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WOMENS
CHRISTIAN
COLLEGE
MADRAS
SEPTEMBER - 1944
NO-XLIV



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THE SUNFLOWER

COLLEGE CALENDAR

JULY 1943—MARCH 1944

1943		
July	1 ...	College reopened.
"	9 ...	Welcome for Miss Moore, Miss John and Miss Deachama.
"	10 ...	S.C.M. Freshers' Social.
"	16 ...	College farewell to Mr. Narayanamurthy.
"	18 ...	S.C.M. Candle Lighting Service.
"	23 ...	Welcome for Miss Jacob and Miss Sargunar. Rev. J. Shriver spoke on 'You can make India strong.'
August	4 ...	Miss Christian spoke on her 'Experiences in Germany.'
"	6 ...	'Some Aspects of Research carried out in the Institute at Guindy': A speech by Dr. Pandit.
"	20 ...	Sri. P. Sambamurthy spoke on 'The Flute.'
"	26 ...	Convocation and College Day.
September	3 ...	Debate: 'The Introduction of Machinery is an unmixed evil and the use of it therefore must be abolished.'
"	16 ...	College closed for September Holidays.
October	6 ...	College reopened.
"	15 ...	A lecture by Mrs. I. Kurien on 'The Red Cross and St. John's Ambulance.'
"	22 ...	Mrs. Rukmani Devi spoke on 'Dance.'
"	29 ...	Mrs. Hensman spoke on 'W.A.C. (I).'
November	5 ...	A lecture by Miss Moore on 'Novels and Novel Reading.'
"	6 ...	Indian Dinner.
"	12 ...	Debate: 'Marriage by Choice is preferable to Marriage by Arrangement.'
"	19 ...	'Some Guesses about Italy': A lecture by Miss Wigan.
December	11 ...	Staff Party and Farewell to Miss Oommen.
"	16 ...	College closed for December Holidays.
1944		
January	12 ...	College reopened.
"	29 ...	Mrs. Hollis spoke on 'Nursing.'
"	30 ...	Public entertainment by the members of the Lotus Dramatic Society in aid of the Bengal Relief Fund:— 'Prisoner of Zenda' and 'Elizabeth Refuses.'
February	5 ...	College Pudding.
"	11 ...	A speech by Dr. Tsui of China.
"	8 ...	Miss Tsai Kwei spoke on 'The Students of China.'
"	12-13 ...	College retreat at St. Ebba's School.
"	19 ...	Hostel Day.
"	20 ...	Universal Day of Prayer.
"	23 ...	Special service in Chapel on Mrs. Gandhi's death.
"	26 ...	College Sports.
March	10 ...	Farewell to Miss John.
"	23 ...	Intercollegiate Sports at the Women's Christian College
"		College closed for the year.

EDITORIAL

This number of the Magazine is pathetically thin; but that is because we too are under the recent paper control (economy) order.

The beginning of last year saw the College busy preparing for the public entertainment in aid of the Nursery School. Our little school helped by the Alumnae and the present students is flourishing. In October we were slightly perturbed by two unusual occurrences: the unprecedented flooding of the Cooum and the almost harmless visit of a Japanese bomber; but those fears were momentary and the College soon resumed its normal, serene course.

No year has yet passed by without our bidding some member of staff farewell. Last year it started with Miss Oommen who left us in December. At the end of March Miss H. John was obliged to leave us as her family needed her. We have lost Miss Susan Oommen too: she had been the demonstrator in physics for nearly four years: we regret that we had not the chance to bid her farewell.

In January the Lotus Dramatic Society staged 'The Prisoner of Zenda' and 'Elizabeth Refuses' and the proceeds were sent to the Bengal Relief Fund.

In March the College closed and most of us went home, but the B.Sc. section had not yet completed its work. Miss Mason and Miss Theophilus gave a course of lectures in Nutrition to a select group of teachers from various schools in South India. The picture of those who attended it and the vivid account of the Extension Course (which are found elsewhere in the Magazine) tell their own happy tale.

The new year saw the return of Miss Rowe, who has been away for two years. We are happy to have her with us again. It has also brought some new members of staff: Miss Nancy Samuel M.Sc. from Wilson College, Bombay, is lecturer in Zoology, Miss Pakiyanathan is Demonstrator in Physics and Miss Esther John is Demonstrator in Nutrition. Both Miss Pakiyanathan and Miss John are old students of the College.

Apparently the College is gay; but we know that Miss Rivett will soon go away to Australia on furlough and leave a sad gap in our lives in College. She needs rest and so we hope she will reach her home safely and enjoy her vacation; but we also hope that she will be back again soon: for we will miss her.

We take pleasure in thanking the following colleges and schools for sending us their magazines:—

Isabella Thoburn College, Lucknow.

Law College, Madras.

Nizam College.

Government Brennen College.

Vidyasagar College.

Uduvil Girls' School.

Madras Christian College, Tambaram.

St. Christopher's Training College, Chetput.

Pudukottah College.

Queen Mary's College, Mylapore.

Annamalai University, Chidambaram.

Andhra Christian College, Guntur.

Gordon College.

Madras Christian College, School, Madras.

Kellett High School, Triplicane.

Malabar Christian College.

Ceded Districts College.

American College.

St. Thomas's School.

NEWS OF MISS McDougall AND OTHER FORMER MEMBERS OF THE STAFF

In a letter to one of the staff, dated 19th February, Miss McDougall writes: "Yesterday Benedicta Rowe suddenly walked into my little office at Edinburgh house, all aglow with the hope of a passage to India at last. She had just been informed that she was on 'the short list' and must be ready to start any time. So she left Selly Oak at once and came to London to see to her passport etc. She is fearfully pleased about it and you will all be glad too. . . . We went and had lunch together."

[Miss Rowe sailed on the 22nd of March and arrived here on the 17th of June. She confirms and supplements the news we gather from Miss McDougall's own letters.]

Miss McDougall continues: "I saw Mrs. Dodd, who is longing to get back. Her Muriel who has been teaching for some years is now entering for nurses training. . . . I was in Oxford for a few days a fortnight ago and saw Miss E. T. Stevens who is working there at two or three odd jobs; one of them is the sending of books to our prisoners of war. She is living in a large room at the top of a big old house (14 Norham's Gardens), where three elderly scholarly sisters live all immersed in educational war work."

In a letter to another member of staff, dated 18th May, she writes: "I have been lucky lately. Mrs. Dodd came to London to see her daughter and I had quite a longish talk with her; when I was speaking at a very small Sunday afternoon meeting in a village in Sussex, suddenly Mrs. Ryan, (Miss Griselda Gray), appeared in the audience; and last week when I was speaking for

the Bible Society at a place called Whitstaple on the coast there was Margaret Hunt, who had come over from her home at Sittingbourne; and she is coming next week again to Maidstone, where I shall be speaking for the Bible Society once more. . . . Last of my list of College people, E. K. Janaki telephoned to me to say that she had returned from Cambridge and wanted me to go to tea with her in Kew Gardens, on Tuesday afternoon, so though it was raining like anything we met in that most beautiful of places, but came at once back to my house here (only half an hour away) where we had a fire, and tea from India (a gift from Miss Carmichael), and enjoyed them as if it were midwinter. Janaki is doing some very important research into the nutritive value of rose-hips, perhaps Miss Mason would be interested. So she will not be back in India just yet."

In another letter dated 27th May she adds: "But there have also been disappointments. Dorothy Renshaw was coming to see me a few days ago, but is not well, so postponed her visit to London." She concludes the letter thus: "I always expect to be less busy but that time never comes. I still feel conscious of college terms and vacations, not as they are here, but in the Madras rhythm, . . . you will be well into the 1944-45 year when this reaches you, and I hope it will be a very good and peaceful and progressive year."

Miss McDougall's address is: 16 Sheen Common Drive, Richmond, Surrey.

THE NURSERY SCHOOL

[Old students will remember the plans made last year for nursery school for the "toddlers" of Mohanmedan's Gardens, from 2½ to 5 years old. In June 1943 we appointed as teacher Miss Jayamani Suviseshamuthu who had been trained at the Vepery Nursery School and had some experience in Madura.

The School started with 8 children in July 1943. At first, as we had no house of our own, a room in Miss Sykes' house was given up to them. We were very fortunate in being able to obtain some of the equipment of a nursery school previously held in Royapettah which had been closed. In August we were able to move into a rented building in an adjacent street and to settle down to a more normal programme.

During the remainder of the academic year we had 21 children on the register, with an average attendance of about 15. Besides the teacher we employed a part-time ayah to help in preparing

their midday meal. A prominent feature of this meal is greens and sprouted gram; we have also tried to substitute ragi for rice as often as possible, though recently it has become very difficult to obtain. These foods give the children the nutritive elements which are most often lacking in their home diet. Quite a lot of greens and other vegetables were grown in the little courtyard behind the school.

After the summer holidays a number of the older children were sent on to the Corporation Schools and we started again with 12 children. We have not tried to enlist new ones, because we were again very uncertain of accommodation, our rented house having changed hands, and the new owner wishing to live in it. He is allowing the school to remain there till the end of August, and the Committee are hoping to be able to purchase a permanent site. New children have nevertheless come, and the number enrolled in July 1944 is 18.

Miss Mason and Miss Theophilus have kept regular records of the weight and general condition of the children.

The result of our work is seen in the gradual change in the children's attitude, from suspicion and fear of strangers to a happy and natural friendliness. Our immediate needs and hopes are two-fold:—

(1) That we should very soon have a permanent home.

(2) That we should be able to appoint an assistant teacher and consequently increase the numbers of children who can be benefited.)

M. S.

COURAGE

'Daddy, What's this word?'

'Courageous.'

'What does it mean?'

'Being brave.'

'That's what I am when I fall down and don't cry.'

'Well, yes, that's one way of being brave.'

'Mummy always call me brave then.'

'Yes, it is being brave if you don't cry when you are suddenly hurt. There are other kinds of bravery too. Do you know what they are?'

'No. But please tell me, daddy.'

'What about men like uncle Jack who have to fly over enemy territory at night and all the time they are being chased by enemy planes trying to shoot them down. They can't turn back, or run away until they have dropped their bombs on the right place.'

'But don't they like doing it? Uncle Jack said he did.'

'Uncle Jack's a brave man, that's why he likes doing it. It needs a lot of courage—the kind of courage that makes a man face danger and not turn round and run away even though he's afraid.'

'I wish I could have that kind of courage. Aren't women ever brave like that, daddy?'

'Why, of course they are. Women very often have more courage than men. Those who are waiting and working at home these days while their loved ones are far away across the sea fighting for them, have to be very brave and there are women who face dangers like men. Don't you remember the story of the brave lady I told you the other day?'

'Who? Florence Nightingale?'

'Yes.'

'She was brave. Wasn't she? She left her Mummy and Daddy and everything so as to help those poor men. Don't you think I could be like Florence Nightingale or Grace Darling, who rowed the boat through the rough sea?'

'Yes, little woman, you can, and you can start by not being afraid of the dark.'

'Oh Daddy! would I be brave if I went to bed by myself and didn't have a light all night?'

'Yes, you would be. Sleeping in the dark isn't a brave thing in itself—nearly everybody does it. But it would be courage in you because you are afraid. Real courage overcomes fear. A brave person isn't one who does silly dangerous things just because they are dangerous. If some one has to do something and is frightened but goes ahead and does it all the same, he can be called brave.'

'Do you know, daddy, I heard Mr. Griffiths say that the little cripple boy is brave. How can he be? He doesn't do anything at all.'

'That's just why he is brave. He *can't* do anything but he's happy all the same. Don't you think he wants to run about and play just like you? He doesn't cry and grumble because he can't. But there's still another kind of courage which sometimes even very strong brave men don't have. We call it moral courage.'

'What does that mean?'

'Sometimes people are afraid to do what is right because they're afraid of being laughed at, or they're afraid of what some one else will think of them. They haven't got that kind of courage.'

'I know all about moral courage, daddy, if that's what it means, Cos a little boy at School yesterday wouldn't go to the orchard with the others to steal apples. They laughed at him and called him "baby" but still he wouldn't go and went home crying. I was so sorry that I walked back with him.'

'I'm sure that was reward enough for his bravery. Well! that's enough seriousness for one day. Off into the garden with you.'

'Bye-bye, daddy. I'm going to grow up very brave.'

'I hope you will.'

BARBARA WALKBY.

EXTENSION COURSE IN NUTRITION

The above seems far too tame a title for the happy days, "jollifications" and the fascinating course of study at our alma mater from April 17—28. There were twenty of us representing Boarding Schools and Hostels from all parts of the presidency. As half of us were alumnae, we quickly adopted the others and allowed them to become a corporate part of the college.

We were hard at work all day 10-1 in the morning, and 2-3.30 in the afternoon. But we found time to go out, visit friends, have parties, go to the cinema, and indeed to have a thoroughly good time, and we ended each day together with evening prayers in our dear old chapel. Those of us who were not scientists were initiated into all the mysteries of practical and laboratory work and realised for the first time the persevering patience needed before making a generalisation or formulating a theory. We began with lectures in the morning and ended up in the laboratory; all the afternoons being spent in practical work.

We learnt the values of all the food we eat, the amount of iron, calcium, protein, calories and vitamins needed for children and adults, and how these were deficient in the average Madras Diet, which has come to be spoken of as the Poor Madras Diet. The effects of malnutrition were discussed fully and all our experiments were directed towards ways of improving this diet.

The most interesting part of the course was our experiment with Rats. They were such jolly handsome creatures in their snowwhite coats, offering themselves readily for experiment in the good course of Nutrition. Pairs of rats were taken from the same litter, and of the same average weight. One pair was given poor Madras Diet, another Poor Madras Diet, plus Rasam (pepper water) and others food substituting ragi and other grains like cholam, kambu, and wheat, instead of rice. One pair was given Poor Madras Diet plus whole milk, others plus calcium, lactate or greens. Another pair was given an experimental school diet, which was actually cheaper than the Poor Madras Diet, in which the rice was reduced from 90 per cent to



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50 per cent and ragi, dhal, sprouted gram and greens added. Every week they were weighed, and the results showed clearly the effects of the various foods. The pair on Madras Diet and whole milk showed a very clear contrast—the former thin and scraggy with falling hair, and rickety legs, and the latter fat, buxom, with glossy hair and well formed limbs. The rats on greens and ragi also showed a very marked improvement.

Of course the Rats on 'Stock diet' (chappathies, carrots, sprouted gram, butter and green vegetables) showed the best results. A chart showing the effects of them on the weight of rats is a very interesting study in itself. We feel that having seen with our own eyes, we shall be able to wean any conservative parent or pupil from wholesale eating of rice. We also did quite a lot of chemical experiments to analyse the contents of food we eat. It seemed like magic to put in a bit of ground 'vadai' and with the help of various chemicals and intricate apparatus, find out its calories, fat content, etc.

The last part of our fortnight was spent in assessing the diets in the different schools. The work put in to arrive at the results seemed enormous, specially to those of us who had thankfully left Mathematics and Decimals behind us in the dim past. Miss Mason had to come to the rescue with her Adding Machine. But once arrived at and put up on the blackboard, it was most interesting to compare results from the different schools. We put up the cost of food per child per month and the percentage each school spent on various foods—cereals, pulses, leafy vegetables, fleshy food, milk, fruit oil and condiments. Then we calculated from the Health Bulletins issued by Dr. Aykroyde, how much each child in our school got of calcium, iron, fat, phosphorous, vitamins A, B & C and calories and compared this with standard requirements. We got a very clean idea where we were good and where we were deficient.

The most practical lectures on Gardening given by Miss Sykes were very useful, and I am sure have inspired us to follow her footsteps. We were also very happy to hear Dr. Bhagvat of the Nutrition Laboratory, Coonoor, talk to us one day. Our class as a whole appreciated greatly the hospitality given by the Women's Christian College, and the kindness of the staff, who were there at the time. We also owe a debt of gratitude to Miss Theophilus, who was Patience itself, answering our various questions at all times. It was most noble of Miss Mason, to have given up part of her holiday, and worked so hard for us and with us. We hope she will be amply repaid by

the sight of healthier children in the schools of the future. I shall end with a verse from a song we composed for a very jolly party on the last night, song to 'Old Black Joe!'

Come help the fight against bad Nutrition,
Come help to build a healthier Nation,
Come give our chief hearty co-operation,
Oh Dr. Mason wants us, calls us you and me,

GETSIE SAMUEL.

[Miss Getsie Samuel, Women's Christian College 1923-1924, is the headmistress of All Saints' Training School for Women, Puthur, Trichinopoly.—Ed.]

MISS SOSA MATHEW

(Miss Sosa Mathew—the first Indian woman to hold the position of National General Secretary of the Y.W.C.A. of India, Burma and Ceylon.)

(Miss Sosa Mathew is an alumna of this College—a Philosophy Graduate of 1924. She studied here only for the two years of her B.A. Course. It is usually in the two years of the Intermediate Course that a student gradually wins the confidence of the college community and proves her capacity for leadership. It is therefore the more surprising that Miss Mathew with her natural disposition to keep herself in the background, or behind the curtains was put on the College Y.W.C.A. Committee and the Games Committee and made the President of the Lotus Dramatic Society. She was a leader in the welfare work organized by the College. She was also one of the two or three chosen delegates to the Students' Conference in Calcutta.) I myself remember her best as the calm and steady shooter of the college net ball team, balancing herself after the run or the jump to get at the ball, and sending the ball cleanly through the centre of the ring with a sure aim and quiet confidence. But what I envy her most is her freedom from self-consciousness and from the attendant malady of embarrassment, whatever her company.

Miss Mathew entered the Y.W.C.A. service soon after her graduation. Her training period was spent partly in Calcutta and partly in Bombay, with visits to various other centres of Y.W.C.A. work in different parts of India. She was then appointed as a Y.W.C.A. Secretary in Trivandrum, where, as Miss Brentvall's colleague and assistant she helped in building up noble and worthy traditions in the Y.W.C.A. Students' Hostel. But her chief contribution to the Y.W.C.A. in Travancore and Cochin was the organizing of branches up and down the whole country and making the members realize that the



Y.W.C.A. was their own and not a foreign association — theirs to support, to develop and enjoy. It is most fitting that she should now be entrusted with the bigger responsibilities of controlling the affairs of the Association on a national scale. She has been prepared for it step by step in the smaller field where she was given increasing responsibility and increasing freedom to plan and shape her own work.

Association with a world organization like the Y.W.C.A. is bound to widen one's horizon of thought and interest. Every active member of the Y.W.C.A. must have experienced this stretching of the boundaries of her world — more so a worker in the Association. Miss Mathew had the rare privilege of serving on the staff of the world Y.W.C.A. at its headquarters in Geneva, for a few months, preceded by a tour in China, Japan, America, Canada, Europe and England. This experience must have given her a clearer knowledge of the work of this world association, of which her own work is an intimate part, and a vision of what the Association in India can and ought to become in the world Y.W.C.A. With this vision to guide her, we hope that she will maintain what is worthy in the traditions already established, but also venture to give the lead to the local associations to make their association a truer expression of the Indian mind in a world setting.

We, as a College, congratulate her on this promotion and wish her success and joy in her work; we hope to hear greater things about her in the future.

E. G.

A STRANGE CASE

DEAR S——,

On looking through the papers of our late lamented friend Mr. S——, I came across the following document, which I thought might perhaps interest you. If you have time you might read it through. I would be very interested to know what you, as an eminent psychiatrist might have to remark upon it.

Yours sincerely,
L——Y——.

P.S.—The document (which I have copied out below) had no title. I have therefore taken the liberty of entitling it thus:—

A TERRIBLY STRANGE CONVERSATION OR THE MURDERER AND HIS SOUL.

I am out in the dahlia garden, surrounded by flowers, and green foliage that glints and

glimmers in the strong light, with a soft patch of bottle-green lawn in the distance . . . Here I hope to escape him at last ———.

If he is a ghost, why does he not come at night, and at night alone? If he is real, why cannot others see him? Why is it me alone that he seeks out? Ah, but surely he will not distrust me, will not begrudge me this quiet hour of leisure? ——— But, no! he is coming. Even now I can feel his vile presence drifting over the lawn, his ghastly voice whispering in my ear.

He is here, I can hear him speaking; I can hear his curious insinuating voice with that hard, cruel essence of Truth in it.

'What a beautiful day,' he is saying. What a beautiful day! What blasphemy when I know quite well what he has come to say!

'That tree, over there, who would imagine that your uncle was found dead under it, who could imagine that black dismal December day now we are in mid-June!'

'He was not found dead,' I shout, as I have shouted so often. 'Not there, he was in his room. He died a perfectly natural death.'

'Yes, Yes,' he murmurs. 'A perfectly natural death! so said doctor Goodyear. Poor Dr. Goodyear! he died soon after, didn't he?—A perfectly natural death!—God, how he runs on!—'Poor doctor Goodyear,' his soft, curious voice continues murmuring. 'Poor Dr. Goodyear—so young too—and what a death!—A perfectly natural death!—'.

'Ah, what a delightful day, what beautiful grounds! What a handsome park! What a magnificent house! It was built in Queen Elizabeth's time, wasn't it? One of the Somerset mansions, I believe. I envy you, Mr. S——, Ah, I envy you—And so do your friends! Who would have thought that your uncle would have died so suddenly, leaving you all this, magnificent property—leaving it all to a nephew whom he hated, to the exclusion of Miss Vincent, his only daughter—'.

'God, will you stop?' The perspiration is running down my neck, my forehead is hot and clammy. I must compose myself. What will Elias the gardener think if he should hear me? He is not very far off; has he heard me? God, they will surely deem me a mad man—. And it is not I who am mad—it is he!

'It is you——' (God, can no one stop that horrid voice?) 'It is you,' he whispers. 'You who are the mad man. Mad—yes, mad. And you know it yourself. Your brain is rotting, your mind stagnant. Something has left you that will never come back—something strange. Boris.' (He has grown persuasive now!) 'Did you not

realise it, when you stood here, all alone, under that old oak tree, one black, dismal December day, a man somewhere at your feet?'

'It is a lie—I cannot recall ———.'

'What book are you reading? "The fall of the House of Usher". Heavens! What a story for a mad man to read!—' But evil things in robes of sorrow,

Assailed the monarch's high estate,
(Ah, let us mourn for never-morrow
Shall dawn upon him desolate!)
And, round about his house the glory,
That blushed and bloomed,
Is but a dim-remembered story,

'Of an old time.'——Wonderful, my friend, wonderful! I am glad to see you have such an eminent taste in literature. But why that book on this beautiful day, in this beautiful place, with such a charming companion as Miss Vincent walking over the lawn?

'You need not insinuate any longer,' I reply. 'I have provided for Miss Vincent. She is as well looked after as her father could wish.'

'As her father could wish!' he echoes, 'and pray', he whispers slowly, 'How do you know what he would wish? You were away, far away when he died. How could you know any thing about his last wishes, or his will that was so mysteriously lost?'

'What business have you to talk to me thus?' I shout. I am hoarse, with indignation and rage. Who is this? What is this man?—this thing, God. Can air take on a human shape, and torture a human mind? I am cold; shivering. A cloud has slipped across the sun.

'Boris, Boris, Why did you do it?—And yet I knew you were to do it. I knew when you were but a child. You stole money then (Ah, me, how long ago! I remember that house well. A cream coloured ivy-entwined cottage, one of many in a long sunny street)—a penny it was; or was it two?'

Five little boys playing Knuckle bones at the street-corner. It was a hot day: a beautiful day, just like this. The charms of the game soon died out, and they sat, lazily chatting, arguing about tops and kites, and pocket-money, as most little boys do, until one of them, a happy, bright-eyed, eager little fellow cried out 'I know what—let's play for farthings. For each point we give our farthing to the one who won it from the other, see? Not very clear, perhaps, but they saw it. Out came all their pocket money and the still silence of that afternoon was only punctuated with happy squeals of delight as some one won his farthings.

'Oh God!' I groaned, 'What a vile wretch he is.

What a vile wretch!' 'Bory' (They nicknamed you that, Boris, you remember?) one of them suddenly called out, 'You owe me a penny, and have not got anything left!' 'No I don't.' You shouted, and jumped to your feet. Were you about to run away, or were you not? But the other little fellow stopped you and a fight ensued.

'Bloody, touselled, disgracefully dirty, the nice little, happy eager bright-eyed boy who had proposed 'The Game of Farthings' returned home that evening with the taunts of his playmates still ringing in his ears (Borry ain't no good. Cheat. Borry's a cheat. Won't pay up! Won't pay up! Yah!)

Oh! How they hurt! How your blood tingled with hatred and shame!—and then, that night, all alone, when the rest of the world was asleep, you slipped across the long, dark passage in front of your room, to the tall, dark, mysterious chest in the corner,—taller, more mysterious still when viewed by the moonlight—and stole, (two pennies, was it?) from your little brother's savings-box. Even while you did the act those taunts, those wicked taunts kept humming in your ears—and you felt strangely justified in your deed; were filled with an overpowering sense of fright, of your righteousness, not your wrong. Who was it—that Greek law-giver, who decreed that stealing a cabbage was as bad as murder, and the punishment, for both should be death?—Dracon?—Ah, yes, that's the name——'.

You are certainly very moral, 'I interrupted frigidly. Ah, what feeling, what contempt, what inimitable scorn, and dignity I put into that reply? It is indeed an irreparable loss to the world that you are not its ruler. How happy we should be then! There would be no need of dyes, for we should all wear white; there would be no need of architectural genius, for we should not want to build; there would be no need of great literature, for we should not want to read. We would all be golden-voiced Orpheus—A world of 'dwellers-in-the-tree-tops,' spending their lives playing on lyres!'

'Boris,'—his voice is actually growing kinder now!—"You would be delightfully childish and quaint, if you were not so old, so seriously wrong. Boris, Miss Vincent is coming across the lawn, stop her, and tell her, tell the world—about last December. Boris," I feel him looking down upon me with kindness: there is infinite pity and concern in his voice, "It is your last chance—till next December!"

Ah! he is gone. Thank God, for that any way!—Miss Vincent is coming towards me; her beautiful face lights up with a smile of welcome: "Well, I hope you have been having a

nice sleep", she says "You know," (here she frowns, as she perceives my book) 'The Doctor has forbidden you to read anything but the very lightest of literature for at least a month after your serious illness. I really don't know what will become of you,' (here she interrupts herself with a charming gesture of helplessness). 'If you go on disobeying his orders at this rate.'

It is not of her, however, nor of the Doctor that I am thinking. 'Miss Vincent,' I say looking up unto her frank, grey eyes. 'I assure you—for there have been certain rumours?—I assure you I have never had—how shall I put it?—any hand in the late Mr. M——'s death....'

A cold breeze suddenly brushes across my cheek, murmurs unhappily through the grass, sighs disconsolately, whines as it joins the wind.....

'Silly Willy,' she remarks sweetly, with a great deal of surprise and firmness, 'Of course must I really think your illness has made you a bit—queer, shall we say? Besides, you were in New York at the time of Papa's death. It was that very week that you had the serious motor accident, was it not?'

'Yes, Yes,' I murmur hastily. 'Of course, I remember now. My illness, must, as you say, have undoubtedly blurred my reason. But let us go on now, and forget about it. Wait a minute, though—I have lost my place. Page eighteen—Ah!'

But before I can close the book my eyes fall upon these lines—

'———Like a rapid, ghastly river,
Through the pale door,
A hideous throng rush out forever,
And laugh—but smile no more'———

'Ugh. We must certainly go in now. It is really getting quite chilly. Is it not, my dear Miss Vincent?'

Here this remarkable manuscript ends almost abruptly. I may add as a kind of postscript, however, that our late friend, Mr. S——, (the Boris of this story) did indeed die the following December, curiously enough, on the anniversary of his uncle's death.

L——Y——

NAHLINI NAVAR,
Class II.

MISUNDERSTOOD!

It was a cloudy morning. On glancing at the clock I knew that as usual I would be late in going to class if I did not leave home at once.

Mother advised me to take my umbrella in case it rained; I said I would, and hurried out.

The tram was crowded with people going to their office; so I just managed to get a seat next a fat little old man in the very centre of the tram. He was calmly reading his newspaper and I was busy anxiously glancing at my watch almost every second. But as I could not hurry the tram, for once in my life I decided to wait sensibly till it stopped at my destination. After what seemed an endless journey, it finally did stop, and picking up my belongings I hurried out. Just as I was about to alight, a shout from within made me turn round only to find my fat neighbour asking me what I meant by taking his umbrella. Hot, confused, I handed it back, mumbling an apology. Now I realised that in my hurry I hadn't brought my umbrella.

Several weeks later, as I happened to be ready early, mother asked me if I could take a couple of umbrellas to be mended. I said I would as it wasn't out of my way, and I had plenty of time to spare. So picking up the umbrellas I leisurely walked along to the tram-stand. The tram wasn't very crowded this morning and I managed to find a good seat and settle myself down comfortably. Not being anxious about being late, I looked at the faces around me. Imagine my surprise when I found sitting opposite to me, the same fat little old man whose umbrella I had nearly carried off that dreadful morning. He was not reading this morning, instead he was looking at me and my umbrellas and then with a merry twinkle in his eyes, said, 'You seem to have been very successful this morning.'

E. Z.,
Class II

AKBAR AND BIRBAL

Many interesting stories are told of Akbar the Moghul and his famous minister, Rajah Birbal. Here's an amusing (and instructive) one.

On a certain cool evening in December, Akbar and Birbal walked the banks of the Yamuna. The sun was setting and a little breeze was rippling the deep waters of the river. Akbar looked contemplatively at the slow, dark waters.

'I wonder,' he said aloud, 'I wonder if any body would dare to defy Yamuna's strength.'

'I could.'

Akbar turned round in surprise. His eyes rested on a very poorly dressed, starved looking Brahmin.

'Your majesty just said'—he began haltingly.

'Yes?'

'I could swim across the Yamuna—tonight if your majesty so wishes. I am a humble man and poor and—and—'

"—and you hope for a reward."

The Brahmin's eyes were beseeching. Akbar considered. The man was very wretched looking. The reward, after all, he thought, would be nothing. And the man, moreover, offered to swim the Yamuna in the night, when the chill waters would be at their coldest. The very idea could make a man shiver. This man who could perform such a feat richly deserved the reward he asked for.

He turned to the Brahmin. 'Tonight,' he said. Then, 'A thousand pieces of gold.'

That night Akbar and his nobles and queens sat on the balcony of the palace. The lights illuminating the palace shone down on the river and showed a man standing on its banks, ready to plunge in, and people watching on either shore.

There was a splash—the man was in the water now, striking out for the other bank. Steadily, surely he went, and the amazement of the lookers-on grew as they watched him. Suddenly a shout went up, as the swimmer reached the men watching on the opposite bank.

Akbar looked round at his nobles. He felt slightly dissatisfied that Birbal had not been there to see it.

'The thousand pieces of gold,' he ordered. The nobles looked at one another, then at Akbar. What! This man from nowhere, this beggarly Brahmin, should he, almost for the asking, get a thousand pieces of gold?

'Your majesty,' said one slowly, 'If I may venture to say so,—He hesitated.

'Yes?'

'—that man has not kept his half of the bargain. He did not really suffer much from the coldness of the waters. The palace lights are many and big—' He paused.

Akbar looked at first surprised, then thoughtful. A thousand pieces of gold!

The Brahmin's arrival was announced. Akbar looked out into the night.

'Send him away,' he said.

The next day, after the Durbar, Birbal, as usual, waited on his royal friend.

'You were not here last night, Birbal,' said Akbar.

'No, your majesty, but I know what took place. I know the man. He came to me last night.' He stopped. Akbar knitted his brows.

'You have something more to say?'

'Will your majesty condescend to dine with me tomorrow in my humble dwelling?'

Akbar breathed freely again. He had dreaded Birbal's outspokenness. He still had a vague sense of something having gone wrong, but he thrust the feeling down.

'Very well,' he said.

It was midday. Akbar and Birbal were seated out in Birbal's garden. It was pleasant under the trees. A fountain near by tinkled away merrily.

Birbal was talking. Akbar listened, at first with great interest, then with less interest, then with no interest at all. The minutes lengthened into hours. Akbar grew bored, then impatient. Another hour passed—Akbar grew uneasy. Finally out it came:

'Are we going to have any dinner today?'

'In a minute, your majesty. Dinner is cooking.'

'Cooking?'—doubtfully.

Birbal pointed. There in a cleared space in the garden, was lighted a small, flickering fire of a few twigs. Over it swung, gypsy fashion, but at a height of about twenty feet from the ground, a little pot, suspended from three poles tied together at the top. Akbar turned furiously upon Birbal.

'It will be ready in a trice, your majesty,' he offered innocently.

'You fool, how can the heat of that fire ever reach the pot?'

'Why not, your majesty, if the warmth of the palace lights could reach a swimmer on the Yamuna?'

Akbar sat speechless for a second. Then he rose.

'Birbal, you are a true friend, and I thank God for you.'

That evening the sun set on a happy Brahmin who sat in his hut marvelling that a *King* could have asked his forgiveness.

M.

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THING IN THE WORLD

Nature is abundant in beauty and it is hard to choose the most beautiful thing in the world. But I cherish my friend's smile as the most beautiful thing in the universe.

She has passed away, but her smile lingers in my memory. She was a plain, grave-looking person. Her short life was full of troubles, but she bore them without a murmur. Though she herself was beset with cares and worries, yet that did not prevent her from helping others, comforting the poor and trying to bring some happiness into their drab lives.

My friend was plain-looking but when she smiled her whole countenance changed. I never

have seen such a wonderful transformation. Sometimes I felt it was incredible. She became a beauty in a moment. She took her own time to smile. Her lips would slowly part to reveal a set of regular pearly teeth. Her eyes would sparkle with joy and shine with happiness. Her head used to be thrown back, her face slightly flushed. Her voice too seemed to vibrate with joy.

Her smile radiated happiness and charm. Happiness is contagious and every one of us caught her spirit. We forgot our sorrows and joined in her merriment. No one noticed her shabby clothes or worn out shoes; for these things were cast into the background by her smile which transformed her whole person. I often told her that her smile cast a spell on all who were in her presence.

She had a wonderful way with children. No child remained in tears when she smiled. They could not resist her invitation to be gay. She bewitched them.

She helped the poor to a very great extent; not with money, for she had not a penny to her name. Her smile wrought wonders. Some may feel that her contribution to humanity was small but :—

'The thing that goes the farthest towards making life worth while,

That costs the least, and does the most is just a pleasant smile.'

She passed away in the prime of her youth, leaving many to mourn her. Her friends have one consolation, for she has left the memory of her smile with them. How true are Pope's words 'Time has only half succeeded in his theft.' No one can rob her friends of the memory of her smile; for I am sure it is engraven on their minds.

T. CHELLAMMAL,
Class I.

NEWS OF OLD STUDENTS AND FORMER MEMBERS OF STAFF

MARRIAGES.

Grace Bhagyam to Lieut Gerald Mani on Feb. 7, 1944.

Mary Chacko to Mr. K. V. Rajan, Feb. 17th, 1944.

Susy Chandy to Mr. J. Verghese, Feb. 2nd, 1944.
Anna P. Oommen to Mr. K. M. Mani, Feb. 3rd, 1944.

Lydia Moses to Mr. R. J. W. Moses, Dec. 29th, 1943.

Mary M. Mathew to Mr. C. M. Cheriyan.

Lily Isaac to Mr. E. M. Joseph, Nov. 3rd, 1943.
Grace Chelliah to Mr. W. Clarke, Feb. 7th, 1944.
Nancy David to Mr. John Devaraj, Feb. 16th, 1944.

M. K. Abraham to Mr. K. C. Abraham in September.

Sosa Kurien to Mr. Isaac, Sept. 18th, 1944.
Mary V. Samuel to Mr. Russel, June 7th, 1944.
K. Sitalakshmi to Capt. Viswanathan, July 7th, 1944.

Hepziban R. Thangaswamy to Manuel D. Azariah, June 5th, 1944.

D. Saraswathy to Mr. P. K. Anandavelu, May 31st, 1944.

Shamala Dhattaji to Mr. G. D. Ramaswami, June 11th, 1944.

Annama Joseph to Mr. Mathew Idiculla, May 18th, 1944.

Elizabeth Jacob to Mr. Eapen Kuruvilla in June.
Achamma Oommen to Mr. Peter Kuruvilla.

Sara Eapen to Mr. P. C. Cheriyan.

H. R. Thangaswami to Mr. M. D. Azariah, June 5th.

R. Lakshmi to Mr. V. C. Anantha Padmanabhan, July 12th.

BIRTHS.

Rina Michael (Mrs. Manuel) a son, Feb. 4th, 1944.

S. T. Benjamin (Mrs. Verghese) twin daughters.
Lalitha Thumbuswamy (Mrs. Krishnaiah), a daughter.

M. P. Chacko (Mrs. Mathew) a daughter.
M. M. Punnoose (Mrs. Mani) a daughter.

Mrs. A. Eapen, a son, March 6th.
Susy Jacob (Mrs. George) a son.

Grace John (Mrs. Philip) a son.
Flora Arumainayagam (Mrs. Jesuadian) a daughter, May 22nd, 1944.

Mrs. Abraham (Miss F. Moses) a son.

DEATHS.

K. J. Thangamma.
Ghouse Unissa (Mrs. M. Sheriff.)

COLLEGE COMMITTEE

The following are the members of the College Committee elected for the year July 1944 to March 1945 :—

Annamma Chakko, *President*.
Ramabai Lewis, *Vice-President*.
Mary Benjamin, *Religious Representative*.
C. B. Muthamma, *Games Captain*.
Alice Rukmani, *Treasurer*.
Mabel Cornelius, *Secretary*.
Manorama Clarke, *Entertainment Secretary*.

Christina Bonnell, *Section Representative*.
Mary Kurien, *Class II Representative*.
A. Gunaratnam { *Non-Resident Students' Representative*.

COLLEGE PRIZES

The Miller Medal to Shamala Dhattaji.
The Lord Pentland Prize to R. Lakshmi.
The Margaret Bretherton English Prize was divided between Nahlini Nayar and F. Thangam.
The Science Prize given in memory of Miss Coon to Mary Benjamin.
The Alexander Miller Scripture Prize (Junior) to R. Arulanandam.

UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS

September 1943

Completing the Examination—

B.A.

A. D. Chandravathana.
K. Thabayya.
C. J. Arulanandam.
C. Whitin.
Kursheed Unissa.

INTERMEDIATE

S. D. N. Moses, K. Sivaprakasam, H. S. C. Daniel, K. N. Lalitha, E. K. Sinniah, Muriel John, A. M. Clarke, R. Shakuntala, C. Janaki.

March 1944

B.A.

Mathematics—

Helen Bedford, E. P. Zachariah (1st Class in Part III), and V. Parukutty (2nd Class in Part III).

Botany Main—

A. Rajalakshmi, C. P. Madhava, H. Yeshoda.

Zoology Main—

P. P. Aleyamma (2nd Class in Part III).
Sara Mathan (2nd Class in Part III).

Philosophy—

A. Arearatnam (1st Class in Part III).
V. Moses (2nd Class in Part III).

History & Economics—

Beatrice Allis, R. Coomaraswamy (2nd Class in Part III), M. Kamakshibai.
V. Thulasamma (2nd Class in Part II).
Elizabeth Jacob, Sosa Kuruvilla, Mumtaz Mahal.
Shamala Dhattaji (2nd Class in Parts I, II & III).

B.Sc. PART I

M. Benjamin, A. Chacko, D. Knight, O. R. Manuel.

B.Sc. PART II

Stella Doraiswamy (1st Class).
Esther John (1st Class).
D. Saraswathy (2nd Class).

Intermediate—

GROUP A

I. M. Arthur (1st Class), C. A. P. Devanesam (1st Class).
R. Gnanamuthu, I. Kamalabai, R. Lakshmi (1st Class).
G. C. M. D. Bhagyaveni, S. Jayalakshmi, Jayalakshmi Nayar.

GROUP B.

R. Arulanandam (1st Class), N. Bhagyanathan, A. K. Chelliah, K. Jayalakshmi, L. Pithavadian, S. Ragaviah, S. Romola, J. Tucker, S. Vedamanickam, D. L. Chenchiah, M. Saraswathy, P. Shantappa, E. Cheriyan, S. C. Mathan, T. Kamala (1st Class), M. Neelambal (1st Class).

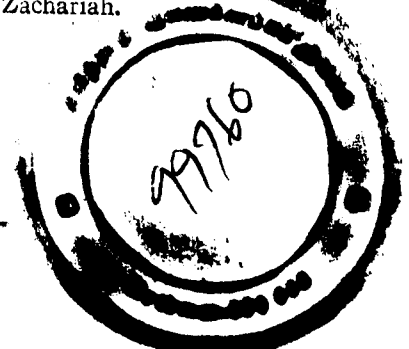
GROUP C

S. Padma (1st Class), R. Padmavalli, M. Gajalakshmi, M. Mani, Ivy Isaac, A. Koshy, C. Bonnell (1st Class), M. Sen Gupta, A. K. Mary (1st Class).

GROUP D

M. Cornelius (1st Class), M. D. Gnanamuthu, S. Devaraj, A. Mary Isaac, M. Kuruvilla, S. Sadarangani, S. Cheriyan, S. C. Mathan (1st Class), E. Zachariah.

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கொலை

அன்று அமாவாசை தினம். எங்கும் கரே லென்று இருள் கவிழ்ந்திருந்தது. கல்லூரி பிரார்த்தனை மண்டபத்தில் மாணவரும் ஆசிரியரும் குழுமியிருந்தனர். மேடையின்மீது ஆசிரியர் ஒருவர் நின்று தாழ்ந்த தொனியில் வேதாகமத்தினின்று சில வசனங்களை வாசித்துக்கொண்டிருந்தார். வெளியே நிசப்தம் நிலவியது. அப்பொழுதுதான் மணிக்கூண்டில் கடிகாரம் எட்டு அடித்து ஒய்ந்தது. மறுபடியும் அமைதல்!

என்ன பயங்கரக் குரல்! ஆம், அது மானிடக் குரல்தான்! மூச்சுத் திணறுவதுபோலிருக்கிறதே. ஆ! கொலையா!! ஆசிரியர் சிலர் எழுந்து வெளியே ஓடினர். என் மனம் “பக் பக்” என்று அடித்துக்கொண்டது. பிரார்த்தனையின்மீது என் மனம் செல்லவில்லை. “ஐயோ, இந்நேரம் எந்த அநாதையின் உயிர்ப் பவியோ! பெண் குரல்போல் தோன்றிற்றே! கழுத்தை நெறித்துத்தான் கொலை செய்திருக்க வேண்டும். ஆம், வேறு எக்காரணமாயிருக்க முடியும்? அப்பெண்மணி என்ன நினைத்து கதறினாளோ! அம்மம்ம, கோரக்காட்சி!” என்று பல எண்ணிப் பதறியது என் மனம்.

பிரார்த்தனை முடிவடைந்தது. மண்டபத்தைவிட்டு வெளியேறினேன். ஒரே இருள் மயம். என் ஹிருதயம் துரிதமாக அடித்துக் கொண்டது. நடைபெற்ற பயங்கர கொலையைப்பற்றி பற்பல விதமான செய்திகள் என் செவியில் விழுந்தன. எனது தோழி ஒருத்தி ஓடிவந்து, “கலா, சத்தத்தைக் கேட்டாயா? கழுத்தைதான் நெறித்திருக்கின்றாள். என்ன வென்று நினைக்கிறாய்? கொலை!” என்றாள். “கொலை! கொலை!! கொலை!!!” என்று யான் திருப்பி மொழிந்தேன். இருதயத் துடிப்பு நின்றுவிடுமோவென பயந்தேன்.

இரண்டு மூன்றடி சென்றேன். இன்னும் சில வார்த்தைகளைச் செவியுற்றேன் “அம்மணி தன் அவனைத் தூர்த்திக்கொண்டே நம் விடுதியைத் தாண்டி-ஓடின சப்தம் கேட்டதாமே?” என்றாள் ஒரு பெண். “ஆம், ஓடினதைத் தான் பார்த்திருக்கிறார்களே” என்றாள் மற்றொருத்தி.

“என் விடுதியினருகில் கொலை! என்ன பயங்கரக் காட்சி! ஓர் பெண் சவமாய்க் கிடக்கின்

றாள். எங்ஙனம் நான் அதைக் காண்பேன்? தெய்வமே!” என வாய்விட்டுக் கூறிவிட்டேன். அடிமேலடி வைத்து விடுதியை நோக்கிச் சென்றேன். அப்போது நுந்த என் மனநிலையை எடுத்துரைக்கவே இயலாது. அதை வாசகர்களே ஊகித்துக்கொள்ளுமாறு விட்டு விடுகின்றேன்.

இருளைக் கூர்ந்து கவனித்து நடந்தேன். ஆ! யாரோ என்மீது விழுந்ததுபோற் தோன்றிற்று. கொலையாளியின்மீது மோதியிட்டோமே என்ற எண்ணம் உதிக்கவும் “ஐயோ! அம்மா!” என்று அலறிப் புடைத்துக் கதறினேன். நெற்றியைத் தடவினேன். உதிரம் வடிந்தது. ஆம், பலத்த காயம். உற்று நோக்கினேன். எதிரே விளாமரம் நின்றிருந்தது. ஆம், மரத்தல் மோதியிருக்கின்றேன். வேதனைச் சகிக்கக்கூடாமல் ஒரே ஓட்டமாய் ஓடி என் படுக்கையில் படுத்தேன்.

இருண்டடர்ந்த வனம். நான் தனிமையாய் மாங்களினுடே சென்றுகொண்டிருந்தேன். எங்கும் கும்பிருட்டு. சிற்சில விடங்களில் ஏதோ பயங்கர சப்தங்கள் கேட்டன. நான் ஒன்றையும் பொருட்படுத்தாமல் சென்று ஒரு இருண்ட குகையை யடைந்தேன். அதற்குள் துழையும் தருணத்தில் யாரோ ஒருவன் என்மீது பாய்ந்து என் கழுத்தை நெறித்தான். “ஐயோ அம்மா” என்றலறி மண்மீது விழுந்தேன்.

என் தோழி என்னிடம் ஓடிவந்து “என்ன, கலா, கனவு கண்டாயா? என் இப்படி உளறுகிறாய்? என்று கேட்கவும்தான் தூக்கத்திலிருந்து விழித்தேன். கட்டிலிலிருந்து கீழே விழுந்து கிடந்தேன். என்ன செய்வதென்றறியாமல் எழுந்து மறுபடியும் படுத்து நித்திரையிலாழ்ந்துவிட்டேன்.

மறுநாட் காலை, கல்லூரியில் அனைவரும் முந்தின இரவு கேட்ட சப்தம், ஏ. ஆர். பி. வேலை செய்யும் இருவர் விளையாட்டாக கழுத்தைப் பிடித்து, பேசி சிரித்துக்கொண்டுபோன சப்தமே யென்றும், கொலையொன்றும் நடக்கவில்லை யென்றும் பேசிக்கொண்டனர். என் மனத்திலும் அமைதி நிலவியது.

சிறைவாசி

மாலை மயங்கும் வேளை. குளிர்ந்த காற்று வீசிக்கொண்டிருந்தது. கால்கள் என்னை இழுத்துச்சென்ற வழியே சென்றுகொண்டிருந்தேன். சுயேச்சையாய் அலைந்து திரிவதினால் உண்டான குதுகலத்தில் என்னை மறந்து நெடுந்தூரம் சென்றுவிட்டேன். சுற்றுமுற்றும் பார்த்தேன். மாங்களும், செடி கொடிகளும் அடர்ந்த ஓர் காடாகக் காணப்பட்டதைக் கண்டு திடுக்குற்றேன். ஆனால் சமீபத்தில் ஓர் இரும்புக் கம்பிகளாலான ஒரு கட்டடம் இருப்பதைக்கண்டு அருகில் சென்று உள்ளே எட்டிப்பார்த்தேன். என்ன ஆச்சரியம்! உள்ளே ஓர் அழகிய பெண், துயரமே உருவாய் ஓர் மூலையில் உட்கார்ந்திருந்தாள். இந்நிர்மானுஷ்யமான காட்டில் கருப்புச் சிறைக் கூடத்தில் அடைக்கப்பட்டிருக்கும் இவ்வணங்கு யாராயிருக்கக்கூடும்? அழகே உருவெடுத்தாற்போன்ற இச்சிறுமியை இவ்விதம் அடைத்துவைத்து துன்புறுத்துபவரின் மனம் என்ன கல்லோ என்று எண்ணியவாறு, அவளருகில் சென்று அவளது வரலாற்றை விசாரித்தேன். அவர், நீர் தேங்கிய கண்களுடன், தன் பவளச் செவ்வாயைத் திறந்து தன் விருத்தார்த்தத்தைக் கூறலானாள்.

“அக்கா, என் பந்துக்கள் யாவரும் அருகிலுள்ள ஓர் ஊரில் இருக்கின்றனர். நான் அவர்களுடிருக்கும்போது எவ்வளவு சந்தோஷமாய், எவ்வளவு சுயேச்சையாய் இருந்தேன். பாடிப்பாடிப் பொழுதைக் கழித்தேன். உலகமே இன்பமயம் என்றெண்ணி இன்பக் கனவுகள் கண்டுகொண்டிருந்தேன். ஆனால் என் தலையில் இப்படி எழுதியிருக்கிறதே! ஓர் சதி கார அரசர்களின் வலையில் விழுந்தேன். அவன் என்னைப் படுத்தி வைத்திருக்கும் அலங்கோலத்தைப் பார்த்தாயா? அவன் மனம் மகிழும் படி நான் பாடவேண்டுமாம், பேசவேண்டுமாம். என் இன்ப வாழ்க்கை அவனது விளையாட்டிற்குப் பரி. என்னை நல்ல இடத்தில்

வைத்திருப்பதாக அவன் எண்ணம். என் விடுதலைக்காக ஏங்கி உருகிக்கொண்டிருக்கிறேன் என்பது அக்கிராதகனுக்குத் தெரியவில்லை. என் கால்களில் கனத்த விலங்குகளை மாட்டி, ஏதோ அழகிய ஆபரணங்களைப் பூணுவித்தது போல் மகிழ்கிறான். நான் நாகவேதனை யனுபவித்துக்கொண்டிருக்கிறேன். அது போதாதென்று, அவன் சமீபத்திலில்லாதபோது, ஒரு புலி வந்து என்னை அச்சுறுத்துகிறது. இவ்விரும்புக் கம்பிகளின்மீது பாய்ந்து, அதை உடைத்து என்னை விழுங்க வகைதேடுகிறது. என்னைப் பிரிந்த பெற்றோர் எவ்விதம் வருந்துகின்றனரோ? எனக்கு விடுதலை கிடைக்கும் நந்நாள் எந்நாளோ?”

அவள் விம்மி விம்மிப் புலம்பினாள். அவளால் தப்பிப்போகவும் முடியாது. அவளது ஒளிர்க்காங்களால் அவளைச் சுற்றியுள்ள இரும்புத் தூண்களை உடைக்க முடியுமா? அப்பேதையின் தூர்ப்பாக்கிய நிலையை நினைந்து, மனம் வெதும்பிச் செயலற்று நின்றேன்.

திடீரென்று ஓர் பயங்கர உறுமல் சப்தம் கேட்டது. சமீபத்திலிருந்த புதரிலிருந்து ஓர் புலி அச்சிறையை நோக்கிப் பாய்ந்தது. சிறைப்பட்ட அழகி பரிதாபமாய் அலறினாள். திடுக்கிட்டு விழித்தேன். மணி ஒன்று அடித்தது. ஜன்னலுக்கு வெளியே வெயில் காய்ந்தது. கொண்டிருந்தது. என் தலைக்குமேலிருந்து ஓர் மெல்லிய அபயக்குரல் கேட்டது. திரும்பிப் பார்த்தேன். என் சகோதரன் வளர்த்து வந்த கிளி பயந்து கீச்சிட்டுக்கொண்டு, கூண்டின் ஓர் மூலையில் பதுங்கிக்கொண்டிருந்தது. எங்கள் வீட்டு வரிப்பூனை உறுமிக்கொண்டு கூண்டை நோக்கிக் குதித்துக்கொண்டிருந்தது. எழுந்து பூனையை விரட்டிவிட்டு கூண்டைத் திறந்து அப்பைங்களியை வெளியே எடுத்தேன். அதன் கால்களில் அலங்காரத் திறகாகக் கட்டப்பட்ட மணிகளை அறுத்தெறிந்துவிட்டு அதை வெளியில் பறக்கவிட்டேன். விடுதலை பெற்ற அப்பறவை ஆரந்தக் கூச்சலிட்டுக்கொண்டு பறந்து சென்றது.