



# PONNI'S BELOVED

Volume 2 : The Storm



An English Translation of  
Kalki Krishnamurthy's Ponniyin Selvan by

**SUMEETHA MANIKANDAN**

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**AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF  
KALKI KRISHNAMURTHY'S PONNIYIN  
SELVAN**

by

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**Part 2 of 5 - The Storm**



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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Sumeetha Manikandan is a top bestselling romance author whose novellas 'Perfect Groom' and 'These Lines of Mehendi' (which was published as a paperback novel called 'Love Again') have been on the top of Amazon India charts ever since their publication. A bookaholic, thinker, feminist and a daydreamer, she reads across genres and is a crazy fan of history, romance and science fiction novels.*

*An avid reader of historical novels, she has been translating Kalki Krishnamurthy's classic Tamil novel Ponnin Selvan for the past ten years and hopes to translate more of his novels into English.*

*Sumeetha is married to filmmaker K.S. Manikandan and lives with her nine-year-old daughter in Chennai.*

## Acknowledgement

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge my father who used to tell me the story of Ponniyin Selvan every evening during dinner and fueled my interest to read the book.

My Aunt Ranganayaki who lent me her Ponniyin Selvan books all those years ago when I was in school. I still treasure them to this day.

Navin and Vidya Sigamany for publishing the first drafts of Ponni's Beloved on their website Zine 5.com almost ten years ago.

Author Venkatesh Ramakrishnan who encouraged me to resume the translation again.

I would like to thank my editor Inderpreet Kaur Uppal for her stellar efforts in editing and proofreading.

Friends like Raja King, Fowzia Iqbal, Abirami Baskaran, Sastha Prakash, Ramanujam Jaganathan, Thirukambigai Devi and countless others who followed the translation avidly and promoted it among numerous groups.

I would also like to dedicate this book to all those fans who have been asking me for years to publish my translation and to my husband who claims to be the first among them.

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

Kalki Krishnamurthy's *Ponniyin Selvan* was the first Tamil novel that I read. To tell you the truth, I learnt to read Tamil using elementary school books, just so that I could read this story.

They say that good books and great authors can transform lives. I have found it to be true in my case. I started translating this book ten years ago, as a hobby and realized that I could write. Today, I am a freelance writer who makes a living out of writing, and I owe my profession to this novel!

Many authors have written phenomenal books in Tamil literature after Kalki Krishnamurthy, but *Ponniyin Selvan* still remains the most popular book, widely read by many. *Ponniyin Selvan* has the right mixture of all things that makes an epic – political intrigue, conspiracy, betrayal, huge dollops of romance, infidelity, seduction, passion, alluring women, unrequited love, sacrifice and pure love.

*Ponni's Beloved* is an English translation, and as many readers have pointed out, no translation can do justice to the original. I have tried to capture the essence and soul of Kalki's writing in my translation.

I recently visited all the places (in India) that are mentioned in this novel. We started on Aadi 18 (Aug 3, 2019) for this trail trip almost on the footsteps of Vandiya Devan and saw all the fascinating places that he mentions in the journey. I have included some of the photos in this volume. For those who wish to sign up for this tour trail, do contact Tour Bee (7299646588). The tour trail was well organized and at the curator had many interesting stories about each place that we visited.

Thank you,  
Sumeetha Manikandan





## FOREWORD

Kalki Krishnamurthy's *Ponniyin Selvan* was serialized in the post-independence era and it ran for four long years. Talking about a golden era in Tamil history, it ensnared the imagination of huge swathe of the Tamil population with people queuing in railway stations long before dawn to lay their hands on that week's edition of the Kalki magazine.

An entire generation dwelt upon the freshness of the novel and surprisingly it was not condemned to the recesses of the mind as a childhood fancy but continued to entice readers of subsequent generations as they were born and introduced to the Tamil language. The novel still has a colossal following but bounded by the hedges of a language that is not easy to learn, it strictly remained out of the mainstream and well within the realms of the Tamil speaking world.

Tamil people have been habitual migrants and the diaspora is spread over numerous countries. In today's generation, though many of them can speak fluent Tamil they lack the patience to read the Tamil script that is spread over 1000 pages of a novel. And that's when the need arises a need for a good translation.

When I read the novel late in my thirties, the social media was just picking up and I was introduced to the yahoo group of Ponniyin Selvan fans around the year 2001. For the first time, readers from different age groups, settled in different lands were congregating online.

It was there that I came across a translation of Ponniyin Selvan into English. (There had been one earlier in print but that left much to be desired for those who had read the original. In fact, at one point the earlier translator mentioned 'Maize' for the Tamil word Cholam. But it

was pointed out in the group that Maize entered India 500 years after the storyline period.)

The online translation was a bold bid by a youngster. As much as the substance within, the attempt bedazzled a lot of us because for 40 years or more it was almost sacrilege to deal with Kalki's works. The one sequel in the market at that time had been mauled by the copyright owners!

Over the next decade many of the members of the Yahoo group became novelists, biographers, bloggers, heritage activists and a host of history and literature connected personalities. And I would like to list Sumeetha's translation of Kalki's work as a starting point for all this.

A translated work should remind us of the original and it should have the author's imprint on the words. I think Sumeetha comes out in flying colours on both fronts. I am sure her work would open up the genius of Kalki to many who were deprived of it all these days.

### ***Biography of Venkatesh Ramakrishnan:***

Author Venkatesh Ramakrishnan is a Chennai based bilingual novelist from India. South Indian historical fiction is his forte. He has published 3 novels in Tamil, 2 of them are sequels to the famous Kalki Krishnamurthy novels Ponniyin Selvan and Sivagamiyin Sabatham respectively, with the titles Kaviri Mainthan and Kanji Tharagai. One of his other fictional work in Tamil is Thillayil Oru Kollaikaran. Gods, Kings & Slaves. The Siege of Madurai is his first novel in English.

# Character List

## CHOLA ROYAL FAMILY

**Paranthaka II** – Emperor of the Chola and Pandya kingdoms from 957 to 970 CE, when this story happens. His handsomeness earned him the popular epithet of Sundara Chola, meaning Handsome Chola.

**Vanamadevi** - Consort of Paranthaka II and empress of the Cholas, she is the mother of Crown Prince Aditya Karikalan, Princess Kundavai and Prince Arulmozhiarman. Her father is the nobleman Thirukovallur Malayaman.

**Aditya Karikalan** - Eldest son of Sundara Chola and Vanamadevi and crown prince to the Chola throne, Aditya Karikalan is a peerless warrior who defeated and killed the Pandya king and established Chola suzerainty over his kingdom.

**Kundavai** - Younger sister of Aditya Karikalan and the daughter of Sundara Chola and Vanamadevi. Kundavai is cherished throughout the kingdom for her wit, wisdom, grace and intelligence. She lives in Pazhaiaarai along with her companions and friends.

**Arulmozhiarman** - The youngest son of Sundara Chola and Vanamadevi, Arulmozhiarman is known throughout the kingdom as 'Ponniyin Selvan'. At the time of the story, he is in Ilangai (Sri Lanka) on a campaign against King Mahindan and had captured many parts of the island. He later ascended the Chola throne as Raja Raja Cholan (985 - 1014 CE).

**Gandaradithan** - Son of Paranthaka I and Sundara Chola's uncle. He was the Chola king from 950 to 957 CE. Gandaradithan was known for his piety.

**Sembiyanmadevi** - King Gandaradithan's queen who was equally virtuous and spiritual. She belongs to the clan of Mazhavarayar and married the king despite his advanced age.

**Madhuranthakan** - Son of King Gandaradithan and Sembiyanmadevi and the first cousin of Sundara Chola.

**Arinjaya Chola** - Son of Paranthaka I and the father of Sundara Chola. He reigned for a very short period from 956 to 957 CE.

**Kalyani** - Wife of King Arinjaya Chola and the mother of Sundara Chola. She belongs to Vaithumbarayar clan.

**Rajadhithan** - Eldest son and heir apparent of Paranthaka I. Prince Rajadhithan died in the Thakkolam war (950 CE) after which the crown passed on to his younger brother.

**Paranthaka I** - Grandfather of Sundara Chola, Paranthaka I ruled from 907 to 955 CE.

## Noble Clans

### PAZHUVUR CLAN

**Periya Pazhuvetarayar** - Lord Treasurer of the Chola kingdom and a peerless warrior who carried 64 battle scars on his body. He is the patriarch and the petty king of the powerful Pazhuvur clan and is an influential courtier and nobleman at the Chola court.

**Nandini Devi** - Queen and wife of Periya Pazhuvetarayar, Nandini is a young woman renowned for her beauty. Nandini's antecedents are a mystery and her past life is shrouded in secrecy.

**Chinna Pazhuvetarayar** - Also known as Kalanthaka Kanda, Chinna Pazhuvetarayar is the younger brother of Periya Pazhuvetarayar and is the commander of the Thanjavur fort. A powerful man with a strong physique, he is also the father-in-law of Prince Madhuranthakan.

### KODUMBALUR CLAN

**Budivikrama Kesari** - The commander of troops in Ilangai, he is also known as Kodumbalur Periya Vellar. He is the patriarch of the Kodumbalur Clan.

**Vanathi** - A Kodumbalur princess and the niece of Budivikrama Kesari, Vanathi is also the cherished companion and friend of Princess Kundavai, who hopes to wed her to Prince Arulmozhivarman.

**Kodumbalur Siriya Vellar** - Father of Vanathi and the younger brother of Budivikrama Kesari, he died valiantly in Ilangai after leading a campaign across the sea.

### SAMBUVERAYAR CLAN

**Singannar Sambuvarayar** - A powerful lord who ruled over Kadambur.

**Kandanmaran** - Son of Sambuvarayar who also fought along with Aditya Karikalan in many wars.

**Manimegalai** - Daughter of Sambuvarayar and the sister of Kandanmaran.

## **MALAYAMAN CLAN**

**Thirukkovalur Malayaman** - Patriarch of the Malayaman clan and the father-in-law of Sundara Chola. He is close to his oldest grandson Aditya Karikalan.

## **VANAR CLAN**

**Vandiya Devan** - Vallavareyan Vandiya Devan is Aditya Karikalan's bodyguard, friend and confidante.

## **PANDYA KING'S BODYGUARDS**

**Ravidasan** - The ringleader of the conspirators who wish to avenge the death of their king. He is also known as 'Mandiravadi'.

**Soman Sambavan** - One of the conspirators and a member of Ravidasan's gang.

**Edupankari** - One of the Pandya conspirators who works in the Kadambur palace and overhears the noblemen's plots about the Chola succession.

**Devaralan** - One of the Pandya conspirators who works in the Kadambur palace.

## **OTHER IMPORTANT CHARACTERS**

**Azhwarkadiyan Nambi** - A Vaishnavite and a spy who is also known as Thirumalai or Thirumalaiappan. He also claims to be Nandini Devi's brother.

**Parthibendra Pallavan** - Close confidante and friend of Aditya Karikalan.

**Kudanthai Jodhidar** - An astrologer in Kudanthai (present-day Kumbakonam) who is patronized by Kundavai.

**Senthan Amuthan** - A devout man who would offer the flowers of his garden to Thallikullathar Temple in Thanjavur. Vandiya Devan stays in his house while visiting Thanjavur.

**Poonguzhali** - Senthan Amuthan's cousin who lives in Kodi Karai.





## **Glossary of Terms**

**Abathudavigal** – The army of bodyguards that guarded the Pandya King

**Adey** – An expression used to refer someone with derision and disrespect

**Adigaley** – A respectful term used to address a monk

**Amma** – Mother

**Ammavasai** – New Moon

**Anna** - Elder brother

**Anni** - Elder brother's wife

**Anthapuram** - Women's quarters in a palace, usually located in an interior and protected part

**Akka** - Elder sister

**Appa** - Father

**Ayya** – A respectful term in Tamil used to address men

**Ayyo / Ayyayo** – An exclamation of distress

**Battar** – Term used to refer to the priest

**Bikshu** – A Buddhist Monk

**Chi Chi** – An expression of disgust

**Dalapathy** - Army Commander

**Devi** – Used to address royal or noble women

**Dhanadhigari** – Treasurer

**Dhoomketu** – A comet

**Gurunatha** – Teacher

**Jodhidar** – An Astrologer

**Kalapathy** – Ship's Captain or Commander

**Maha Mandiri** – Prime Minister

**Maharaja** – My King

**Maha Guru** – Chief among teachers

**Mandapam** – A canopy, usually built of stone with four or more pillars.

**Mandiravadi** – Magician

**Malai** – A Mountain

**Olai** – Palm leaf used to write messages

**Padai** - Army

**Paatti** – Grandmother

**Pujari** – A priest

**Prabhu** – A respectful term to address a lord, prince or the king

**Rani** – Queen

**Raja Drogam** – Treason against the king

**Rakshashi** - Demoness

**Senapathy** – Army Commander

**Samudra Rajan** – The Sea God

**Sangu Sakkaram** – Conch and discus

**Thambi** – Younger brother

**Thatha** – Grandfather

**Theevu** – An Island

**Vajrayudham** – Thunderbolt

**Vaikuntam** – The abode of Lord Vishnu

**Vihara** – A Monastery

## **The story so far...**

About a thousand years ago, a young soldier called Vandiya Devan was traveling towards the Chola Kingdom bearing important messages for Emperor Sundara Chola and Princess Kundavai from the Crown Prince Aditya Karikalan. One night, he stays at Kadambur at his friend Kandanmaran's palace. Coincidentally that day, Kandanmaran's father is playing host to many important noble lords of the Chola kingdom and he had invited Periya Pazhuvetarayar, the Lord Treasurer of the Cholas. Vandiya Devan inadvertently finds out that all the noble lords under the leadership of Periya Pazhuvetarayar were plotting to crown Prince Madhuranthakan (Sundara Chola's first cousin) as the emperor after Sundara Chola's demise. He is disgusted to learn that Pazhuvetarayar was taking Madhuranthakan around with him in a veiled palanquin, while most people mistook him to be his wife.

Vandiya Devan also meets a Veera Vaishnavan named Azhwarkadiyan Nambi (also known as Thirumalai) in Kadambur who follows him around and is seen trying to listen in on the secret meeting of the nobles.

The Veera Vaishnavan wants to meet Periya Pazhuvetrayar's wife, Nandini, because she was his step-sister once upon a time. Nandini was found by Azhwarkadiyan's parents in a garden as a new-born baby and brought up as their own daughter. Three years ago, when the Cholas and Pandyas were engaged in a bitter battle in the Pandya kingdom, the Pandya soldiers had brought the wounded Veera Pandyan (king of Pandyas) to Nandini's hut, who tried to help him. Sadly, the Chola soldiers find out about this and Aditya Karikalan beheads the king. Periya Pazhuvetarayar, who was with them, takes Nandini away and marries her. Since then Azhwarkadiyan has been trying to meet Nandini.

In the meantime, Princess Kundavai comes to Kudanthai along with her companion Princess Vanathi to meet an astrologer. At the astrologer's house, Vandiya Devan meets Kundavai and falls in love with her though he has no clue about her identity. He meets her again in Arisalaru (near Kudanthai) while trying to save her friends from a dead crocodile.

Azhwarkadiyan also stumbles upon a conspiracy hatched by a handful of Pandya soldiers who were once bodyguards of Veera Pandyan to assassinate the Crown Prince Aditya Karikalan, his brother Prince Arulmozhivarman and the emperor Sundara Chola.

Vandiya Devan approaches Thanjavur and is worried about how to meet the emperor alone and warn him about the dangerous plot that the noble lords were hatching. He encounters a veiled palanquin on the way and thinking that it's Prince Madhuranthakan he accosts them, only to find that it is Nandini Devi. He uses Azhwarkadiyan's name to seek help from her and she gives him the Pazhuvur signet ring with a palm leaf emblem to enter the fort.

Inside the fort, he befriends a flower-seller's assistant named Senthan Amuthan and stays in his garden house for a night. On the next day, he goes to the Thanjavur fort and gains entry into the palace thanks to the Pazhuvur ring. He meets Chinna Pazhuvetarayar (Periya Pazhuvetarayar's brother), the commander of the fort, and tells him that his brother had sent him. Chinna Pazhuvetarayar allows him to meet the emperor in private but the emperor gets distracted by poets who arrive to meet him. Chinna Pazhuvetarayar becomes suspicious and tries to confine him to his guest chamber but Vandiya Devan escapes from his guards and ends up hiding in Nandini's palace gardens. Nandini meets him and offers him a position in her palace but he refuses saying that he had agreed to work for Kundavai. She tries to seduce him into accepting the position but is interrupted by the arrival of the chief of the Pandya bodyguards whom Azhwarkadiyan had encountered earlier. We learn that Nandini is helping them with gold to avenge the gory death of their king.

Vandiyā Devan remains hidden nearby and he finds a way out of the fort through a dark tunnel. At the end of the tunnel, he meets Kandanmaran, who is stabbed by a guard. Vandiyā Devan kills the guard and saves Kandanmaran's life. He leaves the wounded Kandanmaran at Senthan Amuthan's house and leaves for Pazhaiaarai to meet Kundavai.

At Pazhaiaarai, Vandiyā Devan enters the city masquerading as an actor with a drama troupe. He meets Kundavai and informs her about the plot that the nobles are hatching under the leadership of the Pazhuvetarayar brothers. Kundavai gives him a message for her brother in Ilangai and tasks him to bring her brother home. Bearing the message, Vandiyā Devan leaves for Kodi Karai to take a boat to Ilangai.

At Kanchipuram, Aditya Karikalan and his friend Pallava Parthibendran are furious with the Pazhuvur brothers for branding their messenger as a spy. His maternal grandfather, Malayaman advises him to be patient. They decide to send

Parthibendran to Ilangai to get Arulmozhiarman back home. Karikalan confides in Parthibendran about his secret passion for Nandini, whom he had met at Pazhaiaarai, and his wish to marry her. He reveals how devastated he was when he found out that she was tending to Veera Pandyan's wounds. He regrets beheading Veera Pandyan despite Nandini's pleas. His anger at learning that she was Pazhuvetrayar's wife now was the sole reason he was not going to Thanjavur to meet his father. At the end of this conversation, Parthibendran gets ready to go Ilangai.



## Chapter 1 – Poonguzhali

The waves washed gently against the shore and receded, marking a peaceful dusky evening in Kodi Karai<sup>[1]</sup>. The sky was dotted with birds flying back home across the pristine white sands of the soft beach. In the woods near the beach, the air seemed still, and the sun was fast sinking behind a veil of clouds.



Kodi Karai Beach Today

A small boat, its oars being plied by a young woman, made its way towards the shore. She reminds us of Senthana Amuthan's description of his uncle's daughter Poonguzhali.

Yes, she is indeed Poonguzhali. Perhaps to justify her beautiful name, she had decorated her hair with a flower and her lovely curly

tresses fell in cascades upon her shoulders. An attractive necklace of shells adorned her neck but indeed, it seemed pleasing to the eye only because she wore it.

What could be more alluring than a beautiful maiden plying a boat? Surely, it would be her melodious voice. Sitting languidly on the boat, she sang a haunting song about the sea and it seemed as if the wind stood still to listen to her honeyed voice. Even the sinking sun stood still for a while before ushering in the night.

While the waves of the sea are placid and gentle,  
why does the sea within me surge and rise?

When the mother earth sleeps in peace,  
why should my heart rise in anguish?

Even the birds of the forest search for their nests!  
Hunters and archers seek their homes too!

When the heaven and earth are enveloped in peace  
why is a storm stirring within the heart of that doe-eyed girl?

The sea will stand still and the breeze will crawl in,  
But why does the wind swirl so strong in that girl's heart?

Listening to her, one wonders what sorrow this young maiden might be hiding in the deepest recess of her heart that seemed to give such a poignant tinge of sadness to her voice.

The song ended as she neared the shore. Reaching the beach, she nimbly got out of the boat and pulled it behind her, deftly securing it and let it rest near the many other boats tied there. She looked around the beach and spotted the light from the lighthouse that acted as a beacon warning ships lest they come too near the shore. Beyond the woods, a temple stood hidden among the trees.

Two hundred years ago, Sundaramurthy Nayanar<sup>[2]</sup> had come to Kodi Karai Kuzhagar temple<sup>[3]</sup> and had sung his famous Devaram<sup>[4]</sup> about how Lord Shiva stood alone amidst the sea and the beach.

My Lord! Why are you here all alone on this lonely beach? This place isn't worthy of you! You are needed in a place where throngs of devotees would place their offerings at your divine feet and not on a lonely stretch of beach.

Yet even after two hundred years, Kodi Karai still remains a secluded stretch of beach, sand and woods at the time of our story. The thick forest that surrounded the temple was populated with wild animals and hooting owls, making it more dangerous than it was two hundred years ago. There was, however, one difference. Two hundred years ago, there was no lighthouse here it had been built during the reign of Emperor Paranthakan I and since then it had become a home for a few families who took care of the lighthouse and the temple.



Kodi Karai Lighthouse today

Poonguzhali looked around her and thought of going towards the lighthouse and then she saw the temple Gopuram<sup>[5]</sup> of Kuzhagar temple and decided to go there instead. As she made the decision, the temple bells started ringing melodiously.

*Why am I going home so early? Let me visit the temple. I can ask the Battar<sup>[6]</sup> to sing divine devaram songs and then take the prasadam<sup>[7]</sup> home.*



Deciding thus, she walked quickly towards the temple. On the way, she saw a herd of deer running towards the forest. Among them was a lovely young deer, graceful and childlike. Poonguzhali's enthusiasm knew no bounds when she saw the herd. She ran along with them as if she was going to catch them but no matter how fast you run, you cannot really compete with the agility of the deer. The herd overtook her and ran gracefully ahead.

At one place, all the deer collectively leapt as if they were escaping from a dangerous deep pool but one of the smaller ones fell in the middle. Sinking in the quicksand, it tried to claw its way up but moaned piteously when the attempt failed. The mother deer and the rest of the herd had stopped running and were watching the small deer worriedly, but they couldn't help the young one.

Poonguzhali immediately set about to help the small doe. She noted carefully where the quicksand ended and approached the place where the deer was stuck. The herd and the mother deer looked at her suspiciously not knowing her intentions. Softly, she cooed at them with a strange sound and that seemed to reassure them. She bent over the quicksand pool and grabbed the little deer's legs and pulled it to safety. The little deer stood trembling from fear for some time and then turned around and ran to its mother for succour and comfort. Soon the entire herd started running at breakneck speed.

“Such ungrateful creatures!” she exclaimed and then comforted herself saying, “Though they are certainly better than humans who are worse than ungrateful.”

She started walking towards Kuzhagar temple into the forest. The thick grove of the forest was so dense that strangers who are unfamiliar with the terrain could easily get lost and roam around clueless for long. Nestled amidst the trees stood the old temple looking a bit desolate and deserted. She entered the temple and went straight to the inner sanctum. The temple priest looked at her in surprise and smiled. Visitors hereabouts were rare and attractive young boat girls were more than welcome.



**Kuzhagar Temple**

After she finished her prayers, the priest gave her a coconut and the prasadam to eat and said, “Will you wait for a while? I will come along with you.”

“I will wait for you ayya<sup>[8]</sup>! I am in no hurry.”

Saying thus, she came out and nimbly climbed on one of the trees to hoist herself on the temple walls. Along the walls, there was a statue of Nandi<sup>[9]</sup>, the bull. Sitting with her back on the considerable bulk of Nandi, she leisurely ate the coconut and the temple prasadam.

As darkness enveloped the temple as dusk set in, she heard horses galloping. She looked intently at the direction of the sound and her heart stirred with a long-gone memory that threatened to choke her with an indescribable sorrow.

*Who is coming here? What do I care who it is? There are too many strangers coming around here these days, citing royal duties. Yesterday too, two people had come wanting to go to Ilangai. They looked so disgusting but Anna took them on his boat after they gave him a bag full of gold coins. May thunder fall upon their gold! Who wants it here? What purpose can gold serve when you are living amidst a forest? But Anna and Anni's world revolves around money. They just want more and more!*



**Wild horses in Kodi Karai beach**

As the sound of galloping horses came closer, she noted that there were two riders. It looked as though if they had travelled a long distance. The man on the first horse was quite young, handsome, broad-chested and looked like a soldier. However, when compared with another face that she had enthroned in her heart, she found him downright ugly. On second thoughts, his face looked like an owl!

As readers might have guessed, the first man on the horse is our hero, Vandiya Devan. Behind him came the physician's son who had accompanied him from Pazhaiaarai. They both were saddle sore and weary, yet Vandiya Devan's face lit up when he saw Poonguzhali lounging atop the temple wall, carelessly eating the coconut. When he saw that she too was looking eagerly at his face, his enthusiasm knew no bounds. He stopped the horse and looked at her with a smile. If he had known that she had been comparing his face to that of an owl, he might not be so enthusiastic to talk to her. Thankfully, God found it worthwhile to make humans hide their innermost thoughts from others.

When Poonguzhali realized that the man on the horse was staring at her, she immediately jumped down on the soft sand of the temple and started running along the temple wall.

When Vandiya Devan saw her running, he too got down from his horse and started after her. Now, who can divine why she felt like running away from a man who was staring at her or what prompted Vandiya Devan to take off after her. We can only conclude that each one of them was following their natural instincts in the order of the world.