



discovery

the first years

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“Love is a friendship set to music.”
Joseph Campbell



Their story began on the net, in the virtual venues of email and chat. While it started with safe words and the shrouds of near anonymity, the connection seemed clear even then. The stories of life were exchanged — adventures, friends and family conveyed in words and music, stuttering movie clips and aged, grainy images. Shared, too, were dreams and thoughts, hopes of what might yet come.

The transitions from the abstractions of the virtual toward the solidity of the real each came with moments of uncertainty and doubt. But in the months that followed, they settled on a plan — to meet on neutral ground, to walk a common path in their formerly separate explorations.





They found each other in the sea of faces at Bangkok Airport — real world contact after months of virtual connection. At the Hotel Atlanta, they found shelter amidst the buzz and bustle of the exotic metropolis.



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In ruin-ringed Ayutthaya, they explored the ancient temples even as each discovered the other's reality.













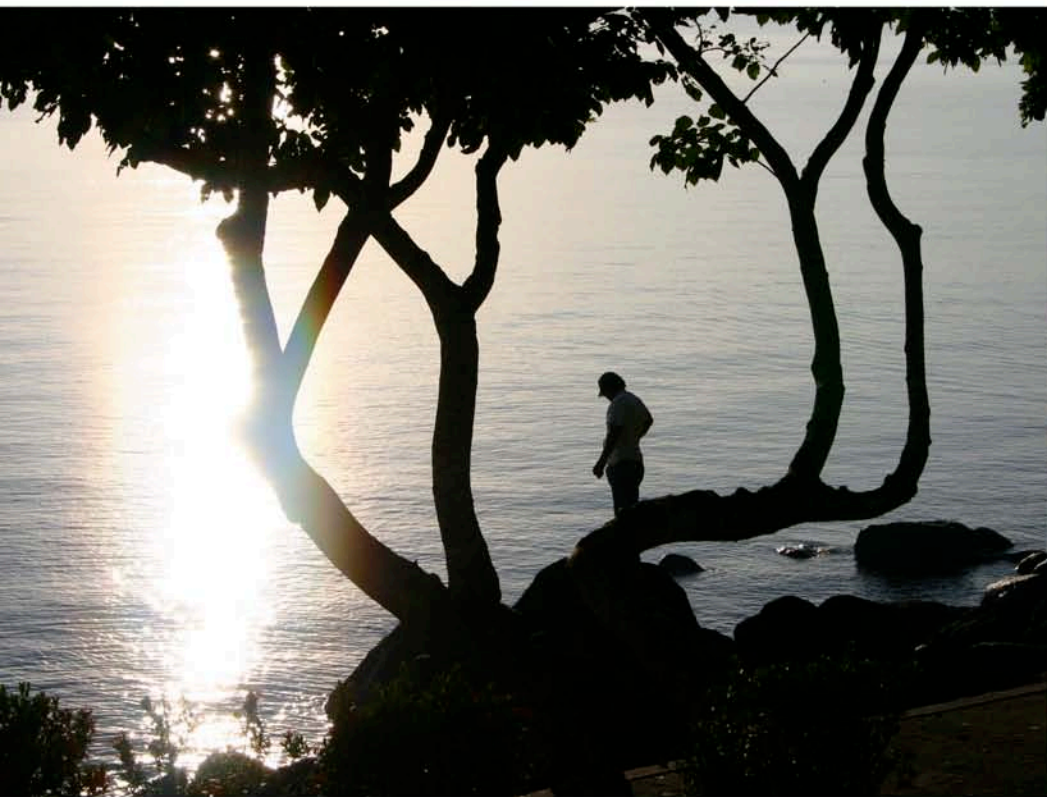


In Manila, she helped him unearth his long-dormant connections with birthplace and family. In later forays to the south, they wandered among her places and he made first acquaintance with her clan.







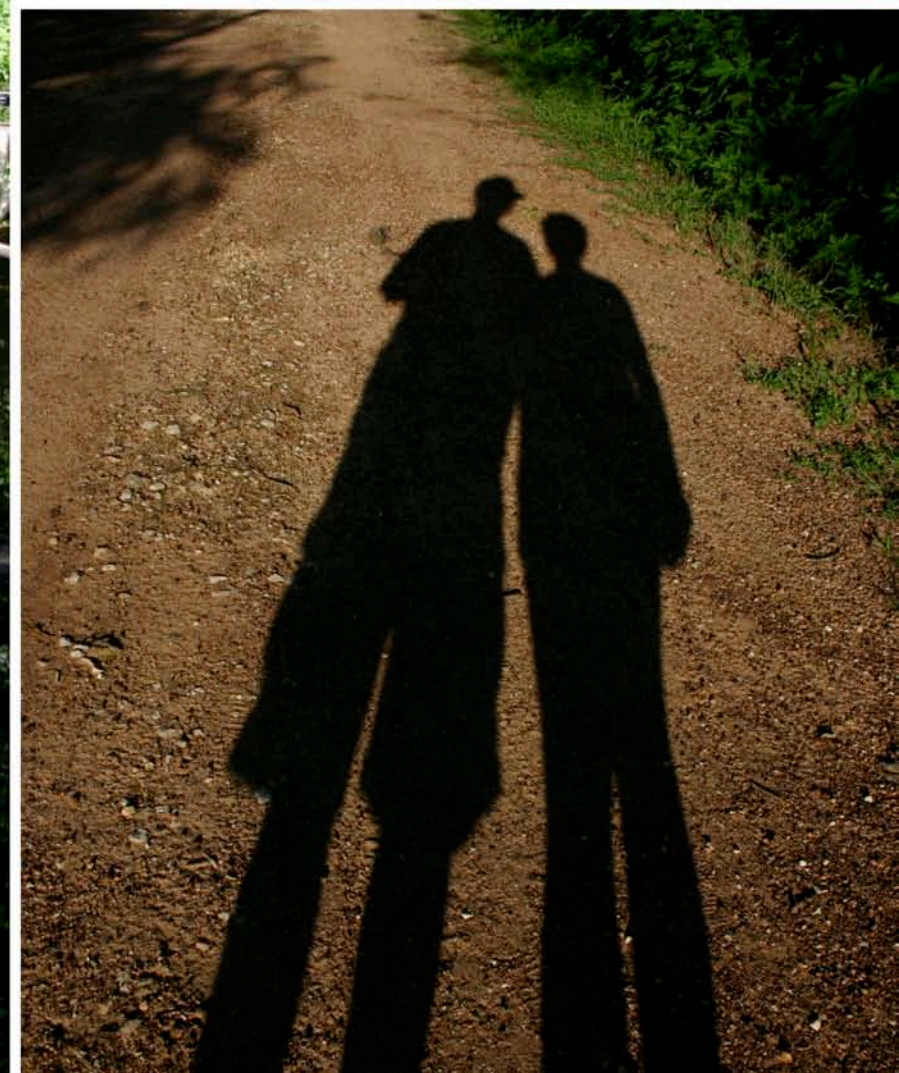




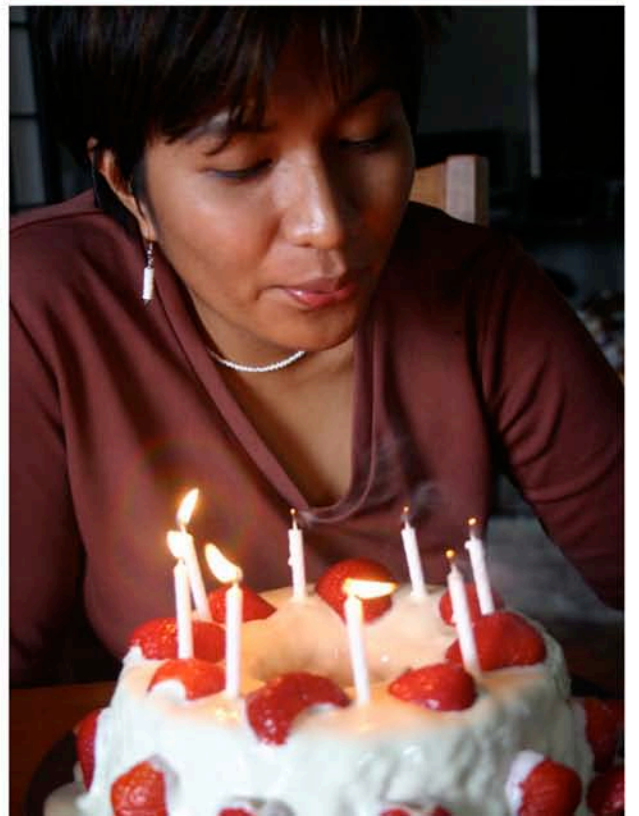
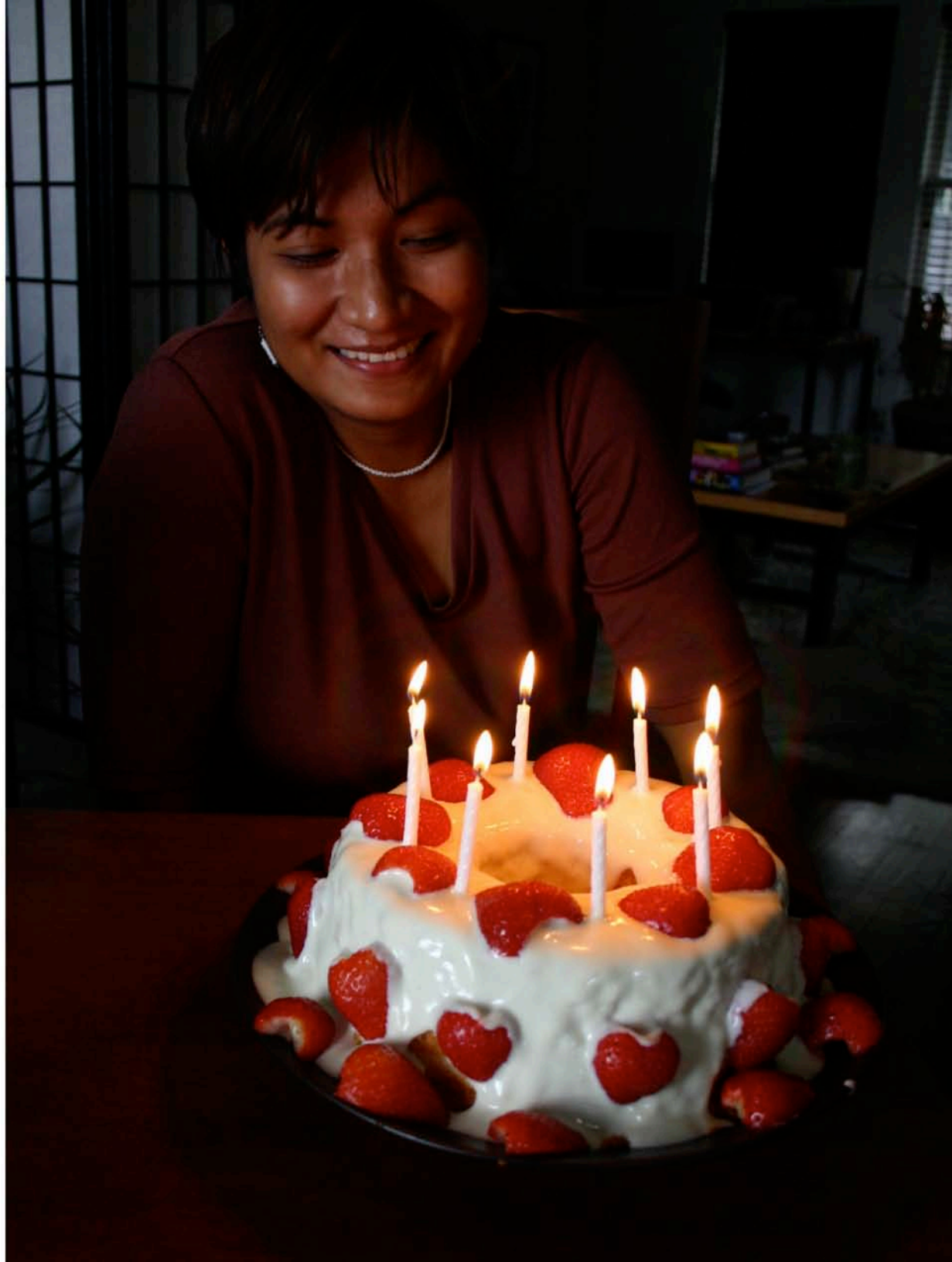




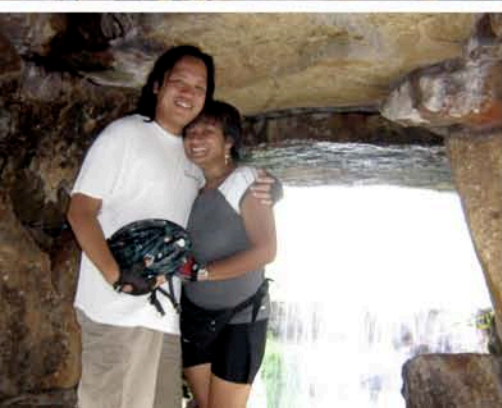
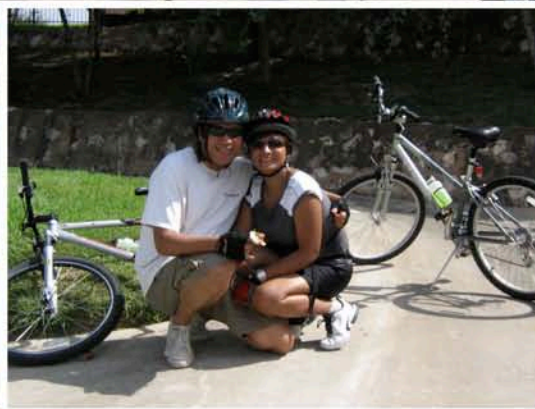
After the whirlwind, they parted, returning to homes an ocean apart. But the separation did not stand. Within a month, she crossed the Pacific and they were reunited on the coastal plains of Texas.



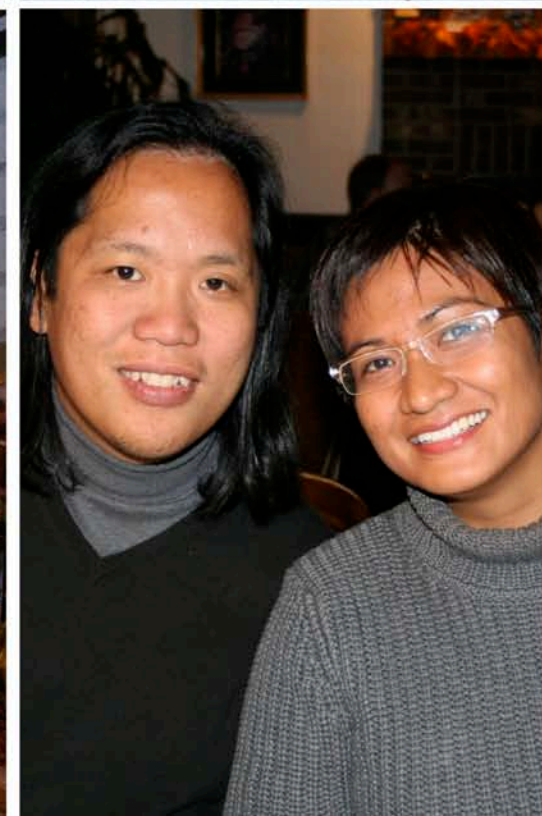
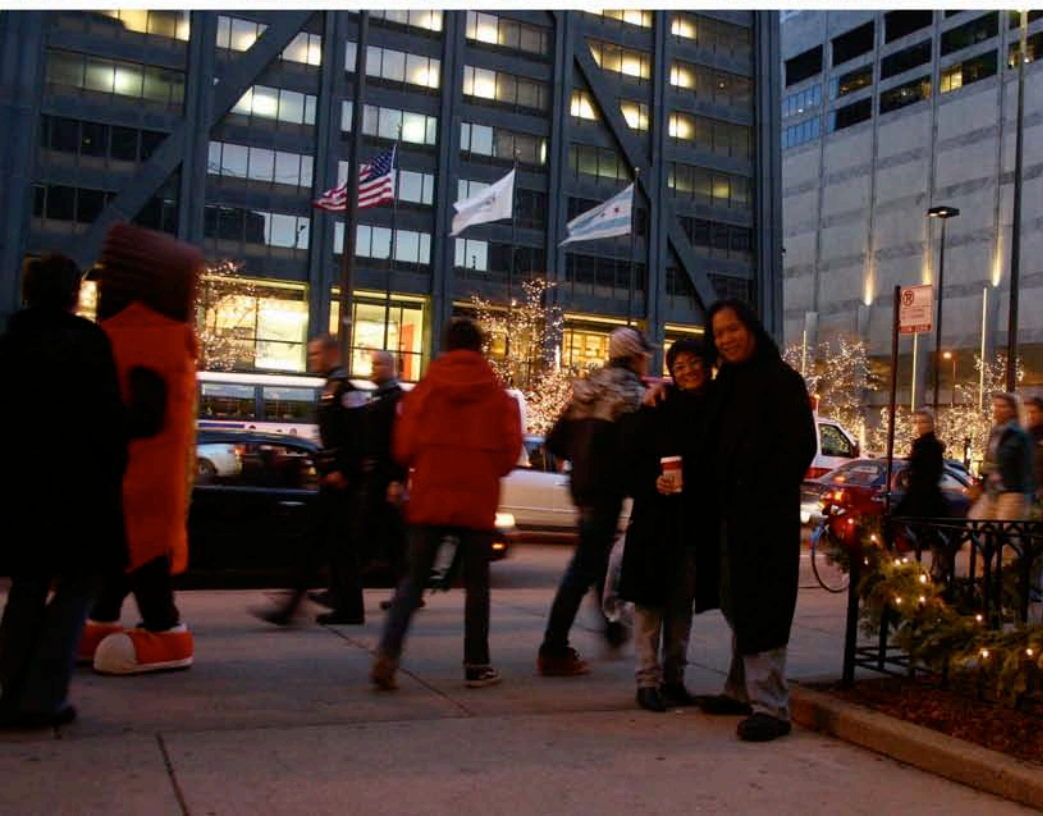














By year's end, they leaped with only momentary trepidation toward a shared future, forever intertwined. It was a path that seemed more natural than any other.



Joined by a justice of the peace who had conducted the marriage rites for an astronaut in space, witnessed by gathered family and celebrated with Afghan cuisine, they took the first steps on their next journey together.









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