

Growing in love

Anthony Oh's caring nature and patience convinced Brenda Tan that he was the man she should marry.

by EVELYN MAK

They say that 10 minutes is all you need to make a good impression. However, this was not the case for 31-year-old Anthony Oh when he first met his wife-to-be, Brenda Tan.

The pair initially encountered each other at the Connect Us Party co-organised by SAFRA and SDN in December last year. Incidentally, it was Anthony's first SDN event, and as Brenda recalls, it wasn't exactly the stuff of fairytale romances. "My first impression of Anthony was not great. He seemed like a sweet talker, and he had a cheeky expression! When we exchanged numbers, I had no expectations that he would follow up since he was chatting up so many other women at the party."

However, Anthony's first impression of Brenda, a 34-year-old administrative executive, could not have been more different. "I was very attracted to Brenda's eyes — I found them mesmerising," says Anthony, who works as an engineer.

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

Just two hours after the party, Anthony got in touch with Brenda. "He started texting while he was out singing karaoke with his friends!" says Brenda.

They had their first date a couple of days later. Brenda recalls that it was just a simple dinner after work. "It was



a last-minute arrangement. Anthony sent me an SMS and asked if I wanted to grab a bite, and I agreed."

The nature of the date was just as unexpected for Anthony. "I had imagined that our first date would be at a restaurant, where it would be quieter. But eating at a coffeeshop in Toa Payoh made me think that Brenda was very down-to-earth," Anthony says.

Brenda also appreciated the casual setting of the first date. "I felt very comfortable. At the coffeeshop,

we could talk and get to know each other better since there were no other distractions," she says.

THE NEXT STEP

After that first date, Anthony and Brenda met up once a week for about two months. During that time however, Brenda was unsure about pursuing a serious relationship with Anthony mainly because of the initial impression she had of him.

"I was a little prejudiced because

Brenda and Anthony at the Great Wall of China in Beijing



of how he had behaved — he seemed very confident with the opposite gender,” Brenda explains, “I felt that he wasn’t the kind of man who was looking for a serious relationship. At that time I was looking for someone who would like to stay home and spend time with his family.”

Age was another big factor for her. “I had been looking for someone older than me — I thought that an older man would be more committed to a relationship.”

But Anthony was unfazed and continued to pursue her by asking her out.

After those two months, Brenda found that her impression of Anthony was changing. According to her, it was Anthony’s sincerity and persistence that won her over. “During that time, I discovered many other attractive traits in him,” Brenda adds. “For example, when we went out with his mother, he would hold her hand while crossing the road. That showed me that he is kind and caring — qualities I was looking for in a husband.”

SHARED LIVES

Anthony’s persistence paid off, and the couple tied the knot in September.

Brenda says, “We have always talked about getting married — even when we first started seeing each other — but I was not really expecting Anthony to propose any time soon.”

In June, Anthony went down on one knee and popped the question after a dinner date at a restaurant.

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— Brenda Tan



“I was very surprised,” recalls Brenda. “He’s usually an outgoing person but I could tell that he was nervous when he asked me to marry him.”

On why Anthony decided to propose after dating Brenda for only six months, he says that even at that time he was already certain that she is his perfect partner. He adds, “I have seen many couples divorce even after they had been dating for many years before they got married, so I don’t think how long a couple has known each other makes a difference. If the

feeling is right, just go for it — and that’s exactly what I did!”

Even though she was surprised by Anthony’s proposal, Brenda did not hesitate for long before agreeing to marry him. “Anthony and I communicate well and he takes very good care of me by showing his concern — just like how I have always imagined my husband would treat me,” Brenda says.

On what her friends and family thought about the short length of their relationship, Brenda says that they were more happy than surprised when she told them the news.

Anthony’s parents, on the other hand, had some concerns. “They asked me to think it through carefully before making such a big decision. When I told them that I was sure, they gave me their blessings,” he says.

Now that their wedding ceremony is over, the couple is enjoying the process of planning the rest of their lives together. They have bought a HDB apartment which will be ready in 2014. In the meantime, the couple is staying with Anthony’s parents.

Says Brenda, “I can’t wait to experience motherhood and bring up my kids with Anthony.”

Her husband is just as excited. He says, “I’m looking forward to growing old with Brenda!”

This couple’s search for love has a lesson we can all learn from. “I know it’s a cliché, but never judge a book by its cover,” says Brenda, “If you do, you could miss out on that special someone just because of your initial judgment.”

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