

## **The Child Who Swallowed the Sun**

*A story about recognizing and nurturing your hidden gifts*

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Once upon a time, in a kingdom far away, there lived a race of monkey people who were very brave and very wise. The day our story opens, there was a big celebration in the village. A little boy had just been born with a big smile on his face. He laughed his way into the world. He was so bright and so strong that everyone loved him. There was nothing he couldn't do. His parents named him Hanuman.

One bright day while his parents weren't looking he crept out of the house, and went for a walk. Looking up in the sky he saw a large red apple. He loved apples and he had never seen such a big juicy apple before. He really wanted to eat it.

So he jumped as hard as he could, and grabbed the apple and swallowed it. Suddenly everything became dark. The little boy was scared. And the apple didn't even taste good. It was very hot!

Everyone was running around shouting and bumping into each other. "Where did the Sun go? What happened to the Sun?"

The Wind came to the little boy. "My child, that was not an apple. You have swallowed the Sun. Now give it back."

So the little boy spit out the Sun and everything became light again.

But the Sun was insulted. He was very angry and demanded that the little boy should be taught a lesson. "From today on, you will forget that you are a powerful little boy. You will have to behave just like everyone else."

So the little boy returned to his home. He grew up just like his friends. While he was very polite, he became very shy and would never try anything too daring. Deep inside him the special power to be great lay sleeping. But, just as the Sun had said, he had forgotten who he was.

Then one day, a great hero named Ram came to town. He was greatly outnumbered in his battle against the evil king who had stolen his queen and taken her across a big ocean.

"Who will help me?" he asked the people. "How will we ever get to the other side? There is no one strong enough to jump across an ocean."

Suddenly, the people remembered. "If Hanuman could swallow the Sun, perhaps he could jump across the ocean." But alas, he had lost his powers.

They called him aside, and tried to remind him. But he had forgotten who he was. His mother had him sit quietly. "Close your eyes and remember. Ask the Sun to forgive you. And tell him that you will only use your powers for good."

Slowly the boy began to remember. He started to jump. Higher and higher he went, until it was as if he could fly. "I am ready to help rescue your queen," he said to Ram. And so he leaped into the air and jumped all the way across the sea. Not only did he help save the queen, but he helped defeat the evil

King, too. Today Hanuman is remembered as a great hero. And it is said that those who remember him and sing his praises receive great blessings and become strong and successful in all they do.

**Thoughts:**

So my fellow travelers, it's good to recognize and nurture your hidden gifts.

We all have special powers hidden inside us. We may not be able to jump across an ocean, but if we focus on our special gifts and don't let the world distract us we can all become heroes at what we do best.

**Essential question:**

Everyone has a special gift. What is your special gift? Don't give up.

**Background:**

The story of Hanuman comes from the Ramayan, one of the great Hindu epics, which by some accounts dates back almost 10,000 years. Hanuman is remembered for his great virtues, of loyalty, courage, and service. Today you will find statues of Hanuman, some 50 feet high, all over India.

**Related Links and Resources:** 1. [www.wisdomthinkers.org](http://www.wisdomthinkers.org)