The Kolipan Crossing Crossing

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For my parents and my brother for guiding me,
and for everyone else who cared
Stephanie
For my supportive and caring parents,
and Jacqueline for always being there for me

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Friends who inspired Mathias, Mauricia and various monsters—Hopefully, you aren't offended or embarrassed by any descriptions we included. We would like to say that all resemblances to living people, dead or alive, are entirely coincidental. Just remember that you can't sue because you agreed to this.

Ms. Merritt, Melesbo, and Smiley—Thanks for not spreading the word about this book before it was released.

Lastly, Thailand—Without you, the name Kohpan wouldn't have ever existed.

Preface \ 自序

《柯盼的神奇旅程》始于三年前的那个冬天。当时《哈利·波特》和《龙骑士》之类的小说刚刚崭露头角,人们的创造力有了前所未见的全新特质,表现形式也空前繁多。不过,随着年龄的增长,我和洪蕾的阅读品味也日趋成熟,越来越觉得自己曾经钟爱的那些奇幻小说也有一些不足:它们的情节发展有时略显突兀,人物的意图也有牵强之处。总而言之,虽然它们依旧不失为杰作,却总有那么一点点不尽如人意。

有一次,我和洪蕾一起去泰国。一天吃晚饭的时候,我俩有了一个共同的愿望:写一本情节发展尽如人意、从头到尾都让人着迷的奇幻小说。于是就有了《柯盼》这本书。

我认为《柯盼》与其他奇幻小说的最大区别在于书中的人物。现在许多作家都希望通过自己的书和书中主人公的种种遭遇来书写传奇,而《柯盼》一书的主角——双胞胎兄妹 Calupson Kohpan 和 Calixte Kohpan——并不是尽善尽美、脱离现实的英雄人物,从头到尾,他们都在诠释"凡人"的意义,因而让人觉得无比亲切,想必你们也会觉得如此。

有趣的是,Calixte 的性格似乎在很大程度上受了我俩性格的影响。我们并没有刻意这么做,但却在不知不觉中将各自的性情注入了这本小说。Calixte 从洪蕾身上得到了热爱动物的天性,以及一种只有信任和时间才能改变的羞怯心理。因为有我,Calixte 则变得有点儿喜怒无常,有时候还很难相处,同时又拥有不畏困难、一往无前的勇气。

双胞胎哥哥 Calupson 为 Calixte 的抑郁性情提供了很好的弥补。虽然他努力想保持坚强的外表,维护男子汉的形象,可他的行为却表明,他远比自己的妹妹更忧心忡忡,更没有安全感。而妹妹倒是终于冲破了自己的枷锁,开始更勇敢的尝试。

《柯盼》当中的世界固然出于想象,书中的少年友谊和成长情怀却十分 真实。借由对抗怪兽、穿越魔法森林以及骑马飞行的种种经历,三位主角

的性格日趋成熟。Calixte 和 Nathan 之间有了一种稍稍逾越友谊边界的情意,但这时两人却都有点儿不知所措,青涩得让人怜爱。进入奇幻世界之初,Calixte 还带着不情不愿的畏怯心情。到了书的结尾,她虽然不能说有了彻底的转变,但却无疑比以前更加勇敢,心胸也更加开阔。当然,成长也有哀伤的一面。Calixte 与 Nathan 越来越亲密,与哥哥却越来越隔阂重重,淡漠疏远。作为作者和读者,我发现这本书能让我暂时放下现实的包袱,去为Calupson 和 Calixte 的胜利摇旗呐喊,为他们的失败心惊胆颤。书虽然出自我的手笔,每回当我再次捧起这本书,却依然感到新鲜,甚至激动。我希望,它也会带给你们同样的感受。

张苏菲 (Sophie Zhang) 2010 年 5 月

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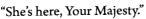
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PROLOGUE

引子



这本是一个由精灵仙子守护的美妙世界,Queen Deliah 和 King Jacob 是这里的主宰,而现在一个神秘的闯入者 Lady Valene 破坏了这一切,她刺杀了国王与王后。好在这之前,王后用魔法把自己的孩子们送到了另外一个世界……



Queen Deliah, the kind ruler of the kingdom of Rochalon for centuries, banged her scepter down on the marble ground, displaying a rare flash of anger. She looked over at her husband, King Jacob, who looked equally as stormy.

"Where is she?"

The messenger bowed low. "The sources say she is at the edge of the kingdom." She was closer than they thought.

Queen Deliah sighed, and signaled for the messenger to be dismissed. The messenger bowed low once more, her nose almost touching the polished ground, and scurried³ out of the room. As soon as Queen Deliah was sure she was out of the room, she leaned over and buried her face in her hands, being uncharacteristically less than regal⁴.

^{1.} scepter: (象征君主权位的) 节杖; a flash of anger: 一阵愤怒。

^{2.} stormy: (脾气、心情等) 暴躁的, 狂暴的。

^{3.} scurry: 急匆匆地走。

^{4.} regal: 适合帝王身份的。

"Don't worry, my dear," said King Jacob comfortingly. "It must be a ruse⁵."

"No," Queen Deliah answered, shaking her head. "She's here. You know Valene likes to make an entrance. The only question now is, when will she arrive? We must sound out alerts and evacuate our people, possibly send them to the planet next door."

She was panicking⁶. The Queen never panicked. The creases on King Jacob's forehead deepened. Normally youthful and loud, the Queen and King were looking haggard⁷. The crisis that had been travelling around the kingdom had been taking its toll⁸.

The fairies⁹ were under attack. Queen Deliah, being the fairie Queen, had sent them into hiding—but she wondered how long they could stay there. What worried her most was whether or not Lady Valene could be defeated by their army.

Even King Jacob, who was slightly more optimistic than his wife, knew that the situation wasn't turning in their favor at the moment. He could only hope that Valene wouldn't arrive unexpectedly. If she did, their chances of winning were slight.

"The crystal is gone," said Queen Deliah, sighing. "How safe can our people be now?"

King Jacob shook his head, confirming the worst.

Queen Deliah swept herself up off her feet, gracefully stepping down the stairs.

"I'm going to go check on the children."

Even more important than her people were her newborn children. They were born right before the period of distress, and were Queen Deliah and King Jacob's pride and joy. Beautiful and cherubic¹⁰, she couldn't bear to imagine them unsafe.

She loved her children, but she knew what she had to do. The decision that she was about to make was only for the best—otherwise, they would get hurt. With a wave of her hand, she summoned the fairie power bestowed on her and in an instant—her children had disappeared.

Where they had gone, she didn't dare to say—she couldn't risk Lady Valene finding out. In a moment of weakness, Queen Deliah felt the tears spilling out of her eyes, like large dewdrops¹¹ as they fell to the ground.

^{5.} ruse: 诡计, 计策。

^{6.} panic (-icked, -icking): 恐慌, 惊恐不安。

^{7.} haggard: 憔悴的,形容枯槁的。

^{8.} take its toll: 造成损失 (或危害、伤亡等)。

^{9.} fairie: 是根据 fairy 自造的一个词,在此指地球以外另一个世界中的"仙子、精灵"。

^{10.} cherubic: 圆脸的, 胖乎乎的。

^{11.} dewdrop: 露珠。

Lady Valene admired herself in the mirror.

She was every bit what the goddess of the darkness should be. Her dark hair cast shadows on her face, concealing her eyes. Her red lips curled upwards in a smile as she felt a surge of power run through her, like a bolt of electricity.¹²

It was perfect.

Everything had gone as planned, and right now, the ball was in her court. She knew that Queen Deliah and King Jacob were panicking—as they very well should. It didn't matter what they planned to do with their so-called army. If all went well, her plan would be the end of them.

The end of them, and the beginning for her.

Lady Valene was tired of all the light that had streamed into their world for so long. It was time for darkness to reign¹³. And for that to happen, she had to have complete power. It was all the better that she had no king—that meant no one to share the reign with. It would be all hers.

She was a combination of beauty and terror.

That was how she liked it—lured in, entited by the beauty—and then trapped in by sheer terror. She smiled to herself, pleased.

Admiring herself once more in the mirror, she put her hands together.

It was time to execute her plan.

"You sure the children will be all right?" Queen Deliah wasn't sure if she had made the right decision by sending them away. She glanced at the empty cribs¹⁴, side by side. It hadn't even been a day, and she missed them terribly.

"My dear," King Jacob said gently, stroking 15 her wrist. "Anywhere is safer than here."

"Yes, I suppose you're right," she sighed, tearing her gaze away from the crib.

"Sleep now," he assured his wife. "We'll deal with everything tomorrow."

She removed her crystal crown from her head and placed it on the red velvet pillow on her dresser. Her husband gently kissed on her forehead, and turned off the light.

In the darkness, she asked once more, "Do you think I did the right thing?"

^{12.} curl: 撇 (嘴等); a surge of: 一阵; a bolt of electricity: 一道电流。

^{13.} reign: 统治, 主宰。

^{14.} crib: 有围栏的童床。

^{15.} stroke: (用手等) 轻抚。

^{16.} velvet: 天鹅绒; dresser: 梳妆台。

"You're doing the best for our children. You'll see them again someday." Slightly reassured, she shut her eyes and fell asleep.

Lady Valene laughed quietly from the doorway.

"Your children may be safe, but you most definitely are not."

It was dark, just the way she liked it. She stroked her poison dagger and held it to her lips, smirking. 17

"My Queen, my King," she sang, poising the knife over the sleeping pair. "I was never one to be loyal."

The Queen awoke with a gasp 18.

"Lady Valene—"

But it was too late. In one motion, she plunged the dagger into the Queen's throat. Once satisfied that she was dead, she moved to the King and slaughtered him as well.

Valene smiled at her handiwork and stroked the dead King's face.

"You were a handsome one. Shame, it really is."

She glanced over at the glittering¹⁹ crown resting on the red velvet pillow. Her eyes glowing within the dark shadows of her face, she reached over and placed it on her own head.

As she smiled in the darkness, she thought she heard a faint crying. Ignoring the sound, she enjoyed the weight of the heavy crown on her head.

She was no longer Lady Valene.

She was now Queen Valene. 🍪

^{17.} dagger: 匕首, 短剑; smirk: 得意地笑。

^{18.} gasp: 倒吸一口气。

^{19.} glittering: 闪闪发亮 (或发光) 的。

CHAPTER ONE

MAKING PLANS

第一章◆如意算盘



在学校里,善良内向的女生 Calixte Kohpan 和双胞胎哥哥 Calupson Kohpan 都是异性心 仪的对象……运动型大男孩 Grayson 要借助一次海滩聚会 对 Calixte 展开攻势……

It was customary for Calixte Kohpan to sit in class with one hand propped on her chin, her eyes focused at a point outside the window. Her teachers had long learned that it was useless to scold her, as she failed to focus in class either way. As long as her test scores and homework grades remained stellar¹, her teachers had no complaints.

However, today, everyone else in the class had adopted a similar pose as Calixte, watching the football players practice outside. Football was undoubtedly a big deal at Carver Academy, seeing as all other sports failed to draw in any victories. Thus, all the football players were worshiped and treated like gods. If anyone ruled the school, it was unquestionably the football players, and whichever girls were lucky enough to be their arm accessories.

Calupson Kohpan, Calixte's twin brother, happened to be the quarterback of the team, and the one in particular all the girls fawned over.² However, while Calixte was indeed looking out the window, she was not looking at the athletic boys sweating up and down the field, as the other girls in her class were doing. In fact, she was not

^{1.} stellar: 杰出的, 优秀的。

^{2.} quarterback: (橄榄球中组织进攻的) 枢纽前卫, 四分卫; fawn over: 讨好, 奉承。

particularly staring at a certain point. Looking outside allowed her mind to wander, as her eyes glazed³ over and she began to think.

While every member of her class belonged to a certain clique, Calixte did not. She had always failed to identify with a certain character, and instead clung to her best friend, Leila. In terms of academics, she excelled, yet she had no particular passion. She spent most of her free time listening to music and drawing aimlessly in her sketchbook. The walls of her room were littered with random doodles⁴ she had begun and forgotten to finish. Often, she would visit the local animal shelters and play with the stray dogs or help feed the newborn puppies, but she participated in no other extracurricular activities, giving her college counselors heart attacks every time they scanned her resume.⁵

Her brother had always extended an invitation out to her to eat lunch with the football jocks and the cheerleaders at lunchtime, but watching the boys scarf down their food like animals and initiate belching contests was too much for her.⁶

Calixte sighed and twirled a lock of her dark hair around and around her finger, drawing sighs from the boys around her. She paid no attention to them, and continued staring out the window absent-mindedly. Her face was abnormally lovely, with a porcelain complexion, a dainty nose, and deep dimples dotting either cheek. Many people claimed that it hurt to look at her, as there was something abnormal about the beauty of her features. Perhaps it was the violet eyes that conveyed a sense of longing and sadness, not at all unlike a tragic ending to a beautiful story. Calixte didn't know it, as she tended not to pay much attention to her surroundings, but her elusiveness made her all the more appealing to others.

Calupson Kohpan saw his sister staring out the window, seemingly watching him on the football field. He wiped the sweat off his brow with his arm, and waved to her. She did not wave back and kept staring, her eyes wide and unblinking. Calupson waved once more and ten girls waved back eagerly, none of which were his sister. He shook his

^{3.} glaze: (目光) 变呆滞。

^{4.} doodle: 乱涂出来的东西。

^{5.} animal shelter: 动物收容所; stray dog: 流浪狗; college counselor: 大学辅导员。

^{6.} jock: 〈美俚〉(特指大学的)运动选手; scarf: 〈美俚〉(尤指狼吞虎咽地)吃; belch: 打嗝。

^{7.} twirl: 捻弄, 缠绕; lock: 一绺头发。

^{8.} porcelain complexion: 陶瓷般的肤色; dainty: 小巧的, 精致的; dimple: 酒窝。

head, chuckling⁹, and reminded himself how his sister could be at times. She was often quiet and aloof¹⁰, but at home, she was open and warm.

As he bent down to tie his shoe, Calupson glanced over at his teammate, Grayson Taylor. Sure enough, he was paying no attention to practice, and was looking up at Calixte.

Many boys pursued Calixte, but Grayson Taylor was different from the rest. Aside from Calupson, who being the quarterback was perhaps the most sought after, Grayson was extraordinarily popular. He was notorious for his sleek charm and swift mouth. 11 Calixte, however, had shown no interest whatsoever to him, and that bothered him. In reality, Calixte did not show any interest in any boy in particular, preferring to keep mostly to herself, but Grayson took her aloofness personally. And although there was a long line of girls waiting to date him, Grayson refused to accept that there was one girl who had not submitted to his charm. Calixte's unintentional "rejection" proved to be the main driving force behind Grayson's never-ending chase for her.

The bell rang, signaling the end of the school day, and the beginning of yet another glorious, sunny weekend. Calupson quickly peeled off his sweaty uniform, crumpled it in a ball, and threw it in the corner of his locker. He ran up from the locker room, taking the stairs two at a time, to meet his sister and his girlfriend, Victoria. While he knew Calixte would be willing to wait a few minutes if he were late, Victoria would not be quite as understanding.

Calixte was just opening her locker as Calupson approached. Seeing as Victoria was nowhere to be seen, he slowed down and relaxed. Breathing heavily, he leaned against an open locker door to catch his breath and steady himself.

From the opposite end of the hallway, Grayson was nearing as well. Calupson had managed to catch his breath, but he lingered for a few extra minutes, and waited for Grayson to pass him. He had always wanted Calixte to go out on at least one date with Grayson. He could see no better opportunity for Grayson to ask than now. He was Calupson's best friend, and while Calupson preferred that his sister never dated anyone, he figured that his best friend would be better than any other boy at the school.

^{9.} chuckle: 咯咯地轻声笑。

^{10.} aloof: 冷漠的,超然离群的。

^{11.} sleek charm: 时髦阔气的魅力; swift mouth: 能言善辩。

^{12.} peel off: 〈口〉脱衣服; crumple: 弄皱, 压皱; locker: (体育馆等公共场所供个人使用的) 锁柜, 可锁的衣物柜。