

Virgin  
COMICS  
ISSUE 1 OF 5

THE  
**Sardhu**  
THE SILENT ONES



MOHAPATRA / MANIKANDAN

Script

**SAURAV MOHAPATRA**

Art

**R. MANIKANDAN**

Color

**S. M. BHASKAR**

Letters

**RAVIKIRAN B.S.**

Cover Art

**BRIAN STELFREEZE**

Project Manager

**S.P. KARTHIKEYAN**

Assistant Editor

**MAHESH KAMATH**

Editor

**RON MARZ**

**VIRGIN COMICS**

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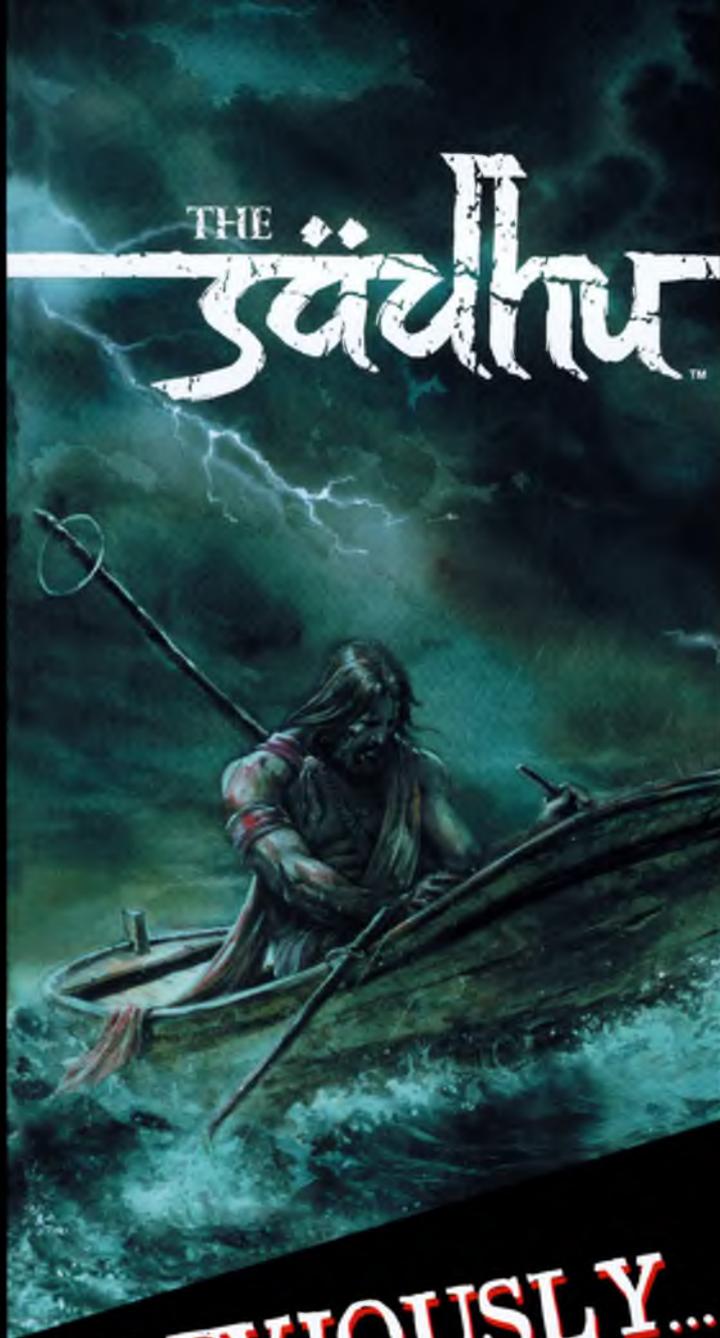
Head of Operations  
ALAGAPPAN KANNAN

Director of Development  
MACKENZIE CADENHEAD

Chief Visionaries  
DEEPAK CHOPRA, SHEKHAR KAPUR,  
SIR RICHARD BRANSON

Special Thanks to

Frances Farrow, Dan Porter,  
Christopher Linen, Peter Feldman,  
Raju Puthukarai and Mallika Chopra



**PREVIOUSLY...**

James Jensen was a soldier in the British Army occupying 18th-century India. But his posting turned into a nightmare when his wife and son were murdered before his eyes by his commanding officer, Timothy Townsend. Pursued by the Army as a deserter, Jensen found refuge with a group of Indian rebels led by Dadathakur, who introduced James to the ways of the Sadhu. The man who was a soldier became a mystic spiritual warrior.

Jensen's desire for vengeance prompted him to pursue Townsend to London, where he discovered that his enemy had acquired the evil powers of a Dark Sadhu. Jensen finally slew his family's murderer in a mystical battle, but his triumph was soured by Townsend's dying declaration that Jensen's son, Jack, was actually still alive. However, Townsend took the secret of Jack's whereabouts to his grave. Now the Sadhu returns to India, and searches for his son.

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REALITY IS  
AN ILLUSION.

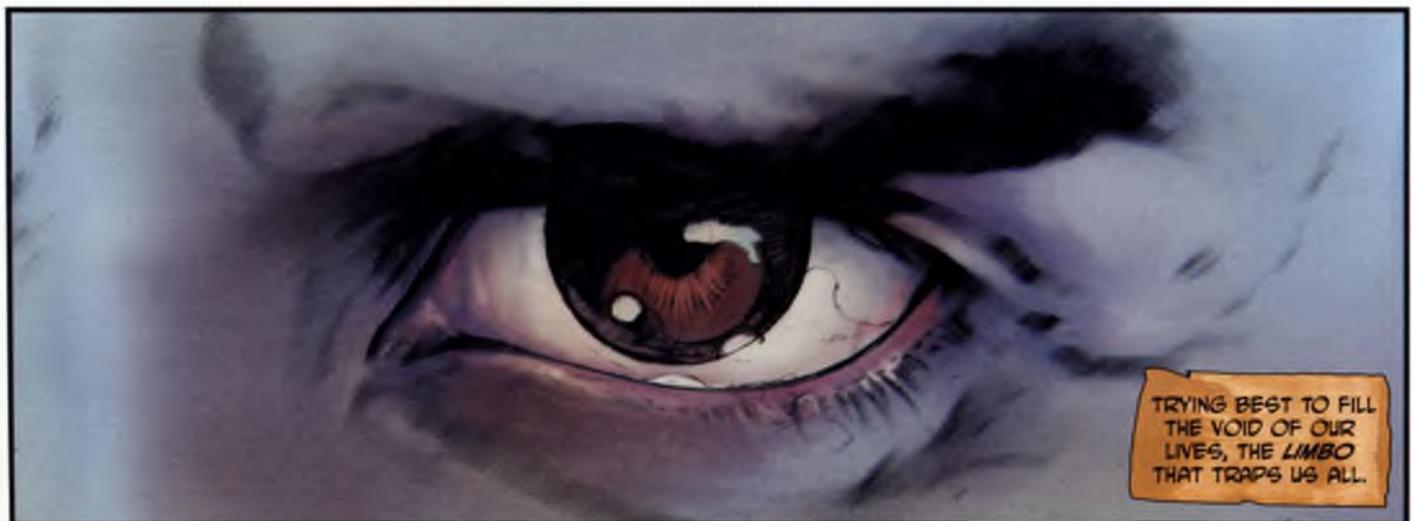


FREE WILL, A  
CHARADE.



WE ARE VICTIMS  
OF CAUSALITY.  
SLAVES TO  
KARMA.

ALL ALONE,  
TRUDGING THE  
PATH THAT DESTINY  
CHARTED FOR US.



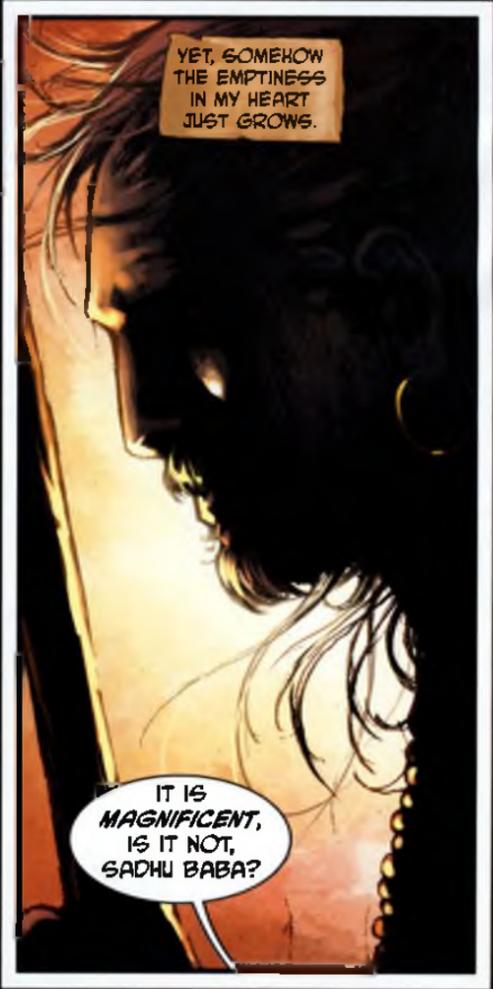
TRYING BEST TO FILL  
THE VOID OF OUR  
LIVES, THE *LIMBO*  
THAT TRAPS US ALL.

WE TRY TO ESCAPE  
BY SURROUNDING  
OURSELVES  
WITH OTHERS.

BY DROWNING  
OURSELVES IN A  
SEA OF HUMANITY.

TODAY, I STAND  
BEFORE THE TEEMING  
MASS OF HUMANITY  
THAT IS THE  
KUMBH MELA.

THE GREATEST  
GATHERING OF  
SADHUS EVER  
KNOWN.



YET, SOMEHOW  
THE EMPTINESS  
IN MY HEART  
JUST GROWS.

IT IS  
MAGNIFICENT,  
IS IT NOT,  
SADHU BABA?



WE HAVE TRAVELED FAR TO SEE THIS.

THIS SIGHT ALONE MAKES THE LONG, LONELY JOURNEY WORTHWHILE.

YOUR COMPANY MADE THE JOURNEY BEARABLE, CHHOTU.



PERHAPS EVERY LIFE IS JUST AN ARDUOUS JOURNEY TO A SOLITARY DESTINATION...

EACH PATH IN LIFE IS LONELY, MY FRIEND...



... BUT ONE NEED NOT WALK IT ALONE.



MY MENTOR,  
DADA THAKUR,  
ONCE LIKENED THE  
KUMBH MELA TO  
AN OCEAN.

SEEING IT FIRST  
HAND, I MUST  
AGREE WITH HIS  
ANALYSIS.



IT SEEMS LIKE  
THE SERENE  
SEA...



... A GREAT  
MARINE HEART THAT  
EMBRACES ALL AND  
SHUNGS NONE.

A THOUSAND  
PARDONS, O  
HOLY ONE.

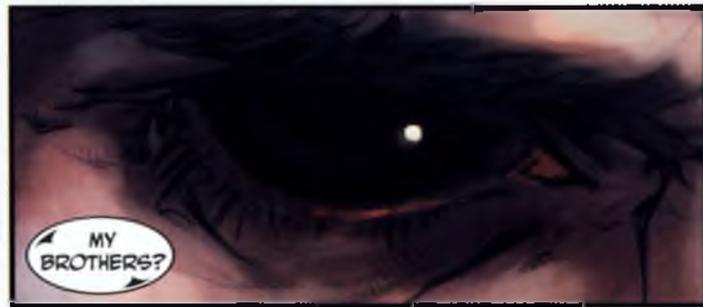


AND YET, I DO  
FEEL A SENSE OF  
FOREBODING.



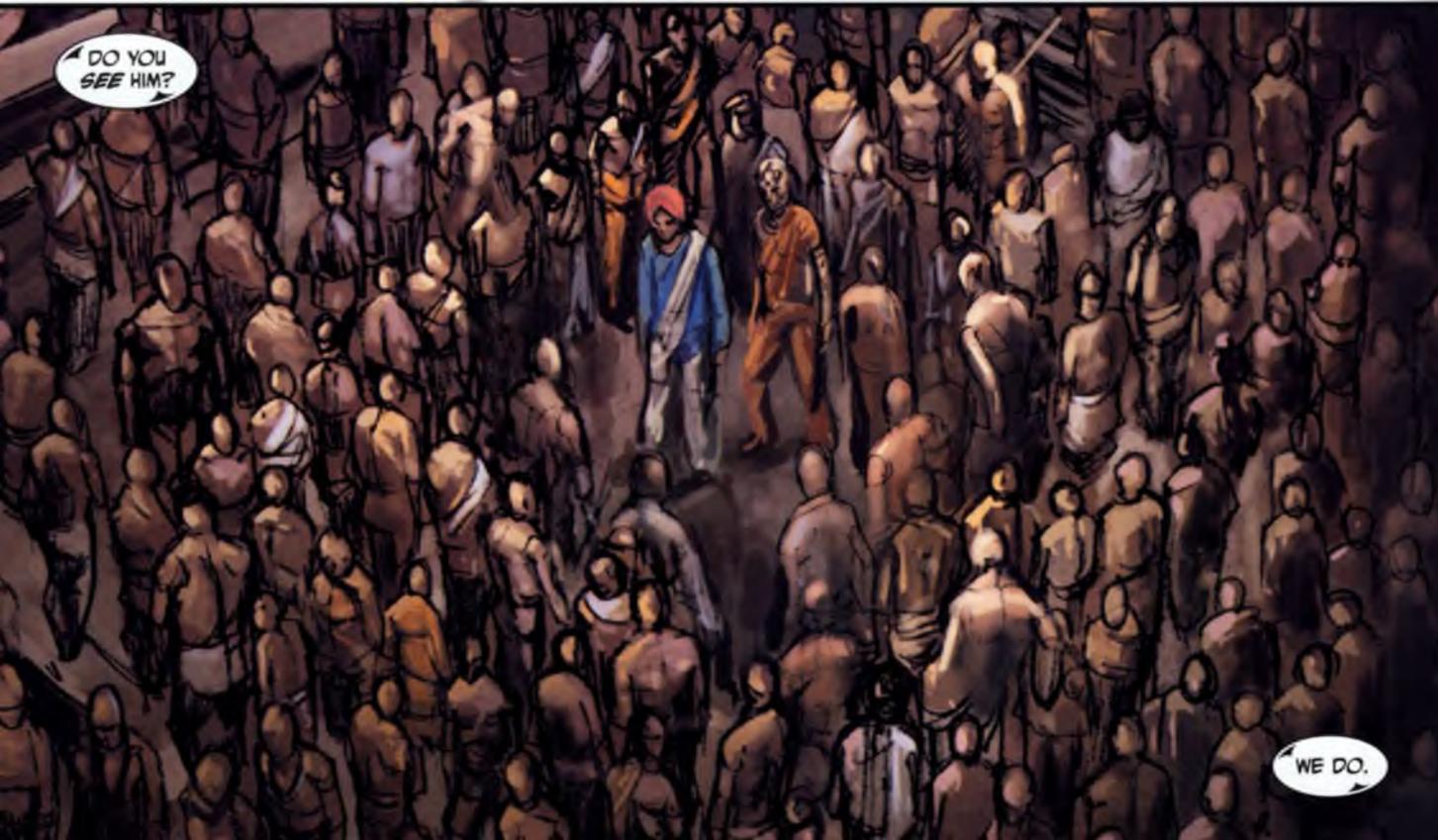
A PREMONITION  
OF DOOM.

AS IF I SENSE  
A PREDATOR  
SWIMMING IN  
THESE WATERS.



MY  
BROTHERS?

DO YOU  
SEE HIM?



WE DO.



YOU HAVE CHOSEN WELL.



HMMMFF?



THIS IS THE ONE WE NEED.



HE CAME INTO CONTACT WITH THE SADHU NOT LONG AGO.



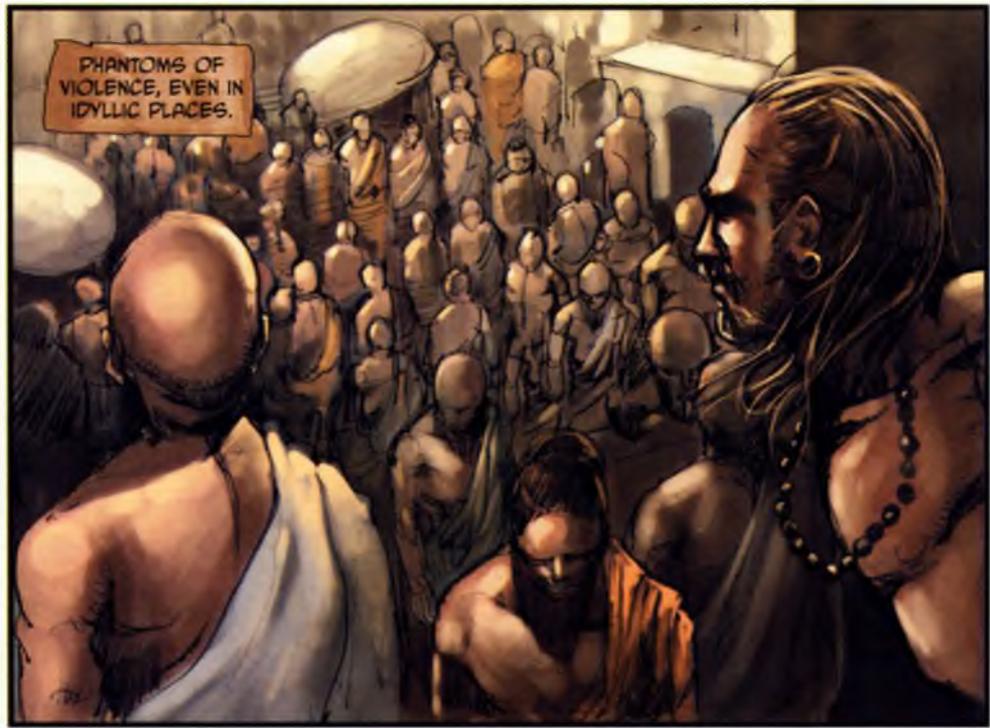
HE IS NEAR, BROTHERS.



IT COULD BE THAT I  
HAVE EMBRACED  
VENGEANCE SO EAGERLY,  
TEETERING ON THE  
CUSP OF SALVATION...



...THAT ALL I SEE  
IS MALEVOLENCE.



PHANTOMS OF  
VIOLENCE, EVEN IN  
IDYLIC PLACES.



OR PERHAPS I AM  
SIMPLY MORE IN  
TUNE WITH THE  
DARKNESS.



IT RESONATES IN  
MY TORTURED  
SOUL, DRAWING ME  
LIKE A SIREN CALL.



CHHOTU!  
MY GOD, WHAT HAPPENED?



DID ANYONE SEE WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?



CHHOTU, PLEASE...

... CAN YOU HEAR ME?



I HAVE HIM, BROTHERS...



...THE ONE THAT WE SEEK.



THIS MAN WALKED THE LONG ROAD TO KUMBH MELA WITH ME.



AND NOW THIS STRANGE MALADY HAS BEFALLEN HIM.



WAKE UP, CHHOTU...



MY HEART IS GRIPPED BY A BLACKNESS THAT I ASSUME TO BE SUDDEN GRIEF.

BUT IT'S NOT  
MERE GRIEF THAT  
ASSAILS ME.



A CACOPHONY OF  
WARNINGS RINGS  
IN MY MIND.

THIS IS THE  
DARKNESS I  
GENGED.



SOMETHING  
PRIMAL...



...AND  
ANCIENT...



...AND  
UNSPEAKABLY  
INHUMAN.



THERE IS NO  
DISCUSSION. NO  
THREATS OR TAUNTS  
OR CHALLENGES.

NONE ARE  
NEEDED.





I WAS ONCE A SOLDIER.



BOUND BY MY LIMITED PERCEPTION OF REALITY.



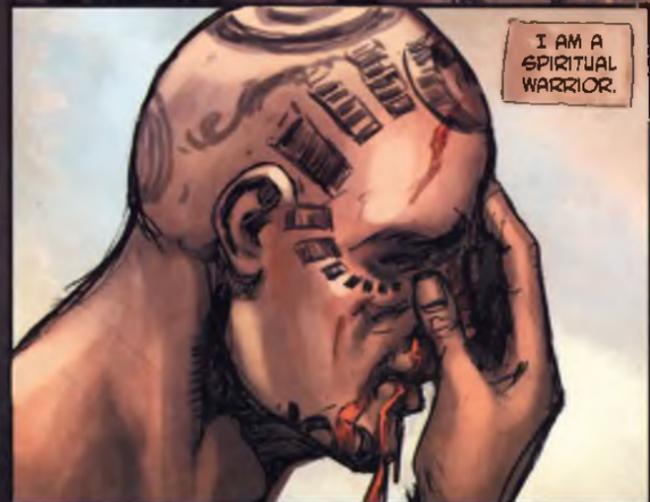
A SLAVE TO MY SENSES.



BUT NOW I AM MUCH MORE.



NOW I AM A SADHU.



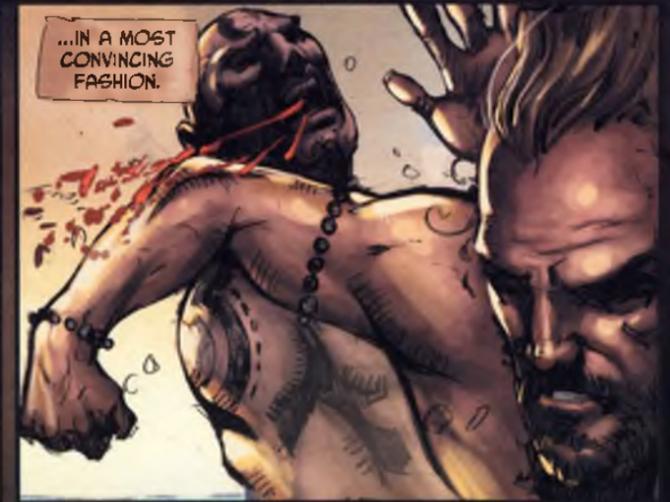
I AM A SPIRITUAL WARRIOR.



A PILGRIM ON THE PATH TO SALVATION.



MY OPPONENTS WILL LEARN THIS...



...IN A MOST CONVINCING FASHION.

THEIR FIRST  
WAVE FALLS  
TO ME...

... BUT THEIR  
NUMBERS ARE  
SEEMINGLY  
ENDLESS.

AND THEY ARE  
NOT WITHOUT  
THEIR OWN  
ABILITIES.



WHO ARE THEY,  
THESE SILENT  
ONES?



A SADHU'S POWER  
IS DRAWN FROM THE  
IRIDESCENT HEART  
OF THE COSMOS.

FROM A  
RESONANCE WITH  
THE CADENCE OF  
REALITY.

I CAN CALL  
IT TO MYSELF...

...LET IT FLOW  
THROUGH ME...



...AND  
RELEASE IT.



I REJOICE JUST  
AS I BATTLED...  
IN SILENCE.

MY MIND AND  
BODY ARE SPENT.  
BOTH MUST BE  
RECHARGED.



YET, AS MY MIND REORIENTS ITSELF...



...I REALIZE I AM NOT ALONE.



AGAIN, I SENSE THAT CRUSHING DARKNESS.



ONLY NOW THERE IS MORE OF IT. I STAND AT THE EDGE OF AN ENDLESS VOID.



I HAVE PLAYED INTO THE HANDS OF A CUNNING ENEMY.

GAAAGH!

MY GAMBIT WAS WASTED ON PAWNS...

...WHILE MY TRUE ENEMY MOVED IN FOR THE ENDGAME.

AT MY OPPONENT'S MEREST GESTURE... UNBEARABLE PAIN.



COLD EVIL REACHES INTO MY MIND AS EASILY AS I ONCE REACHED INTO A POCKET FOR MY WATCH.



I'M LOSING MY MIND. I'M SEEING THINGS.



IT CAN'T BE. MY SON...



...MY JACK.



NO, THIS IS A TRICK. JACK IS DEAD.



DO YOU KNOW THAT FOR CERTAIN, HOLY MAN?



SEARCH YOUR SOUL.



SEARCH YOUR MIND.



REMEMBER, MY SADHU...



...REMEMBER.



DO YOU RECALL THE  
LAST WORDS OF THE  
ONE YOU CALL *TOWNSEND*?  
WHAT HE SAID TO YOU...

... JUST BEFORE  
YOU *MURDERED*  
HIM?



HOW...  
CAN YOU  
KNOW... ?

WHO ARE  
YOU?

I AM MANY  
THINGS, BUT MY  
SERVANTS KNOW ME  
AS THEIR *GRAND*  
*MISTRESS*.



*HUGH*  
NOW.



YOU HAVE NO IDEA THE *GRIEF* YOU HAVE CAUSED ME, JAMES JENSEN.



MY MIND... CLOUDS...

AHHNNN...

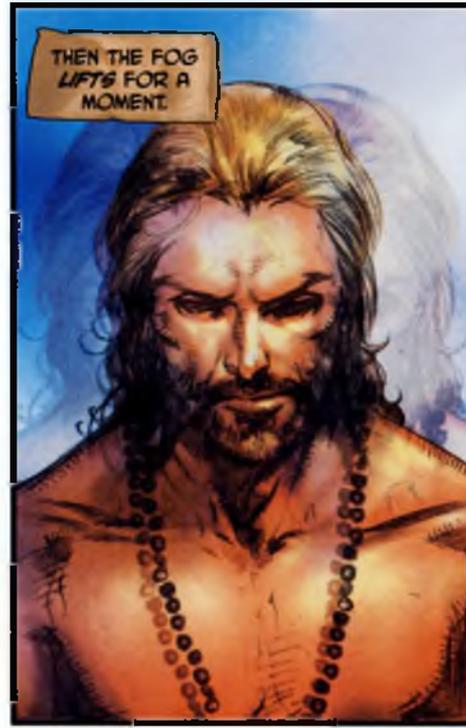


BUT THE FATES ARE KIND. THEY HAVE DELIVERED YOU INTO MY HANDS. YOU SHALL TAKE TOWNSEND'S PLACE BY MY SIDE.



... NUMBNESS DESCENDS...

... LIKE A MISTY BLANKET.



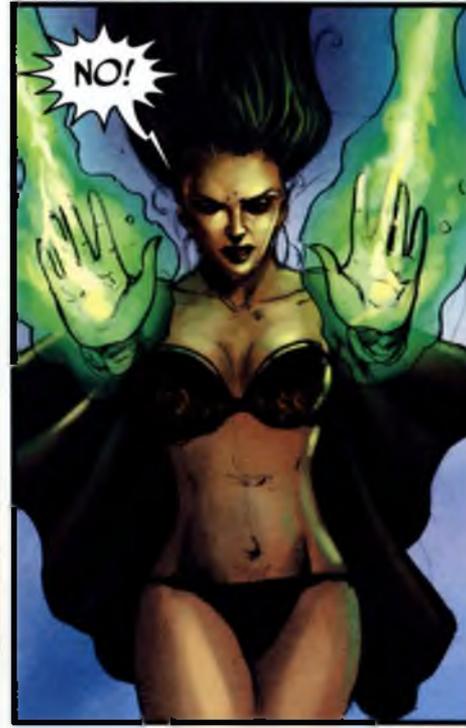
THEN THE FOG LIFTS FOR A MOMENT.



NO.



REALITY BLURS.



NO!



AND EVERYTHING IS SILENT AGAIN.

IT FEELS LIKE  
A DREAM.

I'M FALLING,  
YET I DO NOT  
FEEL THE TUG  
OF GRAVITY.

I AM  
WEIGHTLESS  
AS A FEATHER.

WITH AN EFFORT IN MY  
MIND, I REJECT THIS  
REALITY. I CHOOSE  
NOT TO FALL...

...AND SO  
I DO NOT

WELCOME!  
WELCOME O SADHU!  
I AM TRISHANKU...

...AND YOU  
ARE IN LIMBO!

TO BE CONTINUED

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ISSUE 1 OF 2

THE  
**Sädhru**  
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MOHAPATRA / MANIKANDAN