Hope to those who have not (5/?)

by Adalisa

Summary

Queen Amidala thoughts as C-3PO's message arrives.

Note from mods: this story was originally archived at www.masterapprentice.org, which has closed due to code rot. To preserve the archive, we began manually importing its works to the AO3 as an Open Doors-approved project in March 2014. The m_a list was mailed in December 2013 as well as posted to a number of LJ and Dreamwidth communities about the move and posted announcements, but may not have reached everyone. If you are (or know) this author, please contact us using the e-mail address on collection profile.

Hope to those who have not (5/?)

by Adalisa (marioz@spin.com.mx)

Archive: My site and the m_a archive. Anyone else, just ask. I won't say no.

Category: I'm not at all sure, but it's an AU, h/c, angst, and POV. Yeah, I think that's all.

I still do not know why I am doing this.

I am Queen of Naboo, I was chosen to protect my people.

Then why I am sitting here, listening as Senator... no, Chancellor Palpatine tries to convince me to sign the Trade Federation's deal, as a show of peaceful intentions?

How could I have voted for him, instead of maintaining my faith on Chancellor Vallorum?

I am only 14 years old... but unlike other girls my age, I am not allowed to make any mistakes.

And I fear I made a terrible one.

A mistake I might not be able to rectify.

Still, I have to try.

I open my mouth, ready to tell Chancellor Palpatine that his suggestions are unacceptable, when the doors of the audience room open quite violently, and little Anakin runs towards me, obviously very excited about something.

"Dala... Your Majesty... Please! Come here! We... I ... I have to show you something!" He is at my side in a second, and tugs my sleeve as Palpatine and my Senators look quite insulted.

"Young Anakin..." I begin, hating to use a formal tone with him. "I am in a very important reunion with Chancellor Palpatine. I will go later."
"But... But... It's REALLY Important!!"

"Your Majesty..." Captain Panaka enters the room, and I can see signs of excitement in his face. "...It is a matter most urgent"

"Very well." I rise, very grateful to be able to dismiss my Senators and Palpatine. Every meeting I have with him gives me a dreadful feeling of... something wrong in the air. "Chancellor Palatine, I offer my apologies. We will continue our talks tomorrow."

The holographic image bows and disappears as I walk out, following Panaka and Ani, who is still jumping with excitement.

"What is it?" I ask, barely maintaining my patience. "The Chancellor..."

"We found Obi-Wan!!" Ani's words block out anything I could have said. "But he is in trouble..."

"We received a message in Tandoryan, your Majesty." Panaka explains, as we hurry to Master Jinn's quarters. "It was coded, but Ani managed to decipher it. He says it's from an android he built in Tatooine..."

"It is!" Ani interrupts, harshly. "It was from 3PO! He's with Obi Wan!!"

"The message comes from a unit O-P3C..." Panaka begins to explain. He looks very shaken too... After all, he did formed a good friendship with Obi-Wan on the way to Tatooine, a friendship who turned in sheer idol worship when he learned of Obi-Wan's sacrifice.

I understand him. I also feel a deep admiration for such a brave man. And if I wasn't aware of how Master Jinn feels towards his Padawan, I would let my heart dream of Obi Wan.

"It's our code!" Ani's voice pulls me out of those thoughts, and I'm grateful. He is also very dear to me... If only he were older. "O-P3C is C-3PO backwards! Besides, who else would have thought of sending the message in Tandoryan?"

"What did the message said?" I ask, our half run almost over. It must be a strange view for anyone. The Queen, dressed in one of the most complicated royal attires, her personal guard's Captain, and a little boy running across the Palace and yet pretending not to run.

"Kenobi is in the hands of a bounty hunter... He's going to be sold in Datoine. We have the coordinates of the ship..."

"Datoine is part of the Republic!!" I cannot stop my indignant
tone. That someone in the Republic allows slavery, that someone could pay to capture a Jedi Knight... that's against all my beliefs. "The Senate must hear about this!"

"But we have to save Obi-Wan first!" Anakin looks at me with disbelief. He is too young to understand.

Finally, we reach Qui-Gon's quarters. I am not sure of how to breach the subject, how to tell Master Jinn about the message. Even when his disposition has got a little better, he still spends every day meditating, his face full of sorrow.

When he opens the door, you can almost see the exhaustion in his back. He seems somewhat older, tired. Worse than when he accepted the Council's decision regarding Anakin's fate.

"We found him!!" Ani almost jumps over Qui-Gon, making him step back, his eyes round we surprise. "We have to save him!!"

"Master Jinn..." Panaka begins, following protocol. "We received a distress signal from a ship... A droid there..."

"C-3PO." Anakin interrupts, anxious to act.

"C-3PO" Concedes Panaka. "claims that Obi-Wan Kenobi is going to be sold in Datoine."

"My ship is at your disposition." I finally say, Qui-Gon's eyes fix in Anakin, then in me. "My personal guard is small but my people will help you anyway you need. It's the least we can do." But he only shakes his head in negative.

"I cannot accept, your majesty. I cannot ask you to put your planet in danger for my account."

The man is as stubborn as ever, even if his voice doesn't carry the sarcasm it had in Tatooine.

"I am not doing it just for you, " I say, trying to maintain my royal calm. "Anakin saved the planet, and he wouldn't be here if it wasn't for you and Obi-Wan's sacrifice. We own him our freedom." He opens his mouth, probably to object. I won't let him. "If it will make you feel better, I will make a formal request to the Jedi Council to help us free Obi-Wan, as he is a hero for all the Naboo and Gungan."

I turn around, paying no attention to Qui-Gon's surprised stare, to Anakin's scowl, to Panaka's soft smile.

I am the Queen.

It's time to act like one.
talk with the Senate. The 'Peace and Patience' of the Jedi Code can make anyone want to scream.

But I managed to stay calm. And in some fashion, they understood. Master Jinn still doesn't have their authorization to search actively for Obi-Wan alone, but the Council will send a representative to review the situation.

By the time Master Windu arrives, there might still be time to save Obi-Wan.

I'm immersed in my thoughts when Captain Panaka enters my quarters, his face pale. It's not a nice sight. I've known him since I was able to walk, and I cannot remember of a single time I saw him pale.

"Captain, is there something wrong?" Stupid question. There must be something wrong to cause that expression on his face.

"Your Majesty... A ship has just took off, ten minutes ago." He tells me, barely containing his shock. "It is piloted by Anakin... and it appears that Master Jinn and R2-D2 are with him."

"Their course? I cannot believe it. Master Jinn didn't disobeyed the Council when they practically forbade him from doing anything, and now that they're bending, he chooses to act. Or maybe it was Ani's idea. That wouldn't be a surprise.

"They're going straight to Datoine." I nod, and Panaka waits patiently. I know that he wants to go too... I wish I could go...

"Take a ship and follow them. They might need help." He looks at me, surprised, but then bows, indicating that he will follow my orders. "I will explain everything to Master Windu and the Jedi Council."

My Captain leaves, and I look through the window. Somewhere in the sky, Ani, Qui Gon and R2 are looking for Obi-Wan. Somewhere, far away, Obi-Wan is suffering because we choose a path without thinking on the consequences.

And I am here, on the planet, having to choose a new path.

I have made mistakes in the past.

It is time to put them right.

I activate the computer on my throne, and type my password. "Computer, display all the files on Senator Palpatine. I want to know all about him, his past, and his movements. All about his associates, and family." If what I fear is true, then it
will be hard to find evidence.... but I have learned too much in this day.

Everyone makes mistakes.

But one has to have courage to set them right.

To be continued...

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