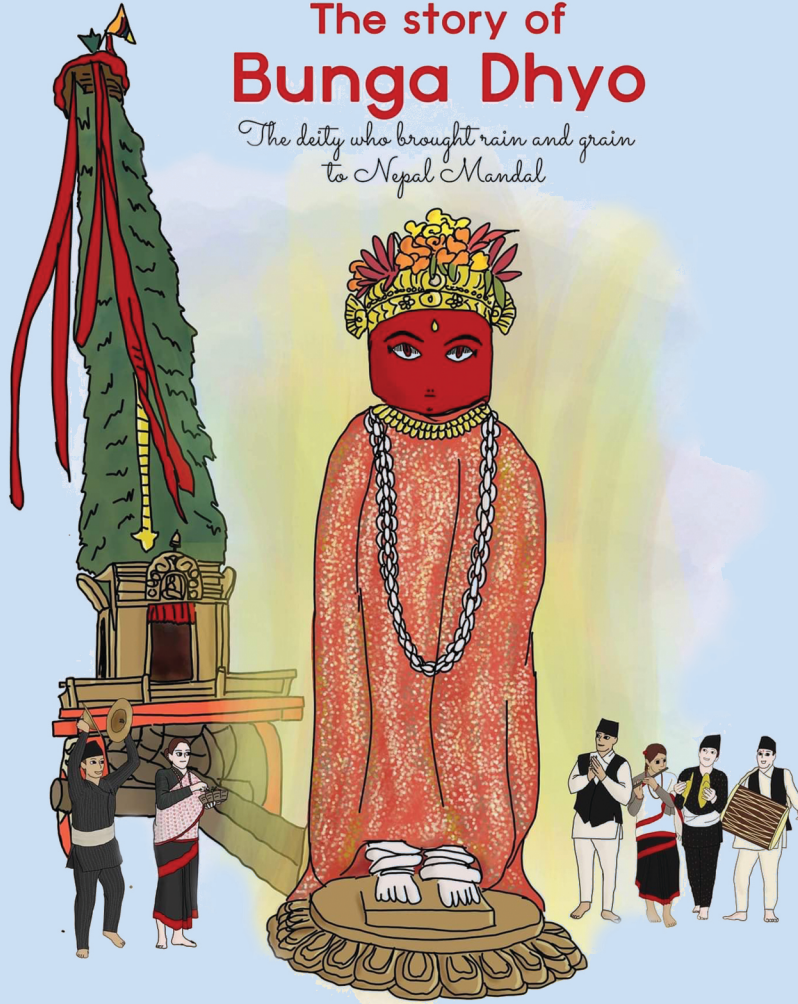


The story of Bunga Dhyo

*The deity who brought rain and grain
to Nepal Mandal*



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*Drona Prasad Koirala
Executive Director*





Bunga Dyah

*The deity who brought rain
and harvest to valley*

Among the many jatras happening throughout Kathmandu valley each year, the Rato Machhindranath Jatra stands out for being the biggest and longest jatra of Patan (Yala), and featuring the highest and the biggest chariot. The deity is known as

Machhindranath (with variant spellings), Matsyendranath, Aryalokitesvara, Lokeshwor, Karunamaya, Lokhnath, Padma-pani and Bunga Dyah. Yet the name Bunga Dyah is currently confined to Patan and Bungamati, it is seldom used by writers, and virtually unknown to new generation.

There are several legendary accounts of the coming of Bunga Dyah to the Valley of Nepal. The Newa chronicle has a full account of legend. We have tried to present summarised story based on the chronicle. Our culture is a mix of myth, beliefs and some historical datas. There might be different version of the same story in different places. We have tried to gather as much information as possible. We don't intend to hurt any group of people and we have also tried to highlight the positive influences through the stories.

Hope you like our series.

The story takes us back to Satya Yuga, the days when gods and demons walked the face of the earth and the age of truth when everybody lived by their word and fulfilled every promise made. There was a princess who would cry almost all the time.



Her father, the king, would try to make the princess stop crying.



That would often help. The king would use the same threat to calm her next day.



That's my good girl.

This time, the princess kept on crying. The king was worried.



This time, the princess kept on crying. The king was worried.



When the king was doing his royal duties, a guard came.

Your majesty, there is a pack of wolves who want to see you.



Amongst them was one who was white in color and magnificent-looking. The king asked the reason for their visit.

What made you come to the palace?

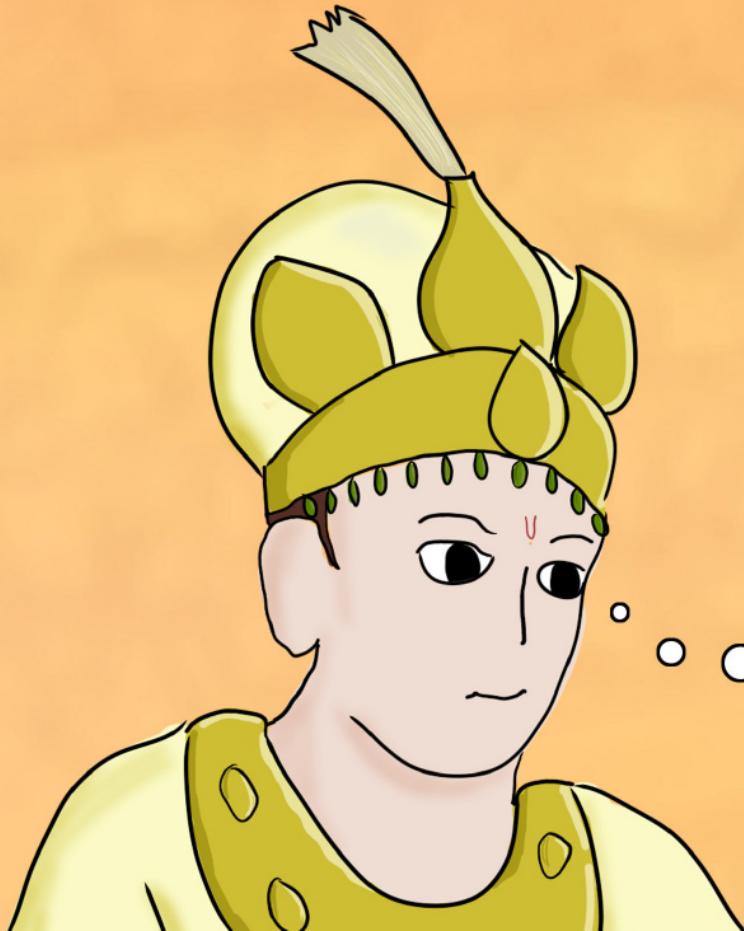


The white wolf reminded the king of his words.

*Fulfill your words king. Marry
off your daughter to me.*



The king was enraged but he was bound by his words.



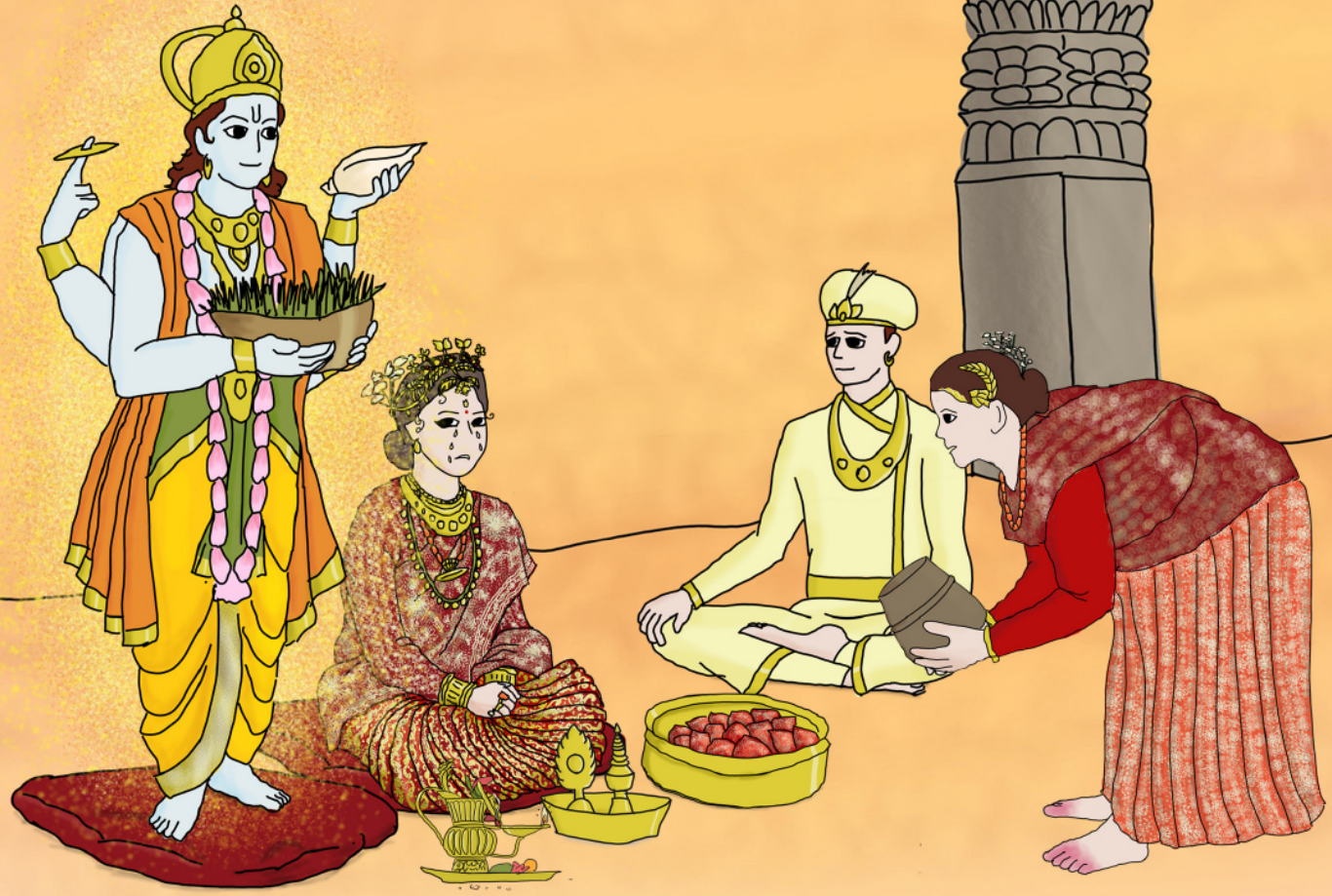
*I should have never said those words.
I have no option but to fulfill them!*



The king delivered on this promise.



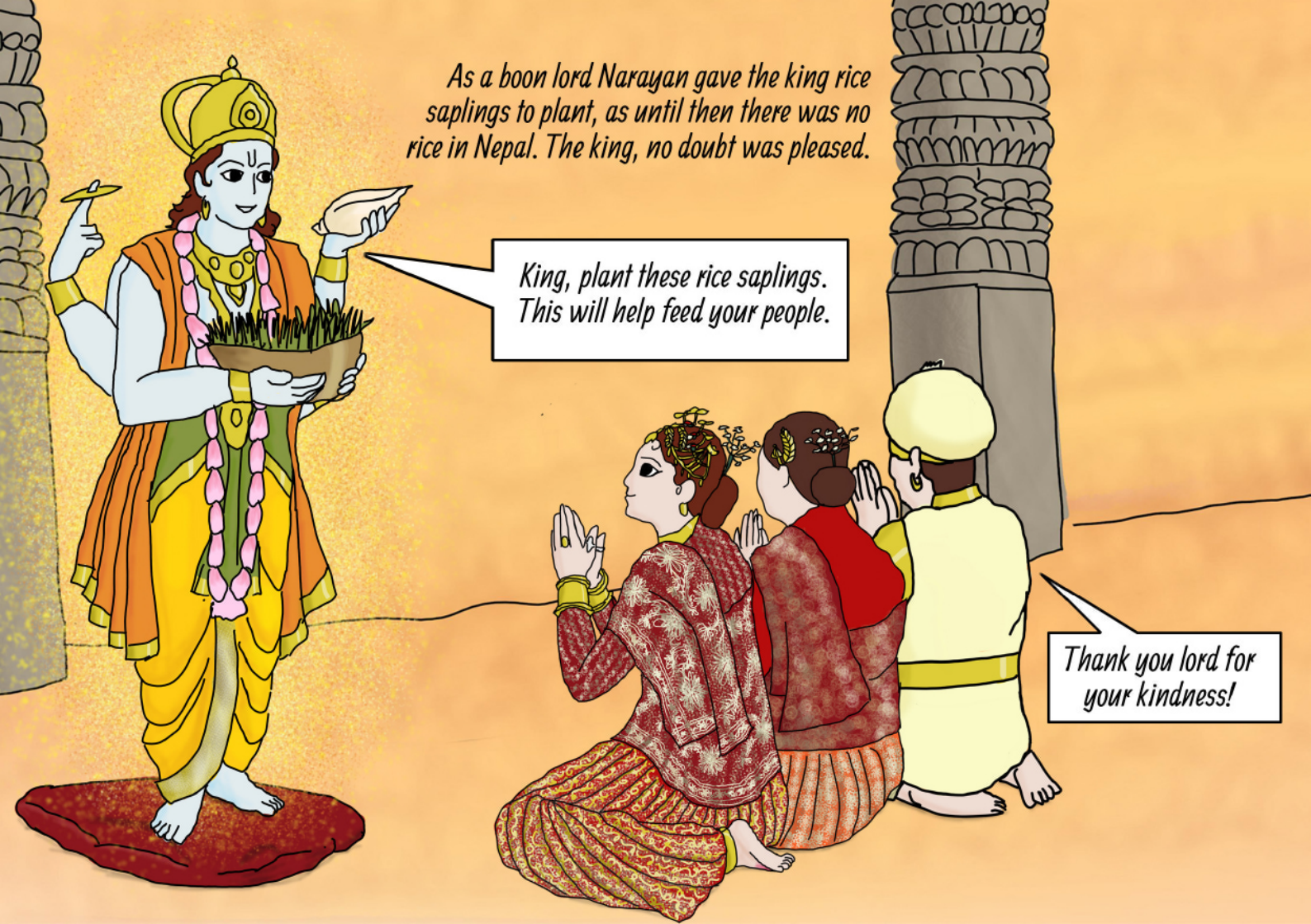
The wolf was in fact the manifestation of Lord Narayan, who was impressed by the king who kept his promise.



As a boon lord Narayan gave the king rice saplings to plant, as until then there was no rice in Nepal. The king, no doubt was pleased.

*King, plant these rice saplings.
This will help feed your people.*

*Thank you lord for
your kindness!*



The saplings were distributed among farmers with the method of plantation.



Soon the harvest time turned the whole kingdom golden.

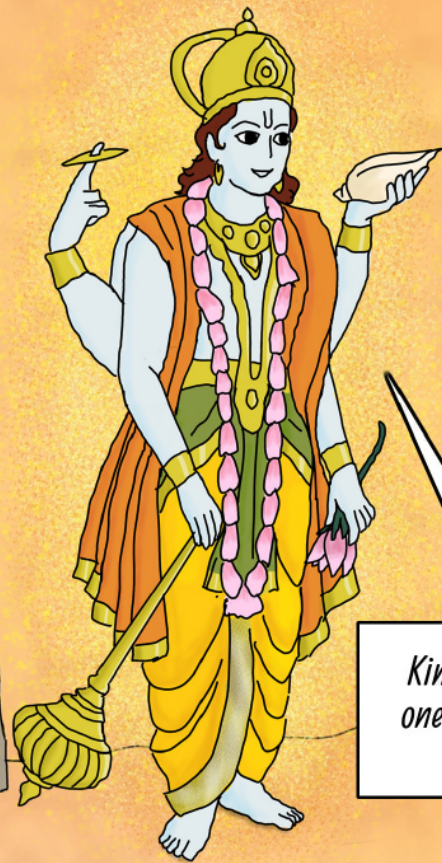


*But it was discovered the husk were empty!
which was then reported to the king.*



*Your majesty, the
husks are empty.*

So the king called Lord Narayan for help.



King, the lord of grain will visit one day to fill the husk. You and your people have to wait.

Lord, the husks are empty. My people are very disappointed.



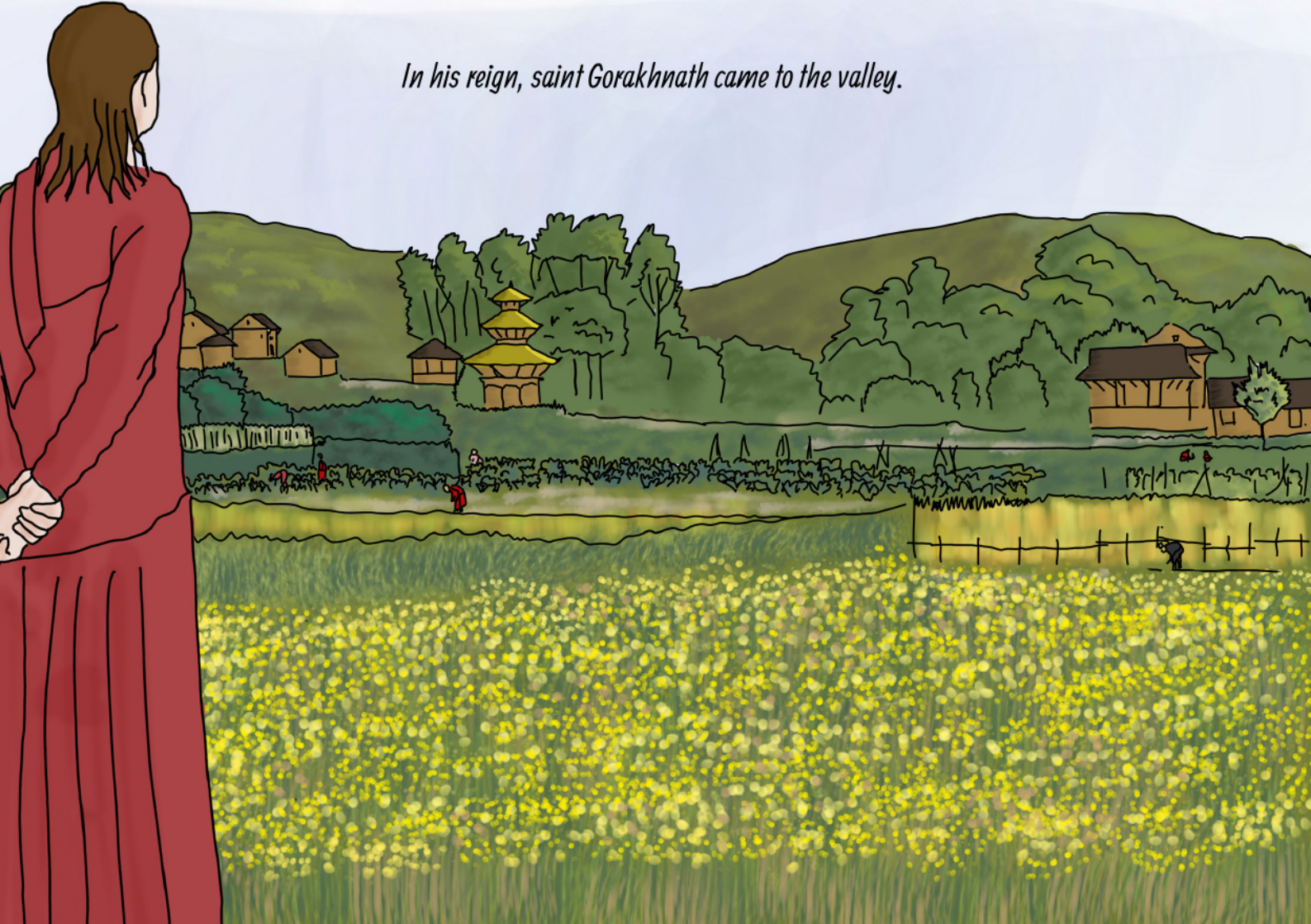
Soon, the queen gave birth to a baby boy, the future king, Narendradev.



In due course, the old king crowned his son Narendradev and went off to forest to spend his last days in religious works.



In his reign, saint Gorakhnath came to the valley.



He asked farmers for alms.

Farmer, I'm seeking for some alms.

Sorry, but we are busy. We have to finish planting these saplings. Plus we don't have anything with us.

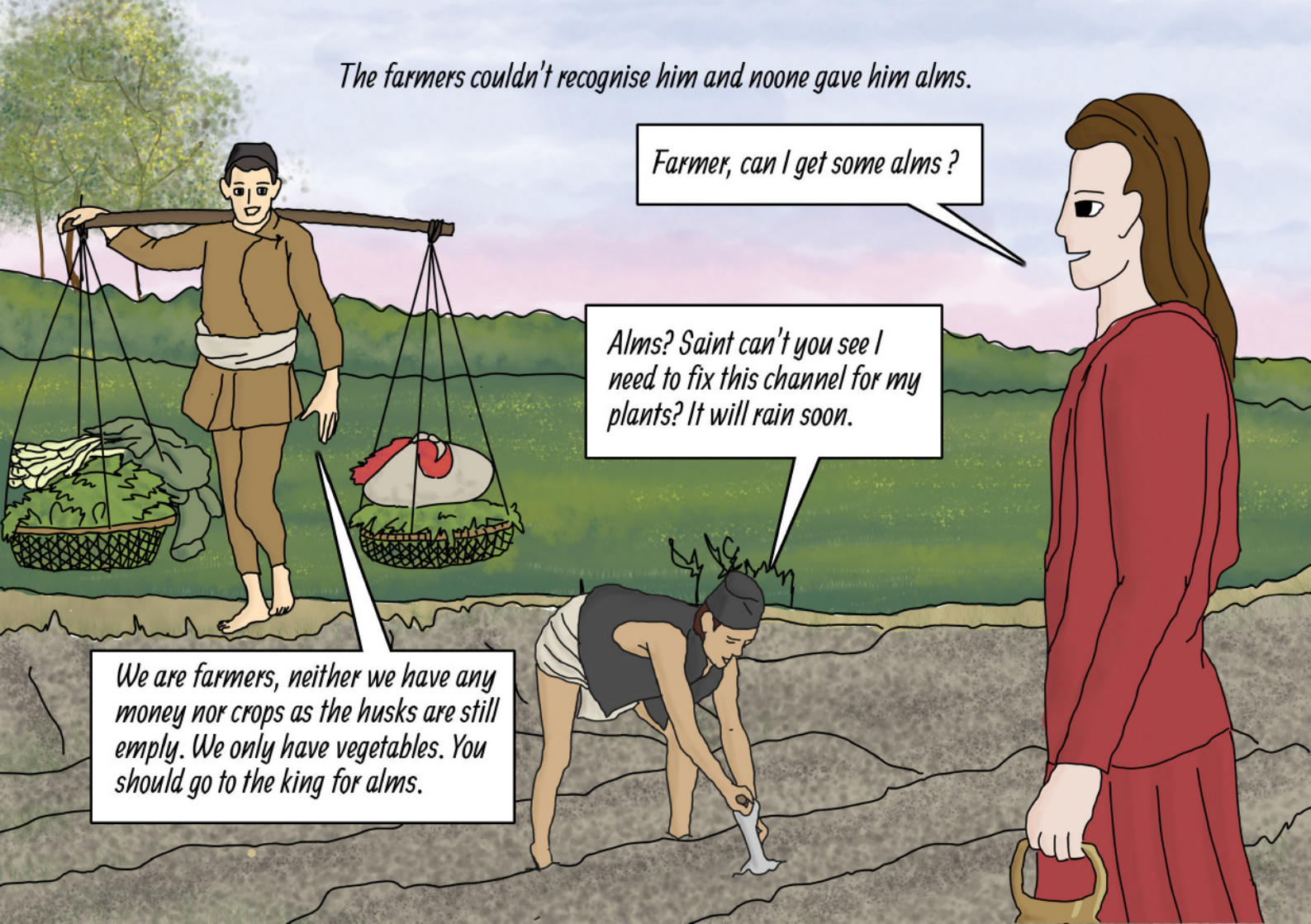


The farmers couldn't recognise him and noone gave him alms.

Farmer, can I get some alms?

Alms? Saint can't you see I need to fix this channel for my plants? It will rain soon.

We are farmers, neither we have any money nor crops as the husks are still empty. We only have vegetables. You should go to the king for alms.

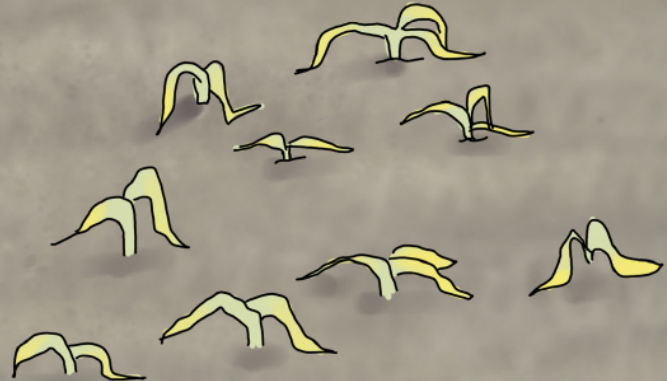


So in anger, he captured all the snakes and 'Nags', believed responsible for rain and started to meditate.

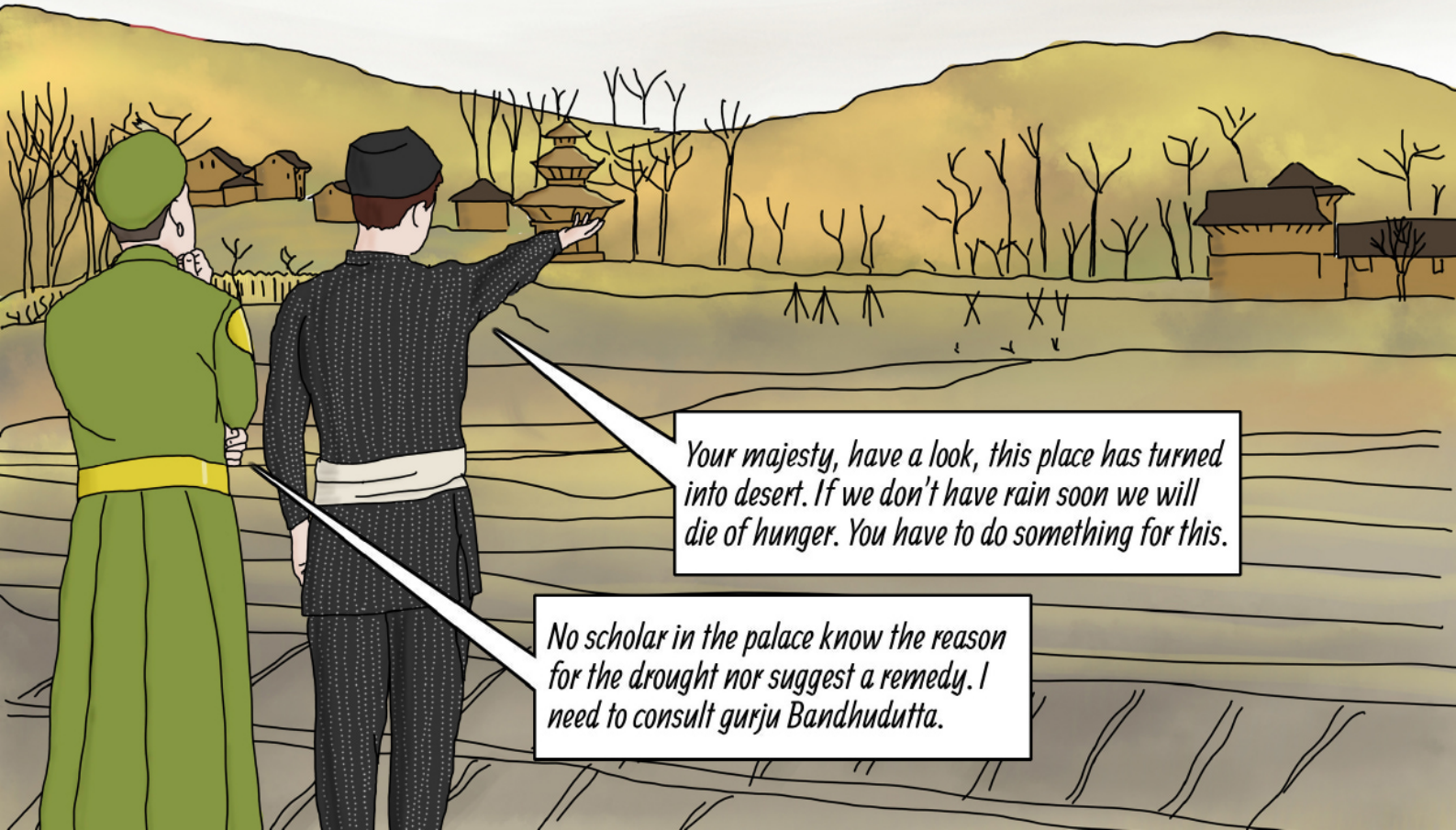
*All these farmers care about
is their farm and rain. I'll
teach them to respect saints*



Since Nags were closely associated with rainfall, the valley saw no rain for several seasons which was followed by famine.



Once lavish valley turned into barren desert and distressed farmers seeked help from the king.



Your majesty, have a look, this place has turned into desert. If we don't have rain soon we will die of hunger. You have to do something for this.

No scholar in the palace know the reason for the drought nor suggest a remedy. I need to consult gurju Bandhudutta.

The kings went to meet Bandudatta, a learned guru.

17



Blessings king. I was waiting for you.

Jojolapa Gurju!



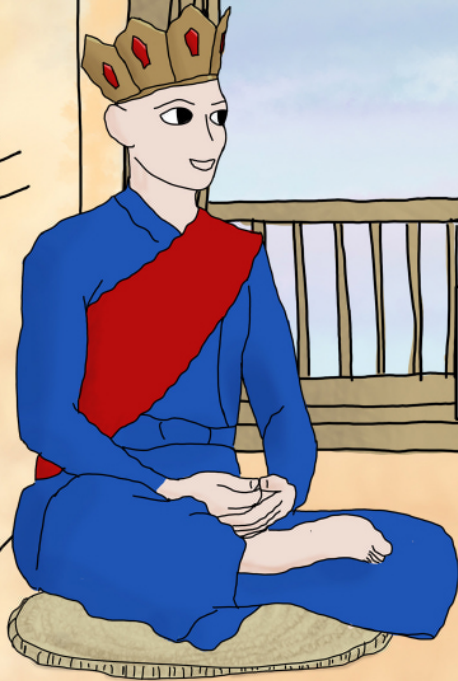
Nothing is hidden from you. I need to bring rain to the valley. Noone knows the cause, neither the solution.

Guru explained the reason for drought.

Saint Gorakhnath has captured all the Nags and snakes and meditating. That is the reason for drought.

How can we set those Nags free?

11



The only way to release them is to make Gorakhnath get up from meditation. But no force can make him do that.

Then you may also know what will make him get up.

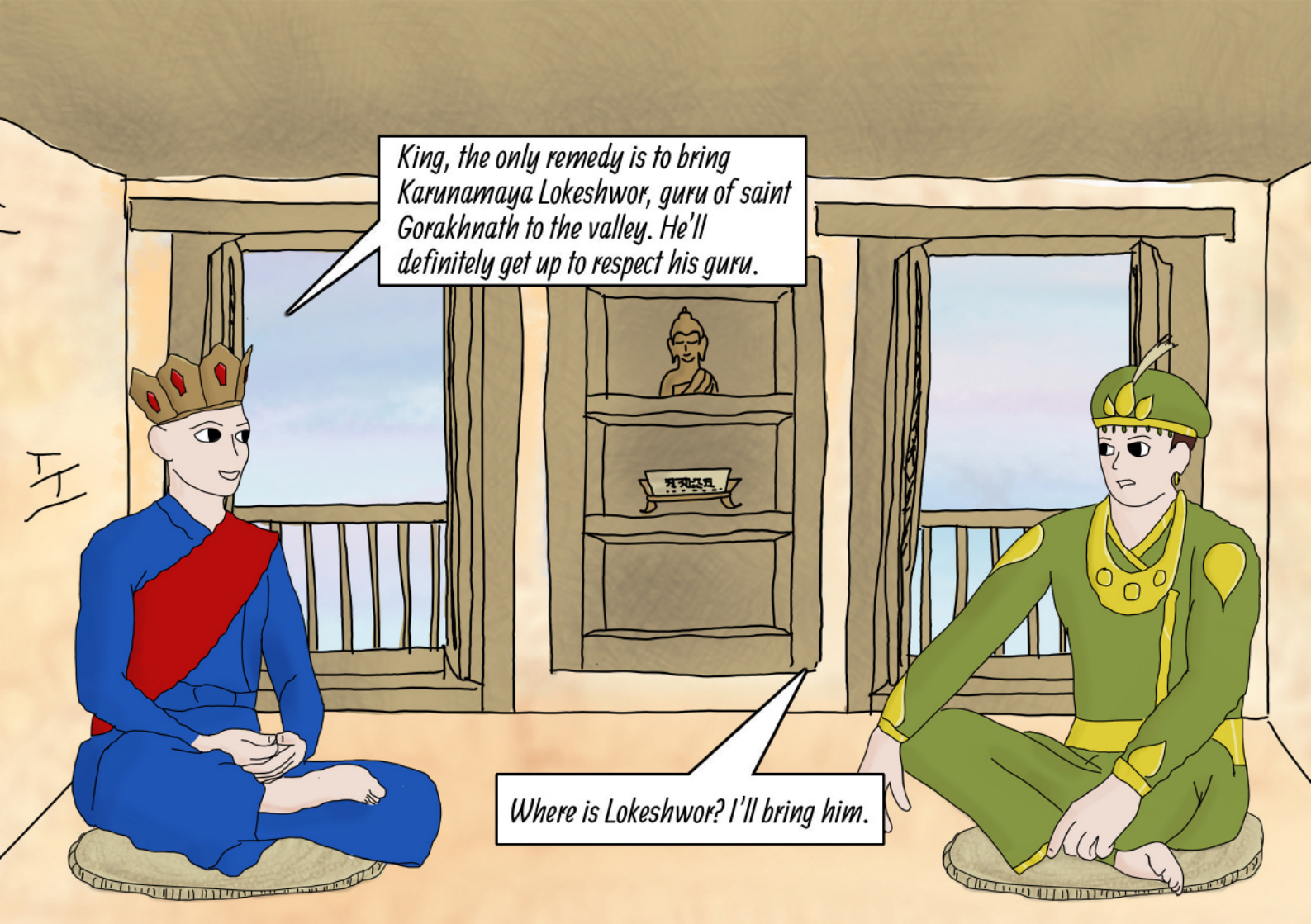


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King, the only remedy is to bring Karunamaya Lokeshwor, guru of saint Gorakhnath to the valley. He'll definitely get up to respect his guru.

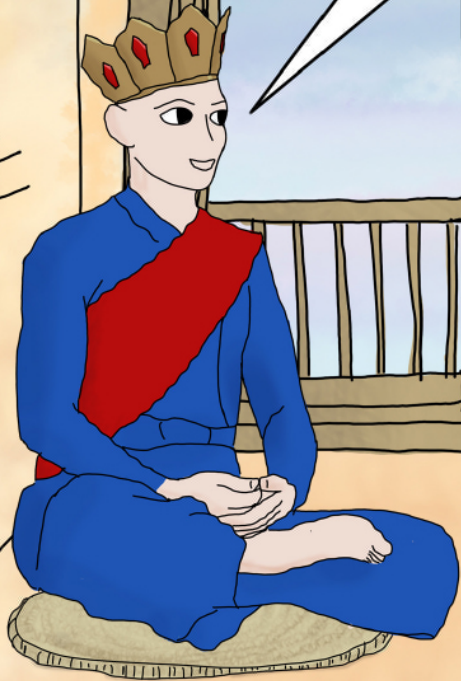
17

Where is Lokeshwor? I'll bring him.



At present, he is in Kamuni, the land of demons (Yaksas), as the youngest son of the king. We need to make a journey to Kamuni. Please make the arrangements. We need a porter as well to carry Lokeshwor.

HI



Yes, gurju

Preparations were made for the journey. Bandhudatta, the King and a porter, Ratan Chakra set off journey to find Karunamaya Lokeshwor.



Bandhudatta cunningly used his tantrik powers to make Lokeshwor's mother, the demon queen sick.

Why did you wake up in the middle of the night?

I am not feeling well lord!



The king then entered the palace to offer his service with a condition.

*Nothing is valuable than
my wife's health.*

*King, I've learned that your beloved wife is
very sick. I know a healer who can cure her but
in return you have to give me what I'd ask.*





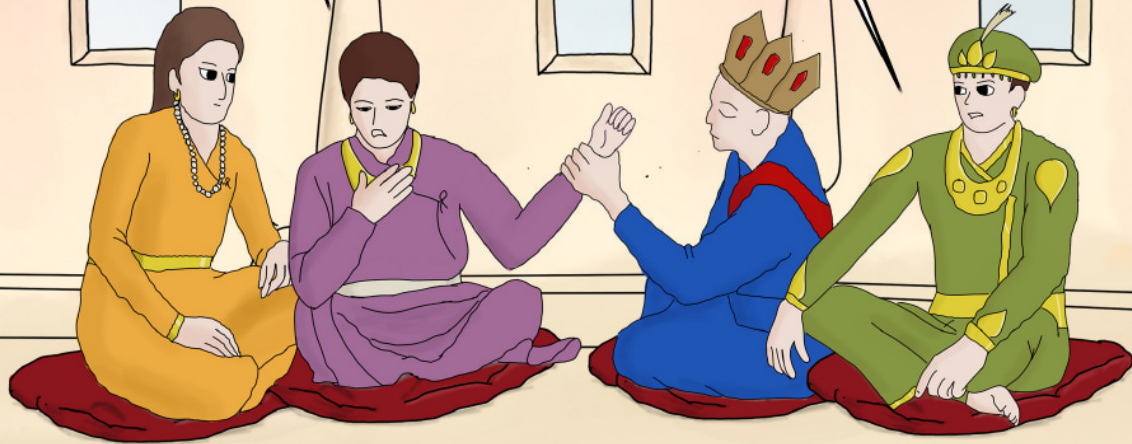
I'm ready to give you whatever you ask for.

I trust you king. I'll bring my healer.

The king & Guru arrived with the king to cure the queen. a condition.

I'm feeling better now.

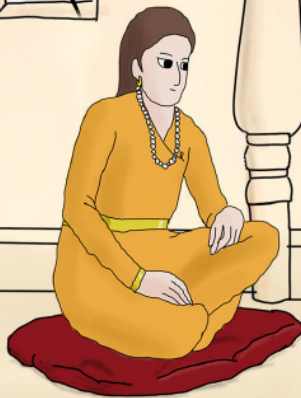
He is the best healer i've ever known.



The pleased demon asked them what reward they wanted for their service.

As promised, I would like give you whatever you ask for your service.

We want to take your youngest son with us, its for a noble cause.



The demon king repend, but then he said the decision should be left to his wife.

You can take anything from me but my son. Take all my treasure.

We only want to take your son with us. Fulfill your promise.

If my queen agrees to send our son, I would not refuse.



The queen adamantly refused.

No, my son is not an object someone could take away! Now I know they tricked us to gain entrance in the palace and take my son. I won't let it happen.



Lokeshwor knew he had to leave the palace so he sought mother's permission.

Mother, its time to leave the palace for mankind. Please let me go.

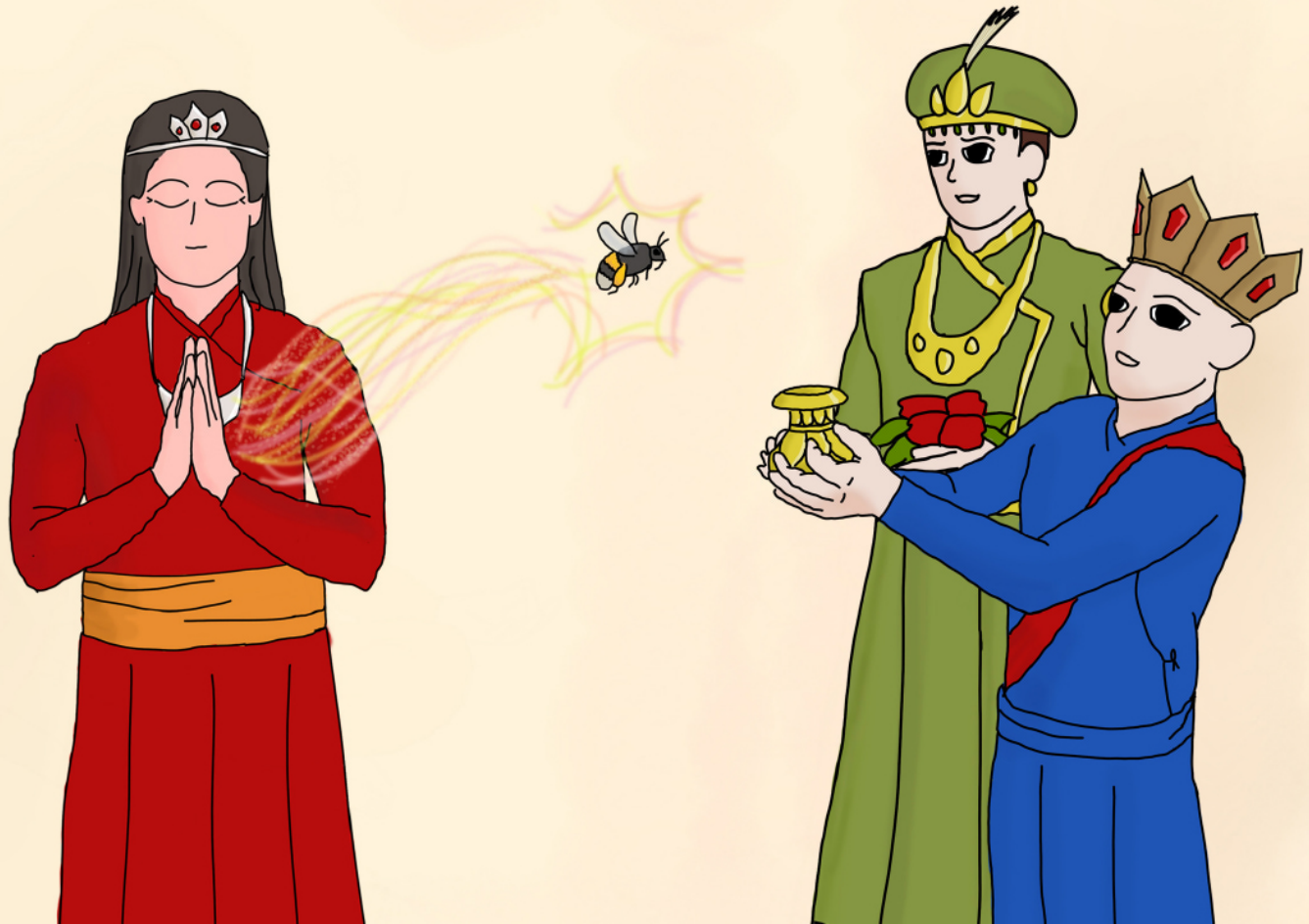
No, son. They've cunningly altered your mind. You belong here. I won't let you go.



In fear that the guru might use his powers to lure Lokeshwor outside the demon's palace, the queen spread her hair blocking the doorway, as it was considered a sin to walk over anyone.



But Bandhudatta's powers were very strong and managed to help Lokeshwor turn into bumble bee to sneak out of the palace. Bandhudatta captured the bee in the golden *Kalash* while the king helped him cover the Kalash.



*Lokeshwor left his lifeless body and mourning
parents at the doorway.*

Son! how could you leave us?



The demons were also powerful and to escape their influence they ran with the Kalash to the valley without looking back.



As they approached their home, gurju realised that the demon queen knew everything and followed them to take her son back. Guru casted a spell binding her to that spot.



Oh! the demon queen has followed us, I need to stop her from snatching the Kalash.



The spell binded her with the tree. It is believed that the spot stills remains!



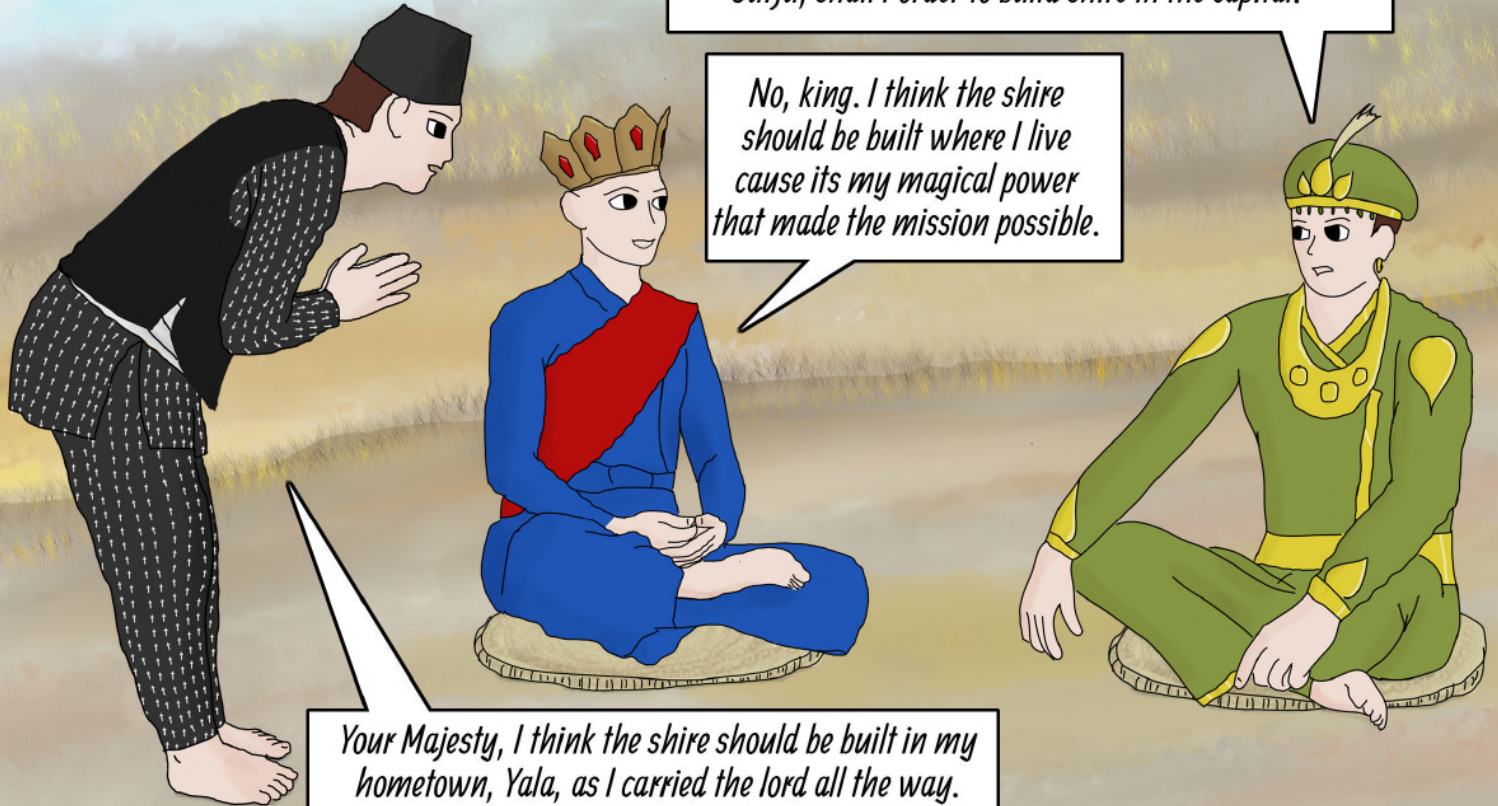
You tricksters! release me. I'll never forgive you. I'll get back my son.

When they reached the kingdom, a dispute broke about where to set up a shire for Lokeshwor.

Gurju, shall I order to build shire in the capital?

No, king. I think the shire should be built where I live cause its my magical power that made the mission possible.

Your Majesty, I think the shire should be built in my hometown, Yala, as I carried the lord all the way.



The problem of where Lokeshwor would be kept was to be solved by the most senior man in the valley.

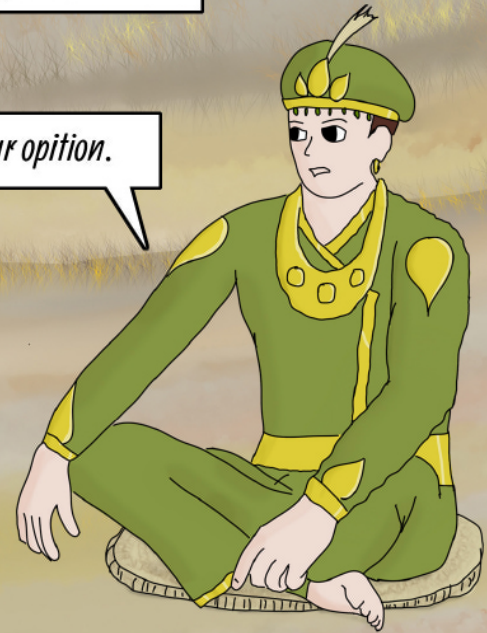


I know the oldest man in the kingdom. I'll bring him tomorrow.



Let's not argue. Let the decision be taken by the oldest and most learnt man of the kingdom.

I agree with your opinion.



Ratan Chakra went to meet the old man.

Baa, I'm Ratan Chakra. I wanted to talk to you. Please accept this yogurt I brought for you.

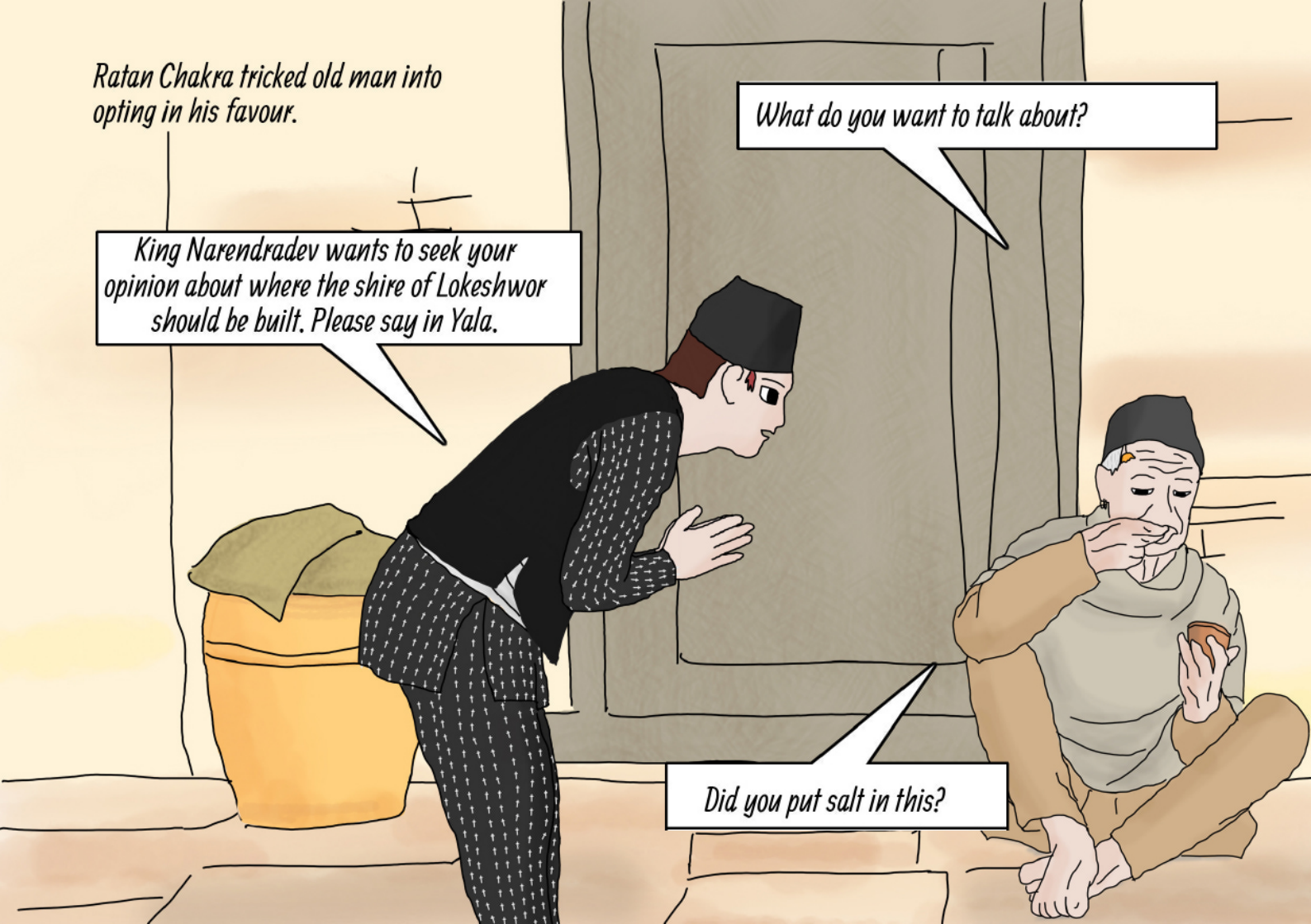


*Ratan Chakra tricked old man into
opting in his favour.*

*King Narendradev wants to seek your
opinion about where the shire of Lokeshwor
should be built. Please say in Yala.*

What do you want to talk about?

Did you put salt in this?



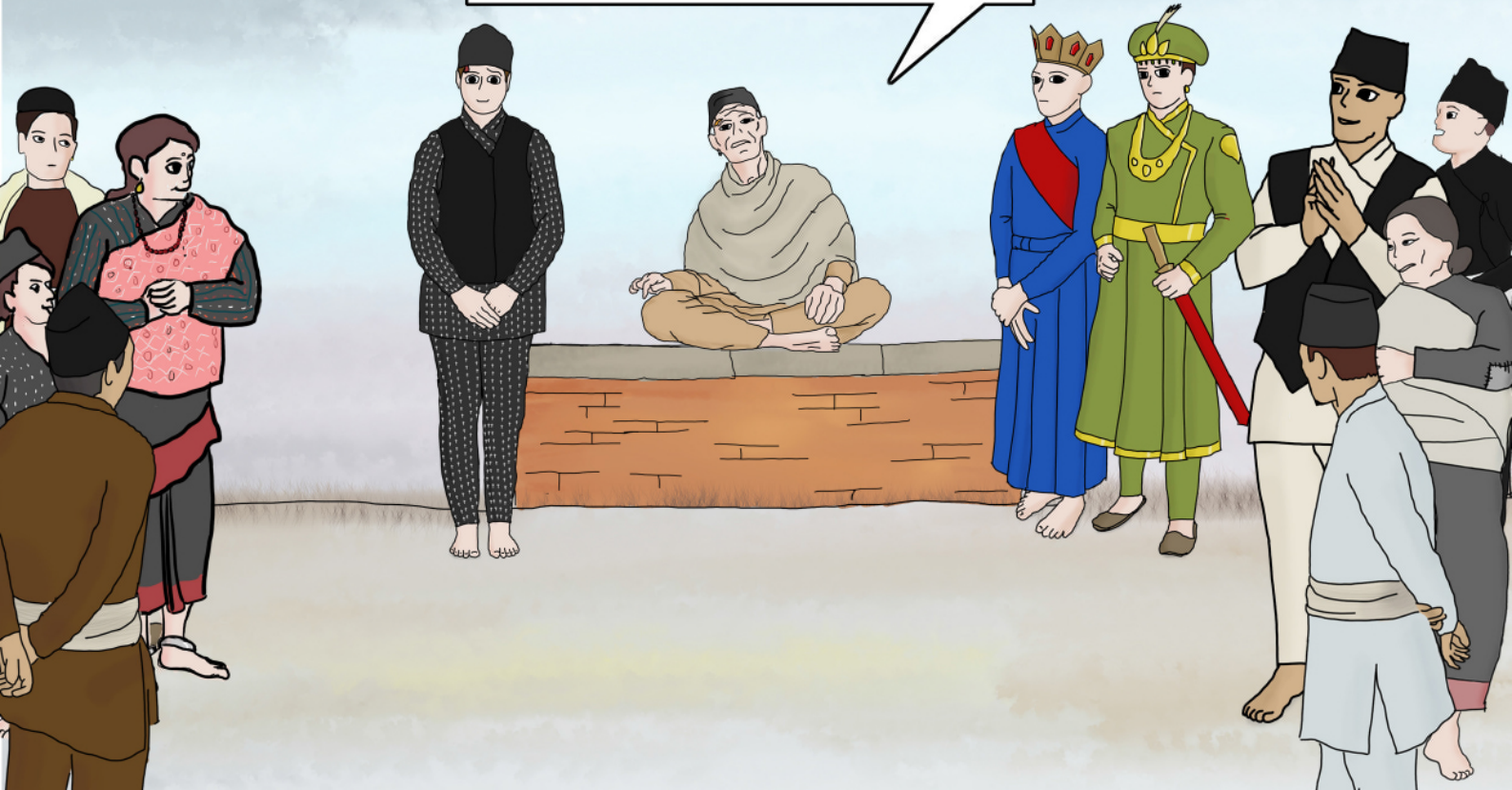
There's a popular saying that once a man has eaten the salt from another man, he must owe other.

You cunningly fed me your salt. So, I owe you!

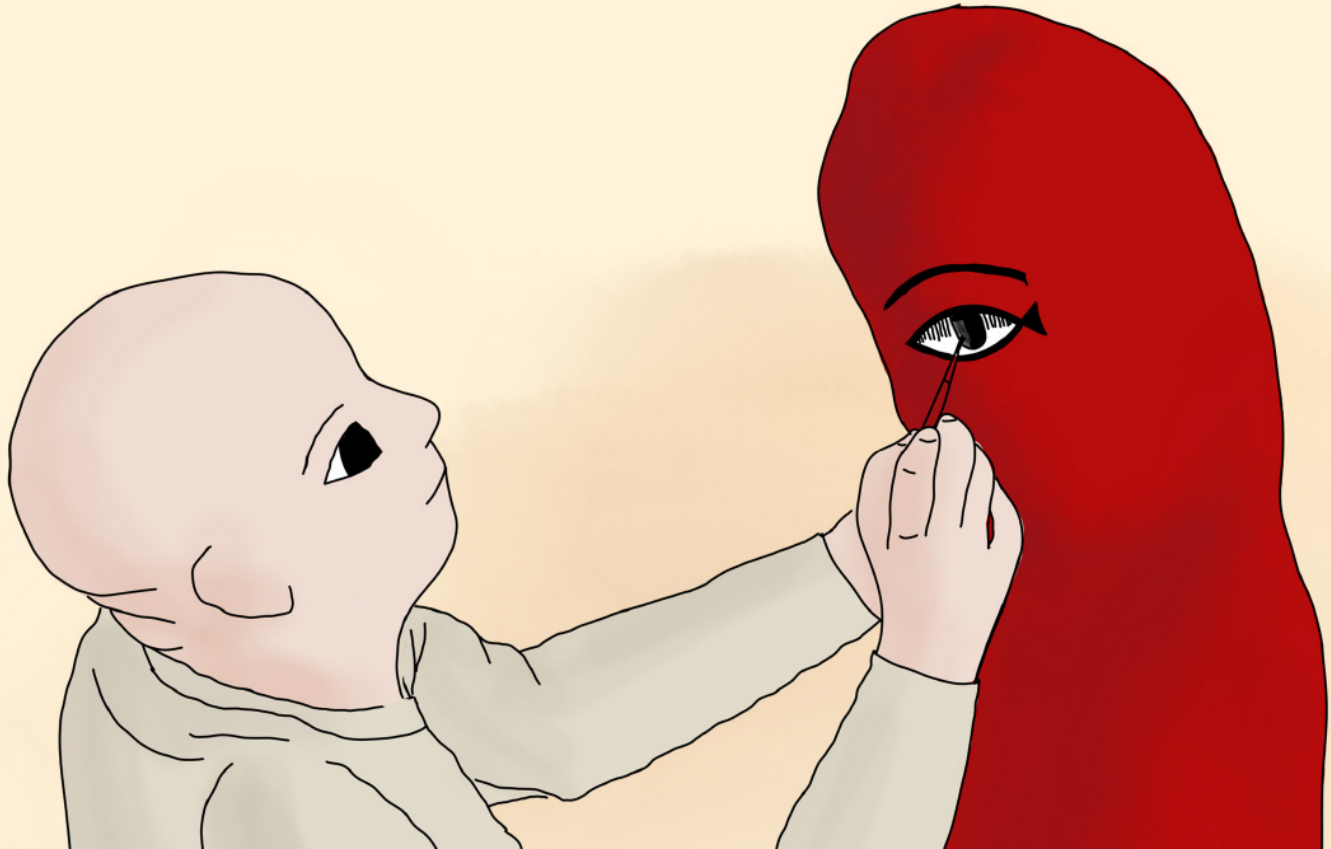


The senior person had to speak in favor of the porter and therefore Lokeshwor was kept in a temple in Yala instead of Khwopa.

In my opinion, the shire of Lokeshwor should be kept in Yala rather than Khwopa.



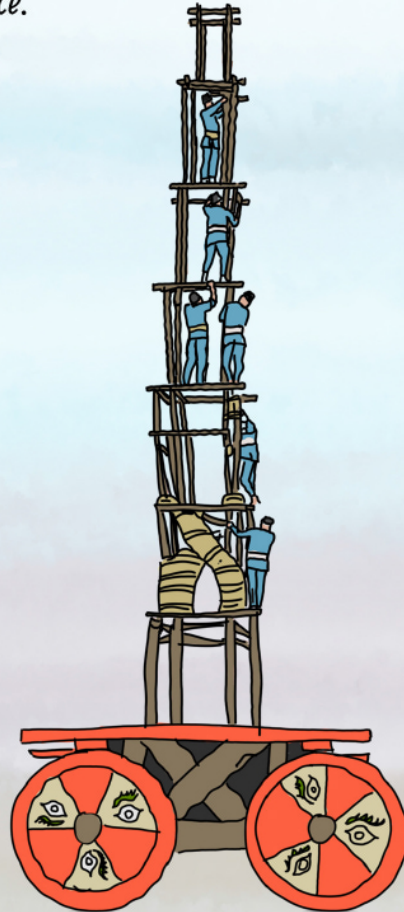
After the dispute was settled, a man was assigned to make the idol of Lokeshwor. The clay was said to be brought from 'Kimayapido', the place currently near Mhepi where Bishnumati river flows.



Bandhudatta performed rituals and transferred life from bumble bee in Kalash into the idol and image was installed in the temple.



Very delegant and dedicated craftsmen were assigned to build unique and exceptionally tall charoit to establish the charoit festival. Bandhudata suspended already occuring six other processions, however, Minnath asked to keep his procession, which is still in practice.



As people were celebrating bringing of Lokeshwor to the valley, Gorakhnath also noticed the unique charoit and realised his guru was in the valley, which eventually made him stand releasing all Nags.



Oh my guru is here. I must pay him visit.

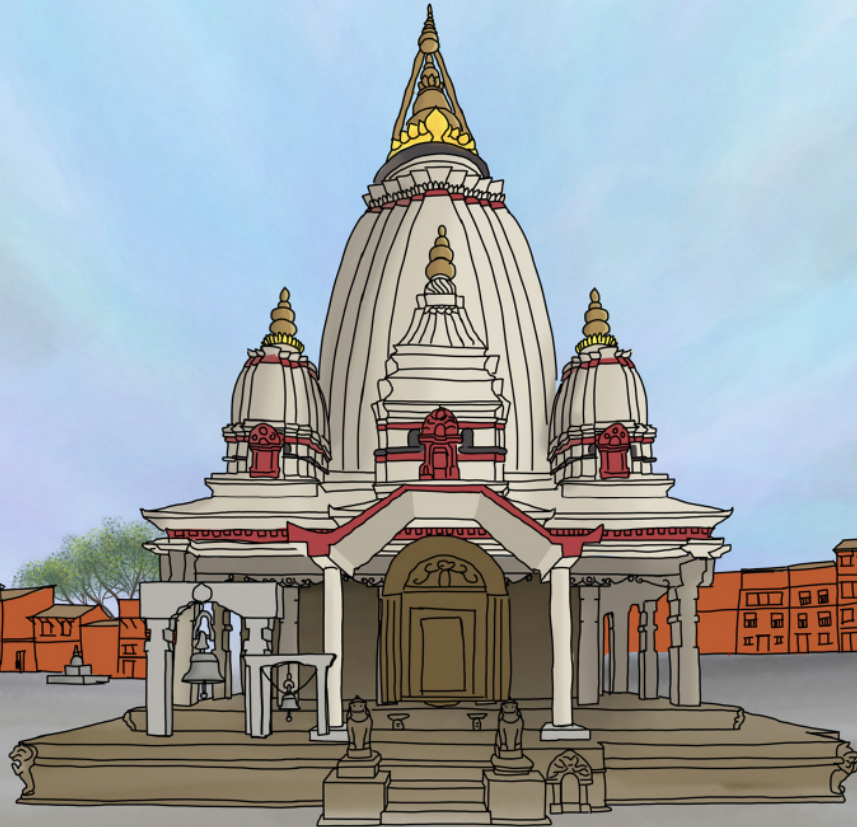
It miraculously started to rain and all the people were overwhelmed .



*Soon the husk were also filled with grain. So the people of valley respect the deity as
God of Rain and provider of food.*



The Bhasa Vamshabali doesnot say anything about two temples of Bunga Dyah. It is only said that the charoit procession from Bungamati to Patan being really difficult, the king ordered to perform it every 12 years. The temple was constructed in Yala for charoit procession.





However, there is another interesting story about having two temples. After all the hardships and tantrik fights with demons, the three were not able to protect the Kalash from local children! While resting, the Kalash was taken by children who put a condition for returning. The children asked three to divide whatever inside equally among them. Hence, the diety was shared between Bunga and Patan for six months.

We all have been hearing a saying that if Yala couldnot continue the charoit procession, people of Bhaktapur will take over the procession. The Newa chronicle doesnot say any such thing. This myth might have been added later so that the charoit procession may not disrupt no matter what happens. It is believed this year (2020 AD) is the 1,353rd for the chariot ! Now its in our hands to preserve it.

