



THIRUTHANGAL NADAR COLLEGE

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Selavayal, Chennai-51.

A Self-Financing Co-educational College of Arts & Science

Affiliated to the University of Madras

Accredited with 'B' Grade by NAAC

An ISO 9001: 2015 Certified Institution

NAME OF THE DEPARTMENT: ENGLISH

SUBJECT : FOUNDATION ENGLISH - I

TOPIC : THE FORTUNE TELLER

STAFF NAME : THAHIRA RAHMATH

Karel Čapek

Karel Čapek was a Czech writer, playwright and critic. He has become best known for his science fiction, including his novel *War with the Newts* (1936) and play *R.U.R.* (*Rossum's Universal Robots*, 1920), which introduced the word robot. He also wrote many politically charged works dealing with the social turmoil of his time. Influenced by American pragmatic liberalism, he campaigned in favour of free expression and strongly opposed the rise of both fascism and communism in Europe.



Though nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature seven times, Čapek never received it. However, several awards commemorate his name, such as the Karel Čapek Prize, awarded every other year by the Czech PEN Club for literary work that contributes to reinforcing or maintaining democratic and humanist values in society. He also played a key role in establishing the Czechoslovak PEN Club as a part of International PEN.

Čapek died on the brink of World War II as the result of a lifelong medical condition, but his legacy as a literary figure became well established after the war.

Characters

- MacLeary – Detective Inspector
- Mrs. Myers – Fortune-teller
- Mrs. MacLeary (disguised as Miss Jones) – Detective Inspector' Wife
- Mr. Kelly – Local Magistrate

The Predictions by Mrs. Myers

Inspector Mr. MacLeary spreads a net to catch Mrs. Myers by sending his wife Mrs. MacLeary. His wife pretends as if she is a 20 years old unmarried girl. Mrs. Myers reads the cards. She predicts that the girl is going to marry a young rich business man before the end of the year. An elderly man will be an obstacle on her way but she will succeed and move across the ocean after marriage. The fee -one pound and one shilling is paid for her predictions.

The Trial Scene in the Court

The inspector files a case against Mrs. Myers. She is summoned to court for trial. She argues that Mrs. MacLeary appeared as an unmarried anxious girl that is why I predicted so. However her fraudulence is proved and she is sentenced to deportation. She also has to pay the penalty of 50 pounds.

The Irony of Life

A year later, the judge Mr. Kelley meets the inspector by chance. He is shocked to know that Mrs. MacLeary eloped with a young rich businessman from Melbourne. She crossed the ocean a week ago for Australia. Mrs. Myers is a fraud but her prediction becomes true. The inspector and judge are able to judge Mrs. Myers but not the mysterious happenings in life. Destiny overrules human intelligence.

Summary

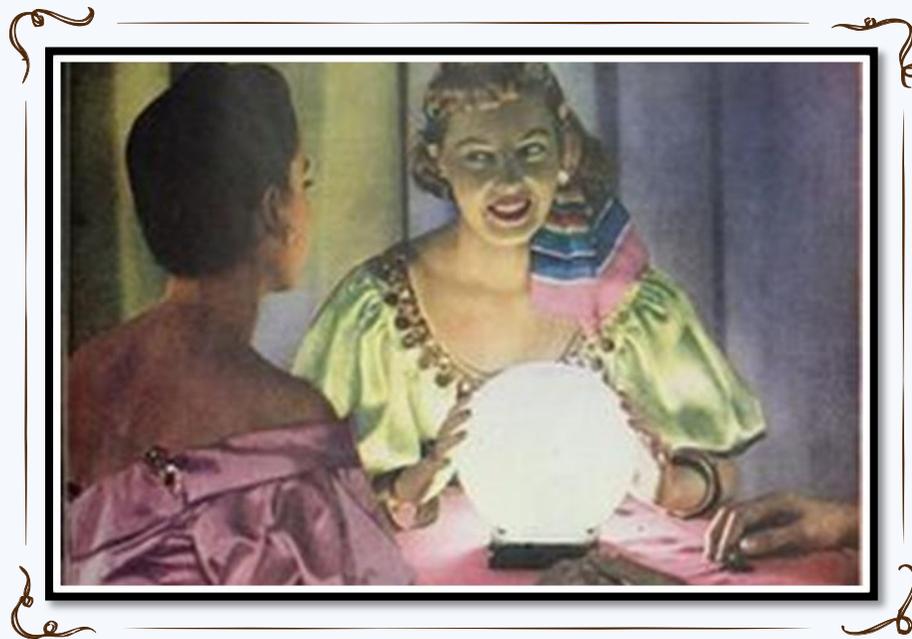
“The Fortune Teller” tells the story of Mrs. Myers, a woman who comes to the attention of a police inspector called Mr. MacLeary. Keen to know how she conducts her business, Mr. MacLeary’s wife calls on Mrs. Myers at home and pretends to be a single woman who desires to know her future. In their meeting, Mrs. Myers predicts that Mrs. MacLeary (disguised as Miss Jones) will be married before the year is up and will go on a long journey. A man, it is claimed, will also try and stand in her way.

Believing these predictions to be false, Mrs. MacLeary reports these findings to her husband. He has recently discovered that Mrs. Myers’ identity is also false: her surname is, in fact, Meierhofer and she comes from Lubeck in Germany.

Mrs. Myers - Fortune-teller



Mrs. MacLeary (disguised as Miss Jones) - Detective Inspector's Wife



As a result, Mrs. Myers is called to account for her business before the local magistrate, Mr. Kelly, who finds her guilty of fraud and sentences her to pay a fine of fifty pounds. The case of Mrs. Myers, it seems, is finally over.

It is in the closing paragraph of the story, however, that Capek uses irony when it transpires that Mrs. Myers' original predictions for Mrs. MacLeary come true. Mrs. MacLeary does indeed marry a man before the year is up: he is a millionaire from Melbourne and Mrs. MacLeary moves with him to Australia, a place which requires a considerably long journey from London.

CONCLUSION

In this short story the prophesy of the old lady, the fake fortune teller that she predicted a certain future for Miss Jones, or Mrs. MacLeary, comes true. Although the judge orders her to go back to Germany and also advises her not to practice anymore such fraudulent prediction as a professional fortune teller, yet the greatest irony is that the prophesy of the fake fortune teller comes true at the end and it takes the readers to some unpredictable climax when Mrs. MacLeary is found to have been married to a rich young businessman and have moved to Australia. Thus a freakish forecast comes true in the life of the smart Inspector.

Thank You

