CITRA-VIDYĀ

~ Drawing-to-Learn Workbook Series ~

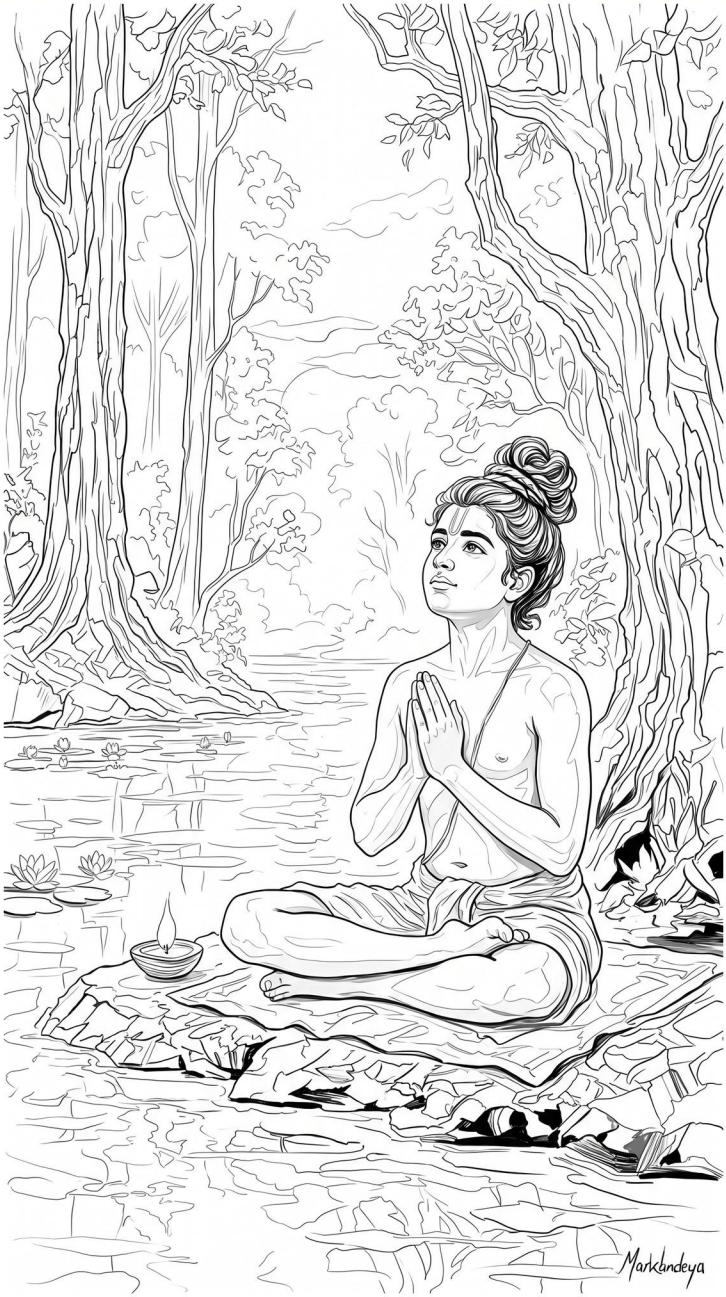
Book Two

The Child Who Dreamed the World

A Story from Ancient India

Children's Joy

childrensjoy.io



1. The Sage Who Wished to See

There once lived a sage named Mārkandeya. He had lived longer than the oldest mountain, yet the gods had blessed him to stay forever young. One wish glowed in his heart: to see the great wonder behind all the world.

1. The Sage Who Wished to See

R E F L E C T

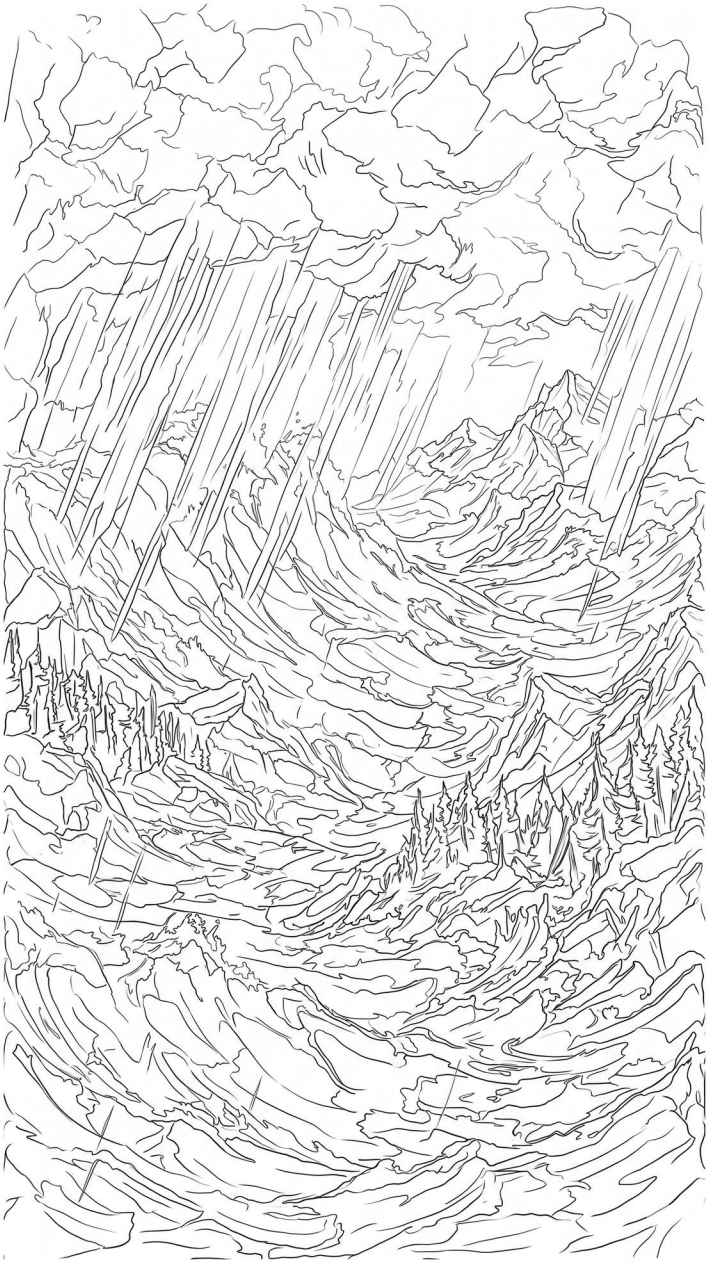
What is one wonder you wish you could see?

Draw the wonder you would most love to see.

WORD TO KNOW

Sage · ṚṢI (rishi)

In the Vedic tradition a ṛṣi is far more than a clever person - he is a 'seer'. Through deep stillness and meditation, a ṛṣi directly perceives truth and is said to 'hear' the sacred hymns of the Vedas. Ṛṣis are the wise guides who carry timeless wisdom into the world.



2. When the World Went to Sleep

One evening, as he prayed, rain began to fall for years and years. The seas rose over the land and all the worlds folded away like a flower at night. This is the pralaya - the great resting, when everything returns to where it began.

2. When the World Went to Sleep

R E F L E C T

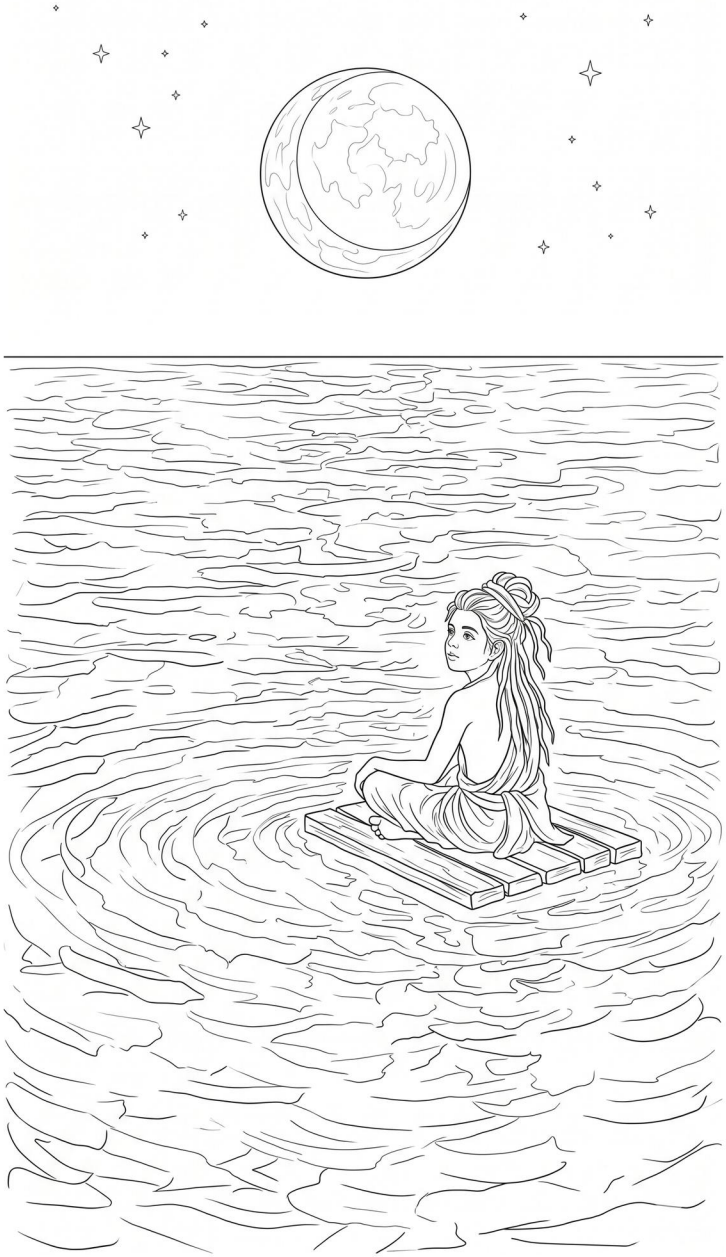
Where do things go when they rest?

Draw something resting - night, winter, or sleep.

WORD TO KNOW

The Great Resting · PRALAYA

Pralaya is the Vedic idea of the universe gently dissolving back into its source at the close of a vast cosmic cycle - the whole world breathing out and coming to rest. It is not a final ending but a deep pause; afterwards creation breathes out again and a fresh age begins.



3. Alone on the Endless Sea

Mārkandeya floated on the endless water, all alone. There was no shore to swim to and no morning to wait for. Feeling very small, he wondered: is anyone here at all?

3. Alone on the Endless Sea

R E F L E C T

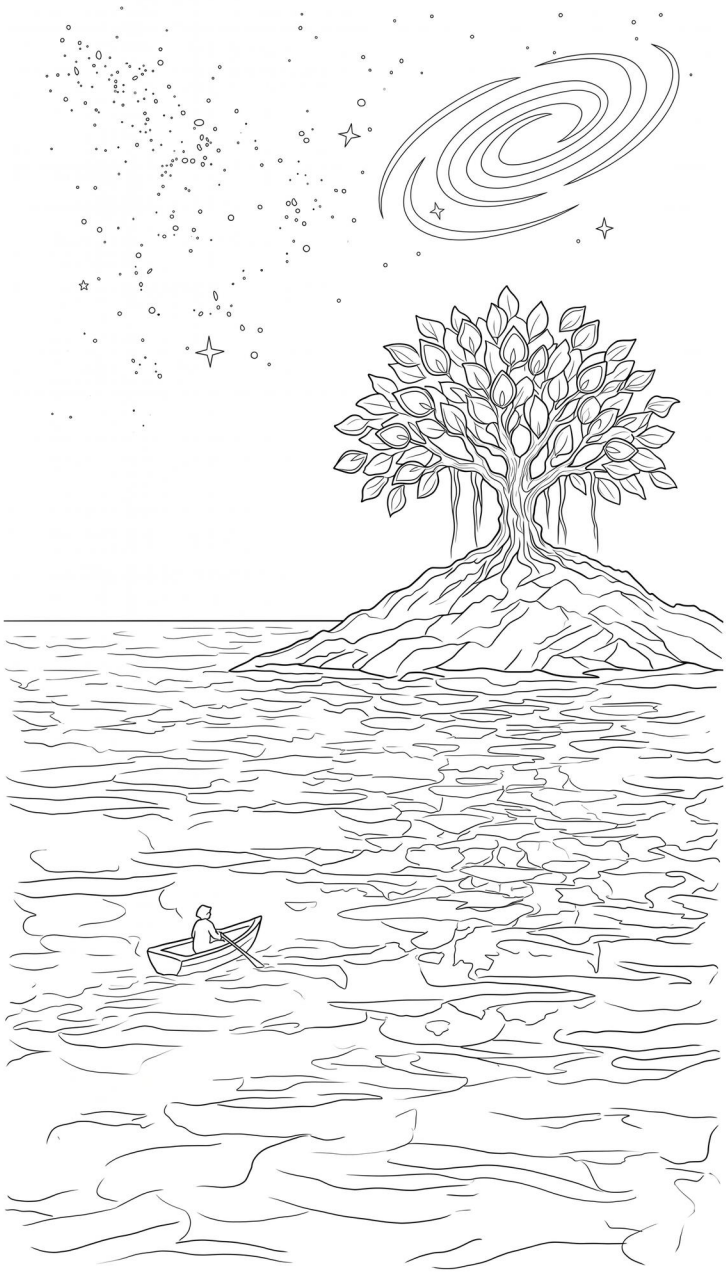
When have you felt very small?

Draw a time you felt tiny in a big, wide world.

WORD TO KNOW

Endless · ANANTA

Ananta means 'without end'. In Vedic thought it points to the boundless, eternal reality that lies beneath everything we see. It is also the name of the great cosmic serpent on whom Lord Viṣṇu rests - a picture of the endless, ever-present ground of all existence.



4. A Light on the Water

Then, far across the dark water, he saw a soft, warm light. It was a young banyan tree, its broad leaves glowing like little lamps. After all that darkness, here was something alive and shining.

4. A Light on the Water

R E F L E C T

What gives you hope in the dark?

Draw your own little light of hope.

WORD TO KNOW

Banyan Tree · VAṬA

The vaṭa, or banyan, is sacred in Vedic culture as a symbol of eternal life: its hanging aerial roots reach down and spread endlessly, so the tree never truly dies. The divine Child resting on its leaf shows the whole of creation sheltered by what is timeless and ever-living.

5. The Baby on the Leaf

On one shining leaf lay a tiny baby, his skin deep blue like a jewel, glowing so softly the darkness melted around him. He held one little foot to his mouth and smiled. Mārkandeya had never seen anything so marvelous - true wonder, āścarya.

5. The Baby on the Leaf

R E F L E C T

When did something fill you with wonder?

Draw the most wonderful thing you have ever seen.

WORD TO KNOW

Wonder · ĀŚCARYA

Āścarya is sacred wonder - the breathless amazement we feel before something vast and mysterious. In Vedic teaching this wonder is the very beginning of wisdom: it quietens the busy mind, opens the heart, and turns us toward the great mystery behind all things.

6. The Whole World Inside

The baby breathed in, and the sage was drawn gently inside him. There, within the child, Mārkandeya saw it all - sky and sun, moon and stars, mountains, rivers and forests. The whole universe was alive and shining inside the little child.

6. The Whole World Inside

R E F L E C T

If you held the world, what would you keep safe?

Draw what you would hold and keep safe.

WORD TO KNOW

The Universe · BRAHMĀṆḌA

Brahmāṇḍa literally means 'the egg of Brahman' - the entire universe pictured as a single cosmic egg that holds every world, star and living being. In Vedic cosmology all of creation unfolds from, and quietly rests within, this one shining, complete whole.

7. He Finds His Own Home

Among all the worlds he laughed aloud, for there was his own little hut beside the river, just as he had left it. Everything was held safely inside the Child. Nothing had been lost - it was all being kept, gently, like a treasure.

7. He Finds His Own Home

R E F L E C T

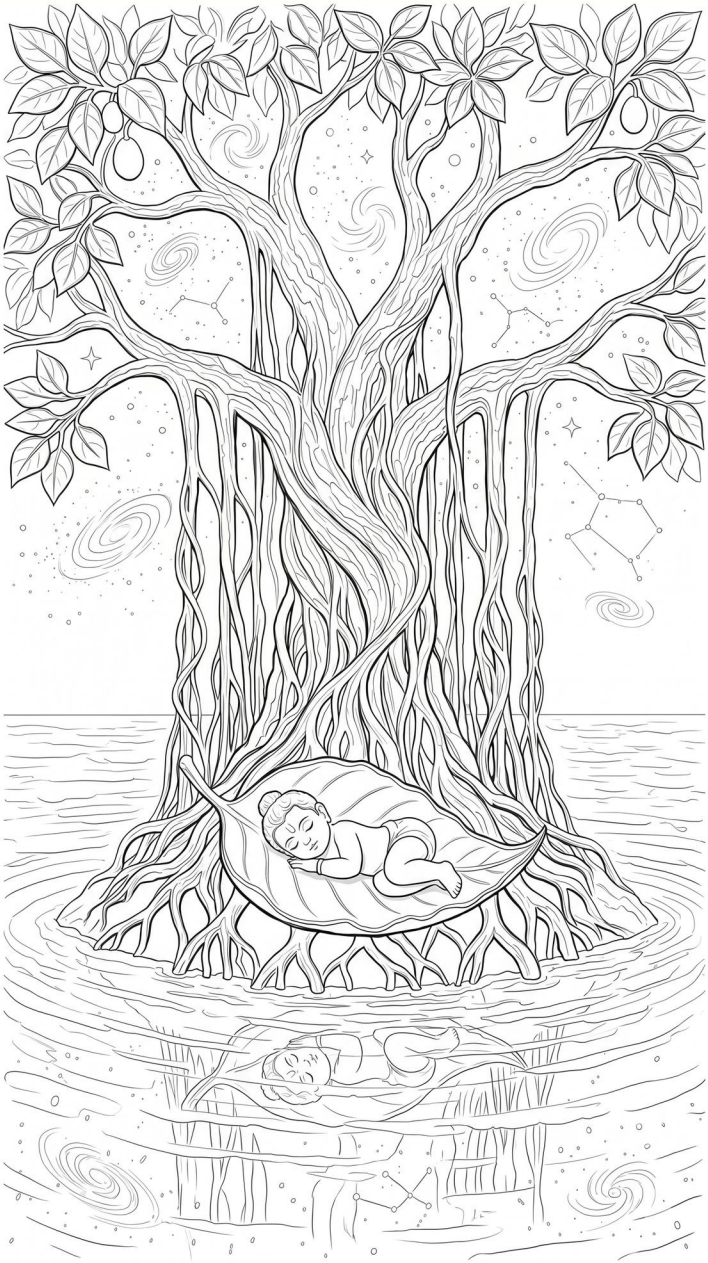
Name one small thing that feels like home.

Draw your home, or a place where you feel safe.

WORD TO KNOW

Wondrous Power · MĀYĀ

Māyā is the mysterious creative power by which the One appears as the many - the wondrous force that spreads out the whole world of shapes and colours before us. In Vedic thought it both reveals and gently veils reality, reminding us to look for the single truth behind the ever-changing show.



8. The Child Who Dreams the World

The baby breathed out, and Mārkandeya floated back onto the water. Now he understood: this was the Lord himself - Nārāyaṇa, who rests upon the waters. The whole world can rest, safe and loved, inside a sleeping child's dream.

8. The Child Who Dreams the World

R E F L E C T

What do you dream about?

Draw a beautiful dream of your very own.

WORD TO KNOW

The Lord · NĀRĀYAṆA · HARI

Nārāyaṇa means 'the One who rests upon the waters' - the Supreme who holds all worlds within himself and dreams them into being; Hari is his loving name. In Vedic devotion he is the source, the support and the peaceful resting-place of the entire universe.