

## *Menika*

Deft-handed, swirling rice-grains in clear water,  
pouring the white stream from pot to pot  
she said:

I would like to go back to the village next week

There is a court case

I am reclaiming my children, two daughters, from their  
father

He has another woman

Neat-handed, kneading coriander and cummin  
on the smooth stone  
she said:

My father made the marriage

There were good fields and much fine property

My father inspected the fields, my brother went with him,

They all agreed it was a good match

Two weeks after the marriage he brought her back to the  
house

The pestle rising, falling, in her practised hands  
the grain in the mortar crumbling to powder  
she said:

We lived eighteen years in that house

My children with me in one room, she with him in the other

One day a relation of his came in, asking for a measure of  
rice

I did not think to refuse it

That night he came home drunk, and said I was giving  
away the household goods

Spreading the grain in the sun to dry

she said:

When he beat me before the neighbours I sent for my  
father

He came and took me away

When we signed the register at the Police Station  
the Sergeant said: What a man is this!

To make such a shameful to-do over a measure of rice!  
 She looks after my children well, they tell me  
 But they are daughters, can I allow them to become women  
 and far away from me?

On the day of the court case, her skin smoothly powdered,  
 a crimson sari knotted at her neat waist, her hair  
 combed into shining coils on her slender neck  
 she said:

He is a good man  
 There is no fault in him

Yasmine Gooneratne

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Although there has been good will in every possible way the transfer of ARIEL from Leeds, England to Calgary, Canada has been no easy task either editorially or administratively. For instance many files could not be moved from Leeds until the publication of Volume 3, Number 4 and many more until the end of the accounting year of 1972. (We wonder if anything like this has ever happened previously in the history of academic journals.) The point is that if this has caused any inconvenience, difficulty or delay for subscribers we apologize. And if there are still problems please write immediately to: The Secretary, ARIEL, The University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2N 1N4.