

Bird of Fire

High in the tamarind tree, Bird of fire looked out over the wide landscape. The tree was so high that he could see the land from the rising to the setting sun. That was important, because Bird of fire divided all the light around the world. Every morning when the sun rose, he shook his beautiful golden feathers, stretched his wings and flew out over the foliage of the evergreen tamarind. When the first rays of sunshine announced the morning, the bright shining light shined all over the earth and Bird of fire divided the light of the sun.

Bird of fire also had some scarlet feathers among all its golden feathers. Those red feathers made the color of the rising and the setting sun deep red. Bird fire was lord and master over all the red flowers and fruits, as well. He gave the world its color red.

You can imagine, that people protected the nest of the Bird of fire. When the sun was high in the sky, he disappeared into the foliage of the tamarind and waited for it to cool down. After long years and many sunrises and sunsets, the tamarind tree began to lose its leaves. The Bird of fire could still hide in his nest at first, but the sun became too hot and came too close. He knew he was going to change now. Finally came the day when his tender wings caught fire. Bird of fire was lost in the light and together with him, so was the tamarind tree. All the people looked startled at the shining tree and were saddened about the Bird of fire.

They feared that he had disappeared forever. But suddenly, as the sun set and in the evening light, the ashes of the tree lit up. This was such a great miracle, that people had to tell it over and over. To their amazement, they saw the bird of fire reappear from the ashes, and even more radiant were his golden wings. He shook the ashes from his wings and feathers and flew towards the sun. He was dazzling. Even though the sun wasn't shining now, it was as if he was the sun, himself. And what was that on his back? Not only red feathers were visible, more beautiful and richer than ever, but between those feathers, were deep blue feathers, with the brightness of the wide ocean. Powerfully, the bird stretched his wings, until it found a new tamarind tree. That's where he built his nest.

Every morning and evening, people marveled at the beautiful evening red, and also about the deep blue of the sea, the wide blue sky and all the blue flowers. That's how it went for a long, long time. Once in a century, Bird of fire lit up in the tamarind tree, when it lost its leaves, and a Bird of fire with new feathers emerged. That's how the colors in the world came about. The yellow of the cornfields, the glowing green of the plants. Every now and then, Bird of Fire creates the rainbow, with all the colors created by the fire, as a reminder of what he has been through.

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