

**Anuwa and his mother.**

**From Folklore of the Santal Parganas
By Cecil Henry Bompas**

**Once there was a young fellow named Anuwa who lived with his old mother, and when he was out ploughing his mother used to take him his breakfast. One day a jackal met her on her way to the field with her son's breakfast and told her to put down the food which she was carrying or he would knock her down and bite her; so she put it down in a fright and the jackal ate most of it and then went away and the old woman took what was left to her son and told him nothing about what had happened. This happened several days in succession; at last one day Anuwa asked her why she brought so little rice and that so untidily arranged; so she told him how she was attacked every day by the jackal. Then they made a plan that the next day the mother should take the plough afield, while Anuwa should dress up as an old woman and carry the breakfast.**

**This they did and the jackal met Anuwa as usual and made him put down the breakfast basket, but while the jackal was eating, Anuwa knocked him head over heels with his stick; and the jackal got up and fled, threatening and cursing Anuwa. Among other things the jackal as he ran away, had threatened to eat Anuwa's \_malhan\_ plants, so Anuwa put a fence of thorns round them and when the jackal came at night and tried to eat the pods he only got his nose pricked. Foiled in this the jackal called out "Well, I will eat your fowls to-morrow;" but Anuwa the next night sat by the fowl house with a sickle and when the jackal came and poked in his head, Anuwa gave him a rap on the snout with the sickle, so the jackal made off crying "Well, Anuwa, your fowls have pecked me on the head, you shall die."**

**So the next day Anuwa pretended to be dead and his mother went about crying; she took her way to the jungle and there she met the jackal and she told him that Anuwa had died in consequence of his curse and she invited him to the funeral feast, saying that he used to eat the rice which she had cooked and he had become like a son to her. The jackal gladly promised to attend, and he collected a number of his friends and at evening they went to Anuwa's house and sat down in the courtyard. Then the old woman came out and began to bewail her son: but the jackal said "Stop crying, grannie, you cannot get back the dead: let us get on to the feast." So she said that she would fry some cakes first, as it would take some time before the rice was ready. The jackals approved of this but they asked her to tie them up with a rope first lest they should get to fighting over the food,**

**so the old woman brought a thick rope and tied them all up and tightest of all she tied up the jackal which had cursed Anuwa; then she went inside and put an iron pan on the fire and from time to time she sprinkled water on it and when the jackals heard the water hissing they thought that it was the cakes frying and jumped about with joy. Suddenly Anuwa came out with a thick stick and set to beating the jackals till they bit through the ropes and ran away howling; but the first jackal was tied so tightly that he could not escape, and Anuwa beat him till he was senseless and lay without moving all night. The next morning Anuwa took the jackal and tied him to a stake near the place where the village women drew water and he put a thick stick beside it and every woman who went for water would give the jackal one blow with the stick. After a few days beating the body of the jackal became all swollen and one night some other jackals came there and asked him what he ate that he had got so fat and he said that every one who came to draw water gave him a handful of rice and that was why he was so fat; and if they did not believe him they could take his place and try for themselves. So one jackal agreed to try and untied the first jackal and let himself be tied in his place, but in the morning five women came down and each gave him a blow with the stick till he jumped about for pain, and seeing him jumping other women came and beat him till he died.**