

498

Special Number

# INDIA

## MAGAZINE

November, 1958.

489

Price 40 nP.

INSIDE READING

### Stories

Where Hearts Meet

Between Desire And Duty (Long Complete Story)

The Secret

Shadows Of The Past

### Articles

In Defence Of Career Girls! (For Women)

Dowry And The Middle Class

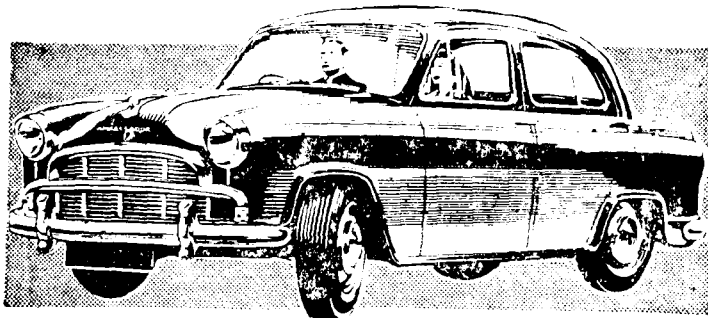
\* \* \*  
MORE STORIES ; FEATURES ; FUN ; FILM ;  
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS.

ASTROLOGICAL FORECASTS FOR NOVEMBER

## No other car offers so much!

You pay a small car price but you get big car luxury.

You get a car that is so brilliantly styled that it fills you with a sense of pride to ride in it. A power unit that offers efficiency and better mileage and many features that make for safer motoring. In short you will not believe that you paid so little for this magnificent car.



There is only one car like the

# Ambassador

- SAFETY FEATURES:**
- Deep-sunk-centre steering wheel
  - Padded fender rails
  - Safety-lock doors and safety glass all round
  - Exceptional road stability and dependable brakes

**PRICE:**  
**Rs. 11161/-**  
**EX-PLANT**

HINDUSTAN MOTORS LTD., CALCUTTA

DEALERS:

### DEALERS AT:

Agra; Ambala Cantt.; Amritsar; Ahmedabad; Allahabad; Baroda; Bangalore; Bombay; Bareilly; Banaras; Calcutta; Cuttack; Coimbatore; Dibrugarh; Dhanbad; Gauhati; Indore; Jaipur; Jodhpur; Jalgaon; Jorhat; Kanishadpur; Lullandur City; Jammu; Kanpur; Kohimur; Madras; Madurai; Mangalore; Meerut; Nagpur; Lucknow; New Delhi; Nepal; Patna; Poona; Palayamcottai; Pondichery; Rajkot; Ranchi; Sambalpur; Shillong; Secunderabad; Silchar; Srinagar; Satna; Tezpur; Tiruchirappalli; Tiruvandrum; Vijayawada; Vizianagaram City

# INDIA MAGAZINE

Member: Audit Bureau of Circulations Ltd.

VOLUME 3: No. 9

NOVEMBER 1958

PRICE 40 nP.

## Stories

## CONTENTS

|                                 | PAGE |
|---------------------------------|------|
| WHERE HEARTS MEET               | 3    |
| A MATTER OF CREDIT              | 8    |
| BETWEEN DESIRE AND DUTY         | 17   |
| THE SECRET                      | 33   |
| THE DREAM HOUSE                 | 38   |
| SHADOWS OF THE PAST             | 45   |
| THE MYSTERIOUS CALL             | 51   |
| WHEN THE SOUL CHANGED ITS BODY! | 57   |
| (MYSTERY STORY NO. 4)           | 57   |

## Skit

|                     |    |
|---------------------|----|
| FROM DELHI TO MARS! | 43 |
|---------------------|----|

## Articles

|                                         |    |
|-----------------------------------------|----|
| IN DEFENCE OF CAREER GIRLS! (FOR WOMEN) | 13 |
| SORE THROAT (HEALTH)                    | 15 |
| DOWRY AND THE MIDDLE CLASS              | 30 |

## Features

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| NEED FOR SWIFT ACTION (EDITORIAL) | 2  |
| LIFE & LAUGHTER                   | 65 |
| QUESTIONS & ANSWERS               | 68 |
| PLANETS AND YOUR FORTUNE          | 70 |
| FLASHES FROM FILMLAND             | 76 |



The names of characters and places appearing in fictional stories are purely imaginary and any reference to living persons is only coincidental. The Editor does not accept responsibility for the views expressed by contributors.

# India Magazine

THIRD YEAR OF PUBLICATION

VOLUME 3 } NOVEMBER 1958 { No. 9

## NEED FOR SWIFT ACTION

WHEREVER we turn we find people gathering in groups and talking of the military coup in Pakistan and the exciting consequences flowing from it. It is doubtful, however, if they are paying as serious attention to the dangerous situation in Kerala. Geographically speaking, Kerala forms the foot of India. Suppose there is an infection in the foot of a man, will not his body be affected soon?

It is some consolation that the All-India Congress Committee which met at Hyderabad recently took a grave view of the situation in Kerala. But it seems to have stopped there. It is a willing-to-wound-but-afraid-to-strike attitude of which few sensible patriots would approve. Day by day the press is deluged with alarming reports that conditions in that State are becoming more chaotic. What will happen if all the plantations on the High Ranges are closed down and the experienced European personnel choose to leave our shores? Millions of pounds of tea that help to increase our exchange resources are being lost irretrievably. Of more ominous significance is the fact that Communism in the name of labour is sweeping all constitutional opposition before it and is striking deep roots in our soil. Mr. John Foster Dulles, America's Secretary of State, appreciatively referred, the other day, to India's fight against Communism. Have we been able to halt the advancing Red tide in Kerala? Sooner or later, President's rule is inevitable and the army must move to the High Ranges and give protection to life and property. But we are delaying.

Diwali Greetings To All Our Readers

# Where Hearts Meet

By V. TIWARI

AT the railway junction where he was waiting on the crowded platform for the train to take him to the hill station, Mohan saw the young woman. She sailed past him in all grace and as she paused for a second to shift her leather bag from one hand to another, she glanced back at him. Then she disappeared into the refreshment stall.

Leaving his trunks to a porter, he dived into the hot drinks section and sipped at a glass of tea. As his eyes roved about he saw her biting into a bun. Her mouth was full, her cheeks bulging. She must be not more than twenty-five, he guessed. Her oval face, pert nose, sparkling doe-like eyes, rather high cheekbones easily distinguished her from the rest of the women there. She wore a pale green sari and a red blouse. Barring her ear-drops, she had no other

ornament. But she looked exquisitely attractive.

She finished her lunch in a few minutes and hurried out. Mohan put down the glass on the stall counter and lit a cigarette. He was deeply lost in thought. His wife Nirmal had gone to her parents' home to have her first baby. On the family doctor's advice he had taken three months' leave and was proceeding to the hill station. He had often shown signs of being run down and depressed. He was armed with a number of tablets, powders and tonics which the doctor had assured would set him right. On the plains it was extremely hot; the earth was barren and baked. The rivers had run dry and man and beast sweated and groaned.

Mohan started with a jerk when the porter came near and

*At holiday resorts you sense romance in the very air.  
The young man and the young woman throw conventions to the winds and plunge into the vortex of love.*

shouted for him to get into the train that had already steamed in. He cursed himself for his forgetfulness and almost ran for the second-class compartment with the porter preceding him. The guard's shrill whistle had gone for the second time and his green flag fluttered about. He jumped into his compartment as the engine roared. The train began to move when the porter demanded his due. He dug into his pocket and flung a rupee coin at him. The sudden motion of the train and the jolt brought down the window shutter from its loose hinges, and the left thumb of Mohan's was almost smashed. "Ouch!" he shouted in agony and lifting the shutter with his right hand, he extricated his left thumb. There was a cut right in the middle and blood was oozing from it.

"Stretch your left arm straight, please. I shall apply some tincture benzoin. I shall take it out from my bag," said a woman.

THEN only did Mohan look about, forgetting his pain for the moment. The only other occupant of the compartment was a woman—the very same one whom he had been admiring from a distance at the refreshment stall. She came towards him with a small piece of cotton soaked in tincture benzoin, placed it on the wound and patted it on with her fingers until it got stuck on the thumb. There was a terrible burning

sensation and he bit his lips and closed his eyes for a minute. Then, as the pain subsided he opened them and looked at the ministering angel sitting opposite. She was wiping her hand on the white handkerchief and smiling at him.

"I must thank you for the timely first aid," he said.

"How is the pain?" she asked.

"It is gone almost," he lied.

"One must be careful these days about window seats. This carriage was probably built in the last century. The doors, the windows and, why, even the benches are shaky."

TOGETHER they laughed, and he thought that she looked most charming as she displayed two perfect rows of even teeth. Then, gradually, he told her about himself, his mysterious ailment, the doctor's advice, his wife's visit to her parents for her first confinement and his plans for a long rest at the holiday resort.

"Where do you propose to stay?" she asked as if to prolong the conversation.

"I have with me the keys of a friend's house in West Street. He goes with his family there once a year and spends a month. For the rest of the year it remains locked. It is very well

furnished and one can command all the conveniences."

THERE was a sudden grating of brakes and a violent jerk. The woman was almost thrown off her seat and Mohan caught her in his arms to prevent her from falling. "You must be careful," he said, grinning. Both their faces were only a few inches apart. Her eyes seemed to probe into his mind and carried a message of their own. She preferred to stay in his arms like that for just some more time and smiled at him. Hot blood pounded in his veins and the nearness of soft feminine flesh made him mad. His lips crushed hers and she twined her arms about his neck and nestled close.

She suddenly forced herself and sat apart. Both of them had a guilty look. But she spoke in an even tone. "Isn't it funny that you don't even know my name? Time we did. They call me Snehlata at home. And I am supposed to be in my parents' home not very far from the foot of the hill. But please don't ask me any questions. Take me for what I am and don't try to know more about me."

"What do I care?" he said, smiling. "We have discovered a new interest in each other and that is enough for me. I shall respect your wish."

At 7 p.m. they reached their destination and entered a hotel where they ate a hearty meal. A refreshing cool breeze blew against their faces as they came out in the direction of their temporary residence. For the first time he felt a huge weight lifting off his mind and the presence of a fair companion exhilarated him beyond measure though he had twinges of conscience as he thought of his devoted wife going through the ordeal of motherhood.

He unlocked and pushed open the main door of a small two-storeyed house and switched on the lights. She followed him quietly and looked with approval at the wooden floors, high cots with layers of woollen rugs, blankets and pillows. The owner of the house and his lady had thoughtfully provided a wardrobe for guests of both sexes. In the kitchen she found tinned food of all kinds, utensils and two electric stoves.

"Well, Mohan, you have a home away from home," she remarked enthusiastically.

"I suppose a man requires a woman to complete his sense of home," he replied.

SHE only smiled. Alone she went into each room on the first floor and the second, and carried out her exploration. He was too tired and exhausted and did not accompany her. He made his bed on a cot and was sitting

on it, half awake, half asleep, wondering where she would take her bed. He then leaned against the pillows and closed his eyes.

He suddenly woke up after a long spell of sleep and found himself groaning. There were shooting pains in his left thumb. The wound was uncovered, the tincture-soaked cotton having fallen away. The lights of the house had been switched off. He called her gently by name and she at once responded from the next room. But she had not closed the door to bar his entry. "I am coming, Mohan," she said. He heard the click of the electric switch and saw her coming out. The light that streamed from her room enabled him to see everything clearly.

"When I came down you were fast asleep. I thought it was your first sleep after several days and didn't want to wake you up. Anything wrong with your thumb?" she asked with concern.

"It is paining me a bit and if you are not very sleepy I would like to have another application of that tincture benzoin," he suggested apologetically.

She went in and brought out a small bottle and a wad of cotton. This time she bandaged his thumb with a small ribbon of cloth torn out of her towel.

"I feel better now," he told her. "Sorry I disturbed you, Snehlata. If you feel chill take the blankets stocked in the corner there."

She went back to her room and switched off the light. He stretched himself on the cot again but sleep had deserted his eyes though he tightly closed them. He listened for her movements in her room. He heard the rustle of her dress. Then silence enveloped the whole house. He turned his face to the wall and was thinking of how dull life would be without this woman. He was startled to feel the touch of a soft hand and knew at once that she had come to him.

She sat on the cot, leaning against his back. "I was anxious to know if you had caught fever. Your face was red and I came back to feel your forehead," she said in a low, caring tone.

He did not reply. He held her soft palm in both his hands and then brushed each finger against his lips. She bent her face over his and imprinted a long kiss on his cheek. He turned round with a savage desire and gathered her in one wide sweep of his arms...

She cooked for him and went to the bazaar with him to buy fruits, vegetables and provisions. She bought them with her own money and would not listen to his pleas to let him place his purse at her disposal.

WITHIN a week of their arrival she had bought saris by the dozen, two pairs of gold bangles from the jewellers and a ring. One day before Mohan got up from his afternoon nap she went to the bazaar and purchased a gold wrist watch. She gave it to Mohan as a present from a new friend but he would not accept it. He pointed out that normally he should foot all the bills and that she was depriving him of the privilege of running the home as she called it.

"All right, I surrender," she said, sighing. "But before I yield you must accept this wrist-watch."

"Before I take it there is one condition to which you must agree."

"What is it?" she asked, wondering.

"Here is a gold chain which you must wear." From his coat pocket he fished out a glittering gold chain which he put round her neck.

"You win," she cooed, blowing him a kiss.

Then he gave her the key to his box wherein he kept his money.

For two months he forgot his wife and his duty to her. He did not even acknowledge the letter from his father-in-law that his wife was delivered of a male child. He was too happy in Snehlata's company.

Late one chilly morning when he woke up he was startled to find that she had gone, leaving a note under his pillow.

"I am going back home. Forget all thoughts about me. And don't be a fool to search for me—Snehlata."

For a whole day he paced the room restlessly. Then he decided to cancel his leave and return to his wife and child. Casually he glanced through the paper that had been delivered that morning and a small advertisement hit him like a knife between his eyes.

"Snehlata, come back to your ailing crippled husband. Discharged from hospital. Let us forget the past—Sahay." ††

## INDIA MAGAZINE

### SUBSCRIPTION RATES

For One Year .... Rs. 4.50 nP.  
For Two Years .... Rs. 8.00 nP.

(Subscription for less than one year will not be accepted.)

Copies are not sent by V.P.P.

# A MATTER OF CREDIT

Her husband was the victim of an accident  
and his colleague tried to take advantage  
of her loneliness.

AT the sewing class that day Brinda was not very helpful to her students. In sheer weariness she closed her eyes and could hardly resist a drowsy feeling. The few students who attended class that day looked at her in sympathy and hatched a conspiracy in silence. They didn't want to stand between her and her sleep and quietly slipped out. Only one girl was left and she went on plying her needle without asking the teacher any questions.

At 5 p.m. Brinda woke up in alarm and looked round. She was dismayed to see that all the pupils except Radha had left the class without taking her permission. Suppose one of them made a complaint to the Manager of the Institute? She would be sacked mercilessly.

Radha looked up just then and put down her embroidery. She understood her teacher's uneasiness and spoke reassuringly. "That is all right, madam. They knew that your husband has sustained a serious fracture of his right leg and is

BY  
RAM SWARUP

lying in the hospital. While you were nodding Pushpa, Raji, Kumudh, Ramabai and others were expressing their sorrow over the sad fate of yourself and your six-month-old child."

"And what did they say, Radha?" Brinda asked eagerly.

"They said your husband will have to remain in hospital for nearly six months—perhaps more. Since a new physical demonstrator has come to the school your husband may not get any pay. The school committee is struggling for funds. Since your husband took up his job only a few months ago they may even terminate his service.... Why, madam, I must be a fool to tell you all that they said and bring tears to your eyes. No, no. I am sorry. It was not my intention."

BRINDA wiped her eyes with a kerchief and smiled sadly. "Radha, how could I blame you for what they said or how could I blame those good friends of mine for finding out the truth and gushing with sympathy for me? I am really grateful to you all for the interest you are taking in me. Please, Radha, go on and repeat all that they said. I insist on knowing."

There was a heavy downpour of rain outside and the wind was howling and battering against the door and the fastened shutters of the windows. Radha drew a chair nearer to Brinda and laying her right hand on her shoulder spoke in a low tone. "You know, teacher, I am even older than you and so please remember that I am more a friend than a pupil. Well, Kumudh, being the Headmaster's daughter, must have got an inkling of her father's mind. The Headmaster is a perfect gentleman and generous friend

but he is bound by the decision of the committee. It even appears that he recommended some half pay for your husband but the committee turned down his proposal. What will you do now?"

Brinda paused for a minute as if to collect her thoughts. "You see, Radha, my husband was getting eighty rupees and my salary here is sixty. I do some tailoring at home; the neighbouring women place orders with me and I stitch their clothes. All told, we were earning a total of Rs. 175 a month. When Rani was born I had to stop my work. My husband borrowed two hundred rupees from Sekhar, a colleague of his in the High School. We have returned to him half the amount with a promise to pay up the balance this week."

"Won't that man agree to take it back from you in easy instalments? I suppose he is sensible and sympathetic enough," suggested Radha.

"No, dear. He is haunting my house morning, noon and night. Whoever dreamt that my husband would be knocked down by a car while trying to save a girl from being run over? The car didn't stop and disappeared into the darkness and nobody noticed my husband until one hour later. I was too dazed to think or act. Indeed I had a hundred rupees which we intended to return to the

creditor, but I had to deposit a major portion of the amount with the hospital.

"But this Sekhar is an unsympathetic man. Last night he suddenly entered my residence—you know it is a small separate outhouse in the first compound on Major Road and mercilessly demanded his money back. The house is in a quiet corner and it was so nice to live in when my husband was there but now I feel so lonely and miserable. Thank all those friends for their kind thoughts when you meet them."

"But coming back to Sekhar, how did you send him out?" asked Radha, unable to suppress her curiosity.

"OH, he said he wouldn't go unless he got his money back. He asked me where I was hiding my jewels and looked me all over. I thought he had some sinister design. Suddenly I had an idea. In the crook of my left arm I took my child and in my right hand I held a bucket, and walked out. He must have thought that I was going to the well to bring water. But I left the bucket near the well and hid myself behind two huge trees in the compound. I waited there for nearly two hours and saw him leaving the house. Luckily the child was asleep. If it had cried his attention would have been arrested. Then I flew into the house, locked and fastened all the windows. I kept awake the whole night for fear he would enter the house by force."

"You could have gone to the police station and preferred a complaint," Radha remarked.

"I THOUGHT of that, too. But, then, he would deny any trespass. He has a good story to tell the police. He may say that he just called at the house for the recovery of his money and that my complaint was just a concocted tale."

"Poor dear! That explains why you have been so weary and sleepy. My! it is past six and I have to meet some friends. The rain too has stopped. It is time you hurried back home. Where have you left your child?"

"I have left her with a neighbour who is very fond of her. Anyhow I am very late. You had better go, please. I shall find the peon and ask him to lock the hall."

Radha left the hall in haste. Leaving instructions with the peon, Brinda hailed a rickshaw and got into it. She claimed her darling daughter after speaking for a few minutes with her neighbour and went into her home. An old man, who was a distant relation of her husband, called to say that he had been to the hospital in the afternoon and that the surgeon in charge had assured him that her husband would be all right in a few weeks and would be able to walk as before. Tears of relief gushed from her cheeks and she prostrated be-

fore the picture of Lord Krishna, smiling at her from the wall. The old man departed after conveying a message from her husband that she was not to worry on his account.

So the worst of the crisis was over. She lay on the cot with her baby suckling at her breast and slept for a while. She woke up after nearly two hours and went to the kitchen to cook some food for herself. Fool that she was she had left the back door ajar and Sekhar had stealthily crept in and confronted her in the corridor. He laid his hands on her shoulders and grinned. "Now, my pretty woman, you may render account in a different way. If you yield to me I won't press you for the balance until your husband returns. I may even cancel it and pay you some extra money if your surrender is absolute."

She was furious at his suggestion. "Get out," she ordered. "Or I will scream my head off. Stand aside. Don't you dare touch me again. I will not yield even if you kill me, you snake in the grass."

She pushed him with all her strength towards the back door. He was livid with anger and slapped her in the face. Blood spurted from her nose. But she did not mind the bleeding. She took a long iron pipe which she generally used for blowing air into the oven, and hit his

head with it. Blood oozed as he ran and she pursued him. As he reached the front portion of the residence he stopped dead at the sight of a group of young women behind whom stood an old gentleman. They were just then entering the compound. It was the Headmaster of the High School under whom he was serving as an assistant. The women shrieked in horror as they saw Radha bleeding from the nose. One of them caught hold of her as she was sinking. Another seized the iron blow pipe and was about to have a go at Sekhar when the Headmaster cried out. "Stop it, girls. I can handle this man without your aid." Then he glared at Sekhar with indignation. "Sekhar, so you have descended to this level? You have brought shame and disgrace to the school and the profession. I am ashamed to call you my colleague. Instead of helping that poor woman and protecting her honour as that of a sister, you have sneaked in like a rake to outrage her modesty. If she goes to the police, you have not the shadow of an excuse to defend yourself with, man. You will have to remain in jail for three or five years and then what happens to your future? Fall at her feet and beg of her forgiveness. I shall, however, have to report your conduct to the committee and recommend your dismissal."

He fell at Brinda's feet and again at the Headmaster's feet and begged both of them to for-

give and forget. Then he got up, overwhelmed with a feeling of shame and guilt, ran out of the compound and disappeared into the darkness.

THE Headmaster then turned to Radha: "Young lady, all these girls including my daughter have spoken highly of you. I apologise to you for the misbehaviour of Sekhar but I assure you that I will personally see to it that he does not misbehave again. You are a brave woman and we all admire the way you tackled him. These pupils of your sewing class wanted me to present on their behalf a small cash present of hundred rupees to which I am personally adding fifty. This comes as our humble gift to you and to your husband for Diwali that comes off tomorrow. We pray for your husband's speedy recovery and wish you both all happiness. Tomorrow I shall pay off from my pocket what you owe to Sekhar and you can return that amount when you find it convenient."

As he stopped speaking the girls took Brinda inside, washed her nose with water and helped her to change her clothes. Kumudh told her friends that she was taking the teacher and her daughter to her home. Brinda turned to the Headmaster and thanked him for his kind words and the gift. The girls almost smothered her with their fussy attentions until she began to laugh with them. She told them that her mother was com-

ing by the morning train and that she not need fear the attack of any other Romeo. All the same, at the instance of the girls, she locked the house and left with Kumudh to spend the night with her.

At Kumudh's house Brinda and the pupils were sitting far into the night and talking. It was then revealed that Radha had taken the initiative in bringing all the pupils to Brinda's house. From her talk with the teacher she realised that Sekhar might revisit her house and try to molest her again. So she left the class in a hurry, met all the other girls and alerted them. They quickly pooled their resources and, then, Kumudh spoke to her father, the Headmaster, and urged him to accompany them. Ramabai then told Brinda about a decent portion in her own house and invited her to occupy it for half the rent that she was paying for the present house. When all the girls pressed Brinda to move on the next day itself she accepted the offer with tearful gratitude. ‡

### ORDERS

The horse shied and, Murphy went over its head. "Murphy," yelled the instructor, "did you have orders to dismount?"

"Oi did."

"From headquarters?"

"No, from hindquarters!"

For Women

## IN DEFENCE OF CAREER GIRLS

By (Miss) K. N. KANTI

WE, modern girls, are accused of committing a thousand and one sins. From old men and young, there is a continuous volley of withering criticism fired at us. They point a finger of scorn and say that we are bold and shameless. They assert that we so design our dress, make-up and appearance that the walls of male resistance simply crumble down as we pass by.

There are girls and girls even as there are boys and boys. Sensible people will agree that there are good girls and good boys and they out-number the naughty girls and wicked boys. But why do they condemn girls alone? They magnify some stray instances and jump from the particular to the general. What a sweeping generalization when the elders shout at the pitch of their voice that a woman's place is the home and that she must remain behind closed doors. A religious leader has lately exhorted his followers not to let girls go out of their homes after they have attained age.

We must remember that the times have changed and that, as a result, an adjustment of views

is called for. The joint family system which prevailed in Hindu society for hundreds of years has completely broken down. All the sons lived in those days with their parents under one parental roof. Even if the sons went out to earn they left their families behind. If the daughters or daughters-in-law were widowed or stranded helplessly with their children they were cared for by the elders, their brothers and brothers-in-law.

The joint family system retains its outer shell in some remote rural areas but the new laws and social and economic trends have rendered it unworkable. The middle classes are the worst hit by the change—especially the women. Brothers are unable to support their sisters when the father, the breadwinner of the family, dies. When they go their several ways and set up separate homes, they neglect their sisters. When they are too poor themselves and struggling to make both ends meet they are often unable to do their duty to their sisters.

Is it any wonder, then, if the modern girl seeks for her economic independence by means of

removed, but nowadays we advise removal of tonsils far less often than we used to.

When children first go to school, or to a Day Nursery, they often get a swelling of the tonsils without appearing particularly ill. This is because they have been exposed to a lot of new germs and the tonsils are working hard to keep them under control. Some mothers seem to think that it is the *other* children who carry all the germs, but the fact is that each child has a collection of germs in his throat, but he has got used to his own brand and has developed a resistance against them. So the sore throats and slight colds which they often develop in their first few weeks at school are a part of growing up. When they have got over them they will have acquired a bit more resistance against a few more germs, and will be that much less likely to fall victim to them later. By the time a town child has grown up he has mixed with so many

people that he has developed all sorts of useful resistances, whereas the country child has not. That does no harm to the country boy if he stays in the country, but if he comes to the town later he may fall ill then. (Tuberculosis is one illness that we become immunised against in this way, and girls from remote country districts may, if they take up nursing, develop it whereas their town-bred cousins are comparatively safe).

#### Simplest Treatment

The simplest treatment for a sore throat is to rest in a warm, dry atmosphere. Gargles are not very effective, but you can try a couple of pinches of salt in half a glass of warm water. Cut down smoking—stop altogether if you have the strength of mind. Inhalations of Friars Balsam in hot water soothes a painful throat. And if you are hoarse, it is most important to speak as little as possible. Finally, as I said at the beginning—don't treat a sore throat too casually, especially if you have a temperature.

---

*Whereas the damsel seeketh the youth's attentions,  
the dad seeketh his intentions.*

*Alas, many a husband's idea of teamwork is that  
his wife should sit at home and knit, while he spins the  
yarns in his club.*

## A Long Complete Story

# Between Desire And Duty

By G. GOPICHAND

INSPECTOR Omnath was trying hard to pacify his young wife. "Don't be angry, Prabha. You seem to think I am too absorbed in duty to remember my pretty darling."

Prabha glared and said in a tearful voice. "Sometimes she called me stupid and left the city in disgust."

Omnath smiled. "What does your mother expect? Should I cradle you in my lap at the office? Should I take you to all the scenes of crime that I visit almost every day?"

---

*Rekha was as beautiful as she was intelligent.  
What more could she desire when she had a  
devoted and loving husband, who gave her  
jewels, money and freedom? But why was  
she murdered? Read this absorbing story  
of mystery and romance long and complete.*

---

you forget you have a home. Last month you disappeared for a whole week. When my mother came here and stayed for four days she was sarcastic. Any other girl in my position would keep twisting her husband round her thumb, she remarked. And

PRABHA got furious and her face blushed crimson. "I am no such fool as to want you to cuddle me even on your official rounds. But can't I legitimately expect you to be with your wife after 10 p. m.? Surely, your superiors don't expect you to

desert your home and wife?  
How could you forget me or...."

"Or what?" queried the Inspector, pulling his wife into his arms and kissing her fondly on the lips.

BUT she turned her head aside and went on angrily. "Or how could you dare forget that tomorrow is the second anniversary of our wedding?"

"I have not forgotten, dearest," laughed Omnath, his left hand still encircling her waist. "Look, sweetie pie," he added, producing a small ivory casket from his trouser pocket. "This contains proof of my remembrance.

Prabha seized it eagerly and snapped the casket open. She gasped in astonishment as she fondly gazed at a gold ring set with sparkling diamonds. She threw her arms round her husband's neck and pressed her lips against his. "You are my darlingest dearest," she whispered in his ears. "I somehow knew you wouldn't forget. And here is another long kiss—as long as a mile."

She glued her lips to his for such a long time that both were out of breath. Then he said, wiping the lipstick stains from his mouth and cheeks, "My dear, tomorrow morning we go to your mother's place and convince the poor old lady that you are not a neglected wife. Shall we stay

there for four days? I have been granted a week's leave."

"A week's leave!" she exclaimed, dancing. "We shall be in each other's arms all the time. It will be heaven for us. Bless the Commissioner. How ever did he consent to relieve you for a whole week?"

He sat on the couch, smoking a cigarette, and she was content to recline in his arms when the telephone rang. Both were startled.

Gruff was the voice of the Commissioner. "Is that you, Omnath?"

"Yes, sir," replied the Inspector. "At your service, sir."

"In Rishender Street No. 130/B, a foul murder case has just been discovered. It is a small house but very compact and neat, and tastefully furnished. The house-owner is one, Rajyapal, a man in his late forties."

"He has been murdered, sir?"

"No, Omnath. Listen carefully. I am preparing the background for you, so you can straightaway proceed to carry on further investigation. I am passing on to you all the facts of the case as reported by the Sub-Inspector of the Division, Sringer. I hear someone else at

your end sighing. Is that your wife?"

"Yes, sir," Omnath laughed gently. "There is nobody else here at this hour, sir."

"TELL the young lady I am so sorry to disturb her and cancel her husband's leave. But I promise you ten days' leave when this case is done with. I will take you both in my car to the station and see you off, that is certain. Hope she forgives me."

"It is all right, sir. She is an understanding, sympathetic wife," said Omnath (Prabha was actually pinching her husband on the cheek). "Her only regret is that I will be too busy to

attend our second wedding anniversary tomorrow and, poor thing, she was very keen on it. But she knows that duty comes first, sir." (Here Prabha pinched both her husband's cheeks.)

The Commissioner just grunted. "We can't spare you for such tamashas, my dear fellow. Who knows, before the third anniversary comes I may not ask the Inspector-General to appoint you as Deputy Superintendent of some District or as my own Assistant Commissioner of Crime? Tell her all that and she will understand."

PRABHA smiled and her arms now curled round her husband's waist.

Bank

With

**DENA BANK**

DEVKARAN NANJEE BANKING CO. LTD.

73 OFFICES & 16 SAFE DEPOSIT VAULTS

**NEW SAVINGS SCHEME**

**INTEREST**  
**2½ %**

WITHDRAWALS BY CHEQUES

SAVE FOR  
THE FUTURE

Pravinchandra V. Gandhi  
Mg. Director

"Yes, sir. As for the case..."

"Well, as I was saying, this Rajyapal's wife, Rekha, a very pretty young lady, about twenty years younger than her husband, has been murdered. Mark you, the circumstances are rather peculiar. At 7-30 p. m. the milkman came for the second time. Seeing that the door was bolted from inside, he knocked for nearly ten minutes. When he got no response, he called in some neighbours and burst open the door. What was their surprise when they saw the mistress of the house lying on the broad double-bed cot? They thought at first she must be sleeping very soundly. But then, one of the women, a friend of hers, approached the cot and screamed. Rekha, Rajyapal's wife, was dead, her eyes staring. The strange thing was that the woman's throat had been slit by some sharp dagger. But there was no blood stain anywhere. Four constables have been posted around the house and our Doctor has already proceeded there post-haste. Until you complete the investigations, I have directed that nothing is to be disturbed. Better go in mufti. I shall be seeing you there in the next half hour or so. Be quick, Omnath. There is no time to lose."

FOR five minutes Omnath and his wife spoke words of love and warmly kissed each other. Prabha didn't weep this time or grumble. She felt proud of what the Commissioner had said and

promised, and saw her husband to the door. But Omnath was gravely shaking his head. "It seems to be a very mysterious case and a tough one, too," he muttered. Giving a final peck to his wife on her cheek, he sallied out into the dark night. He went up to the taxi stand, hurled himself into a vehicle and reached Rishender Street in twenty minutes.

SUB-INSPECTOR Sringar brightened up at his sight. He took him into the bedroom, showed the dead body of the young woman and acquainted him with all the details he knew. The Police Doctor had already examined the body and he gave his considered opinion that the woman must have died of asphyxiation. The murderer must have strangled her first. Then probably when she was breathing heavily he must have got impatient and used a dagger to cut her throat open. Sringar then added that her husband, being a travelling agent for a biscuit manufacturing company, had been absent from home for over a fortnight. This information had been given to him by one of the neighbours and he had this fact checked up with the biscuit company. The Manager had confirmed that Rajyapal was on tour and that he was expected in the city the next morning.

The Sub-Inspector made another disclosure. The previous day, according to one neighbour, a handsome young man of about

nineteen or twenty stayed in the house for a few hours. To the neighbour's enquiry the deceased seems to have evasively replied that he was a relation, and even resented the question.

OMNATH smiled. "Sringar, I appreciate the smart work done so far. But you look tired enough. Go home, take a bite and come back after a little rest. I shall do some snooping for a while. Better post some more constables outside. Didn't the neighbour say how Rekha called that young man?"

"Yes, sir, I forgot," replied Sringar, grinning. "The young man responded to the name of Kishen. I shall take leave, sir."

He gave a smart salute and left the bedroom.

Omnath bolted the door from inside and began a thorough investigation. He first lifted the dead body and placed it on the floor. On the top bedsheet two things caught his eye—a silk handkerchief and a silver shirt button. He looked at the laundry marks, holding the kerchief against the light and pocketed both the button and the kerchief. Then he replaced the dead body and gazed at the wound on her throat. There was the deep line of the dagger from her chin down to the swell of her right breast. "God! she must have been one of the prettiest of women," the Inspector told himself. "She is smiling even in

her death." He slowly proceeded to ransack the trunks, the tin boxes, the bureau and the vanity bag of the woman. From one of the trunks he took out saris, blouses and jewels. There was quite a wide variety—the gold in the ornaments glittered and the diamonds flashed a pleasing blue as they sparkled against the light. Omnath was satisfied on one point. The deceased was wearing jewels and bangles and these were left intact by the assailant. Certainly, robbery was not the motive behind the murder. What else could it be, he mused.

He was about to put back the clothes and the jewels back into the big trunk when something about it arrested his attention. He plunged his hand and probed. There was a click and the false bottom gave way to reveal a photo album beneath. He took it out and scanned the photos—about forty in all. He gazed at each with interest. He just extracted a small one and carefully inserted it in his inner coat pocket.

He opened the door of the kitchen that led into the backyard. There was a tap and beyond it was a well. A few flower pots were placed in a row on a small wall that divided the tap and the well. He groped for a switch and turned on a powerful bulb. Someone had upset a flower pot. It lay in a heap on the other side of the wall. He kicked the broken pot and

the loose clay that had been enclosed. Something like a blade gleamed. He knelt down and flashed the rays of his torchlight. He dug out the object and studied it with care. It was a short, sharp, double-edged dagger with a nice ivory handle. "This is Witness Number One," he told himself. He took out his muffler that was nestling between his shirt and coat round the neck and wrapped the lethal weapon with it.

He turned in, and bolted the kitchen door when he heard a knock on the outer one in front. He opened it to let in the Commissioner and the Deputy whom he saluted smartly first, and then showed the dead body.

"I suppose you are still carrying on with your investigations, Omnath?" asked the Commissioner, a stalwart man with a handle-bar moustache. "I don't propose to disturb you now but this is a tough case. The murderer didn't apparently come to rob the woman. The husband is on tour. There remains only one other motive for us to determine—whether the woman was flirtatious and whether this is a case of the eternal triangle or whether she was assaulted."

"Yes, yes," nodded the Assistant Commissioner, a mild-looking man of medium height. "Omnath, do you still want the body here?"

"No, sir," replied Omnath. "I have seen what I have wished to see. The body may be removed to the mortuary even now. The police guard, however, must continue."

"And what about the husband?" asked the Commissioner.

"I have directed Sringar to go to the station tomorrow, break the news to Rajyapal as gently as possible and take him to the mortuary. Anyway, I have told the Sub to keep watch on him and bring him to see me at the station at about 7 p.m."

"You won't be available tomorrow until then?" demanded the Assistant Commissioner, raising his eyebrows.

"He is probably working on some theory and he won't reveal his mind to anyone until he is positive about the results. Let us not disturb him. Come on," hinted the Commissioner to his new Assistant and led him out.

When their car disappeared, Omnath instructed Sringar, who had by now returned, to have the dead body removed to the mortuary and to bring the dead woman's husband to the police station at about 7 p.m. Then he got into a taxi and asked the driver to take him home. Prabha was over-joyed to see her husband back. Nobody could understand his mind or fathom his ways. He took a bath, gulped some hot milk, cracked jokes

with his wife when she asked him about the case, and suddenly went to sleep on her lap. But by 5.30 a.m. he got up and was gone, after locking the door.

THE body had been removed to the mortuary in the morning. Rajyapal arrived at the station as expected, and broke down into piteous sobs on hearing the news of his wife's murder. At the sight of her dead body he nearly shrieked and beat his head with his hands several times. Even the policemen were moved at his sorrow. "Which husband would not weep at the sad end of such a pretty wife?" muttered Sringar. In his statement Rajyapal said that he had absolute faith in his wife and that he had no reason to suspect her faithfulness. He had been touring the State for more than a fortnight and had written only business communications to the biscuit company to report the nature of his transactions. He had left enough money at home. His wife, Rekha, was an educated woman and she knew very well how to pull on in his absence. Even while they were together she would manage the household efficiently without his aid. The age barrier between them did not count. They had been happy and devoted to each other. Her only grievance against him had been that he often went away on tour. To Sringar's question he said that it was only a year since they had been married. She was a poor girl and her widowed mother,

her only relation, had died only six months ago.

That night Omnath came late to the police station. It was nearly 10 p. m. and even the Commissioner was wondering why he had not even given him a ring. "If facts are as we know them, this case will be undetected," he said to the Assistant Commissioner. The latter said ditto and even suggested that Omnath did not have the intelligence that others credited him with.

At this time Omnath sauntered in with a young man. He was wearing a false beard, dark glasses, a long black coat and a huge white turban. He had a bundle of palmyra leaves tucked under his arm-pit. The young man got alarmed when he saw where he was being taken but the constables on duty caught hold of him and detained him. In another room Rajyapal was sitting, reading a newspaper which he had brought. His room also was well guarded.

THROWING off the disguise, Omnath directed that Rajyapal, too, should be brought before them. Facing the two men, the Inspector began to narrate his story but his words, were addressed to the Commissioner, in particular.

"Sir, Rekha was a most beautiful young woman but she was very poor before her

marriage. Her mother worked hard to have her daughter educated up to the School Final Class. She was learning typewriting when Rajyapal met her. As he himself has said, he was twenty years older than Rekha. He was a widower and had some landed property in his village. He sold it last year to purchase his present house. To Rekha he gave all his first wife's jewels. It is true that he was in love with her and was proud of her beauty for a time. But he has a concubine with whom he spends most of his days. This concubine lives in a back street behind the railway station in house No. 78."

"That is not true," hissed Rajyapal in anger.

"Your business is to listen to the story," said the Commissioner. "When the Inspector has finished his version of the case you are welcome to state yours. I shall give you perfect freedom of expression. But you must not speak unless the Inspector asks you questions. Is that understood, you two?"

Both the men nodded their heads.

"As I said, sir," continued the Inspector, "this concubine, Uma, and Rajyapal got on better than the husband and the wife. They had struck up this relationship shortly after the death of his first wife. She herself is

ready to attest to their liaison and told me so when I saw her this afternoon. She even gave me a photograph of themselves. And here it is."

OMNATH produced a photo from a small paper bag and showed it to the Commissioner. Rajyapal gasped in astonishment when he saw it.

"Somehow Rekha got to know of this affair. For one thing, she disliked Rajyapal because of his age. She became more furious when he was neglecting her. True, her beauty was such that she had a host of admirers. She was a bit frivolous, smiled upon all her male friends and talked freely to them. Uma, Rajyapal's concubine, used to spy on her and magnified her flirtations to the husband.

"Although Rajyapal did not do his duty by his wife, he became jealous and suspicious of her. Sometimes when he returned from his tour, he did not go to his own home. Instead, he stayed in Uma's house and wanted to watch his wife. Thus suspicion began to darken their life.

"From my investigations of the case I found that Rekha did not lead a blameless life. Even before marriage she was carrying on a secret love affair with this young man, Damodar Kishen. He is slightly younger than Rekha and had been her childhood playmate. Rekha used to

call him her cousin though actually he was no relation of hers. He is a rich landlord's son. He wanted very much to marry Rekha but his parents were opposed to such a marriage.

"In fairness to Rekha, it must be said that she stopped having any intimacy with the young man after her marriage though she did not object to his meeting her once in a while in theatres and cinemas without her husband's knowledge. He would often urge her to resume the old relationship and point to the disparity in age between herself and her husband. To my knowledge, the young woman was tempted in a way but she pleaded for time and turned him away.

"SIR, you are probably wondering how I gathered all this information. Yesterday on the dead woman's cot I found a silk kerchief, with the laundry initials "D.K." I found also a shirt button on the bed. The inference was easy. Some man other than her husband must have bent over the bed of the woman or more probable still must have shared her bed. In a trunk belonging to Rekha I fished out the photograph of a young man who had signed his name and mentioned on the back of it his own address. Here is the photo, sir, of the young man. Evidently Damodar Kishen had given his address in the hope that Rekha would relent and write to him to come over.

"It is also clear that Rekha was torn between desire and duty. No doubt she loved Kishen and that was why she kept his photo beneath the false bottom of her trunk. Rajyapal did not suspect that she had such a photo in her album. Somehow the secret was well kept.

"THIS morning I went in the guise of an astrologer and sat on the pavement facing Kishen's room. As soon as I saw him I told him of the great change in his fortune for the better and revealed to him the secret of his love for a beautiful woman. He at once sat down and showed his palm. I guessed that he was ignorant of the tragedy that had overtaken his sweetheart and slowly drew him out. Believing in my supernatural powers as a seer, he gave me a glowing account of his love affair with Rekha. Learning that her husband was on tour, he had gone to her home and knocked at her door at 7 p.m. on that fateful evening. Lonely and starved of love, Rekha was glad to see him. She invited him in and talked to him of the good old days. Then she suddenly wept on the young man's shoulder and told him how her husband had neglected her for a concubine and that life's burden had become intolerable. He suggested that they should run away and she said she was not opposed to the idea and asked him to wait for her letter. Kishen took advantage of this moment and made love to her as of old.

"Some time later he left her after exacting a promise that she would run away with him. The concubine had been overhearing this conversation and reported it to Rajyapal who had already returned from his tour and was staying in her house. By the time he returned home it was past midnight and none of his neighbours had noticed him. Rekha was surprised to see him but spoke engagingly."

Turning to Rajyapal, Inspector Omnath pointed his finger of accusation. "Rajyapal, I accuse you of having murdered your wife day before yesterday night and under the cover of alibi you ran off again as if you were still on tour, to escape detection and punishment. First you strangled your wife with a piece of cloth. Then, when she was gasping for breath, you got impatient and used a sharp Japanese dagger to cut her throat. Since she was already dead, the dagger didn't draw any blood. You buried it under a flower pot and ran out of the city. Then you sent a telegram from Bombay and your Manager honestly believed you had not returned. If you tell us all the facts of the case, the prosecution will examine whether there are any extenuating circumstances. Otherwise, you will have to hang."

RAJYAPAL was shaken and panicky. "By God! You are a smart detective. All your facts are correct and your revelations are astonishing. When Uma

told me that a young man by the name of Kishen was in my bedroom making love to my wife and urging her to elope, I was furious. For the first time I got jealous, too. I wanted to cure her of her stupid infatuation and warn her of the dangerous consequences of elopement.

"FOR the first time, I went eagerly back home and my love for my wife bubbled back. But she was cold and indifferent and even resented my advances. I lay on the bed and then felt something irritating me. I got up, switched on the light and picked up the silver button. 'How does a man's shirt button come on our bed, Rekha?' I asked her. Then I saw the kerchief and angrily demanded of her to account for it. Next came my question point-blank. 'Had she been sharing the bed with another man in my absence?' She retorted that a husband who sought a concubine's company must not fling such a question at his wife. She then told the analogy of the pot calling the kettle black.

"I was wild and felt my honour was at stake. I pretended to go to sleep and at 2 a.m. I woke up. I used a wet towel to strangle my wife. Then thinking she was not dead I used a Japanese dagger to slit her throat. You know, before the outbreak of the Second World War I served in a Japanese firm in the city. When the Manager left our country he gave me that dagger as a present. After

committing the murder I engaged a taxi up to Poona. From there I went to Bombay and then wrote to my Head Office from there. I had left the button and the kerchief on the bed in the hope that the police would track down their owner and charge him with murder."

OMNATH looked round. The Commissioner was nodding appreciatively. The Assistant Commissioner who at first had a low opinion of the Inspector and thought him to be a self-important fool, now regarded him with a new esteem and admiration. The cigar in his mouth had become dead and he had forgotten to re-light it. Then he turned to the Commissioner and said, "Sir, I have a plan to go on long leave, of course with your permission. I think it may be preliminary to retirement since my heart has lately been giving me trouble. If the Inspector-General also approves, I may relinquish my post even earlier than you may legitimately expect. Probably, you don't know that the I. G. and I were pals and class-mates in our school and college days and he always consults me on every important step that he takes. So I intend telling him that Omnath with all his intelligence and shrewdness deserves to be promoted Assistant Commissioner. I have no doubt that he will prove worthier than myself

and serve as the right-hand man of the Commissioner. That is as it should be."

The Commissioner smiled. "Excepting those references to yourself, I endorse all your remarks. But I should have thought the inner sanctum is a better place for airing such informal 'asides.' If you will excuse me, we have just seen the end of the investigations but the usual procedure is yet to be completed."

The Assistant Commissioner was apologetic. "I am sorry, Sir, I forgot all about it. But I am too tired today and I hope you will let me go home."

"Yes, by all means, I will give you a ring early tomorrow morning but if you don't feel well I shall drop in at your residence. Better send for your doctor."

Omnath stood up respectfully. "I can't sufficiently thank you for all your appreciative references to me, sir."

"That is all right, Omnath," waved the Assistant Commissioner as he strode out of the hall.

THE Commissioner now turned to Rajyapal and Kishen. "You two have just heard what Omnath had to say. If you feel

that his statements are wrong or inaccurate or exaggerated, you are welcome to give your version of the case."

"No, Sir," replied Rajyapal. "Your Inspector has not erred even in the slightest particular."

"Then in the name of the law we charge you with the murder of your wife Rekha. Until tomorrow noon when you will be produced before the Magistrate for formal orders you will have to remain in jail. If you stick to the statement that you will be asked to sign now there is every chance of a reduced sentence for you, almost negligible. You see, you have acted under provocation and the motive behind the murder may save you from the gallows and give you back your freedom earlier than you imagine. As for you, Kishen, you may have wronged the husband but in so far as the law is concerned you have not collided with it. But the bottom of the case will be knocked out if you fail to present yourself before the court and tell the honest truth. So, until the Magistrate decides what is to be done with you we are sorry to have to detain you here. But you will be provided with all the comforts, I assure you. The only thing is, you will be under constant watch."

On a sign from the Commissioner, Sub-Inspector Sringer took the two men away under heavy escort. The Commissioner just patted Omnath and briefly congratulating him for a job so well done, wished him good-night and climbed into his car....

Once again Prabha couldn't disguise her joy and nestled in her husband's arms. They didn't crack jokes for a while because she looked very thoughtful.

"There is something on your mind, dear. It is time you let me into the secret," he said smiling.

She gently disengaged herself from his arms, locked the door and put the key inside her blouse. "Well, darling, we are going to have a quiet undisturbed night, all to ourselves. Nowadays you appear and disappear like some meteor. The men whom you catch may escape but not my prisoner," she said firmly, with a merry twinkle in her eyes.

"Pronounce your magisterial order, please," he laughed.

SHE affected a solemn pose. "Whereas my husband comes in and goes out, disregarding his responsibilities and whereas I, Prabha Devi, apprehend disturbance of the peace on the domestic front, I do hereby remand him into custody until 7 o'clock next morning."

She then took a few more steps towards the couch when he caught her in his arms.

"WHAT is the next move, Your Honour? The prisoner demands to know when he will be arrested."

"Stand aside, prisoner, Let me unhook the receiver and place it on the table."

She wanted to move but she was helplessly caught in the grip of his loving arms.

And then it happened. The telephone began to ring. Both raised their eyebrows in annoyance and dejection.

"You are to blame," she said. "You prevented me from unhooking the receiver."

"Never mind. Let us kiss for one long minute," he whispered.

Reluctantly he took up the receiver and cleared his throat. It was Sub-Inspector Sringer. "The accused, Rajyapal, sir, swallowed some capsule half an hour ago without anybody noticing it and I saw him only a few minutes before, writhing in pain. I was rushing him in an ambulance to the hospital but the doctors have pronounced him dead. I have already phoned the Commissioner and he wants to meet you at the hospital."

"Yes, Sringer, I am proceeding at once."

Prabha was amazed when she saw her husband opening the door with the key she had hidden in her blouse. She wondered how he had managed to remove it. Oh! The cleverness of the man!

The Commissioner was raging and fuming at the mortuary. He asked Sringer a thousand and one questions as to why a thorough search had not been made of the person of Rajyapal. He subsided only when Omnath pointed out that until he came to the station with Kishen, Rajyapal was almost a free man excepting for the fact that the constables were keeping an eye on him.

SINCE there was no case for the prosecution now, the Commissioner ordered the release of Kishen who was happy to go back to his room. He then turned to Omnath and said, "My dear man, Rajyapal's death does not detract from the merit of the good work you have done. I have now to proceed to the Inspector-General's residence for a talk. I am granting you ten days' leave from tomorrow. Hope you and your wife will enjoy the holiday."

Omnath went home with jaunty steps. ††

## DOWRY AND THE MIDDLE CLASS

By PRIYADARSHANI

How best can we tackle the growing evil of dowry?

The writer of this thought-provoking article makes useful suggestions.

IT is rather tragic that hundreds of middle-class girls remain unmarried because their parents are too poor to pay dowry. In many a home, what the father earns is just enough—sometimes hardly so—to keep the family above want. On occasions he borrows and often struggles to repay the loans. If he has only girls and no sons his problems begin to multiply. For the marriage of each of his girls a middle-class father has to provide at least five thousand rupees.

Such are the conditions of the matrimonial market that a bridegroom, who has a decent job that fetches him over a hundred rupees a month, has to be paid at least two thousand rupees. The father of the girl has, in addition, to defray the expenses of the marriage. The

value of the 'groom in terms of dowry goes on up and up if he is a graduate, a Master of Arts, a student of medical or engineering college, if he is in Government service—State or Central. He is unapproachable if he is a successful I.A.S. candidate, or even "priceless" and the most eligible of bachelors if he is already in service. For bridegrooms in this category there is a demand for ten thousand rupees.

### Parents' Greed

"Ridiculous!" one may exclaim, but these are hard facts that our legislators for a better India and the champions of equal rights for all would do well to recognize. One great service that Government can render to the middle-class families is to bring in legislation

to ban dowry *in toto* or to restrict it to five hundred rupees. And, even then, cash presents must be forbidden. When negotiations are on, the father of the boy usually tells the father of the girl, "Think of all the trouble and expense I have been put to in educating the boy. When there seemed no hope of sending him to college I had to borrow heavily. You see, those debts still remain unpaid. I am not like those greedy parents who swear by dowry. You can pay me some three thousand rupees. In addition to the jewels you have promised for your daughter, you should buy diamond earrings."

The Andhra Government has promptly banned dowry. Other States are either still hesitant or are too preoccupied with other problems. It behoves the All-India Women's Conference to appeal to the Union Government to bring in legislation for banning dowry. Since Independence it is the Union Parliament that placed the Hindu Code Bill on the Statute Book and took other measures to improve the status of women and assure them of equal rights with men. But much of the legislation seems to be ineffective for it is a man's world still and women have to go a long way before they can hold their own.

### Itching Palm

Some may ask how Government legislation can really be

effective in banning dowry. Will not the evil be driven underground? If the father of a girl is really anxious that she should be married to some decent chap who can earn well and give her all his protection what does it matter if he loses a few thousand rupees? Even if the law forbids dowry would he not go out of the way to grease the itching palm of the boy's father on the sly?

Such possibilities are certain to be reduced gradually if both society and the authorities are watchful. Any legislative measure to prohibit dowry must not be allowed to become a dead letter. At the same time, there must be enlightened propaganda to eliminate the evil. It is heartening to note that very recently His Holiness Sri Sankaracharya of Kamakoti Peeta exhorted Hindus not to accept dowry which he condemned as a curse in the changed circumstances of to-day. If only all the religious leaders and heads of mutts convene a conference and concert measures to abolish dowry it will prove to be a great step forward.

### Effective Step

Since the States may take long to adopt legislation to ban dowry, it may well be undertaken by the Union Parliament

and ensure greater uniformity throughout the country. As a social reformer has suggested, the ban can be made more effective if the law expressly prohibits all servants of the Government—both State and Central—from taking dowry or giving it. Those employees who have sons of marriageable age or young entrants to Government service must be enlisted in the fight against the evil and their example is bound to exercise a wholesome influence on the general public. No harshness or invidious distinction would thereby be deliberately intended. Even today there is a rule requiring Union Government servants to obtain prior sanction before taking a second wife when the first one is alive.

### Urgent Need

If it is widely known and appreciated that no Government employee or entrant to Government service will stoop to the practice of accepting dowry, the evil will become extinct ere long. It will be cut at the very root. Both the Union and State Governments must make it unmistakably clear that acceptance of dowry by their employees will be a serious disqualification. The law must embody a clause specifically mentioning it. Thus one of the main incentives to

this widespread practice will have been taken off.

Even if Kerala follows in the footsteps of Andhra soon by passing legislation to abolish the dowry system there are still twelve more States to fall in line. They too are evidently anxious to curb the growing evil but they seem to be busy otherwise. So Central legislation is called for urgently and Parliament may be trusted to make it thorough and leave no loopholes. The middle class is silently groaning under this age-old, conventional and unbearable burden. Speedy abolition of the dowry system will help in its regeneration.

At the same time, one cannot too strongly stress the need for enlightened propaganda. Religious heads and society reformers must be urged to carry on a ceaseless drive against the evil. The leaders of the All-India Women's Conference must take a more keen interest in the question and must not rest until the evil is completely eliminated. The pity is that their efforts, laudable as they are, seem haphazard. They must intensify their drive and persuade Parliament to pass legislation to ban the evil. The Hindu Code law will be imperfect until a bill against dowry is placed on the Statute Book. The one is complementary to the other. Only then will women's equality of status with men become real. ‡‡

## SHORT STORY

# THE SECRET

By R. V. DAS

THE two women stumbled upon each other in the "Princes Cafe" and screamed in joy.

"Meena," said one, "it is years since we met but I would swear you are not a day older than when you studied in the Inter class."

They sat at the table opposite to each other, holding hands and smiling continuously.

"Now, Meena, B.A. L.T., Headmistress of the New Girls' High School," said Sunita with a laugh, "unless you tell me the story of your life after we parted

---

*When two women friends meet they  
begin to cackle and very soon spill all  
their most intimate secrets!*

---

"Oh, Sunita!" exclaimed Meena. "Just think of it, only yesterday I was dreaming about you. Certainly, the passage of years has made you more lovely."

Sunita curved her left arm round the waist of her friend, and both sailed gracefully into the room reserved for ladies. They sent the waiter in with an order for four cups of ice cream.

fifteen years ago, I am not leaving you."

THE waiter glanced curiously at them as he brought in his tray of ice cream and the two women took two cups each and began their attack with spoons. When the waiter turned his back, Sunita laid down her spoon and looked at her friend enquiringly.

You know, dear, I have been

bursting to unburden my heart to a friend like you (said Meena). Fifteen years ago I passed the Intermediate examination. I was eighteen then and Father thought it time that I married. My mother was eager that I should continue my studies but my grandmother put her foot down. She expressed her longing to see me married as she felt that her end was approaching. We had but to respect her wish.

FOR nearly one whole year Father was hunting for a groom. He had quite a boxful of horoscopes but our family astrologer rejected all of them. Then one day Father entered a shop to buy a soap. What was his surprise when the owner who greeted him was Bhagwan, a young man from our own village? He offered him a chair and they exchanged information about friends and relations. My father's heart leapt with joy when he learnt that Bhagwan was a bachelor. What more could he want? Here was a well-to-do young man, not bad-looking at all, strong and healthy. He was running a shop efficiently and was making good profit. And Father knew of his antecedents; he came from a respectable family. The only obstacle was that Bhagwan was less educated than myself. He had read only up to High School.

Bhagwan then made frequent visits to our home. He was allowed to meet me and talk to me. My father even permitted

me to go to his shop on the pretext of buying things. He grew to like me and I too loved him. Then Father broached the topic one day and asked him if he had any objection to marrying me. He said he had none, but hinted broadly that his approval was subject to his widowed mother's consent. In answer to another enquiry, he assured my father that he would not mind marrying me though I was better educated than himself. Then my father made a trip to the village where Bhagwan's mother was residing and obtained her ready sanction.

As Grandmother was very ill, Sunita, the marriage was hurried through. Both Father and Mother were very glad of this alliance because there was no necessity of having to send me out of the city. We set up home very near the shop. When my husband was in the shop I would go to my parents' home and spend most of the day there by the side of Grandmother. We all feared that she would pass away in less than a week. But she made a remarkable recovery and was able to sit up. "It is Meena's marriage that has put new life into me," she declared one day, hugging me.

I WON'T deny that Bhagwan was in love with me. After closing the shop he would take me in his car to some cinema or a park and we enjoyed every minute of the evening. But I was sometimes mystified when he

left me severely alone and went away in his car. He would return home about midnight but then he was profuse with his regrets and apologies. Disillusionment was, however, not long in coming. I met a girl, Gomati, by name, who was my schoolmate. In High School she was my senior by two years but we often used to meet in the common lunch room and chat together.

I ACCOSTED her one day and asked her how she was getting on. She was big and buxom and even while in school she had a small band of male admirers who would wait for her at the school gate. But she was a frank girl, Sunita, and felt no shyness or shame in discussing her love affairs. I took her to a milk bar and after seating ourselves in a cosy corner, I drew her into a conversation.

She said she was serving as a stenographer in some ink manufacturing company. Before that, she told me, she had been working as a salesgirl-cum-typist in a shop catering to rich gents. She had been getting good pay there plus any amount of extra money that she wanted. When I asked her what work she did to supplement her income, she laughed. She drew the chair very close to me and whispered that the shop owner would lead her into a small inner room behind the shop and make love to her.

But this proprietor, it appear-

ed, soon got tired of her and one day when she wanted more money he sent her out. Darling Sunita, I at once got a terrible suspicion and shock. My husband's shop answered to her description. But I did not hate Gomati. Like all generous and forgiving wives, I conceded that young men would sow their wild oats. Since my husband had got rid of this infatuation he must have turned over a new leaf, especially after my marriage. So I thought. Poor Gomati! She did not know I had married her erstwhile proprietor. If she had known she would never have blurted out her secrets.

BUT, Sunita, my casual friend did not stop there. Seeing that I was deeply interested, she startled me with more revelations. She now mentioned the name of Bhagwan who, she said, ran after all the pretty girls of the town. Of course, he got kicks and slaps from some of them for making his improper suggestions but there were several women who were easily enticed by him. Some poor girls wanted his money and openly walked into his trap. I asked her how it was possible for him to carry out his nefarious aims in that shop. She then told me that a girl could have access to his inner room by means of a back door from a deserted lane behind the shop. Bhagwan, it appeared, spent his nights in that room. He was then alone; his mother was in the village and nobody bothered

to know where he ate or slept. He had a car in which he would take a girl away to some distant place. But, Gomati added, this Bhagwan was liberal with his money. He would pay any price to grab the girl he wanted. He had no scruples, either. He would throw away any troublesome dame if she got on his nerves or if he got fed up.

THAT was the story. Little did Gomati know that her revelations had broken the heart of a young woman. I suppressed my tears as well as I could. When I left her and went home I wanted to tell Mother and Grandmother all that I had heard, and to weep on their shoulders. But careful reflection sobered me down. It would have been a most foolish step. Grandmother would have died of shock if I had told her. So I kept all the knowledge to myself and was quietly watching my husband.

Things began to happen in an unexpected direction. My husband was losing heavily. There was a long list of creditors—more females than males—who had no idea of honouring their obligations. His business was collapsing and when he sought my father's aid he gave him all his savings—to the tune of ten thousand. He would even have helped Bhagwan with more money but he suddenly died of heart attack.

Don't you know, Sunita, that good cometh out of evil? My

husband's business was closed down and one night he ran away somewhere without even telling me. His creditors were hunting after him and he was hiding. I was not worried about his absence. Father had left only a house, some vacant plots of land and a small amount. With these I had to support Mother and Grandmother. I took stock of the situation and arrived at a bold decision. I resumed my studies in the college and graduated after two years. Then I underwent training in a teachers' college for a year and got my L.T. degree. Soon I got the post of a science teacher and slowly worked my way up as the Headmistress of the Girls' High School.

My dear, you must have seen me in the group photo published in the newspapers last week. How delighted I am to meet you and open out my heart to you. But, Sunita dear, don't take that bill. Give it to me, please. You are my guest and I will pay it. Before we go out there are some more things to tell you. Three years ago, Grandmother died peacefully in my lap. We are well off now.

SUNITA wiped her moist eyes with her kerchief. "Oh dear! you are indeed a brave woman. You never flinched or winced in the face of these disasters. If only I were in your place I wouldn't have hesitated to murder that wicked monster of a husband. But you are hiding something, aren't you?"

Meena smiled sadly. "You are impatient, my dearest friend. There is nothing that I wish to hide from you. When Grandmother was dying she exacted a promise from me that if ever my husband came back I should welcome him and live with him.

"Well, shortly after her death, he came in one fine morning and fell at Mother's feet and asked her forgiveness. After a fierce volley of questions and withering criticism, she agreed to admit him. He was about to fall at my feet but I lifted him and embraced him. Then I realised with horror that his left hand was missing. He had lost it in a railway accident, he explained. I did not ask him where he had been nor did he tell me. A veil was drawn over the whole sordid episode.

"I know he has bidden farewell to his life of folly and crime. And I am sure no girl will hereafter love this haggard-looking one-armed fellow. He has not interfered with my career."

When the two women came out at last, Sunita looked her friend all over and laughed. "My dear Meenu, I think you are expecting a baby!"

Meena blushed. "That is the condition you find me in. They are giving me maternity leave as a special case," she said. ‡‡

**WE INVITE**  
*Your Enquiries and*  
*Orders for*

**COPPER SULPHATE**

**D. D. T.**

**INSECTICIDES**

**EPSOM SALTS**

**GLUCOSE**

**HYPO**

**LIQUID PARAFFIN**

**SOFT SOAP Etc.**

**SREEVATSA**

**CHEMICALS & DRUGS**

**(PRIVATE) LTD.**

**MADRAS - 30.**

## SHORT STORY

"Confound that radio!"

I WAS tossing on my bed, striving hard to drive off that insomnia! Quite natural that sleep did not come to me that night. A rainy summer evening, followed by a sweet gentle breeze rustling amidst the green leaves of little neem trees outside and the drip-drip of water on the gravel beside the wall close to one's bed are enough circumstance to rouse one's tender feelings in his solitude.

so much that I sat up in bed cursing bitterly the hand that turned the radio knobs!

I was still in that irritable mood, when the next song arrested my attention; a song I adored most. It was, nay, it is a song of songs, a song of life and will ever be till the end of the world. I have heard it a thousand times over and every-time longed to hear it again. I listened intently:

# The Dream House

By T. JACOB

And like most human beings, I missed my wife and children at that moment, more than ever before! The romantic yearning in me vibrated at every gust of wind through the open window which caressed me in bed and try as I might, sleep was farther away from me than my kindred ones in the distant city!

Such was my state when the radio in the nearby hotel poured into my ears as usual the music heretofore had pleased me and lulled me to sleep on many an occasion. But now it bored me

*"Duniya men hum aaye hain,  
to jina hi  
padega, jivan hai agar zahar,  
to pina  
hi padega."*

A gem of a couplet comprising the mystery of life! True!

*If you are born of this  
earth, live you must; and if  
life were to be poison, you  
needs must drink it!*

THE song was over and the music died away, but those two lines lived for ever! They echoed in my ears. I was me-

lancholy and thoughtful. Feeling sure of a wakeful night, I stood up and put on my shirt and ventured out into the dark night.

THE sky was heavy with dark clouds and not a single star was visible. All was silent except for a few pedestrians, who still lingered behind in spite of the unusual weather and impregnable darkness, which drove the others to the shelter of their homes and a stray vehicle or two passing at irregular intervals, there was no other visible sign of life. The whole town was sleeping! Yet, here was I, who on similar

hut on walls made of clay with two ever-open windows—for there were no doors on them—and one old moth-eaten door on a shaken frame serving as entrance and exit to the only room. To all appearance it was dilapidated; the thatches which stood many a hot summer followed by roaring wind in June and July, and heavy rain towards the year-end, showed evident signs of decay and refused to shelter those within from sun or rain anymore, for through the numerous big holes in them either could pierce unchallenged; the walls were cracked here and there

At the invitation of the tongawallah he entered the house and saw the pretty girl waiting for him. And he learnt a strange truth.

nights would have been snoring in bed at this time, sauntering along one of its dingy streets—alone and with no set purpose!

I had not gone far when a tiny light glittering behind the window-panes of a small house on the farthest end of the street caught my eyes—the very house named by my friend as "A Dream That Came True" and often discussed between ourselves.

Till recently it was a thatched

and bore intermittent small crevices where they touched the ground, which housed toads and rats and what not; the window-frames were shaking and the door on its loose hinges always threatened to fall on those that passed by it. A clear picture of poverty!

BUT now many a change had come over the house, brick walls came in place of clay ones; tiles replaced thatches; glass panes on steel frames were fixed to the once-naked window and polished

rosewood planks took the place of moth-eaten country wood of the ever-threatening door! Another door communicated between the only old room and the newly extended wing comprising a room smaller in dimensions, probably used as bedroom and a still smaller kitchen. Above all a horse-and-carriage was to be seen in the tiny compound on the left side of the house behind the wing, unharnessed but seeming always ready to carry the inhabitants wherever they pleased.

"They *sure* have a sunny future."

My friend was emphatic in his prophecy. We were witnessing a folk dance performed in front of my residence at the dead of night by two young girls both in their early teens, some three years back, when my too outspoken friend who has a craze for fine arts made the above remark.

"You are right, Ramesh. They will undoubtedly rise to fame," dittoed Das, our other friend and companion.

I, too, agreed. Though at first a bit annoyed with them at rousing me from sleep, I was easily swept away by the pleasant performance on which my half-dozing eyes fell and feasted for the next half hour.

They danced swiftly and with rhythm to the tune of the

piper, accompanied by drums and cymbals, swinging and swerving and bending the body at will. Yet, the pots on their heads with "chembus" full of flowers over them never so much as even tilted; so precise were their steps; so perfect their balance! A queer sort of dance never before seen in those parts and a good many spectators gathered around them in a circle. Prizes were showered on them in cash and kind. The dance over, the crowd dispersed.

A FEW months later the troupe again made its appearance; but now under entirely different circumstances. In front of a photo studio and within four walls of its compound where the cars which brought the esteemed patrons were parked in two rows, one on either side leaving enough space between for the dance to be performed. Powerful arc lamps flooded the ground with blinding light as a prelude to the bigger and brighter studio that was perhaps to admit them in the near future!

Zamindars, doctors, officials and business men, all people of a high station in society, had assembled there to witness their dance and those commoners, who crowded outside at the gate to have a glimpse, were thrilled by the dazzling light and the still more dazzling costumes the dancers wore!

"My dream has come true."

With a triumphant air my art-crazy friend asserted. And not very long after, when the sudden changes came over their little hut, he was all the more happy and conferred on the house the most befitting title—to quote his words—"A Dream That Came True."

REVIEWING the altered aspect of the house in my mind I thought: "May not now be poison for those within perhaps."

"Sir! Sir!" I thought I heard someone calling me from behind and turning back saw in the pale light the shadow of a figure approaching. The shadow came nearer and stood before me, looking into my eyes smiling, as if conveying thereby that he detected the purpose of my nocturnal stroll! I recognised in him the tonga driver of the house.

"You may go in, sir," my intruder whispered, jerking his head in the direction of the window. "There is no one else now. Both girls are free, you can choose which one you please. They charge you only twenty-five chips for the whole night."

I was dumb-founded and could not follow him at first. But I understood his meaning by and by. So, this was the result of all the recent pomp and magnificence! This was where their dance led them! This was the bigger and brighter studio they entered through that flood-lit

night in front of those society men! This was how the dream came true!

My silence seemed to encourage my friend and like a shrewd businessman trying to tackle a hesitant customer he began by telling me that if I had no money I could pay on the first, when I received my salary and that he knew where I lived and therefore he would come and collect it himself to avoid any inconvenience I might feel in visiting them a second time simply for that matter.

I was a little amused for I had no such experience before. Yet I decided to enter the dream for the first time, prompted more by curiosity than by any desire to divert my passions in that direction.

"I do not wish to remain through the entire night," I pleaded. "Just a few minutes, and then I will be off."

"That can be done, sir," he assured me adding that it was enough if I paid only five rupees.

INSIDE I was confronted with an old woman, the mistress of the house. Wasting no time for formalities, she led me into the smaller room and, leaving me, closed the door and locked it outside—a sign to the others that it was engaged!

On the cot that lay before me spread with sheets and scattered

flowers, sat the younger girl—(for I had not failed to mention to my conductor that I preferred her slender form to the plump bulky and out-of-proportion figure of her sister). I had watched her daily returning home from school on my way back from the office. I had cherished a sort of liking for her. Her graceful gait pressing the books against her ripe bosom, her smiling eyes and long nose which adorned her round face, her tiny mouth with thin rosy lips and above all her long tresses parted in the middle and reaching as far as the hips, tossing to and fro as she walked, like a fish wagging its tail—all had gained my admiration. Unlike her sister, who was of a gay disposition, she was dreamy, always thoughtful, it seemed.

FINDING no chair or any other furniture I walked up to the bed, hesitated a second or two and sat beside her. She did not even move or look up but fixed her gaze upon the floor where it was resting from the time of my entrance and sat in the same slanting posture as I saw her, supporting her whole body on her right elbow and her right cheek on its palm. She betrayed no sign of shyness; perhaps shyness was beyond her reach. Meek and humble, ready to be pounced upon by the hungry wolf in man, she sat there like a lamb! How selfish man is! To gratify the brute in him how many careers he moulds like the one here!

Silently did I watch her for full five minutes. I simply could do nothing. In her I recognised the divinity of womanhood challenged though bodily by many but still hovering over her soul. At length to be rid of the monotony of musing, I ventured to ask:

"Excuse me if I am too blunt, do you really like this life?"

She did not reply, but a deep sigh escaped her.

"Say, do you find it pleasurable? I mean the sort of life you lead, or are forced to lead?" I repeated my enquiry.

For the first time she raised her eyes and turned them fully on mine as if to satisfy herself about the sincerity of my purpose. They were innocent eyes and one could read in them the agony of the heart beneath. As though assured of my nobility, with quivering lips and faltering voice she confided:

"Yes...and no!" She stopped for a moment to gather up courage and then continued:

"FOR the senses—yes, and for the soul—no. Pleasures of life we have and its sorrows too. An unhealthy mixture. Yet I love this life. Not for the love of it; because I have to. One must live somehow. Those were the very words of our mother while

—Please see page 64

A SKIT

## FROM DELHI TO MARS!

By J. N. JADHAV

*Three hundred years hence Man will fly in a small basket-like rocket-spinner—from Delhi to Moscow, New York to Mars and from there to the Moon. Really, what a prospect!*

"GET up, dear," my wife shouted in my ear. "There are several things to attend to to-day and you are still asleep."

I grinned sheepishly. "All right, my woman," I grunted. "Tell me first, did you have that cheque cashed?"

"How could they honour the cheque when you wrongly dated it 10th October 1958 instead of 10th October 2258? The girl clerk at the bank laughed over the cheque until the tears came to her eyes and she called you..."

"What did she call me?" I asked with my curiosity roused.

"Well, she called you a Rip Van Winkle!"

"Verily, I am. But you could have rung me up," I suggested.

My wife flared. "How could I know where you were—in New York, Moscow or Mars? The new rocket spinner takes you to any place high or low in a jiffy. There need be no air port for its landing. It lights neatly even on our little terrace and I suppose you even come in surreptitiously and peep into my bedroom."

I PATTED her on the shoulder. "I will never suspect my pretty little wife. Rest assured on that score. Remember that 2258 A. D. represents the age of machine miracles—not that moth-eaten wretched period called the twentieth century. When I read the history of that period yesterday it just stank in my nostrils. That explains how I wrongly dated the cheque."

"Ah!" sighed my wife. "You think too much of the present hectic age with the basket-like

rocket spinner which every blessed man owns and operates. The skies are full of men and many accidents and collisions seem to be inevitable. Dead men drop from the heavens these days like raindrops in the monsoon."

"I AM weary of hearing all this grouch, dear. But just think what the spinner does and what science has done for me. You climb into the spinner, push a button and it takes no more than ten minutes to reach Moscow, fifteen minutes to hop on to New York, twenty-five minutes to fly over Everest, thirty-one minutes to get to Mars and forty-seven minutes twenty-eight seconds to land on the Moon. Those small food capsules satisfy your hunger and palate to perfection. The coffee capsule gives you that strong flavour which one associates with it; so does the tea capsule. The *dal-roti* capsule fills your stomach to the point of belching. There is even that cigarette capsule which once you insert into the mouth sends out endless smoke until you spit it out. The world today has shrunk. Our men have gone up and colonised in all those planets..."

"Stop it," said my wife in annoyance. "I want to know your programme for today. My only consolation is that you can't take some sweetheart of yours

in that one-seat rocket spinner. Otherwise..."

I sat up in anger and she stopped lecturing.

"I am expecting a wireless call from the Mars Insurance Company. Only then can I decide my programme," I answered. "What is yours? I see, you have got something on your mind."

"Go to Mars or hell, I don't care," cried my wife drawing away from me. "Don't you know Mother has come here to take me to Banaras? Give us our railway fare. And we won't be back before the end of the year."

"Why not each of you take a rocket spinner and finish the pilgrimage in a few hours? Bah! These women will never change. They still cling to their old beliefs."

My wife threw a small vessel at me by way of retort. And I woke up. "What a dream! ¶¶

#### DOESN'T BELIEVE

SHE: Do you believe in divorce?

HE: Of course not. Why, I don't even believe in marriage!

#### SHORT STORY

## Shadows Of The Past

The young man had an obsession and was hunting after the shadows of the past. And then, when a young woman met him she pointed to the future beckoning...

"FOR years I've been anxious to see the place where my brother died," Aroon Chaudhuri said, having made up his mind to tell the truth, at least part of the truth, to the lovable elderly woman, his father's former sister-in-law.

She pulled aside the curtain and beckoned to Aroon to enter the next room.

"That was Abani's room," she said with the dry voice of one who had cried away all her tears. "Behind that curtain there is the bathroom, where it happened..."

"Drowning in the bath-tub," Aroon was thinking aloud, "what a standard joke, until it happens in real life, in your own family."

"The bath-room is the same, the tub is the same," she told him factually, as though she saw nothing odd about a young man of 23 wanting to see the scene of a death that had happened before his own birth. "It was more than 30 years ago that my husband had died and your

BY

G. A. FLORIS

father asked me to move in with them into this house. Nothing ever changes here."

AROON looked at the old-fashioned, black-stained tub and then at the door which had no bolt, no lock.

"Nothing ever changes here,"

he repeated the old woman's words.

"I hope you'll stay for tea," Mrs. Sengupta asked when they returned to the drawing room. She sat down and motioned Aroon to pull up another chair. "It's so nice to have you here. You remind me of your brother. The same high forehead, bright eyes and slender figure."

"I remind you of my brother?" he asked with a pained look.

"Why, of course!" She was unable to understand his shock. "You are of the same father."

"OF course, of course," Aroon nodded. "But, you see, the dread of being like Abani used to play havoc with me. Ever since the age of 12, when I heard his story for the first time, I thought I would die at 14 as he had died. When the date approached, for months I used only the shower, because I was too scared to sit into the tub. I know it sounds silly, but..."

"I don't think it sounds silly at all," the woman sought to assuage him. "But who told you all about Abani at such a tender age?"

"Oh, I must have overheard fragments of conversation. Also about the money which had been held in trust for Abani."

"You mean the legacy, left

by my late husband," she reminisced. "We had no children of our own and Abani was our favourite nephew. But who told you about the rest? The old bath-room in Calcutta?"

"I have my father's inquisitiveness in me," Aroon admitted. "I was cavesdropping and adding two and two together."

"And now you've come to see where it happened?" she asked.

He nodded gravely: "And to fill out a few details here and there. Perhaps if I shall know everything about his life and death, I can get poor Abani out of my system."

"A quarter of a century has not been long enough for me to get Abani out of my system," she remarked gently. "Maybe, of course, that I've never really wanted to."

"If your thoughts are always with him any way," Aroon looked straight into her eyes, "perhaps it is not too cruel, if I ask you to tell me about that terrible night."

"SOMETIMES I felt it was all my fault," she said after a pause. "Your father was tired that evening, but he told me to go to the cinema with my sister. When we came back... Oh, how could I ever forget it! Your father was fast asleep, but there was light in the bathroom. After

Abani had not answered her repeated calls, Sister entered... I heard her scream, ran after her just in time to hold her when she was about to faint. Abani was in the water, but did not move. Asphyxia, the doctor said afterwards. He must have gone sick or fallen asleep in the bath-tub. The rest of the story you know. My sister died of grief a few months later. After her death your father moved to Bombay and married your mother."

Suddenly they heard the gay noise of young people mounting the stairs and approaching the door.

"Some of my nephews and nieces come to see me on Saturday afternoon with their friends," the old woman answered Abani's unpronounced question. "They bring a little joy into the life of a lonely old woman. And it is nice for them to have a place where to meet once a week."

After all the noise that had heralded their coming it appeared as an anti-climax that there were only three of them. A boy and two girls, all around the age of twenty. The old woman made the introductions, then saw to the tea and the cakes.

AROON was aware of his social obligations. He asked and answered questions and did his best to appear to submerge in the merry-go-lucky

chatter of the other three young people. Meanwhile, however, he could not help having his attention concentrated on the admirable hostess, the way she attended to her guests' cups and plates and listened to their talk. Aroon and the other young man were in white; the two girls wore bright-coloured saris. The sari of the old woman was dark-blue, simple yet dignified.

Aroon loved his mother, still young and beautiful at 44. Since his return from Technical College in England Aroon frequently escorted her to cinemas, restaurants and cocktail parties, whenever his father was too busy with business or out of town. On such occasions his glamorous mother always outshone the young girls present in beauty and elegance. Then he had been proud of her, but now he had the odd feeling that a real mother should be like Mrs. Sengupta, who had never had a child of her own: elderly, benign and self-effacing.

ROY, the other young man, turned to Aroon after a while: "Aroonbhaiji, you may be the answer to a young girl's prayer. We have four tickets to the stage show in the New Empire tonight, but my brother could not come. Now one of the two lovely creatures is unaccompanied. Could you join us and thus fill the gap?"

"With pleasure!" Aroon

gave a quick glance at both of the girls: Suchitra, with the ever smiling round cheeks and Mira, with the lean, serious face.

"Which of the two ladies is to be my partner?"

THE lean-faced Mira raised her hand in an affected school-girlish manner and a faint smile lit up her well-shaped, yet severely narrow lips: "Suchitra being Roy's young lady, you have to put up with me."

"Be careful, Aroon," Roy boomed. "She is a law student. All you say may be used in evidence!"

"How did you pick on legal studies?" Aroon asked Mira, while they walked towards the Theatre on Chowringhee.

The faint smile lit up her stern lips once again, but her voice was serious as she replied: "You scientists go too fast. You bring about the inter-planetary age before we know where we are. So I came to the conclusion that I must help law catch up with you." She added with a twinkle in her eye: "Or else, how can crime meet its just punishment on a space satellite?"

"Don't get lost, you two," Roy's voice was from far ahead, after their amusing conversation had slowed them down and the other two had to wait

for them at the corner of Humayan Place.

By the time they arrived at the Theatre, Aroon felt more cheerful than ever. Nevertheless, during the first act of the play, an exciting American murder mystery, dark thoughts re-entered his mind. He knew that his sentiments were reflected on his face and was embarrassed, feeling the searchlight of Mira's sidelong glances.

During the first interval the four of them went into the bar, but there they broke up into the two couples just as before.

Mira's eyes and lips were unmitigatedly earnest while she scrutinised Aroon's face.

"There is something on your mind," she said while they were sipping their orange juice. Her eyes caught his as she went on: "I don't ask anything, but I offer to be a listener, if you think you want to make a clean breast of it."

CAPTIVATED by her sincere intention to help, he did not even try to brush the matter off with a facetious remark.

"To be truthful, I'm somewhat troubled," he said vaguely, "and a sympathetic audience might be just the thing for me. But, look, the interval is almost over and people are returning to their seats."

"That would not worry me," she shrugged lightly. "We can stay here during the second act if you like and talk undisturbed."

"I FEEL, it is an imposition on my part to burden you with my very personal problems on the day of our first meeting, but...."

"But..." she urged.

"But," with an effort he made himself look up into her calm and thoughtful face, "I think, it is too good an opportunity to miss."

"We have something to discuss," Mira replied in a matter-of-fact voice when Roy and Suchitra, on their way back to the hall, asked them to go along.

"Good going," Roy said, hiding his astonishment behind an air of flippancy. "Knowing each other for an hour, and having already shomething to discuss."

"The age of speed we live in," giggled Suchitra.

Aroon embarked upon his story. At the beginning he talked with hesitation, later on with growing eloquence.

Until the age of 14 Aroon suspected that he was living his brother's, Abani's, life all over again. For years he was scared that he would follow Abani into the early death, once he reached

the age when Abani had died. After he had passed 14, Aroon came to believe that he was the reincarnated Abani, charged with the mission of finding out how his former life, in Abani's body, had come to such a premature end.

Keeping his eyes and ears open for new facts he learned about the trust fund which Abani's uncle, Haridas Sengupta, had instituted for the benefit of the young boy, the proceeds of which the latter was supposed to receive at the age of 21. Upon Abani's death that money went to his father who had been a struggling craftsman in a small workshop up to that date.

It was with the money of his early deceased firstborn that Aroon's father, Hiran Chaudhuri, started his factory in Bombay and began to prosper. His newly acquired wealth enabled the middle-aged man to marry one of Bombay's recognised beauty queens, since his first wife had died soon after his son, still back in Calcutta.

WHILE Aroon spoke, Mira listened attentively, yet silently. She did not interrupt, nor did she prompt. Her penetrating eyes were fixed upon his face and the narrow lips remained stiff, reserving judgment.

After having said all this, Aroon was unable to proceed, although visibly anxious to do

so. Mira broke her silence at last to give him a lead :

"Did you find in Calcutta what you were looking for?"

The seemingly innocuous question was well calculated.

"Did I find it!" Words burst out of him as from a volcano. "I have rounded off my story to perfection. My brother was drowned in the bath-tub when he was with my father alone at home, mind you, in a bath-room that could not be locked from the inside. He died just in time for my father to use his money to set up a factory. A few months later Abani's mother died just in time to enable my father to marry a younger woman. When I began to show interest in my brother's fate, my father prevented me from coming to Calcutta and hurriedly despatched me off to England to College. In London I was just about to forget Abani when I read a real-life murder story about a man who killed women in a bath-tub by lifting their feet and thus making their heads sink under the water. Now you see, why I had to seize the opportunity to talk to you! How could I have lived all alone with such a terrible truth any longer?"

"What terrible truth do you mean?" Her voice sounded very cold. "All I could discern was a passionate indictment based on selected facts. You even chalk up against your father

that he sent you to an English Technical College..."

"But don't you think that all my facts taken together prove..."

"They certainly prove one thing."

"What?"

"That you hate father and are prepared to marshal all the facts against him. It is not so unusual in the case of boys with pretty young mothers. 'Oedipus Complex', they call it."

"You think all that I have said was inspired by the malice of a jealous child?" he asked indignantly.

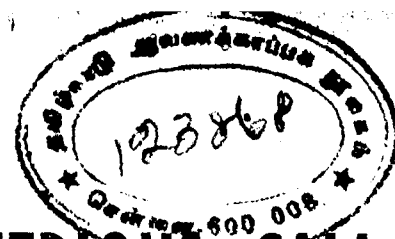
"I did not say that. It is, however, a fact that all throughout these long years nobody but you has seen fit to prosecute your father. And you of all people are not entitled to set yourself up as his judge since, guided by your emotions, you are not even suited to act as an impartial witness."

ARON felt that he had been transformed from prosecutor into defendant. His eyes pleaded for mercy and she was quick to grant it.

"I want you to stop wasting your life," she said and her voice was warm, "acting as a self-appointed avenging angel. You

—Please see page 56

## SHORT STORY



# THE MYSTERIOUS CALL

By A. RAJ

THE clock struck eight, and it was dark outside.

Naresh was reading with very deep interest an Edgar Wallace novel, conveniently stretching his limbs on a comfortable Dunlop cushion. Though the suspense in the story had carried him far away from his surroundings, he was still conscious that somebody—probably a stranger—had entered the house. His sharp ears caught, without effort, the soft footsteps of a man walking in front of the room, perhaps with the utmost care so as to make the least possible noise.

In a second Naresh was on his feet. He went near the door, but did not open it. 'I am getting nervous these days', he said

to himself. 'My ears are also deceiving me, and I must not give way to such trifle frights.' Only two minutes ago, he thought, he saw a face at the window. When Naresh rushed and looked through the window, he saw nobody in the yard.

He was again on the cot with the novel in his hand. He thought he heard a sound by the door and, to his fear, saw the door being pushed slowly from the outside.

Just at that moment, the telephone by his bed rang sharply, and before it could complete its couplet, Naresh grabbed the receiver. Hardly had he taken it to his ear when Naresh was interrupted by a gruff command, "Put it down, or I'll shoot!" Naresh obeyed because the

~~~~~  
*He wanted to get rid of the woman who was frustrating his nefarious plans. And he imposed on her a sentence of death.*  
~~~~~

stranger, a tall man with an ugly mask covering his face, had a pistol pointing at him. Being startled at the sudden appearance of a man with a dangerous weapon in hand, Naresh forgot he should keep the receiver on the rest; he dropped it on the cot.

When the receiver was close to his ear, Naresh heard only one word through the wire, and it was his own name, "Nareesh?" It was an enquiry if the speaker was connected to the proper person. A woman's voice it was, and Naresh did not know what connections she could have with the stranger in the mask.

THE masked intruder took up the receiver which Naresh had dropped on the cot.

"Hello!" A pause. "Yes. Naresh here."

The stranger then listened on the 'phone for nearly five minutes punctuating the information conveyed by the woman with a variety of exclamations.

"Don't you worry," he assured her. "I am always here to help people when they are in distress. I will be in your room in another fifteen minutes."

After keeping the receiver on the rest, the stranger said, "The person who wanted you on the telephone is to die in an hour's time."

"Who's she?" asked Naresh without a thought.

SURPRISED, the man asked, "How do you know it's a woman?"

"I heard her voice, that is, she called my name, before I dropped the receiver." Naresh waited to hear the woman's name.

"You will not know her name, because she will not contact you again."

"How did you know she will ring me up?"

"I obtruded upon you not to prevent you from talking on the 'phone; I thought she had already telephoned you and I came here to stop you from going to her. The unfortunate woman suffers from heart disease and it is possible she may get a fatal attack tonight."

"If it is just a heart disease, why did you prevent her from speaking to me?"

"You shall not know the secret, Mr. Naresh."

"And how do you know she will get a fatal attack tonight?"

"I have already spoken more than is necessary. If you interfere in this matter, I warn you, you will be dealt with mercilessly. Take this warning and be a sensible man."

So saying, the intruder went out of Naresh's bedroom, closed the door behind him and bolted it from the outside. Naresh banged the door and cursed the masked man, but he received no reply.

HE contacted the Telephone House and enquired from which number came the last call to him. The girl was apologetic, "I am sorry, sir; many girls are on leave today, and I am so busy. I shall find out and ring you in five minutes."

Already ten minutes had been wasted and Naresh was restless. He did not worry much about opening the door which the stranger had closed on him. The dominant question in his mind was, 'who could that woman be?' He met a lot of persons everyday, men and women,—some new, some friends and some recent acquaintances. 'She called me Nareesh,' he said to himself. He strained his memory to recollect who usually called his name with that peculiar pronunciation. After recollecting the hundred names that came to his mind, Naresh thought (he was not quite sure) that Mrs. Shanthi Ramgopal, should be the woman in distress. He had talked with her often, but he could not remember for certain if she called his name with that peculiar pronunciation.

Naresh seized the telephone directory, picked up the number and dialled. The bell was ring-

ing impatiently at the other end, but none answered the call.

A woman slightly fair of skin, but obviously pale, was walking restlessly in her little bedroom in the first floor. Her face was drawn and her hair slightly dishevelled. Though she was just twenty-six years of age, fear and helplessness made her look as if she were above thirty-five. Just as the face of a man who had lost all hopes, being condemned to death, this woman's face displayed misery and fear. She knew she was to meet death that night and her face showed how much afraid she was to keep up the appointment. Such a foreknowledge always keeps a person in continuous torture until death itself comes and benumbs the limbs. And this was the torture the woman was undergoing.

ONLY that evening she came to know of the intended plot to murder her. From 7 o'clock she had been trying to 'phone up her friend, but she did not have any excuse nor an opportunity to go into her husband's office room where the telephone was installed. At last, at about 8 o'clock she had entered her husband's office room without being noticed, and dialled the number. At the other end somebody lifted the receiver, but without answering, threw it on the table, or so she thought, for the sound it made had nearly broken her ear-drum. There was a pause during which she went on calling, "Hello! Hello!" The man picked up the receiver

once again, and spoke. He listened to what she had had to say. His voice was completely different and she thought it must be owing to speaking through the wire to which she was not accustomed. He said he would come to her rescue in another fifteen minutes. While she was coming out of the room after making the call, somebody seized her by the shoulders; another person plugged a handkerchief in her mouth. She was carried to her room and after throwing her recklessly, the two men closed the door, bolted it from the outside and went away. She did not see any of them.

Her own room was thus turned into a prison for her! Half an hour had since passed and there was no sign of Naresh! She was now doubtful if she had spoken to the right person. Was it really Naresh who answered the call, or as she had suspected, was it somebody else?

THOUGH Mrs. Shanthi Ramgopal knew well that the door was locked from the outside, the stupid hope of an escape which the sentenced criminals nurse on their last journey to the gallows, urged her to try the door once more and run away somewhere,—somewhere beyond the reach of the murderers. She tried, but the door did not open.

There was a sound at her window. Eight fingers in white gloves were clutching at the lower frame of the window. A

smile involuntarily appeared on her lips and she wanted to run and give a hand to the man. But the next moment she blanched white to the lips. It was a man with an ugly mask over his face. Perhaps, this was the chap who had been engaged to murder her, she thought. Pressing her hands against her cheeks and closing the eyes, the woman screamed.

"SHHHH..." cautioned the man, forefinger across his mouth. He took off the mask and Shanthi nearly fell on the man in joy, surprise and relief. She clung to him so tightly and fondly as a woman would do when she met her lover after a long break.

Shanthi narrated to him quickly the details of the plot to murder her as far as she knew, and the circumstances that had led to the same.

"Where's the telephone?" asked Naresh in a whisper.

"In my husband's office room downstairs," she replied.

When he reached for the door, Shanthi said that the door was bolted from the outside. "They locked me up here to prevent me from speaking on the telephone."

"I see," he said, "don't be afraid, Mrs. Ramgopal," Naresh encouraged. "I will see that nobody touches you to-night;

and moreover the persons who have plotted to murder you shall be taken into safe custody to-night." So saying, Naresh jumped on the window and descended down the way he clambered up.

AT about 9 o'clock that night, Shanthi Ramgopal heard somebody open the door. The door slowly opened and like a thief her husband, Mr. J. Ramgopal, sneaked his neck and entered. The tall, handsome Ramgopal, nice and smart, wore a villain's chuckle. He noiselessly closed the door and came near his wife. This was the intended last interview with her husband, she thought. The murderer would, perhaps, follow.

Ramgopal pulled from his pocket a red scarf and was swinging it in front of him. What a surprise! Ramgopal himself was to do the killing! Shanthi screamed and Ramgopal chuckled.

"Shanthi, my dear, do you think I am going to do this in pleasure? I have arrived at this inevitable decision because you are so very adamant and obstinate. Look how I shiver. I am afraid as much as I grieve. During the last five years you have given me all the pleasures a woman—a wife—can give to her husband, and now....."

Shanthi wept. She fell down on her knees and begged her husband to have mercy on her.

She promised she would be sensible thereafter and would not threaten to tell the police or anybody that he was the chief of the contraband gold and opium traffic in the city. She promised him she would not interfere with any of his rackets but that she would be a dutiful wife.

"I am so sorry, my dear," apologised Ramgopal. "Once you have formed an idea to betray me—to hand me over to the police—I don't think, I am safe, Shanthi. Any time there may be a quarrel between us and you may straightaway go to the telephone and ring up your favourite friend, Naresh, who pokes his nose most unnecessarily into other people's business."

"I won't do any such stupid things hereafter. Please, for God's sake, leave me alive. It is so horrible to think that I must die, and that too, strangled .....by you. At least shooting will bring instantaneous death. But strangling....O God, it is so horrible. Please forgive me and spare my life."

"I AM sorry, my dear. In case you squeal, what will happen to all the nuggets of gold I have at present? What will happen to the busy trafficking in opium which yields in lakhs to me every year, free of income tax? What will happen to all the efforts and risks I have taken all these years to bring this traffic to a perfection? And what will happen to my name

which I have been able to keep with respect and regard all these years? When I begged you last week to be one of my partners in the business, not only did you refuse such a handsome offer, but even went to the extent of threatening to hand me over to the police.....I have been watching your movements since then, Shanthi, and I am convinced that you must be silenced."

Ramgopal came near Shanthi holding the two opposite ends of the scarf in each of his hands. "I hope you will yield quietly, my dear."

She made a last attempt. "Have mercy on me, please."

"THAT is too great a risk to take, Shanti.....And now, don't make noise. If you do, my friend outside will make the job easy for me."

When Ramgopal coolly threw the scarf around her neck, Shanti cried aloud, and the door opened.

"You see, the man is coming," said Ramgopal with a murderer's smile on his lips. And the next moment, Ramgopal's friend who was to assist him in strangling Shanthi fell in front of Ramgopal with a heavy thud and rolled. Startled, Ramgopal turned to see who the assailant was. To his consternation, he saw Detective Inspector Gajjaraj with a triumphant smile on his face. A pistol was pointing at Ramgopal's heart.

Before the Inspector said,

"Hands up," Ramgopal raised both his hands, followed by his friend who was slowly trying to stand on his legs.

The steel almirah in the room slowly shook, and opening the doors, out came Naresh, laughing—laughing as if nothing unusual had happened.

"You" asked Ramgopal addressing his wife, "have trapped me?"

"Yes, my dear husband," she said simulating the bent of his voice. "This was made inevitable as a self-defence".

#### Shadows Of The Past

—Continued from page 50

are Aroon, Abani was Abani. He had his karma, you have yours. Make the best use of your opportunities for the future instead of harking back."

Aroon sensed her genuine concern for him and that was a good feeling. A new human contact tearing up the cobweb invisibly woven around him by the members of his own family, alive and dead.

"I think you are right," Aroon conceded aloud, yet added under the same breath: "But I've been right, too, in a sense."

"Oh?" She looked up at him whimsically.

"Don't you realise?" He smiled again. "Had it not been for my hunting after the shadows of the past, I would never have met you."

## When The Soul Changed Its Body!

Our Shastras tell us that the soul can hop from one body to another and then return to its original shell. The following story, written by an English woman, confirms this amazing truth.

"I TELL you," Jackson said, clinching his argument, "I know that the thing has actually been done."

His two companions received the statement with stolid incredulity.

"Sorry, but I don't believe it," Lynn said flatly.

"You mean to tell us that you have known an instance in which the soul—the ego—of one man entered into and took possession of the body of another, whose

soul was absent during sleep?" Faraday demanded. "I should want some proof to make me swallow that yarn, old man!"

BY

Mrs. J. O. Arnold

"You can believe it or not. The evidence in favour of its having happened is, to my mind, beyond question," Jackson asserted, sticking to his guns.

Faraday was, he knew, a hard nut to crack.

"WELL, go on. Tell us all about it." Faraday lit a fresh pipe. That suavely tolerant air of his, suggesting an open mind and willingness to hear the case through, however doubtful it might appear to be, was one of Faraday's strong points. He was always open to conviction—and merciless when not convinced.

"Fire away," Lynn joined in, encouragingly.

"First of all, we'll discuss the main point at issue—namely that it is possible for the soul—that's as good a word as any—of a man to vacate his body during sleep, leaving the earthly house so to speak, without a spiritual tenant. Well, we have all met or heard of people who declare that they have wandered in unknown yet perfectly recognisable places during the hours of sleep. They can describe their journeyings quite definitely upon awakening.

"There are others who declare they have spent the hours of sleep in the company of absent ones whom they love—some dead, some alive but far away: and, upon awakening, have had the most clear and vivid recollection of all that passed."

"Both examples can be accounted for," Faraday said with calm conviction, "and both refer only to the departure of

the ego elsewhere during sleep. If we grant so much, the entrance of a new temporary tenant into the vacated premises, so to speak, is in no way proved."

"Wait a bit, what's the old tag? 'Nature abhors a vacuum'. Well, I assert that I have personally known such a case," Jackson persisted.

"A most unpleasant suggestion," Lynn said. "I don't like the notion of a game of General Post going on whilst I am supposed to be sleeping the sleep of the just. Who knows what sort of an undesirable tramp ego might not take possession of me whilst I wandered in distant lands, or went to rejoin a lost pal? No—I'm all against it, old fellow."

"Nevertheless you'd be convinced there was something in it if you'd had my experience. It was...horrible!"

JACKSON hesitated before speaking the last word, as though he paused to find an adequate expression. He had lowered his voice, and something in his manner, some gesture of horror, communicated itself to his hearers.

"Go on."

It was Faraday who spoke. His grave eyes were fixed on Jackson's face. Plainly he was all attention.

"It happened a few years ago. I had gone for a fortnight's tramp with another fellow in a remote hilly part of Yorkshire, as far from civilization, motor buses, petrol pumps and humanity as it was possible to go. We had put up at a remote farmhouse, miles from every other kind of habitation: But, lonely as it was, it suited us exactly, and we lived the simple life with a vengeance, without a frill or convention to worry us. Out in the open all day—tramping, climbing, exploring—"

"That's the right sort of holiday," Lynn put in with a nodding head, "and dog-tired at night—"

"WE thought we were the only visitors at the farm," Jackson went on, "but after a couple of days we discovered there was another man staying there. However, he didn't interfere with us—a most retiring, not to say secretive, person he turned out to be. He lived in a bed-sitting room, and never left it during the day-time, only creeping downstairs in the dusk, avoiding us in the most pointed way, and never going for a walk until it was dark. If he'd been a criminal in hiding he could scarcely have kept himself more to the background."

"Perhaps he was," hazarded Lynn. "Did the farmer's wife explain him in any way?"

"She said he was a Professor

of something, suffering from overstrain and under doctor's orders to see no one and do nothing. That's all we know."

"Then you never really saw him?" Faraday asked.

"YES—once. I was going up the narrow, rickety staircase one night with a torch in my hand, there being no light whatever up there, when I came full upon him. I flashed the bull's eye upon him almost involuntarily and saw him clearly."

"Which did his appearance suggest? The overworked Professor or the criminal in hiding?" Faraday asked.

"Hard to say—except for his eyes. He was a big man with black hair and a black beard—not the elderly, stooping individual I had pictured him as being. He wore horn-rimmed spectacles, but I saw that his eyes, remarkably close together, were cruel—mean and furtive, too. I distrusted the man at once because of them.

"Sorry," I said, "it's so confoundedly dark on these stairs."

"He made no clear reply, but mumbling something in his beard, passed me and went out.

"We were too much occupied during the day, and too tired in the evening to bother about him. From what the farmer's wife

said, he plainly preferred to be alone. And there was no reason for us to force our society upon him. So he went his way, and we went ours—until one day when something happened.

"We had started off early in the morning on a longer tramp than usual and it was dusk before we turned into the lonely lane that led to the farm-house. On one side was a fir plantation and a stiffish stone wall of that uncemented kind that looks as if a high wind would blow it down, but is, nevertheless, a nasty proposition to climb over. We were half way along the lane when a sound of groaning pulled us both up suddenly.

"What's that? Sounds like somebody hurt!" Jaffray said.

"We stood still, listening.

"The groans came from a spot beneath the high wall on our left. And going towards it we were not long in discovering the cause.

"A MAN lay there in a huddled heap, his head, as we could see even in the growing darkness, upon a great sharp-edged boulder upon which we guessed he had fallen from the top of the wall. We could not see the nature of his injuries, but his groans plainly indicated he was damaged somewhere.

"Jaffray stooped over him.

"Hullo! What's happened? Had a fall?" he asked, and striking a match looked into the man's face. I was standing close by, and recognized him instantly as our unsociable fellow-lodger at the farm.

"THE man opened his eyes that had been closed, and, seeing us, made an effort to rise. He murmured something incoherently.

"Doesn't know what he's saying. He's had a nasty knock on the head. Look!"

"Jaffray pointed to a red wound over the temple, and to the stained shirt front upon which it had dripped.

"We were still some distance from the farm, and it was obvious the man required help as quickly as possible.

"I'll carry him on my back," Jaffray said. "You go on in front and warn Mrs. Bland. See there's hot water and so on. Just give me a hand first to get him hoisted."

"If the man had been half dazed he seemed to come to his senses when Jaffray laid hold of him. Feebly, yet in a manner desperately, he resisted.

"Come now—we've got you all safe and sound," I said, as Jaffray stopped for his burden.

"Got me? Aye, so you have, d—n you!" A string of blasphemous oaths followed.

"His voice was deep and sounded like a snarl, a voice not easily to be forgotten by reason of its quality of suppressed fierceness.

"But the flash of rage lasted only for an instant—in the next he had become unconscious.

"We did all we could for him amongst us, and then I went off, instructed by Mrs. Bland, to fetch the nearest doctor.

"When I returned, bringing him with me, Jaffray told me how matters had gone during my absence."

"I sat by him, trying to soothe him," he said. "But the poor chap's mind wandered the whole time. He talked nonsense—sheer rubbish."

"What sort of nonsense?" I asked. For those fierce words uttered in the lane stayed in my mind.

"CHIEFLY, he wanted to get away. His idea of preferring to be alone came out pretty strongly, I assure you. And he used a considerable amount of language that was not in the least academic—ill-befitting a Professor, even one suffering from overwork—so that at last I began to wonder if he were quite all he made himself out

to be, or something rather different!"

"THE doctor, coming in at the moment, put an end to our talk. He explained the patient's condition to us briefly, promised to send a nurse and to call in the morning. Then he left.

"The nurse duly arrived, and our assistances being no longer required, we shut ourselves into our little parlour. With slippered feet we set by the wood fire, for the evening had grown chilly after the sun set, lit our pipes and fell to talking.

"I forget whether I have or have not told you that Jaffray, although the best of fellows, was a bit of a crank on some subjects. I never pretended to follow his views on psychic affairs, mind transference, mental telepathy and occult matters in general. I wasn't really much interested in them, being a mere materialist with my living to earn, and no time to waste on side shows. But I grant that old Jaffray—he was about 50 at the time—got some remarkable results occasionally. And, anyway, this sort of investigation was his pet hobby.

"Well, we somehow began discussing the very subject we've been speaking of tonight; the absence of a man's ego, soul, spirit—call it by what name you like, so long as you mean that part of him which is not physical, but which expressed his personality—during sleep or

unconsciousness, and the possibility of another ego temporarily becoming tenant, so to speak, of the vacated premises.

"I told Jaffray I couldn't argue the point, having neither data nor experience to go upon.

"**BUT** from your point of view listening to our friend upstairs when we came on him in the lane with a broken skull, I shouldn't mind admitting that a devil of some sort had got possession of his brain-pan. I never heard a man speak more fiendishly," I said.

"Presently we smoked in silence, both tired out with fresh air and exercise. It must have been late, and we had probably been dozing in front of the wood fire, when a soft tapping at the door roused us. It was the nurse, whom so far I had not seen.

"May I come in for a moment?" she said quietly. "My patient is still unconscious, but I felt I should like to speak to you for a moment. Everyone seems to have gone to bed."

"I drew a chair up to the dying fire.

"No—I mustn't stay, thank you. But I thought you should

know that the man upstairs is not what he pretends to be. He wears a false beard and is obviously disguised. Also, when I first saw him, his ravings convinced him of—well, perhaps, I had better say no more...And for the present, please consider this as confidential. But I thought it wise to have witnesses."

"Do you think he will recover?" Jaffray asked.

"Possibly not. Well, I have one or two matters to see to before. I settle for the night. A place like this is naturally not well equipped for nursing," She smiled, and nodding good-night to us, went out as quietly as she had entered. We heard her go into the farm kitchen.

"**I COULDN'T** help watching Jaffray. He was as white as paper instead of looking like a man who had walked the moors all day. And he was plainly thinking hard....My instinct was to talk about commonplace things and avoid anything psychic. So I said how good the cheese had been at supper.

"But it was no use. Jaffray wasn't interested in cheese.

"It seems to me," he said, ignoring my remark, "that this is a unique opportunity for testing my theory."

"Rubbish!" I said.

"**THIS** man will probably remain unconscious for some time. Ted—he turned to me, his eyes shining. 'I am prepared to wager what you like that I will transfer my ego and by exercise of concentrated will-power take possession of—'"

"But I would not let him finish."

"Don't be an ass!" I broke in. For I hated what he proposed, though I did not believe in its possibility. "I won't take any such wager!"

"Then I shall do it without. Good-night, old chap. I'm dog-tired; I shan't need rock- ing tonight."

"And with that he went right off to bed.

"I walked about the little parlour much disturbed in mind. I did not believe for one moment that Jaffray could succeed in carrying out his intention. But I knew him for a determined fellow; and that he had profound faith in his extraordinary theories. What could I do? Certainly not prevent him from making this strange attempt. I would go up present-

ly and see if he was all right. As for me, sleep was by now far from me. I was wide awake, every nerve tightened to straining point, awaiting I knew not what...

"Then suddenly, without warning, the awful thing happened....someone came tearing down the stairs in headlong haste—then the door was flung violently open—and a man almost fell into the room. It was the patient from upstairs! His eyes were wide with terror; his features contorted with fear; sweat stood upon his forehead, his arms were stretched out to be in agonized entreaty...

"Help me! Save me! Ted, for the love of Heaven, help me! I'm caught...I can't get away..."

"It was the voice of Jaffray!"

"Even as I realised it he fell forward and lay gasping upon the ground.

"**I RUSHED** past him to Jaffray's room. He lay upon the bed—dead."

The silence was broken by Faraday.

"A verdict of heart failure was returned, I suppose?"

I nodded.

"And the other man?"

"He recovered. An amazing revival, the nurse said. But when later on the police arrived to arrest him for a murder committed months earlier, they found he had escaped them, having taken poison, kept in readiness, no doubt for such an emergency—"

"Or because the new tenant did not like his quarters," Faraday hazarded grimly. ‡‡

### The Dream House

—Continued from page 42

choosing this path for us. This was the most easy to find of all professions, she said. She had tried all channels to gain us a footing in the film world, but all her efforts proved futile. Dishear-

tened and with no pie left, she threw open the door of this detestable life before us! Innocent so far and ignorant at first of this horrid experience, we became used to it as time passed on."

She stopped abruptly. Her bosom was heaving. She did not sob or weep, but in her eyes there glistened a tear treampling, and threatening to roll down at the least provocation. She was silently enduring the bitter experiences of life—alone! Though the cup be filled with poison, one needs must drink of it! She may not perhaps be aware of that rule of life!

"Enough food for thought for a sleepless night," I thought. Bidding farewell to the melancholy house and its still more melancholy occupants, I hastened toward home. And even as I opened the door of my apartment, my heart yearned to hear those two golden lines of the song. ‡‡

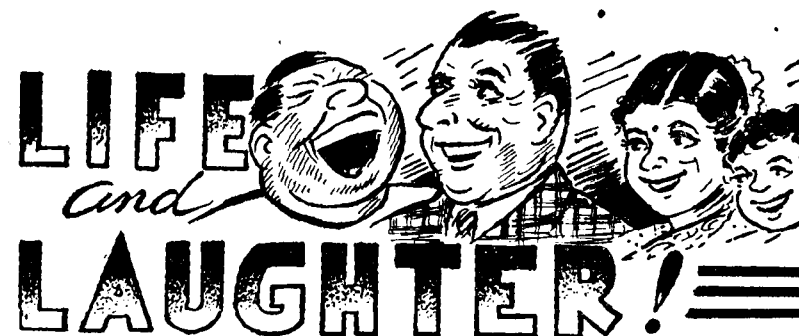
## INDIA MAGAZINE

### SUBSCRIPTION RATES

|               |      |              |
|---------------|------|--------------|
| FOR ONE YEAR  | .... | Rs. 4.50 nP. |
| FOR TWO YEARS | .... | Rs. 8.00 nP. |

(Subscription for less than one year will not be accepted.)

Copies are not sent by V.P.P.



### DIFFERENCE ?

Juanito, a ten-year-old newsboy in a South American resort town, had mastered some English for the tourist trade, but not enough of the North Americans' baffling sense of immediacy.

One day, he sold a paper to a northern visitor and, pocketing his centavos, was well up the street when he was overtaken by an angry roar.

"Come back here!" shouted the customer. "Today is Friday and this is last Tuesday's paper!"

Unruffled, the lad returned and asked confidentially, "Senor, haf you read eet?"

"W-well, no," the tourist admitted.

"So!" said Juanito, his shoulders expressive; "then wot's the deeference?"

### STARTLED !

Passengers on a crowded London bus were thrown into a panic the other morning when—just as the bus started—a woman's voice shouted: "Wait! Wait till I get my clothes off!"

Startled, the driver stopped the bus dead. When he dared turn around, he saw a woman making her way down the bus steps—carrying a large basket of laundry.

### WIDE BEACH

A traveller in the middle of the Sahara Desert was amazed to come upon a man in a bathing suit. "Where on earth are you going?" he demanded.

"Swimming," replied the man.

"But," said the traveller, "you're a hundred miles from the sea."

"Yes," replied the other; "wide beach, isn't it?"

### EXCESS TO PAY!

The old countryman sent his young son to the village shop for an ounce of tobacco, giving him sixpence. He waited. Years passed—and more years. Then one day a magnificent motor-car pulled up beside his humble cottage door, and out stepped a prosperous-looking man.

"Well, Dad," he boomed, "I went to America, worked hard, and so I guess I'm rich now."

"Maybe," retorted the old chap curtly, "but where's my baccy?"

The son produced a packet from his pocket. "Here it is, Dad," he said "but it's dearer now. You owe me three-and-sixpence."

### GOOD PLACE

The railway porter looked searchingly at a group of girls waiting on the platform. "Aren't you the crooners who sang on the radio tonight?"

"That's right," one of them told him. "We were making our debut on the air."

"And where are you bound for now?"

"We're just off to South Africa."

The porter sniffed. "H'm," he remarked. "I suppose that's as good a place to hide as any."

### FIRM REPLY

"John," said the nervous woman nudging her husband, "did you hear anything?"

"Yes, dear, it must be burglars." As he spoke he began to get out of bed.

"Oh, John, do be careful! Don't take any risks. What are you going to do?"

"Lock the bedroom door," was the firm reply.

### ORANGE AND WILLIAM!

Conversation at breakfast in an Oxford hotel. First American, diving into a pot of marmalade: "It's a vurry remarkable thing how the British have always excelled in the production of orange marmalade." Second American, grabbing the pot: "Waal, didn't one of their kings come from there—William the something, was it?"

### GOT TIME

A tourist driving along through the country noticed a farmer and his little daughter sitting under a tree. The tourist pulled up alongside and admired the little girl.

"What do you call her?" he asked the farmer.

"Amalasyinta," the farmer replied.

"Isn't that a rather long name?"

"The farmer looked at the tourist with contempt. "Listen, son, we're not city folks—we've got time."

### SENSIBLE!

A colonel was transferring to a new command. On reaching his depot, he found stacks of old documents accumulated in the archives of his predecessors, so he wired headquarters for permission to burn them. The answer came back: "Yes, but make copies first."

### AMBITION

On the first day of school, the teacher was asking each of the first-formers to tell his name and what he wanted to be when he grew up.

One little tow-head spoke up importantly.

"I'm Jimmy. When I grow up I'm going to be a lion tamer. I'll have lots of fierce lions and tigers, and I'll walk in the cage and"—he hesitated for a moment, then continued—"but, of course, I'll have my mother with me."

### SAD LUCK

Old friends met again after many years.

"Have you heard about Bill?" asked one referring to an acquaintance.

"No," said the other. "What happened to him?"

"He dropped dead outside a public house."

"Going in or coming out?"

"Going in."

"What bad luck!"

### FRANK

"Doctor, if there is anything the matter with me, don't frighten me half to death by giving it a long, scientific name. Just tell me what it is in plain English."

"Well, to be frank—you are lazy!"

"Thank you, doctor. Now tell me the scientific name for it. I've got to let my wife know what's the matter with me!"

### HAD SIX

"My Mother will be surprised when she gets my letter."

"Harold," she used to say, 'you are so stupid that you will never get a job,' and in the last month I have had six!" \*\*

# Questions & Answers

---

*(All types of questions from our readers are welcome. Answers may be diverting, informative or instructive as the case may be but under no circumstances is any offence meant to anyone.)*

---

**M. N. Sidhwa, Poona.**

**Q.**—Democracy is crumbling all about India. Burma and Pakistan are under military rule. What do you prefer for India?

**A.**—Should we burn our house simply because there are bugs in neighbouring buildings? Gandhiji's *Ramrajya* is still our ideal though we would like the franchise to be restricted only to educated persons above 25 years of age.

**H. Kaul, Amritsar.**

**Q.**—What do young men approve of about the modern miss?

**A.**—About her all too transparent dress, of course! They appreciate also her art in leaving nothing to the imagination!

**R. S. Rau, Bombay-1.**

**Q.**—Supposing a wise man finds himself in a gathering of fools how should he behave?

**A.**—To pretend that he is a fool like them!

**Miss K. Kamini, Madras.**

**Q.**—I want to marry a man here who already has a wife. What will happen if I seduce him into marriage?

**A.**—He will then be "seduced" into jail by his first wife. In the eye of the law bigamy is rummy, and the court has a sentence to levy! No escape, dearie!

**Y. V. Visweswaran, Coimbatore.**

**Q.**—"India" (our country) is viewed as a "Magazine" representing different States with different people with different customs and traditions in its different pages. Which page would you like to read first?

**A.**—A curious question! Would a man like to have any part of his body cut off separately and look at it? All pages are of equal importance and can be read with equal interest at any time. Even as life animates the human body, a silken thread of unity binds all the people of India whether in the North, South, East or West. "India Magazine" belongs to one and all, and we are proud to make that claim.

**K. V. Krishnan, Seydunganallur.**

**Q.**—Why do men grow moustaches?

**A.**—Because women like the 'feel' of such bristles against their soft cheeks!

**T. Mallotra, Patna.**

**Q.**—What is the best method of silencing a quarrelsome wife?

**A.**—To be silent but firm.

**L. Mitter, Calcutta.**

**Q.**—I often dream that I am marrying an angel in Heaven. What should I do?

**A.**—Will away your property on the earth and await the call from Heaven!

**P. Ram Dixit, Lucknow.**

**Q.**—Don't you agree with me that "India Magazine" is the leading short story magazine in India? What is the principle behind your selection of the stories from contributors?

**A.**—Any story that is neatly written, covers some aspect of life and carries the human touch is accepted at once. Stories may come from any part of India or even from abroad. But fiction based on Indian life is given first preference.

**J. K. Sahu, Mathura.**

**Q.**—If all colleges are converted into co-educational institutions what will be the result?

**A.**—More secret romances and headaches for the parents!

---

*This month's prize of five rupees for the best question has been awarded to: R. S. Rau, Bombay-1.*

# PLANETS & YOUR FORTUNE

*The following predictions are based on the movement of the Nine Planets in the 12 Rasis according to Gochara. The positions of the planets from Janma Rasi (Moon's Place) are taken into account in forecasting the effects. Those running a favourable Dasa or Bhukthi will experience the evil effects in a lesser degree and those running malefic Dasa or Bhukthi will experience the evil effects in a greater measure.*

[Astrological Forecasts for November 1958]

By T. V. RAMAN

## MESHA

(Aswini 4, Bharani 4, Krithigai 1.)

Mars, Lord of the Lagna, is placed in the 2nd house, un-  
aspected by good planets. Your  
health will, therefore, undergo  
a setback. The important  
feature of this month is that  
Saturn, who was hitherto in  
the 8th house, causing great  
distress, has moved to the  
9th house. This apart, Rahu  
and Kethu have changed to  
Kanya and Meena, respectively.  
As a result, Jupiter in the 7th  
house is free to bestow beneficial  
effects. I have noticed people  
belonging to this Rasi experienc-  
ing very beneficial effects on  
account of Rahu in the 6th  
house, Jupiter in the 7th house  
and Saturn in the 9th house.

The only planet that can cause  
evil effects is Sun, who is Lord  
of the 5th house, having been  
placed in the 7th house as  
Neecha. But he attains Neecha-  
banga. The effect will, therefore,  
be a journey or transfer.

Those in services will thrive  
remarkably. Some may get  
promotions. Some may have a  
change of career for the better.  
Rahu in the 6th house indicates  
gains. Persons who are sickly  
will gradually regain their  
original health in a few months.

Jupiter in the 7th house in-  
dicates happiness in family and  
auspicious functions. Some  
unmarried young men will get  
married. Those in business will  
make surprising progress from

now onwards. Lucky Days :  
7th, 17th and 21st.

Household women will find  
the month splendid. The finances  
will be pouring. There will be  
rejoicings in the household.  
Their health will be good. Some  
unmarried women will get married.  
Birth of a baby is indicated  
in the case of married women.

Women in jobs or studying  
will do well. Some may under-  
take a journey. The finances  
will be steady. Lucky Days :  
6th, 11th and 28th.

## VRISHABHA

(Krithigai 3, Rohini 4, Mrigasirsha 2.)

Venus, Lord of the Lagna, is  
hidden in the 6th house but  
occupies his own house. But as  
he is in conjunction with Sun,  
your health may undergo a  
serious setback unless proper  
preliminary measures are taken.  
Jupiter in the 6th house and  
Saturn in the 8th house worsen  
the situation. Neither is Rahu  
in the 5th house good. The  
only beneficial planet is Kethu  
in the 11th house. The people  
belonging to this Rasi will have  
to put up with grave misfortune.  
There may be misunderstandings  
with superiors, loss of money,  
of prestige and of near relatives  
in some cases.

Businessmen should tempor-  
arily suspend their expansion  
activities as great loss is indicat-  
ed. I can say the time is very  
bad from all points of view. The  
finances will be very bad. There  
are no lucky days during this  
month for them.

Household women will find  
the month very miserable. Their  
finances will be very poor. Their  
health may be affected. There  
may be sad news. Meditation  
and prayer will mitigate them.

Women in jobs and those  
studying may not find the month  
very bad. They will be able to  
manage with some difficulty here  
and there. Patience and per-  
severance will save the situation.  
Lucky Days : 2nd and 22nd.

## MITHUNA

(Mrigasirsha 2, Arudra 4, Punarvasu 3)

Mercury, Lord of the Lagna,  
may cause a setback to one's  
health. Blood pressure, excess  
of heat, itches, scabies, ring-  
worm and other such diseases  
are indicated. Your finances  
will be well maintained on  
account of the combination of  
4 planets in the 5th house. Some  
may meet with unexpected for-  
tune. Those in jobs will thrive  
very well. Mars in the 12th  
house will cause some waste and  
danger through accident. Prayer  
will arrest all this trouble.

Rahu in the 4th house will  
create unpleasantness in the  
household. Saturn in the 7th  
house will drive you to under-  
take futile journeys either  
imposed or otherwise. Business-  
men will carry on as usual.  
Lucky Days : 2nd, 4th and 27th.

Household women will find  
the month very tough. Some  
women may have painful  
delivery. There will be un-  
pleasantness in the household.

Their health will be affected. Their finances will be static.

Women in jobs and those studying will do well. Recognition in job and success in examinations are indicated. Lucky Days : 8th, 11th and 28th.

### KATAKA

(Punarvasu 1, Pushya 4, Aslesha 4.)

Your health will be very good. Rahu in the 3rd house, Saturn in the 6th house and Mars in the 11th house all promise great unexpected gains and recognition. Those in jobs will thrive remarkably. Businessmen will meet with a boom. The month is good for new ventures. The congregation of 4 planets in the 4th house indicates luxuries and happiness in the household. Some may purchase a new vehicle. The month is excellent in all respects. Lucky Days : 9th, 19th and 29th.

Household women will find the month splendid. Their finances will be very good. The children will be happy and prosperous.

Women in jobs and those studying will find the month very fine. They will do very well. This is the time for getting higher posts and employment for those unemployed. Lucky Days : 3rd, 11th, and 22nd.

### SIMHA

(Makara 4, Pooram 4, Uthara 1.)

Sun, Lord of the Lagna, is neecha in the 3rd house. This will upset your health. Rahu

in the 2nd house will keep you disturbed at home. Saturn in the 5th house will cause mental uneasiness and physical unrest. Jupiter in the 3rd house will not bring any benefit. Skin diseases are indicated. Those in jobs will get on well as Mars occupies the 10th house. Businessmen will meet with loss. Avoid new investments. The month is generally not good. Lucky Days : 2nd, 22nd and 23rd.

Household women will find the month very miserable. Their health will be gravely affected. The household will be unhappy. Their finances will be very poor. Therefore it is advisable to mitigate the evil with prayer.

Women in jobs and those studying will pull through with some handicaps here and there. Lucky Days : 8th and 18th.

### KANYA

(Uthira 3, Hastha 4, Chitra 2.)

Mercury, Lord of the Lagna, though placed in the 2nd house, becomes weak due to Arthara, githa and, therefore, your health will be affected. Diseases pertaining to the eye, nervous complaints and blood pressure are indicated. Rahu in Janma will worsen your health. Ketu in the 7th house will drive you to undertake futile journeys. Saturn in the 4th house will cause unpleasantness at home. Those in services will fare ordinarily. Avoid cycle riding etc. as far as possible. Business men will get on as usual on account of combination of 4 planets in the 2nd house.

The month is a trying one and you should be cautious in all respects. Lucky Days : 9th and 19th.

Household women will do remarkably well. Their finances will be good. But their health will be affected due to Rahu in Janma and Saturn in the 4th house. Great care should be taken in diet.

Women in jobs and those studying will do very well. Success in examinations is indicated. Those unemployed will get employed. Those already in jobs will get recognition. Lucky Days : 8th and 22nd.

### THULA

(Chitra 2, Swathi 4, Visaka 3.)

You are free from the evil effects of 7½ years Saturn. You will do remarkably well for 16 years to come. Saturn in the 3rd house, Ketu in the 11th house will keep you very cheerful. There will be unexpected gains. Those who are sickly will improve in their health from now onwards. Those in jobs will get promoted. Unemployed young men will get employed. Businessmen will have to wait till December this year for big profits. The month is generally a very fortunate one. Lucky Days : 3rd, 11th and 27th.

Household women will find the month very excellent excepting from the point of view of health. Stomach-ache, gastric and other abdominal complaints are indicated. Your finances will be very good. Unmarried

girls will have to wait till December for getting married. Women in jobs and those studying will find the month very excellent. Lucky Days : 3rd and 27th.

### VRISCHIKA

(Visakah 1, Anuradha 4, Jyeshtha 4.)

Mars, Lord of the Lagna, is in the 7th kendra. This will keep you healthy. 5 years out of 7½ years of Saturn are over and hence the period ahead will bring prosperity. The distressing period is already over. The combination of 4 planets in the 12th house will cause wasteful expenses. Rahu in the 11th house will give sufficient gains to cover the wasteful expenses. Those in jobs will have to put up with the displeasure of superiors and their blame as Sun, Lord of the 8th house, is Neecha. It is advisable to remain calm and collected. Businessmen should exercise great caution. Avoid new ventures. Avoid cycle riding and journeys as far as possible. Lucky Days : 8th and 28th.

Household women will get separated from their husbands. Their finances will be as usual. There may be bad news in some cases. Their health will be affected on account of 4 planets in the 12th house.

Women in jobs and those studying will meet with failure. Those in jobs are advised to be away on leave. Those studying should put in extra efforts. Lucky Days : 2nd, 11th and 22nd.

## DHANUS

(Moola 4, Poorada 4, Utharada 1.)

Jupiter, Lord of the Lagna, is placed in the 11th house. Your health will not be good. Great caution should be exercised in the case of health. Saturn in the janma will further worsen it. Kethu in the 4th house will keep you unhappy at home. Mars in the 6th house and Rahu in the 10th house will, however, afford facility for smooth sailing through this month. Those in jobs will do remarkably well on account of Rahu in the 10th house. The combination of 4 planets in the 11th house indicates gains from several sources. Businessmen should exercise caution as they are likely to go wrong in their judgments. Lucky Days: 8th and 27th.

Household women will do very well. Some unmarried women will get married. Their finances at home will be very good. There will be some unhappiness at home, on account of Kethu in the 4th house. Great care should be taken about health as Saturn

in janma is likely to keep you indisposed.

Women in jobs and those studying will find the month extraordinarily good. Advantage may be taken of the beneficial planets in the 10th and 11th house in the direction of improving your lot. Care should be taken about your health. Lucky Days: 8th and 27th.

## MAKARA

(Utharada 3, Sravana 4, Dhanishta 2.)

You have just come under the spell of the 7½ years Saturn. The effect will be very adverse. Your health may be gravely affected. Jupiter in the 10th house will keep you very backward on the professional side. The only beneficial planet is Kethu in the 3rd house. Those in jobs should remain calm and collected. The month is a trying one for businessmen. Lucky Days: 8th, 11th and 29th.

Household women will not find the month good. Their health may be poor. Great care should be taken about it. The health of children will also be

affected. Women in jobs and those studying will pull through. Lucky Days: 2nd, 22nd and 30th.

## KUMBHA

(Dhanishta 2, Sathabhisha 4, Poorattadhi 3)

Saturn, Lord of the Lagna, is placed in the 11th house. This indicates sound health apart from unexpected gains. The month is a very fortunate one on account of the combination of 4 planets in the 4th house. Those in jobs will get promoted and win recognition. Those in business will meet with a boom. Rahu in the 8th house will cause risk through accident. To avert it, better spend some time in prayer. Avoid journeys and cycle riding. Lucky Day: 8th.

Household women will do very well. The children will thrive remarkably. Their health will be good. There will be auspicious function at home. Their finances will be good. Those in

jobs and studying will have an exceptionally lucky time.

Lucky Days: Almost all dates of the month!

## MEENA

(Poorattadhi 1, Uthirattadhi 4, Revathi 4.)

This month is not good in general. You will have to wait till December when Jupiter changes over to the 9th house. The month is not good from the point of view of health on account of janma Kethu and combination of 4 planets in the house. But you have to wait till next month for better prospects. Businessmen should also wait till then. Lucky Days: 7th and 27th.

Women in jobs and those studying will pull through. Household women should wait till December for better prospects and happiness. Take care of your health. Lucky Days: 2nd, 22nd and 23rd. ‡‡

..... PIN THIS FREE COUPON .....

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Address : \_\_\_\_\_

Time, Date and Place of Birth : \_\_\_\_\_

Rasi : \_\_\_\_\_

*This Free Coupon entitles you to ask only one question, which may be written on separate paper.*

Nov. '58.

## FREE SERVICE

### FOR OUR READERS

If you have any questions to ask, please address your letters to :  
The Astrologer c/o India Magazine, Madras-5.

Each question must be accompanied by a coupon (cut from page 75 in this issue) along with postage stamps worth 15 nP.

## HOLLYWOOD'S NEWEST HEART-THROB!

AMERICA'S National Art Council is an august body not given to making loose statements. Its opinions are arrived at only after careful consideration. Its verdicts are taken seriously. So you can take it as official that Tina Louise is the world's most beautiful redhead.

The council nominated her for this challenging position. Others even boldly claim her as the world's most beautiful woman!

Tina makes her film debut in the soon-to-be-seen "God's Little Acre." The United Artists publicity boys, not usually lost for superlatives, have become all tongue-twisted over her. "Her figure," they say, "has to be seen to be believed. It beggars description in words, though gasps and whistles have been known to do the trick."

### Accepted Challenge

The vital statistics of that figure are 38-25-36. Its owner has grey-green eyes, high cheekbones, a warmly generous mouth. Her legs are long and graceful.

Her age is twenty-three, writes John K. Newnham in "Tit-Bits."

Her figure, strangely enough, kept her off the screen for some time. After making a sizzling stage impact in "Li'l Abner," she was inundated with Hollywood offers. She turned them down because, she says: "They were only interested in me for the glamour stakes. I couldn't see any future in that. So I decided to wait until a good part came my way."

That's plain common sense. She has a lovely figure and knows it. She makes no mock-modest objections to pin-up pictures being taken, and she joined in the fray when cameramen challenged her to a glamour contest with the blonde Fay Spain, who also appears in "God's Little Acre."

The two girls were dipped in lake-side water in true Italian film-making style, and entered into the spirit of the rivalry with joyous friendliness.

### Earthy Drama

There was a time when the world's film-makers slavishly copied Hollywood styles. Now Hollywood copies the world's styles, and "God's Little Acre" is unashamedly in the Italian school of earthy drama.

The story is so sensationally torrid that whole chunks of the picture were filmed with alternative "takes" so that censorship problems could be overcome without drastic cuts.

It's based on Erskine Caldwell's twenty-five-year-old best seller, of the same title, which had already reached the ten million mark before further interest was sparked off by the film. Since the day it was published, it has been the subject of more consorship attempts than any other book in American publishing history. It has survived to become something of a classic, but for years it has been turned down as a film because it was reckoned to be too hot to handle.

### Primitive Passions

Primitive passions run riot throughout the long and intense story, with Tina Louise as a young farmer's wife who is always conscious of her beauty and its effect on men. She has dreams of glamour and riches. Even in the fields, she wears high-heeled shoes.

Aldo Ray is one of the men in her life. He's her brother-in-

law, and she was in love with him before she married Jack Lord. When they meet again, passions flame anew.

They have one scene which is as torrid as anything seen in an Italian picture. That's when they kiss in the hay.

Another man in her life is Lance Fuller, also a brother-in-law, who tries to steal her from his brother, promising her silken hose and all the high heels she can ever wear. And she has to watch a memorable battle when the two men fight for her.

### Makes You Gasp

Fay Spain's role is equally sensational. She portrays a hot-eyed, carefree teenager. Very early in the production, she joined the group of Hollywood's bathtub lovelies by having a wash-down in an old bath in the open air.

Her most extraordinary scenes, however, are with Michael Landon, who plays the part of an albino. The normally brown-haired, tanned young man had to be given white hair, alabaster skin and pink eyes. The production costs in transforming him were reckoned to be over ten thousand dollars in material and wages, and the process was so complicated that the make-up was carried out behind locked doors to avoid interruption.

One sequence calculated to make filmgoers gasp is when the

two of them in an old wooden boat in marshy water to its two leading ladies.

### Married Five Times

Dominating the story, however, is Robert Ryan. He has the role of the tough, easy-going Georgian farmer named Ty Ty Walden, whose religious devotion is such that he sets aside one acre of his land for the church—God's little acre. "But," he says, easily, "God won't mind if I move it every now and then if it gets in the way of a project."

### Search For Gold

The main project is his search for a treasure of gold, which he believes is buried somewhere on his farm. Flushed with the fever for treasure, he is for ever digging great holes in his land, ignoring his farming and his family in doing so. It is this neglect of his family that leads to the unleashing of so many primitive emotions which cause the death of one son and tragedy for others.

It is the meatiest role ever played by the rugged Ryan, who had to be aged considerably for it. Even the stubble on his face was greyed hair by hair, and throughout the production he had to be in the make-up chair by six thirty every morning in order to be ready for the cameras at nine o'clock.

But, quite apart from its fascination as a story, "God's Little Acre" is likely to be remembered as the picture bringing stardom

to its two leading ladies. Though Tina faces the cameras for the first time, she is an experienced young actress whose career dates back to the age of four. The child actress developed into a nightclub singer, and from nightclubs she stepped into New York stage productions, with "Li'l Abner" bringing her stardom and the chance to become a film star.

Obviously, with her lovely figure and high cheek-bones, she has Continental blood in her. She's still single, by the way.

Fay Spain is a pert younger American blonde, with dancing eyes and shortcropped hair. She, too, is twenty-three, and comes from Phoenix, Arizona.

But she has never lived long in any one town because she moved whenever her mother moved. Her mother married five times, and with every new husband moved to another new district.

Fay always knew that she wanted to become an actress and she was film-mad from an early age. Her first step towards Hollywood was when she became a cashier in the one and only cinema in the little town of White Salmon. In Frederick, Maryland, she got a job as an actress with a small company. "I acted for three days a week," she says. "On the other even-

ings, I was baby-sitter for the theatre's manager." Later, she won a drama scholarship in Washington, but when she tried her luck in New York she had to take a job as a shop assistant selling men's neck-ties.

### Next Stop

Later she became a model and bit-player in television and found herself a husband. The marriage collapsed but her career progressed by degrees after working as a croupier in a Reno casino, a job she quit after her boss had been shot by a gang-land mob.

Next stop: Hollywood. She modelled and did TV commercials. Then she had small parts in television productions, some of which have been seen in Britain, including "Gun-smoke" and "Dragnet." With bigger TV roles, she also won small parts in films, but it remained for "God's Little Acre" to take her to big feature work. "It's a role I understand quite well," she says. "The girl's been around. So have I!"

With its star value and sensational story, "God's Little Acre" is going to be one of the most widely discussed films of the year.

### WITH THE LOVELORN

Dore Schary is producing "Lonelyhearts" as his first personally financed gamble in films since he was fired as the head of the M-G-M studio. He deserves

some admiration for it. Donovan Pedelty in "Picturegoer."

The story concerns a newspaper boss (Robert Ryan) who forces an idealistic reporter (Monty Clift) to run a column for lovelorn correspondents. The play failed on Broadway.

"I'm not filming the play," smiled Schary on the set. "We're doing my adaptation of it—which is quite different."

This is a conflict, he told me, between the urge to good and the urge to evil in human beings. "In one short day Ryan goads Clift into adultery, drunkenness and violence, but you're left feeling Clift's lost a battle but won the war."

"In the book," Myrna Loy told me, "the hero dies. But in this version he lives on, determined to heal the wounds he's dealt himself and not let them warp him. In fact, his experiences really reawaken the good in my husband—that's the Robert Ryan part."

Myrna says she was snared into this return to Hollywood by her role—the idealistic wife of a cynical husband she keeps hoping some day to "save from himself."

### EDUCATIONAL FILMS

Some of the producers and importers of educational films met in Bombay and formed an association with the object of popularising the use of educational films as a medium of mass communication.

This association will also serve as a platform to voice and seek redress to the various difficulties and handicaps faced by the trade like allocation of raw stock, restrictions on imports of educational films and censorship procedure, etc.

The members present expressed concern over the fact that the import quota of 16mm. educational films, required by our schools and technical institutions, had been cut down to 10 per cent.

### FIVE NEW FACES

Five new faces from India, Egypt, England, France and Switzerland are to be introduced in a new Hindi film to be produced by writer Anand Pal.

The picture, titled "Pilot," is featuring Dev Anand in the title role.

Regular shooting of this film has already commenced.

Shankar Mukerji directs the picture, for which the music is being composed by Madan Mohan.

### GOD OF LOVE

Known as Kamdeo in mythology, poetic imagination has created many incidents round this God of love.

Producer A. G. Dhanik has chosen this subject for the initial venture of Amarbhani Pictures' "Kamdeo."

Gopi Krishna plays the titular role with Kamla Laxman as Rati.

Sapru and Jayshree Gadker head the supporting roles.

Dhirubhai Desai wields the megaphone while musical score is by Vasant Desai.

### STIRRING SONG

Under the direction of composer Chitragupta, the theme song of K. Amarnath Productions' topical dramatic offering, "Kal Hamara Hai," was recorded in Bombay.

Mohamed Rafi and Sudha Malhotra, backed by a full chorus provided the voices for the stirring song, the appropriate lyrics for which are the work of Majrooh Sultanpuri and Shailendra.

This song, which will form the musical backdrop for this dramatic saga of our times, has been much appreciated by all those who have heard it, representing as it does one of music-maker Chitragupta's finest efforts in recent times.

It is said to integrate itself very happily into the general theme and mood of the story of this film.

On the same day, another song, a smart and snappy number, was also recorded, with Geeta Dutt providing the voice.



MAY DIVALI bring joy and good cheer to all our patrons rich and poor, old and young who travel in thousands all the year round! Indian Railways strive to give you, on pleasure and on business, cheap, quick and



comfortable service. On this happy occasion, may we request you to help us render our patrons better

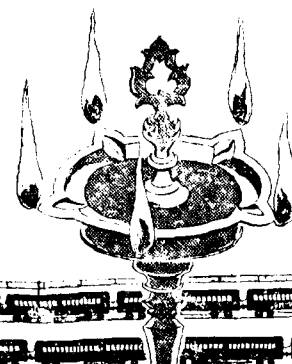


service, maintain cleaner compartments and platforms?

Please keep heavy luggage away from passenger compartments and

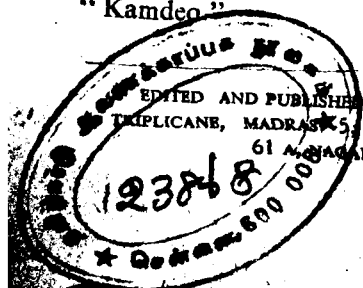


book them in the brake-van



Issued by the

CENTRAL & WESTERN RAILWAYS



EDITED AND PUBLISHED BY B. VENKATAVARADAN FROM 589, HIGH ROAD, TRIPPLICANE, MADRAS-5, & PRINTED BY HIM AT INDIA MAGAZINE PRESS, 61, MAGAPPIER STREET, TRIPPLICANE, MADRAS-5.

Handwritten: 11.11.51  
SUB

SREEVATSAS SOAP GRAINS



For all Household Wash  
Cleanses Bright, Washes  
White, Brightens Colours.  
No other Soap will get your  
Family Wash as clean as

SUB



SREEVATSA CHEMICALS & DRUGS Private LTD.

MADRAS - 30.