Riding the Wheel of If: Episode 12

by Fox

Summary

I was one of several guest writers on Riding the Wheel of If, but we were just playing in Terri’s back yard.

Notes

I am not now, nor have I ever been, George Lucas.

The air was crisp. The sun was high overhead. Obi-Wan peeked out of his corner into the open garden and saw scads of Initiates, running in circles, colliding with one another, sometimes freezing in place for what seemed an arbitrary length of time, always calling out with happy, high-pitched children’s voices. A handful of junior Knights clustered near the Temple wall, chatting and laughing and keeping one eye on the Initiates most of the time.

Although this Temple seemed to have nothing frightening or peculiar or surreal about it, Obi-Wan had learned by now that the best thing was not to call attention to himself until he knew his place - or lack thereof - in a given reality. So he pulled his cowl over his head, tucked his arms into his sleeves, and calmly walked into the Temple, sidestepping a group of Initiates who, unable to see his face, naturally assumed he was just another Knight.

Finding Yoda was the work of a few minutes; putting the salient facts before him took a little longer, but Yoda set a lunch before him and calmly listened while Obi-Wan spoke between and through mouthfuls of bread and cheese. By the end of the account, the little green Master was nodding sagely. "To Naboo went my Padawan last month, with his Padawan," he said. "Grave danger they met there. Returned, they almost did not."
"Survive he did," Yoda nodded. "Wounded, his Padawan was, though. Still in infirmary she is."

She. Sil-Wan. "Pull through, she may not."

"Qui-Gon and Sil-Wan - and they both made it, Obi-Wan thought, so they must be - "Master Yoda, are Qui-Gon and Sil-Wan - are they - " In most realities where versions of himself and Qui-Gon both existed, he had found them in some stage or other of a lovers' relationship; he hesitated to bring it up, though, because of the negative reactions in those realities where it was expressly forbidden. He began again. "In every reality, I see people I think I know, and they behave differently than I'd ever have imagined," he said. "Each reality has different attitudes and different customs and different, ah, expectations of Masters and Padawans."

Yoda was looking at him curiously. "Very close are my Padawan and his Padawan. Envy of the Temple, they are. Work perfectly, they do, as a team." There was nothing in the gnarled Master's voice to suggest any inappropriate relationship between Qui-Gon and Sil-Wan. Not that that meant anything at all; it could be that this was a reality in which it would be unusual for a Master and his Padawan not to become lovers. "Fight seamlessly, as well, they always have. That is why so surprising it was, when wounded she was."

"May I see her? Them?"

"See them you may, but speak with you they probably will not. Unconscious, Padawan Kenobi is, and leave her side Master Jinn has not."

"What - what happened?" Obi-Wan rose and helped Yoda clear his lunch dishes, crouching to speak to the Master face to face.

"Hmm. Know the details I do not. Stabbed, she was, with enemy's lightsaber. Missed her heart, it did, but infected did her burned lung become. Bone and skin healed over before cured was infection. Aggravated, it is, by airborne irritants. Healing as well as it should it is not."

"Can't they use - "

"Liquid, bacta is," Yoda reminded him, anticipating his question. "Drown in it she would if bacta introduced into lungs. Bacta mist she breathes instead, but low concentration, so choke and cough she does not."

"I understand."

"Also heavy painkillers they give her, and antibiotics and sedatives. Unconscious she is," he repeated. "Still wish to see her do you?"

"I do. Will you ... should I go myself, or would it be better if you explained to my Master who I am and how I got here?"

"Hmm. Point you have. Go together we will." He rapped his gimer stick on the floor. "Carry me you should. Faster can longer legs travel." So Obi-Wan hoisted the diminutive Master on his back and walked - perhaps more briskly than was entirely decorous - to the infirmary. Sil-Wan Kenobi lay motionless on her hospital bed, a sensor clipped to her finger, a needle in her arm, and a tube down her throat. Qui-Gon Jinn sat at her side, his head in his hands. His cloak lay draped over the back of a chair, his tunics rumpled and slept-in. His hair was unbound, and so greasy Obi-Wan could see where he had last combed it back with his fingers. The young man forced himself to look away.
"Reading her pulse that is," Yoda whispered in response to Obi-Wan's unfamiliarity with the medical equipment, "and help her breathe the tube does. Oxygen with low dose of bacta it gives her. Feed her, they do, with nutrients directly into bloodstream." Obi-Wan nodded and put the Master down, standing back as he approached Qui-Gon. "My Padawan," Yoda said softly. "Visitor, you have."

Qui-Gon looked at his old Master, then up at Obi-Wan, with shadowed, weary eyes. "I have a visitor, my Master?" At Yoda's gesture, Obi-Wan stepped forward and dropped his cowl back to his shoulders. The look of confusion on Qui-Gon's face broke his heart - the man clearly thought he recognized him, but couldn't understand why he should. He glanced at his injured Padawan, then back at Obi-Wan. "Who are you?" he finally rasped.

"My name is Obi-Wan Kenobi," Obi-Wan answered. "I am - I am who your Padawan would be if she were a man."

"But how can you be here?"

"Come, my Padawan," Yoda interrupted, tugging at Qui-Gon's sleeve. "Talk with you I must. Stay with your Padawan, Knight Kenobi can."

"Knight - but -"

"I'll be sure to call for you if anything happens to her," Obi-Wan assured him. The combined Force-enhanced persuasiveness of Yoda and Obi-Wan finally convinced Qui-Gon, and he reluctantly stepped outside with Yoda. Obi-Wan swiftly moved to the bedside and looked at the face that was at once so like and so unlike his own. He took the limp hand and reached out for her experimentally.

//Sil-Wan,// he thought, //can you hear me?//

Through the pain and fatigue in the girl's mind, he perceived fear and uncomprehending recognition. //I can ... Master?// she responded, confused.

//No, it's not your Master,// Obi-Wan began again.

//Master?// she asked again, fuzzily. As Obi-Wan "spoke" to her, Sil-Wan seemed to shake away her drug-induced stupor, leaving behind complete bewilderment to settle on a sort of drunken stubbornness. //My only bond is with my Master,// she insisted. //Nobody else has a link to my mind.//

//This isn't going to be easy for you to hear, Sil-Wan,// Obi-Wan said, //but you must. You're right. The only people who have access to your mind are your Master and yourself. And I'm not your Master - so I must be ...//

//Me? You can't be me. I'm me.//

//We both are, Sila. I'm the brother you never had. I'm a different you - I'm what you would have been, if you'd been born a boy, and been chosen as Qui-Gon Jinn's Padawan, and loved your Master, and lost him on Naboo -// Here he was stunned into silence by a wave of misery from the girl. He seemed to have touched a nerve. //Sil-Wan? You haven't lost your Master - he's just outside with Master Yoda. Shall I call him?//

//Don't.// Her disbelief of Obi-Wan's presence in her mind forgotten, Sil-Wan was quietly but completely distressed by something he had said. He noticed the machine next to her bed beeping faster and louder than it had been, saw that it was connected to the sensor on her fingertip, and concluded that her heart rate had risen.

//Is there something -//
He doesn't love me. Although physically she did not move, in her thoughts Sil-Wan was near tears.

/What?/

/Love my Master ... lost him, not mine, doesn't love me./ she said, the drugs kicking back in and slurring her thoughts together.

Obi-Wan stared. Everything clicked into place. He'd been right. He - whoever he was - and Qui-Gon were supposed to be together, cosmically, brought together by the Force. Not acknowledging their love for each other was dangerous, and correlated alarmingly with one of them getting killed on Naboo. Of course, he reminded himself, once or twice they had been lovers and still gotten killed - but in the first, they were killed together, and when Mar-Gon lost her Obi-Wan it was a foolish self-sacrifice.

So Sil-Wan was in love with Qui-Gon, and had said so and been rebuffed. And neither had been killed, but the girl had been seriously wounded. He knew what he was here to do - and, yet again, it was to help his beloved Master find love in the arms of another. Obi-Wan sighed.

/Sila, you must tell me exactly what happened./ he said. /Concentrate for me, please./

/You're me,/ she challenged, sleepy but entirely reasonable. /How is it you don't already know?/

/I have my own memories of my own existence,/ he explained. /I can read yours, if you'd rather not tell me./

/We'll trade,/ she said. /Fair is fair, whoever you are. I'll give you my thoughts if you give me yours./

Ah, smart, Obi-Wan thought with a smile. And she can make logical sense even on loads of narcotics. That's my girl. Carefully, he opened his mind, preparing to receive Sil-Wan's thoughts and allow her to receive his. Hers came to him in a flood, the first ones painfully familiar: following in Qui-Gon's shadow, training at his side, his pride in his Padawan's accomplishments. He recognized the exact moment Sil-Wan had realized she was in love with Qui-Gon; she'd been a little younger than he had, he noted, but had bravely kept her secret until after she was of age. She had planned to come forward on her Knighting day, but instead had confronted her Master when he said she was ready for the Trials - the day that, before the Council, he had claimed Anakin Skywalker as his Padawan Learner. Qui-Gon had been flattered but unsurprised, and had let her down gently. Then, on Naboo, they had been separated during the fight with the Sith, and Sil-Wan had felt her Master's strength starting to flag; running with Force-enhanced speed, she'd made it through the energy doors and tried to block him out of the way of the Sith's blade, instead getting caught near the heart as she leapt in front of Qui-Gon when he overextended on his overhead parry.

/Obi - Obi-Wan?/ Sila was saying. /Odd name. But I don't understand. You were in love with your Master?/

/More than you - no, I guess not really more than you know./ Obi-Wan smiled sadly. /Yes, I was./

/But - but that's -/

/Listen, we're not here to talk about me,/ Obi-Wan interrupted, /and if this reality has some sort of hang-up about same-sex relationships, it's just as well I won't be staying, but the point, the point here, is to get you and your Master together./

/Right./ Mentally, Sil-Wan snorted her opinion of the likely success of that venture.
The plain facts are that you are in love with your Master and it's not a crush and it's not going away. And believe you me, he loves you too. He just hasn't admitted it.

He doesn't ...

Sil-Wan Kenobi, that man loves you, and I don't want to hear another word about it. Obi-Wan smiled. Odds are he's afraid. Now, I need you to tell me what you know. How many Padawans did he have before you?

Two, the girl said, puzzled.

Good. And the first one was -

I don't remember his name, but Master's spoken of him before. Master took him as Padawan just a couple of years after his own Knighting. He - no, I'm never going to remember his name - he raised his own Padawan to Knighthood not so long ago ...

Anyway. Your Master's second Padawan? Obi-Wan's brow was knit with the effort of keeping his unconscious counterpart focused.


Something wrong with her?

She - she was troubled. Sil-Wan finally said. Very powerful in the Force, and strong-willed, but weak, somehow - susceptible. She was seduced by the Dark Side.

Xanatos, Obi-Wan realized. Xanatos was a woman in this reality as well. That's not all, is it?

No - Master loved her. I mean, he loved whatshisname, of course, as any Master loves his Padawan, but he really loved Kyratos, and she knew it, and she used it to betray him. She - she turned, just before her Knighting, and Master almost didn't take me, he was still feeling so guilty about it. He still thinks it was because of him, and because of his love for her, that she turned. He thinks he was a bad Master, and he doesn't want to make the same mistake with me.

Sounds familiar. Obi-Wan said dryly. But I promise you that he loves you, more than he loved Kyratos, as much as you love him, with all his soul. Don't believe me now if you don't want, but I swear by my love for my Master that it's true. This is the first time he's left your side since you returned from Naboo, and he wasn't happy about it.

So, but what do I do about it?

You lie here, and keep resting, and keep breathing, and let me talk to him. And when I'm through with him, and he comes back in here, you open your eyes, and if you don't take one look at him and believe every word I've said, my name isn't Kenobi. He stood, leaned down and kissed her forehead, and stepped out into the hall to find Qui-Gon seated on a low bench. He had showered and changed his clothes and trimmed his beard, but his eyes were still haunted, ringed with dark circles.

Those eyes widened in panic when Qui-Gon saw the Knight. Is she -

"She's fine," Obi-Wan said soothingly, laying a hand on Qui-Gon's arm. "I thought you and I might talk for a moment."

Qui-Gon eyed him suspiciously. "Yoda tells me you were my Padawan in another reality," he said, evidently not sure what to make of this concept.
"Yes," Obi-Wan said. "He's taught me that reality is like the branch of a tree; trace it back far enough and you come to a juncture, and if you go up the other side, things turn out differently. I'm just hopping from one branch to the next," he explained.

"Hopping. What are you looking for?"

"Master?"

"One who wanders is also one who seeks," Qui-Gon said a trifle impatiently - though whether it was to see his Padawan or with Obi-Wan himself, Obi-Wan couldn't be sure. "You must be doing all this hopping for a reason."

"Yes - well, I suppose I'm seeking my Master."

"Did you misplace him?" One eyebrow rose in amusement.

Obi-Wan stiffened. "He was killed on Naboo," he said archly.

Qui-Gon's face fell. "I'm so sorry."

The young Knight steadied his breathing. "So," he continued, "I know there must be a reality where I was killed on Naboo, and that Qui-Gon misses his Obi-Wan as much as I miss my Qui-Gon. That's where I'm going." Qui-Gon was looking at him a little strangely. "Yes?"

"You loved him, didn't you?"

Obi-Wan closed his eyes and gave that understatement a moment to settle around his heart. "Yes. That surprises you."

The intent gaze had not wavered. "I suppose it shouldn't, if you're coming from some other reality. And you're certainly from somewhere other than here - my Sil-Wan has no family, but you look too much like her to be anyone else." He paused and looked away for a moment, considering his words. "I am accustomed to Padawans whose Masters are the same sex seeking to be like them, rather than with them. If a male Padawan falls in love with his own Master, usually the Master is a woman."

"Is there no -"

"Oh, young men find love with other men often. But their own Masters - usually a Master is such a role model that it never occurs to the Padawan to think of him - or her - that way. It's surprising with a Master of the opposite sex; it would be flat-out shocking with a Master of the same."

"Is it so surprising as to be frowned upon?" Obi-Wan asked, sliding smoothly into the next topic of conversation. "Look at you and Sil-Wan, for example." Qui-Gon's shoulders tensed and he glanced sharply at Obi-Wan, but the young man pressed on. "She knows she loves you, and has said so. You know you love her, but you won't admit it to yourself, much less to her. Why not?"

"She's a child," Qui-Gon said, his voice a curious combination of anger and sadness; "she's practically my child. She's far too young, and too vulnerable - she's impressed by my stature and my presence. What she feels for me isn't love."

"Granting for now that that's true," Obi-Wan said, "look at your feelings for a moment. If you really believe that she doesn't really love you, why are you so unhappy?"

"My Padawan is emotionally and physically in great distress!"
"No! I mean, yes, but she'll regain her physical strength, and if she doesn't really love you, as you say, she'll get over the emotional crisis as well. Try again. If she doesn't truly love you, then she'll get over you when she meets someone else. So why are you miserable?" Qui-Gon did not answer. "It can only be because you want her to really, truly love you, can't it? You want her to mean it."

"I want her to know what she means by it," Qui-Gon said, struggling to keep his voice even. "She's still just a child."

"She's a woman and you know it, Qui-Gon," Obi-Wan said softly. "And you know you didn't raise her to be starry-eyed and weak-kneed - at least, that's not how my Master raised me, and he was, after all, you. And she of all people knows the real you, right? She loves you, and she loves you for who you are and what you are, not for your image or your reputation."

Qui-Gon gritted his teeth. "I don't love her the way she loves me."

"Don't, or won't?" Obi-Wan challenged. "It's noble of you not to want to make the same mistake you made with Kyratos, but don't you see the differences between them?" He knew he was taking a chance, betting heavily on Kyratos and Sil-Wan being essentially female versions of Xanatos and himself, with no other notable differences - but based on what he knew of the Xanatos in his home reality, and on Sil-Wan's description of her predecessor, this seemed safe. "Kyratos knew you loved her, and she used that knowledge to get what she wanted. She tricked you into believing that she loved you as well."

"Kyra was seduced by the Dark Side," Qui-Gon began.

"Yes! And Sil-Wan isn't like that. Sil-Wan doesn't believe you love her, and would lay down her life for you nevertheless. You think she's in it for some kind of reward?"

"No! I - "

"Would Kyratos have dived in front of you in that battle?" Qui-Gon closed his eyes and did not speak. "You can't imagine your life without her, and that scares you to death, right? You don't want to need another person? Tell me, what are you going to do when she's Knighted and she leaves you? What if she soul-bonds with another?" Qui-Gon looked at him with fury in his eyes. "Aha. Exactly. So get in there and tell her what an idiot you've been, and that you want to spend the rest of your life with her, starting now."

Qui-Gon glared at him and stalked into the room where Sil-Wan lay.

Obi-Wan followed, watching from a respectful distance as Qui-Gon took Sil-Wan's hand in his. "Sil-Wan," he said softly. "My Sil-Wan, can you hear me? Sila?" Nothing. The Master concentrated on the bond with his student. //Sila,// Obi-Wan was surprised to hear, faintly, in his mind. Reverberations, he thought. She and I are on sort of the same frequency. Qui-Gon's presence was nebulous and erratic in his mind; he wondered how much clearer it was to Sil-Wan. //Sila ... wake now ... love .... answer me answer me answer me.//

Sil-Wan seemed to stir, but she did not move and she did not wake. Obi-Wan stepped forward. "Let me," he said gently, taking the girl's hand from her Master's. "I know she can hear me. A bond can be fuzzy, but we're the same person, she and I, so it's easier for me to get to her thoughts."

"Gladly," Qui-Gon said, stepping aside.

Obi-Wan settled next to the narrow bed. //Sila,// he sent. //Sila, it's Obi. Wake up.//

//Don't want to.// Her mental voice was tight with barely-contained emotion.

//You promised.// The girl seemed to heave an exasperated sigh through her breathing tube and
opened her eyes slowly. Seeing Qui-Gon, she closed them and turned her head away. //Sil, that's not fair,// Obi-Wan said. //Hasn't he always been willing to listen to you?//

Sil-Wan looked back at her cosmic twin and gave a barely-perceptible nod, then turned her bleary eyes to her Master. Unable to speak around the tube in her throat, she simply blinked at him; he dragged a second chair forward to sit beside Obi-Wan's, and reached out to stroke her hair back off her forehead. "Welcome back," he murmured, his voice catching just a bit. "You can hear me now, can't you?" She nodded very slightly and held tighter to Obi-Wan's hand. "I've been so afraid, Sila. Of so many things. I've been afraid for you, that your injuries would be too much - and afraid for me, that I wouldn't be able to go on if I lost you." He paused. "But even more than that, I've been afraid of you yourself."

//Afraid of me, Master?// Qui-Gon did not respond, but continued looking thoughtfully at a spot on the wall, composing his thoughts. //Master?//

//He must not hear you,// Obi-Wan said. "Master Jinn?"

"Hmm?"

"Sil-Wan is trying to communicate with you. Can't you hear her?" Wordlessly, Qui-Gon shook his head. Obi-Wan puffed air through his cheeks. "Right. Well - you and I seem to have a sort of a trace of a bond, Master," he said, "and I can try to strengthen that so you can hear Sil-Wan through me. Give me your hand - " His heart leapt when Qui-Gon twisted their fingers together. "Now. Sila, I need you to concentrate - try again."

//Why are you afraid of me, Master?//

//Sila., Qui-Gon returned, relief flooding his presence before he stopped again, choosing his words with care. //I was afraid that you would fall as Kyratos did. I adored that girl, and the minute she said she loved me I didn't stand a chance. She played me like a stringed instrument, and then she was gone, and it wasn't true - as much as I loved her, she said she loved me but she only loved what I could do for her.//

//I know all this, Master.//

//Yes. But you don't know, or you don't believe, that I love you so much it terrifies me.//

Sil-Wan turned away again. //You needn't patronize me, Master.//

//I'm not.// Unconsciously, Qui-Gon squeezed Obi-Wan's hand tightly. //I'm frightened, Sila. Looking back honestly, I didn't love Kyratos half as much as I love you, and look what happened then.//

//It wasn't your love that turned her.//

//No? I believed that she loved me, and bent over backwards for her, and lost her to the Dark. Losing her hurt me horribly. And as far as I was willing to go for her - you - // He shut his eyes and pressed his hand, still clutching Obi-Wan's, to his forehead. //I would turn for you.//

"Master, no," Obi-Wan interrupted -- then realized he had spoken out loud. No, Master, no, we've been through that ..."
sedatives coursing through his veins, his sobriety sort of bled back into her consciousness.

//I didn't think Kyra would ever ask me to, but when she asked me if I loved her and admitted she loved me, her scheme was in place!//

//I didn't ask you that, Master.// Sil-Wan pointed out serenely. //I simply came to you and told you I loved you, gave you that piece of my heart and didn't ask for anything back. How can you doubt me?//

//I don't doubt you, love. I doubt myself.//

//Then trust me.// She reached out, her hand in Obi-Wan's reaching for Qui-Gon's. Obi-Wan brought the two hands he held to each other, pressing the palms flat and lacing the fingers together, folding their joined hands between both of his. The three of them sat there - Qui-Gon and Sil-Wan reading each other's eyes, Obi-Wan watching them - for long, silent minutes. Eventually, Sil-Wan's eyes drifted shut and she "murmured" to Obi-Wan that she was going to sleep. He leaned over and kissed her forehead, squeezed her hand where it still held to Qui-Gon's, accepted the Master's awkward hug with his free arm, and ducked out of the room.

Master Yoda was waiting for him in the hall. "Glad, are you, that you saw her?"

"Oh, yes, Master Yoda, very glad. Glad I got bounced here in the first place. And now everything is well and I think I should move along - "

"Wait." Qui-Gon had emerged from the sickroom, closing the door softly behind him. "I just wanted to thank you," he said to Obi-Wan, extending his hand, fingers together, thumb pointed at the ceiling. Obi-Wan looked at the hand, and looked at the man, and looked at Yoda for guidance. When all the old Master did was nod, Obi-Wan hesitantly held out his hand in the same manner as Qui-Gon's. The other man grasped his hand and squeezed, shaking it up and down a couple of times and holding Obi-Wan's elbow with his other hand. "But I have to ask - why did you do it? Stay with her, I mean, and convince me of - "

"Of what you knew was true anyway?" Obi-Wan smiled. "My Master died before I had a chance to tell him I loved him. I think - if I had told him sooner, it might have saved him. Saved us. Every time I arrive in a reality where he was my Master, the versions of us are together and it is right and good. Leaving here with you and Sil-Wan apart - " He shrugged. "Maybe I was what you needed to take that last step." Qui-Gon smiled gratefully. "So now you, and all the other Qui-Gons I've met, know that I - whoever I am, and wherever and whenever - always love you, whoever you are. And one day I'll find a Qui-Gon without a Kenobi."

A look of total, earnest sympathy crossed Qui-Gon's face. "Thank you," he said again, and squeezed Obi-Wan's hand before returning to the sickroom and his Padawan's side.

Obi-Wan looked for a moment at the door, then turned back to Master Yoda. "Done well you have," the ancient Master said, as they started walking in the direction of the garden. "And done good. Without you, to understanding they would not have come."

"I'm sure they would have figured it out eventually, Master."

"So certain are you?" Master Yoda had suddenly raised his voice. "'Figured it out' did you and your Master? No!" He struck Obi-Wan's leg with his gimer stick. "Unlimited time there is not. Speak our hearts we must while we can! Penance, you are doing, for not speaking yours."

Obi-Wan was stunned. Master Yoda hardly ever became this animated. "But Master Yoda, Sil-Wan
is recovering. Once she's well, they'd certainly have - oh, no," he said, realizing in a horrible instant what Yoda was saying. "No, Master, you don't - "

"Spoke to the healers I did," Master Yoda said, calm again now, his voice and his manner tired. "All they can, they have done. Bacta is only just keeping up with infection. Spreading, it is. More bacta they would need to give her, to kill it, but more bacta she cannot breathe without choking."

Reaching the corner of the garden, his jumping-off point, Obi-Wan sat down heavily. "How - how long?"

"On respirator, long time could she live, but drugs she would have constantly."

"And the tube would always be down her throat."

"Hmm. Without tube, survive she could not for longer than, perhaps, few hours." There was a long, pensive, grieving silence. "So, good it was that together you brought them. Happy, they can be, for a short while."

"Will you tell them?"

"Not sure am I."

"Tell them," Obi-Wan said firmly, taking out his lightsaber. "Tell her it will end the same either way. She won't want to spend the rest of her life with a tube in her mouth. I know her. She's me. And I don't want her to die without knowing Qui-Gon's kiss." Yoda closed his eyes and nodded. "Take care of him for me, once she's gone," Obi-Wan asked softly. Master Yoda nodded again, then raised his head to look him in the eye. Obi-Wan held his lightsaber in front of him. "May the Force be with you," he whispered, and pressed the button.

End Notes

Terri Hamill and I have a long-standing writer-beta relationship, so I was already hip-deep in Riding the Wheel of If when she invited other writers to take a few episodes. By my calculations, though, at that point, we'd had Qui-Gon/Obi-Wan, Mar-Gon/Obi-Wan, and Mar-Gon/Sil-Wan, but no Qui-Gon/Sil-Wan. So I claimed that one for myself.

Again with the internal consistency; I think there were some small things I'd have done differently if I'd been writing this thing to stand on its own, rather than to be a part of a series. High points, however, included Obi-Wan yelling "SILAAAAAAAA!" (this was deleted, alas, alas), and my personal point of pride: killing the girl anyway, even after getting her and Qui-Gon together. You don't know how many requests I got to fix it. But I didn't. Heh heh heh.

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