

Title: A Knight to Remember

Author: D "The Fables spinner"

Pairings: 3x4, 1xR

Rating: R (Skirting lemon in places, but not enough to warrant a higher rating.)

Genre: Can you guess? AU Romance... No... Really?

Disclaimer: Never to be mine, woe is me.

Warnings: I'm a bit heavy on the angst than normal, but it's me, don't worry too much.

Author's note: *This is a historical romance set in the dark ages. And while the vernacular is formal, it will not be as strict or as difficult to read as it would have been spoken otherwise. Some liberties have been taken, but use of slang as is common in most of my other works will be missing from this piece. I want it easy to read, but still a semblance of period observed.*

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War.

It was an ugly word, an even uglier concept, and a hideous reminder that one's duty to one's king often meant fighting in one, whether you believed in it or not.

This was Trowa's current situation. All his life he had grown up in service to the King, like his father before him, and his father before him, and so forth and so on. A long line of Barton's had stood beside the king on the battlefield, Trowa was no exception. Trained to hold a sword before he could crawl, taught the ways of strategy before he could read, his whole childhood spent with wooden swords and shields, leather armor and saddle sores. He was finely shaped and molded into the young knight who walked with heavy steps toward the servants quarters and his destination.

For nineteen years he had grown within these protective walls. The news today that he was to leave with the King's army and lead his soldiers into battle was not unexpected, but certainly not something to celebrate either. He knew his duty, and right now it was warring with his heart.

Trowa stopped before the aged wooden door at the end of the corridor, behind this door was the one thing that Trowa cared for most in the world. His heart was behind this door.

Trowa raised his hand to knock and stopped, soft muffled tears caught his ear, and instead he just stepped inside and shut the door quietly behind him. Arms instantly wrapped around him and a blonde head pressed itself into his chest. Clinging in sorrow and desperation, Trowa could only return the embrace and bury his face in the soft hair just under his chin.

"So you know already?" Trowa asked, his voice catching just slightly.

"I heard. We knew it was coming, I just cannot believe so soon." was the reply that was barely audible where it was spoken, muffled in Trowa's tunic and chest.

"Quatre, you knew well before there was even a war. You've known this day would come since we were children." Trowa tried to scold, but his heart wasn't in it, he hated to see Quatre distraught. He hated Quatre's tears even more.

"Knowing and happening in reality are two different things. Today I have you here, tomorrow I will not. Nor will I ever again." Quatre sobbed now and Trowa stopped short.

"What else have you seen Quatre?" Trowa asked and Quatre sobered and turned away to look out the small window by his cot in the corner.

"I have seen nothing, I have seen everything. I have seen my reflection, my future, my mourning." Quatre said like Trowa was already a ghost.

"I will come back."

"I wish that was a promise you could keep. I wish I knew more to prevent what is to come. I know not when and I know not how. I am still but a student in the arts. If I had studied harder perhaps I would know more than I do. I failed you." Quatre said and Trowa gripped his shoulders and turned him around forcefully. Seizing Quatre's chin to force Quatre to meet his eyes.

"Quatre Raberba Winner, you will cease that talk this instant. I am still your senior in more than age, but in rank, do not make me use that. Ever since you were a child you obsess to be perfect, you do not need to be. Perfect is not what I want you to be, I want only Quatre. I do not want the spell-weaver apprentice, I do not want the son of a dirt farmer, I do not want you to serve me blindly as you always feel you must." Trowa said bending down to capture those trembling lips with his kiss.

"I want you. I want that heart that knows only compassion, I want that smile that can make maids AND soldiers blush, I want you in my arms, I just want you. And you know that Quatre. I have told you this before, many times in fact." Trowa said sitting down on Quatre's cot and pulling Quatre down beside him.

"I know, and do not scold me Trowa Barton. It is because I love you I try so hard. That is also part of me, and you should know that by now." Quatre scolded in return and Trowa smiled and shook his head. Quatre had a point after all.

"I do. And I must beg once more for you to quit this cell too small for a rat and live in my chambers with me." Trowa asked, for probably the thousandth time and Quatre only smiled and shook his head.

"It is not my place, and you know that better than I do. Nobles can be so ignorant of station." Quatre teased and Trowa frowned. "I am a servant and a mere apprentice yet. I have earned no title. And unless I suddenly grow breasts and my manhood drops off. Marriage to me to improve my station is not possible." Quatre began and Trowa shuddered.

"God forbid. And please do not say that again, that image is not pleasant. I thought it was agreed I prefer you as you are, a male." Trowa said as Quatre turned into his arms and straddled his knees, wrapping slender arms around Trowa's neck.

"And let us not forget, I am technically underage. All other obstacles aside my love, I am only sixteen, or have you forgotten we break that law too with our love?" Quatre asked and Trowa's frown increased.

"Do not remind me Quatre. You are not the norm. Your wisdom exceeds men twice your age; it is easy to forget how old you are. Even in our youth, where our ages would have been a great barrier, it never was. To me you have always been my equal, if not my better. I hate when you remind me of our differences." Trowa said and Quatre smiled and kissed Trowa's nose.

"I know. But it is a truth you seem to forget when it's convenient to you. I am only ensuring my love does not wind up dangling from a dungeon wall or worse." Quatre said as the sounds of footsteps came down the hall and Trowa's name called out in the search.

"Damn it." Trowa muttered as Quatre stood from his lap so Trowa could stand as well. "I will be back tonight after the council. We leave at dawn, I will not leave without holding you for as long as possible." Trowa said kissing Quatre firmly before releasing his now weak kneed lover.

"I, as always, will be waiting. I love you." Quatre said laying a palm to Trowa's cheek. Trowa returned the intimacy that was their most common and favored gesture of affection.

"I love you." Trowa said almost as a sigh as he turned and left to answer the call of his soldiers.

"I know Trowa, I know." Quatre said, his tears returning to mist his eyes. "I have never doubted your love for me." Quatre said to the air as he buried his face in his pillow and wept further.

Knowing this was the last night with his lover was shattering his tender heart with every tear that fell to dampen his sheets.

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It was far later than Trowa cared for when he at last found himself in the arms of his beloved and sooner than he preferred to be already lying spent in the uncomfortable little cot. Barely big enough for the small carriage of his lover, let alone his rather tall frame. Both together it was a miracle the cot didn't disintegrate beneath them.

Trowa was drowsy from lovemaking and Quatre's gentle petting of his muscles with soft fingertips and Trowa yawned involuntarily. He felt like a pampered cat under Quatre's loving ministrations. "Continue that love and I will be naught but a snoring fool in your bed." Trowa said shifting Quatre's head off his chest to roll him over and steal a long lingering kiss.

"But you like it." Quatre said, a smug little smile tugging on his lips.

"Aye, that I do and you know well what will drive me insane for you. Now cease, or I just might have to take you again to make you behave." Trowa playfully threatened and Quatre laughed softly.

"Twice in one night? Not even you, oh great Knight of the Realm, are that skilled." Quatre teased back and Trowa chuckled.

"Not yet. But then I have had little practice in this area of training. I would say I've just yet to master the skill." Trowa drawled, drawing his tongue over Quatre's collarbone, getting a

shiver of response beneath him. "We've only had but a few months at this, I am sure I will master this skill for you eventually." Trowa added and Quatre bit his lip but refused to cry. He knew how his tears affected Trowa.

"You master anything you set your mind to." Quatre said instead, reaching up to pull Trowa down for another kiss.

"Now let me up a moment, Trowa. I have something for you." Quatre said rolling out from under Trowa and padding, gloriously nude, across the small room to a small chest. Drawing a small bundle from it, before returning to Trowa's side under the warm cover.

"Quatre, where is your lute?" Trowa asked looking around the room and noticing it was removed and missing from its peg on the wall.

"Ever observant as always. Pretend you have not noticed." Quatre said sitting up to look down upon and into deep forests of green. "This is not much my love, but it is all I could provide." Quatre said taking a small silver and brass ring from the confines of the bundle. Two colors of metal braided together to form the band Quatre slipped onto Trowa's ring finger.

"It's more than just a symbol of my love, I've placed as many wards as I knew upon it to protect you from harm. Please, I beg you, do not ever take it off." Quatre pleaded with his eyes and his words.

Trowa's hand shook as he gazed upon the gift of love and devotion, taken aback and reeling from barely suppressed joy. "I swear Quatre, I will never remove it. As if I'd ever want to." Trowa said collecting his lover into his arms and holding tight.

"However did you manage to afford silver Quatre?" Trowa began then looked at the empty peg on the wall. Sitting up he pushed Quatre to an arm's length and glared at him. "You sold your lute for this."

It wasn't a question. He knew his apprentice spell-weaver.

"I did. I said pretend you did not notice." Quatre said unashamed and unflinching as Trowa glared at him. Stronger men than Quatre quivered under that intense stare. Quatre never even blinked.

"Damn it, do not sell the only things precious to you for me!" Trowa began to protest and Quatre shushed Trowa's ranting with a hand to his lips.

"You are what is precious to me, not some lute." Quatre said, effectively ending the argument before it had even begun.

Trowa at a loss for more words; simply lay back and held his lover to him. The sun would be rising soon. Their last moments together were best spent at peace, not quibbling and squawking voices raised in some petty argument.

When they had fallen asleep was unknown, but a gentle tapping at the door roused their sleep.

"My Lord, it is time." Came the soft voice of Trowa's captain of the guard, Heero Yuy.

"I'll be down shortly." Trowa replied moving to sit up, and not daring to look at Quatre. Not yet, he knew he'd be crushed the moment he looked into those eyes.

Like some nightmare come to fruition, Trowa floated around the small cramped room, dressing in his hose and tunic, as his lover still lay wrapped in the coverlet, small bare feet resting on the floor. That was all the higher Trowa could lift his gaze at the moment as he fastened his sword around his waist.

His purse jingled as he pulled his belt tighter and he went to remove it and give it to Quatre when a small hand stopped him.

"Don't Trowa. A servant never has gold coins to spend, and certainly not in the quantity you are intending to leave. I'll be fine. You will need it more out there." Quatre said tying the purse more securely to Trowa's belt.

"You are like a rock, I forget how strong you really are." Trowa said, now fully dressed, he pulled Quatre into his embrace.

"Not strong enough, but I know you hate my tears, so I will show you only my smile before you leave me." Quatre said, holding all his sorrow deep inside until Trowa's exodus from the room freed him from such restraint.

Trowa cupped Quatre's face in his hands, and Quatre sighed and turned into the gesture he loved. "I promise to come home Quatre." Trowa said claiming one last kiss.

"I love you." Trowa whispered as their lips parted.

"I love you too." Quatre replied smiling brightly, even if it never reached his eyes, eyes that were shining only from unshed tears.

A strangled sob was torn from Trowa's throat as he turned from the gutting emotion in those eyes and tore open the door and fled before he could shed tears of his own.

Quatre slowly shut the door behind Trowa, turning the feeble lock, before collapsing in his bed heaving with the sobs he had been holding back all night. He was ragged and raw before the sun ever broke the horizon and he heard the thundering hooves of horses leave the courtyard under the booming voice of the leader he loved.

"To war for our King! To battle for our loved ones to keep them safe! To victory so we may return to them quickly!" Trowa's voice led the army out of the gates, across the drawbridge and over the horizon.

"Farewell, my love." Quatre sobbed, too emotional to even rise from his bed to join the others left behind over the morning meal.

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War.

Trowa knew beyond doubt what hell truly was. Never told over the evening meal by the fire or in ballads sung by bards were the cold, long nights, the even longer days, the never ending sea of blood, bodies, famine, illness and other haunting memories to be made while on the battlefield. He's watched men he'd known most of his life fall, or worse, see them wounded only to fester and die from infection and fever.

Their King turning a deaf ear to Trowa's pleas for more assistance, the King wanted victory, he wanted it now, but was unwilling to give his soldiers who died for him enough grain to feed them, or enough clean dressing to swab wounds.

Trowa was livid, and Heero caught most of Trowa's anger filled rants with a solid and unwavering ear. He was just as angry as his lord was, and if he could ease his liege of his anger by just listening, so be it.

It was better than the rod his previous liege lord used to vent anger.

"Two years! Two Bloody, God-forsaken years we've been riding all over this wasteland. I've lost more men to cold and illness than to the field!" Trowa raged pacing the floor of his tent. "Our water is foul, our provisions, what ARE EDIBLE, are sub-standard at best. This is no war, it's a massacre!" Trowa grumbled flinging his watered down wine across the tent to splatter against the wall.

"The stains decorating your tent my lord seem to get more frequent. But at least your space is colorful." Heero said pouring more wine where he reclined by the brazier to keep warm. Trowa shot him a highly annoyed and humorless glare.

"Make jokes, I find it in poor taste Captain Yuy." Trowa said and Heero glared right back.

"So we are being formal again Lord Barton?" Heero said dryly waiting for Trowa's anger to subside.

"No, I am sorry for snapping Heero." Trowa said sinking to his cot, his hands combing his hair in frustration. "I just hate having my hands tied like this."

"And your men know that. They see how you fight not only on the field, but also off it with our King for their sakes. They see you losing favor with him, but you only gain favor with your men. At this point they follow you, not the crown." Heero said and Trowa looked up in warning.

"That is treasonous talk, I'd not breathe that again Heero."

"I won't. Once said is enough, and you know it's true." Heero said handing a goblet to his friend.

Trowa accepted and drained the liquid in one long draught.

"Careful, I've not watered this flagon." Heero said pouring another round into Trowa's cup.

"So I noticed. Are you planning to get me drunk?"

his sword arm at that. "Damn it!" Trowa cursed as he broke off the shaft of the arrow before it could travel deeper into his body. It wasn't until much later that night, did he have an opportunity to have the wound looked at, and by that time, it was too late.

"Damn it Trowa! It's gone septic! The fever will be on you!" Heero swore as he poured wine over the wound and dug out the arrowhead.

"We won the battle! It is my job to keep my men safe and organized. I bleed so they don't!" Trowa growled biting on a leather strap as Heero cauterized the wound. "BLOODY HELL!" Trowa howled and bit down harder as the smell of his own burnt flesh filled his tent.

"It could be worse you fool! We need you alive! Imbecile!" Heero countered rubbing salve over the angry red welts left behind on Trowa's wounded shoulder.

"I will live, I made a promise."

"Promises mean nothing. Use your head Trowa!" Heero spat angrily as he drank what was left of the wine in the cup he'd used to sterilize Trowa's shoulder with. He then filled the cup again and shoved it in Trowa's hands. "Drink! This time I am getting you drunk." He demanded and Trowa gratefully drank to dull the pain. The fever was already setting in. He could feel it dull his senses long before the wine took effect.

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Quatre sat in the corner of the great hall by the fire. He hated how drafty this room was in winter, and with the storm outside it was even worse. Even under layers of wool, he was chilled to the bone. His master lay dying, old age was claiming him daily and Quatre was bone weary in taking care of the now senile old fool.

Three years had done much to Quatre's carriage. No longer such a petite young boy, but rather a lithe young man now graced the room. Still far shorter than Trowa had been at nineteen, but much larger than Quatre had ever thought he would be. Still fair of complexion, with a countenance that floated in-between male and female. He was still often mistaken for a woman by drunken old men despite his short blonde hair, and taller carriage. It was the robes of his station, akin to monks, the drab, loose robe of gray wool hung without compliment to his coloring. He looked washed out and ghostly. But to blurred drunken eyes, it must have appeared he wore a dress.

"Come here lass, I'll keep ye warm." An old lord said over his beer. Quatre shuddered.

"Thank you Mi'lord, but no. As you can probably guess now hearing me speak, I am no lassy." Quatre said, his rich tenor, full and vibrant. Without a doubt his voice told you he was male underneath the sheath he wore.

Snores only punctuated the statement, as the old man fell asleep on the table. Quatre sighed and with a bemused, indulgent smile he laid a blanket over the old man's shoulders.

He was about to collect his master's dinner when a herald burst into the room. Heading over to the King and Queen he bowed regally, his long braid swinging behind him as he stood. "Your majesties, I bring news from the field. A messenger arrived just now from Captain Yuy." The herald began and Quatre stood frozen.

Captain Yuy? Why not Trowa? Were the sudden fearful questions that began to plague his mind as he moved closer to hear.

"Speak young Maxwell, We are listening." The king spoke and Duo bowed and continued.

"Captain Yuy beseeches you majesties for more provisions and soldiers. The last battle was fierce, and many were lost due to over powering numbers from the enemy. Even with such odds, the battle was won, Due to Lord Barton's skill. But at great cost, an arrow mortally wounds Lord Barton, and the fever has had him for days and he is waning. He is not expected to live past the arrival of this missive so Captain Yuy begs your assistance." Duo spoke and Quatre went numb.

"Send my reply. We cannot afford any more than is already sent. He must make do on his own resources as I told his Lord Barton on several occasions. Send my condolences on Barton's loss, and gift to his family his lands he earned in service to me." The King said, without much emotion and the clatter of a tray to the floor turned all eyes to the young spell weaver in the shadows.

Tears ran down his cheeks, his head shaking a silent 'no' as he backed away from the throne. He was in shock and the heartbreak on his face was evident to all, even the fool at the king's feet. Duo walked over to his friend.

"I'm sorry Quatre. I looked for you to tell you first, I didn't know you were in here." Duo said trying to keep his friend standing.

"No! NO!" Quatre sobbed, his voice found at last and it screeched in denial.

"I'm sorry Quatre." Duo said, tears in his own eyes as Quatre ripped himself free from Duo's hands and fled the great hall. His sobs echoing down stone corridors until he found sanctuary in his cold little cell at the end of the servant's hall. Still unchanged since his lover had left him, and as predicted...

Never to return.

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Time became a fleeting thing when hope was gone. His master gone, his lover gone, his happiness gone, Quatre was a shell of the man he had been before, and everyone who had known him, noticed the wan figure, always dressed in black, float down the silent stone corridors of the castle. The royal spell-weaver, whose power was seemingly without measure, was feared more for his silence and sorrow filled eyes than his abilities. He sent shivers down people's spines just to gaze upon him.

Meeting his eyes brought great towers of men to their knees with the depth of pain held within.

He had his rank, he had his full power, and he had what any young son of a poor dirt farmer could hope to achieve in lifetime. But success was a bitter pill when there was no one to share it with.

Quatre sat in his favorite spot by the fire as the evening meal was shared in the great hall, no one sat near him anymore, which was all well and good, he did prefer his solitude during his meal. Only the servant Duo and Lady Relena ever dared approach him as a friend. And tonight they both decided to bother him with their chatter.

"Quatre, you're scaring the children." Duo teased as he broke with tradition and ate alongside his friend rather than with the other servants.

"I do not scare the children, do not exaggerate." Quatre grumbled sniffing the wine in his cup but deigning to drink.

"You do. You should hear the games they play when you are not near. One would think you were a wizened old wizard of a hundred and not a youth newly twenty and one." Relena said taking a small bite of her meal and smiling at Quatre amicably.

"I guess they just perceive how I feel. I am weary, and if you persist on having fun at my expense I'll retire now." Quatre said pushing his plate away in distaste. Relena pushed it back.

"No you will not. Eat, you grow too thin by the day. I will not let you do this to yourself Quatre. I know you loved him, but Trowa is dead. Killing yourself like this only causes his ghost to weep. Let him find peace, by finding peace yourself." Relena chastised and Quatre in a move that no one ever suspected threw his plate across the table and stood knocking his bench over and Duo with it.

"Lady, I am already dead. I'll ask you NEVER to speak his name to me again." Quatre said turning and with as much pride as he could muster, left the hall in quick, measured strides. His black robe trailing behind him in his wake.

"Relena, I think you are the first person to EVER anger him like that. I've never seen Quatre in such a state." Duo said climbing back up into his chair as Relena shook her head.

"Neither have I. I do not like what our Quatre is becoming. No one who was as bright as he was should suffer so much. He feels such guilt and it's eating him alive. There is naught he could have done to save Trowa." Relena sighed, her own appetite gone as she shoved her plate away.

"You know that and I know that. Everybody knows that, EXCEPT Quatre. I wish his damn ghost WOULD walk over here and beat the senses back into Quatre's brain. Trowa would never stand for Quatre like this." Duo grumbled and Relena sighed.

"No, Trowa always did know how to keep Quatre from going too far. I wish he'd have shared his secret with us before he left." Relena said as another messenger appeared.

"Your Majesty! VICTORY IS OURS! The peace Treaties have been signed, the soldiers are coming home!" The messenger cried and great cheers rang through the great hall. Relena was swept up in Duo's arms as they danced around the table laughing and crying together.

From the corridor, a black cloaked figure stood, a single tear the only emotion shown as it rolled down a perfect sculpted cheek. "Victory is not worth the price you paid. You put your

men through five years of hell for a patch of earth. Nobility is wasted on the ignorant and greedy." Quatre said bitterly as he returned to his cell.

Even after all this time, he had never moved from this room. It held too many memories, too many stolen nights with Trowa were spent here, he could never leave it, not ever.

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People lined the streets cheering and throwing flower petals as their loved ones returned home at last. "HEERO! HEERO!" Came the tearful cry and Heero smiled a truly genuine smile from where he sat on his steed. He knew that voice and then she broke free from the crowd and it took but a moment to lift her into his saddle and steal a long overdue kiss.

"Careful Heero, Her father is scowling at you."

"TROWA?!" Relena broke free of the kiss and turned a stunned expression to the rider beside Heero.

"Aye, you look as if you see a ghost." Trowa said bewildered.

"We were told you were dead!" Relena gasped and Trowa laughed.

"Almost, but as you can see, I am not." Trowa said eyes scanning the crowd for his own loved one.

"Quatre won't be here Trowa. He's not the same as you left him; news of your death changed him. He's rather frightening anymore." Relena said and Trowa looked livid.

"No one bothered to tell him I did not die?" Trowa asked aghast.

"None of us knew Trowa." Relena explained still in relative shock, as Trowa kicked his heels into his stallion's flanks to spur him forward.

"Damn it!" he muttered heading home as fast as his faithful mount would carry him.

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Trowa walked to the old spell-weaver's rooms, surely Quatre was now in this position. He found the rooms bare to the walls. "He can't still be in that little hole in the wall?" Trowa grumbled turning the opposite direction toward the servant's rooms and the closed door at the end of the corridor.

The door was bolted, but one swift kick shattered the feeble lock and the door shattered from its hinges. "Christ preserve me Quatre Raberba Winner! Do I look dead to you?" Trowa shouted ducking whatever was hurled at him from within.

"Trowa?" Spoke the unsure voice. Deeper than Trowa remembered, but still the same tonal Quality that reassured him it was Quatre who spoke.

"Who else would be so bold?" Trowa asked as a figure suddenly materialized before him. "Well, now that certainly is something new, my spell-weaver." Trowa said looking at the

slight form before him. Taller than before, leaner, much too lean actually, with a face he remembered too well. He hated that look of sorrow, and it seemed permanently etched on that perfect face. Quatre stood trembling, his eyes filling with disbelief and tears as Trowa stepped into the room and reached up to place his palms on Quatre's cheeks in a long denied gesture of his affection. Quatre wilted where he stood and fell into Trowa arms sobbing.

"TROWA!" He wailed as he gripped Trowa's tunic in desperation as he fell to his knees, bringing Trowa to the floor with him. Trowa was awash in sensation, Quatre was everywhere, kissing his face, his hair, his neck, every exposed inch of skin, was covered again and again in joyful lips and tears. Trowa's name repeated over and over in a chant of wonderment, excitement, joy, and elation.

It was too much and Trowa couldn't stop the bubbling laughter that erupted from his belly as he clutched his effervescent lover to his chest as they tumbled backward, sprawled on the floor. Trowa pinned on his back as Quatre covered him in affectionate kisses and caresses. Laughter, Quatre's laughter, that bright warming chuckle began to fill the air around them and the entire room seemed to glow with sunlight.

Too much light which could have possibly filtered in through the small window of this dreary little cell. Trowa opened looked to his lover as Quatre finally released him long enough to be gazed upon.

It was Quatre who was shining. Radiant to behold and he took Trowa's breath away. His skin was gleaming, his eyes were on fire, and his very hair sat like a halo of light around his head and shoulders. "My God, you're beautiful." Trowa said reaching up to frame that face in his hands. "This is how you were meant to be. I never want to see you as I did a moment ago ever again." Trowa said pulling Quatre down to kiss him deeply.

Quatre sighed into the kiss as Trowa rolled them over on the floor. And Quatre returned their shared gesture of love as Trowa sat up from the kiss. Quatre's smaller hands tracing Trowa's sharp features of chin and cheekbone with his fingertips. "Then my love, you must never die. Because my world was dark indeed without you." Quatre said and Trowa nipped at Quatre's fingers as they passed over his lips.

"Dark of your own making Quatre. I made you a promise, and I always keep my promises." Trowa said leaning over to bury his lips in the juncture of Quatre's neck and shoulder. Quatre's hands winding into his hair as he feasted on that soft and tender flesh.

"Of that I will never doubt again." Quatre said in almost a whimper as Trowa's hands began to do very sinful things.

"Just how much more of you has changed?" Trowa asked as his hand disappeared under Quatre's robes.

"Well if you could shut the door you broke, I'd let you find out. But we have an audience my love." Quatre said as Duo cleared his throat at the door.

Trowa grumbled and sat up glaring at the longhaired servant. "What?!"

"Begging your pardon Lord Barton Sir. The King wishes your presence." Duo said trying hard not to giggle and smirk. He caved when Quatre erupted into a fit of giggles behind Trowa.

"Welcome home Lord Barton, it's good to see you bring his smile back with you." Duo said with a wink as he left the lovers alone.

"The King awaits." Quatre said and Trowa frowned.

"He can wait." Trowa said picking Quatre up off the floor and flinging him bodily over his shoulder. "And you will not tell me nay now. You will join me in my chambers permanently if I have to tie you to a wall. Unless you'd prefer an audience as I make up for lost time with your broken door." Trowa said and Quatre laughed brightly.

"And just who broke my door?"

"I should have done that years ago." Trowa said as he entered his chambers and shut the door with a swift kick.

It was several hours later before the King was graced with Lord Barton's presence. Quatre sat off to the side, his black robe gone, and a pale blue one in its place. His hair was tangled and ruffled and his eyes were glazed over exertion flushed cheeks. Duo couldn't resist.

"Did he give you a good welcome home present?" Duo asked and Quatre grinned and looked to Duo as he chuckled.

"Two actually. One gifted in the bed, one other in the bath." Quatre said with a saucy wink. Duo collapsed to the floor in laughter, as Quatre's gaze turned back toward his lover, who had kept more than one promise made to him.

Even without practice it seemed Trowa mastered the skill after all. Quatre couldn't wait for this infernal meeting to be over, there was five years worth of time to make up for after all.

Trowa's gaze drifted to meet Quatre's and he rolled his eyes. It looked like Trowa wanted out of this meeting just as quickly.

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That night as they lay with the moon high in the sky, Trowa turned to Quatre and nudged him awake gently "Quatre. Wake up a moment." Trowa spoke, kissing his lover's ear as he whispered.

"Again? Trowa I'll not be able to walk on the morrow as it is." Quatre protested sleepily. Trowa laughed.

"Not that you fool, I want to ask you something." Trowa asked as Quatre rolled over to face him a soft smile on his lips.

"Ask then, I am listening." Quatre said nestling into Trowa's arms.

"The King and I do not see eye to eye as you know. But my service to him has been unquestionable and thankfully he does appreciate that. I have lands that far outstretch my

