Accordingly while the King of Vatsa was remaining in that Vindhya forest the warder of King Chandamahāsena came to him. And when he arrived he did obeisance to the king, and spoke as follows:—“The King Chandamahāsena sends you this message: ‘You did rightly in carrying off Vāsavadattā yourself, for I had brought you to my Court with this very object; and the reason I did not myself give her to you while you were a prisoner was that I feared, if I did so, you might not be well disposed towards me. Now, O king, I ask you to wait a little, in order that the marriage of my daughter may not be performed without due ceremonies. For my son Gopālaka will soon arrive in your Court, and he will celebrate with appropriate ceremonies the marriage of that sister of his.’” This message the warder brought to the King of Vatsa, and said various things to Vāsavadattā.

Then the King of Vatsa, being pleased, determined on going to Kauśāmbī with Vāsavadattā, who was also in high spirits. He told his ally Pulindaka, and that warder in the service of his father-in-law to await, where they were, the arrival of Gopālaka, and then to come with him to Kauśāmbī. Then the great king set out early the next day for his own city with that Queen Vāsavadattā, followed by huge elephants raining streams of ichor that seemed like moving peaks of the Vindhya range accompanying him out of affection; he was, as it were, praised by the earth, that outdid the compositions of his minstrels, while it rang with the hoofs of his horses and the tramplings of his soldiers; and by means of the towering clouds of dust from his army, that ascended to heaven, he made Indra fear that the mountains were sporting with unshorn wings.[1]

Then the king reached his country in two or three days, and rested one night in a palace belonging to Rumanvat; and on the next day, accompanied by his beloved, he enjoyed, after a long absence, the great delight of entering Kauśāmbī, the people of which were eagerly looking with uplifted faces for his approach. And then that city was resplendent as a wife, her lord having returned after a long absence, beginning her adornment and auspicious bathing vicariously by means of her women; and there the citizens, their sorrow now at an end,
beheld the King of Vatsa accompanied by his bride, as peacocks behold a cloud accompanied by lightning;[2] and the wives of the citizens, standing on the tops of the palaces, filled the heaven with their faces, that had the appearance of golden lotuses blooming in the heavenly Ganges. Then the King of Vatsa entered his royal palace with Vāsavadattā, who seemed like a second goddess of royal fortune; and that palace then shone as if it had just awaked from sleep, full of kings who had come to show their devotion, festive with songs of minstrels.[3] Not long after came Gopālaka, the brother of Vāsavadattā, bringing with him the warder and Pulindaka. The king went to meet him, and Vāsavadattā received him with her eyes expanded with delight, as if he were a second spirit of joy. While she was looking at this brother a tear dimmed her eyes lest she should be ashamed; and then she, being encouraged by him with the words of her father’s message, considered that her object in life was attained, now that she was reunited to her own relations.

Then on the next day Gopālaka, with the utmost eagerness, set about the high festival of her marriage with the King of Vatsa, carefully observing all prescribed ceremonies. Then the King of Vatsa received the hand of Vāsavadattā, like a beautiful shoot lately budded on the creeper of love. She too, with her eyes closed through the great joy of touching her beloved’s hand, having her limbs bathed in perspiration accompanied with trembling, covered all over with extreme horripilation,[4] appeared at that moment as if struck by the god of the flowery bow with the arrow of bewilderment, the weapon of wind and the water weapon in quick succession;[5] when she walked round the fire, keeping it to the right,[6] her eyes being red with the smoke, she had her first taste, so to speak, of the sweetness of honey and wine.[7] Then by means of the jewels brought by Gopālaka, and the gifts of the kings, the monarch of Vatsa became a real king of kings.[8]

That bride and bridegroom, after their marriage had been celebrated, first exhibited themselves to the eyes of the people and then entered their private apartments. Then the King of Vatsa, on the day so auspicious to himself, invested Gopālaka and Pulindaka with turbans of honour and other distinctions, and he commissioned Yaugandharāyana and Rumanvat to confer appropriate distinctions on the kings who had come to visit him, and on the citizens. Then Yaugandharāyana said to Rumanvat: “The king has given us a difficult commission, for men’s feelings are hard to discover. And even a child will certainly do mischief if not pleased. To illustrate this point, listen to the tale of the child Vinashtaka, my friend:

9. Story of the Clever Deformed Child

Once on a time there was a certain Brāhmaṇ named Rudraśarman, and he,
when he became a householder, had two wives, and one of his wives gave birth to a son and died; and then the Brähman entrusted that son to the care of his stepmother; and when he grew to a tolerable stature she gave him coarse food; the consequence was, the boy became pale and got a swollen stomach. Then Rudraśarman said to that second wife: “How comes it that you have neglected this child of mine that has lost its mother?” She said to her husband: “Though I take affectionate care of him, he is nevertheless the strange object you see. What am I to do with him?” Whereupon the Brähma thought: “No doubt it is the child’s nature to be like this.” For who sees through the deceitfulness of the speeches of women uttered with affected simplicity?

Then that child began to go by the name of Bālavinashtaka in his father’s house, because they said this child (bāla) is deformed (vinashta).

Then Bālavinashtaka thought to himself: “This stepmother of mine is always ill-treating me, therefore I had better be revenged upon her in some way”—for though the boy was only a little more than five years old when he was clever enough. Then he said secretly to his father when he returned from the king’s Court, with half-suppressed voice[10]: “Papa, I have two papas.”

So the boy said every day, and his father, suspecting that his wife had a paramour, would not even touch her. She for her part thought: “Why is my husband angry without my being guilty? I wonder whether Bālavinashtaka has been at any tricks.” So she washed Bālavinashtaka with careful kindness, and gave him dainty food, and, taking him on her lap, asked him the following question:—“My son, why have you incensed your father Rudraśarman against me?” When he heard that, the boy said to his stepmother: “I will do more harm to you than that, if you do not immediately cease ill-treating me. You take good care of your own children; why do you perpetually torment me?”

When she heard that, she bowed before him, and said with solemn oath: “I will not do so any more; so reconcile my husband to me.” Then the child said to her: “Well, when my father comes home, let one of your maids show him a mirror, and leave the rest to me.” She said, “Very well,” and by her orders a maid showed a mirror to her husband as soon as he returned home.

Thereupon the child, pointing out the reflection of his father in the mirror, said: “There is my second father.” When he heard that, Rudraśarman dismissed his suspicions and was immediately reconciled to his wife, whom he had blamed without cause.[11]

[M] “Thus even a child may do mischief if it is annoyed, and therefore we must carefully conciliate all this retinue.” Saying this, Yaugandharāyana, with the help of Rumanvat, carefully honoured all the people on this the King of Vatsa’s great day of rejoicing. And they gratified[12] all the kings so successfully that each one of them thought: “These two men are devoted to me alone.” And the king honoured those two ministers and Vasantaka with garments, unguents and ornaments
bestowed with his own hand, and he also gave them grants of villages. Then the King of Vatsa, having celebrated the great festival of his marriage, considered all his wished gratified, now that he was linked to Vāsavādattā. Their mutual love, having blossomed after a long time of expectation, was so great, owing to the strength of their passion, that their hearts continually resembled those of the sorrowing Chakravākās when the night, during which they are separated, comes to an end. And as the familiarity of the couple increased, their love seemed to be every renewed. Then Gopālaka, being ordered by his father to return to get married himself, went away, after having been entreated by the King of Vatsa to return quickly.

In the course of time the King of Vatsa became faithless, and secretly loved an attendant of the harem named Virachitā, with whom he had previously had an intrigue. One day he made a mistake and addressed the queen by her name; thereupon he had to conciliate her by clinging to her feet, and bathed in her tears he was anointed[13] a fortunate king. Moreover, he married a princess of the name of Bandhumati, whom Gopālaka had captured by the might of his arm and sent as a present to the queen; and whom she concealed, changing her name to Manjulikā; who seemed like another Lakshmi issuing from the sea of beauty. Her the king saw when he was in the company of Vasantaka, and secretly married her by the gāndharva ceremony in a summer-house. And that proceeding of his was beheld by Vāsavādattā, who was put in concealment, and she was angry, and had Vasantaka put in fetters. Then the king had recourse to the good offices of a female ascetic, a friend of the queen’s, who had come with her from her father’s Court, of the name of Sānkritiyanā. She appeased the queen’s anger, and got Bandhumati presented to the king by the obedient queen, for tender is the heart of virtuous wives. Then the queen released Vasantaka from imprisonment; he came into the presence of the queen and said to her with a laugh: “Bandhumati did you an injury, but what did I do to you? You are angry with adders[14] and you kill water-snakes.” Then the queen, out of curiosity, asked him to explain that metaphor, and he continued as follows:–

10. Story of Ruru

Once on a time a hermit’s son of the name of Ruru, wandering about at will, saw a maiden of wonderful beauty, the daughter of a heavenly nymph named Menakā by a Vidyādhara, and brought up by a hermit of the name of Sthūlakesa in his hermitage. That lady, whose name was Prishadvarā, so captivated the mind of that Ruru when he saw her, that he went and begged the hermit to give her to him in marriage. Sthūlakesa for his part betrothed the maiden to him, and when the wedding was nigh at hand suddenly an adder bit her. Then the heart of Ruru was full of despair; but he heard this voice in the heaven: “O Brāhman, raise to
life with the gift of half thy own life[15] this maiden, whose allotted term is at an end.” When he heard that, Ruru gave her half of his own life, as he had been directed; by means of that she revived, and Ruru married her. Thenceforward he was incensed with the whole race of serpents, and whenever he saw a serpent he killed it, thinking to himself as he killed each one: “This may have bitten my wife.” One day a water-snake said to him with human voice as he was about to slay it: “You are incensed against adders, Brâhman, but why do you slay water-snakes? An adder bit your wife, and adders are a distinct species from water-snakes; all adders are venomous, water-snakes are not venomous.” When he heard that, he said in answer to the water-snake: “My friend, who are you?” The water-snake said: “Brâhman, I am a hermit fallen from my high estate by a curse, and this curse was appointed to last till I held converse with you.” When he said that he disappeared, and after that Ruru did not kill water-snakes.

[M] “So I said this to you metaphorically: ‘My queen, you are angry with adders and you kill water-snakes.’” When he had uttered this speech, full of pleasing wit, Vasantaka ceased, and Vâsavadattâ, sitting at the side of her husband, was pleased with him. Such soft and sweet tales in which Vasantaka displayed various ingenuity, did the loving Udayana, King of Vatsa, continually make use of to conciliate his angry wife, while he sat at her feet. That happy king’s tongue was ever exclusively employed in tasting the flavour of wine, and his ear was ever delighting in the sweet sounds of the lute, and his eye was ever riveted on the face of his beloved.
End

Endnotes:

[1] Alluding to Indra’s having cut the wings of the mountains. –This fine exaggeration was borrowed by the Persians and appears in Firdausi, where the trampling of men and horses raises such a dust that it takes one layer (of the seven) from earth and adds it to the (seven of the) heavens. In the *Nights* (Burton, vol. iii, p. 83) we read:

“The courser chargeth on battling foe, Mixing heaven on high with the earth down low.”–N.M.P. <back>

[2] The peafowl are delighted at the approach of the rainy season, when “their sorrow” comes to an end. <back>

[3] It is often the duty of these minstrels to wake the king with their songs. <back>

[4] See note on p. 120.[Chapter 10, note 23]–N.M.P. <back>

[5] Weapons well known in Hindu mythology. See the sixth act of the Uttara Rama Charita. <back>


[7] Sidrapatam akarot=she tested, so to speak. Cf. Taranga 24, sl. 93. The fact is, the smoke make her eyes as red as if she had been drinking. <back>

[8] Or “like Kuvera.” There is a pun here. <back>

[9] Young deformed. <back>

[10] Durgāprasād’s text reads *avispaṭayā girā* (instead of *ardhāvistayā girā*), meaning “with his inarticulate voice,” which is perhaps more suitable here.–N.M.P. <back>

In the *Simhāsana-dvātrimśikā* (or *Thirty-two Tales of a Throne*) the sagacity of a young boy brings a jewel thief and his accomplices to justice. There is one *Enfant Terrible* story which is found in several Persian and Arabic collections.

It appears as one of the Prince’s stories in the *Sindibād Nāma*, and relates how a child of three, speaking from its cradle, rebuked an adulterous king about to gratify an unlawful passion, on whom its words make such an impression that the king abandoned his intention and became a paragon of virtue. It appears in *Sīndban* and *Syntipas*, and also in the *Nights* (Burton, vol. vi, p. 208), as “The Debauchee and the Three-year-old Child.”

Another famous story of a clever child is that of “The Stolen Purse.” The outline of the story is as follows:—Three (sometimes four) people enter into partnership. They amass money and deposit it with a trusted woman, telling her she is not give it up unless all partners are present. One day they are all together and one of the men calls in at the old woman’s house ostensibly for a comb (or other articles for the bath) and says: “Give me the purse.” “No,” says the woman; “you are alone.” He explains the others are just outside, and calls out: “She is to give it me, isn’t she?” They (thinking he refers to the comb) say: “Yes.” He gets the purse and escapes out of the town. The others refuse to believe the woman’s explanations and take her to the judge. She is about to lose her case when a child of five, hearing the details, tells her to say to the Kazi that she intends to keep strictly to her original agreement and will give up the purse when all the partners are present. This could certainly not be done as one had run away, and so the woman is saved.

This story with minor differences occurs in Persian, Arabic, Turkish, Hebrew, Greek and Italian collections. It is also found in numerous English jest-books. Burton (*Nights*, vol. vi, pp. 210, 211) gives a long note on the subject.

Further references should be made to both Clouston and Comparetti’s works on the *Book of Sindibād*, and also to Chauvin, *Bibliographie des Ouvrages Arabes*, viii, pp. 62-64.—N.M.P.

[12] Cf. the distribution of presents on the occasion of King Etzel’s marriage in the *Nibelungenlied*. <back>

[13] It must be remembered that a king among the Hindus was inaugurated with water, not oil. <back>

[14] The word “adders” must here do duty for all venomous kinds of serpents. <back>

[15] A similar story is found in the fourth book of the *Pañchatantra*, fable 5, where Benfey compares the story of Yayati and his son Puru (Benfey, *Pañchatantra*, i, 436).
Bernhard Schmidt in his *Griechische Märchen*, p. 37, mentions a very similar story, which he connects with that of Admetos and Alkestis. In a popular ballad of Trebisond a young man named Jannis, the only son of his parents, is about to be married when Charon comes to fetch him. He supplicates St George, who obtains for him the concession, that his life may be spared, in case his father will give him half the period of life still remaining to him. His father refuses, and in the same way his mother. At last his betrothed gives him half of her allotted period of life, and the marriage takes place. The story of Ruru is found in the *Âdîparva* of the *Mahâbhârata* (see Lèvêque, *Mythes et Legends de l’Inde*, pp. 278 and 374).—See also Benfey, *op. cit.*, ii, 545, and Chauvin, *Bibliographie des Ouvrages Arabes*, viii, p. 119.—N.M.P. <back>