

# How a Tragedy Made Us Friends Forever

By Doe Priyakorn Jaykum

We all grow up and have a lot of friends, but only a few become our best friends who always stay by our side and share our moods.

I have a best friend like that whom I really love. Her story is completely different from the stories of my other friends.

Her name is Pleum. I met Pleum for the first time when we started to study at Kasetsart University in Bangkok together.



She was living in Bangkok, but I was from Chiang Mai so she could suggest a lot of things to me. She was tough and so smart. She loved to do outdoor activities and join community services. I like to do activities also, so we shared many things and spent a lot of time together. It made us understand each other, and we become close friends easily.

At first, our friendship had some ups and downs. In our second year, we did a project in the same group but had some differences of opinion, and misunderstood each other. Our communication broke down, and we did not talk or patch things up. Even though we did not talk anymore, we did not have a bad attitude with another and never talked behind the other's back, so I believed in my mind that we were still friends.

Time passed until we had a party on the last day of our university life. Pleum started to talk to me like nothing had happened. I was surprised at first and decided to talk with her too. Our conversation was easy and smooth. We were smiling and very happy. It's kind of unlocked something in my mind, so we began to be close friends again.

After we finished the university, we had different jobs but still lived in Bangkok. I worked at an Animal Hospital, and Pleum worked at the Thai Red Cross Society. They are located a little bit far apart in Bangkok, but we still kept in touch.

One day, I got terrible news: Pleum had been in a terrible car accident while she was driving back from another city. Her car was smashed, but fortunately she still alive. Her body has not much affected, but her head was hit forcefully. It gave her a serious concussion.

So, the next day I drove about 300 miles to see her right away. I did everything I could for her, including contact many organizations to help and bring her back to the hospital in Bangkok. She was in a coma and remained unconscious for about two months.

Finally, she became conscious, but nothing was the same for her. She could not communicate with other people. She could not stand or walk or even take care of herself. She remembered only some things.

At that time, Pleum was just like a child. She said everything she thought. Her emotions changed rapidly, and she could not speak clearly or control her hands to do anything or her legs when she tried to walk. She had to do physical therapy and stay in hospital for a long time.

But all her memories returned, and she remembered me well. She was always very happy and kept hugging me all the time when I went to see her.

One day, I did not bring anything to her when I visited. I was afraid to disappoint her, so I said I was sorry. She hugged me and said:



"Don't worry about that. It's enough that you come to see me. That is the best thing for me."

I almost cried after I heard that.

After two months, her family got a terrible news again: Her father had passed away from cancer. I was pretty close with her parents, especially after her accident.

This news made me so sad and depressed. I worried about Pleum and her mother. It made me think about human life. In just one year, many things had happened to her and had changed her life forever.

It is now about five years later. Pleum is still getting better gradually. She can take care of herself a little bit. She can dress herself, take a shower and walk by herself. But her mind is still like a child's. She can't work anymore.



Although I'm living in San Francisco now and she lives in Bangkok, we still keep in touch by calling, texting and through Facebook. We still love and care for each other.

I just got good news from her: She is learning to bake cookies and if it works, she will be hired through government institute to bake.

I want to see her succeed and get the best from her life. And I always get the most love from her.

Now I've learned the deeper meaning of the word "friend." Our friendship is forever.