

The Perfect Memory By Kracken

"I still don't understand why we went with them," Trowa complained as they rounded the Christmas tree lot yet again. "You already have a fifteen foot decorated Christmas tree in your main reception room. Does it need a friend?"

Quatre glared over his shoulder in mock anger, but then broke into a sympathetic smile. "You really are cold, aren't you?"

Huddled in a thickly padded, plaid coat and with a scarf wrapped tightly around his throat, Trowa was trying to decide if his legs were experiencing frost bite. He was pretty sure they had gone numb at lap twenty seven around the tree lot. It was snowing steadily now and the tree lot wasn't covered. They were slogging through drifts as they followed Duo and Heero on what Trowa was deciding was a fruitless search for the perfect tree.

"Do you remember our first Christmas together as a couple?" Quatre asked. He slowed to allow Trowa to catch up to him. Side by side, they paused at a small tree while the increasingly agitated couple ahead of them began to argue yet again.

Heero fumed, "I don't see how this tree is different from the 347 trees we walked away from."

Duo retorted, "Then you're blind, because it clearly is different!"

"Oh, so now I'm blind and I don't know anything about trees?" Heero exploded. "Anything else you'd like to tell me I'm too stupid to know about?"

"I didn't say you were stupid, stupid!" Duo exclaimed, "But you're not even trying to look closely at them."

"Because, it's a Christmas tree! It's exactly like all the rest of them!" Heero pointed out.

Trowa scowled at the couple, realizing that a decision on a tree was still not imminent. "Vividly, Quatre" he replied with a wince. "You told me in that very precise, stick up your butt tone that you get when you think you're being oh, so reasonable, there isn't any reason for me to celebrate. I had to convince you that there was."

"And that celebrating was worthwhile because....?" Quatre prompted. He was wearing a pink and white hoodie over a thick undershirt. The little white puff balls at the end of the strings on the zipper matched his knitted white mittens. He slipped one of those knitted mittens into Trowa's thickly gloved hand.

"It won't fit in our apartment!" Heero was shouting in exasperation as his hands motioned to the tree Duo was grasping by a needle laden branch.

"We can cut down the top," Duo shouted back. "It's a perfect shape, Heero!"

"If we have to cut it, then we should buy a shorter tree!" Heero reasoned.

"Then it won't be perfect!" Duo bellowed back.

"Perfect what?" Heero wondered in confusion.

"Perfect tree shape," Duo replied.

*"It's a tree, they are **all** trees! They are **all** tree shaped!" Heero exploded.*

"That one does seem trimmed into the correct form, more so than the others," Wu Fei commented as he tugged on the needles of a tree to test its freshness. In his black coat and pants, and with his black hair tied back, he reminded Trowa of a crow powdered in falling snow. The tree lot attendant was standing next to him and looking as if he was having a bad day.

*"Don't **you** start!" Heero snapped at Wu Fei. "They all look good! They are all Christmas trees. They all have Christmas tree shapes. There are trees much cheaper than that one Duo. We need to pick out a tree that's in our budget and get out of this damned cold!"*

"If it's all about money to you, we might as well go," Duo replied with a sudden resigned sadness. His hand was still holding onto the tree, though. The snow was settling on his long chestnut braid and his purple eyes were staring dejectedly into space.

"I should come back when you've decided," the lot attendant suggested uncomfortably.

"No, don't go. I've decided to get a tree as well," Wu Fei declared as he tested another branch of his tree. "Not this one, though. Do you have fresher ones?"

"They are all the same," the attendant grumbled.

"Surely, not?" Wu Fei replied with a lifted black eyebrow.

"You can look, but they were all cut at the same time," the attendant assured him irritably.

"Why was it worthwhile?" Quatre prompted Trowa again, as if they hadn't been interrupted in their conversation.

Heero sighed and it was obvious when he regained control of his temper and decided what was important to him. He slid arms around Duo and pulled the man into an embrace. Duo tilted up his chin and they kissed. The falling flakes of snow settled onto Heero's messy chocolate hair and his blue eyes half closed as he enjoyed the taste of his lover.

Trowa watched them, knowing Duo and Heero were about to own an expensive tree that was much too large for their small apartment. It was perfect, though, in Duo's mind, because it was about their first Christmas together, not the tree in of itself. It was about love and wanting to be together; wanting the time to be special, memorable, and something they could look back on and smile about.

"It's about the memory," Trowa replied at last.

"Being together and making a perfect memory to cherish always," Quatre agreed. "We're helping them with their memory. It's worth a little cold, don't you think?"

"I hope you remember that when we try to get this tree up those narrow six flights of stairs at their apartment building," Trowa chuckled.

"That will be part of the memory too, but so will this," Quatre pulled on Trowa's hand until the taller man was down to his level. He gave Trowa a deep kiss and Trowa suddenly forgot about the cold.