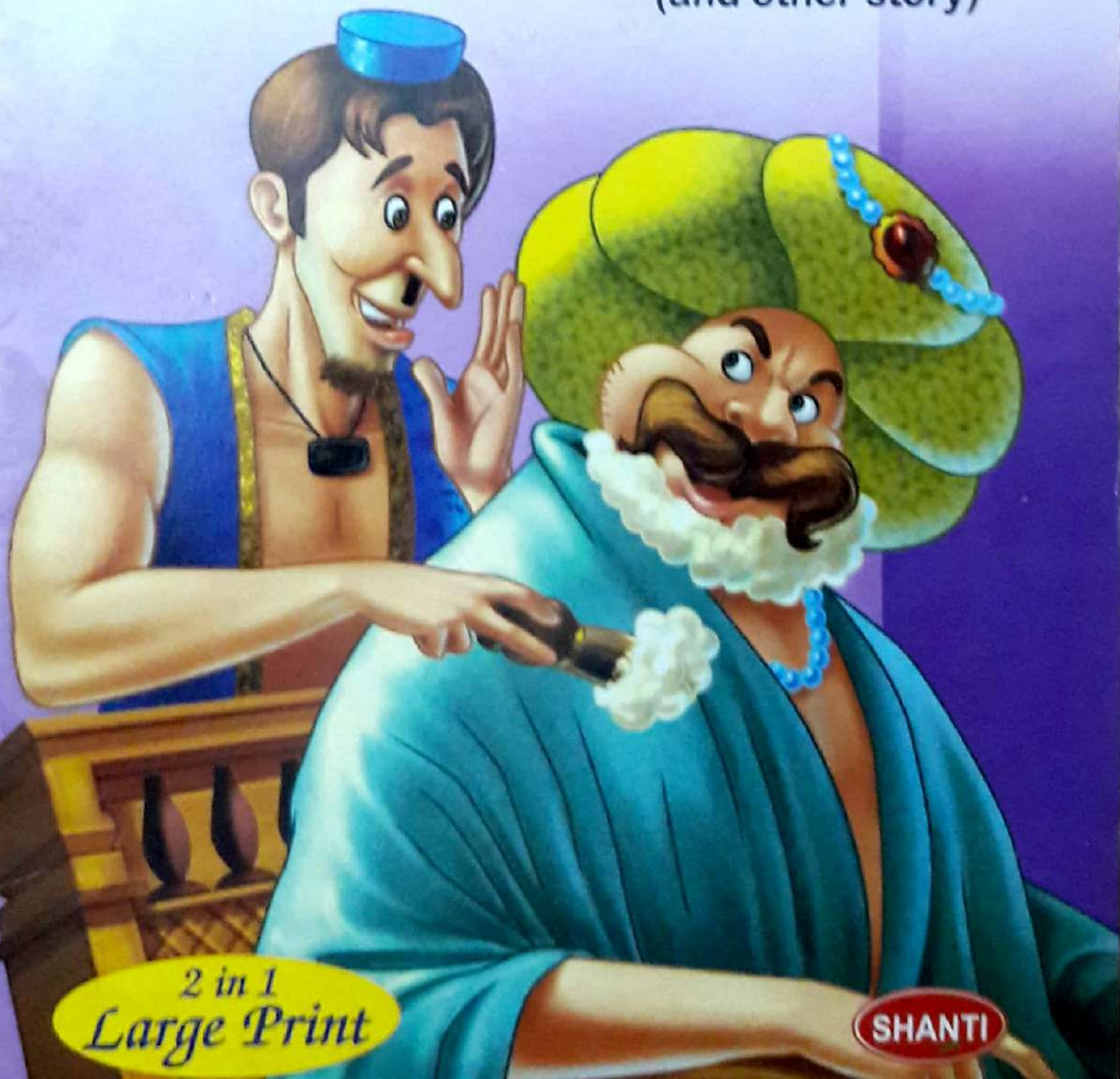


4153

Akbar Birbal

A Trip to Heaven

(and other story)



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SHANTI

A TRIP TO HEAVEN

The royal barber hated Birbal. One day, he said to Akbar, "Your Majesty, do you want to know how your relatives are doing in



heaven?" "Yes of course," answered the emperor. The barber said, "I know a famous saint, he can make a person sit on a pyre and

directly reach the heaven." "Ok, then I will send Birbal to find out how my relatives are there," said Akbar. Akbar told whole story to



Birbal. Birbal understood that it was the Barber's plan. He went to the place where the pyre was going to be lit and got a tunnel dug beneath it right till his house. On

the decided day, a pyre was lit and Birbal safely escaped from it through the tunnel. The barber was happy thinking that Birbal was dead. Birbal spent many

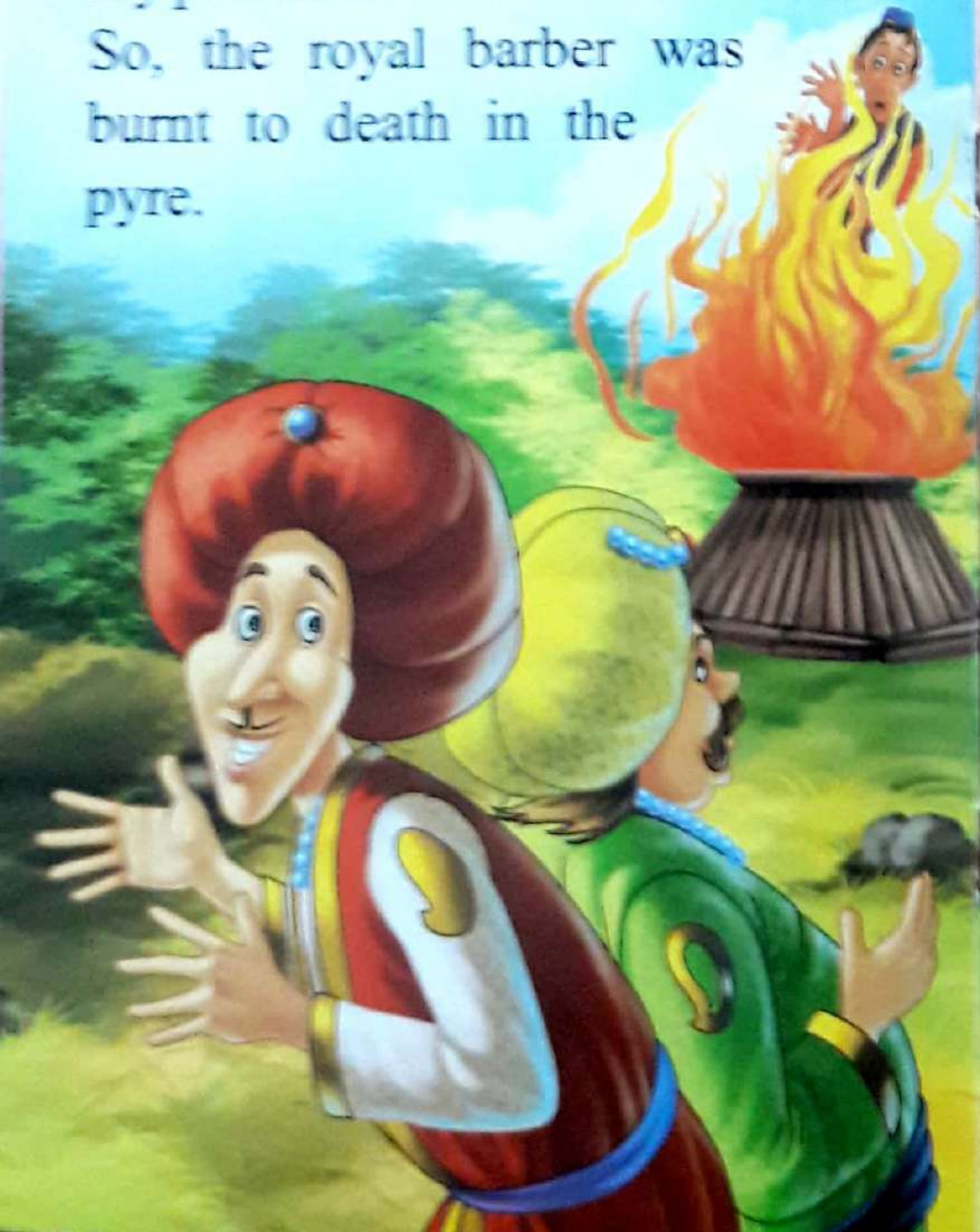


months inside his house and developed a long beard. Then one day, he reached the royal court and everyone was surprised to see him back. Akbar happily asked, "So

how are all my relatives, Birbal?" "They all are fine but they haven't shaved for years. You can see, Sir, even I could not shave as there is no barber in the heaven," said



Birbal. Akbar said, "Then I'll send my personal barber to the heaven." So, the royal barber was burnt to death in the pyre.



OBEDIENT HUSBANDS

One evening, Akbar and Birbal were strolling on Agra streets. Suddenly, they heard some loud shouting coming from a house. They saw that a wife was scolding



her husband and he was quiet. Akbar said, "Birbal, that man looks strong and still he is saying nothing to his wife." Birbal said,

"Your Majesty, this is the ultimate truth that a married man has to listen to his wife even though he is more powerful than her." "Can



you prove this point?" asked Akbar. Birbal agreed. The next day, Birbal made a declaration for the married men of the kingdom to

assemble near the palace. Then Birbal started saying, "All the husbands who do as their wives say should stand on my right side



while others who don't should stand on my left." In a moment, all men except one stood on his right side. Akbar was smiling as he thought that the man was not an

obedient husband. Then Birbal asked that man, "So you don't obey your wife. Right?" the man said, "No Sir, I'm perhaps the most obedient husband. Actually,



my wife has instructed me to stay away from crowd so I chose to stand on your left.” Birbal had proved his point once again!

