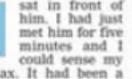
## Surroundings, company maketh a man



THIS JEWELLERY DESIGNER PROVIDES A RINGSIDE VIEW INTO THE COMPLEX LIVES AND CHALLENGES OF ACHIEVERS

## Queenie-tessential



limbs relax. It had been a beautiful wedding and on my last day, I was packing to leave for Mumbai when I got a call that I had an opportunity to meet Radhanath Swami. It was a boat ride across to the

His eyes were kind and soothing. He wore saffron would bring in flowers," he robes and sat in vairousun said. pose. "There will always be On my way out, I was lucky pain but not necessarily suf-

hotel; I hurried on.

sat in front of mind that he meant that I him. I had just keep a positive attitude.

The American swami talked minutes and I about his childhood in could sense my Chicago when his family was going through a rough time. "We had lost everything and my father was working round the clock to keep his family afloat," he said.

"Every day I would hear my father sing in the shower It was about thunderstorms but with that, the April rain

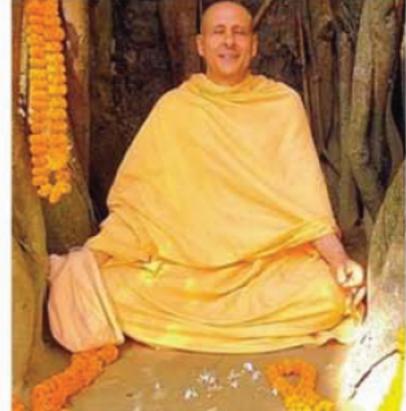
enough to be presented by fering," he said. I nodded him an autographed copy of quickly summing up in my his autobiography The I met his wonderful father

tioned that his father and brother would be visiting him in Mumbai in the next two

Sometimes, some things are meant to happen. The Swamiji had stayed on in the periphery of my mind. Not that we had spoken much, but his presence lingered on.

Two days later, a friend of mine was visiting Mumbai and mentioned that he was going to meet Swamiji. I had taken no contact details from him when I had met him and grabbed the opportunity to see him again. Furthermore, it would be a pleasure to meet his 89-year-old father he had spoken about.

I was greeted by a room of devotees. His kind eyes welcomed me once again and I felt the familiar sense of relaxation in his company. A sense of peace prevailed, my logical mind questioned it, I let go and relaxed.



Gers and his best friend Gary with whom he first left the United States and made his way to Europe.

I also met Hari Sunder who was a Krishna bhakt. I later learnt he had spent three months with John Lennon and a month with George Harrison.

Amongst us was also a gentlemen who had been the head of the Vrindavan temple and now lives in Los Angeles and is doing a book on Nick Nolte. dent was recalled. Swamiji was asked to talk

about one of the experiences in his book. The Journey almost took him in, "The sand Home traces the journey of was greedy to devour me and Swamiji from the time he left his home in Chicago and made his way into India hitchhiking, driven by a force stances becomes viciously and a voice that had asked him to go to India.

meets the forceful Ganges.

father 40 years later when the book had just come out, his father Geri said he had a sleepless night reading that incident.

"What if the quicksand had devoured you?" he asked his enlightened son. "We would have searched high and low without any closure as to what may have happened to you." I detected the pain in his father's eyes as this inci-

In the book Swamiji later talks about the sand that the same sand is soft and now gives me shelter. Like sand, a person influenced by circumenvious or affectionately kind. Our company and sur-He talked about his experi-roundings have a crucial ence during his travel when effect on our consciousness, he almost got sucked in quick- so much wisdom is being sand, which he encountered whispered through every where the calm Yamuna grain of sangemeets the forceful Ganges. grain of sangemeets the forceful Ganges. Share