

Anklet For a Princess *A Cinderella Story from India*

Story by Lila Mehta/Adapted by Meredith Brucker/illustrated by Youshan Tang

Lila Mehta was born in India and educated in England and now teaches in Canada. Her story is based on oral tradition and includes centuries-old beliefs that snakes were powerful underwater creatures that could reward or punish. Meredith Babeaux Brucker is an editor and writer who graduated from Stanford University and now lives in Southern California. Artist Youshan Tang was educated in China and now makes his home in San Francisco. He also illustrated *Abadeha: The Philippine Cinderella* for Shen's books. In *Anklet for a Princess*, Tang's watercolor illustrations are full of the vivid colors and musical movements of ancient India.

As usual in these Cinderella tales, there is a young girl who has lost her mother and who is mistreated by a stepmother. Cinduri has lost not only her mother, but also her father, and has been left with her father's second wife and stepsister Lata. One day when Cinduri is making one of her daily trips to the lake for water, she is visited by a great white snake who questions why she is dressed in rags and looking so hungry. The white snake adopts her, teaches her a magic song, and eventually gives her a brilliant red jewel so that she can dress herself beautifully enough to attend the Navarati Festival. When Cinduri arrives at the festival, she attracts the attention of the Prince of Suryanagar when she dances imitating the movements of her Godfather Snake. She must leave by midnight and when she departs suddenly, she loses one of her anklets made with bells and diamonds.








The prince travels about searching for the owner of the tiny anklet and eventually finds his true love. There is a wedding celebration with garlands of white jasmine flowers and Cinduri and the Prince move to a palace built by his father. A pond is built so that Godfather Snake can come to live nearby but Cinduri's stepmother and stepsister are banished to wander as beggars when they are not willing to work hard enough to keep their home in the village. The tale ends with a promise of happy days and a thank you from Cinduri to her Godfather Snake.

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MOTIFS AND IDEAS

-  in this story both parents have died
-  Cinduri is mistreated by her father's second wife who has become her stepmother
-  the young girl's beauty, hard work, and politeness impress a powerful snake
-  Godfather Snake becomes Cinduri's helper
-  Magical elements include a song and a jewel
-  Cinduri wears and loses an anklet instead of a shoe or slipper
-  Godfather Snake comes to live with the happy couple in a pond near their palace

CONNECTIONS

Cinduri meets her prince on the ninth day of a harvest celebration called the Navaratri Festival. Research what peoples or countries celebrate the following harvest festivals:

Yam Festival..... Succoth..... Pongal.....
 Thanksgiving..... Harvest Home..... Hounen Odori.....
 Crop Over (Sugar Cane)..... Birthday of the Moon.....

Answers include: India; United States of America & Canada; British Isles; Ghana & Nigeria; Japan; Israel; Barbados; China

VOCABULARY WORDS

tantalizing	sputter	stammered	marquee
aromas	pavilion	miraculous	conch
cholera	pomegranate	sari	fetch

Choose the word that matches the meaning:

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 1. a reddish fruit with many seeds and a sour taste | a. sputter |
| 2. a rooflike shelter over an entrance | b. sari |
| 3. to talk excitedly and with confusion | c. pomegranate |
| 4. pleasantly spicy odors or smells | d. fetch |
| 5. the outer garment or dress of Hindu women | e. conch |
| 6. a large spiral shell | f. aromas |
| 7. to go and get; bring | g. marquee |

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QUICKWRITE

Before you read or listen to the book, look at the illustration on the cover and list three things you notice about it:

1.
2.
3.

After reading (or listening to) the story:

CLARIFY

Write words or ideas from this book that you need to discuss with your teacher and classmates:

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.....
.....

QUESTION

Write one question about this book. Start your question with one of these words: Why, Who, When, What, or Where.

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PREDICT

Predict (guess) what will happen next:

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SUMMARIZE

Briefly tell what happened in this story:

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LEARNING TO RESEARCH

The author of *Anklet for a Princess* does not describe Godfather Snake in detail. However she does give hints that the snake who helps Cinduri is a cobra and the illustrator pictures Godfather Snake as a large king cobra. Find three facts about king cobras and list them below. Then write where you found those facts. Good research involves using more than one source and a variety of formats. Check out the following for some examples of how to cite sources: <<http://www.monroe.lib.in.us/childrens/cite.html>> or <kidsconnect.org>

Source: anyplace you find information

Format: print (such as an encyclopedia, magazine, newspaper, or book)

interview (with an expert in the field)

electronic (a CD-ROM, an online database, or the Internet)

THREE FACTS ABOUT KING COBRA

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WHERE I FOUND THESE FACTS

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