

Series 2
Book 6

The Legend of
Ponnivala

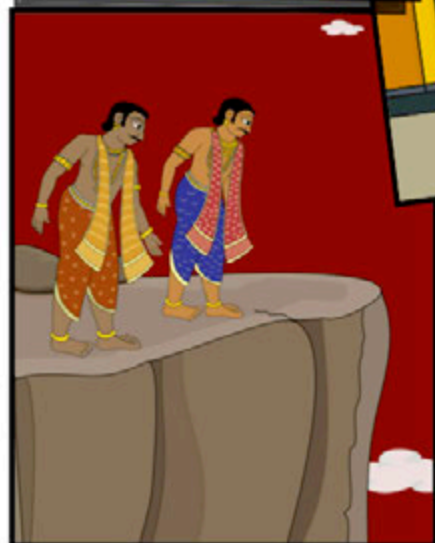


Independence Won



INDEPENDANCE WON
SERIES 2 COMIC 6

A NEIGHBORING
MONARCH
DEMANDS TRIBUTE
FROM
PONNIVALA'S TWO
RULERS, BUT
ONLY ONE
BROTHER IS
WILLING TO PAY
UP. WHEN HE
ARRIVES WITH THE
REQUIRED GIFTS
HE IS JAILED IN A
MOVE DESIGNED
TO FORCE THE
OTHER BROTHER
TO APPEAR. WHEN
THIS BROTHER
DOES ARRIVE, THE
CUNNING KING
TRIES MANY MORE
TRICKS.
EVENTUALLY THE
TWO BROTHERS
OVERTHROW HIM IN
BATTLE AND
PONNIVALA'S
INDEPENDENCE IS
WON ...



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THOSE TWIN RULERS OF PONNIVALA HAVE NEGLECTED TO PAY TRIBUTE TO ME SINCE THE DEATH OF THEIR PARENTS!

AND NOW I HEAR THAT THEY HAVE BEATEN THEIR OWN CLANSMEN HORRIBLY!

I MUST TEACH THOSE VIOLENT MEN A LESSON! WHEN THEY COME TO PAY ME TRIBUTE, I WILL HAVE A SURPRISE IN STORE FOR THEM!



THE CLANSMEN OF THE PONNIVALA BROTHERS HAVE FLED TO THE CHOLA KING SEEKING REFUGE. THEY ALSO SEEK REVENGE. THE MONARCH'S MIND IS MADE UP. HE BELIEVES THE STORY THE REFUGEES TELL HIM.



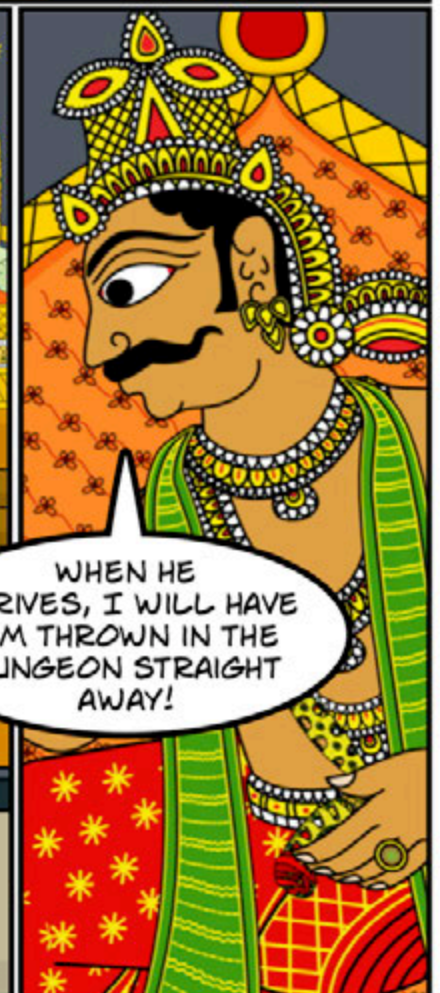
OH GREAT CHOLA KING,
THE SILHOUETTE OF THE
ELDER PONNIVALA BROTHER
HAS BEEN SPOTTED ON THE
HORIZON!



HE MUST BE
PUNISHED FOR FAILING TO
PAY TRIBUTE TO YOU!



WHEN HE
ARRIVES, I WILL HAVE
HIM THROWN IN THE
DUNGEON STRAIGHT
AWAY!



PONNAR AND SHAMBUGA ARRIVE AT THE PALACE WITH THE TRIBUTE ...

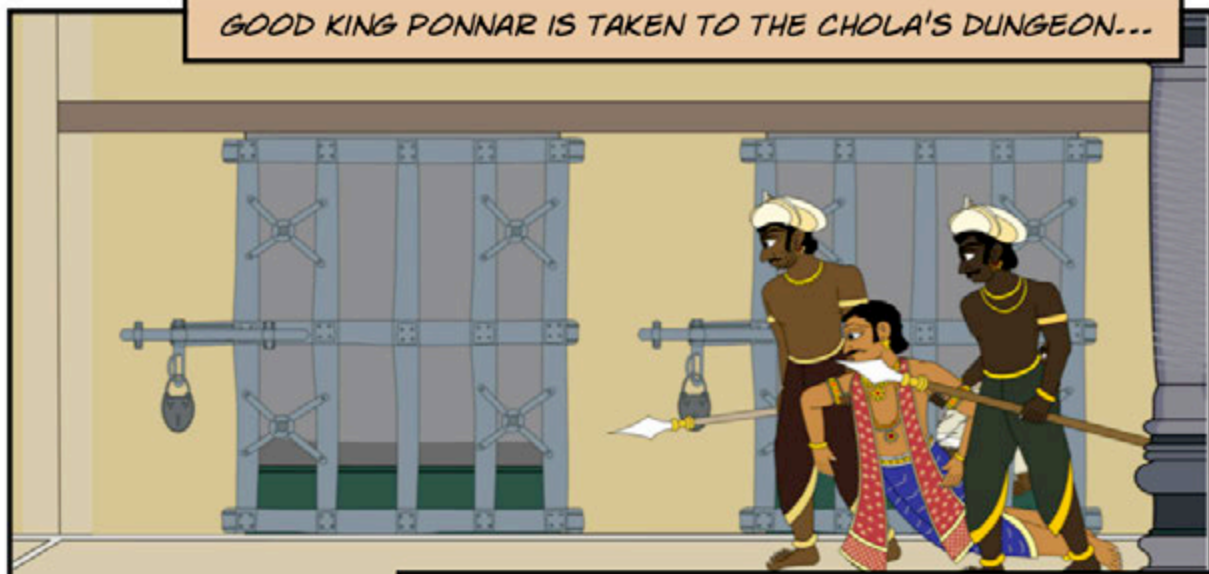


PONNAR DROPS TO HIS KNEES AND BEHAVES WITH GREAT RESPECT. BUT THE CHOLA KING WILL NOT LISTEN. HE ALREADY HAS A PLAN





GOOD KING PONNAR IS TAKEN TO THE CHOLA'S DUNGEON...



... AND LEFT WITH THE AREA'S COMMON VAGABONDS. FLIES AND BEETLES FLEW ABOUT.



OH, TANGAL ...
WHO WILL LOOK AFTER
YOU, MY LITTLE SISTER?



DEAR SISTER, IF I
DIE, YOU ALONE ARE
TO PERFORM MY
FUNERAL RIGHTS.



A VISION OF HIS SISTER APPEARS BEFORE HIM, BUT QUICKLY FADES AWAY...

VISHNU, FROM HIS COBRA COUCH, HEARS PONNAR'S PRAYERS, AND LEAVES FOR EARTH TO HELP HIM.





MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE PONNIVALA PALACE, TANGAL IS DREAMING ON HER SWING...



SHE DREAMS OF PONNAR IMPRISONED, AND OF HERSELF ON A GOLDEN CHARIOT HEADED TO HELP HIM.



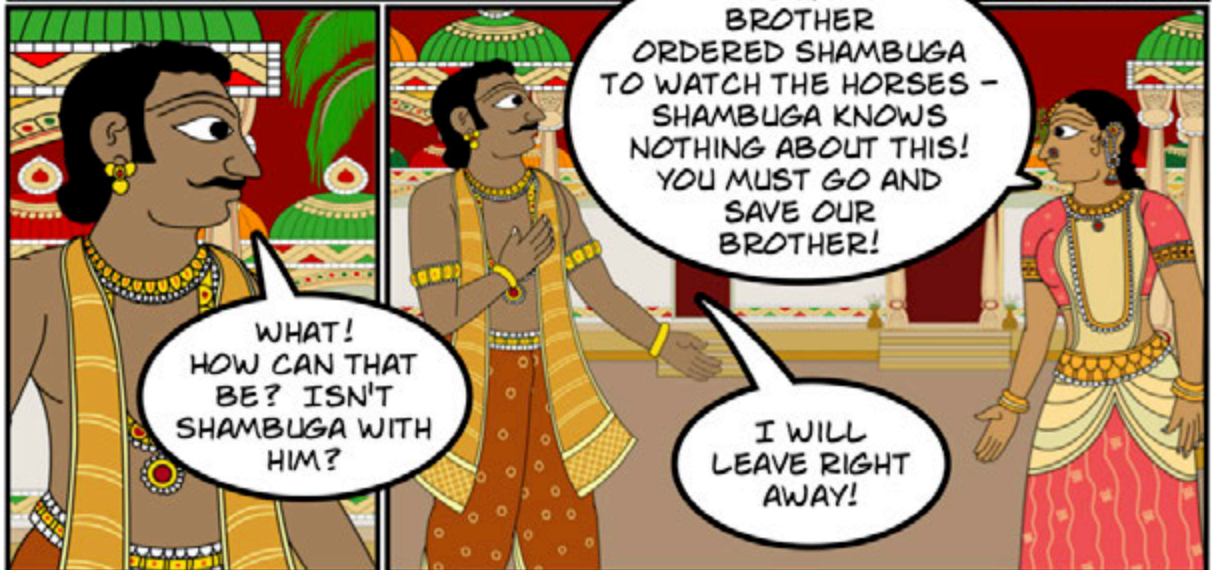
MAID!

GO AND FETCH MY BROTHER SHANKAR RIGHT AWAY!

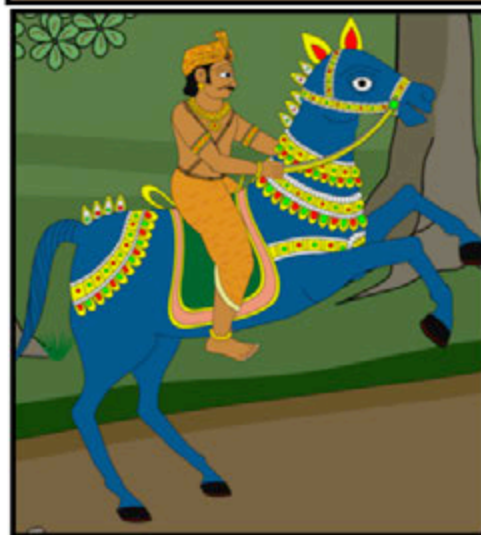
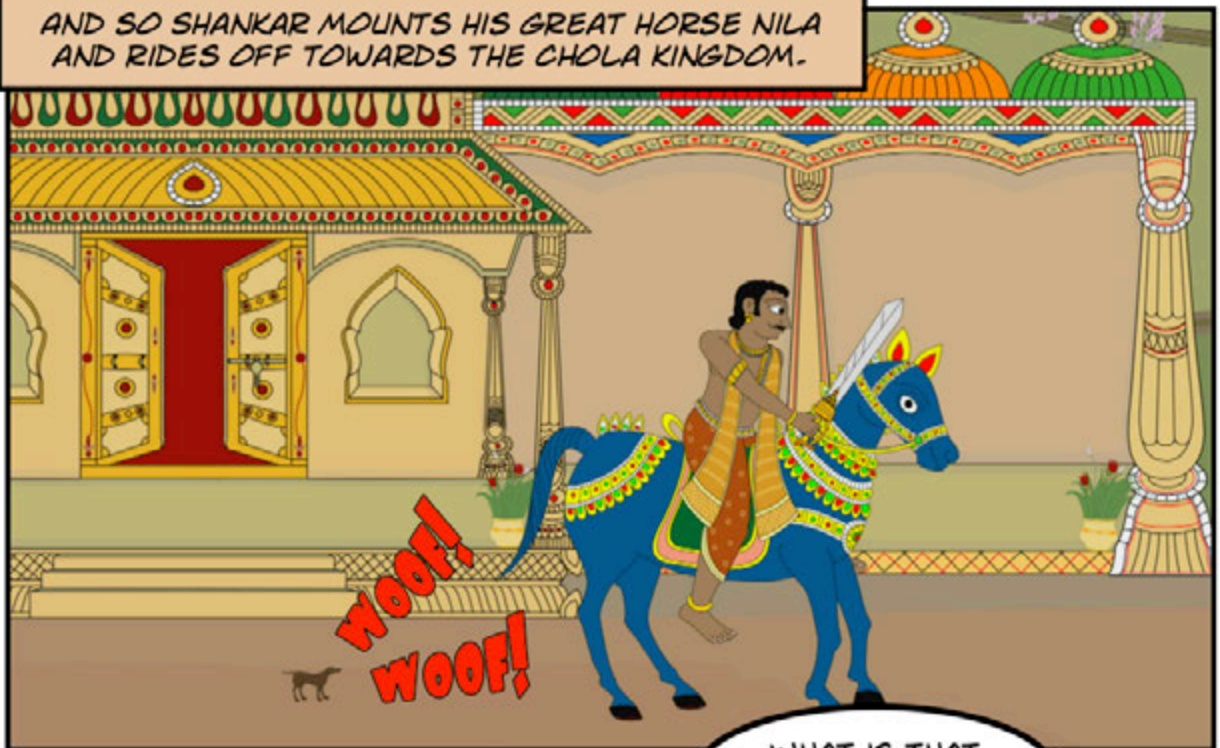


YES, MY LADY!

THE MAID FINDS SHANKAR IN THE PALACE GAME ROOM.



AND SO SHANKAR MOUNTS HIS GREAT HORSE NILA AND RIDES OFF TOWARDS THE CHOLA KINGDOM.



THE THUNDERING OF THE HORSE'S FOOTSTEPS ALERTS THE CLANSMEN...



...AND THEY RUSH OFF TO WARN THE GREAT RULER!

THE CLANSMEN FIND THE CHOLA KING TEACHING HIS SON ARCHERY. THEY QUICKLY GIVE HIM THE NEWS.



THAT ANGRY YOUNGER BROTHER FROM PONNIVALA IS COMING!

HE IS THE ONE THAT BEAT US!

THE CHOLA KING IS SCARED. IF SHANKAR DISCOVERS THE KING'S POOR TREATMENT OF PONNAR, HE WILL NOT BE HAPPY! THE KING QUICKLY DEVISES A PLAN.



FETCH THE ELDER BROTHER FROM THE DUNGEON!

GIVE HIM GIFTS! IF THAT YOUNGER BROTHER DISCOVERS WHAT I HAVE DONE, HE WILL KILL ME!

YES, YOUR MAJESTY!



THE KING'S MEN GO TO THE DUNGEON AND FIND PONNAR THERE.



YOU ARE TO COME WITH US!



PONNAR HAS NO IDEA WHAT IS GOING ON, BUT HE FOLLOWS THE TWO MEN.







IF HE DISCOVERS THE TRUTH, IT WOULD BE A DISASTER!

A LOT OF PEOPLE COULD GET HURT...

IF YOU TELL HIM YOU WERE MISTREATED, I WILL KILL YOU, YOUR BROTHER, AND YOUR SISTER!

HAVE I MADE MYSELF CLEAR?

OH- Y-Y-YESSSS....



PONNAR IS FRIGHTENED BY THE KING'S WORDS.

SOON SHANKAR ARRIVES AT THE PALACE. HE FINDS SHAMBUGA AND IS VERY ANGRY.

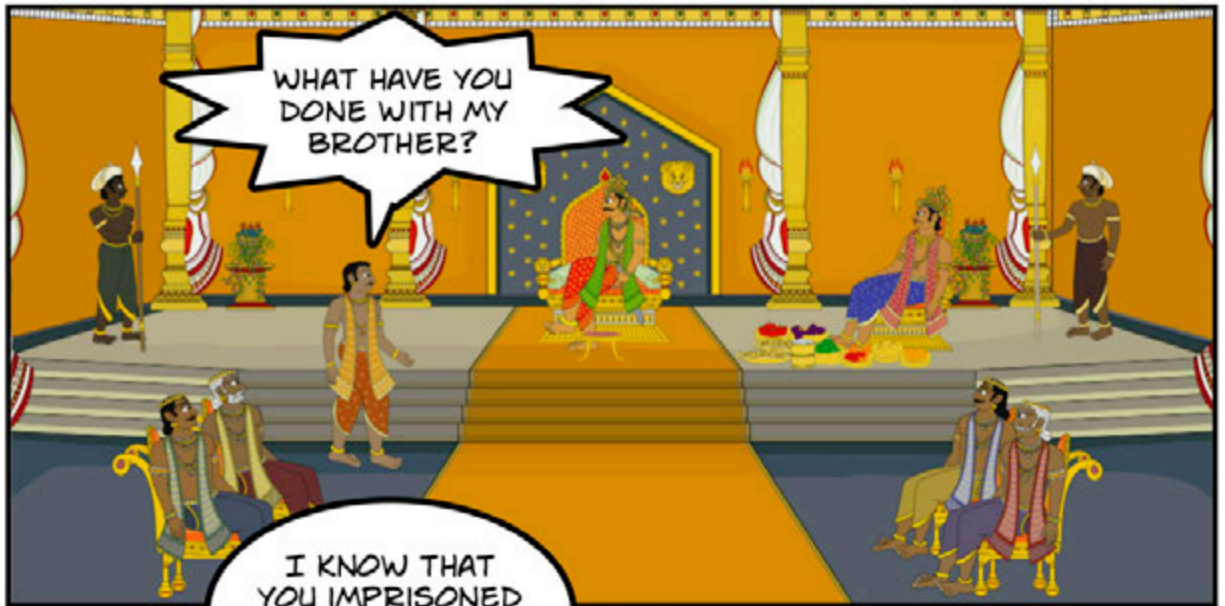


SHAMBUGA,
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING?

YOU FOOL! WHILE
YOU HAVE BEEN SITTING
AROUND DOING NOTHING,
MY BROTHER HAS BEEN
IMPRISONED BY THE CHOLA
KING!



SHANKAR BRANDISHES HIS SWORD AT HIS ASSISTANT,
ENRAGED THAT HE HAS BEEN SO NEGLIGENT.





BUT THE KING HAS A NASTY PLAN IN STORE...

MAID, SEPARATE THE TWO PORTIONS FOR THE PONNIVALA RULERS!



YOU MUST PUT THIS IN THEIR FOOD!



THE MAID POURS POISON OVER THE BROTHERS' RICE, THEN LAYS THE FEAST OUT FOR THEM.



ESTEEMED GUESTS
HERE IS YOUR FOOD!

BUT THIS ACT OF DECEIT HAS NOT GONE UNNOTICED.



LORD VISHNU QUICKLY SPRINGS INTO ACTION ...



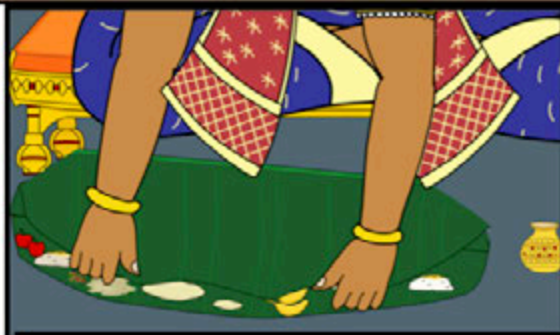
HE CONJURES UP A PALACE CAT ...



...THE CAT EATS SOME OF SHANKAR'S RICE...



AND PROMPTLY FALLS DOWN DEAD!



THE TWIN BROTHERS REALIZE THAT THEIR FOOD HAS BEEN POISONED. THEY FOLD OVER THEIR EATING LEAVES, SIGNIFYING THAT THEY WILL NEVER ACCEPT FOOD IN THE CHOLA'S PALACE AGAIN.



BUT THE CHOLA KING HAS ANOTHER PLAN! HE HAS ORDERED A LARGE PIT DUG, AND FILLED WITH SHARP STICKS!

OVER THE PIT THE SERVANTS HAVE PLACED A BEAUTIFUL CHAIR. THE KING INTENDS TO HAVE THE BROTHERS SIT THERE AND FALL TO THEIR DEATHS.



UNFORTUNATELY, THE KING'S OWN SON FINDS THE CHAIR FIRST, AND THINKING IT A FUN PLACE TO PLAY

AHH!!!



.... THE YOUNG PRINCE SITS IN THE CHAIR, AND FALLS TO HIS DEATH. THE KING HAS THE PIT FILLED WITH ROCKS.

BUT EVEN THIS DOES NOT DETER THE CHOLA KING! HE TRIES ONE LAST TIME TO RID HIMSELF OF PONNIVALA'S TWIN KINGS...

WAIT!

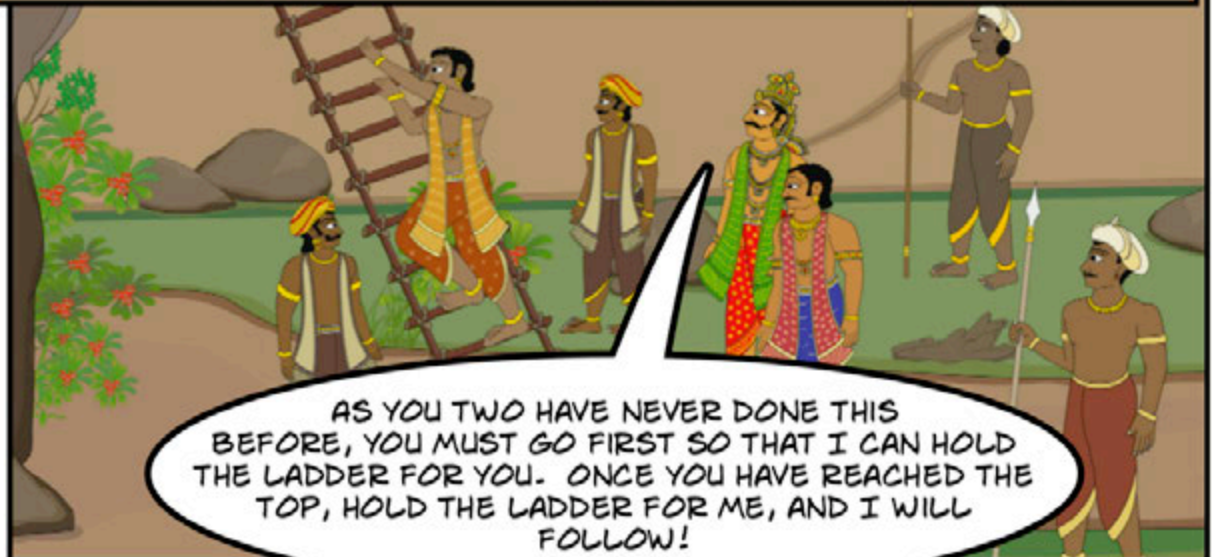
WE ARE LEAVING!

BEFORE YOU GO, YOU MUST WORSHIP AT MY FAMILY TEMPLE!

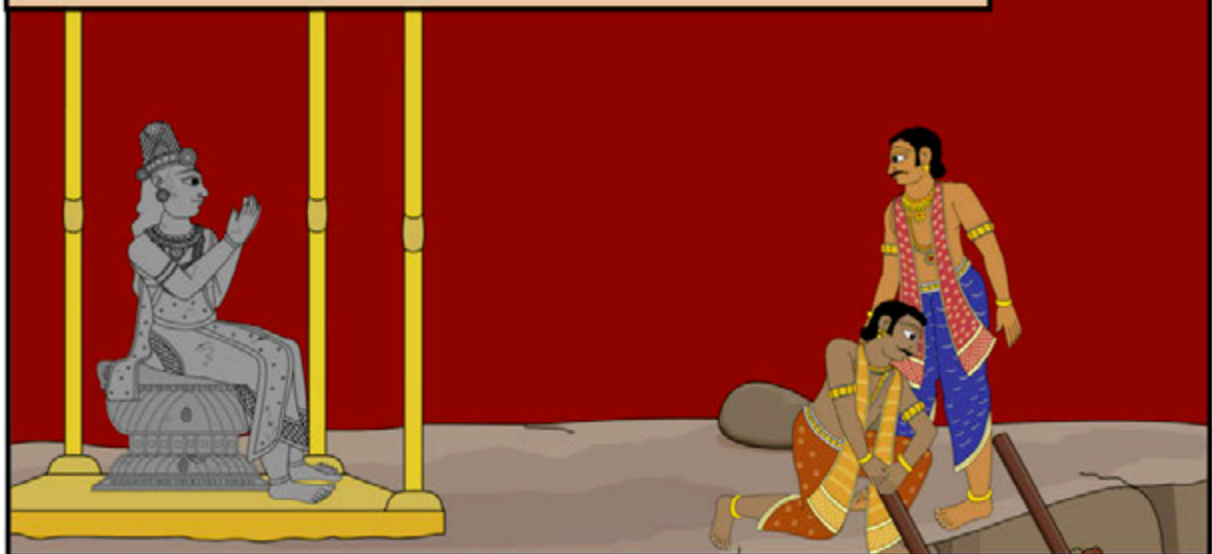
OH BROTHER, PERHAPS WE SHOULD NOT WASTE THIS OPPORTUNITY!

SO THE BROTHERS GRUDGINGLY AGREE TO WORSHIP AT THE CHOLA'S FAMILY SHRINE. BUT THEY ALSO AGREE THAT THEY MUST KEEP THEIR GUARD UP!

WHEN THEY ARRIVE AT THE LOCATION OF THE SHRINE, THE TWO MEN MUST CLIMB A HUGE LADDER. SHANKAR, THE BRAVER TWIN, GOES FIRST.



SHANKAR REACHES THE TOP, AND THEN PONNAR FOLLOWS.



THE KING SHOUTS UP TO THE TWINS THAT HE MUST FIRST MOVE THE LADDER AND THEN CLIMB UP. BUT IT IS ALL A TRICK!



I AM COMING UP NOW, I JUST HAVE TO MOVE THE LADDER!



QUICKLY! TAKE THE LADDER BACK TO THE PALACE!



OH!!!

THE KING'S MEN REMOVE THE LADDER, TRAPPING PONNAR AND SHANKAR AT THE TOP OF THE CLIFF! THE TWO BROTHERS START ARGUING.



THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT!



YOU WANTED US TO COME HERE! NOW WE ARE TRAPPED!

NO, WE WERE BOTH TRICKED! IT IS THE FAULT OF THAT SCHEMING CHOLA!

YET AGAIN LORD VISHNU COMES TO THE AID OF THE TWO BROTHERS ...

Whoosh

HE TRANSFORMS HIMSELF INTO AN OLD MAN WITH LONG HAIR.

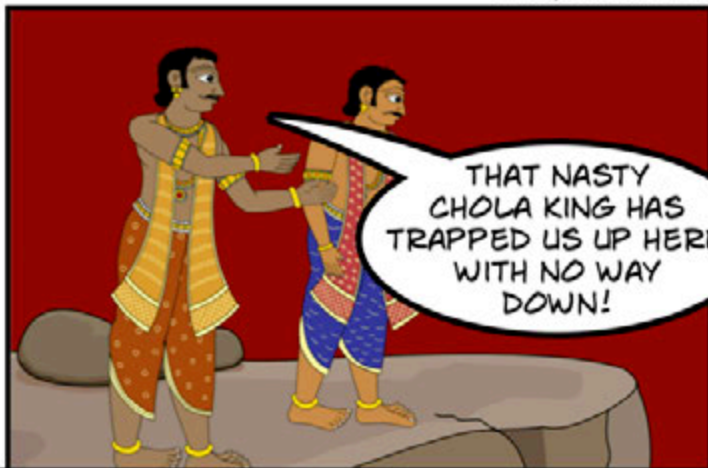


SHAMBO...
MAHADEVA!

THE BROTHERS SPOT HIM FROM THE TOP OF THE CLIFF AND CALL DOWN.



HEY, OLD
MAN, CAN YOU
HELP US?



THAT NASTY
CHOLA KING HAS
TRAPPED US UP HERE
WITH NO WAY
DOWN!



I DO KNOW A
TRICK!

SUDDENLY, TWO CLUSTERS IN THE MAN'S HAIR
BEGIN TO GROW LONGER AND LONGER!



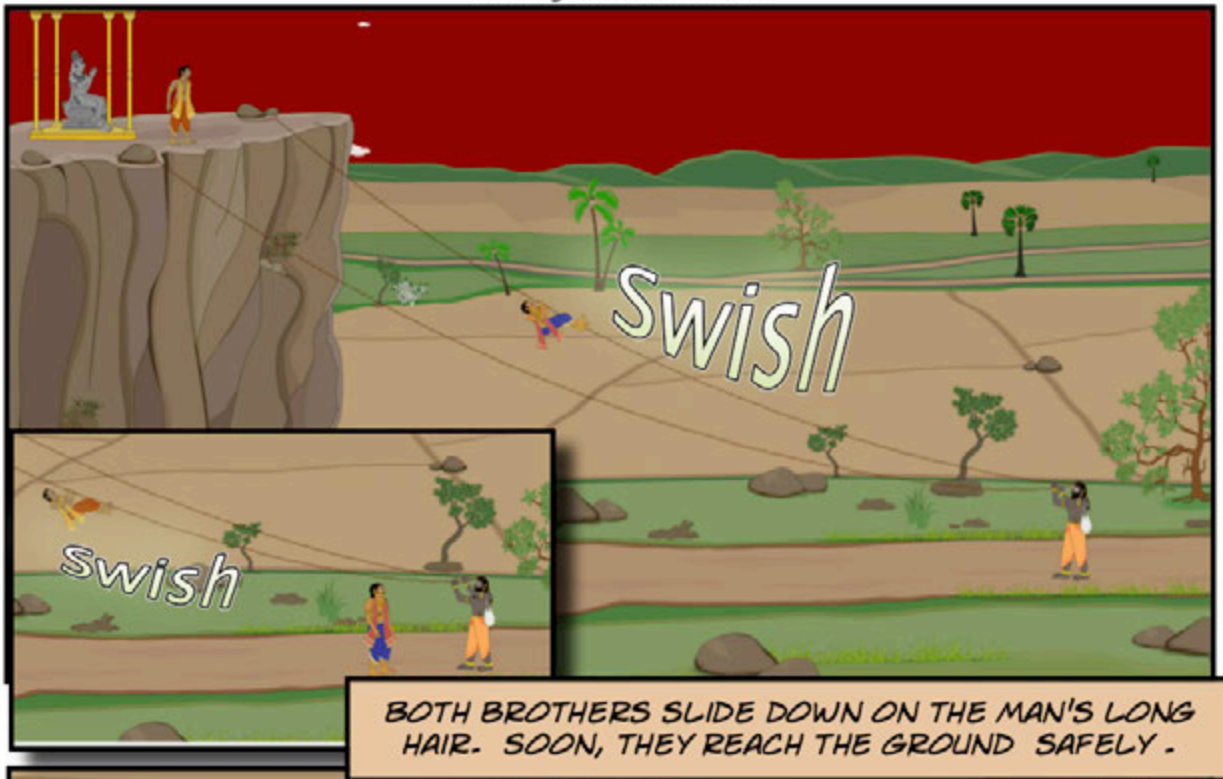
HERE, USE
THESE TO CLIMB
DOWN!



THE OLD MAN TOSSES HIS HAIR ROPES UP TO THE BROTHERS ...



HA!



BOTH BROTHERS SLIDE DOWN ON THE MAN'S LONG HAIR. SOON, THEY REACH THE GROUND SAFELY .



THANK YOU!

NOW, DON'T WASTE A MINUTE! GO AND GET EVEN WITH THAT EVIL CHOLA KING!

SO THE BROTHERS RUN BACK TO THE CHOLA KING'S PALACE. THEY WANT TO FIND SHAMBUGA AND TAKE THEIR REVENGE!





THEY FIND SHAMBUGA SITTING NEAR THEIR TWO HORSES. SHANKAR IMMEDIATELY REQUESTS HIS HELP.



SHAMBUGA, GRAB MY BROTHER'S SWORD AND COME WITH ME! WE ARE GOING TO TEACH THAT NASTY CHOLA KING A LESSON!



SHANKAR AND SHAMBUGA TAKE OFF, READY TO FIGHT!



THERE IS A GREAT BATTLE! FIRST SHAMBUGA AND SHANKAR DEFEAT THE PALACE GUARDS AND BURST INTO THE KING'S COMPOUND.



THEN THEY BEGIN TO DESTROY THE PALACE, FIGHTING ANYONE THEY COME ACROSS!



SHAMBUGA, WHO HAS THE STRENGTH OF SIXTEEN ELEPHANTS, THROWS AROUND MEN, AND PALACE PILLARS, WITH EASE!



OH!!



JUUUN!!!

AHH!!

HA HA!

AIIEEE!

HE TOSSES HIS CHALLENGERS ABOUT AS IF THEY ARE WEIGHTLESS! MEANWHILE, SHANKAR ENGAGES MANY MEN IN COMBAT.





FINALLY, SHANKAR MAKES HIS WAY TO THE CHOLA KING. HE FINISHES OFF THE MONARCH, THEN BEGINS TO TAKE ON OTHERS.

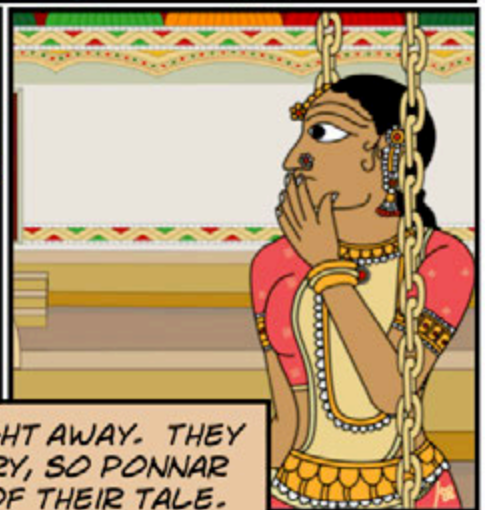


SHANKAR'S BLADE FINISHES MANY CLANSMEN, AND THEN SHAMBUGA CRUSHES THE REMAINING FEW WITH A GIANT PILLAR. AFTER THE DESTRUCTION IS FINISHED, THE THREE MEN HEAD FOR HOME.





SHAMBUGA, TAKE OUR HORSES TO THE STABLE!



THE BROTHERS GO TO SEE THEIR SISTER RIGHT AWAY. THEY DO NOT WANT TO UPSET HER WITH THE STORY, SO PONNAR GIVES HER A MUCH LESS VIOLENT VERSION OF THEIR TALE.



WE PAID THE TRIBUTE TO THE CHOLA KING, AND HAVE NOW RETURNED!

WOOF!



THE BROTHERS THEN RETIRE TO THEIR GAMING ROOM. SETTING THEIR SWORDS DOWN, THEY RELAX AND PLAY DICE.



LET ME SEE WHAT YOU CAN THROW!

HA! I CAN BEAT THAT!

NOW, ONCE MORE, PEACE HAS BEEN RESTORED! THE BROTHERS HAVE RETURNED TO THEIR USUAL ROUTINES. BUT HOW LONG CAN IT LAST? HOW SOON UNTIL THE KINGDOM OF PONNIVALA IS DISRUPTED ONCE AGAIN?



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/comic19

The Legend of
Ponnivala

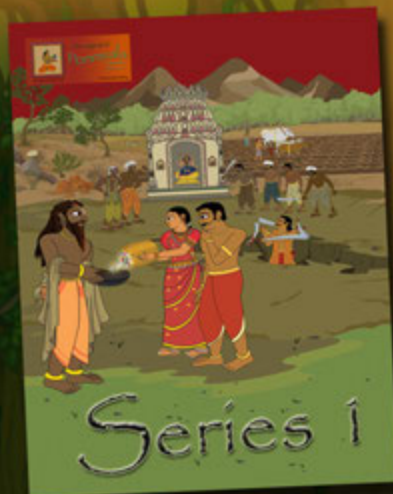
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