

Devlok By Devdutt Pattanaik

Provides a fresh understanding of the Hindu spiritual landscapes and pantheon of gods and goddesses through 99 classic myths.

High above the sky stands Swarga, paradise, abode of the gods. Still above is Vaikuntha, heaven, abode of God. The doorkeepers of Vaikuntha are the twins, Jaya and Vijaya, both whose names mean 'victory'. One keeps you in Swarga; the other raises you into Vaikuntha. In Vaikuntha there is bliss forever, in Swarga there is pleasure for only as long as you deserve. What is the difference between Jaya and Vijaya? Solve this puzzle and you will solve the mystery of the Mahabharata. In this enthralling retelling of India's greatest epic, the Mahabharata, originally known as Jaya, Devdutt Pattanaik seamlessly weaves into a single narrative plots from the Sanskrit classic as well as its many folk and regional variants, including the Pandavani of Chattisgarh, Gondhal of Maharashtra, Terukkuttu of Tamil Nadu, and Yakshagana of Kamataka. Richly illustrated with over 250 line drawings by the author, the 108 chapters abound with little-known details such as the names of the hundred Kauravas, the worship of Draupadi as a goddess in Tamil Nadu, the stories of Astika, Madhavi, Jamini, Aravan and Barnareek, the Mahabharata version of the Shakuntalam and the Ramayana, and the dating of the war based on astronomical data. With clarity and simplicity, the tales in the elegant volume reveal the eternal relevance of the Mahabharata, the complex and disturbing meditation on the human condition that has shaped Indian thought for over 3000 years.

In devotional literature, gods take female forms all the time. Sometimes to serve as 'go-betweens' to bring lovers together, sometimes to stand in for a missing wife, and sometimes to nurse a sick devotee. Not all queer stories are sexual but they do challenge notions of gender. This queering, which is unique to India's devotional tradition, is worth examining to see how natural queerness was viewed by gods like Vishnu and Shiva. Read on as Devdutt Pattanaik examines a few of the most interesting instances of queerness in Gender Fluidity in Hindu Mythology.

Devlok with Devdutt Pattanaik Devlok with Devdutt Pattanaik Penguin UK

An unusual collection of stories from the myths by the author of Jaya: An Illustrated Retelling of the Mahabharata and Myth=Mithya which will bring the gods right into the world of children! Filled with delightful illustrations each book in this new series will introduce thoughts and aspects from our ancient treasure trove of stories for today's children. Why did River Saraswati disappear? Will the vanished river ever reappear? Can you make a river flow in your school? Mrs Sivakami; principal of Madame Mira High School; is astonished when she finds Goddess Saraswati wandering the corridors of her school. The goddess is in search of a missing river! To show her the ancient river and what happened to it; Saraswati puts Mrs. Sivakami on the back of Hansa; her goose; and off they go flying. The teacher sees some schools where students come and go as they please; and others where everyone has a parrot head! She then begins to understand why it is important to make the river flow again; and how she can bring the secret river to her very own school.

• A fish saves the world. • A horse flies across the sky. • A king discovers that his beloved wife is actually a frog. Hindu mythology is full of tales in which animals play important roles. Some animals are looked upon with fear and dread, while some are

worshipped along with the gods. Some shape the fate of the world, others form everlasting bonds with humans. Where did the animals come from? From Vishnu's avatars or Shiva's asanas? How was a deer responsible for the events of the Ramayana? Why is Garuda the sworn enemy of the nagas? How did a mongoose teach Yudhishtira the true meaning of sacrifice? Devdutt Pattanaik answers all these questions and more in this exquisitely illustrated book, retelling numerous animal stories from ancient texts, with his trademark charm and wit.

He Is Eka-Vachani, A King Who Always Keeps His Word; Eka-Bani, An Archer Who Strikes His Target With The First Arrow; And Eka-Patni, A Husband Who Is Eternally And Absolutely Devoted To A Single Wife. He Is Maryada Purushottam Ram, The Supreme Upholder Of Social Values, The Scion Of The Raghu Clan, Jewel Of The Solar Dynasty, The Seventh Avatar Of Vishnu, God Who Establishes Order In Worldly Life. Hindus Believe That In Stressful And Tumultuous Times Chanting Ram's Name And Hearing His Tale, The Ramayan, Brings Stability, Hope, Peace And Prosperity. Reviled By Feminists, Appropriated By Politicians, Ram Remains Serene In His Majesty, The Only Hindu Deity To Be Worshipped As A King.

A decoding of Hindu mythology Hindus have one God. They also have 330 million gods: male gods; female gods; personal gods; family gods; household gods; village gods; gods of space and time; gods for specific castes and particular professions; gods who reside in trees; in animals; in minerals; in geometrical patterns and in man-made objects. Then there are a whole host of demons. But no Devil. In this groundbreaking book Dr Devdutt Pattanaik; one of India's most popular mythologists; seeks an answer to these apparent paradoxes and unravels an inherited truth about life and death; nature and culture; perfection and possibility. He retells sacred Hindu stories and decodes Hindu symbols and rituals; using a unique style of commentary; illustrations and diagrams. We discover why the villainous Kauravas went to heaven and the virtuous Pandavas (all except Yudhishtira) were sent to hell; why Rama despite abandoning the innocent Sita remains the model king; why the blood-drinking Kali is another form of the milk-giving Gauri; and why Shiva wrenched off the fifth head of Brahma. Constructed over generations; Hindu myths serve as windows to the soul; and provide an understanding of the world around us. The aim is not to outgrow myth; but to be enriched and empowered by its ancient; potent and still relevant language.

In 2015, a historic panel discussion took place at the global Festival of Theology held in Sweden. Its objective was to examine what the sacred texts of the Abrahamic faiths -- Judaism, Christianity and Islam -- had to say about human sexuality. Behold, I Make All Things New is the outcome of the effort. This is a landmark work that recasts religion -- especially Abrahamic faiths -- as an ally and not an adversary of queer emancipation, and thus significantly informs the secular and legal movements for LGBTQ rights around the world. It follows in the same vein as I Am Divine, So Are You (2017), which put forth perspectives on sexuality from the Karmic faiths of Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and Hinduism, and played a small but significant role in the reading down of Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code. Taken together, the two groundbreaking books expand the conversation between world religions and human sexuality to a truly global level. Five children are having fun one evening, playing dumb charades, when Shiva

appears and wants to join in! Shiva turns out to be the best at dumb charades, as well as in asking riddles. He can say so much with only his actions! He also tells the children wonderful stories with the help of the many objects he carries with him, like the rattle drum, the crescent moon and a fountain of water that rises from his head. Soon, thanks to Shiva's playfulness, the children know much more about Shiva and the other gods—even more than their parents! How does Shiva talk to us without speaking? Who is the demon of forgetfulness? What is the secret of the Natraj statute?

- Olympus is the home of the Greek gods, much like Amravati of the Hindu devas.
- Zeus, leader of Olympians, wields a thunderbolt like Indra, and rides an eagle like Vishnu.
- The feats of the Greek hero Heracles, known to Romans as Hercules, reminded many of Krishna, as did his name, 'Hari-kula-asha' or lord of the Hari clan.
- The Greek epic of a husband sailing across the sea with a thousand ships to bring his wife, Helen, back from Troy seems strikingly similar to the story of Ram rescuing Sita from Lanka. Is there a connection between Greek and Hindu mythology then? Does it have something to do with a common Indo-European root? Or maybe an exchange of ideas in the centuries that followed the arrival of Alexander the Great, when Greek emissaries travelled to the kingdoms of Mathura and Magadha? In this book, mythologist Devdutt Pattanaik turns his attention to ancient Greek tales, and explores a new world of stories. Long have Europeans and Americans retold Indic mythologies. It is time for Indians to reverse the gaze.

Ramayana is an ancient Indian epic poem which narrates the struggle of the divine prince Rama to rescue his wife Sita from the demon king Ravana. Along with the Mahabharata, it forms the Hindu Itihasa. The epic, traditionally ascribed to the Hindu sage Valmiki, narrates the life of Rama, the legendary prince of the Kosala Kingdom. It follows his fourteen-year exile to the forest from the kingdom, by his father King Dasharatha, on request of his second wife Kaikeyi. His travels across forests in India with his wife Sita and brother Lakshmana, the kidnapping of his wife by Ravana, the demon king of Lanka, resulting in a war with him, and Rama's eventual return to Ayodhya to be crowned king.

What does the Biblical story of Nathan and David say about effective communication skills? How do you identify the Raja Bhoj, the Gangu Teli and the Shekchilli in your office? What is the corporate equivalent of an Ashwamedha yajna? Drawing from sources as diverse as the Mahabharata and the Bible, the Vikram-Betal stories, the Iliad and the Odyssey, Islamic tenets, the tales of rishis and kings, and fables from around the world, Devdutt Pattanaik, India's leading mythologist, provides a fascinating account of what leadership entails. How to choose the right leader, effectively communicate with a boss, maintain the right balance between discipline and leniency? In these and other workplace situations, Pattanaik shows what leaders of today can learn about the art of leadership from stories written thousands of years ago, things no management course can teach. Leader: 50 Insights from Mythology uses myths and legends to

arrive at wisdom that is both time-worn and refreshingly new, on what makes a good leader.

High above the sky stands Swarga, paradise, abode of the gods. Still above is Vaikuntha, heaven, abode of God. The doorkeepers of Vaikuntha are the twins, Jaya and Vijaya, both whose names mean 'victory'. One keeps you in Swarga; the other raises you into Vaikuntha. In Vaikuntha there is bliss forever, in Swarga there is pleasure for only as long as you deserve. What is the difference between Jaya and Vijaya? Solve this puzzle and you will solve the mystery of the Mahabharata. In this enthralling retelling of India's greatest epic, the Mahabharata, originally known as Jaya, Devdutt Pattanaik seamlessly weaves into a single narrative plots from the Sanskrit classic as well as its many folk and regional variants, including the Pandavani of Chattisgarh, Gondhal of Maharashtra, Terukkuttu of Tamil Nadu, and Yakshagana of Karnataka. Richly illustrated with over 250 line drawings by the author, the 108 chapters abound with little-known details such as the names of the hundred Kauravas, the worship of Draupadi as a goddess in Tamil Nadu, the stories of Astika, Madhavi, Jaimini, Aravan and Barbareek, the Mahabharata version of the Shakuntalam and the Ramayana, and the dating of the war based on astronomical data. With clarity and simplicity, the tales in this elegant volume reveal the eternal relevance of the Mahabharata, the complex and disturbing meditation on the human condition that has shaped Indian thought for over 3000 years.

'You are bound by rules, but not I. I am free to choose.' Two thousand years ago, the poet-sage Valmiki wrote the Ramayana. It is the tale of Ram, the sun-prince of Ayodhya, who is obliged to follow family rules and so makes no choices. And of Ravana, king of Lanka, who does not respect anybody's rules or other people's choices. Over the centuries, hundreds have retold the tale in different languages, adding new twists and turns. But few have noticed that the tale always depends on the five choices made by Sita. What were Sita's five choices? India's favourite mythologist brings you this charmingly illustrated retelling of the Ramayana that is sure to empower and entertain a new generation readers.

The three devis are forms of Shakti and consorts of the three gods—but aren't the Tridevi superior to the Trimurti? Did the Devi come before the Bhagvan, or after? Can it be true that without Shakti, Shiva is dead? Finding the feminism in spirituality, Devdutt shows us the intrinsic balance built into Hindu scripture and culture through our goddesses. Annapurna shows Shiva that no matter how ascetic, even sages need food to eat, and that there is greatness in feeding the hungry. Durga showed Shiva that a monster that cannot be killed by a deva or asura might be killed by a woman instead. Saraswati and Laxmi—knowledge and wealth—are the fruit of labour, born of desire. Find out more about an ancient tradition of venerating the female in a natural equality in this short and sweet read from Devlok.

In 2015, a historic panel discussion took place at the global Festival of Theology held in

Sweden. Its objective was to examine what the sacred texts of the Abrahamic faiths - Judaism, Christianity and Islam - had to say about human sexuality. By bringing in perspectives from the Karmic faiths of Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and Hinduism, which together represent the beliefs of almost a third of the world's population, *I Am Divine. So Are You* expands this conversation between world religions and human sexuality to a truly global level. The theology of Karmic faiths is revealed at the intersection of scripture, culture, rituals and lived realities. And hence they are dynamic and amenable to a multiplicity of perspectives. They lend themselves more easily to a recognition and acceptance of fluidity in human sexuality. This is a landmark book as it recasts religion - especially Karmic faiths - as an ally and not an adversary of queer emancipation and thus significantly informs the secular and legal movements for LGBTQ rights around the world.

Both Hindu epics—*Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*—seek to establish a certain order in the world. Their heroes, Rama and Krishna, have different ideals and respond differently to seemingly similar situations. However, is there one correct way? Are Rama's ideals above Krishna's shrewdness? Emotions are the biggest threat to the order imposed by dharma. The conflict between the head and the heart is usually the root of all troubles that plague mankind. This conflict usually leads to either social change or cultural decay. But rules and regulations are meant to adapt and change according to time and geography. If that is the case, are we doing a good job adapting our ideals to our dharma? Read on as Devdutt Pattanaik examines the conflict between cultural demands and natural urges through two of Hinduism's biggest heroes in *Rama vs Krishna*.

'When you can fight for the meek without hating the mighty, you follow dharma.' In the forest, the mighty eat the meek. In human society, the mighty should take care of the meek. This is dharma. A hundred princes should have looked after their five orphaned cousins. Instead, they burnt their house, abused their wife and stole their kingdom. The five fought back, not for revenge but for dharma. What came of the five's fight against the hundred? India's favourite mythologist brings to you this evocatively illustrated retelling of the *Mahabharata* that is sure to illuminate and enthral a new generation of readers.

How do myths and stories influence culture? What is the difference between one culture and another, and how did these differences come to be? Are cultures fixed or do they change over time? Devdutt Pattanaik, India's leading mythologist, breaks down the complex maze of stories, symbols and rituals to examine how they shape cultures. He investigates how stories influence perception and construct truths, the cultural roots of the notion of evil and reveals the need for mythology through a telling of various Indian and Western myths. In doing so, he shows how myths reflect the culture they emerge from while simultaneously reinforcing the source. *Culture* is a groundbreaking work that contextualizes mythology and proposes that myths are alive, dynamic, shaped by perception and the times one lives in.

Are the illustrious clans of the *Mahabharata* from Surya Vansh or Chandra Vansh? Which yuga does the *Ramayana* occur in, and does it occur only once? What do haldi, kumkum, bhasm or chandan signify in a puja thali? After the sensational response to Season 1 of EPIC Channel's *Devlok* with Devdutt Pattanaik, Devdutt invited his viewers and readers to ask him questions about Hindu mythology, which he has answered over thirty thrilling episodes. Prepare to be educated, entertained and moved as Devdutt delves into the exhilarating variety of Hindu mythology. In this volume, you will discover the difference between dhyana and darshan, astik and nastik, Surya Vansh and Chandra Vansh. There are amusing stories about your favourite Hanuman and fascinating facts about the dark Vishnu avatars, Varaha and Narasimha. Learn why Lakshmi or Saraswati are always in conflict, and how women have the most intriguing characters in mythological tales. Journey deeper into the magical world of Hindu mythology with Devdutt, and you'll never want to turn back.

One day, when Krishna wanted to board an aeroplane, he was not allowed to! All because he

did not have an identity card. Then his friends Garuda and Sesha took him to meet Lata-kumari in Guwahati, who told him the story of Anasuya and the Ashwini twins, and why Rishi Chavan made a rule that all gods should carry a dhvaja—a flag with each god's very own symbol. Did Krishna get his identity card so he could ride the aeroplane finally? o Why are identity cards important, even for gods? o How can you tell a Deva from a Manava? o How would you find a particular god in a crowd of gods?

Why are Hindus so ritualistic? Why do they worship idols? Were Hindus always casteist? Are Hindus supposed to be vegetarian? Why is a Hindu prayer different from a Muslim or Christian prayer? Did the arrival of Muslim invaders a thousand years ago destroy Hindu culture? Answering key questions on Hindu philosophy and associated Indian history in simple, lucid, engaging ways, and exploring the often curious customs and beliefs that are an intrinsic part of the Hindu faith, Devdutt Pattanaik's latest book is a treasure house of information on the complex tenets of Hinduism. For many a curious reader, Faith: 40 Insights into Hinduism will prove to be a delightful and eye-opening introduction to the intricacies of one of the world's most practiced religions.

In the forest of insecurities, is it possible to discover humanity through pleasure? Can we stop seeing each other as predator, prey, rival or mate, and rediscover ourselves as lovers? Does the divine reside in sensual delight, in emotional intimacy and in aesthetic experience? Yes, yes, yes. That is the promise of the Bhagavata. The Bhagavata is the story of Krishna, known as Shyam to those who find beauty, wisdom and love in his dark complexion. It is the third great Hindu epic after the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. However, this narration was composed in fragments over thousands of years, first as the Harivamsa, then as the Bhagavata Purana, and finally as the passionate songs of poet-sages in various regional languages. This book seamlessly weaves the story from Krishna's birth to his death, or rather from his descent to the butter-smear world of happy women to his ascent from the blood-soaked world of angry men.

Marriage, by mythologist Devdutt Pattanaik, brings together stories from Vedic, Puranic, Tamil, and Sanskrit literature, from regional, classical, folk and tribal lore, from oral and textual traditions, across 3000 years of history and 3 million square kilometres of geography, to reveal the diversity and fluidity of Indian customs and beliefs around marriage. 'Let all the gods and the waters anoint our two hearts.' -Rig Veda This is the first ever book which links the Indian wedding rituals with mythological stories. The book offers a modern and inclusive, also narrative interpreting stories about LGBTQ in mythology. The book reasons out the customs and the concept of Indian marriage in a logical, spiritual and practical manner. Each story is followed by take-away points at the end, making the reading experience wholesome.

It is significant that the only character in Hindu mythology, a king at that, to be given the title of ekam-patni-vrata, devoted to a single wife, is associated with the most unjust act of abandoning her in the forest to protect family reputation. This seems a deliberate souring of the narrative, made even more complex by Ram's refusal to remarry despite the pressure on royalty to produce an heir. The intention seems to be to provoke thought on notions of fidelity, property and self-image. And so mythologist and illustrator Devdutt Pattanaik narrates the Ramayan, drawing attention to the many oral, visual and written retellings composed in different times by different poets, each one trying to solve the puzzle in their own unique way. This book approaches Ram by speculating on Sita—her childhood with her father, Janak, who hosted sages mentioned in the Upanishads; her stay in the forest with her husband who had to be a celibate ascetic while she was in the prime of her youth; her interactions with the women of Lanka, recipes she exchanged, emotions they shared; her connection with the earth, her mother; her role as the Goddess, the untamed Kali as well as the demure Gauri, in transforming the stoic prince of Ayodhya into God.

Why is Indra an unhappy god? Why is the cow such a cool animal? Who is the demon of

forgetfulness? Master storyteller Devdutt Pattnaik answers these curious questions and reveals many more secrets of the world of gods and demons in this delightfully illustrated omnibus, featuring all six tales in the Fun in Devlok series. Follow Harsha as he discovers the secret to happiness, listen to Gauri's fascinating conversation with a talking cow, play dumb charades with Shiva, find out why identity cards are important even for Krishna, join the fight between Kama and Yama, and learn why the river Saraswati disappeared mysteriously. Jump right in. The gates of Devlok are open.

Why do we offer Vishnu butter, but Shiva milk? Why is Krishna offered the chappanbhog—fifty-six items of food—during Annakuta? Do the goddesses not like bhog? Where does the custom of hanging a lemon and seven chillies come from? Is there a legendary male cook among the gods? Anna is called Brahmin, the way bhasha is called Brahmin. Food and the action of eating maintain life. And yet, traditionally the devis remind you that whenever you eat, you've killed something, sacrificed someone, even plants which come from farms, decimating forests and rivers. The devi reminds one that to build your civilization—sanskriti—you destroy your nature—prakriti. Feast your mind on intricate details behind how we offer food to the gods, and why certain foods are part of the Indian tradition, in this short, sweet read from Devlok.

Shiva was an ascetic and a husband, a yogi and a householder. He is named Veenapani, for playing the veena, Natraja for the elegance of his dance, but is a storyteller and a scholar. He was quick to rage in Bhairava, but has the tenderness of Ardhaneshwar, who loves his wife so much he offers her half his body so that they may always be together. He has a third eye—but is it from when he destroyed desire in Kama, or because he wanted to more fully view Parvati's loveliness? Can we ever truly know the depths of what Shiva embodies? Discover the paradoxes of Shiva woven into a short, sweet read from Devlok.

Where did the name Radha come from? When did Christianity first come to India? What is the connection between sanskar and dharma? After the enormously successful runs of the first and second seasons of EPIC Channel's Devlok with Devdutt Pattanaik, and their book editions, the trailblazer of Hindu mythology Devdutt Pattanaik is back with a third instalment to answer these questions and more! Covering over fifteen informative and inspiring episodes, this volume is a heady mix of education and entertainment. The show delves into myriad topics and lesser-known tales and questions that will be revisited by Devdutt in a Q&A format, making mythology more interesting for everyday audiences.

Are the illustrious clans of the Mahabharata from Surya Vansh or Chandra Vansh? Which yuga does the Ramayana occur in and does it occur only once? What do haldi, kumkum, hasm or chandan signify in a puja thali? After the sensational response to Season 1 of EPIC Channel's Devlok with Devdutt Pattanaik, Devdutt invited his viewers and readers to ask him questions about Hindu mythology, which he has answered over thirty thrilling episodes. Prepare to be educated, entertained and moved as Devdutt delves into the exhilarating variety of Hindu mythology. In this volume, you will discover the difference between dhyana and darshan, astitik and nastik, Surya Vansh and Chandra Vansh. There are amusing stories about your favourite Hanuman and fascinating facts about the dark Vishnu avatars, Varaha and Narasimha. Learn why Lakshmi or Saraswati are always in conflict and how women have the most intriguing characters in mythological tales. Journey deeper into the magical world of Hindu mythology with Devdutt and you'll never want to turn back.

Journey into the amazing world of Hindu mythology with Devdutt Pattanaik • Why are most temples dedicated to Vishnu, Shiva or the goddess, but not to Brahma or Indra? • How are an asura, rakshasa, yaksha and pishacha different from each other? • Why did the Pandavas find themselves in naraka rather than swarga? Over several months, EPIC Channel's ground-breaking show Devlok with Devdutt Pattanaik has enthralled countless viewers. Here, finally, is the book based on the first series of the ever-popular show, which will take you on a scintillating tour through the myriad stories, symbols and rituals that form the basis of Hindu

culture. Prepare to be surprised and thrilled as Devdutt narrates magical tales about larger-than-life figures—gods, goddesses, demi-gods and demons who you thought you knew well but didn't. Learn about the intricacies of Hindu thought as he explains the origin and meaning of different creation myths, and throws light on why we believe in a cyclical—not linear—concept of time. This book is your perfect introduction to the endlessly fascinating world of Hindu mythology.

The popular names of many yogic asanas - from Virbhadrā-asana and Hanuman-asana to Matsyendra-asana, Kurma-asana and Ananta-asana - are based on characters and personages from Indian mythology. Who were these mythological characters, what were their stories, and how are they connected to yogic postures? Devdutt Pattanaik's newest book *Yoga Mythology* (co-written with international yoga practitioner Matt Rulli) retells the fascinating tales from Hindu, Buddhist and Jain lore that lie behind the yogic asanas the world knows so well; in the process he draws attention to an Indic worldview based on the concepts of eternity, rebirth, liberation and empathy that has nurtured yoga for thousands of years.

RAMAYANA MAHABHARATA Also available as an e-book Non-fiction/Philosophy

RAMAYANA vs DEVDUTT PATTANAİK MAHAB HARATA

'I am not sure that I am a man,' said Yuvanashva. 'I have created life outside me as men do. But I have also created life inside me, as women do. What does that make me? Will a body such as mine fetter or free me?' Among the many hundreds of characters who inhabit the Mahabharata, perhaps the world's greatest epic and certainly one of the oldest, is Yuvanashva, a childless king, who accidentally drinks a magic potion meant to make his queens pregnant and gives birth to a son. This extraordinary novel is his story. It is also the story of his mother Shilavati, who cannot be king because she is a woman; of young Somvat, who surrenders his genitals to become a wife; of Shikhandi, a daughter brought up as a son, who fathers a child with a borrowed penis; of Arjuna, the great warrior with many wives, who is forced to masquerade as a woman after being castrated by a nymph; of Ileshwara, a god on full-moon days and a goddess on new-moon nights; and of Adi-natha, the teacher of teachers, worshipped as a hermit by some and as an enchantress by others. Building on Hinduism's rich and complex mythology—but driven by a very contemporary sensibility—Devdutt Pattanaik creates a lush and fecund work of fiction in which the lines are continually blurred between men and women, sons and daughters, husbands and wives, fathers and mothers. Confronted with such fluidity the reader is drawn into Yuvanashva's struggle to be fair to all—those here, those there and all those in between.

It is significant that the stories of Vishnu rose to prominence after the rise of Buddhism. Prior to that, Hinduism was the religion of the elite-based complex rituals known as yagna and esoteric speculations captured in texts known as the Aranyakas and the Upanishads. Bestselling author Devdutt Pattanaik offers insights into the stories and pictures of Vishnu.

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