

Karkandu



Dadhivahan was the King of Kalinga (now Orissa) in India. His Queen was Padmavati. When Queen Padmavati was pregnant, she had an intense desire to wear the best clothes and ornaments and ride on a royal elephant and the King should hold the umbrella over her. She did not like to disclose it to the King. But due to the non- fulfillment of the desire, she was growing weak. The king was insisting on her to disclose her mind to him. Ultimately, when the king persisted very much, she told him her desire.



The King immediately made all arrangements. Jaykunjar, the state elephant was decorated and the Queen rode the elephant. The King sat behind her holding the umbrella. The people were seeing them on the elephant with great curiosity. The women were very happy that the King had great consideration for his wife.



The elephant reached the state park. It was full of the sweet smell of roses and other flowers. The elephant got intoxicated by the fragrance and it started running wild. The Queen felt afraid. The King advised her that long branches were hanging from the Bunyan tree ahead of them and she should hold one of the branches. The Queen was not an expert in such matters. She could not hold the branch. The King however, held a branch of the Bunyan tree. The elephant was still running wild. The Queen was very much afraid and cursing her strange desire.



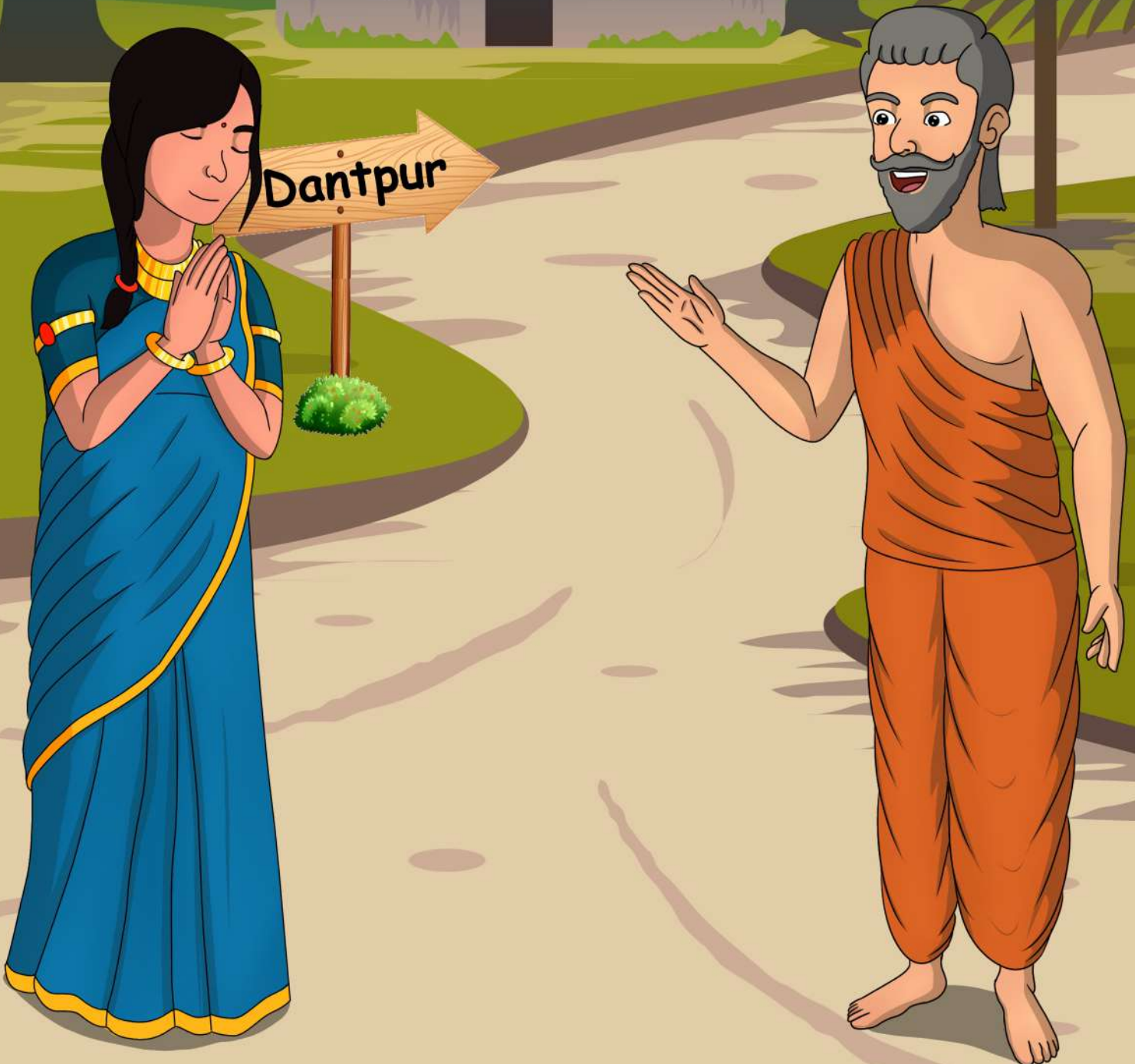
The elephant later stopped near a lake in the forest as it was thirsty. Padmavati immediately came down in the lake. She swam to the bank of the lake. The Queen was alone in the forest.



There was a fear of wild animals like lions, tigers and wolves. She had faith in Dharama. She observed time bound Santhara with some exceptions. After some time she found an ascetic. She told him the entire incident. The ascetic advised her not to lose courage.



He accompanied her up to Bhadrapur and showed her the way to Dantpur. He also told her that from Dantpur she can easily reach Champapuri. The Queen walked up to Dantpur.



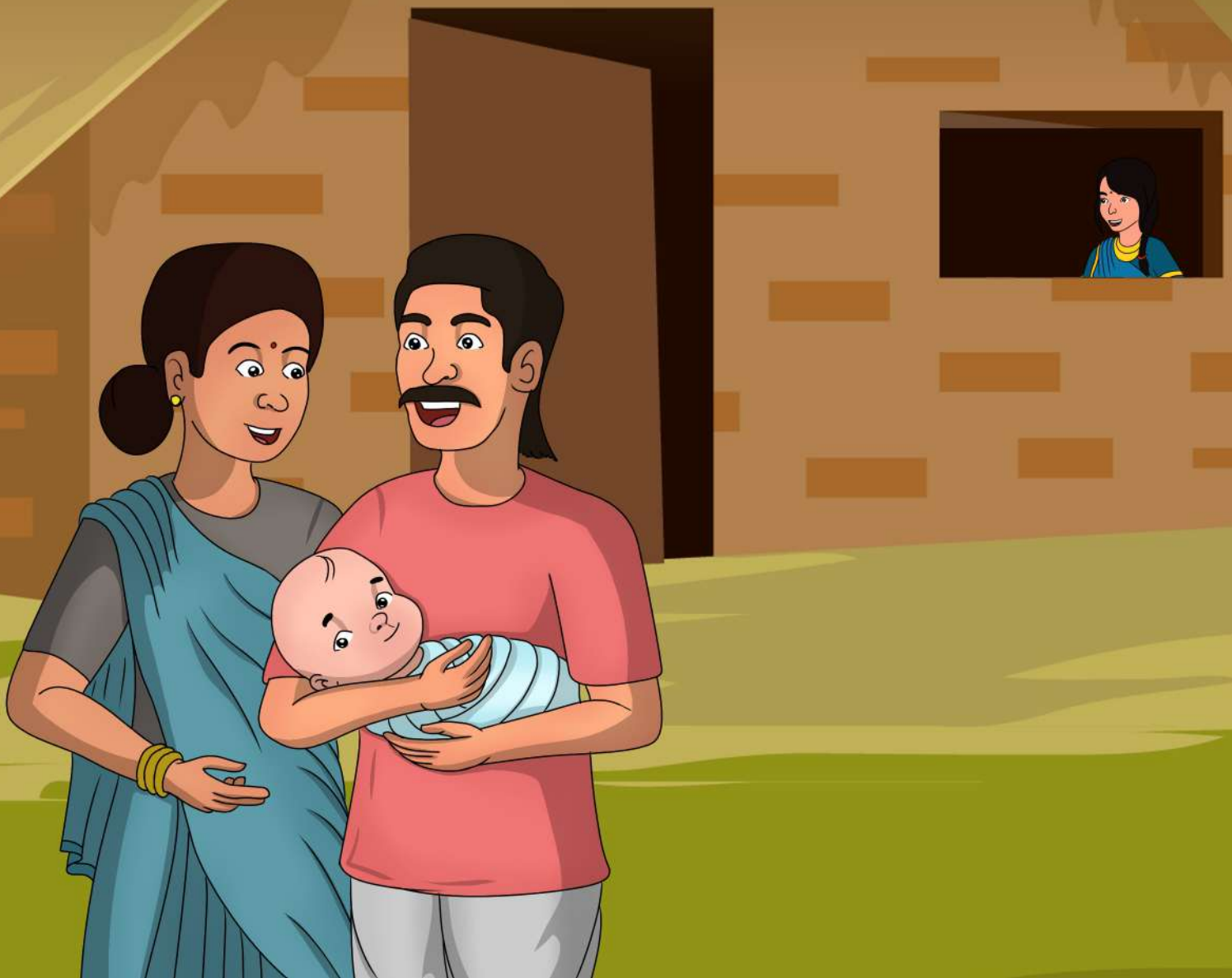
There she met Suguptvrata. She was a learned nun. Queen Padmavati told her pathetic story to the nun. Suguptvrata asked her to be bold. She also told her that in worldly life such situations are quite common. Padmavati listened to her advice carefully and decided to be a nun. She had not told the nun that she was pregnant. Suguptvrata allowed Padmavati to enter the order.



A few months later, Suguptvrata found that Padmavati nun was pregnant. Padmavati then admitted that she was pregnant. She also admitted that she had not told this fact earlier. Suguptvrata talked to a Shravika and she then made the proper arrangements for delivery.



Padmavati gave birth to a handsome child. She wrapped the child in a cloth and left him in the funeral courtyard. Padmavati stood behind a wall looking secretly at the child. A homeless person came to the funeral ground in his wanderings. He was the keeper of the funeral ground and he was childless. He picked up the child. He gave the child to his wife. She was very happy. The child had dry itching over his body since birth. So he was named Karkandu.



When Karkandu became young, he started guarding the funeral ground. Once Karkandu was at the funeral ground, a monk with his disciple came there for meditation. They saw a tiny bamboo plant at the fence of the funeral ground. The monk told the disciple that the person in possession of a four finger long stick of that bamboo shall become a king one day. Karkandu and a Brahmin boy heard the words of the monk.



The Brahmin boy dug out the bamboo plant to take it away. But Karkandu came there. Karkandu was powerful and he snatched the bamboo stick. The matter went to the court. Karkandu told the entire incident correctly.



He also said that the bamboo plant was within the funeral ground. The judge was very happy to learn the truth. He gave the judgment in favor of Karkandu. He also jokingly told Karkandu to give a village to the Brahmin boy when he becomes the King. Karkandu readily accepted it. But the Brahmins took it as an insult. They were proud of their family.



They decided to kill Karkandu and snatch the bamboo plant. The wife of the keeper came to know of their plan. She along with her husband and Karkandu left Dantpur and reached Kanchanpur. By that time it grew dark so they took a rest outside the village.



By chance the King of the village had died without any child. The ministers left the state elephant free with a garland. They decided that the person at whose neck the elephant places the garland shall be made the king. The elephant wandered about and came out of the village. He placed the garland at Karkandu's neck. Karkandu was declared the King.



Some ministers objected to it as Karkandu was ill dressed. Karkandu then showed the bright bamboo stick. He was ready to face anyone. They then accepted him as their king.



King Karkandu then entered all the low castes in Braminic order. The Brahmin boy came to know that Karkandu had become the King. He came to Karkandu to ask for a village. Karkandu recognised him so he asked the Brahmin boy to point out the village he wanted. He demanded Dantpur. Dantpur was in the territory of King Dadhivahan of Champapuri. King Karkandu sent a message to King Dadhivahan to give the village Dantpur to the Brahmin and take any village form his kingdom in return.



King Dadhivahan became furious on knowing the message. He rejected the proposal and turned out to be a Brahmin boy.



When Karkandu came to know of this treatment of the Brahmin boy, he declared war. Armies of King Dadhivahan and King Karkandu came to the battlefield of Champapuri. They were facing each other. The dreadful fight was going to begin. Luckily nun Padvavati learned about it. She came to the battlefield. She told the true facts.



Karkandu verified from the keeper. He admitted that he had brought him from the funeral ground wrapped in a piece of cloth. When Karkandu learned that Dadhivahan is his father he came forward to touch his feet. Dadhivahan was very happy at the bravery of his son Karkandu. He embraced him.

