



Virgin

COMICS

ISSUE #0

A woman with long black hair, wearing black armor and a headpiece, is the central figure. She holds a glowing yellow sword. The background features large, ornate statues and lit candles, creating a dramatic, atmospheric scene.

BETWEEN THE DIVINE
AND THE DIABOLICAL...

...THERE IS DEVI

A new monthly comic magazine launching July 2006
Created by acclaimed filmmaker Shekhar Kapur, the Director of *Elizabeth* and *Four Feathers*



www.VirginComics.com

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SITAPUR, INDIA
PRESENT DAY

I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT, BUT THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT HER...

HERE'S WHAT WE KNOW: EIGHT GUNMEN BUSTED INTO THE TEMPLE AT APPROXIMATELY 1:35 AM. SHOTS FIRED--NO CONFIRMED CASUALTIES... YET. NO DEMANDS EITHER. BEST GUESS: AT LEAST A DOZEN HOSTAGES.

WE TRIED FORCING OUR WAY IN BUT THEY SHOT THE HELL OUT OF THE RAPID ACTION TEAM. SINCE THEN WE'VE JUST BEEN SITTING AROUND WITH OUR COLLECTIVE THUMBS UP OUR--

LANGUAGE, INSPECTOR.

NOW, DID YOU SAY HOSTAGES? WHO'S IN A TEMPLE AT 1:30 IN THE MORNING?

DON'T ASK ME WHY PEOPLE BELIEVE WHAT THEY BELIEVE. I MEAN I KNOW WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT YOU... WHO YOU ARE, WHY YOU WERE SENT TO US. BUT BASED ON ALL THE HORRORS I'VE SEEN, I'D SAY GOD'S ONE SICK--

ANYTHING ELSE, RAHUL?

YEAH. WITNESS SAID THEY HAD SOME STRANGE LOOKING PRIEST WITH THEM. BUT HEY, ALL PRIESTS LOOK STRANGE TO ME. DESCRIBED HIM AS A RAKSHAS-- SOME SORT OF DEMON...

I KNOW WHAT A RAKSHAS IS.

RIGHT... OF COURSE YOU DO.

HOLD BACK YOUR MEN, INSPECTOR. I'LL GO IN ALONE. I JUST NEED FIFTEEN MINUTES.

I'LL GIVE YOU TEN-- THEN I MOVE WITH MY GUYS.



In the beginning there was perfection.

The cosmos danced the celestial ballet accompanied by a chorus of light. Bright, beautiful light. This was the time that was.

This was the age of innocence.

The Gods were born from this light. Like children, their laughter sounded in the song of the spheres.

For a time they played and explored the farthest reaches of space. And when they had learnt all that could be revealed to them, they turned their minds to another goal.

The Gods of Light created Prakriti. They created life!

But they never claimed dominion over creation. When one world was completed the Gods would move to the next, leaving the new life to grow and prosper. It had not occurred to them to claim mastery over any living thing.

For the Gods, the joy of existence lay solely in the art of making. The universe was nearly infinite and there were many creations yet to be undertaken.

But there was one amongst them who was unhappy. There was one who thought his work was most beautiful.

He had something that the other Gods did not possess. He had an ego and that ego demanded that all others should pay him tribute for his craft.

And that all should submit to his will.

The more he was denied his recognition the more discontented he became.

This God was named Bala and his heart had grown dark with jealousy for the work of other Gods.

When it was decided that the Gods would undertake the creation of man, Bala refused to join unless he was given sole control over the making.

The Gods tried to dissuade him. But Bala's resolve was unmovable.

He stormed out of the Halls of Akashik and was not heard from for a long time.

Where he went or what he did during that Yagya* is not known to any.

* Self-imposed exile.



AS FOR ME, I NEVER BELIEVED IN MUCH OF ANYTHING, ESPECIALLY AFTER WHAT HAPPENED WITH MY WIFE...



I MEAN, EVERY DAY THE WORLD SEEMS DARKER AND DARKER...

TWO: DON'T RELY ON ANYONE ELSE TO PICK YOU UP WHEN YOU FALL.

LESSONS LEARNED THROUGHOUT ETERNITY-- ONE: NEVER USE THE FRONT DOOR.



THREE: DON'T LET THE BLOOD GET TO YOU.



... BUT SHE BRINGS THE LIGHT.

FOUR: NO MATTER WHAT THEY DO, HOW THEY DO IT, OR WHERE THEY DO IT...



... DON'T LET IT GET PERSONAL.





Bala came to earth after the race of men had been created. Not as a God but in human form, for it is said that this is the only way the Gods can walk amongst men.

But his body was deformed into a bat-being! His whole visage a mockery of the creation called man. His voice defiant of the Gods--the brothers on whom he had turned his back.

Using the help of his three generals, Gods who had been seduced by his lies, Bala enslaved the human race and was known as the Dread Lord!

Together, they rained much hardship on the defenseless humans, forcing them to build a dark empire in the center of the world where once stood the World Tree.

The Pure Gods eventually discovered Bala's atrocities. Indeed the Dread Lord did not cloak his actions in secrecy.

When their appeal to Bala to change his ways fell on deaf ears, the Gods attacked the Dread Lord.

But Bala had grown too powerful on the forced worship of men--the Pantheon was no match for him.

Eventually, many of the humans rebelled against Bala and allied themselves with the Gods. They were called the Durapasya, Warriors of the Light.

Despite all their efforts all who went up against Bala himself fell before the might of the Dread Lord.

The pure Gods realized that individually they were no match for Bala. So under the instruction of Bodha, King of the Gods, they sacrificed a part of their divine power to create a single entity.

Bodha blessed this divine being of power and named her **Devi**.

The Gods were so wounded by Bala's betrayal that they did not give this entity an immortal form, for they were afraid of what might come to pass if ever such a great power decided to turn on them.

Instead, they gave the Durapasya the secret rites for infusing the **Devi** entity into a human host. Thus making her more than human--an avatar of Divine power.

A goddess with a thousand faces.

A Devi!





SOME PEOPLE ARE BORN WITH GREATNESS. OTHERS ASPIRE TO IT. SHE WANTED NOTHING TO DO WITH IT. BUT ULTIMATELY, THE CHOICE WASN'T HERS.

SHE'S HUKK--

SHE'S HERE!

SO, DAY AFTER DAY SHE FIGHTS A WAR THAT NO ONE EVER SEES. SHE SINGLE-HANDEDLY STANDS BETWEEN HUMANITY AND TOTAL ANNIHILATION.

IF ONLY PEOPLE KNEW, IF THEY TRULY KNEW... WE ARE NOT ALONE. WE NEVER WERE.

ANCIENT EVIL STILL WALKS THE EARTH. SECRET SOCIETIES STILL BATTLE IN THE SHADOWS. HUMAN CIVILIZATION STILL LIVES IN THE DARKNESS OF ITS IGNORANCE.

DIE!

BRAKA!
BRAKA!
BRAKA!
BRAKA!

KRACKK!

AND SHE STILL HAS TO GO AND SAVE THE WORLD'S COLLECTIVE ASS--

--EVERY--SINGLE--DAY!

SHE NEVER ASKED
TO BE THE DEVI--

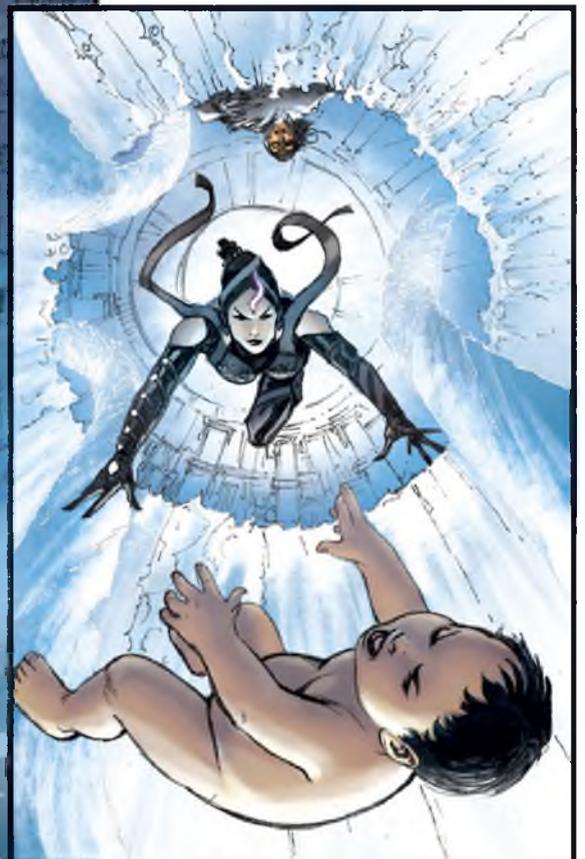
--BUT SHE IS.

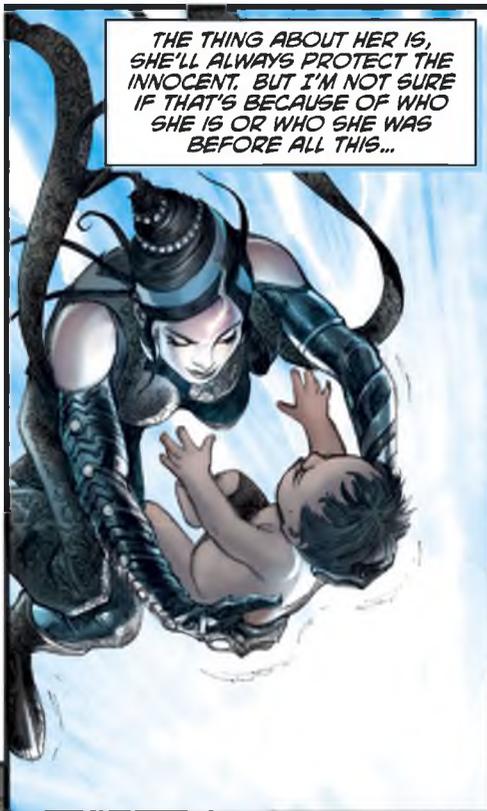


YOU'RE TOO LATE! THIS
PURE BLOOD--BORN AT
THE EXACT MOMENT KETU
PASSED THE FOURTH HOUSE
OF THE ZODIAC--WILL OPEN
THE PORTAL FOR MY
DARK LORDS!



NO!





THE THING ABOUT HER IS, SHE'LL ALWAYS PROTECT THE INNOCENT. BUT I'M NOT SURE IF THAT'S BECAUSE OF WHO SHE IS OR WHO SHE WAS BEFORE ALL THIS...



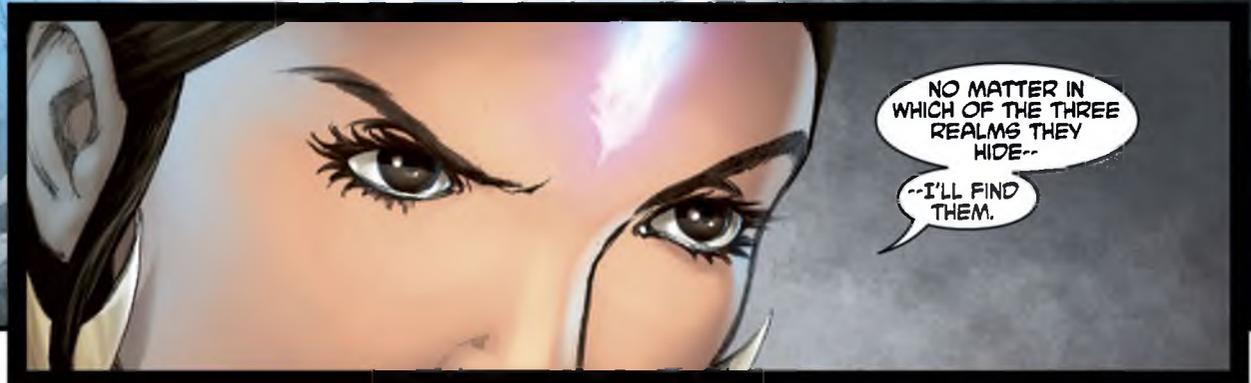
IMPOSSIBLE!



DARK LORDS--I'VE FAILED YOU.



RATHER SPECTACULARLY, I MIGHT ADD. AND ALSO TELL YOUR MASTERS, THEY'RE NEXT.



NO MATTER IN WHICH OF THE THREE REALMS THEY HIDE--
--I'LL FIND THEM.



HELP ME!
DARINDE
GUARDS, HELP
ME!

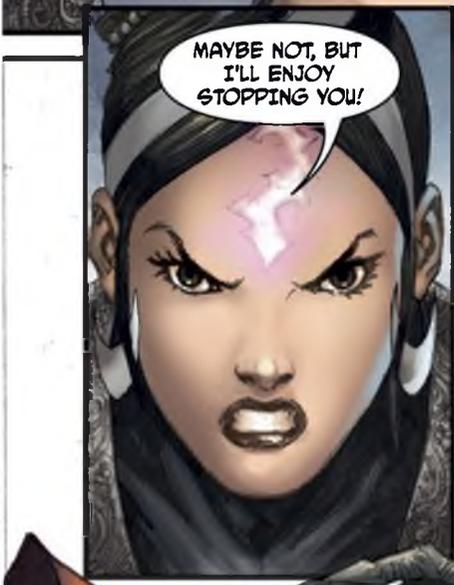
THERE'S NO
ONE LEFT!



IT'S JUST US.



YOU MIGHT STOP ME, BUT WE
KNOW THAT YOUR POWERS GROW
WEAK IN THIS WORLD, AND THERE'S
THOUSANDS MORE OF US--
MILLIONS, EVEN, AND YOU
CAN'T STOP US ALL!



MAYBE NOT, BUT
I'LL ENJOY
STOPPING YOU!



WHUDD!

*DESPITE EVERYTHING
AROUND US, EVERYTHING
I THOUGHT I KNEW, I'M
STARTING TO BELIEVE
IN SOMETHING...*



I'M STARTING TO BELIEVE IN HER.



*NICE JOB--
AND WITH TWO MINUTES
TO SPARE. HOW MANY
WERE THERE? JUST
50 TO 1?*

*HA.
YOU MAKE ME SOUND
LIKE SOME SORT OF
SUPER-HERO.*

*NAH, I
WOULDN'T SAY
THAT...*



*...WHAT YOU ARE IS A
LOT MORE THAN ANY
SPANDEX-COVERED
CLOWN COULD EVER
HOPE TO BE, YOU...*

*...YOU'RE
A GODDESS!*



DEEPAK CHOPRA AND SHEKHAR KAPUR PRESENT...

RAMAYAN REBORN™



**A POWERFUL NEW VISION OF
INDIA'S GREATEST EPIC**

**The Legend Begins This September
First issue Cover by Alex Ross**





Rāmāyan

R E B O R N

WARS ARE FOUGHT FOR MANY REASONS, BOTH RIGHTEOUS AND RECKLESS. THIS IS NO DIFFERENT. NOR WAS THE JOURNEY THAT LED TO IT. FOR EACH STEP OF THE WAY, THE NOBLE RAMA AND HIS BRAVE BROTHER LAXMAN WERE CHALLENGED, BATTLE-TESTED, AND CONFRONTED BY CHOICES--BOTH RIGHTEOUS AND RECKLESS. AS ARE THE WHEELS OF KARMA--THE SEQUENTIAL MATRIX OF ACTION AND CONSEQUENCE--THAT SPIN INTO THE INEVITABILITY OF FATE AND THE SUBSTANCE OF A GREAT STORY. SUCH IS THIS STORY...



GATHER YOUR RANKS...
DO NOT GIVE IN. IN THE NAME
OF ARYAVARTA...

GHHAAARRGE!!



GHHRRRRRR!



YOUR FEEBLE MONKEY RACE WAS
ALWAYS TOO WEAK GENERAL NEEL.



Ghaakkk!

YOU SHOULD HAVE
STAYED IN THE
FORESTS WHERE
YOU BELONG.

AND SO ANOTHER
ONE OF OUR GENERALS
FELL TODAY...

...ONE OF MANY.

SO MUCH BLOOD... SO MUCH
CARNAGE... SO MUCH VIRULENT
RAGE. I CANNOT EVEN REMEMBER
WHEN WE MARCHED INTO THIS
HELLISH LAND AND WAGED THIS
WAR AGAINST THE DEMON ASURAS...
IT HAS BEEN SO LONG...

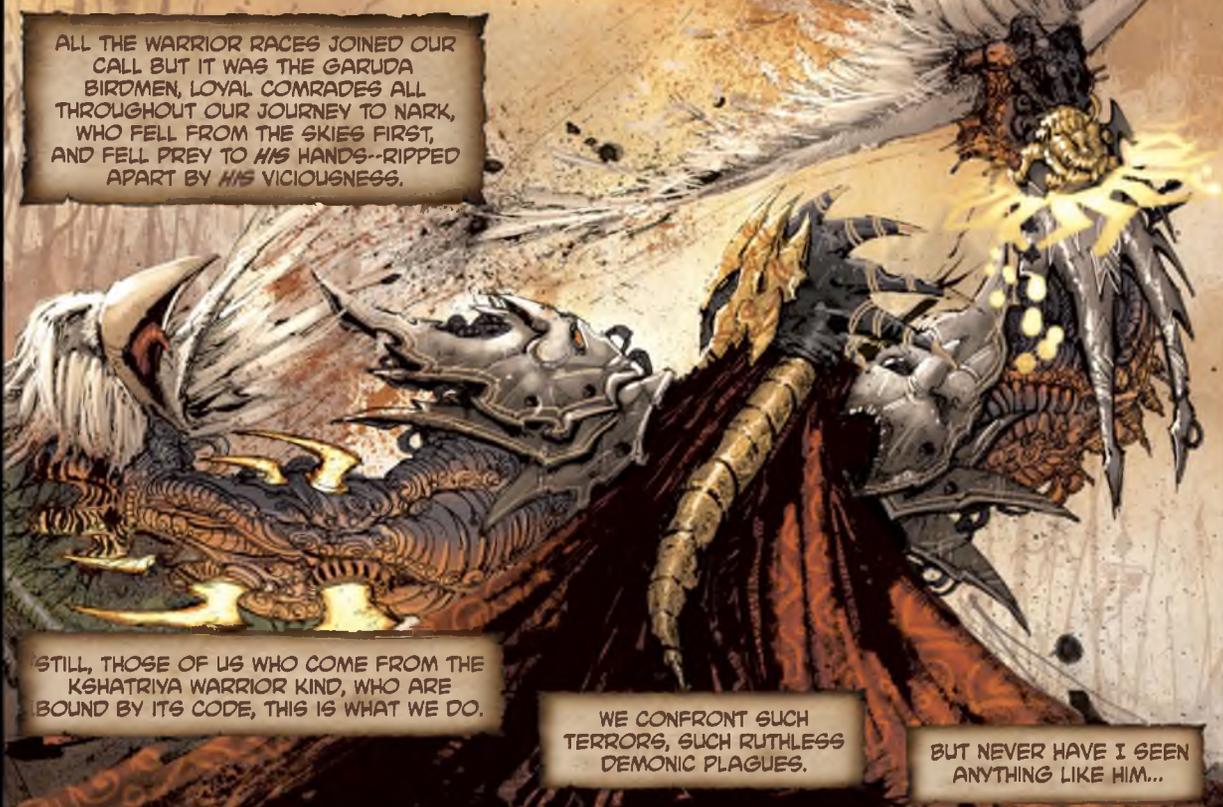
THE DAYS AND NIGHT MERGED
INTO A CEASELESS FLOW
OF TIME AS I FOUGHT HIS
ARMIES ATOP A MOUNTAIN OF
FALLEN WARRIORS.

BUT NOW... TODAY, I
CANNOT ESCAPE THE
FEELING THAT THIS WAR,
MY STRUGGLE, ENDS.



UNTIL NOW, THE DEMON LORD RAVAN HAD NEVER SHOWN HIMSELF, NEVER SET A FOOT ON THE WAR GROUND... NEVER CONSIDERED US WORTHY OF HIS ATTENTION, NEVER HONORED US AND GOT HIS YANTRA CLAD CLAWS DIRTY WITH BLOOD...

...UNTIL I KILLED HIS SON, THE WARLORD INDRAJIT.



ALL THE WARRIOR RACES JOINED OUR CALL BUT IT WAS THE GARUDA BIRDMEN, LOYAL COMRADES ALL THROUGHOUT OUR JOURNEY TO NARK, WHO FELL FROM THE SKIES FIRST, AND FELL PREY TO HIS HANDS--RIPPED APART BY HIS VICIOUSNESS.

STILL, THOSE OF US WHO COME FROM THE KSHATRIYA WARRIOR KIND, WHO ARE BOUND BY ITS CODE, THIS IS WHAT WE DO.

WE CONFRONT SUCH TERRORS, SUCH RUTHLESS DEMONIC PLAGUES.

BUT NEVER HAVE I SEEN ANYTHING LIKE HIM...



THAT FRIGID CHILL RUNNING DOWN MY SPINE AS I HEAR THE SICKENING SOUND OF FLESH AND BONE TORN APART BY BARE HANDS.

THEY CALL THIS FEAR. AND TODAY FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY WHOLE LIFE, I HAVE UNDERSTOOD IT'S MEANING.



STILL, I WILL NOT GIVE INTO IT.

RAVAN!



THIS
ENDS NOW!

YES, YOUNG PRINCE,
YOUR KINGDOM IN RUINS,
YOUR PEOPLE DESTROYED,
LET'S END IT.



SHHTRRANMKK!



SO PATHETIC...



IT WAS FOOLHARDY, TO ATTACK
HIM ALL BY MYSELF... A MISTAKE...
SUCH IS THE INEBRIATION OF WAR.

HOW DARE
YOU?



YOU WILL
DIE SLOWWWWWW....!

AND I KNEW I WAS GOING TO
DIE DUE TO MY FOOLISHNESS.



STOP!



NO
MORE...

NO MORE
DEATH.

BUT I ALSO KNEW
HE WAS NEVER GOING
TO LET IT HAPPEN.



WHO ARE YOU TO
STAY MY HAND?

THERE HAS BEEN
TOO MUCH DEATH TODAY.
STEP AWAY FROM MY
BROTHER...

RAMA, MY BROTHER,
MY TEACHER, MY LORD...

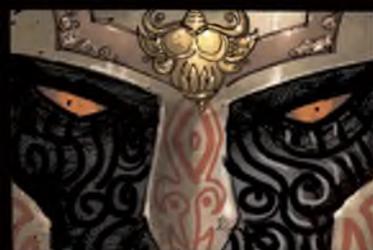
THE LAST BEACON OF HOPE
THIS WORLD HAS AGAINST THE
SOULLESS ABOMINATION THAT
THREATENS ALL EXISTENCE.

OUR CHAMPION, OUR
LEADER... OUR HERO!

I'VE COME TO CLAIM
THE RIGHT OF FREEDOM AND
SURVIVAL...

...AND FOR
LAXMAN!!

SHATRANKK!!





...EVEN IF IT
COSTS MY LIFE.



Coming September 2006

THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

Hi, and welcome to the very first comic book from Virgin Comics!

Virgin #0 is a special issue because it's a one-of-a-kind collection of pieces from the puzzle that is Virgin Comics. In these pages, you'll find prelude stories for two of our initial series - *Devi*, launching in July and *Ramayan Reborn*, on sale in September. More on those in a few, but first, a bit on Virgin Comics' origin story...

Some of you may know the names involved. Some of you may recognize the mythology that inspires many of our stories. To begin: Virgin Comics is the creative brainchild of writer **Deepak Chopra**, filmmaker **Shekhar Kapur**, and maverick **Sir Richard Branson**. Together, we collectively formed Virgin Comics with two core missions:

1) You've seen it with Japan and you're seeing it with Korea. Our mission over the next few years is to create original stories and characters that tap into the vast library of mythology and reinvent the rich indigenous narratives of India.

2) To collaborate with creative talent from around the world. From filmmakers, to writers, to musicians, to visual artists, our goal is to craft original stories and characters into compelling graphic fiction.

Through this, we saw an opportunity to harness some incredible talent - in India and elsewhere - to add to the vast canon of comic lore through three different lines of comics...

Shakti: Meaning power in one of the indigenous languages of India, our "Shakti" comics line focuses on reinventing the great Asian stories of antiquity. Both *Devi* and *Ramayan Reborn* fall into this category, so you'll get a taste.

Director's Cut: In collaboration with some of the best filmmakers in the world, top comics writers and innovative artists we'll bring you brand new, exciting comic series. Look for *John Woo's Seven Brothers*, written by comics legend **Garth Ennis**, this fall.

Voices: Have you ever made that list of people you would kill to work with? Well, we did, and they make up our collaborators on the Voices line. These iconic mavericks are the people we recognize as master creators in their own fields and that we think have something to offer the world of graphic fiction. From a certain pop icon to the man everyone considers the best-kept secret in the creative arts, keep your eyes peeled for upcoming announcements.

We're very excited to chart out some new territory in the industry we all love and we hope you'll come along for the ride. To that end, we offer you premiere stories of *Devi* and *Ramayan Reborn*, our samplings from the Shakti line that will kick-start the Virgin Comics birth.

Devi is a reinvention of the great Devi goddess myths of Asia. It's the story of the goddess spirit's reawakening in the body of an ordinary girl in a modern city who must take on an ancient evil that has sinister designs on the earth and the heavens. Both submissive and seductress, seemingly divine and diabolical, Devi wears all the thousand faces of the goddess and makes for one cool new heroine.

Ramayan Reborn is the relaunch of India's greatest mythology, the Ramayan. Described as the "Odyssey of the East", our version chronicles the epic quest of Rama and his younger brother to recover Earth's most precious element that has been stolen by the Demon Lord, Ravan. Journeying through a mythic landscape that brings encounters with strange creatures and feisty demons all spawned by a post-apocalyptic world, Rama's quest is a primal one for salvation, deliverance, and an effort to bring some meaning to the conflicted world he inhabits. *Disclaimer: Ramayan Reborn is a reinvention of the Ramayan in every way. There is no intention to faithfully recreate the original text. Our goal is only to tell a whole new story by springboarding off of the original that we love so much, with respect and admiration.*

So, enjoy Virgin #0. We're really excited and hope you are, too. It's been a long road up until this point and we're grateful to all of those that have helped us get here (too long to list now but you'll meet them over the next few months and years). Look out for our books and look out for us - we expect to be around for a while.



Gotham Chopra
Chief Creative Officer



Sharad Devarajan
Chief Executive Officer

P.S. - Come check us out at our new and constantly evolving website www.virgincomics.com

DEVI

Created by: SHEKHAR KAPUR

Issue #0

Script: SIDDHARTH KOTIAN

Artwork: MUKESH SINGH

Flashback Pages: ABHISHEK SINGH

Colors: SUNDARAKANNAN

Letters: RAVIKIRAN B.S.

Editor: MACKENZIE CADENHEAD

Assistant Editor: MAHESH KAMATH

RAMAYAN REBORN

Created by:

DEEPAK CHOPRA & SHEKHAR KAPUR

Issue #0

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Artwork: ABHISHEK SINGH

Colors: ASHWIN CHIKERUR

Letters: RAVIKIRAN B.S.

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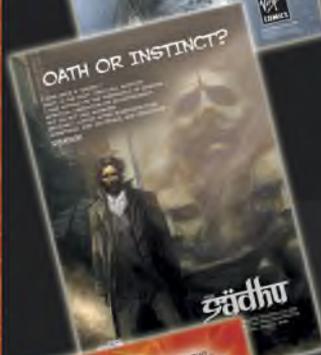
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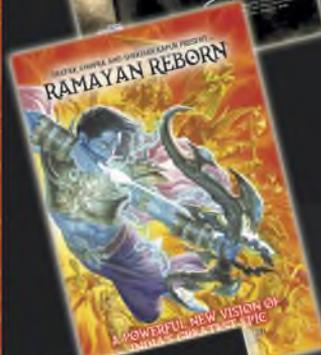
DEVI
ON STANDS
JULY 12th, 2006



SNAKE WOMAN
ON STANDS
JULY 19th, 2006



SADHU
ON STANDS
JULY 26th, 2006



RAMAYAN REBORN
RELEASING
SEPTEMBER 2006



SEVEN BROTHERS
COMING
FALL 2006

SEVEN BROTHERS

JOHN WOO
GARTH ENNIS

FALL 2006



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