

A Sheikh without a Turban

The late Hamid Morad Ashkanani was a fellow student from my times at Syracuse in America. Born in 1955, he was ahead of me by a few years and he studied electrical engineering. I remember how his apartment was always open. Enter and help yourself because you are in the home of Bu-Hussain, the generous man with the lasting smile and a friend to all. He had a forgiving heart and didn't hesitate to give advice. I never saw anything anger or sadden him except for his blue Cutlass which he hated and always used to say: "I never hated anything in life except this car." I asked him why, and he said: "Because it's a 6-cylindar." He had a great sense of humor, easy to talk and mingle with and at the same time well mannered, never guilty of moral flaw.

I remember once we visited New York with one of our friends. I was driving on our way back when I accidentally went over the speed limit and we were stopped by a policeman. He asked why I was in such a hurry, but before I could even answer, Bu-Hussain started laughing. This upset the policeman and he ordered us to follow him. He led us to the small town where the station was and we had to wait for the judge's arrival. It was almost midnight and it felt like we were in an action movie!

When the judge finally arrived, he sentenced us to pay a fine of 120 dollars. We started collecting whatever money we had in our pockets when Bu-Hussain started laughing again! The judge was enraged and demanded to know what was so funny. Bu-Hussain answered simply: "We don't have enough money, and I was wondering what you will do with us." The judge said something like: "I will lock you up for the night, so you can laugh as much as you want." Then I remembered I had Travelers' checks I bought from Kuwait in the car, so I told the judge we had \$70 cash, and the