

to everything else. To be attached to everything was to be attached to nothing. And to be attached to nothing made it possible to be attached to everything.

The class had gone well, but Anakin spent the next few days brooding about attachment before confronting Obi-Wan with, “Why do you keep on *pushing me away*?”

Obi-Wan had struggled to explain again, trying to find different words that might make sense to Anakin when nothing else seemed to. “I’m not trying to push you away. I’m trying to make sure you are never chained to me. That I’m not holding you here.”

“What if I want you to hold me here! I want you to keep me here!”

Obi-Wan honestly wasn’t sure what to do with that. Because, yes, it was what he had wanted too, wasn’t it, when he’d been a padawan under Master Qui-Gon. He’d wanted Master Qui-Gon to want him too.

He slowly reached out and put his hands on Anakin’s shoulders, but Anakin was already turning away. He tightened his grip and pulled the boy in. It wouldn’t be long before he could no longer overpower Anakin in this way. But for now, he could draw the boy into a hug, wrapping his arms all the way around the boy.

Talking about emotions was hard. Anakin saw emotions as natural and shields as deception, but to Obi-Wan, his shields were him. Lowering them was like peeling back his skin and calling the bloody wound beneath it the real him. It wasn’t. But for his suffering student, he’d do it. He was glad that he could hold the boy, murmuring to his ear rather than looking him in the eyes, when he spoke truth that he never wanted to say aloud. “I scare myself sometimes, with how much I want to hold onto you and never let you go. To tie you to me with bonds that will never break. But I am equally scared that I’ll clip your wings, keep you forever at my side, and never get to see you soar to greater heights than I can even imagine.”

He was just as scared that the Jedi lifestyle itself would clip Anakin’s wings, but he didn’t say that. Instead, he shored up his shields and tucked that thought away inside so that Anakin would never hear the doubt.

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PASSION, YET SERENITY



“It has occurred to me that I need to give you the sex talk.”

“What?” Anakin squawked. It was an absolute delight to get that reaction.

“You’re becoming a young man, after all.” Obi-Wan had discovered over the years an utter joy in tormenting his young padawan while maintaining a completely straight face. One of these days, Anakin would catch on, but for all the suspicious glares it hadn’t happened yet.

“You don’t have to give me a sex talk!” Anakin sounded horrified and desperate instead of moody and hormonal like he had been for days now.

“I really do, especially if you already believe you know it all.” Obi-Wan was deeply skeptical of what all Anakin actually knew.

“Jedi don’t do attachments! I’ll just avoid all sex, and we’re good!”

Obi-Wan sighed. “Yeah, no. First of all, sex is fine. It can be fun, sometimes it is useful, and occasionally it is unavoidable. I’ll cover the basic physicality of it for humans and show