

DEEPAK CHOPRA & SHEKHAR KAPUR PRESENT

# Rāmāyaṇ

3892 AD



ISSUE 2

DASGUPTA/ABHISHEK

DEEPAK CHOPRA & SHEKHAR KAPUR PRESENT  
**Rāmāyan**  
3392 A.D.

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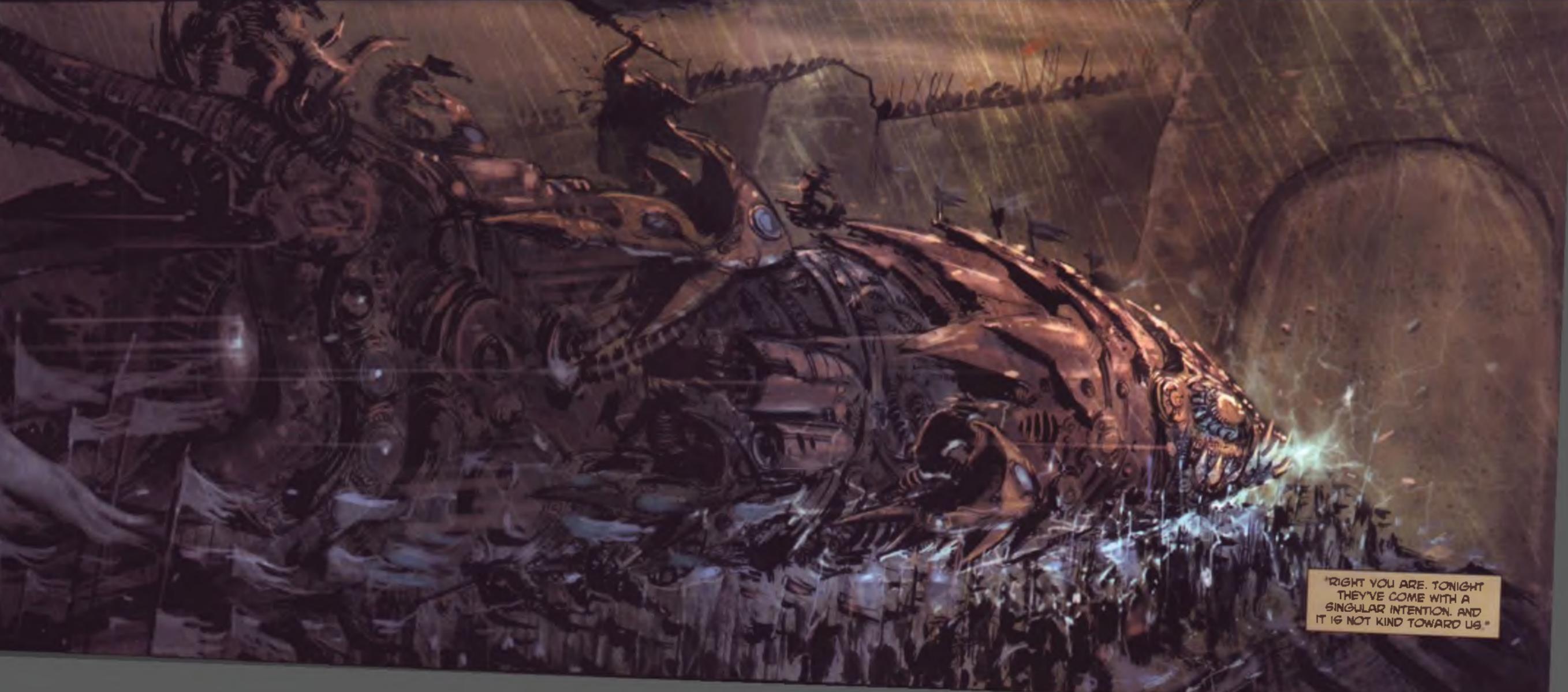
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IN THE DISTANT FUTURE, A GREAT EPIC UNFOLDS. ARMAGARH, THE LAST BASTION OF HUMAN KIND, IS PLAGUED BY RELENTLESS ASURA DEMON ATTACKS ON ITS VARIOUS OUTPOSTS. IN RESPONSE, ARMAGARH'S CHIEF COUNCILOR DEPLOYS NEW BATCHES OF KSHATRIYA WARRIORS TO THE VARIOUS OUTPOSTS, INCLUDING HIS FOUR SONS RAMA, LAKSHMAN, BHARAT AND SHATRUGHAN. RAMA, THE ELDEST BROTHER, ALONG WITH THE YOUNGER LAKSHMAN IS SENT TO THE UNEVENTFUL AND DOCILE OUTPOST OF JANASTHAN. FRUSTRATED BY THE RURAL ATMOSPHERE OF JANASTHAN AND DESIROUS OF COMBAT, THE FIERY LAKSHMAN MAKES HIS UNHAPPINESS KNOWN. BUT THEN, AMIDST THESE TRANQUIL DAYS, JANASTHAN IS ATTACKED BY A GREAT HORDE OF ASURAS WHO APPEAR SEEMINGLY OUT OF NOWHERE UPON THE HORIZON. RISING TO THE OCCASION AND FOR THE FIRST TIME EMBRACING HIS RANK AND DUTY, RAMA PREPARES HIS BROTHER AS WELL AS THE ILL-EQUIPPED, UNTRAINED, AND UNDER-MANNED JANASTHANIS FOR A BATTLE TO SURVIVE.

"LAKSHMAN, BROTHER, DON  
YOUR ARMOUR. IT'S GOING  
TO BE A LONG EVENING."

"IN FACT, IT MAY BE  
OUR LAST, RAMA."



"RIGHT YOU ARE. TONIGHT  
THEY'VE COME WITH A  
SINGULAR INTENTION. AND  
IT IS NOT KIND TOWARD US."



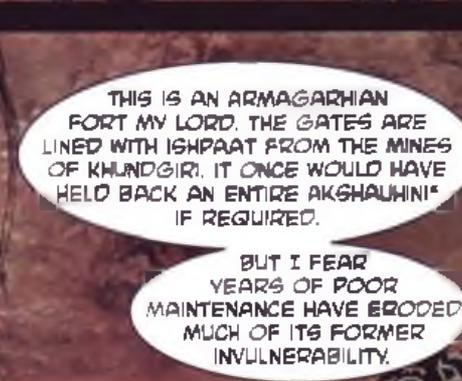
**THHDOOM!**  
**THHDOOM!**

PRADHAAN-JI,  
HOW MUCH LONGER WILL  
THE GATES HOLD?

\*CHIEFTAIN



THIS IS AN ARMAGARHIAN  
FORT MY LORD. THE GATES ARE  
LINED WITH ISHPAAT FROM THE MINES  
OF KHUNDGIRI. IT ONCE WOULD HAVE  
HELD BACK AN ENTIRE AKSHAUHINI\*  
IF REQUIRED.



BUT I FEAR  
YEARS OF POOR  
MAINTENANCE HAVE ERODED  
MUCH OF ITS FORMER  
INVULNERABILITY.

\*HUGE ARMY



BUT I'M EVEN MORE CONCERNED ABOUT THE WALLS .  
THE MASONRY IS OVERGROWN WITH VEGETATION. THE  
ROOTS OF THE CREEPERS HAVE WEAKENED THE MORTAR.  
A CONCENTRATED ATTACK ON ANY WEAK PART  
OF THE WALL MAY DEVASTATE THE  
WHOLE FORT.

THEN ALERT THE  
GARRISON TO KEEP A KEEN EYE  
ON THE DILAPIDATED SECTIONS OF THE  
WALLS. ANY ONSLAUGHT MUST BE  
BROKEN OFF IMMEDIATELY.

HEAVEN KNOWS  
HOW THE ASURAS REACHED  
SO FAR UNDETECTED BY  
OUR SCANNERS!



SHOOT THE  
DAITYAS, YOU MORONS.  
THEY ARE DRIVING THE RAM. THE  
RAKSHASAS CAN BE TAKEN  
CARE OF LATER!



LORD,  
THEY HAVE TWO  
LADDERS UP THIS  
SIDE... I... I...

HOLD  
THEM AT BAY,  
BOY! I'M ON THE  
DAITYAS.



T-THERE ARE  
TOO MANY. I CAN'T  
DO IT ALONE!



FOR GOD'S  
SAKE, JUST PRETEND  
TO BE A SOLDIER...  
IF EVEN FOR A  
MOMENT!



YES, MY  
LORD...



HHRRNNNN...



FOR  
ARMAGARH...



THE JANASTHANIS  
ARE PUTTING UP MORE  
FIGHT THAN WHAT WE  
EXPECTED, GENERAL  
VIV-SHAN.

DON'T BE FOOLED,  
WE'RE WAGING WAR AGAINST  
ARMAGARHIANS, TATAKA. YEARS  
OF DISUSE MAY DULL THE  
SHINE OF AN ISHPAAT BLADE,  
BUT CAN NEVER BLUNT  
ITS EDGE.

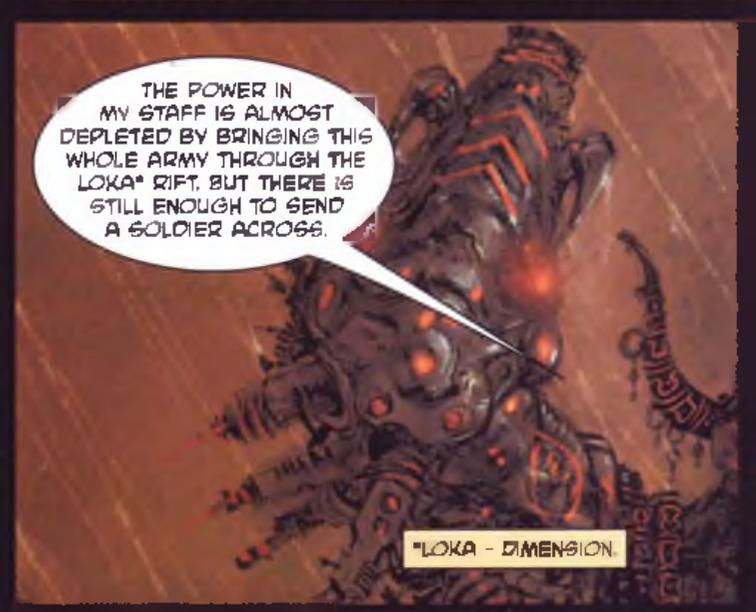
GENERAL... I AM  
HUNGRREEEE... IT'S BEEN  
YEARS SINCE I TASTED  
HUMAN FLESHHHH... WHAT  
CAN WE DO TO TAKE  
DOWN THE FORT?



LIEUTENANT  
TATAKA, PULL BACK  
OUR FORCES.

WHAT...  
RETREAT?!

NO...  
REINFORCEMENT.



THE POWER IN  
MY STAFF IS ALMOST  
DEPLETED BY BRINGING THIS  
WHOLE ARMY THROUGH THE  
LOKA\* RIFT, BUT THERE IS  
STILL ENOUGH TO SEND  
A SOLDIER ACROSS.

\*LOKA - DIMENSION.



HOW IS THE GARRISON HOLDING, LAKSH?

INCOMPETENT FOOLS, THEY HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO DEFEND A FORT. STILL, I CAN SEE SOMETHING STRANGE BELOW; THE ASURAS ARE BACKING OFF.

MAYBE THEY HAVE GIVEN UP.

DON'T COUNT ON IT.



THIS ISN'T A RETREAT. THEY ARE UP TO SOMETHING.

I HAVEN'T SEEN ANY VAYU YAANS\* WITH THEM. HOW DID SUCH A VAST ARMY REACH THIS PLACE TOTALLY UNDETECTED? HAVE YOU ESTABLISHED ANY CONTACT WITH ARMAGARH YET?

YOU WERE RIGHT; THE EQUIPMENT IS ANCIENT AND UNUSABLE AND THE SCOUTS DIDN'T MAKE IT. WE'RE ON OUR OWN.

\*AIR CRAFTS.



SO IT IS!

NO NEED TO WORRY, LITTLE BROTHER. AS LONG AS WE CAN DEFEND THIS FORT, NO HARM WILL COME TO US.

NO FEAR IN ME. BUT IT'S NOT LONG TILL THEY BREACH THE WALLS.



CONSTANT VIGILANCE, MY BROTHERS... PROTECT THE WALL AND WE'RE SAFE INSIDE. THE ASURAS WILL TRY PENETRATING THE PERIMETER OF JANASTHAN. THE WAR IS NOT OVER YET!

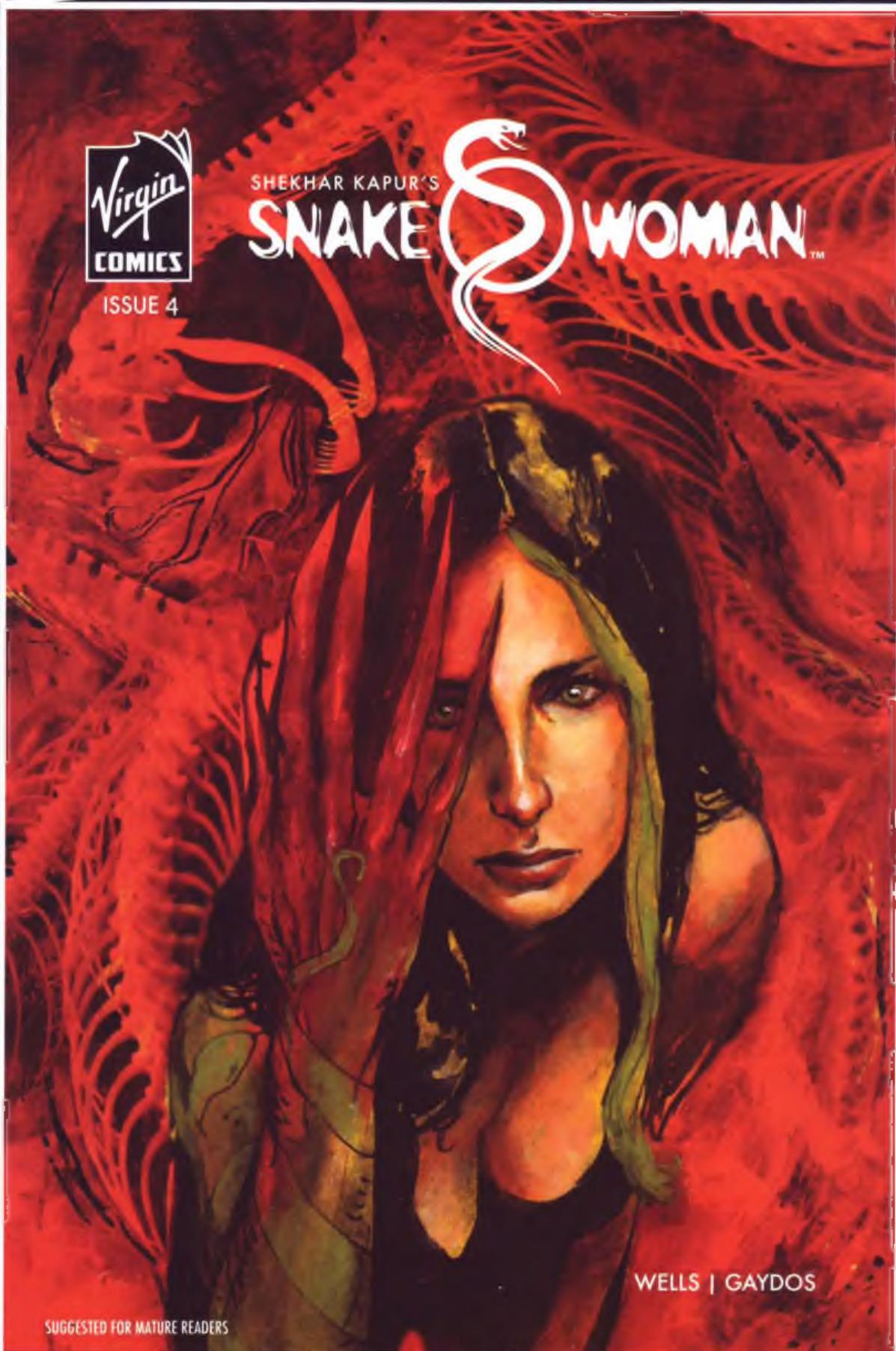
ON STANDS OCTOBER 2006



ISSUE 4

SHEKHAR KAPUR'S

SNAKE & WOMAN™



WELLS | GAYDOS

SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS

DIRECTOR'S CUT

WE'VE BEEN BREACHED... SECURE THE WALLS!



SLURCKK!



HAIL RAVANNNN...



CLICK!



GOD IS GREAT. RAVAN IS GREATER.

WHOOOOWNN... BADDOOOWNN!!





IT'S BEEN AN HOUR AND NO MOVEMENT ON THEIR SIDE YET. MAYBE THAT'S IT FOR NOW.

HMMPH... FAT CHANCE. HAVE YOU EVER FOUGHT ASURAS BEFORE, KESHAV?



UM... NO, I WAS BORN AND BROUGHT UP IN JANASTHAN. WE NEVER HAD TO FACE THESE BASTARDS.

I CAME TO JANASTHAN A FEW YEARS BACK WITH THE PREVIOUS GOVERNOR. I'VE SEEN THESE DEMONS IN ACTION WHILE I WAS POSTED IN KHUNDGIRI. THEIR POWERS ARE SUPERNATURAL.



PRECISELY!



AAAAREK!

KKKCHH!

GAAAAHH!

ASURAS... BUT HOW? FROM WHERE?



GRAB ON TO MY HAND!

URRRRHHH... THE WALL... HOW MUCH DAMAGE THEY HAVE DONE!



"THE WALL WITHSTOOD. WE'LL BE SAFE FOR A WHILE."

"THINK AGAIN. HAVE A CLOSER LOOK, RAMA: SUICIDE BOMBERS."

BADDOOOMMM!!  
BADDOOOMMM!!



DAMN THOSE IDIOTS. THEY CALL THEMSELVES MARTYRS BUT THEY'RE JUST HOPELESS PAWNS FOOLED BY A MADMAN.



KKRRKKRRRTTT!!



WHRRROOOMMMRRR!!





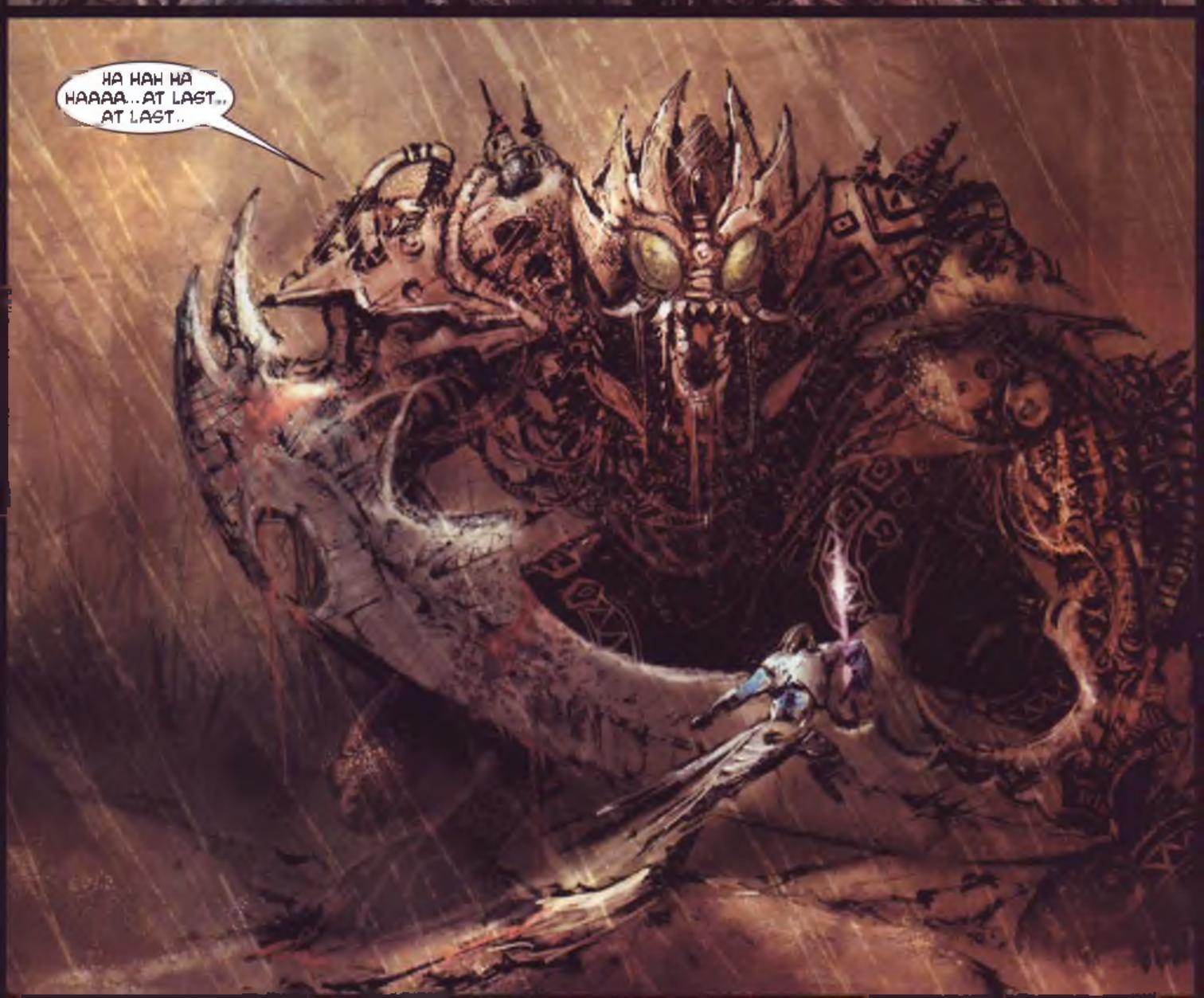
ALL MEN AT  
ARMS! BARRICADE THE  
RIFT IN THE WALL! THE ASURAS  
MUST BE STOPPED AT  
ALL COST. OTHERWISE  
WE ALL DIE!



LET THEM COME.  
THE STONES AND MORTAR  
MIGHT HAVE FALLEN, BUT THEY'LL  
FIND A WALL OF SHARP STEEL  
AND RESOLVE BLOCKING  
THEIR WAY.

WE'LL  
FIGHT TO  
DEATH!

NO CHIEF,  
FIGHT TO LIVE.



HA HAH HA  
HAAAA... AT LAST...  
AT LAST...

**ON STANDS NOVEMBER 2006**



ISSUE 5

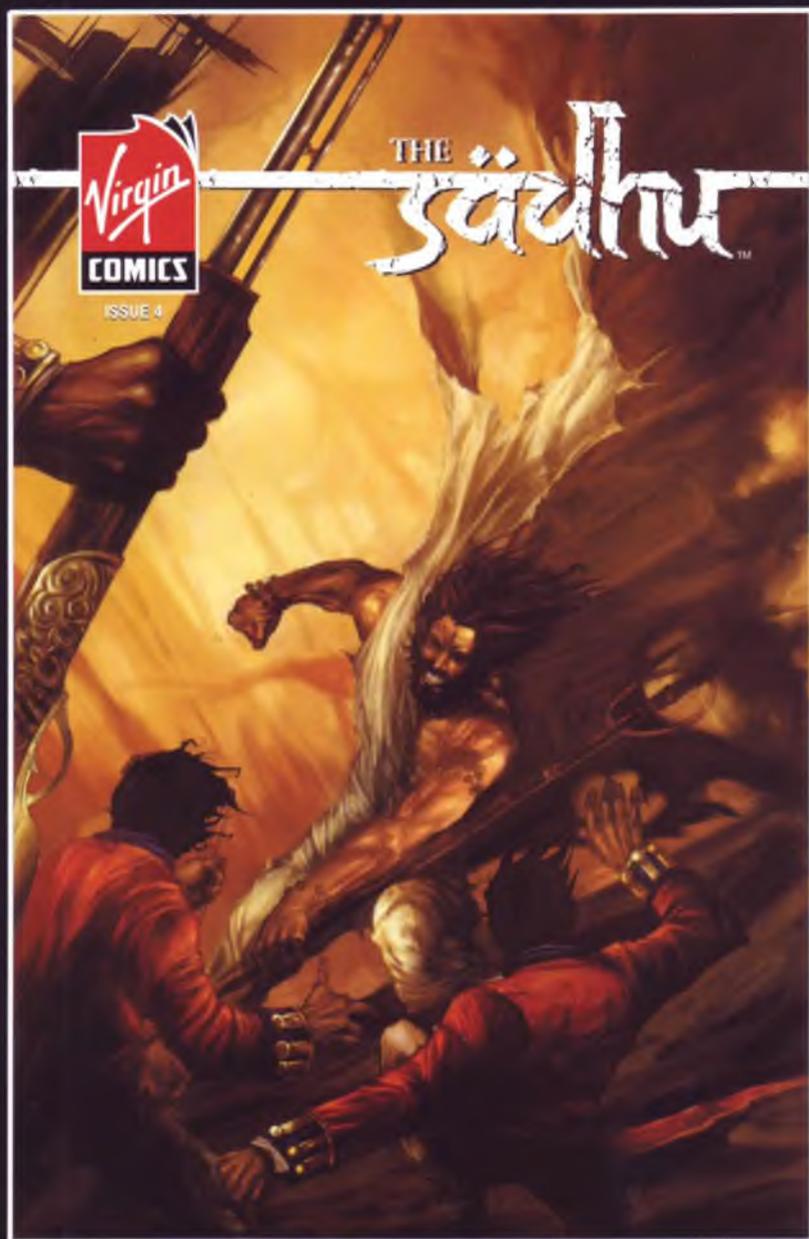
SHEKHAR KAPUR'S

# DEM



BASU / SINGH

ON STANDS OCTOBER 2006









THAT'S FOR MY SON!



IF YOU LOVE HIM SO MUCH...

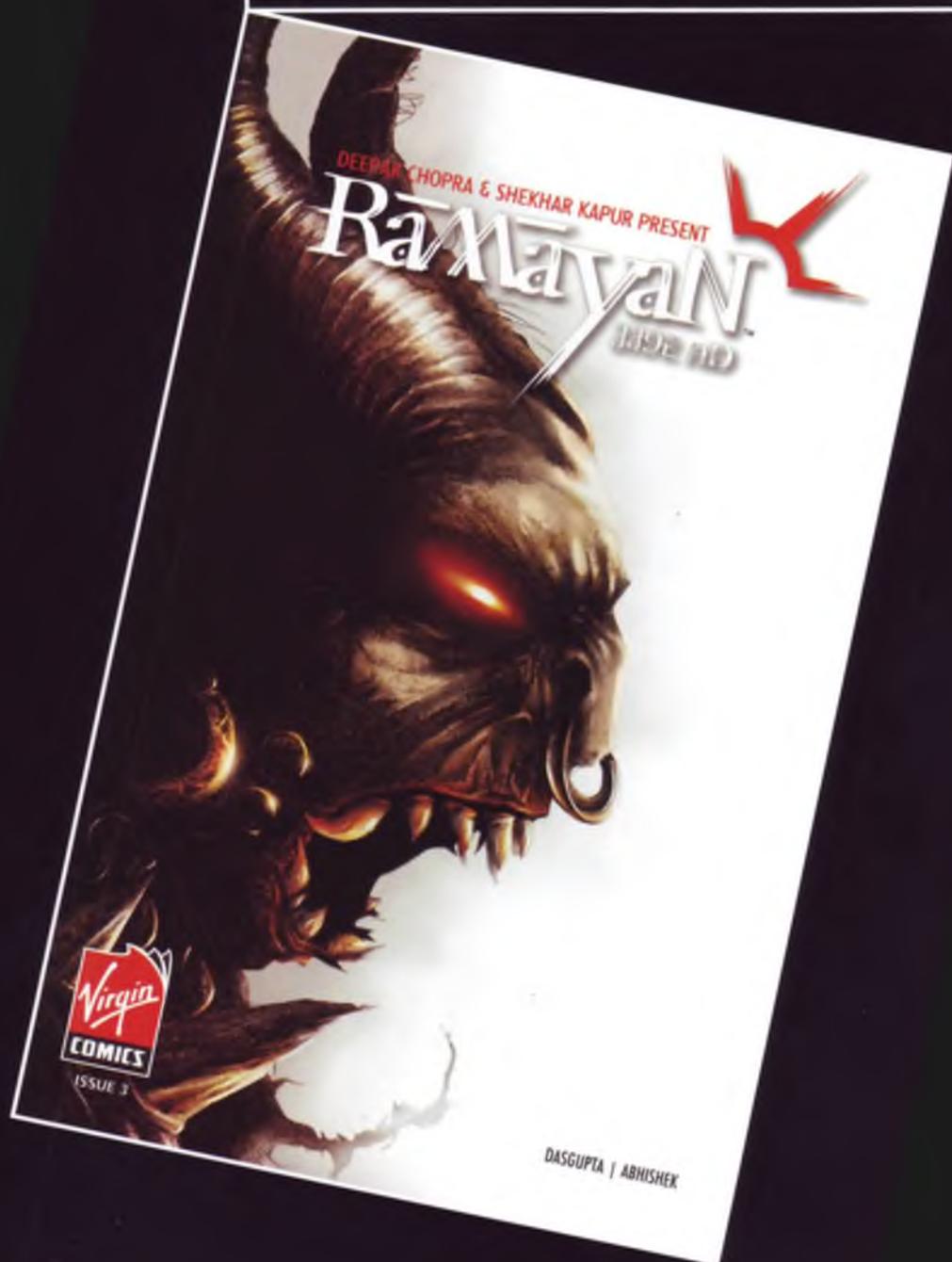


JOIN HIM.

NOOOOOO!!!



ON STANDS NOVEMBER 2006





AAARGHHH!



SO THIS IS HOW IT ENDS? DEATH UNTO ME.



HEH HEH... FLIMSY BOY, CARVE YOU UP... GOOD MEATTT...



BACK OFF!



GHH... VILE RAKSHASA!

HOLD ON, I'LL GET YOU TO THE VAIDYA\*.

\*DOCTOR



WHAT'S THE USE? HE'LL ONLY PROLONG THE SUFFERING. LET ME DIE IN THE BLOOD SOAKED SOIL OF JANASTHAN AND ATTAIN VEERGATI\*.

ARE YOU INSANE, LAUGHMAN? YOU HAVE LONG YEARS TO LIVE.

\*PARADISE



ALL WE HAVE LEFT IS THE GLORY OF OUR FIGHT...



"LORD, THEIR FORCES ARE RELENTLESS AND EVERYWHERE."

"IT'S A BLOOD-LETTING  
LIKE WE'VE NEVER SEEN."



"THE PLAINS ECHO WITH  
THE SILENCE OF DEATH."





AND NOW?  
STATUS?

NOT GOOD,  
OUR NUMBERS ARE  
SEVERELY DEPLETED.  
THEY'VE DRAWN BACK FOR  
A WHILE, BUT I DOUBT WE  
CAN TAKE ANOTHER  
ATTACK.

HOW IS  
LAKSHMAN  
FARING?

MY LORD, THE  
ASURA VENOM SPREADS  
IN HIS BLOOD. WE NEED BETTER  
EQUIPMENT, AND THE VAIDYA  
HAS NO ANTIDOTE...



SUMMON  
THE FLAG  
BEARER.



THEY HAVE RAISED THE  
FLAG, GENERAL SHAN. THE  
GOVERNOR REQUESTS  
AN AUDIENCE.

SO HE  
DESIRES TO  
PARLAY...

GOOD...  
VERY  
GOOD.



HGGGG... THE  
BLUE MAN... HRRR LET  
HIM COME. I DESIRE TO  
DRINK THE JUICES OF  
HIS HEART.



YOU SHALL DO NO  
SUCH THING LIEUTENANT  
MAARICH, IF YOU WISH TO  
KEEP THE OTHER LIMBS  
ATTACHED TO YOUR  
FILTHY BODY.



I'VE BEEN  
OBSERVING  
YOU FROM A  
DISTANCE.

AND WHAT  
DID YOU  
OBSERVE?

A SOLDIER WITH  
LIMITED RESOURCES BUT  
UNLIMITED WILL A GENERAL  
LACKING AN ARMY BUT  
COMMANDING  
A PEOPLE.

WE'LL SURRENDER THE FORT IF YOU GIVE THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN SAFE PASSAGE. THE COMBATANTS WILL LAY DOWN THEIR WEAPONS. YOU CAN TAKE US PRISONERS AND DO WHATEVER YOU WISH, BUT NO HARM SHOULD COME TO OUR KIN...

AND IF I REFUSE? IF INSTEAD I DESIRE TO KILL YOU ALL?

THEN WE FIGHT TO THE LAST MAN, WOMAN, AND CHILD. WE MAY EVENTUALLY LOSE BUT YOUR FORCES WILL SPILL MORE BLOOD THAN THEY HAVE EVER KNOWN. THIS I SWEAR THIS TO YOU.

YOU ARE A REMARKABLE MAN, YOUNG GOVERNOR. I'M IMPRESSED WITH YOUR VIGOR.



VERY WELL, YOU CAN LEAVE. WE WILL NOT TAKE ANY PRISONERS, NOR WILL WE SPILL MORE BLOOD. LEAVE THIS TERRITORY AND NEVER COME BACK. JANASTHAN IS OURS.





WHAT! AND LET THE HUMAN SCUM LEAVE JUST LIKE THAT? I PROTEST. THIS IS DIRECTLY AGAINST THE ORDER OF THE HIGH COMMAND. EVERY SINGLE HUMAN SHALL BE SLAUGHTERED AND EATEN.



THIS IS A DIRECT AFFRONT TO LORD RAVAN'S SOVEREIGN WILL YOU ARE MAKING A SEVERE MISTAKE!

SILENCE TATAKA! YOU WOULD RATHER I FACE LORD RAVAN'S CONSEQUENCES THAN YOU FACE MINE. I ASSURE YOU OF THAT!

THE DECISION'S BEEN MADE.



AS A TOKEN OF MY GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION I OFFER YOU MY SWORD.



YOU ARE A REMARKABLE ASURA INDEED, GENERAL. I AM RAMA. MAY I KNOW THE NAME OF SUCH AN UNLIKELY NARKIAN?

I AM VIV-SHAN, AND IF FATE DECREES, WE SHALL MEET AGAIN... SOMEDAY.



IN ONE HOUR-BURN THE FORT!



A MONTH LATER.

IT'S OKAY LAKSH, YOU'RE SAFE NOW. WE'RE BACK IN ARMAGARH.

ARMAGARH... WE WON? JANASTHAN...

FORT JANASTHAN EXISTS NO LONGER MY BROTHER, BUT WE MANAGED TO SURVIVE. THE SETTLERS HAVE RETURNED SAFELY TO ARMAGARH.

RETURNED... YOU MEAN... YOU MEAN...

WE SURRENDERED THE FORT AND SAVED FOUR HUNDRED ARMAGARHIANS IN EXCHANGE.

YOU WHAT?! YOU BEGGED THE ASURAS TO SPARE OUR LIVES?

I DIDN'T BEG LAKSH, I NEGOTIATED; HUMAN LIVES ARE MORE PRECIOUS THAN STONE AND MORTAR.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!... AT LEAST YOU COULD HAVE LET ME GAIN THE GLORY OF VEERGATI--SPARED ME THE SHAME AND BURDEN OF THIS!

THERE IS NO GLORY IN DEATH, BROTHER. I DID WHAT I HAD TO. I DIDN'T WANT TO LOSE YOU. TRY TO UNDERSTAND.

LEAVE ME. THIS IS SACRILEGE... YOU'VE GONE AGAINST THE DHARMA OF A KSHATRIYA WARRIOR. YOU SURRENDERED EVEN THOUGH A KSHATRIYA IS TO DEFEND HIS LAND WITH HIS LAST BREATH.

YOU ARE A COWARD!

THE COUNCIL HALL

LET'S NOT OVERLOOK THAT BY DESERTING JANASTHAN, RAMA SAVED THE POPULACE—OUR OWN BROTHERS AND SISTERS. MOREOVER FOR THE LAST TEN DECADES WE HAVE BEEN COMPLETELY CUT OFF FROM JANASTHAN. IT NEVER HAD ANY VALUE AS AN OUTPOST. TELL ME, FELLOW COUNCILMEN, WHAT IS, OR WAS THE WORTH OF JANASTHAN SAVE ITS PEOPLE?

EVERYTHING.

WITH EACH OUTPOST FALLEN, WE LOSE HONOR. WE LOSE CONFIDENCE. WE LOSE TERRITORY. AND DESERTING AN OUTPOST WHILE THERE WERE STILL ABLE-BODIED MEN TO DEFEND IT IS THE GREATEST SHAME OF ALL.

IS THAT NOT AGAINST EVERYTHING A KSHATRIYA STANDS FOR?

RAMA'S ACT IN JANASTHAN IS TANTAMOUNT TO TREASON.

WELL SAID COUNCILOR KAALNEMI. AS WE CAN INFER, THE MAJORITY OF THE COUNCIL ACCEDE TO THE FACT THAT RAMA'S ACT GOES AGAINST THE LAWS AND VERY BELIEF OF KSHATRIAN DHARMA. IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR CODE THEN, HE SHOULD BE COURT MARSHALLED.

MAHARAJ DASHRATH, YOUR THOUGHTS?

RAMA IS MY ELDEST SON. ANY COMMENT I MAKE WILL BE TAINTED BY MY AFFECTION AND SUPREME ADMIRATION FOR HIM. I APPEAL THE COUNCIL TO GRANT ME THE PERMISSION TO ABSCOND MYSELF FROM THE DECISION-MAKING. BUT AS A REQUEST I'D LIKE TO PRAY TO THE GODS FOR THEIR FINAL JUDGMENT. LET RAMA VOICE OUT HIS PLEA IN FRONT OF THEIR MIGHTY OMNIPOTENCE.

SO BE IT.

THE 'MANDIR' ATRIUM OF GODS,  
THE GREAT TEMPLE OF AYODHYA.

SOLDIER, DO YOU  
HAVE ANY LAST WORDS  
BEFORE YOUR FATE  
IS DETERMINED? ANY  
CONFESSION?

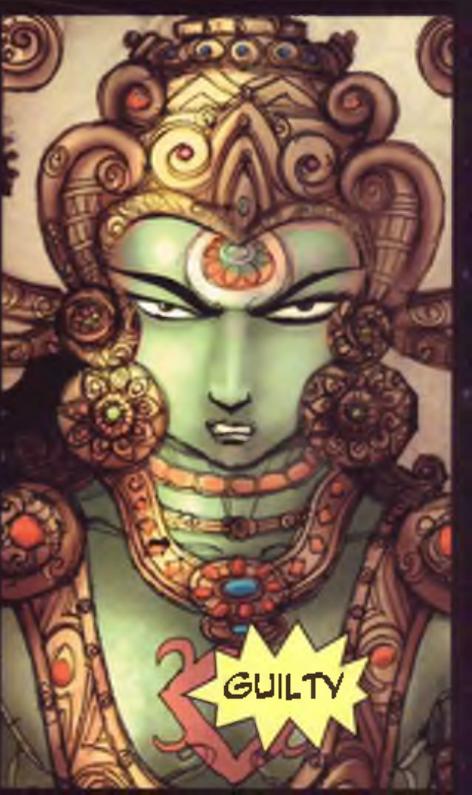


I'VE NOTHING  
TO CONFESS. THERE IS  
NOTHING WRONG IN  
WHAT I DID.

ALL  
I REQUEST IS  
FAIR JUDGMENT.



I BELIEVE IN  
MY SON, AND I BELIEVE  
IN YOU. SPARE HIM...  
SPARE HIM...



**GUILTY**

RAMA, SON OF DASHRATH, HEIR OF THE IKSHVAKU CLAN, YOU ARE GUILTY OF TREASON AGAINST YOUR NATION. HENCE YOU ARE BANISHED THIS VERY MOMENT. FOR FOURTEEN YEARS YOU WILL LIVE A LIFE OF PENANCE IN THE OUTLANDS. IF YOU SURVIVE, YOU MAY HUMBLY RETURN.

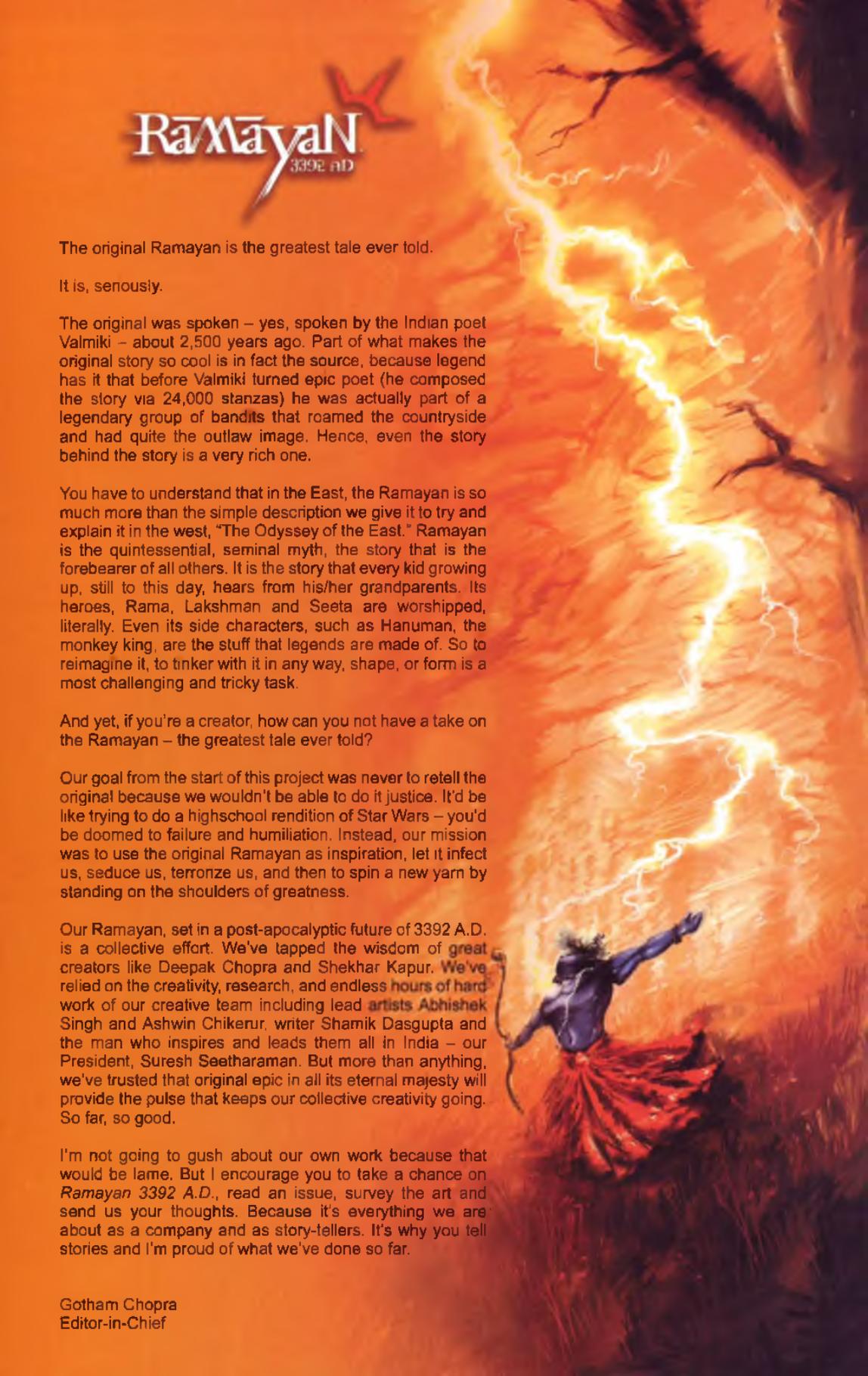


IF YOU ARE DETECTED ANYWHERE IN OR NEAR THE HALLOWED GROUND OF AMARGARH OR HER OUTPOSTS...

... YOU SHALL BE EXECUTED IMMEDIATELY.

LEAVE... LEAVE NOW, IN THIS INSTANT.





# RāMāyaN

3392 A.D.

The original Ramayan is the greatest tale ever told.

It is, seriously.

The original was spoken – yes, spoken by the Indian poet Valmiki – about 2,500 years ago. Part of what makes the original story so cool is in fact the source, because legend has it that before Valmiki turned epic poet (he composed the story via 24,000 stanzas) he was actually part of a legendary group of bandits that roamed the countryside and had quite the outlaw image. Hence, even the story behind the story is a very rich one.

You have to understand that in the East, the Ramayan is so much more than the simple description we give it to try and explain it in the west, “The Odyssey of the East.” Ramayan is the quintessential, seminal myth, the story that is the forebearer of all others. It is the story that every kid growing up, still to this day, hears from his/her grandparents. Its heroes, Rama, Lakshman and Seeta are worshipped, literally. Even its side characters, such as Hanuman, the monkey king, are the stuff that legends are made of. So to reimagine it, to tinker with it in any way, shape, or form is a most challenging and tricky task.

And yet, if you're a creator, how can you not have a take on the Ramayan – the greatest tale ever told?

Our goal from the start of this project was never to retell the original because we wouldn't be able to do it justice. It'd be like trying to do a highschool rendition of Star Wars – you'd be doomed to failure and humiliation. Instead, our mission was to use the original Ramayan as inspiration, let it infect us, seduce us, terronze us, and then to spin a new yarn by standing on the shoulders of greatness.

Our Ramayan, set in a post-apocalyptic future of 3392 A.D. is a collective effort. We've tapped the wisdom of great creators like Deepak Chopra and Shekhar Kapur. We've relied on the creativity, research, and endless hours of hard work of our creative team including lead artists Abhishek Singh and Ashwin Chikerur, writer Shamik Dasgupta and the man who inspires and leads them all in India – our President, Suresh Seetharaman. But more than anything, we've trusted that original epic in all its eternal majesty will provide the pulse that keeps our collective creativity going. So far, so good.

I'm not going to gush about our own work because that would be lame. But I encourage you to take a chance on *Ramayan 3392 A.D.*, read an issue, survey the art and send us your thoughts. Because it's everything we are about as a company and as story-tellers. It's why you tell stories and I'm proud of what we've done so far.



TO BE CONTINUED.


**7 BROTHERS**
**JOHN  
WOO**

If you're like me, have grown up on movies, eagerly await opening weekends for big popcorn flicks, scour smaller theaters in your neighborhood for indie and foreign films, then you have in your head a list of film-makers that are your favorites.

Well, imagine for a moment that you had a chance to go to those filmmakers on your list and say to them: "Come collaborate with a team of artists and writers. Bring your creativity and use the engine that we have created to develop an idea and showcase it to the world via a really cool comic. Do what you do best – tell us a story you have and watch it evolve from an idea into a visual comic book universe."

In short, that's our "Director's Cut" line of comics. As many have already heard, we're launching the Director's Cut with acclaimed action filmmaker, John Woo. John is working with comic book superstar, Garth Ennis and our illustration studio at Virgin Comics to create the new series, *Seven Brothers*, launching in October. Quite a debut even if I say so myself. Our next Director's Cut is with Guy Ritchie, entitled *The Gamekeeper*. It'll be on the rack early 2007.

As for what's next on the horizon, more very cool iconic filmmakers – the type that you hear their names and you know their style, their look and feel, and the tones of their stories.

The obvious question is, will these comics become films? We certainly hope so, but in building the comic we don't get distracted by dreams of red carpet premieres, nifty after-parties, and box office bonanzas. A great comic is its own craft, not just a storyboard for a film.

And that's been the revelation so far. Because as much as we've been learning from our partners, we've also observed them learning from our trade – the way great comic stories are told, episodically, viscerally, visually. We think the Director's Cut is awesome and boy, are we glad we thought of it! We hope you love it as much as we love putting it together. Please send us ideas via our webpage ([www.virgincomics.com](http://www.virgincomics.com)) of other film-makers you want to see in comics. We plan on creating quite a canon and we're happy to keep adding to our list.

ON STANDS OCTOBER 2006



TIGER HILL  
ENTERTAINMENT

JOHN WOO'S

7  
BROTHERS



ISSUE 1  
SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS

GARTH ENNIS  
JEEVAN KANG



DIRECTOR'S CUT



VIRGIN VOICES LINE

PREMIERE ISSUE

COVER BY CELIA CALLE

SCRIPT BY JEFF PARKER

ON STANDS DECEMBER 2006



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DAVE STEWART'S

# WALKIN

