GIRISH KARNAD

is Karadi the bear, in

Young Hanuman

KARADI TALES
Mythology
Script, Lyrics & Direction: Shobha Viswanath
Narration: Girish Karnad
Illustration: Srividya Natarajan
Cover Design: Shajin
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Karadi Tales Company Pvt. Ltd., P.O. Box 8732, Adyar, Chennai 600 020 India
Phone: 91 44 4421775 Fax: 91 44 4422440 email: karadi2000@vsnl.com

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Namaste! Namaste! Warm greetings from my land
Walk across the threshold and step onto my sands

Kings and Kingdoms aplenty, cunning warriors too
Saints and powerful sages, with a miracle or two
The mysteries of the rivers, the magic of the mountains
The beauty of the seasons, the legends of the sun

Join me in my voyage through epics and legends
Come discover with me, the land that's India!

This is the story of Young Hanuman.
You can read along with Karadi the bear.
You will know it is time to turn the page when you
hear his cane tap like this.
Let us begin now.
A delicious mango swings on the tip of a long, slender branch. My friend Meera, the monkey, has tried every possible way to get it. The mango is just out of her reach. From a high branch, she jumps onto my shoulder.

“I want that mango, Karadi. I must have it!” She complains like a stubborn child.
"Well Meera," I say, "There are some things that you simply cannot have. Do you know what happened when young Hanuman went asking for the sun?"

"What happened?" asks Meera mischievously, knowing very well the answer to my question. I am Karadi, the bear. Meera does not miss a single opportunity to listen to the story of Hanuman. I enjoy telling it too.
Deep in the forest lived a troop of monkeys.
Among them, was Anjana, the prettiest
monkey of them all.

One day, Anjana, having done a hard day’s work,
sat under a tree to rest. At that moment Vayu,
the wind god, was going about his business blowing
through the world. His eyes fell on the lovely Anjana.
Vayu was so captivated by her looks that he instantly
came in love with her. Anjana was amused by Vayu.
This gusty god who caressed and teased her,
made her laugh.

She felt happy with him, and soon they
were married.
A few months later, a beautiful baby monkey was born to Anjana. To her surprise, she noticed that the little baby had kundalas in his ears. Kundalas, as you know, are little earrings. Vayu and Anjana were beside themselves with joy.

“This is a divine child,” said Vayu. “Born of my breath and your spirit, he will be as gentle as the breeze and as swift as the wind. He will also be able to fly like the wind, and like the wind, none will be able to hold him down. We will call him Maruti.”
Vayu was a busy god. His work took him all over the world. After a few days with his family, it was time for him to leave.

“Goodbye, Anjana. Goodbye little Maruti,” said Vayu. “You be a good boy now. and don’t give your mother any trouble. I’ll be back as soon as I can.”
But young Maruti did give Anjana trouble. And how much! Anjana had her hands full with the little monkey. The child loved mischief and Anjana had a difficult time controlling him. He also loved the trees of the forests and knew them just by their smells.

He was brave and strong and nothing seemed to frighten him. Despite his mischief, everyone delighted in watching young Maruti.
One day as Maruti sat in the valley of flowers with his mother, a ray from the sun caught his eye. Looking up, he saw the sun shining down fiercely. To the young monkey, it seemed like a bright red ball.

“Ah! Such a big red ball!” thought Maruti.

“Ma,” he said without glancing at Anjana, “I am going to play with the ball in the sky.”

Before Anjana could understand what he meant, Maruti had leapt into the sky. He was heading towards the sun.
He leaps, he bounds
He jumps, he runs
He darts, he dashes
He runs, he races
Little Hanuman is after the sun!

Across the skies
Swiftly be flies
Over the oceans
With a sweeping motion
Little Hanuman is after the sun!

Over hills and vales
Through storms and gales
Through wind and rain
Nothing restrains
Little Hanuman is after the sun!
Up in the sky, Surya, the sun god, was minding his own business. Spreading light and energy, he was quite busy. Suddenly, his bright eye caught a moving object. It was coming towards him.

“What in the world is that?” Surya wondered, startled.

As the young monkey came flying towards him with outstretched arms, the mighty sun god panicked.
“A monkey! And he is coming towards me!” he yelled. Surya started to run. This made young Maruti very happy. “What a nice game!” he chuckled. “Hey wait for me!” he cried, chasing after the fleeing sun god.

Surya ran faster. Maruti chased him. The faster the sun fled, the faster Maruti flew. He did not seem to tire at all. Day turned into night and night into day so quickly that everyone on earth felt very dizzy... very ill.
Huffing and puffing, Surya ran towards Indra the king of the gods. “Help... help me, save me Indra,” cried Surya. “A crazy monkey has been chasing me all over the place. He wants to grab me. Please protect me.”

Now Indra did not like to be disturbed. He was having a wonderful time watching the celestial dancers perform in his court. “A monkey, Surya? Are you afraid of a mere monkey?” he scolded.

“But... this one is crazy.... you should see him. He wasn’t scared or frightened at all,” Surya stammered.
“Hmm... let me see,” said Indra, angrily mounting his white elephant. He headed towards Maruti. The young monkey caught sight of the white elephant. His excitement rose. “An elephant! What fun! Every one wants to play with me!” he cried. He flew towards the elephant. Indra’s anger grew.

“What an impertinent child! I will teach this monkey a lesson!” he said. Removing a thunderbolt from his quiver, Indra sent it hurtling towards Maruti. It struck the young monkey on the chin and he fell unconscious.

Since that day, Maruti also came to be known as Hanuman, the one with the broken chin.
Vayu, who was passing by at the time, caught his falling son.
Noticing that he had been struck by Indra’s thunderbolt, Vayu flew into a rage.

“Indra… how dare you!” he bellowed. “You have hurt my son. You shall pay for this!”
An angry Vayu took a deep breath and then released it with great force. Trees shook and mountains trembled. There were fierce gales and mighty storms. People ran for cover. Vayu’s eyes blazed and his breath shook.

He gathered his monkey child, turned towards Indra and said, “He is just a child, Indra. Pick someone your own size the next time. I am not done punishing you. There will be no air on earth until my son recovers.”
Vayu took his son into a cave deep in the earth and stayed there. With the disappearance of the wind god, the whole world began to suffer. Everyone felt suffocated and breathless. Plants and trees began to wilt and die. People felt as if their breath was being squeezed out of them.

In the heavens, the gods were worried. Would this be the end of the world, they wondered. They went to Brahma, the creator of all life. Brahma listened to them patiently.
“I’ll see what I can do.” he said.
“I will talk to Vayu. Ask Indra to come along too. He has to make his apologies to Vayu.”

When they reached the underground cave Brahma and Indra found Vayu. He was sitting sadly beside an unconscious Hanuman.
“I am sorry, Vayu,” said Indra hanging his head in shame. “Please forgive me.”

Vayu was silent.

“O mighty Vayu,” said Brahma, “Please forgive Indra. He hurt your son in a moment of anger. He is sorry. Do not punish the world for Indra’s mistake.” Brahma then gently lifted Hanuman and placed him on his lap. As he stroked the monkey’s head, Hanuman’s eyes opened. Vayu’s face lit up.

Indra walked towards Hanuman. Placing his hand on the young monkey’s head he said, “Dear brave monkey, henceforth no thunderbolts or lightning or any weapon will be able to harm you and...,” Indra continued with his blessings, “I grant you the power to be however big or small you choose.”

“Death shall not touch you,” blessed Brahma, giving Hanuman the gift of immortality.
“Thank you for all the powers that you have bestowed on my son.” said Vayu. “But dear gods, please bless my child with wisdom so that he may use these powers with caution.”

“So shall it be,” said Brahma, “He will be the wisest of all monkeys.”
Hanuman rose and touched the feet of Brahma and Indra and thanked them for all their boons. Vayu picked up Hanuman.

“Go home to your mother, my child. May your wisdom guide you in the future. Perhaps you will think twice before you go seeking the sun,” said Vayu with a smile.

Hanuman flew home to his mother. Then the wind god rose from the ground and blew a soft, gentle breath into the world. Plants, animals and people came alive and all was well with the world again.
Meera is silent. She is looking at the mango still swinging on the tip of the slender branch. I smile to myself. Perhaps I should give this monkey her sun. Reaching for my walking stick, I pull the branch towards me with the crook at its end. Meera’s face lights up. She jumps on my shoulder and plucks the ripe mango.

“Thank you, Karadi,” she mumbles, her mouth already full with the delicious fruit.
FOR KIDS 4 AND UP

Come discover the world of gods and demons, kings and queens, a world of times past. Come discover the world of stories from Indian Mythology with Karadi, the bear and master storyteller.... stories that are fun, universal and timeless!

The audiotaape and read-along book are designed to

... fire your child's creativity
... develop listening, reading and language skills
... improve concentration and attention span
... develop a ear for music

Would you like to play with a large, red, fiery ball? Young Hammun wanted to do just that.... and went chasing after this huge ball in the sky, the sun! Did he get his ball?

Visit Karadi’s world at www.karaditales.com


This book not to be sold separately.

Product of India.