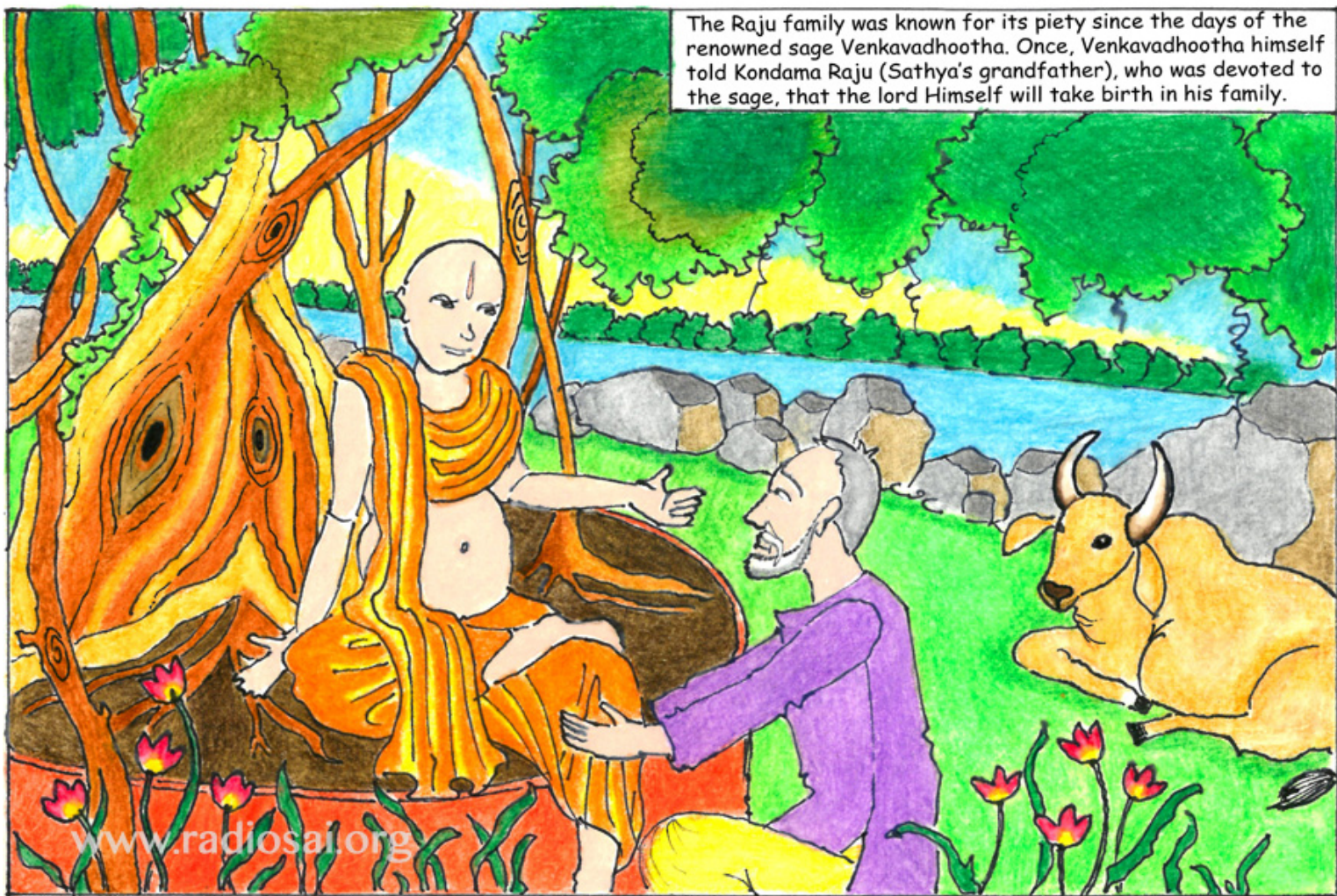


CHAPTER 6
GRANDFATHER, THE FIRST DEVOTEE



The Raju family was known for its piety since the days of the renowned sage Venkavadhootha. Once, Venkavadhootha himself told Kondama Raju (Sathya's grandfather), who was devoted to the sage, that the lord Himself will take birth in his family.



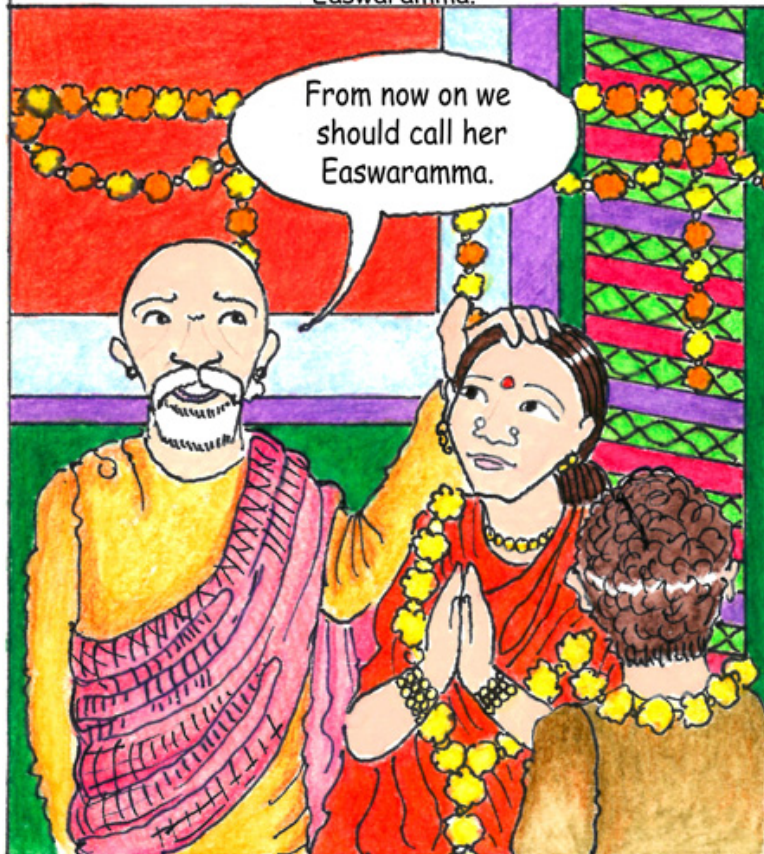
Kondama Raju was a master of music and histrionic art. He knew by heart the Lepakshi version (a series of songs composed by a poet from Lepakshi) of the Ramayana. He portrayed the role of Lakshmana in all the Ramayana plays enacted in Puttaparthi and other villages.



People came from distant villages to see him enact the steadfast devotion of Lakshmana. The dramatic imagery and artistic luxuriance brought tears to everyone's eyes. He appeared hundreds of times in dozens of stages.



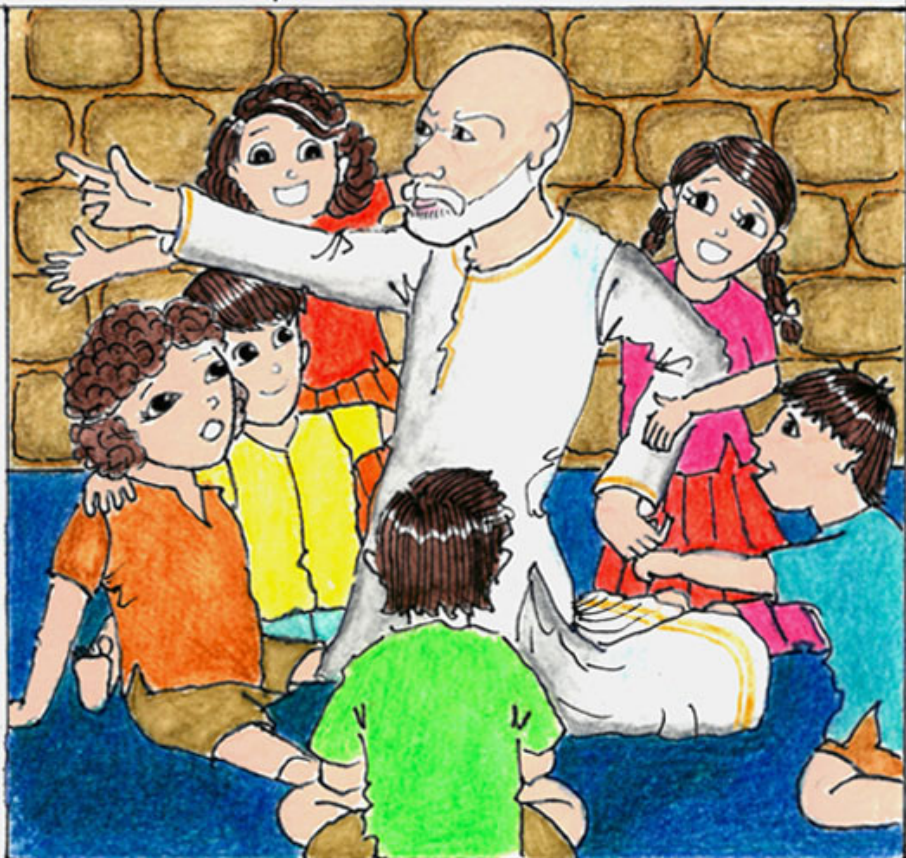
Easwaramma was chosen by Kondama Raju as the bride for his son Pedda Venkama Raju. During the name changing ceremony of the marriage, out of an instinct, he suggested to his son to change her name from Namagiramma to Easwaramma.



His observations of the little wonder boy's antics led him to the conclusion that the mother was indeed the chosen one. He called her one day and addressed her thus -

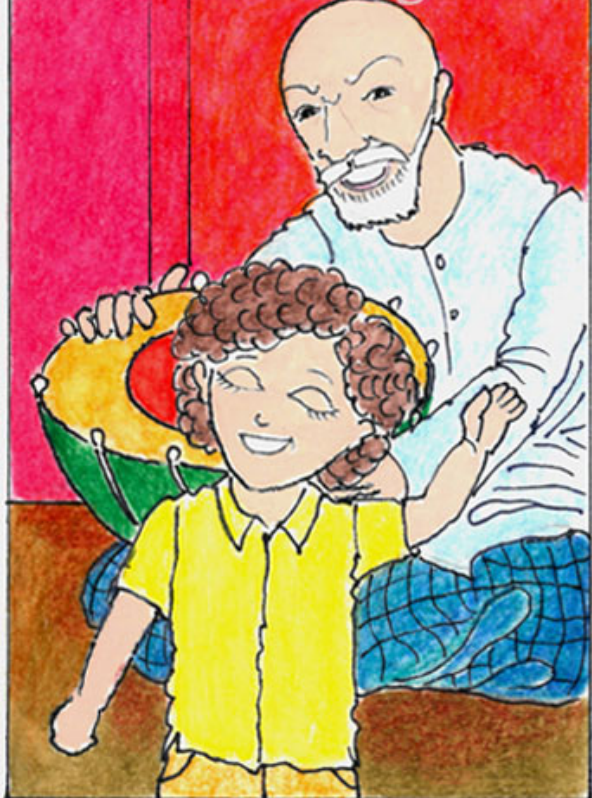


Sathya was growing up with a lot of children (just like lord Krishna). Kondama Raju's brother's sons also had many children. They loved visiting their grandfather's hut which was a little away from the rest of the family's home. It was a veritable ashram, resonant with Ramayana songs. The children were captivated by their grandfather's story telling skills. He narrated to them stories of Gods and saints and made every character and adventure live before their eyes.



It is definite that among all the children, Sathya was the favourite. He was most actively involved and sang in a sweet melodious voice, exhibiting an inherent understanding of music at such a young age.

www.radiosai.org



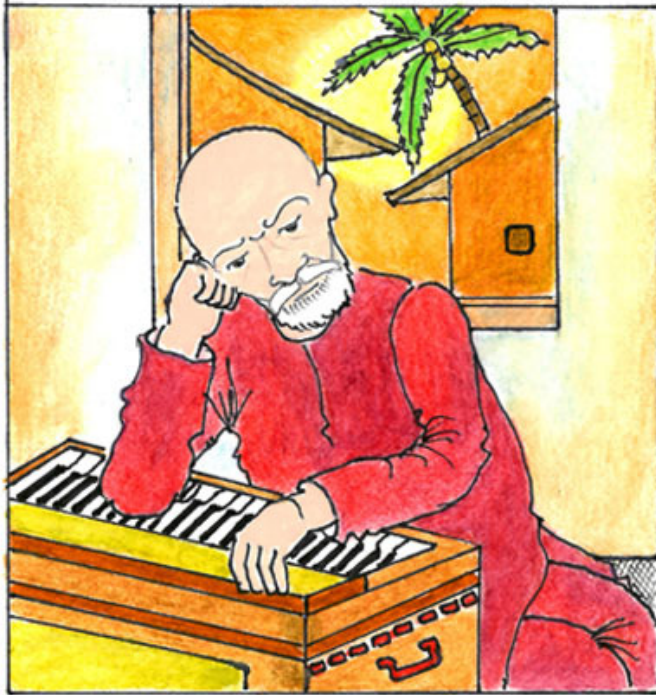
Not only did He sing the devotional songs with His grandfather, but He also gave him a lesson or two in the art of drama. Who knew that Swami would encourage the same in His prestigious educational institutions?



The grandfather and his brother had two sons each. These four brothers were able to live together peacefully but not their wives. The joint family wanted to separate.



This situation was causing the grandfather a lot of trouble. He used to be much tensed.



One day he called Sathya. In his heart he knew that the boy was not an ordinary child. He knew that Sathya was extremely wise. So, he decided to open his heart to him-



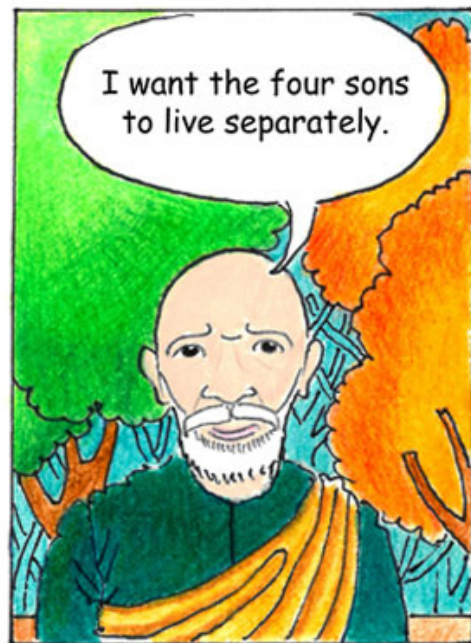
My dear, you have a pure heart and you always speak the truth. I have made a resolve and need your opinion on this.

Sathya enquired from him -



What is it dear grandfather, tell me.

I want the four sons to live separately.



Sathya concurred with his view. He felt that it was the right thing to do as their tolerance had diminished. He said -



These families have been living together with mutual understanding for years. Now, they have lost their values.

My dear, how do you know this?

It is quite evident from their thoughts, words and deeds. What more proof is required?

The grandfather was very happy with the reply. He summoned the four brothers and put forth his suggestion -

From now on, I want you all to lead separate lives and discharge your family responsibilities.

www.radiosai.org

The brothers were happy with the suggestion but they pleaded with him to stay with each of them for six months in turn. Kondama raju replied -

I will not be doing so. Share the family belongings among yourselves but leave with me just one possession - Sathya. I cannot live without Him.

They agreed and the grandfather won the most important thing of the Raju household. With Sathya in his arms he had nothing to lose. This realized soul had been rewarded with the most precious of all gifts.

Kondama raju experienced several inexplicable phenomena. Once, at night, the sound of Omkaar was emerging out of perfectly still, breathless Sathya while He was asleep. The sound of 'Sohum' always emanated from Him during sleep.

www.radiosai.org



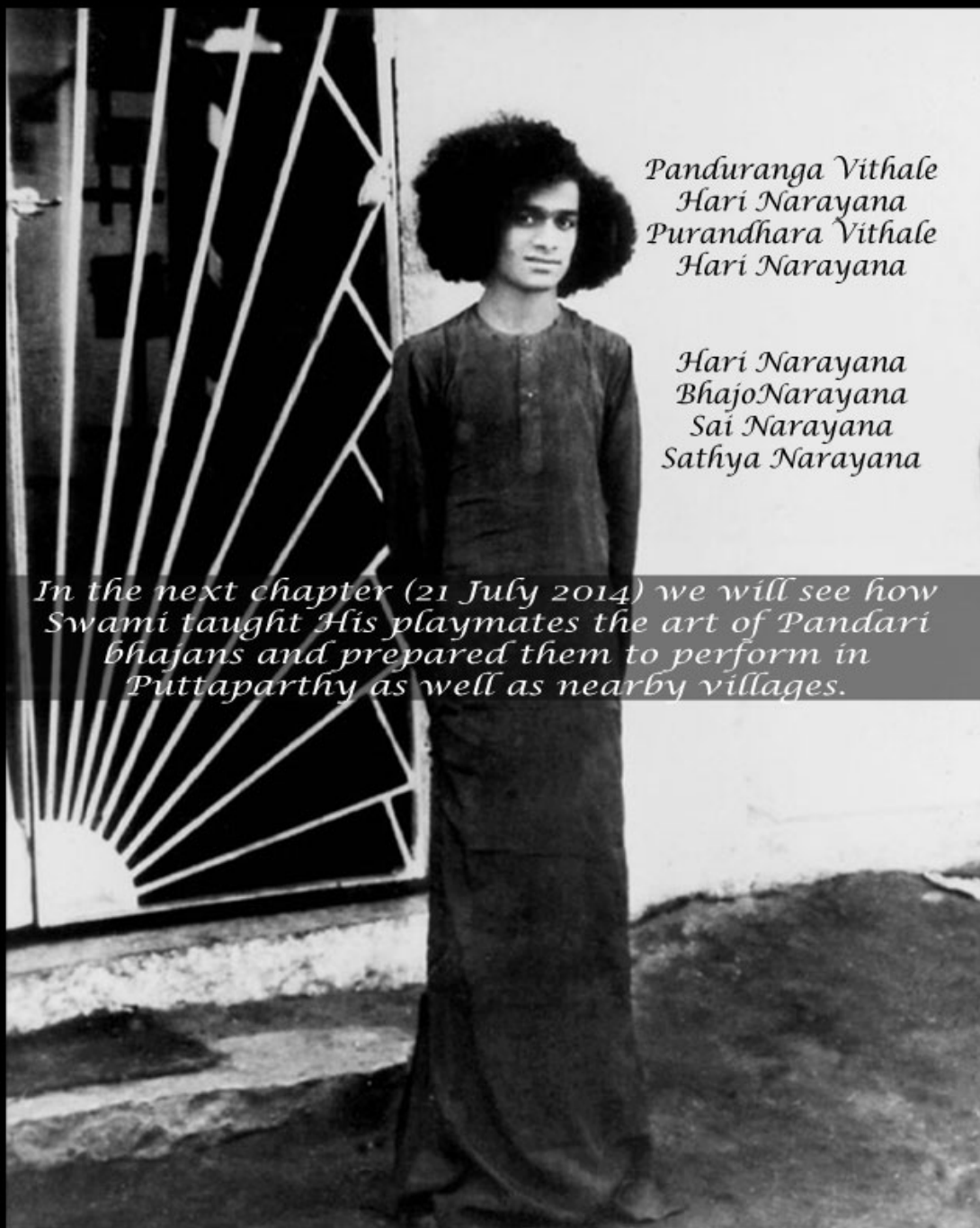
The grandfather confronted the little wonder and asked Him what it was. But Sathya always cleverly diverted his attention from the topic without answering.



Intimidated by these leelas, the grandfather caught Sathya's hands and told Him that he considered them His feet. He had just one desire that Sathya should pour water in his mouth during the time of his departure.

www.radiosai.org





*Panduranga Vithale
Hari Narayana
Purandhara Vithale
Hari Narayana*

*Hari Narayana
Bhajo Narayana
Sai Narayana
Sathya Narayana*

*In the next chapter (21 July 2014) we will see how
Swami taught His playmates the art of Pandari
bhajans and prepared them to perform in
Puttaparthi as well as nearby villages.*

www.radiosai.org