

The Golden Amulet

- India

Suggested letter: "T" (earth) tree

*Golden Tree of the deep dark wood,
Tall and true and treasured,
Guide my love along the trail
O'er trials and tears beyond measure.*

(see colored sheet for additional sample)



Long ago and yesterday, one of the Emperors of India had five wives. Four of them each bore him a son, but the fifth, the youngest and most beautiful of all, was childless. The other wives took every opportunity to insult her because of this, and to try to incite the Emperor against her, so that she might be banished. Try though they might they did not succeed, because the Emperor greatly loved this wife. But they tormented the youngest so that finally they drove her from the palace. She went out alone, without provisions of silver or gold or the least amount of food or water. The Emperor despaired but knew not what to do.

In great sorrow the young queen left the capital of that kingdom, and walked wherever her legs carried her. In this way she came at last to a dense forest. She roamed there a whole day without food to eat or a drop of water to drink, and in the evening she began to be afraid. With the last of her strength she climbed a tall tree in order to protect herself from the beasts of prey, but because of her hunger and fear she could not fall asleep. When at last the dawn appeared, she was exhausted and barely managed to climb down from the tree.

Another day passed and then a third, and still the girl found neither food nor drink. Each night she climbed high in the trees, seeking safety from the beasts of prey. And each dawn she climbed down, hungry and exhausted.

On the third morning, she saw some tiny roots that could bring her a little sustenance. She gathered them and took one small bite and saved the rest for later, for she knew not how long nor how far she might have to walk. Then she walked on as far