

AFZAL SHARIF

We met in 1938, staying in the same neighborhood at College Road, Matunga, Bombay. We went to the same school. We indulged in the same games youngsters play when they are young. Cricket, football, seven tiles, roller skating on the streets, abba doobi, played with a tennis ball and quite tough in the rain. Our families were well known to each other, his father Dr. Sharif being one of the Directors of the Hafkenine Research Institute of India. We were very close friends. And then in 1947 India was partitioned. His family moved away to Pakistan and I never heard from him again.



That is him on the right with my hand on his shoulder, two bum chums in a photograph taken with a Kodak box camera sometime in 1944 which he emailed me.

Then in 1997 I received this email.

My dear Shammi,

Hurrah! I made it..... even if it took me half a century. It was not for want of not trying. Even when I was slack my children invariably reminded me to somehow establish a contact with their uncle. But then I never had your postal address nor your telephone number. I hope you will rectify this deficiency. The credit goes to my younger son, a computer addict for locating you and establishing a link between you and me which I know will flourish in future. From the web site I learnt comprehensively about you and your family. In this context I have some question which I will revert to subsequently.

I learnt about the tragedies in your life i.e., loss of father, mother, wife and brother. Of these I was

aware only of papaji, Raj papa and pabhi Geeta. The news of chahiji's death was a shocker. I had always thought of her as my own mother and it was very painful. I vividly recollect her referring to you, Gurdial and me as "the three musketeers". May God give them all eternal peace.

I am sure you must be keen to know about me and my family. After I left Bombay in 1947 I landed in Karachi to finish my education. I graduated in electrical and mechanical engineering and chose electrical engineering as a profession in 1955. I retired as General Manager of the POWER department in 1990 and settled in Islamabad. My eldest sister(Akhtari) became a professor after obtaining a Ph.D. from Canada and M.A from UK. My second sister (Asghari) did her F.R.C.S. from U.K and become a surgeon. The youngest one (Sarwari) became a doctor also, married a civil engineer(Saleem) and they have one son and three daughters. I lost my mother in 1954, father in 1966 and both my elder sisters in 1982 (Asghari) and 1984 (Akhtari).

I got married in 1960 to Rushda Nazli (Lali) who died in 1977 leaving four children. My eldest son Shamich Afzal (shami... named after you) was born in 1961. He is settled in London. The second was the daughter Kinza Afzal (Kino) she is a professor in a local girls college where she is often mistaken for a student. The third was a son Shahrukh Afzal (Popo) who is a communications engineer and works in a cellular phone company. And the last but not the least is the daughter Ainza Afzal (Bushu) she is a B.A final year student. After the death of my two elder sister in 1984, I remarried to keep the house going. My second wife is Nargis now. And the life goes on.

I do remember old friends Gurdial, Santu and brothers Surinder, Mohan and Kaka of Bedi family, Aasu, Gulab, Vanket, Naryan and Madhu (Buddah...the leg spinner). I wish you could help me to establish contacts to as many friends as possible. I would also like to know more about Permindhur Singh and other Kapoors Shanta, Vishi, Ram, Amernath and their families. I must not forget Jagdish Sethi and family. I virtually know nothing about these families.

There is so much to say and hear but I think I have already exceeded your limit of hospitality therefore I think I will leave the rest for future when we can discuss lighter subjects.

Regards to all.

Yours
Afzal

P.S. After seeing your movies and TV plays I know how you have evolved into what you look like now. I am not very different except length, breadth and thickness which is slightly on a reduced scale at a height of 5' 5".

We had made contact. It was the Internet that brought two friends together after a gap of 50 years and now we are regularly on the hotline.

Thank you for this technology that has given this friendship a new lease and has been largely responsible today for reuniting a lot of people who have lost contact with each other.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shamich Afzal', written over a horizontal line.