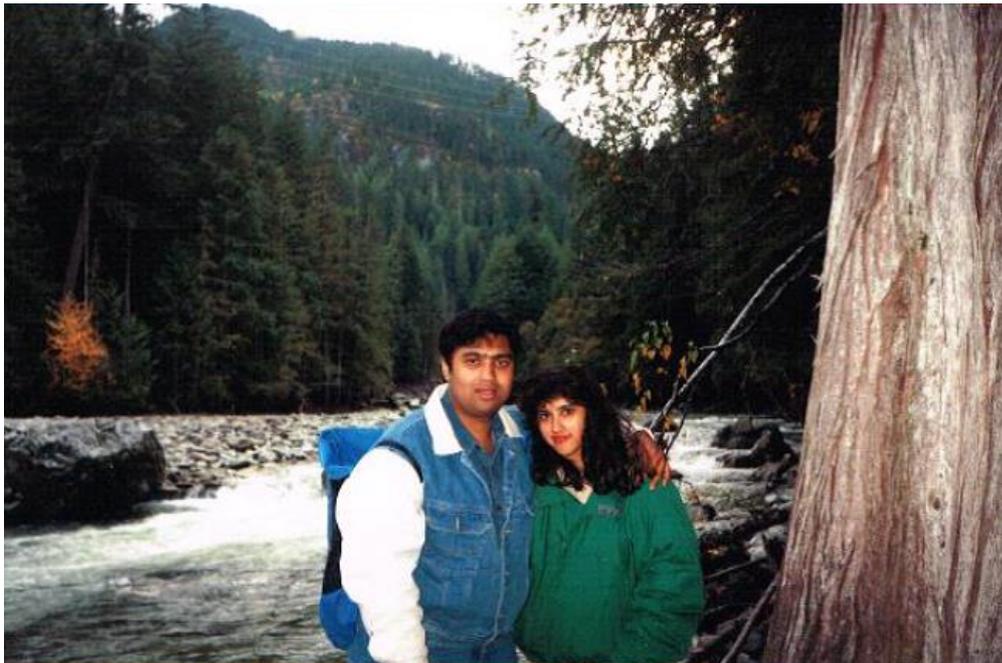




My Final Journey to Coquitlam

📅 February 29, 2016 👤 CQ125 💬 No comments



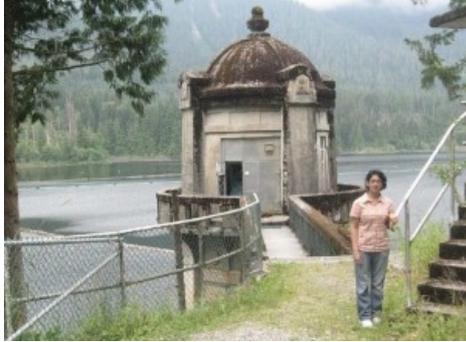
It all began in May 1994, when I immigrated to Canada. I belonged to a well-to-do family and never faced poverty. I came to Canada with only \$500 in my hand. I was married to Sami at a young age, who was studying in Canada, because my mother (a typical Pakistani Indian) couldn't let her "little one" study alone in a foreign country.

Little did I know the power of material things, as I never missed any and was at an age when "things" matter the most. I remember how every time I threw out of my room a beautifully hand-crafted wooden side table, my mother would put it back into my room. Upon my yelling she said, "It is so beautiful, use it." I said "No! Just throw it [out]." The day Sami picked me up and took me to his bachelor suite in Vancouver [on] 8th Avenue, I realized it will be a rough ride: I had no bed, no table, no chair not even a "bedside table", let alone handcrafted. I smiled and remembered my mom.

[On a] September 1994 afternoon, I told Sami, "I have enough money," or so I thought, "Let's go furniture shopping." He knew it was not enough but didn't say anything and took me to downtown Vancouver. I quickly

realized it was not enough, hence my \$500 started to shrink in my hand. He then took me to a furniture thrift store. Not knowing what that store meant, I told him, "But they look old, mismatched, and they smell." The store manager came and said, "Yes, it is used!" My day was done; I said to Sami that I wanted to go home. He left for work and I threw myself on the mattress, cried profusely and went to sleep. Later, Sami came and cheered me up with a bouquet of roses. I felt good, then something came into me and I declared, "Sami, in 10 years I am going to have everything."

Life went on and I forgot all about my avowal...



Coquitlam Watershed Tour

One day, we visited Coquitlam and immediately, I fell in love with it. It has an inexplicable beauty that drew me to it. I told Sami, "Whenever we move, this is my city." Again, life went on. We finished our studies, paid back student loans, had a baby and started planning to purchase a home. The day I took possession of my property on Como Lake Avenue, Sami asked me, "Do you know what [the] date is today?" It was May 2004 – exactly 10 years, [since] I made that affirmation.

[After] surviving through many rough patches, [I] kept moving. Today, I am proud to say that I am a self-made person and a published author. For 12 years, I have been a Coquitlamite and enjoy every bit of my City. I am active in my community, [I] even ran in [the] 2011 Municipal Election, and [I'm] now working to

improve my age-old Coquitlam Meadowbrook.

I love you Coquitlam!

Je vous aime Coquitlam!

- *Images and story submitted by Humera Ahsanullah*

If you have a memory of when you first arrived in Coquitlam, please share your story, photos and artifacts with the Coquitlam 125 story gathering team at stories@coquitlam.ca, or you can [submit your stories](#) online. Help us to celebrate Coquitlam's 125th birthday!

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