

Amam  
chitra  
kathas

# SUBHADRA

THE BELOVED SISTER OF KRISHNA

NO. 74      Rs. 5-50



Arjuna, the Pandava, was the most famous archer of his times. By his feats of archery he won his first wife Draupadi. But through an inadvertent remark of Mother Kunti, Draupadi had to become wife to all the five Pandavas (Yudhishtira, Bheema, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva). To make her task easy the brothers set a rule for themselves. Once Arjuna was compelled by circumstances to break the rule. He insisted on bearing the punishment for the defaulter—twelve years' exile from Indraprastha, their city.

In this exile Arjuna met Uloopi and Chitrangada, the daughter of the King of Manipur. The King gave her to Arjuna on condition that the son born to them would be permitted to live at Manipur and become his successor. Arjuna stayed at Manipur for three years of his exile, after which he proceeded to Prabhasa. There he saw Subhadra and fell in love with her.

The story, as narrated in this book, is based on Mahabharata.

**AMAR CHITRA KATHA** means good reading.  
Over 330 titles are now on sale

© IBH Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Bombay 400 026.  
All rights reserved.

Published by H.G. Mirchandani for IBH Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 22, Bhulabhai Desai Road, Bombay 400 026 and printed by him at IBH Printers, Marol Naka, Mathuradas Vissanji Road, Andheri (East), Bombay 400 059.

Editor: Anant Pai      Retold by: Kamala Chandrakant

# SUBHADRA



SUBHADRA WAS THE BELOVED SISTER OF KRISHNA AND BALARAMA. BALARAMA, UNSURPASSED IN WIELDING THE MACE, TAUGHT MANY PRINCES THE ART.

BHEEMA, THE PANDAVA, AND HIS COUSIN DURYODHANA, THE KAURAVA WERE THE BEST PUPILS.

OF THE TWO, DURYODHANA WAS HIS FAVOURITE.



BHEEMA HAS STRENGTH, BUT DURYODHANA HAS THE SKILL.

HE CAN NEVER BE DEFEATED IN A DUEL. SUBHADRA SHALL WED HIM WHEN SHE COMES OF AGE.



WHEN THE COUSINS GREW UP, YUDHISHTHIRA, THE ELDEST PANDAVA, WAS PROCLAIMED THE HEIR APPARENT.



THE JEALOUS DURYODHANA TRIED TO BURN THEM ALIVE.



BUT THE PANDAVAS AND THEIR MOTHER KUNTI ESCAPED AND WENT INTO HIDING AS BRAHMANS.

WHILE THEY WERE IN HIDING, ARJUNA, THE PANDAVA WON DRAUPADI, THE PRINCESS OF PANCHALA IN A SWAYAMVARA.



HE AND HIS BROTHERS  
LED HER HOME.



MOTHER! SEE WHAT  
WE HAVE BROUGHT  
TODAY.

WHATEVER  
IT IS, SHARE  
IT EQUALLY.



SO DRAUPADI HAD TO BE WIFE TO ALL FIVE OF THEM, SOON AFTERWARDS HALF THEIR KINGDOM WAS RESTORED TO THEM AND THEY RETURNED WITH DRAUPADI AND MOTHER KUNTI, TO REIGN OVER IT.

SHE WILL HAVE TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT NOT LETTING ANY ONE OF US FEEL HURT, NEGLECTED OR JEALOUS.

WE MUST HELP HER OUT.



THE PRINCES CAME TO AN AGREEMENT.

WHEN DRAUPADI IS ALONE WITH ANY ONE OF US NONE OF THE OTHERS SHOULD INTRUDE.

SHOULD ONE OF US BREAK THIS RULE, HE MUST GO INTO EXILE FOR 12 YEARS.



ONE DAY, DRAUPADI WAS ALONE WITH YUDHISHTHIRA.



JUST THEN A BRAHMAN CAME RUNNING TO ARJUNA.

O PANDAVA! THIEVES ARE DRIVING AWAY MY CATTLE. HELP! HELP!



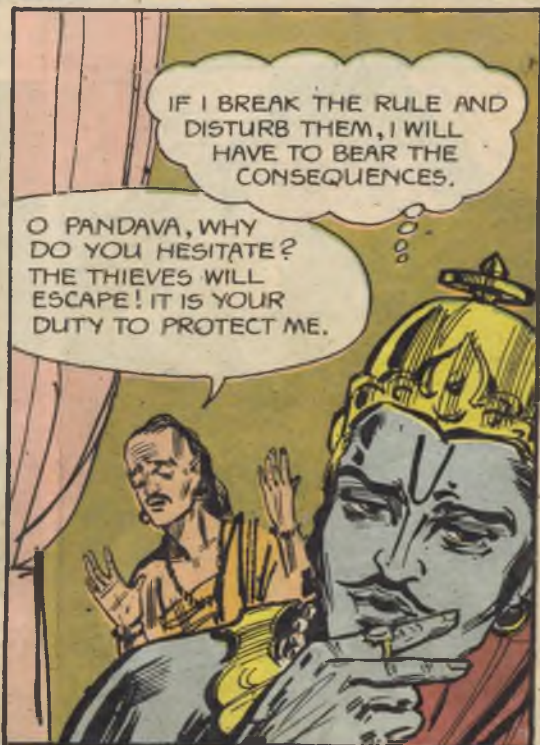
ARJUNA WAS IN A DILEMMA.

MY WEAPONS ARE IN YUDHISHTHIRA'S ROOM, AND DRAUPADI IS WITH HIM.



IF I BREAK THE RULE AND DISTURB THEM, I WILL HAVE TO BEAR THE CONSEQUENCES.

O PANDAVA, WHY DO YOU HESITATE? THE THIEVES WILL ESCAPE! IT IS YOUR DUTY TO PROTECT ME.





ARJUNA DECIDED TO BREAK THE RULE. HE RUSHED INTO THE ROOM...



...GRABBED THE WEAPONS...



...AND RUSHED OUT. THE BRAHMAN WAS WAITING FOR HIM.





ARJUNA RESTORED THE CATTLE TO THE BRAHMAN, AND RETURNED TO YUDHISHTHIRA.

I BROKE THE RULE.  
I AM READY TO GO  
AWAY FOR TWELVE  
YEARS.

NO, BELOVED  
BROTHER!  
I FORGIVE YOU.  
YOU MUST  
NOT GO.



A RULE IS A RULE.  
I HAVE BROKEN IT.  
I WILL TAKE MY  
PUNISHMENT.

AS YOU  
WISH.



AS ARJUNA SET OUT, HE  
WONDERED WHERE HE  
SHOULD GO AND WHAT  
HE SHOULD DO. AT LAST-

I WILL VISIT ALL  
THE HOLY  
PLACES ONE  
BY ONE.



DURING THE COURSE OF HIS PILGRIMAGE, HE REACHED PRABHASA NEAR DWARAKA.



HE WENT UP CLOSER.



AND RIGHT THERE ARJUNA  
MADE A VOW TO HIMSELF.

AND SO  
SHALL IT  
BE. I SHALL  
WIN THE  
FAIR  
SUBHADRA.



HE DISGUISED HIMSELF AS A  
SANYASI.

THIS TRIDENT  
IS THE SYMBOL  
OF RENUN-  
CIATION.  
BALARAMA  
WILL NEVER  
SUSPECT  
WHO  
I AM.



IN THIS GARB ARJUNA ENTERED DWARAKA.

THE RAINS WILL SOON  
BE HERE. THAT SHALL BE  
MY EXCUSE TO LINGER IN  
THIS CITY FOR A  
FULL SEASON  
AND WIN THE  
FAIR ONE.



THE CITIZENS SAW THE SANYASI AND CAME TO PAY HIM THEIR RESPECTS. ONE DAY BALARAMA PASSED THAT WAY.



BALARAMA GOT DOWN FROM HIS CHARIOT AND WALKED UP TO THE SANYASI. THE MOMENT HE SAW ARJUNA, HE TOOK AN INSTANT LIKING TO HIM.



BALARAMA SPOKE TO HIM.

O HOLY ONE, I WOULD FEEL HIGHLY HONoured IF YOU CAME TO MY PALACE AND ALLOWED ME TO ENTERTAIN YOU THERE.

FOR ONE WHO HAS RENOUNCED THE WORLD, THE VILLAGE AND THE PALACE ARE THE SAME. I ACCEPT YOUR INVITATION.



ARJUNA WAS ELATED BY THIS TURN OF EVENTS.

IT WILL BE FAR EASIER FOR ME TO ACHIEVE MY OBJECT FROM WITHIN THE PALACE.



INSIDE THE PALACE ARJUNA WAS IMMEDIATELY RECOGNISED BY KRISHNA.

DEAR ARJUNA! HERE? BUT...



HE WAS ABOUT TO TALK TO HIM WHEN ARJUNA SILENCED HIM WITH A WINK.



KRISHNA TOOK THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO QUESTION ARJUNA.

WHEN DID YOU COME? WHY HAVE YOU COME ALONE? AND IN THIS GARB? WHERE ARE THE OTHERS?

IT'S A LONG STORY.



ARJUNA TOLD HIM EVERYTHING. AS HE WAS ABOUT TO FINISH, A DAZZLING BEAUTY WITH HER BEVY OF MAIDS WALKED PAST THEM.



SUBHADRA TOO WAS ATTRACTED BY THE RECLUSE.



ARJUNA KEPT STARING AFTER HER.



WHO CAN RESIST THE CHARM OF SUCH A GIRL? WERE SHE TO BECOME MY WIFE, ALL PROSPERITY WOULD BE MINE.



TELL ME, KRISHNA, HOW CAN I WIN HER?



I WILL DO ANYTHING FOR HER. I WILL ACHIEVE WHATEVER SHE WANTS ME TO IF ONLY SHE WILL BE MINE.



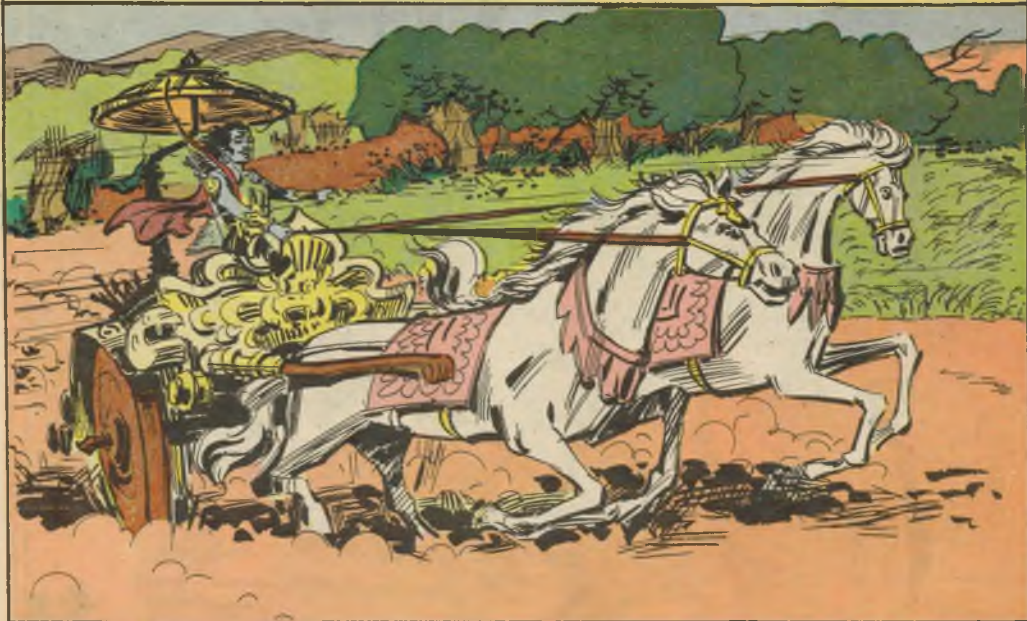
KRISHNA WAS DELIGHTED. HE PREFERRED ARJUNA TO DURYODHANA FOR HIS SISTER.



AS THE DAYS PASSED, ARJUNA OFTEN SAW SUBHADRA BUT HAD NO CHANCE TO FIND OUT WHAT SHE THOUGHT. THEN ONE DAY—



AS SOON AS THE CHARIOT WAS READY ARJUNA SET OUT TO TAKE HIS BRIDE.



MEANWHILE SUBHADRA HAVING WORSHIPPED THE DEITIES, WAS ON HER WAY TO THE PALACE.

OF WHAT USE ARE MY PRAYERS? COULD I EVER BECOME THE WIFE OF ONE WHO HAS RENOUNCED THE WORLD?



SUDDENLY, SHE SAW A CHARIOT APPROACHING IN THE DISTANCE.

THE RECLUSE ? DRESSED  
IN ARMOUR AND  
BRANDISHING A SWORD?  
IN MY BROTHER'S  
CHARIOT ?



AS HE WHIZZED PAST THEM ARJUNA LEANED FORWARD, SWEEPED HER INTO THE CHARIOT...

WH...UH...  
WHAT...



... AND RODE OFF.

HEE!



SUBHADRA'S MAIDS AND GUARDS RAN SHOUTING TOWARDS DWARAKA.

HELP! SUBHADRA HAS BEEN CARRIED AWAY! HELP!



AS SOON AS THEY REACHED THE COURT AT DWARAKA, THEY RELATED THE WHOLE INCIDENT TO THE CHIEF OFFICIAL, WHO SUMMONED ALL THE CLANSMEN TO ARMS.



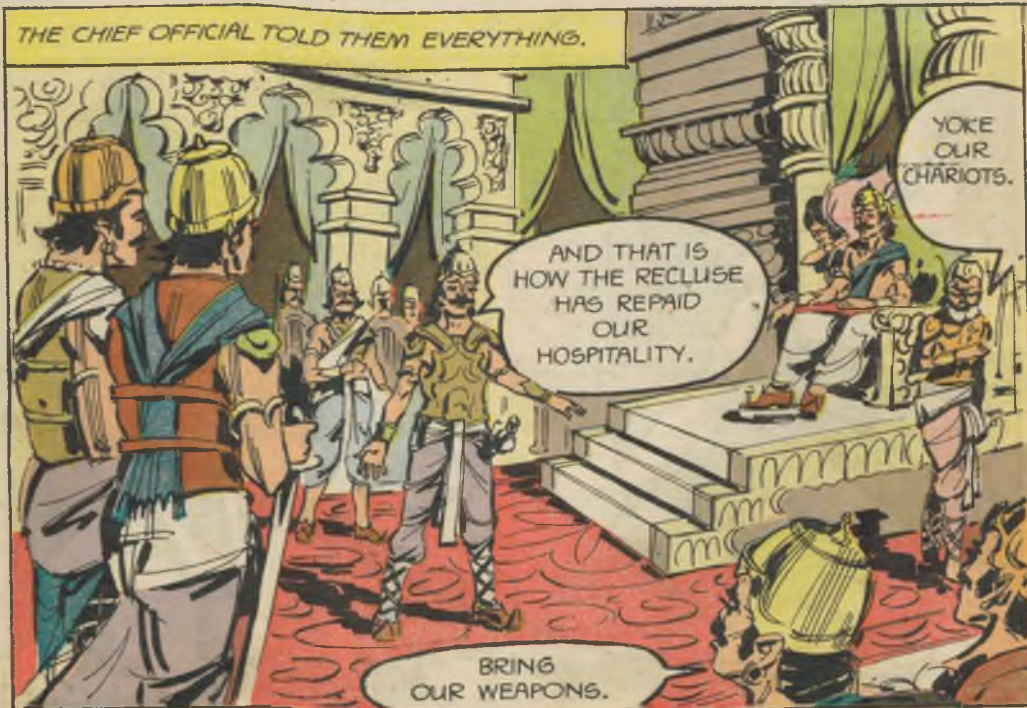
STIRRED BY THE CALL THE CLANSMEN LEFT WHATEVER THEY WERE DOING.



THEY Poured IN FROM ALL DIRECTIONS AND TOOK THEIR PLACES IN THE COURTROOM.



THE CHIEF OFFICIAL TOLD THEM EVERYTHING.



LOUD WAS THE UPROAR WHEN THEIR CHARIOTS, ARMOUR AND STANDARDS WERE BEING ASSEMBLED.



AT THAT MOMENT BALARAMA CAME OUT.





O KRISHNA,  
HOW CAN YOU  
REMAIN CALM  
WHEN OUR  
HELPLESS SISTER  
IS IN THE  
CLUTCHES OF  
A WILY  
RECLUSE ?

THAT WAS NO RECLUSE.  
IT WAS ARJUNA,  
THE PANDAVA .



ARJUNA, THE  
PANDAVA ?

YES! AND  
IT WAS NO  
ABDUCTION  
EITHER.  
IT WAS A  
MARRIAGE.  
SUBHADRA'S  
INNERMOST  
WISHES  
WERE  
KNOWN  
TO HIM.





BUT I HAD  
DECIDED TO  
GIVE HER TO  
DURYODHANA.



AGAINST HER  
WISHES? ARJUNA  
KNEW THIS, AND  
BEHAVED AS A  
KSHATRIYA SHOULD.



WE HAD BETTER  
ACCEPT IT AND  
NOT INTERFERE.  
HE IS INVINCIBLE  
IN BATTLE. IF WE  
GIVE CHASE AND  
ARE DEFEATED  
BY HIM, WE WILL  
LOSE FACE!

THEN WHAT SHOULD WE DO?



GO AFTER THEM. CONGRATULATE THEM. ASSURE THEM OF OUR APPROVAL AND BRING THEM BACK. THERE IS NO DISGRACE IN IT.

SO BALARAMA AND A FEW CLANSMEN SET OUT ON THE MISSION.



THEY SOON CAME UPON A STATIONARY CHARIOT. ARJUNA AND SUBHADRA WERE RESTING UNDER THE SHADE OF A TREE.



BALARAMA WALKED UP TO THEM.

WE HAVE COME TO  
TAKE YOU BACK. YOU  
SHALL MARRY  
SUBHADRA IN  
OUR CITY.



LATER, AT DWARAKA, ARJUNA MARRIED SUBHADRA.




TIME FLEW PAST AND SOON THE PERIOD OF ARJUNA'S EXILE WAS OVER.



AT INDRAPRASHTA, THEY FIRST PAID THEIR RESPECTS TO YUDHISHTHIRA.



THEN LEAVING SUBHADRA IN THEIR CHAMBER, ARJUNA WENT TO DRAUPADI.




DRAUPADI,  
I'VE  
RETURNED.

A scene from a comic book showing Draupadi sitting at a table, looking downcast. Arjuna stands behind her, looking at her with a concerned expression. The room is ornate with a window in the background.

WHY ARE YOU  
WASTING YOUR TIME  
HERE? GO TO THAT  
YADAVA GIRL.  
A SECOND TIE  
ALWAYS WEAKENS  
THE FIRST.

ARJUNA TRIED TO PACIFY HER.



I HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN  
YOU EVEN FOR A  
DAY. PLEASE, DRAUPADI,  
LOOK AT ME.

A close-up of Arjuna and Draupadi. Arjuna is on the right, looking at Draupadi with a pleading expression. Draupadi is on the left, looking away with a sad and weary expression.

BUT DRAUPADI WOULD NOT SOFTEN,  
AND ARJUNA WENT OUT OF THE ROOM,



HE RETURNED TO SUBHADRA.

WHAT DID SHE SAY?

NEVER MIND. CHANGE  
YOUR CLOTHES.  
WEAR THE  
SIMPLE  
GARB OF  
A MAID.



BUT SUBHADRA LOOKED EVEN  
LOVELIER AND ALMOST TOOK  
ARJUNA'S BREATH AWAY.

COME. LET US GO AND PAY OUR  
RESPECTS TO MY MOTHER.

I KNOW  
MOTHER KUNTI  
HAS ALWAYS  
LOVED ME,  
BUT...



THEY WENT  
TO KUNTI'S  
CHAMBER.

HAVE YOU TAKEN HER TO  
DRAUPADI? SHE MUST  
PAY HER RESPECTS TO  
HER ELDER  
SISTER.

YES, MOTHER.  
I'LL TAKE HER.





I SHALL WAIT  
OUTSIDE. YOU  
GO FIRST. I'LL  
FOLLOW LATER.



SUBHADRA ENTERED.

I AM YOUR  
MAID, ELDER  
SISTER. I WILL  
DO WHATEVER  
YOU WANT  
ME TO.

*DRAUPADI WAS MOVED AND ASHAMED. SHE ROSE HASTILY FROM HER COUCH AND EMBRACED SUBHADRA.*



WELCOME, MY  
SISTER. LET OUR  
HUSBAND BE  
EVER  
PROSPEROUS.