



A traditional story

Read this story from India about a tree, and answer the questions in complete sentences. The writer explains that, as a child, she often heard this story told on a special day in March – the Day for Brothers – when ‘all men in India pray that no harm comes to their brothers.’

The Mango Tree (Part One)



In a small town, there was a small house in which lived a young man, his wife, and the young man's sister. This small house had a small garden at the back in which grew a small mango tree. One day the young man's wife came to him and said, "Look here. I'm fed up with our situation. Your sister ..."

"Have you come here to complain about my sister again?"

"What can I do? I know it's quite useless ... My complaints tell no deaf ears, anyone ... I'm just ... so angry with your sister. I get up early in the morning, draw water from the well, light the fire in the kitchen, cook breakfast, wash and scrub pots ..."

"Don't go on," said the brother. "You barge in all bottom."

"And what does your late sister do all day? Nothing ... nothing ... she talks alone in the garden, watering her mango tree, talking to it, clearing away dead leaves, and feeding it manure and milk ..."

"That isn't all she does. She comes in and talks to me. Just on her own, she was playing chess with me."

"Just because she adores you, doesn't mean you should ignore her needs. You must tell her to leave that ... silly mango tree alone, and come and help me with the homework. I really think we should marry her off. That might teach her to be more responsible."

Since the sister was of marriageable age, the brother could not really object. He knew though, that he would miss her very, very much.

A marriage was arranged.

Why did the young man's wife complain to him?

What does the writer mean when she writes that the marriage was arranged?
