

STAR WARS
ANAKIN ☀ **PADME**
VIGNETTES
BY
PADMELEJAINA



Anakin and Padme Vignette Collection

By PadmeLeiaJaina

Story Parameters: Single shot stories that center on Anakin & Padme and range in rating from G-PG-13

Description: Collection of unrelated vignettes/one shot posts about Anakin & Padme. Good reading for those of us who have attention span issues or if you don't have enough time to read a full story.

A Moment in Time

An Anakin Proposal Vignette

Obi-Wan and Yoda stood outside the medics lab as the transplant team worked to assemble and attach the new mechanical arm for Anakin. Obi-Wan unconsciously touched his deeply scored arm from his battle with Dooku on Geonosis. The medics confirmed that his nerve cells successfully begun the regeneration process. And thankfully his recovery should be successful with no permanent damage.

"Do you think he'll be the same with the new arm"? Obi-Wan asked, worry inching into his usual calm voice.

"No difference it should make, to young Skywalker. Highly skilled the medics are. Anakin will need time to retrain, but with his recovery I see not any great difficulties," Yoda replied. Obi-Wan nodded and looked down the hall. Senator Amidala lay sleeping, finally overcome from exhaustion, on a visitor's couch. It had taken much coaxing to get her to see any medics to tend to her own wounds she received while on Geonosis. She nearly refused to leave Anakin's side.

Obi-Wan lowered his voice. "I am worried about his growing attachment to Senator Amidala. It is obvious that her attachment is nearly as strong as his."

Yoda nodded remembering the Padawan and the Senators embrace in the hanger on Geonosis.

"The price Skywalker knows of Jedi forming personal attachments. Worried I am not. Trust we must, that he will make the right decisions," Yoda replied. "When healed he is, let him escort the Senator home and allow him to say his goodbyes to her."

Obi-Wan saw the logic in Yoda's plan and bowed to his master. He still felt a slight twinge of doubt.

"We have sent your skin grafts to Kamino to be grown, they should be ready to create a more natural covering for your cybernetic arm in a couple weeks."

"Thank you 21B," Anakin said as he lifted his right shoulder, experimenting with the weight of his new arm. He sat on the bed of his recovery room wearing only leggings. He rubbed his left hand down his bare right shoulder to where the new mechanical arm began and felt nothing.

"Let us know if you have any problems, sir."

"I will, and thank you." The droid walked out of the room, closing the door behind him. Anakin brushed his left-hand fingers over the plastic coating of his new arm. The plastic felt unnatural. The mechanisms inside whirled and buzzed whenever he wanted to move a finger, or lift his arm.

Anakin spent the last couple days trying to determine with whom he was angrier with, Dooku or himself. Had he listened to Obi-Wan and not charged Dooku, together they might have taken Dooku down. However Dooku seemed to realize Anakin was besting him in the duel and found an easy way out. Anakin felt a flash of anger surge through him, as he balled his mechanical fingers into a fist.

"Someday, you will pay Dooku. Someday, you will pay for what you did to me," Anakin said through a clenched jaw. He cleared his mind and focused on flexing his new fingers, and exercising the new arm. He would need to master his new implant if he would ever successfully take down the Dark Lord. His door chimed.

"Come in, Master," Anakin said, his heart flipped, sensing Obi-Wan and Padme outside. They came in.

"You look well, my young apprentice."

"I'm as well as I can be I suppose. How are you doing Master? Have your wounds healed?" Anakin asked, honestly concerned.

"Yes, they are healing well, thank you. The medics around here seem to think you should be ready to leave by the morning. Master Yoda has granted you permission to finish your assignment and escort Senator Amidala home to Naboo." Anakin looked at Padme. Dressed in a simple red jumpsuit, she radiated love with the smile she flashed him.

"I am most grateful to complete my assignment, Master," he said.

Obi-Wan felt a flash of concern cross his face at Anakin's response. He was still unsure of how wise it was of the Council to allow the two young people to spend much more time together. Anakin needed to be fully focused with the looming war ahead. He did not need additional distractions. "You'll have a total of six days, and then you will need to return to Coruscant. Master Yoda will need to spend some extra time with you relearning your saber techniques with your new arm."

"Six days. I will be back by then. Thank you Master," Anakin bowed his head slightly.

"Here, you will need this," Obi-Wan said with a smile. Out of the folds of his robe he produced a lightsaber.

"Thank you Master, I will not lose it. And when I come back, I will construct a new one of my own. It will be good project to master dexterity with my new hand," Anakin said, grateful to have a lightsaber again. He moved his mechanical arm out of range and ignited the saber. The bright green saber flared to life. Anakin swirled and moved it around a bit, feeling out his new arm. He reached over with his left finger and turned the saber off.

"I'm not worried, I think Geonosis taught you the importance of keeping your saber close. Well I'll leave you two to discuss your travel arrangements. Again Anakin I am glad you are healed. May the

Force be with you."

"Thank you, Master, and May the Force be with you" Anakin said returning the smile.

Obi-Wan bowed to Padme, "M'lady, I am glad to see you are now out of danger, I hope your trip home is safe, and uneventful. May the Force be with you."

"Thank you Master Kenobi for your assistance," Padme said. Obi-Wan left the room. Anakin put a finger up in the air towards her, looking vacantly off into space.

"What is it?"

"Hold on, I just want to make sure." Anakin sensed the doors of the turbolift close as Obi-Wan descended out of the building. "OK, he's gone." He flung his legs off of his bed and rushed over to Padme. He reached his right mechanical arm around her slim waist and pulled her close to him. His left hand gently caressed her cheek as he tilted her face towards his. The two shared a long, tender kiss.

"I've missed you," Anakin said, breathlessly. "I was able to endure the operations because I could feel your presence just outside the doors. Your love calmed me."

"I felt so helpless out there waiting and waiting for them to finish with you. Not being by your side, and having you so close, was agonizing," Padme said. She rested her head on his strong chest. Anakin smiled at her choice of words, he'd only expressed his feelings the same way a couple of days ago. "How does it feel?"

"It's strange you know, they've got everything connected so if I tell my fingers to move, my new fingers move. But unlike before I don't really feel them moving." Padme pulled away from him, reached around and took his new hand into hers. She lifted it gently up to her face and kissed the palm of his mechanical hand. Anakin's lip trembled, "I didn't really feel that." Padme picked up his other hand and kissed it. Anakin smiled through his growing tears, "That I felt."

She reached down and held both of his hands, "I love you Anakin, all of you."

"I love you too Padme. There are many uncertainties in this universe, but that is not one of them. I will always love you and do everything in my power to protect you." Smiling she reached up and kissed him again. Anakin lead her over to his bed, where they both held each other, and gazed out the large window as the unending Coruscant traffic whizzed by.

"What do we do now?" She asked in a small voice. "The galaxy is headed into a full scale Civil War. You will be heading off to fight. Chancellor Palpatine has already declared that the Jedi Order will be leading the troops into battle. And I will be back here trying to assure your success through legislation."

"Wartime will be very difficult. We will be spending a lot of time apart. If I'm off on covert missions, I won't even be able to get word to you about my safety."

"I've always been able to keep a kind of impersonal view on politics, now I'll have to make decisions that could effect the man I love."

Anakin smiled, "Well I couldn't ask for anyone better to be in the Senate to protect the interests for me and the Jedi."

"Yes, but I also can't make it too obvious. If word were to get out that I was in love with a Jedi, the scandal that could come from it could be astronomical!"

Anakin slightly trembled, and looked at her with all seriousness, "If you do not think you can hide your feelings, or if you think our love will somehow...compromise things for you, let me know now Padme."

Padme looked at him, "Anakin, I couldn't stop loving you, even if I wanted to. I will hide my feelings. I will keep our secret."

Anakin removed himself from her warm embrace and stepped off of the bed. He towered over her, "Are you certain?"

Padme looked puzzled, "I just said?"

"I know," he said softly, tilting his head, he gave her a small smile as he reached out and caressed her hair. He wet his lips and narrowed his eyes, "Just think about it for a moment, OK? I need to use the refresher, I'll be right back."

Confused, Padme watched him walk across the room and go into the adjoining refresher. *"Love and duty, the two things could be handled simultaneously, right? Normal people do it all the time, why should it be any different for me and Anakin?"* Padme thought. She knew one thing for sure, she wanted to reap as many moments of personal happiness that she could in life.

Padme knew with absolute clarity that Anakin could fulfill the emptiness inside her. He consumed her thoughts, knowing they loved each other, made her feel complete. Padme's mind fell back on them rolling and playing together on Naboo. Never before had she felt so carefree, full of joy, and love. Anakin's smile, the love in his eyes whenever he looked at her, made her heart flip and pound. She couldn't, wouldn't live without him. She had seen what happened to Anakin's eyes when he thought he'd lost her love, the light in them extinguished. She knew that she could never deny her love to him and risk that light going out again. He needed her as much as she needed him.

Anakin came out of the refresher. He stood in the doorway looking at Padme's back. He etched her image into his brain, burning the memory of her beauty there for eternity. She turned around and looked back at him. His new arm glittered and twinkled in the light, and looked slightly out of place next to his broad, tanned, bare chest. Padme didn't care. The new arm completed Anakin, and she loved him unconditionally.

He walked over and squatted in front of her, his serious expression masked the anxiety behind it, "So, what did you decide? Or do you need more time to think about it?"

Padme placed a warm hand on his face, "I love you. I can't live without your love. You complete me Anakin."

Anakin let out a long breath of relief, "You know this won't be easy? I will also have to shield things from the Jedi."

"Will you be able to do that?"

Anakin bowed his head slightly, "For you, I will do anything. You are worth the risk. You are my soul mate, my angel. I knew that the moment I laid eyes on you all those years ago in Watto's shop. The Force created you for me, I am certain of that. I only hope that I am worthy of your love."

"Oh Anakin. You are my soul mate as well, the thought of not being with you is more than I can bear."

Anakin gave her one of his wide happy lopsided grins. He then took a deep breath, then he turned serious again, "Padme, I have another question I would like to ask you."

"What?"

"Hold on, I want to do this properly. My Mom always said a gentleman should bend upon one knee," he said as he shifted his weight around. He bent down on one knee and took her hands in his. "Padme, my love, the light of my life? Will you marry me?" From out of his hand he produced a tiny metal ring. He held it up to her.

She looked at it quizzically and then smiled, "Is this from C3PO?"

Anakin blushed, "Sorry, Jedi are forbidden to possess anything, so I cannot afford a proper ring. And I have nothing valuable to give you."

Padme laughed, "You know that bobbles and trinkets mean nothing to me." She then realized Anakin had started to sweat and turn white. She flashed him a huge smile, "Oh my stars, YES! YES! I will marry you!"

Anakin smiled with dizzying delight, and gently took her hand and placed 3PO's circuit breaker ring on her finger. Padme stared at it with a mingled expression of happiness and fear. Anakin stood up, reached down and cradled her up off of the bed. Padme threw her head back and shouted out with joy. Anakin did not notice that one arm holding her up was cybernetic, he only noticed its added strength. Anakin laughed heartily for the first time since Naboo. Anakin twirled Padme around the room and she giggled, giddy. Padme threw her arms around his neck and kissed him.

Together, their souls mingled and shot a wave of joy into the Force, shutting out the clouding darkness, with the imprint of pure light that only true love can produce.

Sea of Despair

A Clone Wars Era Padme Vignette

The windows of my office need cleaning from the outside. As I gaze out of them across the Coruscant

skyline, all I see are spots, spots that obscure the view of the city built of durasteel and duracrete. As the sun is setting, the blood red sky seems to be filled with thousands of dots, like locusts invading the atmosphere. There is nothing I can do the windows will only get dirtier, for the Republic cannot afford to spend its resources on such petty things as maintaining external cleaning droids. Instead we will allow our buildings to become caked in the dust of ruin.

Clenching my elbows tightly within my palms I avert my gaze from the city that I once viewed with so much optimism and joy. Now it is a city on the brink of implosion. As I long ago feared this war is costing us everything and not just monetary resources, but our very soul.

Staring at the heavy, blue, crushed velvet gown that imprisons my body I cannot help but feel that I am clinging to a doomed past, a way of life that is on the brink of being extinguished forever. The sessions in the Senate are nothing more than shouting matches where nothing gets accomplished. Important issues are forever ensnarled in endless committee meetings. The Chancellor refuses to rule on anything. He hides away in his office and refuses to make anyone work together, no matter how much I plead. My words are but flecks of foam washed upon a reef, seen then gone.

My eyes flicker towards the unread datapad resting on my desk. The courier who brought it to me but an hour ago has no idea how this daily delivery wrenches my heart out of my chest. When they began sending the lists my way I thought someone had found out... and decided to play a cruel trick upon me, enjoying seeing me suffer. I then found out that all of the Senators received these lists and I relaxed, for only a moment.

How could I relax entirely? How could any wife?

Memories churn in my mind, and as I close my eyes, I can feel his commanding presence standing next to me again:

"The war will not last long, Angel. I will return to you unharmed. In fact, I promise you, I will single-handedly take down every Separatist myself if that will bring me back to you sooner."

His spicy aftershave that wafted in my nose as I replied, "You just need to do what you can, don't be reckless."

He snorted, "You sound like Master Obi-Wan. Don't tell me you doubt my abilities too?"

"You know I believe you, my love. But there will be others fighting as well. It is not your responsibility to win this war by yourself," I advised. Running my hands along his gauzy undershirt, I could see tempting traces of his powerfully sculpted chest lurking behind its folds.

He grabbed and stilled my exploring hands and gently thumbed the folds of my palm. Lightly he kissed the soft fleshy skin, causing my body to ache for more. I felt myself drowning in those rich blue eyes that snared my soul so long ago...

Voice husky with mounting desire he uttered, "I will do as I must. If it will bring me back to you sooner."

I could not reply and we lost ourselves to our mounting desires, for what woman could resist a man who vowed to slay every enemy in his path, just to be back at her side? I certainly could not.

Gulping down a lump in my throat, I battled the tears that threatened to surface. It had been too long since that day. Too many months since I've seen my husband, felt his embrace, and heard his voice.

Anger swelled inside of me. This was all wrong! He shouldn't be out risking his life! He should be safe, training to become a Galactic Diplomat, not a soldier. This wasn't his destiny... war is not the way of a Jedi.

My lower lip trembles as I recall that his words from his letters plague my sleep. I fear what War is doing to my beloved. He was getting comfortable in his duties. In fact, he is enjoying himself. He has become great at killing and his leaders, the generals above him showered him with praise. They don't know how dangerous that is...

I killed them. I killed them all. And not just the men, but the women and the children too... They're animals and I slaughtered them like animals! And I hate them! I hate them!"

I shudder as those words of his still make me weak at my knees. I fear that war has further strengthened his aggressive tendencies.

So much power...

My eyes turn again to the datapad. A simple piece of metal and plastice has the power to reduce a normally calm woman into a vessel of agony and pain. I buck up my courage and approach it. I try once, twice to pick it up. It taunts me. Finally I cave... I must know. Even though I am aware that if I see two words, I will be lost in a drowning sea of despair.

Closing my eyes I trigger the activation switch. One thousand twelve names today, it was a good day, yesterday there were two thousand three hundred and eighty casualties.

I skip through the list towards the bottom third... seeking one name. My parched mouth gapes open in a silent gasp, my heart thunders in my chest and then seizes in terror as my eyes fall upon Skylark and then skips to Slater... relief floods my very soul.

Anakin is alive.

Dropping the disk onto the desk, I collapse into my chair as my legs finally give out.

The sun has set outside marking the end of another day. Relief, I know is short-lived, for tomorrow I will relive this nightmare of uncertainty all over again- another disk will be dutifully, and cruelly delivered.

Silently, secretly, I am united with a Galaxy of war brides everywhere, praying for the return of our husbands, and dreading word of their demise. I don't know what's worse, having to learn the fate of my husband this way because no one knows we're married, or having a representative of the Republic show up at my door to alert me that he was killed in action. I decide that I prefer neither.

As I turn on my computer terminal I shove aside the tears that dampened my face. Staring at the multitude of proposals and issues that current rage in the Senate I begin to scan the data. Somewhere in there in the murky muck of paperwork, I will find a way to bring him back home. To my sisterhood across the galaxy, I silently vow, I'll bring them all home.

To make that come true, I shove aside the hateful disk and I get to work.

The End

Sand

Breathe in...breathe out...breathe in...

“Grrrrr!”

“What is it now, my young Padawan?” the velvety voice asked.

Ani didn’t need to be able to see, even through shut eyes, he knew Obi-Wan was frowning.

Sighng, Ani moaned, “Nothing. Sorry Master. I’ll try harder.”

Breathe in...breathe out...breathe in...breathe out....

A twittering female laugh is carried on the warm, salty wind....*Padme*... Ani’s eyelids burst wide open and he stared longingly towards the rolling ocean’s edge. Two young girls splashed each other merrily, and completely unaware that they had just disrupted a Jedi in training’s lessons. He frowned...not Padme.

Why are you so surprised? You haven’t seen her in three years...she’s probably forgotten all about...

“Anakin.”

The boy turned towards his Master and pouted.

Obi-Wan Kenobi sat on a large piece of driftwood wearing his Jedi uniform and his dark hooded cloak. The wind rustled through his cloak, causing it to puff out in the back. His red hair, having long ago grown out from his Padawan cut, curled nicely above the nape of his neck. Anakin sat on the Mon Calamari beach stripped down to his pants. His boots, socks, robe, shirt and vest were all discarded and thrown haphazardly about.

In the three years since he had taken on the young boy under his wing, Anakin had grown like a weed. He was gangly and wiry in frame. The boy’s hands and feet were large and his head sometimes seemed too large for his neck to support. He had a healthy appetite though, so Obi-Wan never doubted that the boy would eventually fill out. Perhaps, one day, maybe, his appetite would cease to resemble that of a ravenous wookiee after a long day of work.

“What’s the matter?” the Master asked.

Anakin's cheeks flushed slightly as he wondered if Master Kenobi could read his thoughts about Padme. His young teenage hormones had been raging recently and he found himself oftentimes thinking about her...being distracted by the memory of her bewitching eyes, and sweet smelling hair... Deciding that Obi-Wan probably couldn't read his thoughts, he shrugged his shoulders and said, "It's too hot to concentrate." Bending over, the boy rolled up his pants legs half way up his thighs. Then Anakin brushed the sand surrounding him away from his body.

Obi-Wan observed that the boy purposefully kept his toes above the sand, not allowing them to get buried under the grainy dirt. Simply, he said, "You'll find many times in your life that you'll be in situations where the outside elements will attempt to interfere with your concentration. But you need to learn to look past the physical barriers of your external surroundings and not allow them to control your actions. The Force is always present. Making excuses is just a way of admitting that you've failed at your task."

Anakin's eyes blazed with rolling anger, he hotly spat, "I'm not a failure! Master Qui-Gon said I was the Chosen One – how can that make me a failure?"

Brows knitting together in concentration, Obi-Wan studied his Padawan and sharply remarked, "How do you see your inability to concentrate as being anything other than a failure, my young apprentice?" The boy scowled, picked up a handful of sand and threw it away from him. The wind quickly shifted and blew it all right back into his face. Anakin sputtered and violently attempted to brush it off of him. Obi-Wan chuckled, and quipped, "Now see there's a lesson in that for you...anger and impatience will always end up hitting you right back in the face."

Still frowning, Anakin sighed and sarcastically said, "And I suppose that like this dreadful stuff, my anger will get all over me and never come off?"

"In a sense, yes. If you allow yourself to give into hate and anger, the more you do so, the more it will consume your soul. You will cease to exist," Obi-Wan said. "Remember that creature on Tatooine? The one in the desert?"

"The one who killed Master Qui-Gon?" Anakin said, blue eyes filling with sadness.

"Yes. He was a creature of darkness, Anakin. He allowed the Dark Side of the Force to consume him and look what he became...an agent of evil. There was no love in his heart, all that resided there was bitterness and hatred. He killed for the joy of it," Obi-Wan said.

"Why?"

"I don't know. I don't understand how anyone could ever desire to want to kill another person. All life is precious Anakin, you must always remember that," the Jedi Master advised. He reached down and picked up a handful of sand and let it fall through his fingers. He said, "Even this sand is precious."

"Ugh," Anakin refuted. "It's horrible."

"But look, without sand there would be no beach...no place for children to play, to find shells, and to enjoy themselves. Without the beach the ocean would find no buffer and it would quickly erode the surrounding land and would put people's lives in peril. Homes would be destroyed. So you see, sand is a good thing," Obi-Wan explained, pointing towards a small community of beachfront homes that sat

along the shoreline. Red skinned calmari people wandered in and out of the buildings, going about their daily activities.

Anakin blinked his eyes and as he stared at the white sand, memories of a red planet filled with rust colored sand entered his mind. He stated, "But if there is no beach and there is only sand, nothing can stop it. It becomes relentless and has a mind of its own. It can rise in the wind and devour cities whole. Sand is not good...it's evil."

The Jedi Master scrutinized his Padawan, there was more behind those words. He knew that Anakin was referring to Tatooine, remembering that forsaken and barren planet, he didn't blame his Padawan for despising that place. "Yes, I suppose." Lightly he said, "Well luckily it's not like that everywhere in the Galaxy now is it?" The Master grabbed his boots, quickly unlaced them and threw them aside. Shrugging off his cloak and tunic he jumped to his feet and laid out a challenge, "I bet I can get to the water faster than you."

A broad grin spread over Ani's lips as he rocketed to his feet, only to slip and fall over in the sand. Spitting out the hateful stuff he wiped his face and shook his head.

Obi-Wan laughed, and said, "Don't worry about it Anakin, the ocean will wash it all off." He then ran towards the water.

Under his breath Anakin muttered, "Over my dead body will you ever beat me, old man!"

With a whoop, he raced over the sand towards the water. Arms pumping and legs churning like spokes on a fast moving wheel he soared victoriously past his master and plunged head first into the churning warm surf. As the water splashed over his body, the sticking sand got swept away and became one with the ocean – to eventually redistribute itself again somewhere else along the shoreline...the cycle of nature continued.

Anakin bobbed out of the water and laughed triumphantly as Obi-Wan just hit the shore line, fell backwards, and plunged into the cool surf. He allowed his Padawan to trash-talking claims of victory to roll off of his back. For all his talk about the need to properly concentrate on one's tasks, Obi-Wan was terribly grateful to be drifting in the refreshing water, one more moment of wearing all of those heavy layers of clothes and he thought he was going to pass out. Out of the corner of his eye he saw Anakin jumping, paddling around, diving, sputtering water, collecting shells and rocks from the ocean floor. Obi-Wan had to smile.

For all that the Jedi stressed the overall importance of learning discipline and to be in control of your emotions all of the time, there was something utterly effervescent about Anakin and his limitless ability to feel emotions. The boy experienced everything to its fullest whether it be elation, sorrow, misery, or hatred. The boy hid nothing, he was entirely honest all of the time with how he felt, he wore his heart on his sleeve.

Anakin lived like the very ocean itself, always rolling, churning, and moving. Like the ocean's warm edges and surface, Anakin's joy and goodwill comforted everyone around him, yet there were dark, murky parts of his soul that sometimes revealed themselves and were a bit frightening. It was those flashes that worried the Jedi Master...they were the very things that nearly prevented Anakin from becoming a Padawan in the first place.

Obi-Wan had no answers. He didn't know where life would take his Padawan, and he had no clue if he was doing the right job or not to keep the boy on the right course. As he saw Anakin pop out of the water and show off a wiggling crab, Obi-Wan smiled and felt his doubts dash away. How could any boy that happy possibly ever fail?

Shoving all doubts from his mind he flat out decided that he could not. He wouldn't fail...one way or another, he would bring Balance to the Force.

And Obi-Wan couldn't wait to see how it would happen.

The Spoils of War

The tiny woman sat at her desk buried under an avalanche of paperwork. Each bill or legislative article that she read seemed to spawn ten more pieces in their place that demanded to be looked over. In each article she read between the lines, hoping that some word of her husband's whereabouts would be revealed. However, they contained a disappointing dearth of uncensored data regarding the Jedi war strategies.

"I'm never going to find anything," Padme miserably thought. The bills she'd been perusing for hours seemed to be nothing more than empty fluff requests from bootlicking politicians pandering to the wealthy lobbyists who fed off of the Republic's War Machine like leeches on an Opee Sea Killer's back.

A deep and throbbing pressure announced itself in her front temporal lobe. The headache seemed to be her constant companion these days as she watched the Republic that she'd so valiantly defended for so long showing the strains and pressures from War. This past spring, Chancellor Palpatine should've stepped down from office, and new leadership should've been elected. Instead, the frightened Senate body voted him more emergency powers. They feared what might've happened if they elected a new leader during Wartime. She sighed, new leadership might've actually infused life and purpose into the chair and the new Chancellor might have discovered a way to end this war, instead of extending it further.

And bring her husband home, permanently.

Senator Padme Amidala Skywalker stared absently at her dour expression that reflected back at her from her computer terminal monitor. She noticed that her face, once chiseled, fit, and firm was now fuller. Padme had little time to exercise and her body had grown softer and curvier. Her older, form fitting clothes barely cinched shut anymore. She resorted to employing the use of painful gut shrinking corsets in order to squeeze into her gowns. New clothes were a luxury that she could ill-afford during wartime, she had to make do with what she already owned. Her fingers fell along the hem of a deep purple gown that she first purchased three years ago, the velvet was beginning to show signs of wear as the circular pattern on it began to fade from too many washings. She'd also taken to wearing her hair into simple buns, not wanting to waste hours grooming herself in the morning, opting instead for more time catching up on fleeting sleep.

Padme stood up, turned off the blinding lights that had caused the pain in her forehead to pound, and walked towards the large pane window of her Coruscant office. Outside night had blanketed the city hovercars sped by like twinkling red and white firebugs.

When did that happen? she thought and looked down at her wrist to examine her chronometer.

“It’s very late,” a throaty masculine voice announced.

Padme’s vision shifted from the city beyond the window to the internal reflections in the window. He’d materialized out of nowhere. The tall man casually leaned against her inner office door frame. Even in the dark office, she could see the oceanic depths of his eyes luring her into his soul. She had plunged into the bottomless sea of devotion that swam in those eyes just over a year ago and still, they took her breath away.

Headache completely forgotten, she turned and felt her heart hammer in her chest as he crossed the room and paused beside her lit up computer terminal. He appeared to be drinking in the sight of her through his eyes. The pale light illuminated his shoulders, which seemed to have doubled in width since the last time she’d seen him. She could’ve been mistaken, but he also appeared to have grown a couple of inches in height. He now towered over her petite form. His once closely buzzed dark blond locks now curled around his face and playfully covered the nape of his neck. The urge to run her fingers through those curls caused her hands to twitch. All traces of baby fat were gone from his finely chiseled cheekbones. Startled, she realized that he resembled the glorious statues of the Nubian gods carved out of fine mined marble that lined the halls of Theed’s Palace.

Padme detected something painful lurking in his eyes and realized that Anakin was attempting to hide from her the horrors of War that they had witnessed. Ani was no longer that little boy that she knew on Tatooine, somewhere during the past two months of their separation he’d turned into a strong and powerfully majestic male. In his dark Jedi Tunic he was proud freedom warrior; a presence that would cause enemies to cower and undoubtedly would cause young girls swoon. She couldn’t believe that this deity amongst men actually belonged to *her*.

“It’s a pleasure to see you again, Senator,” he said, deep blue eyes burned with wolfish intensity. Padme immediately felt a sharp rise in temperature, and her breath quickened. After the many attempts on her life, they both agreed that her office was most likely always bugged. In such a public setting they had to sublimate their conversations and hope that no device was sensitive enough to pick up the sounds of their whispers and frantic kisses.

“Likewise, Jedi Skywalker,” Padme gulped. She was unable to control herself any longer and lunged into his outstretched arms. He crushed her tightly against his body as their lips locked passionately together. It took every ounce of control for her not to moan loudly with pleasure. Padme’s hands explored the hard contours of her husband’s back as her senses blurred with amorous desire. Her nose inhaled her husband’s familiar, comforting, and alluring masculine scent. Rapidly, she felt as if hope had once again been infused in her deadened soul. The past lonely months melted out of her memory as she focused entirely on her husband. She wasn’t complete without her Ani at her side to breathe life into her otherwise, dull existence. The urge to throw him onto the floor and cast all caution out the window began to cloud her judgment.

Anakin pulled his lips slowly off of hers and raised his lips just out of her reach. Padme’s brown eyes fluttered open and she pouted. He laughed, bent down and whispered hotly in her ear, “If we don’t quit

now, I won't be able to stop. Besides, I'd rather give you a proper welcoming back at home."

Involuntarily Padme felt her face turn bright red and hot with a mixture of embarrassment and pleasure at the same time. To provide any prying ears dull fodder, she asked, "When did you get back?"

Those love-filled azure eyes studied her face closely. She almost felt like a bug under a microscope with the intensity of his scrutiny. Anakin's rich voice purred, "Earlier this afternoon. Obi-Wan and I are here for a short layover for ship repairs."

Worry punctured Padme's heart. "Were either of you hurt?"

"No, but our ships were both heavily damaged in our last campaign," he answered. His black leather covered thumb gently stroked her cheek. A small, curious smile caused the corner of his mouth to jerk upwards as he examined the six buns that circled her head. She could already see his vexed annoyance at trying to figure out how he would later release her hair from the round prisons. With a small wink and sexy smile, he asked, "Do you still have work to do here, Senator? Or would you like an escort out to your car?"

"I'm all done here for tonight, Master Skywalker. I'd appreciate an escort very much," she answered, stood on her tiptoes and pulled Anakin's face close to hers and kissed him passionately. She could feel him trying to control a fit of highly inappropriate giggles at her obvious intentions and desires.

He reluctantly extracted himself from his wife's embrace and wagged a finger disapprovingly in her direction. Into her ear, he whispered, "When we get home..."

"What're we waiting for then? Life Day?" she cooed.

Anakin heartily laughed, causing the strain of war to erase from his features and for a moment, he was simply that young and brash Padawan that she fell in love with a year earlier. Taking her on his arm, they talked impersonally of war as they exited the Senate building. Then, Anakin placed her gently into a cab and said, "I hope you have a most pleasurable evening, Senator."

Padme's face exploded with a broad smile. She said, "You can count on that, Master Jedi."

She spun in her seat and longingly gazed out the back window, watching Anakin's lithe and muscular form spring into a second cab that sped off in the opposite direction. They'd meet back at her apartment shortly, and then, she deliciously thought, she'd unwrap her gift and see how else her husband had matured in their time apart. Blood rushed to her face as tantalizing visions danced in her subconscious. Something told her that she was not going to be disappointed with her present, and for once, this politician would happily partake in the spoils of War.

The End

Title: Episode 1: The Republic Show
Author: PadmeLeiaJaina

Genres: Wacky Humor, Completely AU, Dare Challenge Response

Characters: Anakin, Obi-Wan, Han Solo, Leia, Yoda, Palpatine, Mace Windu, Ki Mundi, C-3PO & R2-D2 and many, many more.

Length: *You must accept the dare of your partner and write a piece that is between 1,000 and 2,500 words.* Total: Just under 2500

My Dare provided by aldocassidy:

Palpatine is a part-time Sith Lord, part-time struggling stand up comedian who is also a single father raising a teenaged Han Solo. Anakin, Obi-Wan, and the rest are members of the Jedi Council, who instead of being in charge of the clone army, are in charge of the Holo-Net networks. Will Palpatine ever get a pilot for his show? That's up for you to decide.

Comments: This had to be one of the strangest challenges that I've ever tried to come up with. I certainly hope that it's funny and not lame 😊

After spending many days cogitating this strange challenge, I take my inspiration from the greatest creatures ever created The Muppets! Enjoy! 🍻

All comments welcome! 🍻

Episode 1: The Republic Show

“Brave is he to allow Masters Windu and Ki Mundi to witness the pilot of this new variety show first hand,” Master Yoda commented to Jedi Master Shaak Ti.

Shaak Ti agreed, “I understand he has much hope in this shows success. Being a single parent of a teenage son is not easy. And after that fiasco of ordering the clone army and his impeachment... Palpatine is struggling financially.”

Each Jedi Master seated themselves in their squashy chairs and activated the Holo-net network and waited for the show’s signal to chime in.

Master Anakin hurried into the room, snatching a datapad by the door and quickly scanned the show’s contents.

“Late again, Master Skywalker?” Yoda asked.

“My deepest apologies, Master.” The small Master detected a whiff of Senator Skywalker’s perfume and thought he saw a hint of red lipstick on the collar of Anakin’s tunic.

Anakin readjusted his off-kilter robe and smoothed his messy sandy blond hair. Averting his blue eyes,

he lied, 'Traffic, you know.' Aloud he read from the disk, "Today we've got a variety show produced by former Chancellor Palpatine. He's appearing in the pilot's main star as...a comedian? Am I reading this right?"

Obi-Wan Kenobi smirked and replied, "Your reaction was the same as ours when we read that."

Anakin laughed. "Well I guess we can immediately check this one off as a bomb, don't you all agree?"

"Patience we must have. Unwise it is to jump to quick decisions, Master Jedi. Otherwise a possible hit we might miss," Yoda advised, clearing his throat.

Suddenly, the room's lights dimmed and an incoming signal brought the vast screen to life. The Jedi Council silenced and focused on their task of rating the show's pilot episode.

The image of a crowded theater appeared with luxurious red velvet curtains covering a stage. The words *Episode 1: The Republic Show* appeared on the screen

A golden protocol droid followed smartly by a silver and blue astromech droid companion wandered to the center of the stage.

"Good evening to you all! I am See-Threepio, human-cyborg relations and this is my counterpart Artoo-Deetoo!"

The smaller domed droid chirped his greeting.

"We welcome you tonight to the grand premier of *The Republic Show!*"

The smaller droid bleated impatiently.

C-3PO scolded back, "I was just getting to that you impatient bucket of bolts! Tonight we are pleased to present a very special guest and our show's producer Former Chancellor Palpatine! Tonight he will dazzle us with his comedic wit!"

From stage right, two figures who occupied the upper balcony seats could be seen. One of the guests sported a spectacularly huge afro and the second had a very large, round head.

From the Council control room, Anakin spied the two guests and cried, "Hey how did Masters Windu and Ki Mundi get invited to this show and not me! It's not Fair!"

Obi-Wan clucked his tongue and shamefully shook his head. Even twenty years after being granted the title of Jedi Master, Anakin refused to stop whining.

"Sorry," Anakin said, as the show's opening sequence began.

Led by intergalactic dancing sensation Oola the Twi'lek, Greta, Rystall, and Lyn Me pranced across the stage as the mighty Chewbacca pounded out an upbeat tune on his piano in time with the orchestra led by Owen Lars.

A lanky, teenaged Han Solo wearing a long black trenchcoat tipped off his top hat and tap danced

across the stage. Loudly he began to sing:

*It's time to play the music!
It's time to light the lights!
It's time to get things started...on "The Republic Show" tonight!*

Jabba the Hutt slithered onto the stage and wiggled his vast belly in suggestive circles. In Huttese, he sang:

*It's time to put on makeup!
It's time to dress up right!
It's time to get things started!!!!*

The cameras panned over to a very bored looking Mace and Ki Mundi.

Mace asked, "Why were we invited here?"

Ki Mundi shrugged and responded, "I guess we'll never know."

"It feels like torture to have to watch this show!"

Chewbacca pounded out an upbeat tune to the music while onstage C-3PO and R2-D2 were being covered in layers of clothes by the skimpily dressed dancers. Han was accompanied in the center of the stage by a smartly dressed, grinning teenage Boba Fett. Boba joined Han in song:

*It's time to get things started!
On the most sensational!
Inspirational!
Celebrational!
Galactic-sational!
This is what we call the *Republic Show!**

Loud booms caused confetti to shower down onto the stage.

Owen cued Dexter Jettster. The Besalisk clanged his symbols together. The reverberation promptly caused his pants to slip down to his ankles. Face burning with embarrassment he pulled them back up to cover his vast derriere.

The curtains slammed shut to a very confused looking C-3PO wearing a long women's yellow gown, four hats on top of his head, and a long feather boa around his neck.

Behind the stage scurrying sounds could be heard. "Oh yes, I am very pleased to introduce our first guest Miss Princess Leia will sing an old Alderaanian funeral dirge for your enjoyment!" C-3PO stated.

The curtains flung open to reveal Leia sitting on top of a coffin. The teenager wore an inappropriately revealing dress as her voice filled the theater with a moving dirge of loss and eternal love. Han tugged the coffin across the stage; stopping occasionally to wipe sweat off of his brow and to cast sly peeks at the lovely girl bellowing out the sorrowful song.

“Since when did you allow your daughter to act?” Luminara asked to a rather befuddled Anakin.

“Well, you know. I’m having to cave on a lot of things...she still hasn’t exactly forgiven me for accidentally blowing up Alderaan,” Anakin said, grimacing. The Jedi Masters frowned at him. “Well how was I supposed to know that Tarkin had crossed the station’s circuit boards? I thought I was just severing their holo-net access due to unpaid bills...not have the system backfire and blow up the whole planet!!”

On stage his teenage daughter’s eyes seethed with hatred as she spat out lyrics about keeping ties of communication open even to the dead. Anakin gulped and asked, “Is it hot in here?”

The curtains then snapped shut on Leia but not before the camera caught Han Solo wiggle an eyebrow suggestively in her direction. The crowd thundered their approving applause.

Obi-Wan hooted with laughter as Anakin glared at the spot where Han had been standing.

Dressed in tight blue spandex, a gold sequin covered cape that read *The Amazing Calrissian*, Lando tapped C-3PO on the shoulder and asked, “When am I up? I have an *Amazing* new feat to present to the crowd.” The dark man’s teeth sparkled brightly.

Baffled by this break in the show’s set routine, 3PO said, “I believe you are on after this number, Mr. Amazing.”

“Good,” he slyly repeated. C-3PO watched as Lando strutted off of the stage.

Threepio then addressed the crowd, “Next we are most pleased to introduce to you our most esteemed guest Chancellor Palpatine!”

The curtains opened to reveal a podium. To the far left of the stage a bucket could be seen being shoved onto the stage. A gray haired Palpatine walked across the stage and he stood nervously behind the wooden edifice and smiled.

“Good evening to you all,” he said. “Parenthood...people say children are a gift, but I must say that I often wish I could send my child back COD, if you know what I mean? I mean if given my choice, I would’ve chosen a different model.”

From the side stage, Han Solo peered nervously at his father. The elder statesman scowled as the theater remained stone silent.

Taking another tactic Palpatine said, “What I mean is that before I had my son I used to have a full head of red hair, now look at me, within ten years I’ve turned into an old man. I must tell you all I have discovered eternal youth! Our teenagers suck the life right out of us – thereby extending our life forever by absorbing our life energies!” He beamed at his own cleverness.

The crowd shifted uncomfortably in their seats and an audible hiss could be heard.

From their elevated seats, Mace loudly asked Ki Mundi, “Tell me, has my fro turned white yet? I think it must have for as long as it’s taking this routine to finish.”

“I do fear that I see a white streak appearing, Master Windu,” Ki Mundi replied with a grin.

Palpatine’s smile turned to a frown. From side stage, Han groaned, “Oh oh, I know that face.” Quickly he grabbed Boba by the shoulders and said, “He’s sinking man, we need to save this skit!”

“How?” Boba asked, shrugging Han off of him.

Lando declared, “Leave that to me!”

“I don’t know, think of something,” Han answered. Ignoring The Amazing’s offer, he dashed behind the stage looking for inspiration.

On stage Palpatine continued on with his monologue. “Do you know how an ewok gets from one place to another? E-WOKS! Ha ha ha HA!”

The crowd turned ugly.

Boos echoed throughout the theater as pieces of fruit hurtled towards the stage. Palpatine appeared completely confused by this turn of events.

From the sides of the stage Han Solo motioned for Chewie’s assistance. The wookiee nervously pounded out a merry tune with his furry paws. An unexpected loud *BANG* echoed through the hall. Barely seen at the side of the stage, Lando shot out of his canon and flew up and out of sight.

Palpatine’s next joke was drowned out by the angry shouts of the crowd.

Boba Fett spied a bucket on the stage, picked it up placed it on his head. Now drenched, he began pantomiming the former Chancellor’s motions. His actions were cut short as a screaming Lando Calrissian landed right on top of him, flattening them both onto the stage.

The crowd laughed at the unfortunate antics of the Amazing and Boba. The Chancellor deliriously beamed.

From the balcony, Mace stood up and shouted, “You fool! They’re laughing at those idiots not you! By the power of the Holo-Net Jedi Council, I declare this show is OVER!”

Han who’d just arrived on stage riding on Jabba’s back like a cowboy gulped as he watched his father’s face fell into an ugly scowl.

“No...NO...NO! I believe it is YOU who are mistaken – for it is *I* who wield unlimited power!” The normally gentile man’s face contorted grotesquely. From his fingertips sizzling blue flashes of Sith Lightning shot out and enshrouded the two Jedi Masters.

The crowd screamed in terror and stampeded out of the theater.

Masters Windu and Ki Mundi’s skeletons flashed from the radiation and they began to smoke. Their shrieks pierced over the screams of the crowd.

The camera suddenly pinwheeled and then the signal went dead.

The Jedi Council sat in stunned silence.

“Guess we should’ve just taken my advice, huh?” Anakin offered.

“Wait we will for the final report from Masters Windu and Ki Mundi,” Yoda stated, got up and began nervously pacing around the room.

An hour later the doors to the chamber opened to reveal two very angry and soot covered Jedi Masters.

Fear crept into Anakin’s heart as his eyes fell upon the two men; Ki Mundi’s once perfectly round head had now distorted into a towering conical shape and Mace Windu’s glorious Afro had been fried completely off leaving his head as bald and smooth as a baby’s bottom.

“What happened?” Obi-Wan ventured.

“Apparently our former Chancellor was harboring Sith tendencies. He’s now safely behind bars... permanently if I have anything to say about it,” Mace growled, massaging his bald head.

“That poor boy, he’s left with nothing,” Shaak Ti said, thinking about Palpatine’s son Han.

“Oh I wouldn’t worry too much about him,” Ki Mundi stated.

“Why is that?” Obi-Wan asked.

“Before we left, I saw him get down on bended knee and propose to that delightful young woman who sang that funeral dirge,” Ki Mundi answered.

Anakin turned as white as a snowstorm on Hoth.

Obi-Wan smirked. “Looks like there is justice in this Galaxy, Anakin - you’ll be paying for this show long after it’s been forgotten by us.”

Everyone laughed at Anakin’s misfortune.

Yoda tapped his cane to gather everyone’s attention. “Vote we must on the future of this show.”

“If we green light it, maybe my fifteen year old daughter won’t get married!” Anakin hopefully pleaded.

Mace glowered as light bounced off of his bald head.

Anakin’s smile fell. “Fine, I vote no.”

One by one the twelve Jedi Masters voted down the show.

Yoda grunted in approval. “It is decided then, “The Republic Show” will not go forward. It is time to move onto the next show, let us hope it will be less eventful than the last.”

“Here, here!” Mace agreed and took his seat. The lights dimmed and the grueling job of voting began again.

Anakin slowly massaged his throbbing forehead as an insipid soap opera began.

Obi-Wan bent over and whispered, “Cheer up, Anakin.”

“Why?”

“This should finally end Luke’s crush on his sister,” Obi-Wan pointed out. “And if it doesn’t, you can always threaten to cut off his other hand.”

Anakin grimaced.

Obi-Wan grinned broadly. “Come on, I’ll buy you a drink.”

Both men got up to leave. Anakin said, “Better make it a triple.”

Obi-Wan laughed and gently pushed his friend towards the door. “Don’t worry, it’s not like this day can get any worse, right?”

The chamber doors opened to reveal a seething, livid Padme Skywalker.

Anakin quickly reached for Obi-Wan but only found empty air as the older Jedi Master had darted back into the safety of the Council chamber room.

In one fluid movement, Anakin collapsed to his knees and said, “I will do anything that you ask, please just don’t yell at me.”

Padme’s brandy eyes sparkled with annoyance. “I’ll leave it to you to figure out how to break off this engagement then.”

Defeated, Anakin nodded, stood up, and embraced his wife. Padme detangled herself from his embrace and smirked. She offered, “You know it probably shouldn’t be that hard.”

“Why’s that?”

“You can always threaten to do to him what you did to Luke,” Padme replied.

Anakin argued, “You know that was an accident, I didn’t mean to cut off his hand...”

“It wasn’t his *hand* that I was thinking that you could threaten to chop off,” Padme said, her eyes playfully twinkling.

A broad grin stretched across Anakin’s face and he barked out a laugh. “Bless the stars, woman. Remind me to never to cross you.”

Padme grinned and took his hand. Together they left the building to face the teenage lovebirds and

trusted that they would find a way to delay the ill-timed event from taking place. Together they would put all traces of Palpatine's doomed "Republic Show" from their lives forever.

The End
