Infinitive by Adalisa

by m_a_archive_owner

Summary

The truth is finally revealed

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Notes

// means telepathy. Also, for continuity time sake,
Leia watched half horrified as Luke Skywalker and Obi-Wan Kenobi approached Jabba The Hutt. They were the last cards in Luke's plan to save Han, after she had failed.

She had handed Chewbacca to the gangster in a last attempt to get into Jabba's Fortress, and had managed to unfreeze Han. That, at least, had to count for something.

The Princess stilled her tears, not wanting to remember those moments, trying to focus on the scene before her.

Luke was talking with very educated tones, asking Jabba for a deal: Trade Han and Leia for Jabba's life. Of course, Jabba had laughed, in that repulsive guttural sound that Hutts called language.

Obi-Wan remained silent, his head bow down.

Suddenly, a blaster came out of no where, to land in Luke's hand who pointed it at Jabba. But the Hutt didn't even blink. At his command, the floor disappeared under Luke and Obi-Wan, sending them to the basement cell under the amused eyes of the audience.

"_That_ could have gone better." Obi-Wan mused, as he and Luke struggled to their feet." Why did you tried to influence Jabba?"

"Because you didn't told me that Hutts were immune to influence!" Luke complained, looking around in search of an exit. They were in a dark dungeon, surrounded by bones.

"I thought that you knew." The padawan smiled. They had no weapons, but his faith in the Force was great. "There are a lot of species in Tatooine that are immune to influence. Toydarians, for example."

"I knew a Toydarian once." Luke knew that Obi-Wan as trying to ease the situation, and decided to follow the game. "His name was Watto and…"

Luke couldn't continue. A door opened at the end of the cell, letting a vicious and hungry Rancor in.

Han had listened to everything Chewie said, trying to stay calm.
For one side, he felt really grateful that his friends were there, that Luke and Obi-Wan were trying to rescue him, but even so…

"Luke, a Jedi Knight?" The pilot shook his head, closing his unseeing eyes. "I was just gone for a while, and everyone got grandiose delusions!"

He didn't ask about Obi-Wan. He didn't dare. Now when the disappointment gasp of Leia was still ringing on his ears.

Han remembered very clearly his last words to the Princess, before he was lowered to the carbonite. Then, all had been darkness.

Silence.

Nothingness.

He had only the fleeting recollection of having seen again the blue ghost of Qui Gon Jinn; of silent words of warning… and then, light. Blinding light and a grave voice telling him that he was free.

"Who are you?" He had asked, trying to make out a shape out of the moving grayness.

"Someone who loves you." The voice had answered, becoming gentler, softer… But Han had only heard the words, not the tone in which they were spoken, not the feminity of the voice, and answered to them.

"Obi-Wan?"

Leia's gasp of denial hadn't been silenced by Jabba's laugh. Han knew then that he had hurt her, wanting nothing more than to take his words back.

His thoughts were interrupted by the opening of their cell, and the entrance of a guard.

"The great Jabba has passed on your sentence." The guard said, ignoring Chewbacca's angry growls. "Follow me."

The dread that Han felt upon hearing Jabba's sentence couldn't ruin the happiness that his friend's presence brought him. Sure, he was just minutes away from one of the most painful deaths in the universe, to be digested by a Sarlac during one hundred years, but at least he had had a chance to see the time-displaced Jedi one more time.

If his eyes could clear before they fell, that was.

"Just stay close to me." Obi-Wan whispered in his ear. "Luke will take care of everything."

"That doesn't make me feel much better, Obi-wan." Han answered, but he smiled, showing the Jedi that he would follow any crazed plan that they had.

"Jabba, this is your last chance." Luke's clear voice rang across the desert. Han now could barely make big dark shadows in the white landscape, but he assumed that the biggest one had to be Jabba's vessel.

"Just tell that slimy piece of meat…" He began shouting, only to be stopped by Obi-Wan, who helped him turn around, in the direction of a bigger dark shadow than the one he had been addressing. "… Just tell that slimy piece of meat that we ain't going to give him any pleasure!" He finished, to show his confidence in Luke and Obi-Wan's plan.
And if it didn't work, at least he still was going to go in a blaze of glory, as he always wished to.

The battle was short but quite brutal. As far as Han could heard, many of Jabba's bounty hunters fell into the Sarlac's mouth, while Luke took the fight into the vessel where, as Han would learn after all was said and done, Leia choked the Hutt to death.

His own eyesight had returned just in time to save Lando from becoming the Sarlac's dessert, and he had managed not to look too shocked to see the former mercenary there.

"We need to talk." Obi-Wan told him, as they walked towards the ships that he and Leia had readied for their escape.

"Yeah." Han answered, looking at the Jedi's eyes. Things had changed during his absence, although Han didn't know how to describe the changes, or how he knew that they were there.

"You found your answers?"

"No. Just more questions." Obi-Wan sighed and looked at the sky." It all began here, you know? In a way, it was all my fault."

"What do you mean?" The pilot resisted the urge to get closer and hug Obi-Wan. He had the feeling that his friend needed to be alone for a moment.

"I… I can't explain it now." Obi-Wan answered, turning to see him. "But…I have to fix it, somehow."

"Then, you won't be coming with us, will you?" Han tried not to sound disappointed, tried to remind himself that Obi-Wan wouldn't stay forever at his side, that soon he would have to return to his own time. To Qui-Gon Jinn.

"Us? You finally decided to join the Rebellion?" The Jedi smiled, but the joy died in his eyes as he saw Han’s face. "You think this is the last time you'll see me, don't you?".

"You need to return to your own time. You said it yourself." Han pointed out, still confused. "When you left Hoth… I half-expected not to see you again."

"You thought that our first kiss would also be the last." Obi Wan touched Han's shoulder shyly, before embracing the pilot. "I wish I could tell you that it's a foolish fear, that I'll return…"

"But you can't. I know." Han returned the embrace, still believing that the longer he took to say goodbye, it would hurt even more. "You have to go back, become a legendary knight, the General of the Clone Wars… It's not good for you to be with an old mercenary like me."

Obi-Wan shook his head, not letting go. "I'll find my answers, Han. And I'll try not to leaving without saying goodbye. If anything, I can promise you that."

Han opened his mouth to answer, but Lando's urgent calling interrupted whatever he was planning to say.

It was time to move on, and part again.

The Second Death Star was almost ready.

Lord Vader surveyed the works, or at least, pretended to, since his mind was somewhere else.
After his encounter against Obi-Wan, he had been analyzing every word said, every movement. But it still didn't make sense.

The youth of Obi-Wan was not enough reason for the differences Vader had noticed.

The Padawan who had fought against him was not the Master who had trained Anakin Skywalker. They couldn't be the same person.

And that realization had forced him to remember, to analyze the memories of that time that he had gladly forgotten.

Anakin's Master had been a great fighter, one of the best in the Temple, after Jinn's death. But he followed too closely Jinn's technique, and, as it had been designed by a man of much more height, weren't equally effective when used by Master Kenobi. They lack the grace Anakin had seen when the older Jedi fought against the Emperor's First Apprentice.

Padawan Kenobi... Padawan Kenobi's style was more graceful, more aerial. It had been that what had given him the advantage in his last encounter. And it had been a style of fighting that Vader hadn't seen since the first battle of Naboo.

Before Jinn's death.

Before his first encounter with his actual Master.

When Obi-Wan Kenobi had fought to defend Queen Amidala, as Qui-Gon Jinn protected the much younger Anakin.

Then, Anakin Skywalker had thought that the sudden change of Master Kenobi's body language was because of his grief.

Now, Darth Vader wasn't that sure.

Dagobah didn't look any more welcoming to Luke and Obi-Wan than the first time they had arrived. If anything, it looked even more menacing.

As soon as they landed, this time in a relatively dry patch of the swamp, they ran towards Master Yoda's house.

However, Obi-Wan stopped in the doorway, pale and scared.

"What's wrong?" Luke asked, trying to see an answer in Obi-Wan's eyes.

"Master Yoda is dying." The Padawan answered, swallowing as he spoke.

"What? How can you..." Luke's question died in his lips as Obi-Wan shook his head, and stepped aside.

"You go with him." The Jedi said, lowering his head. "You need to talk to him one more time."

"What about you?" Luke didn't seem really convinced of Obi-Wan's words, even when now he too could feel the cold touch of death around the house. "You need answers!"

"I think I can give him some." A voice called from behind them, and the two young men turned around to see the glowing blue ghost of Old Ben Kenobi.

"Go into the house, Luke." Old Ben said, under the shocked, and suspicious stare of the young
Obi-Wan. "Master Yoda wishes to see you in his final moments."

Seeing Obi-Wan's almost imperceptive nod, Luke bowed before the two Jedi before entering Master Yoda's old hut. Whatever that happened outside in the swamp, was not his fight, and he had no right to witness it. Now when the answers _he_ sought could be given to him by Yoda.

As soon as the young Skywalker was out of ear range, Obi-Wan turned to see the blue ghost, studying his features with interest. "I never thought I would reach an age when I would look older than Master Jinn."

"Neither did I." The ghost smiled weakly. For a long moment they remained silent. Present and Past in a staring contest, both trying to find answers to their questions.

"I'm going to go back, aren't I?" Obi-Wan finally broke eye contact, looking towards the swamp. "I'm going to see how Qui-Gon dies, and then train Anakin, so he'll destroy the Jedi..." When the ghost didn't answered, the one who still was alive continued. "I just want to know why you did it."

"I had no choice. It was Qui-Gon's last wish." The older man said, sitting down on a nearby log. "And I was too full of pride, thinking I could train the Chosen One..."

"I would have never trained Anakin." Obi-Wan shook his head, trying to make sense of the other's words. "I knew he was dangerous, even since before I met him."

"You sensed him?" Old Ben raised his eyebrows, almost imperceptibly. "It doesn't matter what we thought then. We couldn't fail... not to Qui-Gon..."

"And training a killer was a way to preserve his memory?" Obi-Wan almost exploded, feeling his anger cursing through his veins. "Lying to Anakin's son was a way to preserve the Code?!"

"It wasn't a lie."

"You told him Vader killed Anakin. I believed that too... And now..." Obi-Wan trembled, trying to contain the rage that now filled his body. He didn't want to loose his control, he had fought so much to gain it after Qui-Gon had finally accepted him as his Padawan, always concealing the storm behind his eyes.

"Vader killed Anakin. When he became a Sith Lord, all that was left of Anakin died." Old Ben explained, calmly. It was as if he had never known anger in his whole life. "It was the truth, from a certain point of view."

"A certain point of view, my ass!!" Obi-Wan yelled, outraged. "Why didn't you tell him? Why did you dragged him into this madness, when he's too old to learn most of the basic matters at the temple? All I can think is that something will happen here that will make me go back and act like you're acting now... But I can't see why I would do that!"

The old Jedi didn't answer immediately, just looked sadly at his younger self, waiting for him to calm down. All across the swamp, he could also see the trees trembling, pushed by an unseen wave of power. A very uncontrolled power. "There are still many things that are uncertain in your future..." He began saying, only to be interrupted by a glare of the young Jedi.

"Don't." Obi-Wan said, his voice cold, sharp. "Don't give me that crap of the shadowed path, the ever moving future. You know what will happen to me. You are what will happen to me."

Regaining a little of his self control, Obi-Wan breathed deeply, not seeing the ripples that were forming on the swamp's surface. "I just want to know why."
"The Prophecy had to be fulfilled. The Balance of the Force had to be achieved." The blue ghost shook his head, almost in defeat. "We never thought it would take so much sacrifice."

"For centuries the Sith were almost extinct, and no one remembered the paths of the Dark Side… And we never imagined that the unbalance was in our favor?" Obi-Wan laughed, but it was an humorless sound. It was almost verging on hysteria. Still, it seemed to clear his thoughts, and the wave of anger that had enveloped him began to dissipate. "You won't give me all the answers I seek, will you?"

"If I did, you would try to change this future." Old Ben agreed. It was not a question, as both knew that that had been Obi-Wan's desire from the first moment. "I can just tell you that Anakin was a great student. And that I suffered every day for the mistake of not seeing the darkness growing in his heart."

Obi-Wan looked towards the hut where he could feel Yoda's life force ebbing away. "Why did you dragged Luke into this? Why didn't you tried harder against Vader? Why get Luke in the fight, if he was safely hidden in Tatooine?"

"Luke… is very powerful, and he has a great potential." Ben answered, still on his log, still calm. It was hard for Obi-Wan to believe he would grow to become such a patient man. "He might be the one who can defeat Vader."

"And if he cannot?"

"Then… there's still another." As soon as the Jedi Master said those words, a very clear image appeared in Obi-Wan's mind. He could see the aisles of the Palace in Alderaan, and a very hurried Senator Organa talking with an older man. A man that seemed to be Obi-Wan, some years in the future. He was not wearing Jedi robes, but a military uniform of Alderaan. A young maiden, perhaps Padme, came to them, carrying two babies. Organa took one, General Kenobi took the other, and they parted ways.

"A Sister." The young Jedi said, his voice lowering. "Leia."

The older Kenobi didn't say a word, just closed his eyes and nodded. It was almost as if he hadn't want his younger self to know the truth. But the young Obi-Wan didn't notice. He was too immersed in his thoughts to pay attention to the world around him.

* * *

Luke came out of Yoda's hut, feeling empty inside. The older Master's death had been peaceful, but he hadn't had many answers for Luke. Only more riddles.

He lifted his eyes to see Obi-Wan standing in front of a seated Ben. They seemed immersed in their thoughts, so he decided to wait before interrupting. Perhaps Obi-Wan had been more fortunate in his quest for answers.

Watching them both, the young man couldn't help but find the similitude and differences between both Jedi. Obi-Wan's young self seemed full with energy, he was as restless as Luke, and maybe more impulsive. And he also had a cynical streak that seemed very un-Jedi. The older was the perfect picture of what a Jedi should be.

Only that now Luke knew Ben wasn't perfect. The only thing he knew for certain now was that.

//No Jedi is perfect.// a voice said behind him. //If we were, we wouldn't be in this mess.//

Luke turned around to meet the eyes of another ghost. And as soon as he saw him, dressed in Jedi
robes, his long hair shimmering with the light of the Force, Luke knew who he was. "Qui-Gon Jinn…"

//Did Obi-Wan finally talked to you about me?// The ghost smiled, then sobered as the young man shook his head. //I imagined that. He has many reasons to want to forget me.//

"You were his first Master." Luke stated, remembering the few talks between Obi-Wan and Yoda that he had overheard. "You trained him before Yoda did."

//No.// Qui-Gon shook his head, and began walking away, motioning Luke to follow. //It wasn't like that. And Obi-Wan will probably never explain it to you, because the Council decided against it. What was left of the Council, anyway.//

"The Council?" Luke was confused. Qui-Gon was not like the other Jedi he knew. Of course, he knew very few Jedi, but none was that… explosive.

//Before the Empire, when being a Jedi meant something, all the decisions in the Temple were taken by the Council.// Qui-Gon explained, as they neared the clearing where Obi-Wan and Luke had landed. //Yoda was the head of the Council. And I… I was always going against their wishes. It was I the one who found your father, and the one who insisted in training the boy.//

"Ben said…" Luke began, only to be interrupted by Qui-Gon.

//Never mind what he said. Just listen. I thought you were tired of riddles.// Luke nodded, feeling excited of at least getting some straight answers. //It was in Tatooine. Obi-Wan and I had been charged with the mission to save your mother…//

"You knew my mother?"

//Queen Amidala. A wonderful woman, although I hadn't the pleasure of knowing her a long time.// Qui-Gon smiled, for a moment lost in memories. //We had to stop in Tatooine and it was there when I meet your father. He was a remarkable boy, a very talented pilot… and had a great power. I knew he had to be trained, just minutes after meeting him, so I won his property…//

"My father was a slave?!" Luke's eyes grew, as he tried to process all the information that now Qui-Gon was giving him. It clashed with the image he had in his mind, from his uncle Owen and Old Ben's stories. But he believed Qui-Gon's words to be true. For a moment, he could see the desert of Tatooine, and a young boy, no older than 10, running towards a smiling woman. The boy had blond hair, blue eyes, and a smile that Luke was sure that he had seen somewhere else.

//I couldn't win Shmi's freedom. That was my first mistake.// Qui-Gon continued, obviously aware of Luke's vision. //I took Anakin before the Council, all too sure that your father was the Chosen One. I pushed Obi-Wan away from me, when I tried to force the Council to take Anakin as a Padawan.//

"Chosen One?" Luke interrupted again, as he sat in a nearby rock. Now his head felt like spinning, and he couldn't find a single place to focus on.

//There was a prophecy, about the one who would bring Balance between the Light and Dark side of the Force.// Qui-Gon shook his head. //My third mistake was to believe blindly on it, and not give the Council credit for knowing it fully well. Still, I couldn't train Anakin as I wanted. We had to go back to Naboo, help your mother to free the planet. And before I could apologize to Obi-Wan, he was taken away from me.// Qui-Gon paused for a moment, and Luke knew that the memories were painful for the dead Jedi. Their eyes locked, and instead of hearing Qui-Gon's describing what had
happened, Luke could see it clearly, as if it was happening right in front of him.

Qui-Gon, fighting side by side with Obi-Wan against a short man with a monstrous face, and a two bladed lightsaber.

Obi-Wan, falling from a platform, leaving Qui-Gon to fight alone.

Qui-Gon and the dark man, fighting towards the cooling room of a reactor.

Obi-Wan, running towards them, trying to catch up before it's too late.

Qui-Gon looking up, just a fraction of second, just in time to see Obi-Wan trapped by the security doors of energy that contained the cooling room.

Just in time to see Obi-Wan disappear.

//I barely managed to kill my opponent... but he managed to inflict a deadly wound before dying. And I was sure that my padawan had died before I could say I was sorry.// Qui-Gon finished, a ghost of a tear trembling in his eyes. //But I couldn't sense him in the Force either. It was as if he had never been.//

"It must have been when he got here." Luke mused, trying to put all the pieces of the puzzle in place. "But... he returned. He had to, in order to train my father and..."

//No.// The ghost shook his head, and Luke finally understood why Qui-Gon had sought him. //Obi-Wan never returned home.//

TBC…

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