



### CHANDNI

#### SUMMARY

Once there lived an old man in Almora. His name was Abbu Khan. He kept a few goats as pets. He would give each of them a funny name. Abbu Khan was however a little unlucky. Very often, at night one of the goats would break the string and go up the hills. It was so because the goats loved freedom. His goats were of the best hill breed. Goats in the hilly regions hate being tied to trees or poles. But this freedom cost them their lives. They were eaten by an old wolf who lived in the hills.

One day when all his goats had gone, Abbu Khan became very sad. He decided to have no more goats as pets. However, he changed his mind soon after. It was so because without the goats he became very lonely. Now he bought a very young goat. He thought it would stay with him much longer. He decided to love that goat so much that it would never go away. So he bought a pretty young goat. He named it Chandni.

Chandni lived with Abbu Khan for several years. But when it grew up it also felt the urge of going up the hills. She ran towards them but the rope would stop her. So she began to hate the rope round her neck.

Soon she stopped eating the grass. She also stopped listening to Abbu Khan's stories with interest. She became very thin and unhappy. Abbu Khan did not understand her problem. At last Chandni decided to speak to him frankly. She asked him to let her go to the hills. Now Abbu Khan understood Chandni's problem. He told Chandni of the danger of death if she went up. Chandni said that she would fight the wolf with her horns. Abbu Khan told her that it was impossible. He told her about her sister Kalua who was the size of a deer. Yet she was eaten up by the wolf. Chandni still wanted to go to the hills.

Abbu Khan was very annoyed. He loved Chandni and wanted to save her life. So he shut her in a small hut. But he forgot to close the window. That very night Chandni escaped through the window to the hills.

Chandni reached the hills. She enjoyed her freedom. Chandni felt that it was the happiest day of her life. She played for hours on the grassy hills. She met a herd of wild goats. They asked her to join their group. But Chandni refused. She wanted to enjoy her new freedom by herself.

Then there was night. There was stillness all around. In that silence. Chandni heard the voice of a wolf. She was frightened. For once she thought of going back to Abbu Khan. Then she decided against it. "Death in an open field is far better than life in a small hut."

The wolf now stood face to face with Chandni. Chandni saw that she was very small compared to the wolf. Yet she did not lose heart. "I must put up a good fight." Chandni thought. She fought because she had to retain her freedom at all costs. Success or failure was a matter of luck or chance.

Chandni fought very bravely. They fought each other all night. But the first ray of the sun saw Chandni dead. She was lying on the ground in a pool of blood. The wolf was getting ready to eat her.

A group of birds had watched the fight. Most of them thought that the wolf had won. However, a wise old bird declared that Chandni was the winner.