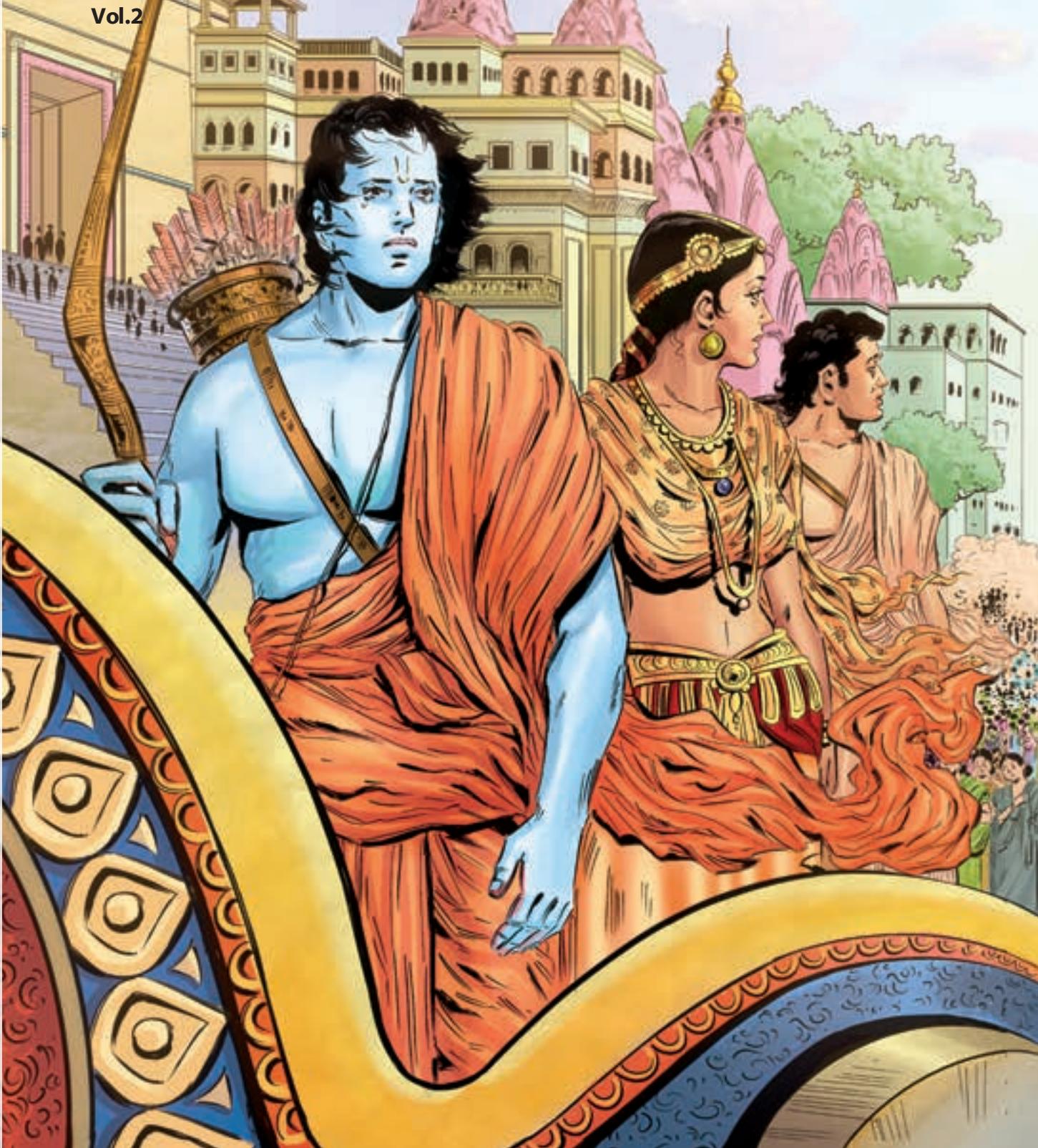




Vol.2

THE RAMAYANA AYODHYA KAND



THE RAMAYANA

AYODHYA KAND





The *Ramayana* is one of the great epics of the world. The story of Rama and Sita is a timeless tale of heroism, courage, love and loyalty; of human emotions and faults that lead to tragic consequences; and of the triumph of good over evil. An inseparable part of our heritage, the *Ramayana* provides vital clues about India's ancient history and culture.

Composed by Rishi Valmiki in Sanskrit verse more than 5000 years ago, it has touched everyone who heard it. There are versions of the story in almost every Indian language, there are dance, drama and puppet theatre versions, and paintings and sculptures depicting scenes from the *Ramayana* in every state. *Ramayana* songs, composed by great devotees, occupy a special place in classical and folk music. The story was carried all over Asia and unique versions are found in countries like Tibet, China, Japan, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia (Bali) and the Philippines.

This *Amar Chitra Katha* retelling is based on Valmiki's original epic, which is composed of seven kands, or books, comprising 645 chapters.

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Acknowledgment

The main translations used in this retelling are:

1. Srimad Valmiki Ramayana in 3 vols. (With Sanskrit text and English translation), Gita Press, Gorakhpur, India, 4th edition, 1995.
2. Online translation by the Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, Tirupathi, hosted by IIT Kanpur: <http://valmiki.iitk.ac.in/index.php?id=translation>
3. Online translation by Sri Desiraju Hanumanta Rao and Sri K.M.K. Murthy: <http://www.valmikiramayan.net/index.html>

The writer wishes to acknowledge the help of her mother, Mrs Ranga Gopalswami, in clarifying many points during the writing of the script.

DASHARATHA'S DILEMMA

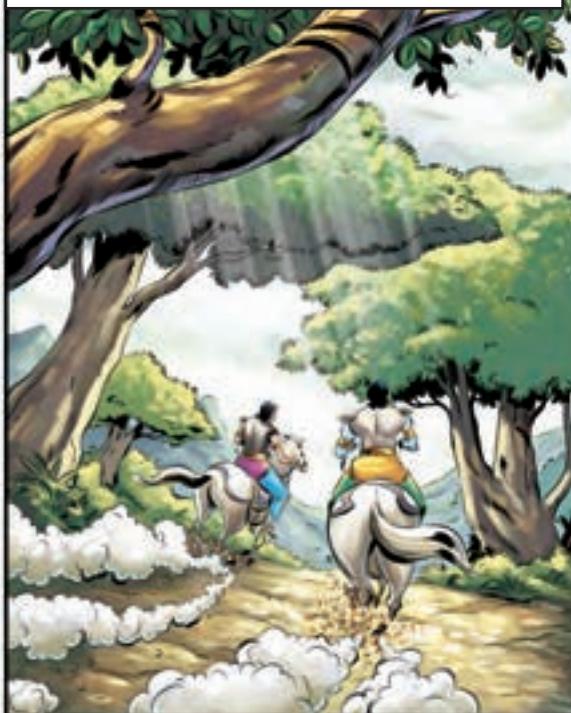


DASHRATHA'S DILEMMA

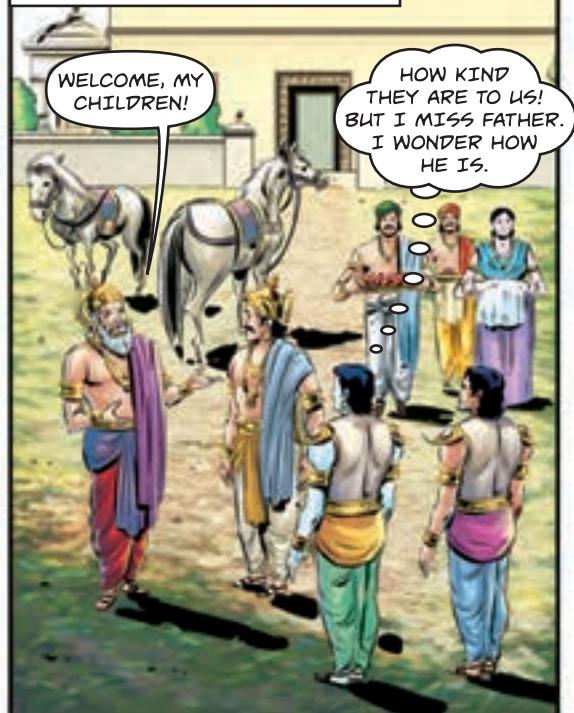
DASHARATHA, THE KING OF AYODHYA, WAS THE HAPPIEST OF MEN. HE HAD FOUR VALIANT SONS - RAMA, LAKSHMANA, BHARATA AND SHATRUGHNA. THEY WERE MARRIED TO FOUR BEAUTIFUL PRINCESSES WHO MATCHED THEM IN VIRTUE.



SOON AFTER THE WEDDING, BHARATA WENT TO VISIT HIS MATERNAL GRANDFATHER, THE KING OF KEKEYA. AS ALWAYS, SHATRUGHNA WENT WITH HIM.

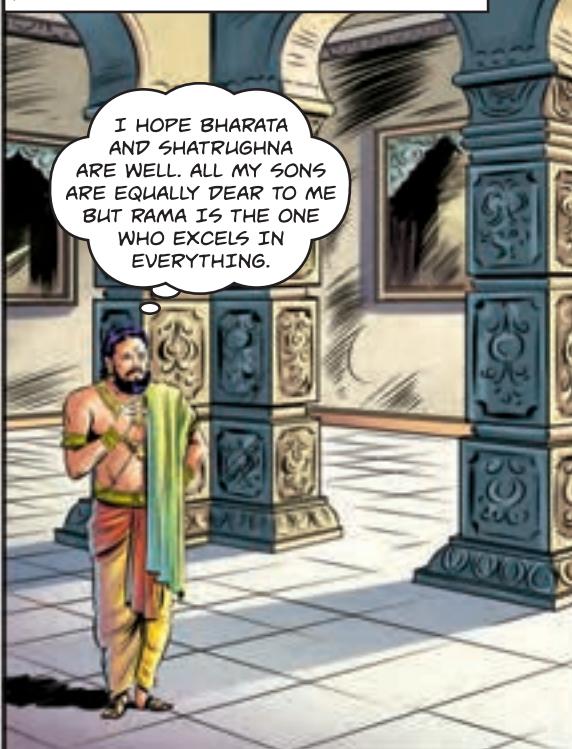


BHARATA'S GRANDFATHER AND HIS UNCLE YUDDHAJIT WERE VERY HAPPY TO SEE THEM AND GAVE THEM MANY GIFTS.



MEANWHILE IN AYODHYA, KING DASHARATHA WAS ALSO THINKING ABOUT HIS SONS.

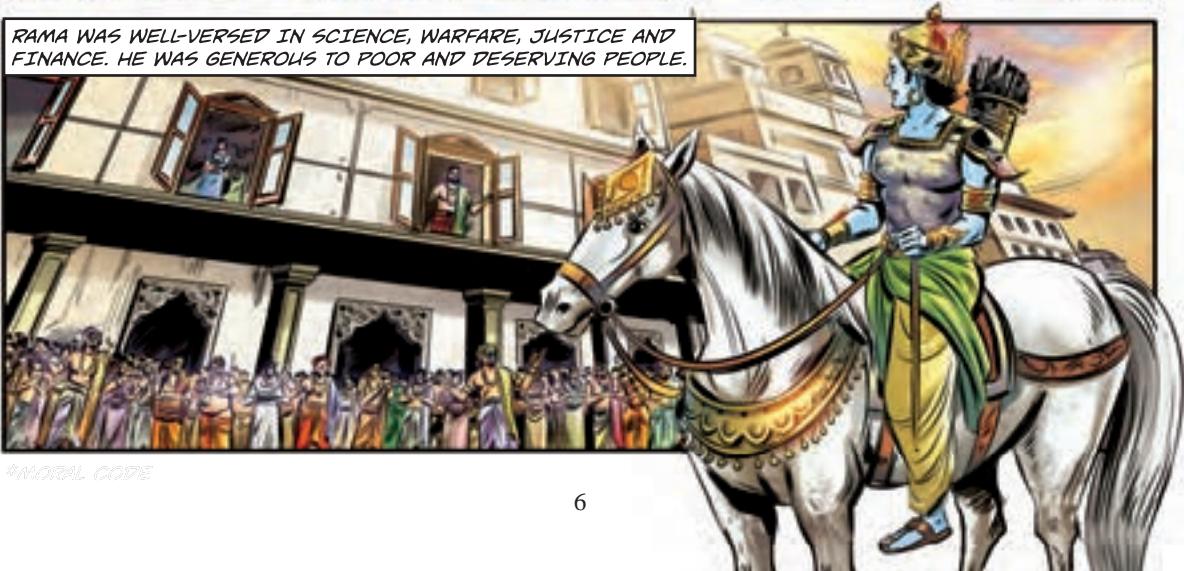
RAMA WAS THE INCARNATION OF LORD VISHNU. HE WAS BRAVE, INTELLIGENT AND KIND-HEARTED. HE TREATED EVERYONE WITH RESPECT AND AFFECTION.



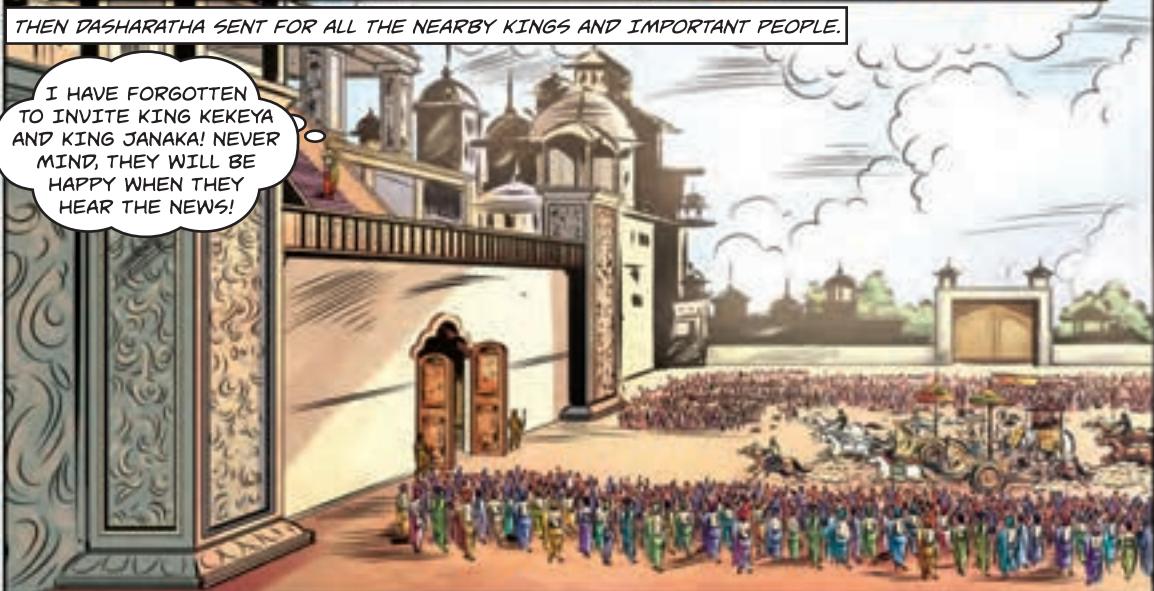
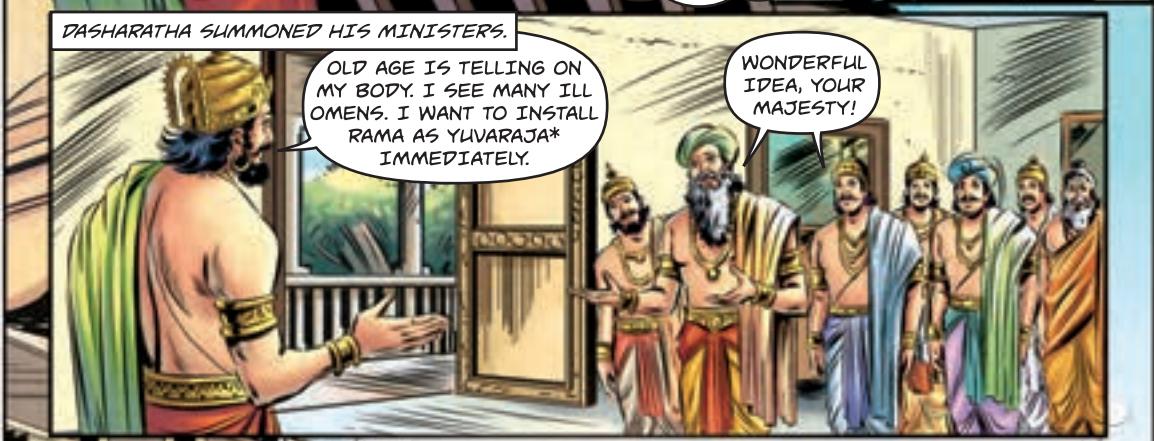
HE WAS NEVER JEALOUS, RESENTFUL OR LAZY. HE HAD STUDIED THE VEDAS AND LIVED BY THE KSHATRIYA DHARMA* AS BEFITTED A KING.



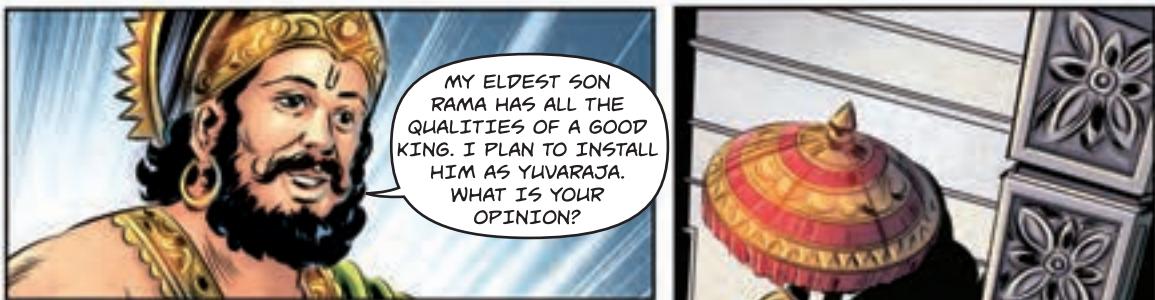
RAMA WAS WELL-VERSED IN SCIENCE, WARFARE, JUSTICE AND FINANCE. HE WAS GENEROUS TO POOR AND DESERVING PEOPLE.



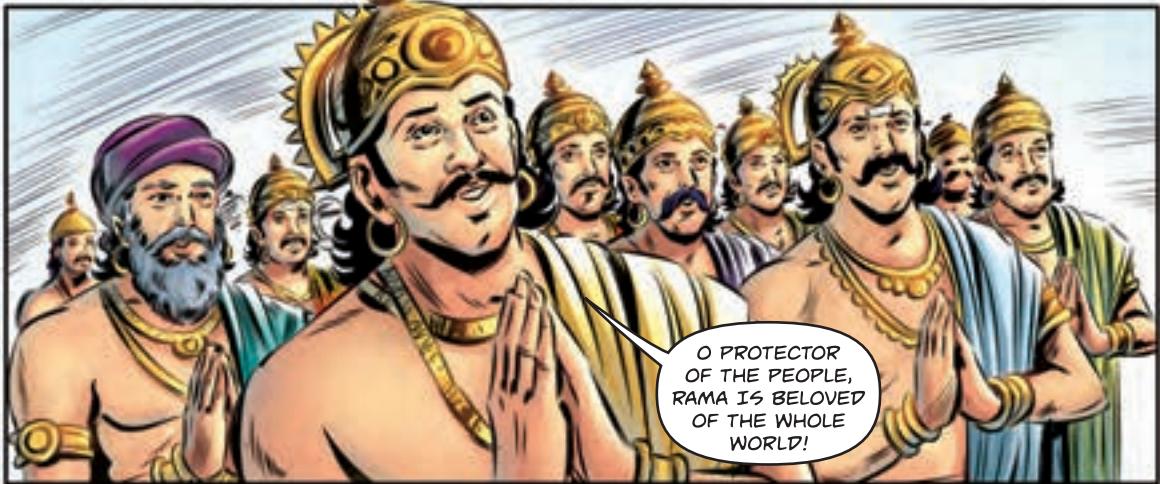
DASHRATHA'S DILEMMA



*YOUNG KING, OR HEIR TO THE THRONE



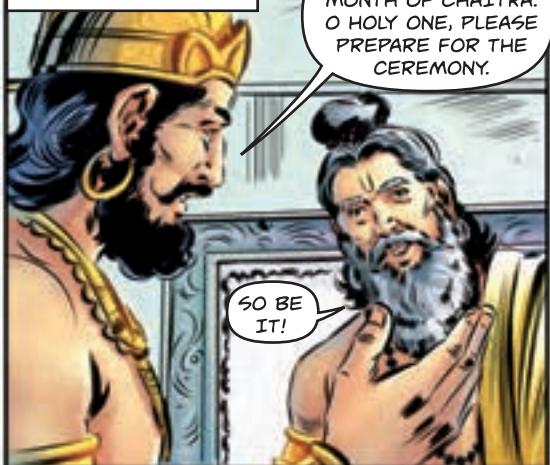
DASHRATHA'S DILEMMA



THEY DESCRIBED RAMA'S WONDERFUL QUALITIES.

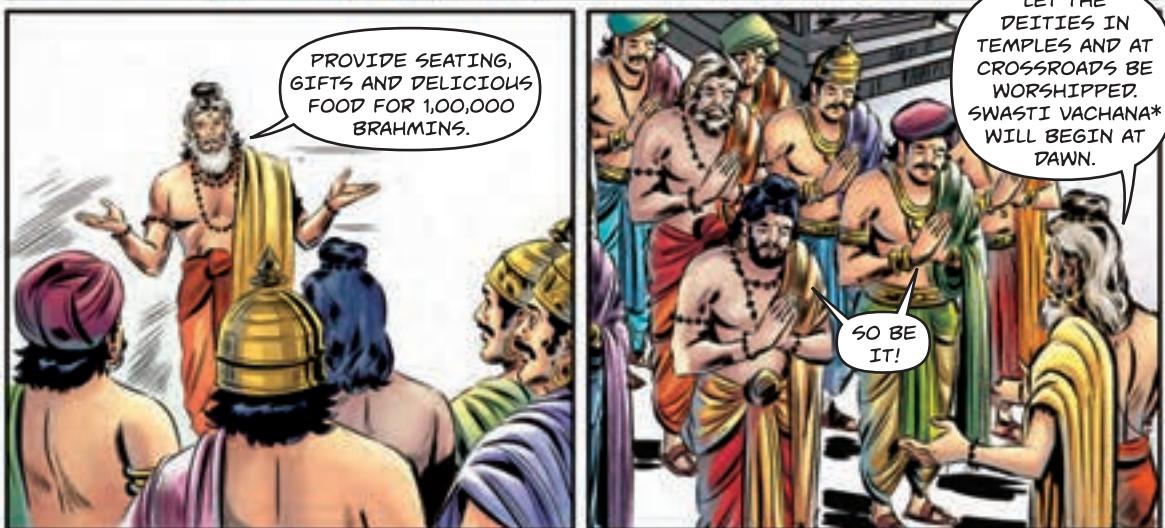


THE DELIGHTED KING THEN
SPOKE TO THE FAMILY
PRIEST, VASISHTHA.



VASISHTHA GAVE THE MINISTERS INSTRUCTIONS.

BY TOMORROW MORNING,
ARRANGE FOR WHITE FLOWERS,
PARCHED RICE, HONEY, CURDS AND
GHEE, YAK HAIR WHISKs, A HUNDRED
GOLD PITCHERS AND A BULL WITH
GOLD-PLATED HORNS.



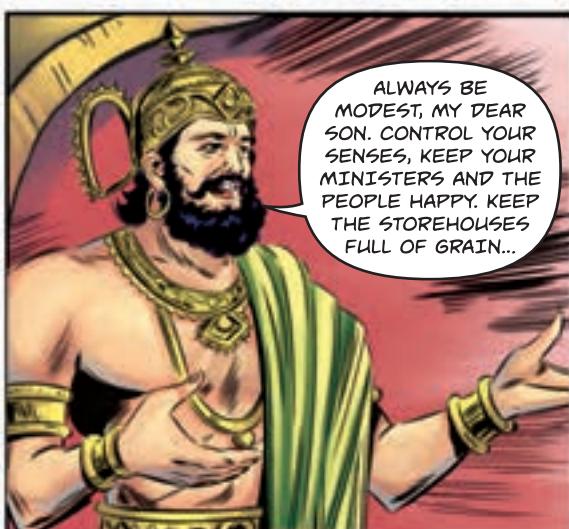
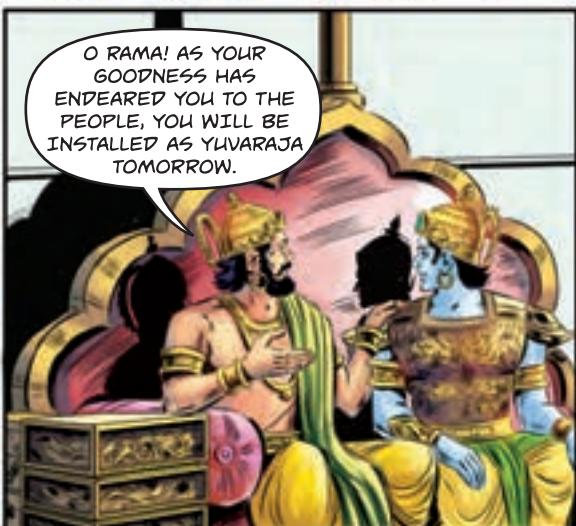
HAPPY TO SEE THE PRIESTS ORGANISING EVERYTHING, DASHARATHA SENT SLUMANTRA¹ TO FETCH RAMA. IN A SHORT WHILE -



*BLESSING AT THE BEGINNING OF A CEREMONY

¹DASHARATHA'S MINISTER AND CHARIOTEER

DASHRATHA'S DILEMMA



WHILE DASHARATHA WAS ADVISING RAMA...



...RAMA'S FRIENDS CARRIED THE NEWS TO QUEEN KALISALYA.



IS IT REALLY TRUE? I CANNOT BELIEVE IT! BUT RAMA'S FRIENDS CANNOT BE MISTAKEN....

GREAT WAS THE REJOICING IN KALISALYA'S PALACE.

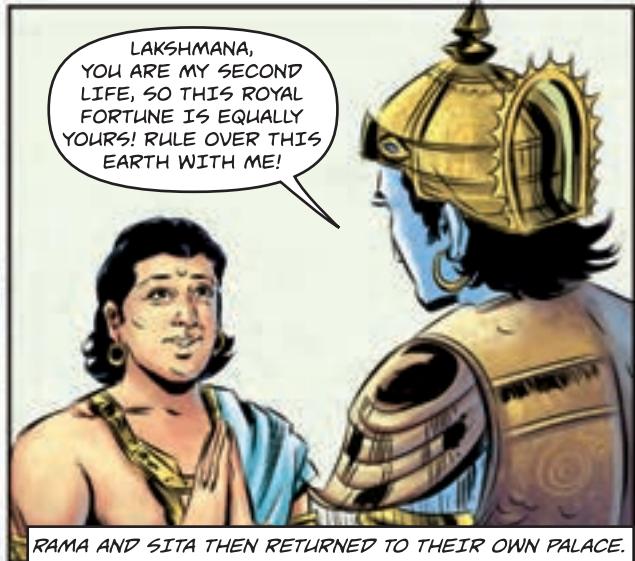


MEANWHILE, DASHARATHA AND RAMA WERE TALKING QUIETLY.



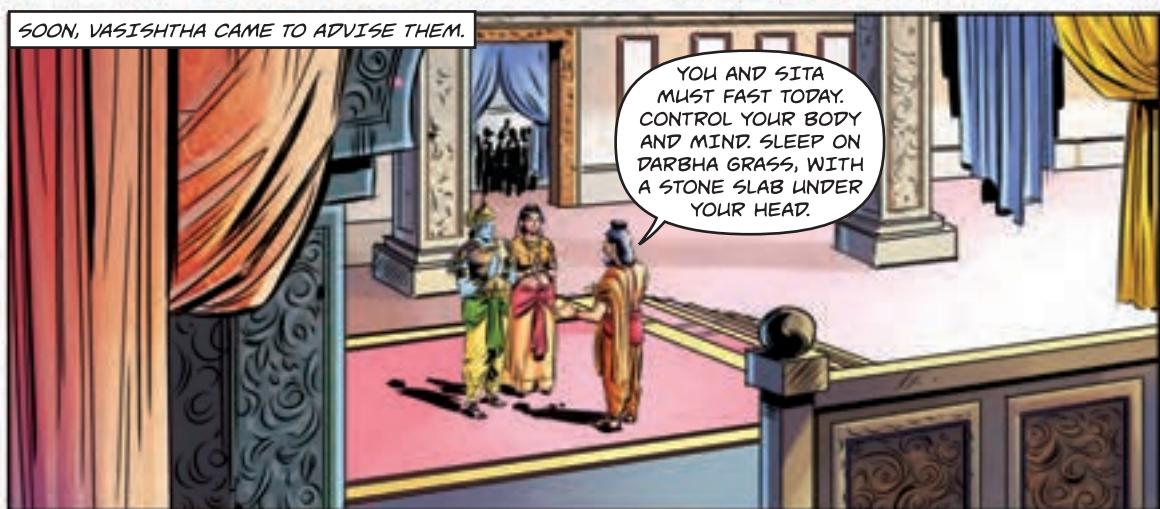
DASHRATHA'S DILEMMA





RAMA AND SITA THEN RETURNED TO THEIR OWN PALACE.

SOON, VASISHTHA CAME TO ADVISE THEM.



AFTER VASISHTHA HAD LEFT, RAMA DUTIFULLY CARRIED OUT HIS INSTRUCTIONS.



DASHRATHA'S DILEMMA

VASISHTHA THEN WENT TO DISCUSS THE ARRANGEMENTS WITH KING DASHARATHA. ON THE WAY -



HIGH UP ON THE PALACE ROOF -



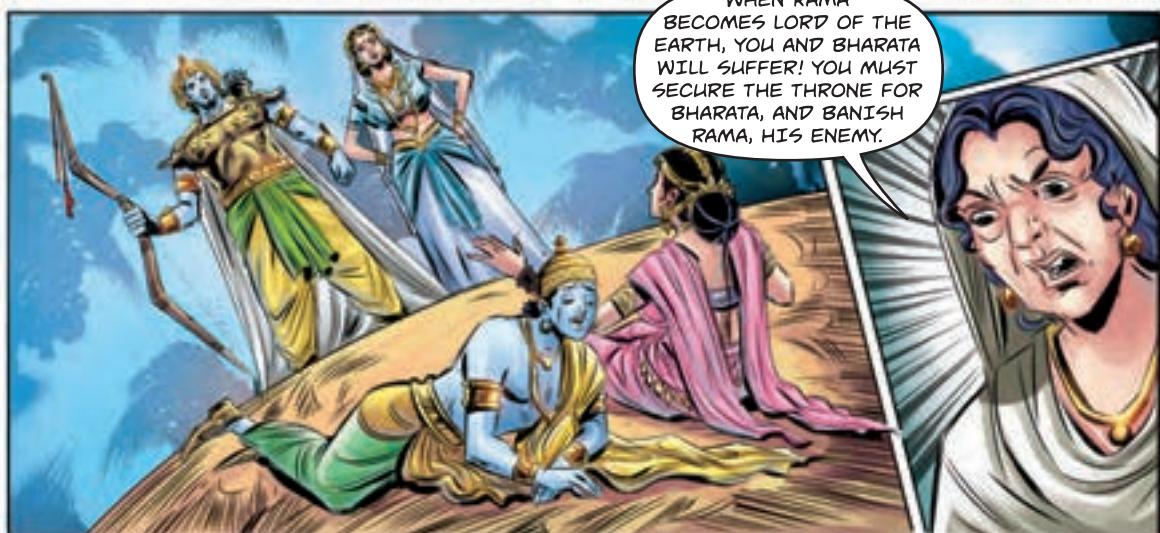
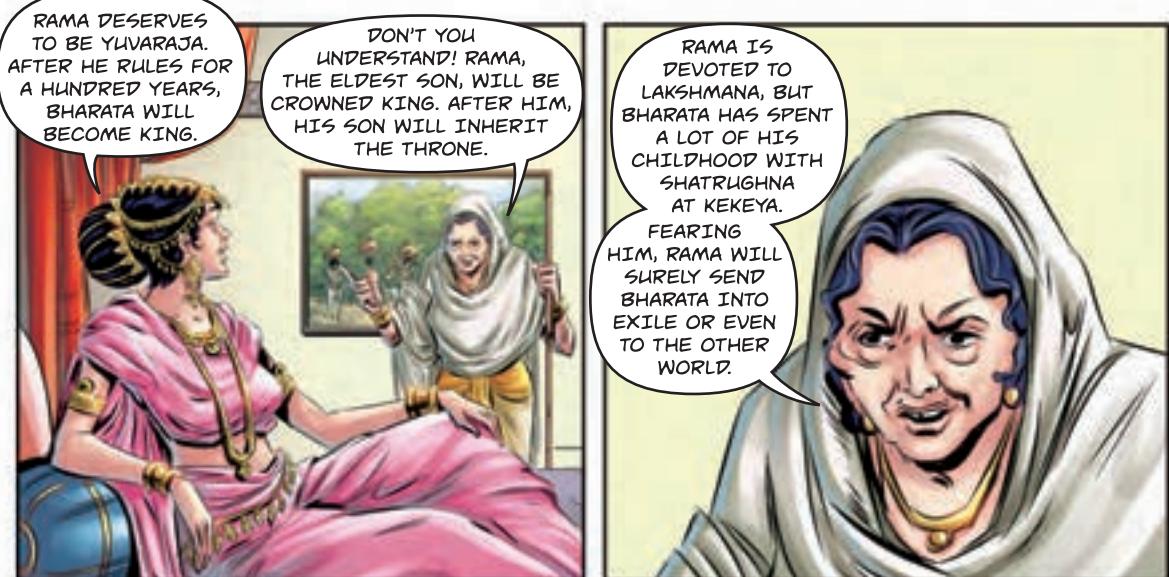
MANTHARA WAS QUEEN KAIKEYI'S MAID,
WHO HAD COME WITH HER FROM KEKEYA.

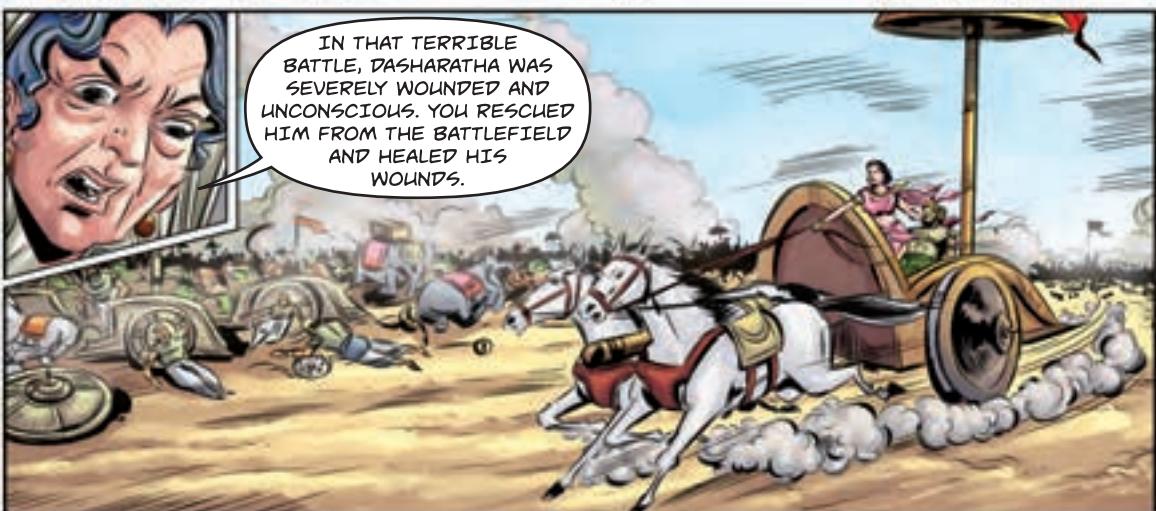
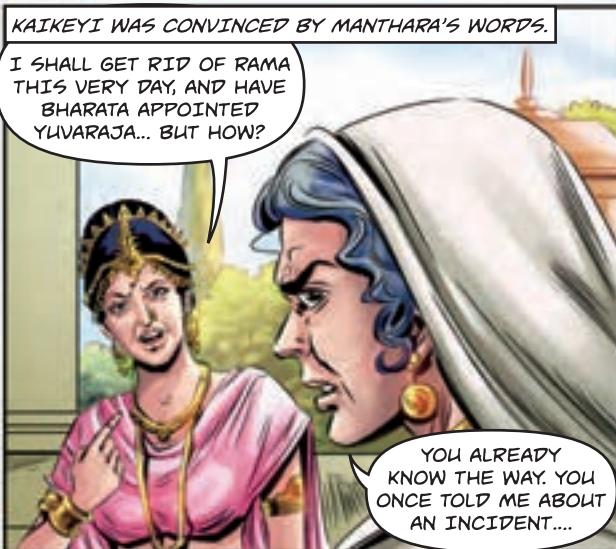
SHE TURNED TO RAMA'S NURSE -



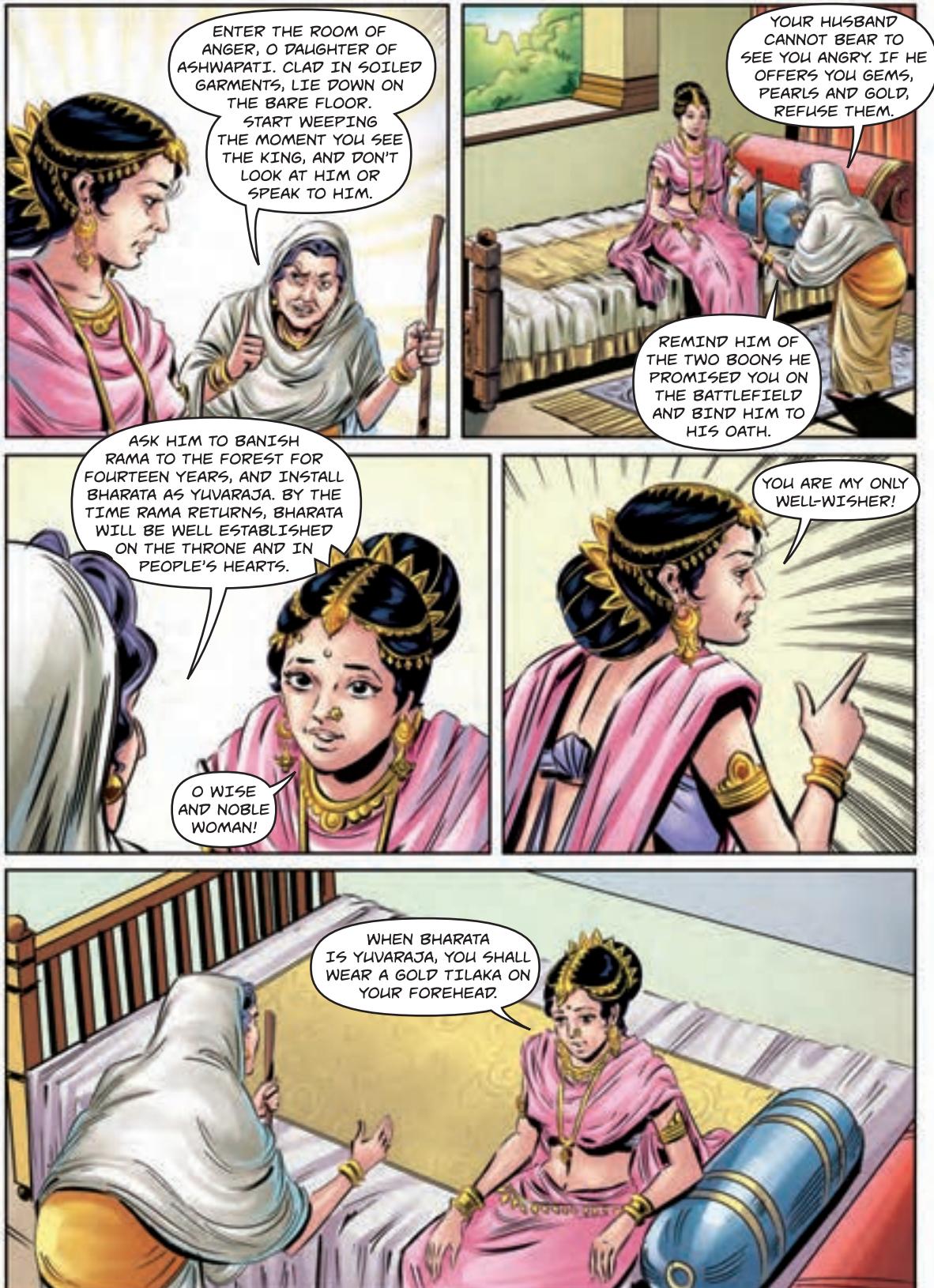


DASHRATHA'S DILEMMA





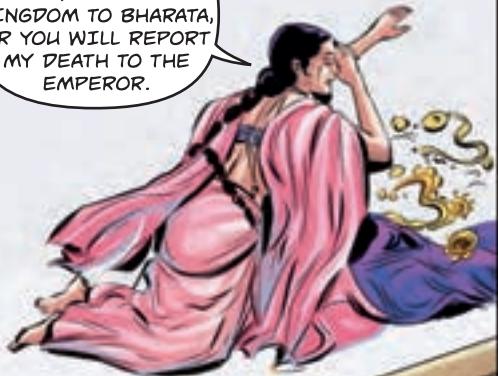
DASHRATHA'S DILEMMA



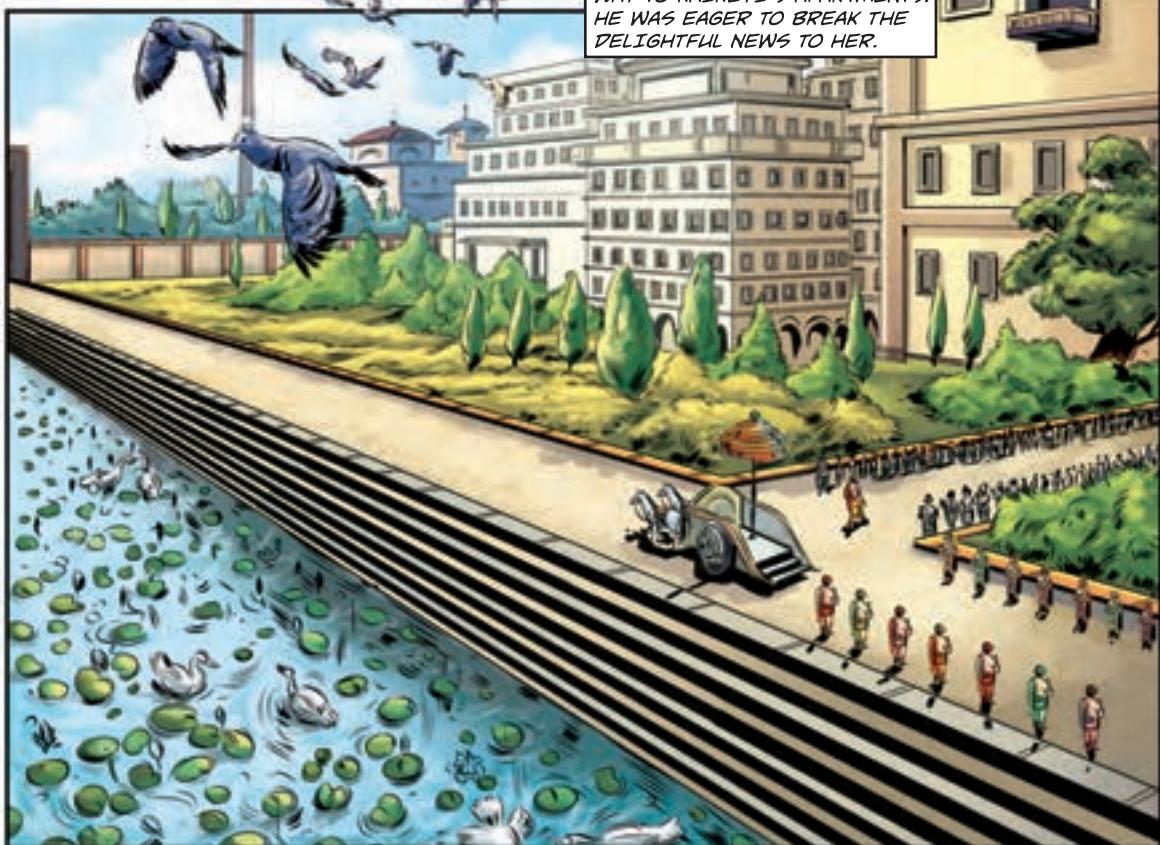
KAIKEYI THEN WENT WITH MANTHARA TO THE ROOM OF ANGER, THREW AWAY HER COSTLY CLOTHES AND JEWELS AND LAY ON THE FLOOR IN SOILED CLOTHES.



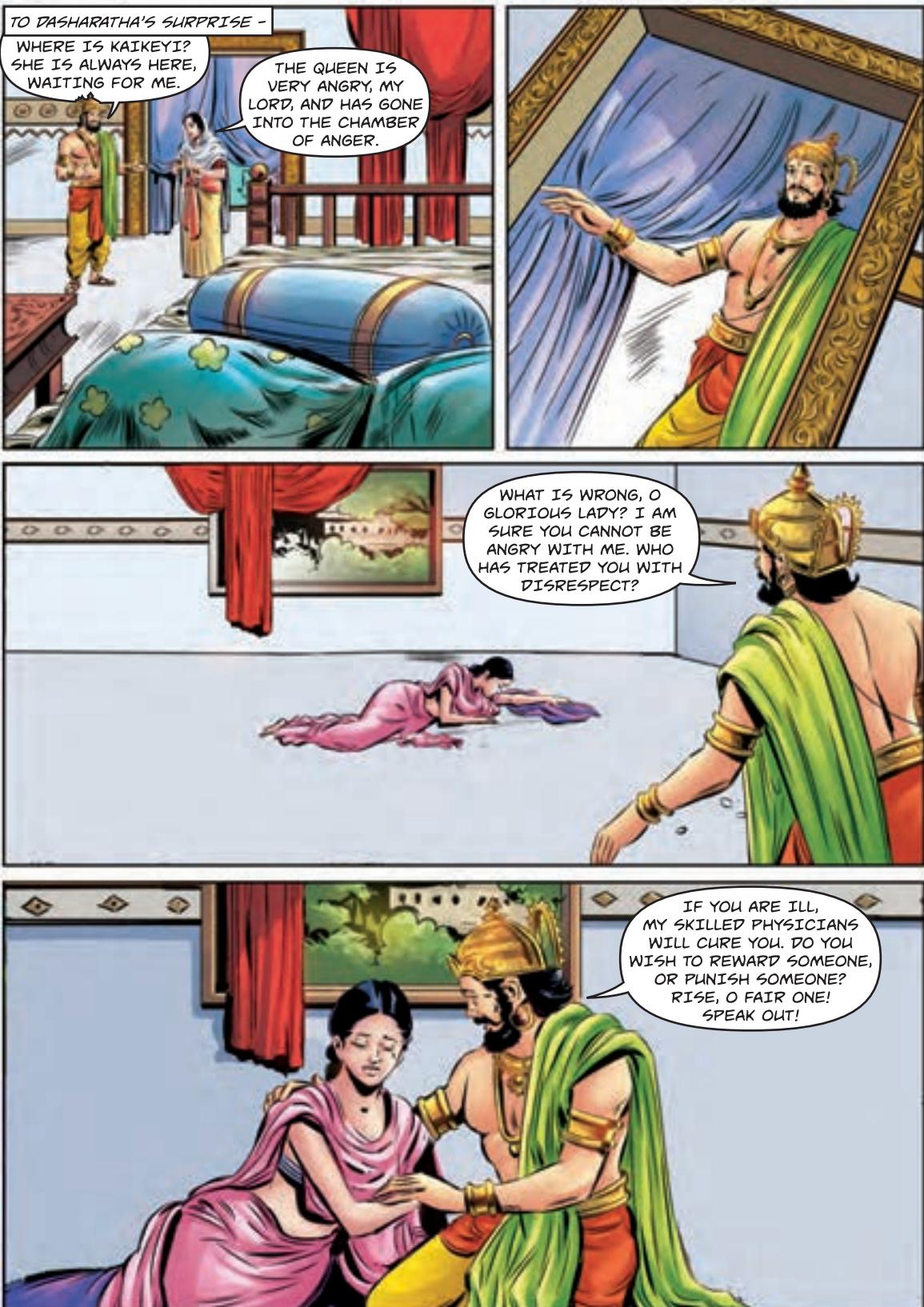
EITHER RAMA DEPARTS FOR THE FOREST, LEAVING THE KINGDOM TO BHARATA, OR YOU WILL REPORT MY DEATH TO THE EMPEROR.



MEANWHILE, DASHARATHA, HAVING ISSUED ORDERS FOR THE INSTALLATION, MADE HIS WAY TO KAIKEYI'S APARTMENTS. HE WAS EAGER TO BREAK THE DELIGHTFUL NEWS TO HER.



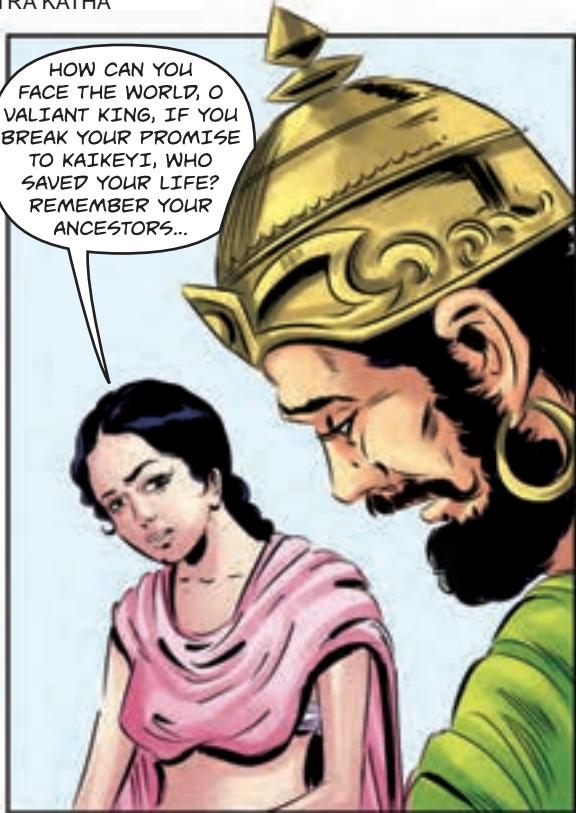
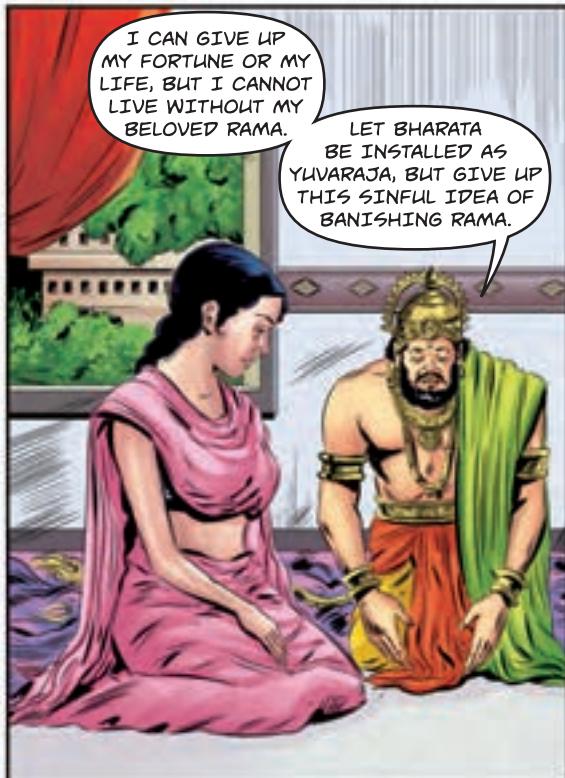
DASHRATHA'S DILEMMA





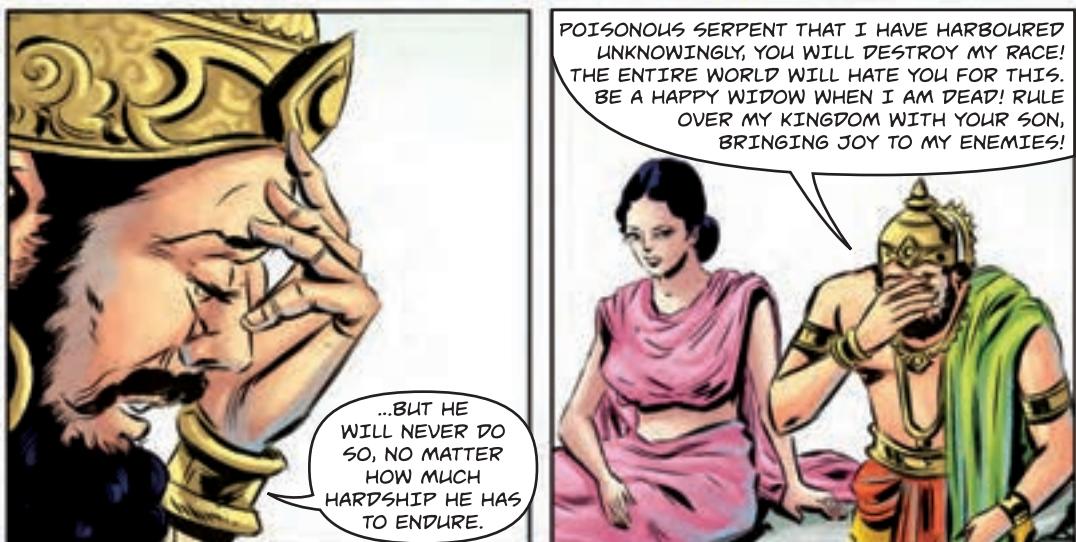
DASHRATHA'S DILEMMA





DASHRATHA'S DILEMMA





DASHRATHA'S DILEMMA

THROUGHOUT THAT NIGHT, DASHARATHA ALTERNATELY COAXED AND REBUKED KAIKEYI. BUT -



WHY DO YOU
LIE ON THE FLOOR IN
AGONY AS IF YOU ARE
COMMITTING A SIN?
YOU HAVE ONLY TO DO
YOUR DUTY.



REMEMBER,
TRUTH IS BRAHMA.
A KING MUST BE
STEADFAST TO
HIS WORD.



OH TREACHEROUS
WIFE - I DISOWN
YOUR HAND, WHICH
I CLASPED BEFORE
THE SACRED FIRE. IF
BHARATA ACCEPTS THIS
KINGDOM, LET HIM NOT
OFFER WATER TO MY
SPIRIT WHEN
I DIE.

IN THE MORNING, THE ROYAL MUSICIANS CAME TO WAKE THE KING WITH FESTIVE MUSIC.

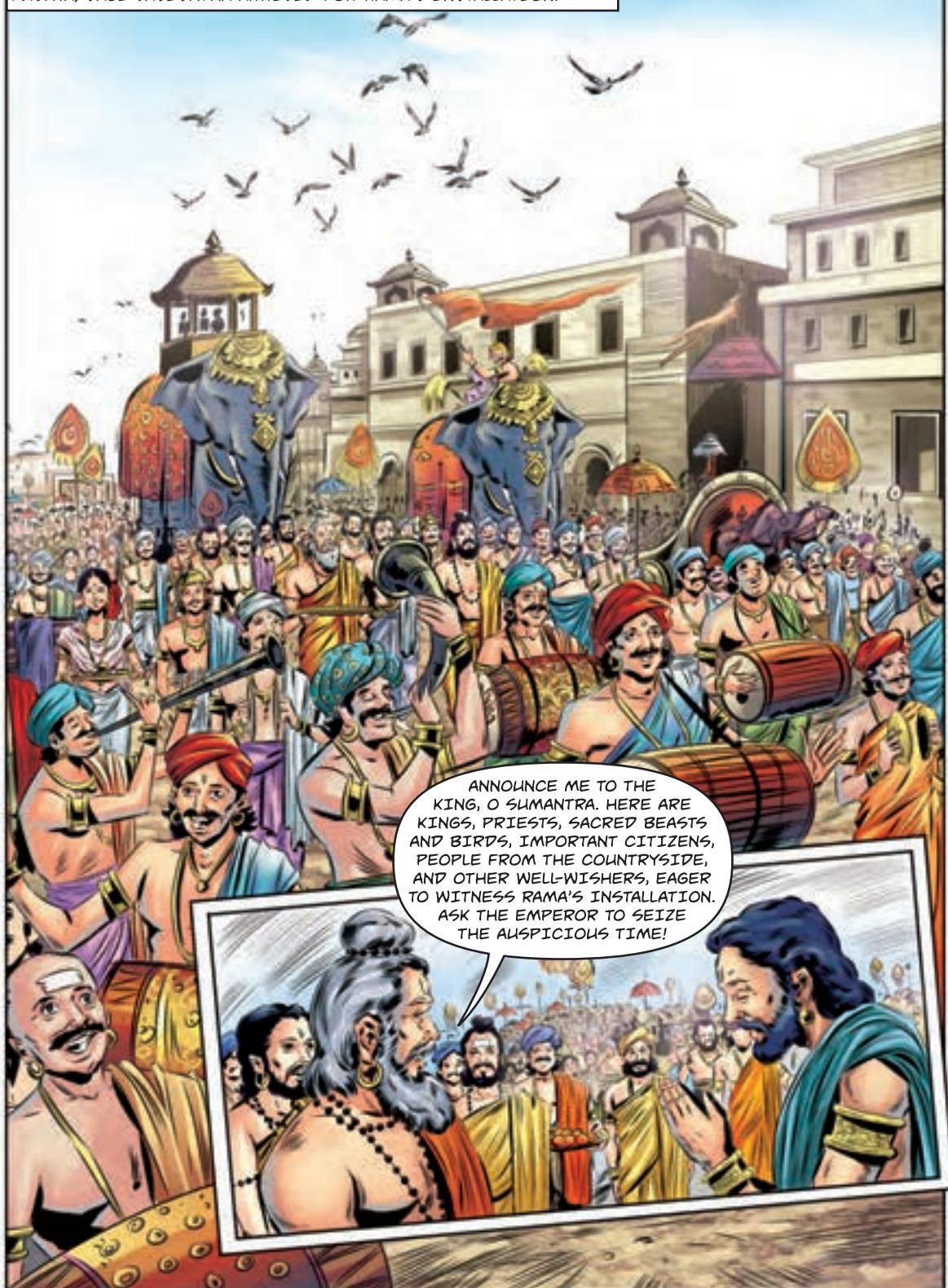


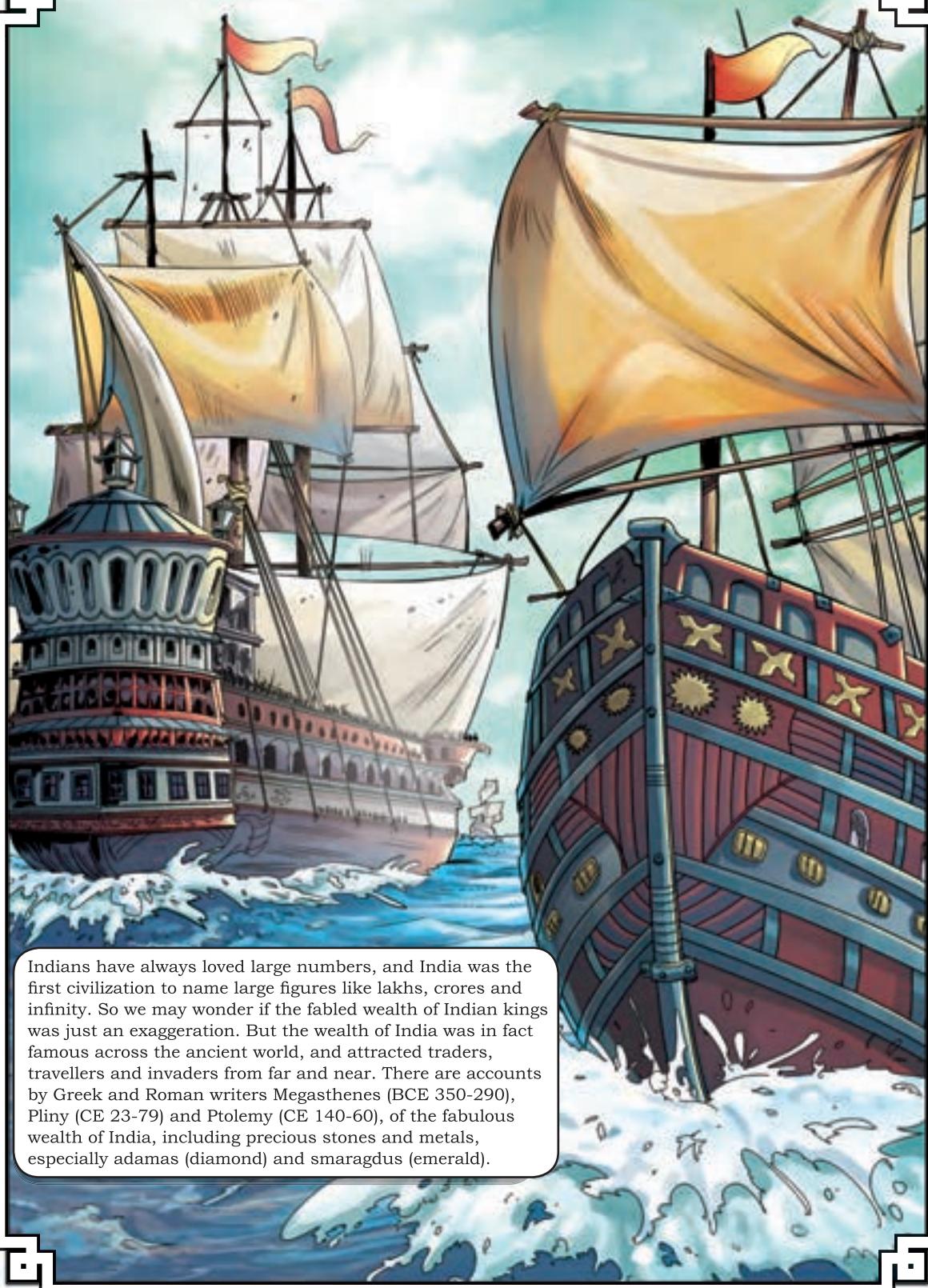
MEANWHILE, RAMA WAS GETTING READY AND RECITING THE GAYATRI MANTRA. AYODHYA WAS FILLED WITH THE DEEP, MELODIOUS SOUNDS OF PURIFYING CHANTS.



DASHRATHA'S DILEMMA

AT THE SACRED HOUR WHEN THE MOON WAS UNITED WITH THE STAR PUSHYA, SAGE VASISHTHA ARRIVED FOR RAMA'S INSTALLATION.





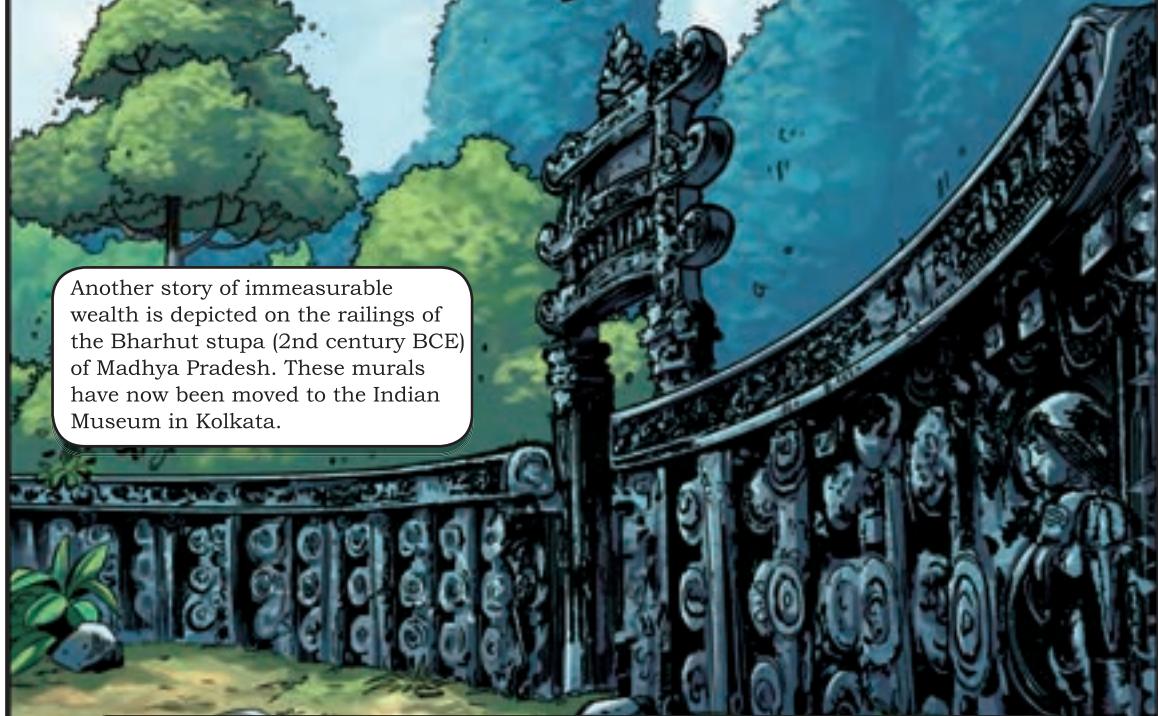
Indians have always loved large numbers, and India was the first civilization to name large figures like lakhs, crores and infinity. So we may wonder if the fabled wealth of Indian kings was just an exaggeration. But the wealth of India was in fact famous across the ancient world, and attracted traders, travellers and invaders from far and near. There are accounts by Greek and Roman writers Megasthenes (BCE 350-290), Pliny (CE 23-79) and Ptolemy (CE 140-60), of the fabulous wealth of India, including precious stones and metals, especially adamas (diamond) and smaragdus (emerald).

Megasthenes lived more than 2400 years ago, in the area now part of Turkey, Syria, Iran and Afghanistan, and visited the court of Chandragupta Maurya. He wrote a book on India called *Indica*. In this book, he describes the Indians' love of finery, their robes and shoes embroidered with gold and precious stones, buildings several storeys high with fine carvings and painted frescoes, luxurious bathrooms and beautifully carved comfortable furniture.

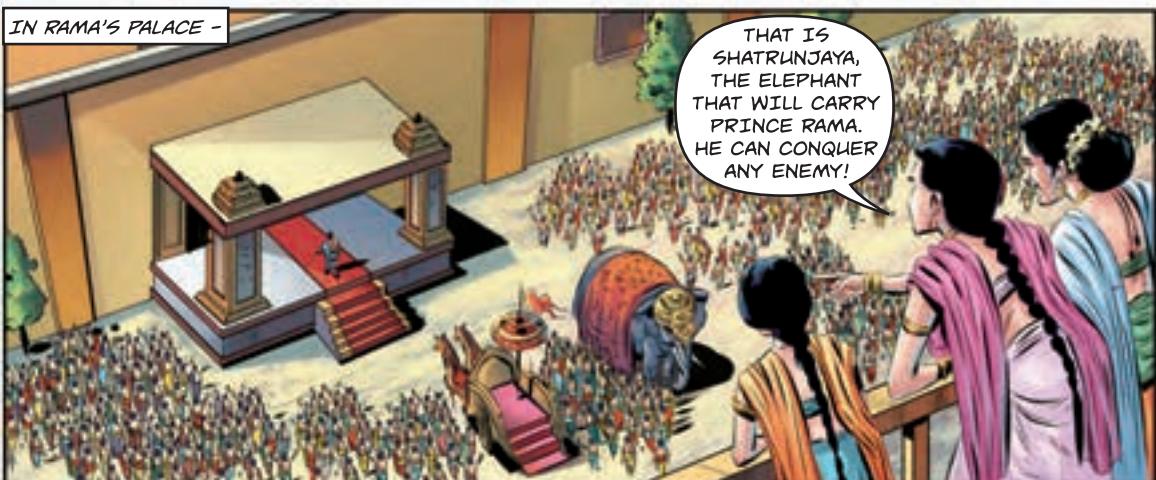
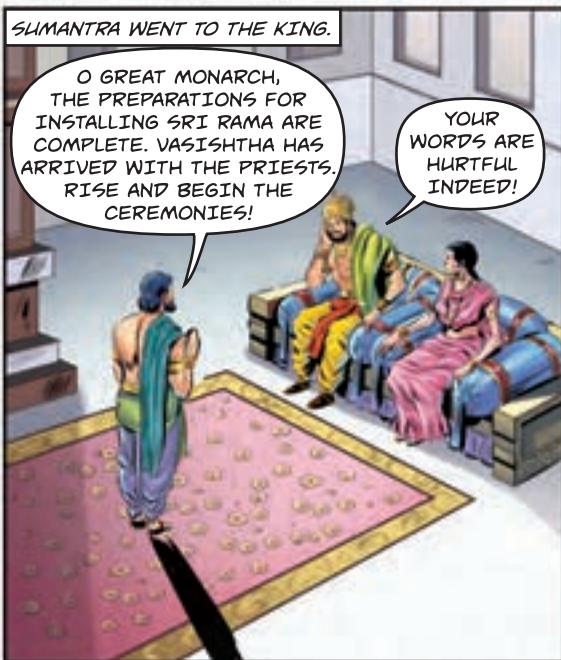
He describes the rich mines and fertile fields of India. Even the ordinary people, he said, lived in comfort. They were skilled workers and had plenty of good food, fresh air and the purest water.



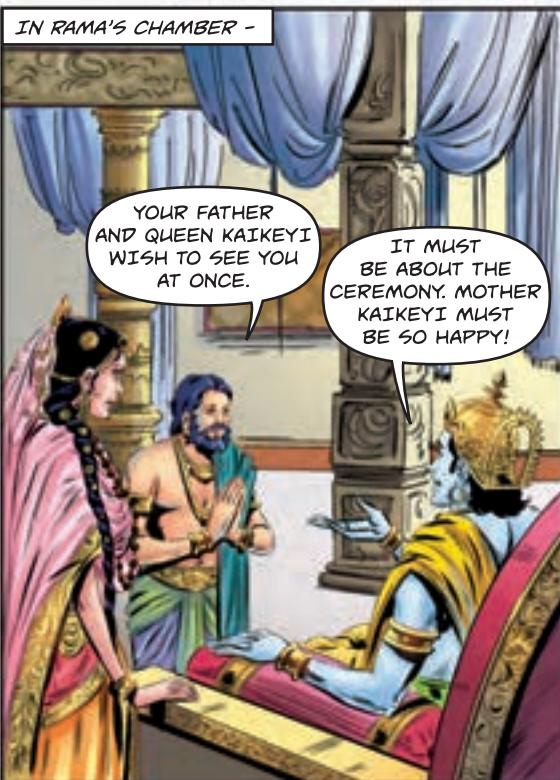
Another story of immeasurable wealth is depicted on the railings of the Bharhut stupa (2nd century BCE) of Madhya Pradesh. These murals have now been moved to the Indian Museum in Kolkata.



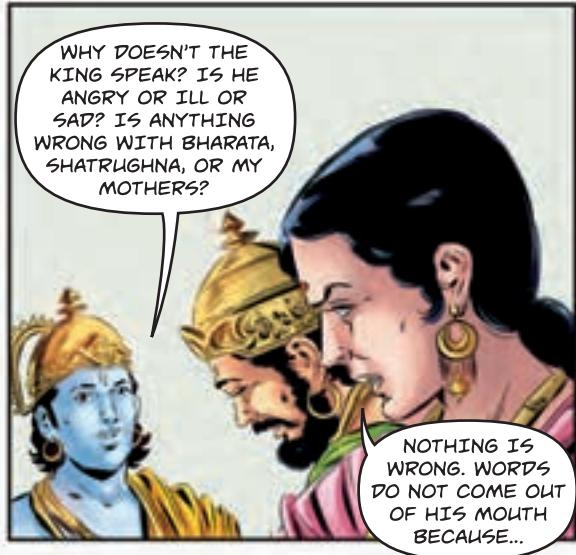
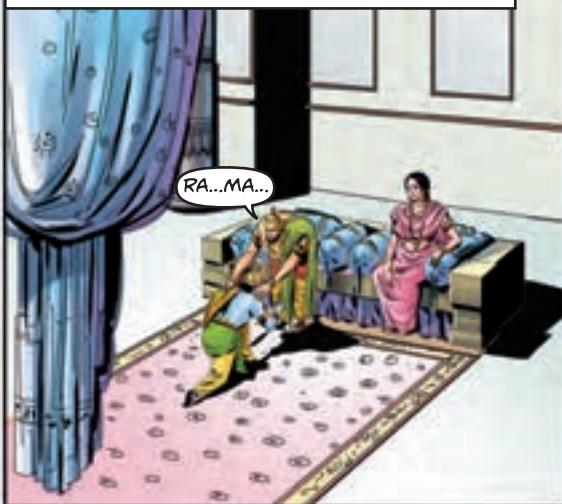
One of them depicts the story of Anathapindika, a rich merchant of Kosala. He wanted to present the Buddha with a beautiful park called Jetavana. The owner of the land agreed to sell it only if he was given enough gold to cover the entire ground. The mural shows cartloads of gold brought by Anathapindika to cover the ground.



DASHRATHA'S DILEMMA

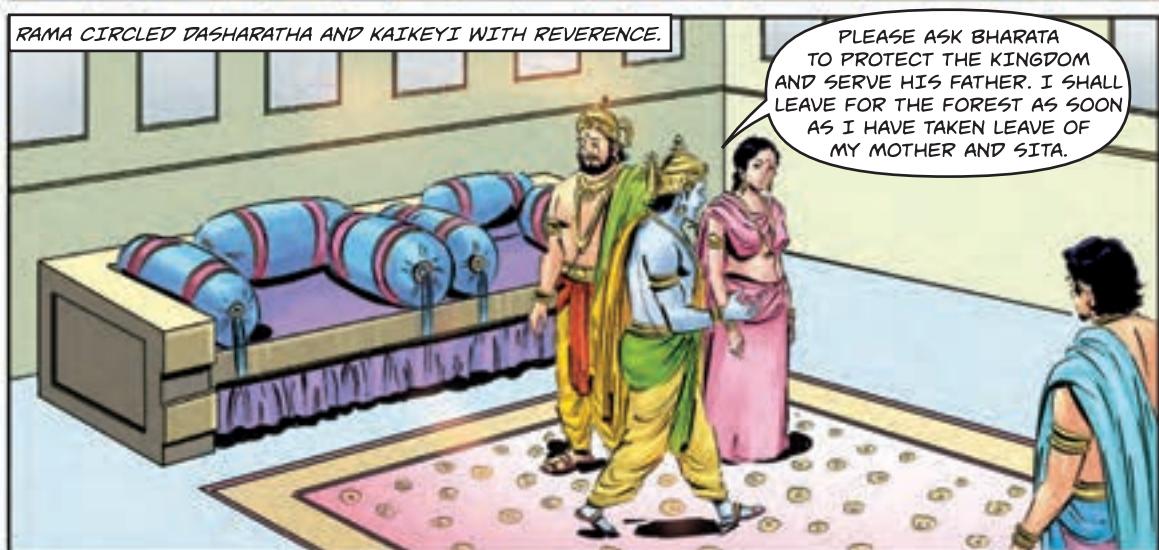
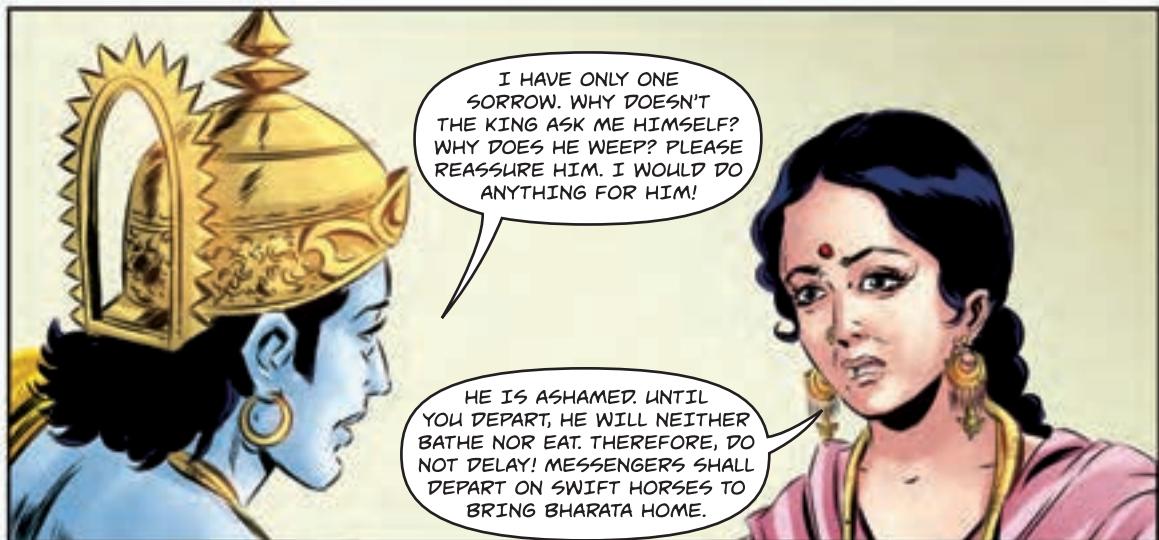


SOON, RAMA ENTERED HIS FATHER'S CHAMBER.

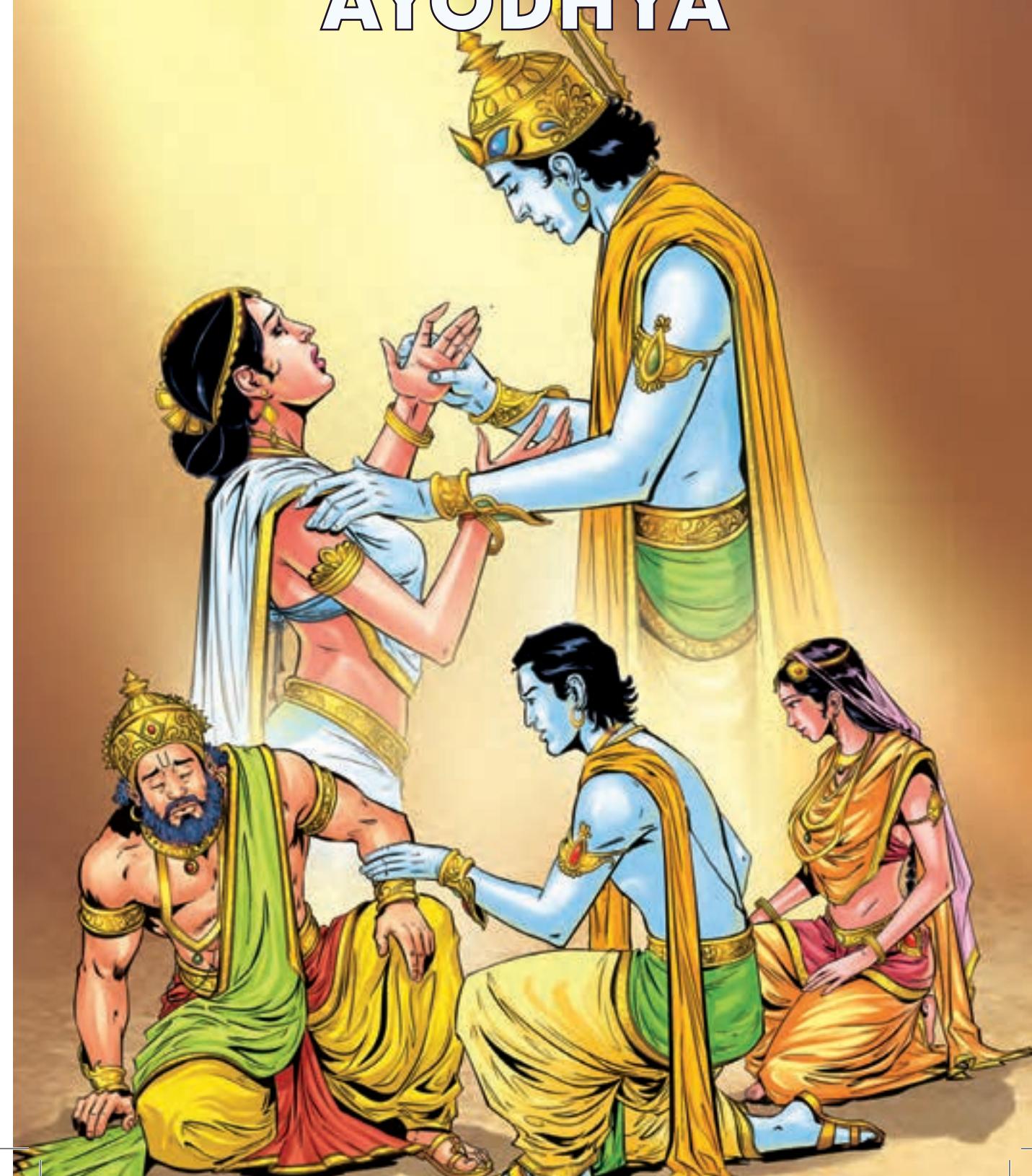


KAIKEYI THEN TOLD RAMA ABOUT THE TWO BOONS.

DASHRATHA'S DILEMMA



FAREWELL TO AYODHYA



FAREWELL TO AYODHYA

EMPEROR DASHARATHA HAD DECIDED TO APPOINT HIS BELOVED ELDEST SON, PRINCE RAMA, THE YUVARAJA OF AYODHYA. THE WHOLE KINGDOM REJOICED BUT DASHARATHA WAS UNHAPPY.

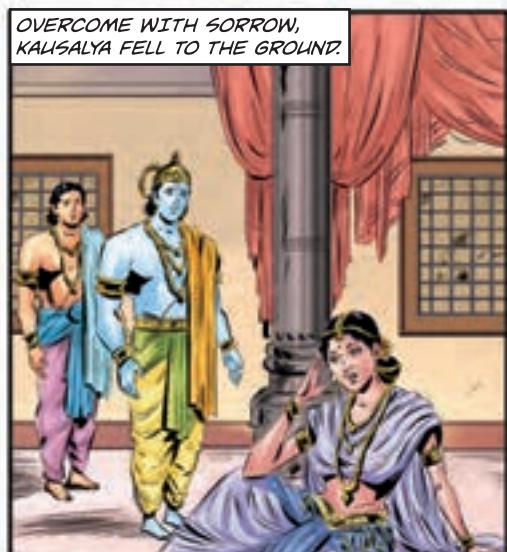
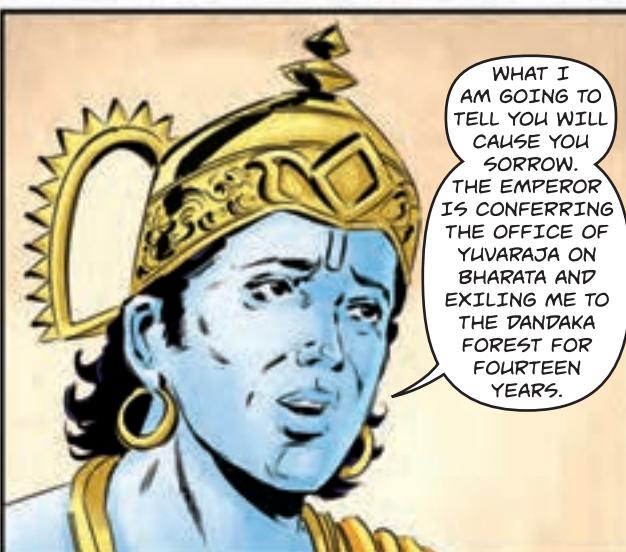
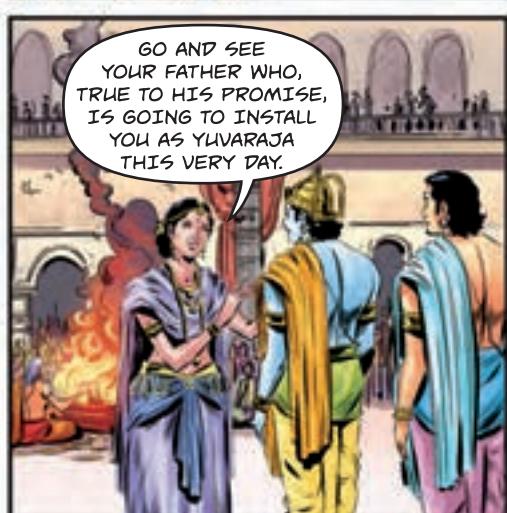
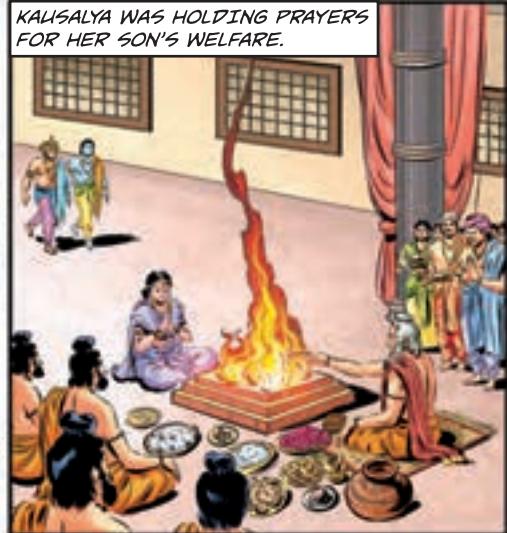
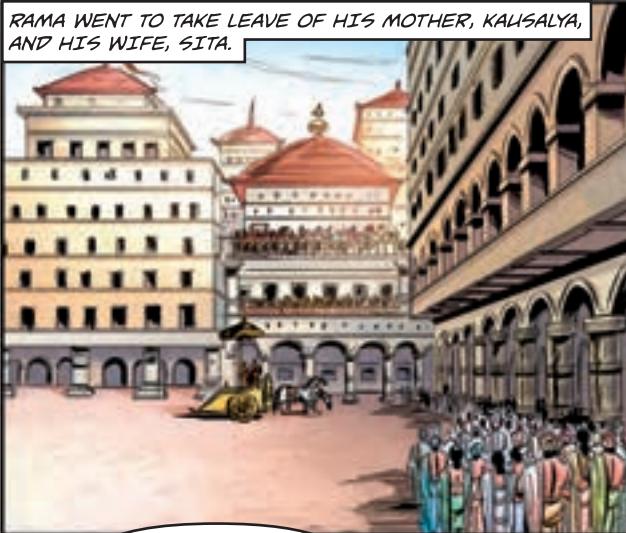


MANY YEARS AGO, DASHARATHA HAD PROMISED HIS YOUNGEST WIFE, KAIKEYI, TWO BOONS. NOW, TO HIS SHOCK, SHE DEMANDED THAT HE BANISH RAMA TO THE FOREST FOR FOURTEEN YEARS, AND INSTALL HER OWN SON BHARATA AS YUVARAJA.



WORD OF RAMA'S RESOLVE TO FULFIL HIS FATHER'S PROMISE SPREAD THROUGH AYODHYA.





AS RAMA GENTLY RAISED HER -

OH MY SON, I HAVE NEVER BEEN HAPPY! MY HUSBAND AND CO-WIVES DO NOT RESPECT ME. HOW CAN I LIVE WITHOUT SEEING YOUR FACE? I SHALL FOLLOW YOU TO THE FOREST.

LAKSHMANA COULD NOT CONTAIN HIS GRIEF ANY LONGER.

O DEVI, THIS IS NOT RIGHT! WHAT DECENT MAN WOULD FORSAKE A GODLIKE SON WHO IS HONEST, DISCIPLINED AND KIND TO ALL?

THE MEEK OF THIS WORLD ARE ALWAYS DOWNTRODDEN. YOU MUST TAKE OVER THE KINGDOM AT ONCE.

I SHALL KILL ANYONE WHO SUPPORTS BHARATA, INCLUDING OUR ROYAL FATHER IF NECESSARY. BY WHAT AUTHORITY CAN HE CONFER ON BHARATA THIS KINGDOM, WHICH IS RIGHTFULLY YOURS? EVEN A GURU, WHEN HE COMMITS A WRONG, MUST BE PUNISHED.





SANAATANA DHARMA – THE ETERNAL LAW

In ancient India, people lived by a set of spiritual principles. These principles were universal. They helped people live in harmony with nature and with each other. They were called *Sanaatana Dharma*, or the eternal law.

The most important principle of the *Sanaatana Dharma* is that there is only one Ultimate Reality, and that is *Brahman*. Everything in the universe – living and non-living – is part of *Brahman*. People worship this Divine Being in many different forms. Since we are all part of one Whole, our actions affect the entire universe, including us. For instance, if we destroy forests and pollute the earth, it may affect us in the long run through high temperatures, too much or too little rain, crop failure and animal extinction. Keeping this in mind, we realise that all our actions must be for the universal good, which means treating all beings the way we would like to be treated.



Sanaatana Dharma tells us that the universe governs itself through rebirth and *Karma* (natural justice). If we do good deeds, we will reap the rewards in our next life, and if we do bad deeds, we will suffer. When we achieve spiritual perfection, the cycle of rebirth stops and we merge with *Brahman*. Thus our future is in our own hands.

Human beings are born with four kinds of goals – *dharma* (truth), *artha* (wealth), *kaama* (desire) and *moksha* (spiritual perfection). At different stages of life, we seek different things – knowledge, money, fame, love, peace and so on. The principles of *Sanaatana Dharma* help us achieve our goals while performing our duties to our family, society and the universe. Some of the principles like truth and *ahimsa* are universal, while others are specific to our profession (*varna*) or stage of life (*ashrama*). For instance, a soldier's duty may be to kill an enemy, while it would be wrong for a priest to do so. A student's duty is to study and to obey his guru, while elderly people with no responsibilities must spend their days striving for spiritual perfection. When there is a conflict, truth and duty always come first. This is why Rama chose to uphold his father's word rather than seize the throne as Lakshmana suggested.





FAREWELL TO AYODHYA

KALISALYA PUT AN AMULET ON RAMA'S WRIST, MADE OF THE HERB VISHALYAKARANI.

KALISALYA DAUBED HIS FACE AND BODY WITH SANDAL PASTE...

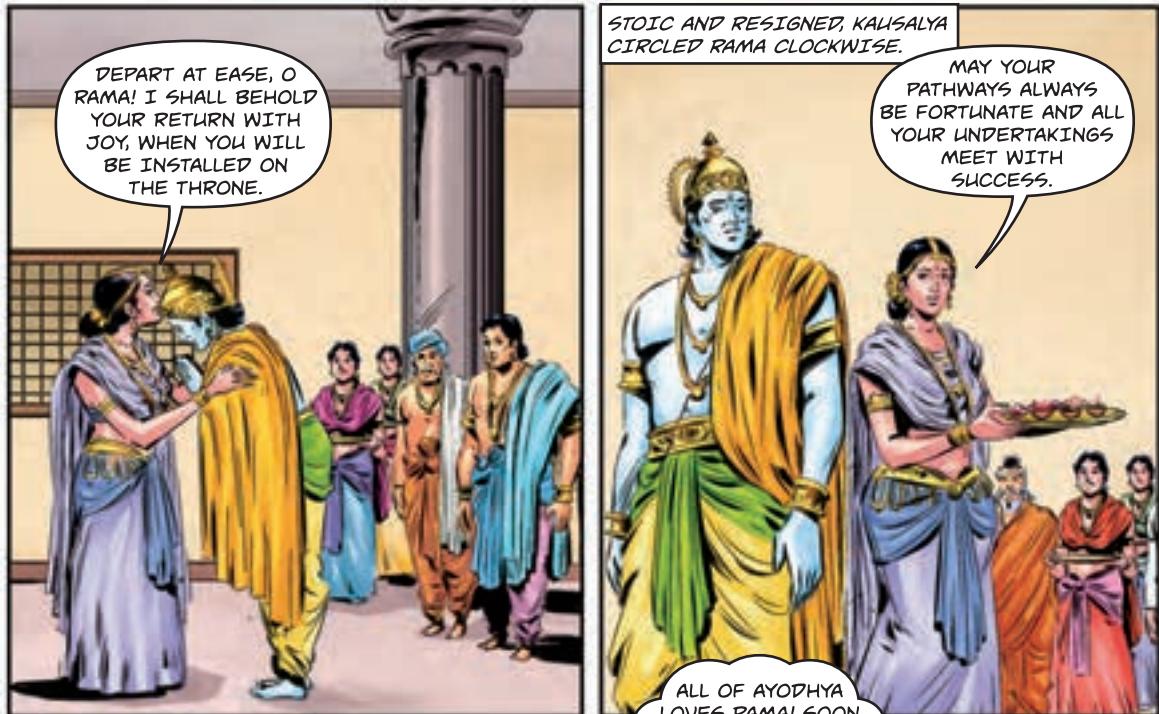
DEPART, MY SON, AND RETURN SOON! MAY YOU LIVE LONG! MAY YOUR TRUTHFULNESS AND LOVE FOR ALL KEEP YOU SAFE! MAY THE RISHIS, AND THE WEAPONS GIVEN TO YOU BY VISHWAMITRA, PROTECT YOU!

MAY SACRED FIREWOOD, KUSA GRASS, TREES, POOLS, BIRDS, REPTILES AND LIONS PROTECT YOU!

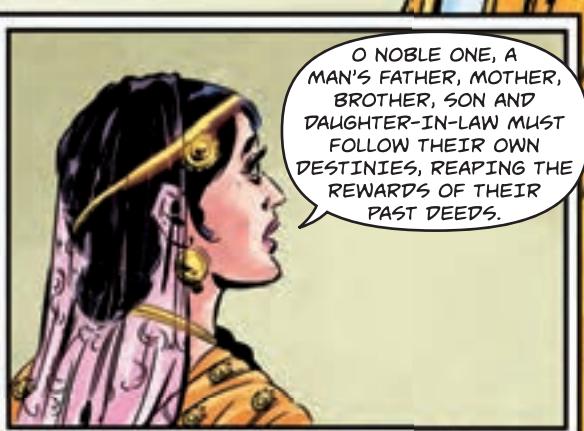
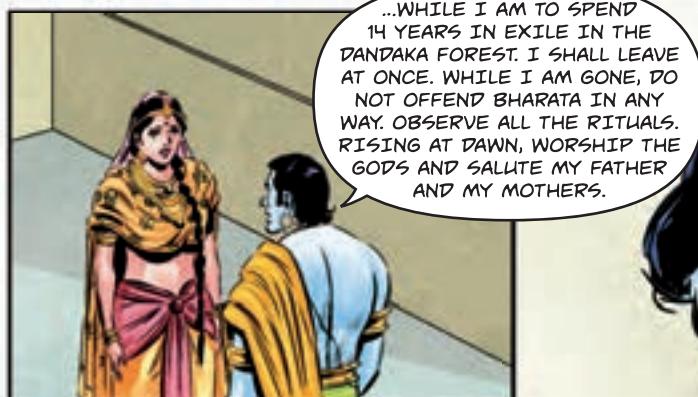
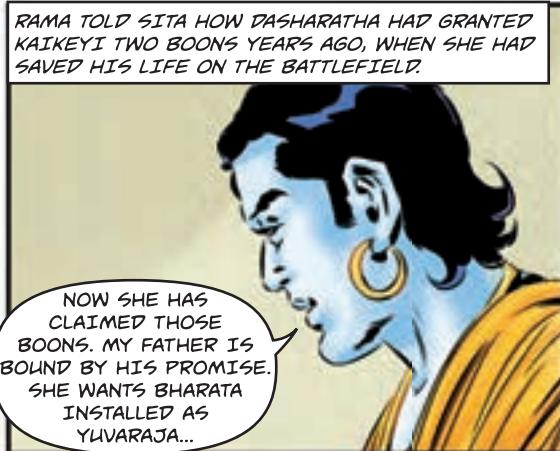
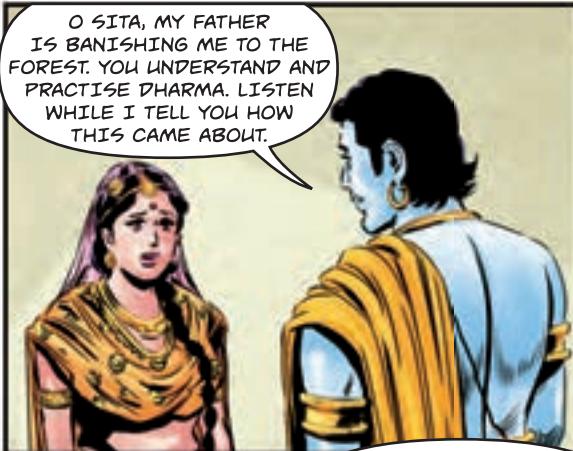
...AND SPRINKLED YELLOW RICE ON HIS HEAD.

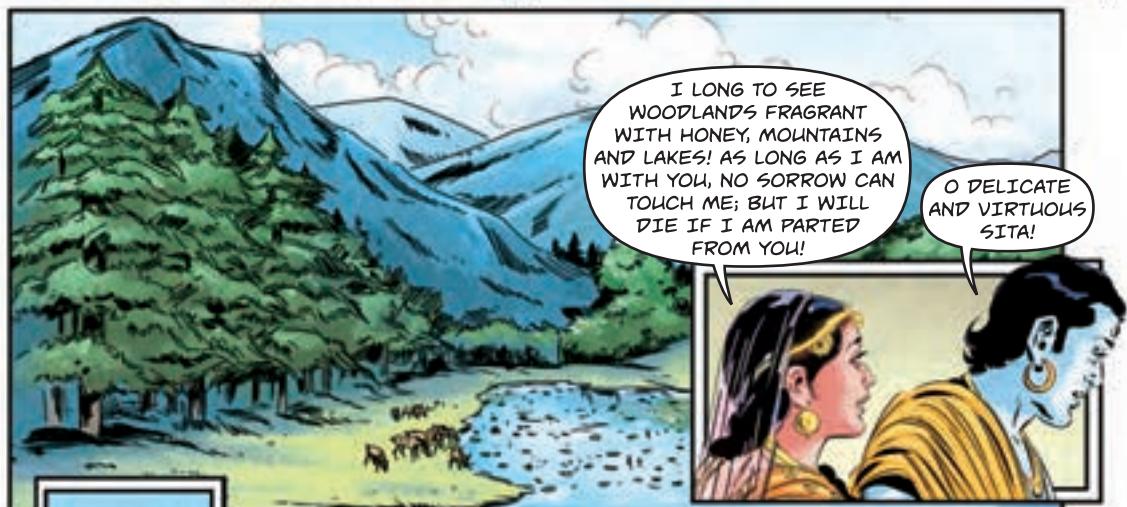
MAY BRAHMA AND ALL THE GODS, THE OCEANS, HEAVEN AND EARTH BRING YOU HAPPINESS WHILE YOU ROAM ABOUT THE FOREST.

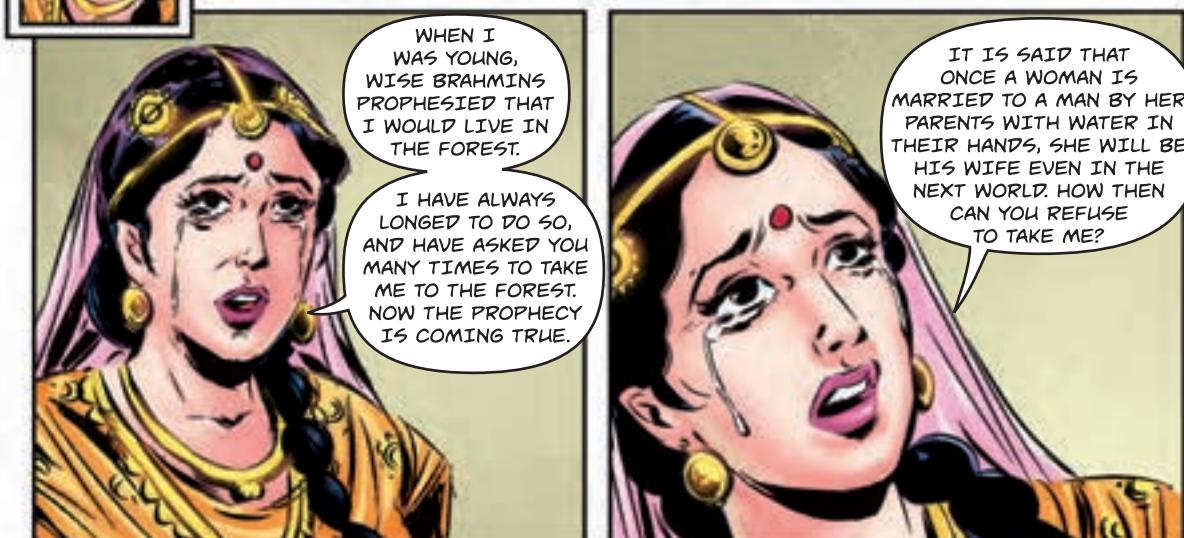
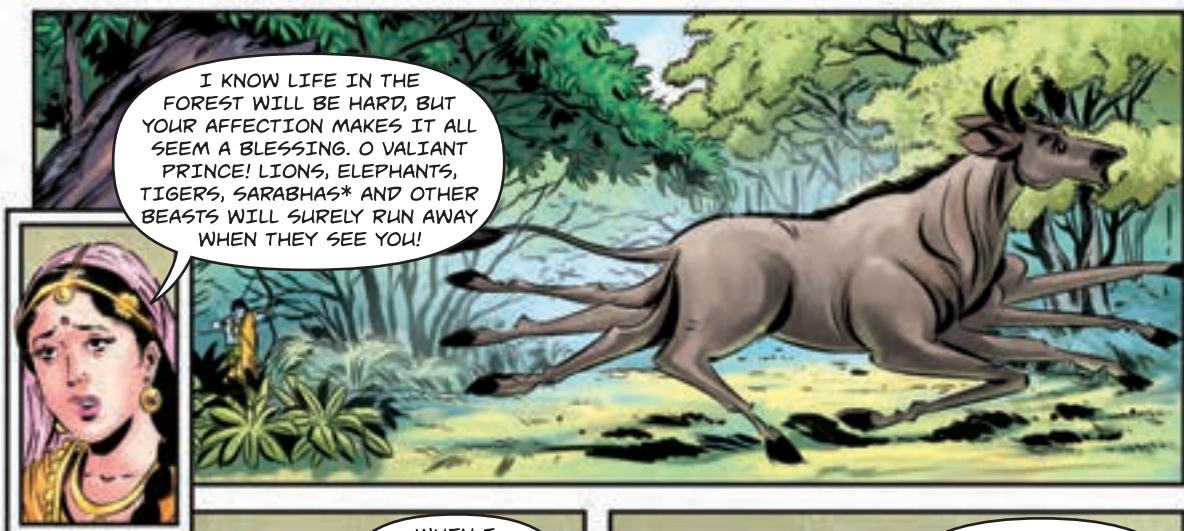
MAY FIRE, AIR AND SMOKE AS WELL AS THE SACRED TEXTS OF RISHIS PROTECT YOU WHEN DRINKING WATER AND BATHING. MAY YOU BE AS VICTORIOUS AS LORD VISHNU!



FAREWELL TO AYODHYA







*A LEGENDARY DEER WITH EIGHT LEGS,
MORE POWERFUL THAN EVEN A LION

UNABLE TO CONVINCE RAMA,
SITA GREW ANGRY.

IT WOULD
BE A SHAME IF THE
PEOPLE OF AYODHYA
DECLARED THAT THE
SPLENDID RAMA
LACKS COURAGE!

WHAT IS THIS FEAR
THAT MAKES YOU DESERT ME?
MARRIED WHEN I WAS STILL A
CHILD, I HAVE LIVED WITH YOU
FOR SO LONG. HOW CAN YOU
LEAVE ME TO THE MERCY
OF OTHERS?

WITH YOU, THE
FOREST PATHS WILL
APPEAR LIKE A GARDEN.
THE DUST OF SANDSTORMS
WILL BE LIKE SANDAL
DUST, THE TURF WE
SHALL LIE ON WILL
BE LIKE CARPETS.

RAMA COULD NOT WITHSTAND
SITA'S WORDS.

SINCE YOU WERE
BORN TO LIVE WITH
ME IN THE FOREST,
O MYTHILI*, WE ARE
AS INSEPARABLE AS
SELF-KNOWLEDGE
AND HONOUR.

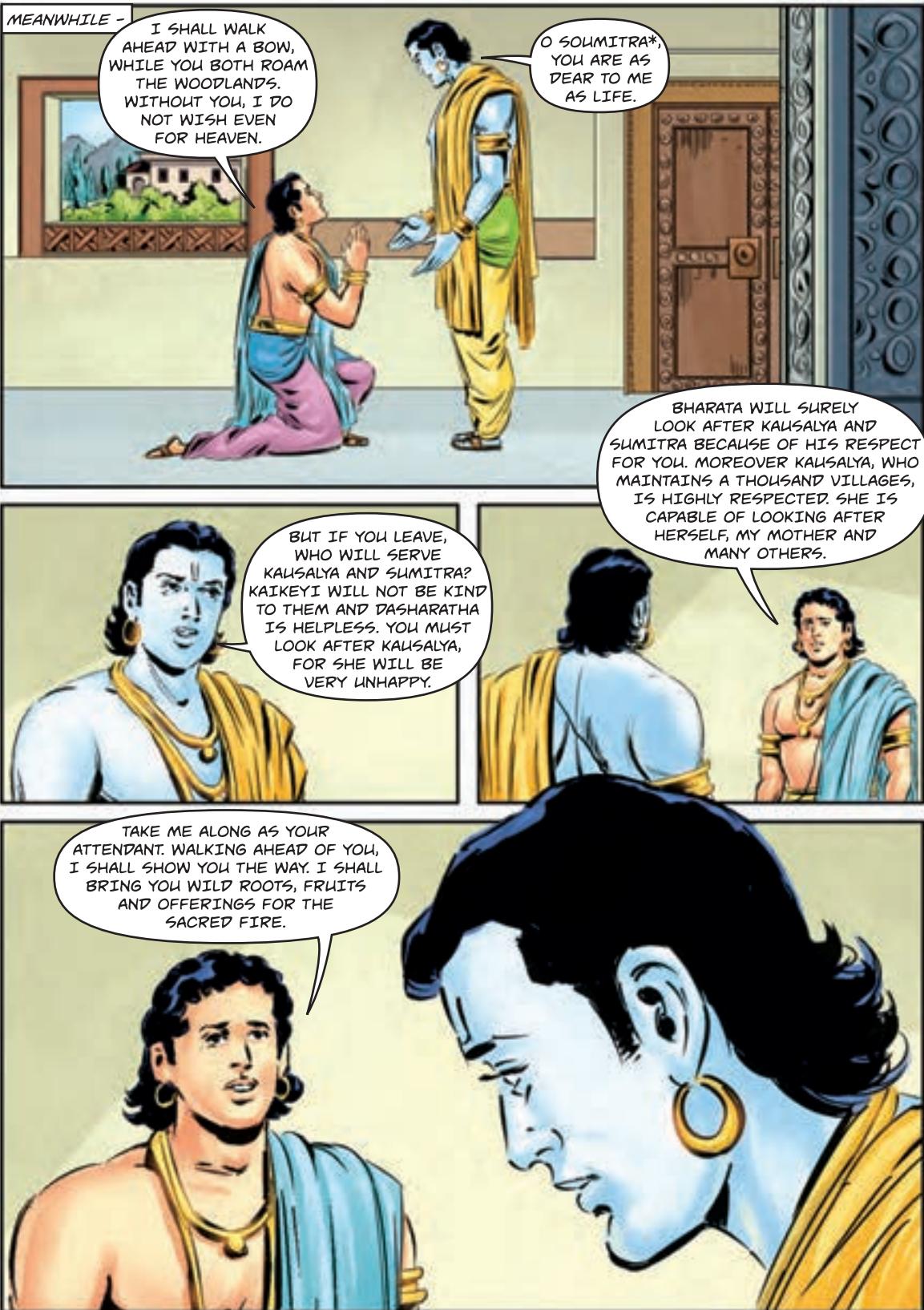


*PRINCESS OF MITHILA

FAREWELL TO AYODHYA



*THE SUN GOD



*SON OF SUMITRA

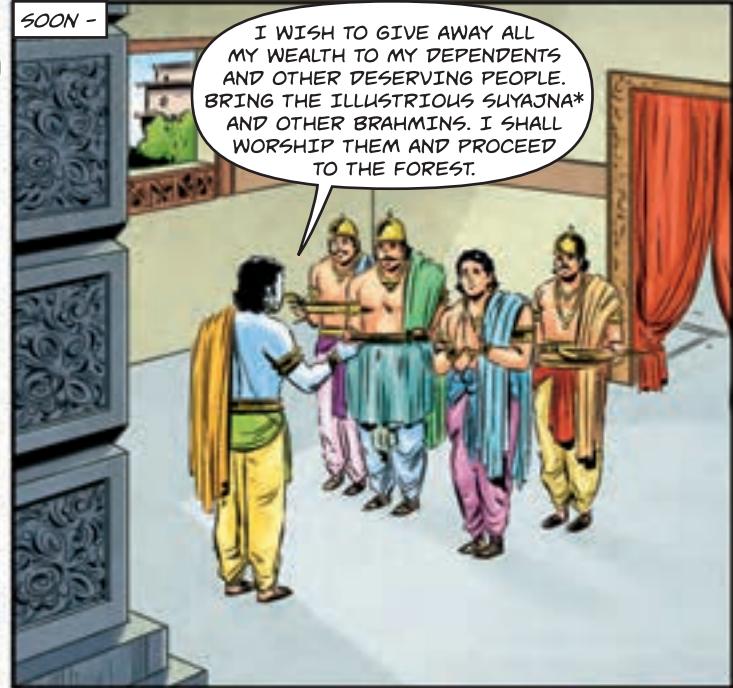
FAREWELL TO AYODHYA

THEN TAKE LEAVE OF YOUR DEAR ONES, SOMITRA! AND BRING FROM VASISHTHA'S HOUSE THE TWO BOWS GIVEN TO JANAKA BY VARUNA, QUIVERS WITH AN ENDLESS SUPPLY OF ARROWS, ARMOUR, AND A PAIR OF SHINING SWORDS.



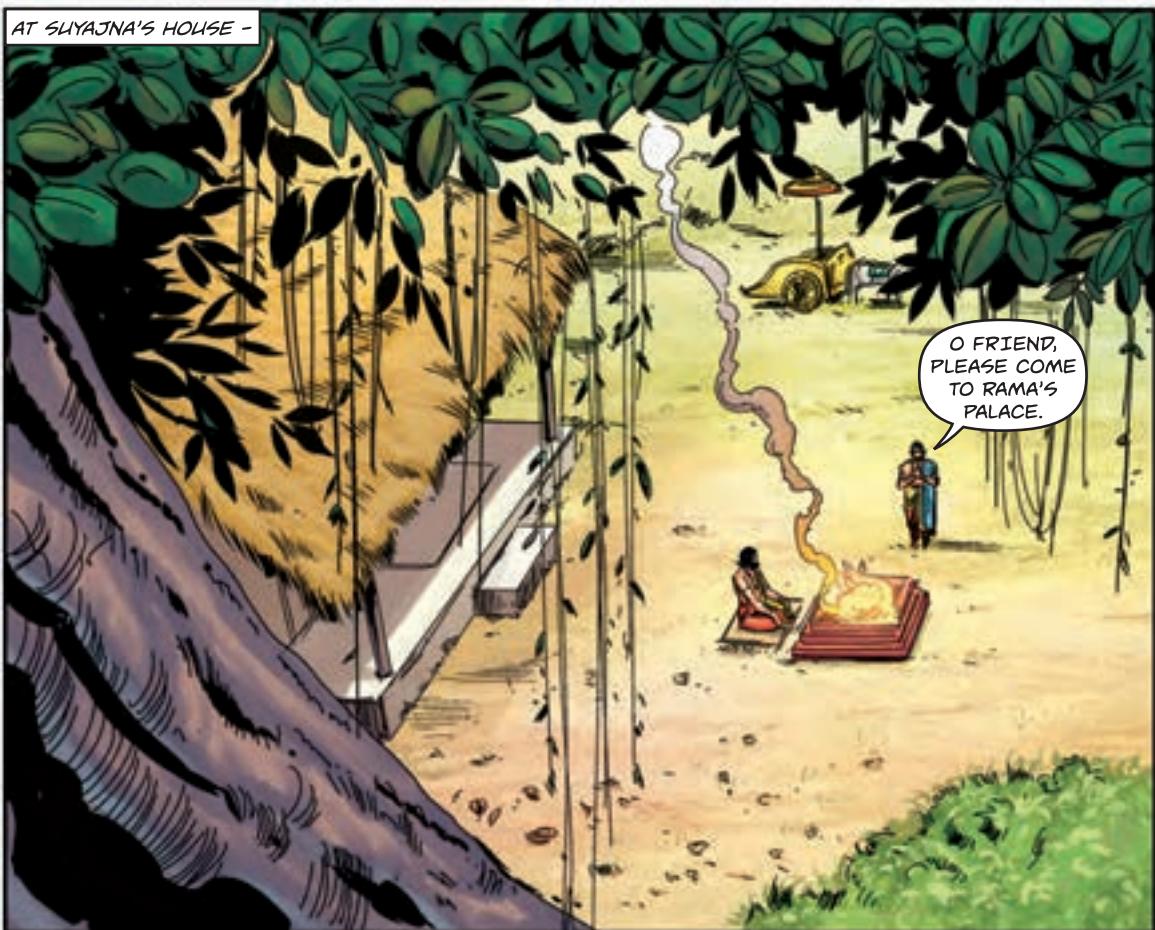
SOON -

I WISH TO GIVE AWAY ALL MY WEALTH TO MY DEPENDENTS AND OTHER DESERVING PEOPLE. BRING THE ILLUSTRIOUS SUYAJNA* AND OTHER BRAHMINS. I SHALL WORSHIP THEM AND PROCEED TO THE FOREST.

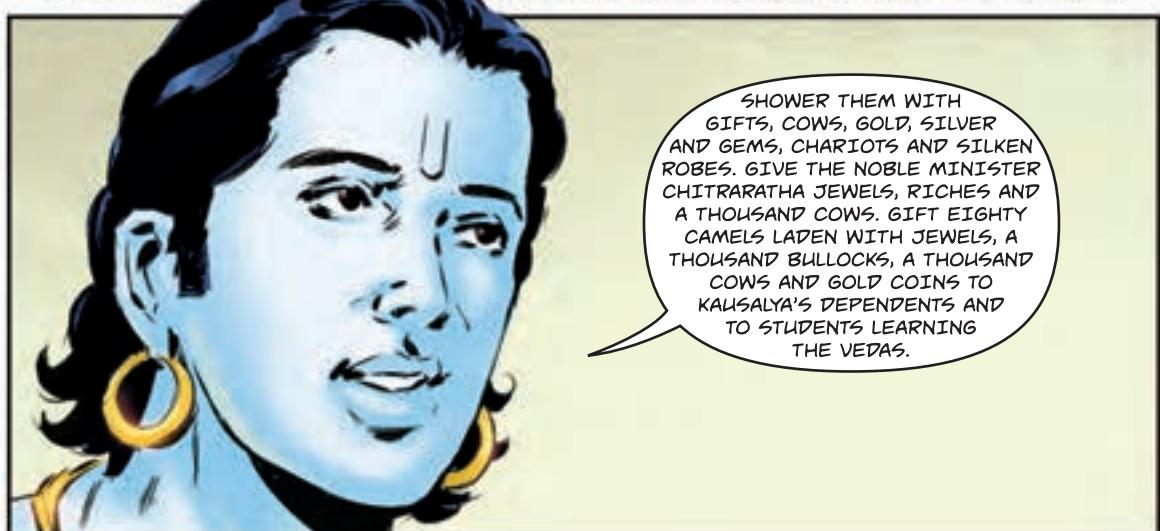


AT SUYAJNA'S HOUSE -

O FRIEND,
PLEASE COME
TO RAMA'S
PALACE.

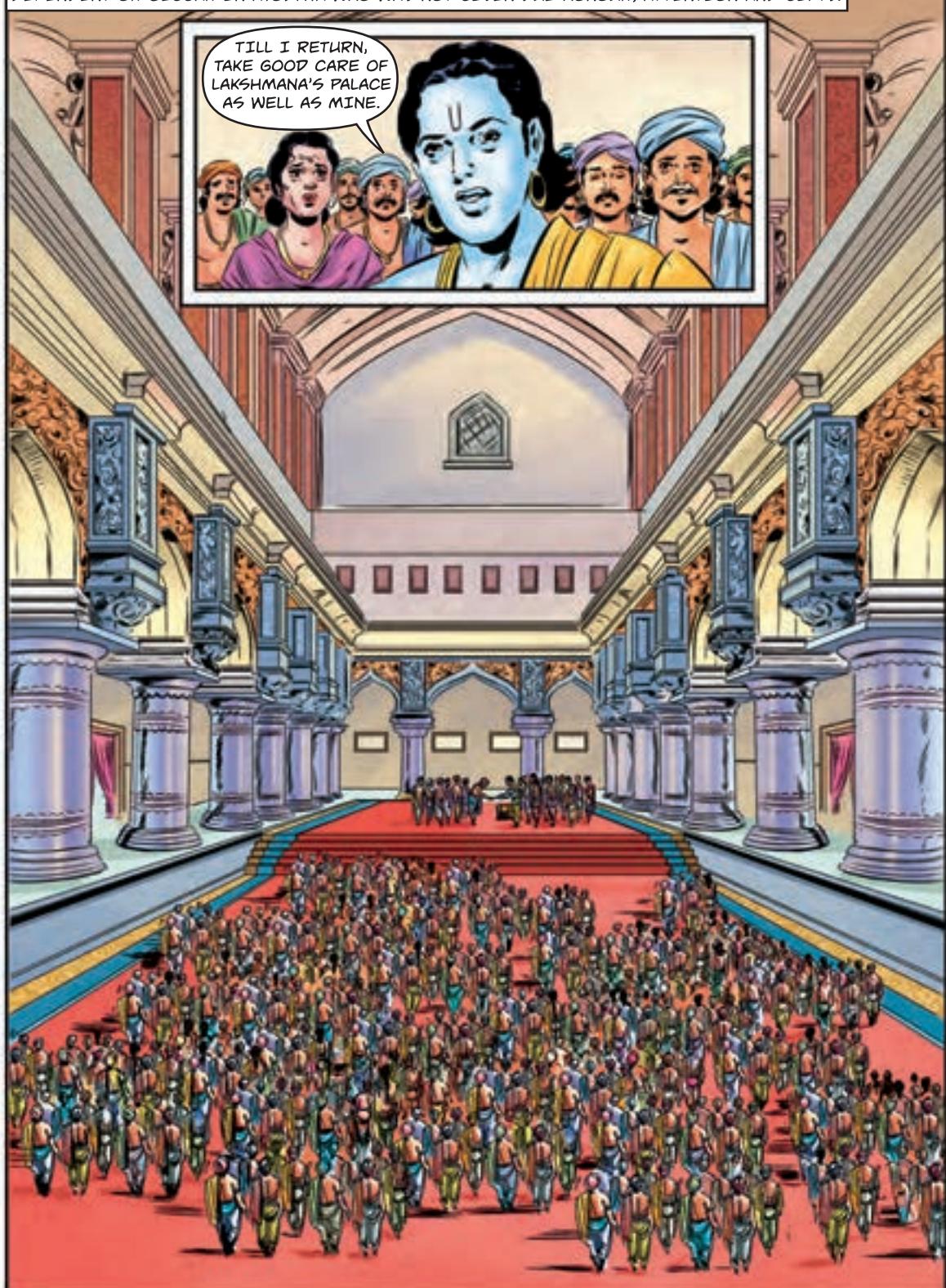


*VASISHTHA'S SON

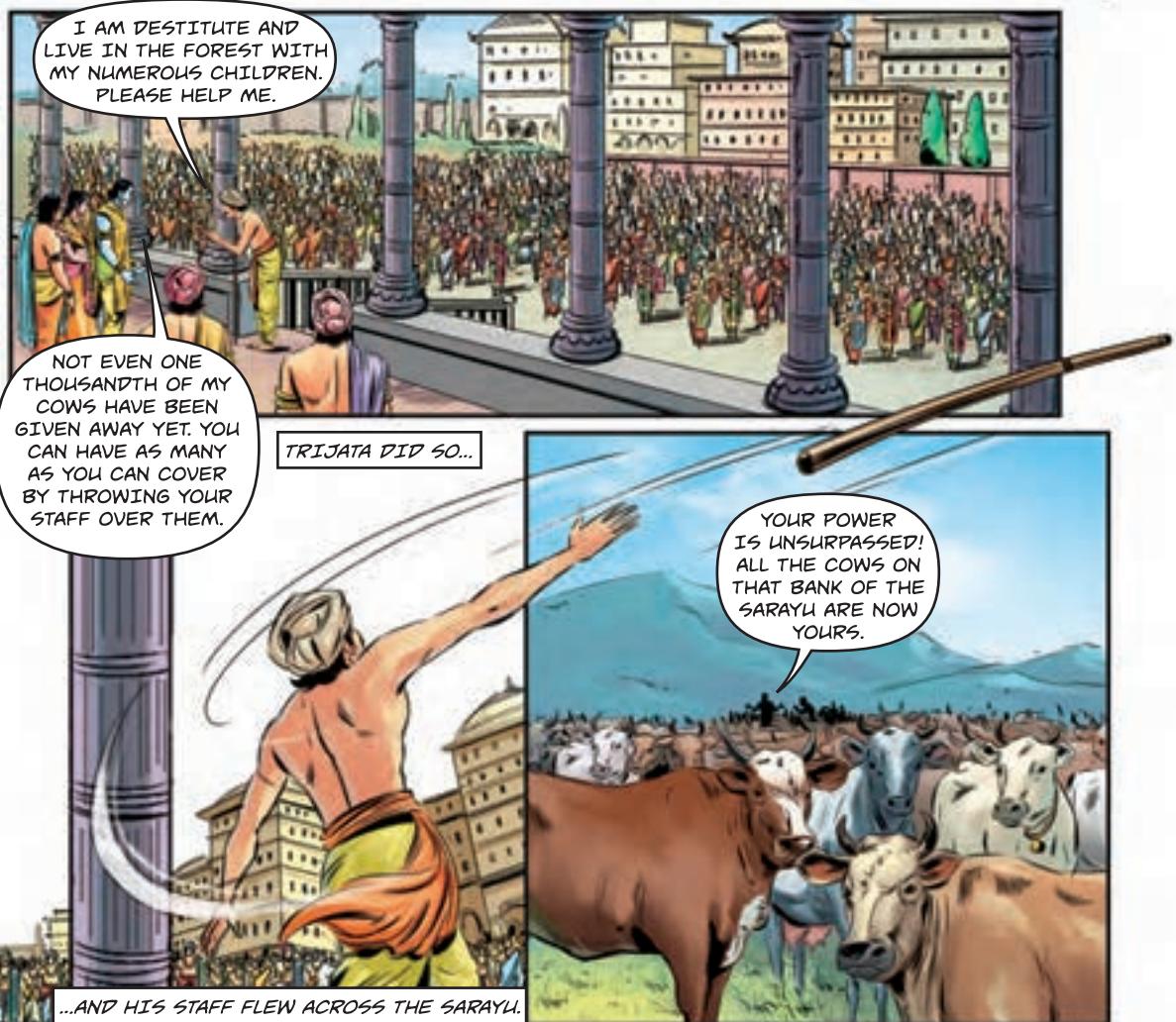
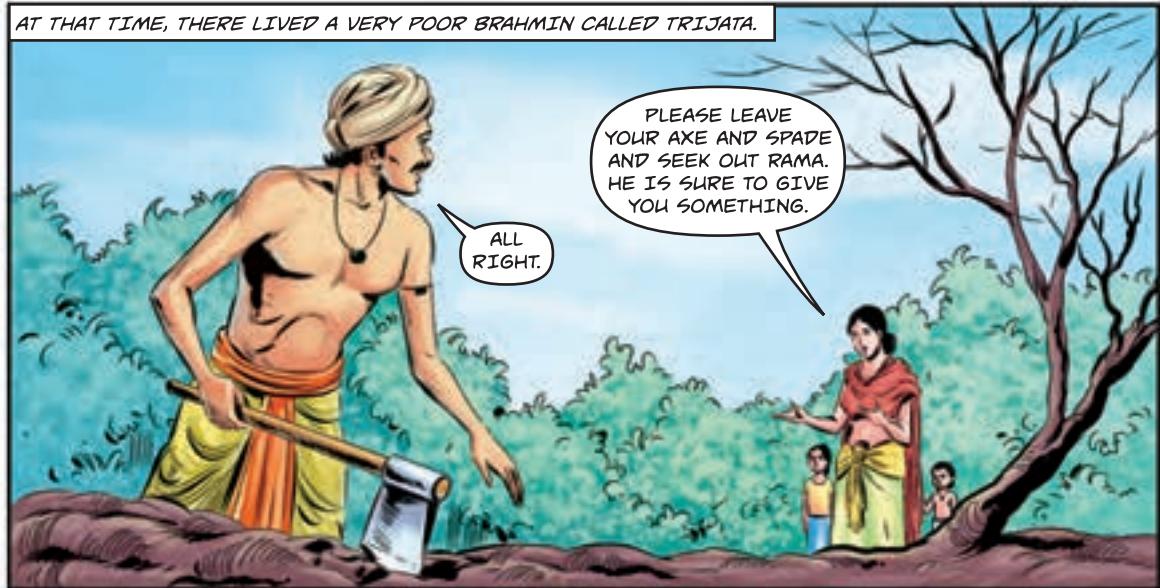


FAREWELL TO AYODHYA

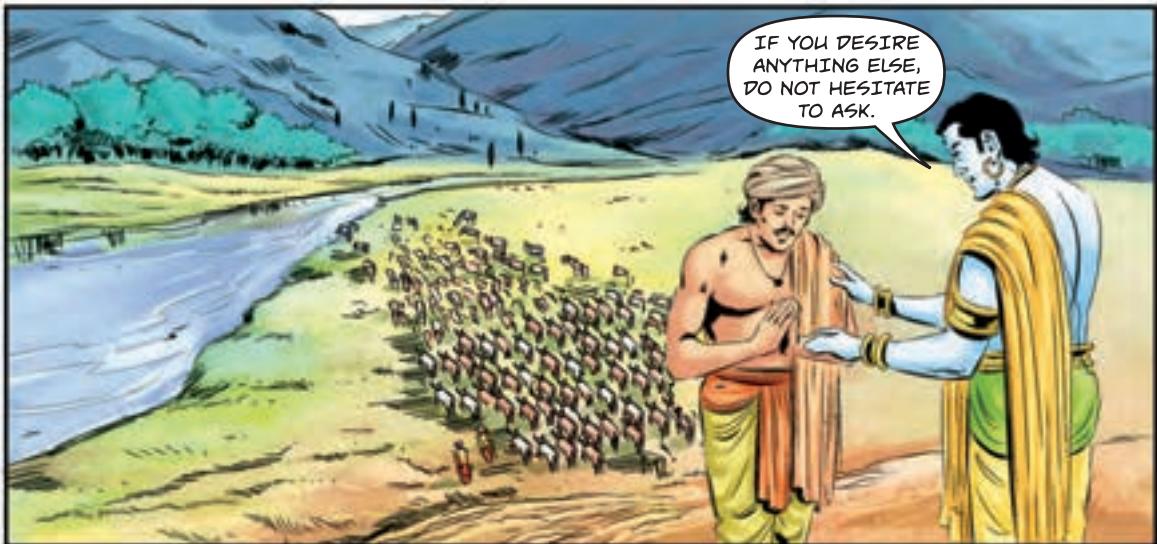
LIKE KUBERA, LAKSHMANA DISTRIBUTED RAMA'S WEALTH. THERE WAS NO BRAHMIN, RELATION, DEPENDENT OR BEGGAR IN AYODHYA WHO WAS NOT GIVEN DUE HONOUR, ATTENTION AND GIFTS.



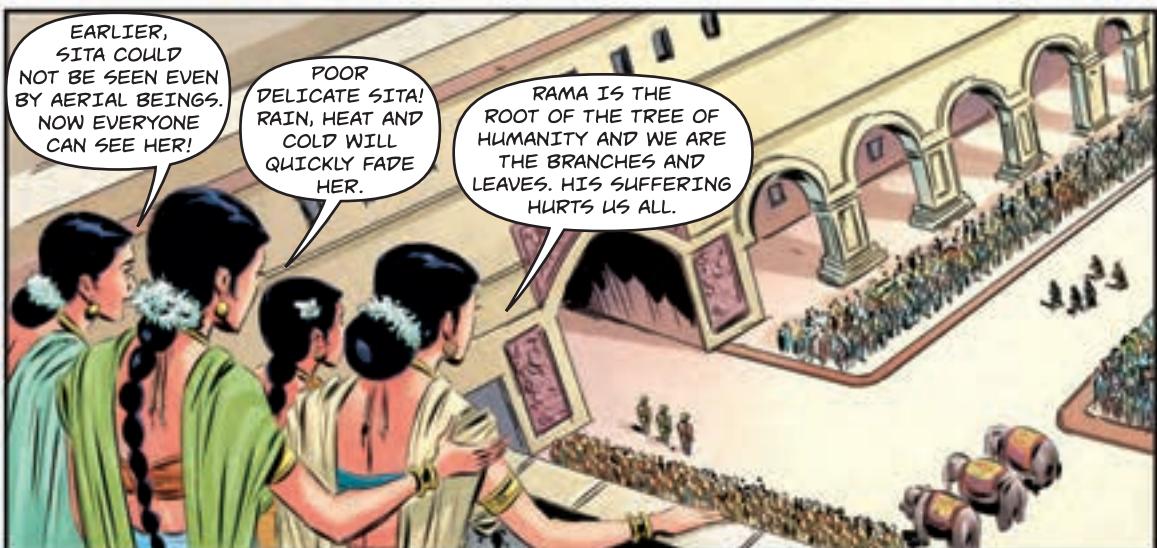
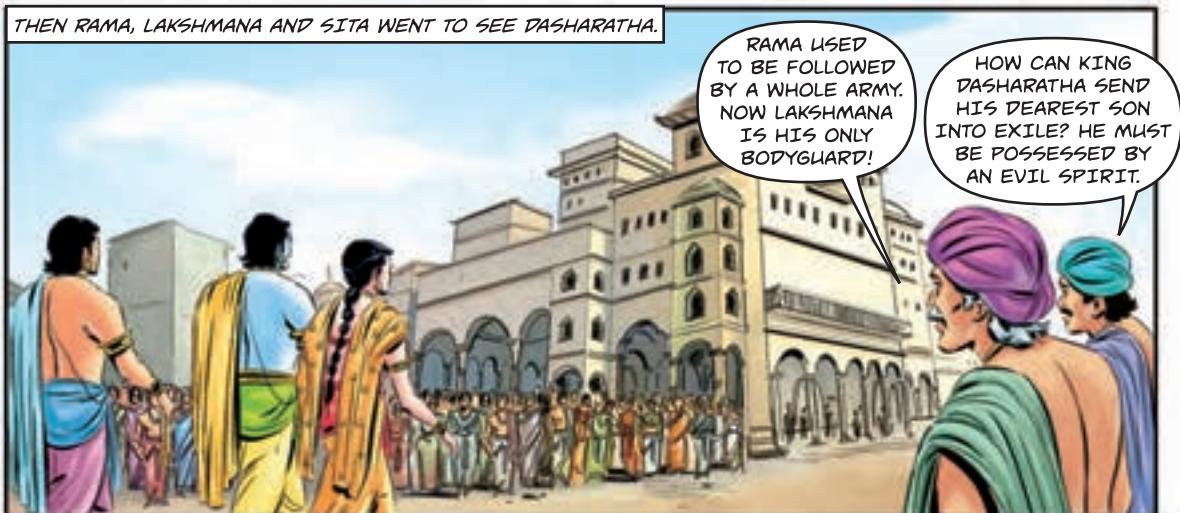
AT THAT TIME, THERE LIVED A VERY POOR BRAHMIN CALLED TRIJATA.

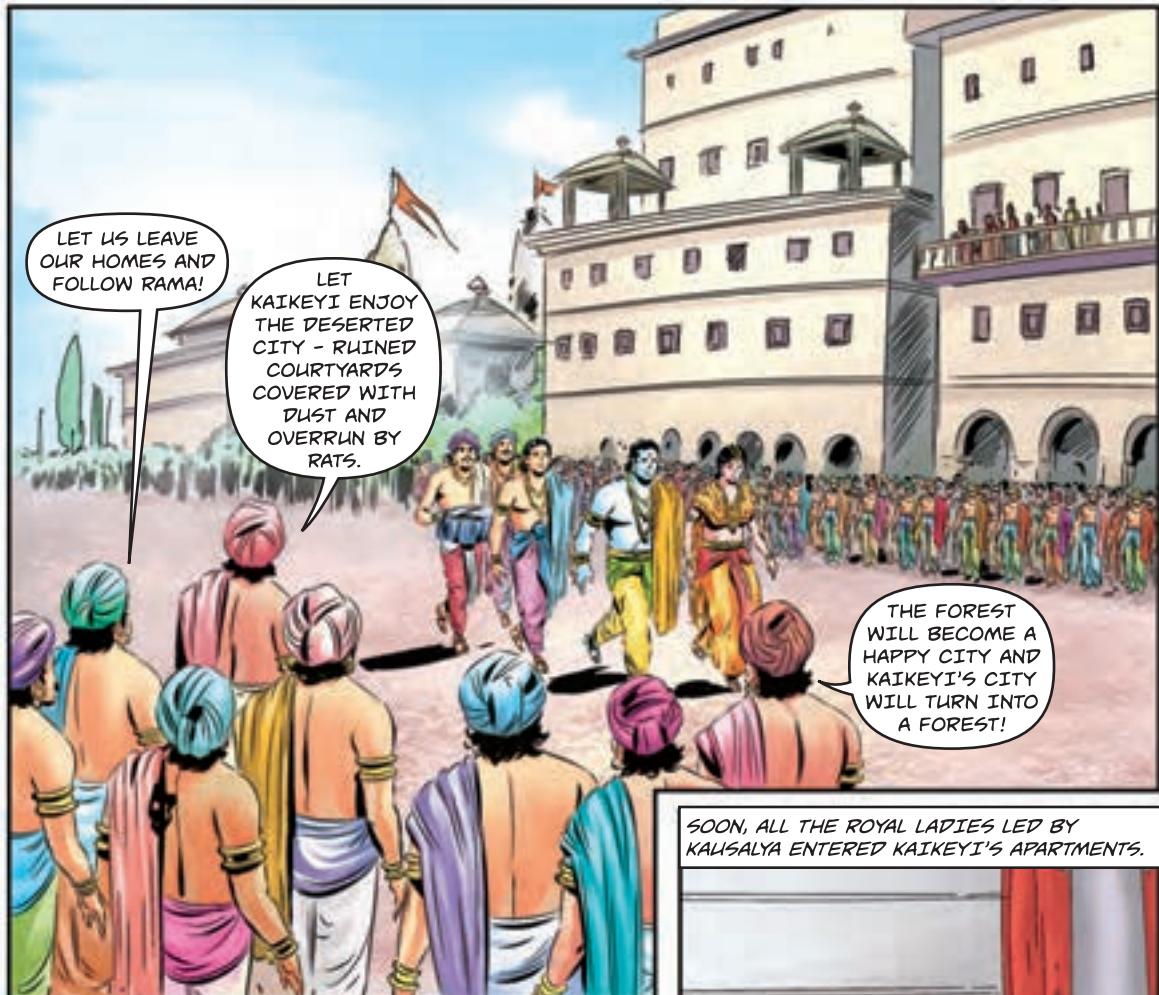


FAREWELL TO AYODHYA

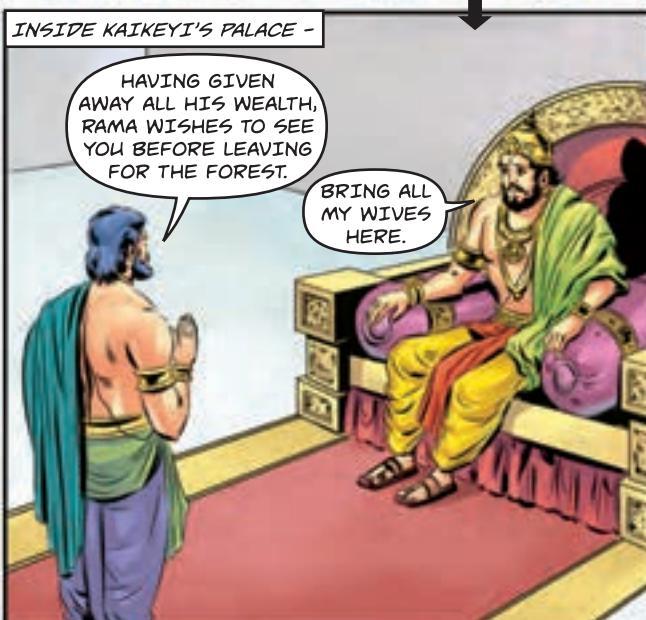


THEN RAMA, LAKSHMANA AND SITA WENT TO SEE DASHARATHA.



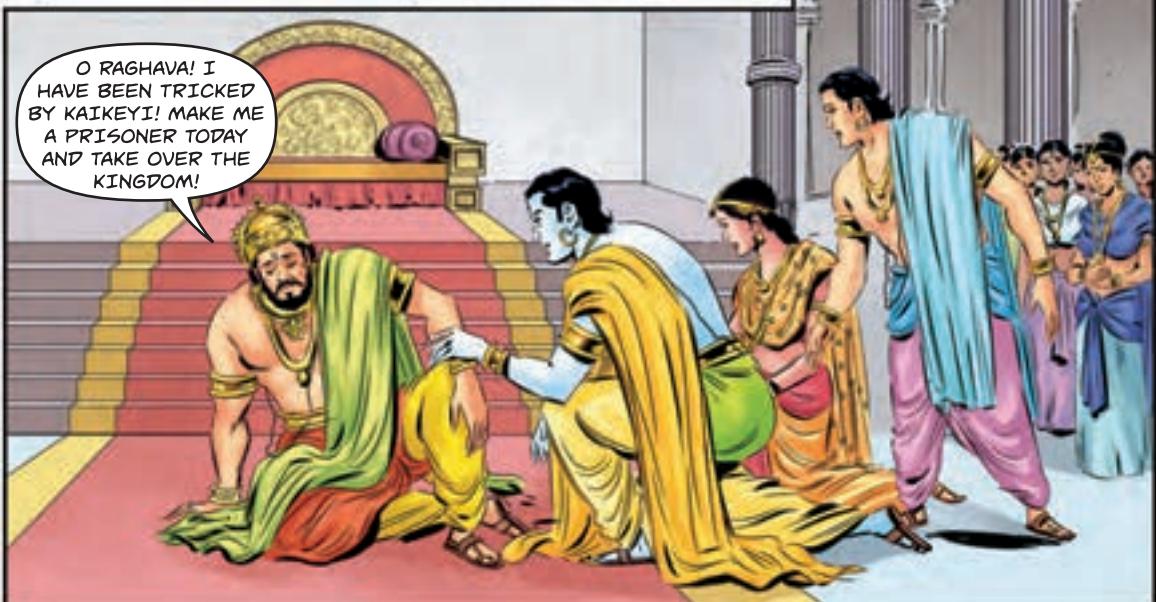
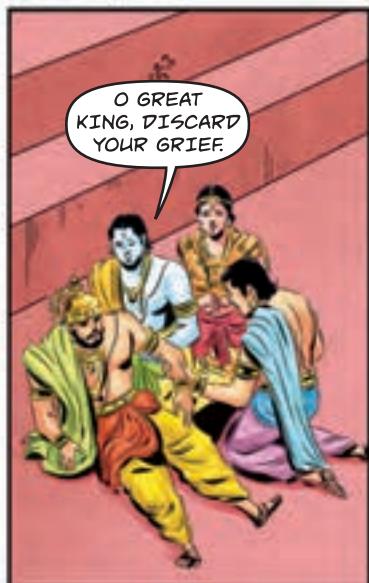
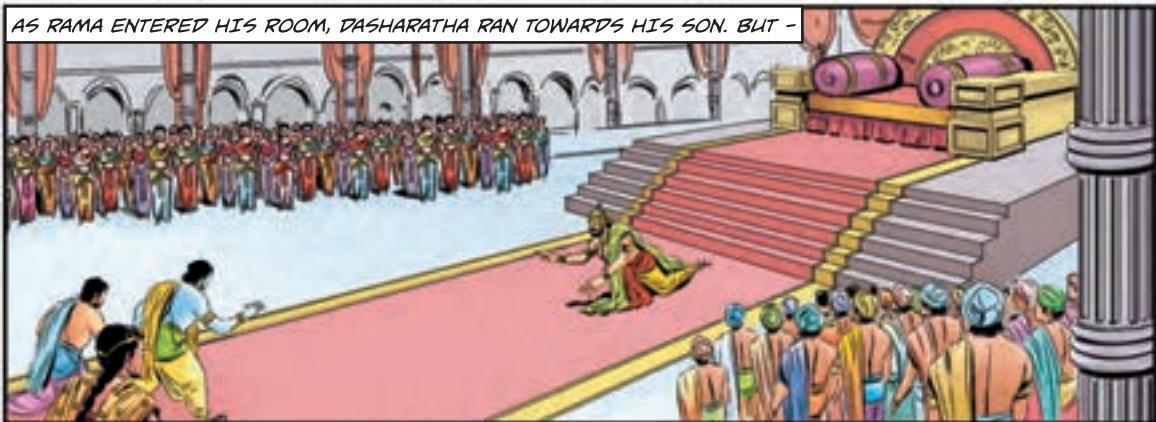


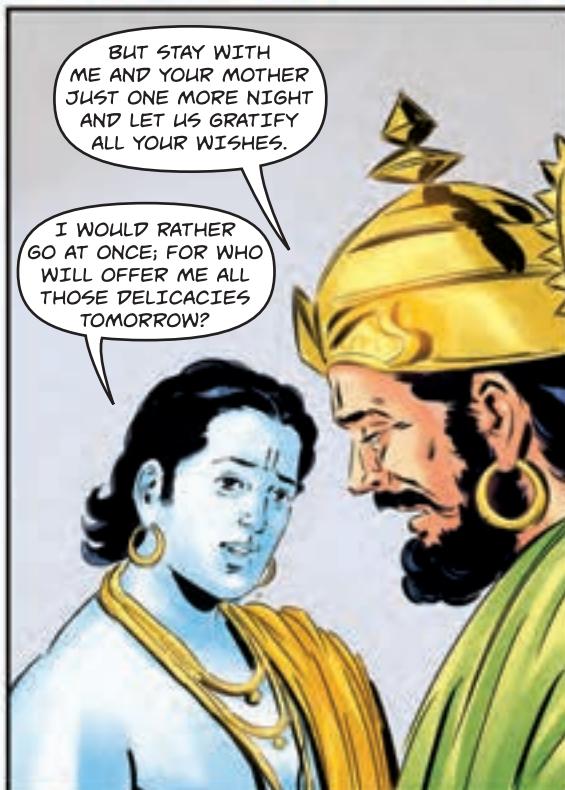
SOON, ALL THE ROYAL LADIES LED BY KALISALYA ENTERED KAIKEYI'S APARTMENTS.



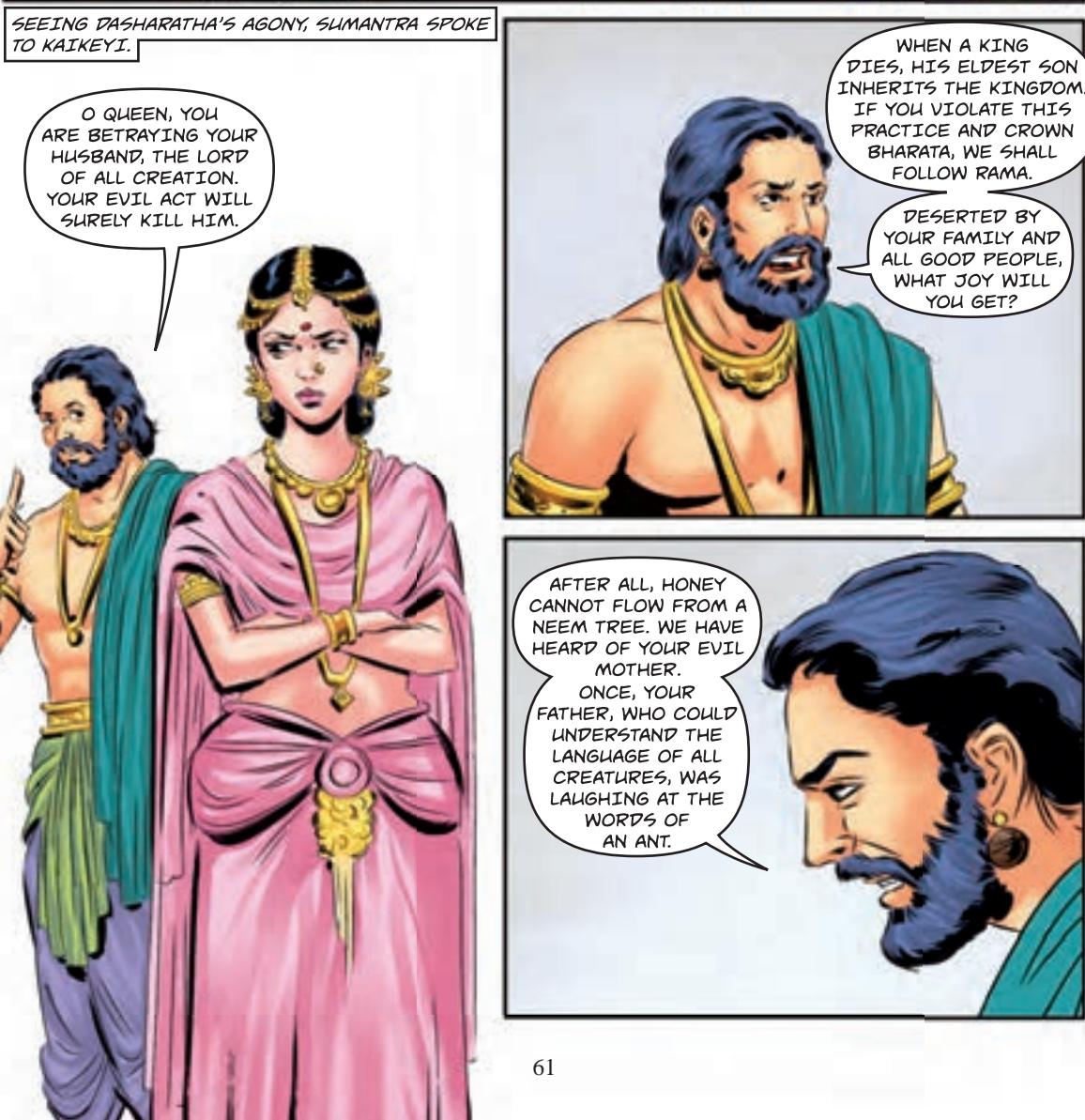
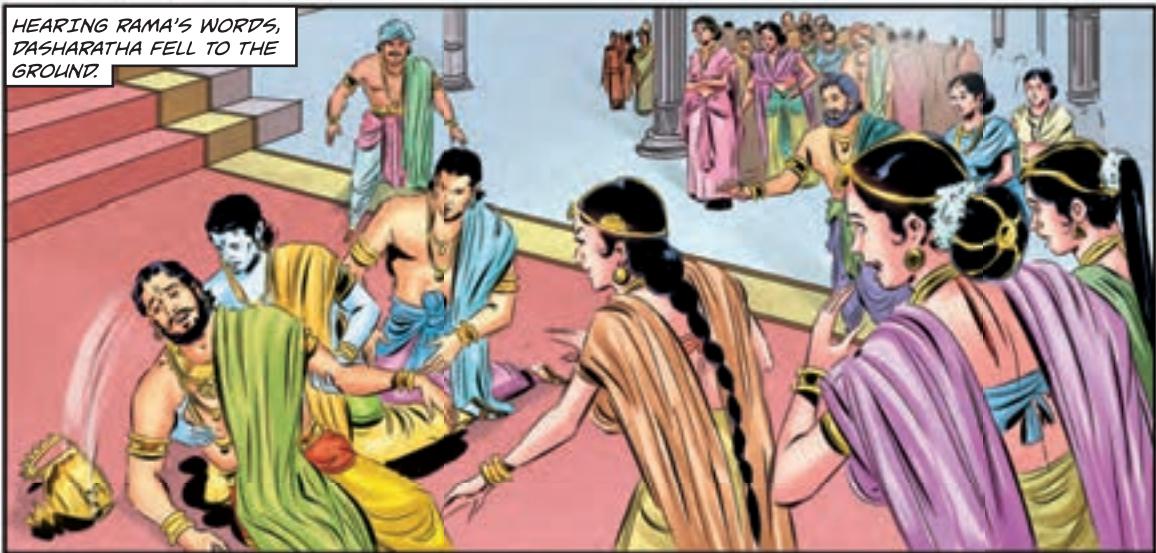
FAREWELL TO AYODHYA

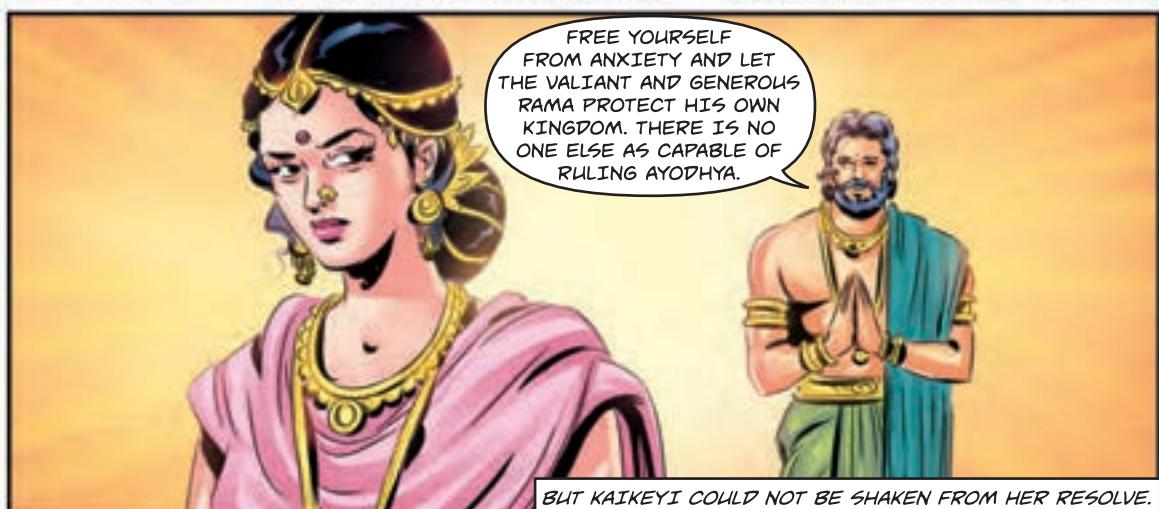
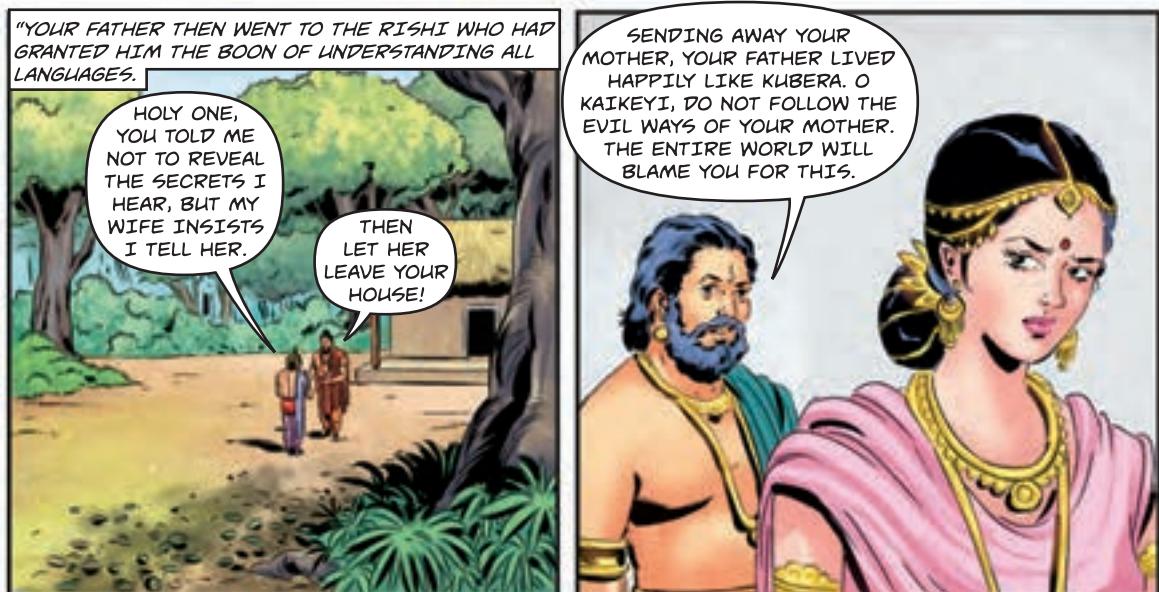
AS RAMA ENTERED HIS ROOM, DASHARATHA RAN TOWARDS HIS SON. BUT -



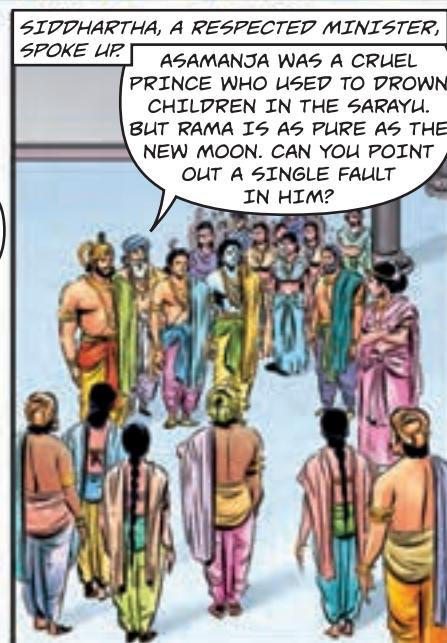
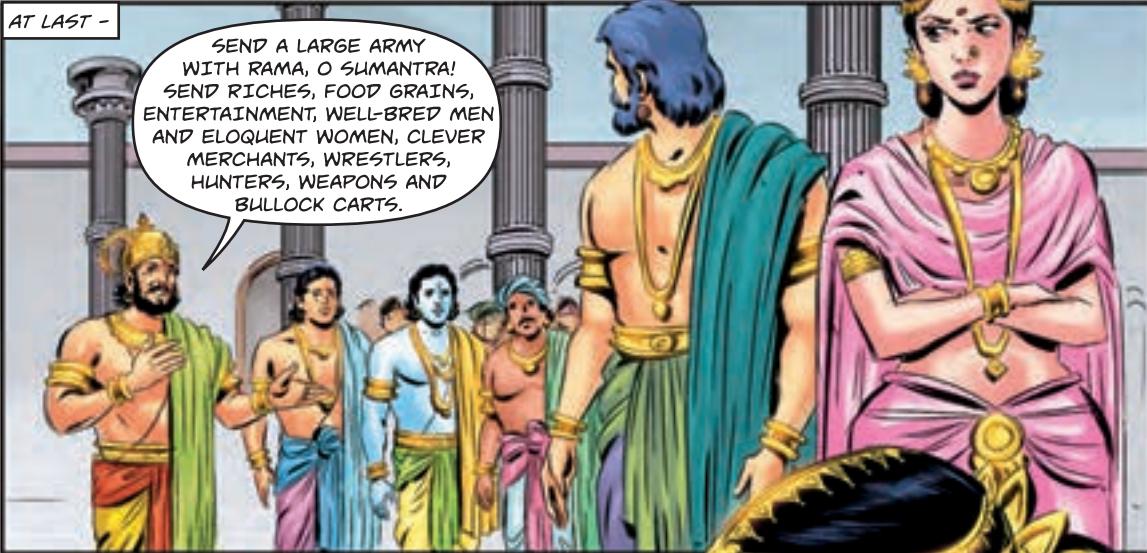


FAREWELL TO AYODHYA





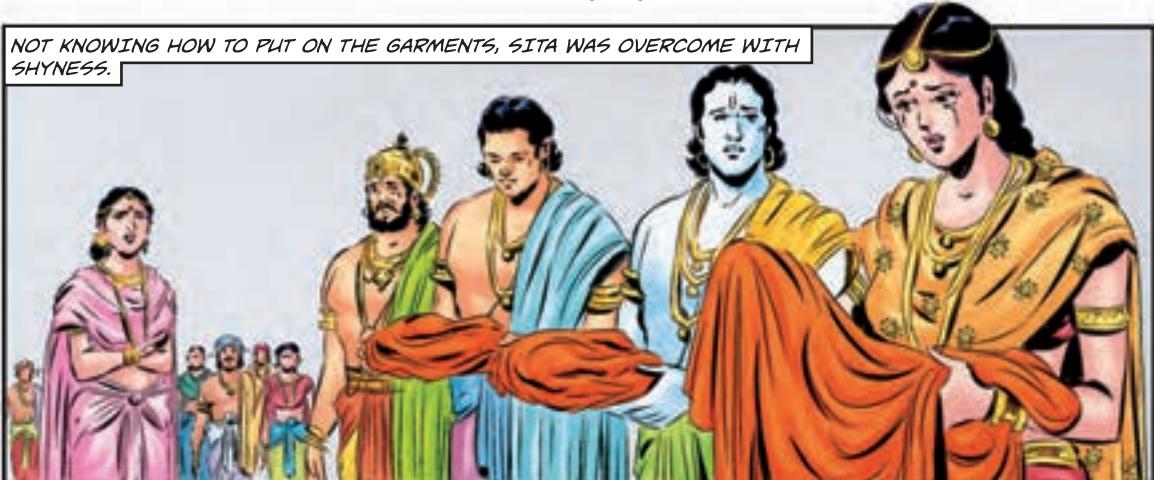
FAREWELL TO AYODHYA





FAREWELL TO AYODHYA

NOT KNOWING HOW TO PUT ON THE GARMENTS, SITA WAS OVERCOME WITH SHYNESS.



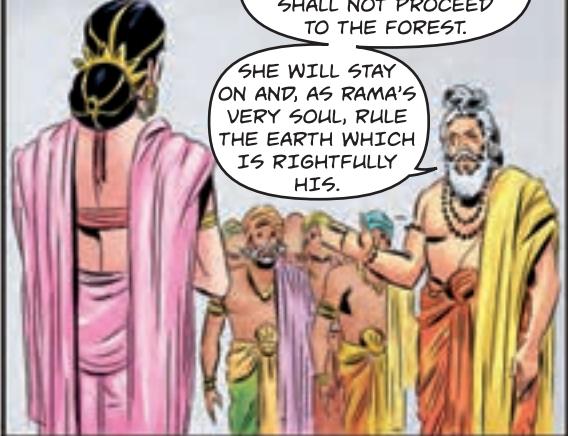
AS RAMA STEPPED FORWARD TO HELP HER -

DEAR CHILD,
SITA HAS NOT BEEN
COMMANDED TO LIVE IN
THE FOREST! LET HER STAY
AND COMFORT US.

THEN VASISHTHA SPOKE TO KAIKEYI.

EVIL WOMAN, YOU HAVE BROUGHT DISGRACE TO YOUR FAMILY! SITA SHALL NOT PROCEED TO THE FOREST.

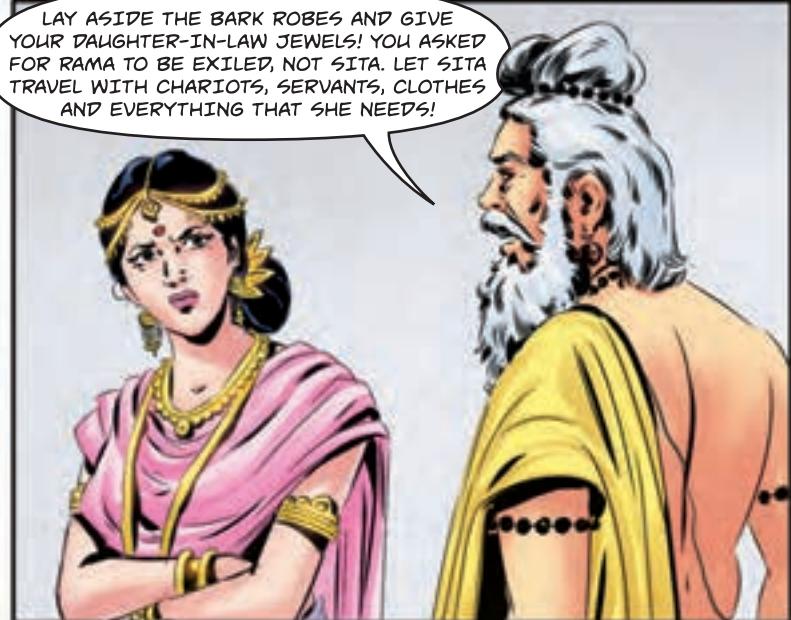
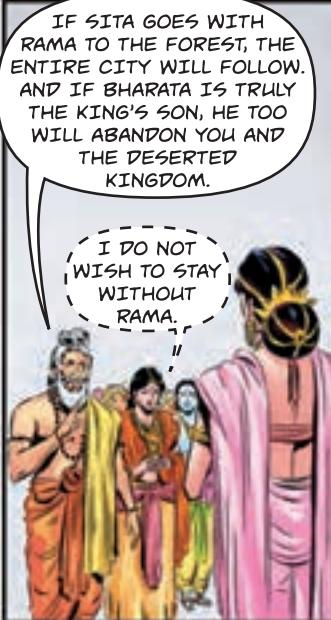
SHE WILL STAY ON AND, AS RAMA'S VERY SOUL, RULE THE EARTH WHICH IS RIGHTFULLY HIS.



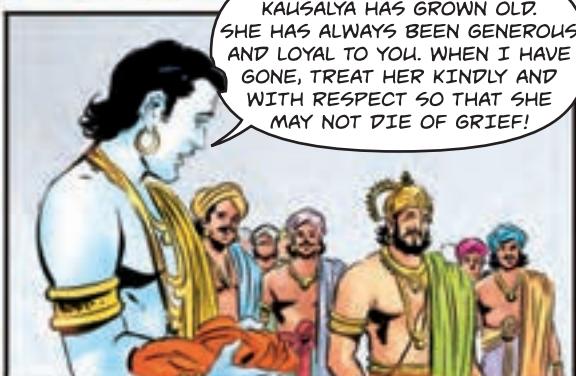
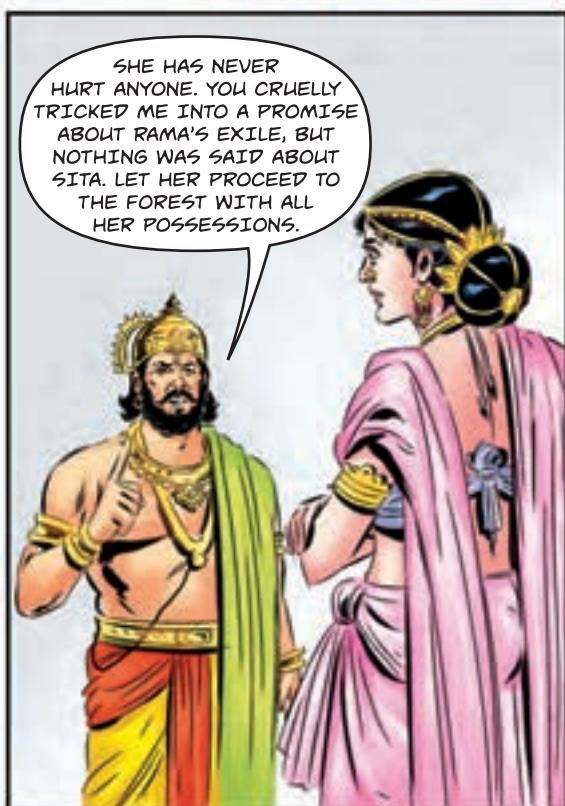
IF SITA GOES WITH RAMA TO THE FOREST, THE ENTIRE CITY WILL FOLLOW. AND IF BHARATA IS TRULY THE KING'S SON, HE TOO WILL ABANDON YOU AND THE DESERTED KINGDOM.

I DO NOT WISH TO STAY WITHOUT RAMA.

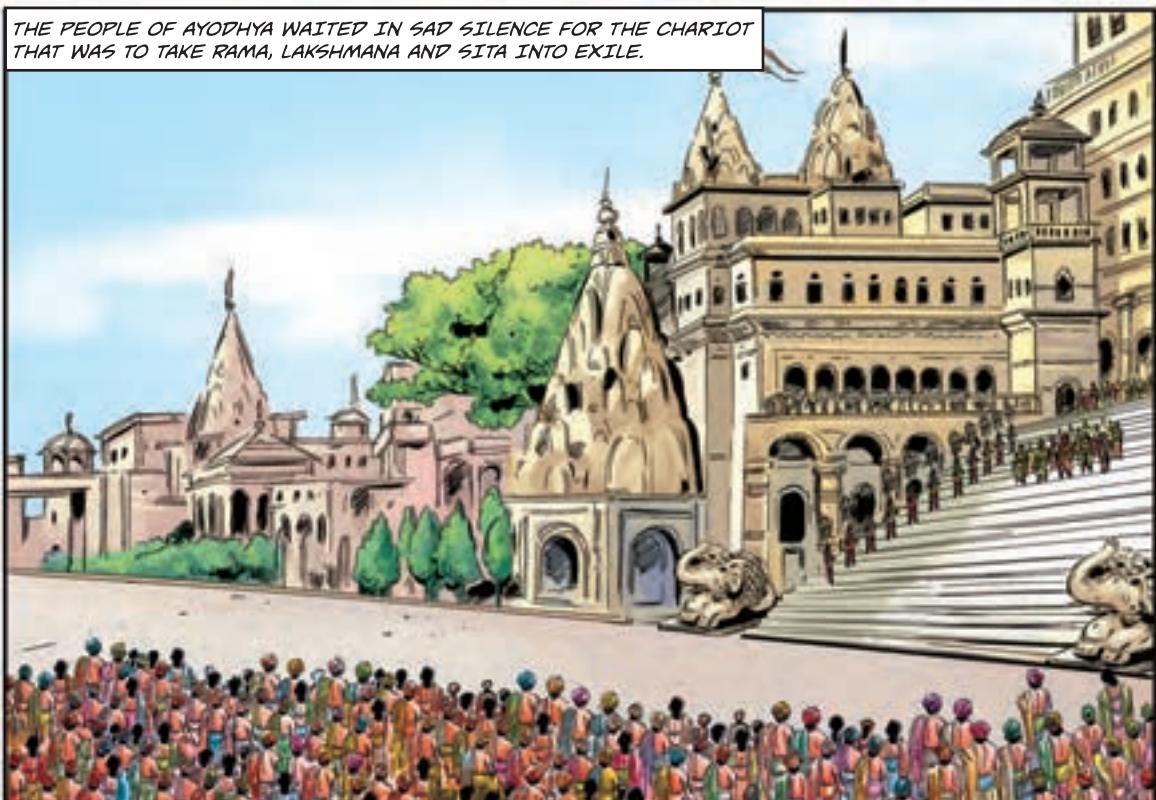
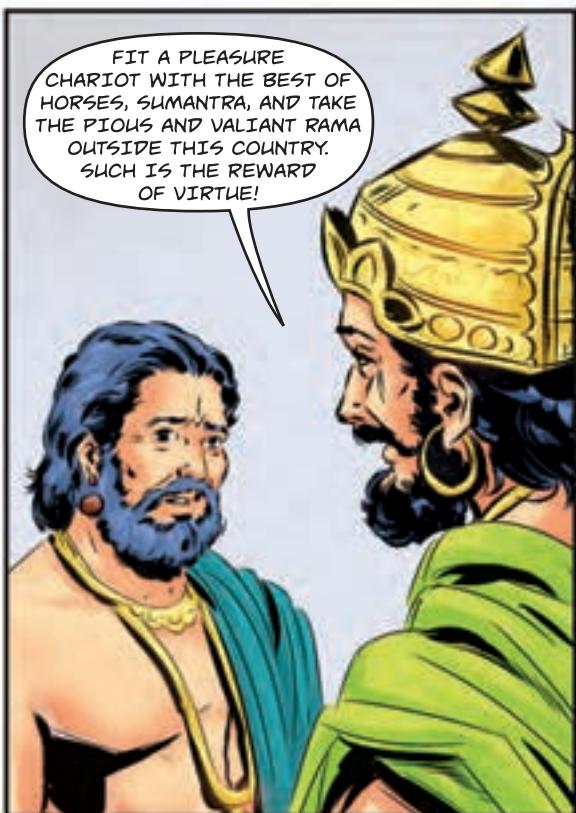
LAY ASIDE THE BARK ROBES AND GIVE YOUR DAUGHTER-IN-LAW JEWELS! YOU ASKED FOR RAMA TO BE EXILED, NOT SITA. LET SITA TRAVEL WITH CHARIOTS, SERVANTS, CLOTHES AND EVERYTHING THAT SHE NEEDS!



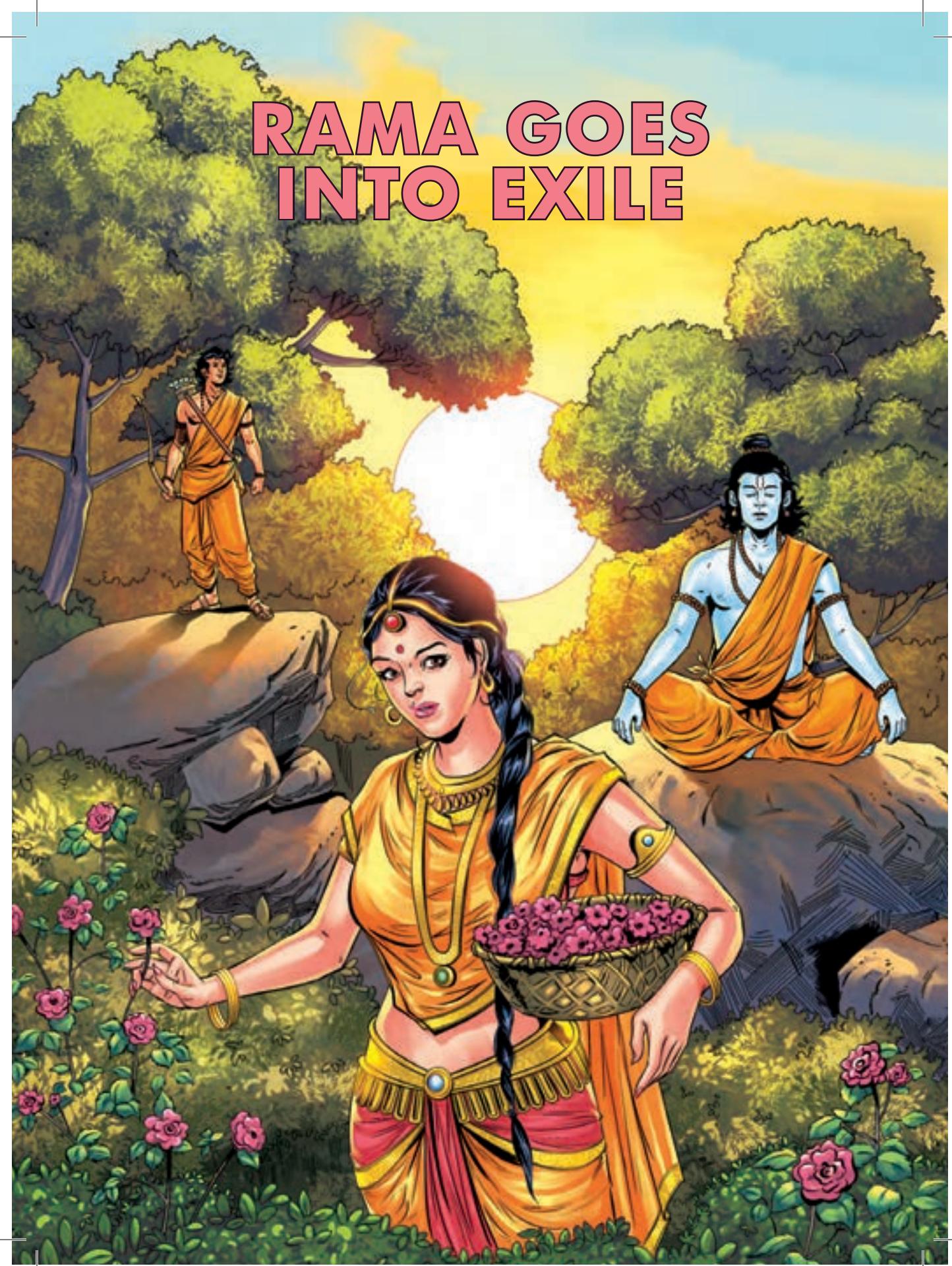
THE SIGHT OF SITA IN HER BARK DRESS MADE THE PEOPLE VERY ANGRY.



FAREWELL TO AYODHYA

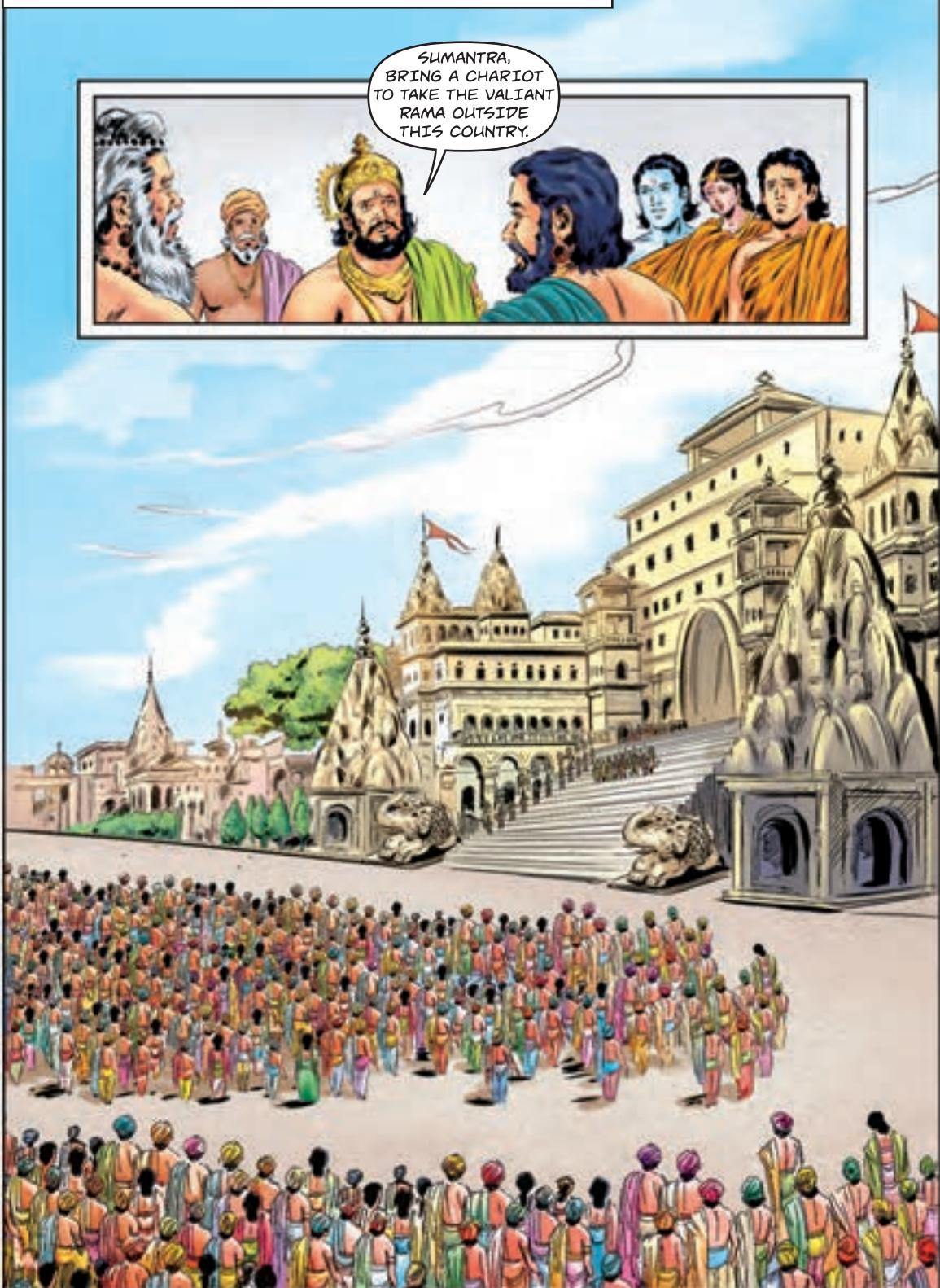


RAMA GOES INTO EXILE

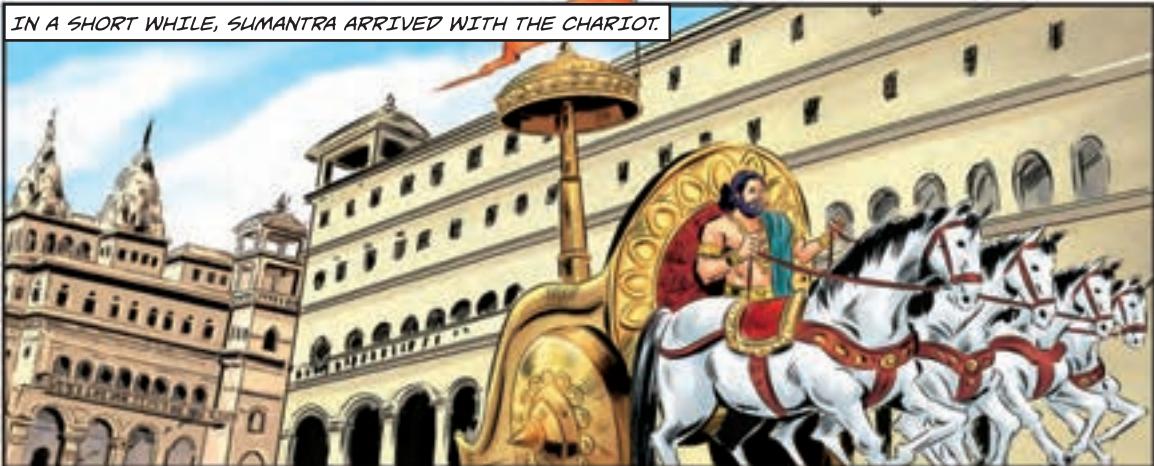


RAMA GOES INTO EXILE

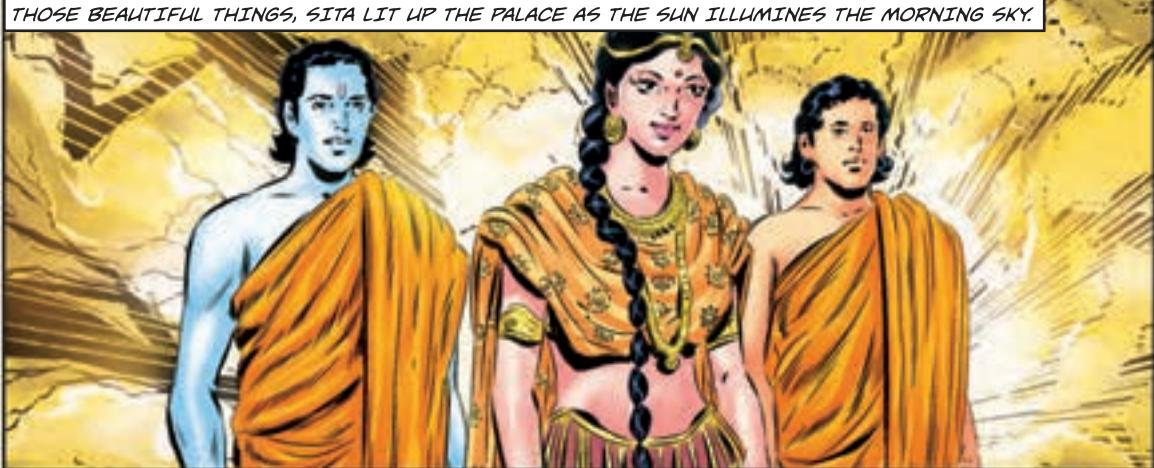
RAMA, HIS WIFE SITA, AND HIS BROTHER LAKSHMANA TOOK LEAVE OF THEIR FAMILY AND FRIENDS AND PREPARED TO GO TO THE FOREST.



IN A SHORT WHILE, SLUMANTRA ARRIVED WITH THE CHARIOT.



DASHARATHA HAD ORDERED THE SERVANTS TO BRING SILKS AND JEWELS FOR SITA. DRESSED IN THOSE BEAUTIFUL THINGS, SITA LIT UP THE PALACE AS THE SUN ILLUMINES THE MORNING SKY.



KALISALYA HUGGED HER DAUGHTER-IN-LAW WITH TEARS IN HER EYES.



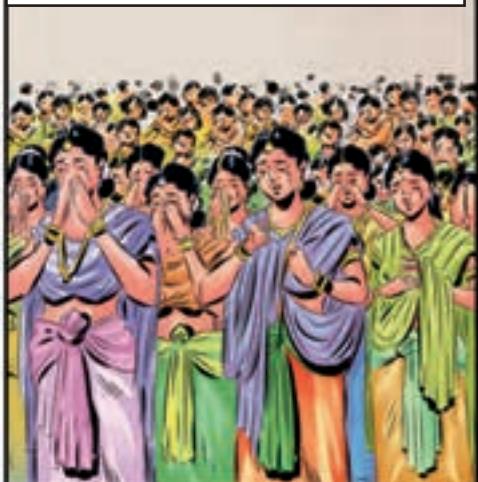
RAMA GOES INTO EXILE

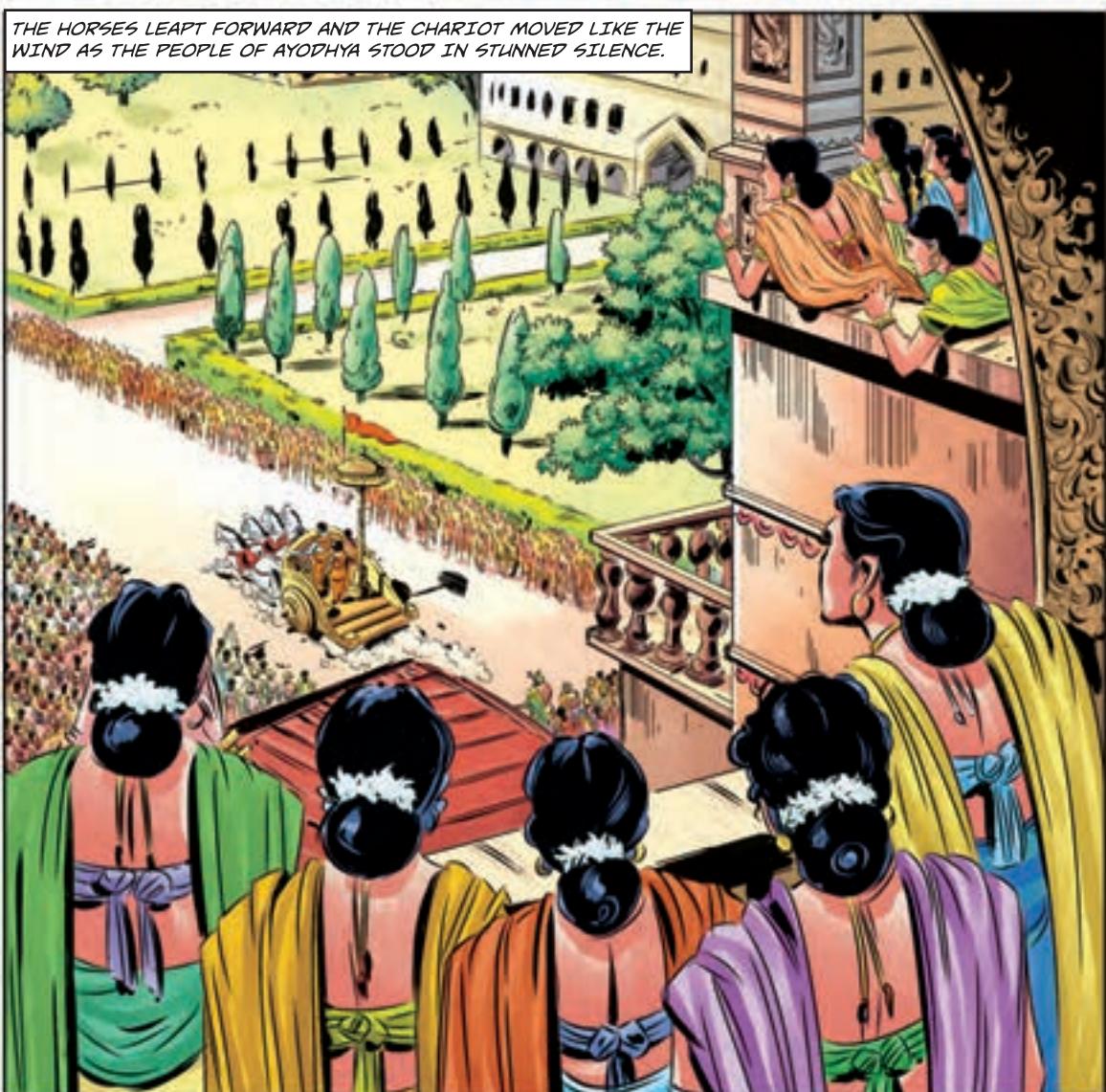
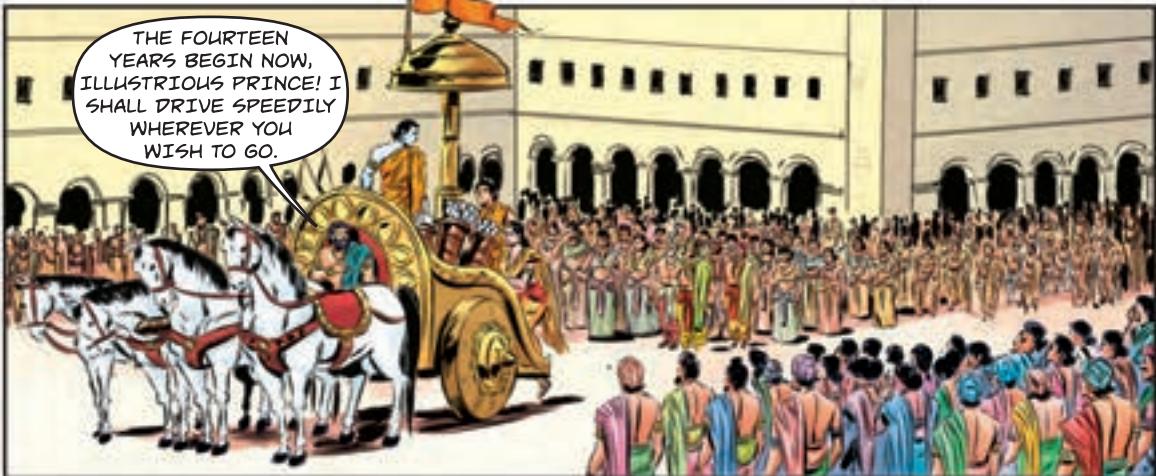


THE PALACE OF DASHARATHA, WHICH USUALLY RESOUNDED WITH AUSPICIOUS DRUMS, WAS NOW FILLED WITH WAILING.

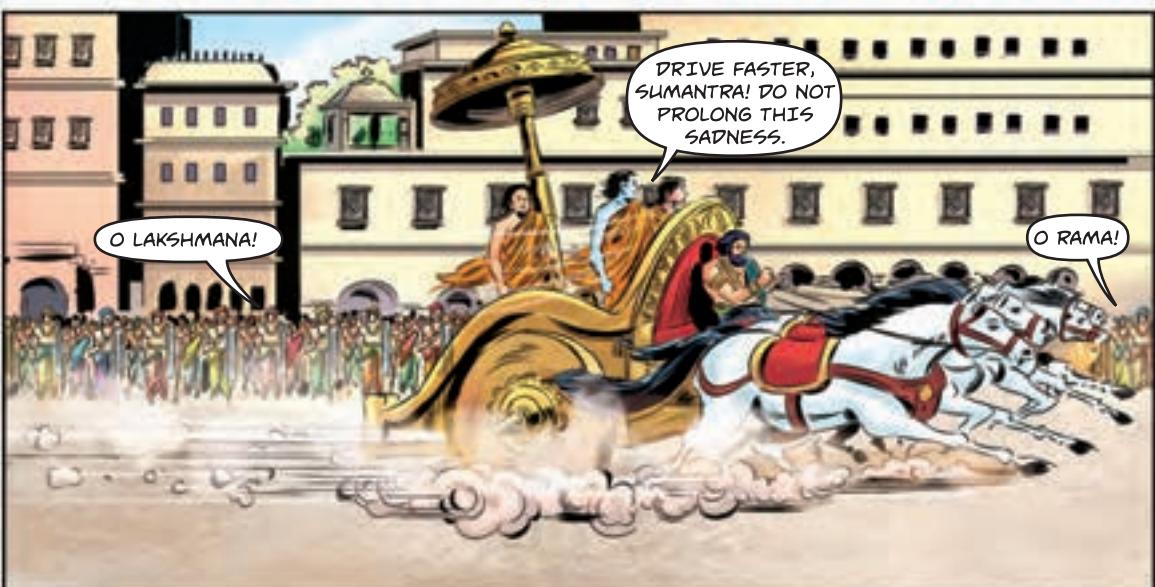
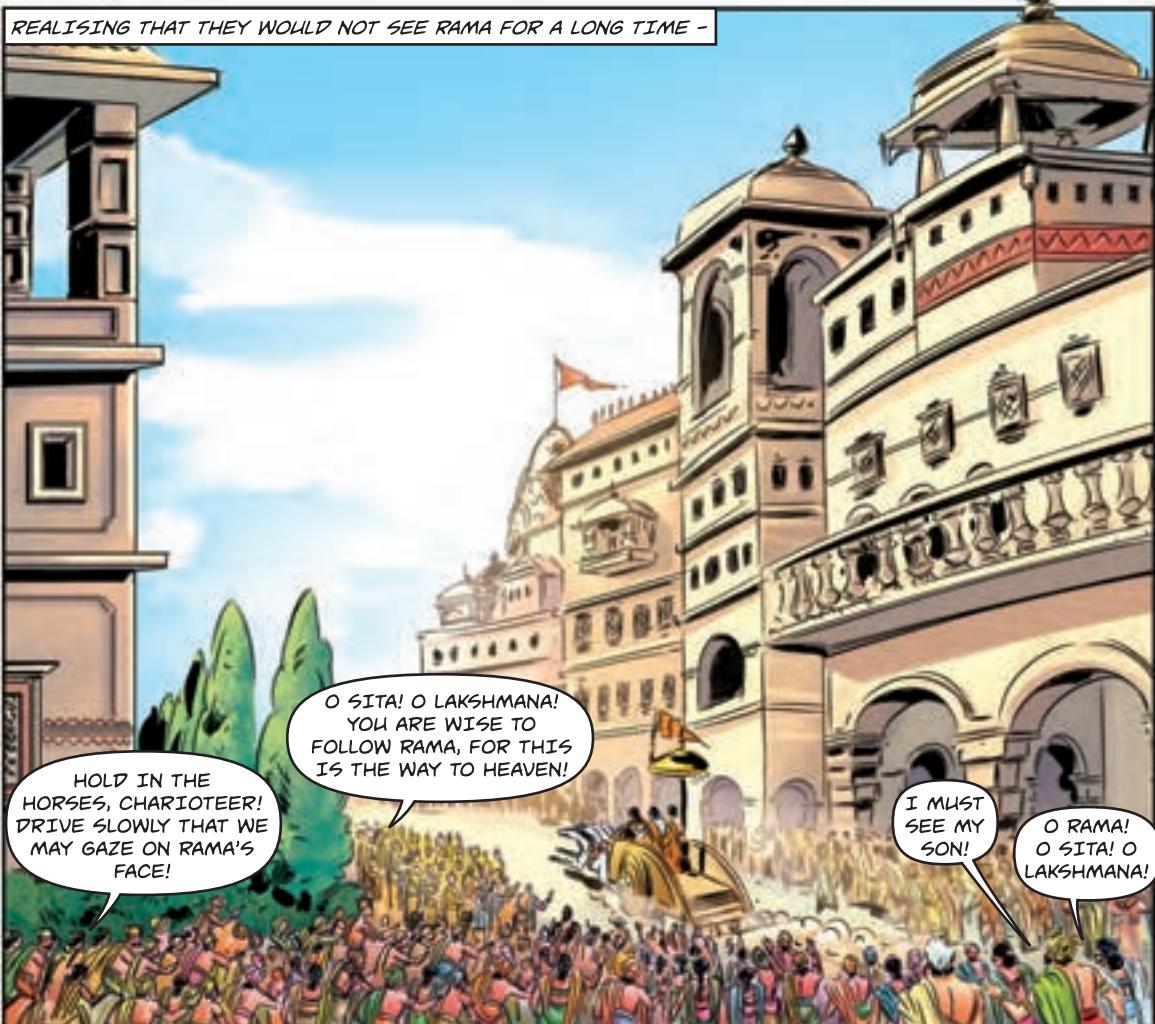
SUMITRA BLESSED LAKSHMANA.

YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN DEVOTED TO YOUR BROTHER. FROM NOW ON, THINK OF RAMA AS DASHARATHA, SITA AS MYSELF, AND THE FOREST AS AYODHYA. DEPART HAPPILY, DEAR SON!



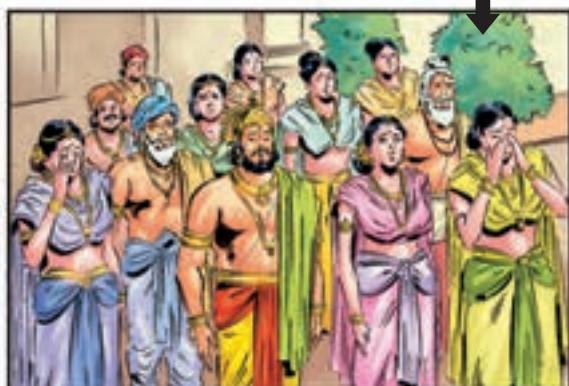


RAMA GOES INTO EXILE

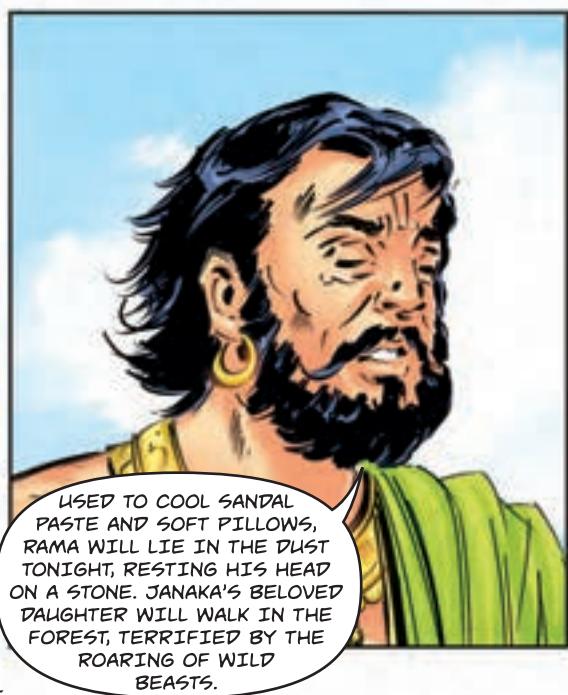
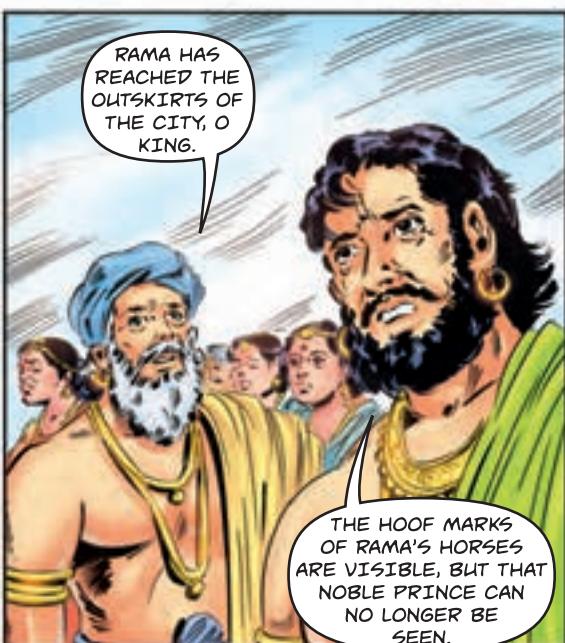
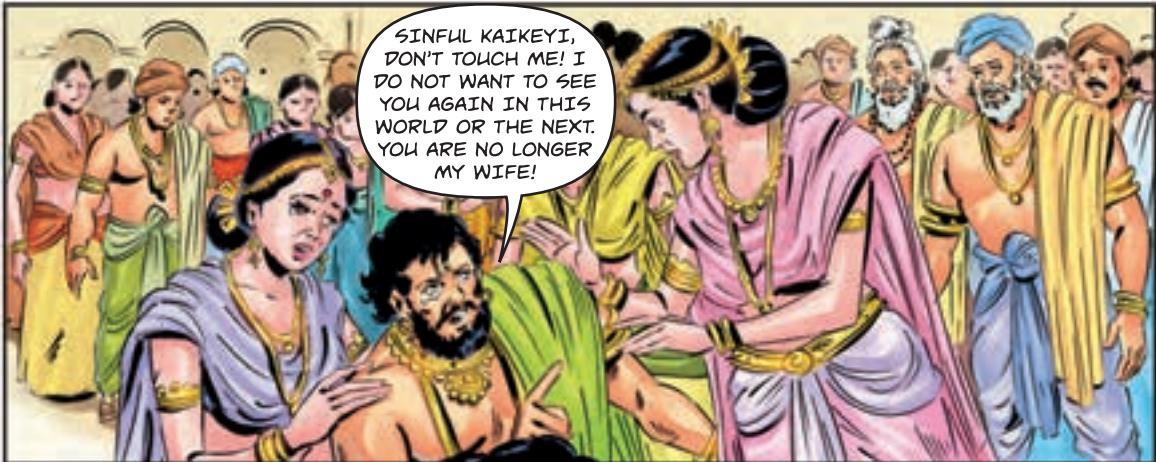




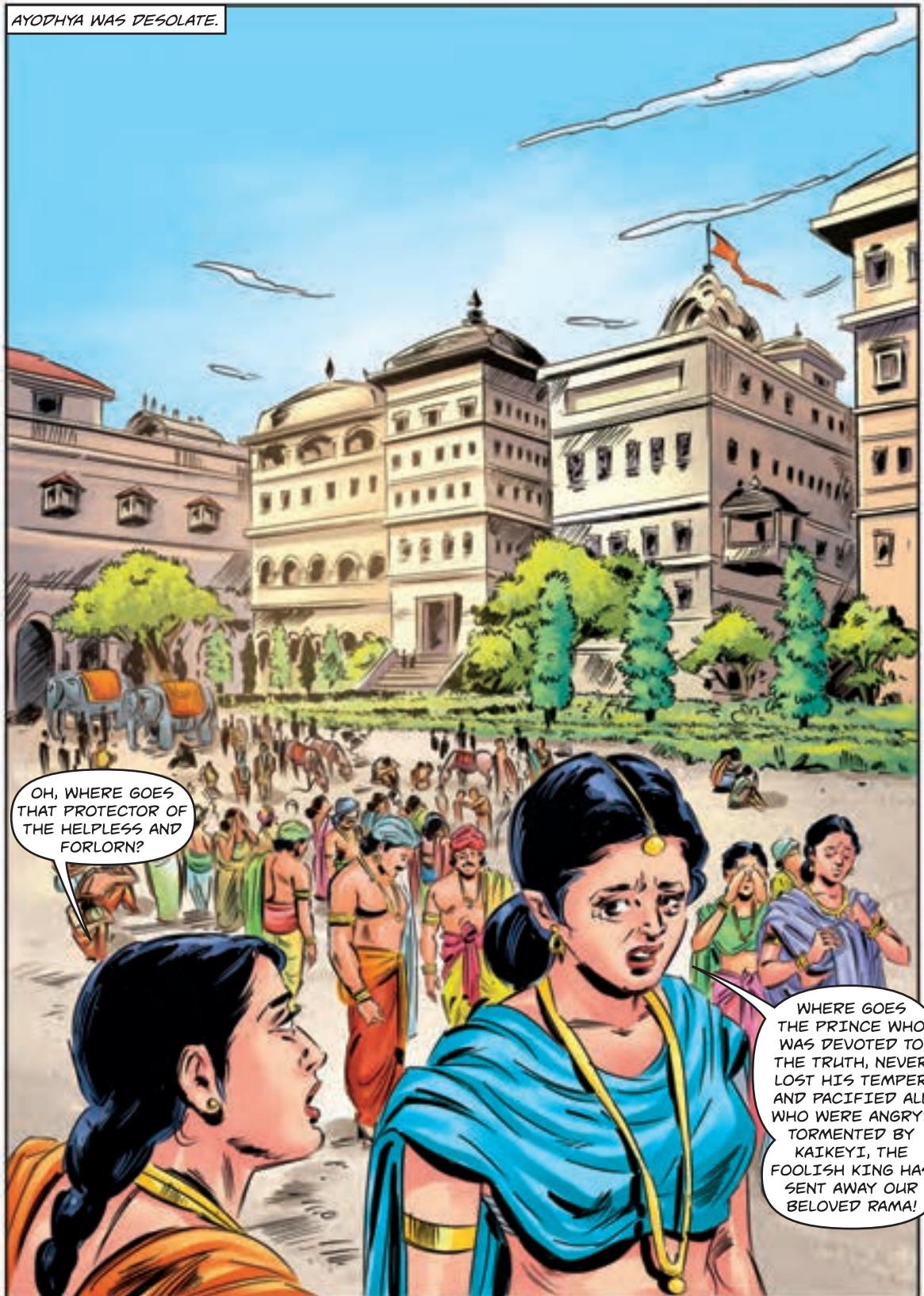
SOON, NOT EVEN THE DUST OF RAMA'S CHARIOT COULD BE SEEN. DASHARATHA WAS OVERCOME BY GRIEF.



RAMA GOES INTO EXILE



AYODHYA WAS DESOLATE.



RAMA GOES INTO EXILE

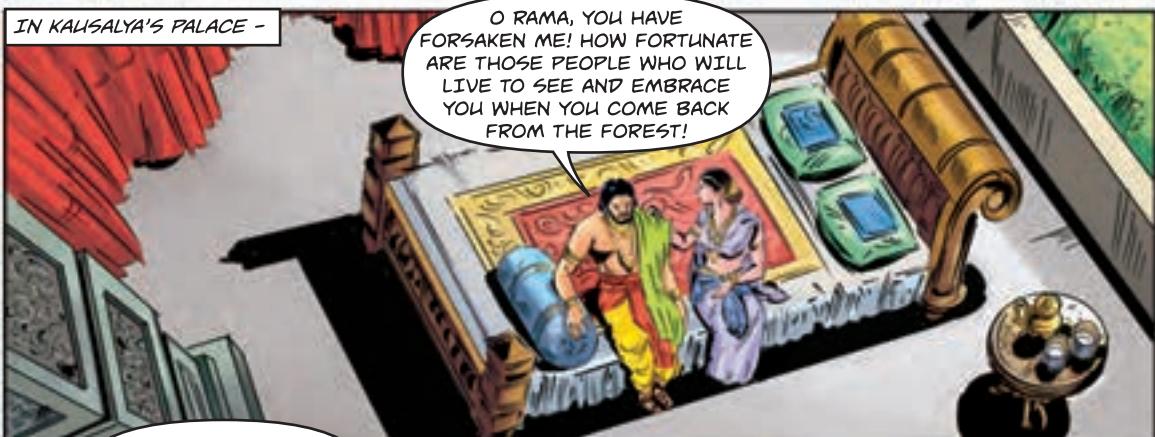
IN THE PALACE -

WITH YOUR WISHES
FULFILLED, O KAIKEYI, ENJOY
THIS KINGDOM AS A WIDOW.
I AM UNABLE TO LIVE WITHOUT
RAMA! TAKE ME TO YOUR PALACE,
KALISALYA, FOR I CAN FIND
SOLACE ONLY IN RAMA'S
MOTHER'S HOUSE.



IN KALISALYA'S PALACE -

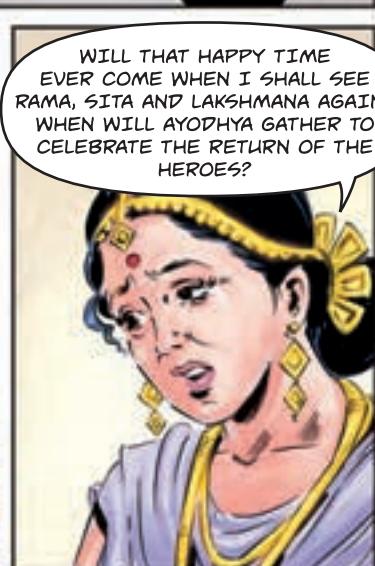
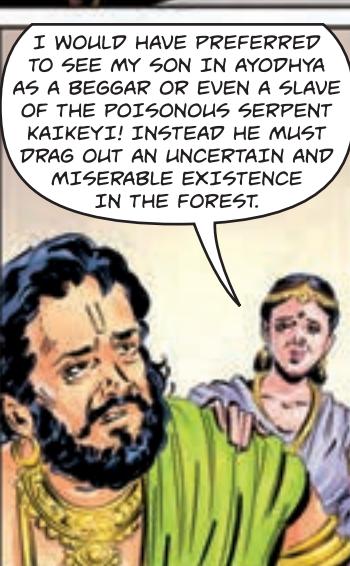
O RAMA, YOU HAVE
FORSAKEN ME! HOW FORTUNATE
ARE THOSE PEOPLE WHO WILL
LIVE TO SEE AND EMBRACE
YOU WHEN YOU COME BACK
FROM THE FOREST!



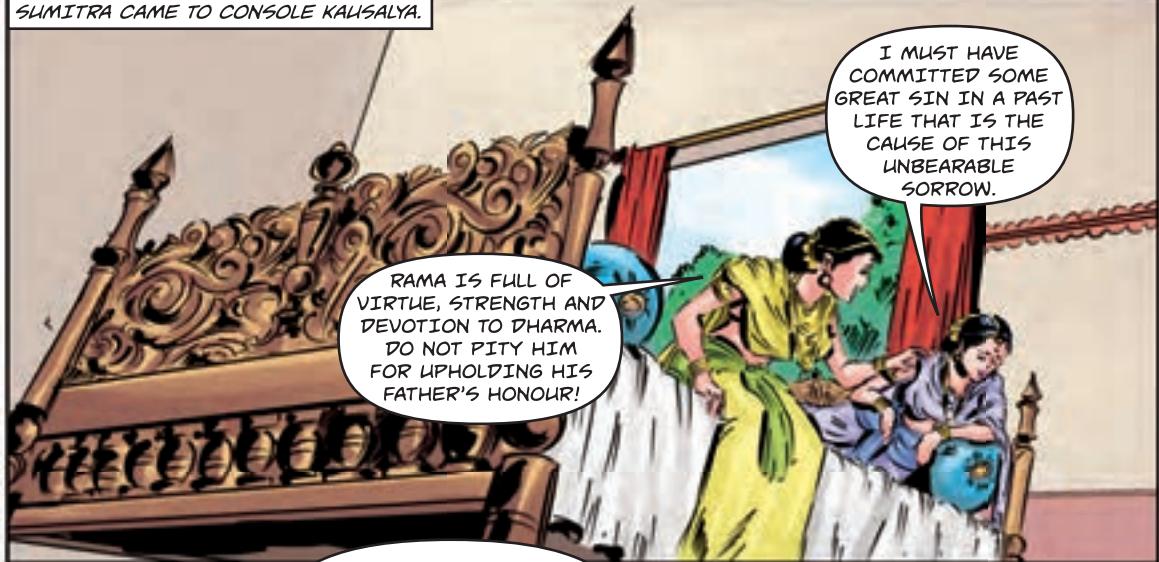
O KALISALYA, MY SIGHT
HAS FOLLOWED RAMA AND
HAS NOT YET RETURNED. I
CANNOT SEE YOU CLEARLY.
PLEASE TOUCH ME WITH
YOUR HAND.

I WOULD HAVE PREFERRED
TO SEE MY SON IN AYODHYA
AS A BEGGAR OR EVEN A SLAVE
OF THE POISONOUS SERPENT
KAIKEYI! INSTEAD HE MUST
DRAG OUT AN UNCERTAIN AND
MISERABLE EXISTENCE
IN THE FOREST.

WILL THAT HAPPY TIME
EVER COME WHEN I SHALL SEE
RAMA, SITA AND LAKSHMANA AGAIN?
WHEN WILL AYODHYA GATHER TO
CELEBRATE THE RETURN OF THE
HEROES?



SUMITRA CAME TO CONSOLE KALISALYA.

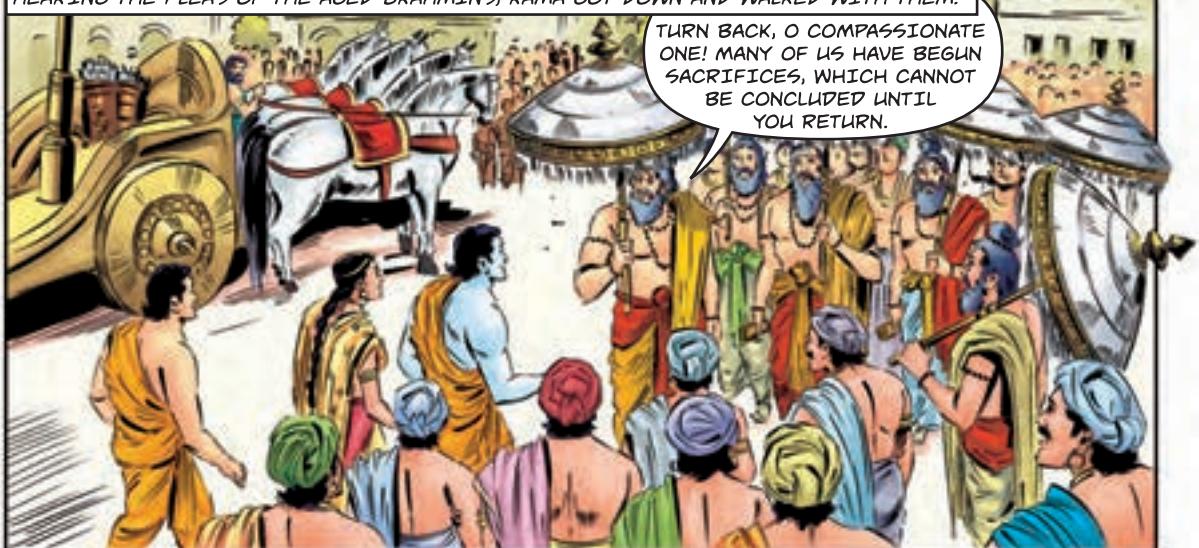


RAMA GOES INTO EXILE

MEANWHILE -



HEARING THE PLEAS OF THE AGED BRAHMINS, RAMA GOT DOWN AND WALKED WITH THEM.



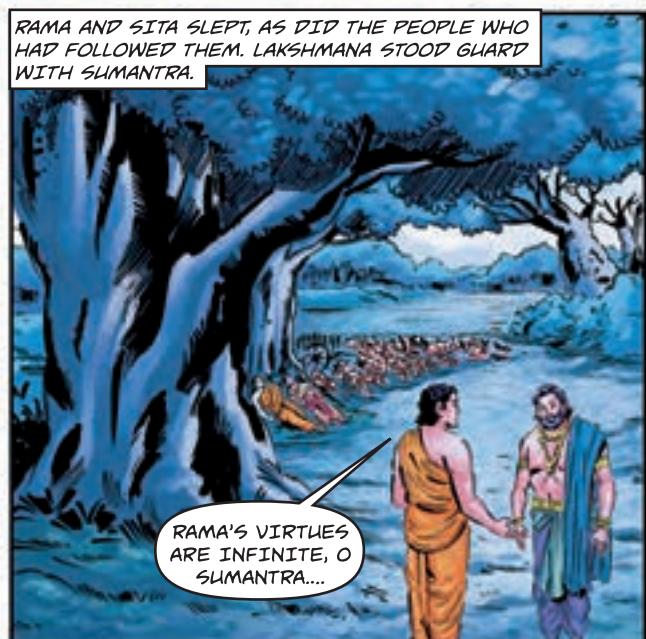
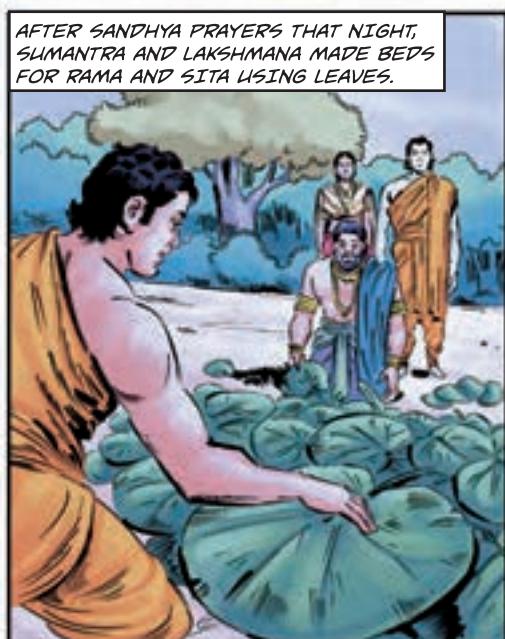
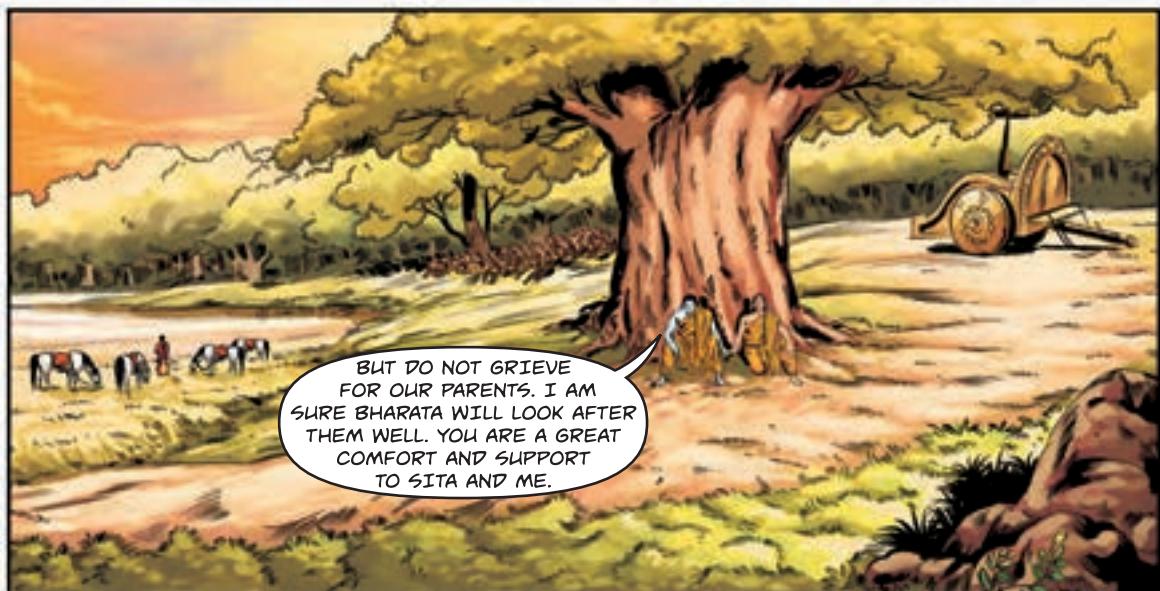
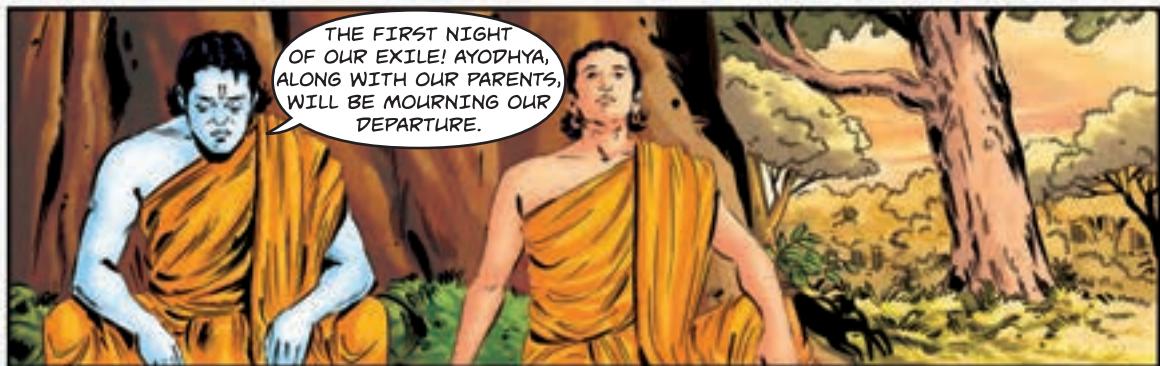


IN THE EVENING, THEY REACHED THE BANKS OF THE RIVER TAMASA. SLUMANTRA RELEASED THE TIRED HORSES AS THEY PREPARED TO SETTLE DOWN FOR THE NIGHT.

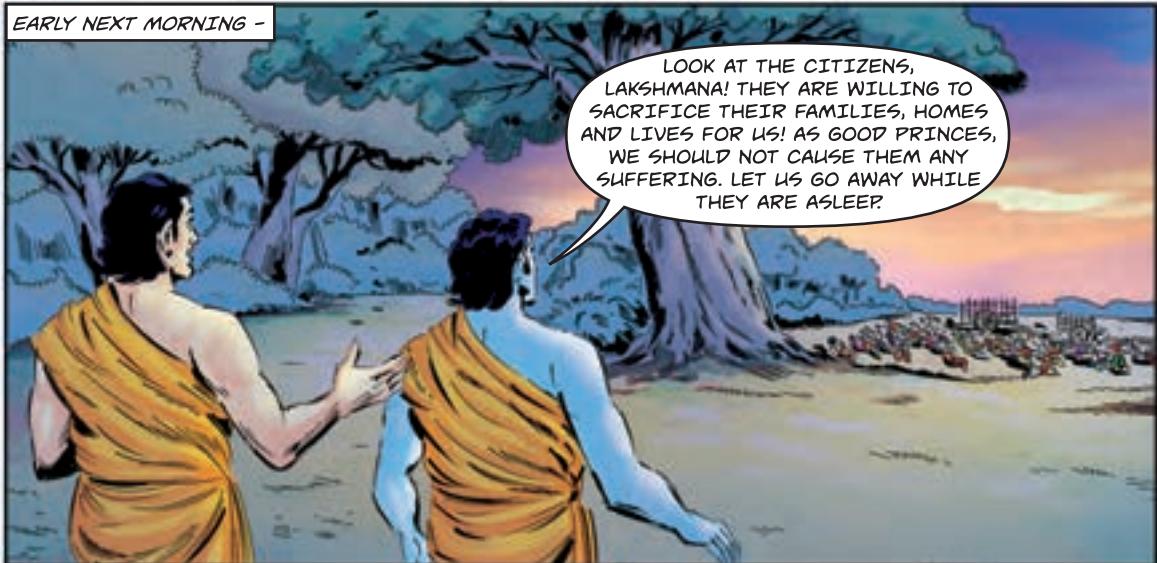


*THESE UMBRELLAS WERE GIVEN TO PRIESTS WHO PERFORMED VAJPEYA SACRIFICES (SACRIFICES DONE FOR THE PROSPERITY OF THE COUNTRY).

RAMA GOES INTO EXILE



EARLY NEXT MORNING -



LAKSHMANA CALLED SUMANTRA. IN A SHORT WHILE -



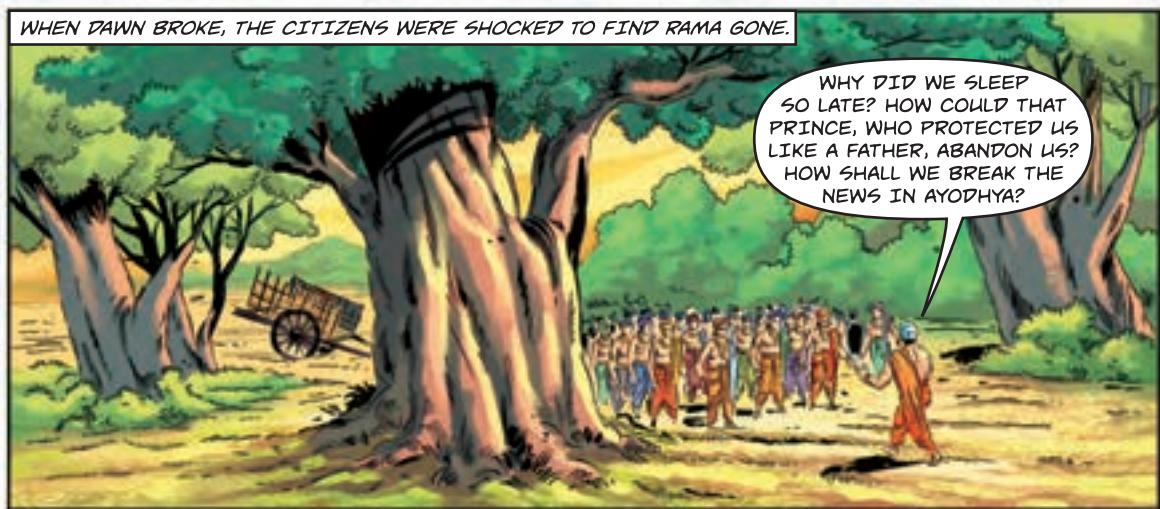
BRING THE CHARIOT
DOWN AND DRIVE
NORTHWARD, SUMANTRA.
THEN RETURN FROM A
DIFFERENT ROUTE.



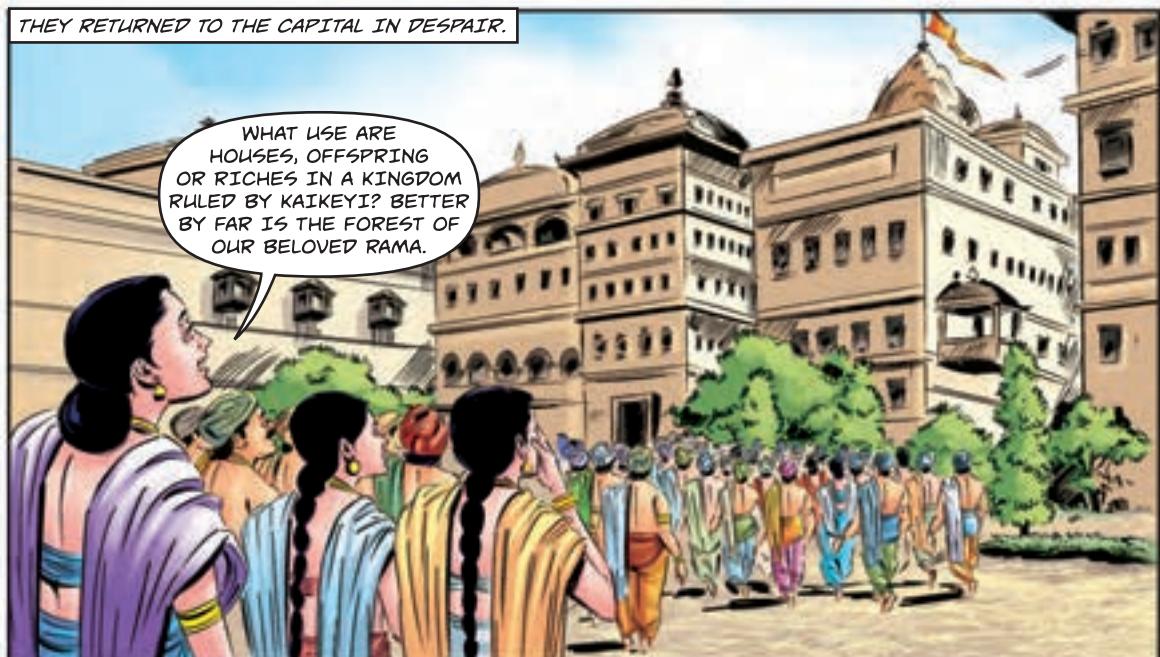
RAMA GOES INTO EXILE



WHEN DAWN BROKE, THE CITIZENS WERE SHOCKED TO FIND RAMA GONE.



THEY RETURNED TO THE CAPITAL IN DESPAIR.



BY THE NEXT MORNING, RAMA, SITA, LAKSHMANA AND SLUMANTRA HAD TRAVELED A LONG WAY FROM AYODHYA. SEATED IN THE SPLENDOUR OF NATURE, RAMA WORSHIPPED THE BLISSFUL DAWN.



WHAT A PITY
THAT KING DASHARATHA
HAS FALLEN INTO THE
CLUTCHES OF CRUEL
KAIKEYI!

HOW WILL
PRINCESS SITA
ENDURE SUCH
HARDSHIP?

CROSSING THE SACRED RIVERS VEDASHRUTI
AND GOMTI, RAMA AND HIS COMPANIONS
CONTINUED SOUTHWARD. AT LAST THEY CAME
TO THE RIVER SYANDIKA - THE SOUTHERN
BOUNDARY OF KOSALA.

LOOK, SITA! LOOK
AT THE PROSPEROUS
LAND OF KOSALA,
GIVEN BY MANU TO
IKSHVAKU.

RAMA GOES INTO EXILE



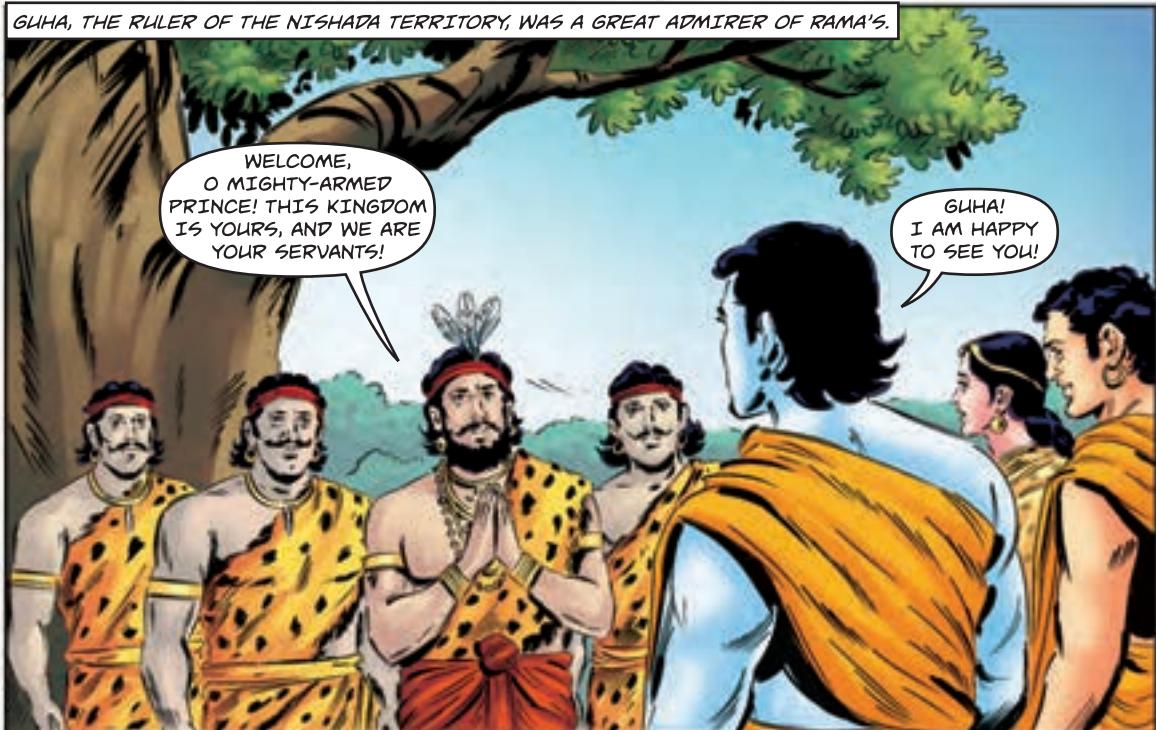
THEN RAMA SPOKE TO THE PEOPLE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE.



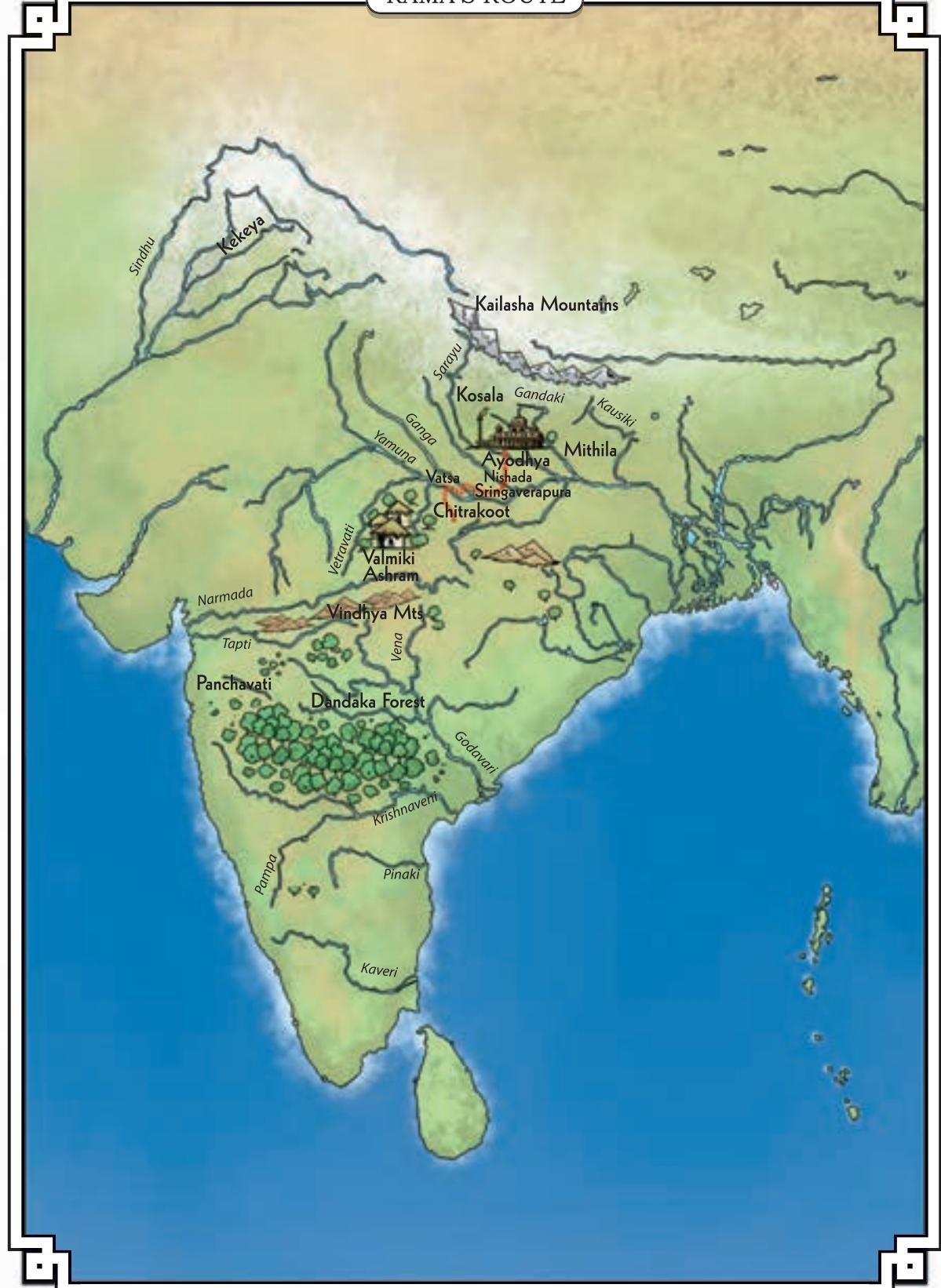
DRIVING AT A GOOD SPEED THROUGH HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS LANDS, THEY AT LAST REACHED THE CELESTIAL AND LOVELY RIVER GANGA. THEY HALTED FOR THE NIGHT BENEATH A HUGE INGUIDI TREE NEAR SRINGAVERAPURA.



GUHA, THE RULER OF THE NISHADA TERRITORY, WAS A GREAT ADMIRER OF RAMA'S.



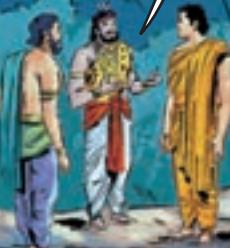
RAMA'S ROUTE



This is a representation of Bharat according to Valmiki's Ramayana and is not a political map of India.

THAT NIGHT, RAMA AND SITA FASTED. WHEN THEY WENT TO SLEEP, LAKSHMANA, SLUMANTRA AND GUHA KEPT VIGIL.

YOU GO TO SLEEP, DEAR BROTHER. NO ONE ON EARTH IS DEARER TO ME THAN RAMA. I SHALL PROTECT HIM.



BY SERVING RAMA, I SHALL EARN GREAT MERIT AND FAME. THIS FOREST IS SO FAMILIAR TO US THAT WE CAN KEEP RAMA AND SITA SAFE EVEN AGAINST AN ARMY.

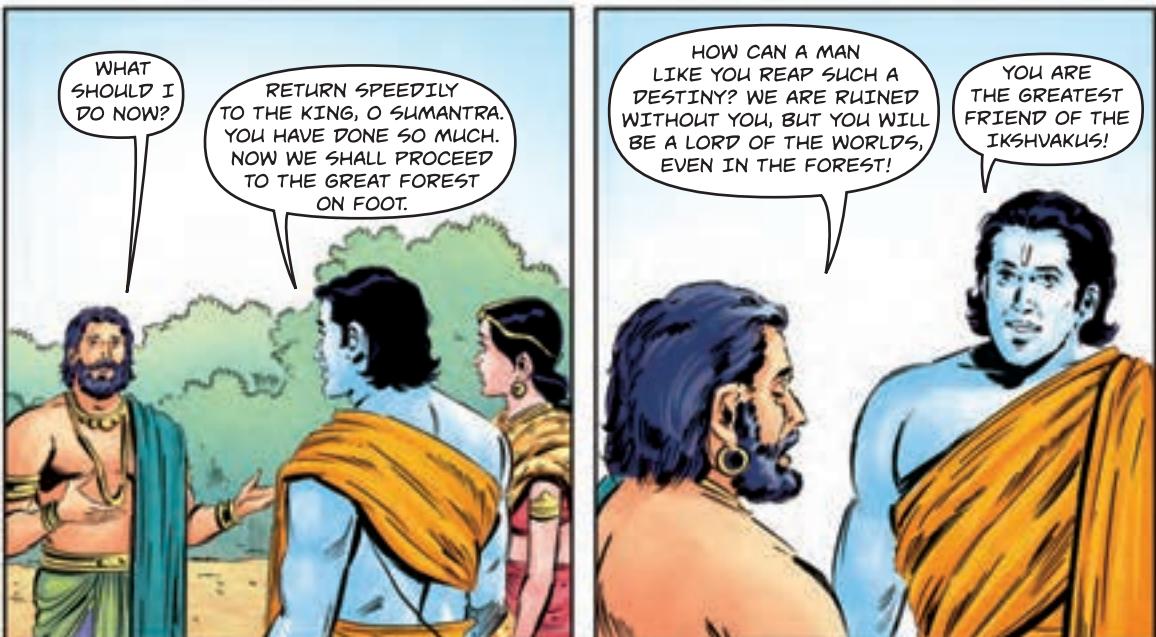
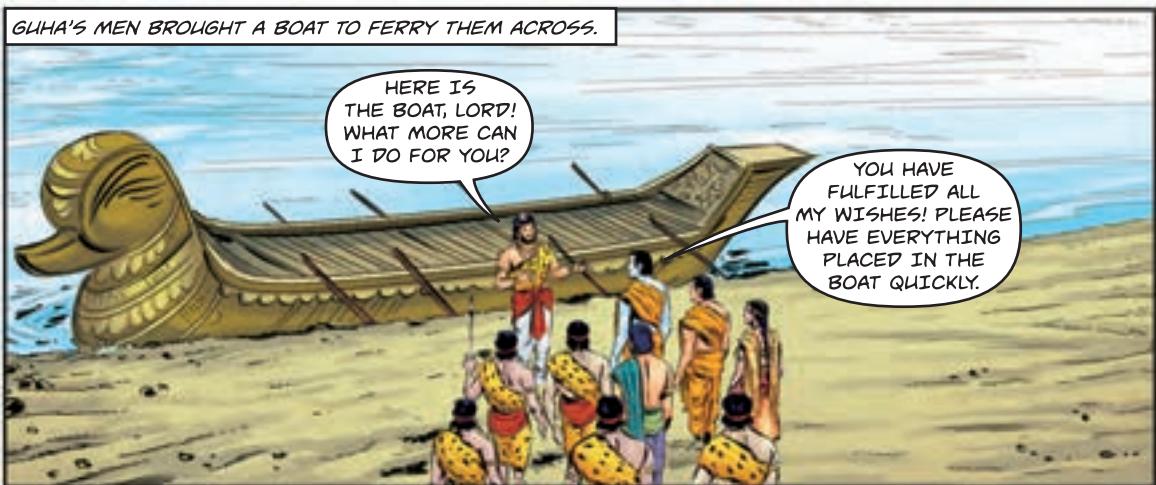
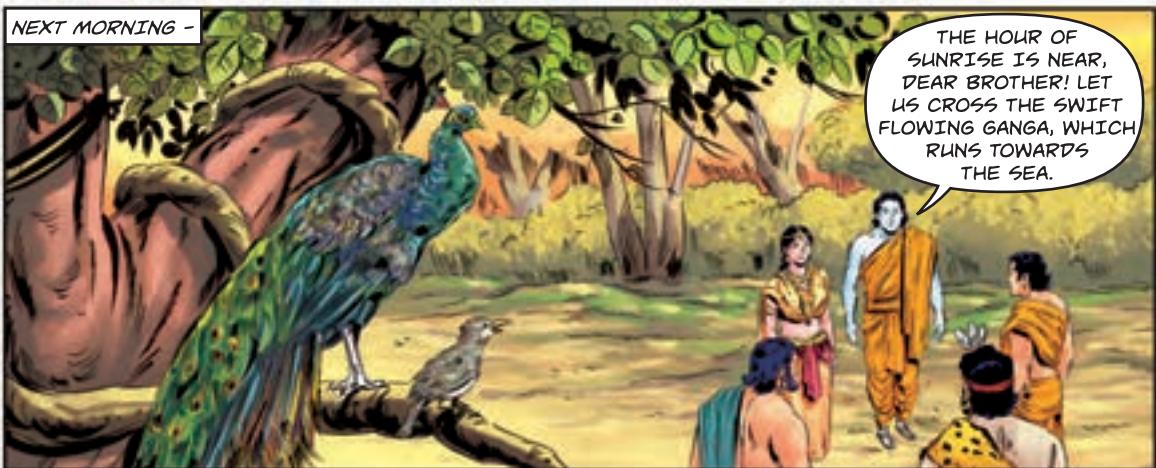
UNDER YOUR PROTECTION, O GUHA, WE ARE NOT AFRAID IN THIS LAND...

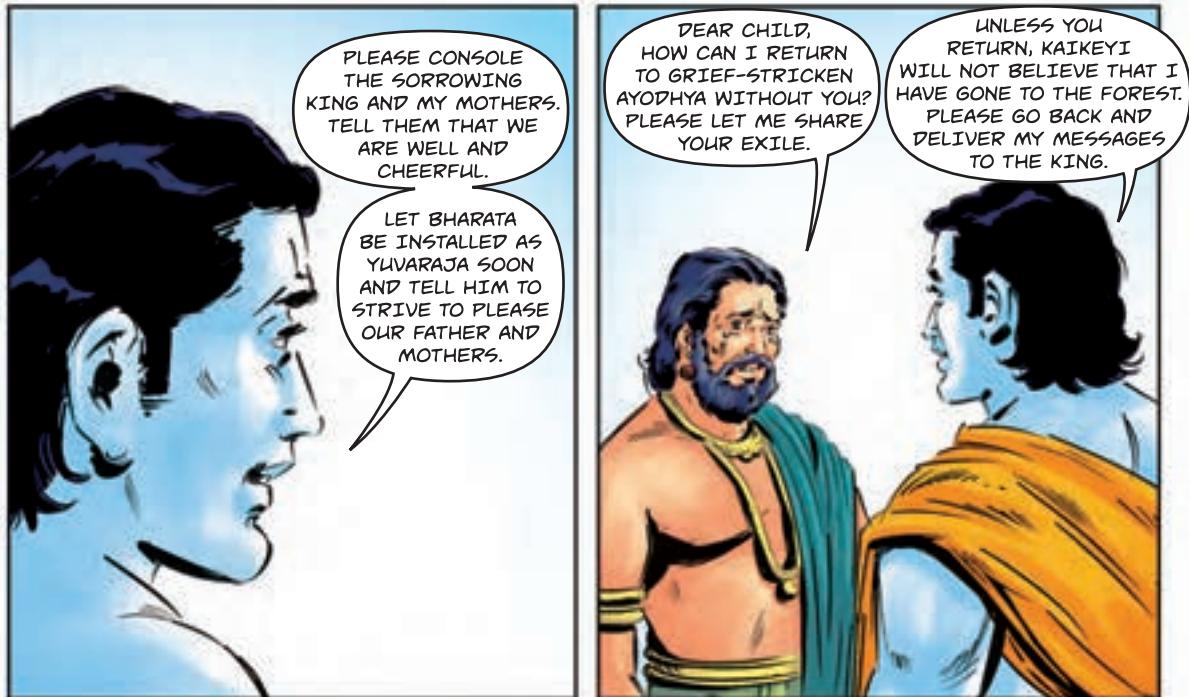


...BUT HOW CAN I SLEEP OR EAT, SEEING MY BROTHER LIKE THIS? I DON'T THINK MY FATHER OR KAUSALYA, OR EVEN AYODHYA, WILL SURVIVE THIS SORROW. WILL WE EVER RETURN SAFELY AND SEE THE NOBLE KING AGAIN?



RAMA GOES INTO EXILE

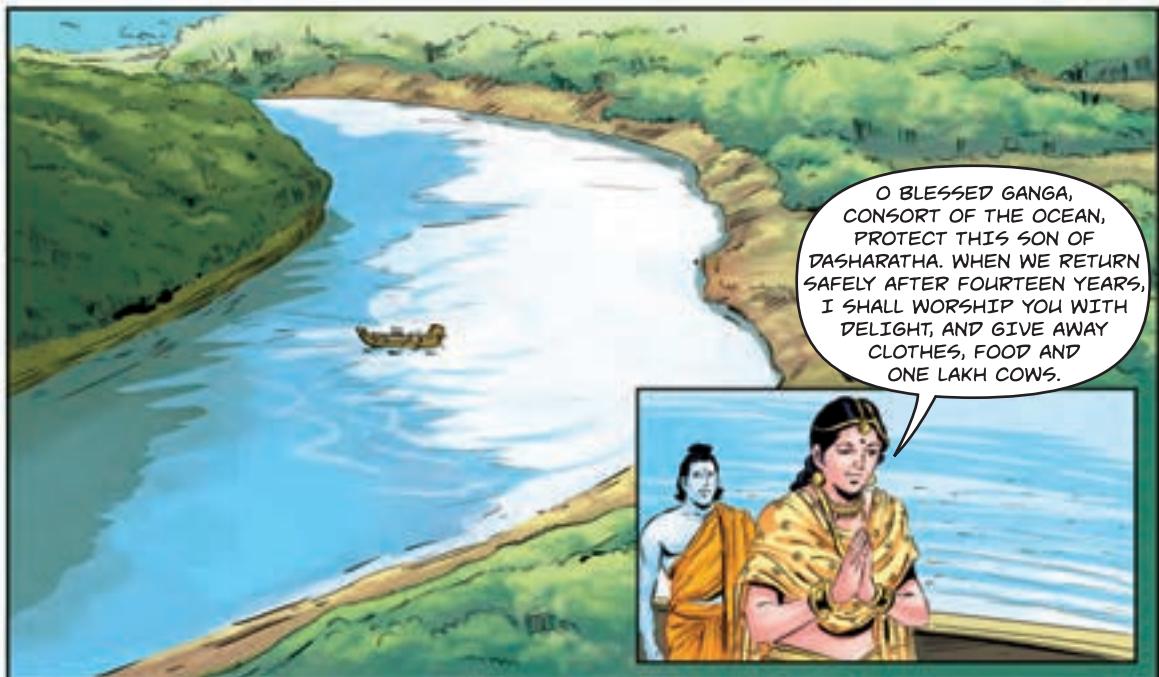




TAKING THE SAP OF A BANYAN TREE, THEY APPLIED IT TO THEIR HAIR AS RISHIS DO, TO MAKE IT MATTED.



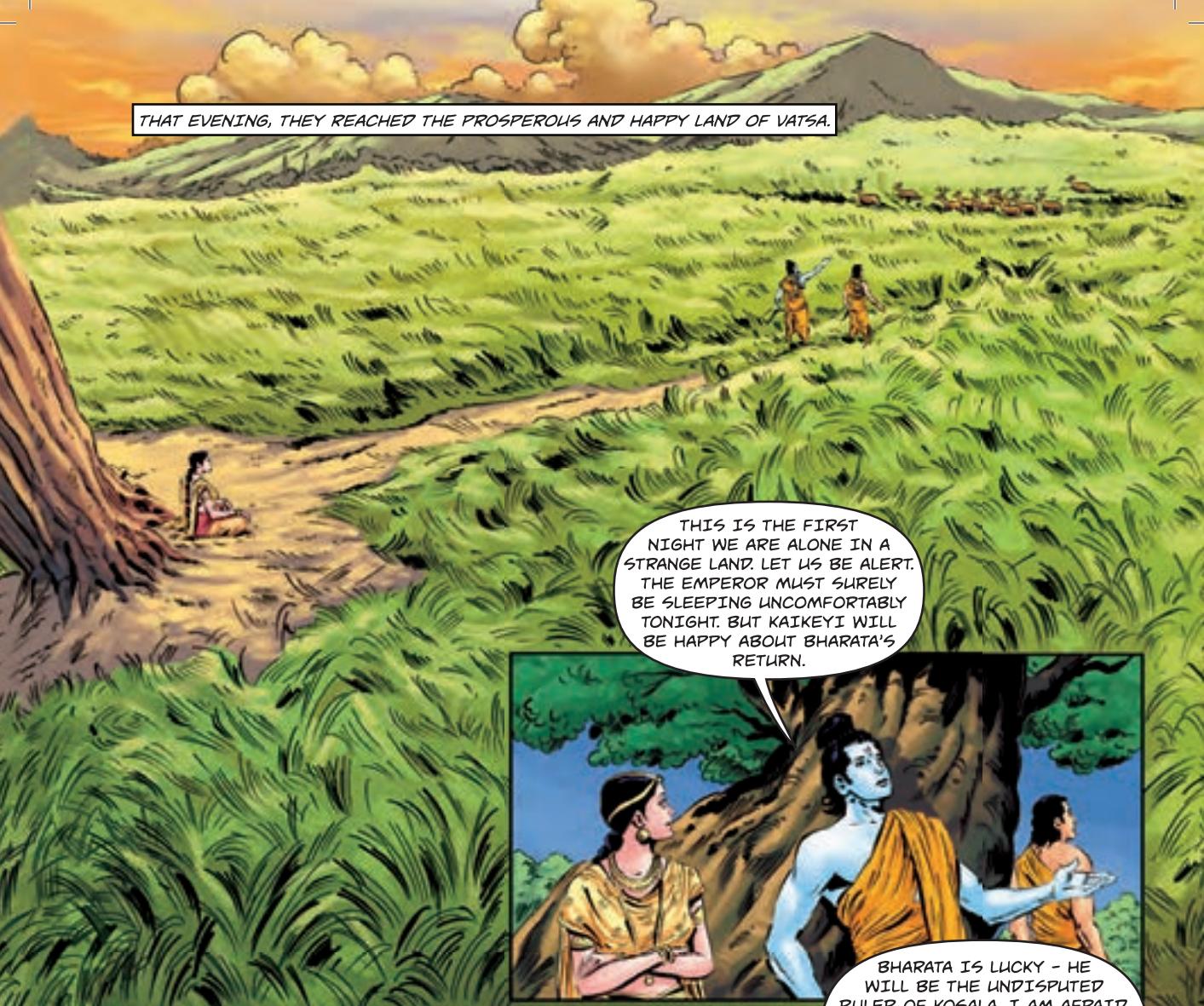
RAMA GOES INTO EXILE



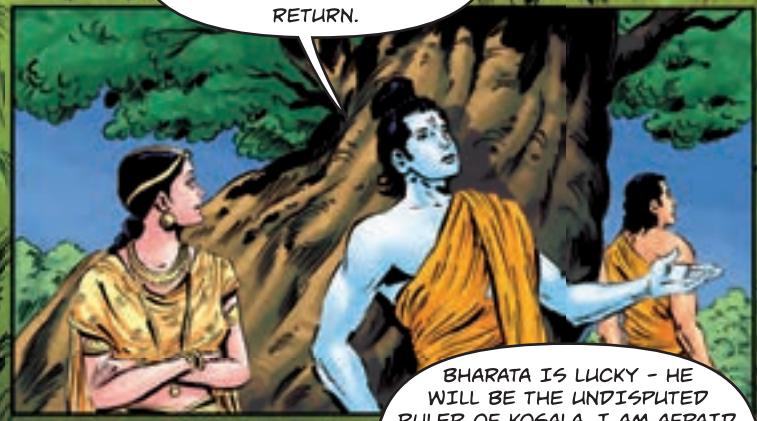
AFTER CROSSING THE RIVER -



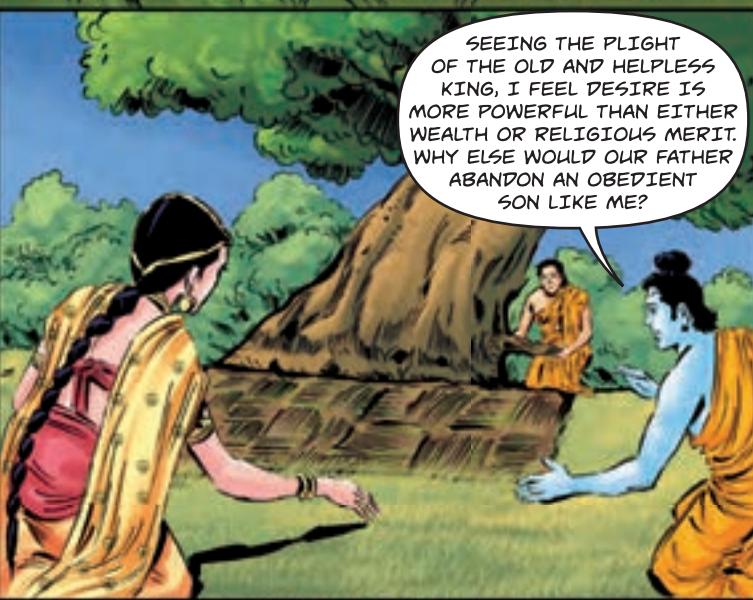
THAT EVENING, THEY REACHED THE PROSPEROUS AND HAPPY LAND OF VATSA.



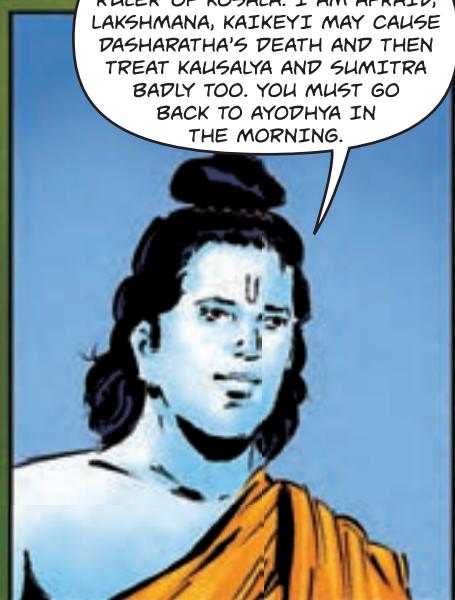
THIS IS THE FIRST NIGHT WE ARE ALONE IN A STRANGE LAND. LET US BE ALERT. THE EMPEROR MUST SURELY BE SLEEPING UNCOMFORTABLY TONIGHT. BUT KAIKEYI WILL BE HAPPY ABOUT BHARATA'S RETURN.



BHARATA IS LUCKY - HE WILL BE THE UNDISPUTED RULER OF KOSALA. I AM AFRAID, LAKSHMANA, KAIKEYI MAY CAUSE DASHARATHA'S DEATH AND THEN TREAT KALISAYA AND SUMITRA BADLY TOO. YOU MUST GO BACK TO AYODHYA IN THE MORNING.



SEEING THE PLIGHT OF THE OLD AND HELPLESS KING, I FEEL DESIRE IS MORE POWERFUL THAN EITHER WEALTH OR RELIGIOUS MERIT. WHY ELSE WOULD OUR FATHER ABANDON AN OBEDIENT SON LIKE ME?





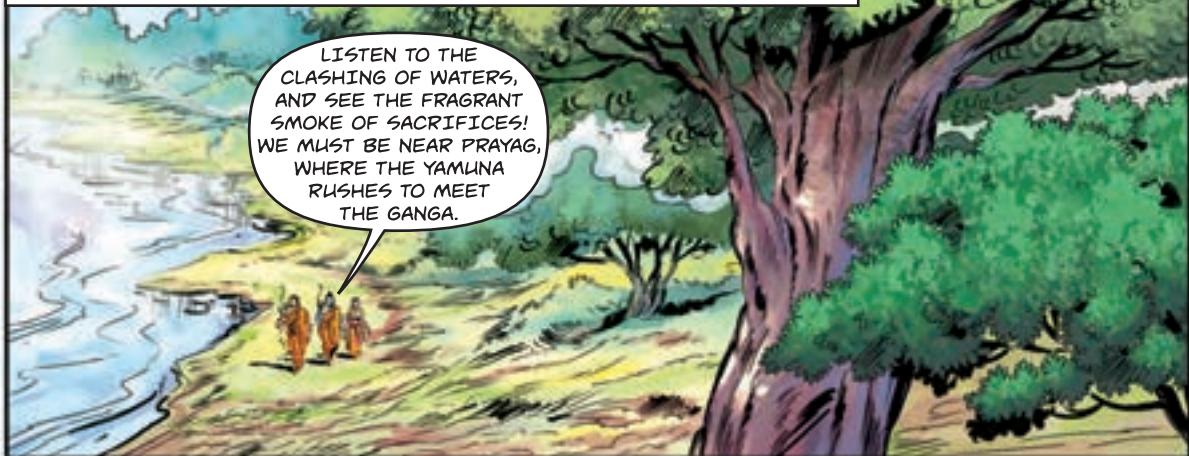
I OUGHT TO BE
LOOKING AFTER MY
MOTHER, WHO HAS CARED
FOR ME ALL THESE YEARS.
INSTEAD, I HAVE LEFT
HER ALONE.

THOUGH I CAN
CONQUER THE WORLD, I
CANNOT CONQUER AYODHYA
BECAUSE I AM AFRAID OF
DOING WRONG.

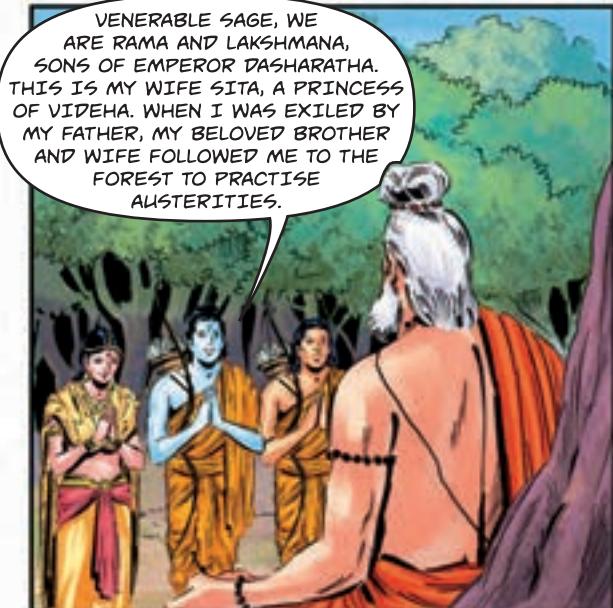
IF YOU GIVE WAY TO
GRIEF, SITA AND I WILL
BE LOST. YOU ARE DEARER
THAN FATHER, MOTHER
OR EVEN HEAVEN!

FROM THE NEXT DAY,
THE TWO PRINCES
LIVED LIKE LIONS
ON A MOUNTAIN PEAK,
NEVER GIVING WAY
TO SORROW.

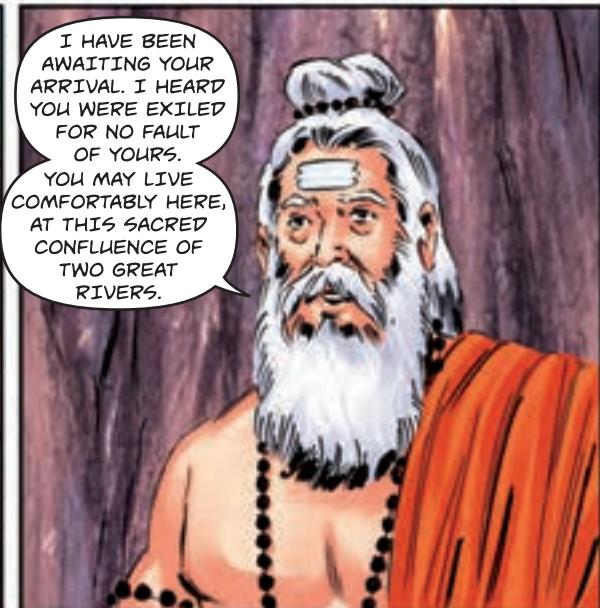
THE NEXT DAY, THEY WALKED ALONG THE GANGA THROUGH FORESTS AND FIELDS.



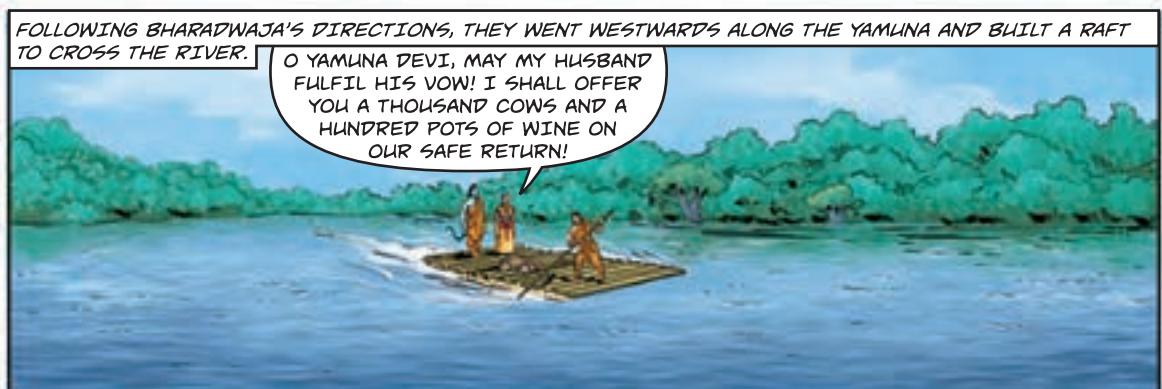
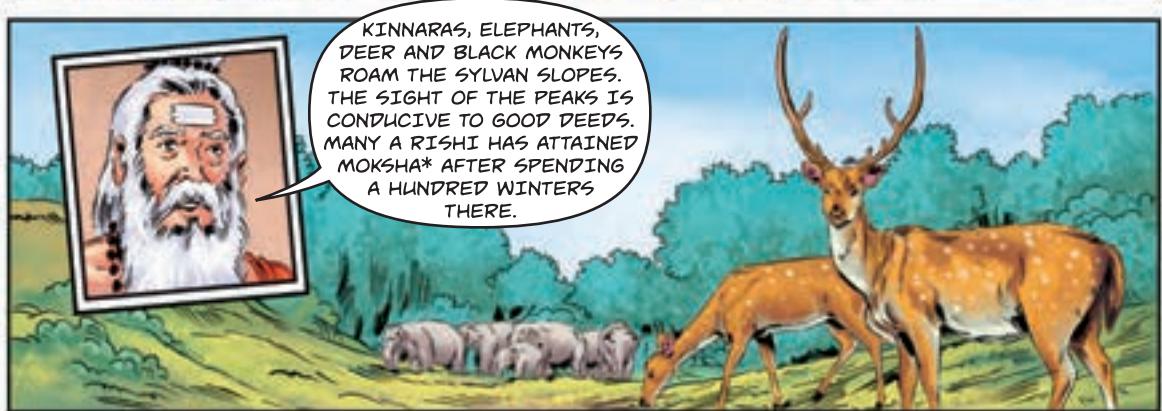
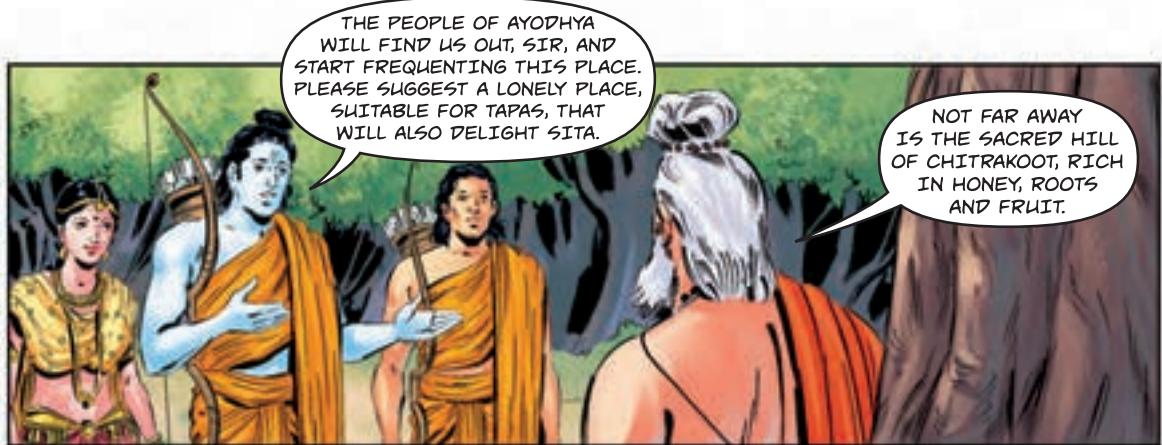
AS THE SUN WAS SETTING, THEY REACHED RISHI BHARADWAJA'S ASHRAM BETWEEN THE TWO RIVERS.



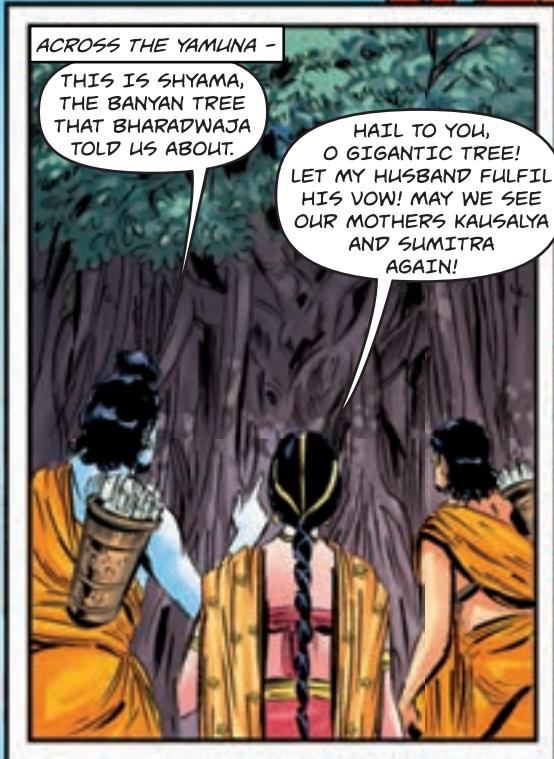
VENERABLE SAGE, WE ARE RAMA AND LAKSHMANA, SONS OF EMPEROR DASHARATHA. THIS IS MY WIFE SITA, A PRINCESS OF VIDHEA. WHEN I WAS EXILED BY MY FATHER, MY BELOVED BROTHER AND WIFE FOLLOWED ME TO THE FOREST TO PRACTISE AUSTERITIES.



I HAVE BEEN AWAITING YOUR ARRIVAL. I HEARD YOU WERE EXILED FOR NO FAULT OF YOURS. YOU MAY LIVE COMFORTABLY HERE, AT THIS SACRED CONFLUENCE OF TWO GREAT RIVERS.



*LIBERATION OF THE SOUL



THE NEXT DAY -

SEE THE BEAUTIFUL
KIMSLUKA TREES, THE
FRUITS AND THE HUGE
HONEYCOMBS. DO YOU
SEE THE ELEPHANTS ON
THE MOUNTAINSIDE?

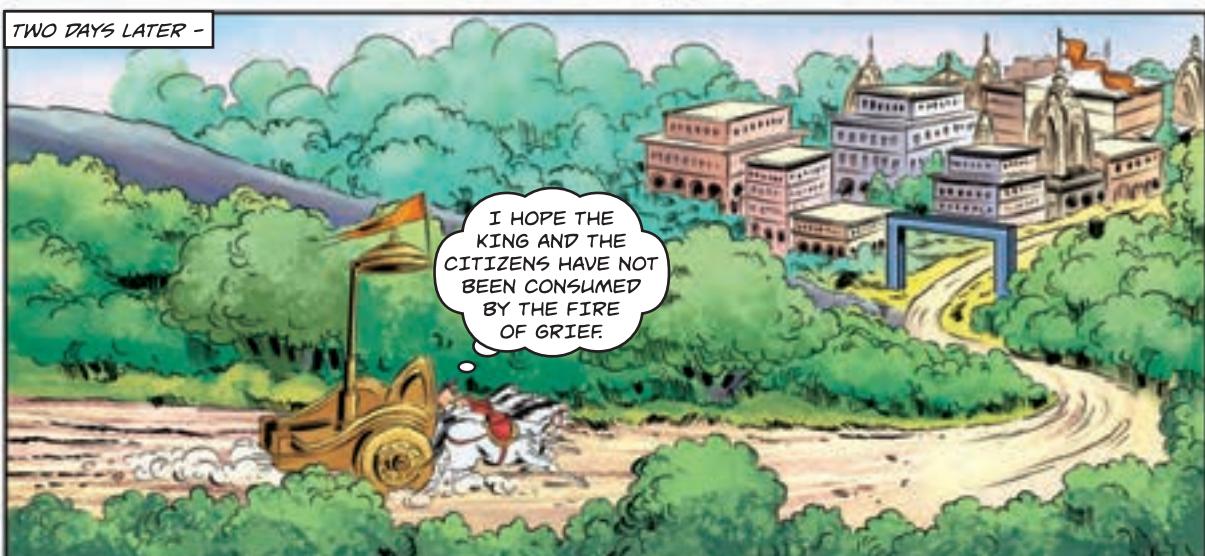
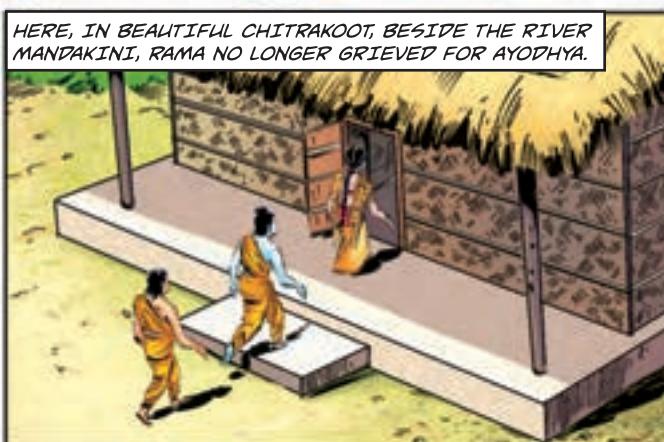
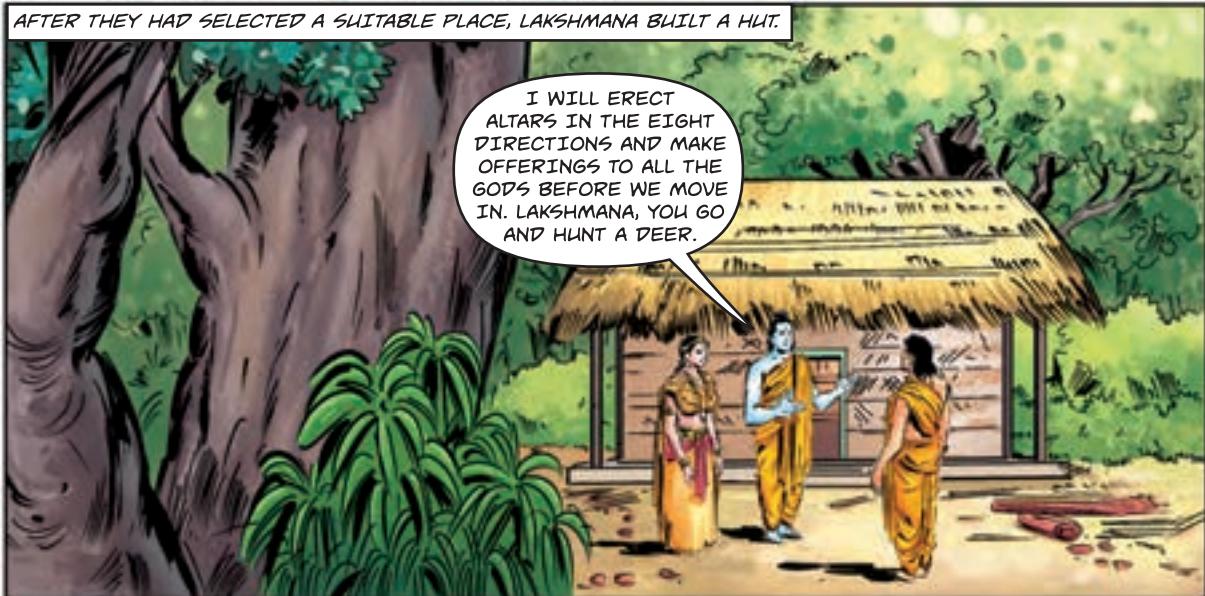
RAMA, LOOK
AT THAT
BIRD!

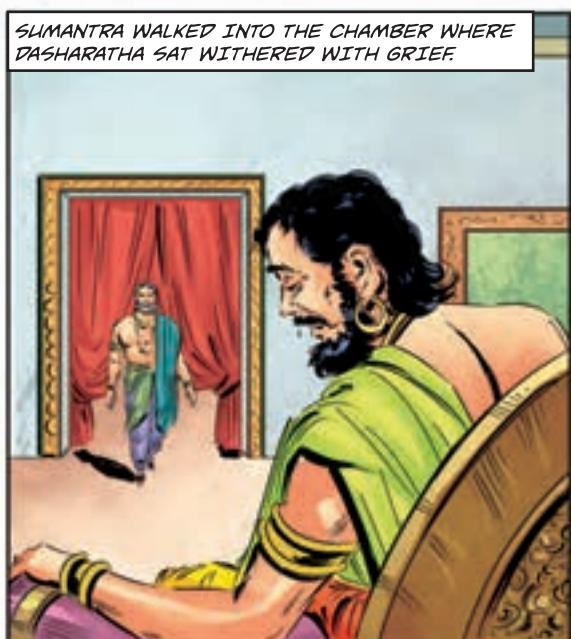
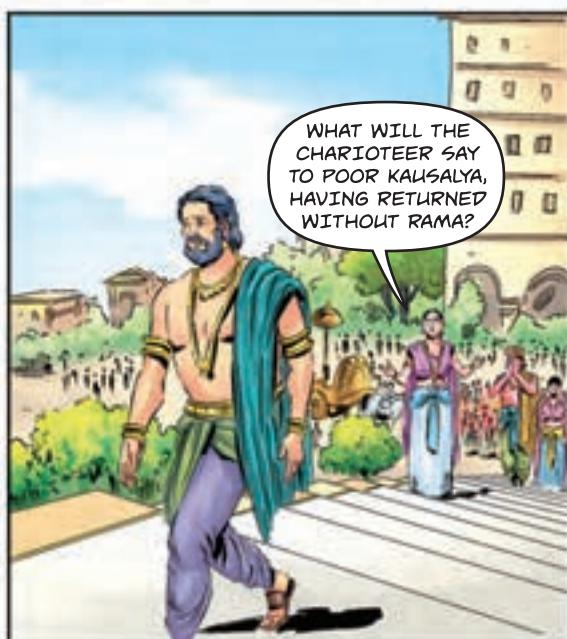
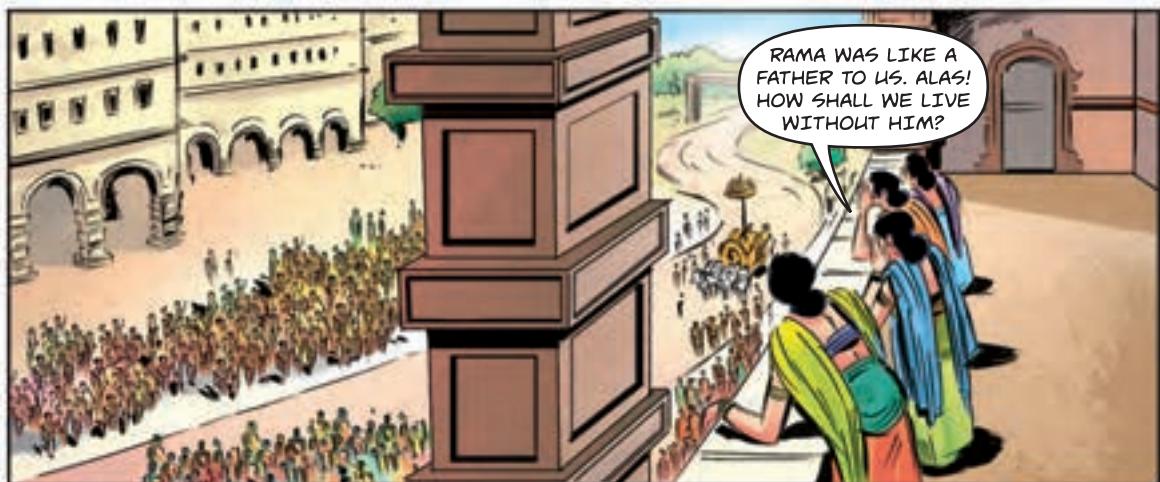
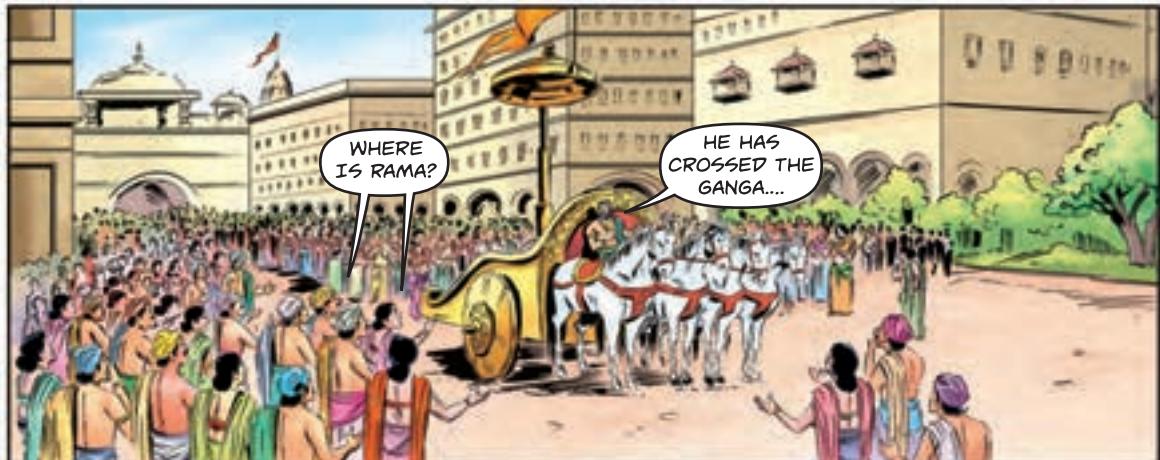
THEY MET MANY RISHIS LIVING THERE, INCLUDING THE
HOLY VALMIKI.

WELCOME,
SCIONS OF
RAGHU!

RAMA GOES INTO EXILE

AFTER THEY HAD SELECTED A SUITABLE PLACE, LAKSHMANA BUILT A HUT.





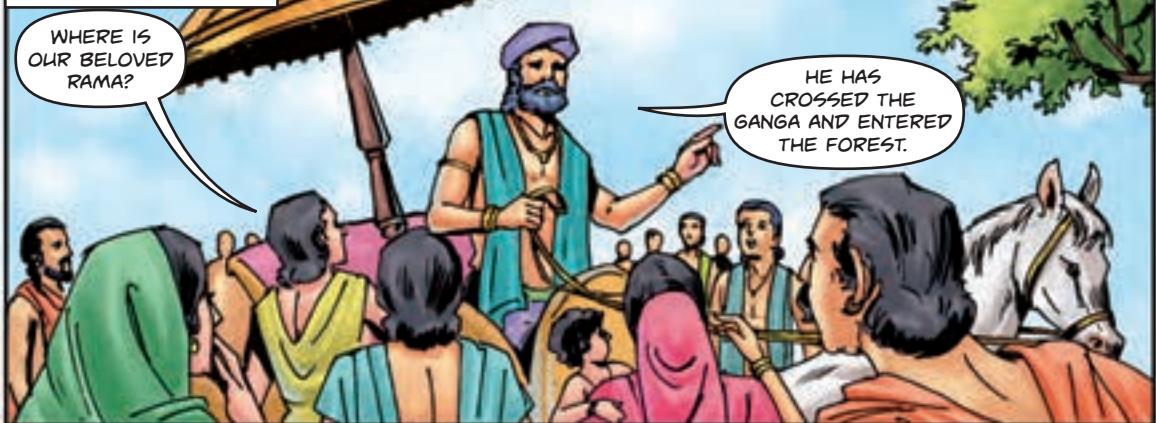
LIFE AND DEATH OF A KING



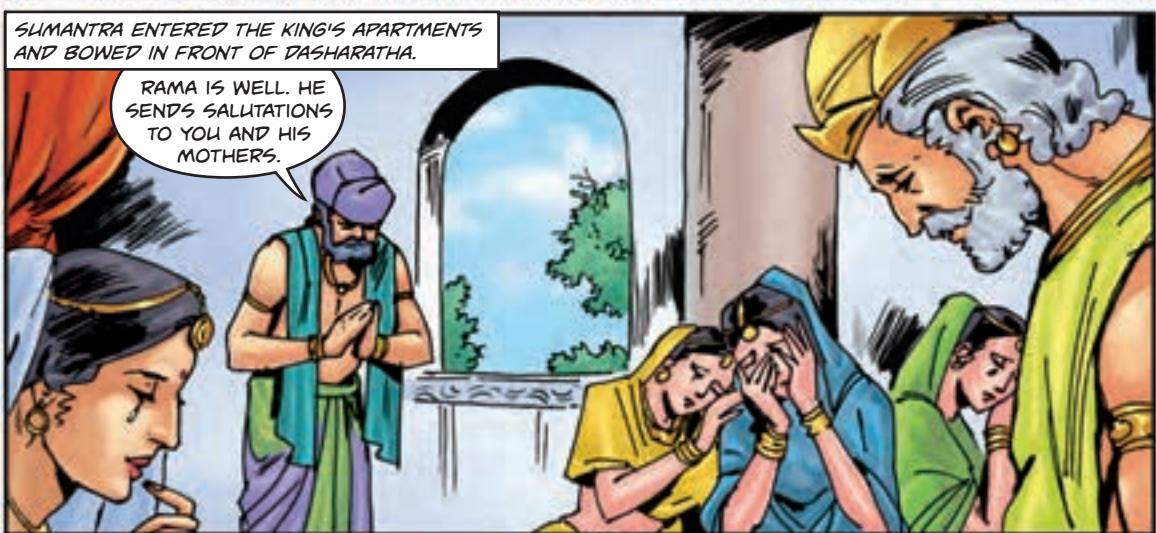
DASHARATHA, KING OF AYODHYA, HAD PROMISED QUEEN KAIKEYI TWO BOONS. REMINDING HIM OF THE PROMISE, SHE HAD ASKED HIM TO BANISH HIS ELDEST SON, RAMA, TO THE FOREST FOR FOURTEEN YEARS AND INSTALL HER OWN SON, BHARATA, AS THE YUVARAJA.*



DETERMINED TO HONOUR HIS FATHER'S PROMISE, RAMA HAD LEFT AYODHYA WITH HIS WIFE, SITA, AND BROTHER, LAKSHMANA. A FEW DAYS LATER SUMANTRA, THE MINISTER AND CHARIOTEER, WHO HAD GONE WITH THEM, RETURNED.

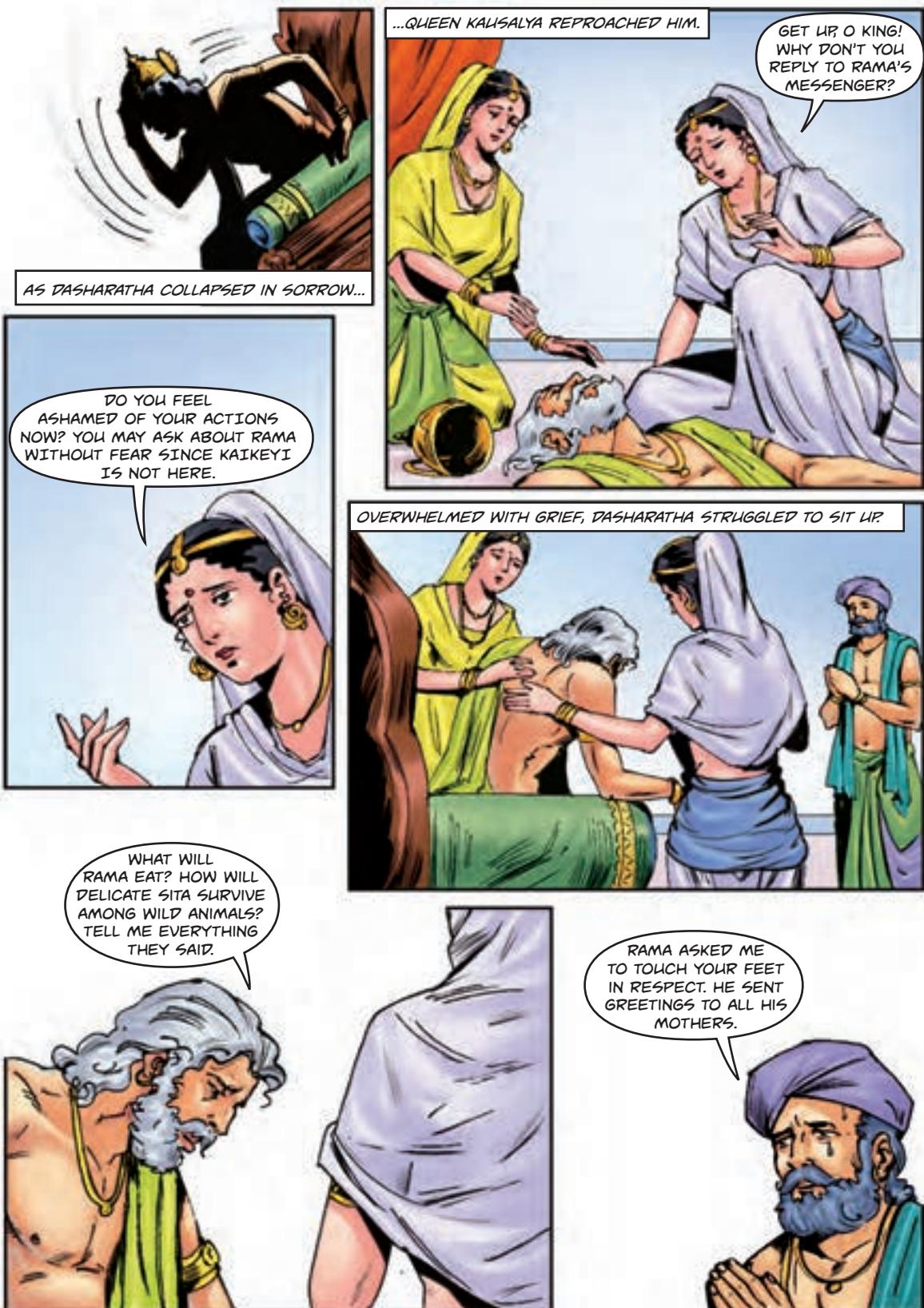


SUMANTRA ENTERED THE KING'S APARTMENTS AND BOWED IN FRONT OF DASHARATHA.

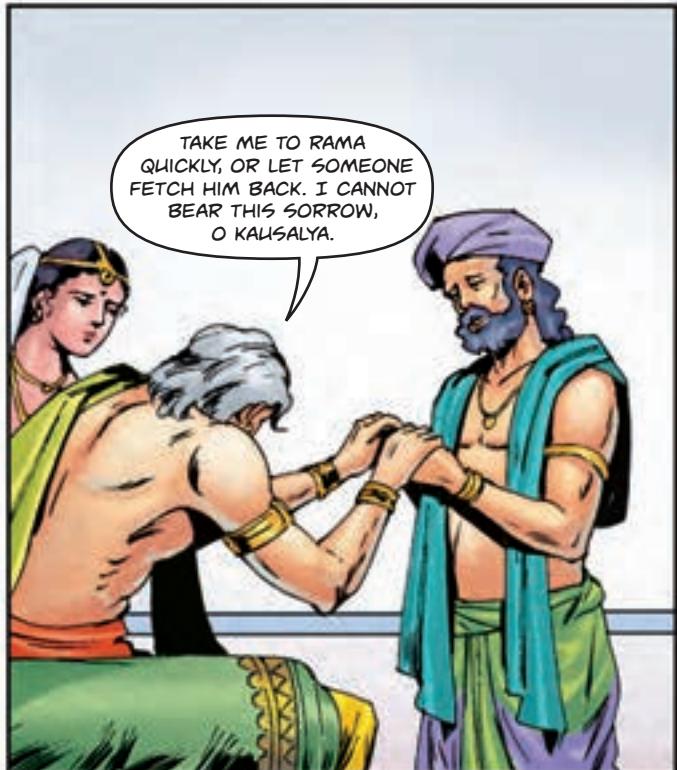
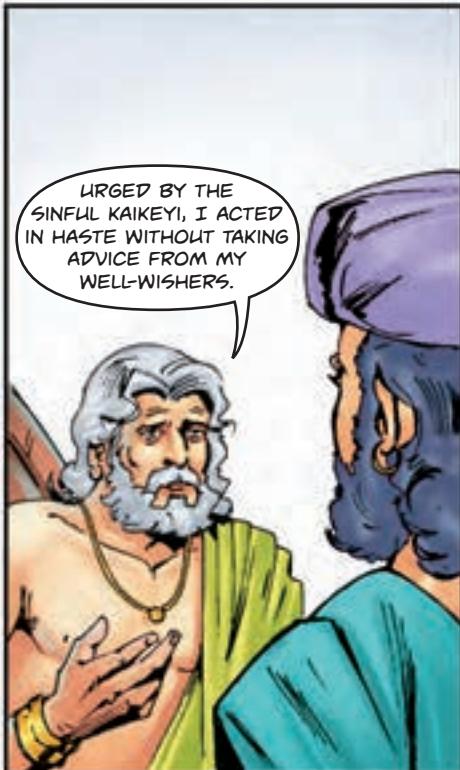


*CROWN PRINCE

LIFE AND DEATH OF A KING

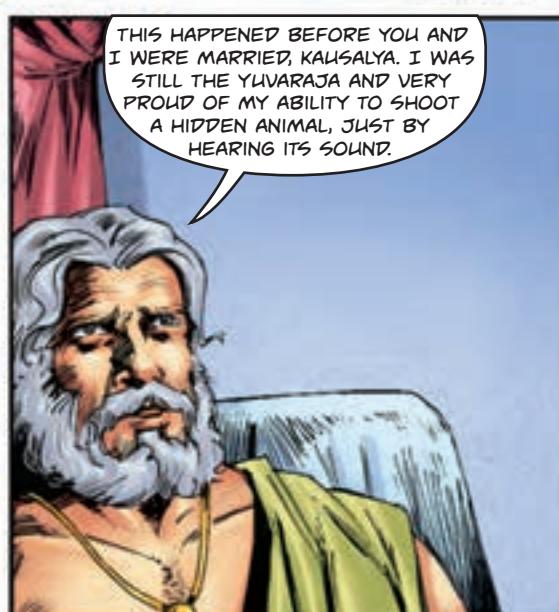
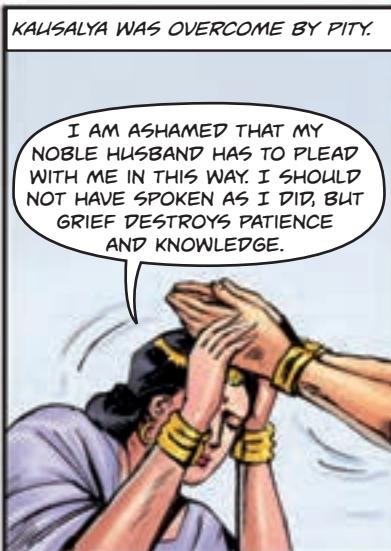
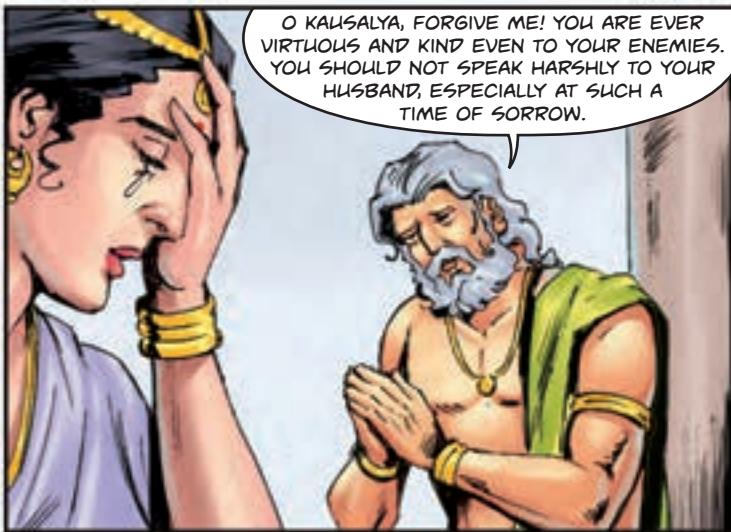








LIFE AND DEATH OF A KING



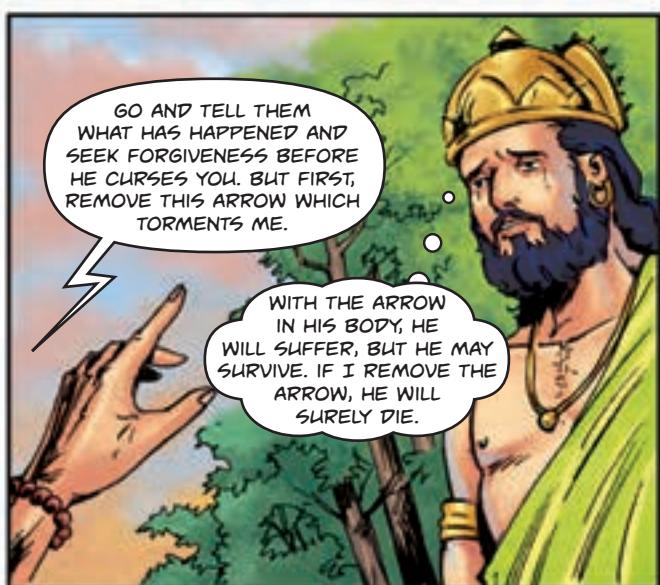
IT WAS THE RAINY SEASON.
EAGER TO HUNT, I DROVE TO THE
RIVER.

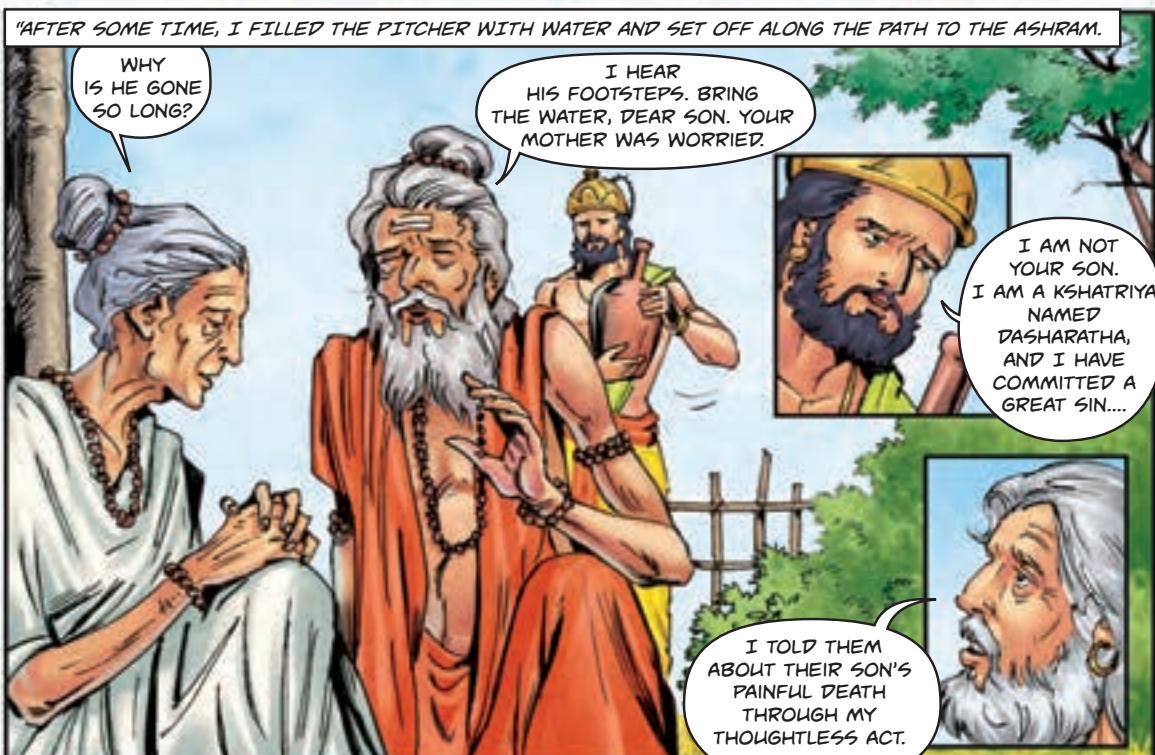


"A LITTLE BEFORE DAWN, I HEARD THE SOUND OF A PITCHER BEING FILLED
WITH WATER AND MISTOOK IT FOR THE NOISE MADE BY AN ELEPHANT
DRINKING. I SHOT AN ARROW IN THE DIRECTION OF THE SOUND."

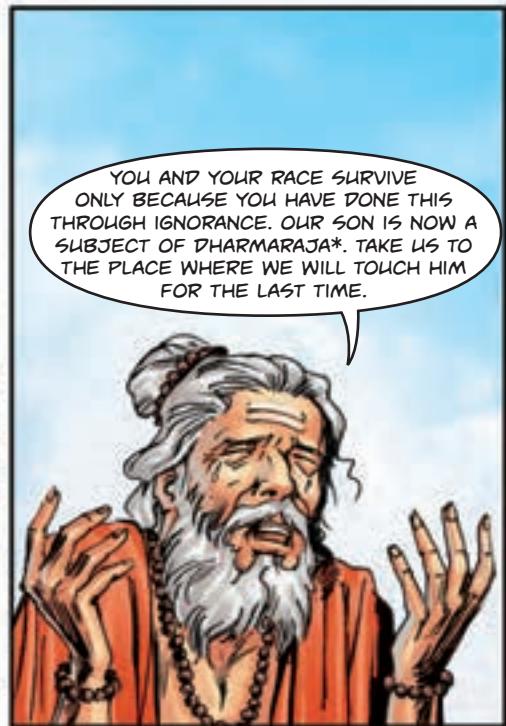
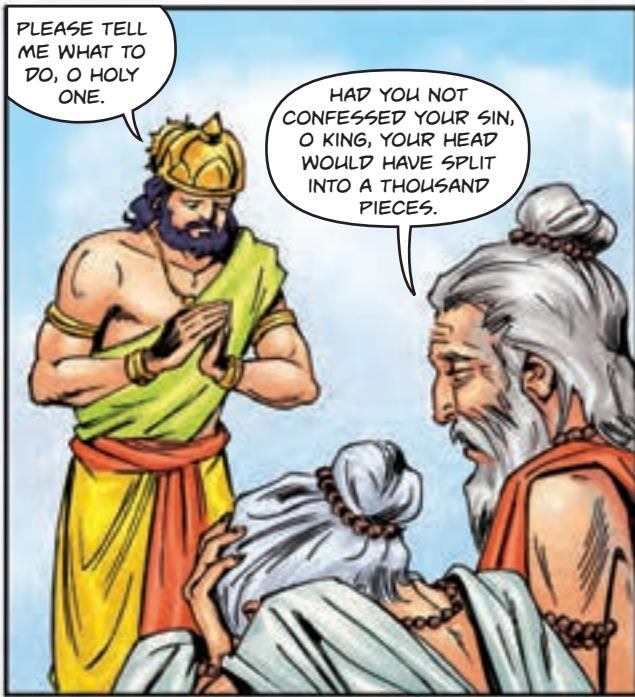


LIFE AND DEATH OF A KING

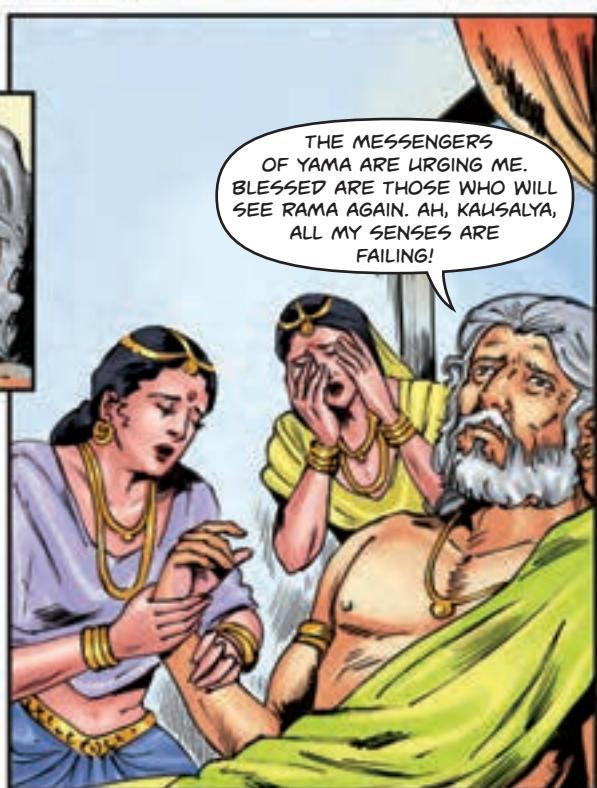
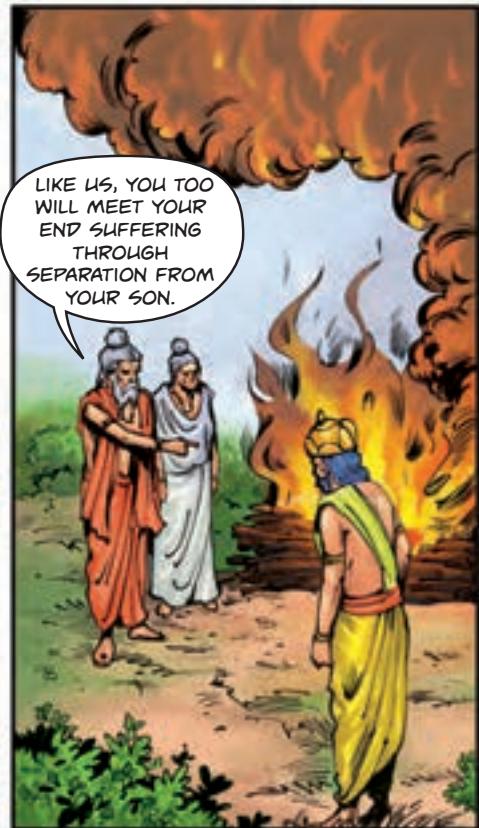




LIFE AND DEATH OF A KING

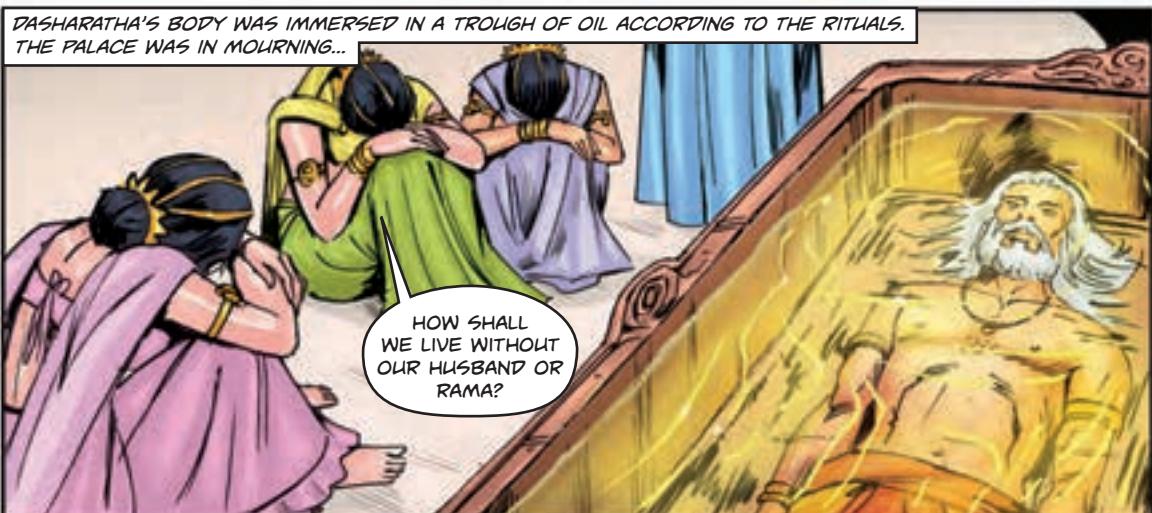
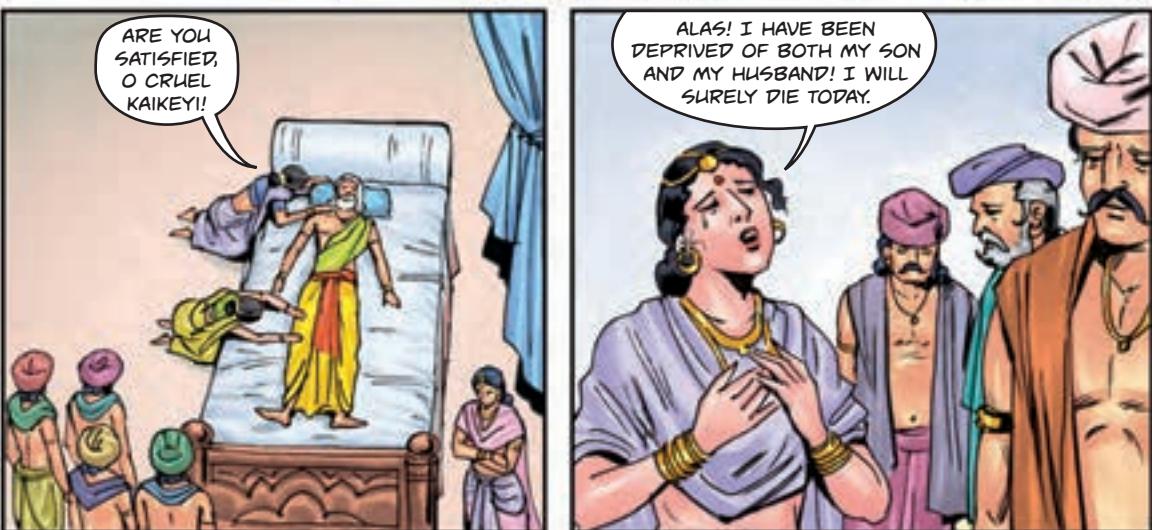


*YAMA, GOD OF DEATH

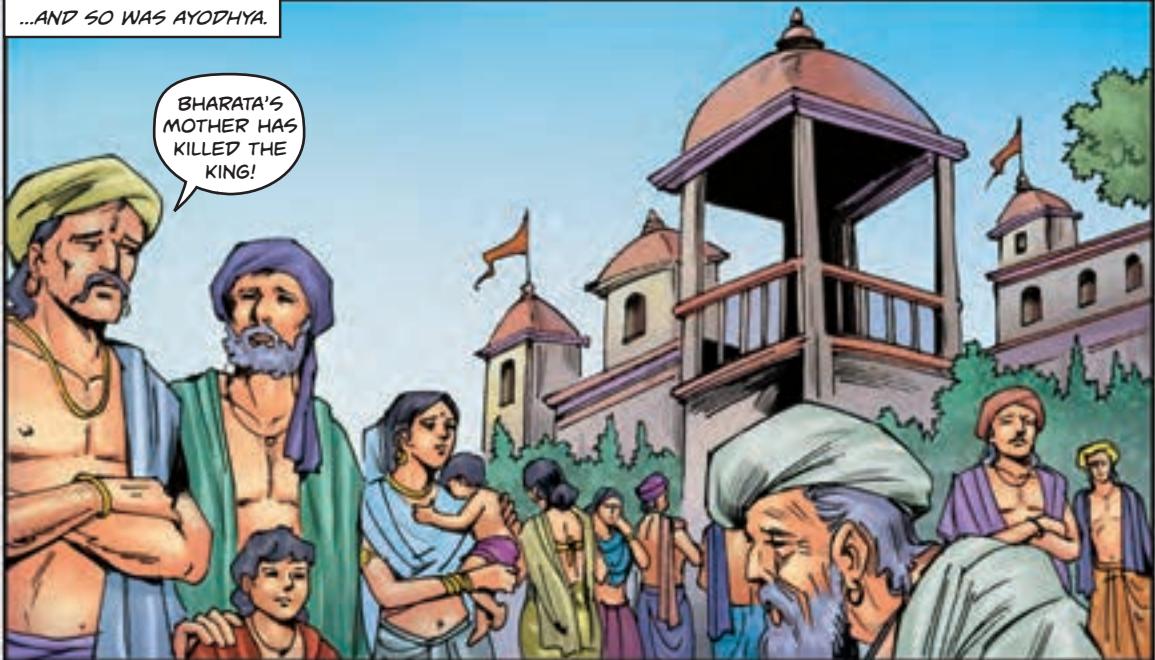


EXHAUSTED AND SORROWFUL, KALISALYA AND SUMITRA FELL ASLEEP. NEXT MORNING, THE OTHERS CAME TO AWAKEN THE KING.

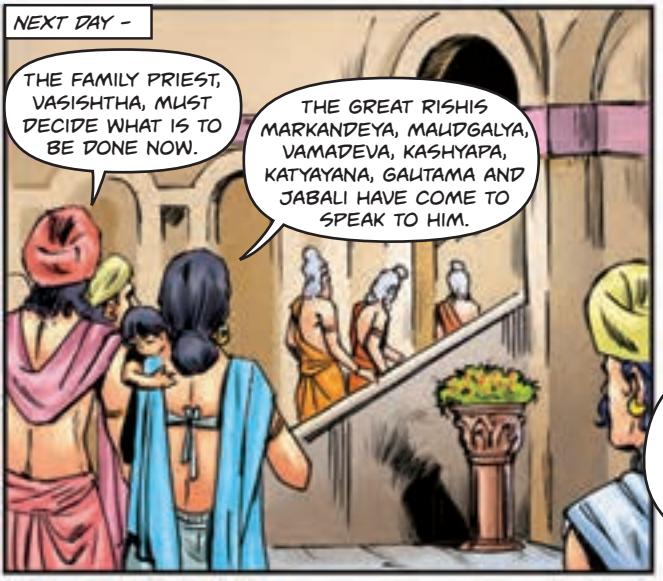


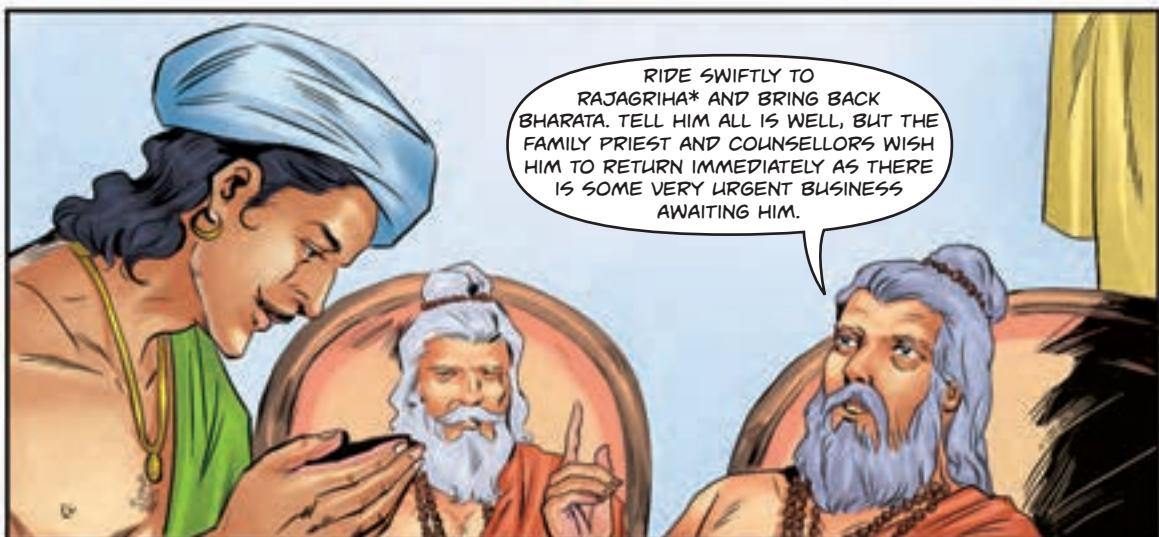


...AND SO WAS AYODHYA.



NEXT DAY -





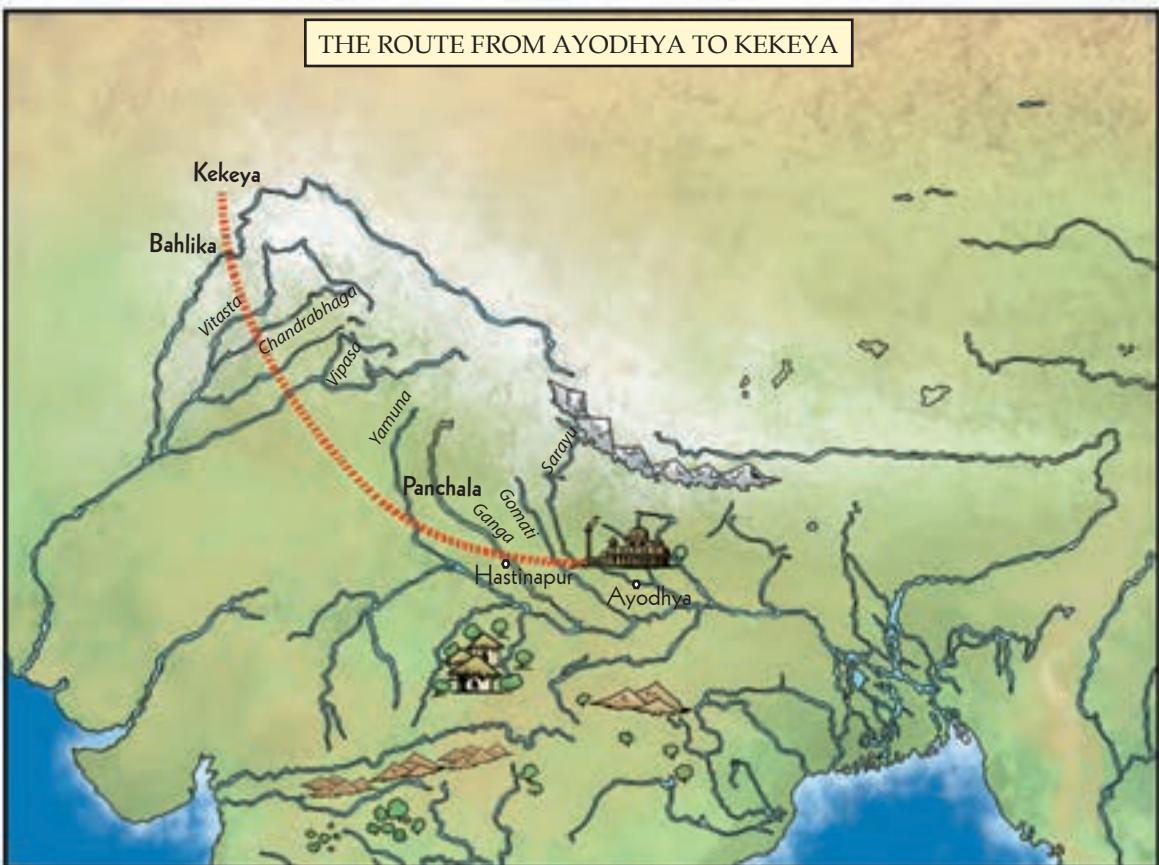
*THE CAPITAL OF KEKEYA; ALSO CALLED GIRIVRAJA

LIFE AND DEATH OF A KING

GALLOPING WESTWARD FROM AYODHYA, THE MESSENGERS CROSSED THE GANGA AT HASTINAPUR. THEY PASSED KURLU JANGALA AND PANCHALA, THE RIVERS IKSHUMATI, VIPASA* AND MANY OTHERS, LAKES, HOLY TREES AND VILLAGES. AT LAST THEY CAME TO THE BAHLIKA KINGDOM, WHERE THEY SAW THE FOOTPRINTS OF LORD VISHNU, BIG WELLS WITH STAIRS, LIONS, TIGERS AND ELEPHANTS. THOUGH THE HORSES WERE EXHAUSTED, THEY CONTINUED ALONG THE BROAD HIGHWAY AND AT LAST ENTERED THE TOWN OF RAJAGRIHA BY NIGHT.



THE ROUTE FROM AYODHYA TO KEKEYA

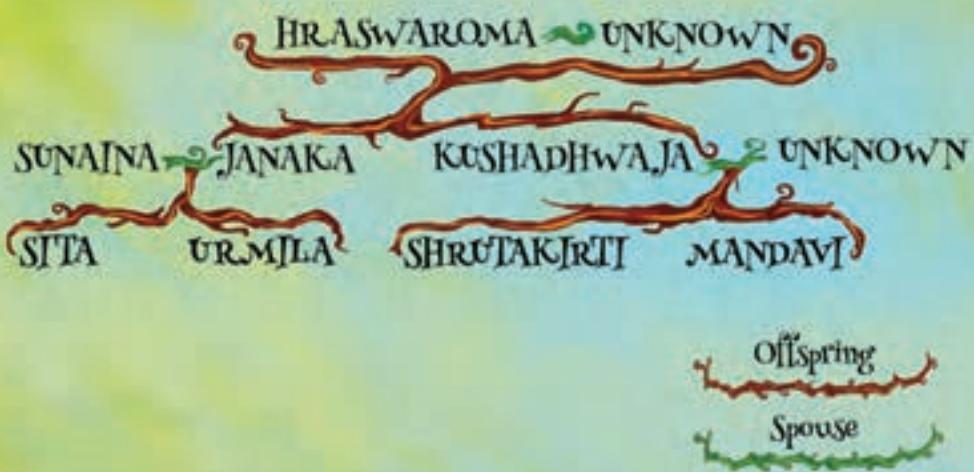


*NOW KNOWN AS THE BEAS

RAMA'S FAMILY TREE

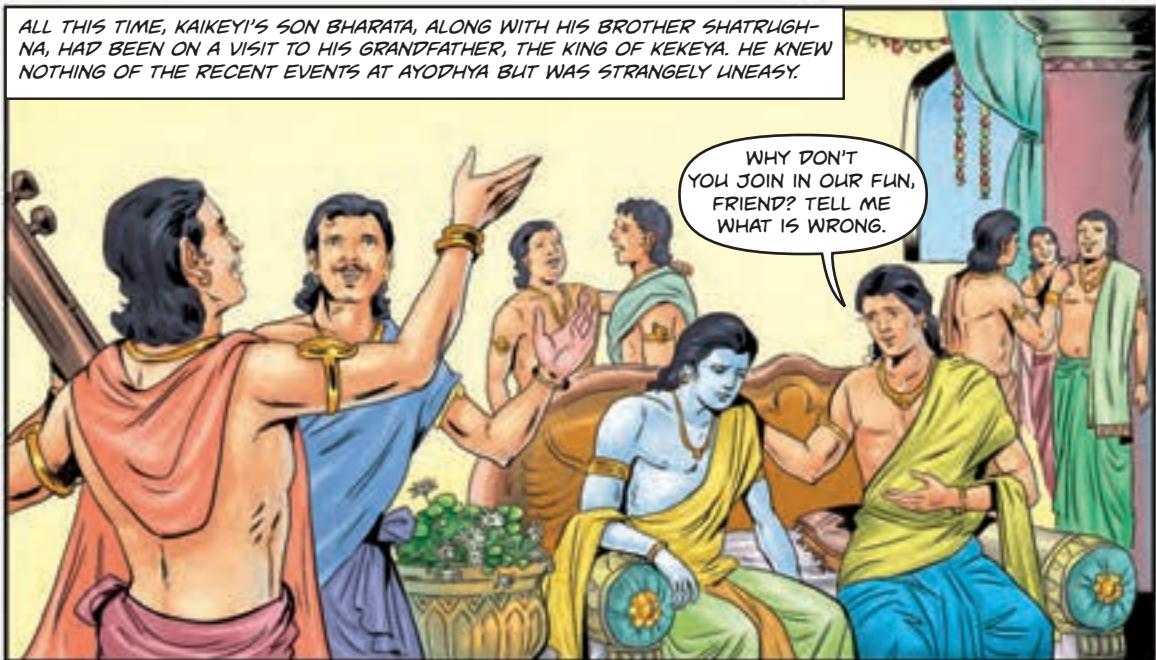


SITA'S FAMILY TREE



LIFE AND DEATH OF A KING

ALL THIS TIME, KAIKEYI'S SON BHARATA, ALONG WITH HIS BROTHER SHATRUGHNA, HAD BEEN ON A VISIT TO HIS GRANDFATHER, THE KING OF KEKEYA. HE KNEW NOTHING OF THE RECENT EVENTS AT AYODHYA BUT WAS STRANGELY UNEASY.

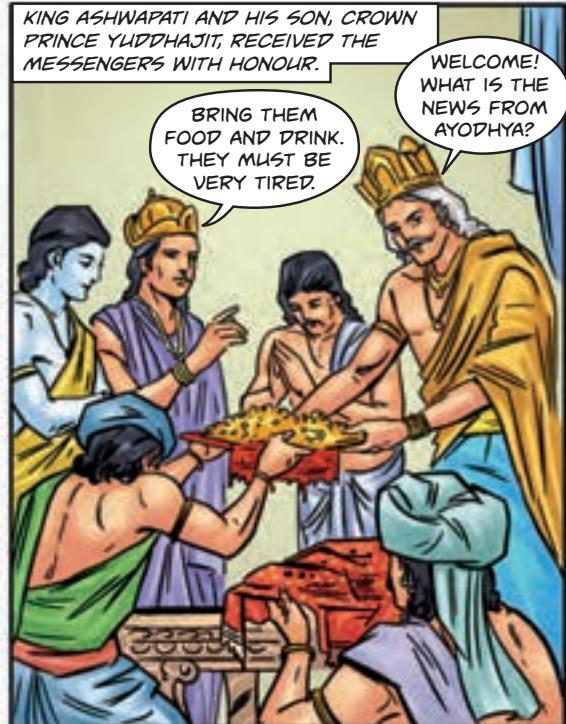


*SESAME SEEDS

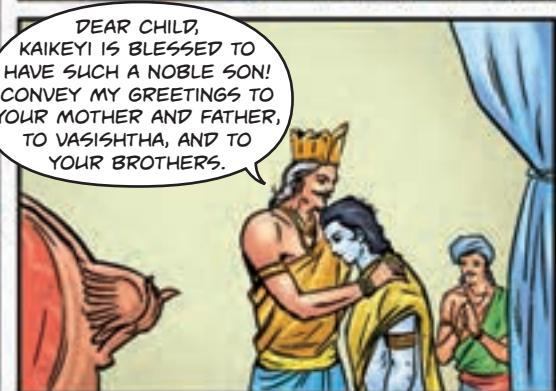
JUST THEN VASISHTHA'S MESSENGER ARRIVED IN RAJAGRIHA.



KING ASHWAPATI AND HIS SON, CROWN PRINCE YUDDHAJIT, RECEIVED THE MESSENGERS WITH HONOUR.



IS MY FATHER DOING WELL? HOW ARE RAMA AND LAKSHMANA? ARE KAUSALYA AND SUMITRA FREE FROM AILMENT? HOW IS MY OWN MOTHER, KAIKEYI?



BHARATA'S GRANDFATHER AND UNCLE SHOWERED HIM WITH GIFTS.

MY TRUSTED
MINISTERS, ALONG WITH
SOLDIERS AND ATTENDANTS
WILL ESCORT YOU AND
SHATRUGHNA TO
AYODHYA.



BHARATA TRAVELED FOR A WEEK, FOLLOWING A DIFFERENT ROUTE FROM THAT TAKEN BY THE MESSENGERS. HE CROSSED MANY RIVERS, INCLUDING THE SHATADRLI*, SARASWATI AND GANGA; AND MANY KINGDOMS, FORESTS AND GARDENS.

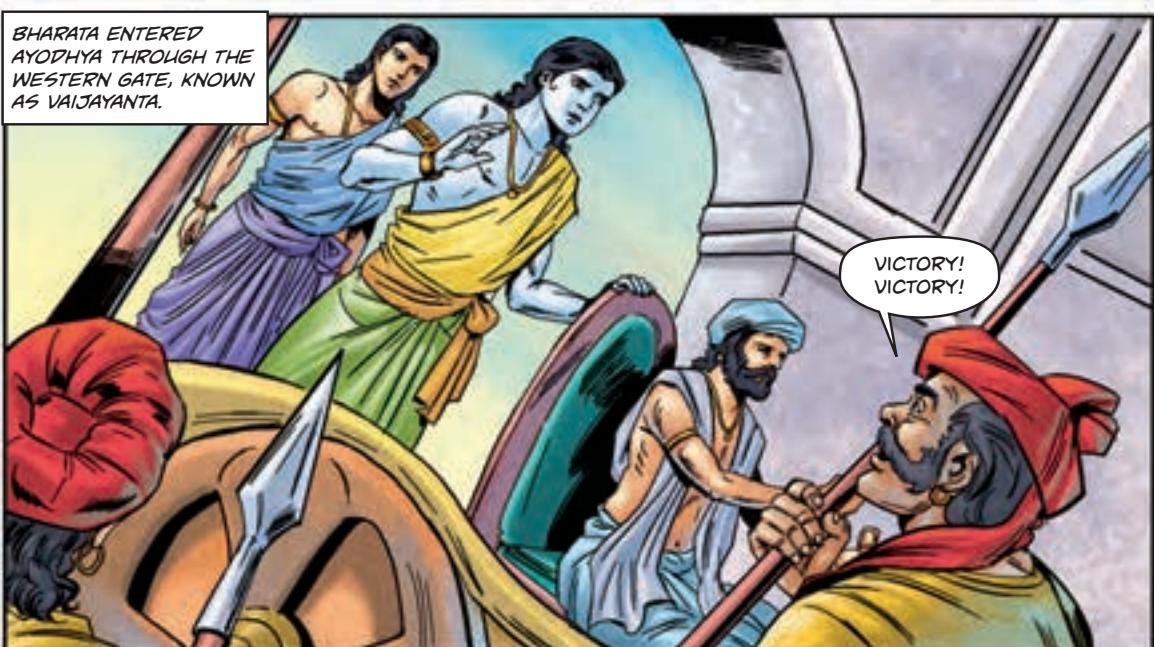
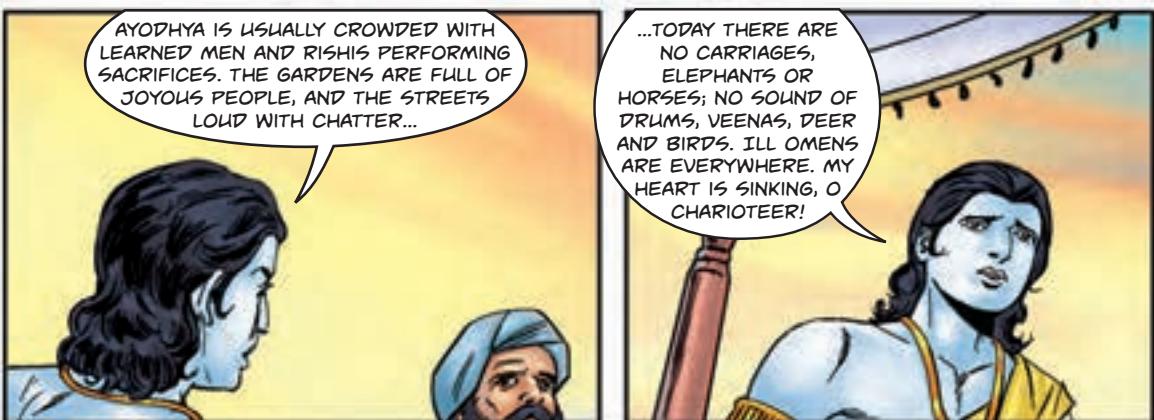


HE WENT AHEAD OF THE ARMY AND, THOUGH HIS HORSES WERE EXHAUSTED, DROVE THROUGH THE FORESTS ALL NIGHT.

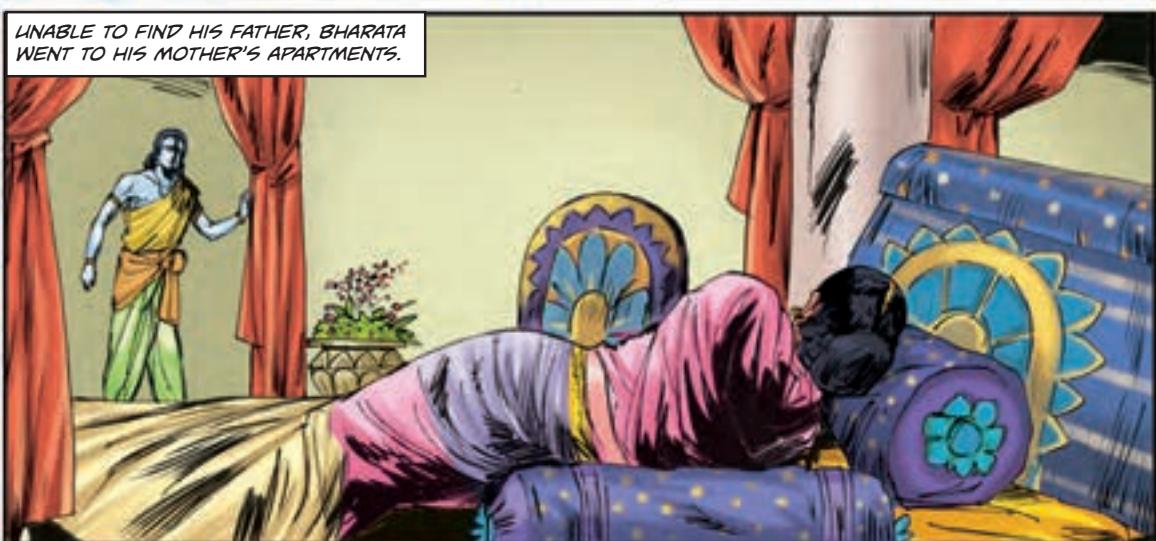
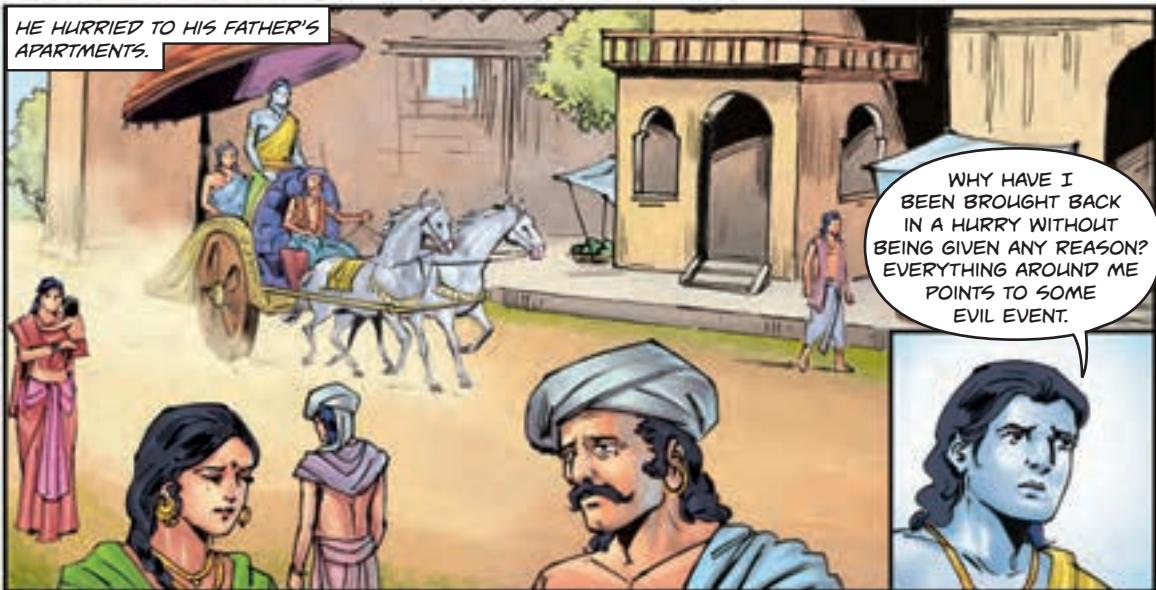


*NOW SUTLEJ

AT LAST, EARLY ONE MORNING, HE BEHELD AYODHYA.

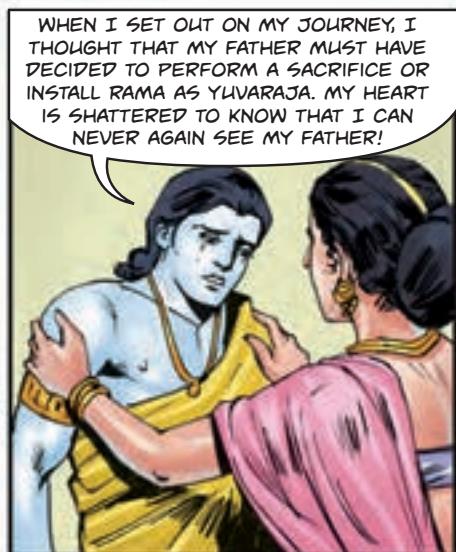


LIFE AND DEATH OF A KING





LIFE AND DEATH OF A KING



SURELY RAMA DOES NOT KNOW THAT I AM HOME, OR HE WOULD HAVE COME AND HUGGED ME. TELL HIM I AM HERE. I SHALL CLASP HIS FEET SINCE HE IS MY MASTER NOW. WHAT WERE THE KING'S LAST WORDS, MOTHER?



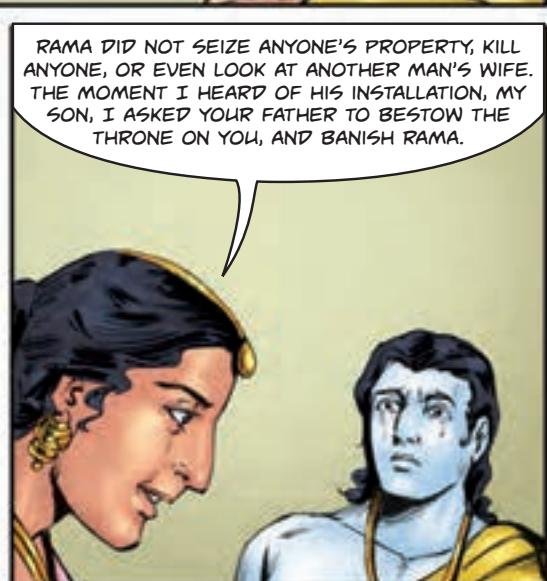
THAT WISE MONARCH, BOUND BY THE LAWS OF KAALAK*, DEPARTED FROM THIS WORLD CRYING: 'O RAMA, O SITA, O LAKSHMANA! FORTUNATE ARE THOSE WHO WILL SEE THEM RETURN!'



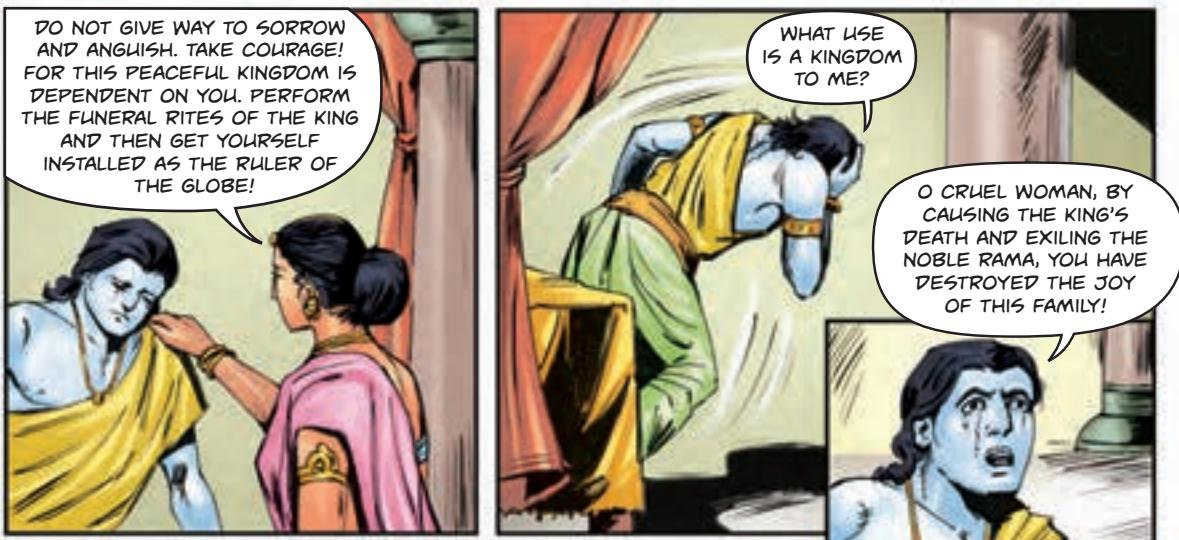
CLAD IN TREE BARK, THE PRINCE IS IN EXILE IN THE GREAT FOREST OF DANDAKA. SITA AND LAKSHMANA WENT WITH HIM.

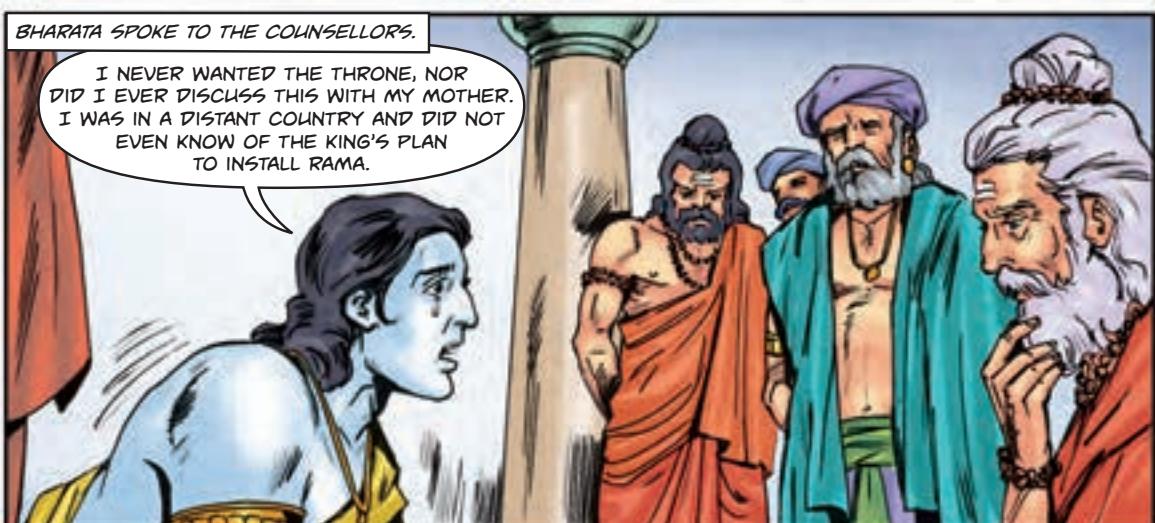
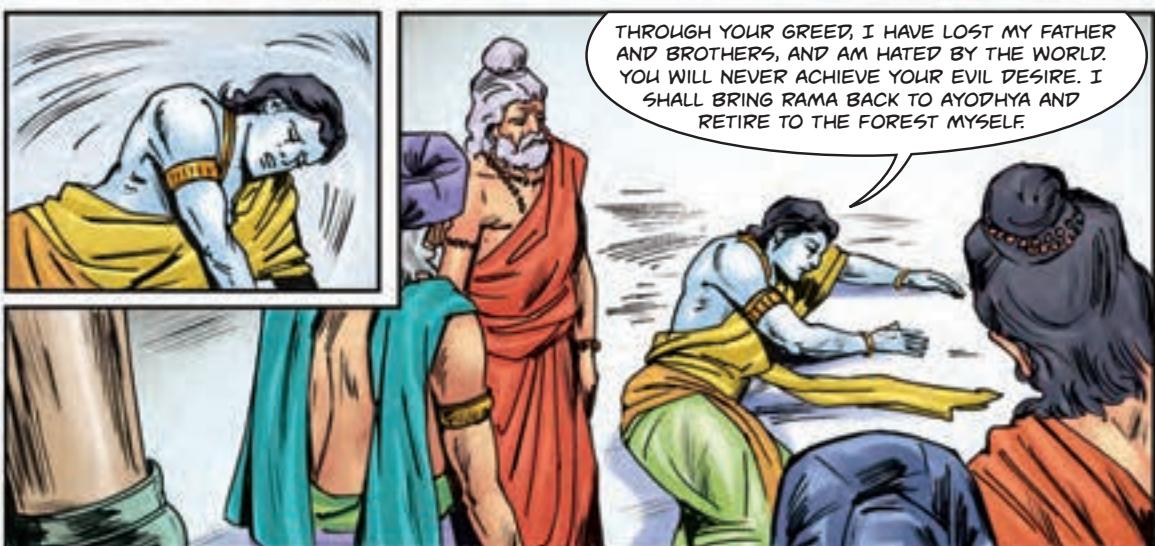
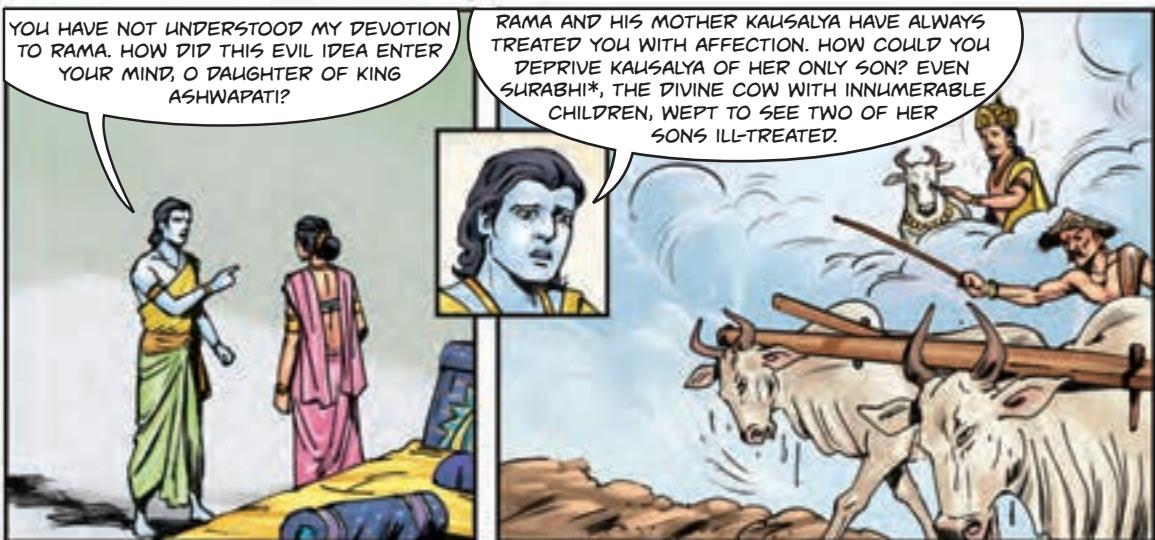
RAMA DID NOT SEIZE ANYONE'S PROPERTY, KILL ANYONE, OR EVEN LOOK AT ANOTHER MAN'S WIFE. THE MOMENT I HEARD OF HIS INSTALLATION, MY SON, I ASKED YOUR FATHER TO BESTOW THE THRONE ON YOU, AND BANISH RAMA.

BUT WHY?
RAMA COULD
NEVER HAVE DONE
ANYTHING WRONG!



*TIME





*A REFERENCE TO THE STORY OF INDRA AND SURABHI

LIFE AND DEATH OF A KING

IN KALISALYA'S APARTMENT -

THAT IS
BHARATA'S VOICE!
THE SON OF
CRUEL KAIKEYI
HAS
RETURNED!

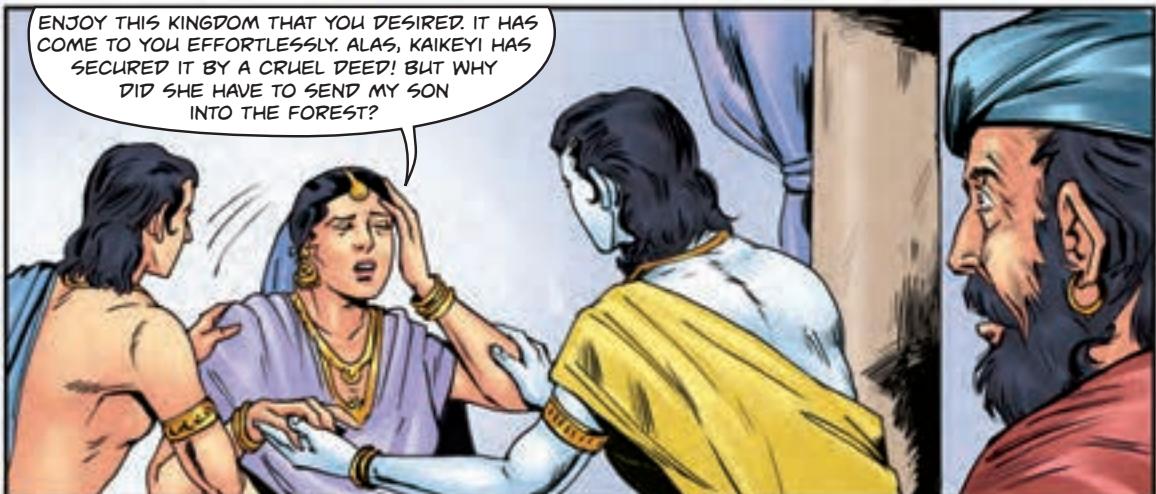
I DID NOT KNOW
THAT RAMA HAD
BEEN BANISHED!

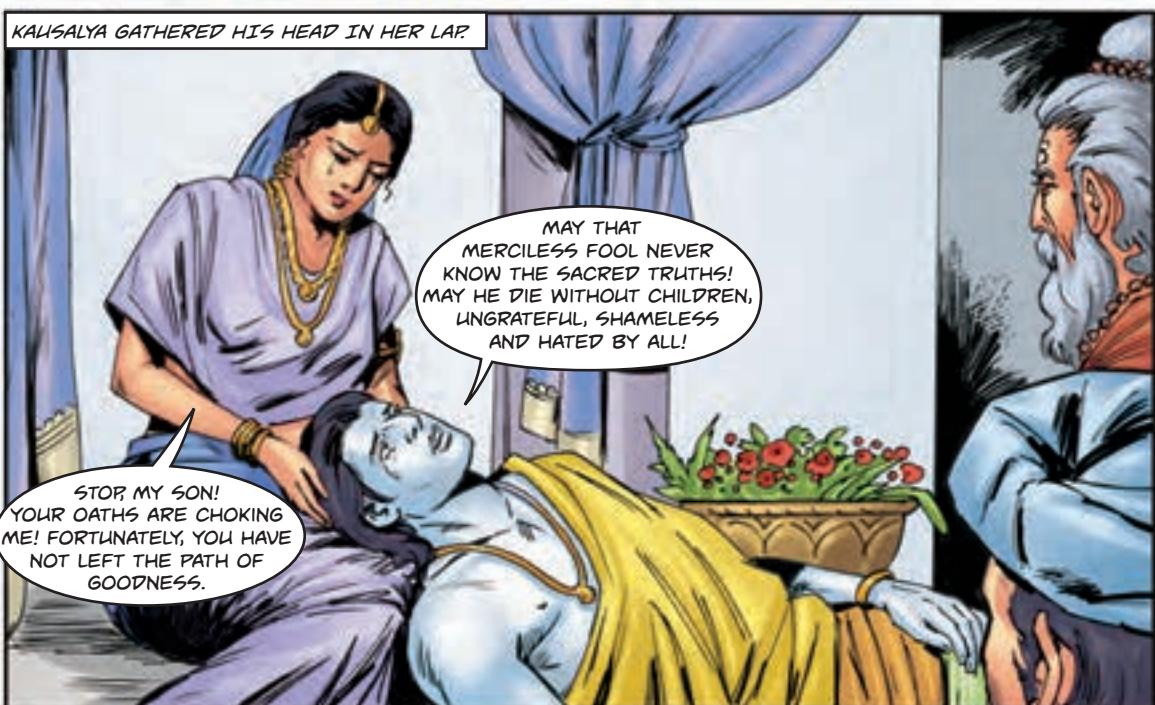
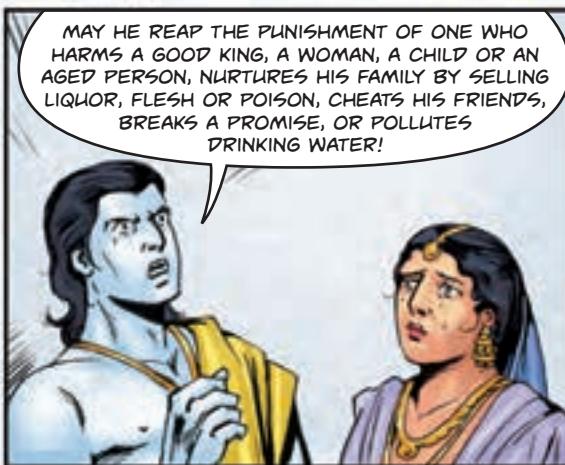


I MUST SEE
THAT FAR-SIGHTED
BHARATA.



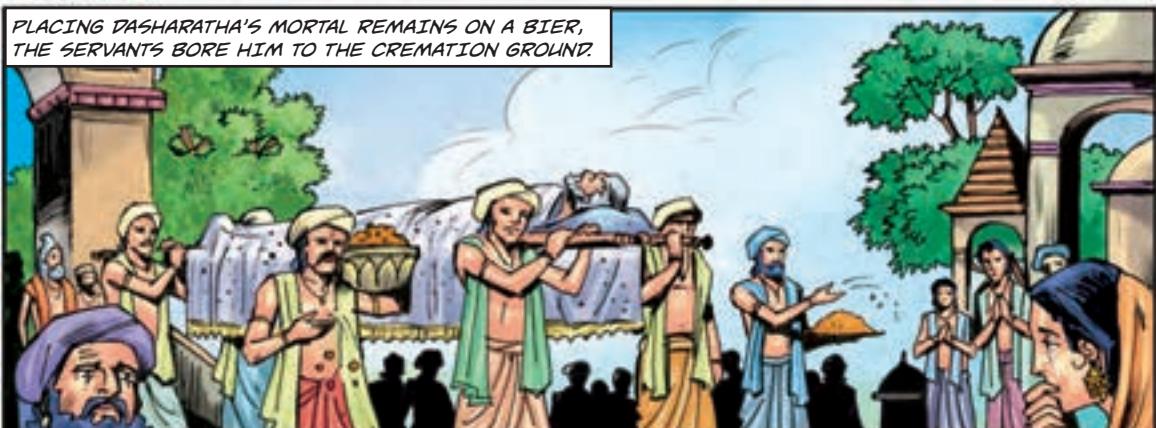
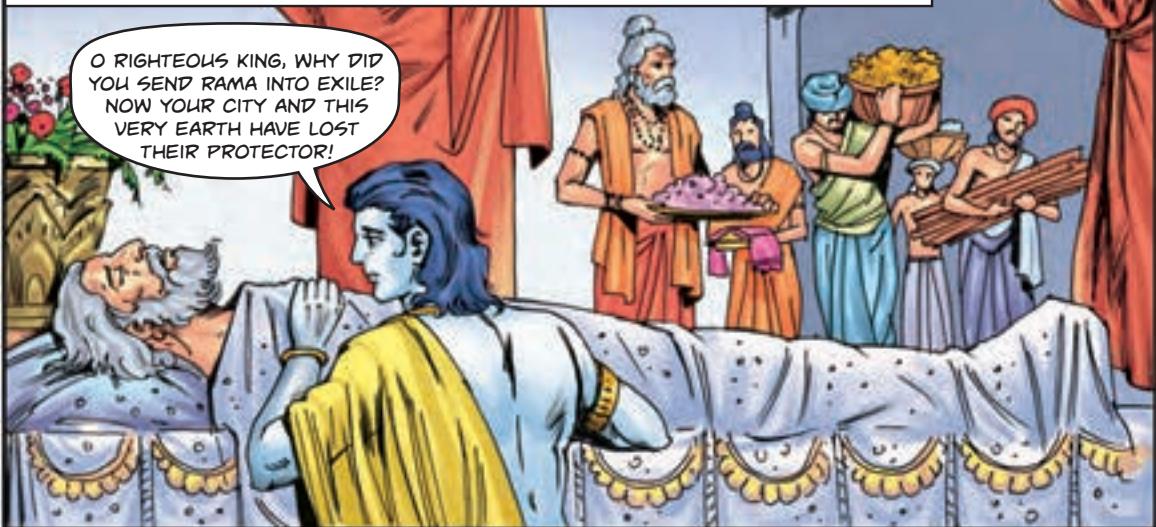
ENJOY THIS KINGDOM THAT YOU DESIRED. IT HAS
COME TO YOU EFFORTLESSLY. ALAS, KAIKEYI HAS
SECURED IT BY A CRUEL DEED! BUT WHY
DID SHE HAVE TO SEND MY SON
INTO THE FOREST?





LIFE AND DEATH OF A KING

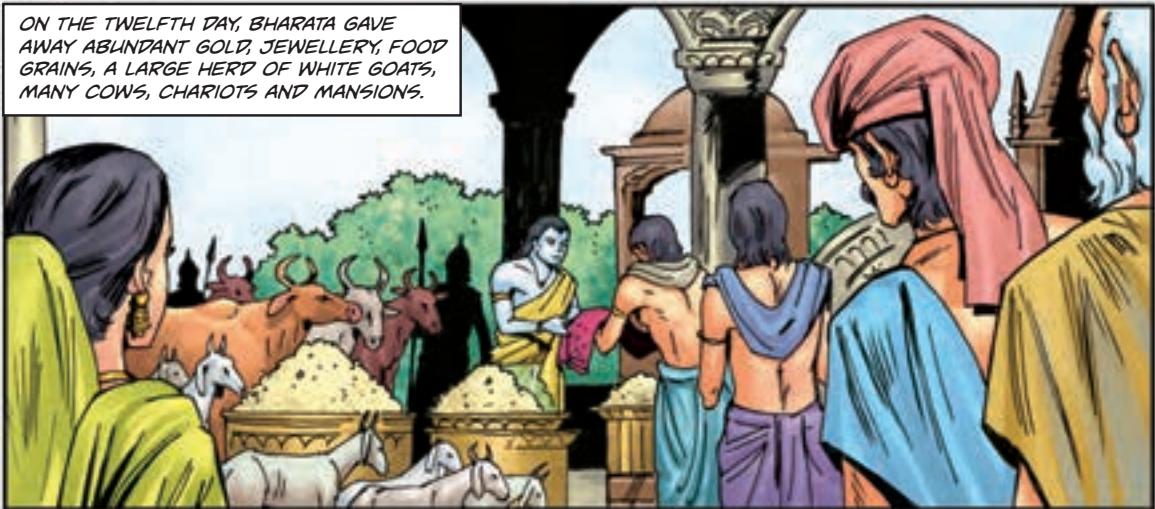
VASISHTHA CONSOLED BHARATA AND PERSUDED HIM TO BEGIN THE FUNERAL RITES.



FOR THE NEXT TEN DAYS, AYODHYA WAS IN DEEP MOURNING.



ON THE TWELFTH DAY, BHARATA GAVE AWAY ABUNDANT GOLD, JEWELLERY, FOOD GRAINS, A LARGE HERD OF WHITE GOATS, MANY COWS, CHARIOTS AND MANSIONS.



ON THE THIRTEENTH DAY -



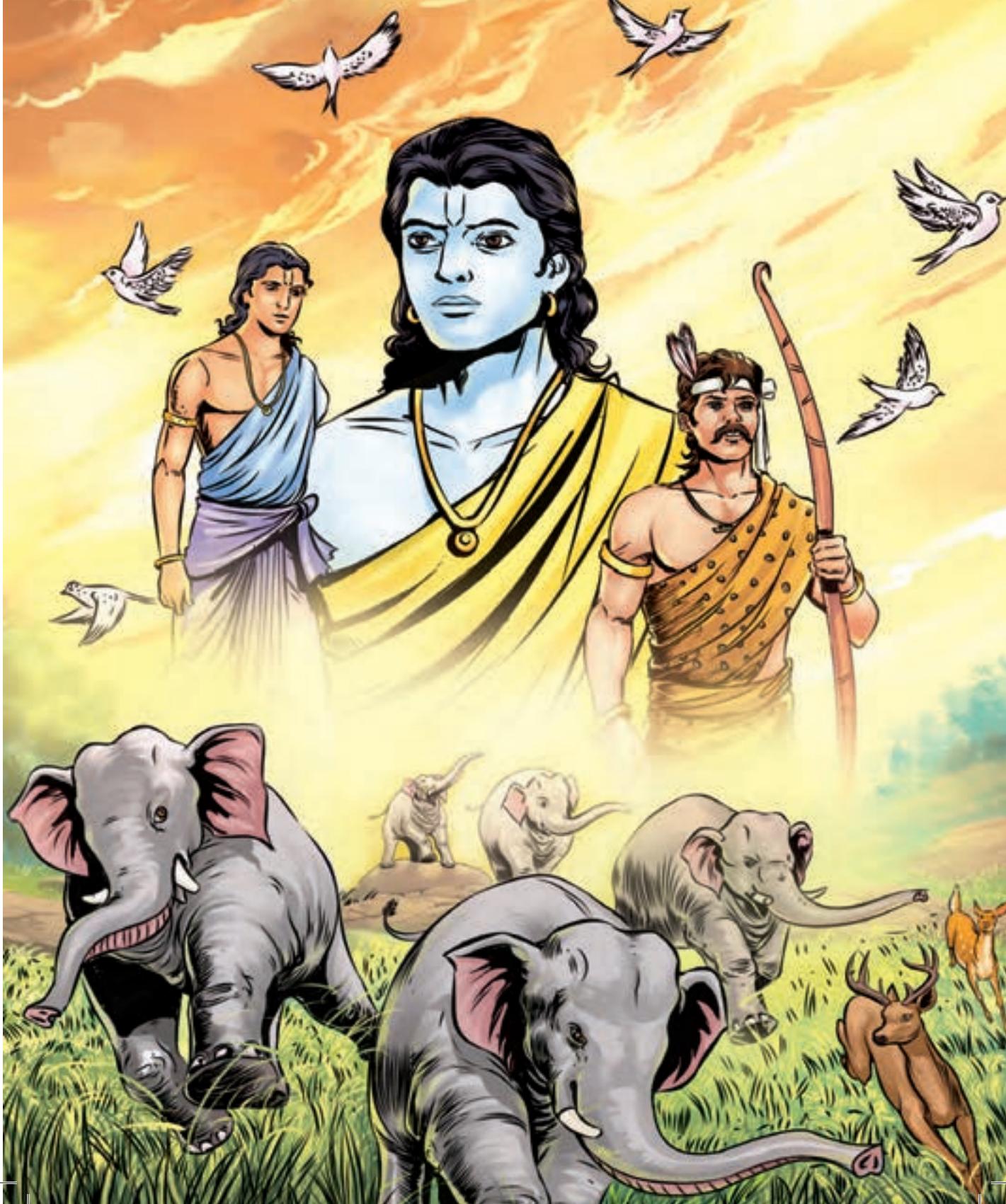
VASISHTHA AND SUMANTRA COMFORTED THE BROTHERS.

ALL LIVING BEINGS
HAVE TO FACE THE THREE
PAIRS OF OPPOSITES - BIRTH AND
DEATH, PAIN AND PLEASURE,
GAIN AND LOSS.

LEARN
TO ACCEPT
THESE REALITIES.
TAKE HEART AND
COMPLETE THE
CEREMONIES.



BHARATA'S RESOLVE



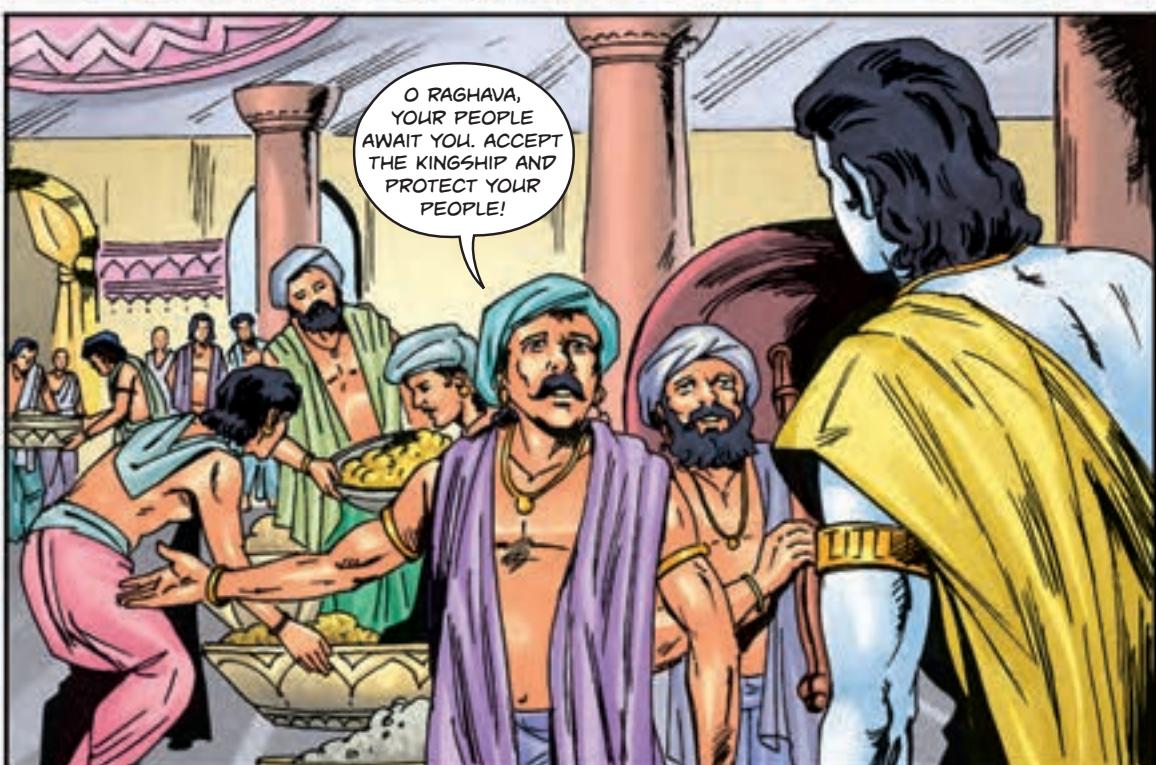
BHARATA AND SHATRUGHNA HAD COMPLETED ALL THE FUNERAL RITES FOR THEIR FATHER.



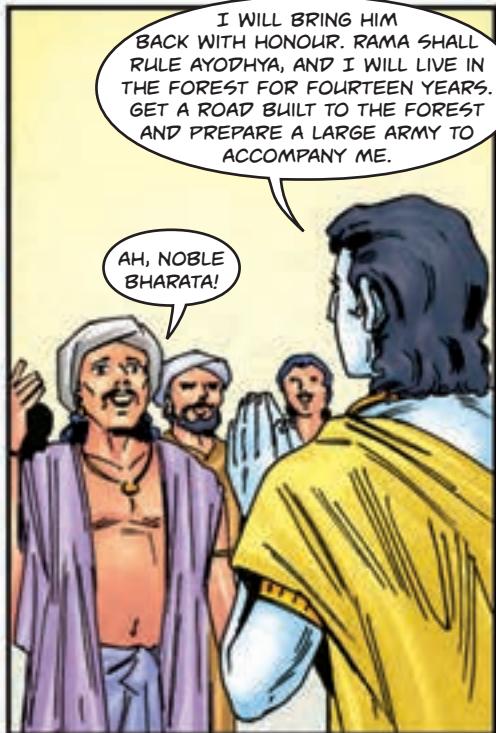
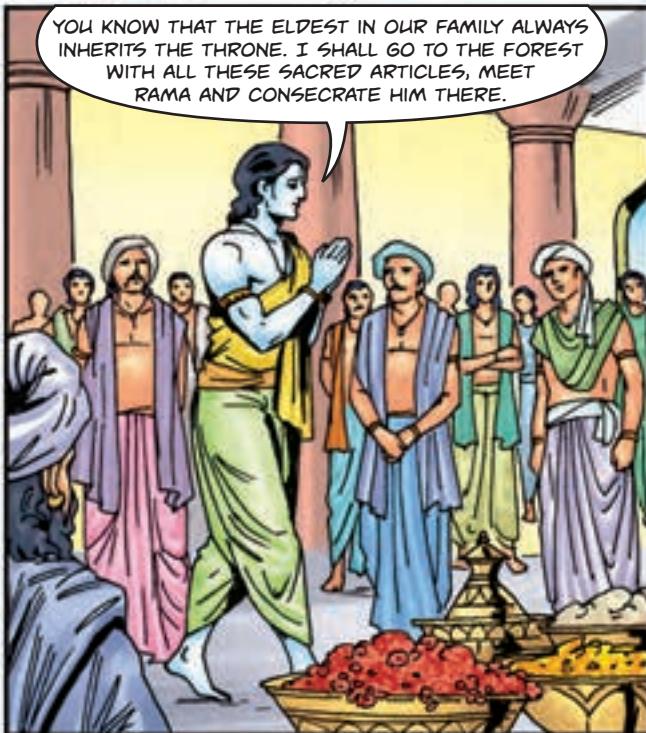
BHARATA'S RESOLVE



THE NEXT DAY, THE KING'S COUNSELLORS CAME WITH SEVERAL CITIZENS TO MEET BHARATA.



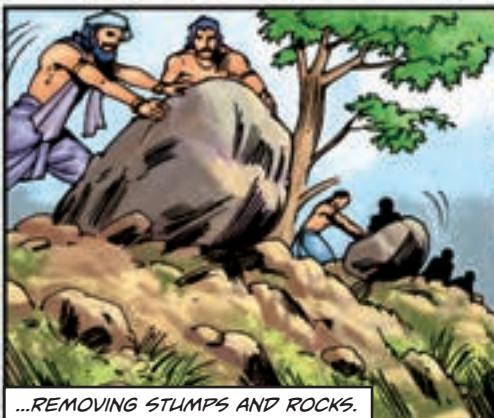
BHARATA'S RESOLVE



ENGINEERS, GUARDS, WATER DIVINERS, WELL-DIGGERS, ARCHITECTS, LABOURERS AND CARPENTERS, TREE CUTTERS, COOKS, MASONS, CANE WORKERS, LEATHER CRAFTSMEN AND GUIDE SET FORTH JOYFULLY WITH THEIR TOOLS TO PREPARE THE WAY.



THEY HEWED OUT A PATH...



...REMOVING STUMPS AND ROCKS.



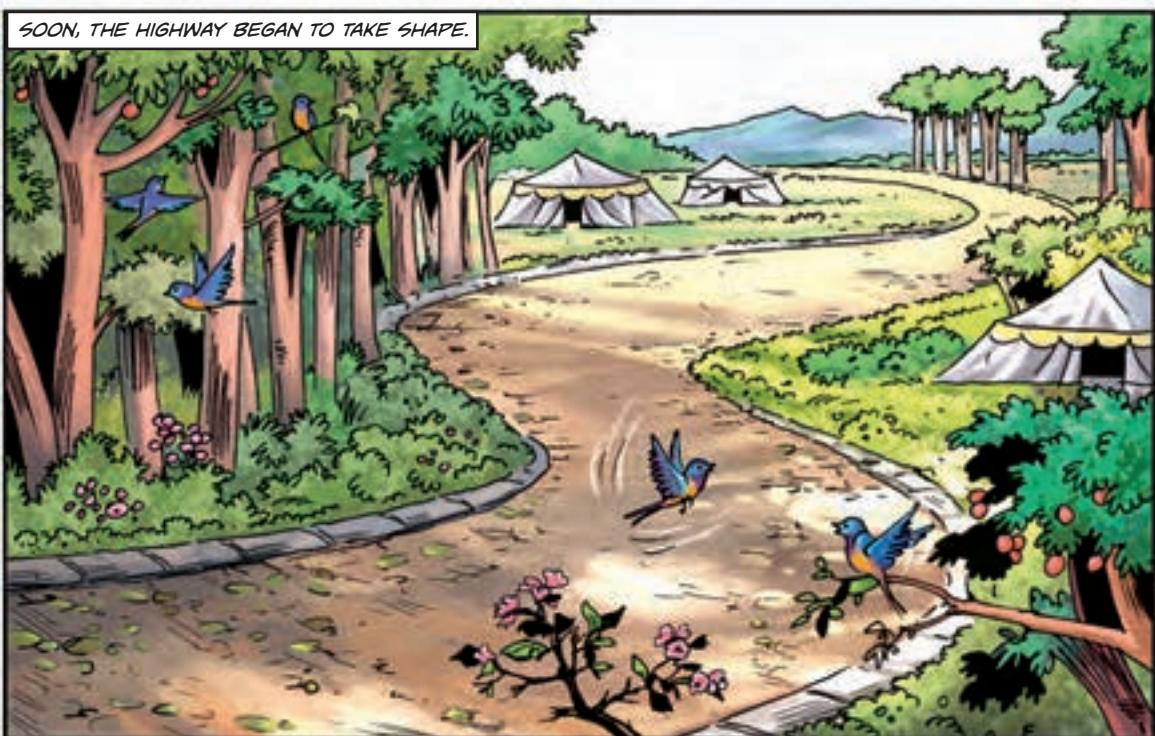
THEY PLANTED TREES IN BARREN AREAS...



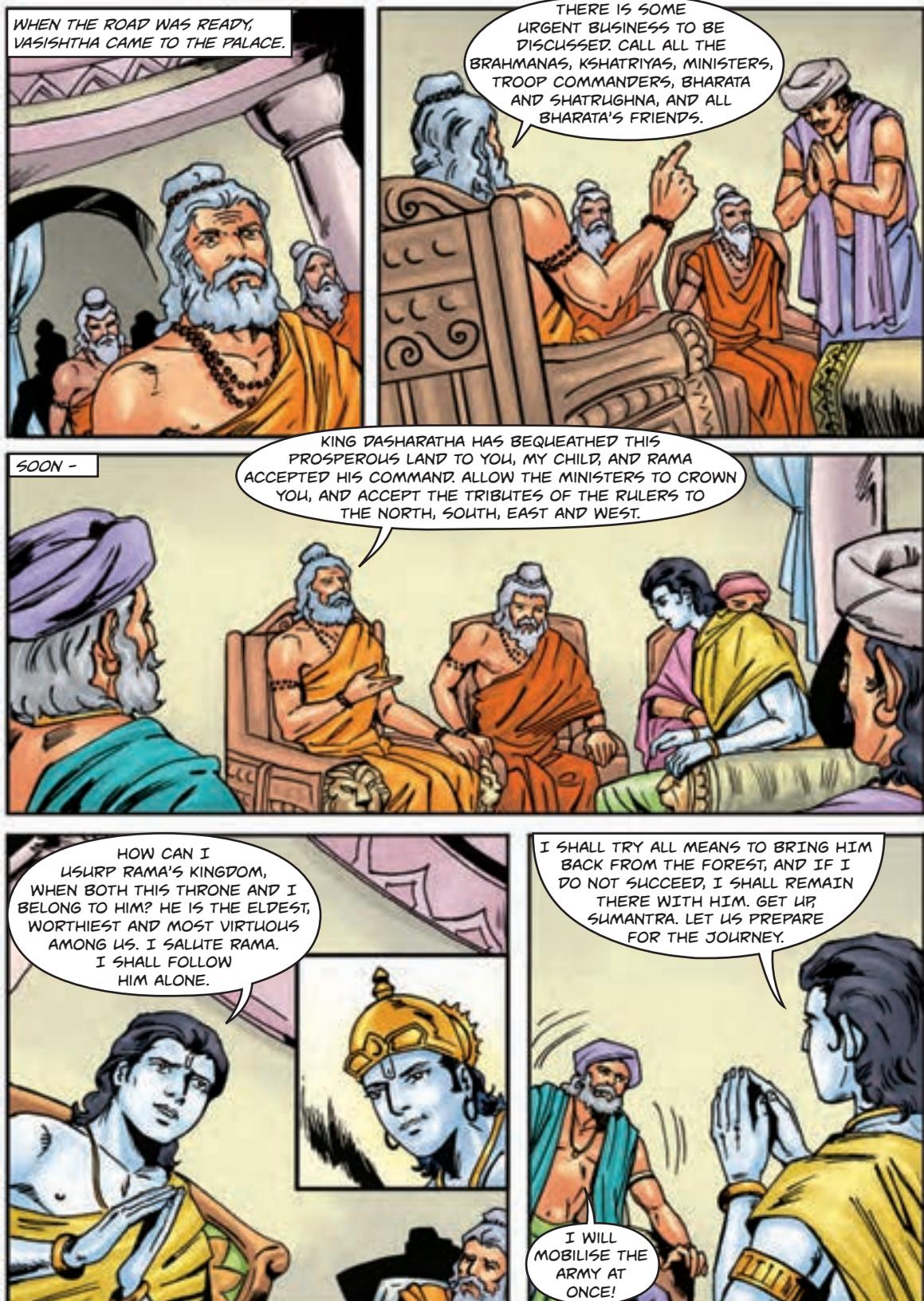
...AND LEVELLED THE LAND.



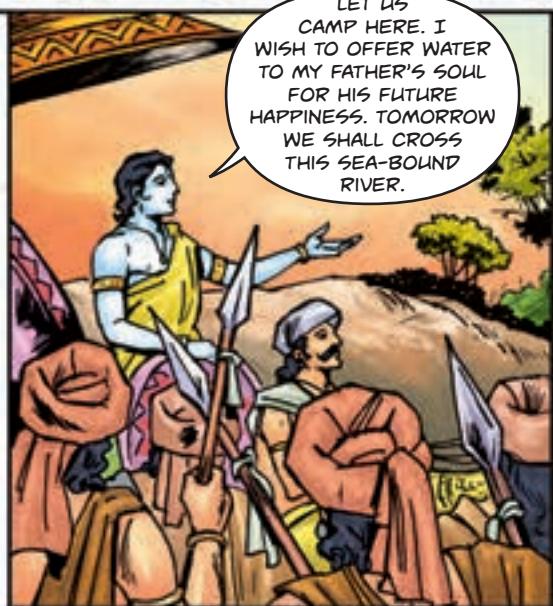
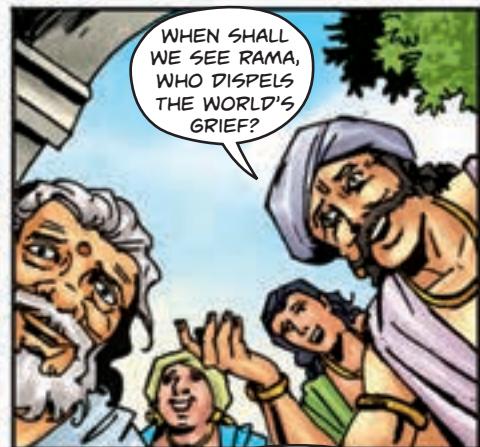
SOON, THE HIGHWAY BEGAN TO TAKE SHAPE.



BHARATA'S RESOLVE

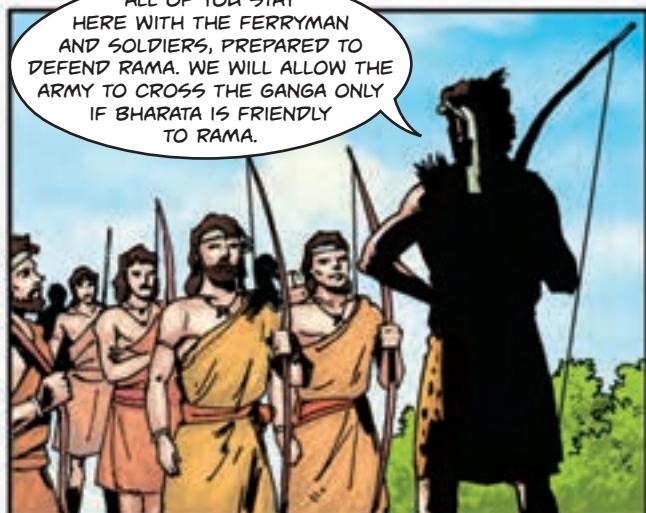
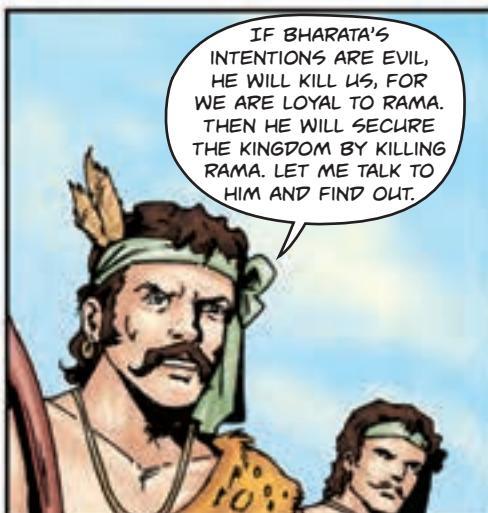
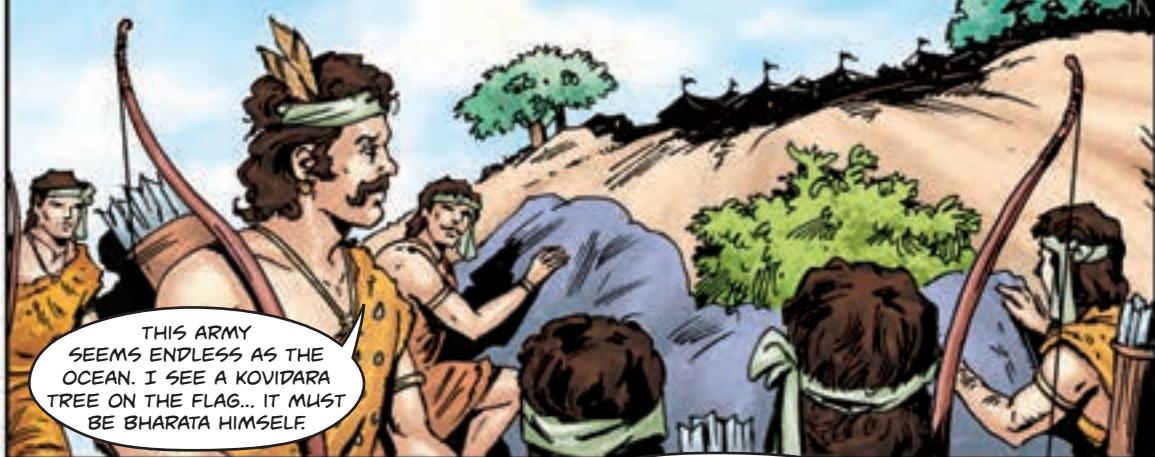


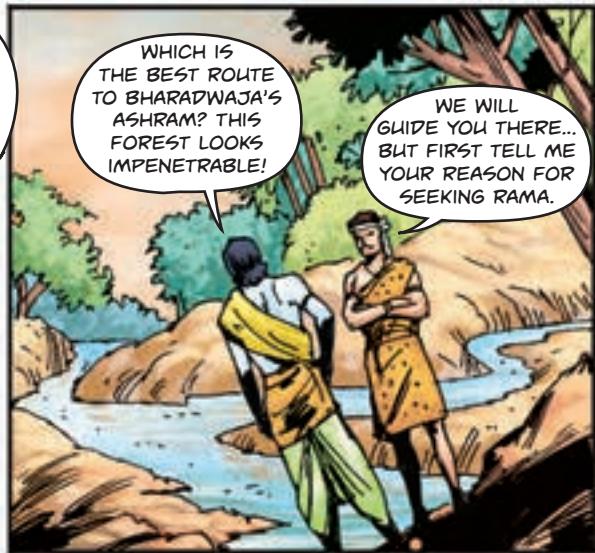
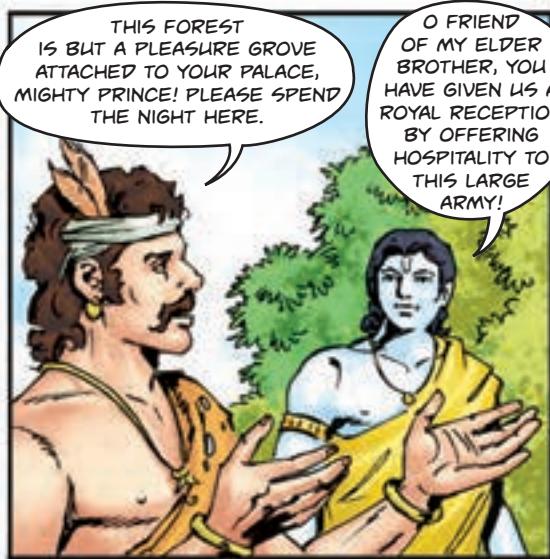
AYODHYA WAS FULL OF HAPPY BUSTLE AS THE ARMY AND THE CITIZENS GOT READY TO GO AND BRING RAMA BACK. AT DAYBREAK, THE FAMILY PRIESTS AND COUNSELLORS LED THE WAY...



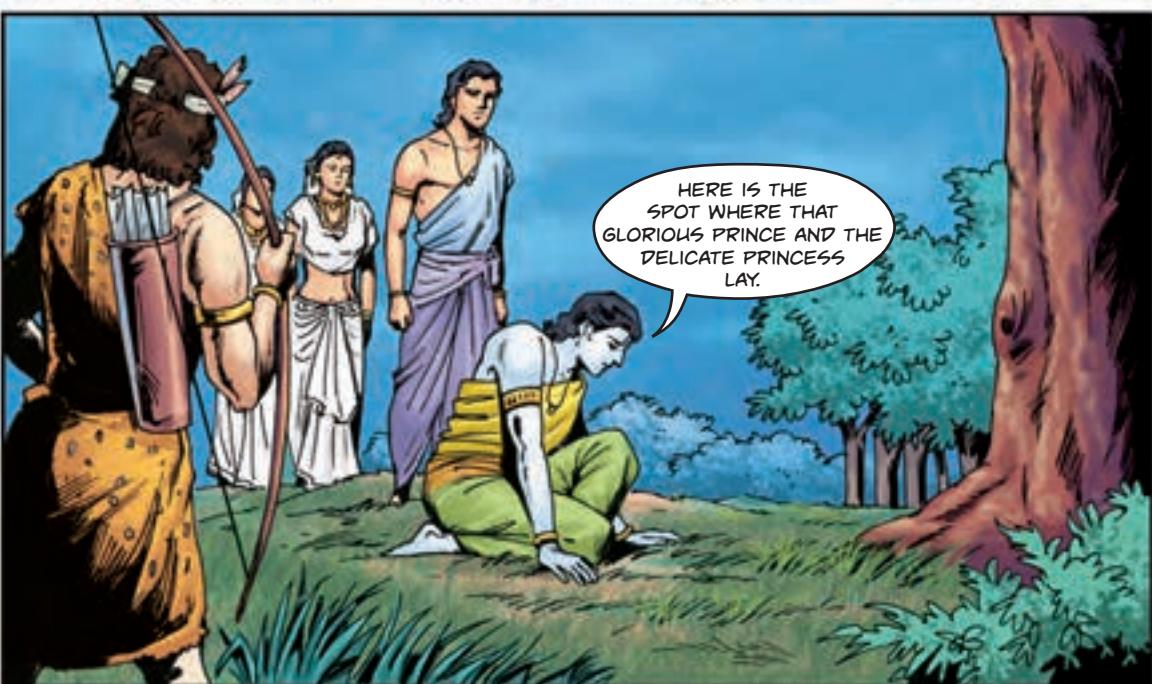
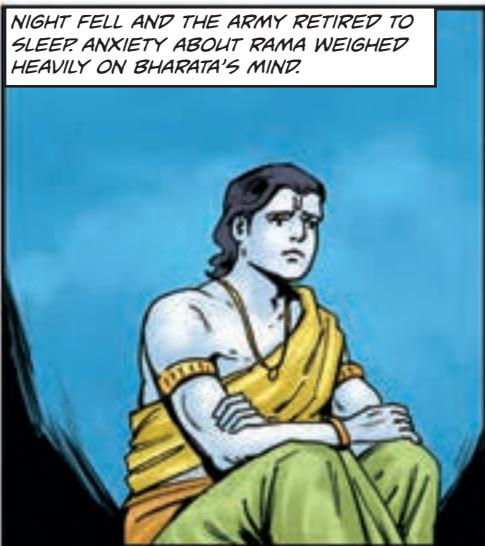
BHARATA'S RESOLVE

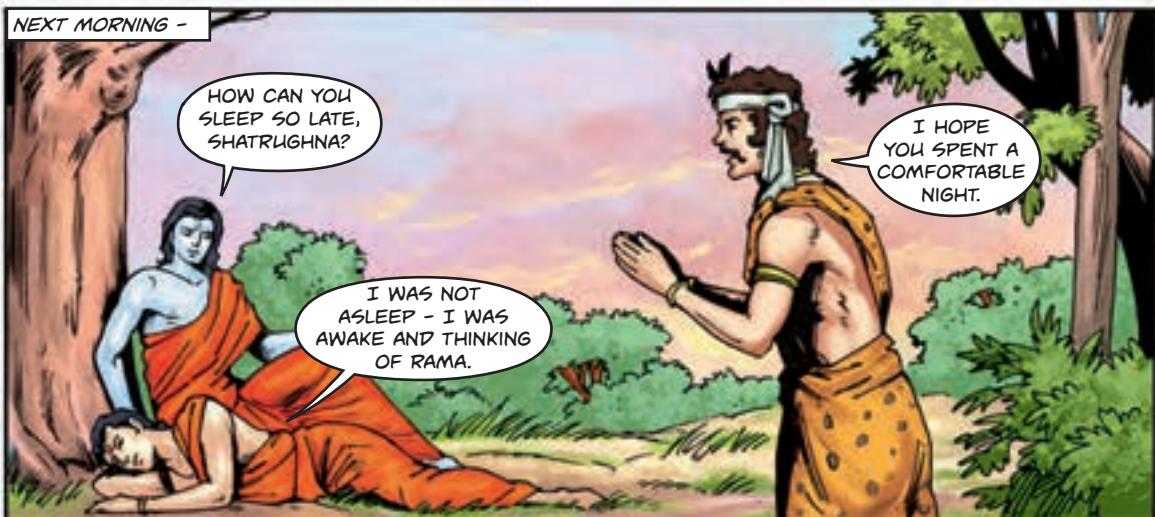
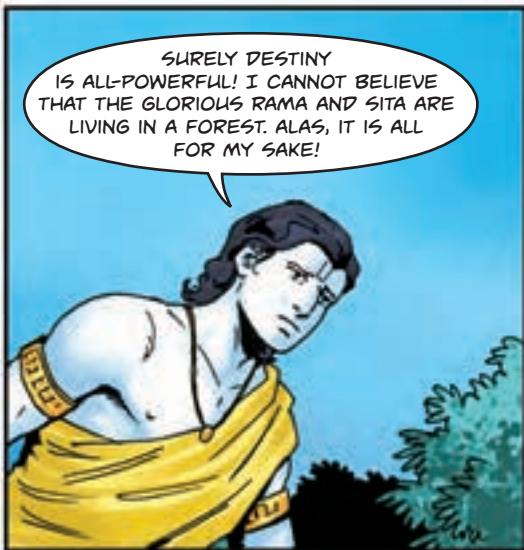
WHEN GUHA, THE KING OF NISHADA, SAW THE ARMY CAMPING ALONG THE GANGA -





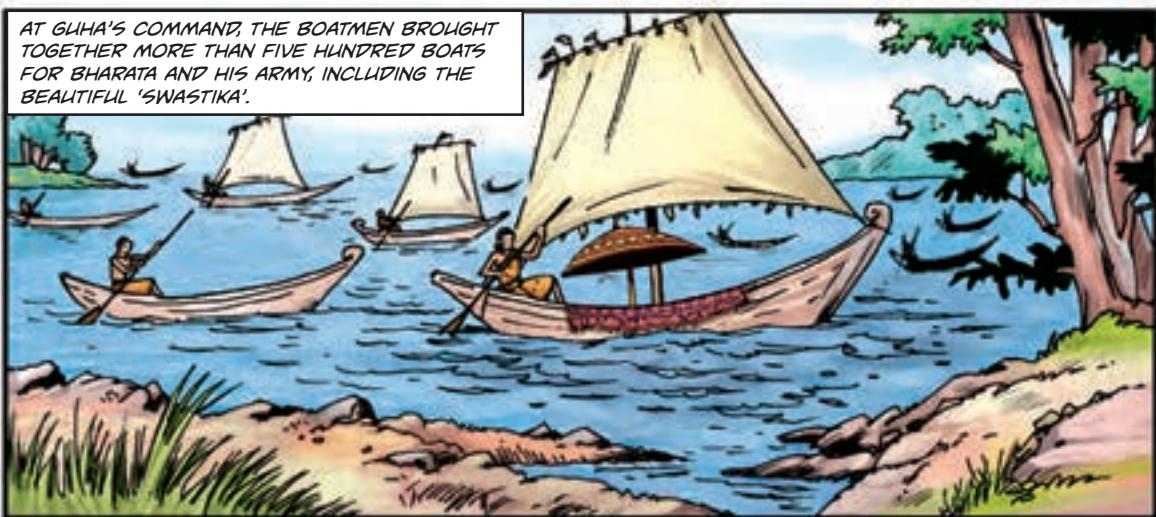
BHARATA'S RESOLVE



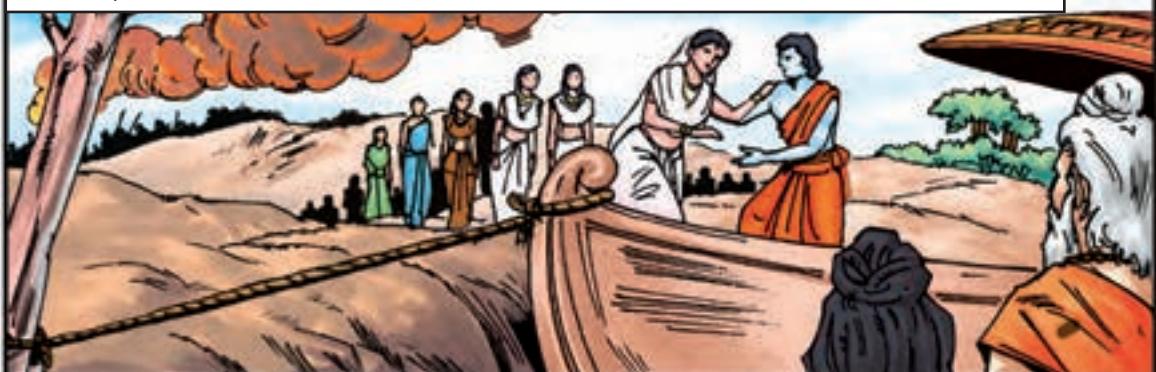


BHARATA'S RESOLVE

AT GLIHA'S COMMAND, THE BOATMEN BROUGHT TOGETHER MORE THAN FIVE HUNDRED BOATS FOR BHARATA AND HIS ARMY, INCLUDING THE BEAUTIFUL 'SWASTIKA'.



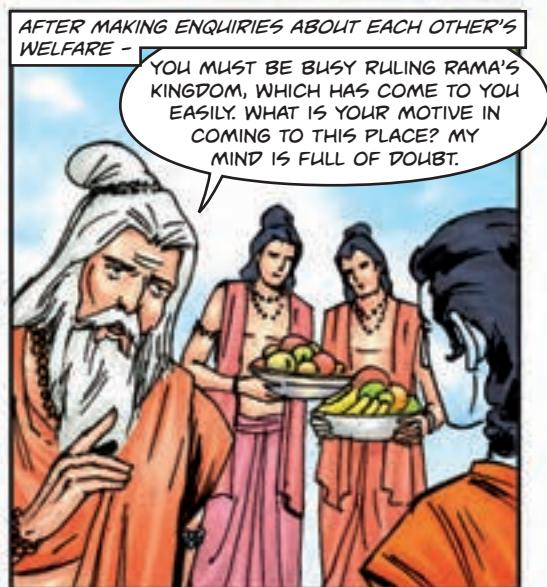
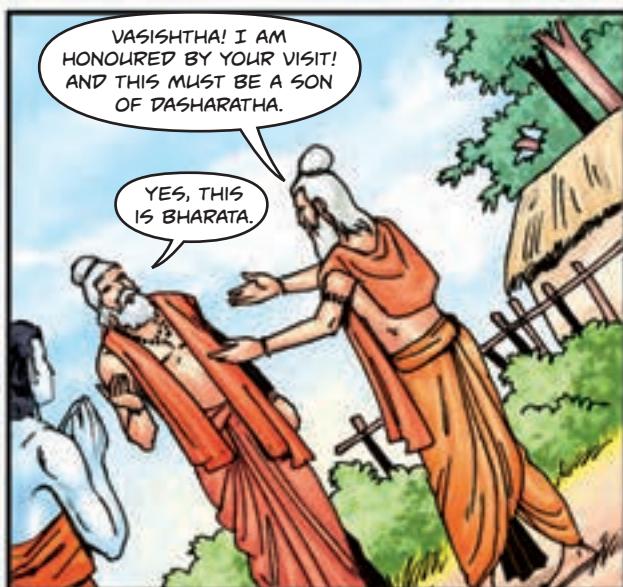
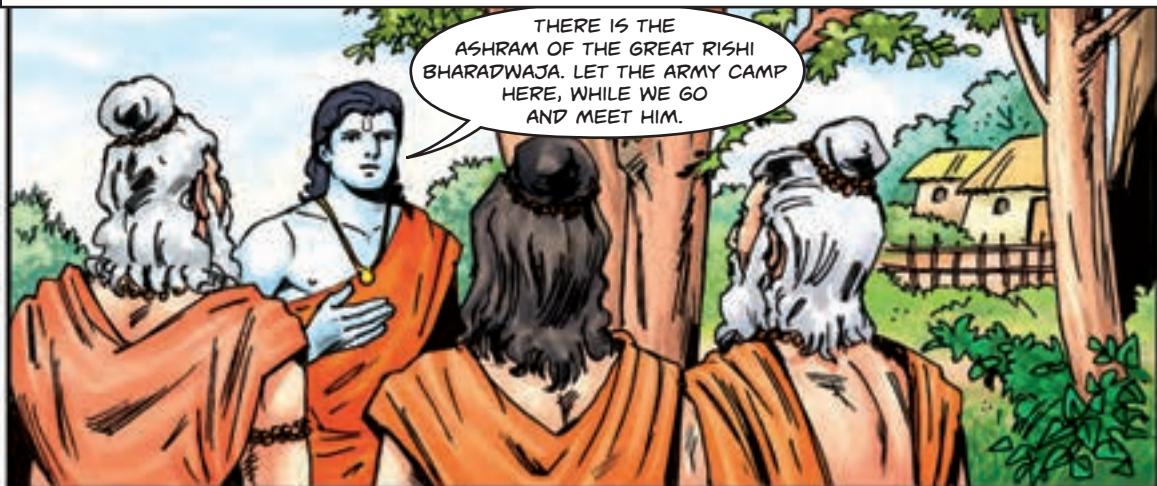
AS USUAL, THE ARMY SET FIRE TO THE TEMPORARY SHELTERS BEFORE THEY BOARDED THE BOATS.



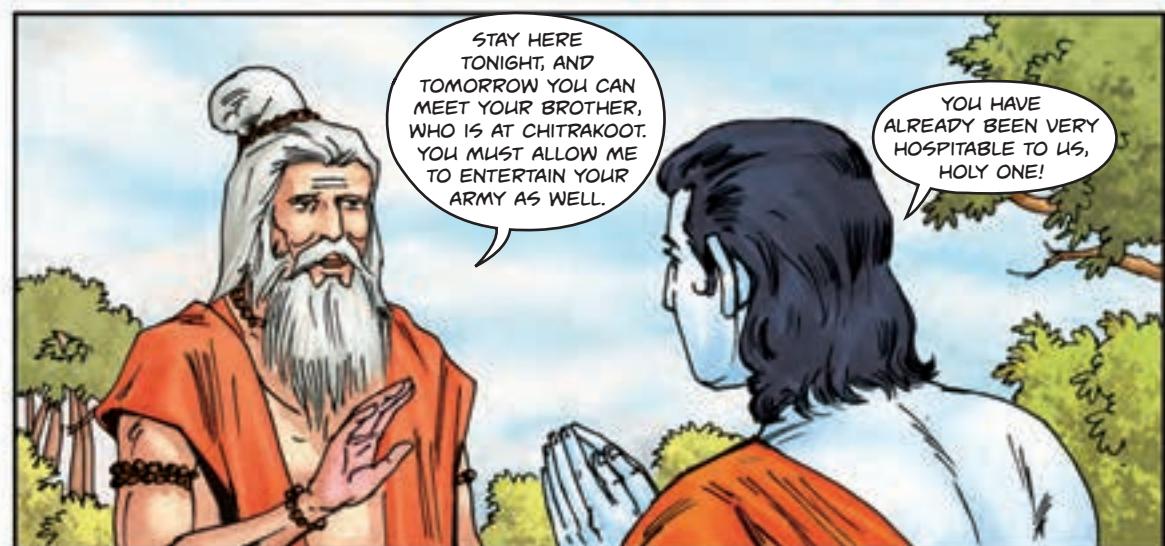
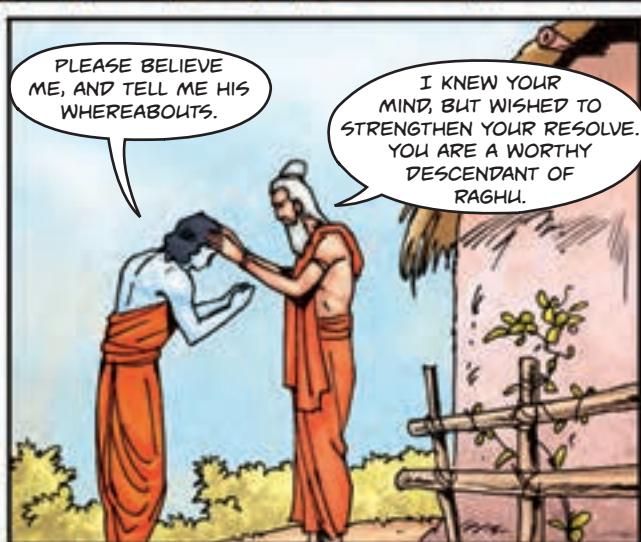
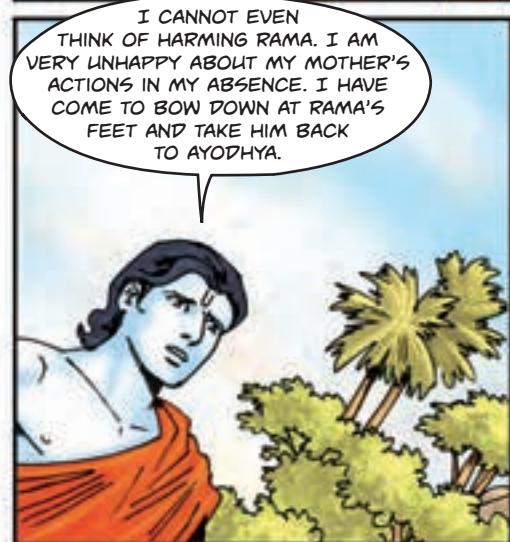
THEN THEY SET OFF ACROSS THE RIVER.

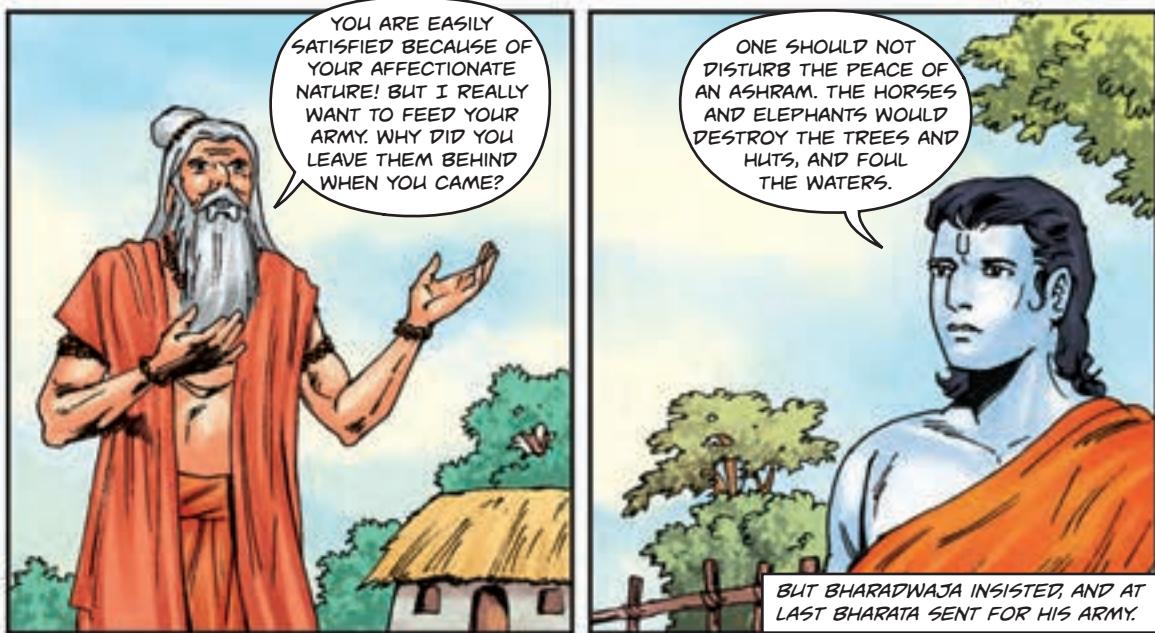


AFTER CROSSING THE GANGA, THE ARMY BEGAN TO MARCH THROUGH THE BEAUTIFUL FOREST TOWARDS PRAYAG.



BHARATA'S RESOLVE





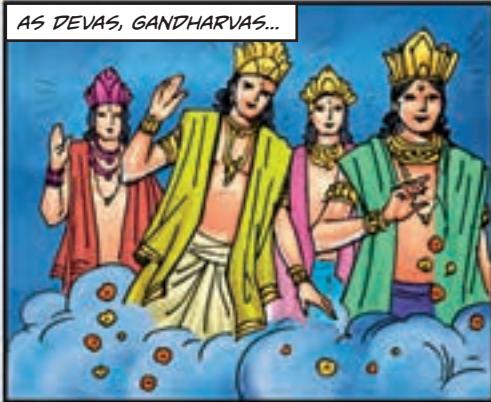
BUT BHARADWAJA INSISTED, AND AT LAST BHARATA SENT FOR HIS ARMY.



*INDRA, YAMA, VARUNA AND KUBERA

BHARATA'S RESOLVE

AS DEVAS, GANDHARVAS...



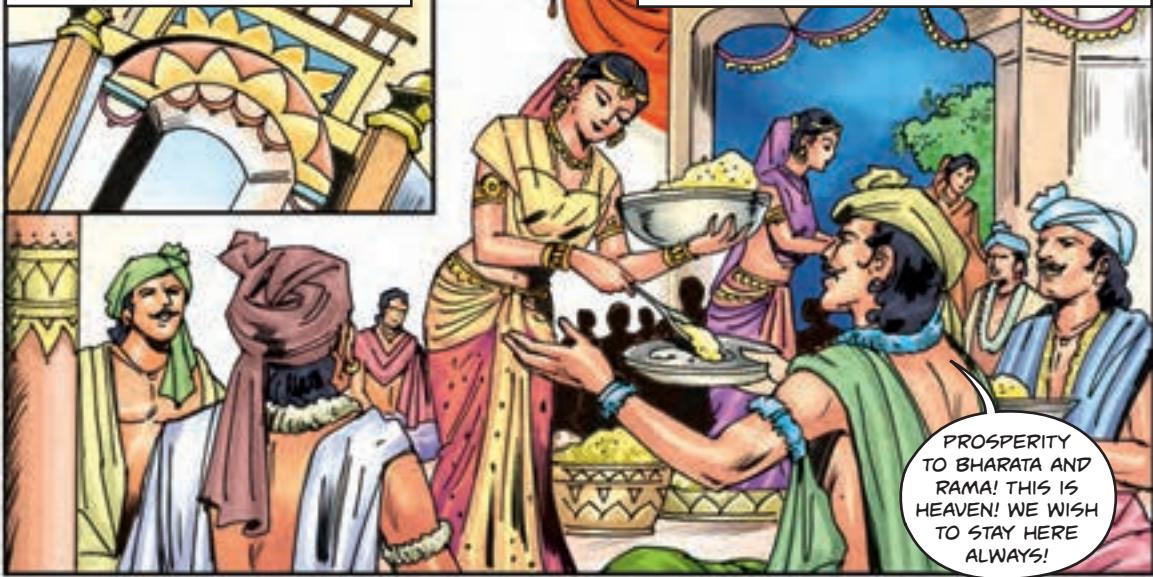
...AND APSARAS
FILLED THE ASHRAM...



...A MAGNIFICENT PALACE APPEARED...



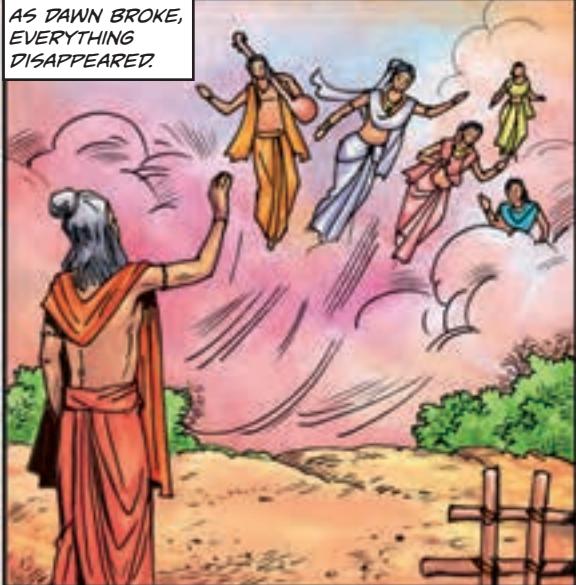
...WHERE THE ARMY WAS ENTERTAINED ROYALLY.

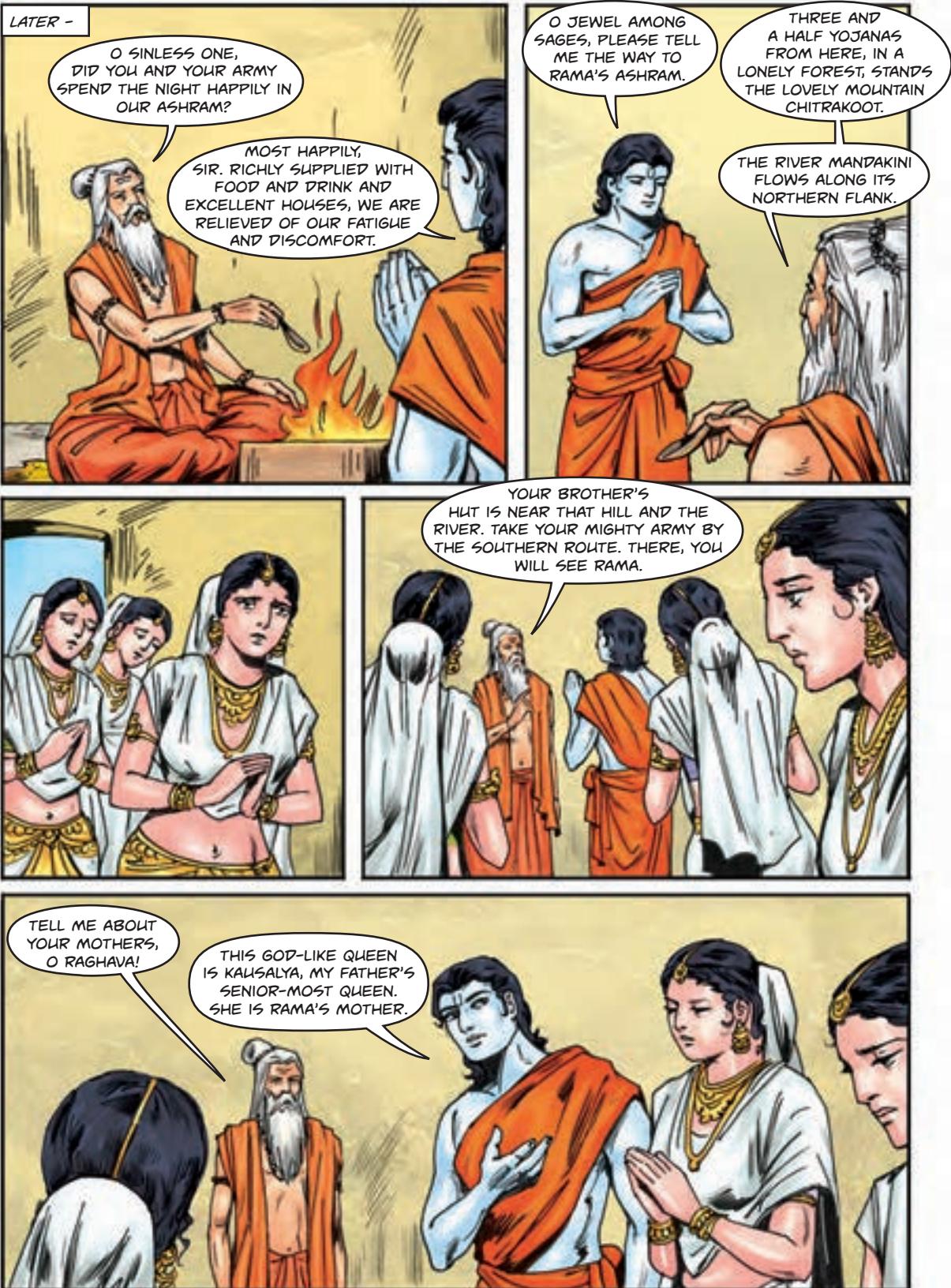


IN THE PALACE, BHARATA SAT ON A MINISTER'S CHAIR LEAVING THE THRONE EMPTY FOR RAMA.

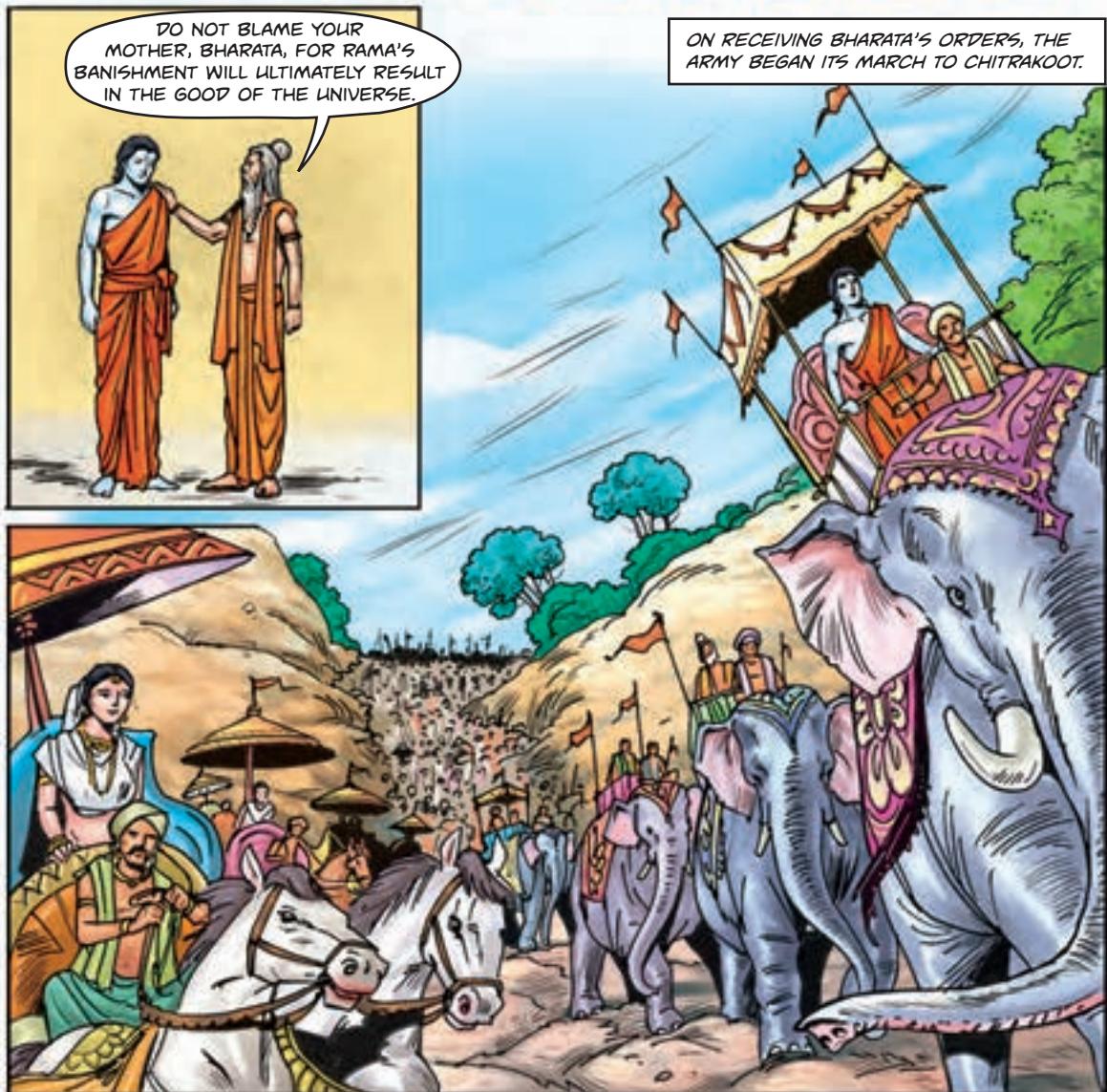
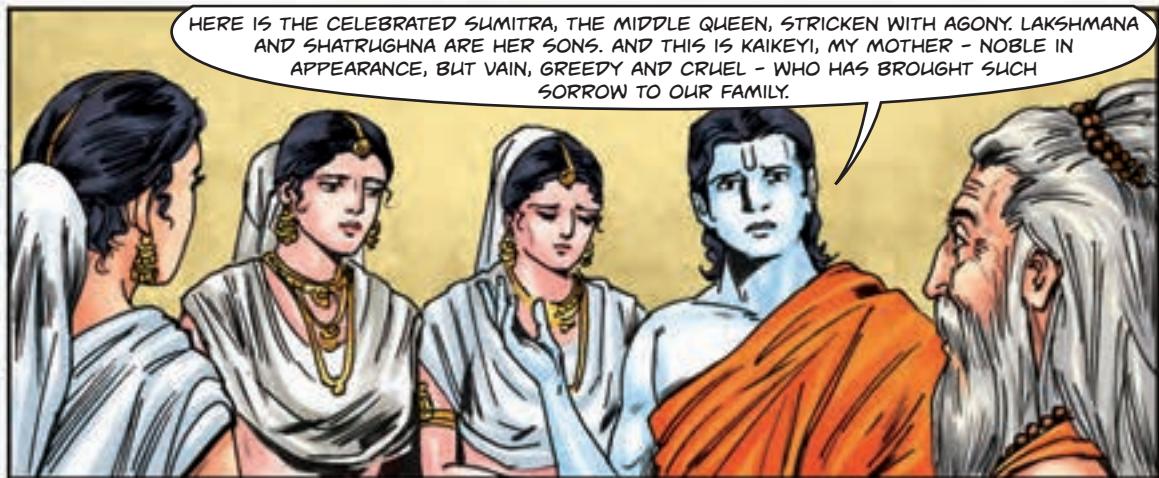


AS DAWN BROKE,
EVERYTHING
DISAPPEARED.

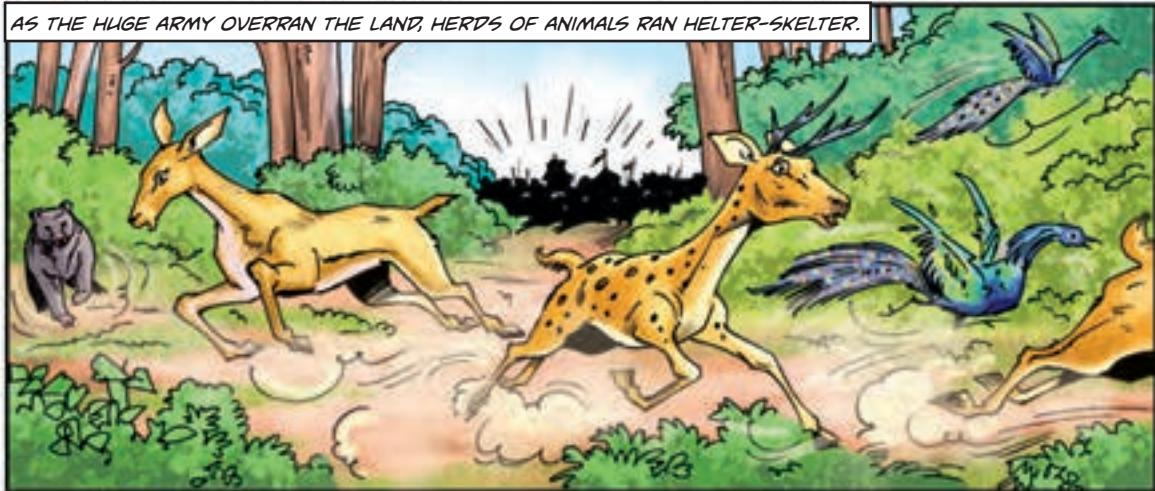




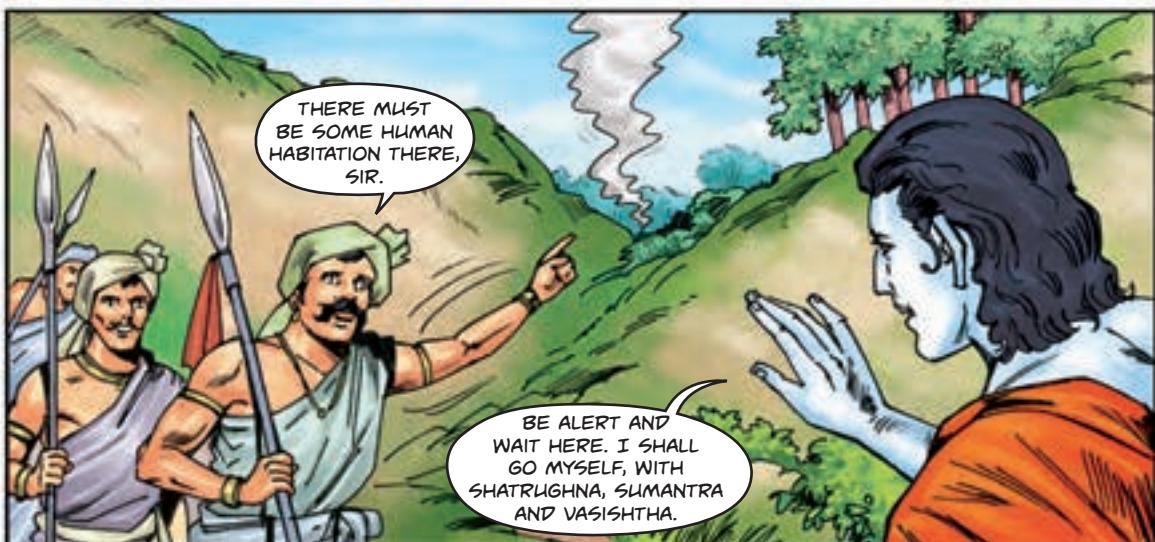
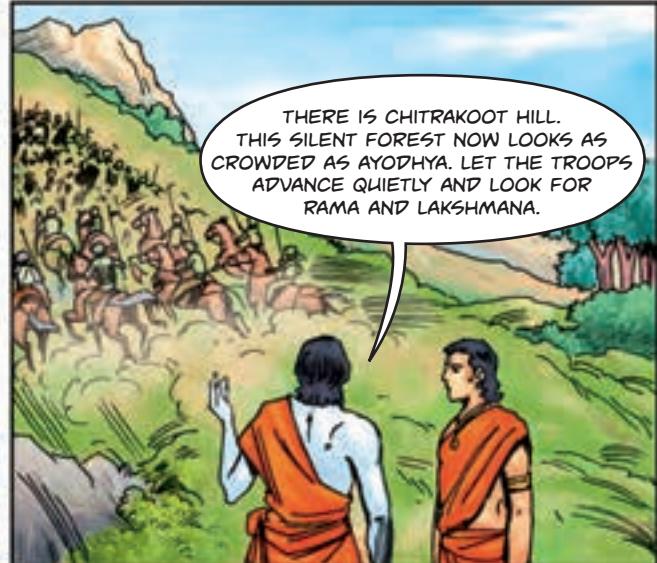
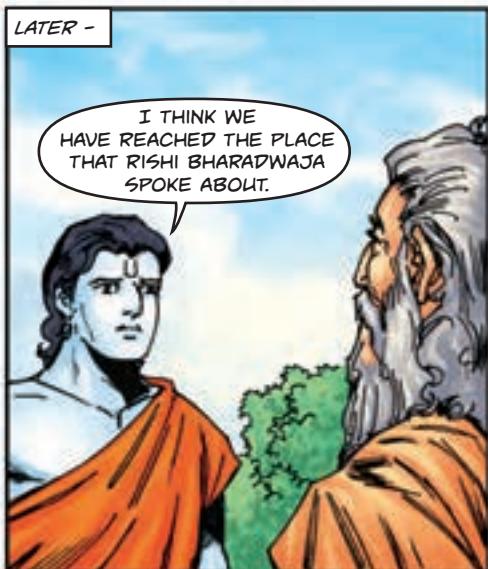
BHARATA'S RESOLVE



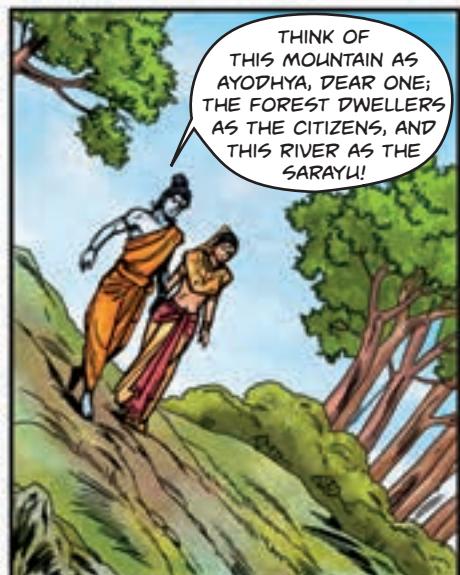
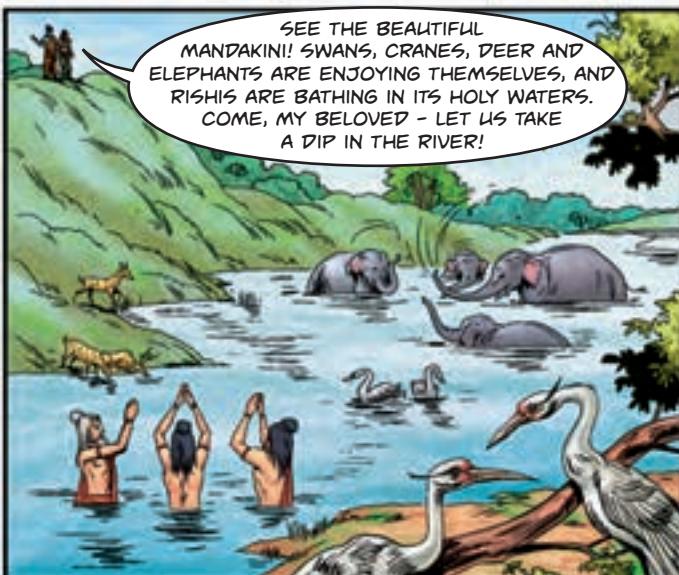
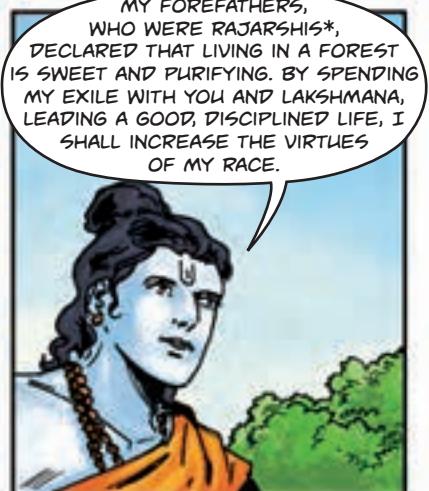
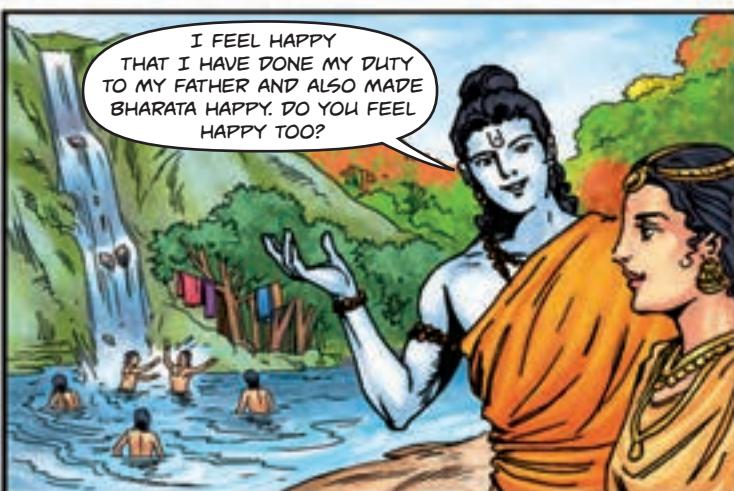
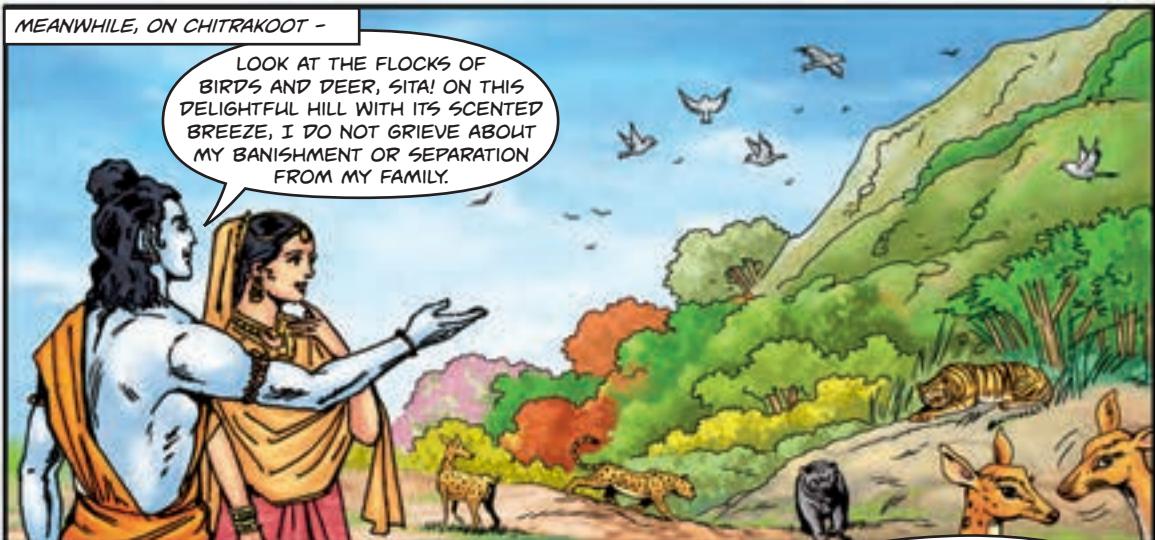
AS THE HUGE ARMY OVERRAN THE LAND, HERDS OF ANIMALS RAN HELTER-SKELTER.



LATER -

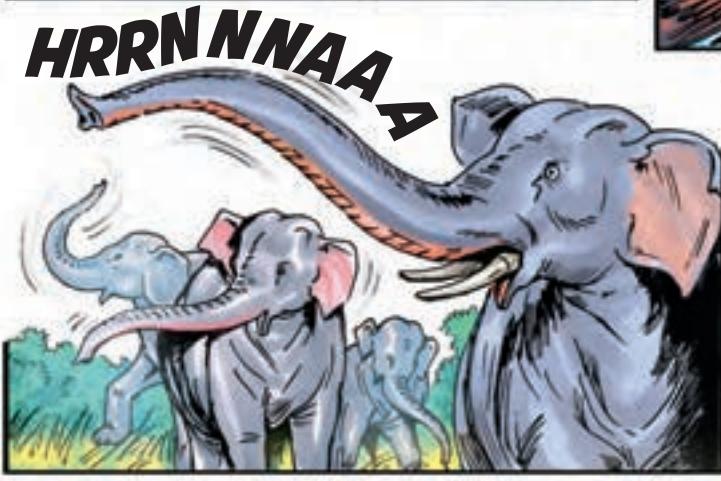


MEANWHILE, ON CHITRAKOOT -



*ROYAL SAGES

ONE DAY SOON AFTER -



The forests that Rama passed through were full of animals and birds. Here are some of the flora and fauna he would have seen during his journey.



Flying Squirrel

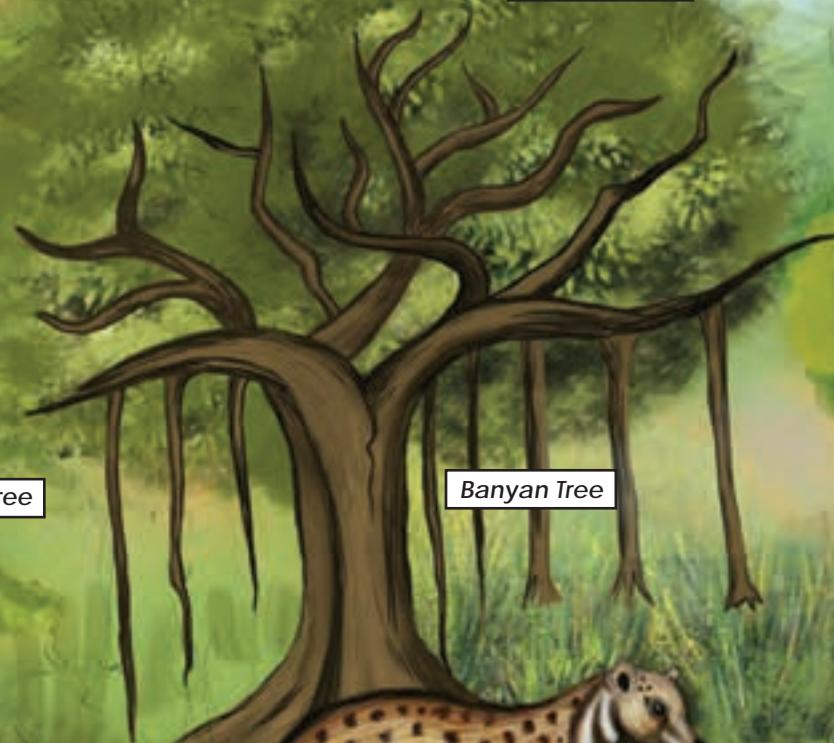


Scarlet Minivet

Deodar Tree



Bengal
Florican



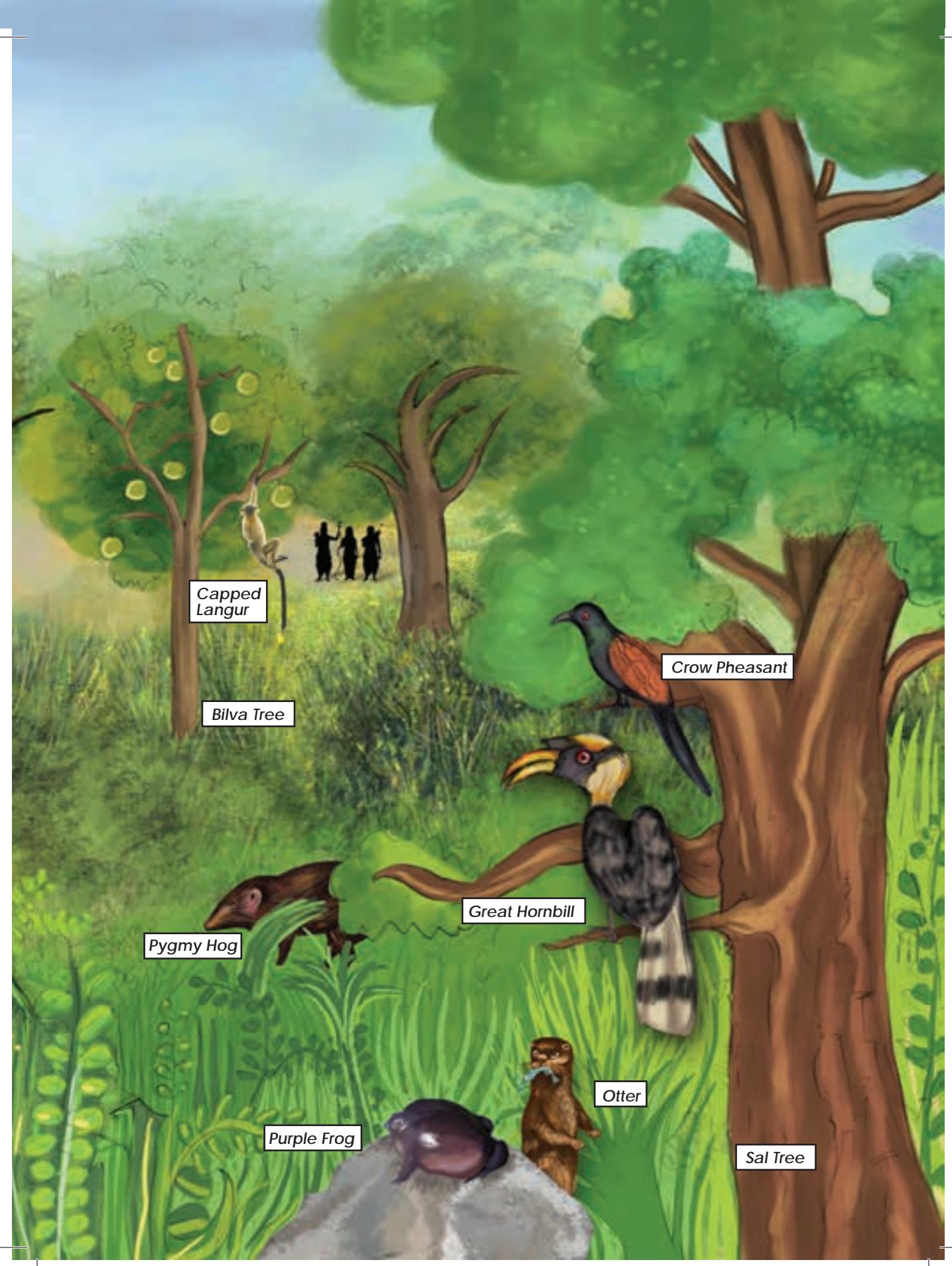
Banyan Tree



Spotted Civet

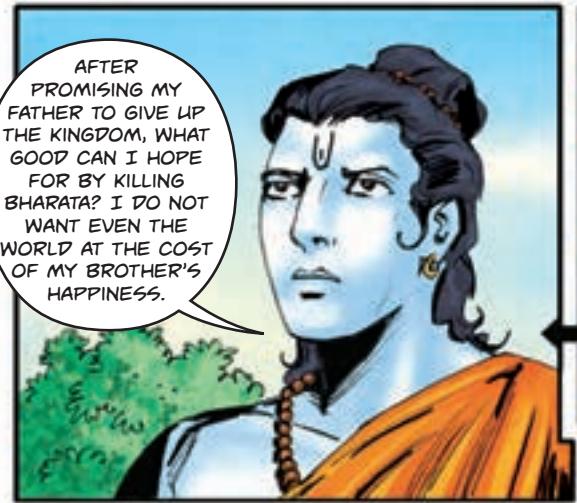


Tahr



BHARATA'S RESOLVE

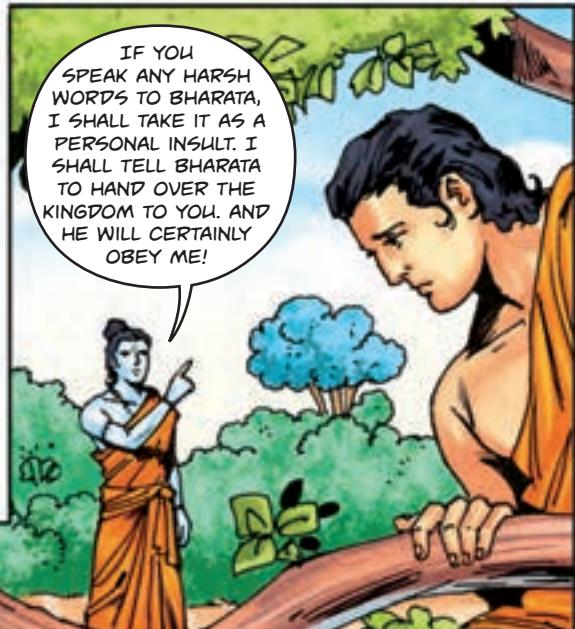




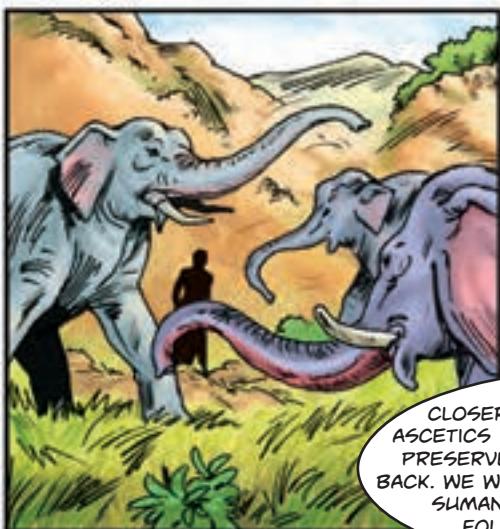
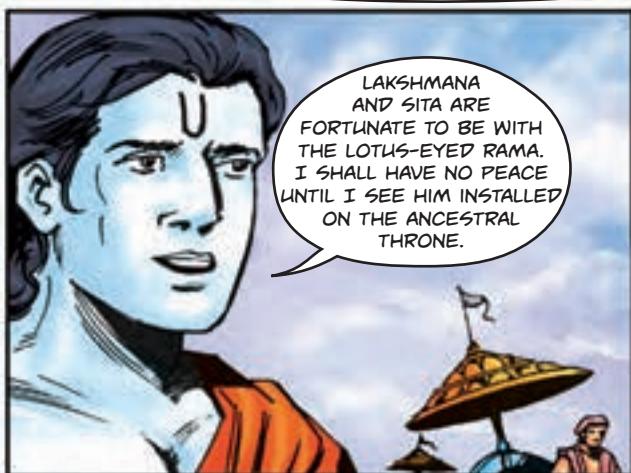
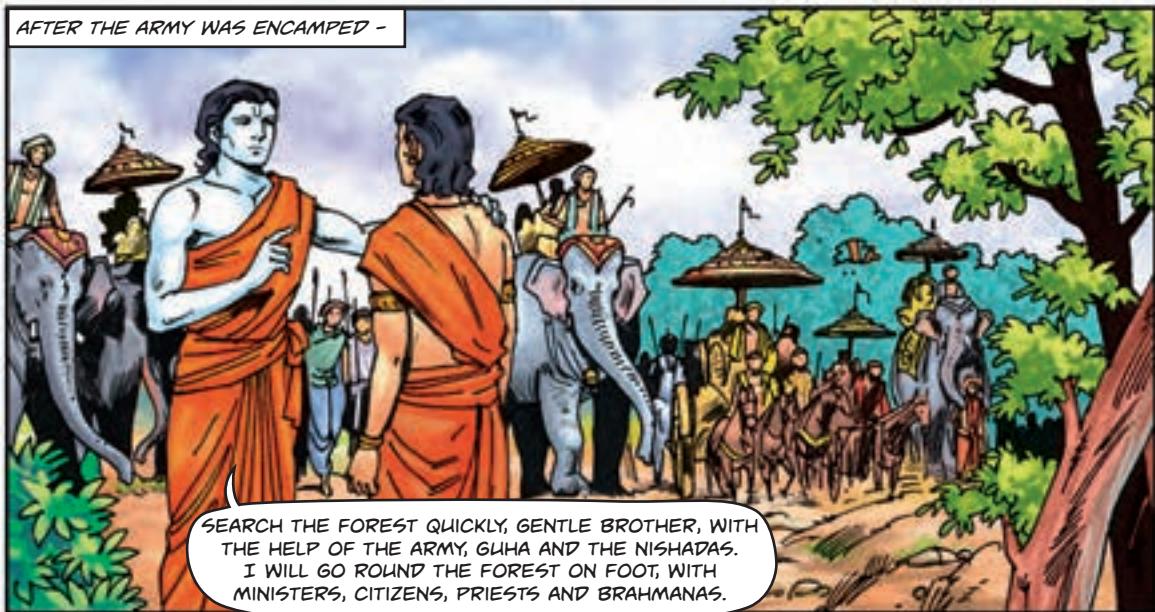
BHARATA'S RESOLVE

BHARATA
WOULD NEVER WISH
US ANY HARM. HOW
CAN A MAN KILL HIS
BROTHER, O SOLIMITRA?
I CANNOT UNDERSTAND
WHY YOU MISTRUST
HIM LIKE THIS.

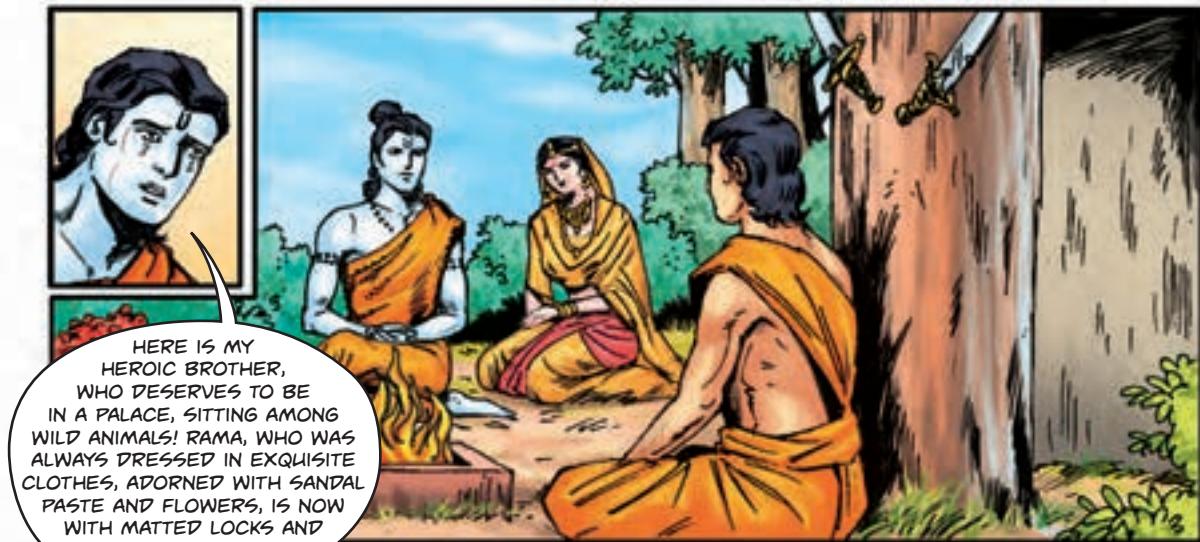
IF YOU
SPEAK ANY HARSH
WORDS TO BHARATA,
I SHALL TAKE IT AS A
PERSONAL INSULT. I
SHALL TELL BHARATA
TO HAND OVER THE
KINGDOM TO YOU. AND
HE WILL CERTAINLY
OBEY ME!



AFTER THE ARMY WAS ENCAMPED -









WHO WILL BE KING?



WHO WILL BE KING?

BHARATA, SEARCHING FOR HIS BELOVED BROTHER RAMA,
FOUND HIM IN A HUT IN THE FOREST OF CHITRAKOOT.

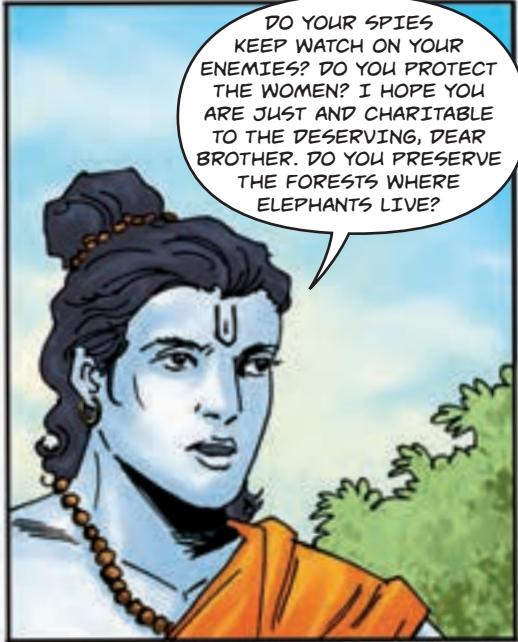


RAMA PLIED
BHARATA
WITH
QUESTIONS.

DO YOU TREAT THE PRIESTS WITH HONOUR? I HOPE YOU HAVE COUNSELLORS WHO ARE COURAGEOUS, LEARNED AND TRUSTWORTHY. DO YOU DISTRIBUTE SALARY AND PROVISIONS TO THE SERVANTS IN GOOD TIME?



DO YOUR SPIES KEEP WATCH ON YOUR ENEMIES? DO YOU PROTECT THE WOMEN? I HOPE YOU ARE JUST AND CHARITABLE TO THE DESERVING, DEAR BROTHER. DO YOU PRESERVE THE FORESTS WHERE ELEPHANTS LIVE?



BUT WHY HAVE YOU COME HERE, CLAD IN THESE CLOTHES AND WITH MATTED HAIR? YOU DO NOT LOOK LIKE A KING. EXPLAIN EVERYTHING TO ME CLEARLY.



WHY TALK TO ME ABOUT THE DUTIES OF A KING? WHEN THE ELDER BROTHER IS ALIVE, A YOUNGER BROTHER CAN NEVER BE KING. PLEASE RETURN TO AYODHYA AND RULE OVER THE KINGDOM!

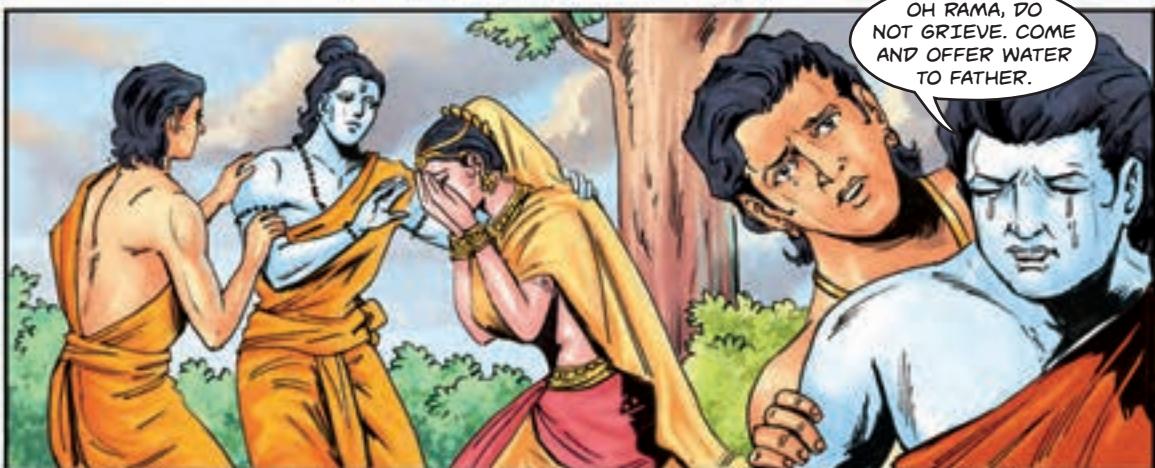
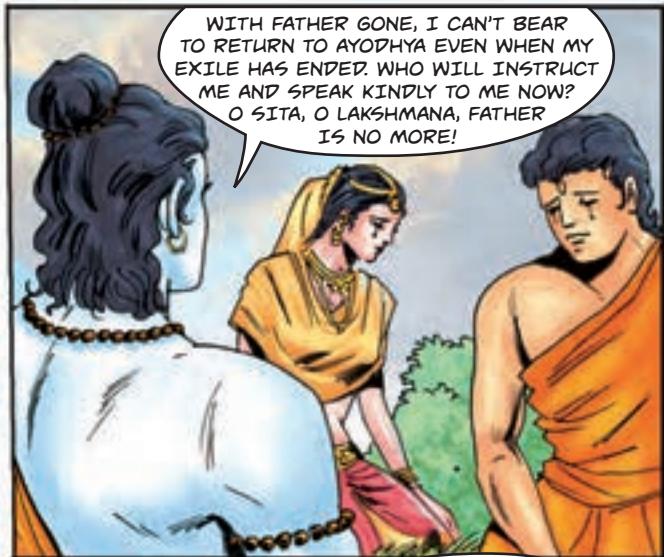
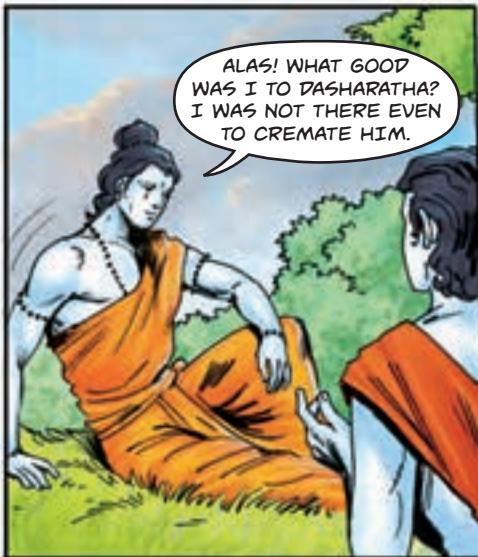


WHO WILL BE KING?



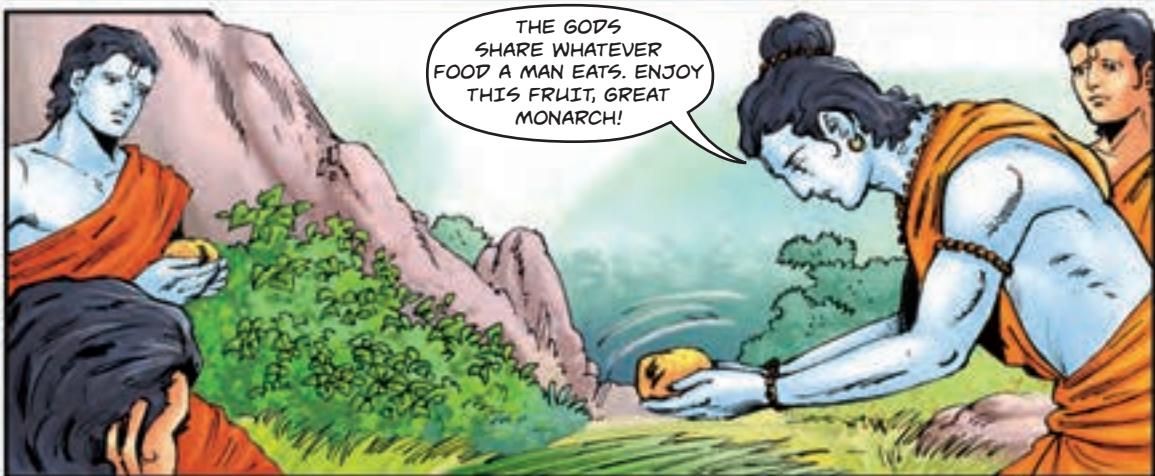
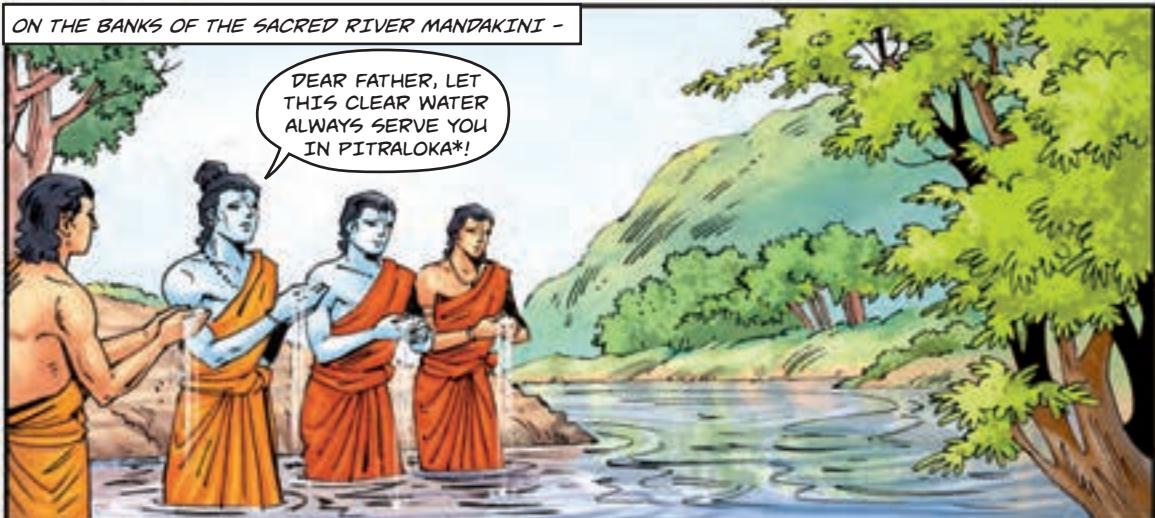


WHO WILL BE KING?

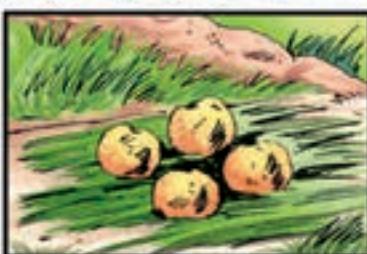


*AYURVEDIC MEDICINAL SHRUB OR TREE

ON THE BANKS OF THE SACRED RIVER MANDAKINI -



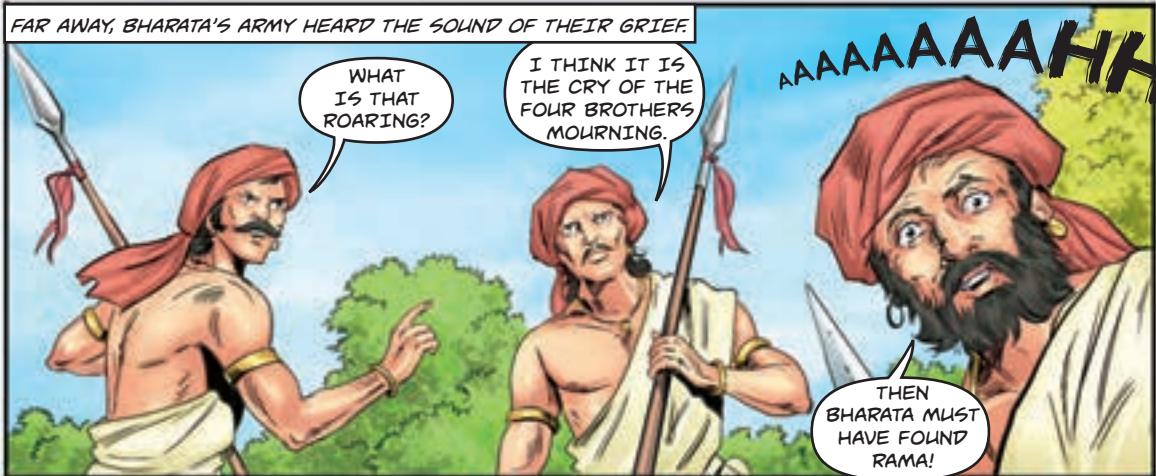
THE BROTHERS CLUNG TO EACH OTHER AND CRIED PITEOUSLY.



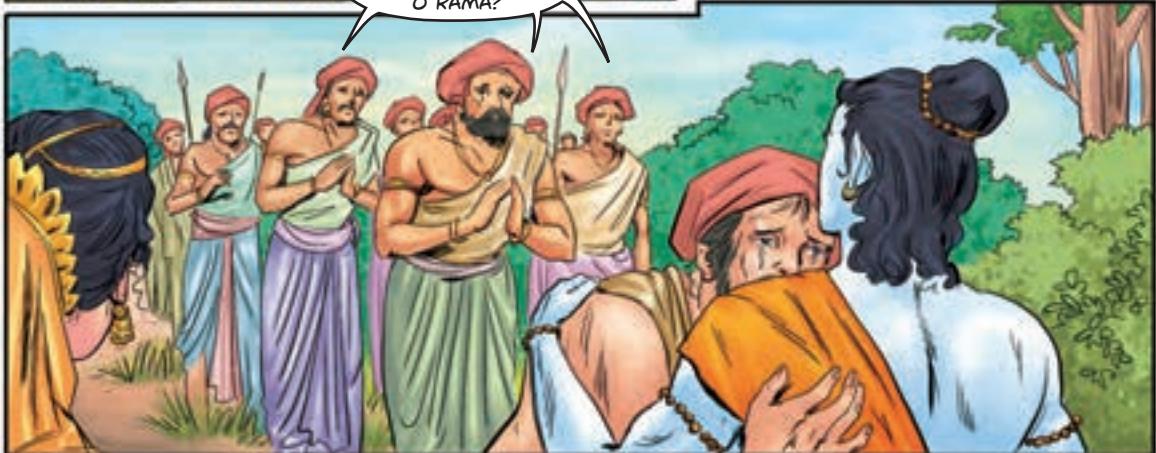
*THE WORLD OF OUR ANCESTORS

WHO WILL BE KING?

FAR AWAY, BHARATA'S ARMY HEARD THE SOUND OF THEIR GRIEF.



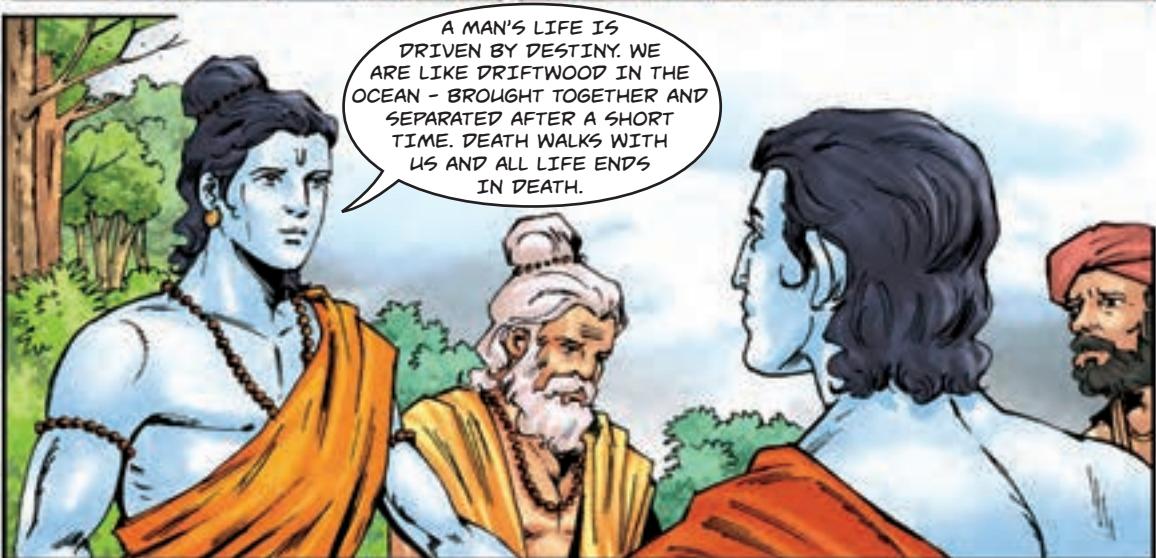
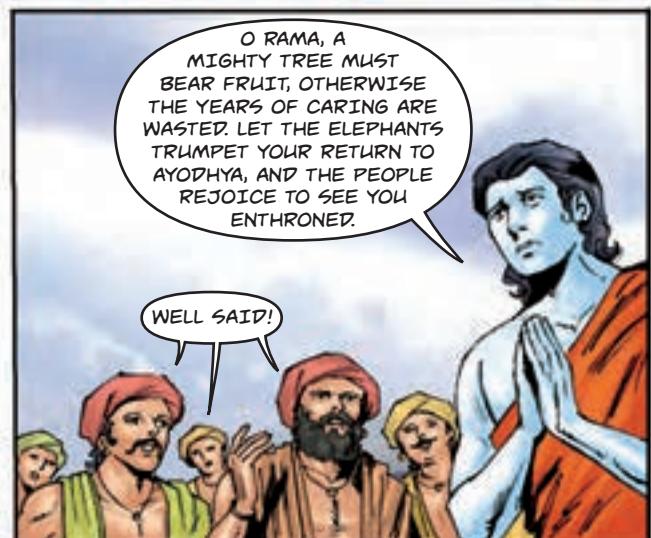
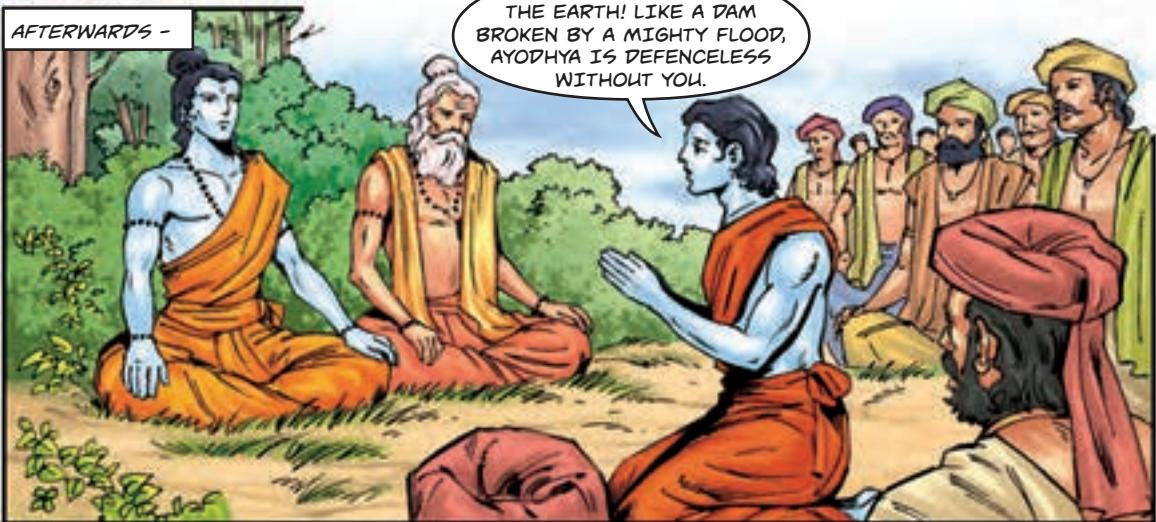
COME QUICKLY!
PRINCE RAMA HAS
BEEN FOUND!





AFTERWARDS -

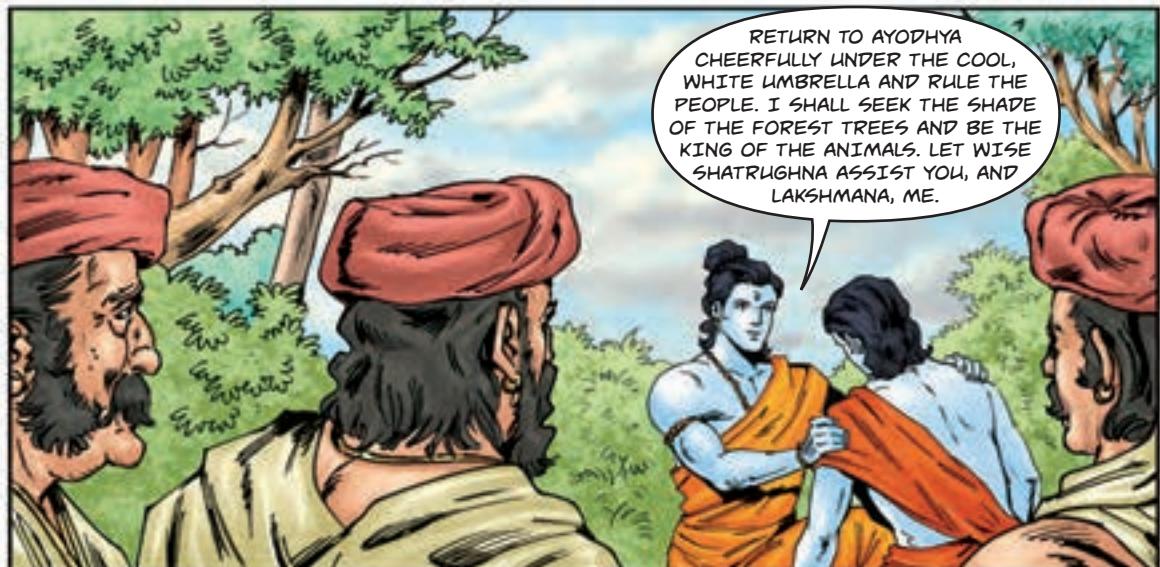
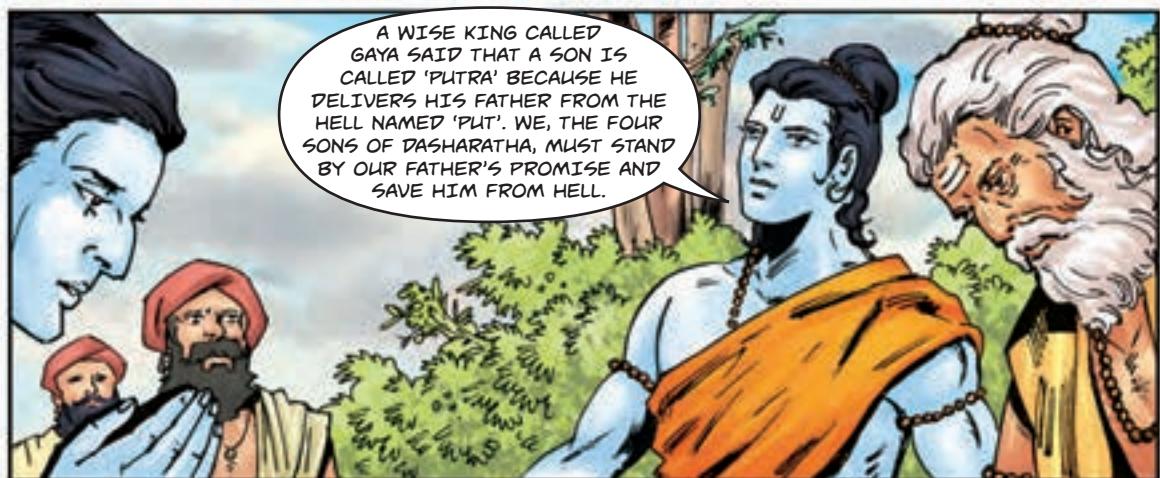
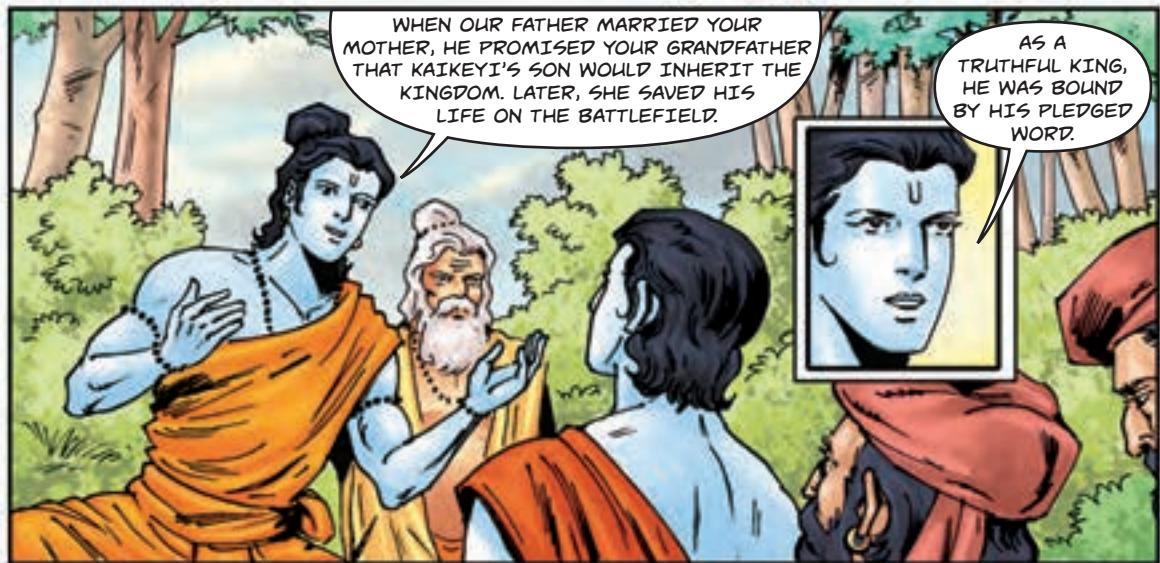
O RULER OF
THE EARTH! LIKE A DAM
BROKEN BY A MIGHTY FLOOD,
AYODHYA IS DEFENCELESS
WITHOUT YOU.





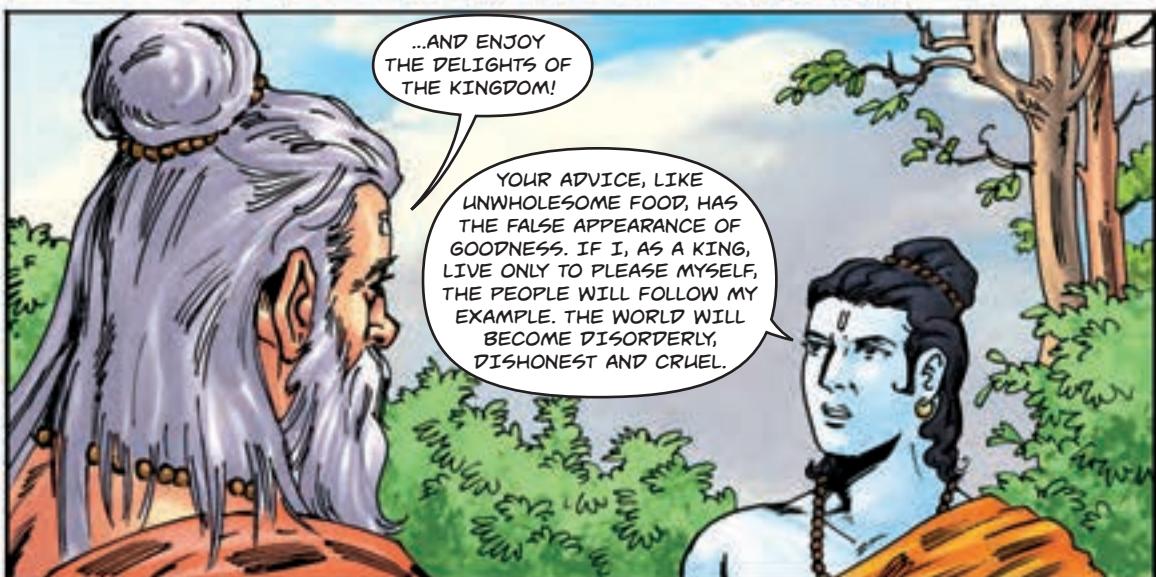
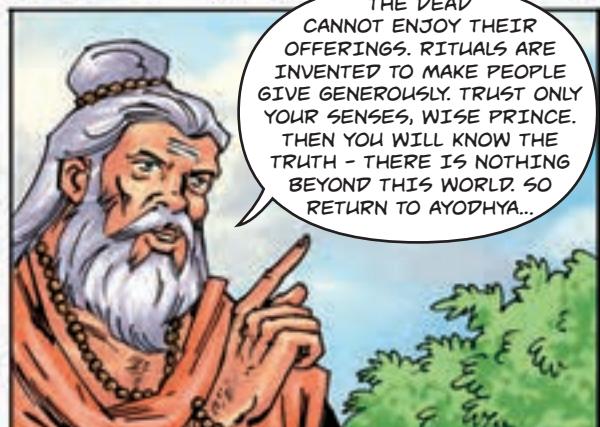
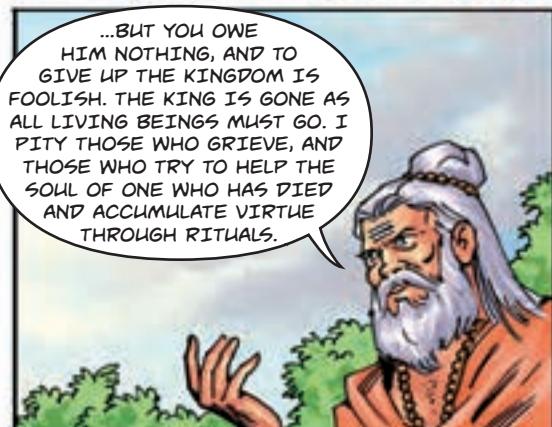
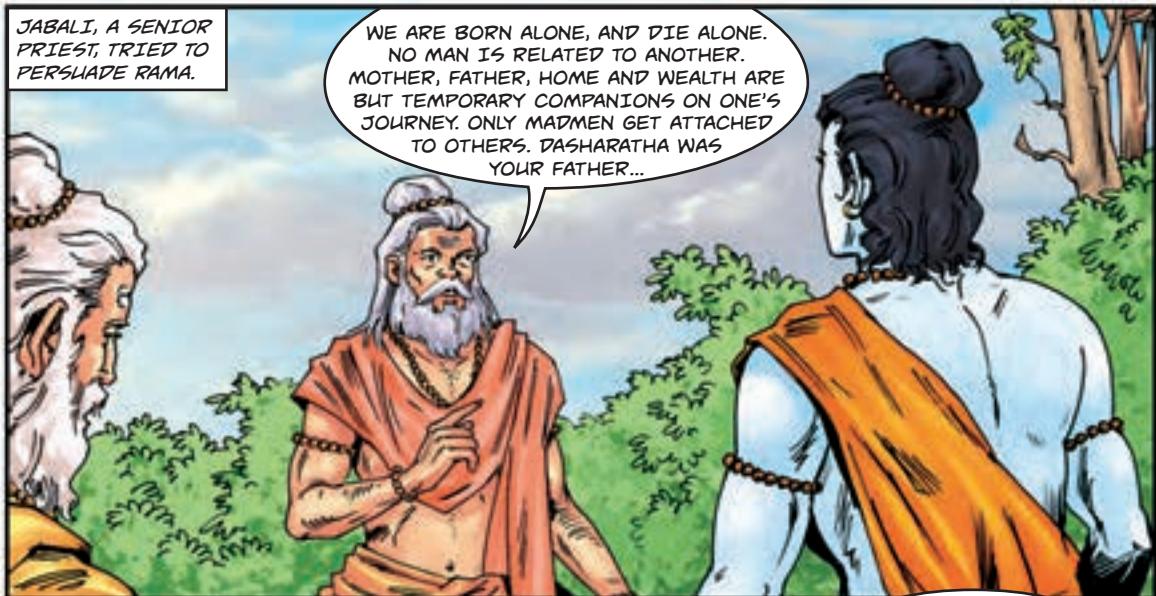
*THE HIGHEST HEAVEN

WHO WILL BE KING?

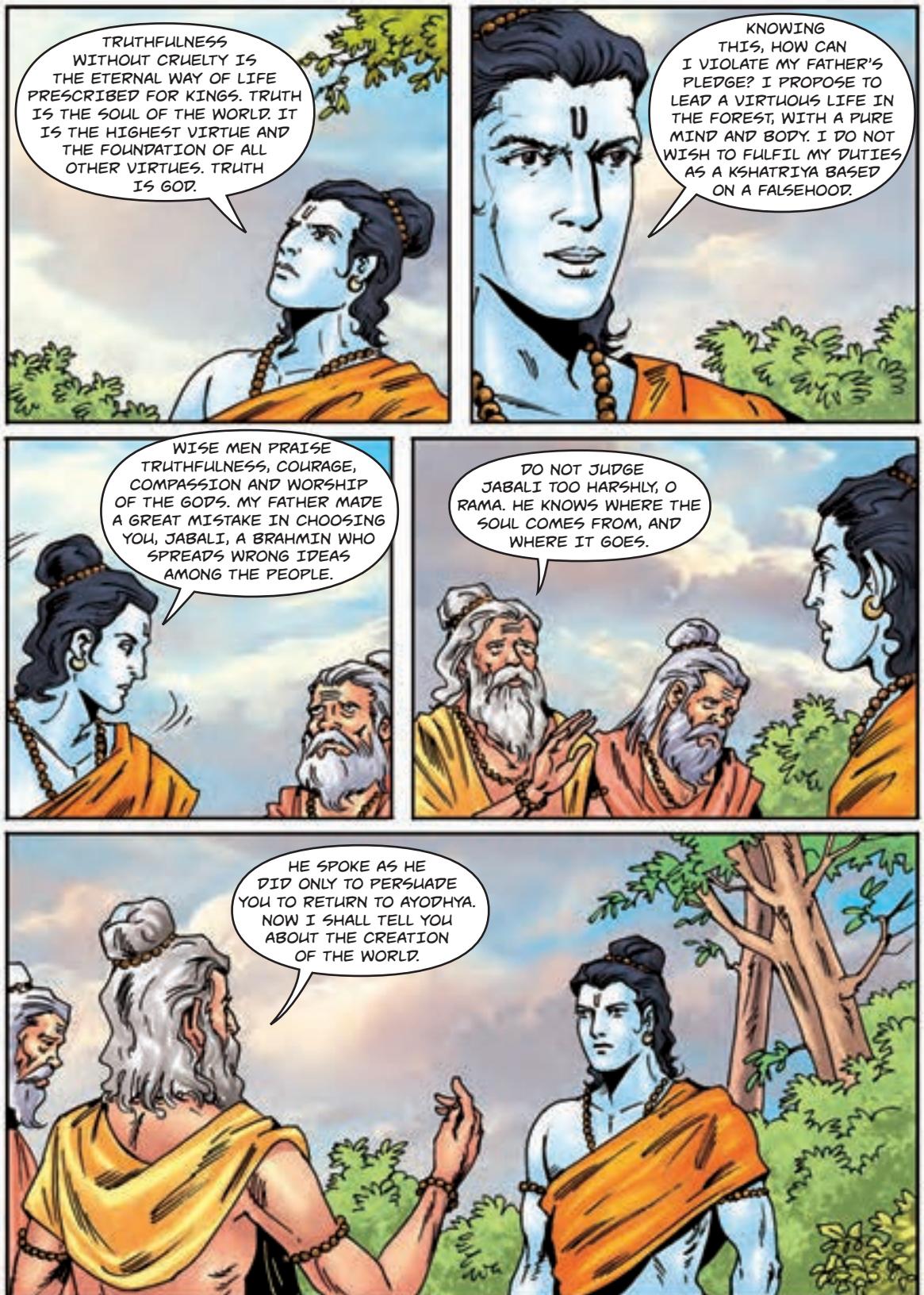


JABALI, A SENIOR PRIEST, TRIED TO PERSUADE RAMA.

WE ARE BORN ALONE, AND DIE ALONE.
NO MAN IS RELATED TO ANOTHER.
MOTHER, FATHER, HOME AND WEALTH ARE
BUT TEMPORARY COMPANIONS ON ONE'S
JOURNEY. ONLY MADMEN GET ATTACHED
TO OTHERS. DASHARATHA WAS
YOUR FATHER...

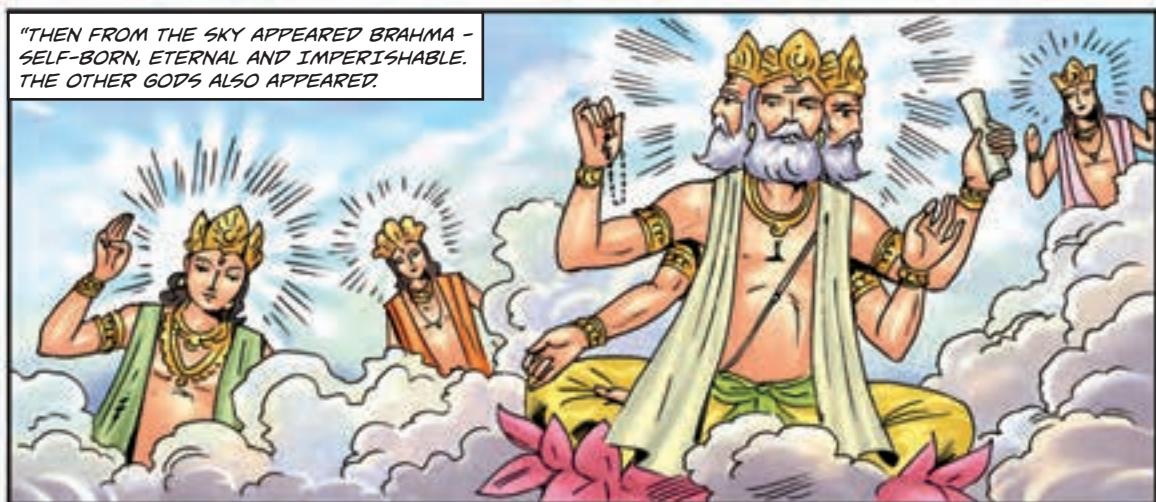


WHO WILL BE KING?

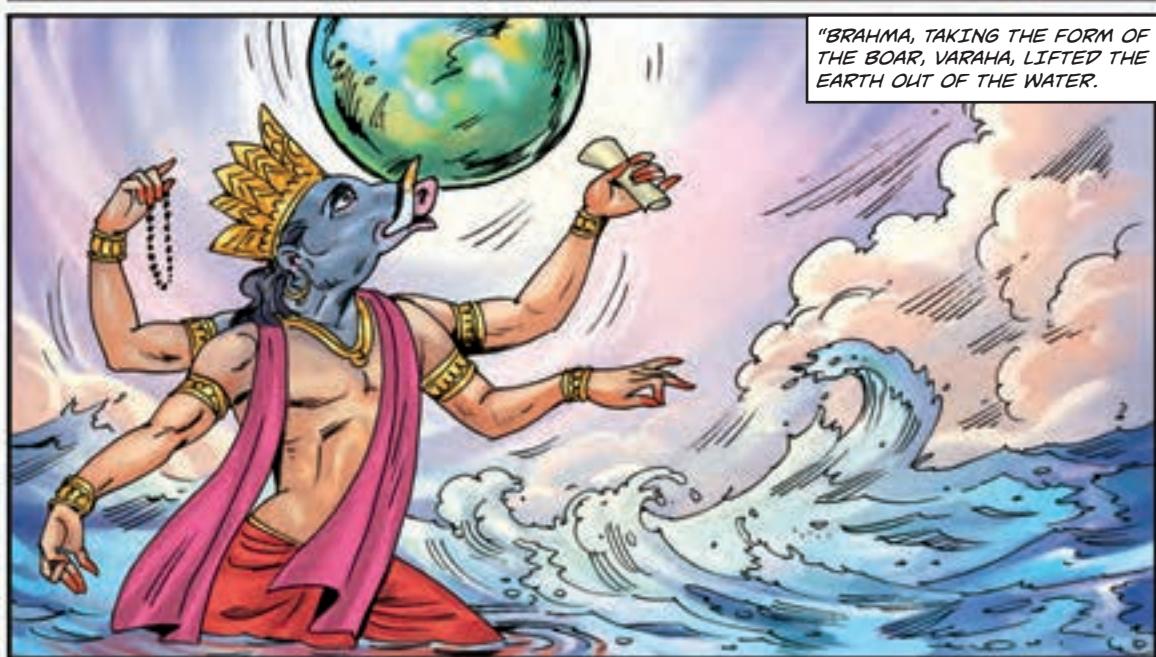




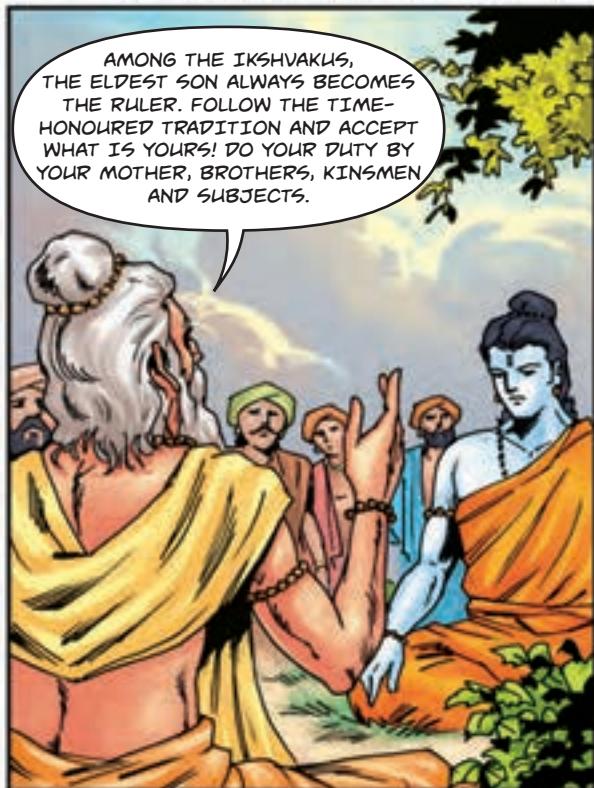
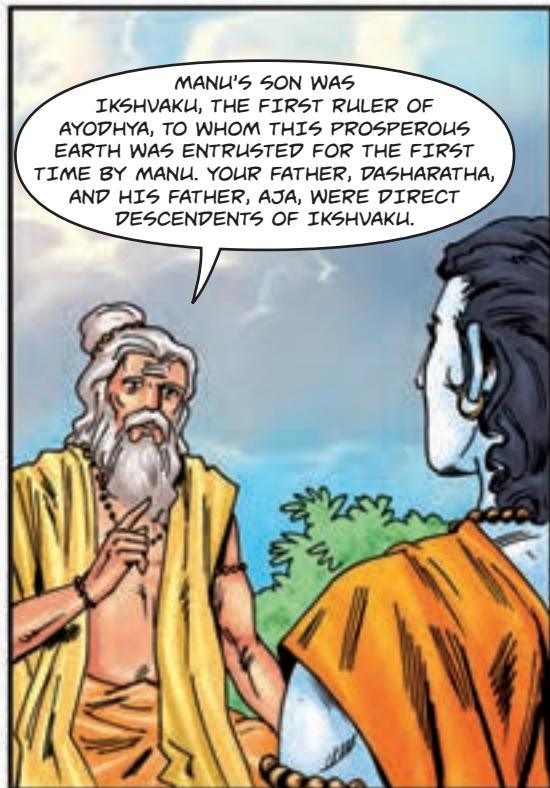
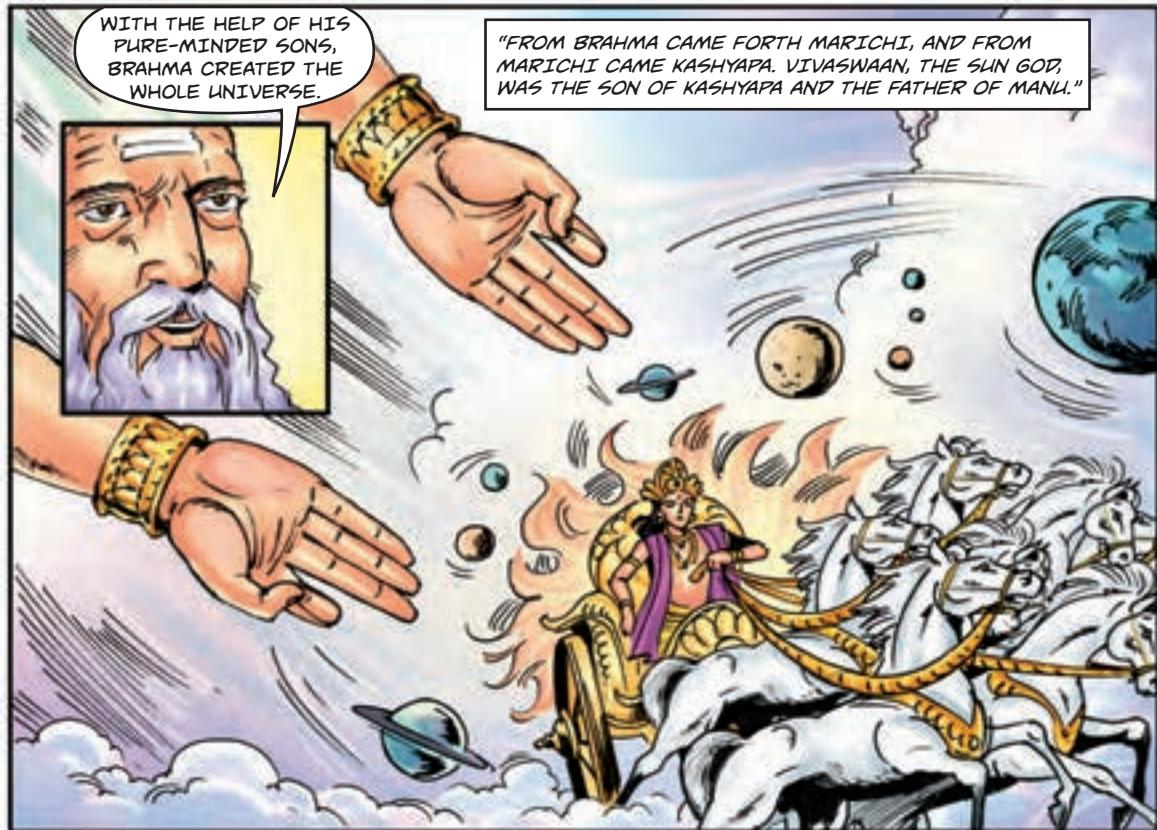
"THEN FROM THE SKY APPEARED BRAHMA -
SELF-BORN, ETERNAL AND IMPERISHABLE.
THE OTHER GODS ALSO APPEARED."

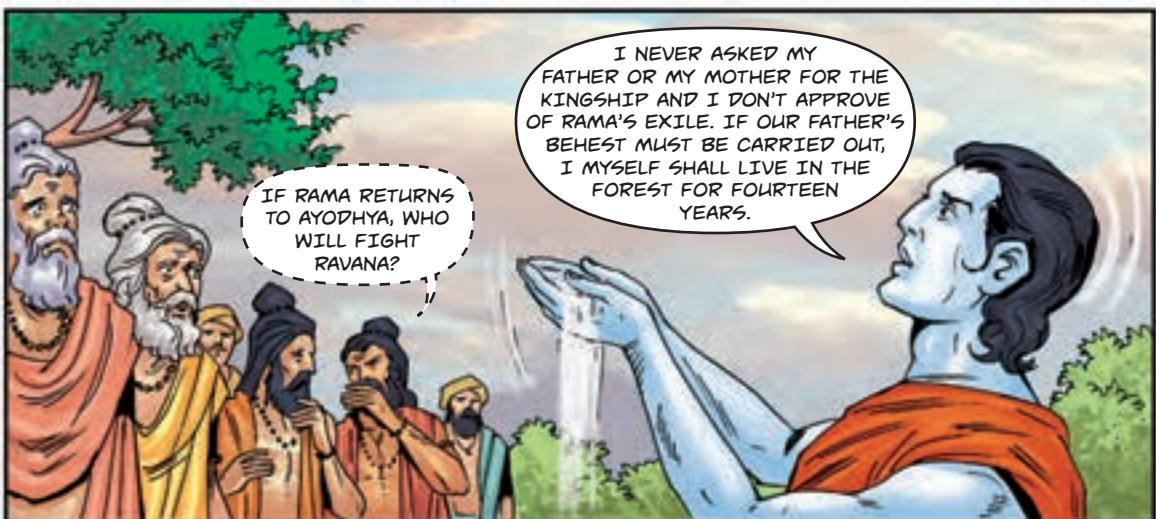
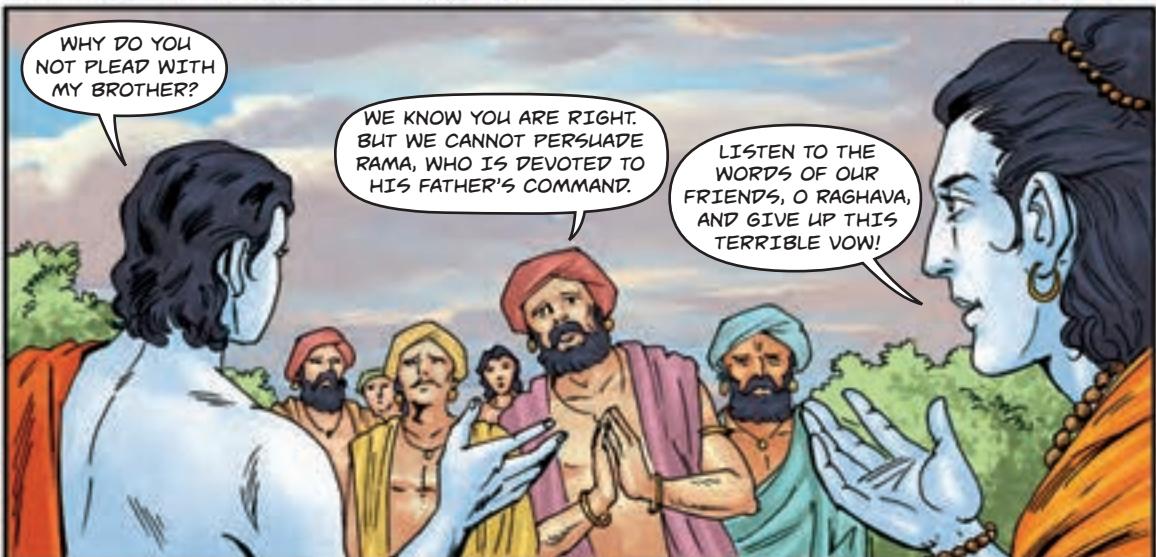
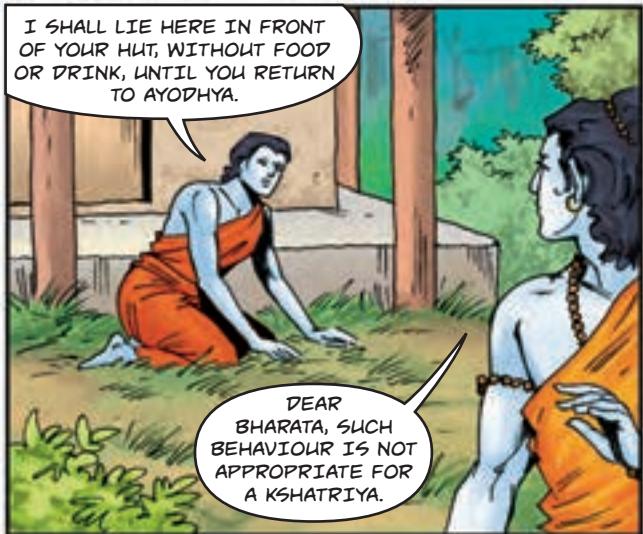


"BRAHMA, TAKING THE FORM OF
THE BOAR, VARAHA, LIFTED THE
EARTH OUT OF THE WATER."

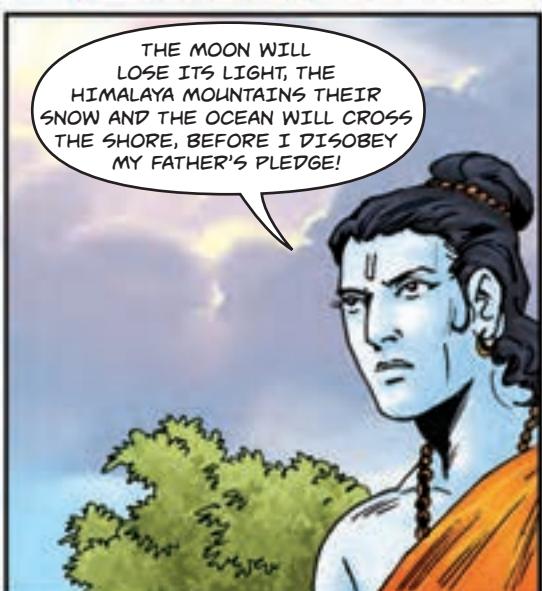
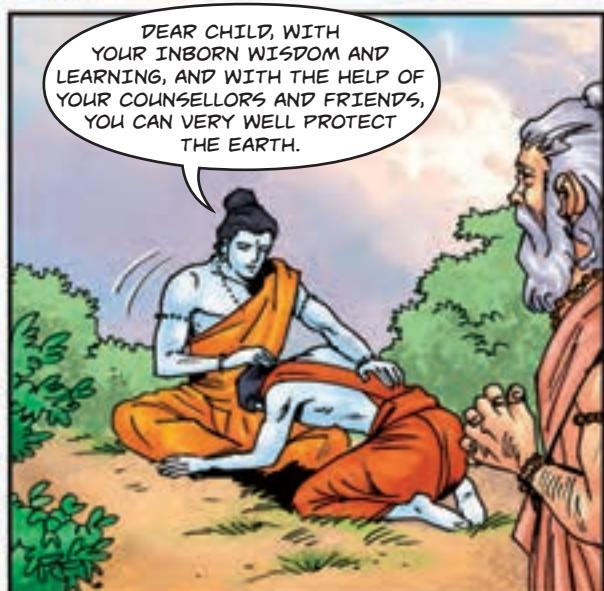
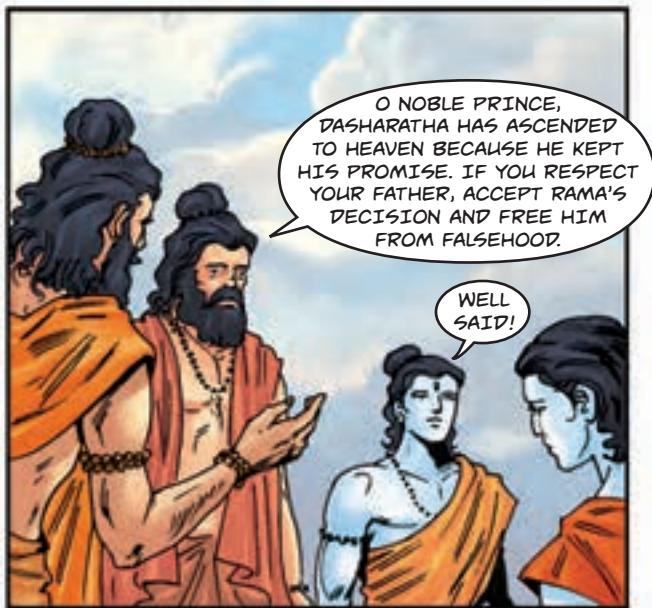
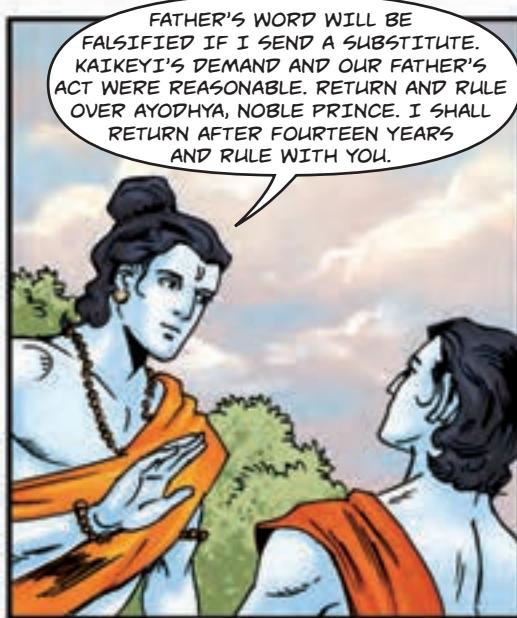


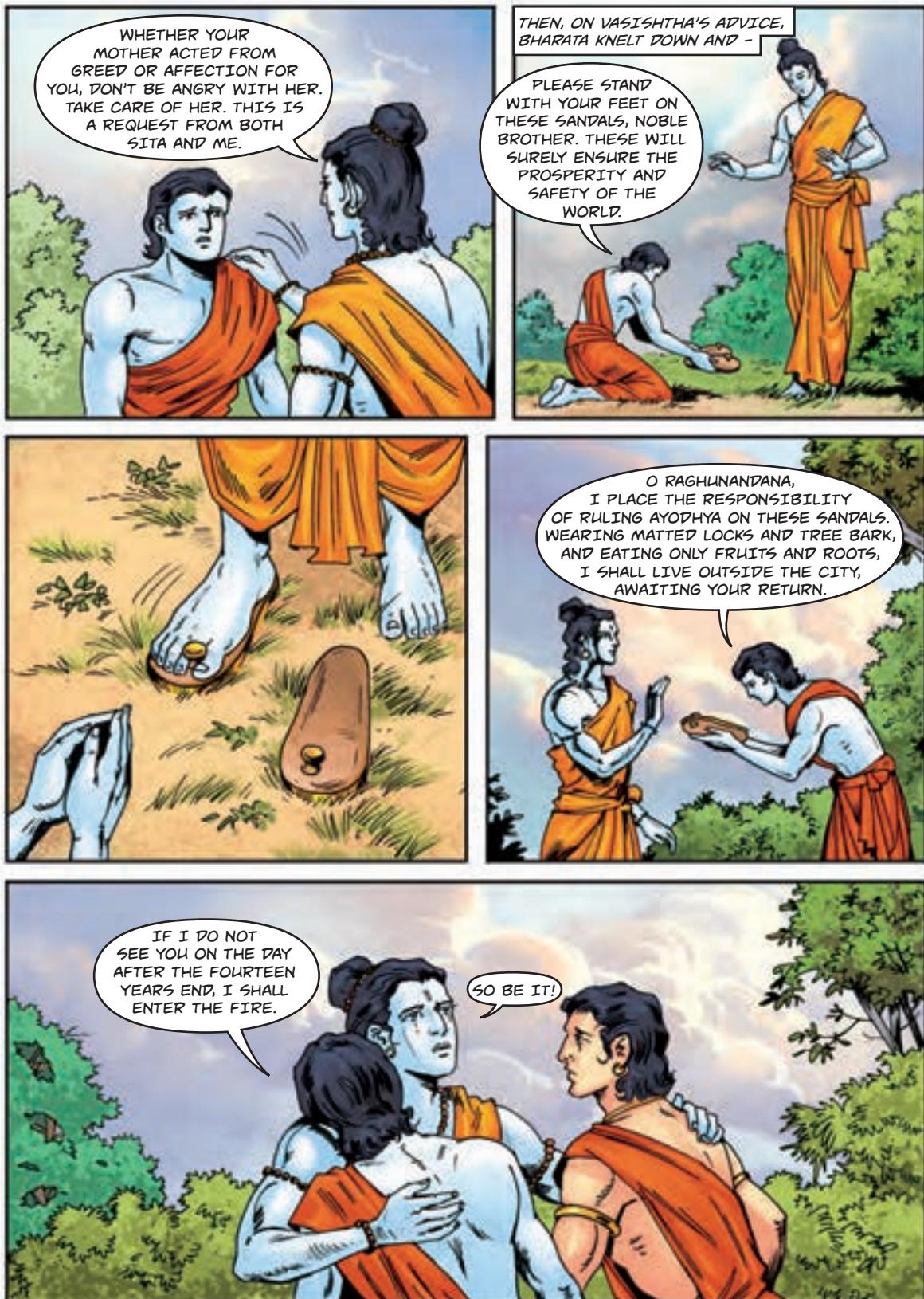
WHO WILL BE KING?





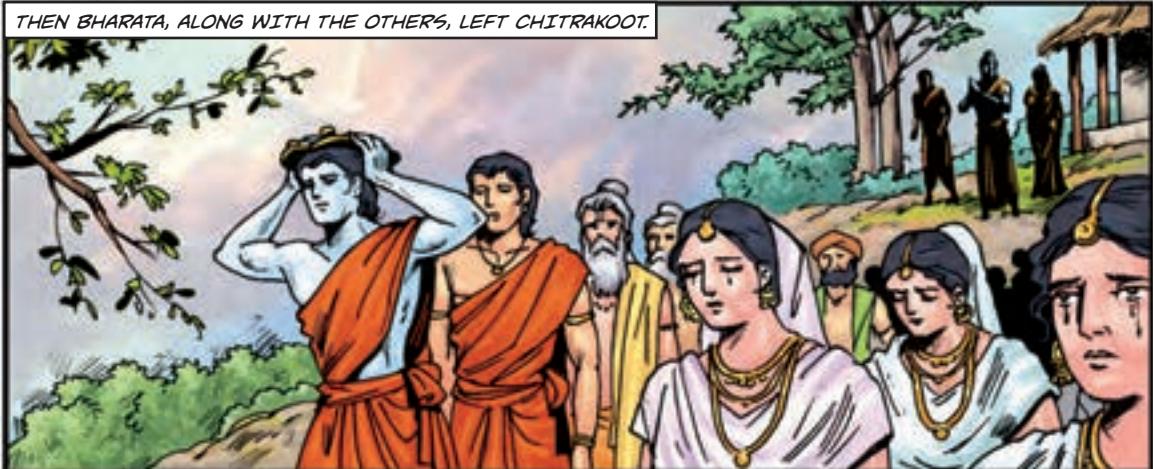
WHO WILL BE KING?





WHO WILL BE KING?

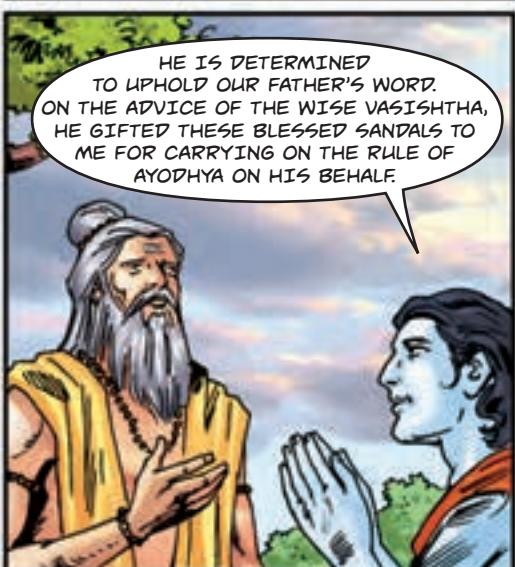
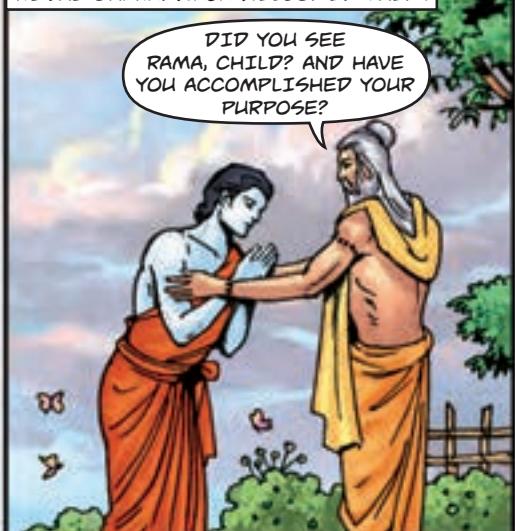
THEN BHARATA, ALONG WITH THE OTHERS, LEFT CHITRAKOOT.



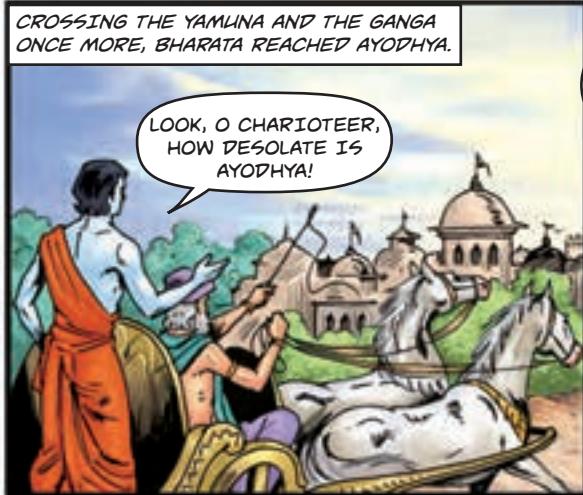
SOON -



RISHI BHARADWAJA WELCOMED THEM.



CROSSING THE YAMUNA AND THE GANGA
ONCE MORE, BHARATA REACHED AYODHYA.



LOOK, O CHARIOTEER,
HOW DESOLATE IS
AYODHYA!

THE CITY NO LONGER
SPORTS ITS SCENT OF FLOWERS
AND SANDALWOOD, THE RICH MUSIC,
THE DELIGHTFUL NEIGHING OF HORSES,
THE TRUMPETING OF EXCITED ELEPHANTS,
THE ATTRACTIVE YOUNG MEN ON
THE STREETS AND THE
FESTIVE AIR.

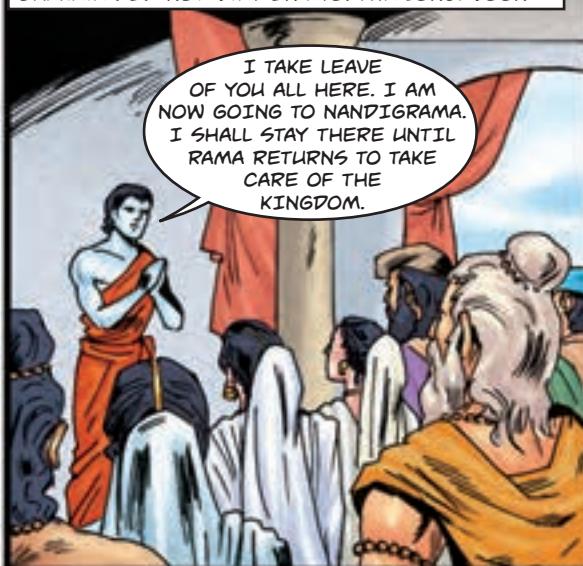


INSIDE THE PALACE -

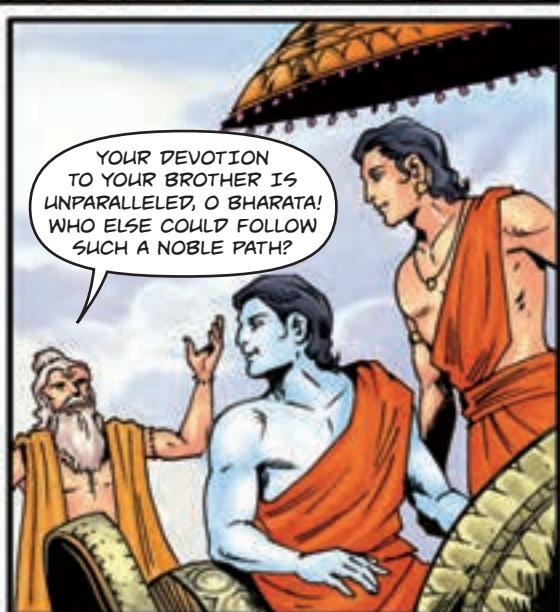


OH, WHEN
WILL MY BROTHER
RETURN, BRINGING JOY
TO AYODHYA LIKE A
RAIN CLOUD IN
SUMMER?

BHARATA DID NOT STAY IN AYODHYA LONG. SOON -



I TAKE LEAVE
OF YOU ALL HERE. I AM
NOW GOING TO NANDIGRAMA.
I SHALL STAY THERE UNTIL
RAMA RETURNS TO TAKE
CARE OF THE
KINGDOM.



YOUR DEVOTION
TO YOUR BROTHER IS
UNPARALLELED, O BHARATA!
WHO ELSE COULD FOLLOW
SUCH A NOBLE PATH?

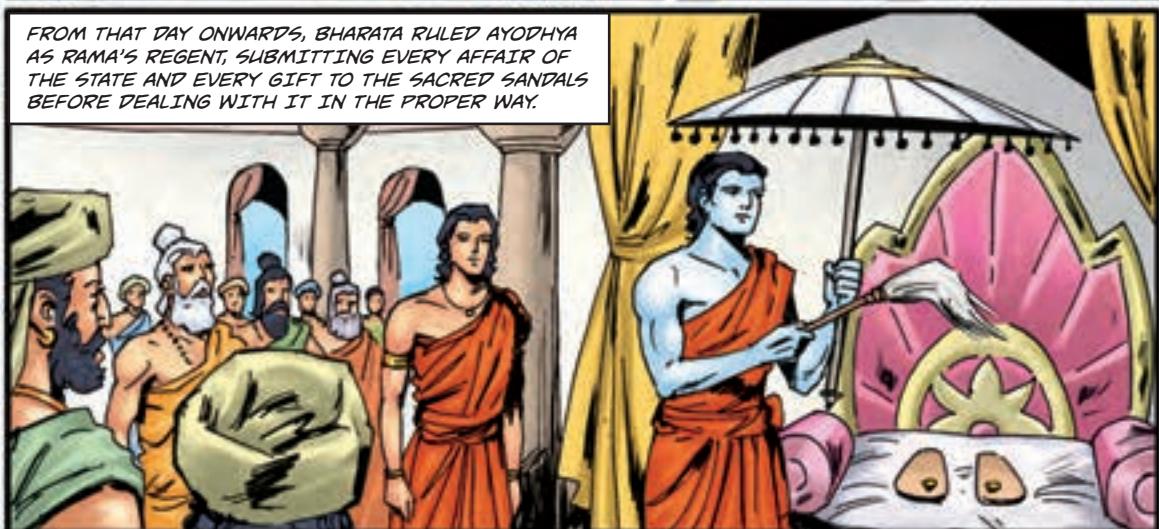


AT NANDIGRAMA -

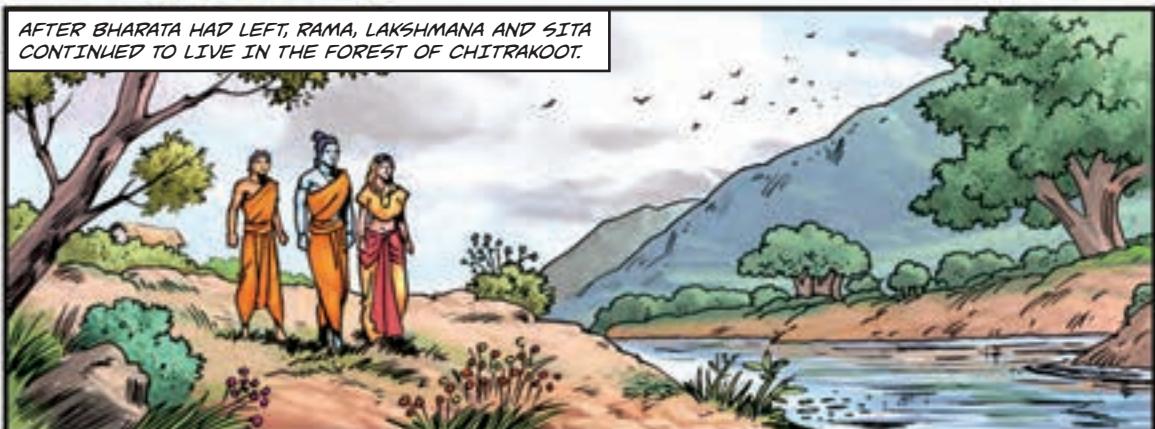
HOLD THE ROYAL UMBRELLA OVER THESE SANDALS. I CONSIDER THEM TO BE THE FEET OF MY ELDER BROTHER. BY THESE SANDALS WILL RIGHTEOUSNESS BE ESTABLISHED IN THE KINGDOM.

THIS SACRED TRUST HAS BEEN COMMITTED TO MY CHARGE BY MY BROTHER. I SHALL KEEP THE TRUST UNTIL HE RETURNS, AND RESTORE THESE SANDALS TO RAMA'S FEET. ONLY THEN SHALL I SHED THE GUILT OF RAMA'S EXILE.

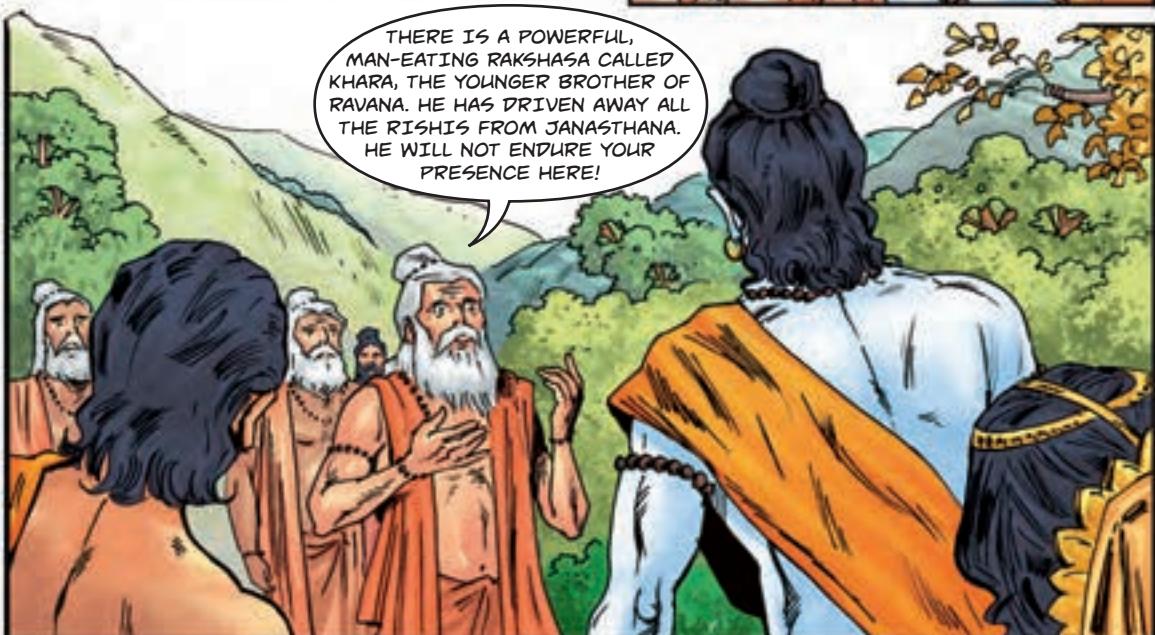
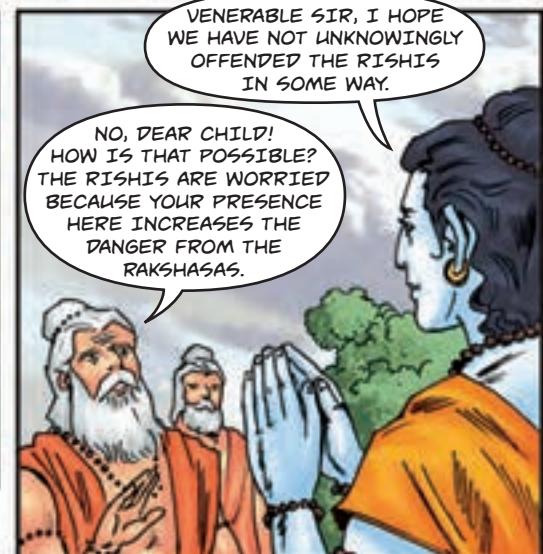
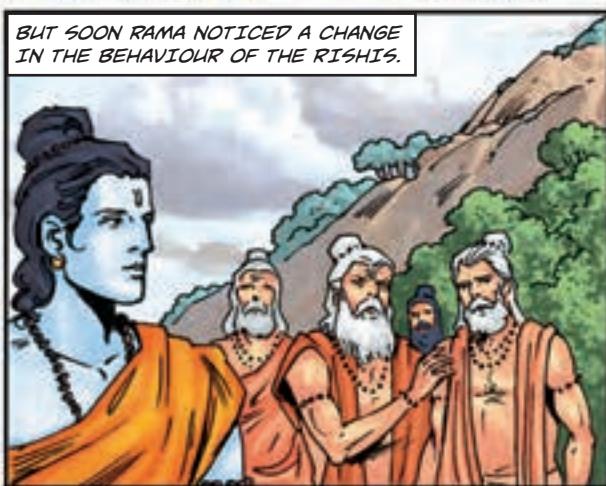
FROM THAT DAY ONWARDS, BHARATA RULED AYODHYA AS RAMA'S REGENT, SUBMITTING EVERY AFFAIR OF THE STATE AND EVERY GIFT TO THE SACRED SANDALS BEFORE DEALING WITH IT IN THE PROPER WAY.



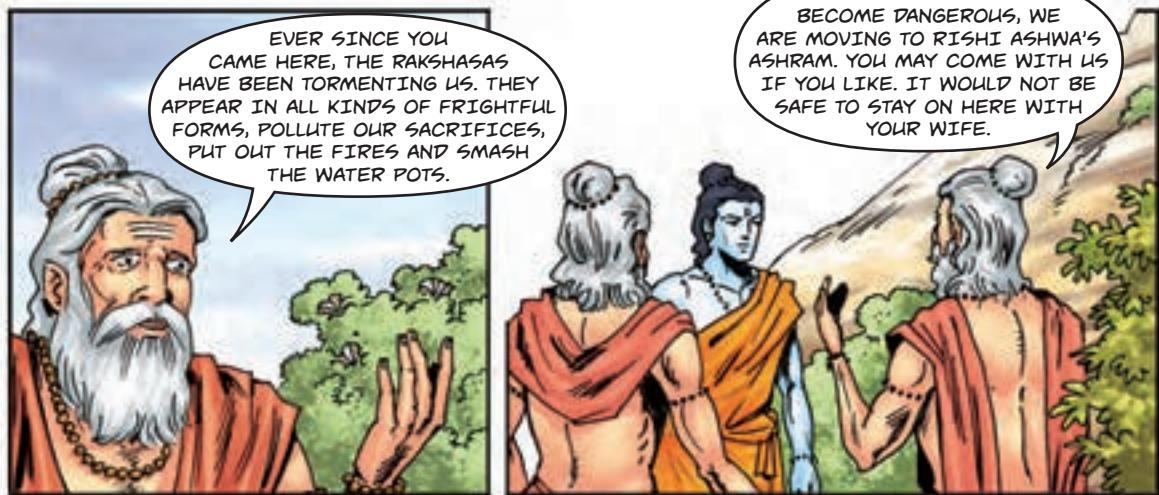
AFTER BHARATA HAD LEFT, RAMA, LAKSHMANA AND SITA CONTINUED TO LIVE IN THE FOREST OF CHITRAKOOT.



BUT SOON RAMA NOTICED A CHANGE IN THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE RISHIS.



WHO WILL BE KING?



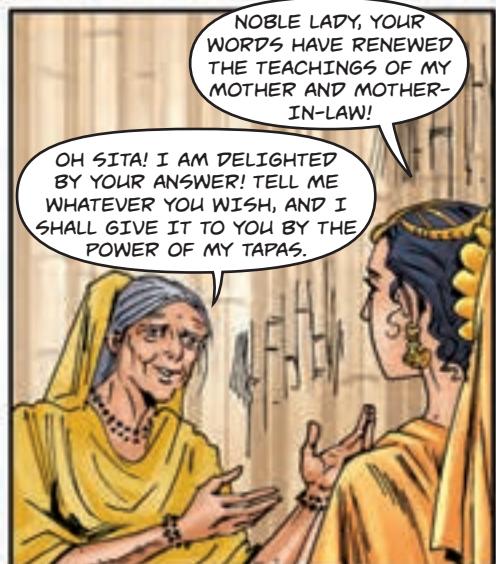
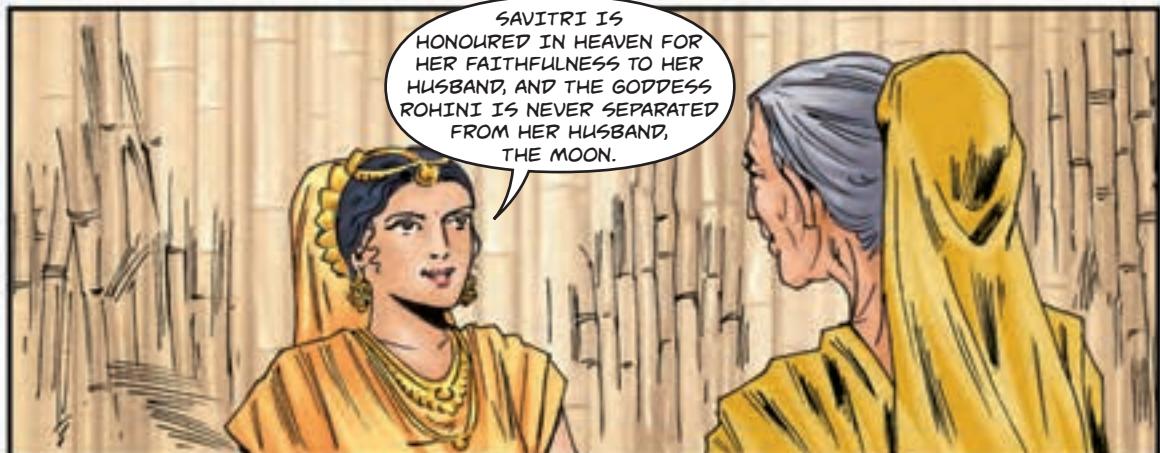
RAMA DECIDED NOT TO MOVE. BUT AFTER THE RISHIS HAD LEFT -

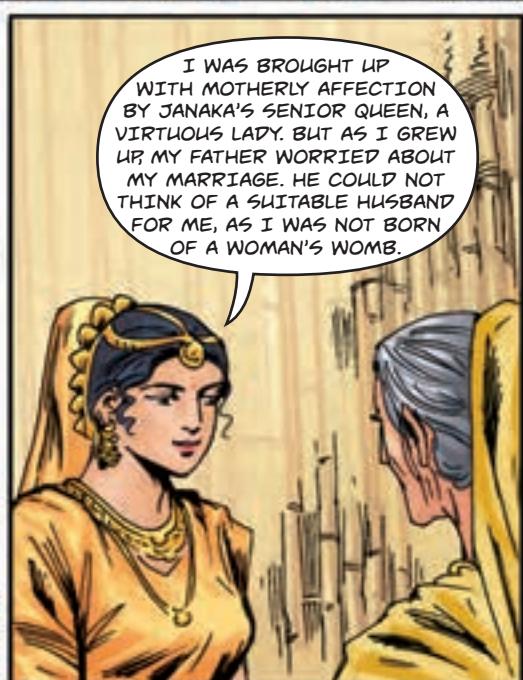
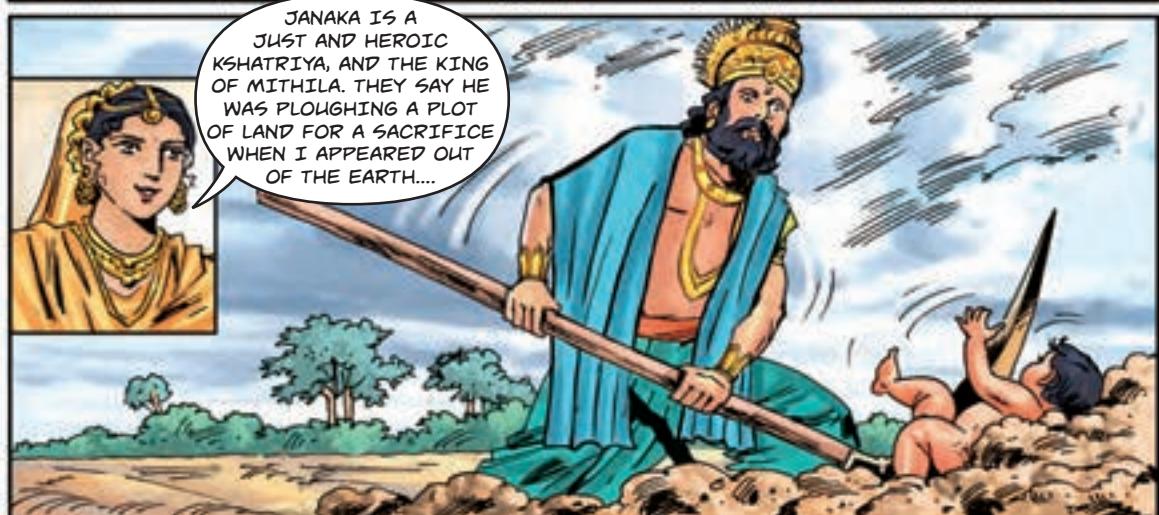
AND SO, THEY SET OFF, LEAVING CHITRAKOOT BEHIND THEM. SOON -





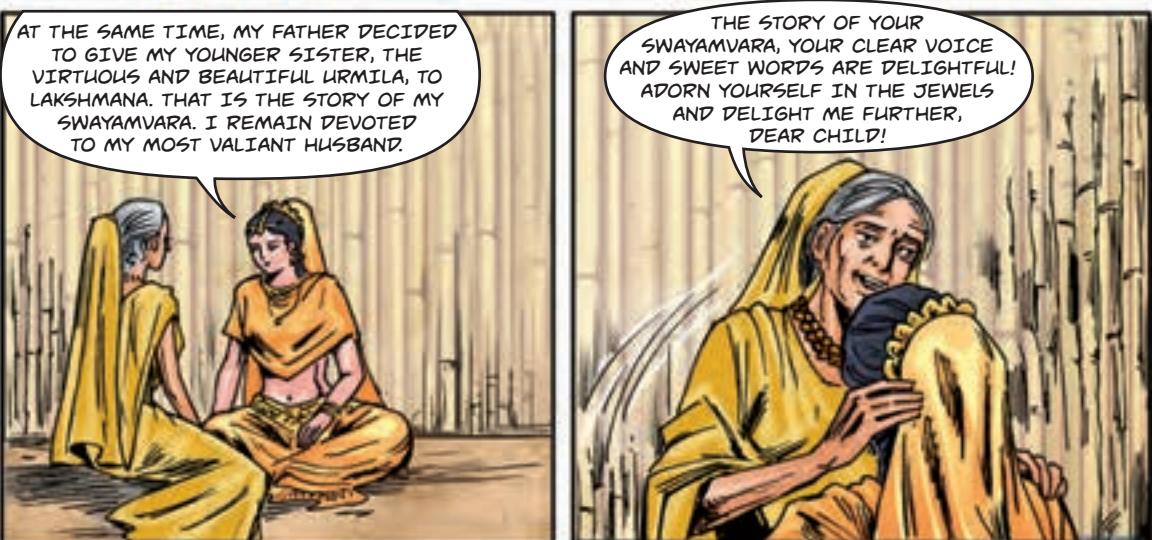
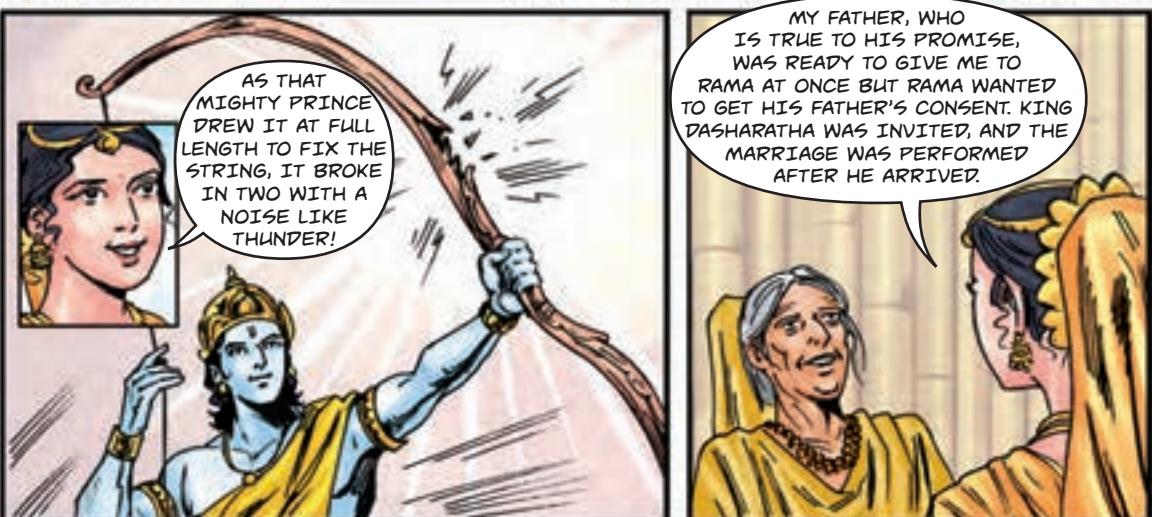
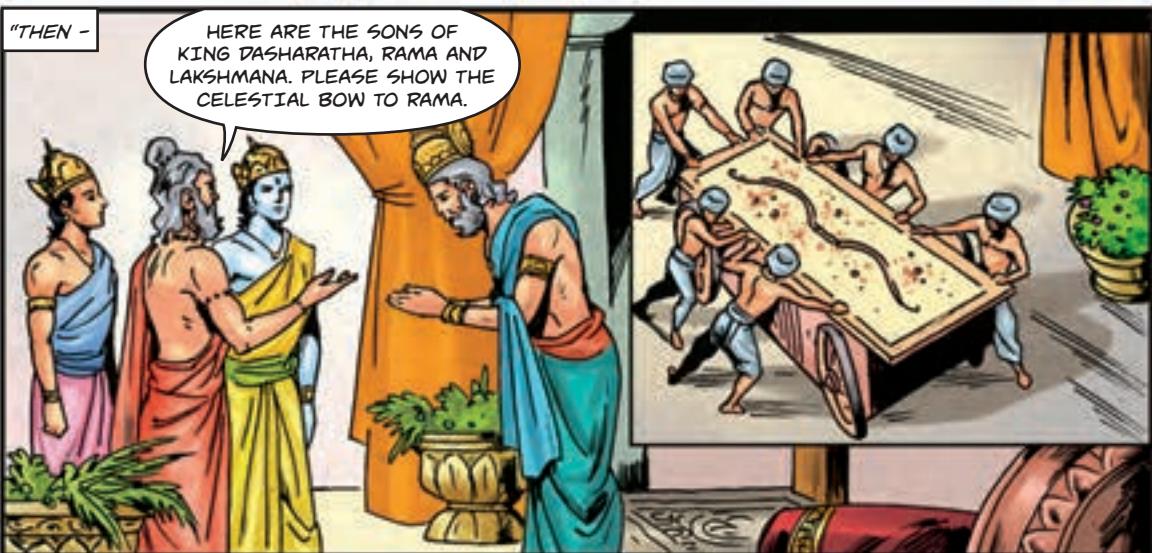
WHO WILL BE KING?





WHO WILL BE KING?



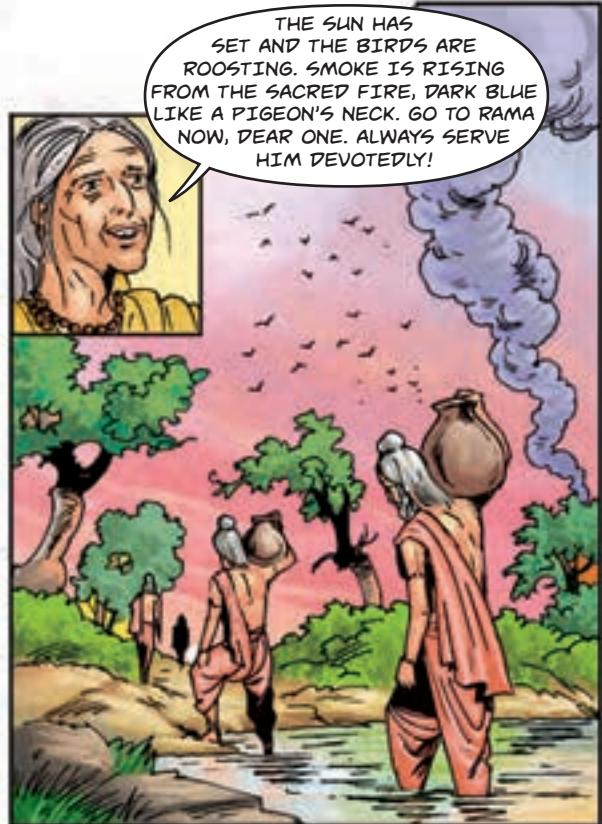


WHO WILL BE KING?

WHEN SITA WAS DRESSED -



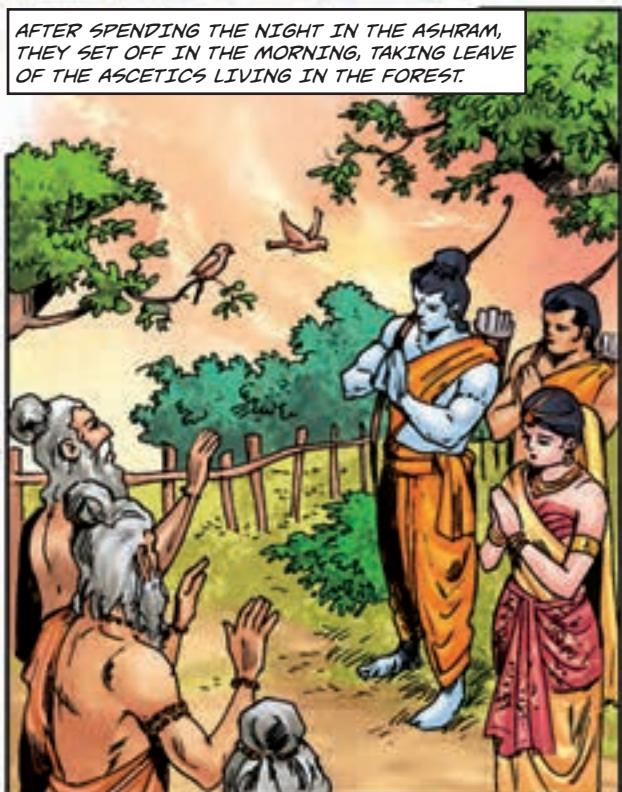
THE SUN HAS SET AND THE BIRDS ARE ROOSTING. SMOKE IS RISING FROM THE SACRED FIRE, DARK BLUE LIKE A PIGEON'S NECK. GO TO RAMA NOW, DEAR ONE. ALWAYS SERVE HIM DEVOTEDLY!

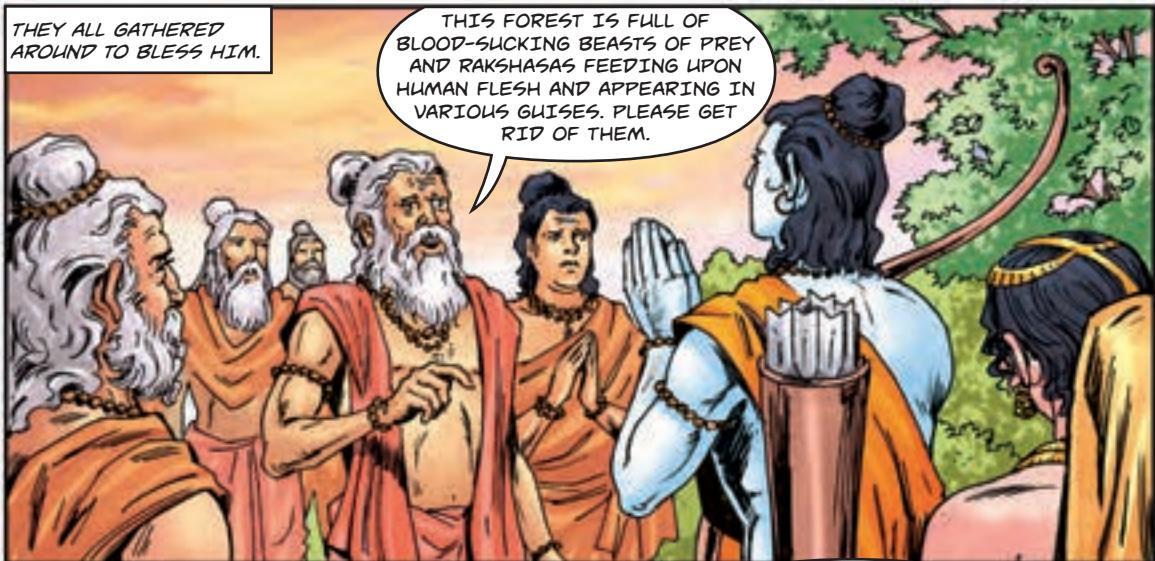


WHEN RAMA SAW SITA ADORNED WITH ANASUYA'S GIFTS AND HEARD HER STORY -



AFTER SPENDING THE NIGHT IN THE ASHRAM, THEY SET OFF IN THE MORNING, TAKING LEAVE OF THE ASCETICS LIVING IN THE FOREST.



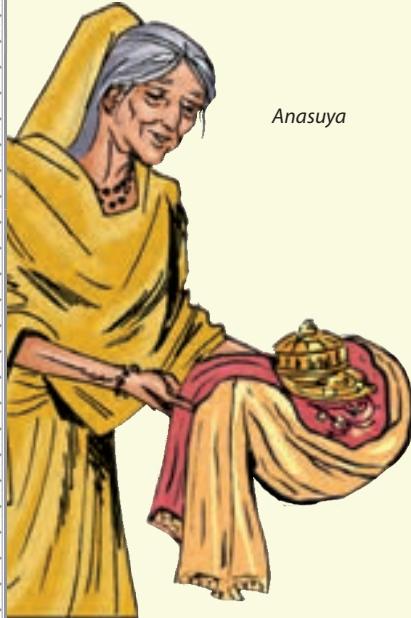


GLOSSARY

AGASTYA अगस्त्य A great sage

AHIMSA अहिंसा Non-violence

AJA अजा DASHARATHA's father



ALARKA अलर्क An ancestor of DASHARATHA

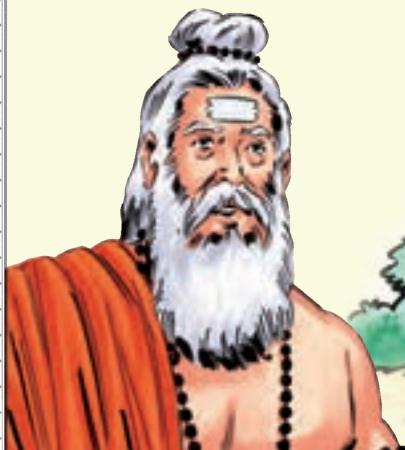
ANASUYA अनसूया Sage ATRI's wife

ANATHAPINDIKA अनाथपिंडिका A rich merchant of KOSALA

APSARA अप्सरा Celestial dancers

ARTHA अर्थ Wealth

ARYABHATA आर्यभट्ट Famous mathematician and astrologer



ASAMANJA असमंजा An ancestor of DASHARATHA who was exiled from the kingdom

ASHRAMA आश्रम Stage of life

ASHWA अश्व A great rishi

ASHWAPATI अश्वपति Another name for KEKEYA (1)

ATRI अत्रि One of the Saptarshis and ANASUYA'S husband

AYODHYA अयोध्या Capital of KOSALA

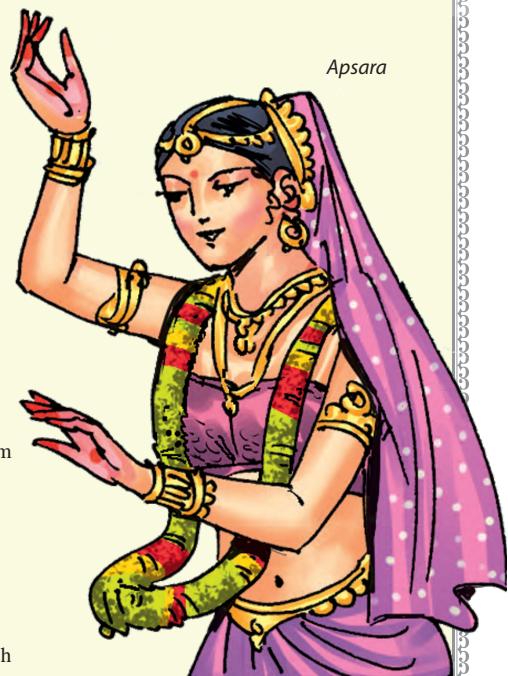
BAHLIKA बाह्लीका An ancient kingdom now the Balkh province of Afghanistan

BHARADWAJA भरद्वाज A sage

BHARATA भरत RAMA's brother

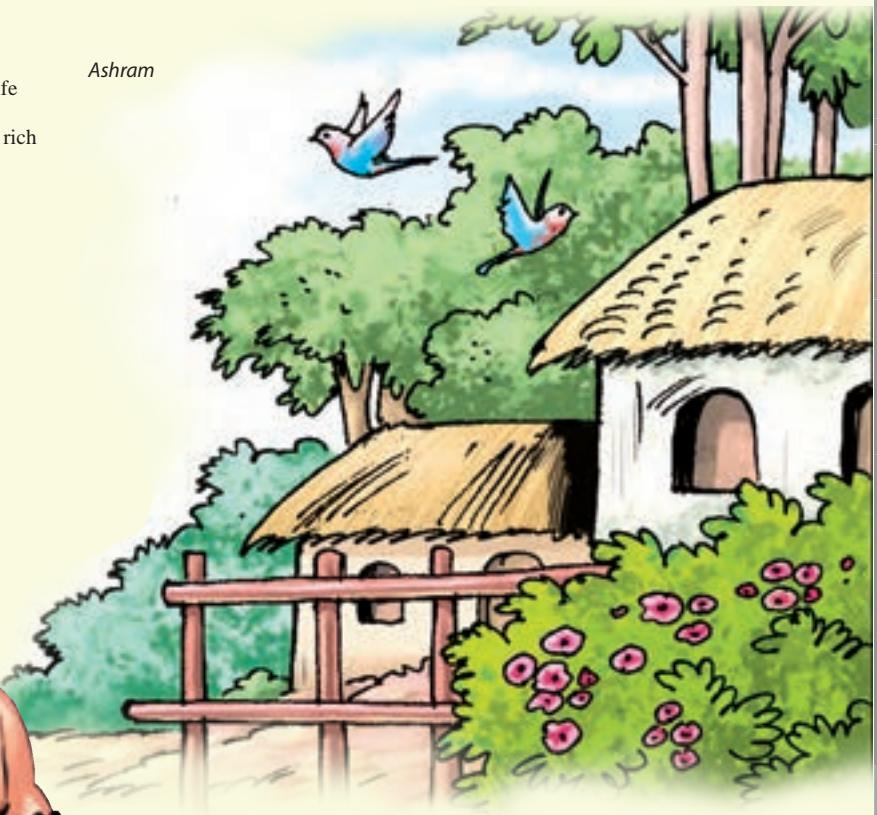
BHARHUT STUPA भरहट स्तूप A structure that existed in Madhya Pradesh in 2nd century BCE

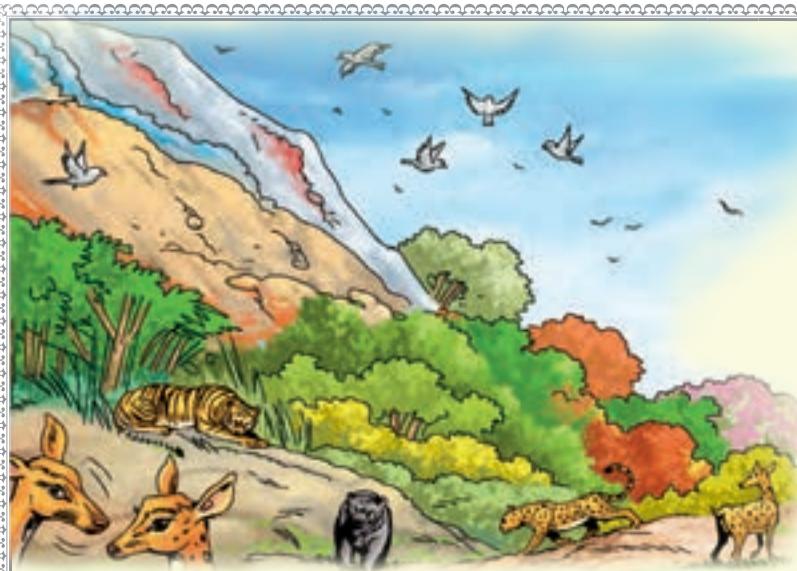
BRAHMA ब्रह्म The Hindu god of creation



BRAHMALOKA ब्रह्मलोक The highest heaven

Ashram





Chitrakoot

BRAHMAN ब्रह्माण् The one Ultimate Reality according to Sanaatana Dharma

BRAHMANA ब्राह्मण् The scholar class in ancient India

CHAITRA चैत्र The first month in the Hindu calendar that marks the beginning of spring

CHITRAKOOT चित्रकूट A beautiful hill near the river MANDAKINI

CHITRARATHA चित्ररथ A noble minister of RAMA

DANDAKA दण्डक A forest that lies near YAMUNA

DASHARATHA दशरथ King of AYODHYA. Father of RAMA.

DHARMA धर्म Morality

DHARMARAJA धर्मराज Another name of YAMA

GANDHARVA गन्धर्व Celestial musicians

GANGA गंगा A sacred river that rises in the Himalayas and flows into the Bay of Bengal

GARUDA गरुड The vehicle of VISHNU

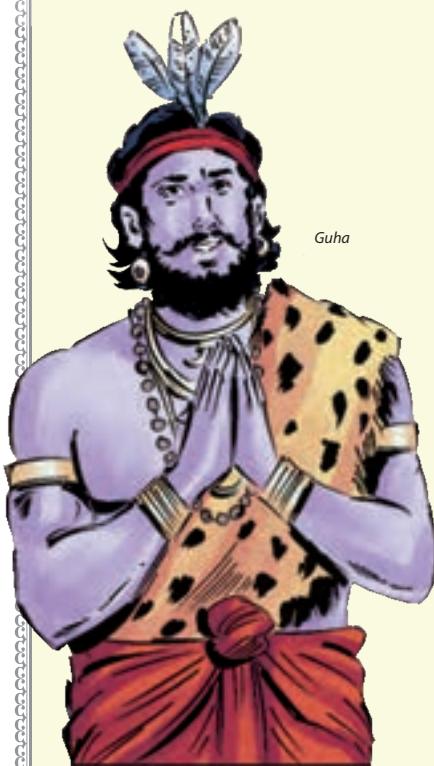
GAUTAMA गौतम A great rishi

GAYA गया A wise king

GAYATRI MANTRA गायत्री मंत्र A Vedic chant

Ganga





GIRIVRAJA गिरीव्रज The capital of KEKEYA, also called RAJAGRIHA

GOMTI गोमती A river in northern India; a tributary of GANGA

GUHA गुह The ruler of the NISHADA territory

HASTINAPUR हस्तनापुर A place that the messengers crossed on their way to KEKEYA's kingdom

HIMALAYA हिमालय A mountain range in nothern India

IKSHUMATI इशुमती A river between AYODHYA and KEKEYA

IKSHVAKU इश्वाकु The earliest ancestor of the Suryavansha kings, the dynasty to which RAMA belonged, and after whom it is named

INDRA इंद्र King of gods

INGUDI इन्गुदी Sacred fig tree

JABALI जाबालि A senior priest in AYODHYA

JANAKA जनक King of MITHILA; father of SITA

JANASTHANA जनस्थान A sacred place terrorised by KHARA

KAALA काल Time

KAAMA काम Desire

KAIKEYI कैकेयी DASHARATHA's youngest wife; BHARATA's mother

KAJAL काजल Cosmetic used to decorate eyes

KARMA कर्म Natural justice

KASHYAPA कश्यप Father of the devas and asuras and the husband of Diti and Aditi

KAUSALYA कौसल्या DASHARATHA'S chief queen; mother of RAMA

KATYAYANA कात्ययन A great rishi

KEKEYA केक्य 1. KAIKEYI's father 2. The kingdom which he ruled

Kovidara



KHARA खर A powerful man-eating rakshasa, and the brother of RAVANA

KIMSUKA किंशुका A kind of fruit-bearing tree, also known as Palash

KINNARA किन्नर A celestial musician

KOLKATA कोलकाता The capital of West Bengal; earlier, Calcutta

KOSALA कोसल A rich and prosperous territory, the capital of which was AYODHYA

KOVIDARA कोविदार Also called Bauhinia, it is a tree with purple flowers

KURU JUNGLE कुरुजंगल Forest between AYODHYA and KEKEYA

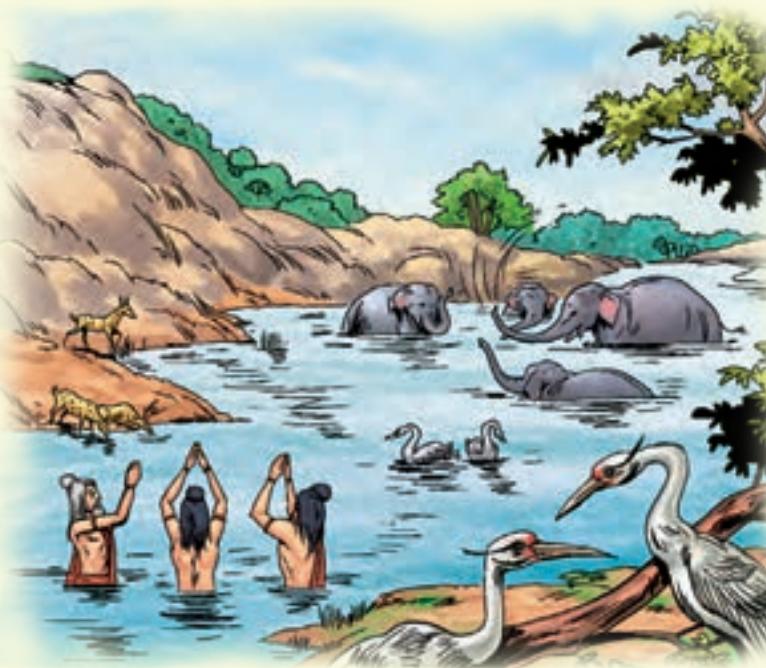
KSHATRIYA क्षत्रिय Class of people traditionally engaged in the military arts

KUBERA कुबेर God of wealth

KUSA कुश A kind of grass, also known as DARBA

LAKSHMANA लक्ष्मण Brother of RAMA; son of SUMITRA

Mandakini



MAHARAJA महाराजा King

MANDAKINI मन्दाकिनी A river in CHITRAKOOT

MANTHARA मंथरा KAIKEYI's maid, who had come with her from KEKEYA (2)

MANU मनु Progenitor of mankind; son of SURYA

MARICHI मरीच BRAHMA's son and KASHYAPA's father

MARKANDEYA मार्कण्डेय A great rishi

MAUDGALYA मौदगल्य A great rishi

MITHILA मिथिला Kingdom of JANAKA

MOKSHA मोक्ष Liberation of the soul

MYTHILI मैथिली Princess of MITHILA; another name for SITA

NAMO नमो A word used during prayer for salutations

NANDIGRAMA नन्दिग्राम A place where Bharata stayed awaiting the return of RAMA

NARAYANA नारायण Another name for VISHNU

NISHADA निषाद The kingdom of GUHA

PADMA पद्मा The Goddess of fortune

PANCHALA पञ्चाल A place between AYODHYA and KEKEYA

PARASHURAMA परशुराम An incarnation of VISHNU

PITRALOKA पितॄलोक The world of our ancestors

PRAYAG प्रयाग A place where YAMUNA meets GANGA

PUSHYA पुष्य A star

PUT पुत A hell

PUTRA पुत्र Son

RAGHAVA राघव The clan to which RAMA belonged

RAGHU रघु An ancestor of RAMA

RAGHUNANDANA रघुनन्दन Another name for RAMA, meaning descendant of RAGHU

RAJAGRIHA राजगृह The capital of KEKEYA, also called GIRIVRAJA

RAJARSHI राजर्षि Royal sage

RAMA राम Prince of AYODHYA; son of KAUSALYA and DASHARATHA

RAVANA रावण The ten-headed king of Lanka

ROHINI रोहिणी A goddess, wife of the moon

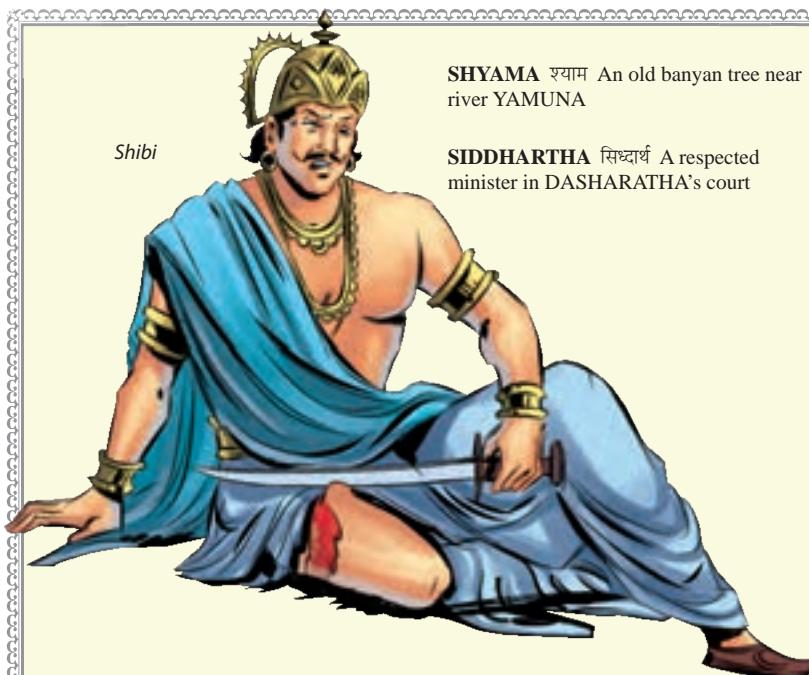
SAGARA सगर An ancestor of DASHARATHA

SANAATANA सनातन The universal principles of Hinduism

SARABHA शरभा A deer with eight legs, more powerful than even a lion

SARASWATI सरस्वती A river between AYODHYA and KEKEYA





Shibi

SHYAMA श्याम An old banyan tree near river YAMUNA

SIDDHARTHA सिद्धार्थ A respected minister in DASHARATHA's court

SARAYU सरयू The kingdom of AYODHYA is situated on the banks of this river

SHATADRU शतद्रु A river, now Satluj

SURYA सूर्य Sun god

SUYAJNA सुयज्ञ VASISHTHA's son

SWASTI VACHANA स्वस्तिवाचन Blessing at the beginning of a ceremony

SWASTIKA स्वस्तिक Name of a boat that Guha brings for Bharata

SWAYAMVARA स्वयम्बर A public function in which a princess chooses her husband from her suitors

SYANDIKA स्यांदिका The river along the southern boundary of KOSALA

TAMASA तमसा A river in northern India; a tributary of GANGA

TAPAS तपस्य The practice of deep meditation and austerities to achieve spiritual power

TIL तिळ Sesame seeds

TILAKA तिलक A mark made on the forehead

TIMIDHWAJA तिमिध्वज A cunning and powerful rakshasa

TRIJATA त्रिजट A poor Brahman in KOSALA

URMILA उर्मिला LAKSHMANA's wife and SITA's sister

VALJAYANTA वैजयन्ति The western gate of AYODHYA

VALMIKI वाल्मीकी Author of the *Ramayana*



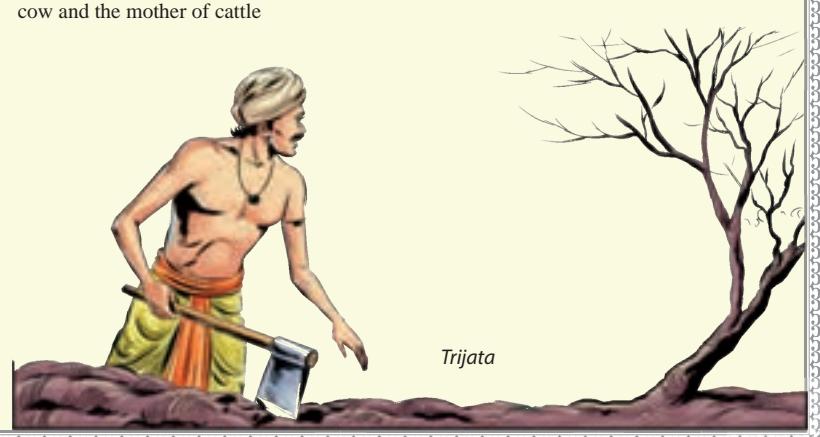
Surabhi

SHATRUGHNA शत्रुघ्न Son of SUMITRA.; twin of LAKSHMANA

SHATRUNJAYA शत्रुंजय An elephant given to RAMA by his uncle

SHIBI शिबी An ancestor of DASHARATHA

SHIVA शिव One of the divine triumvate; the destroyer.



Trijata



Varaha

VAMADEVA वामदेव A great rishi

VARAHA वराहः Form of a boar taken by BRAHMA to carry the earth out of the water

VARNA वर्ण Profession

VARUNA वरुण Lord of all waters

VASISHTHA वसिष्ठ Family priest in the court of DASHARATHA

VATSA वत्सा A kingdom in ancient India

VEDA वेदा Ancient Indian texts

VEDASHRUTI वेदश्रुति An ancient Indian river

VEENA वीणा A stringed musical instrument

VIDEHA विदेहा A country of which MITHILA is the capital

VIPASA विपाशा A river now known as the Beas

VISHALYAKARANI विशल्यकरणी A kind of herb

VISHNU विष्णु The Preserver of the universe

VISHWAKARMA विश्वकर्मा The architect of the gods

VISHWAMITRA विश्वमित्र A revered sage. He was born King Kaushika.

VIVASWAAN विवस्वान The sun god

YAMA यम God of death and justice

YAMUNA यमुना A river in northern India; the largest tributary of GANGA

YUDDHAJIT युधाजित Brother of KAIKEYI

YUVARAJA युवराज Young king, or heir to the throne

Vivaswaan



Vatsa



Next in the series

The Ramayana – Aranya Kand

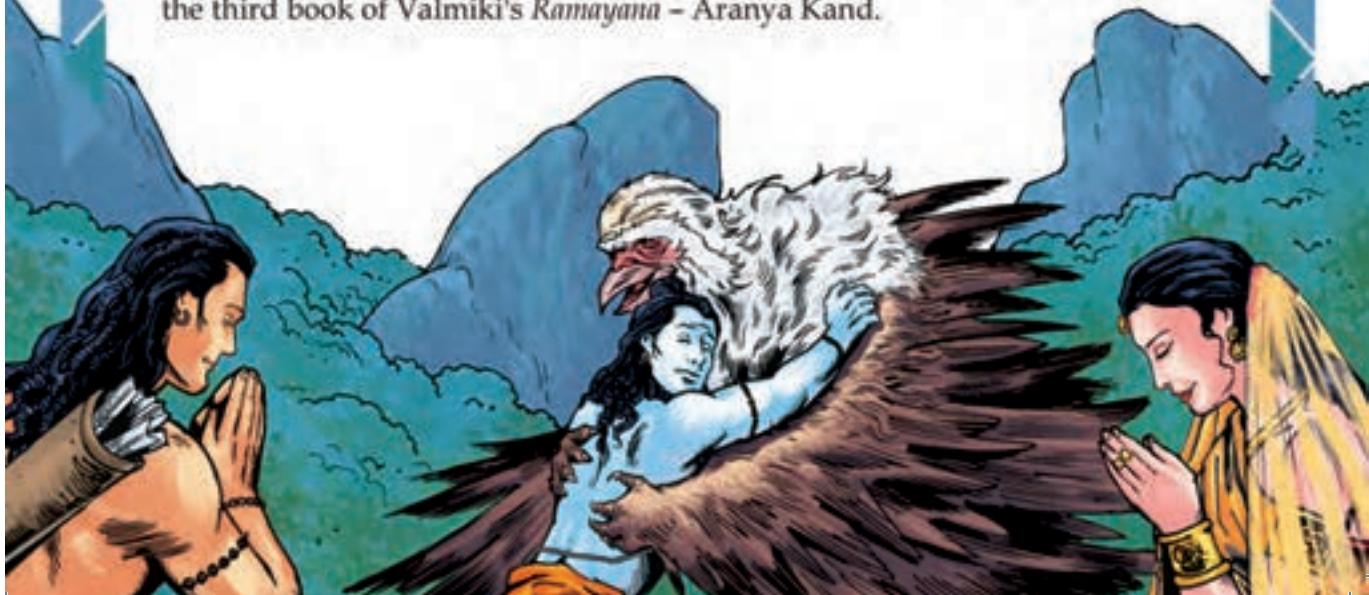
Ten long years pass as Rama, Lakshmana and Sita travel the length and breadth of the Dandaka Forest, meeting sages and fighting the rakshasas who are troubling them. At the end of the tenth year they visit Rishi Agastya who gives Rama many divine missiles and weapons. He then advises them to go and make their home in Panchavati.

On the way they meet Jatayu who tells them about his friendship with their father, King Dasharatha. On hearing that the king has passed away, Jatayu is heart-broken and vows to protect them during their stay in the forest.

In Panchavati, the three settle down to a peaceful life. But it is short-lived as they are spotted by the demoness Shurpanakha who, attracted to Rama and Lakshmana, tries to entice the brothers. When she is spurned by them she attacks Sita, provoking Lakshmana to cut off her nose and ears.

Bleeding profusely and roaring with anger, Shurpanakha goes to her brother, the ten-headed asura king of Lanka, Ravana, for justice. There she describes the great beauty of Sita and encourages her brother to abduct her. Blinded by lust, Ravana goes to Chitrakoot and forces Maricha to help him deceive Rama and kidnap Sita.

All these dramatic events, and the beginning of the search for Sita, make up the third book of Valmiki's *Ramayana* – Aranya Kand.

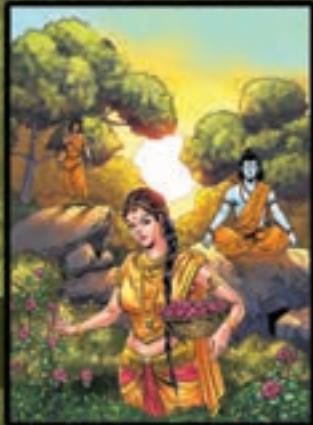


Amar Chitra Katha's Ramayana

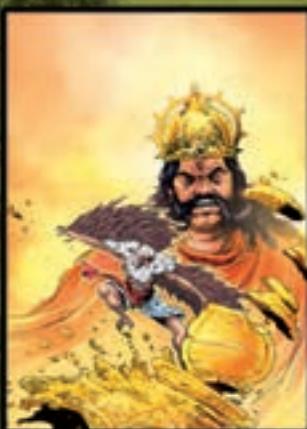
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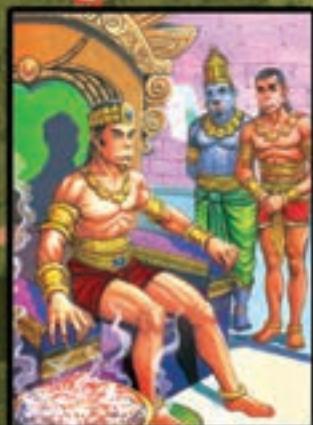
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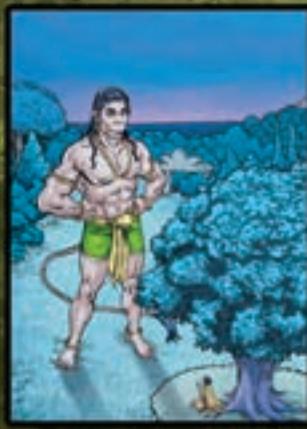
AYODHYA KAND



ARANYA KAND



KISHKINDHA KAND



SUNDARA KAND



YUDDHA KAND

THE RAMAYANA – AYODHYA KAND

Ayodhya Kand is the second book of Valmiki's Ramayana. It follows Bala Kand and tells the story of Rama's exile from Ayodhya, and the overwhelming grief that grips, not just his family, but the whole city.

In Ayodhya Kand, King Dasharatha joyfully announces his decision to install Rama as his heir. But his dreams come crashing down when his youngest wife Kaikeyi demands Rama's exile and the installation of her son, Bharata, as the Yuvaraja. Dasharatha is faced with a terrible dilemma as he has earlier granted Kaikeyi two boons to which he is bound by his word.

Determined to protect his father's honour, Rama willingly accepts the harsh decision and prepares to leave. Sita and Lakshmana decide to accompany him. Even though the people condemn her for her cruelty and the broken-hearted king repeatedly appeals to her better sense, Kaikeyi does not revoke her harsh decision. Kausalya bids a tearful farewell to her son and daughter-in-law, even while Lakshmana's mother, Sumitra, consoles her.

The entire kingdom sinks into dark despair as the chariot carrying the three departs from the city. Unable to bear the loss, the people of Ayodhya refuse to leave their prince and follow him. Touched by their love and concerned for their welfare, Rama decides to quietly leave them sleeping on the banks of the River Tamasa and the three slip away with Sumantra, their charioteer.

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AYODHYA KAND IS FOLLOWED BY ARANYA KAND, KISHKINDHA KAND, SUNDARA KAND, YUDDHA KAND AND UTTARA KAND.



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