



SPECIAL  
ISSUE

# DASHA AVATAR

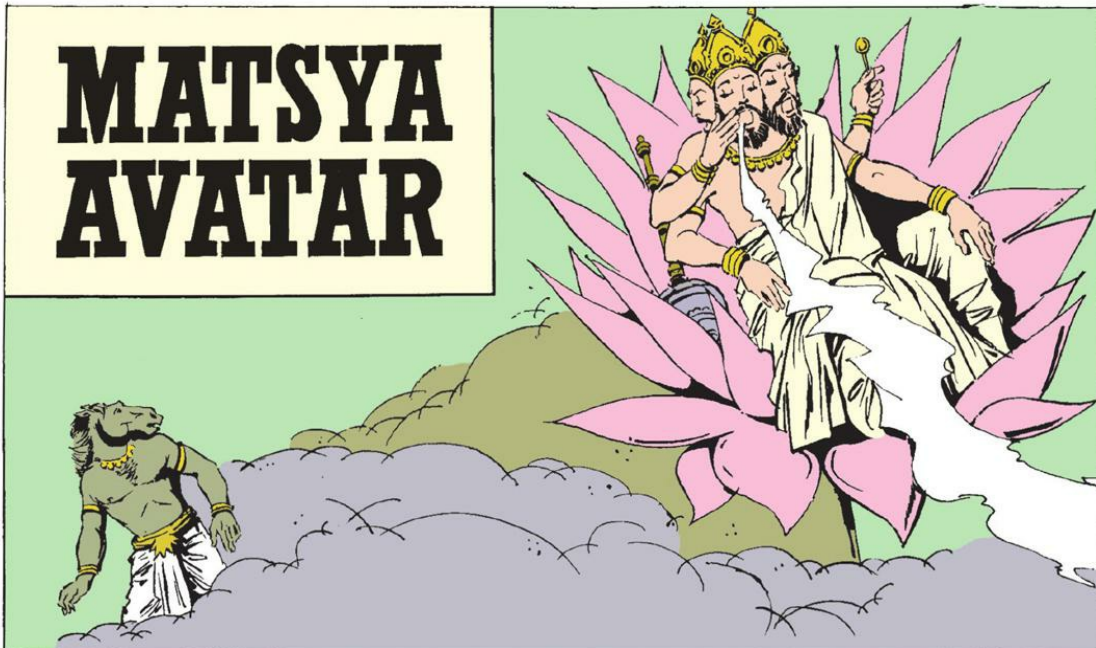
THE TEN INCARNATIONS OF LORD VISHNU

Vol 10002



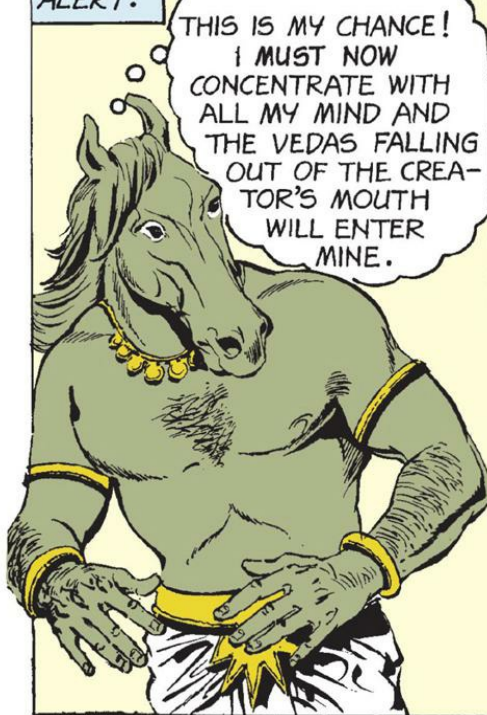


# MATSYA AVATAR



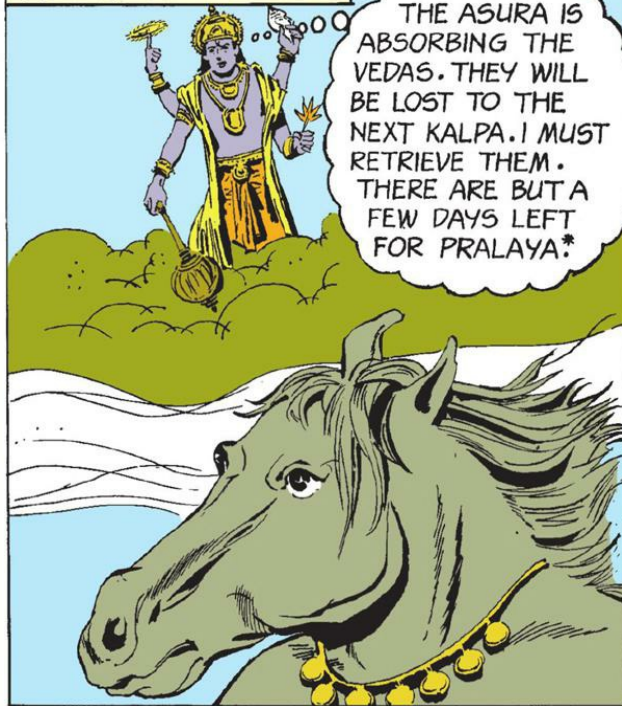
EXHAUSTED, BRAHMA STRETCHED OUT AND YAWNED. HIS DAY'S WORK WAS OVER. THE END OF THE CURRENT KALPA WAS IMMINENT. AS HIS EYE-LIDS DROOPED WITH SLEEP, WITHOUT HIS KNOWLEDGE THE VEDAS SLIPPED OUT OF HIS MOUTH.

THE ASURA, HAYAGRIVA, WAS ALERT.



THIS IS MY CHANCE! I MUST NOW CONCENTRATE WITH ALL MY MIND AND THE VEDAS FALLING OUT OF THE CREATOR'S MOUTH WILL ENTER MINE.

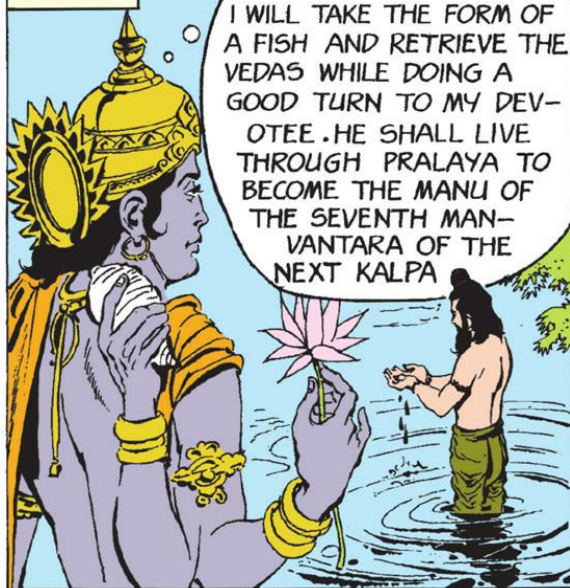
BUT VISHNU, THE PRESERVER, CAUGHT HAYAGRIVA IN THE ACT.



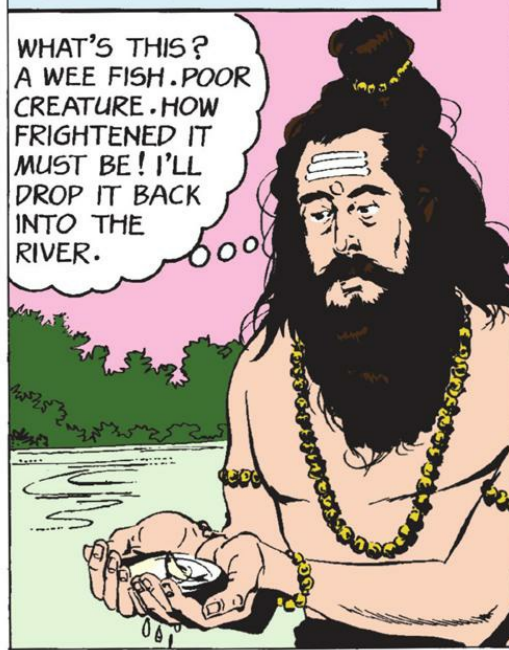
THE ASURA IS ABSORBING THE VEDAS. THEY WILL BE LOST TO THE NEXT KALPA. I MUST RETRIEVE THEM. THERE ARE BUT A FEW DAYS LEFT FOR PRALAYA.\*



AS HE WONDERED WHAT TO DO, HE SAW THE ROYAL SAGE, SATYAVRATA, A STAUNCH DEVOTEE, OFFERING WATER TO THE MANES.



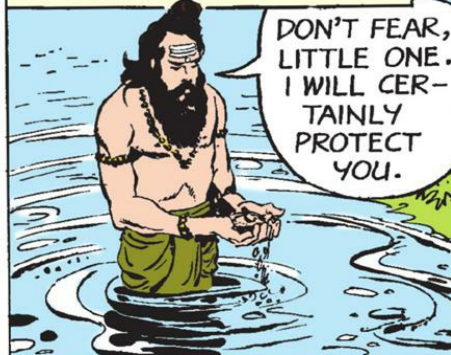
AS SATYAVRATA, SCOOPED UP THE NEXT HANDFUL OF WATER —



HE WAS ABOUT TO DO SO WHEN —



SATYAVRATA WAS MOVED.



HE PUT THE FISH INTO HIS KAMANDALU ...



...AND TOOK IT TO HIS HERMITAGE.



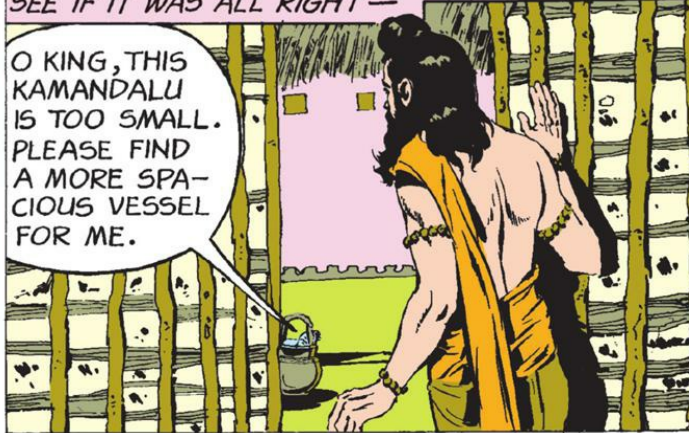


THAT NIGHT, HOWEVER, THE FISH GREW AND GREW TILL IT FILLED THE WHOLE KAMANDALU.



IN THE MORNING WHEN SATYAVRATA WENT TO SEE IF IT WAS ALL RIGHT —

O KING, THIS KAMANDALU IS TOO SMALL. PLEASE FIND A MORE SPACIOUS VESSEL FOR ME.

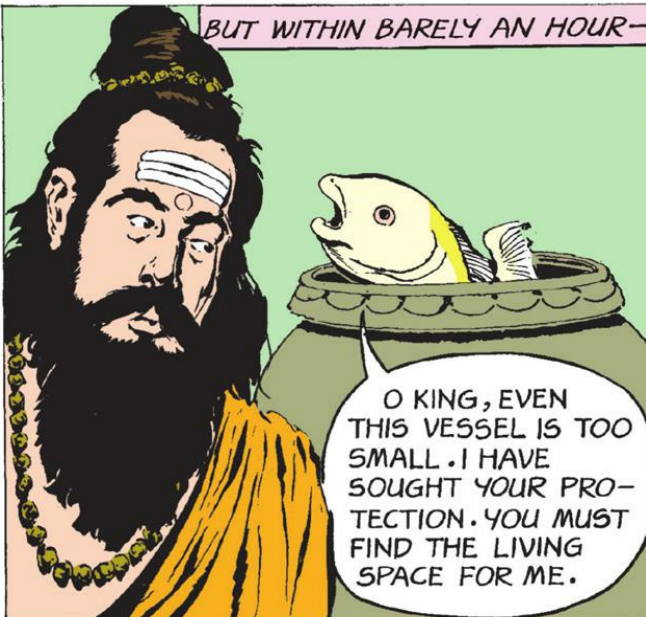


REMOVING IT FROM THE KAMANDALU, SATYAVRATA PLACED IT IN A LARGE VESSEL OF WATER.



BUT WITHIN BARELY AN HOUR —

O KING, EVEN THIS VESSEL IS TOO SMALL. I HAVE SOUGHT YOUR PROTECTION. YOU MUST FIND THE LIVING SPACE FOR ME.



SATYAVRATA PUSHED THE VESSEL TO A LARGE POND NEAR THE HERMITAGE AND TIPPED THE FISH INTO IT.



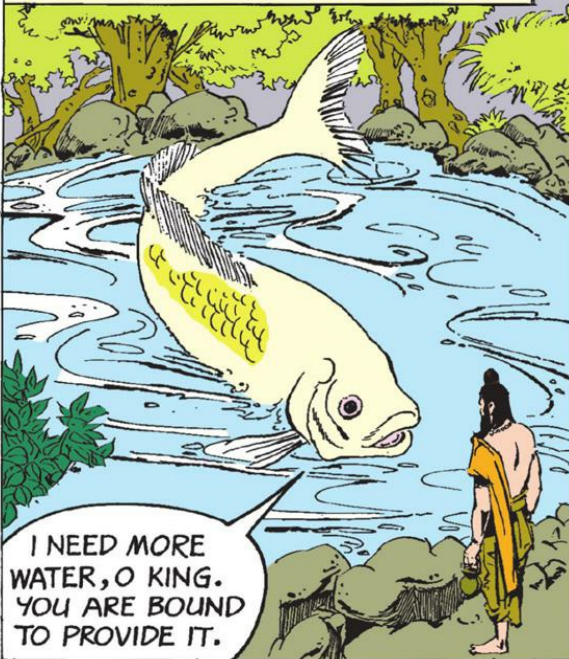
BUT IN NO TIME, THE FISH GREW TILL IT FILLED THE WHOLE POND.

O KING, LEAD ME TO A LAKE — A DEEP, LARGE ONE. I WILL DIE IF I REMAIN HERE.



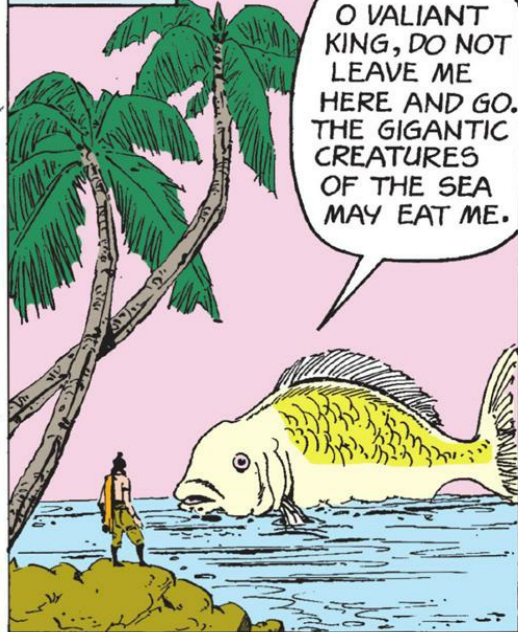


SATYAVRATA TOOK THE FISH TO A NUMBER OF LAKES, EACH LARGER THAN THE PREVIOUS ONE. BUT —



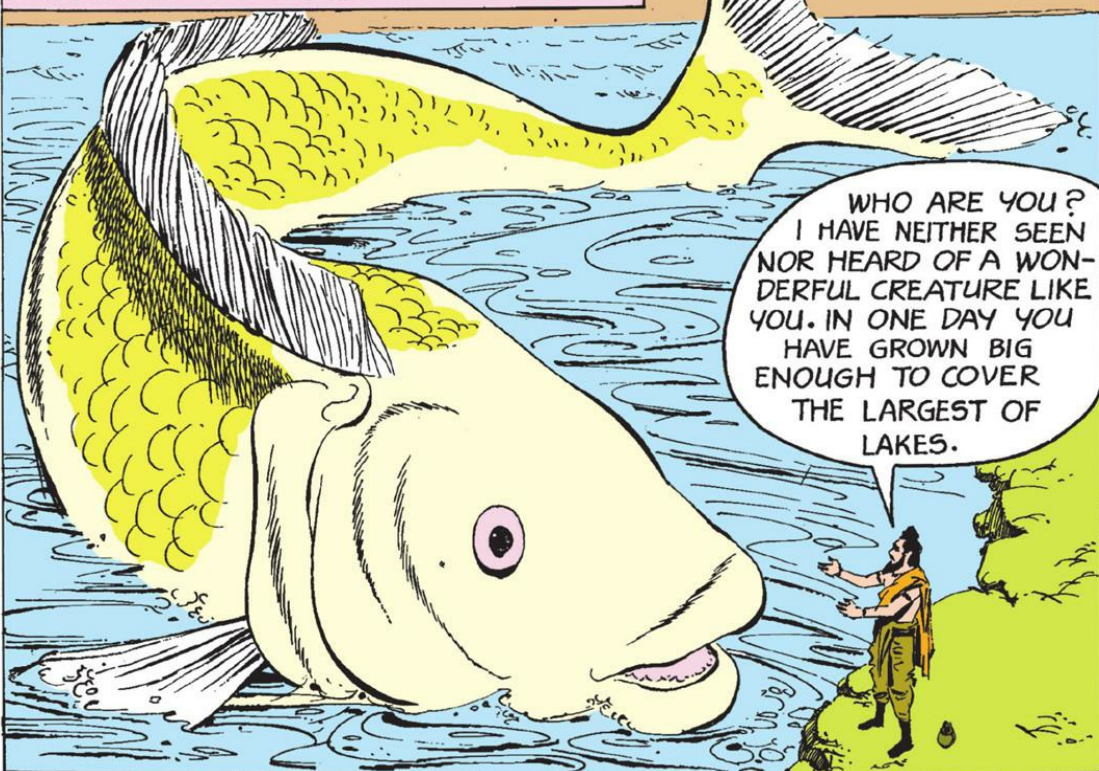
I NEED MORE WATER, O KING. YOU ARE BOUND TO PROVIDE IT.

EXASPERATED, SATYAVRATA DECIDED TO LEAD IT TO THE OCEAN. BUT WHEN THEY GOT THERE —



O VALIANT KING, DO NOT LEAVE ME HERE AND GO. THE GIGANTIC CREATURES OF THE SEA MAY EAT ME.

SATYAVRATA NOW BECAME SUSPICIOUS.

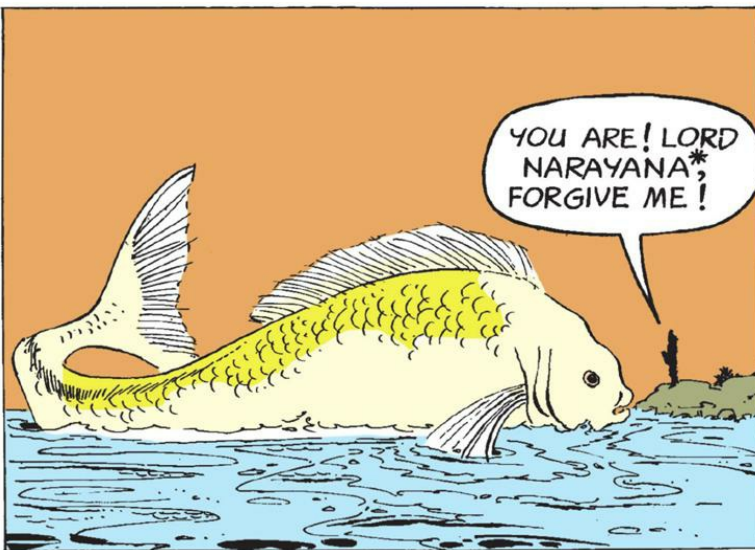


WHO ARE YOU? I HAVE NEITHER SEEN NOR HEARD OF A WONDERFUL CREATURE LIKE YOU. IN ONE DAY YOU HAVE GROWN BIG ENOUGH TO COVER THE LARGEST OF LAKES.



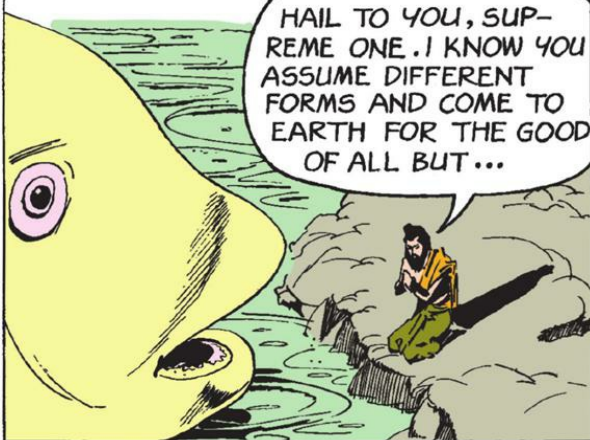


COULD  
YOU  
BE...?



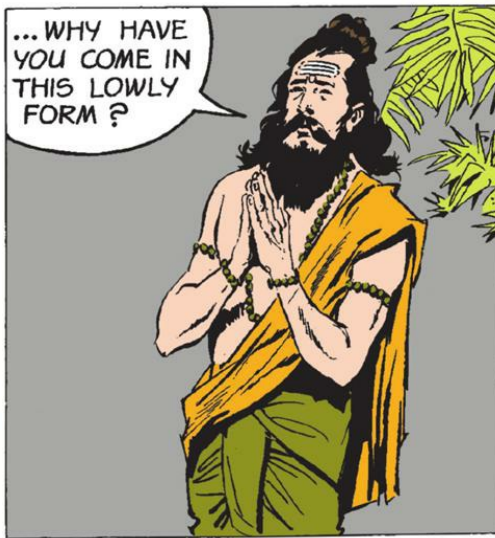
YOU ARE! LORD  
NARAYANA\*;  
FORGIVE ME!

AND SATYAVRATA PROSTRATED  
HIMSELF BEFORE THE FISH.



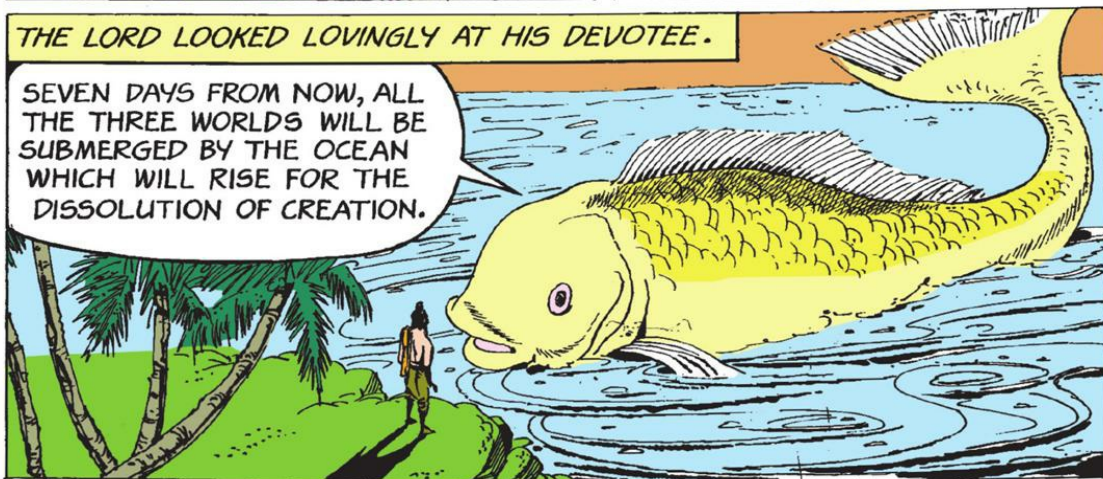
HAIL TO YOU, SUP-  
REME ONE. I KNOW YOU  
ASSUME DIFFERENT  
FORMS AND COME TO  
EARTH FOR THE GOOD  
OF ALL BUT...

... WHY HAVE  
YOU COME IN  
THIS LOWLY  
FORM ?



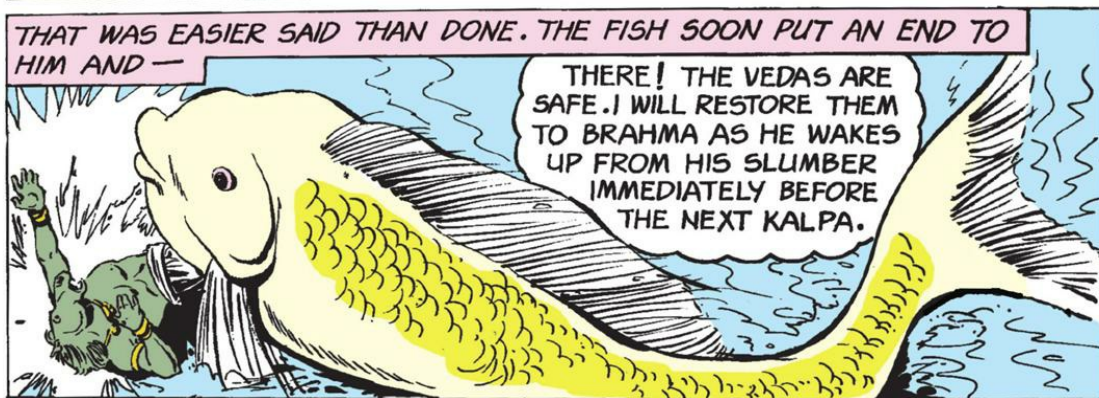
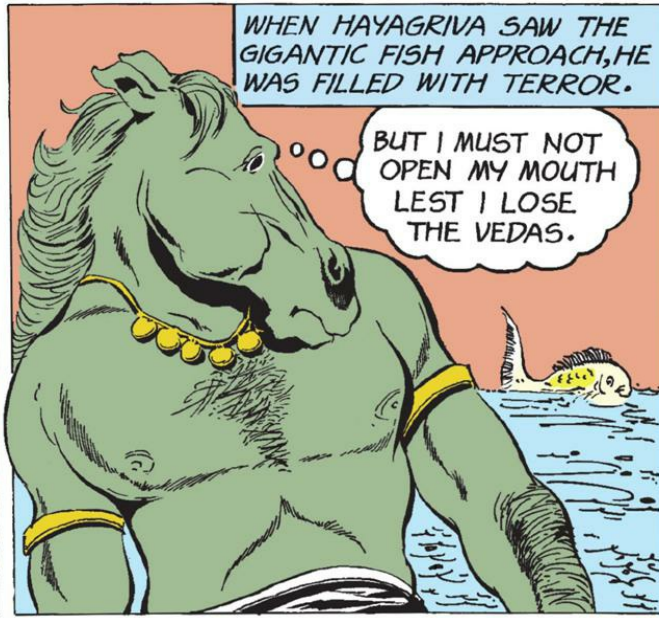
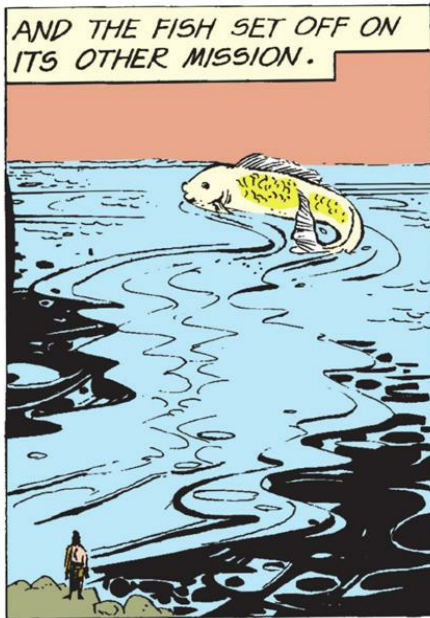
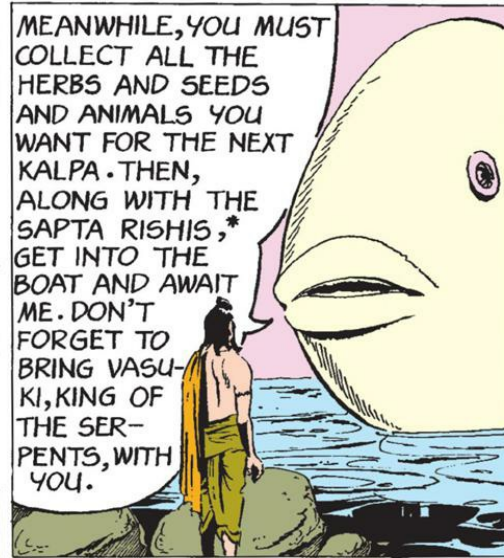
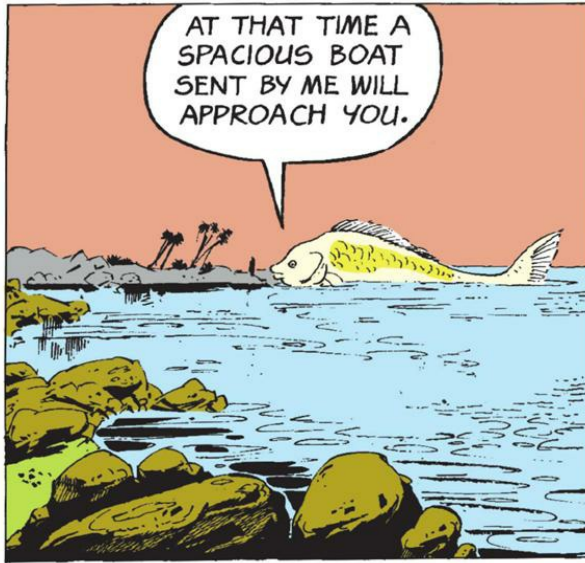
THE LORD LOOKED LOVINGLY AT HIS DEVOTEE.

SEVEN DAYS FROM NOW, ALL  
THE THREE WORLDS WILL BE  
SUBMERGED BY THE OCEAN  
WHICH WILL RISE FOR THE  
DISSOLUTION OF CREATION.



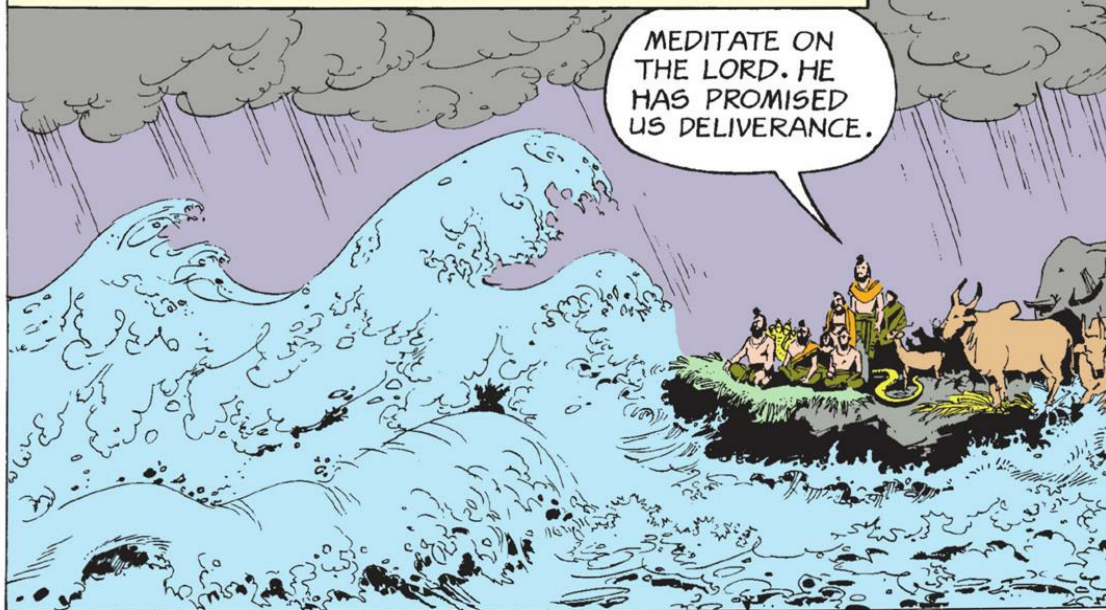
\*ANOTHER NAME OF VISHNU.







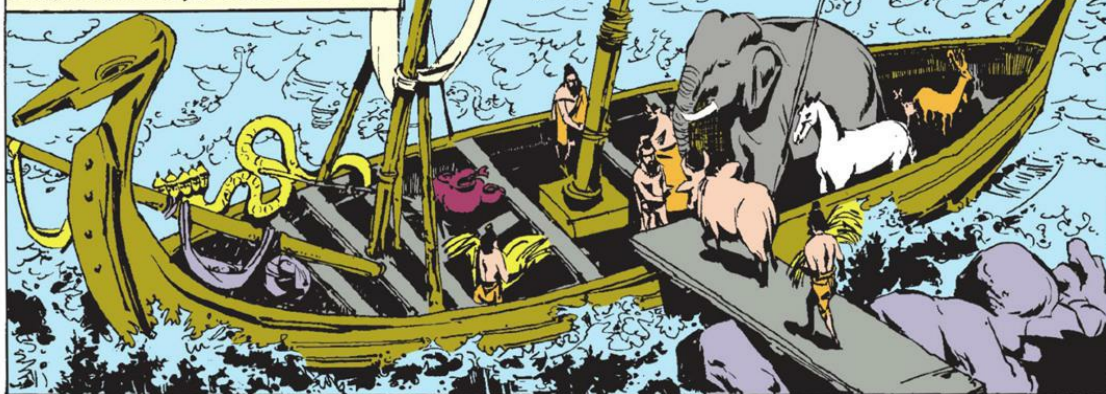
SEVEN DAYS LATER, HUGE CLOUDS GATHERED OVER THE OCEAN. THE RAIN POURED DOWN IN TORRENTS. THE OCEAN BEGAN RISING AND HUGE TIDAL WAVES BEGAN SWALLOWING THE EARTH.



AS ADVISED BY THE FISH, SATYAVRATA AND THE SAPTA RISHIS WAITED ON THE SHORES. SUDDENLY —

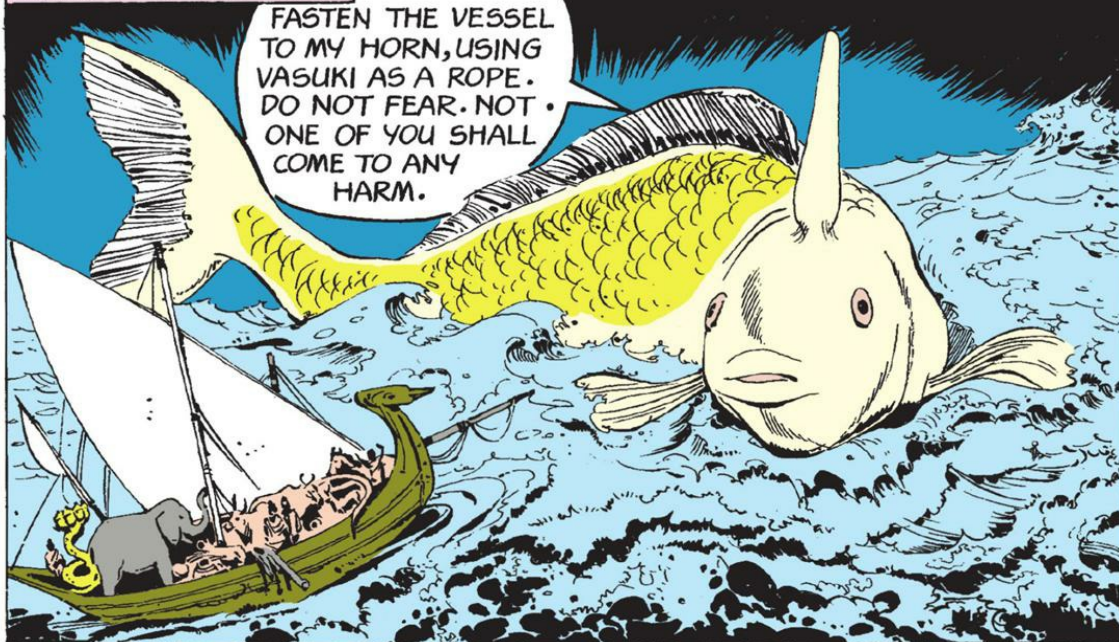


AS SOON AS THE VESSEL TOUCHED THE SHORES, SATYAVRATA, ALONG WITH THE SAPTA RISHIS AND THE SELECT LIVING CREATURES, BOARDED IT.



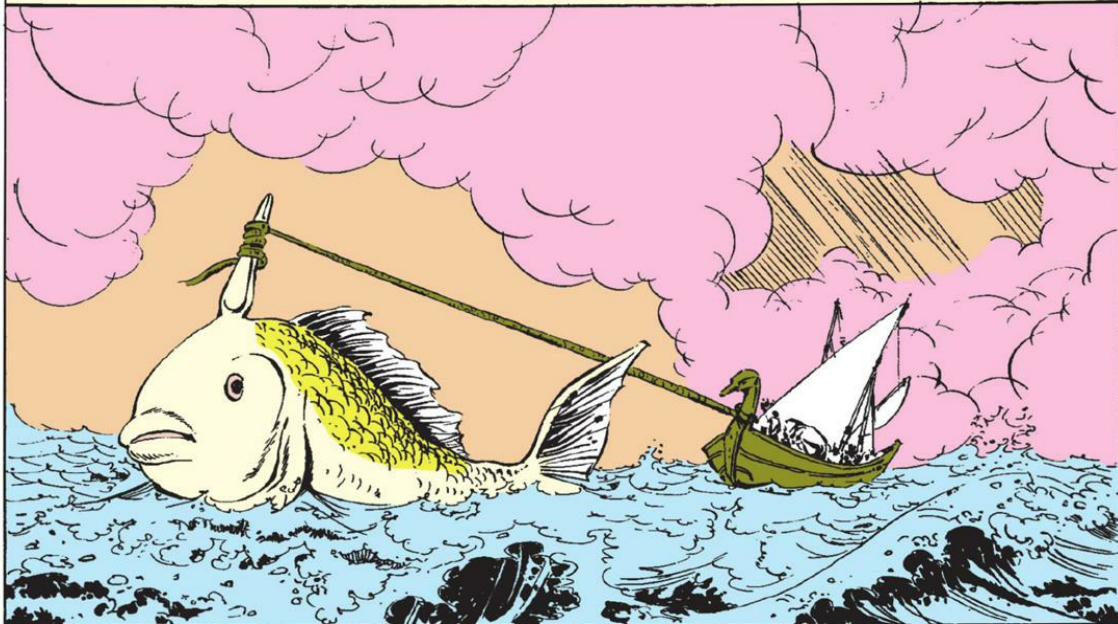


AS THEIR BOAT WAS TOSSED ABOUT BY THE TURBULENT OCEAN, THEY SUDDENLY SAW THE FISH APPROACH THEM. IT HAD A HORN NOW AND WAS GOLDEN IN COLOUR. IT LIT UP THE DARKENING SKIES, REASSURING THE INMATES OF THE BOAT.



FASTEN THE VESSEL TO MY HORN, USING VASUKI AS A ROPE. DO NOT FEAR. NOT ONE OF YOU SHALL COME TO ANY HARM.

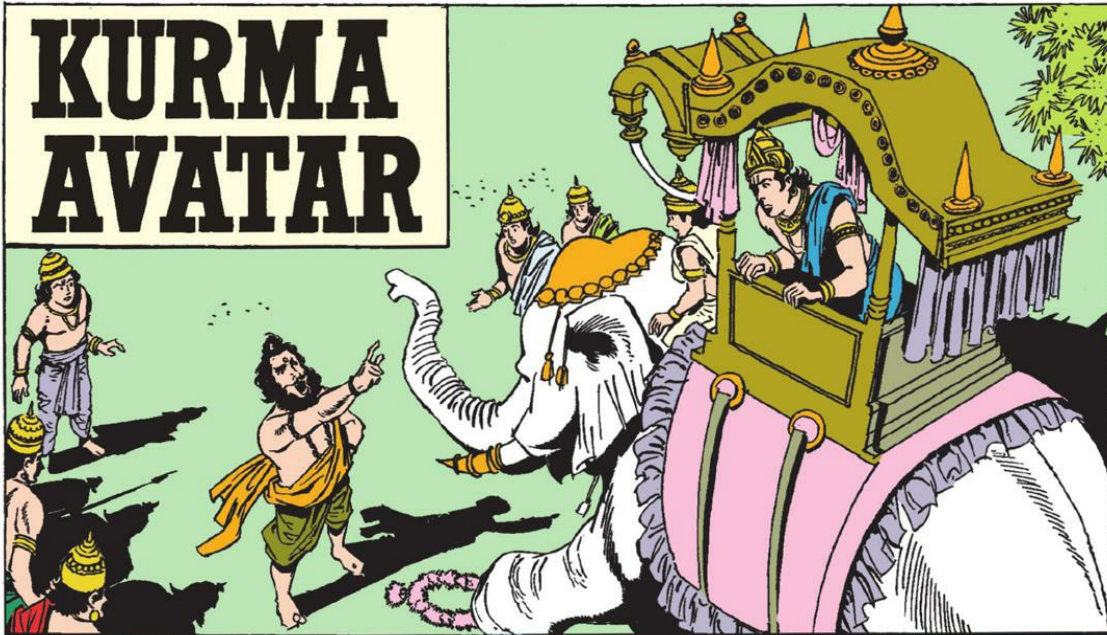
WHILE THEY SAILED ON THAT VAST EXPANSE OF WATER, THROUGHOUT THAT NIGHT\* OF BRAHMA, VISHNU TAUGHT SATYAVRATA AND THE SAPTA RISHIS THE HIGHEST FORM OF TRUTH WHICH HAS COME DOWN TO US AS A COLLECTION OF PURANIC LORE, CALLED THE MATSYA PURANA. THUS DID VISHNU SAVE TRUE DEVOTEES FROM DISSOLUTION SO THAT THEY MIGHT CARRY DIVINE KNOWLEDGE TO THE NEXT KALPA.



\* EQUIVALENT TO A DAY OF BRAHMA.



# KURMA AVATAR



IT WAS THE SIXTH MANVANTARA OF THE PRESENT KALPA. INDRA, KING OF THE DEVAS, AND HIS SUBJECTS WERE IN TROUBLE. CONSULTATIONS AMONG THEMSELVES DID NOT PROVIDE ANY SOLUTION. SO THEY DECIDED TO GO TO BRAHMA THE CREATOR, WHO LIVED ON MOUNT MERU.

AT MOUNT MERU —

SIRE, WE HAVE COME TO YOU FOR HELP. THE CURSE OF DURVASA HAS TURNED US INTO A WEAK AND LACK-LUSTRE LOT. WE ARE HELPLESS AGAINST OUR FOES, THE ASURAS.



WE BECOME LISTLESS ON THE BATTLEFIELD AND OUR FORCES FALL DEAD IN LARGE NUMBERS, NEVER TO RISE AGAIN.





BRAHMA MEDITATED FOR A WHILE. THEN—



LET US TAKE REFUGE IN LORD VISHNU. HE ALWAYS HELPS THOSE WHO PLACE FAITH IN HIM. BESIDES, IT IS HE WHO PRESERVES THE ORDER OF THE UNIVERSE.

SO THEY WENT TO THE ABODE OF VISHNU, THE PRESERVER.

O OMNISCIENT ONE, YOU KNOW WHY WE, THE GUARDIANS OF THE WORLD, HAVE COME. WE SURRENDER OURSELVES TO YOU. SHOW US A WAY OUT OF OUR PLIGHT.



LORD VISHNU SPOKE IN HIS DEEP, RESONANT VOICE.

YOU WILL HAVE TO STRIVE HARD AND OBTAIN THE NECTAR OF IMMORTALITY. THAT IS THE ONLY WAY OUT FOR YOU.

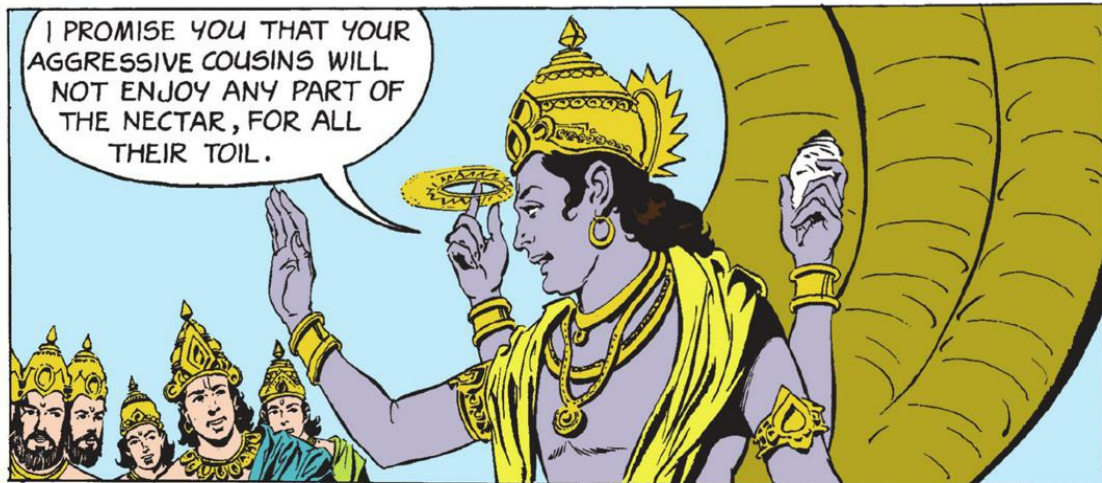
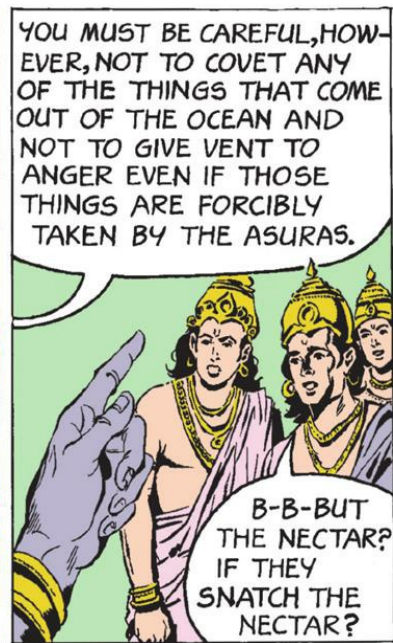
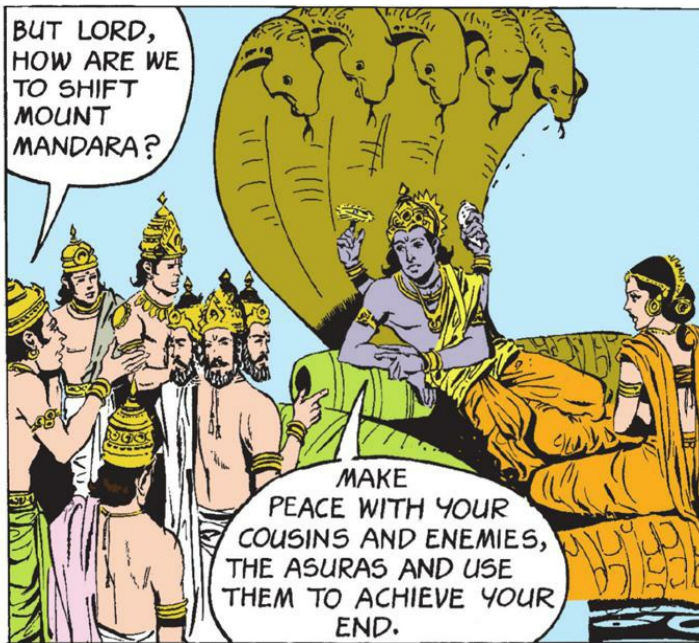


HOW SHOULD WE OBTAIN THE NECTAR, O LORD?

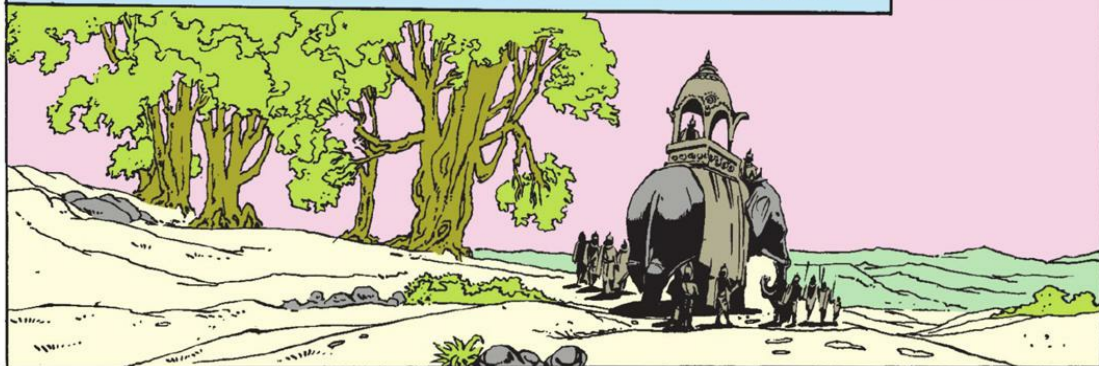


YOU MUST CAST ALL KINDS OF PLANTS, HERBS, GRASSES AND CREEPERS INTO THE OCEAN OF MILK. THEN CHURN THE OCEAN USING MOUNT MANDARA AS A CHURN-DASHER AND VASUKI, KING OF THE SERPENTS, AS THE ROPE FOR TURNING IT.





BRAHMA RETURNED TO HIS OWN ABODE WHILE INDRA AND THE DEVAS  
SET OUT FOR THE COURT OF BALI, KING OF THE ASURAS.





WHEN BALI AND HIS ASURA FOLLOWING SAW THEIR ENEMIES APPROACH—



BALI RECEIVED INDRA AND THE DEVAS WITH RESPECT AND GAVE THEM SEATS OF HONOUR. INDRA TOLD HIM WHY THEY HAD COME.



BALI, AS WELL AS HIS CHIEFS, FAVOURED THE PROPOSAL AND PEACE WAS DECLARED BETWEEN THE ASURAS AND THE DEVAS.

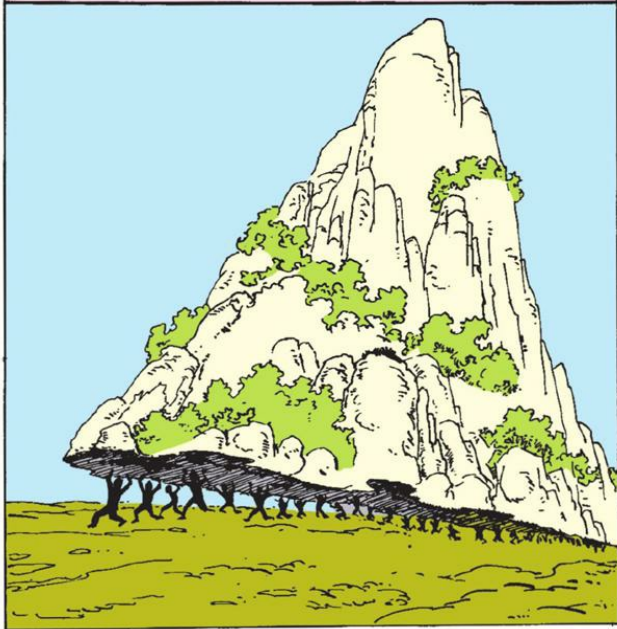




A LITTLE LATER, ALONG WITH THEIR HORDES, BALI AND INDRA BEGAN THE TASK OF UPROOTING MOUNT MANDARA...



...AND TAKING IT TO THE SEASHORE.



BUT WHEN THEY HAD BARELY COVERED HALF THE DISTANCE —





THE MIGHTY MOUNTAIN FELL,  
CRUSHING LARGE NUMBERS OF  
DEVAS AND ASURAS UNDER IT.  
INDRA WAS DESPERATE.



O LORD, WHAT  
ARE WE TO DO  
NOW? PLEASE  
COME TO OUR  
AID, OR WE  
SHALL PERISH.

MEANWHILE —

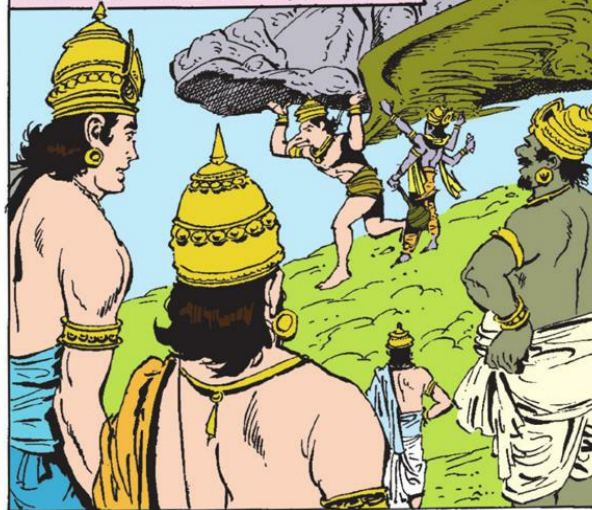


FASTER, GARUDA\*!  
THE DEVAS ARE  
IN TROUBLE.

EVEN BEFORE INDRA  
APPEALED TO HIM, THE LORD  
HAD REACHED THE SPOT.



WITH A MERE GLANCE, HE  
REVIVED THE DEVAS.



THEN, PLACING MOUNT  
MANDARA ON GARUDA'S  
BACK, HE FLEW TO THE  
SEASHORE, FOLLOWED  
BY THE DEVAS AND  
THE ASURAS.

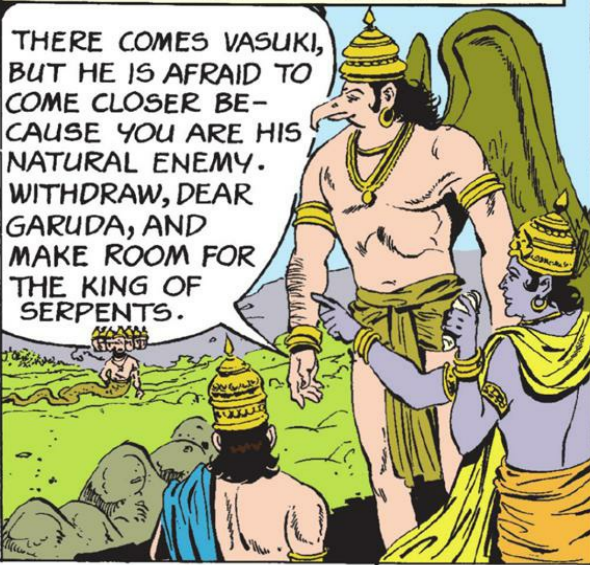


\* VISHNU'S MOUNT.



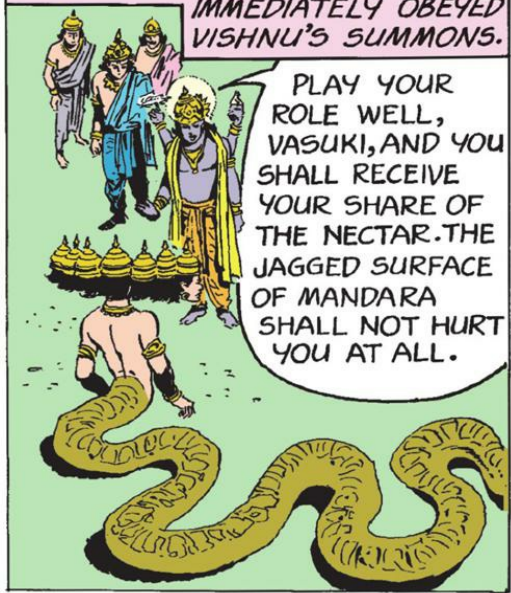
AFTER THE MOUNTAIN WAS SAFELY DEPOSITED ON THE SEASHORE, VISHNU TURNED TO GARUDA.

THERE COMES VASUKI, BUT HE IS AFRAID TO COME CLOSER BECAUSE YOU ARE HIS NATURAL ENEMY. WITHDRAW, DEAR GARUDA, AND MAKE ROOM FOR THE KING OF SERPENTS.



WHEN HE SAW THAT GARUDA HAD FLOWN AWAY, VASUKI IMMEDIATELY OBEYED VISHNU'S SUMMONS.

PLAY YOUR ROLE WELL, VASUKI, AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE YOUR SHARE OF THE NECTAR. THE JAGGED SURFACE OF MANDARA SHALL NOT HURT YOU AT ALL.

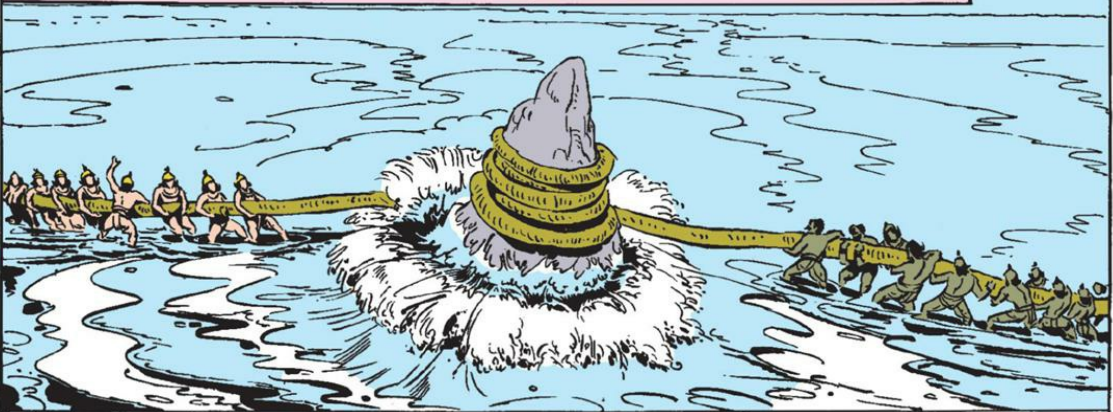


REASSURED, VASUKI ALLOWED HIMSELF TO BE WOUND ROUND MANDARA.

THERE! NOW WE ARE READY. COME, FRIENDS AND BROTHERS, LET US CHURN WITH ALL OUR MIGHT FOR THE COMMON GOOD OF ALL OF US.



FULL OF JOYOUS ANTICIPATION, THEY BEGAN CHURNING.





BUT THEIR JOY SOON TURNED INTO DESPAIR. THE HEAVY MOUNT MANDARA, WHICH HAD NOTHING TO SUPPORT IT, SANK INTO THE OCEAN.

ALAS! IS THE NECTAR NEVER TO BE OURS?



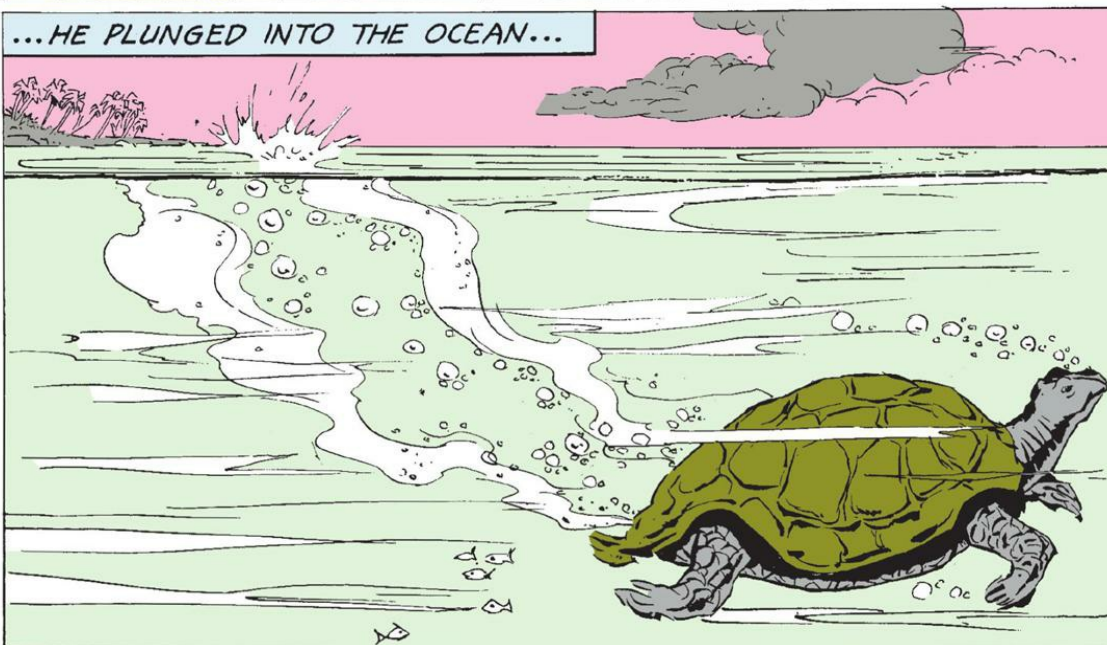
WHAT IS TO BE DONE NOW?

IF WE, THE MIGHTIEST OF DEVAS AND ASURAS, COULD NOT HOLD UP MANDARA, WHO CAN?

THERE WAS ONE AND ONLY ONE WHO COULD — LORD VISHNU, TAKING THE FORM OF A HUGE TORTOISE...



...HE PLUNGED INTO THE OCEAN...

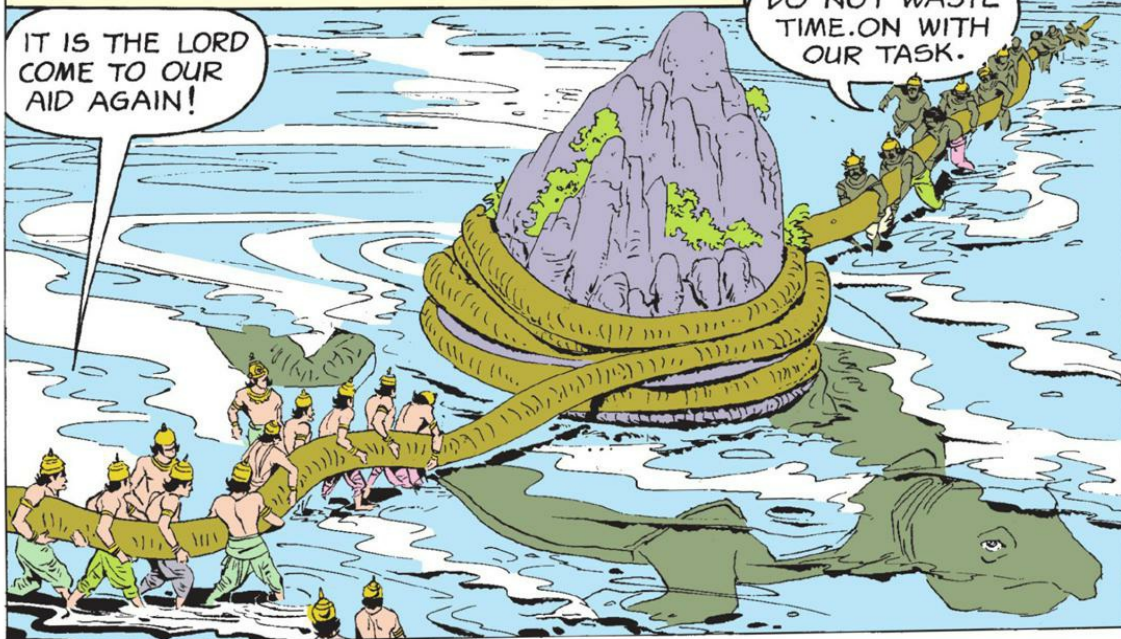




...AND TO THE AMAZED DELIGHT OF THE DEVAS AND ASURAS,  
CAME UP WITH THE MOUNTAIN ON HIS BACK.

IT IS THE LORD  
COME TO OUR  
AID AGAIN!

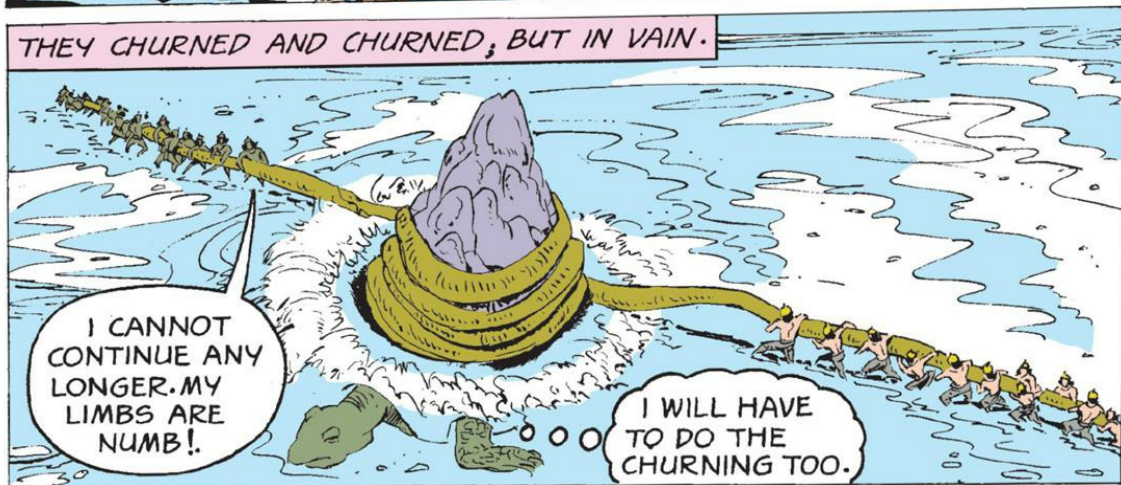
DO NOT WASTE  
TIME ON WITH  
OUR TASK.



THEY CHURNED AND CHURNED, BUT IN VAIN.

I CANNOT  
CONTINUE ANY  
LONGER. MY  
LIMBS ARE  
NUMB!

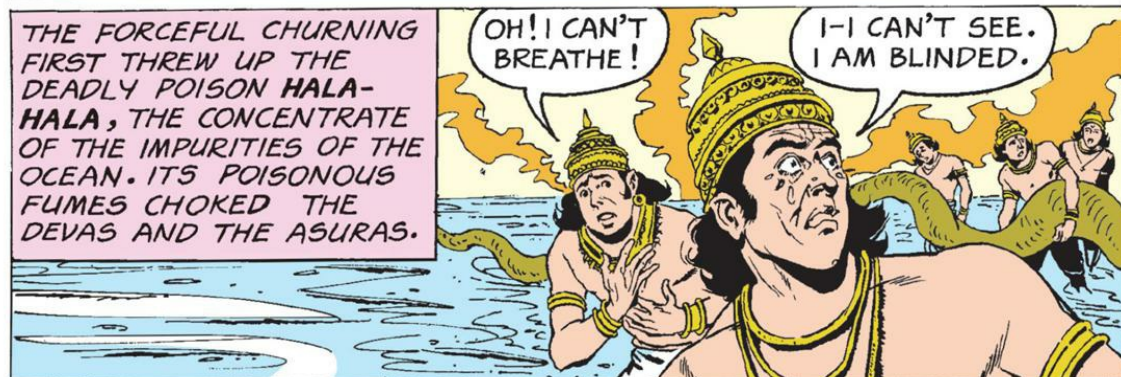
I WILL HAVE  
TO DO THE  
CHURNING TOO.



THE FORCEFUL CHURNING  
FIRST THREW UP THE  
DEADLY POISON **HALA-  
HALA**, THE CONCENTRATE  
OF THE IMPURITIES OF THE  
OCEAN. ITS POISONOUS  
FUMES CHOKED THE  
DEVAS AND THE ASURAS.

OH! I CAN'T  
BREATHE!

I-I CAN'T SEE.  
I AM BLINDED.





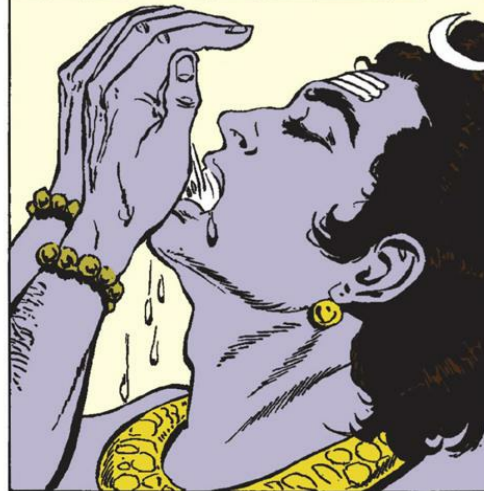
FRIGHTENED OUT OF THEIR WITS, THEY RAN TO LORD SHIVA AT KAILASA.



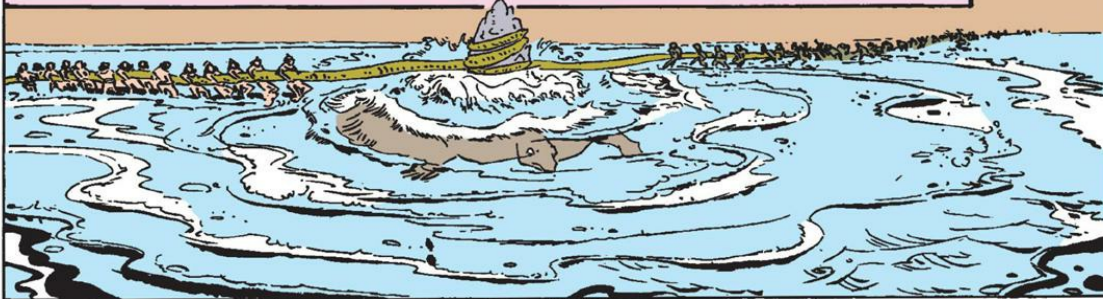
COLLECTING THE POISON INTO HIS PALM ...



... SHIVA SWALLOWED IT.



AS SOON AS THE POISON WAS REMOVED, THE DEVAS AND ASURAS WERE ABLE TO CHURN THE OCEAN ONCE AGAIN.

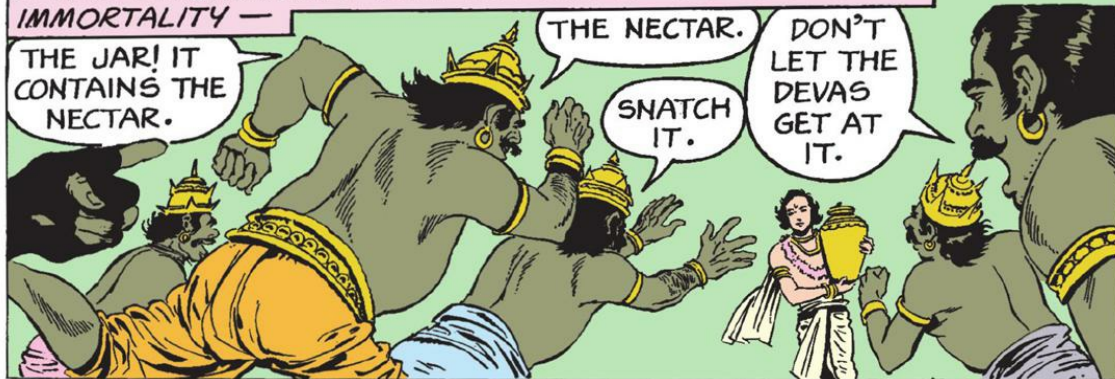




AS THEY CONTINUED CHURNING, MANY PRECIOUS THINGS ROSE TO THE SURFACE, BUT NOT THE NECTAR. THEN SUDDENLY A BEING EMERGED —



IT WAS DHANWANTARI WITH THE JAR OF THE NECTAR OF IMMORTALITY —

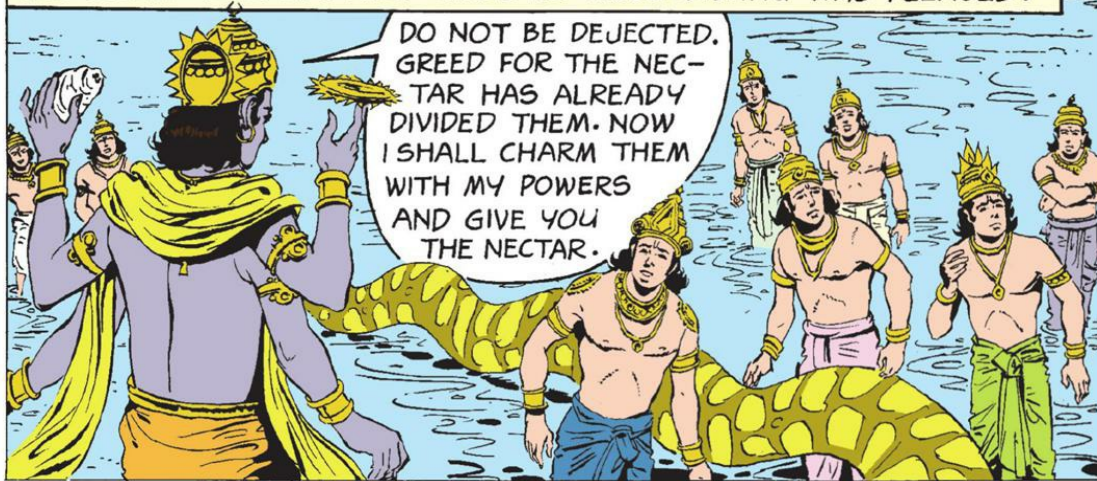


FORGETTING THEIR TRUCE, THE ASURAS SNATCHED THE PRECIOUS JAR ALL FOR THEMSELVES.

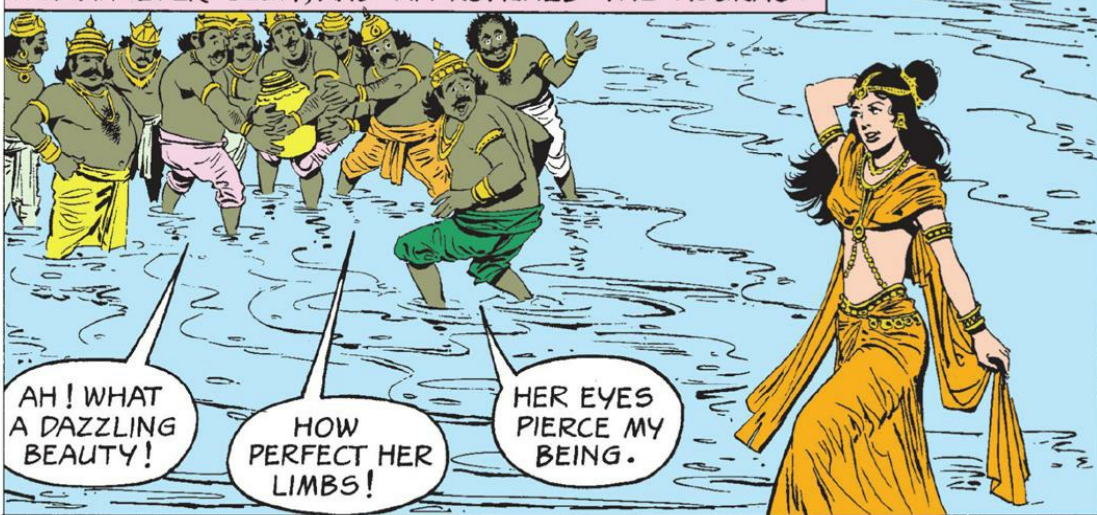




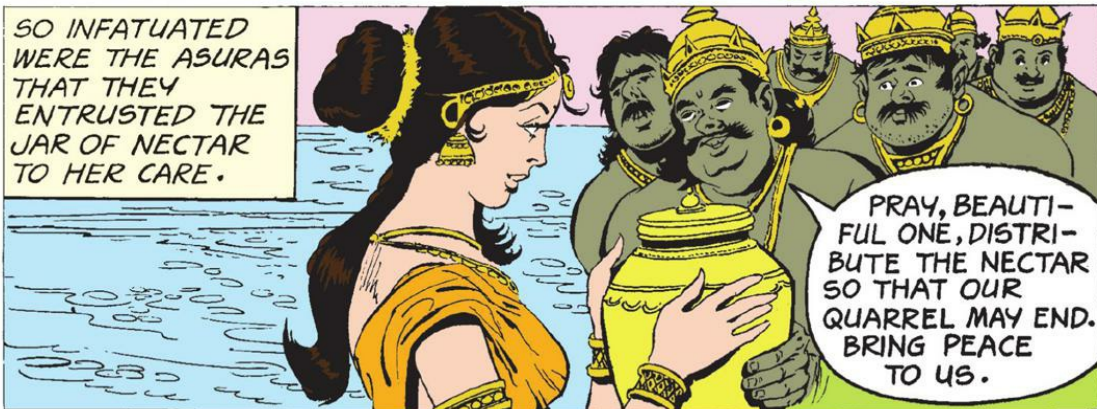
THE DEVAS WATCHED THE ASURAS IN DISMAY. BUT REMEMBERING VISHNU'S COMMAND THAT THEY SHOULD NOT QUARREL OVER WHAT THE OCEAN YIELDED, THEY MADE NO MOVE. VISHNU WAS PLEASED.



THEN VISHNU TOOK ON THE FORM OF MOHINI, THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN EVER SEEN, AND APPROACHED THE ASURAS.

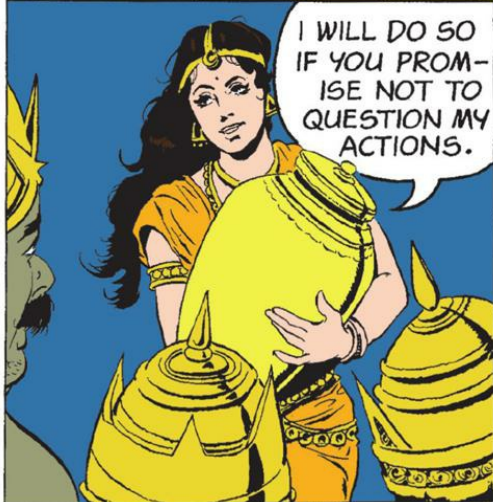


SO INFATUATED WERE THE ASURAS THAT THEY ENTRUSTED THE JAR OF NECTAR TO HER CARE.



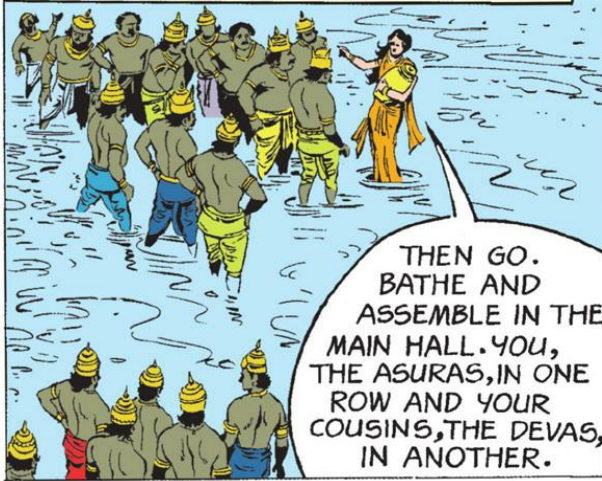


MOHINI TOOK THE JAR. THEN—



I WILL DO SO  
IF YOU PROM-  
ISE NOT TO  
QUESTION MY  
ACTIONS.

NOT KNOWING WHO SHE REALLY WAS,  
THE ASURAS READILY AGREED.



THEN GO.  
BATHE AND  
ASSEMBLE IN THE  
MAIN HALL. YOU,  
THE ASURAS, IN ONE  
ROW AND YOUR  
COUSINS, THE DEVAS,  
IN ANOTHER.

WHEN THE DEVAS AND ASURAS HAD ASSEMBLED, MOHINI BEGAN  
SERVING THE NECTAR TO THE DEVAS. THE ASURAS WERE UNEASY.



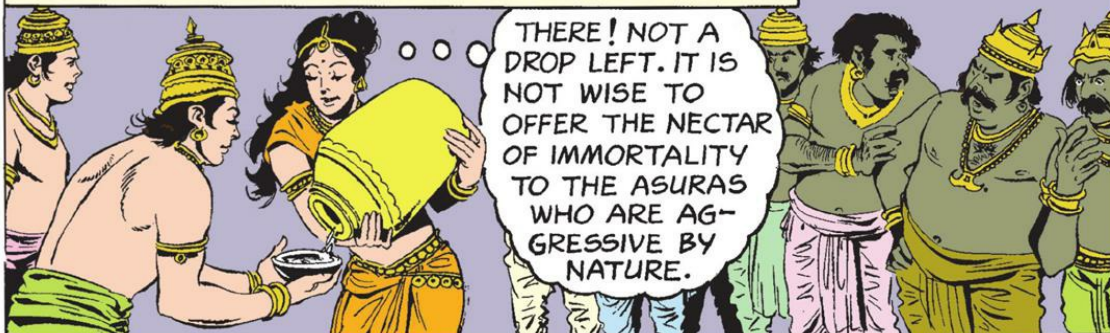
THE NECTAR!  
WHAT IS SHE  
DOING?

HUSH!  
REMEMBER  
OUR PROMISE?

BESIDES, SHE  
IS A WOMAN.  
HOW CAN WE  
QUARREL WITH  
HER?

WE CAN'T. LET  
US AWAIT OUR  
TURN PATIENTLY.

BY THE TIME MOHINI REACHED THE END OF THE ROW OF DEVAS, SHE  
MADE SURE THAT THE NECTAR WAS EXHAUSTED.



THERE! NOT A  
DROP LEFT. IT IS  
NOT WISE TO  
OFFER THE NECTAR  
OF IMMORTALITY  
TO THE ASURAS  
WHO ARE AG-  
GRESSIVE BY  
NATURE.



THEN, TO THE AMAZEMENT OF THE ASURAS, LORD VISHNU ASSUMED HIS OWN FORM.



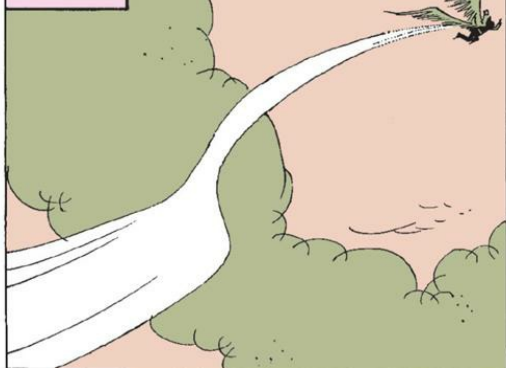
BUT VISHNU ONLY SMILED.



THEN MOUNTING GARUDA ...



... HE FLEW AWAY INTO THE SKIES.

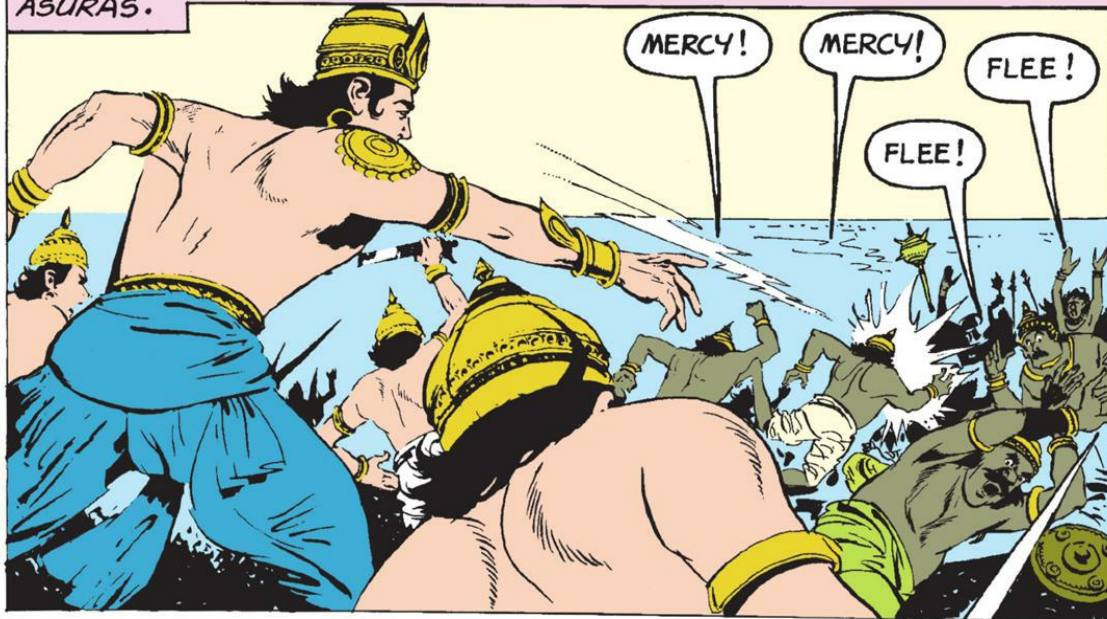


THE FURIOUS ASURAS CHARGED AT THE DEVAS.

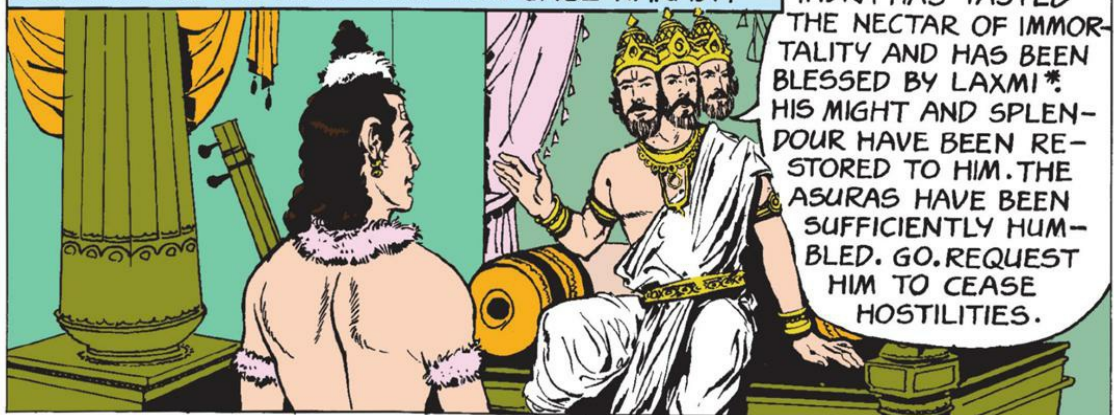




THE GREAT DEVA-ASURA WAR THAT ENSUED THERE, ON THE SEASHORE, WAS A TERRIBLE ONE. BUT WITH HIS THUNDER-BOLT, INDRA, DESPITE THE SEVERAL REVERSES HE SUFFERED, WAS ABLE TO VANQUISH THE ASURAS.

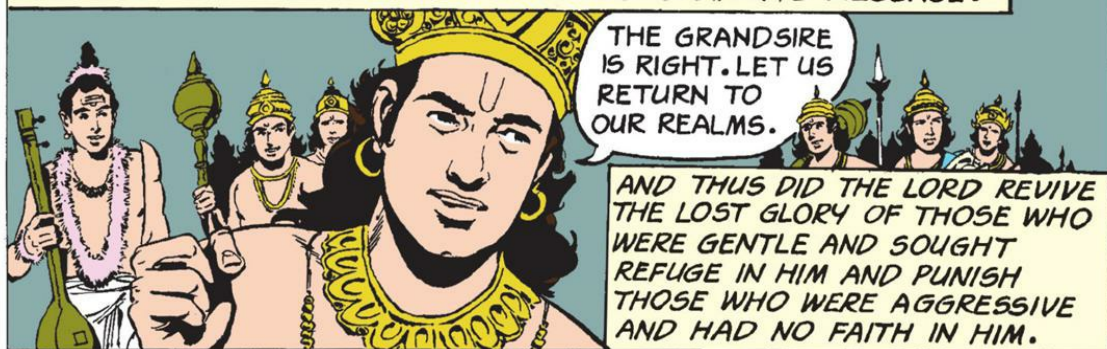


MEANWHILE, BRAHMA SENT FOR SAGE NARADA —



INDRA HAS TASTED THE NECTAR OF IMMORTALITY AND HAS BEEN BLESSED BY LAXMI\*. HIS MIGHT AND SPLENDOR HAVE BEEN RESTORED TO HIM. THE ASURAS HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENTLY HUMBLER. GO. REQUEST HIM TO CEASE HOSTILITIES.

NARADA WENT TO INDRA AND CONVEYED BRAHMA'S MESSAGE.



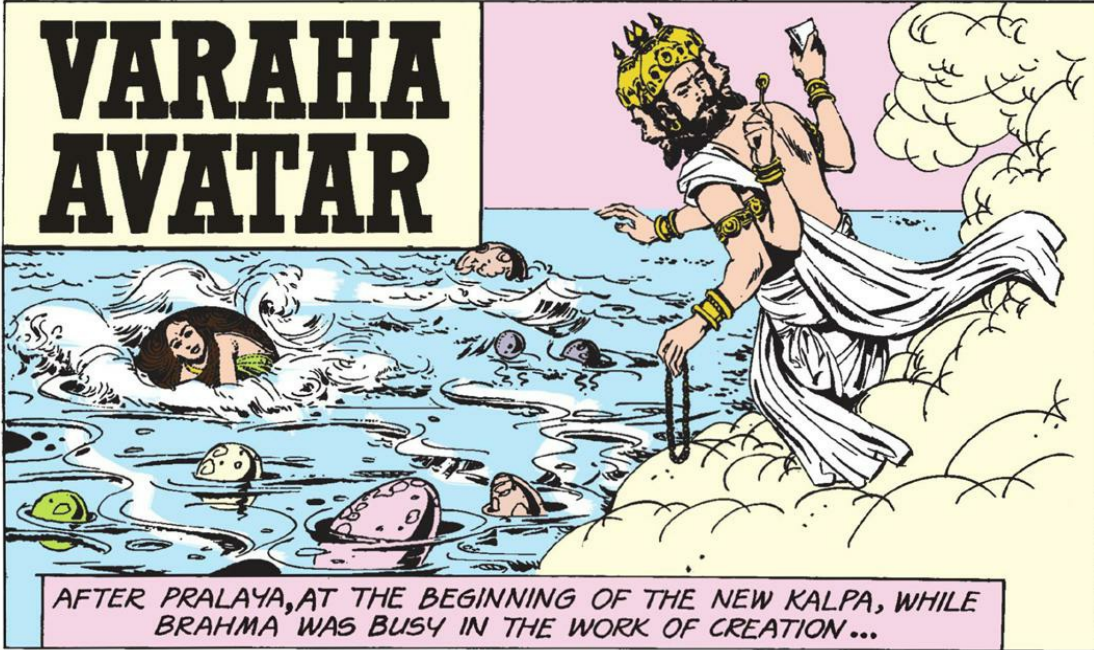
THE GRANDSIRE IS RIGHT. LET US RETURN TO OUR REALMS.

AND THUS DID THE LORD REVIVE THE LOST GLORY OF THOSE WHO WERE GENTLE AND SOUGHT REFUGE IN HIM AND PUNISH THOSE WHO WERE AGGRESSIVE AND HAD NO FAITH IN HIM.

\* THE GODDESS OF WEALTH.



# VARAHA AVATAR



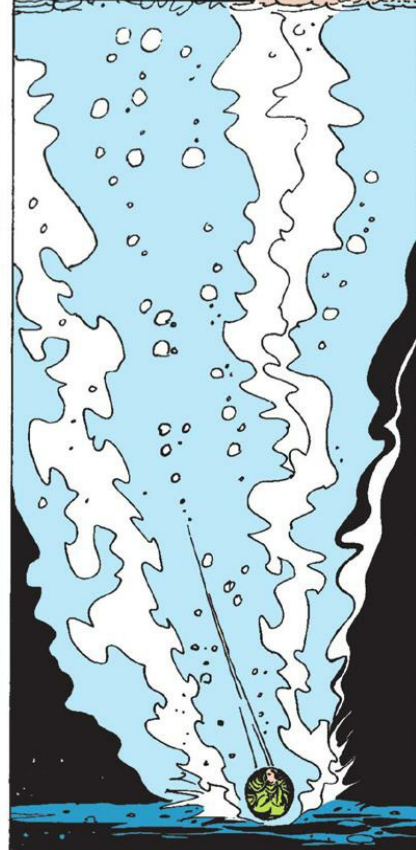
AFTER PRALAYA, AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW KALPA, WHILE  
BRAHMA WAS BUSY IN THE WORK OF CREATION...

...BHOOMIDEVI\* BEING TOSSED ABOUT ON  
THE WAVES ...



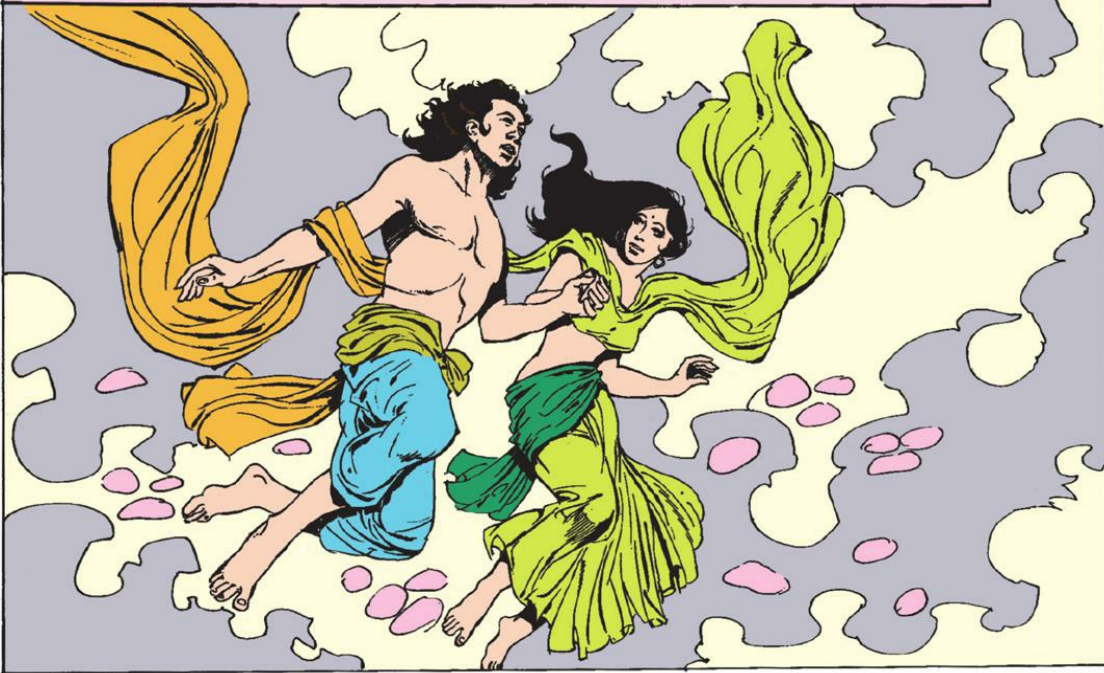
\*MOTHER EARTH

... SANK TO THE BED OF  
THE OCEAN...





...AND SWAYAMBHUBA MANU AND SHATARUPA CAME INTO BEING.



THEY BOWED TO BRAHMA.

FATHER, TELL US  
HOW WE MAY SERVE  
YOU AS WELL AS EN-  
SURE OUR HAPPINESS  
IN THIS WORLD AND  
THE NEXT.

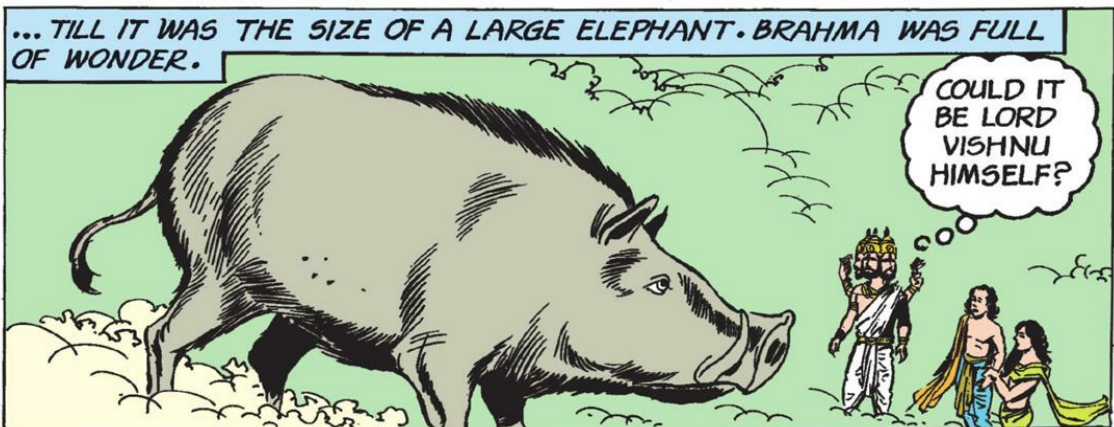
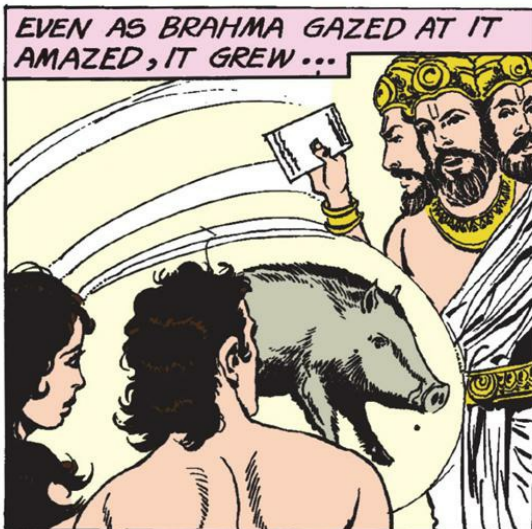
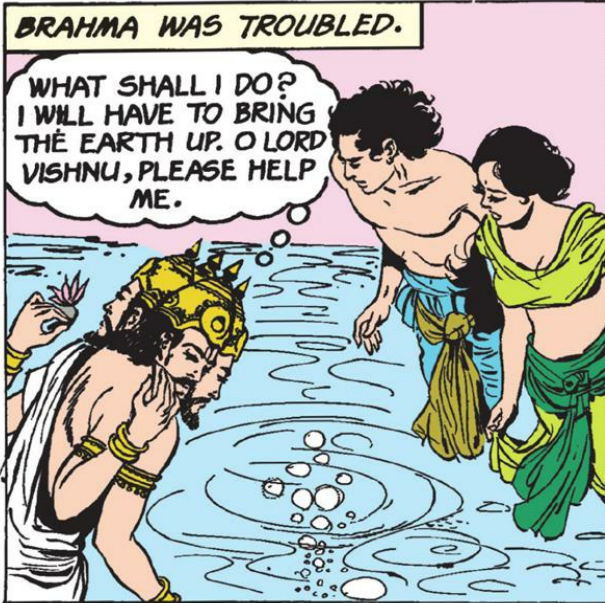


KEEP YOUR HEART  
FREE FROM JEAL-  
OUSY, BEGET MANY  
VIRTUOUS CHILDREN  
AND RULE OVER THE  
EARTH, FOR YOU  
SHALL BE THE RUL-  
ER OF MEN.



I SHALL OBEY YOUR  
WISHES. BUT PLEASE  
LET ME KNOW WHERE  
MY PROGENY AND  
I SHOULD LIVE.  
BHOOMIDEVI LIES  
SUBMERGED.







WHILE BRAHMA PONDERED THUS, THE BOAR, WHICH WAS NOW AS LARGE AS A HUGE MOUNTAIN, ROARED.



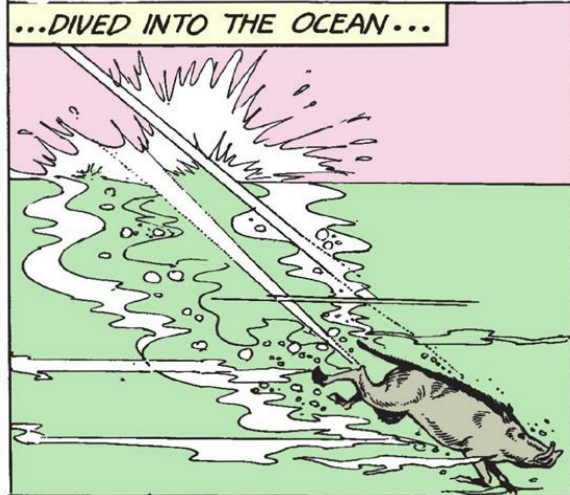
THEN, EMITTING ANOTHER TERRIFYING ROAR, IT TOOK ONE MIGHTY LEAP INTO THE AIR ...



...TORE THE CLOUDS WITH ITS HOOFS...



...DIVED INTO THE OCEAN...





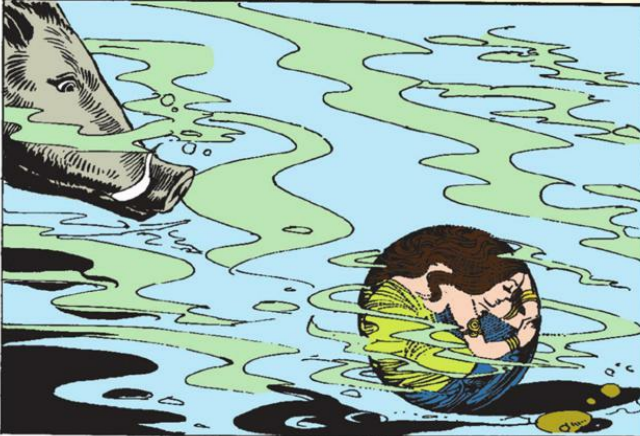
...AND NOSED ITS WAY ABOUT THE OCEAN-BED, IN SEARCH OF THE EARTH...



...TILL IT REACHED THE OTHER END OF THAT FATHOMLESS OCEAN AND DISCOVERED IN ITS DEPTHS...

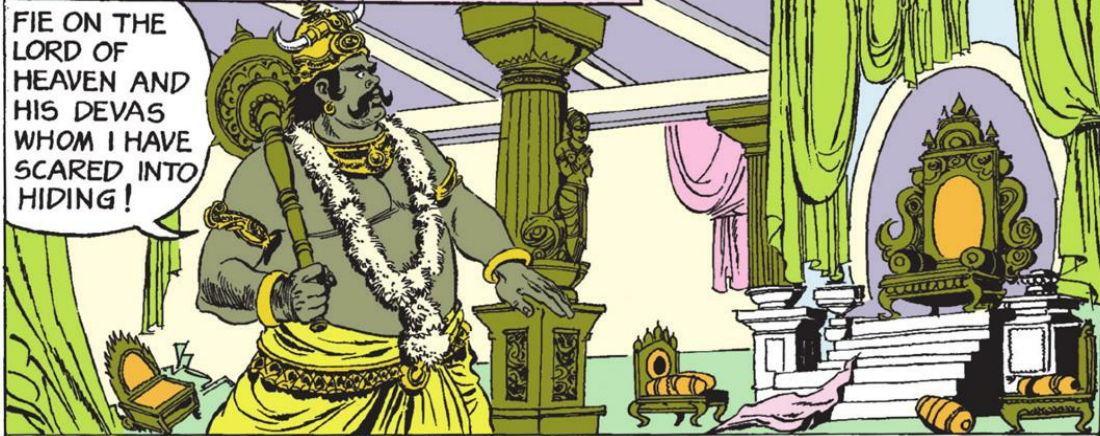


...THE OBJECT OF ITS QUEST—BHOOMIDEVI.



MEANWHILE, THE MIGHTY ASURA, HIRANYAKSHA, THUNDERED UP TO HEAVEN, SPOILING FOR A COMBAT. BUT —

FIE ON THE LORD OF HEAVEN AND HIS DEVAS WHOM I HAVE SCARED INTO HIDING!





DISGUSTED AND ANGRY, HE MARCHED UP TO VARUNA, LORD OF THE WATERS AND FEIGNING HUMILITY, FELL AT HIS FEET.

O SUPREME LORD!  
O GUARDIAN OF A  
WHOLE SPHERE\*!  
O RULER OF GREAT  
FAME! GIVE ME  
BATTLE.

HE MOCKS  
ME KNOWING  
FULLY WELL  
THAT HE IS  
THE MIGHTIER  
OF THE TWO.

BUT VARUNA CURBED  
HIS ANGER.

I HAVE GIVEN UP  
FIGHTING. I AM TOO  
OLD NOW. LORD  
VISHNU IS THE ONE  
YOU SHOULD APPROACH.  
HE ALONE WOULD BE  
AN EQUAL OPPONENT  
FOR YOU. GO SEEK  
HIM OUT.

LEARNING FROM THE SAGE NARADA WHERE VISHNU  
WAS, HIRANYAKSHA CHARGED TOWARDS THE  
OCEAN-BED.

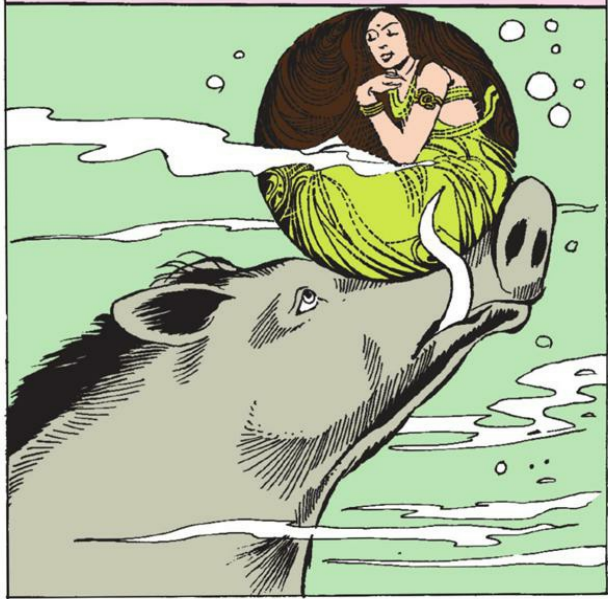
\* HYDROSPHERE .



MEANWHILE THE BOAR HAD JUST DUG HIS TUSK INTO THE OCEAN-BED ...

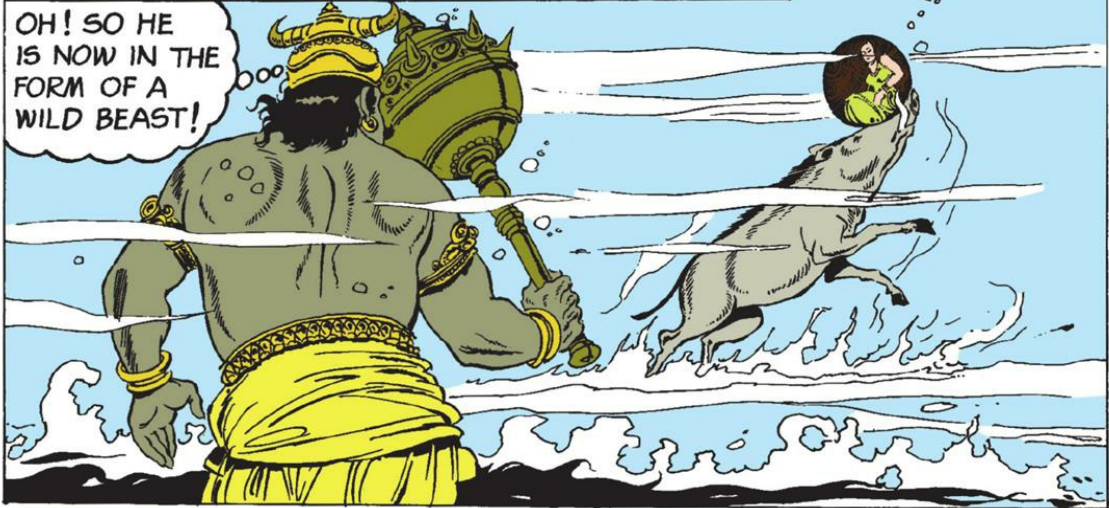


...AND LIFTING BHOOMIDEVI ONTO IT...



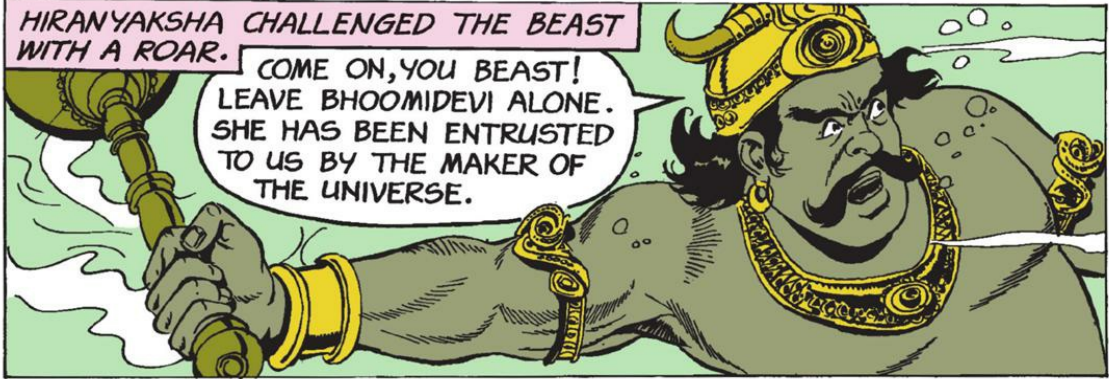
... BEGUN RISING TOWARDS THE SURFACE, WHEN —

OH! SO HE IS NOW IN THE FORM OF A WILD BEAST!



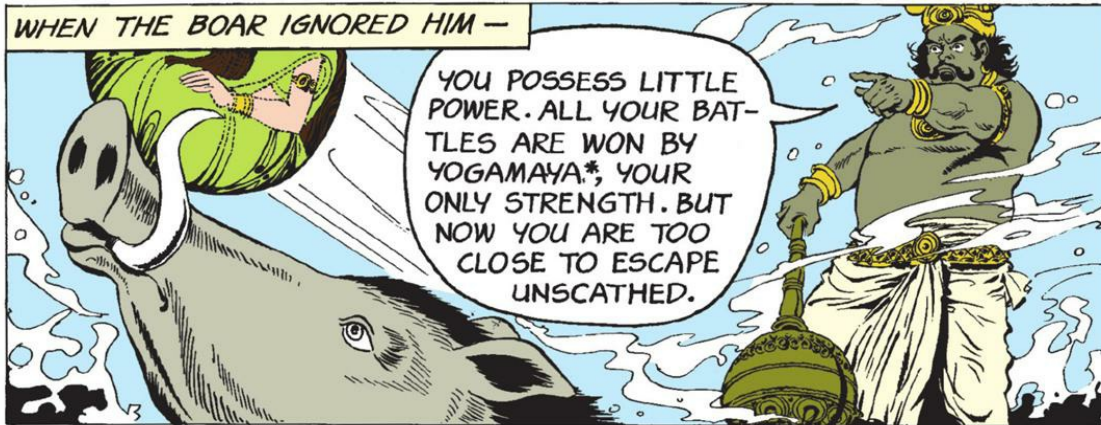
HIRANYAKSHA CHALLENGED THE BEAST WITH A ROAR.

COME ON, YOU BEAST!  
LEAVE BHOOMIDEVI ALONE.  
SHE HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED  
TO US BY THE MAKER OF  
THE UNIVERSE.





WHEN THE BOAR IGNORED HIM —



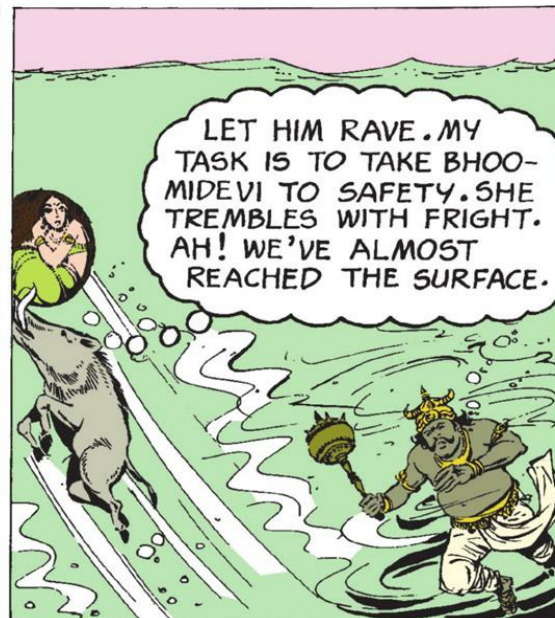
THE BOAR CONTINUED RISING AND HIRANYAKSHA GAVE CHASE.



BUT THE BOAR DID NOT EVEN LOOK BACK.



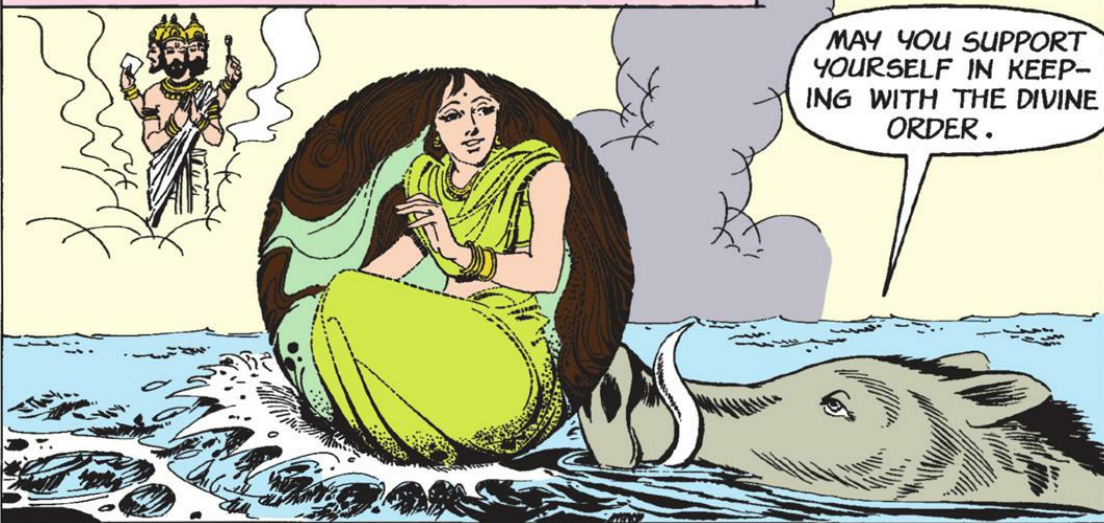
LET HIM RAVE. MY TASK IS TO TAKE BHOO-MIDEVI TO SAFETY. SHE TREMBLES WITH FRIGHT. AH! WE'VE ALMOST REACHED THE SURFACE.



\* POWER OF ILLUSORY CREATION



AS SOON AS HE REACHED THE SURFACE OF THE OCEAN, HE PLACED BHOOMIDEVI GENTLY ON IT AND BLESSED HER.



THEN HE TURNED TO FACE HIRANYAKSHA, HIS SPEECH HEAVY WITH SARCASM.



HIRANYAKSHA BECAME FURIOUS. SEETHING WITH ANGER, HE LIFTED HIS MACE AND ...

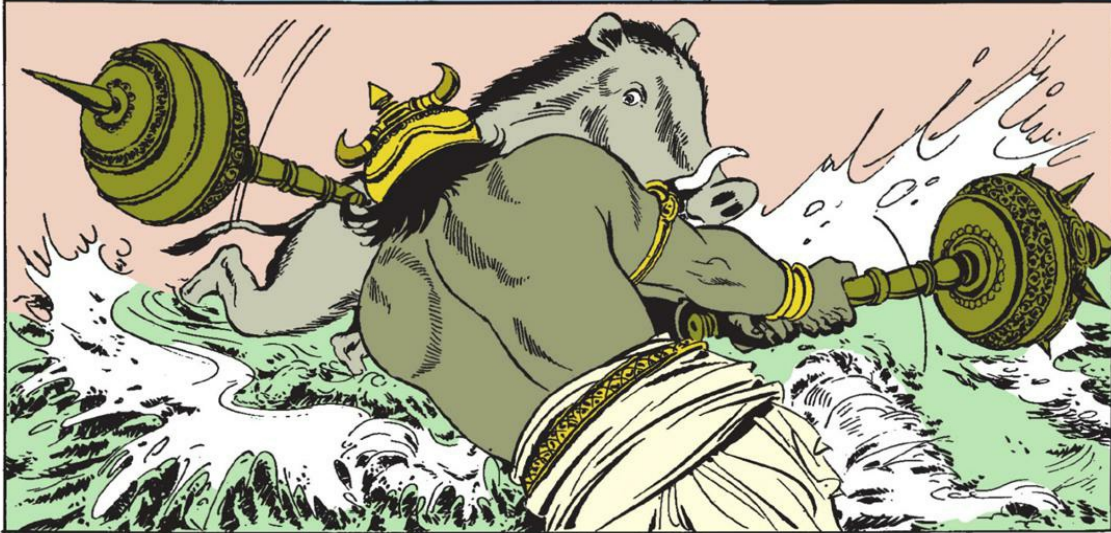


...SPRANG TOWARDS THE ANIMAL. BUT THE BOAR STEPPED ASIDE AND RAISED HIS OWN.

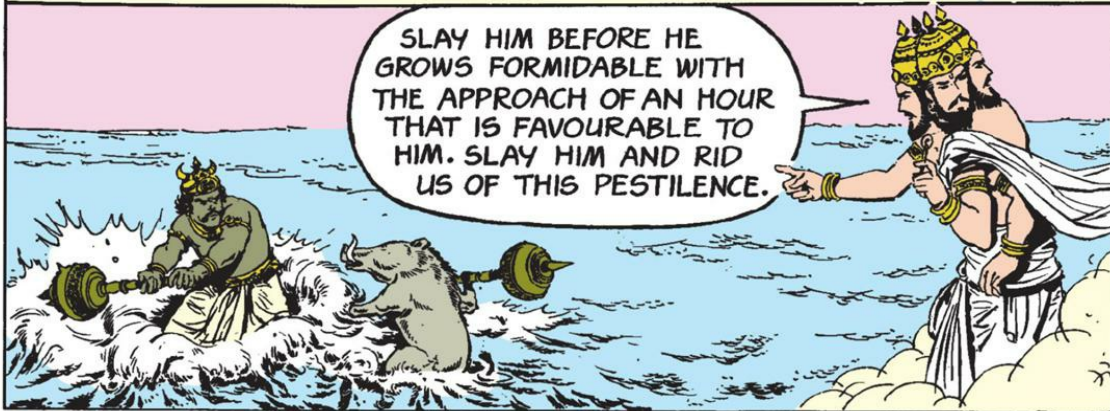




THEY FOUGHT FOR A LONG WHILE, EACH STRIKING OUT WITH HIS MACE.



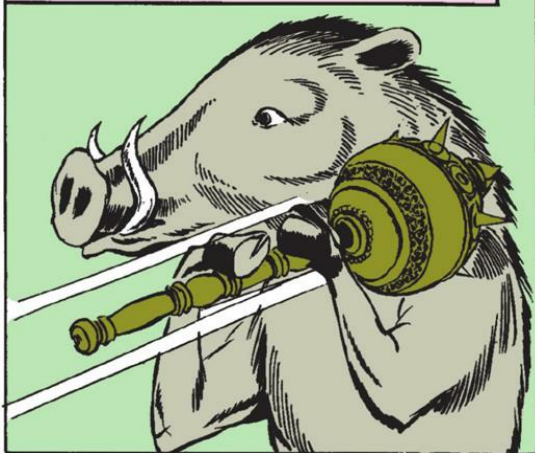
AS THE HOUR OF TWILIGHT DREW NEAR, BRAHMA SPOKE TO THE BOAR.



HEARING BRAHMA'S WORDS, HIRANYAKSHA HURLED HIS MACE AT THE ANIMAL.

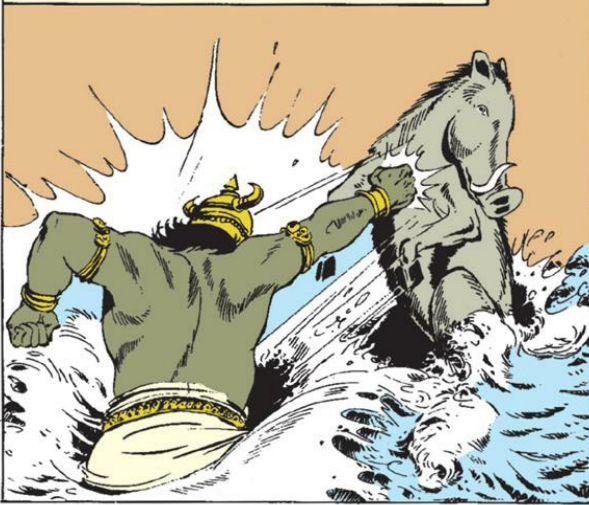


THE MACE WAS CAUGHT BY THE BOAR AS IF IT WERE A TOY.





ENRAGED, HIRANYAKSHA BEGAN HITTING OUT WITH HIS FISTS ON THE CHEST OF THE BOAR.



THE BOAR PLAYFULLY HIT THE DEMON BEHIND HIS EARS.



HIRANYAKSHA REELED AND FELL DEAD.

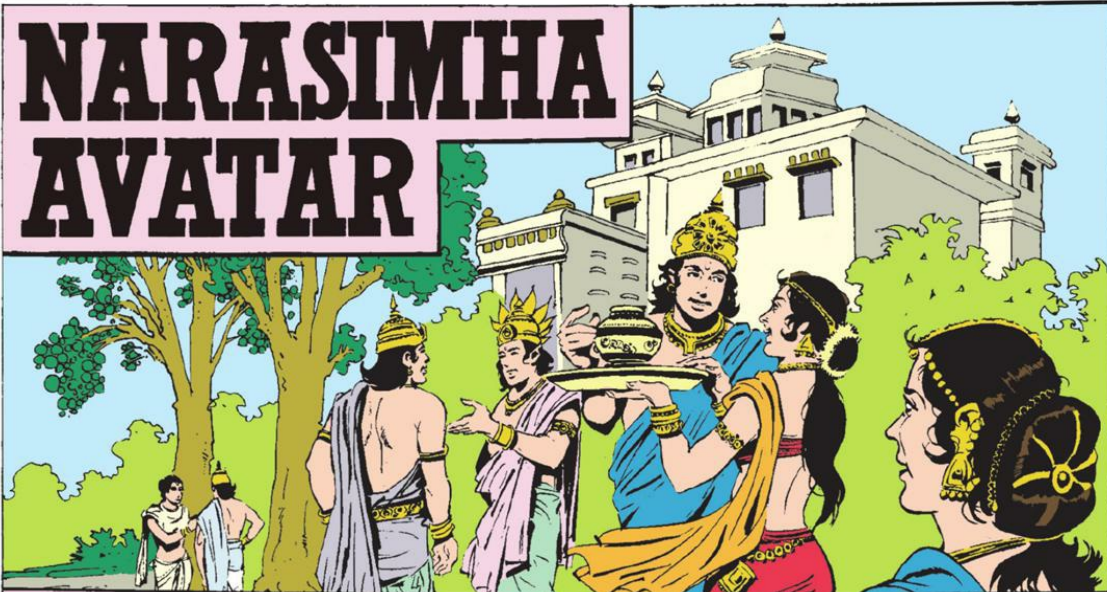


O LORD, ONLY YOU IN YOUR IMMACULATE GOODNESS COULD HAVE LIFTED BHOO-MIDEVI TO THE SURFACE OF THE OCEAN. ONLY YOUR INVINCIBLE SELF COULD HAVE SAVED US FROM THIS SCOURGE.





# NARASIMHA AVATAR



VISHNU, IN THE FORM OF A BOAR, HAD KILLED THE EVIL ASURA, HIRANYAKSHA. THE DEVAS WERE HAPPY AND THERE WAS MUCH REJOICING IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH, BUT NOT FOR LONG.

HIRANYAKASHIPU, HIRANYAKSHA'S ELDER BROTHER, SEETHING WITH ANGER, WAS BENT ON AVENGING THE DEATH OF HIS BROTHER.

VISHNU THRIVES ON VIRTUOUS SOULS AND THEIR VIRTUOUS DEEDS.



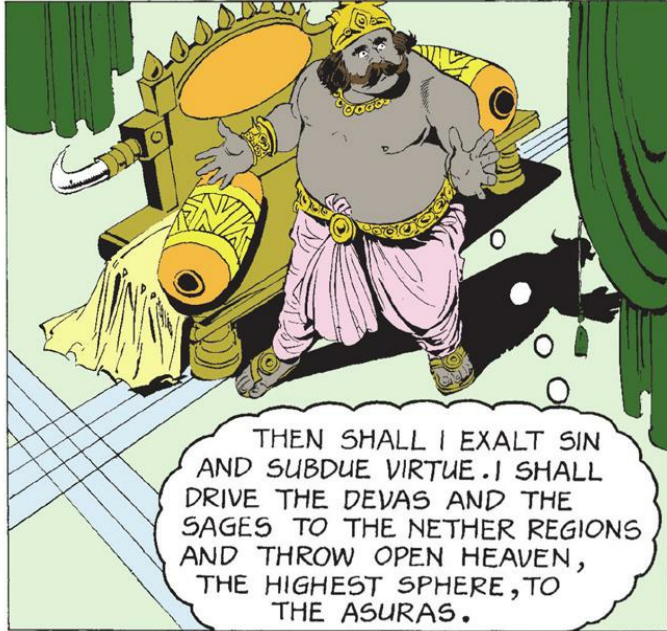
HE TURNED TO THE ASURAS WHO HAD COME TO OFFER HIM THEIR CONDOLENCES.

GO. DESTROY ALL GOOD PEOPLE ON EARTH. PUT OUT THEIR SACRIFICIAL FIRES AND KILL THEIR COWS...





...WHILE I PRACTISE SEVERE  
PENANCES AND BECOME THE  
MASTER OF ALL THE THREE  
WORLDS— HEAVEN, EARTH  
AND OUR OWN REGIONS.

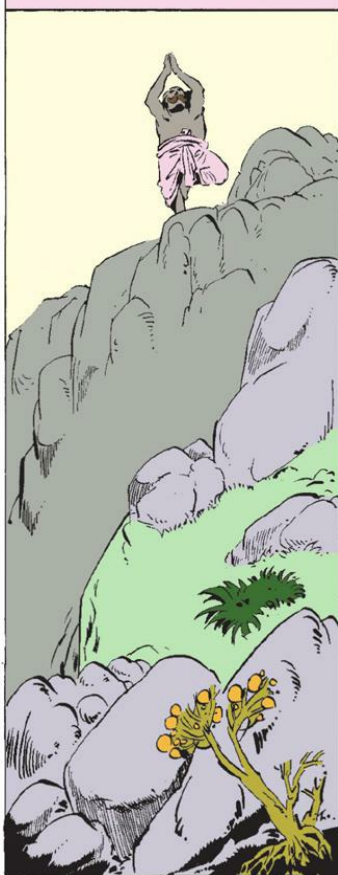


THEN SHALL I EXALT SIN  
AND SUBDUE VIRTUE. I SHALL  
DRIVE THE DEVAS AND THE  
SAGES TO THE NETHER REGIONS  
AND THROW OPEN HEAVEN,  
THE HIGHEST SPHERE, TO  
THE ASURAS.

AND HIRANYAKASHIPU WENT  
TO MOUNT MANDARA AND  
BEGAN HIS PENANCES.



SO HE STOOD FOR  
YEARS AND YEARS.

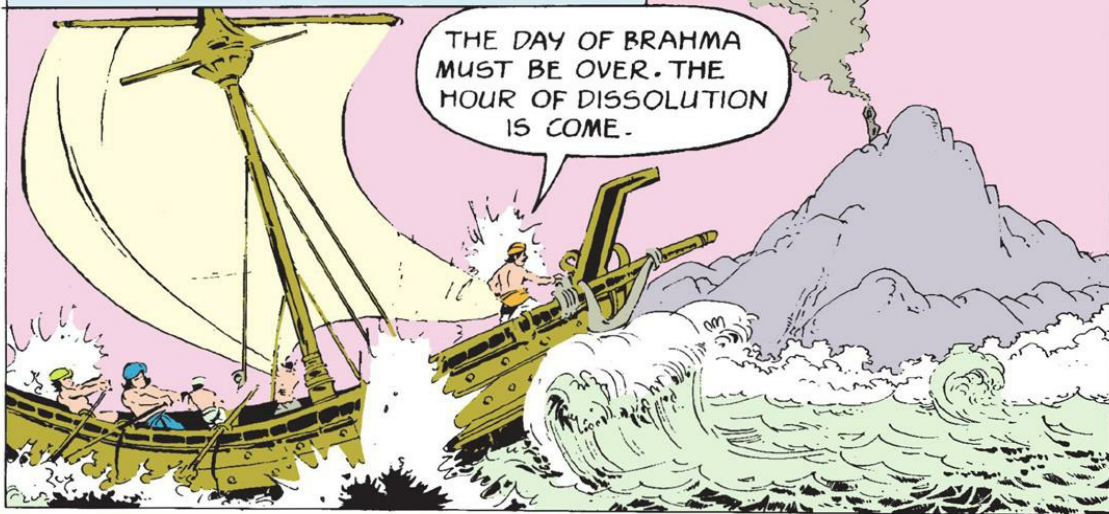


ANT HILLS AND  
GRASS GREW ON HIS  
PERSON BUT HE DID  
NOT MOVE.

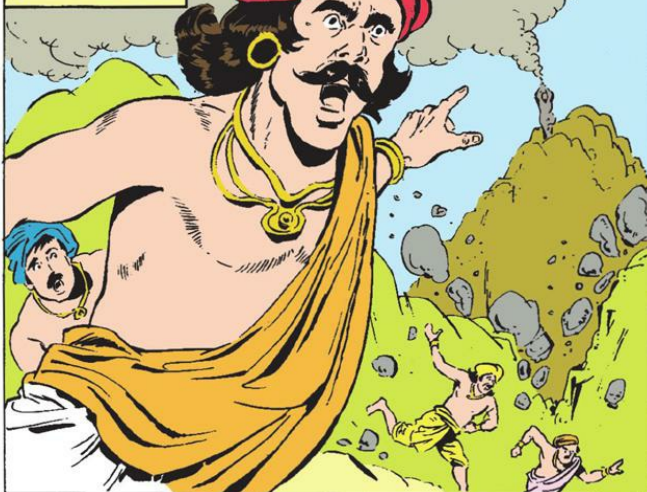




THE RIVERS AND OCEANS TREMBLED —



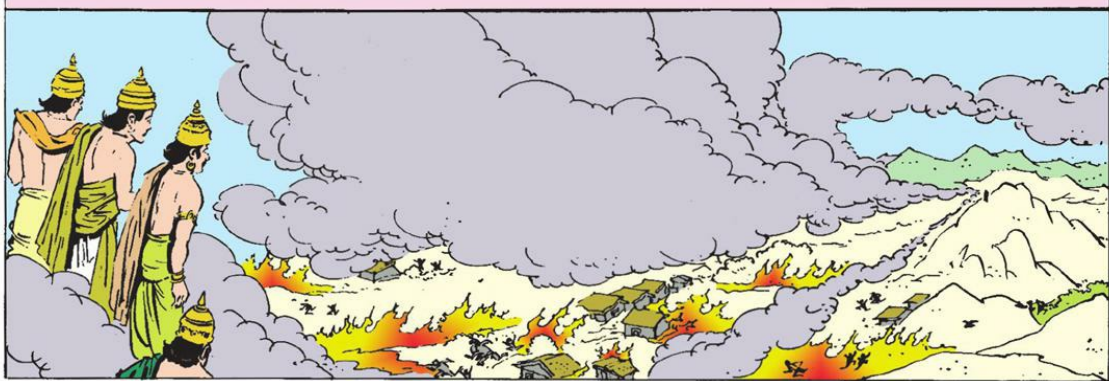
THE EARTH AND HER MOUNTAINS  
QUAKED...



... AND THE STARS AND  
PLANETS DARTED ABOUT  
IN PANIC.



SO INTENSE WAS HIRANYAKASHIPU'S PENANCE THAT THE FIERY SMOKE  
EMERGING FROM HIS HEAD BEGAN TO SCORCH EVERYTHING IN ITS WAKE.



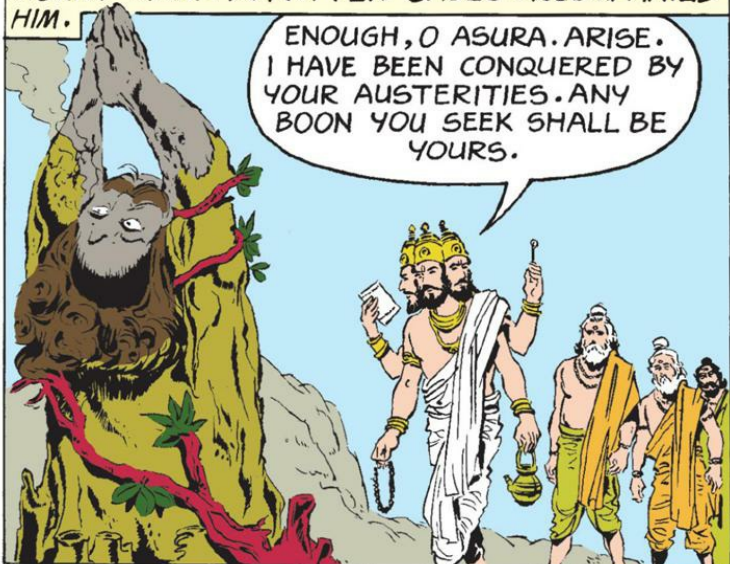


THE DEVAS WERE TERRIFIED. LED BY INDRA, THEY WENT TO BRAHMA, THE CREATOR.

O MERCIFUL LORD, PRAY DO SOMETHING, ANYTHING, BEFORE THE THREE WORLDS OF YOUR CREATION ARE CONSUMED BY THE FIRE OF THE ASURA'S PENANCES.



MOVED BY THEIR PLIGHT, BRAHMA WENT TO MOUNT MANDARA. A FEW SAGES ACCOMPANIED HIM.



ENOUGH, O ASURA. ARISE. I HAVE BEEN CONQUERED BY YOUR AUSTERITIES. ANY BOON YOU SEEK SHALL BE YOURS.

THE HOLY WATER FROM THE CREATOR'S KAMANDALU REJUVENATED THE ASURA. HE EMERGED, HANDSOME AND RADIANT.

LET NOT DEATH COME TO ME EITHER BY MAN OR BEAST, BY DAY OR BY NIGHT, INDOORS OR OUTDOORS, ON EARTH OR IN THE SKY. GRANT ME UNDISPUTED LORDSHIP OVER THE MATERIAL WORLD.

SO BE IT.



ARMED WITH THE BOONS, THE ASURA LOST NO TIME IN CONQUERING AND BRINGING UNDER HIS SWAY, BOTH HEAVEN AND EARTH.

I WISH TO OCCUPY THE PALACE OF THE LORD OF THE DEVAS. DRIVE HIM OUT.





BETRAYED BY BRAHMA, THE DEVAS APPROACHED VISHNU THE PRESERVER. VISHNU'S VOICE REASSURED THEM.

HAVE PATIENCE, O DEVAS. I KNOW THE EVIL THAT IS THE ASURA. HIS SON, THE HIGH-SOULLED PRAHLAD\* IS DEVOTED TO ME. WHEN THE ASURA SEEKS TO KILL MY DEVOTEE, I SHALL SLAY HIM.



THE DEVAS DID NOT HAVE TO WAIT LONG. EVEN AS VISHNU MADE HIS PROMISE, HIRANYAKASHIPU WAS SCREAMING WITH EXASPERATION AT HIS SON.

YOU WILL INSIST ON DEFYING ME AND WORSHIPPING MY SWORN ENEMY, ME, BEFORE WHOM THE DENIZENS OF ALL THE THREE WORLDS QUAKE WITH FEAR!



DEEP IN CONTEMPLATION OF LORD VISHNU, PRAHLAD DID NOT UTTER A WORD. HIRANYAKASHIPU ROARED IN FURY.

YOU SEEM TO BE CONFIDENT IN YOUR FAITH. O FOOL, I CANNOT IMAGINE WHERE YOU GET THE STRENGTH FROM!



\* SEE AMAR CHITRA KATHA NO.537-PRAHLAD



AT LAST PRAHLAD SPOKE.

FROM WHOM NOT ONLY  
I BUT ALSO YOU AND ALL  
OTHER POWERFUL BEINGS  
DERIVE THEIRS—THE  
ALL-PERVADING LORD  
VISHNU.

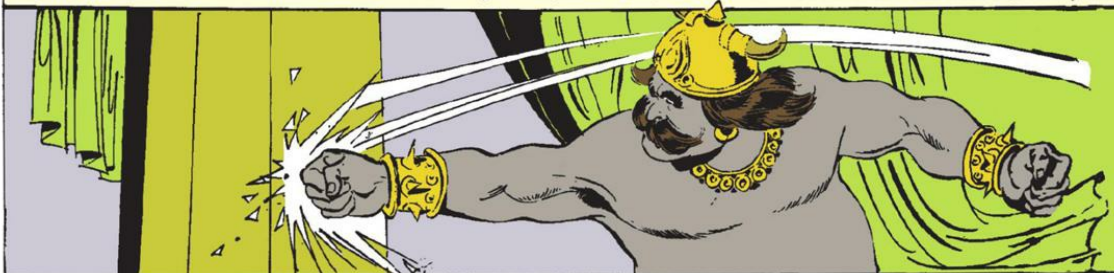


HIRANYAKASHIPU BECAME LIVID  
WITH RAGE.

IF HE IS ALL-PER-  
VADING, HE MUST BE IN  
THIS PILLAR. I AM GOING  
TO SLAY YOU NOW. LET HIM  
COME AND PROTECT...

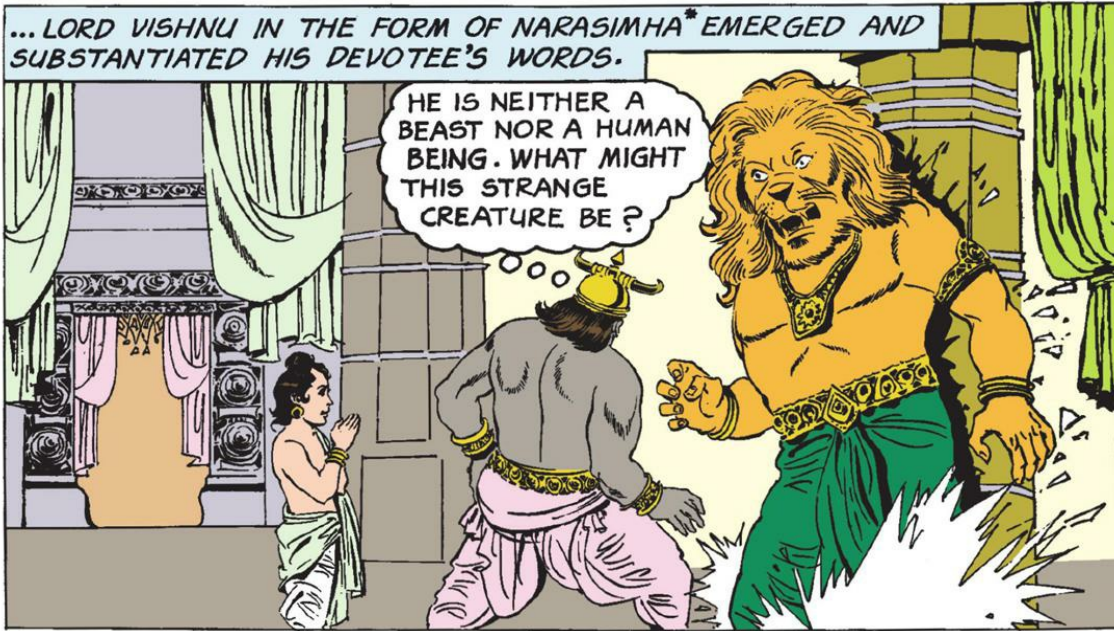


A RESOUNDING CRASH DROWNED HIS WORDS. THE PILLAR CRACKED AND...



...LORD VISHNU IN THE FORM OF NARASIMHA\* EMERGED AND  
SUBSTANTIATED HIS DEVOTEE'S WORDS.

HE IS NEITHER A  
BEAST NOR A HUMAN  
BEING. WHAT MIGHT  
THIS STRANGE  
CREATURE BE?

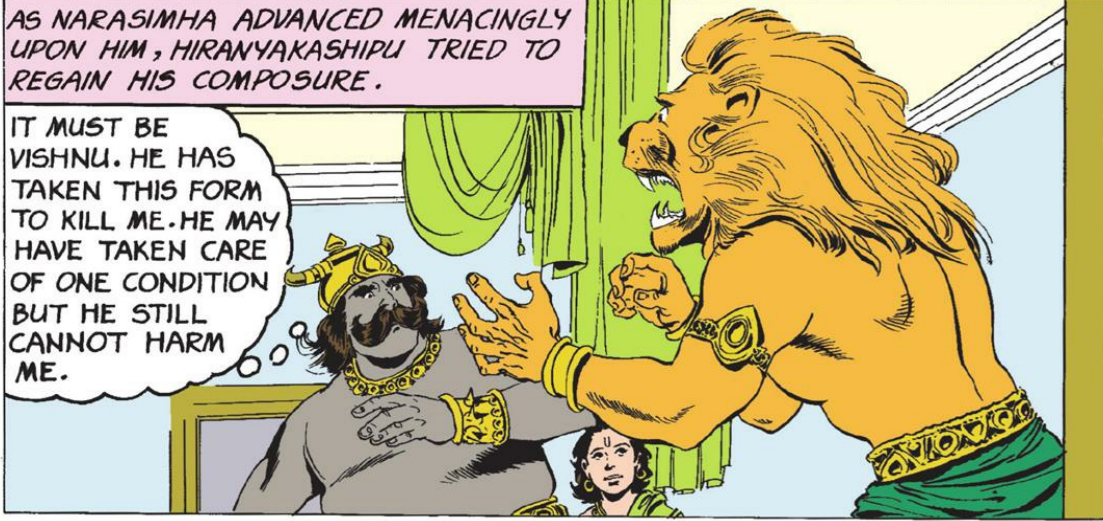


\* MAN-LION



AS NARASIMHA ADVANCED MENACINGLY UPON HIM, HIRANYAKASHIPU TRIED TO REGAIN HIS COMPOSURE.

IT MUST BE VISHNU. HE HAS TAKEN THIS FORM TO KILL ME. HE MAY HAVE TAKEN CARE OF ONE CONDITION BUT HE STILL CANNOT HARM ME.



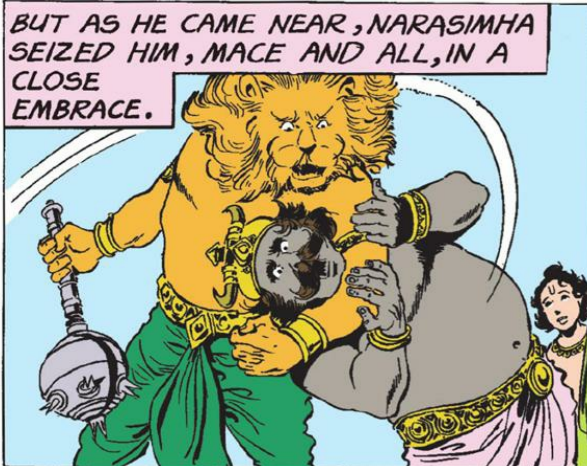
EMBOLDENED BY THAT THOUGHT, THE ASURA PICKED UP A MACE AND...



... ROARING LOUDLY RUSHED AT NARASIMHA.



BUT AS HE CAME NEAR, NARASIMHA SEIZED HIM, MACE AND ALL, IN A CLOSE EMBRACE.

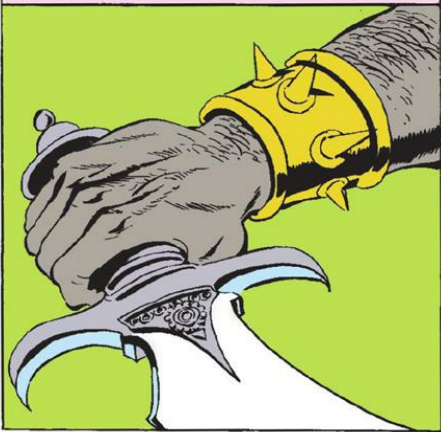


HIRANYAKSHIPU HOWEVER SLIPPED THROUGH HIS ARMS...

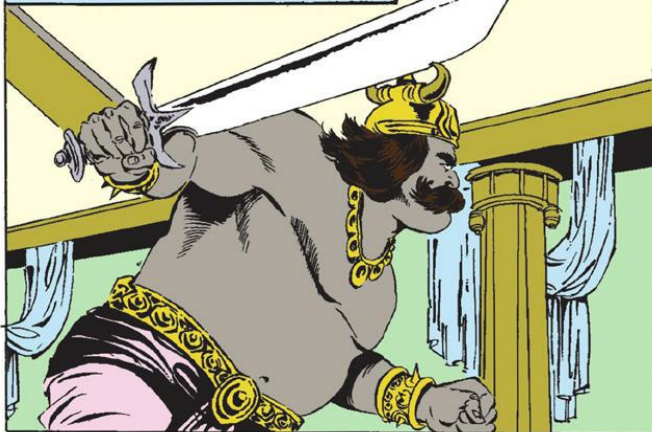




...AND GRABBING A SWORD...



...CHARGED ONCE AGAIN.



WATCHING HIS MOVEMENTS, NARASIMHA SENT FORTH A SHRILL PEAL OF LAUGHTER FOLLOWED BY A WEIRD ROAR.



AND THE NEXT MOMENT, THE ASURA FOUND HIMSELF IN THE VICE-LIKE GRIP OF NARASIMHA'S CLAWS.

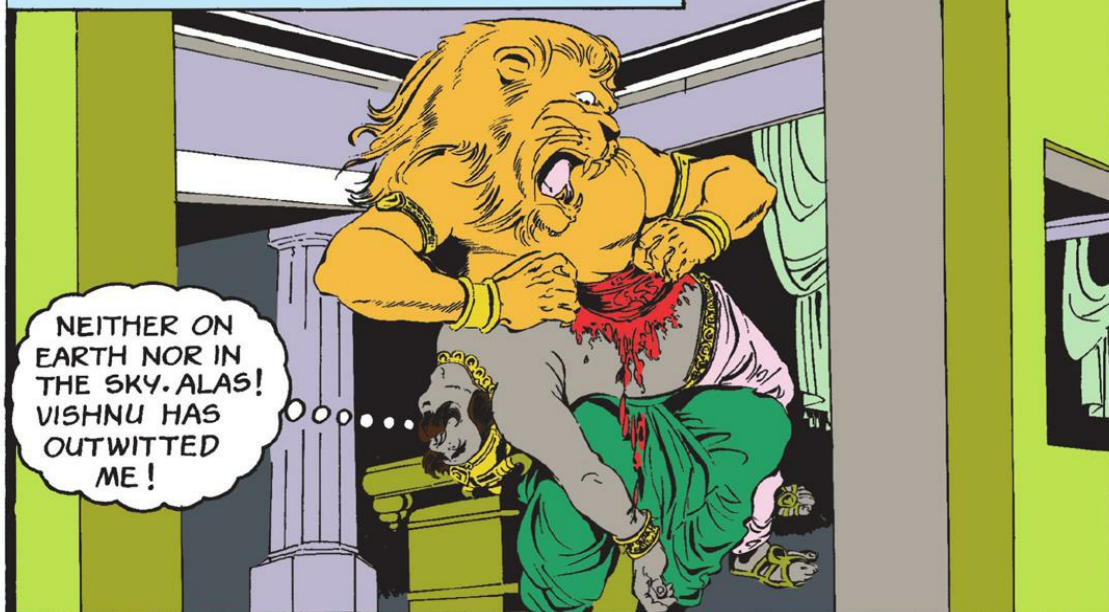




NARASIMHA CARRIED THE ASURA TO THE THRESHOLD OF THE HALL.



AND THERE, UNDER THE GREAT ARCH OF THE DOORWAY, NARASIMHA THREW THE ASURA ACROSS HIS THIGHS...



...AND TORE HIM TO DEATH WITH HIS CLAWS. THUS DID VISHNU, BY THE FAITH OF HIS DEVOTEE, PREVENT THE TRIUMPH OF EVIL AND ESTABLISH VIRTUE.





## VAMANA AVATAR

BENT ON CONQUERING THE DEVAS, BALI\*, THE KING OF THE ASURAS, GUIDED BY SHUKRACHARYA, HIS PRECEPTOR, PERFORMED THE VISHWAUIT SACRIFICE\*\*

... AND RECEIVED FROM THE SACRIFICIAL FIRE A GOLDEN CHARIOT, CELESTIAL WEAPONS AND A COAT OF MAIL, FOR THE CONQUEST OF HEAVEN.

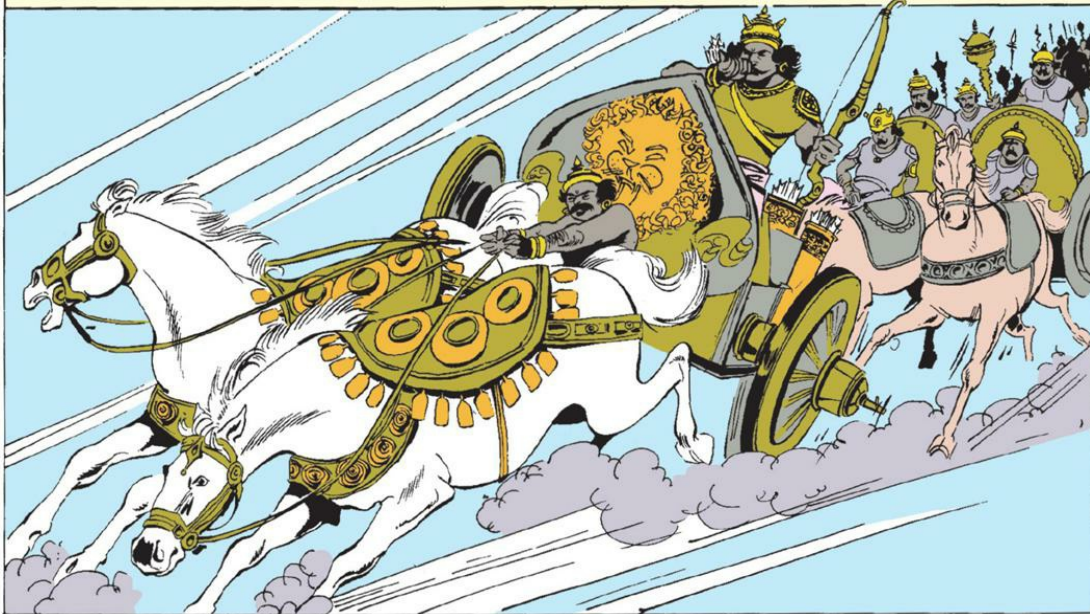


\* GRANDSON OF PRAHLAD.

\*\* A SACRIFICE PERFORMED TO GAIN MASTERY OVER THE THREE WORLDS.



DONNING THE ARMOUR, BALI MOUNTED THE CHARIOT AND WITH HIS ASURA HORDES ADVANCED ON AMARAVATI, THE CAPITAL OF THE DEVAS.



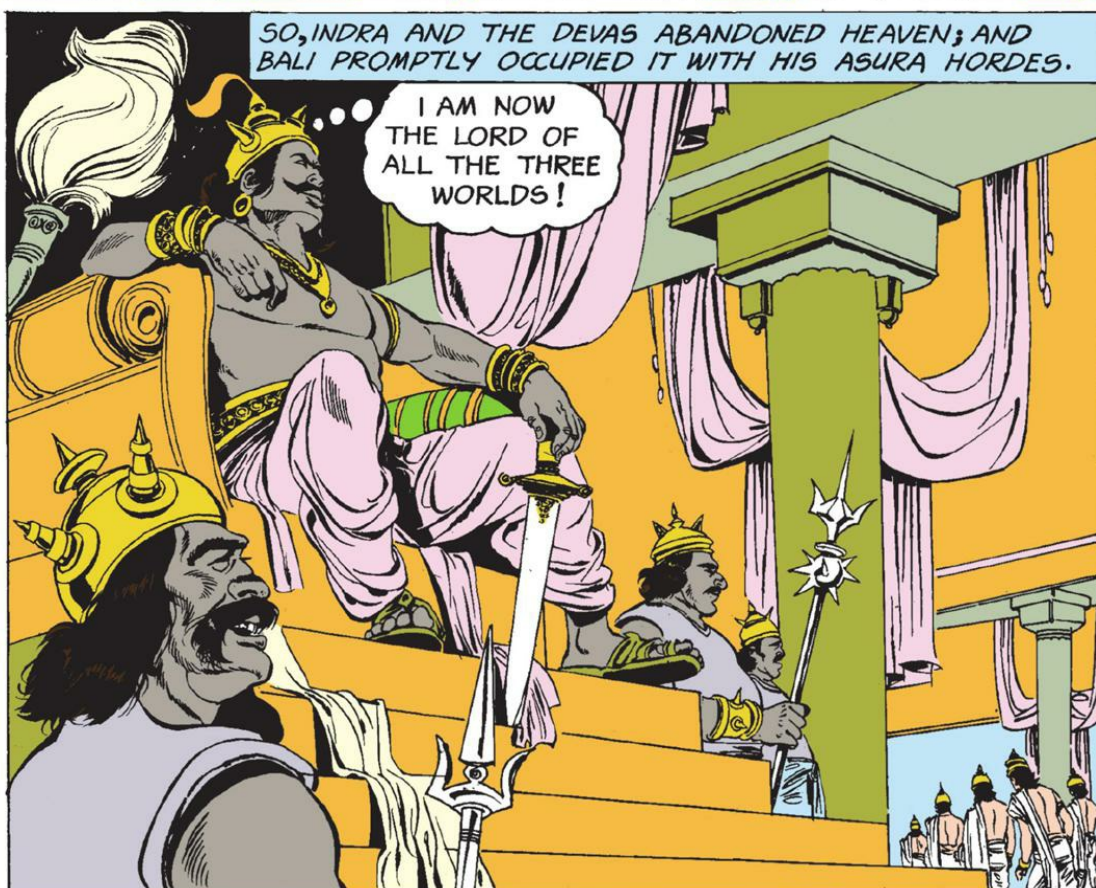
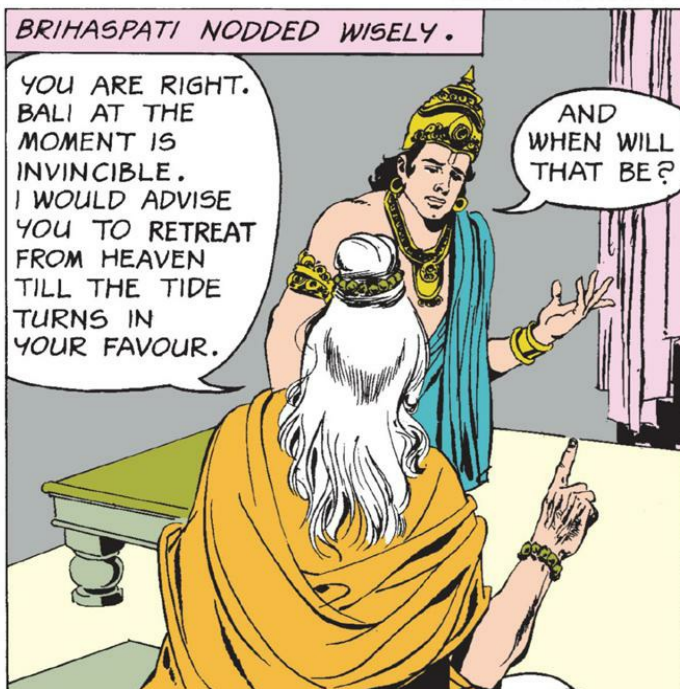
IN THE PALACE OF INDRA, KING OF THE DEVAS —



AS BALI LAID SIEGE TO THE CITY, INDRA WENT TO BRIHASPATI, HIS PRECEPTOR.





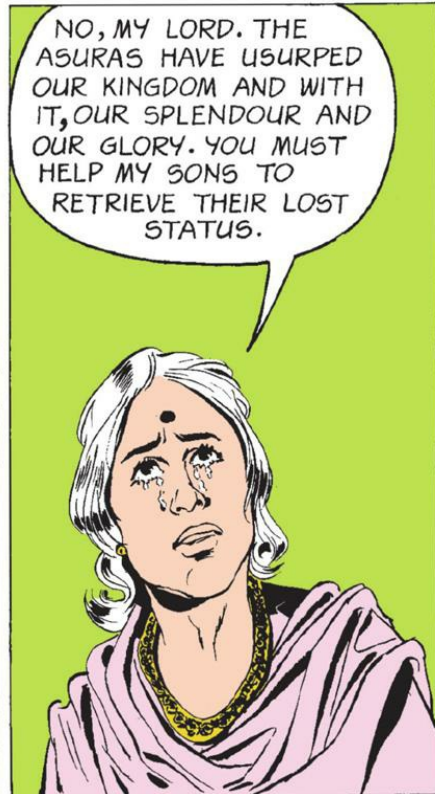
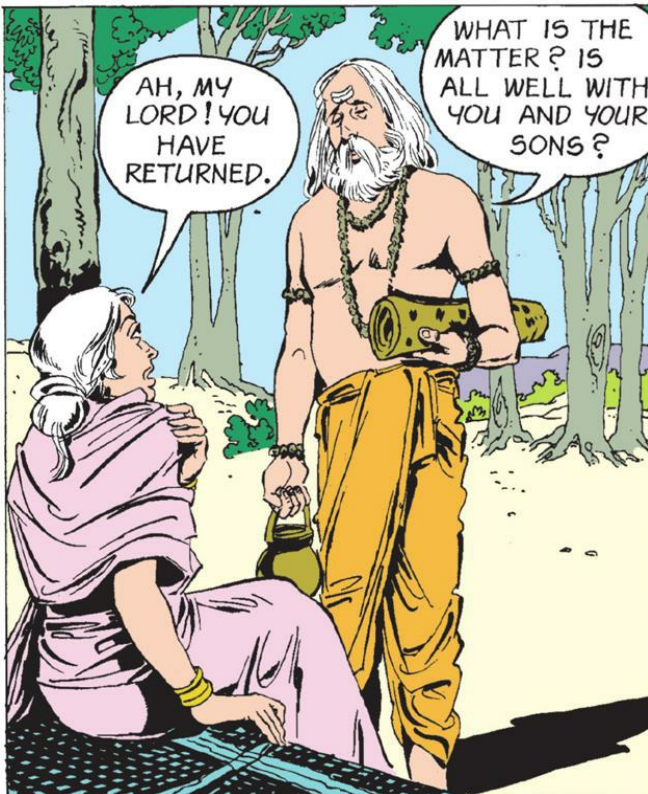
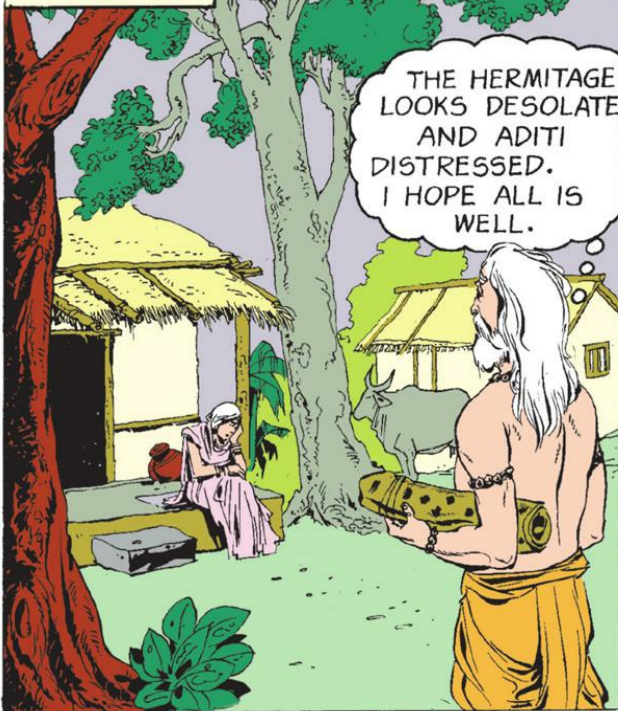




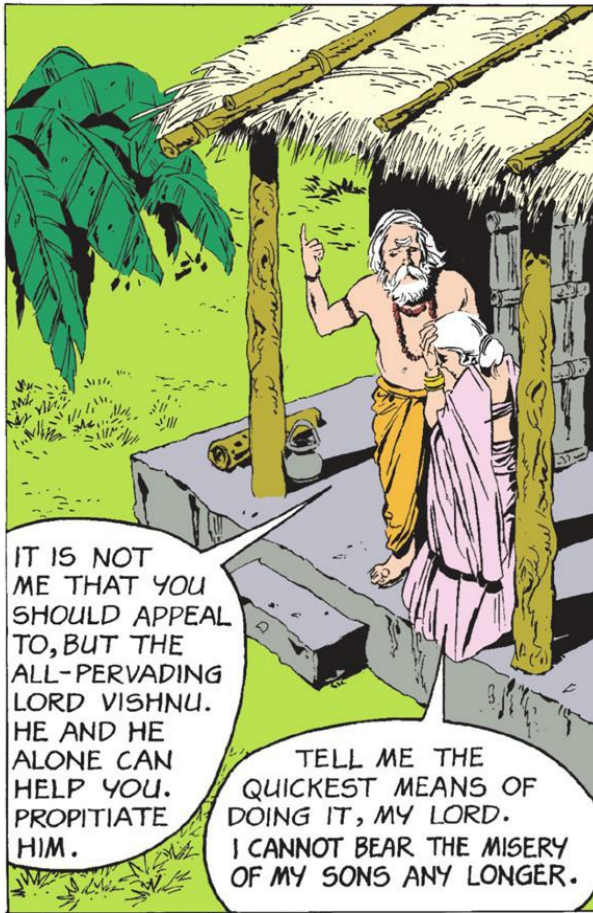
MEANWHILE, ADITI, THE MOTHER OF THE DEVAS, SAT BROODING ABOUT THEIR SORRY PLIGHT. SAGE KASHYAP, HER HUSBAND, WAS AWAY IN THE FOREST, MEDITATING.



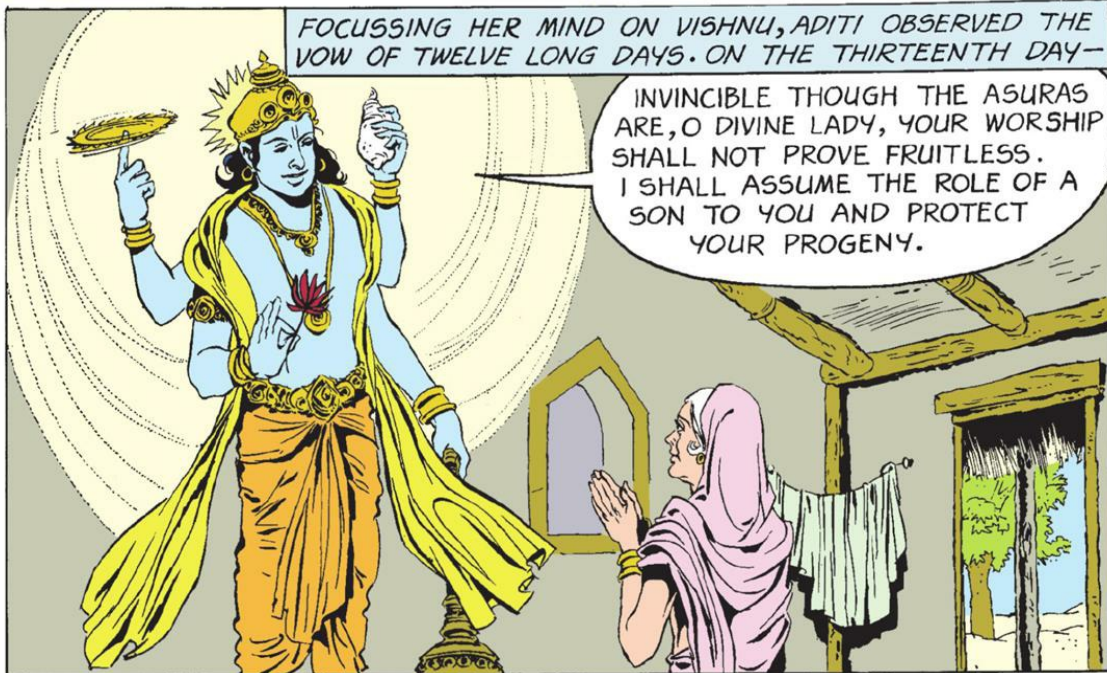
JUST THEN KASHYAP ENTERED THE HERMITAGE.







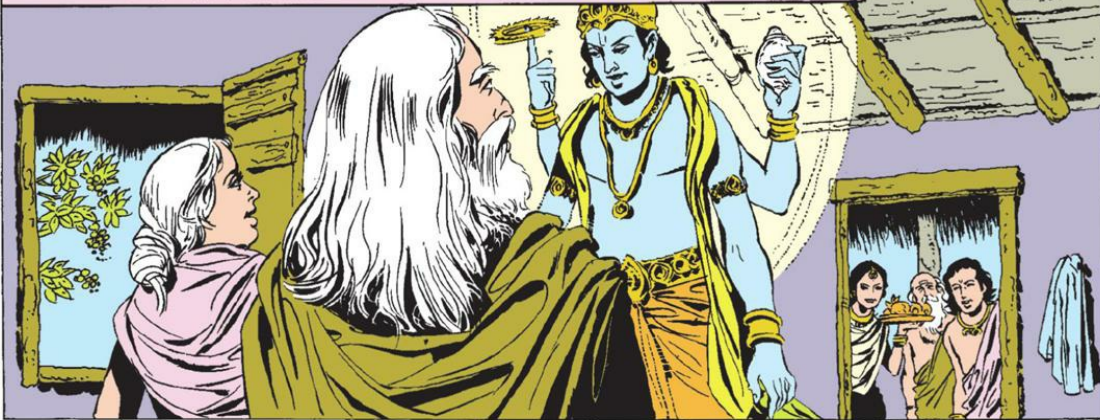
DURING THE BRIGHT HALF OF THE MONTH OF PHALGUNA, WITH YOUR MIND FIXED ON THE LORD, OBSERVE THE PAYOVRA\* VOW THE VOW THAT GRATIFIES HIM THE MOST. PLEASED, HE WILL GRANT YOUR DESIRES.



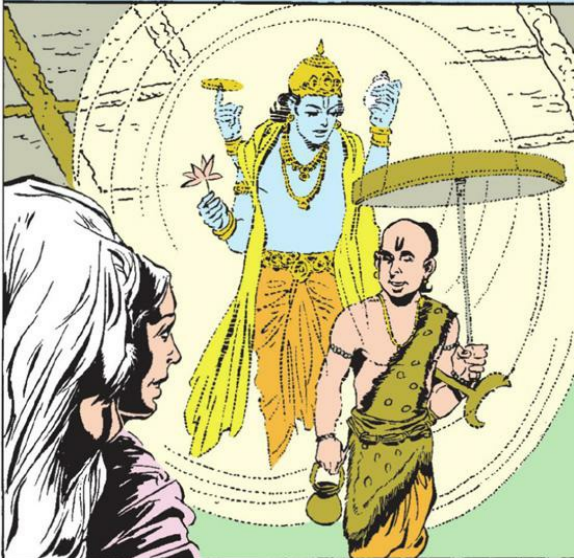
\* VOW OF MILK (NOTHING BUT MILK SHOULD BE DRUNK BY THOSE WHO OBSERVE THIS VOW.)



MONTHS LATER, ON THE TWELFTH DAY OF THE BRIGHT HALF OF BHADRAPADA\*, VISHNU TOOK HIS DESCENT FROM ADITI.



THEN, EVEN WHILE THE COUPLE STOOD GAZING, VISHNU CHANGED HIS FORM...



...TO THAT OF A SHORT-STATURED BRAHMAN.



A FEW DAYS LATER, A BLINDING LIGHT FILLED THE SACRIFICIAL GROUNDS WHERE BALI WAS PERFORMING A SERIES OF HORSE SACRIFICES.



COULD IT BE LORD SURYA\*\* HIMSELF COME DOWN TO WITNESS OUR SACRIFICE?

\* THE SIXTH MONTH OF THE HINDU CALENDAR

\*\* THE SUN GOD



AS THEIR EYES GOT USED TO THE BRILLIANCE, THEY SAW THAT A BRAHMAN MIDGET HAD ENTERED THE SACRIFICIAL ENCLOSURE.

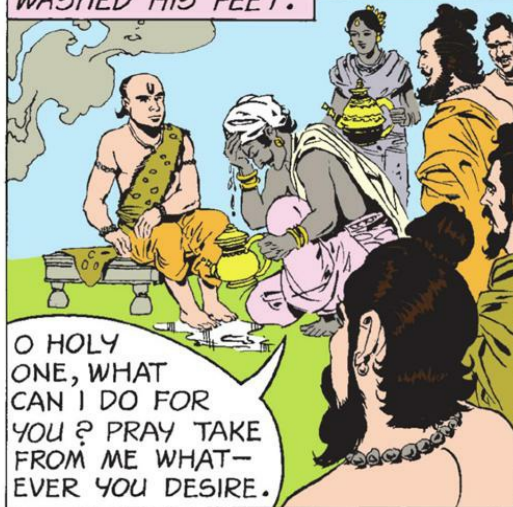


BALI ROSE FROM HIS SEAT TO RECEIVE HIM.

WELCOME,  
O HOLY  
BRAHMAN.  
THIS LAND OF  
MINE HAS  
BEEN CON-  
SECATED  
BY YOUR  
TINY  
FEET.



THEN HE GAVE THE DIVINE MIDGET,  
VAMANA, A SPECIAL SEAT AND  
WASHED HIS FEET.



O HOLY  
ONE, WHAT  
CAN I DO FOR  
YOU ? PRAY TAKE  
FROM ME WHAT-  
EVER YOU DESIRE.

VAMANA WAS QUIET:

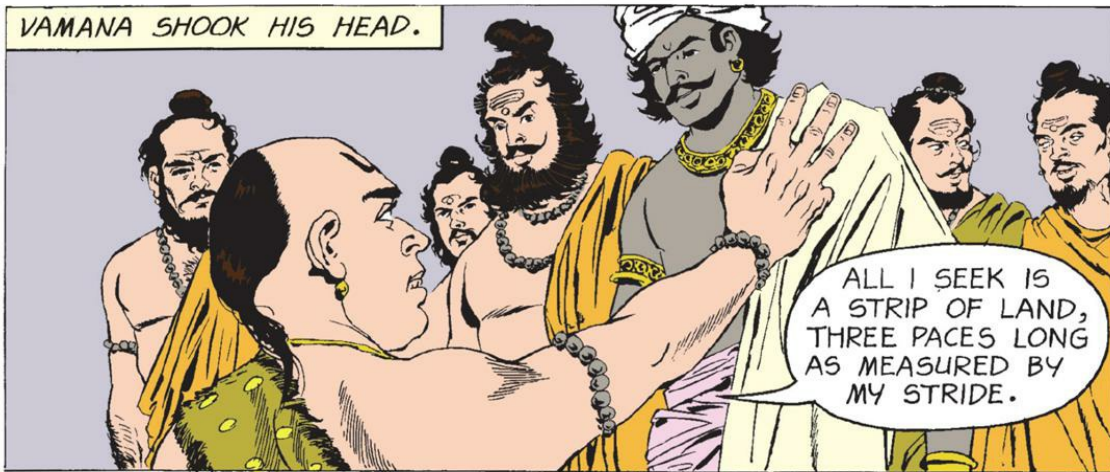
DO NOT HESITATE,  
O BRAHMACHARI.\*  
WHAT WILL YOU  
HAVE — A COW,  
GOLD, ELEPHANTS,  
HORSES, CHARIOTS,  
A BRIDE, A PALATIAL  
HOUSE, PROS-  
PEROUS  
VILLAGES... ?



\* CELIBATE.

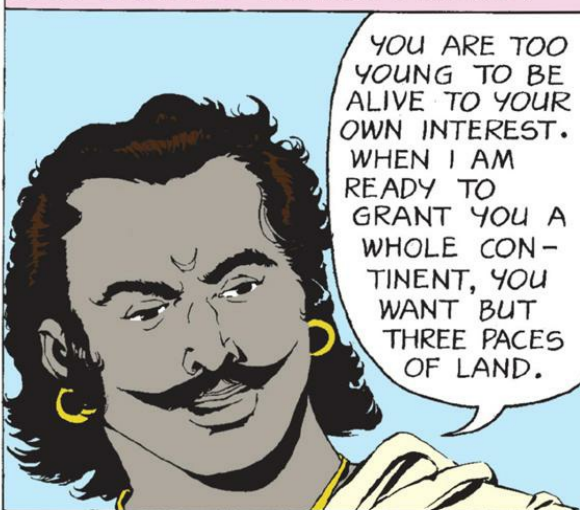


VAMANA SHOOK HIS HEAD.



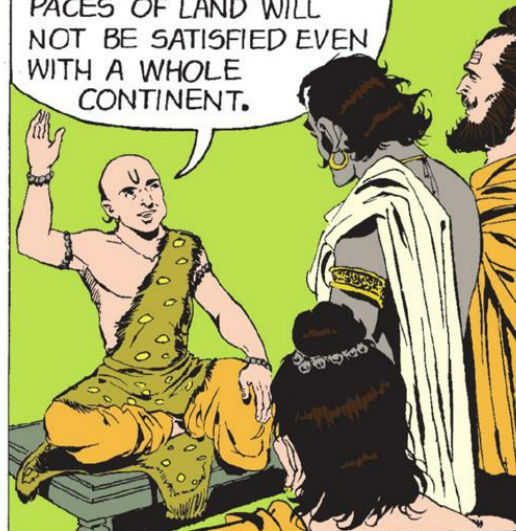
ALL I SEEK IS  
A STRIP OF LAND,  
THREE PACES LONG  
AS MEASURED BY  
MY STRIDE.

SEEKING TO WIN ACCLAIM FOR HIS  
GENEROSITY, BALI WAS DISAPPOINTED  
WITH VAMANA'S HUMBLE DEMAND.



YOU ARE TOO  
YOUNG TO BE  
ALIVE TO YOUR  
OWN INTEREST.  
WHEN I AM  
READY TO  
GRANT YOU A  
WHOLE CON-  
TINENT, YOU  
WANT BUT  
THREE PACES  
OF LAND.

HE WHO CANNOT BE  
SATISFIED WITH THREE  
PACES OF LAND WILL  
NOT BE SATISFIED EVEN  
WITH A WHOLE  
CONTINENT.



THREE PACES OF LAND  
ARE ALL I NEED AND  
THREE PACES OF LAND  
ARE ALL THAT I WILL  
HAVE.

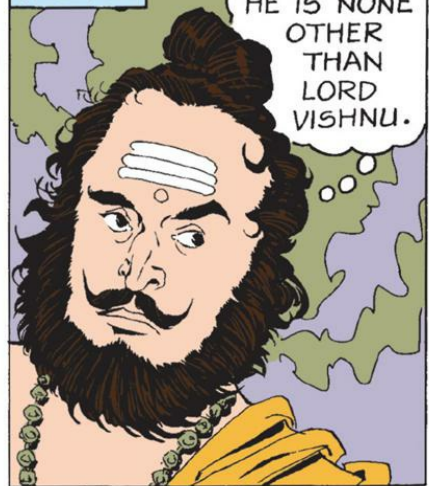


BALI LAUGHED AND GAVE IN.



THEN YOU SHALL HAVE AS MUCH.

AT THAT MOMENT SHUKRACHARYA REALISED THE TRUTH.



HE IS NONE OTHER THAN LORD VISHNU.

AS BALI TOOK THE CONSECRATING WATER IN HIS PALM, SHUKRACHARYA STOPPED HIM.



WAIT! THIS MIDGET IS LORD VISHNU. HE IS HERE TO HELP OUR ENEMIES, THE DEVAS.

NOTHING CAN BE DONE NOW, O VENERABLE ONE. I HAVE GIVEN MY WORD.

RETRACT IT. IT IS NOT WRONG TO DO SO WHEN ONE'S LIFE AND THE LIVES OF ONE'S DEPENDANTS ARE AT STAKE.



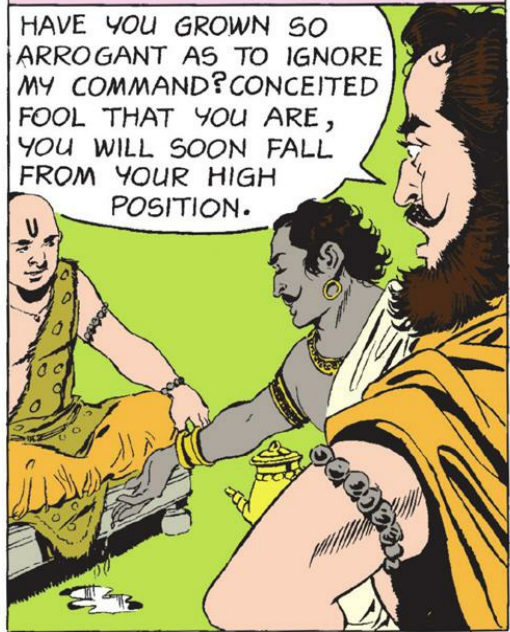


BALI WAS QUIET FOR A MOMENT. THEN—



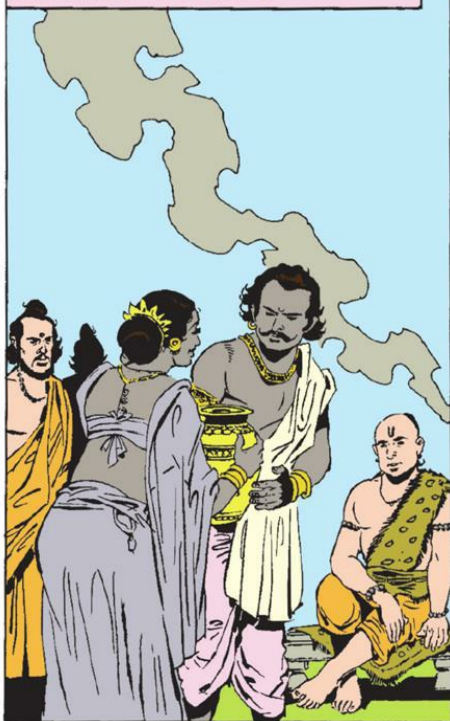
HAVING PROMISED ONCE THAT I SHALL GIVE, HOW CAN I, BALI, THE GRANDSON OF VIRTUOUS PRAHLAD, REFUSE LIKE A COMMON CHEAT? I WILL GIVE THIS BRAHMAN THE LAND HE SEEKS, O HOLY SAGE, COME WHAT MAY.

FURIOUS THAT HIS DISCIPLE HAD DARED TO DISREGARD HIS ADVICE, SHUKRACHARYA CURSED HIM.

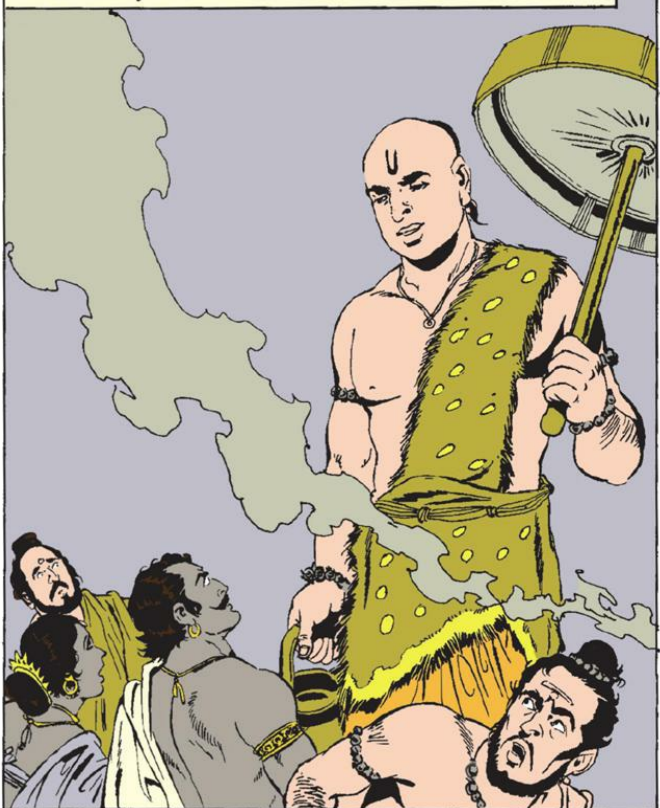


HAVE YOU GROWN SO ARROGANT AS TO IGNORE MY COMMAND? CONCEITED FOOL THAT YOU ARE, YOU WILL SOON FALL FROM YOUR HIGH POSITION.

BALI'S WIFE THEN CAME WITH A GOLDEN PITCHER FULL OF WATER TO WASH VAMANA'S FEET.

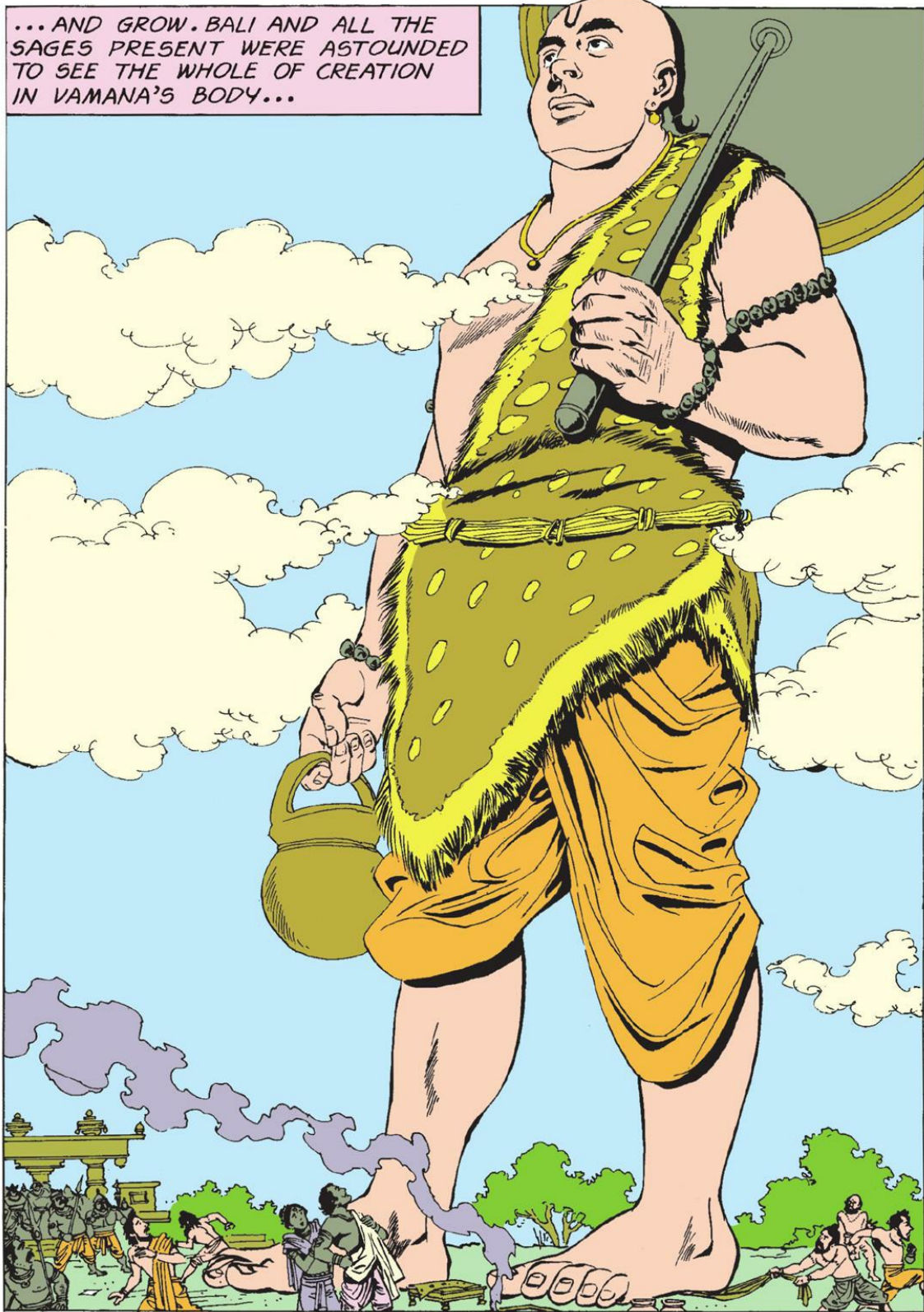


AND LO! VAMANA BEGAN TO GROW...





... AND GROW. BALI AND ALL THE  
SAGES PRESENT WERE ASTOUNDED  
TO SEE THE WHOLE OF CREATION  
IN VAMANA'S BODY...

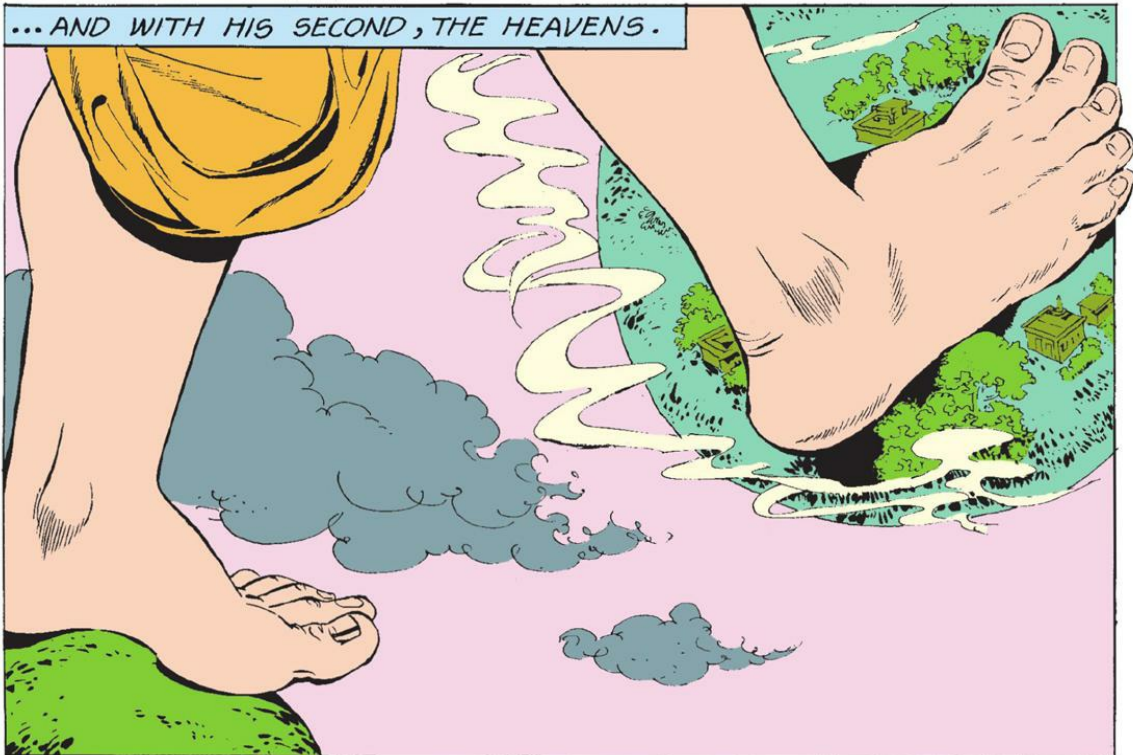




...AS HE BEGAN TO MEASURE THE THREE PACES. WITH HIS FIRST STRIDE HE COVERED THE EARTH...



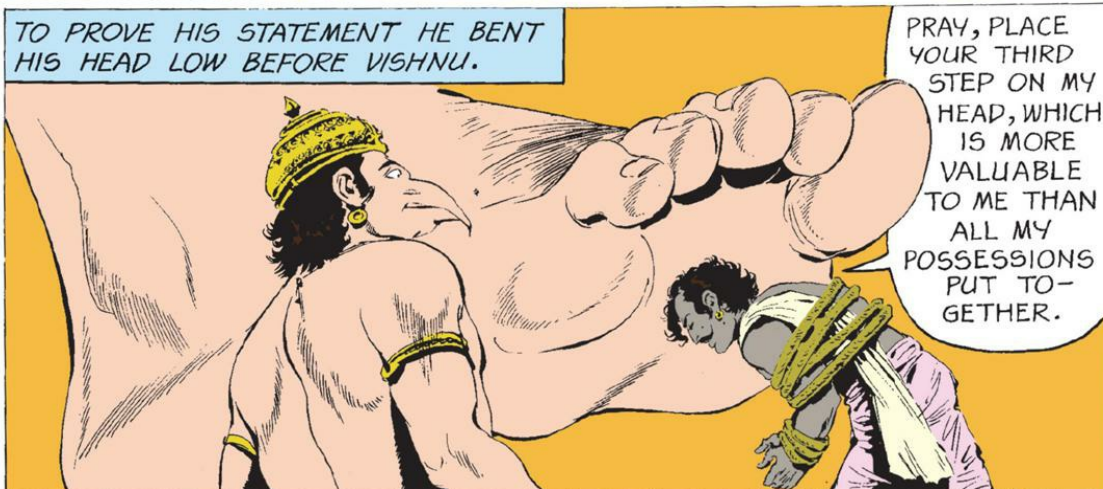
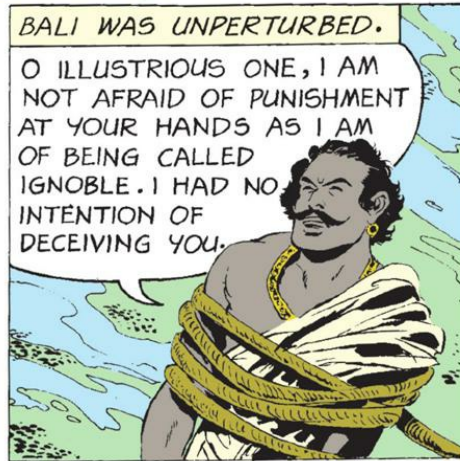
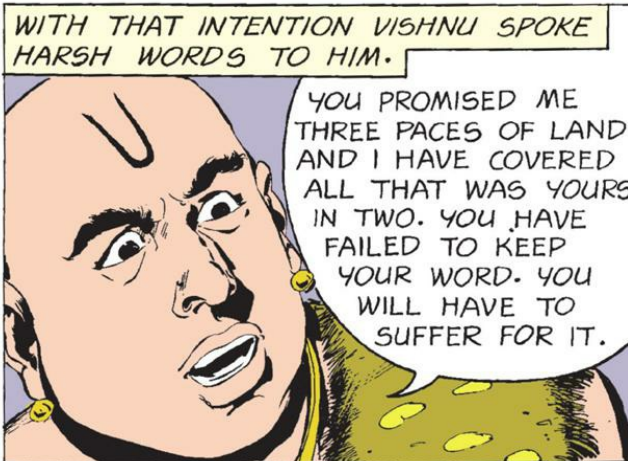
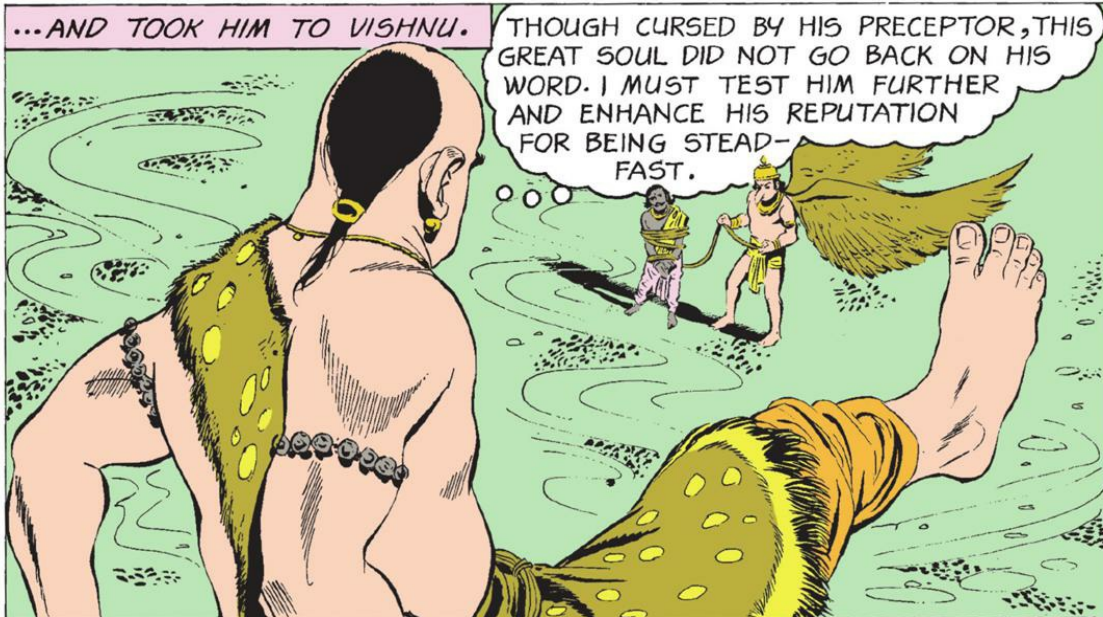
...AND WITH HIS SECOND, THE HEAVENS.











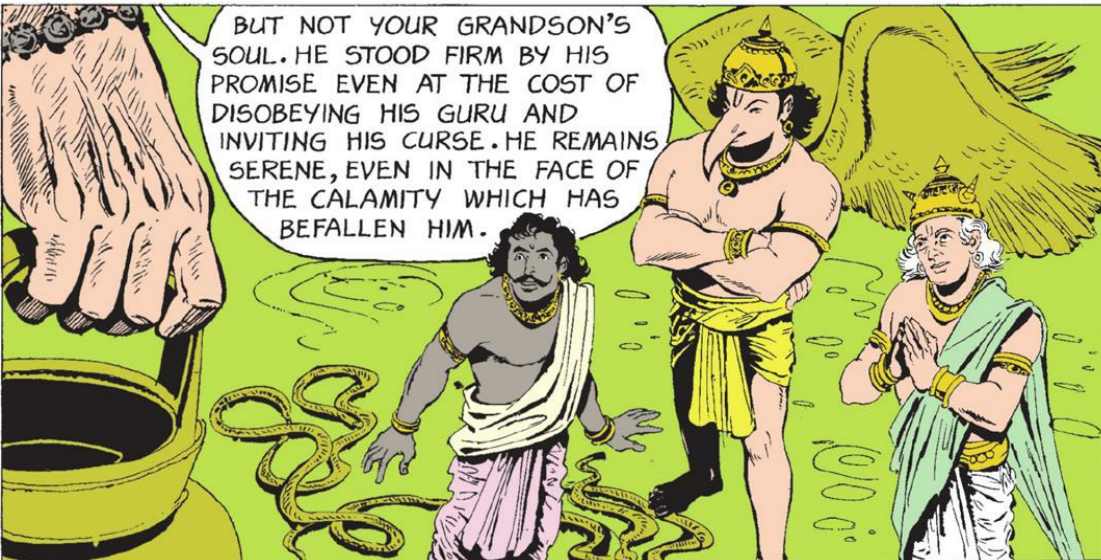


AT THAT MOMENT, PRAHLAD APPEARED ON THE SCENE AND BOWED LOW TO VISHNU —

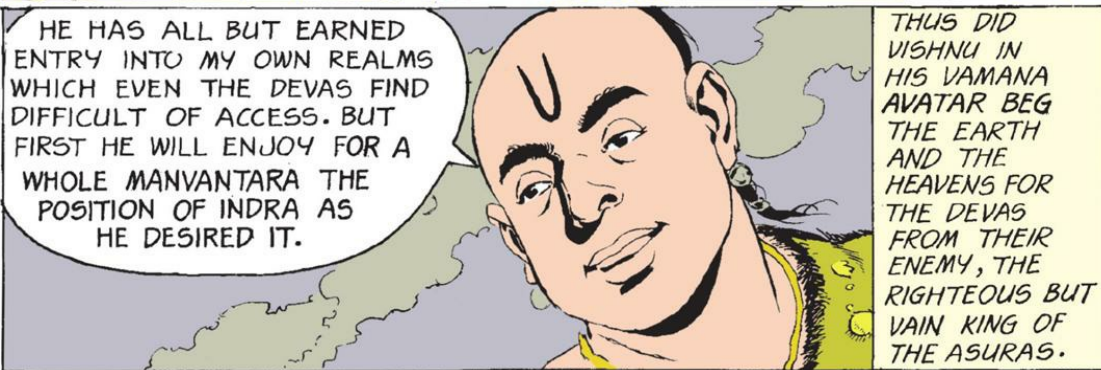
SALUTATIONS TO YOU, O LORD. YOU HAVE CONFERRED A GREAT FAVOUR ON MY GRANDSON BY DEPRIVING HIM OF HIS WEALTH. FOR, WEALTH CORRUPTS EVEN GREAT SOULS.



BUT NOT YOUR GRANDSON'S SOUL. HE STOOD FIRM BY HIS PROMISE EVEN AT THE COST OF DISOBEYING HIS GURU AND INVITING HIS CURSE. HE REMAINS SERENE, EVEN IN THE FACE OF THE CALAMITY WHICH HAS BEFALLEN HIM.

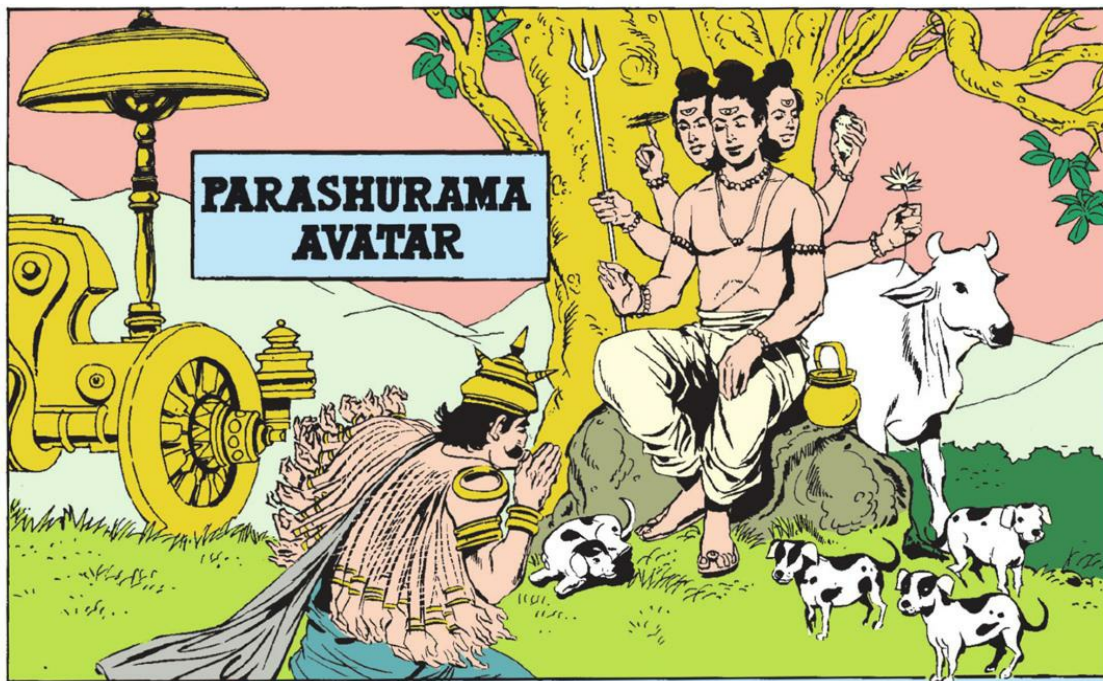


HE HAS ALL BUT EARNED ENTRY INTO MY OWN REALMS WHICH EVEN THE DEVAS FIND DIFFICULT OF ACCESS. BUT FIRST HE WILL ENJOY FOR A WHOLE MANVANTARA THE POSITION OF INDRA AS HE DESIRED IT.



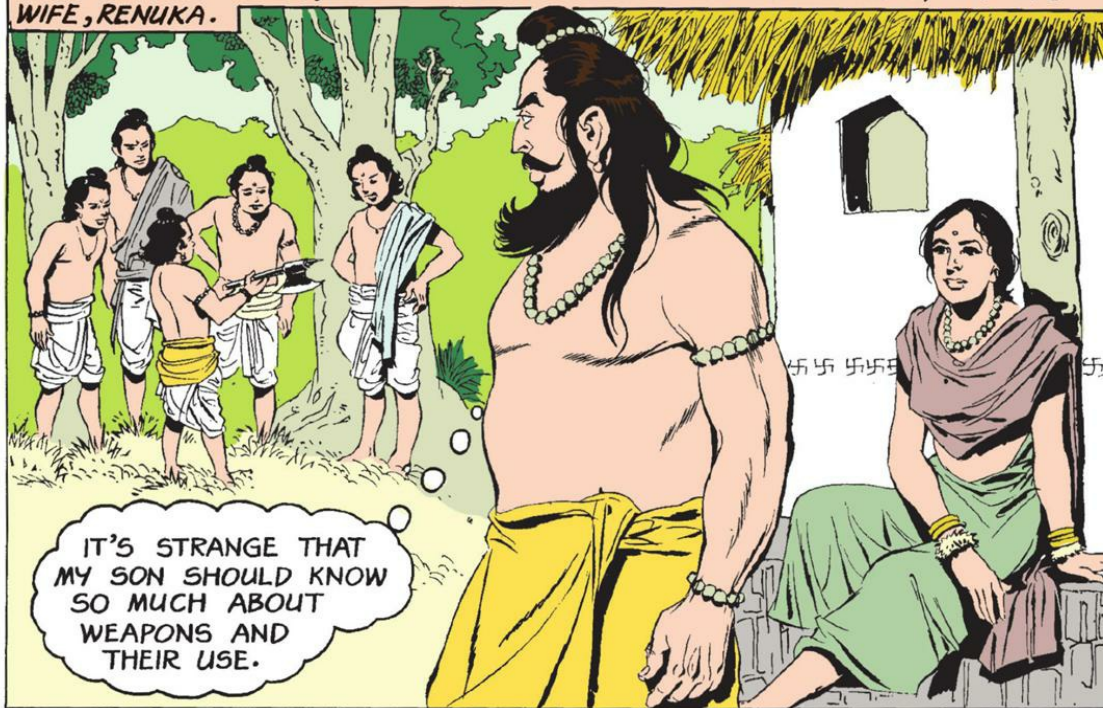
THUS DID VISHNU IN HIS VAMANA AVATAR BEG THE EARTH AND THE HEAVENS FOR THE DEVAS FROM THEIR ENEMY, THE RIGHTEOUS BUT VAIN KING OF THE ASURAS.





KING ARJUNA, THE RULER OF THE HAIHAYAS, HAD PROPITIATED LORD DATTATREYA AND HAD SECURED FROM HIM BOONS WHICH MADE HIM INVINCIBLE. BUT ARJUNA MISUSED HIS POWERS AND BECAME A MERCILESS TYRANT.

TO VANQUISH HIM AND ALL SUCH EVIL KSHATRIYAS, LORD VISHNU CAME TO EARTH AS RAMA, THE YOUNGEST SON OF SAGE JAMADAGNI, AND HIS WIFE, RENUKA.

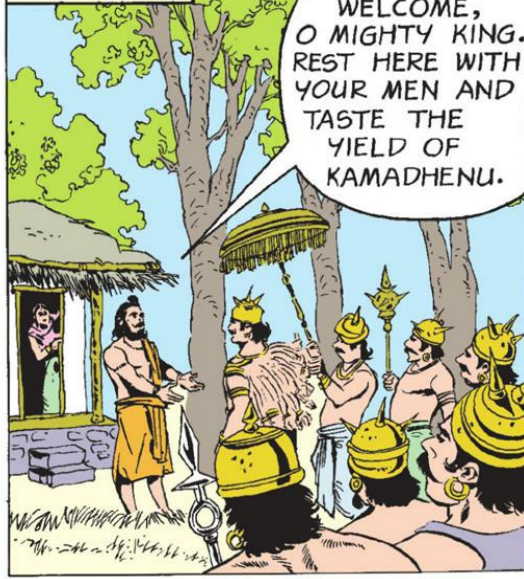




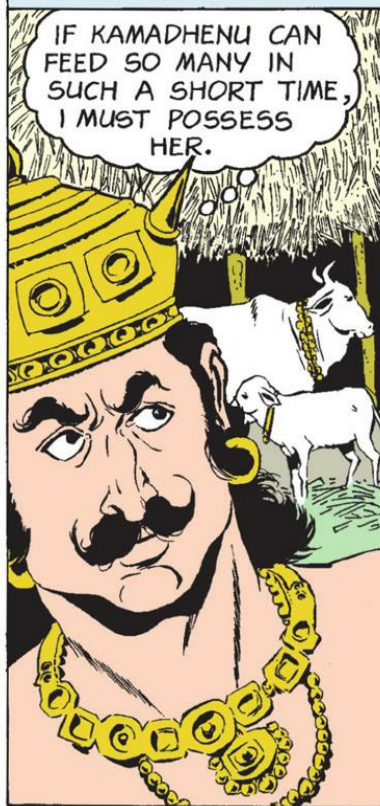
IT WAS TRUE. THOUGH RAMA WAS THE SON OF A BRAHMAN, HE HAD AN INORDINATE LOVE FOR WEAPONS AND HIS FAVOURITE WAS THE AXE.



ONE DAY, WHILE PARASHURAMA\* AND HIS BROTHERS WERE AWAY, ARJUNA ENTERED JAMADAGNI'S HERMITAGE.



BUT WHEN ARJUNA AND HIS MEN WERE FED —



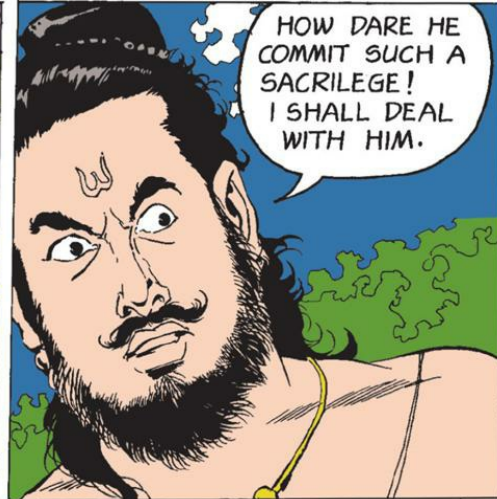
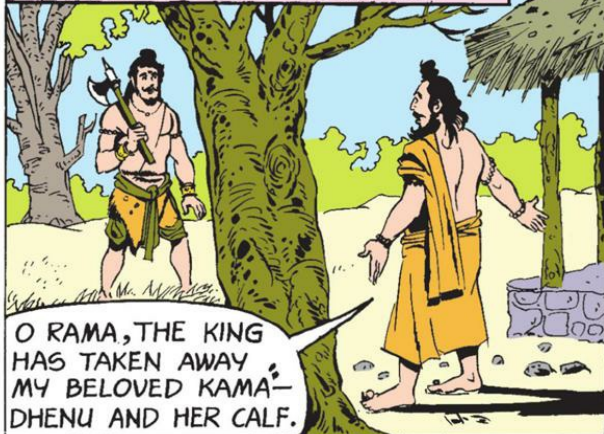
HE TURNED TO HIS MEN.



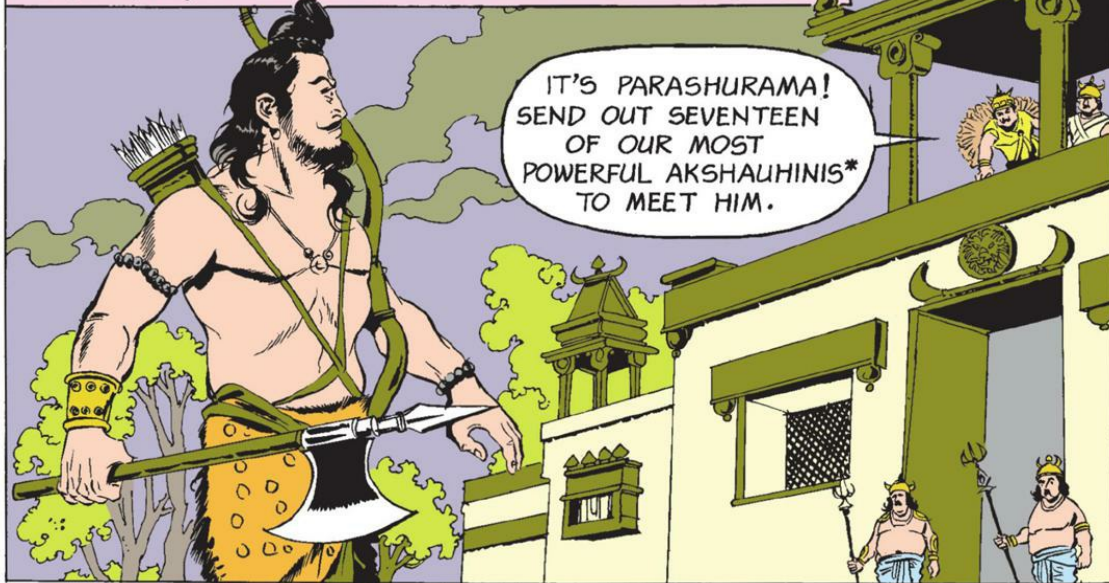
\*SEE AMAR CHITRA KATHA NO.764 - PARASHURAMA



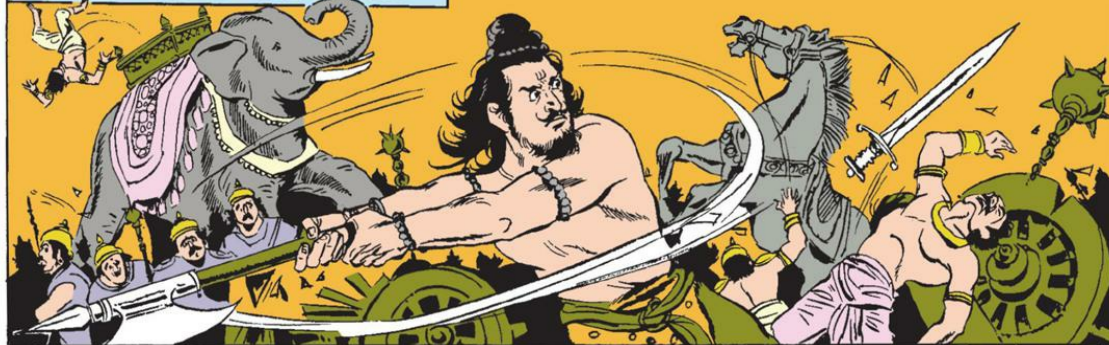
A FEW DAYS LATER, WHEN PARASHURAMA RETURNED TO THE HERMITAGE —



BRANDISHING HIS AXE, AN ENRAGED PARASHURAMA STORMED INTO MAHISHMATI, ARJUNA'S CAPITAL. ARJUNA WAS ALARMED.



BUT THE TERRIBLE PARASHURAMA DESTROYED THEM IN NO TIME. NOT A SINGLE MAN ESCAPED ALIVE.



\*AN AKSHAUHINI CONSISTED OF 1,09,350 INFANTRY, 65,610 CAVALRY, 21,870 CHARIOTS AND AN EQUAL NUMBER OF ELEPHANTS.



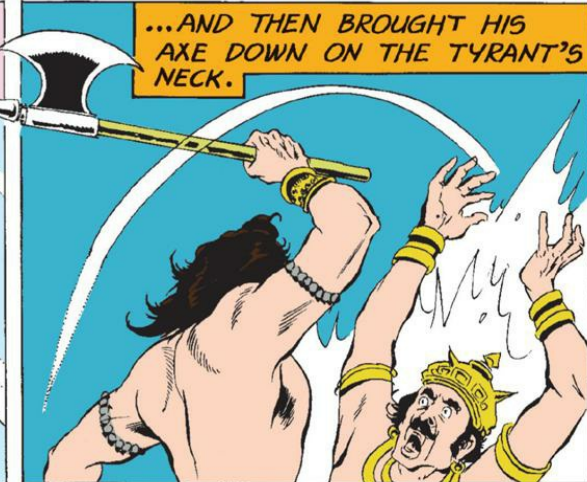
ENRAGED AT THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CORE OF HIS ARMY, ARJUNA HIMSELF RUSHED FORWARD. BUT —



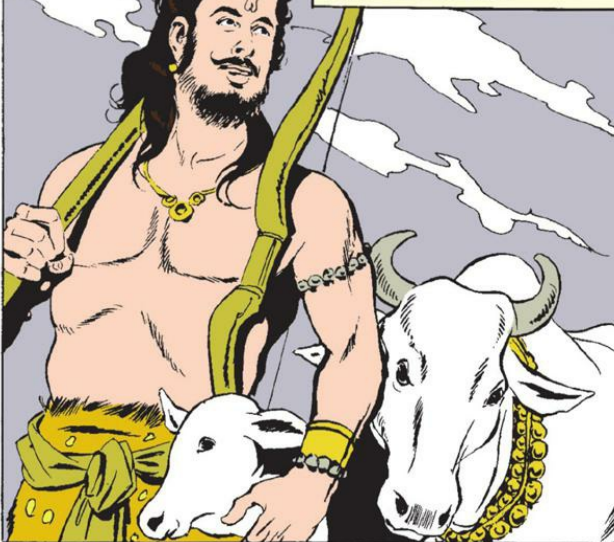
AS ARJUNA RUSHED TOWARDS HIM WITH UPROOTED TREES AND ROCKS, PARASHURAMA LOPPED OFF ALL HIS ARMS...



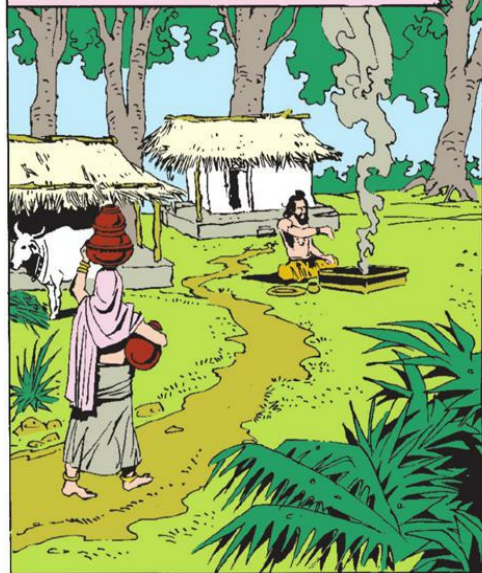
...AND THEN BROUGHT HIS AXE DOWN ON THE TYRANT'S NECK.



PARASHURAMA THEN LED KAMADHENU AND HER CALF TO HIS FATHER.



AND LIFE IN THE HERMITAGE WENT ON AS BEFORE.





BUT NOT FOR LONG. THE SONS OF ARJUNA WERE BENT ON AVENGING THE DEATH OF THEIR FATHER. ONE DAY, WHILE PARASHURAMA WAS AWAY IN THE WOODS...



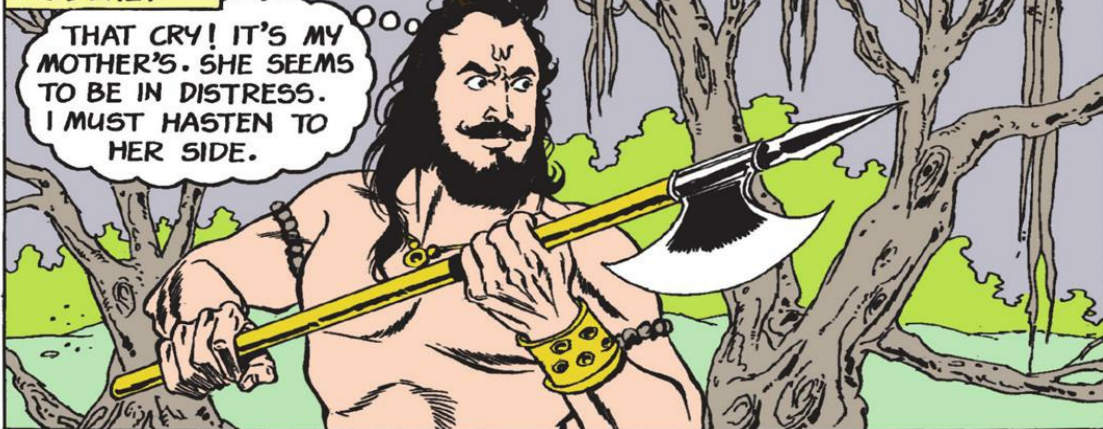
...THEY FELL UPON THE SAGE AND CUT OFF HIS HEAD.



RAMA! OH RAMA!



MEANWHILE, PARASHURAMA WAS ON HIS WAY BACK TO THE HERMITAGE. SUDDENLY —

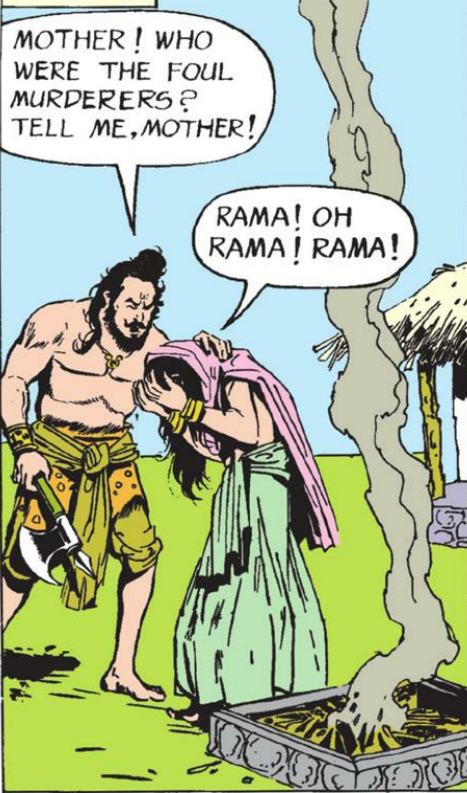




WHEN PARASHURAMA REACHED THE HERMITAGE, HE WAS AGHAST.

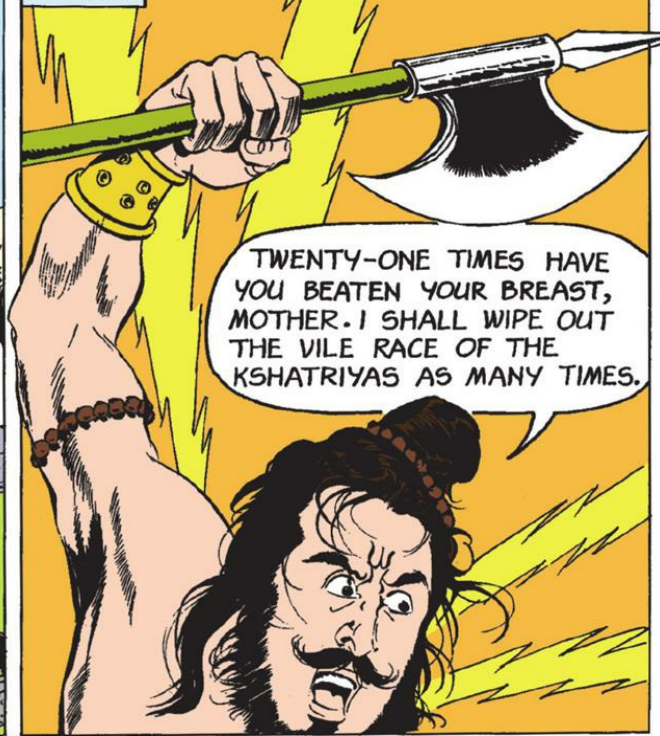
MOTHER! WHO WERE THE FOUL MURDERERS? TELL ME, MOTHER!

RAMA! OH RAMA! RAMA!

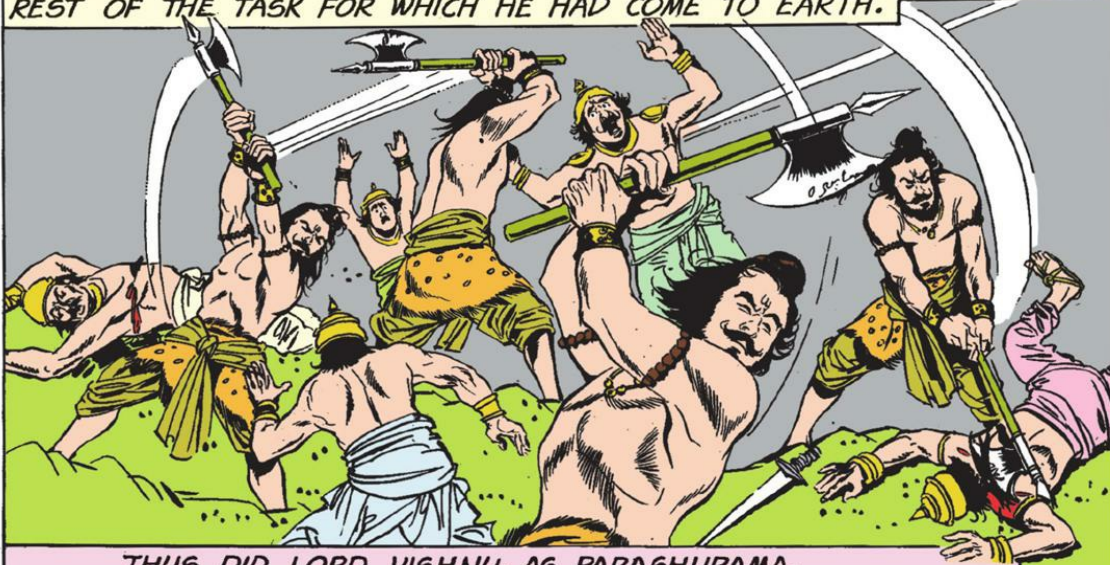


BUT RENUKA'S AGONY WAS SO DEEP THAT SHE COULD ONLY BEAT HER BREAST AND CRY. FULL OF GRIEF AND ANGER, PARASHURAMA MADE A VOW.

TWENTY-ONE TIMES HAVE YOU BEATEN YOUR BREAST, MOTHER. I SHALL WIPE OUT THE VILE RACE OF THE KSHATRIYAS AS MANY TIMES.

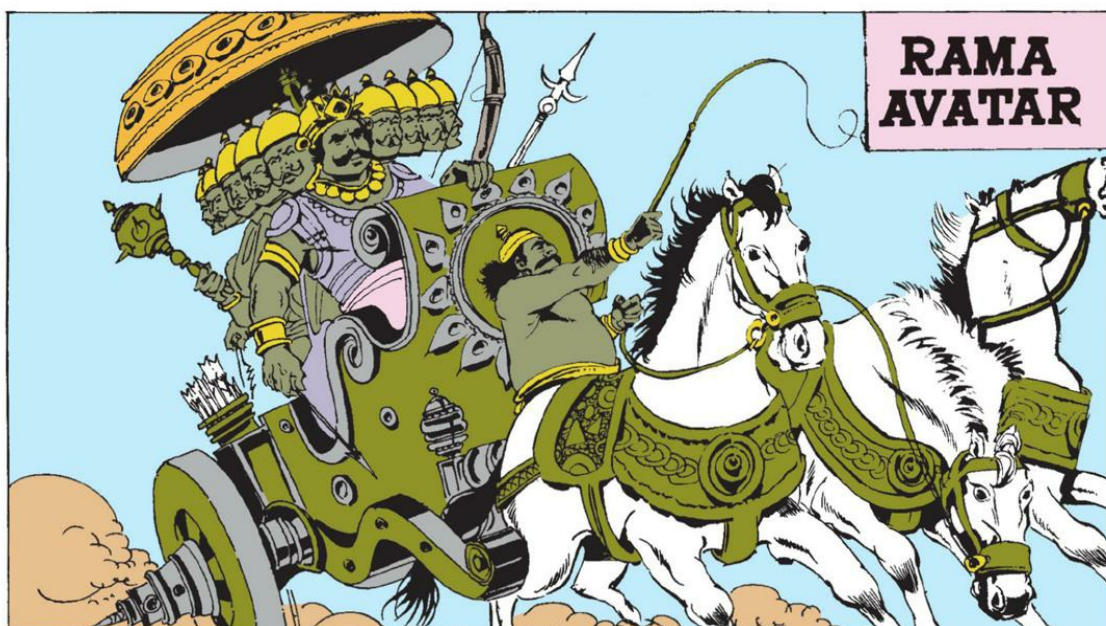


AND, GRIPPING HIS AXE, PARASHURAMA SET OUT TO ACCOMPLISH THE REST OF THE TASK FOR WHICH HE HAD COME TO EARTH.



THUS DID LORD VISHNU, AS PARASHURAMA, EXTERMINATE THOSE KSHATRIYAS WHO HAD BECOME A GREAT BURDEN TO BHOOMIDEVI AND HER CHILDREN.





## RAMA AVATAR

RAVANA\*, THE ARROGANT RAKSHASA KING OF THE ISLAND OF LANKA, HAD PERFORMED SEVERE PENANCES AND HAD SECURED BOONS WHICH MADE HIM ALL BUT IMMORTAL.

PERTURBED BY THE ATROCITIES COMMITTED BY THE RAKSHASA, THE DEVAS APPROACHED VISHNU FOR PROTECTION.



HE NOW PLANS  
TO INVADE OUR  
VERY REGIONS.

VISHNU REASSURED THEM.



DO NOT WORRY.  
TO SLAY HIM  
I SHALL MANIFEST  
MYSELF ON EARTH  
AS THE FOUR  
SONS OF DASHA-  
RATHA—WHOLLY  
IN RAMA, THE  
ELDEST, AND  
PARTIALLY IN  
HIS BROTHERS.

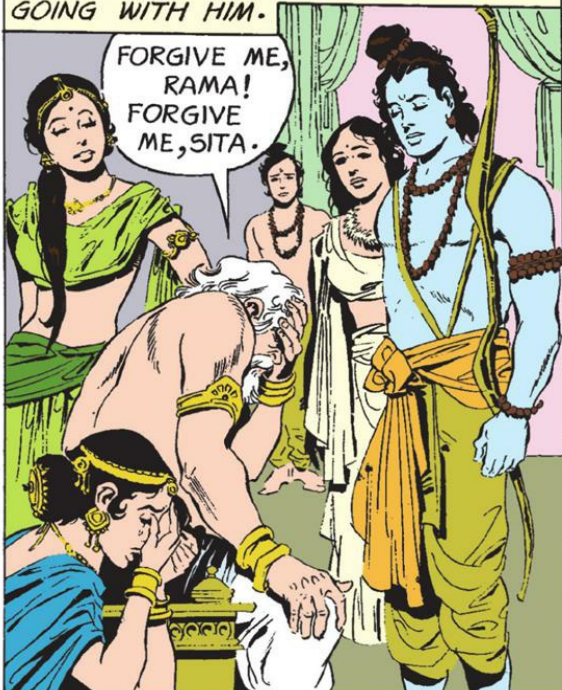
\* SEE AMAR CHITRA KATHA NO.541—THE LORD OF LANKA



ACCORDINGLY, FOUR SONS WERE BORN TO THE THREE QUEENS OF DASHARATHA,\*THE HEIRLESS KING OF AYODHYA. RAMA;THE ELDEST, TO KAUSALYA; BHARATA ,TO KAIKEYI; AND LAXMANA AND SHATRUGHNA ,TO SUMITRA.



BUT, A FEW YEARS LATER, INSTEAD OF CROWNING HIM YUVARAJA, A HEARTBROKEN DASHARATHA, BOUND BY A PROMISE, WAS COMPELLED TO BANISH RAMA TO THE FOREST FOR FOURTEEN YEARS. SITA, RAMA'S YOUNG WIFE, AND LAXMANA INSISTED ON GOING WITH HIM.

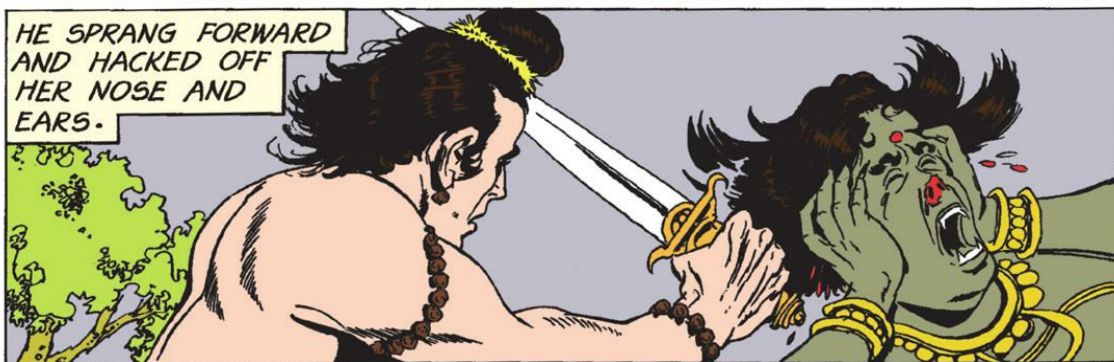
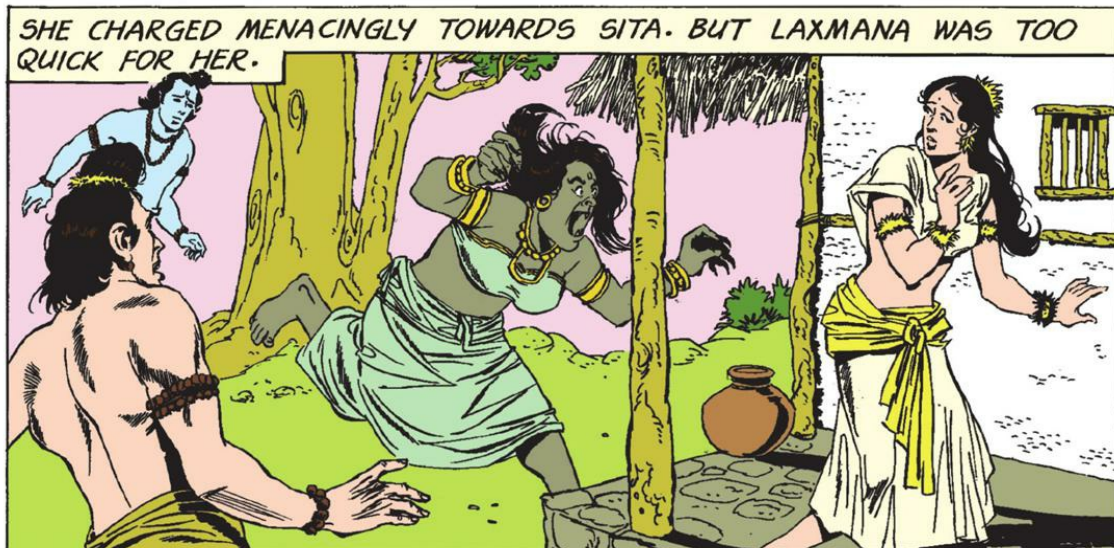


WHILE THEY WERE IN THE FOREST —



\*SEE AMAR CHITRA KATHA NO. 570 — DASHARATHA AND NO. 504 — RAMA.





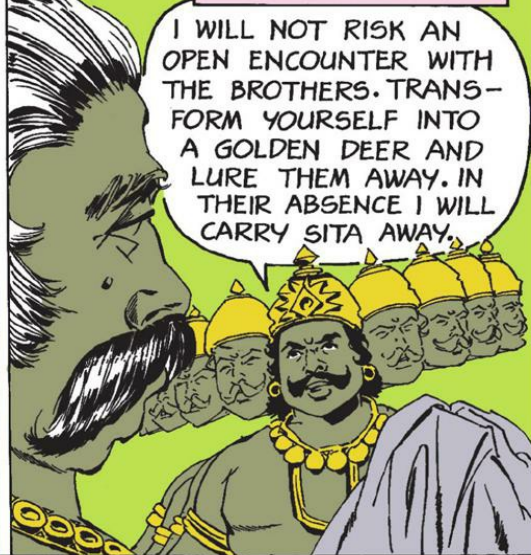


A TEARFUL, DISFIGURED SHOOR-PANAKHA STOOD BEFORE RAVANA.



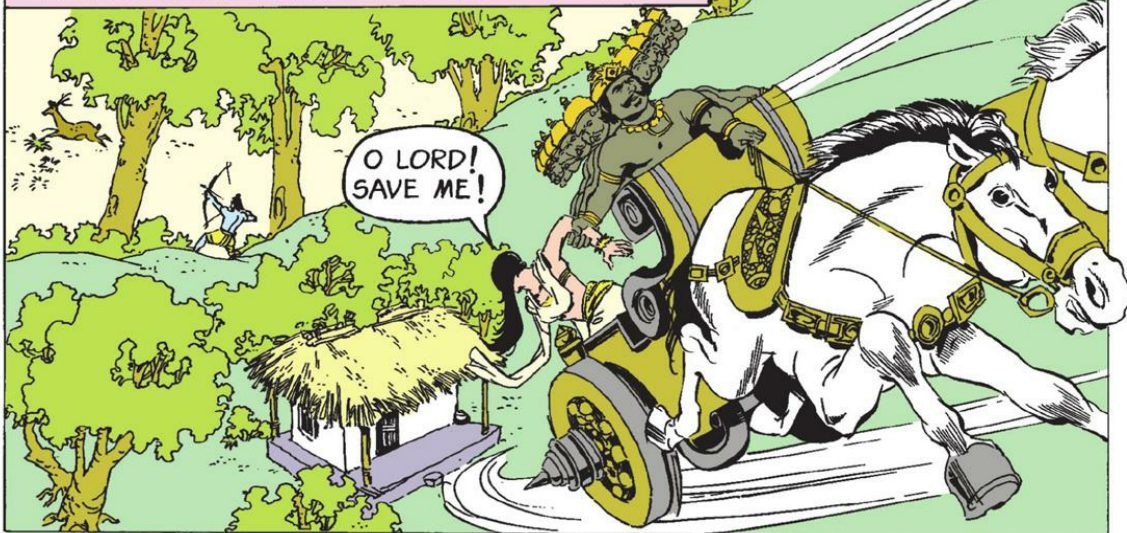
SINCE THEIR LOVE FOR SITA MADE THEM DO THIS TO YOU, I SHALL PUNISH THEM BY ABDUCTING HER FOR MYSELF.

RAVANA TOOK THE HELP OF HIS UNCLE MAREECHA.



I WILL NOT RISK AN OPEN ENCOUNTER WITH THE BROTHERS. TRANSFORM YOURSELF INTO A GOLDEN DEER AND LURE THEM AWAY. IN THEIR ABSENCE I WILL CARRY SITA AWAY.

RAVANA'S RUSE WORKED AND BEFORE LONG —



O LORD! SAVE ME!

IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED WHILE RAMA AND LAXMANA WANDERED IN THE FOREST NOT KNOWING WHERE TO LOOK FOR SITA, THEY WON THE AFFECTION OF SUGREEVA, THE KING OF THE MONKEYS.

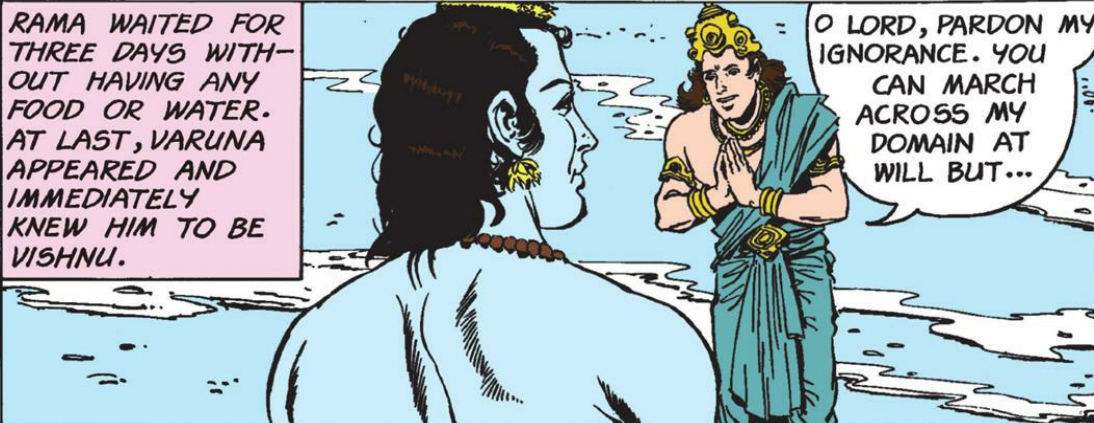
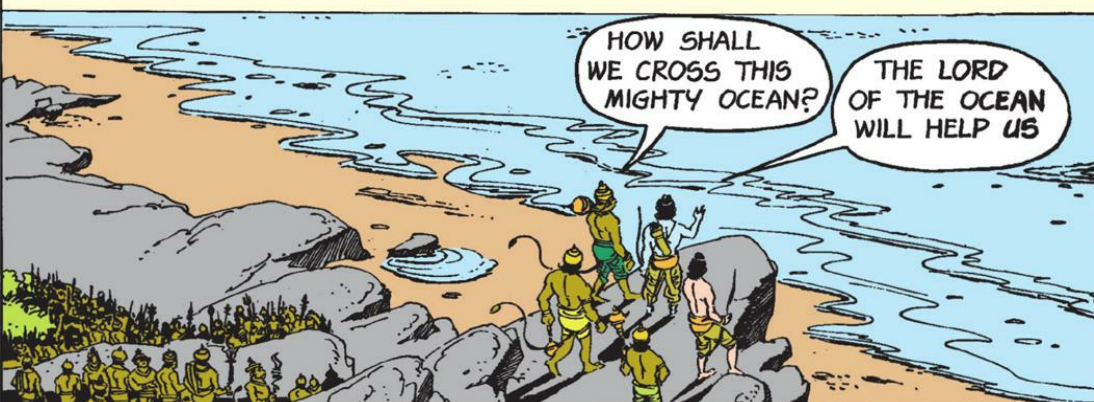


WE SHALL HELP YOU FIND SITA, WHEREVER SHE MAY BE.





AT THE SEASHORE —



\*SEE AMAR CHITRA KATHA NO.502 - HANUMAN

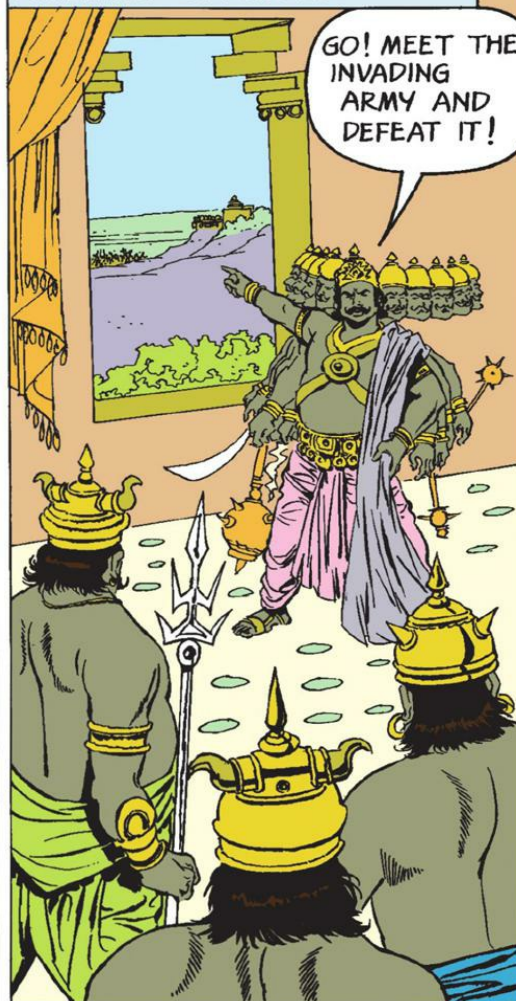




ASSISTED BY THE MONKEYS AND OTHER CREATURES OF THE FOREST, A BRIDGE WAS SOON LAID BY RAMA AND LAXMANA, ACROSS THE SEAS TO THE SHORE OF LANKA.

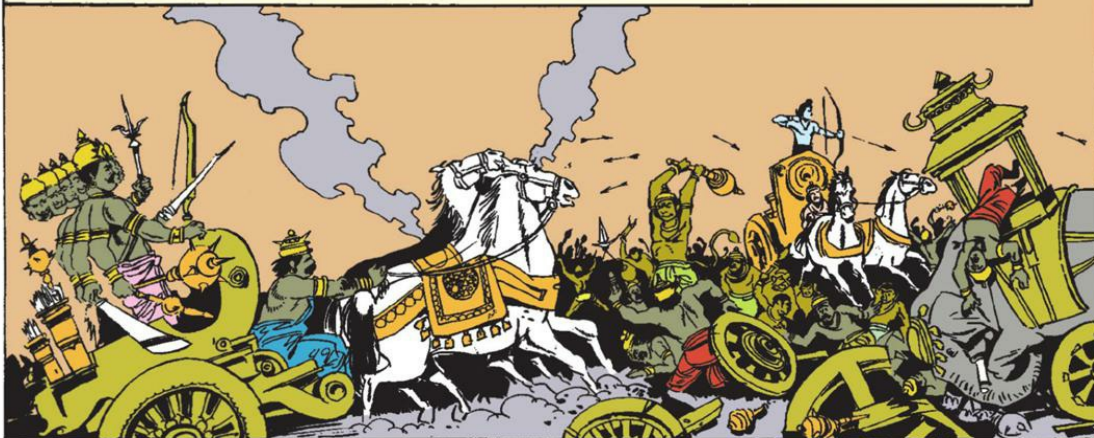


AS RAVANA SAW THE TWO BROTHERS AND THEIR HORDES APPROACH, HE SENT FOR HIS SON, HIS BROTHER AND HIS FOREMOST WARRIORS.





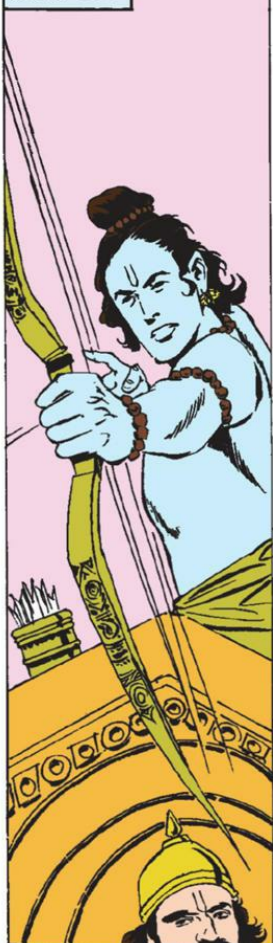
BUT RAMA, SUGREEVA, LAXMANA, HANUMAN AND THEIR WILD HORDES EFFORTLESSLY DESTROYED RAVANA'S HUGE ARMY OF ELEPHANTS, CAVALRY, INFANTRY AND CHARIOTS, IN A SINGLE ENCOUNTER!



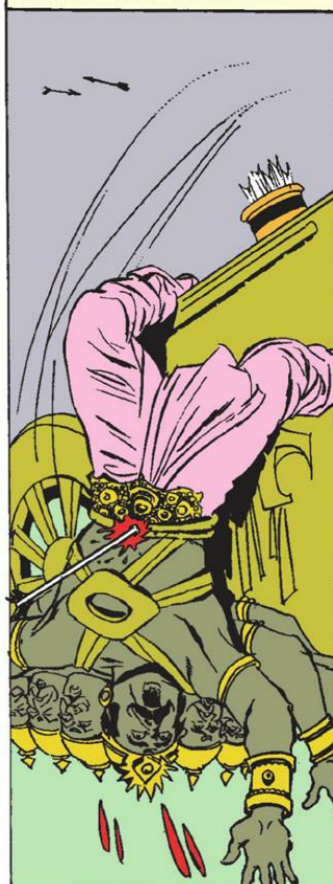
RAVANA WAS FURIOUS. HE RUSHED TOWARDS RAMA. BUT —



AND WITH ONE TWANG OF HIS BOW...



...VISHNU, AS RAMA, COMPLETED THE MISSION FOR WHICH HE HAD TAKEN HIS BIRTH ON EARTH.







## KRISHNA AVATAR

ON THE EVE OF THE DAWN OF THE KALI YUGA, MANY TYRANTS LIKE KAMSA (AND THE DEMONS IN HIS PAY), JARASANDHA, SHISHUPALA, THE KAURAVAS AND THEIR HORDES, MOLESTED BHOOMIDEVI OFTEN IN THE ROLES OF ARROGANT KINGS.

DISTRESSED, SHE STOOD BEFORE BRAHMA IN THE FORM OF A DISCONSOLATE COW.



I SEEK REFUGE  
IN YOU, O LORD.  
RID ME OF MY  
BURDEN.

WHEN BRAHMA IN TURN PRAYED  
TO VISHNU FOR GUIDANCE —



I KNOW OF BHOO MI  
DEVI'S DISTRESS. SHESHA\*  
AND I SHALL COME DOWN  
AS THE SEVENTH AND  
EIGHTH SONS OF VASUDEVA  
TO FREE HER OF HER BURDEN.  
THE DEVAS, MEANWHILE,  
SHOULD PRECEDE US AS  
VIRTUOUS MEN AND  
AWAIT OUR DESCENT.

\*THE SERPENT ON WHOM VISHNU RESTS.



AT THAT MOMENT, VASUDEVA, A YADAVA NOBLEMAN OF MATHURA, WAS GETTING MARRIED TO DEVAKI, KING UGRASENA'S NIECE.



LATER, WHEN UGRASENA'S SON, KAMSA, AFFECTIONATELY TOOK THE REINS TO DRIVE THE COUPLE'S CHARIOT, AN ORACLE SPOKE FROM THE SKIES.



O FOOLISH KAMSA, THE EIGHTH SON OF THIS VERY GIRL IS DESTINED TO SLAY YOU.

AN ENRAGED KAMSA SEIZED DEVAKI BY THE HAIR AND RAISED HIS SWORD TO BRING IT DOWN ON HER...



...WHEN A HAND STOPPED HIM.



IT BELONGED TO THE GENTLE VASUDEVA.



I PROMISE TO HAND OVER TO YOU EVERY CHILD BORN TO HER. LET HER LIVE.

AND I WILL CLING TO THE HOPE THAT DIVINE INTERVENTION WILL SAVE OUR OFFSPRING WHEN THE TIME COMES.

KAMSA AGREED AND THE PROCESSION MOVED ON.



BUT, TERRIFIED BY THE PREDICTION, KAMSA IMPRISONED UGRASENA AND ASSUMING ALL POWER, BECAME THE RULER OF MATHURA.

THOUGH I TOO AM A YADAVA, SINCE A YADAVA IS DESTINED TO BE MY KILLER, I SHALL PERSECUTE AND DESTROY THE RACE.



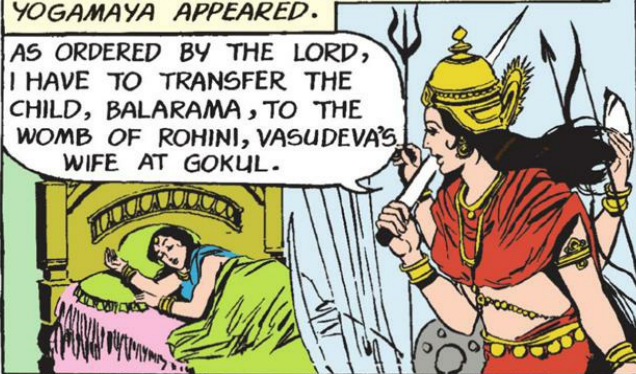
MEANWHILE, TRUE TO HIS WORD, VASUDEVA HANDED OVER TO KAMSA'S MEN THE FIRST SIX SONS BORN TO DEVAKI.

PUT THE VILE INFANT TO DEATH.



WHEN THE SEVENTH CHILD WAS ABOUT TO BE BORN, VISHNU'S DIVINE POWER, YOGAMAYA APPEARED.

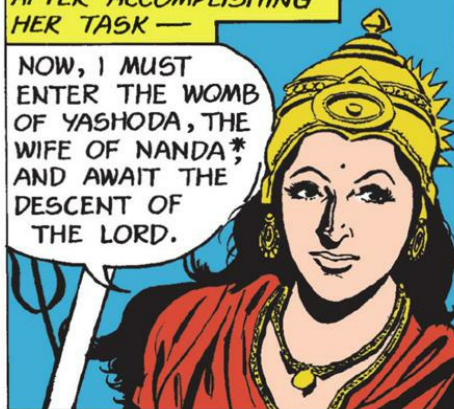
AS ORDERED BY THE LORD, I HAVE TO TRANSFER THE CHILD, BALARAMA, TO THE WOMB OF ROHINI, VASUDEVA'S WIFE AT GOKUL.



THIS WAS TO MISLEAD KAMSA INTO BELIEVING THAT DEVAKI HAD LOST HER SEVENTH CHILD.

AFTER ACCOMPLISHING HER TASK —

NOW, I MUST ENTER THE WOMB OF YASHODA, THE WIFE OF NANDA\*, AND AWAIT THE DESCENT OF THE LORD.



A FEW MONTHS LATER, LORD VISHNU APPEARED BEFORE THE AWESTRUCK DEVAKI AND VASUDEVA.

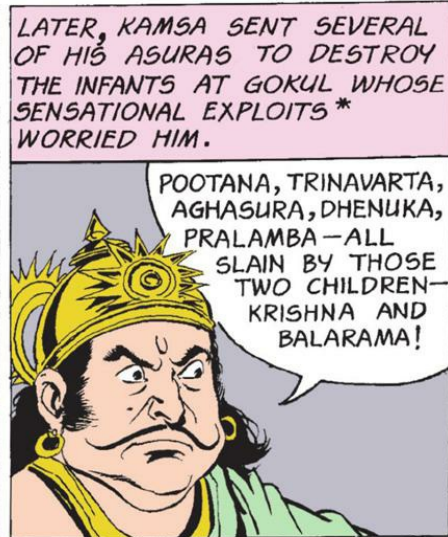
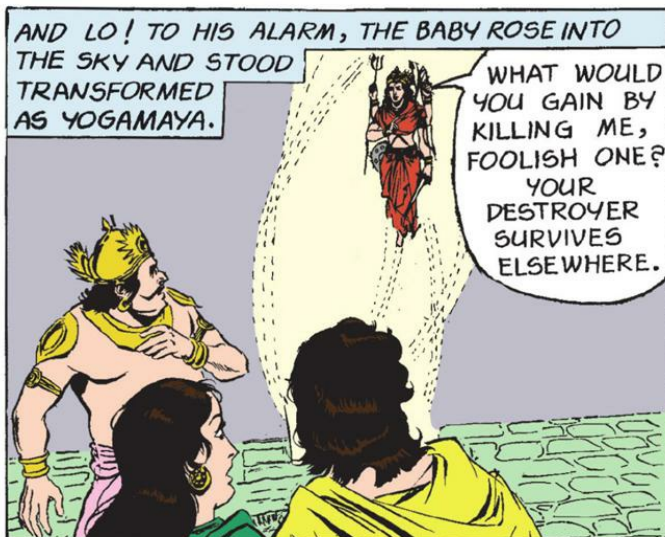
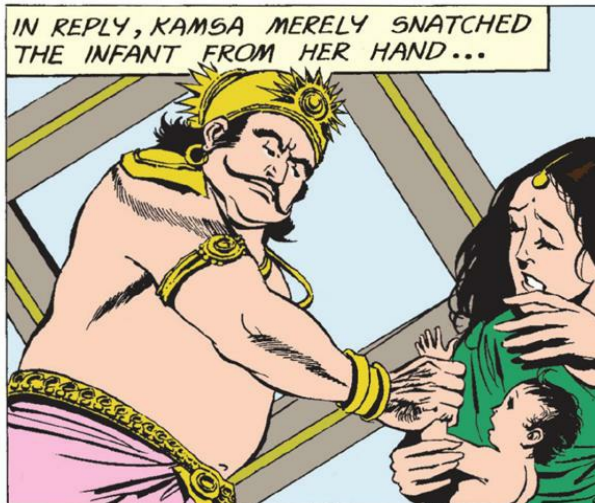
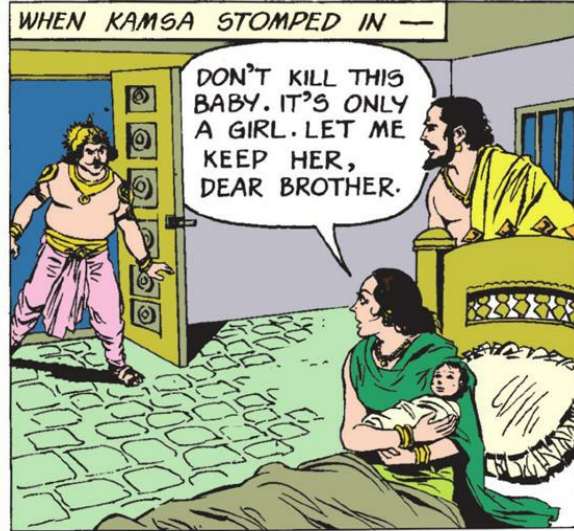


VASUDEVA, TAKE ME TO GOKUL AND LEAVE ME IN THE BED OF YASHODA. THEN BRING BACK THE GIRL THAT HAS BEEN BORN TO HER.

AND FORTHWITH VISHNU ASSUMED THE FORM OF A SMALL DARK BABY, WHO CAME TO BE KNOWN AS KRISHNA.

\* A COWHERD CHIEF AT GOKUL





\* FOR DETAILS READ AMAR CHITRA KATHA NO. 501—KRISHNA.





DELIGHTED BY THE INVITATION, THE BOYS CAME TO MATHURA. AS THEY PASSED THE HALL WHERE THE BOW WAS DISPLAYED —



KRISHNA NOT ONLY BENT THE BOW BUT PULLED ITS STRING SO TAUT THAT IT BROKE WITH A RESOUNDING CRASH...



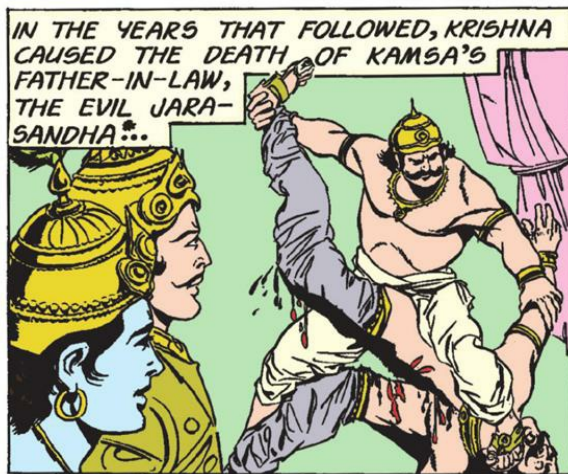
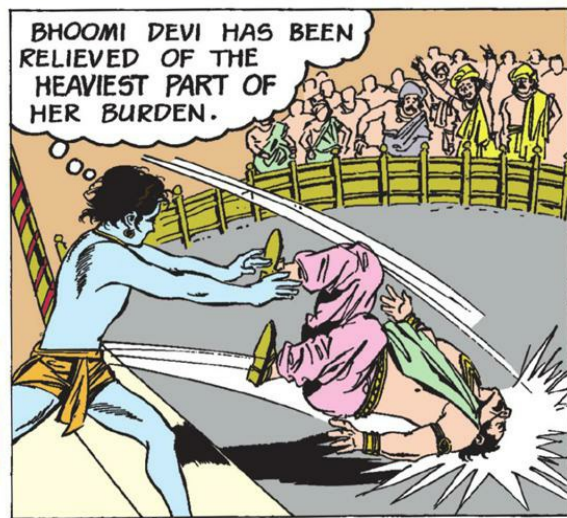
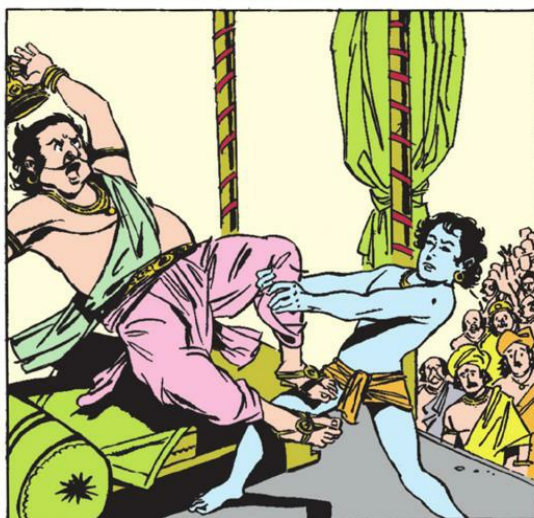
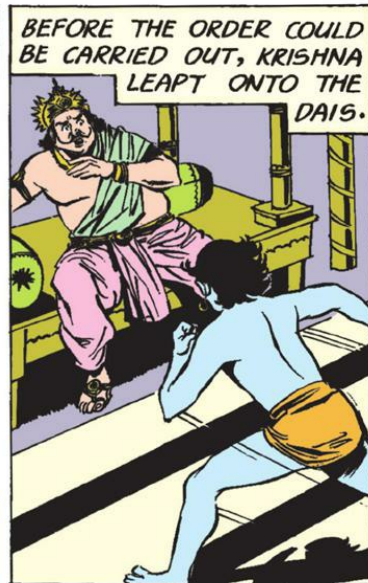
...WHICH REACHED KAMSA'S EARS AS HE RELAXED IN HIS PALACE.



THE DAY OF THE FESTIVAL DAWNED. THE TRUMPET GAVE THE SIGNAL FOR THE GAMES TO BEGIN. THE MIGHTY WRESTLER CHANURA TOOK ON KRISHNA, AND HIS PARTNER, MUSHTIKA, BALARAMA.







\*SEE AMAR CHITRA KATHA NO.518 — KRISHNA AND JARASANDHA



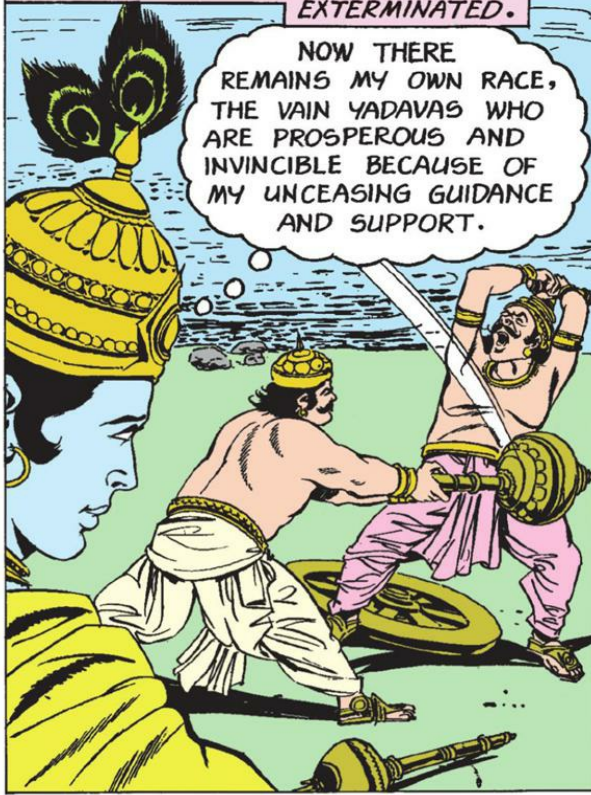
SOON AFTER THAT, KRISHNA'S COUSINS, THE VIRTUOUS PANDAVAS, WERE UNLAWFULLY DEPRIVED OF THEIR KINGDOM BY THEIR COUSINS, THE ARROGANT KAURAVAS, AND WAR BROKE OUT BETWEEN THEM.

I WILL SOON BE ABLE TO RID BHOOMI DEVI OF THE KAURAVAS.

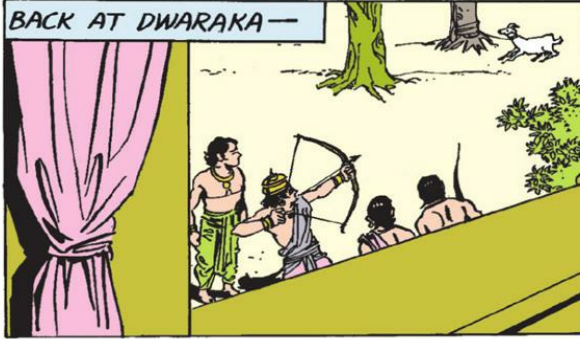


IN THAT WAR THE KAURAVAS WERE EXTERMINATED.

NOW THERE REMAINS MY OWN RACE, THE VAIN YADAVAS WHO ARE PROSPEROUS AND INVINCIBLE BECAUSE OF MY UNCEASING GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT.



BACK AT DWARAKA—



I SHALL CAUSE THE ARROGANT YADAVA YOUTHS TO TEASE THE RISHIS AND INVITE THEIR OWN DESTRUCTION. THEN BALARAMA AND I WILL BE FREE TO WITHDRAW OURSELVES FROM THE WORLD.

AT THAT TIME, THE RISHIS—NARADA, VISHWAMITRA, KANVA, DURVASA, VASISHTHA AND OTHERS—WERE LIVING NEAR DWARAKA.



LET US DRESS SAMBA AS A PREGNANT GIRL AND REQUEST THE RISHIS TO PREDICT THE SEX OF THE EXPECTED CHILD.

AN EXCELLENT IDEA!



WHEN THEY PUT THEIR QUERY TO THE ALL-KNOWING RISHIS, HOWEVER—

HOW DARE THE PRANKSTERS TRIFLE WITH US?

SHE IS BEARING A MACE WHICH WILL DESTROY YOUR RACE, IGNORANT FOOLS!



THE TERRIFIED YOUTHS SEARCHED SAMBA.

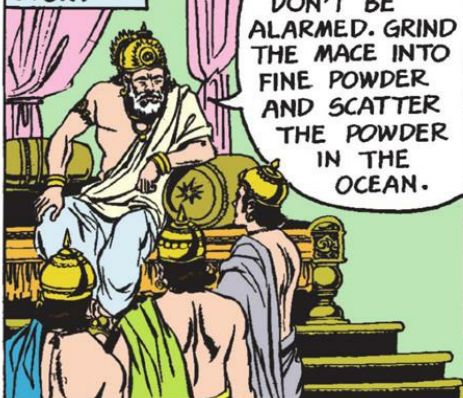
WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH IT?

LET US TAKE IT TO UGRASENA AND CONFESS OUR CRIME.



WHEN UGRASENA HEARD THEIR STORY—

DON'T BE ALARMED. GRIND THE MACE INTO FINE POWDER AND SCATTER THE POWDER IN THE OCEAN.



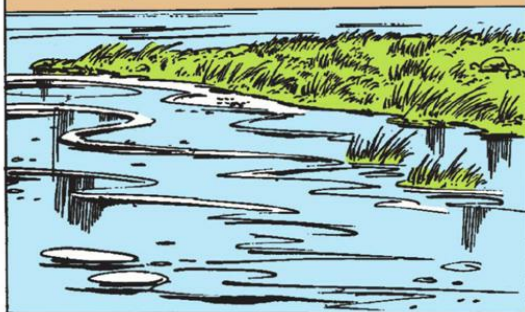
THE ORDER WAS CARRIED OUT.

THIS PIECE IS TOO HARD. TRY AS I MIGHT I COULD NOT POUND IT.

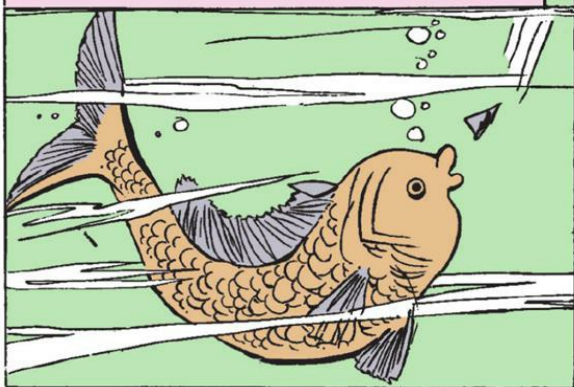
THEN THROW IT IN AS IT IS.



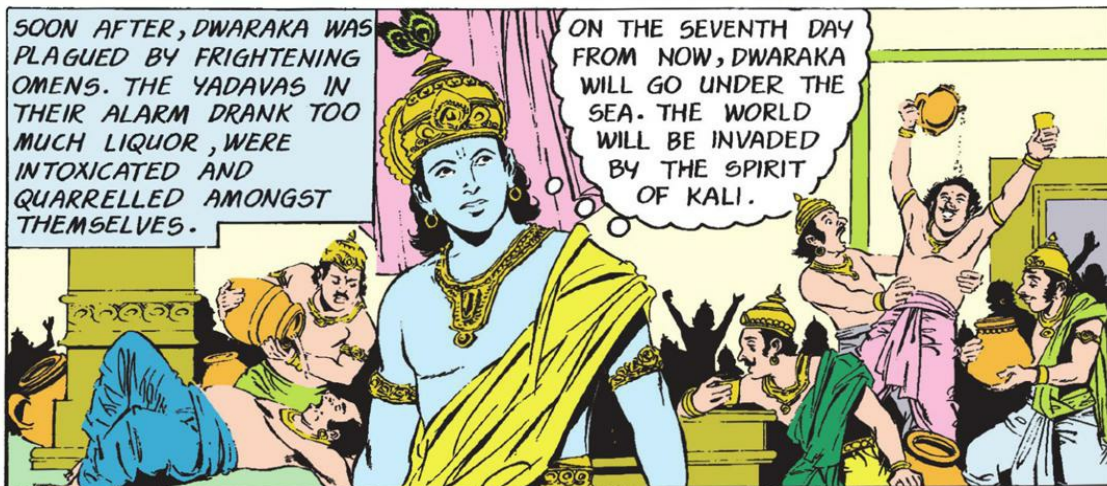
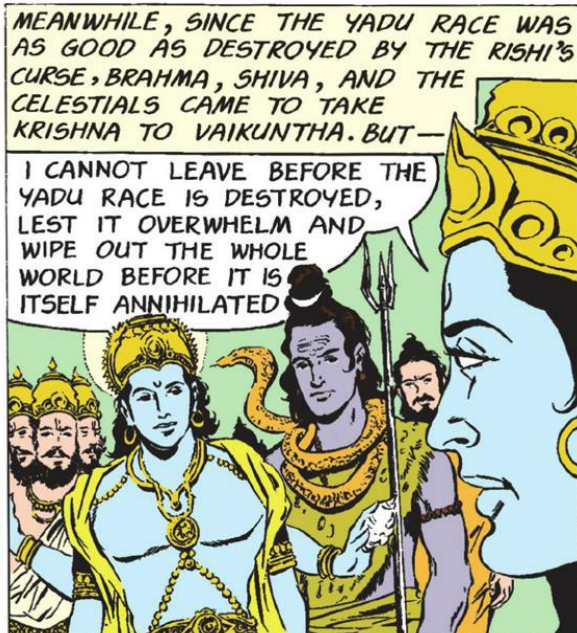
BUT THE POWDER WAS WASHED BACK TO THE SHORE WHERE IT GREW INTO A GRASS CALLED ERAKA.



AND THE PIECE THAT COULD NOT BE GROUND WAS SWALLOWED BY A FISH.

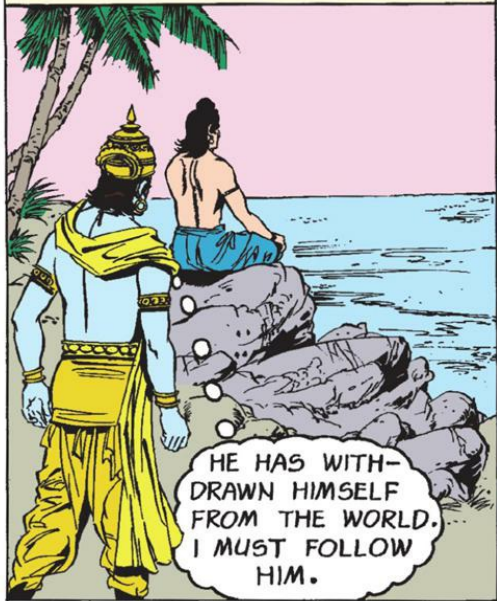








HE WENT TO LOOK FOR BALARAMA AND FOUND HIM ALREADY SEATED IN MEDITATION BY THE SEASHORE.



KRISHNA SAT UNDER A PEEPUL TREE AND LEANED BACK AGAINST IT.

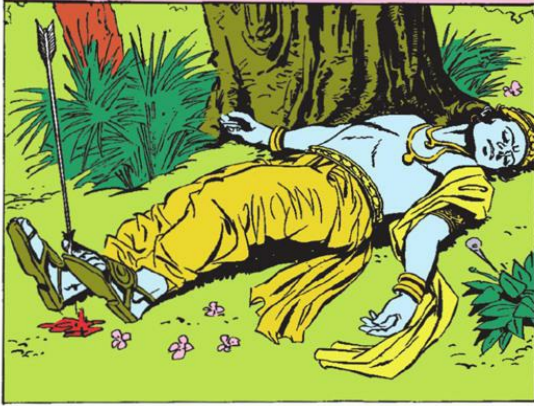


JARA, THE HUNTER, WHO WAS PASSING BY, MISTOOK HIS FOOT TO BE THE MOUTH OF A DEER AND TOOK AIM.

THIS ARROW CANNOT FAIL ME. IT'S THE ONE I MADE WITH THE PIECE OF IRON THAT WAS STUCK IN THE FISH'S MAW.



THE ARROW FOUND ITS MARK AND BROUGHT TO AN END THE MOST GLORIOUS AVATAR OF LORD VISHNU.

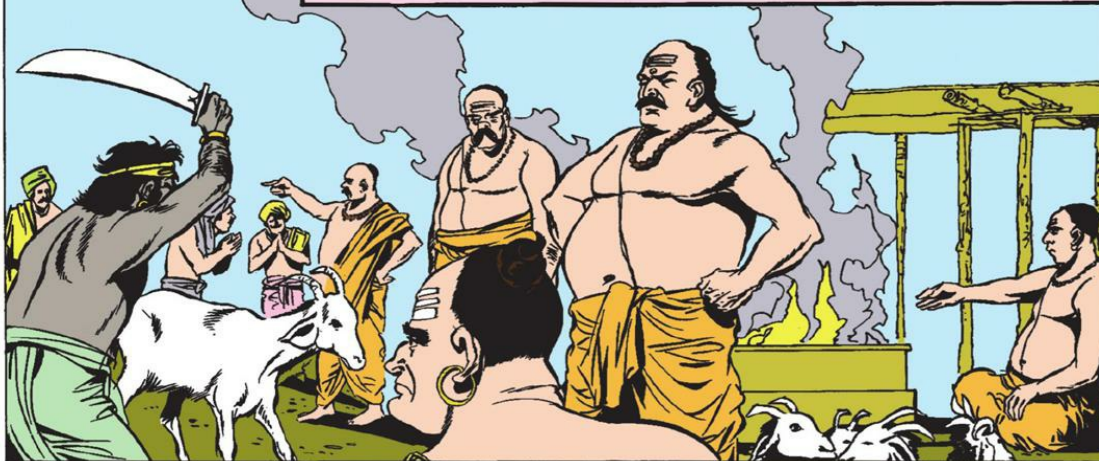


THE HEAVENS RAINED FLOWERS AND CELESTIAL MUSIC FILLED THE SKY AS VISHNU PASSED ON FROM EARTH TO HIS ABODE IN VAIKUNTHA.





# BUDDHA AVATAR



WITH KRISHNA'S DEPARTURE FROM EARTH, THE AGE OF KALI SET IN. HINDUISM LOST MUCH OF ITS PURITY. THE AUTHORITY OF THE VEDAS BECAME QUESTIONABLE. EMPTY RITUALS REPLACED TRUE DEVOTION TO GOD AND POWER-DRUNK BRAHMAN PRIESTS EXPLOITED AND OPPRESSED THE OTHER CASTES.

MAYADEVI, THE QUEEN OF THE SAKYA KING, SHUDDHODANA OF KAPILAVASTU, HAD A STRANGE DREAM. A WHITE ELEPHANT WITH SIX TUSKS PIERCED HER WOMB.



A FEW MONTHS LATER, SHE WAS PASSING THROUGH THE LUMBINI GARDENS ON HER WAY TO HER PARENTAL HOME. AS SHE RESTED BENEATH A SAL TREE, SHE GAVE BIRTH TO A CHILD.



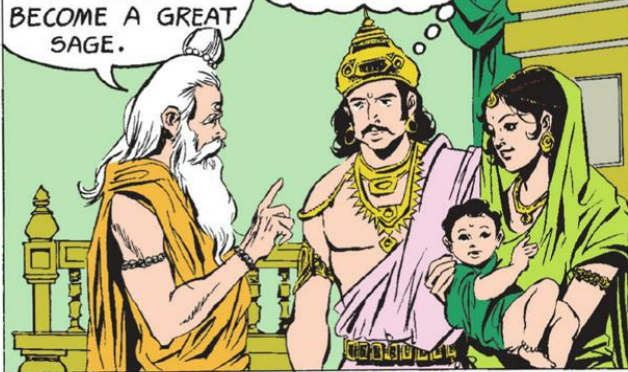
IT'S A BOY, YOUR MAJESTY! HE IS AS LUSTROUS AS THE FULL MOON ABOVE.



LATER, AT THE PALACE, SAGE ASITA CAME TO SEE THE INFANT.

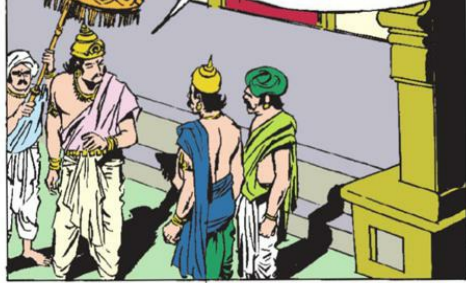
THIS CHILD WILL EITHER BECOME A GREAT EMPEROR OR WILL RENOUNCE THE WORLD AND BECOME A GREAT SAGE.

IF I CAN HELP IT, HE SHALL BECOME A KING OF KINGS AND NOT A SAGE.



WHEN SIDDHARTHA, AS THE CHILD WAS NAMED, GREW INTO A YOUNG LAD —

THE PRINCE SHALL NOT STEP BEYOND THE CONFINES OF HIS PALACE. LET HIM NEVER KNOW OF THE MISERIES OF OLD AGE, DISEASE OR DEATH. PROVIDE HIM WITH ALL THE LUXURIES IMAGINABLE.

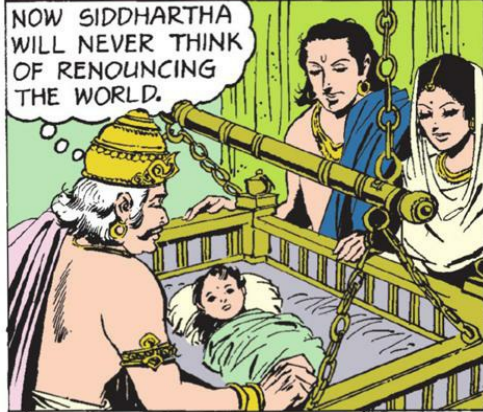


AS SOON AS SIDDHARTHA, THE PRINCE WHO WAS IGNORANT OF THE PAIN AND MISERY OF THIS WORLD, CAME OF AGE, HE WAS MARRIED TO YASHODHARA, THE DAUGHTER OF A SAKYA NOBLE.



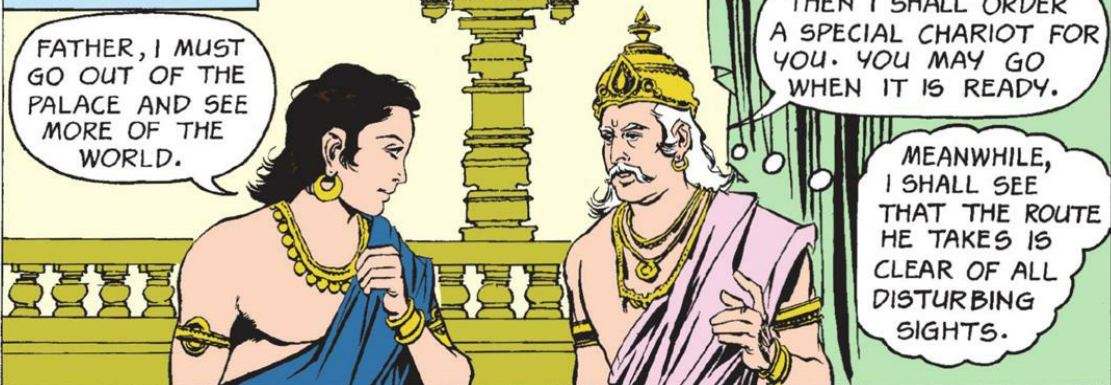
IN DUE COURSE, A SON WAS BORN TO THEM AND SIDDHARTHA HAD ALL THAT A MAN COULD WANT.

NOW SIDDHARTHA WILL NEVER THINK OF RENOUNCING THE WORLD.



BUT ONE DAY, A STRANGE URGE CAME OVER SIDDHARTHA. HE WENT TO SHUDDHODANA.

FATHER, I MUST GO OUT OF THE PALACE AND SEE MORE OF THE WORLD.

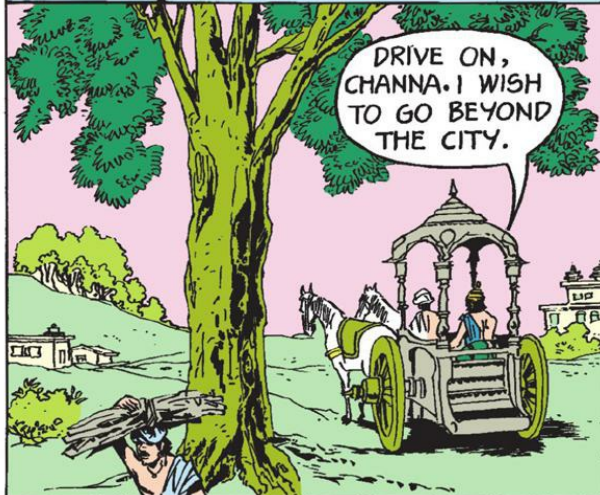


THEN I SHALL ORDER A SPECIAL CHARIOT FOR YOU. YOU MAY GO WHEN IT IS READY.

MEANWHILE, I SHALL SEE THAT THE ROUTE HE TAKES IS CLEAR OF ALL DISTURBING SIGHTS.



A FEW DAYS LATER, SIDDHARTHA RODE OUT IN A CHARIOT DRIVEN BY CHANNA. WHEN THEY REACHED THE CITY LIMITS —



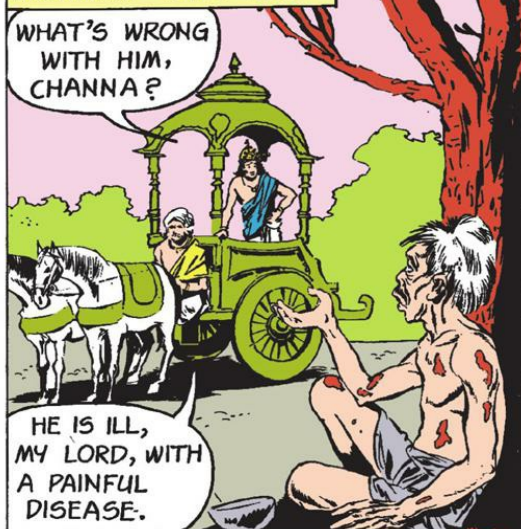
AS THEY DROVE FURTHER —



WHEN THEY RETURNED TO THE PALACE, THE PRINCE BROODED OVER WHAT HE HAD SEEN.



THIS TIME THEY SAW A SICK MAN, GROANING WITH PAIN.



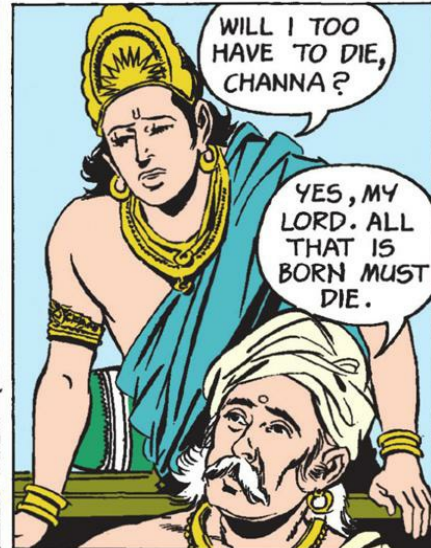


SIDDHARTHA'S GREED FOR MORE KNOWLEDGE ON WHAT HAD HITHERTO BEEN CONCEALED FROM HIM GREW. HE MADE ANOTHER TOUR.



CHANNA! WHY ARE THEY CARRYING THAT MAN? IS HE OLD? IS HE ILL?

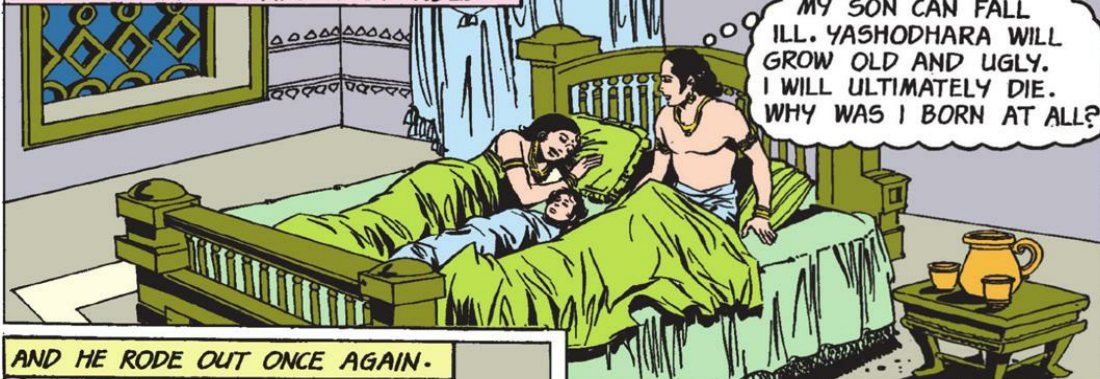
NO, MY LORD. IT'S MUCH WORSE. HE IS DEAD.



WILL I TOO HAVE TO DIE, CHANNA?

YES, MY LORD. ALL THAT IS BORN MUST DIE.

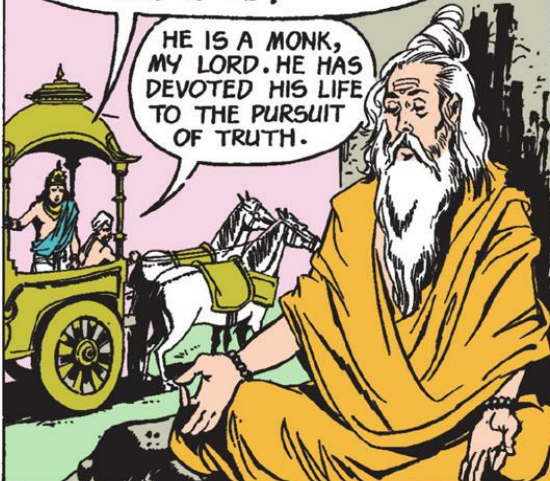
AS SIDDHARTHA PONDERED ON WHAT HE HAD SEEN, HIS LIFE OF EASE AND LUXURY BEGAN TO PALL ON HIM. HE NO LONGER FOUND JOY IN ANYTHING. HE WAS UNHAPPY AND DISTURBED.



MY SON CAN FALL ILL. YASHODHARA WILL GROW OLD AND UGLY. I WILL ULTIMATELY DIE. WHY WAS I BORN AT ALL?

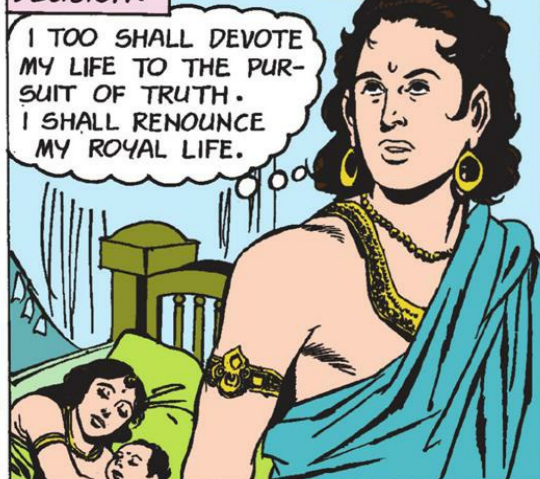
AND HE RODE OUT ONCE AGAIN.

STOP, CHANNA! THAT FACE! HOW CALM! HOW SERENE IT LOOKS! WHO IS HE?



HE IS A MONK, MY LORD. HE HAS DEVOTED HIS LIFE TO THE PURSUIT OF TRUTH.

THAT NIGHT SIDDHARTHA MADE A DECISION.



I TOO SHALL DEVOTE MY LIFE TO THE PURSUIT OF TRUTH. I SHALL RENOUNCE MY ROYAL LIFE.



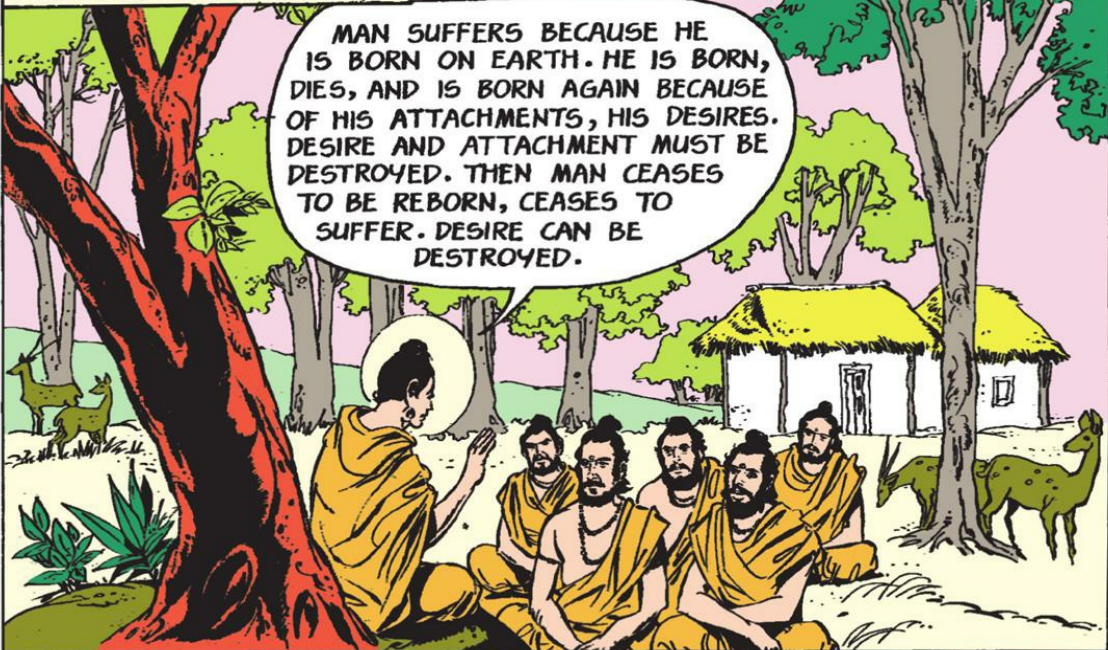
SO SIDDHARTHA LEFT THE PALACE AND BECAME AN ASCETIC. AFTER YEARS OF BITTER STRUGGLES, HE PERCEIVED TRUTH, AS HE SAT MEDITATING UNDER A BODHI TREE.



AND SIDDHARTHA, THE PRINCE, BECAME BUDDHA\*—THE ENLIGHTENED ONE.



THEN BUDDHA CAME BACK TO LIVE AMONGST MEN AND TEACH THEM WHAT HE HAD LEARNT. HE HELD HIS FIRST SERMON IN THE DEER PARK AT SARNATH, NEAR VARANASI.

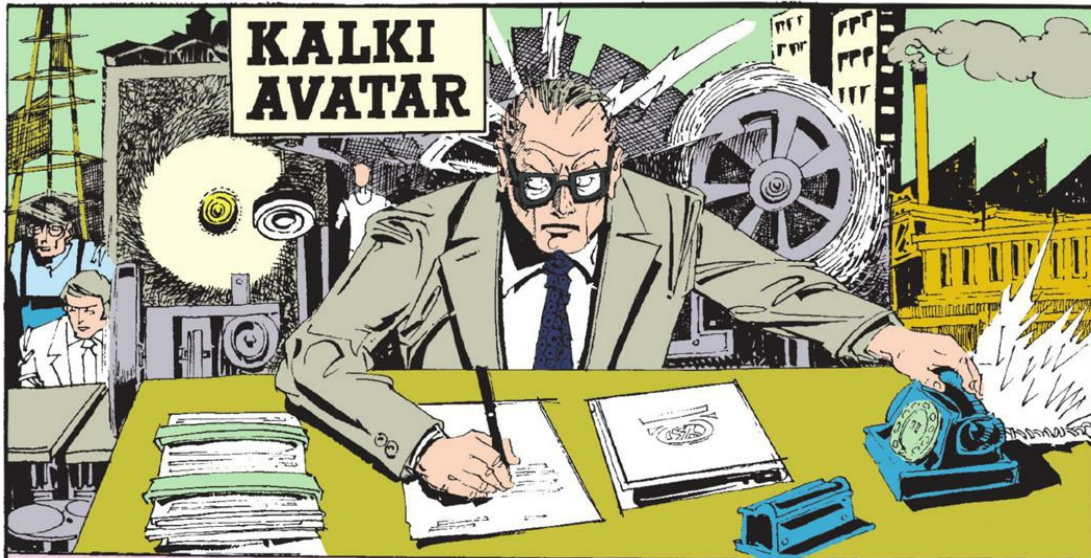


MAN SUFFERS BECAUSE HE IS BORN ON EARTH. HE IS BORN, DIES, AND IS BORN AGAIN BECAUSE OF HIS ATTACHMENTS, HIS DESIRES. DESIRE AND ATTACHMENT MUST BE DESTROYED. THEN MAN CEASES TO BE REBORN, CEASES TO SUFFER. DESIRE CAN BE DESTROYED.

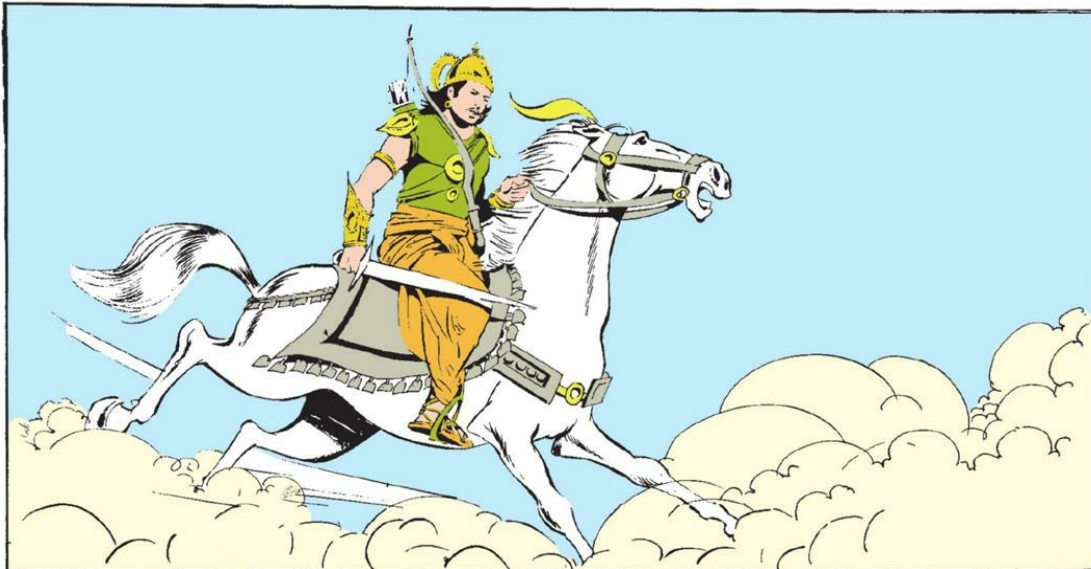
FOR MANY YEARS DID BUDDHA PREACH, AND MANY WERE THOSE WHO SOUGHT REFUGE IN HIM AND IN HIS TEACHINGS. WHAT HE COULD GIVE, HOWEVER, TOUCHED BUT A DROP OF WATER IN THE SEA OF HUMANITY THAT WAS TOSSED BY THE MISERIES FORETOLD FOR THE KALI YUGA.

\* SEE AMAR CHITRA KATHA NO. 510—BUDDHA.





MANY GOOD MEN WALKED THE EARTH AFTER BUDDHA BUT INSIGNIFICANT WAS THE EFFECT THEY HAD AGAINST THE GROWING SUPREMACY OF EVIL AND EVIL ONES ON EARTH. WITH THE ADVANCE OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE THE LONGEVITY OF MAN HAS INCREASED BUT WITH THE ADVANCE IN TECHNOLOGY, MAN'S LIFE HAS BECOME A NIGHTMARE OF HYPERTENSIONS AND POLLUTION. BUT NOT ALL HOPE IS LOST.



"FOR WHEN THE AGE REACHES ITS NADIR AND ITS WORST FORCES HAVE WELL NIGH SPENT THEMSELVES, VISHNU WILL APPEAR AMONGST MORTALS IN HIS SATTVIC FORM AS KALKI. RIDING HIS CELESTIAL HORSE, HE WILL EXTERMINATE, BY THE MILLIONS, CORRUPT ROBBERS WHO BEAR HIGH POSITIONS IN LIFE AND WILL REINFORCE MORAL SENSE AND HUMANITARIAN VIEWS IN ALL GOOD PEOPLE, TILL TOWN AND COUNTRYSIDE WILL AGAIN ENJOY PEACE AND SECURITY. THEN WILL BEGIN A NEW CYCLE OF YUGAS WITH SATYA (TRUTH) AT ITS HEAD, WHOSE HUMAN GENERATIONS WILL BE IMBUED WITH GREAT MORAL, INTELLECTUAL, AND PHYSICAL STRENGTH, POSSESSING ALL IMMACULATE ATTRIBUTES."



## WHICH OF THE ACKs HAVE YOU STILL NOT READ?

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S. Subbulakshmi  Madhvacharya  Mahavira  Marie And Pierre Curie  Megasthenes  Mirabai  Mother Teresa  Narayan Guru  Rabindranath Tagore  Ram Shastri  Ramana Maharshi  Ramanuja  Salim Ali  Shankar Dev  Soordas  Sri. Ramakrishna  Srinivasa Ramanujan  Subramania Bharati</p>	<p>Swami Chinmayananda  Swami Pranavananda  Tales Of Sai Baba  Tansen  Tulsidas  Vidyasagar  Vivekananda  Zarathushtra</p> <p><b>INDIAN CLASSICS</b>  <i>Enchanting tales from Indian literature</i></p> <p>Ananda Math  Ancestors Of Rama  Devi Choudhurani  Durgesh Nandini  Kadambari  Kannagi  Kapala Kundala  Kumanan  Maarthaanda Varma  Malavika  Manonmani  Prince Jivaka  Raj Singh  Ratnavali  Shakuntala  The Adventures Of  Pratapana  The Elusive Kaka  Udayana  Urvashi  Vasantasena  Vasavadatta  Veer Dhaval</p> <p><b>FABLES AND HUMOUR</b>  <i>Evergreen folktales, legends and tales of wisdom and humour</i></p> <p>A Bag Of Gold Coins  Amrapali  Andher Nagari  Angulimala  Bikal The Terrible  <b>BIRBAL STORIES</b>  Birbal The Clever  Birbal The Genius  Birbal The Just  Birbal The Wise  Birbal The Witty  Birbal To The Rescue  The Inimitable Birbal  Chandralalal  Dhola And Maru  Friends And Foes  Gopal And The Cowherd  Gopal The Jester  <b>HITOPADESHA TALES</b>  Choice Of Friends  How Friends Are Parted  Hothal  <b>JATAKA TALES</b>  Battle Of Wits  Bird Stories  Deer Stories  Elephant Stories  Jackal Stories  Monkey Stories  Nandi Vishala  Stories Of Courage  Stories Of Wisdom  Tales Of Misers  The Deadly Feast  The Giant And  The Dwarf  The Hidden Treasure  The Magic Chant</p>	<p>The Mouse Merchant  True Friends  Kanwal And Kehar  Kesari The Flying Thief  King Kusha  Manduka</p> <p><b>PANCHATANTRA TALES</b>  Crows And Owls  How The Jackal Ate  The Elephant  The Brahmin And  The Goat  The Dullard  The Greedy Mother-in-law  The Jackal And  The Wardrum  Raman Of Tenali  Raman The Matchless Wit  Sahasramalla  Sakshi Gopal  Satwant Kaur  Sharan Kaur  Shrenik  Sukhu And Dukhu  Sundari  Tales Of Maryada Rama  The Acrobat  The Adventures  Of Agad Datta  The Adventures Of  Baddu And Chhotu  The Bridegroom's Ring  The Celestial Necklace  The Clever Dancer  The Cowherd Of Alawi  The Fearless Boy  The Fool's Disciples  The Golden Sand  The Green Demon  The Unhappy Tiger  The Learned Pandit  The Lost Prince  The Magic Grove  The Miraculous Conch  The Mystery Of  The Missing Gift  The Pandit And The  Milkmaid  The Pig And The Dog  The Pious Cat  The Priceless Gem  The Prince And  The Magician  The Prophecy  The Queen's Necklace  The Rainbow Prince  The Secret Of The  Talking Bird  The Silent Teacher  The Tiger And The  Woodpecker  The Tiger Eater  Thugsen  Vidyut Chora  Vikramaditya's Throne</p> <p><b>BRAVEHEARTS</b>  <i>Stirring tales of brave men and women of India</i></p> <p>A Nation Awakes  Ahilyabai Holkar  Ajatashatru  Akbar  Amar Singh Rathor  Ashoka  Babur  Bagha Jatin  Bajirao I</p>	<p>Baladitya And  Yashodharma  Balban  Banda Bahadur  Bappa Rawal  Beni Madho And Pir Ali  Bhagat Singh  Bidhi Chand  Bimbisara  Chand Bibi  Chandra Shekhar Azad  Chandragupta Maurya  Chennamma Of Keladi  Dara Shukho And  Aurangzeb  Durgadas  Ellora Caves  Hakka And Bukka  Hari Singh Nalwa  Harsha  Hemu  Humayun  Jahangir  Jallianwala Bagh  Kalpana Chawla  Kochunni  Krishnadeva Raya  Kunwar Singh  Lachit Barphukan  Lalitaditya  Mangal Pande  Noor Jahan  Padmini  Panna And Hadi Rani  Paurava And Alexander  Prithviraj Chauhan  Raja Bhoja  Raja Raja Chola  Rana Kumbha  Rana Pratap  Rana Sanga  Rani Abbakka  Rani Durgavati  Rani Of Jhansi  Ranjit Singh  Rash Bihari Bose  Roopmati  Sambhaji  Samudra Gupta  Sea Route To India  Shah Jahan  Shalivahana  Shantala  Sher Shah  Shivaji  Subhas Chandra Bose  Sultana Razia  Surya Sen  Tachcholi Othenan  Tales Of Shivaji  Tanaji  Tenzing Norgay  The Historic City Of Delhi  The Rani Of Kittur  Tipu Sultan  Veer Hammir  Veer Savarkar  Velu Thampi  Vikramaditya</p> <p><b>CONTEMPORARY CLASSICS</b>  <i>(New Category)  The best of modern Indian literature</i></p> <p>The Blue Umbrella</p>
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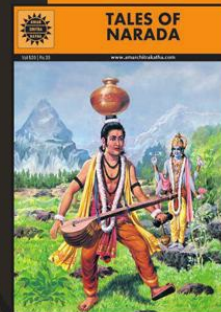
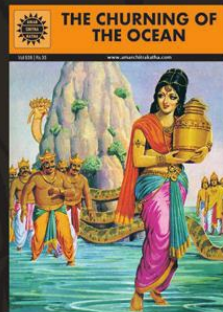
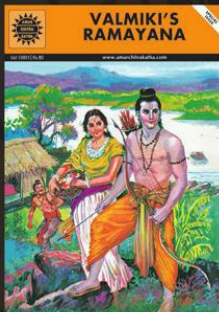
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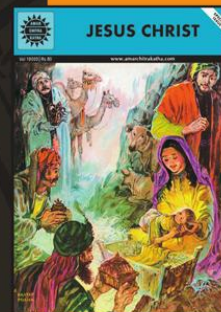
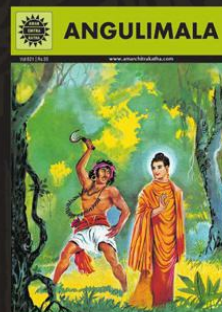
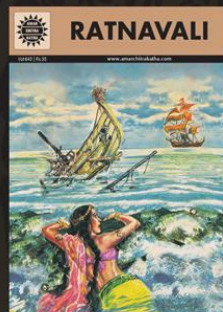
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