

Series 2
Book 7

The Legend of
Ponnivala



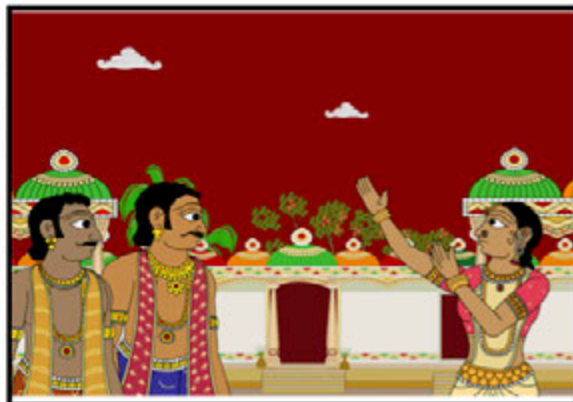
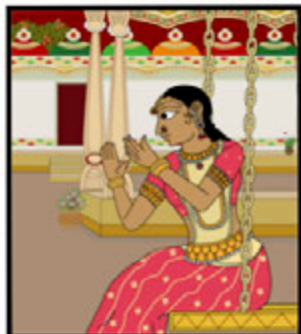
Two Swords Blessed

TWO SWORDS
BLESSED
SERIES 2 COMIC
7

**A LONELY
SISTER**
LIVES IN HER
FAMILY
PALACE WITH
TWO
BROTHERS
WHO SPEND
ALL THEIR
TIME AWAY ON
ADVENTURES.
LONELY, SHE
REQUESTS
THAT THEY
BRING HER A
PARROT FOR
COMPANY.

THE
BROTHERS
AGREE AND
MAKE A
SPECIAL
PARROT NET.
HOWEVER
THE SISTER
HAS A
TERRIBLE
VISION AND
CHANGES HER
MIND. SHE
FEARS
CAPTURING A
PARROT FROM
THE ENEMIES'
FOREST WILL
LEAD TO WAR

...



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WE FINALLY MADE A HARD DECISION AND GOT RID OF THAT LOUSY CHOLA KING! HE WAS A WEAK MONARCH, AND FULL OF DECEIT! HE RESORTED TO MANY TRICKS TO TRY AND KILL US!

AND WE DID AWAY WITH THOSE COWARDLY CLANSMEN! THEY THOUGHT THAT CONCEITED CHOLA WOULD PROTECT THEM!

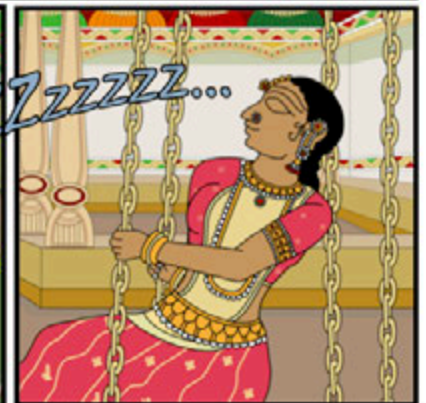


THANK GOODNESS WE GOT RID OF THEM! NOW, HOPEFULLY, WE CAN RULE PONNIVALA IN PEACE!



The Legend of Ponnivala

IT IS A GOOD TIME. THE FIELDS ARE FERTILE, AND PEACE HAS ONCE AGAIN SETTLED OVER THE LAND OF PONNIVALA. IN THE PONNIVALA PALACE TANGAL, THE SISTER OF THE TWO RULING KINGS, IS ASLEEP AND DREAMING IN HER SWING, AS USUAL.



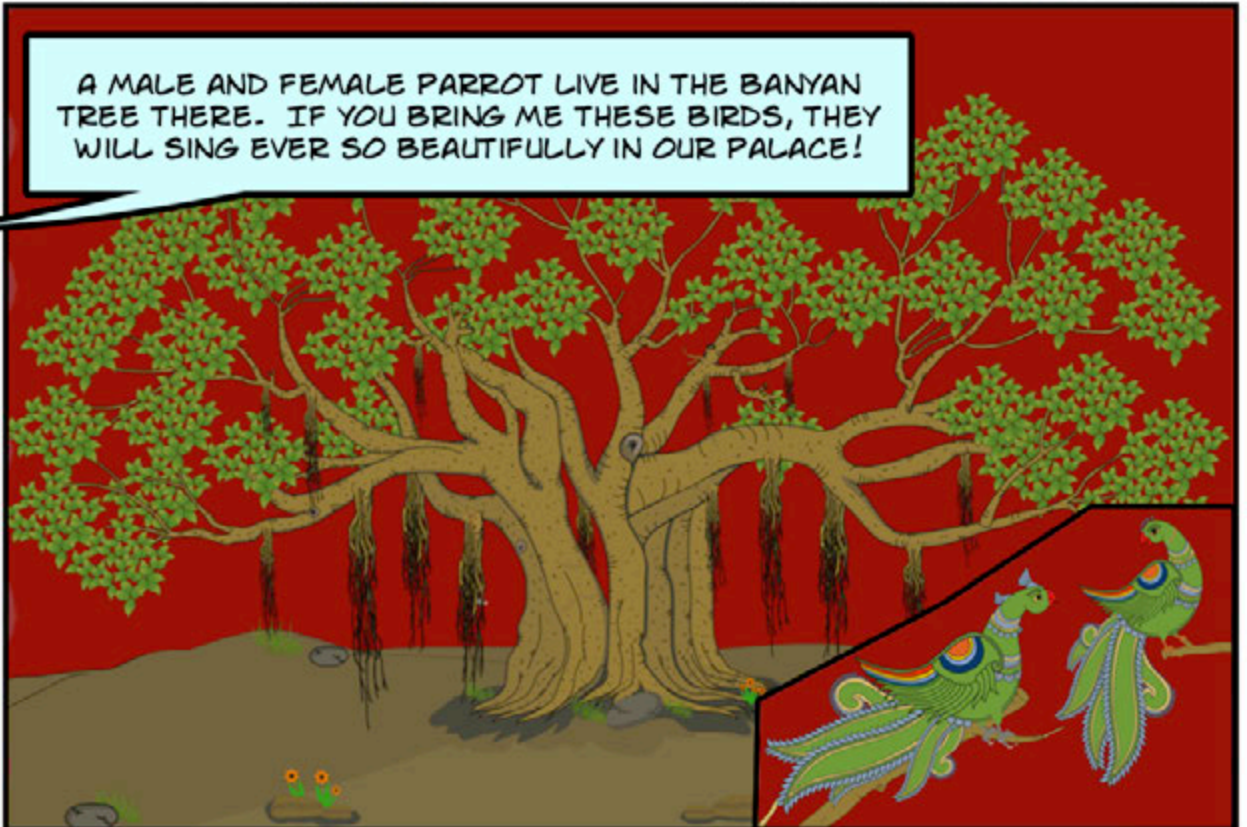


The Legend of Ponnivala

AT THE EDGE OF VIRAPPUR, THERE IS A PLACE CALLED VELLIYANKIRI. THERE IS AN IRRIGATION TANK THERE, AND NEXT TO IT, A HUGE BANYAN TREE!



A MALE AND FEMALE PARROT LIVE IN THE BANYAN TREE THERE. IF YOU BRING ME THESE BIRDS, THEY WILL SING EVER SO BEAUTIFULLY IN OUR PALACE!

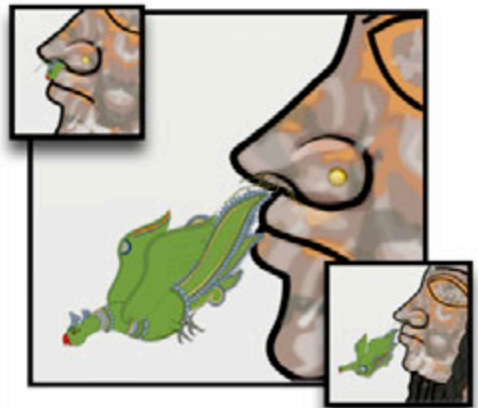




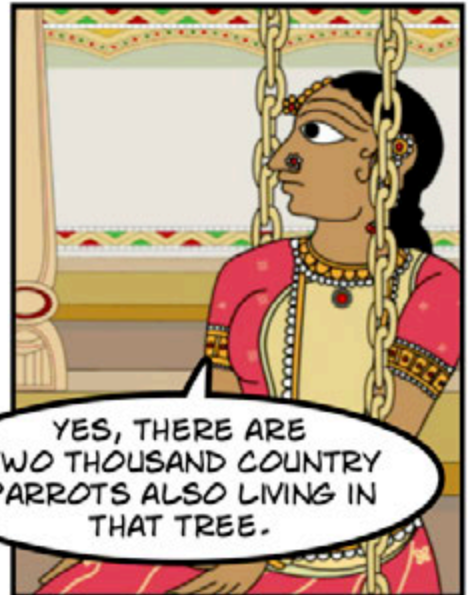
BUT SISTER, THAT LAND BELONGS TO THE VETTUVA KING! CAN'T YOU ASK FOR SOME OTHER PARROTS? WHAT IS SO SPECIAL ABOUT THOSE BIRDS?



ELDER BROTHERS, THERE ARE MANY PARROTS IN THE WORLD. BUT THOSE TWO PARROTS ONCE NESTED IN OUR OWN MOTHER'S NOSE, DURING HER TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF PENANCE AT THE GATES OF SHIVA'S COUNCIL CHAMBER.



SISTER, ARE THERE ANY OTHER PARROTS LIVING IN THAT BANYAN TREE?



YES, THERE ARE TWO THOUSAND COUNTRY PARROTS ALSO LIVING IN THAT TREE.





BUT SISTER, I DO NOT FEEL RIGHT TAKING THESE BIRDS FROM THE VETTUVAS!

ELDER BROTHER, DO NOT WORRY.



EVEN THOUGH THESE BIRDS LIVE ON VETTUVA LAND, THEY CAME TO EARTH FROM HEAVEN. THEY DO NOT BELONG TO THE VETTUVA KING - THEY BELONG TO THE GODS THEMSELVES!



WE WILL HAVE TO HAVE A SPECIAL NET MADE TO CATCH THOSE PARROTS. BUT WHAT SHOULD THE NET BE MADE OF?

OH BROTHERS, IT WOULD BE BEST IF THE NET WAS MADE OUT OF IRON.




ALRIGHT SISTER. WE SHALL HAVE A NET MADE OF FINE IRON WIRES, AND CATCH THOSE PARROTS FOR YOU!


THE BROTHERS LEAVE TO FIND SHAMBUGA, THEIR ASSISTANT.



HEY, SHAMBUGA!
TANGAL HAS GIVEN US AN
ENORMOUS TASK!




SHE WANTS US
TO CATCH TWO SPECIAL
PARROTS LIVING
ON VETTUVA LAND.



BUT IN ORDER TO
CAPTURE THE BIRDS, WE RISK
STARTING A QUARREL WITH THE
VETTUVAS!...

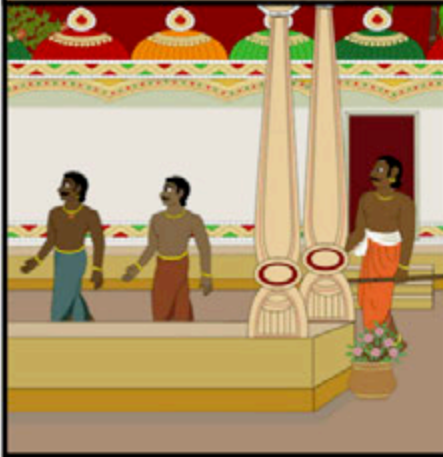
DON'T YOU REMEMBER
WHAT YOUR OWN MOTHER AND FATHER
TOLD YOU? THEY SAID YOU MUST GIVE
YOUR SISTER ANYTHING SHE ASKS
FOR!



OK, SHAMBUGA! WE
NEED A NET MADE OF IRON.
GO AND GET SOME ARTISANS
FROM TANGAVALA AND
BRING THEM HERE!

RIGHT
AWAY!

SHAMBUGA TRAVELS TO
THE NEARBY VILLAGE OF
TANGAVALA AND
RETRIEVES THE ARTISANS.





I WILL SHOW YOU OUR STORE OF IRON.

ARTISANS, WE NEED YOUR HELP! WE WANT YOU TO BUILD US A HUGE IRON NET. WE WILL THROW IT OVER A GREAT BANYAN TREE TO CATCH SOME PARROTS.



HERE IS THE IRON WE HAVE KEPT READY. YOU MAY USE ALL YOU NEED.



YOU MAY USE THIS COURTYARD AS A WORKSHOP.

YES, MY LORD.

THE ARTISANS WORK VERY HARD. BUT EVERY TIME THEY TRY TO STRETCH THE IRON INTO WIRE, THE BRITTLE METAL SNAPS!

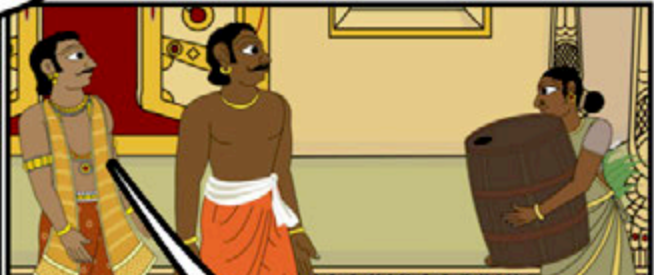




OH KING! WHEN I WAS TRAVELLING THROUGH VIRAPPUR ONE DAY, I SAW THEY HAD A STASH GOOD QUALITY IRON FROM SOME FOREIGN PLACE KEPT THERE. THEY USED IT TO BUILD A TEMPLE FOR THEIR GODDESS KARUKALI.

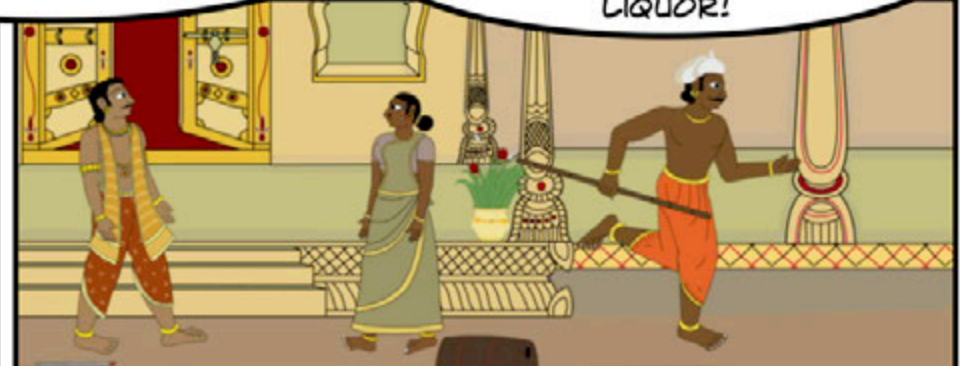
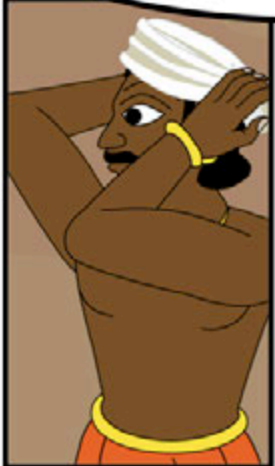


YES, AND I HEARD THERE WERE SEVEN CARTLOADS LEFTOVER FROM THAT BUILDING PROJECT!



I WILL GO AND SEE IF THE IRON IS STILL STORED BEHIND THE TEMPLE. I'LL FIND SOME WAY TO GET IT!

OK, SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO! HERE! ENJOY A HUNDRED OUNCES OF COUNTRY LIQUOR!



SHAMBUGA TIES A TURBAN AROUND HIS HEAD, THEN TAKES OFF TOWARD THE VILLAGE OF VIRAPPUR.

SHAMBUGA TRAVERSES THE COUNTRYSIDE.
HE CROSSES FORESTS AND MOUNTAINS.




FINALLY HE ARRIVES AT THE PALACE OF
VIRAPPUR, THE HOME OF THE VETTUVA KINGS!



TWO MAIDS SEE SHAMBUGA COMING. ONE FAINTS AT THE SIGHT OF THIS HUGE MESSENGER!



THE MAIDS RETURN TO THEIR PRINCESS TO DELIVER THE MESSAGE.



MY LADY, THE
MAN WISHES TO
SPEAK WITH YOU. HE
BRINGS NEWS FROM
PONNIVALA!

I SHALL SEE
HIM.



WELCOME,
WATCHMAN.



WHAT NEWS
HAVE YOU BROUGHT
ME?

IT HAS RAINED WELL
IN PONNIVALA. WE ARE
ABOUT TO PLOUGH OUR
FIELDS, BUT NEED TO MAKE
SOME METAL TIPS FOR
THE PLOUGHS.



WHY TALK TO ME?
WE VETTUVAS ARE PROUD
HUNTERS, WE HAVE NO
PLOUGHS!

WE WERE HOPING
TO BORROW SOME OF
YOUR FOREIGN IRON, WHILE
WE AWAIT A SHIPMENT OF
OUR OWN.



WHY WOULD WE GIVE YOU
OUR IRON? YOU GOUNDER
FARMERS ARE OUR
ENEMIES!

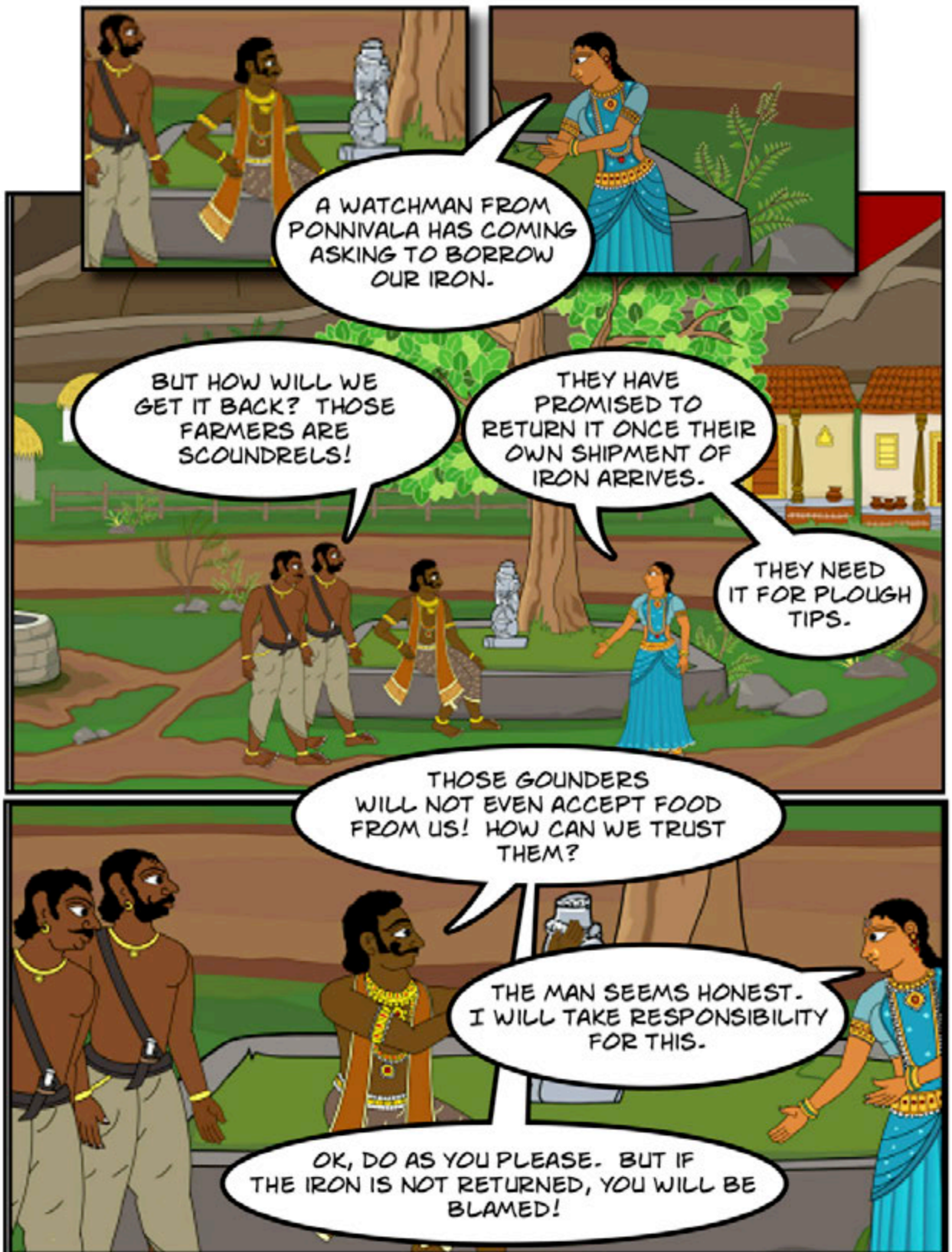
WE WILL GIVE IT BACK AS
SOON AS OUR OWN SHIPMENT COMES IN!
WE ONLY WANT TO BORROW IT FOR A
LITTLE WHILE!




I CAN'T MAKE THIS DECISION
ON MY OWN. I WILL ASK MY
BROTHERS ABOUT THIS.


SO THE VETTUNA PRINCESS SET
OFF IN SEARCH OF HER BROTHERS.

The Legend of Ponnivala







OH HUGE MAN, MY BROTHERS HAVE REFUSED TO LEND IRON TO PONNIVALA. THEY SAY YOU ARE UNTRUSTWORTHY. THEY THINK THE IRON WILL NOT BE RETURNED!



OH FINE LADY! SOFTEN YOUR HEART! I PROMISE THE IRON WILL BE RETURNED AS SOON AS MY TWO FARMER LORDS RECEIVE THEIR OWN SHIPMENT!



OK, I WILL AGREE TO LEND THE IRON TO YOU ON ONE CONDITION - IT MUST BE RETURNED WITHIN THREE DAYS! NOW GO AND GET YOUR CART, AND TAKE ONLY WHAT YOU NEED!

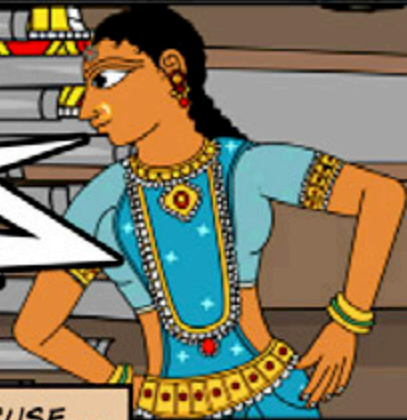


OH LADY, THANK YOU.

BUT SHAMBUGA DOES NOT GO TO GET A CART. HE GOES IMMEDIATELY TO GET THE IRON. BUT HE IS CAUGHT BY THE PRINCESS!



HEY, WATCHMAN!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? WHY ARE
YOU TYING ALL THE IRON
TOGETHER?



BUT SHAMBUGA QUICKLY THINKS OF AN EXCUSE...

OH CHASTE LADY!
I PLAN TO WEIGH THE
IRON SO THAT I CAN
RETURN THE EXACT
AMOUNT!

FINE! WEIGH
IT AND LEAVE!
COME BACK
TOMORROW WITH
A CART!



SHAMBUGA'S WORDS HAVE CONVINCED
THE LADY, AND SHE LEAVES.



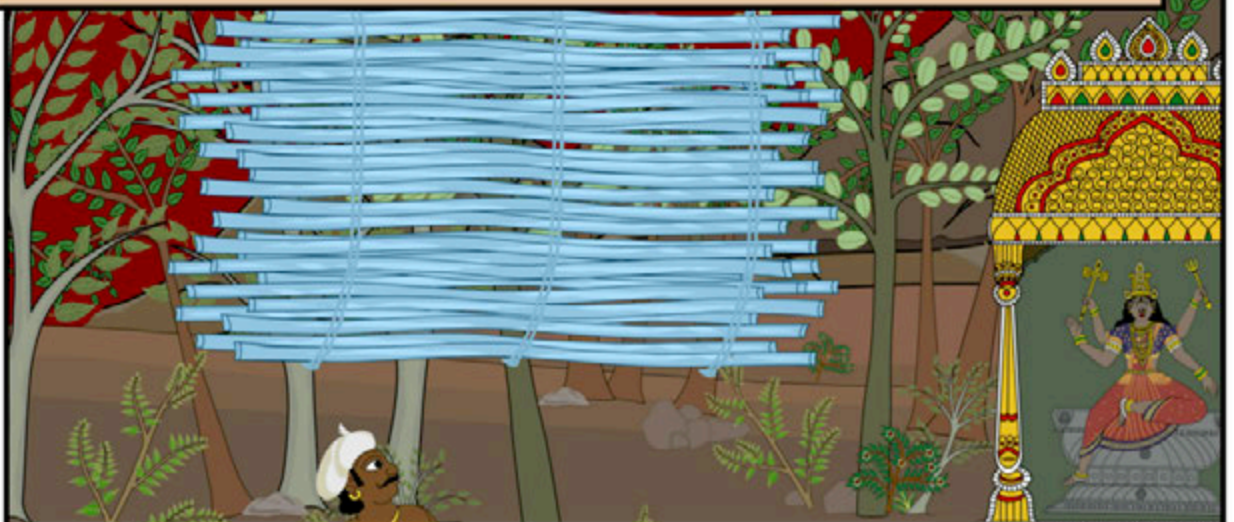
BUT SHAMBUGA DOES NOT LEAVE. INSTEAD, HE BEGINS TO PRAY TO LORD VISHNU.

OH VISHNU! OH TRUTHFUL SPEAKER WHO CARRIES A CONCH! IF I WAS TRULY BORN OF A GOD'S BOON, LET THIS HUGE BUNDLE FLOAT UP AS HIGH AS THE TOP OF A PALM TREE AND SETTLE GENTLY ON MY HEAD!

VISHNU, WATCHING FROM HIS SEAT ON HIS COBRA COUCH, HEARS SHAMBUGA'S WORDS...



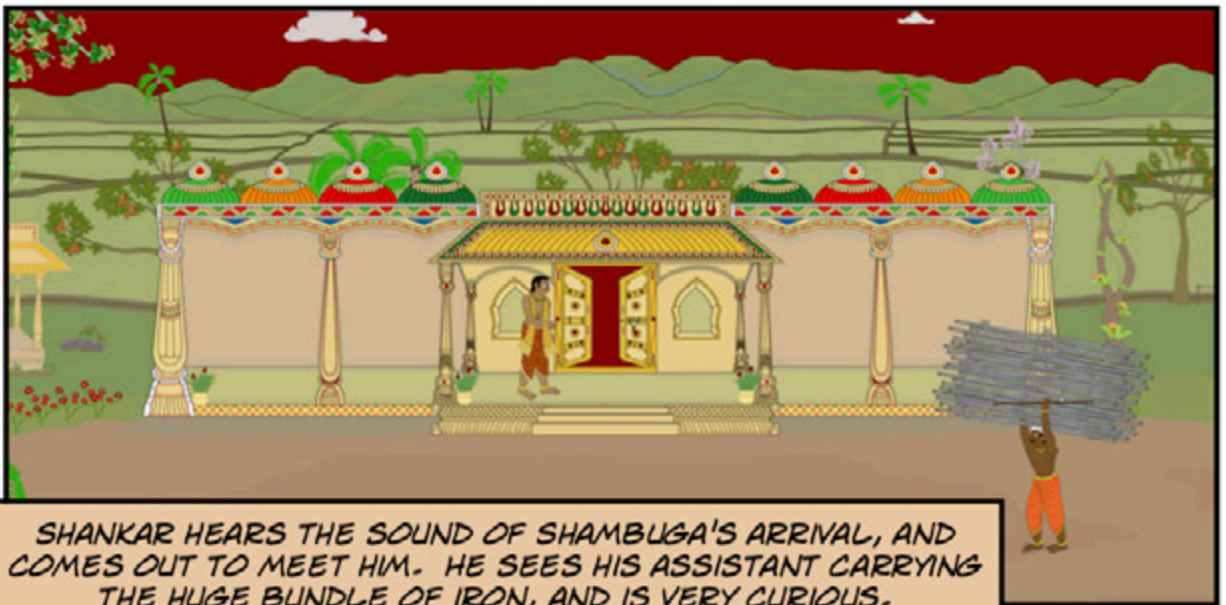
...AND SUDDENLY, THE BUNDLE OF IRON BEGINS TO RISE INTO THE AIR!



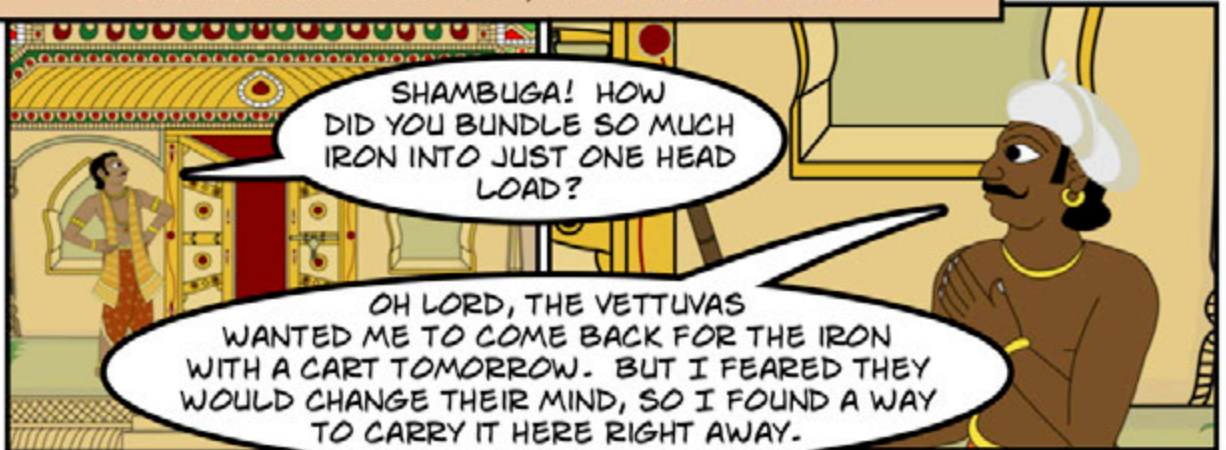


WITH THE HELP OF LORD VISHNU, SHAMBUGA RESTS THE IRON ON HIS HEAD, THEN RUNS SWIFTLY BACK TO PONNIVALA.





SHANKAR HEARS THE SOUND OF SHAMBUGA'S ARRIVAL, AND COMES OUT TO MEET HIM. HE SEES HIS ASSISTANT CARRYING THE HUGE BUNDLE OF IRON, AND IS VERY CURIOUS.



SHAMBUGA! HOW DID YOU BUNDLE SO MUCH IRON INTO JUST ONE HEAD LOAD?

OH LORD, THE VETTUVAS WANTED ME TO COME BACK FOR THE IRON WITH A CART TOMORROW. BUT I FEARED THEY WOULD CHANGE THEIR MIND, SO I FOUND A WAY TO CARRY IT HERE RIGHT AWAY.



THERE CAN BE NO OTHER ASSISTANT LIKE YOU IN THE WHOLE WORLD!

SHANKAR IS IMPRESSED BY SHAMBUGA'S FEAT.



FINALLY THE ARTISANS CAN BEGIN TO MAKE THE NET! SHANKAR BRINGS THE IRON TO THE ARTISANS. THEN HE EXPLAINS WHAT IS NEEDED.

START ON THE NET RIGHT AWAY! IT MUST HAVE A THOUSAND INTERWOVEN STRANDS SO THAT THE PARROTS WILL NOT ESCAPE FROM THE TOP!



AND IT MUST HAVE A THOUSAND STRANDS MORE ON THE SIDES! THOSE PARROTS CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO GET AWAY!



THE ARTISANS BEGIN THEIR WORK WITH THE NEW IRON.

IT IS FINE WORK. THE ARTISANS CRAFT THEIR NET WITH GREAT CARE.



TO HELP SPEED THE WORK ALONG, VISHNU SENDS DOWN A BEAM OF LIGHT. THE LIGHT ILLUMINATES THE NET, AND BEGINS FUSING THE IRON STRANDS TOGETHER.



ONCE THE NET IS COMPLETE, SHANKAR, THE YOUNGER OF THE PONNIVALA KINGS, THINKS OF ANOTHER PROBLEM.

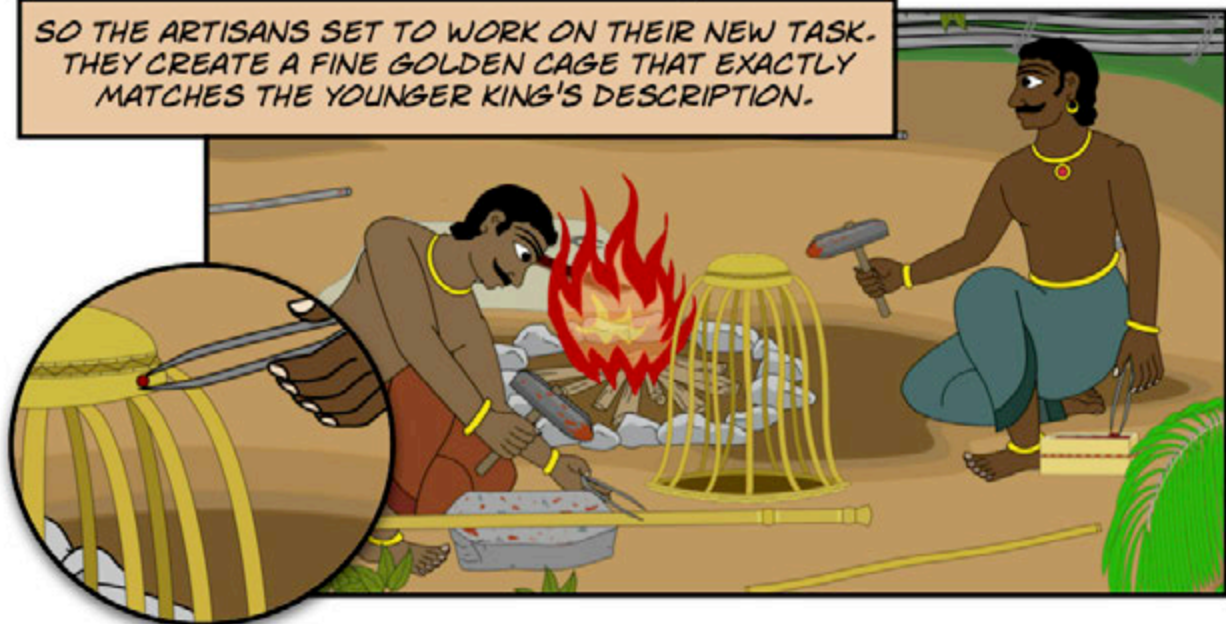
ONCE WE CATCH THE PARROTS, HOW WILL WE GET THEM HOME? WE MUST HAVE A GOLDEN CAGE MADE, TO CARRY THEM IN.

THAT IS A GOOD IDEA, BROTHER. LET'S GET THE ARTISANS BACK AGAIN.

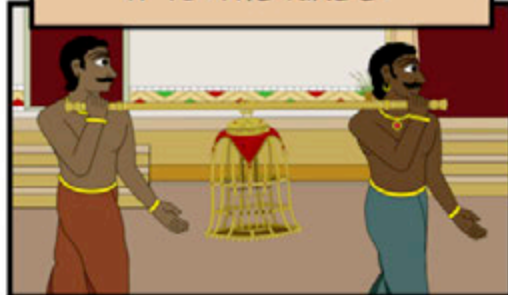
ARTISANS, WE NEED YOU TO MAKE A GOLDEN CAGE.

MAKE IT WITH FINE UPRIGHT RODS, AND SHINING CROSS PIECES!

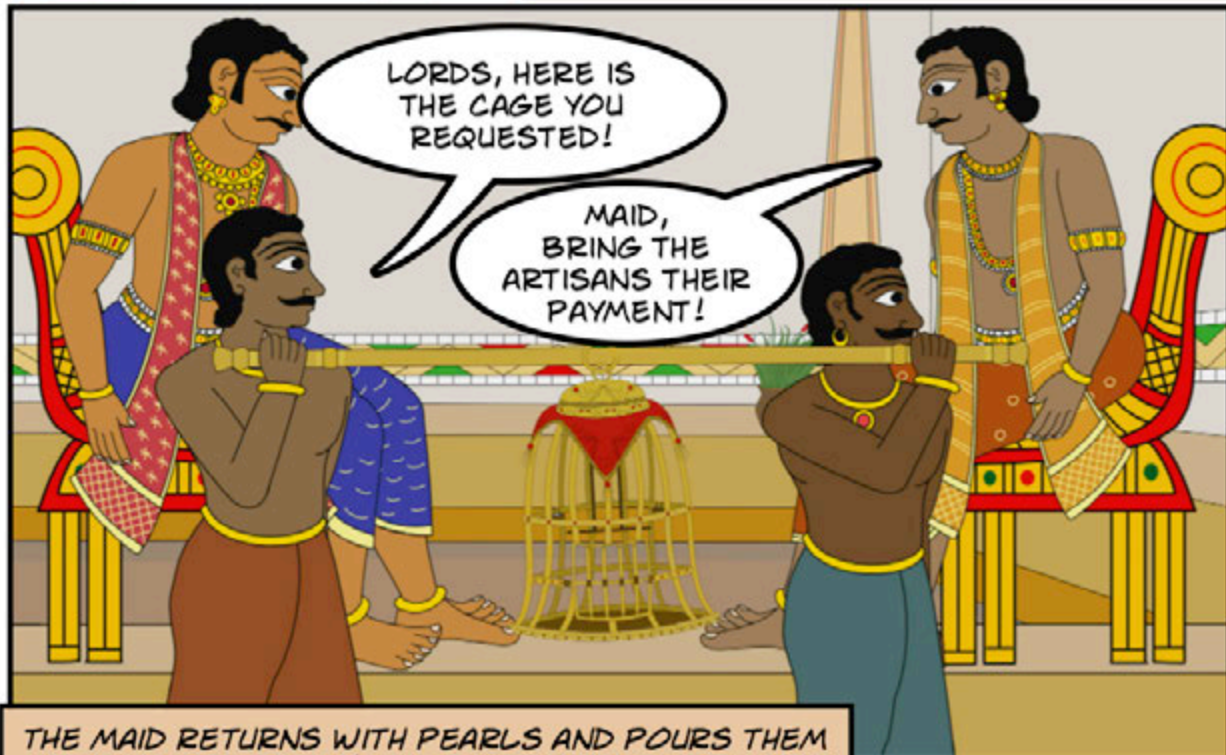
SO THE ARTISANS SET TO WORK ON THEIR NEW TASK. THEY CREATE A FINE GOLDEN CAGE THAT EXACTLY MATCHES THE YOUNGER KING'S DESCRIPTION.



THE ARTISANS BRING THEIR FINISHED WORK AND SHOW IT TO THE KINGS.



MAID! GO AND GET A MEASURE OF PEARLS.



LORDS, HERE IS THE CAGE YOU REQUESTED!

MAID, BRING THE ARTISANS THEIR PAYMENT!

THE MAID RETURNS WITH PEARLS AND POURS THEM INTO THE ARTISAN'S SACK. THEY THEN LEAVE.





SHAMBUGA ENTERS THE NEIGHBOURING VILLAGES, BANGING HIS DRUM. EVERYONE KNOWS HE HAS COME.



Neigh

ON THE DAY OF THE HUNT, SHAMBUGA READIES THE HORSES, AND THE TWIN KINGS READY THEMSELVES.

OH ELDER BROTHER, DON'T YOU THINK OUR CHASTE SISTER SHOULD BLESS OUR SWORDS BEFORE WE GO?

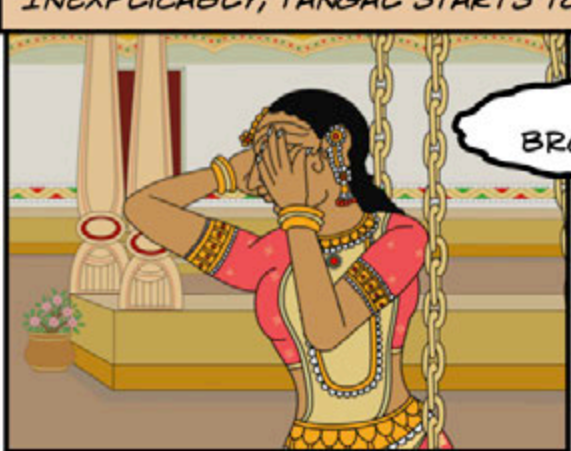
SHE SHOULD BE THE ONE TO HAND OUR WEAPONS TO US.

GOOD IDEA, BROTHER. LET'S CALL TANGAL AND ASK HER TO DO THIS FOR US.



OH SISTER! COME AND LIFT UP OUR SWORDS! BLESS THEM AND THEN HAND THEM TO US!

INEXPLICABLY, TANGAL STARTS TO CRY.



OH, BROTHERS!



OH LOVELY SISTER! TANGAL! WHY ARE YOU CRYING?



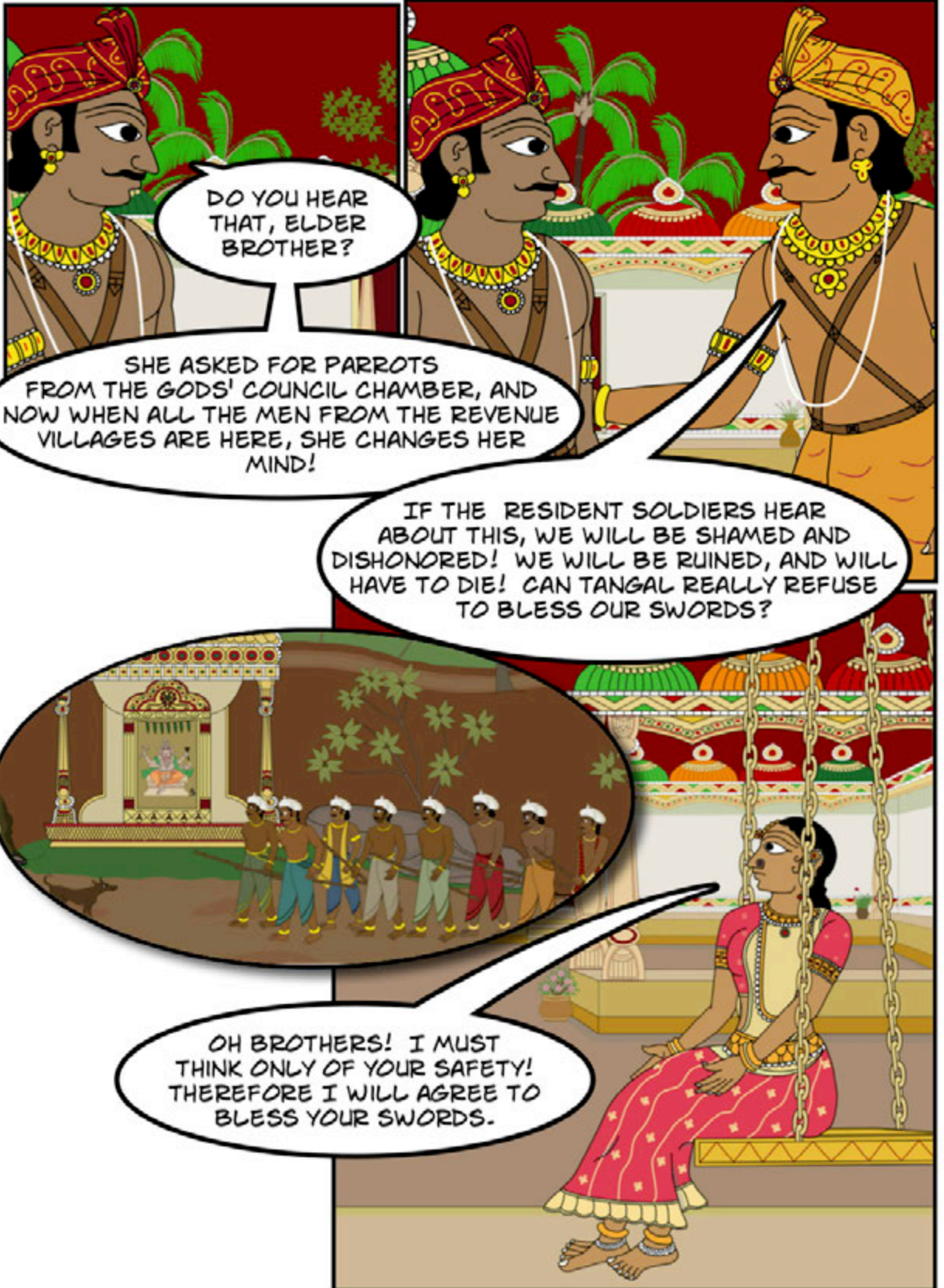
OH BROTHERS! I ASKED YOU TO CATCH ME THOSE TWO PARROTS WITHOUT THINKING ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES. I DO NOT WANT ANY PARROTS!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

Roar!

VIRATANGAL, THE CHASTE VETTUVA PRINCESS, HAS ORDERED FIVE THOUSAND TIGERS AND FIVE THOUSAND COBRAS TO GUARD THOSE TWO PARROTS! OH BROTHERS, DO NOT GO!

Sssssss!



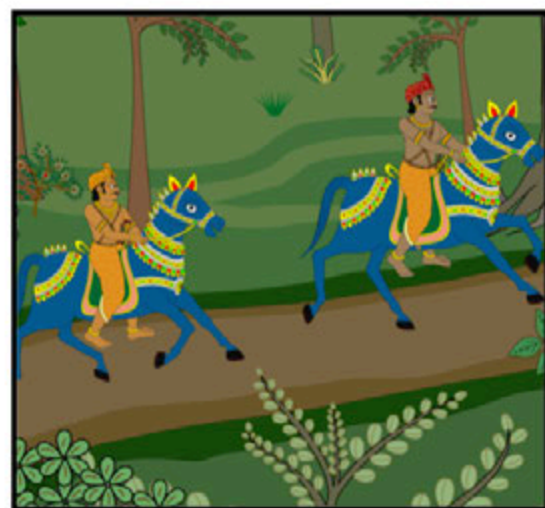
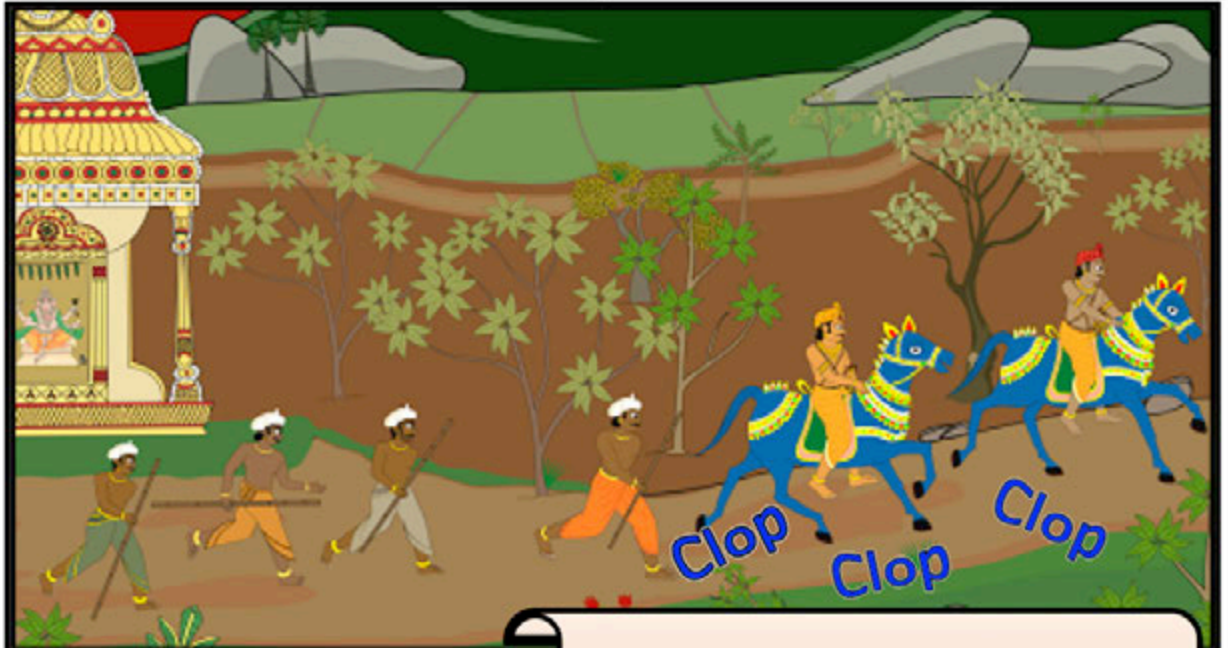
TANGAL GOES TO THE WORKSHOP WHERE THE SWORDS ARE KEPT. SHE PRAYS TO VISHNU.

OH GREAT VISHNU! MY ELDER BROTHERS ARE GOING TO CATCH TWO PARROTS FOR ME.

TO QUIET MY FEARS ABOUT THIS MISSION, PLEASE LET THEIR SWORDS FLY DIRECTLY TOWARDS ME!

MAGICALLY, THE SWORDS FLY RIGHT INTO TANGAL'S HANDS!

Whoosh!



THE TWIN KINGS OF PONNIVALA WILL SOON BE ON VETTIVA SOIL. WILL THE TWO LORDS SUCCEED WITH THIS DANGEROUS MISSION? HOW WILL THEY BE ABLE TO DEFEAT FIVE THOUSAND TIGERS AND FIVE THOUSAND COBRAS? AND WHAT WILL THE VETTIVAS THINK WHEN THEY REALIZE THAT THEIR LONG TIME RIVALS HAVE STOLEN LOVELY BIRDS FROM THEIR LANDS? WILL THIS EXPEDITION AND ITS EXPECTED BOOTY BE WORTH THE CONSEQUENCES?

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/comic20

The Legend of
Ponnivala

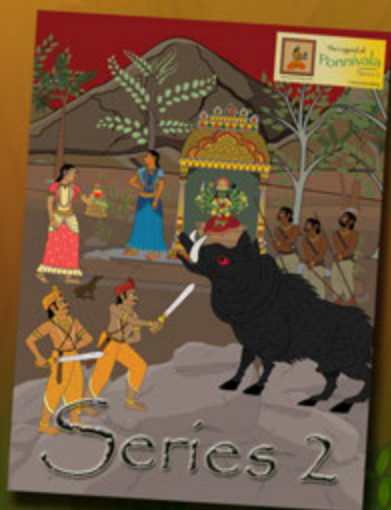
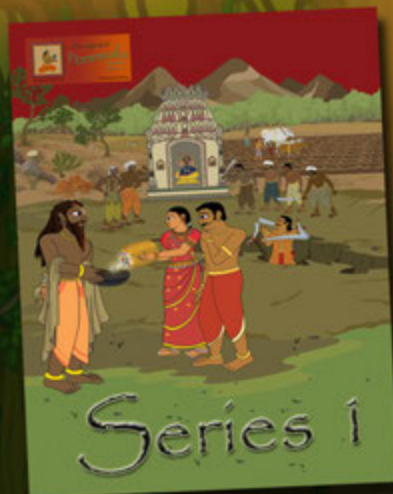
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