

## Huriya Qadir

This story is being narrated by the granddaughter of the couple of witnessed partition.

Grandmother name: Amtul Hafeez

Grandfather name: Ghulam Qadir

The feelings ranged from being happy, excited to scared since they knew the journey was not going to be easy; since now it's a new place called Pakistan. They anticipating both good and bad because they knew it was a silver lining but there were still black clouds. They were also sad as they had to leave their hard-earned assets and comfort zone behind but on the other hand they were crying with joy. There were mixed emotions. This is a story told to her by her grandmother. My grandparents were posted to Amritsar, India before partition. Time before and during the partition was not easy for them. There were massacres taking place on a large scale of the Muslim community especially army men since they were considered the strength and an assets for Pakistan. They were in high hopes that the partition will take place so they had already packed their bags and were waiting for the radio announcement. As soon as it was announced, her grandfather asked her grandmother, who at that moment was expecting their first child, to go to Pakistan as he dropped her off at the station. She was originally from Lahore, before getting married, hence she decided to go to Lahore. Her grandfather was in police so he had an safe idea that he'll somehow find her in Pakistan through his contacts. Their first priority was be alive and safe. She got on the train called the Ladies Express. It only consisted of tons of women and young children. She got on the train while praying that her child's birth doesn't take place while she's travelling or else she would've to throw her child out of the train due to the intensity of the situation and fear of their child being killed by the Sikh and Indian troops and the mother being raped.

They got to know through the radio about the partition. Further during partition all the women and children caught by the Sikh troops were killed, murdered mercilessly. Their body parts were cut into pieces for example if a women was wearing jewelry, her wrists were cut. Everything was looted but Muslims were more concerned about reaching Pakistan rather than their wealth. The travelling time for her was a bit less as Amritsar is close to Lahore hence she was relieved with the thought that she'll reach Pakistan early and a bit safely, especially as she was expecting. She came to live in Mazang, Lahore; her ancestor place. Her husband came back later, but he came to Sialkot first, as it his ancestors place and then they both met each other.

She migrated from Amritsar. It wasn't their hometown, but her husband was posted there. She came to Lahore as it was the closest as well to Amritsar. It wasn't a thought about a decision for them. They knew and they really wanted this. So as soon as the announcement was made, everyone without giving a second thought left their places and bags along with the necessary tings such as property papers with them as they were to be reward accordingly. They did not really care about their household items hence those were left behind. Lots of people in her area, since it was a Muslim area, left that place, as Indians

had become very aggressive and left being betrayed so they were taking revenge. She travelled with lots of women on the train who had lost their loved ones.

They were asked to keep a case in which they were supposed to have their property documents so that after partition the wealth will be awarded accordingly. People were excited, praying and crying. No one knew each other in the train. They were sad and worried since they had left their men behind. The moment had mixed emotions. A funny incident was that a when the train stopped for a break, a woman took off a leaf from the tree close to her and placed it into her mouth and by the time they reached Pakistan, it was still her mouth. Representing the fact that nothing was really a part of their focus other than the fact that reaching Pakistan safely.

A lot of diseases were spread especially the viral ones such as measles and different types of flus. Eye infections and skin diseases were also very commonly spread since Hindus were not as hygienic, so when they came in their house in Pakistan, they had the stuff left behind by the Hindus such as carpets which they used to wash their carpets will cow urine since it was considered as purity to them.

Her grandmother was constantly praying that her child wasn't born on the train since many births were being taken place. Her first child was born on the 18<sup>th</sup> of August, luckily after she had safely reached Pakistan.

My grandmother was not a working woman whereas my grandfather was in police. He was also appointed as the Head of Bait-ul-Maal of the Sialkot and Lahore region after partition. An incident that he told was that while he was coming to Lahore from Amritsar, he had locked all of his property and possession in a trunk and threw it in the Indus River, whereas kept the key to himself. One day, after migration, he was sitting at the banks of Indus and the same trunk came to him and he was surprised at his luck. He did not open it, rather took it to the Bait-ul-Maal and told them that it was his trunk and he has the key (but not at the moment). He told them the items that were inside them and when the trunk was opened, the same items were in it hence he was given the trunk and awarded a medal for his honesty.