The Doctor's Word

In "The Doctor's Word" R.K.Narayan tells the story how a doctor's word save the life of a patient. Dr.Raman was an experienced doctor. He spoke plainly and always spoke the truth. So, his pronounced were held in high esteem. Gopal was the dearest friend of Dr.Raman. They had been friends for forty years. They spent their time in dinning, seeing a picture and talking. Their friendship was not at all affected by changing of time. One day Dr.Raman was informed that Gopal was ill. He went to Gopal's house. Gopal was lying on the bed as if asleep. Dr.Raman examined him and gave necessary treatment. He was worried about his friend’s life and he had no hope of saving his life.

The patient asked the doctor about his condition. He wanted to sign the will and settled the property before he dies. Dr.Raman decided to tell a lie. For the first time in life, he told his patient a lie. He informed Gopal that he would live for long time. Gopal was relieved to hear this information. The next morning the doctor was surprised to find Gopal alive with study pulse. How the patient survives would be a puzzle to him all his life.

The Missing Mail

The Missing Mail' is a well-loved short story. The story is set in an imaginary, small Indian village called Malgudi. The major character in the story is Thanappa, the village postman. Thanappa was much more than just a postman. He went out of his way to involve himself in the domestic matters of the people to whom he delivered letters. He was concerned and cared deeply for the people in the village.

Thanappa was particularly involved in the affairs of Ramanujam and his family, whom he had known for a generation. It was Thanappa who brought the news of the birth of Ramanujam's daughter to him. Thanappa delivered letters of prospective bridegrooms to Ramanujam's family. Each one was accompanied by Thanappa's good humoured remarks. Nothing seemed to work for Kamakshi - there were the usual problems of mismatch of horoscopes, unreasonable dowry demands and the like. Kamakshi’s grandfather had already set aside five thousand rupees for the wedding.

Finally a wedding proposal arrived for Kamakshi. The exchange of correspondence between the two parties went on at a very fast pace. Thanappa involved himself at each stage, whether it was for matching horoscopes, or in deciding whether Ramanujam should go to Madras to meet the groom’s party.

The wedding had to take place within a very short period as the boy had to leave for some training - the marriage would be possible again only after three years if it was put off now.
Arrangements were made for a grand five-thousand-rupee wedding. Thanappa walked into the wedding hall with a bundle of greetings for Kamakshi and her new husband.

Thanappa handed Kamakshi, the first letter from her husband about ten days after the wedding. This was accompanied by his usual cheerful chatter. A few days later, making sure that Ramanujam was at home, Thanappa knocked on the door and handed him a post card. Ramanujam was upset to read that his uncle was critically ill at Salem. Ramanujam’s presence there was most essential. Thanappa said he was sorry about his uncle’s ill health, and hesitatingly handed over a telegram with the news of the uncle’s death.

Thanappa asked Ramanujam to take a look at the date on the card. 'May the nineteenth, nearly fifteen days ago!' said Ramanujam. Thanappa confessed that he did not deliver the card and the telegram that followed on May twentieth fearing that it would interfere with the wedding. Ramanujam was angry and upset saying he would not have gone through the wedding when his uncle was dying. Thanappa spoke softly saying that Ramanujam could complain to the authorities and have him dismissed for not having done his duty. After a while Ramanujam said that he did not want to complain, and was only sorry that Thanappa had done this. Thanappa disappeared quietly around a bend saying that he understood Ramanujam’s feelings.