



# THE RAMAYANA

CREATED BY PATRICK HALE AND AVI RATHNAKUMAR  
MINI-SERIES | THREE ONE-HOUR EPISODES





**"There is no deity so powerful as time."**  
*Maharishi Valmiki*



## LOGLINE

While celebrating Diwali- A modern Indian family is drawn into a blizzard when an accident sends a young girl on a journey that parallels an epic Ramayana retelling, where duty, courage, and redemption weave through time.





## OVERVIEW

The series merges myth with modernity, portraying how ancient tales of duty, family bonds, and heroism continue to resonate. The Ramayana scenes enrich the Kumar family's journey, casting light on themes of courage, redemption, and the timeless impact of storytelling across generations.

This dual narrative allows audiences to see how the profound lessons from the Ramayana apply within a contemporary family context, offering a fresh perspective on the age-old epic.





## THE SHOW

As an extended Indian family gathers to celebrate Diwali, a power outage threatens to dim the evening's festivities. To keep spirits bright, the family patriarch, Dadaji, proposes a storytelling session where they recount the tales of the Ramayana, each family member offering a part of the tale and relating it to contemporary life.

These stories, from Rama's exile to the epic battle against Ravana, become a canvas for family members to impart lessons about sacrifice, alliances, and the triumph of good over evil, connecting historical narratives to their children's modern experiences. As Dadaji and others share stories, the family explores themes of trust, courage, and perseverance, ending the evening with a revived sense of cultural identity and connectedness.





## SERIES THEME

The overall theme of the mini-series is the interplay between legacy and redemption. It explores how ancient myths, like the Ramayana, resonate with contemporary experiences to address familial bonds, personal growth, and the enduring power of storytelling. Through the trials faced by both the modern-day family and the characters from the Ramayana, the narrative underscores the importance of confronting one's past, embracing the truth, and finding redemption and healing within familial relationships.

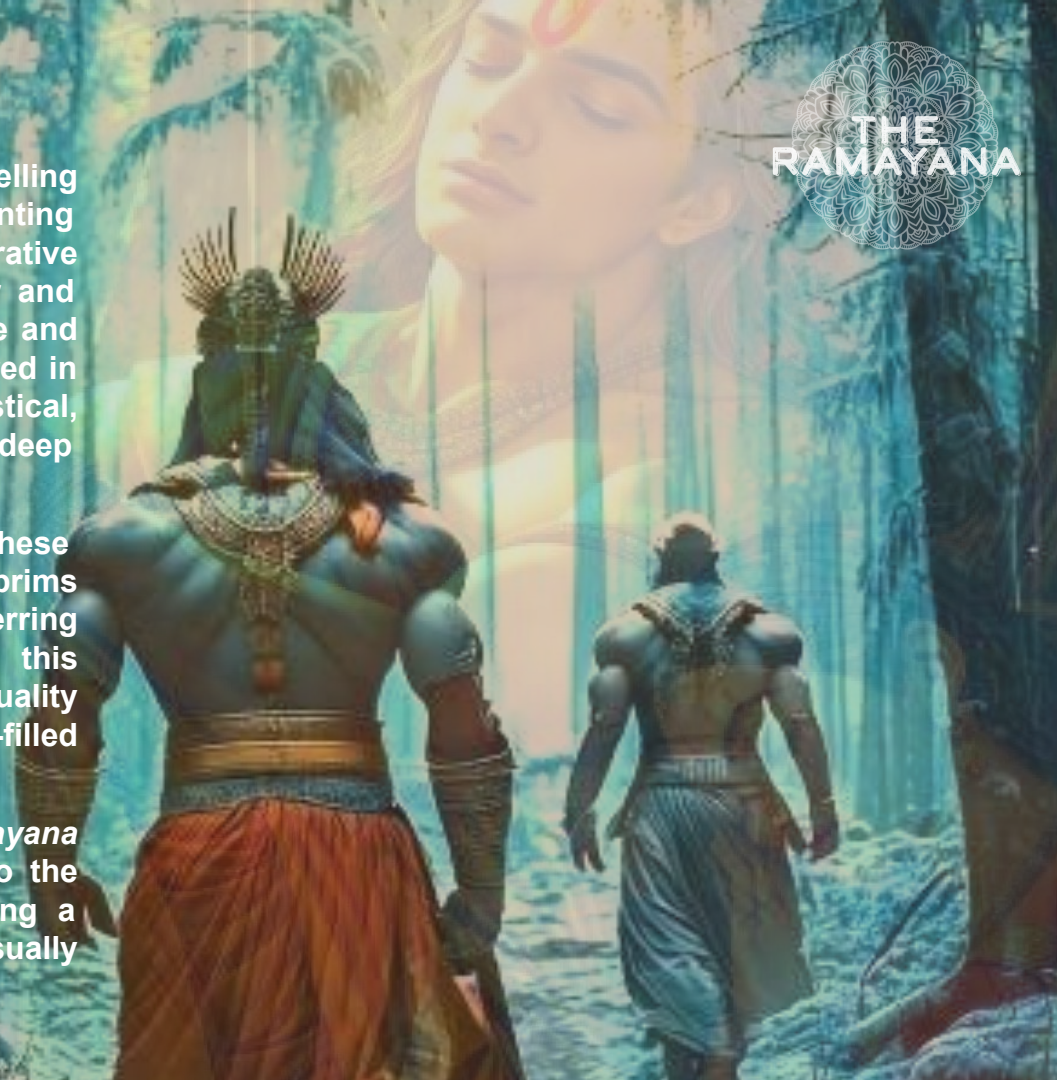


# CREATION

Imagine the visual grandeur and imaginative storytelling of *The Fall*, where each frame is a masterful painting brought to life; the whimsical charm and clever narrative construction of *The Princess Bride*, where humor and heart create an enduring adventure; the epic scope and mythic resonance of *The Lord of the Rings*, anchored in a world rich with lore and landscapes; and the mystical, otherworldly allure of *The Dark Crystal*, where deep history and tangible magic intertwine.

With *The Ramayana*, we aspire to integrate these powerful elements into a live-action series that brims with tangible magic and heartfelt adventure. Preferring the tactile realism of practical effects over CGI, this approach enriches the storytelling with a palpable quality that draws viewers into an inviting, enchantment-filled universe.

Through this blend of craft and narrative, *The Ramayana* aspires to be not just a series but a testament to the delicate balance of art and technology, celebrating a visual and emotional journey as impactful as it is visually stunning.







## TONE

In crafting *The Ramayana*, our intent is to explore the rich tapestry through a kaleidoscope of perspectives, each offering a unique narrative lens that enhances the storytelling experience.

The tale of Sita's poignant ascension to heaven and her enduring love for Rama will unfold through the graceful narration of the family's aunt, whose feminine insights and empathetic reflections imbue the storytelling with a lyrical, timeless quality. Her perspective invites the audience into a world where the emotional nuances of love and devotion are pivotal, accentuating the oral tradition of the Ramayana with graceful visual storytelling that echoes feminine wisdom.



# TONE

*Cont...*

In contrast, the grandfather's recounting of the story bears the hallmark of his elder view—rich in experience and perhaps peppered with humor that leans toward the racy, making it notably entertaining yet insightful for the older audience. It reflects his worldly understanding and aligns with visual sensibilities that favor a story well-told through the lens of time-tested camaraderie and understated audacity.

Meanwhile, the cousin offers an invigorating, action-packed account of heroism that highlights the grand adventures within the Ramayana. His dynamic narrative style will be visually underscored by scenes of valor and bravery, capturing the thrill and daring more attuned to a spirited youth's perspective.

By weaving together these distinct narrative approaches, we aim to create a multi-faceted rendition of the Ramayana that resonates with viewers of all ages. The layered storytelling not only honors the diversity within family dynamics but also enriches the traditional epic with varied interpretations that engage and entertain a broad audience.







## CHARACTER DYNAMICS

The character dynamics are intricately linked, reflecting both contemporary and mythological relationships. In the modern storyline, Avi, burdened by guilt from the car accident, finds guidance and support from Sita, whose curiosity leads her toward understanding their family's hidden past. Priya injects humor and tension, often unveiling deeper truths, while David and Ayesha offer loyal assistance, much like Lakshmana's devotion to Rama. Naveed inhabits the role of Ravana- a cunning warrior bent on Rama and Sita's downfall.

These interactions parallel the Ramayana's narrative, where Rama and Sita's steadfast partnership is echoed in Avi and Sita's shared journey. Ravi, embodying the challenges they face, mirrors Ravana's formidable presence. Ayesha and Aunt Leela's wisdom and guidance resemble Shanta and Shabari's roles, fostering familial bonds. Collectively, these dynamics highlight themes of redemption, familial duty, and the strength drawn from unity and understanding.







## LEGACY OF LIGHT

The show opens shortly after Avi accidentally runs over a deer with his father's new car- setting off a mysterious chain of events. Sita, worried for the deer's safety, gathers family members to investigate the woods. Priya light-heartedly teases Sita, while David and Ayesha assist in her rescue mission.

The episode cuts to Lord Vishnu transforming into Rama, setting the scene for his earthly avatar alongside his wife Sita (who parallels young Sita in the modern story), illustrating their divine mission. The symbolic importance of the deer in Ramayana (Maricha as the golden deer) layers meaning over Avi's incident.

After the power is restored, the parents realize the children are missing and mount a rescue mission in the blizzard. Upon finding the kids, the family is overjoyed and the parallels between the Ramayana and the events that take place become clear.

# EPISODE 1





## GATHERING AND DARKNESS

The Kumar family begins to arrive at the large family estate to celebrate Diwali. It's revealed that Avi has gotten into an accident involving his father's car and a deer. Sita overhears the conversation between Avi and her grandfather as they try to hide the evidence to wait for a better opportunity to tell Avi's father about the accident. Sita, worrying for the life of the wounded deer, tries to enlist help from her visiting family.

The scene transitions to Lord Vishnu becoming Rama, setting the stage with Sita, reflecting their divine purpose and an exciting archery contest ensues in which Rama manages to pull the string on a divine bow, wooing Sita and causing jealousy to eat at the divine family.

# ACT ONE







# ACT TWO

## THE TALES BEGIN

Avi faces guilt whilst trying to remain calm and collected around his domineering father. Sita begins to build a *coalition of the willing* amongst her cousins Ayesha and David while her brother Naveed attempts to sabotage her plans.

We transition to Rama and Sita preparing to leave for the forest after being dismissed by Rama's father- echoing Sita's journey of discovery and Avi's sense of responsibility.





## A LIGHT RESOLUTION

Sita encounters her older sister Priya who encourages her misguided search for the missing deer. With Sita and her companions, Ayesha and David, she embarks on a mission into the woods. Avi discovers that Sita, David and Ayesha have slipped out of the oral retelling of the Ramayana that the elders have put on during the power outage and leaves to find them.

Shanta (Ayesha), in the Ramayana, preps to leave her home, symbolizing familial support as she offers her blessing to Rama and Sita- who are now banished to the woods due to family infighting. As the power is restored Naveed reveals to the parents of the missing children. They mount a rescue mission and discover them in a wintry forest on their vast property. The episode concludes with an ominous weather report that warns of record snowfall.

# ACT THREE



# WHISPERS IN THE SNOW

Sita and Avi bond over the shared grief of the wounded deer while Priya and Naveed tease them- spinning wild tales about its plight. Avi struggles with the guilt of the deer and the car which is only exacerbated by the snowfall- prolonging the reveal to his father about the incident and placing pressure on his grandfather to find a workable outcome to the situation.

The kind Aunt Leela recounts Sita's adventures from the Ramayana- exposing a more feminine point of view of the enduring trials with Rama, reflecting the modern Sita's quest. Lakshmana's loyalty and protective nature towards Sita and Rama reinforce the themes of family support and duty. David's loyalty is questioned, split between his sister and his friend and cousin Naveed (Ravana).

Akin to their mythological counterparts, Ayesha guides our modern Sita with wisdom from the Ramayana recounting the passage on grief- a lesson her mother, Aunt Leela- a passage she has recited in the past. Hanuman's (David) loyalty to Rama is tested as they journey together in search of Sita.



## EPISODE 2





## WAKING TO WINTER

Sita and Avi find themselves bonding over the shared grief of the wounded deer. This incident becomes a focal point for both emotional connection and internal conflict, as Avi struggles with the guilt associated with the deer and the car accident. Priya and Naveed add teenage sarcasm to the moment by teasing them with stories about the deer's plight. Meanwhile, the snowfall exacerbates Avi's reluctance to confess the truth to his father, increasing the pressure on his grandfather to resolve the situation diplomatically.

Aunt Leela shares stories of the Ramayana, focusing on Sita's enduring trials and offering a feminine perspective on her journey with Rama. This narrative emphasizes Sita's resilience and spirit, drawing parallels to the modern Sita's journey towards self-discovery and strength.

# ACT ONE





AVINASH  
(with measuring tape)  
I don't believe you-  
(unrolls tape)  
No way old man.

DADJI  
(bragging)  
Back In India-  
(puffs chest)  
- Like *Hanuman*, my  
leg size was legendary.

AVINASH  
I know I will regret this, but-  
- You do have nice legs, Dadji!

DADJI  
(bragging)  
I was the fastest man in  
all of India.

# ACT TWO

## TALES WITHIN AND WITHOUT

Avi's internal struggle intensifies as he grapples with guilt, yet he finds a sense of solace in the support from Sita and his grandfather. The snowfall serves as a physical and metaphorical barrier, delaying his confession and building tension within the family. Meanwhile, David's loyalty is tested as he navigates his allegiances split between his sister Sita and his friend, cousin Navi.

The story shifts to Lakshmana's unwavering dedication to Sita and Rama during their exile, highlighting family loyalty and duty. Similarly, Hanuman's (David's) loyalty to Rama (Avi) faces trials as they set off on their quest to find Sita. This reinforces the importance of steadfast support and the bonds that keep a family united in times of crisis.





## REVELATION & RESILIENCE

Guided by Aunt Leela's recounting of the Ramayana, Ayesha becomes a source of wisdom for Sita, sharing insights on dealing with grief and familial challenges. These lessons offer Sita the strength to reinterpret her role within her family, embracing her heritage. David ultimately has to confront his loyalty, paralleling Hanuman's legendary devotion.

Ayesha's guidance is mirrored by ancient teachings as she draws from the Ramayana, specifically recounting passages on grief that relate closely to Sita's (modern and ancient) journey. Hanuman's journey with Rama mirrors David's path, with both finding their own faith and dedication tested but ultimately reaffirmed through their actions and choices.

# ACT THREE





## ***VOICES OF HOME***

In the concluding episode, the Kumar family must come to terms with the events set in motion by the deer accident. As the mythical past and modern present converge, each member of the family discovers their role within this larger narrative.

Through heartfelt conversations rather than a frantic search, they unveil profound insights into loyalty, strength, and forgiveness. The episode culminates in a symbolic encounter with the deer, representing survival and continuity, and bringing closure to their journey.

# **EPISODE 3**





## MORNING STILLNESS

This act becomes a moment of vulnerability and honesty as each family member shares their feelings and perspectives on the events that transpired.

With the blizzard still raging outside, the Kumars find themselves gathered around the warmth of their living room, engaging in an open dialogue about the past few days. Avi, feeling the weight of his guilt, initiates a discussion about the accident.

Aunt Leela weaves in tales from the Ramayana, sharing the moment Hanuman discovers Sita's plight in Lanka. This story parallels the modern Sita's journey and the family's introspection, emphasizing the importance of compassion, insight, and trust even in the midst of adversity.

# ACT ONE





DADAJI  
(brushing snow from  
Avi's shoulder)  
Sculptor and statue alike,  
all are molded by those who  
came before- Just as you see  
before you- One cannot go  
against the word of god.

AVINASH  
Yeah, they broke the mold with  
you...

(sarcastic)  
And the best parts leaked out  
on the floor.

SITA  
(pats Dadji's back)  
They must have had a good mop.

## REDISCOVERING ROOTS

The family's conversation deepens as they reflect on loyalty and support. David articulates his internal conflict and divided loyalties, finding resolve in the strength of family bonds. The family collectively realizes that, rather than seeking the deer physically, they must confront their internal struggles. Ayesha adds her voice to the dialogue, sharing wisdom from Ramayana about overcoming fear and finding inner peace.

The narrative shifts to the epic battle between Rama and Ravana, illustrating themes of righteousness and justice. Hanuman's task to bring back the life-saving herb underscores themes of rescue and healing, metaphorically representing the family's journey to find peace and forgiveness. David's journey mirrors Hanuman's, as he finds solidarity and purpose within his family.

# ACT TWO





## NEW BONDS & BEGINNINGS

The family's heartfelt exchanges lead to a cathartic release, washing away guilt and misunderstanding. As dawn breaks, the family steps outside, where they are greeted by the serene sight of the deer in the distance—a powerful symbol of survival, renewal, and the restoration of balance in their lives.

The episode's conclusion aligns with Rama's triumphant victory over Ravana, a testament to the victory of good over evil. Hanuman's successful quest, returning with the mountain and herb, stands as a testament to healing and renewal. This mirrors the Kumars' reconciliation and renewed understanding, epitomizing loyalty, unity, and hope.

# ACT THREE



## SERIES CONCLUSION

The Kumar family, standing together in the fresh morning light, feels a renewed sense of connection and purpose. Reflecting on the timeless lessons drawn from their experiences and the tales of the Ramayana, they embrace the familial bond that has grown stronger than ever. The sight of the deer gives them a sense of closure, symbolizing the continuous cycle of life, learning, and family. With hearts full of gratitude, the Kumars step into their future, fortified by the past and ready for whatever comes next.





## Sita Kumar (8)

**DAUGHTER** | A precocious, inquisitive, and smart young girl who sees the world through a lens of wonder and adventure. Her innocence and playful curiosity draw the family together, echoing her namesake with grace and courage.

Sita grows from a mischievous child into a perceptive participant of her familial legacy, using storytelling and symbolism from the Ramayana to understand her role and deep connections.





## Avi Kumar (15)

*COUSIN* | A confident, occasionally overconfident teenager with a penchant for humor and snacks. He embodies the reluctant hero archetype, initially uninterested but growing into a protector role.

Avi's journey is from apathy to responsibility as he learns through humorous yet significant experiences how his actions impact those around him, gradually embracing his metaphorical 'prince' duties.

Actor Suggestion: Sunny Suljic ("Mid90s")



## Aunt Leela (50s)

**AUNT** | A nurturing storyteller with a sparkle in her eye, Aunt Leela bridges tradition and imagination through her captivating tales. Her wisdom offers both comfort and inspiration to her listeners, making her an integral part of the household.

Reflecting the sage wisdom of Vishvamitra from the Ramayana, Aunt Leela remains a steadfast figure of guidance. Her stories ignite the adventurous spirit in Ayesha and Sita, revealing deeper truths and shaping their paths.

**Actor Suggestion:** Tabu ("The Namesake")





## Dadaji Kumar (70+)

**GRANDFATHER** | The wise, warm-hearted, humorous patriarch of the family, bridging generations with stories rich in tradition and insight. His vibrant tales hold the family spellbound.

Dadaji stays largely unchanged, acting as the pillar of wisdom. His storytelling ignites curiosity and imparts timeless lessons, emphasizing familial bonds and cultural heritage. He embodies Brihaspati, the divine teacher who imparts wisdom and maintains balance.

**Actor Suggestion:** Anupam Kher ("The Big Sick")



## Ayesha (8)

**COUSIN** | A bubbly and imaginative child, Ayesha's curiosity lights up her world and those around her. With her trusty sketchbook in hand, she captures her vibrant imagination and empathy in playful yet profound ways, bridging the ordinary with the extraordinary.

Inspired by Shanta from the Ramayana, Ayesha starts off as a whimsical explorer but grows into a secret keeper and guide, bringing unexpected wisdom and insight to her friends, especially Sita, as they uncover hidden truths.




## David Kumar (14)

**COUSIN** | Avi's loyal sidekick and cousin, quieter but observant, often the voice of reason amidst whimsical chaos. He shares a close bond with Avi, supportive yet individual in thought.

David evolves from simply following along to actively shaping their adventures, embodying Lakshmana's spirit courage, and Hanuman's loyalty- growing confident in his own voice.





## Priya Kumar (13)

**SISTER** | Older sister and mischievous, sending her sister out to find the reindeer. She eventually proves to be a good sister by spearheading the search.

Priya evolves from actively shaping Sita's adventures, to helping guide her through them. She embodies Surpanakha, who told Lord Rama about Sita's beauty and whereabouts, therefore banishing her from the Kingdom to the surrounding forest.



## Naveed Kumar (15)

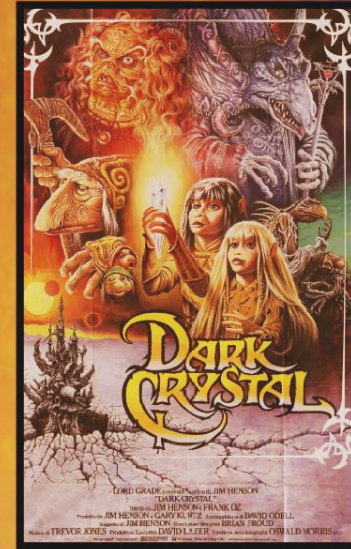
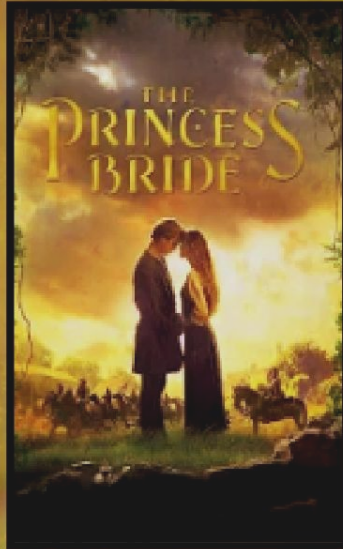
**BROTHER** | The family's charismatic prankster, often getting himself into trouble. His light-hearted antics provide comic relief, but under the surface, he's navigating his own path to maturity.

Naveed moves from playful mischief-maker to a more mature figure, using the metaphor of Ravana to understand the consequences of his actions and learning empathy and responsibility.

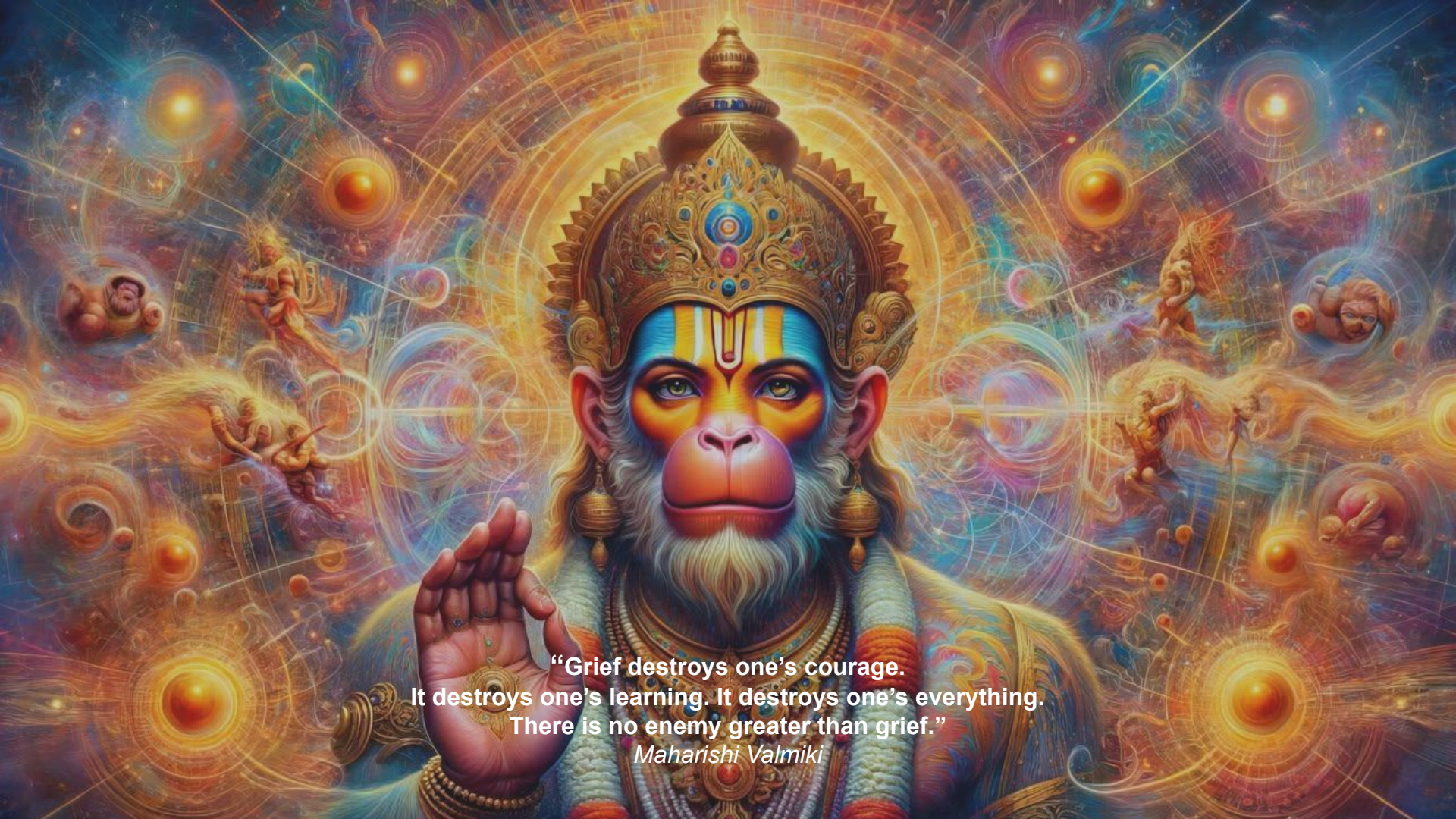
Actor Suggestion: Jack Dylan Grazer ("It")



# COMPS







“Grief destroys one’s courage.  
It destroys one’s learning. It destroys one’s everything.  
There is no enemy greater than grief.”

*Maharishi Valmiki*





# THE RAMAYANA

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