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A JEDI AND A GUY LIKE ME
by Carolyn Golledge

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"Skywalker!!" Solo yelled. "Where's my socks?!!"

"In the wash," came the reply from the kitchen. "Where they should have been two days ago!"

Solo, barefooted, boots dangling from one hand, came to the doorway to glare at the young man working at the sink. He shook his head in disgust, seeing that once again Luke had tucked a towel into his belt as an apron. Much more of this dirt-sider style co-habitation and he'd go crazy! "What the hell am I supposed to wear now?!" he demanded. "There was nothin' wrong with them the way they were!"

"They'll be dry soon," Luke responded calmly. "You can't go until you've had your dinner anyhow."

Solo cursed. "I'm goin' now! I got a date!"

"Without your socks?" Luke's eyes showed shock as he looked up at his friend. "Besides, I'm cooking your favorite dessert."

Overbalancing as he tried to pull on one of his boots, Solo grabbed at the door-frame. His head lifted sharply and he dropped the boots. "Tirana pie?!"

Luke smiled, enjoying the reaction. "Uh huh."

"You're a cruel man, Skywalker. This is some way to repay me for saving your ass from that Death Star thing last month. I don't know why I ain't just cleared out. Takin' more 'missions' from Her Highnessness -- I must

be outa my head!" He crossed to Skywalker's side, looked over his shoulder, and asked, "How long till it'll be ready?"

"About as long as it'll take for your socks to dry. Sit down and help me peel these vegetables.'

"Vegetables!" Solo exclaimed in horror. "I ain't eatin' any of that green muck!!"

"Eat the vegetables or no pie."

Solo made faces behind Skywalker's back. "You're gonna make someone a great mother someday, kid!" Despite the sarcasm, Solo went to the drawer to get a paring knife. "What the hell?" he muttered.

"I sorted them all according to size,' Luke announced proudly. 'And I hung them from that rack above the sink, the one next to the spice rack."

"You're obsessed, Skywalker! I don't believe this! You put all the spices in alphabetical order, then you sort the knives by size?" Solo groaned. "I gotta get outa here. If we don't make contact with Her Worship's agent soon, I'm leavin'."

Luke was so shocked that he almost dropped the vegetable he was peeling. "You can't!" he exclaimed.

"Watch me," Solo rebuffed. 'I can't take much more of this lousy weather, and I hate bein' cooped up in this flea-pit of a house!"

"It's not so bad," Luke replied. "I kind of like it."

"Yeah, well, it's all right for you. You sleep like a log and I gotta lie there and listen to you snorin' all night. Why couldn't you rent a place with two beds?"

' They didn't have one!" Luke said exasperatedly. "Look, I told you -- just wake me up."

"Oh sure," Solo scoffed. "It's like trying' to wake the dead."

"Well it's no fun sleeping with you either!" Luke shouted. "I always wake up cold because you have all the blankets."

"You wake up cold because you've been dead all night!"

They glared at one another, then a distinct smell of burning attracted their attention.

"The pie!" Luke cried in dismay. "Now look what You made me do!"

"Me!?" Solo shouted. "If you hadn't been so busy whining about everything" He looked at the charred mess Skywalker was removing from the oven. "Ahh Sith! Well, that's that. Look, kid, why don't you quit on this little homemaker routine? It ain't like we're movin' in here permanently."

"We've been here two weeks," Luke retorted. He looked away from Solo's gaze and mumbled, "I remember my home and Aunt Beru's cooking. I just wanted..."

"Yeah, Yeah," Solo said, but his voice had lost its sharp edge. "Kid, ya gotta loosen up. Come down to the bar with me. Maybe I can fix ya up with someone."

Luke blushed. "Don't do me any favors! I can find someone for myself!"

Solo sighed. "When hell freezes over," he muttered. "I'm gonna be late. Elzi'll be waiting' for me. Remember what I said. Make yourself scarce before we get back, okay?" He winked, enjoying the color staining the youngster's cheeks. "Unless ya wanta make it a threesome of course." Skywalker choked, rendered speechless by that thought. Solo grinned, pulled his boots on to his bare feet, grabbed his jacket, and left Skywalker staring after him.

"What about your dinner?" Luke called.

"You know what you can do with that green crap!" came the reply as the door slammed.

Sighing, Luke decided to set about making another pie. He whistled to himself happily as he prepared the various ingredients and utensils. He didn't know why Solo complained so much. This was fun!

Time passed. Delicious aromas filled the kitchen. A storm howled outside, rained lashed at the windows and thundered on the rooftop. Luke admired his handiwork, several pies stood fresh and steaming on the benchtop. He jumped as he heard voices and the front door slammed. He cursed as he saw how late it was. Solo appeared in the hall, a heavy-breasted, scantily

clad woman leaning snugly into the curve of his body. Luke blushed as he saw Solo draw the woman hard against him, holding her close as he lowered his mouth over hers. The kiss seemed to last forever. Luke wondered that they didn't suffocate. Finally, Solo lifted his head and his eyes met Luke's. Embarrassed, Luke turned an even more impressive shade of red. Solo was not amused. "What the hell are you doin' here?!" he growled. "I told ya I was bringin' company home tonight."

"I know," Luke stammered. "I just thought you and uh, uh your friend, might like something to eat, so I..."

"Out!!" Solo demanded.

"But...,it's raining!" Luke protested.

The woman moved forward and her deep blue eyes examined every inch of Solo's friend. "My, my, you are a cute one!" she purred. "Let him stay, Han. Maybe we can teach him a few things."

"Luke," Solo warned. "I'm runnin' outa patience"

Luke nodded and scurried past them, blushing furiously but unable to take his eyes from the shapely female figure barely concealed beneath a wet, silken dress. That distraction caused him to entirely forget his weather-proof coat. At least until he found himself outside on the front step, being nearly drowned by freezing rain. He reached his hand toward the door knob, then thought better of it. He'd find shelter at the bar Solo had mentioned. It wasn't far.

Solo and Elzi exhausted themselves during the long pleasurable hours of the night. Thus they slept late. When finally they did surface, they were hungry. Solo was pleased to be able to offer his lover a selection of choice, home-made pies. As he seated Elzi at the kitchen table, he noticed the appalling weather. It was ten o'clock but very dark, the rain had turned to frozen sleet rattling icily against the window panes, the wind screaming and tearing at the open shutters. Then Solo saw Skywalker's coat still hanging from its peg by the door. "Sith!" he mumbled. "Dumb kid!"

"What?" Elzi responded.

"Nothin'," Solo said with a smile. "Good pie, huh? Here. Have some more."

'No, thanks,' she refused. "Gotta watch my figure."

Solo leered. "You look great to me! All the right curves in all the right places."

'You ain't so bad yourself, Solo," she complimented. She leaned across the table and gave him a lingering kiss. "Mmmn. Last night was wonderful. You're the best I've ever had.'

"I know," he smirked immodestly.

She slapped at him and giggled. "Really, I've got to be going. I'm already late for work."

"Right,' Solo agreed, noting the hour. "I should be out lookin' for this idiot who's already ten days late! Miserable weather's cut off all the roads. Why can't you people use hovercraft like everyone else?"

"Not everyone loves flying the way you do,' she teased. She gave him another kiss, then turned into the hall and went to the front door.

Solo followed, intending to open the door and perhaps receive another kiss in return, when the door opened of its own accord. A dripping wet, shivering figure stumbled inside. "Looks like your friend got a little wet!" Elzi noted. "Poor baby's frozen! You really should have let him stay with us." So saying she disappeared into the rain.

"See ya tonight!" Han called after her, disappointed that he'd missed his farewell kiss. "Geez kid," he grouched, looking at Skywalker who was leaning up against the opened door. "Shut the door. It's cold!"

Luke glared at him, slammed the door, then sneezed. "I know!"

Solo felt a little guilty. 'Maybe you should get outa those wet clothes, huh?' he suggested as he saw the puddles of water that had pooled at Skywalker's feet. "What the hell happened to you anyhow? You fall in the river or somethin'? Struth, you're soaked!"

"If I'd fallen in th... the...! Luke sneezed. "I'd be ... be..! Another sneeze. "Dead! I can't swim, remember?!"

"Oh yeah. Well," Solo mumbled. "You sure got awful wet for a five minute walk! Or did you get lost between here and the bar?"

Luke began stripping as he headed for the bedroom. "I didn't go to the bar," he muttered.

'What?' Solo called over a mouthful of pie. He followed his friend into the bedroom, feeling even more guilty as he saw the bluish tinge to Skywalker's flesh, and the way he was shivering violently from head to toe. "Damnit, kid! Where the hell were you? Didn't you go to the bar?"

"I went," Luke admitted. "But I didn't stay."

Solo's eyes rounded in amazement. 'You been out in that storm all night!?' Luke nodded, then sneezed again. "Why the hell didn't you stay at the bar?"

"None of your ... bus ... business!" Luke sneezed. He crawled into the bed and pulled the covers tightly over himself. 'Why is it so c-cold in here?' he complained. "Didn't you refuel the ... the.." he sneezed again.

"It's hot in here, kid," Solo responded, finally beginning to feel worried. "You're sick." He went to the bed and lay a hand to Skywalker's brow -- burning as he'd expected. "Why didn't you just come back here?"

"You w-would ... have ... k-killed me."

"Yeah. Well," Solo grouched. "You could have at least got your coat!" Luke moaned and curled into a ball, tugging at the blankets, seeking warmth. "Hey," Solo offered. "I'll get you some hot soup or somethin', okay'?"

"Don't want any," Luke muttered miserably. "I think I'm gonna throw up."

"Oh great!" Solo responded. "Hang on. I'll get you a bucket." But when he got back he found Skywalker lost to fevered sleep. 'Hell, kid," he said softly. "Why do you do these things to me? Now I gotta go find ya a doctor. Her Holiness'll kill me when she finds out about this!"

Despite the words, Solo was genuinely worried. Thus, some hours later, when the doctor had examined Skywalker and complained about being dragged out for so minor an illness, Han felt too relieved to tell the man what he thought of his ethics and his prices. He tended to Skywalker all night, exhausted himself when the fever finally broke around dawn. He'd had to call off his second date with Elzi, but still feeling guilty and worried, there was no room for resentment.

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Luke came fully to his senses to discover Solo had been sitting with him all night and was now asleep in the chair beside the bed. He decided that was fair punishment. It hadn't been very comfortable out in that storm. In fact, he decided, Solo hadn't suffered enough. He smiled as he plotted his revenge. Settled on his plan of attack, he began by moaning loudly. Solo stirred but didn't wake. "Han!" Luke called, then groaned again.

"Huh? What?" Solo mumbled groggily. He rubbed at his eyes, then looked toward the bed. "Kid!! You're awake!!" he exclaimed. "How do you feel?"

The genuine delight in Solo's eyes almost had Luke abandon his plan for vengeance. Almost. "Not so good," he lied. 'Awful weak.'

Solo frowned. "You think you could eat a little somethin', huh?"

"Maybe," Luke considered. "Some soup?"

"Sure," Solo smiled. "Comin' right up!"

Luke groaned. 'Don't say that!'

"Oh. Ahh, sorry. I'll, uh, get Your soup.'

Luke smiled at the man's back. Now this was going to be fun!

After a day spent carrying various snacks and other items to and from the kitchen, bathroom and bedroom; Solo was tired, annoyed, and beginning to feel suspicious of Luke's continued complaints. That suspicion deepened further after Elzi arrived and began fussing over the patient.

"Poor, poor, baby!" she crooned as she drew a warm washcloth over Skywalker's face. "You've been so sick."

"Still am,' Luke said plaintively. "I don't think I'm ever going to get better." This last remark was directed at Solo. Luke bit back a smile as he saw the man flinch.

"Oh, you poor thing!" Elzi soothed. "Tell me where it hurts."

"I ache all over," Luke explained. "Especially my back."

"Why then I'll just give you a nice massage," Elzi offered. "Would you like that?"

Luke enjoyed Solo's reaction. The Corellian's jaw dropped, his eyes widening with disbelief and jealousy. "Yeah-ah," Luke nodded. "That would be nice. Thanks."

"Good. Solo," Elzi ordered. 'Go get me some of that oil we used. And warm it up a little first."

Stunned, Solo turned toward the bathroom. "And warm it up," he mimicked. "For the poor, poor baby! I don't believe I'm doin' this!"

Back in the bedroom, Elzi and Luke exchanged wicked, conspiratorial smiles, trying to hold back their laughter. While Solo had been out on an errand for more soup, Luke had explained his plan. Elzi had been glad to help.

"How am I doing?" Luke asked.

Elzi giggled. "He's really steamed! I don't think he can last much longer. Maybe you should plan on a complete relapse." They heard Solo's footsteps as he returned. "Quick! Roll over!" Elzi instructed.

Solo stopped dead in his tracks as he saw Elzi pull the blanket down to Skywalker's bare hips, her hands stroking his flesh. "What are Ya doin' to him?!" he blurted out.

"Oh, what do you think!?" Elzi snapped. "Have you got that oil warmed?"

Solo looked at the bottle in his hands. "I ... ahh ... no."

"Well, go do it then! This poor boy is suffering."

"Suffering!" Solo growled as he went to the kitchen. 'Suffering! I'll give him suffering!' He poured the oil into a saucepan, turned on the heat, then returned to the hall. As he neared the bedroom, he heard laughter. His jaw dropped in surprise. He crept closer to the door and listened. It didn't take long to realize he had been set up. So, it was like that, huh? Fine! Time to get even! He coughed loudly so they'd know he was coming back. The laughter stilled. Han gathered his best hurt little-boy-lost expression and walked into the room. He didn't look up at them, but stood staring at his boots. "Look, I can see how it is between you two," he mumbled. "I don't want to get in the way. I'm leaving. Send a signal whenever you need a ride outa here, kid."

Stunned silence followed his exit.

"Han! Wait!" they finally called after him. They heard Solo heading up the hallway, then the front door slammed. Luke jumped out of bed and hurried after Elzi. As they opened the door to call Solo back, he jumped out from behind them.

"Gotcha!!" he declared with a grin and a wink. Luke and Elzi were given only a few moments to gape. Solo held a pie in each hand. "Have some, kids!" he said as he threw the edible missiles full into their faces. He stood a moment enjoying their cries of outrage and their attempts to wipe the mess from their eyes; then he said, "I'm going to bed. I feel a fever comin' on. Bring the oil, Elzi! Oh, and Luke, I left some dirty socks for you to wash,, then you can make some more pies. Have fun!"

Solo strode down the hall. Luke turned to Elzi. "Let's get him!" she declared.

And the battle was on.

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