



INDIAN SCHOOL MUSCAT
SENIOR SECTION
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
CLASS XI

RANGA'S MARRIAGE
Masti Venkatesha Iyengar



SUMMARY

Ranga's Marriage, by Masti Venkatesha Iyengar, is a story about a boy who returns to his village after receiving education from Bangalore.

The story is a first person narrative and a major portion of the story is in flash back. The speaker directly addresses the reader. The narrator is a neighbour of the protagonist. He introduces the story with a difference by first giving a detailed description of their village Hoshali. He praises the mangoes from his village. He asks the reader if he/she has ever heard of the village. He replies to the question himself, for the village was not located in any of the maps for the English babus and the ones in our country forgot to put it there. Then he introduces Ranga, the protagonist, in a time ten years ago. Ranga had gone to Bangalore for studies and returned home after six months. It was the time when English was a language not popular and a few people used it. All used to converse in Kannada.

All the villagers arrived at Ranga's place and began scrutinising him. To their dismay, he was still the same old Ranga and they dispersed. However, the narrator stayed back and shared a few jokes with the boy and then left. Later in the afternoon, Ranga arrived at the narrator's home with a few oranges. The narrator judged the boy and felt it appropriate to marry such a well educated and humble boy. However, Ranga had no plans to settle as a married man. He put his views on marriage in front of the narrator that he wanted to get married to a girl who is mature and someone he could admire.

Ranga left after the discussion and the narrator decided then that he would get the boy married. Determined, he began considering Rama Rao's niece Ratna as a suitable bride for Ranga. She was from a big town and knew how to play veena and harmonium. He came up with a plan and arranged a meeting.

The narrator was happy as his plan was working. As his next step, the next day the narrator took Ranga to an astrologer who he had already tutored what to say. It was the meeting with the astrologer when the narrator's name was disclosed. Shyama, he was. The astrologer pretended to read the natal chart of Rangappa and declared that the boy was in love with a girl who had a name of something found in the ocean. Shyama said it could be Ratna, Rama Rao's niece. Ranga's smile was not hidden from Shyama. Ranga by then had admitted that he had been attracted to the girl.

The story moves forward ten years, or to say, returns to the present. Rangappa came one day to the narrator, inviting him at his son Shyama's third birthday. Obviously, Ratna and Ranga had been married. And now they have a three year old son whom Ranga named after the narrator.

Answer the following questions in 30-40 words:

1. “What has happened is disgraceful, believe me”, says the narrator. What does he refer to?
2. Why does the narrator refer to the Black Hole of Calcutta?
3. What is so special about the village Hosahalli, according to the narrator?
4. What about Ranga impressed the writer in the first meeting?
5. What kind of bride was Ranga looking for?
6. What was the writer's need to rope in the Shastri into his plan?
7. How did the narrator arrange that Ranga should meet Ratna?
8. “Words, mere words! The fellow said he would leave but he did not make a move. How can one expect words to match actions in these days of Kaliyuga?” Who said these words and in what context?
9. What is the theme of the story ‘Ranga’s Marriage’?
10. “There’s greater truth in the shastra than we imagine,” Ranga said. What does this statement tell about his mind?

Answer the following questions in 100-120 words:

1. Character sketch of the narrator.

Shyama, the narrator of the story ‘Ranga’s Marriage’ is also the central character. His style of narration evokes a lot of humour in the story. His use of language is quite colourful and metaphorical. He is an elderly gentleman and refers to himself as a dark piece of oil cake. He believes in Indian culture, its values and etiquettes. He feels it is disgraceful to use English words in the native tongue. He is passionately in love with his village and the villagers and rambles incessantly while describing it. He is a keen observer of his surroundings.

He is a good judge of people and regards Ranga as a generous and considerate fellow. He is conservative at heart and feels unhappy at Ranga’s decision to remain single. His taking selfless interest in Ranga’s marriage shows that he belongs to an old cultured world in which people were no self centred and materialistic.

2. 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?

(introduction –

influenced Indian way of life even in the countryside – use English words while speaking Kannada - Rama Rao’s son - buys a bundle of firewood -tells the poor illiterate seller no ‘change’- English way of life influenced Ranga- believes that arranged marriages do not work - resolves not to marry - mature girl of his liking.

many people under the influence of the English way of life look down upon their own people, language and traditional lifestyles – loses one’s caste and culture – attitude of the narrator to English positive – considers priceless commodity – however , doesn’t adversely affect the people’s religious and cultural practices – Ranga still wears sacred thread, bends low for ‘namaskara’ and touches the feet of elders – arranged marriage)