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asked the Minister about him, he replied that he had many boys loitering about his house, and that he knew nothing of him. Then the men of science said to the Minister :—"The signs of greatness and royalty are so manifest upon this boy, that one day he will surely be the ruler of this country, and all your people and all your property will hereafter belong to him."

Jealousy of the  
Minister.

When the Minister heard these words he saluted the Rishis and philosophers, each one according to his rank, and dismissed them. He then began to reflect upon their words, and to consider that they were not persons likely to say anything which was not well founded. Therefore, to be beforehand with the boy, and prevent his doing any mischief, he determined to put him to death; and he hired some Chandálas to take him into the jungle and make away with him. The assassins led the lad away by night, and when they drew their swords to kill him he prayed to God for succour; and God changed their hearts, and they took compassion on him, and resolved not to kill him. But as the Minister had desired them to bring to him some token or proof from the boy's body that they had fulfilled his instructions, they looked over his body and found that he had six toes; and they cut off the sixth toe, and carried it to the Minister, who was thereupon much pleased, and gave to each man a milch buffalo.

Resolves on the  
death of Chan-  
drahasa.

The assassins  
relent and leave  
the child alive  
in the jungle.

Chandrahassa  
brought up by a  
Zemindar.

About this time a certain dependent of the Minister, whose duty it was to go about the country and receive the rents and correct injustice, was passing through the jungle, when he heard the cry of the boy. He hastened to the spot, and seeing the lad lying wounded, and being very much struck with his countenance, and having no child of his own, he carried him home to his wife and adopted him as his son. He also called in the astrologers of that neighbourhood, who declared that the boy had a most powerful nativity, and would of a surety become a mighty Raja. They also said that when the boy laughed his face resembled the moon, and that he ought, therefore, to be called Chandrahassa, or "Moon laughing." So the boy was named Chandrahassa.



2. *Conquests of Chandrahassa.*

From that day forward everything prospered in the house of Chandrahassa's adopted father. The milch kine and buffaloes gave twice as much milk as heretofore, and the crops produced tenfold. Meantime, Chandrahassa was carefully educated in arms and sciences; and when he was grown up, he was desirous of making war. Now there were many refractory vassals whom the Raja of Kutuwal had frequently directed the Minister to subdue, but who had ever routed his troops and compelled them to retire. Chandrahassa went out and fought against these rebels, and slew them all; and he carried their wives and children into captivity, and brought away abundance of spoil.

Prosperity of the Zemindar.

Conquests of Chandrahassa.

At the achievements of Chandrahassa, his adopted father was filled with delight, and carried off a large present to the Minister, and told him how his son had conquered the rebellious vassals and brought away abundance of spoil. Whereat the Minister was exceedingly pleased, and carried a portion of the spoil to the Raja, saying:—"I sent one of my own dependents to attack the Chieftains of the rebellious provinces; and he has now destroyed all the malcontents, and brought away all their treasures." The Raja immediately asked:—"Which of your dependents was it who has done this service? You, at the head of my whole army, have often gone against these very rebels and never could subdue them: What servant is it of yours who has had so much better success?" The Minister replied:—"I have been much ashamed of my own repeated failures, but the Almighty has now delivered me from my disgrace." Then the Raja was satisfied; and bestowed much encouragement and favour upon the Minister, and even conferred upon him the districts which had been conquered. And the Minister returned to his house in great joy, and in his turn showed much kindness to his dependent, and conferred upon him a portion of the conquered lands.

Achievements of Chandrahassa made known to the Raja and his Minister.

Chandrahassa then dug many wells in his father's city, and built many resting-places for travellers, so that great

Wealth of the Zemindar excites the jealousy of the Minister.





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numbers of people flocked to that city, and passed their lives in comfort and tranquillity; and the city increased mightily. Now the father of Chandrahasa paid every year a revenue of twenty thousand pieces of gold, namely, ten thousand pieces to the Raja, five thousand to the Raja's zenana, and five thousand to the Raja's Minister. But he became so prosperous that he determined to pay seven times the amount he had been accustomed to pay.

### 3. *Jealousy of the Minister.*

The Minister leaves his office in charge of his son and visits the Zemindar.

Meantime the Minister had grown very jealous of his dependent, who had conquered enemies whom he himself had failed to conquer, and who paid seven times the amount of revenue he was called upon to pay; and he determined to leave the duties of his own post, as Minister to the Raja, in the charge of his son Madan, and to pay a visit to the house of his dependent, and ascertain, with his own eyes, the cause of his extraordinary wealth.

Request of Bikya, the daughter of the Minister.

Now at the moment the Minister was about to depart on his journey, his blooming daughter Bikya presented herself before him covered with blushes, for she was anxious to be married, but knew not how to explain her wishes to her father. Accordingly, she said that she had a mango tree, the fruit of which was ripe, and she wished a feast might be given that the fruit might be gathered in its prime; meaning thereby that she herself was the tree, and that she wished her own marriage feast to be celebrated. But the Minister, in haste to depart, heeded not the meaning of her words, and said that the feast might be given; and thus without knowing it he led his daughter to believe that he would speedily give her to a husband.

The Minister arrives at the house of the Zemindar and discovers Chandrahasa.

The Minister then went on his way out of the city, and in due time arrived at the house of his dependent, where he was received with every mark of respect and submission. Then he made inquiry respecting the extraordinary wealth and good fortune which had befallen his dependent, and learned to his surprise that the prosperity was all due to an adopted son, who had been found in the jungle with his foot





bleeding from the loss of a sixth toe. The truth then broke upon his mind, that this was the same boy whom he had sent into the jungle to be killed; and that the assassins had deceived him by sparing the life of their victim and bringing him the toe; and he was exceedingly wroth. But when he beheld the young hero Chandrahassa, and saw that he was far superior to his own son, Madan, and that his face was as resplendent as the full moon, and that in grace and dignity he was equal to the gods, he was very jealous and sought to destroy him; for the Raja of Kutuwal was old, and had no sons and only one daughter; and the Minister had schemed that his own son Madan should marry the daughter of the Raja, and succeed to the Raj; but he now felt assured that should Chandrahassa once enter the presence of the Raja, Madan would be supplanted, and the adopted son of the dependent would be exalted to the highest place in the Raja's favour.

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The Minister in  
jealousy resolves  
on the destruc-  
tion of Chandra-  
hassa.

#### 4. *Plot of the Minister frustrated by Bikya.*

But whilst the Minister was bursting with wrath he kept his countenance and concealed his anger from the standers-by; and he wrote a letter to his son Madan, and requested Chandrahassa to carry it to the city; and the letter was as follows:—

Letter of the  
Minister to his  
son Madan.

“May my son eat the fruits of youth, and know that this same Chandrahassa is my *enemy*, and that he is eager to get possession of all my property: Look not you to his youth or comeliness, nor trouble yourself as to whose son he is, or whether he be a man of rank, or learning, or abilities, but give him *poison*.”

Chandrahassa readily accepted the mission, and setting forth with the letter, saw the most favourable omens on his way. At starting, he met a newly-married man taking his bride home, with a cavalcade of tom-toms and trumpets. Further on he met a cow with a calf just born, which the cowherd was driving to his house. At last he arrived at the beautiful suburbs of the city, and came to the most charming garden he had ever seen; and being very weary, he tied

Chandrahassa  
carries the  
letter.

Goes to sleep be-  
side a garden.



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Sports of the daughter of the Minister, and daughter of the Raja, in the garden.

Bikya discovers Chandrahasa.

Alteration of the letter.

his horse to a tree, and laid down in the shade and fell asleep.

Now it so happened that this pleasant garden belonged to the Minister, and that very morning his daughter Bikya and the daughter of the Raja had come there with all their maids and companions to take their pleasure; and they all sported about in the garden, and did not fail to jest each other about being married. Bikya filled her skirt with flowers and threw them on the Princess, and wished her an agreeable husband and a life of happiness; and the Princess declared that Bikya's face was so radiant that she surely must be about to be married that morning to the handsomest young man in all the world.

Thus the young damsels enlivened the garden with their jests and laughter, and presently Bikya wandered away from the others, until she came to a tank, on the bank of which she saw sleeping a young man with such a charming countenance, that her heart burned towards him. Presently she saw a letter half falling from his bosom, and to her great surprise she perceived that this letter was addressed to her own brother, and was in the hand-writing of her father. Then remembering what her father had said to her about giving her to a husband, she drew the letter from the bosom of the young man, and opened it and read it through. And she had compassion upon him, and thought to alter the writing in the letter, and she read again the words:—"Chandrahasa is my enemy: Give him poison." Now the word signifying "enemy" was such, that by taking away a single letter she could turn it into a word signifying "friend;" and she did so. And the word signifying poison was Bika, and seeing that the young man was very handsome, she altered the word Bika into her own name of Bikya; and she re-sealed the letter with a copy of her father's seal which she had with her, and placed it back in the bosom of the young man. She then returned to her companions, and the Princess looked upon her countenance, and said:—"Ah, Bikya, your face betrays you: Have you not seen a young man, and have you not fallen in love with





him?" But Bikya only answered with a smile, and turned the conversation to another matter.

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After some time, Chandrabasa rose from his sleep, and remounted his horse, and found his way to the house of the Minister, and delivered the letter to his son; and Madan read the letter with great surprise, but saw that the orders were very positive and that he must obey them without delay:—"Look not to his youth, nor to his comeliness, nor whether he be a man of rank, or learning, or abilities, but give him Bikya!" Madan then sent for the astrologers to fix a fitting day and hour for the nuptials, and they declared that sunset that same evening would be a most auspicious time; and Madan issued orders accordingly, and Bikya, who feared lest her father should return and spoil her plot, was immediately arrayed for the ceremony; whilst Chandrabasa, who was more confounded than any one, was presented with a bridegroom's dress, and directed to prepare himself to be married that evening to the beautiful daughter of the Minister.

Chandrabasa  
delivers the  
letter to the  
Minister's son.

Preparations for  
the marriage of  
Chandrabasa  
and Bikya.

At sunset everything was ready for the marriage, for Madan had been anxious to win the favour of his father by showing the utmost alacrity and zeal in carrying out the Minister's orders. He led his sister and Chandrabasa to a splendid couch, and seated them side by side. The Bráhmans, in due form, inquired the names of the fathers and grandfathers of the bridegroom and the bride; but when Chandrabasa was called upon to declare the names of his father and grandfather he replied that he was not aware that he had any father, grandfather, or mother, beyond the Almighty God. The Minister's son, mindful of his father's instructions, smiled at this reply, and desired the Bráhmans to proceed with the rite and to ask no questions; and the Bráhmans tied together the skirts of the bridegroom and the bride, and Chandrabasa and Bikya were thus made husband and wife. Madan then distributed magnificent presents of gold, jewels, silken stuffs, horses, elephants, sandal, and camphor; and the news spread throughout the city, and all the dancing-girls, musicians, and poets, as well as an immense

The marriage.

The presents.





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multitude of people, flocked to the house of the Minister, and received so many good things that every street was filled with rejoicings and congratulations, and with prayers for the happiness of Chandrasasa and the lovely Bikya.

5. *Wrath of the Minister.*

Proceedings of  
the Minister to-  
wards the Ze-  
mindar.

All this time the Minister himself had been staying in the city of his dependent, and having sent away Chandrasasa, he wreaked his wrath upon the young man's adopted father. He threw the dependent into prison, and gave his office and all his great wealth to another of his retainers; and he imprisoned all the officers in that quarter, and grievously punished the Ryots with stripes. Having thus gratified his jealous rage, and being especially delighted at having destroyed his dangerous enemy, Chandrasasa, he returned to the city of Kutuwal at the moment when the marriage ceremony had been finally concluded. On reaching his own house he saw that an extraordinary entertainment was going on, for singers and musicians were performing a delightful concert, whilst drums were beating, and throngs of people were coming out laden with gold and presents. When the people saw the Minister, they loudly congratulated him on the happy marriage of his daughter Bikya with the hero Chandrasasa; and he looked round him with astonishment, and thinking that they were all mad, he ordered them to be driven away with whips. A second multitude approached him with similar compliments, and by his order were driven away in like manner. Last came a crowd of Bráhmans and Chieftains still offering the same congratulations, and the Minister, choking with rage and vexation, seized a whip from his servant and belaboured the Bráhmans with his own hand, until some threw down their presents and ran away, whilst others dropped their turbans, or fell upon their faces in fear and trembling.

Return of the  
Minister to his  
own house.

His surprise.

The Minister  
thunderstruck  
at the marriage  
of Chandra-  
sasa and Bik.

The Minister then entered his house in a state bordering upon madness, for all the women of his household thronged around him, and assailed him with a storm of





blessings and praises. He hastened to the Hall, and there he saw Chandrahassa and his own daughter, Bikya, sitting on the couch with their garments tied together as bridegroom and bride; and a trembling seized him, and he could not say a word, but could only suppose that his son must be mad. He went out, and seeing Madan, he cried out:—"O fool, what have you been doing? I sent you a man with orders to kill him, and you have given him my daughter in marriage, and thrown away all my money in presents to the people." Madan then produced the letter which had been brought to him by Chandrahassa; and as the Minister was unable to perceive the alterations which had been made, he was compelled to accept the orders as his own, and could only wonder at the greatness of his own blunder.

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The Minister  
sees his own  
letter.

The Minister then began to reflect, and to perceive the importance of concealing his feelings; for he knew full well that if he began a quarrel at such a moment, or spoke evil of his new son-in-law, he would be condemned by all men. Accordingly, he returned to the newly-married pair, and endeavoured to conciliate his son-in-law by such excuses as he could invent for the occasion, and kissed his daughter and wished her joy. All the time, however, he was so vexed that he could have murdered every one in the house, but he was compelled to permit the wedding night to pass by without working out any scheme of revenge. Early next morning he sent for some Chandálas, and engaged them by the promise of large rewards to secrete themselves in the temple of the goddess Durgá, which was without the city, and to murder the man who should come at evening time to present a golden pot of incense to the goddess. He then summoned Chandrahassa, and informed him that it was the fixed rule for every man who married into his family to offer a golden cup of incense at the temple of Durgá; and Chandrahassa readily promised to comply with the custom that same evening.

Plot of the Min-  
ister to slay  
Chandrahassa  
in the temple of  
Durgá.

### 6. *The Raj given to Chandrahassa.*

But this very day, being the day after the marriage, a

Sudden abdic-  
ation of the Raja  
in favour of  
Chandrahassa.



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sudden resolution had seized the mind of the Raja. On the previous night he had dreamed a dream which in the opinion of the wise men of his Court betokened a speedy death; and he had also seen his own shadow without a head to it, which is an apparition that always betokens death within seven days. Accordingly, the Raja resolved upon retiring immediately from the Raj, and devoting the remainder of his days to solemn preparations for his coming end. Being ignorant of the return of his Minister he sent for Madan, and told him that he meant that day to resign his Raj, and said that he had heard so much of the virtue and piety of Chandrahasa that he was determined to make that young man his successor. He therefore desired Madan to bring his new brother-in-law to the palace with all speed, in order that the Raj might be conferred upon him without a moment's delay.

The Minister's son proceeds to the temple of Durgá.

Madan, overjoyed at the good fortune of his new brother-in-law, immediately set out in search of Chandrahasa, and presently found him on the road to the temple of Durgá, with the golden cup in his hand; and having briefly explained to him the urgent necessity for his immediate presence at the palace, he took the cup from his hand and promised to present it himself to the goddess. Madan thus sent back Chandrahasa to the palace of the Raja, and proceeded alone with the golden cup to the temple of Durgá. Darkness was now fast closing in, and Madan to his horror beheld many evil omens; an owl suddenly perched upon his head, and two cats fought each other in the middle of his path, whilst blood dripped from his eyes without any apparent cause. But it seemed to him that these omens pointed at Chandrahasa rather than at himself, and he fervently prayed that any evil which might be impending over so excellent a brother-in-law might be transferred to himself. At last he opened the door of the temple and went in, and was at once cut down by the swords of the assassins and slaughtered upon the spot.

His death.

Chandrahasa crowned Raja and married to the Raja's daughter.

Meantime, Chandrahasa had reached the palace where the Raja was holding a Council with his Chieftains. The





Raja then took the diadem from his own head and placed it upon the head of Chandrahassa; and sending for his own daughter, the same who had sported and jested with Bikya in the garden, he married her to the young hero. He then turned to his Council and said :—"I constitute this young man to be Raja over you : may he, and you, and all his subjects, be happy." The Chieftains burst into tears, and pledged themselves to accept Chandrahassa as their new Raja with all their heart and soul. The old Raja then stripped himself of his royal robes, and placed them upon Chandrahassa, and left the palace with only his cloth around him, and went off into the jungle and was heard of no more.

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### *7. Fatal end of the Minister.*

The royal drums proclaiming the succession of a new Raja were then beaten throughout the city, and the Minister hearing the sound immediately inquired the cause, in the fond hope that it betokened the abdication of the Raja, which he had been long expecting, and the accession of his own son Madan to the Raj. The servant of the Minister told his master the truth, namely, that the Raja had given the Raj to Chandrahassa; but the Minister was so enraged at these words that he refused to believe them, and ordered that the tongue of the man who had spoken them should be cut out. Presently, a royal cavalcade appeared in sight, for Chandrahassa still believed that he owed all his good fortune to the Minister, and therefore had determined to pay him a visit that very evening, accompanied by the Raja's daughter, to whom he had been that day married. The Minister now more than ever comforted himself with the idea that his own son Madan had succeeded to the Raj, and was coming to receive his father's congratulations; but he was soon undeceived by the appearance of Chandrahassa, and for a while he was speechless with rage. Suddenly he inquired for Madan, and was told that he had gone in the place of Chandrahassa to offer the cup of incense in the

Chandrahassa  
pays a visit to  
the Minister.



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foregoing story  
of Chandrasasa  
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Bikya in accord-  
ance with Hindu  
ideas.Illustration of  
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historical pe-  
riod.

temple of Durgá. At these words he uttered a loud cry, and ran with all haste to the temple, but only to find the slaughtered remains of his son; and maddened to desperation at the sight, he dashed out his own brains against a pillar and expired upon the spot.

The foregoing story of Chandrasasa and Bikya is one which throws considerable light upon the Hindú belief in astrology and good fortune; whilst even from a European point of view the plot will be regarded as ingenious and pleasing. Perhaps European taste may be slightly outraged by the steps taken by Bikya to secure for herself a handsome husband, but still her proceedings are not altogether unfeminine; nor are they foreign to Hindú ideas, which permits a young lady to choose a husband for herself on arriving at a marriageable age, unless one has previously been selected for her by her father or guardian. In like manner the two marriages of Chandrasasa, first to the daughter of the Minister and afterwards to the daughter of the Raja, is foreign to European sentiments although in accordance with Oriental institutions. Again, the rapid and forcible manner in which the good fortune of Chandrasasa, and the unlucky destiny of the Minister, are developed in the story, may be regarded as somewhat artificial or romantic; but still the whole may be accepted as a pleasing picture of Hindú life during the historical period, when the Mussulmans may already have established themselves at Delhi, but when the Dekhan was as yet undisturbed by their influence or sway.





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