



WHEN *LOVE* TAKES OVER

THEY COULDN'T SAY 'I DO'
AT HOME, SO THIS SAME-SEX
COUPLE DID IT OVERSEAS

Despite growing support for the legalisation of same-sex marriage in Australia (a recent poll found 72 per cent of Australians are pro-marriage equality), same-sex couples still have to travel overseas to have their union legally recognised (17 countries have passed marriage equality laws). Joshua Crouthamel, 34, and Kurt Fulepp, 29, met and fell in love in Sydney. When they married, their official ceremony was in the US, with a celebration in Sydney.

Joshua: "Kurt is one of the most positive, energetic, fun and upbeat people I have ever met. Initially, I was attracted to that energy, as well as his drive. We worked at the same media company in Sydney and a mutual friend, who worked on Kurt's team, introduced us. From then on we started noticing each other at company events and parties and things like that.

On our first date – which I didn't exactly intend to be a date – I invited him to Jazz in the Domain. I'd neglected to mention I was going with a bunch of people, so I showed up with four of my friends and he showed up ready for an intimate date. Still, we had a lovely night and walked back via a pub afterwards and had a beer with everyone. People started to trickle away until it was just the two of us and we chatted for hours.

Not long after, in March 2011, we decided we didn't want to see other people. But I had just signed up to live aboard a world cruise ship, so we didn't have long before I packed up and left for six months. Kurt said, 'I want to make this work, so I'll come and meet you every month along the way.'

I had no idea what the job would be like, but I knew that every few weeks, when I would pull into a port, Kurt would be flying in and we'd have our time together.

I realised I wanted to be with Kurt forever when I came into Cape Town harbour and saw him standing there, having flown halfway around the world and waited for hours for my boat to arrive. My experience on the ship was very stressful and displacing, so finally seeing this bit of home somewhere far, far away and knowing that piece of home can be wherever you are together, I was sold.

We moved to Manhattan a few months after I returned from the cruise. Kurt, who grew up on Sydney's North Shore, had always wanted to live in New York, and I was born in Philadelphia and grew up on the east coast of the US.

In October 2012, Hurricane Sandy hit New York. I was in London on a work trip, so when it happened Kurt was stuck in our apartment on the 10th floor, on his own. There was no power, so it was dark and there was no fridge, no water and you had to take