Karma & Diamonds

Sneak Previews from

Book 3 - Diamond Revealed

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Goddess

From the corner, I heard a voice, "Pretty special here, huh?" It was John, the man I had met earlier in the coffee shop.

"It certainly is. It's a spectacular place, this temple," I replied, picking up a rather handsome looking rosary *mala* of 108 *rudraksha* beads.

"Those beads are from right here on Kauai. Have you been to the Rudraksha Forest?" he asked.

"Really?" I asked, perplexed, wondering if this guy was a bit odd or if he was pulling my leg. "They make *rudraksha* beads here, in Kauai? I've only ever known of them growing in the plains of the Ganges in India." These beads were believed to have special healing

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properties and were considered the most sacred of all in India.

"That's right. Right here, in Kauai. Have you been to see it yet?"

I knitted my eyebrows together, looking confused, "Are you having a laugh?"

"No, I'm serious. It's just a mile or two up the hill, left off the main road."

According to legend, the *rudraksha* tree sprung up from a tear shed by Lord Shiva. A tear of fulfilment experienced by Shiva after being in deep meditation. Rudra, or 'one who weeps', is one of the names of Lord Shiva. *Rudraksha*, in Sanskrit, literally means Rudra's eyes and '*askha*' is to give and receive. So *rudraksha* is one that has the ability to wipe away tears and provide fulfilment. Holy men all over India wear these beads as a necklace, which doubles up as a rosary.

"I'm going there now, if you'd like to join me," John said.

I hesitated. Though the sense I had of John was that he was a 'gentleman', a good guy, I was not in the habit of accompanying strange men I had just met into

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forests, in lands to which I was an absolute stranger. I had barely met him a few hours ago and I wanted to smoke him out first, to get to know a bit more about him and see if he was a trustworthy character.

"Now that you've told me about this forest, I'd definitely like to go there. But right now I'm going to grab a coffee down at the Coconut Marketplace in Kapaa. You're welcome to join me."

"Sure. Why not? I can always go there a little later," he said.

"OK, well, I'll see you down there." I walked to the shop door.

Just then, something fell out of John's wallet as he stood at the counter to pay for a purchase. It was a piece of paper. I walked towards the counter and bent over to pick it up and return it to John. As I crouched down, I caught sight of a colourful, almost kitsch looking image on this tatty, crumpled, glossy card the size of a cigarette packet. The card, its once white edges now browning with the passing of time, curled at the corners and creases, from being stuffed along with the contents of a bulging wallet, lined its surface.

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Despite its wear and tear, the picture on the card was still vivid and I gasped on seeing the image of the woman depicted. Adorned with abundant jewels, she wore an old fashioned, rich golden-bordered green sari, worn in typical ancient South Indian style. A beautiful green parrot perched on her right shoulder.

John, now also crouching down, joined me in staring at the card. "It's a mesmerising image, isn't it?"

I was gobsmacked. My mind raced with so many questions that I couldn't string any one of them in a coherent sentence. "It's the one I call the Goddess in Green! Who is she?" I managed to ask.

"Why, it's Goddess Meenakshi, of course."

"Who? … Meenakshi? … But she's the one I saw in my dream. The same sari. … She told me to come here … the same green parrot on her shoulder. Who is she? But she looked younger in my dream … and she had three breasts … ," I muttered, my mouth agape with disbelief. "I saw her just yesterday when I was sitting, enjoying the breeze, at the top of the cliff on the seashore, and she suddenly appeared in a vision, or should I say, an epiphany. She just blew me away."

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"Well, that doesn't surprise me," John said. "She's pretty special. That's why I take her everywhere with me." His tone was lighthearted. "She's the real McCoy."

"But who is she?

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