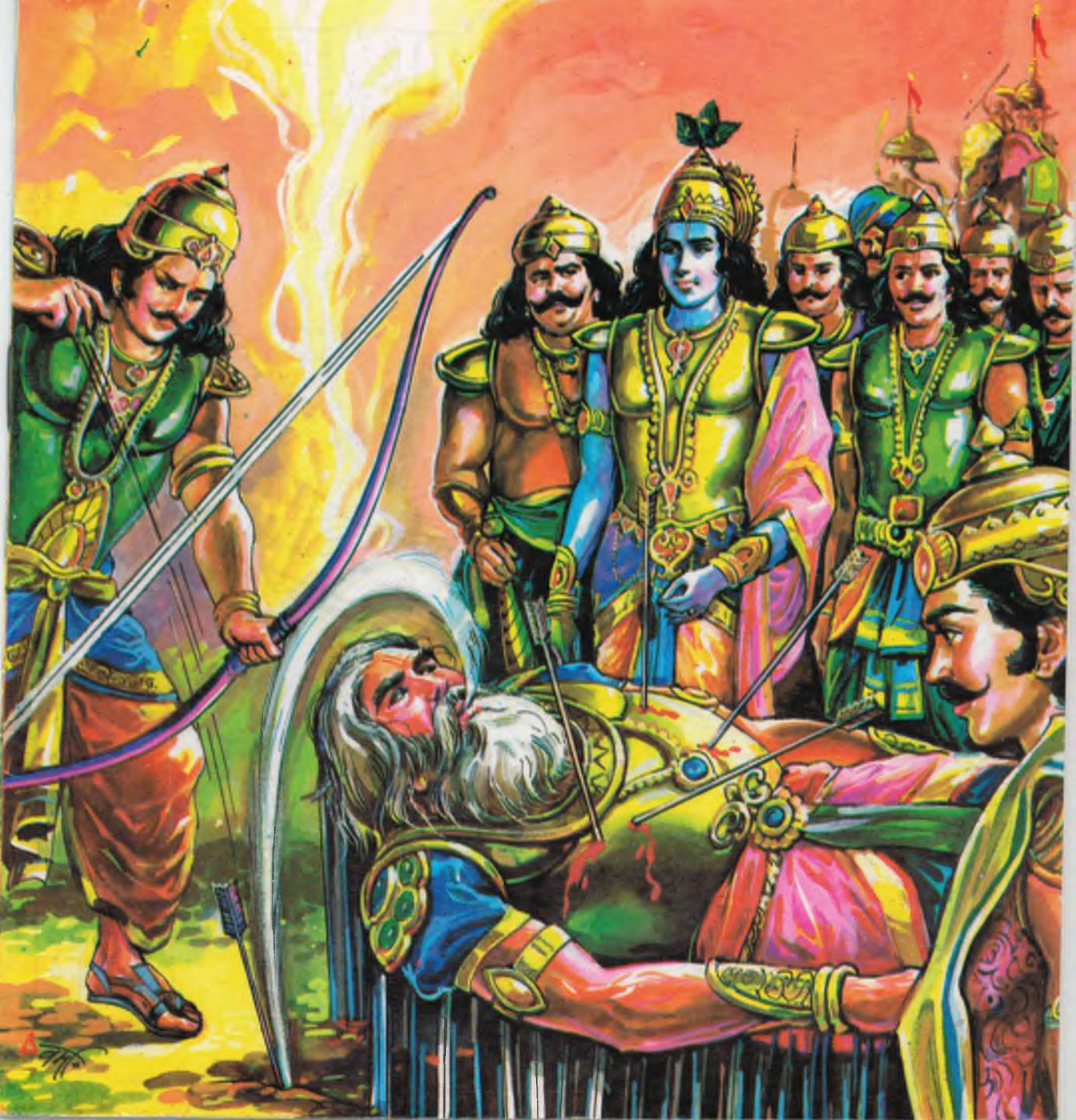




TITLE NO. 106

MAHABHARATA

Part 11



MAHABHARATA



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On one front a fierce battle started between Abhimanyu and Alambush, the demon, who had killed prince Uttar of Viratnagar. Abhimanyu was so furious that he forced the demon to flee the battle-field. On another front, a dreadful battle was going on between Satyaki and Ashwathama. Arjuna was engaged in a scuffle with Dronacharya. But this clash did not last long because of Bheeshma's approach there.

The old Kaurava general was really playing havoc today. Not only this, Duryodhana had deputed Dushashan also to defend Bheeshma. Bheeshma was in such a fury that the Pandava soldiers fell before him as cows fall before a lion. Seeing this, all the Pandava warriors attacked him in a body. Krishna was encouraging Arjuna to make short work of Bheeshma. He advanced his chariot towards the Kaurava General and a new life came to be infused in the Pandava soldiers.

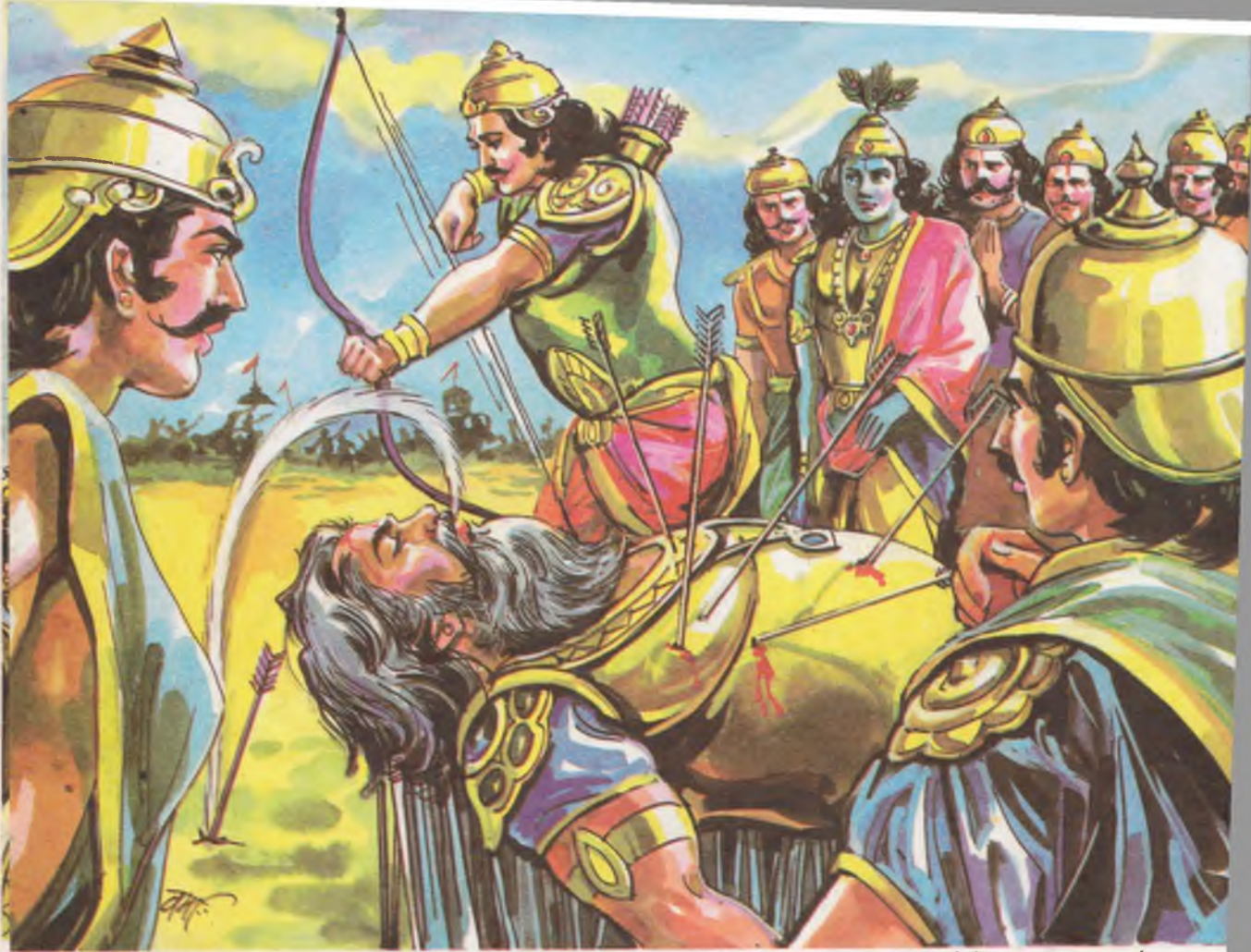
Arjuna broke Bheeshma's bow a number of times but the old warrior was not ready to budge even an inch. Enraged at this, Krishna ran towards Bheeshma with his chakra in his hand. Bheeshma greeted Krishna with a humble salute and Krishna was pacified. Arjuna came running and persuaded Krishna not to violate his promise of not fighting as a warrior in this war. Just then the sun set and the battle came to a close.



On the tenth day, Arjuna had set foot in the battle-field with a vow to kill Bheeshma. So, he had come accompanied by Shikhandi, a eunuch, who had taken a vow to get Bheeshma killed. Arjuna began to shower volleys of arrows on the old Kaurava general from behind Shikhandi. In no time, he pierced Bheeshma's chest with his arrows. Bheeshma became furious like a hungry lion though he had realised that his end was drawing near.

Arjuna and Shikhandi kept showering arrows on Bheeshma who was facing them with a smiling face. He had taken a vow not to attack a eunuch. He had come to be sure that this tenth day of the war was his last fighting-day. So, he jumped down his chariot with a sword in hand and ran towards Arjuna. But Arjuna was quite alert. He broke Bheeshma's sword and shield with his arrows. Every inch of Bheeshma's body had been penetrated with arrows and he had started staggering now.

For a moment, the old warrior leaned against the side of his chariot and then fell flat on the ground. His body was well above the ground supported by the penetrating arrows. Everybody was struck dumb at Bheeshma's fall whose match as a warrior is next to impossible to be found in the entire to-date history of the world. And this fall marked the beginning of the defeat of the Kauravas in the great war being fought at Kurukshetra.



For a short time, the battle came to a close and every soldier ran to where Bheeshma was lying on a bed of arrows to pay his tearful homage to the great warrior. Arjuna and Krishna too could not help running to that place. Bheeshma's head was hanging unsupported and he was experiencing great difficulty which he expressed to the on-lookers standing around him. Duryodhana ordered three-four pillows to be brought to provide support to the hanging head of the old warrior but Bheeshma refused to have them. Lovingly he addressed Arjuna and asked for the proper support so that his head might rest on it in line with the rest of the body.

Arjuna at once followed what his dear grandpa expected him to do. He took three sharp arrows out of his quiver and fixed them in the ground just under Bheeshma's head such that his head came to rest on their pointed tips. Bheeshma put on a broad smile and blessed Arjuna for what he had done. Then he told the on-lookers that he would breathe his last only when the sun had moved into the northern horizon.

Once again Bheeshma said to Arjuna, "Grandson!! am awfully thirsty. Get me some fresh cool water." Hearing this, Arjuna shot an arrow in the ground with such a force that a fountain of water gushed out of the earth and after reaching high in the sky, came down so as to fall into Bheeshma's mouth.



Feeling satisfied Bheeshma was all praises for Arjuna's skill in archery. At the same time, he could not check himself from giving a piece of advice to Duryodhana. He said, "Duryodhana! it is high time for you to come to the right path. Let the war come to an end along with my fall. Come to terms with the Pandavas and shun the war-path once for all otherwise the Kaurava dynasty is bound to meet with its doom within a few days only." But Duryodhana's evil soul did not allow him to heed the words of his grandpa. On the other hand, he got peeved and left the place in a jiffy to be followed by his warriors.

When Karna came to know that Bheeshma was lying on a bed of arrows, he could not control his sentiments. He ran to where the old warrior was lying and touched his feet. With tearful eyes, he said, "Grandpa! you have always denounced me for no fault of mine. My fault was that I was born to a charioteer."

Bheeshma asked Karna to come closer and sit down. This done, he placed his hand on Karna's head and said, "My son! you are not a charioteer's son but you were born to Kunti herself. You are the eldest Pandava indeed and so you are as dear to me as they are. I was displeased with you only because you supported Duryodhana in his vicious moves. You could have brought him to the right path easily. I want you to do it even now and bring this war to an end with my death."



Karna had heard what Bheeshma advised him to do. But he replied humbly, "Revered grandpa! I know that I am a brother to the Pandavas. But the favours showered by Duryodhana on me cannot be betrayed in any case. I am duty-bound to fight from his side against my own brothers. I have come to ask for your permission to do that."

Karna's curt reply disappointed Bheeshma. He said, "You may have your way, my son. I am on the eve of departure from this world. But remember that victory comes to those who are on the right path. Duryodhana is treading the path of evil while the Pandavas are on the right path. So, they are bound to be victorious."

Bheeshma's fall had left the Kaurava army almost leaderless. It was like a flock of sheep without any shepherd to mind them. So, everyone had his eyes at Karna to be their next general. The Kauravas were sure that brave Karna would certainly lead them to victory.

Karna asked for Bheeshma's blessings with folded hands. At last Bheeshma blessed him saying, "Karna! you have memorable exploits to your credit. You have defeated the Kambhojas, the Kiratas and the rulers of Girivraj. Lead the Kaurava army to defend Duryodhana. My good wishes are with you."

Having been blessed by Bheeshma, Karna came into the battle-field on his chariot and the Kaurava soldiers were infused with a new life.



As soon as Duryodhana saw Karna coming into the battle-field, he was beside himself with joy. He realised that the vacuum created by Bheeshma's fall could be easily fulfilled. Both the friends sat together to decide who the next general should be. Duryodhana asked Karna to assume the command of the Kaurava army in place of Bheeshma. But Karna gave him a very wise counsel which appealed to the Kaurava prince and he got ready to act upon it.

Karna said to Duryodhana, "Dear friend! a number of warriors fighting from our side possess the qualities that make a good general. But to appoint anyone of them to this responsible post is sure to estrange others. And it is sure to prove suicidal for us. So, we must entrust the command of the Kaurava army to a warrior who should be acceptable to one and all. In my opinion, Dronacharya is the right choice." So, Drona was made the next general of the Kaurava army.

The appointment of Drona as the Kaurava general was welcomed by one and all and he arrayed the army into the form of a cart. Everybody was sure that Drona would be successful in killing all the Pandavas and leading the Kaurava army to a glorious victory. Dronacharya conducted the war for five days as the Kaurava general. Every day the Pandavas had to suffer severe reverses with heavy losses.



The eleventh day of the war was the first day of Drona's generalship. Though he was fighting for Duryodhana, yet his innate affection for the Pandavas goaded him not to harm any of the five brothers. Duryodhana and Karna were well aware of this fact. So, they hatched a plot and went to Drona. Duryodhana requested the great guru, "We shall be highly obliged to you, if you plan to capture Yudhishtir alive and hand him over to me."

Drona was extremely happy that he was required only to capture and not to kill Yudhishtir. So, he gladly gave his assent to the plan because he knew little about Duryodhana's evil design behind this plan. The Pandavas too had come to know of Duryodhana's plan and Drona's assent to carry it out. So, it was decided that Yudhishtir's person should be protected with special care.

When Drona came into the battle-field, he broke through the Pandava lines where Dhristadyumna was leading the soldiers. Sahdev was fighting against Shakuni and a fierce mace-battle was going on between the two. Nakul fell upon Shalya, his real maternal uncle and forced him to retreat after losing the horses of his chariot. Bheema was playing havoc with his mace and the Kaurava soldiers ran before him as the deer run before a leopard.



The eleventh day's battle was really very dreadful. The warriors from the both the sides were fighting with a vengeance and the soldiers were falling in heaps. Satyaki, Abhimanyu and king Virata were especially furious. Abhimanyu's war-tactics and courageous moves were so matchless that even the enemies could not help praising him. He was facing Paurav, Kritvarma, Jaidrath and Shalya single-handed. Seeing, it Bheema challenged Shalya and a fierce mace-mattle began between the two.

Drona was disappointed to see that Abhimanyu defeated his three opponents and forced them to retreat. Bheema gave such a staggering blow to Shalya with his mace that he fell down senseless. Seeing it, the Kaurava soldiers lost heart and rushed pell-mell. Drona's eyes were searching for Yudhishtir and at last he spotted him. Losing no time, he raced his chariot in that direction. But Yudhishtir was quite alert. He showered volleys of arrows of Drona but all to no purpose. So, Drona penetrated through the Pandava lines and got ready to capture Yudhishtir.

The Pandava soldiers raised a hue and cry, "Yudhishtir has been captured, Yudhishtir has been captured." To the dismay of Drona, Arjuna appeared on the scene in his chariot and stood before the great guru. He rained arrows at Drona with such a skill and rapidity that the great guru had to retreat empty-handed.



Drona had miserably failed in his attempt to capture Yudhishtir alive. Not only this, he had come to realise that as long as Arjuna was there, it was impossible to be successful in this job. So, he said to Duryodhana, "Duryodhana! it is impossible to capture Yudhishtir alive till Arjuna is there to defend him. So, you must do something to lead Arjuna away from him."

Susharma, the ruler of Trigart, undertook the job of leading Arjuna away from Yudhishtir. He raised a large regiment of soldiers and invested them with the **Samshaptak Pledge**. Every soldier vowed that he will not come back from the battle-field until and unless Arjuna was killed. These soldiers were wearing special types of dresses and armours which indicated that they were up to fight to the last breath.

The death squad challenged Arjuna under the leadership of Susharma because they knew that Arjuna could not remain silent after hearing the challenge. So, Arjuna entrusted the protection of Yudhishtir to Draupadi's brother Satyajit and got ready to go and face the death squad. Krishna led Arjuna's chariot towards the death squad and the brave Pandava fell upon them like a hungry lion. A fierce battle raged between Arjuna and the death squad.



Seeing Arjuna engaged in a bloody battle against the death squad, Drona ordered his soldiers to advance in the direction wherein Yudhishtir was fighting. Seeing this, Satyajit (Dhrishtadyumn) rushed to check Drona's advance. We know that his very birth had taken place for Drona's murder at his hands. Drona also knew it and so he, for a moment, trembled from head to foot out of fear. Drona turned his chariot to one side with a view to facing king Drupad. He routed Drupad's soldiers and then all of a sudden advanced towards Yudhishtir.

But Satyajit was quite alert. He came between Drona and Yudhishtir. A bloody battle followed and a large number of Pandava warriors were killed. Two brothers of Draupadi and the prince of Virata kingdom were also killed. Just then Bheema saw his elder brother in danger and came to face Drona along with Satyaki, Nakul, Drupad, Virata, Shikhandi and several other warriors. They cordoned off Yudhishtir and Drona could not be successful in his mission.

Seeing this, Duryodhana, along with Karna, ran for Drona's help. A large regiment of war elephants was with them too. But Bheema was more than a match for them. His onslaught forced the war-elephants to run back trampling their own soldiers under their feet.



King Bhagdukt was an exceptionally brave old warrior. Seeing Bheema in the most dreadful form, he advanced towards him on the back of his elephant named Suprateek. This elephant was famous for its war tactics. It curled its trunk round Bheema's waist and lifted him up. Then whirling him round and round in the air it flung him down with a thud. Everybody thought that Bheema was no more. But the brave Bhishma had a body made of steel, so to say. He got up swiftly and moved under the belly of Suprateek.

Bheema knew that he could kill the elephant by striking at its most sensitive organs. So, he gave several hard blows on the most sensitive organs of Suprateek and forced it to run away from the battle-field with its master on its back. Soon Yudhishtir sent a regiment for Bheema's help and a fierce battle restarted as Bhagdukt had returned to the battle-field.

Arjuna was fighting with a vengeance against the death squad of king Susharma. Most of the soldiers of this squad had been killed while the rest of them were fighting with an iron will. Arjuna was very anxious about Yudhishtir's safety. The trumpeting of Suprateek added to Arjuna's worries and he asked Krishna to drive his chariot to where Yudhishtir was. Krishna complied with Arjuna's request in no time.



Susharma and his soldiers of the death squad raised a war-cry and ran after Arjuna's chariot. Arjuna was in a fix indeed. If he moved further, it meant that he had shown his back in the field. But if he stayed there to face the death squad, Yudhishtir's safety was in danger. Arjuna was still thinking what to do or not when Susharma shot a divine weapon on him and another on Krishna. Taken unawares, Arjuna flew into a violent rage and shot three arrows that nullified both the divine weapons. Not only this, he shot another arrow at Susharma who was forced to retreat with his soldiers.

Krishna at once drove the chariot to where Bheema was facing Bhagdutt. Arrival of Arjuna instilled a new life in the Pandava soldiers and they fell upon the enemy. Arjuna showered arrows on Bhagdutt and his elephant and pierced the elephant's armour. The beast shrieked aloud in pain. Then Arjuna pierced Bhagdutt's body with his arrows. Soon Bhagdutt's elephant fell down dead and along with it the old warrior also breathed his last.

Then came Shakuni's two brothers—Vrishak and Achal to face Arjuna. But they could not hold on before his fatal arrows. Seeing his brothers lying dead Shakuni could not control himself and rushed at Arjuna in a fit of anger. But Arjuna wounded him badly and he fled the battle-field.



The twelfth day of the war had ended with great losses to the Kaurava army. Dronacharya had not been successful in capturing Yudhishtir alive. In the morning of the thirteenth day Duryodhana went to Drona and swore at him in the presence of the soldiers. The great guru felt hurt and said, "Duryodhana! impatience is man's grave weakness. Arjuna is protecting his brother with great care." The battle again started when Shsharma's soldiers of death squad challenged Arjuna. So, Arjuna went in hot chase of his enemies.

Finding Yudhishtir unprotected by Arjuna, Drona led a fierce attack on him. Though a number of warriors like Satyaki, Dhrishtadyumn, Kuntibhoj, Virata and Bheema tried to stem the advance of the great guru, yet they failed to do so. Everybody felt worried for Yudhishtir's safety. Just at that time Abhimanyu appeared on the scene.

Drona was advancing with his soldiers arrayed in a circular form. none of the Pandava brothers except Arjuna knew how to break through his array. But Abhimanyu had heard from his father how to pierce through it though he did not know how to come out of it safely. So, Abhimanyu directed his charioteer, Sumitra, towards Drona's chariot and asked his uncle Bheem to follow him with his mace so that he might seek his help to come out of the array.



The charioteer said to Abhimanyu, "Prince! it is my duty to suggest to you that you should weigh the pros and cons of your entry into the Kaurava array because it can prove dangerous to you. Whereas Drona is a past master in the arts of warfare, you are still under-ripe."

"Bursting into a peal of laughter, Abhimanyu replied, "You are right, Sumitra; but you should not forget that I am a nephew to Shree Krishna and the blood running in my veins is that of the best archer in the world. Fear or doubt cannot take courage to come near me. Race my chariot to where the great guru is commanding his army."

Seeing Abhimanyu's chariot racing towards themselves, the Kaurava army was startled. The soldiers knew that Abhimanyu was as brave and fearless a warrior as his father. They gave way to the advancing chariot of Abhimanyu and the entire array was shattered. In no time, heaps of dead bodies could be seen lying around.

Seeing this, Duryodhana got perplexed and came forward to face Abhimanyu. Drona sent a regiment of soldiers for Duryodhana's help. Abhimanyu was going to capture Duryodhana alive when the soldiers sent by Drona reached for his help. But it was with grave difficulty that they could get Duryodhana free.



Abhimanyu's courage and bravery proved to be an eye-sore for Duryodhana who had already lost his peace because of the fear from Arjuna and Bheema. How could he brook the rise of Abhimanyu as an even greater warrior. He decided to violate all the norms of warfare and kill Abhimanyu by hook or by crook. Even Dronacharya was so surprised at Abhimanyu's boldness that he joined Duryodhana in his evil move. So, Drona, Ashwathama, Karna, Sakuni, Jaidrath, Ashmakh and Shalya—seven warriors surrounded Abhimanyu from all sides.

But Abhimanyu remained undaunted. He killed Ashmakh and pierced the armour of Karna. He wounded Shalya and made him senseless. When Shalya's younger brother attacked Abhimanyu, the Pandava prince killed him with a single arrow. Seeing this, Drona began to praise Abhimanyu which Dushashan could not tolerate. So, he attacked Abhimanyu along with his soldiers. A long battle followed between the two and finally Dushashan was so badly wounded that his charioteer had to carry him out of the battle-field.

Once again, Karna came forward to attack Abhimanyu. But Arjuna's brave son forced him to lick dust as he broke his bow with a single arrow. Seeing Karna unarmed, his brother ran for his help. But before he could do anything Abhimanyu pierced his chest with an arrow and he fell down dead then and there.



Abhimanyu's unchecked advance into the Kaurava lines and his merciless massacre of the Kaurava soldiers sent a current of anxiety among the Kaurava warriors. Seeing them worried, Jaidrath, son-in-law of Dhritrashtra, attacked Abhimanyu with a fresh regiment of soldiers. This infused a new courage among the Kaurava soldiers and they arrayed themselves once again in the circular form. Abhimanyu's chariot came to be surrounded within the array while his supporters including Bheema were left outside it.

Abhimanyu was thus isolated by Jaidrath's timely move. All his four uncles were battling against Jaidrath at the entry of the circular array. Jaidrath was reminded of Lord Shiva's boon which he had obtained after abducting Draupadi. He remembered Lord Shiva and prayed that he should be able to prevent the four Pandavas from entering the Kaurava array. Luckily he was able to check-mate the four Pandava brothers.

Abhimanyu was playing havoc inside the circular array. He was killing the Kaurava soldiers mercilessly. The Kaurava soldiers again lost ground and their lines started shattering. Nobody could hold his own before the tender-aged Pandava prince and Duryodhana was not able to decide what to do.



Seeing his father extremely worried, Duryodhana's son Laxmana decided to face Abhimanyu. He came forward and rallied some fresh soldiers in order to attack his cousin. A short battle followed but Laxmana could not face Abhimanyu for long. Abhimanyu shot such a violent arrow at Laxmana as pierced his chest and he fell down lifeless on the ground. The Kaurava soldiers began to bewail aloud to see the young prince lying dead.

Duryodhana went mad in grief and anger and shouted, "Do away with this Arjuna's son who is all alone among us. Violate all the rules of the war-code to achieve this purpose if required. He has killed my son whom I loved most dearly." It was a pitiable pity that even Dronacharya became a party to this dirty game. Six warriors surrounded Abhimanyu and Karna attacked him from his back which was altogether against the norms of fighting.

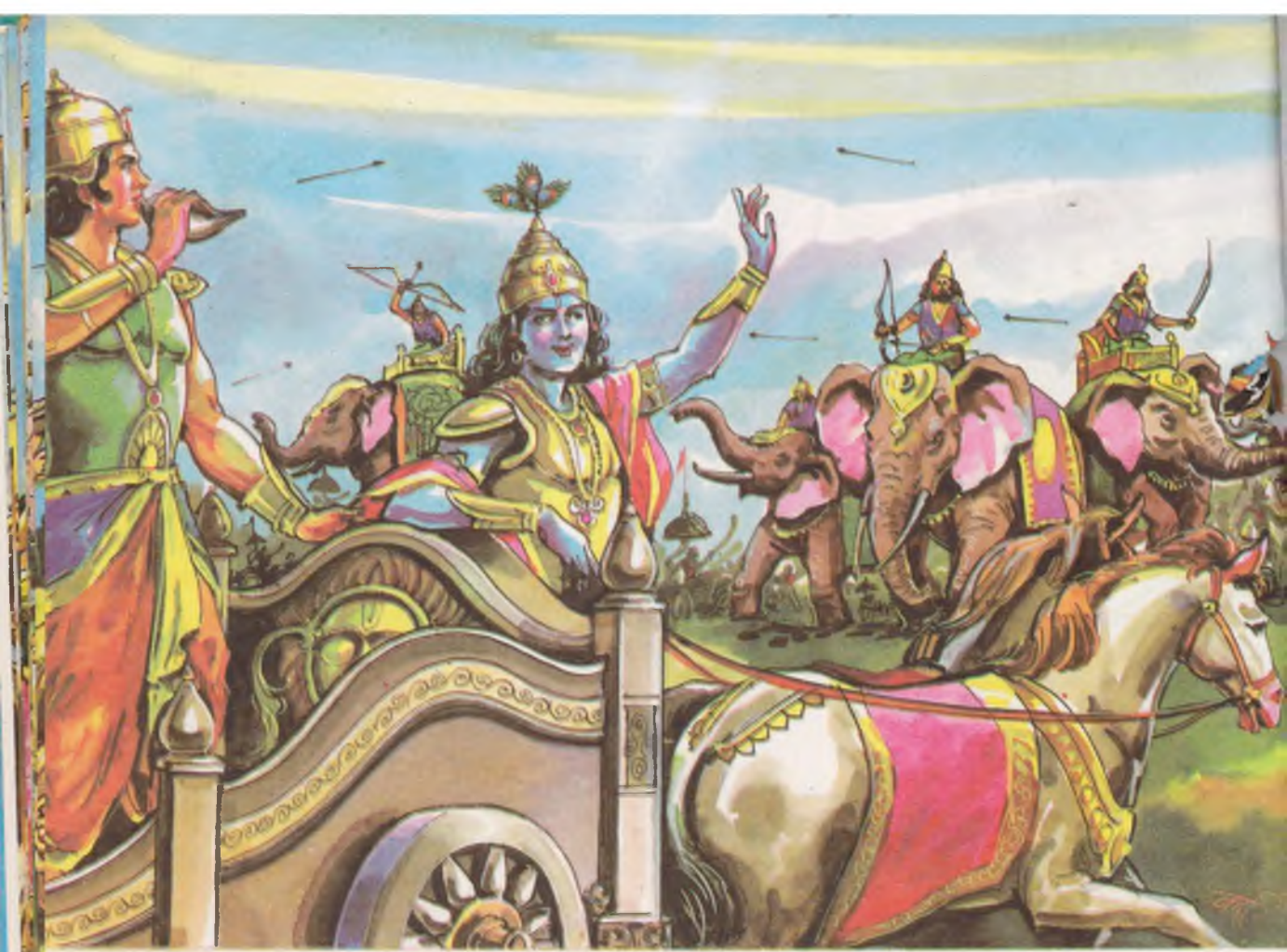
In this way, Abhimanyu came to lose his armour, quiver of arrows, bow as well as his shield. Even then he did not lose heart and lifted the wheel of a nearby broken chariot. He killed about a dozen soldiers with it but the wheel was broken. Now Dushashan's son attacked him with a mace which Abhimanyu snatched from him. Dushashan's son was unarmed so Abhimanyu did not attack him. But somebody struck him with a mace from behind on his head and he fell down dead.



Abhimanyu's death sent a current of joy in the Kaurava camp. But Yudhishtir got lost in limitless grief. Sitting in his camp, he was bewailing over the loss of his brave nephew. He did not know how to pacify Arjuna and Subhadra, Abhimanyu's mother. Just then Saint Vyasa reached there. Yudhishtir greeted him respectfully and sat motionless before him. The saint consoled him and advised him not to mourn the death of a brave warrior.

Arjuna had decimated the death squad of Susharma and he was returning to the Pandava camp. He was feeling upset though he was not able to understand its reason. Reaching the Pandava camp, he came to know of Abhimanyu's unlawful murder and began to bewail over the loss of his dear son. Krishna pacified him but Arjuna wanted to know how Abhimanyu had been killed. Yudhishtir told him that Jaidrath did not allow them to enter the array otherwise they would have saved Abhimanyu.

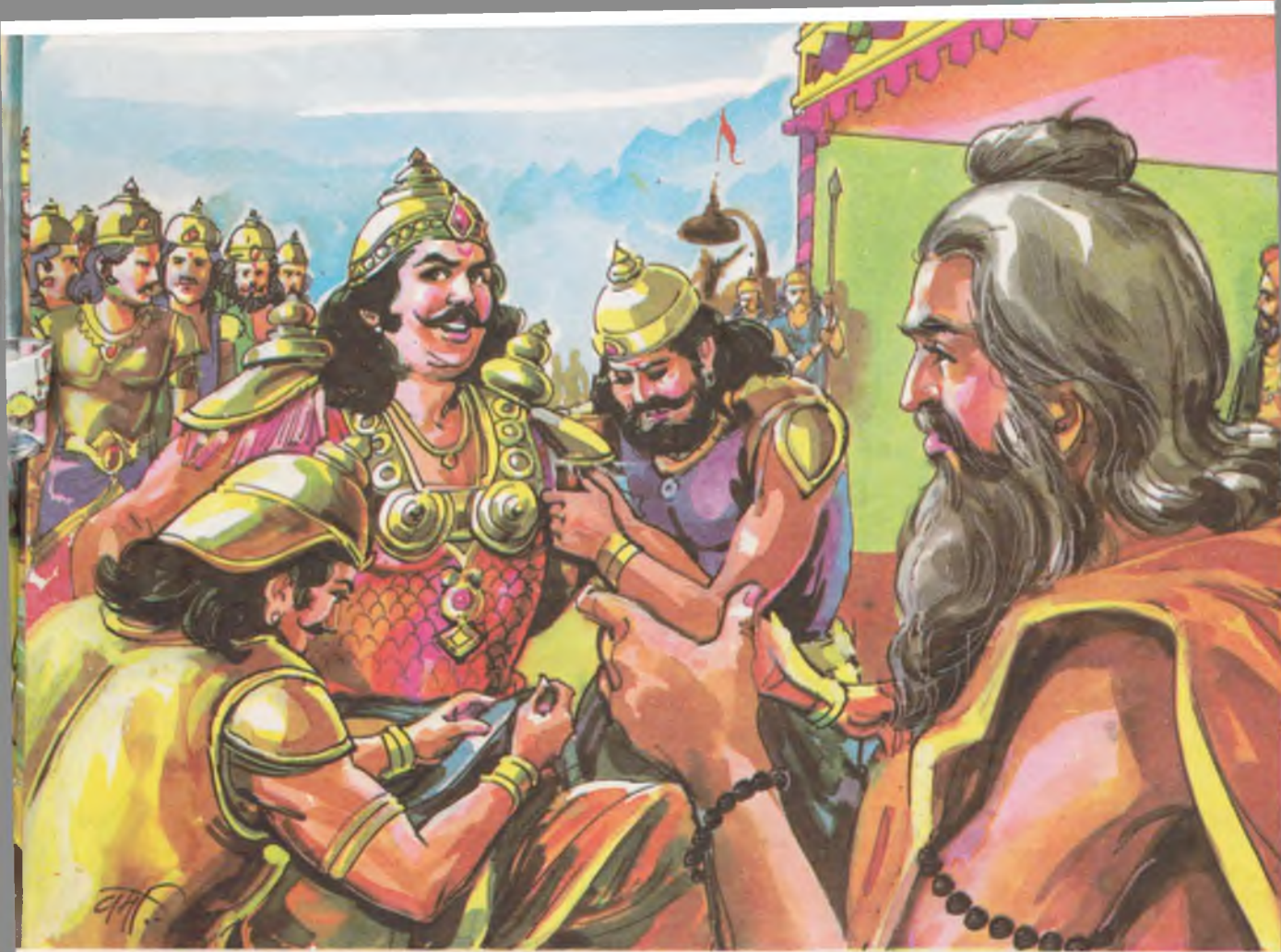
Hearing Yudhishtir's words, Arjuna fell down senseless. After some time, he gained consciousness and got red in anger. A bitter feeling of revenge against Jaidrath arose in his mind because Jaidrath had already incurred his wrath by forcibly abducting Draupadi during their exile. So, he took a pledge, "I must kill Jaidrath by the sunset of tomorrow."



When Jaidrath came to know of the pledge taken by Arjuna, he got frightened and went to Duryodhana. He expressed a desire to go back to his country so that he should be safe. But Duryodhana consoled him saying that proper measures have been taken for his protection. Then Jaidrath went to Drona and expressed his fear. The great guru also encouraged him assuring him of his proper protection.

Then Dronacharya arrayed the Kaurava soldiers in a most invincible form so that even Arjuna might find it difficult to break through it. Jaidrath and his regiment were stationed in the heart of the Kaurava army well protected by regiments of notable Kaurava warriors. When the battle of the fourteenth day was going to start, Duryodhana's brother Durmarshan turned up with his large army consisting of chariots, war-elephants, cavalry, infantry and strong regiments of archers.

Durmarshan asked his soldiers to line up in front of the Kaurava army and facing the Pandava army. He, then, challenged Arjuna aloud. Arjuna accepted the challenge sounding his shell and asked Krishna to drive his chariot towards the regiment of war-elephants. In no time, Arjuna routed the entire army of Durmarshan. Dushashan came with a fresh reinforcement but he had to retreat.



Now Arjuna turned to where Dronacharya was standing. He said to the great guru, "Revered guru! I am roaming in search of Jaidrath so that I may kill him and fulfil my plege. Be kind enough to let me know where he is." Drona replied. "Arjuna! you cannot go near Jaidrath without defeating me as I have undertaken to protect him." Arjuna was going to shower arrows on Dronacharya when Krishna asked him to move further because it was not wise to lose time in fighting the great guru.

Krishna drove Arjuna's chariot towards the left wing of the Kaurava army. A number of Kaurava warriors came to face Arjuna but most of them were killed while others fled the battle-field. Thus penetrating through the lines of the Kaurava army. Arjuna reached where Jaidrath was standing surrounded by his protectors. When Duryodhana saw Arjuna advancing towards Jaidrath, he felt highly worried and ran to Dronacharya. He told him that Arjuna had broken through the Kaurava lines and was about to fall upon Jaidrath.

Drona gave Duryodhana an enchanted armour and asked him to put it on. He then sent him to where Arjuna was looking for Jaidrath and engage him in a bitter fight. Drona had a plan to capture Yudhishtir alive keeping Arjuna away from him. Duryodhana put on the armour and marched against Arjuna with a regiment of soldiers.



Satyaki was feeling tired and weak. A soldier ran to Yudhishtir and asked him to send someone for Satyaki's help. So, Dhrishtadyumna advanced with a fresh regiment of soldiers to face Drona so that Satyaki might take rest. Satyaki returned to the camp and rested for some time while Drupad's son kept Drona engaged in a fierce battle. Suddenly Yudhishtir heard the sound of Krishna's shell named Panchajanya. He felt worried about Arjuna's safety.

Yudhishtir asked Satyaki to go with a band of fresh soldiers for Arjuna's help but he humbly replied, "Arjuna had entrusted me with the task of protecting you from Drona in the morning. How can I leave you unprotected? Worry not at all; Arjuna is invincible and Krishna is with him." But Yudhishtir's heart was gripped with anxiety about Arjuna's safety. He was blaming himself for Abhimanyu's murder and didn't want any harm to come to Arjuna.

Seeing Yudhishtir highly worried, Satyaki proceeded for Arjuna's help leaving Yudhishtir in Bheema's protection. But no news about Arjuna reached the Pandava camp which made Yudhishtir even more anxious. So, he asked Bheema to go and bring news about Arjuna. Bheema at once obeyed his brother and left the camp for where Arjuna was searching for Jaidrath.



Seeing Duryodhana coming at a distance Krishna alerted Arjuna saying, "Brother dear! don't let this golden chance slip out of your hands. Kill Duryodhana who is at the root of this war. Don't let him come near and shower arrows on him." Arjuna rained arrows on Duryodhana but could not harm his cousin in any way. Gazing fixedly at Duryodhana, Arjuna was able to see through the secret of the enchanted armour.

Now Arjuna showered enchanted arrows at Duryodhana and was soon able to overpower him breaking his chariot, killing its horses and wounding him very seriously. So, Duryodhana ran away from the battle-field leaving Jaidrath to his fate. on the other hand, Dhrishtadyumn decided to keep Drona engaged in a bitter fight so that Arjuna should be able to kill Jaidrath and fulfil his pledge.

A bitter fight started between Dhrishtadyumn and Dronacharya. Dhrishtadyumn took out his sword and jumped onto the chariot of Drona with a view to killing him with one stroke. But the great guru shot such a dreadful arrow at his opponent that he could save himself with great difficulty with the help of Satyaki. Now Drona turned to Satyaki and a bitter fight followed between the two. Soon Satyaki was able to break Drona's bow three times and Drona was forced to shoot a fire-arm at Satyaki. But Satyaki skilfully rendered it useless.



Bheema had to face Dronacharya before he could break through the Kaurava lines. The great guru had been tired and so he could not prevent Bheema from advancing further. Soon Bheema reached near Arjuna and finding him quite safe and sound, gave out a loud roar. Hearing this roar, Yudhishtir's worry melted away and he was in high spirits once again. Now he was sure that Arjuna would surely kill Jaidrath and fulfil his vow.

The fourteenth day of the battle was on its last legs. Bitter fights were going on between Satyaki and Bhurishrava, between Bheema and Karna and between Jaidrath and Arjuna. The Pandava soldiers were attacking Drona time and again but the great guru was bravely defending the entrance to the Kaurava army. Seeing the havoc played by Satyaki, Bheema and Arjuna, Duryodhana felt highly worried and gave a bit of his mind to Drona.

Bheema was trying his level best to get near his brother Arjuna so that he should feel encouraged and fight even more bravely. But the Kaurava warriors were trying to check his advance though unsuccessfully. Whoever chanced to come in front of the mighty Pandava was done to death with one powerful stroke of his mace. Seeing this, Karna came forward with a view to preventing Bheema's advance. The fight between the two deserves a detailed mention.

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