

DEEPAK CHOPRA PRESENTS india authentic.

VISHNU

THE NARASIMHA AVATAR



MOHAPATRA/CHANDRASEKHAR

DEEPAK CHOPRA PRESENTS

VISHNU

india
authentic™

THE NARASIMHA AVATAR

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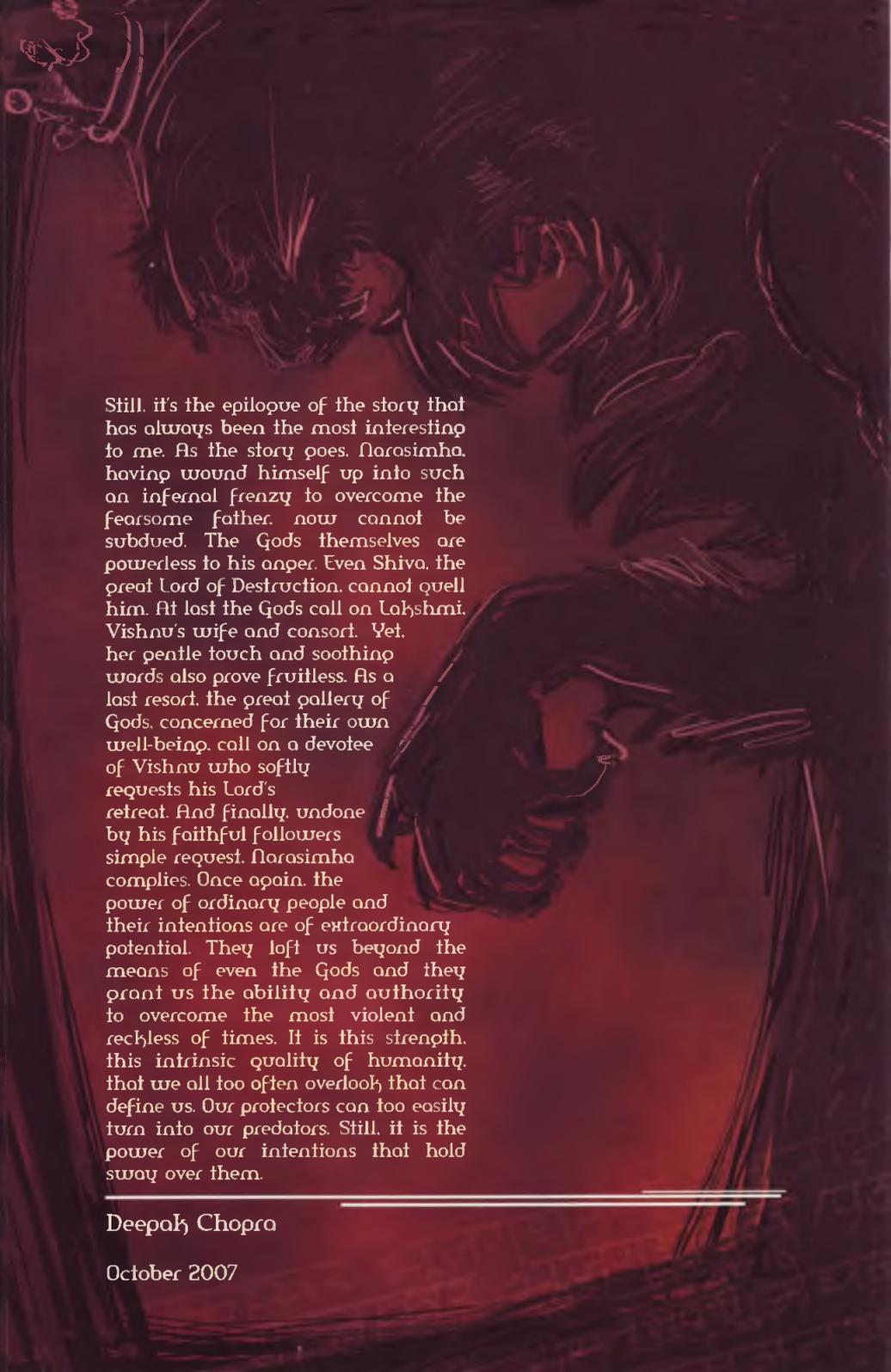
VISHNU

— THE NARASIMHA AVATAR

The pantheon of Indian Gods is wide and varied. There is a deity for almost every mood, emotion, or instinct. Even still, there are few as ferocious as Narasimha, the great protector of his devotees.

The myth behind Narasimha as narrated in this comic, is one of the most dramatic you will ever read. A father is so consumed by rage and jealousy that he is driven to the unthinkable – attacking his son in a murderous rampage. Defenseless against his powerful father, the boy has little chance to survive. When all seems lost, he prays to Lord Vishnu to save him from the violent attack. Vishnu hears him and arrives in the nick of time, but in order to skirt a protective blessing bestowed upon the father by another God, Vishnu must take on an alternate form, a half-man, half-beast, becoming Narasimha to ultimately defeat the father. The moral of the story ranges far and wide, and perhaps even more so in this modern age where we constantly see war waged amongst people descended from the same stock. Enmity can run so deep that it can pervert the very nature of a family, turning those who are meant to protect one another into vicious rivals and predators. Such is the dark power of hatred, rage and jealousy.





Still, it's the epilogue of the story that has always been the most interesting to me. As the story goes, Narasimha, having wound himself up into such an infernal frenzy to overcome the fearsome father, now cannot be subdued. The Gods themselves are powerless to his anger. Even Shiva, the great Lord of Destruction, cannot quell him. At last the Gods call on Lakshmi, Vishnu's wife and consort. Yet, her gentle touch and soothing words also prove fruitless. As a last resort, the great gallery of Gods, concerned for their own well-being, call on a devotee of Vishnu who softly requests his Lord's retreat. And finally, undone by his faithful followers' simple request, Narasimha complies. Once again, the power of ordinary people and their intentions are of extraordinary potential. They lift us beyond the means of even the Gods and they grant us the ability and authority to overcome the most violent and reckless of times. It is this strength, this intrinsic quality of humanity, that we all too often overlook that can define us. Our protectors can too easily turn into our predators. Still, it is the power of our intentions that hold sway over them.

Deepak Chopra

October 2007



**"Yada yada hi dharmasya
glanir bhavati bhārata"**

**"Abhuytthanam adharmasya
tadatmanam srijamyaham."**

**"Paritrānaya sādhanam,
vinashaya cha dushkritam,"**

**"Dharma samsthapanarthaya,
sambhavami yuge yuge."**

**"WHENEVER DHARMA DECLINES
AND ADHARMA PREVAILS, AT
THAT TIME I SHALL COME INTO
THE WORLD OF MEN."**

**"TO SAVE THE RIGHTEOUS, TO
DESTROY THE WICKED, AND TO
RE-ESTABLISH DHARMA, I SHALL
BE BORN IN EVERY AGE."**

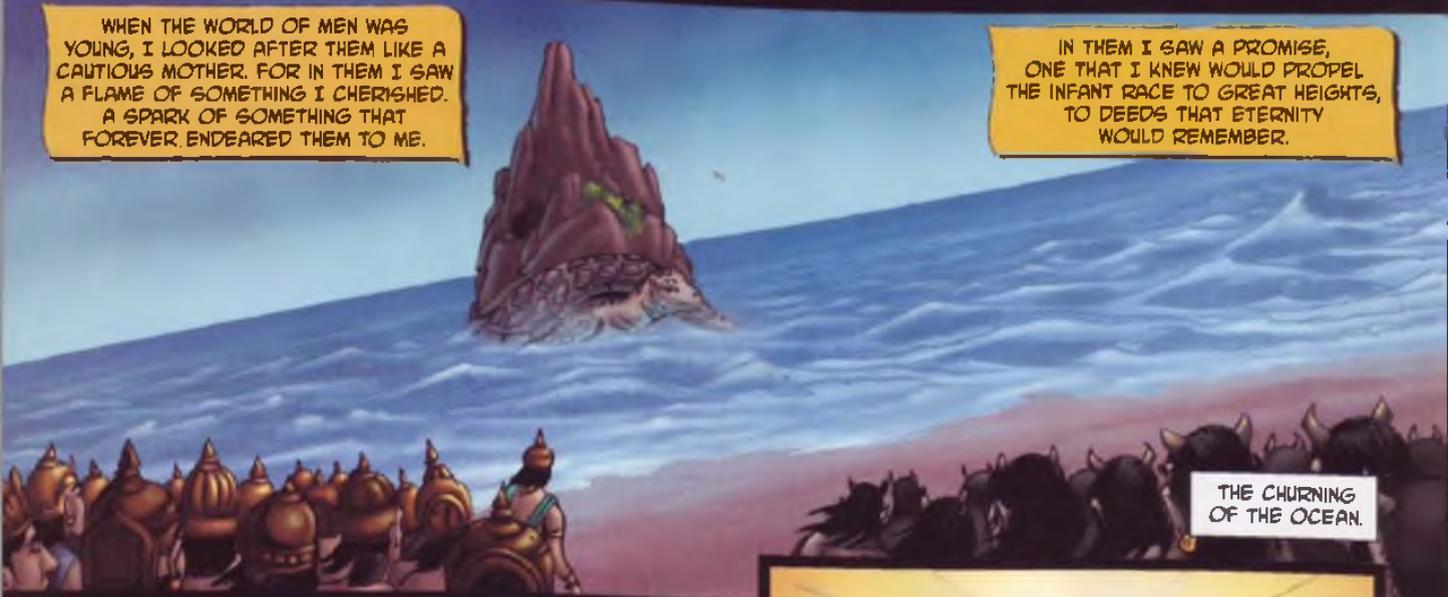
I AM VISHNU,
THE PRESERVER, ONE
OF THE TRINITY ALONG
WITH BRAHMA, THE
CREATOR AND SHIVA,
THE DESTROYER.



THE DAWN
OF MANKIND.

WHEN THE WORLD OF MEN WAS
YOUNG, I LOOKED AFTER THEM LIKE A
CAUTIOUS MOTHER. FOR IN THEM I SAW
A FLAME OF SOMETHING I CHERISHED.
A SPARK OF SOMETHING THAT
FOREVER ENDEARED THEM TO ME.

IN THEM I SAW A PROMISE,
ONE THAT I KNEW WOULD PROPEL
THE INFANT RACE TO GREAT HEIGHTS,
TO DEEDS THAT ETERNITY
WOULD REMEMBER.



THE CHURNING
OF THE OCEAN.

AS THE PRESERVER I TOOK
IT UPON ME TO GUIDE THEM
TO THAT PROMISED
GREATNESS, INTERCEDING
ONLY WHEN CATAclySM
THREATENED TO WIPE OUT
THEIR NASCENT CIVILIZATION.



THE FIRST
AGE OF MAN.



SOMETIMES THE
THREAT WAS NOT A
FORCE OF NATURE.

BUT
SOMETHING
MUCH MORE
HEINOUS.

THE GREATEST
CHALLENGE TO THE RACE
OF MEN CAME FROM
THOSE THAT INHABITED
THE EARTH *BEFORE* THEM.

FROM THE DEMONIC
RACE OF THE *ASURAS*, A
SCOURGE ON THE FACE
OF MOTHER EARTH.



AT THE DAWN OF MANKIND,
ONE SUCH DEMON NAMED
HIRANAKSHYA THREATENED
THE DELICATE BALANCE OF
DHARMA, THE LODESTONE
THAT GUIDES THE ONWARD
MARCH OF MAN ALONG THE
PATH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.



THUS, AS
PRESERVER IT
FELL UPON ME.



THE DEMON
WAS SLAIN...



...AND
BALANCE WAS
RESTORED.



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...OR SO I
THOUGHT.

WHO DID
THIS? WHO
DARES?

WHO IS IT
THAT SLEW MY
BROTHER?

IT WAS THE GODS,
MASTER VISHNU CAME
DOWN TO EARTH AS A WILD
BOAR AND KILLED YOUR
BROTHER.

I SWEAR ON THE
BLOOD SPILLED OF MY DEAD
BROTHER, THE GODS HAVE
GONE TOO FAR.

"FOR IT IS TIME FOR THE
HALLS OF HEAVEN TO
RING WITH THE DEATH
THROBS OF THE GODS.
GATHER THE FORCES
GENERAL."

VIOLENCE IS A LAST RESORT, FOR IT HAS A
TENDENCY TO BEGET MORE OF ITSELF. MADDENED
BY THE SIGHT OF HIS DEAD BROTHER, THE DEMON
KING HIRNYAKASHIPU LAUNCHED A CAMPAIGN
AGAINST SVARGA, THE ABODE OF THE GODS.



THE DEMON ARMY WAS ILL PREPARED FOR SUCH A VENTURE.

THE GODS LED BY THE AVIAN WARRIOR GARUDA ENGAGED THE DEMONS AT THE PLAINS THAT BORDER SVARGA.



EVEN THOUGH HIRNYAKASHIPU FOUGHT WITH THE STRENGTH OF TEN MAD ELEPHANTS, HEAVEN'S VANGUARD WAS ENOUGH OF A MATCH FOR HIS ARMIES.

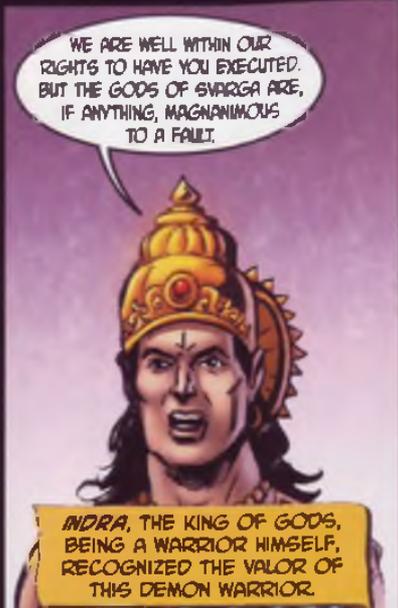


THE DEMONS WERE DEFEATED.



AND THEIR KING WAS BROUGHT BEFORE THE COUNCIL OF HEAVEN FOR JUDGEMENT.

KING HIRNYAKASHIPU, YOU HAVE ATTACKED US WITHOUT CAUSE VIOLATING THE TRUCE BETWEEN OUR RACES, ONE THAT WAS NEGOTIATED BY YOUR ANCESTORS.



WE ARE WELL WITHIN OUR RIGHTS TO HAVE YOU EXECUTED. BUT THE GODS OF SVARGA ARE, IF ANYTHING, MAGNANIMOUS TO A FAULT.

INDRA, THE KING OF GODS, BEING A WARRIOR HIMSELF, RECOGNIZED THE VALOR OF THIS DEMON WARRIOR.



WE RELEASE YOU ON YOUR OWN COGNIZANCE AS IS YOUR RIGHT AS A KING OF YOUR RACE. YOU ARE BOUND BY THE WARRIOR CODE TO SPEND THE REST OF YOUR DAYS IN YOUR KINGDOM AND FORBIDDEN TO ENTER THE REALM OF SVARGA.

INDRA RELEASED THE DEMON KING AFTER ADMONISHING HIM AND THOUGHT NO MORE OF IT.

BUT FOR THE
DEMON KING
MATTERS WERE
FAR FROM OVER.

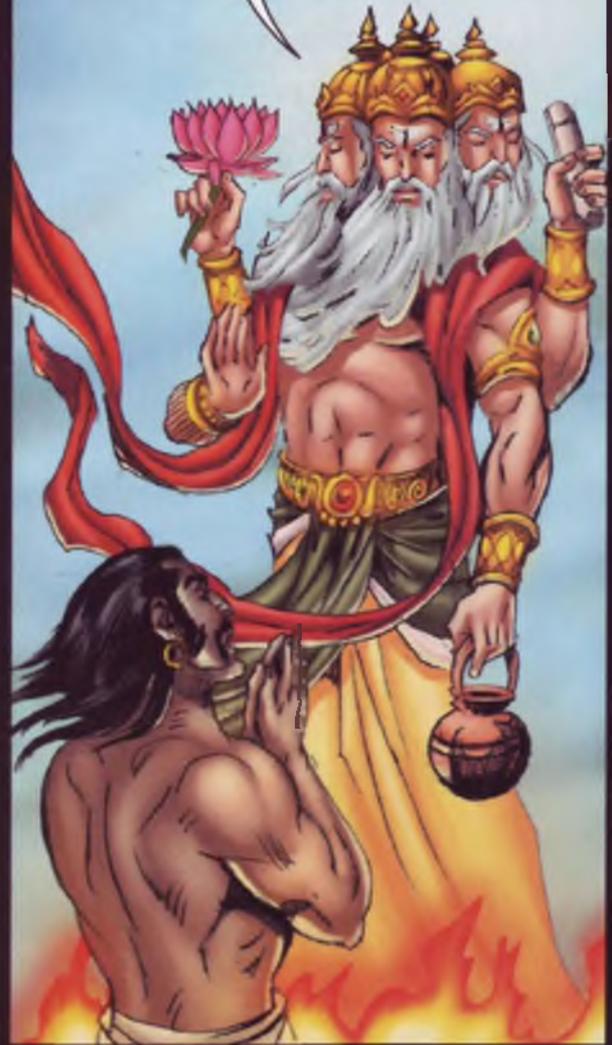
HE PRAYED FOR
TEN YEARS IN A
FIERCE PENANCE
TO LORD BRAHMA.



OM BRAHMAYE NAMAH.
OM BRAHMAYE NAMAH.

BRAHMA, BOUND BY
THE ANCIENT CODE OF
WORSHIP APPEARED
BEFORE HIM TO BLESS
HIM WITH A BOON.

SPEAK, KING OF DEMONS
WHAT BOON DO YOU DESIRE? KEEP IN
MIND THAT THE TRUCE ENFORCED ON YOU
BY LORD INDRA, FORBIDS YOU TO ASK
FOR ANYTHING AGAINST THE GODS AND I
TOO AM BOUND BY THE CODE NOT TO
GRANT YOU FREEDOM
FROM DEATH.



I WISH FOR A BOON
THAT I SHALL BE SLAYED BY
NEITHER MAN NOR BEAST, BY
NEITHER WEAPON NOR IMPLEMENT,
AT NEITHER DAY NOR NIGHT
AND NEITHER ON EARTH
NOR IN SPACE.



MAY IT BE SO,
KING OF DEMONS.
YOU ARE THUS
BLESSED.

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THIS EMPOWERED BY
BRAHMA'S BOON, THE
CRAFTY DEMON LAUNCHED
A SHADOW CAMPAIGN
AGAINST THE GODS.



...HE TURNED HIS
ATTENTION ON THOSE THAT
WORSHIPPED THE GODS.



WITH HIS HANDS TIED
TOWARDS DIRECT ACTION
AGAINST THE GODS
BY THE TRUCE...



AT HIS COMMAND, HIS DEMON
HORDES LAUNCHED A BLOODY
CAMPAIGN OF PERSECUTION
AGAINST HUMANS WHO WORSHIPPED
THE GODS. TEMPLES WERE BURNT,
IDOLS SMASHED AND WORSHIPPERS
SLAUGHTERED.

THE GOAL WAS SIMPLE. IT WAS
A WAR OF TERROR WITH ONE
END IN MIND, TO ERASE FROM
THE MINDS OF MEN, ANY
MEMORY OF THE GODS.

BUT FATE, WITH ITS WICKED SENSE OF HUMOR, DEALT THE DEMON KING A ROLL OF THE CROOKEDEST OF DICE.

HIS OWN SON PRAHLAD, WHO GREW UP FAR FROM HIS FATHER'S INFLUENCE AS THE DEMON KING WENT AWAY ON HIS CAMPAIGN OF PERSECUTION...



... BECAME ONE OF MY MOST ARDENT DEVOTEES. WITH A SOUL AS BLAMELESS AND SINLESS AS THE CRYSTAL CLEAR STILL WATERS OF A MOUNTAIN LAKE, PRAHLAD DEVOTED HIS LIFE TO THE PURSUIT OF THE WAYS OF DHARMA AND THE DEVOTION OF VISHNU.



I HAVE BEEN BETRAYED AT HOME.



I TOIL DAY AND NIGHT TO ERASE THE MARKS OF GOD ON EARTH, WHILE MY ONLY SON SPENDS HIS TIME IN THE WORTHLESS CHANT OF THAT SCOUNDREL, VISHNU.

OF ALL THOSE WORTHLESS GODS, YOU PRAY TO VISHNU, PRAHLAD? YOU WOULD PRAY TO HIM THAT SLEW YOUR OWN FLESH AND BLOOD, YOUR BLOOD UNCLE HIRANAKSHYA? WHY, MY SON? WHY?

FATHER, I PRAY TO VISHNU BECAUSE I HAVE FOUND PEACE IN HIM. HE IS NARAYANA, THE PRESERVER, THE CALM CENTER OF THIS CHAOTIC UNIVERSE.

STAY YOUR VILE TONGUE, PRAHLAD. VISHNU IS AN ENEMY OF OUR RACE. YOU ARE A TRAITOR TO THE GLORIOUS RACE OF ASURAS TO PRAY TO HIM.

FATHER, VISHNU IS NARAYANA, FRIEND TO ALL, THE PRESERVER. HE EMBRACES ALL WHO WALK THE PATH OF DHARMA, BE IT MAN OR DEMON. IN HIM I HAVE FOUND SOLACE FROM THE CRIES OF THE TORMENTED, FROM THE CURSES THAT ARE HEAPED ON OUR HOUSE BY THOSE YOUR ARMIES HAVE RAVAGED.



YOU DARE JUDGE ME? YOU INSOLENT CHILD, I'VE DEVOTED MY LIFE TO DEFYING THE GODS WHILE THE ENEMY SITS RIGHT HERE IN MY HOME. TODAY OUR PATHS PART, PRAHLAD.



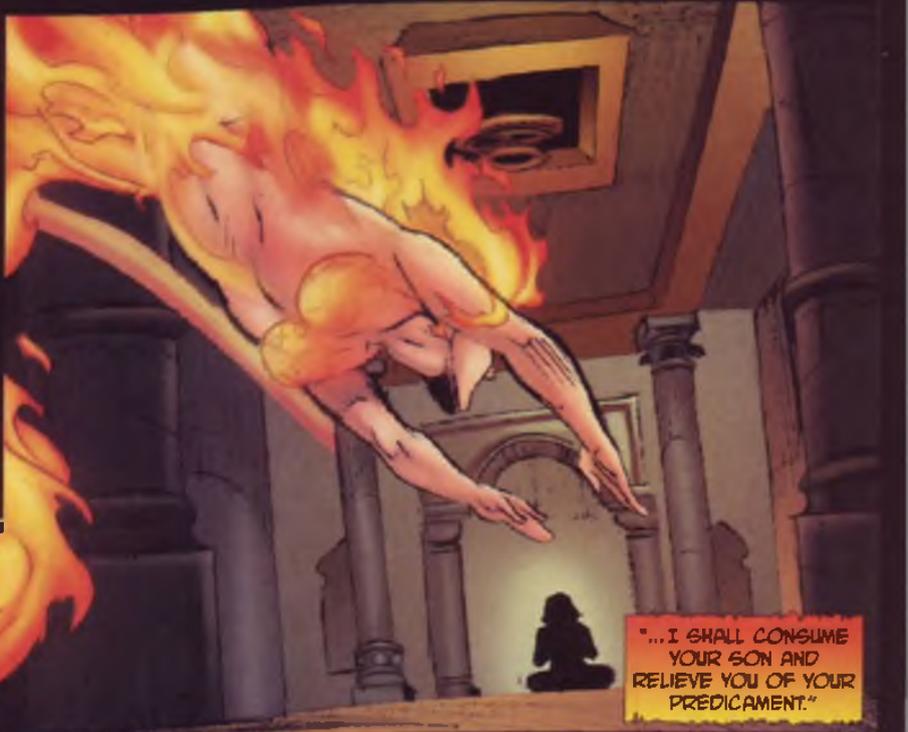
YOU ARE NO SON OF MINE.

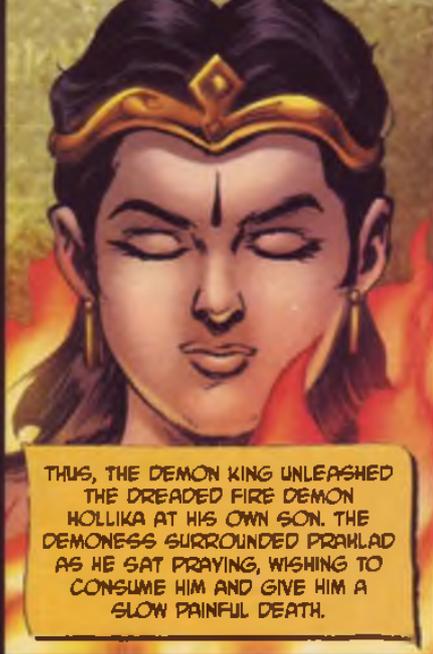


"SEND FOR MY SISTER,
HOLLIKA OF HELLFIRE.
TELL HER, HER KING
WISHES AN AUDIENCE."



IT IS PRAHLAD, MY SON.
I CANNOT HAVE A DEVOTEE OF
VISHNU IN MY OWN HOME, WHILE I
STRIVE TO ERASE HIS NAME FROM
THE MINDS OF MEN. SO I
COMMAND YOU HOLLIKA,
KILL PRAHLAD.





THUS, THE DEMON KING UNLEASHED THE DREADED FIRE DEMON HOLLIKA AT HIS OWN SON. THE DEMONESS SURROUNDED PRAHLAD AS HE SAT PRAYING, WISHING TO CONSUME HIM AND GIVE HIM A SLOW PAINFUL DEATH.

PRAHLAD DID NOT PANIC EVEN WHEN THE HELLFIRE LAPPED ALL AROUND HIM. HE SAT THERE CHANTING THE HYMN THAT HAD SELDOM LEFT HIS LIPS SINCE CHILDHOOD.



BREATHE EASY CHILD. AUNT HOLLIKA IS HERE FOR YOUR FINAL RITES.

OM NARAYANAY NAMAH!



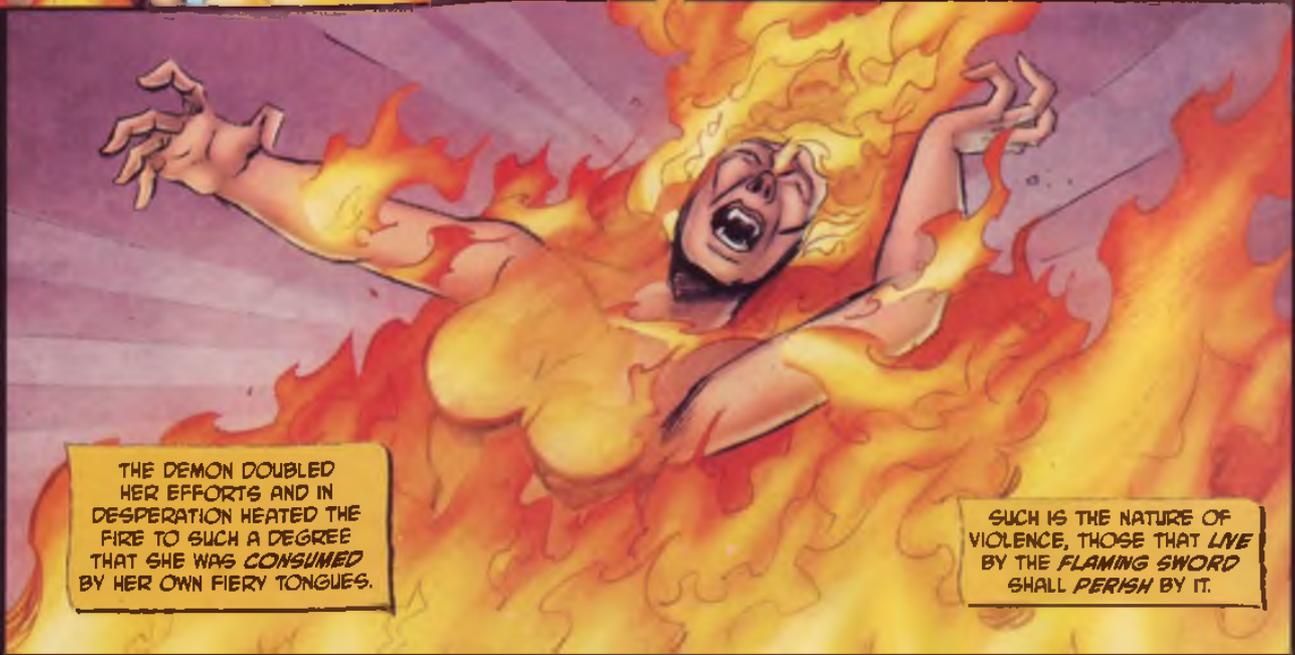
TRUE OF HEART AND SINLESS OF SOUL, PRAHLAD PRAYED TO ME, NOT FOR DELIVERANCE NOR FOR SAVING. BUT HE JUST CHANTED MY NAME SO THAT IT BE THE LAST THING OFF HIS LIPS, IF HE WERE TO PERISH.

YOU ARE NO SON OF MY BROTHER. YOU ARE NOT EVEN WORTHY TO CLAIM THE MANTLE OF AN ASURA. EVEN IN DEATH YOU CHANT THE NAME OF THE ENEMY.

OM CHATURBHUJAYA NAMAH.



HOW COULD I STAND BACK AND LET SUCH AN ARDENT FOLLOWER OF DHARMA BE CONSUMED BY HELLFIRE. I BLESSED HIM WITH IMMUNITY TO IT.



THE DEMON DOUBLED HER EFFORTS AND IN DESPERATION HEATED THE FIRE TO SUCH A DEGREE THAT SHE WAS CONSUMED BY HER OWN FIERY TONGUES.

SUCH IS THE NATURE OF VIOLENCE, THOSE THAT LIVE BY THE FLAMING SWORD SHALL PERISH BY IT.



SIRE, HOLLIKA IS NO MORE. SHE WAS CONSUMED BY HER OWN FIRE.

WHAT? WHAT ABOUT PRAHLAD?

THE PRINCE IS UNHURT, MY LIEGE.



WHAT KIND OF DECEPTION IS THIS? HOLLIKA CONSUMED BY HER OWN FLAMES AND NOT A SCRATCH ON PRAHLAD?



WHAT MANNER OF *MAYA* HAVE YOU MASTERED, PRAHLAD? WHAT KIND OF *VILE* MAGIK IS THIS?



FATHER, IT IS NO MAGIK. IT IS JUST THE BLESSING OF VISHNU. COME PRAY WITH ME. HIS HEART IS AS BIG AS THE ENTIRE COSMOS, YOU TOO SHALL FIND *FORGIVENESS* IF YOU REPENT NOW.



VISHNU AGAIN? WHAT IS VISHNU BUT A *CHARLATAN* THAT PLAYS MY SON AGAINST ME? WHERE IS THIS VISHNU YOU CLAIM PROTECTS YOU?

VISHNU IS *EVERYWHERE*. HE IS IN THE MINUTEST OF ATOMS TO THE MOST EXPANSIVE OF STARS. HE RESIDES IN THE INANIMATE SPECK OF SAND ON THE SEA SHORE AND ALSO IN THE HEARTS OF ALL LIVING BEINGS. HE IS TRULY OMNIPRESENT.



I HAVE HAD IT WITH YOUR SHENANIGANS. I SHALL PROVE TO YOU ONCE AND FOR ALL.



YOU SAY VISHNU IS EVERYWHERE? IS HE IN THAT PILLAR?

YES, FATHER. VISHNU IS THERE EVEN IN THE MOST INANIMATE OF OBJECTS. HIS ESSENCE PERVADES THE VERY FABRIC OF EXISTENCE.



THEN BEHOLD, YOU MISGUIDED CHILD. I SHALL PROVE IT TO YOU THAT IN THIS PILLAR IS NOTHING BUT MORTAR AND STONE. IF THAT IS WHAT YOU CALL VISHNU...



"...THEN I PITY YOUR NANETTE."

A PRESERVER'S ROLE IS MATERNAL. ONE NEEDS TO BE AS PATIENT AS THE EARTH, AS NURTURING AS THE RIVER. BUT THERE ARE TIMES WHEN ONE NEEDS TO BE DIFFERENT.

SOMETIMES PRESERVATION OF THE *RIGHTEOUS* CALLS FOR ELIMINATION OF THOSE THAT THREATEN THEM.



IT IS A SIMPLE MATTER OF CHOICE.



BUT NOT A SIMPLE CHOICE.



THE DEMON KING'S SINS WERE COUNTLESS AND HIS DEATH WAS DUE. SO ONCE AGAIN, I WAS COMPELLED...



...TO DESCEND TO THE WORLD OF MEN AND DEMONS.



SOMETIMES THE ROLE OF THE PRESERVER TRANSCENDS THE MATERNAL.



WHEN THE BALANCE OF CHARMA TESTERS ON THE EDGE OF OBLIVION...



... A MORE *DRASTIC*
APPROACH IS NEEDED.



HALF-MAN
HALF-LION.

NARASIMHA.



WHO IS
THIS?

HE HAS COME,
FATHER. VISHNU
HAS COME.

SHEKHAR KAPUR'S

DEVI

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ISSUE 15



ON STANDS NOVEMBER 2007

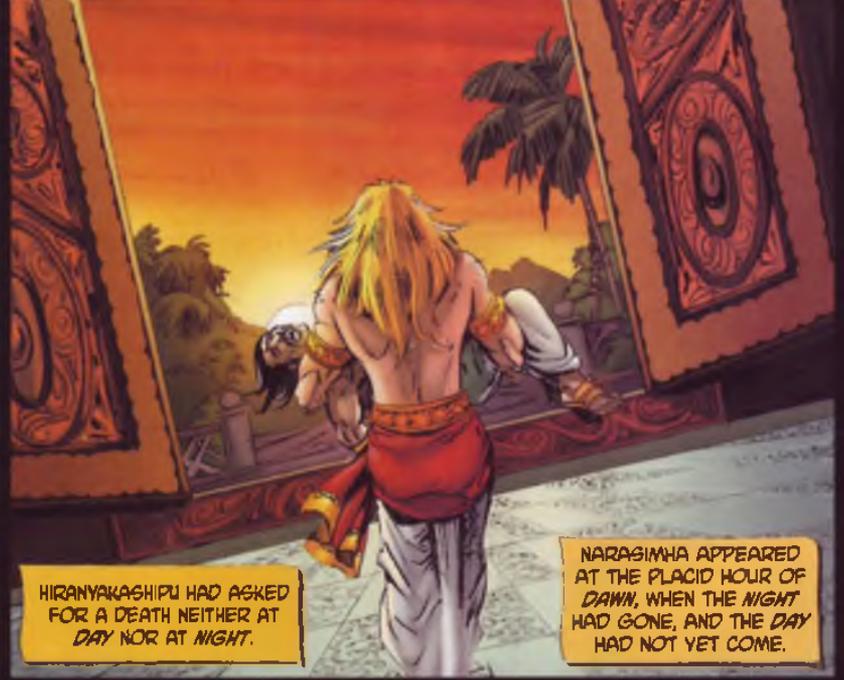


THE DEMON COULD BE KILLED BY NEITHER MAN NOR BEAST.



NARASIMHA WAS NONE OF THOSE.

HE WAS ALL MY RAGE, ALL OF A GOD'S FURY BOTTLED IN THE BODY OF A CHIMERAL CREATURE THAT WAS NOT QUITE HUMAN NOR WAS IT FULLY A BEAST.



HIRANYAKASHIPU HAD ASKED FOR A DEATH NEITHER AT DAY NOR AT NIGHT.

NARASIMHA APPEARED AT THE PLACID HOUR OF DAWN, WHEN THE NIGHT HAD GONE, AND THE DAY HAD NOT YET COME.



THE DEMON HAD ASKED NOT BE SLAIN ON EARTH OR IN SPACE.

THUS NARASIMHA PLACED HIM ON HIS OWN THIGHS.

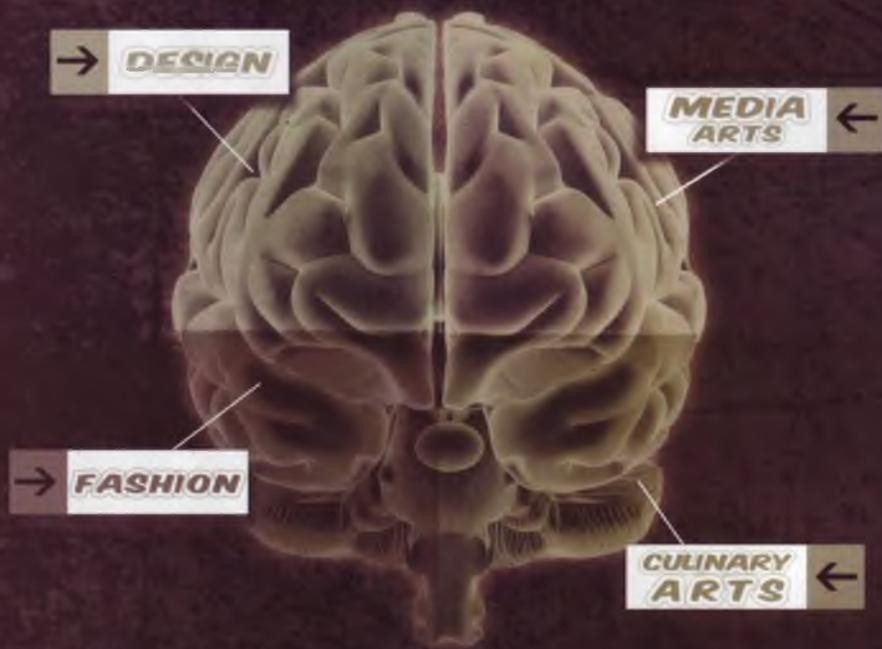
AS FOR THE INSTRUMENT OF DEATH...

...IT WAS NEITHER WEAPON NOR IMPLEMENT, BUT THE VERY CLAWS OF THE CHIMERAL WARRIOR.



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PERHAPS IT DAWNED ON THE
DEMON KING THAT NARASIMHA
INDEED WAS HIS DEATH, AGAINST
WHOM HIS *CONDITIONAL*
IMMORTALITY WOULD NOT HOLD.



MAYBE HE SENGED
AN INEVITABILITY...



...AS HE SAW THE
CLAWS OF NARASIMHA
DESCEND UPON HIM.



THAT HIS END HAD
COME, AS IT *MUST*
FOR ALL OF US.

THUS, THE REIGN
OF THE DEMON KING
HIRANYAKASHIPU
WAS ENDED.

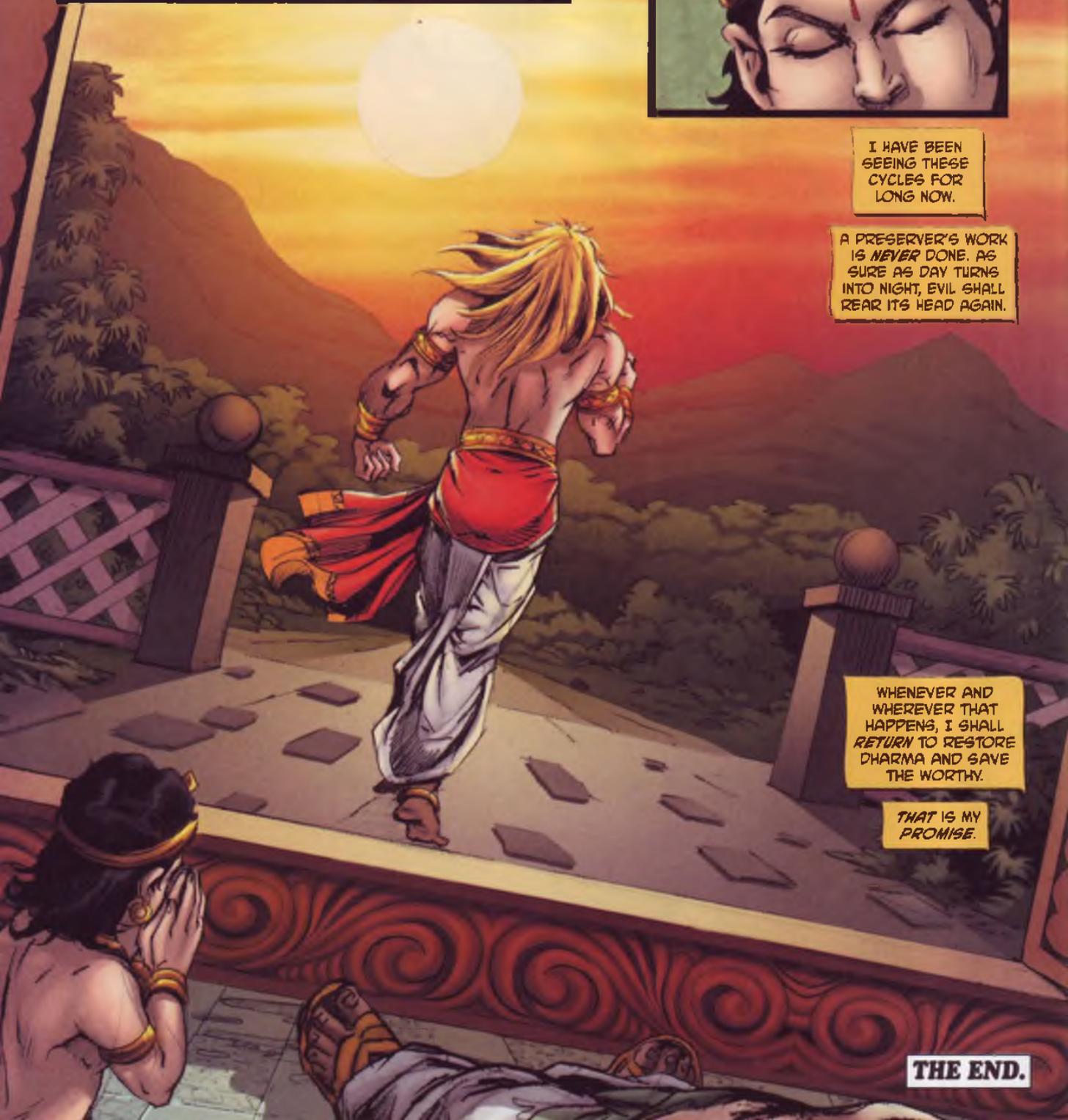




THE RISING
SUN IS A SYMBOL
OF HOPE.



AS THE SUN ROSE ON THAT
DAY IT BROUGHT WITH IT A
NEW DAWN, AN AGE WITHOUT
PERSECUTION FOR THOSE THAT
FOLLOW THE PATH OF DHARMA. THE
PROMISE OF A NEW TOMORROW LED
BY KING PRAHLAD THE SINLESS.



I HAVE BEEN
SEEING THESE
CYCLES FOR
LONG NOW.

A PRESERVER'S WORK
IS *NEVER* DONE. AS
SURE AS DAY TURNS
INTO NIGHT, EVIL SHALL
REAR ITS HEAD AGAIN.

WHENEVER AND
WHEREVER THAT
HAPPENS, I SHALL
RETURN TO RESTORE
DHARMA AND SAVE
THE WORTHY.

THAT IS MY
PROMISE.

THE END.



DAN DARE

WHO IS DAN DARE?

Is he Britain's most popular comic-book character of all time? Is he the reason that Garth Ennis agreed to tone down the expletives and imprecations? Or is he, as Ennis puts it, "our Captain America, our Superman, our Batman, he's all of them rolled into one"?

The answer to all of these questions is a resounding "yes." Exploding onto the British newsstands in 1950, Dan Dare was originally conceived in reaction to the horror comics being brought in from the US in the '40s. Dan Dare creator Frank Hampson and his partner Marcus Morris wanted to create a British hero that stood for morality and who promoted wholesome values. Colonel Daniel McGregor Dare—named after Hampson's wife's favorite hymn, "Dare to be a Daniel"—stood for honor, duty, and principle. He is, according to Ennis, the "quintessential British hero."

The original Dan Dare—which had wild success throughout the 1950s, selling all 900,000 copies of its first print run, and continuing consistently throughout the decade—took place in a fictional and then-futuristic 1990s, in a world governed by the United Nations. Dare was a colonel in the International Space Fleet, and was constantly saving the Earth from imminent destruction by nefarious forces, foremost among them, The Mekon: an evil genius and dictator who had enslaved the Treen people of Venus. Dare repeatedly rebuffed The Mekon's attempts to also enslave the people of Earth, earning himself fame and a reputation as the go-to hero of the Space Fleet.

In our revival of Dan Dare, Garth Ennis has meticulously updated this beloved icon. The United Nations has fallen, and Britain is the world's superpower, the Space Fleet has been disbanded and Dan Dare has retired. Yet, danger lurks on the edge of space. And because Dare is, above all, an officer and a gentleman, he heeds the call of his Prime Minister to return to the service—despite his severe misgivings about the PM himself. Ennis' Dare is simultaneously an homage to the great character that millions of British children grew up with and an extension of that character, bringing him to a world that is not united, where threats come from both on- and off-planet.

Don't miss this fantastic resurrection of a character that defined a generation. Between Garth Ennis' scripts and Gary Erskine's art, it's sure to be one wild ride.

See you on the inside.

The Virgin Comics
Editorial Team

Special Thanks to Peter Hampson

**DAN
DARE**



**INTERIORS BY
GARY ERSKINE**





SCRIPT

ART

GARTH ENNIS GARY ERSKINE

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VARIANT COVER BY
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A LEGEND RETURNS
11-28-2007

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THE LORD OF DEATH



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