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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

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.

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