

BLACK EAGLE

learns

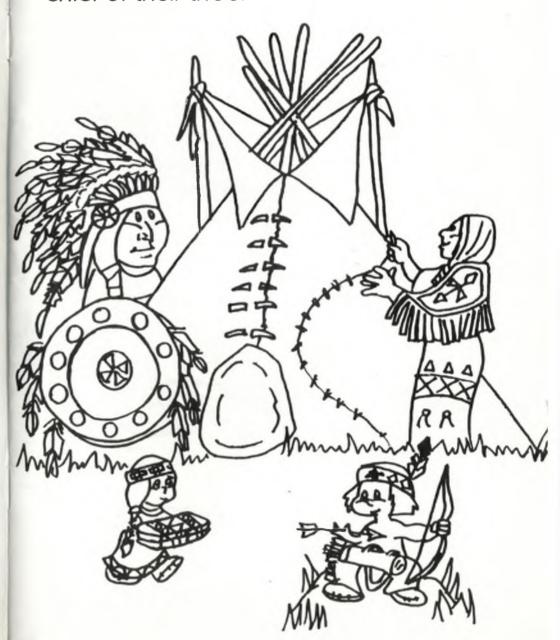
about

Krishna

Read + color storybook

by Prema Nama dasi

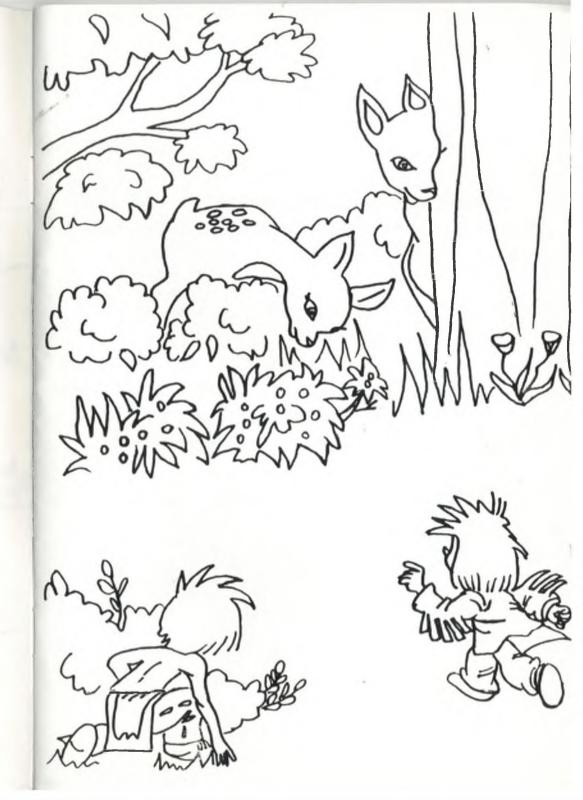
Black Eagle is an American Indian. He lives in a tepee with his mother and father and his little sister, Running Deer. His father is the chief of their tribe.



Black Eagle's best friends are Little Crow, Full Moon, Run with the Wind, and Buffalo Horn. (They call him "Buff" for short). They play games together in the forest and in the Summer they drive off huge boulders into the lake. They each have their own bow and arrows and they love to practice shooting at targets. They pretend they are great warriors fighting bad men.



Sometimes the boys hide in the bushes and when a deer comes they run and try to catch it. All the Indian boys are very fast runners. Every year, in town, there is a big sports competition. Black Eagle and his friends always win the running races.



One day Black Eagle went to town with his family. They saw some people in long clothes playing music.

"All the boys are bald" said Running Deer

"No, look they have a little hair in the back" said Black Eagle. He turned to his mother. "Who are they?" He asked.

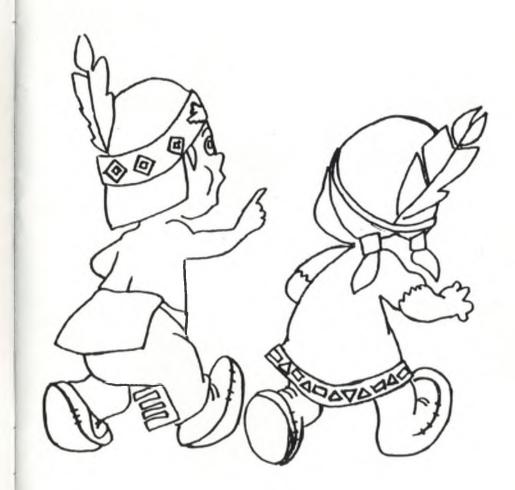
"They must be from another tribe" she said



Black Eagle knew they were not at war with any other tribe. So, while his parents got supplies, he and Running Deer watched the singing and dancing.

"I like the drums" said Black Eagle.

"I like that little baby with the cymbals" said Running Deer.



One lady came over to them. She had a tray with little balls on it.

"Would you like a sweet?" she asked.

"Yes, please!" they both said at once.

"We have some nice books over there on the table. Do you know how to read?" she asked.

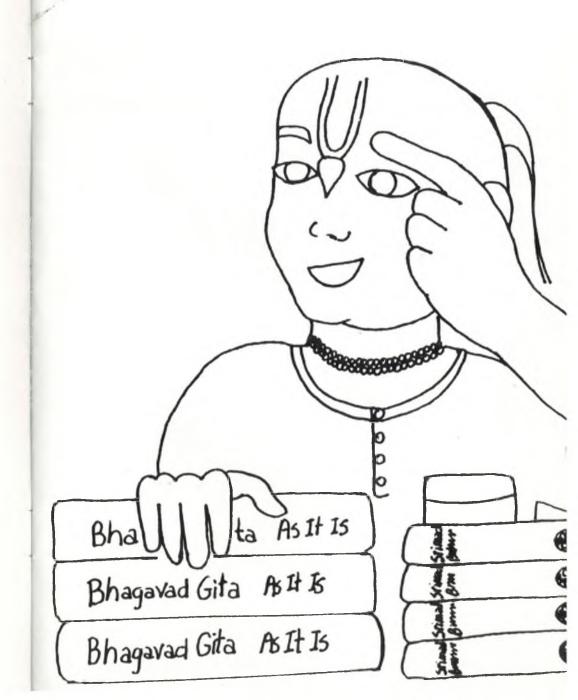
"I do" said Black Eagle. He took Running Deer by the hand and went over to the table.



"Hare Krishna!" one man said to them.

"Hi" said Black Eagle. "What tribe are you from? Is that war paint?" Black Eagle pointed to some yellow marks on the man's face and arms and chest.

"We are devotees of Krishna. We all live in a temple. We have these marks in clay to show that our body is a temple of God" the man explained. "Would you like to read one of our spiritual master's books?"



The man opened a thick book with the most beautiful pictures Black Eagle had ever seen. There was a picture of a little baby growing up and then getting old and dying, and then becoming a baby again. Then there was a picture of a blue man with four arms. "Dad would love this" Black Eagle thought.



"I don't have any money" said Black Eagle. Then he remembered something and reached into his little pouch. He had two beautiful pieces of turquoise stone. He held them out to the man. "Could I trade these for a book?" he asked.

The man looked at the stones. "We can make a pretty necklace for Krishna with these" he said. "You can keep that book and I'll give you this book of Krishna stories, too"

"Thank you!" Black Fagle said.



Black Eagle was so happy to get the books. He wondered how they could make a necklace big enough for Krishna. "If Krishna is the God that makes all the planets and stars, He must be gigantic" Black Eagle thought. He knew his tribe worshipped the Rain God and Sun God with special dances and songs. "But we never made them a necklace. I wonder who is stronger, the water God in the river or the rain God in the sky?" All the way home Black Eagle had so many questions in his head.



After Chief White Horse put away all the supplies he had time to look at Black Eagle's new books. Chief White Horse is very wise. He knows all the stories of the ancient Indians. As he read Bhagavad-Gita he could'nt believe that such pure, elevated knowlege existed on this planet. The next day he called all the Indian men for a meeting and they read these new books together for hours.



On the way home, he saw his wife, Shining Star, cooking some fish on the fire.

"No, please don't cook that. We are not going to eat fish anymore" Chief White Horse said. "We are all becoming devotees of Krishna."

"Oh, allright, What should I do with it?" asked Shining Star.

"Just leave it in the forest for the animals."

"Well, how come they can eat fish and we can't?" she asked.

"Because we are in human bodies" Chief White Horse explained. "We have more responsabilities than the animals. We have higher intelligence and we are supposed to use it to go back to the spiritual world. Just like a high court judge has more responsabilities than a common clerk."



"The souls in animal bodies go into another animal body at the time of death. They go into the next higher species. They keep being born and living and dying until they evolve to the human form. That's where we can decide for ourselves where we want to go after death. If we think and act like animals then we can take birth as animals and go through many more births and deaths before we get a human form again. But if we are really intelligent we will want to go to an eternal life with no more miseries. Come on, let's go fix a lunch we can offer to Krishna."



After lunch Black Eagle went to meet his friends. The boys were at their secret cave, between some boulders. They were sitting and talking together.

"My Dad says we aren't going to shoot deer in the forest anymore" said Full Moon.

"Yeah, and no birds or rabbits or any animals" said Little Crow.

"But why?" asked Buff.

"Because when you kill animals you get sinful reactions" Black Eagle explained. "You will have to be killed in a similar way."

"Oh sure" said Buff sarcastically.

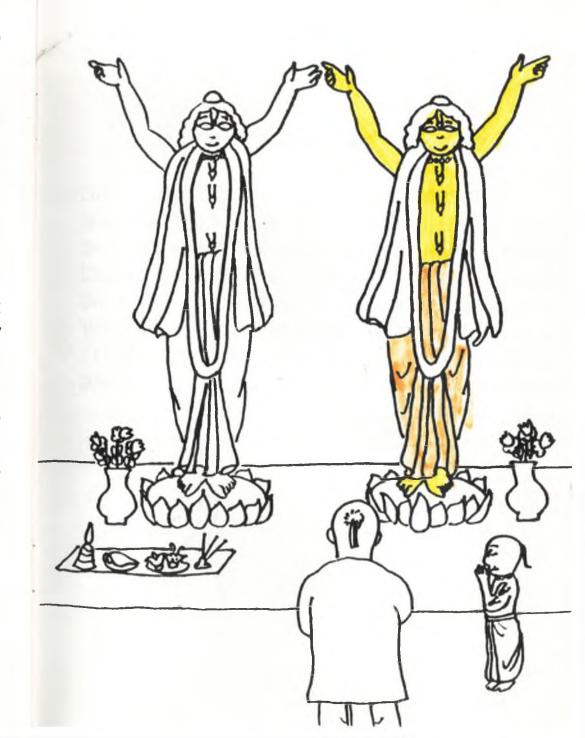


"No, really" said Black Eagle. "The laws of nature are very strong. No one can get around them. Just like when a little baby doesn't know that fire is hot. He thinks it is pretty and he touches it. He still gets burned. The laws of nature are like that. They act even without you knowing. If you kill a lot of animals, you will have to keep being born in this world and be killed for every single animal that you killed. That's what the scriptures say. So why waste time taking so many more births? Why don't we try to go back to Godhead now?"



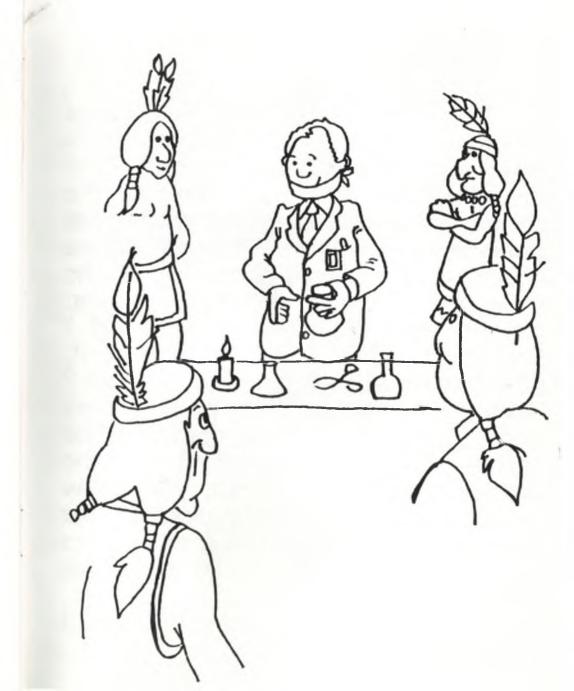
"But why does your Dad want to get some statues to worship?" asked Run with the Wind. "I don't want to bow down to some statue."

Black Eagle tried to explain as best he could. It was all new to him, too. "You see, Krishna comes to us in the material world in His deity form out of His kindness. All material and spiritual things come from Krishna. Everyting we see is His energy. When we take Krishna's energy and make a shape of the Supreme Lord according to the authorities, then it's not material energy anymore, it's spiritual. The Lord is everywhere and all-powerful, so how can we serve Him personally? So Krishna comes in the deity form. That is Krishna Himself. When we make offerings of food or flowers Krishna accepts them. But only devotees can understand that. To nonbelievers it is a mystery."



Then it was Little Crow's turn to talk.

"Remember that time when those white men came and told us they could make water? They said we shouldn't worship the Rain God anymore. They took hydrogen and oxygen and mixed them together to make water. I know your father didn't care for their demonstration. But ever since then I don't believe in God anymore. Men can make water themselves."



"Those men couldn't make water unless they have the hydrogen and oxygen." Black Eagle said. "Who do you think created all the elements? Do you think all the chemicals that make everything you see just popped out of nowhere? There are millions of planets with millions of oceans. So who created all this water with hydrogen and oxygen, and how was it supplied? Somebody must have supplied it, otherwise how has it come into existence? When you see the sun rising on time every single day, and the winter coming at the end of autumn, and the full moon at the proper time every month, you know someone is in control. You wouldn't say that your tepee just appeared by itself - that no one planned or made it, so what to speak of this whole planet, and the universe, where everything is so perfectly planned and balanced?"



"Anyway" said Full Moon, "Chief White Horse told me we still need strong warriors to make sure no bad guys hurt the devotees or disturb the sacrifices. So let's play that we're doing a big sacrifice and you guys are demons and you try to wreck it. Then we come and capture you."

"Yeah!" the boys said.

"Let's sacrifice a frog!" said Buff.

"No!" said the others boys. "We're going to sing God's names: Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Hare Hare ... Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare that's the best sacrifice for these days."

"Okay, Okay" said Buff.



Gradually the whole tribe took up Krishna consciousness. Chief White Horse sent for more books and every evening the Indians would sit around the fire and read Srimad Bhagavatam and Ramayana and Mahabharata. In the morning they would all come together and sing Hare Krishna, clapping their hands and beating their drums.



Each family had a small altar with pictures of Lord Caitanya and Srila Prabhupada. They would offer their food before eating. On Sundays they would have a special festival and put on a play from a story in the scriptures.



On Sunday, Black Eagle was so happy because he got to be Bhima, the strongest warrior, in the play. As he walked on the stage his dhoti fell down, so everyone laughed. He had to hold it up with one hand. Then he tried to swing his club at the evil Duryodhana (played by Full Moon) and the end of the club flew off and hit "King Dhrtarastra" right in the face! Everyone was laughing so hard!



That night Black Eagle and Little Crow slept outside together. They spread out their blankets and laid down looking at the stars.

"Black Eagle?"

"Yes ?"

"I sure am glad you bought those Krishna books" said Little Crow.

"Me too!" said Black Eagle.

They sang Hare Krishna together for a few minutes. Then they both fell asleep, dreaming of being great warriors for Krishna.

