

The Blind Men and the Elephant



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Once there were four blind men who lived in a village in India. One day they were playing their flutes together when they felt the ground tremble.

“What is making the ground tremble?” asked the first man.

“An elephant is coming,” said a young girl who was playing nearby.

The blind men could not see the elephant.

“What sort of thing is an elephant?” they asked one another.

But none of them knew.

“The elephant is standing in front of you,”
said the little girl. “Why not touch it?”

“What an excellent idea!” said the men.

“Then we will understand what an elephant
is like.”



The first blind man stood by the side of the elephant and gave it a pat. “Ah,” he said, nodding to himself. “An elephant is solid and flat like a wall.”



“Is that right?” said the second man. He went to the elephant and felt its tail. “You are wrong,” he said. “An elephant is not solid and flat. It is flexible and round like a rope.”



The third man felt the elephant's tusk. "You are both wrong," he said. "An elephant is hard and sharp like a spear."

