

The Story of Sree and Claire Chen's Romance (fanfiction)

Volume I

Writers: SongTai Z, Andy D, Jayson Q

Editors: Sosuke A

Trainees: Ryan L, Dohyun K

Suggestion team: Maxwell L

Actors in the story: Claire Chen, Sree Tanay Kata, Mr. Dandrea, Claire's friends

Disclaimer: In no way does this story reflect the actual feelings and/or actions of the real people associated with the characters. The traits of the characters also do not reflect the traits of the actual people.

Chapter I

Sree slowly walked up to Claire, scrambling for words. *What should I say?* Sree thought. He was blushing hard, and a bead of sweat slipped down his face. Claire weirdly looked at him.

“Yes?” she asked.

Sree couldn't find words. He blushed even harder. He felt like his face was on fire. Suddenly, the bell rang, and Claire left to go to her next class. *Darn it!* Sree thought, *I never know what to say to her! Maybe I can ask her out to the dance during lunch.*

After forty long minutes, the lunch bell rang, and the hallway was filled with kids trying to get to the cafeteria. Sree headed towards the spot where Claire usually sat. As expected, he found Claire sitting under the scarlet tree with her friends. *Here goes nothing*, Sree thought. He held his chin high and tried to look as tall as possible, even though he is short. The girls began to turn their heads towards Sree and whispered to each other. His courage began to fade, just as Jonarene had.

Sree felt like he would die at any moment. His heart felt like it was beating out of his chest. He braced himself and took a deep breath. “Could I have a moment with Claire?”

Chapter II

Claire's face turned red with embarrassment. Sree held his breath as he waited for what seemed like an eternity, and Claire finally managed a quiet "Sure."

Claire's friends smirked at her. Still blushing, Sree followed Claire to a more private area of the school. Sree knew that after this, the whole school would be gossiping about them, but he decided that it was worth it.

Claire was the first one to speak. "So... what did you want to talk about?"

"So, you know there's a dance coming up...?" Sree began.

"What?" Claire asked, sounding confused. "Why?"

"Um... I was wondering... If you want to... uh..." Sree stuttered.

"Yes?" Claire asked.

Sree coughed. "Uh... do you like chocolate or vanilla ice cream?"

"I prefer vanilla..." Claire slowly replied, looking slightly disappointed. "Are you sure that was what you wanted to ask me...?"

"Uh, yeah, that was what I wanted to ask you... Um... See you later at strings, bye..."

His face burning, Sree quickly ended the conversation and speed-walked back to where he sat at lunch.

Chapter III

Sree had been dreading the 8th period. When he walked in, Claire was already in her seat. Sree had always admired Claire, for she was first chair, a high achievement. Sree was relieved that he wasn't as good of a violinist*, or he would be sitting near Claire. Today, Sree had trouble looking away from Claire's face. Sree was still regretting his awkward conversation during lunch. However, he couldn't help but notice that Claire kept glancing at him too.

"Good afternoon!" Mr. Dandrea yelled over the squeaking instruments. He continued talking, but Sree wasn't paying attention. He had just noticed how pretty Claire's eyes were and didn't notice that it was his turn to play. Everybody laughed. Even Claire. Sree felt his face get hot. He wanted to hide under his chair and stay there forever.

"We'll come back to you, Sree. Make sure you're paying attention next time," Mr. Dandrea said. Sree had felt his eyes watering. His face scrunched up. He tried to hide it, but everyone next to him saw. Sree silently cried. He wiped his eyes and asked Mr. Dandrea if he could go to the bathroom.

Sree ran out of the room and hid inside the bathroom for the rest of school. He felt devastated and like a complete failure.

**Disclaimer: just for the story.*

Chapter IV

Sree couldn't sleep that night in his bed. His mind kept going back to Claire. Not only was he devastated, but he was also angry at himself. *Why am I so awkward?* He thought, turning over. *I had the perfect chance, and I ruined it. How could I be so stupid? Why did I wimp out?* He tossed and turned all night, thinking about these questions. *Should I try again tomorrow? But what if she rejects me? Then everyone will know.* Sree decided that he would ask Claire during Strings the next day. He finally fell into a sleep full of nightmares about Claire rejecting him.

The next day, Sree was very nervous about the 8th period. He couldn't focus in any of his classes. Sree couldn't wait until Strings, yet he also was dreading it.

When the time finally came, Sree slowly walked into the band room, feeling unsure of himself. The room seemed considerably quieter as he walked in. *It's now or never*, he thought. He walked towards Claire. Each second felt like a minute.

But a problem arose: Sree couldn't talk to Claire due to how loud the other instruments were.

"Hey, Claire," Sree tried to say, but she wasn't paying attention to him. The instruments were blocking out his voice. He tried again. "Claire?" Claire still didn't reply. He decided to give up, as he saw Mr. Dandrea come out of his office. Sree quickly went to his seat, feeling disappointed.

Chapter V

The dance was nearing, so Sree finally decided to ask Claire out after school. After the last bell, Sree quickly ran out to meet Claire. Claire had been walking out of school with her friends. When Sree approached them, her friends quickly hid.

“Hey...” Sree said, awkwardly.

Claire looked both relieved and embarrassed at the same time. “Hey,” She replied.

“So... what I meant the other day was if you would come to the dance with me,” Sree says, his voice quicker and quieter than a mouse.

Happy, Claire responded, “Of course!” Sree was ecstatic and walked off, grinning. He heard giggling in the background, but he didn’t care. Claire had accepted his invitation to the dance.

When Sree got home, he texted Claire what time they would meet at the dance. Claire did not respond. *Weird*, Sree thought. *She’s online, but she’s ignoring me.* Deciding not to care, Sree continued his nightly routine, happier than usual.

Sree still did not give up texting Claire, though, because now he was getting worried.

Before bed, Sree decided to text Claire one more time about the dance. This time, he pinged her on Discord. Claire still did not respond.

Chapter VI

Sree was confused about why Claire was ignoring him. However, he still decided to go to the dance.

On the day of the dance, Sree arrived dressed in a suit and a tie. He looked around for Claire and saw her standing in the opposite corner. Sree was about to walk towards her when he saw another person approaching her. Taking a closer look, it was Ansh.

Ansh walked up to Claire and took her hand. He led Claire to the dance floor.

Sree couldn't bear it any longer. He practically ran home. *Why? Why did Claire do this?* He thought angrily. His tears ran down his face as he slammed his room door shut. He ripped his tie off his shirt and buried his face in his hands. That night, he went to bed early, still angrily wondering why Claire would accept his invitation and then go with Ansh. His anger turned to sadness. *How could Claire hurt me like this?* His brain hurt. Slowly, he cried himself into a dreamless sleep.

Chapter VII

The next day, when Sree's alarm rang, he pounded the snooze button. He didn't want to wake up. Not after what happened last night. Eventually, his mom came and had to yell at him and pull his blanket off. After breakfast, his phone rang. It was Claire. Sree didn't bother answering the call. He simply ignored it. Claire dared to call him, right after he had found out that she had cheated on him? Sree felt like someone punched him in the gut. He slammed the wall next to him, furious about the night before.

That day at school, he made every effort he could to avoid Claire. He avoided her eyes and moved as far away from her as possible during lunch. He didn't want to talk or see Claire at all. It was too painful. During Strings, Claire started to approach Sree. He noticed and began playing an out-of-tune F major scale as loud as he could, so Claire would leave him alone. Claire decided to go back to her seat, and Sree's mind went back to the dance again. After school, Claire approached Sree one more time. Sree ran as fast as he could away from her.

When Sree got home, he noticed that he had gotten over 100 pings from Claire. He simply blocked her. Sree just wanted to forget Claire. He never wanted to think about her again.

Chapter VIII

Over the next month, Sree avoided Claire whenever he could. Sometimes, it was impossible, but when Claire tried to talk to him, he just didn't reply. After school, he noticed that Claire was following him from a few feet away. Sree quickly ran to his car and got in. He continued this routine for weeks. Claire made several attempts to try to talk to him, but in the end, she gave up.

One day after school, Ansh approached Sree. It was bad enough that Sree had to avoid Claire, but now Ansh? Sree couldn't take it anymore. Sree didn't realize that Ansh was already in front of him. They were silent for a few seconds.

"You know, Claire doesn't actually like me," Ansh says, breaking the silence. "She only went to the dance with me because of her friends shipping you."

"Really?" Sree says, his voice cracking.

"Yes, Claire likes you," Ansh replies. Ansh then walked away, heading home. Sree thought about this for a long time after school. If what Ansh said was true, then his actions over the past month had been a huge mistake.

Chapter IX

The next day at school, Sree decided to confront Claire. He had spent too much time avoiding her, and he needed to see if Ansh had been telling the truth.

But when he wanted to find Claire during the 8th period, Claire was absent. At first, Sree thought it was just bad luck. He tried the next day, but Claire was absent again. *Maybe she's on vacation*, Sree thought.

But after 3 more days of waiting, Sree decided he would ask Claire's friends. He didn't care how much they laughed at him. He just wanted to know where she was.

So the following day, Sree walked up to Claire's friends during lunch. They all started giggling when he came close. Unfazed, Sree asked, "Do you know where Claire is?"

After a while, one of them said, "She's in the hospital." All of the sudden, Sree felt guilty and alarmed at the same time. After school, he tried his best to contact Claire on Discord. But Claire had been offline for multiple days.

The next day, Sree decided to visit the local hospital to look for Claire. He asked his mom to take him to the hospital. His mom was a bit confused at first but decided not to question it. A few hours later when he reached the hospital, he walked up to the counter.

Chapter X

“Hello, how may I help you today?” asked the employee at the front desk.

“Do you have a patient named Claire Chen that is hospitalized right now?”

After a moment of typing, the employee responded, “Yes, I’ll call someone down to take you there.” Later, a young man appeared in front of Sree and guided him to the elevator. He then told Sree about Claire’s condition.

“She fainted and fell unconscious a week ago,” he said. “The doctors diagnosed her with depression.” Sree was stunned. *Does Claire actually like me?* Sree thought. The elevator had just opened and Sree practically ran to Claire’s room. Claire was asleep. Sree noticed a small picture of him sticking out from under her pillow. He couldn’t help but smile.

He pulled out a seat and sat there, waiting for Claire to wake up. He rehearsed what he was going to say over and over again. When Claire finally woke up, Sree struggled to get his words out of his mouth.

“Um... Hey Sree,” Claire said, hiding the picture.

“Uh... hi, I came t-to see... I mean I heard that... your friends told me that you were in the hospital and I came to see if you were okay,” Sree sputtered.

“Thank you,” Claire smiled. She reached over and took Sree’s hand in hers. There was a moment of silence. Then, Sree leaned closer to Claire. They were inches apart now. Claire squeezed Sree’s hand, and their lips pressed together. It was a magical moment.