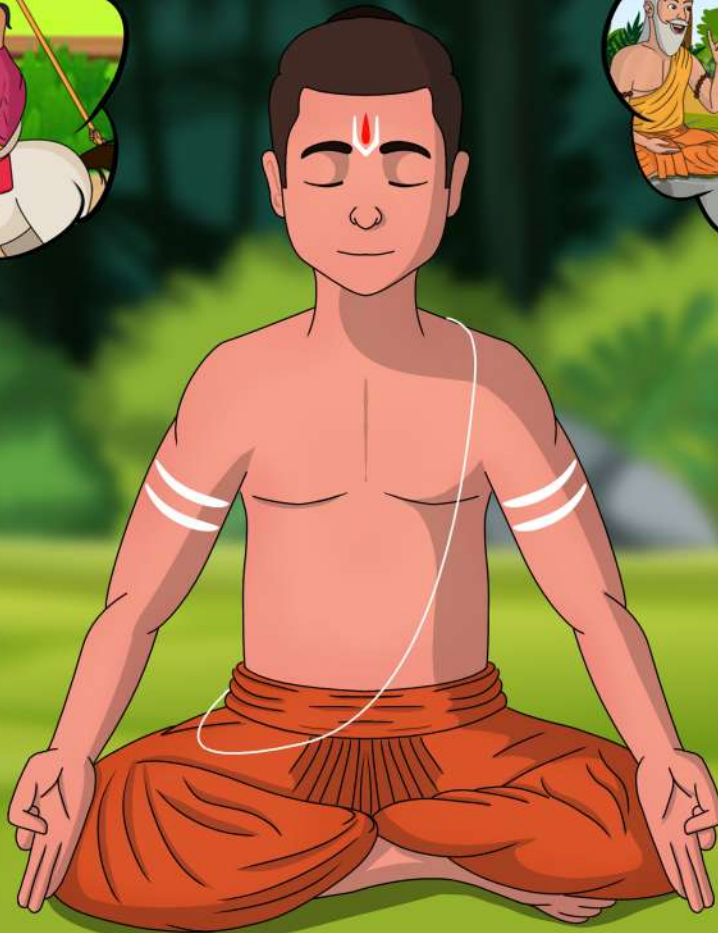
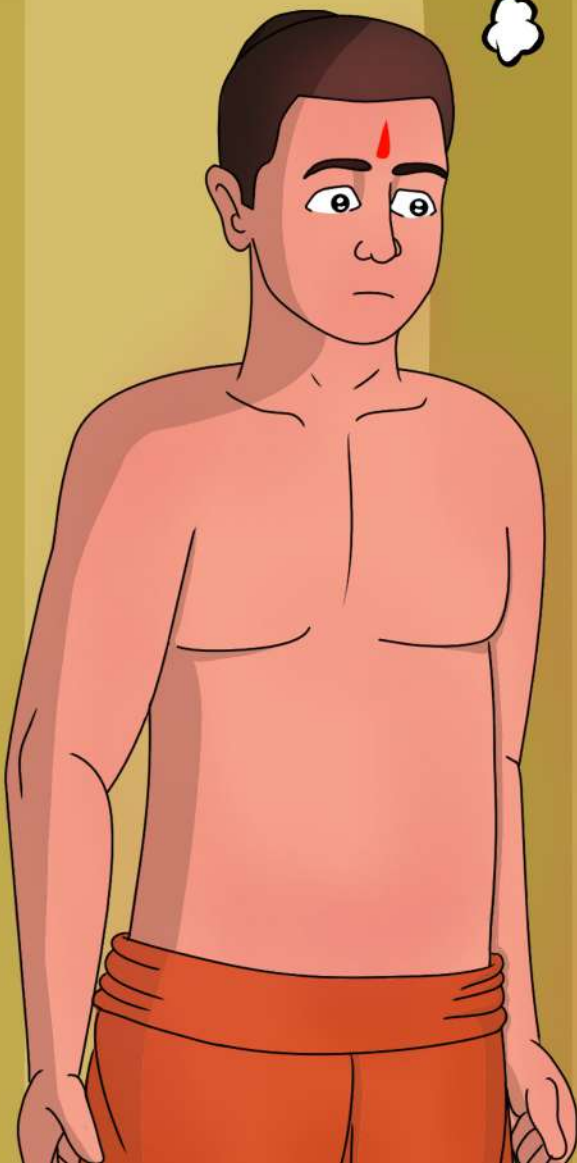


Sage Kapila



Kapila was the son of the royal priest but he received no education in childhood. He always wandered. When his father expired the priesthood passed on to the other Brahmin.



This new priest clad in silks, protected with an umbrella, with two white cowries being waved on both the sides and riding an excellent horse was passing by Kapila's residence.



Kapila's mother was deeply dejected to see the new priest. She thought;

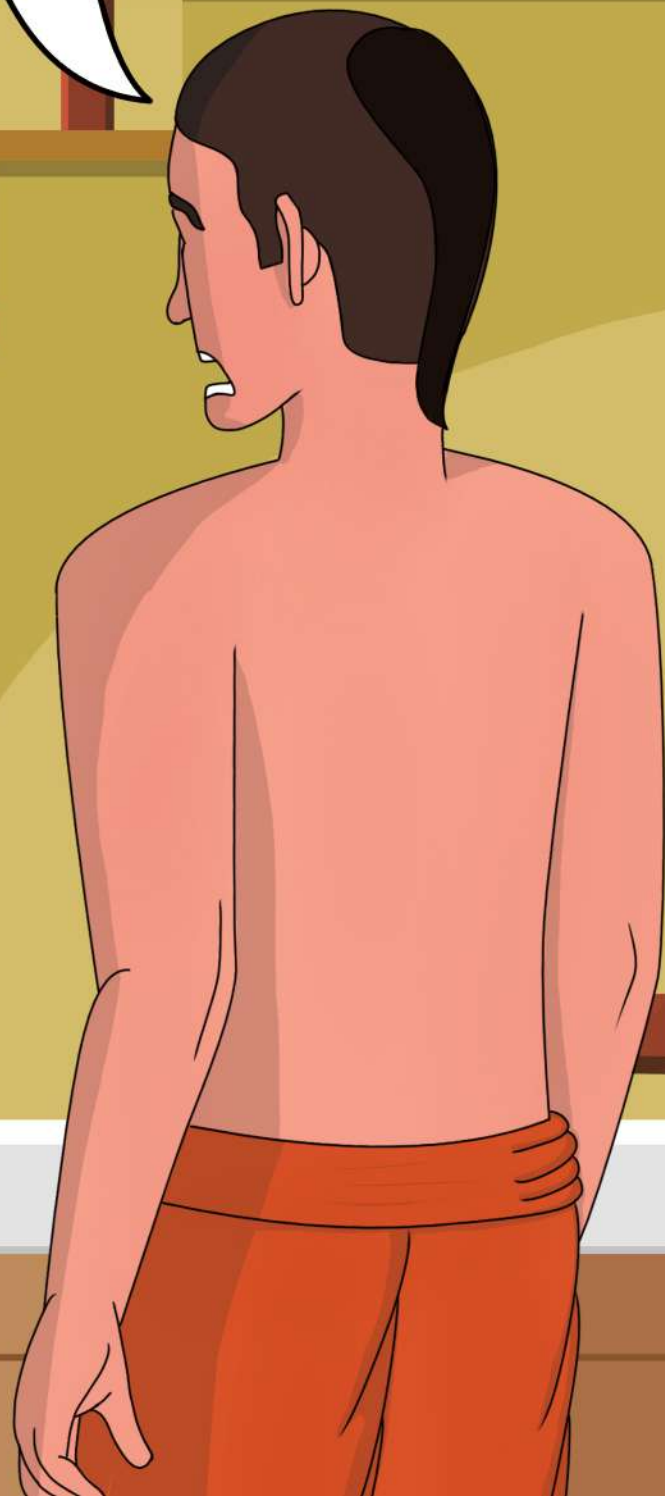
"If my son had received an education, he would have enjoyed these powers and pomp".

She was deeply moved by these thoughts and she began to cry piteously.



By that time, Kapila having loitered arrived. He asked:

"Mother why do you cry? Are you not alright? Shall I call for a physician?"



Mother sighed and said:

"My son, I am alright, but I deeply regret your illiteracy. If you had received learning you would have enjoyed your father's position. The new priest passed by our house. If you could see him, you would have realized the value of an education".

These words deeply pained Kapila. He was determined to acquire learning and he went to the city of 'Shravasti'.



Indradatta Upadhyaya of "Shravasti" was very popular all over the country for his knowledge and thousands of students came to him to receive learning. The students with fair means spent after provisions and the rest maintained themselves by begging. In ancient times learning by begging alms was not in any way derogatory.



Kapila was admitted to Indradatta's school. For some time, Kapila begged alms but he had to spend too much time after begging.



He approached a wealthy man and described before him all the difficulties and requested him to provide him with the required needs. That kind man managed for his food at the place of a Brahmin widow. That wealthy man sent the food provisions for two men daily at the widow's house.



Manorama cooked and Kapila dined at her house daily. This convenience helped Kapila to make good progress in his studies but on the other hand, some evil also took place.



Manorama had lost her husband in childhood and she could not enjoy the pleasures of married life. She gradually enticed Kapila who was finally victimized in her trap of sensual attractions. Youth and solitude mostly bring about a man's fall.



By the passage of time, Manorama became pregnant and her pregnancy was far advanced. She worried:

"How to meet the expenses of delivery, how to maintain the newcomer".

She suggested,

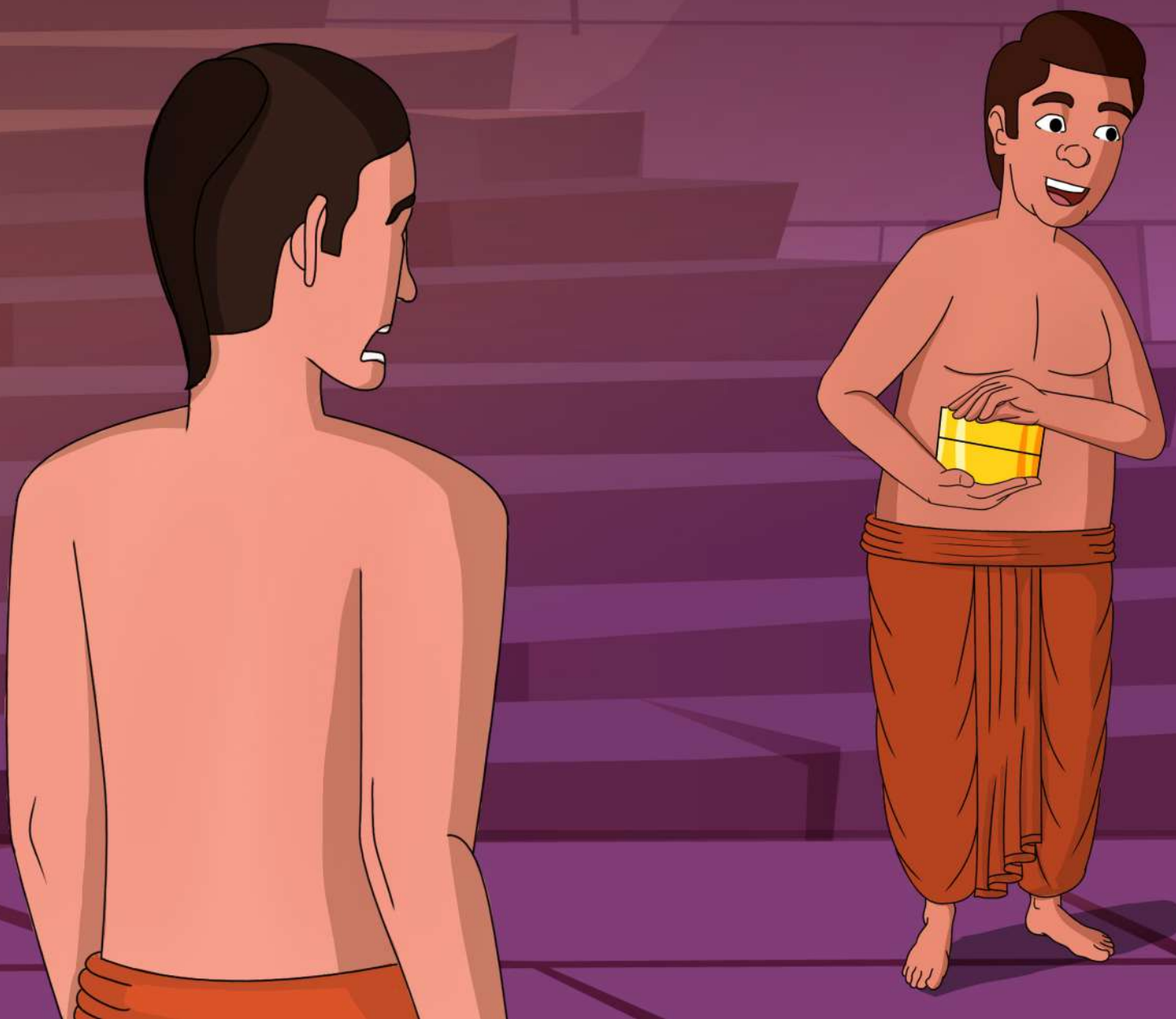
"The king gives 2 Masas of gold to one who bestows benedictions on him first in the early morning. So go to him very early in the morning to receive 2 Masas of gold. That will serve the purpose".



On the next day, Kapila reached the palace in the morning. But some other Brahmin had already reached the palace before him and having conferred benedictions he had received the gold.



On the third day, Kapila also tried in vain. He tried successively for eight days--but he reached later than any other Brahmin who already received gold before him. Thus Kapila was much annoyed and he became determined to reach the palace earliest of all. Whim of any nature makes the man lose all considerations. He got up very early and began to run with the idea that someone else would reach the palace earlier.



It was not even the fourth quarter of the night. People did not move on the roads. Some watchmen were strolling here and there. They found Kapila who was suspected to be a thief, and they arrested him. Kapila tried to convince them but the watchmen did not listen to him. They said:

"You may state what you want to state in the morning before his Majesty".



In the morning Kapila was produced before his Majesty. The first time he appears in the Royal Assembly and as a culprit. So he began to tremble. The king made out that he was not the culprit. The King asked!

"What are you by caste?
Why did you run on the
road at night"?



Kapila said:

"Your Majesty, I am Brahmin by caste and I was running to you to confer my blessings upon you".

The King asked:

"But so early!"

Kapila said!

"Your Majesty, I have been trying to confer my blessings upon you for the last eight days to earn two Masas of gold. But my luck did not favor me to get the reward. So I got up very early to overcome anyone who tried to reach you earlier. But unluckily I am before you as a culprit".



The King said!

"You suffered so much pain to confer blessings upon me and for two Masas of gold. This implies your utter poverty. Oh Brahmin, I am pleased with you and ask you to demand from me anything you like, I shall certainly fulfill your wish".

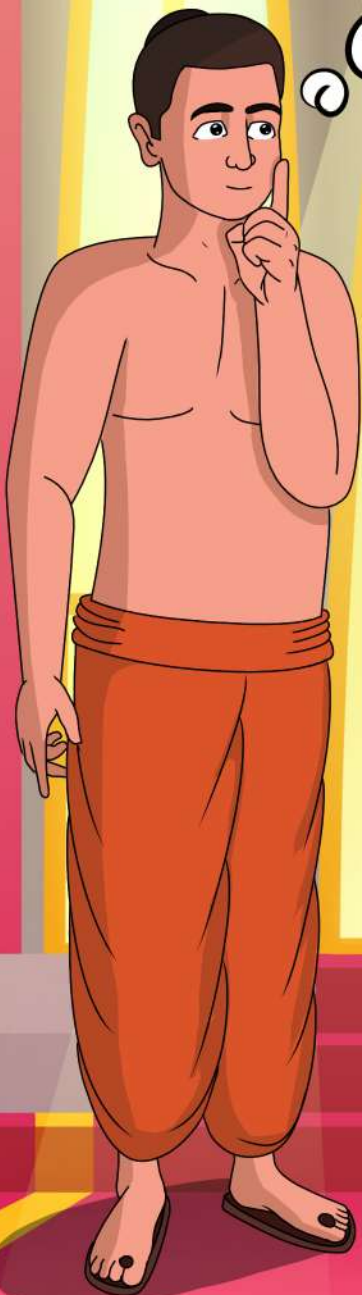
The Brahmin was astonished to find his clouds of miseries dispelled. He said:

"Your Majesty, I ask you for some time to think as to what I should ask for".



The King granted him time. The Brahmin thus reflected:

"Why should I not ask for ten golden coins--Nay! They are too few--I would prefer fifty golden coins. But they shall be spent out in no time. Why not ask for five hundred coins. The king can afford to give me that".



Kapila went on jumping from five hundred to one thousand, then to a million, and then to ten million of golden coins. Then he thought that a king enjoys more prominence and power than a millionaire so he thought of asking for half the kingdom, but in that case, he would entertain rivalry with the King, so he thought of asking for the entire kingdom.



But he recoiled suddenly at this last thought.

"Should I make him a pauper, who thought of fulfilling my desires? No, this is not proper. Should I then ask for half the kingdom? No, in that case, I would be his rival and oppress him who is out to oblige me. Shall I then ask for ten million gold coins? But then what is the use of so much money to me? Excess of money shall breed calamities. Alright, let me ask for ten thousand coins to have a building and lead my life properly".



But his conscience did not permit him to ask even ten thousand.

"So much money would induce me towards sensual pleasures and I will not be able to lead an ideal life. Then what should I do? Shall I ask for one thousand coins? Hundred? Fifty? Twenty-five?"



Thus pondering he felt that he should not ask for anything more than what was required for delivery expenses. But now he was thinking on the right lines so his conscience did not even like to demand the petty amount necessary to defray delivery expenses. He thought he had gone merely to get a reward of only two Masas of gold but the King was pleased to such an extent which induced him to avail of him fully. It was not proper and he decided to ask for only two Masas of gold.



He reflected!

"Avarice creates a helpless position and so I should not demand anything. I should rest and be content. Indeed, contentment is real happiness. I entertained even a small desire to lose my studies and moral character, to consequently be a beggar. Enough of these desires!"



After some time the king said:

"Oh Brahmin, what do you want to ask for?"

Kapila replied:

"Your Majesty, I do not want to ask for anything".

The King said:

"Why so?"



Kapila replied!

"Oh King, greed has no limits, the more a man gains, the more greed dawns upon him, so enough of greed".

The King asked!

"Revered Brahmin, what did you decide to demand?"

Kapila said:

"Your Majesty, I have no desire to ask for anything".

The King said:

"Why so?"

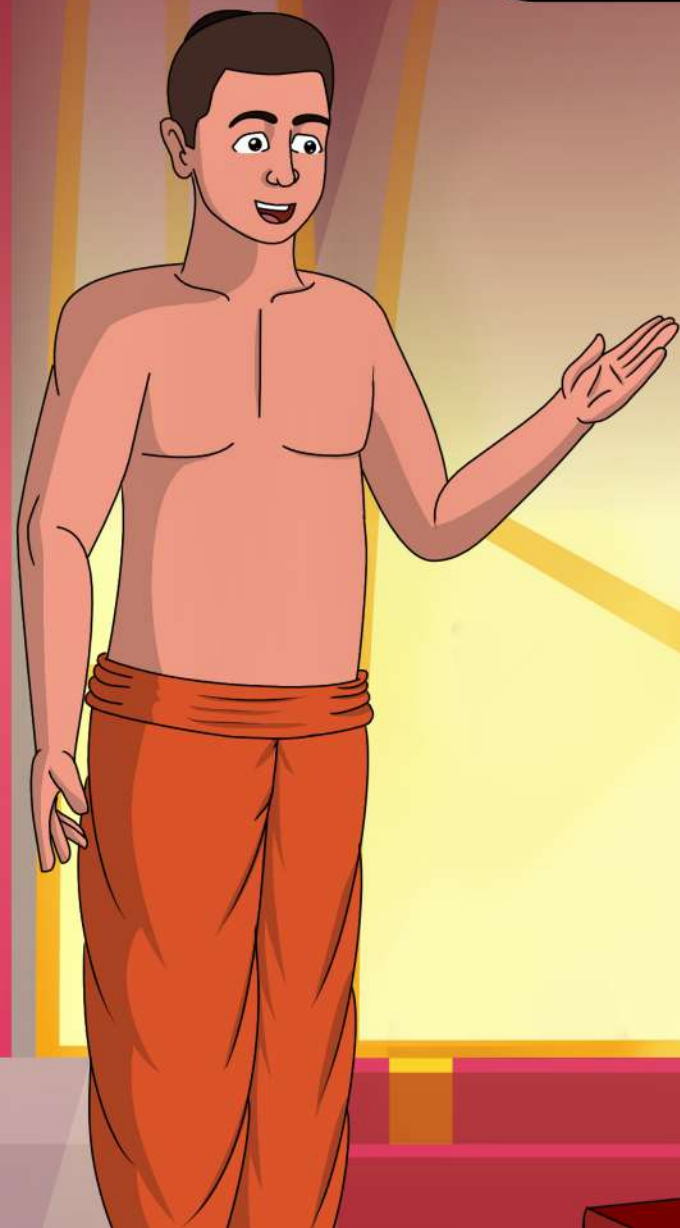


Kapila said:

"Greed is boundless. More the gains, the more the greed swells. So enough of this greed!"

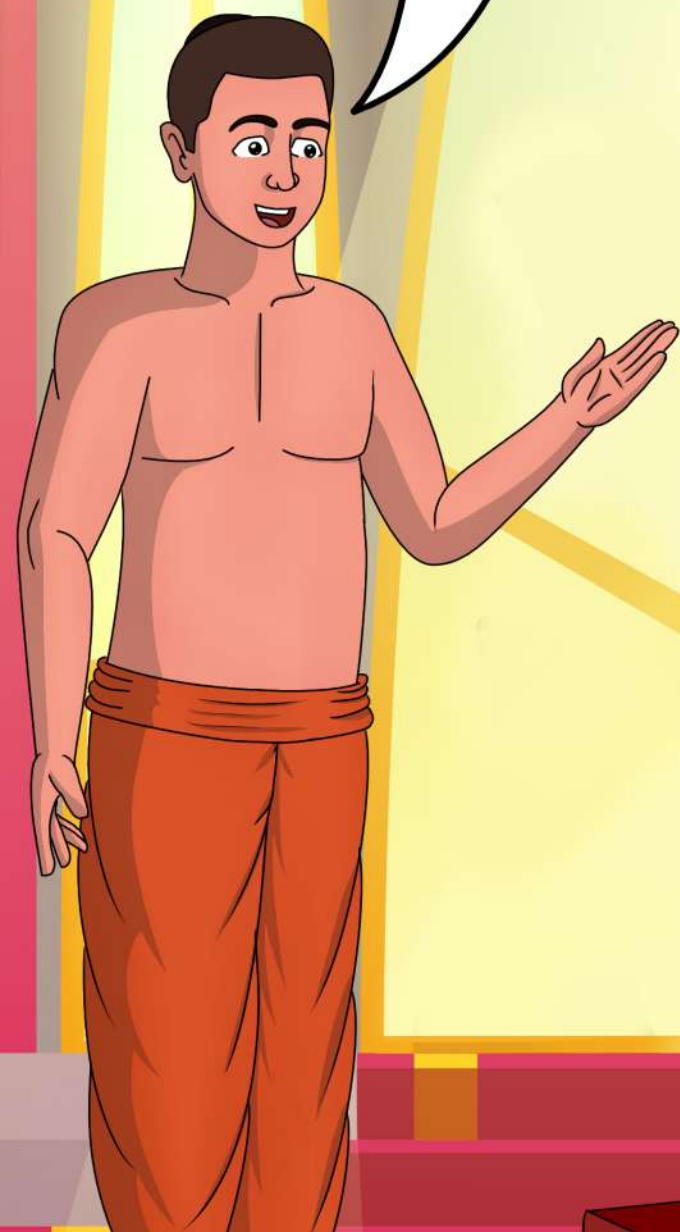
King said!

"But with these ideals, you cannot maintain yourself. So I am pleased to grant you ten million gold coins. Accept them".



Kapila said:

"Oh King, till the cravings swelled in me, I felt that wealth is the indispensable means of happiness. But now I have relinquished cravings and need no wealth, therefore. Contentment is the supreme wealth and I am happy with contentment".



With these words, Kapila departed and the King and the courtiers highly applauded his detachment for wealth.



Passion is also the King of cravings, so he abandoned the object of passion and he also left the school with the conviction that real learning is that only which begets emancipation of the soul. He got himself initiated for "Five great vows" under some monk and practiced righteousness unflinchingly. Within six months only he acquired omniscience by self-purification and started preaching "Truth" to the people.

