



AYYAPPAN

THE LORD OF SHABARIMALA

Vol 673 | ₹70





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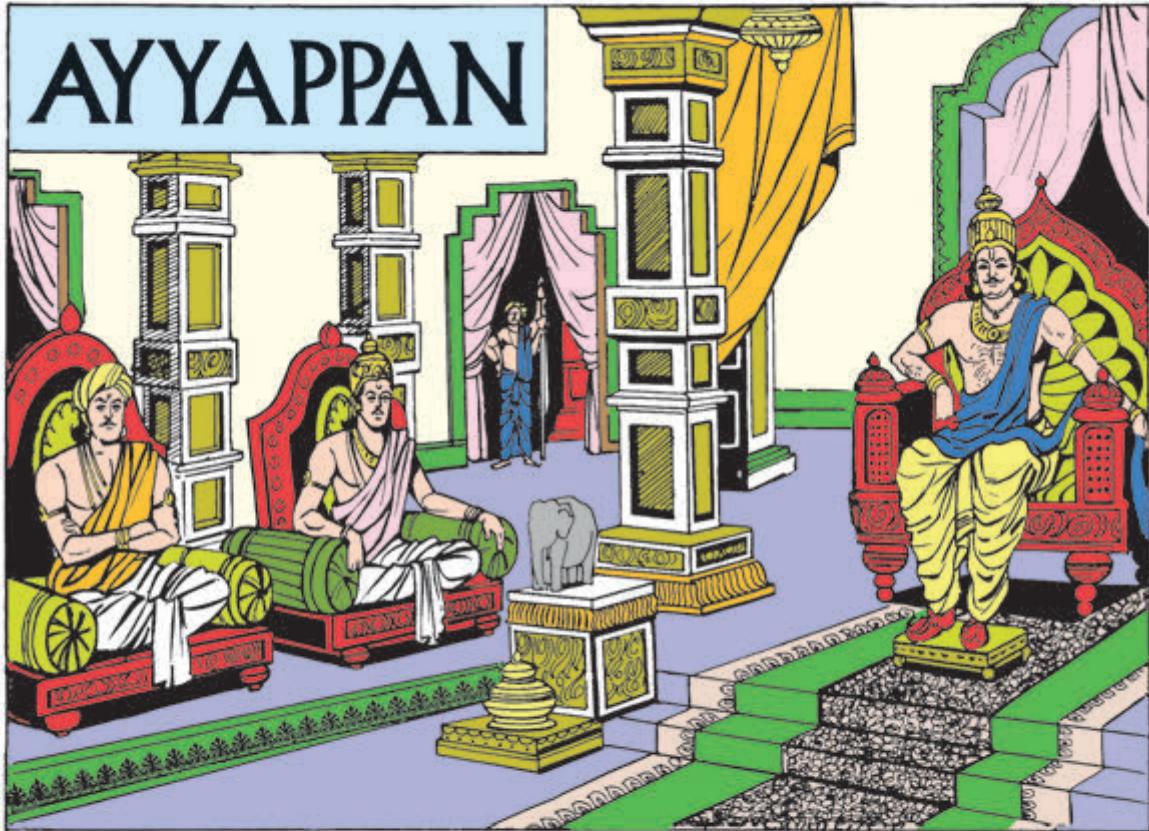
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AYYAPPAN



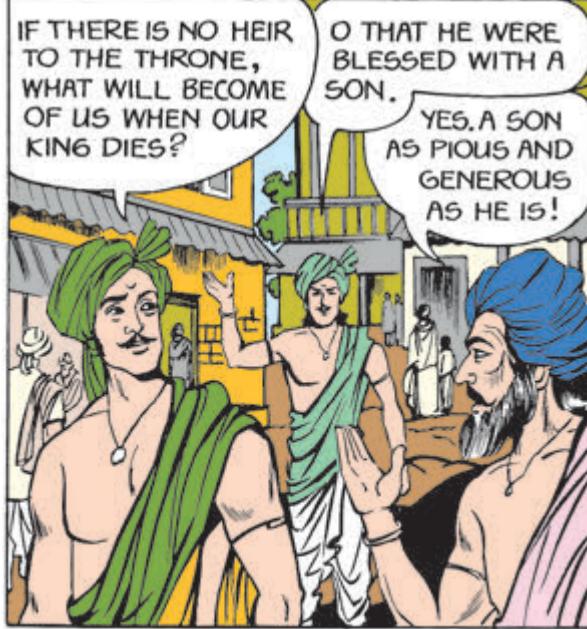
KING RAJASHEKHARA, THE WEALTHY RULER OF PANTHALAM, IN KERALA, HAD NO CHILDREN.

HIS SUBJECTS WERE WORRIED.

IF THERE IS NO HEIR TO THE THRONE, WHAT WILL BECOME OF US WHEN OUR KING DIES?

O THAT HE WERE BLESSED WITH A SON.

YES, A SON AS PIous AND GENEROUS AS HE IS!



HIS AMBITIOUS DIWAN, HOWEVER, WAS HAPPY.

AS LONG AS THERE IS NO HEIR TO THE THRONE, WHEN RAJASHEKHARA DIES HIS KINGDOM WILL CERTAINLY BE MINE.

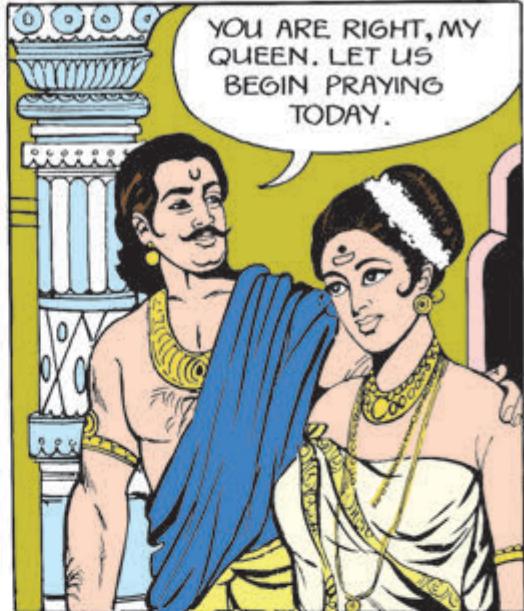


ONE DAY AS RAJASHEKHARA AND HIS QUEEN SAT TALKING -

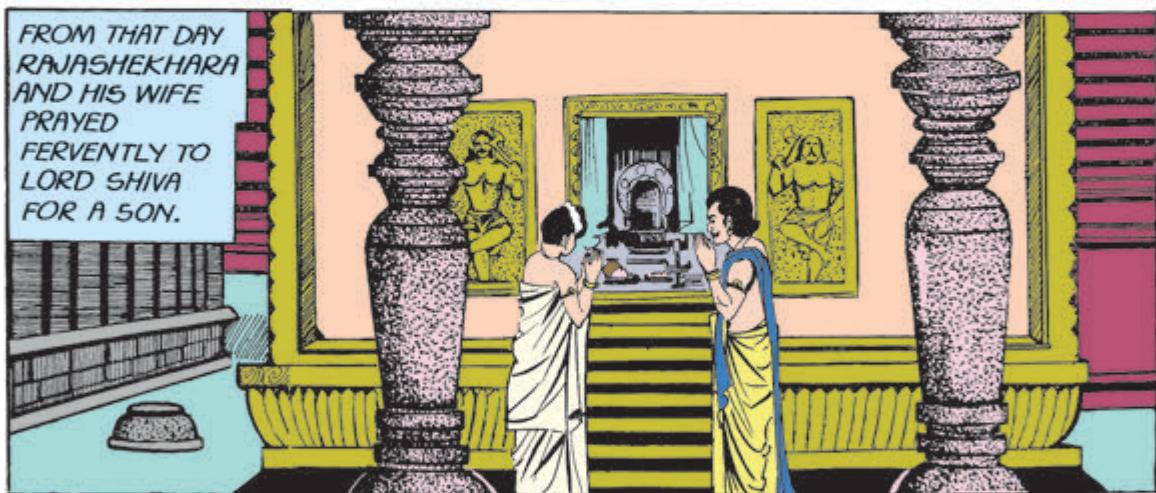
ALAS ! WHO WILL RULE THE KINGDOM AFTER ME ?

LET US PRAY TO LORD SHIVA FOR A SON. I AM SURE HE WILL BLESS US WITH ONE.

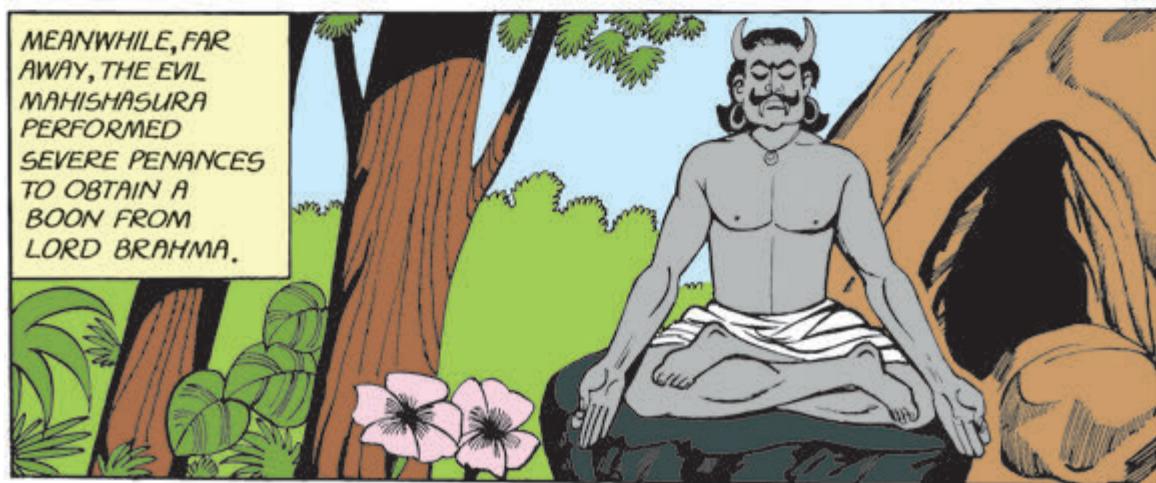
YOU ARE RIGHT, MY QUEEN. LET US BEGIN PRAYING TODAY.



FROM THAT DAY RAJASHEKHARA AND HIS WIFE PRAYED FERVENTLY TO LORD SHIVA FOR A SON.

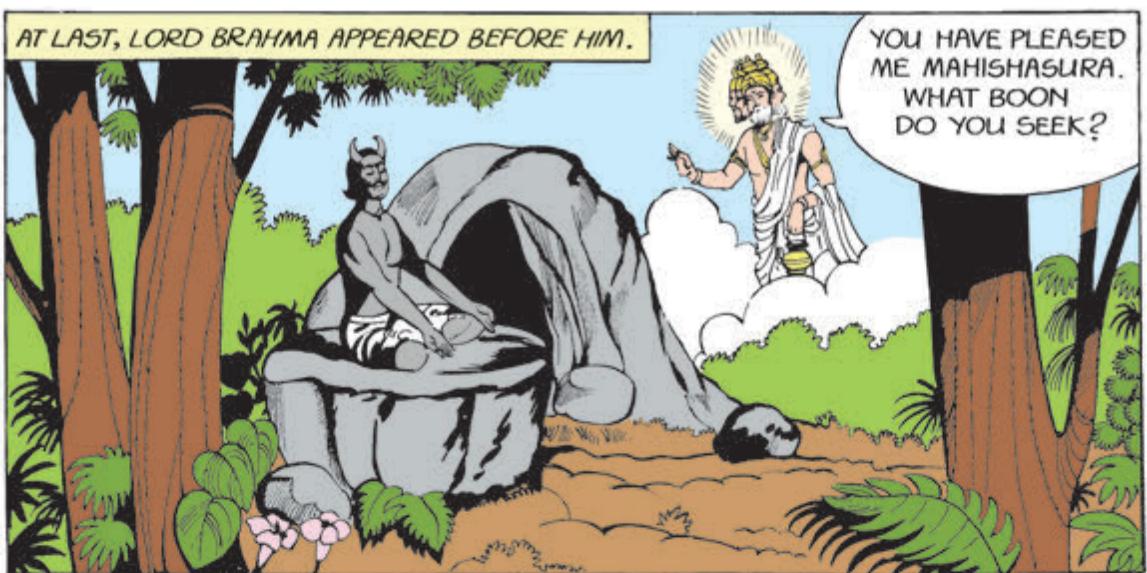


MEANWHILE, FAR AWAY, THE EVIL MAHISHASURA PERFORMED SEVERE PENANCES TO OBTAIN A BOON FROM LORD BRAHMA.



AT LAST, LORD BRAHMA APPEARED BEFORE HIM.

YOU HAVE PLEASED
ME MAHISHASURA.
WHAT BOON
DO YOU SEEK?



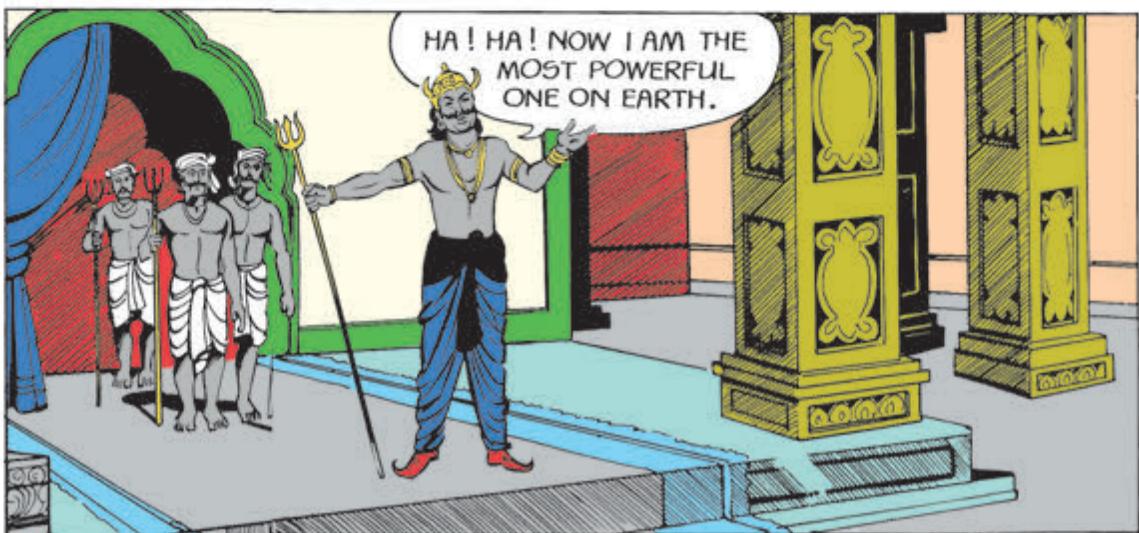
MAHISHASURA WAS QUICK WITH HIS REQUEST.

LET MY DEATH
NOT BE CAUSED
BY ANY MAN ON
THIS EARTH.

SO BE
IT.

AND BRAHMA
DISAPPEARED.

HA ! HA ! NOW I AM THE
MOST POWERFUL
ONE ON EARTH.



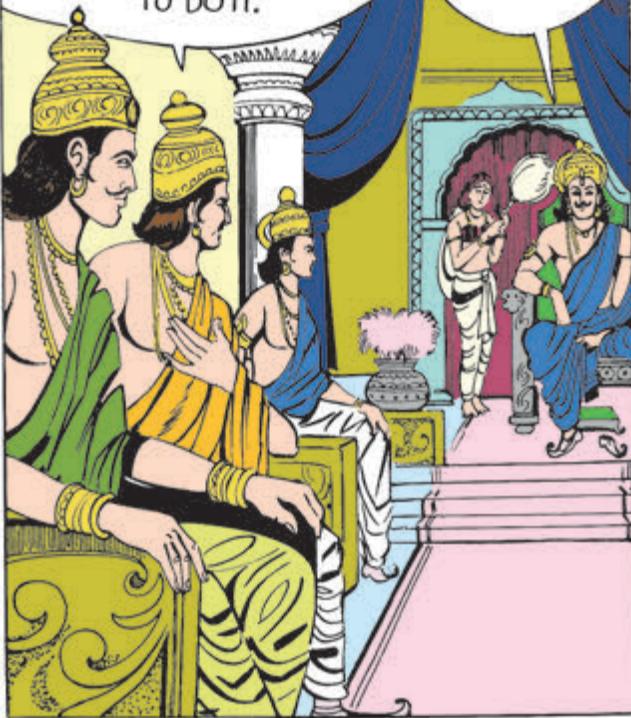
EMBOLDENED BY THE BOON, MAHISHASURA BEGAN HARASSING ALL ON EARTH.



THE DEVAS HELD COUNCIL.

THIS ASURA MUST BE DESTROYED. BECAUSE OF BRAHMA'S BOON, ONLY A WOMAN WOULD BE ABLE TO DO IT.

THEN LET US EVOKE ONE WITH OUR COMBINED POWERS.

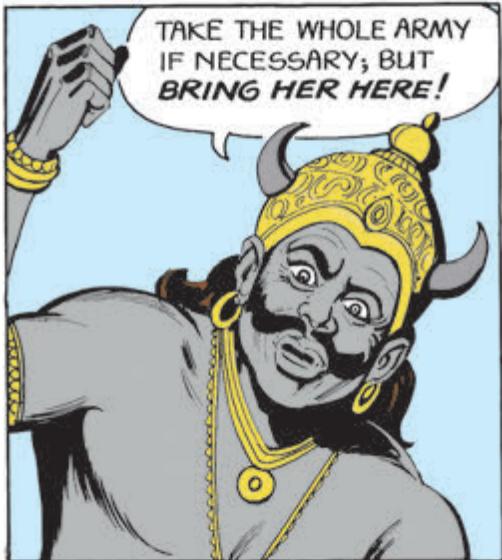
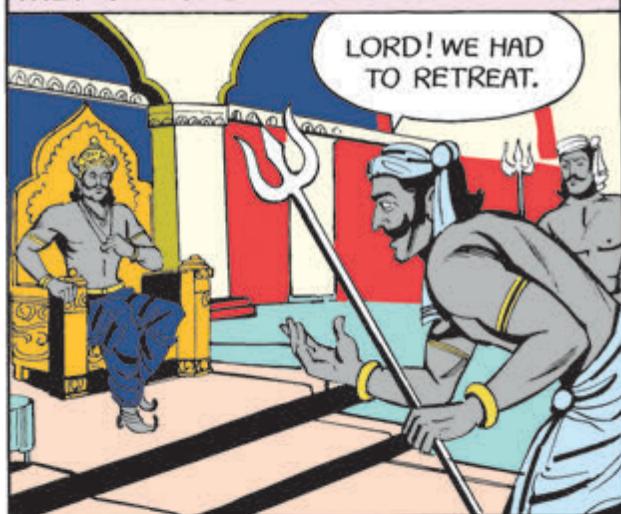




BUT CHANDIKA DEVI VANQUISHED THEM IN NO TIME.



THEY RETURNED TO MAHISHASURA.

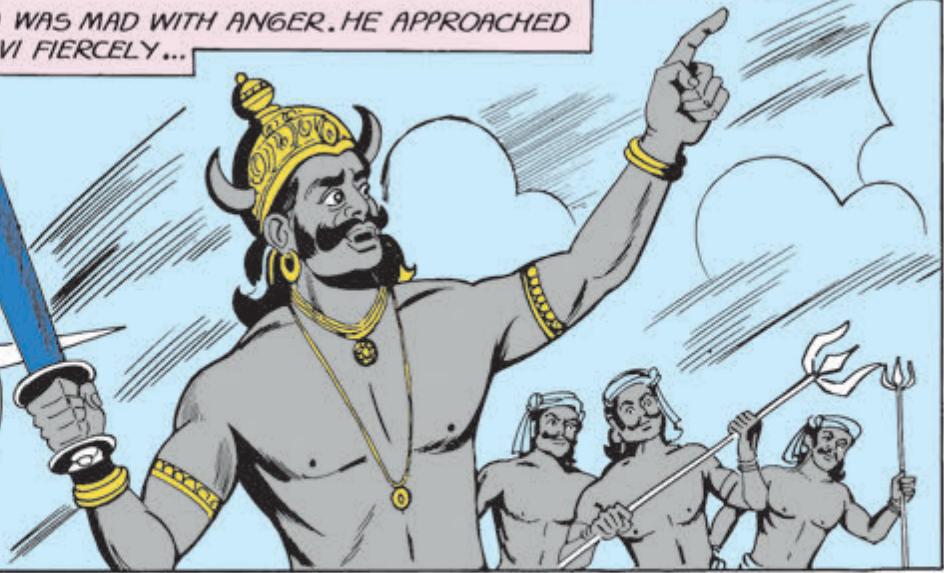


HOWEVER, THE ARMY WAS NO MATCH EITHER FOR CHANDIKA DEVI. IT WAS SOON ROUTED.



MAHISHASURA WAS MAD WITH ANGER. HE APPROACHED CHANDIKA DEVI FIERCELY...

THAT WOMAN HAS GONE TOO FAR. I SHALL DESTROY HER.



...AND ATTACKED HER.

HA! HA!
HA!



BUT HE, TOO, WAS NO MATCH FOR HER AND WAS SOON SLAIN.



HER MISSION ACCOMPLISHED,
CHANDIKA DEVI ASCENDED TO HEAVEN.



WHEN MAHISHI, THE WIFE OF
MAHISHASURA, LEARNT OF HER
HUSBAND'S DEATH -

I SHALL TEACH
THE DEVAS
A LESSON. IT
WAS THEY
WHO INVOKED
THE DEVI.



MAHISHI UNDERTOOK A DEEP PENANCE
TO PROPITIATE LORD BRAHMA. HE
APPEARED BEFORE HER.



BRAHMA GRANTED HER THE
BOON AND VANISHED.





AS SOON AS THE INFANT WAS CREATED -

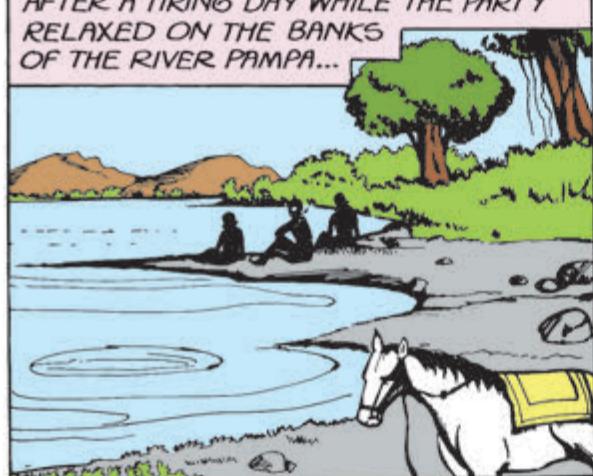
I WILL TIE THIS GOLD BELL AROUND HIS NECK BEFORE I TAKE HIM TO EARTH.



MEANWHILE, ON EARTH, RAJASHEKHARA WAS OUT HUNTING WITH HIS RETINUE.



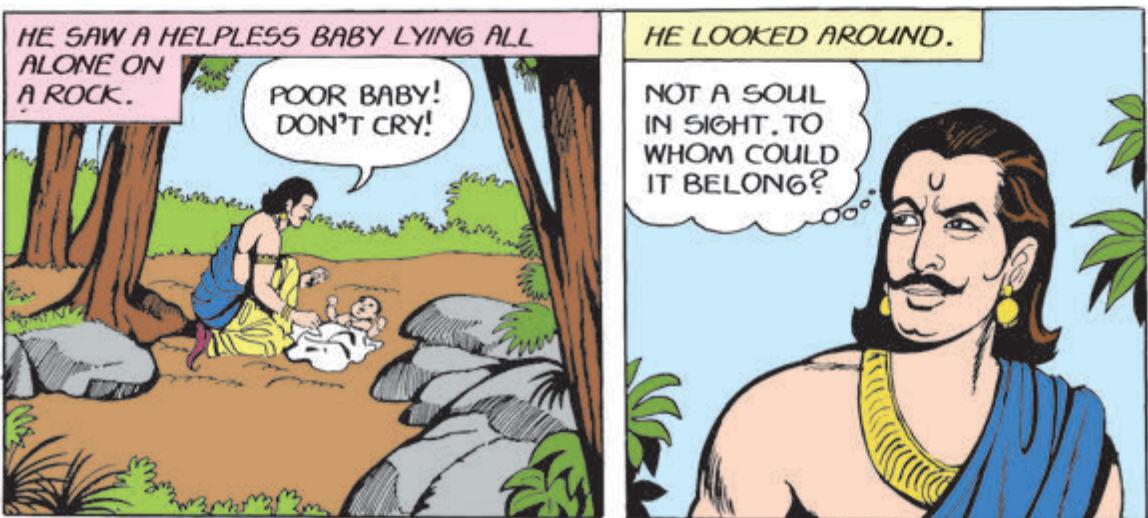
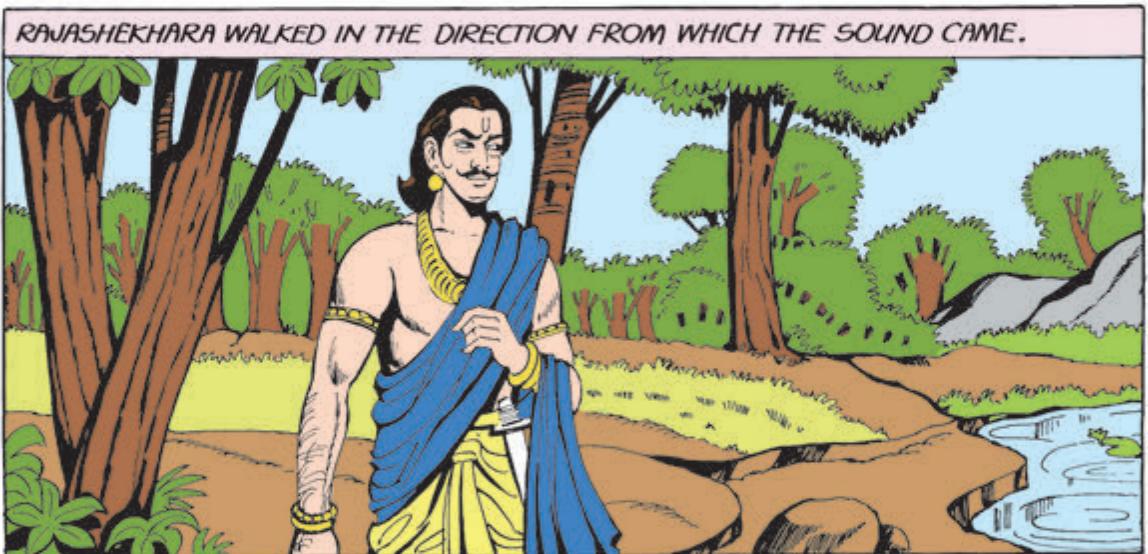
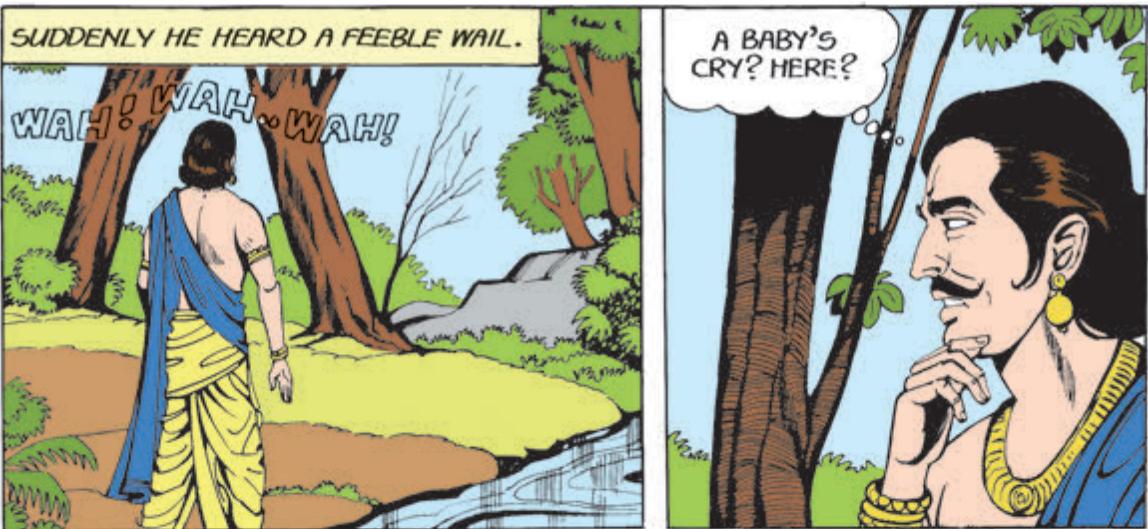
AFTER A TIRING DAY WHILE THE PARTY
RELAXED ON THE BANKS
OF THE RIVER PAMPA...

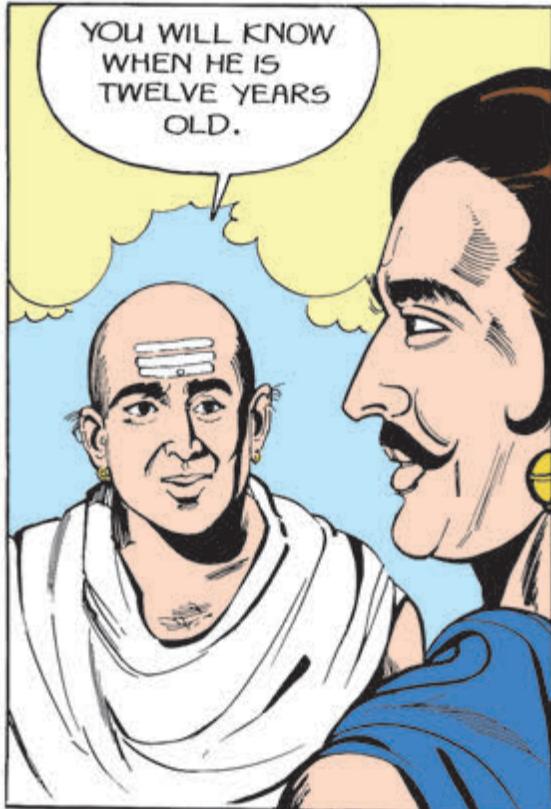
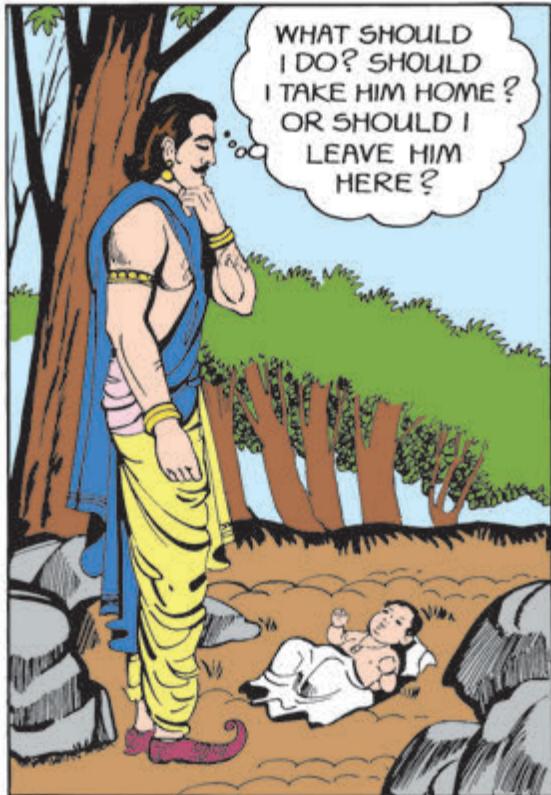


...RAJASHEKHARA WANDERED OFF
ALONE.

HOW PEACEFUL
AND QUIET
IT IS HERE.







RAJASHEKHARA TOOK MANIKANTHAN HOME TO HIS QUEEN.

A CHILD AT LAST!
HOW HAPPY
I AM.

HE IS
GOD'S
OWN
GIFT.

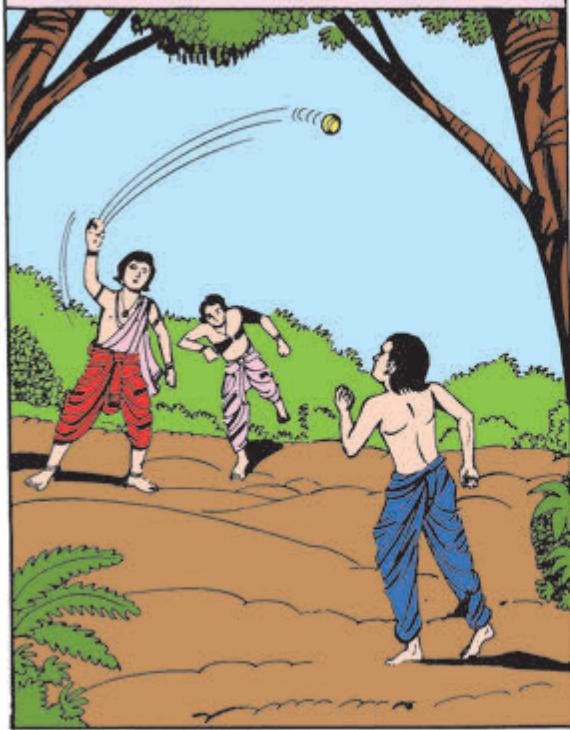


BUT RAJASHEKHARA'S DIWAN DIDN'T THINK SO.

THE ACCURSED
CHILD! IT
HAS UPSET ALL
MY PLANS.



MANIKANTHAN SOON GREW UP INTO A STRONG YOUNG LAD.



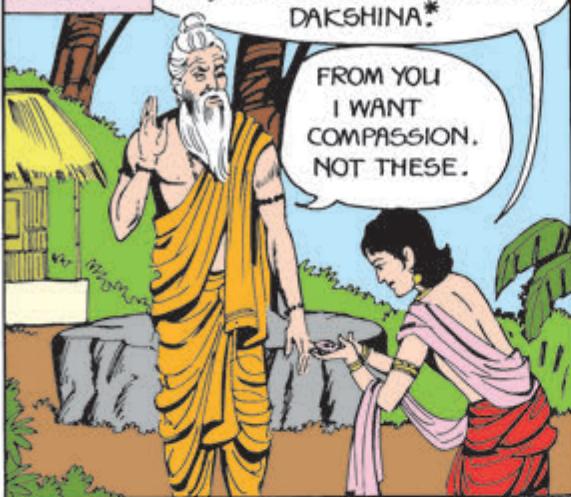
HE WAS PLACED UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF AN EXCELLENT GURU AND SOON MASTERED ALL THERE WAS TO LEARN.



BY THE TIME MANIKANTHAN'S STUDIES WERE OVER, THE GURU KNEW THAT HE WAS A DIVINE CHILD.

SIR, PLEASE ACCEPT MY GURU-DAKSHINA.*

FROM YOU I WANT COMPASSION, NOT THESE.



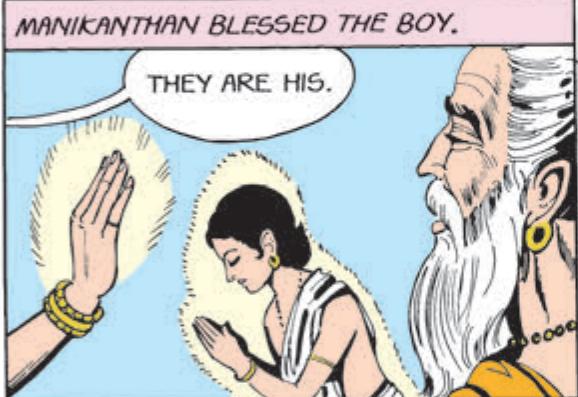
THEN THE GURU BROUGHT HIS BLIND AND MUTE SON BEFORE MANIKANTHAN.

MANIKANTHAN, PLEASE RESTORE HIS SIGHT AND SPEECH.



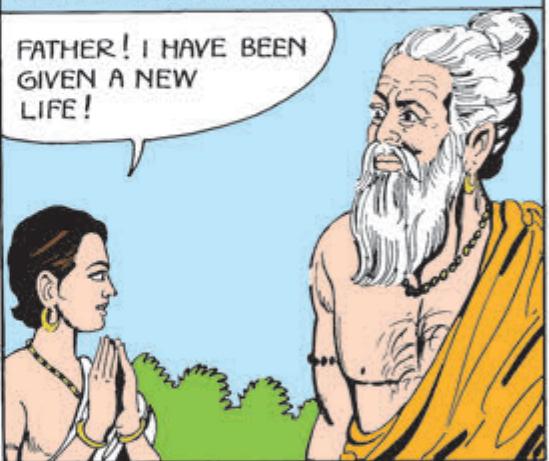
MANIKANTHAN BLESSED THE BOY.

THEY ARE HIS.



THE GURU'S SON SAW LIGHT.

FATHER! I HAVE BEEN GIVEN A NEW LIFE!



AFTER THIS FIRST MIRACLE MANIKANTHAN PERFORMED MANY MORE. THE NEWS SPREAD.

I HAVE NEVER SEEN SUCH A GIFTED BOY.

OUR FUTURE IS ASSURED. HE WILL SUCCEED THE KING.

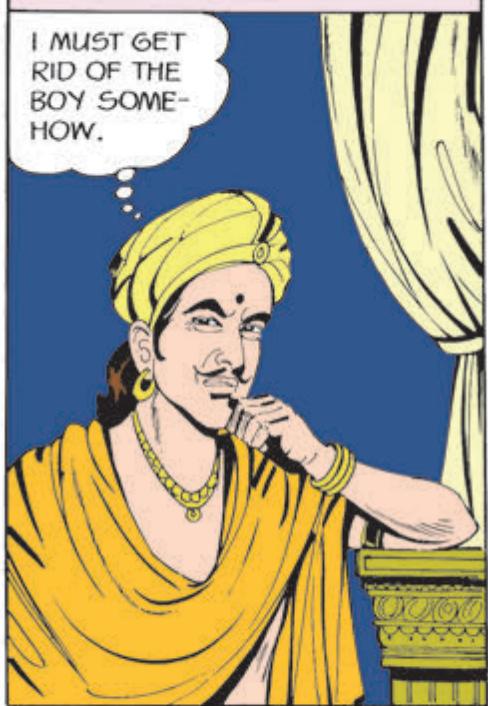


THE DIWAN, WHO OVERHEARD THESE COMMENTS...

*THE TRADITIONAL TRIBUTE GIVEN BY A DISCIPLE TO HIS TEACHER

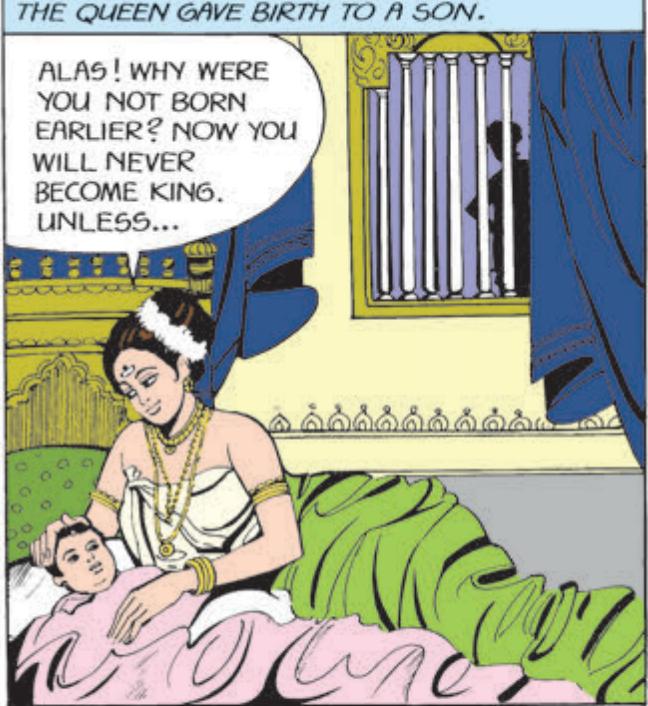
...GOT REALLY WORRIED.

I MUST GET RID OF THE BOY SOMEHOW.



AND THEN THE UNFORESEEN HAPPENED. THE QUEEN GAVE BIRTH TO A SON.

ALAS! WHY WERE YOU NOT BORN EARLIER? NOW YOU WILL NEVER BECOME KING. UNLESS...



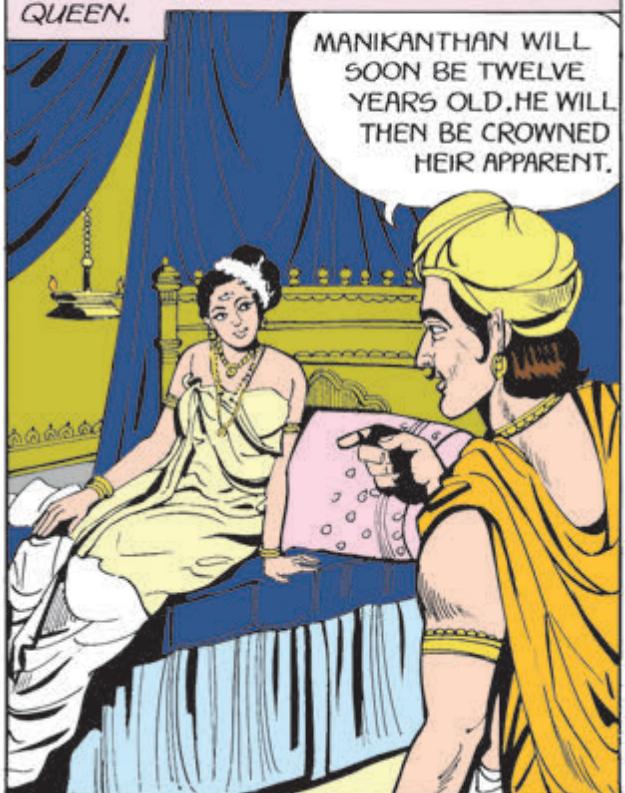
THE DIWAN WAS JUBILANT.

THE THRONE SHALL YET BE MINE!

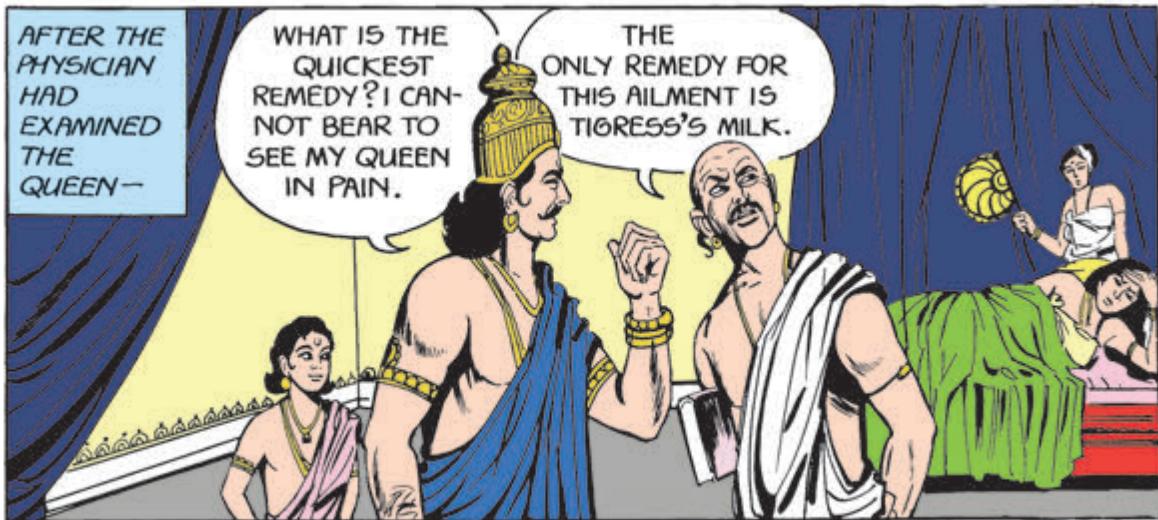
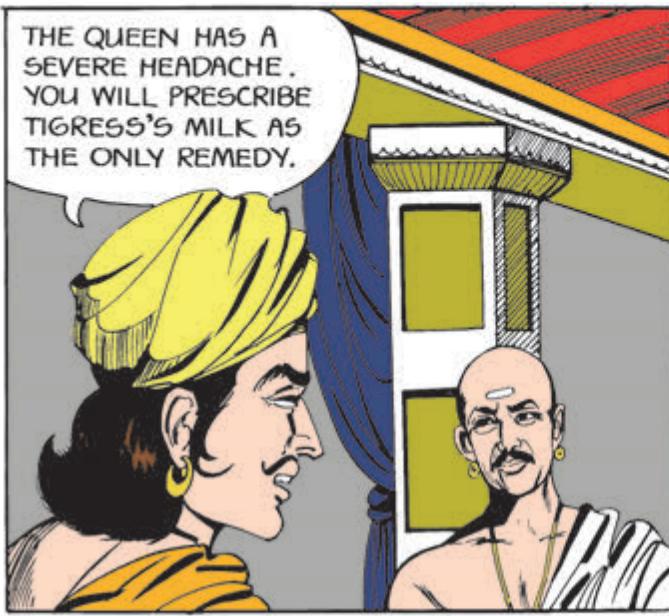


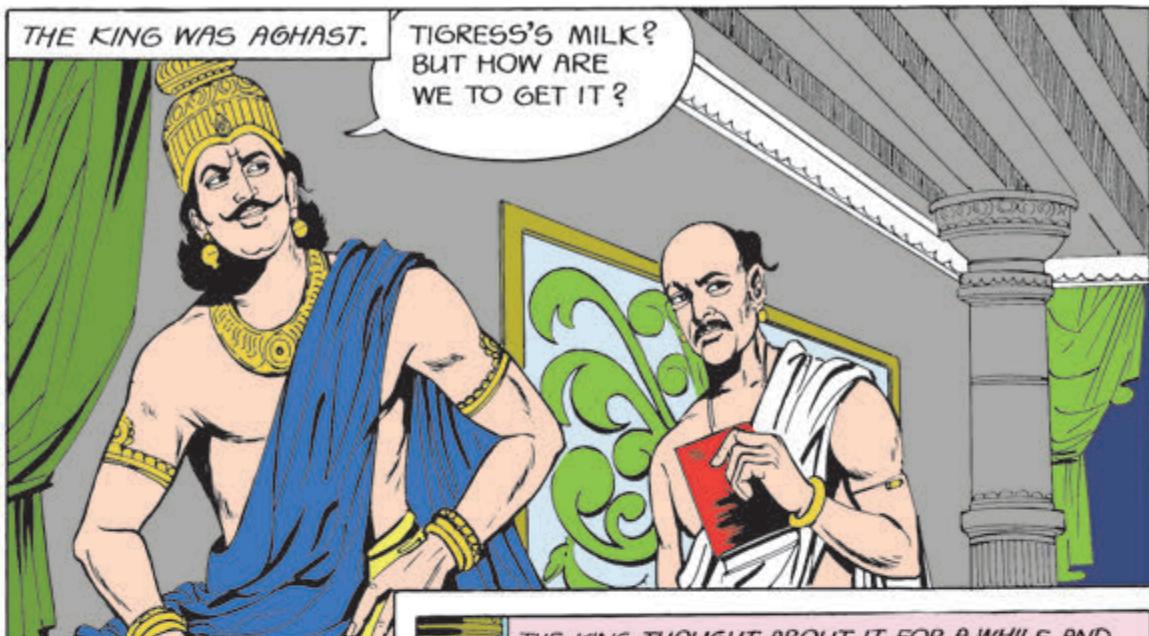
A FEW DAYS LATER HE WENT TO THE QUEEN.

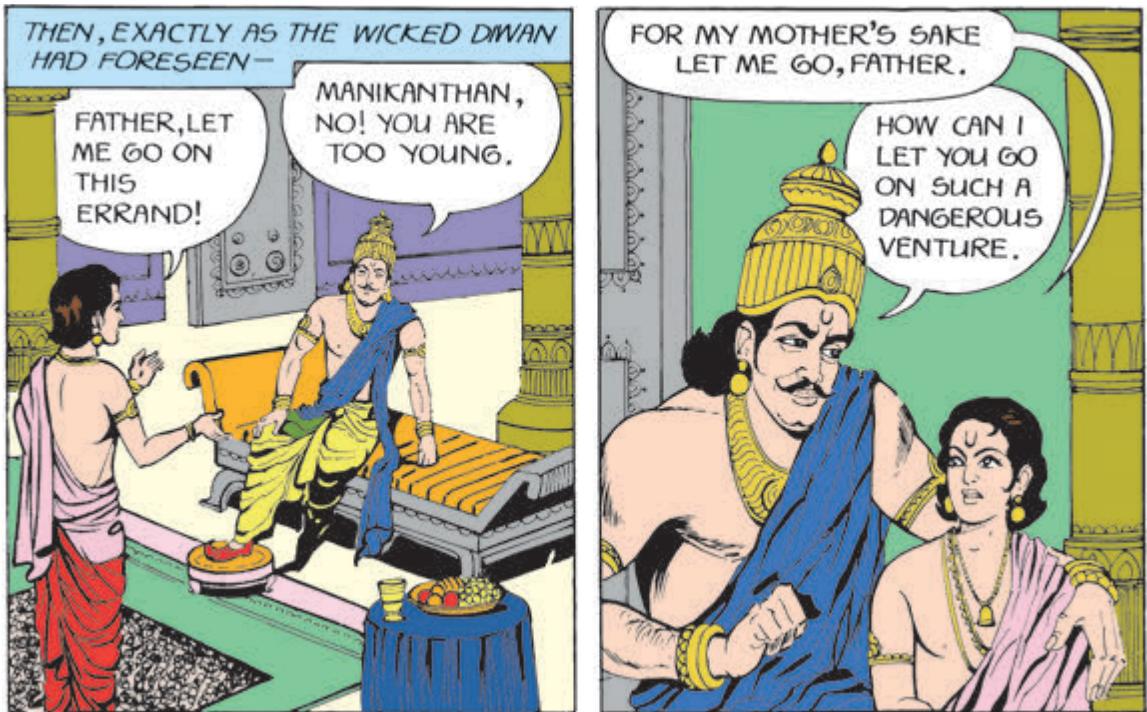
MANIKANTHAN WILL SOON BE TWELVE YEARS OLD. HE WILL THEN BE CROWNED HEIR APPARENT.











AS HE WANDERED DEEPER AND DEEPER INTO IT HE CAME TO THE DOMAIN OF MAHISHI, WHO LIVED IN THAT FOREST.

WHO IS THIS CREATURE
WHO DARES TO TRESPASS
ON OUR FOREST? I MUST
TELL MY MISTRESS.



THE ASURA RAN TO MAHISHI.

THERE IS A
BOY ROAMING
IN OUR
FORESTS.



HOW DARE HE,
WITHOUT MY
PERMISSION!
I'LL DESTROY
HIM.



MAHISHI WENT
UP TO
MANIKANTHAN
AND ATTACKED
HIM.

COME, MAHISHI.
MY EARTHLY
MISSION
IS ABOUT
TO BE
FULFILLED.

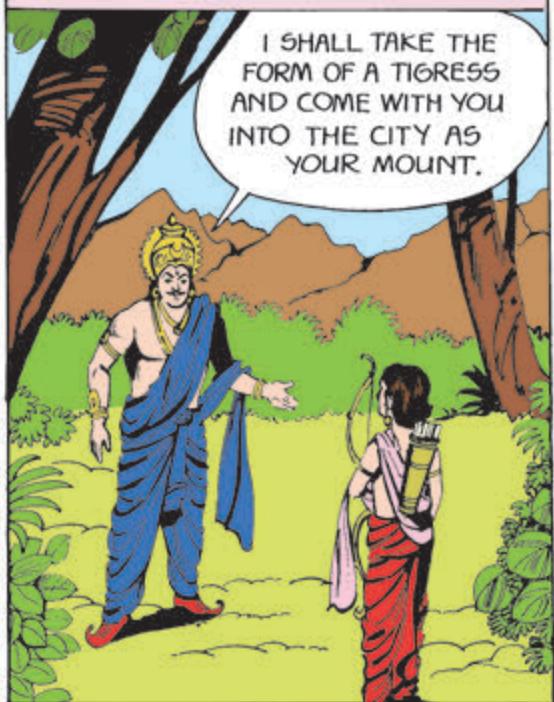


A FIERCE BATTLE ENSUED.



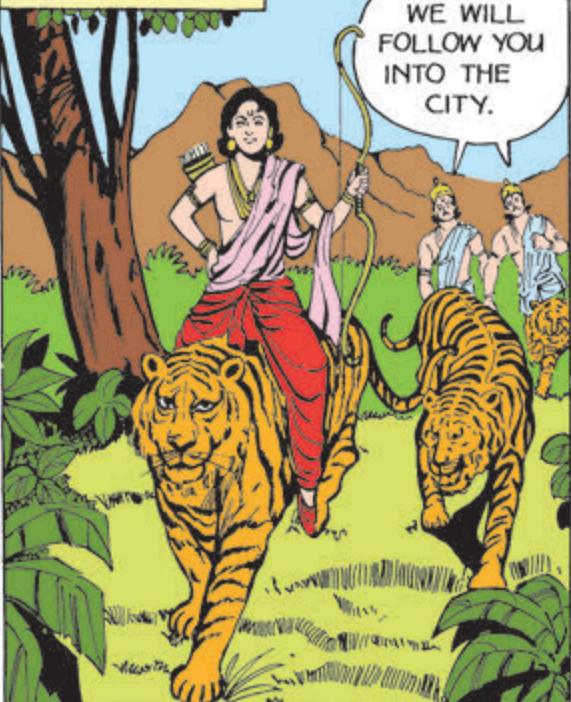
AS MANIKANTHAN CONTINUED HIS SEARCH FOR A TIGRESS, INDRA, KING OF THE DEVAS, APPEARED BEFORE HIM.

I SHALL TAKE THE FORM OF A TIGRESS AND COME WITH YOU INTO THE CITY AS YOUR MOUNT.



THE DEVAS WHO HAD ACCOMPANIED INDRA ALSO TURNED THEMSELVES INTO TIGRESSES.

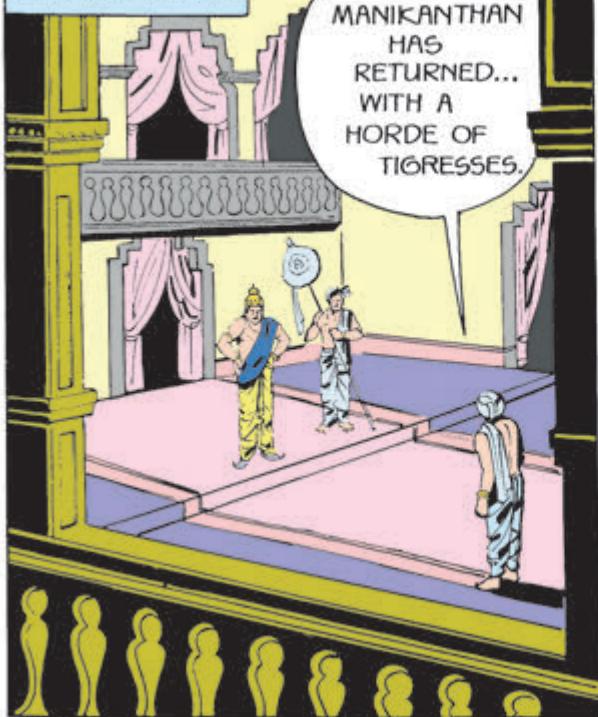
WE WILL FOLLOW YOU INTO THE CITY.



AS MANIKANTHAN RODE INTO THE CITY ON HIS TERRIFYING MOUNT FOLLOWED BY AN EQUALLY TERRIFYING RETINUE—

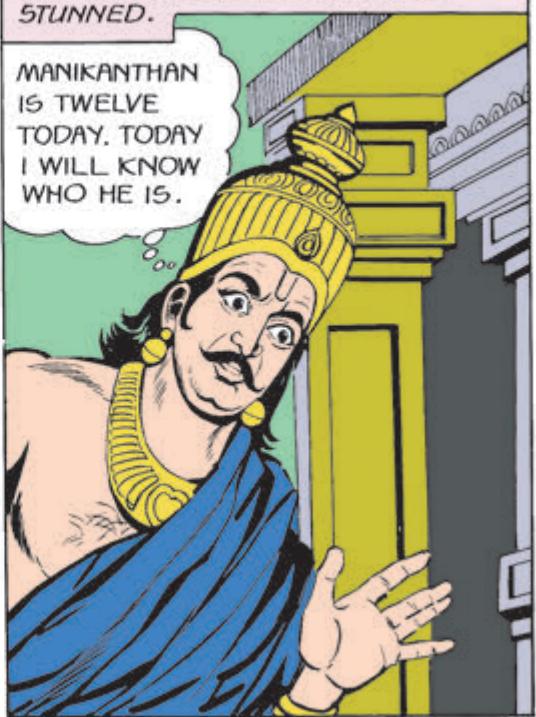


ONE OF THE CITIZENS RAN TO RAJASHEKHARA.



THE KING, WHO RUSHED OUT TO SEE THIS UNUSUAL SIGHT, WAS STUNNED.

MANIKANTHAN IS TWELVE TODAY. TODAY I WILL KNOW WHO HE IS.

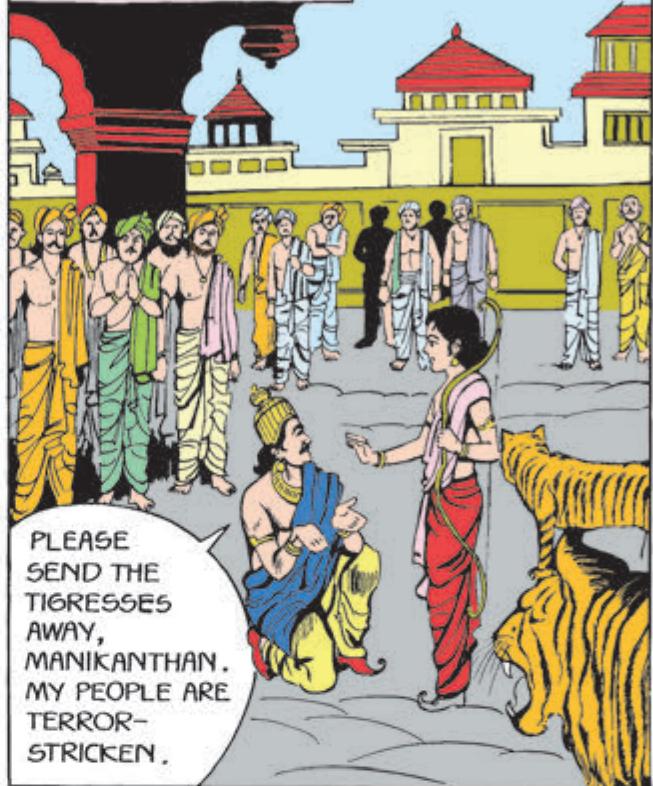


JUST THEN HE HEARD
A DIVINE VOICE.

MANIKANTHAN
IS NONE
BUT GOD
HIMSELF.



RAJASHEKHARA RAN FORWARD AND FELL AT
MANIKANTHAN'S FEET.



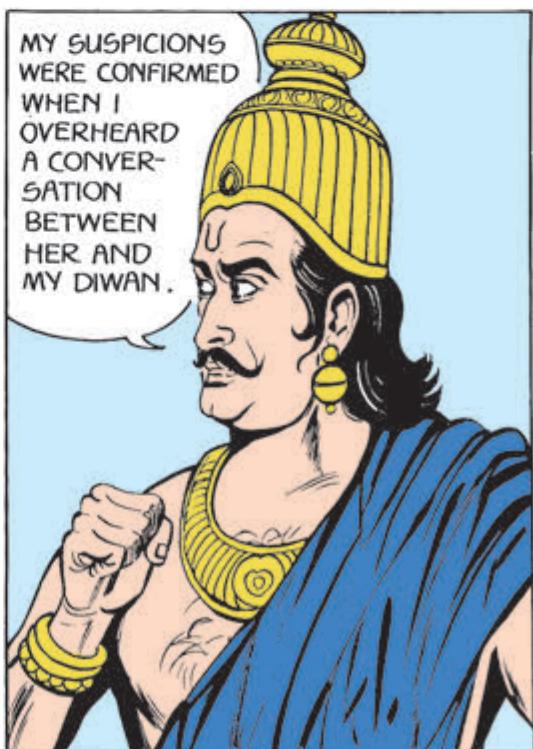
PLEASE
SEND THE
TIGRESSSES
AWAY,
MANIKANTHAN.
MY PEOPLE ARE
TERROR-
STRICKEN.

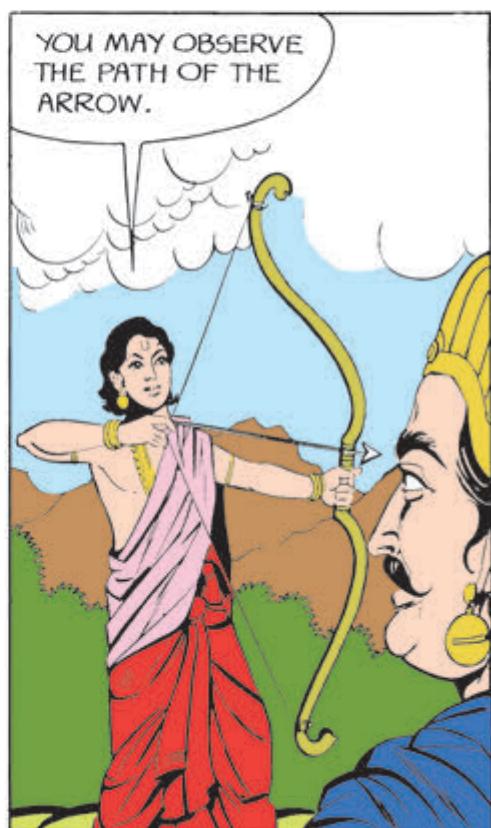
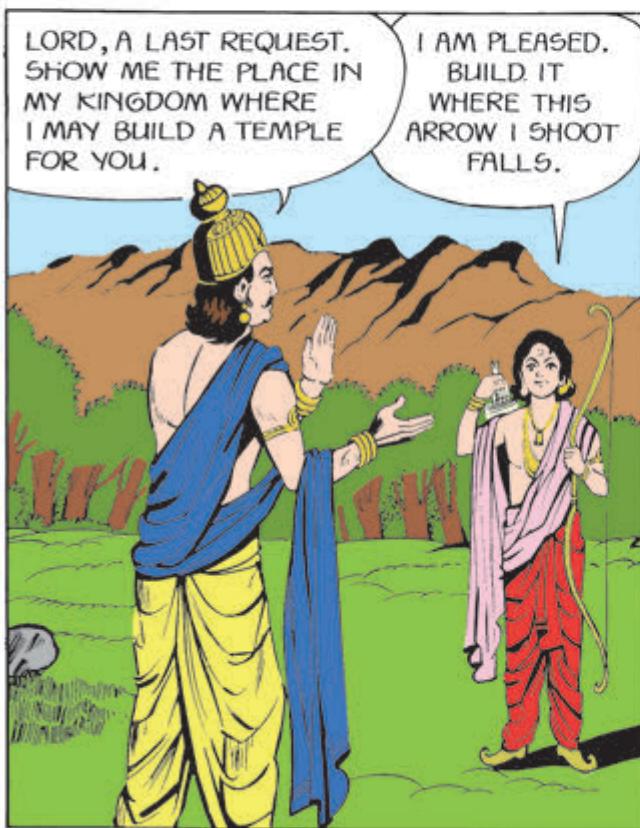
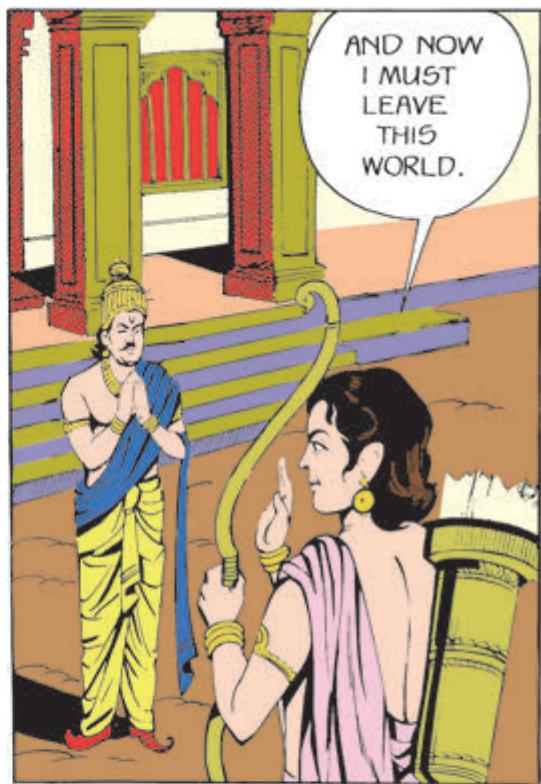
MANIKANTHAN SMILED, AND THE
TIGRESSSES VANISHED.

AS SOON AS YOU
LEFT, THE QUEEN
RECOVERED.
I BECAME
SUSPICIOUS.

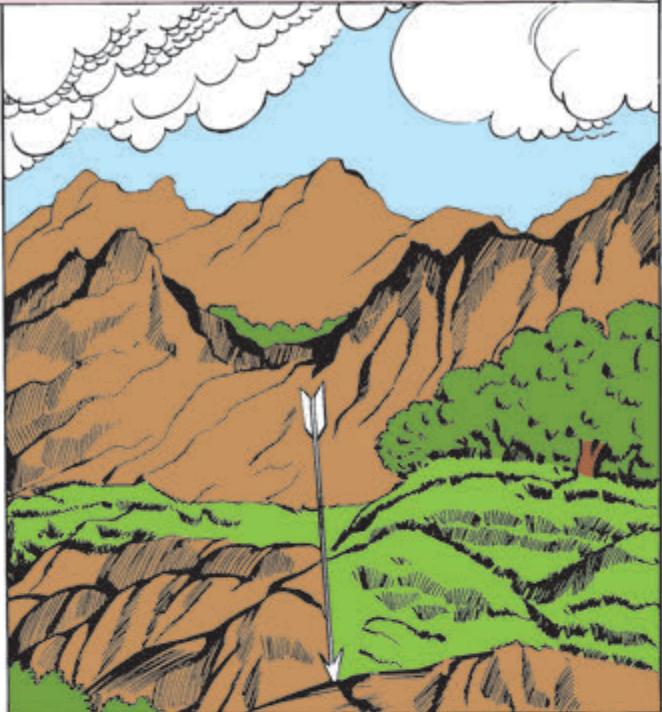


MY SUSPICIONS
WERE CONFIRMED
WHEN I
OVERHEARD
A CONVER-
SATION
BETWEEN
HER AND
MY DIWAN.





THE ARROW FELL AT THE SUMMIT OF THE SHABARI HILLS.



LET THERE
BE JUST
EIGHTEEN
STEPS LEADING
TO THE TEMPLE
AT THE EASTERN
GATE.

MANIKANTHAN VANISHED AND THE
KING BEGAN HIS TREK TO THE
MOUNTAIN TOP.

IT IS SO
HIGH...
IMPOSSIBLE.



AT LAST RAJASHEKHARA REACHED THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN.

HOW WILL
I EVER
ACHIEVE
MY TASK?

AS HE STOOD THERE, DAZED
WONDERING WHERE TO BEGIN—

I SHALL SEND
VISHWAKARMA
TO HELP YOU
OUT.

UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF VISHWAKARMA,
THE DIVINE ARCHITECT...

...THE MAGNIFICENT TEMPLE WAS SOON COMPLETED.

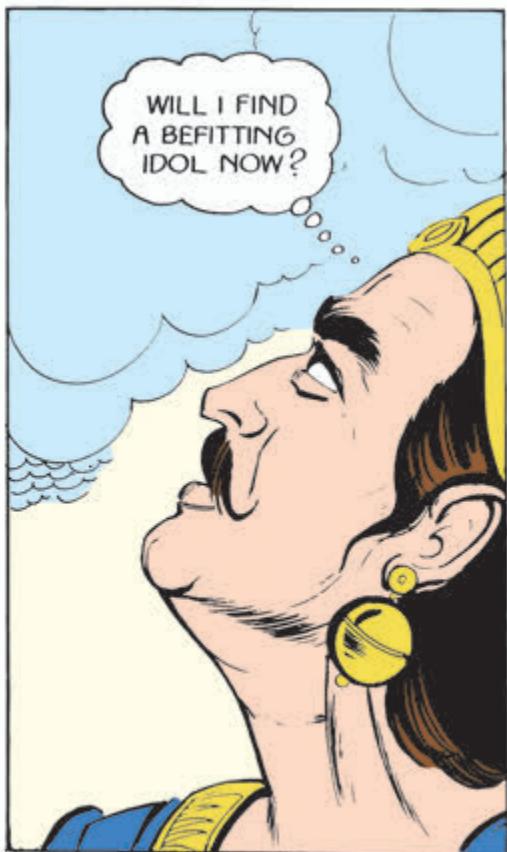
THROUGH THE LORD'S GRACE IT HAS RISEN - NOBLE AND IMPOSING.

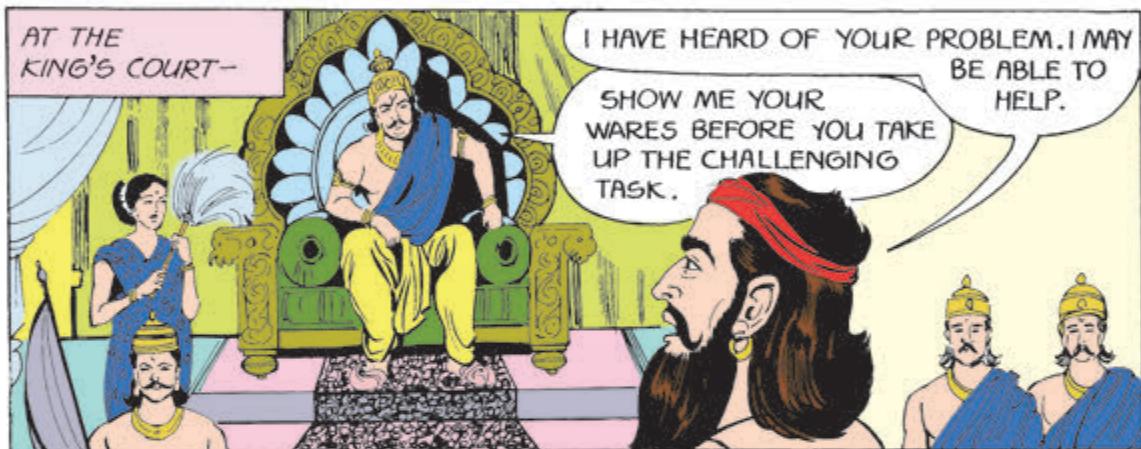
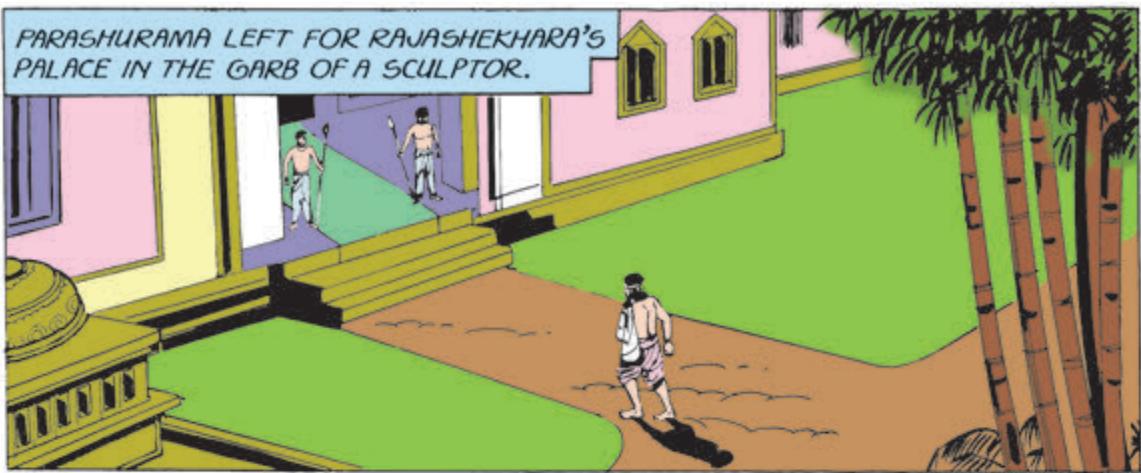


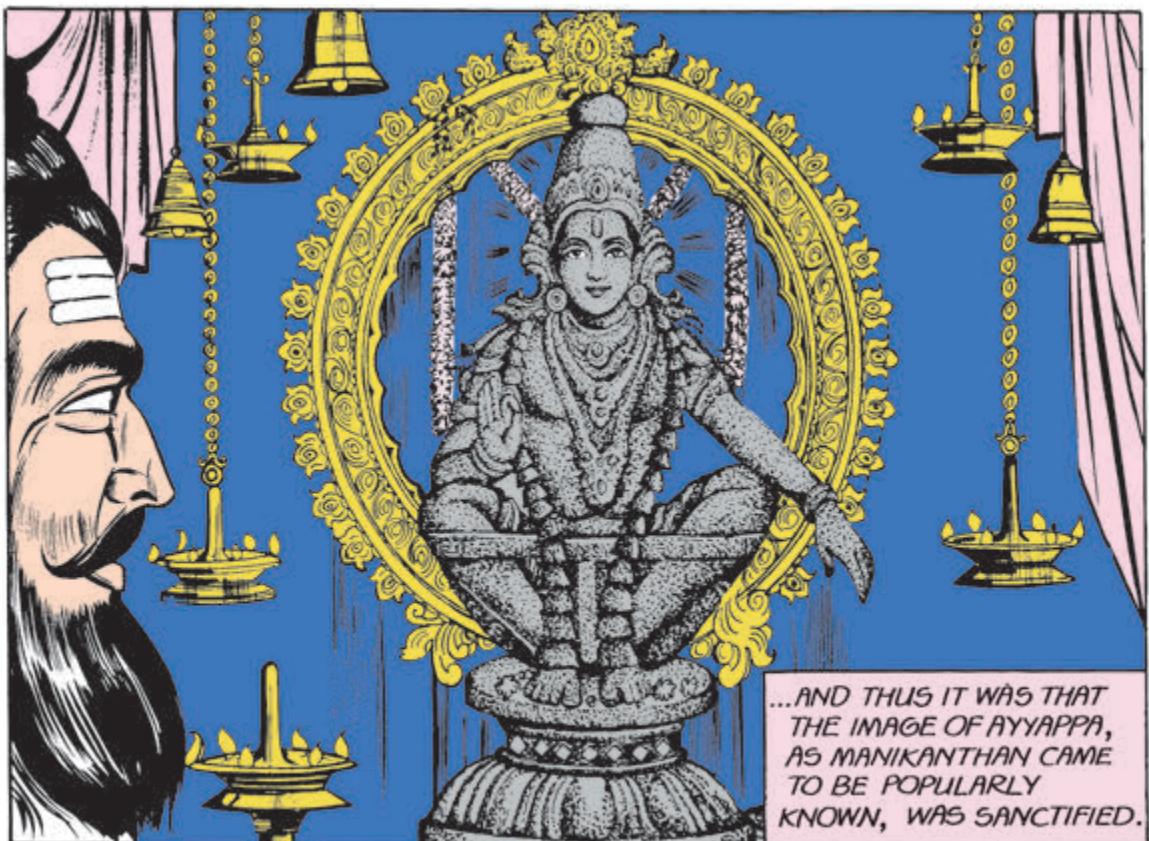
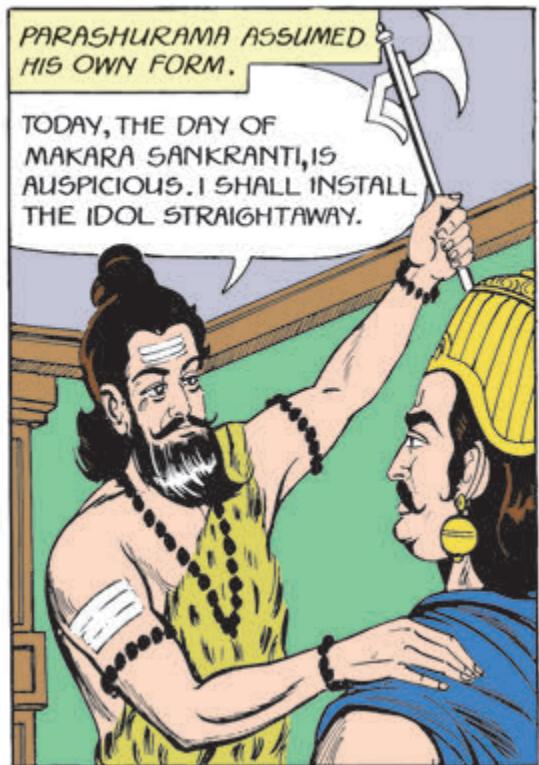
WILL I FIND
A BEFITTING
IDOL NOW?

LORD VISHNU DIVINED THE KING'S ANXIETY. HE SENT FOR PARASHURAMA.

GO DOWN TO EARTH
AS A STONE-CARVER
AND HELP RAJASHEKHARA
INSTALL THE IDOL.







MEANWHILE THE WICKED DIWAN WAS AFFLICTED BY AN INCURABLE DISEASE.

I HAVE SINNED.
WILL I EVER BE CLEANSED?



ONE NIGHT HE HAD A DREAM.

COME TO MY TEMPLE ON THE SHABARI HILL.
BUT ENTER ONLY AFTER CLEANSING YOURSELF IN THE PAMPA.*



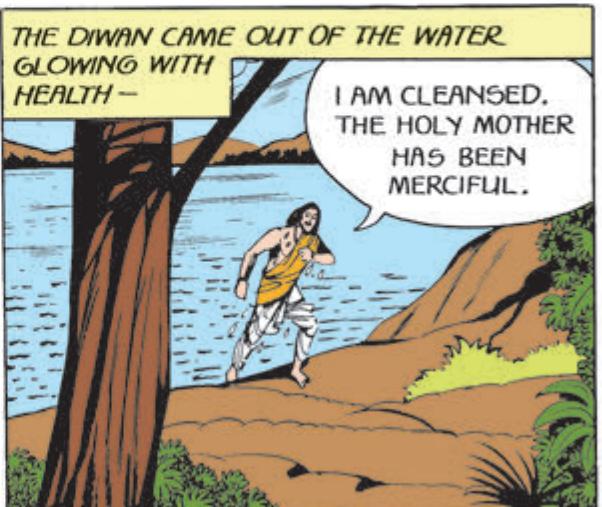
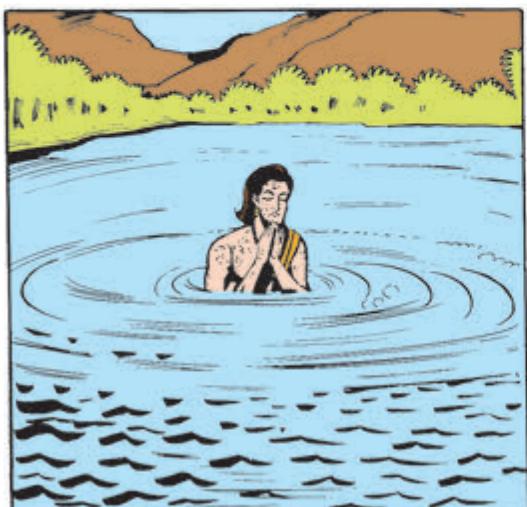
THE DIWAN WASTED NO TIME. THE NEXT MORNING HE SET OUT FOR THE PAMPA.

I HAVE COME TO WASH AWAY MY SINS IN REMORSE, HOLY MOTHER. SAVE ME.



THE DIWAN CAME OUT OF THE WATER GLOWING WITH HEALTH —

I AM CLEANSED.
THE HOLY MOTHER HAS BEEN MERCIFUL.

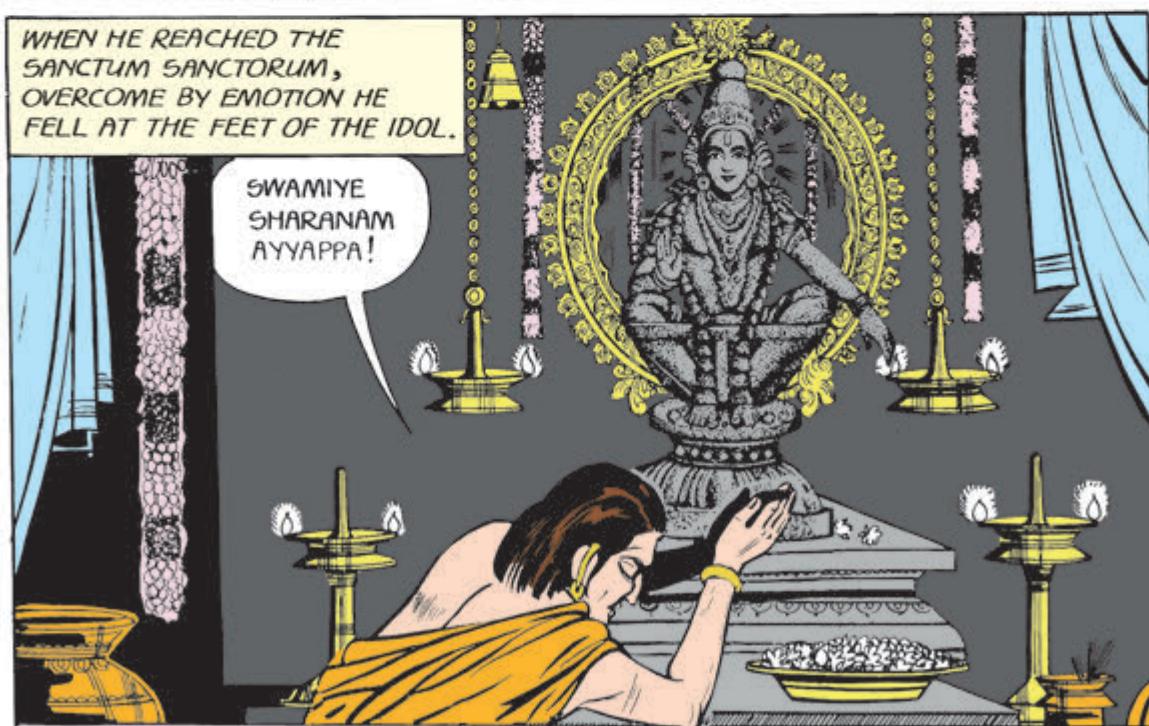


* RIVER SAID TO BE ENLIVENED BY THE SPIRIT OF SHABARI, THE DEVOTEE OF

THEN WITHOUT PAUSING FOR BREATH HE RAN UP TO THE TEMPLE.



WHEN HE REACHED THE SANCTUM SANCTORUM, OVERCOME BY EMOTION HE FELL AT THE FEET OF THE IDOL.



AND TO THIS DAY AS PILGRIMS MAKE THEIR WAY TO THE TEMPLE OF AYYAPPA, THEY CALL OUT 'SWAMIYE SHARANAM AYYAPPA'.

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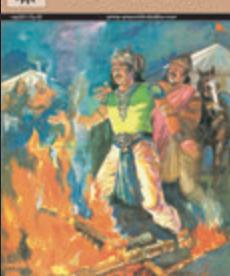
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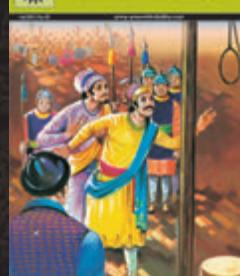
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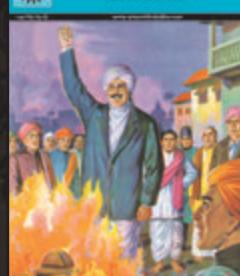
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