

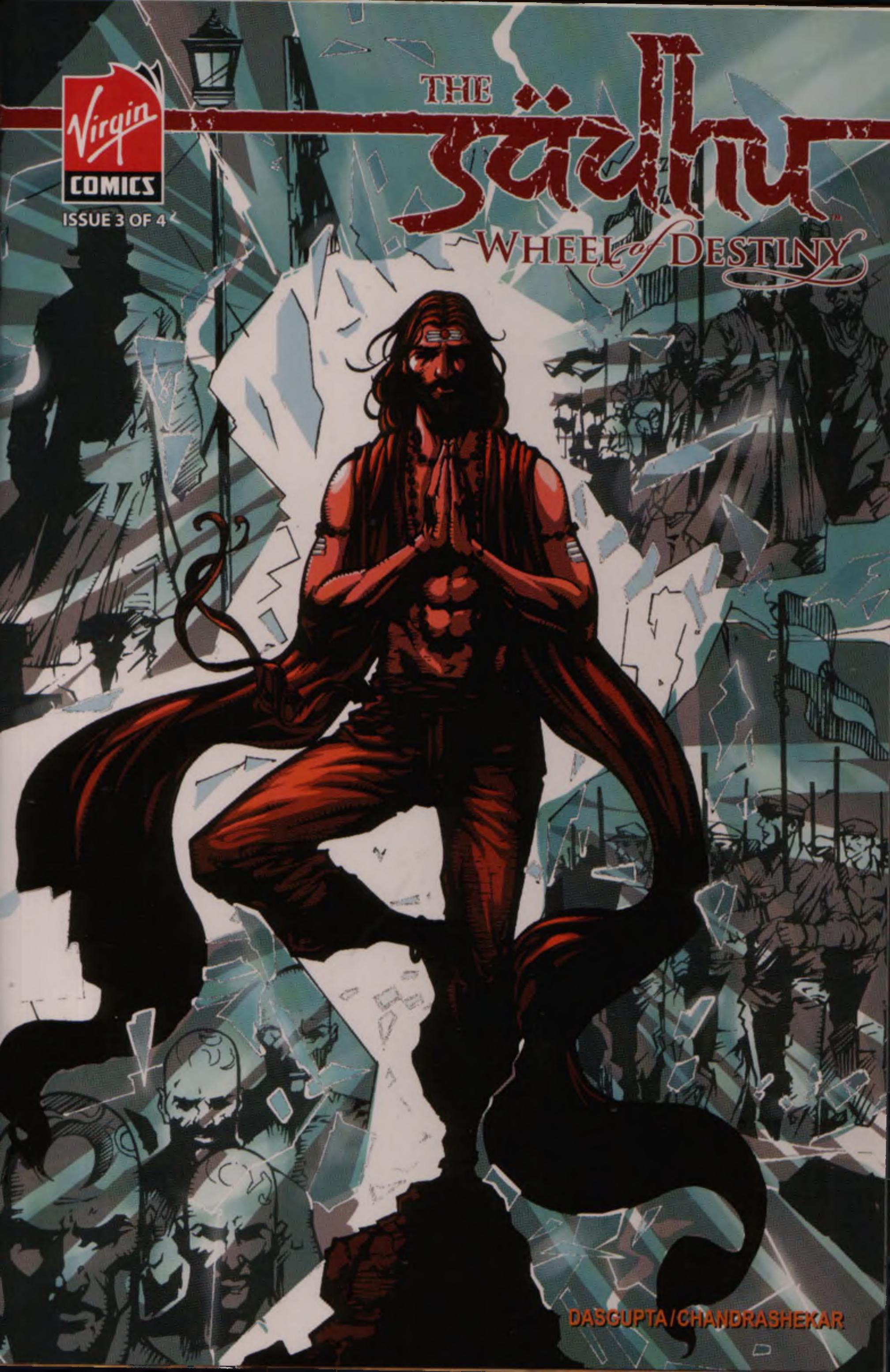


ISSUE 3 OF 4

THE

संज्ञा

WHEEL OF DESTINY



DASGUPTA/CHANDRASHEKAR

THE *Sadhu* WHEEL OF DESTINY

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PETER FELDMAN, RAJU PUTHUKARAI, MALLIKA CHOPRA, JONATHAN PEACHEY.

PREVIOUSLY

James Jensen came to 19th-Century India as a soldier in Her Majesty's Army. Marked as a traitor by his cruel commanding officer for defending the indigenous population, Jensen's family was massacred before his eyes. Hunted as a deserter after escaping imprisonment, James found refuge with the enigmatic Dadathakur, who initiated him into the ways of the Sadhu, mystic warriors of legend. In the years since, Jensen has continued his spiritual quest, wandering India and the world.

Now in the 1930s, India is in turmoil under British rule, as underground revolutionaries fight for freedom. On one end is the fierce Rajat Singh who will stop at nothing to end the British reign and on the other... Mahatma Gandhi. The Sadhu finds Gandhi in the midst of his legendary "salt boycott" attacked by British soldiers intent on destroying his movement for Indians' rights. Jensen defends Gandhi with his fists, but is stopped by the Mahatma, who tells him that violence is not his way. Gandhi invites James back to his ashram, where he meets Meera, a former British native who has joined the cause, and who strangely reminds him of Tess, his lost love.

But the ashram's tranquility is interrupted by Inspector Teggart and his goons. Gandhi is arrested and demands no violent action be taken in response, leaving James furious and confused. Disillusioned, James leaves for the woods, where he is found by one of Singh's agents who tells him that it is time for a more radical course against the British—it is time for James to turn the Wheel of Destiny.

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THE RANN OF KUTCH.
FEBRUARY 3RD, 1932.

IT HAS BEEN MORE THAN A WEEK SINCE WE LEFT SABARMATI ASHRAM. HOW MUCH LONGER, JATIN?

IT SHOULD NOT BE FAR OFF. PEOPLE GET LOST IN THE RANN, BUT MASTERJI GAVE ME A MAP. YOU SEEM AGITATED, SADHU. WHAT TROUBLES YOU?

IT'S JUST A FEELING, JATIN. FROM THE MOMENT I LEFT THE CONFINES OF THE ASHRAM, I'VE FELT LIKE I HAVE ABANDONED MY FRIEND GANDHI AND HIS BELIEFS. THAT SOMEHOW I HAVE BETRAYED HIS TRUST.

EVEN I HAVE BETRAYED HIS TRUST. HE TOOK ME IN THE ASHRAM OUT OF GOODWILL, BUT MY MISSION WAS TO PERSUADE YOU TO JOIN US.

AND YOU WERE SUCCESSFUL. I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING FOR THIS COUNTRY--IT HAS MADE ME WHAT I AM TODAY.

IF NOT FOR MYSELF, FOR MEERA.

AND I WELCOME ANY ALLY WHO WILL SHOW ME A WAY TO MAKE THIS POSSIBLE.

HERE WE ARE.

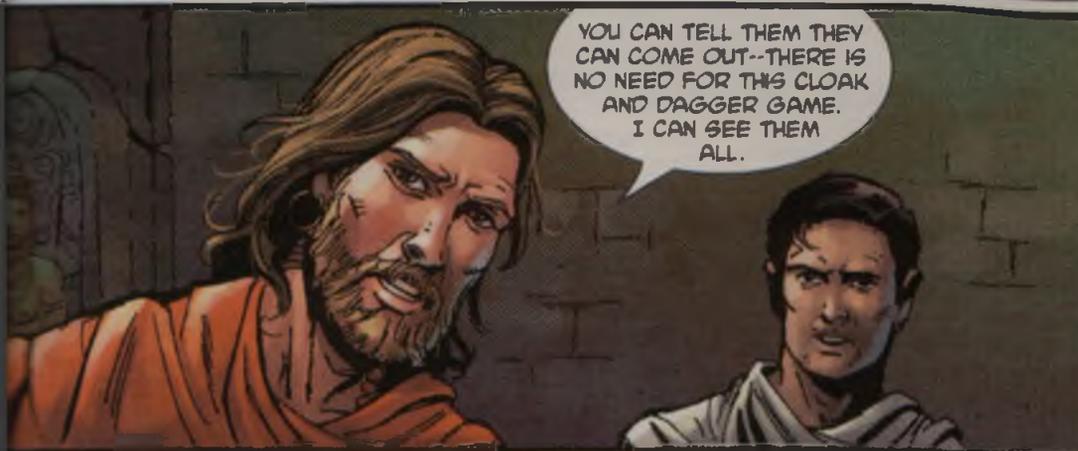
I SENSE THE ENERGY OF THIS PLACE...THIS SITE... IT'S NOTHING LIKE WHAT I HAVE EXPERIENCED SO FAR...

THROUGH MY NERVES AND VEINS I CAN FEEL ITS POWER...WHERE ARE WE, JATIN?

IT HAS MANY NAMES, BUT WITHIN THESE PARTS IT IS CALLED...



...THE
TEMPLE OF
TIME!



YOU CAN TELL THEM THEY CAN COME OUT--THERE IS NO NEED FOR THIS CLOAK AND DAGGER GAME. I CAN SEE THEM ALL.



MASTERJI... YOU HEARD HIM!



SADHU!
YOUR REPUTATION PRECEDES YOU. WELCOME!

RAJAT SINGH!



I HAVE READ ABOUT YOUR EXPLOITS-- ESPECIALLY THE ROBBERY OF CHITTAGONG ARMORY WITH SURYA SEN. HOW MANY YOUTHS DID YOU SACRIFICE IN THAT FOOLISH ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW THE EMPIRE WITH A HANDFUL OF LOOTED WEAPONS?



WHY DID THE EASTER UPRISING IN DUBLIN HAPPEN? WHY DID THE MOB STORM THE BASTILLE?

IT'S FOR FREEDOM MY FRIEND! THE YOUTHS DIED FIGHTING FOR THE RIGHT TO LIVE WITH RESPECT, HOWEVER HOPELESS OUR CHANCES MIGHT HAVE BEEN. I SACRIFICED NO ONE!

BUT PERHAPS WITH YOUR HELP WE CAN ACHIEVE FREEDOM WITHOUT FURTHER BLOOD-LETTING.



UNLIKE YOU, I AM A MAN OF REASON AND SCIENCE. I STUDIED PHYSICS AT CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY.

BUT LIKE A REASONABLE MAN, I UNDERSTAND THE LIMITATIONS OF HOW MUCH WE HAVE EXPLORED. WHERE THE REACH OF SCIENCE ENDS, THE REALM OF MYSTICISM BEGINS. YOU BELONG TO THAT REALM, SADHU.

THERE IS A STRANGE VIBE HERE, RAJAT. THE AIR SEEMS CHARGED WITH PSYCHIC ELECTRICITY...

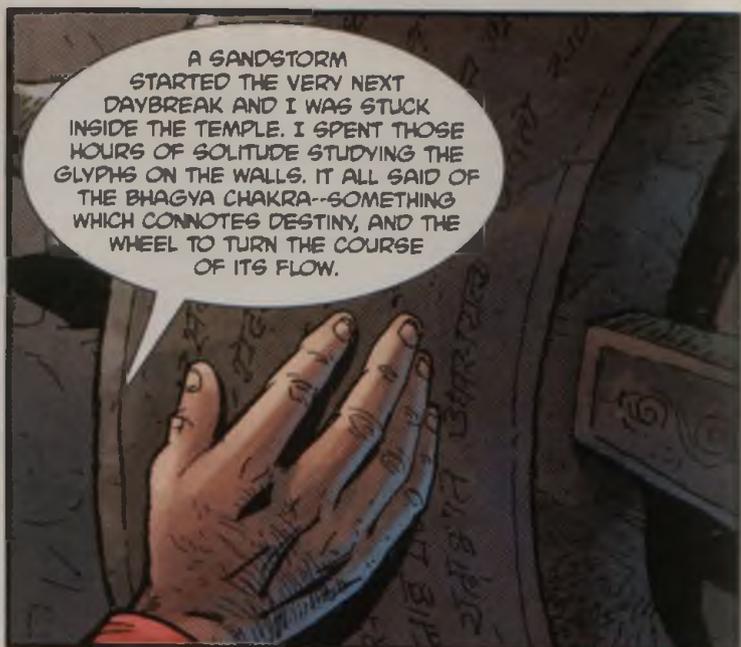


HOW DID YOU FIND THIS PLACE?

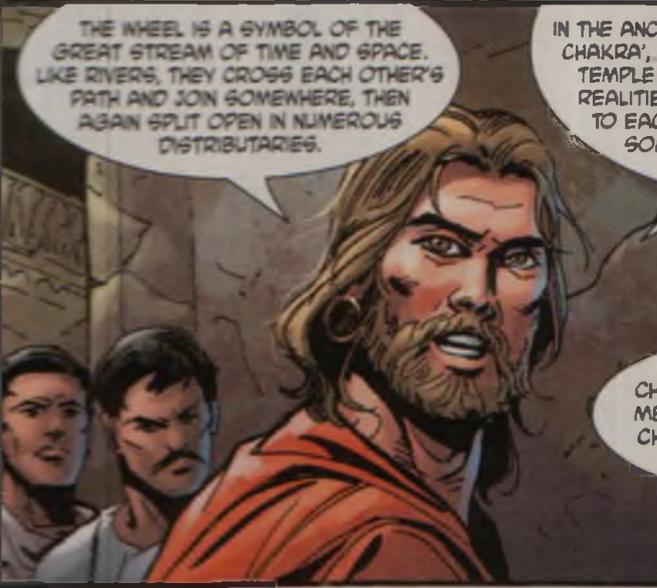


LAST YEAR WHEN TEGGART WAS ON MY HEELS, I FLED LAHORE AND WENT UNDERGROUND HERE IN AHMADABAD. THIS IS GANDHI'S TERRITORY--NO ONE WILL SUSPECT A 'MILITANT' LIKE ME HIDING HERE.

AS I CROSSED THE RANN, I FOUND THIS TEMPLE AND TOOK SHELTER.



A SANDSTORM STARTED THE VERY NEXT DAYBREAK AND I WAS STUCK INSIDE THE TEMPLE. I SPENT THOSE HOURS OF SOLITUDE STUDYING THE GLYPHS ON THE WALLS. IT ALL SAID OF THE BHAGYA CHAKRA--SOMETHING WHICH CONNOTES DESTINY, AND THE WHEEL TO TURN THE COURSE OF ITS FLOW.



THE WHEEL IS A SYMBOL OF THE GREAT STREAM OF TIME AND SPACE. LIKE RIVERS, THEY CROSS EACH OTHER'S PATH AND JOIN SOMEWHERE, THEN AGAIN SPLIT OPEN IN NUMEROUS DISTRIBUTARIES.

IN THE ANCIENT LORE IT IS CALLED 'BHAGYA CHAKRA', OR THE WHEEL OF DESTINY. THIS TEMPLE IS BUILT ON A NEXUS OF SUCH REALITIES, CO-EXISTING BUT UNKNOWN TO EACH OTHER. I NEVER BELIEVED SOMETHING LIKE THIS COULD ACTUALLY EXIST.

YOU SPEAK OF CHANGING THE FUTURE. TELL ME, SADHU...CAN YOU REALLY CHANGE IT BY TURNING THIS WHEEL OF DESTINY?



CAN YOU MAKE INDIA FREE?



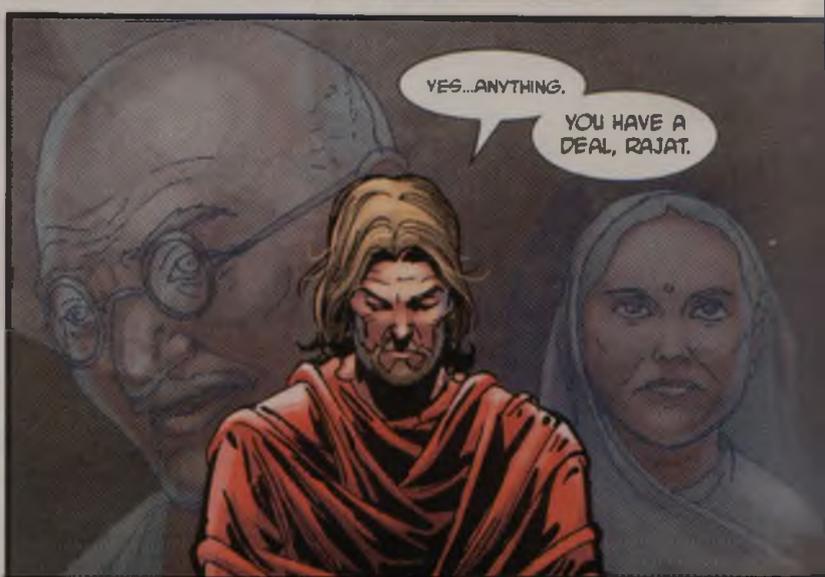
IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE.

TAMPERING WITH THE SPACE-TIME MATRIX CAN BE COMPLICATED. I NEED TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE WHEEL.

BUT I AM WILLING TO TRY...



YOU ARE A MAN OF STRONG RESOLVE, LIKE ME. WE SHOULD DO ANYTHING... ANYTHING FOR THE FREEDOM OF OUR NATION.



YES...ANYTHING.

YOU HAVE A DEAL, RAJAT.





THE WHEEL
OF DESTINY!



SADHU!

I KNOW THAT VOICE.



INDEED YOU KNOW MY VOICE... HARDLY SEVENTY YEARS HAS PASSED SINCE OUR LAST MEETING.



TRISHANKU!

MY, HOW YOU'VE CLEANED UP!

THE PERKS OF LEADING AN EARTHLY EXISTENCE.



AFTER WE PARTED WAYS, I SETTLED IN BENARAS, AND NOW I'M QUITE FAMOUS AMONG THE LOCALS AS SHANKU BABA...THE PALMIST.

AFTER CENTURIES IN LIMBO I FIND HUMAN COMPANY QUITE ENJOYABLE. BUT STILL I SOMETIMES STROLL THE GREAT BLANK NOTHINGNESS.



I AM HERE ON A TASK, TRISHANKU. CAN YOU HELP ME?



YOUR PRESENCE HERE TELLS ME YOU ARE ABOUT TO DO SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY, BUT AREN'T SURE ABOUT IT. I CAN FEEL HESITATION IN YOUR HEART.

YOU ARE ABOUT TO TURN THE WHEEL OF DESTINY, AREN'T YOU?

YOU...YOU ARE RIGHT.



IF YOU TURN THE WHEEL, YOU WILL CHANGE THE ENTIRE COURSE OF HISTORY--PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE WILL BECOME COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT YOU PERCEIVE NOW.

YOU MIGHT EVEN CEASE TO EXIST, OR EXIST IN SOME OTHER ALTERNATE WAY--NOT AS THE MAN YOU ARE NOW. THE TURNING OF THE WHEEL WILL HAVE SEVERE REPERCUSSIONS ON THE TIME-SPACE FABRIC. EVEN YOUR FORMER INCARNATION AND MY GREAT GURU JENSEN NEVER TRIED THAT.

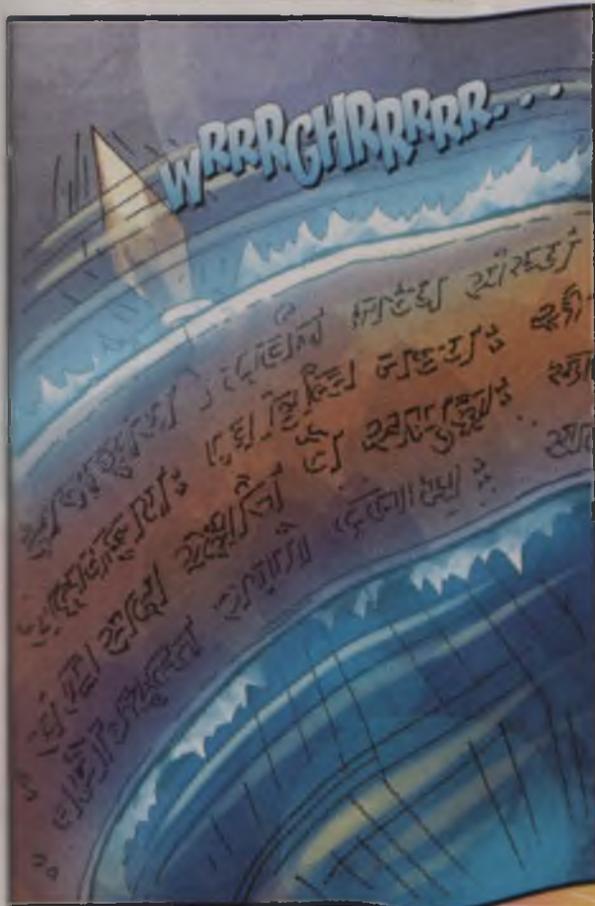
I CAN RISK THAT...



WELL I AM NOT GURU JENSEN. I AM THE SADHU, AND I HAVE PROMISED SOMEONE THAT HER DREAMS WILL BE FULFILLED. INDIA WILL BE A FREE NATION.



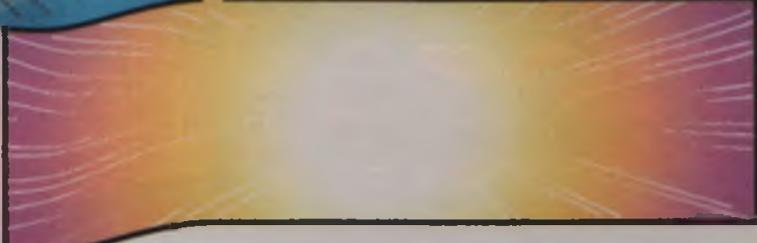
I MUST KEEP MY PROMISE...IF NOT IN THIS REALITY THEN I WILL SIEVE THROUGH A HUNDRED ONES. THIS COUNTRY WILL BEAR THE YOKE OF SLAVERY NO MORE.



THEN LET ME BE YOUR ANCHOR, SADHU...LET ME PULL YOU BACK IF YOU CAN BEAR IT NO MORE.

MY CONSCIOUSNESS WILL STAY WITH YOU AND TRAVEL ALONGSIDE.

I WILL NOT STOP YOU, MY FRIEND. AND I THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMPANIONSHIP.



YOU CANNOT EXIST IN THE PARALLEL WORLDS IN FLESH AND BLOOD. YOU ARE NOTHING BUT A WRAITH HERE, A MERE IDEA. ROAM FREELY, MY FRIEND, AND SEE IF THIS REALITY FITS YOUR DESIRES.

WH-WHAT HAPPENED!?

WHERE AM I?

YOU ARE IN CALCUTTA, THE BELVEDERE ESTATE, HOME TO THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF INDIA.

JAMES!

IT'S WAY PAST ELEVEN...JACK SHOULD BE TAKING HIS PIANO LESSONS NOW, NOT PLAYING CRICKET!

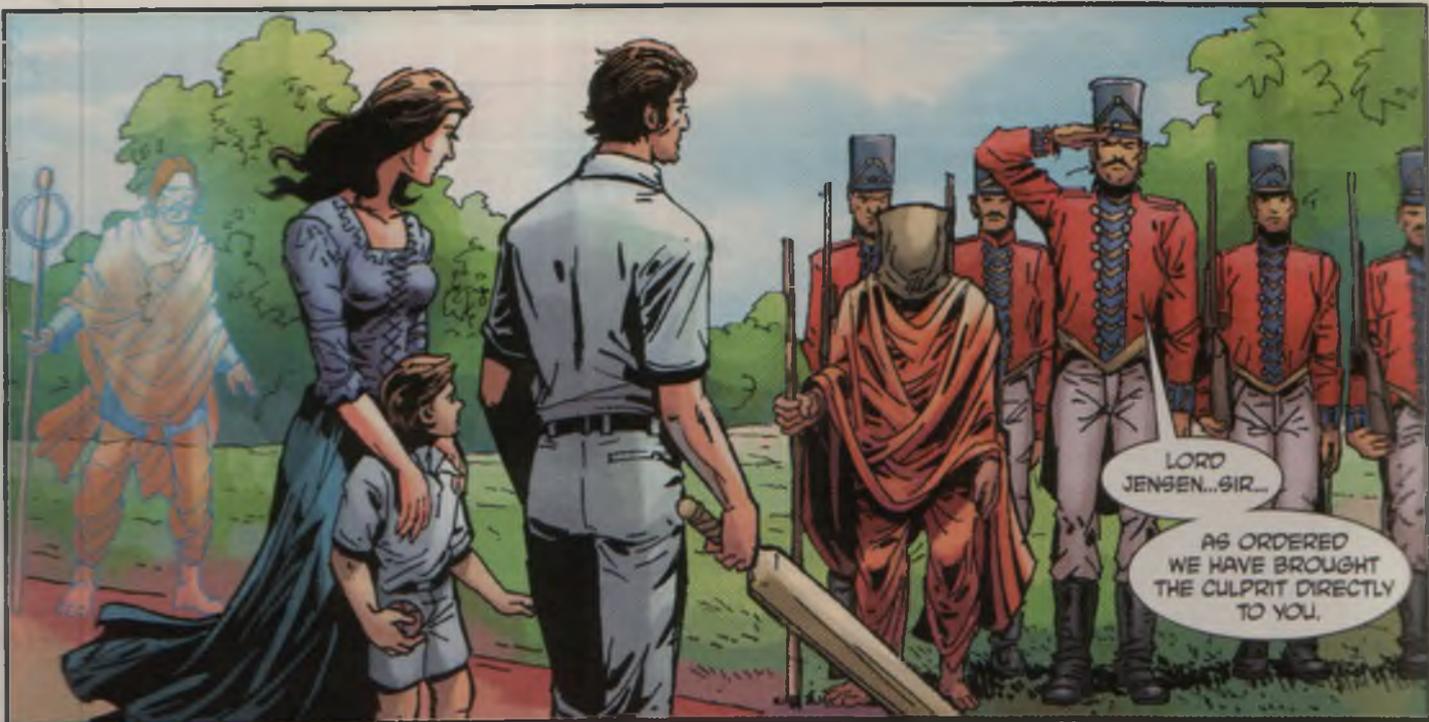
NOW COME ON, TESS, PIANO LESSONS ARE FOR GIRLS. MY SON NEEDS TO GROW UP TO BE A REAL MAN.

NEXT YEAR I WILL BE SENDING HIM TO FORT WILLIAM FOR HIS EDUCATION. HE WILL GROW UP TO BE A FINE OFFICER AND GENTLEMAN.

ARMY MAN...ARMY MAN...LIKE PAPA!

I KNOW... SO LET ME CODDLE HIM AS LONG AS HE IS WITH US.

HA HA HA...YOU'LL SPOIL THE BOY!



LORD
JENSEN...SIR...

AS ORDERED
WE HAVE BROUGHT
THE CULPRIT DIRECTLY
TO YOU.



PLEASE GO
INSIDE, DARLING, I NEED
TO DEAL WITH THIS.

OH JAMES...
PLEASE...NOT IN
OUR HOME!

TEGG...LEAVE!



WHEN DID
YOU CATCH
HIM?

TWO DAYS
AGO, SIR, IN THE
SUNDARBAN JUNGLES. HE
GAVE US A TOUGH TIME.
THIS MAN TOOK DOWN SIX
OF OUR GOOD OFFICERS
SINGLEHANDEDLY.

HMM...UNMASK
HIM. I WANT TO SEE
FEAR IN HIS EYES.

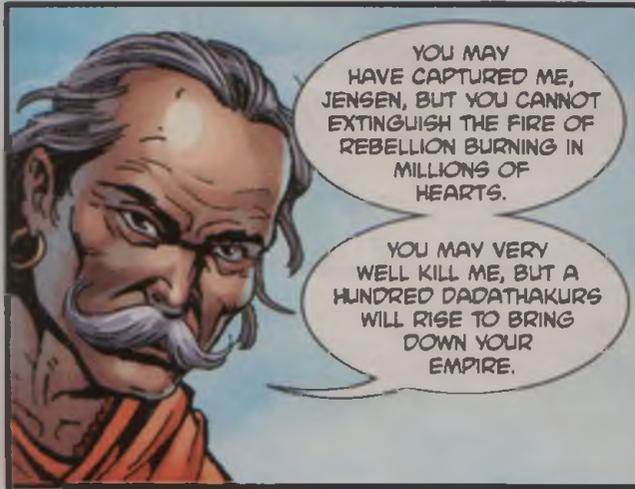
IMMEDIATELY,
SIR.



SO THE
MYSTERY MAN BEHIND
THE LEGENDARY REBEL
ROBBERS HAS FINALLY
BEEN REVEALED...

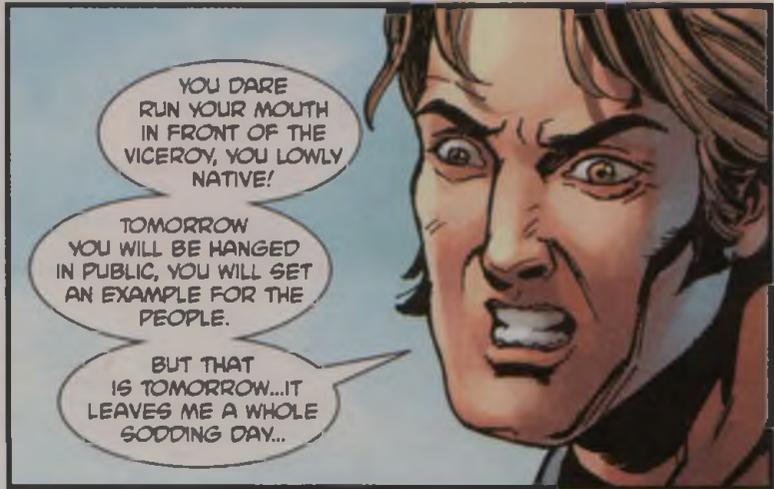


DADATHAKUR OF
THE DAKAITS!



YOU MAY HAVE CAPTURED ME, JENSEN, BUT YOU CANNOT EXTINGUISH THE FIRE OF REBELLION BURNING IN MILLIONS OF HEARTS.

YOU MAY VERY WELL KILL ME, BUT A HUNDRED DADATHAKURS WILL RISE TO BRING DOWN YOUR EMPIRE.



YOU DARE RUN YOUR MOUTH IN FRONT OF THE VICEROY, YOU LOWLY NATIVE!

TOMORROW YOU WILL BE HANGED IN PUBLIC, YOU WILL SET AN EXAMPLE FOR THE PEOPLE.

BUT THAT IS TOMORROW...IT LEAVES ME A WHOLE SODDING DAY...



...TO MAKE YOU REPENT FOR DEFYING GOD AND QUEEN!



DO WHAT YOU WILL, I AM NOT AFRAID.



YOU HASTENED YOUR OWN END, OLD MAN.

NOOOOOO!





I...I KILLED
DADATHAKUR. I
KILLED MY OWN
GURU.

IT'S NOT YOU, SADHU. IT'S JAMES...
OR WHAT YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN IN
A DIFFERENT REALITY. IT'S ALMOST
IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND THE UTOPIA
YOU ARE SEARCHING FOR.



MY GOD...
...WHERE
AM I NOW?

LONDON. LET'S SEE
WHAT THIS REALITY HAS
IN STORE FOR US.



THE
BUCKINGHAM
PALACE...WHAT
HAPPENED
HERE?

YOU HAVE TO FIND
THAT OUT YOURSELF.



FOLLOW
ME, MATES. WE
SHALL MAKE OUR
LAST STAND HERE,
IN MEMORY OF OUR
FALLEN KING.

THEY ARE APPROACHING FROM EAST. IF WE CAN STOP THEM HERE THEN THE IRISH RESISTANCE HAS SOME CHANCE TO STRIKE BACK.



JACK, THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT HAS ANNOUNCED THEY HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS WAR IN EUROPE. THEIR TRADE POLICIES WILL DECIDE THEIR RELATION TO THE INDIAN-CHINESE AGGRESSION.

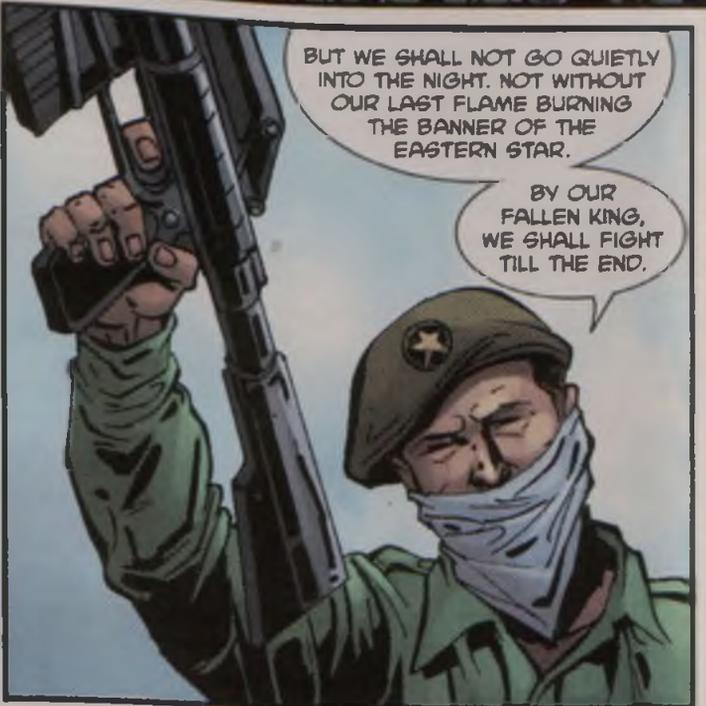
IT WILL BE FOOLISH TO EXPECT THEIR AID.

SO IT SEEMS THE EASTERN STAR WILL NOW RULE HALF THE WORLD.



BUT WE SHALL NOT GO QUIETLY INTO THE NIGHT. NOT WITHOUT OUR LAST FLAME BURNING THE BANNER OF THE EASTERN STAR.

BY OUR FALLEN KING, WE SHALL FIGHT TILL THE END.



GOD BLESS THE KING!



OH MY GOD!

WHOOOP

WHOOOP

WHOOOP

WHOOOP



IN THE NAMES
OF PRESIDENT GANDHI
AND CHAIRMAN MAO, LAY
DOWN YOUR WEAPONS!
YOU SHALL BE UNHARMED
AND ESCORTED TO THE
PRISONER CAMPS.





YOUR PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN CAN KISS MY ARSE!

BUFFF!

BUFFF!

BUFFF!



WHUDDO

WHUDDO

WHUDDO

ELIMINATE THEM WITH EXTREME PREJUDICE...DON'T TAKE ANY PRISONERS.



WHUDDO

WHUDDO

WHUDDO



BUDDO

AHHH!!!

BUDDO

BUDDO



FORGIVVE MEEE, FATHERR...ENGLAND IS LOSSEST...

JACK! OH GOD...NO, MY SON...!



TRISHANKU...TURN THE WHEEL...TURN THE WHEEL...

TAKE ME AWAY FROM HERE!





AS YOU WISH, MY FRIEND, BUT YOU SEE IT IS FUTILE. THE NATION THAT CRIES OUT FOR FREEDOM IN ONE REALITY BECOMES THE MONSTROUS MACHINE OF OPPRESSION IN THE OTHER. WHICH ONE WILL YOU CHOOSE?

NONE.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

NEW DELHI, INDIA.



...AND HENCE IN PRESENCE OF MY GOOD FRIEND AND FORMER VICEROY, LORD MOUNTBATTEN, I, JAWAHARLAL NEHRU, THE FIRST PRIME MINISTER, DECLARE A FREE NATION, AN INDEPENDENT INDIA.

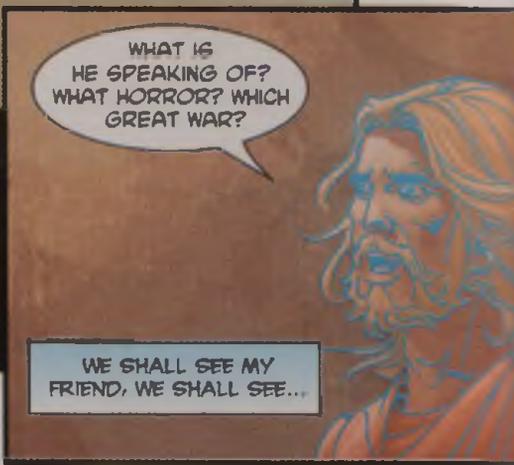
I HOPE OUR NON-VIOLENT STRUGGLE LED BY THE FATHER OF OUR NATION, MAHATMA GANDHI, WILL BE REMEMBERED FOREVER BY THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD. HE DARED TO DREAM, AND HERE WE ARE WITH HIS DREAM FULFILLED.



I TOLD YOU, TRISHANKU, IT IS POSSIBLE...THERE IS A PERFECT WORLD SOMEWHERE. WE HAVE FOUND IT!



BUT SO SHALL THE WORLD REMEMBER THE GREAT HORROR THAT ENGULFED MANKIND. WE SHALL REMEMBER THE COUNTLESS MILLIONS WHO PERISHED IN THE GREAT WAR. THEY WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN.



WHAT IS HE SPEAKING OF? WHAT HORROR? WHICH GREAT WAR?

WE SHALL SEE MY FRIEND, WE SHALL SEE...

WHERE AM I?

WHAT IS HAPPENING HERE?

WARSAW, GERMANY. A FEW YEARS PRIOR TO THE INDEPENDENCE OF INDIA.

GENOCIDE.

IT'S THE SWASTIKA...THE MOST POWERFUL SYMBOL IN THE WORLD. A MYSTIC RUPE OF UNCHARTED POTENTIAL.

YES, AND ITS POTENTIAL HAS BEEN USED IN THE MOST NEFARIOUS MANNER. THIS WORLD HAS FACED THE GREATEST WAR EVER IN ITS HISTORY. EUROPE AND ASIA ARE DEVASTATED. THE BRITISH LEFT INDIA BECAUSE THEY ARE CRIPPLED BY THE WAR AND CANNOT AFFORD A COLONY.

THIS IS THE PRICE THE WORLD HAS TO PAY FOR OUR FREEDOM.

THE WORLD IS A VIOLENT PLACE, SADHU, AND EACH REALITY WILL HAVE ITS OWN SHARE OF HORRORS. REMEMBER THIS.

BRING ME BACK HOME, TRISHANKU...I DON'T WANT ANY OF THIS...RELEASE ME FROM THESE HORRORS...

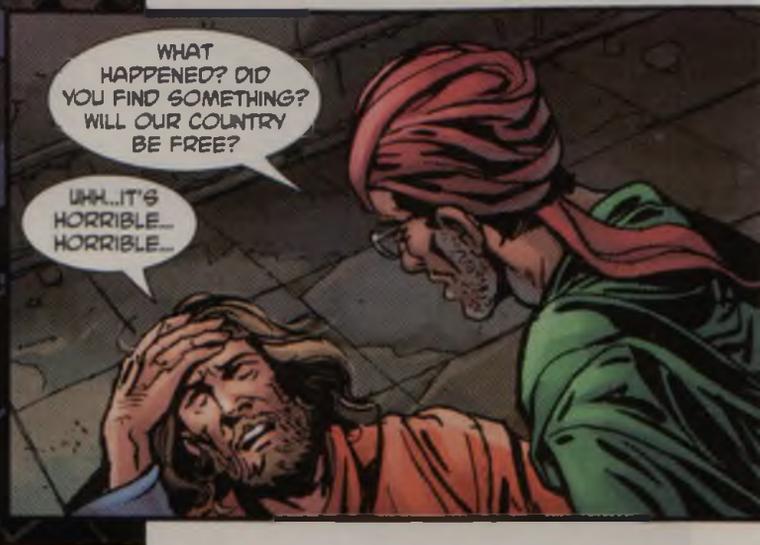


BY THE GODDESS...HE IS BACK!

IT HAS HARDLY BEEN A SECOND!



HANG ON, FRIEND!



WHAT HAPPENED? DID YOU FIND SOMETHING? WILL OUR COUNTRY BE FREE?

UHH...IT'S HORRIBLE... HORRIBLE...



RAJAT, FREEDOM IS RELATIVE. I HAVE SEEN MANY REALITIES AND IN EACH ONE OF THEM I HAVE SEEN HOW VIOLENCE WILL DECIDE OUR FATE... OUR DESTINY.

INDIA CAN SOON BECOME FREE, BUT AT A GREAT PRICE.



REALLY? THEN CHOOSE THAT DESTINY FOR US, SADHU...CHANGE OUR FATE!

I AM WILLING TO PAY ANY PRICE FOR THAT.



NO...IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU. HUMANITY WILL PAY A GREAT PRICE. I HAVE SEEN THE HORRORS...OUR WORLD WILL CHANGE FOREVER.

LISTEN TO ME, HOLY MAN...I DON'T CARE.

I DON'T CARE WHAT THIS WORLD WILL BECOME AS LONG AS WE ARE FREE. YOU MUST DO IT..

YOU MUST TURN THE WHEEL.





NO, I WILL NOT.

YOU ARE NOT MUCH UNLIKE HIM, ARE YOU?

WHO DO YOU SPEAK OF?

THAT COWARD GANDHI WHO SHOWS HIS OTHER CHEEK IF HE IS SLAPPED.

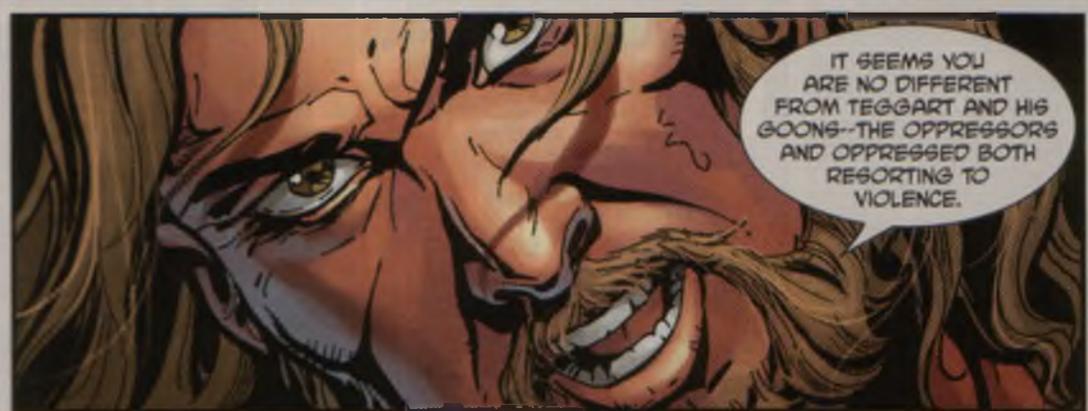


GANDHI IS NO COWARD...HE IS THE MOST COURAGEOUS MAN I HAVE EVER SEEN.



IS THAT SO? THEN I HAVE NO USE FOR SUCH COURAGE.

AND I HAVE NO USE OF YOU AS WELL.



IT SEEMS YOU ARE NO DIFFERENT FROM TEGGART AND HIS GOONS--THE OPPRESSORS AND OPPRESSED BOTH RESORTING TO VIOLENCE.



YOU DARE COMPARE ME WITH THAT MAD SON OF A BITCH?

MASTERJI, WE ARE SUPPOSED TO BE AFRAID OF HIS MARTIAL SKILLS. WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?

HAH, HIS TRYST WITH THE DESTINIES HAS LEFT HIM WEAK... DEPLETED.



YOU...ARE... JUST...LIKE THEM...



SHUT UP! YOU THINK YOUR CRAVEN LOT IS BETTER THAN US?

IT TAKES FIRE TO FIGHT FIRE!



ENOUGH! SINCE YOU ARE OF NO USE TO ME ANY LONGER...

GO AHEAD KILL ME...



NO! I'M
GOING TO KILL
GANDHI!

YOU DON'T
WANT THAT DO
YOU?

TO BE CONTINUED!