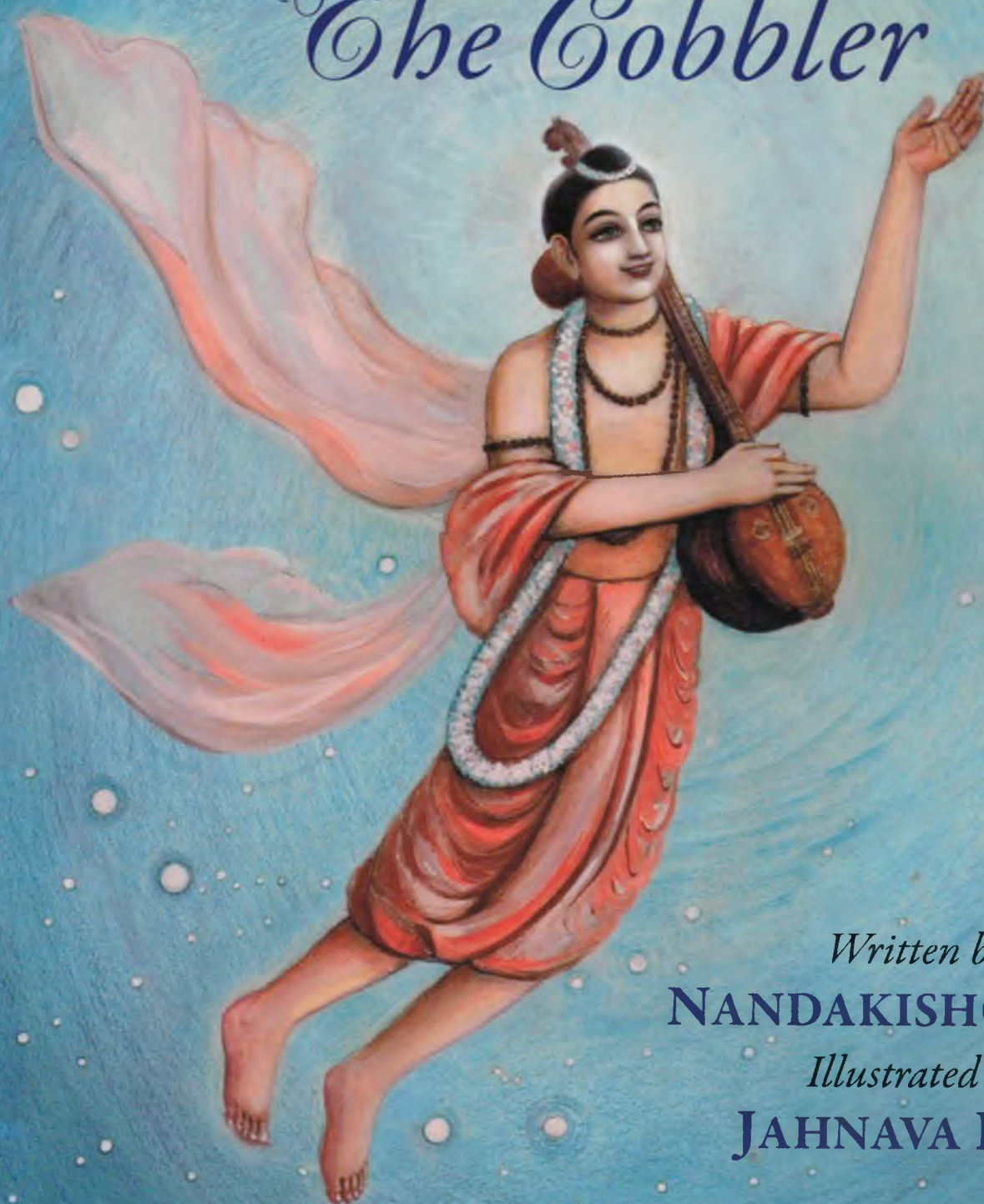


THE STORY OF
*Narada Muni,
The Brahmin and
The Cobbler*



Written by
NANDAKISHOR DAS
Illustrated by
JAHNAVA DAS

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Written by Nandakishor Das

Illustrated by Jahnava Dasi

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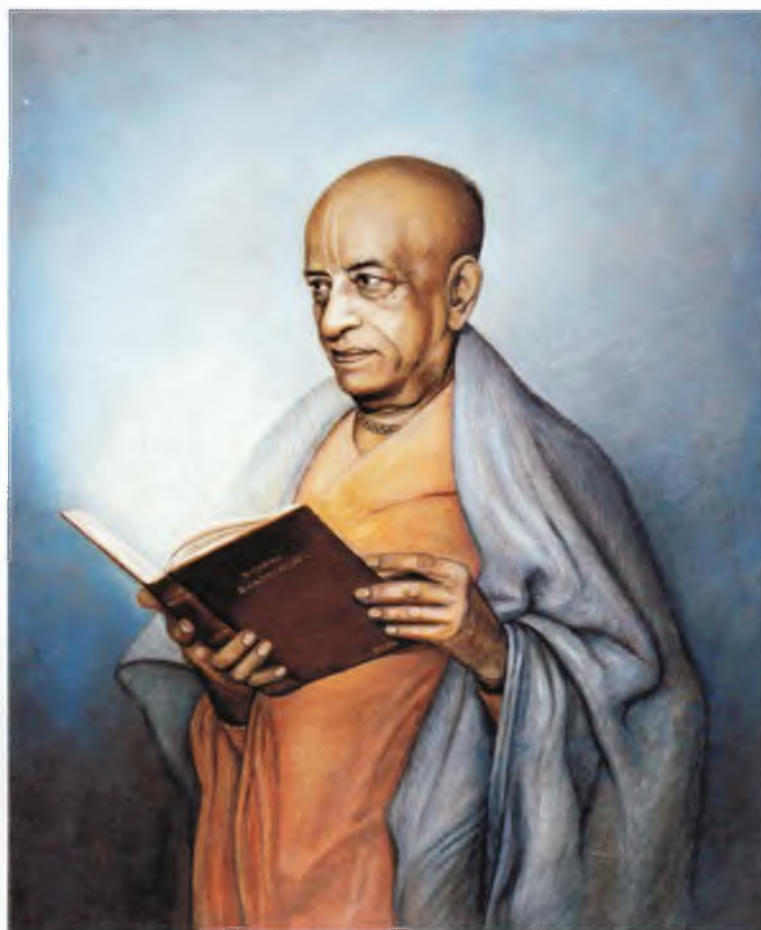
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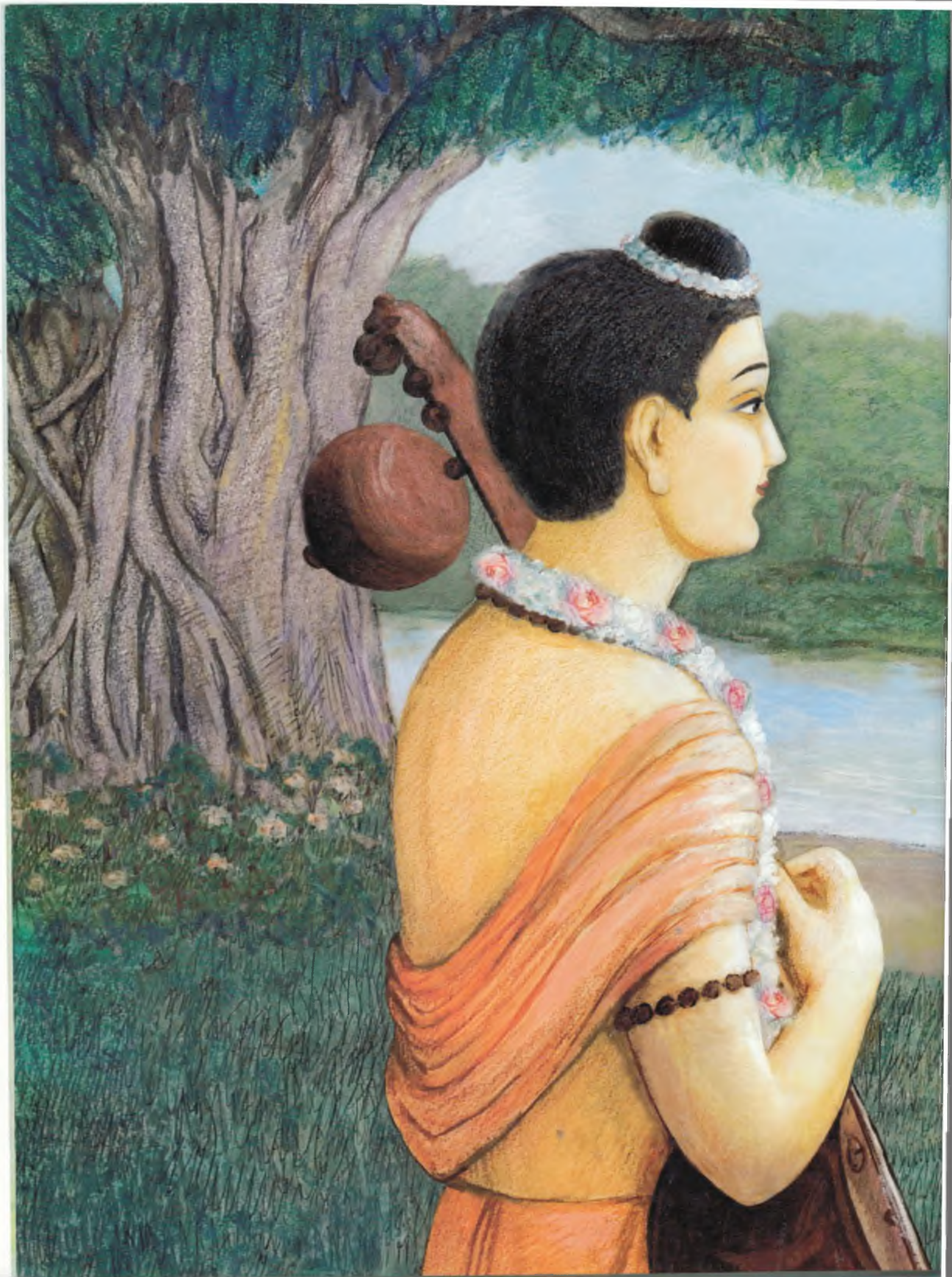


Dedicated to
His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada, Founder-acharya
of the International Society
for Krishna Consciousness, who brought
the teachings of Sri Narada Muni to
the Western world in 1965.

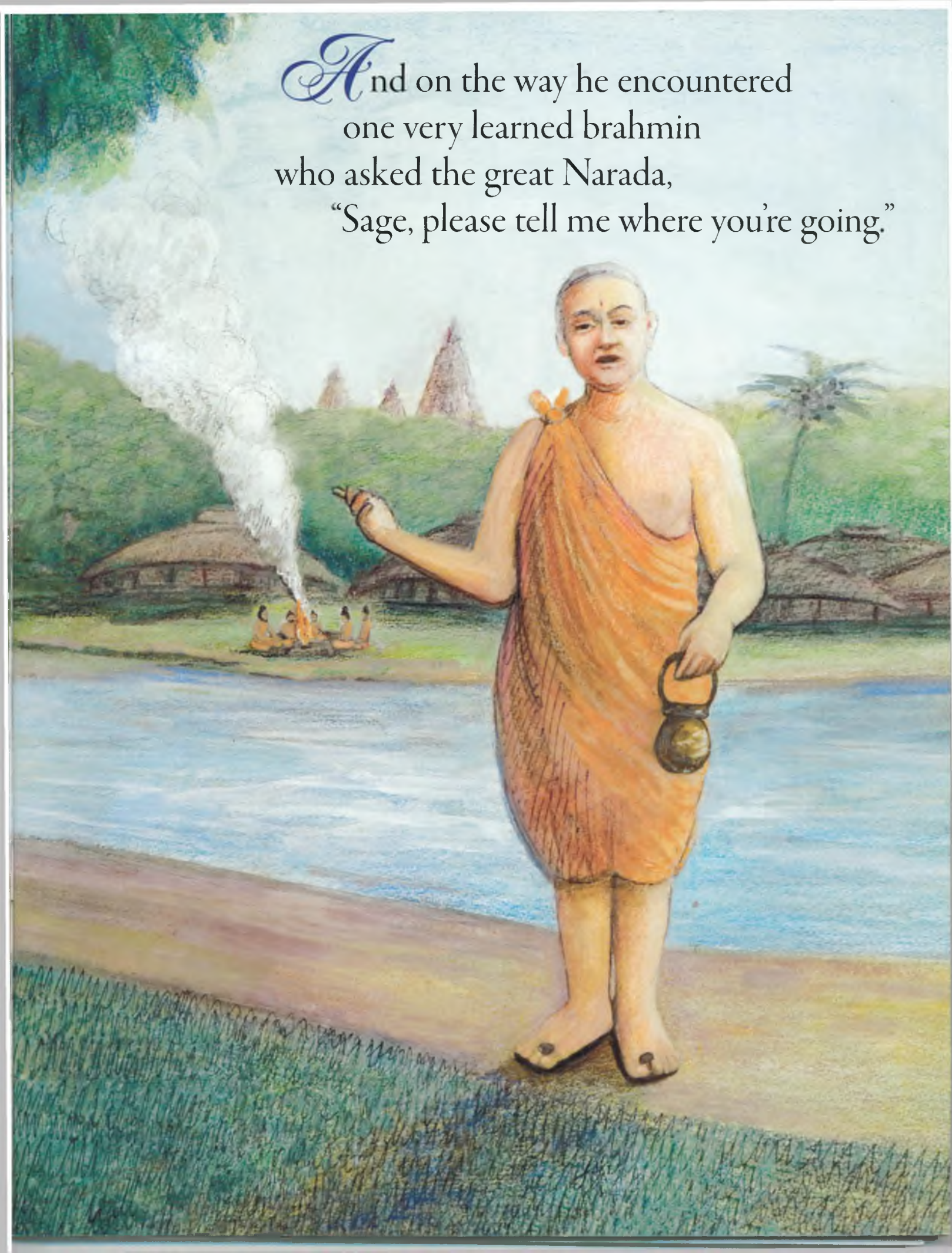


Long ago, Lord Narayan's sage
whom we know is Narada,
was journeying across the earth
on his way to Vaikuntha.





*A*nd on the way he encountered
one very learned brahmin
who asked the great Narada,
“Sage, please tell me where you’re going.”



Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare





Hare, Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare

*N*arada, who sings praises
of the Lord as flies the swan,
told the brahmin that he was going
to see Lord Narayan.

The brahmin turned his head and said,
“Ah! This question to Him bring:
How many births must I stay
in this world of suffering?”



*S*ri Naradaji kindly agreed
and continued on his quest.

Then he met a low and common cobbler
who had the same request.



*N*arada Muni, who always sings
the sweet names of Hari,
then finally reached Vaikuntha
there Lord Narayan to see.







*B*ut when he asked of the cobbler,
the Lord with pleasure said,
“*Triumphantly* he’ll come to Me
from his next deathbed.”



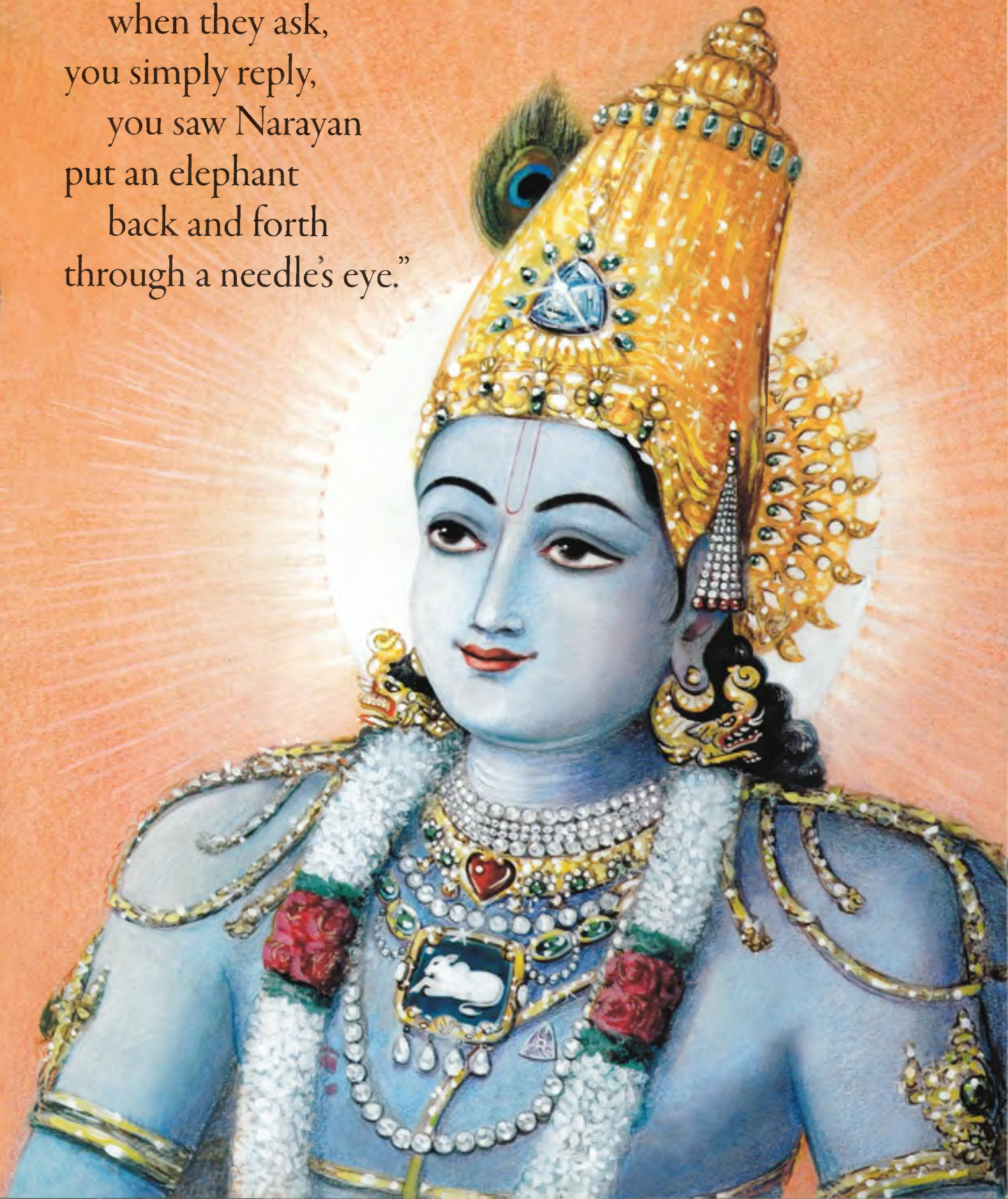


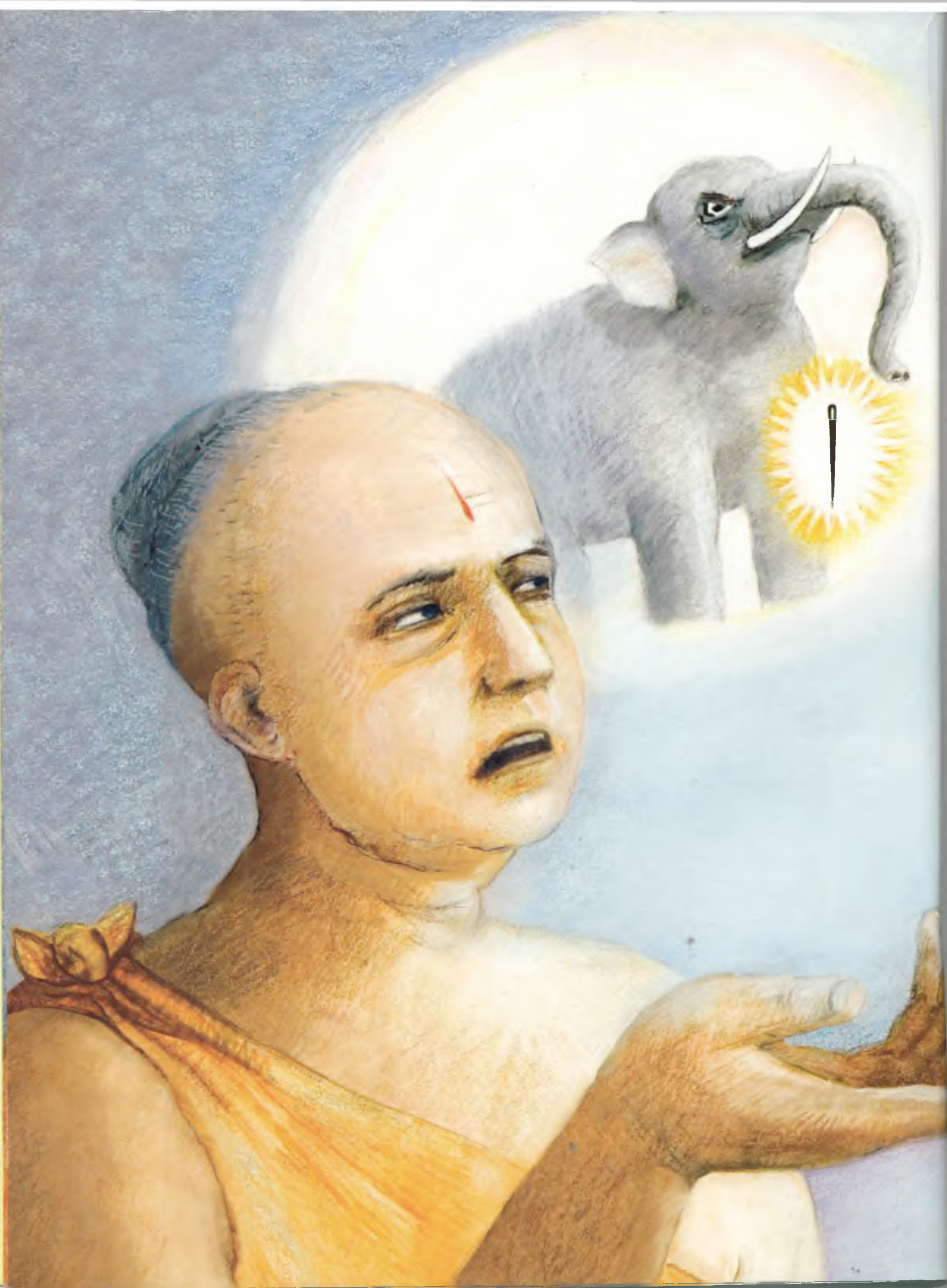
*N*ow Narada could not understand
how a cobbler low and common
could reach to the eternal abode
before a learned brahmin.

The Lord who knows everyone's mind
saw Narada's confusion brewing.
He told him, "When you see them both,
they'll ask you what I was doing.



And to this question,
when they ask,
you simply reply,
you saw Narayan
put an elephant
back and forth
through a needle's eye."







*N*arada offered obeisances
to his Lord Narayan.

He then returned to this mortal world
to the place from where he had gone.
He met the brahmin, who, when he heard
of his fate, he began crying.

And then as Narayan had said,
he asked what the Lord was doing.

Narada simply answered
what the Lord told him to say.

The brahmin scoffed, "I DON'T BELIEVE YOU."
... and Narada went away.



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what the Lord told him to say.

The brahmin scoffed, "I DON'T BELIEVE YOU."
... and Narada went away.



Then he met the cobbler
and told him of his fortune.

The cobbler smiled and humbly said
that the Lord was so kind to him.

And when he asked what the Lord was doing,
Narada told him straight.

The cobbler smiled again and said,
“Ah! My Lord is so great!”

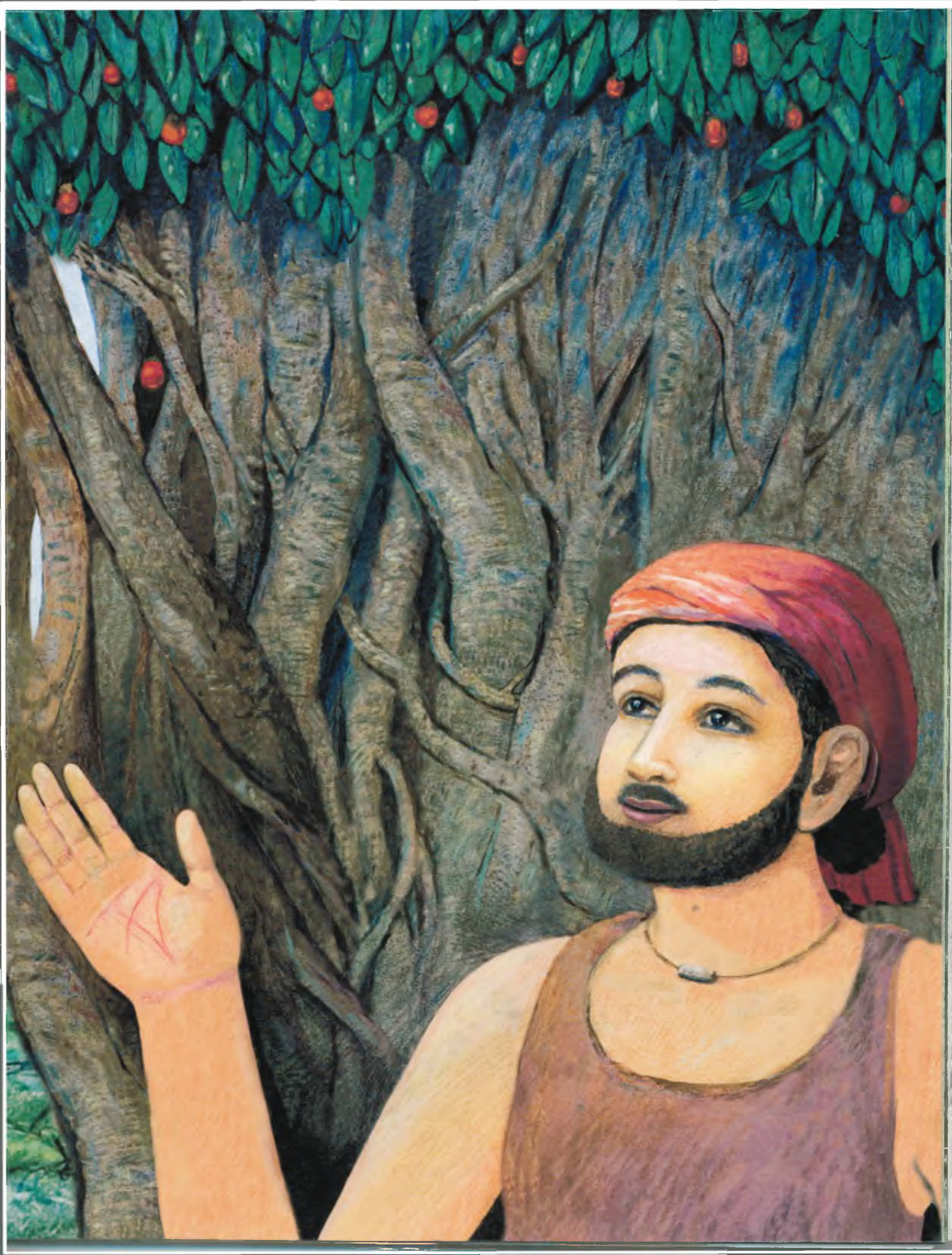


*B*ut the saintly sage could not understand
this common cobbler's faith.

He said, "Sir, now please tell me how
it is you believe what I say."

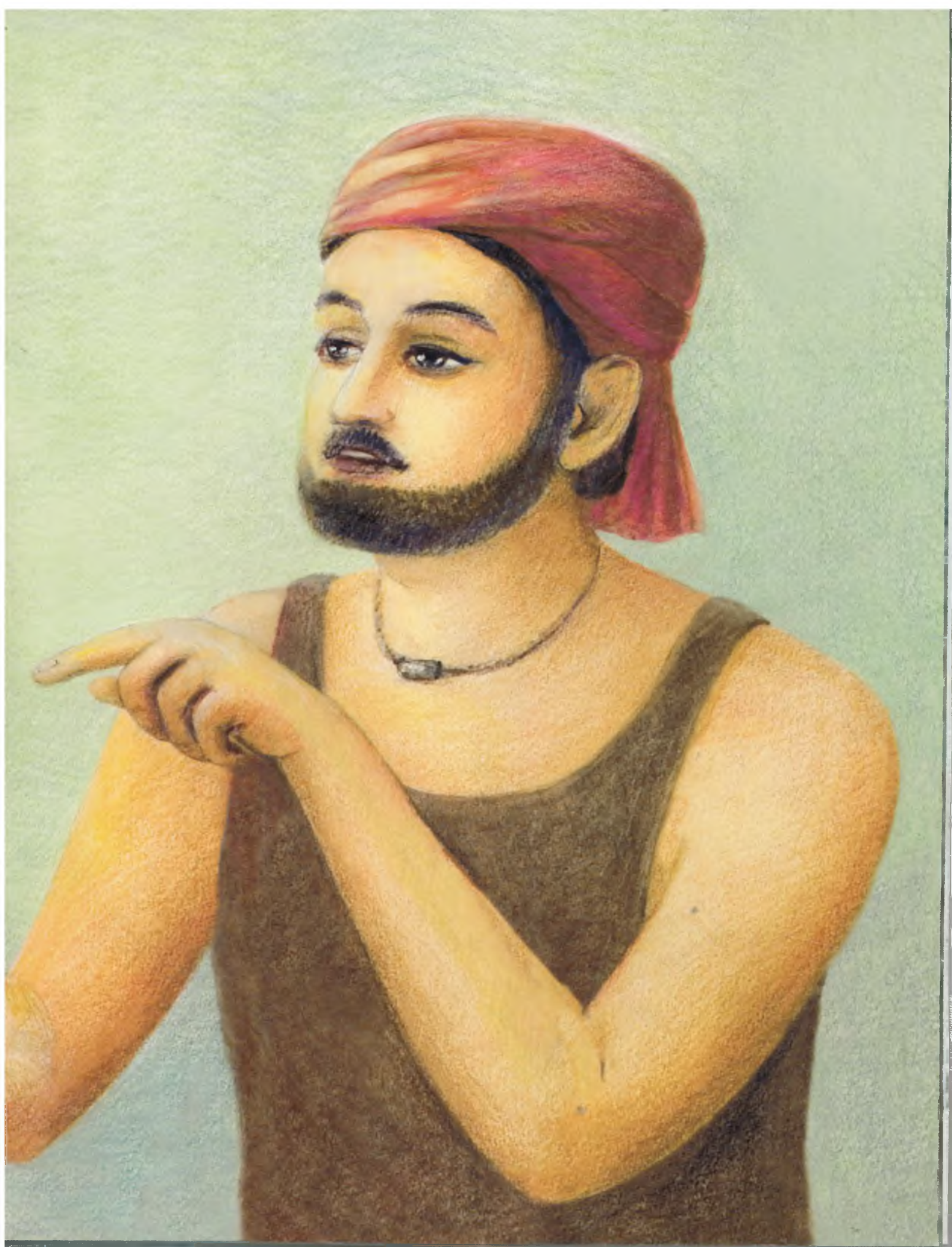
The cobbler, smiling so blissfully,
looked up and said, "You see . . .
how many fruits are falling
from this gigantic banyan tree?"





*A*nd in each fruit
there are many seeds
as they were meant to be.
And in each seed . . .

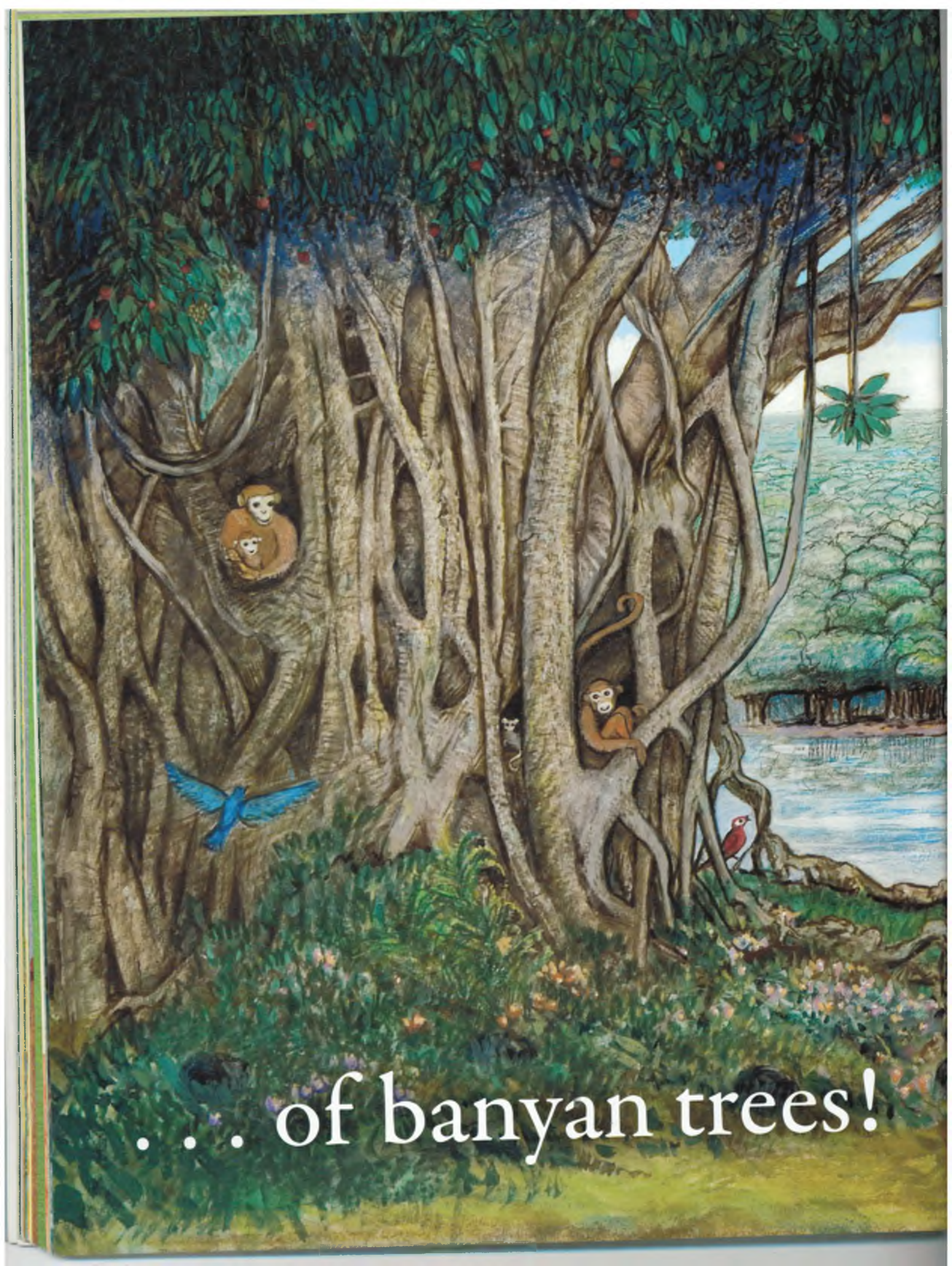




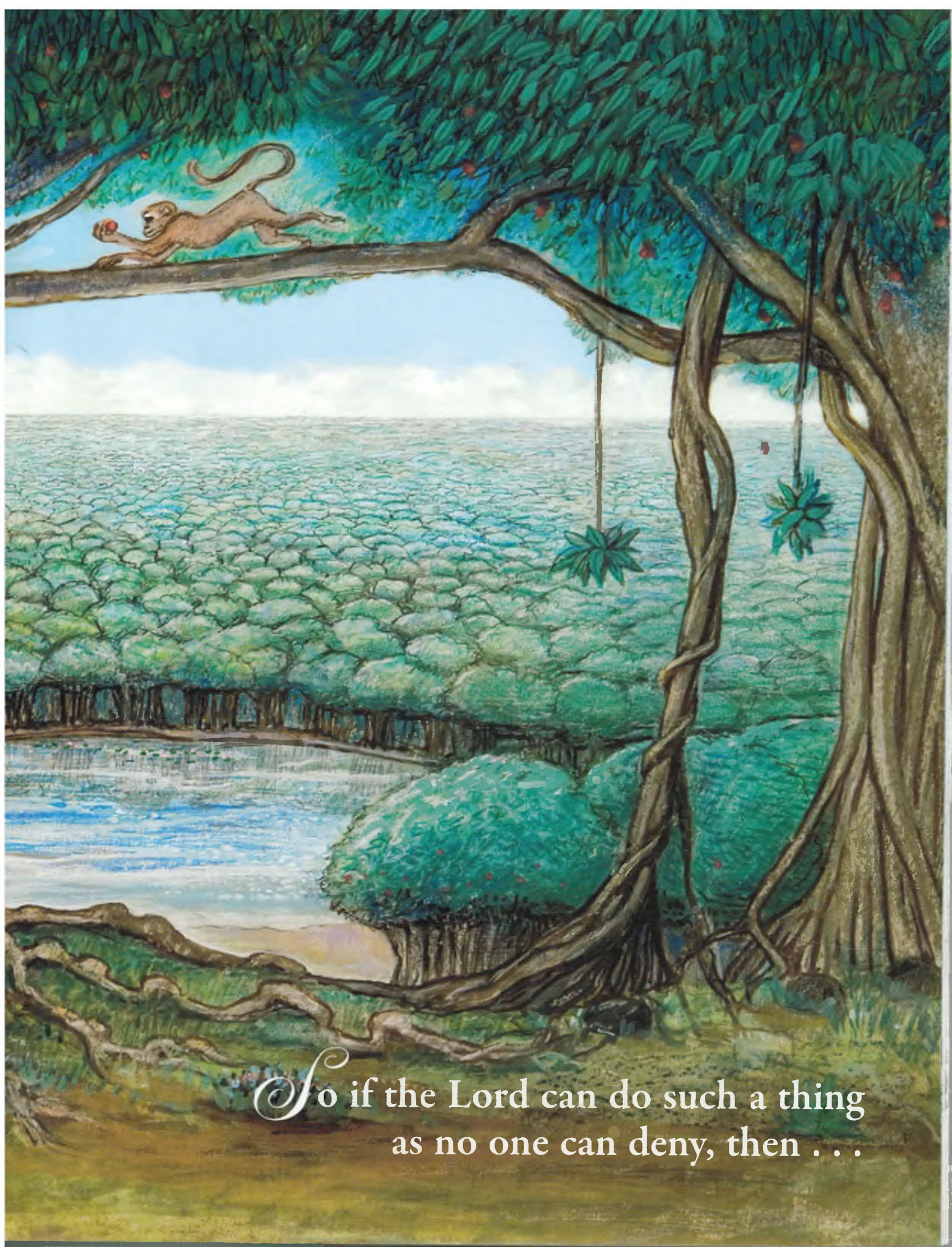


A painting of a vast, cracked, greenish-brown landscape under a cloudy sky. The foreground features a row of trees and a body of water reflecting the scene.

there are thousands
upon thousands
upon thousands . . .

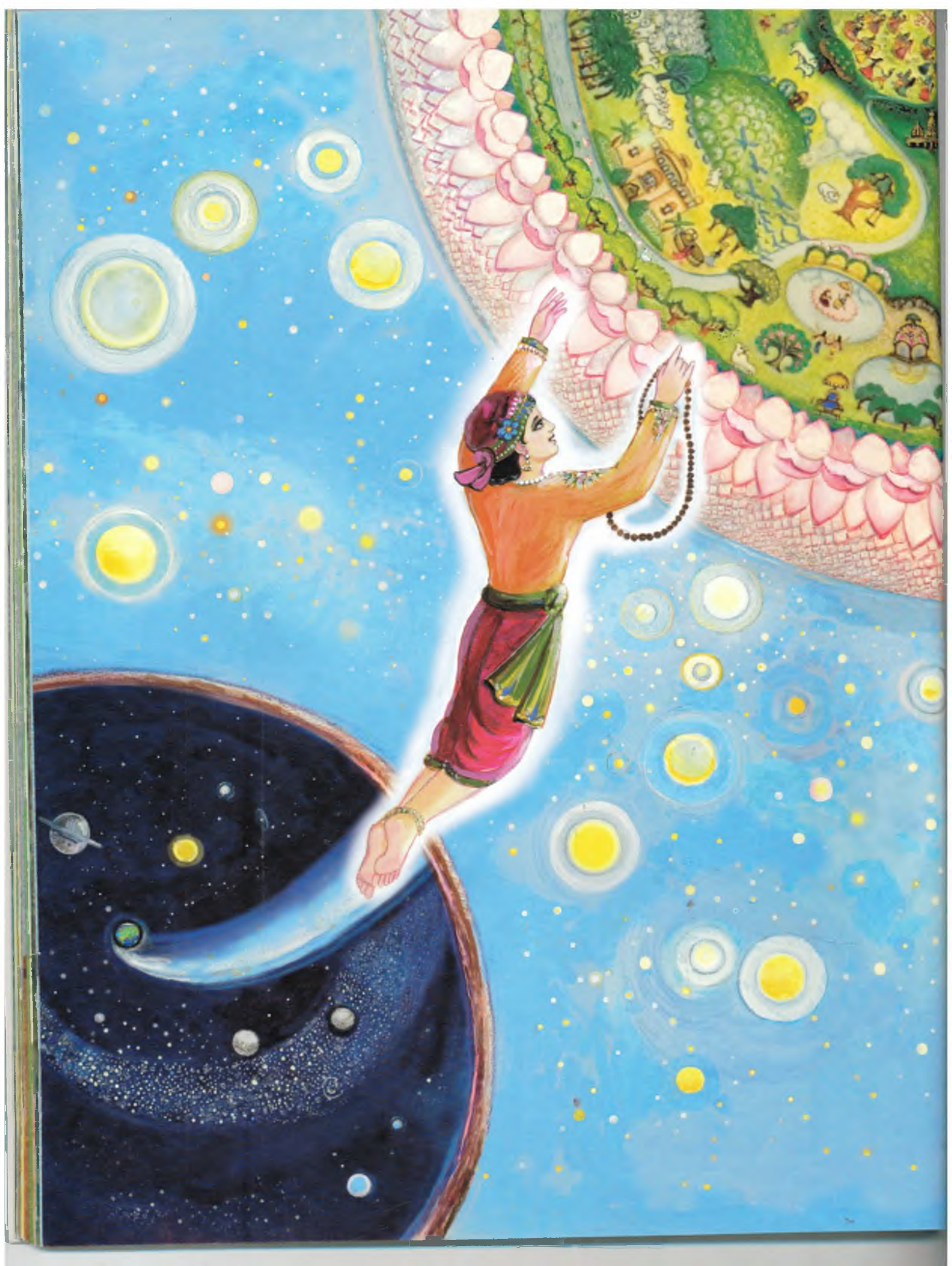


... of banyan trees!



So if the Lord can do such a thing
as no one can deny, then . . .





GLOSSARY

Brahmin (*bra min*)—A person of the priestly class.

Sri Narada Muni (*shree / nah rah dah / moo nee*)—
A pure devotee of the Lord. All great devotees of the Lord all over this universe and in different planets and species of life are his disciples.

Lord Narayan (*nah rye yan*)—A majestic expansion of Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Vaikuntha (*vye koon tah*)—“without anxiety”; eternal, spiritual planets beyond the universe.

RECOMMENDED READING

To explore more about the blissful pastimes of Narada Muni, read *Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead* by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. This 2-volume set is a summary of the Tenth Canto of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, the ripened fruit of the *Vedas*.

“Everyone is looking for KRSNA. Some don’t realize that they are, but they are. I request that you take advantage of the book, Krsna, and enter into its understanding.”—George Harrison, from his introduction

2-volume hardbound set; 750 pages; 82 exquisite full-color illustrations

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NANDAKISOR DAS (Laurence Higgins) joined the Hare Krishna movement at 26 Second Avenue, New York City, in November of 1967. Having heard Srila Prabhupada narrate the story of Narada Muni, the brahmin and the cobbler, he felt inspired to compose the poem which now comprises the text of this book. This and other poems written by him were sent to Srila Prabhupada, who responded, "I thank you very much for your very nice poetry; I am reading it again and again and I shall most probably arrange to publish it." Nandakisor's two full-length dramas, *The Ramayana of Sri Valmiki* and *Yudhisthira, Emperor of Mahabharata*, often performed in the late 1970s and early 1980s, are nearing completion for publication.

JAHNAVA DAS (Joyce Higgins) illustrated one painting for Srila Prabhupada's *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and seven for his *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta*. More recently, she illustrated *The Jaladutta Diary* and *The Beginning*, both published by the BBT Archives. *The Story of Narada Muni, the Brahmin and the Cobbler* is the first book written and illustrated by the husband-wife team.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book would not have been possible without the excellent layout of Yamaraja Das. We heartily thank him for his efforts in making this a first-class presentation. Mr. J. H. Fulcher (Jahnava's father) lent his architectural expertise to several of the drawings. Our twin daughters also assisted—Radha Priya with her drawings of the swan airplanes, and Jaya Radhe with her insightful comments. We also thank Mrkanda, Vani and Kalyani for their fine vocal performances and Bada Haridas for his musical arrangement and engineering. We are indebted to Madhavi and Naveen Krishna Khurana for their ongoing encouragement. We would also like to give special acknowledgement to Allan Chevront of Chevront Studios. And to the many others who also contributed, we thank you all.



*N*arada Muni, the great Vedic sage who freely travels throughout the universe is similarly questioned by a brahmin and a cobbler just before leaving planet Earth. The answer to their inquiry is an amazing surprise.

“What a great book! A delightful and beautifully illustrated classic Krishna story with a universal theme that serves as a reminder to adults as well as children to keep faith and humility in our hearts.”

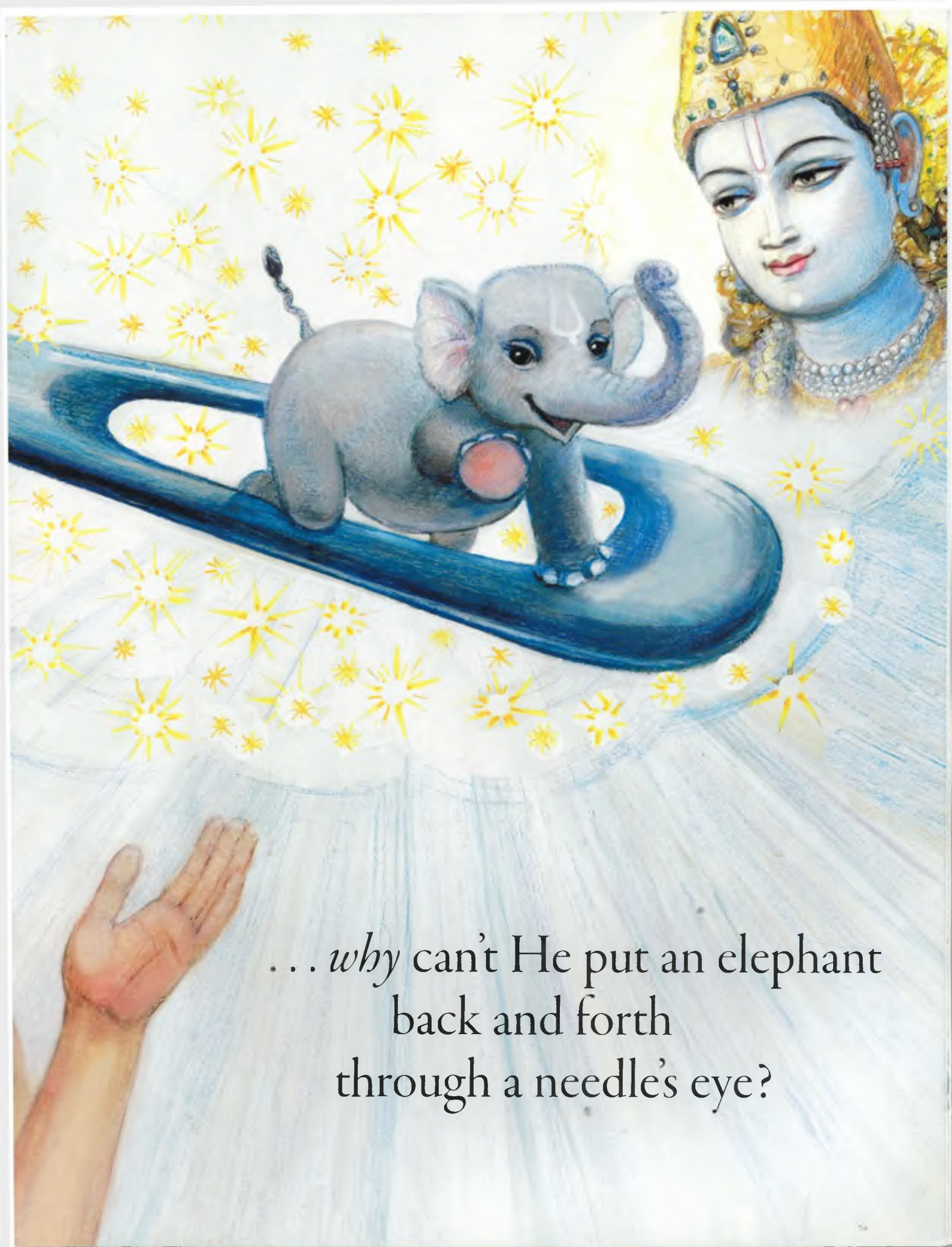
— Allen Rickert, Top Ten Toys, Inc., Seattle, Washington, USA

“A good story is the surest way of reaching the hearts of children. This pastime is such a lovely presentation of the value of faith in a very pleasing and colorful art form.”

— Dr. Gururaj Karajagi, Chairman, Academy for Creative Teaching, Bangalore, India

“This lyrical story from ancient India transports children and their elders into the transcendent realm.”

— Madhu Pandit Dasa, President, ISKCON Bangalore



... *why* can't He put an elephant
back and forth
through a needle's eye?