

Unexpected Visitors

A Submission to the Competition:
“My Favorite Color is Dead Parents”



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Orion Gale had just returned home to Coruscant from a long trip to Nar Shaddaa, tracking down a bounty that had continued to elude his grasp. While the job had been a success in the end, he hated that he had to follow his mark across a handful of planets, always seeming to be one step behind. Luckily, he managed to catch up when the Weequay had left the planet of Nal Hutta, having just missed him at the starport. He quickly found out that the man was heading to Nar Shaddaa and gave chase in a transport that he had borrowed from a contact for the job. He waited a while, wanting his mark to feel safe that he may have gotten away. In Orion's experience, his bounties tended to head to a bar when they felt safe, so the first thing he did upon landing was ask around discreetly for where to find the alien. It didn't take long to narrow down the location, where he promptly apprehended the Weequay.

After one more successful job completed, and after the traveling to various planets, all Orion wanted to do now was relax. He stepped inside his apartment and grabbed a glass of water before setting his bag down beside the couch and slumping down into it. He let out a sigh of contentment as he took a sip. He set the glass down on the table before him and leaned back, closing his eyes, feeling grateful for the opportunity to rest.

Orion was awoken by a noise coming from his door. He opened his eyes, uncertain how long he had been asleep. He wasn't expected any company — he hadn't even told any of his friends that he had returned yet.

"Hold on a second, I'll be right there," he called out as he made his way to the door, wondering who it could possibly be. He reached over to the panel beside the door and punched a button, the door sliding open with a hiss — to reveal his parents standing before him. Too shocked to speak, he could only stare, mouth slightly agape.

"Hello son. It's good to see you again," his father Ray said with a smile.

"It's been a long time, hasn't it, Orion?" his mother Vael added.

Orion snapped out of it, a smile spreading across his face, "Mom, Dad...what are you guys doing here?" He laughed softly and shook his head, embracing his mother and shaking hands with his father. "Come in, please," he said, stepping aside to let them inside. He depressed the button on the panel once they had entered and led them to his living room, offering them a seat on the couch while he took the chair.

Vael looked around at the apartment curiously, nodding in approval. "You seem to be doing well, I see."

"I've managed to get by fine. I'm saving most of the money I make though," Orion admitted with a smile. "I never really saw the point of living luxuriously, especially since it may make you a target to some people. But don't worry, this is a safe neighborhood, even

though I'm more than capable of taking care of myself," he quickly added upon seeing his mother's worried expression.

His father let out a brief chuckle, "Yes, we remember how you were years ago."

"I'm glad to get the chance to see both of you again, but I can't help but be curious," Orion said, looking at his parents. "I know I told you that I was living on Coruscant. But what made you come find me?"

Vael smiled at her son, "We wanted to take a little trip. And we just happened to miss our little boy as well. Is that such a crime?"

"No, Mom. That's not a crime at all. I've missed both of you, too," he said with a laugh. "Can I get you anything to drink?"

"No, thank you. I'm fine," Ray said.

"Perhaps I'll have a cup of tea, if you have any?" Vael replied.

"Sure, Mom, I'll go make some for you. I even Constant Comet, your favorite if I recall," he smiled. He picked up his discarded bag from earlier and quickly deposited it in his room before making the tea. A couple minutes later, Orion handed his mother a cup of tea, sitting down again.

Ray indicated the spot where Orion's bag had been, "I take it you've been working recently?"

"Yeah, I actually just got back not too long ago. It took longer than I had originally thought it would, but I managed to track the man down and capture him, and all without anyone getting hurt, you'll be pleased to know."

His father gave a simple nod of his head, "I am glad to hear that."

Orion took a seat once more, remaining silent for a moment before taking a deep breath and speaking again. "Listen, I know that this probably isn't the kind of life that you had in mind for me as I was growing up, or even once I got older..." he paused. "But I was growing restless just doing security jobs, I wanted something more."

"Oh, we know all about that, dear," Vael said, smiling as she laid a hand on her son's shoulder. "We understand, and we don't blame you for leaving your old job at Fondor Shipyards either. I know that sometimes in life, people just start wanting more. And when that happens, some people choose to act on that feeling. It's perfectly natural."

"I know it might not be a career you approve of either, though," the man admitted to his parents. "But I do always try my best to do the right thing regardless. I never go after

children, and flat out refuse if someone requests it of me. Unless, of course, someone has been kidnapped, even though that's only come up one time in all these years of working. For the most part, it's been mainly criminals, with the occasional person that owed a debt and ran away rather than paying it off." His parents said nothing as they listened, his father nodding his head.

"I've tried to be good, doing things that don't cross any lines. Unfortunately, sometimes my employers can be... less than reputable, or just straight up criminals. But I've never done anything that would make me feel ashamed so far..." he continued.

"We know about some of your work already," Ray admitted. "A couple of the guys I knew while working at Fondor before you were born are still there. They're mostly in management, but there's one or two involved in security, or even former security that have since retired. But your mother and I became curious, so I made some calls. We've learned a bit about what you've been doing through the people I know and their own contacts in the security world. Believe it or not, some of them used to be in the personal security and protection business. So those kinds of connections can be helpful to parents like us that want to keep tabs on their children while still giving them their space."

Orion couldn't help but feel a bit uncertain about this revelation. "So, I guess it's not a total secret then. I'm sorry if I've done anything to disappoint you and Mom."

"Oh, that's just silly, Orion," Vael said, laughing. "That couldn't be farther from the truth."

"What, really?" Orion asked. "Even though you've learned of some of the things that I've done, you're still not ashamed of me or anything like that?"

"On the contrary, my boy. We're very proud of the man you've grown up to become," Ray said with a wide grin on his face. "We know that you'll always try your best, no matter what your goal is, and that you have the best of intentions. We raised you right, and we're glad to see that those values we instilled in you as a child are still showing to this day."

"All this time, I've been worried that you wouldn't approve of my line of work, or the things that I've done sometimes. Like I said, I try to do the right thing, but there have been times where the line between right and wrong can become, well, blurry, to say the least," Orion admitted.

His mother shook her head, "It may not have been our first choice for you, that much is true. But we know that sometimes when parents try to control too much of their children's lives, it can backfire and cause them to drift away, even make them resentful. As children get older, they have to be given a certain amount of freedom. You're our only child, and we would never risk losing our relationship with you."

Orion smiled, taking his mother's hand, "You and Dad will never lose me. I was always grateful that you let me follow my desires, even if you might be uncertain about where they might lead me."

"We trust you, Orion. What your father said is true, and it always will be; we're so very proud of you for following your dreams and making them come true," Vael added.

He looked from his mother to his father, "So, how long will the two of you be staying on Coruscant?"

Orion almost couldn't believe what he had been told. After all the worrying he had done, it had all been pointless. His parents were proud of him, and that was all that truly mattered at the end of the day.