



DEEPAK CHOPRA PRESENTS

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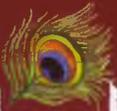
# ANDHAKA



ARTIST: ARVIND MALSUNI

MOHAPATRA/SWAPNIL

DEEPAK CHOPRA PRESENTS  
**ANDHAKA**

india  
authentic™ 

Created by Deepak Chopra

Writer: Saurav Mohapatra

Pencils and Inks: Swapnil Singh

Colors: Gopalkrishna

Letters: B.S. Ravikiran

Cover: S.M. Bhaskar

Art Direction

and Layout Assists: Siju Thomas

Project Manager: Sandeep Nair

Editor: Mahesh Kamath

VIRGIN COMICS

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Special Thanks to:

Frances Farrow

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Jonathan Peachey

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There is such vastness to the multifarious supernatural beings in the Indian Pantheon (over 300 million by some estimates) that you would not be remiss if you admitted to never having heard of a vast majority of them. One such creature might be Andhaka. Indeed, if his visage were flashed before you, you may well not recognize him at all. Then again, you would not be alone, for not even his parents – the mighty Lord Shiva and his consort, the supposedly all-knowing Uma - recognized him when it mattered most.



Such is the curse that Andhaka, the third son of Shiva bore, who, upon his birth, the prophets announced would die at the hands of his parents. To ensure that horrible fate never comes to pass, his parents cast the child out, banishing them from their own care. But of course, the fates conspired and ultimately lead to the fulfillment of the cruel prophecy. Andhaka's parents understanding the horrible truth of their ways far too late.

If this myth seems familiar, perhaps it's because the same narrative exists in various cultures from ancient civilizations to biblical stories wherein murder within the family, albeit most horrible, is not such an alien concept. Amidst the Greek canon, the mighty Kronos is responsible for killing both his father Uranus as well as eating his children.

Personally, I am always fascinated when such specific stories, their generations spaced by centuries, their origins spanning continents, their significance spread in various cultures, so clearly reflect one another. To me, that means they are not just stories meant to entertain, they are archetypal narratives that are meant to depict mythic impulses that reside somewhere inside us, no matter how taboo they may seem.

The truth is that within us we have millions of impulses and instincts, the most inexplicable of which are often resolved through all manner of myth, wherein we seek to resolve that which feels most unnatural and abnormal through story. It is the true beauty of mythology, that which the great Joseph Campbell once described as more accurate than history. If you are a believer in that saying, like I am, then you can stomach stories like the one contained in these pages, not because they justify the unjustifiable, but because they broach areas that others wouldn't dare to, ause they justify the unjustifiable, but because they broach areas that others wouldn't dare to.

Deepak Chopra

April 2008



THERE IS A  
MOMENT...

...A BRIEF  
INSTANT...

...THE INFITESIMAL  
SLIVER OF TIME  
RIGHT BEFORE  
THE END...

...WHEN YOUR  
ENTIRE LIFE  
FLASHES BEFORE  
YOU.

A LIFETIME  
OF MEMORIES  
COMPRESSED IN  
THAT SINGLE  
MOMENT.

MY LIEGE,  
I CANNOT DO  
THIS.

MY LOVE, THIS  
IS THE WAY IT  
HAS TO BE.

LOOK AT  
HIM. HE IS BUT  
A CHILD.

THE SOOTHSAYERS  
HAVE SPOKEN. OUR SON'S  
DEATH SHALL BE AT  
MY HANDS.

HE MUST BE  
SENT AWAY IF HE HAS  
TO HAVE A CHANCE  
AT LIFE.

LET THE  
MIGHTY RIVER BEAR  
HIM AWAY...

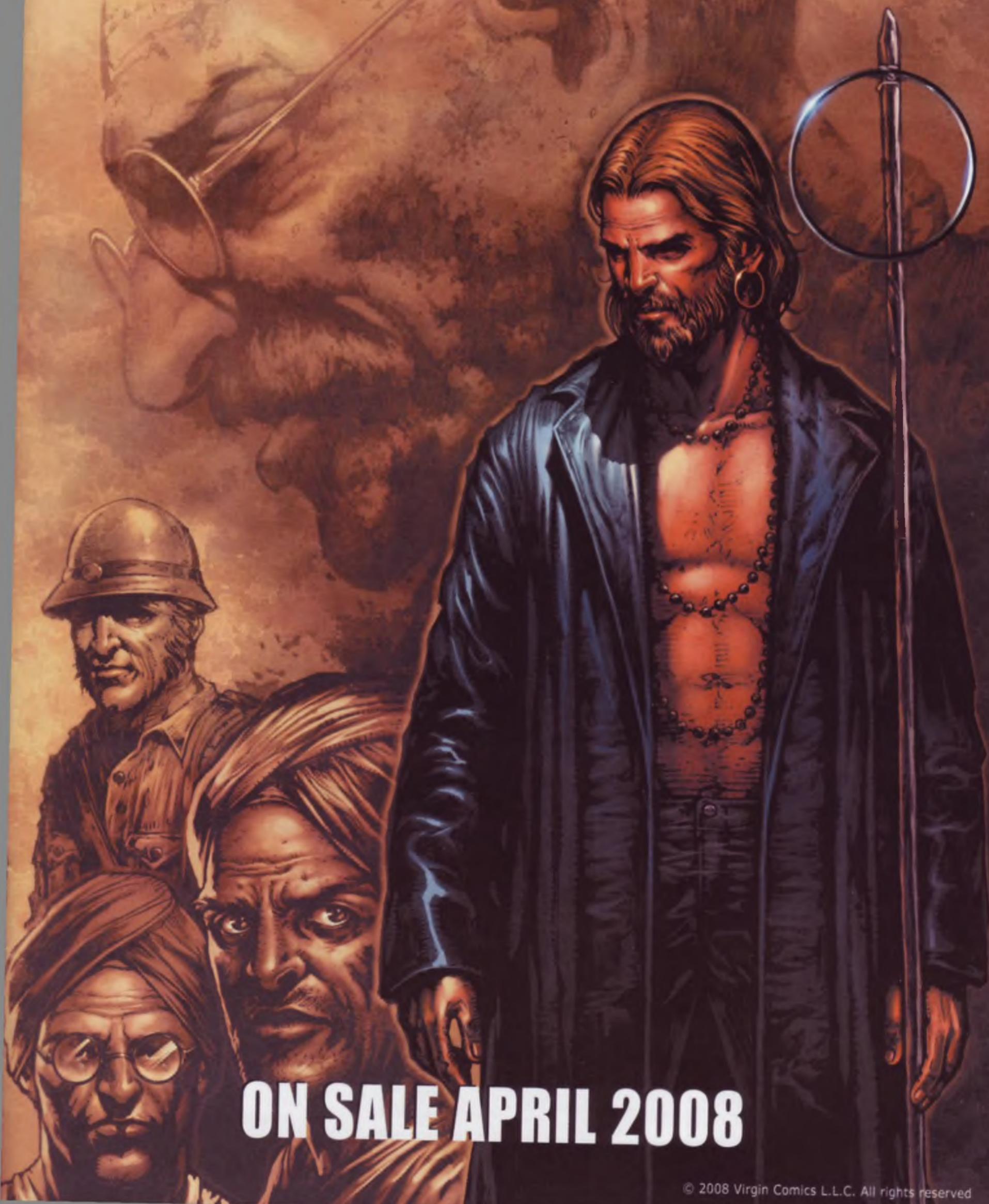
...AWAY  
FROM US...

...AND LET US  
PRAY THAT SHE  
TAKES HIM...



THE  
**Sarathu**  
WHEEL of DESTINY

ISSUE 1



ON SALE APRIL 2008



...TO A NEW LIFE.

MY EARLIEST MEMORIES ARE OF THE RIVER.



THE GUSHING EFFERVESCENCE OF A MOUNTAIN STREAM.



THE GENTLE GURGLE AS IT FLOWED PAST THE MEADOWS.



AND THEN I REMEMBER THE CAVERN.



I REMEMBER  
CRYING.

'T WAS NOT THE  
DARKNESS THAT  
BOTHERED ME THEN  
FOR I WAS BORN  
BLIND.

IT WAS SOMETHING  
ELSE.



THE RIVER HAD BORNE  
ME TO **PATALPURI**, THE  
SUBTERRANEAN REALM  
THAT LIES UNDER THE  
WORLD OF MEN...

...THE REALM OF  
THE **RAKSHASAS**.



AHHH!! THE RIVER  
COMES BEARING  
GIFTS. THE SPIRITS OF  
DARKNESS HAVE INDEED  
SMILED ON US.



TODAY WE SHALL FEAST ON THE TENDER FLESH OF THIS YOUNGLING.

BROTHER, DO NOT BE HASTY. WE HAVE SENT FOR OLD VRIHMINI. PLEASE WAIT TILL SHE GETS HERE.



HOW DARE YOU TOUCH ME YOU WORM?

WHY SHOULD I WAIT FOR THAT OLD HAG AND HER MUMBO JUMBO...



...WHEN A TASTY SUPPER AWAITS ME?



MMMMM, SMELLS GOOD. I AM SURE IT TASTES EVEN BETTER.

YOU FOOL...



**KHRAKHATHOOOM!**

GAHHKKKK

IN YOUR HUNGER YOU FORGET THE PROPHECY?



SIGN UP NOW @

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FORGIVE US  
VRIHMINI, MOTHER  
OF DEMONS.



THE RIVER HAS  
BROUGHT US OUR  
CHAMPION.



BEHOLD  
DEMONS...  
...YOUR  
KING.



I REMEMBER  
THE HOWLS.

OLD VRIHMINI PUT ME ON A PATH THAT WAS HARD TO SAY THE LEAST.

BUT A KING CANNOT BE WEAK.

AKRAMAN!

FOR HER, MY BLINDNESS WAS NOT AN EXCUSE FOR WEAKNESS.

YOU HAVE A LONG ROAD TO KINGSHIP BEFORE YOU ANDHAKA, MY SON. ARE YOU PREPARED?

MOTHER, I...

SHE ASKED ME TO TURN MY WEAKNESS INTO MY GREATEST STRENGTH.

DO YOU THINK THIS IS A JOKE BOY?

NO MOTHER!

DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD PITY YOU BECAUSE YOU ARE BLIND? PERHAPS I SHOULD FIND A BOWL FOR YOU TO BEG FOR ALMS, YOU PATHETIC PIECE OF EXCREMENT.

SHE EXHORTED ME TO FIND WITHIN ME AN INNER STRENGTH.

YOU STILL HAVE STRONG LIMBS DON'T YOU? AN EAR TO HEAR WITH, A NOSE TO SMELL WITH.

OR HAVE YOU LOST USE OF THOSE TOO?

AND FIND IT I DID.

RAAAAAHHHHHH!





AND THUS IT CAME TO  
PASS. IN THE LAND OF THE  
ONE EYED DEMONS...



...THE *BLIND* ONE WAS  
TO BE THE *KING*.



OLD VRIHMINI  
TAUGHT ME WELL.



...AND WHEN IT WAS TIME,  
I FACED THE GAUNTLET,  
THE FINAL CHALLENGE  
THAT ALL CONTENDERS  
FOR KINGSHIP MUST  
UNDERGO.

THE OLD WITCH  
HAD PREPARED ME FOR  
THIS MOMENT.

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ON SALE APRIL 2008



ISSUE 2

Deepak Chopra's  
**Buddha**<sup>™</sup>  
A Story of Enlightenment



# SOME SNAKES CAN NEVER BE **CHARMED...**

**SNAKE WOMAN VOL. 3  
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“...sharp social commentary.”

—IGN



From the  
acclaimed  
director  
of *Elizabeth*



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**ON SALE NOW**

**DIRECTOR'S CUT**



SHE HAD TAUGHT ME  
THAT ONE DOES NOT  
NEED EYES TO "SEE".



GAHHHH!



ALL ONE NEEDS  
IS THE WILL.



WHATEVER HAND  
FATE DEALS US.

IT IS OUR DUTY  
TO MAKE THE  
MOST OF IT.

A WARRIOR IS  
NOT LIMITED BY  
HIS DISABILITIES.

THE WAY OF THE  
WARRIOR IS NOT  
TO BOW DOWN  
AND YIELD.

BUT TO OVERCOME  
AND SURMOUNT.

THE WARRIOR  
SEEKS TO *EXCEL*.



WELL DONE,  
ANDHAKA.



MOTHER.



MY SON, THE TIME  
HAS COME FOR YOU  
TO LEAD US FROM THE  
BOWELS OF THE EARTH  
TO THE SURFACE.



THE AGE OF  
DEMONS IS ABOUT  
TO BEGIN AND YOU,  
ANDHAKA ARE ITS  
HARBINGER.



DEMONS OF PATALPURI, HARK MY WORDS.



LONG HAVE WE LANGUISHED IN THESE CAVERNS.

THE TIME HAS COME.



TO ARMS!



LET THE SURFACE DWELLERS TREMBLE BEFORE THE MIGHT OF THE UNDERWORLD.

AKRAMAN!



THE MARCH OF MY ARMY WAS SWIFT.

KINGDOMS FELL LIKE TWIGS SNAPPING IN HALF BEFORE THE MIGHTY ARMY OF PATALPURI.

AT LAST WE REACHED THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.

THE MOUTH OF THE GREAT RIVER AT MOUNT KAILASH, THE DOORWAY TO HEAVEN.



BUT ON THE FIRST NIGHT AT THE FOOT OF THE MOUNTAINS.

NO, THAT CANNOT BE.

WHAT IS THE MATTER, MOTHER?

WHAT DO THE STARS FORETELL? WHAT PORTENTS DO YOU SEE?

THE STARS TELL OF YOUR DEATH AT THE HANDS OF THOSE THAT SIRED YOU.

MOCK NOT THAT WHICH YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND CHILD.

'T WAS THE STARS THAT TOLD ME OF YOUR COMING AND THEY HAVE GUIDED US SO FAR.

ANDHAKA, MY SON. I AM AFRAID I SENSE AN EVIL OMEN.

MOTHER, WHO IS THERE IN THIS WILDERNESS TO CHALLENGE US? MAYBE YOU READ THE SIGNS WRONG?





I SEE IN THEM A MORTAL DANGER TO YOU. AT THE HANDS OF YOUR OWN PARENTS.



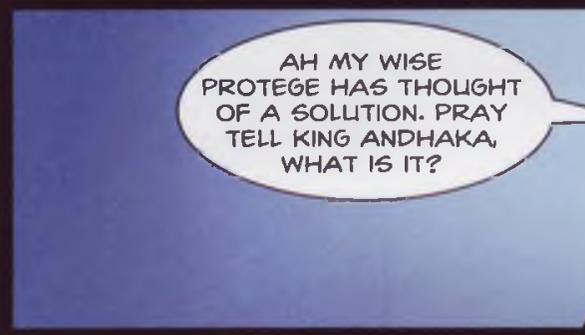
YOU ARE SURE OF THIS? I AM TO DIE AT THE HANDS OF MY PARENTS?



OF COURSE MY CHILD. HAVE I EVER LIED TO YOU?



THEN FEAR NO MORE.



AH MY WISE PROTEGE HAS THOUGHT OF A SOLUTION. PRAY TELL KING ANDHAKA, WHAT IS IT?



WELL, IF I WERE TO SIMPLY...



AGGGGGHHHH

...ELIMINATE MY SOLE LIVING PARENT...



...WHO THEN, IS LEFT TO KILL ME...



...MOTHER?

AAHHHHHHHHHHHHH,  
YOU FOOL!



MY LORD,  
WHAT HAPPENED?  
WE HEARD A  
SCREAM.

EVERYTHING  
IS ALRIGHT,  
SOLDIER.



MY LORD, OLD  
VRIHMINI, WHAT  
HAPPENED TO  
HER?



SHE  
SACRIFICED  
HERSELF.



OLD  
VRIHMINI GAVE  
HER LIFE...



...SO THAT THE  
DEMONS MAY  
RULE OVER THE  
WORLD.

WHY WAIT TILL  
MORNING FOR OUR  
DESTINY. ARE WE  
NOT THE CHILDREN  
OF DARKNESS?

"ONWARDS MY SOLDIERS. THE PATH TO HEAVEN LIES THROUGH THIS MOUNTAIN SLOPE."

"LET US GO WHERE NO DEMON HAS GONE BEFORE. OVER THE SLOPES OF MOUNT KAILASH, DEEP INTO THE HEART OF SVARGA."



WHO ARE YOU? YOU DARE CHALLENGE THE MIGHT OF KING ANDHAKA OF THE DEMONS?

KING ANDHAKA, THIS IS MOUNT KAILASH, MY ABODE...



...AND I AM SHIVA.



IT IS MY CHARGE TO GUARD THE GATEWAY TO SVARGA AND YOU SHALL NOT PASS.



WE SHALL SEE ABOUT THAT. I INVOKE THE RIGHT OF *DVANDA*. FACE ME IN SINGLE COMBAT AND LET THAT DECIDE THE FATE OF OUR ARMIES.



HOW DARE YOU, YOU FOOLISH DEMON? YOU DARE CHALLENGE THE LORD OF LORDS?

CALM DOWN, *NANDI*. KING *ANDHAKA* IS WELL WITHIN HIS RIGHTS IN CLAIMING SINGLE COMBAT.



I WISH NOT FOR MORE BLOOD TO BE SHED, THAN IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.



I AM READY.

GRRAAAHHH!!





AS WARRIORS  
WE WERE EVENLY  
MATCHED.



IT WAS ALMOST AS IF I FOUND SOMETHING *FAMILIAR* ABOUT MY OPPONENT.



AS IF I UNDERSTOOD HIM VIA SOME *UNspoken* *BOND*.

LIKE HIS HEART AND MIND WERE OPEN TO ME.



I GRABBED THE OPPORTUNITY AND MOVED IN FOR THE KILL.



AAHHH



MY BLOWS HAVE  
FELLED MANY.



YET, THIS WARRIOR  
WAS STILL STANDING.



AT THAT VERY MOMENT,  
I REALIZED THE FATES  
HAD DELUDED ME. SLAYING  
VRIHINI HAD DONE  
NOTHING TO AVERT  
MY END.



THERE IS A MOMENT,  
A BRIEF INSTANT.

THE INFITESIMAL  
SLIVER OF TIME  
RIGHT BEFORE  
THE END.



WHEN YOUR  
ENTIRE LIFE  
FLASHES  
BEFORE YOU.

IN THAT MOMENT  
OF CLARITY, ALL  
ANSWERS ARE  
REVEALED.



ALL RIDDLES  
UNRAVELED.



MY NAME IS  
ANDHAKA AND I WAS  
BORN BLIND.

BUT TODAY  
I DIE...



...WITH MY EYES  
OPEN.



**FIN**

# SPOTLIGHT ON

## DIGITAL COMICS

Comic books will always be printed on paper. If you don't feel the pages in your hands, suffer the occasional paper cut, or tremble at the prospect of some idiot dog-eared your precious copy of *Shadow Hunter* #1, then you aren't getting the unique experience of the comic book reader. This is not a purist's point-of-view... this is reality. Whereas movies might be shifting away from their celluloid origins towards an exclusively digital format, the physical experience of watching a film will remain the same. A digital movie will still be a movie, but a digital comic is nothing like a printed one... and that's pretty exciting!

The digital landscape has provided extraordinary opportunities in the evolution of the comic book. Creators that don't have publishing deals can now bring their stories to the masses in ways that would have been impossible in the pre-internet age. But this evolution of technology isn't just about a new distribution method. The digital platform provides an entirely new way to experience visual storytelling. And you'd better believe that Virgin Comics will be at the forefront of this exciting new movement.

One way we've embraced this platform is with the introduction of Virgin Comics' Widescreen Digital Comics, in which the panels of our stories are reformatted into a widescreen aspect ratio, creating a unique and dynamic viewing experience that is unlike anything that can be printed on paper. Each frame exists within its own context so the viewer is completely in the moment with the character—no skipping ahead or knowing what the outcome will be because it's at the bottom of the page.

We'll also be experimenting with other formats. In some cases, the layout might resemble a traditional comic page, but with the addition of special bonus features that you can access on the spot. And did we mention that the colors look amazing?!

Sometimes a story comes along that begs to be born digitally. For us, that story is *The Econauts*. After all, how can a series about eco-friendly teenagers not exist on-line? Focusing on a group of ecologically aware kids, *The Econauts* chronicles their adventures as they fight crimes against the environment by taking down the greedy perpetrators.

Led by the mysterious, orphaned Ayanara Ashworth, the team is made up of a secret global group of her classmates from the posh Sawhill Academy: daredevil and heartthrob Raju Kang; thieving wild-child Keiko Oshima; master-of-disguise Terrence "Tweaker" Thomas; and Mohammed Nabu, the tech genius without whom they'd all be grounded. After a train crash in Latin America releases a dangerous pesticide, the Econauts must draw upon all their abilities to track down the ruthless corporation behind the toxic spill. But as the team begins to uncover the dirty secrets of Mason Morningstar's corporate and political dealings, Ayanara must risk her own life in order to put Morningstar's wrongs to right. There's intrigue, disguise, espionage, and it's all for the best cause we can think of: saving the world... literally!

Each new chapter of *The Econauts* will be posted regularly at [www.theeconauts.com](http://www.theeconauts.com) and you can start checking it out now. But the story doesn't end there. I guess we are comic book purists at heart, because we just can't resist putting out a printed version of *The Econauts* as well. Staying true to our characters' eco-friendly ways, the comic will be printed on recycled paper. It's a first for us and exciting for the comics industry at large. Look for the first graphic novel in comic shops or at [www.virgincomicsstore.com](http://www.virgincomicsstore.com) on April 16th, just in time for Earth Day!

So check us out on-line and in your local comic shop. The digital revolution starts here!

See you on the inside...

**Gotham Chopra**  
Editor-In-Chief



THE  
ECONAUTS

# MEET THE ECONAUTS!

*A covert group of gifted teenagers fighting crimes against the environment, these are THE ECONAUTS.*

**AYANARA**



### **Strategist, Team Leader**

*Orphaned when her eco-scientist parents disappeared, Ayanara uses her hefty trust fund to finance The Econauts' covert missions.*

**RAJU**



### **Daredevil, Heartthrob**

*An extreme-sport enthusiast, Raju's fearlessness is matched only by his need for adventure.*

**KEIKO**



### **Former Thief, Wild-Child**

*An ex-reform school student, Keiko has turned her life around and now uses her special skills to help important causes, not just herself.*

**NABU**



### **Resident Tech Genius**

*Every team needs a computer expert that can hack into any secure site in the world, and there is nobody more tech-savvy than Nabu.*

**TERRENCE  
a.k.a. "TWEAKER"**



### **Master of Disguise, Multi-Lingual**

*Raised by renegade eco-activists, Tweaker is the real heart of The Econauts and would literally do anything to protect the planet.*

NEW CHAPTERS EVERY MONDAY & WEDNESDAY



# THE ECONAUTS

FREE! Digital Comic



CHAPTER 1  
3/24/08



CHAPTER 2  
3/26/08



CHAPTER 3  
3/31/08



CHAPTER 4  
4/2/08

## THE STORY

A covert group of gifted teenagers fights crimes against the environment by exposing the greedy perpetrators. They are THE ECONAUTS, the planet's new protectors!

## MEET THE ECONAUTS

Terrence "Tweaker" Thomas  
If our group needs to be reminded of the whole point...

[More](#)

## NEXT ISSUE

Ayanara goes undercover



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THE PLANET'S NEW PROTECTORS

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**—DEEPAK CHOPRA**

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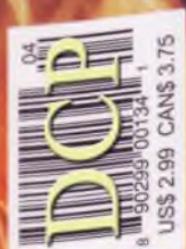
**(AUTHOR OF X-Men, Voodoo Child)**

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