Travelling Tales: Some Stories from the Middle Himalayas

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Summary/Abstract: This paper presents a fascinating book, which has been very recently released in India from Yatra publishing house—Clever Wives and Happy Idiots. Folktales from the Kumaon Himalayas (New Delhi: Yatra Books 2015). Originally written in Russian in 1875 by the ethnographer Ivan P. Minayev (1840–1890), it records the
foltales, myths and legends of the Himalayan region of Kumaon, as also his impressions of the region. His account, preserved as it were in amber and never before translated into English, has both historical and archival value and the charm of rediscovering the folk narrative of Uttarakhand. Two tales from the book, translated by Bulbul Sharma and Madhu Malik, are published as an illustration for this essay.

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