



## ***From our Editor...***

*by Raj-Q-Marie*

Even though 2001 is winding down, KhushDC is in full swing!

For a revival of a practically defunct organization, we've made remarkable gains. In just a few months, our Chutney Friday happy hour attracts a fun-loving crowd, and our newsletters keep on coming. Just last month we co-sponsored the Thai Film *Iron Ladies* at the Reel Affirmations XI: Washington, DC's International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. Our website ([www.khushdc.org](http://www.khushdc.org)) is up and running and attracts new visitors everyday. Attractive KhushDC information/ contact cards have been published to help get out our message. Pick up a stack to give your friends. The KhushDC electronic listserv has almost doubled in subscribers from 50 to 90 in less than a year and is full of lively discussions.

Congratulations to the people who took the initiative to make these fantastic accomplishments possible in such a short time.

But our work isn't done yet. Let's keep the ball rolling!

## **The Fragility of Desi Gay Relationships: Arranged Marriages**

*(part 2 of 4)*

*by Ninad Jog*

**D**esi arranged marriages shape society's attitudes to such an extent that it impacts how gay desis choose mates.

Most Indian marriages even in this age are arranged rather than love matches. Guy chooses girl from pool of several girls, girl's dad buys guy with dowry, girl and guy become bride and groom. Often the bride is less educated than the groom, financially dependent on him, and becomes his housewife. Some working women even lack the freedom to spend their earnings according to their wishes, as the husband controls them and doles out a stipend to his wife. Arranged marriages are often unhappy ones but are sustained through societal pressures and oppressive cultural norms.

Arranged marriages lack a courtship phase and the guy hardly works to impress and win over a bride. He gets a bride for free, or accompanied by a dowry,

and gets away with treating her as his chattel. However, during a courtship both partners learn to respect each other (in addition to falling in love), because they are unsure if they will be accepted or rejected by the other. No courtship, no respect. Indian women are brought up to respect their spouses, but Indian men are unconstrained by such annoying inconveniences.

As a cultural group, Indian men lack the dating skills, the patience and the respect towards the other partner that hallmark successful love marriages. Indian men expect to get a partner by the simple device of the partner falling into their laps (now that's a pun) with little or no effort on their part. Individuals vary in their use of dating skills, so this generalization does not apply to each and every person, but I believe it is typical of desis.

***To be continued...***

## **Next month in Khush Khush Hota Hai...**

- *More on "The Fragility of Desi Gay Relationships..."*
- *More articles, features and fun stuff...*
- *What are the proper undies to wear with a sari? How do I ask my co-worker out? Ask Aunt Helen! She'll answer all your questions about love, life and happiness in the nation's capital...*

*If you'd like to contribute to KKHH, send your article, comments or questions to: [KhushDCKKHH@hotmail.com](mailto:KhushDCKKHH@hotmail.com)*

# Khush in the Kitchen

by SpecialMasala

With the cold winter approaching, this dish is sure to keep your lover warm and close to you.

## Matar Paneer

- 1 pkg. Paneer cubed
- 2 T. chopped ginger
- 1 green chili chopped
- 1 T. ground coriander
- 1 T. turmeric
- ½ t. paprika
- ½ t. ground fennel seeds
- ½ C. water
- 4 T. ghee/oil
- 1 t. cumin seeds
- 28 oz can tomatoes, drained and coarsely pureed
- 1 T. salt
- 1 ½- 2 ½ C. water
- 10 oz frozen baby peas
- 2 T. chopped fresh mint and cilantro
- 1 t. garam masala

Blend ginger, chilies, coriander, turmeric, paprika, fennel and ½ cup water. Fry paneer in hot oil, carefully turning the pieces until they are evenly golden brown on all sides. Remove with a slotted spoon. Add cumin seeds and fry until they darken a few shades. Add the spice blend, and stir until moisture evaporates. Add tomatoes and continue stirring, until the ghee or oil separates from the tomatoes (approximately 10 minutes). Add water and the salt and bring to a boil. Simmer for approximately 15 minutes. Add the fried cheese cubes and the peas and simmer for another 5 minutes. Fold in the chopped herbs and the garam masala before serving. Gauranteed to please even the finickiest of Panjabis.

# Upcoming Events

## South Asian Literary Festival November 9-11, 2001

At the Wyndham City Center Hotel, Washington, DC. This year's festival includes a special film component—Nisha Ganatra talks about *Chutney Popcorn* and her other works. The conference highlights keynote speaker Abraham Verghese author of *My Own County*. For more information or registration information visit: [www.salfdc.org](http://www.salfdc.org)

## Chutney Fridays Friday, December 7, 2001 • 6:00 p.m.

Drink and be social with the KhushDC gang. At Titan's—upstairs from Hamburger Mary's (corner of 14th and Rhode Island). 1337 14th St, NW (202) 232-7010. For a map, visit: [www.khushdc.org](http://www.khushdc.org)

Do you have an event you'd like to have listed in "Upcoming Events?" E-mail it to: [KhushDCKKHH@hotmail.com](mailto:KhushDCKKHH@hotmail.com)

## AUNTY HELEN'S CLOSET

Dear Darling KhushDCs (to be read as Khush Desis):

Firstly, Aunty Helen wants to thank all of you for asking me to give you advice on such profoundly deep and intimate matters. It is most humbling to be in my high heels and juttees right now. My kajal runneth on my cheeks with my glowing tears of gratitude.

[Interpretation: Firstly, thank God you had the good sense to ask me to take up half of a friggin' page of the newsletter, or you would have had aunty screaming haramkhor, budtameez and behenchod on the KhushDC listserv on a daily basis. Now, you know I am not much of a humble bitch and I would have had blood flowing from a desi cheek or two in revenge.]

Every month I will introduce my column with a list of terms that will be useful to you for interpreting columns. As Khush Desi speak is full of a cast of colorful characters, many of the terms are proper nouns representing particular character types:

### Terms for November:

**Khush Desi** (see above): members of the KhushDC species.

**Märtina Kärela**: Scandinavian canine animal who can speak a few words of Malayalam, seeking membership to KhushDC.

Many of you know that your favorite Aunty turned 40 this October (if you didn't, then please to remember from now onwards). So, now that Aunty is truly over the hill, I declare myself the official (read: warped) collective memory (read: naani/daadi/bua/khala) of the group.

Love and kisses  
Helen of Himachal

### Dearest Aunty Helen,

**What's the best thing to use to get those deep, dark piercing black lines for my eyes?**

**I've tried mascara, eye liner, kohl [sic, unless she put a German guy into her eyes], even those eye pencils, but nothing seems to work. I'm sure a lady of your grace and beauty can give me a tip or two.**

Thank you,  
Eyes Without Color

Dear Eyes Without Color:

Aunty's eyes are au naturally. She don't need no mascara or German guy in her eyes. For eyeliner issues, call the SALGA hijras in New York. They b-r-e-a-t-h-e mascara! In fact, it's not just their eyes that are fake.

—AH

**Check out the brand new KhushDC website:  
[www.khushdc.org](http://www.khushdc.org)**

You can get:

- Information on how to join the lively listserv...
- Upcoming KhushDC events...
- History of KhushDC...