

# A Fair Share

and Other Stories from the Indian Heartland

Retold & illustrated by  
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**EMESCO**

## The Magic Glass

A long time ago, in a tiny village called Devanahalli in Karnataka, there lived a man named Prasanna. One day, Prasanna went to a fair in a neighbouring town. Wandering about, the villager saw a face staring at him from a piece of shiny glass. Like everyone in his village, he had never seen a mirror in his life. Fascinated, he immediately bought one.

On his way home, Prasanna kept looking at the strange face that stared back at him from his magical new possession. He wondered whose face it could be...how ugly it was!

At home, he hid the mirror in a trunk. Every day, he would sneak into his room several times and peep into the mirror. Prasanna's wife, Padma, found her husband's behaviour very suspicious. One day, when he was away, she opened his trunk and found the mirror. She looked into it. And lo! She found a beautiful woman staring back at her.

Padma was horrified. So this was what her husband had been up to all these days! He had another woman. She tearfully ran to her mother-in-law and told her what had happened.

"Don't be silly, girl! You know your husband loves you. Anyway, let me see that thing."

Padma brought the mirror and gave it to the old lady. "If you don't believe me, look for yourself!" she said.

When the mother-in-law looked into the mirror, she was startled to see a white-haired crone staring fiercely back at her. The old lady almost jumped out of her skin. "I don't see a beautiful girl, I see an ugly old hag," she shrieked. "And she seems to be threatening me! "

"You're crazy," said Padma, looking into the mirror, "I can still see the beautiful lady!"

