

Wedding Day

by Dallas Woodburn

A bride, dressed in white gown and flowing veil, totters in high heels down the uneven pavement past Simone's Café. She holds a bouquet of red and orange chrysanthemums. Three men, wearing black tuxes, accompany her; one of them holds up the hem of her dress so it doesn't drag on the ground.

"Congratulations!" I call out, raising my paper cup of coffee in a toast.

They stare at me, confused. Maybe they don't speak English? They are Asian, all of them, perhaps not born in America, perhaps immigrants from Japan or China, Taiwan or Korea. Or Thailand, maybe? Is Thailand an Asian country, or is it South American? My wife always had a thing for Thailand. Some friend of hers traveled there in college, for spring break or something, and wouldn't stop gushing about how beautiful it was, and ever since then Molly got it into her head that she wanted to go there.

I can picture the avalanche of guidebooks and travel brochures fanned out across our kitchen table, with their bright colors and exotic promises. "Look at this!" Molly would say, waving a handful of pamphlets, THAILAND scrolled across them in bold lettering. "Come look, Rick — we can go on a jungle excursion!"

"Wow, yeah. That looks great." I would half-heartedly flip through one of the brochures she handed me. I would tell her some bullshit about looking into scheduling a vacation, soon, when things calmed down at the office, we were just so busy right now.

"You're always too busy!" she once burst out, towards the end. There were tears in her eyes, but she blinked them away. "We're never gonna make it to Thailand, are we?" Her tight smile looked pasted on.

Now, I swallow the last dregs of my coffee. Maybe Alfred will take her to Thailand. I see him around town sometimes. We're always cordial to each other. No hard feelings. He wears Hawaiian-patterned shirts and Birkenstock sandals. Seems like the type of guy

who would be excited about jungle excursions. Good for him. Good for Molly.

I'm happy for them.

Down the street, the bride and groom clasp hands and stand against the ivy-covered brick wall. Waiting for the flash of the camera to preserve this moment, so their future can begin.

