

Truth

Von akyo

Come along, let's drink a cup of coffee and let me tell you the truth. Be careful though; it might take some time and you will be surprised, maybe even shocked about what I'm going to tell you.

"Hey, Trowa! Wait up!!"

"Hm? Quatre?!"

"Yes, it's me. Haven't seen you for a long time."

"It's been a while, almost a year. It is good to see you. How is it going?"

"Good, good, the business is running well and no war or signs of war for almost one year. That's a long time if one thinks back. Life is good now. How about you?"

"Still here, traveling with the Circus. Did you come to see the show, or to see me? You are too early for the show tonight. It's only four o'clock."

"Well, both I guess. When I heard that you were giving some shows on this colony I just had to stop by. I haven't heard a lot from anyone lately and I wanted to see what you are actually doing at the Circus. It is still your home, right?"

"These people became my family over the years."

"So, do you have some time before the show? I would love to talk some more to you."

"Sure."

"Great, I'll invite you on a cup of coffee in that café over there."

"Thanks."

"You haven't changed a bit. You still look exactly the same. Two cups of coffee, please."

"We all have changed since Operation Meteor but more on the inside than on the outside."

"Hm, we did. How could it be different? We went through so many events. Some say that we, together with some other people, changed history."

"We did our part to it."

"I don't know; when I look back now I wonder how I made it this far or better how we made it this far without giving up. It was so hopeless to keep on fighting most of the time and the price we paid was so high."

"The price was high but it was worth it. Although at some stage in our fight for peace all of us lost everything we thought to be important to us and we lost faith in theses moments but still kept on fighting." Diesen Satz finde ich zu lang und kann ihm daher schwer folgen.

"You know what? Today I'm not sure anymore why I kept on fighting in those situations."

"Probably because we did not know what else to do back then. When we fought you in Wing Zero Heero said something that brings it to the point. "If everything has gone crazy then I believe in myself and keep on fighting." I think that is in short what all of us thought at some point."

"When we were back at earth he said that the meaning of live for us would be to survive battles. It made me sad hearing those words but at the same time I knew he was right; at least for the moment."

"By now my point of view has changed. There was and is a more profound reason to keep on fighting. It was probably the most important lesson I learned in my life. Noin was right when she said: "A soldier will be rejuvenated when he finds someone to protect. Sometimes it can take some time."

We always thought that the people we protected were the people of the colonies and maybe some individuals on earth, including the few people close to us. Each one of us five was able to find these few precious people like Relena, Hilde, Sally, your family and Rashid and his men, or Catherine. Still it took some of us longer to realize the true meaning of Noin's words than the others. We first had to learn or relearn how to value a specific person, not only for their courage or strength but love this person without any expectations, no matter if the person was strong or not."

"Hm, I don't think that Noin was right. I did everything I possibly could to fight for peace as we all did, but I had to find out that all fighting only led to more fights. It was a long road to stop fighting and live a different life. All my battles caused so many casualties and I lost almost everyone that was precious to me as a result of these battles. I almost killed you in the course of one of them. No, Noin was wrong. It is a wrong assumption that humans battle to defend and protect their loved ones. Now I think it is rather like Milliardo Peacecraft said; that fighting is part of human nature

like the wish to conquer or enlarge possession. Maybe he was right when he said that it needed a new species of humans so that earth and the colonies would be able to live in peace. I mean, even today the Preventers are still needed to put out the fresh uprising fires of new battles. The peace we are living in is only relatively stable for the moment. Who knows when the next OZ, the next Marimea or someone else comes along to start the next war for world and colony leadership? And there will always be people who just fight for the sake of fighting, people that are like we used to be, people who know nothing else but to fight. No, Noin was definitely not right."

"Quatre, tell me: If someone would attack me or anyone close to you what would you do? Would you try to talk the enemy out of attacking or just let them do as they wish and kill me?"

"NO! I would try to protect you with everything I have!"

"See, you would fight to protect. So Noin was right. You would not fight for the sake of fighting but to save and protect someone else's life, ignoring your own safety and disregarding whether you feel pleasure in fighting or not."

"..hmm..I don't know. It just sounds to optimistic, to unrealistic to me, to romantic. Seriously I wouldn't dare to say that I only fought to protect, not after what happened when I piloted Zero and almost destroyed all colonies in an act of self-administered justice. Since you believe in Noin's words Trowa, who did you fight for?"

"For quite some time I thought that you were this special person to me, Quatre, but after a while I realized what the difference between a friend and the person you love is. Your kindness was so surprising and new for me that I did not realize that this new feeling inside of me was only the affection one has towards a friend. For you this difference was always clear and from your perspective I did never cross the line between friend and lover."

"You thought you love me? I...I am sorry Trowa, I never wanted to hurt you but you're right. You never did cross the line, although you are one of the most important people in my live."

"You spilled some coffee, did I shock you?"

"NO! No, you....you didn't. Ahh, you did. You know, I'm a little confused. I always thought that you and Catherine..."

"You thought that there was something between me and Catherine?"

"You were always so distant to everybody and the only person where I had the feeling that you might actually feel something deeper was Catherine. When I met you here after you lost your memory she protected you with everything she had and you were hiding behind her. She seemed to be the only person who could make you feel good back then. Yes, I thought you were in love with her! After all you went back here and did not join the Preventers or anything else. I always thought it was because of her! I never imagined that you would be g...ahm be different, I mean that you would, ahm,

well, be gay.”

“Does it make a different person out of me?”

“No! I guess. It is weird to imagine that you could be in love with a man. I should have noticed through out all these years.” Noticed what?

“Why should you have noticed? For me it doesn’t make a difference if I love a woman or a man. I had never loved before so it felt natural to me although it took me quite long to realize that I was and am in love at all. For a long time I thought I would not be able to feel like this or to experience anything stronger and different from the urge to fulfill a mission.”

“Wait a second; you just said that you thought that you were in love with me and then you say that you have never been in love before! This just doesn’t make sense then.”

“You misunderstand me, Quatre. What I felt for you was just friendship. I did mistake it for love. Friendship was as new to me as love and thus I didn’t know the difference. That feeling was so strong and warmed me from the inside every time I thought about you. From all I knew about love back then I figured that this was how it must feel to be in love. But love is different. It has not only positive sides and is a lot stronger in terms of emotions than friendship. At that time though I thought there could not possibly exist any emotion stronger than what I felt. Everything was so new to me.”

“But how did you find out that you were not in love with me?”

“I needed to really fall in love and experience all the emotional chaos that comes along with it to be able to differentiate. Before I met you and allowed the fragile bond between us to develop I divided the people around me into two categories; “helpful for my mission” or “in my way”. I did not bother to have any closer bonds to other people.”

“Hm, you are not alone with that feeling. I know that at least Heero and Wufei must have had the same thoughts at some point. Even Duo doubted his abilities to feel anything that was not connected to battle in one or the other way just as I did. For a long time I thought that loyalty was the only peaceful emotion I was able to feel.”

“I know. It was not easy for anyone of us. I think that this behavior coincided with our times as Gundam pilots. We were not chosen because of our abilities to feel but to fight without any regrets and to be able to sacrifice what ever is needed to achieve our aim. We were trained to block out any unwanted feelings. In the case of one or two of us only little abilities to feel were present even before we became Gundam pilots. And the others learned to shut down their feelings soon enough. It is sad, don’t you think?”

“Yes. But still I don’t get what is so hard about finding out if you love someone or not? It’s the most natural feeling I can imagine, plus it is so strong that you just can’t ignore it!”

"Do you know, Quatre, that animals do not know how to hate? By nature no animal hates humans, but they can learn how to hate someone if you teach them. Humans are like animals and love is like hate. You have to learn first how it is to hate or love in order to be able to distinguish it from other emotions and be able to name it. If no one explains it to you or no person serves as a model you don't know what it is that you feel since all of these feelings are a mixture of more basic emotions and have many other feelings as prerequisites. You just get confused and that's it. At least that is what happened to me since I lacked a model. What friendship is I learned from you, but as I said, in the beginning I did mistake it for love. I guess I was lucky that I lacked the model. I'm positive that I would have had much more trouble accepting my feelings just like you do now even though I am only telling you about my preferences."

"I....hmm, well you might be right. Ahm, Trowa? Can I ask you something really private? "

"Go ahead."

"Did you...I mean....."

„What is it, Quatre?"

„Did you ever wanted to, hm, how to put it, well ahm, sleep with me?"

"No. I never felt the need to be physically close to you, or to touch you more often. Physical attraction never played a role in the feelings I had for you just as it doesn't in any friendship. That was one of the points that made me realize that I was never in love with you."

"I'm sorry, Idon't want to sound soahm.."

"It doesn't matter Quatre, I understand."

"Soooo, ahm, if...if it is not me and not Catherine who you are fighting for, who is it then? I really wish it is someone who returns your feelings."

"My feelings are returned but it is not that easy. A lot needed to happen to let us three realize what was going on with us. We haven't managed to unite us all completely."

"You THREE?! Trowa!"

"Yes."

"But! You just can't love two people at the same time!"

"Did you ever hear that five boys changed history by fighting against a whole solar system?"

"Hej, that's something completely different!!!"

"No, it is not. It happens rarely but it does happen and it is good that it happens."

"Trowa.....I did not expect that talking to you would....would surprise, shock me that much. It feels as if I am talking to a stranger! I had no idea! Was I so inattentive all the years I was around you?!"

"No, you weren't. As I said, a long time we did not notice ourselves and it took even longer until each one of us knew about their own feelings and the feelings of the others. We were careful, each one of us dealing with it in their own way, since it makes all of us weaker and creates many strong points for attacking anyone of us. It is far more dangerous to be in love as one would think at first. We wanted to keep it a secret until the three of us would be able to live with the burden. You just can't ignore the value people acquire once you fall in love with them. Logic and reasoning lose their power and you start acting on the basis of emotions, ignoring all risks. Neither one of us was able to control this so we did hide everything deep inside of ourselves. No one did notice."

"It is Duo and Heero, right? Since it's not me and Wufei would never love a man! Oh, I'm sorry, I did not mean to offend you. Well, you know what I mean."

"Hm."

"It's really hard to believe, I mean I was always sure that Heero had deeper feelings for Relena. Impressive, how mistaken one can be. And even for Duo! Remember how down and worried he was when Hilde got wounded because she brought us the data on the Libra? In those moments I was positive that she meant more to him."

"To Duo Hilde was a person who was going to make the same mistakes as he did by following in his footsteps. He wanted to protect her and give her the chance to live a normal, safe life, far away from all battles. He was hit hard by the realisation that he could not prevent her from being wounded. I think from that point on he knew that he could not protect her from suffering forever. He himself had to realize that he just can't take on himself all the suffering and the pain of everybody else in this solar system. As soon as people treasure something or believe in something with their whole heart they will do everything to protect it and thus will endure any suffering or pain, accept all losses that are needed for accomplishing their goal. It is not just us that took that road but many others too, Hilde, Relena, the White Fang, Milliardo Peacecraft and Treize Kushrenada for example. I believe that all human beings follow this rule in crucial situations."

"I see, but what about Heero and Relena? You must admit that it seemed obvious that there was something going on between the two of them."

"No doubt, a long time I thought too that Heero was in love with her in his own special way, because he was not able to kill her and was so focused on her. After a while I realized that she was the center of his life but not because he loved her. She was the center of his attention because she was the only stable parameter in his world after we had been betrayed by both, the colonies and the earth. Essentially she was the

symbol for what he was fighting for; she embodied the goal of his largest mission, to achieve absolute peace. He could not kill her just because she knew who he was or saw his Gundam. But if her death would have achieved peace or lead everyone closer to it he would have sacrificed her. Until now this situation just never occurred. This is the difference to a person he loves. A person he loves he can not sacrifice without regrets for his cause. I don't even know if he would be able to sacrifice that person at all. After all there were plenty of situations where it would have been more logical to kill Duo or me, but he never did. Remember when Duo was caught by OZ and was to be executed? Heero went there to kill him, but instead he saved him."

"I understand. You mean that he lacks the emotional distance to be able to react based on logical reasoning no matter how high the cost is as soon as this special person is involved. It must be hard not to be able to react anymore in the way he used to all his life. He must feel completely lost and so confused. Man, back then, when we were fighting Libra I wished him luck to find and save Relena, the woman I thought he loved, just to find out now that he never loved her and his loved ones were around me in that second. I even said we should leave the two alone for a while. Now I wish I hadn't done that; it must have been so cruel for Duo and you to let him go. Why didn't you say anything back then?"

"As I said, we wanted to keep it a secret. Besides at that time only between Duo and me everything was cleared up. The situation was much more complicated than you can imagine. It was a weird feeling to let Heero go but on the other hand we were all soldiers and our duty was to fight for peace. It was important to save Relena's life for the future. We would never have betrayed our duty by stopping him."

"I imagine it's hard to go into battle alongside with the people you love, not knowing if you will be able to protect your loved ones or even without knowing if one of them survives this battle at all."

"It is not so different from fighting side by side with your friends. You experienced that often enough to be able to judge by yourself. You know that you cannot allow emotions to cloud your senses during fighting if you want to survive the battle. Plus, we are all Gundam pilots and we knew how strong each one of us is. It provides some security to know that we are rather hard to kill."

"Yeah, I guess we proved often enough that it's rather hard to get rid of us! Ahh that battle was hard, but it wasn't in vain. It changed many things. For example I remember exactly what you told Dorothy in that Mobile Doll control room.

I thought I had understood the meaning of your words back then but it's only now that I realize their true significance. When you said that you had lived without emotions for a long time you meant that something had changed you in that direction; no, not something but someone. You did not mean that you through all the battles you had fought had realized that an emotionless soldier is not able to achieve peace, but that somebody had entered your life changing your views and opinions. That someone had cracked the wall you had built around your heart and had set your emotions free. You wanted to say that a human being is only complete with its feelings and with accepting these feelings."

"I would put it that poetically but you are right."

"So, at that point Heero didn't know of your feelings yet yet?"

"No, he did know about us, we talked to him on Peacemillion, but he was not sure about himself."

"But...why then..... again I don't understand. If he knew, why is it not settled yet? This is so confusing. If he knew that you two love him and that he loves you how come that there is no happy end to this story even now?"

„It is much more complicated than you think. I am positive that Duo and I subconsciously noticed that Heero did have emotions for at least one of us far before he realized it himself. But first we had to understand what was going on with ourselves to be able to correctly interpret the small signs that Heero send out. I am not sure when he finally became aware of what he was feeling."

"So, when we were at Peacemillion it was at least partly settled. Can you tell me the whole story from the beginning? Maybe I understand better then. When did it all start? Only on Peacemillion or already way before that?"

"I can't pinpoint a specific date. At some point I just knew."

"But there must have been a specific situation when you realized that I am not the person you love but just a friend, right? And that must have been the point in time, when you fell in love with one of them."

"I think, subconsciously, I already knew it the second Heero self detonated in Siberia. His self detonation shocked me more than I had expected. It did hurt in a weird way and I felt more helpless than I had ever felt before in that moment Wing exploded. As you remember I took him with me. The next month I spend most my time at his bedside, taking care of his wounds. Maybe Catherin guessed that I was falling in love with Heero the day he woke up again; I am sure she knew before I realized and I am also certain that she suffered because she found that I did not return her feelings but developed feelings for for someone else. Maybe that is also one of the reasons why she protected me so fiercely after I lost my memory. I know that she is still thinking that nothing of this would have happened if I had not gone away with Heero but stayed with her."

"Well, I kind of see her point. In the end it was entirely my fault but still if you would have stayed with the Circus instead of returning to battle everything might have turned out different. On the other hand, if you had not been there I don't know what would have happened. Maybe I would have destroyed all colonies. I am eternally grateful that you saved me that day but I still wish that there would have been a different way. Huhh, anyway, that was long ago and everything turned out well in the end. I told her that it was my fault so why does she still think that it is Heeros fault?"

"Heero and I were talking about what had happened during the time he was unconscious and my difficulties about deciding what to do next since I had not

received any new orders for a month. I asked if I should stay in hiding or follow his example and thus freeing myself from all constraints. He said: "In that case I have one warning. It hurts like hell." Right away I started laughing. In that second I did not perceive it as so important, I was just happy and relived that he was getting better. Catherine was in a different part of the trailer making soup while we were talking and only when I heard her words it brought the importance of the situation to my consciousness. "Ej, that was probably the first time I heard Trowa laugh out loud." I am sure she did not hear what we were talking about, but she didn't need to hear more than my laughter to know how special this reaction was. I think that she knew from that point on that she had lost the fight for my affection against him without him even taking action.

When we left the circus she said to him: "You are the one that brainwashed my Trowa with your strange ideas. I won't let you off so easy next time." She had to accept it at some point but I think she still can't forgive him for taking me away from her, especially after she had not succeeded in turning my feelings towards her even after I lost my memory."

"It must have been hard for her."

"I am sure of that. I had planed the attack of the OZ base to be my "self detonation show", but I was not able to succeed in my attempt. Catherine stopped me. When I opened the hatch of Heavyarms to tell her to run away she jumped up to me and slapped me right in the face. She started jelling at me. "Don't you think your life is a little to valuable to self detonate? What are you thinking?! Did you ever spend a thought about the people you leave behind?" I knew she was crying because it would have broken her heart if I would have killed myself, but in that second my thoughts went on different paths. She was right; I had never spent a thought about the people I would leave behind when I die. Heeros face popped up in my mind and suddenly I was not able to just kill myself anymore.

I think if she would have not said that to me everything between me and Heero would have turned out differently, not to mention the fact that I would have selfdetonated if she wouldn't have refused to save herself that night."

"So in the end she didn't do herself a favor by saving you that night. I mean she is happy that you didn't die but still.... Hm, I have never heard you laugh out loud, you know."

"Heero was the first person who made me laugh. I don't know why; maybe because his sheer presence makes my heart laugh and smile. Without reason my heart started beating faster and I was lacking words for the simplest thing as soon as I talked to him. I was so confused by this insane need to be close to him and the urge to touch him. It was a tough time for me; I was not used to so much emotions. Still I didn't know though that I loved him but I started taking much more care of him as I ever had for anyone else.

He did not restrain me and that, in return, confused me. On the other hand it comforted me because it felt as if he liked me taking care of his health. He had not fully recovered when we started searching for members of the Noventa family.

I remember this one incident although it was trivial. He dropped a floppy disk and uttered a sound of pain when he tried to pick it up. I gathered it for him and told him

that he should take more care of his body. He looked at me a little confused and maybe a little angry but then he relaxed and let me continue his search on the computer. My heart warmed because he allowed me to do so in that moment and that again puzzled me just as much as so many other things about him. The feelings for him started to blur my senses.

The weeks before we met Noin, who brought us to the South Pole, we spent with meeting members of Marshal Noventa's family because Heero was searching for salvation for killing the old man."

"Oh, yes; he was in that OZ plane that Heero destroyed after we attacked the New Edwards base. That was a tragic mistake, but no one could have known. It was a hard hit for all of us. We had been used like puppets by Treize and OZ. No wonder that Heero was blaming himself for having eradicated the only open supporter of peace that was powerful enough to threaten OZ's plans, thereby creating a perfect opportunity for OZ to seize power."

"Heero offered Noventa's granddaughter Silvia to shoot him but she could not do it. It was only then that I heard his full name the first time while I was waiting for him in the truck and I started to understand how he treated things. Everything he does is very well planned in order to minimize the possibility of failure. He was not planning on surviving his visits to the Noventa family.

Each time we found one of the family members I was worried that Heero's plan would find its fatal end and each time I felt the intense need to stop him from going but I never did. I understood his urge to provide them with the chance for revenge by offering them to kill him in return for him having killed their loved one. In this way he hoped to ease the pain and misery that his mistake had brought over the Noventa family. I told him that I could sympathize but in the same breath also said that I would not go that far to leave my life in the hands of other people. He replied that that was what he wanted. His reply was the last proof for my conclusion about his plans final goal and it did hurt like hell to be right. Actually that day I saved our lives the first time and he still owes me for that."

"Wow, you sure did change! Didn't he notice your change in behavior?"

"No, I don't think so. Heero and I spent a lot time together back then but he only knew me with my changed behavior."

"I see, you mean that since he didn't know you well enough before to realize the changes. He had nothing he could compare your new "You" to so it didn't matter to him."

"Yes. I had enough time to adjust my outer appearance and my reactions. By the time he was challenged by Zechs on the South Pole I was back to normal, my feelings safely locked up in my soul, my confusion banned for the time being. I was on the way to understand what was going on with me but it was still hard to handle, just as hard as Heero is to handle.

Also on the South Pole I discovered that Relena was truly in love with Heero. She came all the way down south to stop Heero from fighting and bring him a letter from a member of the Noventa family. Relena risked everything to bring Heero that little

piece of paper. At first I did not understand why she risked her life just to rid Heero of his feelings of doubt and self-reproach. But then I realized that she would do everything she was capable of to help him just because she did not want him to suffer more than he already had. It proved Noin's words to me; just as Noin herself did by staying at Zechs' side and risking everything she had, her life and her military career, for him and his dreams. She was never a member of OZ because she really believed in OZ's guidelines but was only with OZ because he was too. She truly loved him with every part of herself."

"And then you realized that you would do the same for Heero. Didn't you also lend him your Gundam to fight Zechs?"

"Yes. At first I did not trust Noin when she told us about Zechs' wish to fight us again but Heero did. Without hesitation I said that my Mobile Suit would come in handy. I shocked Heero as much as myself with that offer. None of us would like to see his Gundam piloted by someone else even now and at that early point in time I kind of broke an unwritten rule. I would have given him much more than just my Gundam if necessary. But to lend him the suit was already much more than simple gratitude and he knew that."

"How come you know?"

"He said it himself indirectly later while I was teaching him how to handle Heavy Arms. "Sorry, normally we would not want people going around touching our Mobile Suits, would we?" I knew he needed it and that was all that mattered to me back then. I adjusted Heavy Arms further for his needs and his wounded left arm so he would suffer less pain during battle than he did during our training sessions on the way to our destination. Although Wing 01 was repaired by Zechs' subordinates Heero would not use it. He did not want Zechs' vision to be blurred by his gratitude being accepted by Heero. I was amazed about Heero's strength and once more even deeper amazed about the fact that he did let me take care of him again. I send him to rest and finished the work on Heavy Arms for him, plus some little extras. In the end the battle between the two was interrupted again, although I was fighting off the search troops with Wing. They could not finish their duel once again."

"That South Pole experience must have been hard for you to chew on, but it seems as if you also gained a lot from it. I think I understand now what you meant earlier on. You understood what was going on with you by experiencing other people who were in love with someone and seeing the correlation between them and you."

"Hm."

"During that battle Noin said these words, right? How come? I don't quite get the connection."

"I was wondering why she let this useless battle continue and she replied that the fight was not senseless for both Zechs and Heero. I answered that enemies are necessary and that this would be the soldier's fate. She declared my words to be wrong and told me her view. I must admit it took me some time to realize that she

was right.”

“But in the end you did. And I guess I can also see her point now. Anyway, why didn’t you talk to Heero back then? Oh, right you thought that he had deeper feelings for Relena. So it did not make sense to talk to him about it since it would not change the situation for you. And thus, stop me if I am wrong, you kept it a secret from him and everyone else to not make yourself vulnerable. Slowly I understand how you treated the whole issue and why you handled it this way.”

“You are correct.”

“I wished it would have been easier for you. It sounds as if you suffered a lot without anyone noticing.”

“I did not really suffer; I got used to the new situation rather fast, took it as a regular part of my life and succeeded in either ignoring my needs or satisfying them by observing him and thus noticing the smallest reaction I could interpretate as positive for me. In the beginning I told myself off for doing that, but slowly I understood that there were too many of those small signs. They could not be meant the way I interpreted them. Later on Duo came to the same conclusion concerning Heero, but that was much later.”

“Small signs like what?”

“Before I left him to attack the OZ base the Circus was to perform at he asked what I was planning to do. I answered that on my colony there was no consensus about using the Gundams to take revenge for the assassination of Heero Yui. The attack was launched by a small group of people who strongly believed it was justified. I was one of them but I had started to doubt. Heero told me that there was nothing wrong with acting on my emotions. I replied that I did not want to give OZ another reason to attack the colonies and would follow my emotions thus doing what he did. It somehow felt as if he didn’t want me to self detonate, although he did not hold me back.

Another situation occurred when we were in Marseille to find Silvia Noventa. The city was attacked by OZ and we had to make sure that they would not find out that we had a Gundam with us. Heero stayed back while I fought the Aries. He said that he would only be in the way with his wounded arm.”

“There is nothing irregular about that.”

“Yes, but before that he said that I should not worry about him, as if he thought that I would be held back in my operations by knowing that I had left him without any protection. I might see too much in that simple sentence but it felt as if he said it because he was concerned about me in some special way.”

“Oh, I see. Well, after you two went to the South Pole we all left for space and did hide somewhere. My sister found me by chance drifting through space unconsciously in the leftovers of a Leo Suit. Heero did hide at a school on one of the colonies.”

"Yes, he used Duo's name. Duo was captured by OZ and was used to draw more negative attention to us pilots. They wanted to set an example on him so that the colonies would unite under OZ's rule. They broadcasted his capture on TV. I was wondering if the people of the colonies were just too accustomed to being controlled that they did not notice that with Duo the first of their only allies was captured. I wanted to do something but I was too far away from Duo's position. I was positive that Heero would do something about it since he was much closer. I was not thinking of eliminating Duo, though. As I said before in the end Heero was not able to do it."

"So, do you think that Heero started feeling something for Duo right then?"

"I think it was one of the small signs Duo and I later on interpreted that way. Heero came in order to shoot Duo, he focused his gun on Duo and Duo did not do anything to prevent him from shooting, but still Heero didn't pull the trigger. Duo asked him a little surprised if he would really shoot him. Heero replied coolly: "If that is what you want me to do.", and gave his weapon to Duo.

They made it out of the OZ facility. Duo said to me later that he was really confused about Heero; it seemed to him as if he had some sort of split personality. On one hand he wanted to eliminate all obstacles in his way and on the other hand he rescued him although he was the first obstacle in Heero's way."

"Seen from this perspective I think you were right, I mean that really doesn't sound like Heero's usual "perfect soldier" attitude. So I guess Duo also told you what happened after that right?"

"Hm, Heero took him with him so that Duo could recover. When Heero left in order to destroy the Luna Base Duo wanted to come along but Heero stopped him. He told him to stop complaining and instead to concentrate on getting better. Duo had said that Heero should not overdo it but knew instantly that he would anyways overdo it. He noticed right there that Heero became special for him. It was an easy conclusion. Why else should he be worried about Heero, or to say it with his own words: "I'm the god of death; I don't prevent people from getting killed but kill them myself, so that whole Heero thing got me pretty confused.""

"Oh yeah that sounds just like Duo. So, there are only two things I'm missing right now. First when did you fall for Duo and second when did he fall for you?"

"Duo entered my heart slowly and silently. It escaped my notice for quite a while. Suddenly there he was, right in front of me. It hit me harder than I expected to destroy his Gundam. Still in the cockpit of the Mobile Suit I cried but only the glittering drops floating in front of my eyes made me realize it. It was the first time I remember that I cried. My body was cold and controlled but still I did cry. It did hurt so much to know that by destroying Deathscythe I had also destroyed a part of his heart. In these moments I thought I heard him cry out loud, his voice loaded with pain.

After all the sorrows I had seen without losing a tear Duo was the first person to make me cry. It struck me by surprise that I was afraid that he would hate me from now on. I wanted nothing more than to explain to him why I had done it and apologize although the logical part of my brain told me that he knew that it had been necessary. This all did matter much more to me than the fact that I was being used to strengthen

the position of the colonies against the Gundams."

"How did that come about anyway? I mean how come that you destroyed Deathscythe. It's not that you would just destroy him for the fun of it. I missed quite a lot drifting through space."

"I joined the OZ forces for a while. To be precise I became OZ's new test pilot for the new Gundam models that were being built. I had to pass through a couple of tests. The final test to prove that I was not an undercover Gundam pilot with the intention to undermine OZ was to destroy Deathscythe. I fully gained Lady Une's trust by destroying it but at the same time I..."

"At the same time you knew that you did hurt Duo so much that you were afraid he could never forgive you. I get it. Yep, you definitely were in love, or at least had a crush on him back then. Your codename "Silencer" does not come from nothing but what you are telling me now does not fit into the picture. It has nothing to do with the emotionless person that fulfills every mission in the most effective way possible. I mean you were part of OZ quiet long, right? And didn't you also catch Heero for them and stopped him destroying the new Gundam models?"

"Yes."

"Wasn't it hard to conceal everything from them? Well, I mean that was not just anyone but someone really important to you!"

"I didn't know that he would come to destroy the suits but in the second the V8 started moving I acted without thinking. It was only when I pointed my gun at him that I realized it was Heero. That fact that he did not put up a fight instantly proved to me that he understood what I was doing. For a second something inside me revolted when I turned him in but only for a second. Lady Une trusted me more than was healthy for her and that put me in a position where I would be able to prevent that someone would severely hurt him. This also did shift the balance of power to our side. With Heero together I would be able to do much more damage to OZ than by myself."

"So, you both kept the charade up and no one noticed. Wow. Well on the other hand we are talking about you and Heero, not that you both show too much emotion anyway, hmmh. So what did you do for OZ then?"

"We piloted Mercury and V8 against Zechs' Tallgeese and on some other occasions as test pilots."

"Oh right, I see. That was at the same time when my sister Erea brought me back home. Only a couple days later father was killed when Oz shot down the resource satellite that he had hijacked. Erea died protecting me. After that I was so full of rage against everyone. I build the Wing Zero. I shouldn't have done that."

"Quatre, I am sorry."

"No, no...It's alright. It's been a long time ago and I should be over it by now. Don't say

that I am too sensitive and kind to forget about those incidents already! I don't want to talk about it."

"O.k."

"Never mind my little outburst. I'm sorry, I shouldn't have yelled at you."

"It's o.k."

"Please keep on telling me what happened."

"Wufei also let himself being captured by OZ and only days later Duo joined. By then Heero and I were transferred from Fortress Barch to the Luna Base so that we were reunited with them. The limited amount of time that Heero and I had together did end. I must admit that I was really relieved to see Duo almost unharmed at the Luna Base. Almost by mistake he found the five scientists together with the newly built Deathscythe and Shenlong. To keep the cover the scientists did beat him up and turned him in."

"So that is why you all were there when I came back with Wing Zero."

"Yes."

"But only you and Heero came to fight me."

"Only one person next to me could go. Duo wanted to come along but I did not let him, his condition was not good enough although I had tried everything I could to help him recover without getting too obvious. I would have never let him come with me; chances of getting killed were high enough even if you were fully in command of all of your powers. I knew that I was risking Heero's life but at least in his case I knew that chances were low since he had experience with the Mercury and was fully fit. On our way to intercept you Heero astonished me again by telling me that it would be more advantageous for me to keep on hiding until I could defeat Treize. He knew about my original plan all along. Again I had the feeling that he wanted to protect me in his own special way. Especially because he warned me of you before and told me that we might have to fight you."

"Almost sounds like it. It seems as if he kept on giving you advice that would keep you away from the immediate battle zones. Hmm, well, he was not so wrong about fighting me. Maybe if more than you two had come nothing would have happened. I mean, Heero and you were fighting hard but still I did not only harm one colony and destroyed another one but also almost killed you. After I had already shot you down Heero kept on fighting to protect the colony behind him. At the same time though he drew our battle away from you.

Maybe he was protecting you, since your suit was damaged so much. But you interfered once more and that gave you the rest. I remember that Heero told you to get out of the Gundam before it exploded but you didn't. All you did was moving as far away as possible before your suit exploded. Even though I would have done everything to rescue you in his place I think I understand why he didn't."

"There was still the chance that you would destroy the colony. I hoped that my death would bring you back to your senses."

"Heero hoped so, too. You know what he said to me during the last moments of our battle? I yelled at him that he should let me go because you were going to die but he only replied that I would have been the person that killed you. He also said that my way of fighting was just halfhearted because I begged him to kill me quickly so he could go rescue you and that your death was just a waste because of this. His words were so hard and filled with anger and aggression. I had no clue that I had just killed the person he loved. Oh yes I am certain that he loved you back then. He wanted to kill me not because I had destroyed the colony but because I had killed you. No doubt about it, am I right?"

"Hm, you are. He told me later on that that was one of the moments where he sensed how important I was for him."

"I'm so sorry, I just cannot put it into words properly."

"It's o.k. Everything turned out fine in the end. I was as lucky as Duo was. While we were fighting out there chief engineer Tubero tried to kill the scientists, Wufei and Duo by shutting down the air supplies for their prisons."

"You are right, it was luck that all of us survived."

"This is the danger of being a soldier. You have to be prepared to die at any point in time.

Do you want another coffee as well?"

"What?! Oh...ah.. no, thanks. So, when you shot down Deathscythe you were already in love with both of them. That was much later than Heero's self detonation. Were you not confused that there were suddenly two people in your heart? I think it would rip me apart because I would have the feeling that I would have to decide on one of them."

"I was and I did not know what to do. I was trying to identify whom I had more emotions for but only found that my emotions were shared equally between them. They complement and complete each other. My dreams were a clear sign; always both of them appeared, never one alone. It seems as if I would need both of them to get everything I long for."

"But you weren't sure if it was alright, or to put it in a different way, you didn't know what to do with two people occupying your heart. How come that you finally, well, decided to stick with both of them? I mean this time there scarcely could have been a model, right?"

"Duo finally destroyed all my doubts about it. He said: "Love's like fighting for your life. You either risk everything and get it all or you lose, get nothing and die. I am not gonna take only half of the package and pretend to be happy now that I'm alright with

it! You need milk and sugar for a good coffee, right? I'll not stop fighting!" He was right and I knew it that second. With only one of them by my side I would always miss the other one."

"So, Duo had a tough time coming clear on loving you two?"

„His trouble was different from mine or Heero's. He had stronger moral doubts about loving men in general; after all he is religious in his own special way. Once he was ready to accept it, everything was fine for him. But still he says that he is not gay and if Heero and I were born as women he would also love us, because you do not fall in love with the gender but with the person."

"I see, oh man Duo, that is so typical. He talked his way out of it. I thought he'd only do that with other people but not with himself. Wasn't Duo the one to find you first after you lost your memory? He saw you at the show and tried to talk to you afterwards, but Catherine would not really let him. He then visited me and told me all about it. He was devastated because of your condition and told me that I would not like to see you like that. I thought he said that because he was worried about me but ... I think, no, I'm sure he did not think about me in that second."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, do you know those moments when you say something to someone else but mean it for yourself?"

"No."

"It's like having made a mistake and then telling someone to not repeat it. It is meant as an advice for the other person but also states that you wished you wouldn't have done it yourself. I think by that sentence Duo meant that he wished he had not seen you in this condition, because it did hurt so much. Was he in love with you back then?"

"I don't know; we rarely talk about that time but I think some time back then it did start for him."

"I'm sure he was! Even when he told me about you his face had such a sad and painful expression although he is the God of Death. No wonder that you don't talk about that time often! I mean it's a very painful memory for all involved. Not only was I blaming myself for almost killing you but I think that at least Heero thought that he had not done everything to prevent it.

When the Doctors explained the current situation to us at the Luna Base he was the one to ask about your whereabouts and their answer that you were lost in action, probably dead, seemed to, well, not really disturb him but at least affect him. After having fought each other once more on the Base we left for Earth. Heero kept on telling me that I could not die until I had found you and did not let me go with him and Noin to fight back at Sanc Kingdom. He always pushed me to keep on looking for you and follow even the smallest evidence for your survival.

Now it somehow feels that it was not to ease my devastation about what I had done but more to provide him with new information on your whereabouts. He had never

given up on you, you know. "You can't afford to get killed at this stage of the game; not until you find Trowa." Maybe he sent me looking for you because he could not leave Relenas side and search for you himself, times were difficult on Earth. Although Heero had changed in a way I can't describe he still had not recovered his will to live on. When he took off to fight at Luxemburg he chose the battle ground where he had the least chance of survival. Back then I did not quite understand why he did so, but now...guess you know what I want to say. Anyways, Romefeller was trying to take over all nations of the planet to create a world nation.

Hm, when I think about it now it could have been that he had such a strong focus on Relena to fight off the overwhelming effects your potential death would have had on him. By focusing on her he might have been able to push back his emotions for you and Duo and cover them up with his feelings for Relena.

Wow, that sounds a little too way off but on the other hand it would fit in with Heeros reactions back on earth. It was weird, you know? When we reached the Sanc Kingdom and were welcomed by Relena she right away talked to us about you and said that she was told that you would be a very important person. She had started a search mission for you. I think with that she was trying to convince Heero to stay. I don't know of course but it sounded as if she knew somehow that it would work as long as she used you for her purpose. I mean she also could have started looking for Wufei or Duo; we had no idea of their current whereabouts as well."

"If you want to imply that she somehow knew that there was something between Heero and me at that point I can assure you that there is no possibility that she could have found out. At that time nothing was clarified."

"Right, I forgot that. True, I mean, it was during your absence. Still, I think she might have just by chance chosen the right person and then was proven right by his reaction. How come that it took so long until one of us could locate you?"

"As soon as Catherine and the manager found and took care of me she kept everything away from me that was connected to any kind of battle. She told me that I was her brother and had an accident during one of the shows where I lost my memory. Somehow it did not feel right but I accepted her explanation until first Duo and then you showed up. Even now I remember exactly what I felt when Duo came to the Circus. At his sight something inside me started moving with force and I felt shivers run through my body. I knew that he was part of my life before that accident but I could not arrange the parts of the puzzle correctly. I realized that I had forgotten something really important, something that had made my life worth living but I could not get a hold of what it was. The only thing I knew was that Duo was part of it. Without knowing what I had lost, the loss itself almost made me break down.

He later told me that it was one of the happiest moments in his life when he saw me at the show but at the same time one of most painful moments when I showed no reaction to his happy welcome and questions. I remember that he asked me if Heero would not be with me but I could not give him any answers. I was only helplessly holding onto Catherine, almost afraid of him. Catherine flung her arms around me and told him to leave us alone. I don't like thinking back to that time. Each time I started to remember something my body revolted and cold and shivering I cuddled up somewhere to ease the pain that I had no explanation for.

I was so weak and lost in those days. Even when we talked the first time it was not

enough to break the lock over my memory although my body already remembered everything, from my tasks at the Circus to piloting a Mobile Suit. I guess my heart was not ready to remember."

"Oh yes, I remember that day perfectly. I was so happy to have found you alive but then so shocked by the fact that you had lost your memory. Duo's words had not prepared me for the sight of you not recognizing me. I tried to apologize to you that day but Catherine would not let me talk to you anymore. Still you came and joined the battle outside of the colony only a little later."

"Your appearance finally had made it clear to me that I did not belong where I was. The confusing thing was that I could hear you screaming from outer space while you were fighting. Instantly, I knew that I would not hear someone who I would not have a close connection to. I started remembering things and Heero's words came back to me. When Catherine wanted to hold me back I told her that I had a faint memory of someone telling me once that the only way of living a good life is to act on their emotions and promised her to come back alive. So I left Catherine again to follow you into battle."

"Yeah. We were on the way to the resource satellite of my family when we got engaged in a battle with splinter OZ forces. You ran out of firepower and it was not me but Duo, who appeared out of nowhere to save you. What did he say?"

"Who knew that I am such a friendly guy? After all I came to save the guy that destroyed you before, Deathsycthe." His words did not yet switch the button. Still I was happy that he joined us. I remember exactly that he was fussing about that I did not remember him. His presence made me feel save somehow and help me finding my strength again."

"Yes, you two sure did hang out together on the Peacemillion a lot. I noticed it the first time when Noin and I were to leave to talk to Milliardo and both of you joined. There was this sense of understanding between you that didn't need any words."

"I only followed my emotions, that was all I was capable of at that time. And I clearly felt the need to stay as close to him as possible. He did notice that there was more to it and let me do so. Slowly I started finding back to what I used to be. I am sure it would have not been that easy without Duo's comforting presence.

The arrival of Heero and Wufei with my Gundam speeded up the process. At the same time a tension started to rise between Duo and Heero. I could sense it, although Duo tried to keep me out of it. All three of us being at Peacemillion at the same time was bound to end up in some sort of clarification."

"But wait, how could you know? It took some time for you to remember everything. It was only after you took off with Wing Zero to rescue Catherine and the other citizens of the colony from being sacrifice by OZ that your memory was restored completely."

"Still I could sense it. The Zero System gave my brain the last push it needed to start completely remembering. It was as time hadn't passed. Together with my brain my heart remembered. In an instant I knew again why it was so comforting be together

with all of you and who the people were that I wanted to protect. When I was close to loosing to the Zero System it was you who told me that I should not repeat the mistake you had made and that I had people to protect. So back then you actually shared Noin's opinion."

"I did, but my views changed over time just as your's have, only in the opposite direction. After we had finally stopped fighting I came to think that battling itself is never good and that most people fight just for the sake of fighting. Maybe my fight against Dorothea and the Zero System in the Mobile Doll control room kicked off these thoughts. Did the Zero System actually show you the people you wanted to protect?"

"Yes. After I had regained my full memory the tension between Heero, Duo and me increased further. It seemed as if Duo and I would have almost no need to talk things over. Even during our battles against Zechs' Mobile Dolls he was right there to watch over me. I was hit hard on the right side but he caught HeavyArms and asked if I would be alright. I knew that Heero would be much more of a problem. He always plans ahead and then acts only in combination with listening to his emotions, he rarely only reacts based on his feelings."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I mean that Heero does not often follow his own advice. When we left the Circus after my unsuccessful try of self detonation I told him that Catherine's tears had stopped me. I assumed that if he would have been in my shoes he would have still done it. I said that he should understand now why I admired his strength. I did not expect his answer. All he said was: "I said this before. The only way to live a good life is to act on your emotions." He kept on pushing me to react based on my emotions. I found it weird to hear words like this out of the mouth of the perfect soldier, but at the same time the words comforted me in a confusing way. It was one of the advices he gave me that he himself could never really follow although he wished to. Actually I remembered this sentence at Libra, while Duo and I tried to talk to Heero."

"So on Libra you finally talked to him?"

"Yes. After the battle where Duo faced the Mercury and V8 Mobile Doll models and saved Hilde and before Heero took off to save Relena."

„Oh, come on, Trowa. Tell me more than just admitting that I am right! Did you just walk up to him and said: "Listen, this is it. We are in love with you und we know that you are, too." or was it more romantic, like a confession?"

„We just talked."

„Uhh, Trowa; do I see a little red gleam on your cheeks?"

"Hm."

"I'm not gonna let you get away this easily! Tell me, before I make you tell me!"

"The situation was a little delicate."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Duo and I had talked about the whole thing. It took late into the night to settle everything. I felt smashed afterwards. Although everything was fine between Duo and me it did not seem as if we could persuade Heero to follow our road. We had turned the whole situation upside down, but although there were so many promising signs we were sure that we could not convince him if he did not already feel it himself or accepted what he felt. On one hand I was filled with joy knowing that Duo did not only return my feelings but shared all my emotions. On the other hand my heart twisted in pain realizing that we would always be deserted by Heero.

Both of us had gone to bed; we did share this room with Heero and someone else from the staff. I don't know when or how Duo noticed my pain but suddenly I felt his presence close at my side, he stroked softly over my hair. "We'll make it, you'll see, we always made it!" he whispered. Out of reflex I set up and flung my arms around his neck. All he did was holding me close.

It was the second time in my live that I cried. Without letting go of me he laid down and after a while we fell asleep together. I was woken by Duo's voice, talking quietly but fast to someone else. "Heero, listen to me, just one fucking time listen to me!"

"He found you two? Oh my god, that is more than „a little delicate“!"

"Heero had walked in on us. And apparently he was so shocked by the sight that he uttered some words that woke Duo up. Duo reacted quite rude and did ask without checking who he was talking to what kind of an idiot would rumbled around the room at such an hour.

"Why are you holding him like this?" was Heero's only reply. The rage in his voice broad back Duo's senses and he tried to explain. "No explanation needed." was the short answer."

"Sounds like Heero was much more hurt than shocked by the sight of you two lying there. It almost sounds as if he was a little jealous."

"I think you are right, because when I looked up into Heero's face I knew that we were right all along. He had feelings for us but the confusion about his own rage and jealousy that was mirrored in his expression proved to me that he had not accepted, maybe not even noticed, the emotional situation he found himself in now. He was acting as stubbornly as always and none of Duo's words could bring him to listen.

"Why didn't you kill Duo when it was necessary and why are you constantly protecting me?", I plainly asked. I felt how Duo's body beside me stiffened. Heero looked at me with surprise and almost shocked. I forced Heero to answer. He slowly replied that he didn't know.

Duo said angrily: "Oh come on Heero, you do know it!!! You just didn't want to kill me and you would do everything to spare Trowa from anymore pain! Just give it up alright!" Heero looked from me to Duo. Something inside him simply refused to understand.

He pretended not to understand what we were talking about but Duo just cut him off

and yelled at him, plain and simple that we were talking about him being in love with us; about him caring for us."

"He just blurted it out like this? Desperate situation but still I don't think that it would force Heero to move in the right direction. I think it would only push him even further into denial."

"You might be correct. His only answer was that Duo was mistaken. Heero's reply was so cold and his voice so sharp that Duo stopped talking right away. I couldn't stand it anymore and got up.

I was ready to leave the room, but Duo held me back. "Don't leave me now, Trowa!" his voice was nothing more than a whisper. So I stood still, closed my eyes and waited. Duo went on: "Am I so wrong Heero? Then why did you ask me why I was holding Trowa? You could have asked any question, anything like "what are you doing" but no, you didn't. Why did you ask at all? If you wouldn't care you would have just passed us without uttering a word like you usually do! Fuck it Heero, there is more to this!"

I don't know exactly why Duo started crying while he was yelling at Heero but I think he did it because he felt so powerless. I remember how I slowly turned around and looked at Heero."

"And what happened than?"

"After seeing Duo cry I started acting without a single thought. My voice was much harder and piercing than I intended it to be when I suddenly started speaking. "Does it hurt to see him like this? To know that it is your fault? Right now there is this little part inside yourself that would do everything to ease his pain, right?"

Slowly Heero nodded but then he shook his head. "I am not in love. Emotions like that would cloud my view during battle."

Suddenly I had to laugh and said that he told me so often that I should act on my emotions to be able to live a good life. And all he did was running away from his emotions. He replied that all we were doing would be being foolish.

I shook my head and said that we would only follow his advice and do nothing else than act on our emotions. He looked at me for some seconds, unable to reply anything. You could see the struggle inside him displayed in his face once more.

For a second I hoped that he would now understand but he finally only said that he had to go because Relena would be on Libra."

Suddenly Duo started yelling and swearing at Heero: "RIGHT, JUST RUN AFTER THAT LITTLE BRAT!!! Just fuck off Heero and ..." He was not able to say a lot before his voice went down in a murmur because he had started to cry.

Heero turned around and passed me on the way to the door. "You will come back. It is not over yet Heero." was the only thing that I was capable of saying. Before he finally left the room Duo once more raised his voice and said: "Love's like fighting for your life. You either risk everythin' and get it all or you loose, get nothin' and die. I am not gonna take only half of the package an' pretend to be happy now that I'm alright with it! You need milk and sugar for a good coffee, right? I'll not stop fighting!"

Without another reply Heero left. His fast leave prohibited any further replies or attempts to hold him back."

„Don't tell me he left after all of this. I mean he just couldn't!"

"He did. It was right before we went into the final battle against Libra. I think it might have been the only way for him to react in this situation; turning back to operations and reactions he was accustomed to. We did let him go, there was no sense in holding him back and as I said before we would have never betrayed our duty as soldiers, even though we hated Relena in the moment Heero shut the door behind him.

In the common room, some hours later, everything was back to normal; at least on the outside. Duo at first did not really believe that he had left and was looking all around the Peacemillion for him. At last he entered the common room and we all started talking about the reasons why Heero had left."

"I remember clearly. Now it makes more sense to me why you only said that he had left to the carrier we had capture and added: "You know where he is going." Duo was so angry about us not going after him. He finished the discussion by saying that Heero also makes mistakes like we all do.

Even back then I had the strong feeling that there was more to this sentence than the plain meaning of the words. I guess he did not only mean mistakes in battle but also mistakes in treating people, right?"

"You might be right."

"All of us others had no clue what was going on between you three. But don't tell me that was all! It just can't be!! To go into battle while being in such a terrible situation; unbelievable that nothing happened. I could have done nothing else than think about it all the time."

"Going into battle was actually quite healthy, psychologically. We shut down our emotions and did what we all could do best: fight. In the battle we could not waste concentration power on anything else than surviving the battle and possibly win it."

"So you rather ran away than face the problem?"

"That is incorrect Quatre. You now as good as I do that we did not have much of a choice about fighting or not. It was not as if we could have not go into battle that night. And a lot of things happened during this battle, situations that cleared up uncertain thoughts. Our discussion had finally broken the seals over our emotions and this fight erased the last doubts.

Duo, you and I were fighting our way through Libra to take it over. On my way to you I met Duo. He told me that he had no time to stay and that I would have to keep on going on my own. I told him that it was no problem. His "you're sure?" assured me that he was as worried about me as I was about him. I went on to help you.

In the meantime Heero had taken Relena back to Peacemillion. She wanted to stop him from fighting because she knew that he did not plan to survive this battle along with Zechs and Treize. He told me that they had almost kissed in that moment but in the last second something inside him did hold him back. So he did only close her helmet and pushed her off Wing Zero. He said that from this moment on he knew that he did not love her. This conclusion had not changed his objective to not survive the battle, though."

"It was one hard battle but in the end it seemed as if everything turned out well and Earth and the colonies together would be able to live in peace. Afterwards all of us, except for Wufei, wanted to send our Gundams into the sun to finally destroy them. Who would have guessed back then that we would need them again so soon."

"You are right."

"It was exactly one year after we had defeated Zechs and Treize that everything began again. But right after our last battle against Libra Heero took off. For a while no one did know where he had disappeared to.

After the celebrations of the end of the battle between the earth and the colonies, Duo and you also took off very fast. Did you go after him? I know that later on you went back to the Circus and Duo stuck together with Heero for a while. What did you three do all this time in between? At some point during this year there must have been the opportunity to talk to each other again. Did you finally settle things?"

"No, not in the ordinary sense."

"Oh man, this is much, much more complicated than I thought. I mean you did talk to him, didn't you? If you went after him and talked to him it must have turned out good."

"We did not go after him."

"But why?!"

"It was his turn to come back to us. We decided to give him time to think things over."

"Hm, I see. Can it be that you and Duo made your life more complicated than it was any way?"

"No, we just did not want to spoil our chances by pushing him too hard. Everything that could be said had been said at Libra. For a new discussion on a different basis Heero needed time to think about our coming out and his feelings and opinion towards it."

"Alright, I understand that point but then what did Duo and you do all this time? I mean you hopefully didn't waste the whole year in waiting for him."

"Duo and I spend a couple days together, enjoying each other's presence, talking, doing nothing at all or just being close one another. We thoroughly felt the gap that could only be filled by Heero's presence but still, we were happy. We decided soon to part again and live separate lives with the promise to see each other as often as possible. It was during these days that Duo told me about his troubles with being in love with us, when everything had started for him and so on.

It was a good time that healed many of the wounds we had acquired during our previous battles. I loved waking up next to him, feeling his body warmth close to me during nights and experiencing all this small things about him. After we parted I was surprised to find myself being almost sick in the biological sense because I missed him so much.

Life had changed and now I discovered what it meant to feel lonely although I was constantly surrounded by people at the Circus. Catherine had asked me a couple times what was going on with me but I never actually told her about the whole thing."

"Well, didn't you say that she knew all along anyways?"

"At least that is what I think but as I said I never talked to her about it."

"So, what about Heero? Did he come back?"

"If he would have not come back he would have scarcely been able to send his Gundam to you along with mine."

"Oh Trowa, stop mocking me!!

"I am not mocking you."

"Puhh...forget it, Duo must go insane having you around. So, Heero did come back. What did happen? If I remember correctly, Heero was together with Duo when he went out to rescue Relena."

"He did; it had taken him more than four months. I was very cautious when he approached me the first time. I was not able to predict his reaction. The memories about the discussion on Libra came back and circled around my mind. But all he said was that I had been right and that he had come back.

I was stunned by his words and not able to reply anything. He went on: "We have to talk about what Duo and you said at Libra. It appears that the two of you were right in some parts. It seems as if I missed you."

A warm shiver ran through my body and I caught myself smiling at him. He started to realize what was going on with him although it did not match with his usual self. We did not talk a lot during the few days he stayed but it was not necessary. There is some sort of blind understanding between us.

I woke up one morning to find that he was gone. In the first minutes I was so sad but then I realized that he had left to talk to someone else too. The night before he had asked me where Duo was. The message I got from Duo later on proved my theory. "He has come home. Wished you were here."

"Oh Trowa. You sound so confident. As if this would be the best thing that ever happened to you. It feels good to see you like this. I guess after all it doesn't matter who you love as long as you are happy. I admire and maybe even envy you three a little bit. It sounds as if all of you found your personal meaning in life and obtained everything you need to live in happiness. Although it was a long way and the three of you finally made it."

"It is not settled the way you think. We do not appear to be a couple in the ordinary sense but we do belong together. All of us still live their own lives which is not easy. Heero is as unpredictable as ever and only follows his own will and rules.

Each time he asks for a favor without explaining what is going on or when he is again of to some task that is bound to be difficult Duo always says: "Everything for the one

you love" I guess he must have also said that when Heero took off to rescue Relena and took Duo along. Duo never quite stopped envying Relena so this sentence has in situations like this one an ambivalent undertone to it. In general it only states maybe the most important part of his feelings; he would do anything for the one he loves."

"It must be hard to live in this way."

"We got used to Heero's ways rather quickly. Duo is right; you always do everything possible for the one you love."

"Alright, I don't get exactly what was going on between you three, but it doesn't sound too bad. I need more coffee before I'm completely lost in your explanations. You want another one too?"

"I will take water."

"One coffee and one water please. So, now can you please tell me what happened while I was getting our Gundams back, so that I at least hear the complete story?"

"Different things happened at the same time after Christmas Eve A.C 195. Heero found that Relena had been kidnapped by Decim and Mariemea and went to rescue her with Duo together. I was already at L3X1999 and found that Decim wanted to finish Operation Meteor.

I knew in an instant that I had to stop them if I wanted to save Catherine and the others. Decim wanted to drop the colony on to earth. I saw no other way than intruding the organization unnoticed to prevent them from succeeding but I was uncovered by Wufei and almost killed. I pretended that their brainwashing had succeeded and did fight on Wufei's side against the two intruders.

Duo realized quite fast that he was fighting against me while Heero fought against Wufei. It was never my intention to harm or even kill him. Still I answered that I would not be Trowa when he yelled my name. I shot two missiles at him that missed him of course and used the opportunity to escape so that I could re-establish the colony's stability.

It took me way too long. Maybe because the whole time my thoughts were occupied by the worries about Duo's reaction to my actions. I did not know if he had understood them correctly. For some confound reason I knew that Heero would not be such a problem. I was correct as I found out only hours later when they made it to the control room where I was trying to hack the stability system of the colony.

Only the three of us working as a team did succeed. While Duo was quite confused about the situation, Heero showed not one bit of surprise to find me in that room."

"Well, I guess Duo is just more open in his expressions. And sometimes he is not able to adapt as quickly to changed situations. Your attack on him must have given Duo much more than just a little punch; after all you must have seemed as if you would really kill him. It must feel horrible to find that your lover wants to kill you.

Heero on the other hand adjusts quickly to any new circumstances, but probably knew right away that you would not take Dekim's side no matter what. I mean, you had already worked together when you were part of OZ and worked for Lady Une. He knew your undercover work first hand."

"You might be right."

"How did you make it to earth afterwards?"

"Soon we were trapped in the control room. Not a single word between Heero and me was necessary. It needed only a glance to coordinate our ideas about escape. I think for a second I saw the unpleasant feeling about what we were about to do mirrored in his eyes but it was gone so quickly that I was not sure of it.

Heero asked Duo a favor: he should hit him. In the first moment Duo did not understand but then he punched him only to be hit hard in the stomach by Heero. Duo collapsed right away. With his last breath he tried to ask why Heero had done that. "For your own good. That's one for one." replied Heero. No more need for me to understand."

"Heero really has a weird way of protecting people."

"Heero did hand him over to me carefully and said that he would be all mine now. I understood right away. He would have never pushed through this plan if it would not have been clear that someone of us would be able to take care of Duo while he was unconscious. I was relived to feel that Duo was still breathing once I had slung him over my shoulder. Heero did lie down on the ground. When the guards entered to overpower us I told them that everything was fine, that I had taken care of them already and handed Duo over to them. During the time guards were distracted, Heero made his escape. All my hopes went with him.

Later, while Sally was freeing the captives including Catherine, I captured a shuttle for our escape. I was sitting there, waiting, my thoughts circling around Duo, wondering and hoping that he would make it out of his prison in time. I would not be able to wait once Sally would be there, time was precious. He came before Sally and said that I could have at least come around and help him since there would be nothing wrong with helping a friend in need. I got used to the jokes between Heero and Duo and thus replied: "I was not waiting for you; I've been waiting here for someone else." He was, well, shocked and a little offended since in that second Sally entered. We left right away to meet up with you."

"That was one tough battle we fought. I remember as clear as it was yesterday how we all turned down Noin's wish for us to retreat. You said to Duo that these soldiers were like we used to be.

Well, times did really change for you. You had found something else that gave you a meaning in live other than continuous fighting. Now that I know these words have an even stronger impact. You would have stayed there and die if it would have been necessary, right? But why? Duo was right there and Heero for the moment lost somewhere. Why didn't you follow Noin's advice and left for the sake of protecting what the three of you shared?"

"First: I would have never left the line of battle if Duo would not have left. Second: This was an immensely important battle. If hadn't won it everything that had happened before would have be in vain. Peace would have been lost and with it our chance to live a quiet life. If Dekim and Marimea had taken over the world there

would have been no choice other than to keep on living the life of a hunted bunch of pilots who struggle to stay alive for all of us.

It would have been the same as during Operation Meteor. Even if we had lost our lives during this battle as long as someone else had won it our lives would have been sacrificed for a good cause. As Gundam Pilots our highest duty was always to obtain peace no matter how high the cost."

"You want to say that you'd rather sacrifice yourself in order to re-establish peace for everyone else than stay alive and loose the battle because the life afterwards would have been not "good enough" anymore?"

"No, I want to say that a lost battle would have meant a restless, chaotic life in constant war for anyone in this solar system. I was willing to sacrifice everything that I had found in the past months to prevent millions of other lives from being destroyed. Not only I but all of us have experience what it means to grow up and live in times of war; what comes along with to have to give up everything else in order to be able to fight for a righteous cause. I don't want that anymore people would have to go through this. I am positive that not only I thought this way but Duo and Heero as well."

"Right, he once said to me that he wished that the people of the colonies would leave the fighting to him so that no one else would have to suffer as much as he had."

"You can also be sure about Heero. Duo told me later that Heero had said to him on L3X1999 that he would do anything to prevent Operation Meteor being completed."

"I see. It is sad and good in the same moment that there always have to be some people who are willing to give up everything in order for the rest of the people to be able to live a better life."

"Hm."

"The ultimate goal for every soldier should be to limit the number of casualties to the lowest number possible. In that case it would have been only us. I remember how you said something like this when we ran out of ammunition. Luckily Heero made it in the last seconds."

"My heart stopped beating when I saw the explosion around Wing after the third shot. At the same moment I could sense Duo's pain along with mine. There are no words to describe our relieve when we found him alive at the mansion later."

"I can imagine. Even I was struck hard by the site. Well, after everything was settled we joined up with Relena in Brussels. She was holding Heero pretty close to her chest. It looked as if he was sleeping or unconscious. That last shot with his beam cannon did almost destroy Wing Zero. Was he wounded or something?"

"No, not physically."

"But why then did he lie in Relenas arms instead in your or Duo's arms?"

"First we were not there when he collapsed and second we would have not been the

right people in those seconds.”

“I don’t get it. It is kind of hard to understand what Relenas role in the whole game is. Now it again sounds as if Relena after all was the one for him and not you two. But I am correct when I say that he did not love her, or?”

“Yes, you are.”

“But...”

“By then Relena did become his close friend. She was not just a symbol anymore, but also a point of retreat for him, so he did feel something for her. Our last large battle almost ripped Heeros soul apart. He was confronted with a lot of memories from his past that had not interfered with his thoughts before.

While we went out to fight side by side with Zechs and Noin he was fighting Wufei. That fight did almost cost him his life, not because Wufei did beat him, but because his soul gave up. He was not able anymore to bare the burden of his battles and the deaths associated with them.”

“But in the end he came and destroyed Brussels’ Presidential Residence and finished the battle. So he must have overcome those memories.”

“Only until the battle was over. It took him long to recover completely. He drew himself back from us during that time but was seeking shelter at Relenas side. It seemed as being close to her proved to him that he did not waste all these lives, seeing how she and her fellows broad the earth and the colonies back to peace. That healed wounds that we could have not stitched back together, since we are the same he is; soldiers that took many lives for a common cause and thus our hands are as much covered with blood like his own. After that last battle all of us needed time for ourselves, so we first separated and each one went on his own road.

I went back to the Circus and Duo went back to work with Hilde. Heero stayed with Relena as her bodyguard. His memories stopped hunting him after a while.”

“You really thought a lot about all of this, right?”

“Well, I think I needed to think it all over, to sort it out for myself to not feel hurt by his behavior. He is much more complicated than it appears on first sight. And that he most of the time acts without thinking about it first leads easily to hurt feelings. Especially Relena is a difficult subject but I found my way to deal with it.”

“Did you ever talk to her about it? I mean did you tell her that you three are a couple or what ever you are, after all she does love him?”

“No, we kept it a secret from her as from everyone else except you.”

“Hm, but isn’t she still hitting on Heero, then? I am pretty sure that she interprets his actions in a positive way for her. It is harsh to not tell her the truth and let her waste all her emotions on him without knowing that she doesn’t stand a chance, since Heero doesn’t have any emotions for her.”

"Neither me or Duo are the people to tell her. It is Heero's task. I guess he will do it someday or might even have already done it, I don't know. I do not really care since I am absolutely sure that she is in no way a danger for us; after all, she is still female. A point one should not forget."

"Haa, yeah right....aaahm...Now that we are talking about that last battle I think I remember another situation where I could have noticed something, at least between you and Duo. Duo, you and I were standing on that hill above Brussels after we destroyed our Gundams and you said that you would be nameless again. Duo replied that one would not give himself a name but it would be the people around you that would give you a name."

"I remember."

"Well, after that Duo said that the most important thing would be that you now had a home to go to. You agreed with him. That look between you two at this moment, that was special. Back then I felt kind of left out but then I figured that this was especially important for you two since I always had something to go back to. I thought you were talking about the Circus and Duo's house but you talked about you three, right?"

"Duo had said it so easily that day, but it meant so much more to us. The people from the Circus may be my family but that is not my home. Home is where ever Heero and Duo are and as long as they live I will have a home. He felt the same way that moment."

"Heero disappeared after he left Relenas side. No one knows where he is right now. So, what about you three now? You don't live together but the three of you are a couple, or did I misunderstand you again somehow?"

"Hm."

"Trowa, tell me! What is going on with you three right now? Don't tell me that the end of all this is that it has no end..."

"We don't live together that is right, but we see each other as often as possible. Still a relationship like this is not accepted by society and we do not want to advertise it too openly. We don't want more attention being drawn to our lives than is unavoidable. Maybe it became a habit to keep the most important part of our life a secret from the rest of the world. This thing going on between us only belongs to us and no one else; we do not intend to share it with anyone although it might sound selfish. Times have not changed as much as one would like to think. We still can't risk creating weak points. There are still people out there who dislike us for what we have done. I don't want to be hunted through the solar system and maybe lose my tears or my laughter again."

"Are you only talking about yourself and Duo? By now again it doesn't really seem the way as if Heero accepted you two."

"No, not quite, Heero might be an uncontrollable factor but he is part of our live. Hm...he was never good in giving in."

"So, you are not a couple. Wait, so nothing came out of all of this? But if nothing came out of this....I mean what are you going to do now, Trowa? Just wait for Heero to become more settled, able to take on the challenge of a relationship and finally come back to join you two? Are you not looking for him all over the universe?"

"You are misunderstanding again, Quatre. We just contacted him yesterday."

"You know where he is? Trowa, how did you find out?"

"We always knew."

"You always....?"

"I've got to go now Quatre, it is time to prepare everything for the show. Thanks for the coffee."

"But... Trowa?!"

"See you at the show."

FIN

EPILOG:

While Quatre was sitting on the ranks and followed the circus show his thoughts trailed off to his conversation with Trowa. Quietly he said to himself: "It is so sad for them that there is no happy end to this. I wonder from where he got the strength to carry on and did not simply give up by now." A well known, dark voice next to him answered: "Because we were always there to carry him when he lost faith and his powers abandoned him." It had at least been a year since Quatre had heard this voice the last time. It took him some time to recognize who this voice belonged to. Surprised he uttered: "Heero? Is that ..". A second voice made him turn his head. Also the second speaker spoke quietly but still there was this slight hint of laughter in it that Quatre would recognize under a thousand sounds. "Shh Heero! Now you spoiled the surprise!!"

"Duo!! Heero!! You are both here!! I...I just talked to Trowa, he will be so..."

"We know you did, we saw you in that café."

"But why didn't you two just join?"

"Well, what would you have said? Just imagine the two of us would have run into that café and kiss Trowa. Naaa, this way was the better way."

"Does he know that you are here?" "No, he doesn't", replied Heero in his regular tone. With a twinkle of his right eye Duo said: "That's why you should keep quiet now and don't spoil the surprise for him! He will be the next on stage."

