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(TAMIL)

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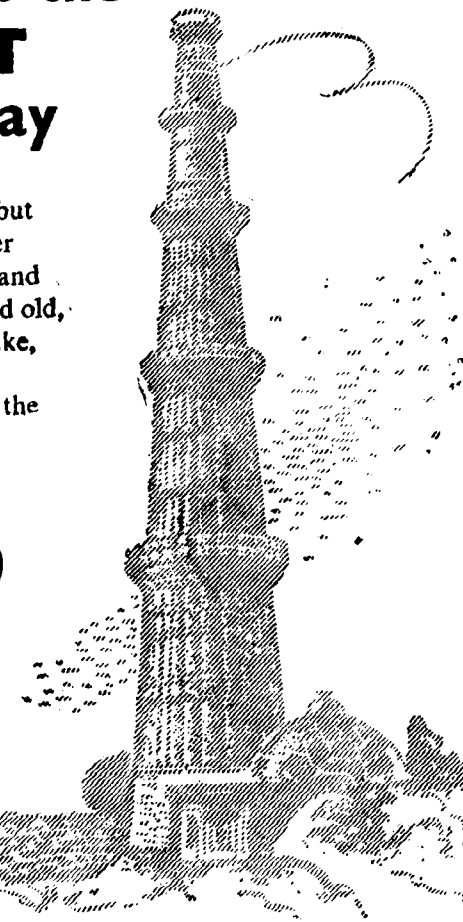
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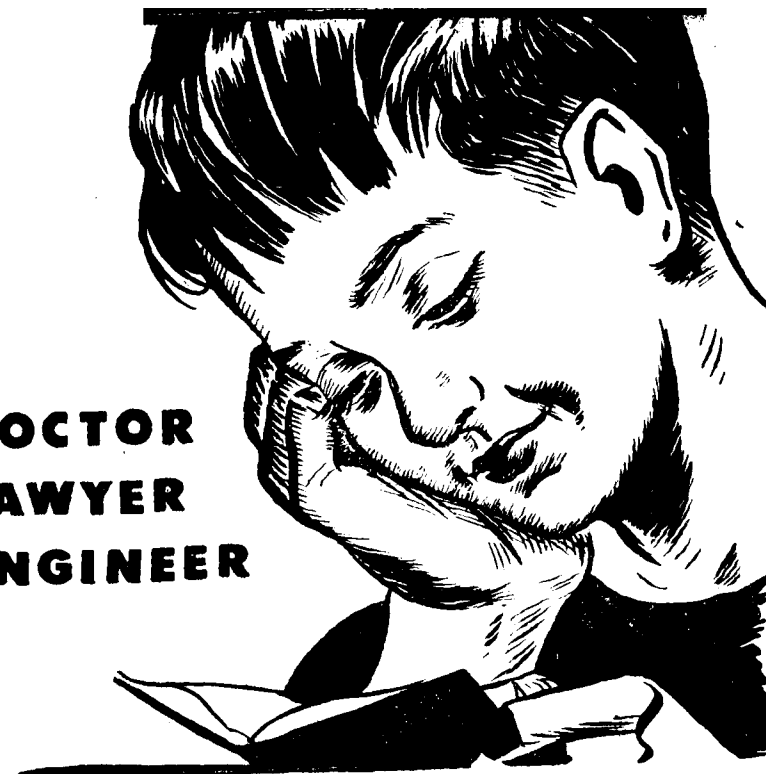
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Jan. '60

EDITORIAL

India Magazine

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AN EVENTFUL YEAR

THE year that has come to a close was very eventful and was fraught with a significance which it would be difficult to over-estimate. At home the people had nothing to be very cheerful about. On the economic front conditions were not so stable; the prices of foodstuffs were soaring despite solemn Ministerial pronouncements and assurances. The distress of the Middle Classes was very marked, and employment opportunities for the educated were not adequate. Education, too, was in the melting pot and more confusion arose over the language issue. The decision of the States to change the University medium from English to the regional language caused dismay among the far-sighted.

It must be admitted that the re-organization of States has created new problems and complications. But having applied the principle of regional autonomy it was unwise not to allow the Maharashtrians and Gujeratis to exercise the same right. Now, happily, the long-standing grievance of the Maharashtrians and Gujeratis is to be redressed shortly.

The birth of the Swatantra Party was a great and significant event. All credit to that veteran statesman, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari who sacrificed the creature comforts of a retired life and came out to lead the nation along the right traditional path in keeping with the genius of the country. If he stems the oncoming tide of Marxian socialism that would be his greatest service.

War clouds were gathering over the Himalayan border with the incursions of the Chinese. How they will roll back the enemy remains to be seen. And, last but not least, President Eisenhower's visit was a memorable event. That it promoted greater friendship and goodwill between the United States and India is undeniable.

New Year Resolutions!

ALMOST everyone breathes a sigh of relief as the old year is rung out and the new one is rung in. And everybody likes to forget his commissions and omissions, his blunders and failures. It is natural that everyone wants to start with a clean slate and render a better account. There is a smirk of self-satisfaction as he purchases a new diary.

What about calendars? In those days when paper was plentiful and merchants went in for customers, calendars were printed and distributed free. They were artistic productions, tastefully got up. Between the 1st of January until the second week of February, there was a crazy band of calendar hunters who entered every shop with a reverential air and cringed and whined for free gifts. The shop owners knew that it would be difficult to get rid of these pests and pacified them with cheaper reprints or soiled ones. I have seen one or two of this gang adorning the walls of their house with a bewildering variety of calendars! Ask him for a calendar and he would snarl and snap at you,

detailing his trials and heroic achievements.

But diaries are no easy gifts and are in a different category. Of course, they will be presented to money-bags who have already received too many. Each of his children will be proudly displaying a different diary and tearing out the pages to impress their playmates.

But I am talking of those earnest men (and women) who record their New Year Resolutions on the first page and make a solemn vow to abide by the letter and spirit of it. Let us take a cross-section:

Millionaire Merchant: "I shall reduce my black-market transactions by 5 per cent. I am getting old and must turn my thoughts Godwards."

Politician: "I shall re-join the Congress as its stock has gone high after the visit of Ike to India. No more of this turn-coat business, and I brighten my chances of standing for election on a Congress ticket and work towards that end."

—Please see page 10

SO SWEET ON EVERYONE!

[She was changing her boy friends as she changed her hair style—But what a sensation she was...!]

MISS Maya was the distinguished typist in the Steel Components Company Private Limited of which Arogya Sinha was the General Manager. She possessed a curvaceous figure enclosing in it a fine blending of soft and well developed limbs. Though she was on the wrong side of twenty she seemed to be in the first flush of her maidenhood. The most noticeable thing about Maya was her dynamic restless eyes. The delicate saree and the colourful choli though intended to veil her beautiful body in fact added glamour to it. Even the adept manner in which Maya would make up her luxuriant hair was a subject of controversy and curiosity to the employees of that firm. She lavishly used cosmetics and all the other paraphernalia which make a modern 'Miss.' Her gregarious nature attracted dozens of admirers who flocked around her like the bees on Khandasari

sugar whenever she paused in a corner of the office with a deliberate theatricality and demonstrated a slow smile which started in her dark eyes and moved by perceptible degrees to her shapely mouth.

Before Maya joined that office the young men working there appeared always in drooping spirits their emoluments being scanty and their prospects for the future being black. The enterprising General Manager Arogya Sinha was seemingly conscious of modern trends in psychology and attributed this indolence of his staff to the conspicuous absence of an Eve among them who he believed might enliven their spirits. They heartily welcomed Miss Maya who suddenly appeared amidst them as an incarnation of distilled beauty. They even immensely admired the middle aged Arogya Sinha for his timely action and thought, though grey haired, he had the

aesthetics of a young blood.

Their fast accumulated hatred towards him transformed itself into a feeling of endearing reverence and gratitude for what a lovely flower had he presented to them for curing the monotony of routine in office! They were getting disgusted with their only pastime, the post-lunch gossip. Chander, Azmatulla, Iyer and Varghese were some of the V. I. Ps. of that group. They were vested with adroit tongues and instinct to mischief which had made them notorious in the eyes of Arogya Sinha. But now each one of them engaged themselves in preparing secret formulae for winning the love of Miss Maya.

EXACTLY at the stroke of thirty minutes past nine Miss Maya would make her presence felt in the office. Instantaneously the atmosphere in the office would be laden with the fragrance of nostril-penetrating perfumes emanating from her body. She would first spend a few minutes in the General Manager's private chamber which was like a sanctum sanctorum, not accessible to everybody at every time. He like an affectionate father would exhort her to be careful in her movements with the 'rogues' in the office indirectly hinting at the Chander-Azmatulla group.

With the exuberance and the devotion of an obedient daughter she would nod assent to his tips and subsequently stir out of the

'sanctum sanctorum' to be in her seat before the Remington typewriter. The 'kir'... 'kir' of her high heeled shoes would synchronise with the flutter of those young men's hearts. To the eagerly staring admirers she would present a very sweet 'good morning.' They would individually and collectively acknowledge it with satiated countenances.

Miss Maya never disappointed anyone in the office. She very well realised what her sweet words and her lovely cheeks meant for them and how potential they were. By the widest stretch of imagination she could never think of her being branded as 'unsocial' or 'country' by young men. Thus she always cared to present a charming meticulousness about her apparel and manners.

That was a Saturday and also the pay day. The office was closed by 1.30 P.M. Miss Maya abruptly stopped pounding the typewriter, adjusted her saree, rubbed off the pearls of sweat from her face and made an exit, swinging her handbag. Chander quietly followed her. Before Miss Maya could get lost in the endless flow of pedestrians she was interrupted by Chander. "I will entreat you to spend a pleasant evening with me, Miss Maya," he requested. It was not Maya's habit to brush aside such requests especially when coming from her admirers. She readily agreed to the idea. Chander escorted her to an aristocratic coffee-house, hired a

'couple room' and entertained her with costly cakes and other delicacies. Thereupon they proceeded to the beach engaging a taxi. Maya praised Chander for his gregariousness and civilised manners which elevated Chander's soul to its zenith.

They sat very close on the vast sand belt of the beach and conversed heartily. There was no barrier for their choice of subjects. From the good humour of their General Manager to the Chinese incursions, they indeed covered a wide range. At one time Miss Maya accidentally brushed her shoulders with those of Chander's and her saree tail slipped down. With a bewitching smile she adjusted it. They were heavenly moments for Chander, current flowing rapidly through his veins. They walked towards a restaurant and enjoyed a superb dinner. She suddenly looked at her wrist watch and said 'Oh! It's nine. I should now be excused to take leave of you, Mr. Chander.'

"We should have many more pleasant evenings as this Miss Maya," he proposed.

"Sure, of course" was Maya's reply. Maya was dropped before her residence by a taxi. Chander walked towards his nocturnal resting place with the absent-mindedness of a somnambulist quite unaware of the truth that the 'pleasant' evening has monetarily emaciated his purse which a few

hours ago was bursting with his monthly salary.

ON the morning of Monday Chander came to the office earlier than usual anticipating a short meeting with his sweetheart. But she came only at 9-30 the scheduled time. When she occupied her seat Chander smiled at her and expected his his colleagues to watch her romantic gestures to him. But alas! there was no change in Maya. She was just the same as ever. She of course smiled at Chander; but she smiled at others as well with the impartiality of the goddess of justice.

Maya could chat with perceptible vivacity and eloquence. At the height of her glowing loveliness her listeners were scrupulously polite to her and regarded every word that fell from her mouth as an 'orient pearl of purest ray serene.' The subject which frequently came in for her criticism as films; the clumsy acting of the supporting actor, the failure of photography in a particular sequence, the lack of melody in songs. There was general agreement that Maya was a successful connoisseur of films. She visited theatres frequently. The unique thing about her was her dislike to be associated with one boy friend for a long time. So she changed them as she would change hair styles. Every one in that office had thus the privilege of her sweet company at week-ends at parks, restaurants or theatre. But no one had the courage to speak of his love to her.

The beak-nosed, curly haired clerk Azmatulla, however, broached the topic of matrimony to her once. "How about our wedding, Miss Maya?" He asked. "Well, we can have we it at any time" was the effortless reply of Maya.

From a certain day there was no trace of Maya in the office. They thought she had availed earned leave. Her absence was quite conspicuous and unbearable to them. Office peon Rajaiah placed a decorated envelope on the table of each one of them. It was an invitation to wedding —of Maya with Arogya Sinha!! They were like the sailors who lost their yacht. The idea of her marrying the grey-haired 'villain' seemed to them fantastic. But to every one of them there was a sad tale to narrate about his association with Maya. Chander has to pay another pending bill in the Quality restaurant where he had entertained Maya to a sumptuous dinner. But he sympathised with Azmatulla from whom she had succeeded in knocking away a hundred rupee note, a quarterly saving intended for his mother. "A terrific explosive" they unanimously resolved.

New Year Resolutions!

—Continued from page 6

Professor : "I will go in for a memory training course. But I shouldn't forget to write for it and I shall have double knot in my kerchief!"

Goonda : "I am in my

element when riots break out and would to God there were more chances to break heads!"

Milkman : "My trick in adulterating milk with water is now worn out. But this foreign milk powder has come in handy. And every customer praises me for serving such thick milk. I shall corner a lion's share of the milk powder from the shops."

Film Star : "I am already scheduled to appear in twenty films and working in all of them. Some ten more contracts and I shall be content."

Road-Side Romeo : "I shall train myself to give such a nice whistle that all the girls who pass by will stop and stare at me. I have learnt this 'wolf-call' from a foreign film."

Career Girl : "I am telling everybody that I am only twenty, but Shanta has started a whispering campaign that I am thirty. Before the year is out I shall angle for a husband."

Doctor : "Last year's income was very low. May God grant my wish that I shall have at least 5000 more cases to attend to if only there were epidemics..."

Minister : "In the New Year I shall make three thousand more speeches than last year and go on record as the most talkative of Ministers." †

Short Story

By B. Dwarakanath

Two Men And A Woman

[Both the men were jealous rivals for the heart of a lovely woman and fought like devils...]

THE two young men fought on the lonely and deserted road, giving punches, dealing out powerful blows of the fist and kicking with unusual vigour and energy. Nagesh was more strongly built than his enemy, Naveen. He flung his arms round the other's neck and they rolled over the ground until they landed in the dry deep ditch.

Both the men stopped fighting for a while and struggled out of the deep pit. Nagesh found that there was a gash on his arm while Naveen was wiping his nose which was profusely bleeding.

"Now," spoke Nagesh in a

gruff voice, "be sensible and stop fighting. It is two years since we saw each other. Should we quarrel even now and embitter ourselves?"

"Oh, you are talking wisdom now like a philosopher. Aren't you ashamed of what you did to my sweet heart Jyoti? Come on, you have to settle that account and you are not going back home alive."

Nagesh held up his hand as if about to say something in explanation but Naveen knocked him down with a punch. He had trained himself as a boxer for nothing. Nagesh was stretched neatly on the floor. He had been hit in the right eye and a thousand sparks seemed

to float before him. He groaned as he attempted to rise but the other man was already upon his chest and pummelling him all over with both his fists.

"Now or never," thought Nagesh. He half raised his body and gripped Naveen's neck with both his arms which acted like pincers. They rolled for a minutes but Nagesh held the other man as in a vice. Naveen gurgled in the throat, he lost his grip on his enemy and fell on his back. Nagesh at once jumped up and kicked his fallen foe. His eyes were goggling and his nose continued to bleed but he was totally unconscious. Nagesh gave him a final kick to see if he was alive.

But he was unaware of a police van standing behind him on the road and two constables silently advancing on him. "Quick, catch hold of him. He may give us the slip," said the elderly-looking constable.

But there was no need for the constables to exert themselves. When Nagesh saw them, he was surprised but meekly submitted to them and did not resist being arrested. In fact he helped them lift the senseless body of the man who had dragged him into a bloody fight. The policemen were doubtful if he was alive.

When the van reached the police station, Nagesh briefly gave particulars. The present fight and misunderstanding had

their origin two years ago when a lovely woman named Jyoti lured them. Nagesh and Naveen had been good friends and helped each other until Jyoti crossed their path. She was a young widow. She had been married to a very old man and he died within six months after their marriage.

Naveen first courted her and often visited her with cash and presents. There was no doubt that she was very much in love with him. It was understood that she was to be his mistress. But Naveen was married and he had to run two homes. He wanted to keep this romance a complete secret. He had to pay heavy bills and he couldn't find much money for Jyoti. It was but natural that she slyly and secretly turned her smiles on Nagesh who used to visit her in his capacity as a friend of Naveen. She whispered once to meet him alone as she wanted to tell him something very urgent and important.

NAGESH was a bachelor, the son of rich parents. He had much money to throw away if he wished to. That night when he visited Jyoti she hypnotised him. She wanted his money as she could not carry on with the meagre allowance given by Naveen. But no woman could keep a secret for long and she boasted to one of Naveen's friends that she held a rich young man like Nagesh under her thumb. When Nagesh heard about her indiscretion he was

ashamed and afraid of his disloyalty to his friend and left the city hastily and disappeared. Naveen knew that he could not be far off. His jealousy had been roused. But he was helpless. Worse than all, he had been found guilty of defalcation in respect of a huge sum in his company where he had been serving as cashier. He was hauled up before the court and sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment. Nagesh heard of his friend's jail life and returned home.

Late one evening when he was returning home on a chilly night he encountered Naveen who had just been released from prison. That night Nagesh was confined in a dark cell while the doctors in the General Hospital struggled for the life of Naveen and succeeded after a mighty attempt. It was life or death for Nagesh too for the death of Naveen would mean the hangman's noose for him.

The next morning Nagesh was taken to the hospital where he was relieved to learn that his rival was pronounced out of danger. It was at his instance that he had been taken to see him.

The Police Inspector stood by when Naveen asked Nagesh about the present whereabouts of Jyoti. With head bent and in a low voice, Nagesh said, "She is now the concubine of an uneducated cotton merchant. Last year she presented him with a boy and in another two months she will be having another baby."

Naveen sat up with a jerk on his cot and spat on the floor. "Nagesh, let us forget it all and be friends again."

They shook hands with the astonished Inspector looking on. The police contented themselves with laying a charge against them for disorderly behaviour on the public road. They were let off with a fine. ‡

GREETINGS

We wish A Happy
and Prosperous New Year
to all our readers

—Editor

SACRIFICE

[When the elder sister remained unmarried how could the younger one marry? The parents were frantically looking for a bridegroom.]

TO support their aged parents Savita and Kamini were working hard as clerks for nearly six years. Both were earning four hundred rupees together. Their father Ashok and mother Jiloo were very happy. The old man managed to clear his heavy debts and buy a small house with his savings.

The daughters were very careful and prudent with their money. They took their lunch packets with them to the office and seldom went to a hotel unless some young man invited them to the snack bar.

Kamini was better-looking than Savita and more lively. The elder sister, too, was

attractive and she dressed more smartly and enhanced her charms. Sedentary habits, however, made their mark. She began to develop a slightly plumpy figure but even this did not detract from her beauty. She was a woman of refinement and culture. Whenever she had leisure she dipped into the pages of some novel or journal and would not turn this side or that unless somebody called her, which was rare. She was known to be a very quiet girl and very shy and reserved. It turned out that she had very few boy friends. There were Raja and Debender, for instance; they were very much struck by her quiet beauty and befriended her.

But Savita did not give them much encouragement. She secretly liked Raja in particular and was almost in love with him but she was too timid and scared. She feared that if love led her on into deeper waters, she might have to sacrifice her job and that would mean fewer creature comforts for her dear parents.

Both Raja and Debender kept her company for a time but there were other girls to lure them and dropped out. When Raja married and settled down Savita did not attend office for a week and shut herself up in her room to give vent to her pent-up grief. Her parents had a dim idea that she was pining away on account of some affair of the heart.

Kamini alone knew the reason well and often entered her sister's room. She wouldn't speak a word and would put her arm lovingly about her shoulders and shed a silent tear. That was all but her attitude conveyed a world of sympathy and her affection for her sister was unmistakable.

THE younger one had now found a new job as a sales girl in a big fancy goods store. The Manager was highly appreciative of her knack and ability to sell both good stuff and indifferent. She stood like an angelic vision framed against the counter and no male customer passed by without ordering some scents, collars, or ribbons.

The sales proceeds for the store went up by leaps and bounds within a month of her arrival. And soon Kamini found herself promoted as the departmental head on double pay, so she was earning thrice the salary of Savita.

BUT which young woman, especially when she is beautiful, could resist the call of Cupid? Among her ardent admirers who buzzed about her like flies around a jack fruit was Loknath. It was only three years since he had graduated. He had struggled hard through his studies and was often starving himself to pay his fees. He had the misfortune to lose both his parents within a week.

But Fortune, as they say, is a fickle Dame. One evening as he was loafing about for a small loan of a few annas, there came a letter from an advocate in a distant town, announcing his inheritance of two lakhs of rupees on the death of his uncle, Karam Chand. Well, he had seen that miserly old man just once. His father had approached him several times for some accommodation to enable his son to continue his studies. But Chand's refusal was churlish and rude. Though he himself had neither wife nor issue he would not part with a pie.

So it was a surprise for Loknath to come into so much of money but it did not spoil

him. He was humble as ever and was simple natured and generous to a fault.

Among Kamini's admirers were men more sophisticated than Loknath. They wooed her with lavish presents and made all sorts of promises but Kamini was easily conquered by the young man who spoke little because his heart was full and who followed her like a devoted slave and who almost worshipped her like a goddess.

SHE often took him to her home and chatted with him for hours. Only when it was past midnight and her mother would hint meaningly with a cough, would she push him out of her door. He had become very intimate with other members of the family as well, spoke with his sweetheart's father as well her sister. For the first time his words brought a smile to her lips after her first serious disappointment.

Then one day Kamini led him before her parents and he respectfully sought their permission to marry her. They willingly gave it and Kamini gave her formal consent on two conditions: that Loknath must be permitted to continue her job. Loknath readily agreed and took his departure at once for his late uncle's town with a promise to return within three months after which the marriage was to take place.

This arrangement pleased and

dismayed the parents at the same time. How could they marry off Savita after Kamini was married? This was a headache and the parents had a heated discussion late in the night. Kamini happened to overhear it and thought long and furiously over this problem. She stopped going to office after a fortnight and took to bed. She was complaining of fever and constant headache and perspiration all over during evenings when the fever subsided. She went to Dr. Amar who was one of her admirers and took his medicines and powders.

At last, after three months, when Loknath returned he was horrified to find Kamini bed-ridden. She was much lean and reduced and had great difficulty in speaking. Dr. Amar, who came in then, told him that Kamini had a touch of T.B. and should take rest for another year at least.

Slowly, by stages, Kamini suggested to Loknath that he should marry Savita if he wanted to keep near her. To him her word was law and the marriage between Loknath and Savita took place.

It was a wonder that Kamini made a rapid recovery within two months. The greater wonder was that she was able to marry Dr. Amar. Savita saw the whole situation at a glance. Her sister had sacrificed her lover for her sake.

Cover Page Story

By Radhakishen

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Girl In The Pond

[When a girl loves a young man with all her heart, one may be sure she is capable of hating him as well without notice. But it is folly in the extreme...]

"OH, Kiron," exclaimed the young woman holding both his hands. "It is such a pleasure to see you. Where have you been hiding all the while?"

The young man squeezed her waist. "Seeta, is it?" he asked wondering and surveying her from head to foot in genuine astonishment. "Am I seeing the lovely vision of a fairy before me or is it my own cousin—my father's sister's daughter who was just a naughty little girl in frock and pigtails?"

"And who was pushed into the pond by her wicked cousin and left for dead until his father saw her struggling and saved her from drowning," laughed Seeta.

"Do you remember that for that innocent little prank his father caned him in the presence of that vengeful girl who chuckled all the while? Have you forgotten the subsequent chain of events that followed?"

She placed her right forefinger on her chin and pretended to forget. But he detected a smile escaping from her expressive eyes.

"Don't you know, my lovely cousin? His father put him on a saltless diet for a week."

"Surely he must have died of that rigorous discipline. Did anybody help him to live?"

"Of course, that little witch surreptitiously brought him the

nicest dishes and compelled him to eat and exacted a pledge of loyalty to her."

"Well, what of it?" she asked smiling, bringing her face close to his.

"What of it?" he retorted. "His father sent him to the city where he had to struggle through school and college under the watchful eye of a cynical uncle who wanted all boys to be shut up in lonely cells after evening."

"Now you are back, Kiron, and you are here on holiday. Why not forget the bitter past and start life anew?" she asked in a gentle tone full of penitence for what had been done.

"Kiron! Seeta! Get ready for breakfast," cried a voice from the kitchen.

"Yes, auntie. We will be there in a trice."

"LET us start afresh," said Seeta, offering her cheek to Kiron. He looked about to assure himself that nobody was looking, closed the door and gathered her in his arms. In her ecstasy the girl closed her eyes as he kissed her cheeks, eyes, and nose and strained her to his body in a passionate embrace until both were out of breath.

When Auntie repeated the invitation to breakfast he gently

released her but she clung to him and kissed him warmly on his lips.

Jauntily they went in and attacked the food with gusto and relish. Auntie was very solicitous in her attention. "My dear Kiron," she said in a voice choked with emotion. "You see, I have no son and I want that my Seeta should be the happiest wife and mother. And who else is better fitted to give her that happiness than yourself?"

"AUNTIE! you are embarrassing me," shouted Kiron. Why not consult father about it all?" At the same time he winked at Seeta who was blushing.

"Your father, Kiron, has given his whole-hearted consent. He too is anxious that this alliance should be entered into. But he says he doesn't know your mind and your wishes should be respected in this matter."

"Suppose my heart is here, what would my father wish to do?" he asked laughing.

"In that case, the marriage will be celebrated here before your holidays are over. All that I have to do is to write or wire to your father," replied the old woman.

"So soon!" exclaimed Kiron. "Let me make up my mind first and also (winking again at Seeta)

let us have some fun and frolic before marrying."

"Fun and frolic!" remarked the horrified old woman. "Ever heard of such a thing in my life? When I was Seeta's age I was mother of two boys though they died suddenly. But I wouldn't venture to talk with my husband, not to speak of joking with him."

"BUT once I laughed so loud at one of his jokes that my mother-in-law was berating me for a whole week."

"You are such an old fossil, Auntie. The present times are so different. Do you know, Auntie, that in the West some young men enter into wedlock only when their women companions fear that children are on the way..."

"Ram! Ram! Let me not hear such impious talk. May God protect you and Seeta and give you wisdom. Now get along!" The old woman almost pushed them out of the kitchen.

Together they walked out into the huge garden in the centre of which stood the pond covered with lotuses opening out their beautiful petals. They sat on the edge feasting their eyes on the variegated flowers that were in bloom all around. Unconsciously they sat closer, diminishing the distance between them until his arms slid round

her waist and they kept stealing kisses.

"You will be mine, won't you, darling?" he asked.

"I am yours for ever, dearest," she said, sighing. In that sigh was compressed all the longing and yearning of a maiden for her ideal lover. Here was no inhibition or prohibition. There were no prying eyes, no busybodies to whisper scandal about them. Their privacy was absolute and undisturbed. But still he was instinctively too shy to take her then and there.

As they went back to the house, Kiron received a message from an old playmate in the next village, Ramesh. He had sent his servant with a letter to say that he had a broken thigh as a result of an accidental fall from the upper storey of his house. That very evening Kiron left with the messenger for his friend's village. He stayed with Ramesh for a week but all the time he wanted to lie snugly in the arms of his beloved. Her beauty haunted him wherever he went.

WHEN he returned to his aunt's house the reception awaiting him was something different and came as a shock to him. The old woman alone was cordial as usual and chattered on pleasantly. But Seeta was cool and indifferent. She tossed her head saucily and sailed past him

into her room, shutting the door with a big bang.

After a hasty meal he knocked at the young woman's door and demanded admission.

"I am not opening the door and there is an end of everything between us," she hissed through the door.

"I don't understand this at all, Seeta. I wonder what has happened behind my back. Has someone else come here and stolen your heart?" he demanded.

She laughed rather sardonically. "Yes, my heart is not where it should be. Somebody has killed it."

"I WANT an explanation, dear. If you don't want me I shall go back," he said.

"Better go back to Nirmal. She is waiting for you in the city," she hit back icily.

"Open the door, Seeta, I say," he banged upon the door again.

She opened the door at last and threw an envelope at his face. "This cover with the photo enclosed came for you last week. I thought there was no secret between us and opened it and found the photo of your sweetheart. So sorry," she said, turning her face to the wall.

"Seeta, dearest," he said excitedly, pulling her towards him. "Listen, this is the photo of a brilliant daughter of our English professor. She was a prodigy but suddenly died of pneumonia. We were like brother and sister and she died in her sixteenth year and knew nothing about love. I had asked the professor for a photo of his daughter and he sent it. Haven't you read what he has written in his covering slip: 'Herewith photo of my late daughter. With regards, Shrinath.'"

"I am so sorry, Kiron, I behaved like a beast to you. Won't you forgive me? I know now I must not open others' letters. It is such stupid folly."

The tiff ended in a long, passionate kiss.

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Short Story

By R. M. Desai

THE TWINS

[Even the mother found it difficult to identify her twins. How then could the sweetheart spot one from the other? It was a most intriguing puzzle.]

I DON'T know how the twins came to be named Laban and Lavan. The names were as confusing as the boys themselves. It was a hard game telling the one from the other. Laban was as handsome as Lavan and the similarity of their features was remarkable. Even their manner of speaking was not different. Each had a small mole on the right side of the nose.

The twins were a source of wonder to all the mothers in the town and they always came to see how Lakshmi brought them up. They wanted to know whether she wrongly fed one boy twice or bathed him twice at the expense of the other. But she always shook her head. She alone knew how to identify the one from the

other. Even their father was often bewildered and cursed himself for his inability to be sure to which one he was talking. He wanted to change their names but they had got stuck and the outside world had come to recognize them as Laban and Lavan—the twins who were so handsome and so devoted to each other.

They studied in school together and fooled all their teachers. But the latter never took offence and were tolerant of their pranks with good humour. They were never quite sure which of the two had absented himself on the previous day. So they gave the benefit of the doubt and marked both of them present. When gifts and sweets were distributed at any function

each of them got double the number of the other fellow.

After finishing their High School course they did not enter college. Their father's sudden death disrupted their studies. But he did not leave them in want. He had lands and cash that were not inconsiderable. They had by now grown into fine young men—strong and muscular—but the surprising thing was that their resemblance to each other was even more striking than before. Their neighbours were wondering how remarkably alike they were.

EVEN twins are apt to quarrel when love crosses their path. Mridubala was simply adorable with her slender figure and curvaceous attractions. She was a distant relation of theirs and had pots of money. Being an orphan, her uncle took all her money and was anxious to give her in marriage to the first decent young man who asked for her hand. When he saw that both the twins had fallen in love with her he approached their mother and started negotiations.

By virtue of her relationship, Mridu often visited the house of the twins and chatted with them for hours. Somehow she showed a marked preference for Lavan though both of them were devoted to her and were ardent in their wooing and cooing. She thought she had permitted Lavan to steal kisses but she

was unaware that Laban too had kissed her in the dark and she had eagerly responded to him, thinking that it was her own lover.

But when the mother said that Lavan was to marry Mridu, the other twin suffered the greatest disappointment in his life and disappeared from home after the marriage. Of course, the patrimonial property had already been divided and he had taken with him all his money.

Though happy in the arms of his wife, Lavan was sad that his brother who had been his inseparable companion all these years should have taken it into his head to fly away from home. The mother, too, was grief-stricken beyond expression and every day she was moaning about his loss. Lavan advertised in all the papers of the country, promising a reward to anyone who could furnish information about his whereabouts. But his efforts were fruitless.

Six years later came a letter from Rangoon to Lavan. It was written by Laban who disclosed that he was working as a clerk in a European firm in that city. He was comfortably well off and begged of his brother and mother not to worry about him. He wound up his letter with an invitation to his brother to visit that fine city and spend at least a month with him.

Lavan wanted to make up with his brother and also realise the dream of his childhood to see Rangoon. That very week he took leave of his mother and wife and sailed for Burma. Mridu urged her husband to bring back his brother and persuade him to stay for a while with them. The mother made a tearful appeal. She wanted to see her first son and breathe her last. That would be the fulfilment of her last wish.

BUT Lavan did not enjoy his stay in Rangoon though he was happy to be with his dear brother once again. The war clouds were gathering thick and fast; Rangoon was being bombarded by the Japanese. The European firm where Lavan was working was closed and all Indians had to trek their weary way through the Black Road.

One of the twins was wounded in the thigh during the bombing but there was little time to stay for undergoing treatment. The Indian settlers there were in a hurry to get away. Since they could not go by sea they had to walk through a danger-infested route. On the way many were robbed. As many dropped dead on the road and those who were sick and wounded were abandoned to their last moments.

Nine months after this ordeal only one of the twins staggered home. "My dearest! whatever

has happened to you?" exclaimed Mridu as she clasped her husband in her arms. The mother was happy and sad at the same time. At least one of her sons had come back alive. He couldn't talk; he was so exhausted and sick. For a whole week he was bedridden and it was Mridhu's loving care and tenderness that put a little strength and heart into him.

The neighbours came and congratulated him on his return from war-torn Burma. They had a word of commiseration for the fate of Lavan who died on the way. Poor fellow! he might have married and settled down in our country itself. To all their enquiries Lavan only made gestures. The fright and horror of the long terrible journey had struck him dumb—at any rate, temporarily. He was deprived of his power of speech.

Mridu was more happy than others. She had got back her husband and lavished her caresses and attentions on him to warm his body and heart and to make him as talkative as before.

Only the old mother knew that Lavan, Mridu's husband, was dead and that Laban had come back alive. Laban had two moles on the back of his left shoulder, which Lavan had not. Perhaps Mridu, too, knew about it but a woman's ways are mysterious!

Two Phases Of Fortune

[On the opening day of the show the chief glamour girl had disappeared. There was a crisis facing the theatre manager...]

SUB-INSPECTOR Kumar gave a dozing glance at his watch. It was only eleven. He slipped in his chair leisurely, crossed his arms and spreading his legs on his desk, thought of a short nap.

Hardly had he relaxed in that posture, when the telephone on his desk began to ring. He was almost shocked. He picked up the receiver and poured in, "Hallo-Gulati Road Police Station."

The man at the other end seemed a little nervous. He spoke in quick jerks, "This is Gaurishankar, Manager of Blue Bells."

"Blue Bells?" Sub-Inspector Kumar repeated absent-mindedly. Then, immediately recollecting having seen an advertisement in the morning paper, he enquired, "Yes?"

"Some fifteen minutes back, the lights went off—on the very first day of opening of Blue Bells. It seemed an accident, but our main attraction, I mean, our Singer-Dancer seems to have disappeared mysteriously. Would you please come over here immediately?" The voice showed an improvement. It was calm and collected.

"Just a moment please," Sub-Inspector Kumar said.

"May I have the name of your main attraction?"

"Miss Zenita Saron." The voice poured in. "She's our main attraction, and has specially flown from Europe."

"Oh, I see." Sub-Inspector Kumar put down his legs. "I'll be right there."

Fifteen minutes later, Sub-Inspector Kumar was on the spot with the Manager to receive him. "Would you please tell me at what time exactly this happened?"

"Say at about a quarter to eleven."

"And what time was it restored?"

"The lights, you mean? Just ten minutes after they went off."

"When was it discovered that Miss Zenita Saron was missing?"

"Five minutes after the restoration of lights."

"Had she any programme immediately thereafter?"

"No, she had finished her last song at about 10-30."

"Can it not be presumed that she may have left for her residence?"

"I called her on the phone at her hotel. But she has so far not reported there. Her hotel is only a few blocks from here."

"Aha!" The Sub-Inspector chuckled. "Have you looked in her dressing room?"

"Yes, Inspector."

"I would like to inspect it."

"By all means, Inspector."

Sub-Inspector Kumar was taken to the dressing room. Everything was in an earthquake fashion. The powder box was on the floor and the whole floor was sprinkled with the talc. The cream bottles were lying on their sides, empty boxes were lying on the floor amid the powder. The window was closed and the crimson-coloured velvet curtain seemed untouched.

There were three burning candles fixed on the dressing table.

"Had you any candle-light dance programme on the list tonight?" The Sub-Inspector asked.

"No."

"HAVE you been keeping candles in readiness—say, for any emergency?"

"No. We've never thought of such—it being the first night."

"How come these candles are burning, then?"

"They were acquired immediately after the lights went off."

"Oh, I see." The Sub-Inspector chuckled. "Who brought them?"

"The chief bearer."

THE chief bearer was a very stout man, with a clean-shaven face and a little bald on the head. "When you fixed the candles, can you recollect what time it was?" The Sub-Inspector asked.

"Say about ten minutes after the lights went off."

"Why are you so particular?"

"Because, I presume, it must have taken me not less than ten minutes to get them."

"Wherefrom did you purchase?"

"At the store—right at the corner of the street."

"Was Miss Zenita inside, when you entered with the candle?"

"Yes, sir."

"Thank you." The Sub-Inspector turned to the Manager, "Who restored the lights?"

"The chief violinist."

"I would like to question him."

A little while later, the Sub-Inspector was questioning the chief violinist. He was a short man, well-dressed, with a thick flowing moustache. He had narrow eyes and a beautiful bugle like voice. "So," the Sub-Inspector continued, "Your opinion is that the lights were

turned off by someone intentionally?"

"Yes, sir."

"Can this not be accident?"

"No, sir. The thing is like this. The meter and the switches are in a wooden enclosure. One has to open the wooden enclosure and turn off the lights."

Sub-Inspector Kumar walked outside the restaurant. There was a beautiful, clean-cut lawn—the very atmosphere of Eve's Eden. Under the window of the dressing room, he found Zenita, tightly roped around hands and legs. Her mouth was bandaged by a new handkerchief, thus leaving out any possibilities of her crying for help till the miscreant had vanished for long and good.

"I was attacked immediately when the lights went off, and all my valuables were stolen," Zenita explained gasping for air, when loosened.

"Did you see the man's face, quite clearly? I mean, would you be able to recognise him when brought before you?"

"No. In fact, he was masked."

"Where are your valuables insured, Miss Zenita?"

"Of course. For forty thousand."

"How were you brought out—I mean by what way? Were you taken out by the main door?"

"No. The robber used the window for an exit, and I was thrown out on this lawn. I couldn't move, since I was tightly tied."

IT was about two in the morning. The Sub-Inspector turned to the Manager and Miss Zenita, "I'm sorry, but you both will have to accompany me to the police station."

"But why?" Both said in unison, surprised, and nervousness showing in their faces.

"I am sorry, but I accuse you both of attempting to cheat the insurance company."

"It's nonsense!" The Manager burst out.

"That you should have thought long turning off the meter, Mr. Gaurishankar," The Sub-Inspector enjoined. He turned and looked at Miss Zenita, "And for you, Miss, you have been more than clever."

"Your stupidity seems to have no limit," Zenita hurled.

"No. Your success has failed you. You and the Manager have conspired together, and no doubt your statements are well-planned and co-ordinated. But for one thing. When you suggested that you were thrown out of the window, Miss Zenita, you should have at least planned it perfect, and natural. You should have blown off the burning candles at least to make it look like true-to-life. Don't you think, the wind would have blown them off

when the culprit opened the window and threw you out?"

Sub-Inspector Kumar took out a cigarette and lighted it. He took a long puff. "The statement given by the chief bearer is contradictory to what you spoke. When he brought the candles for Miss Zenita, she was in the dressing room. According to him, he returned at about five minutes to eleven. I believe him, for it would take at least ten minutes to fetch the candles from that distance. And remember this was the time, according to the Manager, the lights were restored. Therefore, I presume this act was rehearsed and fully acted long before the lights went off—or were intentionally put off, as per the statement of the violinist. In the interval of five minutes from restoring of lights to giving a ring to the police station, so much and so well could not be done." He took another puff, and continued, "And you, Mr. Manager, you should have been wiser with the experience behind you. Aren't you wearing new shoes with rubber soles? Oh, yes, you are. But you should have sprinkled talc powder rather cautiously. There, in the powder, you've left the imprint of your left shoe in the dressing room. This proves that you were present at the time of the so-called disappearance of jewels and Miss Zenita. I suppose, I am working on sufficiently clear clues. Now would you both mind accompanying me, please?"

JUNIOR STORY

THE LITTLE DEVIL!

OLD Muthamma was very cross with the white cat and wanted to get rid of her.

"Of all the cats I have ever seen," she complained to her neighbour, "this one is the most treacherous and cunning. And I have not named her Rakshasi for nothing. She is the very incarnation of evil, I tell you."

But Kasi, the neighbour, gave an indulgent smile. "You seem to be very upset even by trifles, Muthamma," she remarked. "But don't you see Rakshasi sitting on the wall here? She looks so beautiful, serene and innocent. I should think your grievances against the poor thing are more imaginary than real."

Steals Milk

Muthamma turned very red in the face and almost exploded. "You think so, eh? Well, I tell you and that is the truth, this wretched cat has been taking the life out of me for the past six months. She drinks all

the milk and buttermilk in my house.

"Only the other day, my little grandchild of two years, our precious pet, was down with fever, and there was no milk in the house. So what did I do? I hunted up the whole village in pouring rain and that young milkwoman Radha took pity upon me and gave me a small cupful of milk."

"I ran back home and boiled it. I left the kitchen for a few minutes to answer a knock on door. It was only Maragatham who had called to chat with me."

"By the time I dismissed her and returned to the kitchen, Rakshasi had sneaked in and lapped up the milk. But it must have been so hot. It passes my understanding how Rakshasi was able to swallow it."

"That is easy to guess," smiled Kasi. "You must have been so absorbed in your conversation with your friend that you forgot all about the milk and it became icy cold and inviting enough to the shivering cat!"

"How dare you make such a remark?" snapped Muthamma. "You must have your daily fling at me, I suppose. As a result, the poor darling child went without a drop of milk and cried herself hoarse. Her mother is lying in the town hospital, you know, and I have a hard time looking after the young one."

"I am digressing, of course, but coming back to the cat, I would say that she is robbing me of every dish and edible left in the house. She noses around, prises the lids of closed vessels open and carries off rice cakes, gram cakes and fried stuff."

Hunts Mice

"But Muthamma, has not Rakshasi cleared your house of all the rats and mice that were infesting it and making you so nervous?"

Muthamma grinned. "Yes, I agree that is the only good thing that Rakshasi has done so far. But there is another aspect of this wicked animal that gives me the creeps, I am simply furious about it."

"What is it?" coaxed Kasi, with a sly smile.

"Whenever I leave my house to do some shopping or borrow something from my neighbours, Rakshasi crosses my path. She suddenly appears from nowhere and darts across to disconcert me."

"And what is the upshot of it? I come back home empty-handed. Either what I want to purchase in a shop becomes too dear all of a sudden, or what I want to borrow from my neighbour is very politely denied by them. For all this, I say, Rakshasi alone is responsible."

"Do you forget that it is a sign of ill omen if a cat crosses your path? Oh, my God! that Rakshasi has gone into my house, Kasi, and is making a hell of a noise and Baby is yelling her head off. By the third eye of Shiva, a big vessel is crashing down with a bang. Oh! Oh!"

Froze Their Blood

The two old women rushed in to investigate the cause of the trouble. What they saw froze their very blood and they stood rooted to the spot.

Rakshasi was miauling without a stop, standing on a wooden rack above on which big brass vessels had been kept. And her tail was standing erect. On the floor Baby was sitting and yelling, pointing at a small black cobra that had crept into the house. The two women saw that the snake was writhing, unable to move. Its head had been pinned down by a huge brass pot that had fallen down from the rack above.

—Please see page 32

RE-MARRIAGE

[Here is a romance to put a man wise to poison tongues. The husband was losing faith in his wife.]

SO it was decided that Pran should marry again. His mother Bhagwati took a hand in the decision. What strenuous efforts she made in changing the mind of her son. Shanta, his wife, had gone to the village of her parents where her youngest sister was lingering between life and death as a result of typhoid. She seemed to have recovered but a relapse brought the patient again to the brink of danger.

Shanta took Roopa, her four-year-old daughter, who insisted on going with her mother. There was no love lost between Shanta and her mother-in-law. They were always poised for a fight and ready to cross swords with each other. While Shanta spoke very few words she almost

kiiled with her looks. But the mother-in-law always let fly a volley of coarse words which the daughter-in-law with her refinement and culture found it hard to bear. Her language poured into her ears like molten lead. It was abuse and nothing else.

Pran was too dutiful a son to contradict his mother or curb her unruly tongue. Of course he loved his wife with all his heart. But in his attempt to show his devotion to both the women he only made matters worse. The upshot was that both the women hated each other openly and there was little peace in the home.

For nearly a year Bhagwati was quietly poisoning the mind

of her son. She dug up a few unpleasant truths about Shanta before she married. She was living in the city with her parents then. Her father was a clerk in the Public Works Department and only after her marriage he left for his village.

One day Bhagwati brought with her an old friend of hers Devika who was a neighbour of Shanta in the city and knew all about the family. At first she was glad to see Shanta happily married and the proud mother of a beautiful little girl. Bhagwati introduced her to her son who was glad that his mother had new company. Shanta alone was not very pleased to see her. She knew Devika to be sharp of tongue and malicious in gossip. And once she had picked up a violent quarrel with her mother for no reason at all—rather, for refusing to oblige her with a small loan.

Her apprehensions were not groundless. Slowly—bit by bit—Devika treated Bhagwati to a story of Shanta's shady past. When Pran saw her he at once fell in love with her and begged of her to marry him. He gave Shanta a solemn pledge not to question her past.

It was true that Shanta was a dancer—one of a troupe led by Dhyaneswar that toured the whole country and won plaudits. Shanta was a lovely girl, perfectly moulded and wonderfully supple.

Dhyan wooed fiercely and offered to give her the lead if only she married him.

SHANTA, too, was fond of him and almost signified her consent. Her father dragged her home on hearing about this crazy move and shut her up in a room for a whole week until she was cured of her infatuation. There had been a moment when Shanta would have willingly surrendered to him. She had been drawn into the vortex of temptation but she saw the Unseen Hand coming to her rescue. At that particular moment Dhyan's mother had knocked at the door and demanded to see him urgently and Shanta had slipped out by the back door.

Devika seized upon this episode, embellished it with all her riotous fancy and imagination. She told Bhagwati that Shanta used to dance half-naked and actually lived in sin with her troupe master for a time. When Shanta was away in her village Bhagwati convinced her son of his wife's folly and wickedness. He was persuaded when Devika herself told him the story, holding Shanta in the worst light possible.

He wrote to his wife forbidding her to return to his home until she heard from him again. After six months the distraught young woman came to a different part of the city

where her brother was residing. She stayed with her daughter and helplessly watched developments at her husband's home.

HER shock could be more imagined than described when she learnt that her husband was to re-marry in another week. The bride was Devika's daughter, a puny scarecrow of a girl. "Let him marry and repent. I am not going to make the first move," she told her brother.

It was outside a cloth shop when Shanta was waiting with her little daughter Roopa. Then something sudden and unforeseen happened.

Roopa spotted her father who had a parcel of new clothes

tucked under his arm-pit and flew to him with joyous shouts. "Father!" she cried. "You are here and still you don't talk to me. What have I done?"

The parcel dropped to the floor and Pran gathered his precious darling in his arms.

"Shanta dear!" he called. "Come on, let us go home. I don't know how I managed to keep away from my sweet kid."

When they reached home he told his mother and Devika that the marriage deal was off. Late at night Shanta made a clean breast of the whole affair and Pran renewed his pledge never again to question her about her past.

The Little Devil!—Continued from page 29

It was easy to guess how the cobra had been foiled in its purpose. Rakshasi, even as she was sitting on the wall, must have noticed the reptile gliding its way in while Baby was playing about alone and unprotected.

The cat evidently darted after the cobra and diverted its attention. The cobra must have gone after the cat but the latter, taking up a position of vantage, dropped a brass vessel right on the head of the reptile.

Collecting her wits, Muthamma gathered Baby in her arms while Kasi went out and brought in two hefty men who made short work of the cobra. Fearing

that other snakes might be lurking about Muthamma shifted overnight to another house, built on modern lines. But it was situated four furlongs off.

The next evening Kasi came to the new house for a chat. They were talking of the previous day's experience, when they espied the white cat sitting on the wall.

This time Muthamma did not curse Rakshasi. She went in, brought a big plateful of milk and tenderly, gratefully beckoned to the cat to drink it.

—PADMAVATHI

Short Story

By M. Radha Nair

THE LIE

[He told her a lie that he was a bachelor and the simple-minded girl believed him...]

PUFFING and sneezing the train arrived and stopped at the Station. With fresh hopes and fair thoughts Ramesh alighted from it and was warmly greeted by his friend Raghunath who had been waiting for him there for hours! Raghunath was greatly overjoyed over the fact that his friend made no excuses to evade his possibility of coming to that hillside village to pass a few months in his company. He knew, being a doctor, it would never be an easy task for his friend to have such a great leisure, but only to the fact that he himself needed a long rest.

That evening Raghunath took his friend to the hillside and showed him the rich fields, green sloping downs, thin zig-zag silver white rivers and the gardens like bushes where the cooing of pigeons, the singing of birds

and the murmuring of the bees had a pleasant and peculiar effect upon every human mind. Ramesh cordially thanked his friend for having invited him to such heavenly site.

Next day Ramesh wished for a lonely walk and started early without his friend. The picturesque scenery that the site afforded had a great appeal to his senses by its freshness, glory and the beautiful setting it provided to his eyes that he even forgot the time and the gathering darkness. But the ringing of the pooja bell from the nearby temple awakened him and only then did he realise the seriousness of his situation. He hurried back to his home but having lost the right track he stood there perplexed at the crossing of many paths and looked around to see whether there was anyone to help him.

Thanks to his luck he noticed a figure coming from the distance and in the dim light of the setting sun he soon identified it as that of a woman. Within a few minutes she appeared before him like an angel with fresh flowers in her hands. Ramesh became nervous at her presence but gathering all his courage asked her in a hurry.

"WILL you please show me the way that leads to Shree Villah?"

She looked up for a while and turning her face sideways said in a smile. "Yes, I will." She came all the way back with him and showed the right path. Ramesh was so glad that he thanked her wholeheartedly and soon left the place. He felt sorry that he did not ask her name. So next day he went a little earlier and wandered along the place near the temple where he met her last evening. After a few minutes he saw her coming from the temple with a garland in her hands. Walking towards her Ramesh most warmly thanked her again for having helped him on a critical occasion. She smiled back at him and asked. "Are you from Shree Villah?"

"Yes. I am a friend of Raghunath and came here on a pleasure tour. The place holds me better."

"O! I see!" A long soft ripple of wind flowed over the

stream and brought a puff of delicious air into their faces!

She turned her dark dreamy eyes towards the field. Her swaying figure had an enchanting grace of its own and her beautiful fair countenance with her dark black hair around it shone like the moon amidst the clouds. Her fair skin made a strange contrast with her dark blue eyes. Her lips were sensitive, sweet and sensuous and she looked her best when they parted in a smile. Ramesh gazed at her pretty figure for a long time and he even wondered whether she was from the world above!

"What's your name?" he asked with great admiration.

"Geetha..." Her sweet silver voice echoed the sweetness of music. "Are you coming here for the first time?" she asked in a very low tone with a shadowy smile upon her lips. "Yes." Ramesh smiled in return. Her dark blue eyes sparkled with life when she took leave of him and went away.

WHEN left alone Ramesh felt a vague and undefined sense of having an altogether novel experience. His very mode of thought was for the moment disturbed and arrested. The sweet swaying figure of Geetha and her beautiful innocent face haunted his mind. He was restless for the whole night

that he could not tear away her image from his memory.

Geetha, the sweet innocent darling, was no pet of anybody in her home. She was the posthumous child of her father and her very birth blew off the light of her mother's life. She was thus brought up by her old uncle whose young wife was in no way a shelter to her. She treated Geetha and looked upon her as a deformity. She was not treated there well and kindly.

"When will you be returning?" was the first question she asked when she met him the next day.

"Not for three months!"

"Three months!" She exclaimed and smiled. "Then why didn't you bring your wife and children too with you?"

"If I had I might have."

"Oh! Are you a bachelor then! I am sorry" she jumped and ran away without waiting for any reply.

RAMESH felt deeply depressed that he told the greatest lie in his life to that innocent creature. His thoughts were now shattered and imagination failed that he repented of his carelessness and feared that it would develop a false idea of him in her innocent breast. He was not a bachelor, he was a

married man. He thought of his young wife whom he had married decently. He felt something very much unpleasant deep in his heart chasing his pleasure and ruining it little by little. So he decided to tell the truth to her the next time itself!

BUT when he met her next he forgot everything about his decisions, about his wife and even about his own existence in this world. Instead he wanted to keep it away from her, to keep it as a secret for ever and he himself did not know what made him do so. They met again and again. But he spoke nothing of his secret.

He would ask her numerous questions and she would reply them all with great humour and ready wit. Their daily meetings drew them nearer and nearer and Ramesh now found it hard to pass his time without paying her a visit. Geetha too started looking forward to his visits and if she ever missed his familiar steps she would feel that her very life was missing. Her love-starved heart held him as high as heaven that she was ready to sacrifice her own life for his sake.

Ramesh was a man of resolute character and firm will, but his resoluteness found no practical influence upon his deep desire to see that beautiful nymph again and again. He could not resist this anxiety

of him by any means and he ever yearned for her sweet company, longed to hear her sweet silver voice! But he heard his inner spirit warning him against such aspirations and insisting upon his early revelation of his secrets and thereby asking him to end their friendship. He knew that as he was not a bachelor, he should not cultivate such an attitude in his mind and it was not fair of him to think more about a lady other than his wife. But the more he tried to forget Geetha, the more he remembered her. He never met a woman so capable of inspiring affection and that passive goddess had already conquered his heart, and he was helpless!

HER close intimacy with Ramesh made her believe that life was not to pine and sigh. She realised that it was love that gave her life and light and the novelty she experienced in this rosy life made her forget everything about her home and so the unpleasant and unendurable treatment she received there.

But Geetha never once disclosed the hardships and sorrows of her own to Ramesh. But her own words would often betray her by missing their prepared lines and thereby leaning against those pathetic realities revealing some of her heartfelt depressions and unending sorrows. And amidst the conversation she would often say "O! how nice if God takes off my

life and makes me a little sparrow to have its own pleasure and freedom! How glad would I be then, oh Ramesh?" Her dark blue eyes would carry pearls at their ends only to drop them. Ramesh would lose his presence of mind on such occasions and confusing over its effects he would clasp her in his arms and would narrate the nobility of a human soul and the grandeur of its personality.

She would change her mood persently and bring that shadowy smile beam upon her lips; she would ask him anxiously "Ramesh, have you ever seen rabbits? If not I will bring one tomorrow and show you. I am sure that you will of course wonder at their innocence and purity. How nice if all men are like them, oh Ramesh?"

"Do you mean that every man should become a rabbit in form and nature, Geetha?" Ramesh would ask her affectionately.

"Oh! no, not in shape, but in venture!"

"In nature too!" he would laugh. "And how you expect the world to get on, dear, with those rabbits. What good can they produce to their society?"

"Yet they can reduce evil, Ramesh!" Her dark dreamy eyes would lose their lights for the

moment and show her utter grief and sympathy over the uncanny world and its selfishness. The young doctor would say nothing but sitting there admiring her innocence he would praise her silently.

They would sit side by side on a rock under the tree gazing at the shining surface of the silver stream, and its dancing waves, with the sweet scented breeze playing upon their limbs, fighting with their curls and clothes. Leaning against him she would sing some of her favourite songs and every day before parting she would pin a freshly plucked red rose upon his buttons as a sign of her unbounded love and affection for him.

ONCE Ramesh presented her a gold ring with a diamond glittering on its bosom and he asked her to keep it for ever. She was so wild with joy that she threw her arms round his neck and thanked him with all her heart. Her graceful figure swayed and her pretty face brightened with those two dreamy eyes dancing in gaiety. Her uncombed soft dark wavy hair flew in the wind along with her pure white saree that it seemed to him that she was just descending from the above world. Her indefinable beauty at present so enraptured him that holding her in his arms and gazing into her innocent face he called,

"O! my sweet Angel!"

A bright orange dyed her cheeks and an arresting smile rushed into her lips. Ramesh never saw her so beautiful and so pretty before that he experienced a sense of exasperation amounting to pain and despair that he could not and did not own her in his life!

It was a Saturday when Ramesh looked at the calendar and counted the days. Fifteen days more for his return and with that his life in that paradise would come to an end. He felt a pain, so unendurable, creeping into his heart.

Ramesh was greatly surprised at her early presence there under the tree in a rather worried state. Her mud stained clothes and tear stained face indicated that something very much had gone ahead. Greatly amazed at this unusual state Ramesh asked in a hurry. "What's the matter, dear, what has happened to you?"

"Nothing much, Ramesh" she sobbed and hid her face with her hands. Ramesh felt sickly that he drew her nearer to him and asked again very kindly. She looked up to him and resting her hands upon his she said with a sigh—"I am driven out of my home for ever, Ramesh."

Tears raced down her cheeks. She narrated the incident and how her uncle wanted to give her

in marriage to an ugly old farmer who had promised all his lands free of cost in return and that they even fixed the date before obtaining her consent. But Geetha acted bravely showing her utter protestations and refused to give her consent. Wild with rage her uncle beat her and dashed her against the ground. But in spite of all the cruel treatment received she dared to stand on her feet to oppose the proposal. Finding no way to get her involved in it they decided to disown her completely and drove her out of their home, lest they would lose their name and dignity.

"But with all these I am glad, Ramesh, that you are here near me to save my life!" She smiled behind her tears and rested her head upon his shoulders. Secretly alarmed at her words Ramesh said nothing but stared into emptiness and the struggle in his heart had now become vivid that he stood unconscious of everything around him.

"Won't you save me, Ramesh? Won't you marry me?" she asked turning his face affectionately towards her.

"MARRY...you!...how is it? Can...I do...so?" Only then did he become aware of the state of his difficulties. He never thought of marrying her and never even expected that such a question would ever arise. Desperately breaking down he

uttered those words as if in dreams with great difficulties.

"Why not, Ramesh?" her calmness yielded place to pain and shaking him violently she peeped into his eyes with great excitement.

RAMESH stood speechless and an inexplicable awfulness clouded his face, his lips grew pale and colour died off his cheeks. "Geetha, I am sorry, I can't take you. I am not a bachelor, I have a wife." At last he dared to tell the truth, the truth that came like a bolt from the blue falling upon her.

"What is it, Ramesh? Are you serious?" Taking a few steps back she stared at him with expressions innumerable upon her face. "You telling the truth? Are you?" her voice left its sweetness and face lost its colour.

"Yes, Geetha, I am married." Ramesh trembled timidly from top to toe and even his own words gave him a severe blow on his heart.

"You are married...You are married." holding her hair high under her arms she repeated those words gnashing her teeth. Her face wore an expression so haggard and worn out that he never dared to look at her but he uttered in grief:

"My Geetha, it's impossible, impossible for me. Yet I love you. I love you with all my heart. But I am helpless. Ah! forgive...me!"

"Forgive!" She burst out into a tragic laughter. Colour rushed into her face and her eyes inflamed with anger while her lips stood trembling. "How dare you speak that true and divine word Love with that notorious tongue of yours, Ramesh! Hold it no..." Tears of rage and disappointment rolled down her cheeks as if from pipes! "Ah! my wishes, my hopes, my dreams, everything has fallen to the grounds now like a house of cards. O! it is unendurable! my life! my wretched life!" She bit her lips tight to suppress the sobs. Ramesh felt his brain whirling, his legs losing their strength, but his heart was so heavy that he could not utter a single word!

"YOUR words, your actions, O! manners! all deceived me. Are they mere pretensions? Were they not from your heart, Ramesh? O! Ramesh, it's greatly unkind of you to kill me so without killing." She dashed her head violently against the tree and sobbed desperately as if her heart might break.

"Ramesh, you could have told me everything earlier, a little earlier! Ah! but you, you wanted to see my life end,

you wait for that dreaded end. O! heartless creature!"

"No Geetha, never! Don't speak so. Listen to what I say now, hear me!"

"Hear! What more to hear, what more you need to take off my life..." She sobbed. "The world wants me no more, Ramesh, there is no one to love me here..." She hid her face and wept loudly like a babe.

"O! Geetha I am sorry, Geetha!"

"No Ramesh, call me mad! it is too much for me, too much. O! too much, Ramesh..." She hid her face with her hands and ran away weeping loudly without looking back.

Bewildered and torn he stood there in the darkness repeating her words, "Too much, O! too much." He heard her footsteps dying away and her voice fading in the distance. He stood but for a minute and hurried along the path through which his love disappeared. He spent more than half of the night in searching but lost all traces of her. His love overflowed that he decided to marry her at all costs regardless of all the troubles and trials. He determined to meet her, early next morning to convey his decision. After all to him Geetha was more than his life!

The day dawned and the sun rose up. Ah! but for what! Only to break the news of her tragic death, her death by drowning in the river. The news brought hell upon Ramesh that he lost his mental equilibrium. He was wild with grief that he tore himself into pieces and hurried out of his home in great agitation. He was like a man in a drunken state and ran away all the way back to the Railway Station. Really speaking he himself did not know what he was doing, where he was going. He jumped into a vacant compartment without even caring whether it would take him back to his home town. The young doctor who saved the lives of thousands could not save the life of his sweetheart!

Puffing and sneezing the train started immediately and when it took its full speed in due course Ramesh felt faint far off in the deathly stillness he was hearing a cry writhing like the voice of some wandering soul for its happiness. "Is it not her voice, is it not my Geetha's...? She is calling me. O! darling here I am..." He jumped out of his seat like a mad man and threw open the doors to jump out, but before that, he fell fainting at the entrance.

The train now carried his unconscious body lying a little inside and more than half of it hanging outside with the great probability of tumbling down at any moment and thereby losing his life...!

75 YEARS OF SERVICE

Messrs. Wheeler & Co. Ptv. Ltd., of Allahabad recently completed seventy-five years of service as Railway Bookstall Contractors. It is a glorious unique record in which any Agency can take legitimate pride. To the travelling public in the North the name of Wheeler's is a symbol—a by-word for courtesy to the reading public, efficiency and promptness in their transactions and settlement of accounts with the

various publishers of books, newspapers, periodicals and magazines. It would be no exaggeration to say that Wheeler's stock and sell only the best of books, papers and journals. May we take this opportunity of congratulating this great organization on the excellence of its record and wish it many more years of useful service and increasing prosperity.

Short Story

By Pramoda Chandra

Fate Took A Hand

*[She trusted too much in her lover and
the world was slipping away from under
her feet...]*

IN the small hours of the morning the bedroom lamp was growing dimmer and Meena stirred into a gradual feeling of wakefulness. Though the electric lights were off, the small lamp was fed by kerosene and lit up the room from 10 p. m. until 7 a. m. From her childhood Meena was accustomed to sleep with a burning chimney on the wall, for she was afraid of total darkness.

"Curse the servant woman," she muttered. "She nowadays forgets to feed the lamp with kerosene and clean the glass. It is a thing I must attend to myself hereafter."

She got up and switched on the electric bulb which flooded the room with glaring light. Then she lay down on the cot and covered her face with a bedsheet to shut off the light.

She tried to compose herself to sleep but she was wide awake. She began to count up to two hundred but the counting had completely chased out sleep. She uncovered her face and listened for the sounds from the road. A drunkard was staggering along, singing a merry song in a lusty voice and several street dogs were barking furiously at him. But his voice grew louder and he imitated the dogs' bark.

Meena laughed softly to herself at the antics of the drunkard.

She suddenly sat up with a jerk and held her stomach with both hands. "God! what is it?" she shouted. She experienced a terrible gripping pain that shook her body from head to foot. She threw aside her bed-sheets and sat with her head buried between her knees.

After five minutes the pain gradually subsided but her head seemed to whirl. She tried to get down from the cot and stand up. She wanted to go to the wash basin and apply cold water to her face. But there was a recurrence of pain and she dumped herself on the cot.

She heard the voice of her mother from outside the room. "Meena darling! I saw the light burning in your room. Is there anything you want?" she asked.

"No, mother," she shouted back. "I want nothing. I had a slight headache and got up. The servant woman forgot to pour kerosene into the chimney lamp and I woke up to switch on the electric light. Go back to bed, mother. I am going to sleep."

"ALL right, darling. But before you get up your father and I will have left for Banaras. It will be just a fortnight, you know. Take care of yourself. Old Anu has been given in-

structions to take every possible care of you. There is plenty of money in the safe and you can go to your uncle's house in the suburb if you feel lonely. Shall we go?"

"By all means, mother. Anything else you wish to say?"

"Yes, I forgot. On our return, you know, Ram Kumar's parents will come here on a formal visit. You have to keep at home and show yourself as worthy of that young man. Of course, you are a thousand times better than him but convention dictates it. You have to cancel all your night parties and stop going with your boy friends."

MEENA coughed in embarrassment. "It is all understood, mother. You have given me perfect freedom all these days but I shall confine myself to home hereafter. I will do nothing to displease you or Father. That is a promise."

"There is a dear," said her mother. "I am so proud of you though your Father may sometimes grouse that you are giddy. When we return we must see a Meena completely transformed into the most modest of girls. Isn't it so?"

"Yes, Mother. Go on your pilgrimage without any worry."

"Go to sleep, dear. I shall ask Anu to lock all the doors."

Meena heard her mother going downstairs and then burst into a flood of tears. "What a tragedy will be enacted here when my parents return!" she told herself. "Oh, God! I duped my simple-minded parents and had quite a gay time. And now, before they return, I must end my life."

HER thoughts were switched now to Mohan, her lover, to whom she had surrendered herself in a weak moment. How she wished she had settled down to married life and become a happy mother! She shook her fist at the imaginary figure of Mohan who had ruined her beyond redemption. How could she tell her mother that she had shared a bottle of liquor with her lover in his room when he took advantage of her helpless drunken stupor and seduced her? She beat her head with her hands in despair at the thought that she did not stop there or scold him. She had gone to his room every day and shared his bed. She had eaten of the forbidden fruit since she liked it and derived a guilty satisfaction.

As the weeks passed she made horrid discoveries. One night as she drove her car to his little flat she found it locked. His servant waiting outside handed her a note. "Sorry, Meena, for all that. I am going back to my wife. She is expecting her fourth baby any

moment now. Apologies, and forget me—Mohan."

She wanted to scream and fly at the throat of the servant who had handed her that note. She had all along imagined that Mohan was a handsome bachelor and that her parents would approve her choice—when she led him before them. Now he had tricked and ruined her. She had discovered to her horror that she had missed a period. She had read a lot of medical and health literature and knew what had happened to her. She had become pregnant. She knew the symptoms. And every morning there was this nausea and she was vomiting.

Her parents who were idolising her as their only darling would die of shock on the spot if they had an inkling of the tragedy that was facing her. She would not hereafter go out and show her face to her friends. Only one friend of hers she had consulted secretly. She was a lady doctor and she had confirmed her pregnancy.

THERE was only one way out. The doctor had refused to assist her in any way. She had just started on her career and she was not prepared to risk her reputation but she promised to keep her secret. So she would take a bottle of deadly poison after her parents had left and finish her life. They might weep and grieve but at least

their family honour and prestige would be quite safe. Nobody would suspect. The doctors might say at the inquest, if there was one, that she committed suicide while of unsound mind. They were all friends of her father and though they might find out the truth they would not let it out.

[LATE that evening she dressed herself with care and opened her bureau. She sighed as she looked at the costly sarees and jackets and glistening jewels that her parents had bought for her. Who would wear them after she was gone? she wondered. There was something like a sob that choked her throat. If only the new life that was sitting within had been legitimate! What would she not do for it? And what would not her parents give it?

Suddenly an idea occurred to her and it was so staggering that she sat down happy and shuddering at the same time. She would sue Mohan for a breach of promise and the ensuing scandal would entail his dismissal. But she dismissed that thought as she dared not bring herself to face her parents

after the revelation of her condition.

EARLY next morning she dismissed Anu on the ground that she would spend a week at her uncle's house and gave her some money. With the old woman's exit she had the whole house to herself. She went into the bathroom and turned on the shower. As she rubbed her lovely legs and hands she uttered a loud prayer to God to take her away from the earth speedily and silently. The soap with which she was lathering her body slipped from her hand and she chased after it into a corner. She slipped on the moss-covered floor and suffered a nasty fall. Her head hit a vessel and she lost consciousness for nearly half an hour.

When she woke up she felt something queer. The floor was covered with blood. She felt her head and there was no injury on it. Then she realised the truth. The fall had ended in a miscarriage. She slowly sat up with a feeling of ease and relief. "God!" she exclaimed, "You have given me a fresh lease of life and saved my parents from disgrace. Hereafter I will never, never take to wicked ways. Forgive me my sin and folly." ‡

Many with a show of humility say, 'I am like a low worm grovelling in the dust.' Thus always thinking of themselves as worms, in time they become weak like worms.

—SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA

ASTHMA

BY A PHYSICIAN

ASTHMA is a disease marked by recurrent paroxysms of difficult breathing, with wheezing, cough, and a feeling of tightness in the chest. There are many kinds of asthma, and many causes of the ailment, and the treatment of any case depends on the cause or the underlying condition.

Possibly the most familiar types are those due to allergy, or unusual sensitiveness, found in some people, towards certain irritants such as the pollen of plants, vegetable dusts, or the hair or fur of animals. Others are caused by inhaling particles of steel or stone in various trades, by disease of the stomach or tonsils, by the eating of certain foods, or by infection with bacteria. The cause of some cases is shown by the names given to them, such as "cardiac" or "renal" asthma, which are associated with disease of the heart or kidneys.

The disease frequently runs in families, as people tend to inherit the tendency to allergic sensitiveness; it is more common in men than in women, and attacks usually begin in childhood or early adult life.

The disease in adults is usually progressive, and the attacks tend to become more frequent if a cure is not obtained; occasionally the attacks last for two or three weeks. It may cause complications in the lungs, or give rise to dilatation of the heart.

There are many remedies for giving relief during the attack, including sprays, inhalations, and drugs to be taken in tablet form, or used as cigarettes; but in severe attacks it may be necessary for the patient to be given an inhalation of chloroform.

Treatment given between the attacks, with the object of lessening the frequency and severity of the attacks, or of curing the disease if possible, is of greater importance. To achieve successful results, the patient is first of all examined thoroughly in order to ascertain any cause of irritation. The investigation may include examination of the teeth, throat, sinuses, and the alimentary and renal systems, with X-rays of the chest to show the condition of the lungs and to make sure that the patient is not suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis. Tests are carried out to show whether the patient is unusually sensitive to any particular foods, dusts or other substances, and if these can be found, a course of "desensitising" injections may be given. Patients in whom there is some septic or other condition, which may be the asthma, are given the appropriate treatment, such as removal of septic teeth or tonsils, or treatment for bronchitis or cardiac or renal disease.

One of the most modern forms of treatment, which is given in selected cases in which there is no other disease which might make the method unsuitable,

is the use of special breathing exercises.

There is no particular climate or locality which is beneficial to all cases of asthma, as individuals vary greatly, although the majority of patients do better at high altitudes. A change of climate may be helpful, but it does not benefit every patient.

As vegetable and animal dusts play a part in so many cases of asthma, it is also well to give attention to preventing irritant dusts as far as possible. In bedrooms for example, upholstered furniture and fabrics, such as carpets and thick curtains, collect dust, and cleaning should be done thoroughly with a vacuum cleaner; pillows and bolsters should be made with Kapok or the new rubber materials. In some instances the irritant may be contained in toilet powders or face powders, and special makes of these can be obtained. Patients may find that there is some item of food, or even one of the commonly used drugs such as aspirin, to which they are particularly sensitive, and these should be avoided. †

The crowning fortune of a man is to be born to some pursuit which finds him employment and happiness, whether it be to make baskets, or broadswords, or canals, or statues, or songs.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

THIS CO-OPT BUSINESS!

SAID a V. I. P. the other day with the air of a Solomon : " Nobody on this earth can live alone. Happiness is the result of a co-operative effort whether it is on the political plane or the domestic level." But experiments have still to prove the truth of this saying.

It is seldom that political parties co-operate. If democracy is to survive the opposition party must keep shouting and the greater the noise it makes the better it is for public welfare. It must keep up an unceasing war of words and make more liberal promises to the electorate than the party in power. The British Labour Party failed in the recent elections because some of its leaders approved of the Tory attitude towards the test explosions of the Hydrogen bomb. If, as is evident, a conflict of policy statements will bring victory nearer how can one political party co-operate with another? Friction and

faction seem to provide the congenial soil on which democracy thrives.

For instance, in the Eatanswill elections, so graphically described by Charles Dickens in *The Pickwick Papers*, verbal bullets rent the very air and bickerings between rival candidates led to factions at the lower level.

Of course, we in India use more ink to sling at our political rivals and statements are followed by counter-statements, contradictions, withdrawals and repetitions. I know of many young enthusiasts who can repeat this bewildering mass of words and repeat them without a flaw or omission. Thus the controversy is carried from the platform and the press to the club and the dining hall, to the lodging-house and hotel corner. It is strife and nothing else.

What is surprising is that everybody pays lip service to

co-operation at all levels of life but nobody sees it in action. At home some of us make honest attempts but fail. For instance, two brothers, who are married and are earning an honest livelihood, decide to co-operate and economise. They rent a small flat and move in with their families. They pool their resources and live together with the women and children in absolute happiness for a month or two. Then without their being aware of it the apple of discord is being thrown in by the females. There is a cold war going on behind their backs and each of the two women is determined to assert herself. On the question of sharing the milk, distributing the sweets to the children, misunderstandings will arise.

Curtain lectures will automatically follow and a decision will be taken to stop the preparation of sweets at home. But their consumption will not be stopped. Each brother will be instructed to bring home on the sly packets of sweets from the best hotels. This smuggling business will have its end when the wives openly accuse each other of trying to take a lion's share in every edible and contributing little to its preparation.

Then, step by step, the brothers who have been loving each other like Ram and Laxman, are encompassed by the cold war themselves. First

they exchange inane formalities with as few words as possible and then permit themselves a few grudging monosyllables. As soon as they return from office, each of them is closeted with his wife and listens to long whispers from his Eve who finally winds up with a snivel and sob probably on his shoulder. She has not married to end in this hell. Her parents had never dreamt of this state of affairs. If only they had had an inkling they would rather have thrown their daughter into a well than sacrifice her like this. And if things don't mned themselves in a fortnight, well, she will go back to her parents until he (the husband) makes arrangements for shifting to a new house.

But in another two days the other brother's wife suddenly takes her departure for her parents' home on receipt of a post card announcing her mother's illness. And who is to feed her husband and his little school-going kids? So the other Eve also takes the next available train. The brothers, if they are quiet-going and mild-mannered, understand their position and go each his separate way or fling hot words at each other. The result is that each of them messes at a different hotel and moves to a new residence with his family. This co-operative experiment estranges the brothers for years and they cut each other on the road and even at important family functions! †

SAFE DEPOSIT

By LINDSAY HAMILTON

The story so far :

STEPHEN Agnew, known as Stag of the *Daily Comet*, is returning to his flat at 2 o'clock in the morning, when he sees a young man flying headlong down the steps of a house. Two men follow him, but upon seeing Stag scramble back and close the door.

Stag recognises the young man as Michael Smith, his travelling companion on a recent journey from Marseilles. Michael had been accompanied by his beautiful sister Vicky. On reaching London the couple had vanished.

Stag later obeys the impulse to re-visit the mysterious house. He finds it empty, with signs of a recent and hurried exit. The discovery of an empty veronal phial and the crumpled half of a letter, arouses his suspicions. The gist of the letter seems to suggest that the writer was

involved in operations of a criminal nature.

The following morning Stag learns of the sudden death of his uncle, James Agnew. He had been found dead at his writing table, the beginning of a letter in front of him. Appearances suggest that he had taken an overdose of veronal.

Stag makes the astonishing discovery that the half sheet of paper picked up in the mystery house, is the lower portion of his uncle's letter. The two halves, read in conjunction, lead him to believe that his uncle may have been murdered.

Stag determines to get to the bottom of the mystery, and his first job must be to find Michael.

Now read on :

Stag's proverbial good luck seemed to have deserted him. For days he had searched for

Vicky and Michael without avail. Investigations at the Tudor Street flat had led nowhere. He had learnt only what he expected to learn, that the flat had been rented through an agent by an elderly gentleman of the name of Ogilvey. The description might fit his uncle, but equally well it might fit a few thousand other elderly gentlemen.

But since Stag was convinced that Ogilvey definitely was his Uncle James, that only assisted by not actually hindering. Obviously his uncle had become mixed up in some illegal transactions of a kind that his sensation-loving conscience might, in a moment of unaccustomed activity, label as degrading and shameful. Smuggling in dutiable goods, perhaps. Drugs, or white-slaving. It might easily be as bad as that. But the degree of his villainy was beside the point. The important thing to remember was that he appeared to have weakened at the last. His weakness would endanger his accomplices, the three mentioned in the letter, Jessop the cold man of business, Carter the man he described as the complete pagan, and Mole. Yes, Mole was the man he really feared.

For their own safety they might. Stag could well imagine his uncle's abrupt change of front. He could put on the cloak of fearless virtue as

another man puts on a clean shirt. He would probably rant about it. Enough to make anyone want to murder him.

Sure as he was that something of the kind had really happened, Stag fretted under the forced inactivity. If only he could lay hands on Michael...

When he had almost given up hope of that ever happening fate played into his hands. It was not Michael he found, but Vicky. She was in the act of entering a boarding house in Bloomsbury, and, if Stag was not imagining things, the nondescript individual in the raincoat who had been walking behind her, and was now tying up his bootlace, was not quite the casual passer-by he was trying to look.

Stag jumped forward with an exclamation of amazement, and caught Vicky's arm as she raised it to ring the bell.

"You, thank heaven—at last!"

She turned to him large startled eyes, and then giggled with sudden relief.

"Oh, I thought..." she gasped.

Stag nodded towards the man in the raincoat. He had seen and heard enough to surmise the rest.

"Now that I've found you I'm not letting you get away so easily," he warned her. "Call it abduction, force majeure, or what you like, but you're coming with me for a nice long chat even if I have to carry you."

There was really no need to use such drastic threats, for Vicky's expression was one of unbounded delight.

"Oh, you nice big English friend, I've been hoping to see you," she admitted with unaffected candour.

Stag drew her arm into his and led her away protesting how annoyed she had been that Michael had behaved so badly and made her behave badly too. It had all seemed so crazy and pointless. And now it was even more crazy, this queer world of London. No peace or security anywhere, a nightmare, and they seemed to be running away from it all the time.

Her nerves were sharply on edge, he could see. She would talk to him, but it rather looked as though she would have little useful information to give him. She was frightened of something she could sense but not see, like a child in the dark.

They had tea at a quiet little cafe, and Stag tried to draw her out on the subject of Michael. Frankness, he decided, was his best course. He told her grave-

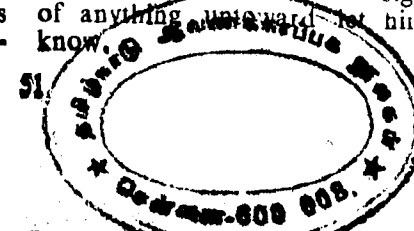
ly that he thought Michael was in some sort of trouble, that he wanted to help her, to help both of them.

She looked distressed, a little angry, but very determined.

"I know," she said. "He always thinks I am so useless and helpless. He never tells me anything. But I know my Michael. He is wild. He does the craziest things. It is the adventure, that and the fever for money. Whatever it was, if there was money to be made by clever brains he would go into it laughing. The scrapes he has got into! But this is worse, far worse. I wish I knew, but he tells me nothing. But I see him getting more and more worked up, on fire with excitement, and always we move from place to place like hunted creatures. Oh, I am so tired of it all, and so frightened for him."

Beyond eliciting a detailed account of their movements since coming to London, Stag was able to learn nothing further, and he was anxious not to distress her by too many questions. For the moment it was enough that he had found her.

One thing, however, he was most insistent upon, that she must promise to keep in touch with him, and at the least sign of anything untoward let him know.



"We'll see this through together, Vicky. Is it a promise?" She reached impulsively for his hand.

"It is good to have one like you," she said, and the English may have been quaint in idiom, but its effect on Stag was definite enough. Perhaps he was reading the thoughts in her eyes rather than the words on her lips.

"You're a darling," he said, fervently. "Count on me right up to the bald patch on the top of my head."

In the morning Stag had a telephone message from Vicky. She had news for him—it needed only half an ear to assure Stag that she was bursting to tell him—but:

"No, no, not now," she said, plaintively. "I am not to. Michael made me promise. Not until after mid-day. He said he would be back by then and we would both come along to you. And if he did not return then he said I might tell you. It's foolish of me, but I'm nervous and excited. Michael was so strange. He frightened me. But I mustn't be so silly. It will be all right when he comes back."

Stag, not so easy in his own mind, did his best to calm her fears. It was not difficult. For the moment Michael and his

mysterious ways were of less importance than the delightful fact that Vicky was on the other end of the 'phone, and would be coming of her own accord to see him that very afternoon.

"Four-thirty then," he said, confirming the appointment. "But look here, Vicky, if Michael doesn't turn up, the sooner I see you the better."

"I think that too." The little laugh she gave then seemed to give a special significance to her next words. "The sooner and the better—oh, much better. Au revoir."

She rang off, and Stag stood for a moment revelling in the music of her words till he caught sight of his reflection in the wall-mirror and came back to earth with a laugh at his own expense.

"Fascinating little imp," he mused. "Imp? No, she's more than that. Fat chance a hard-bitten old cynic like me would have. Still, I'd like to see the man good enough."

Which, for Stag the unimpressible, was an astonishing admission.

Whatever plans he had made for the day he abandoned. A few quick telephone messages and one telegram and he was free for the day. Now that he

had found Vick he was not going to let her run away again in a hurry. He rang up Gullivers and booked a table for dinner. A short talk on the phone to the Manager of His Majesty's, and he had secured seats in a house booked up weeks ahead.

Impatiently he waited and watched for her during the early hours of the afternoon. But she did not come. Michael had evidently returned, and she would not be here till four-thirty, he decided.

But the hour of the appointment came and passed, and Vicky did not appear. Nor was there any message from her. Six o'clock struck. His anxiety became charged with the conviction that Vicky was in trouble, could not get to him. And he could do nothing but wait. If he went in search of her she might arrive and find him gone. Her boarding-house was not on the 'phone. She had called him from a public call-box.

When he could stand the suspense no longer, he ordered a taxi and, after leaving word with Mrs. Brown, his housekeeper, that if Vicky or Michael called they must be persuaded to await his return, he drove to Bloomsbury.

The information he received there was not encouraging. Michael had not been seen since the previous evening. Vicky

had gone out directly after lunch and had not returned. Stag gathered that the person who kept the boarding-house—"deceased Bishop's housekeeper if looks are anything to go by," he decided—"Gothic, sacrosanct, and respectable as a steeple"—would not be sorry if they both failed to return. An event altogether unprecedented in the annals of the house had taken place that morning. A bailiff had entered for the purpose of seizing Michael Smith's goods. Stag gathered that it would be a long time before the house recovered from the desecration.

To say that Stag was troubled would be putting it mildly. Something certainly had happened to Vicky. She had probably set out to come to him. Was it accident that prevented her, or was it by design? And the talk about bailiffs. Stag found that hard to credit. It was not impossible, but it certainly struck him as grotesque and unlikely.

At the most he could only make a guess in the dark. It might be a wild guess, but it was no more improbable than the notion of Michael and Vicky fleeing from pillar to post to avoid the bailiffs. He was prepared to bet his reputation to a rotten apple that both the ecclesiastical boarding-house lady and Vicky had been completely taken in. Those men, whoever they were, were not sheriff's officers. They had adopted the trick to

get access to Michael's belongings. There was something they were searching for.

Stag wondered whether it would be drawing too long a bow to connect the outrage with Michael's flight from the house in Tudor Street. Suspecting the place to be the rendezvous of crooks, it was not difficult to imagine the rest. Michael had got away with something vital to their safety perhaps.

Stag fell to cursing his impotence and lack of any definite knowledge. As soon as he arrived at his flat he set about doing everything he could to trace Vicky. First he telephoned Burns at the Yard and explained in a few words what had occurred. Then he began to ring up all the hospitals.

It was nine o'clock, and Stag was still putting through calls, when Burns rang through.

"That bailiff stunt was a spoof," he informed Stag, laconically. "No warrant has been issued against the party, and no application for one has been made. We're taking it up."

"Any news of my little friend..." cut in Stag.

"Nothing, you. But don't you worry. She'll turn up."

An explosive epithet was on the tip of Stag's tongue. It was

never uttered. A sudden sound came to him from the street below. He clapped the receiver back and darted to the window.

A taxi stood at the curb. Yes, someone was at the front door. He was out of the flat and down in an instant before Mrs. Brown was more than half-way up the basement stairs. He tore the door open, and Vicky almost fell forward into his arms.

"A little late," she said in a very weak, tired little voice. "But they couldn't stop me. I got here."

For a moment he thought she had fainted. But she recovered.

"Pay my taxi for me, will you," she said. She was about all in, badly frightened too, but she could still see something funny in the situation. "I hope you can, for I can't. I'm—" she leaned against him overcome with weariness—"I'll tell you—later."

"Thank God you're safe and sound," said Stag fervently. He sent Mrs. Brown out to pay the taxi-driver. "You're played out, Vicky. You're not to talk till you feel equal to it. Look here, I'm going to carry you up."

"I think I could walk," she whispered, "if I tried."

"Well, don't try."

She sighed contentedly. "I don't want to."

It was a different Vicky who told her tale an hour later. She was still white and her eyes had an unnatural brightness in them, but the attentions of Stag and Mrs. Brown had done much to restore her vitality.

She described the visit of the bogus bailiffs.

"I could have cried with vexation, and then I could have wanted to see them boiled and boiled in oil. The fat gross one and the thin one, like a horrible cod-fish and a shrimp. They were rough with me."

Stag drew in a sharp breath between his teeth. His smile was not a pleasant one.

"They told me it was debt," said I would pay, but they only laughed. They took nothing away, but they turned out every single thing of Michael's. Then they wanted to go into my room. But it was locked, and would not give up the key. I think they would have tried to take it from me, but Mrs. Nightingale interfered and they had to go."

Good for you, Mrs. Nightingale, whoever you are, thought Stag.

"I heard about it," he told her. "It was a trick. They

were after something Michael had. And it rather looks as though they didn't find it."

"I knew it," she exclaimed. "I knew it was a trick. They've caught Michael and now they're after me. Is everyone going mad in London, Stag? Why do they follow me? Why do they try to steal me away? Is it to prevent me coming to you? I tried to come as soon as it was mid-day and Michael had not returned. But when I called a taxi from the rank I remembered I'd left my money locked up in my bedroom. There was not a penny in my bag. I dared not go back for it. I was being followed, and it frightened me. I thought I would try and walk."

"You didn't get here," said Stag as she paused for breath. "What happened?"

"I don't really know," she said. "It all seems like a dream. I was waiting to cross the road somewhere in Knightsbridge when I felt a sharp prick on my arm. A moment after I began to feel queer. I knew I was going to faint. Then all the rest is just a confused jumble. I remember vaguely an expensive-looking car drawing up and a flat female in furs—a loathsome creature—telling them to put me in the car. Then I must have fainted. Anyhow, I came to my senses in the back room of a chemist's shop. He was most kind and seemed quite

worried about me. He kept on telling me that I had had a narrow escape."

Stag nodded. "Stout fellow," he observed, with genuine appreciation. "He was wrong in his guess this time, but he undoubtedly saved you. No doubt he thought it was a White-Slaver's trick. So it is. Anyhow, he seems to have come in at the crucial moment, I must look him up. But I'm interrupting."

"There's no more to tell," said Vicky. "As soon as I came to I asked him to get me a taxi. And here I am."

"Thank God you are!" exclaimed Stag, fervently. "And here, unless I'm a Dutchman, you're going to stay."

"Oh, shocking."

"You're certainly not going back to Bloomsbury."

"How nice it is to be told that. You mean it, I suppose?"

"Until Michael turns up you can consider yourself my prisoner," he answered with a twinkle.

"How comforting."

He could see that she meant it.

"You're very trusting," he remarked.

Her eyes opened wide. "Trusting," she said, "I don't know. Am I? I hadn't thought."

"Then don't," he retorted, quickly. "There isn't the need."

"No." She smiled. "Not with you, Stag. I seem to have known you so well all my life. Almost as though we had been married for years."

Stag caught his breath. "I wish to God that was true."

She laughed gaily. "If that's a post-dated proposal my dear big man, so do I."

"You're chaffing he complained.

"So are you, my gallant," she countered.

"Not on your life, Vicky." He remembered suddenly her concern about Michael. "We'll talk of that later," he said. "Meanwhile we must find Michael. What's happened to him? Have you any idea?"

"Yes," she said, knitting her brows. "He told me enough. Last night he gave me this." She opened her bag and took from it a small label with thread of string attached to it. "He tore it from a key and handed it to me, and told me to hide it and guard it with my

life. Everything depended on my keeping it safe—even his life might hang on it, he said."

"Not so absurd," said Stag. "I begin to see light."

"A key!" said Stag curiously. "What sort of key? Where did he get it? Do you know anything about it?"

"Oh just an ordinary flat key, rather like a Yale, but bigger. He didn't say what it was. But it doesn't belong to him, I know. It's what they were looking for to-day, I'm convinced. I got the idea last night that Michael was taking some desperate risk and if he failed only this label could save him. I daresay that sounds absurd. But that's how it seemed to me."

He was recalling Michael's hurried flight from the Tudor Street flat. Fitting that in with the theory he had already formed, he had come to the conclusion that the key might in more senses than one unlock the mystery of his Uncle's death.

He examined the label with particular interest. It bore the following hieroglyphics:

A. E. Z. U. T. 7. 0. 6. E. 3.
B. C. P. S. T. R. 0/100.

(To be continued)

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GREAT MEN AND HEREDITY

A MAN of genius is independent of lineage. He stands alone in his generation, as the full moon shines single in the firmament. In the words of De Bruyere, "These men have neither ancestors nor posterity. They alone compose their whole race." Shakespeare, Tulsidas, Kalidas, Newton, Galileo, Lincoln, Hamilton, and many more, had none to look before and after. Shakespeare was the son of a butcher, Newton of a woodcutter. Their descendants have melted into the light of common day.

Men of genius belong to no special rank or class. Some of them hail from aristocratic families reputed for old ancestry. Such were philosophers like Bacon, Hume, and Berkeley; poets like Fielding and Smollett; historians like Gibbon. These men of the ancient gentry amply vindicate the pretensions of the old families to the honour of producing the best men that

England has ever seen. On the other hand, there are numerous great men who come of humble and low families or of, what Scott has said, "middling classes of society." Marlowe was the son of a shoe-maker, Bunyan of a brazier, Keats of a livery-stablekeeper, Samuel Pepys of a tailor, Dickens of a clerk, and Lincoln of a ploughman. Shaw, for some period of his life, was a clerk, H.G. Wells a draper's assistant, O. Henry a shepherd, Ben Jonson a bricklayer, Franklin a printer.

Many illustrious persons are born out of wedlock. William, the Duke of Normandy, later known as William the Conqueror, was the illegitimate son of Robert le Diable of Normandy. Charles Martel, the champion of Christendom, was a natural son of Pepin the Fat. Erasmus the great artist, Boccaccio, Prior, and Savage the great poets, were all illegitimate.

All this does not imply that great men are absolutely free from the influence of heredity and environment. They do betray traces of parental traits.

Mothers play a greater role in the making of their children than the fathers do. Abraham Lincoln wrote of his mother, "All that I am and all that I hope to be I owe to my mother." Napoleon went to the length of saying, "the future good or bad conduct of a child depends entirely on the mother." When he was at the pinnacle of glory, Napoleon attributed his success to his mother. It is said of him, "Nobody had any command over him except his mother, who found means, by a mixture of tenderness, severity, and strict justice to make him love, respect, and obey her. From his mother he learnt the virtue of obedience." Gray owed, as he himself said, his poetic sensibility to his mother. At her death he spoke of her as "the careful, tender mother of many children, one of whom alone had the misfortune to survive her." He wrote to his friend, "I felt then, with all my full heart, that one can have but one mother!" The same is true of Cowper, Swift, Thomson, and Southey. Cicero, Goethe, Scott, Saint Augustine, and Kant, to name only a few, have paid glorious tributes to their mothers.

Many great men have derived part of their greatness from

their fathers. Browning's robust optimism is traced to his father's barbarian vigour and strength. Bacon's shrewd commonsense is traced to the statesmanship of Sir Nicholas Bacon. Burns got his mental vigour from his father.

A few of the great men are doubly well-born. They owe many of the qualities of head and heart to both of their parents. Some of thesefortunates are Bacon, Luther, Schiller, Goethe, Burns, and Wesley. Goethe said, "I inherited from my father a certain sort of eloquence calculated to enforce my doctrines on my auditors, and from my mother I derived the fancy of representing all that imagination can conceive with energy and vivacity." One of his admirers, after meeting Goethe's parents, remarked, "Now do I understand how Goethe has become the man he is."

Thus it appears that, although great men are independent of lineage, it is always an advantage to be well-born. Does it mean that the descendants of the men of genius should exhibit the qualities of their progenitors? Sometimes they do, but more often they do not. In fact, some sons of illustrious fathers have been given to the most sordid ways of life. Sophocles wrote, "Noble sons do not always spring from noble fathers, nor evil from evil, but

there is no trusting to anything mortal." Marcus Aurelius was a paragon of virtue, but his son a monster of cruelty. Cicero's son was a drunkard, Luther's violent and disobedient, William Penn's a scoundrel, Campbell's imbecile, and John Howard's profligate and debauch. Sir Walter Scott's son was a cavalry officer. He was ashamed of his father's literary fame and took pride in that he had not read any of his works. Mozart's son, when asked by Bianchin if he liked music, replied, "What the devil do you take me for? I don't love music," and, throwing a handful of gold on the table, said, "That is the only music I like."

Thus our earlier postulate remains that genius is independent of lineage. Noble birth may adorn and assist it, but it can never of itself constitute greatness. The son of a butcher and wool-stapler is the greatest dramatist this world has yet known. "Genius is like the wind that bloweth where it listeth. Genius bursts through circumstances, and makes a way for itself. Patience seeks a way, but genius makes one," observed Samuel Smiles. †

RELAX!

A West-Country friend came to London recently for the first time. He couldn't stand it, and before the week ended he went home.

To him, everyone seemed to do nothing but rush here and dash there. "I only hope," he said, "they know where they are going."

Do we? I doubt it. Aren't we in danger of having "no blessed time for love or hope, but only time for grief?" The ability to relax is a precious thing that "civilization" seems bent on taking away from us—if we let it.

—ROFFE THOMPSON

Short Story

By T. N. Jayaraman

Usha Decides

[The typewriter becomes vocal and tells a romance-about two boys in love with a girl...]

RESIST the temptation of discarding this article as some winding essay on me or my invention. It's a really interesting story, I can assure you, ever written by a typewriter. For the past few centuries you people have got published such a huge amount of material that you are almost in a state of literary exhaustion. You've recorded almost every aspect of human experience that you've no more original stories to write. No wonder, therefore, that we typewriters and so-called inanimate beings should rise up to the occasion and offer you our experiences to the profit of both.

I'm a five-year-old Remington residing at the Central Hall of the Commercial Institute. Perhaps you are one of the

students who manipulate me in which case you'd know what an obliging person I am. (That is to say, if you'd call me a person). Well, in my five years of life, though my entire world is that twenty by twenty by twenty-four Central Hall which has two tube lights fixed at equal distances of the ceiling, I've come across hundreds of boys and girls—and you may not know how meddlesome and destructive most of them are—and thus have gained enough experience to write for the magazines.

(Never, never begin a story with a lengthy introduction like this. The days are gone by since Joseph Addison and men are no longer interested in the author of a story. Your stories, if to be successful,

should begin straightaway and in action. But in the case of me, a typewriter, it is admissible.)

USHA is a student of both typewriting and shorthand. She has the principal asset of a lady-stenographer—I mean personality. I don't have a thesaurus or something such as you have in your writing table and refer whenever you fall short of adjectives. So I'd simply say she's beautiful. She has a lively complexion and a smile and her figure is curved in exactly the right places. I'm not fortunate enough to have her fingers dance over my keyboard. She's practising on the fellow at the opposite corner—he's a Remington Rand.

But once when he's taken up by the manager for job-work and she's asked to go to me, my mainspring throbs as it has never done before. She sails over the hall towards me and she places her chiselled fingers across my keys and she starts pounding. And lo! I feel as if a shiver runs down my spine. (I'm using the phrase in its usual sense and so will you please keep your comments on the spine of a typewriter for yourselves?)

By this time you ought to have gathered that a girl who can stimulate a typewriter to such extent must surely have kindled fire in the hearts of the boys. Sure, she does it pretty

well. Especially there are two boys who are so infatuated over her that there seems to be nothing else in this wide world to interest them more than her person.

(Now, when you write a story, never write one on this topic—one girl and two boys or again one boy and two girls. It's called the eternal triangle and has very little appeal to readers. But this instance of course is an exception.)

Sekar and Kumar—the two Romeos—jointly and severally try everything in their power to please and influence her. As you'd say they worship the very ground she walks on. And it comes to pass that both of them find an occasion to meet her for an immediate decision as some of you young writers urge editors concerning your stories.

AND I can see Usha is in a fix. She admires and respects the two with the utmost equality and she could not find a trace of variation in their love to her. I feel it's a pity she couldn't marry both of them and am wondering what would turn out.

Well, it appears that the trio have had something like a joint-meeting these institute authorities have on Sunday afternoons. An agreement is drawn out to hold a contest for the two boys, and as the odds must be equal they select a common field,

namely typewriting. A day is fixed on which both of them have to type a given passage. He who covers more matter, deductions being made for mistakes, should win the hands of the handsome baby. The other should leave the scene without fuss.

From that day on, as you can imagine, Sekar and Kumar become such active students. Each of them pays three hours' fee and pounds us morning, noon and night without tiring. Kumar is operating me while Sekar is engaged with the one next to myself. It seems the only thought that lives in their mind is "Speed, more speed, more speed, yet more speed." I very often notice to my great dismay Kumar's hasty thumping of my keys with the wrong fingers.

I REGULARLY watch their progress with increasing interest when on the second day to that of the contest, it's announced that Usha is ill and would not attend her classes. Perhaps it's due to the sudden change in weather or perhaps it's one of these modern girls' pretensions of frailty. At any rate the boys seem much worried and on the very same evening, together they pay her an anxious visit.

I now think of shifting the scene of the story to Usha's residence.

(Well, I'd advise you not to practise such feats in *your* story. This is a switching on from first person singular to third person narrative which will not be allowed by any logical editor. In my case, however, it simply can't be helped.)

Usha lies in a mahogany cot in an attractive posture. Even illness can't darken her features. She throws a fascinating smile at the two sultors as they enter her boudoir. They enquire about her health and are consoled on being told that it's simply the result of a drenching. They make certain casual remarks and prolong the delicious interview.

Suddenly Usha turns her head towards the small table beside her and eyes the round rosy apples on it. "I'd like to have an apple," she says.

Kumar immediately gets up, selects a large apple with particular care, picks up the pen-knife beside it and starts cutting the apple in bits. Sekar equally rises to the occasion and begins pouring out his knowledge on the nourishing effect of apples on ailing bodies.

PRESENTLY there is a loud scream and behold, Kumar jumps up from his seat, his fingers all bleeding profusely. The apple bits tinged heavy with red fall to the ground. The sharp edge of the pen-knife has made a deep cut in Kumar's

left index-finger. And at the sight of it, Usha gives vent to a cry as if she has bleeding cuts all over her body.

SEKAR hastens towards his friend and dipping his handkerchief in water ties it securely over his finger. But Kumar's a gallant boy; he totally ignores the matter and when he speaks to Usha his words are coated with immense sorrow. "I'm very sorry, Usha, that you can't have your apple. It has been so unexpected an accident—"

On hearing these words Usha would nearly have sobbed. "Nonsense, Kumar," she says, "don't you know what you've done? You've nearly chopped your finger!"

"I'm only too glad that it happened when I've been doing something for you," says Kumar holding her eyes with his in an affectionate gaze, "I'd sooner have all my fingers cut off than to keep your wish unfulfilled."

And as soon as the friends leave their sweetheart, Sekar fires the question that's uppermost in his heart. "How are you going to take the test with a bandage in your left index-finger?"

Kumar raises a questioning eye-brow. "Why, perhaps the contest may be postponed," says he.

The next morning as Kumar enters the hall I could see his

face all beaming with pleasure. Surely he has had some kind words from his sweetheart. He looks up for the manager and not finding him, he seats himself as usual before me and waits. Probably he's going to get leave for some time as his finger is hurt. Sekar then saunters in and he looks puzzled, anxious and uneasy.

Presently Usha's younger brother makes his sheepish appearance and slips into Sekar's palm a piece of folded paper which the latter hastily peruses. A person convicted of murder would look more cheerful. The note reads: "Sekar, I'm sorry to disappoint you. But I've found that Kumar loves me so much as even to risk his success in the contest. So I've made my choice without having a contest. Best wishes to you. Usha."

Thereupon Sekar gets up and walks up to Kumar who is seated before me. With an affected grin he says, "Congratulations!" Kumar is rather taken by surprise. "Oh, thank you so much," says he, "and please, Sekar, take it easy!"

"I'll take it all right," snaps Sekar, "I'm not so sentimental as to be moved by the careless action of one who cuts off one's fingers. Of course, Usha believes you've been more interested in pleasing her than to take care of yourself. But I

—Please see page 69

A Serial Story—2

The Lady Doctor

By E. THEODORE KING

The story so far:

Vijay and Vilasani are two students in a medical college. They work together in the hospital and watch operations performed by the surgeons. It is natural that they fall in love and meet on the beach alone. The fact that she is a rich girl and he is a poor boy raises no barrier between them. On the sands he gives her a scent bottle, labelled "Mischief"...

Now read on:

"THE best." He drew a small bottle of scent out of his pocket and showed it to her. He uncorked the cap and said, "Smell it."

She smelt it and smiled.

"Good, isn't it?" he said. He sprinkled some in the palm

of his hand and he gently rubbed it on her right shoulder, then on her left shoulder. His touch thrilled her and she put her hands crossed on her shoulders and looked at him with soulful eyes of love, half-closed and dreamy and filled with a strange wistfulness. He capped the bottle and looked at her and a dreamy look came into his own eyes. He took her face gently in the palms of his hands.

"Vilas," he whispered hoarsely.

She did not say anything but just looked at him, her heart in her eyes. He bent towards her and kissed her.

She clung to him. He put his arms around her and hugged her to his heart. He stroked her hair gently.

"When will you take me to your house, Vijay?"

"Soon, darling."

"Will your parents approve of me?"

"They'll be crazy about you. I'll be very jealous then."

She snuggled against him and he kissed her hair softly.

"Do you love me, Vijay?"

He did not answer her. Instead, he kissed her and kissed her hard.

"Will you marry me, Vijay?"

He grinned. "Is that a proposal?"

"I don't know. Can you cook?"

He grinned more now. "Why...you...you...vixen!"

She clung to him and began to sob. He was puzzled. She was a strange creature of moods.

"Did I hurt you, darling?" he whispered.

"I love you, Vijay. I love you very much. I'd die without you."

He drew her head back and wiped her tears.

"I love you, too," he said tenderly. Then he pretended to be angry. "Damn this 'Mis-

chief'. See what mischief it has done. It has made you unhappy. I will throw it away and get you another one, with a better name."

She snatched the bottle from his hands.

"You'll do nothing of that kind, Vijay. I like it." She smiled at him now. "Thank you, Vijay."

He smiled, too.

"How's your mother?"

"She's all right. She's allergic to the kitchen. She asked you to come home sometime."

"I would like to see her, too. She's so kind and loving."

"What about your editorship?"

"I've decided not to contest for it."

"Oh, no, you mustn't. You must become the editor. Give your nomination tomorrow."

His eyes rounded and widened with surprise.

"You women!" he said, laughing. "You never think straight. Why do you have to contradict yourselves always?"

She drew his head towards her and kissed him.

"Because we are women," she said, "and I love you..."

The hurricane lanterns burned slowly and dimly in the house. It was a small building in a row of houses in a dingy street. The street lamp threw its feeble beams round, and the shadowy figures that moved about seemed to appear and disappear.

Vijay knocked at the door. The bolt was unlatched and he went in.

The front room was as big as a small house can have it, and already the beds were spread on the floor. In a corner was the only cot and on it lay a premature old lady, sick, looking so very weak and wan. On the other side was a small table and chair, and a premature old man sat on the chair and typed furiously. Suffering ages people quickly and though Vijay's parents were just middle-aged, they looked old, very old. His younger brother, Vinod, a boy of thirteen, was already abed and fast asleep. His sister, Ramani, about eight years old, smiled at him and got up from her bed and went into the adjoining room that was the kitchen. She looked weak, ill-nourished but bright and precocious. The baby girl, Chitty, a year and a half old, slept soundly on Ramani's bed-spread. In a corner stood a cycle, old but faithful.

The father, Vasudeva, looked up as Vijay came in.

"You are late home today," he murmured.

Vijay just nodded and began to undress. Then he put on an old vest and wore a dhoti, and moved up to his mother.

"How are you feeling?" he asked her gently. "Have you taken the medicine?"

"Yes. I'm feeling better. You go and eat."

"I'm not hungry, mother."

Vasudeva heard him and suddenly flared up. "What do you think you are—a rich man, to spend all your money in the hotels?"

Vijay smiled wryly. "I did not say I ate in a hotel, father. I just said I'm not hungry."

The father went back to his typing. The mother smiled.

"You must never sleep on an empty stomach, Vijay," she said. "What kind of a doctor will you make if you don't follow the fundamental rules of life?"

"As long as I have you, I'll never make a bad doctor."

She smiled again. Ramani came in and stood beside him.

"Food is served, Doctorguru," she said. "Will you come and eat?"

He grinned and put his hand on her head. Then he followed her into the kitchen-cum-dining room. He moved to a small partition which was a bathroom and washed his face, hands and when he came out, Ramani gave him a towel to dry himself. He sat down on the mat before the meal and began to eat. Ramani sat next to him, placing one elbow on his thigh and supporting her chin on her fist.

"I GIVE you much trouble, don't I?" he told her.

"You give a lot of trouble," he said, smilingly. "It makes ather angry and mother anxious."

"And you?"

"It gives me a chance to erve you."

He put his arm around her and drew her close to him.

"Brother," she said, "next ear you will be a doctor, won't ou?"

"I hope so."

"And you will get me a ister-in-law?"

"I hope so."

"And you will build a big ouse and have electric lights ll over?"

"I hope so."

"Aren't you sure? You only say, 'I hope so,' 'I hope so' in such a dejected way."

"We can only hope in this world, little one. We are not sure of anything. Fate plays strange tricks with human lives."

"Did you write that in one of your stories?"

"I guess so. Why?"

"Our teacher was telling us the same thing today in the class. I saw her reading a magazine, the same one like you brought the other day. In my pride and vanity, I imagined that you had written it and that she has read it from your story and was quoting you. I wonder what she would say if she knew that I am such a great writer's sister?"

"She doesn't know?"

"No. And I won't tell her. Let her find out herself. She is a very pretty woman, Anna. Why don't you marry her?"

He hit her on the head lovingly.

"You are getting too mischievous," he said. "Should I marry every pretty girl you come across?"

"You are so good and nice, Anna, that whenever I see a beautiful woman, I say to myself, 'She'll be such a nice sister-in-law'."

"You keep wishing a lot, little one."

"I like it, though. It makes me happy."

He finished eating and got up and washed his hand. Ramani cleared the plate and came with him to the front room.

The father looked up.

"I'm tired," he said. "I think I will go to sleep. You type the rest, Vijay."

"Yes, father."

"It is a good story. Only your women are so unreal."

"I have so little experience with them, father."

The old man laughed and got up from the chair. Vijay went up to his mother who slept restlessly. He looked at her with kindly eyes but with eyes of pain and helplessness.

Ramani came up to him and slipped her small hand in his.

"Why don't you take her to hospital, Anna?" she whispered.

"I want to, but every time I

tell her that, she becomes worse. She says who will look after the children and the house and so on, and I just give it up. If she stays in the hospital for a week, she'll be well soon."

He moved up to the table and picked up the written script of his, studying it. He peered over the typescript and yawned. He sat down and began to type. He could hear his father snoring and Ramani rustling her clothes as she stretched herself on the bed.

(To be continued)

Usha Decides

—Continued from page 64

know yours has been a damp careless action and nothing else!"

With that Sekar leaves the hall.

Kumar stoops over me and whispers as if he's confiding in a personal friend. "Poor fellow! I'm sorry I had to impose upon him. But as regards speed I knew for certain I can't beat him. So I had no other way than to find some device of—" With a chuckle he continued, "Well, he says I've been careless. If only he knew how careful I had been to get the knife do the job!"

A Woman's Middle Years

AT a certain stage in a woman's life she undergoes a slow bodily change. Her middle age is marked by uncertainty and she stands, as it were, at the cross-roads of life. Between 35 and 45, she experiences a gradual cessation of the menstrual flow. When the periods stop altogether she is said to have what is called menopause. Her physical functions of bearing and breast-feeding babies are now at an end and the future calls for a quiet readjustment on her part.

A large number of women are not perturbed or seriously affected by the change. They have the knack of taking the rough with the smooth and they are psychologically prepared to face the new life. They have the strength also to overcome any minor difficulties or ailments, associated with menopause.

But some women who are very nervous and are susceptible to blood pressure have unfor-

tunately to face an ordeal. They have borne sons and daughters who are now grown up. The boys are perhaps earning elsewhere and girls have gone to their husbands' homes.

At first when she misses her periods—say in her fortieth year, she wonders whether she has conceived again and is even secretly ashamed of the fact that she should be in the family way when her grandchildren are entering upon their teens. She feels very much embarrassed and hates to confess about it even to her old mother or her husband's aunt in the house.

Then, to her surprise, the period re-starts after one or two months and the flow is unusually large. The one danger to be guarded against is heavy and excessive bleeding. She breathes a sigh of relief now that there is absolutely no basis for her secret fears. When she feels exhausted after the

three days and has reasons to think that there has been a sharp drop in her weight she must at once consult some expert lady doctor. If she can't afford the fees, she should go to the nearest women's hospital and take advice. Especially is this consultation necessary if she suspects a growth.

If, before the next period arrives, she is troubled with constipation, shooting pains in the back or a warm glow of heat or flush at odd moments she will be justified in drawing the inference that menopause is not far off. As indicated earlier, her suffering will be severe if she has other ailments like blood pressure. She will become restless, will refuse food or drink and will keep dumb even though she may be plied with a hundred queries by her husband and children. She may even resist a visit to the doctor.

I am sorry to point out that there is another type of woman that at times brings down the very roof with her cries and screams. The slightest suggestion that there is something wrong with her and that she would do well to consult a lady doctor would be resented by her and she will become hysterical. She will indeed turn her fury upon those who love her most. Some doctors will go

so far as to say, in plain language, that insanity will affect women who are nearing menopause. In a sense, they are right, for religion would emphasise the close influence of the moon upon such women. And those who have faith will do well to propitiate the Navagrahas.

In such cases, the husband must handle his wife tactfully and with understanding. For a time at least he must not insist on his rights. Such an attitude of self-denial will go a long way towards ironing out the troubles. He must never assume the attitude of a vigorous he-man who is still strong enough to make new conquests. Such nonsensical talk is best avoided as, psychologically, it may have a deleterious bearing on his help-meet whom Nature is subjecting to a new process of transformation.

Of course, after the menopause has arrived after an uncertain half year or one, she will be quite normal. The bodily functions of the male do also undergo some imperceptible change though their routine life is not disturbed.

It cannot be over-emphasised that the psychological aspects of a woman's middle years must be remembered by the husband. If he has been kind and sympathetic before, there is every need for him to appreciate her problems and to be gentle in

word, thought and deed. If the wife imagines that her husband is cold and hostile and hates her because of her present condition for which she is hardly responsible, she will never forgive him. Nothing will be lost if he acts as brother to sister, who are eager to help each other without expecting any reward or return.

The uncertain period will be shortened effectively if the wife is given some health salts to relieve her constipation. This will reduce her back-ache and itching sensation also. Plenty of fruits and a light diet will ease the tension. If her sons and daughters and their children visit her frequently to cheer her up and keep near her the psychological problems associated with this change will solve themselves sooner than later. The doctor's revelation may have upset her but the sight of those dear and near to her—

especially her own children—may give her a sense of fulfilment—of a life that has not been wasted and that has reproduced itself.

And quickly, to the pleasant surprise of everybody, she will soon become quite her normal self. Having accepted this natural fact, she will be gay and cheerful.

Of course, after the menopause a resumption of marital rights is quite common and is not fraught with any danger. But at least a full year must roll by before it is thought of. There are instances of women bearing children five or even ten years after menopause but that need not frighten any one. Exceptions prove the rule even as planes come down to the earth after winging their way through the skies for whole a day!

—G

We give to necessity the praise of virtue.

—QUINTILIAN

★ ★ ★

Time, the subtle thief of youth.

—JOHN MILTON

★ ★ ★

That inverted Bowl they call the Sky

Whereunder crawling coop'd we live and die.

—OMAR KHAYYAM

A Change Of Heart

[When it became crystal clear to the young woman that her husband was making love to a widow, she decided to teach him an unforgettable lesson...]

"SUBADRA," accosted Swarna, "your husband is running after a young widow. They meet every evening at the end of the station platform No. 7 after 8 p.m. You know, no train comes there except in the morning and it is absolutely dark and deserted."

I suppressed my rage and vexation at this bolt from the blue and pretended to be unconcerned. "Oh, you mean Gowri? They were childhood playmates and lived as neighbours for years. But I know for certain there is no romantic attachment between them. They

are just like brother and sister. She is badly in need of a job and I think he is trying to get her one."

Swarna giggled and thrust her handkerchief into her mouth apparently to stop laughing outright. Then after a pause she said with a mock-serious air. "I shall give my opinion of you, Subadra. You are too simple-minded and think that the world consists of good-natured men and virtuous women. Shall I tell you what Keshav, that young college lad, was talking about? He goes to the station every evening and

loiters about all the platforms. He has seen your husband Bhagwan kissing and cuddling that cursed widow. Why should she sit on his lap while they are talking? I don't understand."

I FLARED. "Swarna, even while you were studying in school you carried tales against your class-mates and teachers. Don't you remember how your mistress gave you a dozen cuts with the cane warning you against scandal mongering?"

"On your own admission the station platform No. 7 is absolutely dark and deserted. Then how can anybody see anything there? So you have just started tale-bearing against my husband. I know you are a jealous cat. Your parents moved heaven and earth to have you married off to him but Bhagwan said he would remain a bachelor rather than marry you."

"So you accuse me of lying?" retorted Swarna. "Well, you had better go one of these nights to the station and see things for yourself. Why are you hitting at me over my single blessedness? My parents may be poor and I may not be as pretty as you. But I am not a husband-stealer like that cunning vixen, Gowri. Then you will be thanking me for giving you this timely warning. I don't know what has come over you. You are so emotionally overworked and irritable. I am off now."

I must buy medicine for my ailing father."

She turned her back on me and was about to cross the street when I clapped my hands and called her. She returned smiling though pretending to be hard pressed for time. "Now, Subadra, you seem to be believe me after all. Do you want better proof that your husband has fallen into the snare of that widow and is unfaithful to you?"

"You have taken the question out of my lips. What I want to know is, did you yourself see that widow and my husband together?" I asked.

She seemed surprised at my question and was thoughtful for a minute. "To be frank with you, Subadra, their romance doesn't stop there. Gowri takes him to her small flat at the end of my street and he comes out of it after an hour or two."

"It may be some harmless talk or chat. Seeing how broad-minded my husband is, I wouldn't blame him for trying to cheer up that widow. Did you see with your own eyes...?"

Swarna laughed without stopping her mouth with her kerchief. "Last Sunday night," she confessed, "I stole upstairs to her flat and went on tip-toe to her room. The door was

not even fully closed and a dim light was burning. I peeped from the shadows and saw your husband holding Gowri in her arms and kissing her most passionately on the lips. But that devil of a woman would not leave him. And how shameless she was, half clad and so seductive. I wouldn't blame your husband for losing his head."

"Go on, Swarna, hide nothing from me," I encouraged.

"Ah! And then the light in the room went out and I heard some silly whispers and giggles."

"Enough Swarna," I cried, my anger fully roused. "Now I am fully convinced of my husband's treachery. There will be blood on my hands tomorrow. You are going to hear all about it and read some god-chilling accounts in the papers. I am determined, I swear," I shouted. Some passers-by stopped and stared at me and then passed on.

SWARNA was horrified. "I have to be moving, Subadra dear. The chemist's shop may be closed if I am late. I suppose you will be justified in the dreadful step you are con-

templating. But think of the three sweet kids that you are blessed with and what will happen to them...?"

I stiffened up, my eyes gleaming with unwonted fire. "What is going to happen to me will certainly happen to them. Now I am off."

It was about midnight when there was hell in the house. My husband began to shout and shake me up. "What is it, Subadra? You have been striking me on the chest with your comb? What have you been dreaming about? You were calling me a faithless villain and all that?"

I woke up and rubbed my eyes. Ashamed and humiliated I apologized to my husband. "You see," I explained, "we members of the ladies' club staged rehearsal of a drama with myself acting the part of a heroine let down by a faithless husband. Swarna plays the part of the treacherous husband and I am supposed to murder him with a rubber comb!"

My husband laughed and hugged me. \$

All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others.

—GEORGE ORWELL

PLANETS & YOUR FORTUNE

The following predictions are based on the movement of the Nine Planets in the 12 Rasis according to Gochara as also that of Uranus, Neptune and Pluto which are upagrahas. 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 January 1960]

By T. V. RAMAN

The important planetary transits: Mercury to Dhanus on 1-1-1960 and Mars to Dhanus on 10-1-60. Uranus continues to stay in cancer, Pluto in Leo and Neptune in Libra. During this month too "Kalasarpa Yoga" is present. This Yoga is considered as an evil yoga in astrological parlance. The effects will be full of ups and downs.

MESHA

(Aswini 4, Bharani 4, Krithigai 1.)

After 10-1-60, your health, popularity etc. will be extremely good since Mars transits to Dhanus. Venus, Lord of 2nd and 7th house is powerfully placed in 7th house, his own house. Your finances will be good. There will be unexpected financial gains. The position of Mercury, Lord of 3rd and 6th house in the 9th trikona is very

good. Pluto in the 5th house indicates that you will be a bit worried. Kethu in the 12th house indicates wasteful expenditure and risks through accidents.

Those in jobs will have promotions after 13-1-60 and those in business will meet with a boom this month onwards. The month is excellent for those engaged in politics, social service or film acting.

Lucky Days: 14th, 18th, 21st and 30th.

Household women will find the month splendid. The finances will be good. The month is excellent for those in jobs or studying. Some unmarried women will get married. Some married women will become expectant mothers.

Lucky Days: 8th, 18th and 23rd.

VRISHABHA

(Krithigai 3, Rohini 4, Mrigasirsha 2.)

Venus, Lord of the Lagna, is hidden in the 6th house. Jupiter aspects Lagna. Hence there won't be remarkable setback in your health. Your finances will be rather discouraging. The position of Venus and Neptune in the 6th house indicates liquidation of debts and financial gains. The positions of Mars, Mercury, Saturn and Jupiter in the 8th house indicates wasteful expenditure, risks through accidents. Hence be cautious in all directions.

The month is good for those in jobs. Businessmen will meet with loss. Those engaged in politics, social service or film acting will be held to blame.

Lucky Days: Nil.

Household women will find the month very bad. Your health may be affected. Finances will be poor. Those studying or in jobs will have an adverse time. Unmarried women will have to wait the whole of this year for getting married. The month is not good for all others.

Lucky Days: Nil.

MITHUNA

(Mrigasirsha 2, Arudra 4, Punarvasu 3)

Mercury, Lord of the Lagna, occupies 7th kendra. Hence your health will be good. Your popularity will be on the increase. Rahu in the 4th house indicates irksomeness at home front.

Venus in the 5th house indicates financial betterment, happiness through children and mental vigour.

Those in jobs will have promotions. The month is good in general. Businessmen will meet with huge profits. Those engaged in politics, social service or film acting will earn fame and name.

Lucky Days: 7th, 18th and 21st.

Household women will find the month good after 13-1-60. Some unmarried women will get married. Some married women will become expectant mothers. Those in jobs or studying will experience good effects after 13-1-60. Those engaged in politics, social service or film acting will have a good time.

Lucky Days: 10th, 11th and 27th.

KATAKA

(Punarvasu 1, Pushya 4, Aslesha 4.)

Uranus is in Janma. Hence you should be careful about your health. Pluto in the 2nd house will affect your finances. The position of Venus in the 4th house indicates luxuries and comforts. The conjunction of Jupiter, Mars, Mercury and Saturn in the 6th house indicates unexpected gains apart from liquidation of debts.

The month is not good for those in jobs. Businessmen will meet with loss. Politicians,

social workers and those engaged in film acting will be held to blame.

Lucky Days: 8th and 12th.

The month is good for household women. Those engaged in jobs or studying will pull through. The month is not equally good for all others.

Lucky Days: 10th, 15th and 26th.

SIMHA

(Makara 4, Pooram 4, Uthira 1.)

Pluto is in Janma. Sun is in conjunction with malefics. Hence your health may be affected. The month is adverse from this point of view. Rahu in the 2nd house indicates that there will be hitches at home front. But your finances will not be affected since Jupiter is in 5th house. The conjunction of Venus and Neptune in 3rd house indicates gains.

Those in jobs will experience good results. Those in business will have to wait for some time more to reap profits. The month is good for those engaged in politics, social service or film acting. The month is adverse for speculators.

Lucky Days: 10th, 18th and 27th.

Household women will be well due to Jupiter in the 5th house. Some unmarried women will get married. Some married women will become expectant mothers. The month is good for those studying or in jobs. Those

engaged in politics, social service or film acting will be held to blame.

Lucky Days: 8th, 12th and 23rd.

KANYA

(Uthira 3, Hastha 4, Chitra 2.)

Rahu is in Janma. Mercury is placed in the 4th house. Hence you have to take care of your health. The conjunction of Venus and Neptune in the 2nd house will keep your finances steady. Uranus in the 11th indicates financial gains. Pluto in the 12th will cause wasteful expenditure and trouble through enemies.

Those in jobs will pull through. Businessmen will meet with heavy loss. Those engaged in politics, social service or film acting will not thrive. The month is not good for speculation.

Lucky Days: 4th and 13th.

The month is not good for household women. Those in jobs or studying will manage well. Those engaged in politics, social service or film acting will have a hard time.

Lucky Days: 4th, 13th and 19th.

THULA

(Chitra 2, Swathi 4, Visaka 3.)

Venus is in Janma in conjunction with Neptune. Lagna is hemmed between malefics. Hence your health may be

affected. The presence of malefics in the 3rd house indicates gains, liquidation of debts and other benefits and disappearance of enemies.

Those in jobs will pull through. Businessmen will meet with loss due to Jupiter in 3rd. Politics and social workers will be held to blame.

Lucky Days: 4th, 14th and 24th.

Household women will find the month adverse due to 3rd house Jupiter. The finances will be poor. There will be sorrowful news. The month is not good for those in jobs or studying. The month is adverse for all others.

Lucky Days: 6th, 8th and 12th.

VRISCHIKA

(Visaka 1, Anuradha 4, Jyeshtha 4.)

Mars ~~lord of~~ the Lagna, is 2nd. Jupiter's transit to 2nd house from 13-1-60 will bring prosperity to you. The remaining period of 7½ years' Saturn (i. e. one year and five months) will pass smoothly. Rahu in the 11th house indicates gains.

Those in jobs will be held to blame. Those in business will manage well. Those engaged in politics, social service or film acting will earn name and fame.

Lucky Days: 7th, 12th, and 31st.

Household women will find the month splendid. The finances will be good. Those studying or in jobs will find the

month good. The month is adverse for those engaged in politics or social service.

DHANUS

(Moola 4, Poorada 4, Utharada 1.)

Jupiter, Lord of the Lagna, is in Janma. Hence your health may be affected. Kethu in the 4th house indicates irksomeness at home. Uranus in the 8th will cause wasteful expenditure and risks through accidents. Venus in the 11th house in conjunction with Neptune indicates small financial gains.

Those in jobs will manage despite difficulties. Those in business will meet with heavy loss. The month is not good for all others.

Lucky Days: Nil.

Household women will find the month miserable. Your health will be affected. The household will be unhappy. Those in jobs will pull through. Those studying will not fare well. The month is not good for women engaged in politics, social service or film acting.

Lucky Days: Nil.

MAKARA

(Utharada 3, Sravana 4, Dhanishta 2.)

Saturn is in 12th in conjunction with malefics. There are no good aspects to Lagna. Your health will be affected. Kethu in 3rd house indicates financial gains. Pluto in the 8th house will result in wasteful expenditure and risks through accidents. The month is not good in general.

Those in jobs will pull through. Businessmen will meet with heavy loss. The month is not good for all others.

Lucky Days: Nil.

The month is adverse for household women. Those in jobs or studying will pull through. Women engaged in politics or social service will be held to blame.

Lucky Days: Nil.

KUMBHA

(Dhanishta 2, Sathabhishta 4, Poorattadhi 3.)

Saturn, Lord of the Lagna, is placed in the 11th house. Jupiter transits to 11th house from 13-1-60 which is enviable transit in astrological parlance. Ketu in the 3rd house indicates financial gains. The month is excellent in general.

Those in jobs will get promotions. Businessmen will meet with big profit. The month is good for all others.

Household women will find the month excellent. Those in studying or in jobs will fare well. Women engaged in politics, social service or film acting will make remarkable progress.

Lucky Days: 8th, 18th and 29th.

MEENA

(Poorattadhi 1, Uthirattadhi 4, Revathi 4.)

Jupiter transits to 10th house,

which is adverse. You must be specially careful about your job or business. Ketu in the Janma will affect your health. Pluto in the 6th house indicates good results. Rahu in the 7th house indicates a journey. The conjunction of Venus and Neptune in the 8th house indicates small financial gains.

The month is not good for businessmen or speculators. The month is not good for all others.

Lucky Days: 7th and 12th 19th.

Household women will find the month normally good. Women in jobs or studying will pull through. The month is not good for all others.

Lucky Days: 4th, 14th and 23rd.

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