



DR SANTWANA BORDOLOI

Scripting Success in the Silver Screen

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Well known pediatrician as well as film director Dr Santwana Bordoloi is a familiar name to the people of Assam. Born to Rabindralal Baruah and Binapani Baruah, popularly known as Jeuti, Santwana was the middle daughter of five girls, all of them equally talented and creative. She also has a brother. She came to this world one autumn day, 62 years back on the 16th of Sept, 1948 in Dibrugarh.

Theirs was a large family of five daughters and a son. The home environment was extremely encouraging, culturally rich with music and drama. The head of the family was himself interested in drama and did a lot of plays. All this encouraged the young Santwana and her siblings to be culturally active. By the age of 10 years, she had made up her mind to be a doctor. A big influence in her life was her maternal grandmother, Sushila Kakaty. Her granny herself used to be an avid reader and always encouraged her grandchildren to study. Her schooling was done mostly in Guwahati in T.C Girls' High School though the family had a brief stint of four years in Tinsukia. After H.S, she joined the Gauhati Medical College and passed out in 1971.

After she passed out from medical college, she married Dr Jayanta Bordoloi in 1974. Childbirth and motherhood followed soon after as Santwana became the mother of two children, a boy and a girl. Though a practising child specialist, she never submitted before the pressures or compromises one associates with marriage. Husband Jayanta was extremely cooperative in each of her endeavours especially when she announced that she would make a movie. It was after one of her annual 10-day visit to Goa where the international Film Fests are usually held. She along with her children used to attend them religiously every year.

So began her tryst as a film maker, and also began her personal struggle to garner funds for her movie. Her better half proved to be a real support when he helped her to tide over the financial crunch in her film making efforts. Frequently in and out of Guwahati, her children too never complained and gave her silent support. All her efforts bore fruit when she won accolades and awards for her maiden venture *Adajya*, a film based on the novel *Datal Hatir Une Khowa Howdah (The Moth eaten Howdah)* by internationally acclaimed writer Dr Indira (Mamoni) Roisom Goswami. She won the National Award for Best Regional Film and Jury's Special Award in 1996 and also other international awards.

Santwana also had a very successful career as a radio artist to her credit during the 1980s. The avid listeners of AIR, Guwahati, in those days can never forget the strength and modulation of her voice lent for such highly popular radioplays as 'Surangor Shesat'.

Today Santwana Bordoloi divides her time between her hospital work and creative pursuits, being amply supported by her children, daughter Ushma, an alumna of Satyajit Ray Institute and son Jayesh who specialized in hospital management. Her future plans include directing another serious film in the near future in between keeping herself busy with her passions for cooking, reading books and cinema. □□