

# In your Hands

*A folktale from India*



A young man once thought to confound the elder of his village.

The old man was said to be exceedingly wise.

But the young man was certain his own wisdom exceeded that of the frail old man.

He had caught a young bird, and carrying this bird hidden in his hands, he approached the older gentleman.

"Here is a riddle for you, old man, "I have in my hands a bird. Is it alive? Or is it dead?"

He thought there was no way the old man could win. If he guessed "dead," the boy would open his hands and release the living bird. But if he guessed "alive," the young man would crush the bird in his hands. When he opened them ... there would be a dead bird.

But the old man looked into the young man's eyes and said,

"The answer, my son, is in your hands."

Margaret Read MacDonald

*Earth Care*

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