

The Reality of the Fantasy

One of the biggest parts of human life is human connections. I can't imagine my life without my friends. Of course, I have my family, but friends are very important as well. I'm going to be telling a story of how I learned the truth about relationships, specifically friendship. While I used to live in Albania, I had a best friend. We had become friends when I was 7 and she was 8. Her name is Salmida. At the time, we were each other's only friends. Because of that most of our time would be spent together. We would go to school, come home, get our homework done, then meet up with each other, and stay outside playing until the sky turned black. Because of all the time we spent together from such a young age, we became really close. There were times when we would get in a fight, but we'd make up and be even closer to each other after the fight. That's also something I've learned throughout the many friendships I've had. Fights are inevitable. You'll become upset with your friend and have a fight. That doesn't matter though if you can talk to each other and come to a conclusion together. In fact, those resolved fights make your friendship stronger.

Continuing on with the story, Salmida is very precious to me. She would be there to listen to everything going on in my life and help me through it. Though most of my troubles were minor, the sentiment was what mattered. Then it was time for me to move to the U.S. It was hard for us to leave each other but I promised I would visit during summer breaks and that made us both feel more at ease. For a few years, that's how it went. When we became old enough, we were allowed to have phones and that created a new way for us to communicate. Now we could talk to each other whenever we wanted to. We were both super excited about it and got each other's numbers immediately. I never realized how much of a commitment that was going to be.

At that point, it had been 2-3 years since I came to the U.S. I had already gotten settled in and made many new friends at school. But the difference was that I would see those friends every day in school, there was hardly any need for me to text them. But with Salmida, the only way for me to talk to her was through texting, especially now, when we can't travel anymore. Suddenly I had to be texting her all the time. I had such a hard time having a good conversation through text that at one point I would ignore her texts because I

didn't feel like trying to keep the conversation going. I hated it when I would do that. Yet I kept doing it. Salmida was always the one to text me. When I would reply it'd be a very dry answer. There would be times where we would talk for a bit, but those times were super rare. Once quarantine started, I felt horrible, as many other people did. I wasn't motivated to do anything but just lay in bed. I started to distance myself even more. Thankfully, Salmida had enough of that and decided to talk to me.

I got the message, "We need to talk". I immediately knew what was going on. But I decided that it was time I stopped running. So I talked to her. We talked about what was going on and how we were feeling about it. I explained what was going on, apologized, and promised to try harder from then on. Salmida, like the kind person she is, decided to give me a second chance. I don't know if I deserved it. But I'm thankful that I got it. After that conversation, I tried to talk more to her. I would ask her about what was going on with her and talk about what was going on with me. We started talking more and having longer conversations. We talk a good amount right now. You should also know that there is a 6-hour difference between us. That makes it a bit difficult to talk all the time but we still manage to talk at least once a day. We've been friends for over 7 years now and hopefully, the number keeps going up.

So what was the message I learned? Simple, it was that relationships are easy to create but hard to keep. You have to invest time in someone else to show them that you value the relationship that you have. And I will continue to do that. I believe the reason that I'm still friends with people from middle school is because of what I learned from what happened with Salmida. I've made mistakes in the past, but I learned a valuable lesson from them. I hope you learned something from this too.