

MIDDLE EASTERN MYTHOLOGY (GANDAREWA)

The great dragon Gandarewa was a beast of immense proportions. With great golden heels which glowed in the sun, and a body as bright and beautiful as a meteor's flames. Able to swallow up to twelve men at once, Gandarewa was a terror of the deep.

Gandarewa dwelt in the cosmic sea of Vourukasha, guarding the White Haoma, a great healing plant which could cure the sick and bring life to the dying.

There had been a time when Gandarewa had gifted the White Haoma to those in need, but as time passed, Gandarewa spent his time guarding this precious plant, refusing to share its rejuvenating properties.

Gandarewa's malevolence drew the attention of the mighty hero Keresaspa, a hero whom had fought other beasts. Keresaspa sought to slay Gandarewa and return the White Haoma to those who needed it.

As Keresaspa entered the cosmic sea of Vourukasha, he saw

Gandarewa from a distance. His massive body was intimidating, even from a distance. Keresaspa looked at his large teeth, the gaps of which were filled with the broken bodies of men upon whom Gandarewa had feasted.

Gandarewa swept down upon Keresaspa, gripping his beard and throwing him across the cosmic sea.

Keresaspa fought the beast for nine days and nine nights, exhausting the beast. Eventually, Keresaspa caught Gandarewa by his golden heels and began to flay the skin from his flesh. Gandarewa bellowed in agony, as Keresaspa bound the beast by the hands and feet and dragged him ashore.

On the shore, Gandarewa whipped around, breaking free from his bonds and devouring fifteen of Keresaspa's horses and regaining his strength. At once, he lashed at Keresaspa's eyes, blinding him and hurling him into a dense thicket.

Gandarewa took flight, seeking out Keresaspa's wife and family, and dragging them down into the cosmic sea.

Keresaspa gave chase, fighting Gandarewa and freeing his family. Enraged by Gandarewa, Keresaspa unleashed his fury, beating him down and dragging him ashore. With a clean hard swing of his club, Keresaspa smashed open Gandarewa's head, and returned to White

Haoma to those in need.

Despite his blessings, Gandarewa had become spoiled, bitter and jealous of those who sought to make use of the White Haoma. His cruelty turned him into an unpitiable monster, who preyed on the weak, and consequently, he had been hunted by the great hero Keresaspa.

The moral of the story is not to hoard your blessings, but to share them with others.

Q: Why did Gandarewa become spoiled and bitter?

A: He was jealous of those who sought the White Haoma

Q: How many men could Gandarewa eat in one go?

A: Twelve.

Q: How did Keresaspa bind Gandarewa?

A: By the hands and feet.