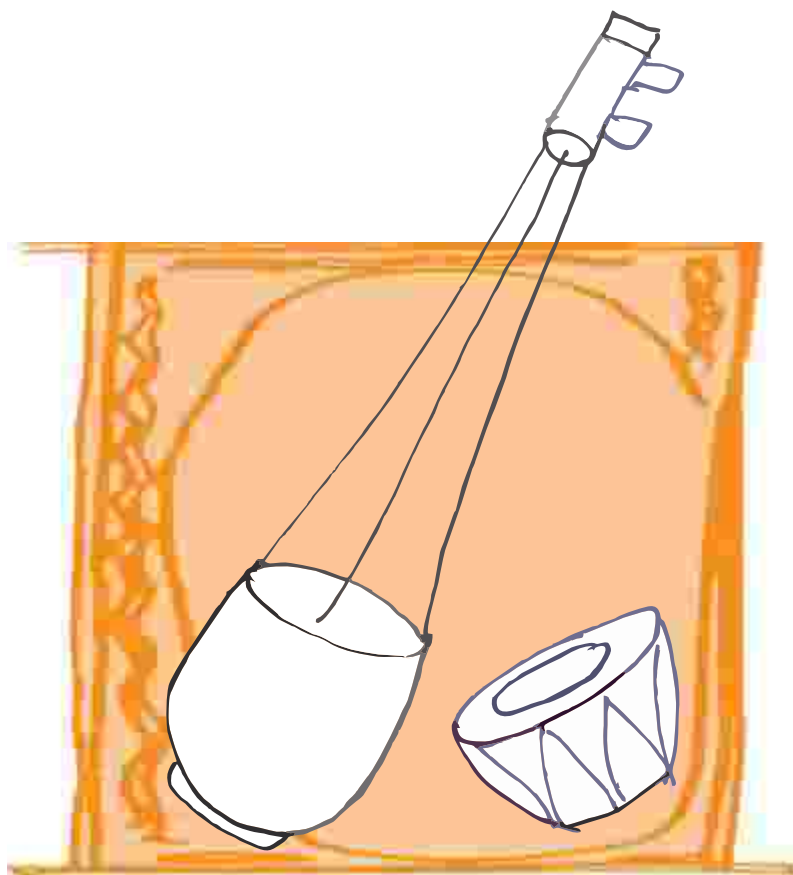


Lalon- A man who lived







Lalon- A man who lived

Sanskriti Parichay - IV

 SANSKRITI
PARICHAY



**Lalon - A man who Lived
Sanskriti Parichay- IV
Story and Script: Biplab Chowdhury
Cover and illustration: Sanjoy Bose
Picture on the cover: Jyotirindranath Tagore
a banglanatak dot com presentation
First Edition: 2019**

Retired professor Priyadarshi Sen took his grandchildren Ranu and Ridoy to the Gorbhanga Fakir Utsav.





Both of them were attracted by the outfits and gestures of the Baul-Fakirs. And after roaming around the Akhras they fell in love with the festival.



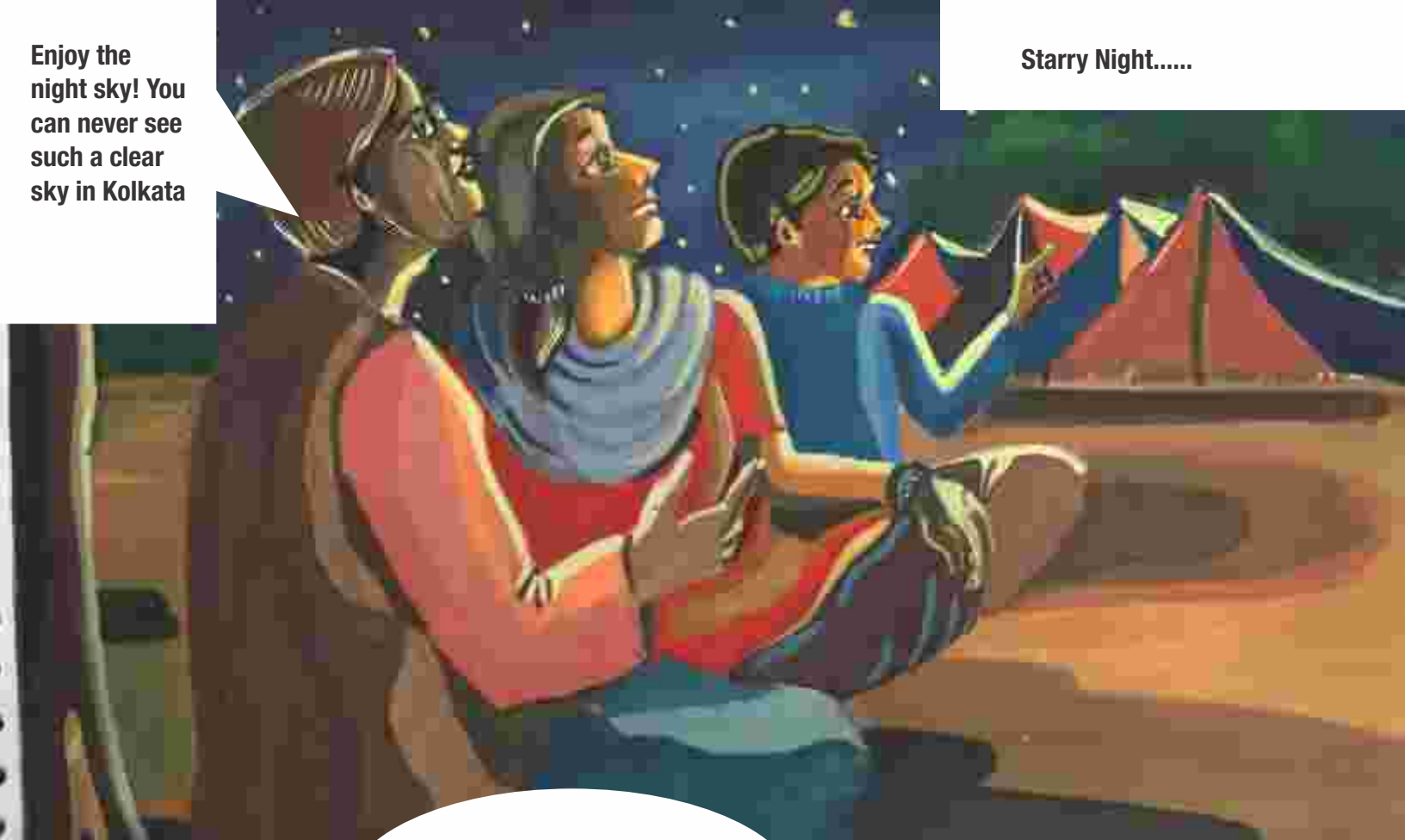
Grandpa!
Tent

Are we going to
stay in there?

Yes

Enjoy the night sky! You can never see such a clear sky in Kolkata

Starry Night.....



I couldn't understand the meaning of the songs

Neither could I





Ridoy! You are in 5th grade and I am in 9th. How can you expect to understand when I couldn't

Ridoy makes faces




That's ok! I will explain that to you tomorrow

Early morning the three of them went for a stroll around the village.




After a while,
they settled
under a
Banyan tree.





Grandpa!
Explain the
songs to us now



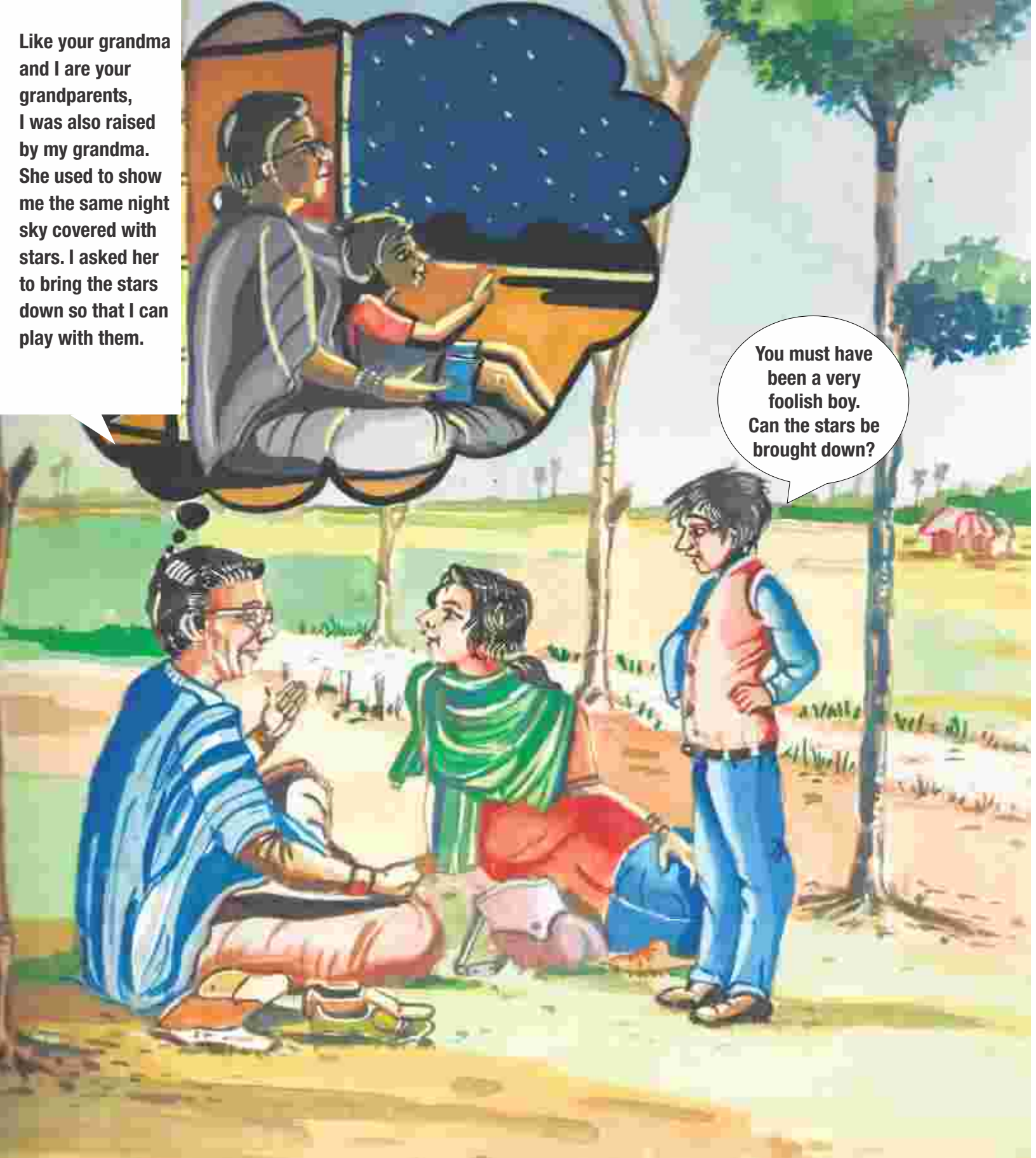
Do you
remember
yesterday's
night sky?

Yes

Full of stars ...
hundreds and
thousands ...

Like your grandma and I are your grandparents, I was also raised by my grandma. She used to show me the same night sky covered with stars. I asked her to bring the stars down so that I can play with them.

You must have been a very foolish boy. Can the stars be brought down?

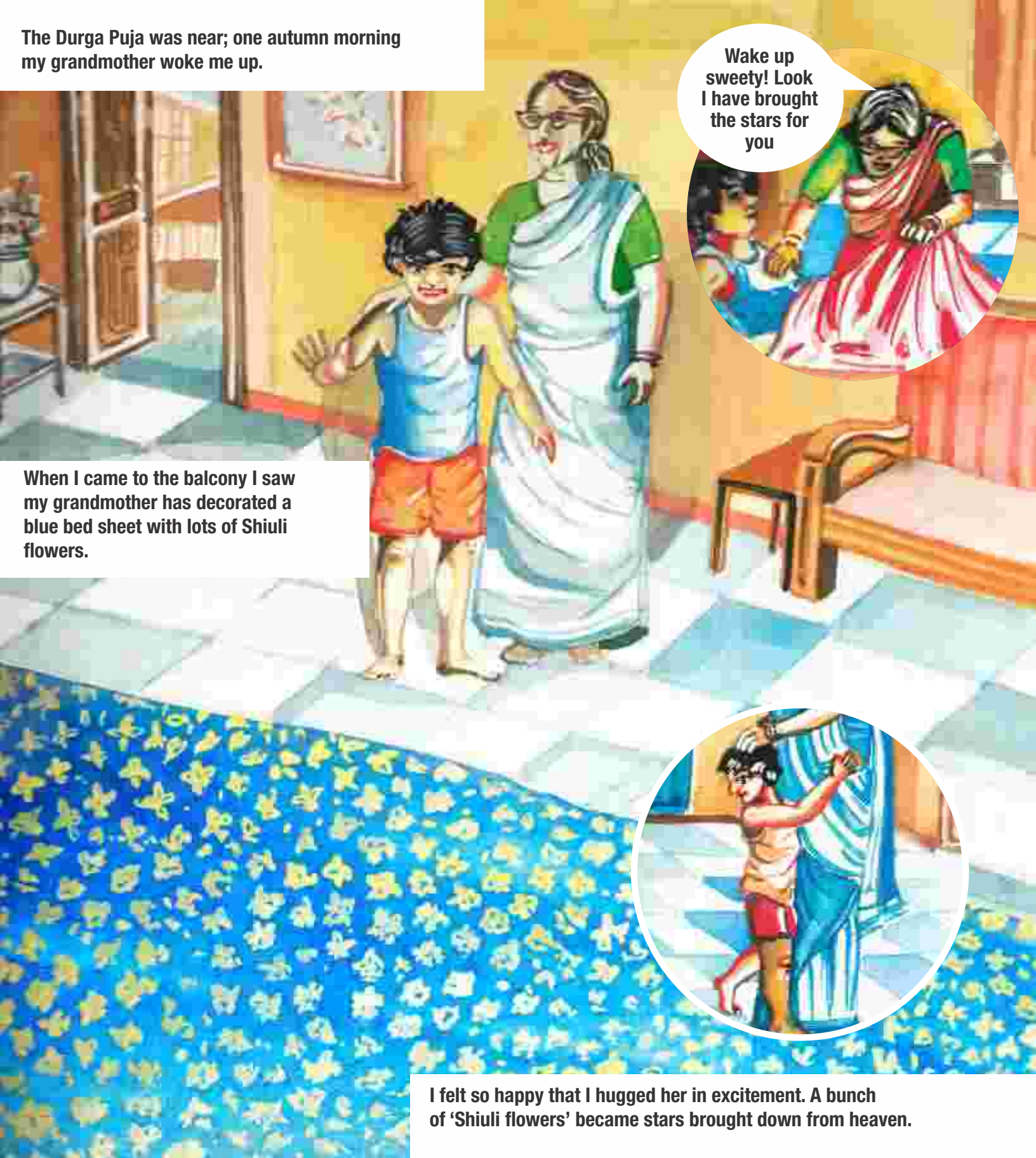


The Durga Puja was near; one autumn morning my grandmother woke me up.

Wake up
sweety! Look
I have brought
the stars for
you

When I came to the balcony I saw my grandmother has decorated a blue bed sheet with lots of Shiuli flowers.

I felt so happy that I hugged her in excitement. A bunch of 'Shiuli flowers' became stars brought down from heaven.





But what about the songs?

Does anyone identify shiuli flowers as stars? I never heard of that. But the villagers will identify snake as a twiner. And those who know it, will understand the meaning. So Baul-Fakirs are a kind of people whose words carry a different meaning than what they sing. And that's why it's sometimes difficult to understand it.





Can you state an example for this

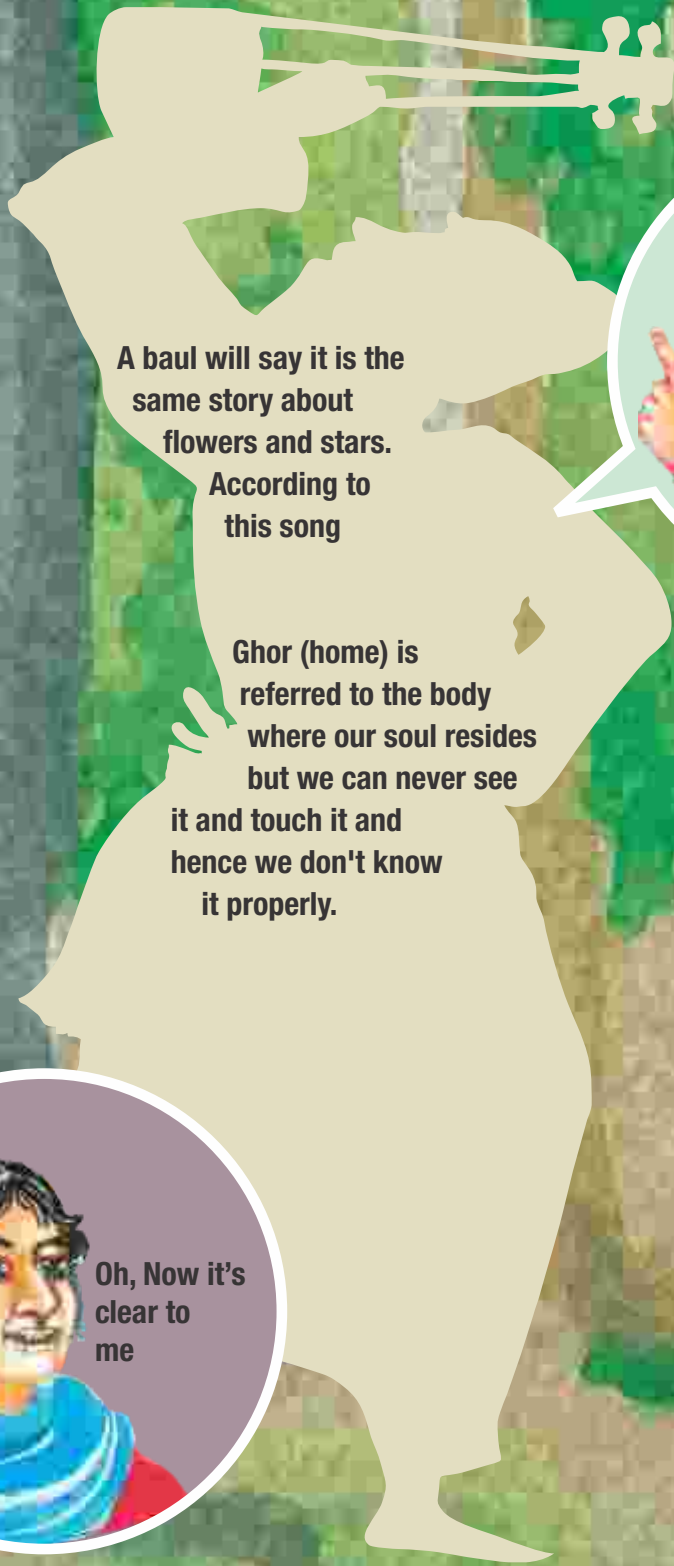
For instance

"amar ghorkhanae
ke biraj kore/
jonom bhore
ekdin dekhlam
na re"

Can you understand?



Absolutely not



A baul will say it is the same story about flowers and stars. According to this song

Ghor (home) is referred to the body where our soul resides but we can never see it and touch it and hence we don't know it properly.



Oh, Now it's clear to me

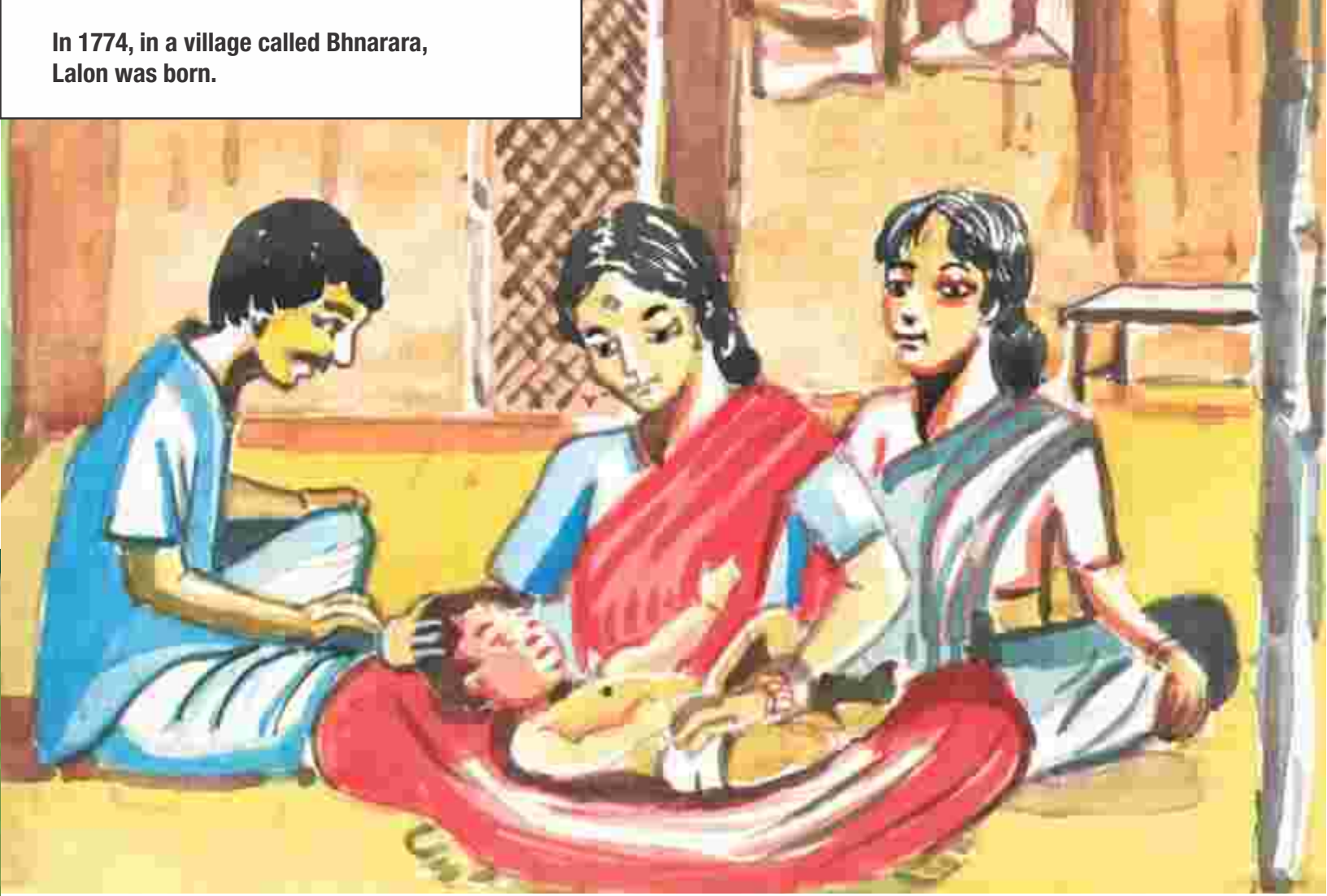


Baul songs are like this, full of riddles. They belong to a different world and emotions. Among them, the famous one is Lalon Snai or Fakir. The above two lyrics are stated from one of his songs.



**Grandpa!
What was the era
of Lalon Fakir ?**

In 1774, in a village called Bhnarara, Lalon was born.



Where was the village?

In the present time it lies in Kushthia of Bangladesh. Before the partition of Bengal Kushthia was under Nadia



Please tell the story of Lalon



Grandfather continued:

There is a song —
“sobe bole Lalon Fakir
hind ki jobon/ Lalon
bole amar ami na jani
sondhan”

Lalon was the only son of Madhav and Padmabati. Some people say that the real name of Lalon was Lalitnarayan. But it doesn't affect our story

The Baul-Fakirs believe in the concept of Humanity. So when he was not concerned about his name, caste or religion we also don't have to think about it



Why?



Right !
Then what happened Grandpa?



He became an orphan at a very young age

Then he got married to a girl named Bishakha

Later she died

But before that, something miraculous happened which changed his life completely



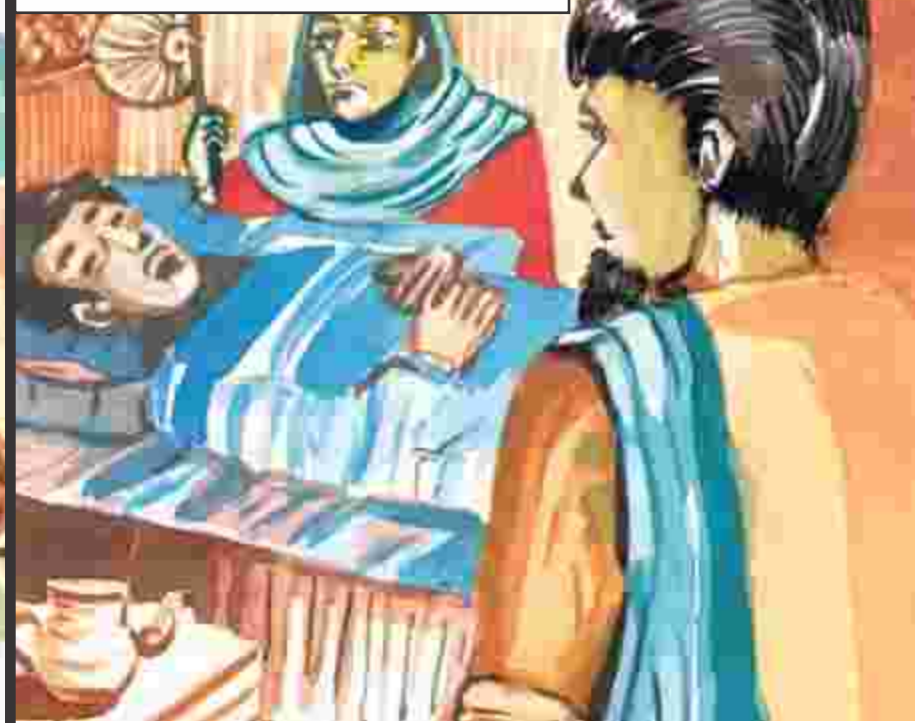
Once few villagers of Bhnarara were going to Nabadwip, the birthplace of Chaityanya Mahaprabhu. Lalon was also in the group. During the journey Lalon was infected with small pox, so his companions left him behind in Shiuria and went away.



A weaver lady found him while she came to fetch water.

O god !

The weaver couple took him to their house to look after him.



But the pilgrims returned to Bhnarara and told that...

Lalit died of small pox

What are you saying?



After recovering from the disease Lalon returned to his village. At first everyone was shocked but happy to see him also. But as he had spent some of the time in a Muslim family he was not accepted by the villagers. Everyone regarded him as a part of the other community.

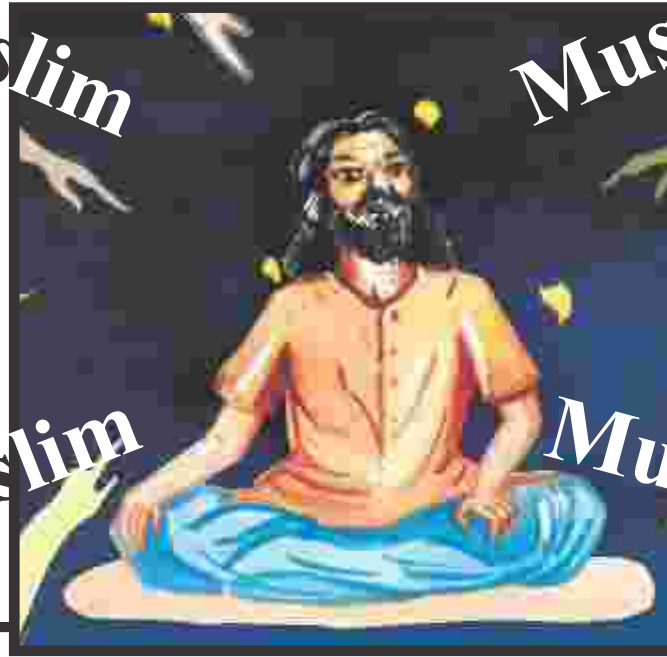


Muslim

Muslim

Muslim

Muslim



Lalon again returned to the weaver's family. He Became Lalon from Lalitnarayan. But he believes that Humanity is the greatest religion of all. And this is the ultimate religion of every Baul-Fakir.





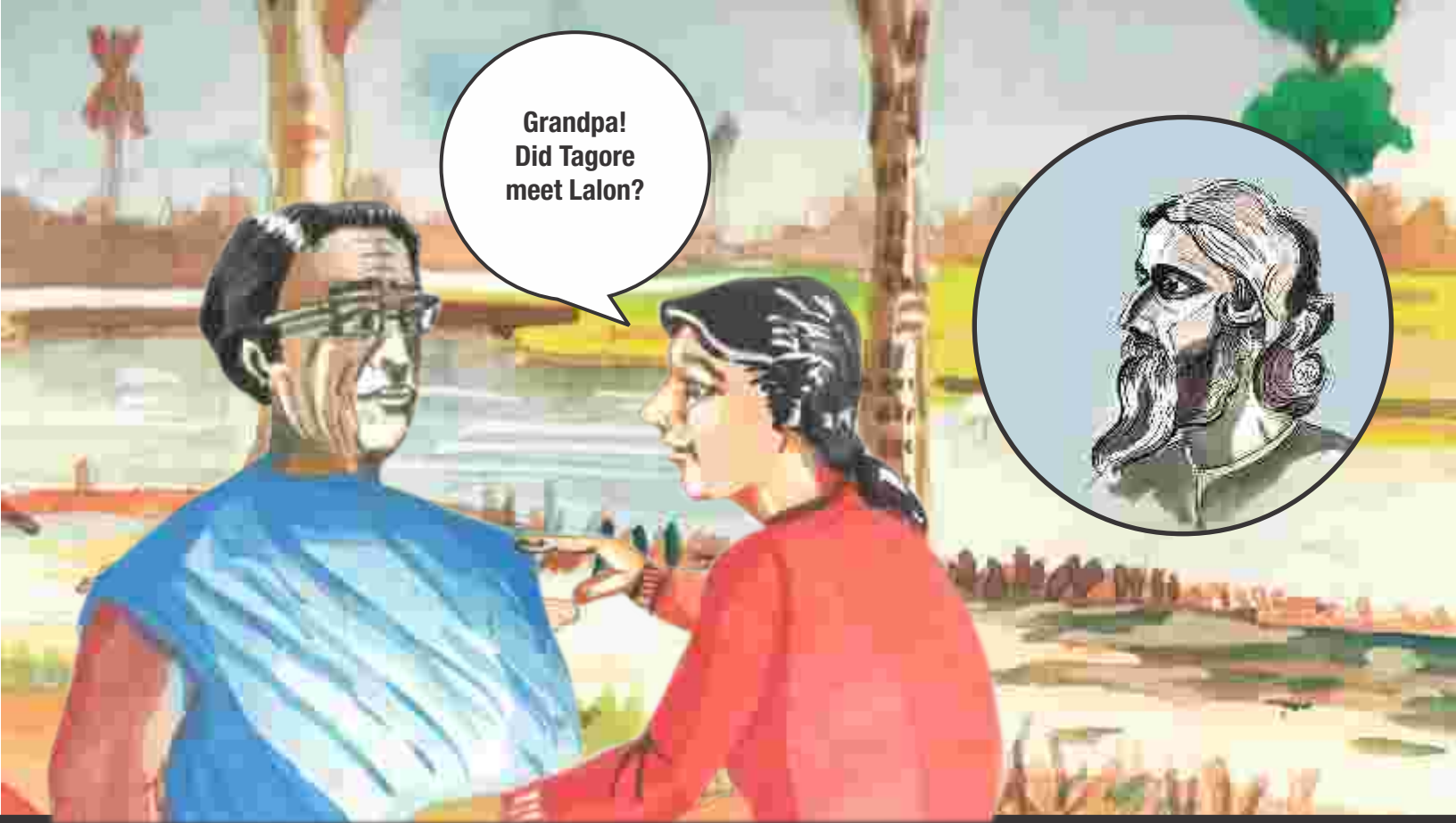
After that, he became the disciple of Siraj Snai and started living a life of a Fakir. His songs became famous and spread like wildfire.

Malam Karigar gifted 17 bighas of land to Lalon in Sneuriya Village. Lalon stayed there in his Akhra with his second wife Moti Bibi and his students and disciples.



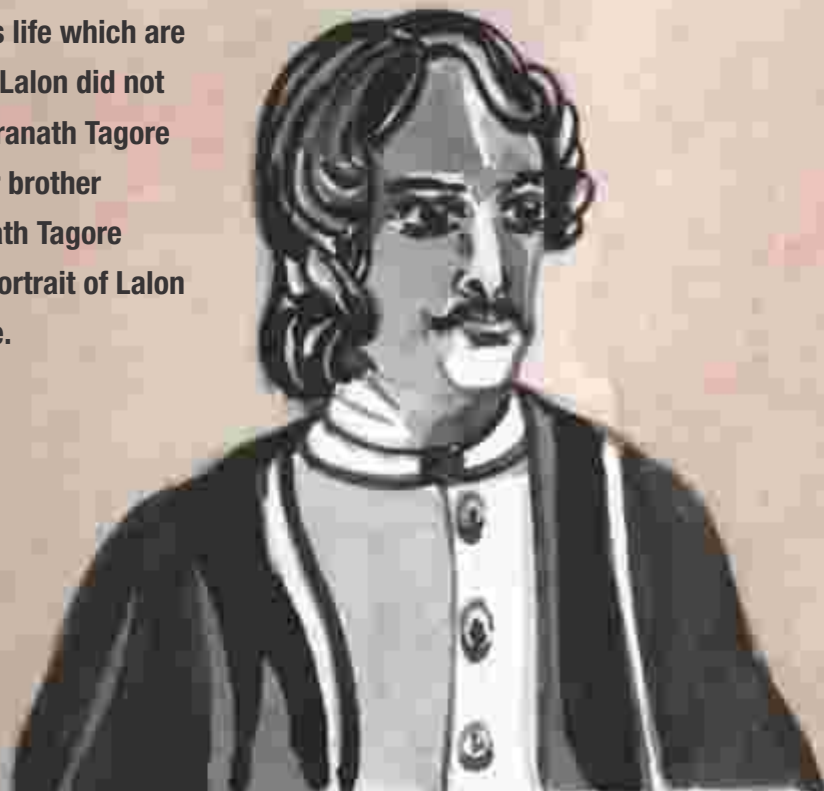
Every winter a festival took place there.

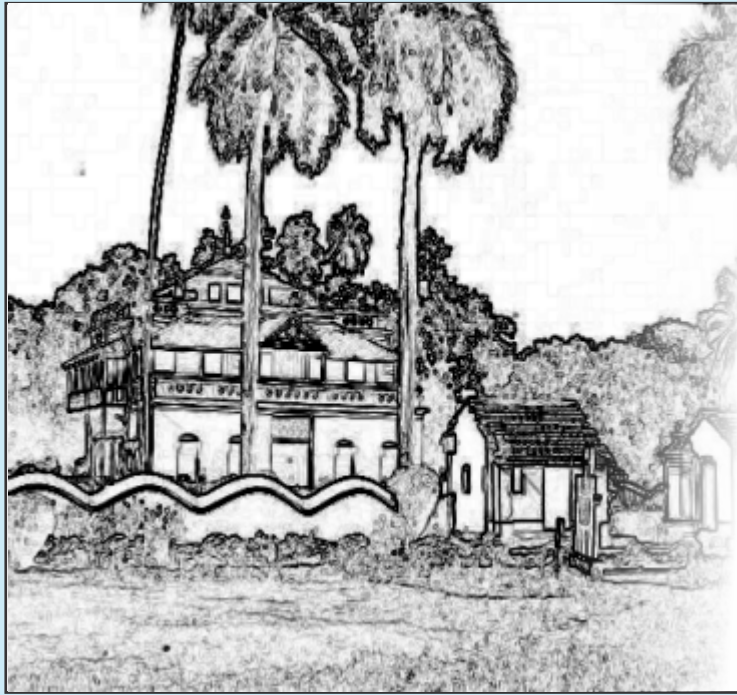




Grandpa!
Did Tagore
meet Lalon?

People say a lot of things about Lalon's life which are often myths. Lalon did not meet Rabindranath Tagore but his elder brother Jyotirindranath Tagore sketched a portrait of Lalon in his old age.





Yes! Will show you on returning to Kolkata. Though they did not meet each other, there is a connection between Lalon's songs and Rabindranath Tagore. Tagore had a property at Shilaidaha near Kushtia. After Lalon's demise Rabindranath collected lots of Lalon's songs from that area and published in Prabashi Patrika in Kolkata. That was the first time people came to know the feelings and emotions of Lalon's songs

Will you show me the picture Grandpa?

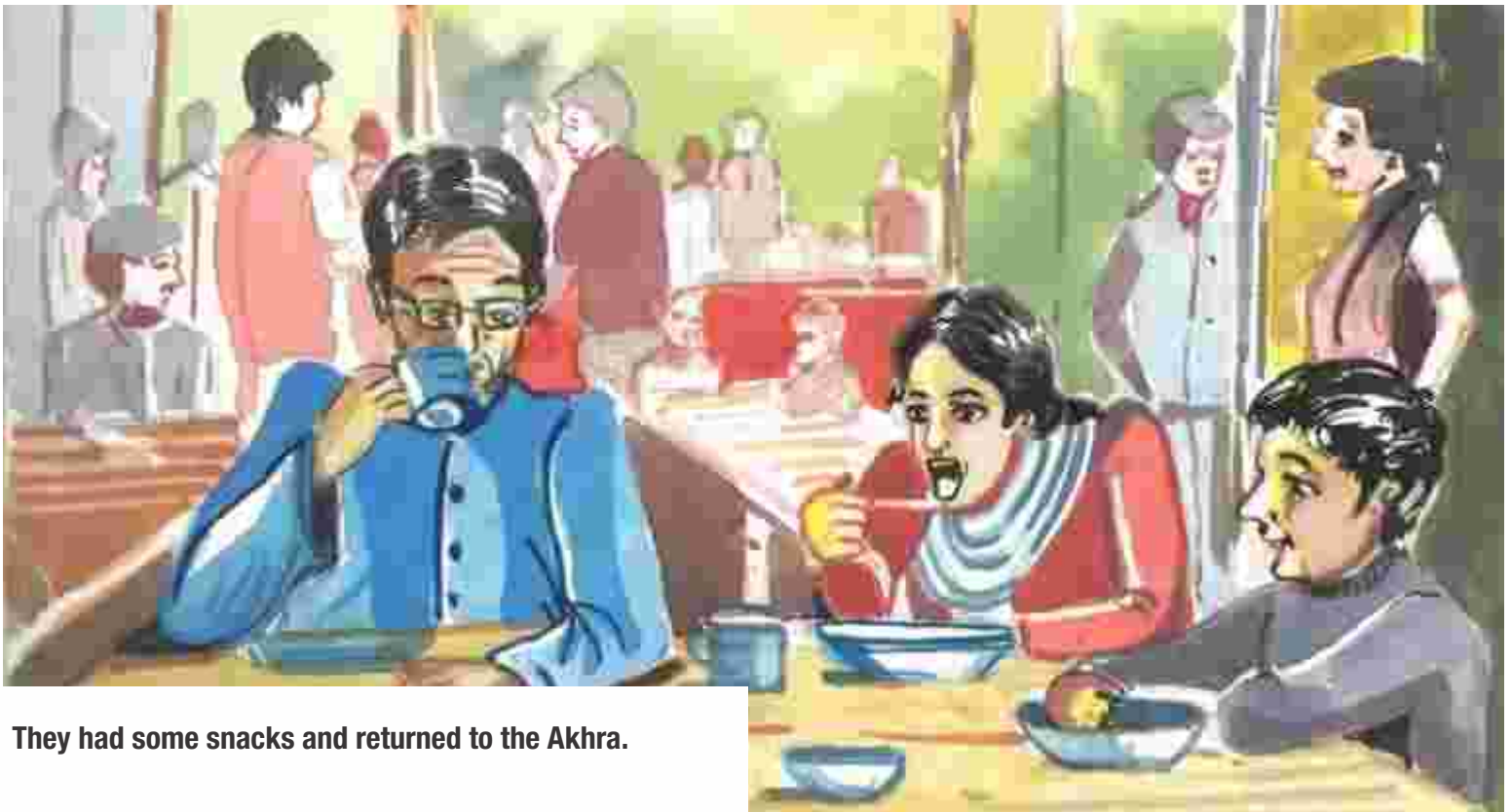


Grandpa! Is he still alive?



He would have been 250 years old if he was still alive. In 1890 on 17th October at the age of 116, Lalon passed away. His tomb is still present in his Akhra.

We must go now, the program has started



They had some snacks and returned to the Akhra.

Khanchar

bhetor

achin

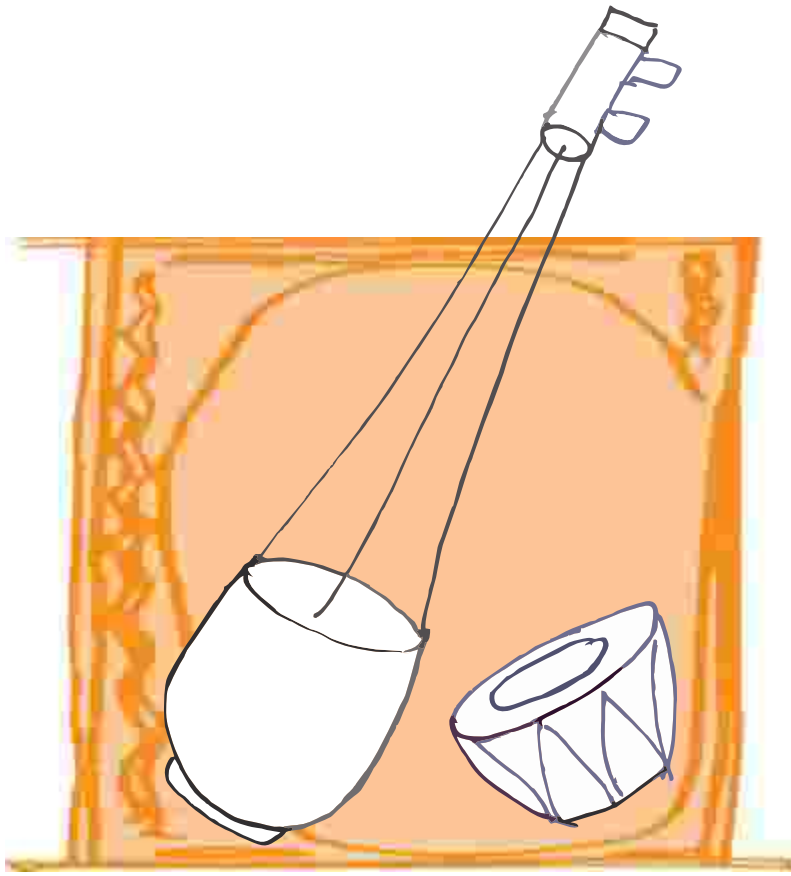
pakhi

kyamne

ashe

jay





Lalon - A man who lived

Sanskriti Parichay - 4



Being aware about the cultural traditions, practices and heritage of our own country as well as other civilizations around the world is part of a wholesome educational upbringing. It sensitizes our minds about the diversity and pluralism of societies and people and inculcates in us a deep sense of respect for the other. This series has been conceived to familiarize and attract young generations to Bengal's rich folk culture and heritage.



Rural Craft & Cultural Hubs
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