

Focus

Read about it

1 What is an "arranged marriage"? In which countries or cultures is this type of marriage common? Do you know anyone who has had an arranged marriage?

Real-life **COUPLES**

Sarita and Ranjit Sharma talk about their arranged marriage

How was the marriage arranged?

Sarita: I was studying in America at the time. A friend of my family told us there was this man living in Britain who was looking for a suitable girl. My dad liked the sound of him. We made some enquiries - his education, what he did, that kind of thing. The news was very encouraging. Ranjit was a good catch.

Ranjit: The first I knew about Sarita was the day before she arrived here! My father organised the whole thing. I was happy to meet Sarita but I knew I could always say no if I didn't think we'd be right together.

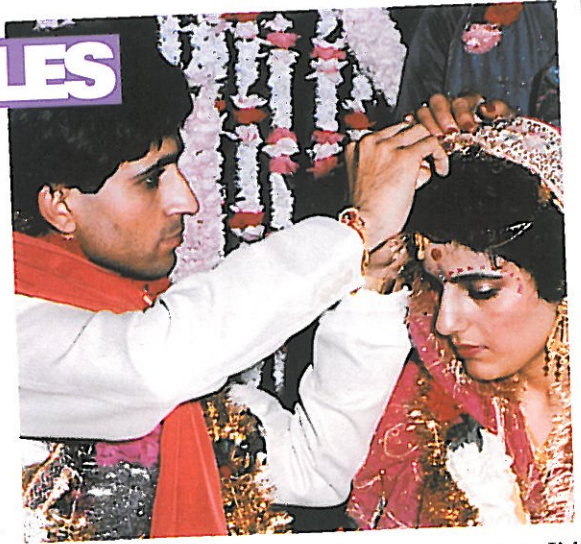
What were your first impressions of each other?

Sarita: Good. Although there wasn't a great surge of attraction, I remember thinking, "He seems nice." The atmosphere that day was quite intense because our families were watching us, so Ranjit suggested we go out for a drink on our own.

Ranjit: I liked Sarita. I found her attractive, but there wasn't that spark you get if you see someone you fancy at a party. It was more mental attraction.

How did you decide on each other?

Sarita: We met up three more times over the two



weeks before I returned to America - by then I'd decided that Ranjit was right for me.

Ranjit: There was pressure from my family after the very first meeting. I'd seen three girls before Sarita, but she was the first I was interested in. So I said yes after those first three meetings.

Do you love each other now?

Sarita: Yes we do. I couldn't pinpoint an exact time when love began, but it was about two years into the relationship.

Ranjit: Love came into our relationship after a while. I didn't wake up one morning and think, "I love this woman." The love we now have is warm, deep and lasting.

New Woman

2 Read the story again. Write T (true), F (false) or ? (don't know) in the boxes next to these statements.

- a Sarita and Ranjit had known each other as children.
- b Sarita's mother liked Ranjit a lot.
- c The first time Sarita and Ranjit met, their families were present.
- d They were very physically attracted to each other when they met.
- e Sarita and Ranjit agreed to get married after knowing each other for just two weeks.
- f They fell in love with each other about two years after their marriage.

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liked the sound of him liked what he heard about Ranjit
a good catch a good person to marry for reasons of social status
a great surge a sudden, powerful feeling
spark emotional flash
fancy find attractive
pressure strong persuasion
lasting going to continue for a very long time