



The Lost Veda

Geeta Dharmarajan | Art by Atanu Roy



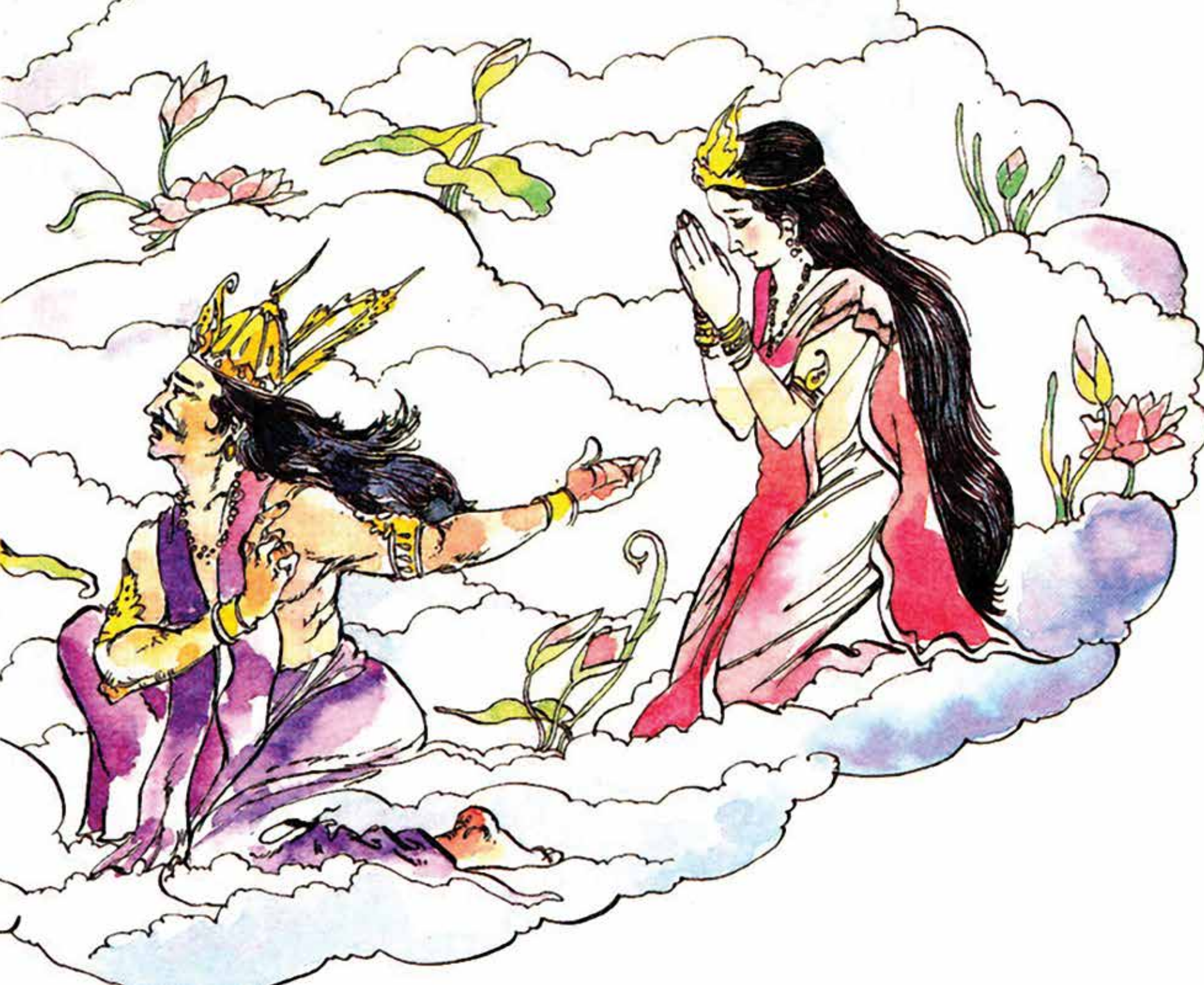
a 300m thinkbook from Katha 

Long, long ago, there was excitement in Brahmatalok. Brahma's son, Atharvan was getting married to Devi.

Three years later, Devi was to have a baby Atharvan was overjoyed. "Give me a son to carry on the name of my family," said Atharvan, smiling at his wife.

Devi nodded her head shyly. But Devi was worried. At last, "How can I promise you a boy child?" she asked Atharvan.





Atharvan went to Brahma, his father, and said, “You are the Creator of All Things. Tell Devi that she must give me a son.”

Brahma smiled. “Dear child’ he said. “Even I cannot say that a child growing inside its mother should be a boy or a girl. How can Devi?” “She carries the child in her womb”, said Atharvan, firmly. “Child,” said Brahma, gently. “Learn the Brihat Veda. Come!”



Wondering, Atharvan and Devi stepped into the Brahmachakra which showed things that no human being can see without magic eyes. They saw this moving picture of the inside of a human body.

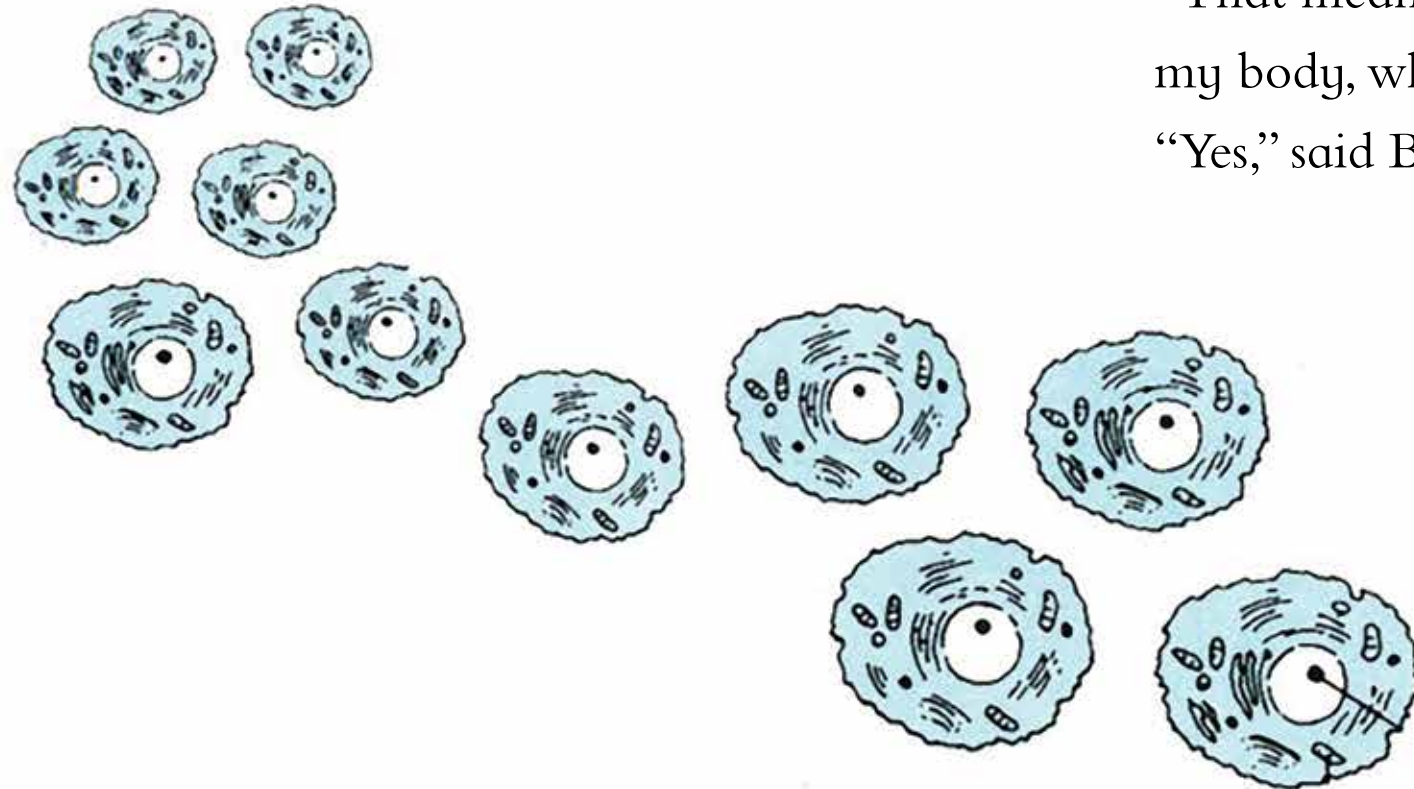
All living things on Earth are made up of small units of life called cells. A cell is smaller than the smallest grain of sand you can find.

There are different types of cells. Skin cells. Skin cells form our skin. Bone cells form bones. We also have brain cells, blood cells, finger nail cells, and so on.



This is a Microscope. It makes small things big enough to see!

You can't see cells without a microscope!

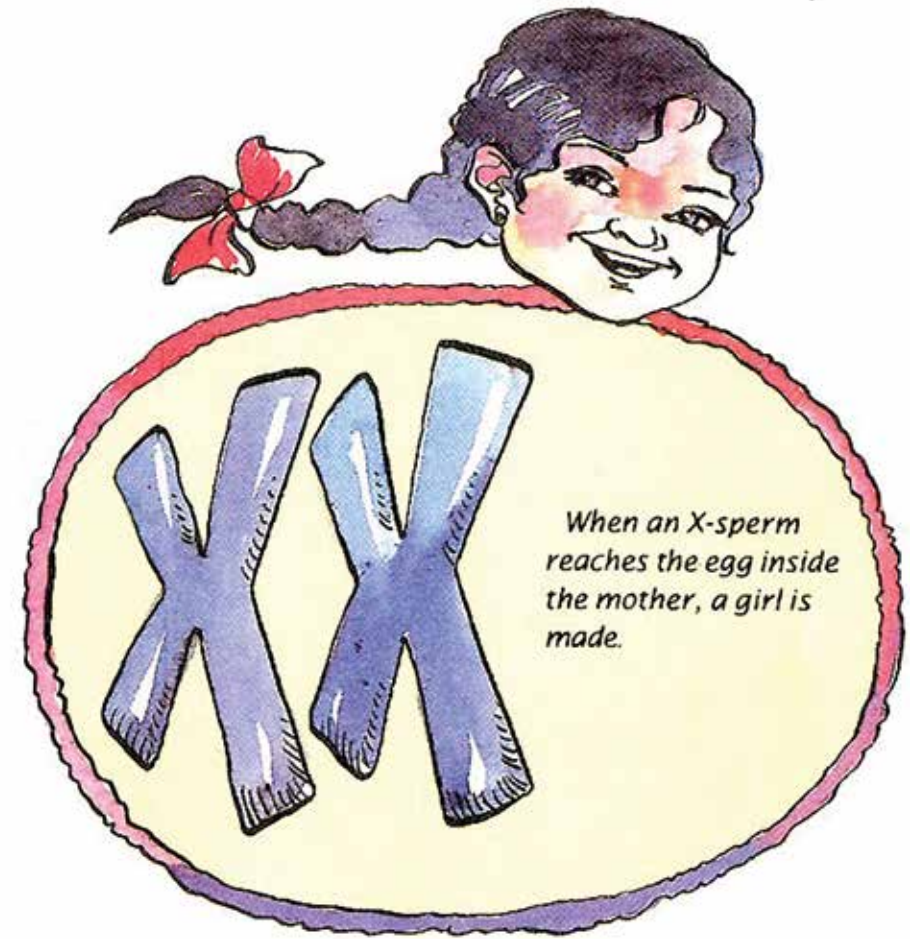


In each human cell there are 23 pairs of thin threads called **CHROMOSOMES**. These make a child take after its parents.

Of these 23 pairs, one pair is special. It is made up of two X chromosomes in women. Men have one X and one Y chromosome. Now, Atharvan asked, “That means I have X and Y chromosomes in my body, while Devi has only X chromosomes?” “Yes,” said Brahma, nodding his head. “See on.”

When a man and a woman come together, the man's seeds are placed inside the woman. Each seed is a special cell called a SPERM. A sperm is smaller than the thinnest ray of sunlight you can find. Every month, a woman's body also makes one special cell called the egg. When a sperm happens to join the egg inside the woman's body, a new cell is made.

This is the baby.

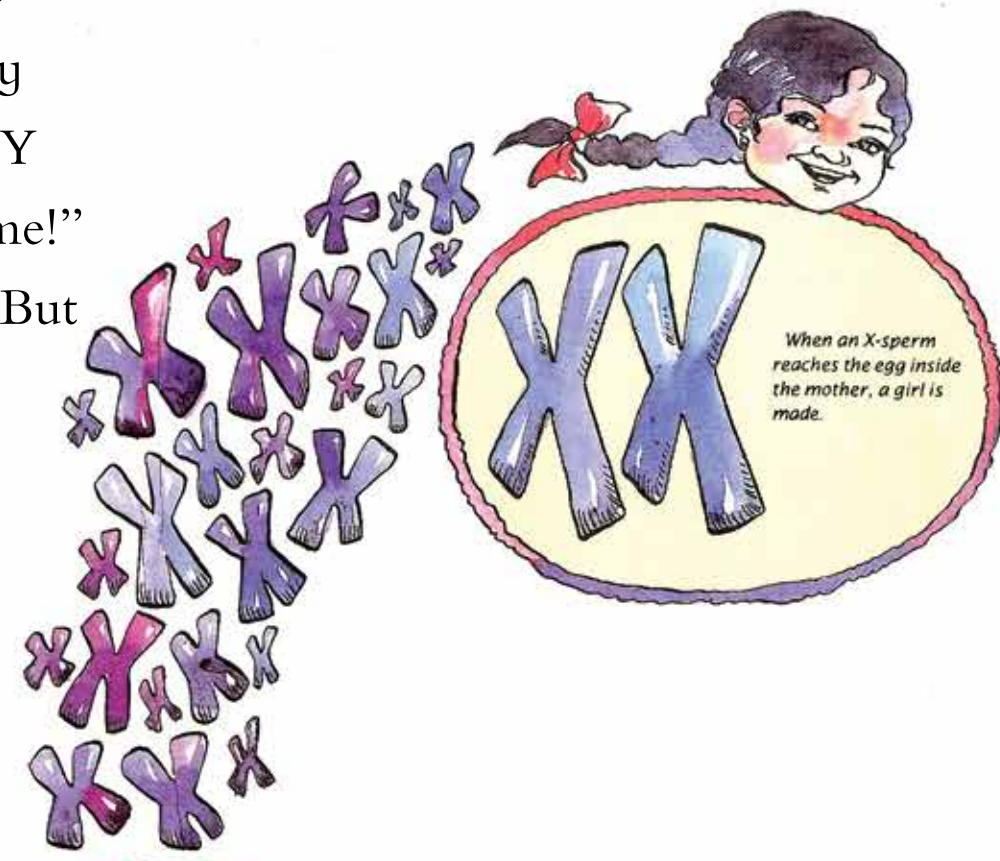
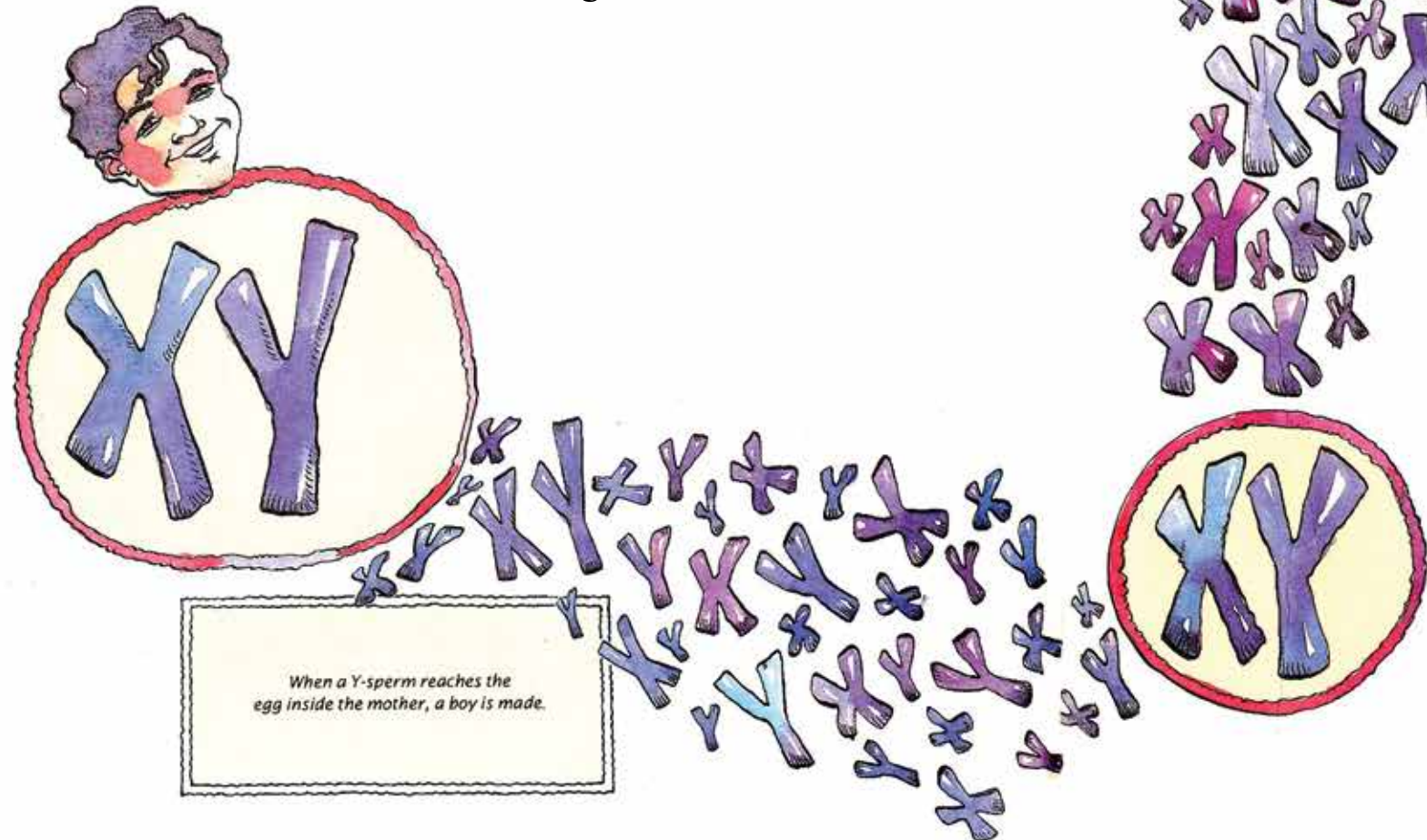


The baby has taken one sex chromosome from the mother, and one from the father.

When a Y-sperm reaches the egg inside the mother, a boy is made.

If it so happens that the X chromosome joins the egg, the baby is a girl. Atharvan stopped the story again to say, "A baby boy needs one X and one Y chromosome! But a woman has no Y chromosome!" "You are a good pupil, Atharvan," said Brahma. But Atharvan was looking at Devi.

"It means that I am responsible for whether my child is a boy or a girl. Only I have the Y chromosome to give to the child," he said, softly. "Atharvan, this is true for all human beings. It is the father who makes a child a girl or a boy. This is the Brihat Veda. May your children never forget this!" said Brahma.



Many years ago, we lost the Brihat Veda. Scientists have rediscovered it today. Now that you know it, will you share this most special veda with everyone!

Geeta Dharmarajan loves writing stories for children. She was one of the editors of Target, a magazine for children, and The Pennsylvania Gazette, the magazine of the University of Pennsylvania. She was awarded the prestigious Padma Shri in 2012 for her distinguished service in the fields of literature and education.

With over a hundred children's books under his belt, **Atanu Roy** has devoted much of his creative prowess to children's literature. It's no surprise then that Roy, who once worked as a political cartoonist for India Today, has won awards like the Children's Choice Award for Book Illustrations and the IBBY Certificate of Honour for Illustrations.

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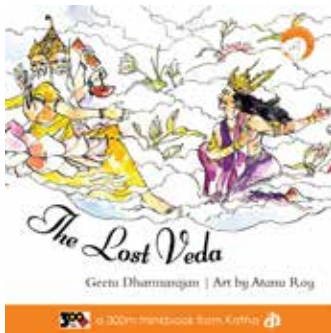
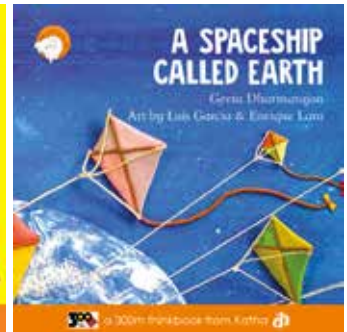
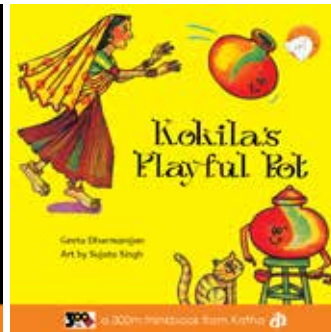
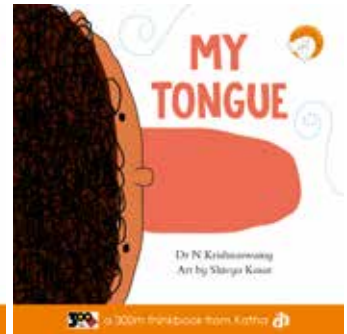
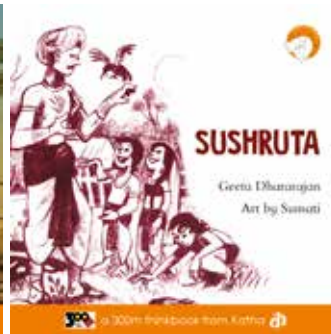
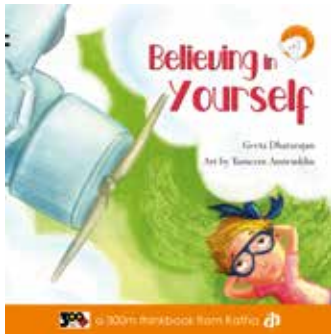
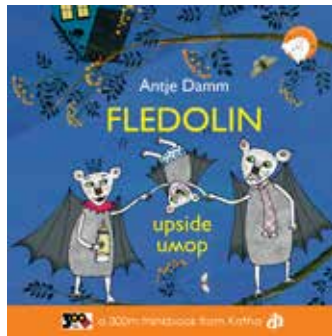
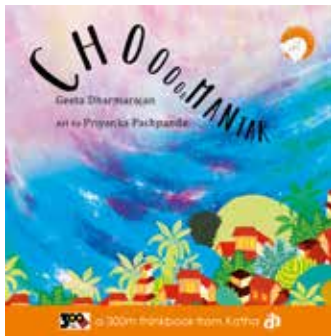
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