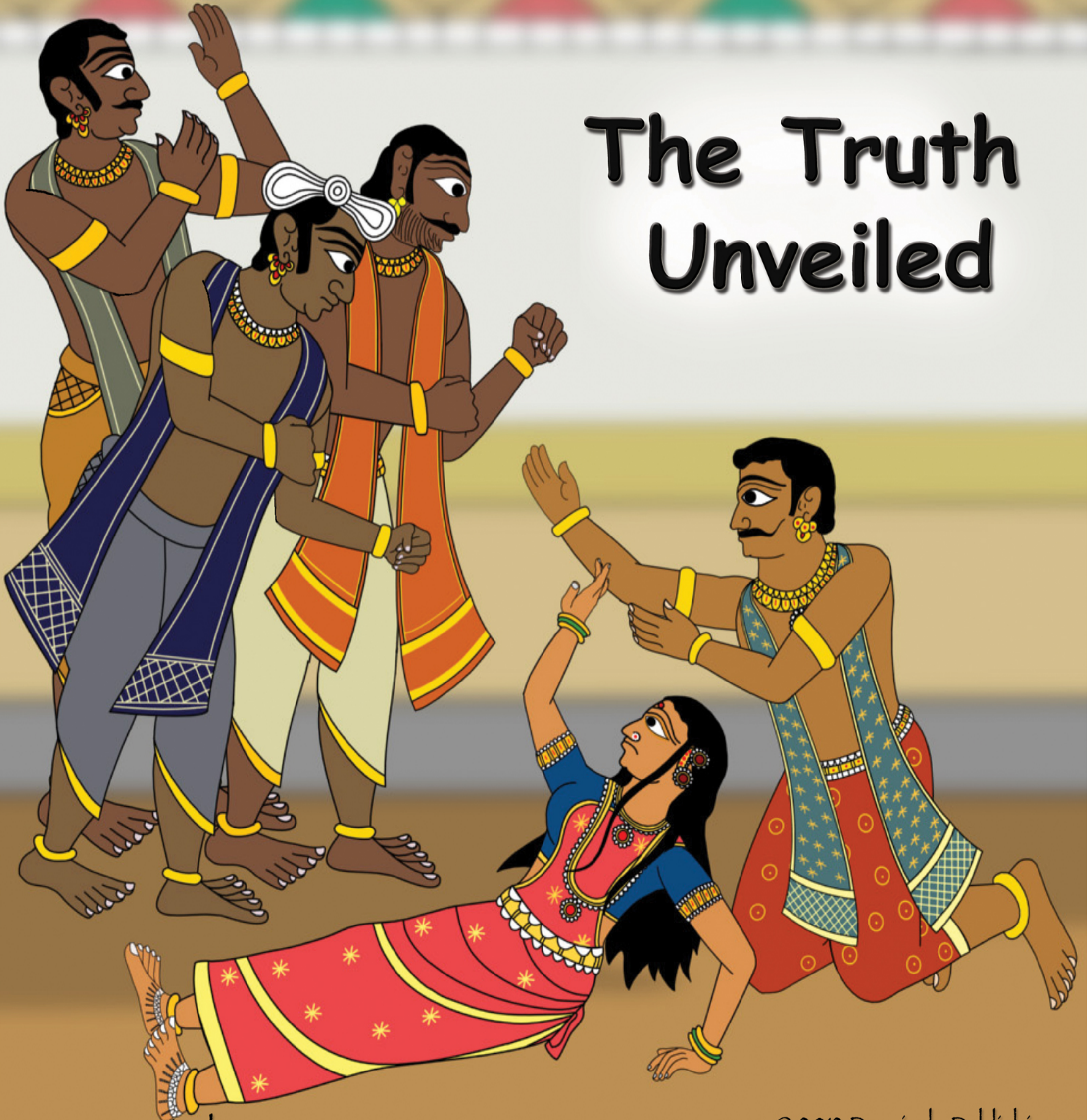


Series 2
Book 2

The Legend of
Ponnivala



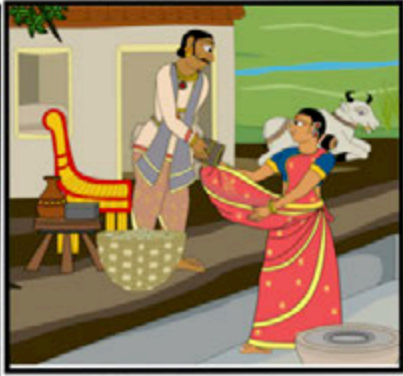
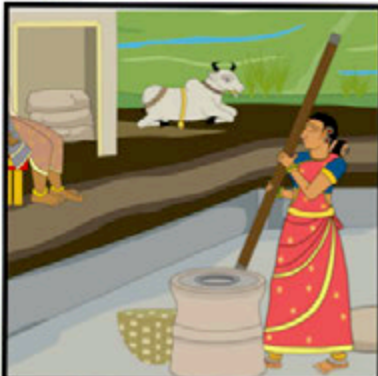
The Truth Unveiled



The Legend of Ponnivala

THE TRUTH UNVEILED SERIES 2 COMIC 2

FAMILY CLANSMEN ATTACK THE PONNIVALA PALACE, SENDING THE KING, QUEEN AND THEIR BABY DAUGHTER INTO EXILE. THE COUPLE FLEE TO THE FOREST AND END UP LIVING IN A HUMBLE HUT. THE QUEEN HAS TO WORK TO FEED HER SUFFERING FAMILY. BUT A SURPRISE IS IN STORE WHEN TWO SONS THEY DON'T KNOW THEY HAVE, START ASKING THE LOCAL GODDESS ABOUT THEIR TRUE PARENTS



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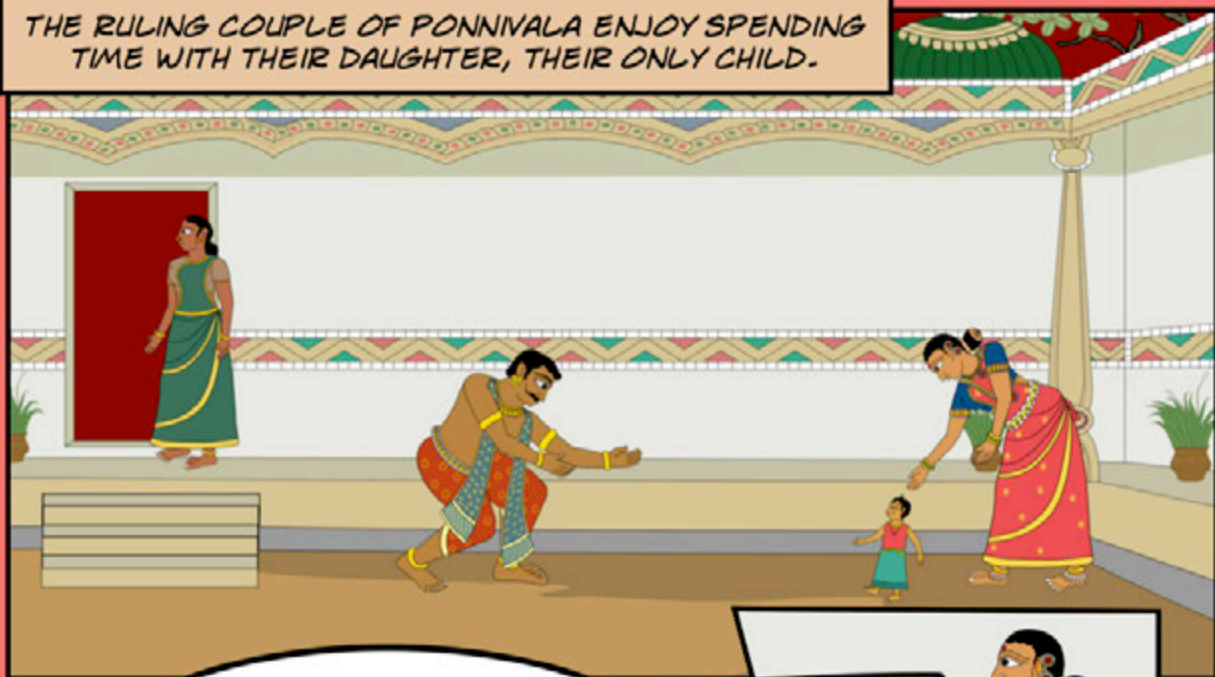
LORD SHIVA
PROMISED ME TWO
MALE HEIRS...INSTEAD, I HAVE GIVEN
BIRTH TO JUST ONE DAUGHTER! WHAT
COULD HAVE GONE WRONG?

MY HUSBAND IS RESIGNED
TO RAISING TANGAL WELL, AND
TREATING HER AS THOUGH SHE WILL
INHERIT ALL OF PONNIVALA. BUT HOW
CAN THESE LANDS STAY IN OUR FAMILY
LINE, IF WE HAVE NO SONS?

OUR ANIMALS HAVE GIVEN
BIRTH AND PROSPERED NICELY.
WHY DID MY GIFT FROM LORD SHIVA
FAIL TO YIELD SONS?



THE RULING COUPLE OF PONNIVALA ENJOY SPENDING TIME WITH THEIR DAUGHTER, THEIR ONLY CHILD.



LORD! IT IS AN AUSPICIOUS FRIDAY. LET US TAKE OUR BABY DAUGHTER TO THE GANESH TEMPLE.



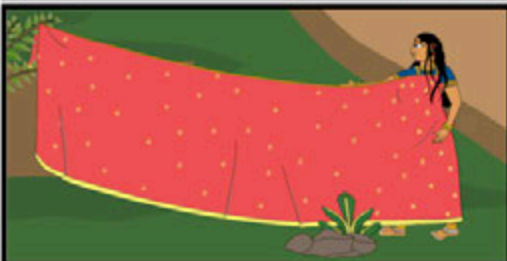
FROM THERE, WE CAN GO TO THE TEMPLE OF OUR FAMILY GODDESS!

OK, WIFE! LET'S BATHE AND THEN VISIT THESE TEMPLES TOGETHER.



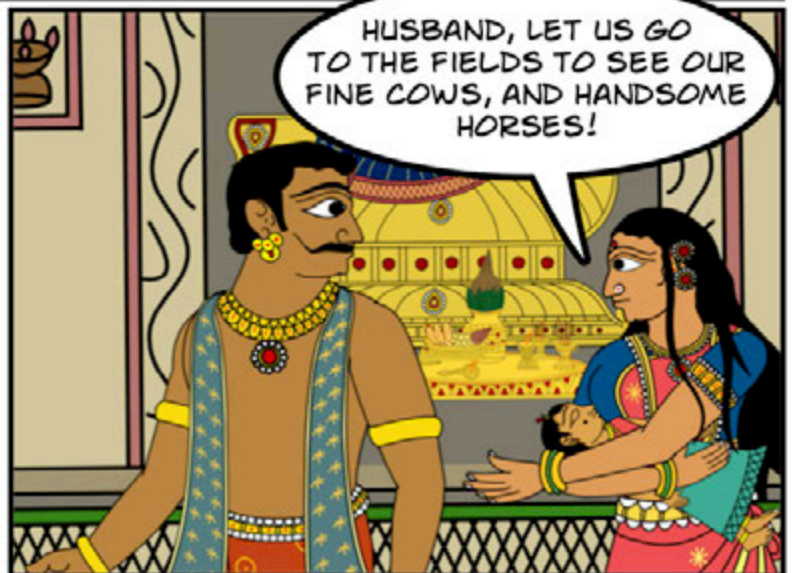


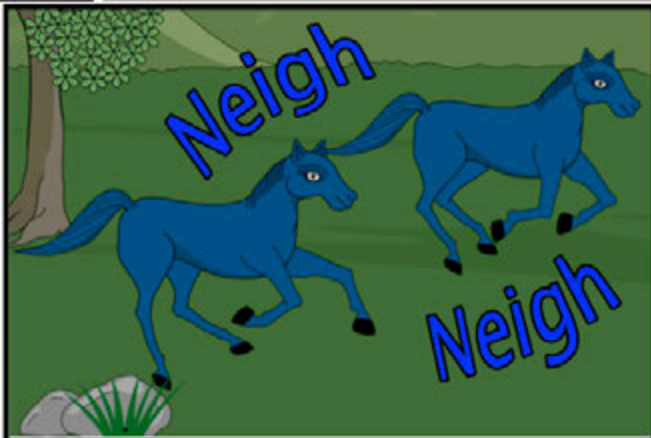
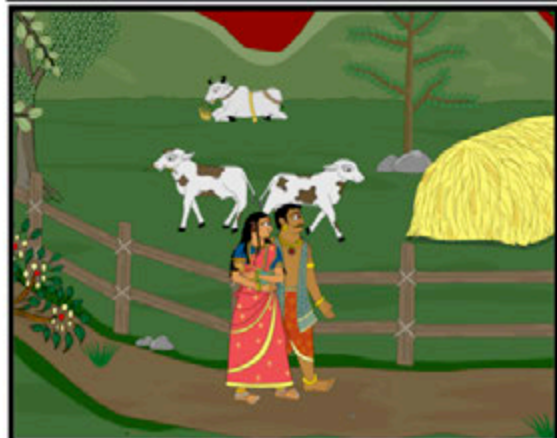
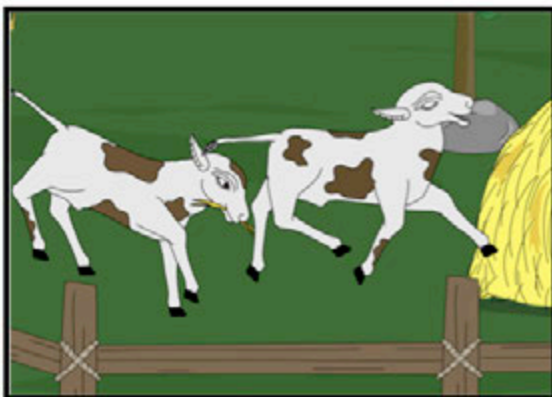
THE FAMILY GOES TO THE RIVER TO BATHE. TAMARAI DRIES HER SARI ON A TREE, WHILE TANGAL PLAYS NEARBY. SOON THEY SET OUT FOR THE TWO TEMPLES.





THE COUPLE PAY THEIR RESPECTS AT THE GANESH TEMPLE. THEN THEY GO TO CELATTA'S SHRINE. SHE IS THEIR FAMILY GODDESS. KING KUNNUTAIYA SETS TANGAL DOWN IN FRONT OF THE DIVINE LADY AND OFFERS HER A SHORT PUJA AS WELL. THEN QUEEN TAMARAI MAKES ANOTHER SUGGESTION.





The Legend of Ponnivala





THE COUPLE HEAD INTO THE VILLAGE, AND GO STRAIGHT TO HER HOUSE



LORD SHIVA'S GIFT WAS VERY PRODUCTIVE FOR THIS WOMAN! LOOK HOW STRONG AND HEALTHY HER SON IS!



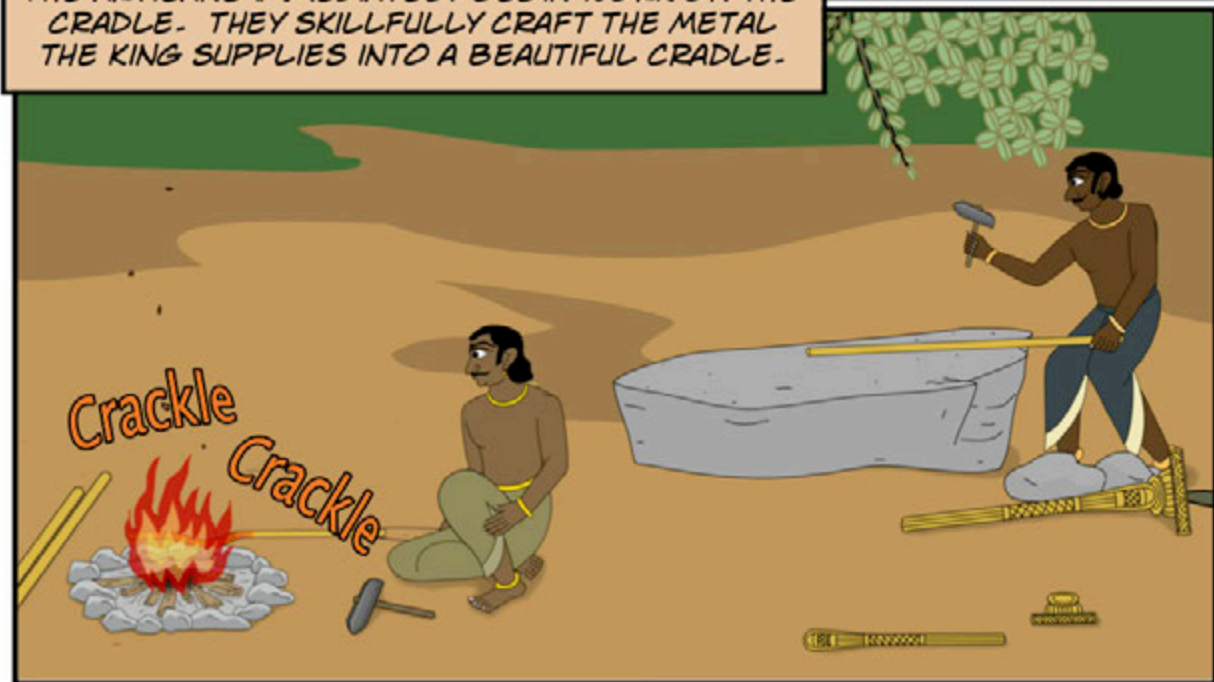
AS SOON AS HE BECOMES A MAN, I MUST APPOINT HIM AS OUR PALACE GUARD!

THE COUPLE RETURN HOME, AND EAT A FINE MEAL. THEN THEY SIT DOWN AND TALK.





THE ARTISANS IMMEDIATELY BEGIN WORK ON THE CRADLE. THEY SKILLFULLY CRAFT THE METAL THE KING SUPPLIES INTO A BEAUTIFUL CRADLE.





THE ARTISANS HANG THE CRADLE, AND ARE PAID FOR THEIR WORK. ONCE THEY HAVE LEFT, TAMARAI PLACES THE LITTLE GIRL IN HER NEW BED.



MEANWHILE, IN TANGAVALA, THE CLANSMEN OF KING KUNNUTAIYA ARE HAVING A MEETING. THEY SOON DEVISE A NASTY PLOT TO STEAL THE LANDS OF PONNIVALA FROM ITS RIGHTFUL RULERS!

OH FINE BROTHERS! HAS ONE MAN FROM EVERY HOUSEHOLD COME?

YES, WE ARE ALL HERE!

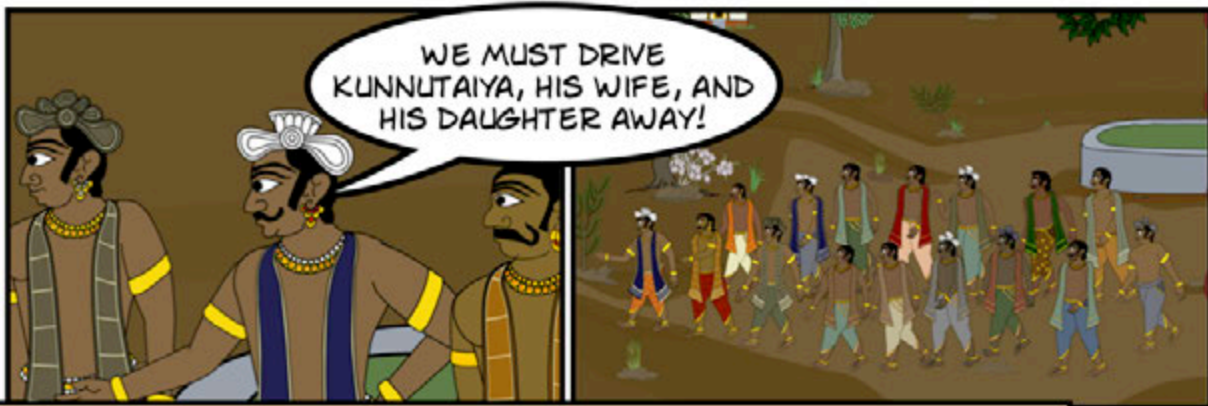
GOOD! YOU ALL KNOW THAT TAMARAI AND KUNNUTAIYA RETURNED A WHILE BACK FROM A TWENTY-ONE YEAR PILGRIMAGE TO THE GATES OF HEAVEN.

LORD SHIVA PROMISED THEM A GIFT, AND AS A RESULT, A BABY GIRL WAS BORN TO THEM!

THE WEALTH OF PONNIVALA IS IN DANGER OF PASSING INTO THE HANDS OF A STRANGER!

THE KING WANTS A SON-IN-LAW THAT WILL LIVE IN THE PALACE AND INHERIT THOSE FINE LANDS. BECAUSE THERE IS NO SON THERE IS TALK THAT THE COUPLE WILL EVENTUALLY WED THIS GIRL WITHIN PONNIVALA ITSELF!

WE MUST SEIZE THOSE LANDS BEFORE THIS HAPPENS!

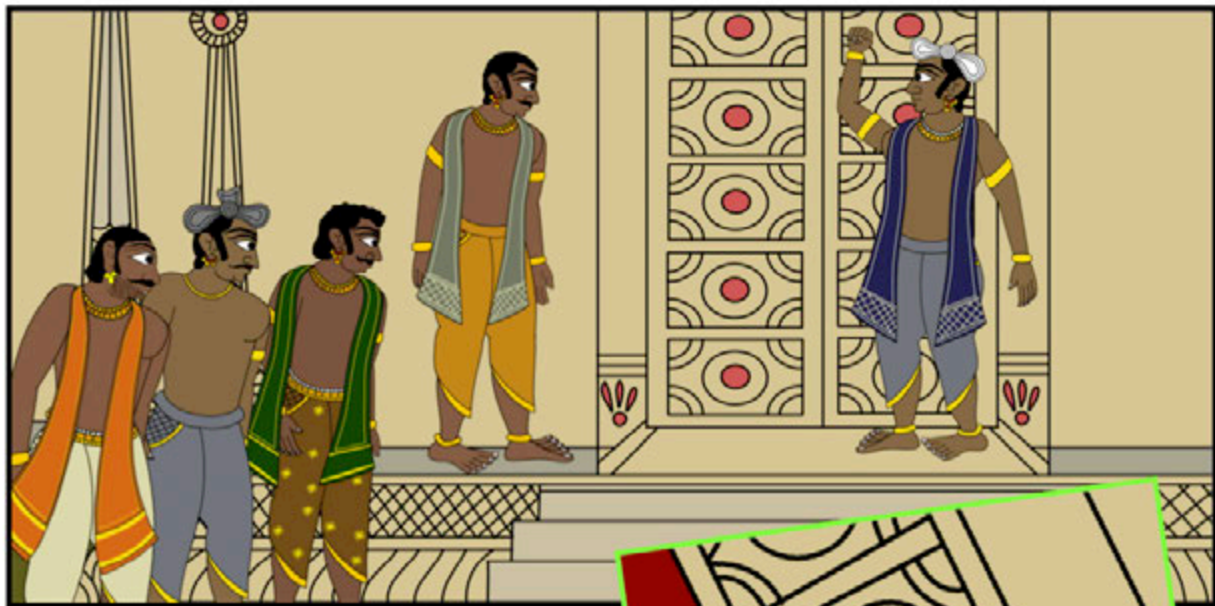


THE CLANSMEN SET OFF FOR PONNIVALA. THEY WALK QUICKLY, AND SOON REACH THE GANESH TEMPLE IN PONNIVALA.



A SMALL GROUP OF MEN SET OFF FOR THE PALACE.



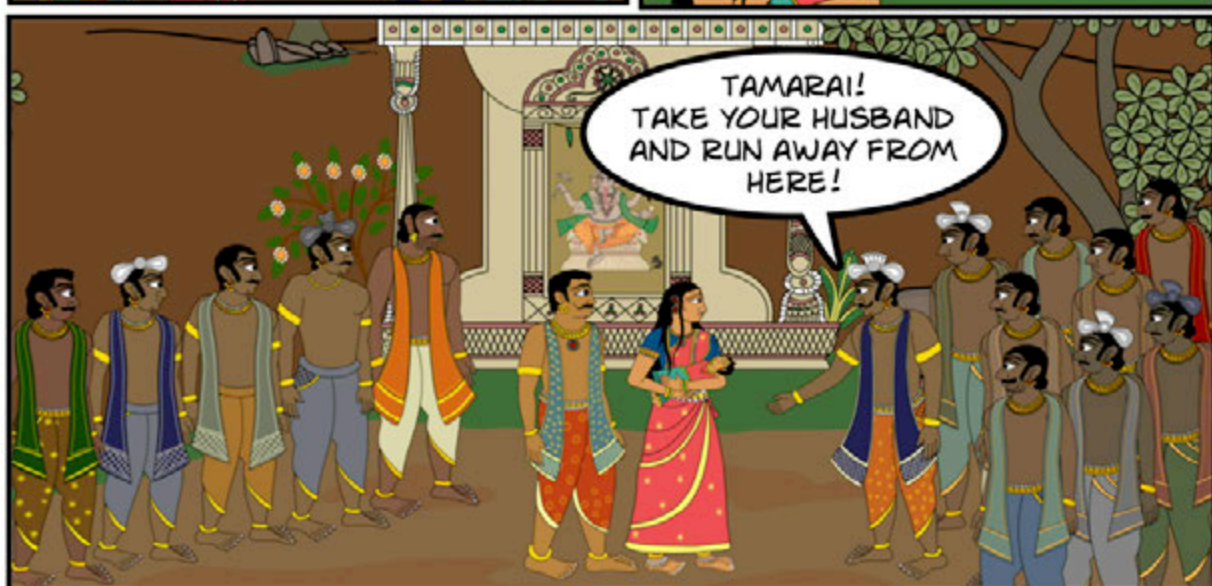
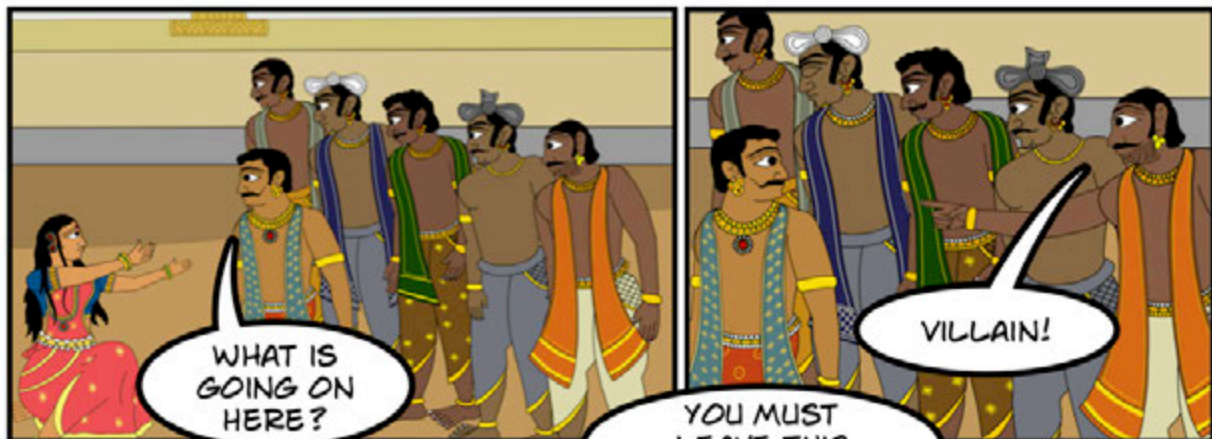


BANG!

SMASH!

THE CLANSMEN KICK OPEN THE DOOR, THEN CHARGE INTO THE PALACE. A MAID DROPS HER POT IN FRIGHT.







LORD VISHNU HEARS TAMARAI'S PRAYERS, AND SENDS DOWN A SWARM OF MAGICAL BEETLES AND WASPS TO GUARD THE PALACE.



TAMARAI AND KUNNUTAIYA GO TO THE PONNIVALA CELATTA TEMPLE BEFORE THEY DEPART. THEY ARE ANGRY WITH THEIR FAMILY GODDESS.

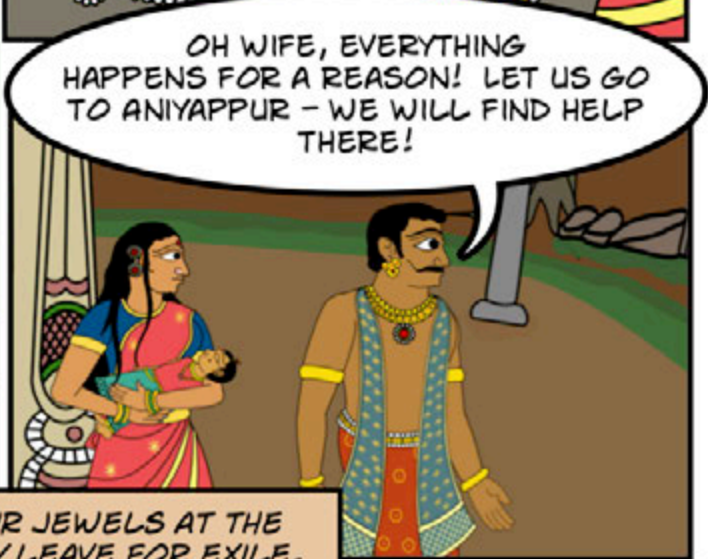
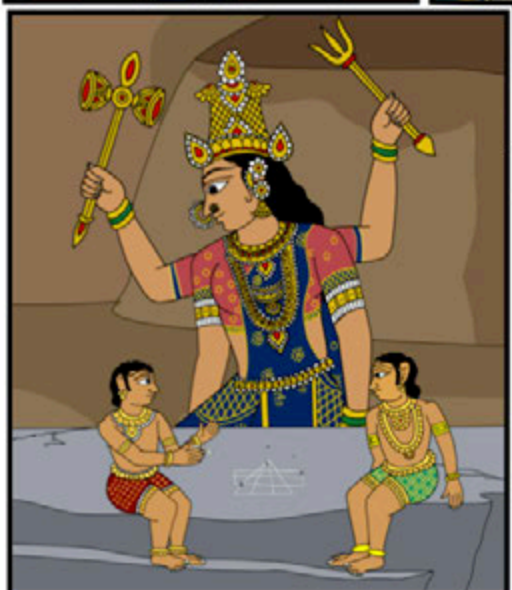


I DID TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF PENANCE, AND HAVE WOUND UP WITH ONLY ONE DAUGHTER. WE HAVE BEEN BEATEN, AND EXILED FROM OUR HOME!

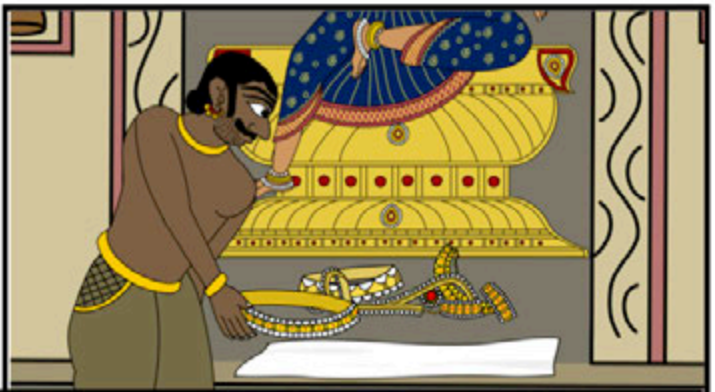
CELATTA...ARE YOU IN YOUR TEMPLE, OR HAVE YOU ABANDONED US, YOU VILLAIN?



BUT THE STATUE OF CELATTA REMAINS SILENT. THE COUPLE DOESN'T REALIZE THE GODDESS IS CURRENTLY OCCUPIED, CARING FOR THEIR TWO GOD-GIVEN SONS! THEY HAVE YET TO LEARN OF THESE TWO CHILDREN.



THE COUPLE LAY DOWN THEIR JEWELS AT THE
GODDESS'S FEET. THEN THEY LEAVE FOR EXILE.



A THIEF WATCHES FROM BEHIND A TREE AS THE COUPLE LAY THEIR JEWELS BEFORE THE GODDESS AND WALK AWAY. SEEING HIS CHANCE, THE ROBBER GOES TO THE TEMPLE AND GRABS THE JEWELS.



NEXT THE THIEF HEADS TO THE PALACE, BUT HE IS TOO FRIGHTENED BY THE BEETLES AND WASPS PROTECTING IT TO GET CLOSE! HE RUNS AWAY.



AFTER A FEW HOURS OF WALKING, THE SAD COUPLE REACH THE TOWN OF ANIYAPPUR, THE HOME OF THEIR ALLIES. THEY GO IMMEDIATELY TO THE GANESH TEMPLE THERE, TO SIT AND REST.



TAMARAI HANDS THE BABY CHILD TO KUNNUTAIYA.



TAMARAI WALKS UP AND DOWN THE STREETS OF ANIYAPPUR. THE WOMEN THERE TURN AWAY FROM HER PLEAS.



MY BABY CRIES FROM HUNGER! PLEASE, DO YOU HAVE ANY MILK?

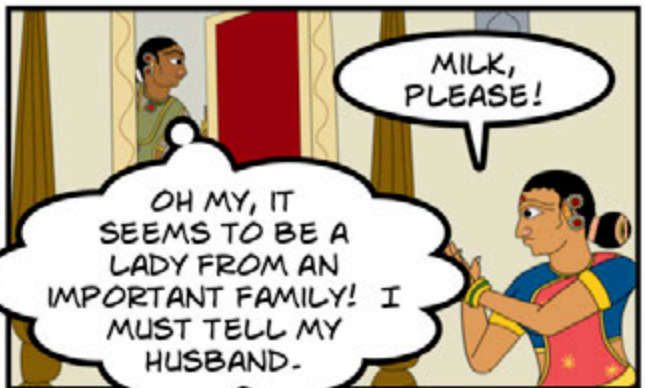
THERE IS NO MILK HERE! GO AWAY!



THEN TAMARAI COMES TO A STREET WITH BIGGER HOUSES ON IT, THE HOMES OF WEALTHY LANDOWNERS. SHE AGAIN CRIES FOR MILK.

MILK FOR MY BABY, PLEASE!





TAMARAI LEADS THE WEALTHY MAN BACK TO HER HUSBAND. THE MEN TALK WHILE SHE FEEDS HER BABY THE MILK.



THE TWO MEN LEAD KUNNUTAIYA AND TAMARAI ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS TO THE BORDER OF VIRAPPUR. THEN THEY TAKE LEAVE OF THE COUPLE AND HEAD BACK HOME.

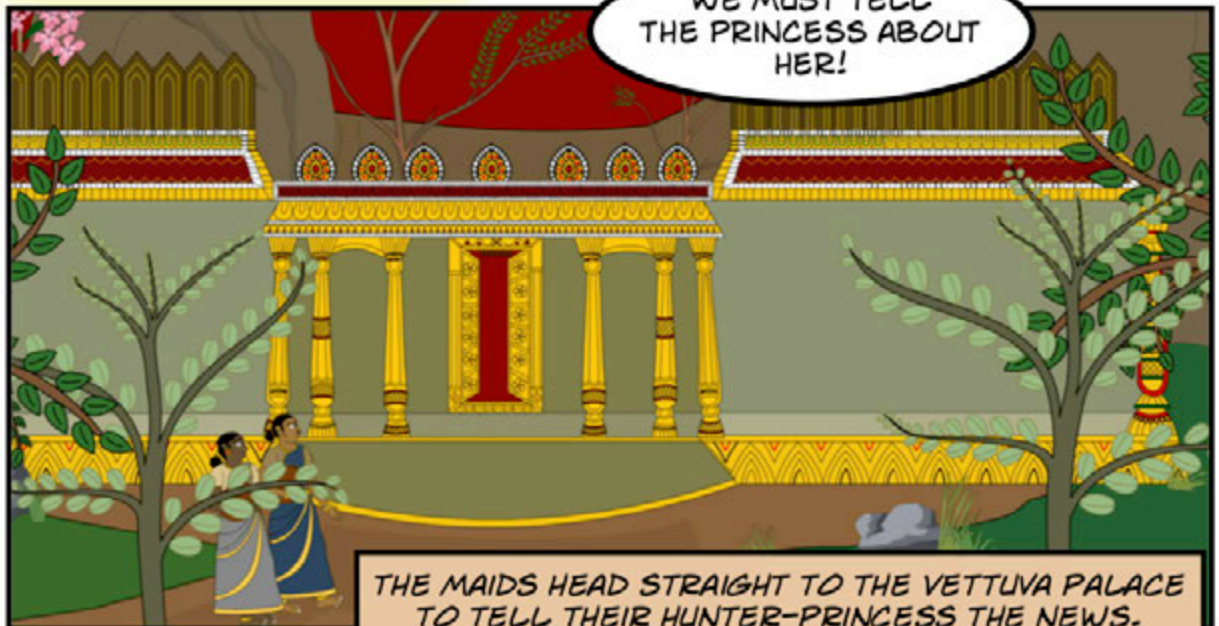
THE KING AND QUEEN SIT AT THE GANESH TEMPLE IN VIRAPPUR. A SHORT TIME AFTER THEY ARE SEATED, TWO OF THE VETTUVA KING'S MAIDS HAPPEN BY, ON THEIR WAY BACK FROM FETCHING WATER.



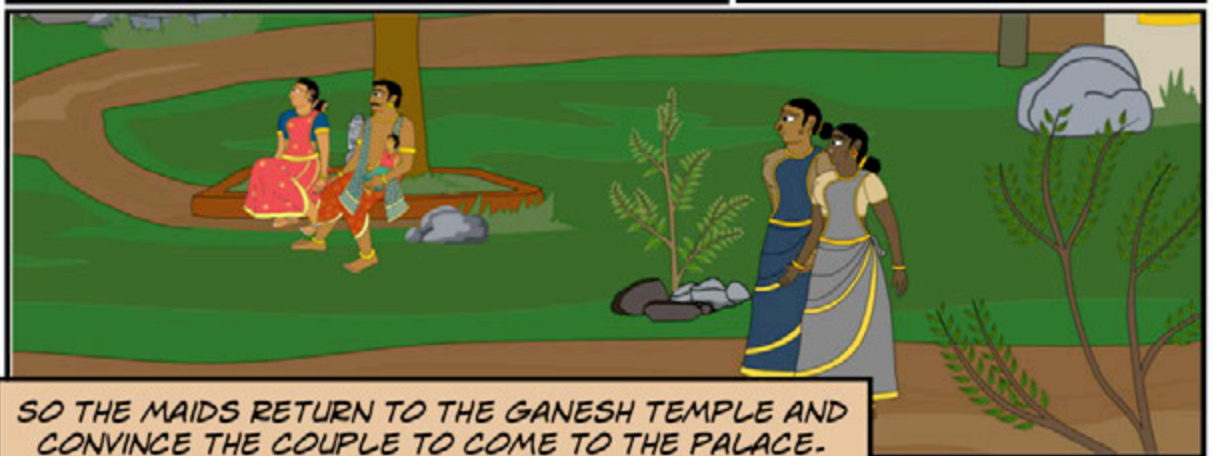
THEY NOTICE THE LITTLE GIRL, WITH A FACE THAT SHINES WITH AS MUCH BEAUTY AS THE SUN ITSELF.



WE MUST TELL THE PRINCESS ABOUT HER!



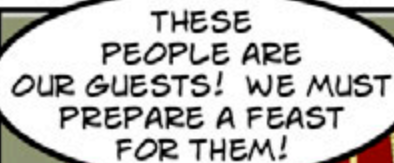
THE MAIDS HEAD STRAIGHT TO THE VETTUVA PALACE TO TELL THEIR HUNTER-PRINCESS THE NEWS.





THE VETTUNA
PRINCESS
BELIEVES
TAMARAI'S
STORY. HER
BROTHER THEN
ARRIVES.





THESE PEOPLE ARE OUR GUESTS! WE MUST PREPARE A FEAST FOR THEM!



WE ARE NOT ALLOWED TO ACCEPT FOOD COOKED AND SERVED BY THESE PEOPLE.

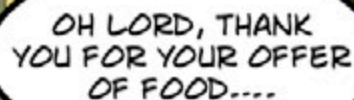


BUT THE VETTUVA KING WILL BE INSULTED IF WE DO NOT!

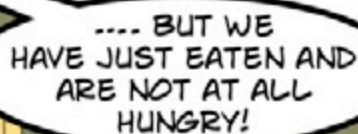


DON'T WORRY, LOVELY QUEEN. I HAVE A PLAN!

FOR CULTURAL REASONS THE KING AND QUEEN CANNOT ACCEPT FOOD FROM THE VETTUVA HUNTERS.



OH LORD, THANK YOU FOR YOUR OFFER OF FOOD....

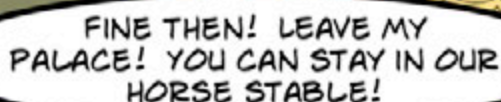


.... BUT WE HAVE JUST EATEN AND ARE NOT AT ALL HUNGRY!

KUNNUTAYA QUICKLY COMES UP WITH AN EXCUSE, BUT THE VETTUVA KING DOES NOT BELIEVE IT.



OH GOUNDER FARMER, YOU ARE LYING! YOU SAY THIS BECAUSE YOU DO NOT WANT TO ACCEPT FOOD FROM US!



FINE THEN! LEAVE MY PALACE! YOU CAN STAY IN OUR HORSE STABLE!



THE KING AND QUEEN ARE LED TO THE STABLES. THEY CLEAN UP THEIR NEW HOME. THEN THEY LIE DOWN TO REST.



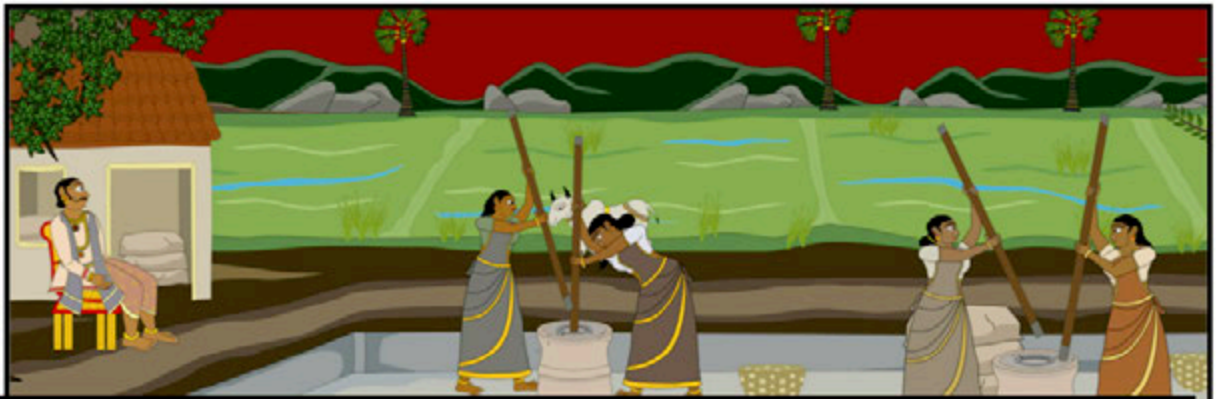
NEITHER ONE IS ABLE TO FALL ASLEEP.



MORNING COMES, AND TAMARAI WAKES UP. SHE KNOWS THEY NEED TO MAKE A LIVING, SO SHE SETS OUT TO FIND WORK.



TAMARAI SETS OUT, FOLLOWING THE OTHER WOMEN TO WORK.



SOON TAMARAI COMES TO A PLACE WHERE MANY WOMEN ARE HUSKING RICE. THEIR MANAGER SEES HER AND CALLS OUT.



OH LADY! WE COULD USE HELP. CAN YOU HUSK RICE?



OH SIR, NO ONE WILL ACCEPT THAT WOMAN AS A PARTNER!

SHE IS TOO DELICATE!



NEVER MIND! I WILL HUSK ALONE!



TAMARAI PRAYS TO VISHNU, AND HE SENDS HER MAGICAL HELP. SHE HUSKS AT LIGHTNING SPEED!



OH LORD, PLEASE HELP ME!

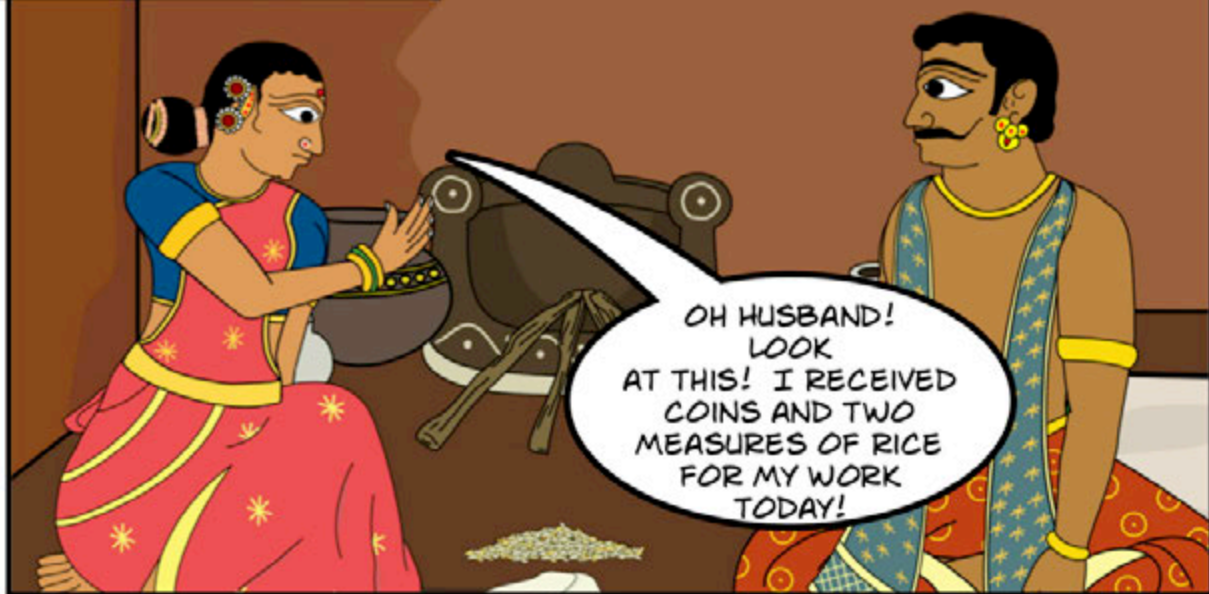


I HAVE NEVER SEEN ANYONE HUSK RICE SO QUICKLY!

SHE IS SOON FINISHED, AND THE MERCHANT GIVES HER SOME MONEY AND SOME RICE IN PAYMENT.



TAMARAI RETURNS HOME, AND SHOWS KUNNUTAIYA THE FRUITS OF HER LABOR.



OH HUSBAND!
LOOK
AT THIS! I RECEIVED
COINS AND TWO
MEASURES OF RICE
FOR MY WORK
TODAY!



WOMAN! HOW
DID YOU FINISH
YOUR WORK SO
SPEEDILY?



LET ME
SEE YOUR
HANDS!

TAMARAI'S HANDS ARE COVERED WITH BLISTERS!



MY POOR WIFE! THIS
IS ALL MY FAULT! OH, HOW
LONG MUST WE ENDURE
THIS EXILE?

OUR GREAT LORD OF
CONJEEPURAM WILL HELP US!
TRUST IN HIM.

YEARS PASS, AND THE COUPLE MANAGE TO SURVIVE IN THE VETTUVA'S HORSE STABLE. MEANWHILE, THE GODDESS CELATTA CARES FOR THE HIDDEN SONS OF QUEEN TAMARAI. ONE DAY, SHE SINGS THEM A SONG.



SLEEP WELL, LITTLE ONES. YOU TWO ARE HEIRS TO A FINE FAMILY.

YOU WERE BORN OF A QUEEN! ONE DAY, YOU WILL BE GREAT WARRIORS.

ONE DAY, YOU WILL SLAY THE GREAT BOAR KOMBAN!

WHY DO YOU SING THIS SONG? ARE YOU NOT OUR MOTHER?

WHO IS OUR REAL MOTHER, AND WHERE IS SHE?

AT HEARING THIS SONG, THE BOYS AWAKEN. THEY ARE CURIOUS ABOUT ITS MEANING.



OH BOYS, I WILL TELL YOU EVERYTHING! QUEEN TAMARAI AND KING KUNNUTAIYA ARE YOUR REAL PARENTS.

YOU ARE FROM PONNIVALA, THE BEAUTIFUL LAND WHERE THE KAVERI RIVER FLOWS. BUT SOME JEALOUS CLANSMEN WANTED THE LAND FOR THEMSELVES...

CELATTA TELLS THE BOYS EVERYTHING. IT TAKES SOME TIME.

OH CELATTA, LET'S GO MEET OUR REAL PARENTS RIGHT AWAY!



WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR CARE, BUT WE WANT TO GO HOME!

OK, BOYS. I WILL TAKE YOU THERE.



THE POOR KING AND QUEEN OF PONNIVALA HAVE BEEN FORCED INTO EXILE BY THEIR GREEDY CLANSMEN. WITHOUT HEIRS, THEIR CLAIM TO THE FIELDS OF PONNIVALA HAS BEEN WEAKENED. BUT NOW, THE HEIRS TAMARAI AND KUNNUTAIYA NEVER KNEW THEY HAD ARE ON THEIR WAY TO JOIN THEM! WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN CELATTA LOCATES THE BOYS' PARENTS? HOW WILL THIS HARD-WORKING COUPLE REACT WHEN THEY SEE THEIR OWN TWIN SONS FOR THE FIRST TIME?



The Importance of The Legend of Ponnivala

This is an ancient epic, stemming from a long tradition of local village storytelling and passed down as a lively oral tradition. Its roots can be traced back to medieval times, well before the coming of the British to India. Its content was memorized by bards who first spent many years as apprentices. They learned from more experienced singers, eventually become leaders themselves, gaining the respect and even adulation of whole villages of eager listeners.

The primary source for this new compressed retelling is a tape recording made in 1965 over 18 consecutive nights in a village where music and song were still the primary means of after dark entertainment. At that time, electricity was scarce in the region and there were no televisions, computers, or CD players. Skilled bards provided the village entertainment, and served as the area's history teachers. They shaped the local understanding of the past by telling stories.

For the first time the Legend of Ponnivala is presented here as a connected chain of 26 short episodes. These sequential tales describe the rich past of Kongunadu through a chain of events that impact one local family. Its heroes and heroines are farmers who live in this specific cultural and geographic region. The larger Legend covers a period of roughly six centuries of South Indian medieval history. As a story it compresses what is known into three generations. Basically, the life of the grandfather covers the period from 1,000 to 1,200 CE, the father's adventures represent the events between 1,200 CE and 1,400, while the experiences of the sons match local events occurring between 1,400 CE and 1,600 CE. This is a story rich in cultural and sociological detail. Several events parallel real social upheavals documented by contemporary historical accounts.

The Legend of Ponnivala also presents a simplified template for a much larger idea - that all life is cyclical. A basic concept that underlies folk Hinduism is that cosmic rhythms move in great cycles. Each begins with the creation of a good age. Subsequently, various acts of human selfishness cause deterioration. After a considerable period, such a cycle must end, often helped by divine intervention. Via their deputies or incarnations, these deities kill all that is evil, washing and cleansing the earth and then setting in motion a new era. Our series presents a genuine folk model of how cosmic energies work. In a sense it tries to depict the very nature of human life on earth!

For website extras such as character details and name and place pronunciations unique to this graphic novel please visit the webpage below:

www.ponnivala.com/comic15

The Legend of
Ponnivala

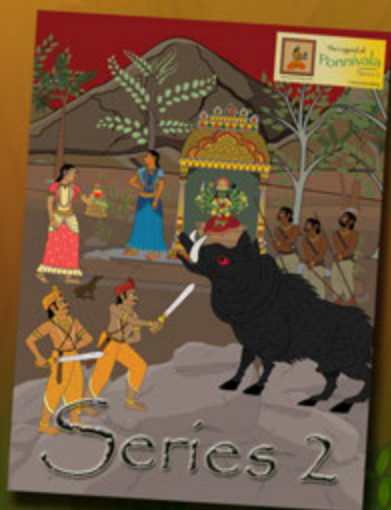
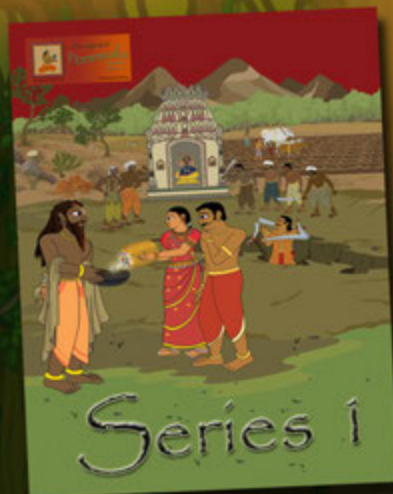
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ISBN 978-1-92709



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