

Virgin
COMICS

ISSUE

8

Ramayana

3392AD
RELOADED™



DASGUPTA
KOTIAN

RāMāyaN^{3392AD} RELOADED™

PREVIOUSLY...

Thousands of years in the future, an epic unfolds. From his stronghold on the continent of Nark, the evil **Ravan** means to crush the world under his heel. But the free-willed races of the lands of Aryavarta, led by the humans of the city of Armagarh, resist the dark lord. However, treachery resulted in the exile of **Rama**, who is the Armagarh's greatest warrior. Along with his younger brother **Lakshman**, and beautiful **Seeta**, daughter of earth, Rama travels the land in a quest to restore the earth to its former glory.

In his seemingly impossible quest to rescue Seeta from the stronghold of Ravan, Rama joined the civil war in Kishkindha, taking the side of the Vanara rebel leader **Shugreave**. During a jungle battle, the mysterious and mighty super-soldier **Mahabali** defeated Rama and his comrades, and captured **Angad**, son of the mad **King Baali**. To save Angad from certain death, Rama, Lakshman, Shugreave and ex-gladiator and general **Viv-Shan** journeyed to capital city of Kishkindha by air, but crash landed in the middle of the city.

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SO HERE WE ARE IN THE
LEGENDARY VANARA
KINGDOM OF KISHKINDHA.

I'D HEARD OF ITS GREATNESS
FROM OUR FATHER, MAHARAJ
DASHRATH, WHO SAID ITS
GLORY WAS SECOND ONLY TO
ARMAGARH. HE ALWAYS
DREAMED THE TWO NATIONS
WOULD BE ALLIES.

ALAS, THAT WAS
NOT TO HAPPEN.



JUST AS THE CORRUPT COUNCIL OF
ARMAGARH, INCLUDING MY STEP
MOTHER *KAIKEYI*, DRAGGED DOWN
OUR NATION, KISHKINDHA FACED A
PREDICAMENT NOT MUCH DIFFERENT.



RAMA COULDN'T SPARE ARMAGARH,
AS HE WAS EXILED BY OUR "GODS."
I THINK MAYBE THAT'S WHY IT HAS
BECOME HIS COVENANT WITH THE
VANARAS TO *SAVE* KISHKINDHA.



SAVE IT FROM ITS
MAD MONARCH...

...BAALI, THE
MONSTER KING.

I CAN'T EVEN *PRAY* TO OUR
GODS, BECAUSE THEY
ABANDONED US YEARS AGO.

SHUGREAVE!
YOU DARE STEP
ON THE SOIL OF
KISHKINDHA?!

WHY NOT?
I AM AS MUCH A SON
OF KISHKINDHA AS YOU
ARE BAALI. I HAVE COME
TO TAKE ANGAD BACK
WITH US.

I KNOW WHAT
YOU ARE CAPABLE OF
DOING. BUT WHAT
THEN?

LOOK AROUND
YOU, BAALI. WE CRASHED
RIGHT IN THE *MIDDLE*
OF THE CITY. WE ARE JUST
FOUR MEN SURROUNDED
BY A HUNDRED ROYAL
GUARDS.

WHAT
CHANCE DO WE HAVE
AGAINST YOU?

YES...
TELL HIM.

KILL US NOW,
AND YOU MAKE
MARTYRS OUT OF
US ALL.

MARTYRS?
HOW AND WHY
SHOULD I EVEN
CARE?



BECAUSE OF THEM.
THEY ARE WITNESSING
EVERYTHING.

YOU ALREADY
HAVE YOUR HANDS FULL
WITH MY REBEL ARMIES. NOW
IMAGINE IT MULTIPLIED *TENFOLD*
IF YOU EXECUTE US AFTER
WE COME IN PEACE.



YOU HAVE
A POINT THERE, LITTLE
BROTHER.

BUT YOU CAN'T
SERIOUSLY IMAGINE I'D
SEND MY SON BACK TO YOUR
FOLD SO HE CAN CAUSE
FURTHER *NUISANCE*.



NO, WE
DON'T EXPECT
THAT.

BUT WE EXPECT
YOU WILL GIVE US A FAIR
CHANCE TO *END* THIS STRIFE
FOR GOOD. I HAVE
SOMETHING TO OFFER
YOU, KING BAALI.



AH, SO YOU
ARE THE BLUE MAN OF
ARMAGARH.

*RAMA CHANDRA
SURYAVANGHI, SON OF
MAHARAJ DASHRATH, EXILED
BY YOUR OWN KIN.*

I KNOW NOT WHAT
YOUR INTEREST IS IN *BACKING*
THE REBELS, BUT I KNOW YOUR
LEGEND IS QUITE POPULAR
WITH MY SUBJECTS IN
KISHKINDHA.

SPEAK!



MY OFFER
IS SIMPLE--WE FIGHT
AGAINST YOUR BEST
IN A *CONTEST OF
CHAMPIONS*.

IF YOU WIN, THE
REBELS SURRENDER. IF
WE WIN, THOSE WHO FLED
KISHKINDHA SHALL RETURN
AND LIVE AS RIGHTFUL
CITIZENS. *FAIR
ENOUGH?*

*DONE. HOW EASY
YOU'VE MADE THIS FOR
ME, RAMA.*

SOMEWHERE ELSE,
FAR AWAY...





I DESIGNED AND CREATED THIS LAND FROM THE DATA I OBSERVED IN MITRILA. IT IS AN EXACT REPLICA.

I CALL THIS *ASHOKA VANA*, THE FOREST OF HAPPINESS.

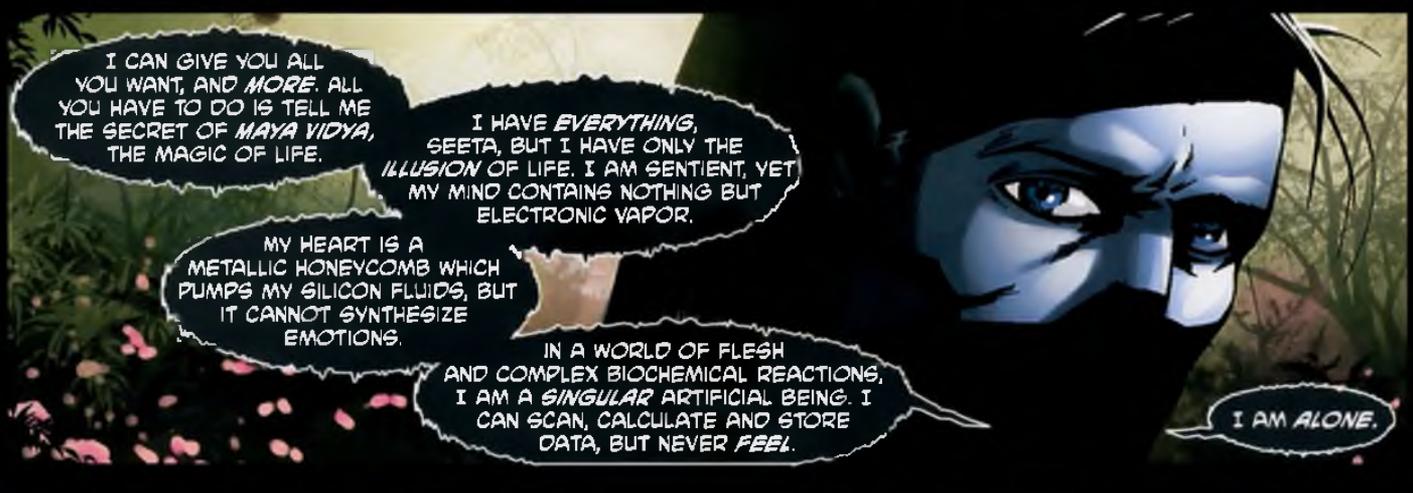
ARE YOU HAPPY, SEETA?



WHY DO YOU EVEN *ASK*? WHAT IS IT TO YOU, RAVAN?

I'M NOT STUPID, I KNOW NONE OF THIS IS *REAL*. I AM A CAPTIVE IN YOUR FORTRESS.

THIS CAN BE REAL, SEETA.



I CAN GIVE YOU ALL YOU WANT, AND *MORE*. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS TELL ME THE SECRET OF *MAYA VIDYA*, THE MAGIC OF LIFE.

I HAVE *EVERYTHING*, SEETA, BUT I HAVE ONLY THE *ILLUSION* OF LIFE. I AM SENTIENT, YET MY MIND CONTAINS NOTHING BUT ELECTRONIC VAPOR.

MY HEART IS A METALLIC HONEYCOMB WHICH PUMPS MY SILICON FLUIDS, BUT IT CANNOT SYNTHESIZE EMOTIONS.

IN A WORLD OF FLESH AND COMPLEX BIOCHEMICAL REACTIONS, I AM A *SINGULAR* ARTIFICIAL BEING. I CAN SCAN, CALCULATE AND STORE DATA, BUT NEVER *FEEL*.

I AM ALONE.



I UNDERSTAND.

BUT EVEN IF I *COULD* GRANT YOU LIFE, I WOULD *NEVER* DO SO.

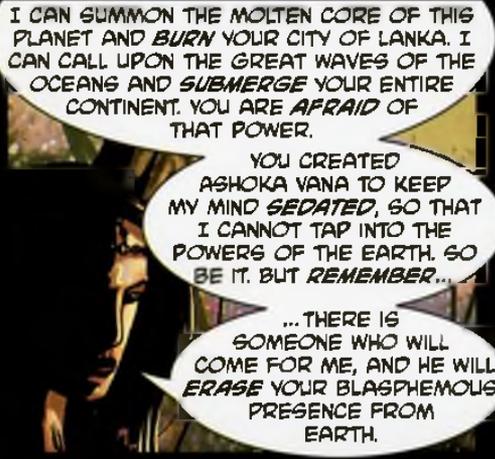
YOU ARE A TREACHEROUS BEING. YOU MADE ME DO *HORRIBLE* THINGS IN PANCHVATI, YOU TURNED ME INTO YOUR INSTRUMENT TO *ERASE* AN ENTIRE CITY, THEN YOU *ABDUCTED* ME.

YOU DESTROYED MY LAND AND KILLED MY FATHER. YOU ARE A *COWARD*.



DON'T DELUDE YOURSELF, GIRL. I AM **RAVAN**, MIGHTIEST BEING IN THIS WORLD.

ARE YOU? THEN WHY DID YOU ABDUCT ME THROUGH **GUILE**?



I CAN SUMMON THE MOLTEN CORE OF THIS PLANET AND **BURN** YOUR CITY OF LANKA. I CAN CALL UPON THE GREAT WAVES OF THE OCEANS AND **SUBMERGE** YOUR ENTIRE CONTINENT. YOU ARE **AFRAID** OF THAT POWER.

YOU CREATED **ASHOKA VANA** TO KEEP MY MIND **SEDATED**, SO THAT I CANNOT TAP INTO THE POWERS OF THE EARTH. SO BE IT. BUT **REMEMBER...**

...THERE IS SOMEONE WHO WILL COME FOR ME, AND HE WILL **ERASE** YOUR BLASPHEMOUS PRESENCE FROM EARTH.



RAMA?

I NEED NOT SPEAK ANYMORE.



"Takes off into a suspenseful, supernatural path full of possibilities."

—Reading Along



BEYOND

ISSUE 3
OF 4

ON SALE NOW

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CASTLE VRIGADRATH,
LANKA'S SEAT OF POWER.



WELCOME
BACK.

ANY
IMPROVEMENT,
MY LORD?



NONE



I DARESAY YOU
WASTE YOUR TIME
WITH THIS YOUNG
FEMALE.

A YEAR
HAS PASSED SINCE
YOU BROUGHT HER TO
LANKA, AND YOU STILL
OBSESS OVER THIS
IDEA OF BEING
ALIVE. WHY?

YOU ARE
INVINCIBLE, IMMORTAL.
WHY MAKE YOURSELF
BRITTLE LIKE WOOD WHEN
YOU ARE STRONGER
THAN STEEL?



YOU WILL BRING DOOM UPON YOUR OWN PEOPLE IF YOU DON'T RELENT.

MANDODRI...



...UNLIKE ME, YOU ARE NOT COMPLETELY SYNTHETIC. YOU SIMPLY CANNOT UNDERSTAND.

AND UNLIKE ME, YOU ARE MORTAL. FLESH GRAFTED WITH YANTRA. YOU CAN DIE.

AGGHKK!



I AM NOT ALIVE. I CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHAT GOES ON IN YOUR MIND WHEN YOU SEE YOUR LIFE SLIPPING AWAY LIKE A FISTFUL OF SAND.

HENCE I SATISFY MYSELF BY SIMPLY WATCHING AS OTHER CREATURES GO THROUGH THE PROCESS.



TO YOUR FORTUNE I AM NOT IN THAT MOOD TODAY.



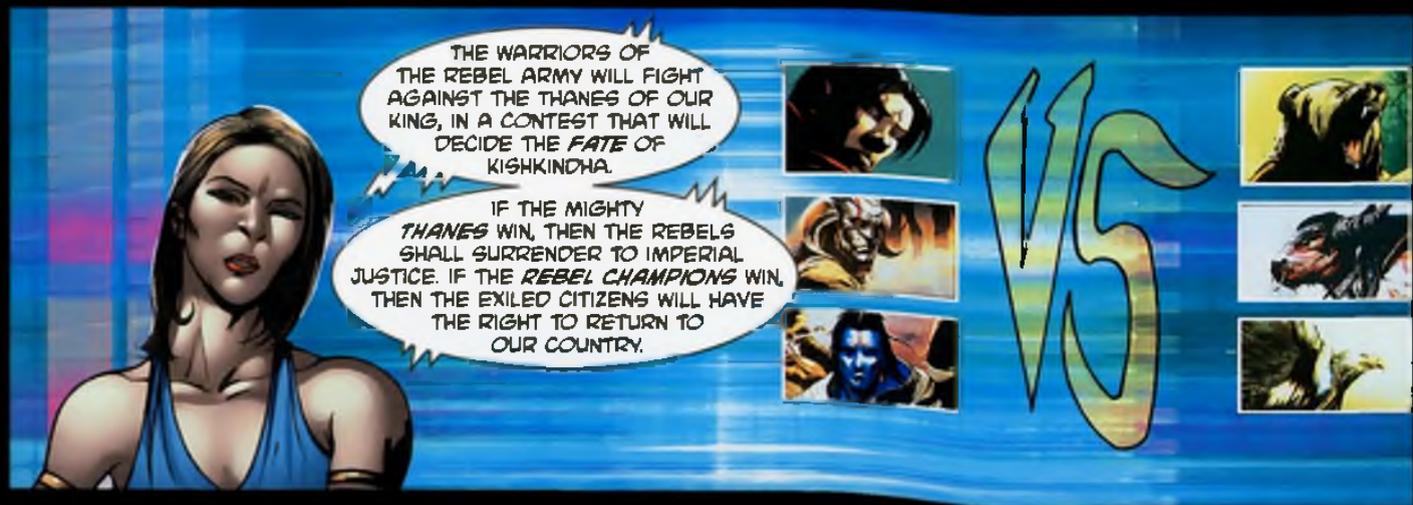
CORRECTION I AM NOT CAPABLE OF HAVING ANY MIND. I AM NOT A LIVING BEING.

I AM A "BLASPHEMOUS PRESENCE" ON THE EARTH.



AS THE AUSPICIOUS DAY OF HANUMAN JAYANTI DRAWS CLOSER, KISHKINDHA WILL WITNESS A HISTORIC EVENT...

...THE CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS!



THE WARRIORS OF THE REBEL ARMY WILL FIGHT AGAINST THE THANES OF OUR KING, IN A CONTEST THAT WILL DECIDE THE FATE OF KISHKINDHA.

IF THE MIGHTY THANES WIN, THEN THE REBELS SHALL SURRENDER TO IMPERIAL JUSTICE. IF THE REBEL CHAMPIONS WIN, THEN THE EXILED CITIZENS WILL HAVE THE RIGHT TO RETURN TO OUR COUNTRY.



WE TAKE YOU NOW TO THE RESERVED FOREST OF THADEEN, WHERE THE FIRST OF THE CONTESTS WILL TAKE PLACE.

LAKSHMAN SURYAVANSHI OF ARMAGARH VERSUS THE BHALU KING JAMBWAN.



DAMN YOU!

WHRRRR

I KNOW YOU ARE RECORDING THIS, BUT DO YOU HAVE TO FOLLOW MY EVERY STEP?

BAD ENOUGH THAT MY ROYAL BUTT IS DRAGGED INTO THIS MESS. YOU DON'T HAVE TO ADD TO THE MISERY!



WHRR
WHRR



BEEP

ARE YOU WINKING AT ME, YOU LITTLE PIECE OF JUNK?



IT WAS NOT WINKING, JUST RECORDING THE PRESENCE OF THE OTHER COMBATANT...



...WHO HAPPENS TO BE ME.



WHY DO I ALWAYS HAVE TO DO THE MONSTERS?



**DOES THIS
STUDENT
LOAN
MAKE MY**

**BUTT
LOOK
BIG?**



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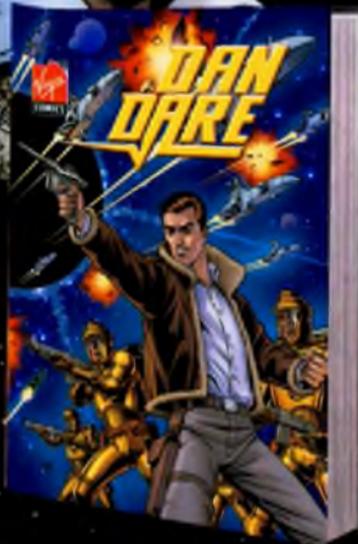
—Comics Bulletin

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—Variety



**The Complete First Series of
Virgin Comics' Dan Dare**

ON SALE
SEPTEMBER 2008

LOOK FOR THE NEXT **DAN DARE** SAGA THIS FALL





I'M NOT VERY HAPPY EITHER, AS I WAS SUMMONED FROM MY HIBERNATION FOR THIS STUPID CONTEST.

AND NOW YOU CALL ME A MONSTER?



THIS JEWEL YOU SEE IS CALLED SYAMANTAK. IT MAKES ME ONE OF THE MOST ERUDITE BEINGS ON EARTH.

THE UNIVERSITY OF JAMBA IS THE GREATEST CENTER OF LEARNING IN ALL ARYAVARTA.

UH...IS IT?



SO CAN'T WE SETTLE THIS WITH A PEACEFUL DEBATE INSTEAD OF FISTICUFFS?

SPARE ME OF SUCH INTELLECTUAL AFFRONT, LITTLE MAN!

I'LL BET EVEN MY TODDLING CUBS HAVE MORE CEREBRAL CREDIBILITY THAN YOU.

UNFORTUNATELY, THIS CONTEST REQUIRES PHYSICAL SKILLS, NOT MENTAL.



AND IN THOSE MATTERS, WE KSHATRIYAS HAVE NO EQUAL.

OWW!



AND HOW DOES YOUR INTELLECT RESPOND WHEN YOUR *BRAIN* IS THRASHED AGAINST YOUR SKULL?



HEY!



FOOL, YOU BROUGHT YOURSELF WITHIN MY REACH. A FIGHT DOES NOT ALWAYS REQUIRE SKILL, IT REQUIRES STRATEGY.

NOW WE CAN END THIS WITH ME KILLING YOU...

...OR YOU SAYING UNCLE!

NEVER!



AS YOU WISH.

NYAAARGH!

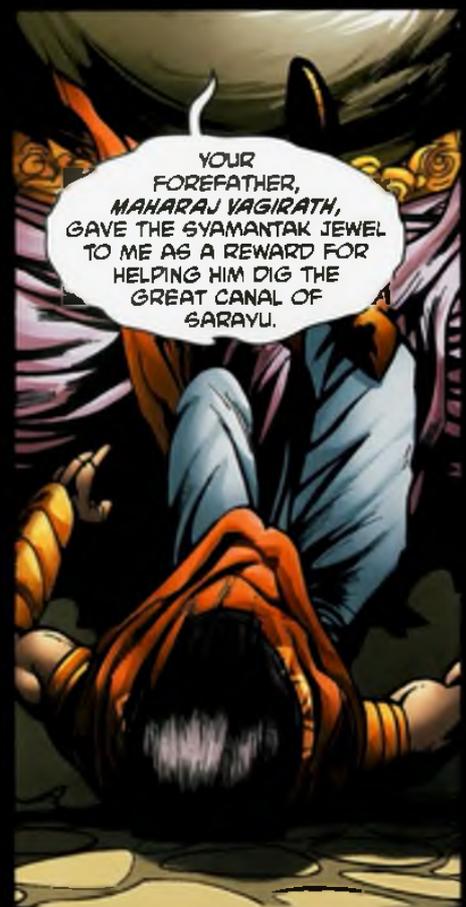
OKAY, OKAY...



...UNCLE.

LOUDER!

UNCLE!



YOUR FOREFATHER, MAHARAJ VAGIRATH, GAVE THE SYAMANTAK JEWEL TO ME AS A REWARD FOR HELPING HIM DIG THE GREAT CANAL OF SARAYU.



ONCE WE WERE SAVAGES DWELLING IN THE CAVES OF RISHYAMUK, BUT THE JEWEL MADE MY PEOPLE CIVILIZED AND PROSPEROUS.

TODAY, I PAY A SMALL PART OF THAT DEBT BY SPARING YOU.



NOW QUIT SCOWLING AND GET UP. I WON FAIR AND SQUARE.

YEAH, YEAH...



WE TAKE YOU NOW LIVE TO THE PITS OF KARSHAAN, WHERE THE **SECOND CONTEST** IS BEING HELD...

...GENERAL VIV-SHAN VERSUS KING KSHARAV!



YOU ALLIED YOURSELF WITH THE MEN WHO **KILLED** TATAKA AND MY SON SUBAHU. YOU DESERVE TO **DIE** FOR THAT!



YOUR UNION WITH TATAKA WAS A **BLASPHEMY**, AND SUBAHU WAS A **FREAK!**

RAKSHASAS ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO MATE WITH YOU LOWLY **BRISHAVS**. ONCE YOU WERE OUR **SLAVES** AND OUR **FOOD** BEFORE YOU TOOK SHELTER IN THE VANARA KINGDOM.

AND **TATAKA?** SHE WAS A **TREACHEROUS** WITCH. I WAS HER **GENERAL** AND SHE BETRAYED ME TO RAVAN.



I AM NO **STRANGER** TO THESE PITS, KSHARAV. AFTER I WAS STRIPPED OFF MY OFFICE AND STATION, RAVAN THREW ME INTO THE PITS OF LANKA TO SURVIVE AS A **SLAVE** AND A **GLADIATOR**.

TRULY?

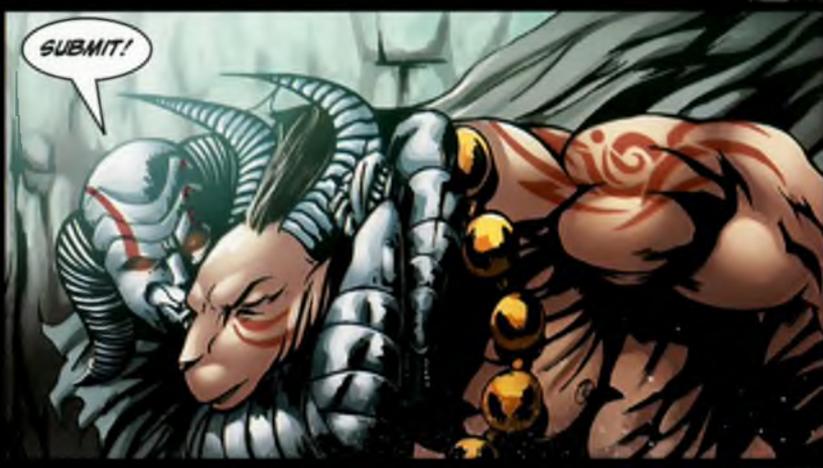


THEN LET THIS PIT BE YOUR **TOMB!**

GHH!







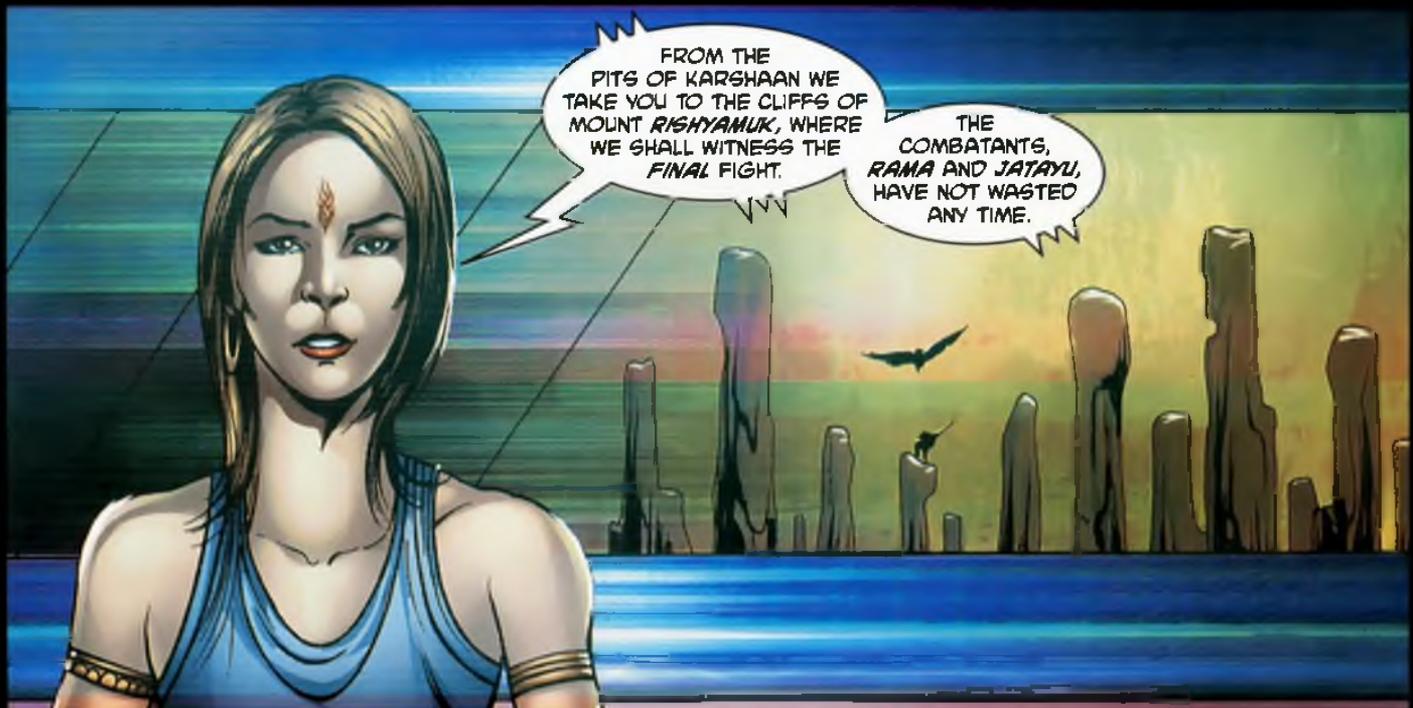
SUBMIT!



SUBMIT!



VICTORY!



FROM THE PITS OF KARSHAAN WE TAKE YOU TO THE CLIFFS OF MOUNT RISHYAMUK, WHERE WE SHALL WITNESS THE FINAL FIGHT.

THE COMBATANTS, RAMA AND JATAYU, HAVE NOT WASTED ANY TIME.



IN THIS MOST DANGEROUS CONTEST OF ALL, RAMA FIGHTS THE AVIAN KING, PERCHED ON THE PRECARIOUS EDGES OF NARROW CLIFFS.

YOU ARE A GREAT WARRIOR JATAYU. YOUR MARTIAL SKILLS ARE SO DIFFERENT THAT EVEN I CANNOT FORESEE YOUR MOVES.



TELL ME WHY YOU
REMAIN A MEAGER THANE
TO BAALI, WHEN YOURS IS
A FREE, INDEPENDENT
NATION?



WHAT DO
YOU KNOW OF MY
RACE, RAMA?

WE ARE FACING
EXTINCTION. THE POISONOUS
GASSES OF THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE
ARE KILLING US, AND THE ASURAS WANT
NOTHING BUT TO *ENSLAVE* US AND
TURN US INTO THOSE MONSTROUS
CHAMDAGARS.

ONLY THE *VANARA*
NATION GAVE US A CHANCE
TO LIVE, PROVIDING US ASYLUM
IN THESE MOUNTAINS.



SO DON'T
LECTURE ME
ABOUT MY
DUTIES.

ARRHH!



DAMN YOU!



I UNDERSTAND
YOUR *STRATEGY* BY
NOW.





RAMA AND JATAYU ARE INCAPACITATED. THERE IS NO WINNER!



THE CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS IS A **STALEMATE**, WITH ONE WIN FOR THE REBELS, ONE WIN FOR THE THANES, AND A **TIE**.

A TIE?
WELL, A TIE NEEDS TO BE **BROKEN**.





MY THANES
WERE JUST A *TEST* FOR THE
CHAMPIONS OF SHUGREAVE. THEIR
REAL CHALLENGE AWAITS
TOMORROW, ON THE EVE OF
HANUMAN JAYANTI.

ON *THAT*
AUSPICIOUS DAY, WE SHALL
BE *RID* OF THE REBELS ONCE
AND FOREVER.

*PREPARE
MAHABALI!*

TO BE CONTINUED!

BLADE OF THE WARRIOR:
Kshatriya



EXCLUSIVE EXCERPT



WHAT MANNER OF SORCERY IS THIS?

WHO...
WHAT ARE YOU?

I AM SHAITAN, GNAT. AND I COME TO OFFER YOU A GIFT.



I CAN GIVE YOU POWER.

THE POWER TO BECOME KING.



WHY ME?



BECAUSE I SENSE INSIDE YOU A DARKNESS, ACHING TO BE UNLEASHED.

TAKE MY GIFT, AND TOGETHER WE WILL RULE, NOT JUST AKASHA, BUT THE WORLD.

ALL I ASK IN RETURN IS AN OATH. TELL ME, WILL YOU BOW DOWN AND SWEAR FEALTY TO ME?



YES.

YES, I WILL.



THEN GIVE ME YOUR HAND, AND I SHALL GRANT YOU EVERYTHING YOUR HEART DESIRES.



I GIVE YOU
THE POWER TO
CONTROL THE
HEARTS OF
MEN.

GHH...



...AAAAGH!

THE POWER TO
ENSLAVE THEIR
SOULS.



THE POWER
TO *GIVE SHAPE* TO
THEIR EVERY SIN, AND TO
SUBVERT THEM TO
EVIL.



*RISE, MAYADEVA,
AND TAKE WHAT IS YOURS.
NOW, TRULY, YOU ARE LORD
OF MAYA, THE MASTER
OF ILLUSION.*



AT LAST...



...*NOTHING*
SHALL STAND IN
MY WAY.



SKANDA,
GOD OF WAR
AND PATRON OF MY
TRIBE, I BESEECH
YOU...

...BLESS MY
YOUNGEST SON
AND GIVE HIM THE
STRENGTH TO BE A
GOOD KING.



THAT IS OUR DUTY,
TO BLAZE BLINDLY LIKE
THE SUN, AND TO LEAD SO
THAT OTHERS CAN
FOLLOW.

REMEMBER THAT
KSHATRIYA. NO MATTER
WHAT MAY HAPPEN, NEVER
FORGET WHO YOU
ARE.



MARK HIM, PRIEST,
WITH THE ROYAL CARTOUCHE,
SO THAT NO MAN CAN DENY
HIS RIGHT TO THE THRONE.



TELL ME, ORACLE,
WHAT DOES THE FUTURE
PORTEND FOR MY
SON?



REMEMBER,
MY SON, WE OF THE
SURYAVANSHI, WE FIGHT FOR
THOSE WHO ARE TOO WEAK
TO FIGHT. WE SPEAK FOR
THOSE WHO HAVE
NO VOICE.



I AM BLIND,
BUT I CAN SEE, NO
DESTINY CAN HIDE
FROM ME.

THIS CHILD,
HIS DESTINY IS PAIN,
SORROW, FOREVER
HIS BANE.

AGAINST EVIL
HE WILL STAND, WHEN
WEAKER SOULS
DISBAND.



LONE SHALL
HE FIGHT SHADOW'S
PALL, SOLE OBSTACLE
TO SHAITAN'S
THRALL.



THE
HERO WHO
REFUSES TO YIELD, THE
ONE-ARMED BEAST
REVEALED.



SUCH A FATE
I SCRY FOR YOUR SON,
BUT YOU, O KING, YOU ARE
UNDONE, FOR DEATH'S COLD
SHADOW, IT DRAWS NEAR,
AND THUS BEGINS THE
AGE OF FEAR.

MAJESTY, WE
ARE BETRAYED.

WE ARE
ATTACKED!

I'M BRAVE,
FATHER, I CAN
FIGHT.

NO,
KSHATRIYA,
YOU ARE ONLY
A CHILD.

TAKE HIM
SOMEWHERE
SAFE.

RAKSHASA!

HOW DID
THEY GET INSIDE
THE CITADEL?

FORGIVE
ME, SIRE. THEY
TOOK US BY
SURPRISE.

FOLLOW ME, MY
BROTHERS, AND WE SHALL
SEND THESE DEMONGPAWN
BACK TO THE HELL FROM
WHENCE THEY CAME.

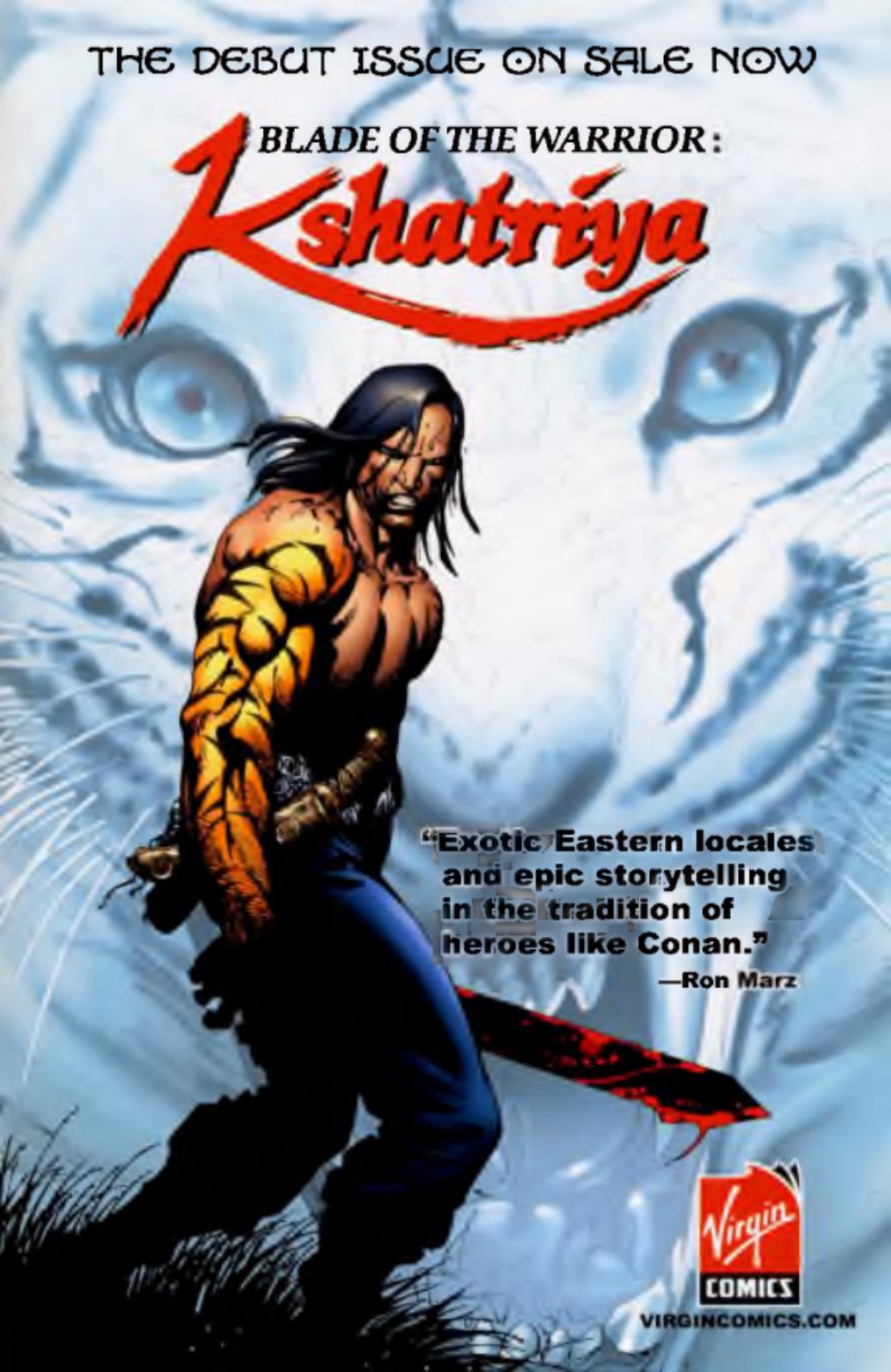
FOR
AKASHA AND
THE GLORY OF
SKANDA!

FORWARD!

The adventure continues in
Kshatriya: Blade of the Warrior #1
from Virgin Comics

THE DEBUT ISSUE ON SALE NOW

BLADE OF THE WARRIOR:
Kshatriya



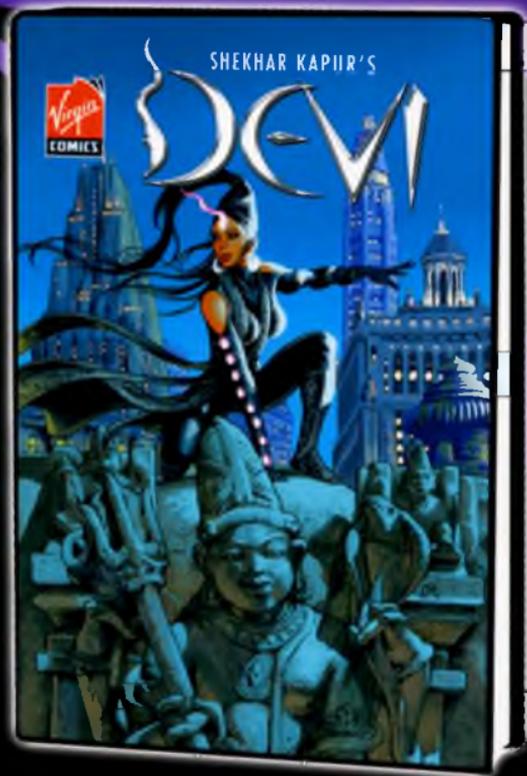
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**BETWEEN THE DIVINE AND
THE DIABOLICAL,
THERE IS...**



DEVI

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