

How did Jen meet Naren?? The short answer is “On the internet”.

Now here’s the long answer:

In the spring of 2001, I was working the afternoon shift (4p-12a) at Mitsubishi. There were many nights where the network would be operational, and so there was a lot of downtime.



In this downtime I would logon to Yahoo, and chat in the chat rooms. My favorite one was the Travel Chat. I would go into that room and convince others to cruise, as anyone who knows me They know that I love to cruise !

One night while goofing off at work I was chatting in the Travel Chat and there was a gentleman in the room saying he was going on a cruise. I then made the announcement that I was going to pack myself away in his luggage! I was bound and determined to get on that ship!



Shortly thereafter, I received a private message from Naren. He asked me if I was that cruising guy’s girlfriend. I said that I wasn’t, but Naren couldn’t understand why I’d pack myself into a strangers’ suitcase. I informed him that cruising guy was going on a cruise and I was insisting to go too. Naren was still puzzled, and I told him that he’d obviously never been on a cruise, because once you go, you get it.

He said he’d never been but told me of the travels he’d just completed in India. He told me about the places he’d seen in the country while he was going to school and of the nearby towns where he was raised in Mumbai. We chatted back and forth and had a marvelous conversation. Before I knew it, it was midnight and time to go home. So I logged off, and added Naren to my buddy list.



Over the next few months we would chat about what we’d been up to, and things in the news that made us laugh. We never talked about anything personal, it was more like sharing funny stories with each other.

In November 2001, I was told by my cruising friends that they were planning a group cruise on the Carnival Pride and that I should go. I would chat with these people every night on the Cruise Critic message board and enjoyed their company, so I knew that this would be a great cruise! The only problem is that if you cruise alone you pay a single supplement fee (you make up for the lost revenue of your missing passenger). I did NOT want to pay this fee, and so I tried to ask anyone



So bummed out, I logged into my yahoo messenger to see what was happening and Naren sent me a message and we chatted. He sensed I was down, and I told him why. He asked me about the cruise and I told him the details, then asked “do you want to go with me?” He said he would go, and he could afford to go. I also asked him what airport he’d use to fly to the ship. He told me “LA”. I asked if he meant LAX or Louisiana, and he said LAX. I asked him where he lived and he replied “West LA”. I was floored. I was in the inland empire, which is about 100 miles east of him. I had no idea we were so close in proximity. It was then that he asked me (for the hundredth time) if I would like to meet-up with him. I told him I thought he lived in Boston from his stories, and he said he USED TO live in Boston, but hated the cold and moved to California, 4 years ago! I laughed and said yes, of course now we can meet. I had no idea you were so close. I kept saying No before, because I’m apprehensive about flying to Boston for a date.



of my friends that I could find if they would go with me. All of my friends and family had 1 of 2 problems. Either they couldn’t afford to go, or they wouldn’t go for 7 days without their spouses.



After our chat, we exchanged phone numbers. He was not sure I would understand his accent. I told him I worked with a company full with Japanese engineers. If I could understand them, yes I could understand him! On my way home from work, I called him and we chatted all the way home. It was so much easier than typing everything I wanted to say. We made plans to meet-up that weekend in Santa Monica.

At first our date was for Saturday. I told him that I couldn't remember why, but Saturday seemed familiar to me. Turns out, it was the date of my friends' wedding. So I called him the next day and said that Saturday wasn't good, I had a wedding to attend. Naren jokingly said that it was only a date, and we weren't getting married yet. I told him that it wasn't OUR wedding, it was my friends' wedding. So we changed the day to Sunday.



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Each day leading up to that weekend we did chat for hours at a time. The conversation never got boring with him.

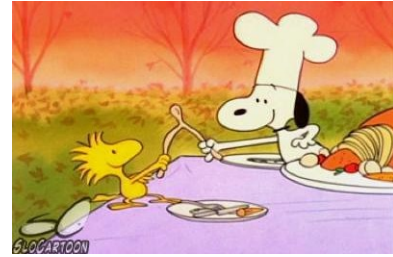
Sunday November 17th, 2001 we met for the first time in Santa Monica at Third Street Promenade at 1pm. We had exchanged pictures but he was more handsome in person than in the pictures. It turns out I'd parked in an incorrect lot, so we went to move my car. Then we had lunch at a great little Italian place. We had a great lunch, and had wine, then walked along the boulevard. We saw that Monsters, Inc. was playing and we were in time to see it, so he bought our tickets and we went into the theatre. The movie was darling, and I cried because he was going to miss her soo much. Naren laughed at me.



After the movie we went back to my car to get my jacket. At the top of the parking garage, Naren asked to kiss me. So we shared our first kiss and it was nice. After I got my jacket we walked along down by the pier. Next we visited a British pub and enjoyed beer and appetizers. After walking around some more, we went back to my car and sat and talked (yes and kissed again). It was 1:30am when I realized that we should probably call it a date. I told Naren Id

drive home, but he offered me his apartment as a closer spot to spend the night. I told him that I had to work the next day, but would call him later. I drove home happy but tired. I instantly fell asleep.

When I woke up for work on Monday, I checked my email and he had already sent me a note saying he had a wonderful time and wanted to go out again. I told him that I wasn't working that week Thursday or Friday (Thanksgiving holiday), and we made plans to meet on Friday evening. But during that week we continued to chat on the phone. I was looking forward to my date with him on Friday.



My parents went to Lake Havasu for Thanksgiving with my grandparents and I was asked to walk and feed the wiener dog while they were away. So I told Naren to meet me at my parents house. We'd go to dinner from there. He drove from West LA to Riverside (3 hours at least) on a Friday night to have dinner with me. When I asked him why he drove all that way he said because I was on the other end of the trip. (awwwww)

We went to dinner, then came back to my mom's house to get the dog, and take her with me to my apartment where I would watch her until my parents came back. Naren stayed with me on Friday night, and on Saturday morning I had to go to school for a few hours. So I told him I'd be back in a few hours, but to make himself comfortable.



There wasn't anything to eat in my apartment, so he went to get some cereal and milk. I came back from school, and we went to lunch, then watched some tv, and had a great Thai dinner. Naren stayed with me Saturday night too. On Sunday we hung out all day, I did some laundry for Naren, and we played a great drinking game. I got so tore up that Naren had to hold my hair back for me. I started crying that he wouldn't come see me anymore because I didn't mop my bathroom floor! He again laughed at me. I wasn't feeling well that night so Naren slept over again on Sunday night. He left at 5am to get to West LA at 8am, so he could go to work. Again he braved that traffic for me!

I stayed home from work that day and besides the fact that I wasn't feeling well, my parents were coming home and I told them they could come and pick up the dog. Naren and I again chatted on the phone all that night. We made plans to meet-up again that next weekend, and I told him that if he comes to stay, perhaps he should bring some extra clothes so that he doesn't have to wear my flannel nightgown while I do laundry.



The next weekend, I told Naren that I had to go shopping with a friend to get a holiday party wardrobe, and that I could meet him Saturday night, December 1st. So we arranged to meet at a pool hall in Riverside. The date was for 7, and Naren didn't show up until 8:30 !! At that time he didn't have a cellular phone. He saw the need for one that night as he admitted he got lost on his way over.



We played pool and got some dinner. I didn't hold it against him that he was so late. I didn't feel that he'd start standing me up when we had been dating already, and we talked all the time. Turns out he was just lost and the traffic was bad.



I had to watch my mom's dog that weekend, so we drove to pick up the dog, and spent the weekend at my house. That night, after dinner, I asked Naren if he was ever going to make me his steady girlfriend. He said he had planned to several weeks later at my birthday. I told him I wouldn't mind if we started dating at that point. So he did ask me to be his girlfriend, and I accepted!

We spent that whole weekend together, and Sunday night we started a ritual where I'd get sad when he had to leave. He said he didn't want to leave either, and stayed with me until 5am Monday morning when he had to leave for work.



The week flew by because my mom and I had made plans to go on a little weekend cruise on Dec 7th – 10th. I missed Naren all weekend long, but talked about him constantly to my mom. She could tell I'd met a wonderful man! This one was definitely different!

The next time we saw each other was the weekend of Dec 15th. I couldn't wait to see him and we hugged and kissed for the longest time. We both looked at each other and said "lets never go this long without seeing each other again".

That weekend we also exchanged Christmas gifts. I also got my birthday gift. I was so ... stunned! That year Naren gave me a lovely handbag, but inside the handbag was a tiffany box. In the jewelry box was a beautiful ¼ carat round, bezel set pendant affixed to a neck chain. I was so touched, as it was apparent that Naren felt the same way about me that I felt about him. No guy gives just any girl a Tiffany Diamond!



I loved it and still wear it years later.

We had a wonderful Christmas and new years. Shortly thereafter, Naren said "Hey remember that cruise that we met because of ... well you can go ahead and book it for us". I told him that it was in March, and we'd just started January. He said that it was fine, as he planned on keeping me around till March and even after.



Soon after we booked the cruise it was Valentines Day. We had a wonderful romantic day planned and exchanged gifts. I was again ... at a loss ... for this year I got a Coach handbag and Tanzanite earrings. They were stunning.

As another part of my gift, Naren said he'd clean his house, so I could visit. When I say clean, I meant he'll get the pots and pans out of the living room (as he was cleaning the kitchen). I was starting to get worried why I hadn't been over to his house. He joked that he had a harem and he wanted to keep us separate. At first it was funny. Now I was worried. I was pleasantly surprised when I did not find any other women in the apartment. I stayed that night, and subsequent nights there as well.



It was soon time for our cruise, and couldn't wait to show Naren everything I knew about life onboard a cruise ship. We flew to Florida, stayed in a nice hotel the night before embarkation.

Then on Saturday March 2, 2002 we boarded the Carnival Pride.



We had a wonderful stateroom and spent a very nice week onboard the ship. The first night after dinner, when Naren was so full he couldn't move, I asked him if he was having a good time so far. He said "I could get used to this".





We got home and unpacked. Life continued wonderfully. At six months, we celebrated our milestone, and I got a beautiful ruby and diamond pendant set. I loved it, it was so beautiful. With regard to where we lived, we had our own apartments but we still kept staying with each other. Either we'd be at my house together or his house together, but still we stayed together. When my lease was up in the summertime we talked about it, and it just made sense that we stop paying two rents and we found a place we liked together.

We ended up finding a cute little duplex for rent in Redondo Beach. It was a little hard to find but it was a perfect (albeit small) little place for us to share. We had to combine two 800 sq ft 1 bedroom apartments into 1 2bedroom 1 bath 1000 sq ft apartment. It was tough, but we made it work. I did wish that it had two bathrooms though!

We moved in on the weekend when I was graduating from College. I thought it would be best if I hired a moving company to do my move. I had a lot of furniture and it would be tough since I lived upstairs.

Life with Naren was wonderful and things really just felt right. It was great to be able to come home each day and see him, versus just talking to him.

I gave him a cruise for his 30th birthday that October. We sailed onboard the Royal Caribbean Vision of the Seas.



In January, Naren went back to India to visit his family. He was gone for 5 weeks and I missed him so much. During his time to India, I was desperate to look forward to something, so my mom and I went on a cruise, just the two of us.

Naren came home a few days before Valentines day, 2003. I was so happy to see him that I took a few days off of work to be able to pick him up and spend a long weekend with him. I got a beautiful 23k gold bracelet from India. It would go nicely with the Emerald earrings and pendant set I'd gotten for my birthday a few months back.



In March 2003, we were facing some difficult times. Unlike the previous rounds of layoff notices that the software engineering industry had experienced where Naren's job wasn't affected, it would be much different this time. It was official. Naren would lose his job with "Company I" in the next few months. The drama escalated when I learned that because Naren had been working on an H1B work visa – turned Greencard, he had to get another job within a month that had the same EXACT job title and job description or else his sponsorship with Company I would end, and he could be deported.

Not wanting to lose the best thing that ever happened to me, I explained that although I would love to have a year to plan a wedding, I would happily marry Naren in Las Vegas, so that we could ensure a happy life together in the U.S.



Prior to learning that Naren was going to lose his job we had talked about what our future looked like. We both agreed that we each saw the other person as a major part of our future together.

Anyhow, although stressful, our life continued together. A letter had come in the mail for Naren marked Confidential. I didn't dare open it, as I was just the girlfriend. I later asked Naren who sent the envelope, and he said it was his Bank pin number for his India account. I thought it was weird that the return address was on Hawthorne Blvd (a major street in Torrance Ca), but didn't question it.

On Wednesday, March 19th, 2003, Naren called me while I was on the evening shift at Mitsubishi (still, yes I still worked those crazy hours). He said that he had an Indian connection to a job in the bay area in Northern California, and would I consider living up there.



I told him that I would move with him anywhere, and loved him more than anything, but warned him of the backlash I was going to get from family and friends (mainly my mother). Those people were going to criticize the fact that I quit my job and moved with a boyfriend. I told him that although he and I both know that we're not looking to end the relationship, those outsiders don't know this, and they're going to throw their opinions into the mix.

I basically leveled with him and said that I was going to need to vent my frustrations to him, and that he can't say he wasn't warned about the concern my family would have. He told me that he understood and since I had a few things to do at work, that he would talk to me later when I got home that night.



I left a little early and got home. I told Naren that we could go to the local IHOP restaurant and I could get some dinner. He said he wanted nothing to do with IHOP and wanted Denny's instead. I didn't understand, as he'd been salivating over IHOP's cream cheese crepes all week long, but whatever.

We sat in Denny's and I kept reassuring Naren that I would move anywhere with him, but no one in my life would understand my decision to uproot my life for a boyfriend. He understood and said he would keep looking for work locally, but to save his greencard sponsorship he would take the job up north if nothing else came about. We went home and slept on the decision.

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On Thursday March 20, 2003, Naren said that he wasn't going to go to work at the normal time, if he was getting laid off, he would sleep in and relax before heading to the office. I understood and still got ready at my normal time. Before he left that morning, we apologized to each other for the last night's heavy discussion. He said he wanted to come to my work during my "lunch" break at 7pm and take me to dinner. I thought that'd be lovely.

He called me on his way down and we chatted about heavy job stuff and who we think is the decision maker in our relationship. We disagreed about this too. Anyhow, Naren came to the door and I saw he was dressed really nicely. He also had roses in his hand. I thought to myself “Sheesh, our fight wasn’t that bad”. Anyhow then I saw the card that was in the roses. It said that he had a question for me.



(an inside joke in our relationship is that when he’d previously say “hey, I have a question”, I’d get excited and say “yes of course I will”. He’d always laugh and say “aahh haaa, its not that question”)

Well I suddenly realized that he was going to ask THAT question !!!!

And I think I said “Oh my God” about 1000 times. He sat me down, got down on one knee, pulled out the biggest marquise solitaire I’ve ever seen, and asked me to marry him. I immediately said Yes, yes, yes, oh my god yes !! We hugged and kissed and of course I cried.

After the engagement, we went for a lovely dinner where we shared champagne. I couldn’t keep this news to myself for long, but knew that I had to wait to tell my friends and family. At dinner we talked about how Naren’s job and layoff has impeccable timing, because Naren had been planning this engagement since he was in India. He’d purchased my ring several weeks ago, and that confidential envelope was actually a thank you note from the engagement ring store, thanking Naren for buying the biggest diamond they’ve ever seen! Thankfully I didn’t open the envelope.



Speaking of that ring store, Naren didn’t want to go to IHOP that night because IHOP happens to be on Hawthorne Blvd, next to the Robbins Brothers engagement ring store. Naren didn’t want to have me put two and two together. I actually wouldn’t have, and I’m flattered he thinks I was that sharp.

Anyhow, the next day I told my best friend (who worked with me at the time), and she was so excited! Then I called my mom and said that we hadn't gotten together (the 4 of us) in a while and we probably should. So we arranged to meet for dinner.



In the parking lot, I turned my ring backward so she wouldn't see it from across the parking lot. I told Naren to get a solemn look on his face. Mom asked what was going on. I told her that we had some pretty big news. Naren was getting laid off and due to all the crap that was going on, he didn't want to continue to be my boyfriend.

My mom's heart dropped. My dad suddenly became ghostly white.

I said because he now wants to become my husband !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

And I showed her my hand!

And she screamed and hugged me and cried!!!!

Then she punched me for scaring her.

At dinner she was still tearing up and couldn't read the menu.

But we had a wonderful dinner and shared visions of the future.

We said that we didn't know what our date was because of this whole damn job thing, but that we were hoping for Spring 2004. Several weeks later while sitting at home, Naren was using his work computer to job search (they had a copier, printer and fax), the phone rang. It was this guy with the hardest to pronounce name on the planet! He said that he got Naren's resume and wanted to interview him. I eagerly took a message and said I'd find Naren to call him back right away. Turns out it was Company C in San Diego.



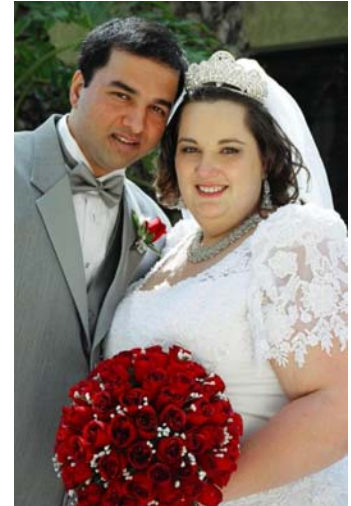
They had two software engineer positions available. Naren went for the interview but learned the company got thousands of resumes for these positions. While heading out of the interview, Naren ran into several of his old colleagues he'd worked with at Company T. Turns out that Company T's technology was bought by Company C, and many of T's employees went to work at C.

So one of Naren's old friends asked for Naren's help with some code they couldn't get right. Naren helped the group shed some light on their situation, and spent some time helping them. The friend went to C's management and said that it was strongly advised that C open a requisition to hire Naren. And so it was done.



About a week before his "hire or leave the U.S." deadline, he started working at C. The only issue was that since it was all the way in San Diego, that meant uprooting us from our lives in LA, and we moved halfway between Orange County (where I worked) and San Diego (where he worked). We settled in Carlsbad. Life there was wonderful. It was cool, it was safe, it was expensive !!!!

Life at my job, however, was becoming more and more stressful. I had a deep rooted hatred of my boss, and the last straw was that my shift would keep changing every 8 hours. So on Monday I'd work 8a-4p. Tuesday I'd work 4p-12a. I wouldn't work on Wednesday, but would come back on Thursday at 12a-8a. Then work Friday 8a-4p. And this stupid vicious cycle would repeat itself the next week. Monday would be 4p-12a, not work Tuesday, Come back Wednesday 12a-8a. etc. I couldn't keep my damn hours straight, regardless of my days of the week! So since they wouldn't let me keep the same shift time, I decided to give notice. I had a good lead on a network engineering job at Petco, but that didn't work out. Naren said that I could concentrate on getting a job full time. I did try that. From September 03 – January 04. In the mean time I also planned our wedding for March 2004.



In January 04, I decided that I needed some money to come in, so I even started looking at temp work (admin work). We also tried to get Naren's family in India to get U.S. Visas so they could attend our wedding. My father in law was not a problem. His visa was issued the same day it seemed. My sister in law, however, was going to have a HUGE problem.

The consulate in Bombay believed that my unmarried, surgeon sister in law was going to come to the US and live forever. We even showed our wedding invitations and invoices from the hotel where our wedding was to be held. That didn't convince the consulate worker. So we had to quickly come up with a back up plan. I saw how it was devastating Naren to not have his family here at the wedding. So I suggested that we get myself an Indian visa, and we get married twice. Once in India, once in the US. Naren loved the idea.



So we flew to San Francisco, got a hotel, and spent the day in the city getting my passport updated with a visa. I got a 10 year multiple entry visa. It was issued that day. We decided to fly home in the morning, as we'd had a long day.

We flew to India in February 2004 and I met my Indian in laws for the first time. I was also one of 5 Caucasian people in Bombay that week. I stood out like a sore thumb. My family, however, was a very warm and hospitable family, and I immediately felt welcome. I bonded with my sister in law and she even had Indian saris that would fit me, so at least I looked the part. My sister in law was busy planning a wedding in 4 days. She pulled it off fabulously!



We met with a priest who listed our auspicious times to be married and we picked one of two times that fit in our travel schedule. When we had a ceremony date, we planned the ceremony hall and reception in a matter of two days. We got my sari blouse stitched, and jewelry picked up in one afternoon. The only drama with this wedding was that my sari blouse didn't fit. So we ripped out some stitches and whew, the blouse finally fit. I was kind of stressed, but my aunts helped a great deal.

We had a nice ceremony in the morning and our garlands were exchanged at just the right time. After the ceremony we went back to the house to relax and nap. That night we had our reception (and a wardrobe change). We were hungry and could smell the wonderful cooking just adjacent to where we were sitting. After our Indian wedding we had a wonderful honeymoon trip to Golden Swan in Murud Janjira, just on the Arabian Sea.



We had a wonderful stay here and I'd highly recommend the resort to anyone. There is even a little café that is on the property so you can eat and not have to take your car and driver and head into town. I really recommend the paneer pakoras (small pieces of fried Indian cheese ... sooo good). I had them for breakfast and lunch sometimes. They were one of three things on the menu that weren't too spicy.

After our wonderful honeymoon we flew home and I finalized details of our California wedding. I still had to chase RSVPs and pay vendors and get all the people in the wedding party onboard with rehearsal times and dates. It was funny because I was telling the hotel and the Videographer that we were doing to take a majority of our pictures before the ceremony. They were shocked that I wasn't superstitious and I explained that when our "wedding day" arrived, we were already going to be married !!!! They laughed.





Our wedding day was perfect. The weather was overcast, and cool, but made for gorgeous lighting for pictures. It wasn't too hot, and the hotel was very accommodating. They even worked with me because the ballroom we'd reserved at first suddenly wasn't available, as they were redecorating the ballrooms. (insert bridal screams)





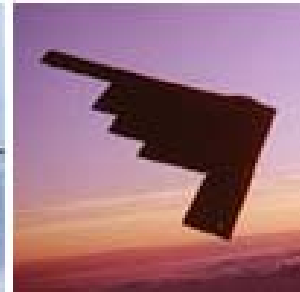
After our wedding on March 20th, we went for a 2 day mini moon honeymoon to wine country and enjoyed our time together. We did this because our real honeymoon couldn't happen before May. Its too cold to sail in the Mediterranean before Mid April. Our itinerary we wanted wasn't sailing until Mid May. So we had another Mini Moon.



Our Honeymoon was onboard the Star Princess. The 12 day cruise went from Barcelona Spain to Venice Italy, and everywhere in between. (The cruise review is in the reviews section). Our trip started with two extra days in Barcelona, and finished with two extra days in Venice. We had a wonderful time in Europe, and would go back when we had a few gazillion dollars available to spend.

When we finished our 3 week honeymoon, we came home and I decided that I would dumb down my resume and get any admin job.

I did a few odd admin jobs and then one admin filing job at a local defense contractor turned into an IT job 3 months later and I ended up working there for 5 years.





Since I was now a real employee with Company N, we decided to stop renting and buy a house. We picked a lovely house in a gated community. Everything was like this when we moved in! All the rooms were painted and we didn't need to change any tile, carpet, or paint colors!!!

The Company N provides great benefits and once my health insurance kicked in, during July 06, we got to working with a wonderful doctor to help us have children.



Fertility Specialists
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Since I have PCOS, we didn't want to waste any time. I spent a few cycles with my regular doctor before he referred us to Infertility. This was the golden ticket! We conceived our beautiful son James very quickly with the help of Fertility Specialists in San Diego.



Visit

<http://www.jenscuisereviews.com/ttc/index.html> for further details about our fertility cycles and treatments.