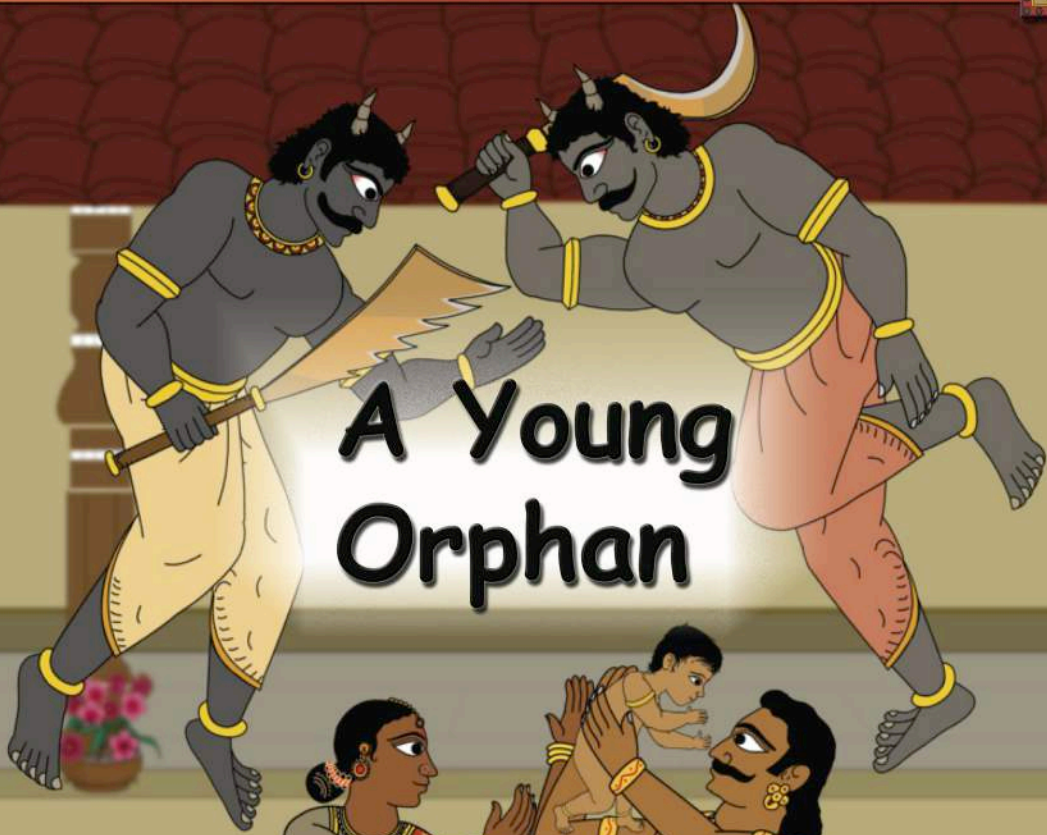


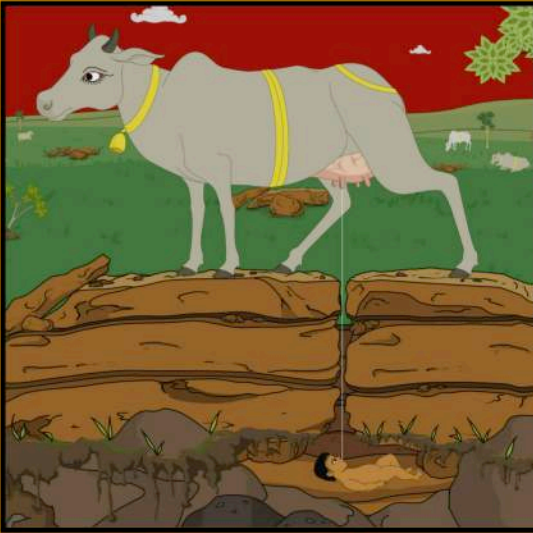
Series 1
Book 2

The Legend of
Ponnivala



A Young Orphan





A YOUNG ORPHAN
SERIES 1 COMIC 2

LORD SHIVA HAS CURSED A FARMING FAMILY TO BE CHILDLESS DUE TO THE DEATH OF SOME COWS. HE LATER RELENTS, CREATING A LITTLE BABY WHICH HE HIDES UNDER SOME STONES. SOON DISCOVERED, THIS BABY IS ADOPTED AND LOVED. BUT THEN HIS PARENTS DIE SUDDENLY AND THE YOUNG BOY FINDS HIMSELF ORPHANED ...

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PONNIVALLA
PUBLICATIONS
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LORD SHIVA THINKS BACK ON PAST EVENTS ...



MY LOVELY WIFE PARVATI HAS ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE LIFE ON EARTH PROSPER. ONE DAY, SHE CREATED NINE FARMER BROTHERS TO MAKE THE EARTH BOUNTIFUL.

BUT SOON AFTERWARDS, A GREAT FAMINE SCORCHED THE EARTH TO THE EAST. THIS AREA, RULED BY THE CHOLA KING, WAS SO BARREN THAT THE MONARCH WAS FORCED TO LET HIS PRIZE COWS FREE TO WANDER.

THOSE COWS DISCOVERED THE SUGARCANE OF PONNIVALA. THEY ATE FROM THE FIELD, AND TRAMPLED MUCH OF THE CROP. TO PROTECT HIS SUGARCANE, THE KING OF PONNIVALA ORDERED A SPEAR-TIPPED FENCE BUILT, WHICH ENDED UP KILLING ALL OF THE COWS!

IN RESPONSE TO THIS TERRIBLE DEED, I HAVE CURSED HIS WHOLE FAMILY...THERE SHALL BE NO CHILDREN BORN TO THEM FOR SEVEN GENERATIONS!



MATTERS IN THE HOME OF PONNIVALA'S LEADING FARMER ARE AT A STANDSTILL. MANY YEARS HAVE PASSED AND STILL NOT A SINGLE CHILD'S VOICE CAN BE HEARD. KOLATTA AND HIS WIFE WORRY ABOUT THE FUTURE.



SO MANY YEARS HAVE PASSED, AND EVEN THOUGH OUR LANDS PROSPER, I HAVE NOT GIVEN BIRTH, EVER!

WHO HAVE I WRONGED? DID I EVER FAIL TO FEED A WANDERING BEGGAR?



OH WIFE! IF THAT IS OUR FATE, THEN WE MUST LIVE WITH IT!

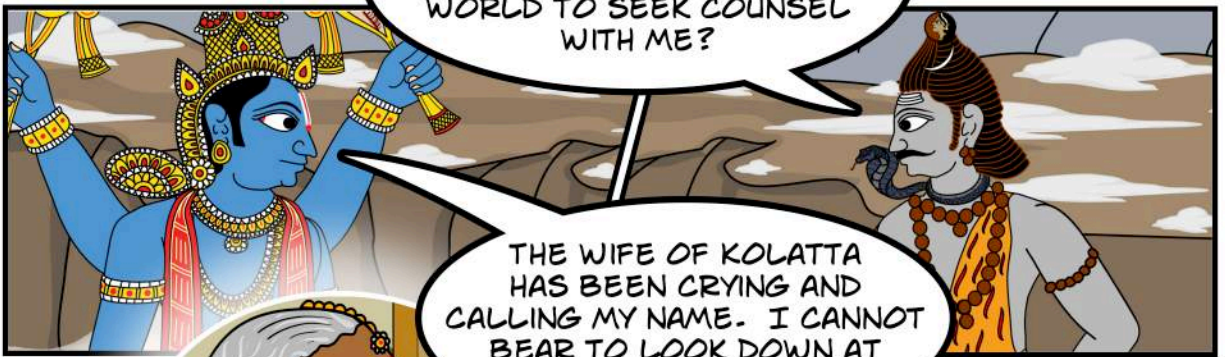
KOLATTA'S WIFE ARIYANACCI BEGINS TO CRY. SHE CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY SHE HAS NOT BEEN GRANTED CHILDREN. AS SHE CRIES, SHE THINKS OF LORD VISHNU.



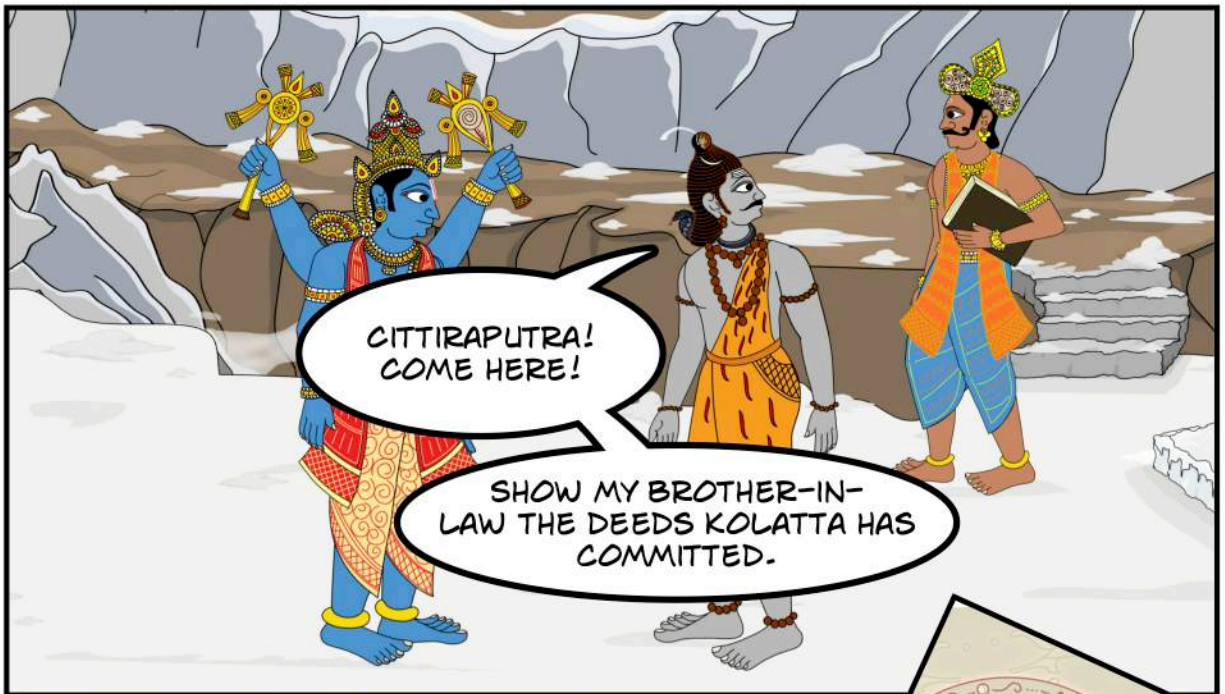
WHAT HAVE I DONE?



OH VISHNU, MY
BROTHER-IN-LAW! WHY HAVE
YOU ABANDONED THE HUMAN
WORLD TO SEEK COUNSEL
WITH ME?



WHAT SIN HAVE
THOSE TWO COMMITTED?
WHY DO THEY HAVE NO
CHILDREN?



CITTIRAPUTRA!
COME HERE!

SHOW MY BROTHER-IN-LAW
THE DEEDS KOLATTA HAS
COMMITTED.

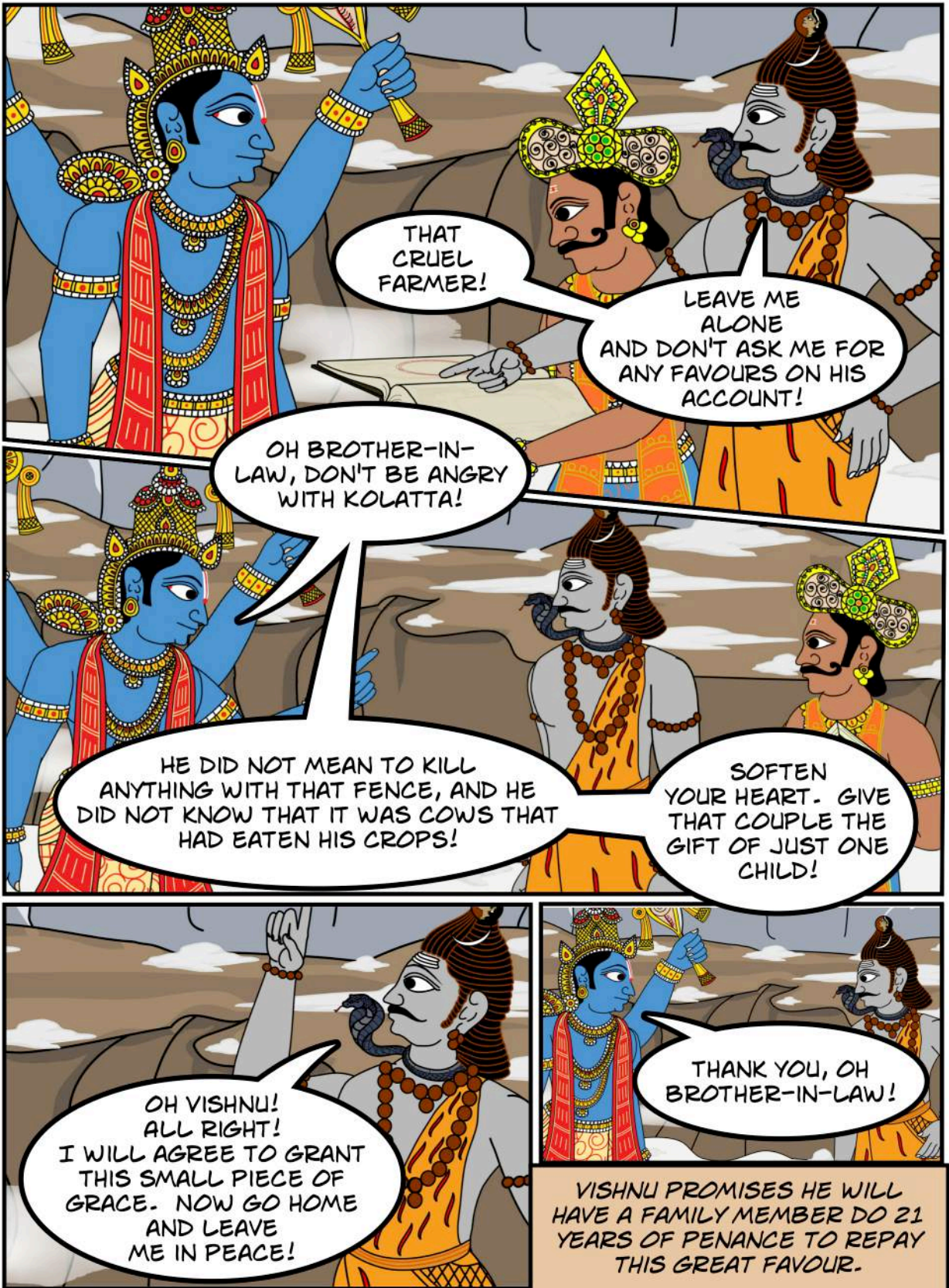


THAT
VILLAIN!

HE ORDERED A
SPEAR-TIPPED
FENCE BUILT TO
PROTECT HIS
SUGARCANE...

THE CHOLA
KING'S COWS DIED A
HORRIBLE DEATH
BECAUSE OF IT!

HE VALUED HIS
SUGARCANE ABOVE HIS DUTY
TO FEED AND PROTECT
SACRED COWS!



THAT
CRUEL
FARMER!

LEAVE ME
ALONE
AND DON'T ASK ME FOR
ANY FAVOURS ON HIS
ACCOUNT!

OH BROTHER-IN-
LAW, DON'T BE ANGRY
WITH KOLATTA!

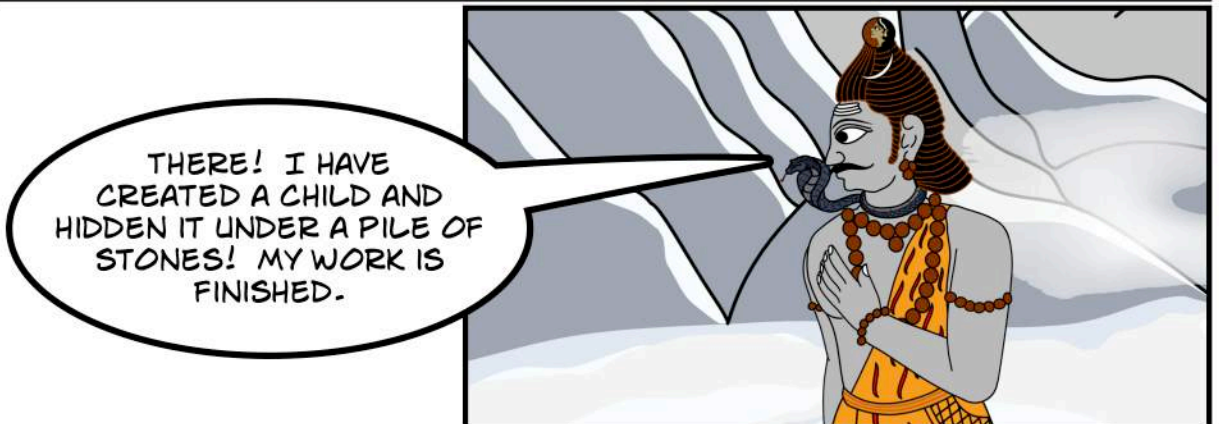
HE DID NOT MEAN TO KILL
ANYTHING WITH THAT FENCE, AND HE
DID NOT KNOW THAT IT WAS COWS THAT
HAD EATEN HIS CROPS!

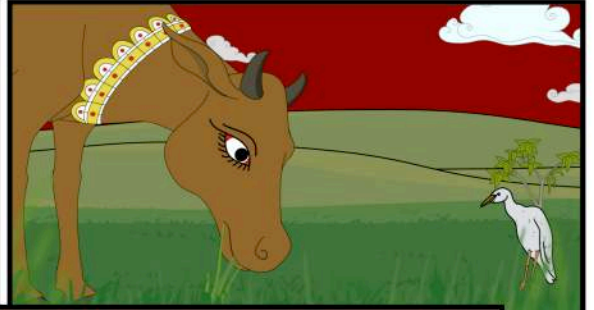
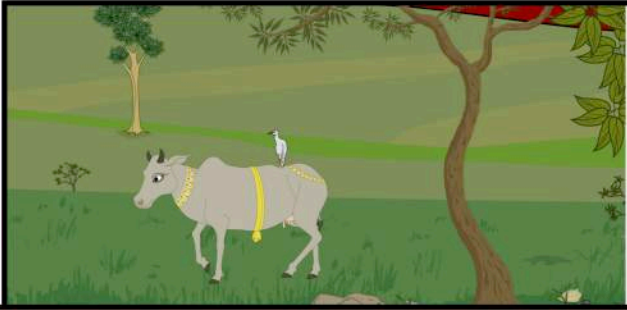
SOFTEN
YOUR HEART. GIVE
THAT COUPLE THE
GIFT OF JUST ONE
CHILD!

OH VISHNU!
ALL RIGHT!
I WILL AGREE TO GRANT
THIS SMALL PIECE OF
GRACE. NOW GO HOME
AND LEAVE
ME IN PEACE!

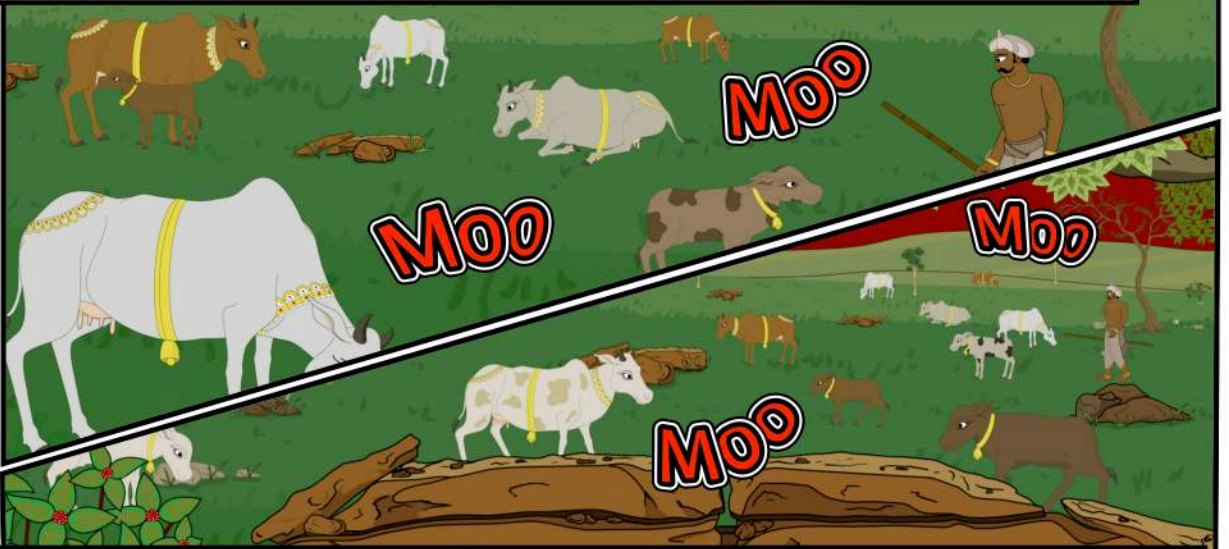
THANK YOU, OH
BROTHER-IN-LAW!

VISHNU PROMISES HE WILL
HAVE A FAMILY MEMBER DO 21
YEARS OF PENANCE TO REPAY
THIS GREAT FAVOUR.





IT IS A GOOD AND PROSPEROUS TIME. PONNIVALA IS FLOURISHING.



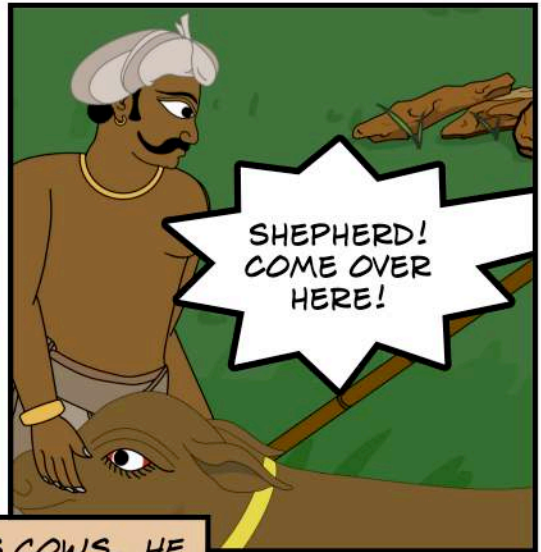
THE GOOD KING KOLATTA HAS 12 FINE COWS, AND EACH ONE HAS A CALF. EACH MORNING THE SHEPHERD TAKES THESE ANIMALS TO GRAZE IN A FIELD KNOWN FOR ITS ROCKS AND LIZARDS. IN THE AFTERNOON HE RETURNS THEM TO THE PALACE AND GIVES THEM WATER TO DRINK.



The Legend of Ponnivala

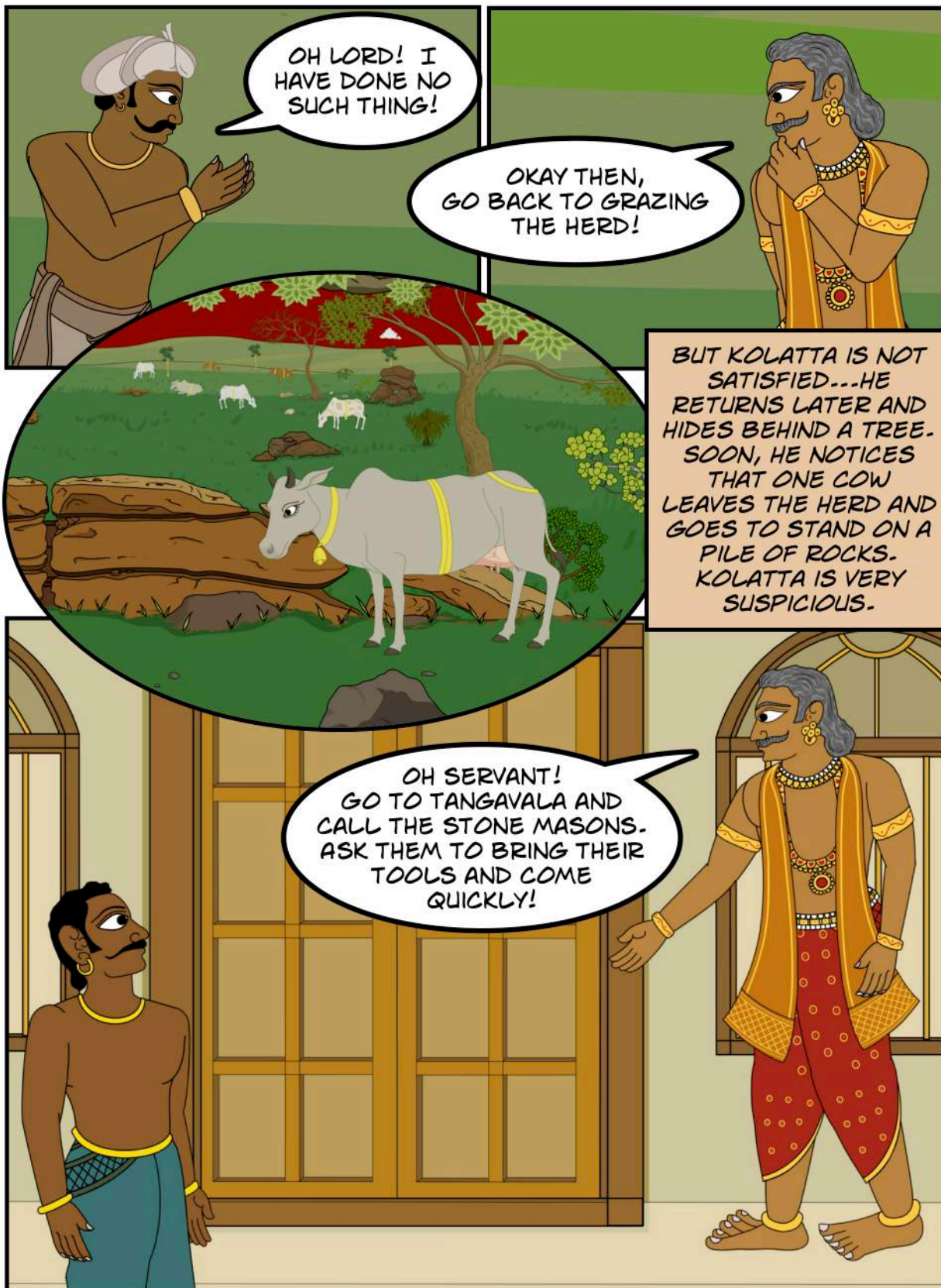


ALL OF THE CALVES
ARE HEALTHY AND
FULL OF ENERGY.
ALL EXCEPT
ONE...FOR THE
MOTHER OF ONE OF
THE CALVES IS
PROTECTING A VERY
IMPORTANT SECRET!



ON THIS DAY, KOLATTA DECIDES TO VISIT HIS COWS. HE NOTICES SOMETHING STRANGE ABOUT ONE OF THE CALVES, AND DECIDES TO INVESTIGATE THE MATTER. HE SPEAKS TO HIS SHEPHERD ABOUT HIS SUSPICIONS.





OH LORD! I HAVE DONE NO SUCH THING!

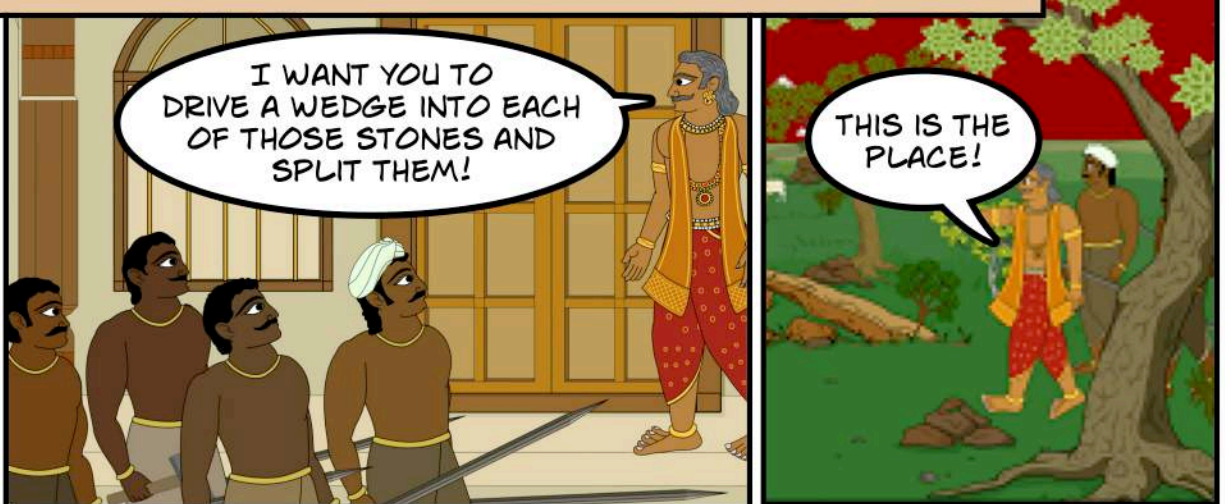
OKAY THEN, GO BACK TO GRAZING THE HERD!

BUT KOLATTA IS NOT SATISFIED...HE RETURNS LATER AND HIDES BEHIND A TREE. SOON, HE NOTICES THAT ONE COW LEAVES THE HERD AND GOES TO STAND ON A PILE OF ROCKS. KOLATTA IS VERY SUSPICIOUS.

OH SERVANT! GO TO TANGAVALA AND CALL THE STONE MASONS. ASK THEM TO BRING THEIR TOOLS AND COME QUICKLY!

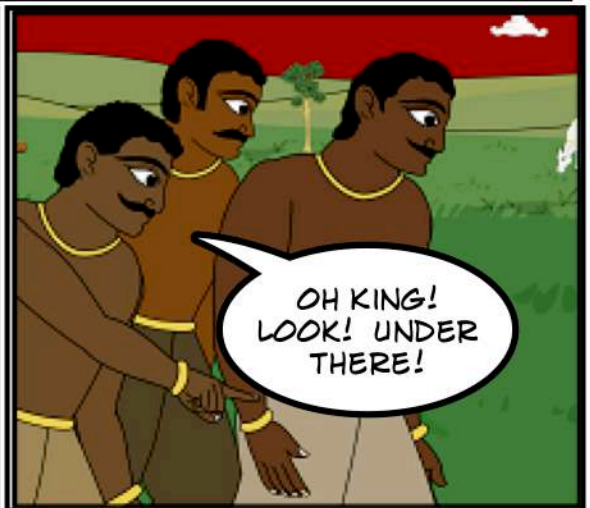


THE KING ISSUES HIS INSTRUCTIONS TO THE STONE MASONS, AND THEN LEADS THEM TO THE FIELD OF STONES AND LIZARDS.



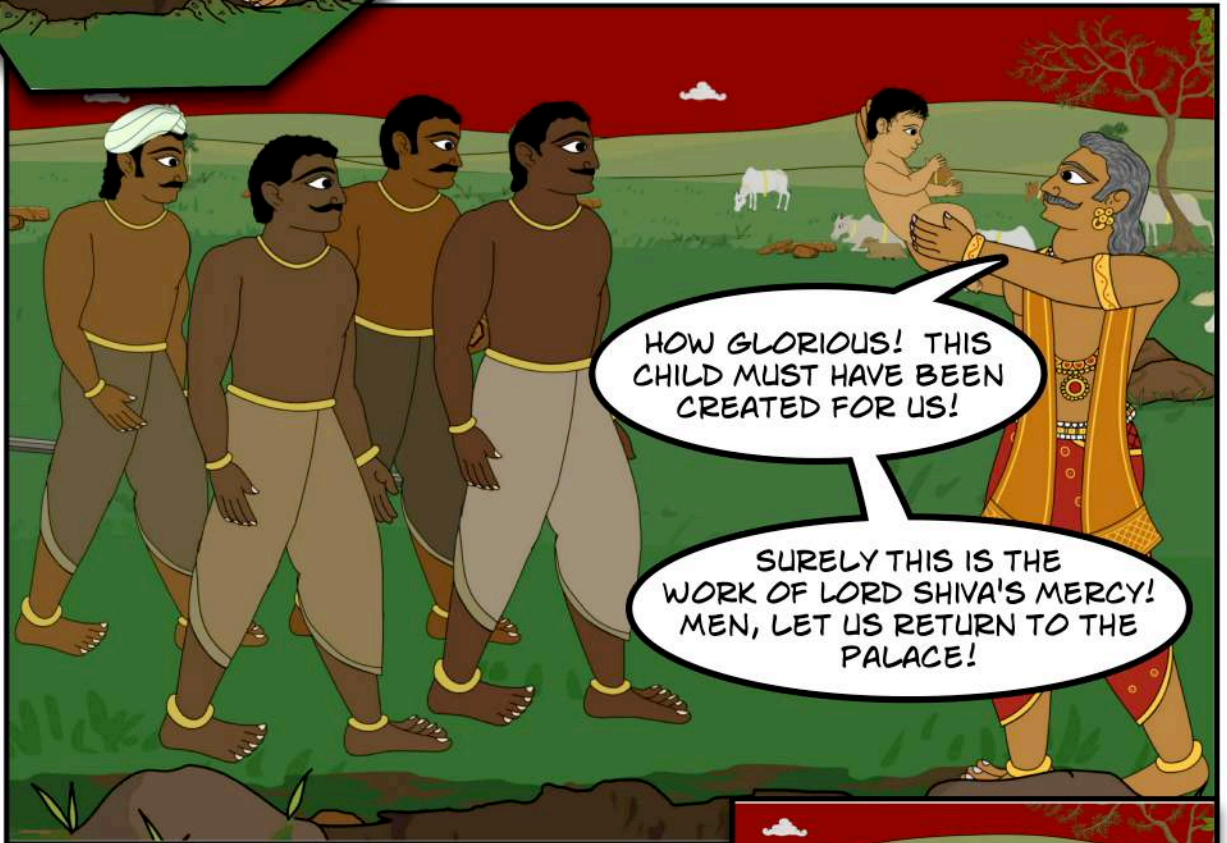


THE MEN WORK HARD TO LIFT THE SEVEN HEAVY STONES. THEY FIND NOTHING. FINALLY THEY REACH THE SEVENTH STONE. WHEN THEY LIFT IT, THEY UNCOVER A SURPRISE! ALL OF THE MEN GATHER IN AWE.





INSIDE THE HOLE IS A BABY BOY AS BEAUTIFUL AS THE FULL MOON!

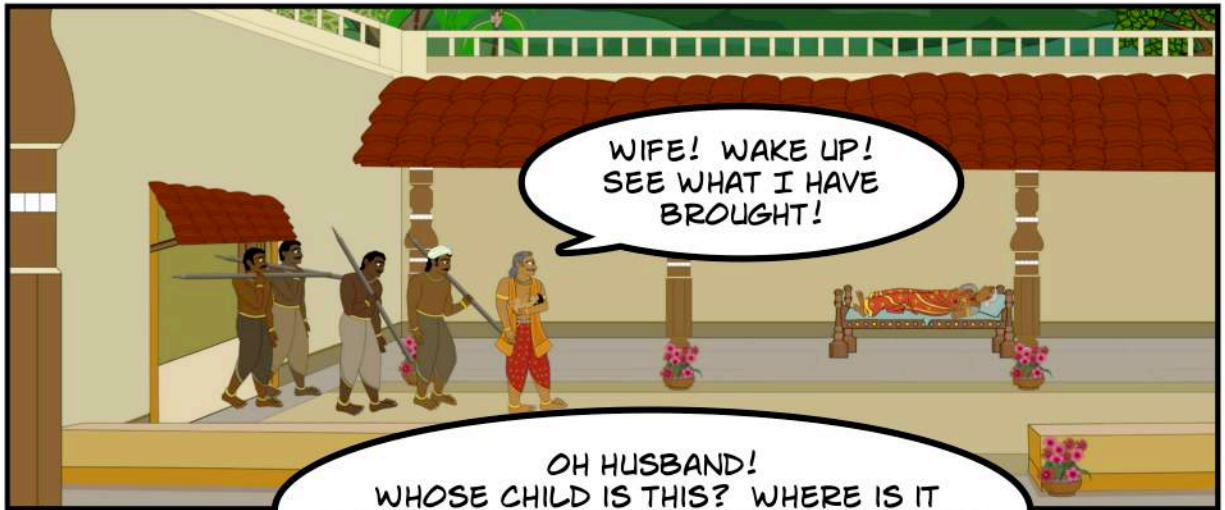


HOW GLORIOUS! THIS CHILD MUST HAVE BEEN CREATED FOR US!

SURELY THIS IS THE WORK OF LORD SHIVA'S MERCY! MEN, LET US RETURN TO THE PALACE!

KOLATTA PICKS UP THE BOY AND IS OVERCOME WITH JOY. HE HUGS THE CHILD AND KISSES ITS JEWEL-LIKE FACE. HE KNOWS THAT THE CHILD MUST BE A GIFT FROM THE GODS THEMSELVES.





WIFE! WAKE UP!
SEE WHAT I HAVE
BROUGHT!

OH HUSBAND!
WHOSE CHILD IS THIS? WHERE IS IT
FROM? HOW DID YOU LAY YOUR HANDS ON
SOMETHING SO PRECIOUS?



WIFE! LORD SHIVA HAS
BLESSED US! HE HAS BESTOWED
HIS GRACE UPON US! ASK THE
STONE MASONS!

YOUR HUSBAND IS CORRECT.
WE REMOVED SEVEN STONES FROM A
FIELD TO THE WEST OF HERE. AND UNDER THE
SEVENTH, WE FOUND THIS BEAUTIFUL
CHILD!

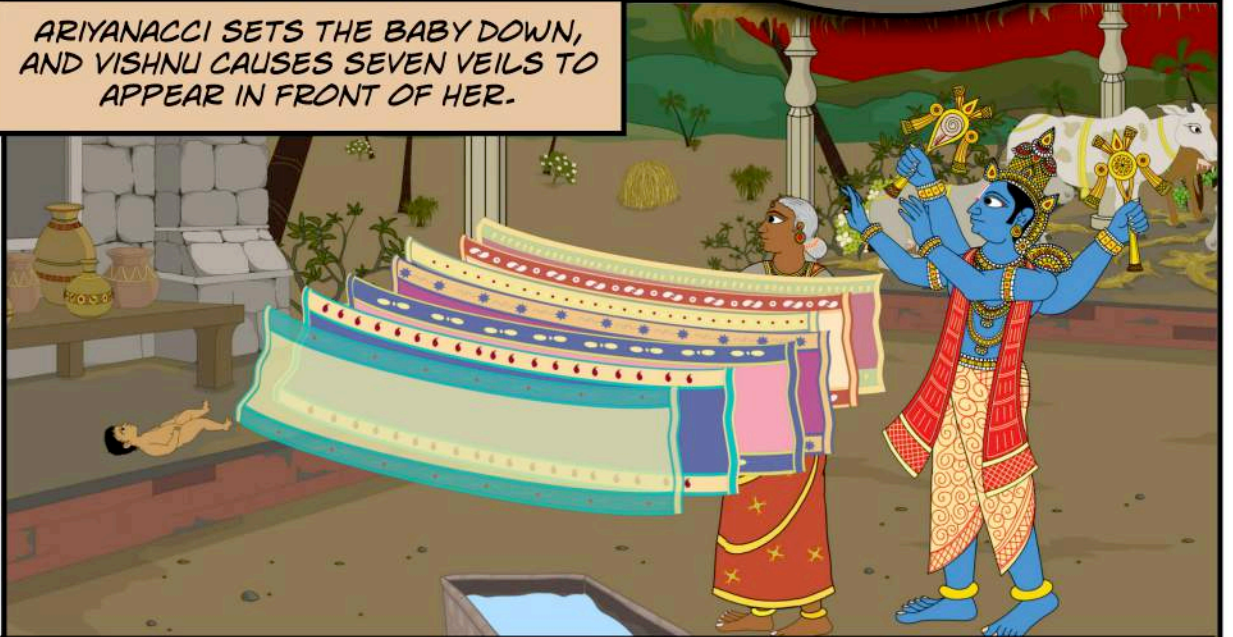


COULD IT
REALLY BE
OURS?

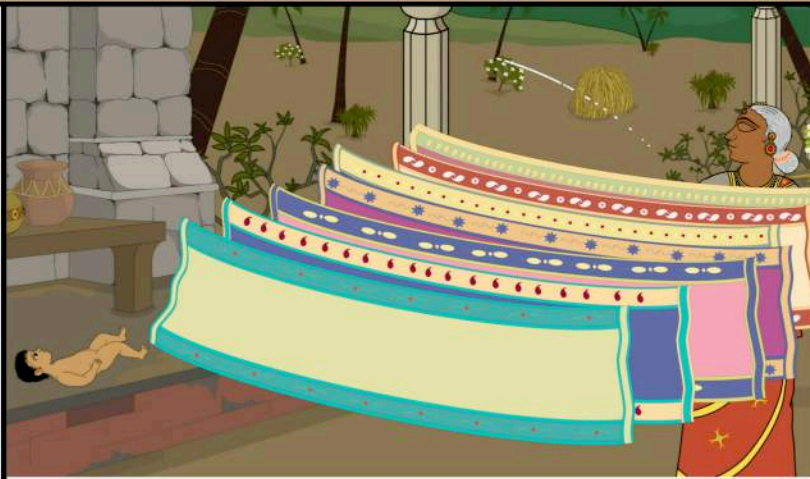




ARIYANACCI SETS THE BABY DOWN, AND VISHNU CAUSES SEVEN VEILS TO APPEAR IN FRONT OF HER.

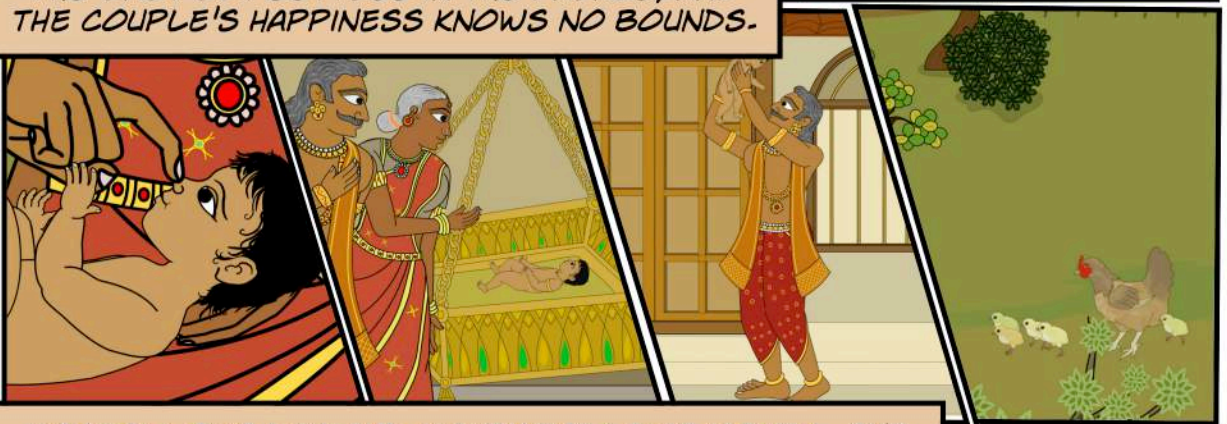


MILK SPURTS FROM HER, AND LANDS IN THE BABY'S MOUTH. WITH THIS ACT ARIYANACCI KNOWS THE CHILD IS TRULY HERS TO RAISE. VISHNU, HIS WORK COMPLETE, FADES AWAY, AND SO DO THE VEILS.

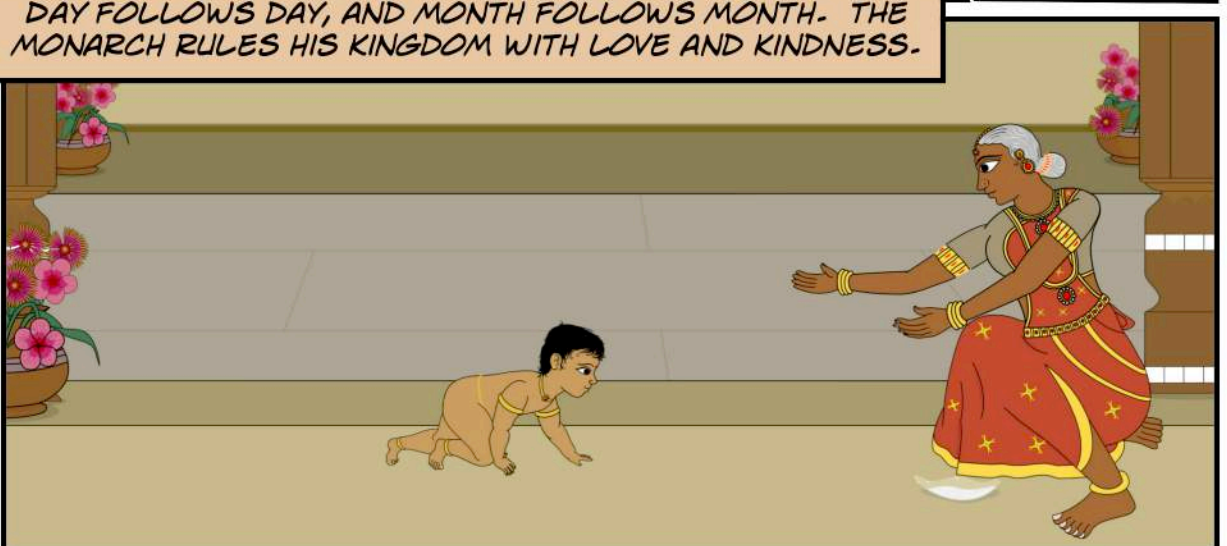


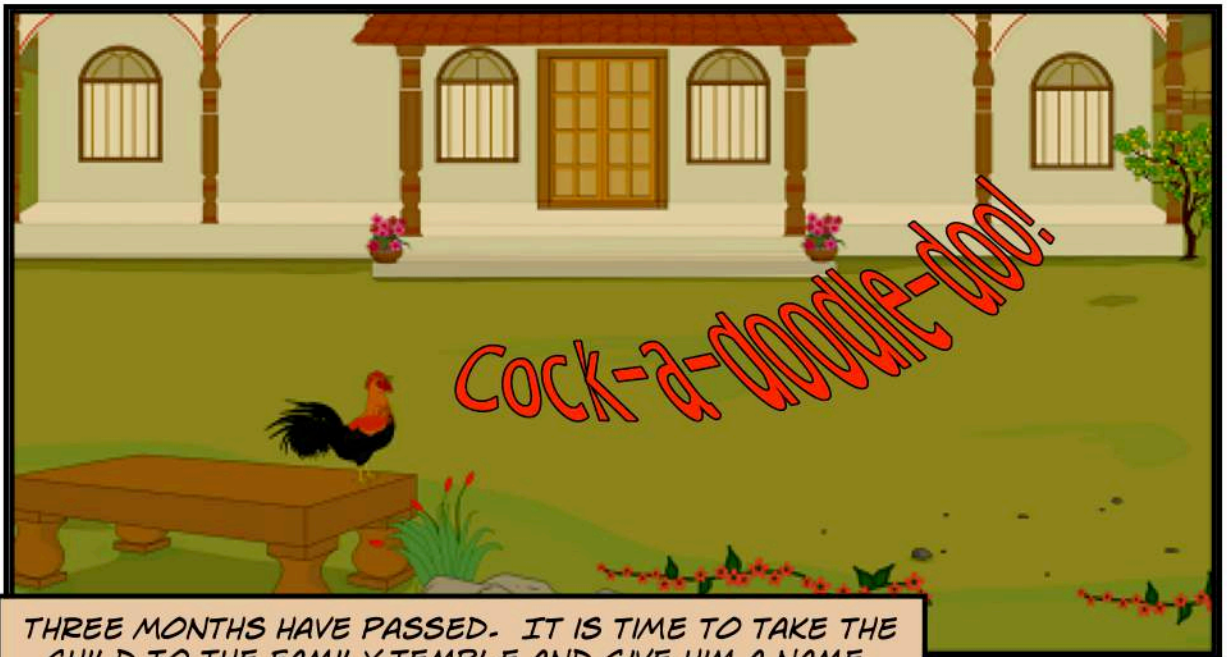


THE BABY BOY SETTLES IN THE PALACE, AND THE COUPLE'S HAPPINESS KNOWS NO BOUNDS.

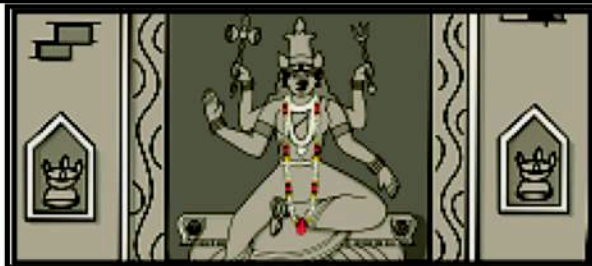


DAY FOLLOWS DAY, AND MONTH FOLLOWS MONTH. THE MONARCH RULES HIS KINGDOM WITH LOVE AND KINDNESS.

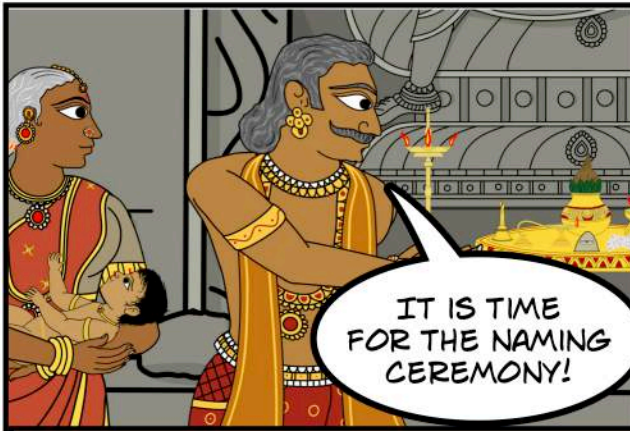




THREE MONTHS HAVE PASSED. IT IS TIME TO TAKE THE CHILD TO THE FAMILY TEMPLE AND GIVE HIM A NAME.



OFFERINGS HAVE BEEN SET BEFORE THE FAMILY GODDESS. MANY VILLAGERS ARE ALREADY IN ATTENDANCE.



ARIYANACCI CALLS UPON VISHNU, WHO SOON ARRIVES.



LORD VISHNU CALLS UPON CELATTA, AND SHE JOINS HER BROTHER FOR THE EVENT.





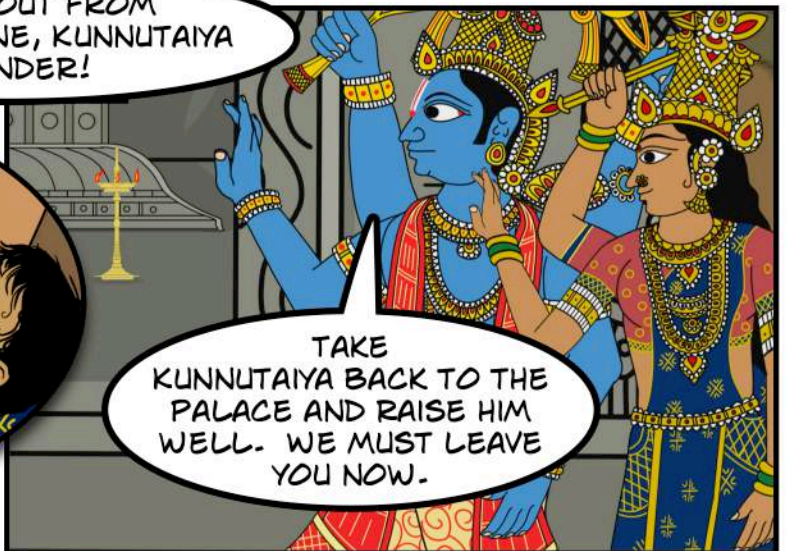
FINE CELATTA! TAKE THE BOY AND SIT FACING EAST.

NOW REPEAT MY LINES THREE TIMES!
"PULLED OUT FROM UNDER A
STONE, KUNNUTAIYA
GOUNDER!"

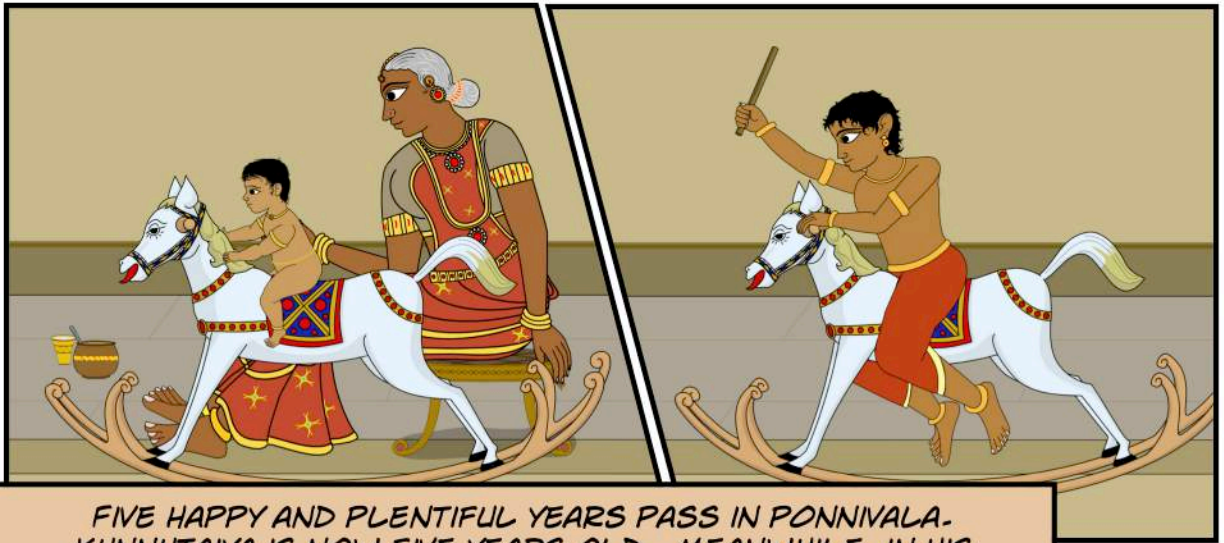


PULLED OUT FROM
UNDER A STONE, KUNNUTAIYA
GOUNDER!

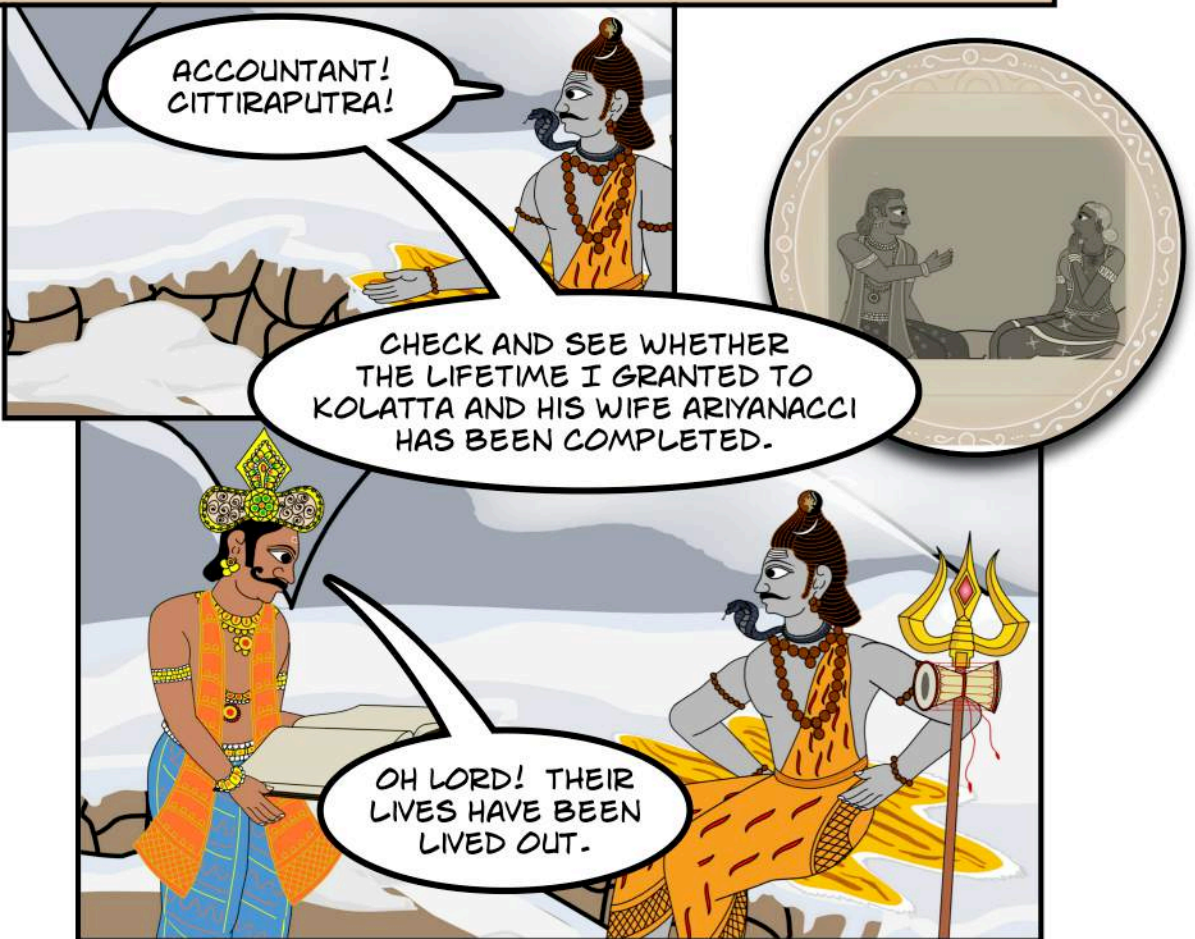
CELATTA DOES AS VISHNU
INSTRUCTED, AND REPEATS
HIS WORDS THREE TIMES.



TAKE
KUNNUTAIYA BACK TO THE
PALACE AND RAISE HIM
WELL. WE MUST LEAVE
YOU NOW.



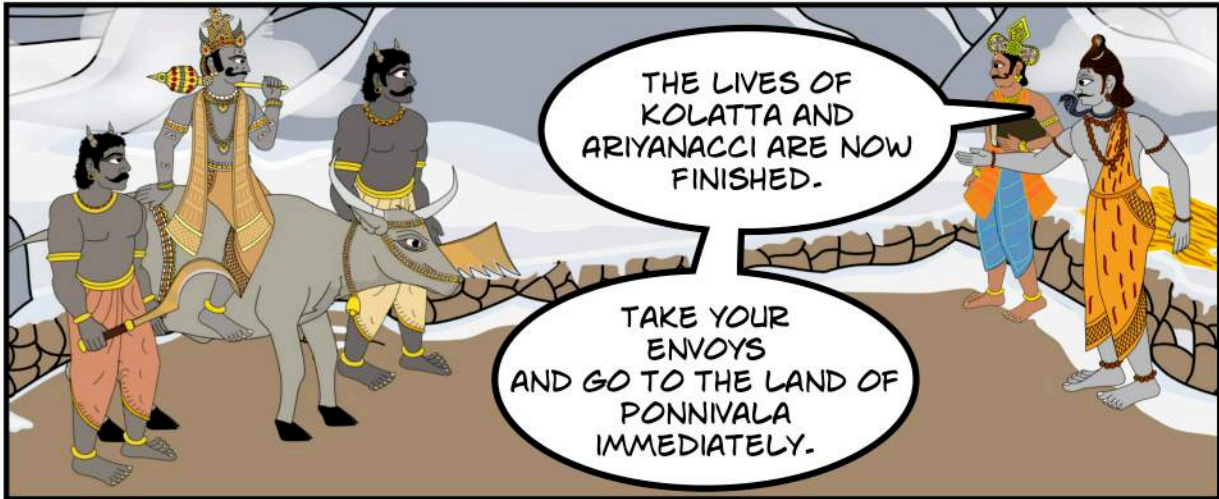
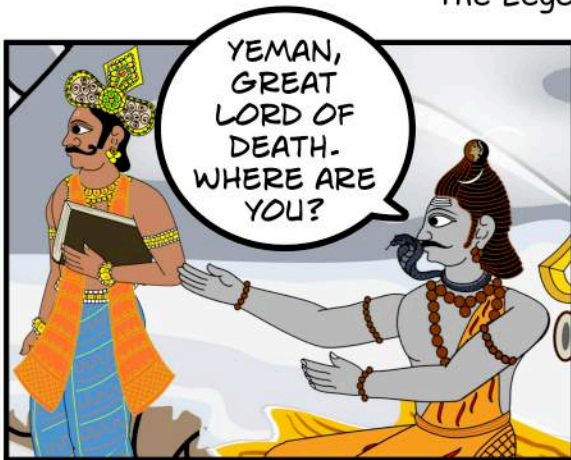
FIVE HAPPY AND PLENTIFUL YEARS PASS IN PONNIVALA. KUNNUTAIYA IS NOW FIVE YEARS OLD. MEANWHILE, IN HIS COUNCIL CHAMBERS, LORD SHIVA CALLS FOR HIS ACCOUNTANT.

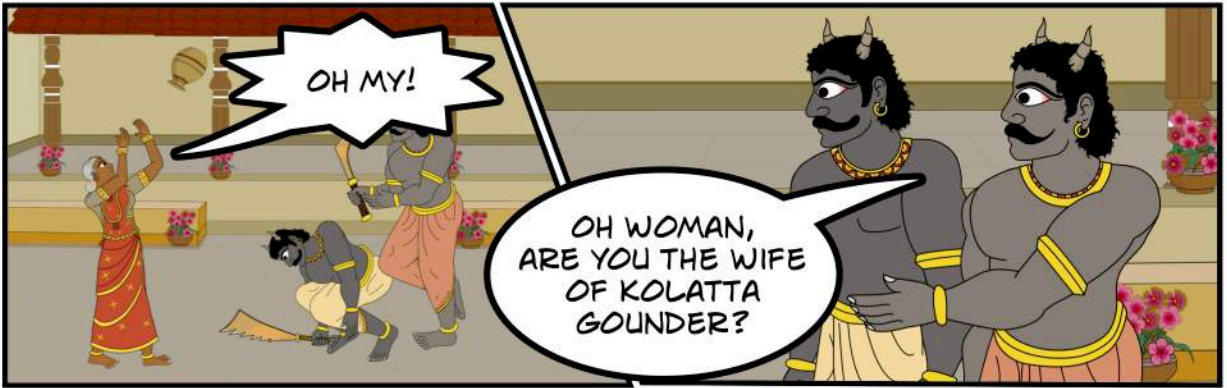


ACCOUNTANT!
CITTIRAPUTRA!

CHECK AND SEE WHETHER
THE LIFETIME I GRANTED TO
KOLATTA AND HIS WIFE ARIYANACCI
HAS BEEN COMPLETED.

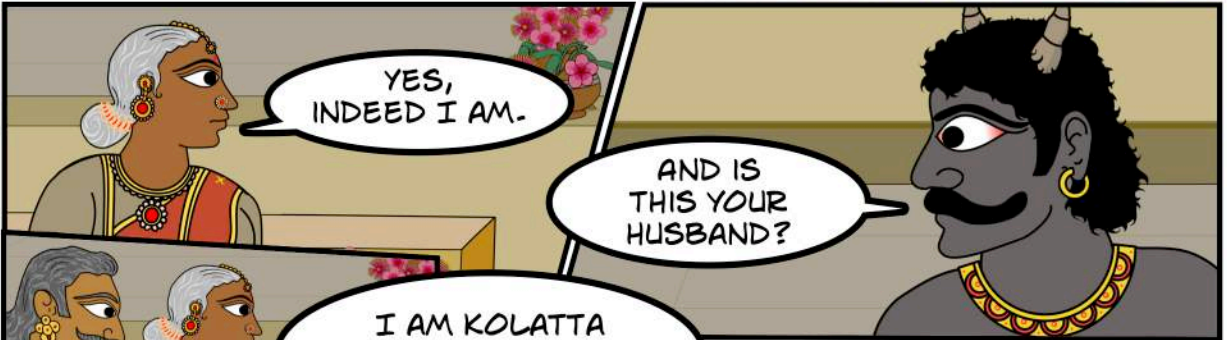
OH LORD! THEIR
LIVES HAVE BEEN
LIVED OUT.





OH MY!

OH WOMAN,
ARE YOU THE WIFE
OF KOLATTA
GOUNDER?

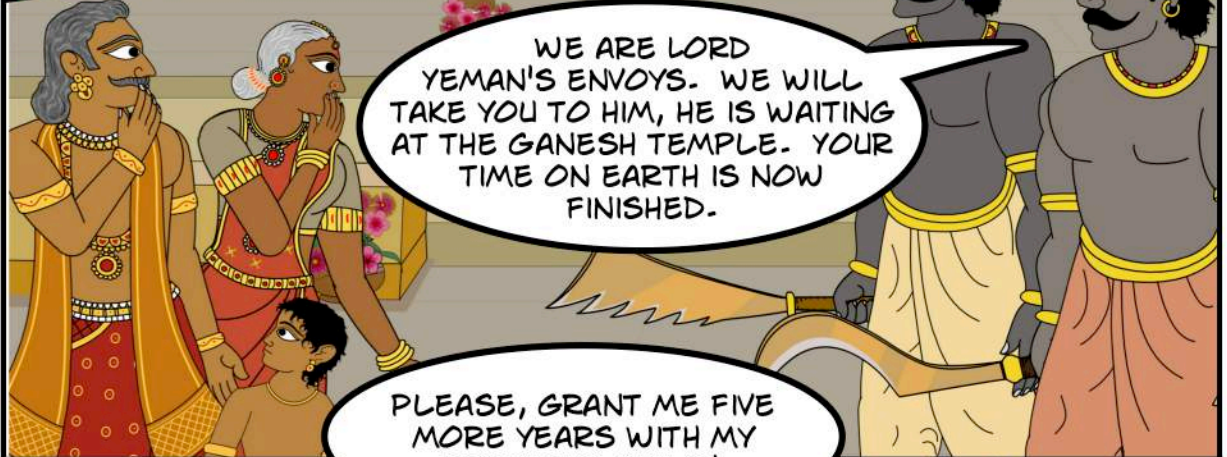


YES,
INDEED I AM.

AND IS
THIS YOUR
HUSBAND?



I AM KOLATTA
GOUNDER, HUSBAND OF
ARIYANACCI.

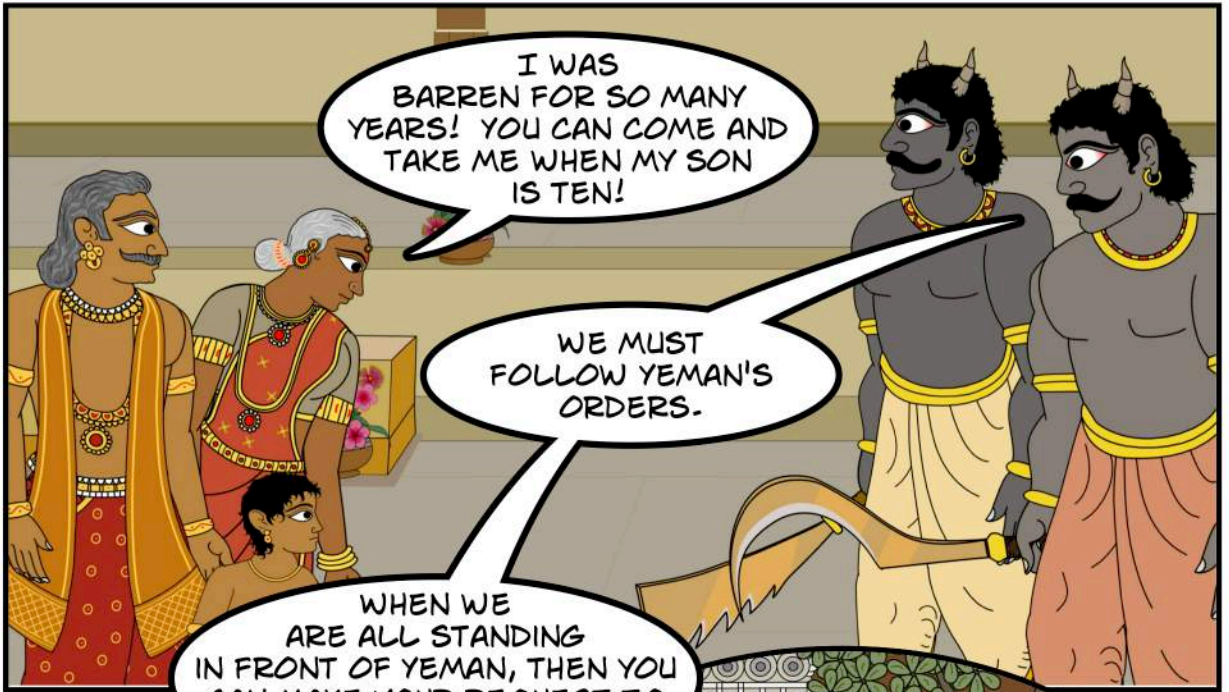


WE ARE LORD
YEMAN'S ENVOYS. WE WILL
TAKE YOU TO HIM, HE IS WAITING
AT THE GANESH TEMPLE. YOUR
TIME ON EARTH IS NOW
FINISHED.

PLEASE, GRANT ME FIVE
MORE YEARS WITH MY
PRECIOUS CHILD!



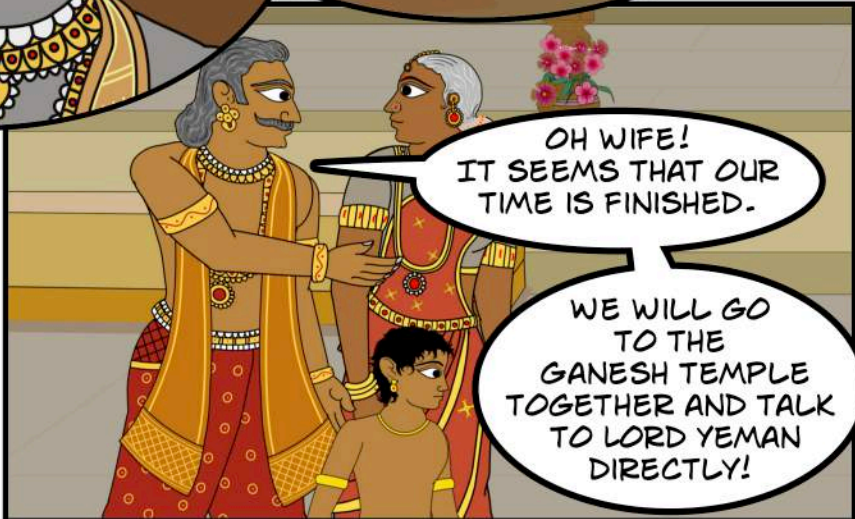
WE CANNOT DO
ANYTHING ABOUT THIS
MATTER!



I WAS BARREN FOR SO MANY YEARS! YOU CAN COME AND TAKE ME WHEN MY SON IS TEN!

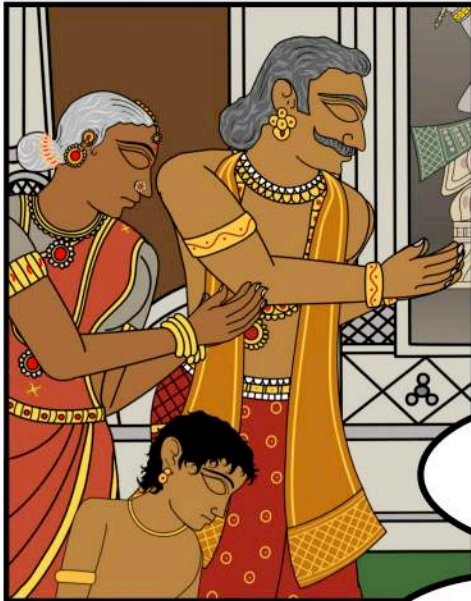
WE MUST FOLLOW YEMAN'S ORDERS.

WHEN WE ARE ALL STANDING IN FRONT OF YEMAN, THEN YOU CAN MAKE YOUR REQUEST TO THE LORD HIMSELF.



OH WIFE! IT SEEMS THAT OUR TIME IS FINISHED.

WE WILL GO TO THE GANESH TEMPLE TOGETHER AND TALK TO LORD YEMAN DIRECTLY!



KOLATTA AND HIS WIFE AND SON GO TO THE GANESH TEMPLE AND MEET WITH LORD YEMAN. THEY BOW RESPECTFULLY TO THE LORD OF DEATH. THEY BEG AND PLEAD TO BE ALLOWED JUST A LITTLE MORE TIME WITH THEIR YOUNG CHILD. BUT LORD YEMAN KNOWS WHAT IS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF FATE, AND HE KNOWS THEIR TIME IS UP.

OH WOMAN!
MAN! ARE YOU
ARIYANACCI AND
KOLATTA?

YES LORD.
THAT IS WHO
WE ARE.

WELL THEN, YOUR TIME
ON EARTH IS FINISHED.
SHIVA HAS ORDERED ME TO TAKE YOUR
LIVES TO HIM. IF THERE IS ANYTHING
YOU NEED TO SAY, DO IT NOW.

OH GREAT ONE!
I WAS BARREN FOR YEARS.
NOW, BY THE GRACE OF VISHNU,
I HAVE A SON!

PLEASE LET US
STAY WITH HIM A WHILE
LONGER!

I CANNOT ALTER YOUR
FATES. BUT I CAN GIVE YOU
ONE HOUR.



THERE IS ONLY A SHORT TIME LEFT.

OH LORD, IF I LEAVE HIM NOW, WHO WILL LOOK AFTER HIM?

I ONLY HAVE THE POWER TO GIVE YOU THIS LITTLE GRACE PERIOD.

OH SERVANT, GO TO THE CHOLA COUNTRY RIGHT AWAY.

TELL THE CHOLA, CHERA, AND PANDIYA KINGS WHAT IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN.



OH GREAT KING. KOLATTA AND ARIYANACCI OF PONNIVALA ARE ABOUT TO BE TAKEN TO HEAVEN BY YEMAN.

I AM VERY SORRY TO HEAR THAT.

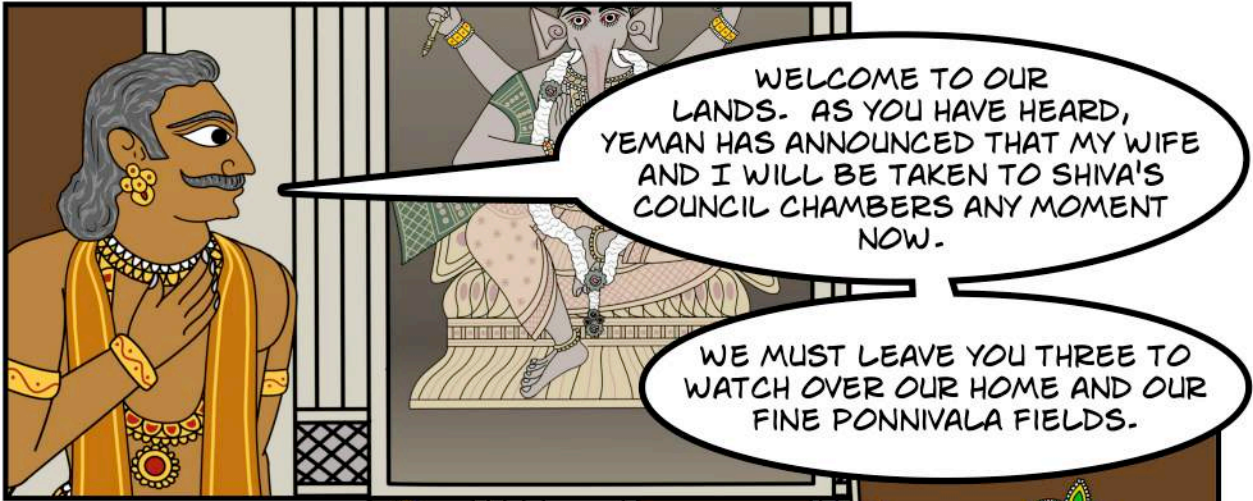


KOLATTA WAS A FINE AND HONOURABLE MAN. HE WAS WELL-RESPECTED.



YES, THIS IS SAD NEWS. PLEASE TELL THE CHERA AND PANDIYA RULERS ABOUT THIS.

ALL THREE OF YOU MUST COME TO PONNIVALA FOR THE FUNERAL CEREMONIES.



WELCOME TO OUR LANDS. AS YOU HAVE HEARD, YEMAN HAS ANNOUNCED THAT MY WIFE AND I WILL BE TAKEN TO SHIVA'S COUNCIL CHAMBERS ANY MOMENT NOW.

WE MUST LEAVE YOU THREE TO WATCH OVER OUR HOME AND OUR FINE PONNIVALA FIELDS.



NO ONE CAN CHANGE FATE. WE HAVE TO ACCEPT WHAT THE GREAT LORD HAS WRITTEN.



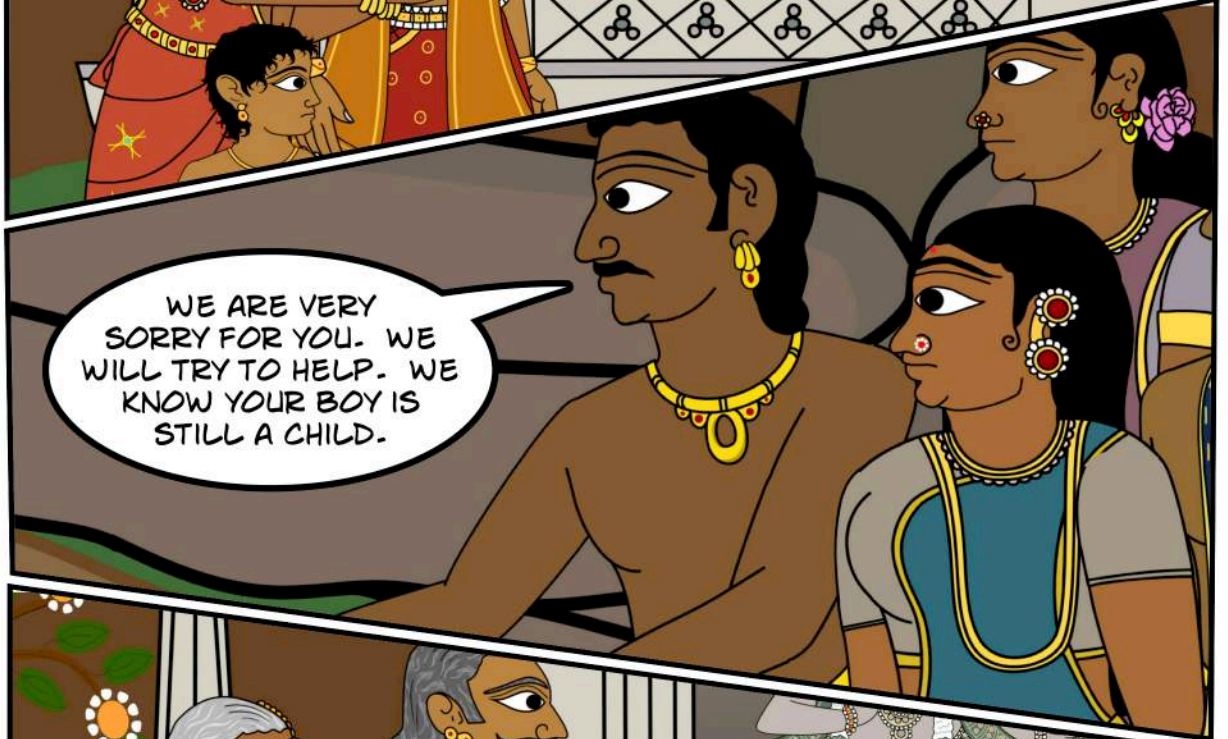
OH FINE KINGS! I AM LEAVING TODAY BUT MY SON MUST STAY BEHIND. YOU ARE THE ONLY ONES WHO CAN PROTECT HIM.



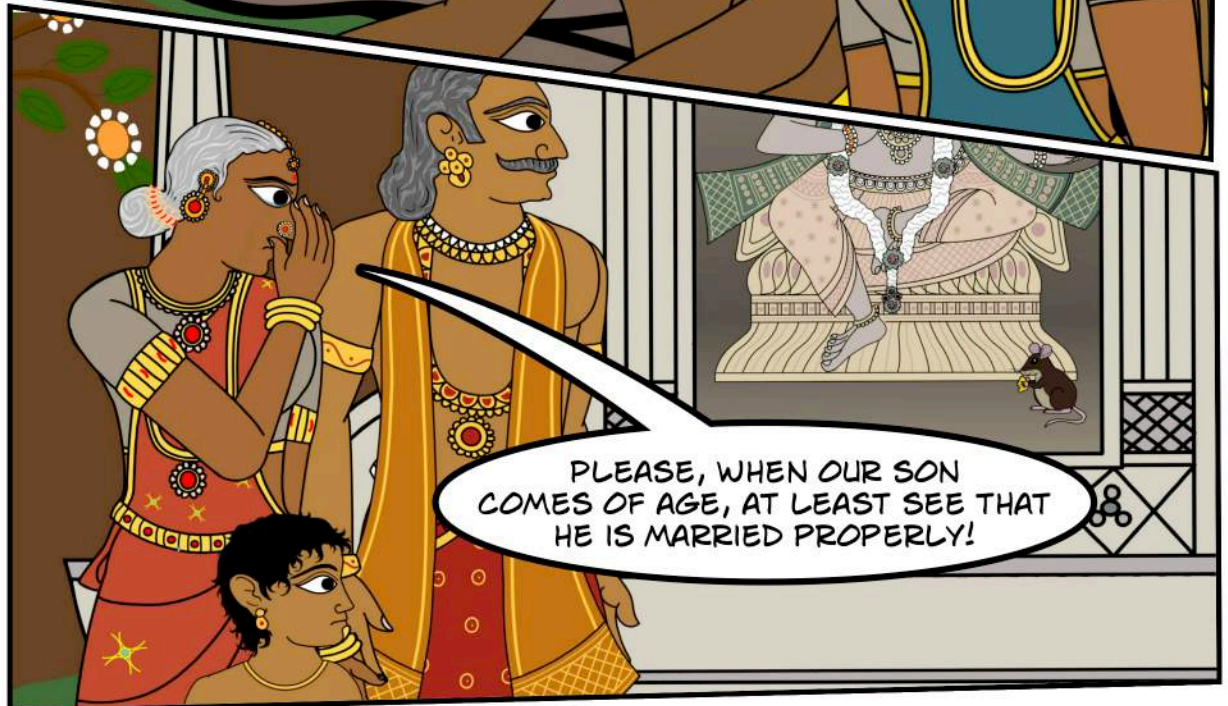
YES, IT IS SAD NEWS THAT BRINGS US TOGETHER. I WILL DO WHAT I CAN FOR YOU. DON'T WORRY.



OH PEOPLE OF PONNIVALA! PLEASE TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY SON. SEE THAT HE IS WELL FED!



WE ARE VERY SORRY FOR YOU. WE WILL TRY TO HELP. WE KNOW YOUR BOY IS STILL A CHILD.



PLEASE, WHEN OUR SON COMES OF AGE, AT LEAST SEE THAT HE IS MARRIED PROPERLY!



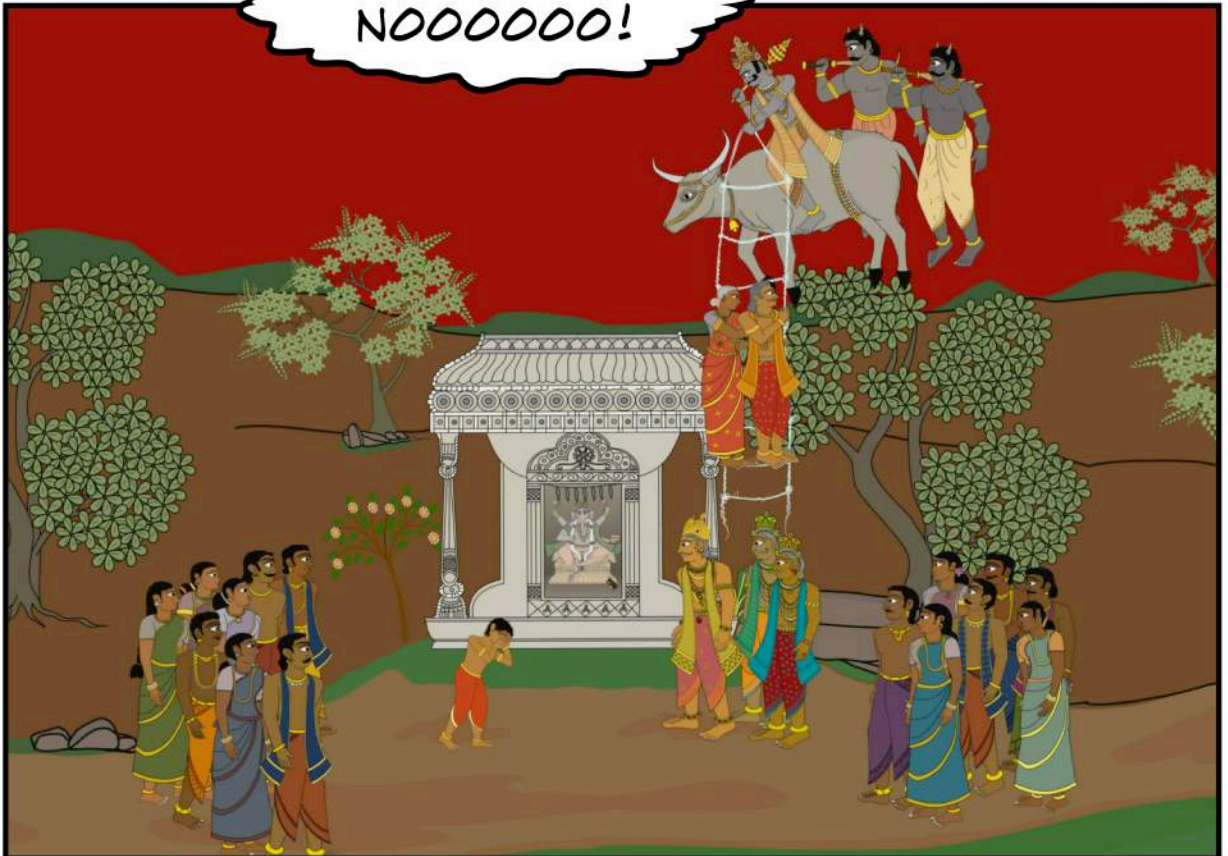
ALSO, MAKE SURE THAT HE PERFORMS THE PROPER CEREMONIES AT OUR FAMILY TEMPLE FOR CELATTA, THREE TIMES EVERY DAY.



OH FINE LADY!

WE WILL DO WHAT WE CAN.







OH! PLEASE DON'T LEAVE ME!



I HAVE LOST MY FATHER. NOW I AM LEFT ALL ALONE!



I HAVE LOST MY MOTHER!

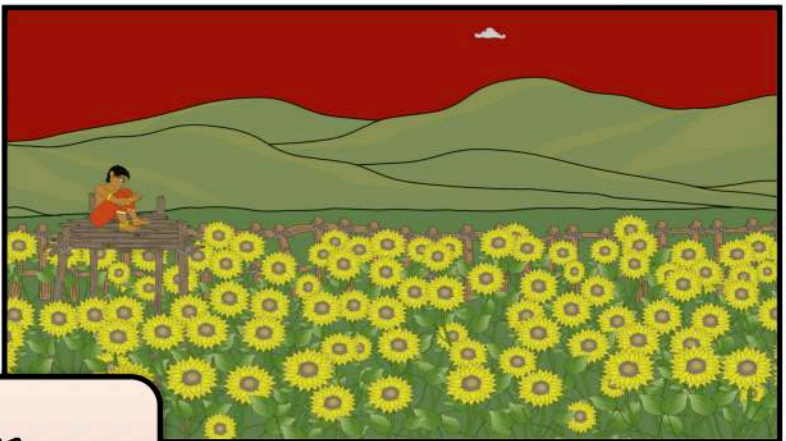
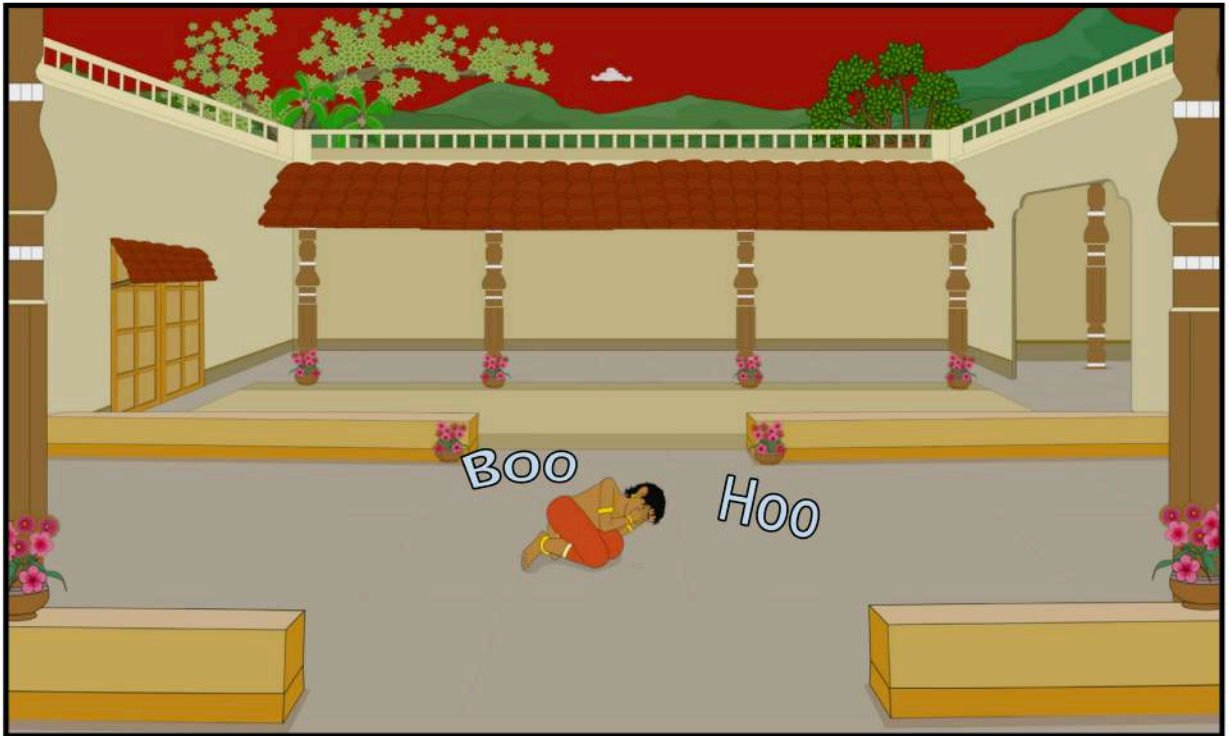
YOUNG KUNNUTAIYA CRIES, AND THE CHOLA KING TRIES TO CONSOLE HIM.



WE WILL LOOK AFTER YOU WELL. DON'T CRY!



PLEASE MAKE FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE GREAT FARMER KOLATTA AND HIS FINE WIFE ARIYANACCI!



THE YOUNG KUNNUTAIYA IS DEPRESSED AND WITHDRAWN. HE MISSES HIS PARENTS TERRIBLY. WHAT WILL HAPPEN NOW THAT THERE IS NO SENIOR RULER TO MANAGE PALACE AFFAIRS? HOW CAN A FIVE-YEAR-OLD BOY SURVIVE THE POLITICAL RIVALRIES THAT ARE SURE TO SWIRL AROUND PONNIVALA'S FINE LANDS? WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE ORPHAN KUNNUTAIYA AS HE GROWS UP?



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/comic2



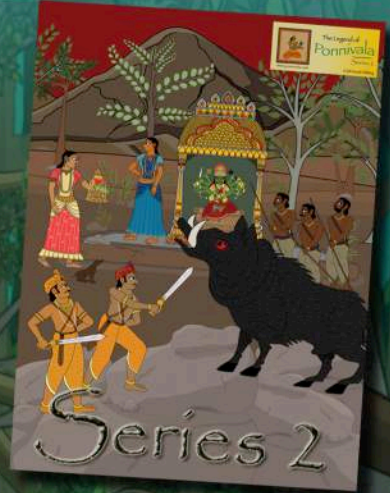
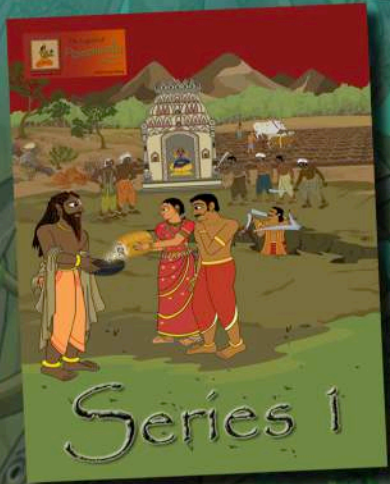
The Legend of
Ponnivala

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