

HUMOROUS TALES FROM THE EAST

# TENALI RAMA

Retold and Illustrated  
by Krishna Shastri



**EMESCO**

## The Barber's Promotion

One day, the royal barber went to the king's palace to give him his daily shave. Finding Krishna Deva Raya asleep, the barber proceeded to give him his shave anyway.

When the king woke up, he was delighted with his shave. Amazed at the barber's skill and gentle touch, he said, "Tell me what you want. It is yours!"

"Sire, it has been my lifelong wish to be your minister," replied the barber, bowing deeply.

Krishna Deva Raya agreed immediately. The next day, when the king told his advisers about this, they were shocked. How could an uneducated man ever be a minister! After the king left, they turned to Tenali Rama.

"Don't worry, my friends. I will make sure that the Raya sees reason," he reassured the others.

The next day, as the king was taking his morning stroll in his gardens, he saw the strangest sight. Tenali Rama was standing in the royal pond and scrubbing away vigorously at a poor brown dog!

"What is the meaning of this nonsense?" roared the Raya.

"Your Majesty, I just want to make the dog white," replied Rama, continuing to scrub the dog.

"Don't be a fool! How can a brown dog become white?" asked the king impatiently.

"When an illiterate man can become a minister, Your Majesty, why can't a brown dog become white?" asked Rama innocently.

The king immediately realized his folly.

