

Himanshu's Farewell to Ba

Pujya Vadilo

Dear family and friends

Vishvala, Komal, Anjli Amar and I would like to thank you all for joining us today for this shradhanjali to Shardaben, my mother. She would always refer to herself as Shardaben J. Amin - adding my father's name to hers.

My mother was born in Gujarat, India in 1925. She was educated in Arya Vidyalaya, a boarding School in Baroda. She got married after finishing her schooling.

At the age of 24 mum travelled to Kenya with my sister Pratibha who was a few months old. She lived a happy life in Kenya for 33 years and moved to London in 1983 with my father. She has lived with us ever since, except for a 6 year gap when we moved to Zurich. She spent time with my sister Daksha and her children before she joined us in Zurich in 2005.

She decided to make this beautiful country her final resting place.

Komal Anjli and Amar spent their childhood with Mum in London. I remember all 3 sitting by the dining table while mum would make hot rotlis. Komal received special treatment. Mum would put lots of butter which Komal would lick up and gobble up the garam garam rotlis. Unfortunately Komal cannot eat garam rotli anymore because she is wheat intolerant.

Mum was a beautiful person both inside and out. By nature she was always LOVING, KIND and GENEROUS. She particularly enjoyed giving gifts, especially Swiss chocolates. Vishvala and I had to ensure that there was always a supply of chocolates at home. Her favourite chocolates were the red Lindor balls.

Mum gave up teaching to raise 4 children. Pratibha and Daksha, my two sisters, myself and my elder brother Mukund. A part of her died when Mukund passed away at the tender age of 19. He was the apple of her eye. Mum loved music, singing, reading and travelling and she loved relating her experiences to her children and grandchildren. Some of you have also heard her happy memories of her school days in India. This was her favourite story to relate. The other day, Komal sent me a recording of her talking to a friend of hers. Mum was explaining to Mark, in English, her school days. She was saying, I studied 4 languages and I quote "Gujarati, mother tongue, Hindi, National Language, English, International language and Sanskrit, old language. She must have been very happy at school!"



Mum has left us a treasure trove of memories. All these beautiful memories have given all of us, my sisters and their families tremendous strength to bear her loss in the last few days. We have been listening to her recorded conversations and her singing and it brings us laughter and joy. She was singing until her last days. She sang to Komal, Amar and Daksha in London and Pratibha in Houston and to us in the house. Her recent favourite was Sajana saath Nibhana - we think she was calling out to my father. Reminding him that she is on her way! Yesterday I found a card in her diary where she had noted the lyrics to the song. She also had a sense of humour, the card also had a short joke written down.

Mum was an avid reader. Her general and historical knowledge was amazing. She could name the top five rivers of Africa, India, Europe and America. She could name countries and their leader. In the last few weeks she would wake up in the middle of the night when she could not sleep and I would find her reading her favourite issue of Akhand Anand, a Gujarati Monthly which she read all her life.





All of you present here, have contributed in some way to my mother's life and happiness. We thank you for being with her over the years, listening to her patiently and making her happy in your own way. She was always happy when she was with people. Wherever Mum went she would have friends.

Mum was not well in the last few months. She was in pain. The family takes solace in knowing that she is not suffering any more. We are grateful for all the support from you all, our family and friends.

Komal Anjali and Amar have been the rocks who have given tremendous happiness to mum over the years, especially in the last few months. Anjali sat with her and video called Amar, Komal and my sisters every day. Anjali we are so happy and grateful that you did this. When I told Anjali that you are my rock she asked me what about mum? Anjali, Vishvala is the mountain that produced these rocks.

Vishvala has done more than anyone one of us. She took care of mum's every need. I travelled a lot but Vishvala was always there with mum, meeting her every need. Thank you Vish. You inspire us.





Mum, it was a privilege to be your son. You led a full life and you were loved by all of us – I am sure that you will forgive us if we have fallen short in any way, we know your standards were very high....

You will not be forgotten.

With a very heavy heart we bid you a fond farewell. We will miss your physical presence but you will always be in our hearts.

Om Shanti!

