

18. "Indeed I do wish to see and learn as much as you will allow," replied Kanak.

Then the Man in the Moon said to him, "For a while, my friend, I must leave you. But I will return shortly; and, in the meantime, you may amuse yourself by comparing the things here with those in your own world. You are safe enough, if you will just bear one little thing in mind; and that is, *not to laugh*, or evil will come to you.

19. "When I am gone, my women will do all they can to make you laugh; and should you do so, they will kill you, for that is the rule of our land. If you *feel* that you are going to laugh, and cannot help it, rub your knee with the nail of your little finger; and then the desire even so much as to smile will pass away."

20. No sooner had the Man in the Moon left him, than two women came into the hall and began to caper and dance in such an absurd manner, that Kanak almost burst out laughing. But, just in time, he rubbed his knee quickly with the nail of his little finger.

21. As he did this, the women started back in surprise and alarm; then, through the hole in the floor, they sprang into space, and Kanak saw them no more. After them came a troop of boys and girls who sang, danced, and capered, seeming quite hurt that Kanak showed no desire to laugh.