



GARUDA

VISHNU'S DIVINE MOUNT

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Script

Kamala Chandrakant

Illustrations

C. M. Vitankar

Editor

Anant Pai

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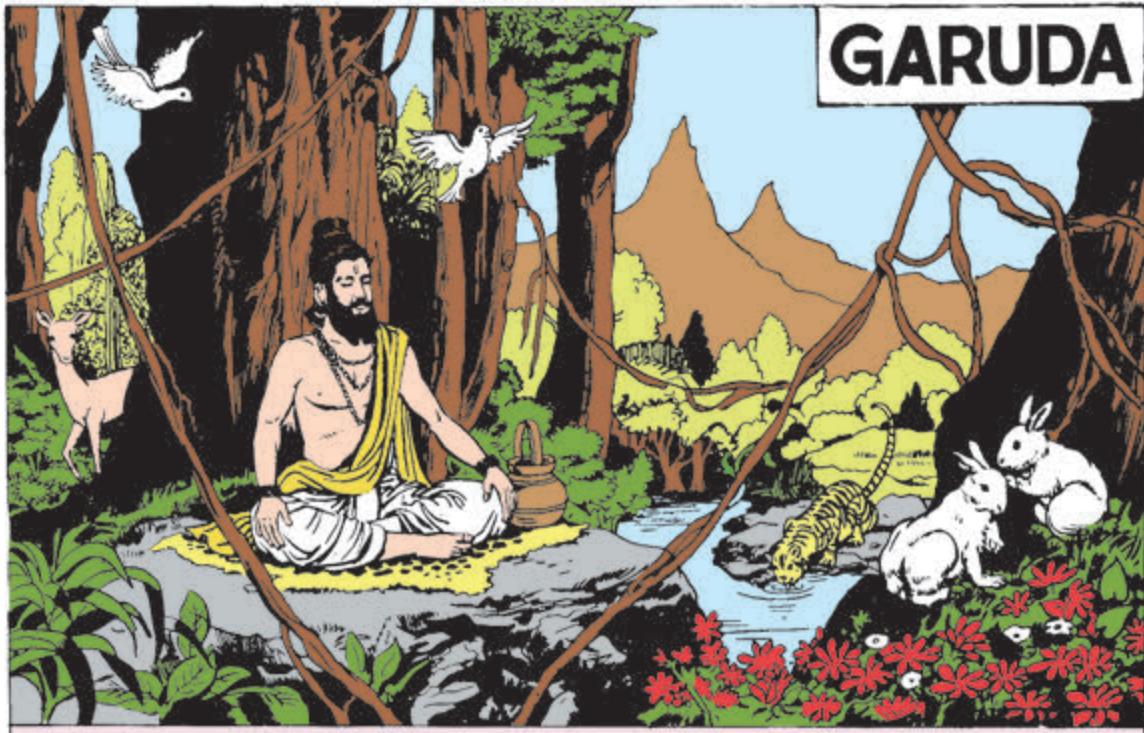
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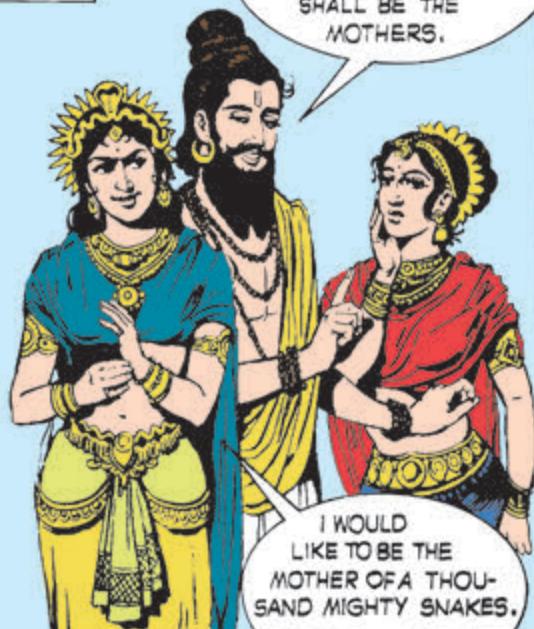
GARUDA



SAGE KASHYAP WHO HAD MARRIED THIRTEEN OF DAKSHA'S DAUGHTERS, WAS THE PROGENITOR OF THE DEVAS AND THE ASURAS, AND MUCH OF THE ANIMAL KINGDOM AS WELL.

ONE DAY, HE DECIDED TO CONFER A BOON EACH ON TWO OF HIS WIVES, VINATA AND KADRU.

I AM GOING TO PERFORM A YAGNA * FOR MORE OFFSPRING. THIS TIME YOU SHALL BE THE MOTHERS.



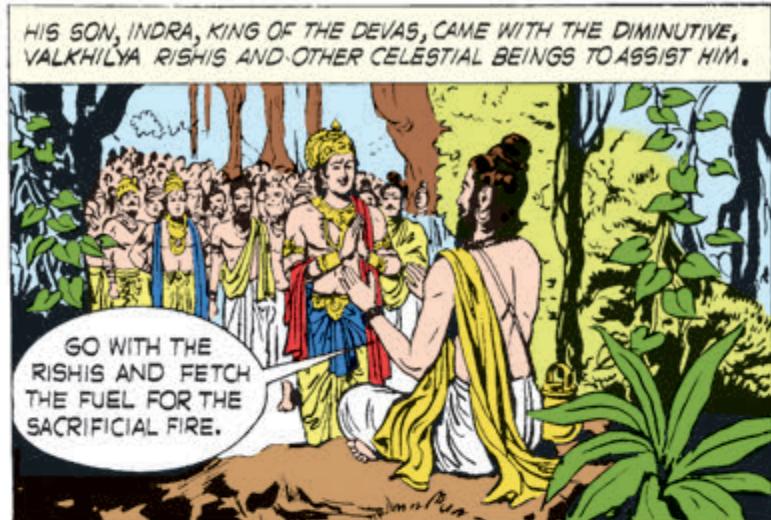
I WOULD LIKE TO BE THE MOTHER OF A THOUSAND MIGHTY SNAKES.

AND YOU, VINATA?

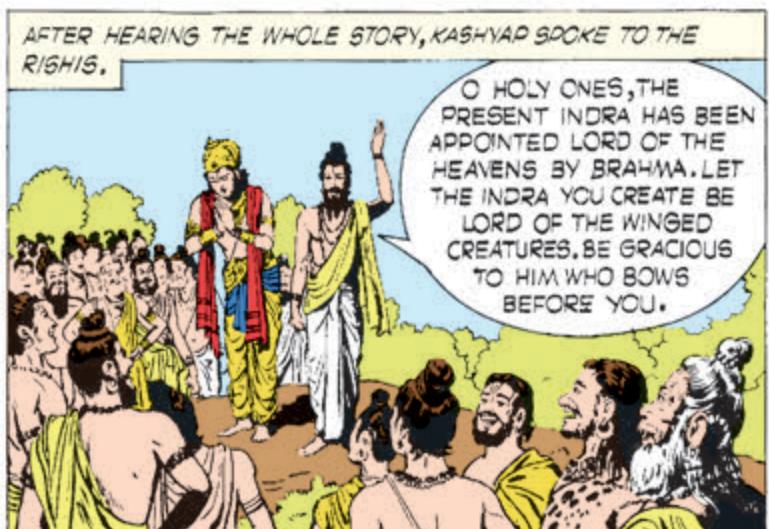
I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE TWO SONS WHO WILL SURPASS KADRU'S THOUSAND SNAKES IN STRENGTH AND VALOUR.



*FIRE SACRIFICE.



SO, LATER, AS THE SACRIFICIAL FIRE BLAZED FORTH WITH THE CONSECRATING GHEE —



THE RISHIS RELENTED.

SO BE IT. SINCE THIS YAGNA
IS FOR OFFSPRING FOR YOU,
ACCEPT THE FRUIT OF
OUR ACTIONS.



WHEN THE YAGNA WAS OVER, KASHYAP RETURNED
TO VINATA AND KADRU.

YOU SHALL SOON
BE THE MOTHERS
OF THE SONS
YOU DESIRE.



MONTHS LATER, VINATA BROUGHT FORTH TWO
EGGS AND KADRU, A THOUSAND.

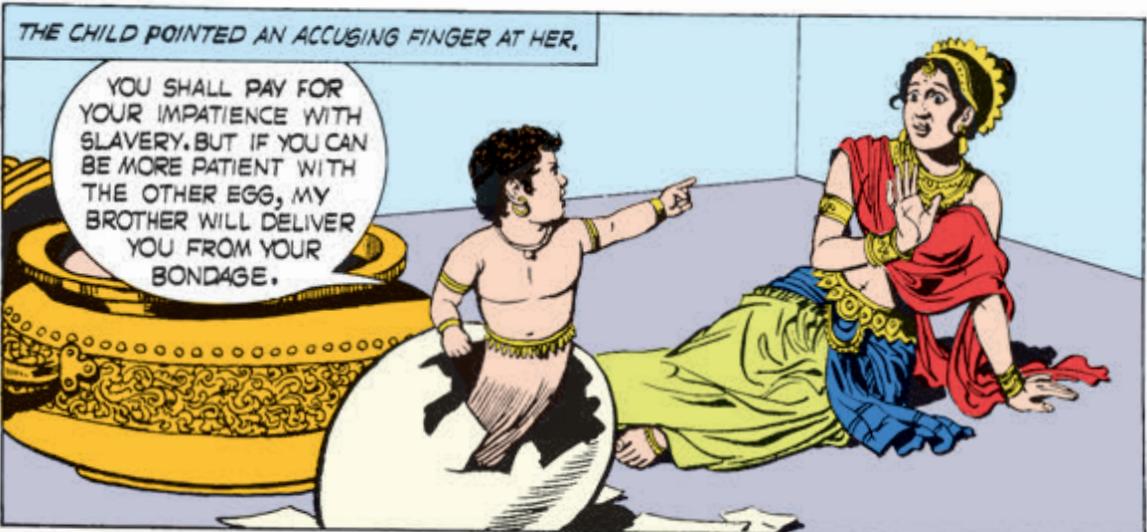
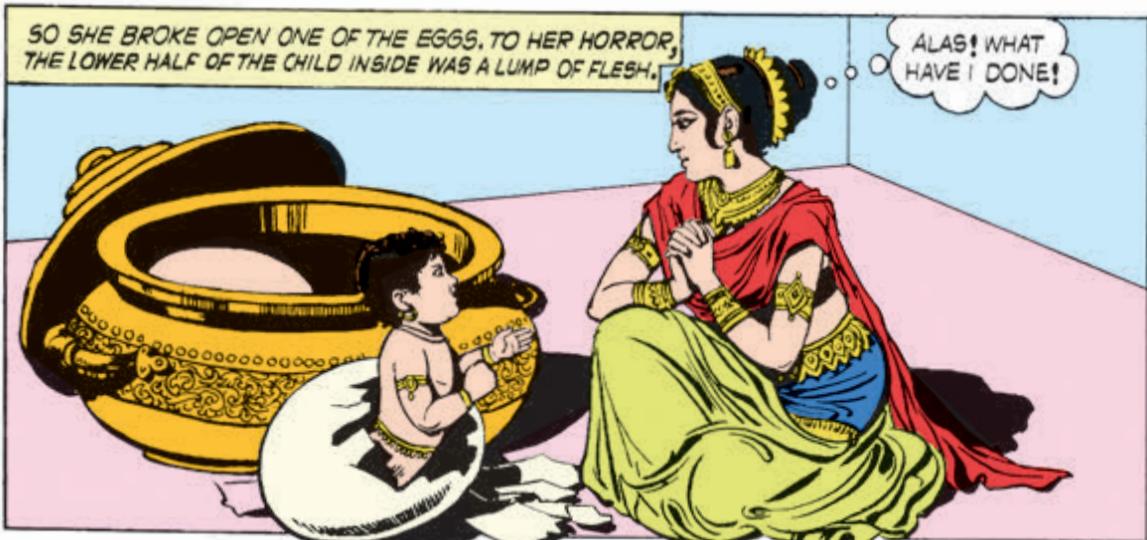
LET US HAVE THEM
INCUBATED SEPARATELY
IN WARM VESSELS.

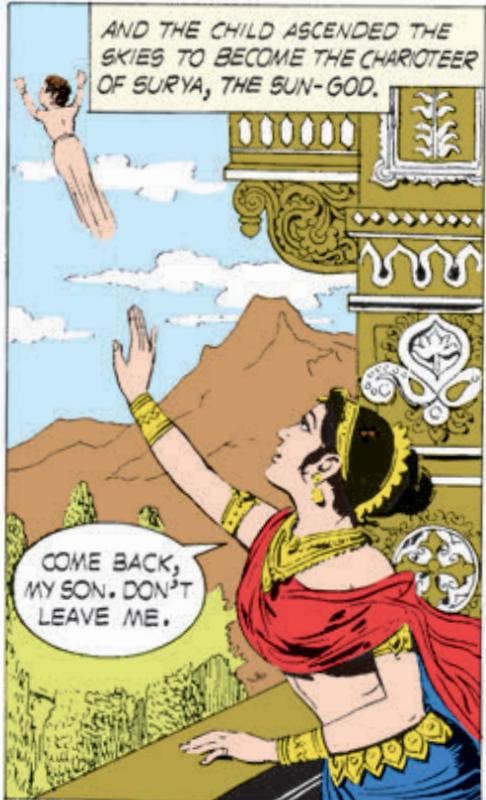


YEARS ROLLED BY. THE MOTHERS WAITED
ANXIOUSLY FOR THE EGGS TO HATCH. THEN
ONE DAY—

O VINATA, MY
SONS HAVE BURST
OPEN THEIR SHELLS!
COME, SEE THEM.







WHEN THEY REACHED HOME, KADRU SENT FOR HER THOUSAND SONS.



THE NEXT DAY, VINATA AND KADRU SET OUT TO SEE THE HORSE. ACROSS THE MIGHTY OCEAN THEY TRAVELED ...



... TO THE ABODE OF UCHCHAISHRAVA. THERE STOOD THE HORSE, SPOTLESSLY WHITE BUT ...



... ITS TAIL WAS BLACK. VINATA COULD NOT BELIEVE HER EYES.



MEANWHILE, AT HOME, VINATA'S SECOND SON BROKE HIS SHELL AND EMERGED INTO THE WORLD.

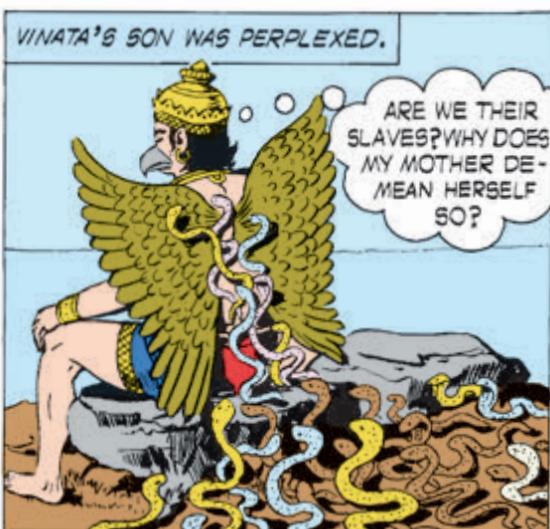
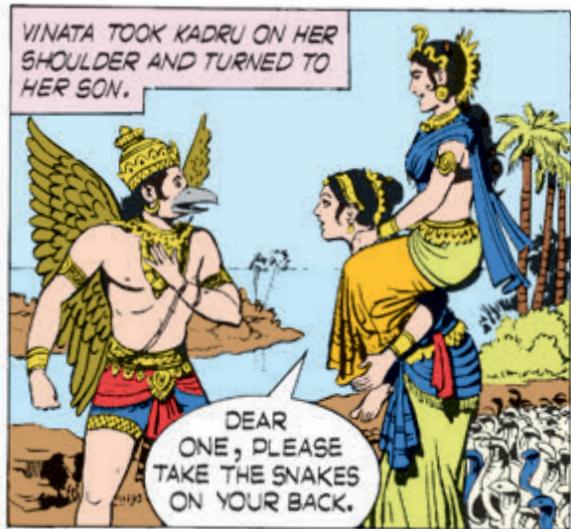


YOU DID NOT TAKE CARE TO ASCERTAIN THE FACT BEFORE MAKING THE WAGER. COME, MY SLAVE. YOU HAVE WORK TO DO.

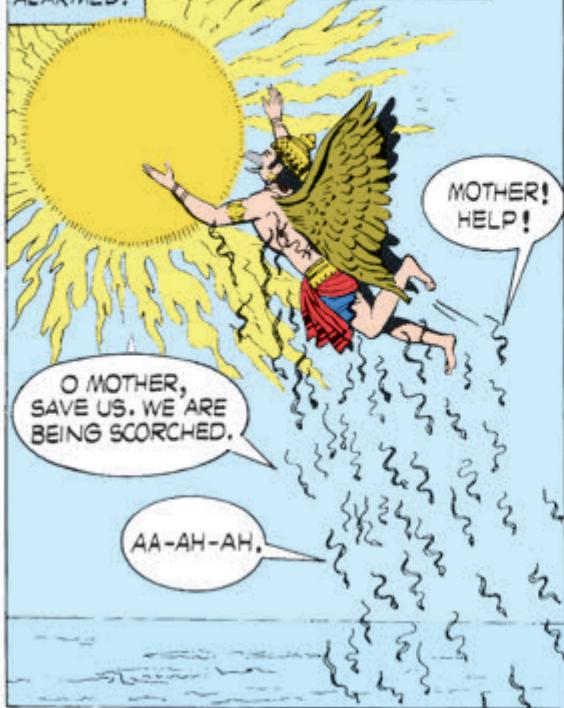


...AND SOARING INTO THE SKIES FLEW ACROSS THE OCEAN...





... SUDDENLY ROSE INTO THE AIR AND FLEW TOWARDS THE SUN. THE SNAKES WERE ALARMED.



MY SONS! HE'S OUT TO DESTROY MY SONS!



WITHOUT WASTING ANOTHER MOMENT, KADRU BEGAN PRAYING TO INDRA.

O LORD OF SHACHI, O KING OF THE HEAVENS, SAVE MY SONS WITH YOUR LIFE-GIVING SHOWERS. O BEST OF DEVAS, YOU ARE MY ONLY REFUGE.



THE CLOUDS AT INDRA'S COMMAND, SUDDENLY DARKENED.

O BENEVOLENT DEVA, YOU HAVE HEARD MY PRAYERS.





WHEN SHE ENDED HER TALE, HER MIGHTY SON WENT TO THE NAGAS.

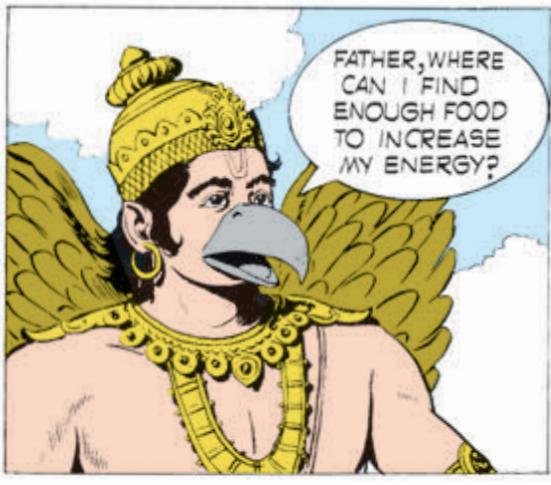


* THE NECTAR OF IMMORTALITY,

AS HE FLEW TOWARDS THE ABODE OF THE DEVAS, HE HEARD A VOICE.



IT WAS SAGE KASHYAP.



KASHYAP POINTED TO A LAKE IN THE DISTANCE.

DOWN THERE YOU WILL FIND A HUGE TORTOISE AND AN ELEPHANT. THEY ARE BENT ON KILLING EACH OTHER. EAT THEM AND PROCEED ON YOUR MISSION.

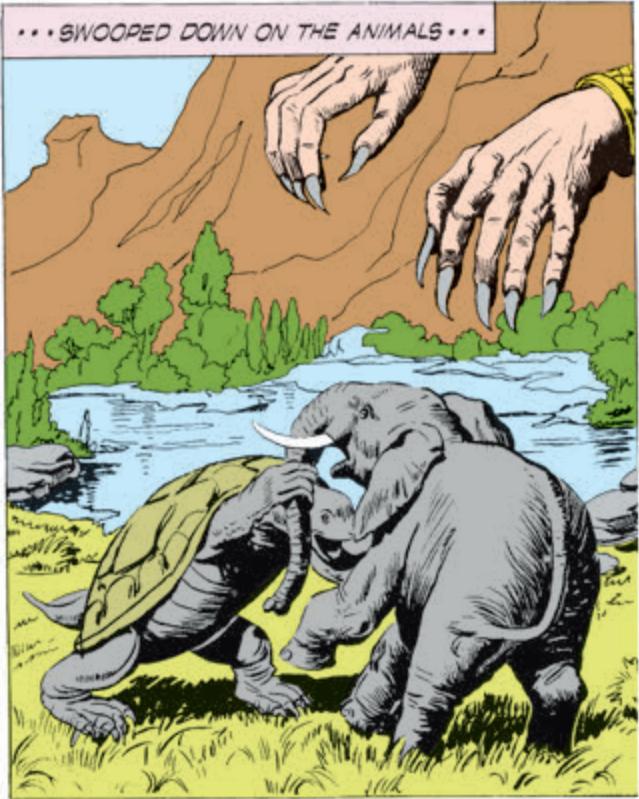
I SHALL DO AS YOU SAY, FATHER!



THE SON OF VINATA FLEW TOWARDS THE LAKE ...



... SWOOPED DOWN ON THE ANIMALS ...

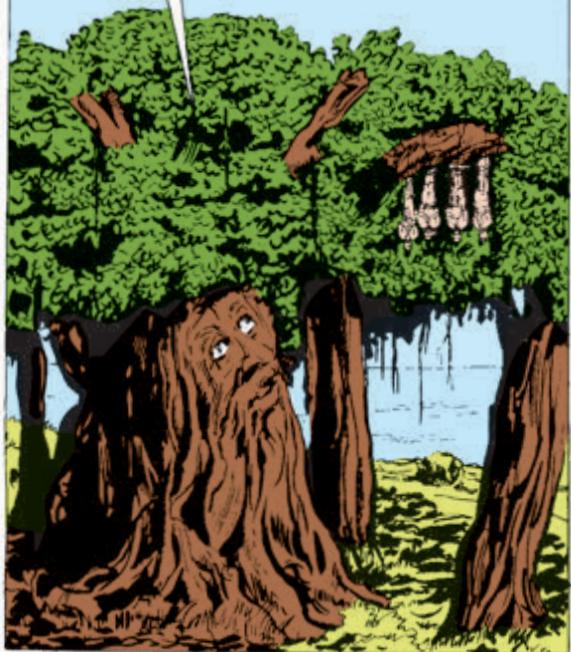


... AND SEIZING ONE IN EACH CLAW, SOARED INTO THE SKY.



AT LAST, HE SAW AN OLD BANYAN TREE ON THE SEASHORE. IT BECKONED TO HIM WITH ITS BRANCHES.

O GREAT BIRD,
COME AND SIT ON
THIS STRONG ARM OF MINE AND ENJOY
YOUR FEAST.



BUT ALAS! THE MOMENT THE GREAT BIRD ALIGHTED ON THE BRANCH...



... IT TREMBLED AND BROKE, THE MIGHTY SON OF VINATA LOOKED DOWN.

WHY! THERE ARE SOME RISHIS HANGING FROM IT, THEY MUST NOT BE HARMED.



AND BEFORE THE BRANCH COULD COME CRASHING DOWN ...



... HE CAUGHT IT.



THE RISHIS WERE AMAZED BY HIS SPEED AND STRENGTH.



GARUDA FLEW SLOWLY ONWARD.



* ONE WHO IS CAPABLE OF CARRYING GREAT WEIGHT.

SUDDENLY—

AH! THE
PEAKS OF THE
GANDHAMADANA
MOUNTAINS.

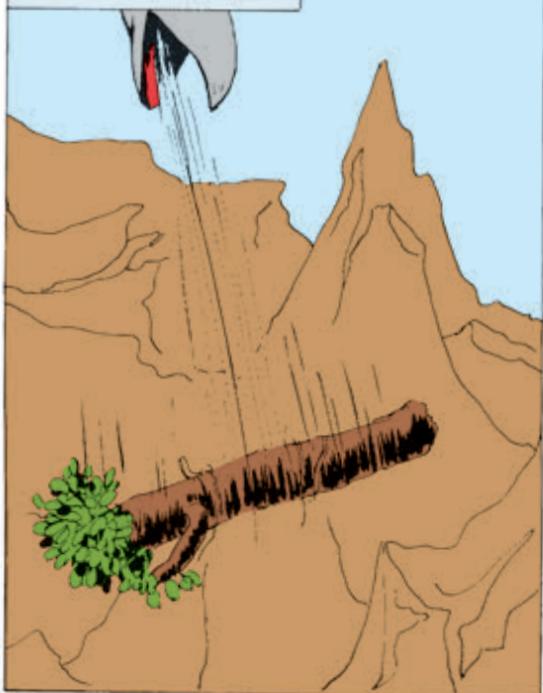


AS SOON AS GARUDA LANDED, THE RISHIS LEFT THE BOUGH.

LET US GO
TO THE HIMALAYAS
AND PURSUE OUR
VOCATION.



THEN, FLYING OVER AN UNINHABITED SUMMIT, GARUDA LET THE HUGE BRANCH FALL FROM HIS BEAK.



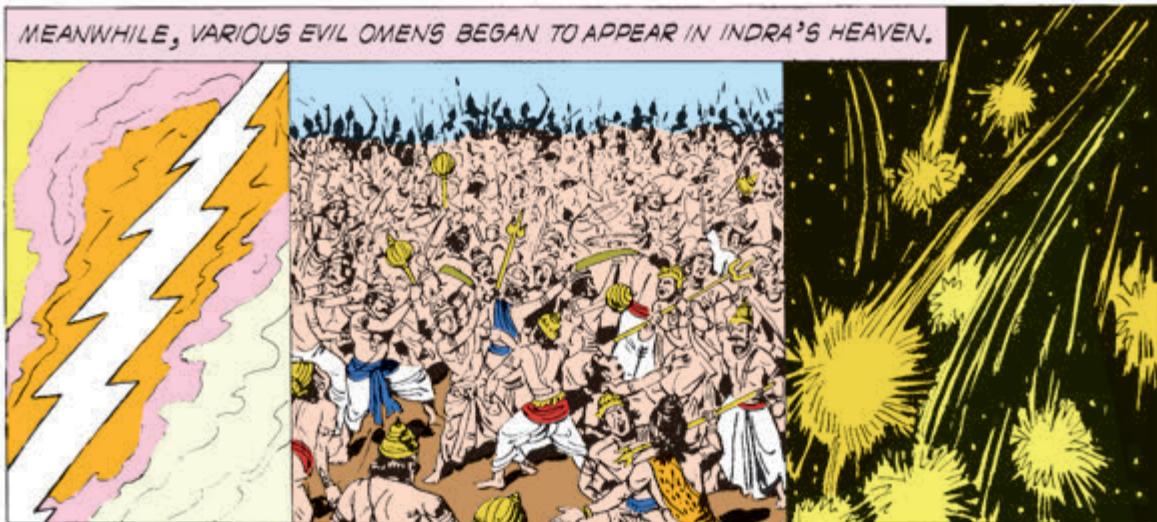
AT LAST! I CAN PERCH ON THAT PEAK AND EAT MY PREY IN PEACE.



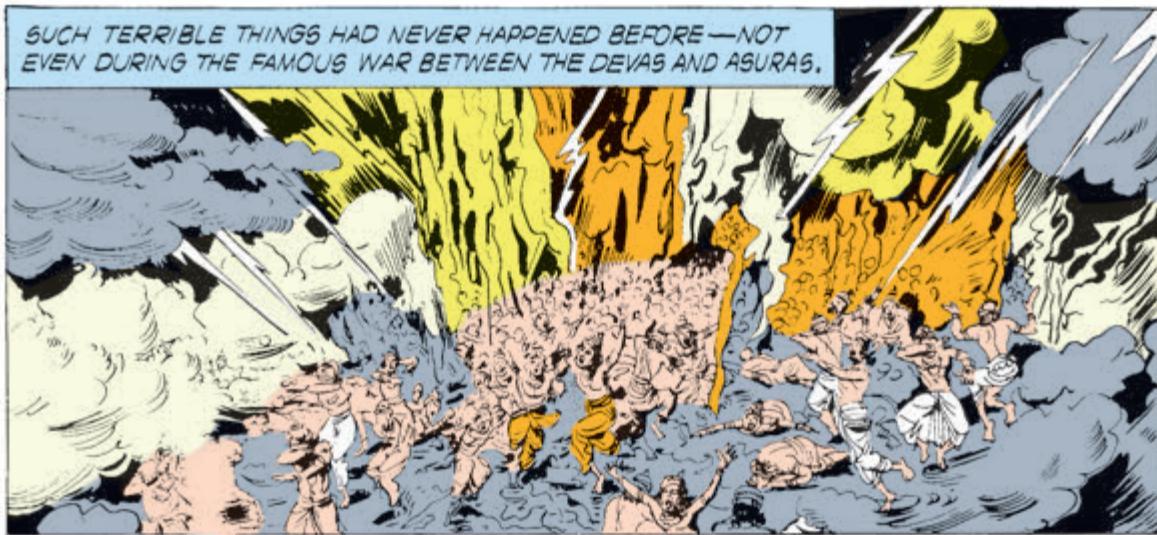
HIS MEAL OVER, GARUDA RESUMED HIS FLIGHT TO THE ABODE OF THE DEVAS.

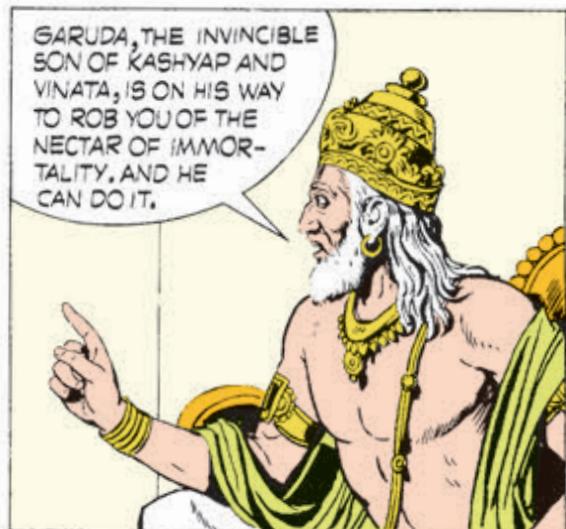


MEANWHILE, VARIOUS EVIL OMENS BEGAN TO APPEAR IN INDRA'S HEAVEN.

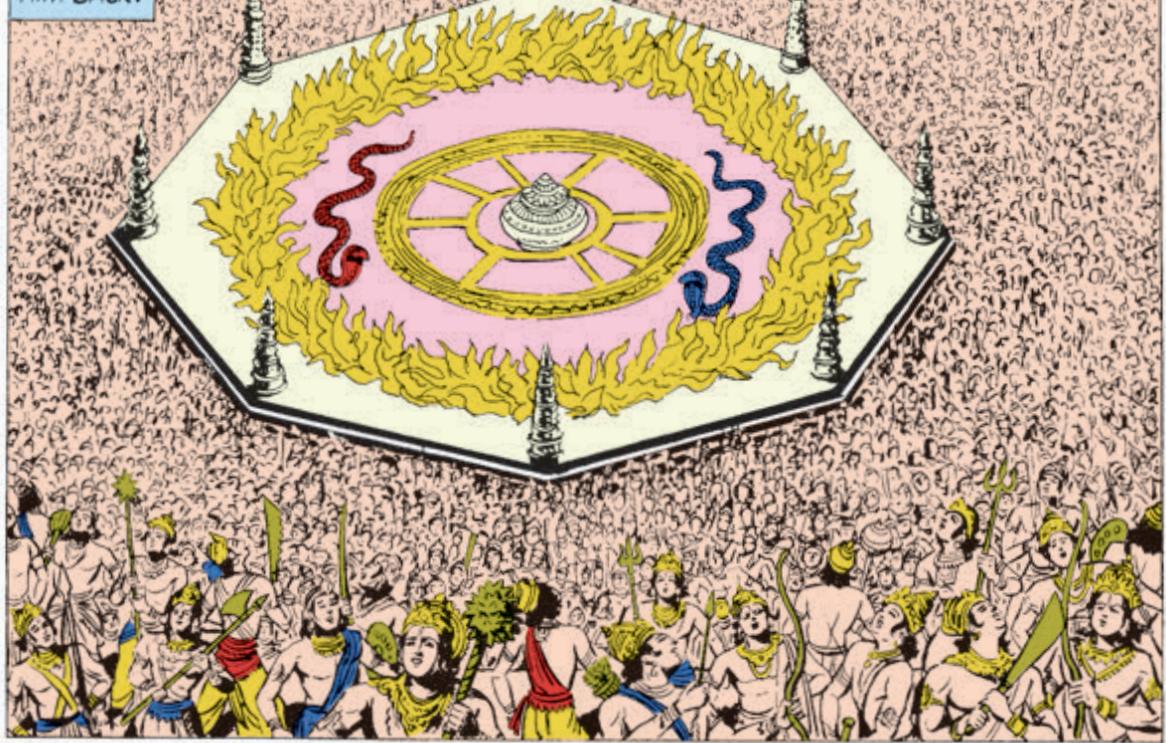


SUCH TERRIBLE THINGS HAD NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE—NOT EVEN DURING THE FAMOUS WAR BETWEEN THE DEVAS AND ASURAS.





AND THE DEVAS WITH THEIR KING AWAITED GARUDA'S ARRIVAL, FULLY PREPARED TO BEAT HIM BACK.



A FEW MINUTES LATER, GARUDA CAME. THE SKIES WERE DARK WITH THE DUST RAISED BY HIS FLAPPING WINGS.



INDRA TURNED TO THE GOD OF THE WINDS.



VAYU DREW IN HIS BREATH...



...AND WITH ONE LARGE PUFF BLEW AWAY THE DUST.



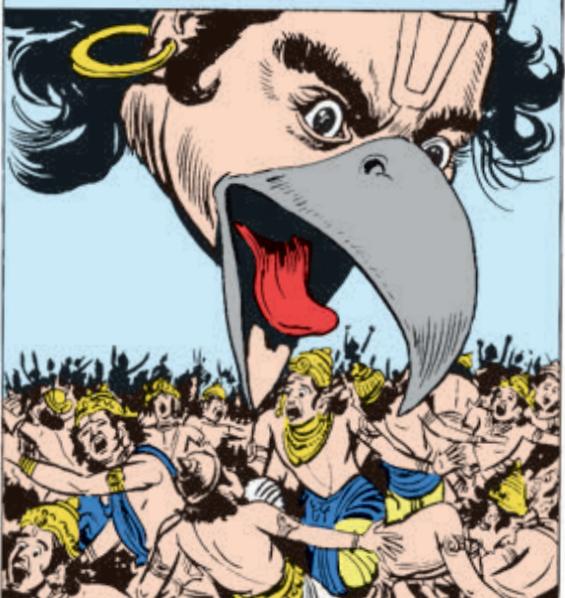
AS GARUDA HOVERED ABOVE THEM, THE DEVAS ATTACKED HIM WITH THEIR DOUBLE-EDGED BROADSWORDS, SPIKED IRON MACES, POINTED LANCES AND MANY A DISCUS.



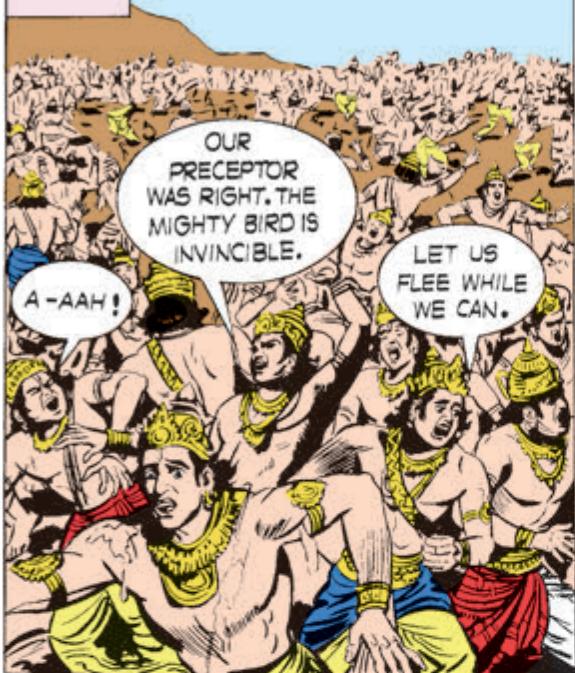
FOR A WHILE , GARUDA HUMOURED THE DEVAS AND LET THEIR WEAPONS GRAZE HIS BODY.



THEN WITH A MIGHTY ROAR HE ATTACKED.



OVERCOME BY THE ONSLAUGHT, THE DEVAS BEGAN TO FLEE IN ALL DIRECTIONS, THE BLOOD FLOWING COPIOUSLY FROM THEIR MANGLED BODIES.

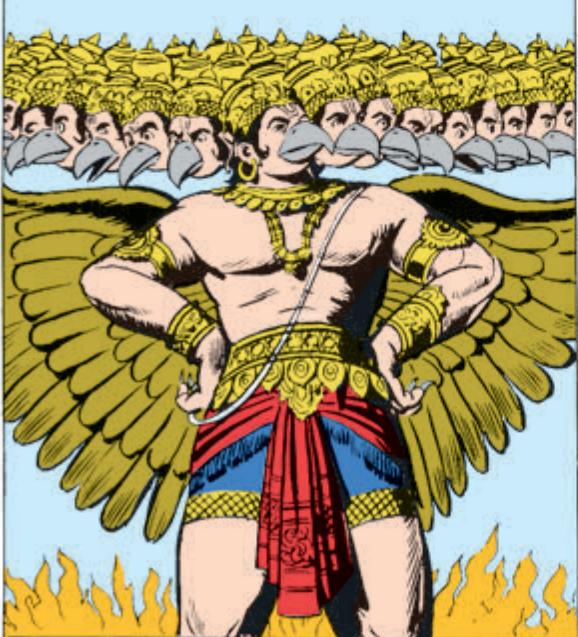


HAVING DEALT WITH THE DEVAS, GARUDA NOW HAD TO TACKLE THE WALL OF FIRE AROUND THE POT OF AMRIT.

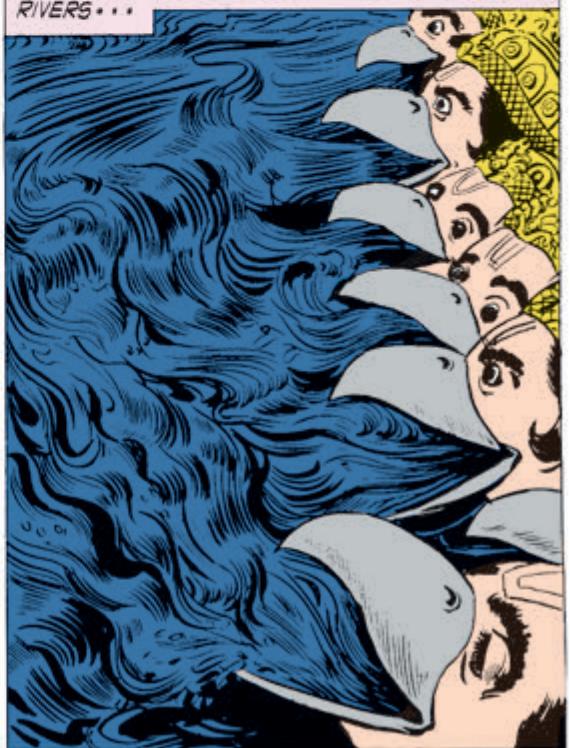
THESE TERRIBLE FLAMES SEEM TO BE BENT ON BURNING SURYA HIMSELF. I WILL HAVE TO PUT THEM OUT BEFORE I VENTURE ANY FURTHER.



CAPABLE OF CHANGING HIS FORM AT WILL, GARUDA ASSUMED NINETY TIMES NINETY MOUTHS...



... FILLED THEM WITH THE WATERS OF SEVERAL RIVERS...



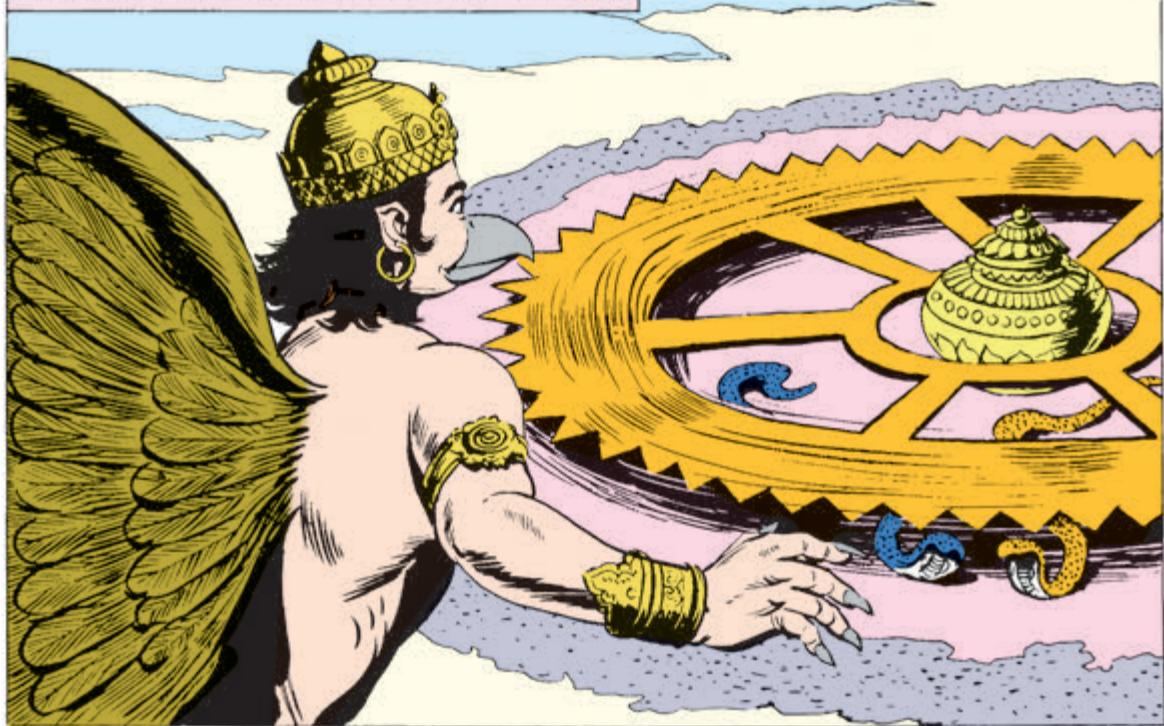
...AND SUBDUED THE WALL OF FIRE.



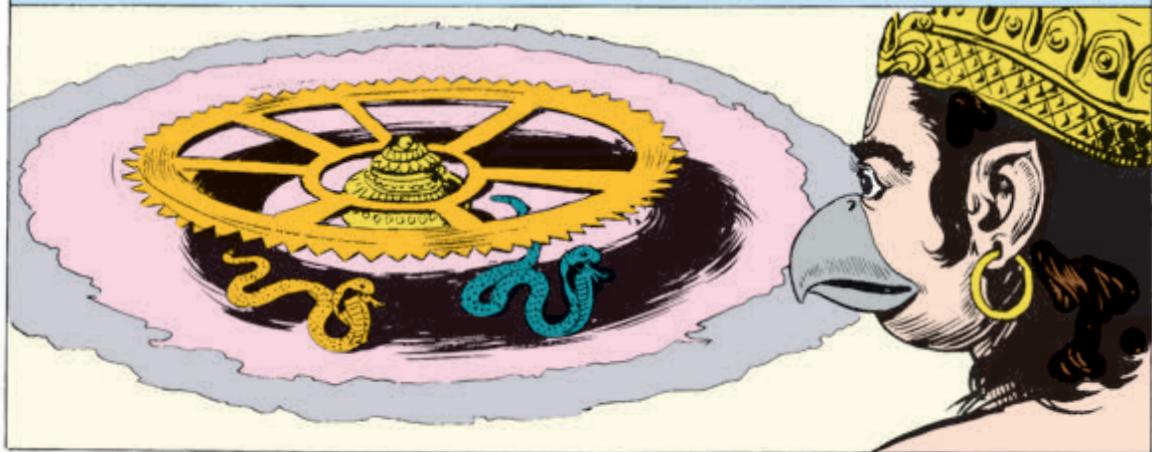
THEN WITH A ROAR OF TRIUMPH, HE RUSHED FORWARD THROUGH THE SMOKE ...



...AND CAME TO A SUDDEN HALT. A REVOLVING WHEEL WITH A SHARP EDGE OF FINE, TEMPERED STEEL STOOD BETWEEN HIM AND THE POT OF AMRIT.



AS HIS GAZE FELL ON THE POT BELOW THE WHEEL, HE SAW TWO POISONOUS SERPENTS — THEIR TONGUES DARTING IN FURY, THEIR BLAZING EYES EVER WATCHFUL — STANDING GUARD OVER IT.



GARUDA WAS UNPERTURBED, IN AN INSTANT HE REDUCED HIS SIZE ...



... SLID UNDER THE WHEEL ...



... AND BEGAN FLAPPING HIS WINGS INCESSANTLY, THROWING UP DUST,



AND BEFORE THE BLINDED SERPENTS KNEW WHAT WAS HAPPENING, THEY WERE KILLED.



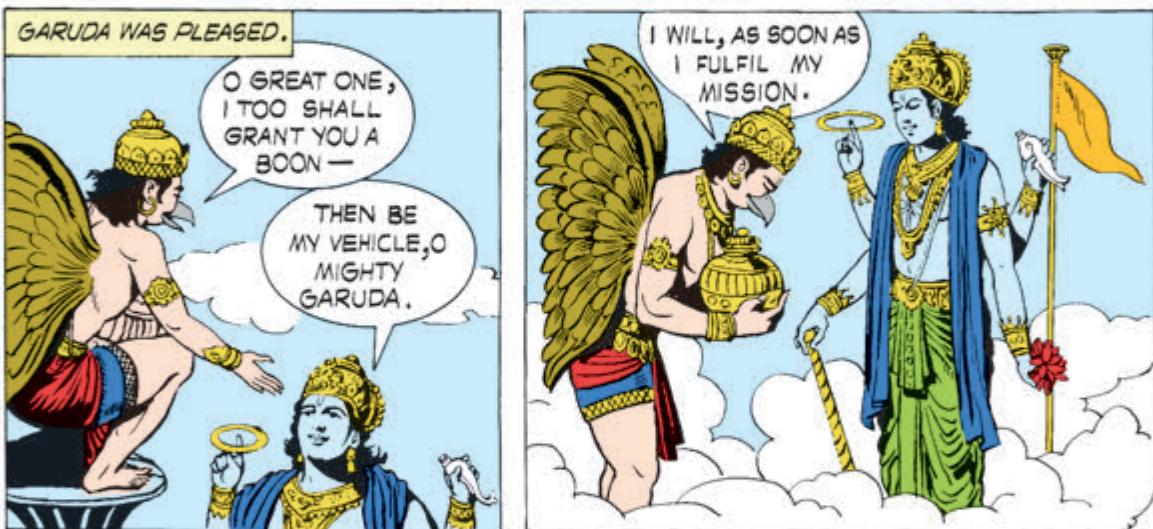
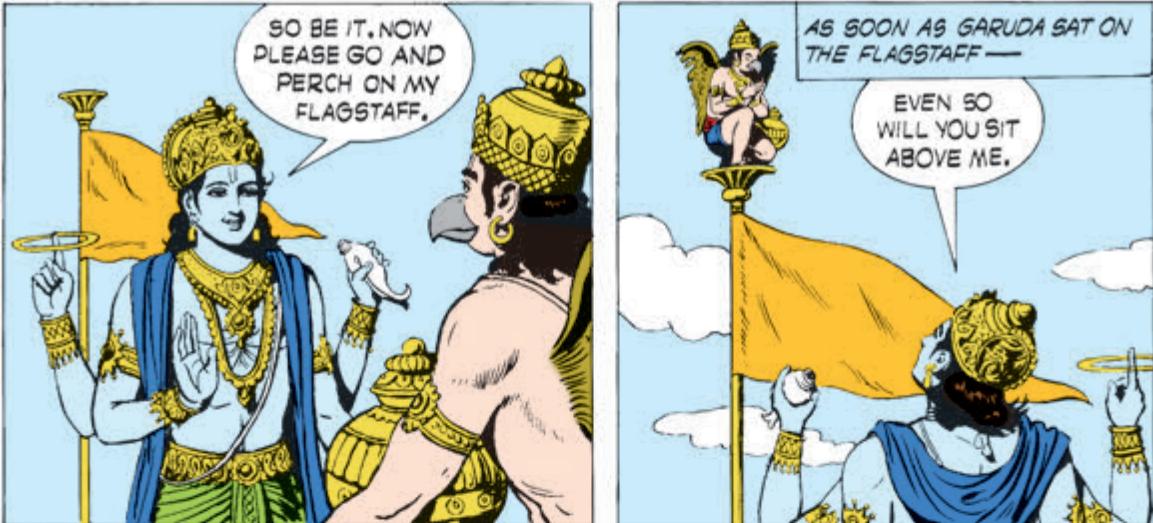
GARUDA THEN SNATCHED THE POT OF AMRIT AND . . .



... SUDDENLY BEGAN TO GROW — SHATTERING THE WHEEL INTO A MILLION PIECES WITH THE FORCE OF HIS ACTION.















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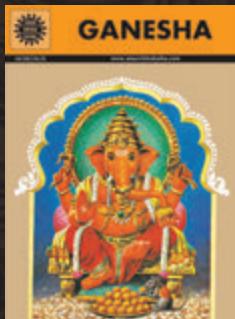


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GARUDA

Garuda, eagle-faced son of sage Kashyapa and Vinata, had strength that surpassed all the devas in Indralok. So when he was required to bring the pot of Amrit or Nectar of Immortality, to save his mother from slavery, Indra's heaven shuddered with fear. This story is from the Adi Parva of the Mahabharata.

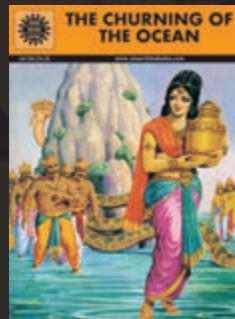
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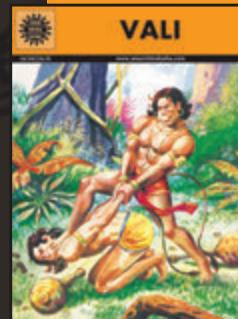
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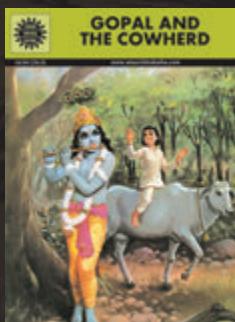


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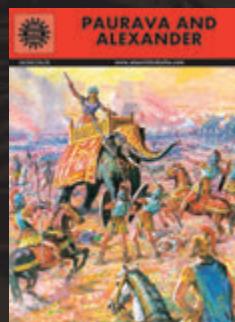
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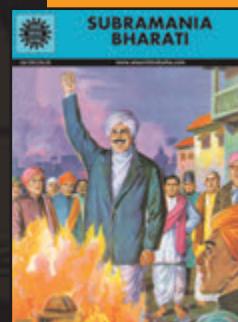
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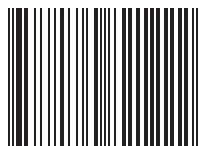
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