

~ALove/OnceKnew~

Original story by user *sassiegirl* (original 4K!DSTV fan fiction forum)

Finished and edited by user *maatkare* (original 4K!DSTV fan fiction forum)

maatkare's pre-note:

When *sassiesgirl* disappeared from the fan fiction forums on the old 4K!DSTV website, this story was left up in the air and facing much criticism on issues such as spelling, grammar, and story construction. I decided that I needed to finish what *sassiegirl* started and salvage and fix this story.

When I finished the original version online, I received much positive review from others, some of who found the ending so touching and sad that they cried (or at least that's what they said). So when I learned that the old 4K!DSTV website was being shut down and the original story going to be forever lost, I decided to make a copy of the story, fix all the grammar and spelling error, and re-post it online for more readers to read.

Despite my changes and revisions, I hope the first three chapters still remain true to the *sassiegirl's* original ending, and I hope this story will be enjoyed as it has been done so by others.

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It is important to note some out-of-canon things here: Both Atemu and Yugi have their own bodies and live currently in the Mutou household. The part of Atemu returning to the afterlife has been ignored. Mana's age is assumed to be 17yrs, Atemu's age 18yrs.

CHAPTER 1:

Atemu turned on his side. His eye lids felt heavy but they wouldn't close. He had gone another night without sleep. His memories of the pharaohic days still haunted him.

Failing to rest, he lifted himself up out of bed and ran a hand through his multi-colored hair. He shook his head slightly, in attempt to salvage the image of an old memory. It was the image of an old and dear friend of his, Mana. He missed her very much, more than he would like to admit.

Suddenly, a noise broke his concentration.

"ATEMU!" Yugi yelled through the bedroom door. "Are you up yet? It's 9:30! Joey's going to meet us in about 15 minutes!"

Atemu let out a slight laugh. "I'm up," he answered, sitting up in his bed, a sleepy look on his face. Upon noticing this, Yugi sprinted over to the former pharaoh's bedroom.

"Did you forget?" Yugi chirped. "We're going to the carnival today with the others. Joey's going to be mad if we're late!"

Oh yes, that's right. I almost forgot, Atemu thought. He did not enjoy the thought of going to the carnival, being that it reminded him of KaibaLand, but he did enjoy hanging out with his friends. *Perhaps it won't be as bad as it seems.*

Atemu hopped out of bed. "Okay, I'm getting up," he replied. Still somewhat groggy, he began to prepare for the rest of the day. *It's good to have friends,* he thought.

~At the carnival:

Atemu rushed off the roller coaster ride, clutching his stomach. He felt twisted inside, and he was almost sure that his meal was not going to stay down.

"Hey, you alright?" Joey asked.

"No," Atemu responded, somewhat peeved. He was a little mad at Joey, who managed to convince him that the roller coaster would be "fun". Apparently, it was more of a harrowing experience than what was originally envisioned.

"Leave him alone, Joey" Tea said. She walked over to Atemu. "You just need some fresh air to clear your head, Atemu," she replied to the former pharaoh. She helped him up, and the two of them started walking down the street.

Tea and Atemu wandered the streets of the carnival. Suddenly, something caught Tea's eye. "Hey look, what's that?" Tea chirped, pointing to a little shop.

Atemu lifted his head up. The shop, with its window displays filled and decorated with rare and exotic objects, caught his attention. "Let's go and find out," he suggested, and the both of them started walking towards the little shop.

CHAPTER 2:

Atemu walked up to the store, as if something was pulling him there like an invisible mist was beckoning him to enter. He kept on moving, and proceeded inside.

He walked over to the edge of one of the tables in the store, filled with an array of exotic objects. The table glowed with beautiful aura to it. A brown haired girl walked over to Atemu. She held out her hand.

"Hiya! I'm Lexie! Pleased to meet you," the girl chirped. "Who are you?"

(Lexie was one of the forum users as 4K!DSTV. sassiegirl had used her as a character for this story upon Lexie's request).

Lexie. Atemu had heard that name from somewhere, but he didn't know where. She looked like one of Yugi's schoolmates who visited the Game Shop often. He blinked upon suddenly remembering who she was. "What! You're that girl from school who's always getting the cheerleaders mad!" he exclaimed, chuckling a bit.

Lexie laughed. "Yeah, I am," she said.

"I'm Atemu," he replied, answering her question from before.

Lexie smiled. "So," she said, placing her hands on the table, "anything catch your eye?" She was hoping to make a good sale.

Atemu looked down, his eyes scanning the table for anything interesting. His gaze landed upon what was labeled as a "golden wishing bracelet". It had it had rubies, sapphires, and emeralds decorating it. He felt compelled to buy it for some reason. "I'll take that," he responded, pointing to the bracelet.

"Ah, that is a very special piece," Lexie explained with allure as she picked up the bracelet. "When my grandmother got it from a trip in Egypt, the seller told her that one wish will be granted."

Atemu smiled. "I'll take it," he declared, and he took out a couple of bills from his pocket to pay for the bracelet. He then stuffed the bracelet into his pants pocket, and left the store to join his friends. *Hmm, I hope Joey doesn't trick me into riding another harrowing ride again,* he thought.

~Mutou residence, near midnight

Atemu flopped onto his bed, tired. He just wanted to go to sleep after a long day of being dragged around from one carnival ride to another.

He rolled over to his side, but a small stabbing motion from his pants pocket caught his attention. *Oh, of course, the bracelet,* Atemu thought. He took the bracelet out of his pocket.

Lexie's explanation of the bracelet buzzed in his mind.*one wish will be granted....*

Atemu thought about Mana for a minute, and began to reminisce on how he used to play with her when he was still a child, how she always made him feel better when he was down, how she always made him laugh when he felt sad...

He missed those times. He wished that Mana would be here, with him.

Suddenly, the bracelet began to glow. It became beautiful and lucid in appearance. Some sparkling glows began to fly off the bracelet and joined together, forming the body of a human being. The light formed into... Mana.

CHAPTER 3:

(sassiegirl's story is slightly longer than this and, in actuality, extends for a few more chapters with Mana going out and having a makeover. I decided, for fluidity reasons, to end her story here. Here is where sassiegirl's story ends and my original ideas come into play.)

Mana's eyes opened up. "Wha....?" she asked, confused. She looked up and saw Atemu.

Atemu walked up to Mana. "Mana, it's me, Atemu," he said gently, trying not to surprise her. He didn't know how she would react. *Would she be in culture shock? Would she realize he had brought her from the afterlife to his time?*

Mana blinked a couple of times. "Atemu?" she murmured, dazed. Suddenly, to Atemu's surprise, Mana jumped up and embraced him into a huge bear hug, glomping him in the process. "PRINCE!" she exclaimed. "IT'S YOU!!!" I've missed you so much!"

Mana pulled herself back. "Um, prince, how did I get here?" she asked, a quizzical look spreading across her face. "Where am I? Am I in Egypt? Where's everybody? Is this some weird secret room in the palace? Why are you wearing tight black leather?"

Atemu shook his head. "One question at a time Mana," he replied. He held out the bracelet. "I used this bracelet. You're in the modern world, now," he explained. "This isn't Egypt, this is a place called Domino City. And ..."

Yugi and Grandpa walked into Atemu's room. "Hey," Yugi exclaimed. "What's going on h... How did she get here?!"

"Uh..." Atemu started to explain, but was at a loss to say anything. This was a very awkward situation. He stammered over in an attempt to explain.

"Let me guess," Grandpa started. "She got back here by some force of magic." He took a quick look at Mana, noticing that, by her features, she was ancient Egyptian. "This isn't part of some evil plot twist, is it?"

Atemu shook his head. "She's an old friend of mine, and she needs a place to stay," he replied.

"If she's staying here, I'd better go get a spare nightgown from the attic," Grandpa answered. "I'll prepare a spare bed for her so she can sleep in peace."

Everyone nodded in agreement.

~Next Morning

It was the next day of Mana's appearance. She jumped out of bed and began to wander into the pharaoh's bedroom. Seeing as Atemu was already up, she walked up to him and gleefully asked, "So, what does everyone do for fun around here?"

"Um, well," Atemu began, "there's the arcade that Yugi and his friends go to..."

Mana didn't know what an "arcade" was, but if Atemu said it was fun, then it was fun. "Well, come on then, let's go!" she cried out. She was about to rush out the door when Atemu stopped her.

"Mana, wait!" Atemu yelled out.

"What?" She turned around, surprised.

"You're... you don't expect to go out like that, do you?" he questioned. Apparently, she was still dressed in a nightgown.

"Why?" she asked, confused. "What's wrong with it?"

"People don't go out dressed like that these days, not in their sleeping clothes," he replied back.

"Then...wouldn't I need new clothes then?" she said. "I don't have any..."

"I could ask Tea to bring some clothes for you to borrow in the meantime...." he suggested, his voice trailing off.

"Okay, let's go ask her then," she chirped. And she attempted to run out into the street.

"Gah! Mana!" Atemu yelled out, running after her. He could tell that this was going to be a long and frustrating day.

CHAPTER 4:

Atemu swiftly grabbed Mana's arm as she was about to run into the busy street. "Mana!" he yelled out as he grabbed her arm and dragged her back onto the sidewalk. The cars racing across honked their horns loudly at the sight of some girl almost dashing haphazardly onto the busy road.

"Mana," Atemu began, "you don't run out into the street like that! Those cars can be dangerous!"

"So...that's what you call them? 'Cars'?" Mana asked. "Then why do people ride in them if they are so dangerous?"

Atemu sighed in frustration. He wasn't quite sure how to explain the concept of cars to her. "Ugh, never mind, I'll explain later," he said, and brought her back inside.

Meanwhile, Yugi and Grandpa were in the lobby of the Game Shop, already dressed for the new day; Grandpa was fixing up the shop to be ready for the customers, and Yugi was tying up his sneakers, ready to go out with his friends when they arrived.

"Hey there!" Yugi said. He looked at Mana, who was still in her nightgown. "Um, Atemu, she's not going out dressed like that, is she?"

"No, she's not," Atemu replied back. "Call Tea and ask if she can bring some spare clothes for Mana. Hopefully she hasn't left her house yet."

Yugi walked over to the phone and started dialing Tea's number.

~About an hour and a half later

Mana was dressed up in a pair of jeans, a white blouse-like shirt, and pink tennis sneakers, all courtesy of Tea's closet, as well as the bracelet Atemu had obtained earlier. She was observing herself in the mirror.

"So, what do you think?" Tea asked.

"It feels weird," Mana replied.

"What feels weird?" Tea and Atemu asked jointly.

"These things you call 'pants'," Mana replied back. "There were no 'pants' where Atemu and I are from." She continued to look at herself in the mirror. Everyone could see that she had some kind of frown on her face.

"Mana," Atemu began to ask, "What's wrong?"

"I'm missing something," Mana responded back. She looked at Tea's bag of spare clothes and pulled out a white bandana; she then wrapped the bandana around her head, similar in style to her headpiece 5000 years ago. "Okay, we can go now," she chirped.

"Okay," Tea replied. "Duke is outside waiting in his car with Tristan and Joey."

Yugi, Tea, and Atemu proceeded to go outside, but suddenly, Mana was stubborn to leave. "No!" she cried out. "I'm not going!"

"But...I thought you wanted to go to the arcade..." Atemu said, his statement trailing off in surprise. "Why are you changing your mind?"

"Tea said that we have to ride a car! You told me that cars were dangerous!" she cried out, clutching the doorframe to the main entrance of the shop.

Atemu grabbed onto Mana's arm. "Trust me, you'll be safe. I'll explain on the way to the arcade."

Joey, Tristan, and Duke were waiting in the car. "What took ya guys so long?" Joey asked. "Me an' Tristan almost thought ya weren't comin'."

"Clothing issues," Tea replied.

"Ah, just a girl thing," Tristan remarked.

Mana stepped wearily into the car. "So... is this thing... safe?" she said in wonder.

"Yeah," Duke said. "And it's fast, too. 400 horsepower under the hood." He pointed to the hood of his car and patted it with pride.

Mana looked at the car hood. "Those must be some awfully small horses, then," she replied.

"Huh?" Duke said, with a weird look on his face.

"Never mind," Atemu responded back.

CHAPTER 5:

The car sped down the road to the nearby arcade. Mana almost couldn't believe how fast the car went. It reminded her of riding the ancient Egyptian chariots so long ago, except, instead of standing, she was sitting down. Not to mention the ride was much more smooth than anticipated.

She watched the scenery past by. Some things she recognized as being similar to her past, such as trees and plants and flying birds and walking people. But other things mystified her. "Atemu," she asked, "what are those things?" pointing to the buildings and skyscrapers.

"They're called buildings, Mana," Atemu replied. "The really tall ones are called skyscrapers because they're so tall that people say they scrape the sky."

Then she began to point to one of the tall buildings, the KaibaCorp tower. "You mean like that one over there?" she questioned again.

"Eh, dat's rich boy's skyscraper," Joey remarked sourly.

"Who's 'rich boy'?" Mana inquired.

"Ugh, that would be Kaiba," Tristan said.

Mana looked around at everyone's faces. They didn't seem to be pleased with the name of "Kaiba".

"Kaiba? Who's Kaiba?" she asked inquisitively asked.

"It's a long story," Yugi said. "Maybe we can tell you later."

Duke reached over to the radio dial at the car dashboard and turned it on. The music of the popular rock star Yuichi Ikusawa was playing on the radio.

Mana became intrigued with the car radio. "You...do you have someone trapped in that...thing?" she said with surprise. "He sounds like he's screaming in pain."

"Um, no," Duke said. "That's a radio. It plays music." He then began to wonder if the radio needed some kind of tune up if Mana had described the sound as someone screaming.

Mana began to squint her face. "That's music? It doesn't sound so good," she said. "I can't believe anybody listens to that stuff."

"Maybe you should turn it off, Duke," Atemu said. "She's not used to these modern ideas and concepts of today."

Duke turned around. "Wha...What do you mean 'she's not used to the modern concepts of today'?" he asked. "Who exactly is this girl anyway? You....!"

"DUKE, LOOK OUT!" Tea yelled.

Duke turned around to see his car swerving off the road. He quickly turned the wheel if the car to get back onto the road. Everyone's heads whiplashed as the car screeched to a halt.

"Duke, watch what yer doing!" Joey yelled.

"Sorry," Duke apologized.

"Atemu, now I know why you said that cars were dangerous," Mana replied.

CHAPTER 6:
SMACK!

Tea reached over from the passenger seat and slapped Duke on the back of his head. “What were you thinking? You could have gotten us killed! And I bet you scared poor Mana half to death!”

“I said that I was sorry!” Duke responded back.

“Just drive carefully next time...and watch the road...” Tea said angrily.

Duke pulled away carefully from the edge of the road, remembering to drive carefully.

(At the front of the arcade)

Duke’s car rolled over slowly to a stop in a parking spot directly in front of the arcade.

Atemu pointed to the arcade building. “That’s the arcade,” he said.

Mana looked at the neon-light covered arcade building. She could hear loud music, loud cheering and yelling, and other loud noises coming out of the entrance door. She couldn’t really believe that anyone would go to an extremely loud and boisterous place just to have fun. “Um, wow, it’s very noisy,” she said. “Are you sure this ‘arcade’ is the place where you all go to have fun?”

“It sounds like you’ve never went to an arcade before,” Duke said to Mana.

“There were no ‘arcades’ where I am from,” Mana responded back.

“Really? You don’t have arcades from where you’re from?” Duke answered, surprised. “Where are you from anyway?” he questioned.

“From the kingdom of Egypt! I live in the pharaoh’s palace,” she answered back.

A weird look spread over Duke’s face. He then turned to the rest of the gang. “Would someone care to explain to me what is going on?” he asked.

“Well,” Yugi began, “that girl is Mana, and she’s was one of the pharaoh’s friends. And -”

“So...wait, that would mean she’s about 5000 years old!” Duke exclaimed.

“What?! I’m not old! I’m seventeen years of age!” Mana yelled out. “You look older than me!”

“Ugh, never mind,” Duke said. “So, how did she get to our time anyway?” he asked. “Some vortex? A time portal? A weird result of a shadow game?”

“No, I actually obtained some kind of wishing bracelet...” Atemu began.

“So, you wished her back?” Duke responded. “What is she? Your *girlfriend*?” he teased.

“She’s...she’s just a friend,” Atemu answered back.

“Yeah...right,” Duke replied sarcastically, causing an embarrassed look to spread across Atemu’s face.

“Don’t make fun of the pharaoh like that!” Mana snapped, reprimanding him.

“He isn’t exactly the pharaoh anymore,” Duke said. “He-”

“Uh, hey, how about we just go inside the arcade?” Tristan suggested.

“Yeah,” Joey agreed. “Dat’s why we drove all da way out here. Let’s go inside already.”

“Yeah!” Yugi joined in. “She wanted to see how we all have fun! Let’s go inside already.”

Mana clung onto Atemu’s hand. “That’s right!” she chirped “You promised to show me a good time!”

They all walked to the entrance of the arcade and went inside.

Naturally, there were people everywhere, playing at the game booths, eyes peeled to the bright screens in front of them.

Mana wondered how people could enjoy staring at a tiny screen for enjoyment.

“Hey, Duke, Tristan! Race ya to the alien blasting game!” Joey yelled out. “Last one there has ta pay for da game!” He sprinted off.

“That’s not fair! You got a head start!” Tristan called out, and he began to hit the ground running as well.

“What? Wait for me!” Duke cried out, running after the two.

Yugi, Tea, Atemu, and Mana were left standing there.

“So much for those three,” Tea mumbled.

Mana turned to Atemu. “So, what are we going to do first?” she asked.

CHAPTER 7:

Atemu, Mana, Yugi, and Tea were left standing there as Joey, Tristan, and Duke ran off to fight each other in a virtual game.

Mana turned to Atemu. "So, what do people do here for fun?" she asked.

"Well, some people play games here," Atemu responded back.

"There's also the dance platform," Tea added. "That's pretty fun."

"How about we go around and see what we can do?" Yugi suggested.

Suddenly, there was yelling, cheering, running and shoving.

"What's going on?" Mana asked. "It sounds like some kind of exciting thing is happening."

"Well, why don't we go and find out?" Atemu replied.

The four of them began to follow the crowd, which led to a duel in progress.

In a clearing, there were two duelists facing each other, standing 18 to 20 feet apart. A gothic style male duelist had his right hand placed on his deck, prepared to draw. His opponent, a nerdy looking girl in a lab coat, waited eagerly for the next turn.

Mana looked at the glowing duel disks. "Atemu, what are those?" she asked, pointing to the duel disks on their arms.

"Those are duel disks," Atemu answered. "They're like the *dia diansk* of modern times. Today, people use them to duel each other."

"Duel?" Mana questioned. "You mean, fight each other with monsters? Isn't that dangerous, especially in an enclosed and crowded area like this?"

"Well, they're not really monsters, they're just holograms," Tea replied.

"What's a 'hologram'?" Mana asked.

"It's an image of a monster. You'll see," Yugi replied, pointing to the duel that was about to take place.

The guy duelist drew out six cards from his deck and fanned them out in his left hand. He then dramatically pulled out one of the cards with his right hand and placed it on his disk. "I play Feral Imp in attack mode!" he declared. (Feral Imp ATK=1400)

Mana watched as the Feral Imp seemed to magically appear on the field. "Ahh!" she screamed, and she nearly ran off in fear of what damage the Feral Imp might do.

But Atemu held onto her arm. “Mana, wait, they’re not real,” he said. “That’s just a lifelike image of the Feral Imp, just as Yugi said. The images are called holograms. They don’t hurt anybody.”

Mana was skeptical at first, but she noticed that people were cheering instead of running away, so she decided to stay and watch.

The female duelist drew out her cards in a similar fashion as her opponent. “The Feral Imp is a weak card...easy prey for my Gemini Elf!” she called out. (Gemini Elf ATK=1900) With one swift move, Gemini Elf appeared and destroyed the Feral Imp in one shattering blast. “Ha, the Feral Imp is no more, and you lost 500 life points.”

The crowd cheered wildly at this spectacle. But Mana couldn’t believe what she saw. She just witnessed a battle between two monsters, but nobody underwent injury or pain or had their souls lost to the Shadow Realm despite the loss of “life points”. *Is this what dueling has become?* she wondered.

The guy duelist growled in fury at his loss. But he regained his composure. “I play Aqua Madoor in defensive mode,” he said. “Try to get through his defense. And I play one card face down.” (DEF=2000)

The girl duelist just smirked. “I sacrifice my Gemini Elf to play...Dark Magician Girl!” she called out. “And I use the Book of Secret Arts to boost her attack power by 300 points!” The Gemini Elf hologram disappeared and the Dark Magician Girl hologram appeared on the field.

Mana’s eyes opened wide at the sight of the Dark Magician Girl on the playing field. She almost couldn’t believe it when the Dark Magician Girl began to follow the girl duelist’s orders. *This can’t be right....* she thought. The Dark Magician Girl was her ka; having seen her ka controlled by someone else, she felt as if she lost a part of herself. She ran outside, almost bursting into tears.

“Mana!” Atemu called out after her. He followed her outside. “Mana, are you alright?” he asked.

She turned to Atemu. “Why....why was the Dark Magician Girl there?! She’s my ka! She only follows what I ask her to do....She’s loyal to me....” she sobbed.

Atemu searched his minds for the right words to explain what had happened. “Um, well,” Atemu began, “after the game was remade for modern times, certain monsters were copied over and over again into many cards. The Dark Magician Girl was one of those monsters and...”

“But...but that’s not right,” she replied. “There’s only one real Dark Magician Girl....”

Atemu then pulled out his deck from his pants pocket and began searching through it. He pulled out a card from his deck and handed it to Mana. “Here,” he said. “You can one of my cards. It’s yours now.”

Mana reached out her hand to look at the card. It was the Dark Magician Girl card. She began to smile. "You really mean to give this to me?" she asked. She held it close to her heart caringly.

Just then, Yugi and Tea came running out of the arcade building.

"What happened?" Yugi asked. "Tea and I saw you running out of the arcade. Is everything alright?"

"Everything is fine now," Atemu answered. "There was a bit of a misunderstanding, that is all."

"That's good," Tea chirped. "We thought something bad happened to you two."

Soon, Joey, Tristan, and Duke followed afterwards.

"Hey guys!" Joey called out. "Didya see da duel?"

"No," Yugi answered. "We had to leave mid-match. Who won?"

"That nerdy girl duelist," Tristan responded. "She used the Inaba White Rabbit to bypass her opponent's defenses, and she finished it off with a direct attack after swiping the field clean with dark hole and summoning a powerful monster. He was done for anyway."

"So, why is everyone out here?" Duke asked. "Shouldn't we go back inside?"

"Maybe Mana had enough of the arcade," Atemu said. "I'll take her back to the Game Shop."

CHAPTER 8:

It was nearing rush hour. The cars began to clog up the streets quickly. The drivers honked furiously, impatient to get wherever they needed to go.

Mana clung onto Atemu's arm as they walked down the street together. Her eyes watched the zooming cars speeding down the road. She found their loud horns very annoying.

The sun was high up in the sky, illuminating the glass windows that encompassed the outer façade of buildings. Atemu, already adjusted to the modern world, was indifferent to the light-filled windows. Mana, on the other hand, was in awe; it was almost as if she were walking through a corridor of light and mirrors.

A clamor of noise could be heard up ahead. "Atemu, what's that noise?" Mana asked.

The sound was coming from a nearby construction site. "The sound is coming from a construction site, Mana," Atemu told her.

A confused look spread over Mana's face. "A construction site?" she questioned. "Are you sure?" For her, the sounds of the modern construction site were much different from the sounds of a construction site from thousands of years ago. The vibrations of the backhoes, bulldozers, and jackhammers were completely new to her.

"If you want, we can go see the construction site," Atemu suggested.

"Oh yes!" Mana chirped. "Let's go see!"

The two of them walked a few blocks ahead to see the construction site. Upon arrival, Mana's eyes were amazed at what she saw. Instead of workers dragging blocks, there were several metal creatures (actually machines, being that she just wasn't familiar with the concept of machinery yet) picking up and dumping materials with ease. But what was awe inspiring most of all was the gleaming steel cage (actually the upper foundation of the building).

The overseer who was managing the site noticed Atemu and Mana standing nearby. He went up to them. "That's enough sightseeing you two," he said in a gruff and annoyed voice. "This is a hazardous construction site, not a tourist landmark. Now get moving."

"But I never saw a construction site this big and impressive before!" Mana answered. She was hoping to stay a little while longer.

The overseer was flattered. He never met anyone who called his building projects "impressive". He dropped his annoyed tone, and began to point to the building's upper foundation. "Well, it is going to be an impressive building," he said in a proud manner. "Gonna be fifty stories tall. Imagine a fifty story tall plexiglass building. It'll be finished in about six to seven months."

"Six to seven months?" Mana replied in surprise. "I remember it taking several years to create something that huge. You must use some kind of magic to get your work done quickly."

A weird look spread over the overseers face. "Huh? Magic?" he asked.

Atemu grabbed Mana's arm, and motioned for her to leave. "Okay, we must get going now," he hastily blurted out.

"But - " Mana replied, but was interrupted.

"We have to go," Atemu quickly answered, and he firmly tugged on Mana's arm, dragging her away from the construction site, only letting go when they were out of range of the construction site.

"What was that for?!" Mana snapped. "Why did you have to pull me away?"

"Because you mentioned to the use of magic," Atemu answered. "Today, people don't use magic as much as they used to thousands of years ago. You would have aroused suspicion."

"A world with little to no magic?" Mana wondered. "What about the sorcerers and magicians?" she questioned.

"They don't exist anymore," Atemu responded, not taking the time to figure out the impact of his statement.

Mana felt downtrodden and out-of-place. She was, after all, a magician-in-training. "So, is there no place for me here then?" she asked, sadly.

"What, no!" Atemu said swiftly. "I wanted you to come here for a reason."

"What reason?" Mana questioned.

Atemu's face turned scarlet. "I...I just needed someone to talk to with whom I could I reconnect my past with," he fibbed.

Mana noticed the scarlet face. "Um, are you okay?" she asked.

But before Atemu could answer, a group of three tough looking guys began to approach them.

"Hey, look," one of the guys motioned to the others. "That one looks like his hair was caught in a paint factory explosion." He pointed to Atemu and began to laugh hysterically.

"He looks familiar," another one said. "Didn't he win the Duelist Kingdom and Battle City tournament?"

"Hey, yeah," the third answered. "He also won the KC Grand Prix. He's musta won some prize money for winning all those duels."

"Do ya think he has some cash on 'im?" the first wondered.

“Well, there’s only one way ta find out,” the second declared.

Oh great, Atemu thought sarcastically. Not really wanting Mana to deal with riffraff, he tried to get her to move in a different direction, away from the swift moving gang. But the feet of the trio was faster, and they caught up the two.

“Let’s jump ‘em!” the third yelled out.

Atemu was about to block his attack, but before anybody could do anything, Mana stuck out her hand. “FREEZE SPELL!” she yelled out, and all three thugs froze.... *in midair*.

“Mana! What did you do?!” Atemu cried out.

“I used my freeze spell on them,” Mana replied, smiling proudly. “See? They’re stuck there in that position. That will teach them to never mess with the pharaoh again.”

The commotion drew attention. Onlookers saw three rough-looking guys suspended above the ground, surrounded in pink light, unable to move. Not knowing what was going on, the onlookers screamed and ran away.

Today, people don’t use magic as much as they used to thousands of years ago. You would have aroused suspicion. That statement echoed in Mana’s mind. *Perhaps I should let them go,* she thought. She motioned her hand to remove the freeze spell.

The freeze spell wore off, and the three thugs collapsed to the ground.

Atemu grew tense. *Would they try to attack again?* he wondered.

But, to his surprise (and relief), the three thugs ran off, scared and nearly crying.

“That girl is strange!”

“She made us freeze in midair!”

“Run! Before she does *more* crazy stuff!”

In fear and shock of it all, the three thugs ran as fast as they could to get away. They did not want to see what other havoc Mana is capable of producing.

Atemu turned to Mana. “Hey, are you alright?” he asked caringly.

Mana laughed. “I was about to ask you the same question,” she giggled. “Your face was red before those guys tried to attack us.”

CHAPTER 9:

Suddenly, a small, soft growling arose. It was emanating from Mana's stomach.

Atemu looked at Mana, who felt a little embarrassed from what just happened. "I guess that means we'll be going out to lunch then," he said. "The mall is not so far from here. We can go there to eat."

Mana's ears perked up. She had never heard of a "mall" before, but it sounded interesting. "What's a mall?" she asked with great curiosity. "Is it like food market stands thousands of years ago?"

Atemu's mind searched for an explanation of what a "mall" is. "Well, actually," he replied, "it's more like a market bazaar. People come there to shop for goods."

The idea of a mall quickly became exciting for Mana. She remembered the enjoyment from walking through the bazaar thousands of years ago, and she felt that this trip to the "mall" would be just as fun.

"Let's go then!" she chirped. She clung onto Atemu arm so he can lead the way.

Fifteen minutes later, the two reached a huge, windowless, concrete building, with people entering in and out its front doors. Mana looked at the gigantic structure with great disbelief. It looks nothing of what I envisioned, she thought. "Atemu, where's the 'mall' you told me about?" she asked. "I just see a huge stone building with glass doors and no windows."

"That building is the mall," Atemu answered.

"It doesn't look fun," Mana blurted out. The drab grey façade of the mall was an eyesore for her, and she thought that going to the mall would be more disappointing than exciting.

Atemu saw the disappointed look on Mana's face. "Mana," he began, "the 'bazaar' that you seek is inside that building. How about we go inside so you can see for yourself?" He took her hand and brought her inside.

Mana walked through the glass doors to find a bright open space illuminated by the sunlight that shone through the mall's glass ceiling (which, apparently, was not visible from the outside). Instead of market stands and merchants yelling out to passing customers, there were massive glass walls (actually, the shop windows), showing an array of different objects to be sold.

She looked to her left and her right, her eyes peering through the giant glass walls. Some of the glass walls showed things she recognized: clothes, shoes, jewelry, soaps, perfumes. Other glass walls showed other objects which she did not recognize, but their interesting shapes and colors grabbed her attention.

Suddenly, a smell wafted up her nose. It was the smell of food, and it was coming from the back of the mall. The smell reminded her of how hungry she was; her interest shifted towards that of a bite to eat. She turned to Atemu. "Is there some place to eat?" she asked.

"The food court is up ahead," Atemu replied. "We'll be eating there." He took her by the hand and headed towards the food court.

~At the food court

Mana sat at one of the tables in the food court. The top of the table was smooth, unlike the splintery wooden tables of the past. The steel chair she was sitting in felt a bit uncomfortable, but she was used to it, considering that the chair was just as stiff as the wooden chairs of ancient Egypt.

She watched as Atemu walked over to a line of people, and then fall in line with them. It appeared kind of odd seeing him at the back of the line like a commoner, for she always knew him as a prince and as a pharaoh.

Watching Atemu fall in line soon became boring, so Mana's eyes darted up and down the menu walls. The different foods being sold sounded so strange to her. *Pizza? Hamburger? Fries? What are those things?* she wondered. She thought of them as weird and repulsive. She wondered if Atemu was going to order any of these things.

In the meantime, Atemu wondered what he was going to order. He didn't want to order something that Mana possibly wouldn't like. He scanned the menu quickly and decided to order two salads and two yogurt parfaits; after all, those were the only two dishes he could think of that closely resembled an ancient Egyptian diet.

(Author's inserted note: Egyptians did eat lettuce 5000 years ago, hence why I decided to have Atemu choose to order salad. And yes, yogurt was part of the ancient Egyptian diet, too, except it was more likely made with goat milk and would have probably mixed with honey instead of sugar to make it more sweet).

The line was moving slowly, and he wished that it would move faster. His legs began to hurt a little from standing for an extended period of time.

His mind began to wander from the boredom of waiting in line. He began to recall the recent events of today: the car ride, the trip to the arcade, the encounter with the three thugs. Then he began to recall the events in between: him giving her the Dark Magician Girl card, the little side trip to the construction site, the time when Mana asked about her place in the modern world:

"So, is there no place for me here then?" she asked, sadly.

"What, no!" Atemu said swiftly. "I wanted you to come here for a reason."

"What reason?" Mana questioned.

Atemu's face turned scarlet. "I...I just needed someone to talk to with whom I could I reconnect my past with," he fibbed.

This flashback led him to remember the memories of thousands of years ago when he was still a prince of the royal palace. He remembered when he met Mana for the first time, how they quickly became friends, how they used to play hide-and-seek by the giant pots in the Great Hall of the palace, how they played tag in the royal garden. This, in turn, led him to remember how his life was stifled with royal duties and divine law; he began to recall the conversations that the palace advisors had with his father, how they were concerned about the prince's relationship with Mana because she was considerably of lower class.

All of those strict palace rules that stymied his life were gone now. Long gone. Now she was here with him with no palace rules to hold him back. But still, even with such rules gone, he couldn't bring himself to tell her how he really felt about her. *Why must something so simple be so hard to do?* he wondered.

"Hey, you!" a voice yelled from over the counter. It was the cashier. "It's your turn to order. Hurry up! Other customers are waiting in line!"

"Huh? Oh sorry," Atemu replied. He quickly made his order and returned to the table when the order was complete.

~Ten minutes later, at the table

Mana picked up the little crisp green lettuce leaf with her plastic fork and placed the lettuce leaf into her mouth. She was pretty glad that Atemu didn't order a disgusting meal.

She was about to pick up another lettuce leaf, when she noticed that Atemu was eating slowly. His mind appeared distant and wandering.

"Hey, are you alright?" she asked. "You barely touched your food."

"Hmm? Oh, yes, I'm fine," Atemu replied. "It's nothing." He picked up his fork and continued eating.

Mana knew something was up. She wanted to figure out what was wrong, but it seemed like Atemu wouldn't be willing to tell her. So, she decided to create a conversation about something else. "So," she began, "where are we going after were done eating?"

Atemu assumed they were going back to the shop, but he figured that Mana wanted to see more of what the city of Domino had to offer. But where could he bring her next that would be of interest to her? *The park?* That was too far and out of the way. *The movie theater?* He didn't know how Mana would react to a movie. *The local dueling arena?* He didn't want Mana to become upset again. It was difficult to choose the next destination.

The only other place he could think of was the museum, which was still sporting its ever popular Egyptian exhibit. Bringing her to the museum sounded like a good idea, for the museum displays would be like a home away from home for her.

"We could go the museum, Mana," Atemu suggested.

“Museum”. Another word I don’t know, Mana thought. “What is a museum?” she asked.

Atemu smiled “I’ll leave that as a surprise,” he told her. “But I have a good feeling that you will like the museum when we reach there.”

~Half an hour later, in front of the Domino city museum.

The Corinthian columns seemed to rise like the great needle-like obelisks of the kingdom of Egypt. The design and structure of the museum was awe inspiring to Mana, imposing an implicit message of importance into her head.

“So, this is the museum,” Mana quietly said to herself. The museum reminded her of the sacred temples she used to pray in.

“How about we go inside?” Atemu suggested. He opened the decorative brass door of the museum to let her inside.

Mana was even more delighted with the inside of the museum than the outside. *It looks almost like home....except indoors!* she thought.

The museum had gone to great lengths to recreate the Egyptian kingdom. It went through the trouble of restoring temples, shrines, tombs, statues, and artifacts. It even went through the trouble of creating a fountain filled with lotus flowers and papyrus reeds to represent the Nile River!

Mana jumped with glee at the sight of everything. She wanted to explore each and every inch of the museum. She wished that the museum wasn’t so huge; it would take days to explore everything.

She rushed over to the first exhibit, featuring some artifacts. It was kind of odd for her seeing people oogly-eyed over a woven papyrus basket and other medial items, but she enjoyed looking over the objects which she was so familiar with.

Atemu followed her wherever she went. “Are you enjoying yourself?” he asked Mana.

“Oh yes, very much!” she replied gleefully. And she hopped on over to the next exhibit on display.

Atemu was about to continue following her, when an object featured in the nearby jewelry exhibit caught his eye. It was a gold bracelet laced with gemstones. *Where have I seen this before?* Atemu wondered. Suddenly, he remembered that this bracelet was similar to the one he bought from Lexie a while back.

He decided to read the description of the bracelet:

Wishing bracelet – 3750 B.C.E., Upper Egypt

This exquisite gold bracelet was designed carefully by some of Egypt's best artisans. Such a piece of jewelry could only be afforded by the extremely wealthy, for the diamonds and rubies had to be imported from the Orient and the emeralds from the Mediterranean.

The description sounded quite ordinary to Atemu. Nothing in the description seemed to catch his attention. He was about to leave, when he noticed that the description continued on farther than what he read:

It is said that such a bracelet is able to grant one wish. However, these bracelets were often prized more for its beauty than its magic, for it was said that the wishes were only temporary.

A feeling of shock swept through Atemu's mind. *Temporary? Oh no*, Atemu thought. *But I wished for Mana to come to present times! Does this mean that she will be soon be gone?*

Mana's voice pierced his thoughts. "Atemu? Where are you?" she cried out. Apparently, she had gotten lost in the labyrinth-like design of the museum.

Atemu followed her voice and found her walking through the corridor-like passageways lined with marble statues of Egyptian figures, not far from the jewelry exhibit.

Mana ran over to Atemu, a relieved look spreading across her face. "I'm so happy you're here!" she exclaimed. "I got scared when I couldn't find you. I almost thought that I lost you forever."

Mana thought that Atemu would be happy to see her, but she noticed a dreaded look on his face. "Wha...what's wrong?" she asked, worried.

Atemu was almost at a lost for words. How could he tell her the horrible news?

But, he wouldn't have to. Mana's eyes spotted the bracelet in the exhibit. "Why, this bracelet looks like the bracelet I'm wearing right now," she spoke out. She walked over to the display and began reading the bracelet's description.

CHAPTER 10:

As her eyes descended upon the last part of the bracelet's description, a horrible feeling began to effervesce up from her heart. It almost as if she was reading her own fate. She slowly lifted her head to break her gaze from the display case, and she turned her aquamarine eyes towards Atemu's face.

Atemu looked at Mana. He saw Mana's once cheery bubbly attitude fade away.

"Wha... what is said here..." Mana began softly, "is...is it true?"

Atemu didn't know what to tell her. He could have told her that it wasn't true to make her feel better, but that would be untruthful. On the other hand, he could have told her that it was true, but he wasn't able to bring himself up to say so, because it would greatly upset her. He opened his mouth slightly, but no voice came out...he was at a complete loss for words.

Small tears started to well up in Mana's eyes. "Please don't tell me that it's true!" she cried out. "Please don't!" She fell on her knees, sobbing, her hand hiding her face and her tears. "Oh, please don't..." she continued, weeping.

Atemu walked over to her, knelt down, and held her in his arms caringly. "It's...it's going to be alright, Mana," he gently whispered in her ear. He kept saying that phrase over and over again, wanting to reassure her and calm her down, but it was of no use. Both of them knew what was going to eventually happen: Mana was going to disappear and be gone from the modern world for good...it was only a matter of time.

Suddenly, the bracelet on Mana's hand began to give off a soft, luminescent glow. Mana felt herself being slowly tugged away from the modern world. "A...Atemu, I feel strange all of a sudden," she said quietly.

Atemu knew what was going to happen: Mana was going to disappear. *No...she can't leave!* Atemu thought. *Not now! Please, just a little longer!* "Mana, please don't go..." he pleaded, but to no use; she had no control over the bracelet's power.

The light from the bracelet began to grow stronger, and both Atemu and Mana seemed to be engulfed by it. Atemu held onto Mana, a desperate attempt to keep her here with him. "Mana, you can't leave!" he cried out. Suddenly, he found himself saying "Wej hr merej et ke....."

Mana looked up towards Atemu's violet eyes. "Wej hr merej et ke, Atemu," she responded back to him, smiling softly.

Suddenly, the light around them became intense and burst into small, speckled glowing fragments. They fluttered around and faded as they descended to the ground. Atemu was left kneeling there on the museum floor, alone.

"She's...she's gone," he despondently whispered to himself. He began to feel empty inside.

Yugi was sweeping up the last bit of dirt that was in front of the Game Shop. He watched as the swept up dust got picked up by the wind and carried away.

It was nearing 8:00 PM. The pharaoh has been awfully gone for a long time with that girl, Yugi thought. I wonder where he is. He looked up from the dust-filled sidewalk and peered down the street.

It was dark outside, but the street lamps had not yet turned on. Yugi could see the shadow of a figure plod slowly in his direction. *It's too late for customers to be coming now. Who could it be?* Yugi wondered. He squint his eyes to see who it was.

As the figure drew closer to the shop, Yugi recognized that it was Atemu. "Hey there!" he called out cheerfully. He was glad to see Atemu coming back safe and sound. But, then he noticed that Atemu was walking alone.

Atemu finally reached the door of the Game Shop. Yugi could see a depressed look on Atemu's face. "Hey, are you okay?" Yugi asked, concerned. "You look upset. And what happened to your friend Mana? Wasn't she with you?"

"She's...she's gone," Atemu replied quietly. He began to walk silently into the shop.

Yugi started to follow him. "Huh?" Yugi wondered. "What do you mean by 'she's gone'?"

Atemu's face winced. "I...I just need to be alone for a while," he blurted out abruptly, and he quickly went inside. He did not feel like talking about it further. He just wanted to go quietly up to his room and be left alone for a while.

(A few minutes later...)

Something's not right. Yugi walked up the stairs to Atemu's room. He found the door closed, but unlocked. He placed his hand on the doorknob. *Would it be so bad if I just went in there to see how he was doing?* Yugi wondered. He decided to open the door. His small hands turned the doorknob and he went inside.

Atemu was standing by the window, looking up at the starry night sky. The sound of the door opening startled him. He quickly turned around to see Yugi standing by the doorway.

"Umm, hey, are you okay?" Yugi asked meekly.

"She's...she's gone, Yugi," Atemu answered. "The magic from the bracelet wasn't strong enough to keep her here...." His voice began to trail off.

Yugi began to feel pity towards Atemu. He couldn't imagine what kind of pain Atemu was going through. After all, losing friends is difficult for any person to bear.

“I...I told her ‘wej hr merej et ke’, and she told me the same thing, right before she left,” Atemu said.

“Huh? ‘Wej hr merej et ke’? What does that mean?” Yugi asked, curiously.

Atemu gave off a short, sad sigh. “‘Wej hr merej et ke’ means ‘I love you’ in ancient Egyptian,” Atemu explained. A sorrowful look could easily be seen in his eyes.

“You loved her very much, didn’t you?” Yugi inquired.

“Yes...I did,” Atemu answered. “I wanted her to come back to me because she was a love I once knew.”