

An arm's length away...

Timeframe: 17 ABY

Characters: Luke, Mara, young female students

Summary: Visiting the Jedi Academy at Yavin IV, Mara once again disapproves of Luke's teaching methods - or does she?

*A/N: This fic is inspired by the starting scene of **The New Rebellion** as well as by hot pics of a sweaty Mark Hamill on the Endor set... It is also an answer to the October 2011 Arm Challenge on TFN/The Skywalker-Jade Revival Society: "You must write a fic featuring Luke's arms (or, if you are a guy or if you want to: Mara's arms). It can be about anything you want, and in any timeframe, you simply have to reference: Luke's (or Mara's) arms (A LOT), Yoda and Dagobah."*

"Just *look* at those arms..."

"Oh, my..."

"...yumm..."

The murmurs were so low they were almost impossible to hear, much less to catch the words, but Luke glanced to the girl who'd last spoken. "Ennina? Are you paying attention?"

"Um, yes Master." The girl blushed and donned a meticulously attentive expression. For the next several minutes she was the picture of an attentive student while Luke continued to explain how the Force could be used to speed up reflexes. Mara rolled her eyes, but Luke obviously hadn't determined what the teenage girls had been breathing about – after, all, there wasn't any trace of embarrassment to detect from him and the girls *had* been standing a bit off to the side.

The love-struck moans of the youngsters didn't brighten Mara's mood. Neither did the fact that, upon her visit to Yavin IV, Luke had suggested that she attend a *teen* class to get a few tips of how to increase physical abilities. The fact that it was Luke himself teaching was little solace. Still, she forced herself to stay, even pay attention to his teachings – and she had to admit she could use the expertise he offered.

That didn't elevate her mood either.

The class finished and Mara tapped her foot while Luke wrapped up the lesson, patiently answering last questions - though in Mara's opinion those questions, at least for the girls' part, had no other reason than to gain them their handsome Master's attention. Finally he was ready to join her for their promised lunch together.

He smiled expectantly and trotted up to her. "Hungry?" When she didn't answer but only glared, he added cheerfully, "I am!"

Those were two other annoying traits about Skywalker, Mara reflected – his unrivalled vitality and impossibly good mood. She had to annoy him really badly to bring it down and most of the time

nowadays, she didn't really bother. For some reason his hurt expressions made her feel guilty. Still, that smile, bright as the Tatooine twin suns over a reflecting desert - for the moment throwing its light over all too visibly rippling biceps - was almost more than she could handle at the moment. And the glistening sweat on his tanned skin didn't make it better. He looked more like a exotic male dancer than a Jedi Master and he was, of course, completely oblivious to the fact.

Mara had barricaded herself back against the wall and just leaving that position seemed like humoring Luke far too much, much less following him out of the room. She gave him a disapproving glare, aware that the edge of her glower slackened when she scanned those exposed, brawny arms. "Why have you dropped teaching in the Jedi robes?"

Luke shrugged. "I thought it got so formal. Particularly with the the youngsters. They need to play once in a while. And they need to see that adults can do that as well." He shrugged again and turned, as to leave.

It was a sympathetic, moderate and mature answer. She couldn't really attack that. In principal it *was* good that Skywalker cut back on the reserve – she wasn't worried he'd do that too much.

Still... "Is it really fitting for a Jedi?" she heard herself say.

"It's not clothing that make a Jedi," Luke replied easily.

"We're talking about *lack* of clothes," Mara pointed out. She knew she sounded picky as an old maid and it didn't make her mood any better.

"Hey, I trained like this on Dagobah," Luke countered. "And Master Yoda didn't have a word to say against it." He gave her an impatient glance, the promised dinner obviously tugging at him, but at least he stayed were she was.

"And were there teenage girls present on Dagobah?"

He looked at her like was she out of her mind. "Of course not. What does that have to do with anything?"

All right, he *asked* for it. She could see no way but to tell him. Mara tried to make her voice as neutral as possible. She even left her wall and stepped towards him in order to deliver the message more gently. "Luke, the girls are... looking. I can see they are. And, truth be told, your appearance is very, um, *undressed*."

Luke, of course, caught neither her point nor her pedagogical efforts. "Hey! I wear a tanktop," he protested sheepishly. "And an old one, too."

"Doesn't matter."

"Listen, Mara. I don't know where you get your issues, but that one..." Luke shook his head. "Besides, me and Kam have been training bare chested for years and no one has lifted an eyebrow." He turned to leave again, obviously considering the matter finished.

But if it was me and Tionne doing that, I bet you'd lift more than an eyebrow... Mara pursed her lips, deciding to go for that approach. "What if the girls started to sport their chests too? Would you think that appropriate?" The thought was compelling enough to make her stroll up beside him.

He glanced at her, startled. "That's not the same thing."

Mara pushed on. "What if *I* gave lesson, let's say about hand to hand combat technique, and did it shirtless? Would you interfere? And would you pay attention to my *teaching*?" For the first time this day she could feel her mood really start to buck up. The idea actually had some fascination.

Obviously Luke seemed to agree, and he wasn't pleased with it at all. "Mara, that's not the same. A woman's breast is, well... sexualized. A man's chest isn't."

Mara stopped and placed her hands on her hips, forcing him to stop as well and face her. "It has never occurred to you that women can ogle as much as men do? 'Cos I'd say that's exactly what your female students are doing."

"Certainly not," Luke protested, "and certainly not on..." He blushed, cutting off. Obviously the idea of being sexualized made him feel awkward.

Mara let her gaze wander to the ceiling. He just didn't get it, did he? Then she took a deep breath, focusing on him again. *Ok, don't say it, Jade – show it!*

She let her gaze slowly drop to his jawbone, caressing it with her eyes. The cleft in the chin, the broad, firmly cut jaw line. Then down his muscular throat. He really had an amazing throat, she realized. Thick and firm – yet long enough to be graceful. He suddenly swallowed and she could see his Adam's apple move in that particular male way she so seldom paid attention to but always thrilled her when she did. His shoulders were a piece of art too, and his arms... oh those arms... well muscled and powerful - *gorgeous* - the teen girls *did* have a point there... Now that she wasn't so annoyed, Mara had to admit she'd been savoring those arms too. Unheeded, her tongue darted out to lick her lips.

Luke shifted uncomfortably now, but Mara allowed her eyes to slowly sweep across his swelling biceps, the sinewy shoulders... then back to dwell on his collarbone - there was still some sweat there, she could actually *feel* the smell of it, fresh and tickling in her nose. Gosh, she'd never thought of Skywalker like this... but now that she did... Darn, she was getting really hot and bothered here!

"Okay, okay," Luke cut her off, cheeks crimson now. "I take it that you wanted to prove a point?"

"Was that a question?" Mara's bad mood has completely evaporated and now she couldn't help teasing him. She tilted her head, a mischievous smile starting to play on her lips.

"No!" Luke stared at her, almost angrily. "And yes - you have proved your point! I *won't* teach shirtless again!"

“Well, after all, why not?” Mara purred. “As long as you’re aware of the effect you want to achieve? Maybe the word has spread? Tionne told me that the number of female applicants to the Academy has gone up the past years. Maybe your *teaching methods* are the reason why?”

Luke gave her a dirty look, whirled and started towards the cantina with long strides, snatching his robes from a chair as he went.

Mara followed him slowly and realized, a little belatedly, that she should have known that telling him the truth would drive him back into robes quicker than you could say Luke Skywalker.

A pity, really. It struck Mara that she’d quite enjoyed the class after all...

And with all those the teenage girls around, she’d got a much better opportunity to ogle those arms.

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