



TALES OF ARJUNA

THE EXPLOITS OF AN EXCEPTIONAL WARRIOR

Vol 525 | ₹90





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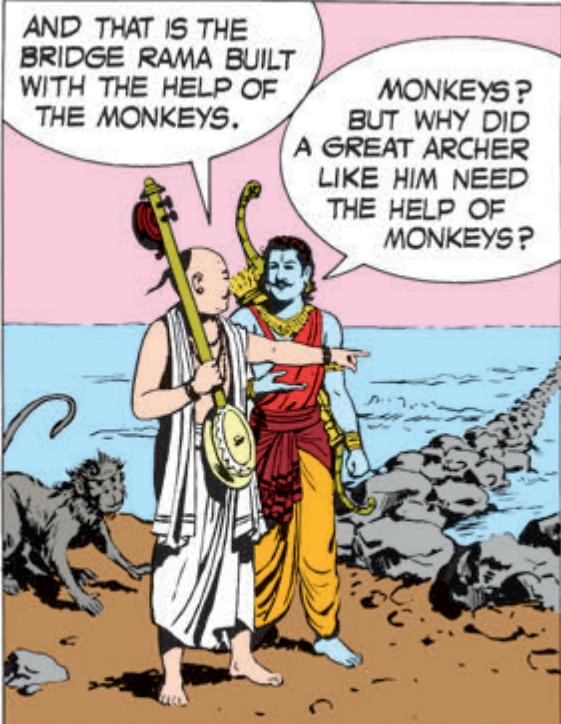
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ARJUNA, THE MONKEY AND THE BOY



ONCE, WHILE ARJUNA WAS ON A PILGRIMAGE TO VARIOUS HOLY PLACES, HE CAME TO RAMESWARAM.*



* IN COASTAL TAMIL NADU

THE BRAHMAN WENT HIS WAY BUT A MONKEY, WHICH WAS FOLLOWING ARJUNA, BURST OUT LAUGHING.



SURPRISED, ARJUNA TURNED ROUND—



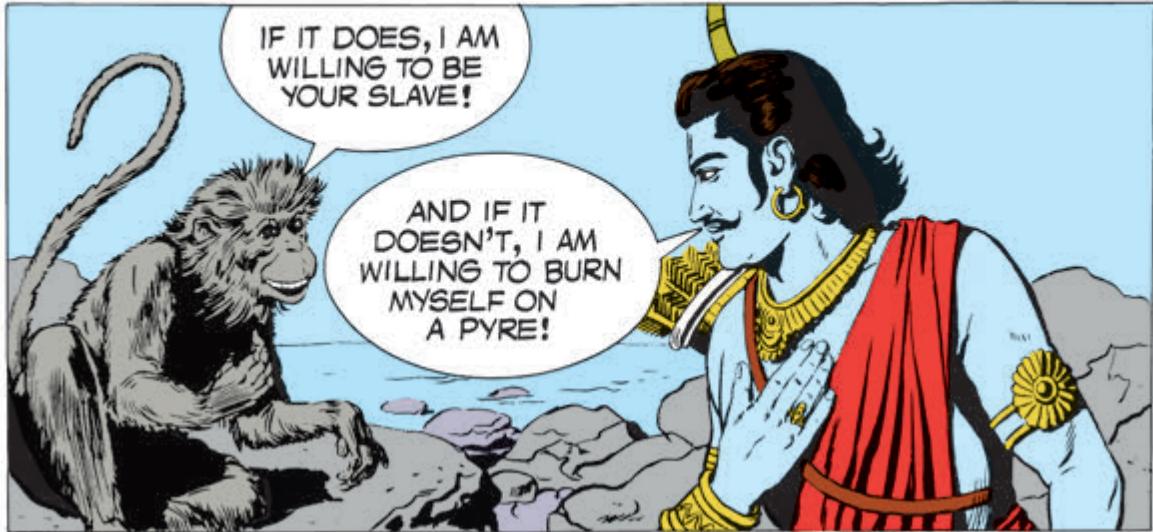
ARJUNA WAS A LITTLE ANNOYED BY THE MONKEY'S AUDACITY.

MERE MONKEYS COULD BREAK A BRIDGE OF MIGHTY RAMA'S ARROWS! IMPOSSIBLE! WHY, NO MONKEY COULD CRUSH A BRIDGE OF EVEN MY ARROWS!

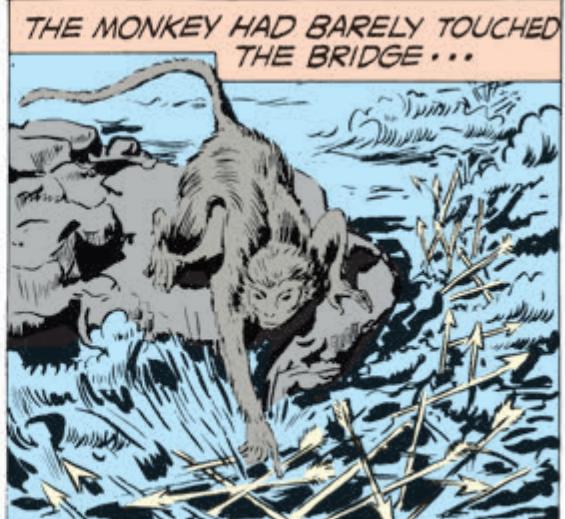


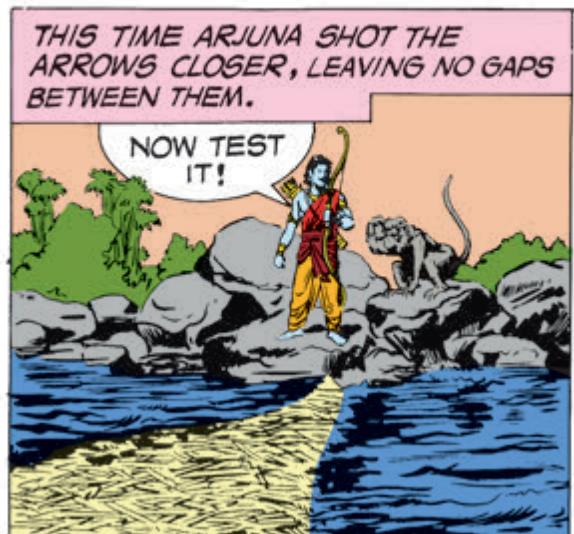
I CHALLENGE THAT! A BRIDGE MADE WITH YOUR ARROWS WON'T WITHSTAND EVEN MY WEIGHT, PUNY AS I AM.



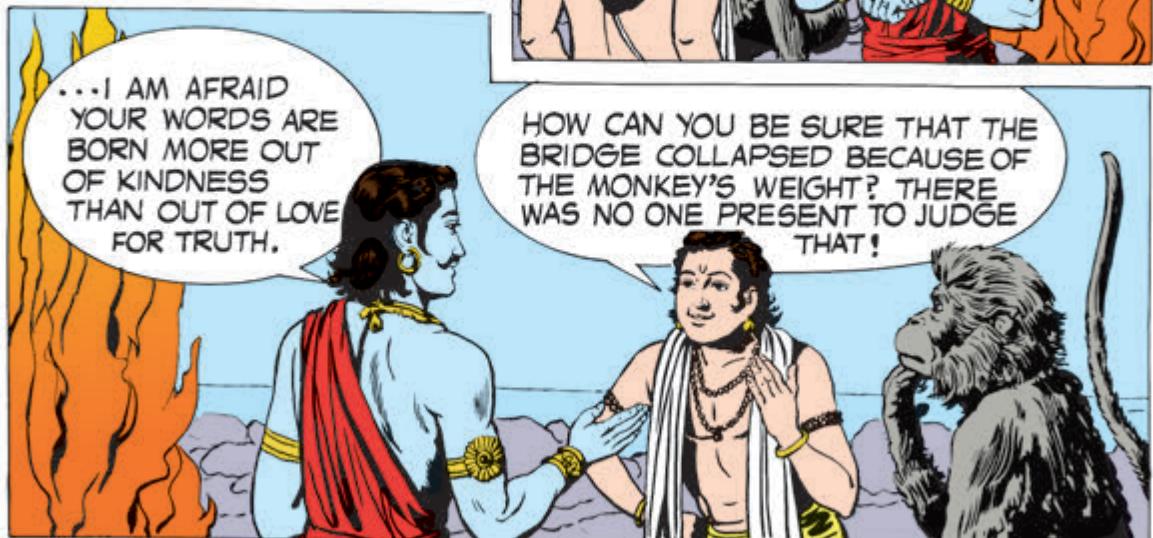
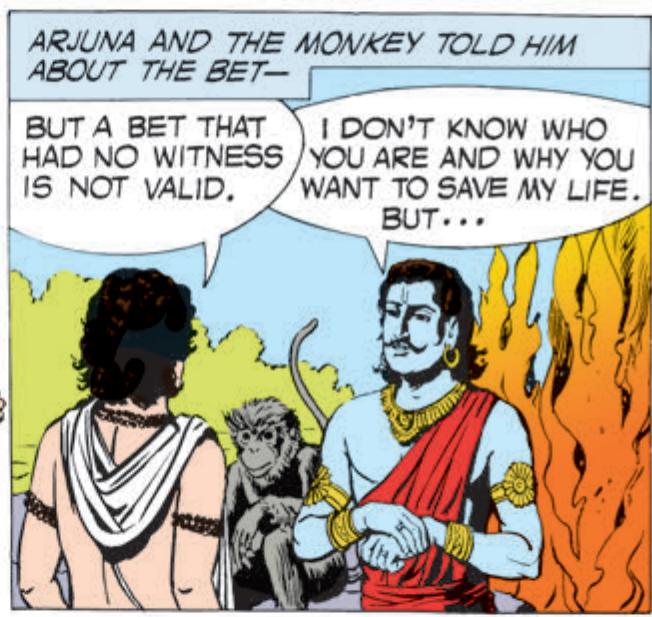


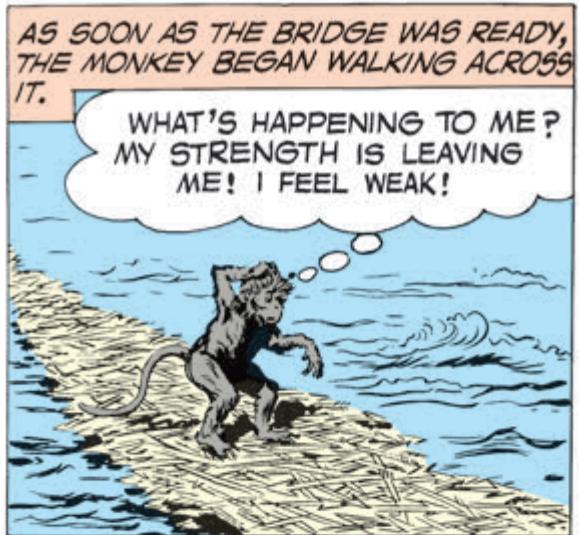
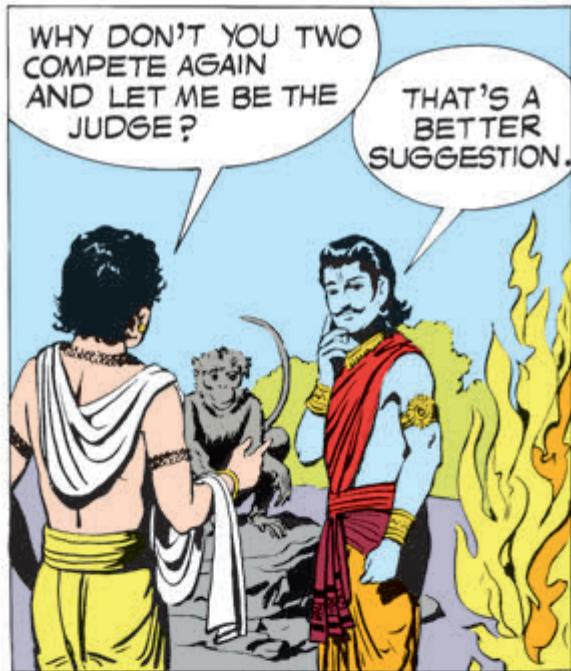
SO ARJUNA SET TO WORK AND BEGAN TO BRIDGE THE WATERS BETWEEN LANKA AND THE MAINLAND WITH A SHOWER OF ARROWS.





THE PYRE WAS MADE AND ARJUNA WAS ABOUT TO JUMP INTO THE FLAMES—





... AND JUMPED UP AND DOWN ON THE BRIDGE.

WHAT! THE BRIDGE STILL STANDS! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
ONLY KRISHNA.... WHY, OF COURSE
THE BOY IS KRISHNA!



AT THE SAME MOMENT, THE MONKEY, TOO, REALISED THE TRUTH.

WHAT A VAIN FOOL
I HAVE BEEN. OF COURSE IT IS THE LORD HIMSELF!



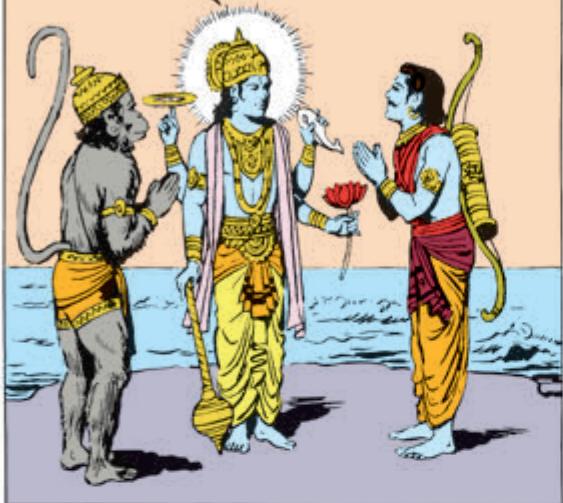
RAMA!

KRISHNA!



AND LO! IN THE PLACE OF THE BOY STOOD LORD VISHNU.

YES IT IS I ! BOTH OF YOU NEEDED TO BE TAUGHT A LESSON IN HUMILITY. YOU, ARJUNA, WERE TOO VAIN.



AND YOU, HANUMAN, WERE TOO PROUD OF YOUR STRENGTH.



HANUMAN, TO FULFIL THE CONDITIONS OF YOUR WAGER YOU SHALL BE ON ARJUNA'S FLAG.



ARJUNA DEFEATS INDRA



WHEN AT LAST THE SACRIFICE WAS COMPLETED, AGNI WAS PERTURBED.

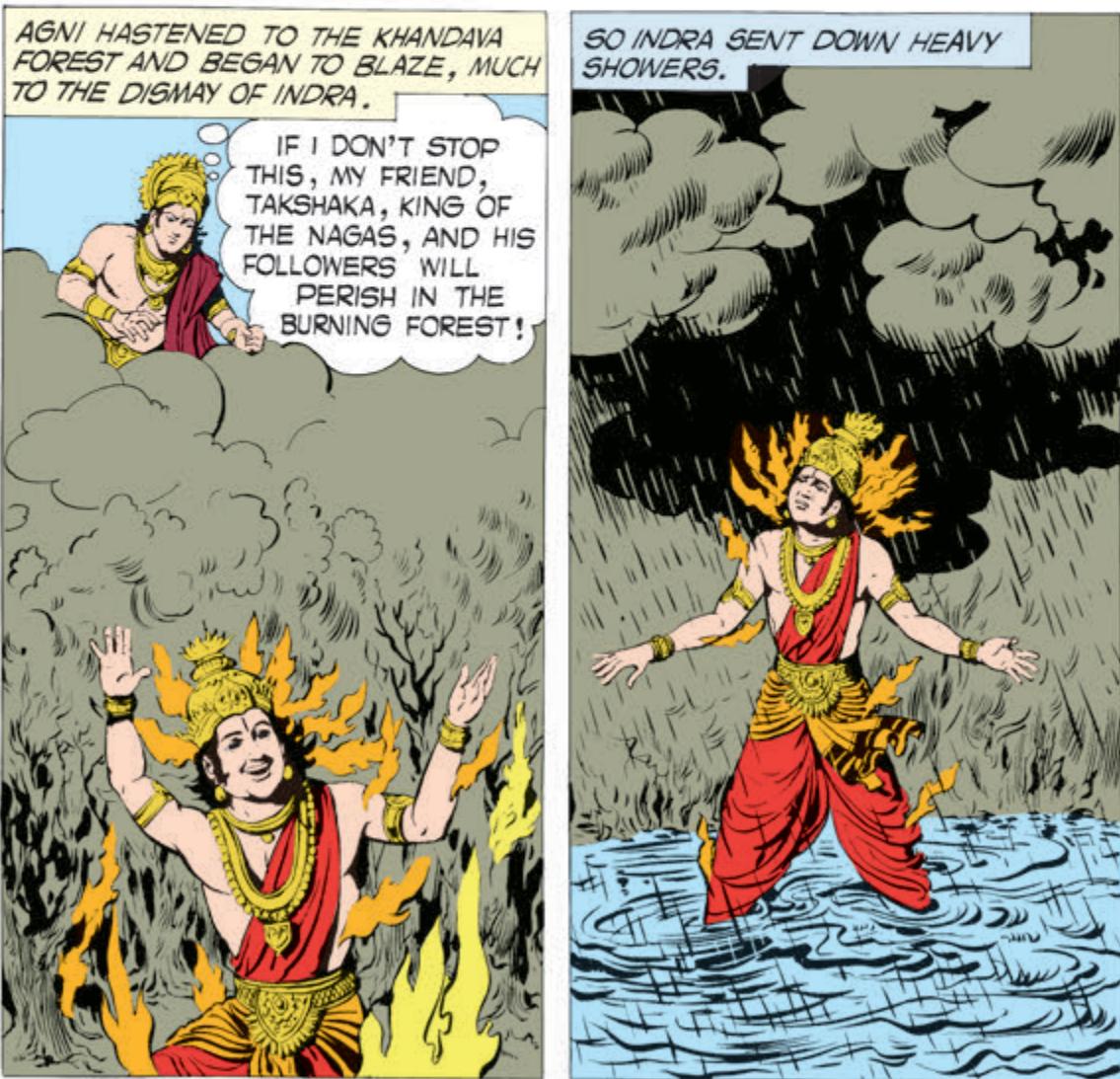
WHY DO I FEEL SO DULL AND WEAK? WHY AM I SO PALE?
WHY DON'T I SHINE AS I DID BEFORE?



HE WENT TO THE ABODE OF BRAHMA.

O LORD, WHAT SHOULD I DO TO REGAIN MY LOST SPLENDOUR AND STRENGTH?





AGNI WENT BACK TO BRAHMA.

LORD, INDRA IS BENT ON THWARTING ME! WHAT SHOULD I DO?



THERE ARE ONLY TWO PERSONS WHO CAN HELP YOU: THE VALIANT HEROES, ARJUNA AND KRISHNA. GO TO THEM. THEY ARE NOW NEAR THE KHANDAVA FOREST.



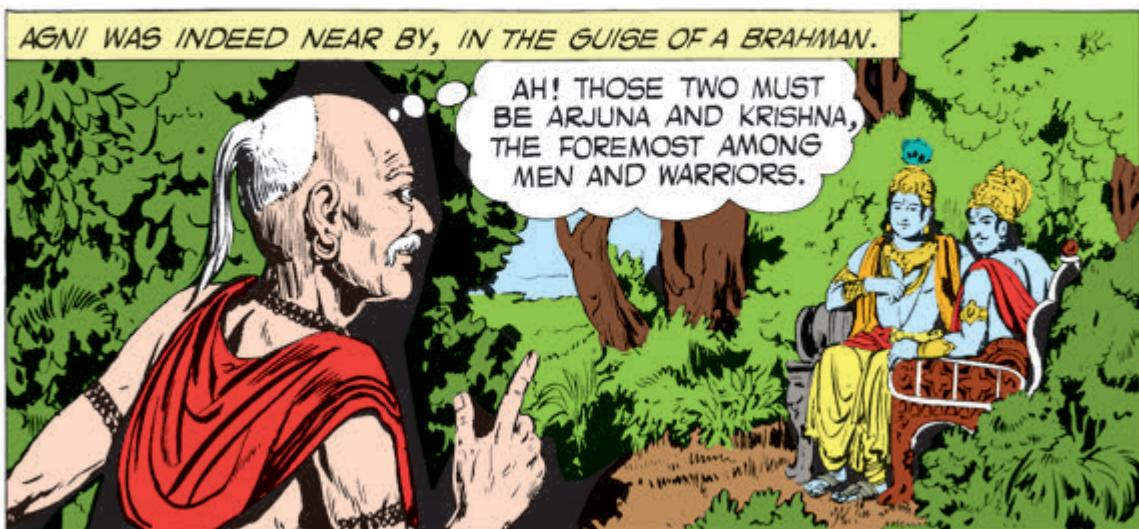
AT THAT MOMENT, ARJUNA AND KRISHNA WERE RELAXING ON THE BANK OF THE YAMUNA.

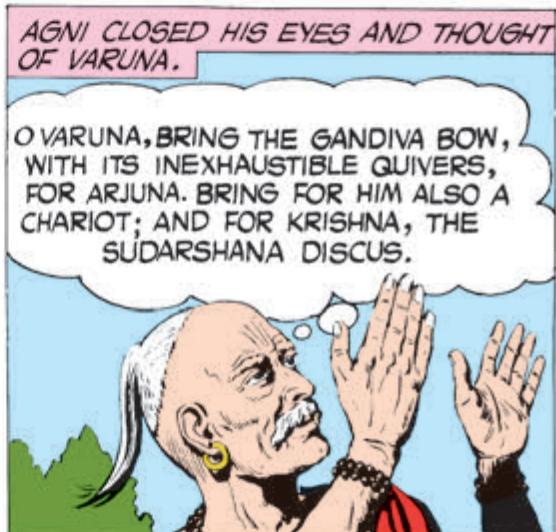
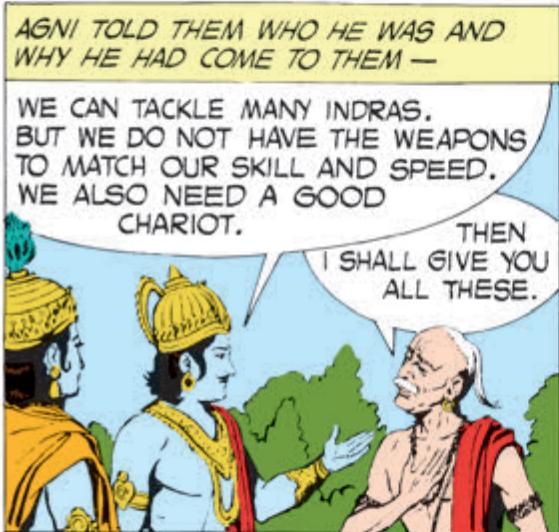
THIS HAS BEEN AN UNUSUALLY HOT SUMMER. I FEEL AS IF I AM BEING SCORCHED BY AGNI!



AGNI WAS INDEED NEAR BY, IN THE GUISE OF A BRAHMAN.

AH! THOSE TWO MUST BE ARJUNA AND KRISHNA, THE FOREMOST AMONG MEN AND WARRIORs.





URGED ON BY THEM, AGNI CHANGED HIS FORM. HE THEN BROKE OUT INTO SEVEN FLAMES AND SURROUNDED THE FOREST, SETTING IT ABLAZE ON ALL SIDES. AS THE FLAMES ROSE HIGH, KRISHNA TURNED TO ARJUNA.



AS THEY POSTED THEMSELVES ON OPPOSITE SIDES OF THE FOREST, THE SKIES SUDDENLY DARKENED.



THE NEXT MOMENT THE RAIN CAME DOWN IN TORRENTS.



THE FOREST, CHOKED WITH SMOKE AND STRUCK BY LIGHTNING, WAS FEARFUL TO LOOK AT.



ARJUNA STOPPED THE SHOWER WITH A SHOWER OF HIS OWN...



... TILL THE FOREST WAS COVERED WITH A CANOPY OF ARROWS.



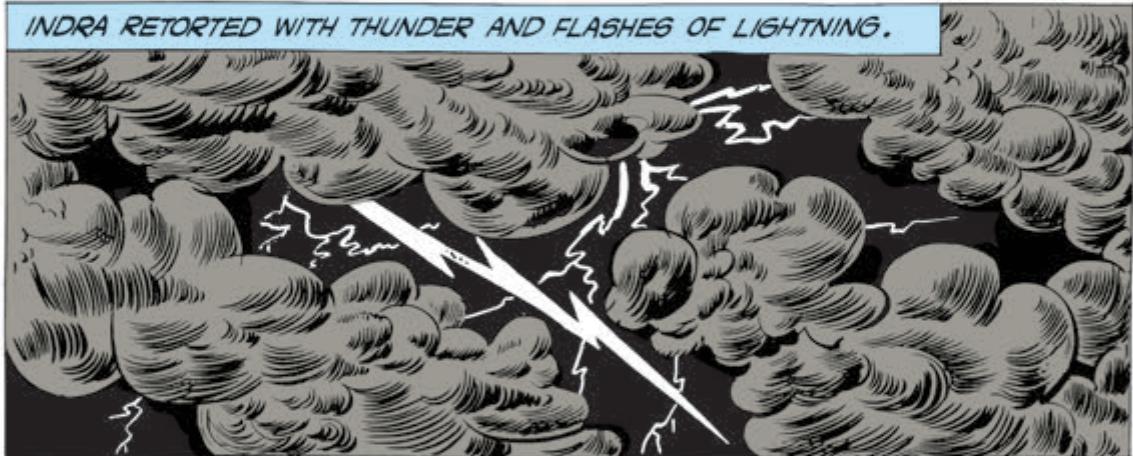
WHEN ARJUNA REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS HE WAS FURIOUS.



AND HE BEGAN TO AIM HIS ARROWS AT INDRA IN THE SKIES.



INDRA RETORTED WITH THUNDER AND FLASHES OF LIGHTNING.



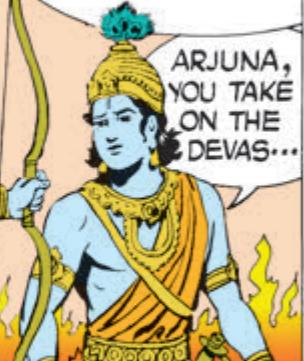
SUDDENLY ALL WAS QUIET —



THE NEXT MOMENT THE SKY WAS CLEAR. THE SUN SHONE BRIGHTLY AND A COOL BREEZE FANDED AGNI AS HE BLAZED AFRESH. SUDDENLY —



AND LOOK! ON THE OTHER SIDE THE ASURAS AND NAGAS ARE CHARGING FORWARD!



... AND I'LL DEAL WITH THE ASURAS AND NAGAS.



KRISHNA SENT HIS DISCUS FLYING THROUGH THE AIR, AND THE NAGAS AND ASURAS FLED IN TERROR. MEANWHILE, ARJUNA COUNTERED THE ATTACK OF THE DEVAS SO SKILFULLY...



... THAT THEY RETREATED IN PANIC. INDRA COULD NOT HELP ADMIRING ARJUNA.

MY DEVAS ARE TURNING AWAY IN FEAR! ARJUNA HAS SURPASSED HIMSELF.



BUT, ALL THE SAME, HE SENT DOWN A SHOWER OF STONES.

LET ME SEE THE EXTENT OF YOUR MIGHT.



BUT ARJUNA QUICKLY WARDED OFF THE SHOWER WITH HIS ARROWS.



INDRA THEN TORE UP THE PEAK OF THE MANDARA MOUNTAIN...



...AND HURLED IT AT ARJUNA.



BUT ARJUNA SMASHED IT WITH HIS ARROWS.



I AM PLEASED! HIS VALOUR IS UNMATCHED! AND KRISHNA HAS VANQUISHED THE ASURAS AND NAGAS WITH HIS DISCUS! IF IT WERE NOT FOR TAKSHAKA I WOULD....



AT THAT MOMENT A VOICE ECHOED FROM THE HEAVENS.

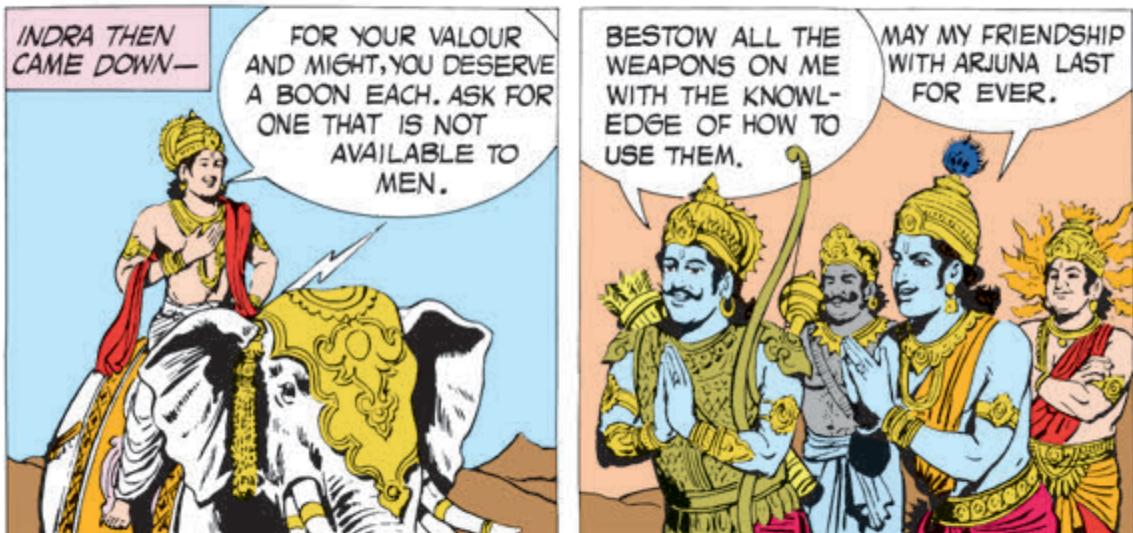
YOUR FRIEND, TAKSHAKA, IS SAFE. WHEN THE FIRE BROKE OUT, HE WAS AT KURUKSHETRA, O INDRA! NO ONE CAN DEFEAT ARJUNA AND KRISHNA. AND THE DESTRUCTION OF KHANDAVA HAS BEEN ORDAINED BY FATE. SO GIVE UP THE FIGHT.

AS THEY SAW INDRA RETREATING, ARJUNA AND KRISHNA LEAPT FOR JOY.





WHEN QUIET WAS RESTORED, AGNI BLAZED FORTH FOR FIFTEEN DAYS TILL HE REGAINED HIS LOST LUSTRE.



AS INDRA WENT AWAY, IT WAS AGNI'S TURN TO BESTOW A REWARD—

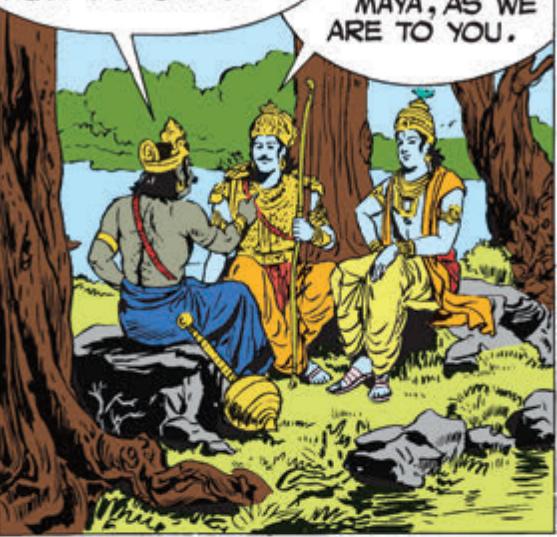
I HAVE BEEN GRATIFIED BY YOU. YOU SHALL, AT MY COMMAND, BE ABLE TO TRAVEL ANYWHERE AT WILL.



WHEN AGNI LEFT, ARJUNA, KRISHNA AND MAYA RELAXED ON THE BANK OF A RIVER.

O ARJUNA, YOU PROTECTED ME FROM THE WRATH OF KRISHNA AND AGNI. TELL ME WHAT I CAN DO FOR YOU.

BE EVER WELL - DISPOSED TO US, MAYA, AS WE ARE TO YOU.



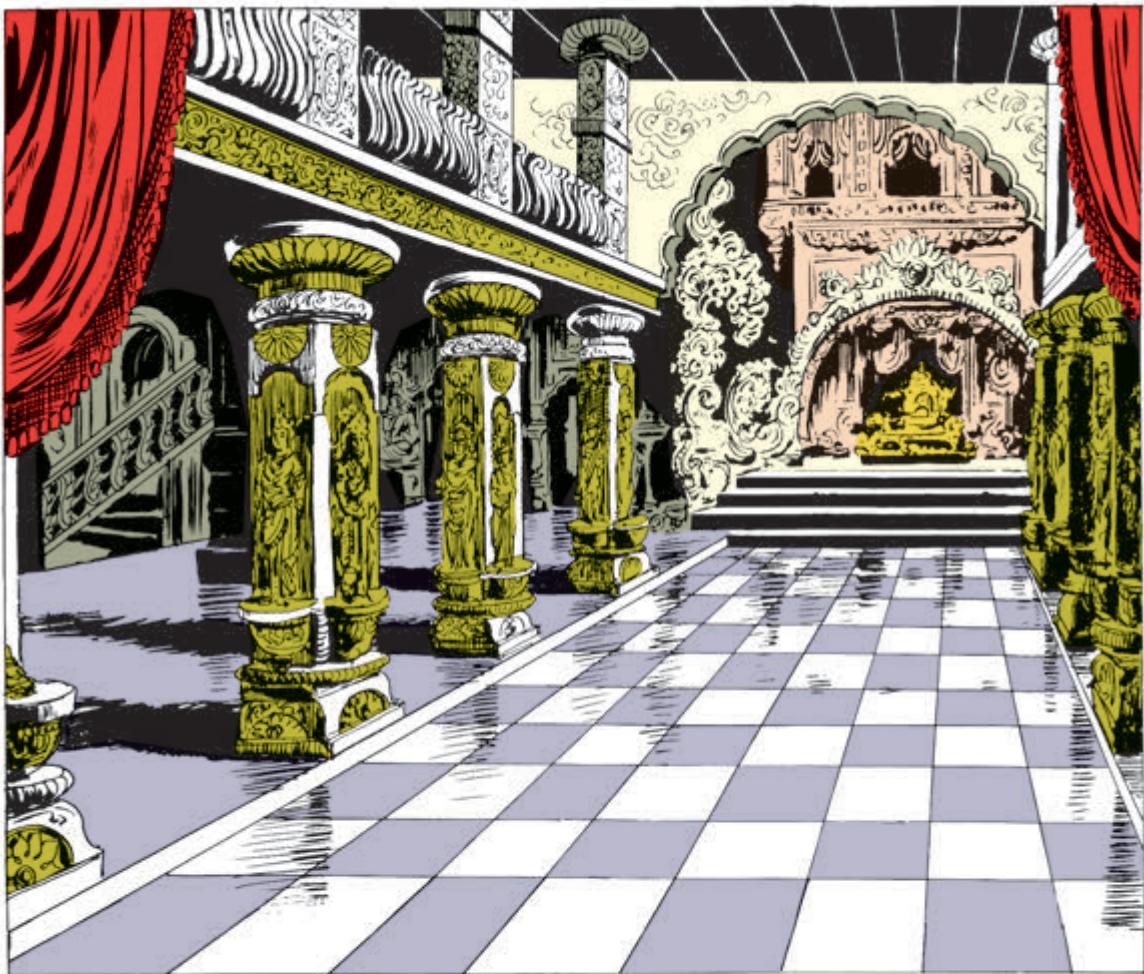
BUT I MUST DO SOMETHING FOR YOU.

WELL, KRISHNA, WHAT CAN WE ASK OF OUR FRIEND?



MAYA, YOU ARE THE GREAT ARCHITECT OF THE ASURAS. WHY DON'T YOU BUILD A SABHA* FOR YUDHISHTHIRA? BUILD ONE THAT WILL BE UNSURPASSED IN SPLENDOUR.





AND THAT WAS HOW YUDHISHTHIRA ACQUIRED THE MAGNIFICENT HALL THAT BECAME THE LAST STRAW FOR HIS ALREADY ENVIOUS COUSINS, THE KAURAVAS, AND INDUCED THEM TO DECEITFULLY DEPRIVE YUDHISHTHIRA OF HIS KINGDOM.

ARJUNA HUMBLED

AH! KRISHNA,
NOW THAT THE GANDIVA
BOW IS MINE, NO ONE
CAN DEFEAT ME. EVEN
INDRA WAS HELPLESS
AGAINST MY ARROWS!

ARJUNA, THE PANDAVA, HAD COME TO VISIT KRISHNA AT DWARKA.

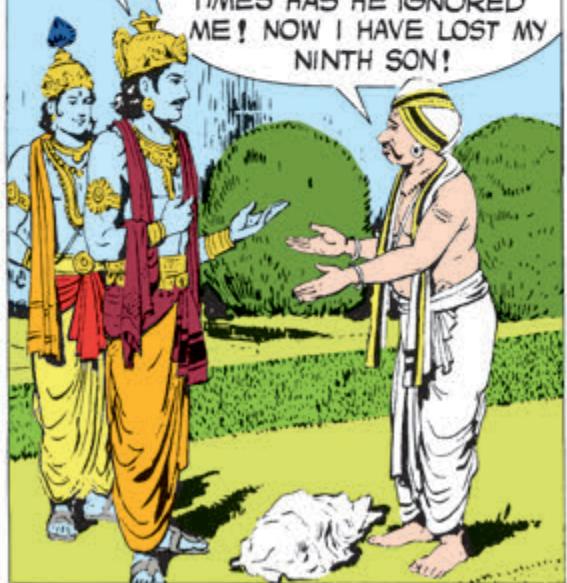
SUDDENLY, THEY HEARD A LOUD CRY.

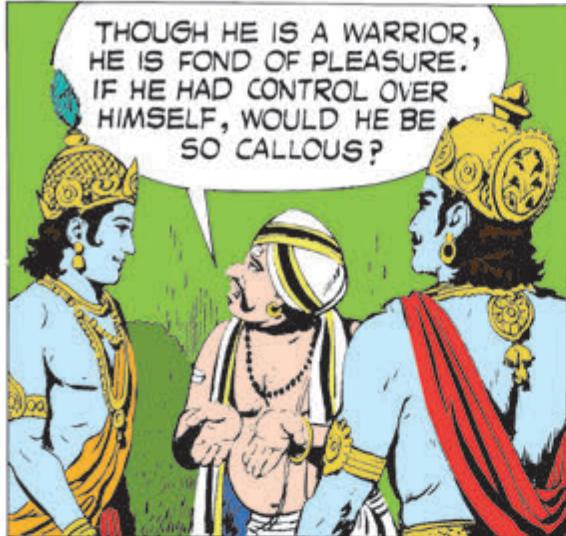


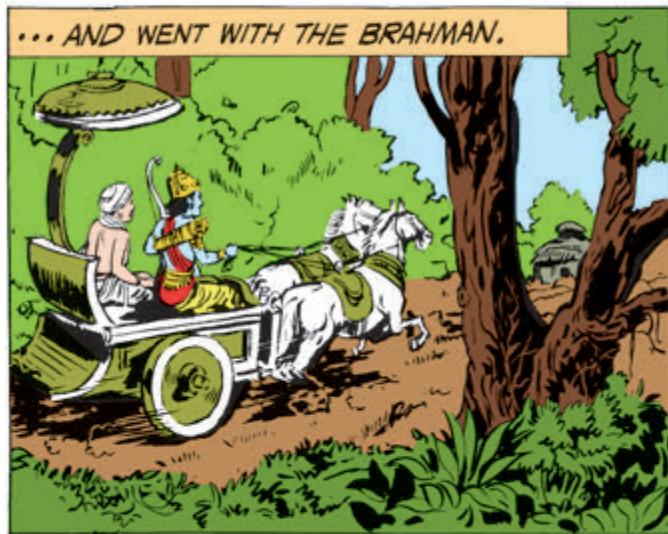
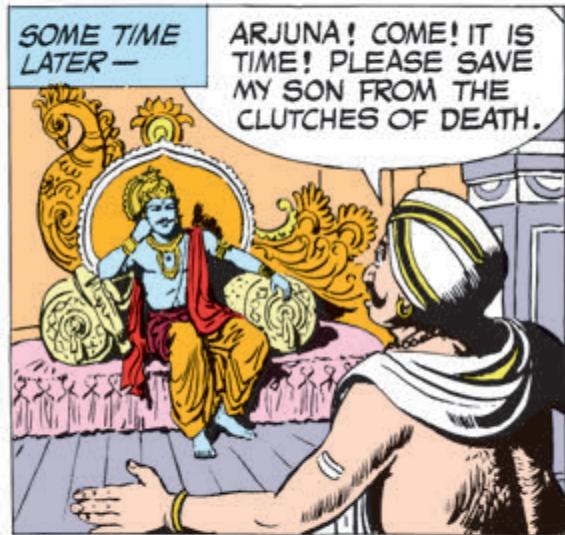
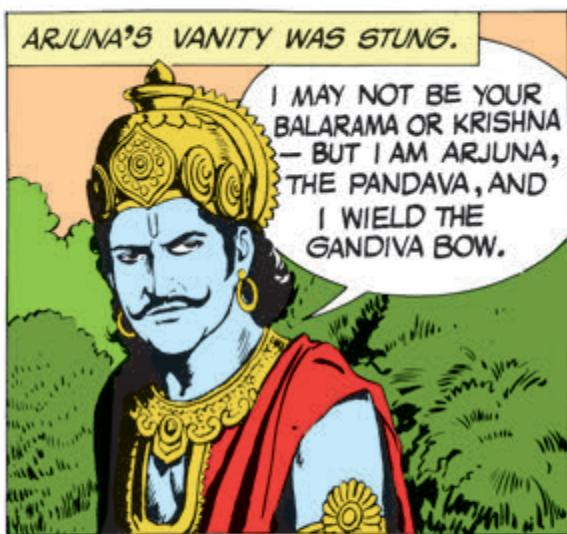
SEEING A BRAHMAN OUTSIDE, THEY WENT TO HIM —

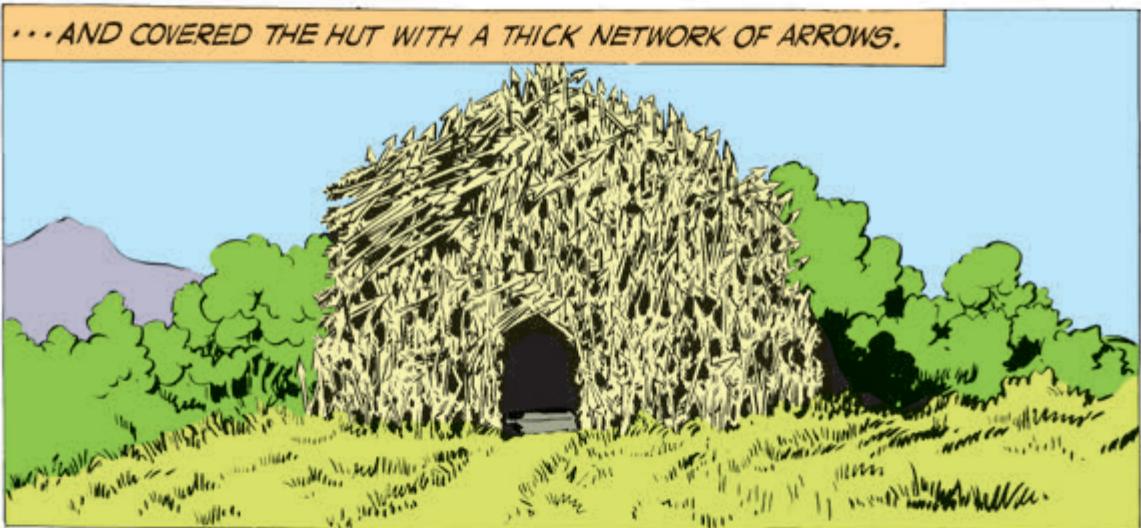
WHAT IS TROUBLING YOU, FRIEND?

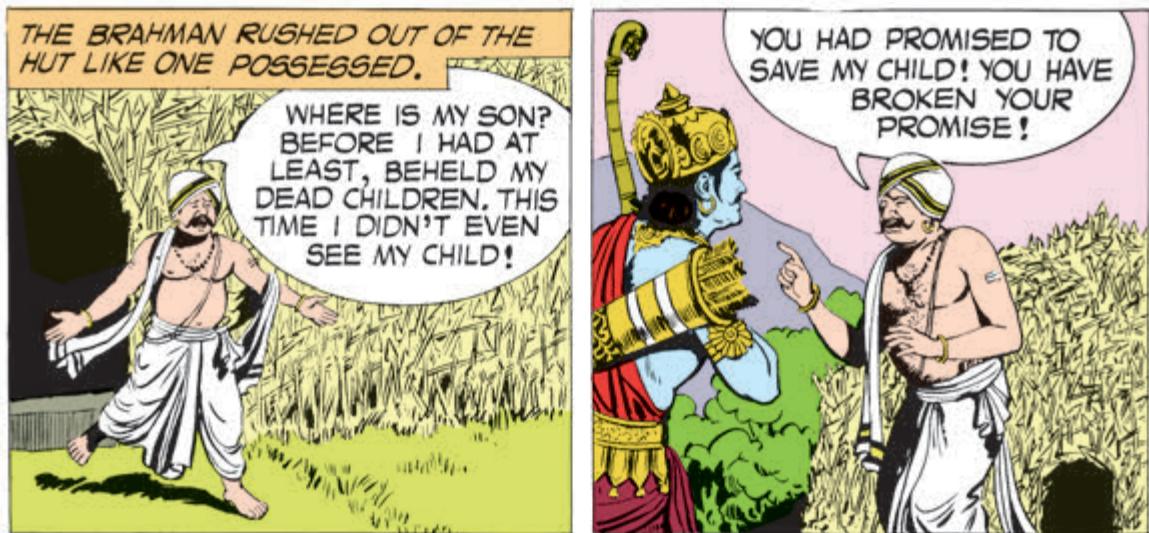
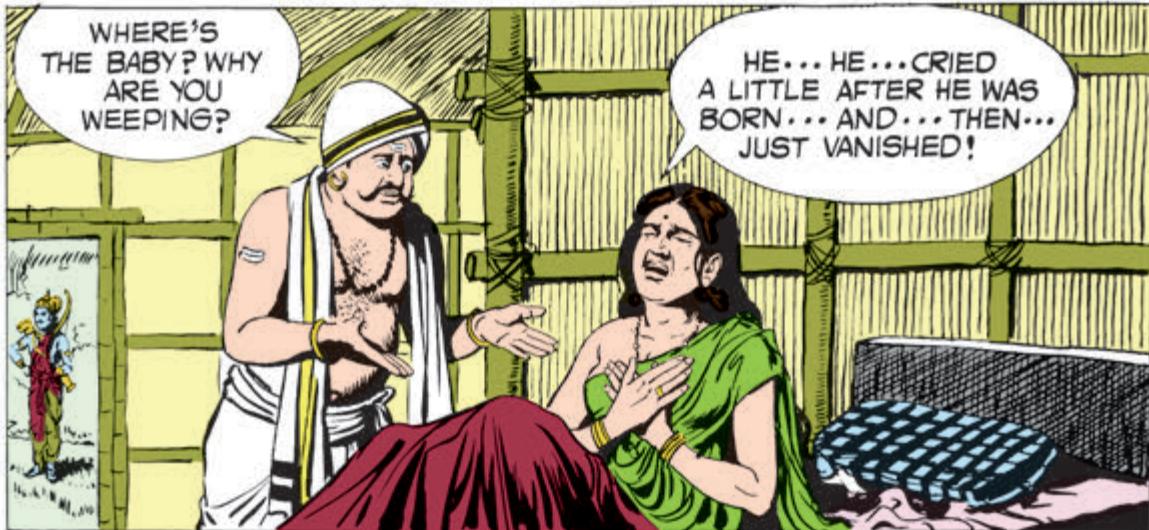
EIGHT TIMES HAVE I APPEALED TO OUR KING TO SAVE MY DEAD SONS AND EIGHT TIMES HAS HE IGNORED ME! NOW I HAVE LOST MY NINTH SON!











... AND LOW. BUT NOWHERE COULD HE FIND THE BRAHMAN'S SON.

I'D BETTER RETURN AND
GIVE UP MY LIFE. I HAVE
FAILED.

I CAN SEE YOU
HAVE FAILED.
WHY HAVE YOU
COME BACK?

TO FULFIL THE SECOND
HALF OF MY
PROMISE.

ARJUNA SOON HAD A PYRE PREPARED.

AS HE WAS ABOUT TO JUMP INTO IT—

WAIT, ARJUNA!



DO NOT PUNISH YOURSELF.
I WILL SHOW YOU WHERE
THE BRAHMAN'S SONS
ARE. COME WITH
ME.

THE BEMUSED ARJUNA GOT INTO THE
CHARIOT—

WE WILL GO
TOWARDS THE
WEST.



THEY DROVE ON TILL THEY CAME TO THE REGIONS OF THE NIGHT.

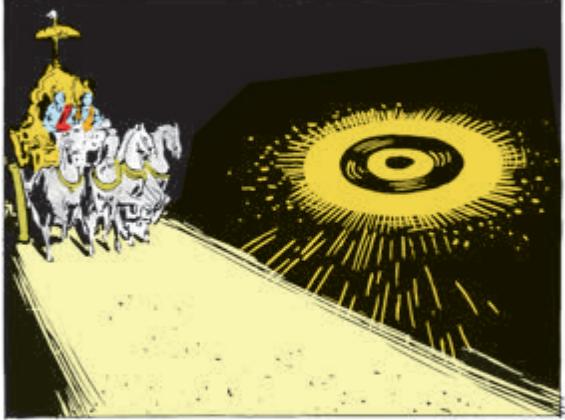
OH! I CAN'T SEE A
THING! ARE YOU THERE KRISHNA?
HAS THE CHARIOT STOPPED?

THE HORSES
HAVE STOPPED BECAUSE
OF THE BLINDING
DARKNESS.

KRISHNA RAISED HIS DISCUS —



KRISHNA'S DISCUS WHIRRED ON AHEAD CUTTING WITH ITS OWN LUSTRE A BRIGHT PATH THROUGH THE DARKNESS.



SOON THEY REACHED THE OCEAN OF MILK, THE ABODE OF VISHNU. KRISHNA BOWED TO THE LORD, OF WHOM HE WAS BUT A PART.



ARJUNA STOOD DAZED FOR A MOMENT. THEN HE, TOO, BOWED IN REVERENCE.

I HAD THESE BRAHMAN BOYS BROUGHT HERE ONLY TO GIVE YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO COME HERE, SLAY THE ASURAS AND HELP PRESERVE THE DIVINE LAW. THAT IS YOUR MISSION. AFTER FINISHING IT, COME BACK QUICKLY TO ME.



AH! KRISHNA, YOU KNEW ALL ALONG THAT THEY WERE HERE! NO WONDER YOU WERE SILENT AND UNMOVED.

AND THEN ARJUNA REALISED WHY THIS WHOLE DRAMA HAD BEEN PLAYED.

O KRISHNA, I NOW UNDERSTAND. WHATEVER MANLINESS AND POWERS A MAN MAY HAVE, IT IS ALL THROUGH THE GRACE OF GOD. FORGIVE ME MY VANITY.



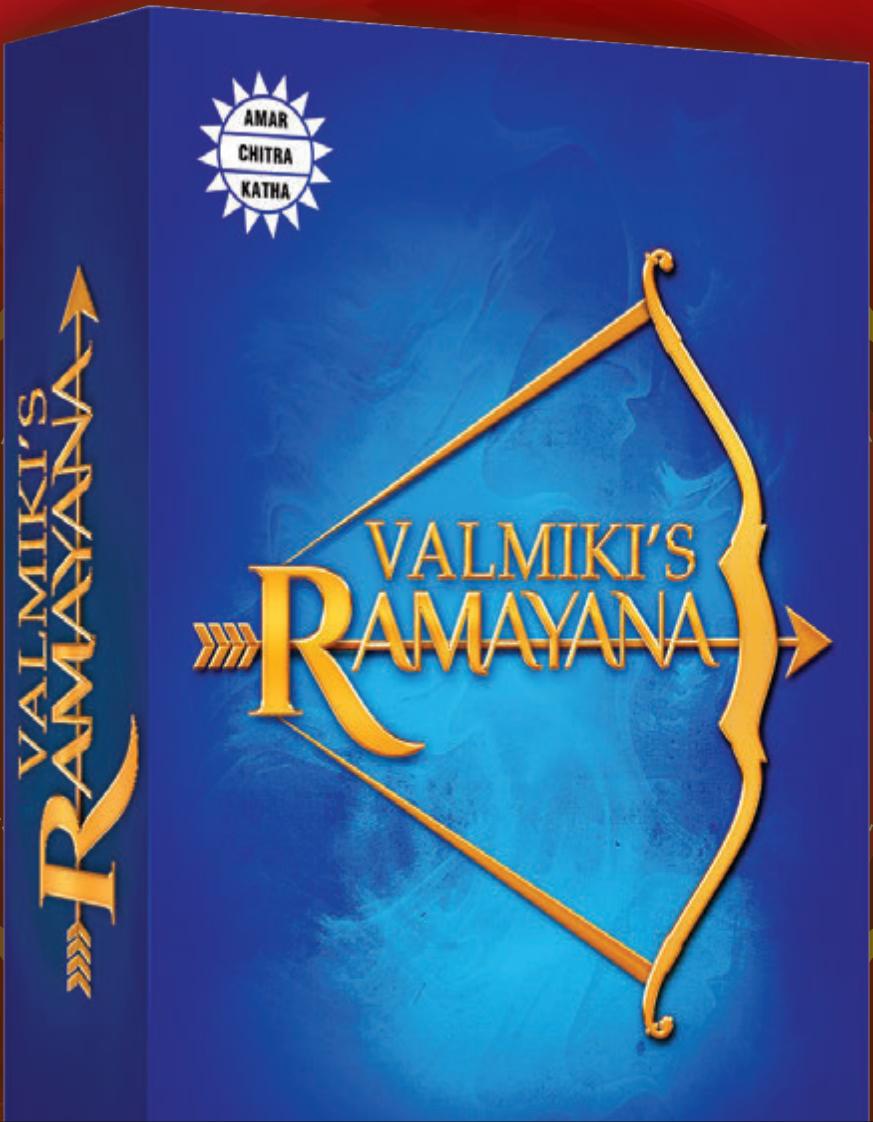
TAKING THEIR LEAVE OF VISHNU, KRISHNA AND ARJUNA PUT THE TEN SONS OF THE BRAHMAN IN THE CHARIOT AND LEFT FOR DWARAKA.

IT IS FAITH IN GOD AND HUMILITY THAT ULTIMATELY WINS OUR BATTLES FOR US, ARJUNA, NOT VANITY OR SKILL ALONE.





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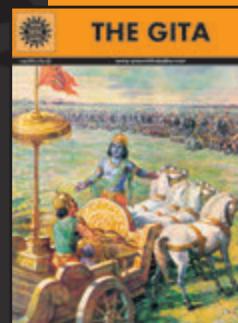
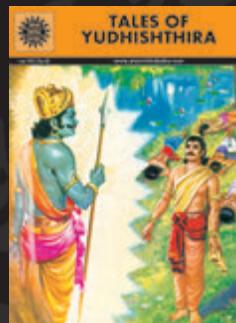
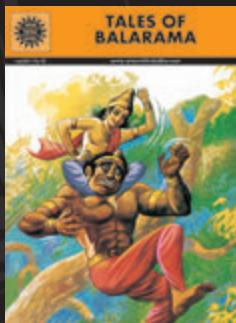


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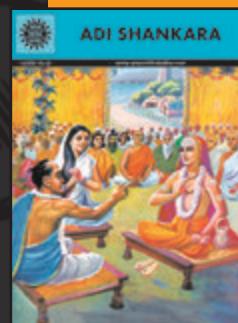
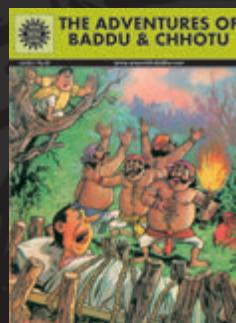
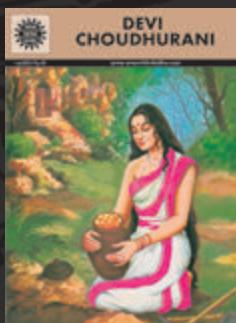
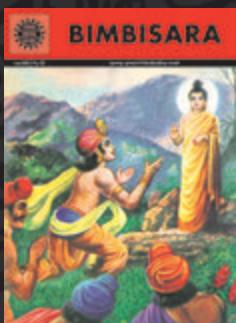
TALES OF ARJUNA

Superbly skilled, speedy and strong, Arjuna boasted that he was the world's greatest warrior. But, despite his unquestionable courage, this honourable Pandava prince realised he could not confront Lord Indra's power – or even the wiles of a cheeky monkey – without help. He needed divine weapons, such as the Gandiva bow, with its inexhaustible supply of arrows, and a special war chariot. Most importantly, he needed the blessings of the gods, especially Lord Vishnu.

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