

TARA

AND THE TIMELESS MESSAGE

Dear reader, Welcome! Please sit comfortably and then I'll begin this tale. Our heroine, Tara, is eight years old. Listen! For she has just returned from the most amazing journey. All that she has heard and seen we are just about to discover.

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Tara was running as fast as she could. She hurtled up the stairs to her brother's bedroom. "Neala! Neala! You'll never guess what's happened!" she cried as she burst in excitedly through the door.

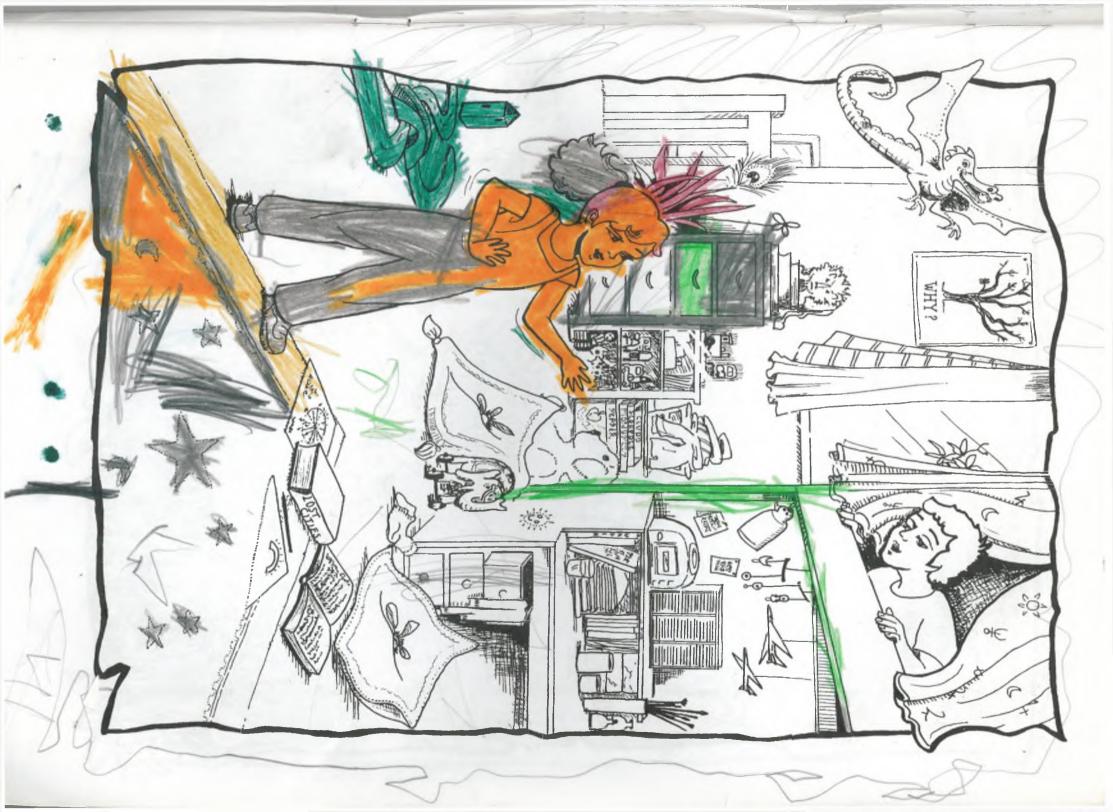
"Ok, I'll try," he said looking up from his game. "I can't wait!" she exclaimed excitedly. "Listen to this!"

"What is it? Come on then, tell me," he said, getting interested. He knew that his sister didn't get excited without a good reason. "Hey Sis, calm down," he added. "Climb up here and tell me exactly what happened."

> Tara climbed quickly up into the loft area, their special secret place.

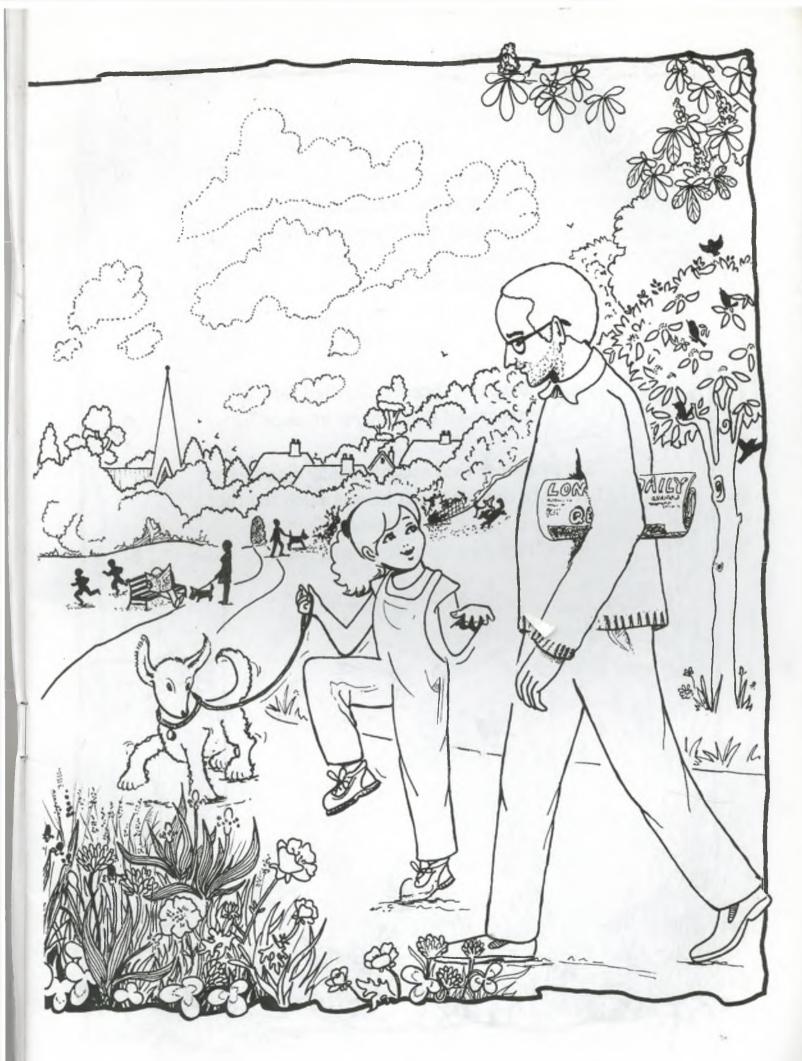
It was here that they shared many adventures, travelling together on the magic carpets of their imagination. Nothing was impossible. They could fly far away into mysterious worlds, of ancient times or into the future, as they pleased.

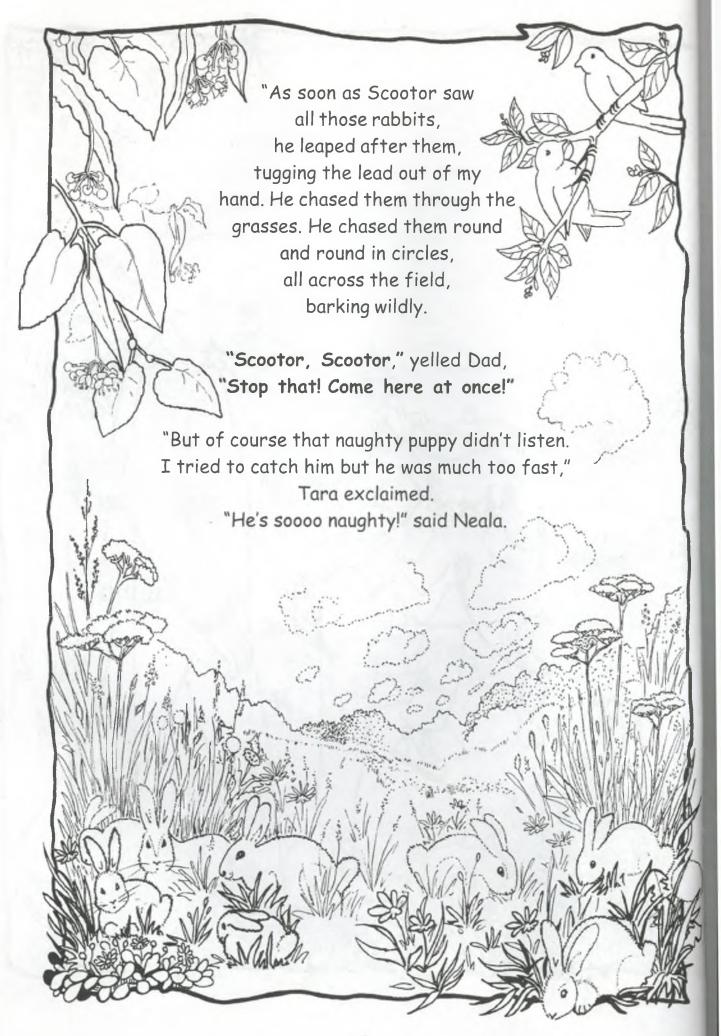
> "Listen to this," she whispered, nestling amongst the cushions and catching her breath. "This is something quite different."



"It started out as any other day. Dad and I took Scootor (our puppy), for a walk in the park. Everything was perfectly normal until we walked into the wild area, you know, on the far side over near the forest. There, Scootor discovered the rabbits!" "And then?" asked Neala.

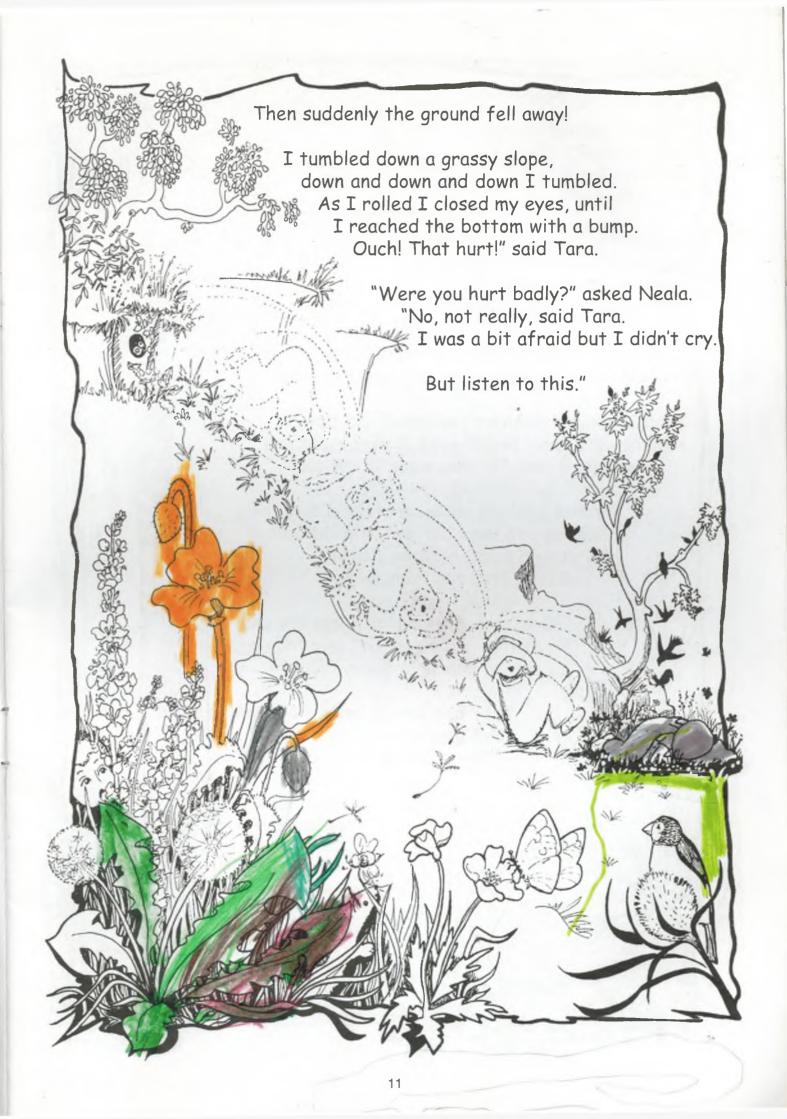
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"When I opened my eyes," she whispered slowly, "I found I was in a special place.

All the trees were unusual colours and a carpet of blue and white flowers spread out in every direction.

It was very magical, like in a typical fairy dell and the birds sang the most beautiful songs.

Then, I noticed amongst the leaves and flowers, there were many bright eyes all peeping at me! I wasn't afraid, for they were so curious!

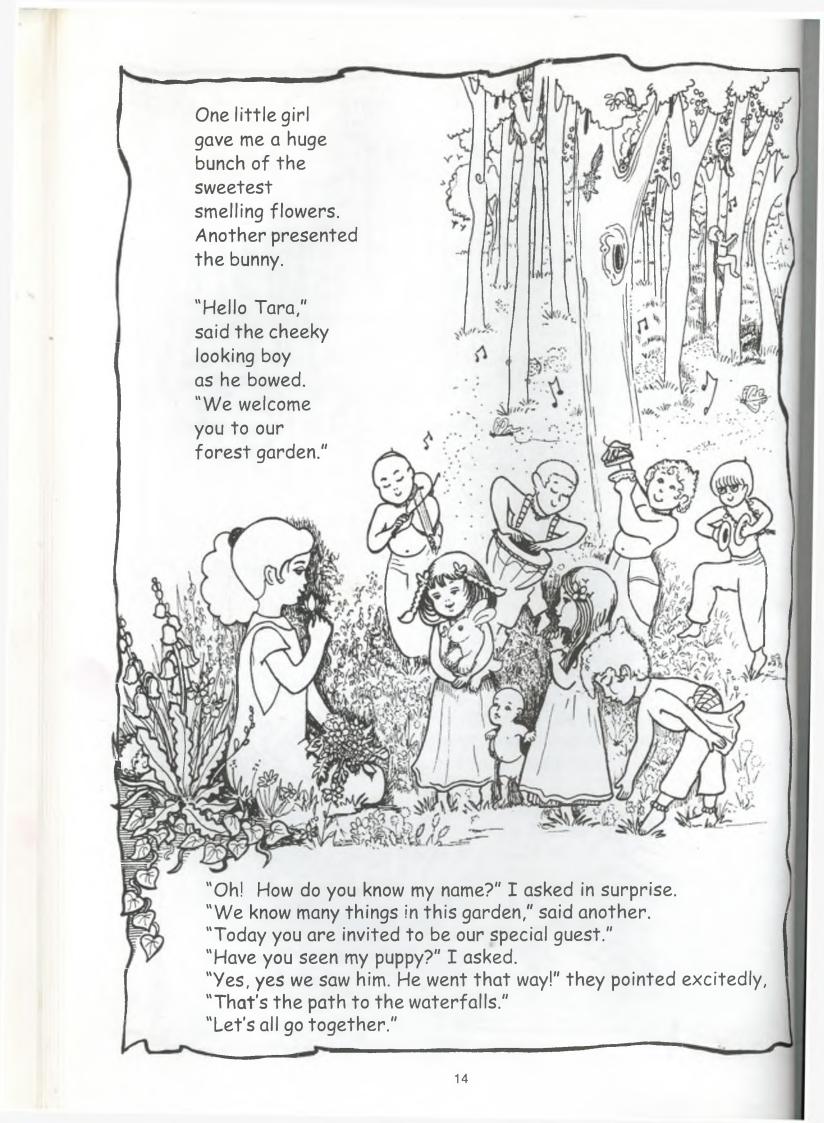
> And as I looked more carefully, I saw they belonged to some darling little children. I stayed quiet, because I didn't want to frighten them away.

> > Gradually, they became less shy and as they came nearer I saw they were not at all like ordinary children.

> > > They had drums, bells, flutes and a violin and they started dancing and singing. One started to do somersaults.

> > > > I laughed and we became friends.





So we set off through the trees. Every now and then we found Scootor's paw prints. Soon we heard a roaring sound, and there we saw a magnificent waterfall.

There we found Scootor. He was chasing the frogs and splashing about." "Let's swim," the children cried in delight.

"The waterfalls were charming. The big falls roared thunderously and

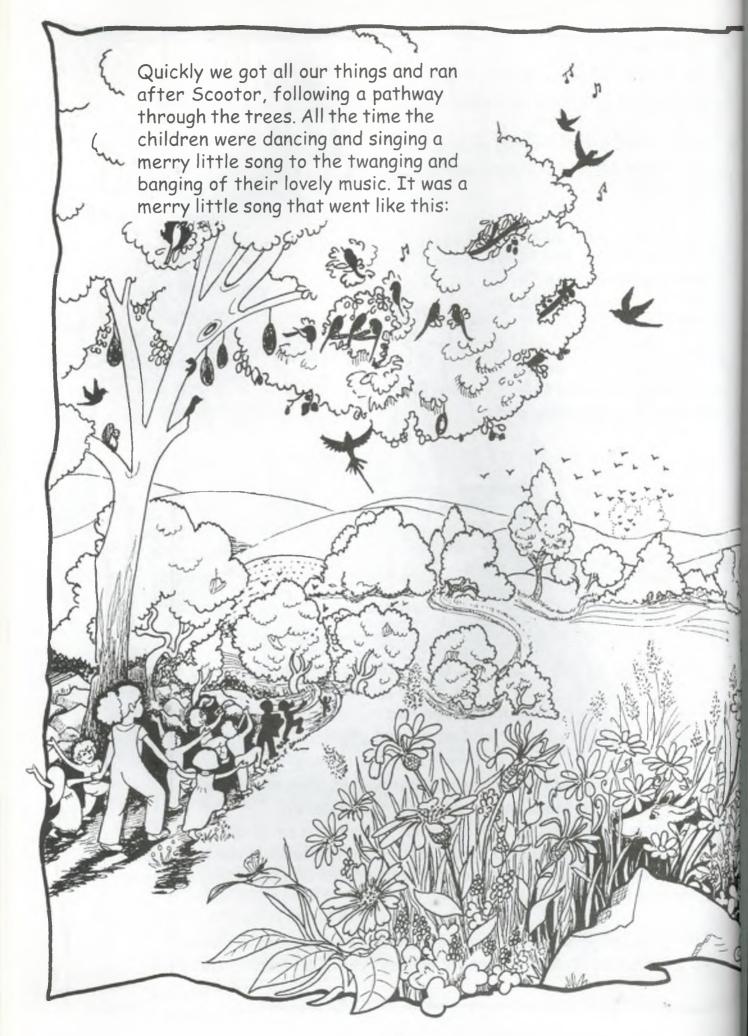
> But there were smaller ones where the water cascaded down like music on the rocks. There the water was warm and crystal clear and not too deep.

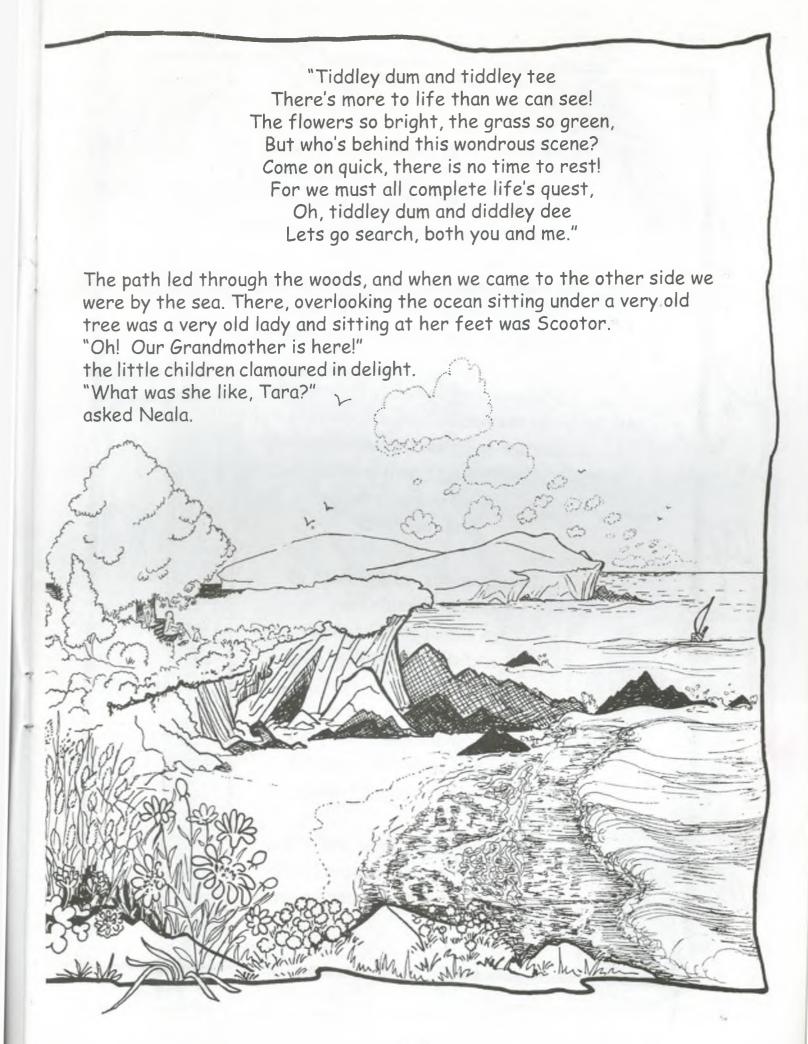
We dived, splashed and played, shouting happily. "Tara you're just like one of us," said the children.

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"Yes, only sooooo much much bigger," laughed a small one. "Tara you're the BIGGEST SISTER in the whole wide world," lisped the smallest. Everyone laughed with bright smiles and sparkling eyes and splashed the water over me.

Then suddenly, Scootor started barking and spinning in circles. As soon as we looked at him he was off, with a flash of wet fur!





"O Neala! She was such a charming old lady! Unlike any other I've ever seen. She had a lovely, kind and mysterious face.

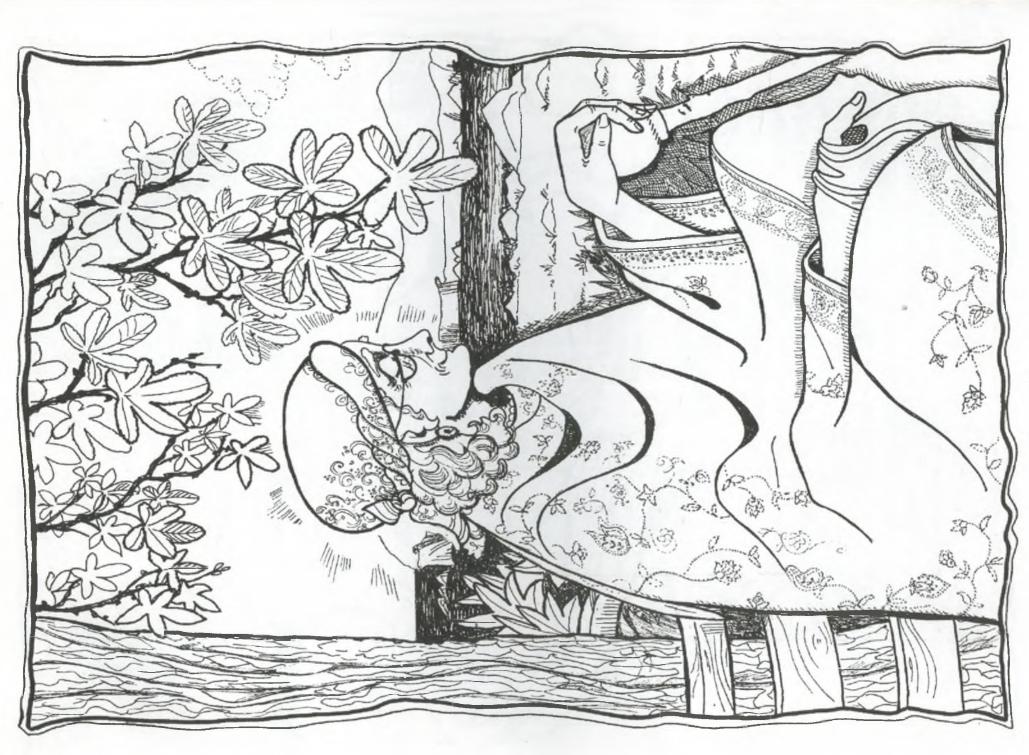
She was wrapped in a woollen shawl and had funny white pointy shoes. (Which you can't see in this picture).

She was singing softly to herself. All the birds seemed to have stopped their chirping in order to catch the sweet melody of her soft gentle voice. She looked very happy and peaceful.

> I was curious, so I walked up and sat beside her. Then she opened her eyes and smiled upon me.

> Her face was nut brown and her hair shone like silvery silk. She had sparkling eyes and I liked her straight away.

I knew she was good and wise. The children very respectfully sat quietly, waiting for her to speak.



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"How did you get here, Grandmother?" I asked. Smiling, she replied simply, "I was born into this world just like you. Your questions show that you are very intelligent."

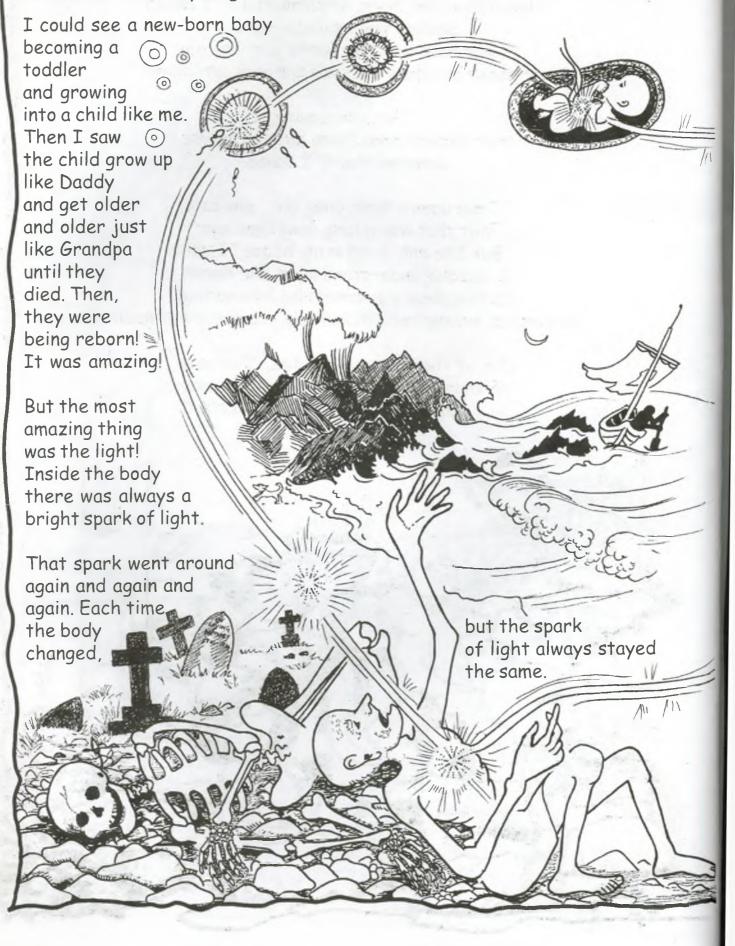
> "Are you saying that babies come from another world, Grandmother?" I asked.

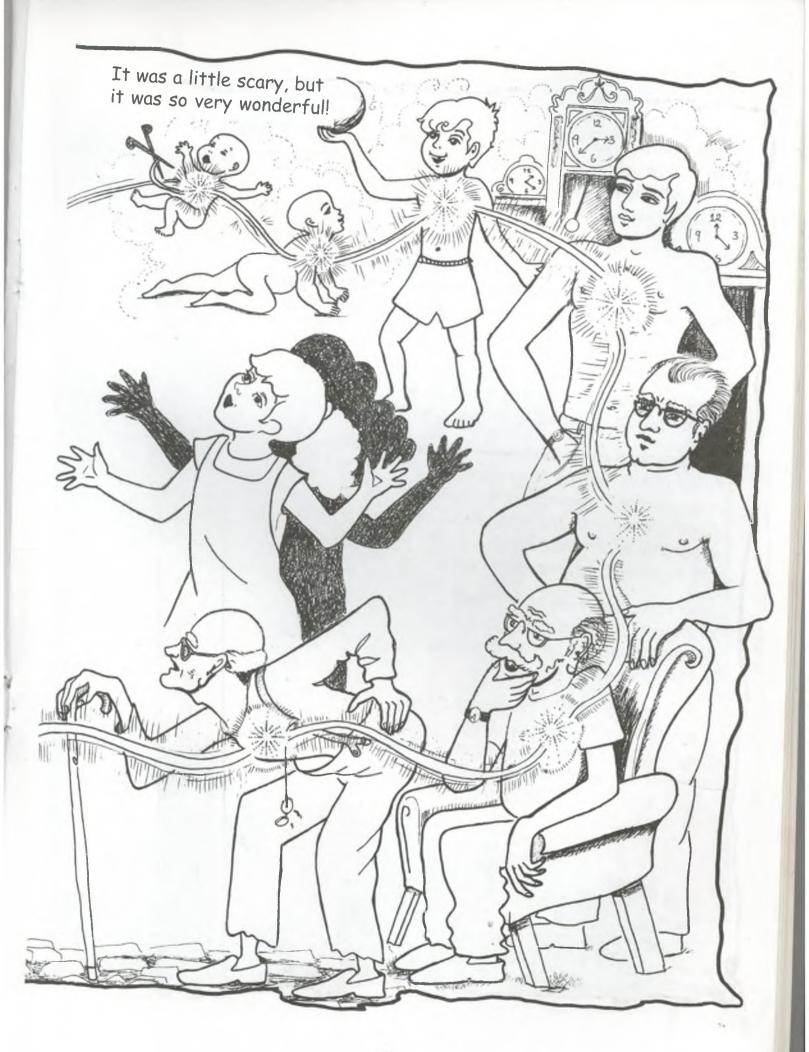
"Once upon a time, they did," she said, "but that was a long, long time ago." "But I've only lived in my house," I said. I couldn't understand what she meant. "Let me show you something interesting!" she added, waving her stick slowly in a circle in the air.

> One of the children shouted, "Everyone! Grandmother is going to do some magic!" and the others got very excited.



In the darkened sky a light trailed out of her stick. It was full of pictures.





"Grandmother, what was the bright spark of light?" I asked. "Very good, excellent," said Grandmother. "Children can you see the bright light? Let us have a closer look at it." Then she waved her stick again.

Before us in the sky a brilliant sun appeared. As my eyes got used to the dazzling light, I saw within it the most stunningly beautiful and shining person. His eyes were long, dark and soft like velvet petals of a lotus flower.

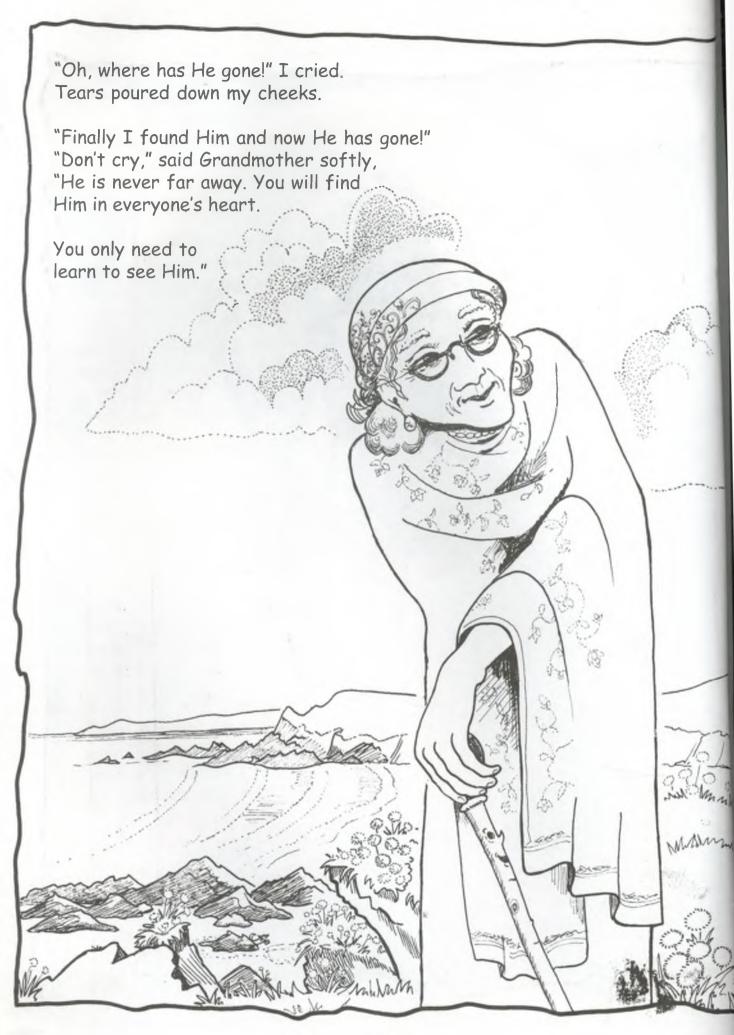
He wore a necklace of fresh blooming flowers that mingled with His curling black hair and reached down to His knees. On His head He wore a golden crown, covered with every kind of gem.

He appeared to be made of a light that filled the air with a fragrance like a rose garden in summer. A light that filled the air with the most beautiful unearthly music that echoed from the beginning, before time began.

Love radiated from Him. I felt so happy, so completely happy! My heart opened up like a flower in the sunshine.

I recognized Him! I recognized Him! I finally met the person I was longing for, for so long. He smiled upon me ever so sweetly. I was about to speak when the vision faded.





"Who is He? It's as if I know Him so well" I cried. "He is our best well-wishing friend. The ancient texts call Him Paramatma, the Super Soul.

He helps us and teaches us from inside our hearts. He understands all our thoughts and desires. He is with us forever, sitting in our hearts. He is not alone......did you see the small spark at His feet?"

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"Yes, yes, I did. Who was that?"

"That is YOU. The you who lives forever. There is a soul in every living creature. It is very tiny. So tiny you cannot see it."

"How about with a microscope?" I asked. "NO, not possible. He is smaller than the smallest."

Just then one of the children jumped up and began to sing.

"I'm a soul, you are a soul, we never ever die. Our body is a coat that covers you and I.

I am spirit soul, this body, I am not. I'm joyful, never dying. It's just that I forgot!"

Everyone joined in the song and Grandmother clapped her hands. It was wonderful! It was as if the souls within the trees, flowers, birds, sky and even the rocks were joining in singing altogether.



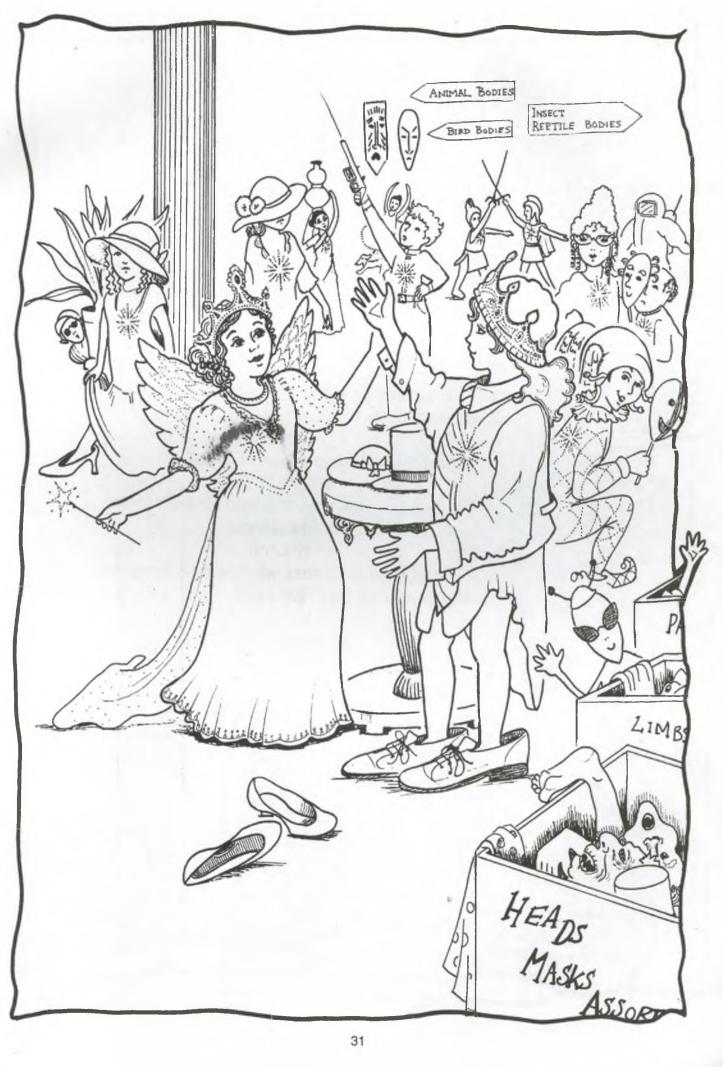
After some time Grandmother said kindly, "Alright everyone, sit down now."

"If the soul lives forever, that means I will never die!" I said.

"That's right," said Grandmother. It's only your body that dies.

> It's simple! Your body is line a cress. The soul puts on the dress but when the dress is too old he gets a new one.

"Then its like dressing up!" "Exactly," she said. "Can I choose which body I like?" I asked. "Yes, just see how many choices there are!" she answered waving her stick.



"There were so many I couldn't begin to count them.

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So, animals Do have souls!" I cried.

"Well of course they do," said Grandmother as all the children giggled.

"I could be a bird or a giraffe or a kangaroo! That would be fun!" I said.



"NO, NO," warned the children. "Animals are always scared, " said one. "They even EAT each other," said another. "Yuk! That's gruuuuuesome!" said another.

"It is best to be a person because only they can break free from *THE SPELL."* "*The spell? What spell?"* I asked.

"You don't know about *the spell*?" they cried in surprise. "0000000HHHHHH!"

"The *befuddling spell*, cast by the *witch Maya*, makes everyone forget," whispered the tallest child.

"You see how it works, you already forgot," they said.

"Don't worry, Tara," Grandmother said. "*The spell* is so strong that everyone forgets. It takes lots of practice to remember that you are a soul that never dies."

"That's why we sing the song," the children said. "Let us sing it all together."

They began to sing the song over and over again. See if you can learn it too. You can make up your own tune.





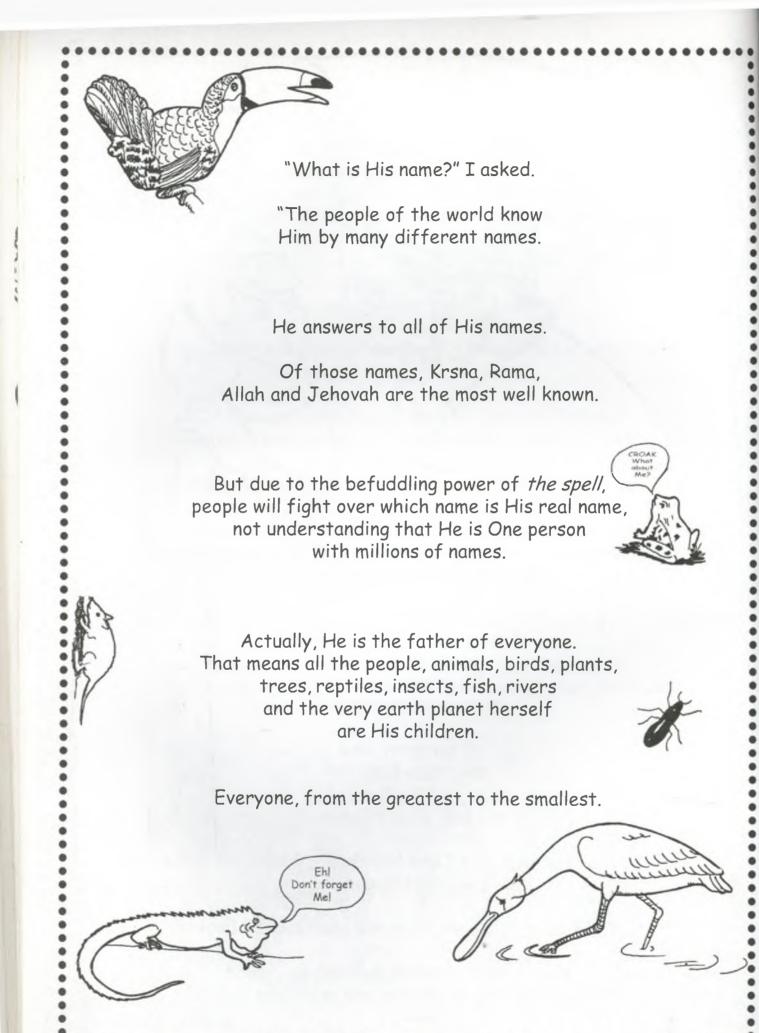
"I am a Soul, you are a Soul, we never ever die. The body is a coat that covers you and I.

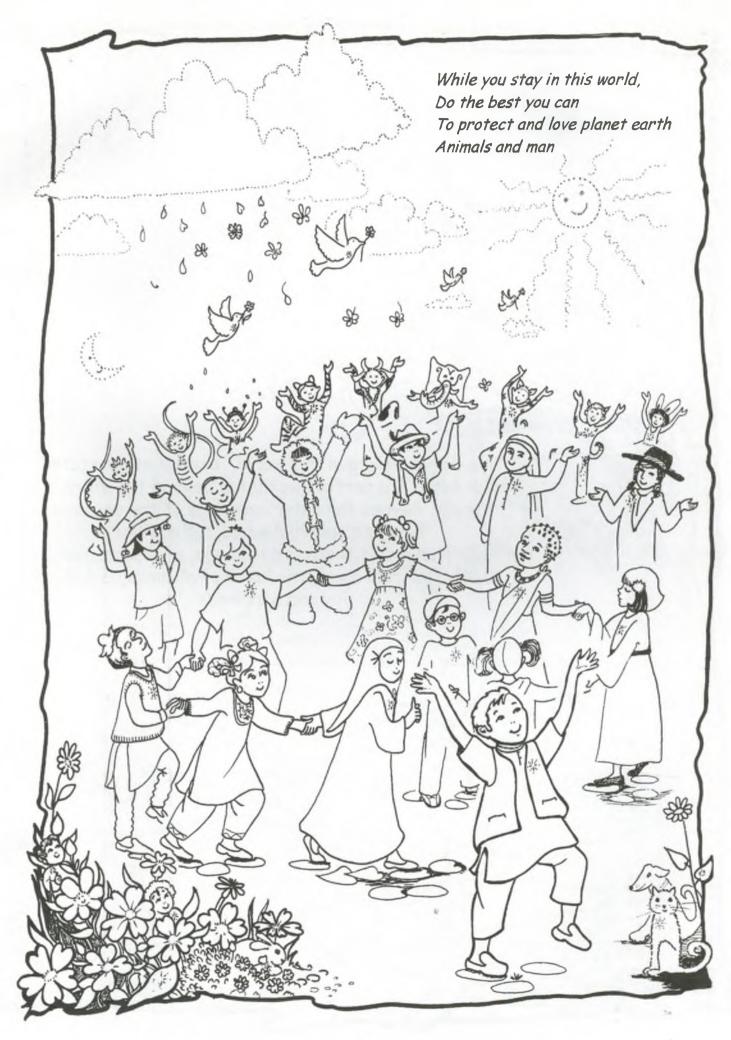
I am spirit Soul, this body I am not! I'm joyful and eternal. It's just that I forgot. "

We all sang together until I had learnt it by heart and I was sure I wouldn't forget it.

"Grandmother," I asked, "Can the spell ever be broken?"

"Yes, it can be broken but *only* by calling the names of the *Master of the spell*," she replied.





"We do not belong in this world," Grandmother stated. Our home is a perfect world far beyond the stars in the sky. Beyond the outer coverings of the universe, there is a spiritual world, full of light. In that world there is no old age, no disease nor death. Our real home, the home of all souls, is full of joy and happiness.



"Can I go there?" "Yes, listen carefully," she said. "This lesson is very important. Then she sang:

> "Our heart is like a garden, our actions are like seeds. Good deeds grow into flowers, bad deeds into big strong weeds."

"That's so nice," I said. "Does it mean I should always do good things and grow love in my heart, like flowers in a beautiful garden?"

"Yes, exactly," said Grandmother smiling.

"Everything you do, do it as a gift of love. Seal it with a wish for the happiness of the whole world and all its creatures.

Only then do we become ready to go back home.

In the heart's beautiful garden, the sweetest voice is heard. Listen well! The Supreme Lord in His fullness, in the blissful, eternal world forever dwells.

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Far beyond this land of time, far beyond the outer sky. He lives in a land of total bliss. There He waits for you and I.

Beautiful Lord, Father of each and every one. He is life within us, radiant like a million suns."

I'm growing love

flowers.

Do

you want

to plant

some

too?

What did you

plant Tara?

"I think I love him Grandmother, but how will He know?" "We show our love by remembering Him. When you love someone, you'll always find ways to please them."

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Then Grandmother stopped speaking and smiled at me.

She waved her stick again and I saw the same beautiful person, but this time with the most exquisite lady in a forest garden full of flowers and birds and animals.

"This is the Divine Couple. Sri Radha Krsna in the topmost spiritual abode," she said.





"Tara, that's amazing! Grandmother is really mystical," said Neala. "So tell me what happened next!"

"That's just it," said Tara. "Then the picture began to fade, and when I looked around, Grandmother and the children had also gone. Next thing I knew, I was lying on the grass with the music and singing still in my head.

Just then Scootor came and licked me on the nose. Then Dad came, a little annoyed."

"Finally I've found you, Tara," he said. "Come on, let's go home for lunch. It's getting late."

"But Tara, that's awful!" said Neala.

"Neala! Tara! It's dinner time." It was Mum calling.

They ran down the stairs and into the kitchen, where Mum was putting vegetable soup, homemade bread and salad onto their plates. Scootor was loudly lapping some water from his bowl.

"Children, wash your hands and go and sit down with your father," said Mum.

As they sat around the family table for lunch, Dad showed them what Tara was holding in her hands when he had found her. It was a small necklace made of round wooden beads. She recognised it immediately as belonging to one of the children.

"Tara," he said, "where did you get these beads? They look very old."

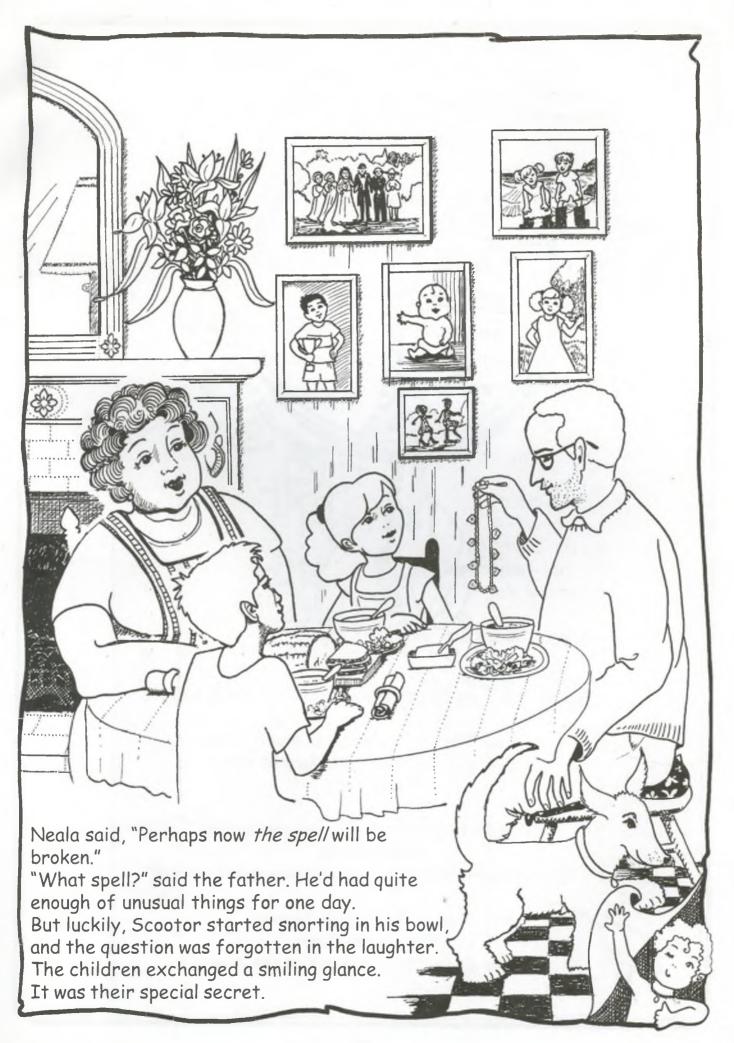
"They belong to a friend of mine," said Tara.

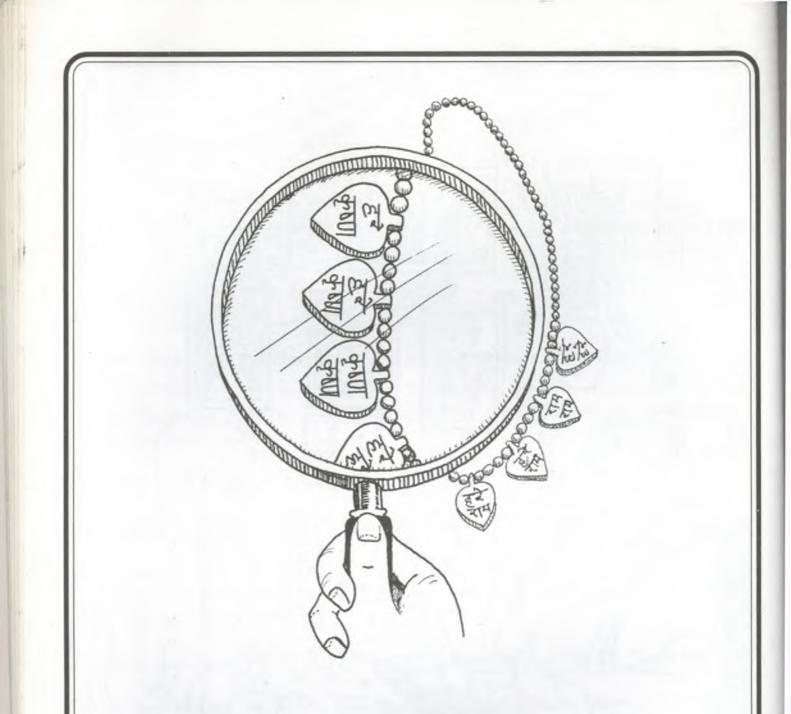
"They are very unusual,"

said Mum. "Don't lose them, Tara."

'As if I would,' thought Tara. 'These beads are so special.

They remind me of the other world I've seen.' But she didn't say anything.





Neala and Tara couldn't wait till after lunch to talk.

"Wow, Neala, I learned so much today. Everything looks so different now," said Tara.

"I think these beads are the connection," said Neala. "Did Grandmother tell you what she was singing?"

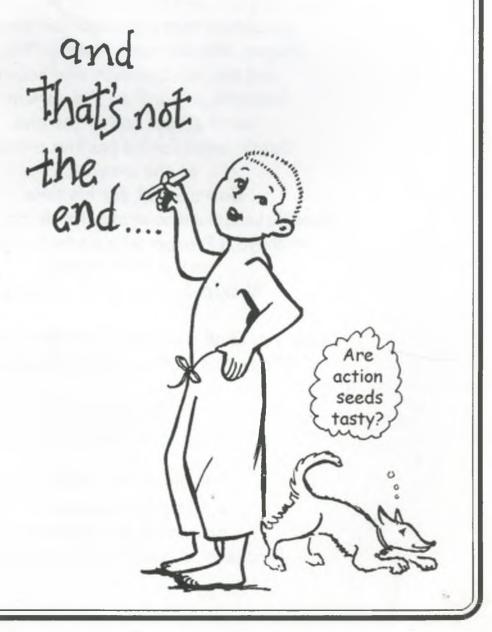
"No.....But LOOK Neala!" exclaimed Tara. "There's something written on the leaves." "I bet you it's a secret message!" Neala cried excitedly.

"Wow Tara, you've really started something now!" "Do you think we will ever find them again?"

asked Tara.

"I don't know. But we can certainly try," Neala said.

"Tomorrow after school we'll go there together. Where there's a will, there must be a way."



Inspired by the teachings of 'Bhagavad-Gita, As It is,' given to us by our beloved Param Guru, His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada. Whose teachings form the basis of my life and who has given me shelter in the form of transcendental knowledge.

I would like to offer thanks to my Guru Maharaj, H.H. Lokanath Swami who is an ocean of realization and kindness.

I would like to thank all my friends for their help and encouragement. Parasuram, who sponsored the printing and shipping, and is helping with the distribution. Radha Mohan, who helped with the writing and gave ideas that improved the content. Bhogini, who did more than edit the book and her son Syamalal who helped. Dinanath, who edited the work in the early stages and at the end. Sakshi Gopal for his positive criticism of the artwork. Gaura Gopal, for his time. Moksha Lakshmi who wrote the children's song. Akshaya & Praveen who worked tirelessly on the final layout. Bhakta Carl for proof reading.

Thank you to all my readers for giving your time. I hope this work serves to inspire you.

> Thank you Syam Priya

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