

STORYTELLER:
HINDU STORIES



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Anita Ganeri

Illustrations by Carole Gray



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Introduction



Hindu Stories



In each of the world's six main religions - Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Sikhism - stories play a very

important part. They have been used for many hundreds of years to teach people about their faith in a way which makes difficult messages easier to understand. Many stories tell of times in the lives of religious teachers, leaders, gods and goddesses. Others explain mysterious events such as how the world was created or what happens when we die. Many have a strong moral or lesson to teach.



The collection of stories in this book comes from the Hindu scriptures. Hinduism began in India at least 5000 years ago.

Hindus believe that everything comes from a spirit called Brahman. It is the source of all life and is eternal. Hindus often call Brahman God. They also believe that there are many gods and goddesses and that each one is a different way of showing Brahman. In this book, you can read some of the stories about the Hindu gods and goddesses.



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How the World Came to Be



Long, long ago, Lord Vishnu created the different universes and in each universe, he lay down on an ocean of milk. A pure, white lotus flower came from his navel and, fast asleep, inside its satin petals, lay Lord Brahma, the creator, the source of all things. While Lord Brahma slept, there was nothing. Then Brahma stirred and woke up, and began to create the world and everything in its four quarters.

First, he created the gods of the sky. They were Soma, the moon and Surya, the sun. He placed them in the heavens to bring night and day. Then he created Agni, god of fire, Vayu, the wind and Varuna, the ocean.

Into the ocean, Lord Brahma placed a gleaming, golden egg. Gently rocking on the waves, the egg grew and grew. For a whole year it grew...until, one day, it started to crack, wider and wider, until it split right open. From its golden inside Lord Brahma stepped out, crowned in shining light. He divided the egg into two halves and placed one above as the arch of the sky, and one below as the earth. Then he made human beings to live on the earth, in the golden shell of the empty egg.

And so the world was made. But when Lord Brahma falls asleep again, his creation will dissolve into nothing and the world we know will no longer exist.