



NO. 512 RS. 30



Tales of Vishnu





Illustrated Classics From India

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Amar Chitra Katha is a collection of illustrated classics that retell stories from Indian mythology, history, folktale and legend through the fascinating medium of comics. Over 430 stories from all over India have been told in this series that has been endorsed by educationists and recommended by teachers the world over.

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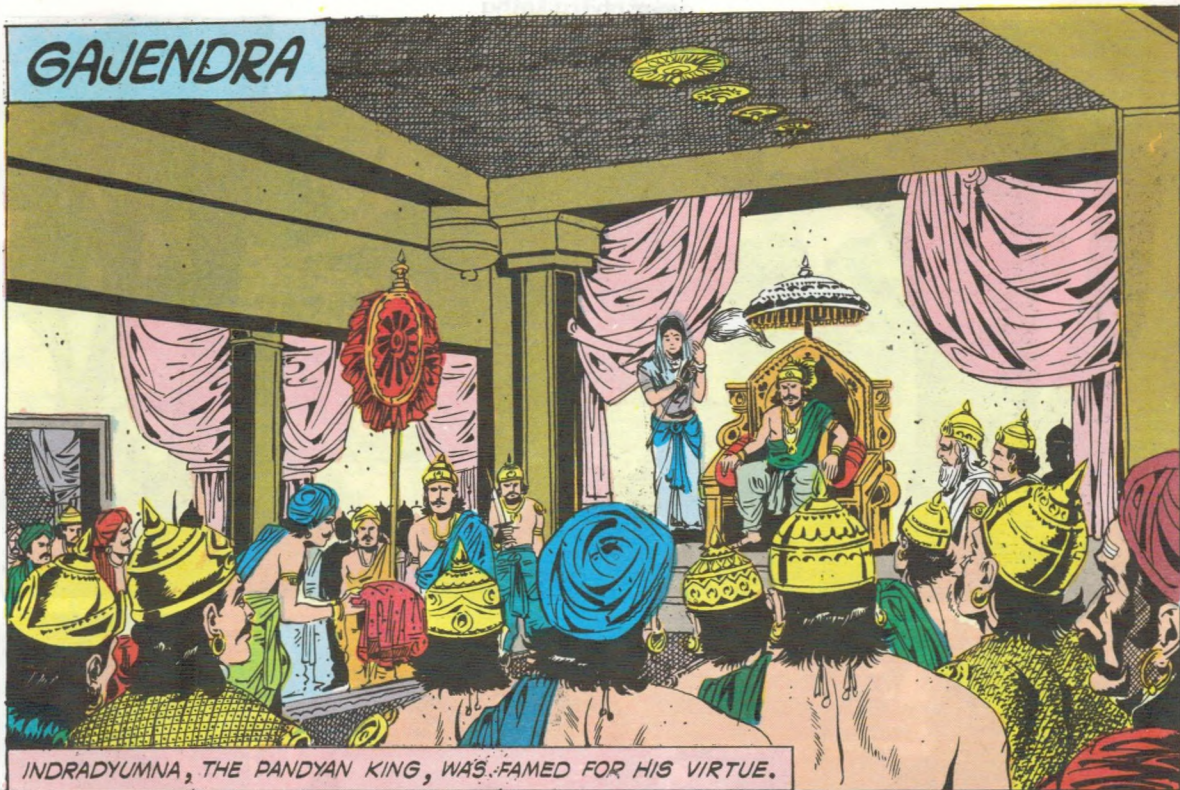
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INDIA BOOK HOUSE

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Published and Printed by India Book House Pvt Ltd, Mahalaxmi Chambers,
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GAJENDRA



INDRADYUMNA, THE PANDYAN KING, WAS FAMED FOR HIS VIRTUE.

ONE DAY, HE CALLED A MEETING OF HIS COUNSELLORS.

I HAVE DECIDED TO RETIRE TO THE FOREST AND DEVOTE ALL MY TIME TO THE WORSHIP OF THE LORD.

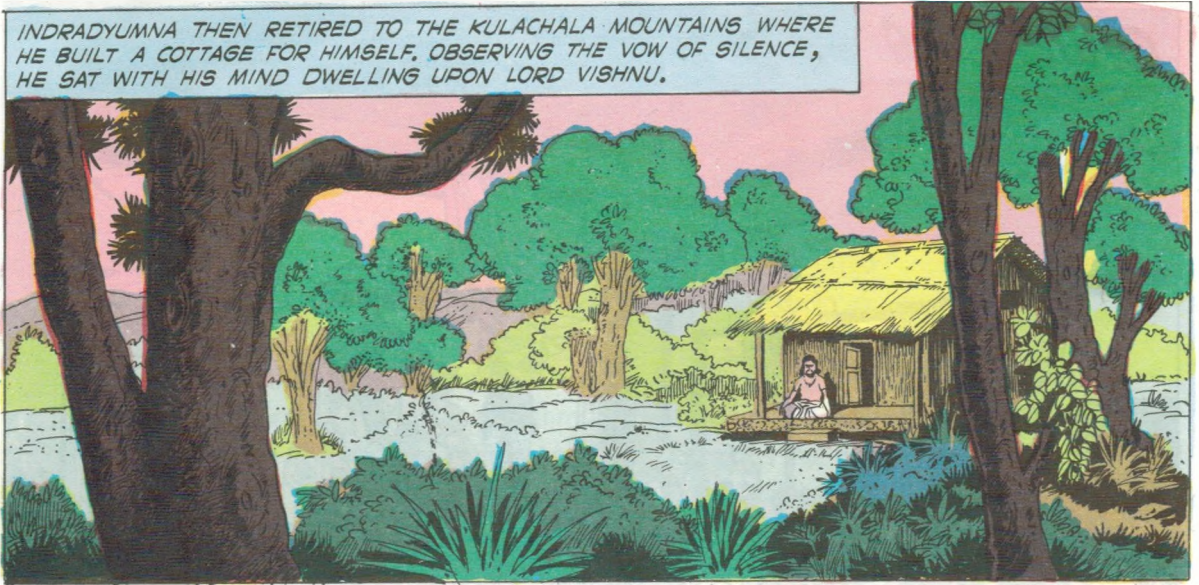
BUT, YOUR MAJESTY... THE KINGDOM...



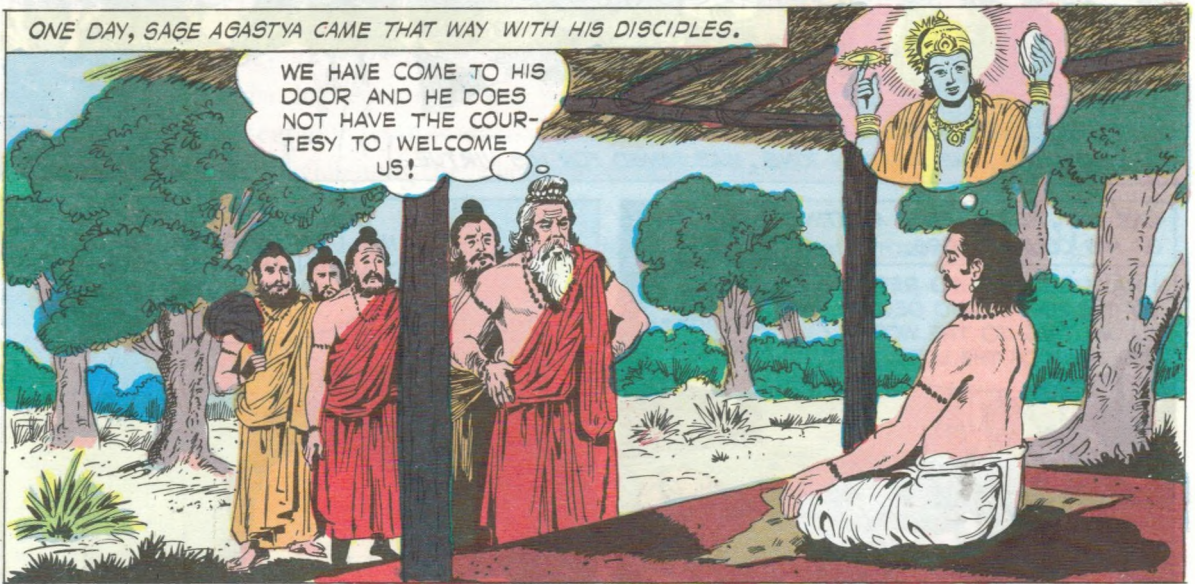
DON'T TRY TO STOP ME. I AM CONFIDENT THAT YOU CAN AND WILL TAKE CARE OF THE KINGDOM.



INDRADYUMNA THEN RETIRED TO THE KULACHALA MOUNTAINS WHERE HE BUILT A COTTAGE FOR HIMSELF, OBSERVING THE VOW OF SILENCE, HE SAT WITH HIS MIND DWELLING UPON LORD VISHNU.



ONE DAY, SAGE AGASTYA CAME THAT WAY WITH HIS DISCIPLES.



WE HAVE COME TO HIS DOOR AND HE DOES NOT HAVE THE COURTESY TO WELCOME US!

YOUR ARROGANCE SHALL NOT GO UNPUNISHED! MAY YOU TURN INTO AN ELEPHANT.

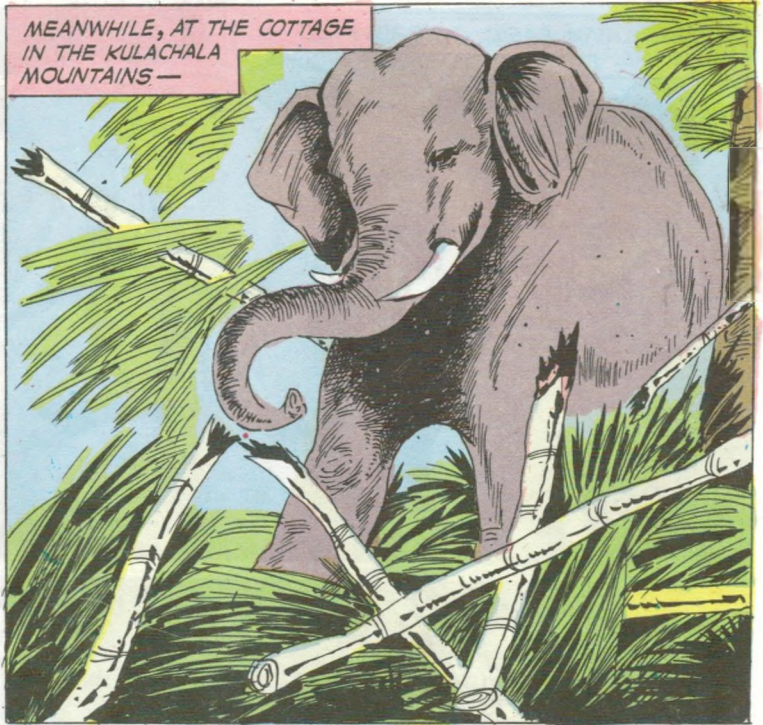


IN HIS CELESTIAL ABODE, LORD VISHNU SMILED WHEN HE HEARD THE CURSE OF AGASTYA.

AGASTYA, YOU HAVE UNKNOWNLY DONE MY DEVOTEE A GREAT SERVICE!



MEANWHILE, AT THE COTTAGE IN THE KULACHALA MOUNTAINS —



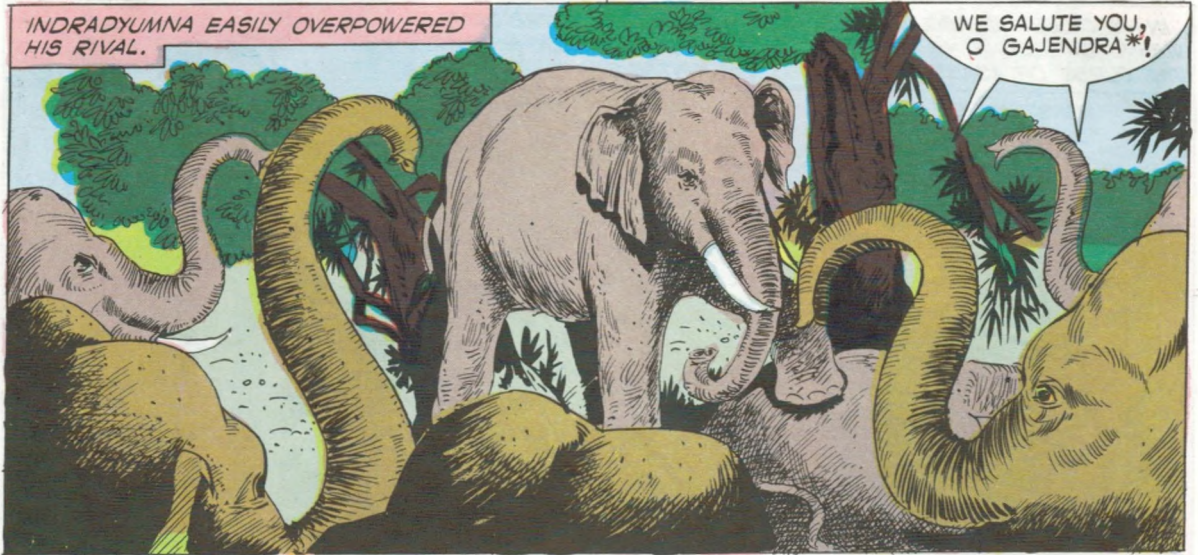
AS INDRADYUMNA BEGAN TO ROAM ABOUT IN THE FOREST, HE CAME ACROSS A HERD OF ELEPHANTS.

I WILL HAVE TO FIGHT THEIR KING. ONLY THEN WILL THE HERD ACCEPT ME.



INDRADYUMNA EASILY OVERPOWERED
HIS RIVAL.

WE SALUTE YOU,
O GAJENDRA*!



ONE DAY —

LET US
GO TO THE TRIKUTA
MOUNTAIN. IT'S A
BETTER PLACE THAN
THIS.

WE'LL FOLLOW
YOU TO THE END OF THE
EARTH, O GAJENDRA.

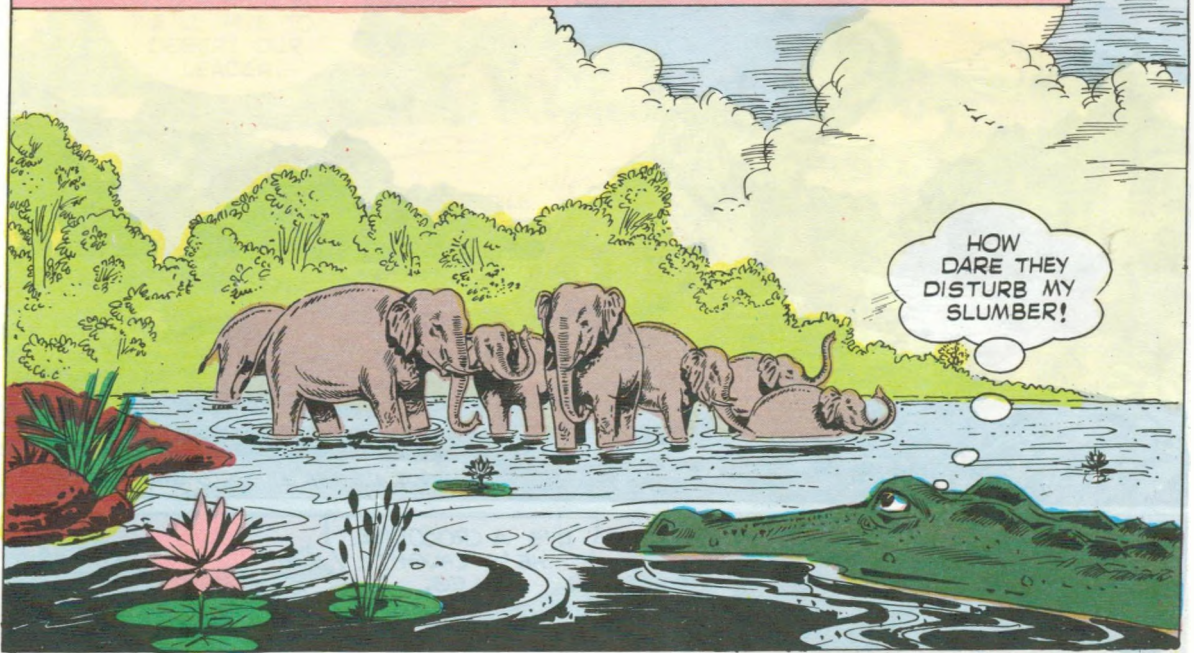


LED BY GAJENDRA, THE HERD TOOK THE TRIKUTA FOREST BY STORM.

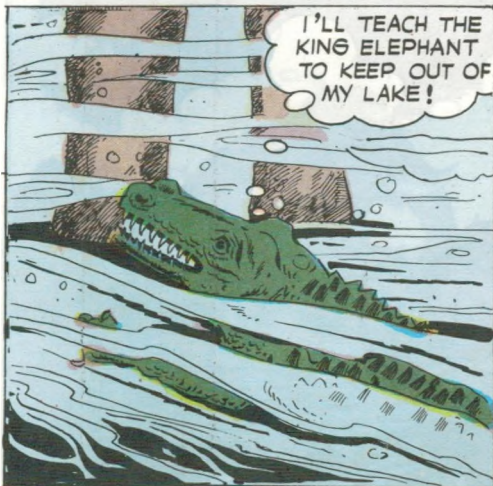
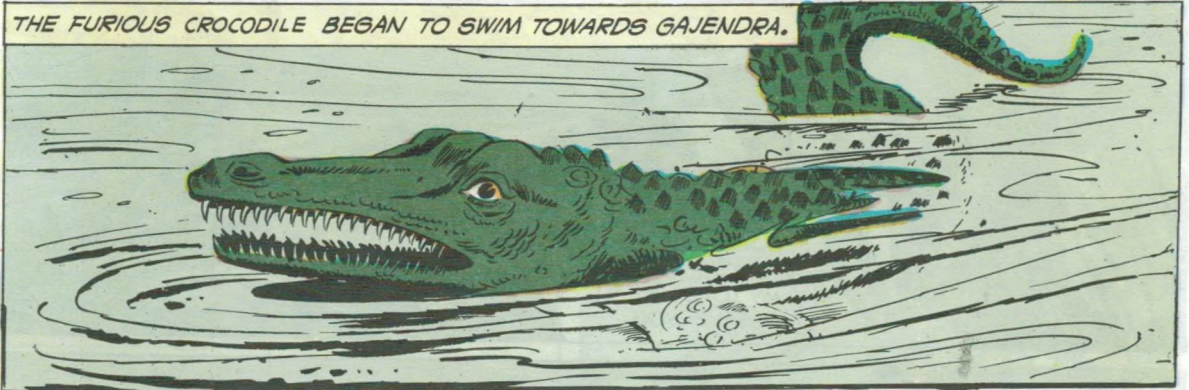


* KING ELEPHANT

THE ELEPHANTS THEN ENTERED A LAKE, WHICH WAS THE ABODE OF A CROCODILE.



THE FURIOUS CROCODILE BEGAN TO SWIM TOWARDS GAJENDRA.



I'LL TEACH THE KING ELEPHANT TO KEEP OUT OF MY LAKE!

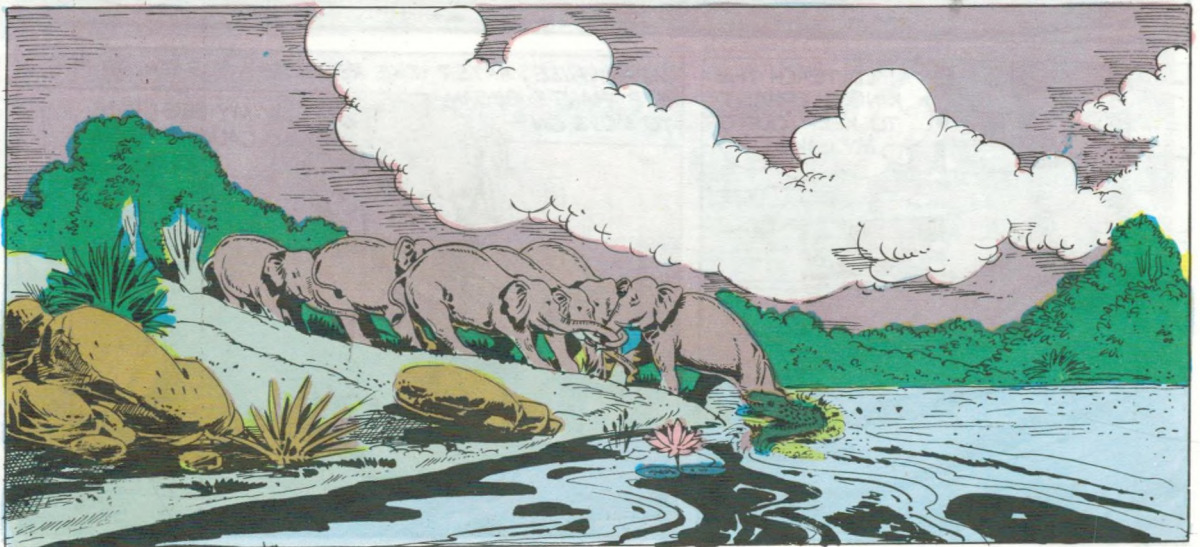
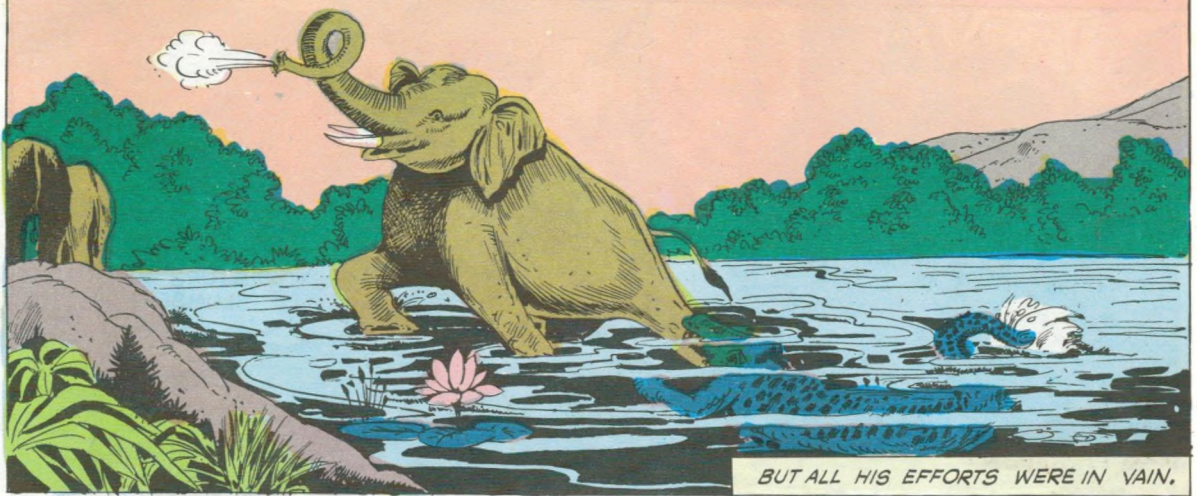
MEANWHILE, AFTER THE REFRESHING BATH, AS THE ELEPHANTS BEGAN TO MOVE ON—

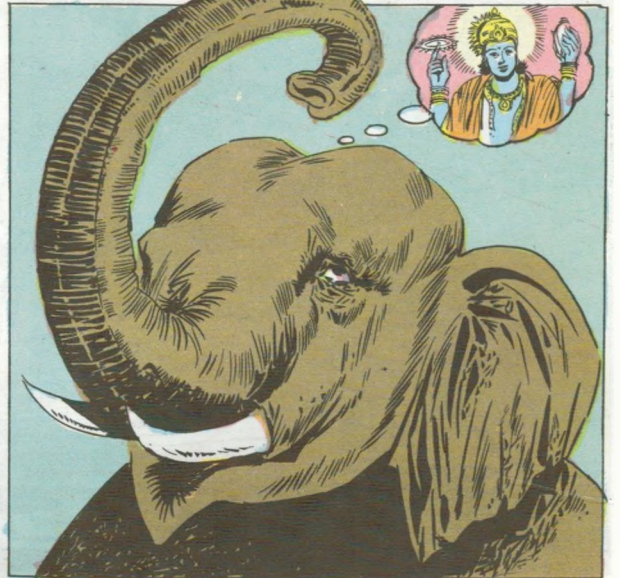
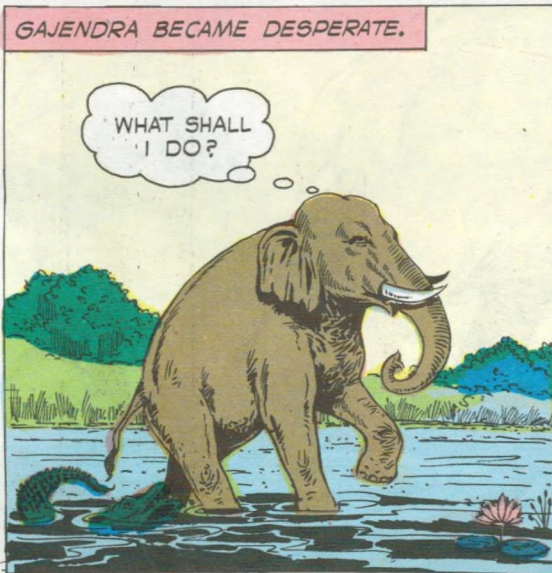
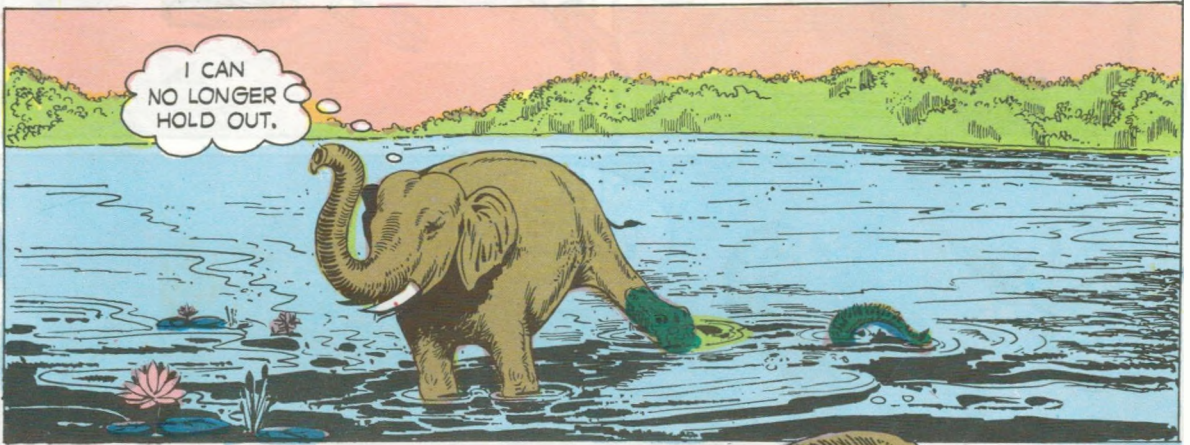


MY LEG! IT'S CAUGHT IN A TRAP...

IT'S A CROCODILE!

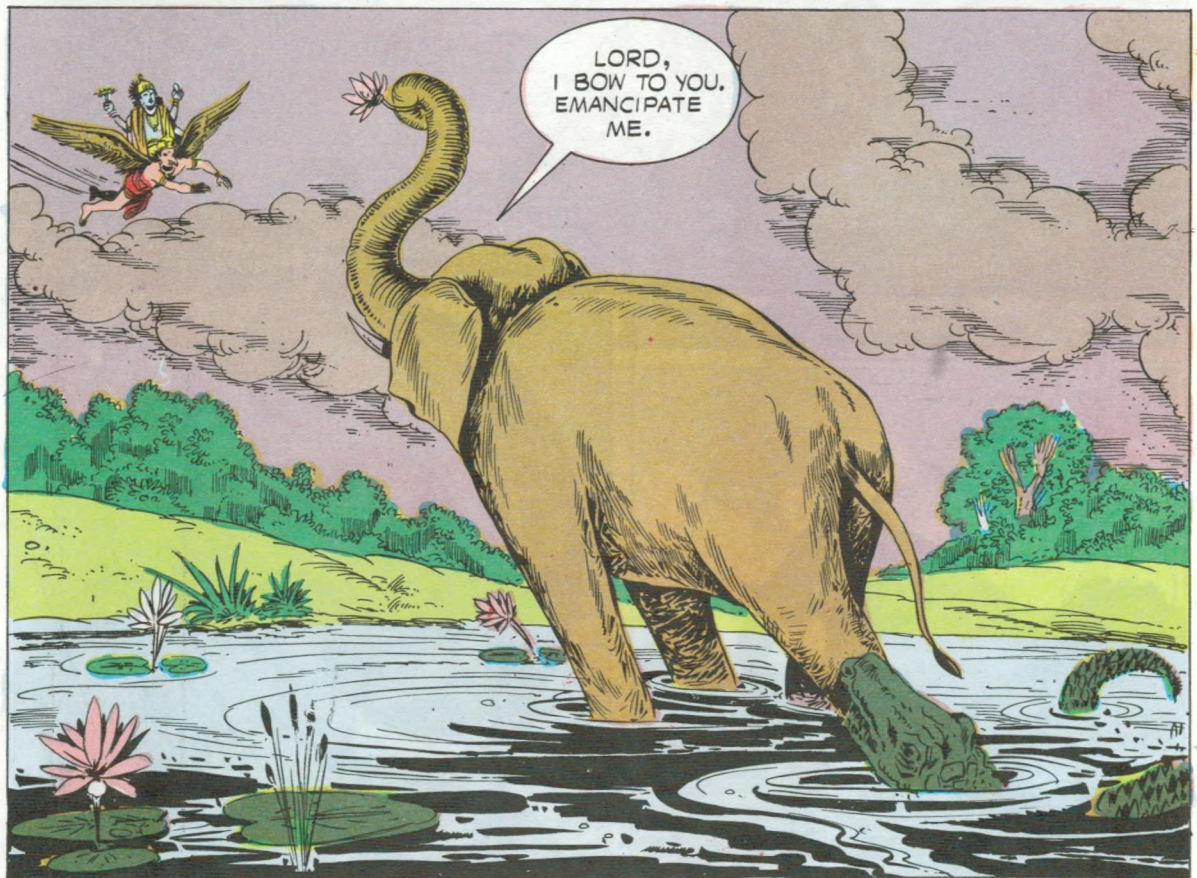
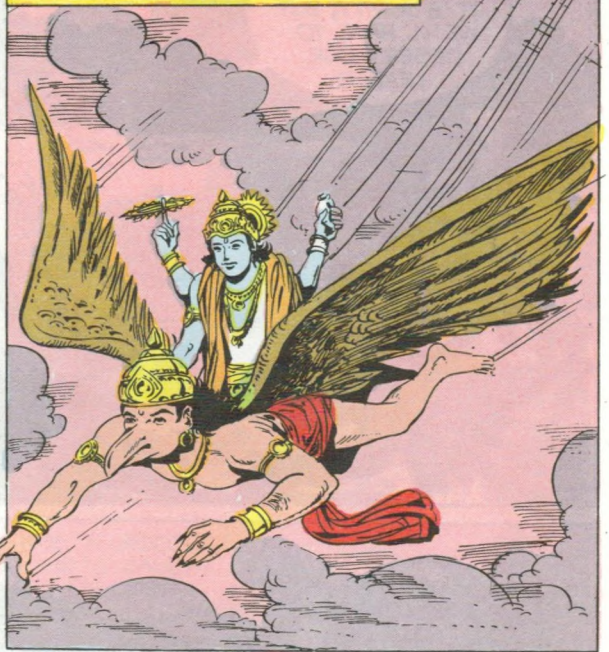
TRUMPETING LOUDLY, HE TRIED TO SHAKE OFF THE CROCODILE.





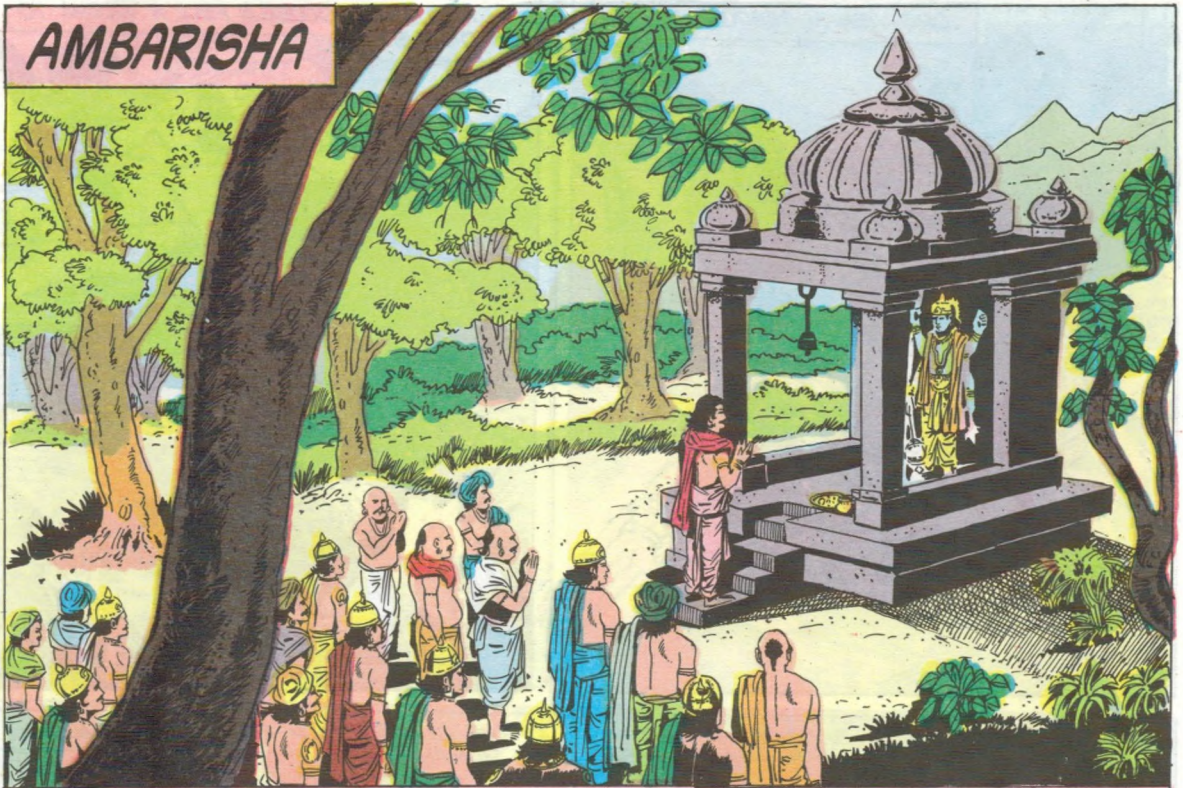


VISHNU HEARD THE PRAYER. MOUNTING GARUDA,
HE LEFT HIS ABODE, VAIKUNTHA.



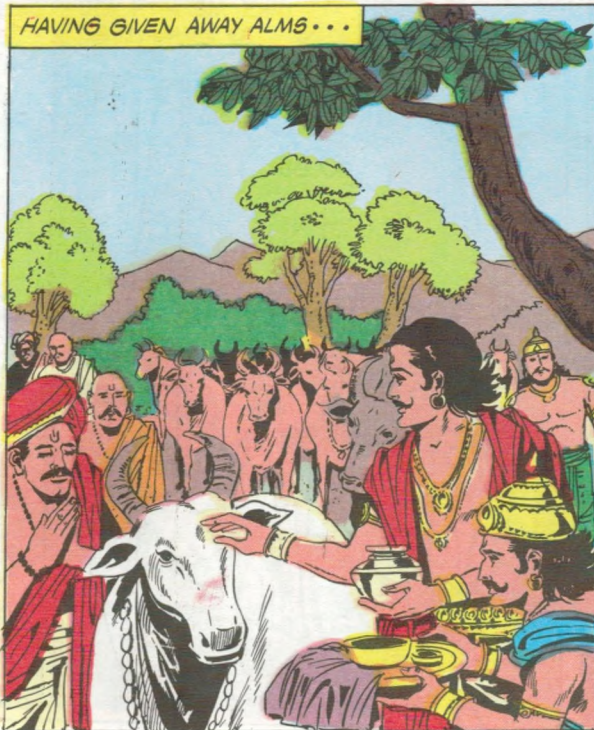


AMBARISHA

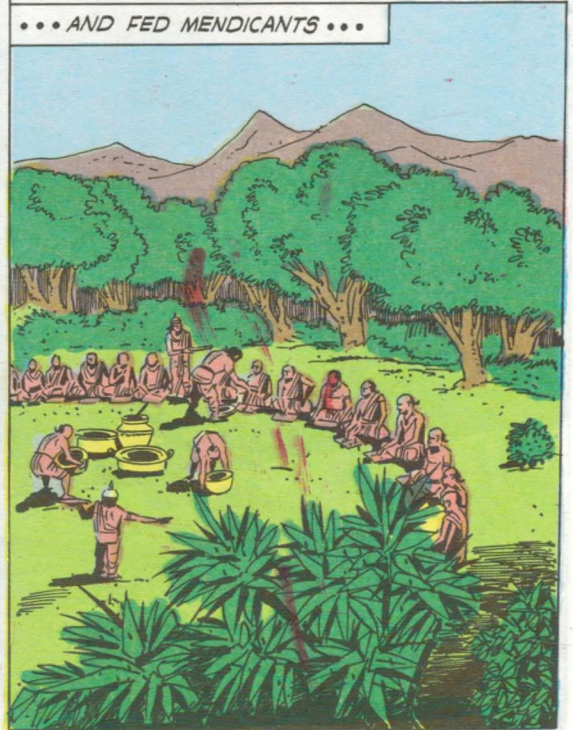


AFTER FASTING FOR THREE DAYS, KING AMBARISHA WORSHIPPED LORD VISHNU IN THE FOREST OF MADHUVANA*. HE WAS TO BREAK HIS FAST ON THE AUSPICIOUS DAY OF DWADASHI.†

HAVING GIVEN AWAY ALMS...



...AND FED MENDICANTS...

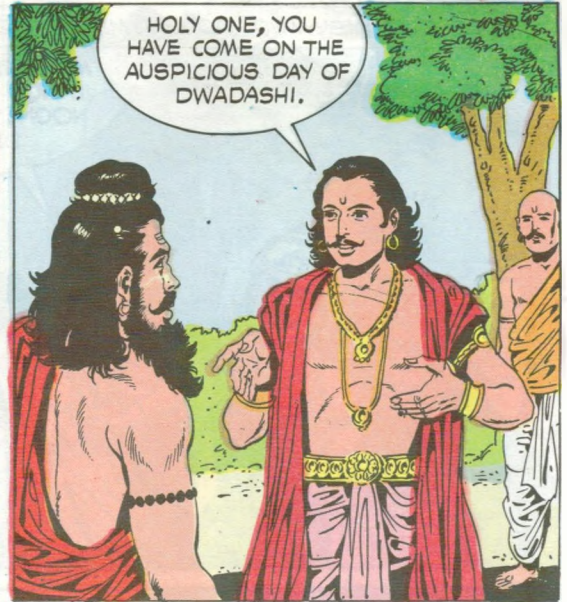


* THE FOREST REGION AROUND MATHURA † THE TWELFTH DAY OF THE FORTNIGHT

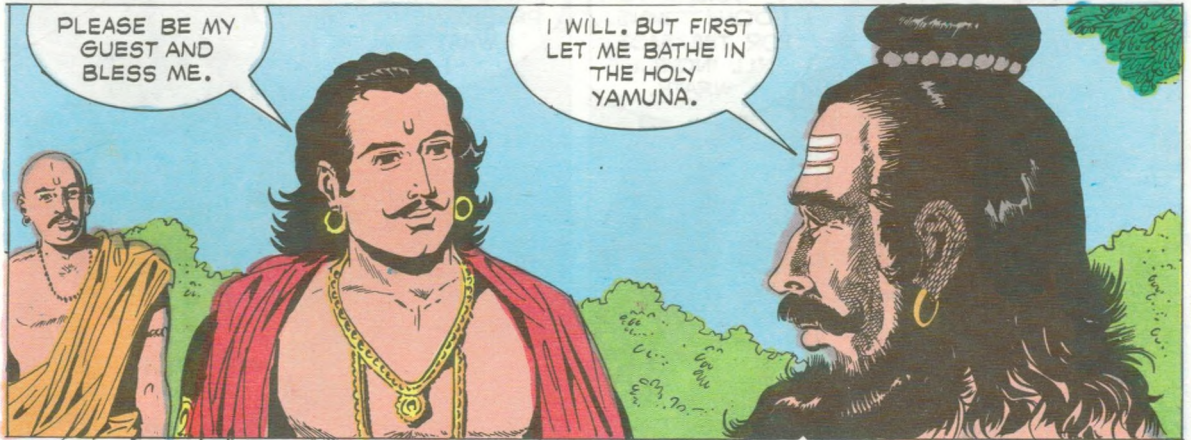
... HE HIMSELF WAS ABOUT TO BREAK HIS FAST WHEN SAGE DURVASA CAME BY.



ARISE, O KING.



HOLY ONE, YOU HAVE COME ON THE AUSPICIOUS DAY OF DWADASHI.



PLEASE BE MY GUEST AND BLESS ME.

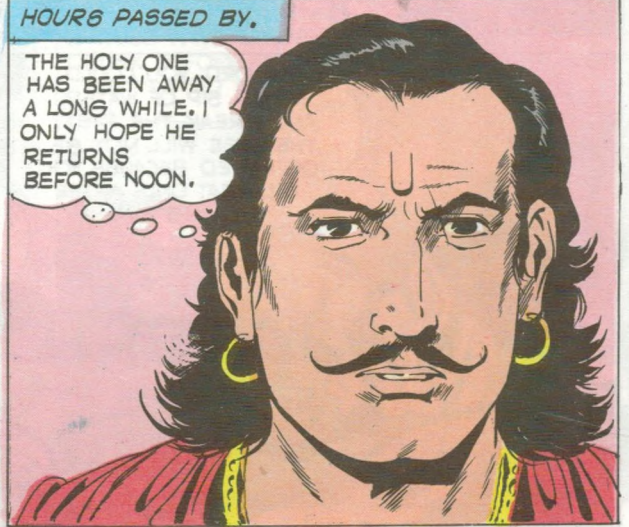
I WILL. BUT FIRST LET ME BATHE IN THE HOLY YAMUNA.

DURVASA LEFT FOR THE RIVER.

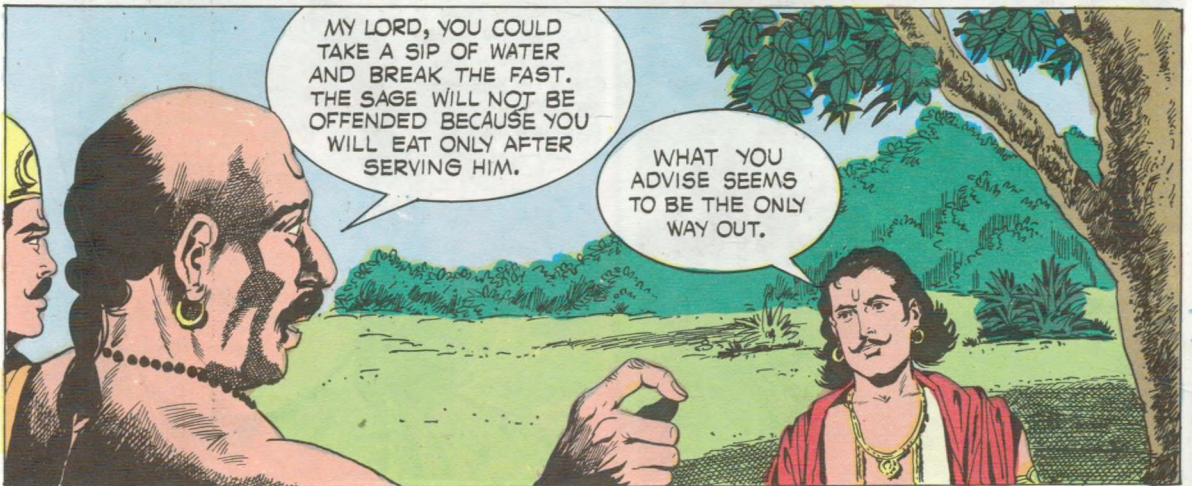
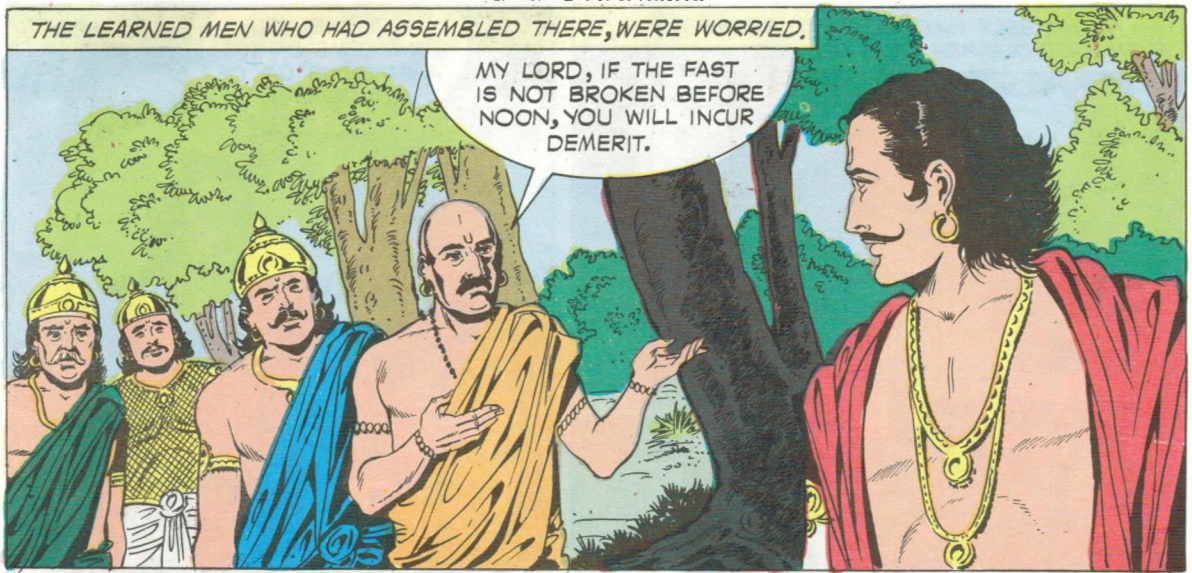


HOURS PASSED BY.

THE HOLY ONE HAS BEEN AWAY A LONG WHILE. I ONLY HOPE HE RETURNS BEFORE NOON.



THE LEARNED MEN WHO HAD ASSEMBLED THERE, WERE WORRIED.



AS AMBARISHA POURED A LITTLE WATER INTO HIS PALM AND RAISED IT TO HIS LIPS —



YOU ARE KNOWN TO BE A VIRTUOUS KING!



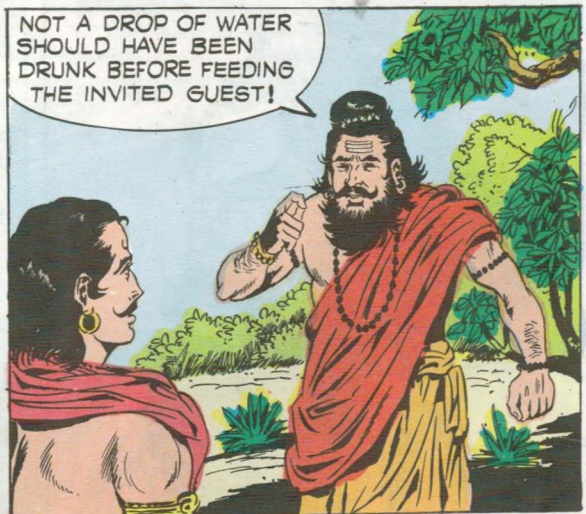
AND YET, YOU COULD NOT WAIT FOR YOUR GUEST!



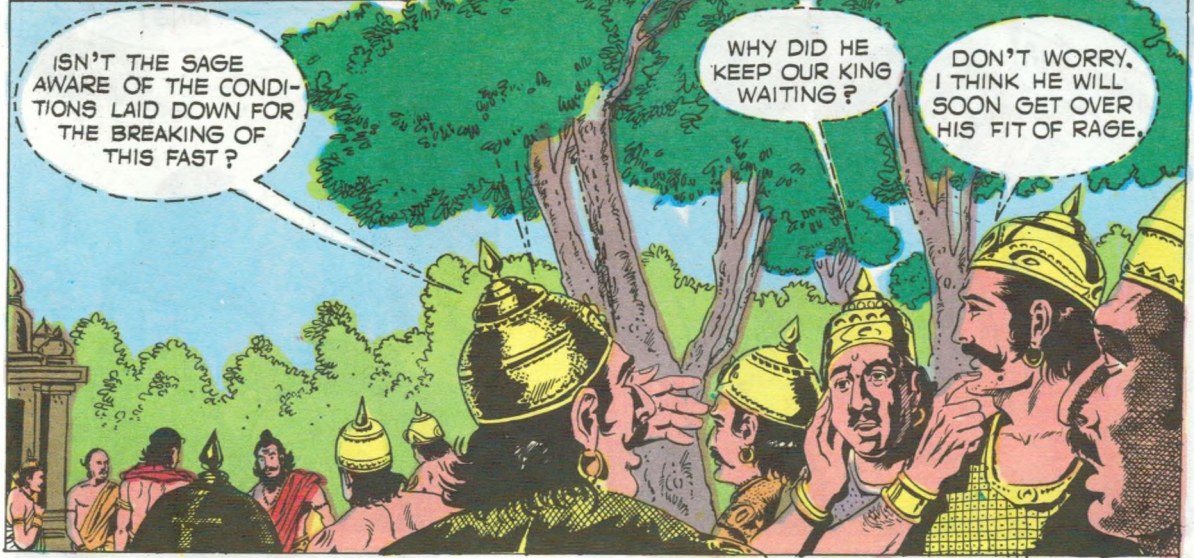
HOLY SAGE, I HAVE ONLY TAKEN A SIP OF WATER. I HAD TO. OTHERWISE...



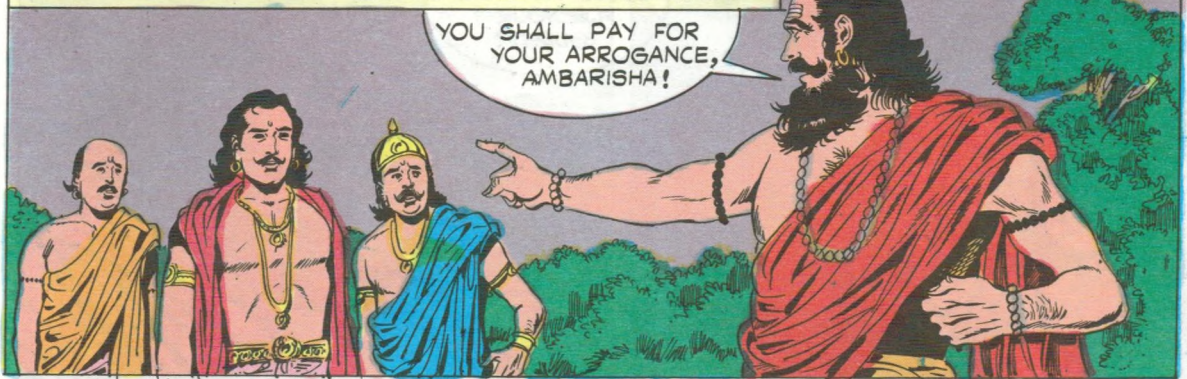
NOT A DROP OF WATER SHOULD HAVE BEEN DRUNK BEFORE FEEDING THE INVITED GUEST!



THE COURTIER'S WERE AGHAST.



BUT THE COURTIER WAS IN FOR A SHOCK. THE NEXT MOMENT—



THE SAGE TORE OFF A LOCK OF HIS MATTED HAIR.



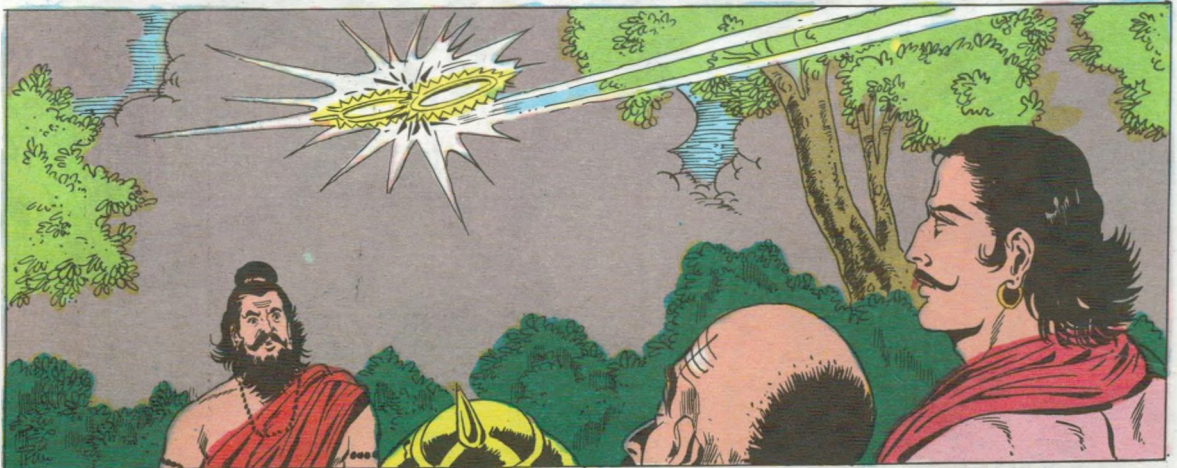
AND LO! IT TURNED INTO A DISCUS.



AS IT CAME WHIRRING
TOWARDS AMBARISHA —



MEANWHILE —



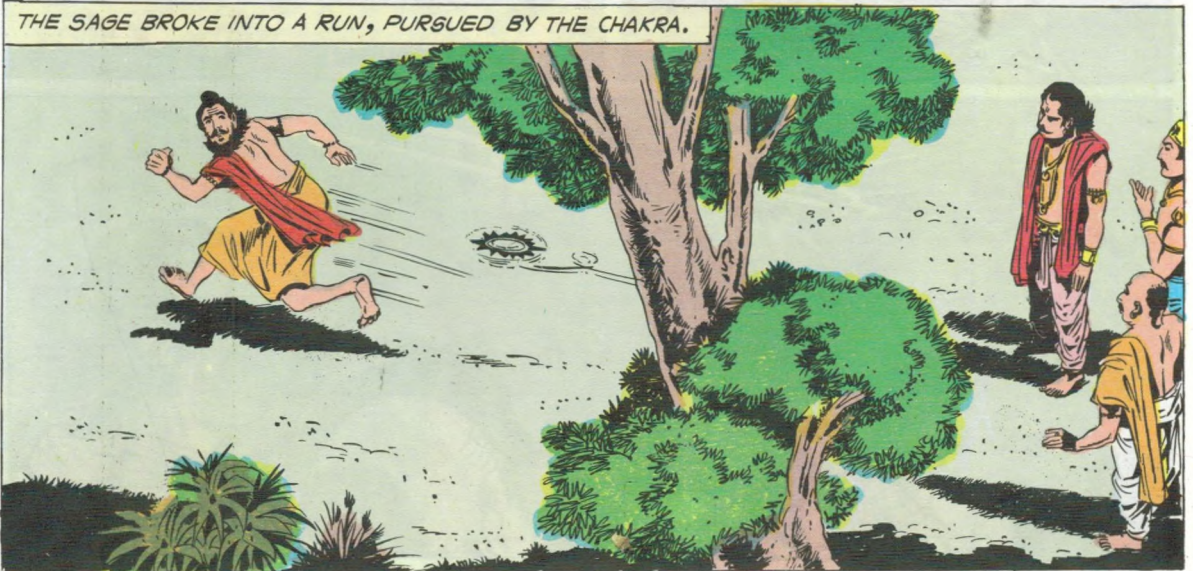
HAVING DESTROYED THE DISCUS WHICH THREATENED AMBARISHA'S LIFE, SUDARSHANA CHAKRA FLEW TOWARDS DURVASA.



IT'S HEADING FOR ME!

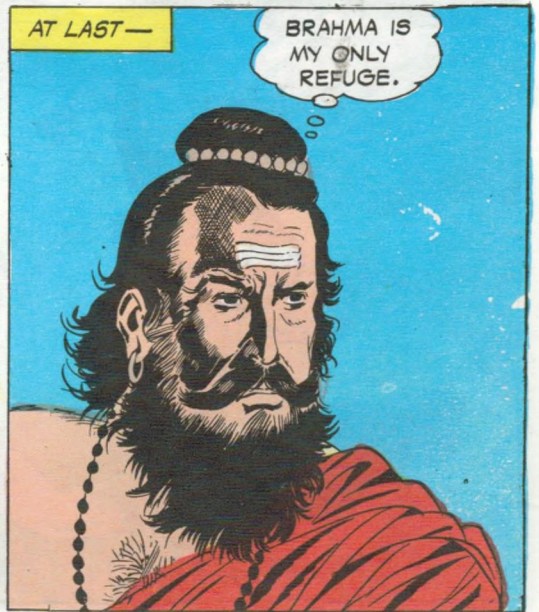


THE SAGE BROKE INTO A RUN, PURSUED BY THE CHAKRA.





I AM BEING
SCORCHED. I
CANNOT BEAR
IT.



AT LAST—

BRAHMA IS
MY ONLY
REFUGE.



DURVASA RUSHED TO LORD VIŚHNU.

O LORD! I HAVE
OFFENDED YOUR
DEVOTEE. PARDON
ME! PROTECT
ME!



O SAGE, HE WHO
EMPLOYS HIS POWER
TO INJURE THE VIRTU-
OUS, INVITES EVIL
UPON HIMSELF.



ONLY AMBARISHA
HAS THE POWER
TO SAVE YOU. SEEK
HIS PROTECTION.



DURVASA RETRACED HIS STEPS TO MADHUVANA.

AMBARISHA,
TAKE PITY ON ME!
CALL OFF THIS
DISCUS!

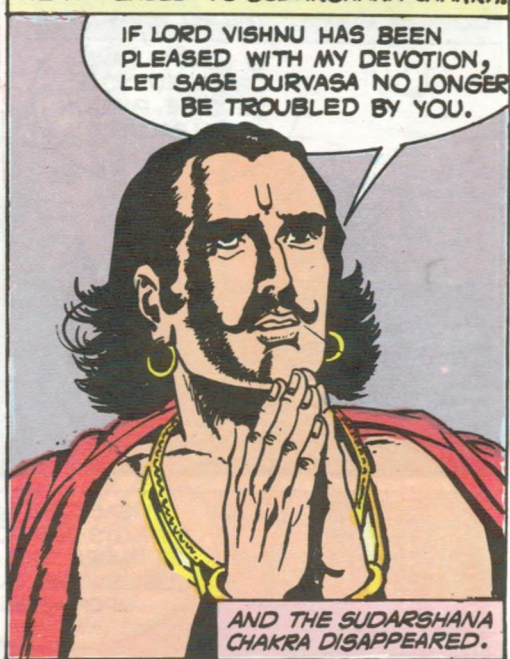


AMBARISHA WAS MOVED BY DURVASA'S PLIGHT.



HAS THE GREAT SAGE BEEN REDUCED TO SUCH A PATHETIC STATE?

HE APPEALED TO SUDARSHANA CHAKRA.



IF LORD VISHNU HAS BEEN PLEASED WITH MY DEVOTION, LET SAGE DURVASA NO LONGER BE TROUBLED BY YOU.

AND THE SUDARSHANA CHAKRA DISAPPEARED.

THE NEXT MOMENT —



AMBARISHA, I AM GRATEFUL TO YOU. YOU HAVE RETURNED CRUELTY WITH KINDNESS.

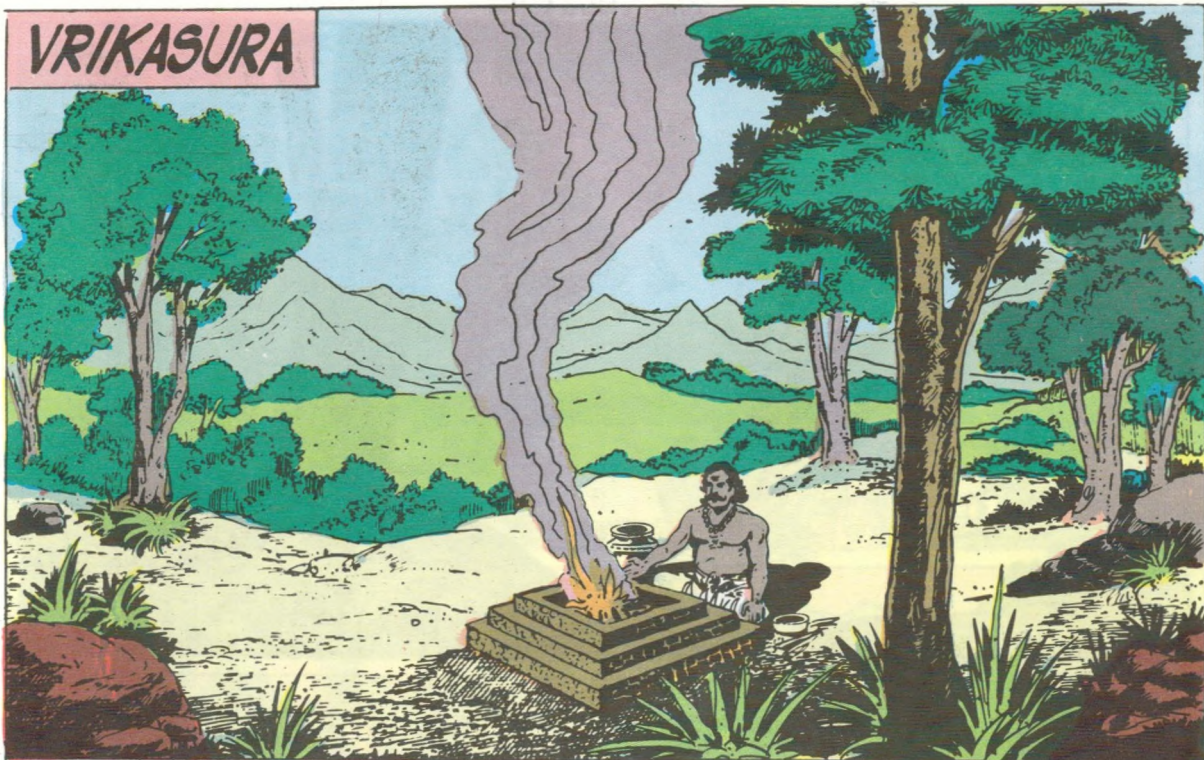
THE DISCUS OF VISHNU WHICH COULD NOT BE CONTROLLED BY EITHER SHIVA OR BRAHMA, RESPECTS YOUR WORDS. WHAT IS THE SECRET OF YOUR POWER?



THE LOVE OF LORD VISHNU.

THUS DID VISHNU DEMONSTRATE HIS LOVE FOR HIS DEVOTEES.

VRIKASURA



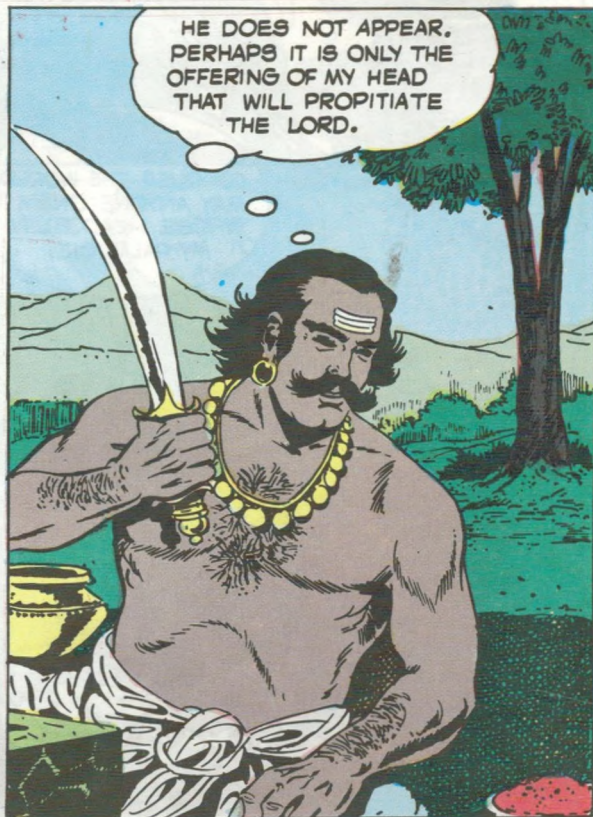
THE FOOLISH BUT MIGHTY ASURA, VRIKA, ONCE DECIDED TO PROPITIATE LORD SHIVA.

HE CUT OFF HIS FLESH AND OFFERED IT TO THE LORD.

LORD, WITH THIS OFFERING, MAY YOU APPEAR BEFORE ME.

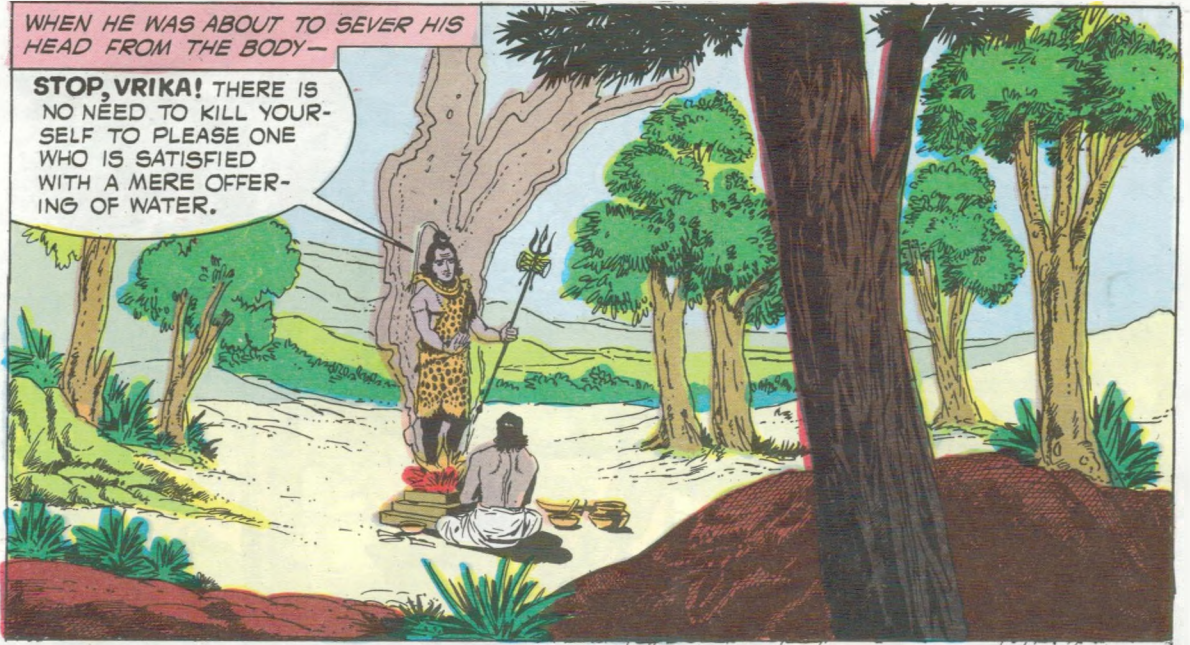


HE DOES NOT APPEAR. PERHAPS IT IS ONLY THE OFFERING OF MY HEAD THAT WILL PROPITIATE THE LORD.



WHEN HE WAS ABOUT TO SEVER HIS
HEAD FROM THE BODY—

STOP, VRIKA! THERE IS
NO NEED TO KILL YOUR-
SELF TO PLEASE ONE
WHO IS SATISFIED
WITH A MERE OFFER-
ING OF WATER.



WHAT IS
THE BOON
YOU SEEK?

I WISH TO
CONQUER THE WORLD.
MAY ANYONE ON
WHOSE HEAD I LAY
MY PALM, DIE.



SO BE
IT.



THE NEXT MOMENT, VRIKA TRIED TO REACH FOR SHIVA.



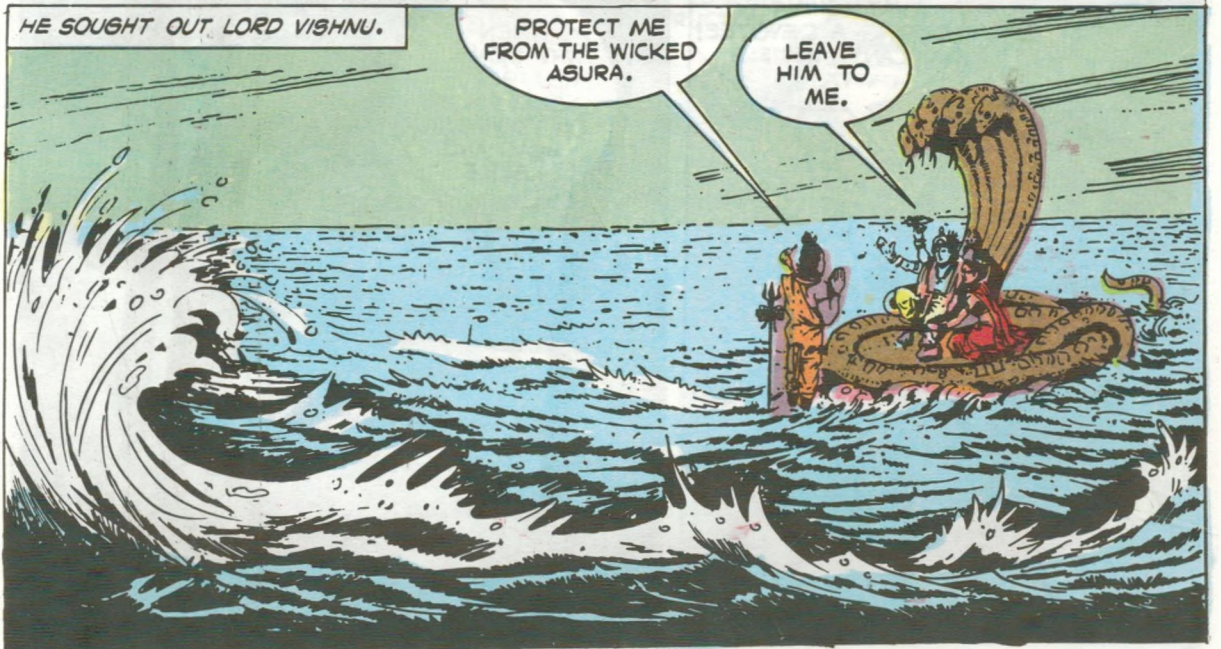
SHIVA BROKE INTO A RUN.



HE SOUGHT OUT LORD VISHNU.

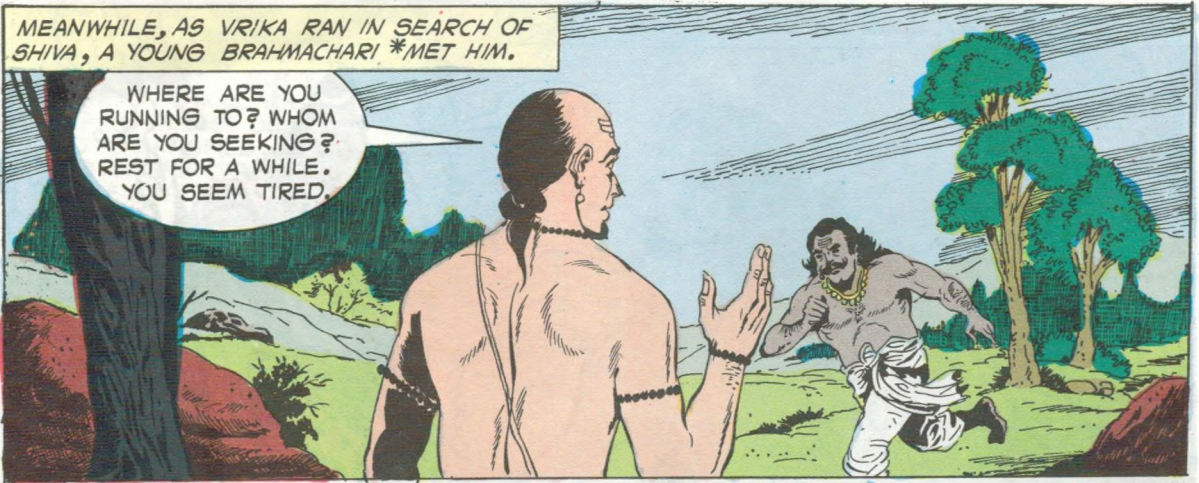
PROTECT ME
FROM THE WICKED
ASURA.

LEAVE
HIM TO
ME.



MEANWHILE, AS VRIKA RAN IN SEARCH OF SHIVA, A YOUNG BRAHMACHARI *MET HIM.

WHERE ARE YOU RUNNING TO? WHOM ARE YOU SEEKING? REST FOR A WHILE. YOU SEEM TIRED.



VRIKA TOLD HIM OF SHIVA'S BOON.

WHEN I WANTED TO TRY IT ON HIM, HE RAN AWAY.

THAT'S BECAUSE THE MOMENT YOU PLACED YOUR PALM ON HIS HEAD, YOU WOULD REALISE THAT HE HAD DUPED YOU.



WHAT! SHIVA DUPING A DEVOTEE! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT.

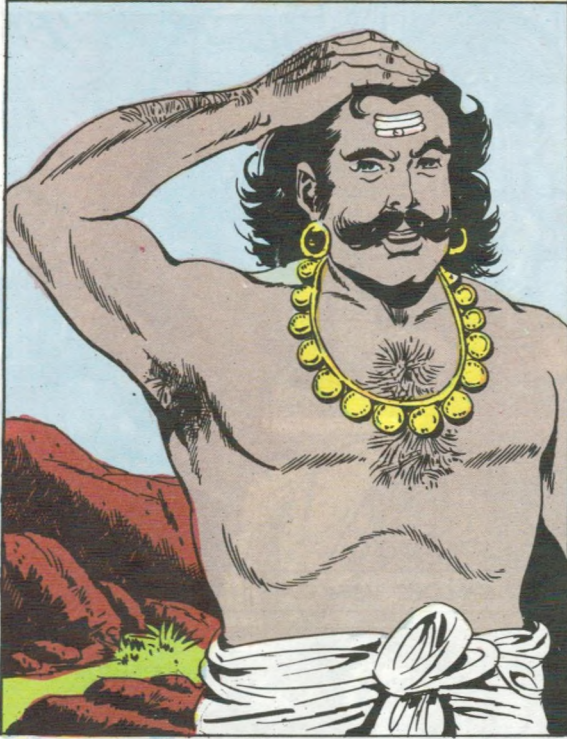


THEN WHY DON'T YOU PLACE YOUR PALM ON YOUR OWN HEAD AND SEE?

A GOOD IDEA!



WITHOUT STOPPING TO THINK, THE FOOLISH ASURA PLACED HIS PALM ON HIS HEAD.



THE NEXT MOMENT, HE FELL DEAD. THE CLEVER BRAHMACHARI WAS NONE OTHER THAN VISHNU.



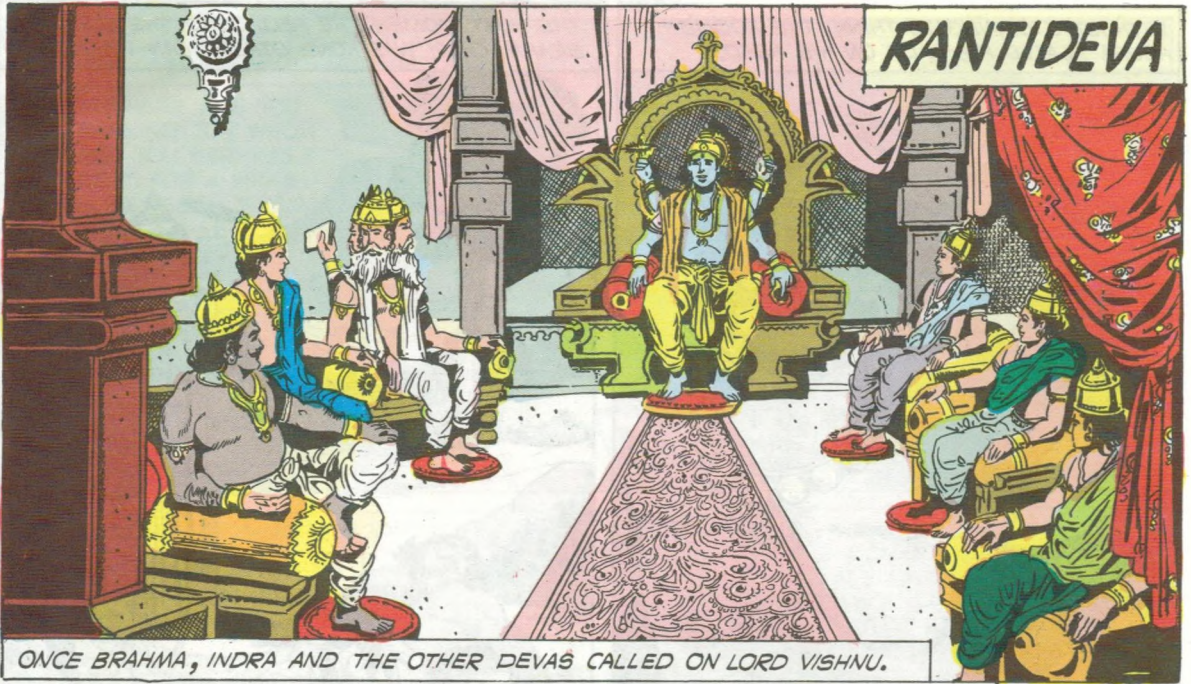
JUST THEN, SHIVA APPEARED.

I AM SORRY THAT THE UNFORTUNATE ASURA HAD TO DIE.

IT WAS INEVITABLE. HE WHO SECURES A BOON TO DESTROY OTHERS SEEKS HIS OWN DESTRUCTION.



RANTIDEVA



ONCE BRAHMA, INDRA AND THE OTHER DEVAS CALLED ON LORD VISHNU.

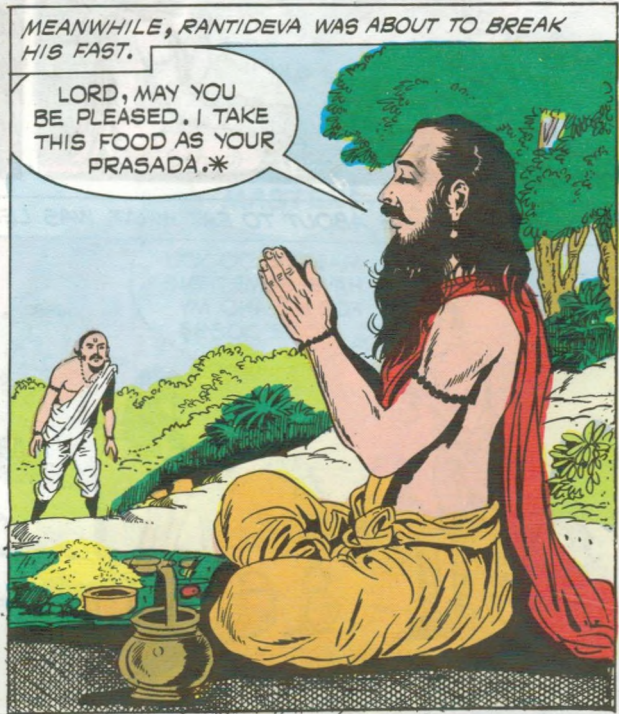


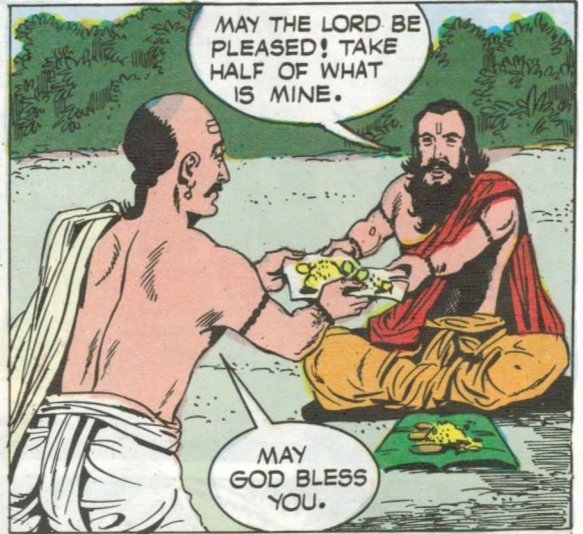
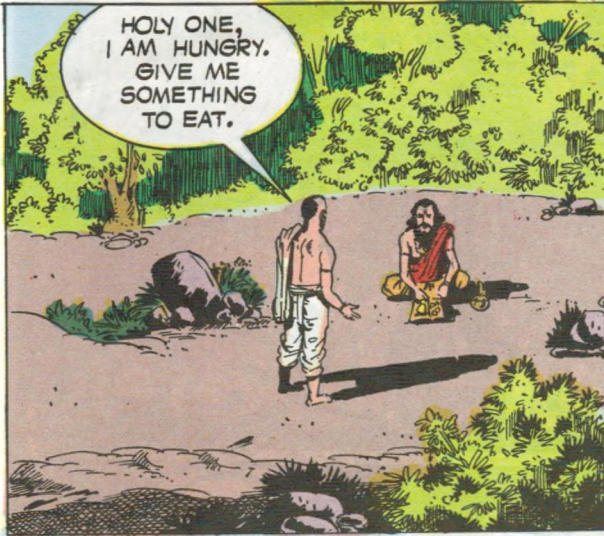
LORD, WHO DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST DEVOTEE?

RANTIDEVA.



THAT KING?
JUST BECAUSE HE
HAS GIVEN UP HIS
KINGDOM AND
FASTED FOR FORTY-
EIGHT DAYS?

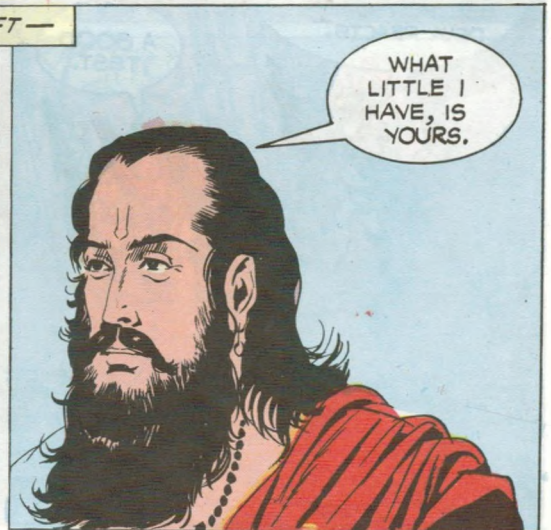


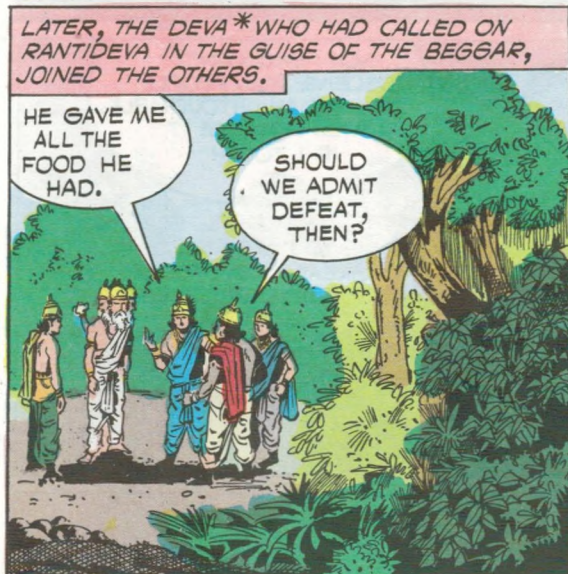
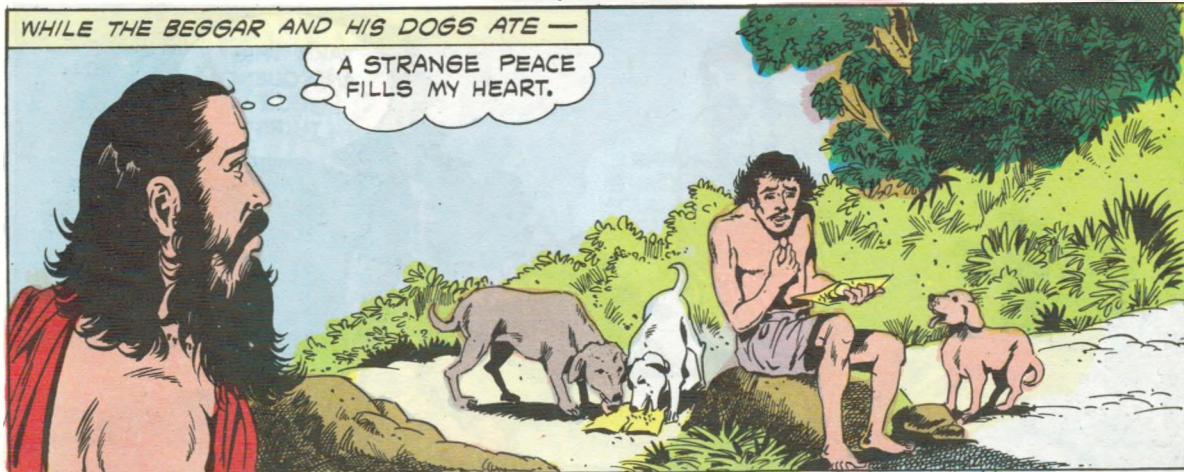


AS THE BRAHMAN WENT AWAY, A FARMER CAME ALONG.



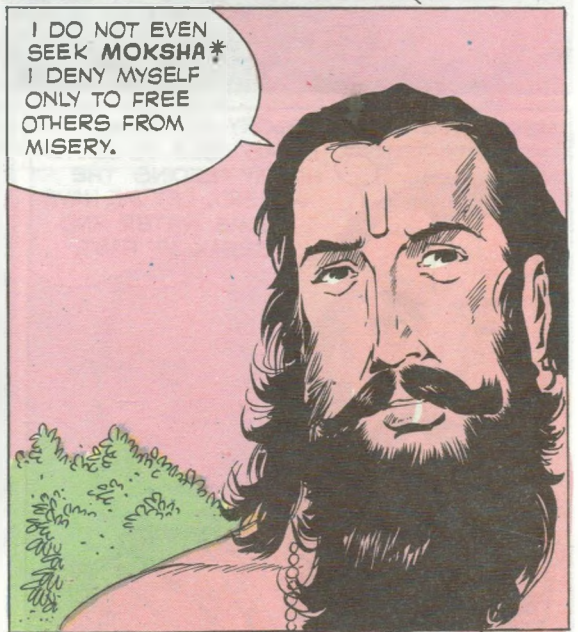
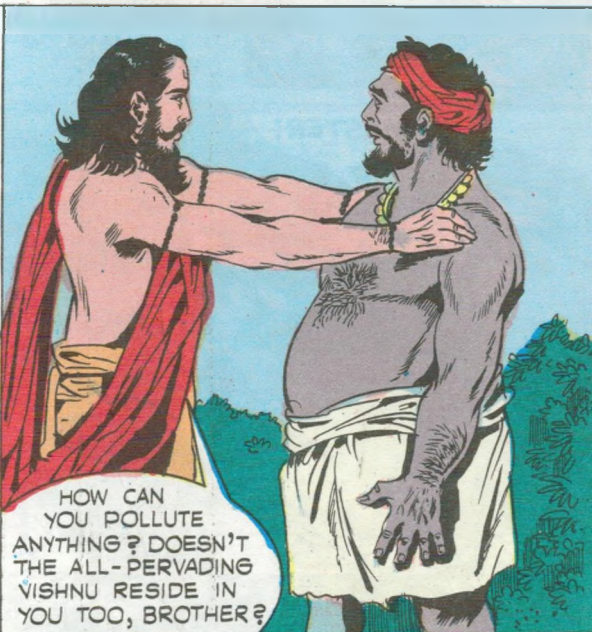
AS RANTIDEVA WAS ABOUT TO EAT WHAT WAS LEFT —







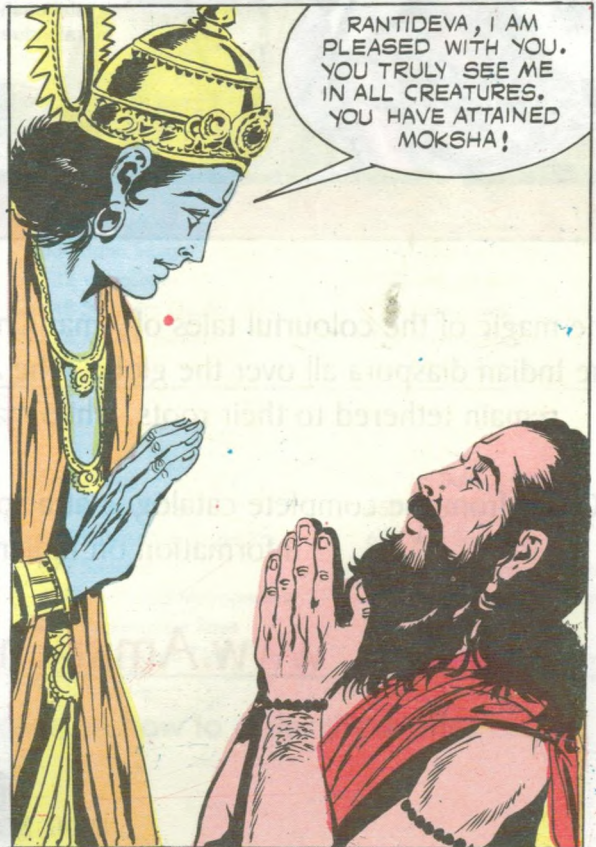
BUT THE VISITOR HESITATED.



* EMANCIPATION OF THE SOUL



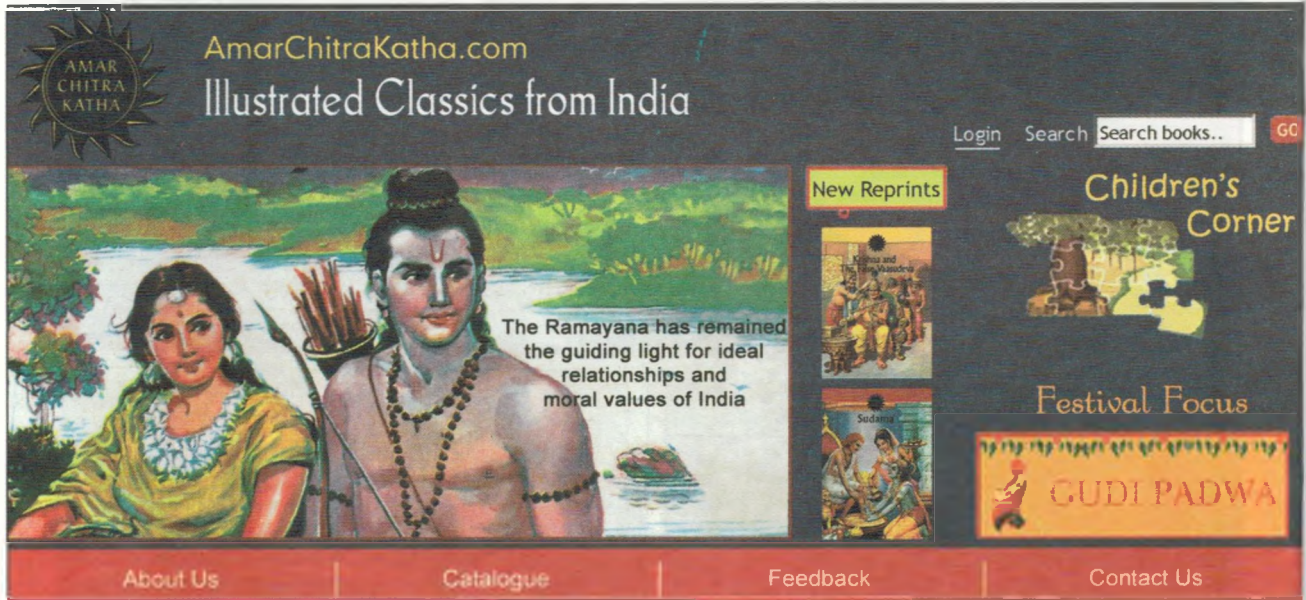
THE NEXT MOMENT, VISHNU AND THE OTHER DEVAS APPEARED BEFORE RANTIDEVA.





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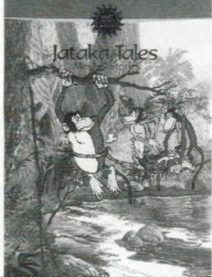


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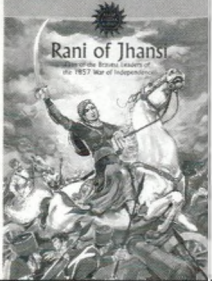
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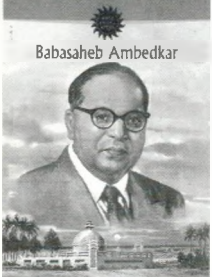
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| 563 Rana Pratap | 645 Lokamanya Tilak | 732 Swami Chinmayananda |

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Tales of Vishnu

Lord Vishnu is known as the Preserver in the holy Hindu trinity along with Brahma, the Creator, and Shiva, the Destroyer. Whenever evil is on the rise, Vishnu descends onto the earth to uphold righteousness, preserve justice and annihilate sin.

Vishnu has countless incarnations, but the complete incarnations are ten in number and are called Dasha Avatar. These ten start with the form of a fish and work their way up to the human form, cast in the image of god.

The tales of these descents or avatars told in various Puranas have contributed in no small measure to make Vishnu one of the most popular Hindu deities. His worshippers are called Vaishnavas. Of the eighteen major Puranas, six are known as the Vaishnava Puranas as they eulogise Vishnu and depict him as the Supreme Self.

According to some scholars, the identification of Vishnu with Vasudeva-Krishna, the deified Yadava hero, contributed significantly to the rise of Vishnu as the greatest of the gods in the hierarchy of the Hindu pantheon. In fact, Vasudeva-Krishna came to be considered the eighth avatar of Vishnu.

Vishnu inspires more love than fear in his devotees. The Bhagawat Purana, from which the tales in this Amar Chitra Katha have been adapted, abounds in narratives of the benevolent acts of Vishnu. Although he is kind and sympathetic, he is never taken in by the apparent devotion of the wicked and wily. Even when they succeed in wresting favours from other deities, Vishnu maneuvers to bring about their destruction without falsifying the boons given to them by the gods.

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Script: Subba Rao Illustrations: H.S. Chavan Cover: C.M. Vitankar

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