

# Unbreakable

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*Set about 4 years after EW. Heero and Duo are working with the Preventers, it's peace just about everywhere, yadda, yadda, yadda and all that crap. No plot, fluff, OOC, the mention of adult objects aaaaaaaand... A singing Heero (told you it would be*

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# 1 - Unbreakable

## Unbreakable

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Parings: 1x2, 3x4, 5xS

Disclaimer: I own nothing. Sorry to say it, but I don't... If I did, Relena would be killed a long time ago and the Gundam Boys would be extremely happy (not because Relena was dead. Well, Heero would...) I'm making no money for writing this. Don't sue, you won't get much anyway, unless you want a cranky, old cat, a fracked up cell-phone and a really, really, REALLY old and crappy computer.

Rating: PG-13

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Archive: Sure, but please ask first. :)

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The sun was slowly creeping up over the horizon and threw its warm rays through a window in a nice apartment stationed in America. Still snoozing in the early morning rays two sleeping characters laid spooned together in a bed. But as the sun shone through the window, one of the two mentioned characters woke up and watched as his partner, lover, and best friend was sleeping.

Smiling, the normally stoic ex-wing pilot grabbed the end of his lovers braid and started to tickle him with it. Groaning, the ex-Deathscythe pilot tried to swat away whatever it was that was disturbing his slumber and rolled over.

"Duo," the dark haired man called softly and stroked his lover's hair. "Time to wake up."

"s way early, -ro... Let me sleep, will ya?" Duo slurred and turned again. Heero shook his head and bent over to place small feather kisses over the slumbering ex-pilot. Hearing the other purr, he smiled and placed a gentle kiss on the lips he desired.

"Mm, that's nice, Heero." Duo mumbled while turning and fixed his sleepy, cobalt eyes in Heero's

direction, only to be greeted by a pair of smiling, loving Prussian eyes.

Snuggling closer to his love, Duo sighed. Heero hugged him close and placed a kiss on the other man's forehead. "Happy twentieth birthday, koi."

Duo grinned and turned so he was lying on top of Heero. "That's right, babe. I'm twenty today. I'm turning into a big boy now."

Heero laughed and placed a chaste kiss on the tip of Duo's nose. "That's right. And as a big boy, you need to get up and hit the showers. Just because it's your big day, doesn't mean work will let you off the hook."

Duo groaned and collapsed onto Heero's chest. "Man, the Preventers are mean on that area. I mean, they never let us off when it's someone's birthday or anniversary or something like that."

Heero chuckled and stroked Duo's slightly tangled braid. "I know, but the world is in need of us. But I think we'll be getting home slightly before time today, thanks to our last successful mission and I promise you that when we get home later, we'll celebrate your birthday big time. Just you, me and a big birthday cake. And maybe some whipped cream too."

Heero raised his eyebrow and watched as his lover smirked. "That's sounds wonderful, lover."

Heero smirked and kissed Duo again. "Mm, it does, doesn't it. But in order for that to come true, I need you in the shower so we can go to work."

Duo groaned again and rolled off his lover. Removing the quilt that was clinging to his body, he muttered "Mean, mean, mean," something that made Heero snicker and swat Duo's behind with a pillow.

"The world is a mean place," he smirked as Duo jumped from the surprising swat and turned around. Seeing the smirk on his lovers face, Duo stuck out his tongue and wiggled his hips.

Heero just returned the gesture with a grimace of his own and started the task of tidying the bed while his braided lover disappeared into the bathroom. As soon as he heard the shower turned on, he hurriedly slipped on a pair of boxers and went into the kitchen to prepare the first part of today's plans.

Meanwhile, a completely clueless Duo was standing in the shower, enjoying the warm trickles of water that currently ran over his body. Quickly running his hands through his waist length hair to wet it, he started to smile. It was his birthday. His birthday.

Thanks to the medical company Quatre had evolved when he took over the family business, he and Heero had been able to determinate their date of birth. His was in late spring, on the 27Th of May. Heero's was in the summer --the 2nd of August. The same company also offered other services, such as male pregnancies, something Heero and Duo wanted to study more about once they'd quit the Preventers and established a somewhat calmer life.

His thoughts circled from his day of birth to his beloved koi. Gently smiling, Duo started to wash his hair while he thought about his and Heero's relationship. They'd been together for almost three years now.

When the last war ended Duo had returned to the Scrap heap to work with Hilde, but it hadn't lasted long. He'd been restless and the job that had earlier satisfied his need now became boring. Hilde had understood when he left the business, but instead of trying his luck somewhere else, he'd traveled around on a few colonies until he ended up on earth half a year later. By luck, he'd ran into Wufei on the space airport in America, and the Chinese agent was quick to suggest a place with the Preventers when he heard about Duo's restlessness. Duo was only too happy to accept as the thought of being useful again entered his brain. And at the Preventers office he'd met Heero again.

Heero had ended up with the Preventers at somewhat the same way, but at an earlier date. After the last war he finally taken up Relena's offer to become her personal bodyguard. After the first day he offered her his services, he'd regretted it. From day one Relena tried to change him into something he wasn't, and at more than one occasion he feel like a mere trophy that the girl was just showing off to the snobs. After half a year, he quit. When Relena begged him to stay, he'd merely muttered that he had his own personal reasons to leave, something that wasn't too far from the truth. But the main reason was that he couldn't stand the girl anymore. He'd liked her at first, and hoped as they worked together she could help him out of the tight shell he'd locked himself into so many years ago so he could finally be able to cope with society. That was not the case because every time she came, he found himself creeping further into the shell. A relationship with her had never crossed his mind as his feelings for the Vice foreign minister was more sibling like. He cared for her as a sister and could never think of her another way than that. Lady Une had heard about it when Heero had departed, and immediately contacted him to offer him a position with the Preventers. Heero had instantly accepted the offer since he still had the same feeling in his heart that he belonged more on the battle field than he did in the society. And after three months working with the Preventers as Agent Day, he saw Duo again.

They were immediately partnered up, working under the codenames Agent Day and Agent Night, and they worked just as well together now as they had done during the two wars. And just as during the wars, Heero felt his shell crack in the mere presence of his braided companion; soon feelings he didn't know existed in his heart blossomed up, and he found himself in love with the other man. Heero had never cared too much about the society and its looks upon gay relationships. They'd come a long way since the year 2000, and even though gay relationships and marriage was less frowned upon, there where still places were it was not accepted. But the Winner family been a great influence on that area since Quatre Raberba Winner himself was quite happily married to Trowa Barton, who he'd been with secretly since after the first war. It wasn't a shock for either of the former Gundam pilots when they finally came out to them; they'd noticed a long time ago. But even though Heero didn't mind gay people, it was still a great shock for him when he figured out that he was gay and in love with his long time partner. It made him scared as hell.

But love had blossomed between the two agents after a minor accident on the field. Heero had taken a bullet to his shoulder and ended up under surgery. The first thing he saw when he woke up was Duo Maxwell's worried face. When he saw Heero open his eyes, he'd let out a sigh of relief and muttered that he'd been afraid that the God of Death had claimed another victim. Heero had snorted and told him that he wouldn't go that soon, and then he'd found himself with an armful of braided goo. Duo had almost hugged the breath out of him, and he finally let go, he had gently brushed his lips over Heero's, and told the other that the next time he did something like that, he would smack his @\$\$ into the afterlife. Heero had merely brushed his fingers over his lips and watched as the braided agent turned several shades of red. But he never let Duo apologize for the accident and merely asked him if he was free on the day he got out of the damned place.

They dated for about half a year before they finally decided to move in together, and had only gone smoothly since then. Sure, they had their fights, just like everybody else, but they'd made it a rule that nobody went to bed angry. They solved their problems with talking and heard each others version of the situation. Then they would kiss and make up.

Quickly rinsing his hair clean from soap, he went to the task of cleaning himself off. They'd finished their last mission late last night and when they finally came home, neither of them had bothered to take a shower. They'd merely stripped out of everything they'd worn that day and had fallen asleep the second their heads made impact with their pillows. Heero had managed to give him a small kiss on the cheek before he went into dreamland, and Duo had barely registered it since he was halfway gone himself. Today they would be forced to deliver their reports and do a pile a paperwork from the case, but still they would be let out early.

Stepping out of the shower, Duo started to dry himself off. After wrapping a giant, fluffy towel around his head, he started to shave off the light stubble on his chin before he got dressed. Skilled fingers went to the task of dividing his thick chestnut hair into three equal large sections of hair and braided it into his trademark braid. Happy with the result, he fastened it with an elastic and frowned when he looked at the end. It missed a few inches thanks to a mission they'd had just a few months ago. Lady Une had assigned him and Heero to train three new rookies and had assigned them a fairly easy mission. They were going to do a raid on the hide out of a small group of drug dealers, but thanks to the hesitation and somewhat clumsy behavior from one of the rookies, the group was left with one rookie gunned down and Duo's hair on fire. Heero had managed to handcuff one of the drug dealers while Duo was trying to put out the flames, but the others got away. The gunned down man survived, but the clumsy one had to start his training from scratch.

Quickly scanning over his Preventers uniform, he silently praised the day when he didn't have to put it on again. He liked working there, but his body could only take so much more abuse. Heero was still in shape, but even he was starting to feel the strain. Hurrying out of the bathroom, he was greeted with the smell of coffee and scrambled eggs. Stepping into the kitchen, he grinned to his lover, who was currently sitting down, reading the paper.

"Wow, breakfast ready and everything. Not that that's anything new, but I can't remember the last time you made scrambled eggs. You spoil me."

Heero smiled and put the paper down. "Well, it is your birthday, and today I had the time to make you eggs." Duo grinned and kissed his lover before sitting down and digging in.

Heero smiled as he watched his koi enjoy his meal. It was so easy to make him happy. Duo was like a puppy. The only thing he needed was a little attention, or something to do, and he was happy. But Heero would gladly sacrifice anything just to see him smile. Silently, he praised everyday he got to share with Duo, everyday he could see his smile. It had taken them two wars and three years to reach this stage, but now he knew that he couldn't be happier with anyone else. He needed Duo, and he wanted nothing more but to spend the rest of his life with him.

Silently getting up, Heero gave Duo a quick peck on the cheek and started to move towards the bathroom. It was always like this in the morning. Duo would go into the bathroom first, while Heero

cooked them breakfast and ate. By the time Duo was finished in the bathroom, Heero would be finished with the table. Then it was his turn to freshen up while Duo ate. It was efficient, but somewhat lonely; however they made that up when they came home and enjoyed the rest of the evening together. Only during the weekend were they able to enjoy breakfast together, and it was something the two of them always treasured.

Taking a quick shower to get yesterdays' stench of his body, Heero quickly rinsed his body before jumping out of the shower and slipped into his own uniform, he too with a small sigh and a hope that there would come a day were he didn't have to put it on.

Walking back to the kitchen, he found his lover with his head in the dishwasher as he filled it up with the used dishes. Smiling, he walked over and gently spilled his arms around Duo's waist and pulled him up for a tight embrace. "You know," he murmured as he inhaled the scent of Duo's aftershave and just plain Duo and placed a gentle kiss behind Duo's ear. "Tonight we're going to celebrate your day of birth so that even your mother in heaven will know how grateful I am that you are born."

Snickering, Duo turned in Heero's loose embrace and wrapped his own arms around Heero's neck. "Well, you'll just have to show me how grateful you are then. And I'll show you how the birthday boy celebrates his birthday." Grinding their hips together, Duo smiled a seductive smile that made Heero groan and release him.

Releasing Duo's arms from his neck, he placed a tender kiss on his hands and smiled. "You can show me tonight, but now it's time to get back to reality."

Duo nodded and kissed the tip of Heero's nose. "Okay, let's go." Walking towards the door, he flashed Heero one of his biggest grins. "And hey! Maybe I'll get free cake in the cafeteria today." Heero shook his head, and followed his bouncy lover to the car.

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"Hmmm, the perp was out of control, he pulled a big @\$\$ gun from his back pocket, blah, blah, blah... He fired three shots in our direction, we fired back, yadda, yadda, yadda... The bullets hit the perp in the chest and left a big hole... Blood and guts flew everywhere, and the perp sang his last song before going down town." Duo looked over his report for the third time and chewed on the tip of his pencil.

Heero looked over his own report and smiled as he listened to Duo and his summary. "I hope you didn't write that in your report, Duo," he murmured with a smirk.

Duo looked at him and gave him a grin. "Why, Heero, you know I didn't. I'm highly professional when it comes to my reports so I leave out every yadda, yadda, yadda and blah, blah, blah, and I exchange blood and guts with bodily fluids and entrails."

"That's reassuring," Heero replied with a snort which earned him a curled up paper ball aimed towards his head. With the same reflexes he possessed during the war he swatted it away and glared towards the guilty one. Duo on the other hand plastered his most innocent face on and went back to his report.

Heero just shook his head and added his signature to the report. After stapling the report together, he

placed it in an envelope and placed it in his `in' drawer. Seeing that he was done with his work, he simply did a thing he would never have done just 4 years ago. He placed his head in his hands and stared at his lover with a smile plastered on his face. When they arrived at the headquarter just 5 hour ago, they'd been greeted with the usual greetings and gestures. Later, people had come and greeted Duo a happy birthday and some had even brought gitfs. In the cafeteria Duo actually received a free cake and the whole office broke out in a birthday song.

“Oi! Earth to Heero!” Snapping out of his little daydream, Heero watched as a hand waved mere inches away from his face. “You okay?”

Giving Duo a quick smile, Heero straightened up and ran a hand through his hair. “Yeah, I'm fine.”

Duo nodded, before the worried face broke into a big grin and he started waving his report in the air. “Good, Hee-chan. I've just finished my report and my guess is that you've been done ages already, so let's deliver this puppies to Lady Une or Wuffers, and get home.”

Heero nodded and grabbed his own report. Wufei's office was just down the hall from their office, and when Heero knocked, they waited of the usual `enter' before they walked in.

“Wufei, sir, we've finished our reports, sir, and are handing them in now, sir.” Duo stomped his foot on the floor and saluted the Chinese behind the desk.

Wufei just snorted and shook his head. “How you managed to become one of our best infiltration agents, I'll never know, and if it wasn't for that you would have been sacked ages ago.”

Duo grinned and sat down on Wufei's desk. “Aw, you know you love me, Wuffers, and my merry smile in the morning is always the thing to start you up.”

“I'd rather run away screaming, agent Night.” Duo just grinned and patted Wufei's head before he jumped down from the desk and danced back to stand next to Heero. Heero just stood there, biting is lip so he wouldn't burst into laughter. That was one of the changes he'd gone through during the three years he'd now shared with Duo by his side. His stoic mask was just about gone and even though he managed to keep himself calm and stoic during their missions he found that he cracked up nuch more easily now.

Wufei shook his head over the foolishness that was Duo held out his hand. “Well, if your reports are done, hand them in so I can have a look, gentlemen.”

Duo used his elbow to nudge Heero's side and grinned. “Did you hear that? He called us gentlemen.”

Heero just snatched Duo's report and handed it in along with his own. Wufei nodded a silent `thank you' and started to look over the reports. Heero watched as Wufei's black eyes scanned over the pages, sometimes he stopped and noted a detail to himself before he continued. “Maxwell, just what is it you've been writing here?”

Duo walked over and looked at the sentence over Wufei's finger. “It says the perp was handled with ease, Wuffers.”

Wufei raised an eyebrow and muttered "Thought it said the perp handed over a cheese," before he continued his reading. After a minute or two he put the reports down and looked at the two agents. "Well, I'll go over them in detail later, but they seem to be in order. But one advice for you, agent Night; Freshen up your handwriting. Or better yet, start typing your reports instead."

Duo smiled a sheepish smile and scratched the back of his neck. "Can do, sir, but expect no sudden changes over night."

"I stopped praying for that a long time ago," replied the Chinese with a sigh, something that left Duo pouting. Heero quickly brushed his hand over Duo's, just to calm the other man down. "Well, everything seems to be in order so you're free to-"

A sudden knock on the door stopped Wufei's talking and a few seconds later came Lady Une in. "Do you have a moment, agents?"

The three men nodded and Lady Une positioned herself in front of them. "Agent Day. I know you were supposed to have the rest of your day off, due to your and agent Night's last successful mission, but an urgent mission has just occurred and I need you on it."

Heero raised his eyebrow. "What kind of mission?"

Lady Une looked at him. "We've received news that a shop on colony X-3 AD45 has a certain artifact that's needed within the Preventers. It's supposed to give us answers to an important question within the Preventers. Your mission is to infiltrate the shop, find information about this artifact and, if possible, bring it back here."

"The mission doesn't seem that difficult. Can't you assign some of the other agents. I have plans for this evening and-"

"It's necessary that it's you, agent Day. No other agent can get the satisfying result that is needed."

Heero quickly glanced at Duo then back at Lady Une. "How long will the mission take?"

"Three days at the most. The shop's security isn't the best, but gaining the object may prove difficult unless we put the right man on the job."

Heero looked back at Duo before he shook his head. "I'm sorry, but I-"

"He'll do it!" Heero's eyes widened as Duo interrupted him and just stood there with his mouth slightly open. Duo smiled and looked at Lady Une. "Agent Day accepts the mission. His plans for today can be moved."

"But, Duo-"

Lady Une looked from Duo to Heero, before replying. "Do you accept the mission?"



Heero dragged Duo a little away from Lady Une and whispered, "Are you sure, Duo? It's your birthday and we made so many plans."

Duo nodded and smiled. "Yes, we made plans, but it's basically the same plans we make every Friday night. Besides, it's just a birthday."

But, Duo. You'll be all alone. Don't you remember that we told the others that we would celebrate your day this weekend?"

"I remember, Heero, and it's okay. We can move our plans too. This mission seems to be important since it can give us answers. Just take it, Heero, I'll be fine on my own."

Heero looked into Duo's eyes and gently stroked his cheek. "I don't want you to be alone, Duo."

Duo gently brushed his fingers over Heero's hand and smiled. "I'll be fine. Miss Schizophrenic said three days tops. You'll be back in no time `cause colony X-3 AD45 is basically just down the block." Staring deep into Heero's eyes, Duo smiled and gave him a gentle kiss. "I'll be fine, love. It's not like I've never spent a day alone. Just because it's my birthday doesn't make the day any longer, it's basically just another day."

Heero nodded and removed his hand from Duo's cheek. "If you're sure, Duo..."

"I'm sure. Take it, Hee-chan. The quicker you get started, the quicker you'll get home and the quicker will we be able to celebrate my day together."

Heero smiled and gave Duo one last kiss. "What did I do to deserve you?"

"Pulled the shorter straw. Now get your @\$\$ in gear before the Lady puts on her glasses."

Heero smiled and walked back to Lady Une. "Mission accepted, Lady."

Lady Une nodded. "Acknowledged. Now, if you will come right this way and I'll fill you in on the details." Heero nodded and disappeared out the door. Lady Une looked at Duo and gave him a weak smile. "I didn't mean to ruin your plans, but it was quite urgent for some of the others within the Preventers, and agent Day is the only one that could do this if we were to get positive results."

Duo nodded and smiled. "I'm cool with it, Lady. It's just another day after all."

Une nodded her head and walked over to give Duo's shoulder a friendly squeeze. "I'm glad you're taking it so well, but I'm sure you two will have a great time when agent Day returns." Duo nodded and watched as Lady Une moved to the door. As she opened the door, she smiled and waved. "Happy birthday by the way, agent Night. I hope you'll find something to entertain you while agent Day is away. But I'm sure he'll be back before you know it."

Duo winked and waved. "Spank you very much, ma'am, and I'm sure I'll find something to do." Lady Une nodded and closed the door. Duo watched the door in silence and sighed.

"I'm very sorry, Maxwell." Startled by the sudden reply, Duo jumped and turned around. He'd completely forgotten about the Chinese.

Grasping his shirt just over his heart, Duo stuttered out a shaky reply. "Geez, Wu-man, you'll give me a heart attack if you scare me like that again."

Wufei just smirked before his face turned serious again. "I'm... Very sorry that your big day got destroyed like this. I know how much you were looking forward to it. It's been a while since you and Yuy spent some time together, hasn't it?"

Duo shrugged and scratched the back of his neck. "Well, it has been a while, but like I said; it's no big deal. It's just another day."

Wufei nodded and opened his drawer. Duo watched as he stirred around before his hand reappeared with a long box wrapped in sparkling paper. "This is a gift from me and Sally. It's not much, but you need it."

Duo opened and closed his mouth as he stepped up and accepted the present. "Th-thanks, Wufei. Thanks a lot."

Wufei smiled and shook his head. "No need to thank me, Maxwell. It's just a little something on your day. But if I'd known that Lady Une was assigning Yuy a mission today, I would have made sure that both my and Sally's schedule were free."

"You're going out?"

Wufei nodded. "Yes, I'm taking her to a restaurant tonight. I feel I've given her too little attention lately. We've both been busy."

Duo nodded, still clenching the present in his hand. "Ah. Say no more. I know what you mean."

Wufei gently looked Duo in the eyes and got up from his chair. "You know, you're more than welcome to join us tonight. There's no need for you to be alone," he replied as he walked past his desk to stand in front of Duo.

Duo shook his head and smiled. "Nah, I wouldn't ruin stuff for you. I wouldn't want to be a third wheel. You two go ahead and have fun. I'll figure something out."

"You sure, Maxwell. I'm sure Sally wouldn't mind that--"

Raising his hand, Duo shook his head and smiled. "No, no, I'll be fine. I've got a lot to do. I've got some reports I can freshen up. I can fix that radio I broke, I've got a tons of books I've promised myself I would read. Trust me, I'll be fine."

Wufei nodded and patted Duo's shoulder. "Well, if you are sure, Maxwell. I must say that I admire your strength right now. I know you miss him."

Duo nodded, but was still able to hang on to his smile. "Yeah, it's a little sad, but it's okay. I'll survive."

Wufei nodded and went back to his desk. "Well, with that cleared up, I give you the rest of the day off. Go home, and get some rest, agent Night."

"Yes, sir," Duo yelled and saluted the other man. Wufei just snorted again, but Duo could still see a faint smile on the Chinese' lips. Saluting his boss one more time, Duo clinked his heels together and stepped out of his office. Walking to his and Heero's office, he looked over the present he'd gotten from Wufei and Sally. The form didn't give any clue to what it could be, but he still had a hunch. Collecting the other presents he'd received that day, Duo grabbed his car keys and headed for the parking lot.

Dumping the present into the back seat, Duo started the car and drove out from the parking lot. While he was driving, he could feel a faint sting in his heart. He always felt that when Heero was away. But he always tried to make the best out of those days, and he would try to do the same today. It wasn't like Heero wanted to go.

With a new, loud sigh Duo parked the car outside of their apartment and turned the vehicle off. Resting his arms on the steering wheel, Duo just sat there, staring into the open air. He'd really looked forward to this day. They hadn't planned much since they and the guys would celebrate his birthday properly later, but he had really looked forward to a day with just him and Heero.

Banging his head down at the steering wheel, Duo let out an annoyed growl and got out off the car, taking the presents with him. Why couldn't the world just be at peace? Why couldn't everybody just put the guns down and give each other a big hug instead? Gently smiling off his own silly thought, Duo opened the door to their apartment and stepped in. The hall seemed so cold and dark. So lonely...

Gently shutting the door with his foot, he walked into the living room and dumped the present onto the couch. The keys ended at the kitchen table along with his wallet while his Preventers badge ended up on the top of the fridge. Walking back to lock the door, he quickly stripped the Preventers jacket from his body and hung it up. After he'd kicked off his shoes, he bent down to fetch the mail. He wasn't surprised when he found a few more presents along with the usual bills and stuff and after dumping the presents along with the rest of them, he stepped into the bathroom to remove the uniform. If he was going to be alone today, he wanted to be alone and comfortable. After stripping out from his uniform, he walked into the bedroom to find some more comfortable clothes.

While he pulled on a sweatpants, his eyes wandered to a picture next to their closet. It was of him and Heero. Heero had a good grip around Duo's waist with one hand and was smiling broadly. Duo had both his hands wrapped around Heero's shoulders and was grinning. It was taken when they'd first gotten together. Duo smiled and walked over to brush his finger over the glass. The passion they had three years ago still hadn't cooled off. They were still as much in love as back then, but now they had less time.

Sighing, he went back to the closet and looked up a big, black T-shirt with the words `Positive Attitudes, Thank You' printed on it. He'd gotten it from Heero on a trip to Florida last year and was among his favorites.

While pulling the fabric over his body, he started thinking about their three years together. The journey

had been long and bumpy, but it had been worth all the problems and hard work. Now they had a bond that continued to strengthen every day, a level of trust they'd never had before, and passion and love that continued to grow every time they looked into each others eyes. Truth be told, Duo had never felt happier in his entire life.

Gently working out the knots in his neck, Duo walked out of the bedroom and into the kitchen. Opening the fridge while rubbing his neck, he frowned when he discovered that it was just about empty. "Damn," he mumbled to himself and slammed the door shut. "Forgot that it was shopping day today..."

Moving from the fridge to lean against the kitchen table, Duo started to chew on his lower lip and make plans. 'I'm not really in the mood to cook today. It's so freakin' boring to cook all by yourself.' Glancing at the phone, he grinned and stretched. 'Hey, it's my big day. I can celebrate it even if I'm alone. And since it's my day today, I can order take-out instead of cooking. But I still hafta shop so I'll just do that and pick up a cake somewhere that I can enjoy when I come back home. I remember Quatre talking about a bakery by the bridge that had a chocolate cake that is to die for. And by the time I've gotten home I would have decided what to order for dinner and place a call to a restaurant somewhere. Then I can open up my presents, call everybody and say thank you and be a lazy bum for the rest of the evening.'

Looking up in the air, he tested his own mood and rubbed his stomach. 'I'm in the mood for some Mexican right now, but that will probably change. I had Mexican last week.' Remembering the meal, Duo grinned, and grabbed his wallet and car keys before towards the hall. Walking out the door and over to the car, he made a mental list over the items he needed.

Several items were removed or added to the list while he drove to the mall, and as he stepped out of the car, he mentally added toilet paper to the list. Snickering, he started to think about the meal he and Heero had had last week. "You never know when Heero's stomach decides to get upset again," he mumbled with a grin as he remembered how the rest of their quiet night at home had ended up with Heero's body curing itself anally.

Inside the mall, Duo just spent some time looking around in the different stores, before ending up at the grocery store. Grabbing a basket by the entrance, he whistled as he walked into the store, picking up random items as he passed the many shelves in the store. Once or twice, he looked through the amount of items in the basket before tossing something out and replacing it with something else. Making sure that Heero got his beloved vegetables, Duo also made sure that a few cans of soda and beer found their way into the basket.

While standing in the pay line, Duo scanned the nearby shelves for some more things he may or may not need. Briefly looking over the different brands of toothpaste, aftershave, lotions and so on, his eyes stopped at something he needed plenty off. With a little smirk, he snatched a tube of lube and placed it down along with the other items. The lady behind the counter just smirked when she checked through his items and found the innocent, little tube, but Duo ignored it. He was used to it by now.

Gently packing all the stuff into a plastic bag, he headed for the car. Resisting the urge to just run into the toy store and buy himself one of the big, stuffed teddy bears in there, he walked out of the mall and over to his car. Carefully placing the bags into the backseat, he decided that a stroll would do him good. It was quite a beautiful day and the bridge wasn't far away.

Slowly stretching out every muscle in his upper body as he walked, Duo took a deep breath of the somewhat fresh air and headed for the bridge. Deciding that the air in the park next to the mall was much fresher than by the main street, he changed his course and strolled into the park.

As he walked around in the park, Duo took his time to study the different people around him. Old people, young people, fat people, kids. Some were alone, just sitting in the grass and relaxed. Others were gathered in big groups, while the couples were by themselves. Feeling a little sting of jealousy when he saw a young girl with her boyfriend kiss, he decided to hurry to that bakery and get his butt back home. It had been quite awhile since he and Heero had spent time together like that. During their first year as a couple, they'd taken plenty of trips to the park so they could make out in public, gone to the movies so they could make out on the back row and just enjoyed each other's company. Thanks to their work, they didn't have time for such things anymore.

Sighing, Duo sped up a little. It was past 5 already, and his stomach had started to let itself be noticed. Hurrying out of the park, he took a left and followed the river until he could see the bridge. And as he got closer, he could also smell the faint scent of newly made bread and cookies, something that made him mouth water. He could remember the few times he and Heero had tried to bake something, unsuccessfully. He always ended up eating most of the dough until Heero had to chase him out of the kitchen while swinging a spoon over his head.

Beside the bridge Duo could see a small, red house, and as he got closer he could also see a sign with the words "Madam Tora's Bakery" printed in red letters.

Speeding up his pace another few notches, Duo walked up the little stair up to the door and entered. And as soon as he got in, a wall of heavenly odors attacked his nose and left him drooling. Quickly scanning the shop, he could see all kinds of baking products. The shelves were stuffed with all sorts of bread, cakes, muffins and pastries. Duo felt that he had died and gone to heaven. Quatre had not lied when he had told him that this was a nice place.

Inspecting some of the merchandises a little closer, he failed to notice a little, old woman enter. "Can I help you, young man?"

Duo jerked his head up from the little chocolate crisp cookies he'd been drooling over and smiled sheepishly. "I don't know yet, ma'am. I was checking out what you have here." Nodding towards the shelves, he smiled. "And it looks like you have quite the selection here."

Mrs. Tora smiled and nodded. "I've very pleased to hear that. Everything here is homemade and I'm always glad to hear positive things about my bakery."

Duo whistled and looked around. "You've baked everything here?"

Mrs. Tora nodded. "Everything. With the help of my daughter and my grand-children. I can assure you that you will not find any of those factory-made cakes in my shop."

Duo laughed. "That sounds good, ma'am."

Mrs. Tora just smiled and nodded towards her selection of cakes and bread. "Is there anything I can

tempt you with?"

Duo grinned. "Well, if I could afford it, I would have bought the whole store, but I think I'll settle with a cake."

Mrs. Tora nodded again. "Is there anything special you had in mind?"

Duo looked around again before his eyes stopped on a large chocolate cake. Grinning, he pointed at it. "How much for that bomb of sugar and fat?"

Mrs. Tora smiled and checked a list. "It's 25 dollars, young man."

Duo grinned. "That's cheap. I'll take it."

Mrs. Tora nodded and carefully lifted up the cake and put it in a box. "There is a special event going on today?"

Duo nodded. "You could say that. It's my birthday."

Mrs. Tora smiled. "I see. Then happy birthday to you. You having a big party?"

Duo shrugged and looked out the window. "Not really. It's a very small party. Actually, I'm the only one coming to it."

Mrs. Tora stopped and looked at him. "You shouldn't spend your birthday all alone, young man. Don't you have anyone close you can spend it with? Family? Friends? A girlfriend?"

Duo turned and gently smiled to the old lady. "I lost my biological family for a long time ago, my friends are my family, but they are busy today and no girlfriend, only a boyfriend." He looked down and grabbed the end of his braid so he could play with the end. He always did when he was feeling a little sad. "I was supposed to spend my day with my boyfriend, Heero, but he had to work. We were supposed to celebrate it later with our closest friends so they have already laid out plans for today."

Mrs. Tora nodded. "I see. That is so sad... It's no fun celebrating alone."

"You seem to be familiar with the feeling, ma'am."

Ms. Tora laughed and continued to secure the cake in the box. "Well, when my husband died some time ago, I did spend some years by myself. My daughter was busy with her own life, so I didn't want to bother her. But now she, her children, and her fiancée are living with me and are helping me in the shop."

Duo smiled and released his braid. "That's good." Mrs. Tora nodded again and finished the preparations. Duo walked back to the counter and fished his wallet from his pocket. "How much did you say it was again?"

"25 dollars, young man."

Duo chuckled. "Cheap, lady. Very cheap." Handing the lady a fifty dollar bill, he smiled and told her to keep the change. Mrs. Tora smiled and reached behind the counter. Taking out a plate with chocolate crisps, she put some in a small paper bag and handed to him along with the cake. "Take this, young man."

Duo shook his head. "No, I can't accept that, ma'am."

Mrs. Tora just smiled. "You paid too much for the cake and I had to give you something to add up to the price."

"Nah, that isn't necessary, ma'am. Believe me, I survive."

Mrs. Tora walked from behind the counter and gently placed the box and the bag with chocolate crisp into Duo's hands. "Then look upon it as a birthday present from me."

Duo looked at the box and bag, then smiled. "Thank you, ma'am. Thanks a lot." Walking out of the shop, he could hear her call after him.

"Young man!" Turning, Duo saw her smile and waive. "Have a happy birthday, young man. And don't you worry. I'm sure your boyfriend will be home in no time. I wouldn't be surprised if he planned his homecoming right now. Because why would he want to be away from such a charming and handsome man like you?"

Grinning, Duo winked and waved. "Ma'am, if I wasn't already taken, I'd be marrying you right now."

Hearing Mrs. Tora's rich laugh was music to his ears right now and with a satisfied smile, he headed back to his car. While driving, he turned on the radio and tried to find a channel with good music. Stumbling over a good song, he stopped his searched and enjoyed the music while using his fingers to drum on the steering-wheel.

*Come on, come on  
Spin a little tighter  
Come on, come on  
And the world's a little brighter  
Come on, come on  
Just get yourself inside her*

*Love ...I'm in love*

Feeling a little disappointed that he'd found the song when it was about to end, he let the radio be stationed on that channel.

*This was Counting Crows with "Accidentally in Love" and this is the love channel where you can send your special someone a little greeting 24/7, just to show them how much you care. The next song is from a gentleman on L5-X13 that misses his little rose very much and to cheer you up while he's away he has requested a song for you. Here is Tony Braxton with "Unbreak My Heart".*

*la la la la la ohhh*

*Don't leave me in all this pain*

*Don't leave me out in the rain*

*Come back and bring back my smile*

*Come and take these tears away*

*I need your arms to hold me now*

*The nights are so unkind*

*Bring back those nights when I held you beside me*

Duo switched of the radio with a sigh. The last thing he wanted was to hear lovers all over the God damned universe sending each other greetings when he himself was unable to send Heero anything. He knew better than to call anyone that was stationed on a mission. He would have to wait until Heero called him. If he called him.

Looking sadly towards the sky, he wished that Heero would hurry home. He didn't want to be alone today. "Get a grip, Maxwell," he mumbled and stopped the car at the parking lot. "It's just your birthday. It's nothing big, you've celebrated it alone before. Heck, most of the time you haven't even celebrated it!"

'Yes, but then you didn't knew when your birthday was,' a smug voice whispered inside of his head and Duo tried his best to mentally smack the little thing out of his head. "I've had enough voices in my head for a lifetime," he mumbled and grabbed the shopping bags. He managed to place the cake-box under his arm and somehow managed to stumble his way up to the door.

After almost kicking the door open, Duo stumbled into the kitchen and dropped the bags onto the floor. A quick movement saved the cake from ending up as a pile of mess in the box it was in and was safely placed it in the fridge. Then he went to the task of sorting the groceries he'd brought home. Most of the objects ended up in the kitchen, but he quickly dropped the toilet paper in one of the bathroom closets and placed the lube in a drawer in the bedroom.

Once everything was put in it's place, he grabbed a phonebook and the phone. Slumping down into the couch, he started looking through the book for a decent take-out place. Settling for some Chinese, he called the nearest take-out place and ordered steamed Dumplings, Wonton Noodles, Lo Mein and some Garlic Chicken. Hey, was he first going to eat alone, he wanted to have a darn good meal to make up for the loneliness.

Once the order was made, he looked at the presents that were lying beside him on the couch. Picking up the one he got from Wufei, he examined the paper and shook it. It didn't make a sound. Ripping it off, the sparkling paper revealed a long, black box. Looking at the box, he carefully opened it and gasped. "Oh, Wufei... Thanks, dude..." From the box, he picked out a beautiful, black Movado watch. Gently



laying it on his knee, he studied it. It was a simple watch, but still beautiful and Duo loved it. Quickly discarding his own watch, he wrapped the new shining beauty around his wrist and admired it. "Wufei," he grinned and stroked a finger over the watch. "You have a horrible sense of fashion, but you scored a whopper on this one. Remind me to freshen up my handwriting as thanks for this beauty."

Picking up another gift, Duo noticed that it was a slightly bigger box, wrapped in black paper. "Hilde," he grinned and shook the present. "What in the world are you giving me this year? Heero was never quite himself again after you gave me those silver handcuffs last year with a note that said I could use them when Heero was a bad boy..." Ripping of the paper, he opened the box and gasped. "Hilde?! A five snap cock ring?!" Dropping the box just out off pure shock, he looked at the innocent leather ring that was lying on the floor next to the box. Carefully picking it up, examined it and broke out in a smile. "Hilde," he mumbled and picked up the box from the floor to put it back. Noticing that the little, black pillow it had been lying in the box had moved, Duo removed the pillow gasped. Under the pillow was a beautiful golden cross. Laying the cock ring down beside his, he carefully lifted the cross up to study it. "Oh, Hilde," he managed to choke out when he noticed that the letters DM and HY were engraved on the horizontal part of the cross. Carefully putting it back in the box, Duo laid the pillow over it again and placed the cock ring back inside before snapping the box shut. "Hilde, if I didn't know that you were so busy this weekend I would have called you right away. But I guess I have to wait until you do."

Duo spend the next half an hour opening presents from his friends and by the time he was done a new alarm clock, a book, a few DVDs and two tickets to a basketball game were among the things now occupied the living room table. After placing a few calls from the persons he'd gotten the gifts from, he started cleaning up all the used wrapping.

When the door rang, Duo was sure that it was his food and ran to open the door. He was starving now, but when he opened the door, he got a little disappointed. There was no food out there, just some guy carrying a big box. "Big box?"

The guy shifted the box in his arms and looked at him. "Are you Duo Maxwell?"

Duo nodded. "That'll be me."

"Got a package for you."

The guy handed Duo the package and looked up his tablet 1. "Can you sign here, please?" he asked and handed him the pen.

Duo nodded and quickly signed the tablet. Looking at the box the big box in his arms, he asked, "Hey, who's it from? It doesn't say."

The guy checked the tablet and yelled back. "It's from a Quatre Raberba Winner and Trowa Barton, sir."

"Quatre and Trowa?" Smiling, Duo walked back inside and slammed the door shut with his foot. Placing the box in the kitchen table, he wondered what the heck they'd gotten him. "Man, it's huge," he mumbled and started ripping of the brown paper around it. "It's no animal, that's for damn sure. Quatre wouldn't have had the heart to place it in a box, even for a minute."

When the box was revealed, Duo went to the task of opening it. The box itself was plain white and gave away no clues to what could be inside of it. Finally his curiosity got the best of him and Duo ripped the box open, only to let himself gasp in pure shock for the second time that day. "Quatre... That's just too much..." Inside the box was the latest hi-tech stereo on the market. Duo had been drooling over it for months, but he couldn't afford it. But now it was standing there, on his kitchen table.

Duo jumped when the phone suddenly started ringing and he bounced over to the couch to grab it. "Hello, you've reached the erotica hotline where all your hottest fantasies will come true," he grinned into the phone and went back to the stereo to check it out some more.

"Duo?"

Duo's grin just widened. "Hey, Quat."

The other man just chuckled before replying. "Duo, you must stop doing that. You completely fooled Trowa when you said that he'd reached the dry-cleaner."

"Sorry, but I can't help it. It's in my nature."

"I know, Duo. But that's not why I called."

Duo grinned even more. "Oh?"

Quatre chuckled again. "No, silly. I called to wish you a happy twentieth, my friend."

Duo's grin turned into a heartwarming smile. "Thanks, Quatre. And while I'm on it, thank you very much for the present. But you shouldn't have. It's way too much for little, ol' me."

"Nonsense, Duo. You deserve it and much more. And you know I can afford it."

Duo nodded and chuckled. "I know that, money pants, but it's still too much. But thanks anyway. It will be put in good use."

Quatre laughed. "I'm sure it will have a happy life with you and Heero, playing either your loud hard rock music or Heero's classical."

Duo laughed again. "I'll try to find out how long it will take me to bust up the speakers. I've got the whole evening alone so I won't give Heero a head-ache from it."

Quatre turned silent for a moment before speaking up again. "I'm... Sorry that Heero had to leave so urgently, Duo. Wufei called to see if I and Trowa were available to keep you company, but I'm afraid that I'm busy the whole night and Trowa was needed at the circus."

"Wufei did that? Wow..." Duo chuckled. "Guess the guy cares about me after all. I got a brand new Movado watch from him and Sally."

"You know that all of us care about you, Duo, and we wish you nothing but the best."

“Aw, thanks dude. But no need to feel guilty just because I hafta spend my b-day alone. It's just another day. I'll be fine.”

“I know you will, Duo. But I have to hang up. I have a meeting with the leaders in three of Earth's greatest companies. We're going to discuss the use of Brazil's rain forest. I'll see if I can get them to understand that we have other options than the last of the forest, and that the forest must be protected.”

Duo laughed. “Nail `em, Quat. Just use your evil glare and you'll have `em shaking in their pants.”

Quatre laughed. “I'll try, Duo. Have a nice day and once again, I'm very sorry. But I'm sure Heero will be back before you even know it. He can never stay away from you for too long.”

Duo just laughed again and told Quatre good-bye before hanging up in time for the door to ring again. And this time, it was his food.

He prepared the meal in the kitchen before returning to the living room with it. He didn't bother to put the food out on plates, he could just eat right out of the box. Placing the food on the table next to at the presents, he grabbed the remote and started switching through the channels in order to find something to watch. Finding an old comedy, he grabbed his food and chopsticks before snuggling into the corner of the couch. But it wasn't half as cozy as it would have been if Heero had been there.

Slowly eating his food, Duo couldn't quite focus on the movie. All he could think of was how much he missed Heero. Why had he told him to go? Placing the half empty boxes on the table, Duo grabbed his pillow and hugged it close. He really, really missed Heero. Carefully glancing at his watch, he saw that it was only 37 minutes past 9.

Turning of the TV, Duo turned on the radio instead in order to find some good music. Using the remote to flip through a dozen channels, he found the same program he'd listened to earlier that day.

*This is the love channel and you've just heard Daniel Bedingfields "Honest Questions", send by a lonely little lady on colony L6-XF3 to her man on earth. And know we send a greeting to a young girl on L8-XX876 from her big teddy bear on L2-X3. He wishes you a happy birthday and sends you your favorite song, Bryan Adams "Here I am". Enjoy.*

Duo sniffed and hugs the pillow closer. “At least I'm not the only one who's alone on his birthday,” he mumbled and looked out the window. “But at least she got a greeting from her boyfriend. Heero hasn't even called me to see how I'm doing...”

*Here I am*

*This is me*

*There's nowhere else on Earth I'd rather be*

*Here I am*

*Just me and you*

*Tonight we'll make our dreams come true*

Duo sighed and released the pillow. Walking over to the bookshelf, he picked up a book he'd promised himself he would read for ages now. `Might as well get started now...'

Placing the book on the table, Duo walked to the fridge and got himself a beer. Slumping back into the couch, he grabbed the book and tried to read.

*It's a new world*

*It's a new start*

*It's a life with a beam of young hearts*

*It's a new day*

*It's a new plan*

*I'll be waiting for you*

*Here I am*

Duo closed his eyes and left tears prickling behind his eyelids. Rubbing them, he mumbled, "Boy's don't dry. You can do this. Heero'll be home in a few days. It wasn't like he wanted to go. You forced him to." Once again focusing on the book, he just tried to enjoy the song.

*Here we are*

*We've just begun*

*And after all this time my time has come*

*Yeah here we are*

*Still going strong*

*Right here in the place where we belong*

*It's a new world*

*It's a new start*

*It's a life with a beam of young hearts*

*It's a new day*

*It's a new plan*

*I'll be waiting for you*

*Here I am*

Swallowing, he placed the book on the table and grabbed the soda can. Taking a sip from it, he turned so he could stare out the window. Sighing softly, he took a new sip. "Oh, Heero... Wonder what you're doing right now... Are you thinking of me? Because I'm sure as hell am thinking about you... Miss you, baby," he murmured softly and tried to find the location of colony X-3 AD45 on the night sky.

*Yeah here I am*

*Here I am*

*Yeah, Yeah*

*Waiting for you*

*Here I am*

*This is me*

*There's nowhere else on Earth I'd rather be*

*Here I am*

*Just me and you*

*Tonight we'll make our dreams come true*

"Yeah, here I am... Here I am... Yeah, yeah... Waiting for you..." Singing after the lyrics, he tried to hold the tears at bay. Maybe it wasn't such a good idea to listen to that program when he missed Heero so much, but now he just couldn't turn it off. He just wanted to listen.

*It's a new world*

*It's a new start*

*It's a life with a beam of young hearts*

*It's a new day*

*It's a new plan*

*I'll be waiting for you*

*Here I am*

*It's a new world*

*It's a new start*

*It's a life with a beam of young hearts*

*It's a new day*

*It's a new plan*

*I'll be waiting for you*

*Here I am*

*Here I am*

*Oh right next to you*

*And suddenly the world is all brand new*

*Here I am, Here I am*

*I'm gonna stay*

*Now there's nothing standing in our way*

*Oh Here I am*

*Here I am*

*This is me*

Duo couldn't help but drying away a tear at the end of the song. He'd never been so affected by a song before, but he'd never missed Heero like this before either. "I'm turning into a softie," he mumbled and grabbed his pillow again. Burying his face in his pillow, Duo tried his best not to break down and cry. 'I'm not gonna cry, dammit,' he thought and bit his lower lip. 'I'm not gonna break down and cry like a baby just because Heero's not here on my birthday. I was the one who told him to go!'

*This was Bryan Adams with "Here I am" and this is the love channel where you can send your special someone a little greeting 24/7, just to show them how much you care. The next song is from a angel with broken wings who's stuck far away from his black angel on earth. He's so sorry that he can't be with you on your big day, but he wishes you a happy birthday and promise you that he will be back before you can imagine it. He found you a song that he claims tells every emotions he has for you and he made a specific request that this song would be played at 11 o'clock sharp. So black angel, here is Westlife's*

*"Unbreakable".*

Duo wasn't really paying attention to the DJ, but when the words sank into his brain he gasped. 'Black angel? But, but... That's me!' Turning so that he was facing the radio, he listened to the song with his mouth open.

*Took my hand,  
Touch my heart,  
Held me close,  
You were always there, by my side,  
Night and day,  
Through it all,  
Baby come what may,*

*Swept away on a wave of emotion,  
Oh were caught in the eye of a storm,  
And whenever you smile,  
I can hardly believe that you're mine,  
Believe that you're mine.*

Duo swallowed and more tears threatened with falling. It was from Heero. His Heero had actually called on a song he wished for Duo to hear. He'd probably hoped that Duo would find the channel and listen to it around this time. Duo always liked to listen to calm music in the evenings, especially when he was alone.

*This love is unbreakable,  
Its unmistakable,  
And each time I look in your eyes,  
I know why,  
This love is untouchable,  
I feel in my heart just cant deny,  
Each time I look in your eyes ohh baby,  
I know why,  
This love is unbreakable.*

Biting his lip, Duo couldn't help but smile while listening to the song. He'd never imagined in a lifetime that Heero would do this for him, at least not using something as cheesy as a love program on the radio, but still it left his heart beating fast. He was so wrapped up in the song that he failed to notice a figure come in the door through the front door and silently made it's way over to the couch where Duo sat with his back to the door.

*Share the laughter,  
Share the tears,  
We both know,  
We'll grow old from here,  
Cause together, we are strong,  
In my arms, that's where you belong,*

*I've been touched by the hands of an angel,  
I've been blessed by the power of love,  
And whenever you smile,  
I can hardly believe that your mine.*

*This love is unbreakable,  
Its unmistakable,  
Each time I look in your eyes,  
I know why,  
This love is untouchable,  
I feel in my heart just cant deny,  
Each time you whisper my name ohh baby  
I know why.*

Duo gasped as he felt two rough hands cover his eyes and automatically spun around with his fists raised. There he got his third shock for the day. Gasping, Duo gazed into two sparkling Prussian eyes. Heero smiled and took Duo's hands in his. "Happy twentieth, koi... Could have the honors of having a dance with the birthday boy?"

Duo nodded and Heero gently pulled Duo closer so he could wrap an arm around Duo's slender waist. From there he leaded them into a slow dance and much to Duo's surprise, Heero started to sing along with the song on the radio.

*This love is unbreakable,  
Through fire and flames,  
When all this is over,  
Our love still remains.*

*This love is unbreakable,  
Its unmistakable,  
Each time I look in your eyes,  
I know why,  
This love is untouchable,  
I feel in my heart just cant deny,  
Each time you whisper my name ohh baby,  
I know why.*

Stopping the slow dancing, Heero one again grabbed Duo's hands and brought them to his lips. Dropping a chaste kiss on Duo's hands, he murmured the last sentences of the song.

*Cause each time I look in your eyes ohh baby,  
I know why,  
This love is unbreakable.*

Then he wrapped both his hands around Duo's waist and pulled his lover in for a deep kiss. Duo wrapped his own arms around Heero's neck and kissed him for all he was worth, pouring everything he had into the kiss. Now he let some of the tears drip over his cheek, simply because he was so happy.



Pulling back, Duo dried away the tears and smiled. "Thank you, Hee-chan. That was the sweetest thing you've ever done. But how come you're home this fast? Did you abort the mission or?"

Heero shook his head and smiled. "No, the mission is complete. I've gained the artifact and the Preventers office is waiting for the answer it can give."

Duo looked at him with a slightly confused look, but Heero kept on smiling towards him. "But, Heero, shouldn't you be there and help them with something? Or is it something I need to hear as well?"

Heero nodded. "Yes. It's very important that you hear it. Because it's about you."

Duo gasped. "About me? But how can an artifact be about me? Is it a file or something?"

Heero shook his head. "No, it's no file. But the artifact is for you and you hold the answer we are all hoping for."

"Heero, what the hell are you talking about? The artifact is for me? How can it be for me? I mean, I don't hold any answers that the-" Being cut short by Heero's finger, Duo watched as Heero dug around his pocket and knelt down in front of him. Feeling his breath hitch as he spotted a black, little box in Heero's hands and fresh tears started to pour out from his eyes.

"Duo Maxwell," Heero stated and took a deep breath. "You have no idea how hard it was for me to leave you on your day like this and I have to admit that this whole thing was a plan. I've known of the mission for weeks, because I'm the one who has planned it. I was hoping that you would send me off and I was also taking a lot of risk to send you that song over the radio, simply because I didn't know if you would hear it."

Smiling, Heero swallowed and continued. "But this time fate worked with me and I have acquired the thing I needed to get an answer for you that would make me the happiest man on earth or colonies."

Opening the black box, Heero revealed a shiny ring. Looking up at Duo, he whispered. "Marry me, Duo. Be my only one and let me be yours. I love you, and I want nothing more than to grow old and gray with you."

Duo fell to his knees and brushed a finger over the shiny metal. It was of white gold and in the middle of it was a big, clear diamond with just a little hint of blue with it. The jewel was simply beautiful. "Hee-chan... Are you-?" Choking on the words, Duo looked up with tears in his eyes.

Heero gently brushed away the tears and kissed his cheek. When he pulled back, he smiled and whispered softly. "Marry me, Duo-koi..."

Duo took a deep breath and nodded. "Yes." It felt so unreal, but when the cool metal slid onto his finger, he knew he wasn't dreaming after all. Throwing himself around Heero's neck, he kissed him for all he was worth and smiled. "Yes, Hee-koi, yes!"

Heero smiled too and hugged the other man tight, feeling the other one's body against his. With a smirk,

he added a quiet “Mission complete” into the night sky and kissed his lover again. Deepening the kiss, the two men strengthened the bond of love between them and when they finally broke for air, they were both flushed and were panting. Smiling, Duo slapped him teasingly on the arm. “That was cruel, Heero. Fooling me like that. I really missed you, yanno.”

“Sorry, koi,” Heero murmured and stroked Duo's cheek. “But I wanted to be original. And when I saw that ring when I had a quick stop at X-3 AD45 last month during a mission, I just knew that it would be perfect for you. I only want the best for you, even if you had to suffer a little today. And I'm sorry about that.”

Duo smiled and shook his head. “Don't be, love. It was I who sent you off anyway. And this,” he grinned and lifted up his hand. “Makes up for everything. I honestly didn't know that you wanted to take that final step.”

Heero grinned and kissed the hand. “I have to make sure that nobody takes what is rightfully mine... I don't want anybody to touch you...” Kissing Duo deeply again, wrapped his arms protectively around Duo's waist.

Duo moaned into the kiss, but still managed to pant out “Have a little faith in me, dude... Who am I gonna run to when I already have you...”

Heero grinned and broke of the kiss. “Good point there, lover.” Looking over at the table, he spotted the various gifts on the table. “You've sure got a lot this year. Mind if I take a look?”

Duo shook his head and helped Heero onto his feet. “No, go ahead and have a look. I can make us some coffee and warm up some leftover Chinese if you're hungry.” Winking, he wiggled his butt and smiled. “And then we can snuggle the rest of the evening before you have your wicked way with me.”

Heero raised his eyebrow and grinned while viewing Duo's @\$\$\$. “Sounds like a plan to me, koi.” Sitting down, he picked up the book. “Wow, who did you got this one from?”

“Susan at the office! She says it's a real good one,” Duo called from the kitchen while heating up the food.

Heero nodded and continued to study the presents. Lifting up the black box, he called. “Who gave you the black box, Duo?”

“Hilde,” Duo called back before gasping. Turning, he yelled from the door. Heero, don't open-!” Hearing the thud from the living room made him run back out and saw Heero promptly passed out on the floor. Carefully lifting up the open box and the cock ring, he placed it back onto the table and returned to Heero. Carefully lifting Heero's head onto his lap, he smiled and stroked his hair. “Thank you, Hee-chan,” he murmured and kissed his forehead. “Thanks to you, it turned out to be a decent birthday after all...”

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*Author's Notes: 1 You know that electronic thingy you're supposed to sign when you get packages*

*delivered on the door? Well, I heard that it was called a tablet... Don't hurt me if I'm wrong!*

*Geez, Louise, another one of my sappy pieces of shoot? Damn, if I write anymore of these I'll get cavities. Oh, well, I'm a sucker for romance, which is kind of odd since I hate romance and drama movies and books. But I love romance fan fictions. Heh, that just shows that you people out there's better authors than some of the so-called great ones out there. Feel proud of yourself and your work.*

*Once again, I am not writing about the wedding because I don't know what I'll do with it. Maybe (the keyword is `Maybe') I'll write a sequel to it, but at this moment I have nothing planned. But if enough people request it, I will make an extra chapter on it, or maybe a sequel. It's all up to you (and me, of course...)*

*Oh, well, enough rambling. Let's get down to business. What did you think about this little one-shot? Was it pleasant enough or did it make you puke? Review and make my day. points at the review button  
Thankee!*

*Oh, and don't forget to give my wonderful beta anÂ aplauce! She's done a wonderful job, wouldn't you say? grins You know who you are, beta! Love ya!*