a slight frown.

“I assure you, this is the loveliest cell I’ve ever been held in!” Obi-Wan said brightly. Satine looked a bit disconcerted at that. Whoops. “Good night, my fair lady,” Obi-Wan slowly grabbed her hand and kissed the back of it, giving her plenty of time to pull away.

“Good night, you charmer. I’ll come back for you in four to ten nights,” Satine smirked at his antics as he stepped into his room. The door closed and locked, then Obi-Wan heard her walk away. He stared at the door for a moment before going to shower.

After the shower, he tried to sleep. But he kept thinking of everything he had just learned. A group of pacifist Mandalorians! For one, it was almost unthinkable that they existed. But here they were. Their existence was a joyous thing. For another, now that he had met them, they needed help. They were obviously dedicated administrators, strategy-making of more… militaristic undertakings was not something they were familiar with.
Still, at least they had agreed to work out the new government before replacing the old one. It would take at least two more months for them to finish planning that out, let alone the actual change of power. Obi-Wan fell asleep thinking of ways to improve the coup’s plans.

Chapter End Notes

I don't think this chapter needs any notes?
If you have questions, ask me in the comments below, please!
The one where he has another evening talk

Chapter Notes

Previously:
Still, at least they had agreed to work out the new government before replacing the old one. It would take at least two more months for them to finish planning that out, let alone the actual change of power. Obi-Wan fell asleep thinking of ways to improve the coup’s plans.

“I don’t understand! This is so stupid!” Trox Wuzlon was not making much progress in tuning into the force.

“Mr. Wuzlon, you are force sensitive. You have felt the force’s “current”, as it were, your entire life. Just focus on that feeling. Like closing your eyes and ignoring background noise to focus on touch. Focus on your force sense.”

“This is stupid,” Trox gritted out.

“We’re the only ones who can hear, so we have to practice hearing! Right?” Kas chimed in brightly.

“Correct, young Shull,” Obi-Wan gave the praise quickly, then turned back to Trox, hopefully to get him calm enough to do the basic exercise. As he did so, he heard something hard break against the wall.

Obi-Wan looked over to find that one of the chairs from the back rows had been flung against the wall and broken. The Twilek guard had had to drop to the floor to avoid getting hit and was slowly picking themselves up.

“I’m sorry,” the apology was gasped, in a frightened, meek manner that Obi-Wan would not have expected from Trox.

“Mr. Wuzlon!” the Verpine whipped his head at Obi-Wan’s stern tone. He looked afraid, shaking slightly, the fear made Obi-Wan pause and soften his tone. “When we are frustrated, we do not take our aggressions out on innocent people. Or furniture. Why didn’t you just put it down?”

“I was trying to! I’m never able to put the stuff back down! Sometimes I can throw it to the ground but that doesn’t always work!” now Trox was upset, both afraid and angry, his emotions spilling out into the force. The other students leaned away. Put whimpered and Kurri slung an arm around his shoulders to calm him down.

Obi-Wan froze and stared at Trox for a few moments. “You can’t put it down?” his voice was quiet compared to all the previous noise. Trox shook his head, still frightened. Obi-Wan closed his eyes and took some deep breaths, calming down then releasing the feelings of calm into the room. The children and even the guards relaxed marginally.

“This is the sort of thing I wanted you to tell me on the first day. We will have to adjust the curriculum.” Obi-Wan glanced towards the guards. “Are we allowed to rearrange the furniture?” The
guards glanced at each other for a moment.

“I suppose so? Looks like you already started,” The presumably-Togruta guard snickered. Obi-Wan sent a lightly admonishing look of displeasure at them.

“Right. Well, let’s move the front row back enough so we can sit in a circle on the floor. We’re playing lift-feather today.”

“Game!” Put seemed happy with the prospect of playing. The older students started moving the desks.

“Yes. Slightly modified for a crash course where we don’t have feathers, but still a game.” Obi-Wan glanced at his desk and picked up a stylus and a data pad before moving to sit cross-legged in the circle the children had formed on the floor.

“Lift-feather was one of the early crèche games played in the Jedi temple. Initiates tried to see who could hold a feather up the highest and the steadiest for the longest period of time. You all will be lifting a stylus. When you have proven adept at that, I will levitate the data pad above it and you will try to hold the stylus just below the data pad. Understand?” A chorus of affirmative sounds. “Good. Let’s start with you, Mx. Spac.”

Murka managed to shakily hold the stylus for six seconds before their concentration broke and the pen fell to the ground. “That was a fine first attempt. Good job,” the theelin nodded shyly to accept the praise.

They went around the circle, each attempting the task with varying success. Sarduc held the stylus unsteadily for three seconds. Be held the stylus steadily for three seconds before it wobbled to the ground in the span of two seconds. Put actually did the best, holding it up relatively steady for eleven seconds before it wobbled for another three then fell back down. Obi-Wan explained to the grumbling students that some things may come to the youngest more easily, as he hadn’t developed any habits to get in the way yet. Kurri held the stylus with a slight wobble for four seconds. Kas misunderstood the directions and shot the stylus into the ceiling.

“Let’s try that again. This time, Ms. Shull, try to keep the stylus still,” Obi-Wan explained as he dislodged the stylus from the ceiling tile and slowly brought it back down to the ground. Kas held the stylus the wobbliest of all, but managed to keep it up for five seconds.

“Mr. Wuzlon?” Trox gritted his teeth. The pen lifted unsteadily, then shot off toward Obi-Wan, who ducked out of the way, hearing the stylus clatter against the wall.

“I’m trying, Okay! I’m trying but it doesn’t work!” Trox was upset again.

“Do or do not. There is not try,” Obi-Wan recited the maxim. Trox just stared at him for a moment.

“That doesn’t make any sense! How do I do something if I don’t try!?” Trox was a little less upset, replaced with confusion.

“It’s not an instruction manual, it’s a state of mind. Don’t get caught up in trying to do something, whether you can or can’t do it. Just picture it happening and do it.” Obi-Wan had not meant to put the force in his voice, but that seemed to calm Trox down a bit. He growled for a second then closed his eyes. Focusing on the stylus.

He held it steady for four seconds before it started wobbling, then he let the stylus down slowly. He opened his eyes slowly, “How’d I do?”
“Quite well. That was a nicely controlled descent,” Obi-Wan let his inner warmth show in his smile. Trox blushed lightly. “Now, let’s try that first exercise again. Together,” Obi-Wan habitually settled into proper meditation pose and noted that the students moved to copy him.

That was the sixth lesson Obi-Wan had given the children. They seemed to finally be picking up some of his teachings. At dinner, Wenuve had accused him jokingly that he was getting too preoccupied with teaching them and would actually have to go for remedial lessons if he focused anymore on them.

Obi-Wan smiled to himself lightly and heard two knocks on the door. Satine. Obi-Wan started to sit up to get his boots as the door opened. It was Jango Fett. Obi-Wan froze, most of the way up.

“Su’cuy,” Fett took up his usual place against the wall.

“Su’cuy. Are you actually okay with leaning against the wall each time you come here? I’d offer you chair if I had one, you know.” Fett snorted at the sass.

“You worried about my feet or something?”

“Merely trying to be polite and show some manners,” Obi-Wan crossed his arms. He seemed to be doing that a lot when talking to Jango Fett.

“Sure, fine. Have it your way. Scoot over,” the other’s tone held laughter in it as he walked towards the bed. Obi-Wan acquiesced and moved to the head as Jango perched near the foot of the bed.

“How are the kids doing so far? I heard today was particularly exciting.”

“Trox is having particular trouble letting go and allowing himself to channel the force,” Obi-Wan sighed out after a moment.

“They’re not supposed to give themselves to the force. You know that,” Jango growled.

“I’m aware. That’s not what I’m teaching them. But in order to control the force you have to understand it. That means learning to communicate with it. Let go of yourself on the physical plane for a bit and spend time reflecting and feeling your connection to it.” Jango didn’t stop glaring, Obi-Wan raised his hands in a placating gesture. “Look. The force abilities you’re worried about, like force visions, are dangerous because the children don’t have any control about when they are immersed in the force or not. I’m trying to teach them to go in and out at will.”

“Hm… All right, I suppose that’s acceptable. Still, the kid threw a chair in anger?”

“No. Well, yes. But--” Obi-Wan rubbed his temples, “-part of why the Jedi have the reputation of being unfeeling is that they – we spend a large amount of time training ourselves to control our emotions. If they get out of control, we may accidentally do things with the force without intending. Such as throwing chairs like young Trox did today,” Obi-Wan mentally berated himself at the slip-up, especially given Jango’s smile in response to it.

“His father calls him ”tracyn’ika”, I’m not surprised he’d have that kind of response,”

Obi-Wan glanced to the side while stroking his beard for a moment. “Little fire?”

“Elek. He calmed down though? The others?”
Jango felt quite lucky at the moment. Lucky that Obi-Wan Kenobi had been at the back of that caravan and turned around. Lucky that he had been the only Jedi, or force-user, they had grabbed for a while. Lucky, that Satine and Mujita had annoyed him enough to send Effao to interfere. Lucky, that this man was who he was.

Because this man obviously held deep care for children. Given what Obi-Wan had said earlier, the Jedi should have trained this deep a love for anything out of the man a long time ago. Yet here he was, animatedly explaining to Jango about the progress his students had made already, as well as relating small anecdotes of their shenanigans with each other.

It was also lucky because Obi-Wan was integrating more due to teaching the kids. He had slipped up three times already in the conversation, using language that excluded him from the Jedi or included him with the Mandalorians. Obi-Wan had only noticed the first slip. Jango was also getting quite a bit of information about the kids themselves.

“… But it has only been six days, I don’t know too much about them yet, nor do I have as solid of an idea of their strengths and weaknesses as I would like,” Obi-Wan finished his praises and concerns of the children.

“Sounds like you’ve learned plenty about them already, and I’m sure you’ll get a better idea as the kids get to do more,” Jango had moved from perching on the edge of the bed to lounging on the lower half of it.

“I suppose. I just worry in the meantime that I’ll misstep. In the temple, everyone was raised the same way so you knew generally who was coming in to any class you may teach, especially for the younger ones. By the time I’m teaching twelve-year-old Mandalorians, I have little idea what will make them cooperative or help them learn,” Obi-Wan was stroking his beard again, but his face was almost what Jango thought might be a pout. It was kind of cute.

“Hmm… The families do have your guide, correct?”

“They should.”

“Then you have time. I read some of it. Seemed well written. Succinct and simple but comprehensive. Should help with a lot of problems the kids have at home,”

“But my goal is get the children to the point where they are skilled enough that they don’t have problems.”

“Like I said, you have time. You are going to be sticking around here for a while, after all,” Jango chuckled out. Obi-Wan glared and huffed at that, but bit his tongue, keeping in whatever response he had. Shame. Jango was hoping for some entertainment. Still, it had been a mainly soothing evening with the force user, certainly worth the time. Jango rolled off the bed and stretched.

“Jate ca, cuun kad’au,” Jango called over his shoulder as he walked to the door and opened it.

He heard a sigh before Obi-Wan responded. “Good night.”

Well, it was a start. They’d get there eventually. Like Jango said, they had time. Obi-Wan wasn’t going anywhere.
Obi-Wan is integrating more now. This is because, like Jango said/thought, Obi-Wan can only last so long around so much of Mandalore before he starts to see himself as one of them/not existing outside of Mandalorian culture, and the children make him drop his guard on that stuff even more, making it easier to wear him down.

Mando'a:
“Su’cuy” – hello
Tracyn’ika - little fire
“Elek” – yes
“Jate ca, cuun kad’au” - Good night, our lightsaber | there’s another version of lightsaber, “Jetii’kad” (lit. Jedi’s sword), but, once again, Jango doesn’t want Obi-Wan thinking of himself as a Jedi anymore
The one where he plans some more

Chapter Notes

Previously:
Well, it was a start. They’d get there eventually. Like Jango said, they had time. Obi-Wan wasn’t going anywhere.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“We aren’t getting anywhere!” Wenuve was frustrated. Obi-Wan couldn’t blame her.

“Perhaps it’s time we thought of doing this differently?” Obi-Wan queried.

“We’ve gone over every route! Our best bet remains “wait for phase two or three and try again then”. That’s not actually an escape plan. How else can we think about it?” Wenuve growled out.

“Perhaps we should see if we can get one of us out? Pooling two peoples’ strengths might be enough for one escape.” Obi-Wan started stroking his beard.

“And which of us, pray tell, would we get out? No matter how you answer that, your answer’s shitty. Just a difference of being a shitty jerk or a shitty martyr.”

“Martyr, then, I suppose. And I’m being practical. Who do you think they’ll be watching more? Their only force user, who has been drafted into helping them save some of their children, or another former Mercenary who fits in decently well and might someday be another good commander in their armies?”

“I hate it when you use your logic like that.”

“You’re not alone in that. Let’s try using our different accesses to help us-”

Obi-Wan had finished his coursework, had meditated. But found that he wasn’t quite ready to shower and get into bed just yet. His thoughts were still swirling around Wenuve.

He couldn’t tell her that he was now involved in a coup, the fewer people that knew about it, the more secure it was, the less risk there was for it to leak before it came to fruition. He wanted to tell her, though. When he had suggested that they try to just free her, she had obviously not wanted to leave him behind. But he could not pretend to earnestly plan his escape when he planning with and helping a coup that would let him go anyways.

But he couldn’t just tell her to stop trying to escape without explaining the coup. That was part of why he had suggested that they only break her out anyways. Another part was that Obi-Wan was coming to realize that it actually would be more feasible to plan one escape instead of two. He was also worried about Wenuve staying here much longer. Despite their efforts and knowledge, Wenuve was integrating, more interested in talking about her trident work or the latest gossip than planning escape.

Obi-Wan was still ruminating on Wenuve’s level of integration when he heard a knock on his door.
When it still hadn’t opened after a moment, Obi-Wan called out “Yes?”

The door slid open to reveal Satine. Obi-Wan smiled at her before moving to his boots and putting them on.

“Off again, then?”

“Quite. As I said, four to ten nights.” She smiled back.

“Eight certainly meets those parameters, yes,” Obi-Wan took her arm.

“Today, the issues you’re to advise on are more… in line with some of your more active experience,” she carefully enunciated the word active.

“Ah, I see. Then I would be happy to lend my experience.” Obi-Wan grinned at her. Satine was pleasant, especially as far as the politically minded were concerned. Obi-Wan wondered if she would have been friends with Bail or Padme, if she had been born into Republic politics.

Obi-Wan was led to the same room as before. Vissul and Tek were both absent.

“Su’cuy, Mando’ade,” Obi-Wan gave a small bow in greeting. Most of the others returned the greeting. Bron just grunted back at him.

“Tonight we were planning on primarily working on the “flip phase” as we’ve been calling it,” Mujiita began as soon as he and Satine had taken their seats.

“Understood. What has been planned so far?” Obi-Wan’s question was met with Bron sliding a pad across the table to him.

“Review that. Then you can contribute. Password’s 1-9-7-2-red-5.” Bron Varr definitely didn’t like Obi-Wan.

Obi-Wan read through the documents on the pad, half-listening to the conversation around him. Reading and listening, it was obvious that these people really weren’t fighters. How they had managed that growing up in Mandalorian culture was a mystery.

Once he had read through the current plan, Obi-Wan chimed in, “Have you considered using Mr. Skud’s access to trade goods in order to get your hands on something to physically weaken the militant heads when you do the deed?”

“There is no way you could have read that whole thing yet. And no. No we have not.” Bron almost spat out the words.

“I assure you, I’ve had to read more in less time for military ops. Also, you only need to kill a person once, so lethal poisoning or making them weak enough to kill would be a sound strategy.” Obi-Wan reasoned. The others shifted uncomfortably at the mention of killing another being. “You are still planning on killing them, correct? Or have you decided merely to capture and keep captive?”

“They are blood-thirsty maniacs that need to be put down! Of course we’re going to kill them!” Mujiita seethed.

“Does that not make us blood-thirsty monsters as well, though!” Famma exclaimed.

The senators of the republic would have been put to shame with the circles the following “debate” went in. Satine even became spiritedly involved, arguing to subdue and not kill. Eventually Obi-Wan
decided enough was enough.

“YOU COULD ALWAYS-“ Obi-Wan began shouting before the others quieted down, “-just lightly poison them so they are weakened, ask them to renounce their ways, and, if they refuse, arrest them before taking them before a court that may or may not use capital punishment.”

“I suppose that is a decent compromise,” Bron grunted out before being the first to sit back down. “We certainly should look into having Tek obtain a poison to weaken the monsters who kill for a living.”

The rest of the meeting went decently smooth following that, Obi-Wan occasionally contributing ideas for what sort of poison and how to administer it.

Obi-Wan collapsed on his bed as soon as Satine left him in his room. He stripped off his boots and outer layers, too tired to shower and change. It seemed that people, especially politicians, were the same no matter where you were. Still, Obi-Wan wanted to help them. Politicians or not, their hearts were in the right places, were they not?

Chapter End Notes

Short chapter because there wasn't much to write, I guess?

Mando'a:
Su'cuy, Mando'ade - Hello, children of Mandalore
The one where he tires himself out

Chapter Notes

Previously:

*Obi-Wan collapsed on his bed as soon as Satine left him in his room. He stripped off his boots and outer layers, too tired to shower and change. It seemed that people, especially politicians, were the same no matter where you were. Still, Obi-Wan wanted to help them. Politicians or not, their hearts were in the right places, were they not?*

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Obi-Wan was being led to teach his class once again when he noticed that his guards were far tenser than normal. There seemed to be underlying currents of… some emotion being projected by both beings. Obi-Wan wondered if the children were all right.

“Pardon, but you two seem quite tense. Is there something wrong?” Obi-Wan queried, keeping his voice mild. The guards both stiffened and the one in front stopped completely.

“Vojunn.” The Twilek behind him warned.

“Oh, kriff you, Kanvined!” Vojunn whipped around and tore their helmet off. They were indeed a Togruta. Perhaps seventeen in age? Their montrals and lekku were still quite short. “It’s not my fault you’re such an ass!”

“I still don’t get what you think I did wrong!” the other whipped their helmet off as well.

“Think! No, I know!”

“WELL I DON’T!”

“WELL YOU SHOULD!”

“Regardless of whether they should know or not, the fact remains that they don’t know. If you wish for this conflict to reach any resolution, it would appear that you have to tell them.” Obi-Wan explained calmly to the Togruta from where he had made himself small between them.

Force, these two were boiling with aggression and distress. The togruta, Vojunn as Obi-Wan recalled, stared at him for a few moments, breathing heavily, before turning back to Kanvined.

“Two days ago, I saw a blue Twilek, who had covered their lekku with wraps, in a makeup shop, your second favorite in fact, groping an assistant. Said assistant slapped said hands away ONLY FOR THEM TO RETURN! How dare you!”

“That wasn’t me!”

“Prove it! Only one blue Twilek shops at that store!”

“On the regular? Yes! But anyone can pop in for a second, including other blue Twileks! Wait… How do you know I’m the only who shops there?!”
“I went in once and they recognized me, said I had to be dating their favorite blue Twilek. Someone in the back shouted that you were their only blue Twilek customer.” Vojunn huffed after a second, “And once again, prove that you’re not a groping chakaar!”

“I didn’t set foot in that shop that day! I was in another neighborhood that entire morning! Then we were together for the rest of the day!”

“But can you prove you were in another neighborhood that morning?!” They were both shouting again.

“Yes! I have a kriffing receipt at home to prove it!”

“How convenient that it’s not here!”

“Perhaps they-” “He/him/his, by the way,” Kanvined interrupted, “-he, thank you. Perhaps he could just show you when you get back home?” Obi-Wan suggested.

Kanvined whimpered.

“What? Does the receipt not exist now?!” Vojunn fired at him.

“It’s not that! It’s that… It’s a receipt for a gift okay? I got you something for three days from now. For the fourth year anniversary of our first spar. When we met.” Kanvined said. He blushed while burying his face in his hands.

Vojunn stared at him for a moment before a smile slowly crept onto their face. “Glad I didn’t misjudge you, you sappy bird.”

Kanvined looked up, “You’re one of the best at judging folks, ner cyare,” he said, reaching up to caress their face.

“Um, pardon. I am glad you’ve made up. But I think we’re going to be late and the children…” Obi-Wan trailed off as they snapped away from each other’s eyes to look at him in surprise.

“Osik.” Vojunn hastily put on their helmet, Kanvined copying the action, before grabbing Obi-Wan by the arm. “Kan, I’m going to run ahead. Try to keep up this time.”

Obi-Wan collapsed onto his bed, exhausted. Vojunn had dragged him with enough speed that they had been early. That day’s class had been full of the children acting like, well, children. Then Ms. Wudo had decided to pick Obi-Wan half the time to answer the hardest questions about the new unit in Mando’a. Which had been after Vojunn and Kanvined had escorted him back. Vojunn had apparently decided that he was now their friend and had chatted his ear off. After His actual classes, Wenuve had spent dinner venting about the problems she was having with Genya as her sparring partner for her melee weapons class.

He was glad to help, truly. But the whole day had been a bit overwhelming and he was glad to be alone for a bit.

Though the day had made him nostalgic for his downtime at the temple, when he would advise whichever youngling found him meditating in the garden on their problems, or discussing some holo-drama with a blushing Anakin to subtly give him advice about him and Padme (or just advising
Yes, Obi-Wan was exhausted, in a good way, but still. His work was done for tomorrow. He had meditated, showered. It was time to go to sleep.

There was a knock on the door. Obi-Wan groaned. The door didn’t open. Satine. That was a bit better than Jango. Unfortunately it meant he would have to change. “Hello.” He called out as he sat up.

“Hello, Obi- Oh!” Satine exclaimed as she walked in.

“Apologies. Perhaps we should figure out a way for me to know whether I’ll be needed or not?” Obi-Wan chuckled as he moved to the closet.

“That would be wise,” Satine said as she moved to sit on the bed, perching as elegantly as if she was on a throne. The image suited her. Obi-Wan grabbed his clothes and went into the fresher to change.

Much like the occupants of his room, Obi-Wan automatically froze as soon as he walked back into it.

Jango was a step inside the doorway, the door having closed automatically behind him. His eyes were narrowed slightly in a cautious, questioning, almost glare. Satine was tense on the bed, looking afraid and unsure, like an Alderaanian deer caught in speeder lights. They had not heard him step into the room.

“Apologies, Minister Satine has requested my assistance tonight with a matter that my experience makes me particularly suitable to advise,” Obi-Wan broke the silence.

Satine and Jango snapped their heads to look at him. Jango stared at him for a moment, his eyes seeming to search Obi-Wan, before turning back to Satine.

“What matter?” Jango’s voice was hard. Did he suspect something?

“There’s a… dispute between two farming communities. The circumstances are similar to some of the work he has done as the Negotiator in the past. I wanted his advice in order to solve it before they had to go to their clan heads,” Satine started out speaking a bit timid, but quickly moved back to her usual assured politician’s voice.

“Hmmm… mine can wait. I’ll be back tomorrow, then.” Jango bowed his head at Satine “Ret’urcye mhi, alor be Manda’yaim”

“Ret’urcye mhi, Mand’alor,” Satine gave him the forty-five degree bow, but lowered her head and eyes as well.

“Jate ca, cuun kad’au,” Jango waved jauntily as he stepped out of the room, the door closing before Obi-Wan could respond.

“Does he always call you that?” Satine asked after a moment. She had wrinkled her nose in some degree of displeasure.

“It started the last time he visited. I have no idea if he’ll keep it up,” Obi-Wan was still looking at the door.

“He visits you often?” There was a hard undertone of concern in Satine’s question this time. It had
not occurred to Obi-Wan until this point that the personal attention Jango had been giving him could be trouble for the coup.

“A bit, I suppose. At first, it was because I was a Jedi and unsettling some of the cha- guards. It has continued due to my teaching of the force-sensitive children. They’re being very cautious with that,” Obi-Wan responded, griping internally for having slipped up again. Vojunn, Kanvined, and the others were guards, his jailers, not chaperones.

“Hmm… then we really should find a way to communicate when you’re needed and when you can come,” Satine remarked as they made their way out the door, walking down the hallway to the now familiar path to the conference room.

Bron raised an eyebrow as they walked in. “You’re late. And what’s with the outfit, Jedi?” Obi-Wan looked down at himself.

“Laundry is going to be done tomorrow. There was a very limited selection of Jedi clothes at the quartermaster’s.”

“huh.”

Obi-Wan put his new data pad and communicator under his mattress then collapsed onto his bed again. Politicians, no matter how noble they try to be, always squabbled. It was exhausting to deal with. And the clashing personalities were hard to handle as well. Some of the conspirators were a bit… harsh with their morals. Obi-Wan supposed that it might be the fact that they were raised by Mandalorians, so even if they were against physical violence, they were still going to be brutal about some things. But he had felt uncomfortable with some of the suggestions they had for destroying the current Mandalorian culture.

With those thoughts swimming in his head, Obi-Wan quickly fell asleep.

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Jango huffed as the last sparring droid fell to the ground, waiting aware and prepared for any more attacks for a moment before straightening and walking over to his water and towel and sitting down on the bench.

Why was he so agitated?

He knew the answer was Obi-Wan. But why was the answer Obi-Wan?

He had been back from his last off-planet excursion for two days. He had been notified that there were more parents willing to send their children to Obi-Wan, as well as a few younger adults. He wanted to talk to the other about new students. He had walked to Obi-Wan’s room, nothing unusual compared to his previous visits. He’d entered the room.

Jango put the towel in the laundry chute and exited the small side room, making his way out of the training wing and down the hallways.

Satine. Satine had sat on Obi-Wan’s bed like a child hanging out in their friend’s room. Jango had
been surprised and so had she. They had stared at each other, unsure how to proceed until Obi-Wan had broken the silence himself.

With the explanation of Satine’s presence, Jango had realized that Obi-Wan must have been in the fresher to change out of his sleep clothes. The clothes he had on instead…

There were still elements of Jedi fashion in the outfit. But it had obviously used some items from a mercenary or rogue of some type. Sleek synth-leather pants, dark brown short boots, a tight, long-sleeved black turtleneck with a blue stylized tunic over top. The outfit had looked vaguely Mandalorian and, in Jango’s view, looked far better on Obi-Wan than the Jedi robes. Jango wished he could make an exception for the former Jedi and force him to wear Mandalorian clothes to get him looking more Mandalorian while his mind was still coming along.

Still, that didn’t explain his irritation. Jango had been more impatient before on military campaigns and dealt with it fine. What else had happened in the scene that could have irritated him?

Obi-Wan had given his explanation, taking a few steps towards Satine and the bed, still facing Jango. Satine and Obi-Wan had glanced at each other for a fraction of a second before Satine answered. Obi-Wan had glanced back at him, seeming to assess him for danger.

Did Jango dislike that Satine and Obi-Wan had apparently become friends? Or had become… something where they apparently tried to protect each other?

No. The more recruits interacted with other Mandalorians, especially positively, the faster they integrated. Satine and Obi-Wan having some sort of relationship was beneficial. Jango especially wanted Obi-Wan to integrate. So why was he irritated at the two?

Jango stopped in front of the entrance to the force-sensitives’ hallway, warring with himself for a moment before turning and walking down it.

They had been polite, proper in their behaviors, nothing wrong with it. Even if Obi-Wan had reminded him of a Republic politician again…

That’s what is was. Satine’s attitude made Obi-Wan start to act more like a politician. Kind of. Maybe just as more of a Jedi? An annoying Republic official. Jango didn’t want Obi-Wan to integrate as a pseudo-politician.

The skills Obi-Wan had gained as the Republic’s “Negotiator” could be useful in the future, yes. Whole planet conquests meant treaties and different power structures to be dismantled and the sort of politics that most Mandalorians couldn’t stand. Obi-Wan and Satine could make a good team to deal with that once Obi-Wan had finished integrating. But in the mean time…

Jango opened Obi-Wan’s door. The man was asleep, of course. Jango walked in as quietly as he could. The other had most likely learned to sleep lightly on the battlefield.

Obi-Wan was an accomplished solo mission goer, a fantastic military leader, and apparently, a terrific teacher. If Obi-Wan pursued any of those things instead of politics he could become very beneficial for Mandalore. There were larger chances for Obi-Wan to flourish as a true Mandalorian if he kept away from Satine. And a few other of the administrative officials, as well.

That’s why he was irritated. He didn’t want Satine around Obi-Wan in case she accidentally curbed his potential as a Mandalorian.

Jango walked towards the bed, looming over Obi-Wan’s sleeping form. His fingers twitched. He sat down, leaned back onto the nightstand, and stared at Obi-Wan’s face.
The teaching especially. If Obi-Wan could give them the tools to keep their force-sensitives safe without any Jedi or Sith nonsense, it would be an invaluable contribution.

Still, it was just a one-time thing. Jango didn’t have to worry about Satine, the odd bureaucrat-by-trade, corrupting Obi-Wan or something awful like that.

Chapter End Notes

Vojunn and Kanvined are currently dating. The gift is an engagement present. They are going to marry, but we won't directly see that in the fic.
Vojunn is nineteen, their montrals just grow kind of slowly.
Kanvined is really good at makeup and is often playing around to do cool things to his face. To the point where he has a list of his top five makeup stores.
Also, aye, Jango was feeling a bit attracted to Obi-Wan here, and a bit jealous of Satine, even if he does not realize that yet.

Mando'a:
Chakaar – petty criminal l general term of abuse
Osik - Dung (impolite) l AKA shit
Ret’urcye mhi, alor be Manda’yaim – Goodbye, leader of the planet Mandalore l basically, there’s no word for minister so I’m going to make the head administrators titles “leader of (whatever they’re in charge of)”. Please just go with it.
Jate ca, cuun kad’au – Good night, our lightsaber l same thing from two chapters ago,
Jango doesn’t have a new nickname yet.
The one where he goes to a nicer party

Previously:

Still, it was just a one-time thing. Jango didn’t have to worry about Satine, the odd bureaucrat-by-trade, corrupting Obi-Wan or something awful like that.

“We’re going to another banquet today,” Wenuve said once they had sat down to lunch.

How does Genya find out about these things?” Obi-Wan raised his brow in slight incredulity. Wenuve shrugged.

“I mean, they’re paranoid. I guess they deal with it by gathering as much info as they can. It’s pretty impressive actually.” Wenuve looked over at Genya, who was sitting with Alono and Nel, seeming to mull over something for a moment. “Now if only they could figure out how to use that when fighting,” she smirked. Obi-Wan gave a light snort at that.

The banquet was the same format as the last time, though there seemed to be more varied styles of clothing. Apparently, this banquet was a meeting for Mandalorian governors and former rulers of conquered planets. Obi-Wan supposed that things like this could improve how smoothly the transition went and could be used to intimidate all of those planets at once.

He was given a smaller berth this time; Obi-Wan had elected to tie his tabards around his Obi, making one of the few bows he knew in the back. He looked closer to an outer rim resident that way, especially with the synth-leather pants.

Since barely more than half the room was really Mandalorian, it was taking longer for their group to be picked up by Mandos. Obi-Wan had almost made it to Wenuve, hoping to be able to stick with her this time, when he felt something latch onto his boot.

Looking down, Obi-Wan saw little Kas Shull clinging to him, looking up with wide eyes.

“Up, please!” she smiled.

Obi-Wan gave a small smile and reached down to pick Kas up, settling her on one forearm while holding her waist with his other arm.

“I see Kas found you,” Obi-Wan turned to see Effao coming towards him, holding Kurri much like she had when they had first officially met.

“Yes. She’s certainly an adventurous little child,” Obi-Wan replied.

“Yep. I’ve been taking care of her today, certainly different from my own little Kurri,” Effao patted her daughter’s head.

“Hey! We’re not little! We’re just not big yet!” Kas yelped in offense.
Effao chuckled at that before addressing Obi-Wan again. “Would you join us for dinner again?”

“Of-“ “Pleeeeeease?” Kas interrupted Obi-Wan before he could finish, “Kurri wants you to too, even if she won’t say it,” it appeared that the little Zabrak was close to perfecting puppy-dog eyes.

“Of course, I would be delighted to join such lovely ladies for a meal,” Obi-Wan smiled softly.

Obi-Wan glanced towards Wenuve to see the same Twilek from last time talking to her again. It was Kanvined. Vojunn joined them.

“Food’s ready!” Kas started to squirm as soon as the announcement was made. Obi-Wan put her down as Effao did the same for Kurri. Kas grabbed Kurri’s arm and the two bolted for the end of the hall.

“I suppose we should follow them.” Obi-Wan commented. Effao just started making her way to the buffet, obviously trusting Obi-Wan to keep with her. Obi-Wan moved to follow when he felt someone approach with mild maliciousness and move to grab him. Obi-Wan spun around as a dodge and found Bron Varr barely holding back a glare.

“What are you doing?” He hissed.

“Having dinner. Effao’s daughter and temporary charge are my students, I couldn’t really say no.” Obi-Wan replied, surprised to find himself quite annoyed with Bron under his calm façade.

Bron openly glared for a moment before huffing and peeling away from Obi-Wan with as much haste as he could without raising suspicion. Obi-Wan turned back and made his way to the buffet.

He pondered his aggression as he got food. Certainly Obi-Wan was less inclined to like Bron due to the man’s seemingly immediate, unprovoked dislike of him. But Obi-Wan had dealt with worse before and been nowhere near as annoyed as he had just felt. Perhaps it was because Bron had questioned his relationship with his students? Obi-Wan knew that after so many years of having to suddenly take care of small or vulnerable beings (thank you, Qui-Gon) he had a tendency to be automatically protective of them.

Still, Bron didn’t deserve the inner aggression. He was probably worried that their Jedi in the integration program really was integrating and becoming less of a Jedi. He was only taking care of children, though. That was never a bad thing. And it wasn’t as if these kids were inundating him with Mandalorian propaganda, it was the opposite if anything, he was teaching them non-Mandalorian things. He would be fine. If Bron brought it up again he’d explain carefully to assuage any fears.

Obi-Wan finished getting his food and moved away from the buffet table, looking around for a moment before he heard Effao calling from a few feet behind him. He turned around and they corralled the children towards the table, taking care to stay together.

They made their way to an open section and Effao and Obi-Wan automatically situated Kurri and Kas between them.

“Kurri’s been telling me a bit about your class, but I’d still like to hear about it from you,” Effao opened before they could touch their food, the two children were already eating voraciously.

“Where would you like me to start?” Obi-Wan took a sip from his water as Effao formulated a response.

“Well, I think I have a basic grasp of your curriculum format. How is Kurri coming along in the
individual parts?” Effao started cutting her meat before popping a piece in her mouth.

“Meditation is coming to her easier than most of her other classmates, which is quite good as she is one of the most affected by visions. She is having a bit of trouble with a few concepts regarding the living force, I believe that she is more in tune with the unifying force like me. She is progressing as she should with the more practical applications of control,” Obi-Wan mused, stroking his beard.

“That sounds… pretty Jedi like,” Effao sounded uncomfortable. Obi-Wan chewed his bite of salad.

“I’m not really able to teach them differently. I know a few general philosophical maxims and, in some cases, how to dodge other types of force traditions, but if it seems Jedi like it’s because it is. I try to teach them just general force skills. But they’re a curious bunch, they aren’t really satisfied with just basic theories and skills. I keep having to answer questions that need disclaimers for being Jedi history or philosophy,” Obi-Wan sighed out. Effao opened her mouth to reply when Kas beat her to it.

“Do you not like our questions?” Obi-Wan paused for a moment to look at her before responding.

“I am quite glad that you are all asking questions… But I’m not supposed to be teaching you how to be Jedi and I’m still trying to find ways each time how to not do that.” Obi-Wan stroked his beard just thinking about it. “Honestly, how many times each day do I say that the Jedi believe or use such and such?”

“On average, three point six. You’ve had to say it eleven times in one lesson at most and one time at least,” Kurri suddenly murmured.

“Is… Is that a force thing?” a Kiffar across from them asked, staring at Kurri with a slightly worried, maybe even scared, look.

Obi-Wan raised a brow, “If it is, then I suppose the Jedi should be checking the banking clan for midi-chlorians.” Effao tried to cover a snort at that. The Kiffar blushed in embarrassment.

“I didn’t think the Jedi taught a course on sass,” sounded a voice behind them. Obi-Wan’s side of the table turned around. It was Jango Fett.

“‘Alor,” came the near-simultaneous greeting, everyone gave the forty five degree bow, with their eyes down this time. Obi-Wan bowed with them, but did not say anything.

He looked up to see Jango looking at him, brow quirked in a silent question.

“It was an extra-curricular. One I elected to take for the sake of a diplomat-in-training’s sanity,” Obi-Wan joked, hoping it wouldn’t be taken by those he was sitting with as sassing the Mand’alor himself. Jango chuckled before squatting so he was at eye level with Kurri and Kas.

“And how are you two doing? I heard you got a back-flip kick yesterday, little Kas,” He smiled down at her.

“Yep! And Kurri almost got those twist locks perfect too!” Kas beamed back at him. Jango chuckled at that and rubbed Kas’s head, carefully avoiding her horns, before ruffling Kurri’s hair as well.

“Good to hear. You two keep at it and you’ll be some of our finest commandos someday,” Jango’s smile seemed genuine and was full of warmth.

“Ret’urcye mhi, Mando’ade” Jango nodded his head to say goodbye.
“Ret’urcye mhi, ‘Alor,’” the others said and Obi-Wan joined them in giving the formal bow. Jango walked away.

Dinner passed uneventfully after that. Kas excitedly told Obi-Wan and Effao about her studies, sometimes prompting Kurri to say something as well. It had become quite apparent to Obi-Wan the past few weeks that the two were good friends. Effao and Obi-Wan took turns trying to get Kas to chew and swallow her food before talking.

Once dinner came to a close, the recruits were told to line up to be led out of the room. Kas gave Obi-Wan a hug before he got out of his seat and Kurri said that they would see him tomorrow before giving him a bow. Obi-Wan nodded his head in return and went with the chain gang as peacefully as he had before, letting himself be led back to his room.

Obi-Wan let himself collapse onto his bed once he had finished his nightly routine. The banquet had been… almost pleasant. That was confusing. Obi-Wan couldn’t afford confusion right now.

It was war. The Sith and their empire were a threat to everything the Jedi stood for. The Mandalorian empire was often allied with the Sith and even when they weren’t, their crusades were a danger to the Republic. The Republic was to be protected.

He had been taught these things since the crèche.

But even if he knew that they were purposefully shoving it in his face, Obi-Wan couldn’t help but see this sympathetic side of those around him. The children especially.

But Obi-Wan was a Jedi of the Republic. He wasn’t to concern himself with these beings who dedicated themselves to such a barbaric society.

Obi-Wan had heard Sith say similar things.

It wasn’t… strictly against Jedi teachings to empathize with the enemy. They were sentient beings as well, after all. And a good amount of his time was spent around children. Innocent children.

The Mandalorians had that priority in order. Obi-Wan had seen the care they gave their children, even if they considered children to have a smaller definition than Obi-Wan would like.

Effao was a superb caretaker. Kanvined and Vojunn interacted so nicely with the children at the end of class, sometimes even during. And Jango…

Jango had shown at both banquets that he took the duty of child caretaking quite seriously. He had even insisted that Obi-Wan’s guide get distributed to families that needed it. Had… trusted? Been willing to risk a Jedi’s influence to help a small subset of children. The man obviously cared for and tried to protect all the children in his empire.

And at this point, they were protecting and reinforcing their borders more than crusading. Politically the empire might not even be able to stop their violence.

No, change could always happen. Satine’s coup could change the Mandalorians into a pacifist state. But perhaps not all of the old Mandalore had to be sacrificed? Not all the people at least. If the leader could be so caring and supportive then there had to be hope for some.

Thoughts still strewing, Obi-Wan fell asleep.
“The Resol’nare are a cornerstone of this barbaric society! A modified version will just let people slip back to the old ways! We need to completely destroy it!” Ife was getting worked up again.

“We are still Mandalorian! The Resol’nare include teaching our own young our language! We want to change our political structure and stances! Not completely eradicate our culture!” Ches fired back.

“Language is powerful. We don’t need to enunciate old ideas by encouraging the same language. Mando’a should be presented as equal with other languages and be allowed to be picked up or not depending on the student.” Mujiita grunted out.

“Well, I suppose that’s one way we could do it…” Ches mumbled, obviously thinking Mujiita’s proposal over.

“Then it’s settled. We’ll remove the Resol’nare. If we catch someone teaching their kids we’ll arrest them as traitors. It’ll be easier that way. Let’s move on now.” Bron’s voice was harsh and gruff; he had tired of this debate some minutes ago.

“Wait. If they’re arrested for teaching the Resol’nare, how serious do we consider the offense?” Famma asked. Obi-Wan opened his mouth to respond when someone else answered faster.

“Well, to teach the Resol’nare would be like they’re saying that they still want to follow the steps of old Mandalore…“ Tek trailed off.

“So they’d be traitors, committing treason and sedition. The crime would be as high class as other direct acts of treason.” Mujiita declared. The others nodded along, Ches hung xer head in passive resignation. Obi-Wan raised his brows slightly and almost countered when he noticed Bron Varr shooting him a glare.

He closed his mouth. Things at this meeting were... not right. It would probably be best to just observe.

“Well since that’s settled, let’s move on.” Bron tried again. This time they did move forward with planning the aftereffects of the coup.

“So sorry you’ve had to sit through these bits of the planning. You’ll probably be gone by then.” Satine apologized as they neared Obi-Wan’s hallway.

“I’d much rather sit through them, than have them not happen at all,” Obi-Wan replied. He tried to give a charming smile, but was a bit too out of it to make it truly convincing. Satine didn’t notice.
“True, we do actually have the brains to make sure we have a plan and a new system for when this one is gone,” They turned down Obi-Wan’s hallway.

“I’d be quite worried about us if that wasn’t the case,” Obi-Wan chuckled politely, Satine joining in a bit more heartily. They reached Obi-Wan’s door.

“Good night then, our Jedi,” Satine said softly as she opened the door.

“Good night, my fair lady,” Obi-Wan replied, kissing her hand as was customary now, before stepping through the door into his room for the night.

Obi-Wan opened his eyes.

He had been trying to fall asleep for close to an hour. He couldn’t do it. He was getting increasingly worried.

The coup was getting a little… fanatical.

That was an understatement. When Obi-Wan tried to curb some of their more extreme ideas, they either barely softened their positions or insisted that he was missing something cultural as an outsider and completely ignored him.

Tonight they had decided that someone teaching their children the Resol’nare was the same level of offense as trying to kill a high political official.

The Resol’nare. Speak the language. Wear the armor. Protect yourself and yours. Contribute to the clan’s welfare. Raise your kids as Mandalorian. Rally to your Mand’alor’s cause.

Were those ideas really high treason? Sedition?

To protect and contribute to your community were good things. Mujiita had a point about the language, but Obi-Wan thought he was blowing it out of proportion. Besides, languages evolved. The act of wearing armor wasn’t necessarily violent, and could easily be switched to mainly ceremonial or rite-of-passage usages. If the culture was called Mandalorian, the children would be raised as Mandalorian, even if the definition of Mandalorian changed. They were getting rid of the single Mand’alor position, though loyalty to your leaders wasn’t bad anyways.

Ches had been the only one in that room who seemed to be really thinking about the Mandalorian citizens recently. What was it that Jango had said the first time they had talked? That Mandalorians had the right to exist in their own culture just like the rest of the galaxy? Something along those lines.

This coup seemed to be moving further away from changing the empire into a pacifist state and closer towards flipping power and imposing the will of a new few. Who just happened to have isolationist policies. It was quite possible that new Mandalore wouldn’t be much better than current Mandalore. And the instability could leave many worse off or even dead.

Even Satine had been too harsh and judgmental lately. At the beginning, seeing someone so obsessed with stopping all fighting had been a bit awe-inspiring for him. But now it came across as snobbish elitism and privilege. Satine refused to consider any reason a good reason to fight, and thought that anyone who chose to fight a monster, at best a barbaric savage.

And although sticking to your morals was an admirable quality, now she was just being impractical. In a leader, not willing to bend your goals to reality meant defeat.
But they were pacifists. The idea of a pacifist Mandalorian empire was surely worth the risk of their harshness going overboard, correct?

Obi-Wan thought of Vojunn and Kanvined, who were now engaged. The children he taught, innocent and oh so eager to learn now that they weren’t afraid of the force.

Perhaps the coup wasn’t the right way to change the empire. Obi-Wan absently shifted his hand under his mattress until he found a data pad and data stick.

He was still uncertain, he knew that, knew master Yoda would have whapped him with a stick if the old troll knew about his uncertainty. But Obi-Wan had also been a leader in an army. He’d only survived so long because he was prepared for multiple scenarios. Obi-Wan turned on the pad and plugged in the data stick before pulling up a new document.

He stared at the blank screen for a moment before beginning to type. If he was going to keep a record, it would take quite a while to type what had already been planned. He’d definitely need to reference the documents on the other contraband data sticks and pads he had hidden.

Chapter End Notes

No Jango this time, but we needed this chapter to push Obi-Wan further down his descent. Next chapter's almost all Jango and Obi-Wan, though. I promise.
The one where he kind of has a dinner date

Chapter Notes

Previously:
*He stared at the blank screen for a moment before beginning to type. If he was going to keep a record, it would take quite a while to type what had already been planned. He’d definitely need to reference the documents on the other contraband data sticks and data pads he had hidden.*

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Obi-Wan was tired. He had some older students now, technically adults by Mandalorian standards, though only one was an adult by Republic standards, and they could only all come in once a week. During dinner.

He got his dinner delivered through the slot of the bottom of his door on these days. Obi-Wan collapsed onto his bed to wait for it.

His boot vibrated. He groaned. That was the new signal to let him know he was wanted for conspiring tonight. He was too tired to want to go. But he had a duty. And he still believed that he could get the others to see sense on some of their hypothetical policies and change them so there wasn’t a civil war or undue burden on the citizens.

Obi-Wan picked up his boots and was about to put them on when there was a knock on the door.

“Good evening,” Obi-Wan gave the proper bow before moving to put his boots in closet, using the motion to discreetly press button on the bottom of his boot twice to inform Satine that he wouldn’t be able to come.

“Evening,” Jango sounded mildly amused by something. “Don’t delay dinner on account of me.” Jango held the tray out for Obi-Wan to take.

“My thanks.” Obi-Wan nodded as he took his dinner and set it down on the nightstand. He sat down on the bed and Jango followed, sitting relatively relaxed at the foot of the bed as he had the last few times he’d come in to Obi-Wan’s room.

Obi-Wan looked down at his dinner, water to drink, a warm soup that seemed to be mainly broth with some kind of meat and vegetables, some sort of flat bread on the side, and a small pastry for dessert. Obi-Wan wafted his hand a few times to appreciate the smell of the soup. It smelled even more delicious than it looked.

Jango let him eat a few spoons worth of the soup before opening his mouth. “How are the new students coming along?” Obi-Wan swallowed.

“Along, I suppose. The new children are going a bit more smoothly than the first group. I think mainly due to the first group being there to help them learn about the force and unlearn some of their insecurities regarding their sensitivity to it,” Obi-Wan couldn’t help but send a light glare to the side at Jango, who had the decency to look a little sheepish. Maybe even guilty.
“And the adults?”

“They… They’re coming along differently. They are all grasping the concepts faster with much more coherency, but they are also more stubborn about learning in the first place,” Obi-Wan stroked his beard for a moment before turning back to his food.

“Except for Sioth Wral, I presume?” Jango asked as Obi-Wan took a bite of bread. Obi-Wan nodded then raised a questioning eyebrow at Jango.

“Sioth’s the son of one of my advising officers. He was the first adult to ask to be taught. Suggested a separate class for the adults too.”

“Hm… Not surprised. He seems quite smart. I’m not sure the others realize just how smart, though, what with his always cheery disposition,” Obi-Wan mused.

“I have heard some stories over the years of people assuming he’s an idiot ‘cause of it and thinking they can best him,” Jango smirked, “they didn’t think that for long,"

“A smart man who can play the fool is a very valuable thing, indeed,” Obi-Wan said, a light smile on his lips.

“Indeed. You ever tried to play the fool?” Jango looked over at Obi-Wan, who was trying not to smile so he could finish his sip.

“Many times. I play the obliviously innocent idiot particularly well, I’ll have you know,” Obi-Wan was openly smiling with mirth now, thinking back on a few missions he’d done.


“What?” he asked after a moment.

“Hm… Nothing. And how are your own studies going? How many combat lessons do you attend?” Jango leaned back, apparently making himself at home.

“Just the blasters lesson. Apparently, I can “gun for a ship, but not in a ship”. The instructor, Likko, says I’m almost proficient.” Obi-Wan worked on finishing his bread.

“I’m surprised you passed hand-to-hand but not blasters,” Jango sounded barely surprised.

“If I’m in a blaster fight, I’ll just deflect the shots. If I’m handed a blaster and have to use it, I’ll use the force to make up for any lack of skill,” Obi-Wan paused to finish off the soup. Jango waited for him, watching him silently, “As for hand-to-hand, it’s good practice for general fitness and my master and I always managed to get into the most ridiculous situations, this meant more use of hand-to-hand. Which resulted in me putting more effort into hand-to-hand than my peers. Which resulted in more undercover missions where I had to rely on it once I became a knight,” Obi-Wan finished.

“Hm… Seems that for all the Jedi tried to water you down into a bland Republic dog, you still managed to come out good. Glad for that.” Jango was openly smirking. Obi-Wan tensed, but when he found himself unable to completely hold back his glare he instead opted to openly glare back at Jango.

“The Jedi did not try to water me down into anything. I chose to be a Jedi. I chose it every day. A Jedi protects the Republic, as it stands for our morals. All Jedi follow the same codes and believe in the same things. Each Jedi just finds the way best suited to them in order to carry them out,” Obi-
Wan was tense. What was it about Jango that managed to get under his skin so much?

Jango chuckled lightly, though the tone held darkness in it. “The Jedi,” Jango spat out the word like it was dirty, “like to take children and raise them as nothing but soldiers. And before you say anything about hypocrisy, in Mandalorian culture children are taught to be able to fight. Whether they fight or not is completely up to them. Did the Jedi ever give you a chance? Or did they tell you as soon as you understood words that you would be fighting for them in a war older than your grandparents?”

Obi-Wan gritted his teeth, “The Jedi do not have much choice. But they do what they can. I was trained as a diplomat. I had the option to leave the temple. We had to learn to fight because as Jedi we knew we were going into situations where not knowing how to fight would kill us.”

“And where would you have gone, if you left? And can you really say you were trained as a diplomat? Not a soldier who took extra-curriculars on diplomacy?” Jango shot back.

“If these thrice-damned wars would end, then I would be able to function fully as a diplomat!” Obi-Wan had not heard himself use such an angry voice for a long time.

“And could you have gone somewhere, if you left the temple?” Jango asked softly. It reminded Obi-Wan to calm down. He took a deep breath in then exhaled.

“As a child? No. A year or so after I was knighted I met someone who would have taken me in. If I had left as a child I… probably could have found something,” Obi-Wan knew it wasn’t a good answer, but it was the truth.

“That’s not a choice. I stand by what I said,” Jango’s voice was harsh, cold. Obi-Wan hadn’t realized until this moment how casual Jango usually was with him.

He picked up the small pastry in lieu of a response and bit into it. It was Muja flavored, one of Obi-Wan’s long time favorites. He couldn’t help but let out a small, pleased noise.

“You like Muja?” Jango was wearing a baffled but amused expression. Obi-Wan could tell he was starting to blush.

“It’s one of my favorites. I, uh, have a bit of a sweet tooth,” Obi-Wan admitted, face flaring.

Jango chuckled. “Cute,” was the only comment he made.

“A man’s favored pastry flavor is an odd sense of cute,” Obi-Wan responded, though he was too flustered to put any real bite into his words. Which only seemed to amuse Jango even more.

“Well you are an odd sort of man, aren’t you?” was Jango’s reply.

Obi-Wan just sighed at that. Jango chuckled at his sigh.

“Well, since you’re done,” Jango stood and stretched “Jate ca, cuun dinui meg ba’juri nuhaatyec kot.”

Jango scooped up Obi-Wan’s tray and walked towards the door. As he did so, Obi-Wan warred with himself.

It wouldn’t hurt... He was watching himself after all. And Jango had spared him a night arguing with politicians. He was just being polite...

“Jate ca… Mand’alor” he called as Jango stepped through the door. He thought Jango might have
stopped in surprise, but the force null door closed too quickly for him to tell even in the force.

Chapter End Notes

Mando’a:
Jate ca, cuun dinui meg ba’juri nuhaatyec ko” – good night, our gift who educates the invisible strength | basically “our gift for teaching the force”; fun fact, Mando’a has no word for the force
Jate ca… Mand’alor – good night… Sole ruler | Mand’alor is Jango’s official title, Obi-Wan is kind of in diplomat mode here, and he was taught to always use the correct title so as not to offend whomever he’s addressing
The one where he has a breakdown

Chapter Notes

Previously:
“Jate ca… Mand’alor” he called as Jango stepped through the door. He thought Jango might have stopped in surprise, but the force null door closed too quickly for him to tell even in the force.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Ah, ‘Alor!” Akkus Wral called out as Jango walked down a hallway with Satine Kryze and Bron Varr. They had just come from a meeting and were discussing a few points further. Jango was getting annoyed at them, Bron especially, for their obtuse questioning.

“Akkus,” Jango said pleasantly. Ze stopped a few feet away and gave Jango the proper bow. “Is there an issue?”

“Not at all, ‘Alor. There is good news from the Generis system. This is the debrief packet, I was just on my way to deliver it to your quarters,” Akkus held out a data stick which Jango took with a hum.

“You seem more pleased by this than I think it warrants. Did something good happen?” Akkus questioned.

“Hm? Ah. The force-user is coming along better than I expected,” Jango stowed the data stick in one of his pouches.

“Force-user? Oh, that’s right. You and Effao managed to grab the Negotiator a while back, didn’t you?” Akkus smiled a bit when speaking about their friend. Jango smirked back.

“What do you mean, better than expected?” Satine questioned from besides him, her tone seemed to contain… worry, perhaps?

“Well last night, I got him to admit that the Jedi aren’t perfect and they basically raised him as a child soldier. Then as I left, he said “Jate ca, Mand’alor”. And he’s one of the recruits who’s figured out the whole “reframe your mindset with language” strategy,” Jango purred.

“I… see…” Satine looked a bit disconcerted, “I’m surprised he would use such language if he’s aware. The reports we have of him would frame him as smarter than that.”

“Well no one lasts forever. I think he slips into his diplomatic “Negotiator” role by accident sometimes, which would dictate that he gives proper form of address. Probably saved his ass in the past. But here it’s just integrating him faster,” Jango mused.

“I see… Well, Bron and I will leave you two to discuss military matters, then, Bron?” Satine smiled at Akkus and Jango, giving them a bow before holding out her arm for Bron Varr to take.

Bron also gave a bow, his face seeming even grumpier than it had been earlier, then he took Satine’s arm and they retreated down the hallway.

“Have you taken particular interest in Kenobi, then?” Akkus questioned as they watched the other
two leave.

“He is teaching our first course on controlling the force. He started with just kids, I’ve been watching him closer than I would most because of it. Before that I checked in on him once or twice. Force users, Jedi especially, are rare for these programs.” Jango stated.

“Do you like him? You’ve always had a particular distaste for Jedi that I’m not seeing right now,” Akkus questioned. Ze always had a particular way of picking up on small details and pursuing them to find out the truth. Jango started walking down the hallways, motioning for Akkus to follow.

“I want him. He can handle politics without being a politician, strong on solo missions and as a leader, and he can teach our kids to not have to worry about the force. Once he integrates, he’ll be invaluable. I want him to be a part of this empire completely. As soon as possible” Jango had no shame in admitting it. The thought of Kenobi walking these hallways as a teacher, a military leader, a Mandalorian, made him excited.

“Well then, I will be eagerly awaiting his commencement to the next phase. ‘Alor,” Akkus gave Zir bow, which Jango returned with a nod, before turning down a new hallway.

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“It’s fine, I assure you,” Obi-Wan tried to placate.

“Fine! How is it fine?! You called him ‘Alor!” Bron Varr shot back, clearly angry.

“I called him “Mand’alor”. Which is his proper title. I called him the sole ruler of the Mandalorian empire.” Obi-Wan’s voice was stern, cold.

Mujiita nodded his head, seeming to understand. “Which you have been taught is the title of your enemy since you were young.”

“Yes. Also, the more I seem to integrate, the more freedom I will be given,” Obi-Wan explained, “If I get moved to phase two, then I will be far more useful.”

“Mujiita, can’t you just move him to phase two?” Tek questioned. Obi-Wan fought the urge to face palm.

“If he did, then someone would notice that he didn’t follow proper procedure. Then we’re all screwed. Our Jedi is stuck for now,” Bron Varr grunted. Obi-Wan still couldn't tell if Bron disliked him or Tek more. He also absently wondered why he felt a bit uncomfortable at being called the coup’s Jedi.

“Can we put this to rest now? The Jedi is doing fine. Let’s continue with tonight’s actual planning,” Vissul brought them back to task.

Obi-Wan stepped out of the ‘fresher in his sleep clothes and moved towards the bed. Kneeling down, he lifted the mattress and took out two data pads and a few data sticks.

He inserted the timeline stick into one data pad and the journal stick, as he’d taken to calling them,
Creating a new point on the timeline, Obi-Wan typed: *reference: journal entry 36, audio files __, transcript number __*. He’d find the other numbers and write the transcript later. For now, though…

Obi-Wan brought the other data pad onto his lap and began typing:

* Journal entry 36:

Today, the conspirators worked further on methods to use after the coup in order to change Mandalorian society. Tek Skud suggested that they destroy previous battle records and history of the different Mand’alors so that the upcoming generation wouldn’t be able to get any ideas about how to be violent. Ife said that it would also help with putting down any rebel cells as they wouldn’t have access to as much of their history.

Ches Mebba and I argued that destroying history is never a good thing and that those battle records at least could prove useful in the future. I also worried that this would lead to revisionism in Mandalorian historical academia. Ches suggested that not all of the records be destroyed. Mujita Orrad said that any violent history would be a slippery slope that would inevitably lead Mandalore back to its violent ways. I suggested that they could lock the records up and restrict access, but not destroy them. Vissul Hud said that it would be too burdensome to maintain such a restricted archive.

Both motions were overruled. Ches voted for both suggestions and against destroying the records. All of the others voted against both suggestions and for destroying the records. I still do not have a vote. This took up majority of the meeting.

Tek Skud also gave an update about the supplies. The first shipment of chemicals has come in. The devices to administer them are going to take at least a few more weeks to come. Once they do, they will need to be modified. There is still slicing that will need to be done before the coup can commence.

Obi-Wan paused for a moment. Not sure if he should add the incident at the beginning of the meeting or not.

At the beginning of the meeting, several minutes were wasted while Bron Varr accused me of betraying the coup. Not for this record, but because he had heard from Jango Fett that I had called him “Mand’alor”. I did indeed call Jango Fett “Mand’Alor” two days ago. Satine Kryze corroborated the story, but seemed displeased to do so. When she came to escort me to the meeting she had seemed guilty and worried by something.

Mujita Orrad finally put an end to it by pointing out I had called Jango Fett by a title I had been taught my whole life was an enemy.

Obi-Wan paused again, stroking his beard.

*I am uncertain I meant it as that, but it*

No, that wouldn’t do. Obi-Wan deleted the line.

*This placated the others and we moved on to the rest of the meeting, as described above.*

Obi-Wan saved the entry and uploaded the other information and files for tonight to the other data sticks. He put them all back in their usual places under the mattress, where they couldn’t be discerned, and finally laid down in bed.
What did he mean he was uncertain if he meant “Mand’alor” like that? Mujiita was correct, he had been taught his whole life that it was the title of one of his enemies.

Enemies…

Jango Fett didn’t seem like an enemy.

Because Obi-Wan was in a program that made Fett consider him a Mandalorian. On his side. But Obi-Wan wasn’t.

He was collecting evidence against a group trying to bring Jango Fett and his administration out of power.

Because he was worried they might make things worse. He wasn’t doing it for Fett.

He was caring too much for the Mandalorians around him.

His students were children. Kanvined and Vojunn were a young couple in love. Obi-Wan didn’t interact with too many Mandalorians outside of them and their caretakers. The guides for classes didn’t count. They weren’t allowed to interact with initiates.

No.

They were prisoners. Even if their wardens smiled at them when they weren’t wearing helmets, they were still in a jail of sorts. Even if he was in a room almost as comfy as his room at the temple.

Obi-Wan groaned. Things were getting so confusing. He needed to meditate. He needed to sleep.

He needed to meditate.

Obi-Wan slowly shuffled himself out of bed and settled himself on the floor. This was probably going to take most of the night.

Obi-Wan had spent the entire night meditating and still couldn’t sort himself out.

He ended up resorting to releasing his emotions into the force without fully working through them. Hopefully that would give him a clear enough head that he could make it through the day and re-examine himself tonight.

He had finished teaching the daily force class and was being escorted back by Vojunn and Kanvined, as per usual.

“Okay, what the kriff is wrong with you?!” Vojunn suddenly stopped, turned around, and growled. Obi-Wan stared at them, slightly confused.

“Pardon? What are you referring to, Mx. Vojunn?” Obi-Wan kept his voice even.

“Gah! That!” Vojunn threw their arms in the air. “What the hell happened in the last twenty-four hours that made you some kriffing protocol droid?!”

“I… I’m sorry, I’m afraid I don’t understand what you’re referring to,” Obi-Wan straightened himself.

“I mean, you have been oddly… distant? Today I mean,” Kanvined said from behind. Obi-Wan half
turned to see both and saw Kanvined take his helmet off.

“Distant and docile. And not lively. You’re like a kriffing puppet. I thought we were getting to be close too!” Vojunn exclaimed, tearing their helmet off as well.

“I assure you, I am still my usual self. And we have been talking to each other daily for the past few weeks, it would be quite difficult to not be closer,” Obi-Wan replied. He wasn’t sure how to interact with these two anymore.

“Dude, you were almost impersonal with the kids today. There was basically no warmth in you. That was what made the kids open up to you in the first place!” Vojunn shot back.

Obi-Wan could feel his control slipping. He needed to calm down. He took a deep breath in and exhaled.

“I am still teaching them how to control the force. There is nothing that says I have to be a constantly sunny presence with them to teach them nor for them to learn,” his voice was tenser than he wanted, but it was the best Obi-Wan could do at the moment.

“You’re also a lot less friendly with us today. Even I noticed that,” Kanvined snorted.

“I do not need to be friendly with my wardens. Your job is to escort me from class to teaching and back without letting me escape. There is no need for you to try to be friendly, nor for me to reciprocate it,” Obi-Wan’s voice was cold. He could see Vojunn and Kanvined both flinch back in surprise of his tone, as well as the content of what he had said.

“And why can’t we friendly, huh? What’s wrong with us all liking each other?!” Vojunn moved uncomfortably close to Obi-Wan, looking livid. Their anger was more evident in their voice than the day Obi-Wan had first started talking with the two.

“You’re Mandalorians! I – I am a Jedi! Your empire is at war with the republic I serve! You are my enemy, I’m not supposed to- supposed to be-“ Obi-Wan put his hand over his face and tried to take deep breaths to stop the hyperventilating, missing Vojunn and Kanvined looking at each other worriedly.

“That’s… You interact with sentients who aren’t trying to kill you, and you tend to get friendly with them. That’s just how life works unless you’re a jerk, and you were kind of raised to not be a jerk, you know?” Kanvined was trying to soothe him, Obi-Wan could tell. It was working a little bit.

“There you go. You’ll be fine. Good job. Uh… do you still want to go to class? If you need to head back to your room or the medic’s ward, that’s allowed,” Vojunn said hesitantly. They were treating Obi-Wan like glass.

Obi-Wan took a few seconds more to breathe and calm down before removing his hand from his face, revealing a perfectly placid expression.

“I am capable of attending class. I believe we will still be within our usual five-minute grace window if we fast walk there. Apologies for the disturbance,” Obi-Wan gave a shallow bow and put his hands in his sleeves, as was habit. Vojunn and Kanvined glanced at each other before apparently coming to a decision.

“Right then. Let’s go,” Kanvined said while putting his helmet back on, Vojunn following suit before they all started silently hurrying down the halls to his class.
Obi-Wan had felt a need to shower before meditating tonight. He settled down on the bed with his back to the wall to begin meditating in his sleep clothes. As Obi-Wan closed his eyes, there was a knock on the door. Obi-Wan opened his eyes in light surprise just as the door opened to reveal Jango Fett.

“Evening,” was Jango’s gruff greeting as he stepped into the room, stopping a few steps in. Obi-Wan had a bad feeling about this in his gut, but was uncertain whether it was the force warning him or just his own anxiety.

Chapter End Notes

Not as much editing as I probably should have done, but I just want to get to chapter 18 at this point...
Previously:
“Evening,” was Jango’s gruff greeting as he stepped into the room, stopping a few steps in. Obi-Wan had a bad feeling about this in his gut, but was uncertain whether it was the force warning him or just his own anxiety.

Jango saw Obi-Wan tense as he stepped further into the room so he stopped a third of the way to the bed. He settled into a neutral stance, ready to move at any moment but appearing non-threatening.

“I hear you were having some psychological troubles today,” might as well get straight to the point. Obi-Wan narrowed his eyes for a moment and furrowed his brow a bit. He seemed to be trying to figure out some puzzle.

“I’m curious. You seem to be unusually involved with me in my time here. Why? I’ll answer your non-question, by the way, I don’t have much choice anyways. I just want to know,” Kenobi’s face had settled into some sort of mask. Harsher than his serenely blank face from when he first began the program, but just as emotionless. It annoyed Jango.

“I thought you’d be worth the trouble from when I first fought you,” Obi-Wan quirked an eyebrow in confusion at that, “I was the one with blue and silver armor. The one who electrocuted you and told you to surrender. I came to check on you because I seemed to be the only one not freaked out by you, you proved to be pretty fun to be around. Then that first banquet happened and I’ve been coming in for that since,” Jango explained, “So?”

Obi-Wan sighed. Jango suspected that his answer hadn’t satisfied the other, but didn’t particularly care about rectifying that at the moment.

“I… I am just a little confused. And I can’t seem to sort myself out like I should be able to and that’s not helping.” Obi-Wan slumped down, looking far more defeated than the time Jango had actually seen him defeated. Jango walked further until he was only a step or two from the bed.

“What exactly is confusing to you?” Jango tried to keep his voice soft, but could feel himself holding his breath. Was Obi-Wan at a breaking point? If so, was he finally breaking away from his past life as a Jedi? Or just breaking down in general?

“What’s- I-” Obi-Wan closed in on himself, seeming unable to answer. Jango lowered himself down to Obi-Wan’s level.

“Look, I know that sometimes people have trouble when they realize they’ve changed, if you need someone to help talk you through the realization, that can be arranged.”

“You mean someone can convince me that abandoning my morals and teachings is the “right” thing to do,” Obi-Wan’s voice came out in a harsh bite. Jango growled at that and saw Obi-Wan’s body tense further in response, preparing to fight or run.
Jango took a deep breath in, thinking. The man in front of him was still obviously distrustful of those around him. He’d probably been socializing as nicely as he had been for survival’s sake. This whole thing might have just been whatever anxiety and stress he had clamped down on to do so bubbling over. If he could get the force user to trust him, Obi-Wan could open up and perhaps let that go. But trust was a two-way street.

Jango sat down on the bed, on his new usual spot, and looked the force user directly in the eye.

“The last time we had a force user in this program, they seemed fine at first. They were coming along well, and quick. Then, a few months in, they snapped. Sent a few of their peers to the medics, most in the intensive care unit. Killed two. Several full Mandalorians were also in intensive. We subdued them and tried to help them. But their sanity had completely snapped. We had to kill them in the end. I don’t want that to happen to you,” Jango explained in the gentlest voice he could manage.

Obi-Wan opened his mouth to respond, then closed it before curling in on himself a bit again, though it looked like he was thinking seriously more than retreating this time.

“I don’t need a soul healer.” He finally stated.

“Is that what the republic calls them?” Obi-Wan shrugged.

“It’s what the Jedi call them. I believe most citizens go to “therapists”, though ours also use the force to help heal,” Obi-Wan explained. He looked tired, Jango realized, far more tired than he should.

“Do you want to talk about it, though?” Obi-Wan snorted at that.

“Don’t worry. If I do snap, I won’t harm anyone unless they try to harm me,” Obi-Wan gave a sardonic smile that reeked of despair.

“And if I don’t want you to snap at all?” Jango put his hand on Obi-Wan’s shoulder, who flinched at the touch and looked at the hand then Jango, bewilderment clear on his face.

“I… I do not understand why you would care too much. If one more Jedi gets put down, that sounds like no skin off your back,” Obi-Wan was still trying to move away from Jango’s hand, so he removed it before answering.

“You’d make a good Mandalorian. And by our laws you are almost a full Mandalorian already; you at least fall under the number of beings that I am to take care of. Even if I wasn’t personally for you surviving with your mind intact, it would still be my duty to try to make sure you did,” Jango explained. Perhaps being more impersonal would give Obi-Wan enough space to settle himself down.

“I see.” Obi-Wan seemed calmer, and without whatever glacier of a mask he had on earlier, but he also seemed to not want to talk about whatever was confusing him. Jango didn’t like that.

“You’re allowed to like us you know. No one’s going to punish you for that, especially while you’re here,” Obi-Wan shifted uncomfortably at that, “Look, do you agree with your friends on everything? Absolutely everything?”

“Well no, that’s not really how any being works,” Obi-Wan admitted. Jango wouldn’t necessarily say his voice was meek. But it was meek compared to his usual voice.

“Well you don’t agree with everything we do, but we’re all sentient beings here, right? So you’re allowed to like us. Even if you don’t completely agree with us,” Jango stated, hoping that would be enough for Obi-Wan to get out of whatever the Jedi had left in his head that was making him so
resistant.

Obi-Wan just hummed and seemed to mentally draw in on himself. Either he was thinking things over or he was retreating deeply. Either way Jango’s best option was to leave and wait for Obi-Wan to settle into something on his own.

“Well, I’ll leave you to… meditate or sleep or whatever you were going to do.” Jango put a firm hand on his shoulder for a second before standing up and walking to the door.

“Jate ca, cuun kad’au. Ke’partayli, ogir cuyi yaim par gar olar.” Jango said before stepping out, leaving their force user to his own thoughts.

Chapter End Notes

So... That happened. And I procrastinated on my homework for this. Hope it was worth it.

Mando'a:
Jate ca, cuun kad’au. Ke'partayli, ogir cuyi taap par gar olar - good night, our lightsaber. Remember, there exists a home for you here
The one where he resolves

Chapter Notes

Previously:
“Jate ca, cuun kad’au. Partaylir, ogir cuiyir yaim par gar olar.” Jango said before stepping out, leaving their force user to his own thoughts.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It had been several days since his breakdown. He’d managed to settle back into a relatively stable pattern of interactions. His peers were the easiest, he hadn’t even been distraught enough with them for Wenuve to push on why he was acting weird. The children were still children, Obi-Wan quickly went back to almost how he had been with them, sometime more reserved, but generally they didn’t notice.

With Kanvined and Vojunn however…

They were still treating him with kid gloves. On the one hand, Obi-Wan felt insulted by it. On the other hand, he still had no idea how to interact with them anymore and the distance was what he needed. He had given a polite apology the day after, but all three knew his mind still hadn’t made itself up yet.

The coup…

Apparently hadn’t heard about it. Obi-Wan would have thought that Mujiita at least would have been informed, though. Perhaps the man had just decided that it wasn’t relevant and hadn’t told anyone else?

Obi-Wan had been a bit more reticent in the one meeting since then, but the others didn’t really notice with all the talking they did themselves. The more that they talked and Obi-Wan just listened though…

They were becoming harsher in their planning. Even Ches had made concessions to ideas that Obi-Wan balked at with little resistance. He had spoken up at those moments, trying to get them to see some sense. He Appealed to their morals, to logistics, logic, history, and even economics. It was not working well.

Obi-Wan knew that they all had an ideological tendency to try to hold others to their high standards. Obi-Wan didn’t want to call them elitists but that was the closest word he could come up with for them. He was getting more and more worried about the coup. That he would have to use the evidence he’d been collecting.

Force, he was collecting evidence against a pacifist coup.

But they weren’t too pacifist anymore. The one half had convinced the other that the death penalty would be needed for those trying to bring back the old Mandalore. Their definition of that was worryingly wide to Obi-Wan.

Obi-Wan’s boot buzzed. Obi-Wan looked at it for a moment before moving to put both boots on,
pressing the button on the bottom once to get it to stop vibrating and let Satine know he could come.

Obi-Wan’s diplomat mask, honed through years of experience with politicians, slipped on automatically when the door opened to reveal Satine and Obi-Wan moved immediately to take her arm, mentally slipping into the role of the Negotiator once more.

“Kenobi and Mebba are right, though. There’s no way we will be able to make people forget quickly enough to ensure that no one tries to make their own space where Mandalore is still barbaric,” Vissul stated. “The children of the higher ups alone would try to keep being violent in secret or attempt straight out rebellion.”

“That’s true, there are currently many young ones who are planning on joining the military soon. They will not be willing to change their ways. They are too set in the ways of their parents without having seen how bad violence truly is,” Ife growled out.

“We’ve known that those children in particular would be hard to deal with since the beginning. But they are still sentient beings with brains. They can be reasoned with, I’m sure,” Satine seemed a bit irritated with today’s discussion. Obi-Wan suspected that they had had similar discussions before when he wasn’t here.

“We’ve been over this. I thought we were going to give them the benefit of the doubt? Gar taldin ni jaonyc; gar sa buir, ori’wadaas’la,” Ches was almost pleading at this point.

“And I thought we agreed to avoid using Mando’a?!” Mujitta responded angrily, “and can we really afford that? Realistically there’s no way that all of those children, or even more than a handful, will be willing to see reason and become pacifists.”

“That’s true. These children, I’ve seen the sort testify in court, come to watch even, they will not let go of violence.” Famma intoned.

“But what do we do, then?” throw them all in jail? An integration program like Obi-Wan has been forced into?!’’ Satine gestured towards Obi-Wan animatedly.

“Is that why you brought him here tonight? To make a point?!” Bron was getting close to shouting.

“You know that’s not why. But Kryze brings up a good question. When these children do rebel, what do we do with them?” Ife crossed her arms. The room was silent for a moment.

“If they were adults doing this, we would give them capital punishment,” Famma stated with a frown, “But since these are children, they should be handled differently, should they not?”

“Some of these children are almost adults, though. Does two weeks in time really make that big of difference in the crime?” Tek asked. The conspirators were quiet for a moment. Obi-Wan continued sitting still in his seat, trying to not let his eyes bug out like they had wanted to for the past minute.

“Well when you put it that way, it doesn’t really. I think that these current children, at least of those whose parents are active or high ranking in the military, are too Mandalorian in the wrong way. They will not grow into anything besides barbarians.” Mujitta said with disdain.

“I’m afraid I must agree. These children are not going to change. They are, effectively in mind, barbaric Mandalorian adults,” Famma sighed out.

“If that’s the case, then they must be treated and tried as such,” Vissul concluded. Satine chewed her
There’s not really any fault in your logic, I suppose they aren’t really children in this case…” she looked vaguely uncomfortable but did not disagree. Obi-Wan glanced to the side at her in disbelief. Then he looked around the table. All the others were nodding except for Ches, who had hung xir head.

“All for treating the children of high ranking military personnel as adults as they will not change their ways in adulthood?” Mujiita asked.

“Aye,” Obi-Wan still did not have a vote. Ches said nothing.

“All opposed?” Ches opened xir mouth for a moment before closing it. Obi-Wan felt like his brain was shutting down.

After Satine left, Obi-Wan sat on his bed for a while, dumbfounded.

Children. The coup was planning on killing children. Because their parents were part of a system thousands of years old.

Obi-Wan glanced at the data pad and stick on his lap. They had the records from today’s meeting. He slowly, in a trance-like manner, plugged in the stick and went to the audio recording of the meeting.

“All for treating the children of high ranking military personnel as adults as they will not change their ways in adulthood?”

“Aye,”

“All opposed?”

Silence.

Obi-Wan had listened to the recording three times now, his heart hardening each time. Each time he listened, he couldn’t help but picture Kurri and some of his other students. How they had started out scared and defenseless like wounded animals when he started teaching them. How that had changed.

Trox had held the stylus steady under a pad for three minutes two days ago. His smile had been the widest Obi-Wan had ever seen on his face. He had then gone on to automatically help two of the new students, who were having as much trouble as he had at the beginning, with the game.

That scene didn’t deserve to die. Those children didn’t deserve to die. There was no way that the children of other Mandalorians were so different that they deserved to die.

Obi-Wan felt himself find his resolve. The coup might have begun with good intentions in theory, but they were planning a cruel imposition of will on an entire culture of people.

He would tell and give the information to Jango Fett the next time the man came in, his own punishment be damned. He couldn’t let these children die.
Obi-Wan has picked his poison, though it won’t end up being what he thinks it is.

Mando’a:
Gar taldin ni jaonyc; gar sa buir, ori’wadaas’la – lit: Bloodline is not important but you as a father are the most valuable thing | saying that means being a good parent is important and that people are judged by more than their lineages, more of what they do and contribute as themselves
The one where he seals their fates

Chapter Notes

All right, at this point I'm just second guessing myself on everything so here.

Previously:
*He would tell and give the information to Jango Fett the next time the man came in, his own punishment be damned. He couldn’t let these children die.*

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Jango knocked once before automatically opening the door to Obi-Wan’s room. The force user was sitting on his bed, looking tense and a bit startled at his entrance. And nervous. Jango’s guard automatically went up a little.

“There a problem?” The man in front of him swallowed audibly before hanging his head and taking in a few deep breaths.

“Yes,” The word was a broken croak. Jango moved to the bed and sat down in his usual spot, though not lounging like he’d taken to doing the last few times.

“What happened?” Was Obi-Wan’s mind breaking down again?

“I…” The force user clenched the fabric on top of his knees. Jango noted he was still in his day clothes, very unusual given the time of night. Jango had actually half expected the man to be asleep again when he came.

“Can you promise me something?” Obi-Wan’s voice was quavering, but stronger now.

“That… would depend on what it is,” Jango answered truthfully. Obi-Wan gave a dark chuckle in response to Jango’s answer.

“Gar taldin ni jaonyc; gar sa buir, ori’wadaas’la,” Obi-Wan’s voice was hard. Jango was mildly impressed with Obi-Wan’s use of that phrase. It was more advanced than he should have gotten to for class.

“I can promise to follow one of my own culture’s adages, yes.” Jango thought that was what Obi-Wan was getting at, though why the man wanted Jango to promise that was still a mystery.

“Even if it might be referring to children who have been raised to think like their parents?” Obi-Wan’s voice sounded like steel put under too much stress. Jango couldn’t help but look at him a bit incredulously.

“Especially if they’re children. What the hell is going on?” Now Jango was even more concerned. Had something happened in one of Obi-Wan’s classes that he hadn’t been informed of? Obi-Wan’s shoulders seemed to slump in relief at Jango’s answer though, like most of the tension had suddenly left his body.

“Could you stand up for a moment? I need to get something from under the mattress,” Obi-Wan said softly. Jango did as requested.
Obi-Wan stood as well and lifted the mattress. Jango felt his eyebrows raise in surprise at the small collection of data pads and data sticks underneath. Obi-Wan was not supposed to have those.

Obi-Wan gathered them all in his arms before replacing the mattress. He sat back down on the bed and Jango followed suit.

“I… There’s…” Obi-Wan started saying something before sighing, seeming to give up. He picked two data pads and put a data stick in each. Turning them on, entering passwords, then passing them to Jango, “Here.”

Jango took the pads and glanced curiously at Obi-Wan out of the corner of his eye before turning his attention to the pads in front of him. The first one appeared to be just a timeline of sorts. The first point was dated and simply said “first contact with Satine Kryze and Muijita Orrad. See pre-audio transcript 01, journal entry 01: subsection 02” Jango figured it had to refer to the first banquet Obi-Wan had attended.

The most recent point on the timeline was dated for the day after Obi-Wan’s breakdown. It simply told him to refer to different records. Looking at the other pad, Jango saw that the stick inserted had the journal entries referenced in the timeline. He scrolled to down to the most recent entry, casting a sideways glance at Obi-Wan.

The man was holding his head in his hands and was slightly bent over. Jango could see him taking deep breaths.

Jango began reading the journal entry, tensing as he went along. Five lines in, he stopped and exited out of the journal entry, finding the first one and opening that to read.

A coup. There was a coup being planned by some of the highest administrators on Mandalore and Obi-Wan had been recruited for it.

“Why are you informing me now?” Jango made sure to keep his voice neutral. Obi-Wan jerked up and stared at him wide eyed before glancing down, his face pinching slightly.

“I… wasn’t able to write an entry for tonight yet. It- that is to say, at tonight’s meeting, they decided that the children of the higher ups in the military at least would be tried like their parents. I’ve seen those types of trials before. No one is declared innocent. They were going to kill children for being raised in a culture they didn’t like. I could not go along with them anymore!” Obi-Wan raised his eyes to meet Jango’s at the end of his explanation. They had an intensity that Jango hadn’t seen before. His tone was hard, controlled fury behind every word. If it had been directed at him, Jango knew he would have actually been scared.

“I see,” Jango began processing Obi-Wan’s words and turned back to the journal entries, skimming them to give himself more time to think.

First of all, this coup apparently could have been serious trouble. The conspirators were such that they could have actually run a new government if they had managed to take down the current system. Their strategies to take down the current Mandalorian empire were relatively effective. They might have actually worked. As Jango kept reading, he noticed that most of those strategies, though modified, had been originally suggested by the man besides him.

That wasn’t too surprising given Obi-Wan’s experience and skill in military matters and the lack of for the others involved. In fact, if it wasn’t for Obi-Wan, the coup probably wouldn’t have had a
chance for at least a few more years, if ever, at succeeding.

Still, the coup had already gotten too far in preparations and planning and needed to be taken care of as soon as possible.

Jango glanced over at Obi-Wan again. The man was staring at him, face relatively neutral, though with a tense jaw and stiff posture. Obi-Wan was waiting for a response. Jango still needed time to think through the situation though, so he turned back to the journal entries and kept reading.

Obi-Wan had obviously been invested in the coup at the beginning. His head had been full of Jedi teachings that made him automatically side with anyone claiming to want peace, Jango supposed. But Obi-Wan had still been driven to betray them.

It appeared that Obi-Wan was more integrated than anyone had realized, even the man himself. The collected evidence was more proof of that. Obi-Wan had not been drawn in by the coup’s ideology for a long time if his timeline was anything to go by.

Also, if Jango played this right, Obi-Wan’s integration could be furthered exponentially, and far smoother than the last time they had tried to integrate a force user. Jango thought about what he had told Akkus, about wanting Obi-Wan fully integrated as soon as possible. For that to happen, for Obi-Wan to be the best Mandalorian he could be, Jango would need to play this exactly right. Whatever that meant.

“You won’t harm them, right? Any of the conspirator’s children?” Obi-Wan suddenly asked, his worry and stress clear in his voice. Jango stared at him for a moment.

“No. Not the ones who are still kids, at least. Grown-up children and any others who have been under their care will be questioned. If they renounce their former guardians’ actions they’ll be left alone,” Jango replied evenly, “Have to at least do that.”

“You’d be a fool to do otherwise, yes.” Obi-Wan dropped his stare and glanced down.

Way more than a pretty face. The thought occurred suddenly to Jango. He hadn’t thought of Obi-Wan as a pretty face for a while. Not that he wasn’t pretty. A handsome man.

He could also be quite cute. Jango remembered Obi-Wan’s face when he had eaten that muja pastry. The force user’s mind was also enjoyable company. Jango looked forward to the days he had an excuse to visit Obi-Wan.

Oh.

He liked him. He liked Obi-Wan.

Obi-Wan wasn’t a bad person to like; a strong warrior, good with kids and, as was especially apparent now, protective of them, pleasant to be around, Jango had felt calmed around the force user when he wasn’t having fun with Obi-Wan’s wit.

No, Obi-Wan wasn’t a bad person to like at all, perhaps even the sort of person Jango would take as a mate.

But he was Mand’alor, his mate needed to be a bit more than most.

But hadn’t Obi-Wan proved himself of that? He was smart, good at combat, a trained diplomat who could handle the political tasks that would be given to him, he was very compassionate, perhaps enough to try to help all the citizens, would it be so different from being a Jedi trying to protect the
whole republic?

Yes, Obi-Wan could definitely make a good mate for him.

The more he thought about it, the more appealing the idea became. Obi-Wan would make a fantastic mate for him.

Jango was fairly certain he wanted the man like that now. Still, he’d need to make sure. This also added another level of difficulty to the situation.

Obi-Wan needed to be handled carefully to continue integrating, hopefully now as a candidate for Jango’s mate. The coup needed to be dealt with as soon as possible, though. Both were too important to split attention on. How was he supposed to do this?

Jango glanced down at his belt. One of the pouches had the fast-acting sedatives. Jango handed the pads back to Obi-Wan, who looked up at him questioningly as Jango reached into his belt for a piece of flimsi and a pen. Jango handed those to Obi-Wan as well before standing up and walking to the night stand.

“Write the passwords for the pads on that.” Jango ordered calmly, grabbing the cup on the nightstand before walking to the fresher. He filled up the cup at the sink and put in the sedative, swirling the water for a few moments to let the pill dissolve a bit.

He walked back into the room to see Obi-Wan had finished writing on the flimsi and had put the pads and sticks in neat piles on the night stand.

“Here, take this. It’s the same sedative from when we first found you,” Jango said as he walked over. Obi-Wan looked up, surprised, as Jango held out the glass. “There is going to have to be a punishment for conspiring, you realize?”

“Well, yes, of course. But I assumed it would be death, sedating me isn’t necessary for that- ah, testimony. After whatever trial you give the others, then,” Obi-Wan replied as he took the glass and started swirling it to make the sedative dissolve more. Obi-Wan’s words made Jango a bit uncomfortable, especially the nonchalant manner he had said them in.

“I don’t plan on killing you,”


“You’re not a full Mandalorian yet, and you’re the one who’s informing us of the coup. You seem to have done most of the evidence collection for us already. So no, no death penalty for stopping an anti-Mandalorian movement that you dragged yourself out of. I’m not an idiot,” Jango said.

“I see…” Obi-Wan looked at him for a moment, obviously still a bit confused, before turning back to the glass in his hand and swallowing it in two gulps. Jango took the glass then watched Obi-Wan start to close his eyes after about thirty seconds, before gently catching him when he fell forward a few moments later.

Jango maneuvered the man to a normal sleeping position on the bed and watched him for a moment. Obi-Wan had expected to die for being a part of the coup, but had still told him. For the children. Exploiting Obi-Wan’s compassion seemed to be the best way to get Obi-Wan to integrate further. Jango would have to make sure he kept using that. Right now he had a coup to dismantle.

Jango tucked the pads under his arms and scooped up the pile of data sticks. He turned on his com unit as he left the room and started speed walking down the hall. Contacting Akkus, Jango wasted no
time in getting to the point once the other being answered, not even bothering with any greetings.

“Wral, get my high war council to my quarters. Now. We have some traitors to deal with,” cutting off the transmission before the other could even reply, Jango picked up speed to get back to his room even faster to set things up.

Chapter End Notes

Any questions or desires to scream in the comments, please.

Mando'a:
Gar taldin ni jaonyc; gar sa buir, ori’wadaas’la – lit: Bloodline is not important but you as a father are the most valuable thing | see last chapter for more explanation
Previously:
“Wral, get my high war council to my quarters. Now. We have some traitors to deal with,” cutting off the transmission before the other could even reply, Jango picked up speed to get back to his room even faster to set things up.

When Obi-Wan regained consciousness, his brain took a moment to fully wake up. When he remembered what he had done, Obi-Wan automatically felt out with the force, trying to figure out how much trouble he was in.

There was only one other life-force nearby, too dim to belong to another force-user. Obi-Wan’s body itself seemed to be fine, all limbs and innards in the same places they had been when he’d taken the sedative. He was currently laying on something with a little less support than his old bed and narrower as well. An actual jail cell’s bed, perhaps?

Obi-Wan let his head fall to the side and slowly opened his eyes. Taking in the room he was in bit by bit. Once what he was seeing registered, he bolted upright and blinked a few times to make sure he was actually seeing correctly.

He was on a cot. In a very spacious room. He was also quarantined in a corner by a ray shield. His corner had the cot, a bookshelf that had a few actual paper books as well as data pads, a low table, and a comfy looking rug underneath.

The room beyond had a large bed with a nightstand on each side, two doors on the far wall, two dressers, a door on the wall across the bed, a desk next to Obi-Wan’s corner, and a few file cabinets. There were also multiple weapons mounted on each wall.

Suddenly one of the doors on the far wall opened. It appeared that Jango Fett was the being Obi-Wan had sensed. He stepped into the room from what looked to be a fresher; given that the man appeared wet and had a towel wrapped around his hips, Obi-Wan supposed it was a good guess. As he stepped in, Fett seemed to notice that Obi-Wan was awake. He gave a smile that seemed kind, but Obi-Wan couldn’t help but be reminded of a predator when looking at it.

“Ah, jate. You’re up. Just give me a moment,” Fett said as he walked to the other door on the wall. It opened to show a small walk-in closet. He emerged a minute later fully dressed, then crossed the room to a panel besides the shields and put his hand on it. Fett’s hand was scanned and the shields went down. He sat at the table and gestured for Obi-Wan to join him.

Obi-Wan did, still nervous. What was going on? He seemed to be in the other’s personal quarters. But that didn’t really make sense, strategically. Why would he be placed in the Mand’alor’s quarters?

“Your punishment is as follows: you’ll be removed from normal classes for the time being and will be provided with digital coursework to substitute those lessons. This is for the sake of keeping more scrutiny on you and ensuring that your integration is not interfered with again. You will still be teaching your force classes. You will still be escorted to and from these classes” he stated bluntly.
Obi-Wan straightened himself up in surprise. This punishment seemed far too light.

“Also,” ah, there it was, “if you haven’t figured it out, you will be staying in my quarters. This will be majority of you increased scrutiny. Furthermore, when I address you as “Kenobi” you must call me “‘Alor” and when I address you as “Obi-Wan” you must call me “Jango”. Do you understand your punishment?” Fett finished. Obi-Wan stared for a moment before replying.

“Yes, I believe I do.” His voice was more hesitant than he would have liked, but Obi-Wan’s mind was still whirring in confusion. This was nowhere near any punishment he had imagined.

“Do you accept this punishment, Kenobi?” Jango Fett’s voice was softer for this question. Obi-Wan swallowed before answering. It wasn’t as if he had a choice.

“Yes… ‘Alor,” Fett smiled at that.

“Good. Unfortunately, when I’m gone you’ll have to remain behind the shields. I do have to leave for a meeting. I should be back with dinner in no more than three hours,” he explained as he got up and walked over to the desk. He returned with a canteen and a few ration bars.

“Water and snacks in case you’re hungry before that. Feel free to read anything on the bookshelf,” he offered.

Obi-Wan just nodded back mutely, taking the water and bars from Jango, no, Fett, and watched the man walk back over to the panel and pushing a button that reactivated the shields. He then grabbed a belt from the table and put it on, as well as a few holsters containing a few small daggers and two blasters, before finally putting on his vambraces and going to the door.

“Ret’, Obi-Wan,” Jango Fett gave a small wave as he stepped over the threshold.

“Ret’, Jango…” Obi-Wan wasn’t sure if the man heard his response before the door closed.

What was going on?

Jango Fett might have told him that he didn’t want to kill Obi-Wan, but this punishment was still too light. Was he missing something? Obi-Wan needed to think this through thoroughly.

Last night… If that had indeed only been last night… When he had told him, Jango had said that he wasn’t a full Mandalorian.

Perhaps that meant he was legally treated as someone with a compromised mind? And therefore, was not beholden to the same consequences if he had been in what Mandalorians would consider a right state of mind?

That would make sense. He was an adult whose mindset was not quite right according to Mandalorian culture. In some ways, the integration program was like intense behavioral therapy. Not one that he went into willingly, but still.

Jango Fett had also said that his isolation from others was to make sure no one “interfered” with his integration “again”. Yes, if they were viewing Obi-Wan as someone with a compromised mind, then he could have been absolved from any guilt. That explained the lack of any punishment that Obi-Wan might have expected.

What he had instead though…

The isolation made sense, once again, the other had said that this was for the sake of “ensuring that
your integration is not interfered with again”, and having Obi-Wan kept in a room with a Mandalorian would probably further his integration even more. The forced title-calling was probably there for the same reason. He would have to be extra careful about that.

Force, he hadn’t been careful recently, Obi-Wan realized suddenly. The “’Alor” and “Jango” had come out far too easily earlier. And when was the last time he had worked on a plan for escaping?

No, he hadn’t planned escape when he was part of the coup because if they had succeeded then he would have been able to leave when he wanted. He would have to start doing that again. It would be harder now, certainly.

But what about Wenuve? He was going to suddenly be gone and leave her without his support. Obi-Wan should have worked harder to get her out, now she might be really stuck.

Could he request Jango to let her know he was alive? Not “removed”?

It wasn’t worth the risk. Knowing his circumstances wouldn’t help her escape anyways.

Obi-Wan’s mind stewed itself around in guilt for a few more minutes before Obi-Wan drew himself out of it. There was no point in letting himself get mired in such thoughts. He might as well meditate and try to release his emotions if he couldn’t actually make something of the thoughts.

Obi-Wan got back onto the cot and settled himself into a meditation pose.

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“Any further comments or questions?” no one responded for a moment.

“’Alor!” Threl Dag suddenly exploded, quietly. Quietly for him, at least.

“Yes?” Jango arched a brow at him.

“Are you sure that the Jedi - er, former Jedi, sorry, should be in your rooms? Or like, why the light punishment?” Threl seemed genuinely bewildered, and the others around the table nodded in agreement, obviously cautious of the situation as well.

“I’m sure. You doubting me, Dag?” Jango replied.

“No! I just- why?! I don’t- what is it about this initiate that you’re giving him such light treatment, and such heavy investment?”

“Investment. That’s a big word for you to use if you’re not talking about ships.” Effao teased from her seat across from Threl.

“Oi! You wanna go, Effao! I’ll beat your ass two ways to next week!” Threl shot back, easily riled up by her. Effao just grinned back and starting rising out of her seat like Threl had done.

“I get that you two basically adopted each other as siblings, specifically the sort who like to roughhouse, but could you please save it for after the meeting?” Akkus groaned from Jango’s right.

“Sorry!” came the simultaneous response, Threl looking chastised, Effao looking not sorry at all with the grin still plastered on her face.
“To answer your question, Kenobi is invaluable to us. He’s already written a guide and started teaching classes that are preventing the force from taking any more kids from us. Some guardians are already reporting that following the guide’s instructions have led to fewer and less severe instances of the force almost taking the kids.” Jango paused to look around and see the others listening closely.

“Furthermore, he started in the coup as a very new initiate, one that had been raised his whole life as the Jedi’s, and the republic’s, dog. Of course he joined them at that point in time. He’s also the sort that’s going to punish himself, we wouldn’t need to really do anything but let him stew if we were trying to actually punish him,” Jango brought up a document on the console that was their table.

“Also, more on why I’m so invested, he karking good. These are the strategies and changes he made to the coup. You’ll notice they were the most competent ones. He was the republic’s “Negotiator”, one of their youngest generals ever, and I’m fairly certain every one of us in this room had a run in with him where he stole victory out from under you,” Some growled and some chuckled at that, but everyone obviously did have some mission they remembered, “He’s worth a whole lot. I’m not going to waste his potential as a Mandalorian. And I’m not going to risk him being corrupted again.

No one had any. “Good. The execution’s in two weeks, at least two of you should be there. Tell me once you know if you’re coming. Adjourned.”

“Yes, ‘Alor.” The council replied before each gathering their things and filing out.

“Something you need?” Jango asked, glancing sideways at Akkus.

“I’m just curious and hoping you’ll explain something.” They were the only two left in the meeting room. Jango raised an eyebrow, a habit he seemed to have picked up from Kenobi.

“The “punishment”, as you told him it was, why those specifics? Pardon, I’m just curious about the reason and purpose behind the methods,” Akkus queried.

“It’s fine, you know you’re supposed to ask questions. I explained earlier why I want him integrated. Having seen him so close to being dragged away from integrating, I decided to take some more drastic measures. If his only contact is with full Mandalorians, not even those integrating at the same time, he’ll integrate faster. Having him call me by my title is also going to help him integrate faster by getting his brain to associate me with it.” Jango explained while he began to gather his things.

“And having him call you by your actual name?” Akkus really was observant.

“I am… considering him for a special position in the empire. That’s part of why I want him with me, so that I can really figure out if he’s suited for it. I’m having him call me by my name because for that position, we would need to be on at least friendly terms, and hopefully trust each other. Calling me by my actual name half the time should also make it easier for that relationship to develop.” Jango didn’t want to tell anyone about Obi-Wan’s candidacy as his mate yet, that might screw the whole thing up if it came out too soon.

“More brain association, then.”

“Yes. He’s the thinking sort, figured out the integration program’s strategies. We just need to wear him down, making his brain already have associated pathways in place will make things smoother and sturdier.” They both had finished gathering their things and walked to the door.

“I trust you to do so ‘Alor, but make sure you don’t push too much. I do agree with you that Mr.
Kenobi would make a fine addition to the empire,” Akkus gave the proper bow before turning down the hallway, leaving Jango alone.

Jango stared after zem for a moment before going the other way to get dinner.

Jango opened the door and walked in to find Obi-Wan meditating again on the cot. And floating things in the room. The force null panel for the ray shields was definitely a good idea. Jango deactivated the shields and put the food down on the table. How was he going to wake Obi-Wan out of this?

“Kenobi.” No reaction. Jango moved closer.


“Obi-Wan Kenobi!” Jango spoke loudly and grabbed Obi-Wan’s shoulder.

A data pad hit the back of his head.

Jango growled as he turned around and registered that most of room had jerked in response to what he’d done. A few of his weapons had almost become unfastened from their mounts as well. That could be a problem.

Jango turned back to Obi-Wan, annoyed. The force-user’s face was twitching again, like when Jango had last pulled him out of a meditation. Jango grabbed the pad that had hit him and walked back to the far side of the table, sitting down to wait for Obi-Wan to come back again. Thankfully none of dinner had gone flying, just the utensils, which Jango righted.

Two minutes later, Obi-Wan took a deep breath and his eyes fluttered open, looking a bit bewildered. His gaze settled on Jango at the table.

“Has it been three hours already?”

“Little less. Was hitting me in the back of the head really necessary, though?” Jango held up the data pad.

“Wha- Oh dear. Um, I’m terribly sorry. I forgot that could happen.” Obi-Wan absently rubbed his neck.

“Aren’t you supposed to be the one actually in control of the force?” Jango gestured at the table and Obi-Wan once again moved to it without complaint.

“The meditation I was in is usually done in the gardens at the temple, or the Room of a Thousand Fountains. It’s harder to move things in a room full of the living force by accident than it is here.” Obi-Wan’s face seemed to slip into another mask as he explained.

“Will you be able to begin teaching again tomorrow?” Jango asked as they began eating. Obi-Wan ate his bite before answering.

“I believe so. Was today the only day missed?”

“Yes. We told the kids that you were temporarily indisposed and would be coming back in a day or two.”

“Hmm… it is a good thing that you didn’t use a strong sedative, then.” Obi-Wan’s voice and face
were still annoyingly neutral.

“That sedative can take out a Wookiee no problem. You just seem to be particularly immune. Even more than the few other force-user’s I’ve seen given it.”

“Well, I am a diplomat. Negotiation dinners can get quite… interesting. You really refine some skills after doing a number of them.” Obi-Wan replied diplomatically.

“Didn’t think it was a diplomat’s job to be a poison tester.” Jango snorted.

“Well it is war. I’ve been poisoned many times. I’ve learned to filter it quite well.” Obi-Wan’s voice had a bit of an edge to it now. At least Jango was getting a reaction.

“Not by Mandalorians, I can tell you that much.”

“No, not by Mandalorians. Your people prefer to shoot me.” Jango supposed that he should have expected some kind of regression on Obi-Wan’s part. Still, Obi-Wan had to be corrected on that sentiment.

“They’re your people too, now. You’re one of us. Don’t forget that.” Jango growled out.

“I have not forgotten that you are trying to force me to assimilate into your empire, don’t worry.” Obi-Wan managed to smirk sardonically in a manner that was very condescending, disgusted, even, with a glare as well. Jango glared back.

“You seem to have forgotten the multiple times I’ve explained that you’ll realize you’re Mandalorian eventually, though. Whatever part of you still thinks you belong to the republic will not last. Understand, Kenobi?” Obi-Wan looked to the side, refusing to meet Jango’s gaze or answer.

“Do you understand what I’m saying, Kenobi?” Jango’s tone was harsh and commanding.

“… Yes… ‘Alor.” Obi-Wan sounded a bit defeated when he finally ground the words out, but Jango would take it for now. He started to eat again and, a few moments later, so did Obi-Wan.

They finished the meal in silence.

“Your clothes are in the top two drawers of that dresser,” Jango pointed over his shoulder to the corner, “You should shower. Use water or sonic.” He started gathering their trays as Obi-Wan nodded and crossed the room.

“Um… There’s more than… Are they…” Jango heard a moment later. So Obi-Wan had noticed.

“Right. Laundry’s only going to be done once a week. Found some extra clothes. Tried to find ones that you’d like. But we don’t really have Jedi-styled clothes.” Jango probably could have found more if he’d really tried. Or gotten some clothes tailored. But he wanted Obi-Wan to stop seeing himself as a Jedi. The clothing choices made by the other weren’t helping. This way Obi-Wan would either get to dress similar to a Jedi for three days then see himself in Mandalorian clothing for two, or he’d be dressing only half as a Jedi each day.

“Ah, understood. Thank you.” Obi-Wan’s voice was still a bit reserved, though Jango suspected that was just how Obi-Wan would be for a while. Jango walked to the door as he heard Obi-Wan go into the fresher.

When Jango came back from putting the trays in the delivery slot down the hall, he could hear Obi-Wan using the water shower. Jango sat down at his desk. As always, there was quite a bit of
paperwork to do when you ran an empire.

Chapter End Notes

Fun fact; weeks in Star Wars are 5 days. I’ve actually been applying this the whole time. Sorry if that confused anyone.

Mando’a:
Jate – good
‘alor – leader/commander | shorter than Mand’alor, can be used for various types of leaders (usually military, b/c Mandalorians), kind of casual
Ret’ – bye | short version of ret’urcye mhi
Previously:
When Jango came back from putting the trays in the delivery slot down the hall, he could hear Obi-Wan using the water shower. Jango sat down at his desk. As always, there was quite a bit of paperwork to do when you ran an empire.

They didn’t talk much the following days. Jango tried, but Obi-Wan would only respond the bare minimum to anything he said. Apparently, Obi-Wan was his usual self with his students, though. It was nice to know that Obi-Wan wasn’t jeopardizing their education. Though Jango had to admit he was a little envious of them. He did miss the other’s conversation.

Maybe he had messed up a bit…

No. Obi-Wan couldn’t be allowed to think of himself as anything but Mandalorian anymore. It was a shame that the fight had happened, but given their personalities and roles it had been inevitable. Jango would just have to wait this out.

Jango stepped back into their quarters with lunch. He didn’t always get to take lunch with Obi-Wan but he was going to take advantage of the break in meetings today.

Obi-Wan was reclining on his cot when Jango came in, reading another holobook. Jango was fairly certain the man had already gone through an entire shelf. Perhaps that was something he could use to get Obi-Wan to open up again?

Obi-Wan had sat up as soon he had noticed Jango stepping into the room, and was re-shelving the book. If Jango was remembering correctly…

“The Tales of the Kyber Blaster?” So Jango read silly fantasy tech books once in a while, sue him, it was better than resource reports.

“It was the next one on the shelf. It has a very enjoyable writing style,” Obi-Wan replied blandly while Jango deactivated the shields. More words than Jango had been getting these past few days.

“I was quite surprised by that too, when I first read it. Which tale are you on right now?” Jango smiled kindly while he put down the large tray at the end of the table before grabbing their separate servings and putting them at the usual spots.

“The Twin Suns,” Obi-Wan answered as he moved to sit down at his spot across from Jango.

“Oh, that is a good one,” Jango chuckled, “who do you think’s more deserving of the blaster, Selena or Solda?” Maybe that would get Obi-Wan’s tongue flowing, folks tended to have strong opinions on that.

“I think the joint custody is the best option, honestly, but I doubt that will last.” Obi-Wan began eating, apparently already done talking.
“That’s actually not an opinion I’ve heard before,” Jango said. It was true. Obi-Wan was silent for a moment before looking up at Jango and putting down his next bite, sighing.

“Selena is the more risky choice. She would be far more likely to abuse the blaster’s power or be callous with its side-affects. Solda is still too naïve, however, and may not be able to use enough of the blaster’s abilities to complete the quest.” Obi-Wan was stroking his beard again, meaning he was finally considering this a conversation worth thinking about. “What about you? Selena?”

“’Lek. As you said, Solda is too naïve, and overwhelmed. He’d just keep fumbling and his incompetency would cause far more harm than his good intentions can make up for.”

“You speak like he has no redeemable qualities and can’t handle a blaster. His father’s repair shop, which he was basically running at the beginning, was on the edge of a forest. He may not be used to shooting at sentients as Selena, but he’s certainly shot more moving targets,” Obi-Wan huffed lightly.

“The blaster largely responds to willpower, though. Selena definitely has the will to make sure the quest is finished completely and correctly. She’s mandokarla.”

“And Solda’s deepest desire right now is to make sure no one else ends up like his dad. Selena’s corruptible.”

“True. But Solda’s problem is actually picking up the damn blaster… I guess you’re right, Selena’s needed to make sure they keep moving on fast enough and Solda makes sure they stay on the right path.”

“That’s—” Obi-Wan began before cutting himself off and blinking owlishly for a moment, “yes. Exactly,” Jango raised an eyebrow at that.

“What? You made a good point.” Obi-Wan opened and closed his mouth a few times while Jango went back to eating before responding.

“I… I would hope so. Apologies, I suppose I got too used to arguing with politicians. They need to have their arms twisted before they even think about whether another view has merit,” Obi-Wan glanced down at his food, seeming a bit lost, before slowly beginning to eat again.

“That’s unfortunate. I’ve always preferred to keep company with those that can see sense.” Jango said wryly.

Obi-Wan reflexively snorted and moved to cover his mouth in response. His face turning a little red. This was nice. And progress.

“That being said, you are going through my bookshelf at pretty quick pace. I’ll have to restock it soon. Any genre you prefer?” Jango moved from leaning over his food to sitting up straight so he could watch Obi-Wan’s reaction better.

The man in question gave a small flinch and stiffened, miniscule enough that Jango almost missed it. He chewed his bottom lip for a moment, apparently warring with himself about telling Jango something this simple.

“You’re the one who’s going to be reading them, you know?” Jango snorted.

“And it’s your bookshelf,” was the automatic response. It’s likely yours as well, Jango couldn’t help but think.

“Don’t worry. I’ll grab some stuff for me as well. But once again, you’re probably going to be
reading it more than me. And unless it’s economic reports or something awful like that, I’ll be likely to pick it up too,” Jango shrugged.

“… I’m also fine with most genres… I am particularly fond of micro-histories, though,” Obi-Wan finally admitted. Jango was a bit surprised at that, though at the same time it suited the man perfectly.

“Micro-histories, huh. I’ll see what the library has, then,” Jango went back to his food. Today’s conversation had been a huge success; a lot of ground had been gained back or at least set to be gained back. Maybe Jango should read some of the Micro-histories to keep the conversations up. He’d have to find-

“There’s a library?”

That sounded lively compared to anything else Obi-Wan had said recently. Jango snapped his head up to see Obi-Wan’s eyes filled with a combination of trepidation and excitement.

“Of course there’s a library here, what did you expect?” Jango teased.

“Well obviously there would be some kind of archive. But that does not necessarily mean that there’s a pleasure library,” Obi-Wan replied, rolling his eyes.

“A lot of folks spend most of their day here, they all need to do something. A library’s only logical to have,” Jango chuckled, “And I doubt the kids want to read about engineering projects or tax records between classes,”

Obi-Wan gave a small laugh at that, very breathy but more genuine and emotional than anything else he’d done in the past few days. Jango couldn’t help but stare.

Osik. He really did like him. He had missed this since Obi-Wan had been moved to the room.

His com unit beeped on his belt. Jango groaned at it. Obi-Wan raised his eyebrows in his typical fashion at Jango’s response.

Jango reached down to the unit.

“Fett.”


“All right. I’ll be there in a few minutes.” Damn. He had finally been managing a conversation too.

A little over a week later Jango finally found the time to browse through the library to restock. Obi-Wan was officially over half-way through the bookshelf. His pace was slowing down though. Jango had checked the security footage to see that Kenobi had begun working out when he was alone. That had led to Jango providing a bit more food, with more protein, for the other. Obi-Wan had noticed, but hadn’t done more than look at Jango with suspicion for it.

Honestly, the man had mental barriers far stronger than Jango had anticipated. They had probably been useful in the past, when Obi-Wan had been captured by enemies, but now they needed to come down for Obi-Wan to see that he was being taken care of instead of anything worth such suspicion.

Maybe Jango could select some books to help with that? Micro-histories…
The terminal had directed him to the right section, and Jango concentrated on the titles in front of him with renewed focus.

*Salt: a Galactic History, From Loved to Hated and back again; Sand’s Ever-changing Value, The Art from destruction, A Brief Overview of Mandalorian Cohabitation…*

Oh. That one could work. Jango pulled it out and brought up the synopsis.

*Throughout Mandalorian history, the family, particularly child-raising, has played a key role in our culture’s formation. This book offers an overview of how different cultural practices have found their way into modern Mandalorian cohabitation, analyzing the aspects of day to day common setups of cohabitation between familial, platonic, and romantic relationships.*

Yes, that could definitely work. If he could find more books with content like this…

He’d have to be discreet, though. Put in a mix of books to help Obi-Wan integrate how Jango wanted and just for pleasure reading. Though perhaps the latter could all be fiction?

Best to put in one pleasure micro-history for safety though, a lot of Jango’s plans relied on not letting Obi-Wan catch wind of any manipulations. That would just make Obi-Wan retreat back into his closed-off, Jedi-dog, Republic-bound persona. Jango grabbed the salt book along with the cohabitation one, putting them in the now no longer empty cart that he had used to return the first load of books, then renewed his search with more motivation and direction than he had anticipated.

The next day, as Jango found himself entering their room for dinner again, it occurred to him that they had settled into a routine already. Obi-Wan no longer even bothered to look up for dinner, just standing and putting his book away before sitting down at his spot. Jango deactivated the shields and set the tray down. Obi-Wan started serving them while Jango put away whatever extras he had come back to the room with, leaving only one or two weapons directly on him. Jango would ask Obi-Wan about his book and his coursework while they ate. Sometimes he would also get updates on Obi-Wan’s classes, and Jango would often share stories of the children or their families outside of class.

It was a very domestic scene, Jango supposed.

“You seem particularly tired today. Did something happen?” The question brought Jango fully back to the present, and he looked up to find that Obi-Wan was looking uncertain and trepid. But his concern seemed genuine. That was good, this wouldn’t really work if Obi-Wan refused to care about him.

“Just a bit of a long day. As you’ve said before, politicians often need their arms twisted before considering other points of view. Had a lot more of that today than I would have liked. You know that feeling?” It was a bit risky to have Obi-Wan think of his past life, but it could help ease him further into integrating by a fair amount.

“Yes.” Obi-Wan said it with a cold tone, barely letting any emotions leak through. Osik. There was the Republic dog coming back.

“Any recommendations? What did you like to do after dealing with idiotic politicians?”

“Well… Meditation. Volunteering for crèche duty. Sparring on a particularly frustrating day. Read.”

“So, what you do now. Minus the awful politicians.” Obi-Wan chewed his lip at that, obviously trying to come up with a response. “I’m not wrong, am I, Obi-Wan?” Jango smirked at him.
“Well, no... Jango,” Obi-Wan stroked his beard for a moment before thinking of something to refute with, “But the contexts are a bit different, I dare say.” Ah, there was the sass.

“Yeah, this one’s less stressful.” Jango replied with a confident shrug and a smirk. Then winced, his shoulder was still really stiff.

“Injury?” Obi-Wan gestured at Jango’s shoulder with his fork. He was obviously trying to change the subject. Jango thought it was a good time to do so anyways.

“Not really. Got a bit jostled in sparring then had to stay still for the rest of the day. It’s a bit sore and tense now.” Obi-Wan glanced down at his almost finished food dinner in silence for a minute.

“My master used to have similar trouble. He was a large man who insisted on using a highly acrobatic fighting style. It put quite a bit of strain on his body.”

“Any tips, then? What did he used to do for it?” Jango was genuinely curious.

“Well…” Obi-Wan glanced askance, another nervous habit of his Jango had picked up on, “a bit of force healing if it was really bad. Otherwise he tended to use a heating pad or I sometimes gave him massages… I became competent at them by the time my apprenticeship finished,”

“Massages? Really, you?” Jango had honestly not expected that.

“I do have two working hands, you know. That’s enough for most humans to give massages.” An imperious eyebrow raise. Jango couldn’t help but bark out a laugh, which seemed to startle the other a bit.

“Don’t suppose you’d be willing to work on my shoulder, then? I’d like to be able to write tomorrow.”

Obi-Wan stroked his beard, seeming to retreat, before replying.

“Yes… I could do that.” He spoke slowly and carefully, like he was walking through a mine field.

“Have at it then.” Jango gestured at his own shoulder. Obi-Wan ate his last bite then stood up and walked around the table, Jango heard him settle behind him on his right side.

Obi-Wan hadn’t been lying, he was quite competent at massages. Jango could feel his muscles loosening in just the right manner.

“More than sore, you have a lot of knots in your muscles… Do you want me to try to work those out as well?” Obi-Wan broke the silence after a few minutes. Jango thought on that.

“Tomorrow. Dinner was late today and you should get ready for bed.” Obi-Wan gave a noise of assent and Jango heard him move away to the dresser for his sleep clothes. Jango started to collect their finished meals and heard Obi-Wan go into the fresher.

Things were going quite well. Obi-Wan was still a bit resistant, but he was interacting fairly freely with Jango now. And now that Jango was paying attention to their interactions…

Obi-Wan seemed compatible with him. He was smart, but not elitist about his intelligence, relying on true sense and constantly thinking. He was a calm presence, most of the time, and was a refreshing harbor of level-headedness compared to some of his colleagues. Obi-Wan was also fun to be around, their book discussions were entertaining, and his sass was humorous. And when Jango saw his face while he related stories about his classes… that happiness, pure and earnest…
Jango could tell he was well on his way to being in love with Obi-Wan. Now it was just a matter of getting the other on the same page.

Jango stepped back into their room, trays having been delivered, locked the door fully and found himself staring at the fresher’s door.

How was he going to get Obi-Wan to start thinking about this?

One of the main problems, he decided, was that Obi-Wan was coming from such a different place that he couldn’t tell what would let the other think of him as a potential partner.

Jango moved to the closet to change.

The books were a good start, yes, but it was going to take more than that.

He’d start wooing him, of course, but given that he had been raised as a Jedi Jango wasn’t sure how to get him to think in a romantic context. How do you get a former Jedi to start seeing himself as a potential lover, hopefully spouse?

As he walked out of the closet in his sleep clothes, Jango glanced around the room, stopping to stare at the bed as a thought occurred.

That could work.

Chapter End Notes

Okay, there’s nothing that says heating pads exist in the star wars universe, but there’s nothing that says they don’t and I refuse to believe that they would be too stupid to not think of them.

Also, we're halfway done!

Mando’a:
‘Lek – yes
mandokarla – the state of being the epitome of Mando virtue (a blend of aggression, tenacity, loyalty, and having a lust for life)
Osik - dung (impolite) | AKA shit
‘Alor – ruler/leader/commander | ya’ll know the drill on Mand'alor vs 'Alor by now
The one where he tries to not settle

Chapter Notes

Previously:

As he walked out of the closet in his sleep clothes, Jango glanced around the room, stopping to stare at the bed as a thought occurred.

That could work.

Obi-Wan felt lost. He couldn’t bring himself to regret what he had done with regards to the coup. But he should have tried to figure out a better way to stop it, at least some way that wouldn’t have resulted in this “punishment” as it was being called.

On the one hand, it wasn’t really a punishment. Obi-Wan was being treated kindly. He had been given comfortable shelter, good food, stimulating books. The only complaint Obi-Wan could make was that he was relatively isolated and going a bit stir-crazy.

On the other hand, he could feel these things making him slip. Obi-Wan had a new appreciation for how much Wenuve had done for him, the isolation made him desperate for company. And he received it. In the form of Mandalorian children, guards, or the Mand’alor himself.

Jango wasn’t too bad on a personal level, he was a good conversationalist and had a pleasant manner, supplemented further by his interesting book opinions…

No. He had to stop thinking like this. Jango was – The Mand’alor was his enemy. He had to try to keep his guard up.

Obi-Wan stopped doing sit-ups and wiped his brow. That was enough for today. Time to stretch out.

Jango was being kind to him because he was trying to get Obi-Wan to integrate. Yes, it felt nice to have someone listen to him and interact without caring about whether he was being a good-enough Jedi. But Obi-Wan couldn’t afford to get wrapped up in that. He had to escape, had to figure out a plan, had to stop feeling so karking content with taking meals in Jango's good company, he could get good company back in the Republic, on his own terms.

He really needed to stop thinking so positively about Jango.

Obi-Wan sat down on the cot and pulled out his current book, *The Psychology of the Two Passions: Why War and Love are Comparable*, and opened it to his previous spot. He’d read a bit to clear his head and figure out how to approach his new predicament later.

“So then Lay of course decides that that would be a terrific moment to figure out she has a flu by sneezing at the highest decibel she can. This leads to Sioth, who was right in front of her and couldn’t tell it was coming, being startled and completely losing concentration for half a second.”
Obi-Wan said.

“And the shell was fragile you said?”

“Yes. And since Sullex didn’t expect Sioth to stop, the equilibrium was broken and the shell burst. That let all of the liquid inside explode onto one side of the room. Which resulted in half the class, including me, getting dyed various shades of pink, unfortunately,” Obi-Wan said to finish the explanation. The older students had gotten fairly good at force applications, but sometimes the lack of experience popped up and resulted in messes like today’s.

“Is it really unfortunate, though? The pink suits you.” Jango teased back lightly, obviously enjoying himself.

“It will take about three days for the dye to get out of my skin. Also, I now have a set of pink splotched Jedi robes.” Obi-Wan said in reply.

“Well, I’m not sure I’ll be able to find more Jedi robes, but I am definitely getting you clothes to replace those ones. The carnation look may work for you, but the clothes are a whole different story.” Jango chuckled. The man was definitely enjoying this, his teasing revealed a very light mood about the whole mishap. Obi-Wan supposed it could be amusing from the outside, though he wasn’t sure it warranted the levels of amusement Jango was showing.

“I’m not sure calling the being about to give you a back massage a “carnation” is that wise of a move,” Obi-Wan said.

“It was that or a molting snake. So I think carnation is the wiser move,” Jango gave him an unrepentant grin. Obi-Wan rolled his eyes.

“Yes, well let’s finish this and let the snake at your back,” Obi-Wan grumbled. Jango just chuckled.

They finished the last remains of their meals quietly, then Obi-Wan stood and walked around the table like the night before.

And just like before, he found himself kneeling behind Jango, a bit more centered this time. Jango’s back was not extraordinarily broad, but it was enough to warrant the adjective. More impressive was the lean muscle Obi-Wan could feel through the other’s shirt as he tentatively put his hands on Jango’s back and started exploring.

There really were a lot of knots on this back. It was probably going to take him a while. Also…

“Could you take off your shirt? That will make this a lot easier and more efficient.”

“Course.” Jango said before he unceremoniously stripped off the shirt.

It really was a well-muscled back. There was a bit of visible definition even with Jango’s current posture. Obi-Wan put his hands on the junctures between the neck and shoulders, deciding to start there before working his way down and out.

It felt familiar to Obi-Wan. In many ways, this was like what he did with his master years ago. With Qui-Gon, the massages had meant a calming evening. After stressful missions when Qui-Gon was sore and Obi-Wan too keyed up to meditate or sleep, it could solve both of their problems.

Jango groaned appreciatively as Obi-Wan finished up the upper back.

“Kriff, you’re good at this. Would have asked you to do this sooner if I’d known,”
Obi-Wan found himself unsure of how to respond, so he merely gave a noise of acknowledgement in return before renewing his focus on his task. And studiously ignoring the noises Jango was making. His master used to make similar sounds to show Obi-Wan he appreciated how good the massage felt. It was the same as those times.

No. It was not the same. Jango was not an ally. Not someone Obi-Wan cared for or was invested in the happiness of. Not like his master.

As the minutes ticked by, Obi-Wan got most of the way worked through Jango’s back and shoulders. He could feel Jango release tensions not physically present even as his muscles relaxed under Obi-Wan’s deft fingers. Obi-Wan could also feel his own mind and body relaxing unbidden, as they always did when he worked through a problem or helped someone else. And here he was doing both. It made perfect sense that he was relaxing! It wasn’t a sign of anything to worry over. But still, he’d better do this efficiently and get over with it…

“…I think that should be good, now,” Obi-Wan said, removing his hands from Jango’s back. Force, the man was made of lean muscle, it seemed. Obi-Wan was glad that he had only had to fight him in close quarters once. He would certainly lose a wrestling match.

Jango turned around, giving Obi-Wan a big, relaxed smile as he oozed contentment into the force.

“Thank you. If you want to take some extra time in the shower, I can get some special soap that should help wash out the dye quicker,” Jango said, his smile remaining the same as he turned around completely to face Obi-Wan.

His eyes, however, could be seen more clearly now. And Obi-Wan felt his heart start to speed up at them. They looked as predatory as a nexu plotting how to capture its prey, and for the life of him, Obi-Wan couldn’t figure out what the plot was or what goal Jango was hunting here.

“I would not mind, but I’m sure it could wait until tomorrow.” Obi-Wan eventually replied as he stood up, diplomatic responses would be best now. Probably.

“Or I could get it in three minutes,” Jango said while beginning to collect their dishes, “Start your shower, I’ll be back with the soap.”

Jango turned to face Obi-Wan with the tray in his hands. Apparently he was determined to get Obi-Wan in the shower with this soap. Obi-Wan still couldn’t figure out what for, and as a result, was having trouble in figuring out how to proceed. Apparently he was taking too long.

“Kenobi, go shower,” Jango said after he had stood up for moments. It was an order. Obi-Wan was in no position to disagree, nor could he figure out a counter-argument.

“Yes, ‘Alor,” Obi-Wan turned and gathered his sleep clothes before retreating into the fresher. What in the Sith hells was going on here?

Chapter End Notes

I now understand why writers say that they can't always make characters do what they want.
Also, I am out of ideas for names, this has just been the massage/soap chapter in my head for a while
Previously:
“Kenobi, go shower,” Jango said after he had stood up for moments. It was an order. Obi-Wan was in no position to disagree, nor could he figure out a counter-argument.

“Yes, ‘Alor,” Obi-Wan turned and gathered his sleep clothes before retreating into the fresher. What in the Sith hells was going on here?

Jango stalked down the hallway to the quartermaster’s storage, deep in thought. He hadn’t meant to insist so strongly on something as inconsequential as soap, especially not to the point of making Obi-Wan use his title. He also didn’t understand why the other had been so reluctant to let him get the soap. He supposed this could be a good way to get Obi-Wan to let himself be taken care of, or even just further impress upon him that he was supposed to be taken care of here.

This could also be used as a way of testing the waters regarding Obi-Wan’s physicality. Jango would have to enter the fresher himself, and could use whatever Obi-Wan’s reaction was to help extrapolate how Obi-Wan would react in more intimate situations. And if a former Jedi could even think in those terms. Jango was fairly certain those were just rumors, most sentient beings needed physical intimacy, sexual or otherwise, it would be too odd if Jedi actually didn’t need that.

Whichever way, it wouldn’t matter until Jango had actually tested and figured it out.

Jango nodded at the Mando on duty at the quartermaster’s and headed to the toiletry room.

As he found the section with the type of soap he was looking for, a thought suddenly struck him as he looked at the many different labels. He had no idea what scent to get.

Did Obi-Wan prefer unscented, like all the recruits were given? Or did he like fragrant items? Perhaps lightly fragranced?

Jango himself preferred silvergrass and uwa. But would Obi-Wan… Oh.

Now that was a thought.

Having Obi-Wan smell like him.

Obi-Wan’s products had been moved to the fresher, but once he ran out…

It was unnecessary. It may help Obi-Wan subconsciously feel more comfortable with Jango, fewer physical differences putting them less at odds, but it probably wouldn’t have much practical effect.

Jango reached for the unscented soap before aborting the movement, lightly grabbing the shelf instead.
But the idea of making Obi-Wan smell like him was attractive.

Well, what could it hurt?

The only person really getting anything out of this was Jango himself, and he was self-aware enough to know that he was a bit possessive, but he didn’t really care.

Jango grabbed the silvergrass and uwa soap and headed out, recording his soap on the log before giving the clerk a nod then power walking back to his room.

He could still hear the water shower going. Good. Obi-Wan had listened to him, then.

He stepped into the fresher.

Now that was an impressive view. Obi-Wan was still a little too skinny for Jango’s liking, but it was evident that he was well-muscled into a lithe, streamline form that would always make him a bit on the skinny side. He would keep trying to get some more fatty food into the man, though, he still looked far too close to a pole to be completely healthy.

“Soap,” he said once he was only two steps from the shower.

Obi-Wan turned, seemingly unsurprised by his sudden appearance. Well, for a force-user of his caliber it probably wasn’t sudden. Obi-Wan slid open the shower door just enough for his hand to slide through, holding it out.

It had callouses from saber use, and was holding steady. Jango took the soap out of its box, letting his fingers brush along Obi-Wan’s hand as he handed over the soap.

He was a bit surprised by how defined the callouses still were; after all, Obi-Wan had been here for a little over three months. Then again, he had apparently spent most of his combat time practicing with a sword.

Jango retracted his hand, staring for less than a second as Obi-Wan pulled the soap back in and resumed his shower, then walked out of the fresher.

That had been…

Cold, almost?

Professional.

Not quite impersonal, though. That was good.

So Obi-Wan was used to having him around, but did not see him as a target for any carnal desires right now.

Jango might have been able to believe that Obi-Wan didn’t have any desire like that if not for the evidence of his flirting in the past. The Negotiator had charmed the pants off of many rulers and ambassadors. And enemies, apparently. He had done it too naturally and too well to not know what it was like to desire someone.

It wasn’t a bad place to start.

Jango sat down at his desk and pulled out the most urgent of the paperwork he had for the night. There were only a few truly urgent pieces before his workload for the night devolved into the usual documents that were needed for running an empire.
After a bit, Jango heard Obi-Wan step out of the fresher and make his way across the room. As he moved to the bookshelf to pick his current book out, Jango glanced to the side to look at Obi-Wan.

The soap had been effective. Obi-Wan now looked like he only had a few fading sunburns, a huge improvement from earlier this evening.

Obi-Wan settled down on the cot, leaning against the wall with his legs crossed, and began to read. Jango reached over and activated the ray shield, which Obi-Wan spared a glance before returning to his book. They settled into a comfortable silence, both used to this kind of evening already.

“Eighty-three times fourteen, minus twenty-eight for maintenance…” Jango muttered.

“One thousand one-hundred and thirty-four,” Obi-Wan offered without preamble.

Jango grunted then marked down the number, “Vor’e.”

Obi-Wan hummed in acknowledgment before diving back into his book. Jango wondered if the man had realized he had developed the habit of helping Jango do his paperwork. There seemed to be hardly a night where Obi-Wan didn’t do calculations for or explain some culture to Jango anymore.

At length, Jango came towards the end of the night’s workload. Obi-Wan had finished reading a while ago and was meditating again. Jango had found that, if allowed, the man would keep going and forgo sleep completely.

“Kenobi,” he said. Tonight it only took about twenty seconds for Obi-Wan to open his eyes and blink up at Jango. Force, the man was cute.

“Yes, ‘Alor?” there was almost no hesitation with the title anymore, Jango was glad for the noticeable progress.

“Go to sleep,” he ordered while walking towards the fresher. Obi-Wan hummed in response.

Jango entered the fresher, undressed, and stepped into the water shower.

Standing under the spray, Jango thought.

Obi-Wan was friendly with him now, even if there were still moments when it was obvious he was trying to resist it. They spent too much time around each other for the other to hate him, not that Obi-Wan seemed the sort who tried to hate others. Jango supposed he could thank the Jedi for cultivating at least that in Obi-Wan.

Jango was pretty sure they were at the point where he could move on to the next step. He’d begin tomorrow night. It was time to start working on making Obi-Wan his mate, not just a Mandalorian.

Chapter End Notes

(If anyone has a better idea for the chapter name, please tell me)
Three months Star Wars time is closer to four months our time, just so you know
Also, I'm going to stop translating "Mand'alor" and "'Alor" because I assume you all know what it means by now

Mando'a:
Vor'e - thanks
The one where he becomes a bed warmer

Chapter Notes

Previously:
Jango was pretty sure they were at the point where he could move on to the next step. He’d begin tomorrow night. It was time to start working on making Obi-Wan his mate, not just a Mandalorian.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Obi-Wan was reading an interesting part of *Raising Warriors, Not Brutes* after dinner when the routine broke. Jango turned off the ray shields, which shouldn’t have happened until breakfast the next morning.

Obi-Wan took note of where he was in the passage quickly before looking at the man, who was continuing on with his paperwork. He pointed over his shoulder with his thumb to the rest of the room.

“Bed. Warm it up.” Obi-Wan raised an eyebrow at the command, looking at the other a bit incredulously.

When Jango noticed that he wasn’t automatically moving, he was given a side-ways glance and a smirk before the other snarked at him, tone relatively light, “You do know how to give off body heat, don’t you?”

“The last time I did this sort of thing, my padawan and I were stranded on an ice planet and switching between keeping watch and keeping warm,” Obi-Wan said as he slowly stood up. It wasn’t like he had a choice about doing it or not. But there didn’t appear to be any real reason for this, so he was cautious, trying to buy even a few more seconds to think. He had learned that any kind of deviation from routine wasn’t safe when captured.

Jango just hummed and returned to his work, obviously expecting Obi-Wan to follow orders. Obi-Wan slowly walked to the bed and settled under the duvet about where Jango woke up each morning, hopefully the man didn’t move too much in his sleep.

Obi-Wan brought up his book and resumed reading, albeit a bit distracted, cautiously glancing at Jango every paragraph or so.

Despite any appearances otherwise, he was still a captive. Jango was his captor. When captured, it was wise to observe routine and try to exploit it in order to escape.

Mercurial treatment usually gave more opportunities to escape, even if it was more dangerous.

But before this, his treatment hadn’t been mercurial at all. He couldn’t presume that this was the beginning of such.

No, it was far more likely that Obi-Wan was missing something. That this was calculated to do something.

But what?
Obi-Wan spent the next hour trying to figure out some sort of motive, barely making it through three pages in his book, before Jango put away his work and stood up, stretching.

“Thanks. Night,” Jango said as a gentle dismissal, giving Obi-Wan a soft, seemingly genuinely warm, smile.

Obi-Wan quickly slid out of the bed and back to his corner. Jango activated the shields and slid into his bed. Obi-Wan put away his book before laying down on his own cot.

What, for force’s sake, was that?

The next two nights yielded no more answers, though they brought repeats of the same order.

The night after those, Jango left once he was done with his shower. It wasn’t the first time it had happened, Jango usually had at least one late night meeting each week. It was, however, the first time he came back accompanied.

An Omwati, judging from appearances, stumbled with Jango into the room and pinned him to the wall besides the door once it closed.

They kissed for a few moments before Jango grabbed the other by the hips and started moving them back to the bed. The Omwati wrapped their legs around Jango’s waist to avoid disconnecting.

Once they hit the bed and fell back onto it, Obi-Wan decided he should reapply himself to his book again.

It was not a productive reading for the ten minutes or so before he managed to tune out the moans coming from only a few steps away. Mostly, at least. It was impossible during a few particularly passionate moments. When the other two’s pleasure screamed in the force, Obi-Wan couldn’t help but be a bit overwhelmed. He resolved to try to build extra shields if this happened again. Force, he hadn’t expected such waves to batter his mind like that!

At length, the other two exhausted themselves and fell asleep, leaving Obi-Wan to finish his chapter in peace before putting his book away and laying down for sleep himself.

Hopefully this would not be a frequent occurrence.

Obi-Wan woke up the next morning when he felt the other two stir. The Omwati stretched for a moment before padding to the fresher. Jango remained in the bed, lazing contentedly. Obi-Wan remained where he was, still not opening his eyes.

The Omwati came back into the room a few minutes later. Obi-Wan heard the bedsheets shift as Jango propped himself up to look at his bed-mate. Obi-Wan heard the other move around the room, presumably picking up their clothes.

“Well that was fun. Come back to the club if you ever want a repeat. I certainly wouldn’t mind.” The Omwati purred lazily.

“I’ll make sure to keep you in mind. Ret’ureye mhi,” Jango drawled back.

“‘Alor,” The Omwati said, accompanied by, based on the sound of their clothes shifting, a bow, then
walked out the door.

“Huh. Guess I forgot to lock it all the way last night,” Jango commented once the door had closed again.

“Yes, well, I dare say you were a bit too busy to remember,” Obi-Wan offered dryly from his cot, finally opening up his eyes.

Jango rolled over so he was facing Obi-Wan. He stared for a few moments before letting out a hum then rolling out of bed and stretching.

“I would like to shower before anything else. You able to wait a bit for breakfast?” Jango asked cordially.

Obi-Wan opened his mouth to deliver a politely scathing remark about how he didn’t have a choice about meal times, nor anything else here, when his stomach decided to answer for him by audibly growling.

“I’ll take that as a no,” Jango chuckled. Sometimes Obi-Wan swore that the man got a kick out of feeding him and making him sleep. Regardless of what the other thought, however, he was not some pet to be pampered for Jango’s amusement.

Jango put on his clothes from the night before and left the room, returning minutes later with breakfast before going straight to the fresher.

Obi-Wan waited until he could hear the water shower going before beginning to eat.

When Jango joined him, they took their meal in silence. Obi-Wan finished first and grabbed the pad with his coursework before sitting back down and starting up the device.

He worked his way through a handful of his conjugation problems before Jango spoke.

“How far along are you in the current modules?” he asked.

Obi-Wan glanced up to a neutral expression before looking back down to his pad. Closing his exercises, he brought up his progress report, though he wasn’t sure why Jango wanted to hear it from him, the other surely had access to this. Sith hells, his pads weren’t even password enabled, Jango could look whenever he wanted.

“sixty percent done with History, ninety-six percent done with Culture, forty-three percent done with Mando’a, sixty-five percent done with Current Events, and fourteen percent done with Law,” the law module had popped up the week before, Obi-Wan had found himself grateful that the documents were less jargon-filled than the Republic’s, if only just barely.

“Hmmm… levels?”

“History is level four, Culture is level three, Mando’a is three, Current Events is two, and Law is still at one,”

“Sounds like you’ll be done with History before the month is out, with Current Events not far behind,” and there was that predatory look again. Obi-Wan had no idea what it could be about at the moment, though.

“… Most likely, yes,” Obi-Wan hesitantly replied.
“Impressive,” Jango was openly smirking now. They stared at each other in silence, Obi-Wan wary, Jango looked almost… excited.

“Don’t you have meetings to get to?” Obi-Wan broke the silence and the staring contest, looking back down at his pad, he could feel his face heat up a bit. For what, he couldn’t quite explain.

“Hmm… I suppose I should get ready for those, yes.” Jango stood up from the table and went to finish prepping for the day. Obi-Wan returned to his pad.

Jango eventually left and Obi-Wan continued on with his coursework. He worked through Mando’a for an hour and a half before putting down the pad and beginning to rearrange his corner.

Obi-Wan felt pinpricks on the back of his neck as he began his push-ups. He was tempted to glare at the room’s camera, but he resisted the urge. He still wasn’t sure if Jango and whoever else knew he was aware of its location. And he wanted to keep them in the dark about himself as much as possible.

It had been easy to confirm that there were cameras in the room when he had begun his workout. His meals had suddenly increased in calories and amount of protein. And the first night of his augmented meal plan Jango had watched him eat while exuding obvious satisfaction into the force. Obi-Wan knew that his continued physical training would probably be seen by the Mandalorians as a good thing, especially for an initiate, but he did have to maintain his body.

Obi-Wan switched to crunches and sit-ups.

It really was worrisome, how long he had been here. It had been approximately three months, by his own count. Had the Jedi, the Republic, declared him dead yet?

Even if they hadn’t, he was on Mand’yaim, no, Mandalore itself. Rescue would be impossible. Escaping himself was barely more possible than that, but it was all he had.

That being said, he still had no idea how to escape. As things currently were, he was still too tightly bound to do anything, and now he didn’t even know what the rest of his initiation would entail. Would he gain the freedom that was promised for the regular program?

Obi-Wan stood up and moved to a corner to start one of the katas he knew that was designed for tight spaces. Taking a few deep breaths and centering himself, he began going through the familiar movements.

He would just have to hold on to the hope for more mobility and be patient until that time came. He could do it. It was harder to be patient if you didn’t know when the end was coming. But he would do it. He had to.

For now though, he would clear his head and re-center himself. Obi-Wan focused anew on his movements and emptied his head of all thoughts besides the next move of the kata.

Once he had worked through the katas he could a few times, Obi-Wan stopped and refreshed himself with the bottle of water that had been left for him. As he started to stretch out, he noticed the silence again.

After a few more moments, he could feel it enveloping him, it seemed inescapable, and made his skin itch.
Kriff.

Before he had been confined to these quarters, he had spent most of his day surrounded by others, even his time without his classmates was often interrupted by Jango or the coup’s members. Back in his life in the Republic, his time had similarly been occupied. When Anakin had just started as his padawan, he hadn’t been able to get more than an hour alone each day.

Now he was alone for most of the day. Jango for some meals, students for class, and Vojunn and Kanvined to and from that. Otherwise he was alone. He was not enjoying it.

It was lonely, in a way that he had only felt on the worst of missions.

Unfortunately, unlike those missions, the loneliness was broken.

It was best on those missions to use the loneliness to push himself to finish the mission and get back to the temple as soon as possible.

When the loneliness kept getting broken by the few people he got to interact with, however, he ended up craving their company again instead of focusing on making his return himself. He felt like his resolve collapsed in their company out of relief.

It wasn’t like he could help liking the relief of loneliness.

And it wasn’t bad for his mind. It was healthy to have interaction.

But, force, it made it harder to remember to escape.

Not that he could do anything right now, not until he was granted more freedom. He would just have to keep up his routine and wait until then.

Obi-Wan picked up his pad, sat down on his cot, and made himself open up his Current Events module.

He was about to start the next exercise when he felt a collar snap around his neck and pull him against the wall. As soon as he hit the wall, a restraint wrapped around each of his biceps.

“I suppose this means Jango won’t be taking lunch here, then,” Obi-Wan thought, allowing a bit of snarl to show on his face.

After a few seconds, a serving droid entered the room, deactivated the shields, and left Obi-Wan’s lunch on the table before putting up the shields again and leaving. Obi-Wan heard the door lock before his restraints released him.

The first time this had happened, he had watched and waited to see what would occur. The second time, he had waited for the droid to undo the shield before using the force to undo his restraints and trying to make a break for it. It had been the only day where desperation had overwritten sense. The ray shields had gone back up before he had made it two steps. He had not gotten lunch that day.

Obi-Wan sat down at the table and began to eat. He certainly preferred having to take three meals a day with Jango to these lunches. The restraints were still a bit too rough, even with the adjustments made since the first time they had been used, or at least he thought he could feel phantom discomfort from them. That could very well be his imagination, though.

After he finished eating, Obi-Wan finally got to work more on his course work. He managed to work through another ten percent of current events before the door opened again.
“Obi-Wan! You ready to test the kiddos today?” Vojunn exclaimed as they leaned into the room. Kanvined came inside and undid the ray shield. Obi-Wan exhaled as he put down his course work pad, picked up his teaching pad, and stood, holding his hands in front for Kanvined to connect his bracelets before they all left the room.

The practical part of the exam had gone very well, and Obi-Wan hoped that the written part would show similar results. The children, at least, seemed pleased with how they had done. It was not unwarranted, even the newer students were coming along at a fantastic pace.

Vojunn opened the door and the children started to file out while Obi-Wan double checked to make sure he had all the data he needed for grading. He wished sometimes that the classes were longer, this was when he felt most at peace and assured about what he was doing. Helping the kids never made him feel like he was wavering on the edge of something. It wasn’t some dark-side seduction to make him lose track of the right path. It was a good thing, something he never needed to question the morality of.

Obi-Wan finally looked up, satisfied with his data collection, and started moving towards the door. He stopped when, instead of Vojunn coming back in, Jango stepped through the door. He nodded at Kanvined, who bowed before leaving. Obi-Wan could see him and Vojunn walking down the opposite way from normal.

“Well come on, then,” Jango said lightly, a warm smile on his face. Obi-Wan walked towards Jango, hoping this wasn’t a drastic deviation again.

When Obi-Wan reached him, Jango turned and they walked out of the room then started making their way back to their – no – Jango’s quarters. There was a light guiding touch on Obi-Wan’s shoulder. If he didn’t know any better, he’d have said it was a friendly gesture.

They walked in silence, Obi-Wan was uncertain of what he could, let alone should, say and Jango seemed content with the silence. It was comfortable, if a little less so than their usual post-dinner silences.

When they got back to the room, Jango opened the door and gestured Obi-Wan inside. Obi-Wan obliged and walked back to his corner, as was habit now, and sat down on his cot with his pad still turned off, eying Jango suspiciously.

Jango just locked the door and walked over to his desk before pulling out some work, the new supply distributions for the Moddell Sector, if Obi-Wan was remembering correctly. He hadn’t put up the shields up so he was apparently staying for a while. Obi-Wan stared for only a few more moments before turning on his pad to start grading.

After a while of them working next to each other, it must have been more than three hours, Jango stood, activated the shields and left the room with his customary “Ni venyaimpar.”

He came back a few minutes later with dinner and Obi-Wan went through the usual motions without much thought.

“How did the test go today?”

“Well. Everyone seems to be on the path to controlling their abilities. A few are a bit behind on theory still, but as they really solidify their understanding of the basics I expect their understanding of the theory behind it to improve as well,”
“Hmmm…”

“What?”

“Sometimes the way you talk about this reminds me of teaching combat,” Jango commented, a bit thoughtful.

“It’s a skill. Force control, combat, weaving, whatever you pick. It’s a skill. As you practice the basics you understand the theory behind the skill better and better. Honestly, sometimes I don’t understand how people can find force abilities that mysterious while... I don’t know, flying a ship is a perfectly acceptable as a part of daily life!” Jango chuckled at his rant.

“What?”

“You had a reputation of being unflappable, the contrast between the propaganda and who you really are is amusing. The real you is much cuter and far more interesting,” Jango was smiling warmly, but the mirth in his expression led Obi-Wan to believe the man just enjoyed teasing him.

“four-year-olds are cute. Kittens are cute. Somehow I don’t think I qualify.”

“What can I say? Maybe I have an odd sense of cute,” Obi-Wan flushed a bit of the memory of that dinner. He really hadn’t meant to make that noise, but he hadn’t had anything with actual muja for years.

Obi-Wan couldn’t come up with a response quickly enough, so he decided to return to eating instead. Jango laughed at him for another moment before following suit. The rest of dinner passed in the usual manner, Jango had some interesting insight on *Raising Warriors, Not Brutes* and offered to restock the bookshelf again. Obi-Wan found himself insisting that it wouldn’t be necessary for a few weeks at least.

The rest of the evening passed as though nothing unusual had been going on lately. Right up through Jango deactivating the shields and telling him to warm up the bed again.

Obi-Wan followed orders, the idea of resisting so worthless it was hardly a thought, and, upon settling down under the covers, remembered the previous night’s events and found himself grateful that he was not burdened with psychometry.

Chapter End Notes

Most of the subjects have five levels, except for the one-off courses, like geography; although some, like current events and law, have two to four levels. Usually after getting Geography and one other subject finished other modules like current events would be added to an initiates schedule, but Obi-Wan is in special circumstances so he’s following a slightly different schedule.

So the ray shields have thermo-motion sensor mode and a droid that keeps its deliveries inside its chassis, and has programming to not give Obi-Wan his lunch if he doesn’t behave.

Mando’a:

Ret’urcye mhi – goodbye l lit. “maybe we’ll meet again”, and Jango is being pretty literal here
Ni venyaimpa – I will return
Obi-Wan found himself quickly settled into his slightly altered routine. He continued to act as a literal bed-warmer most nights, unless Jango decided to bring back company. Those nights had improved his concentration and focus skills drastically, as well as his shields. Jango occasionally walked him to or from classes now, though Vojunn and Kanvined were still far more frequent guides.

And, he thought as he finished his cool down stretches, it was still very lonely in the room. He wished that he would be allowed back into the classes with the other… initiates. Perhaps he should ask Jango about it?

Obi-Wan sat down on the cot, trying to find the motivation to pick up his pad and do more course-work when the door opened. Jango stepped through, though this time, instead of a tray with lunch like usual, he had a covered basket under his arm. Obi-Wan stared as Jango put the basket on the desk before putting away a few pads and data sticks. Obi-Wan then noticed that Jango had grabbed a few more weapons than usual for the day, and that his blasters looked like they were set to stun already. After putting away his load, Jango picked up the basket again and deactivated the shields.

“Come on, we’re eating out for lunch today,” Jango said, giving a small nod towards the door. Obi-Wan stared for half a second before slowly standing up and walking towards the door, Jango right beside him with a hand on his shoulder.

They made their way down the hallways, getting close to Obi-Wan’s classroom before veering off in a different direction, to an area of the complex that Obi-Wan had never been to before.

They walked in silence for a few more minutes before they turned another corner and came upon a sight that made Obi-Wan stop in his tracks.

There was a courtyard, its sides were glass, allowing for those in the surrounding halls to look in on it. It was beautiful. The plants were verdant when they weren’t bursting with exotic colors, and they seemed to be such a diverse crop, Obi-Wan had to assume that some, if not most, of the plants had been brought from off-world.

Jango chuckled and gently prodded Obi-Wan on, guiding them to two sections of the glass that opened automatically. They stepped through, then past the first row of trees and bushes, to an open area filled with different types of grass. There were only a few people wandering around or lounging in the courtyard. Obi-Wan couldn’t imagine why, the place was brimming with good energy, the living force was practically singing.

Obi-Wan glanced up to see a glass ceiling extend what must have been around ten stories, some mirrors helping bring the sunlight down further. Looking back down, the courtyard seemed big
enough to have a few different copse of trees and plants, allowing for more private spaces. It reminded Obi-Wan of the temple gardens.

“Come on, we’re eating by the pond,” Jango said while tugging lightly on his arm. Some of the others in the courtyard looked over to watch them, but ultimately left them alone.

Jango led them to a natural looking pond with what looked to be a decent size school of fish swimming happily inside. The land round the pond was flat for the most part, except for a small, artificial hill on one side, which Jango had apparently chosen as their lunch spot.

Once they had settled down with the basket between them, Jango started unloading their lunch. Today was salad and soup, it appeared.

They ate in silence, and Obi-Wan glanced out on the pond, it was… odd, to eat without looking at Jango now. After so much time, he had become used to at least seeing those hands at the edge of his vision.

Obi-Wan glanced to the side as he took a spoonful of soup to his mouth. Jango was looking at him, observing. Obi-Wan sipped his soup carefully, not hesitating under the gaze. This, at least, was routine.

“Do you like it?” Jango asked, “I thought you’d enjoy a bit more change of scenery, although you seemed to have really settled down lately.”

Obi-Wan slowly rested his spoon in the soup. Was this… a test? A reward? A bribe?

Jango seemed to imply that he was being allowed here because he hadn’t shown any signs of planning escape for the past month. The man also had enough weapons to probably take him down if he tried to escape now. Not that he could get far, trying to make a run for it was useless at this point.

“It reminds me a bit of the gardens in the temple. Full of different plants from different planets, singing with the force for all the living things thriving here,” Obi-Wan replied.

“Hm… Slightly different plants though, I presume?” Jango chuckled a bit at the end, as though the different access to plants due to the wars was funny to him.

“Well, yes. It’s not like republic space has too many trico plants or starflowers, just the few brought by refugees into private gardens,” Obi-Wan huffed, turning back to his meal.

“Well, we have some more republic plants here as well, since our refugees were willing to donate their plants’ offspring to public and government gardens; as well as a few breeders for the markets,” Jango drawled, not rising to the light heat Obi-Wan had put in his voice.

They ate in silence for a few minutes. Well, Obi-Wan ate, Jango seemed more content with drinking in whatever sight Obi-Wan gave him. If he hadn’t spent the past month and a half living with the man, it might have unnerved Obi-Wan.

Perhaps I should get a plant for our room, so you can have something for the force to “sing with” there as well. I’ve heard that the… What’s it called? The Murakami orchid. The Murakami orchid is apparently involved with the force somehow. Would that do?” Jango asked.

Obi-Wan glanced sideways at Jango, “I’m not familiar with that plant. I wouldn’t know,” he responded. The lie, though a knee-jerk reaction, was designed to hopefully dissuade Jango from getting the plant. Hopefully he wouldn’t notice.
“Hmmm… I’ll look into it, then,” Jango smiled contentedly at Obi-Wan. He seemed in a good enough mood, and this trip seemed to imply that he was being trusted enough to not remain on full lock-down...

“Jango, I was wondering…” Jango turned towards him a bit more and raised an eyebrow. Obi-Wan took a deep breath before continuing with carefully selected words, “‘Alor. I was wondering when I would be put back into class with my fellow initiates,” he said evenly.

Jango looked a bit surprised at his question, before his face settled into a thoughtful expression, his eyes seeming to analyze Obi-Wan. After a moment, his face seemed to harden to stone, a business mask; presumably he had formulated an answer. He opened his mouth to speak.

“Adat’juri Kenobi!” a young kiffar shouted, running around the pond towards them.

The two men snapped their heads to watch the little one’s approach.

“Ms. Deg, is there something you needed assistance with?” Obi-Wan asked.

“Yes, I was, um, was w-wondering if… um,” Ju tapered off into stammers as she noticed who was sitting beside Obi-Wan. Jango gave a light chuckle, relaxing his face and body posture so he seemed more approachable, less intimidating.

“Hello, little one, I don’t think I’ve met you before,” Jango said gently.

“Um… I’m, I-I…” Ju looked at Obi-Wan, silently begging. Apparently Jango was making her too nervous.

“May I present Ju Deg, she/her/hers; one of my young students from the newer group,” Obi-Wan said.

“Pleasure to meet you, Ms. Deg,” Jango gave a respectful nod with his head.

“Mand’alor,” Ju gave a proper bow, though she held it for a few seconds too long, as if she was giving an apology.

“I believe you had something you wanted to talk to Obi-Wan about,” Jango prodded.

“I- uh, yes!” Ju turned to face Obi-Wan again, “I was trying to do the, uh, “feel outwards” meditation but I, uh, couldn’t. And I don’t know why,” Ju shifted nervously on her feet and kept her eyes on the ground. Obi-Wan glanced over at Jango, who gestured towards Ju, giving him permission to proceed.

“Well, let’s see if I can’t help you find out what’s going wrong, then,” Obi-Wan offered, patting the ground beside him. Ju quickly scrambled beside him into a basic meditation pose.

“Why don’t you try it on your own first, and I’ll observe and see what’s going on?” Ju nodded at that, closing her eyes to begin the mediation.

After barely a minute, the problem became quite clear to Obi-Wan.

“Ms. Deg, come back to yourself,” she did in short order, opening her eyes and looking towards him.

“While this meditation is similar to the releasing and communing meditations in that you allow your presence to no longer inhabit your body, it differs in that you are trying to merge with the presences
immediately around you, instead of existence at large. You extend yourself to the surrounding physical area, instead of releasing yourself to ethers of the universe. Does that make sense?” Obi-Wan patiently explained.

“Um… In theory, but… but I don’t,” Ju sighed, “I don’t understand how doing it feels, or how to do it, really,” she confessed.

“All right, then. This time, focus on my force presence as you start meditating. When you think you have a feel for me, try also focusing on your surroundings, okay?” Obi-Wan instructed after a moment.

Ju nodded before closing her eyes again, beginning her meditation. Obi-Wan did the same, allowing some of his shields down so his presence was even more obvious in the force.

Eventually, he felt Ju reach for him in the force, her presence wrapping around part of him slowly in the force. Her light was a bit dim, due to both its time spent without proper guidance and Ju’s young age, but it was a warm and delightful thing to feel nevertheless. The tendrils of her force presence were a bit timid, and Obi-Wan made sure to stay as stable as he could, just a big, bright, warm, and welcoming presence beside her.

After spending time just knowing herself and him, Obi-Wan felt her hesitantly reach out in the force for the next brightest thing, which ended up being Jango. Next, the pond with its fish, after that Obi-Wan left her presence alone and retreated back into just himself and Ju beside him. After a while of Ju tentatively exploring, Obi-Wan noticed her own presence getting feint beside him. Though she was only in danger of exhausting herself if she continued stretching herself, Obi-Wan thought she had done more than enough for today.

Gently, Obi-Wan grabbed onto Ju’s force presence, sending his own to the further out parts of her, tugging and coaxing her back. Eventually, she was back to herself, and they opened their eyes simultaneously.

“Good work, do you think you understand how to do it now?” He asked. He had a moment’s warning, only because he had grown accustomed to what that wave of manic excitement in the force meant, before he had a lap and face full of exuberant child.

“Oh gods, yes! That’s was so cool! I could feel the reeds by the pond shifting! And the trees’ leaves growing! And the starflower buds literally pushing through the dirt! And I didn’t know the fish were so happy! Did you know that fish could be happy? I didn’t before that! Oh, and the berry bushes, and the thorn bushes, and all the trees, did I mention the trees yet? And the vines! And the… and the… GAAH! That was so cool!” Ju collapsed out of Obi-Wan’s lap to lay on the grass, still euphoric.

“Yes, but if you do that again, be careful, you were well on your way to exhausting yourself there, you’ll need to practice that in small doses until your presence is stable enough. Okay?” Obi-Wan said. Ju nodded vigorously.

“Elek, adat’juri!” she exclaimed, “akay nakar’tuu!” Ju gave a respectful bow with the goodbye.

“Akay nakar’tuur, ner hibir,” Obi-Wan nodded back.

“Ret’urcye mhi, Mand’alor,” the more respectful bow, a nod back, and then Ju was bounding around the pond and out of sight.

“How long were we meditating for?” Obi-Wan asked, rolling his shoulders. Their stiffness indicated
that it had been some decent amount of time.

“Ehn’eta,” Jango responded, then grabbed the now packed basket and stood up, “It’s a good thing you’d already finished lunch,” he said while offering his hand.

Obi-Wan accepted the hand and stood up, humming in agreement as Jango guided them out of the courtyard. Neither spoke until they were navigating the hallways again.

“It’s good to see you teaching the children so well, you respond to their needs quite competently.” Jango said.

“Well, it does help that they all truly want to learn. Nothing makes it harder to help someone with something than the being not wanting to overcome it. As my students learn basic control over the force, they want to learn more. Understanding yourself, no longer having to be afraid every second of the day, being able to actually be happy with your existence, that’s the sort of feeling, the sort of safety, that leaves you wanting more,” Obi-Wan replied.

Jango stopped them, turning Obi-Wan towards him as he moved his hand from shoulder to arm, squeezing gently, “I’m glad. It’s a fantastic thing that they’re learning to control these abilities. They’re able to live life much more fully this way. And it’s because of you, I will always be grateful for that.”

Jango was exuding happiness. Obi-Wan was also tempted to call him content, but those eyes... There was intensity there that he didn’t think he could associate with contentedness. He wasn’t sure how he could answer to that.

“K’olar, let’s get back to our room,” Jango said after a moment and began leading them back. Obi-Wan was still a bit too out of it to see if he could remember the way back and, before he knew it, they were back in front of the room.

Once inside, Jango settled down for work at his desk, and Obi-Wan grabbed his pad to do some course work. He pulled up a review that took only half a thought and began working on it while reflecting.

The lunch had been nice. Jango had been nice. He hadn’t even minded Obi-Wan talking about and comparing the courtyard and the Jedi temple, which was refreshing. Even Vojunn and Kanvinid didn’t like it when he talked about his past in the republic. Then Ju Deg had showed up. And Jango had let him teach her a relatively advanced meditation, encouraged it, even.

The man seemed invested in making sure Obi-Wan was doing well himself when he was helping. Not trying to make sure he was being a good “role model” of a certain mold. It was... nice. Nice to be allowed to just do what he wished without having to really change himself.

If this was to be his life from now on, it certainly wouldn’t be a bad one.

No. He couldn’t think like that. Obi-Wan paused his work for a moment to collect himself. Force, how far had he gone? How far had he strayed from the Jedi path, if he was thinking like that?

Well, not necessarily far. He was being treated well. It was a good thing he could still recognize kindness. He had seen beings so far broken that they could not do that anymore. And most sentients found some way to deal with drastically changed circumstances, such as war or capture, even just a large move or change in roles. He was still fine.

“You doing alright over there?” Jango asked. Obi-Wan had apparently stopped working for a bit too long.
“I’m fine. I was just thinking about the meditation with Ju Deg from earlier today. A bit of reflection,” he replied. It was true, from a certain point of view.

Chapter End Notes

Back to chapters that I don’t hate!

Mando'a:
adat’juri - teacher | I could not find a word for teacher, but “adate meg ba’juri’” translates to “person who teaches” and I squashed that together to make a new word, because linguistics, also, “who” seems like the kind of word they would drop
Mand’alor – sole ruler of Mandalore | once again, Jango’s official title
Elek – Yes
Akay nakar’tuu! – Until tomorrow!
Ner hibir – My student
Ret’urcye mhi – goodbye | go back a chapter or two for more details. This was the most formal (least colloquial) goodbye I could find
Ehn’eta – thirty
K’olar – come
The one where he tells his war council/advisors/inner circle

Chapter Notes

Short chapter so quick update.

Previously:
“I’m fine. I was just thinking about the meditation with Ju Deg from earlier today. A bit of reflection,” he replied. It was true, from a certain point of view.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Jango walked down the hallway, internally buzzing with energy, carrying the day’s dinner. It was hard to keep arranging meals like this, hopefully he’d be able to give Obi-Wan more flexibility soon.

That seemed more and more likely each passing day. Obi-Wan had stopped overtly resisting, and seemed to have accepted his new life. This was probably what he was like when he had been the most settled with his fellow initiates.

No. It was more than that. Back then, Obi-Wan hadn’t been as immersed as he was now. He had been planning escape as much as he could. Now the man had given into a routine of living with Mandalorians. He was already half way to having a respectable daily routine for a full citizen. And his coursework was done well over the half way point.

Jango had even found time to read some of Obi-Wan’s more recent essays. The books were working. The man obviously still thought with a Jedi lens, it showed in the essays. But that was fine, the writing was almost manda enough for it to be considered a healthy amount of diversity.

Using his compassion had also definitely been the way to go. Jango credited that with being majority of the reason why Obi-Wan had become less self-warring about the changes that came with integration. The picnic they had the other day, with Ju Deg…

It had been wonderful to see Obi-Wan helping a child. Even better to see it without any Jedi “don’t feel emotions” nonsense. Obi-Wan seemed to be keeping out of philosophy in his classes, which was good. Jango was hoping that the students could make a force tradition that was Mandalorian. One thing he had definitely picked up from talking with Obi-Wan was that the force was pretty much just a type of energy that could be utilized. If that was the case, he wanted his citizens to develop those skills so that they were manda.

Approaching the door to their room, Jango felt a smile start to grow on his face. He knew that at this point, he was definitely in love with Obi-Wan. He could hardly wait until Obi-Wan started reciprocating. The man seemed to at least enjoy Jango’s conversation, if not his presence itself.

“Er – ‘Alor? Before we start, um…” Everyone looked at Threl with varying degrees of concern and bewilderment. He never sounded meek, but that was the only word to describe how he had just spoken.

“Yes? Is there a problem?” Jango probed questioningly. Had something serious happened to Threl
that they didn’t know about?

Threl opened and closed his mouth a few times before Suki Silnyaru beside him seemed to realize what he was getting at and took pity on him.

“I believe, that he is curious, albeit being a bit awkward, about the rumors and sightings of you and the former Jedi having lunch in a courtyard a week ago,” she said. Threl nodded at that; apparently, it was what he wanted to ask about.

“Oh yeah!” Effao joined in gleefully, “I heard you two were picnicking like a rom-holo couple!” Threl only partially succeeded in covering his guffaw at that image.

“Effao, really? Could we please show some re-“ Suki began when Jango interrupted.

“Well, minus the fakeness, that was kind of the point,” Jango snarked. Most of the room burst into clamors at that.

“A special position in the empire, was it?” Akkus drawled from beside him after a moment. The question got the room to quiet down for a moment out of confusion.

“Yes. I dare say mate of the Mand’alor is a special position, certainly not the most common.” Akkus only raised zir brows at the reply, the rest of the room only got louder than before.

“Wait. Wait. Wait,” Effao got the others to calm down before asking, “So are the bags under your eyes from staying up late, love sick as your beloved sleeps only meters away, yet feels miles apart in your heart?” She teased, gesturing theatrically.

Threl had apparently decided that this was the final straw, and, with a groan, leaned back far enough to topple his chair, muttering to get him up once this nonsense was done.

Jango knew he’d be listening avidly from the floor.

“Well, they are from the plans to woo Obi-Wan, this part’s just taking a bit longer than expected is all,” Jango did not huff. Not at all.

Effao just smirked at him until he gave in.

“I’m trying to stay up late enough for him to fall asleep in my bed, in which he’s currently playing bed-warmer, literally, but he won’t fall asleep. He just keeps reading or doing coursework until I have to sleep,” he explained.

Threl barked out a laugh from the floor.

“Have you tried not staying up late for a few days, at least a week, really, then staying up really late?” Effao asked.

“I’ve only been doing this for two weeks, so no, I have not done that yet,” Jango hissed.

“You could always just drug him,” Suki proposed nonchalantly. The room was silent as they all stared at her, “What? He’s done it twice already.”

“Ethics, Suki, ethics,” Akkus intoned tiredly from his side.

“I mean, it wouldn’t have to be the usual knock out drug. Just a sleeping pill, right?” Threl asked as he picked himself and the chair off the floor, reclaiming his place at the table.
“That is way more subtle than any idea I ever expected to come out of your mouth,” Effao gaped, the others nodded along.

“Oi!”

“Well unless someone else has a useful idea, let’s leave me to woo my mate and actually get on with the meeting,” honestly, it was a good thing that they all liked each other, but some meetings felt like he was trying to herd cats. It looked like Effao was going to tease him again when Akkus stepped in.

“Right then, first order of business is approving and mashing out some details for the final parts of the Generis campaign.” At least he could always rely on Akkus.

He had to go to bed before one. He had scheduled duties starting at seven thirty. He glanced at the discreet mirror on the desk to see Obi-Wan still reading, then down at his work. The words were starting to swim a bit. And these didn’t even need to be done for another week.

If there was one good thing coming from this setback, it was Jango discovering that it was actually possible to get ahead in paperwork.

He had to go to bed.

Jango saved and powered everything down before putting it away. He stood and stretched, noting Obi-Wan’s movement to his (currently his) corner. He put his pad away as Jango brought up the shields.

“Jate ca, Cuun Kad’au,” he said. Ner kad’au, was what he wanted to say, but not yet.

Obi-Wan stared at him for a moment, moderately surprised at the revival of the nickname.

“Jate ca, ‘Alor,” Jango gave a warm smile at the easy response before moving to his (almost their) bed.

He turned off the lights and settled under the sheets. They smelled a mixture of Obi-Wan, the products they both used now, clean linen, and him. Though the warmth left behind was nothing compared to a companion’s.

Tomorrow. He’d start following Effao’s suggestion tomorrow. And probably Threl’s as well. Obi-Wan was a stubborn sort, after all.

Chapter End Notes

Mando’a:
‘Alor – commander/leader
Jate ca – good night
Cuun kad’au – our lightsaber
Ner kad’au – my lightsaber
Manda - The state of being Mandalorian in mind, body, and spirit | there’s a few other definitions of this, with different nuances, but we’re going to be using it like this in the fic
The one where he falls asleep

Chapter Notes

Previously:

Tomorrow. He’d start following Effao’s suggestion tomorrow. And probably Threl’s as well. Obi-Wan was a stubborn sort, after all.

Obi-Wan sensed Jango walk into the classroom as Kanvined and Vojunn walked away, it was quite easy to identify the man’s presence in the force now, and saw Sullex bow to Jango as he left, leaving them the only two in the room.

“Would you mind a walk to get dinner from the cafeteria?” Jango asked as he walked towards the door.

“Not particularly. Why? Are your arms too tired to carry a tray for two?” Obi-Wan teased dryly as Jango started leading him down to the opposite end of the hallway from usual.

“No, I just thought I’d be nice and give you more of chance to stretch your legs,” Jango replied, voice light.

After a few turns, Obi-Wan thought he was recognizing the hallways they were in. Was this one of the ways he’d gone through before?

They went down a flight of steps and Obi-Wan felt certain they were in the area he had spent the first few months in. As they made their way to the cafeteria, presumably the one Obi-Wan had gone to before, he wondered if they’d see any of his former classmates.

Probably not. They were likely all back in their rooms at this point of the evening.

They came up to those oh so familiar cafeteria doors and saw two Mandos standing outside as guards. Were there usually guards outside of there? Obi-Wan thought that was only for when initiates were eating.

“’Alor,” both guards greeted before bowing.

“Suc’cuy, Las. Kark,” Jango replied with a nod to each once both of them had stood up again. They both gave Obi-Wan a nod that he returned politely.

“Tion hibire su olar? Val nu’amyc be’chaaj jii,” Jango asked.

“Elek. Val shi ru’ky b’akaanla tionase,” Las, presumably, answered. Obi-Wan found he was actually following along the conversation fairly well.

“Val ru’cuyi jate,” Kark added.

“Ni haa’tayli. Ibic solus cuye ti ni,” Jango inclined his head toward Obi-Wan before walking them towards the motion-sensor doors.
“Mhi kar’tayli. Nubatti,” Las said as they walked past, clearly amused.

There were a few actual officers getting food, but the initiates the guards were watching were all sitting down already. Obi-Wan tried to discreetly search for Wenuve as Jango corralled him to the food line. He didn’t recognize anyone nearby, perhaps these were all different groups than who he had seen before? No – wait – there was Genya. And now he could feel shock in the force around him, coming from someone at his back. Someone had recognized him at least.

As he felt more beings notice him, sending out their own waves of surprise into the force, one being also felt a mixture of anger, happiness, and relief that could be expected of Wenuve.

Obi-Wan picked up a tray and focused on that presence. It was... harder, now. But that spot in the force was undoubtedly Wenuve. As they moved closer to her, Obi-Wan managed to turn enough to catch a glimpse of her out of the corner of his eye without slowing down his food gathering too much.

She was much the same outwardly, though Obi-Wan didn’t remember ever seeing the scarf she had on before. And she was too far away to really get a good look at her expression, unfortunately. She was leaning forward over the table at which she was eating now. Obi-Wan turned his full attention back to the food, moving a little faster.

Apparently, it was too big of a difference in pace. Obi-Wan felt some minor confusion from Jango next to him before the man and Wenuve both started radiating displeasure. Obi-Wan thought he heard a low growl from Jango before the man shifted closer, a stray hand almost casually hooking lightly into the crook of his elbow. Obi-Wan didn’t dare attempt to shake it off.

Once they finished getting their food, they started moving towards the door. Obi-Wan peeked over his shoulder to look at Wenuve again, she was opening her mouth like she wanted to say something, or shout something. Before she could, Obi-Wan felt an arm sling itself across his back and his attention and gaze were brought back to the man beside him.

“K’olar, Kenobi,” it was a command. Cold, but with that internal fire that Obi-Wan had come to recognize after cohabitating with Jango for so long. He wasn’t quite angry yet, but Obi-Wan didn’t want to risk anything at this point.

“Elek, ‘Alor,” the arm across his shoulders relaxed marginally, but was not removed. Nor did the pace of their march slow down until they had left the cafeteria, nodding at Las and Kark, and rounded a corner.

The week and a half after that resulted in less time spent outside of the room. It was like when he had first been moved there, only being let out for class.

It was a bit disheartening, really. He had enjoyed the intermittent trips to the courtyard he and Jango had taken the few weeks before that.

Obi-Wan still wasn’t sure if the decrease was due to the dinner incident or not though. On the one hand, this felt a bit like a punishment, but for what? Looking at a friend? No, that didn’t make sense. He supposed it could be Jango getting paranoid about his integration being jeopardized again, though this would be going a bit overboard, in his opinion.

Obi-Wan hoped it was for a third reason. He wasn’t sure if it was the most likely or his hope made him think that, but he thought it was most likely because Jango had apparently gotten very busy
during the day. Before, Jango had been able to waste an hour with him during the day then would stay up late in the night. This past week however, their meals had been an efficient affair in the room. Jango would come back from some meeting and only work a bit before deciding to go to bed.

Tonight though, it seemed like they would be going back to the late-night schedule.

He had personally appreciated getting to stop his bed-warming duties quicker, and Jango had stopped bringing any nighttime guests, so they had both been getting better sleep. Obi-Wan wasn’t sure he could remember being so well-rested in his life.

Although for being so well-rested, he was feeling very tired tonight. Had the two classes really exhausted him that much? Certainly, there had been more demonstrations today than usual, and guiding everyone through meditation had been harder than usual, but still, he didn’t think he should be this tired.

Obi-Wan tried to focus on the book he was reading, *Heturam be haar Kar’ta*, again. It would not do to fall asleep in another’s bed, even if they were the reason he was even in it in the first place!

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Jango glanced over his shoulder. The sound he had heard was Obi-Wan’s pad falling onto his chest. Good. Threl had been right about the sleeping pill.

He worked for about fifteen minutes more, letting Obi-Wan fall into a deeper sleep, then saved and stowed everything away.

He walked over to the side Obi-Wan was on and carefully extracted the pad, setting it on the nightstand. He stared for a moment at the other's lax face, calm and unguarded in sleep. It was… domestic. And soothing. Really, the man’s presence alone always seemed to work wonders in giving Jango some inner calm.

Jango walked to the other side of the bed, turned off the lights, and slid under the covers, positioning himself close to Kenobi. The man shifted slightly, either because he had sensed Jango in his sleep or his body was adjusting the bed’s new topography caused by Jango’s weight.

After a few minutes of just watching the other breathe, Jango slowly closed the distance until their arms were touching. The other’s muscles twitched slightly in response to the stimulus, but the owner seemed as deep in sleep as before.

Slowly, he draped his left arm over Obi-Wan’s stomach. Propping himself up a bit on his right arm, he carefully pulled Obi-Wan to him. Jango got Obi-Wan pulled up against him and used his own chest to leverage Obi-Wan onto his right side.

Once that was done, he moved until they were up against each other, spooning. His left arm was still draped over the other’s waist and he used it to move Obi-Wan’s right arm out from under him. Waking up to a numb arm never made a good morning.

Jango settled down completely, his other arm moving up to stroke the other’s hair. It was soft and smooth and Obi-Wan’s. He knew this was far from his end goal, but he couldn’t help but feel content with the other man in his arms for the night.
And now the bed-sharing trope! In a very messed up way!

Mando’a:
Tion hibire su olar? Nu’amyc be’chaaj jii – The students are still here? They’re usually gone now | not a very literal translation as actual Mandalorians tend to drop things like the verb “to be” and “usually” is the same word as “normal” which has a direct translation of “not changing” or “to not change”... so yeah
Elek. Val shi ru’ky b’akaanla tionase – Yes. They just ended their fighting exams | “ru’ky” is half made up using “end” with the past prefix and “akaanirla tionase” literally translates as “war/fight puzzles/questions” because there is no word for test or exam
Val ru’cuyi jate – They did well | finally something easy
Ni haa’tayli. Ibic solus cuye ti ni – I see. This one is with me
Mhi kar’tayli. Nubatti – We know. Don’t worry
K’olar - come
Heturam be haar Kar’ta – Mouthburn of the heart | heturam is a sought after state of intense burning in the mouth from very spicy food, I figured there’d be at least one romance novel with this name
The one where he wakes up in a new place (reprise 02)

Chapter Notes

Previously:
Jango settled down completely, his other arm moving up to stroke the other’s hair. It was soft and smooth and Obi-Wan’s. He knew this was far from his end goal, but he couldn’t help but feel content with the other man in his arms for the night.

Obi-Wan came to full consciousness quite suddenly. His first thought was that he didn’t remember falling asleep. The second was that he was not alone in whatever place he fell asleep. The third was that there was something strong and unmoving, though warm, around his waist. He opened his eyes to see his corner. From the outside.

Force, he had fallen asleep in Jango’s bed!

And apparently the man had decided to just get into bed with him instead of waking him up and kicking him out!

He should probably extract himself before the other woke up.

Obi-Wan had barely moved his right arm to try to disengage the one caging him when he felt Jango stir from behind.

The arm on his waist tensed for a moment before he felt Jango lean closer and breathe in his scent at the back of his neck. Obi-Wan tensed at the proximity to such a vulnerable spot in response and, the second the arm loosened, threw himself out of the bed, tumbling to the floor and accidentally taking one of the flat sheets with him.

He looked up at Jango from the floor, breathing a bit hard from the shock of adrenaline. Jango just propped himself up on one arm and gave Obi-Wan a self-satisfied smirk, looking very much like the proverbial cat who got the cream.

"Jate vaar’tur, Obi-Wan," He said. Obi-Wan took a deep breath calm himself down. It worked a little.

"Jate vaar’tur, Jango. You know you could have just woken me up and I would have gone to sleep on my cot," he said as he stood up, fixing his clothes and collecting the sheet he had taken with him.

"Hmmm… Perhaps. But then I wouldn’t have gotten such a nice, warm night. Or gotten to see your copikla, mirshiryc face," Jango replied with a grin. Obi-Wan rolled his eyes and threw the sheet at the other man.

"Once again, you have a very odd sense of cute," Obi-Wan replied with a huff. Although it came out with a lighter tone than he would have liked.

Jango untangled himself from the sheets, stood up, and stretched. “Don’t forget, this odd man is the one getting you breakfast,” Obi-Wan stiffened at the comment.
“You’re the one not allowing me to get breakfast,” he stated coolly. Jango apparently thought they were still being friendly, though, and walked over to him with a smile, the force around him laughing with the joy Jango was broadcasting.

“Eventually, Obi-Wan, eventually,” Jango said as he ruffled Obi-Wan’s hair. After a second of that he switched to smoothing it out and, after tucking a bit behind Obi-Wan’s ear, said “I’ll go get it now, just wait a bit. Ni venyaimpa,” he left before Obi-Wan could respond.

Or even process what had just happened, really.

It was apparently okay that he had fallen asleep in the bed. But still improper. One was not supposed to fall asleep in a state leader’s…

Kriff.

What was wrong with him?

How could he act like it was fine to fall asleep in the Mand’alor’s bed? Be friendly with him afterwards and tease him? He was a Jedi! Even if he hadn’t held a lightsaber for over four months. He was a Jedi master and the Republic’s Negotiator. He didn’t belong here!

He also couldn’t afford a mental breakdown again. Not now that he was under such tight watch. He’d have to analyze and deal with this later.

Obi-Wan put aside all his feelings and moved to the dresser and got out some clothes.

Strip out of sleep clothes, it was laundry day. Put sleep clothes in laundry chute. Put on clothes. Leggings, long sleeve shirt, sleeveless tunic, belt. Then the coat Jango had insisted on getting him, the weight reminded him of his cloak. His boots were in his corner.

As he finished snapping them on, Jango came back in with breakfast, apparently still in a good mood. They took the meal in silence, Jango watching him more than usual and Obi-Wan avoiding his gaze more than usual.

Obi-Wan used the time to gather his thoughts for the day. He was going to begin the day by grading the adults’ test from yesterday. They were going to use next week to plan the next steps in their curriculum plan with Obi-Wan. Except Sullex. He was leaving today for the Generis campaign. Then he’d review the rest of the kids’ lesson plans for the week. The rest of the day could be for his own curriculum.

“I’ll see you for lunch,” Jango broke into his thoughts as he collected their breakfast dishes and headed for the doors.

“’Ret, Jango,” he replied out of habit.

“’Ret, Obi-Wan,” Jango smiled back widely before stepping out, the doors closing and locking behind him. The man definitely hadn’t minded him falling asleep in his bed. He’d have to analyze that at a later time.

“We’re going to the library after this, if you want,” Obi-Wan put down the forkful of food he had been about to insert into his mouth.

“Pardon?”
“You’re half-way done with *The Twelve Most Important Borrows* and there are only five more books in the bookcase after that. You should get to pick some of what you’re reading,” Jango explained.

“I’ve been fine with what you’ve been bringing me,” Obi-Wan said.

“Still,” Jango shrugged, “It’s only if you want.” Obi-Wan thought for a moment.

“That would be nice.”

Obi-Wan had seen much of the galaxy, and so rarely felt awe anymore. But he walked into the library and felt the sort of awe he had only felt a few times in his life.

The library was large, with shelves expanding far in the eye. There were many spaces for lounging and working, though not too many. The space was well lit, no doubt in large part due to the wall of windows on the far end, which Obi-Wan suspected overlooked the courtyard Jango had taken him to a few times, and the mirrors apparently used for both security and lighting.

It wasn’t a breathtakingly sublime place, somewhere that inspired awe through its incomprehensibility and overwhelmingness. No, this was the sort of awe he felt when he had walked the halls of the Jedi temple after the hardest of missions, or gotten back to his room to see Anakin after thinking he would never again. It was awe and it was relief. Both so all-encompassing that he just wanted to drink in the moment. Or crystalize it and carry it around. A euphoria that would be tempting to live in forever if he could.

A proper library. There were too few of these in the galaxy, let alone ones that were obviously so well treated, so valued.

A library was knowledge. From knowledge came truth, choice, freedom, and understanding. When Anakin became older and would spend his bad days tinkering with the temple droids, Obi-Wan would go to the library and research. Sometimes he had wondered if he could have been a scholar, if he lived in a time without any major wars.

“K’olar, ni ven’tengaana tolase,” Jango said after a moment of letting Obi-Wan drink in the sight.

Obi-Wan followed him to a central area with a few computers that appeared to be free to use, as well as a few desks with workers. Jango guided them to one of the open computers and sat Obi-Wan in the chair, pulling up one for himself on the left.

“Desk helpers can help with anything, but if you don’t try to find it yourself for at least five minutes they’ll get mad at you.” Obi-Wan snorted at that, “There are a few other places with catalogs in the library, if you click on *this*,” Jango tapped on an icon in the top right corner, “you’ll bring up a map. Which you can see also includes general floor plan and general book sections. It’s useful to memorize the assigned numbers.”

Obi-Wan looked at the map, the organization seemed to be about the same format as the Jedi temple’s, just with different numbers. He tried to memorize them quickly before Jango closed the map and clicked on the button in the middle of the screen labeled “joha”.

“You pick your operating language on this screen; we’ll go with basic for today,” selecting basic brought them to another screen, “from here, you search by coming to this sidebar and entering what you want in different fields. Title, author, general section, sub-section, subject, so on. You need to have at least language and one other field filled out to search, and the computer automatically picks
your operating language, though you can add more,” Jango showed him by adding Mando’a to the search criteria.

“And the desaturated search fields?” he asked.

“Once you’ve searched generally, those fields unlock so you can narrow down results further. I’ll give you five minutes to find some stuff while I go return these,” Jango left behind a sheet of flimi and a pen while he went away with the small cart.

Obi-Wan turned back to the computer and set to work.

By the time Jango came back, he had a small list of sub-sections to visit and the map completely memorized.

“Micro-histories, of course, foreign culture, Bontaa Ruk’s books, horticulture, and… childhood psychology? Really?” Jango read his list from over his shoulder.

“Yes. Really,” Obi-Wan chose not to elaborate on it. Jango just chuckled as he motioned Obi-Wan out of the chair and they began walking to the history section.

“All right then. Oh, that reminds me, I have a plant coming for you. Should get here in a week or less,” Jango said.

“Oh, really? What type of plant?”

“A Murakami orchid, like I talked about that one time. Turns out they’re connected to the force more than other plants, and do some sort of bonding thing?”

Obi-Wan stopped. Did Jango really have so little information about the plant? Or was this some sort of manipulation?

“What?” Jango asked. Obi-Wan started moving at a quick clip. They were only five shelves from the micro-histories though and he soon found himself having to stop.

“I do remember that plant now. The Murakami orchid is not usually raised out of extremely force-filled environments, as the force is its major source of nutrition. Otherwise it needs very little light and barely any water,” He started looking over titles, “when it does not have access to enough force around it, it can only grow, or continue living, by bonding to a force-sensitive being who is able to give it the right amount of force. Some force traditions, including the Jedi, have used them in the past as an exercise of control,” he finished explaining.

“That sounds like more of a pain than I was expecting. Should I cancel the order or…”

“No. I’ll take care of it. My master actually tried once, but it couldn’t handle all of the moving around. I’d like to see if I could do it now,” Obi-Wan replied after a moment. That wasn’t a lie.

Jango gave a hum of acknowledgement as Obi-Wan continued to select books. He eventually found three that he’d like and one he knew Jango would like. They made rounds to all of the other sections, and unexpectedly found a book on the Murakam system’s plants that Obi-Wan picked up to better prepare for his new charge.

As they were finishing up in the psychology section, Obi-Wan couldn’t help but comment, “You should probably find some books that you actually want to read yourself, you know. It is your bookshelf,” Jango gave him a considering gaze at that.
“I think, at this point, we can call it our shelf,” he replied.

“And I think that, if all goes how you want it to, I’ll eventually end up in phase three and living with a Mandalorian family. Therefore, while you are temporarily allowing me access to the shelf, its possession still falls to you,” Obi-Wan said. In response, Jango pushed off the shelf he was leaning on and stalked towards Obi-Wan.

“If it goes how I want it to?” Jango asked, stopping only a step away. Obi-Wan found himself unable to comprehend what Jango was actually asking. The response and tone were not what he expected. And the gaze, was not quite angry, but definitely not happy. And the intensity was such that he wanted to look away, but found himself unable to do so.

“Well, one thing’s for sure, you certainly study hard, don’t you?” Jango said after a moment. The intensity vanished and Obi-Wan felt his shoulders relax from their unintended tension.

“I do try,” he replied, voice acceptably steady.

He found one more book that seemed useful and then Jango was leading them to the checkout, a simple fingerprint scan and barcode scan and then they were out.

Obi-Wan laid in Jango’s bed again, thinking. The library trip had been unexpected, Jango’s words even more so. He wasn’t sure what to make of them. He thought that there was something else about his situation he had told himself to analyze, but he couldn’t remember quite what. It was honestly giving him a bit of a headache trying to figure it out.

He’d try again in the morning. If he wasn’t too busy working on including his new information into his curriculum. The psychology books he had picked were good ones. Or at least this first one was good.

It was also getting harder to concentrate on it. Apparently it was going to be another late night for Jango. Why did they have to have Deadalin tea for dinner tonight? It made him, and another 57% of humans, sleepy. Apparently Jango was not one of them.

Regardless, back to the book…

Chapter End Notes

Deadalin tea does not exist, I just made it up because I needed something like it to exist
Okay, I know it seems like this chapter takes place over the course of one day, but it doesn’t. And I’m too tired to figure out how to write that without messing up emotional/thought process continuity. So there’s the morning after, then three days, third day is the library trip, then the day after that is when Obi-Wan is reflecting at the end. So this chapter takes up five days or one star wars week. (I may actually come back and edit this chapter for more indication of time skip, so be aware if you reread this chapter, it might be different)

Mando’a:
Jate vaar’tur – Good morning
Your copikla, mirshirc face – your cute, shocked face I made an adj. out of the verb
“mirshir” which means “to shock/stun"
Ni venyaimpa – I will return
‘Ret – goodbye (casual/normal/informal)
K’olar, ni ven’tenegaana tolase – come, I will show [you] the system
Joha - language
The one where he has a breakdown again

Previously:
*It was also getting harder to concentrate on it. Apparently it was going to be another late night for Jango. Why did they have to have Deadalin tea for dinner tonight? It made him, and another 57% of humans, sleepy. Apparently Jango was not one of them.*

*Regardless, back to the book…*

Jango woke up first this time. Unlike Obi-Wan, he stayed still, content to just feel the other’s warmth and take in his scent. By now, Obi-Wan mostly smelled like Jango. His room, his products, but there was still an undertone that was distinctly Obi-Wan that seemed there to stay. He breathed in the other’s scent again and tightened his hold a bit more.

He was glad that the tea had been enough, even if he had to stay up even later than usual. He didn’t want to drug his cyar’ika into bed each time. It just wasn’t healthy.

This time had gone even better than last, though. He had needed far less time to maneuver them, even if Obi-Wan had stirred a bit while doing it. Also, he hadn’t thought too much of it last time, but this time Obi-Wan had been more relaxed in his arms, far less stiff. Subconsciously, he was getting even more used to Jango’s presence. Slowly relaxing more than before.

He got a few more minutes of just holding the other when Obi-Wan woke up. His shifted a bit, then woke up completely and suddenly. Jango could tell when all of his muscles tensed for a second.

“My apologies, I had not intended to do this again. The tea last night, Deadalin, makes me sleepy,” Obi-Wan said nervously, slowly trying to move Jango’s arm so he could escape.

Jango wanted to pull the other back against him, stay there for an hour and cuddle. But not yet, Obi-Wan wasn’t quite used to this enough for him to do that.

“Then the apology should be mine, I forgot that it made most humans sleepy,” Jango didn’t care if Obi-Wan could use the force to tell if he was lying. It would work in his favor either way. Obi-Wan finished extracting himself, stood up, and gave Jango a questioning look.

“We should… probably get ready for the day,” Obi-Wan said after a moment. The man was obviously still a bit off balanced, a bit confused by what was going on, if his tone and body posture were anything to go by.

Jango hummed at that and stretched as Obi-Wan walked over to the dresser and picked up his last outfit. It was, unfortunately, a full Jedi outfit. Obi-Wan walked into the ‘fresher to change. He still didn’t like changing while others were watching, which was fine. Jango got up and changed himself, then left to get breakfast, making sure to lock the door on the way out.

When he got back with breakfast, he was surprised to find that Obi-Wan wasn’t at his usual spot at
the table or on the cot. Locking the door then putting down the food, Jango couldn’t help but survey the room an extra time. No Obi-Wan in sight. He must still be in the ‘fresher, then.

“Obi-Wan? You still in there?” Jango asked. When there was no response, Jango knocked at the door, which opened automatically; apparently, it hadn’t been locked.

Obi-Wan was staring at himself in the mirror, pain clear on his face.

“Obi-Wan? What happened?” Jango moved swiftly into the room, hovering next to Obi-Wan, who was still staring at his reflection. He reached out to put his hand on the juncture between Obi-Wan’s neck and far shoulder.

As soon as he did, Obi-Wan bowed his head and collapsed until his upper half was bent over the counter.

“It’s wrong,” he said, his voice… despairing? Jango wasn’t quite sure yet, “I’ve worn these robes for years, never been out of similar style except… Why does it look wrong? Why does it feel wrong?!” the man was dry sobbing, his arms trembling. His legs didn’t seem to be any steadier.

Jango grabbed both shoulders and gently dragged the other down to the floor. Obi-Wan kept trembling while on his knees, Jango rubbed what he hoped were soothing circles on Obi-Wan’s upper back.

“I don’t know. People change. What’s comfortable for them changes with that. You shouldn’t hold on too tightly to the past, especially if it’s hurting you,” He said.

“But it’s… I…” Obi-Wan tried to say something, but still couldn’t get out the words. Couldn’t even seem to think of them. That was unlike the man on so many levels.

“Let’s just… get you out of some of this. Keep on the pants and the under-tunic. Everything else off. You can borrow one of my tops for today,” Jango placated, still rubbing the circles on Obi-Wan’s back.

At length, Obi-Wan calmed down a bit and nodded, then moved to undo the obi around his waist. Jango helped him out of his outer layers then out of the ‘fresher.

Obi-Wan just stood there, vacant and spent, as Jango rifled through his drawers for something that would fit well. It seemed that Obi-Wan still liked elements of Jedi style, as far as clothing construction and cut went, but couldn’t handle the image of being a Jedi master anymore. He found a top he thought would work, a rich dark blue, three-quarter sleeve, V-neck, with a cropped hem and simple embroidery. It would be a little baggy, but it would work.

Hmmm… he should add a belt as well. He handed the shirt to Obi-Wan and moved to the closet. He grabbed a dark brown, but definitely Mandalorian, belt.

Stepping back out, he saw Obi-Wan had the shirt on and was taking deep breaths. He walked behind Obi-Wan and put the belt on his hips, fastening it in the back. In response, Obi-Wan turned around to face him, opened his mouth to speak, then blushed and looked down.

“Thank you,” he said softly after a moment. Gods, Jango wanted to hug him. Hold him tight, never let go. But Obi-Wan was already taking a step back, putting distance between them, they weren’t at that point yet.

“No problem, now let’s eat. Cold breakfast today,” Obi-Wan gave a weak chuckle at the small bit of humor as they settled down at the table. That was promising.
They ate in their usual morning silence for a bit, Jango suspected that Obi-Wan found comfort in the routine, and would prefer to put the breakdown behind him as soon as possible. Still, he had to ask.

“Do you think you’ll be able to teach today? Or should we tell the kids you’re unwell?” he asked. Obi-Wan swallowed the fruit in his mouth, then stroked his beard in thought for a moment.

“No, I think I’ll be fine. Besides, the adult class is having meetings today,” Obi-Wan’s voice was still a little cracked from the breakdown earlier.

“Alright, but tell Vojunn and Kanvined if you can’t, no sense in burning yourself out when you can rest and come back okay,” Jango said. Obi-Wan nodded and they fell back into silence for the rest of the meal.

Unfortunately, he did have to get to his meetings. He cleaned up, put Obi-Wan behind the shields, and left with their usual goodbye, although it was understandably a bit lackluster.

Walking down the hall to drop off the tray, Jango was finally able to think about the morning’s events. During the actual event, he had been focused on helping Obi-Wan, alleviating his pain, now that he could think a bit though…

Obi-Wan couldn’t stand to be in Jedi robes anymore. This was good. Perhaps not as good as if the man thought nothing of the robes, but it did mean that he couldn’t consider himself a full Jedi anymore. He was now most comfortable in Mandalorian clothes with Jedi elements incorporated. As far as being Manda went, it was a common, perfectly acceptable way to be. A path many initiates took, especially ones that came from more traditional cultures.

Chapter End Notes

Mando’a:
Cyar’ika – darling/sweetheart
The one where he plans with Akkus

Chapter Notes

Previously:

*Obi-Wan couldn’t stand to be in Jedi robes anymore. This was good. Perhaps not as good as if the man thought nothing of the robes, but it did mean that he couldn’t consider himself a full Jedi anymore. He was now most comfortable in Mandalorian clothes with Jedi elements incorporated. As far as being Manda went, it was a common, perfectly acceptable way to be. A path many initiates took, especially ones that came from more traditional cultures.*

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Obi-Wan woke up with a now fairly familiar arm wrapped around his waist. He had fallen asleep in Jango’s bed again. For the third time in barely two weeks.

He was now certain that Jango was trying to get him to fall asleep in his bed. Jango hadn’t woken him up any of the times before, which wouldn’t have made much sense unless the man wanted him in his bed.

Not to mention the circumstances each time he had fallen asleep. The first time, he suspected that he had been drugged, the uj’alayi tasted different that night compared to the other times he had it. Then the Deadalin tea used to make him sleepy. Jango had lied the next morning about forgetting what it did to most humans. He wasn’t sure what he had digested this time, though. But each of the three times, Jango had spent a few nights going to bed early before staying up late, now presumably to wait for him to fall asleep.

The question, of course, was why. Why was Jango trying to get him to fall asleep in the bed? It just… didn’t make sense. The man had made no sexual advances, so it couldn’t be that. But everything else his brain could think of was flimsy, and could have been remedied with some piece of technology or other, he himself was unnecessary.

Really though, he couldn’t think of anything he had eaten that might have been drugged, or that he had a reaction with. It couldn’t have just been the fact that it was a heavy meal for dinner last night, could it?

Jango shifted behind him, and Obi-Wan hoped that meant he could get out soon. It really was embarrassing to fall asleep in a bed you weren’t supposed to. Well, apparently, he was supposed to, but the reasons and any order to actually do so were not forthcoming.

Instead of letting him go, or even loosening, the arm instead tightened and drew him even closer against Jango. And apparently this time Jango’s other arm was under his neck, Obi-Wan realized as it strapped itself around his chest to pull everything but their legs flush against each other.


In lieu of a response, Jango just tightened his arms a bit more. Through the force Obi-Wan could tell he wasn’t all the way awake, but he certainly wasn’t completely asleep.
“We should both get ready for the day. Don’t you have meetings?” Obi-Wan tried.

He wasn’t sure if Jango was actually nuzzling the back of his head or just shaking his head no, perhaps both. It felt nice, but he still wanted out of the bed.

“No meetings. Free all morning,” The arms settled into a steel cage and Obi-Wan felt Jango slip back into a light sleep.

Well, then. As resigned as he was at the moment, he was not letting this happen again.

000

Jango couldn’t wait to do that again. He was honestly pretty impressed that it had only taken a heavy meal this time. Even if it had still taken longer for the other to fall asleep than he would have liked. He had even gotten an extra half hour this morning just to hold Obi-Wan!

“Ah! ‘Alor,” Akkus called as he turned a corner, “I was just coming to your room, you weren’t in your office,”

“I was heading there. Lucky we ran into each other,” Jango said as Akkus turned to walk with him to his office. They walked a moment before Akkus replied.

“Yes, it is. I do have some questions, or rather a conversation that I want to have with you, but I’m not sure if you’ll want to wait until we’re behind closed doors or not,” ze said. Jango quirked an eyebrow in response.

“It is with regards to your… recent dinner schedule,” His wha- ah, Obi-Wan.

“Let’s wait. But maybe on the way we can find a better euphemism,” Jango laughed. Akkus responded with zer own laughter.

By the time they had gotten to the office they had decided that kad’au and kaysh ge’tal worked pretty well.

“So why do we need to talk about him?” Jango asked once they sat down. Akkus sighed.

“Some members of the war council have concerns about him,” Akkus began.

“Let me guess, Suki and Jordug?”

“Yes, and Threl a bit. But really only a bit. I think it’s mainly confusion on his part.”

“That makes sense. What are the concerns?”

“Well, the expected “what if he’s not good enough, what if he’s not good for you” questions. But they are also mildly concerned about his past as a Jedi, and whether that makes him suitable for any high Mandalorian position,” ze explained.

“I’ll talk to them about it. He’s integrating pretty well, so it’ll be easy to provide proof that their concerns are unfounded,” Jango said.
“There is another matter, not really an issue with them, but…” Akkus tapered off. Jango motioned for ze to continue, “During the conversation I privied myself to, there was a moment where they wondered if you had been put under the influence of some sort of force ability,” Jango snorted at that, “yes, I know it’s ridiculous, and they dismissed it as ridiculous soon after they thought of it, but you need a plan for that when your courtship is more known,” Akkus explained. Ze had a point. Jango sighed and leaned back in his chair.

“Kriff. I do,” he groaned.

“Indeed.”

“Can’t I cross that bridge when I come to it?”

“If you want, but it will be a lot harder than if you get it out of the way now,"

“I know, I know” Jango sighed as he sat properly again, “is it enough to just make him interact with the war council, plus a few others, and trust him to impress them enough that those folks will attest to him being a good match?”

“Well it’s not a bad idea, but you might need more than just that. Some sort of demonstration for his suitability as a Mandalorian would work. I’m not sure how to prove there was no force tampering, though,” Akkus said.

“For the demonstration, I think we can wait for an opportunity to present itself. Not sure about the force thing. I’ll ask Obi-Wan to explain some of that to me, make a plan from that,” Jango decided.

“Combined with your first idea, that sounds like it will work. ‘Alor,” Akkus rose from zer chair and gave the proper bow.

“Ret’urcye mhi, Akkus,” Jango said.

“Ret’urcye mhi,” Akkus returned before walking out the door.

Chapter End Notes

I am once again out of ideas for chapter titles
Short chapter from here to chapter 36 or so, by the way. So hopefully they'll come quickly? But also, university is about to get crazy, so we'll see...

Mando’a:
Uj’alayi – Uj cake | type of Mandalorian desert, a dense and flat cake made with ground nuts, syrup, pureed dried fruit, and spice (sounds good, tbh)
Kad’au – lightsaber
Kaysh ge’tal – his red
Ret’urcye mhi – goodbye
“Explain the force mind-tricks to me,” Jango asked in the middle of dinner. It was a non-sequitur, sure, but it needed to be asked.

Obi-Wan glanced at him before taking a sip from his bowl.

“Which one?” Kriff. There was more than one? How had he not thought of asking this before?

“The one where you make other people do things. And they end up in that weird stupor. Any others can be at a different time,” he elaborated.

“Ah, that one. It’s one of the simpler techniques, actually. But also… a bit like how an omelet is easy to make, but you can really tell a chef’s skill by how well done it is,” Obi-Wan began. Jango quirked an eyebrow in question as he lifted his own soup bowl to his lips.

“Many force basics involve sending your presence out, or using your own force abilities to affect the world around you. In that technique you send out a very directed bit of force, your will, as it were. Then you use that to override another’s will temporarily.”

“How temporary?”

“That depends. What kind of command did the force user give? Who is the force user? Who is the being that the technique is being used on?”

“How do each of those affect what happens?”

“Well, you’re overriding another’s will when you do it. That means you need to have a will much stronger than the other to displace their native will. That’s why we say it only works on weak-willed beings. And you need a lot of power to pull one off successfully. Also, it really only works on fairly immediate commands, ones that can be kept at the front of one’s mind. “Drop that” or “Stop moving” or, if one is strong enough, “Let us through and stand guard until your boss comes, when they ask, tell them no one came through” things like that,” Obi-Wan explained. Jango motioned for him to continue.

“To put it perhaps too simply, the simpler and shorter the command, the easier it is to make another do it. The stronger your will is, the better able you are to enforce it on another. The weaker their will is, the easier it is to override it for a bit,” Obi-Wan finished.

“Hmmm… It has a reputation of being able to basically make another being a willing slave, though,” Obi-Wan choked a bit on his food at that. He had to cough a few times before responding.
“No. No. Not like that. There… there are Sith legends about such techniques, but they are different. And would require far more preparation than the basic mind trick.” Obi-Wan seemed a bit disgusted just talking about it.

“What’s the difference? Beyond how long it lasts,” Jango queried.

“The Sith technique is, as you said, slavery. It… It does not overpower another’s will. Supposedly, it removes the will. It’s closer to a specialized mind wipe, actually. The basic technique the Jedi use is more like… overwhelming persuasion. Not permeant, more effective on some then others, still nearly impossible to make one go against their own strong convictions,” Obi-Wan said.

“And the Sith techniques are legends, you said,” Jango prompted.

“Well, yes. But there’s always at least one grain of truth behind a legend,” Obi-Wan cautioned.

“Hmm” Jango rubbed at his face out of tiredness. The past week and a half had been rough. At least this conversation was bringing good news…

“You seem… very exhausted today. And you’ve been quite stressed the past week or so. Would you like another massage?” Obi-Wan asked. Jango thought about the offer.

“Like one? Yes. Have time for one? No,” Gods did it sound good now, though. Ugh. He couldn’t wait to finish sorting out this supply chain disaster. He was pretty sure he only had an hour or so of work for it tonight, though. Then he would just have to wait and see if implementation worked. He really hated that sort of stress.

Jango glanced over his shoulder at the other man, who seemed to have finally fallen asleep. Jango smiled at that and turned back to the document in front of him, which happened to be the outline to make sure Obi-Wan was accepted by the citizens of the empire.

After seven overworked days, he had finally gotten around to asking Obi-Wan about mind tricks. It turned out he wouldn’t have to worry about too much about those accusations. One did not last in, or even get to, the position of Mand’alor without a strong will. He’d done enough over the years to prove how strong-willed and determined he was as a person. It would just be a matter of spreading knowledge about how those mind tricks worked.

Which they probably should have been doing anyway. He was actually extremely grateful for tonight’s conversation, Jango hadn’t realized how much better prepared they could be against force users. This was why diversity of thought was always important.

Dealing with that information was for another day, though, one where he wasn’t so exhausted, at least. Tonight, he got to put away his work a little late, then spend the night with his cyare, soon to be riduur.

Jango put everything away, stood up, and stretched. He walked to the bed, looking forward to another night with Obi-Wan’s soothing presence. He couldn’t wait for when Obi-Wan was officially sharing his – no – their bed.

For now, he would make do with these stolen nights. If he had these, then that was enough.

He grabbed Obi-Wan’s data pad and put it on the nightstand before walking back over to his side of the bed.
He lifted the sheets and slid halfway into the bed when Obi-Wan started to get up, making to get out of the bed.

That would not do.

Jango heard himself growl as he lunged forward and grabbed Obi-Wan, using his weight to pull both of them down onto the bed.

He pulled Obi-Wan flush against him with both arms, tangling their legs to make the entrapment more complete. He could feel Obi-Wan’s heartbeat speeding up under his right hand as they both just laid there for a moment.

“Where are you going? I didn’t tell you to leave,” He growled into Obi-Wan’s ear. He both heard and felt Obi-Wan swallow before answering.

“Well, usually when one gets into bed, one no longer requires a bed-warmer. I was merely following the established routine,” Jango was still too driven to keep Obi-Wan in their bed to appreciate the sass like usual.

“Broken routine,” screw it. He might as well go all the way at this point. It was about time, “Tomorrow, that cot will be replaced with a couch. You sleep here from now on.” Obi-Wan was silent.

“Understand?” He asked, tightening his hold. The message was clear, no escape until Jango got his answer.

Obi-Wan gave high-pitched keen out of confusion. Jango was too far gone to care.

“Obi-Wan Kenobi, do you understand? Tion gar suvari? Ke’gar nuhoyi olar teh jii bat,” he kept his arms stiff, completely unmoving.

“Elek, ‘Alor. Jango,” Obi-Wan said. Jango relaxed his body at the answer, though he didn’t loosen his grip. He nuzzled Obi-Wan’s hair, the man seemed to like that usually. And did indeed relax his body a bit at the action. Probably subconscious.

“Good. You should try to go to sleep, ner kad’au.”

Chapter End Notes

Mando’a:
Cyare – darling/sweetheart
Riduur – spouse/partner | I decided that Mandos in this alternate universe of Star Wars translate this as “mate” because I figured it would have developed as a more catch-all term for the different types of partnerships/marriages that would have been integrated into the Mandalorian empire with all the additionally conquered systems and planets and stuff
Tion gar suvari? Ke’gar nuhoyi olar teh jii bat – Do you understand? You sleep here from now on | this is a very literal translation, with zero nuance, but I don't feel like making "from this moment to eternity" or something sound decent so...
Ner kad’au – my lightsaber
The one where he's confused

Chapter Notes

Previously:
“Elek, ’Alor. Jango,” Obi-Wan said. Jango relaxed his body at the answer, though he didn’t loosen his grip. He nuzzled Obi-Wan’s hair, the man seemed to like that usually. And did indeed relax his body a bit at the action. Probably subconscious.
“Good. You should try to go to sleep, ner kad’au.”

Obi-Wan woke up from an… interesting night of sleep. He had been restless in his bouts of unconsciousness, but each time he had woken up it had been with Jango still wrapped around him. Then his body would slowly relax at the other’s presence and soon he would fall back asleep.

Since when did Jango have that effect on him?

Sure, Jango was now a comfort of sorts. His presence was familiar, and Obi-Wan often enjoyed his time with Jango, it was usually intellectually stimulating or relaxing. But this…

Kriff.

What was going on now?

He didn’t know how to interpret last night. Especially when he took into account that Jango had been having a rough week that resulted in a relatively short temper and exhaustion.

The man still hadn’t made any sexual advances, so it couldn’t be that. Was he… touched starved? It still seemed an odd way to fix that hypothetical problem, though.

It just didn’t… what was going on? He couldn’t really make hide or hair of why Jango was doing this. And how was this going to affect the rest of their routine?

He felt Jango’s muscles tense a bit as the man came to full consciousness. A small, sleepy, noise from the other, then Obi-Wan felt the back of his neck being nuzzled once more. And then his own neck and shoulders were relaxing again. When had his body gotten conditioned to do that?

“Jate vaar’tur, ner kad’au,” Jango mumbled from behind him.

“Jate vaar’tur,” Obi-Wan replied cautiously.

Jango took in another deep breath and tightened his grip for a moment before letting go. As he sat up and stretched, Obi-Wan turned to face him, unsure of what to do now.

After a moment, Jango glanced down at him and smiled. Reaching down and ruffling his hair, he said, “Go get dressed. I’ll get breakfast.”

Then the other was gone. Obi-Wan collapsed back onto the bed for a moment before standing up and moving to get his clothes.
Apparently, they were doing the same thing as usual, just… waking up closer and being a bit friendlier?

By the force, what was going on?

The rest of the morning passed in the same way as usual. As it got close to or ilor lunch, Obi-Wan shifted to the spot he had found where the collar caused almost no pain. It looked like Jango was not joining him for lunch.

He was momentarily surprised when the door opened without the restraints, then confused when the droid rolled in instead of Jango. Had the restraints malfunctioned?

The droid deactivated the shields and deposited the tray. Obi-Wan sat up straighter, befuddled.

The shields were put up and the droid left. Obi-Wan slowly moved down to sit at the table, glancing back at the spot the collar usually came from. Perhaps it had finally been deemed unnecessary?

That would be nice. It had been nothing more than an annoyance for some time.

After lunch, Vojunn and Kanvined came to take him to his first class. He was still so out of it from the morning that they asked three times if he was feeling okay or needed to cancel the class.

Kurri and Kas seemed to sense that something was not quite right, but he did not give them reason to comment. The rest of the class didn’t notice. Well, he was a consummate actor, he wasn’t going to let his confusion affect his performance as a teacher.

When he was escorted back to his room, the door was opened to reveal that the cot had indeed been replaced by a couch. The fact that it perfectly matched the décor made Obi-Wan suspect that it had been there originally before the cot. Kanvined did not comment on the change, but Obi-Wan could see Vojunn tilt their head in confusion at the door.

“So what’s with the couch?” Vojunn asked as they walked down the halls to the adult class, breaking Obi-Wan out of his thoughts. He was still trying to understand that himself, actually. He opened his mouth and closed it again. What was he going to say? “I’m now sharing the bed with the Mand’alor”? That wouldn’t cause a fuss at all.

“The cot was deemed unnecessary, so it was given back so that the couch could return,” he answered after a moment.

Vojunn turned around and walked backwards a few steps, studying him before shrugging and commenting, “To each their own, I guess.”

The adult class definitely noticed that he was out of it. Though barely, his responses now were slower, his thoughts more scattered, his answers less sensible compared to their usual high level of clarity.

Two minutes before the end of class, they decided to give up on learning entirely and just focus on teasing him.

“Jeez, adat’juri, you’re as out of it as Troz when he first started getting courted by his mate,” Lay jested. Obi-Wan looked at her in confusion for a moment before asking.
“Mate? As in a… clan mate? Or a partner-in-crime sort of situation?” the use of the word “courted” was also confusing, though.

Then again, everything seemed to be confusing today.

“Er… No. Like… an animal’s mate? Would be one way of saying it,” Mo responded with a chuckle and eyebrow wiggle.

Obi-Wan just looked at Mo with a face of mild shock that also communicated his disappointment with their low-brow attitude.

“Wait! Adat’juri, you’re an initiate, aren’t you? Has no one explained the concept of mates to you yet?” Sioth questioned.

“No, I suppose not,” Obi-Wan sighed. At least they weren’t really teasing him anymore.

“OhohoohoOOo,” Lay mused, “Well the word in Mando’a is “riduur”. Have you heard that one?”

“So mate means spouse?” Obi-Wan questioned. It seemed like an odd synonym.

“Well, in some cases, yes. But this place is a combination of many different cultures, so it can mean different things to different folks. It’s also a bit less constricting than “spouse” tends to be in most of the galaxy,” Sioth explained.

“What you first guess of clan mate actually wasn’t too out of line of thought. In clans you have extended families, and in each extended family there are more nuclear family units. Those units are usually organized around mates. But it’s not always the “one plus one in a romantic relationship” that the Republic tends to use. Although romantic relationships are the most common,” Troz added.

“I see…” Obi-Wan said. It was interesting information, that was for sure. He was surprised that his culture modules hadn’t brought that up.

“But seriously, isn’t he acting like Troz did?” Lay asked while beginning her cackling once more. Obi-Wan saw an opportunity and took it.

“And just how, pray tell, did Troz act when he was first getting courted?” Obi-Wan prompted.

“HAH! I think he was even worse than you, actually. He had his head in the clouds half the time. You had to call him three times to get him to respond to anything. He once even walked into a pond!” Lay elaborated, clearly enjoying her memories. Troz groaned.

“Oh! I remember that, it was hilarious! And then Jeka, his mate, was actually there and he almost ran off in embarrassment!” Mo chimed in next.

“Oh that was so good, especially when… when Jeka lifted him out of the pond and then he wasn’t sure how to thank her and- and he just gave her a sopping wet kiss!” Lay was having trouble breathing at the tale. Troz had buried his head in his arms.

“Wait that was you two years ago?!” Sioth asked. “That was so cute! My friends and I were having lunch a few paces away. We still talk about it!” Troz groaned again and said something muffled that sounded suspiciously like “just kill me now. Please.”

“Friends? Or… FriENdS?” Lay asked with an eyebrow wiggle. Honestly, were his students ten again today?
“Well, the four of us are mates now, but we were just regular platonic at the time. You know the best mates are the ones you can be best friends with too. Don’t you agree, Troz?” Sioth responded, quite obviously content with his relationships.

“Well, yeah. It’s gotta be people you can come back to at the end of a hard day and just… collapse into happiness with them, you know? Maybe you complain, or just get to forget everything else, or even a nice massage or something. But you should be a mate to someone you want to just spend your downtime with. Someone whose presence is enough to be around,” Troz said after unburying himself from his arms. Sooth nodded his head in agreement.

“You got anyone like that, adat’juri? Or anyone you might want to in the future? Or do you think you don’t want that sort of thing?” Mo asked. How was he supposed to answer that without being dismissive? To him, they were ridiculous questions.

Obi-Wan took a breath in to give himself time to answer and glanced about the room, only to have his eyes land on Jango by the door.

“I think it’s five minutes past the end of class, and you all should be getting back home. To mates or otherwise,” a few chuckled at the light humor and they all started to make their way out. They all bowed to Jango as they left, having gotten used to the man’s sudden presence after the first few times.

After the students had all left, Obi-Wan walked to the door. Jango was still leaning against the door frame, staring. It was intense and seemed to be full of… anticipation, perhaps? It made Obi-Wan a bit nervous.

“What?” Kriff. He didn’t want to sound nervous.

“Hmmm… nothing. Dinner’s in the room. K’olar,” Jango responded, reaching out to grab Obi-Wan’s arm and pull him into the hall.

They made their way back to their room and sat down to dinner, as was normal.

Normal conversation. Normal shower and work routine for them both. Feeling sleepy at the normal time.

Obi-Wan glanced at the bed. He was having trouble meditating tonight, and was more likely to fall asleep before he managed any more. But going to bed would mean…

Force, this whole situation was odd. And he had no idea how to handle it.

In the end, he didn’t really have a choice. In an odd way, that actually made it a bit easier to pick his book off the table, put it away, and walk over to the bed.

He slid under the covers, onto the side that he supposed was his now.

He heard Jango shift a bit before he felt a small dose of simultaneous elation and contentment through the force, then Jango was back to work, his presence still buzzing. Presumably the man had looked to find him in the bed and was happy about it?

Why? For what ends was this happening?

His uses were as a teacher for force-sensitive beings, as a general (not that they were in any shortage of those around here), and perhaps as a strategist against other force sensitives. It did seem more and more like the Sith empire might make a move against the Mandalorians, if Jango’s dealings with
them the past month were anything to go by.

So why was he sleeping in the Mand’alor’s bed? If those were his uses, then this would be completely unnecessary. Yet here he was.

Here he was falling asleep, he thought to himself. He would have to try to puzzle this tomorrow, he was about to succumb to unconsciousness.

Chapter End Notes

Mando’a
Jane vaar’tur – good morning
Ner kad’au – my lightsaber
Or’ilor – the midday meal
Adat’juri - teacher | Once again, my made up word for teacher
Riduur – spouse | once again, “spouse” in canon universe, in this alternate universe, they translate it as “mate” usually
K’olar – come on
Previously:

So why was he sleeping in the Mand’alor’s bed? If those were his uses, then this would be completely unnecessary. Yet here he was. Here he was falling asleep, he thought to himself. He would have to try to puzzle this tomorrow, he was about to succumb to unconsciousness.

Obi-Wan was about to finish his last Mando’a exercise for the night when Jango’s com started beeping demandingly.

“Osik,” Jango hissed. He grabbed the com with more urgency than usual.

“’Alor,” It was Effao.

“Stirs. What’s going on?”

“Generis campaign just went to haran. I’m getting the info copied now. Council meeting?” Her voice belied well controlled stress.

“’Lek. My room. I’ll call the others. Get here quick,” Jango turned off the com and started rearranging his desk.

“Will you need to move me for this or should I remain here?” Obi-Wan asked a moment later, standing up.

Jango looked at him for a second, studying him, before turning back to his desk.

“No. You’ll be fine here.”

“Suvari,” Obi-Wan replied, sitting back down. Jango gave a tight smile at that, and the stress he was releasing into the force decreased. The man did always seem happier when Obi-Wan used Mando’a.

Jango finished clearing off his desk, called the others, and then sat down to wait. Obi-Wan went back to his book.

The first to arrive were a humanoid and a Silonian, who Jango greeted as Threl and Suki, respectively. Apparently, they had no idea what was going on either.

Next, a Theelin, Akkus apparently, and Effao showed up.

Three more beings, a Wookiee, Druos, and Togruta showed up while Effao was plugging in a data stick into one of Jango’s pads. While also apparently setting up a copier for it.

“Drak, Kros, Wun, glad you could join us,” Jango said. Each of them bowed back to Jango’s nod.

“Okay, so the problem is the Oblin system of the Generis sector,” Effao began.
“Isn’t that basically step one of the consolidation phase, though?” Wun asked.

“Precisely, we’re trying to start the others, but with the current stalemate at Oblin, we’re not really getting anywhere,” Effao continued.

“Do we have a star map? And what are the current battle statistics for that system?” Akkus asked. Jango started looking for the map as Effao brought up the statistics.

“Well, we started with the 6th fleet, backed up with six extra squads from the 3rd fleet, a brigade from 4th, and both the Ash Birds and the Stormbringers are giving support in their sakagals. We’ve sustained minor loses, not much to affect our firepower, but the problem is getting through their defenses. The enemy is currently set up at… Um, ‘Alor? Do we have a map?’

Obi-Wan looked up to see Jango crouched down at one of his bottom desk drawers. The Generis sector map…

“The flat middle drawer, left side, usually,” He said. The others looked at him, a bit startled. Apparently, some hadn’t noticed him or had forgotten about him. Jango just grunted and moved to the correct drawer.

“‘lek. Vor’e,” Jango said after taking a second to find the map. Obi-Wan gave a noise of acknowledgement as he went back to his book.

“Okay, so the enemy’s number is basically a size two fleet. But we’re not quite sure of possible formations because of all the different types of ships and sigils. They do all, however, carry this sigil. Which identifies them as part of Onoricron,” Effao finished explaining.

The name rang a bell. Wasn’t the Onoricron coalition… Yes. He remembered that mission.

“So the defenses?” Threl asked.

“I haven’t gotten to reading that yet,” Effao said.

“Apparently, what they’re currently doing is similar to a lockstep formation. And they have connected shields,” Akkus read, “and we’re also worried about the amount of strike forces behind the shields,“

“Then we do a javelin, split the shields in one place, then divide and conquer. The Onoricron, they’re known for being a homogenous society with kind of slow reactions. We should be able to deal them that strategy effectively. Especially if our fleet has the Ash Birds and the Stormbringers, right Threl?” Drak commented. Threl looked thoughtful, but Obi-Wan felt the need to chime in before they could respond.

“That’s a misconception, actually,” Obi-Wan stood up, hands naturally folding into his sleeves. The others stared at him for his second interruption, at least two of them clearly not happy about it in the force.

“Which part?” Jango asked. He was long used to Obi-Wan’s cultural explanations.

“The Onoricron coalition is a single banner under which at least seventy different cultures unite. These cultures have only four similar traits. One, they do everything quickly. Two, individuality is important. Three, social cohesion is paramount. Four, the coalition is necessary to maintain each of their cultures in this galaxy, and therefore they must present it as a single, united organization,” Obi-Wan explained.
“And how do you know this?” Kros asked.

“When I was eighteen, my master and I spent seven months on a mission dealing with them. The Onoricron coalition seems to move a bit slow because they have so many members. They are actually very efficient at decision making considering their number. The reason why there are so many different types of ships is because they belong to the different cultures, and are therefore made by many different people and workshops,” Obi-Wan said.

“But if each of these cultures focus on individuals, who all work fast, then the javelin is just going to make us work against multiple new strategies at once,” Jango said, realization dawning on his face.

“Exactly. Wearing them down would probably be better. Choking their communications without stopping them completely would slow down their reactions as well,” Obi-Wan replied.


“So long as they have communication with others in their coalition, they’ll try to keep honoring the coalition and making group decisions, correct?” Akkus asked, looking a bit… impressed? Obi-Wan nodded back in affirmation.

“So basically, we want to break the shields, run their forces down like a fortress, and set up communication interference while we’re at it,” Suki said, tapping their chin.

“Yeah, that’ll work. Kenobi, come over here. Where are they likely to retreat to?” Jango asked. Obi-Wan walked over to the map, looking for Onorin, their main council planet.

“They’re likely to split on retreat. The largest group will probably go to Onorin, the main planet for the coalition. A small group should also splinter off to its moon, Cronos,” Obi-Wan gestured to the corresponding spots on the map as he explained the most likely pattern.

“There should also be contingents to Skolar and Vadur, which are highly populated planets with a lot of resources, so they consider them very important. There will also likely be caravans, going through at least these three routes, carrying communications and likely trying to skirmish,” Obi-Wan continued.

“What about here? This dwarf planet seems like it would be a good station,” Kros asked.

“Ah… yes, Minaus...” Obi-Wan hesitated. Jango gave him a look with a raised eyebrow. Obi-Wan sighed, “Minaus is a holy place to twenty-one of the cultures in the coalition and nearly all of them consider it an important historical site. They may have a few fighters stationed there to defend the place itself, but they won’t dare do anything to draw a fight to it,” he explained.

“So if we attacked it, would they split up more to try to defend it?” Suki asked.

Obi-Wan stared at them in horror for a moment before replying. “Well… yes, they would send reinforcements. But it would be quite… rude.”

“It would just be a bluff. They’ve got shields around this thing, don’t they?” Threl asked.

“They didn’t when I was there, and they hadn’t had any for at least the last two thousand years before that,” Obi-Wan said, a bit of snark in his voice. Effao snorted.

“Could send in the Ash Birds and tell them to miss,” Jango commented.

“They hate missing, though,” Threl protested lightly.
“They’ll deal with it. And we’ll only do it if we need it. To start, let’s get our side to start interfering with communications while breaking down those shields. Then the usual fortress pound. While prepping for pursuit of the retreat Kenobi just described. Anyone have anything else?” Jango finalized. No one had anything to add.


“Elek, ‘Alor,” the others chanted. Obi-Wan followed them in giving a bow, then watched them all quickly file out of the room once they each grabbed a copy of the info.

“Thank you, by the way,” Jango said once the door had closed.

“You’re welcome, but I hope that I did not overstep my bounds,” Obi-Wan replied.

“No. You only spoke when you had something useful to say, a correction, or when I asked you to speak. That’s fine. You didn’t overstep at all,” Jango put his hand on Obi-Wan’s shoulder and gave a reassuring squeeze, as if he was giving a pep talk to a new officer. Obi-Wan gave a pointed, mock-incredulous look at the hand.

Jango snorted as he removed his hand.

“It will be a late night for you, then?” Obi-Wan asked. Jango groaned.

“’Lek. And I won’t even have anything to do for a half-hour. At least,” ah, war. So much hurry up and wait.

“If that’s the case, would you like a massage? Don’t think I didn’t notice that stress building in your shoulders. And I swear they doubled in tenseness during that meeting,” Obi-Wan teased.

“A massage would be nice. Let’s do it on the bed this time, though,” Jango replied.

They moved to the bed, Jango sitting on the edge, Obi-Wan kneeling behind. Jango took off his shirt and Obi-Wan got to work.

There were already a few new knots from the last time he had done this. Honestly, and he thought that he could be bad at taking care of himself. Jango seemed to be giving him a run for his money. Although, given Jango’s position, it wasn’t too surprising that the man was constantly under some stress. Although now he had Obi-Wan to help with that.

Obi-Wan mentally paused at that thought.

It wasn’t wrong, though. They were cohabitating, so it made sense for them to help each other out. And a few massages were something he could easily provide.

And it was… nice. The motions of the massage were relaxing for both of them, and far calmer than the rest of their days seemed to be. The scene probably looked almost domestic from the outside, Obi-Wan mused.

000
“Akkus?” Suki asked from her board.

“Elek?” ze responded. Everything was going smoothly, so ze could spare zer attention from the monitors for a bit.

“What did you think about our ‘Alor’s… um…” ah yes, there were some in the room that probably shouldn’t learn about Obi-Wan for a bit.

“We decided that “kaysh ge’tal” works. And what do I think, was it?” Akkus mused.

“Elek, that,” Suki said, “Tonight was… they certainly have something going."

“Yes, they are obviously very used to each other,” Akkus replied, “I think that they have a good dynamic. And kaysh ge’tal is obviously quite mired in whatever dynamic that is. Even if he is not completely… one of us, he is at least willing to help our ‘Alor. And he already acts like he’s in his future position in many ways.”

“Hm... that’s true. He behaved quite respectfully, although perhaps a bit out of turn, earlier,” Suki said, completely turning away from her board. Akkus chuckled.

“Did he really, though? He helped move the meeting efficiently and non-obtrusively, then only interrupted to make a correction that we would have paid for dearly without. After that he only spoke because our ‘Alor prompted him to do so,” ze explained. Suki looked thoughtful.

“That’s true. I suppose it wasn’t really out of turn, then. I did like their dynamic a lot, actually. It will be nice when it’s completely willing and official,” Suki said.

“Indeed. I think that may be sooner than one might expect, even,” Akkus said.

“If that’s the case, the problem may end up being that kaysh ge’tal is not prepared, duty-wise,” Suki conjectured.

“I had not thought of that, actually… As high advisors, I think helping with this problem falls under our purview,” Akkus said, a grin growing on zer face. One that Suki matched with enthusiasm. They had always been a good team.

Chapter End Notes

Can't proofread right now, here's hoping this is decent...
Oblin system, Onoricron coalition, etc. All made up because I needed something to go here and was unable to wookiepedia a decent replacement otherwise.

Mando’a:
Osik – dung (impolite) | AKA “shit”
‘Alor – shortened form of Mand’alor, “sole leader of Mandalore”
Haran – hell
‘Lek – yeah
Suvari – I understand
Vor’e - thanks
Din’kartaye – sitrep (situation report)
Elek – yes
Kaysh ge’tal – his red
The one where he starts getting groomed politically

Chapter Notes

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See the end of the chapter for more notes

Mid-morning, Obi-Wan looked up as the door suddenly opened. In stepped one of Jango’s officers from the week before. Akkus, if he was remembering correctly.

“Jate vaar’tur, Kenobi,” they said.

“Jate vaar’tur. Akkus, correct?” Obi-Wan replied as the Theelin made their way over to the shields and deactivated them.

“Correct, Akkus Wral, ze/zem/zer. And you are Obi-Wan Kenobi, he/him/his,” ze said, reaching out for a hand shake.

Obi-Wan gave the shake.

“Ah yes, one of the few benefits of being a propaganda piece, your pronouns are well known. Any relation to Sioth Wral?” Obi-Wan responded.

“That would be my ad’ika. I was wondering if you would be willing to help me with some issues today. A bit of a follow-up from last week,” Akkus said, already turning zer body to the door. Obi-Wan was obviously expected to acquiesce.

“Of course,” Obi-Wan gave a respectful bow, which Akkus returned and they made their way out of the room.

“Odd,” thought Obi-Wan, “returning that bow would position us as equals. Ze should technically be above me.”

“I presume Jango has approved this trip?” Obi-Wan asked once they were out in the hall.

“I sent him a message, he probably won’t have time to read it until mid-afternoon, though. This should get done by noon,” Akkus explained.

They walked in silence for their trip, side by side. Eventually they came to a door that Akkus stopped in front of and opened. After being ushered in, Obi-Wan sat at the lone table in the small office.

Akkus took the bag off his back and put it on the table before sitting down across from Obi-Wan.

“We did manage to break through the Onoricron coalition’s formation, and got most of them on their retreat,” Obi-Wan remembered Jango being happy about how the attack went. There had been a lot more nuzzling the next night, and he thought Jango had held him in a more relaxed manner as well, “but there are still a few groups that are holding out. A siege never ends well for anyone, so I’m
hoping your experience can help me find a way to get them as well,” Akkus explained.

“I’ll see what I can do, Mx. Wral,” Obi-Wan replied as ze started pulling out some data pads and data sticks.

“Just Akkus, please. I’m sure that will also make it easier for you to keep me and my son separated,” Akkus corrected.

“Then I must insist on Obi-Wan,” he responded reflexively.

“Very well then, Obi-Wan. So the current hold-outs are on these highlighted locations…”

Jango seemed extra happy that night at dinner. More satisfied. During their conversation, he said nothing about Akkus borrowing him. Indeed, besides the force, the only reason Obi-Wan could tell he was extra happy were the slight differences in expression and body language.

Jango did not actually do anything unusual until they had finished the dinner.

Obi-Wan was about to make to stand up, head for his shower as usual, when Jango reached out and grabbed his hand. The hand was gently forced to rest on the table, palm up. Jango reached into a pocket and pulled out a small tool.

“I apologize for not doing this sooner. It was supposed to happen last week, but the supply chain disaster happened and we were prepping for the final push in Generis,” Jango said as he fiddled with the bracelet on Obi-Wan’s wrist. After a moment, the constant blue light disappeared and it popped open.

Obi-Wan slid his wrist out of the restraint and rubbed the wrist gently, exploring the smooth, uninterrupted skin. It had been months since he had stopped frequently noticing the bracelets, a month and a half since they had actually been used as restraints.

Jango held out his hand and Obi-Wan gave him the other arm, palm up as well.

This time Jango held onto his hand as he removed the bracelet.

“I’ll be back in a bit. Got to return these as well,” Jango said. He left with both the trays and the bracelets, leaving Obi-Wan alone.

That had been quite nice of him.

Obi-Wan didn’t see anyone outside of his usual routine for another two days. Then the door was opening again and the Silonian from the meeting walked through.

“I would like some assistance regarding another culture’s values,” they said bluntly.

“All right. I’ll see what I can do,” Obi-Wan replied.

While they walked to their office, the only words exchanged were simple proper introductions.

“Suki Silnyaru, she/her/hers.”

“Obi-Wan Kenobi, he/him/his.”
He spent a bit more time with Ms. Silnyaru than he had with Akkus, though perhaps a bit less pleasantly. She seemed to be unable to understand either ethics or morals, at least one of the two. He supposed that was why she had asked for assistance, though, and was grateful for that.

Over the next three weeks, both of them came multiple times to have him help them, twice they had even come together.

He would like to say that he had a tentative friendship with each. He certainly had one with Akkus, the Theelin was fairly open with zer affection. He was fairly certain that he was friends with Ms. Silnyaru, especially now that he figured out that she was by nature quite reserved.

The breaks in his ordinary routine were usually enjoyable themselves. Especially given how much knowledge and information he was learning, he had nearly finished his coursework and needed something else to do.

He was also quite grateful now for the law module he had finished. Those lessons had become very useful, as he often found himself helping with some political or even strictly legal matter that would have taken far longer if he was not already familiar with the empire’s laws.

He was also apparently at the point where they could just give him a stack of work to do. This time Akkus had said that he needed help, but Obi-Wan suspected that ze had just wanted someone to share the misery of bureaucracy with. At least this sort of thing was easy.

Eventually, they had both worked long enough through the never-ending slog and were walking back to Jango’s quarters, casually talking and joking with each other.

They had made it to Jango’s hall when they ran into Effao and another officer. Threl, if Obi-Wan was remembering correctly. They all stopped short, narrowly avoiding knocking into each other as they turned their corners.

“Obi-Wan? What are you doing with Akkus?” Effao asked.

“Wait. Better question. Since when are you on a first name basis with him, Effao?” probably-Threl asked.

“Since he became my kid’s favorite teacher, Threl. Get with the program,” Effao teased back lightly.

“Favorite… Oooh, that’s right, I forgot she was force-sensitive. In that case, I agree with Effao, what are you two doing together?” Threl seemed very genuinely confused at this. Effao seemed to have a bit of suspicion underneath her curiosity.

“I was having him assist me with some paperwork,” Akkus explained.


“Well, they do say misery loves company. Almost as much as it loves apples,” Obi-Wan said, not resisting the tease. Effao and Threl gave him twin looks of confusion.

“You are not letting that go, are you?” Akkus asked beside him.

“Mutually assured destruction. You hold an embarrassment over my head, I’ll hold one over yours,” Obi-Wan explained, an impish grin on his face. Akkus returned it with a smirk of zer own.
“Well, I should finish returning you to our ’Alor. Effao, Threl,” Akkus gave a nod that they returned before they all went on their separate ways.

Akkus opened the door to reveal Jango sitting at the table, dinner already there and served. Jango had turned around when he had heard the door and was now staring at them. The force around him revealed that he was… discontent would probably be the best word for it.

“I apologize for getting him back to you late, ‘Alor. We got a bit caught up in work,” Akkus gave a small chuckle that Obi-Wan returned with a snort. Caught up in complaining about work, was more like it. Though they had finished a fair bit beforehand.

“I see. Well he’s back now. You should probably get back to your family for the night,” Jango’s tone was surprisingly hard. Apparently, according to what the other was projecting into the force at least, it surprised Akkus as well.

“Elek, ‘Alor,” Akkus gave the proper bow, eyes down, and held it a few seconds longer than normal, before leaving.

Jango’s eyes tracked Obi-Wan as he crossed the room, took off his boots, then sat in his spot at the table. Once he was seated, Jango stood up and moved to the door, locking it.

They ate dinner in tense silence for a while, Jango stewing and Obi-Wan not wanting to aggravate anything. Jango was sending out cycles of the discontentment, which built into anger, which gave way to frustration, which then settled back into discontentment and cycled again. At length, however, Jango seemed to find a resolution.

“How is Jaro be Kyr’yc Ad be Akaata going?” Jango asked.

“Well… I understand that “Jaro” means death wish or doing something insanely stupid and reckless, but if Jho actually dies I will be quite put out,” Obi-Wan could hear himself start to rant, but Jho was a good character, and certainly deserved a happy ending.

“Hmmm… I remember that one pretty well actually. Want me to tell you if she survives?” Jango said. He was beginning to feel lighter, more positive, in the force.

“Well, no. But also- I would like to know if she does live, and not know if she doesn’t, ideally. But tha-“

“She lives,” Jango interrupted. It took Obi-Wan a second to process that.

“Oh thank the force,” Obi-Wan sighed out.

“Thank Bontaa Ruk, is more like it,” Jango snorted.

“To be fair, Bontaa Ruk also made her live through all of that osik,” Obi-Wan replied a bit grumpily. Jango gave a single laugh back.

“Haat, haat,” Obi-Wan gave an amused smirk to that. Jango started feeling even better in the force.

“But since I am only five chapters into this one, could we talk about the previous book in the series?” Obi-Wan resettled himself, ready for another enjoyable conversation.

That night, Jango laid down a little further away than usual. The arm was still wrapped around his
waist, tight, and Obi-Wan could feel the other watching him.

And, though better, the man was still projecting something unpleasant into the force.

“Jango?” he asked. He received a light hum in reply.

“Are you alright? Apologies, you’ve just seemed… off this evening,” Obi-Wan turned around to see Jango’s face. What he saw was an unidentifiable expression. It wasn’t painless, or without confusion, but the predominant emotion was something else entirely. Obi-Wan also felt a burst of… desire, probably, in the force after a moment. A response to his question?

“‘Lek. Jate,” Jango took advantage of his previous movement to pull him closer, as well as down a bit, so that Obi-Wan’s eyes were just below Jango’s chin, the crown of his head at Jango’s lips. He could feel the other’s next words blow across and move his hair.

“You’re almost at your cin vhetin, aren’t you?” Jango asked. Obi-Wan thought on the phrase for a moment before responding.

“My white field? Apologies, I don’t understand. Is there another translation?” Jango squeezed him a little tighter in response.

“It’s in the final culture lessons, you’re almost there. Kenuhoyi, Ner Kad’au,” Jango said, seeming to finally settle down for the evening. It also seemed that Obi-Wan would not be allowed to turn back around tonight.

Chapter End Notes

Mando’a:
Jate vaar’tur – good morning
Ad’ika – little one | used to refer to children but also informally to adults (like saying “guys” or “lads”)
Elek – yes
Jaro be Kyr’yc Ad be Akaata – Death Wish of the Last Daughter of the Battalion
Osik – dung (impolite) | AKA shit
Haat – truth
‘Lek. Jate – yeah. I’m good/well
Cin vhetin – lit. white field, clean slate/fresh start | term indicating the erasing of a person’s past when they become Mandalorian. In this AU, it has also come to mean an initiate accepting their place in the Mandalorian empire, and deciding to leave their past life behind for a life in the empire
Kenuhoyi, Ner Kad’au – sleep (imperative), my lightsaber
The one where he decides to be a bit bold

Chapter Notes

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See the end of the chapter for more notes

“That’s it for this meeting. Akkus, Suki, I want to talk to you two after. Otherwise, dismissed,” Jango said, keeping his voice as even as usual.


The others filed out, Effao leaving last while shooting a cautiously curious glance over her shoulder. Then it was just the three of them.

Jango stood up and started pacing the room.

“You two… have recently started having my ven’riduur help you out with your duties. In theory, I don’t particularly mind this. In practice, it looks like one or both of you are trying to… poach him,” Jango got back to the head of the table and leaned over his spot, hands splayed on the table, “Explain. Now,” he commanded.

The two looked at each other for a moment, then Suki gestured at Akkus to speak.

“We are both aware that Mand’alor’e usually have closed relationships. For very good reasons. And we do not seek to challenge that. We are not having him help us to pursue anything romantic or otherwise serious. Rather, we are both in agreement that he would, or rather will, make an excellent mate for you. Both for you as a person and for you as Mand’alor,” Akkus began, pausing for breath.

Jango looked to see Suki nodding along in agreement before gesturing for Akkus to continue.

“But as the Mand’alor’s mate, Obi-Wan will be expected to take on duties. There have been exceptions in the past where it works best for a mate to not do this, but we are under no illusions that your chosen will be anything but one of the best for these duties. Therefore, we have decided to begin getting him ready to take on those responsibilities. I believe you will find this perfectly acceptable preparation for him, since you already had him learn our laws,” Akkus was smirking at him by the end. The jerk really was too observant for zer own good.

Jango sat down in his seat again, finally relaxing. He glanced between Akkus’s self-satisfied smirk and Suki, who he had been around long enough to recognize her barely there smile.

“Yeah. I did do that. So how is he coming along, then?” Jango asked.

“His experience with similar duties shows through quite easily. Sometimes he seems hesitant to be hard enough, he thinks I’m sometimes too harsh, but we’ve easily reached compromise with small discussions,” Suki said.
“Given your challenges in the ethics department and his… history, that sounds like he’s coming along swimmingly. He grumbles less than I do about paperwork, and is cautious without being inefficient or obtuse,” Akkus added.

“All right. If that’s what you’re doing, keep it up. But ask before taking, and be aware that I might say no,” Jango said.

“Still jealous?” Suki asked, curious.

“Possessive is more likely,” Akkus replied, a bit teasing. Jango quirked a small smile.

“Guilty as charged. But not going to change. I have it under control. Obi-Wan is an indulgence, though,” Jango explained.

“I think that one’s future mate is a reasonable indulgence for that,” Suki agreed. Jango hummed at that.

“That’s all, then. You two are dismissed,” Jango said.

Jango felt mildly ecstatic as he walked back to his room. This meant that Akkus and Suki really were on board with Obi-Wan as his mate. He knew the others wouldn’t deny him unless they truly thought Obi-Wan was completely unsuited, but this meant that the two actually supported his choice.

And they were pretty hard beings to impress. The fact that Obi-Wan had managed it through basically reputation and one meeting alone spoke miles about his caliber.

It also meant that most of the others in his war council would probably follow in their opinions.

Most important, though, was probably their initiative to help groom Obi-Wan for his future role. That would make everything go so much smoother. Especially since he still had no idea how big of a change the mate relationship would be for Obi-Wan. If he was basically already performing politically as his mate, they could focus on their actual relationship.

Which was going decently as well, even if a bit... slower than he wanted. Obi-Wan had at least asked the previous night how he was, obviously concerned by his reaction to Akkus. Obviously caring about him.

He finally got back to their room and opened the door to find Obi-Wan reading on their bed. He looked relaxed, at ease and casual.

Gods, if that sight didn’t warm up his chest.

Obi-Wan looked up from his book.

“Ge’catra,” he greeted.

“Ge’catra,” Jango replied as he stepped into the room, moving to take off his weapons.

“Late night. Is everything still going fine?” Obi-Wan asked.

“Hmmm... yeah. I was just planning some things out further. It looks like those plans are going to go even better than I expected,” Jango said. He moved to the ‘fresher and entered as he heard Obi-Wan reply with a noise of acknowledgement.
When he came back out of the shower, he found Obi-Wan almost asleep on his back, his book already put on his nightstand.

Jango quickly finished drying and changing into his sleep clothes, then went to the bed.

He laid down on his stomach and draped an arm over Obi-Wan’s waist.

Obi-Wan was still a bit more reserved with him than he wanted. Or distant, rather. Obi-Wan had settled somewhat, had resigned himself to sleeping in their bed, which led to him physically relaxing around Jango. Which led to more a more casual attitude.

But mentally, the past two or three weeks had been a stalemate when they should have continued the trend of Obi-Wan feeling like he belonged around Jango more and more. No further progress had been made and Jango wasn’t sure where to go from here.

Mainly because he still couldn’t grasp why Obi-Wan’s mind was still resisting. He had to figure that out before he could really present himself as a potential mate to Obi-Wan.

Jango walked down the hallway to their room, happily carrying tonight’s dinner. The cafeteria had had Muja-flavored sorbet on brownies today. The deserts should tick off all of Obi-Wan’s preferences.

Obi-Wan was working on something on a data pad when Jango entered the room.

Obi-Wan put the pad down as Jango put down the food. They both sat down to eat.

“You forgot to put the ray shields on today,” Obi-Wan began without preamble. His tone was the one that he used when he was being cautious and diplomatic. Jango recognized it easily now.

“Not really, just chose not to turn them on. It’s not like we need them,” Jango replied, his tone purposefully casual.

“… True…” Obi-Wan said, openly cautious now.

“So what were you working on?” Jango nodded to the pad at the end of the table.

“Culture,” Obi-Wan said.

“You only have… Culture and Mando’a left, correct? How much left?” Jango asked.

“I still have the last evaluation in Strategic Thinking as well, actually. But Culture is level four, eighty-six percent done, and Mando’a is level four, seventy percent done,” Obi-Wan rattled off.

“That’s good. I’m surprised you’re not done with Strategic Thinking yet,” Jango teased. Obi-Wan waved it off.

“There were other things to do, and it’s not an area I’m concerned about, so I felt no urgency to find room for it,” he said.

“That’s fair. Akkus said you and Suki were working on preliminary treaties for Oblin.”

“Ah, yes. Suki said that you were going to go over them tomorrow. Which means she has tonight to finish them.”
“She works better under tight deadlines anyways. I’ll just leave it then, don’t want to deal with treaties twice over, you know?”

“I’ll leave it to Suki, then, and spare you for the night,” Obi-Wan laughed politely.

Their conversation fell into an easy lull after that, and they continued eating. With a meal as messy as Ormachek, the additional attention for eating was appreciated.

After a minute, Jango noticed that Obi-Wan had gotten a bit of it on his cheek. He was tempted to lick it off of the other man, just to see what sort of face the other would make.

Licking it off may freak him out too much though… probably would.

Well, maybe not licking then, but Obi-Wan was his indulgence, wasn’t he?

Jango reached out and wiped the food off Obi-Wan’s cheek, bringing it to his own lips to lick. He may or may not have made a bit of a show of tasting it.

All the while, Jango stared at Obi-Wan, letting his natural intensity show through.

Obi-Wan’s reaction was… not what he expected.

The man flushed a bit, which was an admittedly easy thing to happen to the ginger. But then the look he gave Jango was one that could only describe as confused.

Meg haran?

Jango gave a small smile with a chuckle and went back to eating. Then continued questioning the expression.

Why that reaction? That genuine confusion at what he had done… Surely the man had seen others do that. Plus all of his time spent as a diplomat and the Negotiator. He had to know what that sort of scene meant.

But he looked like he had no idea why Jango might have done that.

Maybe…. The confusion was from not thinking of himself as a viable target for that sort of attention?

But that couldn’t make sense. With Obi-Wan’s exper-

That could be possible, actually. Anyone who might have made the overtures before were probably trying to get him on their side politically. And probably hadn’t bothered spending months as a friend then wooing him first.

So if Obi-Wan didn’t see himself as the sort that could be properly romanced, how was he supposed to figure out when to start making overtly romantic advances?

This was probably the block he had been questioning the night before. Now the question was how to get around it.

Well… Obi-Wan hadn’t really seemed to settle into living with him until he had been explicitly told to, in a sense. He had been acting like a friendly roommate until Jango had told him they were to sleep in the same bed. Then he had started accepting more intimate actions.

But if that was the case, then he would have to start overtly courting without waiting for Obi-Wan indicate a return of his interest.
It wasn’t how he really wanted to go about this, certainly not how he planned it, but that was how he would have to do it.

Chapter End Notes

Mando’a:
Elek, ‘Alor – yes, leader
Ven’riduur – future spouse
Ge’atra – evening
Meg haran? – What the hell?
The one where he really starts courting him

Chapter Notes

Previously:
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It wasn’t how he really wanted to go about this, certainly not how he planned it, but that was how he would have to do it.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Kenobi, come help me with this,” Jango ordered.

Obi-Wan put down his pad before walking over to the desk. Maybe he should get another chair.


“We… are probably going to war with the Sith in a month. Maybe less, maybe more. I would, one, like it to be a little more, and two, need to be prepared. We haven’t been at war with the Sith for two thousand years,” Jango explained.

“I’ll try to help. What do you want assistance with?” Obi-Wan asked.

“I need help predicting what they’ll do first. I need help – here,” Jango interrupted himself and scooched over so he was on half of his chair, then pulled Obi-Wan down beside him, wrapping an arm around Obi-Wan’s hips to help the man keep his balance in his half-second of surprise.

“I need help figuring out which parts of the empire we’ll need to start shoring up our defenses at,” Jango continued, deciding to leave the arm there on the other’s waist.

Obi-Wan felt tense from his actions for only a second before he seemed to focus on the maps, his body half relaxing.

“I think it will depend on how friendly they’ve managed to become with the Hutts. If they haven’t had much headway over there, then their favorite way of launching a campaign on this border would be to gather in this empty part of space before launching an attack on Mimban,” Obi-Wan zoomed into one part of the border on a map, marking the locations he pointed out.

“From there, they would swing around Tarhassan and run to Umbara to establish a foothold,” he continued.

“Umbara? Tarhassan might have a high defense already, but Umbara seems a bit risky,” Jango questioned.

“I’ve been to Umbara once, it’s the sort of place the dark side of the force could easily thrive. They’d want to settle there as quickly as possible so that they could build up a strong station. It would be beyond difficult to get them out once they settle. They also would like to get a pincer attack on
Tarhassan. Take that without having to damage the weapon factories much,” Obi-Wan explained.

“And if they’re friendly with the hutts?”

“Then they’ll gather their forces on Toydaria, hit Ruusan then Tholarin, then Umbara. And try to take Tarhassan before or after they capture Umbara, depends on how big their losses are,” Obi-Wan said.

“So basically, they’re going to come in for Umbara and Tarhassan.” Jango concluded.


“Well then. Any advice on delaying them? We’re still playing some political games, pretending to get along with the ambassadors,” Jango prodded.

“Well, playing to their vanity or pride, which is sometimes the same thing, will hold off aggressions. If there are multiple Sith? Then watch for their power plays between each other and try to use that to get them to fight each other,” Obi-Wan explained, obvious disdain in his voice.

Obi-Wan continued to advise Jango for several minutes, not relaxing further or moving closer, but not rejecting Jango’s closeness and touch. Jango counted it as a victory on multiple fronts.

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Obi-Wan was now a bit confused, to say the least.

Lately Jango had been more… intrusive?

Besides ruffling his hair a bit, Jango had always kept an acceptable physical distance, cuddling tendencies in bed notwithstanding.

Now though… The past two weeks had suddenly seen an increase in casual touching, starting with the food incident during that one dinner.

He was manhandled a lot more, though gently. More stray hands found their way to his shoulder or his waist and hips. Sitting or standing now involved almost no room between them. Legs touching under the table here or there. For force’s sake, Jango had half intertwined their fingers at lunch earlier today!

He just… didn’t understand what was going on or why. Jango’s emotions in the force seemed normal, so there were no clues to figuring out the changes there.

What might be a clue though were the… compliments, that usually came with the touches.

Obi-Wan was frankly unused to the amount of praise he was receiving. It was slightly uncomfortable but… nice. It was nice to know he was liked. Especially since the compliments were genuine. He had grown too used to “compliments” from those trying to brown nose into his good graces. With Jango’s there was an obvious amount of sincerity.

It really was nice…

But why?
The changes could indicate that Jango now liked him, but Jango seemed to have liked him before. And he hadn’t done anything different to trigger this new behavior.

Perhaps this was just Jango feeling closer to him?

That would make a fair amount of sense. It was possible that Jango was just reserved with his affection and this was him being open with it. And that he finally felt close enough to Obi-Wan to be open with him.

Yes, that was probably what was going on now.

Well, there was no reason not to indulge the other. It wasn’t really making him uncomfortable, and was some of it actually quite pleasant usually.

The door opened and Jango stepped through with dinner, drawing Obi-Wan out of his retinue.

“Ni norac.”


They settled down and started to eat for a few minutes before a thought occurred to Obi-Wan.

“The treaties for the Generis campaign… Those were supposed to be finalized and signed today, weren’t they?” he asked.

“Elek. Smoothest I’ve ever seen it done, in large part due to you,” Jango responded.

Obi-Wan gave a derisive snort in response to that.

“You are doing quite a bit of exaggeration toni-“ he started.

“I’m not. You’ve got paklalat. Suki tries, she really does. But there’s only so much one so unsuited to this sort of thing can do to improve. With your help, we probably skipped six back and forth renegotiations at least. Just another reason to love that brain of yours,” Jango said. Obi-Wan felt his cheeks start to warm at the quiet enthusiasm in Jango’s voice when he was praising him and hoped that it didn’t show.

“I must wonder why you would have someone so predisposed to do poorly working on these treaties, then,” Obi-Wan deflected.

“Because the only two I have who don’t burn out when trying to deal with the rest of the politics involved in treaties are Suki and Akkus. And Akkus is too busy. So Suki does it and has assistants help edit it. And those still tend to burn out too quickly for our liking,” Jango explained.

“Hmmm… That is rather unfortunate. Well, I’d be willing to keep helping her, if she wants,” Obi-Wan offered. He felt Jango light up in the force.

“I’ll make sure that happens then,” Jango replied.

Jango settled down to sleep, nuzzling the back of Obi-Wan’s head again, and reveled in his own
happiness.

Obi-Wan was coming along nicely. The man blushed often enough at his compliments and had been very accepting of his touches. Except that one time he tried to do it while Obi-Wan was feeding his orchid.

Regardless, the other seemed to be accepting these changes. That was good. The courting seemed to be working.

And the treaties… Jango hadn’t been joking, he had never seen one of those negotiations go so smoothly. He might have said he would make sure Obi-Wan kept assisting Suki, but he was in effect going to get Suki to transfer over her treaty duties to Obi-Wan. Subtly, of course.

Suki, at least, would be glad for it.

He should go to sleep.

Well, maybe just few minutes more with Obi-Wan. At this point the man was completely pliant in his sleep when Jango was next to him, completely used to his presence.

Jango started rubbing small circles on Obi-Wan’s hip. The other didn’t even stir.

Yeah, Obi-Wan was definitely coming along nicely. Just a little more patience and he would completely be Jango’s.

Chapter End Notes

Hey folks, only five more chapters!

Mando’a:
Ni norac – I am back
Haa’tayli, olarom norac – I see, welcome back
Elek – yes
Paklalat – gift of the gab/silver tongue/wit/eloquence
The one where he wishes he was a healer

Chapter Notes

Previously:
Yeah, Obi-Wan was definitely coming along nicely. Just a little more patience and he would completely be Jango’s.

Obi-Wan was working on one of his last culture modules when the door to the room opened. He looked up and had half a second to register the blur of a tiny Zabrak hurtling towards him before he had a lap full of enthusiastic Kas.

“Adat’Juri! Su’cuy!” she cried out enthusiastically.

“Su’cuy, Kas’ika,” Obi-Wan said, looking down at the bouncing energy that was Kas, who was looking up at him excitedly.

“Jango has things to do today, but we all thought that you could use another chance to stretch your legs. Picnic?” Effao asked from the door. Obi-Wan looked up to see her carrying a large basket, with little Kurri standing right by her calmly.

“Of-“

“Pleeeeeease?” Kurri asked in his lap, “Please, please, please?”

“Well, with you on my lap, I’m not sure I’ll be able to make it. If I get my legs back, then I would of course love to accompany such lovely beings on a picnic,” Obi-Wan explained teasingly.

Kas shrieked happily and scurried out of his lap, over to Kurri, and ran down the hall while dragging her friend.

Effao snorted at the antics while Obi-Wan gave a chuckle, saving his progress and stowing the pad in the drawer Jango had designated for him in the desk.

He joined Effao at the door and they sped walked down the hall to catch up to the children.

They caught up in short order and put the smaller two in between, Effao holding onto Kurri’s hand and Obi-Wan onto Kas’s. Kas decided that she and Kurri should hold hands as well, Kurri releasing a small burst of happiness in the force when Kas did so.

They went to the main courtyard in this wing, Jango’s favorite one for these trips, and settled down in a lawn area.

It was a pleasant affair, Obi-Wan and Effao talked about how Kurri was doing, and a bit about the other children. Kurri and Kas talked to each other when they weren’t eating. Eventually Kurri and Kas turned to Obi-Wan, wanting to tell him about their other classes.
They had almost finished eating when Effao’s com started beeping insistently.

Effao tensed for only a moment before she answered it.

“Stirs.”

“Effao, is Obi-Wan still with you?” Jango’s tone was brusque, controlled, and a bit stressed.

“Lek. We were just finishing up.”

“Get him to the med wing. Blue ward, room 6. One of his students, Sullex, is here,” Jango ordered. This certainly explained Jango’s stress. If he was being called, then the doctors thought the force was involved and couldn’t do anything.


Obi-Wan had already begun cleaning up. Kurri and Kas quickly caught on and helped.

In less than three minutes, they were leaving the courtyard.

“You two only have Adat’juri Kenobi’s class left today, correct?” Effao asked the children.

“Lek, buir,” Kurri responded seriously. Effao nodded at that and allowed the children to follow them to the medical wing.

Jango met them outside of the room and ushered them inside. Effao stopped herself and the children in the waiting area as Jango put a hand on Obi-Wan’s shoulder and led him further into a room.

A Twilek doctor walked towards them then joined them in step, giving a small bow to Jango as they continued walking.

“Any changes?” Jango asked briskly.

“No. Which is fortunate and unfortunate,” they replied, “this is the force user, then?”

“Obi-Wan Kenobi, at your service,” he introduced himself, giving a slight bow of his head.

“You make it any worse and I kill you. Understand?” The doctor ignored his greeting. Obi-Wan straightened back up at the hostility in their voice. This doctor clearly didn’t like the situation. How much of it was because they couldn’t help and how much was due to prejudice against the force was unknown.

“Understood.”

They walked to the far end of the room, to a curtain-cordoned area, and entered, Jango pulling the curtain back and gesturing Obi-Wan in first.

There, lying in bed and hooked up to monitor upon monitor, was Sullex.

Next to him were two beings, a Chiss and a Togruta, who both looked up at him as soon as he entered, the Chiss holding Sullex’s hand, the Togruta pausing their pacing to see who had intruded.

“Here he is. If you can help, get started,” the doctor grunted.

“Well first, what happened?” Obi-Wan directed the question to the two who were obviously close to
his student.

The two looked between each other and him suspiciously.

"Since we think it’s a force-issue, we brought a force-user. Help him out," Jango commented, voice bland with authority.

The two looked at each other again, then turned back. The Togruta took a step towards him.

"We were stationed on Atrivis 7 for the last combat stage of the Generis campaign. It only had a few rebels that we were going after. Sullex was doing better than we’d ever seen him. He’s usually a gruff, caring grump, who gets a bit distracted but is a good fighter. Good reflexes, instincts and situational awareness. Those last three traits seemed to have multiplied tenfold for this mission," the Togruta explained.

"Not to mention how much better he was at concentrating, this time around," the Chiss offered softly from Sullex’s side.

"Yeah, not to mention the concentration. Once we started the real hunt for the last squad of rebels in our sector, it was like Sullex had a tracker on them. Mainly because of him, we drove the rebels back down into a ravine. They apparently set off some bombs, which usually wouldn’t have been too much of a problem, but apparently this ravine had been made because of an old battle. There was… a lot of debris, including huge rocks and parts of ships caught in vines and branches above the ravine. With the rebel’s bombs and two and a half squads worth of sen’trae, they got dislodged. Sullex he…” the Togruta trailed off, their face scrunched in frustration.

"He noticed before any of us, I heard him gasp three seconds before there was anything I could see to notice what was about to happen," the Chiss continued.

"I still don’t really know what happened. Sullex reached out his hands and then the debris… fell wrong? All of the biggest chunks moved to the side a bit, didn’t hit anyone. We got the rebels captured, except the two we had to kill in battle. Sullex seemed fine for a bit, but two hours later or so started going downhill, continuing the next day. He didn’t wake up the day after, apparently he had fallen into an unstable coma overnight," the Togruta finished their story.

"And then you got him here and he was stabilized?" Obi-Wan asked, an idea already forming in his head.

"No. He stabilized when we were… three days out from here. We had hooked him up in the ship’s medical, but that wasn’t working for two days, then he was suddenly stable in a matter of hours," the Chiss explained distractedly, they had gone back to looking at Sullex.

"So his state deteriorated for a day and a half, then he was in an unstable coma for two days, and a has now been in a stable coma for three?" Obi-Wan asked for clarification.

"Yes!" The Togruta growled out, frustrated and a little angry. Obi-Wan raised his hands in a placating gesture.

"I merely wanted to make sure that I had the facts straight," he explained gently.

Obi-Wan took a step towards Sullex.

The Chiss automatically looked up at him and hissed, while the Togruta stepped between Obi-Wan and his student, growling and shifting into a threat display. Obi-Wan sighed.
“Look, I have a good guess on what’s happened, but I need to confirm. It will be easiest for both of us if I have physical contact,” Obi-Wan reasoned, gesturing gently towards Sullex.

The Chiss and Togruta looked at each other for a few moments before Jango suddenly spoke up.

“He doesn’t actually need your permission,” the tone was detached, matter-of-fact, cold and commanding in its objectiveness. Obi-Wan couldn’t remember the last time he had heard Jango use it.

Obi-Wan nodded in thanks as the growling stopped before turning back around and carefully making his way to the head of the bed, careful not to dislodge any equipment.

Obi-Wan centered himself above Sullex and gently placed two fingers on each side of the Bith’s forehead. He closed his eyes and took a few breaths.

He opened himself up to the force, letting his presence interact and diffuse through the area around him for a few moments to enter an easy meditation, then pulled himself back inwards.

Sullex’s presence was right by him, made more concrete by the physical contact he was mainainting.

Sullex always reminded Obi-Wan of a hissing, scarred mother cat protecting her kittens. Gruff, but always caring for those he considered his. His presence was fairly familiar by this point.

Obi-Wan carefully followed the familiar presence down through his fingers, a direct connection always made this so much easier. Just skimming along the surface of Sullex’s brain confirmed his suspicion. Sullex had overworked himself into psychic exhaustion.

His connection in the force was fried, meaning his brain couldn’t function properly until it was fixed enough. The fact that Sullex had apparently tried to continue his mission instead of meditating and resting had not helped. No wonder the man was so unstable for the first few days. Burnout comas were always nasty without exacerbating them by pushing them off.

Looking a little deeper and investigating Sullex’s connection more gave Obi-Wan some relief. The overuse hadn’t been bad enough to render Sullex incapable of healing. Especially with the life support machines, Sullex would eventually heal himself. But there was no reason Obi-Wan couldn’t jumpstart the process.

Carefully, Obi-Wan gathered the force and sent it along Sullex’s bonds, slowly, carefully. It was a comforting pattern of ebb and flow, cajoling just a bit of force through Sullex to energize his systems without overwhelming them.

Eventually, Obi-Wan was fairly certain he had cut down Sullex’s recovery time to a few days in the coma. The connection was still weak and damaged, but it didn’t feel like fragile charcoal anymore.

Slowly, Obi-Wan extracted himself from Sullex, coming back to himself. As he became more aware that he must have been going at it longer than he thought. The medic’s area was cold, certainly, but it had to have taken twenty minutes for his fingers to become so stiff.

Obi-Wan opened his eyes and immediately reached for the rails on the bed when the room appeared as swirling, blurry lights. He felt someone gently guide him by his shoulders down onto the stool the Chiss must have vacated at some point.
Obi-Wan took a few deep breaths before opening his eyes and looking up. Everything was still a bit bright, but at least it was in focus and still. Sullex’s traat’illit’ade were at the end of the bed, the doctor was a few steps in front of him, and he could feel Jango’s presence and warmth over his left shoulder. Jango still had a hand on it.

“I presume that you weren’t just diagnosing for twenty-two minutes,” the doctor said coolly, quirking a brow. At least there wasn’t any hostility in their voice anymore.

“Indeed. I figured I should accelerate the healing process,” Obi-Wan saw the two at the end of the bed move forward a bit, the Chiss opening their mouth, “and yes, Sullex is healing. Especially with the life support machines, he’ll be able to naturally fix himself. He just needs enough time.”

“What was wrong with him, though?” the Chiss asked.

“Psychic burn-out. He overused his force abilities, so he burned out and shut down,” Obi-Wan saw the Chiss and Togruta look at him in worried confusion, “it’s like… overusing a muscle, I suppose? You push too far, achieve something great, then you can’t use whatever muscle well, if at all, until it’s healed. Unfortunately, for force abilities, you use your mind and soul, so…” Obi-Wan trailed off.

The doctor clicked their tongue before beginning to write on their tablet, their calm face a stark contrast to their furious scribbling.

“Is there any way for us to… ice this overused hypothetical muscle?” the Togruta asked, walking around the bed to take Sullex’s hand.

“Without using the force? No. I was able to help a bit, an actual healer would have helped more. I can do a bit of immediate help, but I never learned much beyond minor things or emergency field uses of healing techniques. If I had been there during the initial event I…” Obi-Wan stopped, one of the biggest problems that had caused this situation had only just occurred to him, a month too late at least.

He put his head in his hands and groaned.

“What? Is he hurt too, now?” He heard the doctor ask in slight disbelief.

“No. That’s how he groans when something idiotic has happened,” Jango answered, his hand squeezing Obi-Wan’s shoulder lightly. The man had a slight undercurrent of worry in him despite the joking words.

“Kriff. I’m going to have to teach them healing trances,” he said, looking up at Jango to explain. Funny, he usually looked over Jango’s shoulder at the desk to explain things, it felt a bit odd to look up the man now.

“Healing trances?” the doctor asked, interest evident in their voice. Obi-Wan looked back to see their expression matched their tone, stylus poised to write again.

“A healing trance is a force technique, similar to a meditation, where the user utilizes their force connection and inner peace to slow down their body functions and rejuvenate themselves, including healing injuries. It’s particularly effective for psychic injuries. If Sullex had used it before he fell into the coma, he likely could have avoided the coma all together,” Obi-Wan explained.

“And why the haran didn’t he know this already?!” the Chiss hissed, the Togruta matched his glare at Obi-Wan. Jango released a flare of irritation into the force. Obi-Wan leaned into his hand a little bit
and kept his face calm and level.

“To be fair, I designed my curriculum months ago so six-year-olds could deal with force visions safely, not for soldiers over-using abilities they didn’t even want,” his voice kept as neutral as he was going to manage. He wanted to comfort these people, not sass them.

The doctor snorted as the other two looked abashed. Perhaps he hadn’t succeeded at holding back the sass as much as he wanted.

He tried again, his voice softer, “regardless, the facts are that I have many students. Some are soldiers, some will be soldiers. And they’ll fight just as fiercely and protectively as any other Mandalorian,” the two traat'allit'ade straightened up at that. Sullex was in particular quite protective, even for a Mandalorian, everyone Obi-Wan ran into was proud to talk about that, “Sullex will use whatever he can in the future and so will my other students. It’s my duty as a teacher to prepare them for that. I have already failed to do so for too long. For that, I am truly sorry.”

Obi-Wan bowed in his seat, looking at the plain tile for a few seconds before daring to lift his head again.

“Look… if he can help us out of pinches, where we think we’ll lose a quarter of a squad, without losing anyone, because of you, that’s amazing,” the Togruta said, their face finally softening into something somewhat peaceful.

“And if you can help him avoid comas to boot? That’s a kriiffing miracle,” the Chiss continued, walking to stand next to the Togruta “we weren’t kidding earlier about him being better than we’d ever seen. Sullex always was too strung-up, like he was seeing all the wrong things. Missing things that were important, seeing things that weren’t. Kicking himself for daring to be different like… that,” force-sensitive, was the implication. Just how taboo had that idea become in the empire?

“And we’re glad that he’s finally working through these hang-ups thanks to your class. But you’re also right that he’s going to do something stupid like this again,” the Togruta chuckled out wearily.

“And you can’t predict stupid or its consequences, just try to fix the mess then leash it from happening again,” The Chiss said, a grin splitting on their face.

“I thought we weren’t bringing that up again,” the Togruta replied automatically.

“Hm? Sorry, did I bring something up?” The Chiss teased. The Togruta groaned at whatever inside reference was being made.

“Anyways, thank you for helping him and if he’s really recovering just fine, don’t worry. No need to apologize or anything,” the Togruta reassured him.

They were… warm. It was rare that people warmed up in their opinions of him so quickly, especially given how suspicious and irritated they were with him at first.

“Oh, he’s definitely recovering. With his signs this strong, I’d expect to wake up at some point in the next two or three days,” the doctor declared from where they were marking notes by the monitors. They turned back to Obi-Wan after writing another note. Jango put his hand on Obi-Wan’s shoulder again, closer to the neck this time.

“Unless there’s something else about this you need to tell me,” the doctor continued, a bit of tension coming back into their voice, though it still lacked the hostility from earlier.

“Depends on his natural tendencies, since he has no training with this. He might wake up earlier and
have to be on bed rest for longer than you think, or vice versa, or he might behave as a normal patient,” the doctor hummed and made a few more notes on their pad again, “but he shouldn’t get worse. And he shouldn’t be in a coma for more than six days if you think a normal patient would wake up in three,” Obi-Wan finished.

“Think? I kn- Well, I’d say ‘I know’, but you force-sensitives are frustrating because you don’t let us know. You’re quite the puzzles to us,” the doctor said, a small smirk growing on their face.

“Apolologies, we’re just sentient beings, if one knows how to ask the right things, we’ll give the answers we might have negligence to give,” Obi-Wan smiled back.

“Any chance I could get to ask you those questions, then? I think I could figure out how to ask them, given the right amount of time,” the doctor purred with a manic grin on their face.

“Indeed, I’d certainly be willing, if we can find such amount of time. You doctors are always buzzing from one crisis to the next after all,” Obi-Wan returned, hearing his own voice reflexively lower.

“Indeed, but I also get to schedule research time. What do you say, up for being a medical research subject?” The doctor moved forward so they were only two steps in front of him, manic grin still in place. Obi-Wan hummed with a playful smile growing on his own face.

“Sounds like it could be a fun time. What sort of research were you thinking of, doctor?”

“Perhaps a written guide would do to start. You have teaching to do and other work. You haven’t forgotten how to write guides these past few months, have you?” Jango said, squeezing Obi-Wan’s shoulder.

Obi-Wan had automatically diverted his gaze to the man when he heard him start speaking. When had Jango gotten irritated?

The grip remained tight on his shoulder, a little uncomfortable, but barely worse than Jango’s clinginess in bed. The man’s gaze was locked with Obi-Wan, though he found himself unable to really read it. Jango cocked an eyebrow. Right. Respond to the ‘Alor.

“Indeed, I have not. It would probably be more efficient that way, not need as much basic questioning. You want common medical force conditions and a few of the basic trends of differences between force-sensitives and force-nulls, I presume?” Obi-Wan responded, directing the question towards the doctor and leaning a bit into the hand still gripping his shoulder.

The hand did loosen a bit, but Jango also shifted closer, which was not what Obi-Wan had expected. Curious.

The doctor looked between them for a few seconds as their grin slowly faded from manic to mischievously energetic.

“That would be best, yes. I can send you any further questioning, shouldn’t need much direct research for this sort of thing,” they replied as they stepped back to the foot of the bed.

The two at the end suddenly crowded together as the doctor approached, looking a bit timid.

The doctor smacked the Togruta in the head, whose head then smacked the Chiss.

“Now you two leave. Your friend’s going to be fine and I’m not opening up two more beds because you di’kute decided to collapse of starvation and sleep deprivation,” they chided firmly.
Jango gently tugged at him to indicate he should get up, which was more difficult then he would have wanted. Force, had he really used *that* much energy? Still, he was able to walk without looking like anything was remiss.

Then Jango put a hand between his shoulder blades as if to guide him.

Or perhaps he was too tired. Haar’chak.

Jango led him out of the curtained area right behind Sullex’s squad-mates. Obi-Wan heard the doctor pulling the curtains closed behind them with a distinct bout of amusement releasing into the force.

They made their way back to the entrance, where Effao and the children were still waiting.

“Vor entye, again. Really,” said the Togruta as they and the Chiss paused by the door. Their eyes were only a little wet.

“There is nothing to thank me for, I only did what was right. My duty to a comrade and student in trouble,” Obi-Wan responded, as serious and kind as he could manage.

The Chiss breathed out a laugh before going into a slight bow, the Togruta giving one only slightly shallower. Then they were gone.

“Are you able to do your class?” Jango asked.

Obi-Wan turned to look at the more neutral, inquisitive Jango that he was quite familiar with. Whatever had irritated him earlier must have passed.

“Yes, I should be fine,” he responded.

“Without overworking yourself?” Effao asked pointedly, one eyebrow raised, her face was the picture of exasperated amusement. Obi-Wan rolled his eyes.

“I’ll be fine. I’m just going to sleep like a rock tonight,” he assured. It was true, he would sleep soundly tonight, no matter how clingy Jango got.

Well, that might be misleading. At this point, he was fairly certain that Jango’s presence at his back and arm around his waist let him rest better than the nights he had to fall asleep without them.

Effao snorted and shrugged with her hands up as if to acquiesce, then held the shrug until the two children climbed onto her shoulders before standing up and leaving herself.

Haar’chak. He really would have to make sure they all knew healing trances. Maybe teach them basic healing techniques if they were willing. He’d have to talk to Jango about it, of course.

Obi-Wan looked up from his short contemplation.

“Ready? You need this next hour on the couch, I’d say,” Jango said from beside him.

Obi-Wan just smiled and nodded slightly, that was all Jango needed to start leading them back to the room.

He really did let Obi-Wan move at his own pace. It was quite nice. He couldn’t really remember another time he had someone let him do that. Let alone someone he was allowed to cohabitate with.

Chapter End Notes
Hey y'all, what's up. I'm back. All of the plot chapters are rewritten, the last chapter was giving me trouble, so I'm just going to start putting these out now, perhaps with less editing than they should have.
Thank you guys so much for your patience and all of your wonderful comments. Seriously, those meant a lot to me and made me really determined to finish this and put it up. Y'all are awesome!
Now, for the translations:

Mando'a:
Adat'Juri! Su'cuy! - Teacher! Hi!
Su'cuy, Kas'ika - Hello, little Kas
'Lek - Yep
Buir - parent
Traat'illit'ade - squad mates | traat'illit is squad, added the plural for children, since that is also like saying "guys" or "lads" in Mando'a, making this basically say "the squad guys"
Haran - hell
Di'kute - idiots
Haar'chak - damn it
Vor Ente - thank you | lit. I accept a debt, but colloquially thank you
The one where he gets to exercise

Chapter Notes

Previously:

*He really did let Obi-Wan move at his own pace. It was quite nice. He couldn’t really remember another time he had someone let him do that. Let alone someone he was allowed to cohabitate with.*

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Want to play something? Spar?” Threl asked, pulling Obi-Wan out of his analysis of the cu’bikad game on the other side of the sparsely populated lounge.

Obi-Wan glanced quickly to the corner where Kurri was still reading before shifting his view to the wall of glass on one side. The small atrium outside had a ring of plants surrounding an open area of grass. Threl could never sit still, although Effao swore he calmed down when he was in a vehicle.

“Shall we spar while the others finish their meeting? They shouldn’t take too long now, it’s been a bit. The atrium?” Obi-Wan offered. Threl automatically brightened up at the prospect of moving around.

“Hey, Kurri! We’re going out to the courtyard, want to join?” Threl asked as he jumped up from the couch he had been laying on restlessly.

The few other occupants in the room startled and glanced over to see where the outburst had come from. Nearly all of them went back to their activities once they realized it was just Threl’s usual energy.

Kurri took a moment to look up, then proceeded to stare at them for a few moments in the way they both knew she was thinking things through. She turned off the pad she was reading from before standing up herself.

“Okay. When is buir going to be back?” She asked calmly.

“Likely within an hour. But emergency meetings can be pretty varied in run-times. Obi-Wan and I will take care of you until then!” Threl answered as he walked towards the door.

Kurri had a small smile on her face as she trailed behind Threl, Obi-Wan taking up the rear of their little caravan. “I know,” she said, too softly for Threl to hear as he walked through the automatically sliding panel of glass.

Obi-Wan followed them out, noting a few of the others in the room eying them all with curiosity.

Kurri selected a bench, prompting Obi-Wan to take off his overtunic and place it next to her. Threl followed suit with his vest.

“Three minutes to warm up, then first to pin for five seconds or otherwise make the other yield wins. No breaking bones or aiming for the head or neck. Sound reasonable?” Obi-Wan asked as he rolled his shoulders.
“Sounds fine. Keep in the grass circle in the path? And no trying anything that would probably sprain or strain each other?” Threl replied as he moved across the area before dropping to stretch his legs.

Obi-Wan noted Kurri’s bench in the dirt behind the small stone path, “Agreed.”

It was... probably cheating a bit to use the force to accelerate his blood flow to his muscles. Three minutes of warm up with that would be like fifteen for Threl.

Force, what was he thinking? That was how he fought. Threl would have been insulted at the thought of Obi-Wan cutting out an entire part of his style just to go easy. It wasn’t like Threl was a youngling just because he didn’t have as much specialization in hand-to-hand.

Obi-Wan quickly reapplied himself to his warm up, letting the force smooth the process. There really was nothing like letting the force flow through you, it sung as its energy swam through his blood. He could feel his body, every single cell, as they moved into synchronization with the world around him. The force was always with him, his body was at its most efficient when communicating with the force, and his mind sharpest.

He felt Threl move out of stretching and turn towards him. Obi-Wan let himself slip out of the quasi-meditation.

The force still sung in his blood, but he put on the back burner in his mind, a humming, constantly present sensation. But he couldn’t revel in that fully while sparring.

“Ready?” Threl asked, a smirk on his lips as he raised his hands into a tight guard.

Obi-Wan nodded his acquiescence and let Threl charge him.

Grappling. Of course, Threl was mainly a pilot, if he had to fight hand to hand, he was probably being boarded on a ship with very little room. And sensitive equipment.

Obi-Wan waited to the last second before side-stepping, leaving his foot out to trip Threl.

Threl dodged, but revealed poor balance as he tried to turn around to face Obi-Wan again.

Obi-Wan was about to feint a charge to unbalance Threl when he noticed that many of the people in the public longue had come out to watch them. As well as some who hadn’t been in there at all. Probably from the hallways that looked into the atrium. Even the cu’bikad players had stopped to watch from their seats.

Threl charged him again and Obi-Wan let him grab him this time so he could counter grab.

Time to put on a show.

Threl countered his counter grab. Obi-Wan countered the counter-counter grab before pushing them apart.

Threl charged in again, his body higher. Seemed that he wanted to put on a show as well.

Threl threw a jab, Obi-Wan blocked and tried to hook Threl in the stomach.

It landed and Threl took the blow admirably, as well as the opportunity to grab Obi-Wan’s back and try to flip Obi-Wan.

Unfortunately for Threl, it wasn’t the first time someone had tried to flip Obi-Wan.
Obi-Wan went with the flip, jumping into it and adding momentum of his own. It was simple to just grab Threl’s shirt, land, and use Threl to dispel all of the remaining momentum by flipping and throwing him in turn.

Threl managed to roll properly and came to a stop a few feet in front of Kurri, who looked at him blankly, but still managed to look slightly judgmental.

He laid there for a moment before jumping up and around to face Obi-Wan, a wild smile on his dirt-streaked self.

“Oya, Threl! Gar gana ibie!”

“Yeah! Show him what you’ve got, Tra Alor’ad!”

“Yay, ba’vodu,” Kurri added to the laughing cheers, voice and face completely flat.

“Oh, come on, adike! Don’t any of you have faith in me?!” Threl whined, stopping the spar to pout at his new “cheer” squad.

“Well, you’re not in a sakagal right now sooo… no,” one of spectators responded, their face perfectly unrepentant and amused while most of the others laughed.

Threl squawked at the indignance.

“Oh, olaro bat, Ruusaan. Nusosol. I bet if he pulls out all the stops, he could do some damage. He might even manage to dirty Ge’tal’s pants!” Two twin Elomins said in synchronization, their voices ringing like bells with their laughter.

The taunts had their intended affect. Threl charged again, more energetic than he was even at the start of their spar.

The next few minutes were… fun. Threl was a good fighter in his own right, but compared to Obi-Wan? Who had specialized in close quarters combat for as long as he could remember? Threl could not beat him, especially since they weren’t actually trying to kill each other.

It was nice exercise for Obi-Wan’s body, though, with enough of a challenge that he also had to use his mind, couldn’t let his guard drop, but he wouldn’t need to get desperate.

Threl, on the other hand, seemed to be thriving on the adrenaline that came with his underdog position. Given the man was enough of a pilot to end up in charge of the empire’s fleets, this was not surprising.

Threl charged in for another grapple and Obi-Wan prepared to redirect him, only for Threl to change strategies at the last second.

It was a good feint. But Obi-Wan was more than fast enough to handle it.

Threl kicked the ground hard, shooting over to Obi-Wan’s left, bringing back his fist and leg for simultaneous attacks. Obi-Wan grabbed the kicking leg and leaned back to dodge the punch, dragging Threl back with him and throwing the other off balance.

Threl responded by throwing a ridge hand with his back arm. Obi-Wan blocked it but had to let go of Threl’s leg with one arm to do so.

They both felt each other tensing to continue the spar when they heard someone clear their throat on
They looked over towards the bench where Kurri still sat, Obi-Wan was unsurprised to see Jango, having recognized the voice, as well as Effao cuddling her daughter on the bench.

They both stared at Jango, not disengaging.

After a moment, Obi-Wan could see him exhale in a silent sigh before delivering a simple order, “Finish up.”

Obi-Wan and Threl snapped back to look at each other and Obi-Wan could feel Threl’s body tense again in preparation to make a move, his presence in the force coiling up with energy as he resolved to attack.

Obi-Wan moved first.

It was a flamboyant takedown and, besides the flipping throw towards the beginning, the only Ataru-based move he’d used this spar. Everything else had been Soresu or Shii-cho based, meaning Threl wasn’t used to fighting against the style at all. Added to Obi-Wan’s superior speed and, well…

Threl rolled, head over heels, several times and out of bounds. The jabs and pinches delivered during the actual takedown mean that his arms and legs were sore, and the wind was knocked out of him as well. Perhaps adding the throw at the end had been a little much after all.

Instead of following Threl to contain him, like he would in battle, Obi-Wan turned around and walked to grab his overtunic as Threl groaned out “I yield. I’ve lost and I yield,” in a dramatic enough tone that everyone who was listening knew he that didn’t actually need medical attention.

Kurri was sitting in her parent’s lap, hand covering her smiling mouth and shaking slightly from suppressed giggles. Effao was openly laughing while taking care to not displace Kurri.

The other spectators joined Effao in laughing, a few going to help Threl up and pat his back, as well as the dirt off of him, in consolation.

Obi-Wan finished refastening his overtunic and turned to Jango.

Jango gave a slight nod of his head, indicating the door, and Obi-Wan noticed the smallest of twitches in his near hand. He responded accordingly and crossed to let Jango put an arm around his shoulder before beginning to lead him out of the atrium.

“Ret,” Jango called, loud enough for everyone to hear. A chorus of goodbyes called back, and Jango gave a slight nod in acknowledgement of them.

The walk back provided a bit of a cool down for Obi-Wan, helped by him doing what arm and neck stretches he could while walking with Jango’s arm still around his shoulders.

Once they reached the room, Jango removed his arm to go open the door, commenting, “I can go get dinner while you take a shower.”

Obi-Wan couldn’t help but peel his shirt from his clammy skin a bit. The spar had been a nice workout, but he hadn’t dressed in the best clothing for sparring in a bright, sun-lit garden.

“Yes, I think that would be for the best,” he replied as he walked into the room.

As the door closed, he felt Jango release a wave of happiness into the force around them. He wasn’t
sure why, but Jango often was happy about things Obi-Wan couldn’t figure out. It didn’t really affect anything if he didn’t know, so he let the mystery be as he started towards the bathroom to get the remains of the spar off of him.

Chapter End Notes

There has been some progress, like... 250 words, on that last chapter. It will get done. I swear. But here's this one, at least.

Mando’a:
Cu’bikad - an indoor game that involves stabbing blades into a checkered, 3-D board (a cross between darts, chess, and ludo)
Buir - parent
Oya, Threl! Gar gana ibic! - Hooray, Threl! You've got this! | Oya can mean a lot of things, but it's basically a positive cheer
Tra Alor’ad - space captain | this is now his official title, because why not?
Ba’vodu - aunt/uncle | anyone know an English gender neutral term for this? Unt?
Ancle?
Adike - guys | in the casual, gender neutral, colloquial way
Sakagal - X-wing
Olaro bat, Ruusaan. Nusosol - Come on, Ruusaan. No fair | fun fact, Ruusaan is supposedly a common Mandalorian name, especially for girls, and means Reliable One
Ge’tal's - Red's | there is no word for pants in Mando’a so I couldn't make "Red's pants" in Mando'a, hence the Basic/English grammar. Also, Obi-Wan just has red-hair, this person is not in on the "Make Obi-Wan the Mand'Alor's Mate" conspiracy
‘Ret - bye
“Alright. If there are no more questions, we’re done for the day. Dismissed.”

No one moved. Jango stared at his council for another moment.

“What?”

“You and Akkus are going to talk about Kaysh Ge’tal- er, gar ge’tal, rather, right? We all just want to be kept up to date,” Effao answered in her usual shameless manner. The others nodded in agreement.

Akkus, the traitor, chuckled at them and looked towards him, face showing zer mirth subtly, which meant Jango could see it plainly.

His staring contest with Akkus ended after only a few moments, resulting in him sighing.

“Fine. You can stay,” he sat back down. It felt odd to do so when the others were still there. A council meeting meant he was stood to commence the meeting and stood until all business was finished. He didn’t have much occasion to sit down with everyone. He turned to Akkus.

“So?”

“Well, it turns out that I didn’t even need to leak any security footage, a few spectators took video and that has spread splendidly. The moment where they look back to each other and then Threl gets flipped has become the subject of multiple net-jokes, as well as his subsequent lounging in defeat,” Akkus said, a wild grin on zer face. Jango heard multiple snickers throughout the room, and easily imagined Threl’s responsive eye roll. Jango kept his eyes on Akkus, waiting for zem to continue.

Akkus cleared zir throat before continuing. “Of course, the videos themselves have resulted in people talking. People quickly realized his identity as a former Republic general, and many connected him to the story about his stunt in the medic’s area a few weeks ago, since that incident also got around. A few have even correctly theorized about his assistance with the Generis treaties.”

“And their opinions on him?” Jango prompted.

“The overall consensus has settled into a positive view. With a few strains of vigilance. People realized that him being so friendly and casual with Threl, as well as hearing how obedient he was with you, means that he’s almost, if not completely, integrated. At which point people started to become excited at the prospect of having the man who was once the Republic’s Negotiator in our ranks.” And here Akkus let a truly unsettling smirk grow on zir face. Jango had long ago learned that
“Some said that he would make a good mate, on their own, without any prompting. This led to multiple well-viewed discussions on multiple platforms about whether or not this was a good thing and how likely it would be. I prompted these discussions so that the most popular ones concluded there was a chance it would happen and that Obi-Wan becoming your mate would only be a good thing,” Akkus concluded.

“Yeah, that worked pretty well. I was reading the Tuurla Bes’bev at breakfast and half of their stories today were for this,” Effao chimed in. Threl groaned in response.

“Tuurla Bes’bev is a literal tabloid, Effao! Why do you read it?! What if Kurri reads it?!” he complained tiredly.

“In short, Alor’ika, go for it.” The others looked confused at Akkus’s old nickname for him, but he still wasn’t telling anyone that story. Well, maybe he’d tell Obi-Wan if it ever came up…

Jango checked the time and stood up. The others quickly quieted and put all of their attention back on him.

“Right. On that note, we are all once again dismissed. I am not to be disturbed for the rest of tonight unless it’s an emergency.”

Jango turned and exited the room without waiting for anyone to respond, but this didn’t prevent his council from chuckling and wolf whistling him out of the room.

He made his way to Obi-Wan’s classroom and arrived about five minutes before it would finish.

Vojunn and Kanvined gave him the usual bows before Vojunn opened their mouth to tease him.

“You’ve got him today, then, ‘Alor?” they practically giggled out the question. He would have to deal with this for a while, wouldn’t he?

Kanvined snorted at his partner’s antics before corralling them down the hallway, leaving Jango to wait alone for his riduur. Ven’riduur. Technically.

Not for long.

He only had to wait a few minutes before the students started filing out. They all gave the expected nods, some even dared to smirk at him, having gotten used to his presence quicker than the children in Obi-Wan’s other class and therefore somewhat casual.

Finally, Obi-Wan walked out of the room and nodded in greeting, unsurprised by his presence as usual.

Jango slung an arm across Obi-Wan’s back as they started making their way back to their room.

“How was today’s class?”

“Hmm… Fine for the most part. There was…” Jango looked at Obi-Wan and quirked his brow, “Well. They were a little hyper today, like they were expecting something very interesting to happen, in that teenage way. I have no idea what they were anticipating, though.”

Jango hummed in response, trying to hold back his own anticipation.

“Weren’t there any comments to give you clues?” He prompted.
“Well, there were one or two comments that referenced you… your habit of bringing back guests. Nothing derogatory, of course.” Jango snorted at that. It would be obvious soon that he was far more serious about Obi-Wan than any of those.

“You know, you can bring back guests still. If you want. I’ll just sleep on the couch,” Obi-Wan continued, “you’ve seemed a bit… pent up, as it were, lately.”

Jango froze for a moment in disbelief, too shocked to properly appreciate Obi-Wan’s blush like he usually would.

How could Obi-Wan say that?

How could he still not understand Jango’s intent?! He was doing everything. Bed-sharing, conversations, picnics, compliments, taking care of Obi-Wan, physical affection.

He had hugged the man from behind to whisper apologies about a late meeting into his ear yesterday, for force’s sake!

Jango heard himself growl and felt Obi-Wan tense as he looked up at him in confusion.

He quickly moved his arm to grab Obi-Wan’s near arm and started dragging him back to their room.

Obi-Wan tried to keep pace, despite his apparent obliviousness to the actual situation.

“Jango? Jango?! What’s wrong? You’re bleeding anger into the force! What happened?!”

Jango didn’t bother responding, just got them back to their room.

He quickly scanned his hand to be let in, still ignoring Obi-Wan’s questions, still keeping his grip on Obi-Wan’s arm, and swung the other man against the wall next to the door.

He caught the hand reflexively trying to punch him. Good. No mate of his could be coddled out of a warrior’s instincts.

They just looked at each other, breathing slightly labored, mingling from proximity, until the door automatically slid shut, breaking the tension enough to move the interaction forward.

“Jango?” Obi-Wan asked, the question felt as much as heard.

“You. Are. A dense idiot.” And then he was kissing Obi-Wan.

It wasn’t the nicest of first kisses, too desperate on Jango’s part, and Obi-Wan was frozen for a few seconds before Jango felt him relax, thought the other still wasn’t active in the kiss. They had to break apart after a few moments, the kiss had been too sudden for either to take a breath beforehand. It probably lasted less than ten seconds.

Jango felt Obi-Wan take in a shaky breath before he was pushed away.

Jango managed to keep his balance and looked up to see Obi-Wan breathing heavily, not just from the kiss, reminding Jango of a cornered, injured, Jakobeast.

“What?!” The question was desperate.

“I would have you as my mate.” There was no way Obi-Wan could mistake his intentions for anything else now.
Obi-Wan’s mouth moved for a few moments as tried to gather himself enough to speak.

“I… I can’t. This is not… I don’t…” Jango saw Obi-Wan look around the room wildly as he worked himself into an even higher frenzy, beginning to hyperventilate.

Obi-Wan froze completely for a moment. Jango waited for his response.

Suddenly, Obi-Wan had hit the button on the pad and was running out the door, turning down the hallway.

Osik! He forgot to lock it!

Jango rushed to the door and looked down the corridor, prepared to chase Obi-Wan down if that was what it took to get the man to stop and listen. To look at him again.

Obi-Wan was already turning the corner as he started down the hallway.

He ran as fast as he could, but by the time he could look down the next hallway, Obi-Wan was nowhere in sight.

Jango took a moment to collect his breath and his thoughts.

Osik.

What did the Jedi teach him?! He couldn’t let Obi-Wan escape.

Oh.

He hadn’t thought of that in a while. He needed to get him back. And then what? You thought he was ready for this step, what if you’re wrong about him wanting to do it at all? He couldn’t have an unwilling mate. It had been eons since anyone high-ranking did that. And that wasn’t what he wanted. He wanted Obi willingly.

Akkus. He needed to call Akkus.

000

Obi-Wan turned as soon as he entered the library, tucking himself into a corner.

He took a few minutes to just breathe, using one of the easier pseudo-meditations to get his heart rate down and start to clear his head.

He was… confused. To say the least.

Jango wanted to be mates.

Obi-Wan carefully collapsed into a sitting-cushion on the ground as he continued to think.

That was… not something he had ever considered. Until Jango had kissed him.

Why did he even do that? It didn’t make any sense!

He honestly wasn’t sure he understood what it meant. Especially with Jango being Mand’alor…
No, he really didn’t understand what was going on. Not enough at least.

He could make some sort of sense of some parts of the mate relationship, when it was close enough to something he had encountered in the Republic. But sometimes he was still out of his depth in the minutiae of how it worked at all. Compounded with Jango’s position…

He really had no idea what was going on, let alone what it meant for him.

Obi-Wan started looking around the library, eyes landing on a terminal nearby.

He needed information.

Chapter End Notes

Wasn't that fun? I loved writing this chapter! Both times!
Also, it felt weird to use the word meme in this chapter so... net-jokes.
Also also, this chapter takes place a few weeks after the last one, so Jango has had time to get "pent up", as it were.

Alright, I have officially finished all of the remaining chapters, the next chapter will be probably be posted later this week. We're in the home stretch, folks!

Mando’a:
Kaysh Ge’tal - His Red
Gar ge’tal - your red
Tuurla Bes'bev - Daily Bes'bev | a bes'bev is a large metal flute with a sharpened/cut-off end. Both a wind instrument and a weapon, because Mandalorians are just that awesome.
Osik - dung (impolite) | AKA shit
The one where he finally understands what he feels, somewhat

Chapter Notes

Previously:

*Obi-Wan started looking around the library, eyes landing on a terminal nearby.*

*He needed information.*

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Obi-Wan came back to full consciousness quite suddenly. In such a manner that he couldn’t really tell he had been unconscious at all, save for the fact that he didn’t remember putting his head on the table.

He did remember, however, all of his research from the night before. Or rather, early this morning. He thought through what he had learned as he started to put his research into the appropriate refiling bins nearby. It was quite a bit of information. With even larger implications.

He glanced up at the clock and froze for a moment before going back to his task, at triple the rate.

He only had fifteen minutes until class!

000

Kurri finished double checking her answers then glanced at the clock. She should have enough time. And it wasn’t like she was going to be lying, technically. It was just a creative point of view of the truth, as Adat’juri would say. Her buir said they needed all hands on deck, and even if she didn’t mean Kurri, the force was prompting her. Adat’juri had said to listen to the force, always, and then decide whether or not to follow. This seemed like a time to follow.

She saved her quiz one final time before getting up and handing in her pad.

“Um… Adat’juri?” she asked quietly, looking down at her shoes.

“Yes?” he whispered back. Most of the others were still taking their quizzes.

“Buir wanted me… to do something for her today. It should be really quick… and I’ll be back for meditation… Can I go do it now?” she asked.

“That’s fine. Hurry back, Ad’ika,” he responded kindly.

Kurri nodded her assent before slipping out of the classroom. She looked into the force for a moment, easily finding her buir in the force – *Safe Home Protecting Laughter Thinking Love*– and started making her way towards her. She felt the force urge her on and started moving quicker towards her buir, eventually breaking into a jog.
She stopped to catch her breath before turning a final corner to see her buir, ba’vodu Threl, and some other people her buir worked with frequently, including her ‘Alor.

“‘Alor, we really need to start preparing to go public. If we can’t find him by-”

“No. Everyone just got on board with this. It’s too early to shake that yet. I’m not going to jeopardize our acceptance until we’re really-”

“‘Alor. Jango. Jingles. When the kriff did you become so Hut’uun you stopped having ret’lini’e?!?” her buir asked, as stressed in the force as everyone else in the group.

Her ‘Alor and a few others looked ready to respond to her buir when Ba’vodu Threl spotted her.

“The kids!” He shouted, pointing at her. The others quickly swiveled to look at her, surprised, and even more stressed, in the force. It was nice to actually understand what she was sensing now that she had Adat’juri.

Her mother quickly dashed over to her and knelt down to be at her level. “Kurri’ka, dear, are you okay? Are the other kids in the classroom?” She asked as the others came down the hallway to join them.

Kurri took a moment to look at the others. They had newer worry now. Because they thought the kids were left alone.

“I’m fine. Everyone else is finishing up their quizzes, then Adat’juri is going to lead a mediation for the last twenty minutes of class,” the force stirred when they heard her mention Adat’juri, “is something wrong with Adat’juri?”

“Nope, no. It’s just… a miscommunication. He got a bit freaked out by something last night and we want to make sure he’s okay,” Ba’vodu explained.

“He doesn’t get freaked out,” Kurri replied. It was true. Adat’juri was very accepting of whatever she and her classmates did, even the stuff their other instructors were scared of. And he was only stern if they tried something dangerous before they should.

“It’s, um… something he doesn’t have experience in,” the Duros said, Kros, as Kurri recalled. Adat’juri knew a lot of things though, most of them through some experience…

“Relationships? Romantic ones,” they all looked startled at her response. She was right.

“How do you know?” her ‘Alor asked.

“We… ask him about a lot of things. When we ask about romantic relationships, he’s clinical. Crushes are fine, but when we ask him about actually being in a relationship… he’s like a textbook,” she explained. Her ‘Alor nodded, accepting her answer. She felt him settle down in the force, before something solidified, bringing out a wave of what she was fairly certain was determination. Her ‘Alor frequently felt like this, so she always tried to study him. Adat’juri said it was rare for one emotion to be so much that it was felt strongly as the only emotion from people. Emotions were usually weak or came in multiples.

“Well, we should get you back to class. I’ll walk you back, okay?” He said while stepping up so he was right in front of her. Kurri nodded in agreement. The force in general had settled, whatever it had wanted her to do had been done.

Her buir ruffled her hair and gave her a quick goodbye while her ‘Alor offered his hand. She took it
and they started walking down the hallway at a calm pace.

“For the rest of you, I’m not be disturbed until tomorrow morning except for emergencies,” her ‘Alor commanded. The others mainly gave whistles at this order, while her buir and Mx. Wral laughed, though Kurri didn’t quite understand why any of them responded in this way.

Her ‘Alor didn’t mind, just snorted and released a flare of joy, no, amusement, she was pretty sure, into the force.

She really was getting better at the details of emotions.

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Jango waited patiently in the hallway as class ended. On the one hand, he was impatient to get Obi-Wan back with him, to make sure the man understood, to hold him again. The past day had him panicked about having to face a future, a life, without Obi-Wan again. He needed him back at his side as soon as possible. On the other hand, Obi-Wan was only a handful of steps away from him, through a door, in a space that Jango wanted him. He knew exactly where Obi-Wan was, knew that the man wasn’t even trying to leave, and that settled him into contentment for the moment.

Regardless of whether his impatience or patience was more prominent, class ended when it was supposed to, and the children quickly started filing out. Some of the newer students still looked at him in intimidated awe. He tried to look as non-threatening as possible and gave them encouraging nods. Most of them managed a bow before scurrying down the hallway. The students who were already used to him just waved.

Soon, it was just Obi-Wan in the classroom. Jango pushed himself off of the wall as Obi-Wan came to his classroom’s doorway.

They stared for a moment, drinking in their first look at each other since last night’s perspective-shifting disaster. Obi-Wan looked tense.

“Let’s go back,” Jango said gently, giving a small nod down the hallway.

Obi-Wan took a deep breath before stepping out and beginning down the hallway.

They walked quietly, unhurried, with not even a thumb’s width between them, but not touching at all.

The walk was a silent eternity that seemed to condense into an easily forgotten moment the second they stopped outside of their room.

Jango opened the door and let Obi-Wan go in first. He went to lock the door from the inside pad but hesitated.

He made a purposeful abortive gesture to show he had not locked the door and turned back to face Obi-Wan, who was halfway across the room, by the foot of the bed. It took a full minute for the other man to break the silence.

“Why didn’t you tell me?” Mandalorian courting usually began with an explicit declaration of intent.
“Would you have let me? If you knew?” They both knew that he wouldn’t have. Obi-Wan looked aside. Jango waited another minute before continuing.

“We did find some record of you last night. You were researching quite a bit.” Obi-Wan chewed his lip for a moment before responding.

“I needed information. I didn’t know enough to really understand… what you meant. What it meant for us, especially for me,” Obi-Wan explained, a light blush spreading on his face. He still wasn’t looking at Jango.

“Do you understand now?” Jango asked, daring to take two steps closer. Obi-Wan didn’t move, just stroked his beard with more force than Jango had ever seen him use for that tic. He seemed… almost guilty?

“It would help so many, this sort of stability. You in this position. And you’re so used to this, to me, to us. Is there anything wrong with that? Helping people? Having a domestic routine?”

Obi-Wan finally looked back at him. He looked over Jango, assessing him with new eyes. Still too trepid for Jango’s liking, but at least the other was looking at him again. Obi-Wan took a few more breaths before looking down and answering, his blush flaring more.

“No, there’s nothing wrong with that.” Jango took a few more steps.

“So? Your answer?” Jango breathed out. Obi-Wan made eye contact for a single second, before blushing even further and looking down once more.

“I might not be able to reach your… your current level of affection for a while. You have a bit of a head start, after all. If that’s all right, then yes,” he finally answered.

Jango grinned at that, to the point where he could feel his cheeks working to accommodate the stretch, and closed the distance between them.

He reached out, caressing Obi-Wan’s face, causing the man to look up. He still looked a little scared, a little unsure, but he leaned into the caress, obviously accepting it, wanting it.

Kriff it. He was too beautiful.

Jango wrapped his arms around Obi-Wan and picked him up, causing him to yelp in surprise. Jango walked them back into the foot of the bed, continuing so that they tipped over onto it.

“Well then, will you let me show you just how much affection you’ll be catching up on?” He whispered excitedly into Obi-Wan’s ear.

Chapter End Notes

So... That's actually the end! Of the plot! There will be another chapter, that just kind of enunciates what's happened... through sex (Surprise, surprise, I'm sure.)
But if that's not your jam, you can stop here, at the original ending. Or you can wait a bit more for the bonus smut, your choice ¯\_(ツ)_/¯

Mando’a:
Adat’Juri - teacher I see the end notes from chapter 24 for more details
Buir - parent
Ad'ika - child (diminutive)
Ba'vodu - gender-neutral term for aunt/uncle | seriously, does anyone know an English word for this
Hut'uun - coward | partially derived from Mandalorians' disdain for Hutts
Ret'lin'i'e - back up plans
Kurri'ka - Little Kurri (diminutive) | think a Hispanic grandma calling her granddaughter Rosa "Rosita" or something
The one where he has the sex

Chapter Notes

PLEASE NOTE: Breaking with how I've been using italics/bold/etc. the few times I bothered with them, Italicized dialogue in this chapter is for when they're speaking in Mando'a. I have decided to use this during the sex scene because it would break the reader's emotional continuity too much if I wrote all the Mando'a and you kept having to scroll up and down. After the sex, I did write one or two things in Mando'a, but the important bit is that italic dialogue, even written in English for this chapter, is in-verse them speaking Mando'a.

Previously:
“Well then, will you let me show you just how much affection you'll be catching up on?” He whispered excitedly into Obi-Wan's ear.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Jango looked down in amusement as Obi-Wan’s blush became impossibly redder.

“Well?”

“Yes. That… That sounds fine,” Obi-Wan breathed out, flustered.

Jango chuckled at how embarrassed Obi-Wan was as he leaned down to nibble on the shell of other’s ear. Obi-Wan wouldn’t spend too long before he was so used to this that embarrassment would be impossible.

He experimentally flicked his tongue behind the ear and felt Obi-Wan's toes flex in response.

He hummed at this before suddenly rolling off of Obi-Wan and crawling towards the top of the bed, reaching his bedside table and opening it up to find the right supplies.

“We’re both clean, so we don’t necessarily need these,” he said, holding up the box of condoms. He looked over his shoulder to see Obi-Wan taking off his shoes. He should probably do that soon as well.

Obi-Wan stared at him for a moment before seeming to realize that he wanted a response and nodded. The man really was still a little overwhelmed, Jango made a note to watch that.

Jango quickly dropped the condoms back into the drawer, put the lube on the bedside table, and kicked off his own shoes.

He scrambled over to the other side to drag Obi-Wan towards the headboard and push him down so he could kiss the other.

He practically devoured Obi-Wan’s mouth, forceful enough that it took a few moments before Obi-Wan could even try to reciprocate. When he finally did, it was tentative at first, before gaining fervor.

Jango broke the kiss, pleased to see the bright light in Obi-Wan’s eyes. He hadn’t been able to stare at Obi-Wan from this close before.
He moved down to make a meandering path of kisses on the other’s neck, nipping and sucking light enough to tease and not leave marks. As he continued with that, he started to undo Obi-Wan’s top. The overcoat was belted in front, easy to open and push aside to pool at Obi-Wan’s arms. The undertunic snapped at the side and took only a moment longer to get in a similar position.

Obi-Wan lightly pawed at him to push him back bit, Jango acquiesced and Obi-Wan lifted himself up to finish taking off the garments, throwing them over the side of the bed carelessly.

Jango saw Obi-Wan’s hands hesitate before he actually reached out to try to take off his shirt in return. Jango quickly complied, leaning down to both make it easier for Obi-Wan slip the cloth over his head and so that he could automatically start attacking the neglected ear once that was done, not even giving Obi-Wan the time to throw it away.

And wasn’t that interesting, he thought as Obi-Wan mewled almost immediately at the new stimulus. Apparently, that ear was very sensitive. A small lick had Obi-Wan sputtering a bit and combining licks with sucking and nibbling had Obi-Wan gasping and arching under him.

He experimentally moved one hand down from its place near Obi-Wan’s head to try and see what reactions he’d get from toying with the other’s nipples and was rewarded with another mewl as soon as he brushed over one.

Jango grinned at that and teased the area mercilessly. He could feel Obi-Wan start to tremble from trying to keep still. Another sensitive spot, he noted as Obi-Wan groaned.

Jango was planning to learn a lot about Obi-Wan’s body. All that he could, like he had already learned Obi-Wan’s mind.

Jango refocused his efforts and quickly found Obi-Wan pulling him up into another kiss to try to keep quiet.

Pity. Jango had been enjoying the other’s noises so much.

Jango pulled back to look at Obi-Wan and was pleasantly surprised by the sight that greeted him. Obi-Wan was flushed scarlet, face, ears, and all the way down his neck to his collarbone, practically. He was panting, a little bit of drool collecting at the corner of his mouth, glimmering as he breathed harshly. His eyes were glossed over, and wet from unshed tears caused by the stimulation.

Jango sat up to properly straddle Obi-Wan, noting one hand tangled in his shirt and the other clinging to the bed sheets desperately.

All of this, the man beneath him so undone, just from some foreplay of hardly five minutes in length. It was exciting to get such a level of response from his lover.

Jango leaned back down, one hand on the side of Obi-Wan’s head, the other going to slowly untangle his shirt from Obi-Wan’s grip, and kissed him slow and sweet, letting the other have a moment to collect himself again.

When he managed to throw away the shirt, he broke the kiss and whispered into his cyare’s ear, purposefully lowering his voice “You must have had poor lovers in the past, to still be this sensitive.”

Because really, as much as he was enjoying Obi-Wan’s sensitivity, and planned to take advantage of it, this was ridiculous. And the idea that any past lovers apparently hadn’t bothered with even basic foreplay, basic affection for Obi-Wan, made something angry in him rear its head. Although, now that he was thinking about it, the idea of past lovers at all…
“Maybe I should kill them for that, or just for touching you.”

He felt Obi-Wan tense at that, before he seemed to melt a second later. He heard and felt the man take in a deep breath.

“There weren’t… that is to say, I never… actually…” Obi-Wan trailed off, sputtering a bit.

Jango quickly got up on his hands and knees to look down at Obi-Wan directly. He quirked an eyebrow in question.

Obi-Wan’s blush, which had died down a bit, flushed anew.

“I haven’t… actually… done this before. I’ve had to flirt, kiss, imply, for missions. But this… I’ve only really kissed one person before willingly, and that was just a peck between childhood crushes. So, I don’t think past lovers have any part of my… because they didn’t… there weren’t… you know what I mean,” Obi-Wan trailed off, looking sideways out of embarrassment.

Jango froze at that admission. He hadn’t expected that. But it did mean…

“Meaning I’ll be your first fuck, your first lover, your first everything. Meaning everything you ever do will be here, in our bed.” He felt a wide anticipatory grin work its way onto his face. His possessiveness was elated at the thought this part of Obi-Wan would only ever be shared with him.

Obi-Wan blushed anew as he kept looking aside, chewing his lip a little and fistig his other hand in the bedsheets. Nervous.

Jango chuckled. Obi-Wan was just too cute.

“Don’t worry, I’ll teach you all of the joys that come with this kind of intimacy,” he said.

Jango quickly moved down and pulled off Obi-Wan’s pants and underwear, pleased to see that the other’s cock had already gotten fairly hard.

He glanced up to make eye contact before taking Obi-Wan with his mouth.

Within moments, Obi-Wan completely hardened. Jango could hear those lovely groans start up again, as well.

“Perhaps… you’ll teach me… more upfront… than you taught me the political duties of your mate,” Obi-Wan managed to breathe out over the course of half a minute. Jango disengaged at that.

“So, you caught onto that, huh?” Jango sat up completely, spreading Obi-Wan’s legs a bit more to resettie in between them.

“I realized it last night. How long have you been planning this?”

Jango looked down at Obi-Wan, who was still breathing a bit heavily. He leaned down to press another kiss to the other man’s lips and used the moment to quickly take off his own pants and underwear. His own cock, which had hardened long ago, seemed glad to finally be free to show its interest fully.

Once that was done, he returned to attacking Obi-Wan’s more sensitive ear, pausing every few seconds to answer a bit more of Obi-Wan’s questions in heated whispers.

“Started a long time ago.” A kiss to the shell. “But the desire couldn’t be named.” A quick lick behind. “Couldn’t even be categorized, until you gave up the coup for the kids.” A nibble to the lobe,
and that gave him a loud gasp, despite Obi-Wan’s best efforts to keep quiet. “It was very Manda of you.”

Jango brought a hand back to Obi-Wan’s nipples, still pebbled, and started teasing him there again as he pressed fluttering kisses to the other’s throat.

“You really are amazing, you know? So fierce in battle. Watching you spar makes me think of the old legends, when combat was justice.”

Obi-Wan keened at that, whether it was more the words of praise or the physical stimulus overwhelming him was unknown. Jango found he didn’t particularly care for the details at the moment.

He grabbed the lube before moving down the bed while unscrewing the lid, settling back in between Obi-Wan’s bent legs. He took Obi-Wan’s cock in hand and started to stroke, holding eye contact with Obi-Wan’s glossed-over eyes.

“And the way you just took to teaching the kids. So kind, giving them exactly what they need. It all just sits in your beautiful head, doesn’t it? Always thinking things through, always figuring out how to use that to help others,” he continued as he discretely covered his other hand’s fingers with lube.

He changed his strokes’ pacing to be unpredictable as he slowly inserted one finger. He felt Obi-Wan tense around it.

“Relax, dear. You’re doing so well. Ah, and the way you’ve been doing things in general.” Jango slowly slid his finger in further as he continued his commentary.

“The treaties, the classes, for Mandalorians. For the empire and its people.” He managed to press something that had Obi-Wan breathing a little harder. Found it.

“Jango?”

“You fight for them, you teach them, you give them structure, perfectly Mandalorian. You’re glorious.” He kept pressing the other’s prostate, it wasn’t long before Obi-Wan was gasping again, trembling with effort to keep still, his back arching off the bed, seemingly only anchored by the hands grasping even more desperately at the sheets, causing ripples to grow across the bed like a sea of pleasure. And if Obi-Wan was sinking in the sea, Jango was the storm gladly causing it.

“And now,” he pulled out his finger, enjoying Obi-Wan’s small keen at the absence, before putting in two, quickly finding the prostate again, “Now, here you are, beneath me. Beautiful and perfect. The perfect mate.” Jango continued to stimulate Obi-Wan, watching the other come undone and start breathing his name while he gasped.

Once he thought the other was sufficiently used to the feeling, he quickly leaned down and gave Obi-Wan a kiss, drawn out long enough that he felt Obi-Wan try to start using his tongue, before going back down and lubing up his own cock then removing the fingers.

Getting to watch Obi-Wan closely was enjoyable, especially as the man came undone on his fingers, but he had been patient enough.

He carefully slid into Obi-Wan, slowly, until he found Obi-Wan’s prostate again, still stimulated enough that the lightest touch had the other mewling from sensation.

He started with a light, slow, steady rhythm. As amazing as it felt to see Obi-Wan so overwhelmed because of him, Jango didn’t actually want him to pass out during their first time.
Although, it seemed he might have underestimated how teasing the lighter rocking would seem to Obi-Wan, he thought a few moments later when Obi-Wan launched himself up to grab at Jango, holding onto his back like one would grab onto a barrel at sea.

Not that he minded. Obi-Wan’s whimpers in his ears were some of the sweetest sounds he had heard in a long time. His physical proximity, by his own choice, just made Jango feel better.

Jango drew Obi-Wan into another kiss, swallowing the other’s sounds, which seemed to take him back from the edge a bit. Jango used the small distraction to let them fall back onto the bed, taking care to not hit heads, caging Obi-Wan’s head between his hands.

The motion rocked him further into Obi-Wan, making the man keen louder than before.

Jango set a new pace. Harder, faster, deeper, putting a bit of variation in the rhythm. He made sure to hit Obi-Wan’s prostate as much as possible. The other man was having trouble breathing so Jango broke the kiss, letting Obi-Wan get the air he needed and letting Jango hear more of those delicious songs.

“Jango. Jan-,” his name cut off with another keen

“Right here. I’m right here. And who are you with?” He asked.

“Yo- You. Jango. You! Jango!” his dear Obi-Wan was still trying to keep his head in this scenario. It wasn’t working, but it was an amazing sight to behold.

“And who do you belong with, Obi-Wan? Who do you belong to?” He pressed, making sure to enunciate his question with a direct hit to Obi-Wan’s prostate.


Jango felt himself rapidly getting closer to the edge at the response. As he slowly went non-verbal, it seemed like Obi-Wan was too.

He was right, he came a minute later, pounding into Obi-Wan through his orgasm, making sure to hit his prostate with renewed vigor.

That was enough to push Obi-Wan over the edge. Jango would be holding those screams of pleasure as precious memories for years to come.

Jango slowly pulled out as Obi-Wan kept panting, eyes closed.

He crawled back up the bed, watched Obi-Wan’s eyes flutter open, then leaned down to kiss him. It was slow, calm, and almost lazy compared to what they had just been doing. Jango broke the kiss and opened his eyes to see Obi-Wan was keeping his closed, looking completely exhausted with the sweat and panting.

Jango smiled as he rolled off and walked to the ‘resher to get the right cleaning supplies.

When he came back, Obi-Wan tried to get up, obviously still spent, and he pushed him back down onto the bed.

Obi-Wan let him clean both of them up and take the top sheet off to send down the laundry chute.
Jango turned off the lights and climbed into bed, settling under the covers with Obi-Wan and drawing the other into his arms, happy at doing so openly while the other was awake, for once.

He kissed Obi-Wan again and, gods, that was never going to get old.


He heard Obi-Wan gulp and waited in silence for a few moments before the other responded tentatively buy steadily.


Jango smiled at Obi-Wan’s vows and pulled the other closer, bringing their foreheads together.

They stayed like that, Obi-Wan was still more exhausted, the last twenty-four hours had been far more taxing on him, especially emotionally and mentally. Jango could tell he was falling asleep quickly.

“Ni mirdi… ni ret kar’tayli gar darasuum,” Obi-Wan whispered as he nodded off.

Jango was happily surprised at the admission, conditional though it may be. Well, considering Obi-Wan’s emotional difficulties, that confession meant that Obi-Wan was already far closer to his level of affection than he could have hoped for.

Jango smiled and did what he could to pull them even closer together.

Obi-Wan was his.

Chapter End Notes

And that's that! Thanks for reading!

Mando'a:
Ni pirimmu ner besbe’trayce par gar. Mhi gotal’u mhor yaim tome. Tome mhi solus. Gar cuiyi ner riduur. Ni cuiyi gar riduur - I use my weapons for you. We make our home together. Together, we are one. You are my mate. I am your mate | I made up mate-marriage vows, for a traditionally nomadic warrior culture, this is actually legally binding.
Ni mirdi… ni ret kar’tayli gar darasuum - I think... I might love you | (how sure about that are you, Obi-Wan?)

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