

Title: A Soul for a Soldier
Major pairing: Heero X Relena
Author: The Fables spinner
Rating: PG-13
Genre: Romance

Disclaimer: The characters in this yarn sadly do not belong to me. I wish they did but they belong in total to Sotsu/Sunrise and Bandai entertainment. I am only borrowing their colorful personalities for the sake of this story. I promise to return them, only slightly rumpled when I'm finished with them so the next writer can use them as their muse.

I normally write original fantasy works, but sometimes, characters like these come along and I get inspired to make up my own little musings involving them. Usually these tales stay rattling around my brain, here's one I decided to put down on paper. I hope you enjoy my little story as I have enjoyed all of yours.

AC 198

Heero felt the rain run in rivulets down his spine, he didn't care. He just pulled the collar of his jacket tighter around his throat and tuned out his discomfort. That was the one thing he did best. The only thing in his opinion he did well at all, numb his mind to all things save the mission or his objective. Well, almost all things. One sandy haired female seemed to pop into his mind uninvited and always at the worst possible time. He'd see something, hear something that would trigger a memory, and against his will her image would dance in his mind's eye. He hated her, hated what she did to him. He hated her because she touched him in a way no other could. She touched his heart and that was forbidden territory. Soldiers didn't have feelings. They didn't have emotions. Those things just got in the way. "Damn her." He said as he hunched himself under the eaves of the nearby shed to escape the freezing rain as best he could. He re-focused on his mission, the letter he'd received was short and to the point. It had read:

*To: Commander Heero Yuy
Preventers Uncover Surveillance Specials Officer /stop/
Mission Code 79825: Information Request.
Seeking status on rumored militia forces amassing at coordinates
75 degrees latitude 80 degrees longitude.
Objectives: Covert intelligence/Destroy any weapon stockpiles
From: Colonel Zechs Merquise
Preventers Undercover Surveillance Specials Commanding Officer /Stop/*

The eighteen year old Heero set his last explosive charge on the very shed sheltering him from the rain, attuning the frequency to the rest and priming it to the remote detonator switch. His fingers numbly repeating a task he'd done countless times before. He was a machine, a perfect soldier, honed to these gruesome tasks from the day of his mysterious birth. Even Heero didn't know who he really was, he had no memory of a life that did not revolve around a mission. A task to perform, a battle to be fought, in short, Heero had never truly lived a day in his life. He was a young man who was a leader of men, yet knew nothing but how to follow and give orders. He'd never known what it was like to just be Heero. The advise he'd given Trowa all those years ago we're words, nothing more. He'd told Trowa to follow his emotions, Heero was a hypocrite, he

knew nothing of emotions. He'd never let himself feel a day in his life and the only one he did feel confused him. He knew satisfaction, he felt that when he completed a mission well. He knew pain, that he knew very well and ignored. He knew anger, anger at himself when he made a mistake. He felt ashamed only once. The day he'd destroyed the shuttle carrying the pacifists leaders of the alliance, he'd felt a deep cutting shame that day indeed. A soldier could not afford to make mistakes like that, and he'd made a serious error that day. But, normal emotions, everyday emotions were as elusive to him as fog over the landscape. Joy, sadness, Love, all of these were just words to him. These were concepts he'd never known the true meaning of. He'd seen these emotions on all his friends and it confused him. Duo especially confused him. That Man had every emotion in the book and he seemed to have an over abundance of that happiness thing.

Duo Maxwell, that man was about as different from Heero as Night and Day, and yet, Heero looked upon him as his best friend. Even if he refused to say that out loud. Duo knew and didn't press and that's how it was, how it always had been. Heero felt a twinge of something, was it jealousy? Mayhap, mayhap not. But he knew he felt something when he watched Duo and Hilde together. Did he want that in his life? No, not that, that was too much, Hilde was too much. But in saying so, she was the perfect compliment to Duo. They fed off each other, personality ping pong. One joked, the other caught and returned joke, and so forth and so on. They were happy, that's what mattered. They all had known at first sight, that those two would never part. They were undeniable soul mates. One couple out of several Heero knew.

Heero looked up at the dark night sky, the clouds were parting slowly, allowing a star to be seen here and there. The rain had stopped at last. The last charge in place, Heero disappeared back into the forest growth, walking away a safe distance before pushing the button on the detonator in his hand. Mission complete, another peace threatening rebellion squashed, Heero headed back to his solitary life to await his next Mission. His mind pondering those strange individuals he had come to know over the past three years of his life. There was sweet, ever polite little Quatre. The oddity Heero just could not figure out. Quatre was one of the best fighters he knew. No one, not even Heero could best Quatre's strategical command of a battlefield. Quatre didn't need a zero system to direct a battle play that would defeat any enemy. Yet he did so with the compassion and finesse of a poet and artisan. He truly grieved for those he defeated in battle. He had a tenderness that just simply baffled Heero. Then there was Trowa. Again, stoic, quiet Trowa was also a man that raised many questions in Heero's mind. He said little, and revealed even less about his feelings. He seemed devoid of emotion at all, unless you gazed into his eyes. It was there he showed the world who he cared about. There were only two people in the world Trowa held in his heart. Only two people Trowa would ever confide his emotions to with words. One was Catherine. Beautiful, caring Cathy. Trowa's beloved sister, in her occasionally he would confide his innermost self. But rarely. The other knew all, without having to be told. The other allowed Trowa to feel and love and to be understood for who and what he was. The other was Quatre. Another pair of souls that just belonged together. They were his friends, part of the select few individuals Heero trusted.

Heero drove down the muddy, pothole riddled road, as the rain started again in harmony to Heero's mood. Friends, at least he had friends. People to watch his back when times grew tough. He was grateful, and they knew he was grateful. Only they understood him. He wished he understood himself as much as they seemed to know him. Heero's mouth turned up into a half snarl half grin when he thought about Wufei. He'd never known anyone so arrogant and full of self righteous indignation in his life. Yet, he had to admit Wufei did get the job done, and did live up to his own idea of integrity. He was a bit old fashioned in his attitude toward women, but that

was a by product of his strict cultural upbringing. Wufei was rigid and practically unyielding. Or as Sally so often put it, he was so uptight, if she shoved a lump of coal up his ass in two weeks she'd have a diamond. Sally mind you, could get away with teasing Wufei. No one else would have dared say that about him. But Sally had Wufei's begrudging respect, something very few people ever had from him. She also had his love, or the Wufei adaptation of that emotion. No one knew what went on behind closed doors, it was none of their business. Public display of affection was abhorrent to Wufei and everyone knew that, but they also knew Wufei would go to hell and back for Sally's sake. He had married her, so it was obvious he loved her, that was enough. Sally was the only one to know the real Wufei, something she saw right from the beginning and what no one else could see. Even his friends. Again though, in Heero's mind they were perfect together yin and yang as he thought of them.

Heero pulled up to a run down roadside inn on the outskirts of the nearest town. Mission completed, he'd earned a few hours sleep at least. He was physically tired even if his brain was running around thinking useless, trivial thoughts. A soldier does not have time for friends. A soldier did not care about anything but his mission. Heero tried in vain to convince himself of that. At one point in his life, he had indeed been a soulless shell, then that damn girl had dug her stubborn claws into him and he hadn't been the same since. "Relena" he spat her name like a curse, but even so the name itself hung in the air like a caress to taunt him. Heero paid for a room and key in hand went to lose himself to the empty space for the duration of the night. Tossing his knapsack of personal necessities onto the bed, Heero turned to the bathroom. Flicking the lights on, he was forced to look at the reflection in the cracked mirror. A shock of disheveled dark brown hair, which was in a state badly in need of a haircut, shaggily framed a face he barely took time to look at. It was a handsome face, but cold. The eyes, the windows to the soul, showed this man had none. Or rather, buried it so deep within, all that was left did not reach his eyes. They were empty, piercing, terrifying eyes. Eyes that could freeze a man in his tracks out of terror, eyes that held a promise of death. Eyes that had seen too much death, too much pain. The beauty of the surrounding face was almost a joke played by a cruel deity. Over the past three years Heero had changed, he'd gotten taller, and was not as slight as he once had been. A man's body rather than a boy's was now in his possession. He wasn't overly tall, not like Duo and Trowa, but he was not short anymore either. He had been feared when he had worn just a boy's frame. Now, no one dared underestimate the power of Heero Yuy. People hid from him, ran from him. He was untouchable, he was starved for contact and didn't know it himself.

He splashed water over his face to wash the dirt away which had streaked it, then turning out the light, collapsed onto the bed wearily. But not to sleep, not just yet. From his knapsack beside him he pulled out his laptop and flipped it open. the illumination of the screen the only light in the room. He tapped out the appropriate codes and a face appeared on the screen. A handsome man, with platinum blonde locks and azure eyes stared back at Heero from the computer screen. "Heero, thank goodness. I've been sending a transmission beacon to your signal for two hours!" Zechs said, a pained look in his expression. Heero's inner voice, inner senses leapt to catch and constrict his throat. Pain, that foreign pain he couldn't name clenched his chest again. He fought it back and looked to the image of Zechs. "Mission Complete. What's wrong?" Heero asked and Zechs nodded. "The shuttle Relena was on has disappeared from our tracking radar network. It just vanished about fifty miles from your current location. It's trajectory was uninterrupted. It literally just vanished from our view." Zechs said. Heero fought that mutinous feeling in the pit of his stomach again. "I'll check it out. I'll find her." Heero said and Zechs nodded. "I know you will. You always do Heero." Zechs said knowing if Heero couldn't find Relena, no one could. Ending the call Heero downloaded his Mission report to Zechs then terminated the connection. Sleep now the last

thing on his mind. That nagging pain in his chest wouldn't go away. It never did when Relena was involved. "I don't love her!" he said to his reflection in the mirror. His brain, his very eyes laughed at him. Daring him to deny the truth. *Then why couldn't you kill her? You barely knew her and you let those blue eyes of hers stop you.*

"Shut up."

Why did you risk your mission? Why did you go after her time and time again to save her? Face it Heero Yuy, you love her. What's that pain in your chest?

"Shut up. I admire her. I only care about what she stands for!"

Bullshit! You don't dream about making love to an idea, a symbol. You dream about the girl. You love her admit it!

"No." Heero warred with his thoughts as he fought the pain that had moved from his chest and into the pit of his stomach. "What's wrong with me?" He asked his reflection, and this time, his mind remained silent. Devoid of the mocking truthful answer Heero was afraid to face. He replaced his laptop in his sack and went to leave when he heard voices outside his door. No it couldn't be this easy, could it?

The scuffling halted outside his door and Heero listened a feral grin sweeping across his face. "Is she still sleeping?" a gruff voice asked in query. "Like a baby, how much did you put in her coffee?" a younger sounding, but no less harsh voice hissed back. "Enough to keep the little miss vice foreign minister quiet and out of the way till we can get her back to base." the first voice said in answer. Heero wanted to laugh these goons were so stupid. They were discussing the abduction of Relena out in the open and right in front of the door Heero was hiding behind. "Hn" Heero muttered rather than laugh. His room was still dark, he'd not turned on the lights so he moved the curtain slightly to get a view of Relena's abductors. One was dressed as a Shuttle attendant. The elder wore the uniform belonging to the militia base he'd just destroyed. "You've no base to go back to." Heero said as he continued to eavesdrop on the not too subtle kidnappers. He deduced, the one wearing the Shuttle uniform was the pilot who flew the shuttle out of radar range, and the other the mastermind. It sounded like Relena didn't even know she'd been kidnapped. But for what purpose? It didn't make sense, what did they want? Heero tossed these questions around as he followed their direction with his eyes. He watched as the younger shut and locked a door a few rooms away and both men laughing, descended upon the bar across the street.

Heero waited until both men were inside the bar, before he went to investigate. It didn't take much fiddling with the lock before the door opened for him. Sure enough, sleeping soundly, a little too soundly, was Relena. She'd obviously been drugged and her pulse was too fast. A dry coffee stain on her skirt showed it was a fast acting agent they'd given her. She must have dropped her cup, so Heero gently lifted her skirt to look at her legs. He frowned, her upper legs were bright red with welts. He needed to get some ice or ointment on them, or else she'd wake up in a lot of pain. The burns weren't serious, but any burn hurt. He picked her up carefully, and cradled her in his arms. The pain in his chest not quite as intense now that he had her close. He carried her back to his room. A place neither of those buffoons would think to look. They'd assume she had awakened and ran. Once they left to look for her Heero would take her the opposite direction. Until then, she had drugs to sleep off and wounds that needed tending. She also had a big brother he needed to contact. Heero knew Zechs would be a nervous wreck until news that his baby sister was all right was

received. The man was overly protective of her, Heero really couldn't blame him. Relena was rather stubborn and was forever ignoring dangerous situations regarding her person. If she felt she needed to confront someone or be somewhere, she went. Hell, Heero had once, no several times, he had threatened to kill her, and every time Relena just defiantly faced him and dared him to do it. Heero smiled, she wasn't short of guts, he gave her that.

Once her got her back to his room he laid her gently on the bed and praying she'd forgive his forwardness, removed her skirt. His mouth had gone suddenly dry, *Damn she's got some nice legs.* "Shut up!" Heero berated himself, her care was more important, not his libido. He ran cool water into the sink and risked a fast trip to the noisy and ancient looking ice making machine outside by the motel stairwell. He filled his shirt with ice and dumped half into the sink. He tied his shirt around the other half, making a large ice pack out of it. He laid it softly onto the red welts to try and take the heat out of the burns. Ice was always best when it came to a burn, despite some wives tales he had heard. Butter being the most absurd. Putting butter on a burn only helped to cook the burn more. Butter didn't let the heat escape, that was the most crucial part about a burn. Cooling it down as quickly as possible was best. That he'd learned from Sally when Duo had tripped into Quatre and sent Quatre's full cup of piping hot tea onto both Wufei and Heero. Duo had both eyes blackened that afternoon and poor Quatre had whimpered apologies all week and it wasn't even his fault. Trowa had viewed that event with a blistering silence as usual. Only sparing Quatre a few words of comfort occasionally and glaring Catherine like daggers at Duo with his eyes. No one upset Quatre without warranting those knives from Trowa's eyes.

Relena murmured her discomfort, but did not awaken as the cold and wet compress was draped tenderly across her legs. Heero smoothed the hair from her face. "It's all right Relena. Just relax you're safe." he whispered soothingly. Something he'd learned how to do from her actually. He'd tended wounds a thousand times before. His, Duo's, His, Duo's, His caused by Duo, His, and so on. Bedside manner never was a problem or even considered. Then there were a few instances where Relena had been the one to attend him, and she always murmured soft soothing words of comfort as she did so. With the roles now reversed, he offered what poor words of comfort he could. After about an hour he heard the first swears and curses come from the courtyard of the motel. Heero watched from his darkened room as the two bumbling kidnappers went frantically in search of the missing vice foreign minister. Once they were a safe distance away, Heero turned the lights back on to check her legs again and refresh the compress. Upon inspection, the welts had lost their redness and the swelling was virtually non-existent. So instead of applying more cold compresses, he towed her dry carefully and pulled a sheet over her. Turning out the light Heero crawled into bed next to her and sought to catch a few moments of sleep while he could.

Relena slowly opened her eyes, and choked down a cry of panic. She was laying in bed in a shabby room. Well, what she could make out, the thick drapes were pulled tight, obscuring the light from outside. She also couldn't move, an arm was draped over her, holding her tightly. Suddenly her fear vanished. She knew that hand. How she got here or why she'd find out later. She knew she was safe, she was with "Heero?". He stirred and his breath tickled her ear. "Relena. How do you feel?" He asked sitting up to look at her. "Groggy. What happened? Where am I? How did I get here?" She asked and Heero actually chuckled. "So many questions. Which one do you want answered first minister?" Heero said mockingly. "Don't tell me you are getting a sense of humor all of a sudden. Warn me if you're going to grin or laugh or something. I want to be sitting down for that." She said and once again a touch of a smirk crossed Heero's features. "You're lying down already." He said and Relena rolled her eyes. "Heero, just tell me what happened." She said fixing him with her own glare of annoyance. "You we're drugged and taken Hostage. Zechs told me you

disappeared off radar not far from here. As luck would have it, your foolish abductors decided to bring you next door to me. They made your rescue quite easy." Heero said sitting up. "Now, don't get upset or flinch or anything. I'm just going to look at your legs. You were burnt a little. I surmise that they slipped the drugs in your coffee and you dropped the cup in your lap." Heero said sitting up lifting the sheet. She promptly snatched it out of his hands. "You didn't!" She groaned in modest shock. "What? Look? Yes I had to, and I'm going to again like it or not Relena." He said fixing her with his glare. "Don't you look at me like that Heero Yuy! Don't you try and Bully me! I thank you very much for helping me and taking care of me while I was incapacitated. But I can take care of it myself now." She said never flinching from his rock hard eyes. "Save the theatrics Relena. You're not in a parliament meeting now. I will look at those burns." Heero said right back. "You will not!" see returned fire. This was getting fun "I will." Heero said never blinking. "No you won't. You've seen enough. I'm not a peep show." Relena said wrapping the sheet more tightly around her.

Heero felt as if a bullet had pierced his chest when he saw the glint of fear in her eyes. He realized what she feared and with that realization he knew he could no longer deny the truth. Her face and voice had remained firm, but her eyes and the trembling of her hands gripped him by the throat. "Oh Relena, you didn't think I was going to? I would Never do that to you." He said brushing the hair from her face. The palm of his hand against her cheek. *Tell Her! All right!* "I love you Relena. I would never hurt you. I'd rather die than to cause you pain." He said and the look in her eyes made his pulse quicken and his heart pound in his ears. "You love me?" She asked, her voice trembling. "Undoubtedly, Always." He said and with those words his eyes softened. They grew warm and inviting, and were no longer blank orbs. "Oh Heero! I love you so!" She cried throwing her arms around his neck sobbing. He grappled her to his chest, never wanting to let go. "I thought you hated me." She sobbed into his shoulder. "Never. I just, I just thought, I mean I'm not exactly a man you should be associating with Relena. Pacifist leader, killer. It just does not work. They wouldn't approve of it Relena." He said hating the words that came from his lips. "I don't care what *'They'* think Heero. I would rather be discredited and shunned than live one day without my soul. I love you Heero, I have from the first day I saw you lying there on the beach. I knew, I just knew you were a part of me." She said into his chest and he cradled her there, tears of his own falling silently down his cheeks. "I didn't think I had a soul, until you bought it back from the devil for me. I love you Relena, and if it takes the rest of my life I'll prove it to you." He said hugging her more tightly than ever. Desperately clinging to her, the embodiment of his soul. "Just love me. That's all I ask." She said softly, her breath caressing his throat. He brought his face down to look her directly in her beautiful, tear bright eyes. "For all eternity." He whispered as he claimed her lips in a kiss. The first of many.

AC 201

"This is it Buddy." Duo said slapping the groom firmly on the back. "Nervous?" He asked. "No." Heero said fixing his best man with a stern look before going back to straightening his tie. "Liar. I know I was shaking in my boots and I didn't have every news camera in all of creation filming MY wedding." Duo said with a smirk crossing his arms over his chest as to dare Heero to deny being nervous a second time. "Not wanting the world to watch my wedding and being nervous are two different things you long haired SOB." Heero said sneering at himself in the mirror. "I hate ties." He said looking at the crooked bow. "Here, let me." A very pregnant Hilde said moving over to tie it for him. A toddler of around Three, the spitting image of Duo, at their feet. His little Tudor style tuxedo matching his father's. The child even sported a braid of hair that hung to the middle of his back already. Duo refused to cut his son's hair, he'd even convinced Hilde to stop

cutting hers. Duo leaned over and picked his son up. "Now, you remember you're job big guy?" Duo asked and the toddler grinned brightly. "I bwing Unca Heewo's piddow up ta da fwont of da chutch." The little cherub for a ring bearer answered. Heero had to smile at the tot, it was impossible not to like the little runt, just like it was impossible not to like the runt's father. Even if Heero still refused to admit liking Duo at all. Something's would never change in steadfast Heero. He may have found his heart but that didn't mean Duo got off the hook.

AC 203

Heero, the stalwart soldier, who could look death in the eye without so much as a flinch. Heero, the man who had seen the broken bloodied bodies of war spread out around him. Who had looked upon all the bloodshed without so much as a twinge of sickness. Watched what his wife was eating and grew very, very nauseous. He swallowed the gagging reflex and just averted his gaze. "Ah, God. How can you eat that?!" He asked shuddering as Relena spread hazelnut paste on bread then proceeded to lay anchovies on top. She shrugged "Don't ask me, blame the baby. The craving come from him you know." Relena said taking a bite. "Well, SHE is making me ill." Heero said and Relena smiled. She called the baby a He and Heero always referred to it as a She. They'd find out in a few months which one was right.

Christmas AC 205

It had been ten years since the end of the War and Nine since the battles with Barton ended. Those days now a distant memory. He'd been on countless mission since then, but none with the same mind numbing weariness of those early days. He much preferred the life of a Preventer. He had people in his life he cared deeply about. None more so than his wife Relena and their two year old daughter Kimiko or Kimi as everyone had taken to calling her. She in her father's eyes was the purest vision he'd ever seen. Heero in short was wrapped firmly around her dainty little finger. They were expecting a mass of guests for Christmas dinner, but right now it was morning, and little Kimi was tearing the wrapping off yet another present. Heero had spent a fortune on gifts for his wife and daughter. "Heero, you are going to spoil her rotten!" Relena said rolling her eyes at the extravagance. "Like you weren't. You turned out all right to me." He teased right back. A smile coming readily to his face these days. But only to those closest to him. "No I didn't, I was a little spoiled bitch." Relena said smiling "Don't deny it Heero." She said as he opened his mouth to Protest. "All right, All right. But it's Christmas. I will forever spoil my girls on Christmas." Heero said planting a kiss on his wife's cheek. A little brown haired, blue eyed angel crawling up into his lap. "Look Daddy!" She said shoving the doll up under his nose for him to look at. His eyes crossed as he tried to focus on the doll stuck into his eye. "I see. Did Santa bring you that?" Heero asked grinning like an idiot. "Silly Daddy. Santa brings everything!" she said plainly. She was incredibly lucent for a two year old. "I see. So he brought Mommy's and Daddy's presents too?" Heero asked humoring her. Her eyes went wide like her father was a supreme idiot. "*tsk* Of course! Santa brings EVERYTHING." she said exacerbated at having to explain something everybody knew to her mentally challenged father. Heero just laughed, life was at last good. Heero had learned to feel and in doing so had learned to fly. Love, Joy, pleasure, all words he now knew the meaning of. His Eyes, no longer hard and empty but full of those emotions. They only hardened into those steely knives if those knew emotions he held so dear to him were threatened. No one would take from him what he fought to gain. No one would make him sell his soul again. It had been too painful to gain it, it would kill him if he lost it. "Merry Christmas Daddy!" Kimiko said handing her father a gift Relena

had handed her. Heero took it in his hands and smiled at his family. He unwrapped the box and looked at the portrait of his Daughter dressed in a little red velvet dress, a Christmas scene behind her. The frame gaudy and Christmas oriented with a phrase that now rang true in his life. *'Peace on Earth, Goodwill towards Men'* "Amen" He said as he settled back into his chair. Even a soldier it seemed could learn to love peace.