

RISHYASRINGA

RETOLD FROM THE MAHABHARATA

CHITRA

KATHA

U.K. 25p. USA. 60¢

Rs. 2.50

No. 2



INTRODUCTION

The story of Rishyasringa, as told in the Vana Parva of the Mahabharata, is a plea for liberal education. Insulated education makes for inadequate development of body and mind in the sense that it is insecure, being subject to the influence of wordly forces. Liberal education, on the other hand, is a guarantee against the trauma of subsequent and sudden revelations.

It is a measure of the strength of the moral fibre of ascetic India that the restraints of up-bringing imposed on Rishyasringa led him not to ignorance but to innocence. It was untainted and therefore responsible for his achievement of bringing rains and fertility to a parched and barren land.

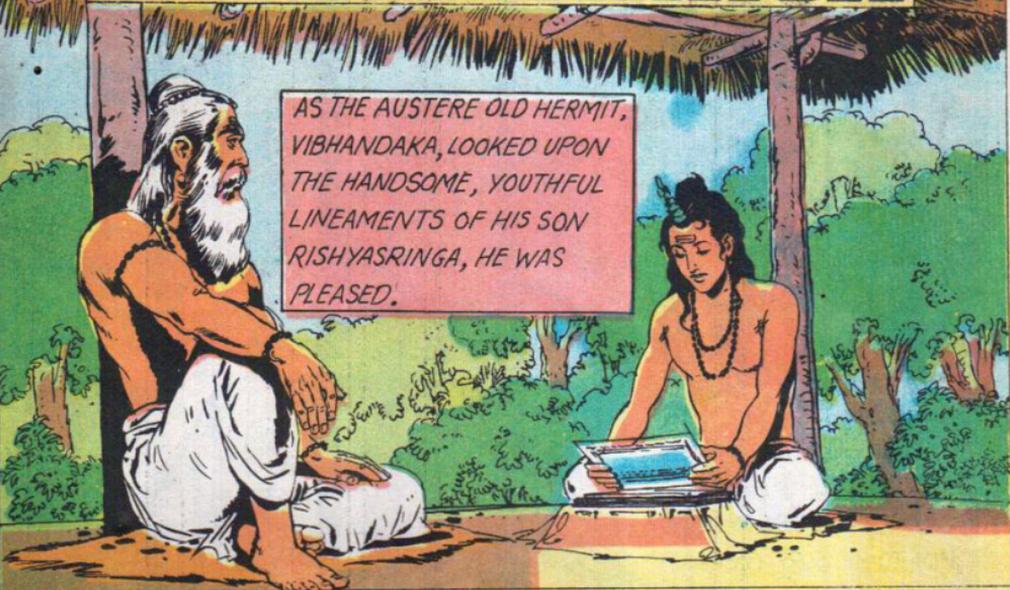
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Editor : D. Kumar Illustrations : Pratap Mulick

Printed by : A. J. Printers, 5 Bahadur Shah Zaffar Marg, New Delhi,
and published by Geeta Kumar for Argus Central Enterprises, 16, Golf
Links, New Delhi-110003.

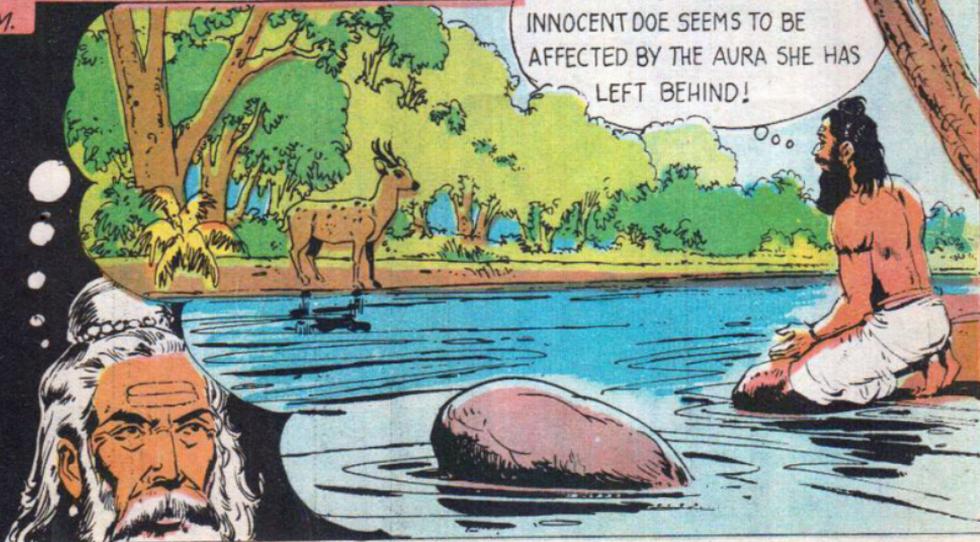
RISHYASRINGA



AS THE AUSTERE OLD HERMIT, VIBHANDAKA, LOOKED UPON THE HANDSOME, YOUTHFUL LINEAMENTS OF HIS SON RISHYASRINGA, HE WAS PLEASED.

HE REMEMBERED THE DAY WHEN THE ENCHANTING APSARA, URVASHI, HAD FOR A MOMENT DISTURBED HIM.

WHAT A DIVINE FORM I SAW JUST NOW! THAT INNOCENT DOE SEEMS TO BE AFFECTED BY THE AURA SHE HAS LEFT BEHIND!



A FEW DAYS LATER, ANOTHER BEAUTIFUL DAMSEL
HAD COME UP TO HIM WITH A BABY IN HER ARMS.

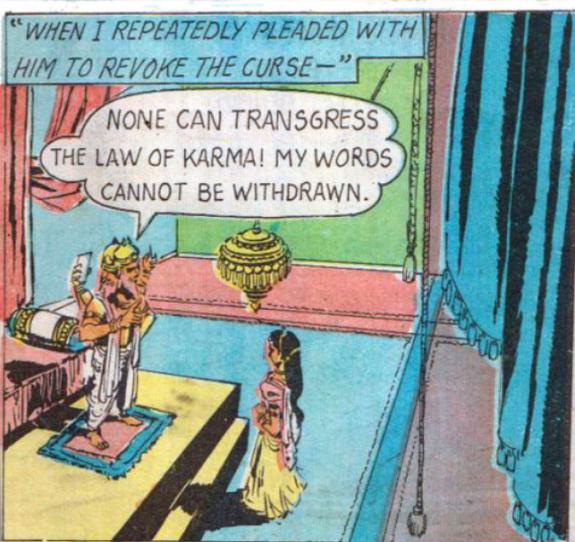


LORD,
ACCEPT YOUR
SON.

MY
SON?



YES, YOUR SON.
I AM A CELESTIAL MAIDEN.
I HAD ONCE OFFENDED
BRAHMA AND WAS CURSED BY
HIM TO BE BORN ON EARTH
AS A DOE.

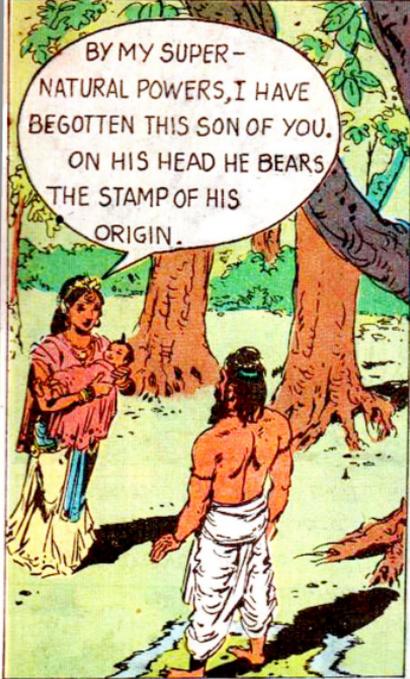


"WHEN I REPEATEDLY PLEADED WITH
HIM TO REVOKE THE CURSE—"

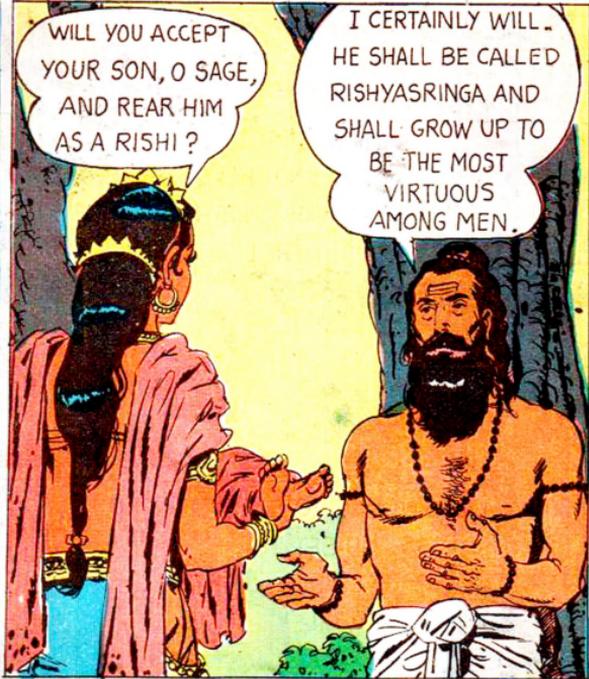
NONE CAN TRANSGRESS
THE LAW OF KARMA! MY WORDS
CANNOT BE WITHDRAWN.



HOWEVER, YOU MAY REGAIN
YOUR OWN FORM AND STATUS
IN HEAVEN IF AS A DOE YOU
BEGET A SON OF A RISHI.



BY MY SUPER-NATURAL POWERS, I HAVE BEGOTTEN THIS SON OF YOU. ON HIS HEAD HE BEARS THE STAMP OF HIS ORIGIN.



WILL YOU ACCEPT YOUR SON, O SAGE, AND REAR HIM AS A RISHI ?

I CERTAINLY WILL.. HE SHALL BE CALLED RISHYASRINGA AND SHALL GROW UP TO BE THE MOST VIRTUOUS AMONG MEN.

AS VIBHANDAKA HAD WALKED AWAY, THE CELESTIAL MAIDEN HAD VANISHED.



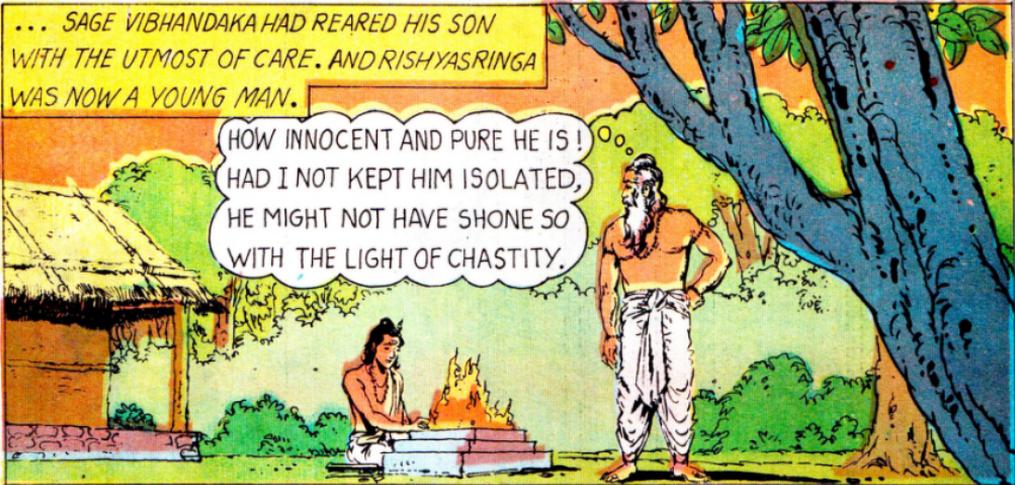
I SHALL BRING HIM UP IN ISOLATION, LEST HE BE TEMPTED AWAY FROM THE DUTIES OF A CONTINENT LIFE.

SO TAKING THE CHILD DEEP INTO THE FOREST, AWAY FROM THE WORLD OF MEN...



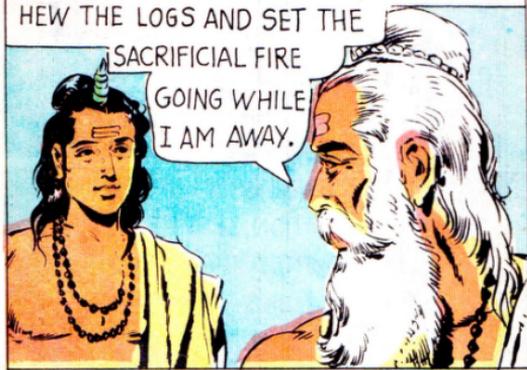
... SAGE VIBHANDAKA HAD REARED HIS SON WITH THE UTMOST OF CARE. AND RISHYASRINGA WAS NOW A YOUNG MAN.

HOW INNOCENT AND PURE HE IS! HAD I NOT KEPT HIM ISOLATED, HE MIGHT NOT HAVE SHONE SO WITH THE LIGHT OF CHASTITY.

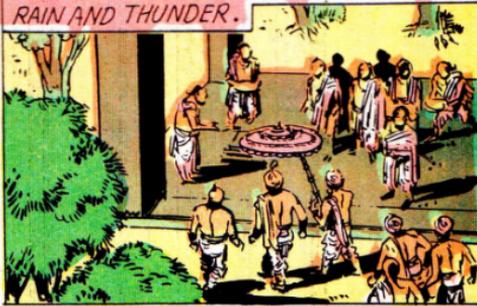


SON, I AM GOING OUT TO GATHER FRUITS. HEW THE LOGS AND SET THE

SACRIFICIAL FIRE GOING WHILE I AM AWAY.

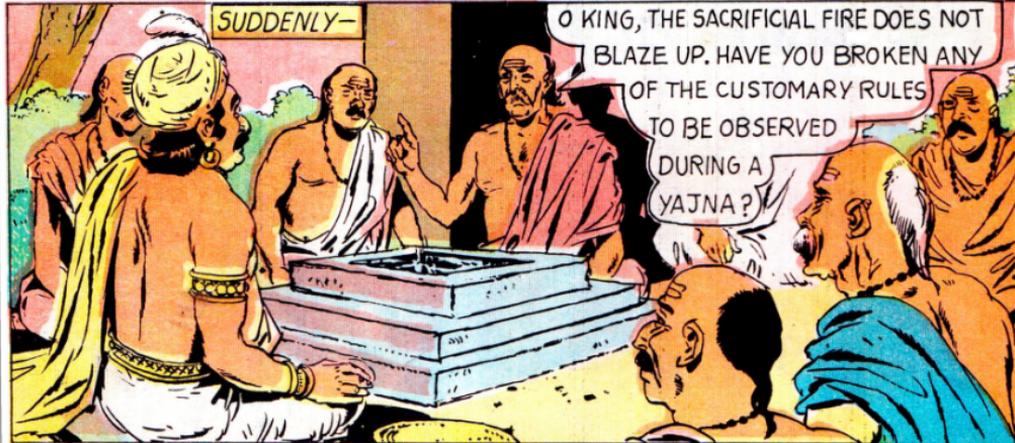


AT ABOUT THAT TIME KING LOMAPADA OF ANGA WAS PERFORMING A YAJNA TO PROPITIATE INDRA, THE LORD OF HEAVEN, RAIN AND THUNDER.

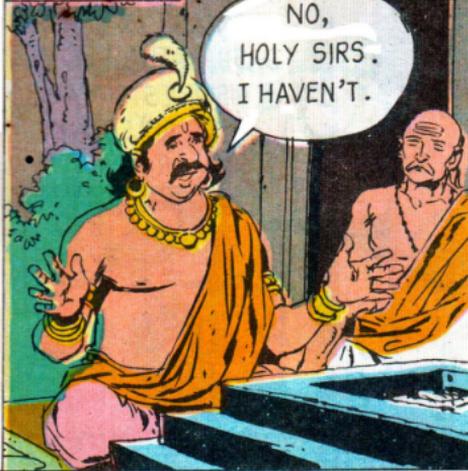


SUDDENLY—

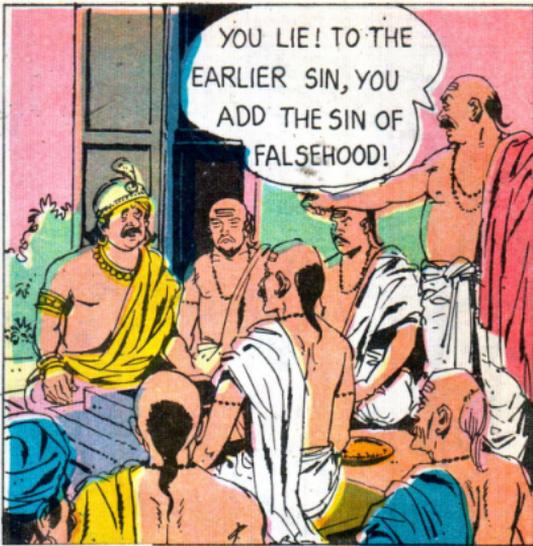
O KING, THE SACRIFICIAL FIRE DOES NOT BLAZE UP. HAVE YOU BROKEN ANY OF THE CUSTOMARY RULES TO BE OBSERVED DURING A YAJNA?



LOMAPADA WAS GUILTY BUT HE DARED NOT ADMIT IT.



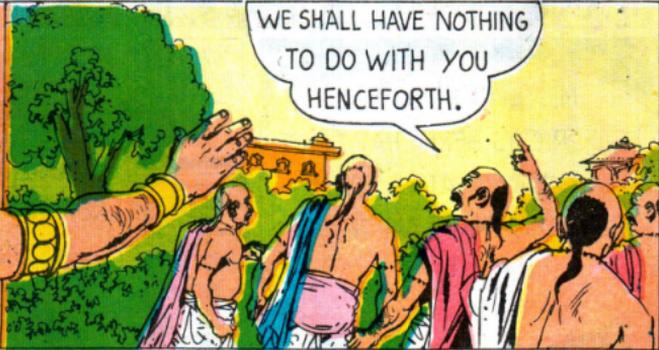
NO, HOLY SIR. I HAVEN'T.



YOU LIE! TO THE EARLIER SIN, YOU ADD THE SIN OF FALSEHOOD!



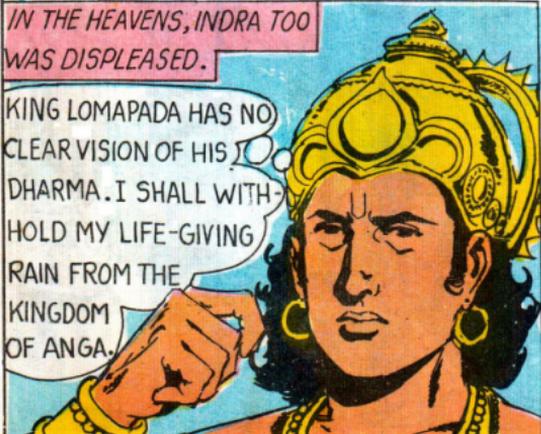
WAIT! PLEASE DON'T DESERT ME. I SHALL ATONE FOR MY LAPSES!



WE SHALL HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU HENCEFORTH.

IN THE HEAVENS, INDRA TOO WAS DISPLEASED.

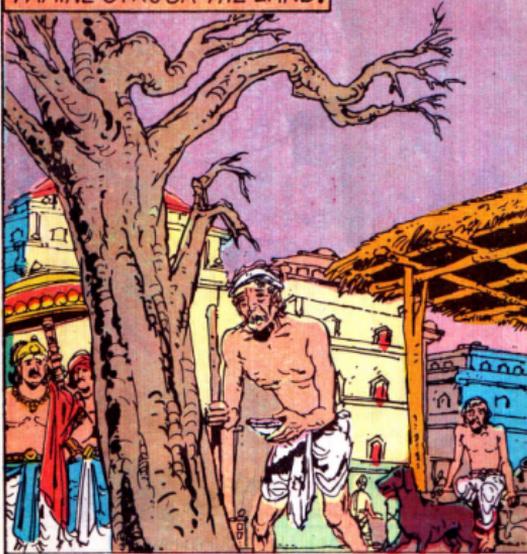
KING LOMAPADA HAS NO CLEAR VISION OF HIS DHARMA. I SHALL WITHHOLD MY LIFE-GIVING RAIN FROM THE KINGDOM OF ANGA.



WITHOUT RAIN, THE CROPS WITHERED AND FAILED.



FAMINE STRUCK THE LAND.

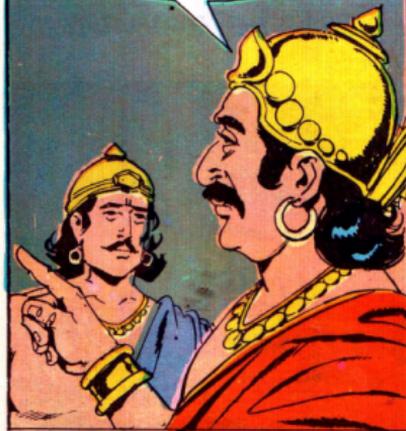


LOMAPADA SENT FOR HIS MINISTERS.

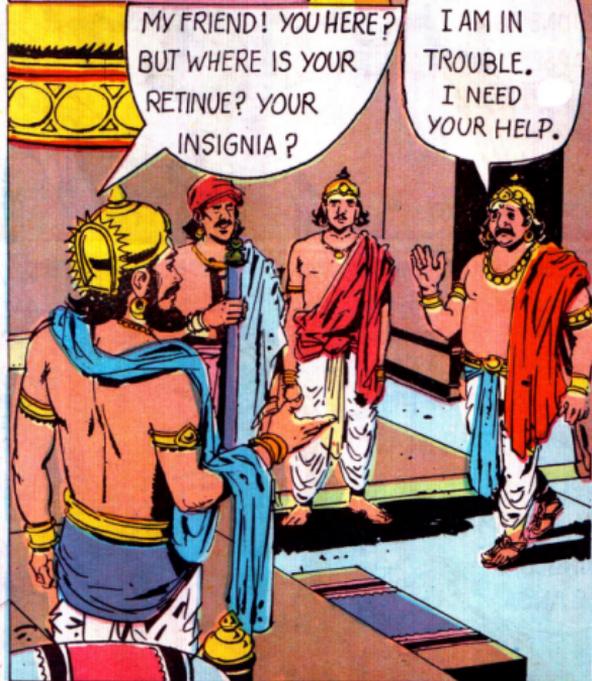


I WILL GO TO AYODHYA AND SEE MY FRIEND DASHARATHA. PERHAPS HIS PRIESTS MAY BE ABLE TO HELP OR ADVISE ME.

MEANWHILE YOU TELL THE PRIESTS HERE THAT I HAVE GONE AWAY TO ATONE FOR MY MISDEEDS; THAT I AM TRYING TO MAKE AMENDS.



WHEN LOMAPADA REACHED DASHARATHA'S PALACE—



MY FRIEND! YOU HERE? BUT WHERE IS YOUR RETINUE? YOUR INSIGNIA?

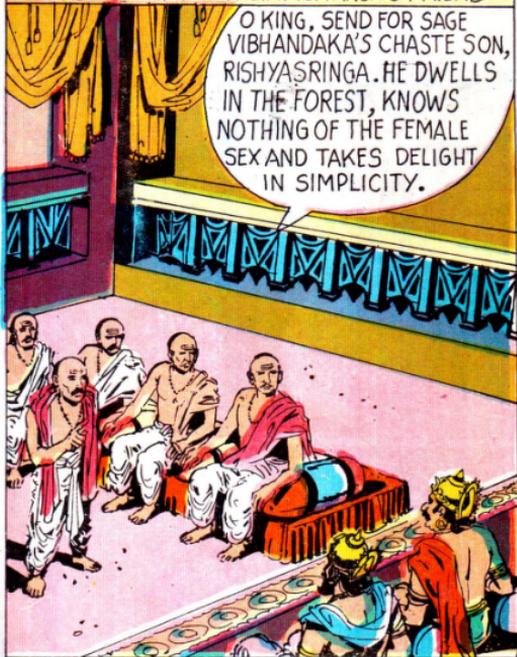
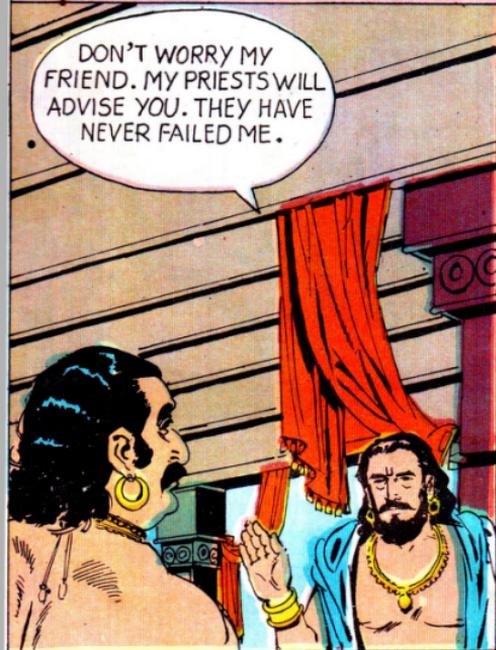
DASHARATHA, I AM IN TROUBLE. I NEED YOUR HELP.

WHEN LOMAPADA TOLD DASHARATHA THE WHOLE STORY —

DON'T WORRY MY FRIEND. MY PRIESTS WILL ADVISE YOU. THEY HAVE NEVER FAILED ME.

WHEN THE ROYAL PRIESTS OF A YODHYA HEARD OF THE PREDICAMENT OF THEIR MONARCH'S FRIEND —

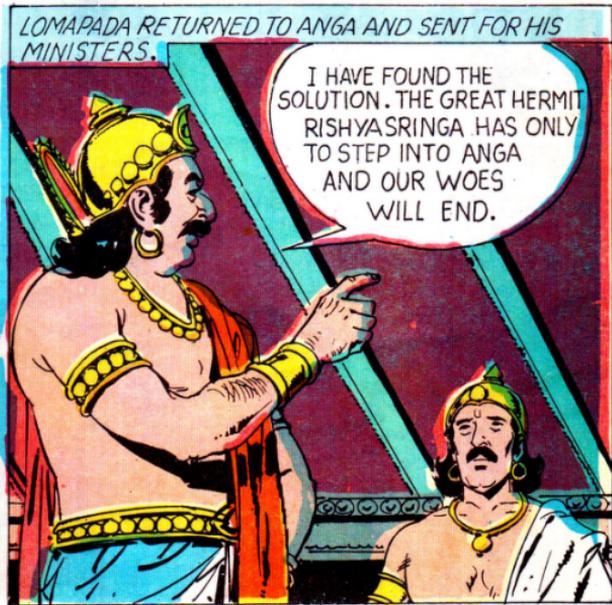
O KING, SEND FOR SAGE VIBHANDAKA'S CHASTE SON, RISHYASRINGA. HE DWELLS IN THE FOREST, KNOWS NOTHING OF THE FEMALE SEX AND TAKES DELIGHT IN SIMPLICITY.



THE MOMENT THAT TRUE HERMIT SETS FOOT ON YOUR KINGDOM, THERE IS NOT THE LEAST DOUBT THAT THE CLOUDS WILL BURST AND POUR RAIN, FORTHWITH.

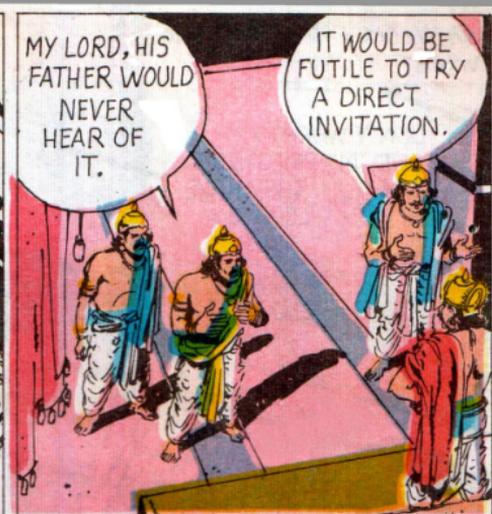
LOMAPADA RETURNED TO ANGA AND SENT FOR HIS MINISTERS.

I HAVE FOUND THE SOLUTION. THE GREAT HERMIT RISHYASRINGA HAS ONLY TO STEP INTO ANGA AND OUR WOES WILL END.



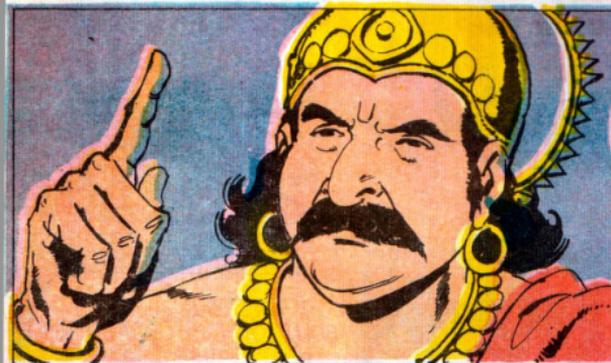


WHAT'S THE MATTER ?
WHY DO YOU LOOK SO
SULLEN ?



MY LORD, HIS
FATHER WOULD
NEVER
HEAR OF
IT.

IT WOULD BE
FUTILE TO TRY
A DIRECT
INVITATION.



THEN FIND SOME OTHER MEANS.
WHATEVER THEY BE, THE SAGE
MUST BE BROUGHT HERE AT
ALL COSTS, BEFORE MY
SUBJECTS PERISH FOR
WANT OF FOOD
AND
WATER.



MY LORD! WHY
NOT SEND SOME COURTESANS
TO ENTICE HIM HERE ? THEY
BEING WOMEN OF THE WORLD
ARE CLEVERER IN SUCH
MATTERS.

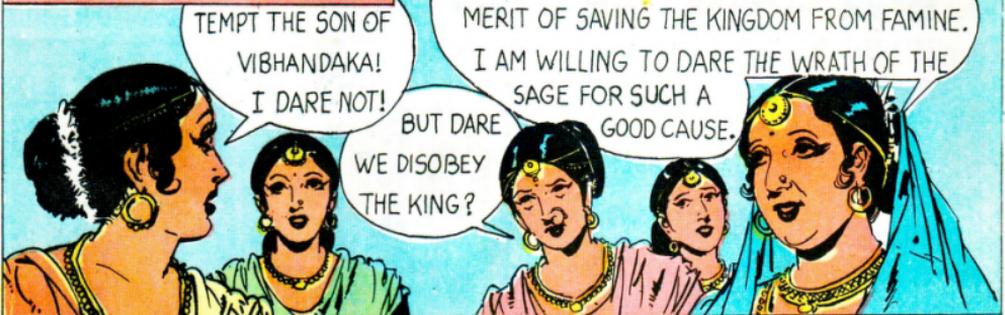
AN EXCELLENT IDEA!
SEND FOR THE MOST
ACCOMPLISHED
COURTESANS OF THE
LAND.

WHEN THE COURTESANS WERE BROUGHT BEFORE THE KING—



SAGE VIBHANDAKA'S SON, RISHYASRINGA MUST BE BROUGHT TO THE KINGDOM. SECURE HIS CONFIDENCE, TEMPT HIM AND BRING HIM HERE.

THE COURTESANS WERE STUNNED.



TEMPT THE SON OF VIBHANDAKA! I DARE NOT!

YET, IF WE SUCCEED, WE WOULD EARN THE MERIT OF SAVING THE KINGDOM FROM FAMINE. I AM WILLING TO DARE THE WRATH OF THE SAGE FOR SUCH A GOOD CAUSE.

BUT DARE WE DISOBEY THE KING?



THEN, TRUSTING IN FATE, AS WE ALWAYS DO, I SHALL GO WITH YOU.

SO SHALL I!

AND I!

THE CHIEF COURTESAN STEPPED FORWARD.

O KING, I SHALL TRY TO BRING THAT GREAT HERMIT HERE.



THE KING TURNED TO HIS MINISTERS.

GIVE HER ALL THAT SHE NEEDS FOR THE MISSION! AND A SPECIAL GIFT OF GOLD AND JEWELS FOR HERSELF!

IT SHALL BE DONE, MY LORD.



TAKING WITH HER A BEVVY OF COURTESANS AND SOME WORKMEN, THE CHIEF COURTESAN LEFT FOR THE FOREST.



IN THE FOREST —

BUILD AS BEAUTIFUL A FLOATING HERMITAGE AS YOU CAN. ADORN IT WITH VARIOUS PLANTS AND CREEPERS, AND EXOTIC TREES LADEN WITH FLOWERS AND FRUITS.



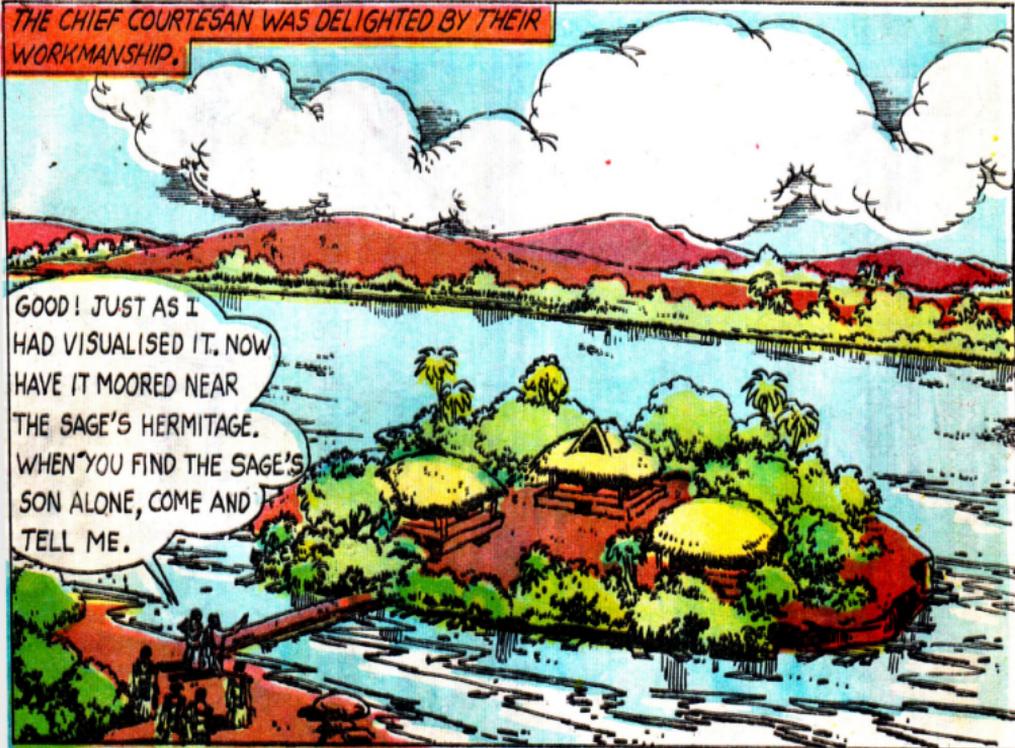
THOROUGHLY SKILLED IN THE ART OF CREATING AN ILLUSION, THE WORKMEN COMPLETED THE TASK IN NO TIME.

MADAM, IT IS READY. WOULD YOU CARE TO SEE IT?



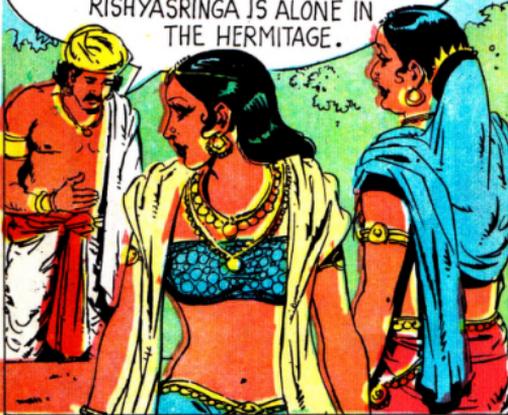
THE CHIEF COURTESAN WAS DELIGHTED BY THEIR WORKMANSHIP.

GOOD! JUST AS I HAD VISUALISED IT, NOW HAVE IT MOORED NEAR THE SAGE'S HERMITAGE. WHEN YOU FIND THE SAGE'S SON ALONE, COME AND TELL ME.



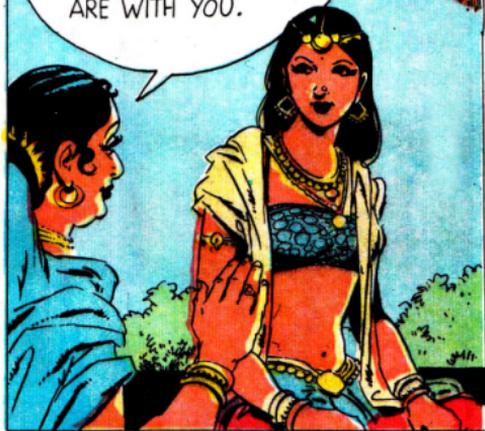
HIS MISSION ACCOMPLISHED, THE
MAN SOON RETURNED.

VIBHANDAKA HAS GONE DEEP INTO THE
FOREST IN SEARCH OF ROOTS AND FRUITS.
RISHYASRINGA IS ALONE IN
THE HERMITAGE.



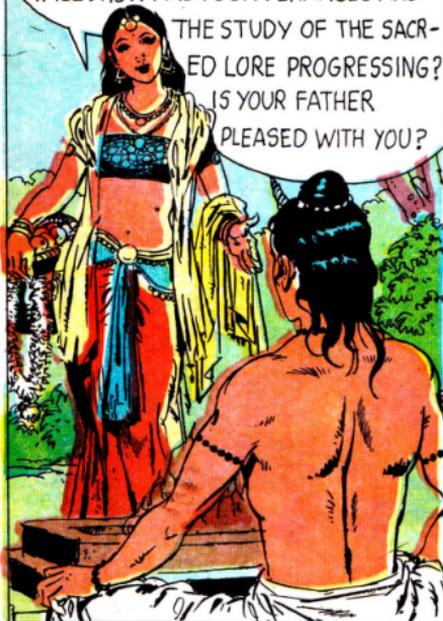
THE COURTESAN TURNED TO HER DAUGHTER.

GO, MY LOVE! AND DO WHAT
IS NECESSARY. MY BLESSINGS
ARE WITH YOU.



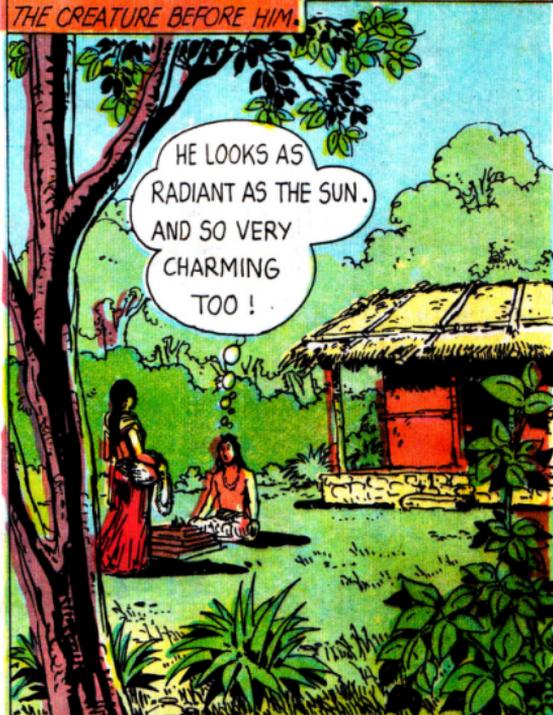
A LITTLE LATER, THE COURTESAN'S
DAUGHTER STOOD BEFORE RISHYASRINGA.

I HOPE ALL IS WELL AT YOUR HERMITAGE.
HOW ARE YOUR PENANCES AND
THE STUDY OF THE SACRED
LORE PROGRESSING?
IS YOUR FATHER
PLEASED WITH YOU?



RISHYASRINGA WAS STUNNED BY THE BEAUTY OF
THE CREATURE BEFORE HIM.

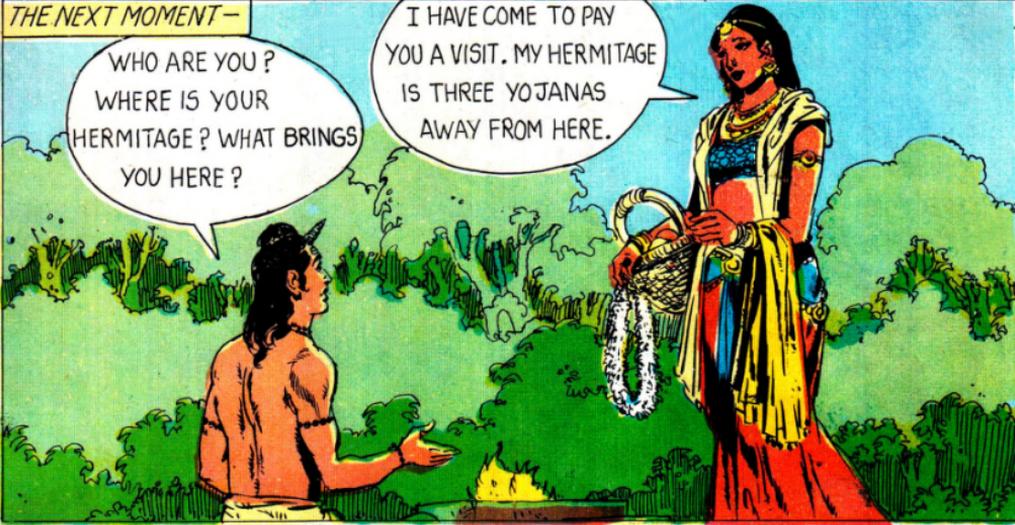
HE LOOKS AS
RADIANT AS THE SUN.
AND SO VERY
CHARMING
TOO!



THE NEXT MOMENT—

WHO ARE YOU?
WHERE IS YOUR
HERMITAGE? WHAT BRINGS
YOU HERE?

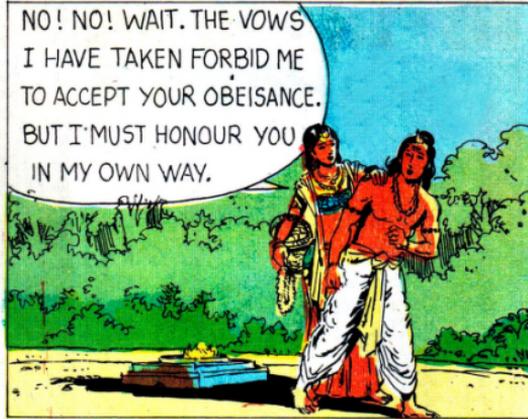
I HAVE COME TO PAY
YOU A VISIT. MY HERMITAGE
IS THREE YOJANAS
AWAY FROM HERE.



THEN LET ME WASH YOUR
FEET AND MAKE
OBEISANCE TO
YOU.



NO! NO! WAIT. THE VOWS
I HAVE TAKEN FORBID ME
TO ACCEPT YOUR OBEISANCE.
BUT I MUST HONOUR YOU
IN MY OWN WAY.



I MUST EMBRACE
YOU ACCORDING TO OUR
CUSTOM.

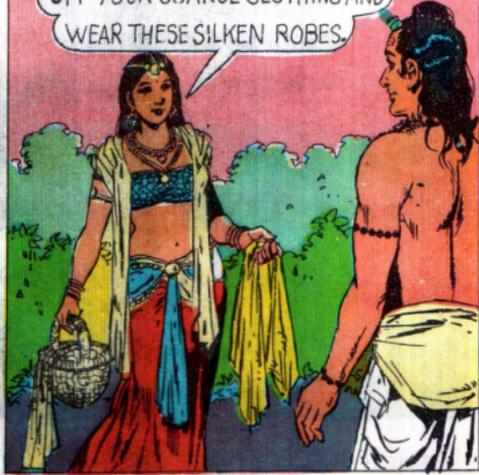


RISHYASRINGA HAD NEVER SEEN ANOTHER HUMAN BEING, EXCEPT HIS FATHER. SO HE THOUGHT THAT THE COURTESAN WAS A YOUNG SAGE LIKE HIMSELF.

YOUR WAY OF SHOWING RESPECT IS DELIGHTFUL INDEED.



NOW WE SHALL EAT THESE EXOTIC FRUITS THAT I HAVE BROUGHT. BUT FIRST CAST OFF YOUR COARSE CLOTHING AND WEAR THESE SILKEN ROBES.



RISHYASRINGA WORE THE FINE CLOTHES.

HOW SMOOTH AND SOFT THEY FEEL! COME SIT BY ME ON THIS MAT. WON'T YOU GIVE ME THE HONOUR OF EMBRACING ME ONCE AGAIN?



THE COURTESAN WAS ABOUT TO EMBRACE HIM WHEN SUDDENLY-

FOOTSTEPS! THE RISHI IS BACK! I MUST DEPART!





I HAVE TO GO NOW. I HAVE TO PERFORM A SACRIFICE AT A CERTAIN HOUR. I MUST RUSH TO MY HERMITAGE.

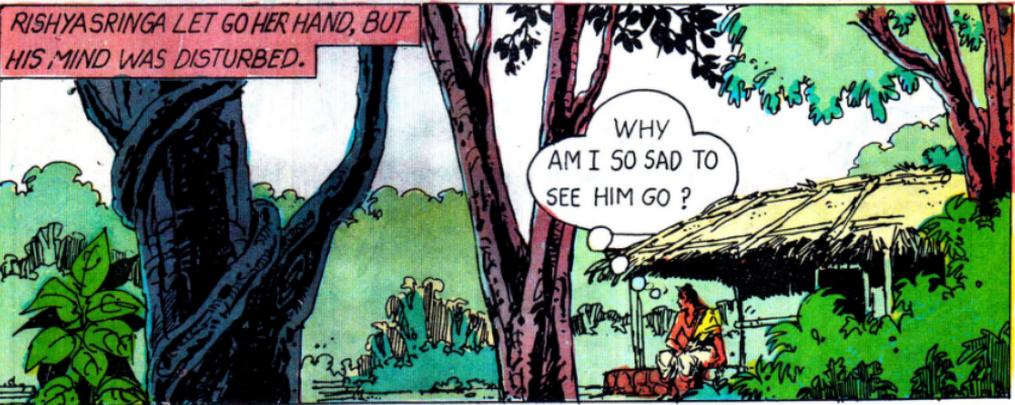


BUT YOU'LL COME AGAIN. WON'T YOU?



I WILL! I WILL! NOW LET ME GO.

RISHYASRINGA LET GO HER HAND, BUT HIS MIND WAS DISTURBED.



WHY AM I SO SAD TO SEE HIM GO?



THE SAGE!

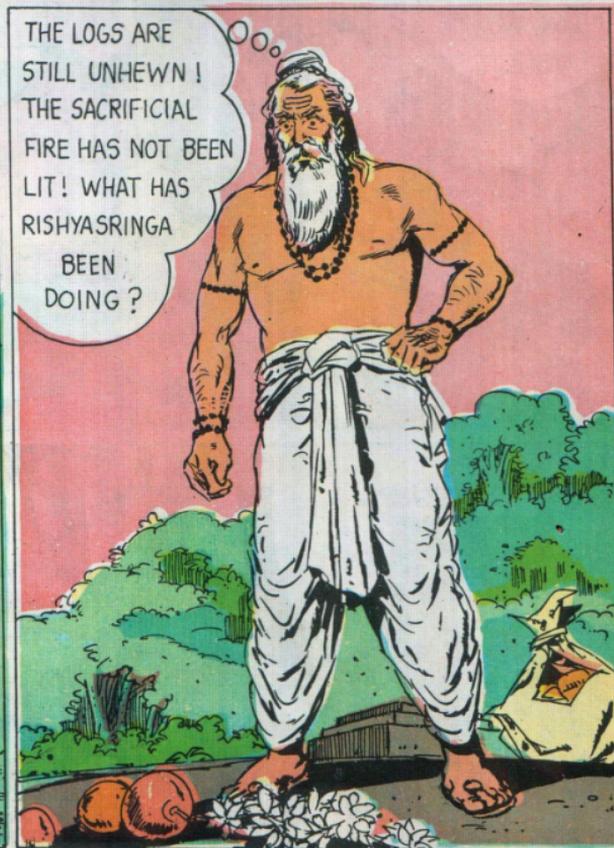


JUST
IN TIME! THE
FATES ARE KIND.
ALL IS SURE TO GO
WELL.



AS THE SAGE APPROACHED THE
HERMITAGE —

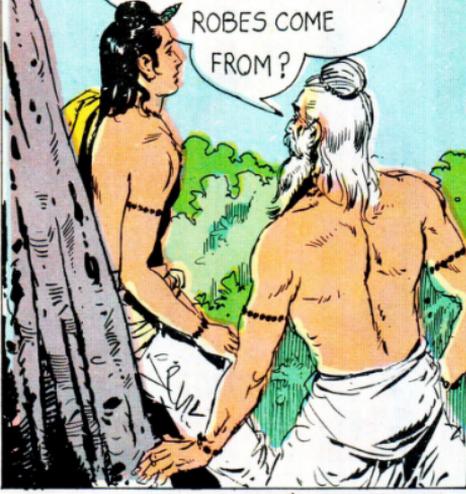
WHAT'S THIS?
FORBIDDEN FRUIT!
WHO HAS DEFILED
THIS PLACE?
WHERE IS MY
SON?



THE LOGS ARE
STILL UNHEWN!
THE SACRIFICIAL
FIRE HAS NOT BEEN
LIT! WHAT HAS
RISHYASRINGA
BEEN
DOING?

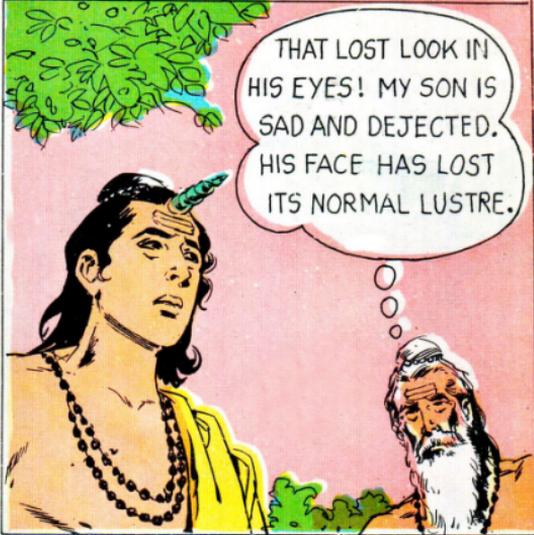
AND THEN HE SAW RISHYASRINGA.

RISHYASRINGA! WHAT ARE YOU WEARING? WHERE DID THESE SILKEN ROBES COME FROM?



THE SAGE WALKED UP AND STOOD BEFORE HIM.

THAT LOST LOOK IN HIS EYES! MY SON IS SAD AND DEJECTED. HIS FACE HAS LOST ITS NORMAL LUSTRE.



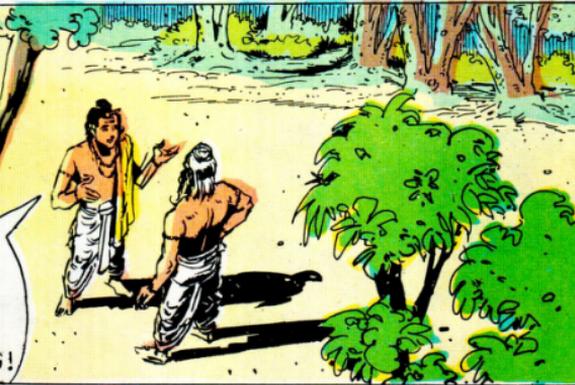
ONLY THEN DID RISHYASRINGA NOTICE HIS FATHER.

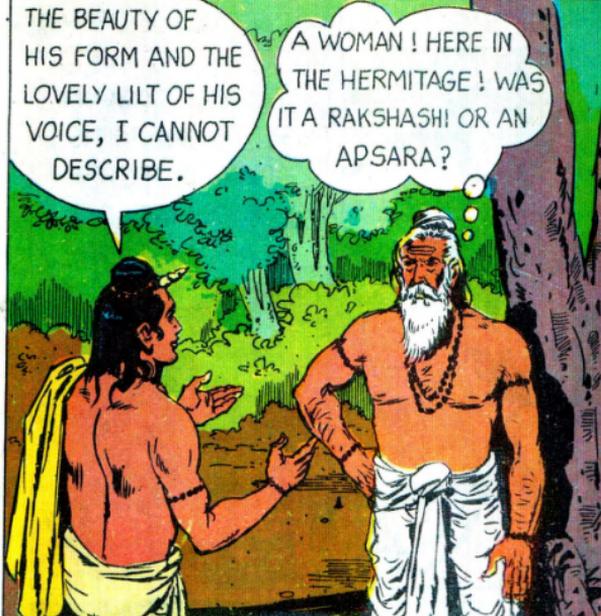
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU, MY SON? HAS ANYONE BEEN HERE?



THAT WAS THE ONLY CUE THE INNOCENT RISHYASRINGA NEEDED TO SPEAK OF WHAT WAS NEAREST TO HIS HEART.

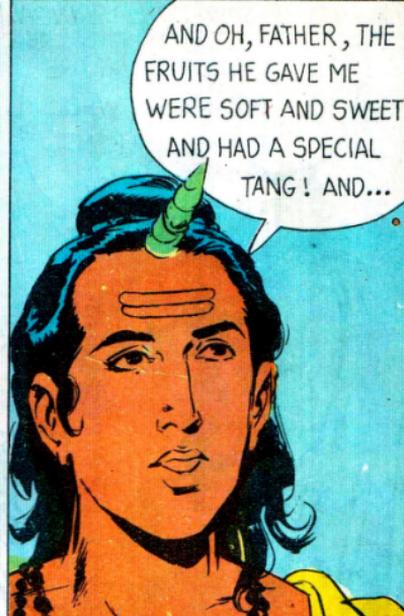
O FATHER, A BEAUTIFUL BRAHMACHARI CAME TO VISIT US! HE HAD MASSES OF LOVELY HAIR, HIS COMPLEXION WAS THE COLOUR OF A RIPE MANGO AND HIS EYES WERE AS LARGE AS LOTUS PETALS!



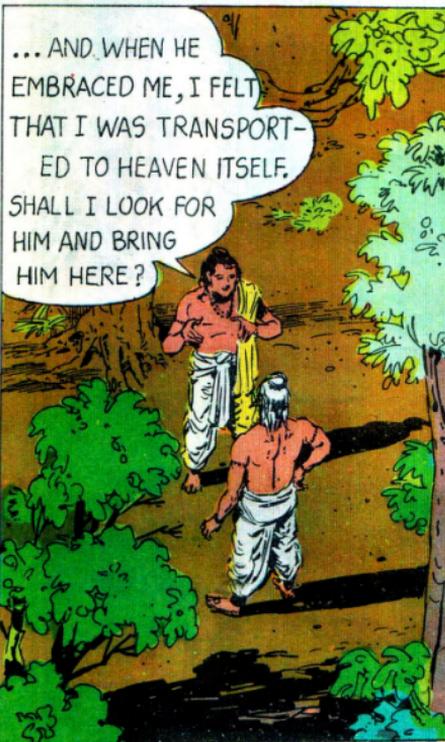


THE BEAUTY OF HIS FORM AND THE LOVELY LILT OF HIS VOICE, I CANNOT DESCRIBE.

A WOMAN ! HERE IN THE HERMITAGE ! WAS IT A RAKSHASHI OR AN APSARA ?

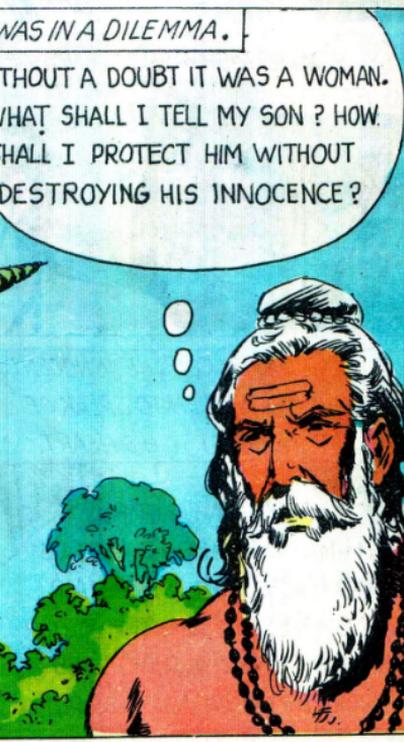


AND OH, FATHER, THE FRUITS HE GAVE ME WERE SOFT AND SWEET AND HAD A SPECIAL TANG ! AND...



... AND WHEN HE EMBRACED ME, I FELT THAT I WAS TRANSPORT-ED TO HEAVEN ITSELF. SHALL I LOOK FOR HIM AND BRING HIM HERE ?

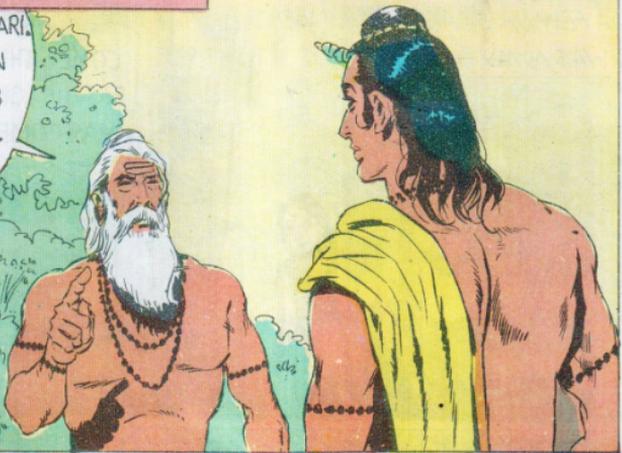
THE SAGE WAS IN A DILEMMA.



WITHOUT A DOUBT IT WAS A WOMAN. WHAT SHALL I TELL MY SON ? HOW SHALL I PROTECT HIM WITHOUT DESTROYING HIS INNOCENCE ?

AT LAST VIBHANDAKA SLOWLY TURNED TO HIS SON.

MY CHILD, THAT WAS NO BRAHMACHARI.
IT MUST HAVE BEEN A DEMON IN
DISGUISE, COME HERE TO DISTURB
OUR PENANCES AND SACRIFICES.
I SHALL HUNT HIM OUT AND
PUNISH HIM.



VIBHANDAKA WENT DEEP INTO THE FOREST,
AND FOR THREE WHOLE DAYS HE SEARCH-
ED BUT -

THE WRETCH HAS
LEFT NO
TRACE!

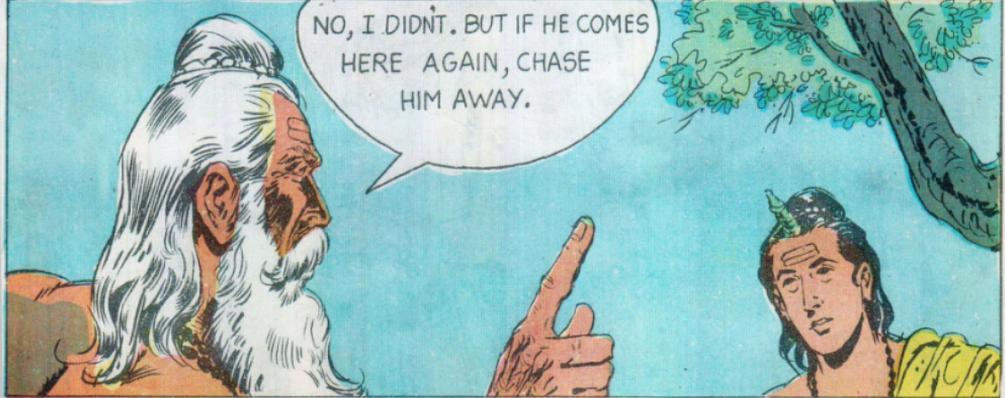


WITHOUT ANY SUCCESS HE RETURN-
ED TO THE HERMITAGE.

DID YOU
FIND HIM,
FATHER?



NO, I DIDN'T. BUT IF HE COMES
HERE AGAIN, CHASE
HIM AWAY.



BUT HIS WORDS FELL ON DEAF EARS. FOR,
A FEW DAYS LATER, WHEN VIBHANDAKA
WAS AWAY —

HE'S
COME! THE
BRAHMACHARI
HAS COME!

HE RUSHED OUT TOWARDS HER.

WELCOME,
BRAHMACHARI. WHERE
HAVE YOU BEEN ALL
THESE DAYS? I HAVE
BEEN WAITING
FOR YOU.

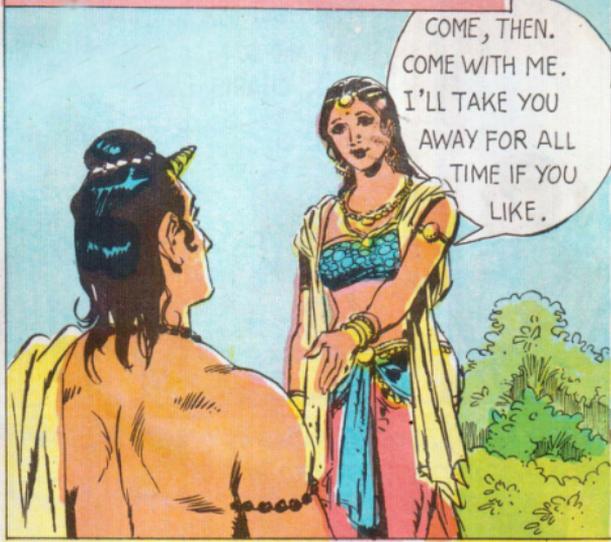
OH! THE
SACRIFICE TOOK
LONGER THAN I
EXPECTED.

ARE YOU
NOT GOING TO GIVE
ME YOUR CUSTOMARY
HONOUR OF EMBRACING
ME AGAIN. IT IS A
DIVINE WAY,
INDEED.

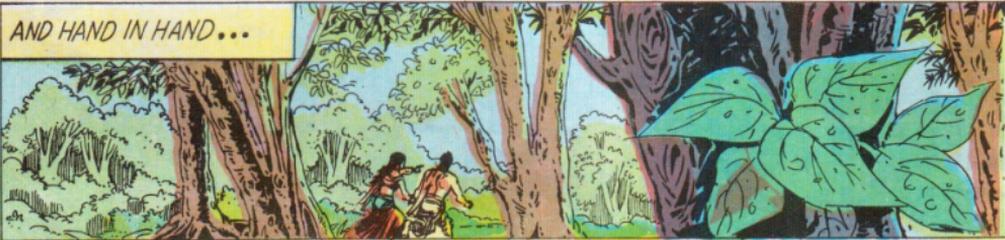
BETTER STILL, TAKE ME TO YOUR HERMITAGE. MY FATHER DOES NOT BELIEVE WHAT I SAY ABOUT YOU. HE MAY CHASE YOU AWAY IF HE COMES.

THE COURTESAN SEIZED THE OPPORTUNITY.

COME, THEN. COME WITH ME. I'LL TAKE YOU AWAY FOR ALL TIME IF YOU LIKE.



AND HAND IN HAND...



... THE TWO RAN TOWARDS THE FLOATING HERMITAGE.





WHAT A BEAUTIFUL HERMITAGE!
AND SO MANY BRAHMA-
CHARIS HERE!

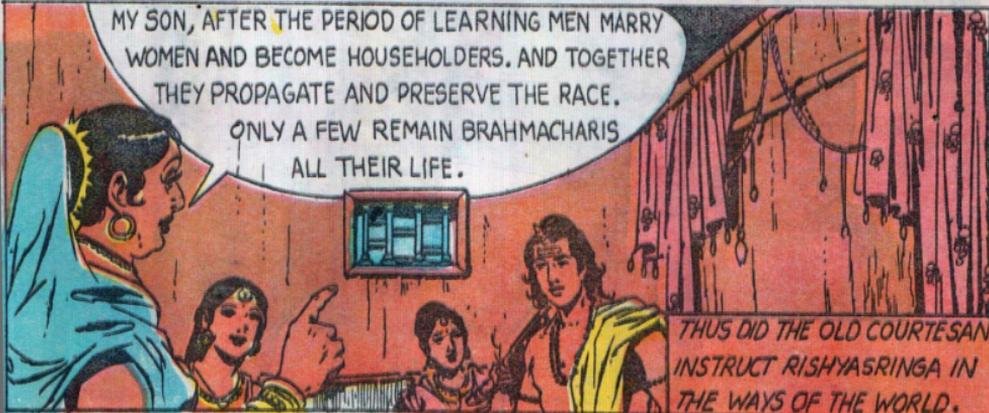
COME, COME MY
CHILD. WE'LL TAKE
YOU TO AN EVEN
MORE BEAUTIFUL
HERMITAGE
THAN THIS ONE.

AS THEY SAILED TOWARDS ANGA, RISHYASRINGA LEARNT
MUCH THAT HAD BEEN DENIED HIM.



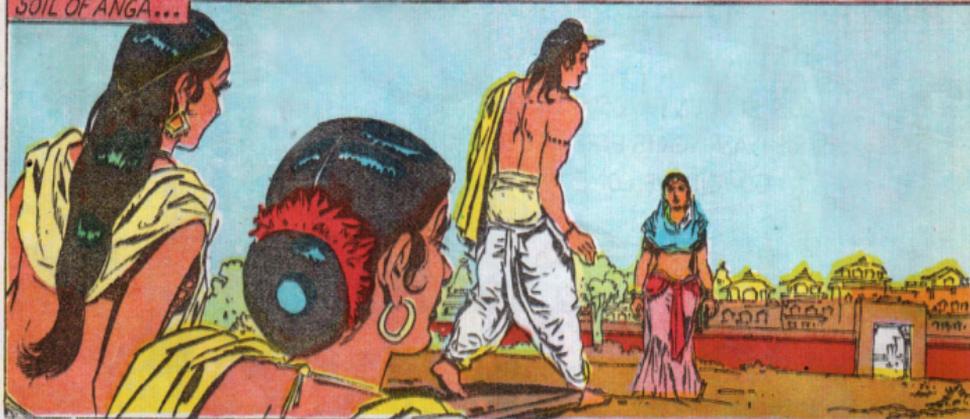
WE ARE NOT
BRAHMACHARIS. WE ARE
WOMEN. YOU ARE A
MAN. THE WORLD NEEDS
MEN AND WOMEN.

MY SON, AFTER THE PERIOD OF LEARNING MEN MARRY
WOMEN AND BECOME HOUSEHOLDERS. AND TOGETHER
THEY PROPAGATE AND PRESERVE THE RACE.
ONLY A FEW REMAIN BRAHMACHARIS
ALL THEIR LIFE.



THUS DID THE OLD COURTESAN
INSTRUCT RISHYASRINGA IN
THE WAYS OF THE WORLD.

THEY SOON REACHED THEIR DESTINATION. THE MOMENT RISHYASRINGA SET FOOT ON THE SOIL OF ANGA...



... FLASHES OF LIGHTNING LIT THE SKY...



... CLAPS OF THUNDER RENT THE AIR...



... AND THE RAIN CAME DOWN IN TORRENTS, ALMOST DROWNING THE JUBILANT SHOUTS OF JOY.



MEANWHILE AT THE PALACE—

RAIN! THE COURTESANS HAVE SUCCEEDED! RISHYASRINGA IS HERE! LET'S GO AND WELCOME HIM.

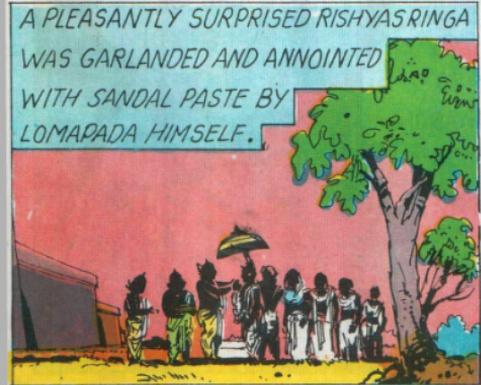


AND THE KING AND HIS MINISTERS RUSHED TO THE BARGE.

IT'S THE KING HIMSELF COME TO RECEIVE YOU!



A PLEASANTLY SURPRISED RISHYASRINGA WAS GARLANDED AND ANNOINTED WITH SANDAL PASTE BY LOMAPADA HIMSELF.



WE SHALL NOW GO TO THE APARTMENTS SPECIALLY BUILT FOR YOU IN MY PALACE.

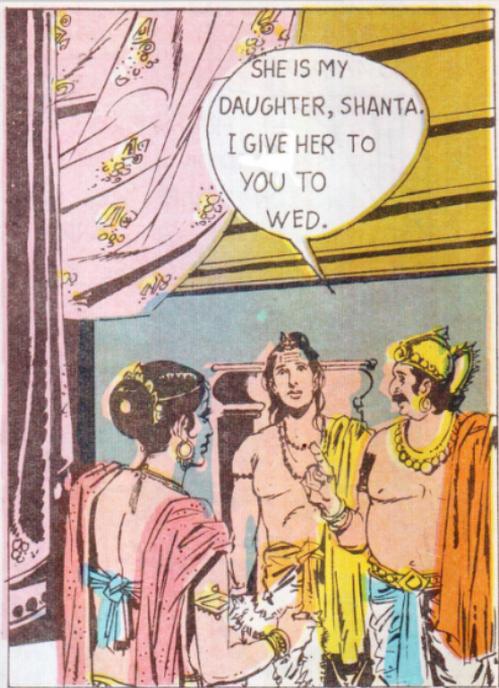


AS HE ENTERED THE APARTMENT, FRESH SURPRISES AWAITED RISHYASRINGA.

WHO IS THAT? SHE IS FAIRER EVEN THAN THE MAIDEN WHO BROUGHT ME TO THIS VERY HEAVEN.



SHE IS MY DAUGHTER, SHANTA. I GIVE HER TO YOU TO WED.



SHANTA CAME FORWARD AND GARLANDED RISHYASRINGA.

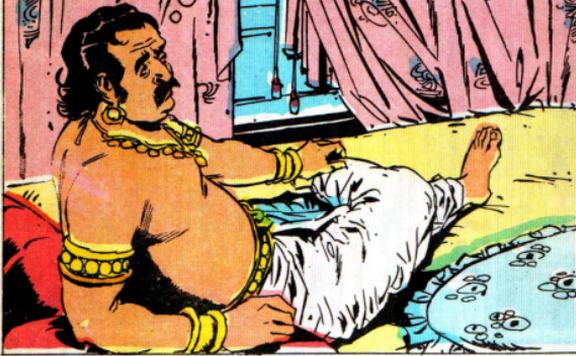


BUT IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, WHILE RISHYASRINGA ENJOYED THE PLEASURES OF A HOUSE-HOLDER'S LIFE...

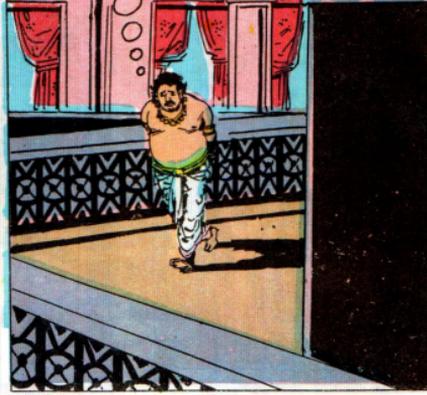


... LOMAPADA SPENT SLEEPLESS NIGHTS.
HE WAS AFRAID.

THE TERRIBLE SAGE
IS SURE TO DIVINE THAT
HIS SON IS HERE. HE
WILL COME TO ANGA AND
PRONOUNCE A CURSE
ON ME.

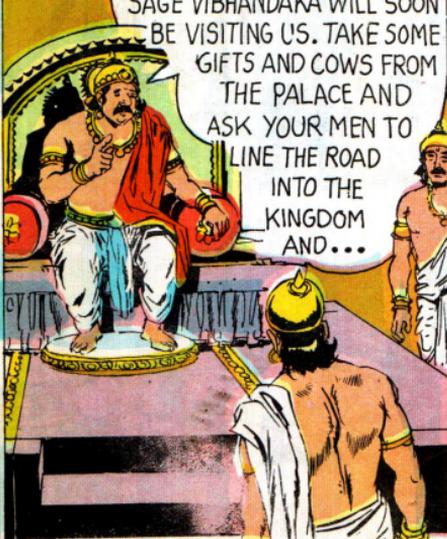


I MUST ACT SO
THAT I AT LEAST
BREAK THE TIDE OF
HIS FURY BEFORE
HE REACHES
THE PALACE.



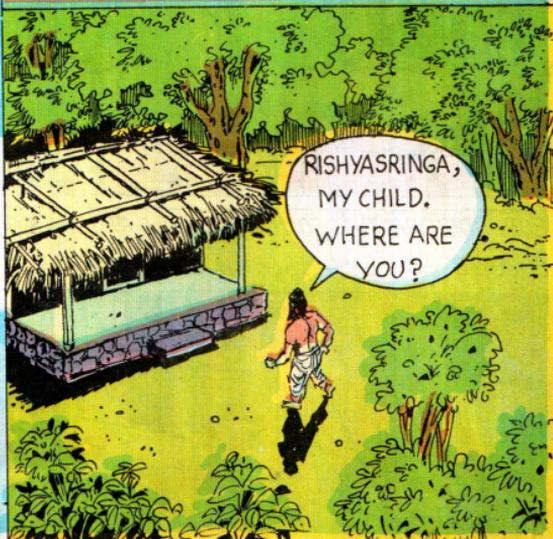
THE NEXT DAY HE SENT FOR THE CHIEF OF
THE COWHERDS.

SAGE VIBHANDAKA WILL SOON
BE VISITING US. TAKE SOME
GIFTS AND COWS FROM
THE PALACE AND
ASK YOUR MEN TO
LINE THE ROAD
INTO THE
KINGDOM
AND...

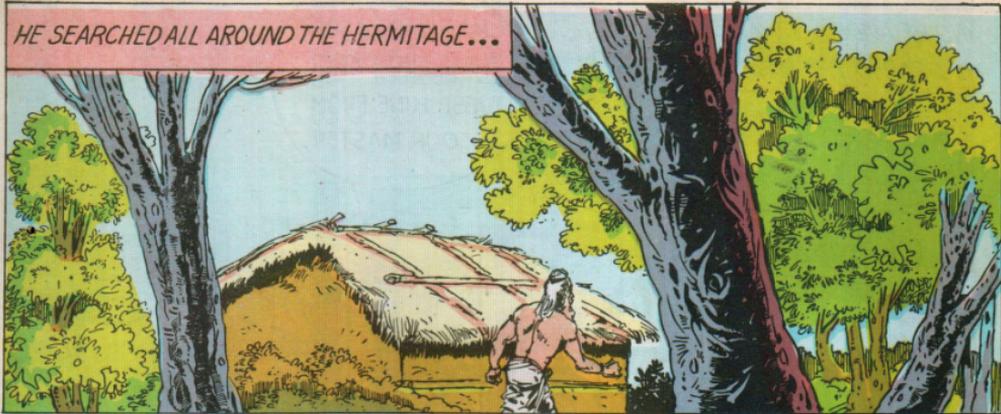


MEANWHILE, SAGE VIBHANDAKA HAD RETURNED
TO THE HERMITAGE.

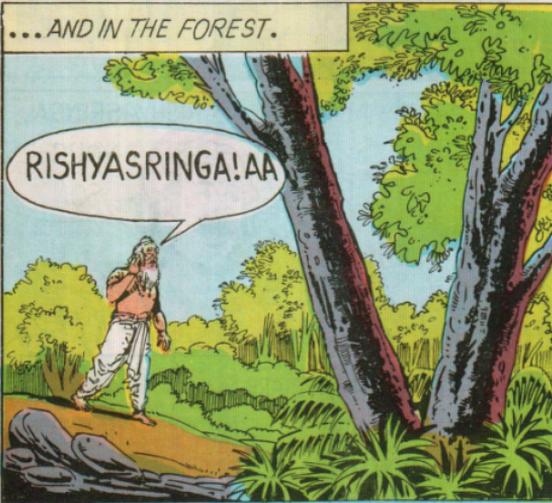
RISHYASINGA,
MY CHILD.
WHERE ARE
YOU?



HE SEARCHED ALL AROUND THE HERMITAGE...

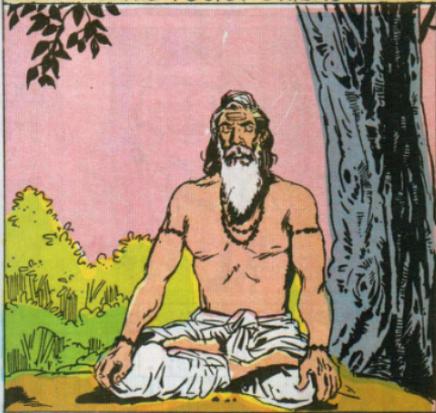


...AND IN THE FOREST.

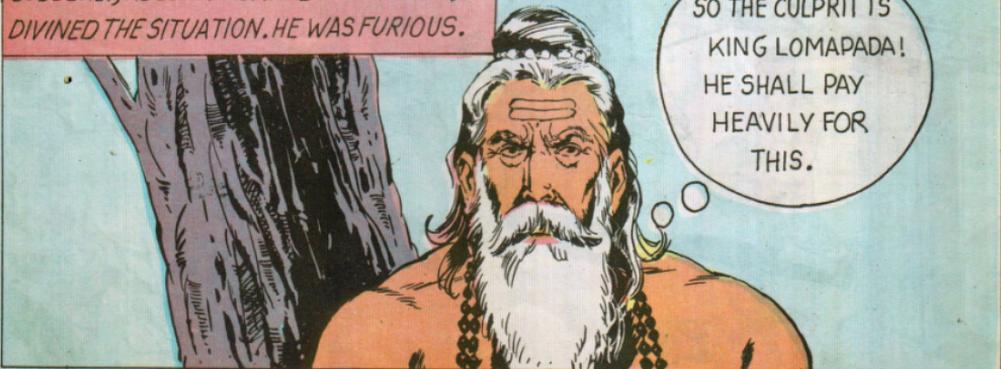


RISHYASRINGA! AA

DISTURBED HE SAT DOWN TO MEDITATE,
USING ALL HIS YOGIC POWERS.



SUDDENLY, AS LOMAPADA HAD ANTICIPATED, HE
DIVINED THE SITUATION. HE WAS FURIOUS.



SO THE CULPRIT IS
KING LOMAPADA!
HE SHALL PAY
HEAVILY FOR
THIS.

AND HE MADE HIS WAY TO ANGA . WHEN HE NEARED THE KINGDOM -

HOLY SAGE, ACCEPT THESE GIFTS AND THESE KINE FROM OUR MASTER.



WHO IS YOUR MASTER ?

RISHYASRINGA, YOUR SON.



AS HE APPROACHED NEARER AND NEARER THE PALACE...

REVERED SIR, WE ARE YOUR SON'S SLAVES. HE HAS COMMANDED US TO WELCOME YOU WITH THESE CATTLE AND GIFTS.



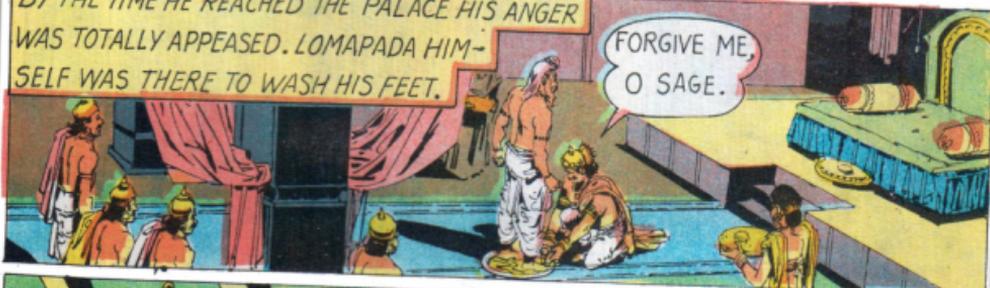
... VIBHANDAKA'S ANGER GRADUALLY SUBSIDED.

ACCEPT THESE GIFTS FROM YOUR SON, OUR MASTER. AND BLESS US O SAGE WITH YOUR COMPASSIONATE GLANCE. WE ARE HERE TO CARRY OUT YOUR ORDERS.



BY THE TIME HE REACHED THE PALACE HIS ANGER WAS TOTALLY APPEASED. LOMAPADA HIMSELF WAS THERE TO WASH HIS FEET.

FORGIVE ME, O SAGE.

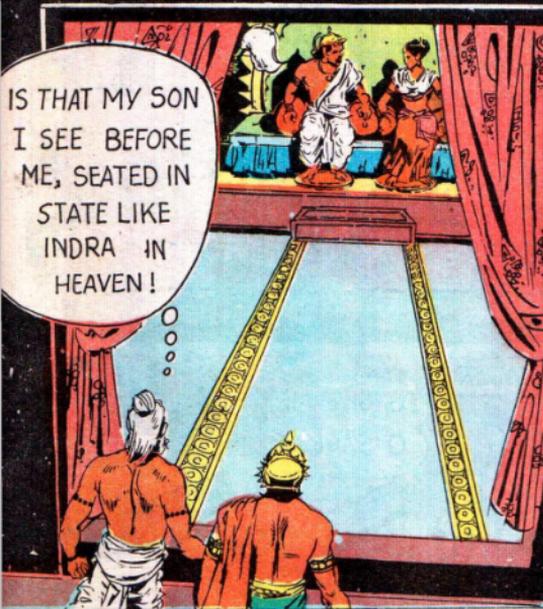


MAY YOU AND YOUR KINGDOM EVER PROSPER.



WHEN LOMAPADA LED THE SAGE INTO RISHYASRINGA'S APARTMENTS, HE BEAMED WITH JOY AT THE SIGHT THAT MET HIS EYES.

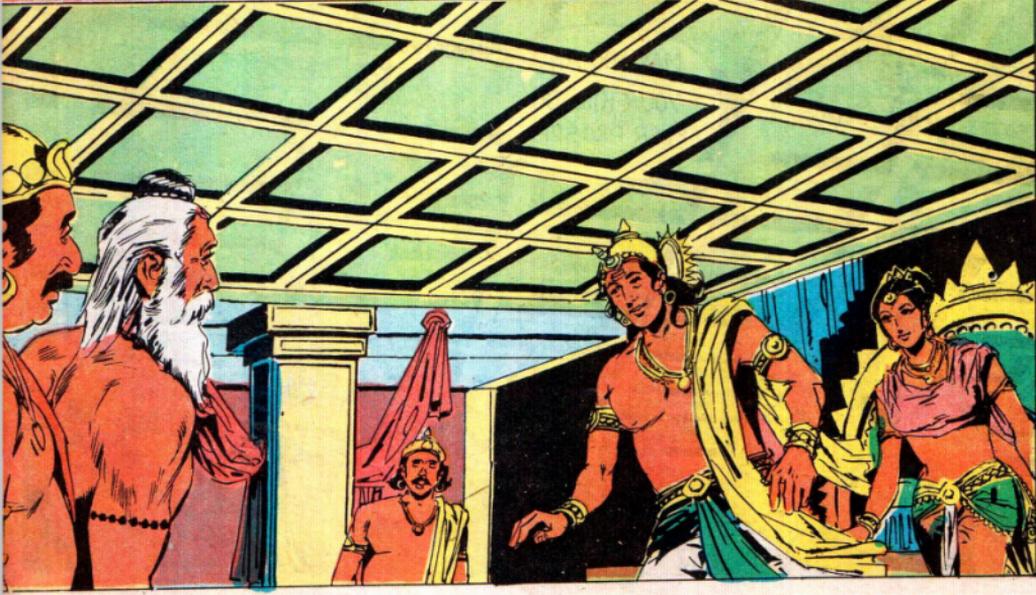
IS THAT MY SON I SEE BEFORE ME, SEATED IN STATE LIKE INDRA IN HEAVEN!



AND IF IT IS NOT THE PIOUS PRINCESS SHANTA SEATED BY HIS SIDE!



AS SOON AS HE SAW HIS FATHER, RISHYASRINGA RAN FORWARD AND...



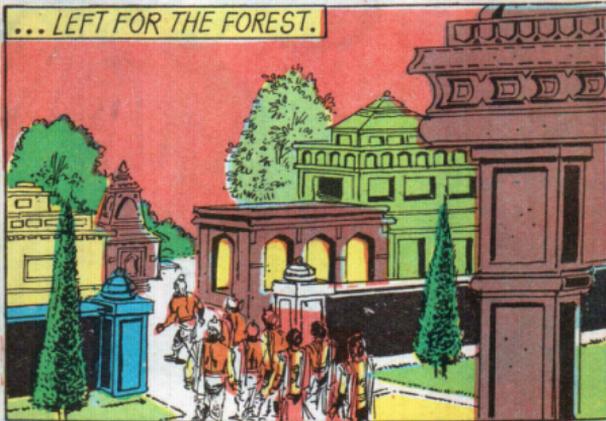
... FELL PROSTRATE AT HIS FEET.

FATHER!
FORGIVE
ME!

ARISE, MY CHILDREN.
RISHYASRINGA, DO ALL THAT
WOULD PLEASE THE KING.
BEGET A SON AND THEN
RETURN TO THE
FOREST.

VIBHANDAKA THEN BLESSED
EVERYONE PRESENT AND...

... LEFT FOR THE FOREST.



IN DUE COURSE OF TIME WHEN A SON WAS
BORN TO THEM, RISHYASRINGA AND SHANTA
LEFT THE PALACE AND WENT TO THE HERMIT-
AGE WHERE THEY SPENT THE REST OF THEIR
LIVES IN SPIRITUAL PURSUITS.





Kerala's Kaikottikali is a dance performed during the festival of Onam, in which the dancers move in a circle of flowers, with rhythmic hand movements symbolising the emergence of shoots and leaves. Handclaps accompany the graceful foot movements to the beat of popular melodies.

The Koli dance of Maharashtra is the folk dance of coastal fisher-folk and tells the story of their trials and tribulations, the swaying back and forth of the waves, and the brooding wait for the catch to be brought home. In two parallel rows they dance their laborious lives in mime; the arduous rowing against the tide, the waves breaking on the shore, the culminating joyousness of a good catch, as the beat quickens and the dancers break apart to fall, exhausted but happy, to the ground.

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