



ISSUE 11

SHEKHAR KAPUR'S

DEVI

TM

ATEETA

SHEKHAR KAPUR'S DEVI™

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Raju Puthukarai and Mallika Chopra**



PREVIOUSLY

LONG AGO, THE GODS WERE THREATENED BY THE TREACHERY OF ONE OF THEIR OWN, BALA. A DIVINE WARRIOR WAS CREATED FROM THE COLLECTIVE ESSENCE OF THE PANTHEON. SHE WAS THE FIRST DEVI, AND SHE DEFEATED BALA IN BATTLE IN THE SECOND CENTURY OF MAN. MILLÉNIA PASSED, AND RECENTLY BALA ROSE AGAIN, DEADLIER THAN EVER. DEVI ROSE AGAIN TO OPPOSE HIM, INHABITING THE BODY OF TARA MEHTA, A YOUNG WOMAN IN THE CITY OF SITAPUR.

CO-EXISTING WITH TARA THANKS TO THE INTERVENTION OF A PRIEST OF THE DURAPASYA NAMED AGANTUK, DEVI MANAGED TO BRING DOWN BALA ONCE MORE. SHE WAS AIDED IN THIS BY INSPECTOR RAHUL SINGH OF SITAPUR POLICE, WHO SEEMINGLY PLUNGED TO HIS DEATH IN AN ABYSS. HOWEVER, UNBEKNOWNST TO DEVI, AGANTUK MANAGED TO SAVE RAHUL, WHO HAS LAPSED INTO A COMA.

NOW WITH HER INITIAL MISSION ACCOMPLISHED, DEVI MUST COME TO TERMS WITH RESPONSIBILITY THRUST UPON HER AS PROTECTOR OF SITAPUR AND CHAMPION OF MANKIND. HOWEVER, THE APSARA ASSASSIN KRATHA, ORIGINALLY HIRED BY BALA, STILL INTENDS TO CARRY OUT HER CONTRACT AND KILL DEVI.

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THERE WAS THE
END...AND THEN THE
BEGINNING.

I WATCHED A NEW CREATION
SPRING FORTH FROM THE VOID.
I WATCHED IT GROW SIDE BY
SIDE WITH THE MYRIAD OTHERS
UNDER MY CARE.

BUT NOW I SENSE SOMETHING
AMISS, SOMETHING THAT
THREATENS THE BALANCE
BETWEEN DARK AND LIGHT,
PUSHING THE UNIVERSE TO THE
BRINK OF ANNIHILATION.

EVEN PEERING THROUGH THE
MISTS OF TIME, ONLY
FLASHES ARE REVEALED TO
ME, NOT THE ANSWER.

I SEE A GODDESS
AND HER VESSEL, FOREVER
TORN BETWEEN THE HUMAN
AND THE DIVINE.

SITAPUR.

ONE YEAR AGO.

GOOD MORNING, SIR!

THIS IS TARA MEHTA, FROM MCBC BANK, CALLING TO OFFER YOU A SPECIAL--

THE VOLUNTEER'S HANDBOOK

CHILD PSYCHOLOGY AND YOU
(INDIAN CHILD WELFARE)

DON'T YOU PEOPLE HAVE ANYTHING BETTER TO DO ON A FRIDAY?

WHATEVER YOU'RE SELLING, I DON'T WANT IT!

YOU CAN GO TO HELL, AND DON'T EVER CALL THIS NUMBER AGAIN!

CLICK

HOWDY, ROOKIE...

... MAKE THAT FIRST SALE YET?

MAYA, HI. I WAS JUST...

... I WAS...

TOUGH CALL, HUH?

I REALLY HATE THIS JOB.

THANKS.

HEY, IT HAPPENS, RIGHT? WE GET USED TO IT.

HERE...

A BUNCH OF THE GIRLS ARE GOING OUT TONIGHT, USUAL TGIF STUFF. MAYBE CATCH A MOVIE.

LIKE TO JOIN US?

I APPRECIATE THE OFFER, MAYA, BUT I'LL PASS.

I NEED TO BE IN BED EARLY TONIGHT...

...BIG PLANS FOR THE WEEKEND.

HOW ARE MY LITTLE ONES DOING TODAY?

TARA DIDI!

I VISITED YOUR TEACHER ON THE WAY. SHE SAID YOU GUYS REALLY DID A GOOD JOB IN YOUR EXAMS. SO...

*BIG SISTER IN HINDI

...SOME REWARDS ARE IN ORDER.

RAMU! HARRY POTTER FOUR, AS PROMISED!

THE BARBIE DOLL YOU ASKED FOR, LAALI.

AND SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR MY FAVORITE ARTIST, A WATERCOLOR SET FOR YOU, RAVI.

RAVI? HAS ANYONE SEEN RAVI?

THANK YOU, DIDI!

THANKS!

RAMU, DO YOU KNOW WHERE RAVI IS?

NO, DIDI, HE DIDN'T COME TO SCHOOL THE LAST TWO DAYS.

DID YOU GO SEE HIM? IS HE ALL RIGHT?

YESTERDAY WE WENT TO HIS HOUSE...

...BUT HIS FATHER WAS HOME. HE SHOUTED AT US AND WE RAN AWAY.

RAVI? ARE YOU THERE?



IT'S TARA.



TARA DIDI!



RAVI!
WHAT HAPPENED?!

TARA DIDI?
IS THAT YOU?





MY GOD, WHO DID THIS, RAVI? HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

IT WAS... I...

HE SLIPPED AND FELL.



IT WAS AN ACCIDENT. HE BANGED HIMSELF UP PRETTY GOOD.



MR. VERMA! I WAS JUST... I WAS WONDERING ... WHEN DID ALL OF THIS HAPPEN?



I JUST TOLD YOU, HE SLIPPED IN THE BATHROOM YESTERDAY.

BUT... HE HASN'T BEEN TO SCHOOL FOR THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS...



YOU ACCUSING ME OF SOMETHING, MISSY? YOU CALLING ME A LIAR?

NO, NO, I JUST... I WAS...



FATHER, DON'T! TARA DID!



...IT'S WHAT HE SAID, OKAY? I... SLIPPED...

"...AND I FELL."

SITAPUR
MORGUE.

TODAY.

...SHOWS SIGNS OF
SEVERE AND REPEATED
PHYSICAL ABUSE...



...CAUSE OF DEATH
WAS MASSIVE BLUNT TRAUMA.
HE WAS *BLUDGEONED*
TO DEATH.



BUT I STILL
DON'T GET WHY
YOU'RE HERE.

THIS IS
CRIMINAL, BUT NOT
THE KIND OF THING
YOU USUALLY DEAL
WITH.



INSPECTOR
SINGH ONCE TOLD ME
YOU ONLY DO *GODS*
AND *DEMONS*.



THANK YOU
FOR LETTING ME
SEE HIM, DR RAO.
I KNEW HIM
ONCE...



...WHEN
THINGS WERE
DIFFERENT.

I SENSE YOUR
PAIN, TARA, YOUR
ANGER...



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COLUMBIA PICTURES





... BUT YOU ... WE ...
CANNOT AFFORD THE
LUXURY OF EMOTIONS.

YOU COULD'VE *SAVED*
THAT CHILD IF ONLY
YOU'D HAD THE GUTS
TO STAND UP WHEN IT
MATTERED MOST.

TARA, WE WIELD MORE
POWER THAN AN ENTIRE
PANTHEON. WITHOUT
TEMPERANCE, IT WILL
EXPLODE.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO GET
THINGS WRIGHT. THAT GOOD IS
ALL THAT MATTERS IF YOU CAN'T
USE IT TO SAVE THOSE THAT
MATTER ...

... OR AT LEAST
AVENGE THEM.

MY CHILD, WE CAN
MAKE A DIFFERENCE
TOGETHER, BUT
VENGEANCE IS NOT
THE ANSWER.

THE GODDESS ONLY
WANTS TO BRING THEM
YOUR RAGE, YOUR FURY.

I AM THE
ANSWER!

TARA, *LISTEN* TO ME.
KILLING THE *FATHER*
WOULD NOT BRING
BACK THE *CHILD*.

YOU ARE *BETTER* THAN
THIS. WE *CAN* MAKE THE
WORLD A BETTER PLACE,
BUT NOT WITH BLIND
REVENGE.

REMEMBER YOUR
PROMISE, TARA.
REMEMBER WHAT YOU
PROMISED *RAHUL*.

AH, WELL PLAYED,
GODDESS. *YOU WIN...*
THIS TIME.

BUT REMEMBER THIS.
DARKNESS GROWS IN HER
SOUL. SOON THE DAY WILL
COME WHEN SHE NEEDS YOU
NO MORE.

THEN SHE'LL BE
MINE FOREVER.

I SEE THE *PROTECTOR*
OF THE GODDESS, A MORAL
MAN HAUNTED BY HIS OWN
DEMONS.

HE SHARES A BOND OF A
LOVE UNSPOKEN WITH BOTH
THE CELESTIAL AND HER
VESSEL.





SITAPUR POLICE FIRING RANGE.

ONE YEAR AGO.

BLAM! BLAM!

PAPERWORK'S DONE, RAHUL. WE'RE ON.



BLAM! BLAM!

DISPATCH CLERK WASN'T TOO HAPPY ABOUT GOING BEHIND GAITONDE'S BACK...



BLAM!

... BUT SHE HATES HIM MORE THAN SHE HATES YOU.

HOPE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING, RAHUL.



TRUST ME, ROMA



YOU KNOW I APPRECIATE YOU DOING THIS FOR ME.

YOU CAN MAKE IT UP BY BUYING ME DINNER LATER.

AN EXPENSIVE ONE.



THE TIP'S SOLID. IVAM'S SHIPMENT COMES IN TONIGHT.

DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS EXACTLY, BUT WORD IS IT'S BIG.



AND SINCE I CAN'T BE THERE OFFICIALLY BECAUSE GAITONDE SUSPENDED ME...



CLICK!

... WE'LL JUST HAPPEN TO BE IN THE AREA WHEN THE DEAL GOES DOWN.



I COULD LOSE MY JOB OVER THIS, YOU KNOW.

RELAX. DON'T WORRY SO MUCH...

"...YOU'LL LIVE LONGER."

BRAKKA

THIS IS INSPECTOR SINGH REQUESTING BACKUP! WE ARE UNDER HEAVY FIRE!

SO YOUR INFORMANT DIDN'T HAPPEN TO MENTION THAT THE SHIPMENT WAS A TRUCKLOAD OF AUTOMATIC WEAPONS?!

BRAKKA

BRAKKA

BRAKKA

I SWEAR, ROMA, I HAD NO IDEA! WE'LL JUST HOLD OUT 'TIL THEY RUN OUT OF AMMO.

WHICH IS WHEN? TWO WEEKS FROM NOW?

WHAT ARE THESE THINGS?

BRAKKA

BRAKKA

DON'T KNOW, BUT THERE MUST BE A HUNDRED OF THEM!

BLAM!

AND THEY JUST KEEP COMING!

BRAKKA

BRAKKA

BRAKKA

HRRRRR!

YEAH, WELL...

BLAM!

...WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT.



SHOOT THEM
IN THE HEAD! STOPS
THEM COLD!

WHAT, TOO
MANY ZOMBIE FLICKS
FOR YOU?



JUST DO IT!

FOR
ONCE IN HIS
LIFE, THE MAN
IS RIGHT.

WE'VE
GOT AN
OPENING! MOVE
YOUR FAT ASS,
INSPECTOR!

I KEEP
TELLING YOU, I'M
BIG-BONED!





HEMA MALINI IS BIG BONED.
YOU'RE A BONA FIDE FAT ASS!

CAREFUL, YOU'LL HURT MY FEELINGS...



RAHUL!



LOOK OUT!



ROMA?



ROMA!
HANG ON,
BABY! HELP'S ON
THE WAY!

...RAHUL...



I THINK... I'LL
HAVE TO TAKE A
RAIN CHECK...

...ON THAT
DINNER...



TWO DAYS LATER

THIS WAS GOING TO HAPPEN SOONER OR LATER, SINGH...

... AND IT WAS GOING TO BE YOUR FAULT.

RULES APPLY TO EVERYONE EXCEPT YOU, RIGHT?

DIDN'T WORK OUT SO WELL THIS TIME, DID IT?

I CAN HAVE YOU FIRED FOR THIS ...

... BUT I WON'T.

I'D RATHER HAVE A FRONT-ROW SEAT TO WATCH YOUR GUILT EAT YOU ALIVE...

"... BIT BY BIT.

"THIS IS SOMETHING YOU'LL HAVE TO LIVE WITH, HOTSHOT..."

"... FOR THE REST OF YOUR MISERABLE LIFE."



ON STANDS MAY 2007

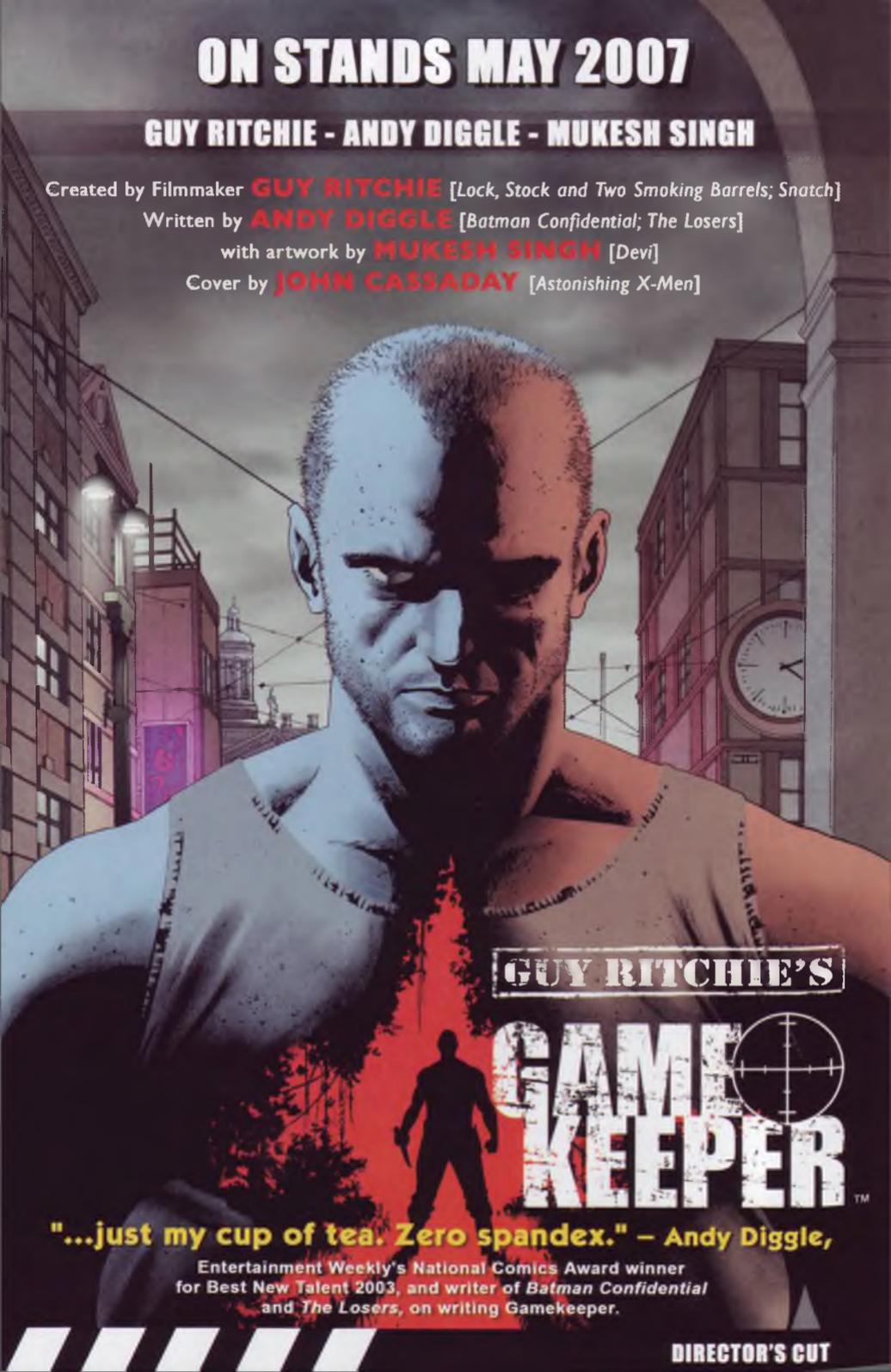
GUY RITCHIE - ANDY DIGGLE - MUKESH SINGH

Created by Filmmaker **GUY RITCHIE** [Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels; Snatch]

Written by **ANDY DIGGLE** [Batman Confidential; The Losers]

with artwork by **MUKESH SINGH** [Devi]

Cover by **JOHN CASSADAY** [Astonishing X-Men]



GUY RITCHIE'S

**GAME
KEEPER**™

"...just my cup of tea. Zero spandex." – Andy Diggle,

Entertainment Weekly's National Comics Award winner
for Best New Talent 2003, and writer of *Batman Confidential*
and *The Losers*, on writing *Gamekeeper*.

DIRECTOR'S CUT



I SEE A *FALLEN WARRIOR*,
AN APSARA WHO HAS EMBRACED
THE WAY OF THE ASSASSIN.

HER BLIND HATRED FOR ANY
HINT OF THE DIVINE CLOUDS
EVEN *MY* VISION.



GO TELL LORD BOOKA...



"...KRATHA RETURNS FROM HER QUEST."





AH!
KRATHA!
WE
PRESUME
YOU WERE
VICTORIOUS?



YOU BRING
US THE HEADS
OF THE FOUR?



MOST EXCELLENT!
THEY SHALL MAKE A
GREAT ADDITION
TO OUR TROPHY
WALL.



SEND FOR
OUR CHRONICLER.
TODAY IS A DAY TO
BE IMMORTALIZED
IN THE EPICS.



OUR DEVOTEES SHALL SING PRAISES TO THE GLORY OF THEIR VICTORIOUS GOD, *SLAYER* OF THE FOUR GUARDIAN DEMONS OF THE NARAKIAN GATES.



SIRE?
A
WORD,
IF I MIGHT?



YOU HAVE OUR LEAVE TO *SPEAK*, KRATHA.



FOR GENERATIONS THE APSARA HAVE SERVED YOU AS *CONSORTS* AND *WARRIORS*.

HALF A DOZEN OF MY SISTERS LAID DOWN THEIR LIVES DURING THIS MISSION. WHAT WILL BE DONE TO COMMEMORATE THEIR *SACRIFICE*?



THEIR SACRIFICES WERE IN SERVICE TO A *DIVINE* CAUSE. WHAT *MORE* NEED BE DONE?



DAMNATION!

OUT OF MEAT AGAIN?



WE TOLD YOU TO BRING MORE MEAT! ARE YOU *STUPID* OR MERELY *DEAF*?

DON'T JUST STAND THERE *GAPING*...



...BRING US SOME MORE MEAT!



AND DO NOT TAKE ALL DAY OR WE SHALL HAVE THAT *SOFT SKIN* OF YOURS *FLAYED* OFF YOUR BACK!



YOU WERE NEVER SUCH A DIFFICULT SERVANT, KRATHA. WE COULD ALWAYS RELY ON YOUR OBEEDIENCE.

NOW, ABOUT YOUR SISTERS WHO HAVE FALLEN FOR A DIVINE CAUSE.



THEY SHALL BE IMMORTALIZED IN THE DIVINE ANNALS AS *MARTYRS* OF GLORY.



BUT YOU, KRATHA, SHALL HAVE A FAR *GREATER* HONOR.



WE HAVE WATCHED YOU *BLOSSOM* INTO A FINE APSARA...

...AND WE
HAVE DECIDED
TO GRANT YOU
THE HONOR...



...OF
GRACING
OUR BED
THIS NIGHT.

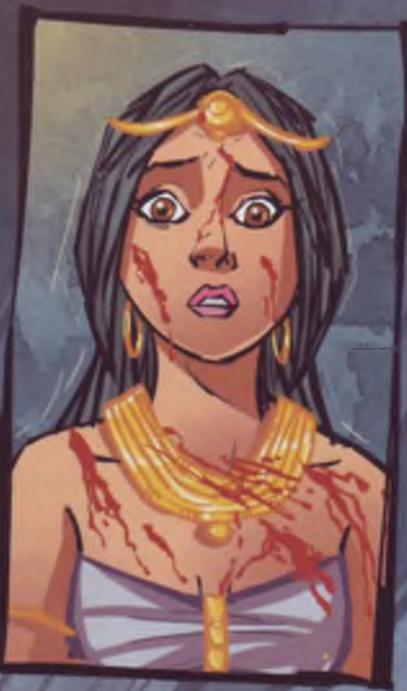


ENOUGH!



ZWICK!





WHEN THE CHRONICLER RECORDS THIS IN HIS EPIC...



...MAKE SURE HE KNOWS MY NAME IS KRATHA.

DEEPAK CHOPRA PRESENTS

india authentic™

KALI



ON STANDS JUNE 2007



THEIR FATES ARE *INTERTWINED*.
THEIR COLLECTIVE DESTINY CALLS
OUT TO ME, AND FROM BEYOND
THE REACHES OF SPACE AND
TIME, I AM DRAWN TO THEM.

PERHAPS THE
ANSWERS I SEEK
LIE WITH THEM.

PERHAPS I SHALL
DISCOVER THE KEY TO
AVERTING *ARMAGEDDON*.

TO BE CONTINUED!



ISSUE 1

DEEPAK CHOPRA & SHEKHAR KAPUR PRESENT

Rāmāyaṇ RELOADED™

3392 AD

NEW STORY ARC
SPEARHEADED BY
RON MARZ

ON STANDS JUNE 2007

ON STANDS JUNE 2007



ISSUE 1

THE Särlhu



THE SILENT ONES
1 OF 5

NEW STORY ARC
SPEARHEADED BY
RON MARZ



ISSUE 01

SHEKHAR KAPUR'S

SNAKE & WOMAN™

TALE OF THE SNAKE CHARMER



NEW
MINISERIES!

WELLS | SHINDE

ON STANDS JUNE 2007

SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS

DIRECTOR'S CUT

INSIDE VIRGIN COMICS

Snake Woman # 0

It seems impossible that it has been almost a year since three new Virgin titles braved the wilds of the comic book stands, but here we are, ten months, fifty issues, and more than a thousand pages later, and we've barely broken a sweat (okay, maybe a light sheen). Those three original titles—*Devi*, *The Sadhu* and *Snake Woman*—have all come a long way, and each continues to grow in its own way. *Devi* and *The Sadhu* are getting for their ten-month birthdays a makeover from story guru Ron Marz (you guys should definitely check them out); *Snake Woman*, on the other hand, is getting ready to turn a corner. As we get ready to begin the new *Snake Woman* miniseries, *Tale of the Snake Charmer* (on stands June 2007!), we thought it would be a nice tribute to our girl in snakeskin to take a look back—way back—and give our long-time readers a little something extra, while letting our newest readers jump on board for one of Virgin Comics' landmark series.

That's where we got the idea for *Snake Woman*, Issue #0. Writer Zeb Wells has taken a step out of the current *Snake Woman* timeline to look at the myth of this Goddess on a historical scale, giving us a deeper insight to the Naga spirit itself. And, while regular *Snake Woman* artist Vivek Shinde plunges straight ahead into *Tale of the Snake Charmer*, we thought, who better to render this

century-spanning tale than original artist from issues #1-#5, Michael Gaydos? Nobody, that's who. His brooding moody style is perfect for our journey through the dark history of the *Snake Woman*.

In addition, to help Zeb and Michael shed more light on the interwoven histories of the *Snake Woman* and the 68, we're packing Issue #0 with tons of bonus material to further expand the world of Jess, Harker and Raj. It's a big story, and we're going to tell it in as many ways as possible.

Lastly, in addition to all the stuff we're doing for Jess and her crew, we wanted to do something special for you guys as well. So, we decided to throw caution to the wind and stick a 99¢ price tag on this puppy. That's right, all this for under a buck.

So, whether you've been with Jess since *Snake Woman* premiered the Director's Cut line last July, or if you're thinking that maybe this is something you'd like to check out, throw down the buck and step into this thrilling world, and get pumped (and caught up) for *Snake Woman: Tale of the Snake Charmer*.

Virgin Comics Editorial Team



I AM NAGA. IN THE DARKNESS OF THE OLD DAYS, BEFORE HUMAN EYES GAZED UPON THE UNIVERSE, I WAS THERE.

I WILL DESCRIBE THE WAY THINGS WERE. MY TALE WILL SOUND SIMPLE, BUT THAT IS BECAUSE YOUR MIND CAN NEVER COMPREHEND...

BEFORE HUMAN FEET MARRIED THE EARTH, THE GODS ABOVE PARSED OUT THE ELIXIR OF IMMORTALITY.

US NAGAS, HUNGRY FOR ETERNAL LIFE, STOLE THE ELIXIR...

BUT WE DID NOT MAKE IT FAR.

THE ELIXIR WAS WRENCHED FROM OUR GRASP--ONLY A FEW PRECIOUS DROPS WERE LEFT BEHIND.

IN OUR DESPERATION, WE FELL TO OUR HUNGRY BELLIES, AND SO LOST OUR ARMS AND LEGS.

WE OPENED OUR MOUTHS TO THE GRASS, AND OUR TONGUES WERE CUT ON THE BLADES...

THE NAGAS BECAME THOSE WITH THE FORKED TONGUES. THOSE WHO SLITHER ON THE GROUND. WE BECAME THE SNAKE GODS...

SNEAK-PEEK OF
SNAKE WOMAN #0
ON SALE JUNE 2007!



WE OBTAINED
IMMORTALITY IN
A DIFFERENT WAY.

FROM OUR REPTILE
BRAINS SPRUNG THE
MINDS OF EVERY
THINKING CREATURE
ON THE EARTH.



WE ARE THE INSTINCT
CORTEX OF YOUR
MAMMALIAN MIND. WE
PROVIDE FEAR OF
THAT WHICH MAY
BURN YOU...

...AND THE LUST FOR
THAT WHICH MAY
PLEASE YOU.



AND SO WE HAVE BEEN
WORSHIPPED BY THOSE
NOT YET MADE STUPID BY
THEIR INTELLIGENCE.



EVEN IN THIS LATE AGE,
SOME OF US NAGAS
SURVIVED. STRENGTHENED
BY OUR WORSHIPPERS,
SUSTAINED BY THEIR LOVE.



AND IN TURN WE
OFFERED PROSPERITY.

SNEAK-PEEK OF
SNAKE WOMAN #0
ON SALE JUNE 2007!

Only in Snake Woman #0!

ON STANDS MAY 2007!

The Diary of a Snake Woman:

April Manning (1945-1980)

February 6, 1980

It's gotten worse—the headaches, that heavy feeling that greets me each morning. My dreams are becoming more intense, more real, and I wake afterwards, drenched in sweat. It's like I've been chasing something all night. Something I desperately need. I just can't remember what. Michael says they're merely nightmares, but he should understand. He's a part of this somehow. I can feel it. It's almost instinct.

SPECIAL
BONUS
MATERIAL

From the desk of Dr. Stanley Braskowitz

February 12,

First meeting with patient F. G. today. He was referred to me by a colleague, apparently my specialization in dream phenomena makes me well or better suited for this gentleman's more unique problem. I am doubtful; over 99% of the cases of abnormal phenomena reported from dreams end up being either fabricated or symptoms of a deeper psychological disorder. I've garnered a certain skepticism when it comes to these referrals. F.G. is a successful investment banker, has a (rather beautiful) wife and two children. He lives in an upper-class suburban town and works Downtown. A self-described "regular guy," he enjoys spending time with his family, spicy food and football. Says about six months ago, he began having increasingly vivid nightmares about snakes. A common theme in dreams; in certain cultures, a bad omen, portending business or money troubles, or even death. Here, more likely, it seems like patient has seen too many Indiana Jones films. I've advised him to keep a dream journal, and prescribed a mild sedative.



ISSUE 12

SHEKHAR KAPUR'S

DOOM

TM



ON STANDS JUNE 2007

EXPERIENCE THE UNKNOWN



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METAL DAVE

DCP