

Mom, we just found a match for you

Neha Tara Mehta
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NOW THAT she has found a suitable boy for her 58-year-old mother, Aarti Singh, 32, is finally getting to plan out her own life. No longer bound by the need to live close to her widowed mother, this Delhi-based doctor is soon moving to Australia.

Aarti took time out of her medical internship to surf for grooms for her mom on matrimonial website *shubhlagan.in*. An alliance with a doctor settled in the US clicked, and Aarti's mother — a former doctor — relocated to the US. "Though her loneliness was making her depressed, my mother didn't want to stay with me after I got married. As a doctor, I know that depression causes many other problems. Finding a match for her was the least I could do," says Aarti.

In Chennai, 24-year-old software engineer Ram Kumar is trying to net



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a match for his 60-year-old widower father, a retired DGM of an oil company. Ram posted his father's profile on *bharatmatrimony.com*, telling him, "If Nelson Mandela could marry late in life, why can't you?"

As the Internet-enabled, over-worked Gen X logs on to end their single parents' loneliness, rules of matrimony are being reversed. Says

BharatMatrimony Group CEO Murugavel Janakiraman, "Out of 3,750 senior citizens registered with us, 1,500 have been registered by their children." *Re-marriage.com* gets around five such inquiries a week. Says Vivek Khare, *jeevansaathi.com*'s business head, "These are mature young people, for who going online to end their parents' loneliness is a fast and convenient option."

Helpage India's communications head Nidhi Raj Kapoor sees this as a big shift in the children's acceptance of senior remarriage. A HelpAge survey conducted two years ago revealed that children found the idea of their parents remarrying at a later age "ridiculous". Says Kapoor, "People are feeling increasingly guilty about not being there for their parents and want to ensure that their parents' autumn years are spent in companionship."

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(Some names have been changed)