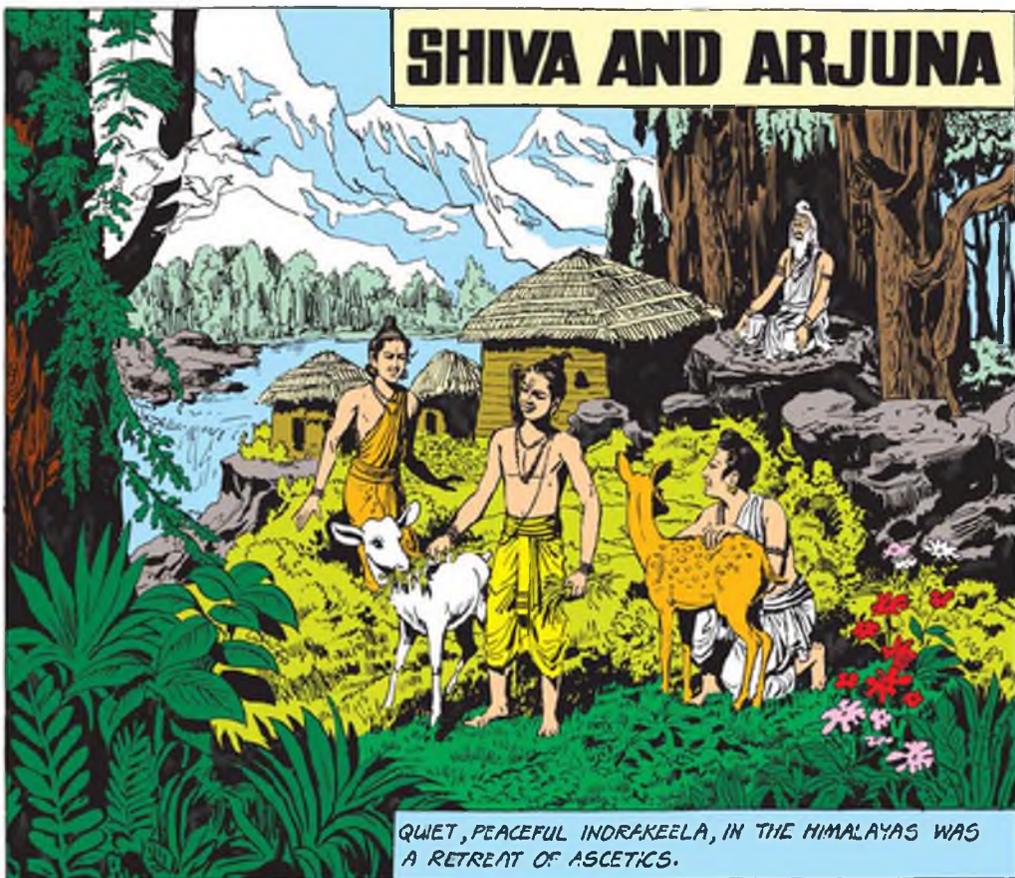


SHIVA AND ARJUNA

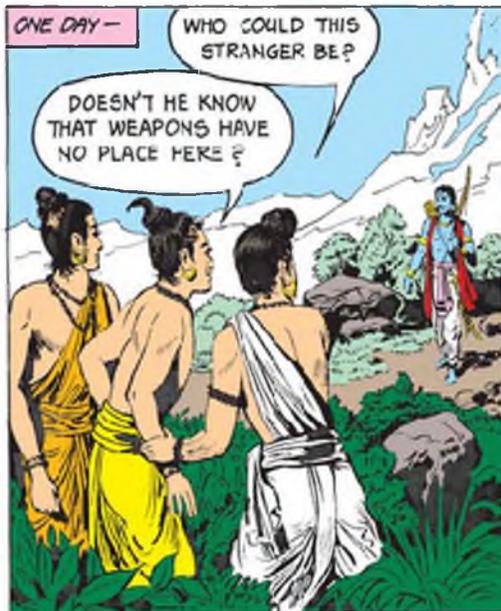


QUIET, PEACEFUL INDRAKEELA, IN THE HIMALAYAS WAS A RETREAT OF ASCETICS.

ONE DAY —

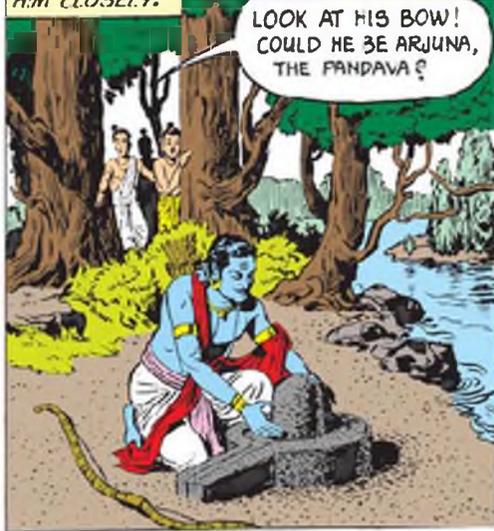
WHO COULD THIS STRANGER BE?

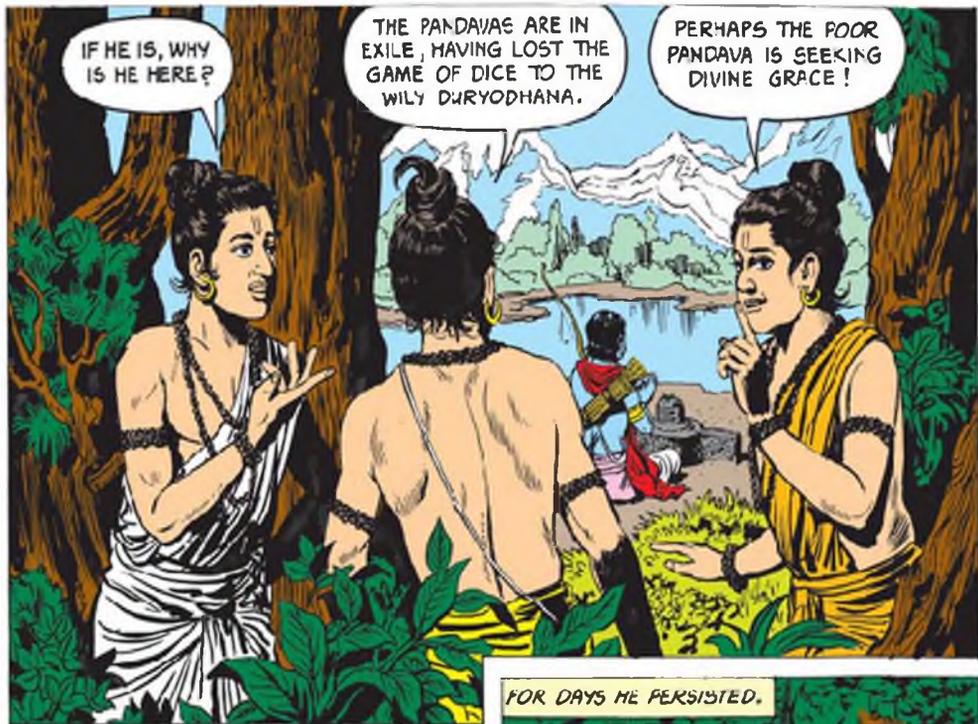
DOESN'T HE KNOW THAT WEAPONS HAVE NO PLACE HERE?



THE YOUNG ASCETICS FOLLOWED THE STRANGER TO THE RIVER BANK AND WATCHED HIM CLOSELY.

LOOK AT HIS BOW!
COULD HE BE ARJUNA,
THE PANDAVA?

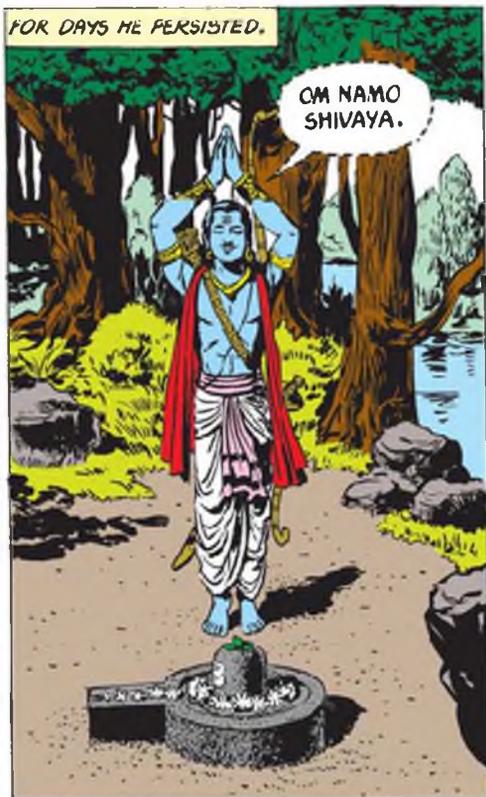




IT WAS INDEED ARJUNA WHO WAS THERE TO PROFITATE LORD SHIVA.



FOR DAYS HE PERSISTED.



FOUR MONTHS LATER —

WE CANNOT GO ANY NEARER.

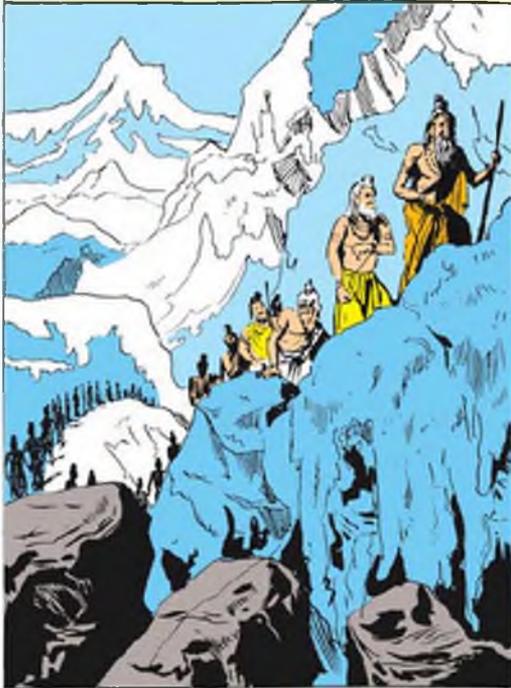
THE HEAT OF THE TERRIBLE PENANCE IS SPREADING FAR AND WIDE.



IT SOON CHOKED THE WHOLE FOREST.



THE SAGES OF INDRAKEELA SET OUT FOR KAILASA, THE ABODE OF LORD SHIVA.



AT KAILASA —

LORD, GRANT ARJUNA HIS WISH, AND RELIEVE US OF THIS SUFFERING.

SO BE IT.



WHAT DOES ARJUNA WANT, MY LORD?

HE WANTS CELESTIAL WEAPONS.



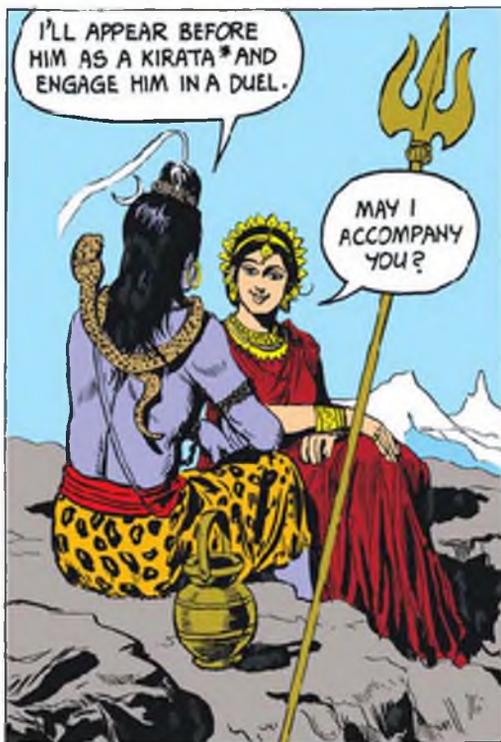
CAN HE WIELD THEM, MY LORD?

I WILL FIND OUT BY TESTING HIM.



I'LL APPEAR BEFORE HIM AS A KIRATA* AND ENGAGE HIM IN A DUEL.

MAY I ACCOMPANY YOU?



YOU MAY, BUT IN DISGUISE.

I SHALL COME AS A KIRATA-WOMAN.



WHEN THE HORDES OF SHIVA HEARD ABOUT IT —

LORD, WE WOULD LIKE TO WITNESS THE GREAT COMBAT. MAY WE ACCOMPANY YOU?

YOU MAY, IN THE GUISE OF KIRATA WOMEN.

SOON —



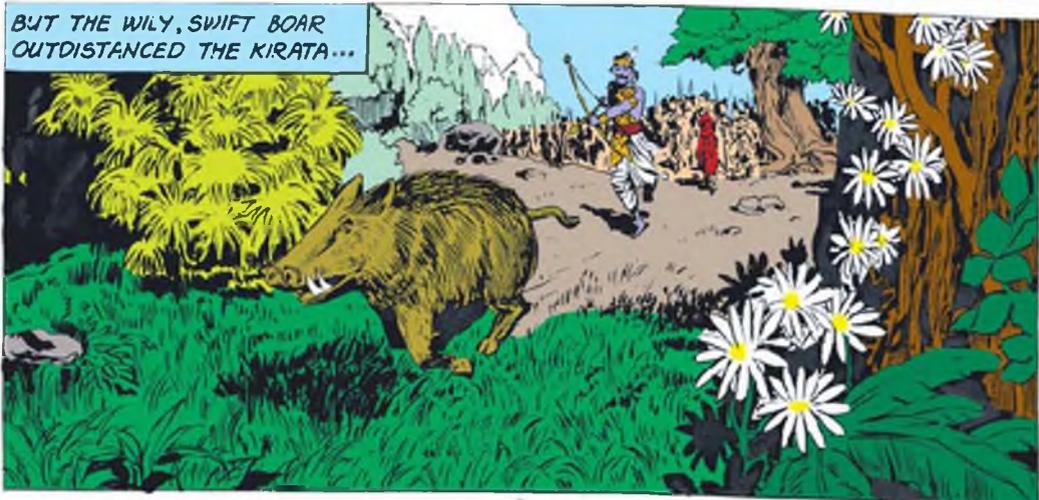
AS THEY APPROACHED INDRAKEELA —

SEE THAT BOAR RUNNING WILD, MY LORD.

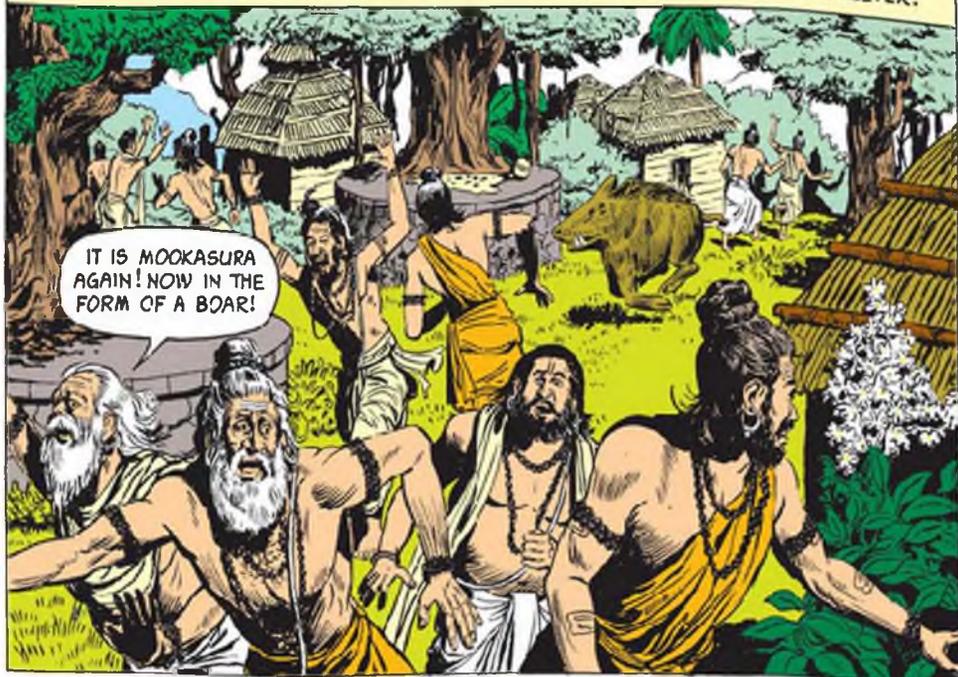
HAH! A FIT TARGET FOR MY ARROW!



BUT THE WILY, SWIFT BOAR OUTDISTANCED THE KIRATA...



...AND CHARGED INTO THE QUIET HERMITAGE, DRIVING THE ASCETICS HELTER-SKELTER.

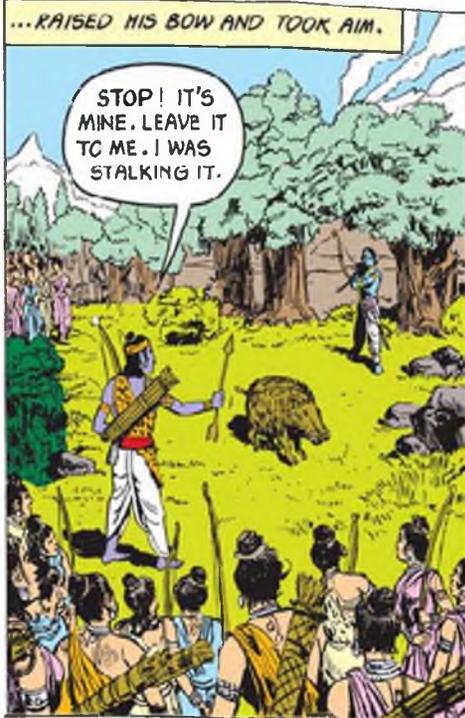


IT IS MOOKASURA AGAIN! NOW IN THE FORM OF A BOAR!

HIS PENANCE DISTURBED BY THE DIN, ARJUNA OPENED HIS EYES...



...RAISED HIS BOW AND TOOK AIM.

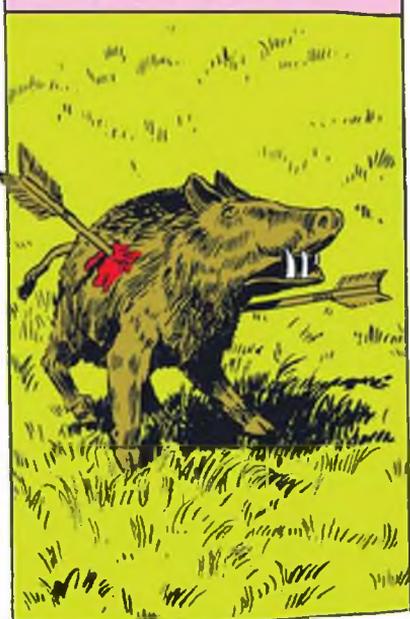


STOP! IT'S MINE. LEAVE IT TO ME. I WAS STALKING IT.

SHOOT IT AND
CLAIM IT.
HUNTERS DO
NOT BEG.



THE BOAR WAS CAUGHT BETWEEN
THE TWO UNERRING ARROWS...



... AND FELL DEAD, REVEALING
THE TRUE FORM OF MOOKA-
SURA.*

VICTORY TO
OUR LORD!

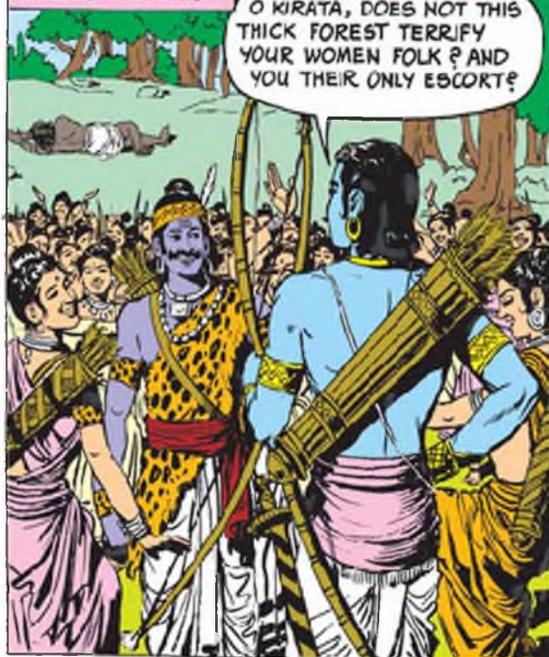
YOUR ARROW
KILLED IT.



* DEMON MOOKA

THE WILD EXULTATION OF THE KIRATA WOMEN
AMUSED ARJUNA.

O KIRATA, DOES NOT THIS
THICK FOREST TERRIFY
YOUR WOMEN FOLK ? AND
YOU THEIR ONLY ESCORT ?



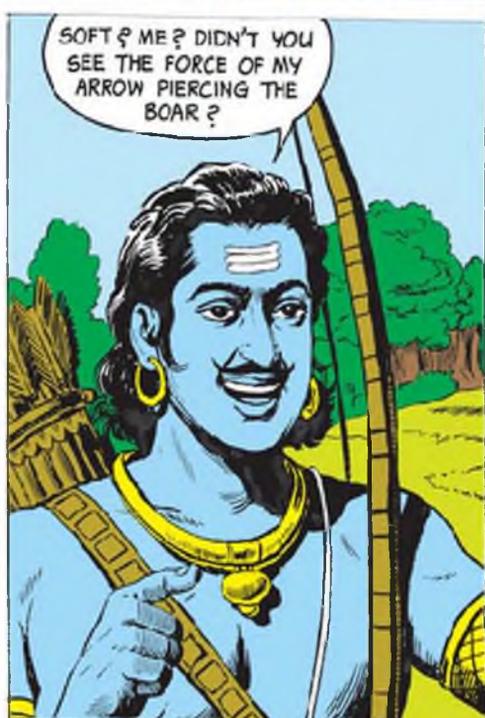
YOUNG MAN,
WE FEAR
NOTHING.



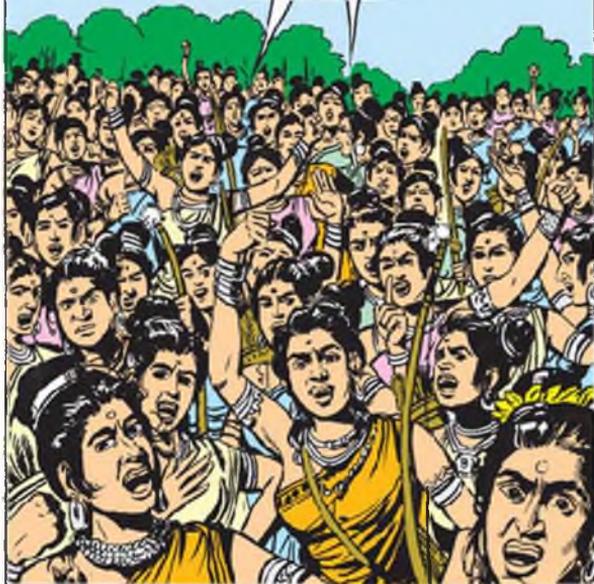
PERHAPS YOU ARE
TERRIFIED. YOU DO
APPEAR SOFT !



SOFT ? ME ? DIDN'T YOU
SEE THE FORCE OF MY
ARROW PIERCING THE
BOAR ?



IT WAS OUR CHIEF'S
ARROW THAT KILLED
THE BOAR.

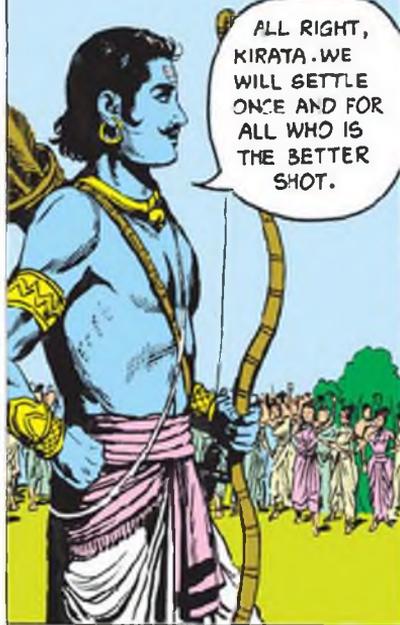


THEY SPEAK THE
TRUTH, YOUNG MAN.
YOUR ARROW HIT
A DEAD BOAR.

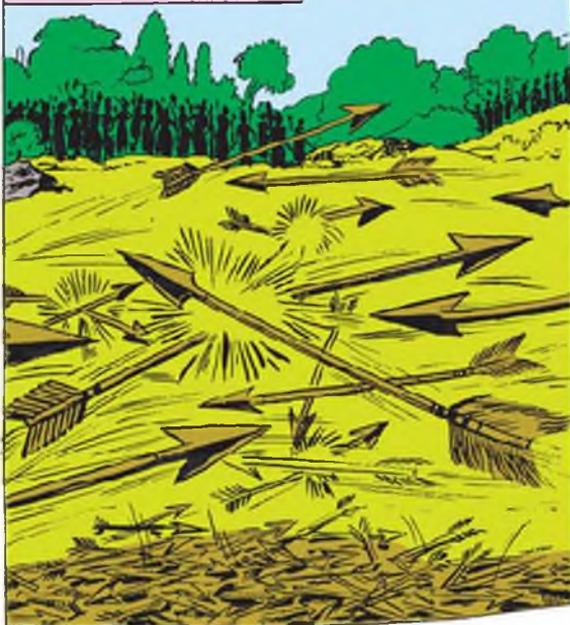


ARJUNA WAS ENRAGED.

ALL RIGHT,
KIRATA. WE
WILL SETTLE
ONCE AND FOR
ALL WHO IS
THE BETTER
SHOT.

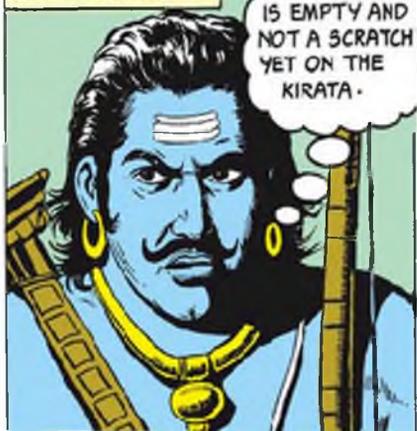


ARROWS WHIZZED PAST AS THE TWO ARCHERS
MATCHED THEIR SKILLS.



AFTER A WHILE —

MY QUIVER IS EMPTY AND NOT A SCRATCH YET ON THE KIRATA.



O MIGHTY ARCHER, SHALL I LEND YOU A FEW ARROWS?



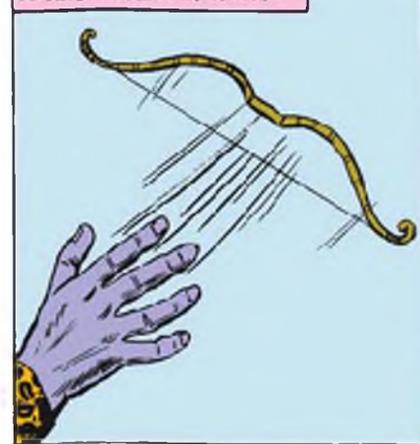
IN A DEFT MOVE, ARJUNA CAUGHT THE KIRATA IN HIS BOWSTRING.



THE NEXT MOMENT, THE KIRATA WRESTED THE BOW FROM ARJUNA...



... AND THREW IT AWAY.



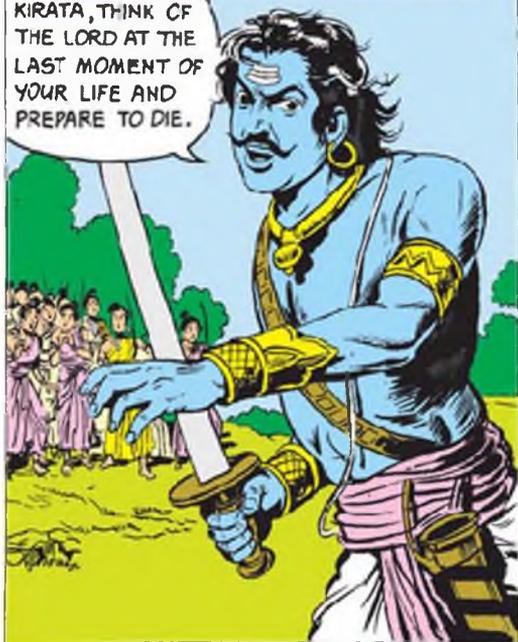
THE KIRATA WOMEN DANCED FOR JOY.

THE ASCETIC IS BEATEN!



UNDAUNTED, ARJUNA WITH HIS SWORD RAISED, RUSHED TOWARDS THE KIRATA.

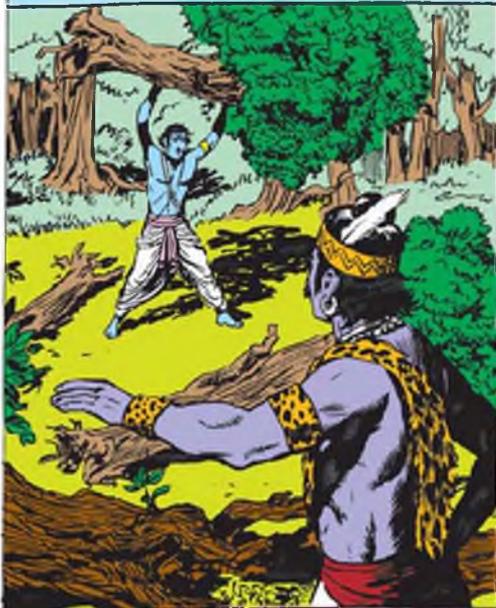
KIRATA, THINK OF THE LORD AT THE LAST MOMENT OF YOUR LIFE AND PREPARE TO DIE.



AS ARJUNA SMOTE THE HEAD OF THE KIRATA WITH HIS HEAVY SWORD, IT BROKE.



SHORN OF HIS ARMS, ARJUNA CONTINUED THE FIGHT WITH UPROOTED TREES.



BUT THE KIRATA REMAINED UNSCATHED.

IN A DESPERATE ATTEMPT, ARJUNA CHARGED AT THE KIRATA WITH BARE HANDS.



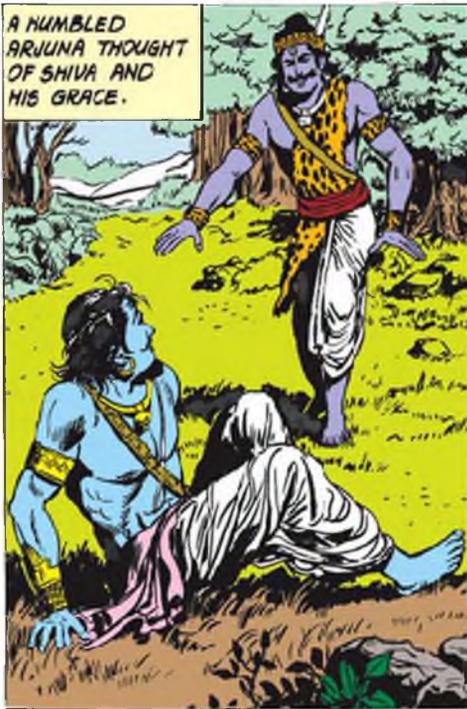
WITH A FLICK OF HIS WRIST, THE KIRATA
LIFTED ARJUNA...



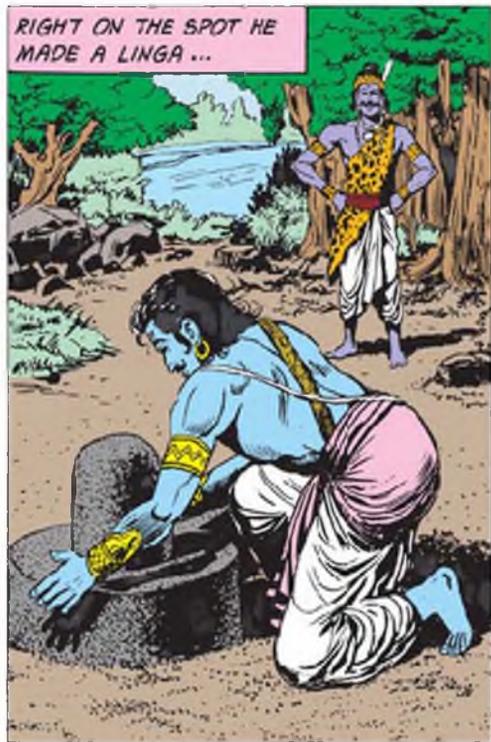
...AND FLUNG HIM DOWN.



A HUMBLED
ARJUNA THOUGHT
OF SHIVA AND
HIS GRACE.



RIGHT ON THE SPOT HE
MADE A LINGA ...



...AND BEGAN TO WORSHIP IT.



A NEW POWER SURGED THROUGH
HIS LIMBS.

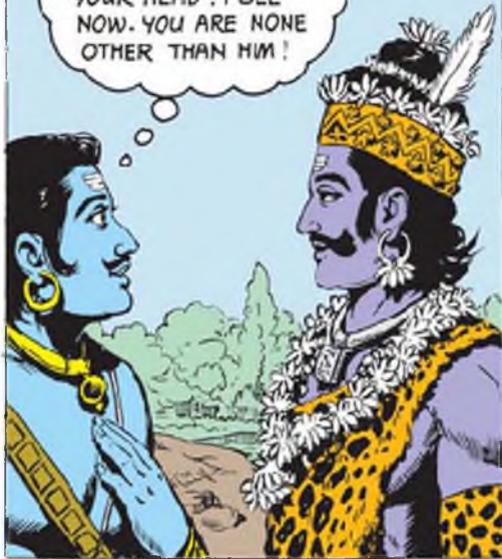


A REJUVENATED ARJUNA AGAIN
CHALLENGED HIS RIVAL.



BUT HE STOPPED, AS IF TRANSFIXED.

THE FLOWERS, I OFFERED
TO MY LORD SHIVA, ON
YOUR HEAD ! I SEE
NOW. YOU ARE NONE
OTHER THAN HIM !



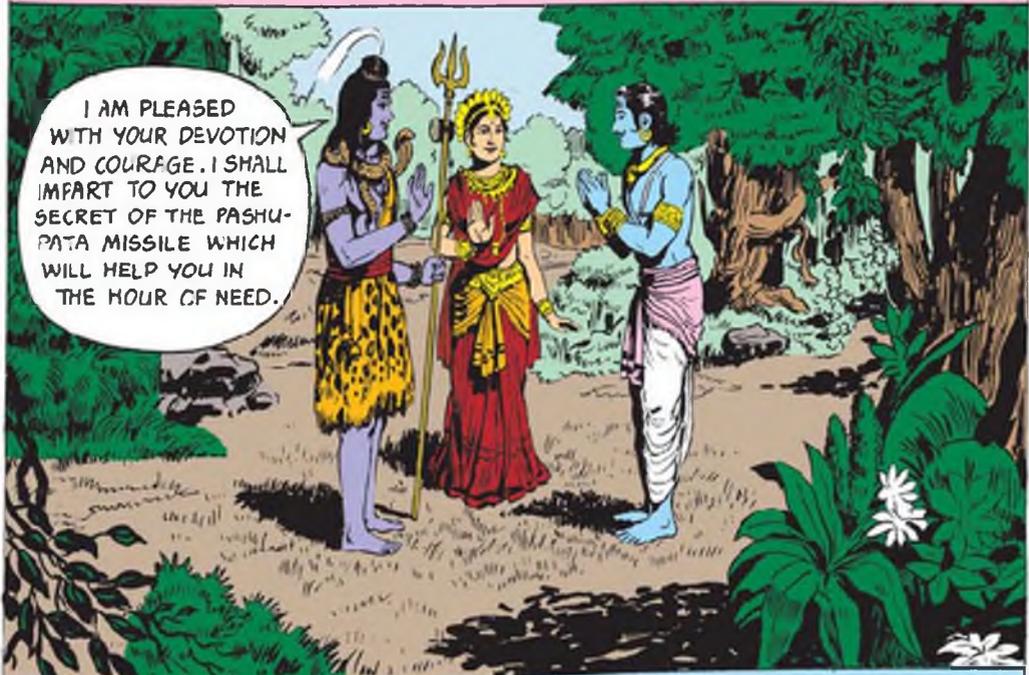
ARJUNA FELL AT THE
FEET OF THE KIRATA.

O LORD,
PARDON ME
AND MY
VANITY .



SHIVA THEN REVEALED HIMSELF IN HIS TRUE FORM AND SO DID PARVATI IN HERS.

I AM PLEASED
WITH YOUR DEVOTION
AND COURAGE. I SHALL
IMPART TO YOU THE
SECRET OF THE PASHU-
PATA MISSILE WHICH
WILL HELP YOU IN
THE HOUR OF NEED.



SHIVA'S WORD CAME TRUE. LATER IN THE MAHABHARATA WAR, IT WAS ONLY WITH THE PASHUPATA THAT ARJUNA COULD KILL HIS ARCH-RIVAL, KARNA.

SHIVA THE FISHERMAN



ONCE IN KAILASA, SHIVA STARTED EXPOUNDING THE MYSTERY OF THE VEDAS TO PARVATI WHO WAS LISTENING ATTENTIVELY.

YEARS PASSED BY. SHIVA CONTINUED WITHOUT A BREAK.



GRADUALLY, IN SPITE OF HER BEST EFFORTS, PARVATI'S ATTENTION FLAGGED AND SHIVA WAS ANNOYED.



THE VEDAS ARE NOT FOR YOU. SINCE YOU ARE NO BETTER THAN A COMMON FISHERWOMAN...



...MAY YOU BE BORN AS ONE!



BUT WHEN PARVATI VANISHED, THE VERY NEXT MOMENT —

WHAT HAVE I DONE!



IN THOUGHTLESS HASTE HAVE I CAST AWAY ONE WHOSE LOVE FOR ME WAS PEERLESS.

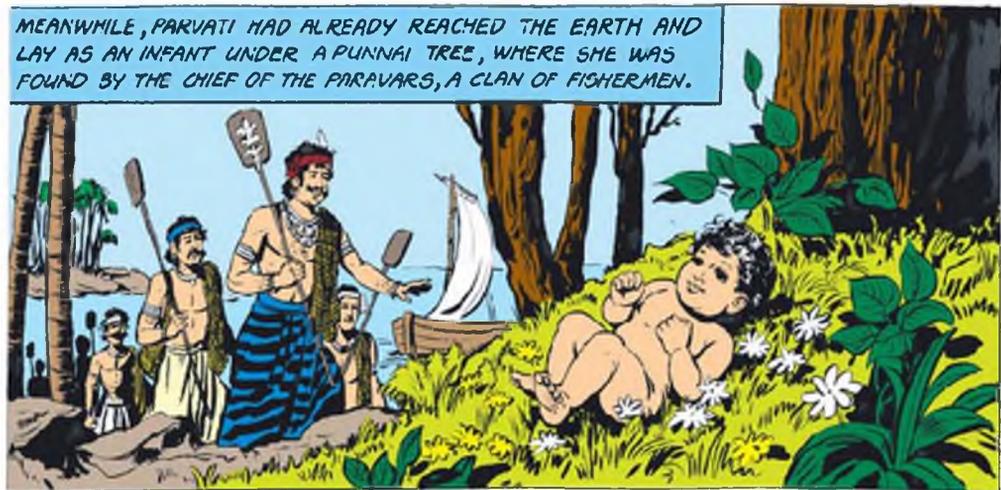


SHIVA'S STATE OF MIND
DID NOT ESCAPE NANDI,
HIS TRUSTED SERVANT.

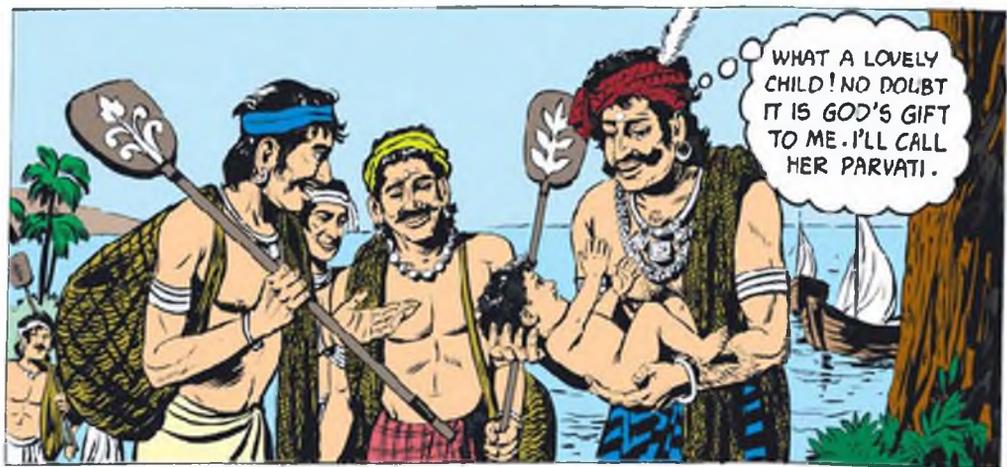
NOW MY MASTER
WILL KNOW NO
PEACE UNTIL MOTHER
PARVATI RETURNS.



MEANWHILE, PARVATI HAD ALREADY REACHED THE EARTH AND
LAY AS AN INFANT UNDER A PUNNAI TREE, WHERE SHE WAS
FOUND BY THE CHIEF OF THE PARAVARS, A CLAN OF FISHERMEN.



WHAT A LOVELY
CHILD! NO DOUBT
IT IS GOD'S GIFT
TO ME. I'LL CALL
HER PARVATI.



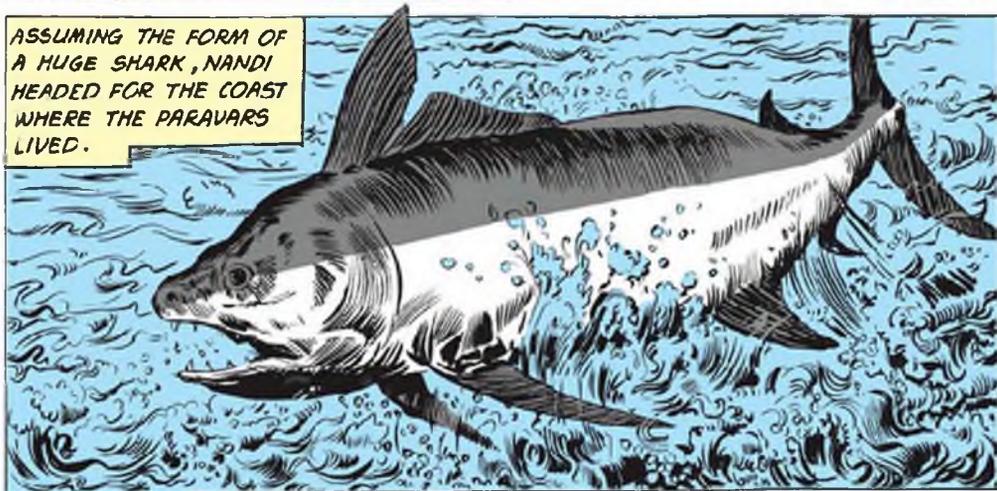
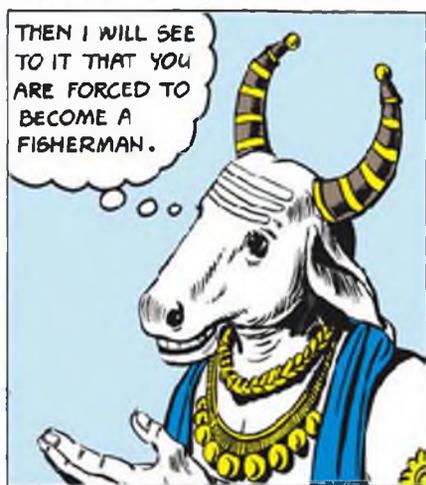
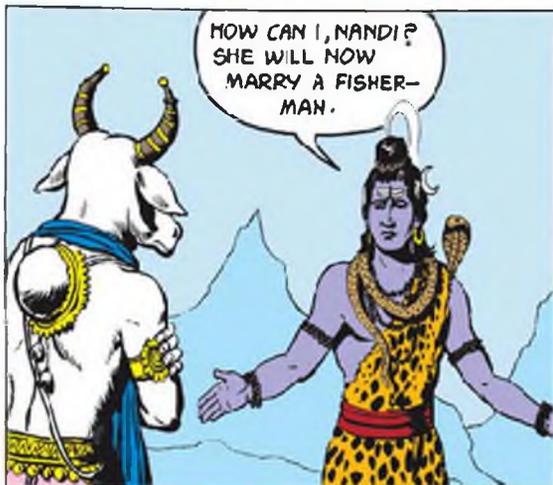
LITTLE PARVATI USED TO GO WITH HER FOSTER FATHER WHENEVER HE WENT FISHING .



AS SHE GREW UP, SHE EVEN LEARNT TO ROW THE BOAT .

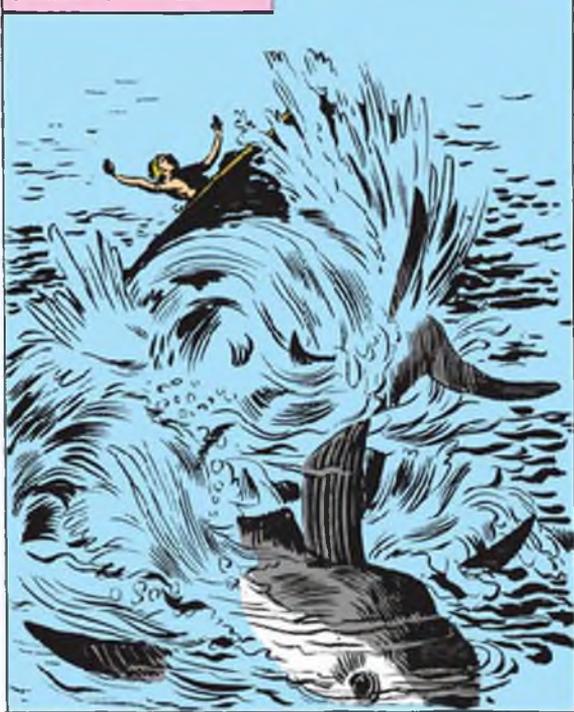


MEANWHILE AT KAILASA —

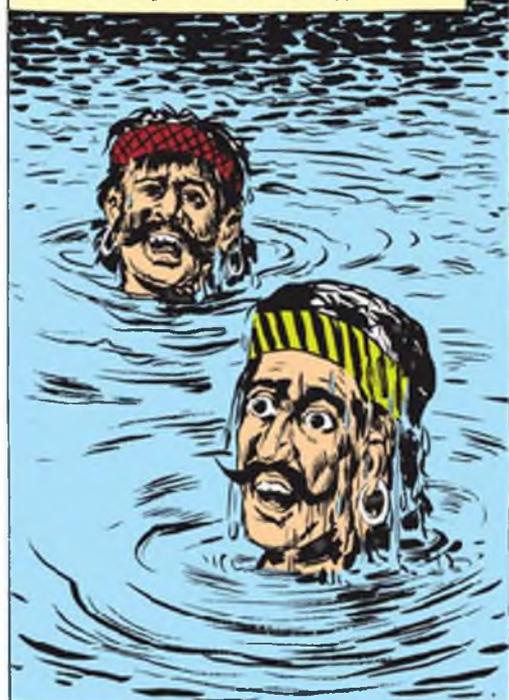




BUT BEFORE THE FISHERMEN COULD ACT, THE SHARK ATTACKED...



...AND THE TWO FISHERMEN FOUND THEMSELVES IN THE WATER.

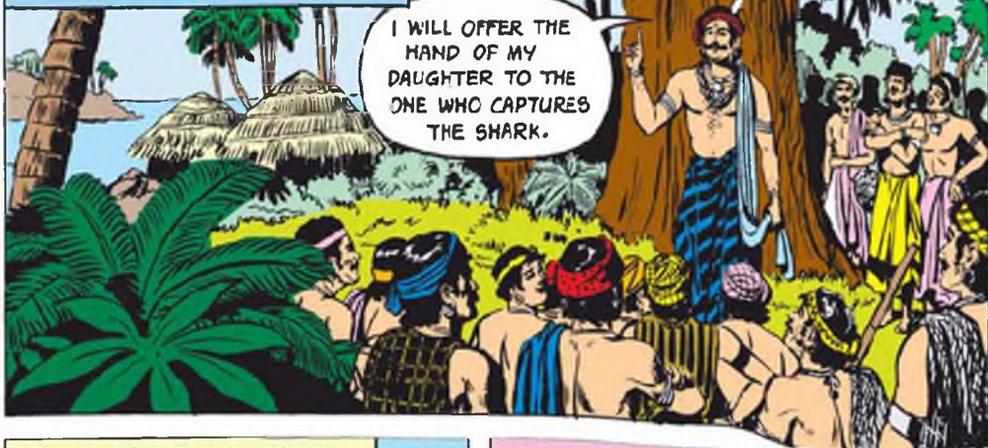


AS THE DAYS WENT BY, THE SHARK BECAME A REGULAR MENACE.



AT LAST, THE CHIEF OF THE PARAVARS
CAME UP WITH AN AWARD.

I WILL OFFER THE
HAND OF MY
DAUGHTER TO THE
ONE WHO CAPTURES
THE SHARK.



MANY A YOUNG MAN TRIED...



...AND FAILED.



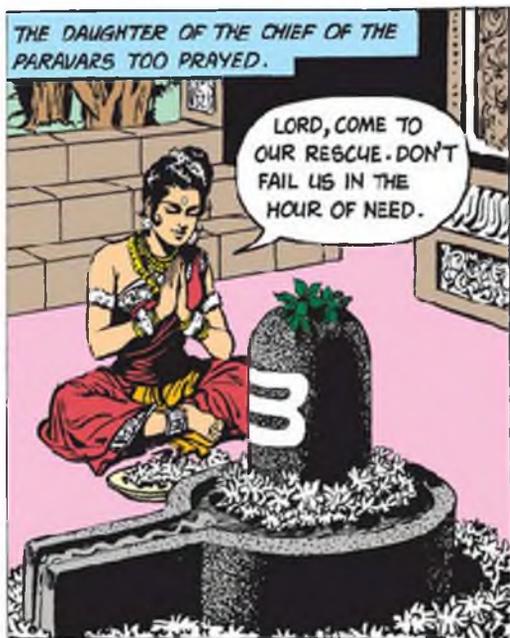
THE DESPERATE PARAVARS
AT LAST SOUGHT DIVINE HELP.



O COMPASSIONATE
ONE, GAVE US
FROM THE SHARK.

THE DAUGHTER OF THE CHIEF OF THE PARAVARS TOO PRAYED.

LORD, COME TO OUR RESCUE. DON'T FAIL US IN THE HOUR OF NEED.



SHIVA HEARD HER PRAYER.

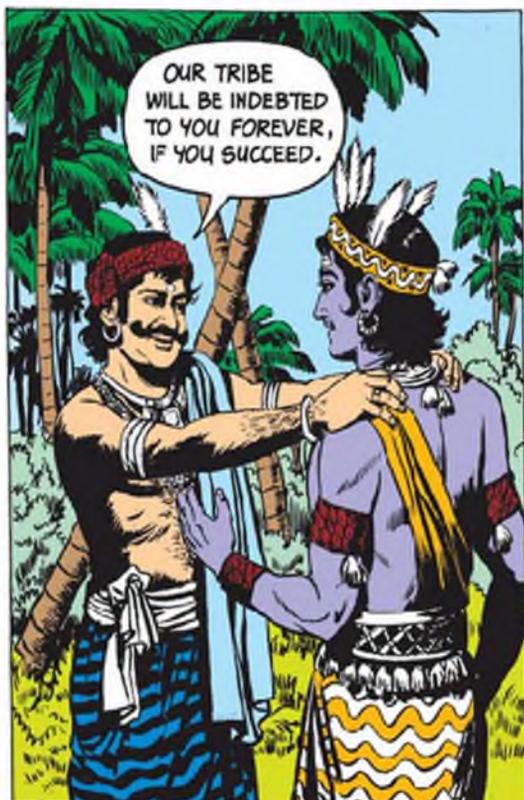


HE APPEARED BEFORE THE CHIEF OF THE PARAVARS AS A YOUNG FISHERMAN.

I HAVE COME TO CATCH THE SHARK.



OUR TRIBE WILL BE INDEBTED TO YOU FOREVER, IF YOU SUCCEED.

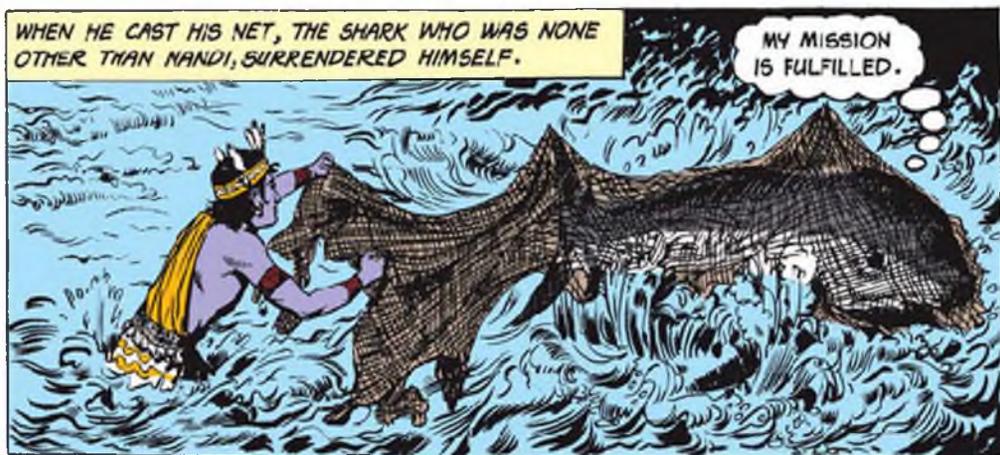


NET IN HAND, SHIVA WENT
DOWN INTO THE SEA.



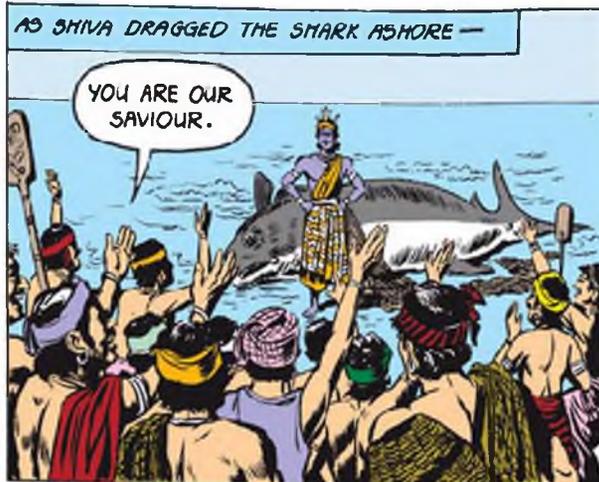
WHEN HE CAST HIS NET, THE SHARK WHO WAS NONE
OTHER THAN NANDI, SURRENDERED HIMSELF.

MY MISSION
IS FULFILLED.



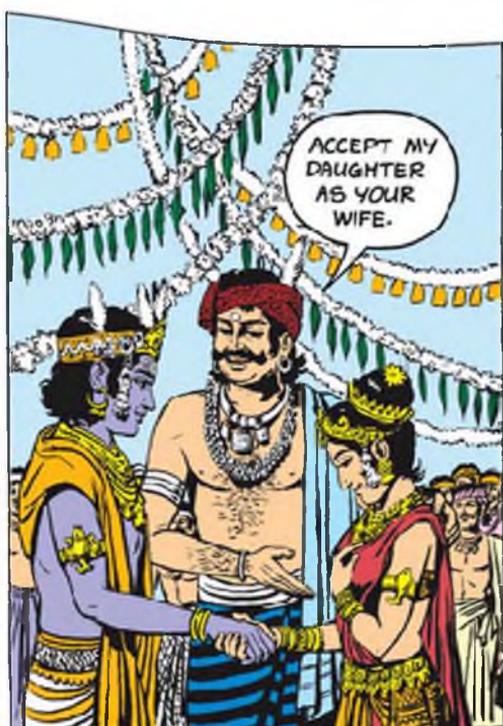
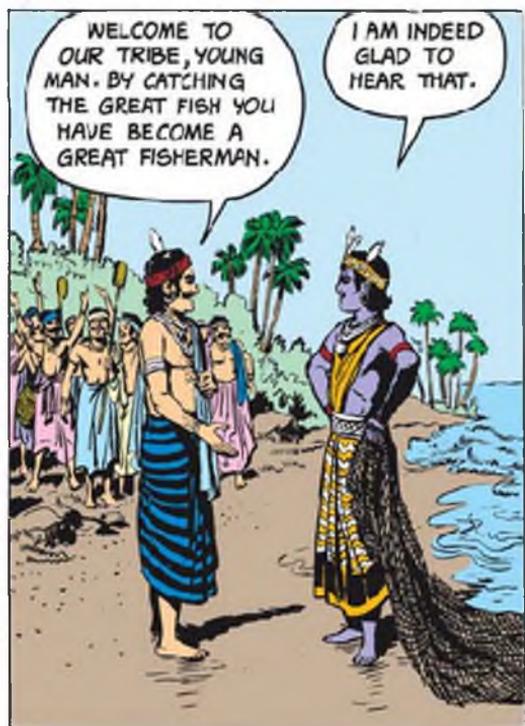
AS SHIVA DRAGGED THE SHARK ASHORE —

YOU ARE OUR
SAVIOUR.



HOW FORTUNATE FOR
ME THAT THIS BRAVE
MAN HAS CAUGHT
THE SHARK!

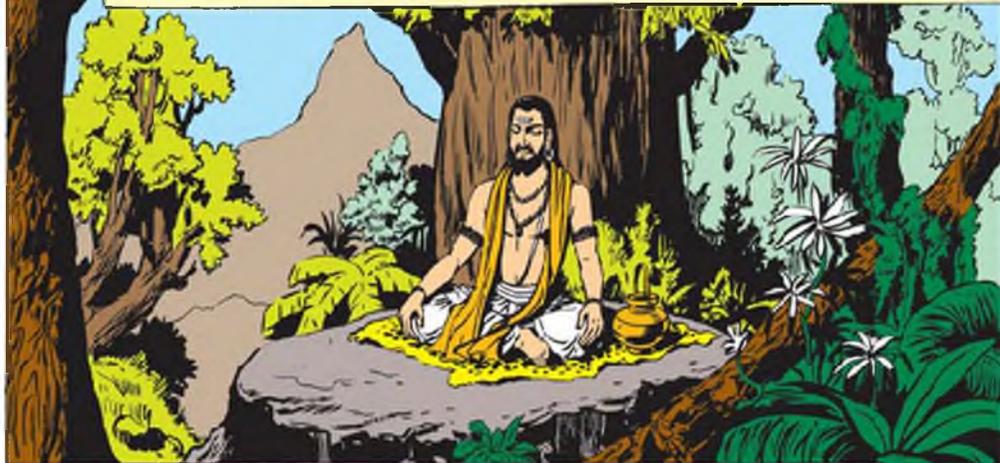




SHIVA, THE FISHERMAN, MARRIED PARVATI, THE FISHERWOMAN. NANDI ASSUMED HIS TRUE FORM AND CARRIED THE TWO TO KAILASA.



SHIVA AND MARKANDEYA



SAGE MRIKANDU OBSERVED SEVERE PENANCES TO PROPITIATE LORD SHIVA.

WHEN LORD SHIVA APPEARED BEFORE HIM —

LORD, FAVOUR ME WITH A SON.

DO YOU WANT A SON WHO WILL LIVE LONG THOUGH LACKING IN VIRTUES ...

...OR A SON WHO WILL BE WISE AND VIRTUOUS BUT WILL LIVE FOR ONLY SIXTEEN YEARS?

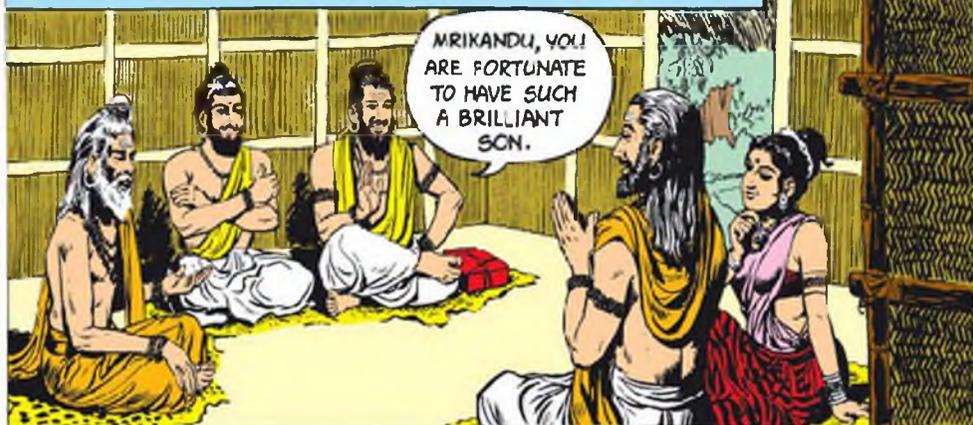
I WILL HAVE THE VIRTUOUS SON, MY LORD.

IN DUE COURSE, MARUDVATI, MRIKANDU'S WIFE, GAVE BIRTH TO A SON.

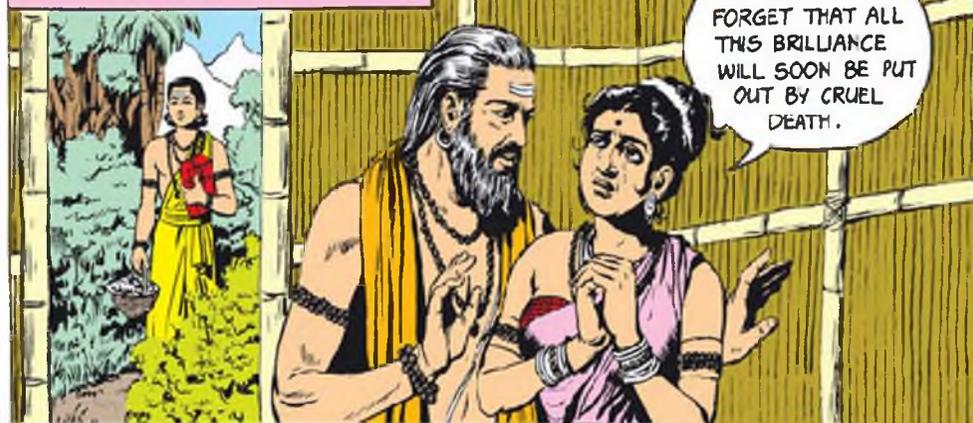
GRANTING THE WISH OF THE SAGE, LORD SHIVA VANISHED.

THE BOY SHALL BE NAMED MARKANDEYA.

WHILE BARELY SIXTEEN, MARKANDEYA HAD MASTERED THE VEDAS.

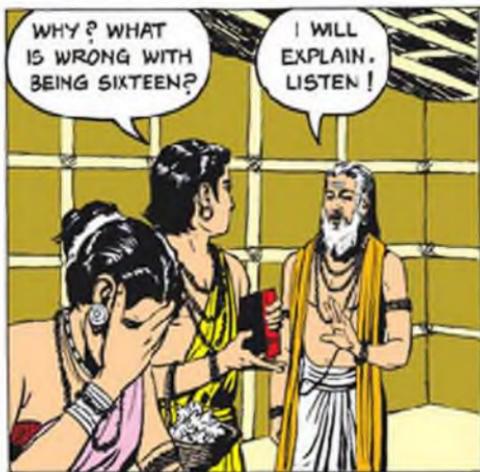
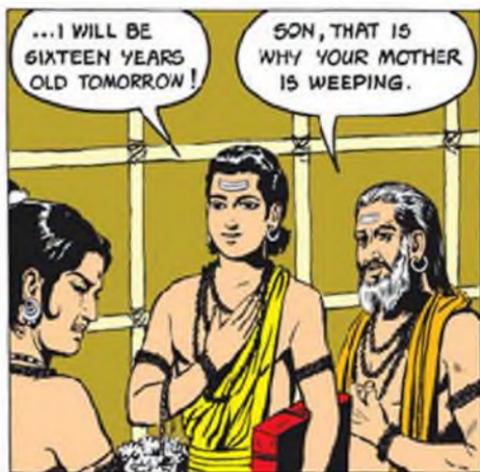


WHEN THE VISITING SAGES LEFT —

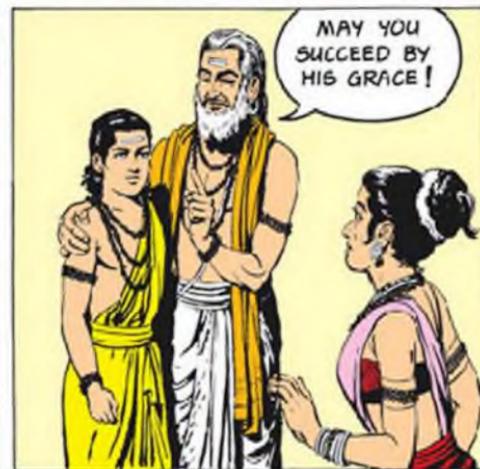
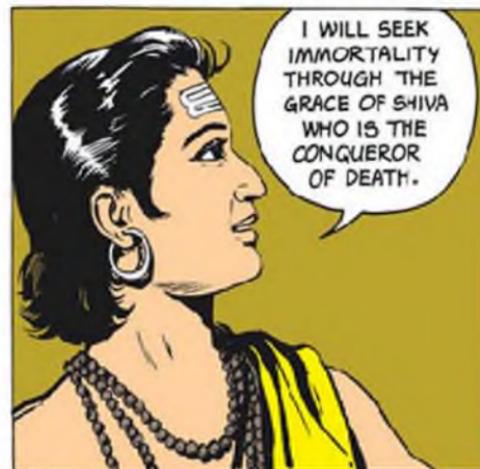


JUST THEN MARKANDEYA CAME HOME WITH THE FLOWERS FOR WORSHIP.





WHEN MRIKANDU TOLD HIM ABOUT THE EVENTS LEADING TO HIS BIRTH —

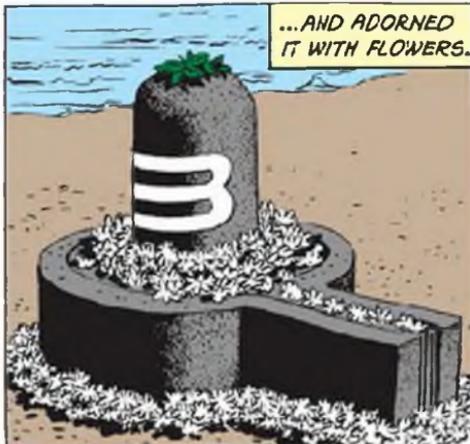




EARLY NEXT MORNING, MARKANDEYA REACHED THE SEA-SHORE WHERE HE MADE A SHIVA LINGA OUT OF THE WET SAND ...



...AND ADORNED IT WITH FLOWERS.



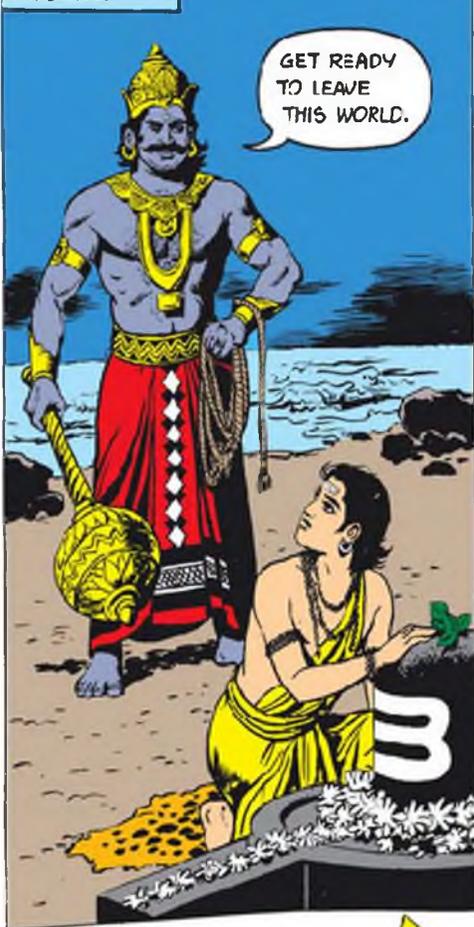
THEN HE SAT DOWN TO PRAY.



TOWARDS NIGHTFALL, HE BEGAN TO SING AND DANCE BEFORE THE LORD.



SUDDENLY —

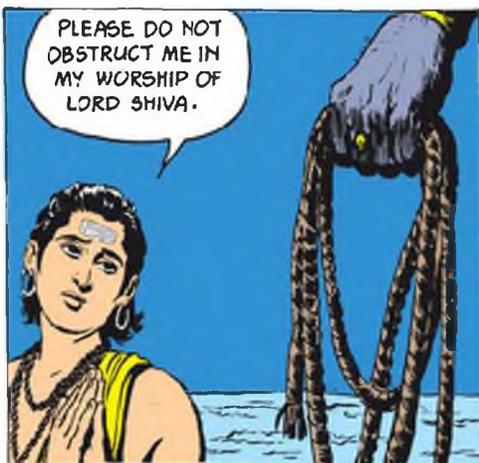


GET READY
TO LEAVE
THIS WORLD.

IT WAS YAMA, THE GOD OF DEATH.

O LORD OF DEATH,
PLEASE WAIT.
I HAVE NOT YET
FINISHED MY
WORSHIP.

FOOLISH
BOY, DON'T
YOU KNOW
THAT DEATH
Waits FOR
NONE ?



PLEASE DO NOT
OBSTRUCT ME IN
MY WORSHIP OF
LORD SHIVA.

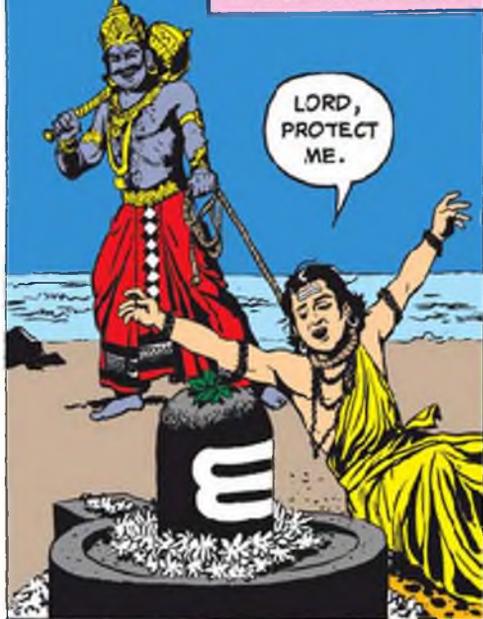


FOOL ! DO YOU HOPE
TO ESCAPE FROM ME BY
CLINGING TO SHIVA ?
THE GRIP OF DEATH IS
FATAL AS YOU SHALL
NOW KNOW.

YAMA CAUGHT MARKANDEYA'S NECK IN THE NOOSE ...

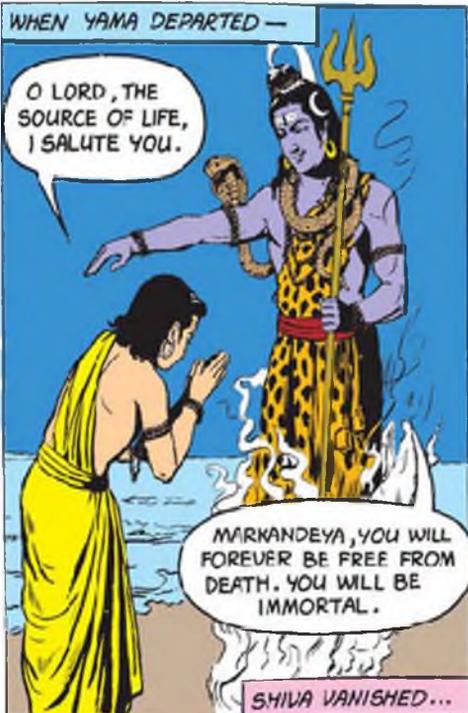
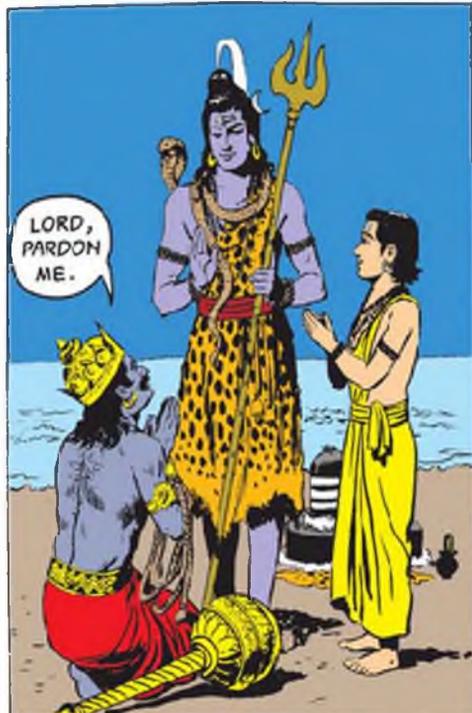


... AND DRAGGED HIM.



THE NEXT MOMENT, SHIVA SPRANG FROM THE LINGA AND KICKED YAMA ON THE CHEST.





...AND MARKANDEYA RETURNED HOME.

