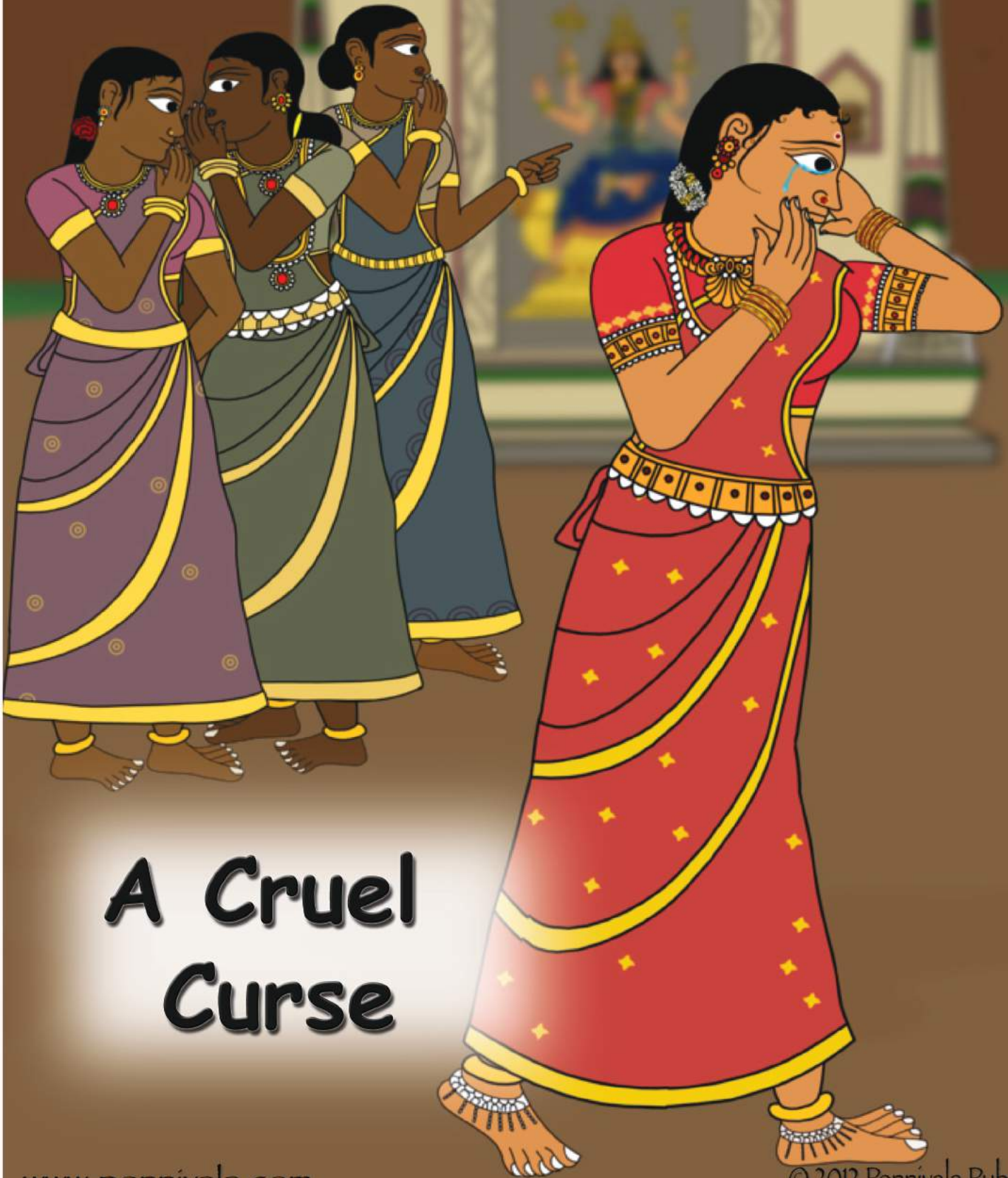


Series 1
Book 8

The Legend of
Ponnivala



A Cruel Curse

A CRUEL CURSE
SERIES 1 COMIC 8

A COUPLE RETURN TO THEIR ANCESTRAL LANDS AFTER MANY YEARS AND DECIDE TO REBUILD THE HUSBAND'S ANCESTRAL PALACE. THEY INVITE A NEIGHBORING MONARCH TO THE COMPLETION CELEBRATIONS. IN TURN HE HONORS THE PAIR AND NAMES THEM KING AND QUEEN OF PONNIVALA. BUT THE NEW QUEEN SUFFERS FROM A CURSE OF BARRENNESS AND IS WORRIED ABOUT THE FUTURE.



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PUBLICATIONS
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KUNNUTAIYA THINKS ABOUT HIS SUDDEN GOOD FORTUNE ...



HOW EXCITING THE LAST FEW DAYS HAVE BEEN! WITH LORD VISHNU'S HELP, WE NOW HAVE A STOREROOM FULL OF WEALTH.

THE GREAT LORD LOOKED AFTER US WELL WHEN HE DECIDED TO HIDE JEWELS IN THE HEADS OF MAIZE PLANTS!

I PLANTED EACH SEED WITH SUCH EFFORT THREE MONTHS BACK. AT FIRST WE DIDN'T HAVE MUCH HOPE, BUT NOW WE HAVE SUCH BOUNTY AND SO MANY GEMS!

MY WIFE TAMARAI IS VERY HAPPY. SHE WANTS US TO BUILD A PALACE, AND SHE CAN EVEN AFFORD TO HIRE SOME SERVANTS!

BUT FIRST, I MUST CALL UPON LORD VISHNU ONCE MORE...

The Legend of Ponnivala



OH LORD. OH FINE RULER!

I NEED TO CONSULT YOU ON AN IMPORTANT MATTER!



VISHNU HEARS HIS NAMED CALLED AS HE SITS ON THE MILK SEA. HE FLIES TO EARTH ON HIS GARUDA BIRD STRAIGHT AWAY. HE MEETS THE COUPLE IN FRONT OF THEIR HOUSE.



GREETINGS TO YOU BOTH. MAY YOUR FAMILY PROSPER.

NOW, HOW CAN I HELP?

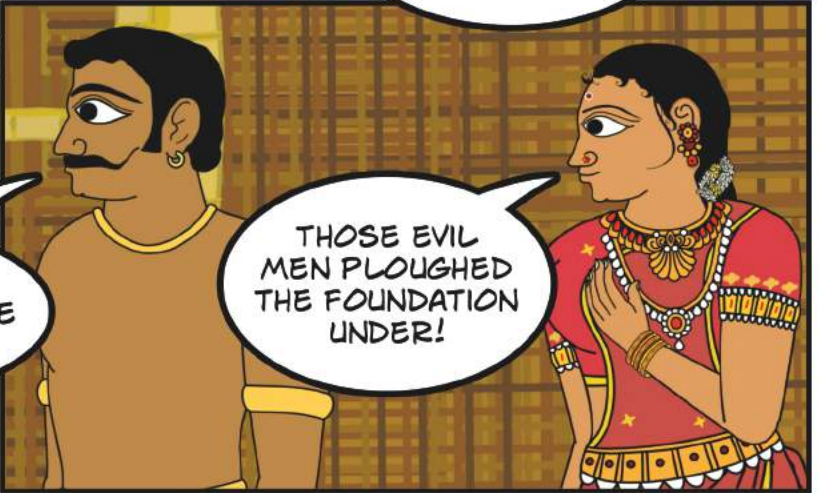


I NEED YOU TO HELP ME LOCATE WHERE MY OLD FAMILY HOME ONCE STOOD.

LORD! THE PALACE WAS DESTROYED BY OUR CLANSMEN 25 YEARS AGO.

WE WANT TO REBUILD BUT WE DO NOT KNOW THE LOCATION!

THERE IS NOTHING BUT SCRUB TREES AND STONES AROUND THERE NOW.



THEY DIDN'T WANT ME TO EVER BE ABLE TO FIND IT!

THOSE EVIL MEN PLOUGHED THE FOUNDATION UNDER!

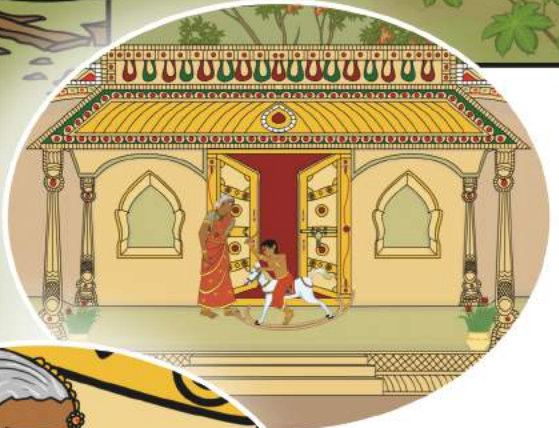


COME WITH ME!

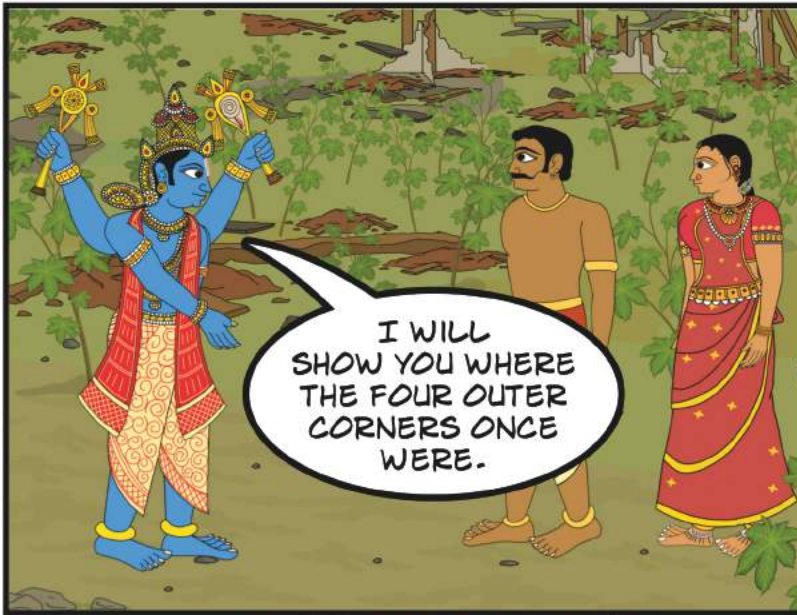
THE PAIR FOLLOW LORD VISHNU TO WHERE THE OLD PALACE USED TO BE



IT WAS RIGHT OVER HERE!



LOOKING AT THE LOCATION OF HIS OLD HOME REMINDS KUNNUTAIYA OF HIS PAST.



I WILL SHOW YOU WHERE THE FOUR OUTER CORNERS ONCE WERE.



HERE.



HERE.



HERE.



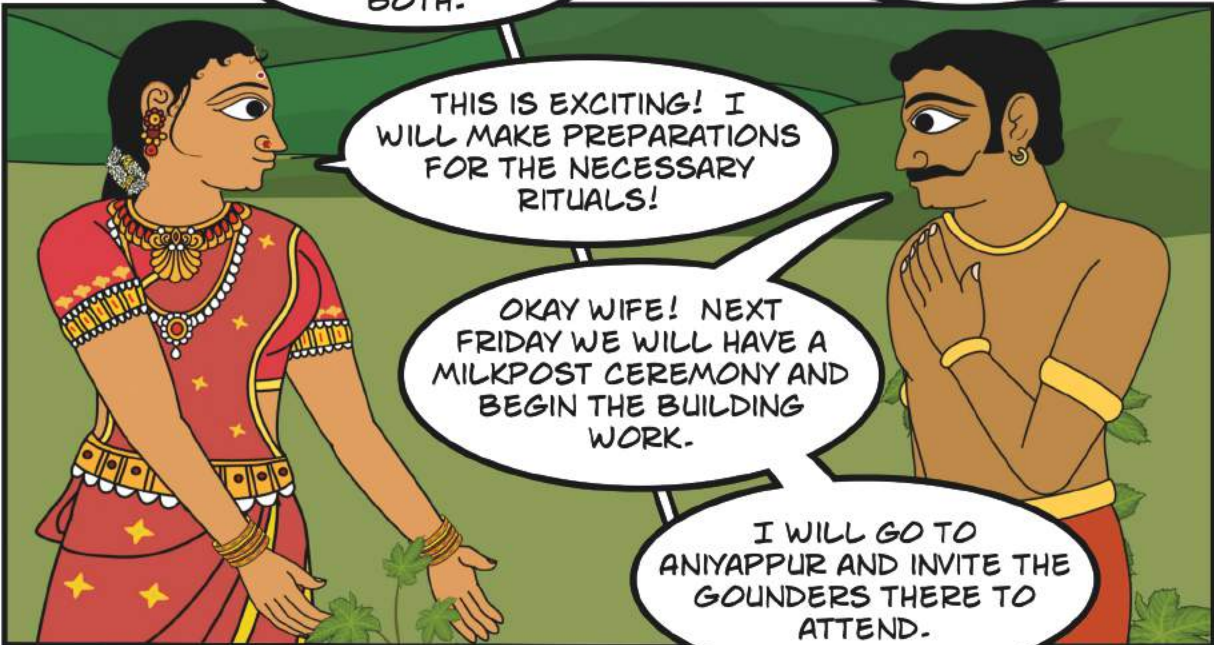
AND HERE!

YOU WILL HAVE A FINE PALACE SOON.

MY BLESSINGS ARE WITH YOU BOTH.



NOW THAT WE HAVE LORD VISHNU'S BLESSINGS, WE CAN START WORK ON OUR PALACE WITH CONFIDENCE!



THIS IS EXCITING! I WILL MAKE PREPARATIONS FOR THE NECESSARY RITUALS!

OKAY WIFE! NEXT FRIDAY WE WILL HAVE A MILKPOST CEREMONY AND BEGIN THE BUILDING WORK.

I WILL GO TO ANYYAPPUR AND INVITE THE GOUNDERS THERE TO ATTEND.



KUNNUTAIYA TRAVELS TO ANIYAPPUR. ONCE THERE, HE MEETS UP WITH MANY GOUNDERS AT THE LOCAL GANESH TEMPLE. HE TELLS THEM THE NEWS.

GREETINGS MEN!

I HAVE COME TO INVITE YOU ALL TO OUR MILKPOST CEREMONY. *

WE ARE GOING TO REBUILD OUR OLD FAMILY PALACE.

I WILL BE PLEASED TO COME AS WELL!

THANK YOU! I WILL BE PLEASED TO BE YOUR GUEST AT THIS CEREMONY!

YES INDEED

* A SPECIAL EVENT, A BLESSING CEREMONY USING, AMONGST OTHER THINGS, THE MILK POST PLANT TO BRING GOOD LUCK TO THIS BUILDING PROJECT

THE MILKPOST CEREMONY IS PERFORMED. IT IS NOW TIME FOR THE BUILDING TO COMMENCE!



OH HUSBAND!



WE NEED TO SEND A SERVANT TO ANIYAPPUR TO BRING SOME STONE MASONS HERE.



WE CANNOT BEGIN THE BUILDING WORK WITHOUT THEM!



OH SERVANT!

GO TO ANIYAPPUR QUICKLY AND BRING BACK A GROUP OF STONE MASONS.

TELL THEM WE ARE GOING TO BEGIN WORK ON A GRAND PALACE!

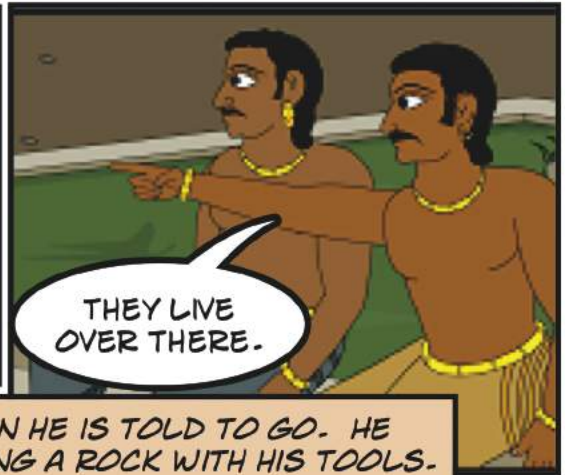




THE FINE SERVANT TRAVELS ACROSS THE COUNTRYSIDE UNTIL HE REACHES ANIYAPPUR. ONCE THERE, HE FINDS A FEW LOCAL RESIDENTS.

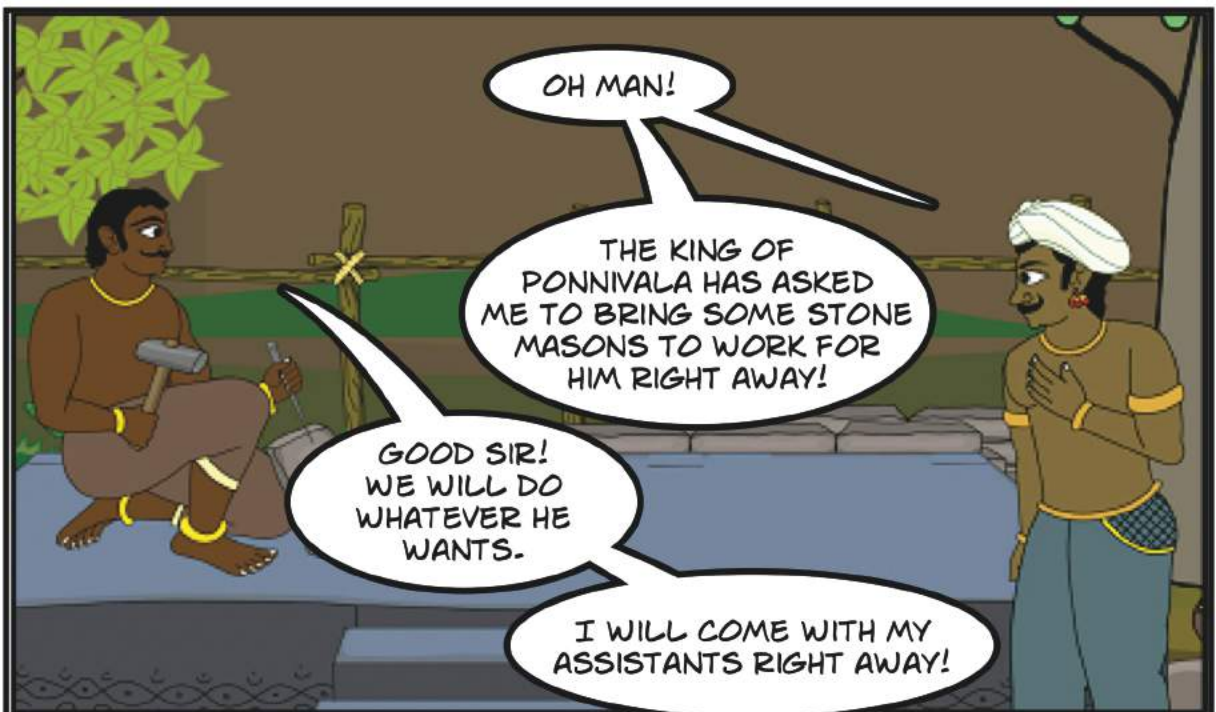


OH MEN, CAN YOU TELL ME WHERE THE STONE MASONS LIVE?



THEY LIVE OVER THERE.

THE SERVANT HEADS IN THE DIRECTION HE IS TOLD TO GO. HE FINDS ONE STONE MASON BUSILY CARVING A ROCK WITH HIS TOOLS.



OH MAN!

THE KING OF PONNIVALA HAS ASKED ME TO BRING SOME STONE MASONS TO WORK FOR HIM RIGHT AWAY!

GOOD SIR! WE WILL DO WHATEVER HE WANTS.

I WILL COME WITH MY ASSISTANTS RIGHT AWAY!



THE STONE MASON SUMMONS HIS ASSISTANTS AND TOGETHER THEY FOLLOW THE SERVANT TO KUNNUTAIYA'S HOME IN PONNIVALA.



STONE MASONS!
BLESSINGS TO YOU!

WE WANT TO BUILD
A PALACE. IT MUST BE
FULLY COMPLETE IN
THREE MONTHS!



THAT
WILL BE
FINE!

WE KNOW HOW
TO BUILD A
PALACE!

I SHALL GIVE YOU
YOUR ADVANCE
PAYMENT NOW.



TAMARAI,
BRING
A CLOTH FILLED
WITH A MEASURE
OF PEARLS.

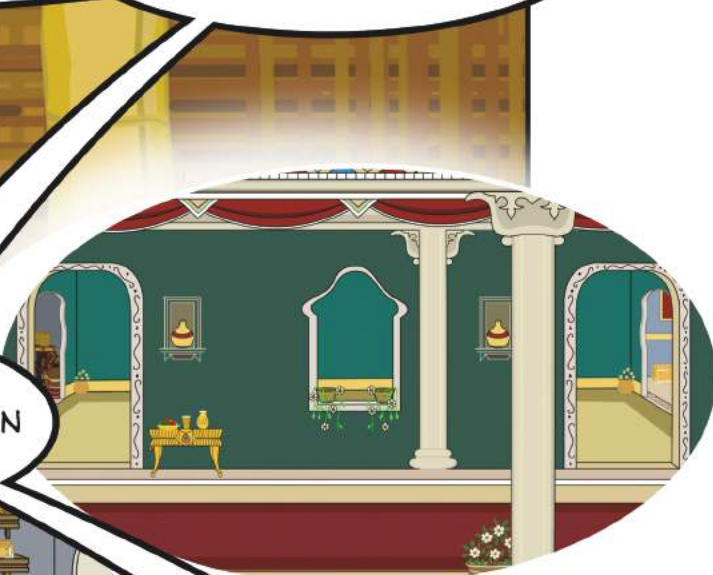


TAMARAI BRINGS THE PAYMENT FOR THE MEN. KUNNUTAIYA THEN OUTLINES WHAT HE WANTS HIS PALACE TO LOOK LIKE. HE LISTS THE ROOMS IT SHOULD CONTAIN.



WE WILL NEED A FINE AUDIENCE HALL. WE WILL ALSO NEED A READING AND WRITING ROOM.

WE WILL NEED A GOLD STOREROOM, AN ARMORY...



A DRESSING ROOM AND SOME BEDROOMS!



IN THREE MONTHS THE BEAUTIFUL PALACE IS COMPLETE!



LORD! WE HAVE FINISHED THE PALACE CONSTRUCTION WORK!



WE HOPE YOU ARE SATISFIED WITH IT!

YES, FINE MEN! YOU HAVE DONE AN EXCELLENT JOB.



TAMARAI! GO FETCH ANOTHER MEASURE OF PEARLS!

THE HAPPY COUPLE MOVE INTO THEIR NEW HOME. SOON, MANY PEOPLE ARRIVE TO REQUEST JOBS IN THE PALACE.



HUSBAND!

THERE IS A MAN HERE WHO IS ASKING TO BE APPOINTED AS OUR WATCHMAN.





INVITE ALL THREE KINGS TO ATTEND OUR PALACE INAUGURATION CEREMONY.

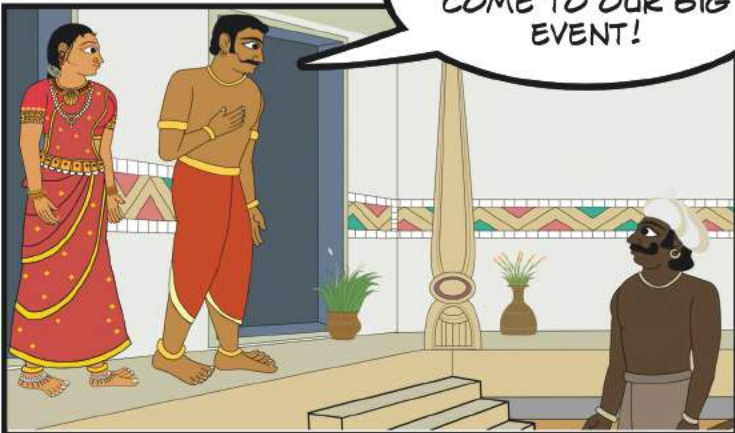


VISIT EACH OF THE REVENUE VILLAGES, AND INVITE ALL THE PEOPLE THERE TO COME.

INVITE THE TANGAVALA CLANSMEN TOO!



INVITE ALL THESE PEOPLE TO COME TO OUR BIG EVENT!



THE NEW WATCHMAN INVITES EVERYONE.



SOON, THE PALACE IS FILLED WITH GUESTS.



KINGS!
RESPECTED GUESTS!
WELCOME TO OUR NEW
PALACE.

LET THE
CEREMONY
BEGIN!



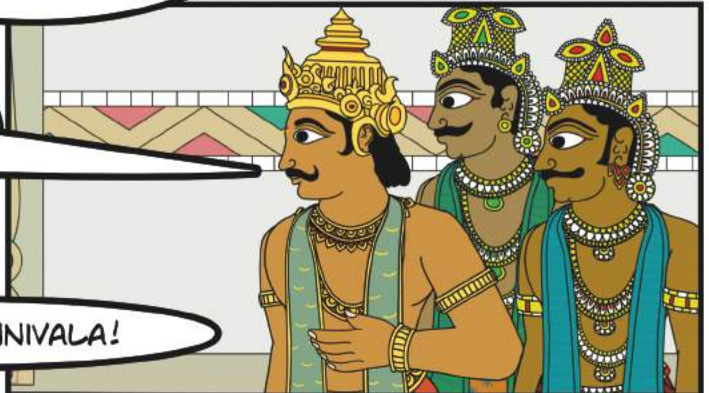
BLESSINGS TO YOU
ALL! MAY YOU ALL LIVE
LONG LIVES.



NOW, FOR THE
MAIN EVENT!

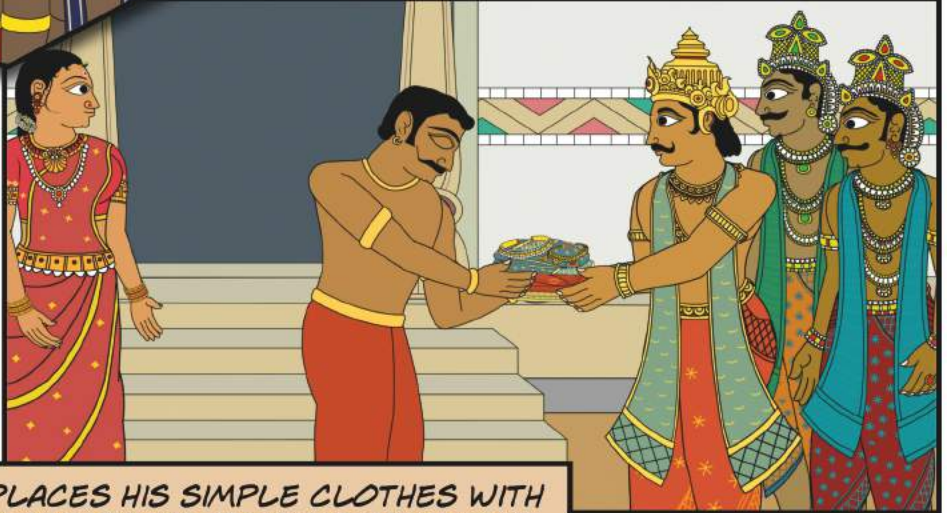
WE THREE
KINGS HAVE DECIDED
TO GIVE KUNNUTAIYA
GOUNDER THE
TITLE....

KING OF PONNIVALA!

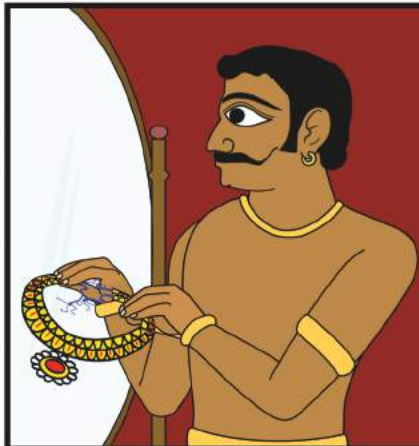




KUNNUTAIYA IS HUMBLD BY THE HONOR. HIS JEALOUS CLANSMEN LOOK ON AS THE CHOLA KING HANDS KUNNUTAIYA FINE NEW CLOTHES AND JEWELRY. KUNNUTAIYA RETREATS INTO A DRESSING ROOM TO CHANGE HIS CLOTHING.



HE QUICKLY REPLACES HIS SIMPLE CLOTHES WITH FINE CLOTH BETTER SUITED TO HIS NEW STATUS.





KUNNUTAIYA RETURNS,
AND THE CHOLA
CROWNS HIM "KING
OF PONNIVALA."

WE HOPE YOU WILL
BE A FINE AND GENTLE
KING FOR ALL THE PEOPLE
OF PONNIVALA.



YOU ARE TO BE
TRUTHFUL AND FAIR.

YOU ARE TO
SUPPORT AND NOURISH
THE POOR.



YOU MUST
HELP ALL THOSE
WHO ARE
SUFFERING.

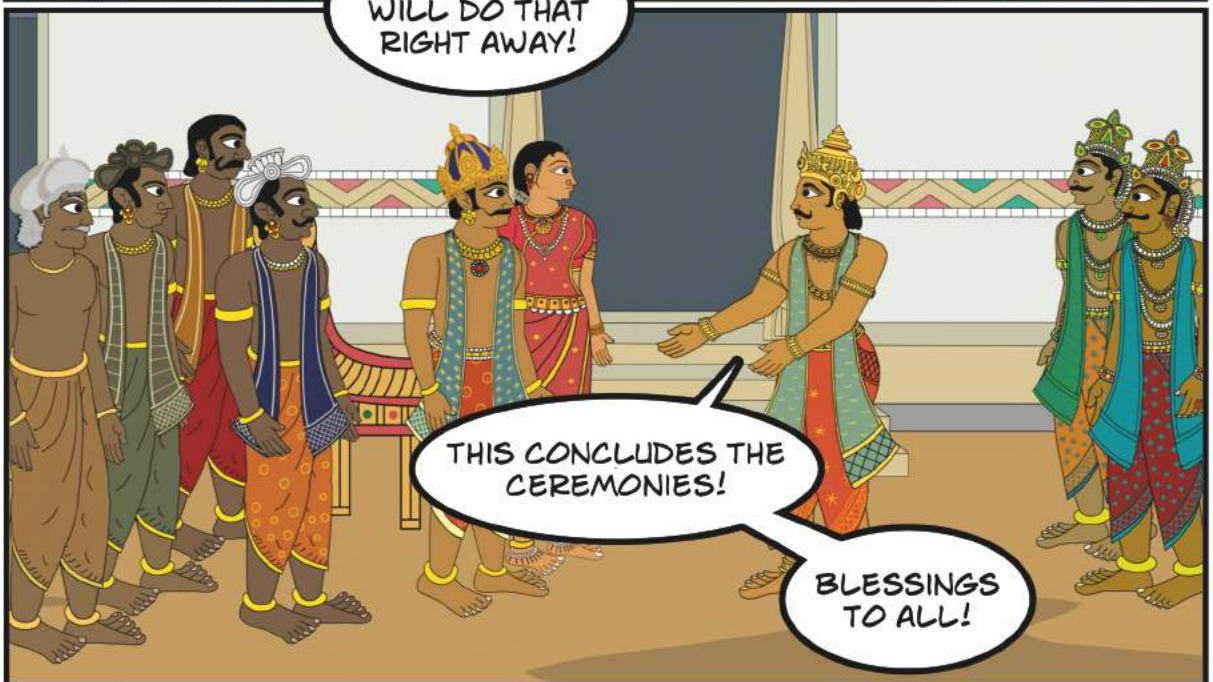


YES, I PROMISE TO BE KIND, JUST, AND GENEROUS. I WILL ALWAYS BE TRUTHFUL AS I TRY TO LEAD THE PEOPLE OF PONNIVALA.



CLANSMEN OF TANGAVALA! AS PER OUR EARLIER AGREEMENT, YOU MUST NOW GIVE ALL THE PONNIVALA LANDS TO KUNNUTAIYA.

WE...WE WILL DO THAT RIGHT AWAY!



THIS CONCLUDES THE CEREMONIES!

BLESSINGS TO ALL!

The Legend of Ponnivala

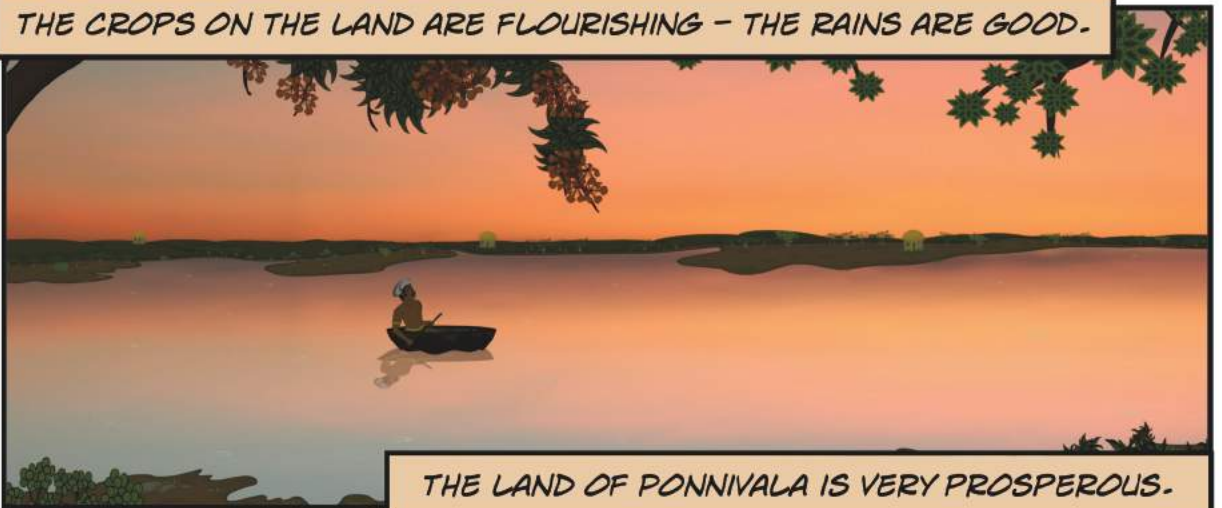
THE TIME PASSES HAPPILY. KING KUNNUTAIYA AND QUEEN TAMARAI RULE WITH LOVE.



THEY PERFORM A PUJA FOR CELATTA THREE TIMES A DAY.



THE CROPS ON THE LAND ARE FLOURISHING - THE RAINS ARE GOOD.

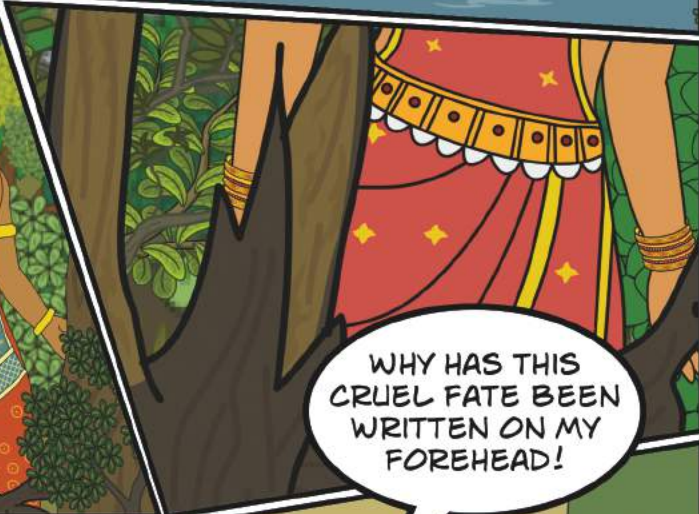
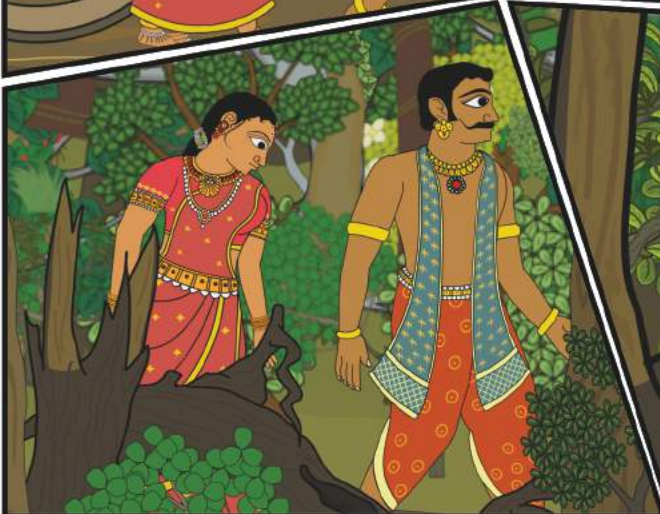
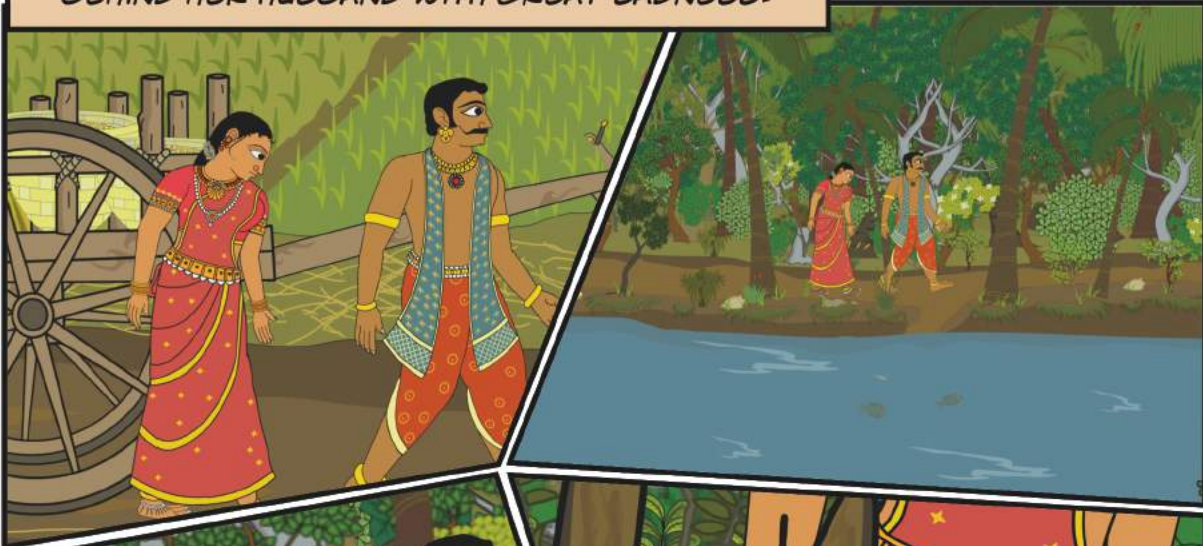


THE LAND OF PONNIVALA IS VERY PROSPEROUS.

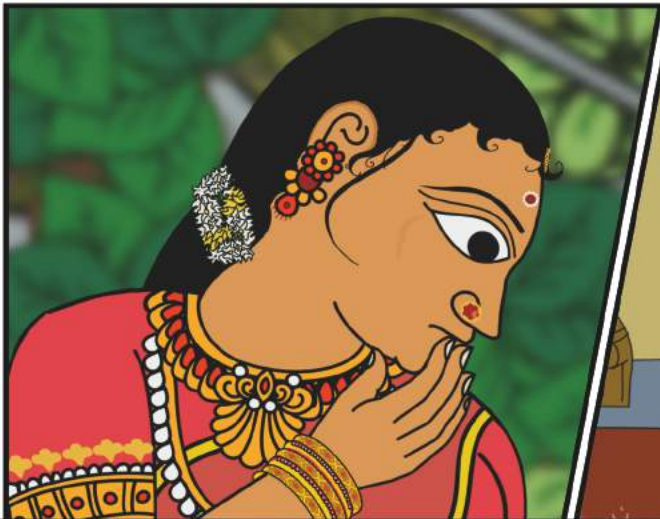
BUT DESPITE THE HAPPY TIMES, TAMARAI IS SAD.



TAMARAI CANNOT BE CONSOLED. SHE FOLLOWS BEHIND HER HUSBAND WITH GREAT SADNESS.



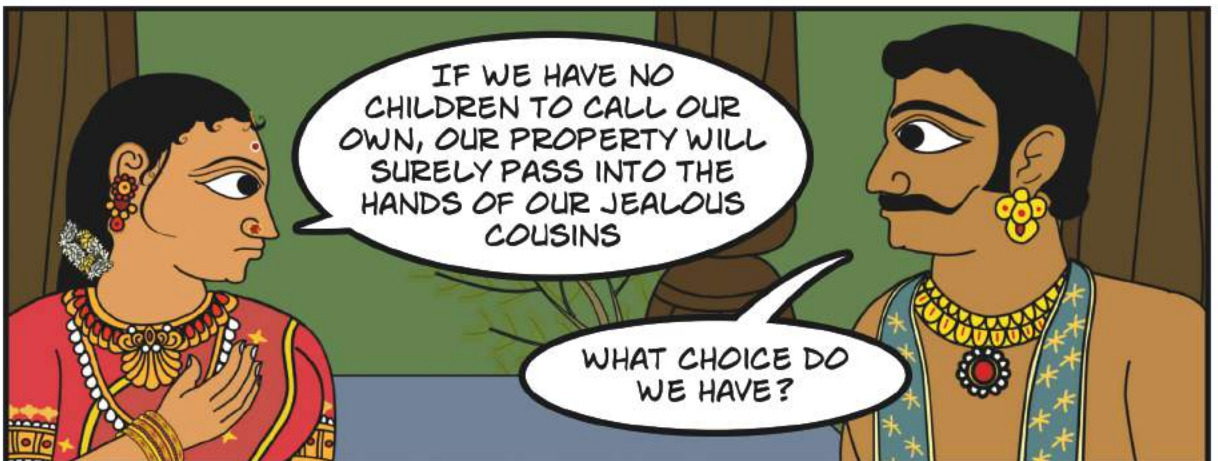
WHY HAS THIS CRUEL FATE BEEN WRITTEN ON MY FOREHEAD!



SHE BELIEVES SHE HAS COMMITTED GREAT SINS - SHE HAS NO CHILDREN!

A Cruel Curse

THE COUPLE WALK TOGETHER INTO A VILLAGE IN PONNIVALA. THERE, THEY SIT ON THE EDGE OF A PAVILION. THEY CONTINUE THEIR DISCUSSION, AND TAMARAI TALKS OF HER ANGUISH.





ARE YOU SAYING OUR WEALTH SHOULD GO TO THOSE WICKED MEN AT OUR DEATH?

YOU WANT OUR HARD-WON GRAIN TO FEED THOSE NEIGHBORS?



YOU FORGET THEY GAVE YOU ROASTED SEEDS TO PLANT!

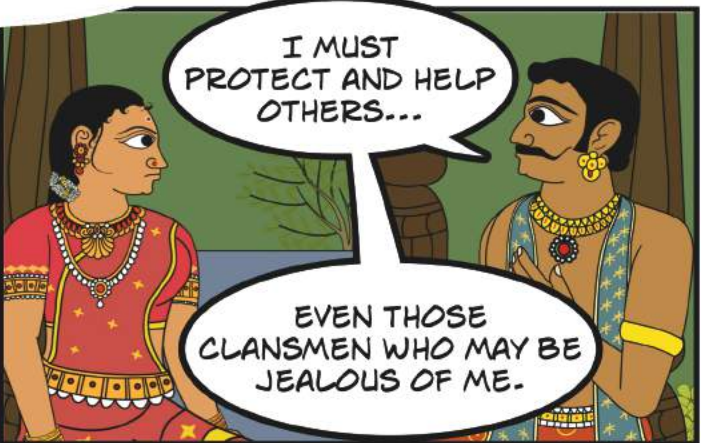
YOU FORGET HOW THEY BROKE DOWN YOUR PALACE...



HOW THEY STOLE YOUR LANDS!...



I AM THE RULER OF PONNIVALA NOW.



I MUST PROTECT AND HELP OTHERS...

EVEN THOSE CLANSMEN WHO MAY BE JEALOUS OF ME.



ALL OUR WORKMEN, AND ALL THE ANIMALS IN PONNIVALA HAVE NO OFFSPRING!



THE COWS AND GOATS THAT GRAZE HERE HAVE NO YOUNG!



THE MOUSE IN HER HOLE HAS NO BABIES. THE CAT HAS NO KITTENS.



THE LITTLE SPARROW HAS NO CHICKS TO FEED.



EVEN THE EARLESS DOG IN THE PALACE HAS NO PUPS!



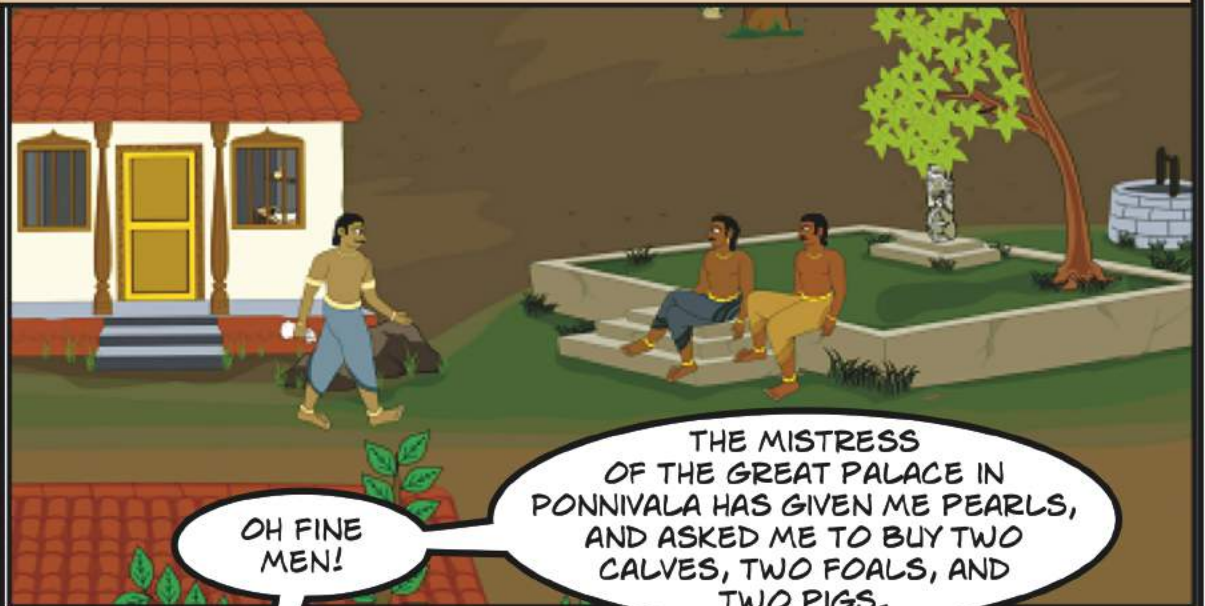


TAMARAI RETURNS TO THE PALACE AND CALLS FOR A SERVANT. SHE HANDS HIM A MEASURE OF PEARLS AND TELLS HIM HER REQUEST.





THE FINE SERVANT WALKS ACROSS THE LAND. HE REACHES THE VILLAGE OF ANIYAPPUR. HE FINDS TWO MEN AT THE GANESH TEMPLE THERE.



OH FINE MEN!

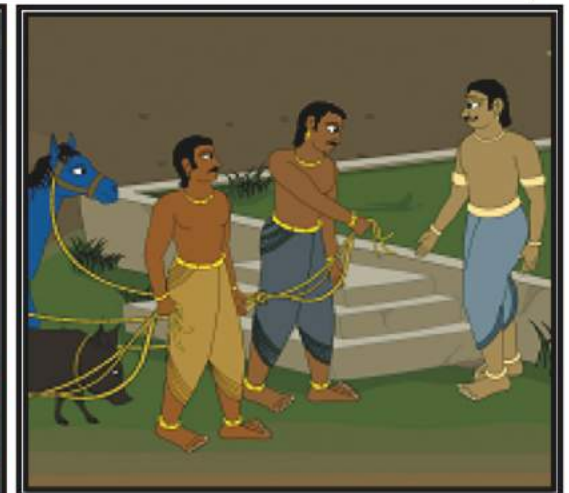
THE MISTRESS OF THE GREAT PALACE IN PONNIVALA HAS GIVEN ME PEARLS, AND ASKED ME TO BUY TWO CALVES, TWO FOALS, AND TWO PIGS.



THEY WANT ANIMALS THAT ARE SURE TO BE FERTILE!



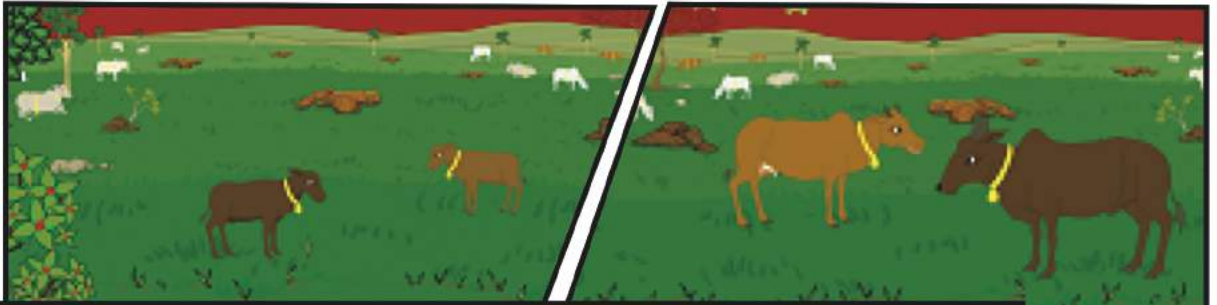
THE SERVANT HANDS OVER HIS MEASURE OF PEARLS TO THE GOUNDER MEN, AND THEY DEPART FOR THE CHOLA KINGDOM. THE SERVANT WAITS FOR THEM AT THE GANESH TEMPLE. IT IS NOT LONG BEFORE THEY RETURN, BRINGING SIX FINE ANIMALS WITH THEM.



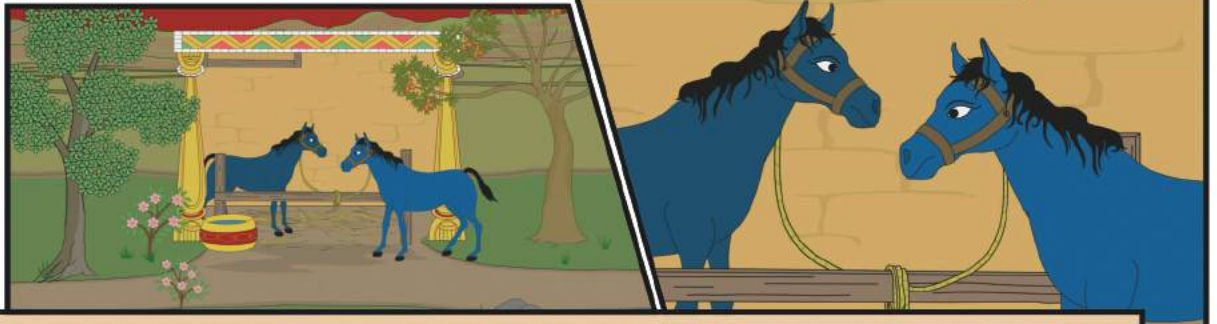


THE SERVANT TAKES THESE ANIMALS WITH HIM BACK TO PONNIVALA.





A YEAR PASSES, AND THE COWS, HORSES, AND PIGS MATURE.



BUT ALTHOUGH THEY ARE HEALTHY, NO OFFSPRING HAVE BEEN BORN!

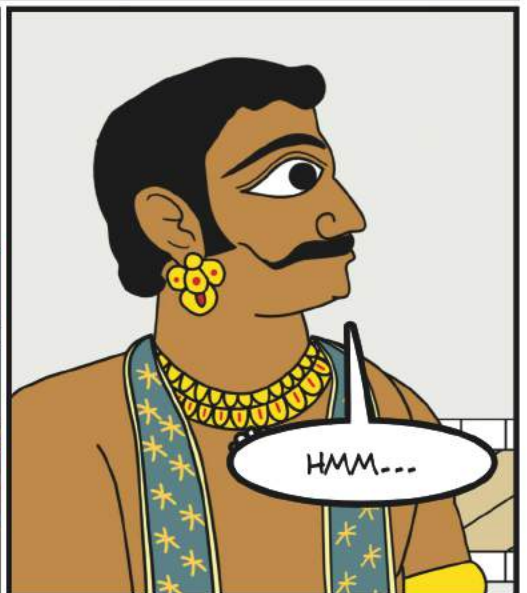


HUSBAND! I MUST HAVE CAUSED DESTRUCTION!



I MUST HAVE COMMITTED MANY SINS!

I THOUGHT I WAS THE BARREN ONE...BUT THERE HAVE BEEN NO BABY ANIMALS BORN ANYWHERE IN PONNIVALA!



HMM...



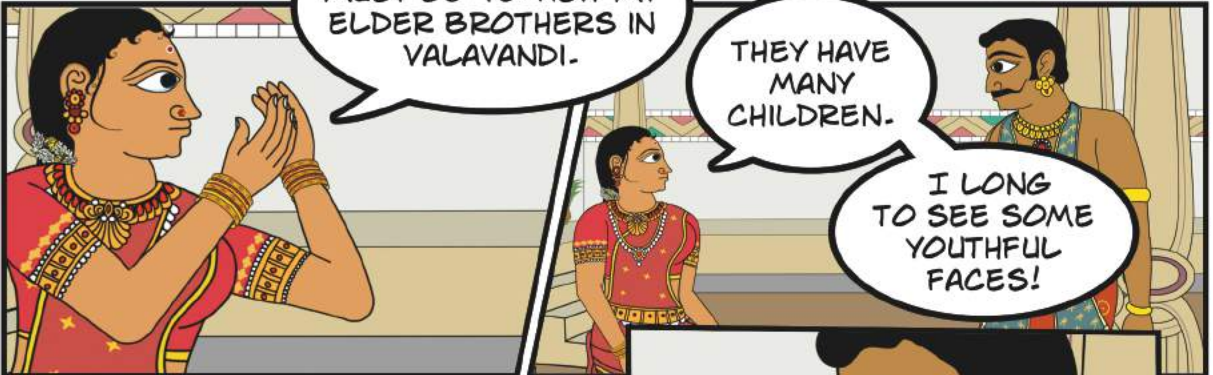


BOO HOO
HOO!



OH MY LADY!
PLEASE CEASE THIS
WEEPING!

CAN YOU
CHANGE YOUR FATE
BY CRYING?



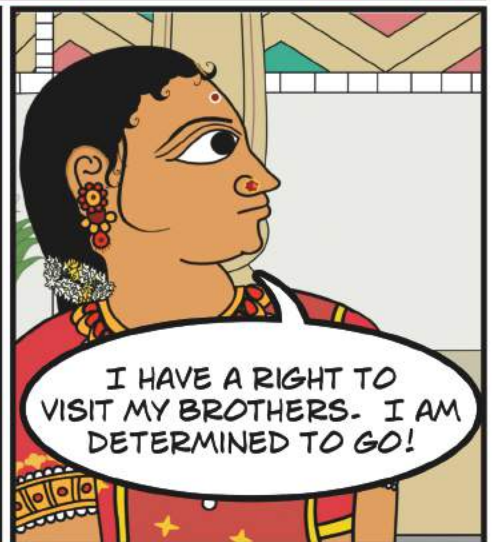
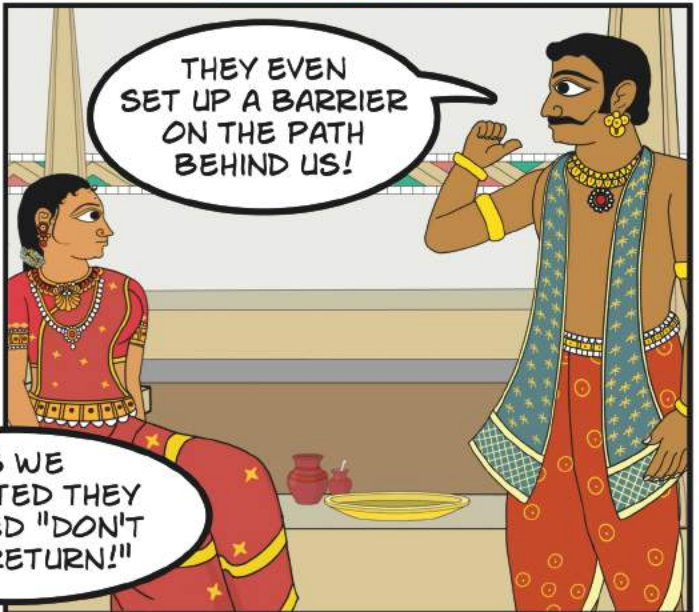
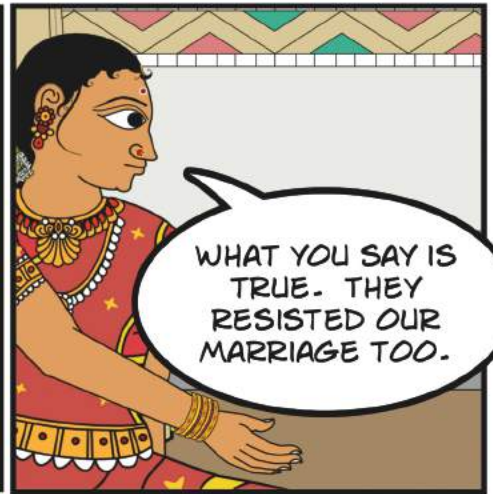
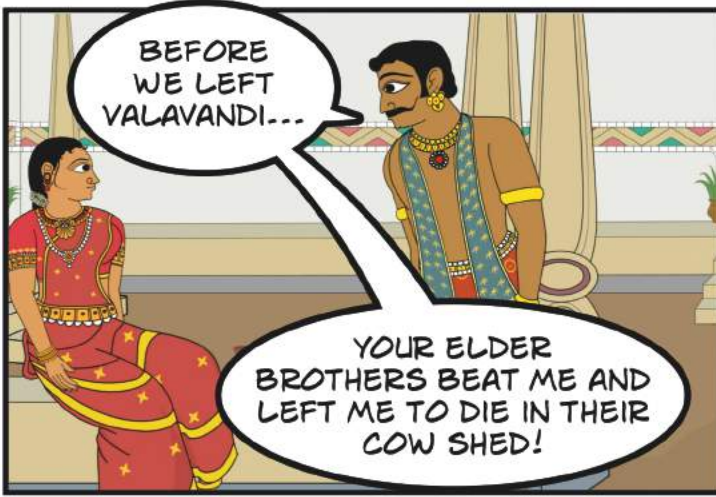
HUSBAND! I
MUST GO TO VISIT MY
ELDER BROTHERS IN
VALAVANDI.

THEY HAVE
MANY
CHILDREN.

I LONG
TO SEE SOME
YOUTHFUL
FACES!

TAMARAI!
HAVE YOU
FORGOTTEN?







TAMARAI! YOU WILL BE MAKING A BIG MISTAKE!

I DO NOT WANT YOU TO GO!



DESPITE HER HUSBAND'S WORDS, TAMARAI BEGINS PLANNING FOR HER LONG TRIP. SHE IS GATHERING TOGETHER THE GIFTS SHE WANTS TO TAKE TO HER NIECES AND NEPHEWS. BUT IS HER HUSBAND RIGHT? IS THIS A BIG MISTAKE? WHAT WILL REALLY HAPPEN TO HER WHEN SHE RETURNS TO THE LAND OF HER BIRTH?



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/comic8

The Legend of
Ponnivala

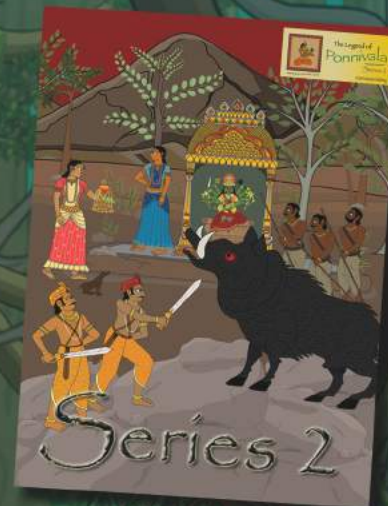
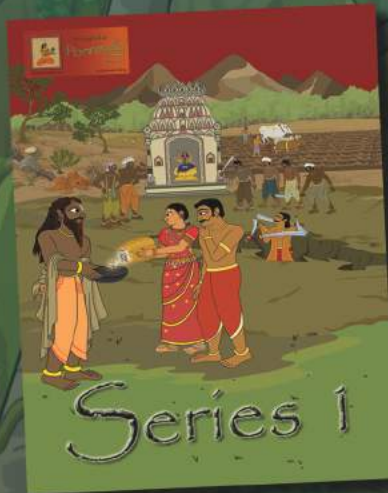
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26. An Epoch Ends

Collect All 26!

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