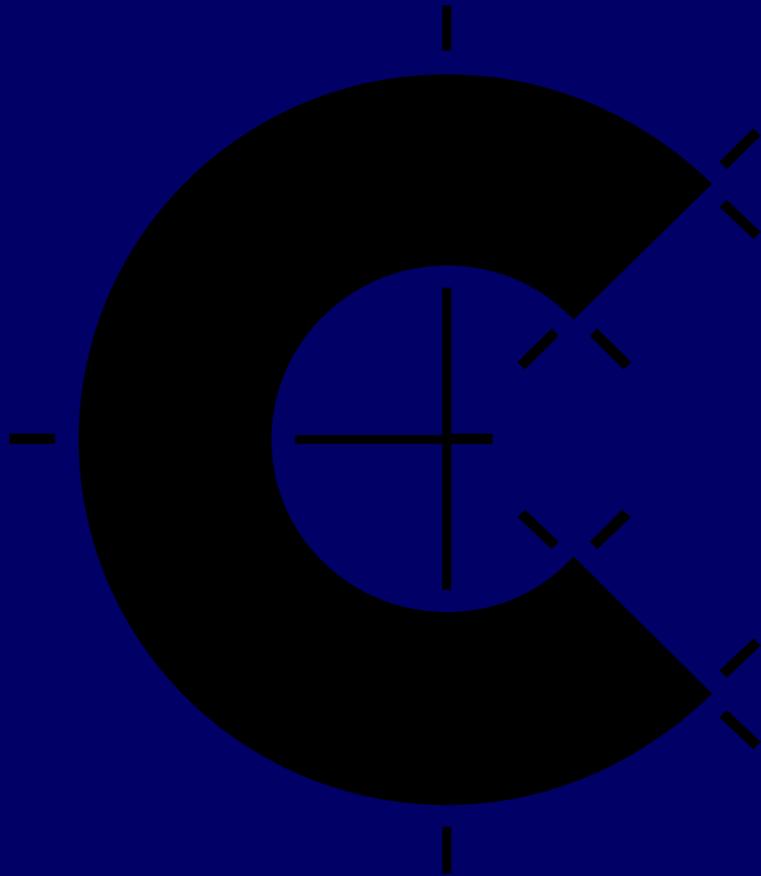
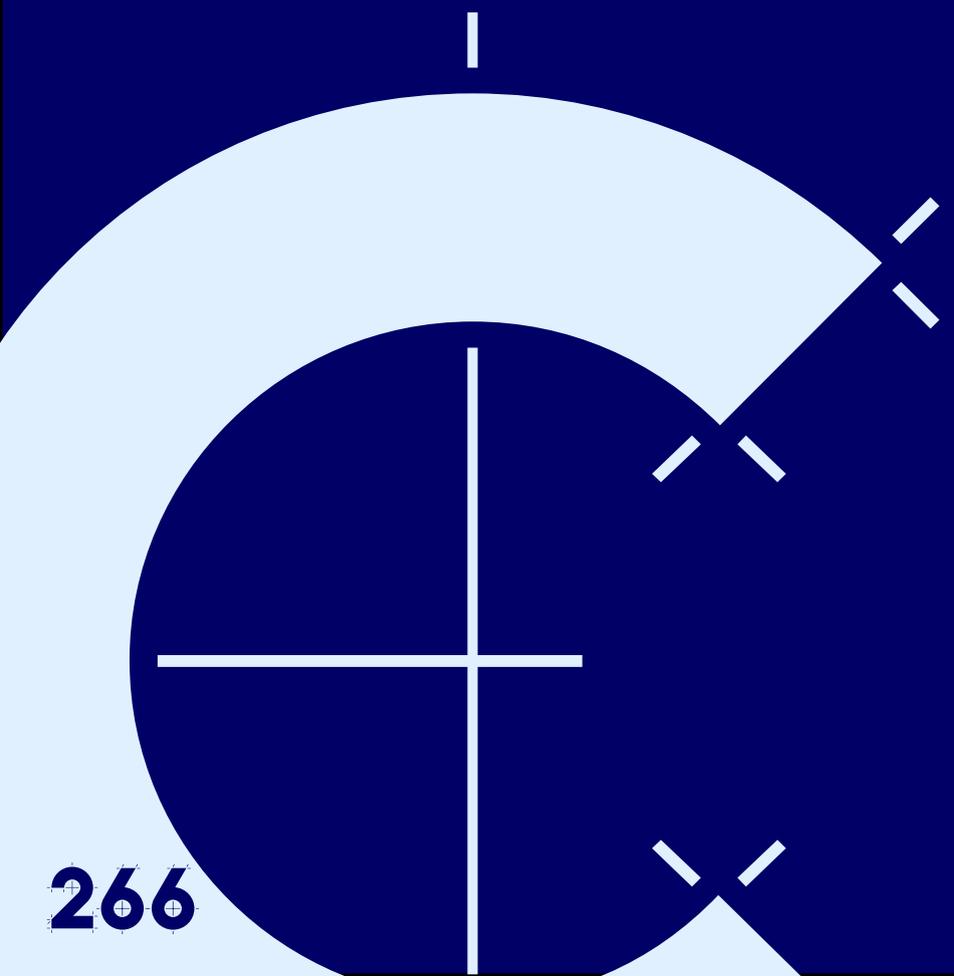


Pæan to Priapus VII a multi-media slash anthology



ircumference
by M. Fae Glasgow



HONOR BOUND

This trifle barely counts as a vignette—
and it was the result of wondering why
Mace Windu was on the Council, and
Qui-Gon wasn't.



IT WASN'T

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something he wanted to think about another person, but Master Qui-Gon Jinn was rapidly running out of excuses not to think it.

Whilst lending half an ear to the chatter around him, he glanced around the refectory. Yes, there it was again—Mace Windu was looking at Obi-Wan.

It sounded so innocent, so stupid when he put it like that—Mace is looking at Obi-Wan. It made him—a Jedi master on his third padawan—sound like a petulant child complaining about a sibling: Ma, she looked at me!

But it was what lay behind the look. It was the *why* of the look. It was the way in which Mace was looking at Obi-Wan.

No child should be looked at like that. And for all Obi-Wan's body was an awakening, walking pile of lust, his heart and mind were still the questioning, quivering, quicksilver no-man's-land between childhood and adulthood. Honest, and so raw to emotion, so easily flagellated by feelings and questions and doubts and pride—an age when padawans thought themselves ready to take on the Galaxy, but were still dearly in need of protection,

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right in the middle of that age when they most desperately needed a safe zone in which to answer their questions about themselves for themselves.

If Mace, with all his certainties and convictions, with all his sureness and confidence as to who and what Obi-Wan was, were to take Obi-Wan... The boy would be molded not in Obi-Wan's own image—whatever that would be—but in Mace's.

Something had to be done, before Obi-Wan was seduced by the promise of being in charge, of being the one making the decisions, the one making all the choices—of being all grown up. Something had to be done before Obi-Wan was saddled with adult responsibilities before he'd had the chance to simply play and explore. Something had to be done before Mace made his move, and convinced Obi-Wan that it was all on Obi-Wan's shoulders—that poor Mace was helpless before Obi-Wan's beauty, that a full Jedi master was simply too drawn to Obi-Wan's charm, intelligence and brightness to resist. Something, Qui-Gon sighed unhappily, had to be done before Mace made Obi-Wan responsible for the failure of his very first attempt at a relationship, his very first attempt to be loved for himself.

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Qui-Gon didn't even want to think about how much it would hurt to be in love with someone as special as a respected Jedi master and then cast aside as lacking.

He couldn't quite stop the name from sliding into his mind: Xanatos.

He hadn't seen it in time, not with Xanatos. But he'd seen, now, with Obi-Wan.

Something had to be done.

But still, to take on a Council member, to go to the Council with nothing more than "he's looking at him"?

To have no evidence of prurient interest, to have no proof of untoward attentions, to have nothing but his fear that he'd be too late for Obi-Wan, as he'd been too late for Xanatos.

To stand in front of the assembled Council—Mace Windu included—and admit that his padawan hadn't complained, hadn't professed fear or murmured of duress, but simply to say, "he's looking at him, the way he looked at Xanatos."

It would put an end to any ambitions he might have harbored himself: there'd be no Council seat for himself, no position as Aide-de-Camp, Liaison to the Senate—he wouldn't even be put

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out to pasture as an instructor. He'd be stuck in the field, going from one petty trade dispute to another, until something killed him.

But it was that, or fail his padawan. Again.

Beside him, Obi-Wan's conversation faltered, and Qui-Gon looked up in time to catch the expression on Obi-Wan's face: oh yes, Obi-Wan was on the cusp, torn between blushing at being so flattered, and frowning in unease.

For there it was again: Mace was looking at him.

Something had to be done.

He sighed, gathered his robes about him, and then, bound by honor, Master Qui-Gon Jinn went off to commit career suicide.

