

# One Way Ticket

a *Snowdrop* ficlet

by Rodo

A TOUCH WAS all it took. Soft fingers brushing against his, out of the blue. They turned towards each other and froze. Then the moment was gone, and Soo-ho felt as if he'd been knocked off balance in sparring match.

During the rest of their group blind date, Soo-ho felt as if he was two person at once. There was the spy who knew the danger a pretty face posed, who was keenly aware of how his heartbeat had accelerated. He was looking for a way to extricate himself from the situation before it became a problem. Then there was the young man who yearned for an excuse to get to know her – Yeong-ro. In the end, her friend took the decision out of his hands, and he was both glad and sad at once. That had been it, he thought – until he heard her in the record store.

When he saw her again, the spy was gone, chased away into the recesses of his mind, and for the first time in years, Soo-ho could forget everything: his father, his mission, even his country. For a moment, he could revel in the feeling of being young and in love, impossible though it was.

He bought the tape on impulse. If his comrades ever learned of how he'd wasted their money, he wouldn't hear the end of it for years. But he liked her, and he liked how the world seemed to brighten around her. It was money well spent. For one moment, he fantasized about stealing away to meet up with her, about going on dates, hanging out like normal people.

Then the police patrol brought him back to reality. She saved him. She wanted what he did. Of course, Soo-ho knew better. He liked her. That was reason enough to let her believe he'd be at the café the next day. He was a spy, after all. And the only thing he could do to protect her was protect her from himself, from being associated with him. So he never did, and broke her (and his own) heart in the process.

Still, it would be weeks until he could get the song out of his head.