



Aniruddha



ANIRUDDHA



USHA WAS THE DAUGHTER OF THE NOBLE ASURA KING, BANA OF THE THOUSAND ARMS.

BANA WAS A DEVOTEE OF LORD SHIVA. ONE DAY WITH HIS THOUSAND ARMS, HE PLAYED VARIOUS MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS AS SHIVA DANCED THE TANDAVA.



SHIVA, IMMENSELY PLEASED, GRANTED HIM A BOON.

FOR THE PLEASURE YOU HAVE GIVEN ME, I ASSURE YOU OF MY PROTECTION.



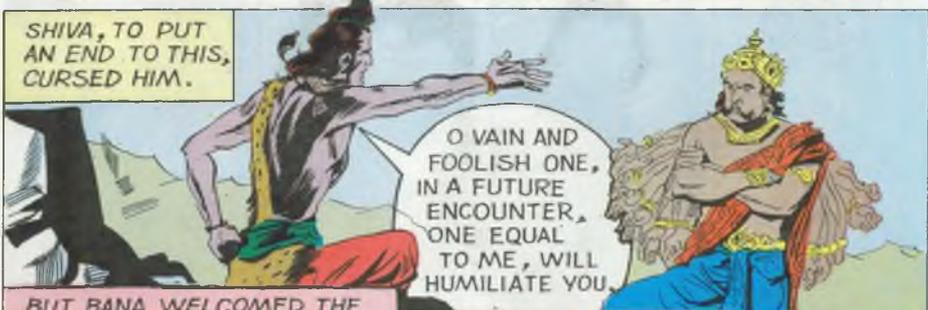
BUT AFTER SOME TIME BANA BECAME VAIN AND COMPLAINED TO SHIVA.



MY
THOUSAND
ARMS ARE
BECOMING
A USELESS
BURDEN TO
ME.



EVEN WITHOUT
THEM THERE
IS NONE EQUAL
TO ME, SAVE
YOU.



SHIVA, TO PUT
AN END TO THIS,
CURSED HIM.

O VAIN AND
FOOLISH ONE,
IN A FUTURE
ENCOUNTER,
ONE EQUAL
TO ME, WILL
HUMILIATE YOU.

BUT BANA WELCOMED THE
CURSE AND LOOKED FORWARD TO MEETING A PEER IN FIGHT.

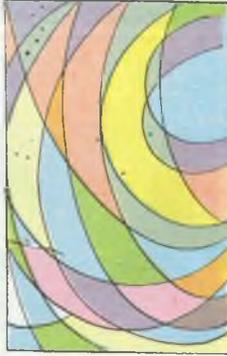
A FEW DAYS LATER, USHA AND HER FRIENDS WERE PICKING FLOWERS IN THEIR FAVOURITE GROVE.



THEY SET THEIR BASKETS DOWN AND LAY DOWN UNDER THE TREES.



AS USHA DROWEED, SHE HAD A DREAM.



USHA WOKE UP WITH A START.



LORD!
WHERE ARE
YOU?

HER FRIENDS WERE AT FIRST
STARTLED...



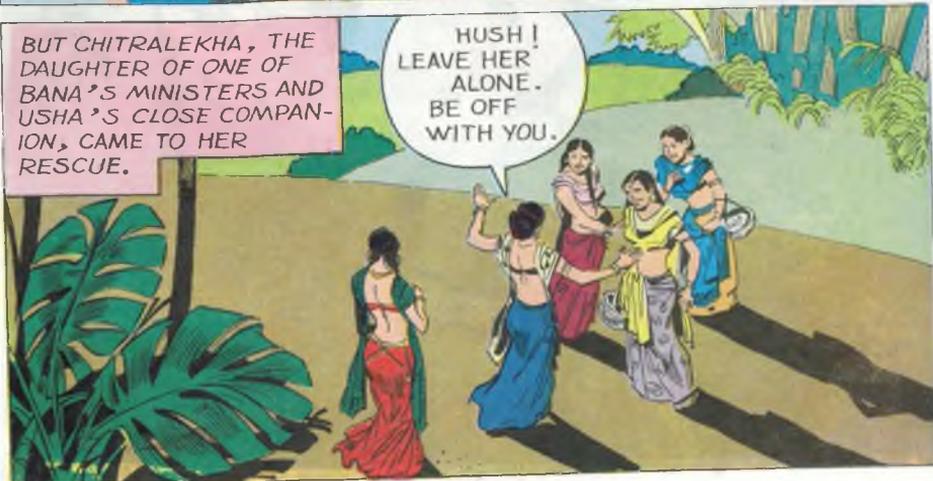
... AND THEN AMUSED. THEY BEGAN TEASING
HER.



WHERE
IS WHO?
TELL US,
USHA. DON'T
BE SHY.

WHO IS THIS
LUCKY LORD, WHO
HAS WON YOUR
HEART?

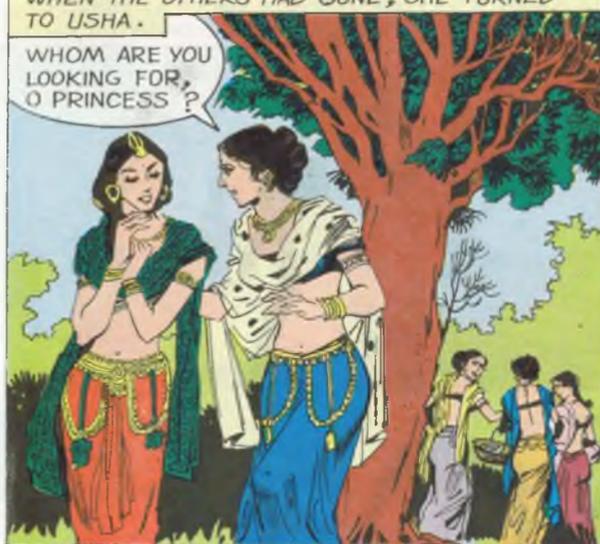
BUT CHITRALEKHA, THE
DAUGHTER OF ONE OF
BANA'S MINISTERS AND
USHA'S CLOSE COMPAN-
ION, CAME TO HER
RESCUE.



HUSH!
LEAVE HER
ALONE.
BE OFF
WITH YOU.

WHEN THE OTHERS HAD GONE, SHE TURNED TO USHA.

WHOM ARE YOU LOOKING FOR, O PRINCESS?



USHA DECIDED TO CONFIDE IN HER.

A CERTAIN PRINCE CAME TO ME IN MY DREAM.



I WANTED TO KEEP HIM WITH ME. BUT HE DISAPPEARED LEAVING ME IN GRIEF.



WHO WAS HE?

I DON'T KNOW. HIS SKIN WAS DARK BLUE AND HE WORE YELLOW GARMENTS.





CHITRALEKHA CONSOLED HER.

DO NOT GRIEVE, MY PRINCESS. IF THIS PRINCE EXISTS, I CAN AND SHALL BRING HIM TO YOU.



BUT FIRST YOU WILL HAVE TO IDENTIFY HIM FOR ME FROM AMONG THE MANY PORTRAITS I SHALL PAINT FOR YOU.

CHITRALEKHA FIRST PAINTED A NUMBER OF GODS ...



IS HE ONE OF THESE?

NO!



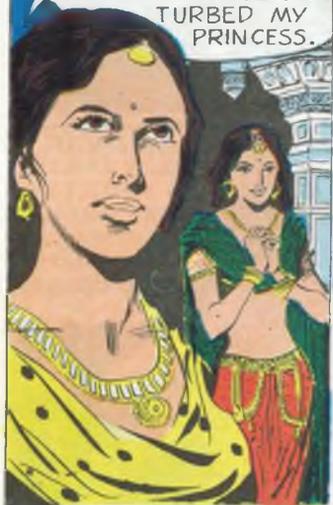
AT LAST CHITRALEKHA DREW THE PORTRAIT OF ANIRUDDHA, SON OF PRADYUMNA. USHA, SUDDENLY SHY, CAST HER EYES DOWN.



THIS IS HE !

HE SHALL SOON BE HERE WITH YOU .

I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN ! SURELY, AMONG MEN, IT COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE VALIANT YADAVA RACE WHO COULD HAVE DISTURBED MY PRINCESS.



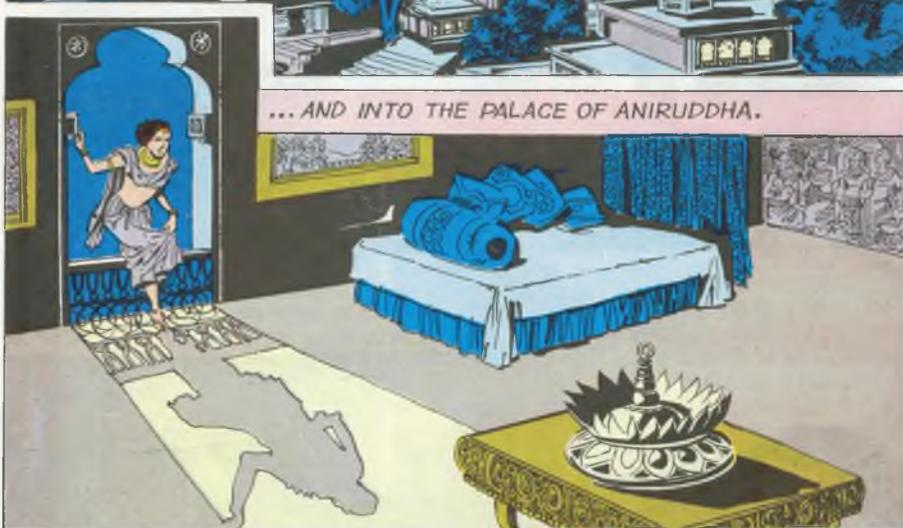
THEN CHITRALEKHA WITH THE HELP OF HER YOGIC POWERS CONVEYED HERSELF...



... TO DWARAKA ...



... AND INTO THE PALACE OF ANIRUDDHA.



SHE FOUND HIM FAST ASLEEP ON HIS BED.



I AM FORTUNATE. I SHALL DO WHAT I HAVE COME TO DO BEFORE HE WAKES UP AND RESISTS.

THUS, WHILE ANIRUDDHA SLEPT, CHITRALEKHA, USING HER YOGIC POWERS, TRANSPORTED HIM TO THE KINGDOM OF BANA ...



...AND INTO THE PRESENCE OF HER DEAR PRINCESS, USHA.



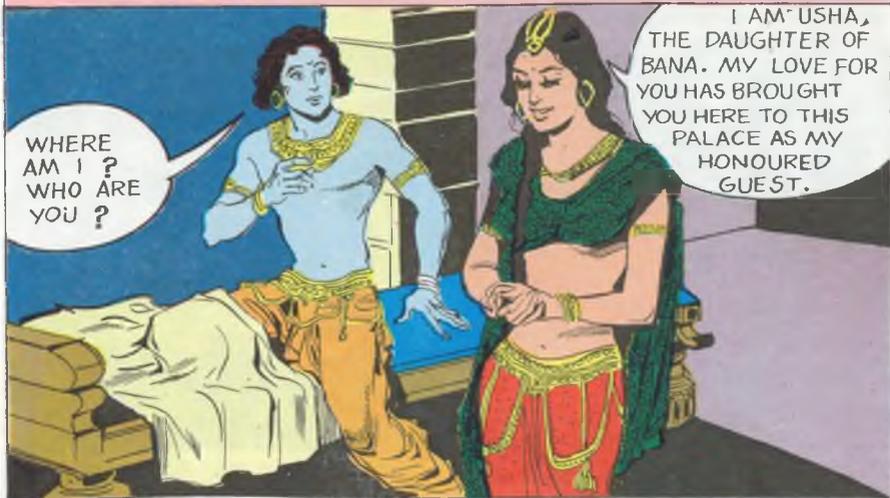
HERE HE IS,
MY PRINCESS.
HE IS
YOURS.

USHA WAS
DELIGHTED.

DEAR
CHITRALEKHA,
YOU HAVE
BROUGHT ME
GREAT HAPPINESS.
I SHALL EVER BE
GRATEFUL TO
YOU.



CHITRALEKHA WENT AWAY, LEAVING USHA WITH ANIRUDDHA.



WHERE
AM I ?
WHO ARE
YOU ?

I AM USHA,
THE DAUGHTER OF
BANA. MY LOVE FOR
YOU HAS BROUGHT
YOU HERE TO THIS
PALACE AS MY
HONOURED
GUEST.



YOU HAVE
BEEN BROUGHT
HERE IN
SECRECY
AND...



...YOU ARE
FREE TO
LEAVE IF YOU
SO DESIRE.

BUT ANIRUDDHA WAS NOT ABLE TO TAKE HIS EYES OFF THE LOVELY USHA.

I CANNOT DREAM OF LEAVING YOU. I WOULD RATHER STAY HERE AND DELIGHT IN YOUR COMPANY.



SHE ENTERTAINED HIM WITH SONG AND DANCE...



THUS IMPRISONED BY THE TENDER ATTENTIONS OF USHA, ANIRUDDHA MARRIED HER.



... AND FED HIM WITH THE CHOICEST OF FOODS AND THE SWEETEST OF WORDS.

IN MY DREAMS YOU HAUNTED ME. IN FLESH AND BLOOD YOU SPIRIT ME AWAY.



ANIRUDDHA LOST COUNT OF THE DAYS.

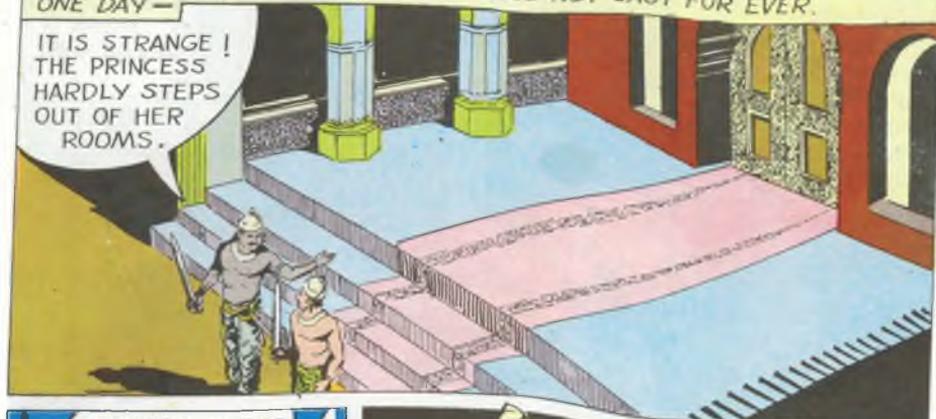
I'VE WON AGAIN!

YOU ARE AS CLEVER AS YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL.

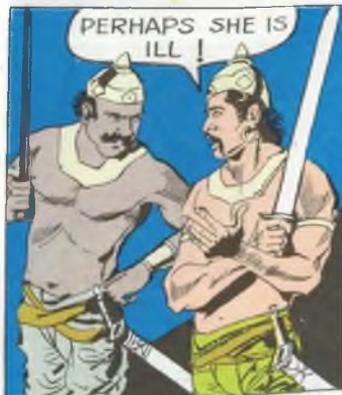


BUT SUCH STOLEN HAPPINESS COULD NOT LAST FOR EVER.
ONE DAY —

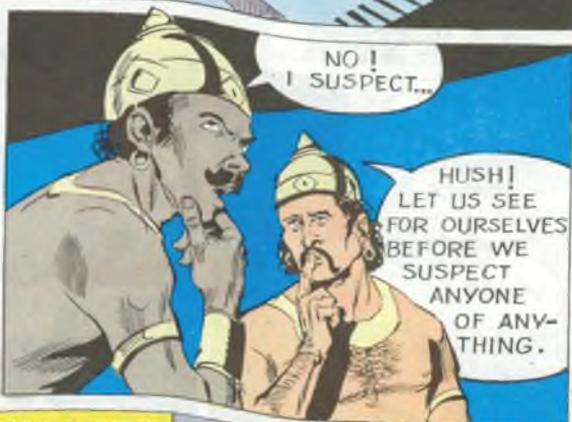
IT IS STRANGE!
THE PRINCESS
HARDLY STEPS
OUT OF HER
ROOMS.



PERHAPS SHE IS
ILL!



NO!
I SUSPECT...



HUSH!
LET US SEE
FOR OURSELVES
BEFORE WE
SUSPECT
ANYONE
OF ANY-
THING.

THE ATTENDANTS THEN SPIED ON THE
PRINCESS.



THEY WENT STRAIGHT TO BANA.

O KING, FORGIVE US. WE ARE AFRAID THAT YOUR DAUGHTER'S CONDUCT...

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
SPEAK OUT.



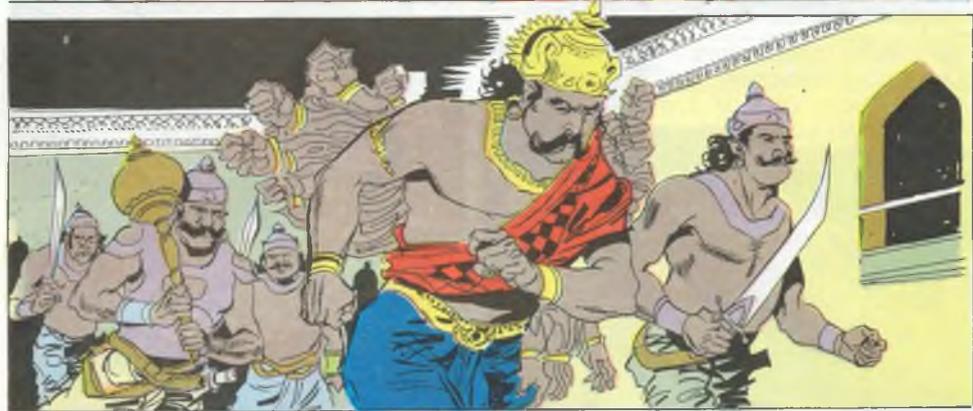
SHE HAS SECRETLY MARRIED THE YADAVA PRINCE, ANIRUDDHA.

WHAT !

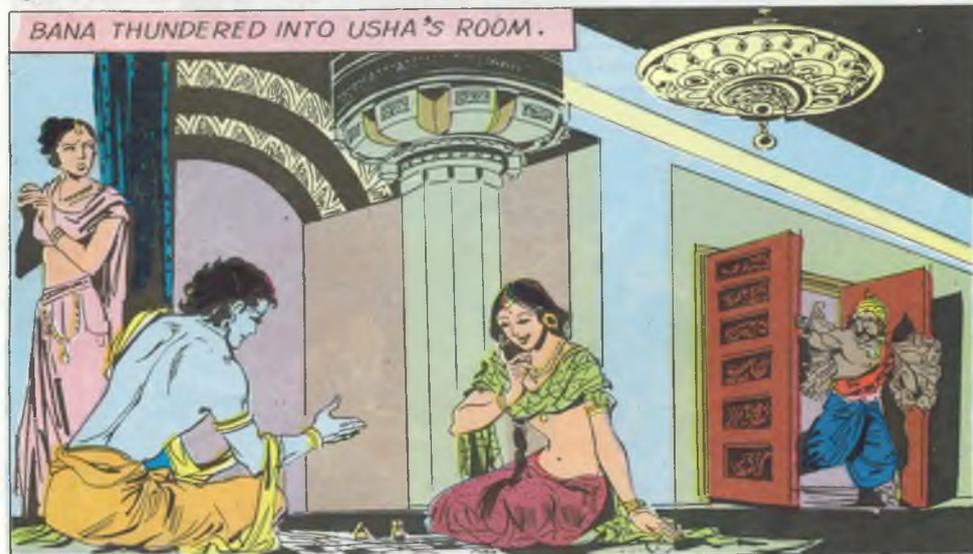


OH LORD, WE ARE AT A LOSS TO UNDERSTAND HOW YOUR DAUGHTER WHO IS NOT ALLOWED TO MOVE ABOUT...





BANA THUNDERED INTO USHA'S ROOM.





BUT ANIRUDDHA WAS QUICK. HE GRABBED A MACE FROM ONE OF THE ATTENDANTS...



... AND SLEW ALL OF THEM BEFORE THEY COULD EVEN REALISE WHAT WAS HAPPENING.



BANA WAS LIVID WITH RAGE.





BANA HELD ANIRUDDHA WITH SOME OF HIS THOUSAND ARMS AND WITH OTHERS HE BOUND HIM FROM HEAD TO FOOT, USING SERPENTS FOR ROPES.



CHITRALEKHA, WHO SAW ALL THAT HAPPENED, RAN TO USHA.





MEANWHILE ALL DWARAKA WAS UPSET ABOUT THE DISAPPEARANCE OF ANIRUDDHA.



KRISHNA HAS
SENT FOR
SAGE NARADA.

HAS
HE ?



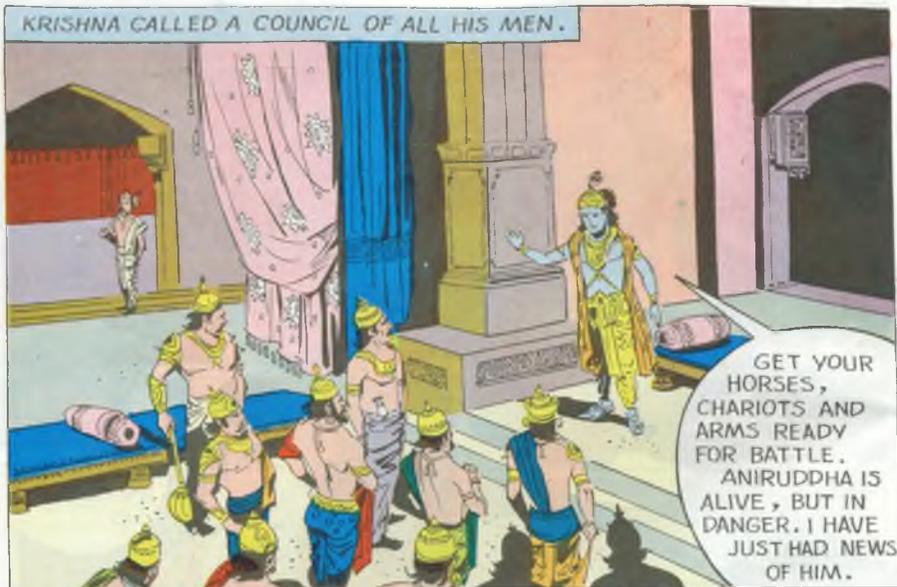
HE IS
SURE TO
KNOW
WHERE
ANIRUDDHA
IS.



NARADA CAME TO SEE KRISHNA, AND CAME
WITH NEWS.



KRISHNA CALLED A COUNCIL OF ALL HIS MEN.



KRISHNA, PRADYUMNA AND SATYAKI WITH HUNDREDS OF WARRIORS SET OUT FOR BANA'S KINGDOM TO RESCUE ANIRUDDHA.



WHEN THEY REACHED, KRISHNA GAVE THE COMMAND.

ATTACK!



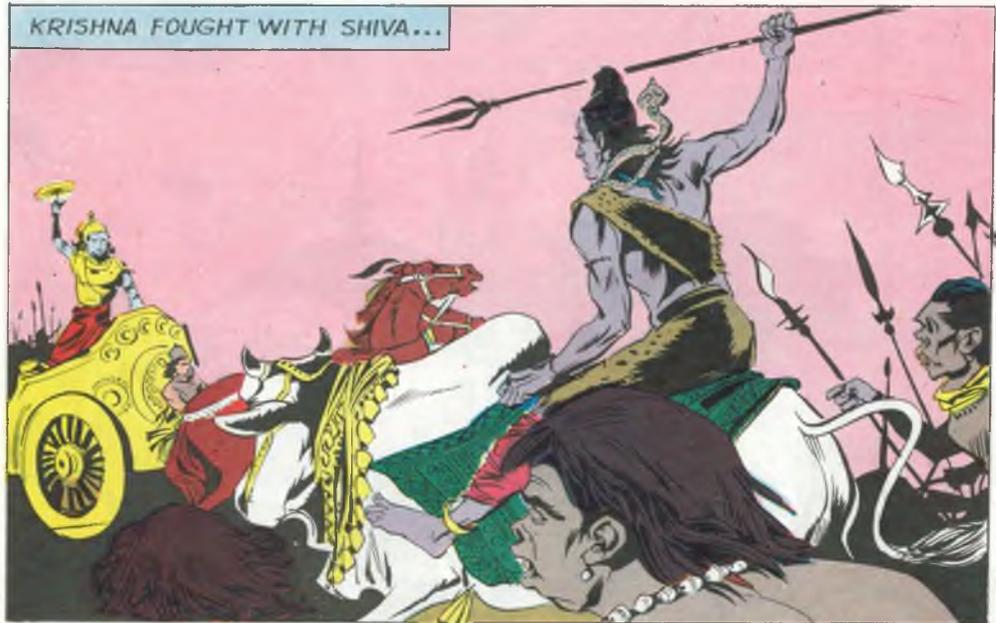
BANA'S RAGE KNEW NO BOUNDS. HE CAME OUT WITH AN EQUALLY
LARGE ARMY AND A GREAT BATTLE ENSUED.



SHIVA WHO HAD PROMISED BANA
HIS PROTECTION AT ALL TIMES, CAME
TO HIS AID, WITH HIS SON, KARTIKEYA.



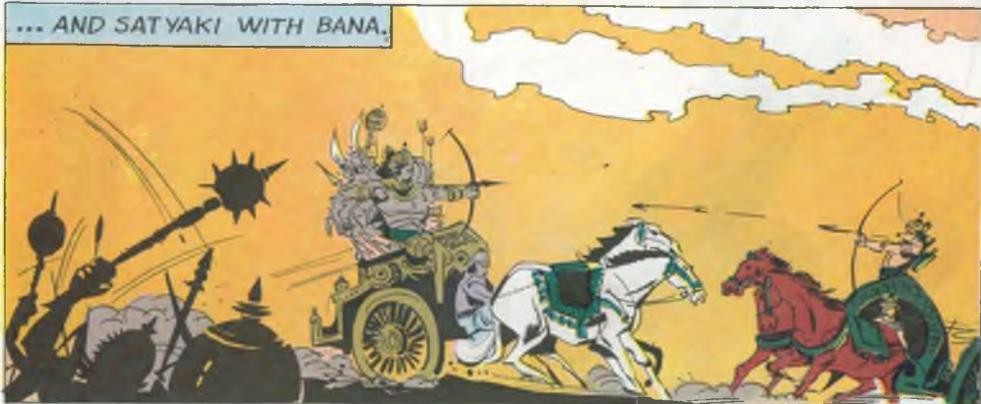
KRISHNA FOUGHT WITH SHIVA...



...PRADYUMNA WITH
KARTIKEYA ...



... AND SATYAKI WITH BANA.



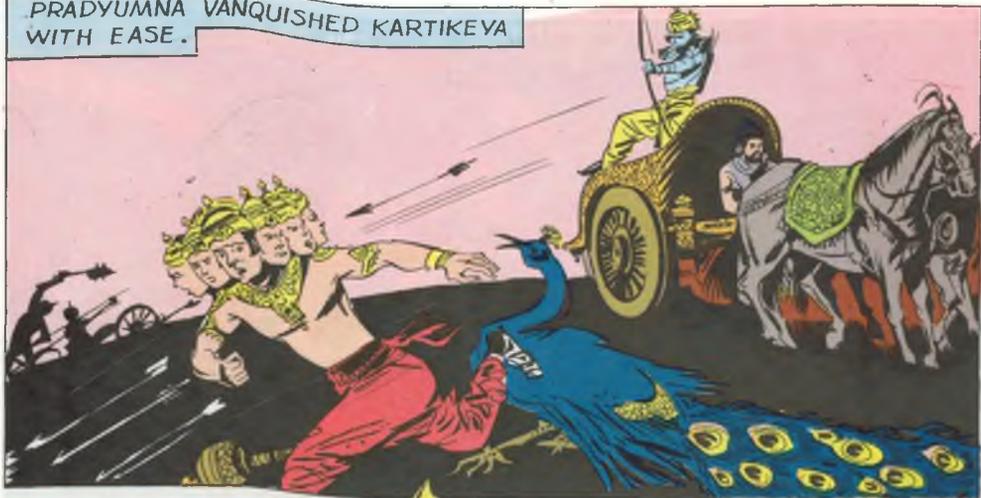
ALL THE CELESTIALS, HEADED BY BRAHMA, THE SAGES, THE GANDHARVAS, THE APSARAS AND YAKSHAS CAME IN THEIR CHARIOTS TO WATCH THE MIGHTY BATTLE.



KRISHNA WAS EASILY THE BEST WARRIOR. IN NO TIME AT ALL HE DESTROYED SHIVA'S WEIRD HORDES WITH THE HELP OF JRIMBHANA STRA WHICH KEPT SHIVA STUPEFIED.



PRADYUMNA VANQUISHED KARTIKEYA
WITH EASE.

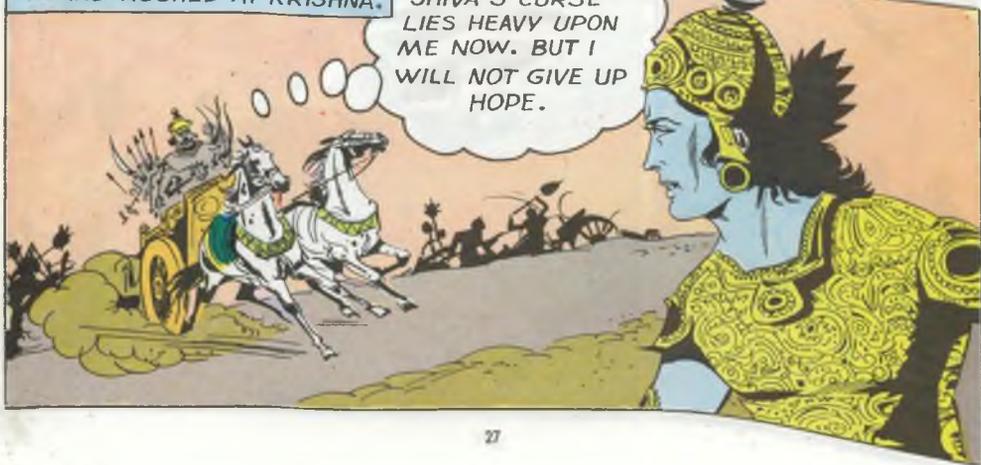


BANA WAS BLIND WITH ANGER.
HE LEFT SATYAKI...



... AND RUSHED AT KRISHNA.

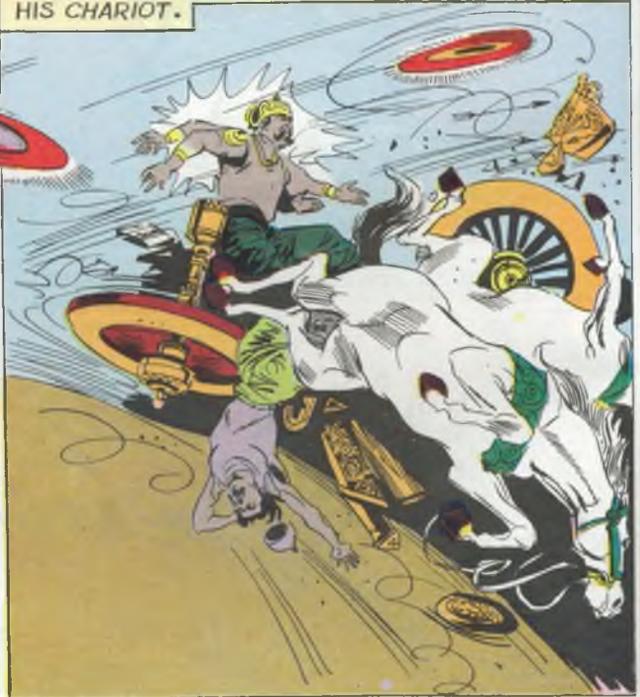
SHIVA'S CURSE
LIES HEAVY UPON
ME NOW. BUT I
WILL NOT GIVE UP
HOPE.



WITH HIS THOUSAND ARMS, HE DREW FIVE HUNDRED BOWS AT THE SAME TIME AND SET TWO ARROWS IN EACH.



BUT KRISHNA WAS TOO QUICK FOR HIM. WITH HIS DISCUS HE CUT OFF NINE HUNDRED AND NINETY-SIX OF BANA'S ARMS, KILLED HIS CHARIOTEER AND HORSES, AND DESTROYED HIS CHARIOT.



AND THEN HE BLEW HIS CONCH IN TRIUMPH.



BANASURA TURNED TO ENTER HIS CITY GATES.

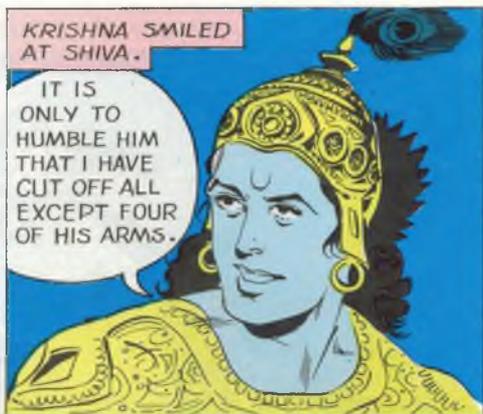


KRISHNA WAS ABOUT TO FOLLOW WHEN—





I PLEAD WITH YOU TO SPARE HIM.



KRISHNA SMILED AT SHIVA.

IT IS ONLY TO HUMBLE HIM THAT I HAVE CUT OFF ALL EXCEPT FOUR OF HIS ARMS.



AND TO RELIEVE THE EARTH OF HER BURDEN, I HAVE DESTROYED HIS ARMY.

HE STILL HAS FOUR ARMS LEFT. BESIDES I GRANT HIM IMMORTALITY AND EVERLASTING YOUTH.

