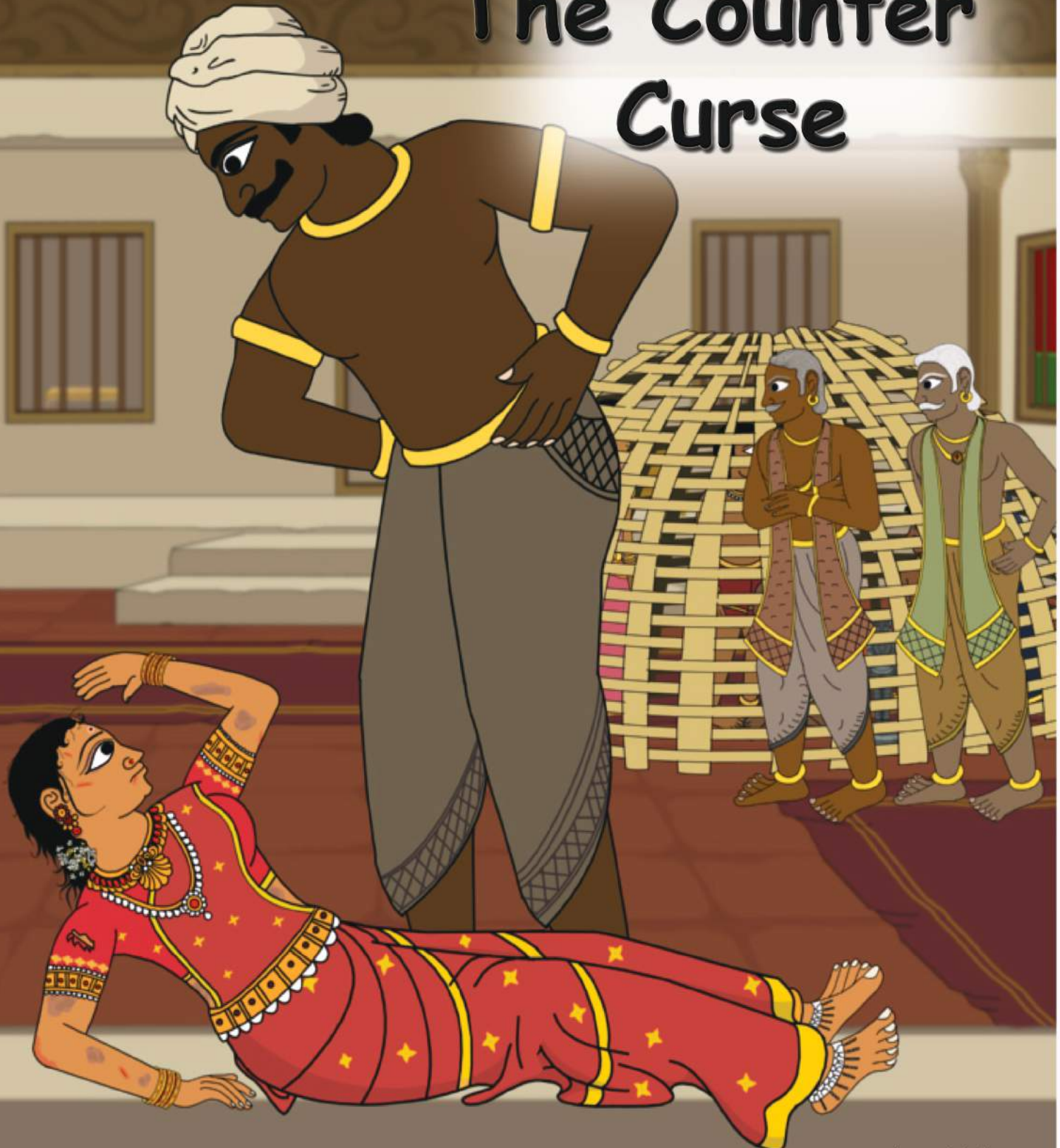


Series 1
Book 9

The Legend of
Ponnivala



The Counter Curse



THE COUNTER CURSE
SERIES 1 COMIC 9

THE QUEEN OF PONNIVALA STILL HAS NO CHILDREN. SHE IS WORRIED AND WANTS TO FIND COMFORT BY VISITING TWO WEALTHY BROTHERS. HER HUSBAND IS OPPOSED BECAUSE ILL-WILL EXISTS BETWEEN THE TWO FAMILIES. THE DETERMINED WIFE GOES ANYWAY. ALAS, SHE IS ORDERED BEATEN BY A GUARD AT HER BROTHERS' PALACE GATE. ANGERED, THE QUEEN LAYS A CURSE ON THEIR ENTIRE FAMILY...



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The Counter Curse



WHY MUST I SUFFER SO MUCH? I HAVE BEEN MARRIED FOR MANY YEARS, YET I HAVE NOT GIVEN BIRTH TO A SINGLE CHILD.

EVEN THE ANIMALS IN OUR FINE KINGDOM ARE CHILDLESS. EVERYONE IS GOSSIPING ABOUT ME - THEY ARE AFRAID TO COME NEAR ME!

I WANT TO VISIT MY ELDER BROTHERS AND FIND SOME COMFORT IN SEEING THEIR CHILDREN. BUT MY HUSBAND HAS FORBIDDEN IT, BECAUSE THERE IS A FEUD BETWEEN OUR FAMILIES.

THAT WILL NOT STOP ME... I AM DETERMINED TO GO!



The Legend of Ponnivala



KUNNUTAIYA RULES HIS LANDS WELL. BUT DESPITE HIS KINDNESS, NO CHILDREN HAVE BEEN BORN TO HIM AND HIS WIFE, TAMARAI. NOW, SHE IS ASKING TO VISIT HER BROTHERS, BUT KUNNUTAIYA WILL NOT HEAR OF IT.



OH WOMAN, THE WHOLE WORLD KNOWS WE ARE CHILDLESS.

IF YOU GO TO YOUR BROTHERS' PALACE WITHOUT A CHILD IN YOUR ARMS, THEY WILL CALL YOU BARREN!



THEY WILL TAUNT YOU AND WILL NOT LET YOU INTO THEIR HOUSE.



I DON'T WANT YOU TO SUFFER SUCH AN INDIGNITY.

THAT IS WHY I WILL NOT PERMIT YOU TO GO THERE!



OH MY! MY HUSBAND HAS LEFT IN ANGER!

NEVER MIND. I WILL GET HIS PERMISSION LATER.

SURELY MY BROTHERS WILL WELCOME ME BACK HOME AFTER SO MANY YEARS!



BUT I MUST NOT GO TO THEIR PLACE EMPTY-HANDED! LET ME FIRST PREPARE SOME GIFTS.

TING



GOLDSMITH! MAKE ME SOME FINE JEWELRY FOR MY BROTHERS' CHILDREN!

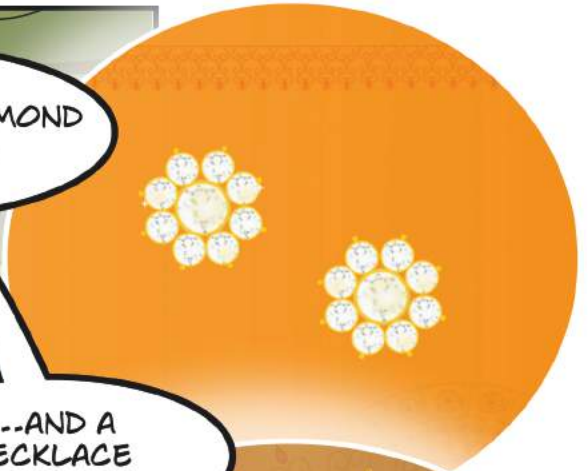
FINE LADY, WE WILL DESIGN MANY LOVELY THINGS FOR YOUR NIECES AND NEPHEWS!



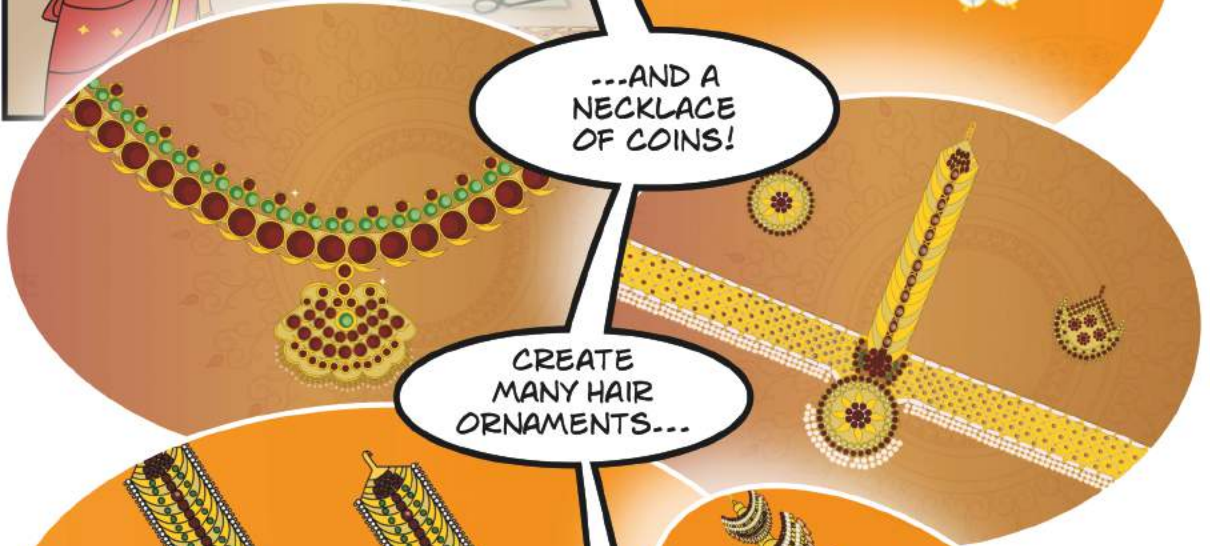
GOOD. I WANT BEAUTIFUL NECKLACES, PRETTY BANGLES, AND SHINING EARRINGS.



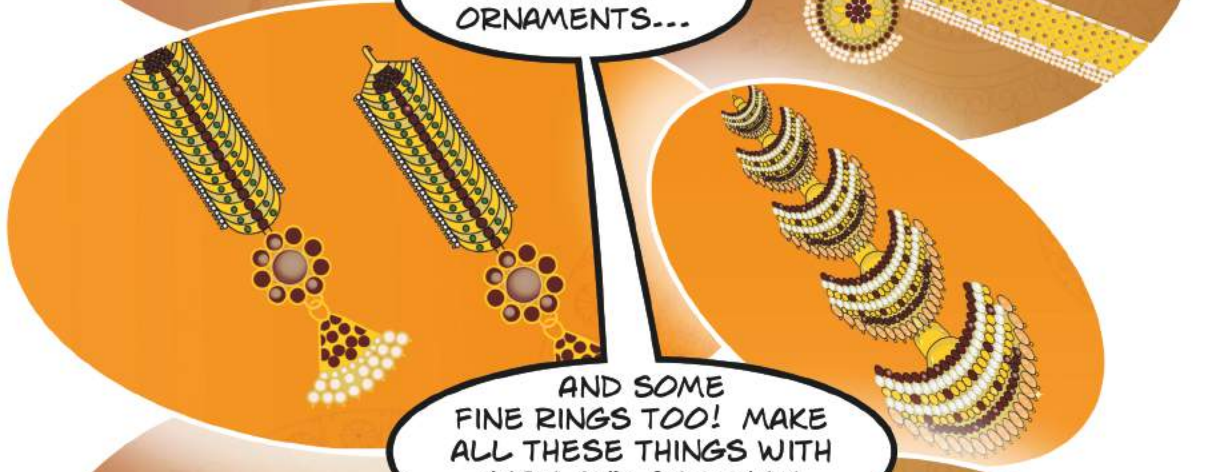
CREATE SOME DIAMOND
JEWELRY....



---AND A
NECKLACE
OF COINS!



CREATE
MANY HAIR
ORNAMENTS...



AND SOME
FINE RINGS TOO! MAKE
ALL THESE THINGS WITH
CARE AND SET THEM
ASIDE!



The Counter Curse

THE GOLDSMITHS SET TO WORK. MEANWHILE, TAMARAI CONTINUES WITH THE REST OF HER PREPARATIONS. SHE SPEAKS FIRST TO THE WATCHMAN, AND THEN GOES TO FIND HER HUSBAND.





IN ANGER, KUNNUTAIYA KICKS OVER HIS CHAIR. HE SHOUTS LOUDLY.



DESPITE HER HUSBAND'S FOREWARNING, TAMARAI GOES FORWARD WITH HER PLAN.

OH
SERVANTS
AND MAIDS!

TAKE
CARE OF MY
HUSBAND AND
PALACE.

I WILL BE
BACK SOON.

TAMARAI SETS OFF FOR VALAVANDI WITH A MAID AND TWO SERVANTS.

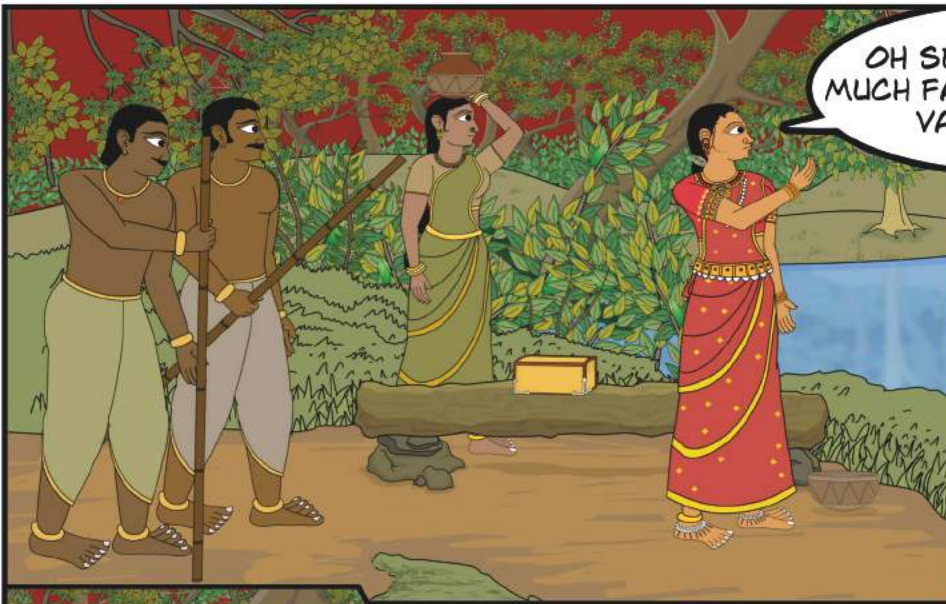
THEY MARCH ACROSS THE LAND UNDER THE BLAZING SUN.



THE MAID QUICKLY FETCHES TAMARAI SOME WATER. TAMARAI DRINKS IT AND COOLS HERSELF OFF.



The Counter Curse



OH SERVANT, HOW MUCH FARTHER IS IT TO VALAVANDI?



IT IS CLOSE NOW. IF YOU LOOK, YOU CAN JUST SEE THE TOP OF THE MAIN TEMPLE THERE.



OKAY, SERVANTS AND MAID.



LET'S FINISH THE LAST LEG OF THIS LONG JOURNEY!

The Legend of Ponnivala



HMM...WHO ARE THOSE PEOPLE AT THE GANESH TEMPLE?

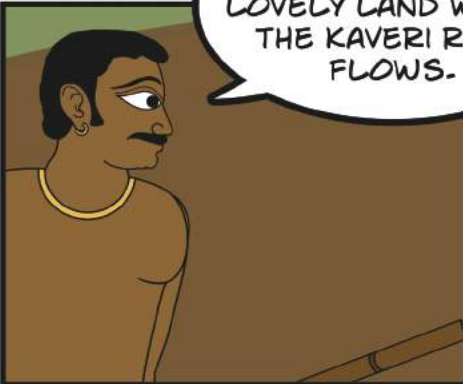


GREETINGS!

I SEE THAT YOU ARE NEW TO OUR VILLAGE. WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

WE ARE FROM PONNIVALA, THE LOVELY LAND WHERE THE KAVERI RIVER FLOWS.

AND WHERE ARE YOU HEADED?



WE HAVE COME TO VISIT THE PALACE IN VALAVANDI AND ITS TWO KINGS.

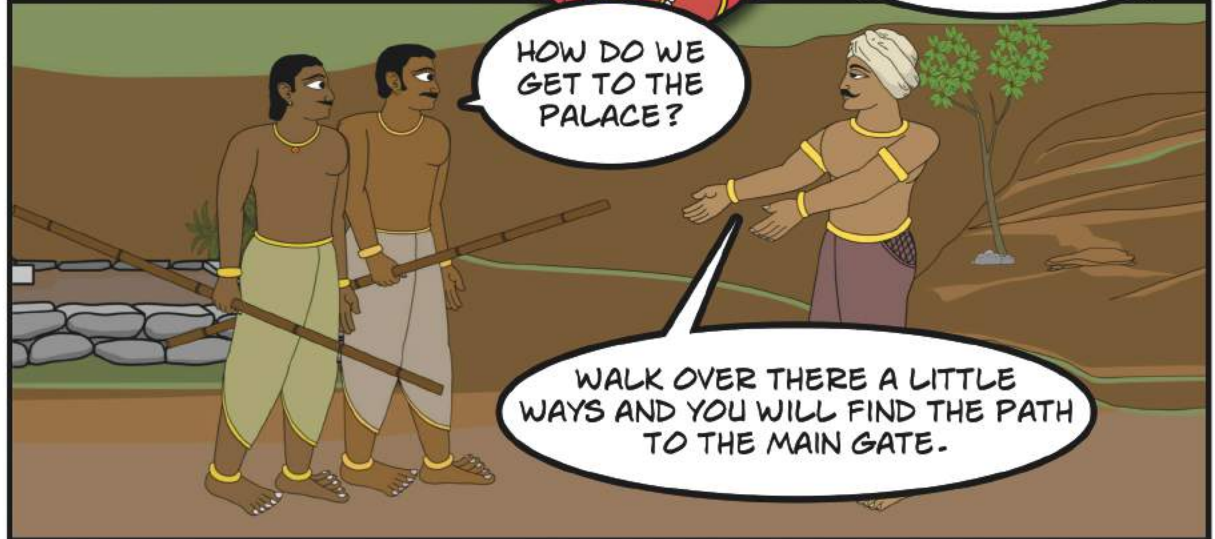
DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THEM?



YES, I KNOW THEM WELL. I WORK IN THEIR FIELDS.

THIS IS TAMARAI GOUNDACHI.

SHE MARRIED OUR PONNIVALA KING. NOW SHE HAS COME TO VISIT HER TWO BROTHERS.



HOW DO WE GET TO THE PALACE?

WALK OVER THERE A LITTLE WAYS AND YOU WILL FIND THE PATH TO THE MAIN GATE.



THE SERVANTS FOLLOW THE FARM WORKER'S DIRECTIONS AND LEAD TAMARAI INTO THE MAIN VILLAGE. THEY DO NOT KNOW THEY ARE TAKING A ROUNDABOUT ROUTE.

MEANWHILE, THE FARM WORKER TAKES A SHORT CUT THROUGH THE THICK UNDERBRUSH, RUNNING AS FAST AS HE CAN. HE REACHES THE VALAVANDI PALACE FIRST.





THE FARM WORKER ARRIVES AT THE PALACE AND MEETS THE TWO WIVES IN THE BACK YARD.



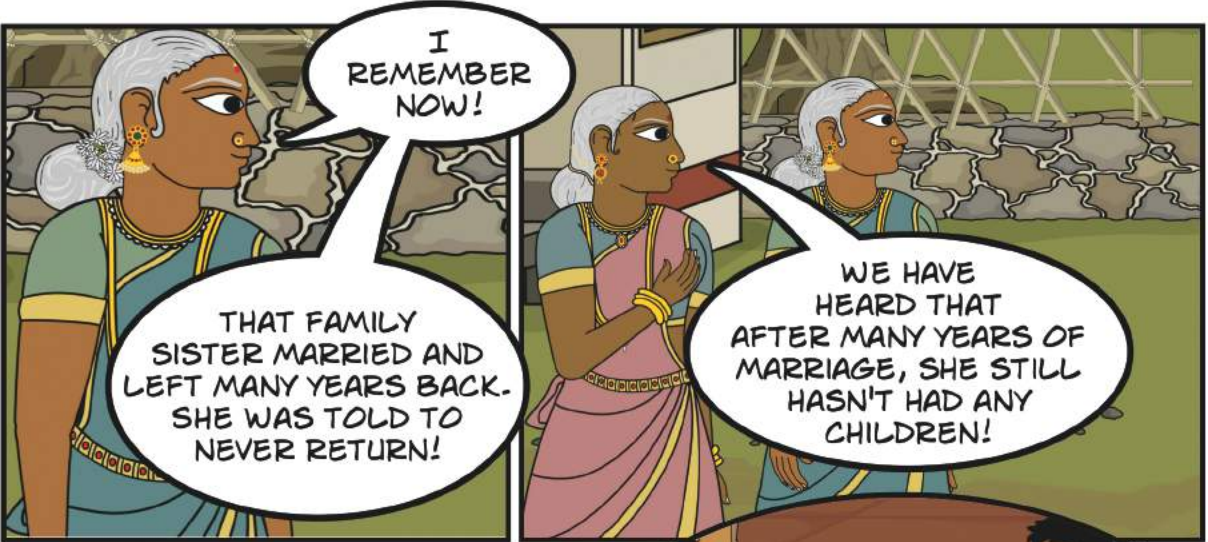
SERVANT!
WHY ARE YOU
RUNNING LIKE
THIS?



I MET A GROUP OF
STRANGERS AT THE
GANESH TEMPLE.

THEY HAVE
COME FROM
PONNIVALA.

A WEALTHY LADY NAMED
TAMARA! GOUNDACHI IS WITH
THEM. THEY SAY SHE IS YOUR
HUSBANDS' SISTER.



I
REMEMBER
NOW!

THAT FAMILY
SISTER MARRIED AND
LEFT MANY YEARS BACK.
SHE WAS TOLD TO
NEVER RETURN!

WE HAVE
HEARD THAT
AFTER MANY YEARS OF
MARRIAGE, SHE STILL
HASN'T HAD ANY
CHILDREN!



SHE MIGHT BE THINKING
ABOUT TAKING SOME OF OUR
CHILDREN BACK WITH HER TO
PONNIVALA!




OH MY
GOODNESS! WE
HAD BETTER ACT
QUICKLY!

THE WIVES IMMEDIATELY RUN TO THEIR HUSBANDS.




HUSBAND!

QUICK, WE MUST HIDE ALL OUR CHILDREN WELL.



WIFE! WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO DO THAT?




PEOPLE SAY THAT YOUR YOUNGER SISTER CAN RUIN OTHERS WITH HER CURSES!



WE HEAR SHE IS BARREN!

WE HEAR SHE IS BARREN!

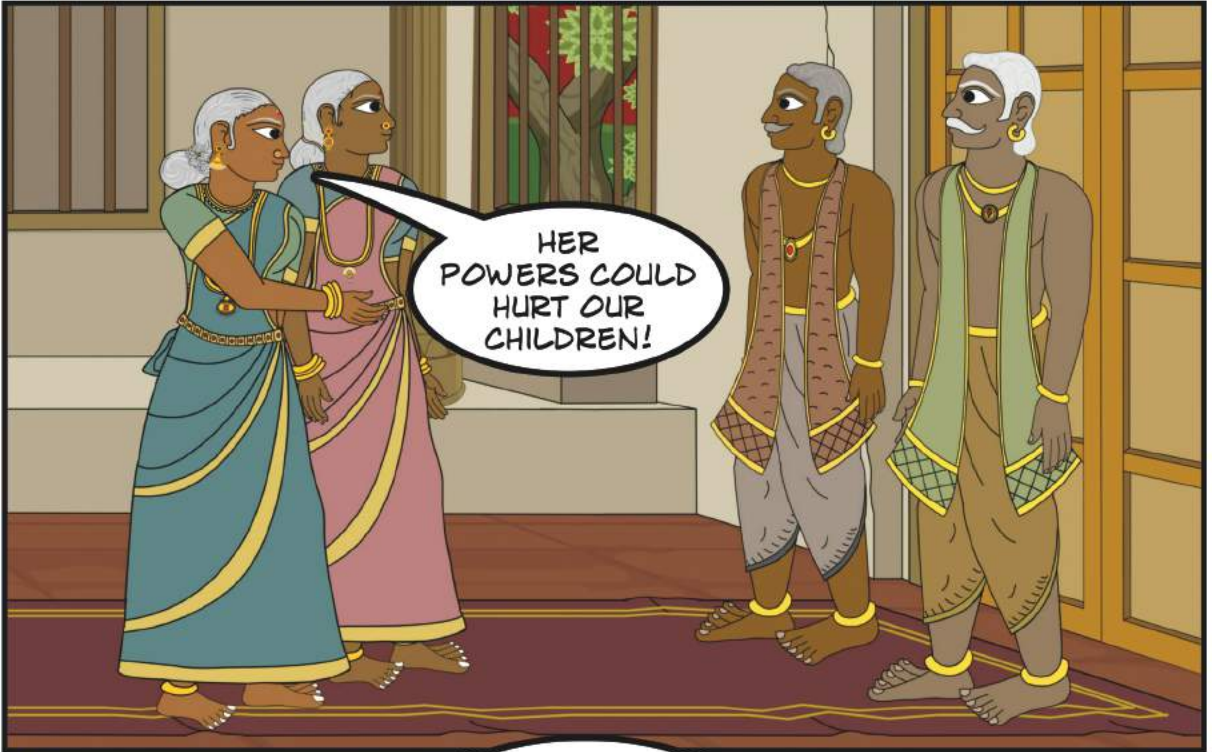
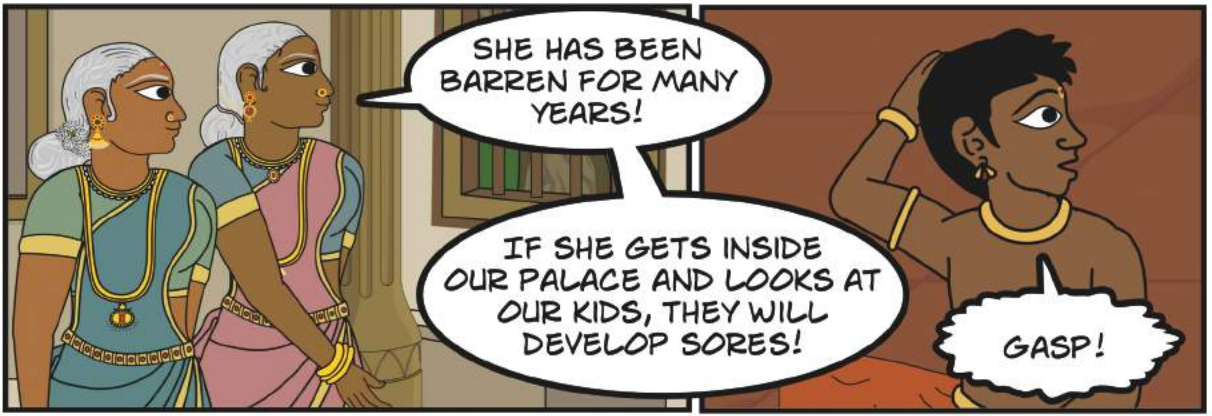


WELL, WE DID HEAR THAT SHE WAS BORN TO MY MOTHER AS A RESULT OF A SPECIAL GIFT FROM LORD SHIVA.



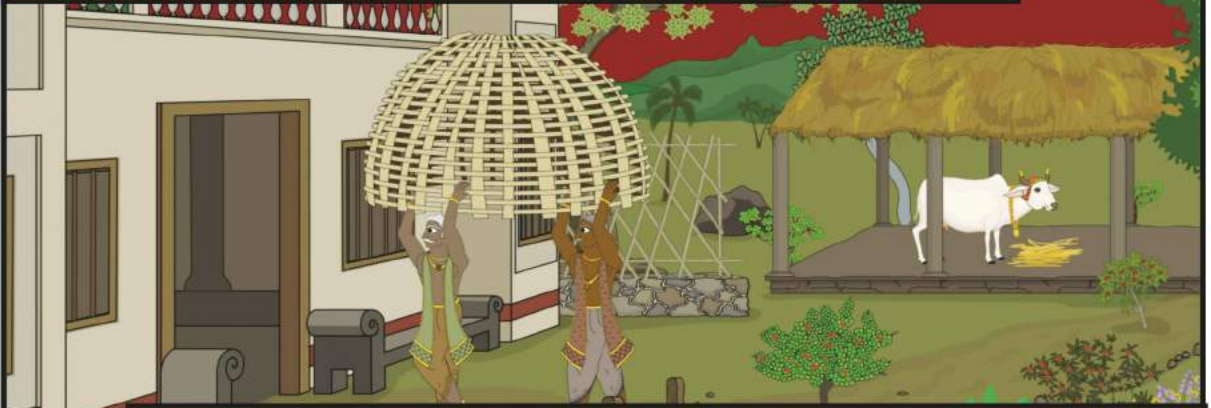
MOTHER BADLY WANTED A BABY GIRL!

The Counter Curse





THE TWO BROTHERS GO OUTSIDE TO FETCH A LARGE BASKET.



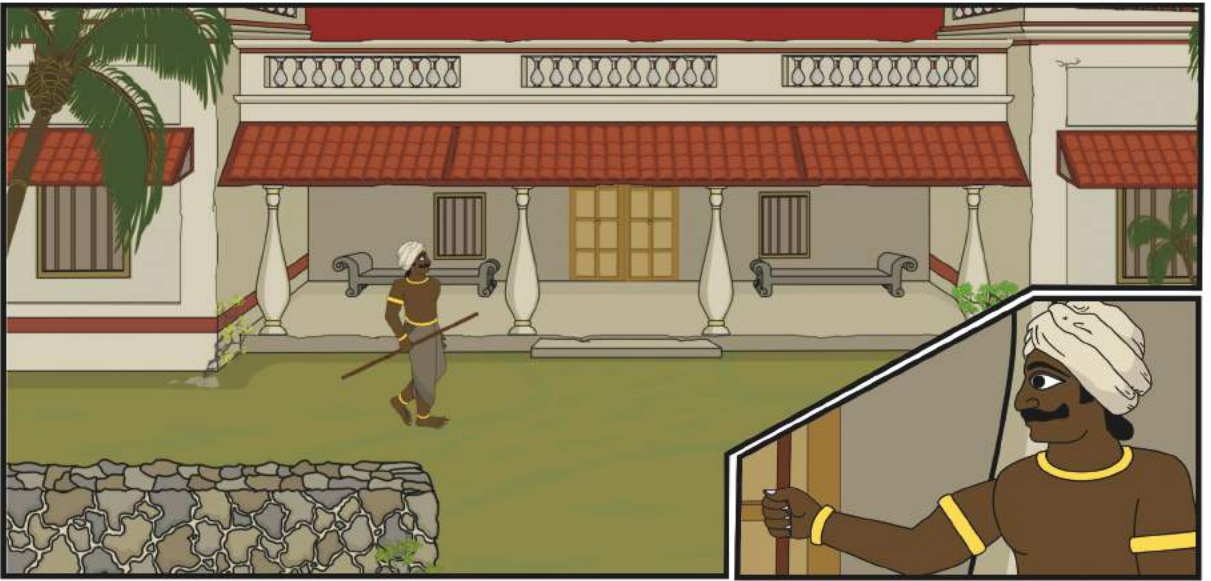
BACK IN THE HOUSE, ALL THE KIDS ARE QUICKLY HIDDEN UNDER IT.



MEANWHILE, TAMARAI HAS REACHED THE VILLAGE CENTRE.



SHE SETS HER GIFTS DOWN AND HEADS OFF TO THE PALACE, ALONE.



AT THE PALACE, TAMARAI COMES UPON A STRANGE SIGHT. A PALACE WATCHMAN IS GUARDING THE ENTRANCE, AND THE GATE IS LOCKED!



OH WATCHMAN!

WHY IS THE PALACE GATE SHUT?

DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE ME?



I AM YOUR KING'S YOUNGER SISTER TAMARAI.

OH MAN! WHERE HAVE MY BROTHERS GONE?

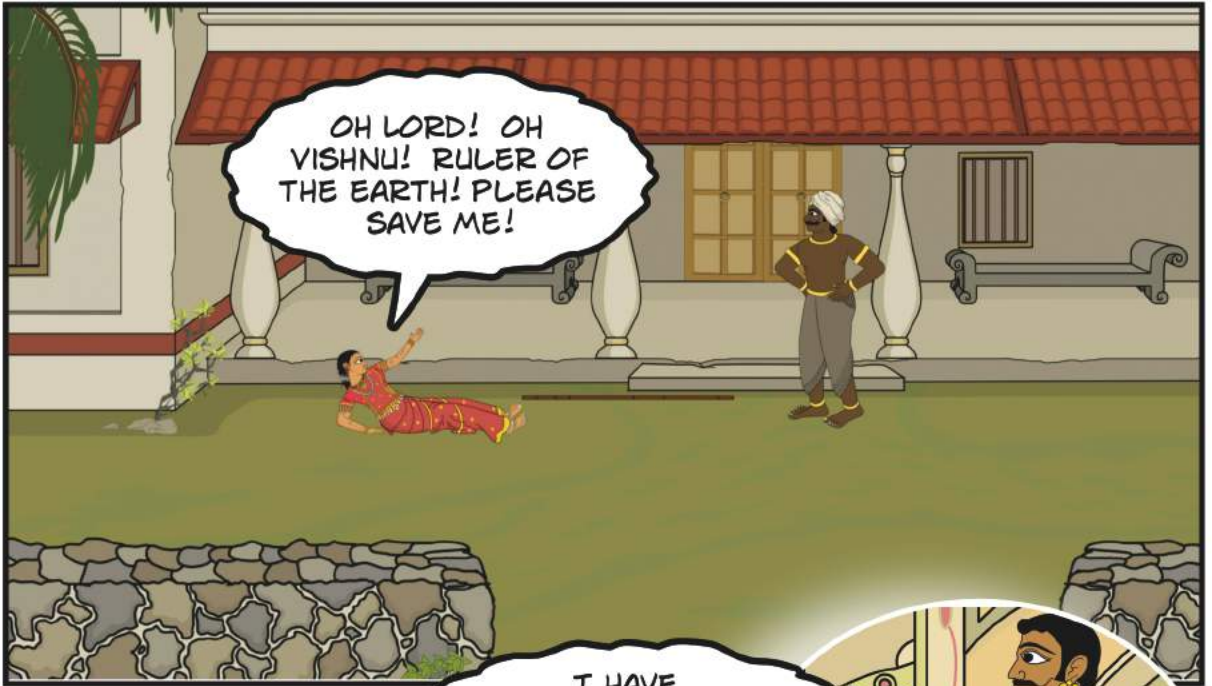
LADY!

OUR KINGS HAVE GONE HUNTING IN MANTAPPUR AND WILL NOT BE BACK FOR SIX MONTHS.



THE WATCHMEN GRABS THE WOMAN AND BEATS HER MERCILESSLY!







YOU HORRIBLE VILLAINS!

YOUR ONLY SISTER COMES ON A VISIT AND WHAT HAPPENS?.....

SHE GETS BEATEN BY THE WATCHMAN! YOU SINNERS!



OH SHIVA! OH RULER OF CONJEEPURAM!

LET YOUR GREAT FIREBALL DESCEND TO EARTH!



THAT'S LADY TAMARAI!

SHE DID NOT LISTEN TO HER HUSBAND. HE TOLD HER NOT TO GO TO VALAVANDI!

LORD SHIVA IS DEEP IN MEDITATION AND DOESN'T HEAR HIS NAME BEING CALLED...BUT VISHNU AWAKENS.



NOW SHE IS IN TROUBLE.



I MUST SEE IF I CAN GET MY BROTHER-IN-LAW SHIVA TO HELP.

VISHNU LEAVES HIS PLACE ON THE MILK SEA TO FIND SHIVA.

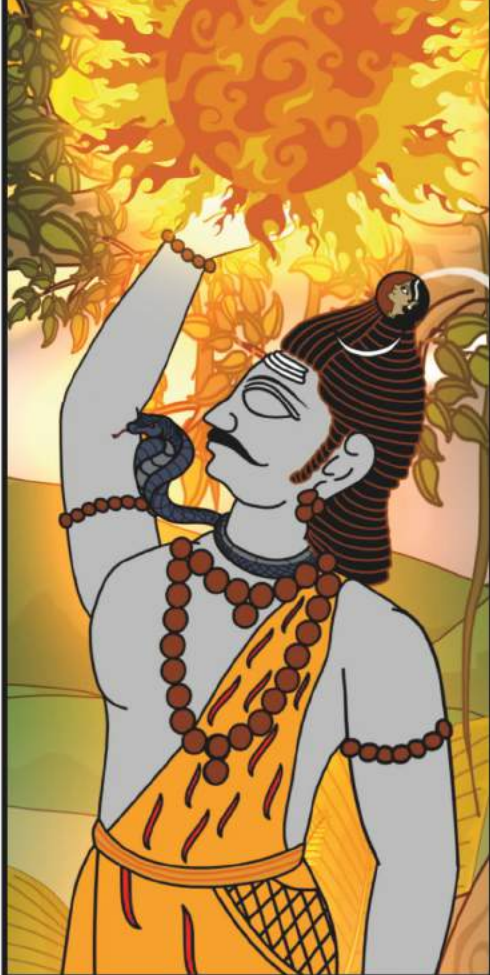


I DON'T WANT TO DISTURB YOU, BUT LADY TAMARAI NEEDS A FIREBALL RIGHT AWAY!





SHIVA CONJURES UP A FIREBALL AND SENDS IT FLYING TO EARTH.



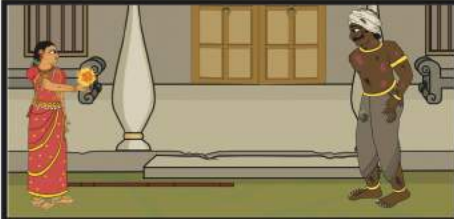
VISHNU THANKS SHIVA AND HEADS BACK TO THE MILK SEA.

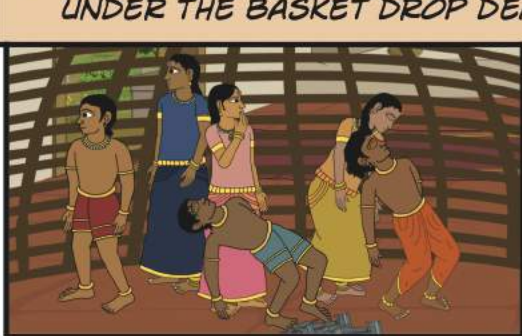
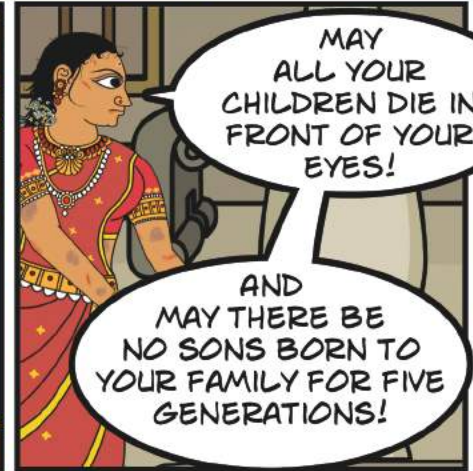
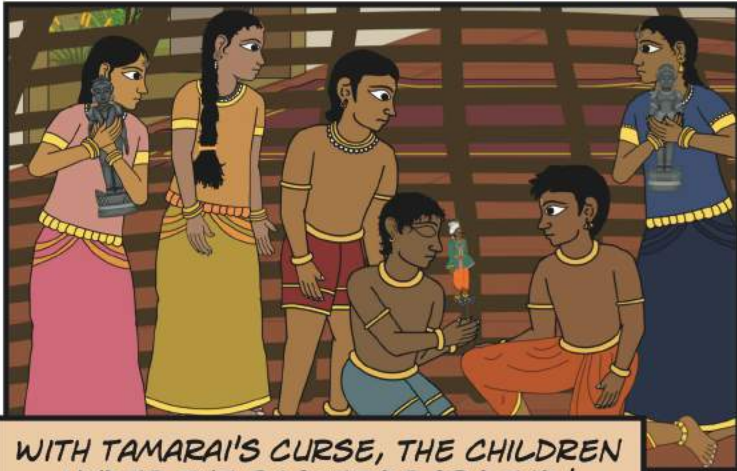


TAMARAI RECEIVES THE FIREBALL AND THROWS IT AT THE WATCHMAN!



FINALLY, TAMARAI CALLS THE FIRE BACK TO HER HAND.





TAMARAI RETURNS TO HER SERVANTS.

EMPTY THE BOXES OF JEWELRY AND FOOD.

COLLECT ALL THE VILLAGE CHILDREN AND LET THEM SEE WHAT WE HAVE BROUGHT!



CHILDREN, MY QUEEN WISHES TO SEE YOU!

THE SERVANT BRINGS THE CHILDREN TO TAMARAI. SHE GREETES THEM.

CHILDREN OF VALAVANDI!

TAKE EVERYTHING FROM HERE. CARRY HOME WHATEVER YOU CAN!



NEXT, TAMARAI CALLS FOR THE VILLAGE STONE MASONS.



OH FINE STONEMASONS!

LAY THEM AT THE SOUTH SIDE OF THIS TEMPLE.

I WANT YOU TO PREPARE MACHED STONES, EACH TWO FEET HIGH AND FOUR FEET LONG.

ONE SHOULD BE ON THE GROUND, THE OTHER STANDING ON TOP OF IT VERTICALLY.



OH LORD OF CONJEEPURAM!

LET THESE TWO STONES STICK TO EACH OTHER!



FIZZZZZZZZ!

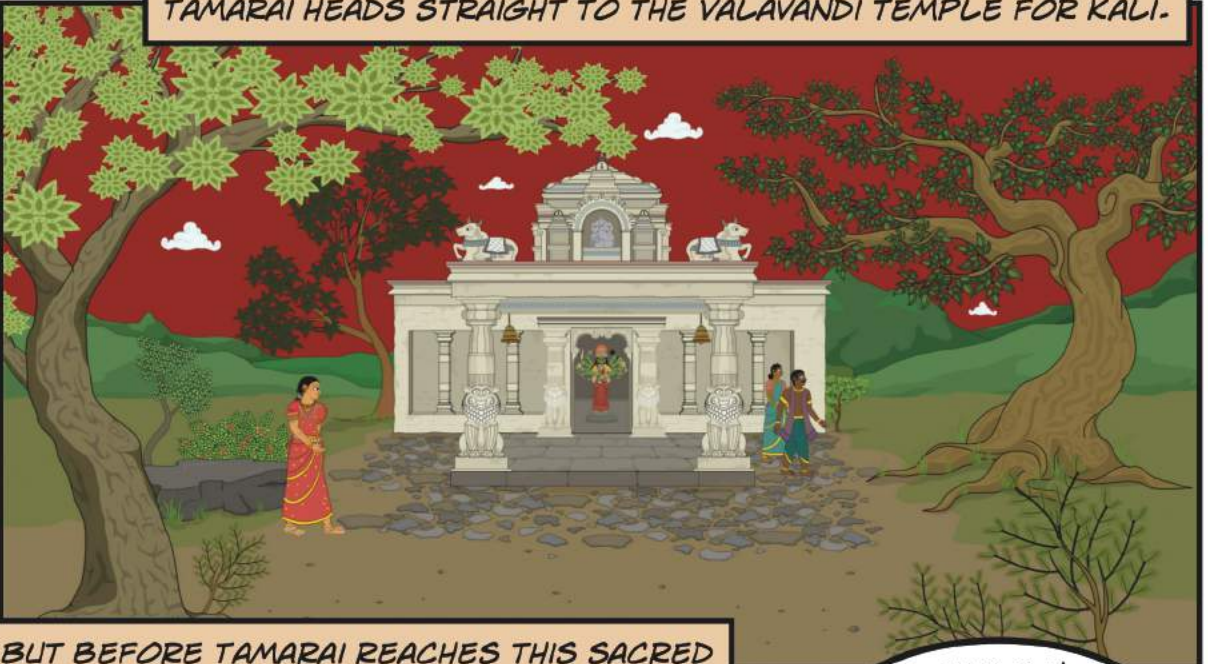
OKAY MEN, I WANT YOU TO WRITE THE FOLLOWING...

"NO MAN IN THIS WORLD IS TO TAKE WOMEN IN MARRIAGE FROM EITHER OF THE KINGS OF VALAVANDI!"





TAMARAI HEADS STRAIGHT TO THE VALAVANDI TEMPLE FOR KALI.

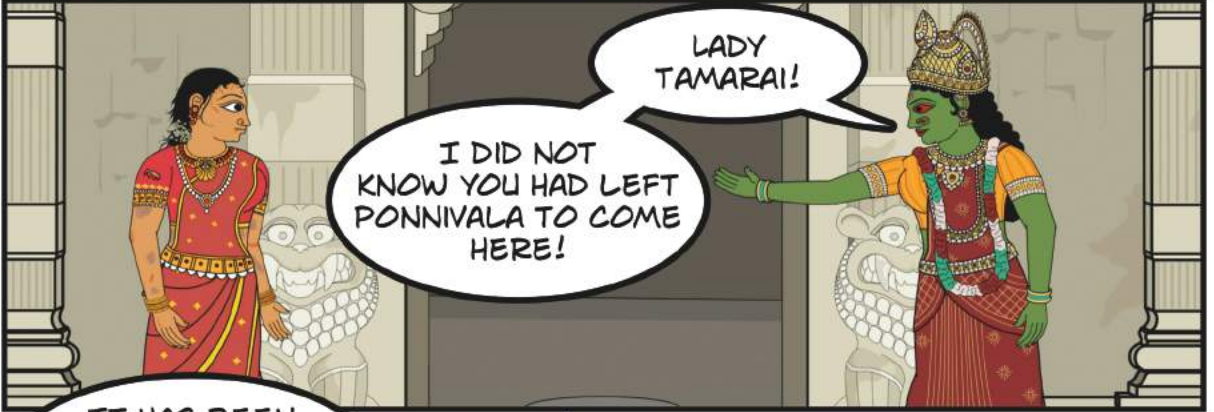


BUT BEFORE TAMARAI REACHES THIS SACRED SPOT, THE DOORS MAGICALLY CLOSE!





KALI AWAKENS, HEARING TAMARAI'S LOUD PLEAS AND CRIES. SHE OPENS HER EYES, AND AS SHE DOES, THE DOORS TO HER TEMPLE MAGICALLY OPEN. KALI LEAVES HER PLACE ON THE PEDESTAL INSIDE AND APPEARS BEFORE TAMARAI. TAMARAI BOWS TO SHOW HER DEEP RESPECT.

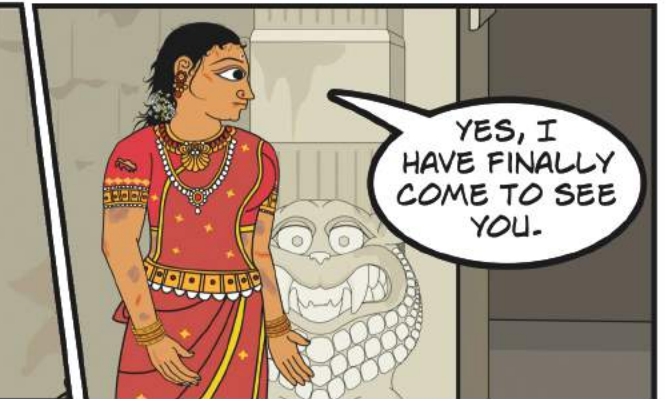


LADY TAMARAI!

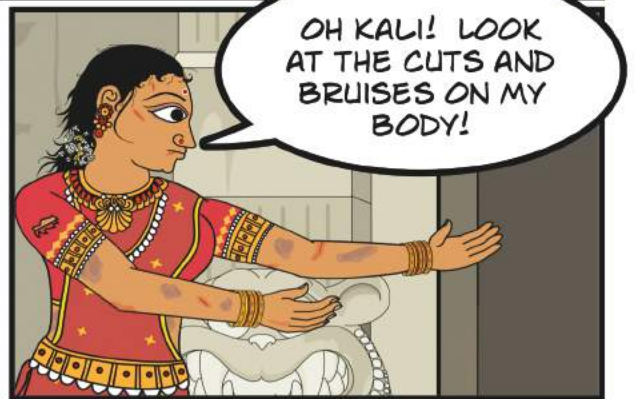
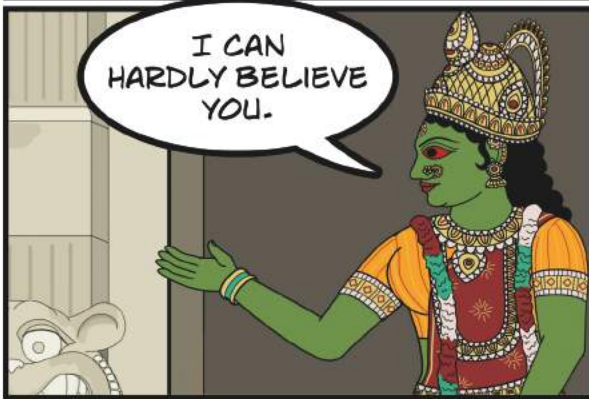
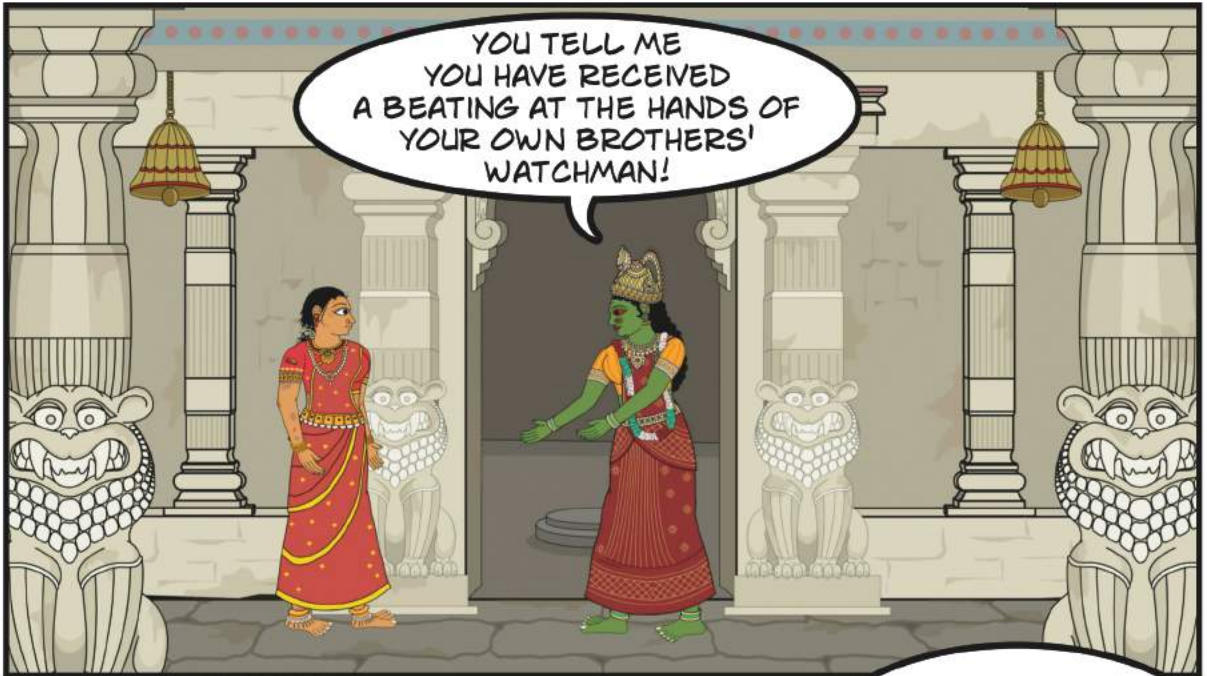
I DID NOT KNOW YOU HAD LEFT PONNIVALA TO COME HERE!



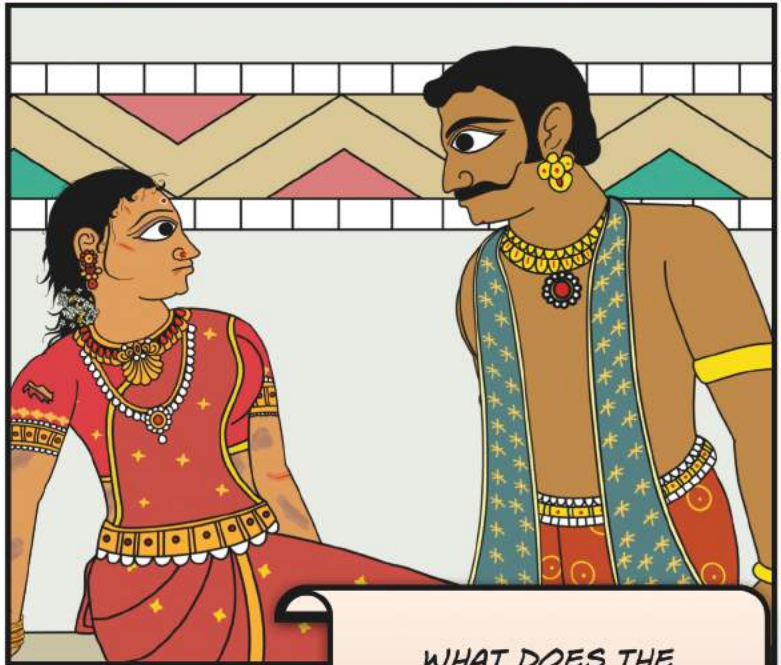
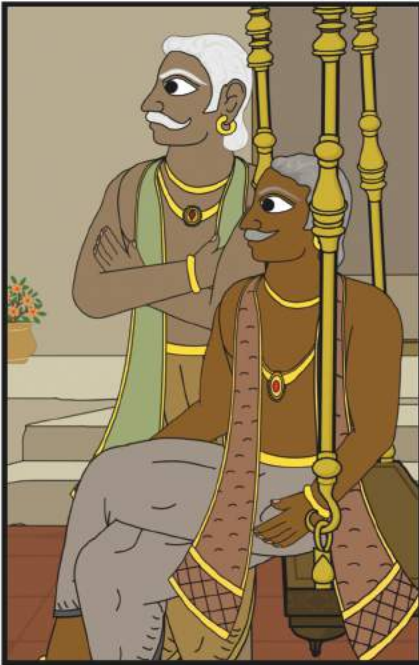
IT HAS BEEN SO MANY YEARS SINCE I HAVE SEEN YOU!



YES, I HAVE FINALLY COME TO SEE YOU.



**BOTH WOMEN
PONDER
TAMARAI'S SAD
FATE. WILL THIS
STRING OF
MISFORTUNES
CONTINUE? KALI
RETURNS TO HER
STATUE FORM
AND RESTS ON
HER PEDESTAL.
SHE IS THINKING
IN SILENCE.**



**WHAT DOES THE
FUTURE HOLD IN
STORE? HOW WILL
TAMARAI'S
BROTHERS REACT
TO HER CURSE?
WHAT WILL HER
HUSBAND DO WHEN
HE SEES HOW
BADLY SHE HAS
BEEN BEATEN?
CAN THE GODDESS
KALI FIND A WAY TO
HELP THIS POOR,
WRONGED, AND
SUFFERING WOMAN?**

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/comic9

The Legend of
Ponnivala

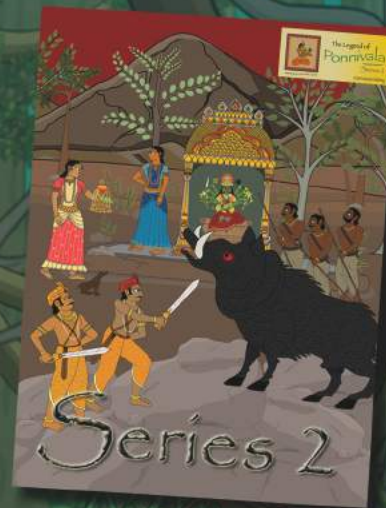
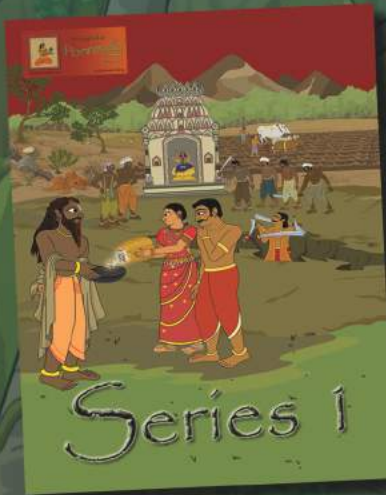
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Collect All 26!

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