

A DREAM COME TRUE

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Chapter 1

At the time this story begins, Malee is 16 years old. She is petite, thin, and likes sweets. Her black hair is medium length, falling gently on her shoulders. She is very pretty and has an amazing smile. The first thing most people notice about her is her stylish clothes, she even looks good in her school uniform. She lives in Bangkok, Thailand with her parents.

Her grades in school aren't as good as they could be because she is a dreamer and wastes a lot of time reading comic books about love and watching romantic dramas. One could even say she is lazy. However, she loves to dance, and she dances every day.

Her father is a very successful businessman, so she has pretty much anything she asks for. Her parents spoil her.

Malee's older brother Prasert, is very protective of his younger sister. He is an excellent student, so his parents use him as a model of how she should study. She hates it when her parents compare her to him. She wants to be herself. It's hard for Malee in school because the teachers always ask her why she is not more like her brother. She doesn't really care.

She has a BFF named Sunan. They have known each other since middle school.

They tell each other everything that is going on in their lives, and they enjoy doing the same things. They are both romantic and love to read stories and watch romantic movies.

Malee has a dream. She has a dream of her first love. His name is Sanit.

Sanit is a very bright young man. He does well in school, but his passion is playing video games for competitions. He is one of the best in the city and has qualified for the national gaming tournament in the largest arena in the city. His mother is not happy about all the time he puts into practicing and the games he is playing.

He treats all people the same, which makes people like him even more. He is well known in his school for how good he is at gaming competitions. It is hard for him because they always want an autograph from him. He is very good looking, and many girls like to give him presents, chocolates, and letters asking him to be their boyfriend. This makes it difficult for Malee to convince him that she is serious. There is so much competition for his attention.

Malee and Sanit have been friends since kindergarten. They have attended the same schools up until now.

Malee has always believed that Sanit would be her first love, but he does not have the same feelings for her. He knows that she is a dreamer, so he thinks he is just part of the dream and that she really doesn't mean it. He has always liked her as a friend it's just that he has so many other things going on in his life, he hasn't taken it seriously.

In the beginning, when Malee and Sanit met, they were in kindergarten, they became best buddies at school. They always played together during play time. When Sanit was not there, Malee would cry. Sometimes their parents would plan a play time for them at the park or at the playground. Over time, the parents also became good friends.

When they got to elementary school, they played on the playground and ate lunch together at the same table. After school, Sanit would walk Malee to her house.

Now they are in high school. Malee loves to chat with her friends online when there isn't anything else to do. She has her favorite groups she watches to and copies of all the dances. She joined the dance club at school and became one of the choreographers. But

when she gets lonely, she reads romantic books and daydreams of her first love.

Sanit on the other hand, spends most of his time practicing his video game skills by playing challenging international competitions on his computer. He has qualified for the city finals many times, but so far has not won.

Whenever Sunan and Malee are together, they share stories they make up about what life would be like when they were older. Malee never tells Sanit what she really thought. She always says she was going to be an international dancer and be in many music videos.

Malee didn't like her science class, so her scores were not good. Her mother told her she would have to give up her dance classes if she did not improve. She went to her teacher to see if she could get extra help, but she said she was too busy to give extra lessons. Her mother wanted her to go to an academy after school to catch up with the class.

Sanit noticed that Malee was not happy.

"Malee, what's wrong? You look like someone died."

"My mother told me I have to quit my dance lessons."

"Why?"

"I'm not doing well in science. My mom said I have to improve my scores. If I don't, I will have to stop my dance classes. I don't want to stop dancing, but I have no other choice. I don't understand science and I can't get help from the teacher. It makes me mad."

"I have an idea. I will help you. I like science and I'm getting good scores. I'm sure if we work together you will improve."

This is like music to Malee's ears! She never thought they would have the chance to study together.

Sanit's help is just what Malee needs. Her scores get better and she stays in her dance class.

What doesn't happen is Sanit doesn't seem to be interested in Malee. Later she finds out that he is interested in a girl on his video game team. She goes to another school. Malee doesn't know who she is, so she makes a plan to meet her.

One day, when Sanit goes to the restroom, and she gets onto his phone. She sees a

message from her.

‘I’m Lisa, remember me? I’ve liked you since you joined the team, and I want to meet you in the park after school tomorrow. Can we meet at the ice cream shop?’

Just before Sanit returns, she replies, ‘That would be great.’

She then deletes the messages so Sanit will not know.

When Sanit returns to the room, he sees how she looks.

It is hard for Malee to concentrate on the lesson.

“What’s wrong? Why are you so distracted?”

She wants to tell him about the plan, but she knows better. He might get really mad at her, and then they wouldn’t study together anymore. She likes being with him too much.

“Nothing, my mom is being difficult again, but it will be okay.”

The next day, during class, it is hard for Malee to listen to her teachers. She is so jealous and is ready to tell the other girl to go away.

Sanit finds Malee after school and is ready to go to her house to study.

“I can’t study today. I have something I have to do. See you tomorrow.”

“What do you have to do?”

“Meet a friend?”

“Do I know her?”

“How do you know if it’s a her?”

Malee teases Sanit.

“Just asking.”

He says goodbye and walks away.

Malee gets onto the tram to go to the park. She is having second thoughts about spying on Sanit, but her curiosity is more than she can bare.

She takes her time walking through the park, looking at the playground and watching the kids as they play on the slide. It brings back memories of when she and Sanit would go to the park with their mothers as little kids.

On the other side of the park is the ice cream shop. At first, she doesn’t want to go

in, but she gets up her courage and walks in.

To her surprise, when she goes inside, she sees Sanit sitting with a girl. She stops and stares; not knowing what to say or do.

Sanit notices her. He stands up.

“What are you doing here? I thought you were meeting a friend?”

Malee stutters.

“Uh, uh, uh yeah, I was supposed to meet her here, but I don’t see her.”

“Do you want to join us?”

“Uh, OK. I guess that would be alright,”

She really wants to run away.

They walk to the table and Sanit introduces Malee to the girl.

“This is Lisa. She is on my video game team. She texted me late last night about a plan to meet here after school. I didn’t remember making any plans. I told her I had something to do, but since you said you had plans, I agreed to come. It’s funny that we should be in the same place.”

Malee is very uncomfortable and it appears that Lisa is annoyed. Lisa had expected Sanit to be alone so she could tell him her feelings.

Now Sanit is feeling important. He has two girls at the same table with him. What he doesn’t realize is the way the girls are looking at each other. They are very unhappy.

Sanit gets up to order ice cream for the girls, but to his surprise they both leave. Sanit sits back down, wondering what had just happened.

The next day in school Malee ignores Sanit. She doesn’t eat lunch with him, and after school Sanit can’t find her.

Sanit goes to Malee’s house to find out what is wrong.

He knocks on the door, but there is no answer. He knocks again, still nothing. He keeps knocking and knocking knowing she is home.

Finally, she comes to the door.

“What do you want?”

“I want to know what I did wrong?”

“You know what you did!”

“Nope, I’ve got no idea.”

“Well you should!”

“Honestly, I have no idea what you are talking about. Can we talk about it?”

“OK, fine, come in. It’s raining and you’re getting all wet.”

After taking off his wet coat and shoes, Sanit goes to the table and sits down.

“Can I have drink, I’m really thirsty.”

“Get it yourself. You know where it is.”

“OK, OK. Relax. I can get it.”

He gets up to go to the kitchen.

While he does, he trips on a box that was left on the floor and bumps into Malee, almost knocking her down. He catches her before she falls.

Malee looks up at him as he is holding her. This is what she has dreamed about. She has a big smile on her face now.

Just then her mother walks into the room.

“Now, now children. Behave yourselves.”

Sanit almost drops Malee onto the floor from being surprised, but he manages to help her stand up.

“That was awkward.”

Sanit says. He is blushing a little bit.

Her mother goes to the kitchen to get a glass of water, and then leaves.

They sit at the table in the kitchen.

“OK, now tell me what’s going on. I am so confused. Both you and Lisa left so fast yesterday I didn’t get a chance to talk to either of you.”

Hesitantly she begins to tell him why she is upset.

“I have to tell you something. I knew you were meeting Lisa yesterday. That is why I was there.”

“Huh? What are you talking about? How did you know?”

“When we were studying and while you were in the restroom, I answered a text from Lisa to meet you in the park at the ice cream shop. I told her you would be there, but actually I was going to go in your place. I wanted to meet her.”

Surprised at the confession he asks her.

“Why?”

“I wanted to tell her to leave you alone.”

“Why?”

“You know why.”

“No, I don’t, explain it to me,”

Sanit is showing how frustrated he is with her.

“If you really want to know, go ask Lisa!”

Now she is angry because she doesn’t know what to say, so she pushes him toward the door and tells him to go home.

The next day, Sanit goes to Lisa’s school after his classes are over. He wants to find out what Malee was talking about.

When Lisa walks out of the gate of her school, Sanit runs up to her.

“I want to talk to you.”

“Before I answer you, I want to tell you something first. Let’s go to the park to talk.”

They walk across the street to the park and sit on a bench under a big tree.

“I wanted to tell you something, but I didn’t have a chance to. I want to say it right now. I know that you received my message, but I want to say it to your face. I’ve liked you since you joined the team, but I didn’t know that you have a girlfriend, so if I am out of place, I’m sorry.”

“Girlfriend? I don’t have a girlfriend. What gave you that idea?”

“Who was that girl you met at the ice cream shop?”

“You mean Malee? She’s just an old friend from school. She’s not my girlfriend.”

“I find that hard to believe. I was sure that she was jealous of me.”

Sanit goes quiet. He begins to think. He starts speaking to himself.

“Maybe that is why she acted so funny yesterday. I have to go and find her right now.”

Lisa’s mouth drops open in disbelief.

Sanit runs away, leaving Lisa alone sitting on the bench.

Chapter 2

Sanit runs to Malee's house to try and figure out why she is acting so strangely. Lisa told him that she is jealous, but he doesn't believe it. He knocks many times, but no one comes to the door.

He sits on the steps and tries to call her, but she doesn't answer her phone. He is very confused.

“What's wrong with her?”

Finally, he gives up and goes home.

The next day in school, he goes to Malee's desk to talk to her. But she turns her back and ignores him.

“Come on Malee, we need to talk. Don't be like this.”

She looks up at him and gives him one of those 'go away' looks.

The rest of the day goes badly for Sanit. He can't concentrate on his studies. All he can think about is how mad Malee is at him. He doesn't like it at all.

After school he waits for her at the door, but she doesn't show up. He goes inside to look for her. He finds her in the dance studio practicing for the program. She is working very hard and looks tired.

Sanit waits for her to finish.

When she comes out, he asks.

“Why are you working so hard? You look tired.”

“I'm trying to get my mind off of something.”

She keeps walking past him.

Sanit chases after her.

“STOP! I need to talk to you.”

She stops, turns to face him, crosses her arms in front of her, cocks her head to the side.

“OK, what is it?”

Puffing from running he manages to ask her.

“Why are you so mad at me?”

“You should know by now.”

“I’m going to have to guess. Is it because of Lisa? Is she making you jealous?”

“You figure it out. You’re so smart.”

“Really, is that what this is all about?”

“OK, yes. That’s it. I think you’ve known for a long time that I’ve liked you, but you don’t really care, do you?”

“I knew you were trying hard to find a true love and that you always are thinking about it, but I didn’t know it was me, or is it?”

She leans forward in his face.

“YES, you stupid boy. I thought you were so smart, but I guess I was wrong about you. There are other boys out there, so you can just go with your Lisa and I will be just fine.”

Putting his face closer to hers.

“What if I don’t want Lisa, then what?”

He kisses her.

Malee jumps back.

“What did you do that for?”

“I wanted to.”

Now Malee is very confused. She turns and runs away, leaving Sanit standing wondering what he has done wrong.

When Malee gets home, she runs to her room and lays on her bed crying into her pillow.

Just then her phone rings. Malee looks to see who it is. It isn’t Sanit, it’s her best friend Sunan.

“Hey Malee, how are you?”

It’s hard for Malee to talk through her tears.

“That stupid Sanit. He kissed me!”

“He kissed you? Isn’t that what’ve you wanted?”

“You don’t understand! He kissed me when we were fighting. I don’t get it.”

“Now I’m really confused. You really make me crazy. What were you fighting about?”

Malee stops to think.

“I don’t really know. I think I was just jealous of this girl named Lisa. I don’t know what to think anymore.”

Malee takes a tissue and blows her nose.

“I’m so confused right now.”

“I think you need to talk to him.”

“He may not want to talk to me ever again since I was so mean to him.”

“Why do you think he kissed you? Do you think he’s so mad at you that he would kiss you? I think it’s the opposite.”

“Maybe your right. I’ll call him and apologize.”

“What are going to apologize for? Did you ask him to kiss you?”

Sunan is trying to make Malee laugh.

“No.”

“So, the one who needs to apologize is not you. Sanit is the one who needs to apologize, right?”

“I guess you’re right. I need to talk to him,”

“When?”

“I will call him now,”

She ended her call with Sunan and sent a text Sanit right then.

‘We need to talk. Can you call me when you’re available?’

Almost immediately her ring tone went off.

“Hi.”

“Hey, what’s up? I thought you were mad at me.”

Malee pauses for a moment.

“Why did you kiss me?”

“I don’t know. It just happened. I didn’t plan it.”

“But... I’m seriously confused right now. You have to give me an explanation.”

“Don’t you like me?”

“Well, yes I do but before this kiss thing happened to us, we were friends. Friends aren’t supposed to kiss?”

“You’re right, I apologize. I shouldn’t have done that to you. I’m sorry if that made you unhappy or anything. But perhaps... You are not just a friend to me...”

“Then what?”

“Maybe I have the same feelings for you as you have for me. I just didn’t realize until now.”

“Wait WHAT!?? Stop Sunit. Are you kidding me? Or are you saying this just because you realized that I really like you?”

“I don’t think so Malee. Otherwise I wouldn’t have kissed you. I’ve been thinking about this question every single second after it happened. I’ve been confused too, but I don’t think I am anymore.”

“So, what does that mean? Seriously.”

“Well, maybe I am saying that I like you.”

Malee goes silent. It is her dream. She doesn’t know what to say next.

Sanit is uncomfortable with the silence.

“Malee, are you still there?”

“Yeah, I just don’t know what to say.”

“Will you be my girlfriend?”

Again, there is a long silence.

“Did I say something wrong Malee?”

“NO! Everything is fine. Yes, I want to be your girlfriend, but it seems so awkward after so long.”

The phone goes silent.

“Sanit! Are you there?”

Silence.

Malee lies back on her bed and smiles the biggest smile she has ever had.

She calls Sunan.

“You won’t believe what just happened. Sanit asked me to be his girlfriend!”

“NO WAY! I don’t believe it! What did he say to you?”

“He apologized for the kiss, but said he liked it and then he wanted me to be his girlfriend. It is all I have dreamed about for soooooooo long.”

Just then there is a knock on the door of the house.

When Malee opens the door, there is Sanit.

“Oh my gosh, what are you doing here!”

“To meet my new girlfriend,”

He has a huge smile on his face as well.

Malee’s whole face turns red.

Sanit steps into the house and gives her a big hug. She doesn’t want it to stop.

Malee’s protective brother walks past on his way to the kitchen and sees them hugging.

“WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO MY SISTER?! LEAVE HER ALONE OR I WILL HAVE TO BEAT YOU UP!”

He is not happy.

“MOM! Malee and Sanit are hugging in the hallway.”

Her voice comes from the kitchen and sees them.

“Good, it’s about time.”

Her brother can’t believe it and goes into the kitchen.

Malee and Sanit go to the living room and sit down to talk.

Just as they sit down, her brother comes out of the kitchen with cookies and milk and sits down to watch the TV.

“Get out of here!”

Malee is not happy with her brother.

“I can watch TV and sit here. You can go someplace else. Leave me alone.”

They leave the living room and go into the kitchen.

Just then her mother comes to the kitchen and goes to the refrigerator.

“What do you want for dinner? Sanit, do you want to stay and eat with us?”

Her brother looks over at his mother shaking his head no, and then looks at Malee in disapproval.

“What’s the matter? Sanit is here all the time when we study. What’s the big deal?”

“You weren’t hugging before. It’s disgusting.”

Their mother speaks up.

“Be quiet.”

He rolls his eyes and starts to go to his room, but his mother stops him.

“Where are you going with that food? You know you aren’t supposed to have food in your room.”

“I don’t like them to be holding their hands like that!”

He puts the glass and the cookies on the counter. He leaves to go to his room. He slams the door behind him.

Malee and Sanit move to the living room and sit on the couch. They are holding hands.

“Wow, I don’t think your brother likes me very much right now. We were good friends before this. What do think changed?”

“He’s just protective of me. He doesn’t want me to get hurt.”

They talk and laugh until dinner. It feels really good to finally be able to share things they had never been able to talk about before.

“Do you know that I have dreamed that you would be my first love?”

“Yeah, but I didn’t think you were serious. I thought it was just a girl thing.”

Sanit’s phone rings. It is his mother.

He answers the call.

“I have to go now. My mom needs me. Something is really wrong. I will let you know about it after I get home.”

Sanit runs out of the house like there is an emergency.

Chapter 3

Malee sits alone wondering what could have happened that would make Sanit leave so quickly.

At dinner, the table is silent.

Then her mother starts a conversation.

“Why did Sanit leave so suddenly?”

“I don’t know. He didn’t say. His mother called and then he ran out the door.”

“He hasn’t called you?”

“No, it must be very serious, I guess.”

Her brother decides to add a comment.

“I bet he got scared of you and ran away.”

Malee gets an evil look on her face.

“Don’t be stupid. That’s not it. We’re fine. You’re just jealous because you don’t have a girlfriend.”

He laughs at her.

“I’m going to tell all my friends that you lost your first love on the very first day. He ran away scared.”

“You’re so mean. Mom, tell him to stop!”

“It’s between you two. I’m going to stay out of it.”

She picks up her plate and goes to the kitchen to start cleaning up after dinner.

Just then, Malee’s phone rings. It is Sunan.

“How did it go?”

Malee is crying. She goes to the living room.

“I’m more confused than ever. He came over, gave me a hug, sat on the sofa holding my hand, and then he ran out of the house after getting a call from his mother. I don’t know why?”

“Did you try to ask him about the reason?”

“No, he ran out of the house so fast I didn’t get a chance to.”

“What do you think?”

“I have no idea.”

“Did you do something wrong?”

“I don’t think so.”

“Text him and ask him the reason why.”

“But what if he doesn’t want to tell me.”

“You won’t know until you ask, right?”

“I guess so. Talk to you later, bye,”

“Bye.”

Malee looks at her phone trying to get up the nerve to call him.

Her brother comes into the living room to tease her, but she yells at him to go away.

“Get out of here! Can’t you see that I need my privacy!”

“Why don’t you go to your room if you’re going to act like that.”

Malee jumps off the couch and runs to her room, slamming the door behind her.

She lays on her bed staring at her phone.

The door opens and her mother walks into the room, not very happy.

“Don’t slam the door like that! Don’t ever do that again young lady.”

“I’m sorry, it’s just that Presert is such a brat. Sometimes I hate him!”

“Stop that. You need to show more respect. I don’t know what is going on here, but you need to control yourself.”

Her mother leaves her in her room.

Malee falls asleep holding her pillow waiting for Sanit to call.

Chapter 4

It was a Friday night when Sanit ran out of the house after getting a call from his mother.

Two days later Malee sees a call from Sanit.

“Hi, Malee. I’m sorry I didn’t call you sooner. It has been really crazy around here.”

“What happened?”

“My dad died suddenly.”

“Oh my God. That’s terrible. Are you OK?”

“I still don’t believe it. I’m still trying to figure out what I’m going to do. It is all so confusing. I’m not sure when things will get back to normal.”

“I’m sorry your dad passed away. I’ll wait until your OK. I’ll be here if you need me.”

“Can you come over now?”

“I can be there in about 30 minutes. Is that OK?”

“OK, see you then. I really need someone to talk to right now.”

Malee after taking a quick shower, she gets dressed very quickly and leaves her room.

“Mom! I’m going to Sanit’s house. His dad died and he needs me.”

“What? What did you say about Sanit?”

Her mother is shocked.

“His dad died on Friday. It was really sudden. That is why he ran out of here so fast.”

“OK, let me know if there is anything, I can do to help his family. Tell you what, I’ll give her a call now. Wait for me. I’ll drive you there.”

Malee runs out the door, not waiting for her mother. She runs all the way to his house. She is tired when she gets there.

Sanit sees her coming from the window and goes to the door.

“Did you run the whole way?”

Breathing hard she looks up at him.

“Yep, I needed to get here as quickly as I could.”

He walks up to her and gives her a hug.

“Thanks for coming. I really need to talk to you.”

They walk up the steps to the house and go inside.

Sanit’s mother is on the phone with Malee’s mom. She nods at the two kids as they head into the living room. They sit on the couch and Malee looks deep into Sanit’s eyes. She can see the sadness.

Malee starts the conversation.

“I know I asked you, but I need to make sure, are you really OK?”

“It’s better now that you are here.”

He takes her hands and holds them gently. Looking into her face he begins to tell her about what has happened during the past two days.

“My mom called me when I was in your house and she told me something had happened to my dad. I knew that my dad had a heart problem, but we thought the surgery he had last year made it better.

“I think he was not as well as we thought. I saw him getting up at night calling my grandmother, but I wasn’t sure what he was talking about, so I didn’t think it was serious.

“When we talked to her yesterday, she told us he called her often to complain about pains in his chest. He didn’t want to go to the doctor again. He hated the hospital.”

“Didn’t your mom tell you about this before she called you that day?”

“No, I didn’t know a single thing about the illness except for the surgery. My mom decided I didn’t need to worry about him. I wish she had told me. Maybe I could have convinced him to go to the doctor.”

“It’s not your fault or anyone else. This would have happened no matter what. Everything is up to our destinies, and this was his. I liked your father and he always had a smile on his face when he saw me. He enjoyed life and he loved his family. Those are special memories.”

“Thanks, I know my dad was a positive person. I loved him better than anybody else. I am going to miss him so much.

“What I need is to talk to you about is that my mom has told me we have to move. Without his income we can’t afford to stay here any longer. I’m going to have to change schools too.

“It will be harder for us to see each other. I will be on the other side of the city. I’m going to miss our study time.”

Sanit explains how things are going to change.

“You’re kidding, right?”

“No, I’m serious. We are moving at the end of the week.”

Malee leans over to hug Sanit. He takes her face in his hands and kisses her.

Just then his mother walks in. She waits patiently, not wanting to interrupt their sweet moment.

“I just got off the phone with Malee’s mother. She told me that your family is going to help us. What a relief. We’ll still need to move, but they have offered me a job in their company. I will start next week.”

Sanit stands up and goes to his mother to hug her.

“What are you talking about? Next week? I thought we needed more time to work everything out. You said I had to quit my gaming in order to get a part time job. Do I still need to do this?”

“No. The job they offered me is very good. We can make it on what I earn, but only if we move. The new apartment is ready for us and the movers will be here on Friday to pack and move everything.”

She leaves the room to call to make some details on the funeral.

Sanit takes Malee’s hand and heads for the door.

“Let’s go for a walk. I need to get out of here for a while.”

“Where are we going?”

“It doesn’t matter. I just need to clear my head.”

They walk down the street in silence. It is nice to be outside with the sun shining and wind blowing through the trees.

They end up at the park and sit on the grass under a large tree. Sanit lays back with his hands behind his head and tears begin to flow down his cheeks.

“I don’t get it. Why did he have to die? I’m going to miss him so much. Everything is going to change.”

“Don’t think that way. I’m still here with you. That’s not going to change.”

She lay down next to him and put her head on his chest, listening to his heartbeat. Soon she fell asleep.

Boom! The sound of thunder rolled across the park, startling both of them.

Malee jumps up and looks around.

“What was that?”

Sanit laughs.

“It was just thunder. We’d better get home before it starts raining. We’ll get soaked if we don’t.”

It’s too late. The rain comes pouring down drenching them.

Malee starts to laugh as she begins to run around in the rain. Sanit joins her. They dance in the rain and splash in the water on the ground. It was like this when they were little children in the park.

When she gets home her mother sees how wet she is.

“Where have you been? You’re soaked.”

Malee just smiles at her mother as she puts her coat on the hook in the hallway and runs up to the bathroom to dry off.

Chapter 5

The next day, Malee doesn't feel well. She has a cold from playing in the rain. She looks at her phone and sees there is a message from Sanit.

'I really enjoyed our walk yesterday. Do you want to take another walk with me?'

She types a message in return.

'I have a bad cold. I think I need to stay home. Maybe tomorrow.'

A few seconds later there is a reply.

'That's too bad. I'm sorry you don't feel well. I won't be able to see you tomorrow. I have to leave for a video tournament, and I won't be back for a week. My mom told me it's the last tournament I can participate in. She says that I need to work harder in school so I can get a good job. I HAVE to win, or I won't be able to play anymore.'

Malee stares at her phone. She wants to see him even more than ever.

She runs down the stairs, grabs her coat, and tells her mother she will be back a little later, but as she is about to run out the door her mother yells at her, "Stop!"

Malee turns to look at her mother.

"What?"

"You have a bad cold. You shouldn't go out," her mother says to her in a strong voice.

"But I won't be able to see Sanit for a week. He's going to a video tournament and I want to see him before he goes."

Then she turns and runs out the door before her mother can say anything else.

On her way she texts him and tells him she is going to meet him at the park.

When she gets there, Sanit is already sitting on a bench waiting.

She blows her nose and then speaks up.

"I have a cold, but I really needed to see you."

Sanit stands up to give her a hug.

“I think I have a cold too, but it was worth it. We had a lot of fun yesterday.”

Malee leans into Sanit and puts her head on his shoulder while he wraps his arms around her.

They stand there for a long time not saying anything.

Malee pulls away to look him in the face. She takes out something from her pocket and shows it to him.

“Do you have confidence that you can win the tournament?”

“I will do my best, I hope so.”

“Here is my favorite stone. I found it while I was on vacation last year. Take it for luck and when you hold it, think of me.”

He takes it and looks at the white stone and then gets a big smile on his face.

“This is exactly what I need! Now I’m sure I’m going to win!”

Then, without warning, he kisses her. She looks up at him and her eyes tell him she wants more. They stand in the middle of the park for a long time, just looking at each other, not really having to say anything at all. They know in their hearts that this is what is meant to be. True love.

The next day, Sanit leaves for his tournament and Malee goes back to school.

Sunan sees her before they go to class.

“Why are you smiling so big?”

“Sanit and I are boyfriend and girlfriend.”

“Did he say he loved you?”

Malee thinks for a moment.

“No, we never said that, but I felt it.”

“If he didn’t say he loved you, how do you know he isn’t like that with other girls? He could be a playboy, you know.”

“Stop it! He isn’t like that at all. I’ve known him almost my entire life. He has never acted like that.”

They turn and go to class.

Sunan yells over to her, “You know, we aren’t finished with this conversation yet.”

At the end of the day, Sunan finds Malee and offers to walk home with her.

Once they were outside of the school Sunan looks at Malee and sees that she is still smiling.

“I miss Sanit. I wish he wasn’t at that tournament. I like it when he walks me home.”

“Do you want to know why I asked you about Sanit? Do you want to know what I think?”

“Not really, but I think you will tell me anyway.”

“I saw in a magazine where a girl like you had grown up with her boyfriend who became her ex-boyfriend. The girl smelled perfume that was not hers on her boyfriend and he didn’t use cologne.

“She checked his phone when he wasn’t looking and found many numbers in it. There were texts from five different girls, and he gave them nicknames like: cute one, sexy one, friendly one, smart one, cuddly one.

“She found out that he would see these other girls when he was in a mood that matched the nickname, all the while, he was supposedly dating only her.”

“That’s not Sanit! He’s not like that.”

“I’m just saying.”

“Stop it. You’re making me nervous. Those magazine articles are not true. They just want to sell stories.”

“Well, this could happen. It’s not like those fictional stories like aliens come and kill your boyfriend. The point is, it could really happen. We can’t predict the future, unless he said he loved you, which he didn’t.”

“You’re so mean. Why do you say things like that? I have found my first love. You can’t take that away from me. I’m going home now. Just leave me alone.”

“OK, but don’t say I didn’t warn you!”

Malee runs off to her home, goes to her room and lays on her bed, thinking about what Sunan had said.

She looks down at her phone to see if there is a text from Sanit. She doesn't see one. She thinks about sending one herself but decides to wait for him.

The next thing she knows she wakes up in the middle of the night. She had fallen asleep on her bed without even having dinner.

Her phone is beeping.

She sees a missed phone call from Sanit while she was asleep. She wants to call him back, but it is so late she decides not to.

Then the phone rings.

Quickly she pushes the answer button without looking to see who it was.

“Sanit!”

“No this is Sunan. Were you expecting a call from him?”

“Actually, he called me, and I missed the call. Why are you calling me so late?”

“I want to apologize for what I said earlier. After I went home, I thought about all the things I said, and I realize that I'm a bit too serious. I didn't think through what I was saying and didn't understand that it would hurt you. I get too involved in the stories in my romantic magazines. I know that Sanit is a good and honest boy, I was just letting you know to be careful. The articles I read have changed the way I think about some things. I need to stop reading them.”

“I forgive you. But you did scare me a little though. I was thinking before I fell asleep about how kind Sanit has been to me. He has never done anything on purpose to hurt me.”

“What about Lisa?”

“He was not interested in her. She was the one who was chasing him.”

“What about all the other girls at school who want to be his girlfriend?”

“STOP IT! You are so mean sometimes.”

Her phone begins to ring.

“It's Sanit! I have to go! Bye!”

She taps her phone to answer the new call.

“Hello.”

“I didn’t think you would still be awake. I was going to leave you a voice mail, but now I can say what I want to say directly to you.”

“What’s that?”

“When we were at the park yesterday, I meant to say something to you, but didn’t.”

“OK, what did you want to say?”

“I wanted to say, I love you.”

There’s a long period of silence.

“Are you still there?”

“Uh, I’m shocked, but I have to tell you, although I know you already know this, I love you too. How is it going?”

“We are doing really well in the tournament. If we win, we will travel to Japan for the Asian finals. That will begin next week. After that we can qualify for the World Championship in London. That begins in two weeks. I may not be home for a while. This is a lot of fun, but I miss you. I hope to see you soon. I have to go now. We are practicing and I have to leave. Love you!”

“Love you too.”

He hangs up.

Malee lays back on her bed and smiles.

“I knew it!”

Chapter 6

As soon as he hangs up, she calls Sunan.

“He told me he loves me!’ Ha! Ha! You were wrong!”

“OK, so I was wrong. I was just trying to make sure you didn’t get hurt.”

“He’s in Bangkok until the end of the week, then if they win, he will go to Tokyo for the Asian Finals. He says they are doing really well. I’m proud of him, but I miss him.”

“How long do you think he will be gone?”

“He could be gone for three weeks if they keep winning. It’s going to be hard, but I want him to do his best.”

They talk for a while and then Malee falls asleep.

The next day, after getting ready for school, she looks at her phone to see if Sanit had called. She had a text.

‘We won yesterday. If we win today, we will be the champions!’

Malee is both happy and sad. She is happy that he had won, but she is sad that she will not see him until later.

She goes to school and meets Sunan.

“Hi, Malee. Did you hear from Sunit?”

“He texted me and told me he won yesterday and that he will play again today. If they win again, they will go to Japan. I don’t like this, but he is doing what he loves. I will just have to concentrate on my dancing until he gets back. That is my best distraction.”

Sanit and his team win advancing them to the Asian Finals in Japan. During that time, Malee takes extra dance lessons to keep her mind off being so lonely.

While she is taking a lesson, a man comes to visit the class. He goes to the back of the room and sits in a chair, observing the class. Malee has no idea who he is, and the teacher doesn’t tell her anything.

The class is the hardest class she has ever taken. The teacher makes her do things

she has never done before. The music is fast, and it is hard for her to keep up, but she works hard and does everything she is asked to do.

At the end of the class, Malee sits on the floor to rest. She has a towel over her head. Someone taps her on the head. She looks up and sees the man standing in front of her.

He bends his knees to look her in the face.

“Young lady, you did very well today. Your teacher told me about you, and I had to come and see for myself. I want to ask you something.”

“What is that?”

“I want you to come and join my school. You are a very good dancer and I think with some training in a professional school you can do very well. What do you think?”

Malee got a very big smile on her face. This is what she had dreamed about for her whole life. Now life is perfect. She has a boyfriend and now she is going to train in the best dance school in her country.

When she gets home, she runs into the house yelling.

“MOM! MOM! I have some great news! Where are you?”

Her mother comes out of her room.

“What is it Malee? What are you so excited about?”

“I’ve been invited to join the best dance school in Thailand! The dance director came to see me today and he wants me to join!”

“That’s terrific news, but how are we going to pay for it?”

“He says I will have a scholarship, so it won’t cost us anything.”

“That’s amazing. When do you start?”

“Tomorrow! I have to take the bus after school, and I will be in class until nine o’clock.”

“When will you do your homework?”

“On the bus and during lunch. I’m sure I can get it all done.”

“You know, that if your schoolwork suffers, you will have to stop, right?”

“Yes mom, I understand.”

The next day in school, Malee has a hard time concentrating on her classes because she can hardly wait until the last bell rings. Then she will get on the bus and go to her first lesson.

When she arrives at the school, a man comes up to her and asks who she is.

“Who are you and what can I do for you?”

“My name is Malee and I was told to come here for my first lesson. Do you know where I need to go?”

“Ah yes, Malee. I was told about you. Follow me and I will introduce you to your new instructor.”

They walk down a long corridor to the last door on the right. As she passes the other classrooms, she can hear the music and listens to the instructors give direction. It is so exciting she starts to get nervous.

“What if I’m not good enough?”

The man opens the door and motions for Malee to enter.

Once inside, the man introduces Malee to her new teacher.

“Hi, my name is Kamon. I will be your teacher. I’m told that you like to dance. Join the group and we will see what you can do.”

Malee takes off her sweatpants and joins the group of girls. They smile at her.

The teacher shows the girls what she wants them to do. Malee has done something similar in the past, so it isn’t very difficult.

Malee is very comfortable in the class and she isn’t tired when it ends.

The teacher comes up to her.

“Malee, tomorrow you will have a different instructor. You already know how to do what we did today. I’m going to recommend that you move to another level, OK?”

“Sure, just let me know where I’m supposed to go, and I’ll go there. No problem.”

Malee is happy on the bus ride home. She finishes all her homework before she gets home.

She meets her mother at the door.

“How did the class go?”

“It was lot of fun, but I knew most of what we were taught, so the teacher is going to have me move to another level tomorrow. I’m excited!”

Malee continues to take the classes, and in the meantime, Sanit gets invited to join a professional gaming team to compete in the United States. His team had won the International Championship in London.

He has to move to the US in order to be on the team right away. He writes to Malee about what he’s going to do. When she gets the letter, she cries because she knows it is going to be a long time before they will see each other again.

A few months after, the director of the dance studio comes up to Malee and asks her a question.

“Hi Malee, I have a question for you. Would you like to be a part of the dance troupe that will perform in our production of Frozen? We need dancers and I think you would be perfect. What do you think?”

“Uh, uh, I have to ask my mom, but yeah, I would love to!”

Malee bursts through the door of her house and runs to find her mother.

“MOM! Where are you? I have important news for you.”

She finds her mother in the laundry room.

“MOM! I’ve been asked to join the dance troupe in a production of Frozen. They want me to dance in it. Can I do it?”

“How long will you be doing this? You have school, you know.”

“We will be leaving after school is out.”

“Leaving? Where are you going?”

“First we will perform here in Bangkok and then if everything goes well, we might travel to other cities in Thailand, and if the response is good, then we will go to other countries.”

Malee is afraid to tell her everything right then. She thinks if her mother knows all of it, she will say no.

“Is this what you want to do?”

“Yes mom. I’m really excited.”

Her brother walks in and overhears the conversation.

“What about that boyfriend of yours?”

“Huh. What do you mean?”

“You know, Sanit. What about him?”

“Well, he’s in the U.S. playing video games and I don’t know when he’ll return. I have to live my life too; don’t you think so?”

“Whatever.”

He leaves to go to his room.

“So, mom. What do you think?”

“I’ll think about it. When do you need answer?”

“Tomorrow.”

“TOMORROW! That’s pretty short notice, don’t you think?”

“Rehearsal begins tomorrow, so I have to be ready.”

“I’ll think about it and give you an answer in the morning.

Malee goes to bed but can’t sleep. She is too excited.

Malee’s mother can’t sleep either. She is worried about her little girl going on such a long trip.

In the morning, over breakfast, Malee’s mom starts to talk.

“OK, I have thought this over. I will go with you when you leave to go internationally. I’m going to do a background check on everyone who is involved with this. I want to meet the director and I want to be at your rehearsals to make sure everything is safe. Do you agree?”

Malee is too excited to argue.

The next five weeks are really busy. Every night she goes to the school for practice. It is faster to get there now that her mother is driving her. She likes having the time with her mom.

The day of the first performance comes and Malee is ready. Her mother helps her get dressed and puts on her makeup.

They drive to the theater and when they get there her mother takes her face and gently strokes her cheeks.

“I’m proud of you Malee. You have worked so hard. Do the best you can do, and everyone will love you.”

She kisses her on the forehead and then watches as she goes into the back door.

After the performance, her mother meets her at the door.

“That was amazing! I really enjoyed the show. I’m sure it is going to be something that people will want to see.”

“Thanks mom. We just found out that a very important person was in the audience and he talked to our director. He wants us to go to London at the end of the month and put on performances there!

Chapter 7

Sanit wins the tournament in London and is on his way to the U.S. When he gets there, he competes in tournaments with the team all over the country, winning almost all of them. He proves to be the top player in the competitions.

He is invited to play with a U.S. sponsored team. This is a problem because he has to get a special visa in order to stay. The sponsor makes all the arrangements and it isn't long before he has the paperwork he needs to stay.

Upon entering the university, he is asked to be a part of the e-sport team and is offered a scholarship for a full ride of expenses at the school. His mother is happy that he is getting an education as well as doing what he loves most. She is sad that he has been gone so long and she tries to visit him whenever she can.

Between his studies and the tournaments, he doesn't have any extra time at all. More and more he forgets to text Malee and he gets fewer and fewer texts from her. He knows that she is performing professionally now, which makes him very proud, and she is proud of him as well.

After he finishes his degree, he meets some friends who invite him to stay with them when he is not traveling. It has been five years since he last visited Thailand. One of the top game companies hires him to be a representative at their shows around the country. He demonstrates new games and helps sell them to interested buyers. He is very good at doing this, but only when he is not in a competition someplace.

As the business grows, they expand to Europe and ask if Sanit will be the international spokesperson for their products.

His team wins the International Championship held in France. Afterwards he has some free time. This does not happen very often, so he decides to take a tour of Paris. He didn't realize how romantic a city Paris is, and then he begins to think about Malee and

how much fun it would be to go around the city together. He picks up his phone and dials her number.

The number he has for her no longer works. He sits down on a bench in the park thinking about what he has missed. He has never had another girlfriend because he has been just too busy. Now that he is in Paris, alone, he is having regrets.

He browses his phone and looks to see if she is on social media. Nothing there. Then he Googles her name, and to his surprise, there are many entries about her and the shows she has been in. She is famous.

“Wow, I never thought she would be such a great dancer. I knew she was good, but not this good!”

The last entry lists her schedule of performances and where they will be. He is excited to see that she is in Paris, so he decides to try to find her.

While walking through the city, he admires the architecture and the small shops along the way. He arrives at the theater where she is supposed to perform that evening. He looks in the door to see if he can get in.

A man walks up to him asks why he is there.

“My old girlfriend is a dancer in the show. I’m looking for her.”

“Sorry fella, the show closed last night, and they are going to Berlin in the morning.”

“Do you know where they are staying?”

“Nope, I don’t have any idea, but you might ask the manager if he knows.”

“Where can I find him?”

“He’s over there, changing the sign for the next show that will open on the weekend.”

He pointed to a man on a ladder.

“Sir, can you tell me where the cast of the last show is staying?”

The man looked at him strangely.

“Je ne parle pas anglaise.”

“I said ‘Sir, can you tell me where the cast of the last show is staying?’”

The man he was talking before yells over.

“He can’t speak English.”

“Can you ask him for me?”

“Sorry, my French is almost as bad.”

Sanit is a little frustrated.

“How long have you been in Paris?”

“I just got here. I’m working for the show that will open here next. Our show is from London. You should come and see it. It’s really good.

Sanit starts to ask people who are walking by if they speak English. One young man starts to talk with him.

“I speak English. How can I help you?”

“I need to ask the man over there if he knows what hotel the cast of the last show is staying at.”

“Hold on. I’ll find out for you.”

The two have a conversation and then the young man returns.

“They’re at the Hotel Olympic in Boulogne-Billancourt, outside of Paris near the Roland Garros tennis stadium and the Parc des Prince. Any taxi driver can take you there.”

Sanit hails a taxi and tells the driver he wants to go to the Hotel Olympic.

The drive through the city is interesting although the traffic is heavy.

The taxi arrives at the front of the hotel, he pays the driver, and goes to the front desk.

“Do you have the cast of Frozen staying here?”

“Why do you ask?”

“My girlfriend is in the show. I want to see her.”

“What is her name?”

“Malee.”

“Let me check.”

The man behind the counter looks at his computer.

“It appears that she checked out two days ago.”

“What about the rest of the cast?”

“They are here until tomorrow. Then they will be checking out.”

“Can I talk to the director? I need to find out why she left.”

“Let me see if he is still here. Some of the cast went out to shop and to see the city.”

He looks at the computer and then, as he looks at Sanit, he notices something behind him.

“He’s in the lounge on the other side of the lobby.”

Sanit turns around to see where the clerk is pointing.

“Which one is he?”

“The one in the brown jacket. He’s sitting alone.”

Sanit goes to the lounge to talk to the director.

“Excuse me sir. My name is Sanit. I’m a friend of Malee’s. Do you know why she checked out of the hotel and where she might be?”

He looks up at Sanit.

“Have a seat son. I have heard about you. You’re an amazing video gamer.

“Malee had an accident the other night and had to drop out of the show for a while. She will need to rest for six to eight weeks while her leg heals. She and her mother returned to Thailand. She will rejoin us in Rome when we start our run there. I’m sorry she is not here. She talks about you a lot.”

“Do you know if she is seeing anyone?”

“You’ve got to be kidding. All she talks about is you and how well you are doing in your gaming. She is really proud of you.”

Sanit is sad. He had no idea how much he missed her until right then.

“Thanks for letting me know.”

He gets up and walks to the lobby. He finds a chair in the corner and calls his mother.

“Sanit, it is good to hear from you.”

“Hi mom. I’m in Paris. I just missed seeing Malee. She was here, but she hurt her leg and she went back to Thailand. I’m thinking about coming home.”

“I heard about that. She got here last night. I got to see her and her mother. We had a nice chat. I’m sure she will be excited to see you. How long has it been?”

“It’s been about five years. I don’t have any obligations for two weeks, so instead of going back to the States, I’m coming home. I’ll let you know when I get there. Don’t tell Malee. I want it to be a secret.”

“It will be hard to keep quiet, but I will try.”

Sanit goes to the desk and asks if the concierge can help him make reservations for a flight back to Thailand.

The flight takes eighteen hours. He tries to sleep, but he is too excited about going home. He practices his games on his portable player.

When the plane lands, he has to wait a long time for the passengers to get off. An older man had gotten sick and medical personnel were helping him to get off.

Once he is in the terminal at the airport is very familiar to him. He has taken many trips from it to other places to compete. It felt good to be home.

He looks at the signs that directed him to the baggage claim area. To his surprise, his mother is there, and so is Malee! She is on crutches.

Sanit can’t help himself. He runs to meet them.

“You told Malee! I told you to keep the secret.”

“I told you I would try, but it was too much for me to keep quiet. I knew Malee would want to see you as soon as you got here.”

Sanit hugs his mother and he looks at Malee’s face. Tears begin to flow for both of them as he takes her into his arms and holds her.

She looks up at his face. He says to her.

“I don’t ever want to be away from you again.”

“I agree.”

Sanit reaches into his pocket and takes something out.

“Here is the white stone you gave me for luck. I still have it, and every time I look at it, I’m reminded of you. You’ve never left my heart.”

VOCABULARY (*Match the word to its definition*)

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. gently _____ | a. grumble, protest |
| 2. delete _____ | b. quiet, no sound |
| 3. romantic _____ | c. how one is feeling |
| 4. apologize _____ | d. passionate, love |
| 5. silence _____ | e. group, cast, company |
| 6. complain _____ | f. say one is sorry |
| 7. mood _____ | g. softly, tenderly |
| 8. rehearsal _____ | h. practice, prepare for a show |
| 9. forehead _____ | i. above the eyebrows |
| 10. troupe _____ | j. remove, erase, cancel |

TRUE / FALSE

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. At the beginning of the story, Malee is sixteen years old. | T / F |
| 2. Sunan is Sanit's girlfriend. | T / F |
| 3. Sanit is good at video games. | T / F |
| 4. Sanit and Malee live in Thailand. | T / F |
| 5. Malee's father dies. | T / F |
| 6. Sanit goes to an American University. | T / F |
| 7. Malee sings in the production of Frozen. | T / F |
| 8. Malee was to go to Berlin to rejoin her troupe. | T / F |
| 9. Sanit forgets about Malee. | T / F |
| 10. Sanit's mother kept his secret. | T / F |

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. What was Sanit good at doing? _____
 - a) dancing
 - b) singing
 - c) gaming
 - d) running

2. What was Malee good at doing? _____
 - a) dancing
 - b) singing
 - c) gaming
 - d) running

3. Who was Malee's BFF? _____
 - a) Sunan
 - b) Koman
 - c) her mother
 - d) Sanit

4. What did Mallee give to Sanit before he left? _____
 - a) coin
 - b) flower
 - c) white stone
 - d) her heart

COMPREHENSION: *(Write a complete sentence to answer the question.)*

1. Where do Sanit and Malee live?

2. How long have Sanit and Malee known each other?

3. Where did the kids like to play when they were younger?

4. Where did Sanit win the Asian Championship?

5. What was the name of the show Malee was in?

6. Who went with Malee to all of her rehearsals?

7. What happened to Sanit's father?

8. Who gave Sanit's mother a job?

9. Who liked Sanit and made Malee jealous?

10. Where did Sanit meet Lisa?
