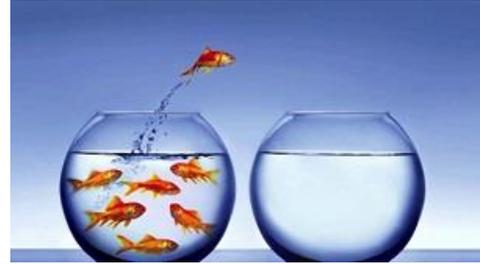


Out of My Mind

Game Stop(per)

by Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'



Dusty decided to play a low-stake game with his friends and neighbors about Mr. and Mrs. Disaster's hopeless marriage. The expectation was that they'd (the Disasters) walk to the divorce court in less than a month. Most of Dusty's friends betted against their marriage. Only a few betted otherwise. They called this a "Short Squeeze."

It was obvious that things were not that great in the Disaster household. The shouts coming from their apartment could be heard by other dwellers too. Screams like, "You stupid! You again squeezed the toothpaste in the middle. How many times should I remind you that it should be squeezed at the bottom? Stupid! Stupid!! Stupid!!!"

The other day, the neighbors heard Mrs. Disaster yelling: "Why are you wearing a sweater in the middle of summer?"

Mr. Disaster: "Oh, that's right, because you're living in an igloo. Any hotter than 60 degrees and you complain 'it's so sweaty'. Shape up or shut up!"

Mrs. Disaster: "Stupid! Stupid!! Stupid!!!"

Over the past year, all the apartment dwellers were confined to their homes due to COVID-19 and were utterly bored. Abetting on the Disasters was a good way for them to spend their time and money. To cut a long story short, they formed this new betting group and called themselves

"Short," just for fun. Some sarcastically called them "Hedge Fund Managers"

Most of the Shots betted for the Disasters' separation or divorce as it was very obvious that their marriage was about to end. Suddenly, an outsider entered the fray. He wagered that the Disasters would keep their marriage. The Shorts named him "Robin Hood." Robin Hood planned to borrow the fund from "Shorts" for his bet with a promise that he'd return their money once the bet was settled. The "Shorts" gladly lent money to Robin Hood as it was obvious to them that the latter was going to lose big. They called Robin Hood's move a "squeeze." This brought even more players into the game. The pot ultimately grew to more than a million dollars.

At the end of the month, the Shorts were shocked to know that the Disasters were going on another honeymoon instead of going to the divorce court. Robin Hood walked away with everybody's money. People kept on wondering who was Robin Hood? They think that he was an agent of the Disasters. They had formed an alliance to mulct the "Shorts" of their money and ruin the big guys. Was that just a rumor or was that true? Wanna bet?