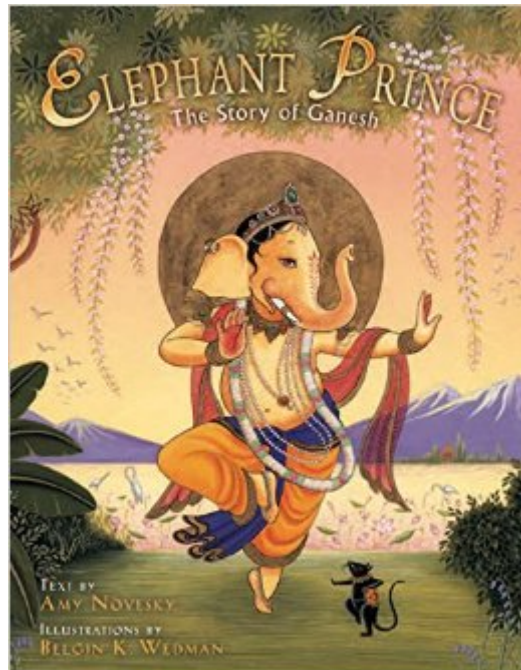# Elephant Prince: The Story Of Ganesh

Synopsis

Elephant-headed and big-bellied, mischievous and sweet, the god Ganesh is one of the most familiar faces in the world. But why does he have the head of an elephant? Set in the Himalayas in a time of gods and goddesses, Elephant Prince tells the story of a remarkable bond between a mother and her son, a remorseful god, a generous elephant and the boy who became Ganesh. Belgin K. Wedman's jewel-toned illustrations, reminiscent of classical Indian miniatures, complement this poetic story of one of the most beloved gods of all.

Book Information

Hardcover: 32 pages

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Product Dimensions: 0.2 x 8.5 x 11.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars See all reviews (25 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #587,015 in Books (See Top 100 in Books)   #6 in Books > Children's Books > Religions > Hinduism   #28 in Books > Children's Books > Religions > Eastern   #52 in Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Asian

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 4

Customer Reviews

I have been searching for children's books that present the Hindu gods and goddesses and this is by far the best of all that I have found. This is a beautiful book that matches authenticity with contemporary sensibilities. My four year old appreciates this one as much as I do. I have found that with many books retelling stories from Hindu texts, the story is often presented in a way that is inaccessible to young children. Here the story has been retold beautifully. In this version, it is not Shiva who cuts off Ganesh's head but Shani's gaze that turns the head to ashes. While this is not the most popular version, and may be a disappointment to some, it is 'authentic' and the source is cited. I think this makes the story a better read for my young daughter. Additionally, I really like the way that Parvati is presented as a goddess, a princess and "also just a girl." Beyond the story, the art is wonderful. Take one of your best children's books and imagine how it would look with a Hindu

flare and that is what you will get here. The art is engaging and the images are detailed enough to keep a child's eye but not overly complicated. The authenticity of the presentation is very respectful. I would highly recommend this book as an introduction to one of the children's favourite Hindu gods, Ganesh, and as an excellent children's book for anyone interested in plurality and multiculturalism. I hope that the authors will collaborate again for more tales of the gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon.

Elephant Prince: The Story Of Ganesh will serve to entertainingly introduce the elephant headed Hindu god to young readers ages 4 to 8. Belgin K. Wedman's superb illustrations are a perfect story-telling showcase to talented children's author Amy Novesky's story set in the Himalayas during a time of gods and goddesses. Elephant Prince does not recount the commonest version of Ganesh's origin, in which Parvati creates a child from earth and her husband Shiva is so surprised by the stranger he cuts the boy's head off; instead, Elephant Prince draws upon a classic Indian text entitled "Brahma Vaivarta Purana" to present a version in which Parvati wishes for a child and to her delight has her wish granted, yet tragedy strikes when the god Shani (Saturn) accidentally destroys the child's head, for whatever powerful Shani gazes upon is instantly obliterated. The merciful god Vishnu brings the boy back to life with the aid of a wise old elephant, who chooses to sacrifice himself so that the child may be restored. And so Ganesh lives again with the head of an elephant, and becomes skilled at writing down stories. The elephant will live forever, and Ganesh lives and is loved by all - especially his mother. The stunning watercolor artwork with gold leaf highlights was deliberately created in style of the Kangra school of painting, developed in India during the 16th century. Highly recommended.

Basically - ,"What the heck just happened?" Was my reaction after reading this book. If you know anything about the story of Lord Ganesha - this tale will leave you scratching your head. It actually says, "Lord Shiva was not ready for kids." Huh? What is he, an investment banker working overtime to pull in his first million?The author claims that it is a new telling based on a different version of the Ganesha myth. However, anyone who is familiar with the tale will just be left scratching their heads. It will be left high on a shelf never to be read again. As a non-Hindu, I didn't mind the new version of the tale, but that is just me - but it is not my culture, so why would it bother me if it is new. It it like picking up a bible story told in an "Apocrypha" version - not familiar but non-Christians would not know the difference.The author tries to make it more gentle by suggesting that Ganesha lost his original head in a tragic accident rather than his father cutting it off. Again, huh? Mythology can

seem violent, but most of the time we are just used to the stories. There is no need to soften ancient stories to something else and to reduce it to a strange retelling, to fit modern sensibilities.

Beautiful pictures, but the story varies from the traditional story that most of us know. I suppose it's scary enough in this version for some very young children if they parents don't explain the background of the story before they read it to them, if the child isn't old enough to read. The pictures alone are worth the price.

This is a lovely book that really gets down and tells the story.One thing is this is the watered down version of the story and not exactly the version I grew up with but a valid version. In this version his head just denigrated from a blessing versus getting cut off by his father. Otherwise a good book.

Story is not the best but the illustrations are wonderful. Almost a mixture of European and Indian art that is breathtaking. They way Ganesh is draw is in my opinion the best out of all the characters. I would recommend if not just for the illustrations.

Absolutely beautifully illustrated and gentler story of how Ganesha obtained his elephant head. Contrary to the better know story where Shiva cuts off the head of Ganesha while he is guarding his mother's bath, this story sees the loss of the baby's head as an accident, when Lord Shani looks at the baby at Parvati's insistence and because of the Lord's power the baby's head disintegrates. To the rescue Lord Vishnu who brings the head of an elephant that sacrificed himself so that the child might live. What a story!

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