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Indian Fairy Tales



Synopsis

India is often reputed to be the home of the fairy tale. Here are some of the best from the sub-continent, from the Jatakas to the folktales of Kashmir. You'll hear stories about the evil magician Punchkin, the magic fiddle, and more.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This was a book of many wonderful Indian fairy tales. It includes tales both of a 'classical' fairy tale style and ones that are moralistic folktales instead. All are wonderful. Stories included are: The Lion and the Crane, How the Raja's Son Won the Princess Labam, The Lambikin, Punchkin, The Broken Pot, The Magic Fiddle, The Cruel Crane Outwitted, Loving Laili, The Tiger, the Brahman and the Jackal, The Soothsayer's Son, Harisaman, The Charmed Ring, The Talkative Tortoise, A Lac of Rupees for a Bit of Advice, The Gold-Giving Serpent, The Son of Seven Queens, A Lesson for Kings, Pride Goeth Before a Fall, Raja Rasalu, The Ass in the Lion's Skin, The Farmer and the Money Lender, The Boy Who had a Moon on his Forehead... The Prince and the Fakir, Why the Fish Laughed, The Demon with the Matted Hair, The Ivory City and its Fairy Princess, How Sun, Moon and Wind Went Out to Dinner, How the Wicked Sons were Duped, The Pigeon and the Crow. For more Indian tales you can also check out Deccan Nursery Tales or, Fairy Tales from the South or Hindu Tales from the Sanskrit, although they are both aimed slightly more towards an audience of children.

My name is Suni - chan. I am 10 years old. This book is very interesting, because it goes into detail

about a lot of things in the stories. The bad things about the book are that the stories are about princes and princesses and heroic stories over and over again. One of my favorite stories were of the 7 queens and how they got their freedom from jail again. That is why I rate this four stars! I love this book, and recommend even 6 year olds to read this book. For anyone who dislikes stories repeating again and again- DO NOT READ THIS!

The stories could be interesting, but they are written as if someone used a free online translation service - plug in one language and get the computer direct translation output in English. Yikes. At the best of times you can make out what they mean, at the worst it's completely nonsensical. Even for a free book, this is not worth the read.

Some very good stories in here, a lot of similarities to Anglo-American and Native American fairy tales and folk lore.

I have enjoyed these short fairy stories a great deal. They're just the right length to read one or two on the bus ride to work, without having to stop & forget my place. There are a lot of similarities between some of these stories and European fairy tales. I quite like this collection!

Good read

The book was a let down. The language used is arcane and sentence constructs are convoluted. I was hoping to give it to my child as she loves the western fairy tales so much. But the translation used in the book makes it impossible for her to comprehend the stories or for me to read it to her. I really wish there were better translations available. Heck. I am willing to do some translation myself so that the rest of the world can also enjoy the wonderful stories we have.

There are twenty-nine stories in this collection. These Indian tales resemble the stories that flourished in Europe, such as the tales by the Brothers Grimm and by Aesop, although they have an Indian flavor. The collector of these stories contends that they are very old, older than the legends and folk-tales that later flourished in Europe. He believes that India was the originator of this genre and the stories were possibly brought to Europe by the crusaders or other travelers that passed through India. For example, the tale The Lion and the Crane is well-known. A lion was eating an animal when a bone got stuck in its throat. A crane offered to help if the lion promises not to eat it.

The lion agrees. The crane protects itself by placing a stick in the lion's mouth to keep it open while he is inside the lion's mouth removing the bone. As soon as the crane removes the bone, it pushes out the stick and flies off to a high tree. Later, the crane asks the lion what the lion will give it for saving the lion's life. The lion responds that it already gave the crane a gift by not eating it. The Indian version ends by speaking about the transmigration of souls, a belief of many Indians. The lion and the crane were people in another life. How the Raja's Son Won the Princess Labam is another example of a familiar tale, although known in the west under other names. A prince goes in search for a beautiful princess. While journeying, he takes out his food and finds an ant in it. He places it on the ground for other ants to come and finish it. The ant Raja arrives and tells him that since he fed the ants, if he needs help in the future all he need do is think of them and they will come to help him. He leaves and continues searching for the princess. He comes across a tiger with a thorn in its paw. He helps the tiger who tells the prince that if he needs help in the future, he should think of him, and he and his wife will come and help him. The prince continues his search and comes across four fakirs with four magic items: a bag that give food whenever it is requested to do so, a bowl that offers water, a bed that flies and can take the prince where he wants to go, and a stick that will beat any group that tries to harm him. He takes the four items from the fakirs. He uses the bed to go to the princess. He uses the bag and bowl for food and drink. He then uses the ants and tigers and the bed when the princess' father insists that he performs tasks before he will give up his daughter. The final fourth task that the father insists that he perform is one that none of his friends or magical items can help him with. But the princess tells him how to do the task. The story ends by stating that the two lived happily and never needed to use the magic stick.

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