



Translated by: Andy Sundaresan

*Kurinji Publications* is proud to bring out yet another anthology of Tamil short stories—CUPID’S ALARMS—translated into English for US readers.

This time the author is India Devi, who under the pen-name *Vindhiya* published stories in late 1940’s and 1950’s. Gathered from twelve years of magazine publication, translated by her brother Andy Sundaresan now living in the US, they nonetheless have a consistency of tone. It would be hard to speculate which stories are from the late-Forties and which from Fifties. The same personality runs through all of them, that same love of story telling.

India Devi, childless, passed away in 1999, followed by her husband Prof. V. Subrahmanyam, in 2001. Now India

Devi’s family members, at the initiative of her younger brother Dr. S. Naranan, have brought out this collection of short stories.

The anthology includes ten stories including CUPID’S ALARMS which brought the author recognition as the recipient of *New York Herald Tribune International Short Story* award (1950) and two prize stories published in *Kalaimagal*.

India Devi was a writer recognized for her skilful renderings of domestic life. She tells her stories with tenderness, compassion and understanding. The result is an affectionate portrait of the family as the ultimate refuge of human spirit.

Much of India Devi’s stories are primarily autobiographical. Through thoughtful and subtle scenes they recall something of Norman Rockwell’s vision (albeit, with an Indian flavor).



The characters in her stories are simple and ordinary people; it is their deliberate ordinariness that lets the reader glimpse a side that affirms traditional Indian values.

The lives of India’s characters revolve around faith - because of her strong belief that readers are looking for stories that show the spiritual as an integral part of everyday life: children, family ties and basic human decency. They are the simple, God-fearing, solid citizens –not part of some lunatic fringe. And faith plays a major role in their lives.

India Devi’s stories speak to those people by reflecting their reality. Some may consider her stories treacle and overly sentimental. But in her stories bad things do happen to good people; like Parvathi in a story of this collection (*Parvathi*), the girl who confronts her misfortunes. India Devi’s characters don’t whine; they don’t give up on life. Instead, they rely on their faith and community -family and friends—to help them through. They know that life is but a passing shadow on their journey.

India Devi took it on her faith –literally. In 1959, after nearly more than a decade of a writer’s life that brought her fame, prizes and recognition, she gave up writing. She turned to religion and never again went back to any serious writing of fiction. However, she



remained a voracious correspondent of letters as well as an avid diarist for the next forty years - till her death in 1999.

Rajam Krishnan, a distinguished Tamil writer and a contemporary of India Devi, has penned a foreword to CUPID’S ALARMS.



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