

DEEPAK CHOPRA & SHEKHAR KAPUR PRESENT

# Rāmāyaṇ

3392 AD



ISSUE 7

The Ascent of Part I

DASGUPTA/ADHISHEK

DEEPAK CHOPRA & SHEKHAR KAPUR PRESENT  
**Rāmāyaṇ**  
3392 AD

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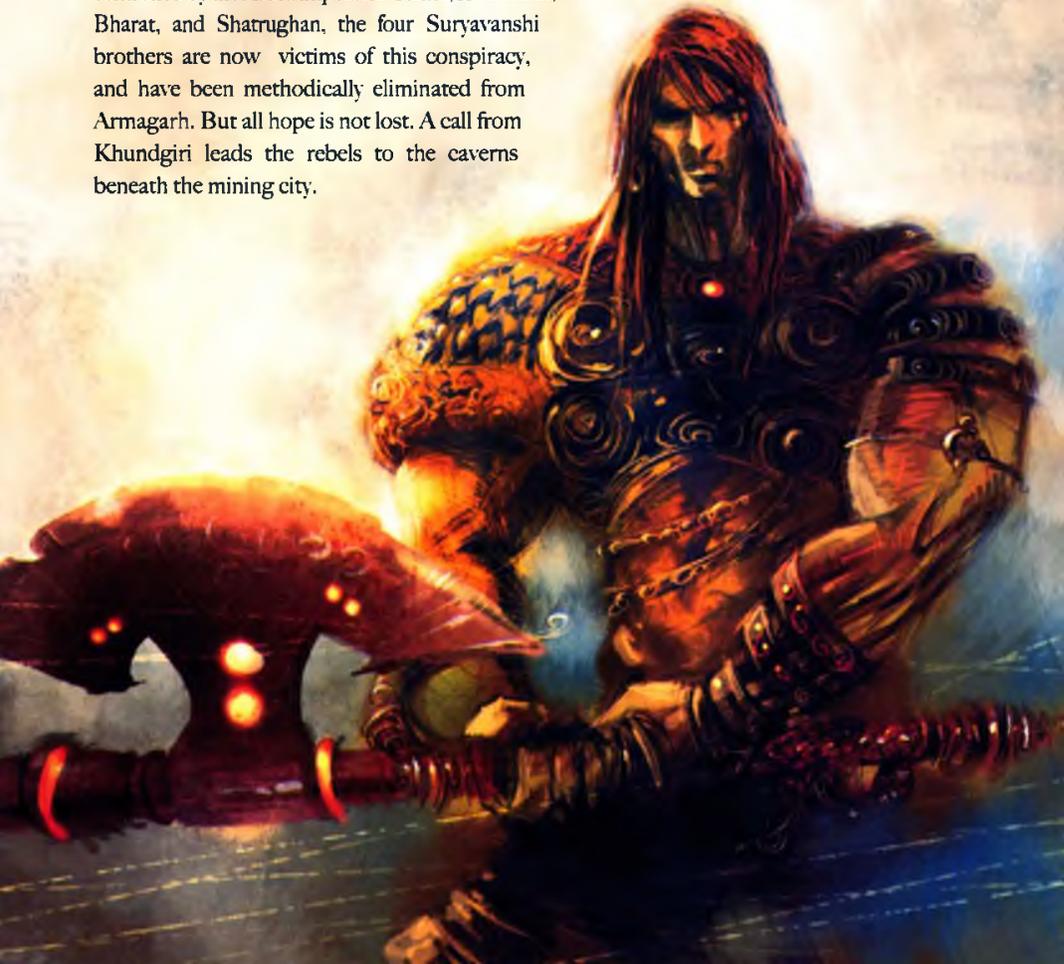
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## STORY SO FAR

Armagarh is ridden with conspiracy which weakens the great nation from within. After Rama's humanitarian act of saving the lives of the people of Janasthan in exchange for surrender to the Asura army of Viv-Shan, the council decrees upon him the sentence of fourteen years of exile in the outlands of Aryavarta. Maharaj Dashrath dies in grief of losing his son Rama. Lakshman is on the run, chased by assassins. Bharat dies in a freak accident in Khundgiri. Very few know that a covert band of Asuras have disguised themselves as human beings in Armagarh, and that their evil machinations have slowly eroded the integrity of the supreme council that rules the land. The House of Suryavanshi falls victim to these conspiracies and after having justly ruled over Armagarh since the days of the Mahavinaash, now looks like it is about to collapse forever. Indeed, the times are dark for Armagarh.

A small band of rebels led by the late Maharaj Dashrath's close friend, Councillor Sumantra, makes advances into investigating this conspiracy, and unearths shocking facts. Kalnemi, the prominent councillor is actually an Asura. The Gods that decree moral judgment are nothing but a programme now controlled by the Asura imposters. Rama, Lakshman, Bharat, and Shatrughan, the four Suryavanshi brothers are now victims of this conspiracy, and have been methodically eliminated from Armagarh. But all hope is not lost. A call from Khundgiri leads the rebels to the caverns beneath the mining city.





THE MINES  
OF KHUNDGIRI.

"THEY CAPTURED MY  
BROTHER BHARAT  
ALMOST A YEAR AGO.

"THEY ARE KEEPING HIM  
ALIVE, TRYING TO BREAK  
DOWN HIS GENETIC CODE  
AND--CLONE--HIM.

"AN ASURA  
CLONE.

"BUT *GURYAVANSHI* DNA IS HARD  
TO COPY. OF SELECTIVE BREEDING  
AND GENERATIONS OF TRAINING,  
WE AREN'T THE TOUGHEST OF  
*KSHATRIYAS*\* FOR NOTHING.

"BUT THEY ARE SMART, BEING  
PATIENT, KEEPING HIM ALIVE, AND  
DRAINING HIM SLOWLY. I CAN ONLY  
*IMAGINE* THE PAIN HE MUST BE IN."

\*THE DYNASTY  
OF RAMA

\*WARRIORS OF  
ARMAGARH



"MORE THAN A YEAR HAD PASSED SINCE MY BROTHERS AND I WERE DISPATCHED BY THE ARMAGARHIAN COUNCIL TO *KHUNDGIRI* AND *JANASTHAN* RESPECTIVELY. I STILL REMEMBER HOW IRRITATED LAKSHMAN WAS AT BEING POSTED IN JANASTHAN. ALL HE WANTED WAS WAR, FOR WHICH THERE WAS LITTLE SCOPE IN THAT TINY HAMLET.



"THAT WAS NOT THE CASE IN *KHUNDGIRI*. THERE IS NOTHING BUT WAR OVER HERE.

"THE ASURA INVASION HAD GOTTEN MORE AMBITIOUS AS THE WEEKS PASSED. THEY HAD WRESTED CONTROL OVER HALF THE *ISHPAAT*\* MINES.

"BHARAT WAS OVERJOYED AT THE PROSPECT OF SEVERAL MARTIAL ACTIVITIES IN WHICH HE COULD GET INVOLVED.

\*STEEL



BHARAT FOUND HIS DHARMA\* HERE, MARCHING AGAINST THE ASURA CONQUEST AND ADMINISTERING THE GRISLIEST OF DEATHS TO THEIR HORDES."

\*DESTINY

"AND IT WASN'T JUST HIS VAJRA THAT INDULGED...."

"THE INTOXICATION OF SUCCESS AND POWER TURNED HIM INTO QUITE A CAROUSER. HE JUST COULDN'T HAVE ENOUGH OF WINE AND WOMEN."

"SOMETHING WHICH I BECAME QUITE WARY OF."

"I TRIED TO PERSUADE HIM TO SLOW DOWN, BUT HE FOUGHT BACK FURIOUSLY. HE CLAIMED I WAS JUST A BOY AND DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THE WAYS OF MEN, OF WARRIORS."

"IN SHORT, OUR CONVERSATIONS BECAME LIMITED AND CURT THEREAFTER. I IMMERGED MYSELF IN STUDIES AND INCREASED MY KNOWLEDGE OF THE HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY OF THIS LAND."

"IN TIME, BHARAT GREW SPECIFICALLY FOND OF SHIVANI, THE DAUGHTER OF COUNCILOR KALNEMI, A NEW RECRUIT IN THE AKSHAHINI" THAT CAME WITH US.

"FROM THE BEGINNING, I HAD NOTICED THAT HER INTERESTS WERE MORE INCLINED TOWARDS AMOROUS ESCAPADES WITH MY ELDER BROTHER RATHER THAN TRAINING."

"BHARAT'S INFATUATION WITH HER GREW TO THE POINT WHERE HE MADE HER HIS *SARATHI*" DISCHARGING DHANUSH, WHO SERVED US FAITHFULLY SINCE WE WERE BORN.

"HE LEFT FOR BATTLE IN HIS *RATH*" WITH SHIVANI. I WARNED HIM, BUT TO NO AVAIL.



"PILOT

"AIR CHARIOT

"THAT WAS THE *LAST* TIME I SAW HIM. HIS *RATH* CRASHED IN THE BATTLEFIELD. REPORTS CAME THAT HE *PERISHED* IN THE FIRE.



"BUT I KNEW FROM MY TIME IN KHUNDGIRI THAT A *CONSPIRACY* WAS BREWING AGAINST MY BROTHER AND THE SOVEREIGNTY OF ARMAGARH AS A WHOLE. NO REPORT COULD DISSUADE ME FROM MY INSTINCT THAT SOMETHING WAS AMISS.

"SO I STARTED EXPLORING THE *SUBTERRANEAN* NETWORK OF KHUNDGIRI, WHICH I KNEW FROM MY RESEARCH, WAS HONEYCOMBED WITH *HUNDREDS* OF TUNNELS LEADING IN AND OUT OF THE MINES."





"FOR LONG I WATCHED THE ASURAS AND LEARNED ABOUT THEM- THEIR MOVEMENTS AND MOTIVATIONS.

"AT PRESENT, THEY ARE SPREAD WIDE AND DEEP WITHIN THE MINES OF KHUNDGIRI, AND BURROWING TOWARDS OUR FORTRESS. THEY HAVE FORMED THEIR STRONGHOLDS AND RESEARCH LABS IN SOME OF THE MINES.



"MONTHS, I SPENT UNDERGROUND, EVADING AND DODGING THE ASURAS, EXPLORING DEEPER, FEEDING ONLY ON CAVE RODENTS.

"EVENTUALLY, AFTER MUCH ANXIOUS WANDERING, (WITH A FEW CLOSE CALLS) I ENCOUNTERED WHAT I HAD ALWAYS SUSPECTED.



"... AND MY INSTINCT WAS SPOT ON. SHIVANI WAS NOT TO HAVE BEEN TRUSTED."

SOMEWHERE DEEP  
UNDERNEATH KHUNOGIRI

HENCE I  
ACCUMULATED AS MUCH  
INFORMATION AS I COULD,  
AND TRANSMITTED IT  
TO YOU **UNCLE  
SUMANTRA**.

WELL DONE MY  
BOY. WERE YOUR FATHER  
ALIVE, HE WOULD HAVE BEEN  
**PROUD** OF YOU.

HM...MY FATHER...I RUE THE  
DAY WE LEFT HIM. THE MALADIES OF HEART  
AND BODY TOOK A GREAT TOLL ON HIM AND  
HE SUCCEEDED. I **FAILED** HIM AS A SON.  
IT IS MY GREATEST REGRET.

SHOW US  
WHERE THEY ARE  
KEEPING HIM.

WE **NEED** BHARAT TO  
SAVE ARMAGARH. WE NEED  
THE HOUSE OF SURYAVANSHI  
TO STAND BESIDE US.

HOW  
MANY HAVE YOU  
BROUGHT?

TEN SKILLED  
KSHATRIYAS.

FFNK... WHAT  
GOOD WILL **TEN**  
KSHATRIYAS BE AGAINST  
THE **THOUSANDS** IN THE  
CATACOMBS?

WE'LL  
DO WHAT WE  
MUST

**FOLLOW ME--**  
I KNOW WHERE THEY  
ARE WEAK...



OPEN THE DOOR.

YES O' MISTRESS.



A WONDERFUL EVENING TO YOU MY LOVE.

JUST TO KEEP YOU INFORMED, FORT KHUNDGIRI IS IN SHAMBLES. THE LACK OF LEADERSHIP IS HAVING ITS DESIRED EFFECT.

I STILL LOATHE THE DAY WHEN YOU FIRST TOUCHED ME WITH YOUR FILTHY HUMAN HANDS. BUT I HAD NO OTHER CHOICE BUT TO OBEY THE COMMAND OF MY FATHER TO WRAP YOU AROUND MY FINGERS.

THE DECEPTION, AT LEAST, PROVIDED SOME THRILL.

I HATED MY FATHER FOR MAKING ME YOUR PLAYTHING. BUT AFTER THEY'RE DONE CLONING YOU, ALL MY TROUBLES WILL BE COMPENSATED, AND I'LL HAVE A PERSONAL FOOT SLAVE TO BOOT.





A WONDERFUL  
EVENING TO YOU...  
SHIVANI!



AH, SO YOU HAVE COME FOR *BIG BROTHER* AT LAST, *LITTLE TUBBY* TO THE RESCUE!



NEVER CONSIDERED YOU TO BE A *THREAT*. SHOULD'VE KILLED YOU LONG BACK. ANYWAYS, TO ERR IS HUMAN...



...BUT TO DISEMBOWEL IS... ASURA..

I KNEW YOU WERE LURKING IN THE TUNNELS FOR *LONG*...

...BUT NOW THAT YOU'VE BROUGHT YOUR FRIENDS TO THE PARTY AS WELL...

YOU'VE MADE THINGS FAR TOO EASY



'I'M GOING TO KILL YOU ALL.

AND MAKE YOU *WATCH*.



SHATRUGHAN... UNSHACKLE BHARAT.

WE'LL TAKE CARE OF HIS *EX-GIRLFRIEND*.



JAYANT, MANDAVI...COVER HER FLANK,

AGNISH, THE NEURO-CANNON, AIM FOR HER LOWER TORSO! THREE HITS MINIMUM.



THE ONLY THING YOU'RE GOING TO HIT IS THE DIRT.



YOU KILLED HIM...YOU BI...

TCHHH...



SUMANTRA'S CORE TEAM. FINALLY, I'LL RID US OF YOU REBEL SCUM.



DAMMIT. SHE WILL SLAUGHTER THEM ALL.

BHARAT...WAKE UP BROTHER. WE NEED YOU...





HEH...YOU MIGHT'VE GOTTEN AWAY WITH THOSE WORTHLESS PISAACH\* GUARDS.

GGGNNN...

\*ASURA ZOMBIE RACE

GUESS YOU NEVER FOUGHT A REAL RAKSHASA.

HKKK...

HOY!



...IT'S TIME TO GET SOME CLOSURE ON OUR LITTLE TRYST...

...YOU WITCH.



AH...MY DARLING, I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO IT EAGERLY.

BUT AS MUCH AS I'D HATE TO SAY, YOU'RE WITHOUT YOUR WEAPON.



THERE ARE SIXTY-NINE WAYS I CAN KILL YOU WITH MY BARE HANDS.



PICK ONE.

ARMAGARH,  
THE RAJMAHAL.

COUNCILOR  
KALNEHI REQUESTS AN  
AUDIENCE WITH YOU  
O' MISTRESS.

I AM NOT  
INTERESTED. TELL  
HIM THAT I AM  
UNWELL.

B..BUT HE  
INSISTS...IT'S  
IMPORTANT...

I TOLD YOU  
ONCE, GIRL...DON'T  
TRY MY PATIENCE.

I DO INSIST  
COUNCILOR  
KAIKEYI.





GREETINGS  
KAIKEYI

FOR WHAT? I  
LOST MY HUSBAND, I  
LOST MY SONS. WHY  
SHOULD I FEEL  
EXULTED?

--FOR THE  
FUTURE MY  
DEAR...



THE MAHARAJ  
HAD BUT A FEW YEARS  
LEFT, AND THE LOSS OF  
HIS FAVOURITE SON RAMA  
USHERED HIS DEATH  
SOONER THAN WE  
EXPECTED.

NOW DON'T  
SAY YOU WERE NOT  
OVERJOYED BY THE  
PASSING AWAY OF  
THE OLD MAN.



SHUT  
YOUR ARROGANT  
MOUTH.

MY HOPES WERE  
HIGH BECAUSE I WANTED MY  
SON BHARAT TO BECOME THE CHIEF  
COUNCILOR OF ARMAGARH AND THE  
GODS BEAR WITNESS THERE'S  
NO ONE ELSE WORTHIER  
THAN HIM.



NOT EVEN  
RAMA?



THAT'S WHY  
WE CONSPIRED AND  
DECIDED TO PLOT  
AGAINST HIM.

YOU SUGGESTED HE BE  
SENT TO JANASTHAN WHICH WAS  
SOON TO BE ATTACKED BY THE  
ASURAS, AND WE EXPECTED THAT  
HE WOULD DIE IN THE BATTLE  
THAT ENSUED.

BUT IT TURNED  
OUT TO BE OTHERWISE, HE  
CAME BACK WITH THAT  
BRAT LAKSHMAN.

IT WAS ENTIRELY  
YOUR PLAN AND I PLAYED  
ALONG, HOPING THAT ONE  
DAY MY SON WILL BECOME  
THE MAHARAJ OF  
ARMAGARH.

BUT THEN  
REPORTS CAME  
OF HIS DEATH IN  
KHUNDGIRI.



YOU ARE  
RESPONSIBLE FOR  
THAT KALNEMI!



DON'T YOU *DARE* ACCUSE ME WOMAN! I AM NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR SON'S RECKLESSNESS!

ALL WHAT YOU EVER WANTED WAS FOR BHARAT TO BECOME THE MAHARAJ. ALL YOU EVER WANTED WAS TO *DESTROY* RAMA AND LAKSHMAN.

BUT MY SONS ARE *DEAD*...ALL BECAUSE YOU SENT THEM TO KHUNDGIRI.

WE *BOTH* LOST OUR CHILDREN KAIKEYI, BUT WE ARE *ALIVE*.

AND WE HAVE THE WHOLE OF ARMAGARH TO RULE.

LET'S FORGET THE PAST AND BEGIN ANEW, I'LL BECOME THE NEW MAHARAJ OF ARMAGARH, AND YOU SHALL BE MY *CONSORT*.

*SPTH!*



WITCH!

*SPTH!*

I OFFER YOU THE *GREATEST* SEAT OF POWER AND YOU *REFUSE*? NOW YOU'LL *SUFFER* THE CONSEQUENCES.

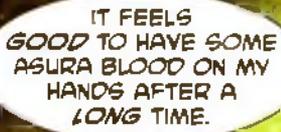
TOMORROW I AM GOING TO BE APPOINTED THE NEW MAHARAJ OF ARMAGARH, AND THE ENTIRE COUNCIL IS WITH ME. I CAME TO YOUR CHAMBERS TO GAIN YOUR *SUPPORT*, OTHERWISE I WOULDN'T HAVE GIVEN A *DAMN* FOR A HAS-BEEN LIKE YOU.

FROM NOW ON YOU WILL ROT IN THE LUXURY OF THIS CHAMBER. YOU'LL *NEVER* SET FOOT OUTSIDE THE BOUNDARIES OF YOUR QUARTERS.

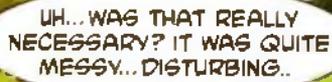
AS FOR BHARAT, I'LL KEEP HIM *ALIVE* FOR ANOTHER YEAR. HIS SUFFERINGS WILL BE *LEGEND*.



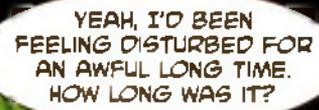
BHARATH! *ALIVE?*!



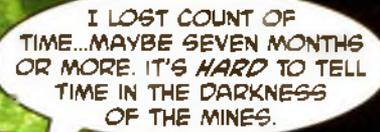
IT FEELS GOOD TO HAVE SOME ASURA BLOOD ON MY HANDS AFTER A LONG TIME.



UH... WAS THAT REALLY NECESSARY? IT WAS QUITE MESSY... DISTURBING..



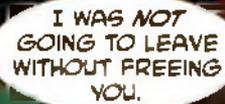
YEAH, I'D BEEN FEELING DISTURBED FOR AN AWFUL LONG TIME. HOW LONG WAS IT?



I LOST COUNT OF TIME...MAYBE SEVEN MONTHS OR MORE. IT'S HARD TO TELL TIME IN THE DARKNESS OF THE MINES.



YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR ME IN THE MINES FOR THE LAST SEVEN MONTHS?



I WAS NOT GOING TO LEAVE WITHOUT FREEING YOU.

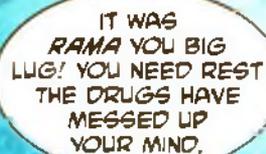


THEN WE'RE EVEN. REMEMBER, I SAVED YOUR ROUND BEHIND IN THE SHAKTI KUNDALI?

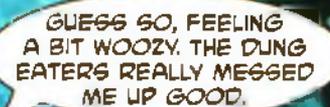


OOOFF...

**BOF!**



IT WAS RAMA YOU BIG LUG! YOU NEED REST THE DRUGS HAVE MESSGED UP YOUR MIND,



GUESS SO, FEELING A BIT WOZZY. THE DUNG EATERS REALLY MESSGED ME UP GOOD.



FUN IS FUN,  
AND DONE IS DONE  
BROTHER.

WE'VE GOT  
TO GET OUT OF  
HERE.

SHKRANK!

WHAT ARE  
YOU LOOKING  
FOR?



I'M NOT GOING  
TO GET OUT OF HERE  
WITHOUT MY GEAR.



COME ON  
THEN, WHERE ARE  
YOU?



AH...THERE'S  
MY BELOVED VAJRA\*,  
AND KAVATCH.\*\*

SO THESE  
ARE THE LEGENDARY  
WEAPONS OF 'BHARAT  
THE BERSERKER'?

\*BHARAT'S AXE  
\*\*ARMOR



--MY VAJRA IS MADE  
OF THE FINEST ISHPAAT  
OF KHUNDGIRI, BOASTING THE  
MOST SOPHISTICATED SOLAR  
TECHNOLOGY THAT POWERS  
THE BLADES.

I SWEAR I  
CAN LOP OFF THE  
TEN HEADS OF RAVAN  
WITH THIS BABY.

HMMPH...BIG  
WORDS, BOYS AND  
THEIR TOYS.



AH, I REMEMBER, YOU'RE UNCLE SUMANTRA'S DAUGHTER MANDAVI. LAST TIME I SAW YOU, WE WERE TRAINING IN THE SHAstra-GAR\*. HOW OLD WERE YOU THEN? TWELVE...THIRTEEN?

FOURTEEN. YOU WERE QUITE A BROWBEATER I RECALL..

YEAH, AND I USED TO SCARE THE SPIT OUT OF YOU.

THAT WAS A LONG TIME AGO. I'M NOT SCARED OF ANYTHING ANYMORE. GUESS I GREW UP.

COMBAT INSTITUTE



INDEED, AND ALL IN THE RIGHT PLACES, I MIGHT ADD!



BHARAT, WE HAVE TO LEAVE NOW. MY SCANNER IS DETECTING A LARGE NUMBER OF ASURAS NEARBY.

WE HAVE TO RUN.



AH, SHIVANI SERVED WELL AS AN APPETIZER.

BHARAT, WE WON'T ENGAGE THE ENEMY UNTIL IT IS AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY. THERE ARE AROUND THIRTY ASURAS HEADING THIS WAY.

MAYBE MORE.

MORE THE MERRIER.



IF WE HURRY,  
WE MIGHT REACH OUR  
VEHICLE BEFORE THEY  
CATCH UP.

UNCLE  
SUMANTRA, YOU'RE  
ALWAYS SUCH A  
SPOILSPORT.

HUFF...HUFF...



ARE YOU TRYING TO  
OUTRUN ME? LOOKS LIKE  
YOU'RE OUT OF BREATH...  
WANT A PIGGYBACK?

HUFF...IN  
YOUR DREAMS...  
HUF...



GODS HELP  
US...THEY ARE  
TOO CLOSE.

THEY  
ARE TRYING TO  
SURROUND US.

THEY MIGHT  
WELL BE IN THE  
NEXT TURN.



BRING IT  
ON, THEN.





WHEE...HOOO...  
AND THERE GOES  
THE LAST ONE.

I CAN STILL  
USE A SECOND  
SERVING.

HAPPY?

I CAME HERE  
WITH TEN KGHATRIYAS.  
NOW THERE'S ONLY  
ONE LEFT. MY  
DAUGHTER.

COME, LET'S  
GO FOR A SECOND ROUND.  
LET'S FIND OUT EVERY SINGLE  
ASURA IN THESE CONFOUNDED  
MINES.

AND KILL  
YOUR BROTHER  
AND MY DAUGHTER  
IN THE PROCESS?

THAT'S  
WHAT YOU  
WANT?

I AM  
SORRY, MY  
FAULT.

I WAS  
LOOKING FOR A  
LEADER AND FOUND  
A WAR-ADDICT  
INSTEAD.

MANDAVI, LETS  
GET OUT OF HERE AND FIND  
RAMA, WE MIGHT DIE IN THE  
WASTELANDS, BUT THEN IT WILL  
BE A WORTHY DEATH. WE WILL  
DIE TRYING TO FIND OUR TRUE  
LEADER WHOM ARMAGARH  
EXILED.

RAMA...EXILED?



YES, EXILED. RAMA WAS EXILED BY THE COUNCIL BECAUSE HE CHOSE TO *SAVE* HUMAN LIVES.



THE COUNCIL EXILED HIM FOR FOURTEEN YEARS, AND FOR YOUR INFORMATION YOUR MOTHER VOTED AGAINST RAMA ALONGSIDE KALNEMI AND THEIR FRIENDS IN THE COUNCIL.

AND FOR YOUR INFORMATION YOUR FATHER, MAHARAJ DASHRATH IS NO MORE.



KALNEMI IS SPREADING HIS INFLUENCE. SOON HE WILL BECOME THE MAHARAJ OF ARMAGARH. KNOW THIS, ARMAGARH WILL BE RULED BY AN AGURA.

...IF WE DO NOTHING ABOUT IT.

LEAD ME TO YOUR VEHICLE, UNCLE SUMANTRA.

IT'S TIME THE SURYAVANSHI RETURN TO ARMAGARH.

AND I *SWEAR*..





*BEGIN THE  
PROCESS OF ANOINTMENT  
MY FRIENDS, FELLOW  
COUNCILORS.*

*IT'S TIME TO  
ELECT THE NEW  
MAHARAJ OF  
ARMAGARN.*

**"...THERE'LL BE  
HELL TO PAY!"**

**TO BE CONTINUED.**

## INTERVIEW WITH ANDY DIGGLE

**Q:** Tell us a bit more about this *Gamekeeper* and some of the other characters that inhabit the series.

**A:** The main character is Brock, the Gamekeeper, who's something of an unknown quantity to begin with. We deliberately don't reveal too much about him or what makes him tick—all that's apparent at first is that he's not exactly what you'd call a "people person." He's much more at home in the wild, more in tune with nature than other human beings.

The story begins when Brock takes in a young runaway he's caught trespassing on the estate where he works, which is owned by Jonah Morgan, a rich, old Scottish academic who shares a dark secret with Brock. They were both damaged by something that happened in the past, and have been unable to move on ever since.

Then, out of a clear blue sky, their dark past comes calling again. As the action begins to escalate in the present, we begin to flash back to the past to fill out Brock's back-story and learn what brought him here in the first place. It's brutal, bloody stuff.

**Q:** When we first talked about *Gamekeeper*, you mentioned that the series involves "a killer who's more in touch with the natural world than he is with his own humanity." That's very intriguing. Talk about the themes that idea allows you to explore in *Gamekeeper*.

**A:** It's all about second chances. A damaged man who thought he'd lost everything—including his sense of his own humanity—finds himself at a crossroads. He has become closed off from the world, shut down emotionally. So, when dark forces from his past resurface in the present, there's a danger he'll go completely over the edge—but there's also a chance of salvation, a second chance that he never dreamed might be possible. So, it's about revenge, regret, and the possibility of redemption.

**Q:** What is it about *Gamekeeper* that made this project a compelling one for you? I'm guessing the opportunity to work with Guy is a no-brainer.

**A:** Right. The chance of working with Guy Ritchie was the unique selling point for me, no question. *Lock, Stock and Snatch* reinvigorated the British film industry like nothing else in years. That and the fact that they wanted a mainstream contemporary

thriller, which is just my cup of tea. Zero spandex.

**Q:** With so many people behind *Gamekeeper*—whether it be Guy, Virgin Comics, your artist, yourself—this could be a very challenging project for anyone on the creative side. What's the creative process been like thus far? And what sort of say does Guy have on this book? Does he have final script approval?

**A:** I was initially wary about getting into a "too many cooks" situation, with the various interested parties all wanting to throw their two cents in. The kind of situation where you try to please everyone and end up pleasing no one, including yourself. But we agreed that all feedback and discussion would be filtered through my editor, MacKenzie Cadenhead, who has done a wonderful job of distilling and focusing any competing voices into a single clear vision.

So, yeah, while I imagine Guy doubtless has some kind of script approval, I've been given a very great deal of freedom to tell exactly the kind of story I want to tell. I guess that's why they wanted me for the job in the first place—they figured my "voice" would be a good fit for the project. To paraphrase Terry Gilliam, "If you cast it right, you don't have to direct."

**Q:** Once your story is written, how involved and how much input will you have once the art starts coming in?

**A:** I always like to do a final dialogue rewrite once I've seen the artwork, just to make sure word and image marry up as smoothly as possible. Beyond that, I guess I'll just have to wait and see!

**Q:** What does your artist, Mukesh Singh, bring to a project like this? Of what you've seen thus far, what do you think?

**A:** His work on *Devi* has been slick and stunning, and he's loosening up his style for *Gamekeeper*. His design sketches have a wonderfully gritty, somewhat European flavor to them, which suits the tone and subject matter of the story perfectly. I can't wait to see him start bringing the story pages to life.

SNEAK-PEEK OF  
**GAMEKEEPER #1**



IS IT DONE...?

AND DUSTED--STABLE'S GONE UP LIKE GUY FAWKES NIGHT. THE HORSES, THOUGH, THEY'RE STILL IN THERE...

CHRIST, I NEVER KNEW THEY COULD MAKE A SOUND LIKE THAT.



FOCUS. EMERGENCY SERVICES--WHAT'S THEIR E.T.A.?

THEY MUST BE AN HOUR OFF, EASY; IT'S THE ARSE END OF NOWHERE OUT HERE.

AND THE MAIN HOUSE...?



BURGLAR ALARMS HAVE ALL GONE DOOLALLY, AND EVERYONE'S OUTSIDE FIGHTING THE FIRE.

IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S WIDE OPEN.

GOOD WORK.

ALRIGHT, MEET US AT THE RENDEZVOUS POINT...



IT'S TIME.

SNEAK-PEEK OF  
**GAMEKEEPER #1**



**SNEAK-PEEK OF  
GAMEKEEPER #1**



AMATEUR.

BRAVO TEAM,  
SIT REP.

CHARLIE?

ROGER THAT,  
GO FOR IT.

REAR  
PERIMETER'S  
SECURE.

STANDING BY,  
READY TO GO IN.

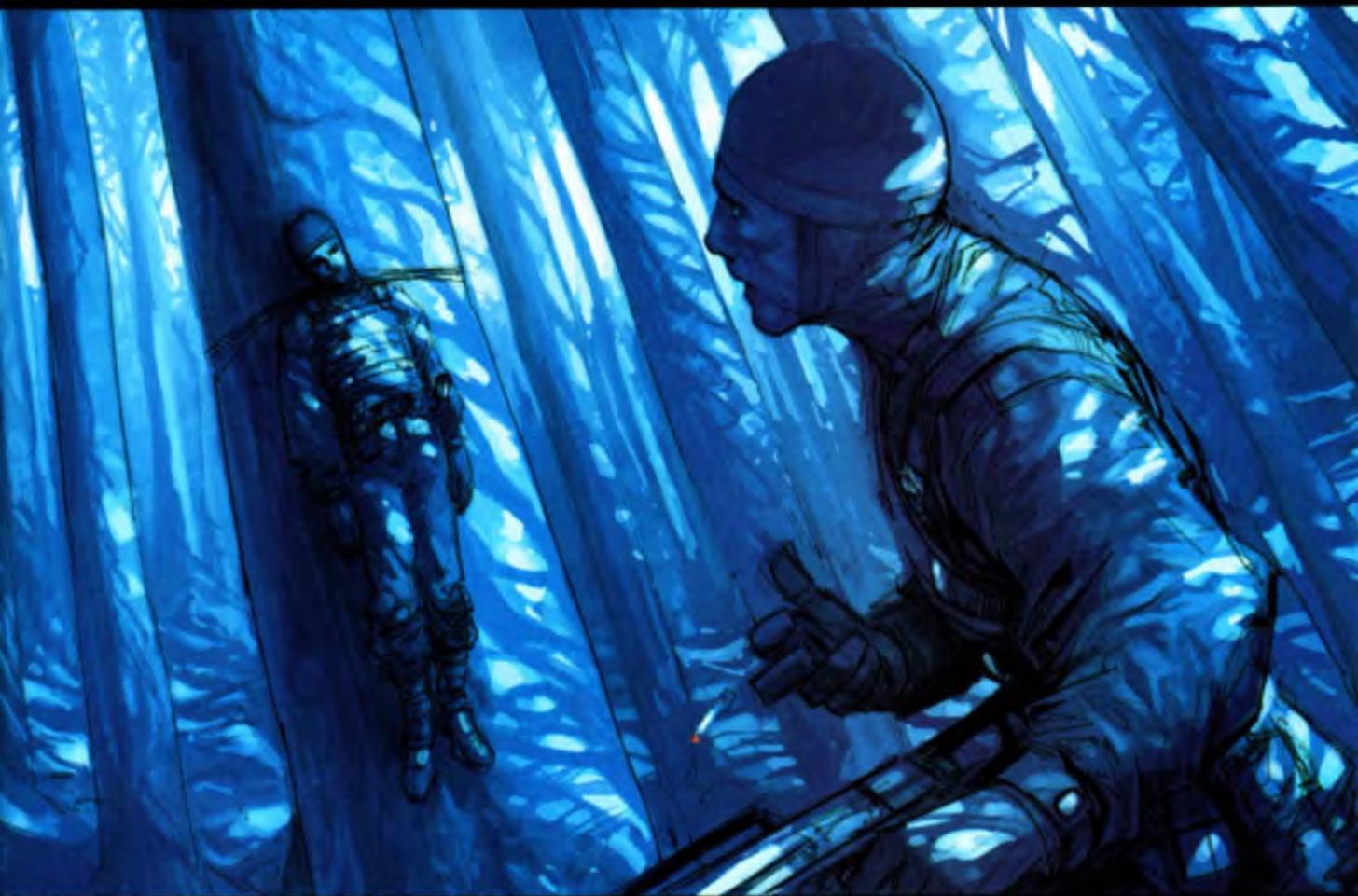
TAKE THE PRIMARY ALIVE  
IF YOU CAN. EVERYONE  
ELSE IS COLLATERAL.



ROGER THAT,  
ALPHA.

ALRIGHT GARRETT,  
IT'S GAME TIME.

GARRETT...?



MMNG--!



SNEAK-PEEK OF  
**GAMEKEEPER #1**



IN THE HOUSE.  
HOW MANY?

TH-THREE--



HNKK



ALPHA TEAM,  
WE'RE IN.

ALPHA, YOU  
COPY...?



TO BE CONTINUED IN **GAMEKEEPER #1**  
ON SALE MARCH 2007!

ON STANDS APRIL 2007



ISSUE 8

DEEPAK CHOPRA & SHEKHAR KAPUR PRESENT

# Rāmāyaṇ

3392 AD

DASGUPTA/ABHISHEK

*"India's answer to The Lord of the Rings"*  
- The Times of India

*This one's for you, my friend*

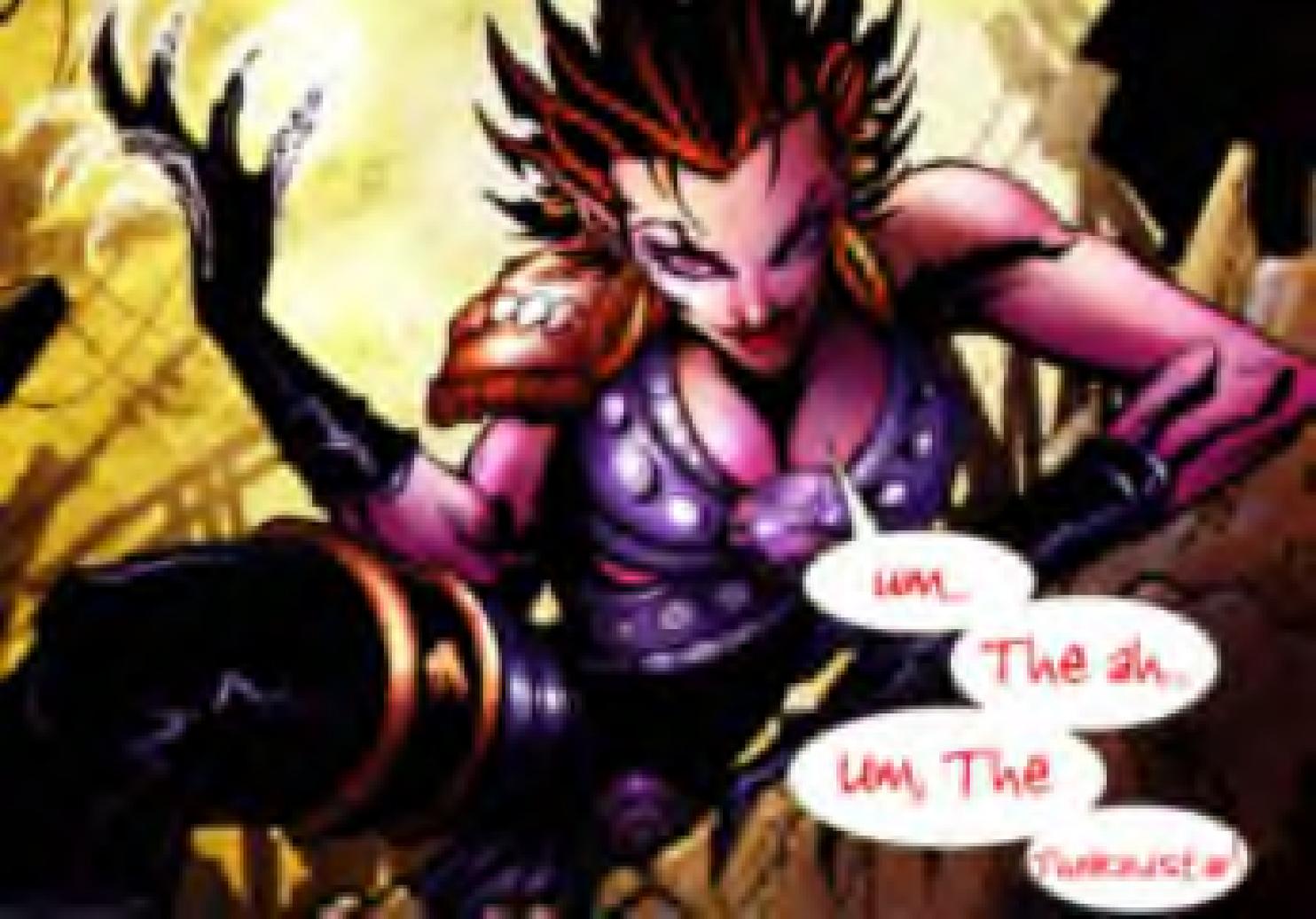
*"Say not in grief 'he is no more' but live in thankfulness that he was"*  
*- Hebrew proverb*

In Memory Of Our Dear Friend

PUCKINFL

August 30, 1978 - February 21, 2007

Be At Peace



UW...

The sh...

UW, The

(Turkust w)