

8th May 2008

Some would say (and I agree) that you deserve a special kind of *Sitaaraé Jür'at* for managing to tolerate me for 38 years. All I can muster is "Thanks" & "Love" ... and a blog post!.



Our families and friends had all sorts of views about the kind of partners we were getting. Yours viewed us kinda like this:



8th May 2008

While mine, I am sure, thought I'd have a great deal of taming to do. Nuz, you really were a lot wilder than people who've met you only recently can tell.

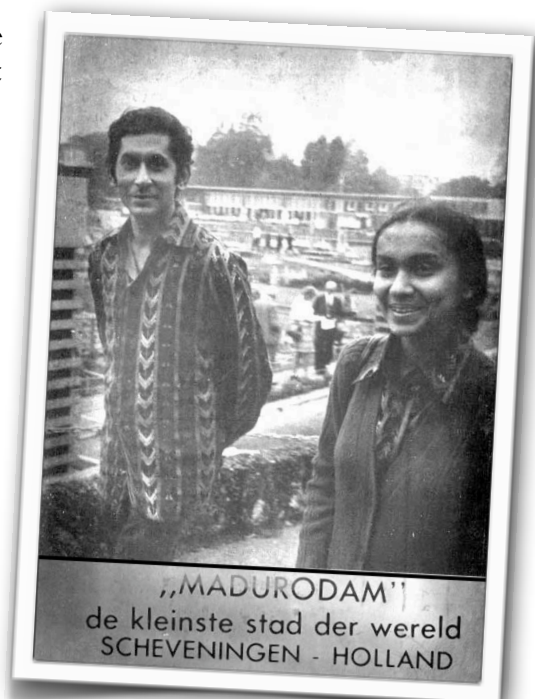


Unless, of course, they've caught a glimpse of you tackling a mulla on TV. Or lodging a complaint at the DHA office.

Looking back at our life, if any period stands out the most, it's our days at sea, the 12 years we spent sailing together. Here are some of the "*tasavvuraat ki parchhaiyaan*" that come to mind.

Our trips to the UK and Europe on the two of the most beautiful Pakistani ships in the Merchant Navy (Bagh-e-Dacca & Bagh-e-Karachi) were the hippiest/happiest ever.

The lingering taste of Steak Tartare at Las Palmas, the mad last minute rush to see a Dali in Glasgow, the chance encounter with Sir John Gielgud in London (London, London, London! Uff! Worth writing a whole book about ... remember Shel Silverstein and Spike Milligan at Hyde Park?), the unforgettable friendship with Les Eley in Liverpool/Manchester, the never-equalled fries from near Antwerp station.





8th May 2008

Remember getting Lenny - *how I miss him!* - from the animal shelter from Rotterdam? The gorgeous sea-food in Taiwan, the hilarious moments in that cinema-house in Aqba where the audience had to hold the roof down so it would not fly off? And how could one ever forget Beirut that brought us face-to-face with a new harsh reality and the shape of things to come.



Then there was our first trip together to the USA (with the historic great Drug Bust - another event that needs to be written

about, but can't. Don't want to die young ...).



The highlight for me was the New Orleans Jazz festival and catching one of Ella's last performances,



Of the many countries we visited together, Russia was quite a different experience. I still recall walking down the Odessa Staircase (of *Battleship Potemkin* fame).

The two 'Baghs' had several reasons for being my favourites. I got my first command on one. We sailed on our honeymoon on one. They both had such family atmospheres and were home to classical music *baethaks* and *miishaaeraas*. And I had spent so much time on them that the two Master's cabins had become kinda personalized. Apart from the Captain's Day Room slowly becoming hi-fi/library-fitted to our specs, the 2 ships were also home to our photography and DIY crazes. Though using the attached loo on board as a makeshift darkroom - complete with enlargers and a host of equipment that would have put many small photography studios to shame - may not have been too innovative, I doubt if any other ship captain's cabin has ever had a fully equipped workbench at its entrance :-)



Here's an example of one of our first shots at developing/printing



Our first anniversary, too, took place on one of those ships, though I can't recall which. All I can see from the picture is that we had hair ;-)



As far as the days on the Singaporean almost-falling-apart ship "Hai Eng", they weren't any less adventurous and fun in their own way.

Except, of course, for the macabre bits (like when the crew cooked and ate the ship's pet puppy!). Or the health mis-adventure I had, just 3 years after our marriage, where the doctor in KL thought I needed to be hospitalized and "may not survive" ... and Second Officer was asked to 'prepare' you

8th May 2008

s-l-o-w-l-y for the possible risk. How often have we laughed about his breaking it to you 'gently' in a whispered tone: "You fly back home from here, Mrs *Keevai*", he'd said. "Don't worry, we'll send the body later." He was obviously a student of a fellow seafarer (who shall remain nameless here - but you know who I mean) in the art of subtlety :-)



The last years at sea, with occasional stints at the GESL office in Hong Kong, and a surprise London posting (uffffffff again!!!) were delightful, too, and - much as neither of us ever wanted to stop sailing - the seafaring days came to a close with the miracle of Ragni's birth.

Who'd ever want it different?

Happy anniversary, darling!

