

ENGLISH

CHAPTER 3: RANGA'S MARRIAGE



RANGA'S MARRIAGE

~Summary~

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No Fancy Title of the Story

The narrator comments why he had not given any elaborate title to the present story, like 'Ranganatha's Vivaha' or 'Jagannatha Vijaya'. The reason is that the story is about a common boy, Ranga, and his marriage. He is an accountant's son and native of village Hosahalli.

The Village of Hosahalli

The narrator mentions that this village is very small and it is not mentioned in geography books. Still he speaks highly about Hosahalli. Even the local doctor, Dr Gundabhatta, who has visited many places outside India, finds it an impressive village.

The village is famous for its sour mangoes and creepers growing in the village pond. The leaves of this creeper could serve as good plates for serving afternoon meals.

But the narrator, Shyama, says that real appreciation of the village can be felt only if one visits it personally and gets acquainted with it.

Ranga's Home coming was a Great Event

Shyama recalls an incident that happened ten years ago. The village accountant was the first one to gather enough courage to send his son to Bangalore to study. Not many people knew English then. That was why Ranga's homecoming was a great event. A big crowd went to greet him. The narrator rushed to see him. Everyone was surprised to see that Ranga had not changed. Once they realised that Ranga was unchanged, the crowd of people slowly disappeared. Only the narrator continued to stand there. Ranga had a smile on his face. He still followed the rituals of his caste by respectfully touching the narrator's feet.

The Narrator Decides to Get Ranga Married

The same afternoon Ranga went to the narrator's house with a couple of oranges in his hand. The narrator thought that such a fine and generous boy should get married and settle down. He enquired about his plan to get married. Ranga said that he didn't want to get married soon. He was searching for the right girl who was mature enough. Secondly, he wanted to marry a girl he admired. He was not in favour of the arranged marriages prevalent in society. Till he got a girl of his choice, he wanted to remain a bachelor.

The narrator was distressed to learn about Ranga's views on marriage but he made up his mind that very soon he would get Ranga married.

The Narrator Found a Suitable Girl for Ranga

The narrator found the most suitable girl for him. It was Rama Rao's niece Ratna, a pretty girl of eleven who had come to stay with him after her parents died. She was from a big town, so she knew how to play the veena and the harmonium. She also had a sweet voice.

The Narrator Starts Playing Match-Maker

The next morning, the narrator told Rama Rao's wife to send Ratna to his house to fetch some buttermilk. Ratna knew the narrator as he was a frequent visitor to Rama Rao's place. Ratna came to the narrator's house. When Ratna came, he requested her to sing a song. It was Friday, so she was wearing a saree.

Ranga's Disappointment

Meanwhile, Ranga came to the narrator's house and stopped at the threshold. He didn't want the singing to stop, but he was curious to see the singer. He was enchanted by her and kept glancing at her. After a while Ranga asked she was married a year ago. Ranga was extremely disappointed to hear this. The narrator noticed signs of disappointment on Ranga's face. Ranga left after sometime.

The Narrator's Plan

The next morning, the narrator met the astrologer, better known as Shastri, and tutored him about his plan in Ranga's case. In the afternoon, the narrator met Ranga, who appeared as disturbed as he was yesterday. The narrator suggested to meet Shastri and enquire about what was worrying him. Ranga did not protest and went to meet Shastri with the narrator. Shastri pretended surprise and spoke about meeting the narrator after a long time.

The narrator almost ruined his own plan by saying that he had already met Shastri that very morning but Shastri saved it by changing the sentence.

The narrator told Shastri that something was worrying poor Ranga and they had come to seek his help. After making a pretence of some calculations, Shastri said that it was about a girl. To the narrator's question as to who that girl was, Shastri said that she had the name of something found in the ocean - Kamala, Pachchi, Moss, Pearl or Ratna - the precious stone.

The Narrator's Plan Succeeds

The narrator's plan was bearing fruit. There was some surprise on Ranga's face and even some happiness. On their return, Shyama passed in front of Rama Rao's house.

Ratna was standing at the door. The narrator went inside Rama Rao's house and came back a little later. He had a surprised look on his face. He told Ranga that there was some wrong

information given to him. Ratna was not married. He also enquired of Ranga whether what Shastri had indicated was true. Shyama asked Ranga that he is thinking about Ratna. Ranga admitted that whatever Shastri said about the girl was true. Now, he wanted to get married to Ratna.

Ranga and Ratna Get Married

Finally Ranga and Ratna got married. All the idealism of Ranga was forgotten as he was totally fascinated by Ratna's beauty and sweet voice. They named their first child Shyama, as because of Shyama's (the narrator) efforts they had got married. Years later, Ranga invited the narrator for dinner on the occasion of his 3 year old son's birthday. The son was also named Shyama in honour of the narrator. Thus, Ranga was leading a happy married life with Ratna.

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NCERT SOLUTIONS

Questions (Page No. 24)

(Reading with Insight)

Question 1. Comment on the influence of English — the language and the way of life — on Indian life as reflected in the story. What is the narrator's attitude to English?

Answer: The narrator thinks that the English language and the English way of life have not made any valid impact on Indian life. The story tells how the villagers are eager to meet Ranga who has returned from Bangalore after learning English. Villagers believe Ranga's physical appearance has changed as a result of his English studies. They gather in large numbers in front of his house, but when they see that he is the same old person, they are disappointed and leave. This proves the influence of the English language on villages. The narrator dislikes English and its sporadic use in Kannada, his native language. It is disgraceful, according to the narrator. Ranga, on the other hand, was influenced by the English language and culture. He preferred to marry a mature woman rather than a modern bride. The narrator did not approve of this thought.

Question 2. Astrologers' perceptions are based more on hearsay and conjecture than what they learn from the study of the stars. Comment with reference to the story.

Answer: In this narrative, the astrologer assists the narrator in convincing a young man that Ratna is the best choice for him. In the story, the astrologer is portrayed negatively. After the duo dupes Ranga, they sit down and discuss the entire situation. The narrator commends the astrologer for reciting everything he had taught him without raising any doubt. He also ridicules his shastra. Though the astrologer is hurt by the statement, the complete situation portrays how his perspectives are based on rumour and conjecture rather than the study of the stars.

Question 3. Indian society has moved a long way from the way the marriage is arranged in the story. Discuss.

Answer: The entire process of choosing a bride for Ranga in the narrative 'Ranga's Marriage' is based on the system that was followed long ago in our country. The situation has now completely changed. Marriages at a young age are uncommon. People have realized that if a marriage is to last, a certain level of maturity is required, and this maturity can only be obtained through education. When boys and girls decide to marry, it is always a deliberate decision. Marriages now take place in India only after both the girl and the boy consent. The narrator took the initiative for Ranga and Ratna's wedding in the story 'Ranga's Marriage.' However, in terms of the marriage scene in India, we are witnessing a lot of change these days.

Question 4. What kind of a person do you think the narrator is?

Answer: A narrator is an aged person who has a loving and generous character. Ranga's decision to remain a bachelor if he does not find a girl he considers suitable for him astounds him. As a result, the narrator decides to find a girl for Ranga, demonstrating his concern for him. He is a good judge of human character and enjoys a good laugh. He is also a gentleman who is always looking out for the best interests of others. The narrator of the story expresses his disapproval of the English custom of love marriage.

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