

Silence is the true friend that never betrays.

Confucius

the columnist

KIRAN BEDI



# Tormented husbands

ARJIT SEN



Manisha committed suicide after her husband Sumit Aggarwal and his family started harassing her for dowry. But it's not always women who are victims in such cases. Sometimes, men are falsely implicated in dowry cases by their wives.

HERE IS a mail I received during the last week. It is worth looking into because it reflects some of the current challenges faced by our society. We are its cause and also the solution. Once we learn from others' mistakes, we will stop repeating them. Here are the contents of the email.

## THE PROBLEM

"My brother's wife is not coming back from her parents place without specifying any reason. It was suggested that my brother should file a police complaint. However, we consulted two lawyers and one of them advised against the complaint, saying it would lead to more problems. On the other hand, the second lawyer who is more aggressive wants us to file a police complaint and file for divorce.

Our family is very confused. We have gone through websites like 498.org and also talked to people who have faced similar situations. We have realised that the man and his family never get justice even if the girl is making false allegations.

It's an irony that we are living in a

developing country and we talk about man-woman equality. Then why is it that men are not listened to in marital disputes? Where is equality of justice in such cases? The police does not care what the husband or his family says. I, my younger sister (unmarried) and my mother are also women. But we cannot file a case against my *bhabhi*. Does the Women's Cell listen only to the wives? Are mothers and sisters of poor husbands not women?

IS THIS LAW? Is this the definition of law and order in India? I believe the victims of such laws rightly call it 'LEGAL TERRORISM'. That day will come, soon, when all men will think a hundred times before getting married. I now realise how nice and innocent people are forced to become terrorists by this society and the so-called laws of our country.

I may be very harsh and I should not be asking you this, but I do not see any door open. Please tell me this: Is there any way or any person whose intervention can close this issue without harming anybody? My brother is certain he wants a divorce.

We talk about man-woman equality in every sphere of life. Yet, when it comes to matrimonial disputes, men are always looked at with suspicion. Why?

I agree it was our fault that we got him married without proper enquiries about the girl and her family.

One cannot spend one's entire life with someone whose character is suspicious. They will demand money, but my brother is diabetic and he has earned whatever he has through sheer hard work. He cannot afford to give away money as he himself may need it to save his life. (His eyes are getting weak and his diabetes has not been in control ever since all this happened. He is mentally imbalanced now and is undergoing treatment.)

Can you help us please? Or can you suggest a way out? We are ready to file for divorce, but we cannot prove that the girl's character was bad even after marriage. She has been staying at her parents' place for three months now. Earlier, my brother would meet her every week and request her to come back. He changed his mind only recently.

Her family is very interfering and even if the girl comes back, the family will not let her settle down."

The mail ends here.

Friends, while we need more effective systems for such dissensions, we must also recognise that we need better personal attitudes which are the solutions to such agonies. We must learn to let go...

Send flowers or flak to  
columns@metronow.co.in