



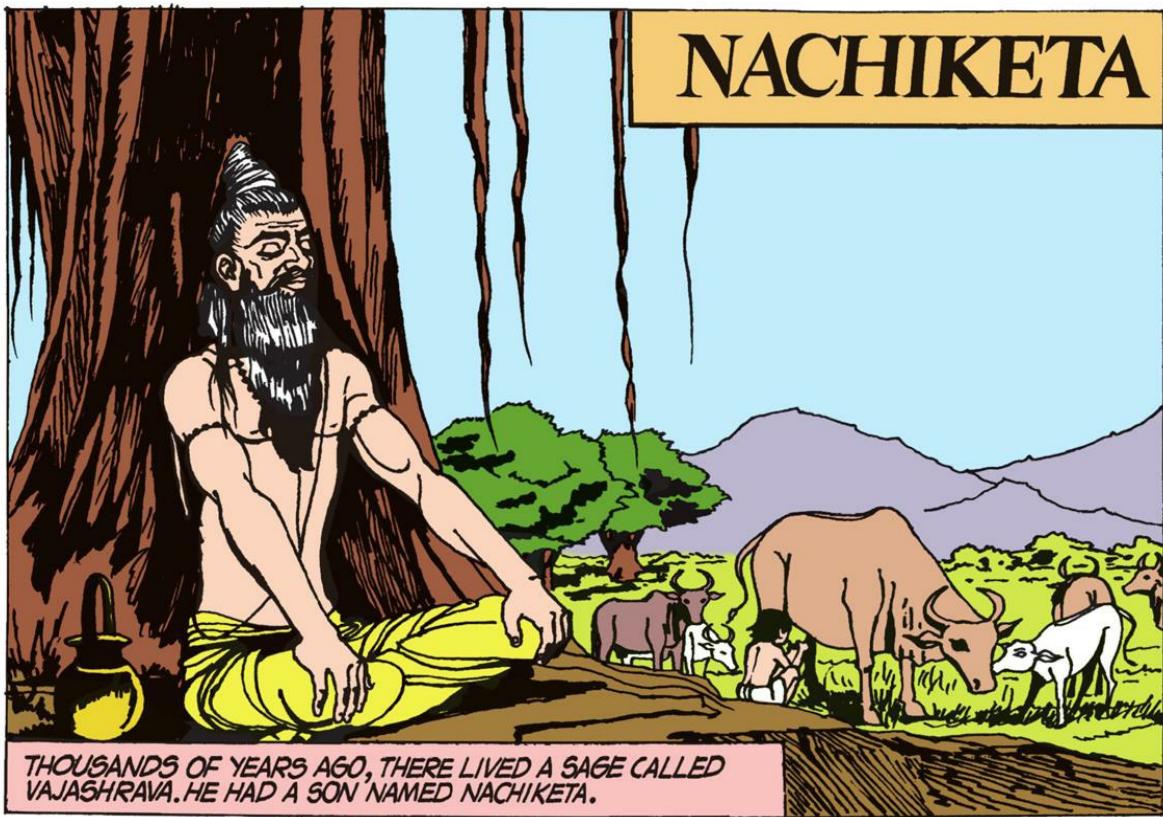
NACHIKETA

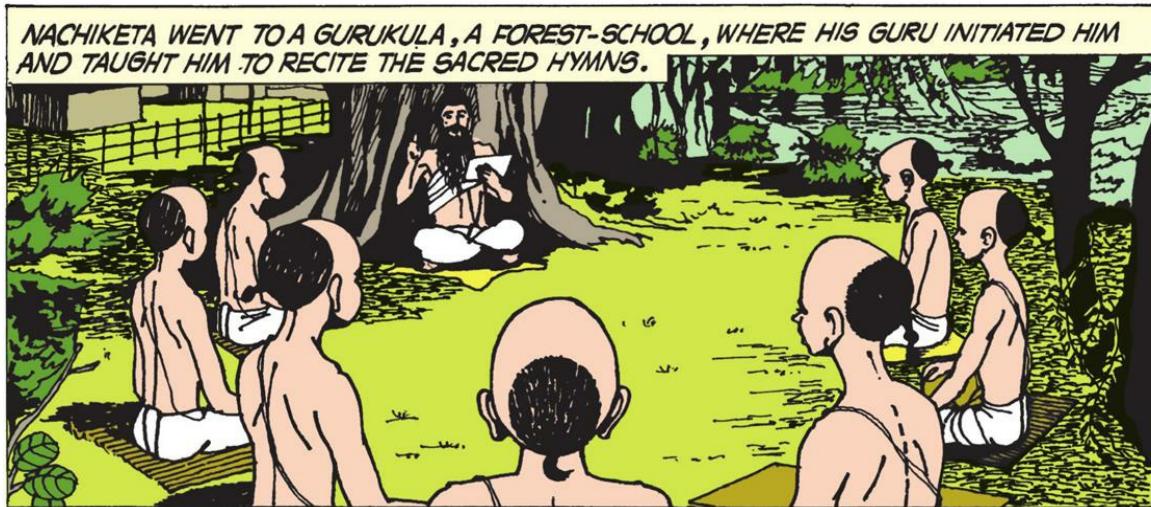
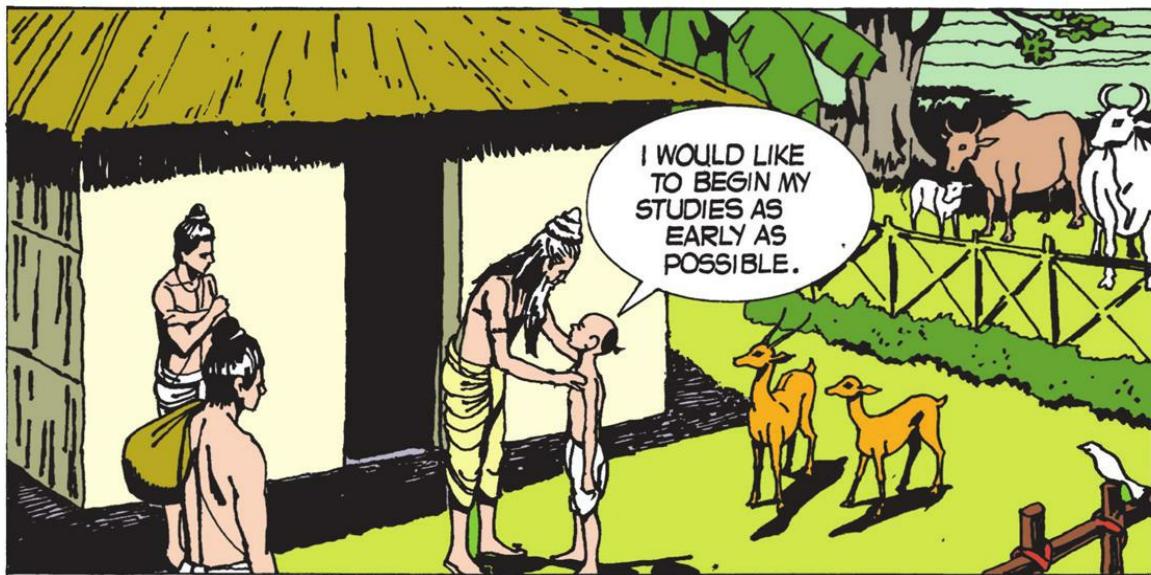
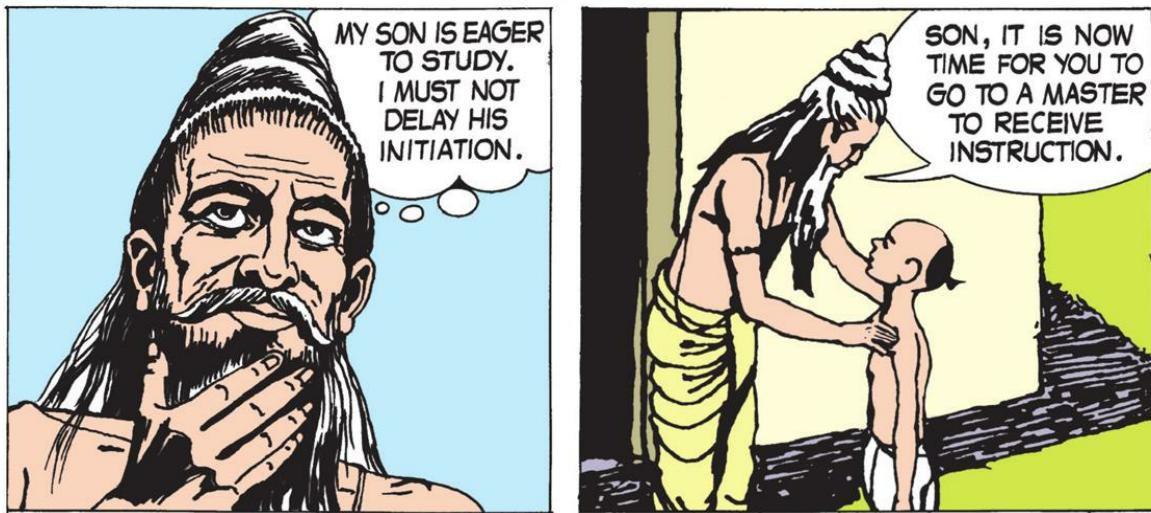
A COLLECTION OF STORIES FROM THE UPANISHADS

Vol 702 |

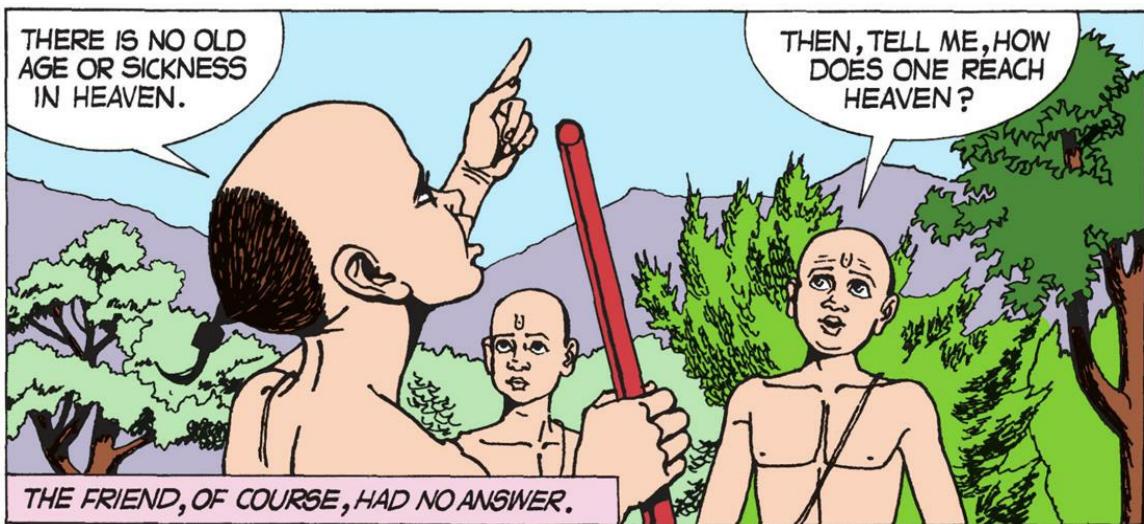
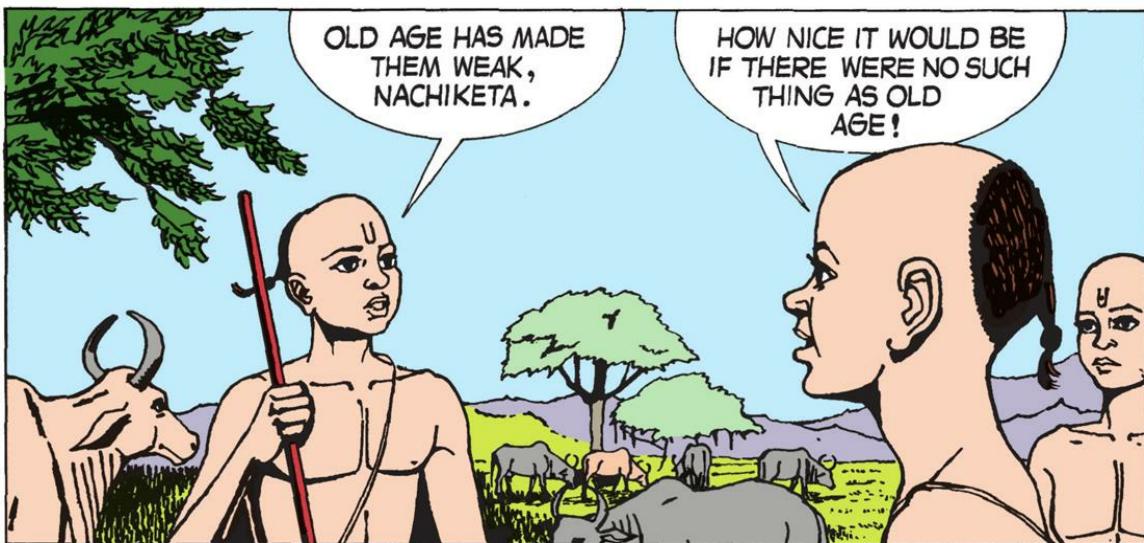
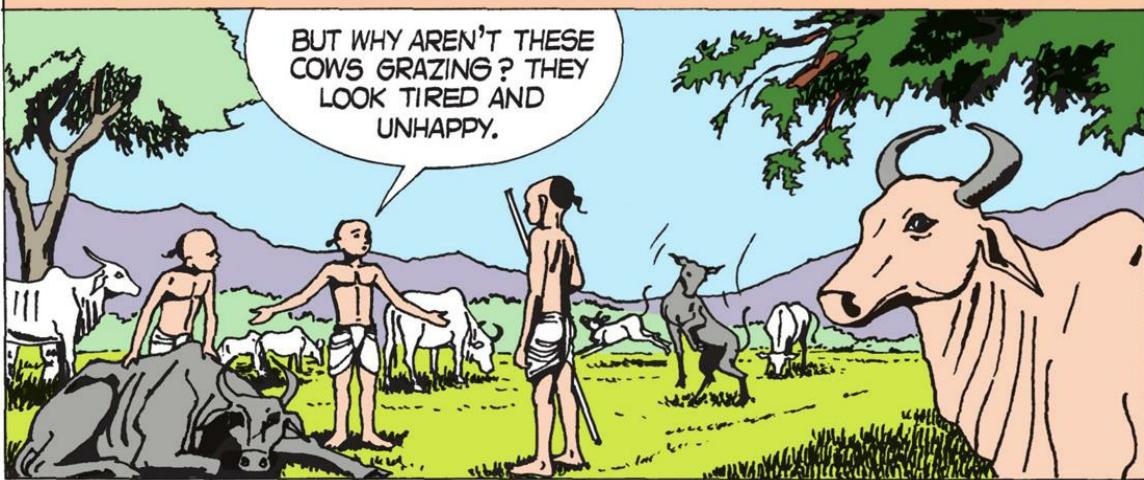


NACHIKETA

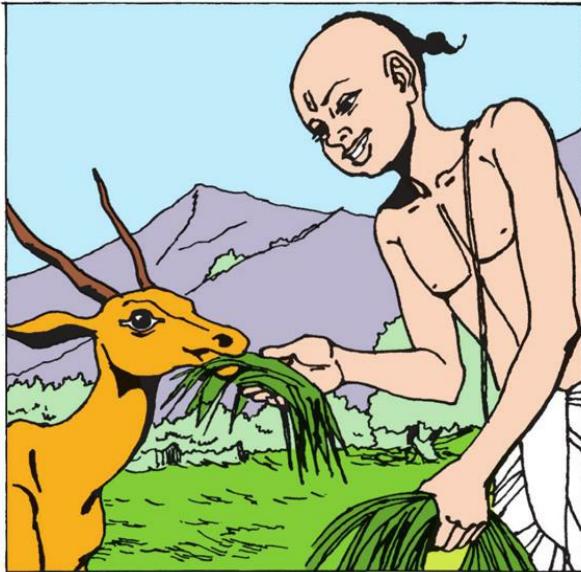




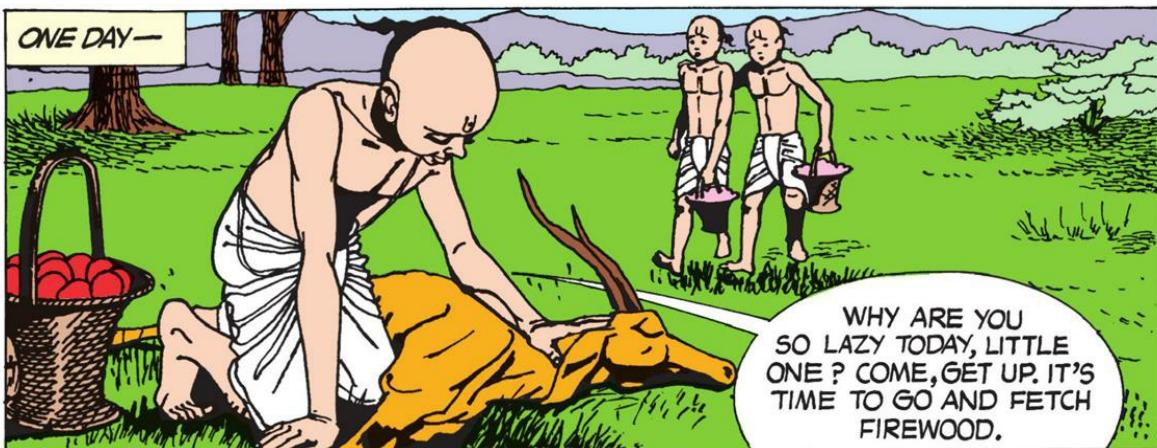
NACHIKETA AND ANOTHER BOY WERE ASSIGNED THE TASK OF LOOKING AFTER THE CATTLE.



A DEER HAD GROWN QUITE FOND OF NACHIKETA AND USED TO FOLLOW HIM WHENEVER HE WENT OUT TO GATHER FIREWOOD.



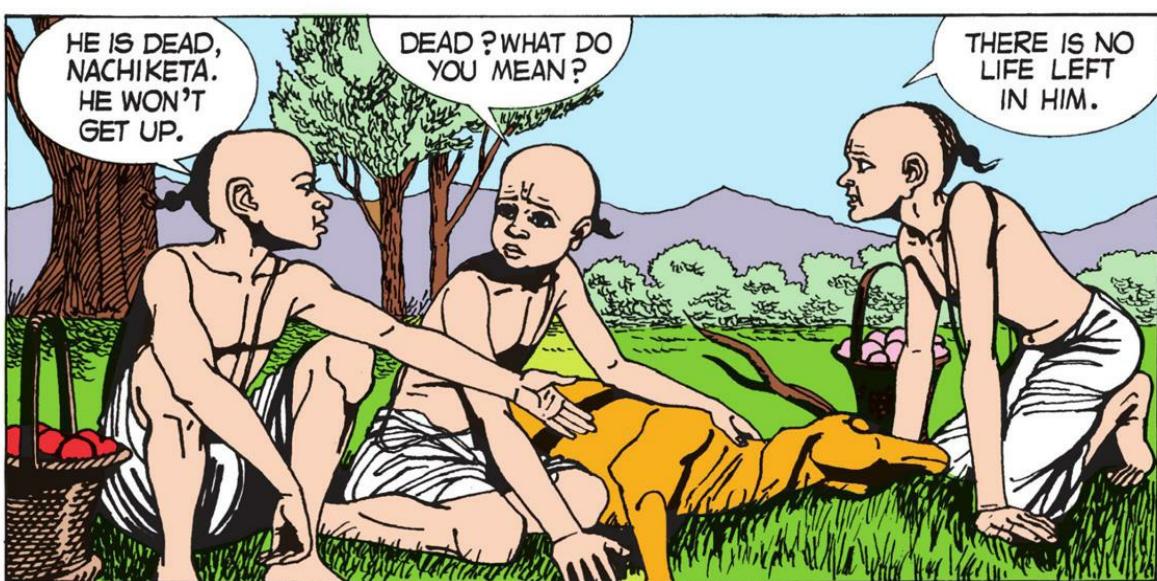
ONE DAY—

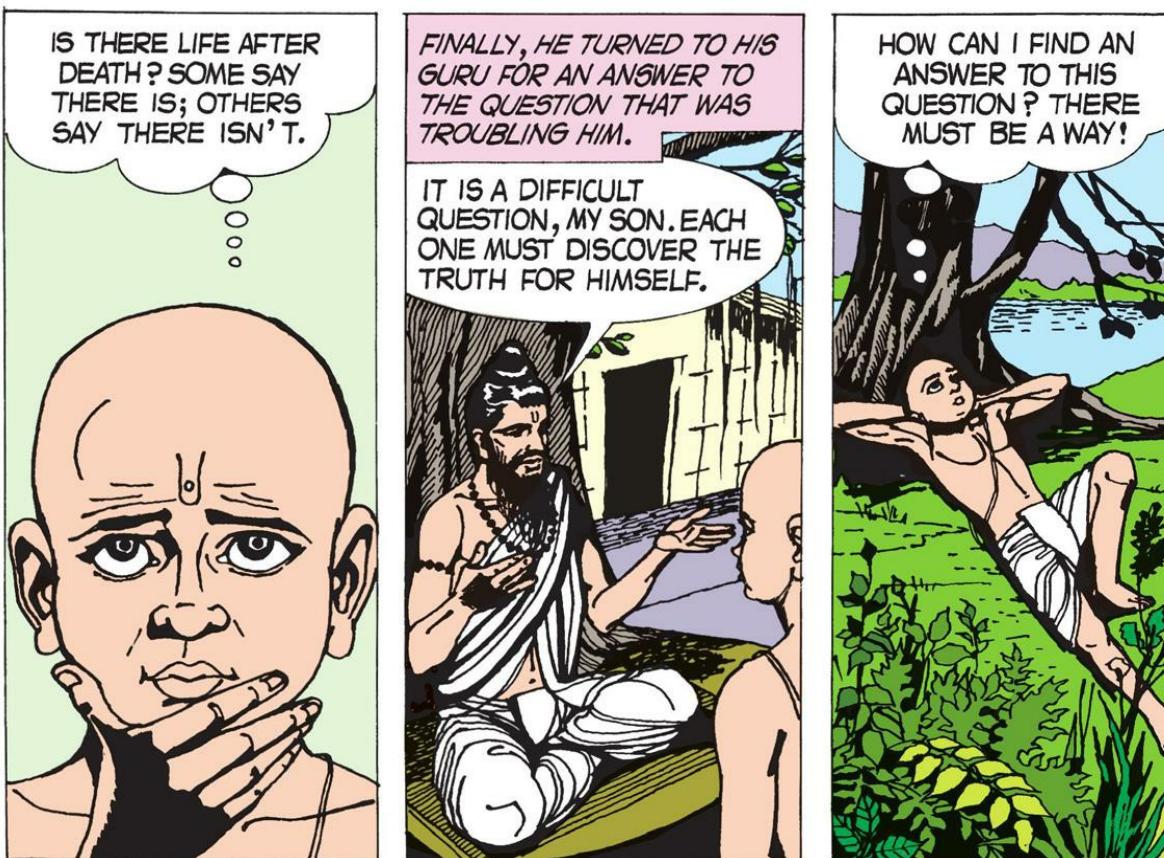
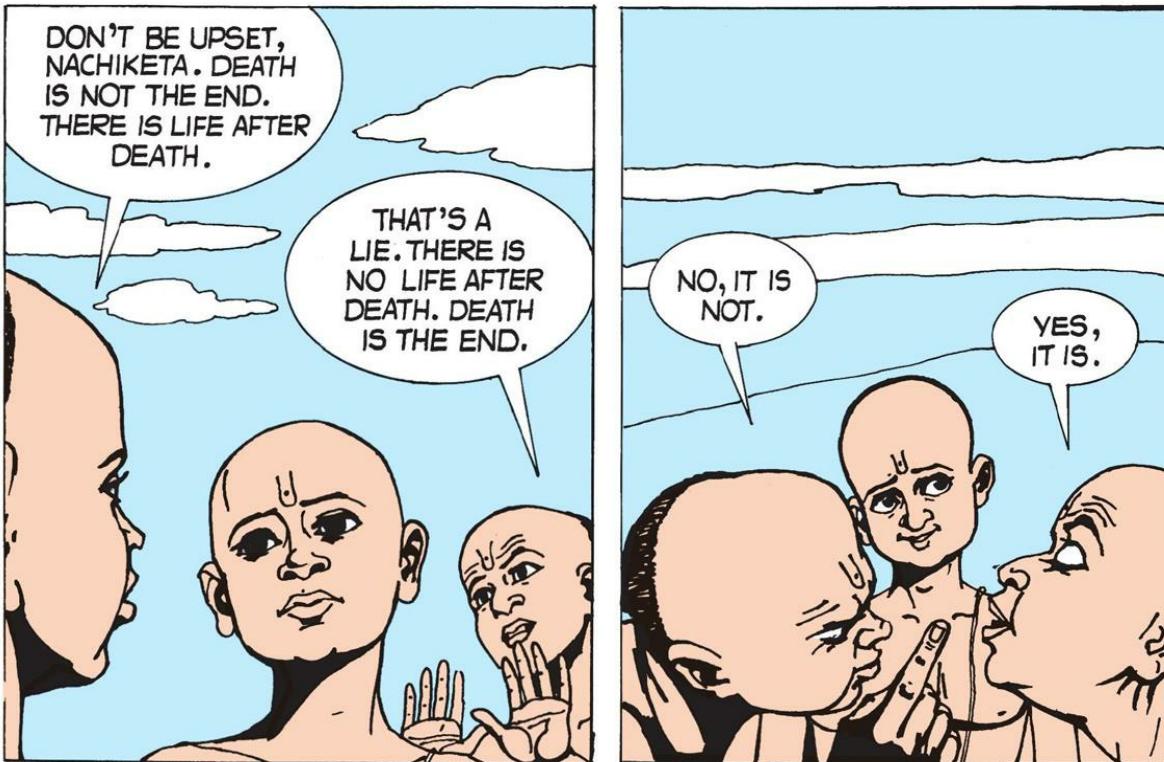


HE IS DEAD,
NACHIKETA.
HE WON'T
GET UP.

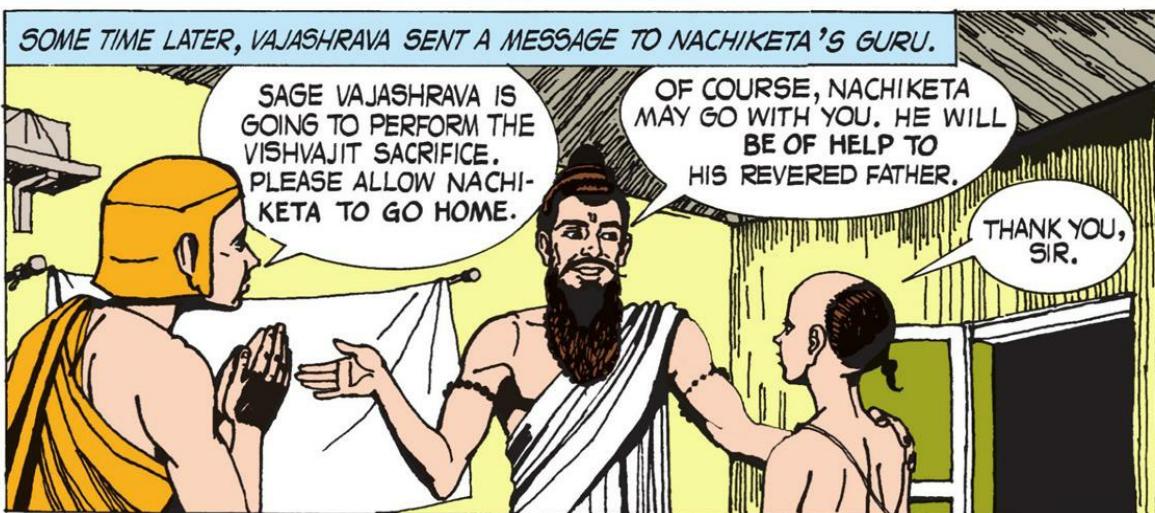
DEAD? WHAT DO
YOU MEAN?

THERE IS NO
LIFE LEFT
IN HIM.





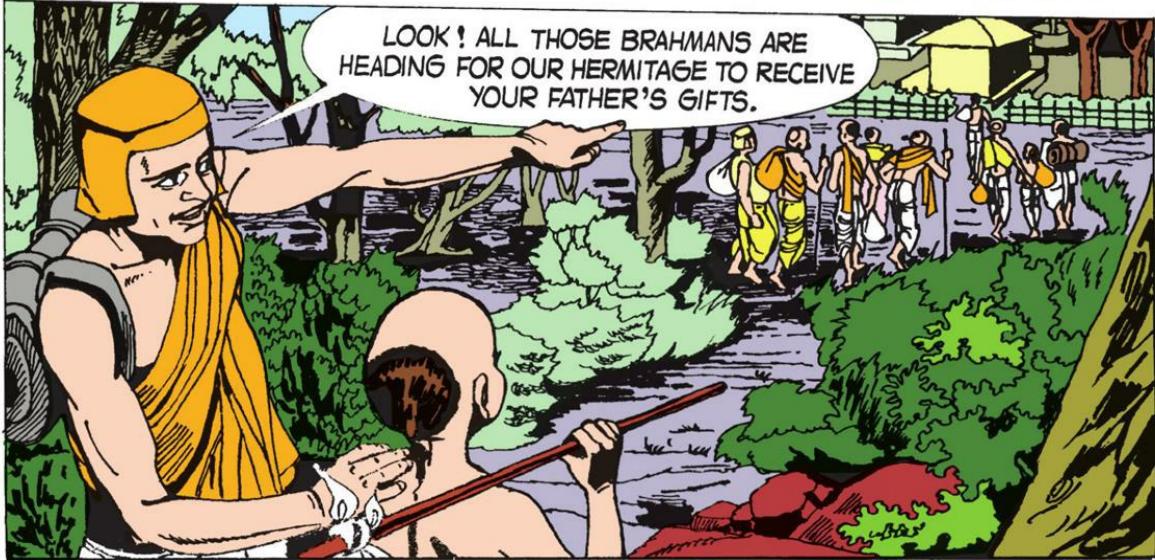
SOME TIME LATER, VAJASHRAVA SENT A MESSAGE TO NACHIKETA'S GURU.



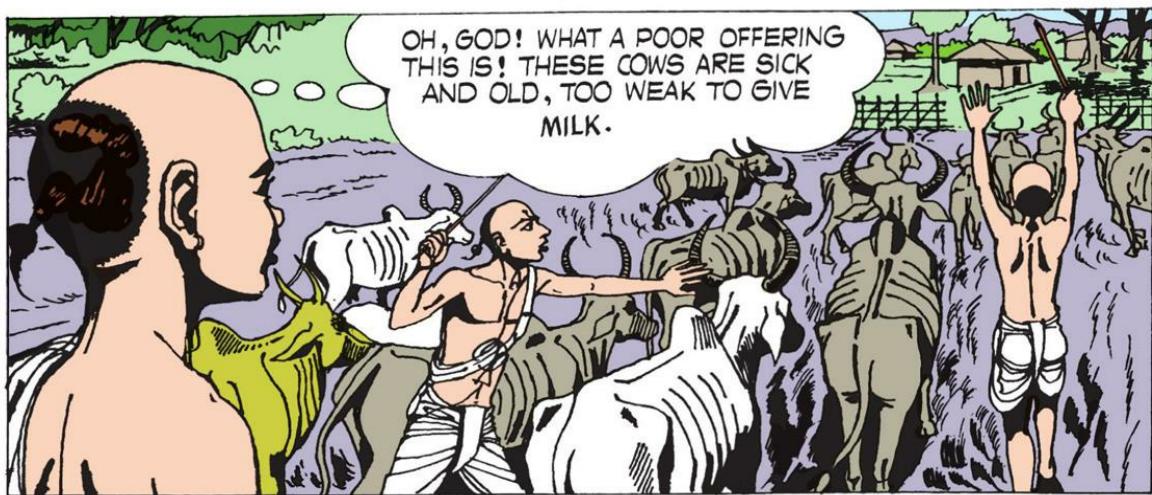
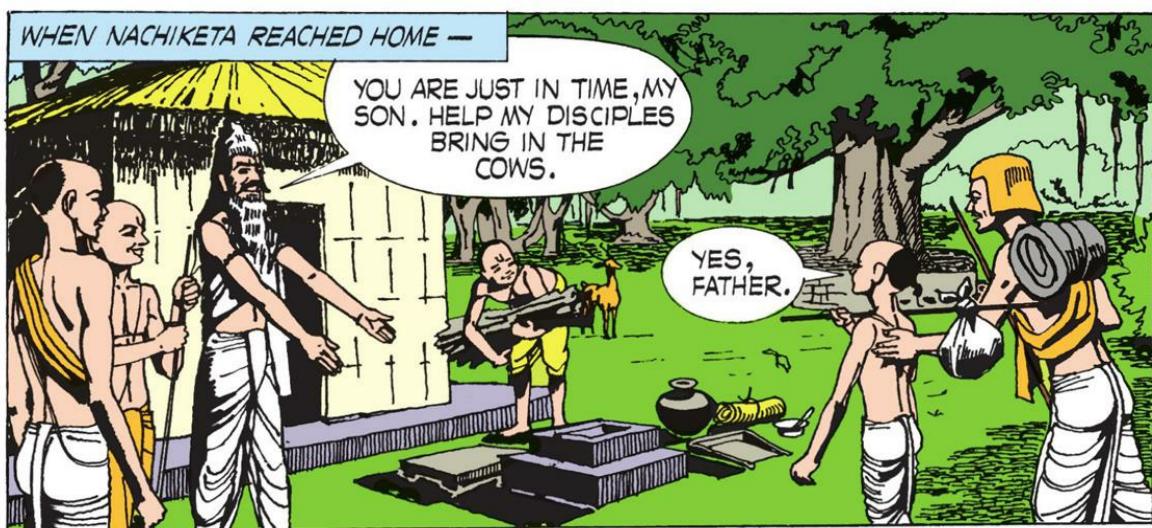
ON THE WAY HOME —

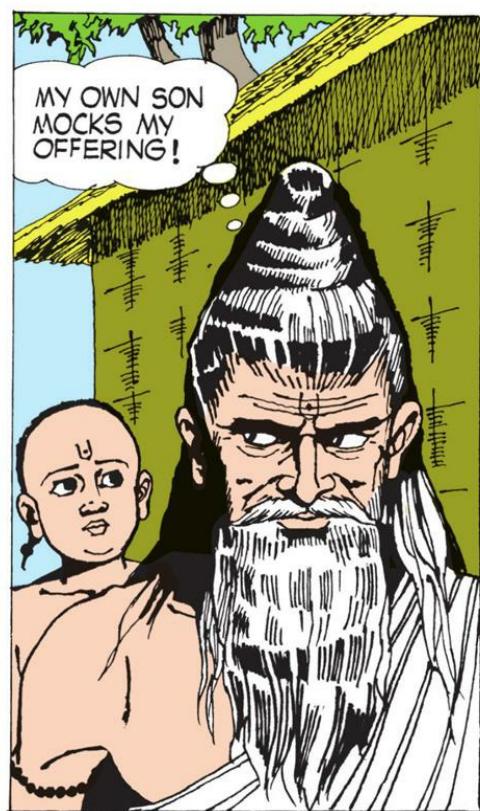
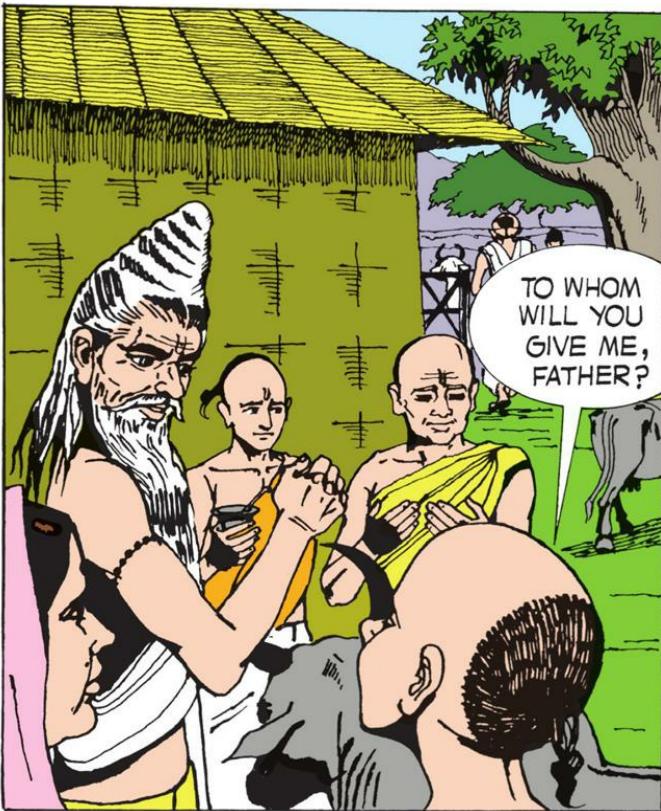
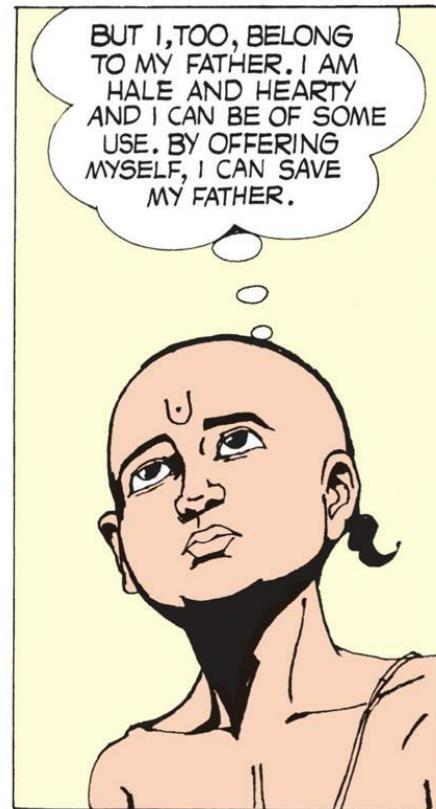
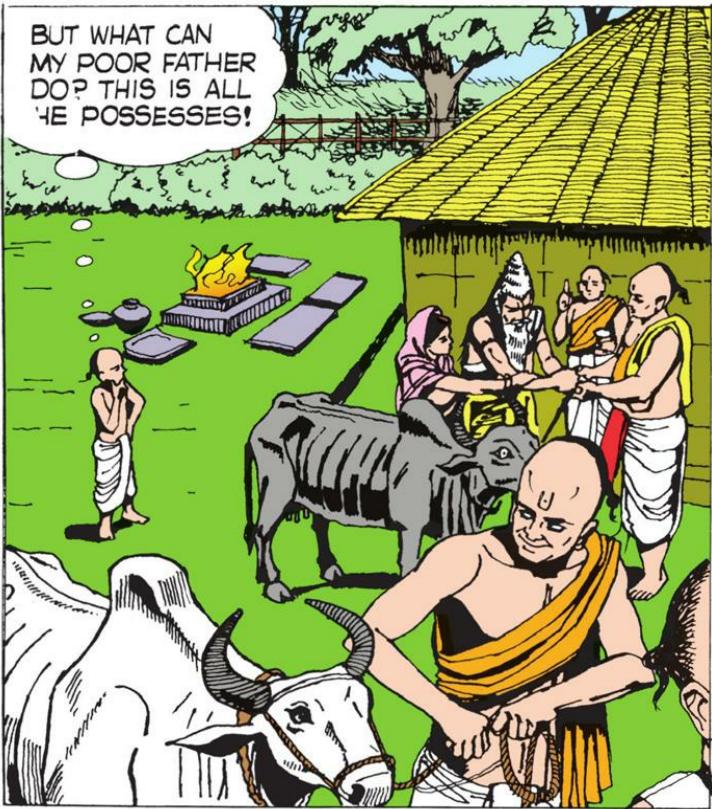


LOOK! ALL THOSE BRAHMANS ARE HEADING FOR OUR HERMITAGE TO RECEIVE YOUR FATHER'S GIFTS.



WHEN NACHIKETA REACHED HOME —

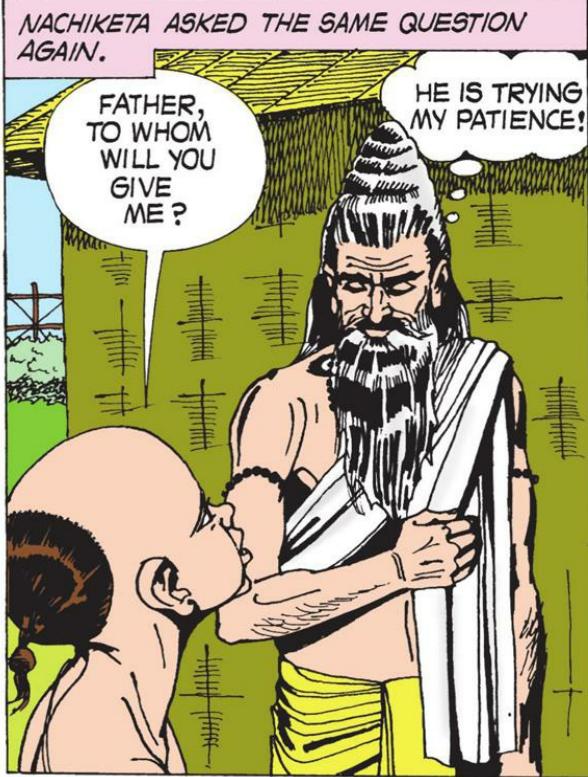




NACHIKETA ASKED THE SAME QUESTION AGAIN.

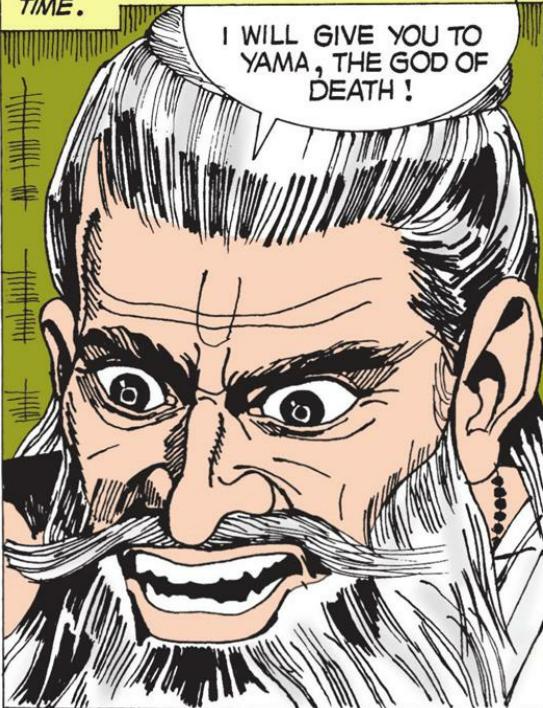
FATHER,
TO WHOM
WILL YOU
GIVE
ME ?

HE IS TRYING
MY PATIENCE!



RECEIVING NO ANSWER, NACHIKETA REPEATED HIS QUESTION FOR THE THIRD TIME.

I WILL GIVE YOU TO YAMA, THE GOD OF DEATH !



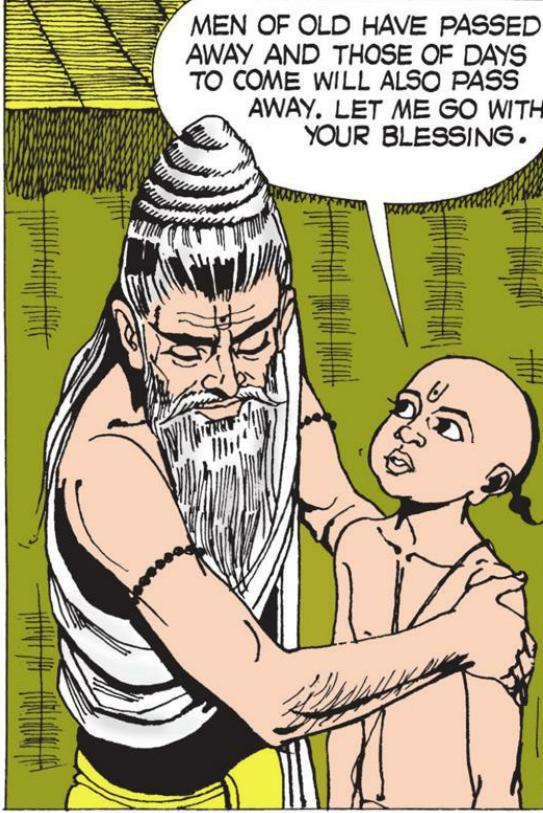
THE SAGE REGRETTED HIS ANGRY WORDS IMMEDIATELY.

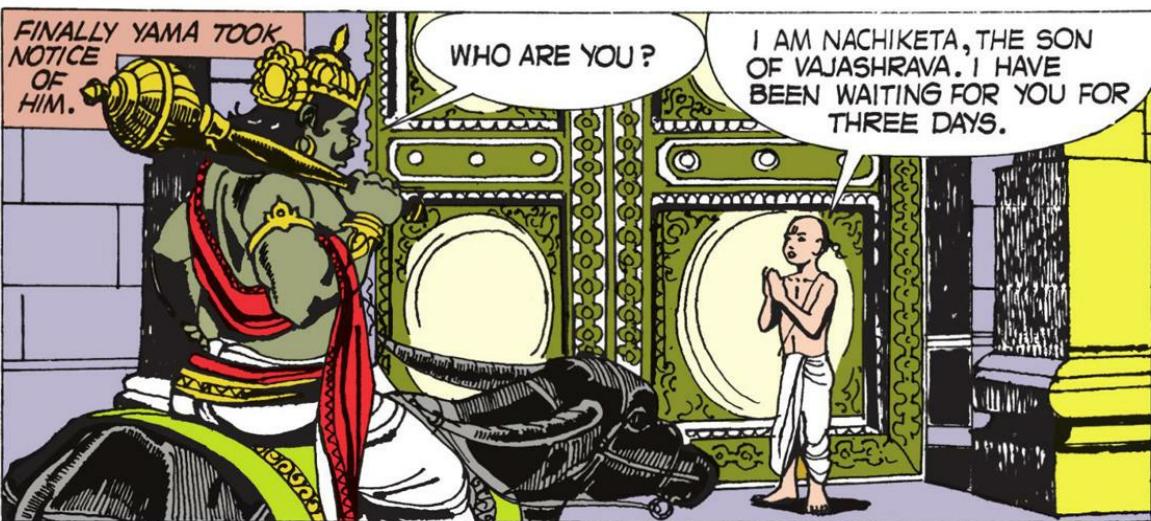
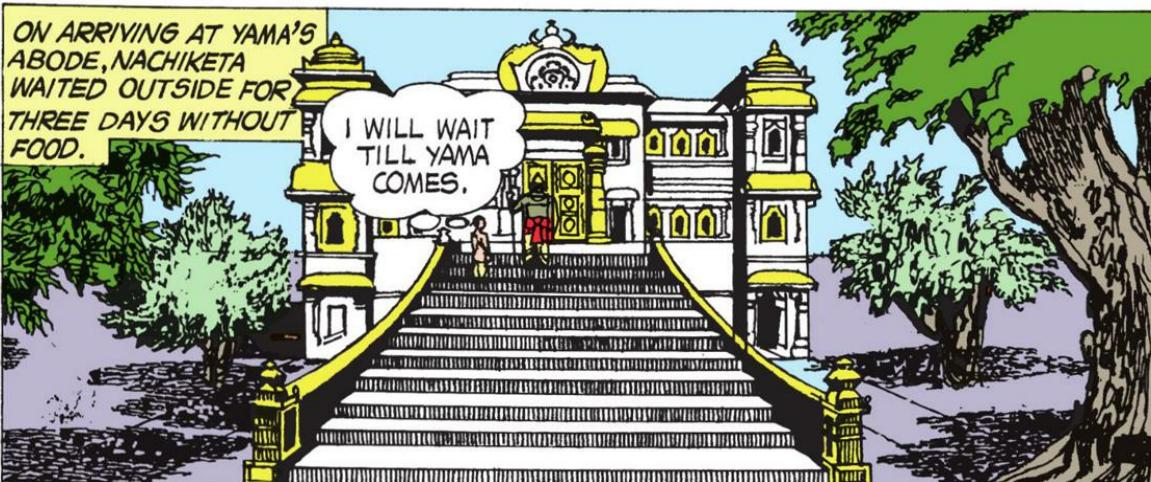
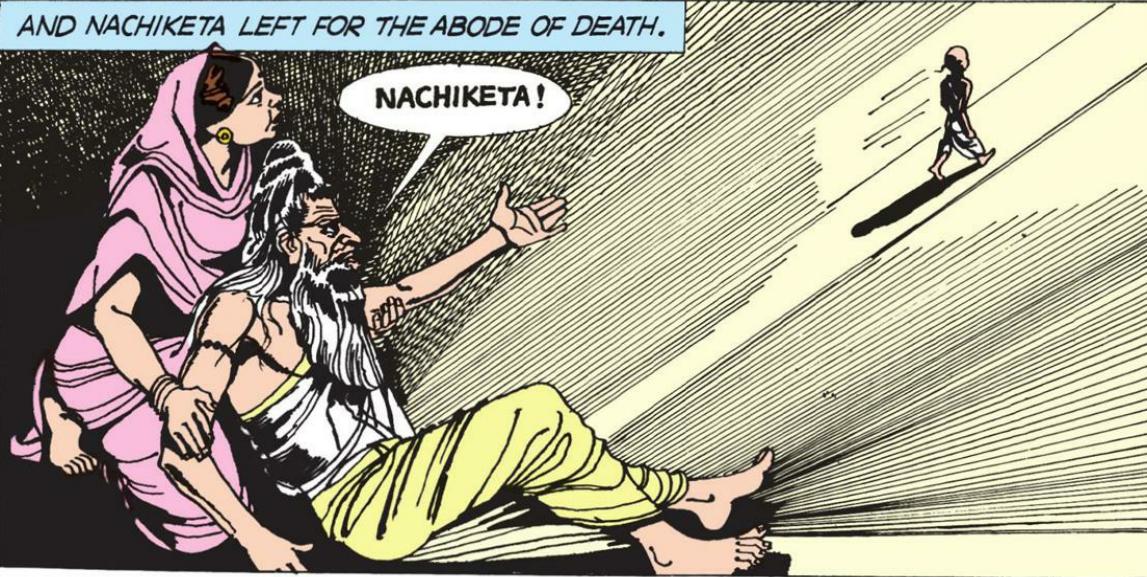
O MY SON ! WHAT HAVE I DONE ? NO, DON'T LEAVE ME. DON'T GO TO THE ABODE OF DEATH !

FATHER,
DO NOT
GRIEVE.



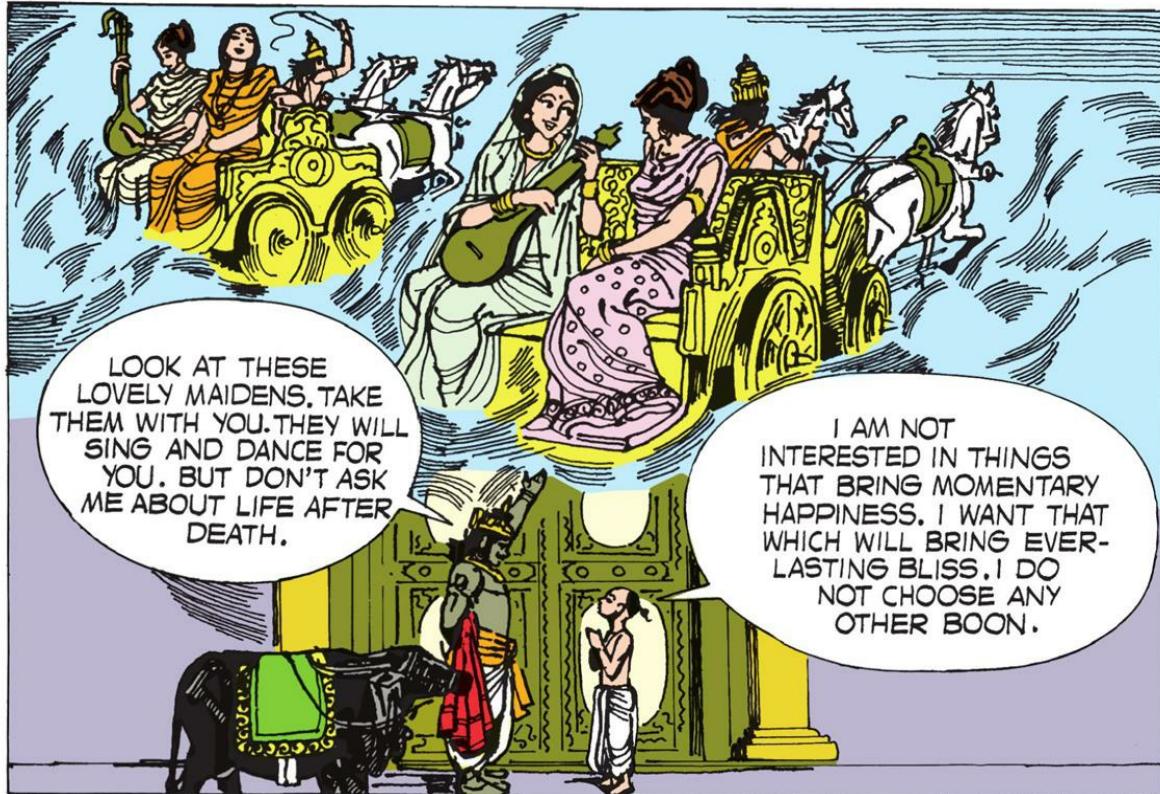
MEN OF OLD HAVE PASSED AWAY AND THOSE OF DAYS TO COME WILL ALSO PASS AWAY. LET ME GO WITH YOUR BLESSING.

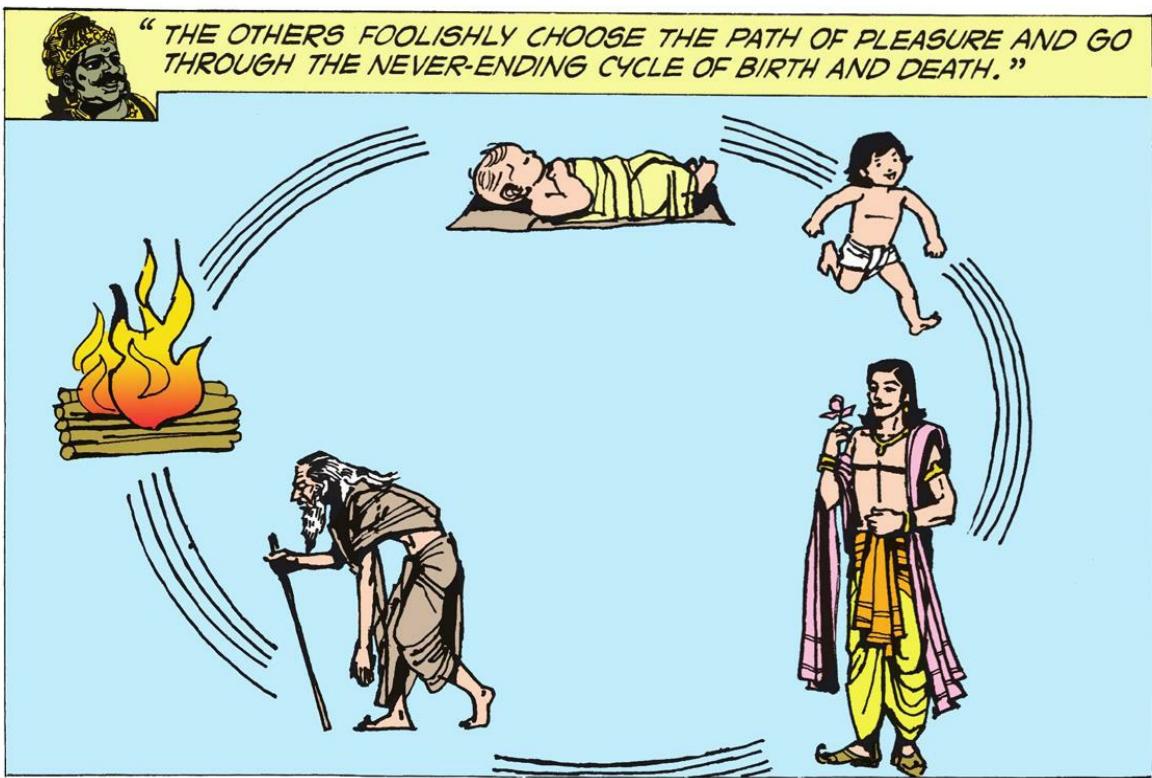
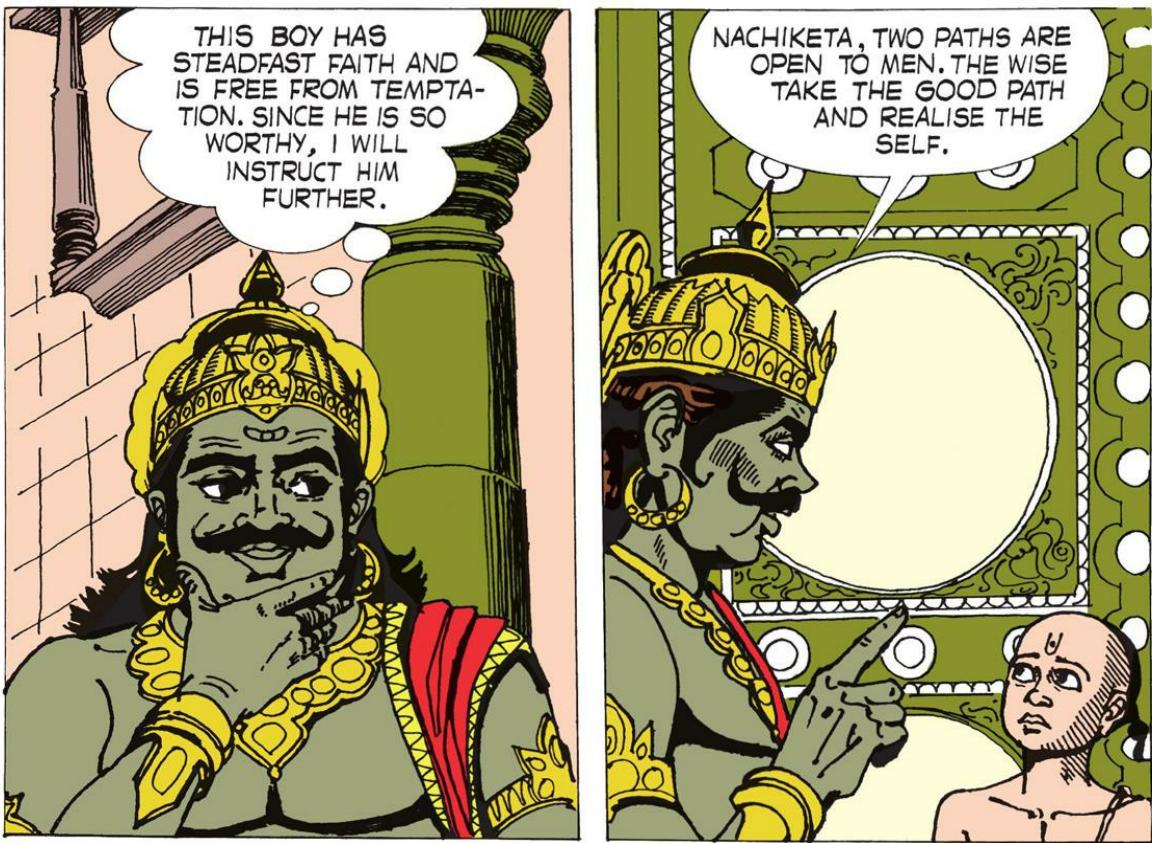












YAMA PROCEEDED TO TEACH NACHIKETA THE NATURE OF THE SELF.

WHEN A MAN IS DEAD,
IT IS THE BODY THAT
PERISHES, NOT
THE SELF.

BUT
AREN'T
THEY THE
SAME?



NO, THEY ARE NOT. THE
SELF RESIDES IN THE
BODY AS A MASTER
DOES IN HIS CHARIOT.
THE TWO ARE
DIFFERENT.

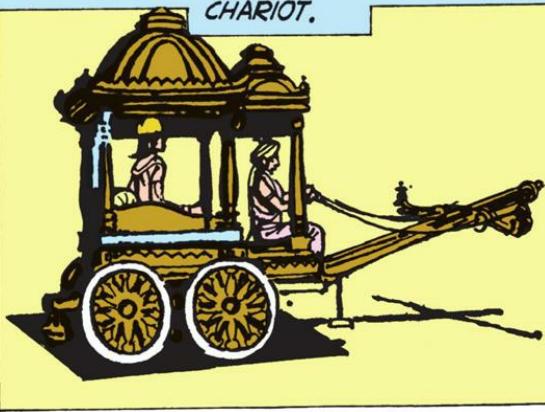


THE SELF, THEN, MUST
BE THE SAME AS THE
INTELLECT.

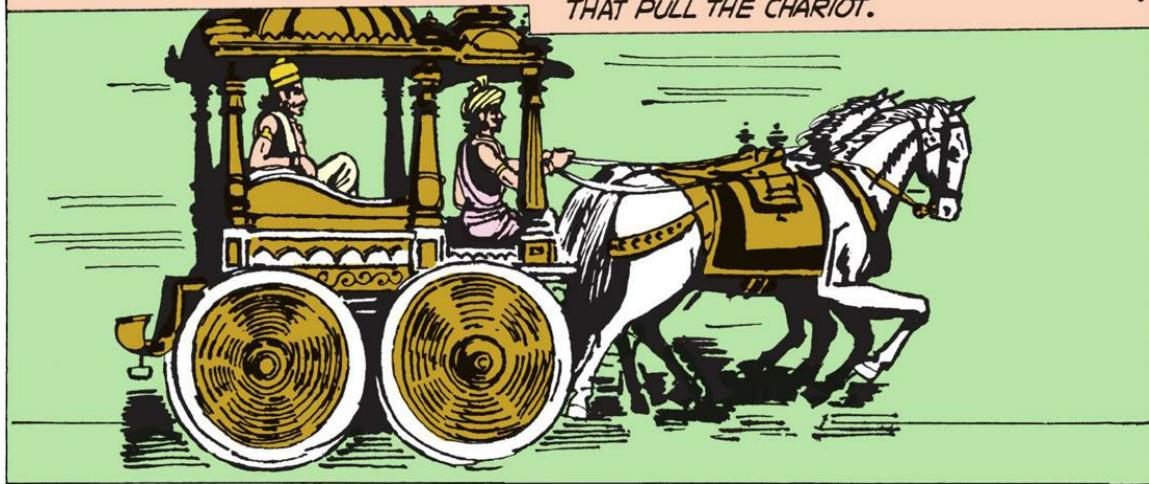
NO, IT
ISN'T.



"THE INTELLECT IS TO THE SELF WHAT THE
DRIVER IS TO THE MASTER OF THE
CHARIOT.

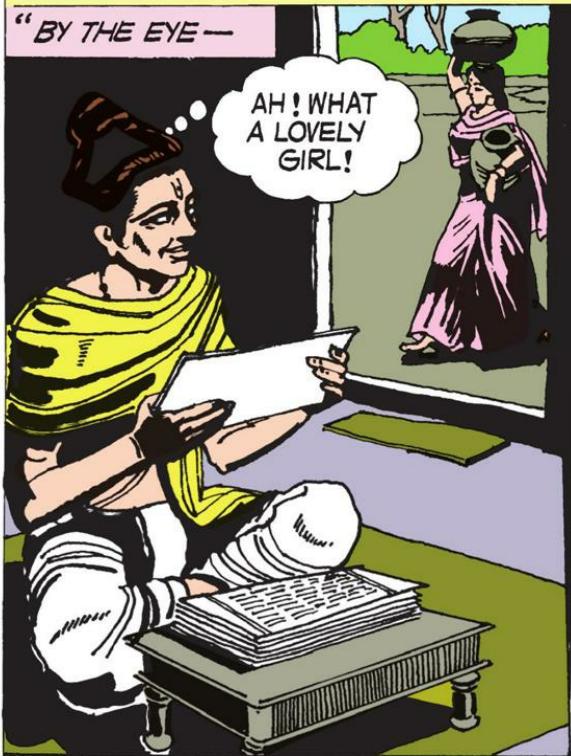


"THE SELF IS DIFFERENT FROM THE SENSE ORGANS, TOO, WHICH ARE LIKE THE HORSES
THAT PULL THE CHARIOT.



"MEN ARE PULLED IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS BY THE SENSE ORGANS.

"BY THE EYE—



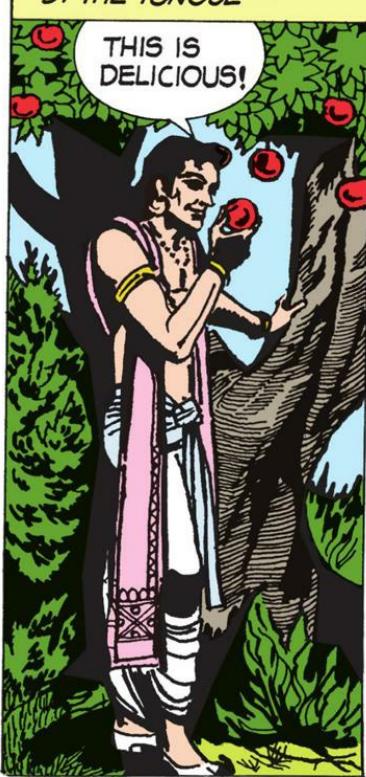
"BY THE EAR—



"BY THE NOSE—



"BY THE TONGUE—



"AND BY THE SKIN.



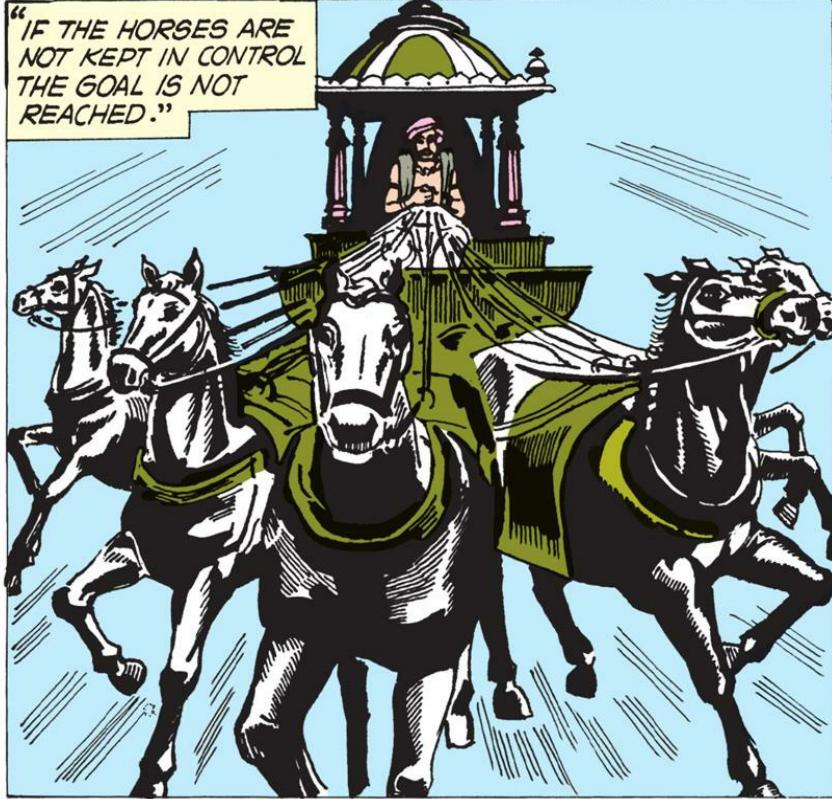
"JUST AS THE HORSES ARE HELD IN CHECK BY THE REINS..."



"...SO ALSO THE SENSE ORGANS ARE HELD IN CHECK BY THE MIND."



"IF THE HORSES ARE NOT KEPT IN CONTROL THE GOAL IS NOT REACHED."

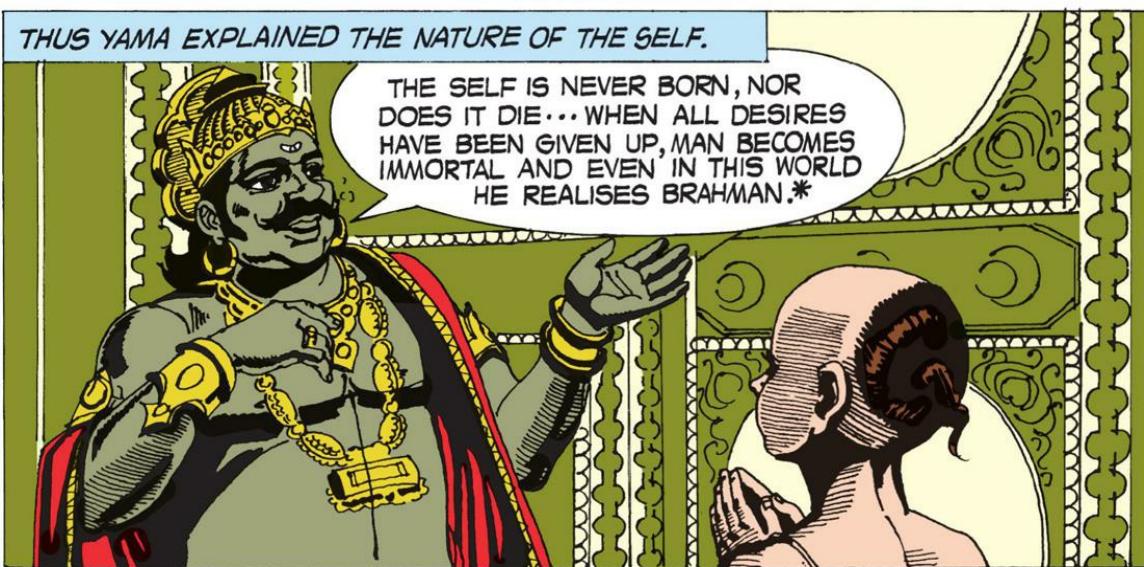


SIMILARLY, THE MAN WHO CANNOT CONTROL THE SENSES WON'T REACH HIS GOAL.



THUS YAMA EXPLAINED THE NATURE OF THE SELF.

THE SELF IS NEVER BORN, NOR
DOES IT DIE... WHEN ALL DESIRES
HAVE BEEN GIVEN UP, MAN BECOMES
IMMORTAL AND EVEN IN THIS WORLD
HE REALISES BRAHMAN.*



NACHIKETA TOOK LEAVE OF YAMA AND RETURNED HOME.

NACHIKETA ! I AM
HAPPY TO SEE YOU
BACK ! YOU ARE
GLOWING, LIKE ONE
WHO HAS ATTAINED
SELF-REALISATION.

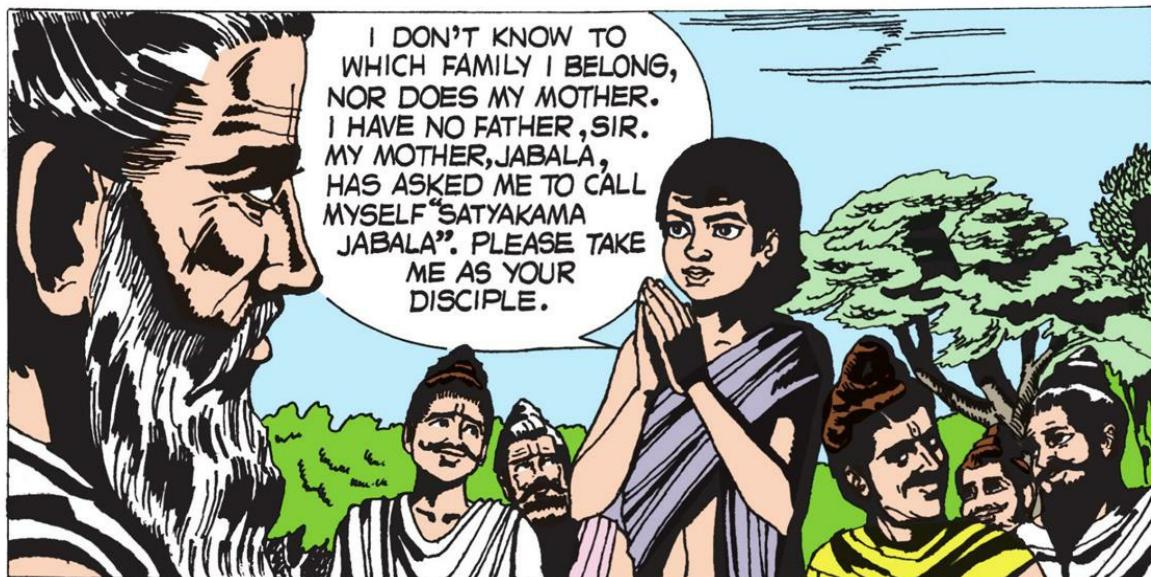
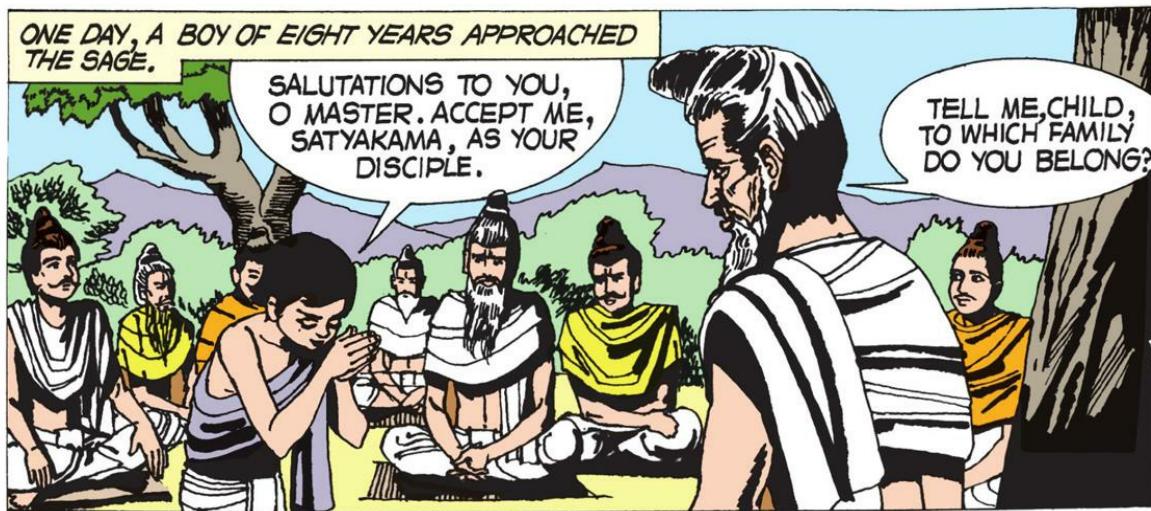
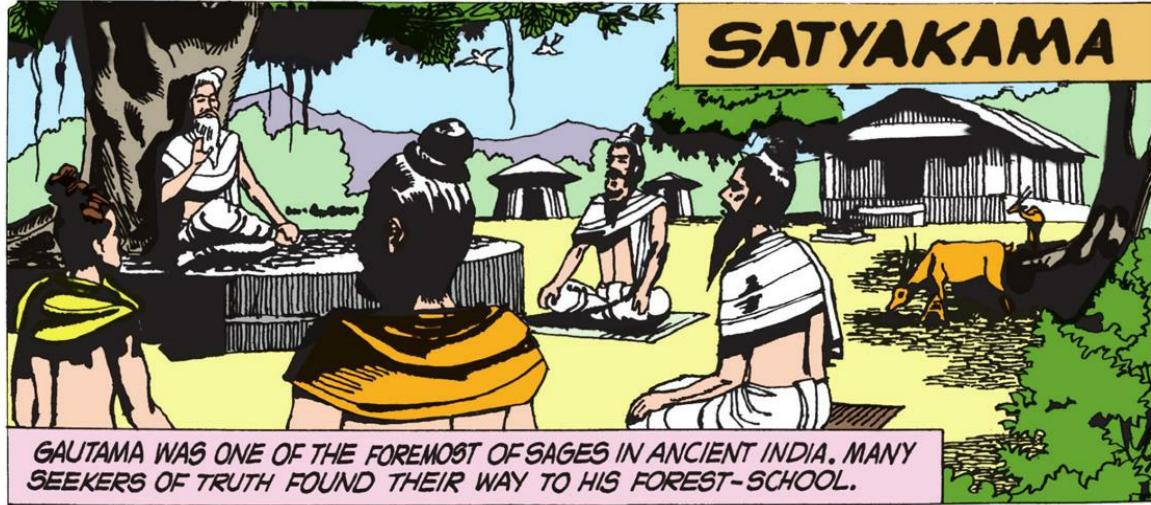


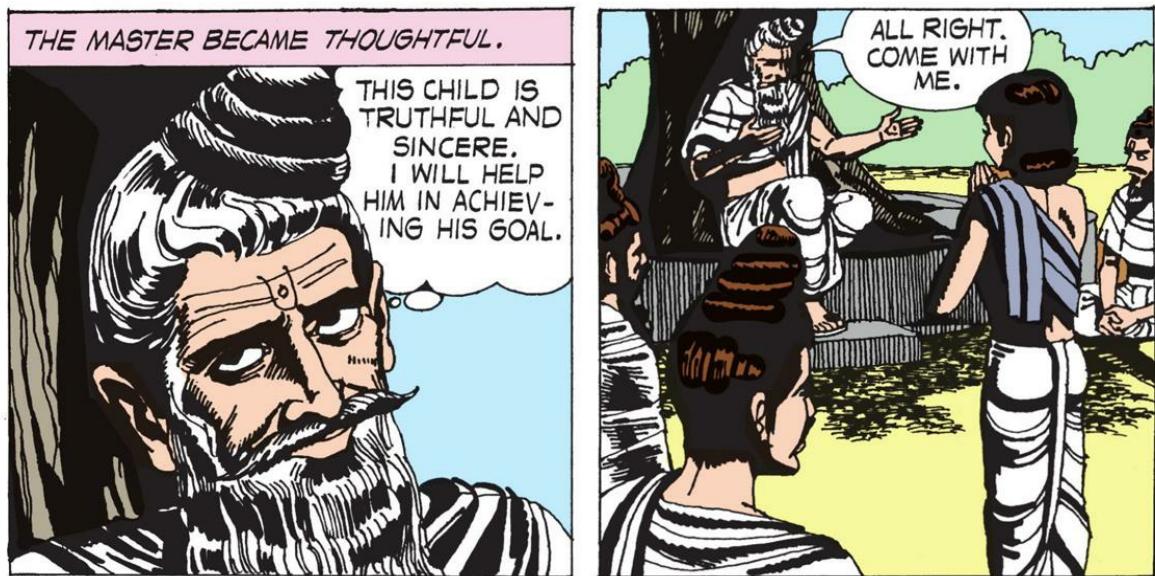
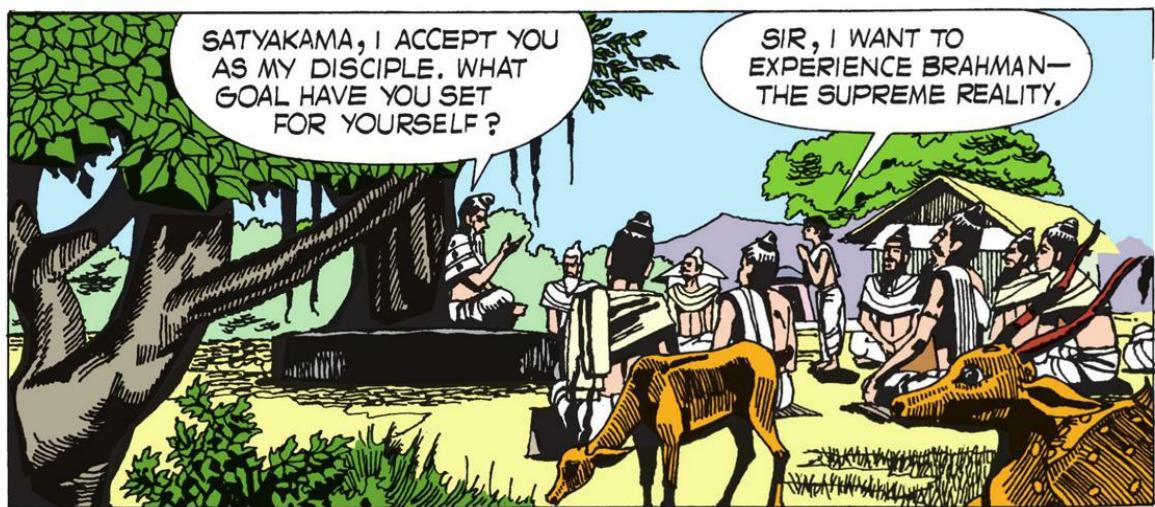
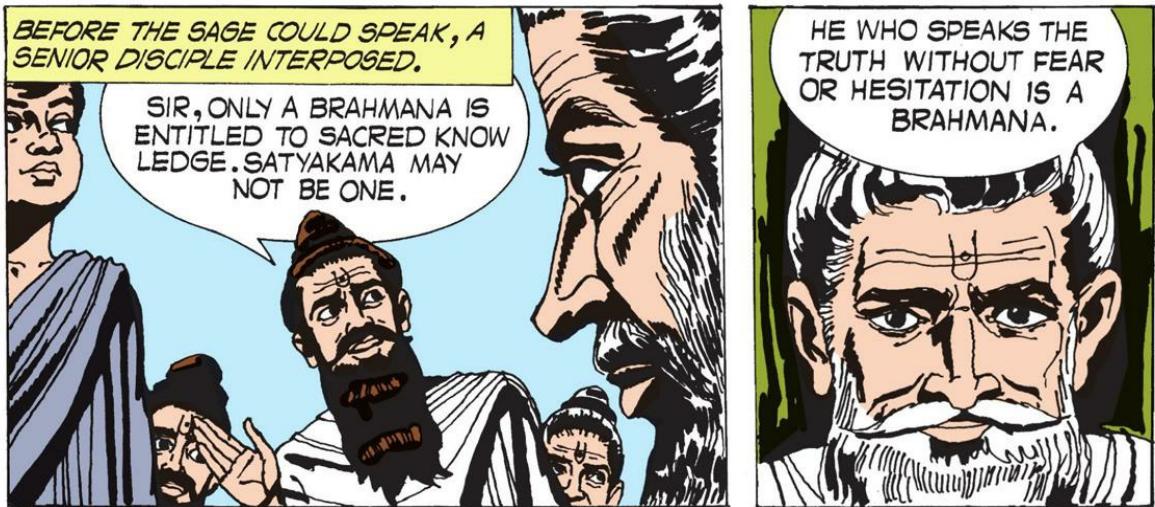
AS NACHIKETA GREW OLDER, HIS RENOWN SPREAD. LATER, MANY SEEKERS OF TRUTH CAME TO HIS HERMITAGE FOR GUIDANCE.



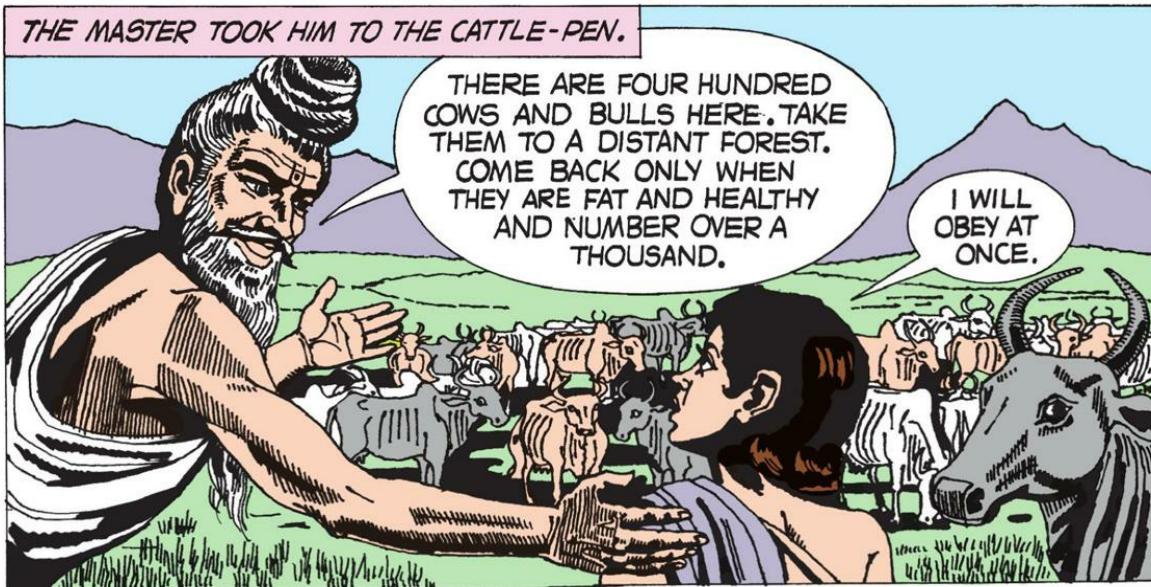
* THE SUPREME BEING

SATYAKAMA

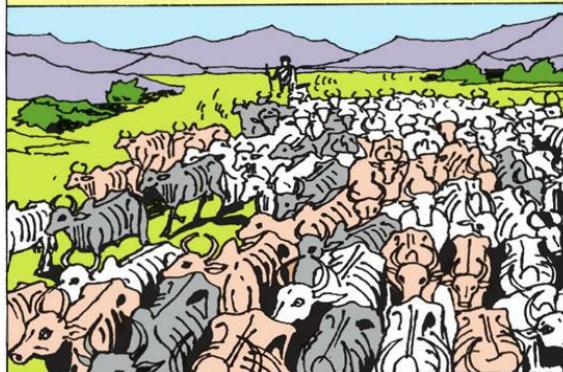




THE MASTER TOOK HIM TO THE CATTLE-PEN.



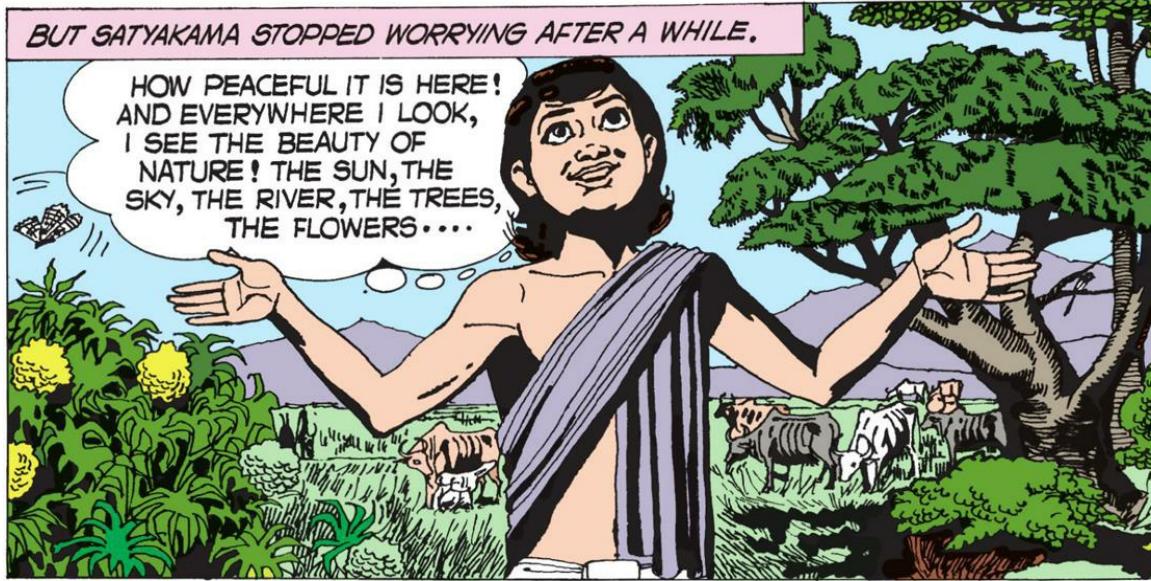
SATYAKAMA LEFT WITH THE CATTLE.

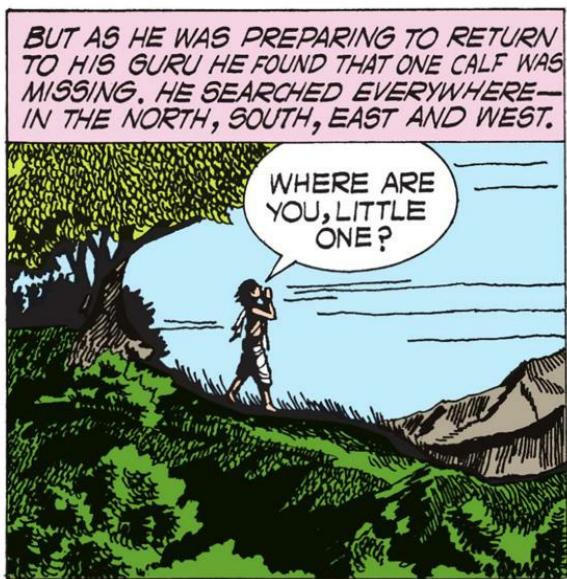
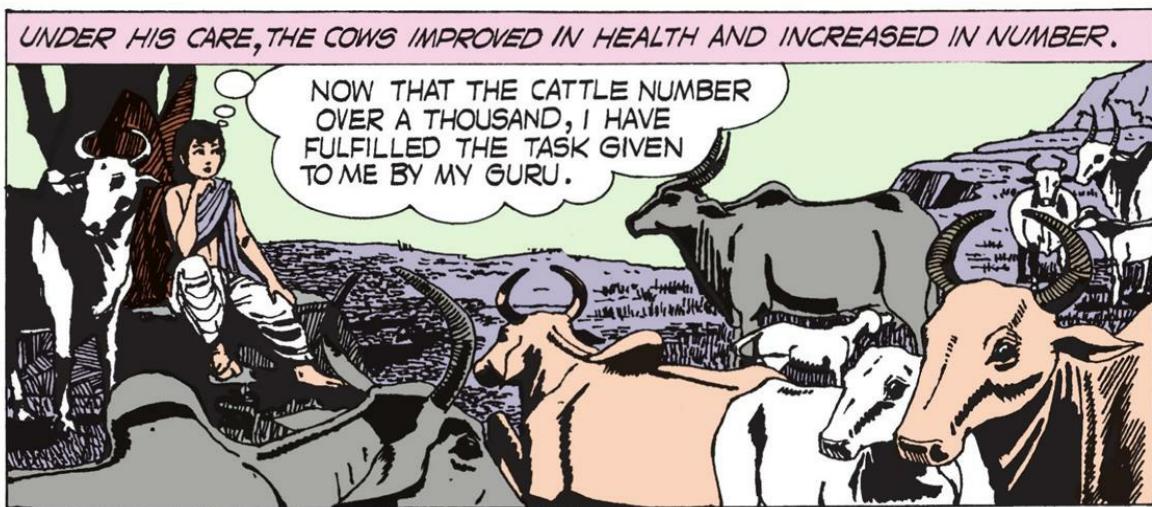
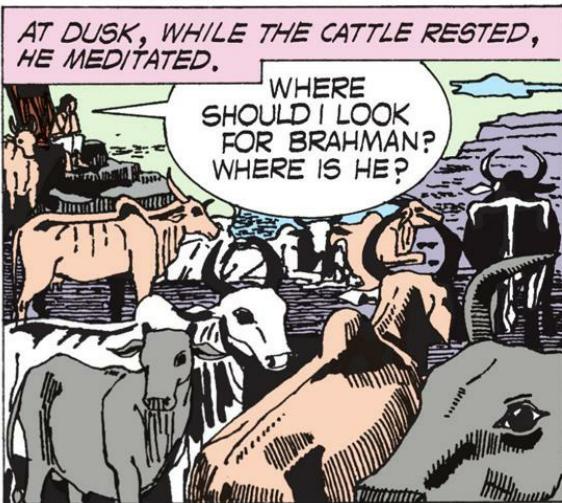
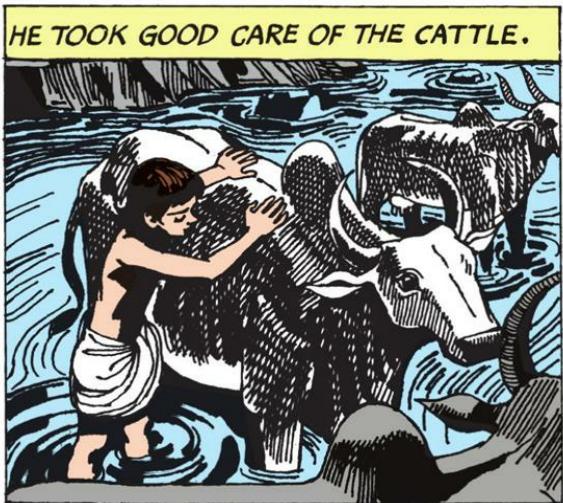


I TOLD THE GURU THAT I WANT TO EXPERIENCE BRAHMAN. I WONDER WHY HE SENT ME TO THE FOREST. IS BRAHMAN TO BE FOUND IN THE FOREST?



BUT SATYAKAMA STOPPED WORRYING AFTER A WHILE.



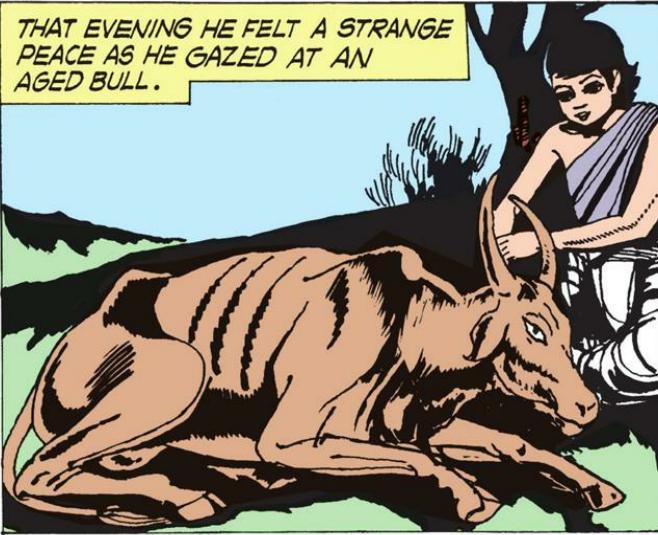


THEN HE BECAME THOUGHTFUL.

WILL I BE ABLE TO FIND BRAHMAN ALSO?

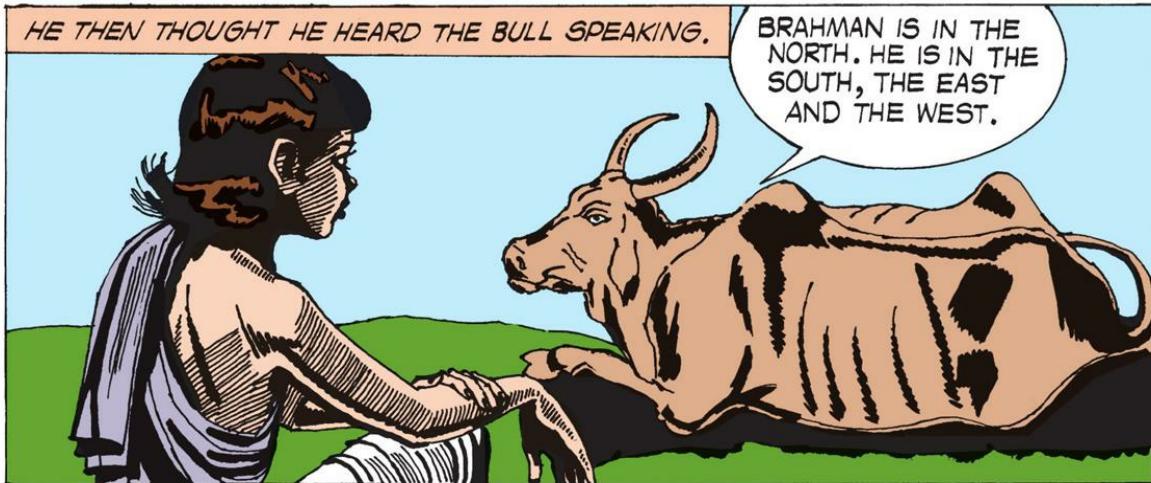


THAT EVENING HE FELT A STRANGE PEACE AS HE GAZED AT AN AGED BULL.



HE THEN THOUGHT HE HEARD THE BULL SPEAKING.

BRAHMAN IS IN THE NORTH. HE IS IN THE SOUTH, THE EAST AND THE WEST.



THAT'S TRUE ! WHY SEARCH FOR HIM ? HE IS PRESENT EVERYWHERE.



THAT DAY HE STARTED ON HIS RETURN JOURNEY, TAKING THE CATTLE WITH HIM.



AT DUSK HE BUILT A FIRE AND SAT BY IT. THEN HE FELT HE COULD
HEAR THE FIRE SPEAKING.

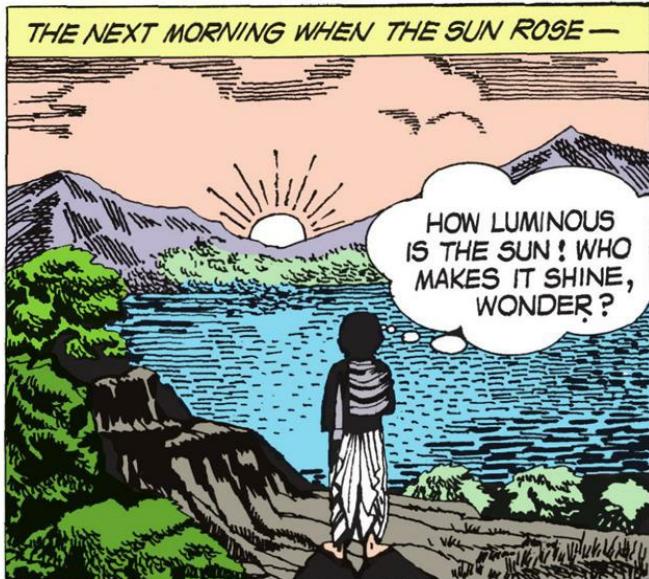
BRAHMAN PERVERSES
THE EARTH, THE SKY, THE
ATMOSPHERE AND THE
OCEAN.



YES, BRAHMAN IS ENDLESS
LIKE THE SKY.

THE NEXT MORNING WHEN THE SUN ROSE —

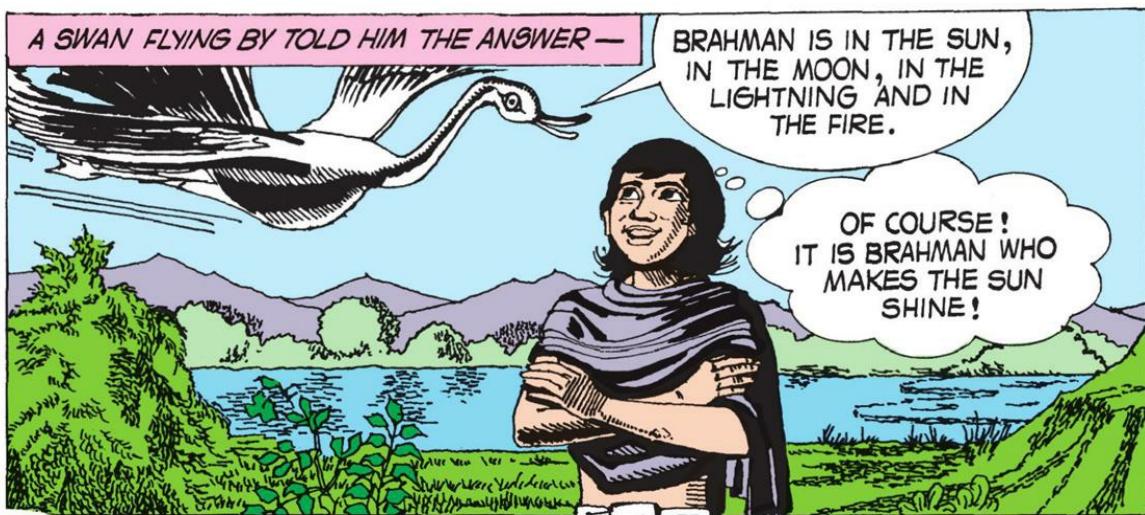
HOW LUMINOUS
IS THE SUN ! WHO
MAKES IT SHINE,
WONDER ?



A SWAN FLYING BY TOLD HIM THE ANSWER —

BRAHMAN IS IN THE SUN,
IN THE MOON, IN THE
LIGHTNING AND IN
THE FIRE.

OF COURSE !
IT IS BRAHMAN WHO
MAKES THE SUN
SHINE !



SATYAKAMA STOOD STILL AS NEW THOUGHTS FLOODED HIS MIND.



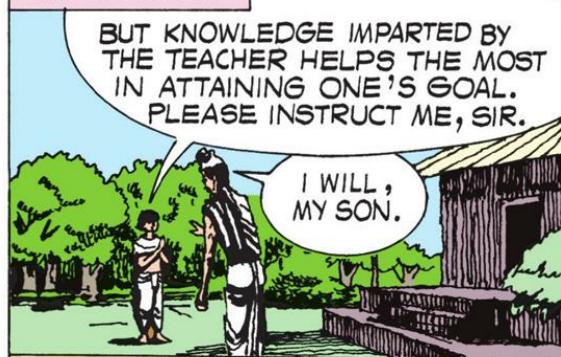
AS A BIRD FLEW PAST HIM, HE RECEIVED HIS ANSWERS.



WHEN SATYAKAMA REACHED THE FOREST-SCHOOL —

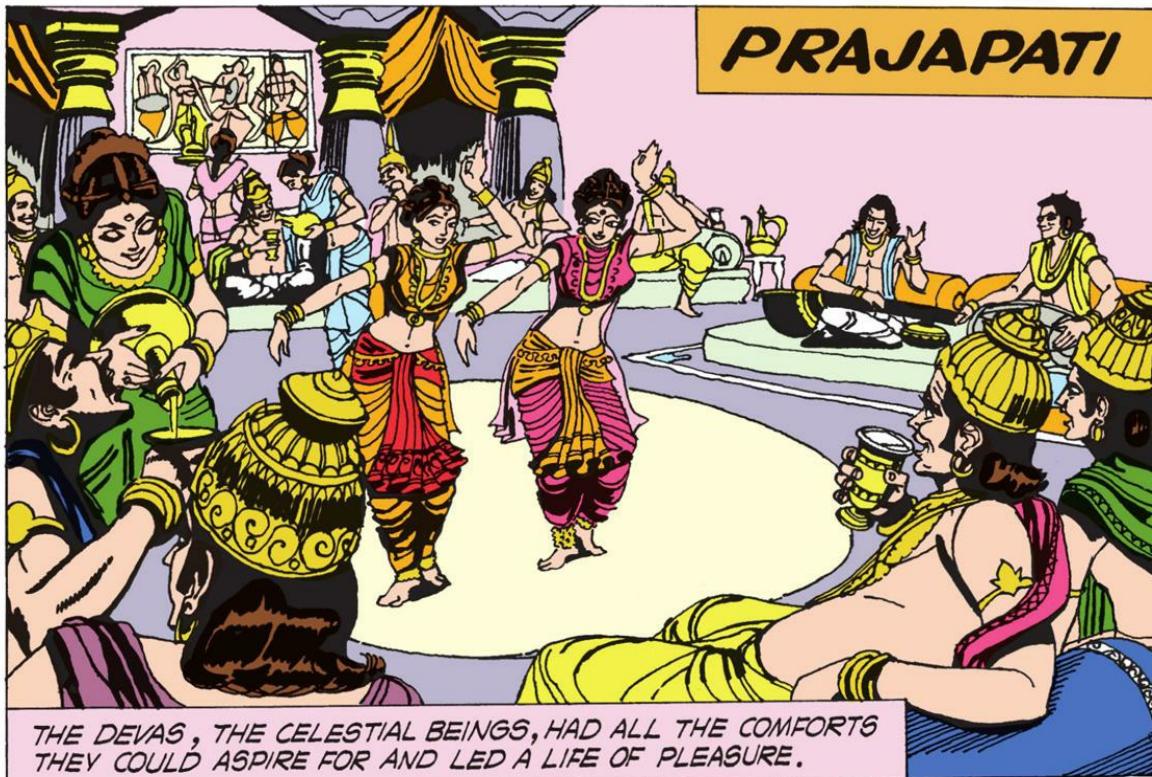


SATYAKAMA DESCRIBED HIS EXPERIENCE.

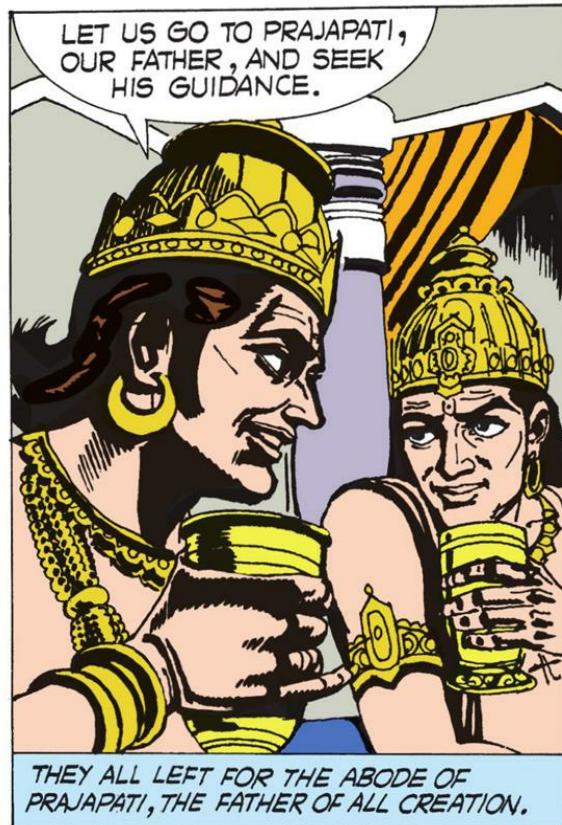


GAUTAMA THEN IMPARTED THE SACRED KNOWLEDGE TO HIS DESERVING DISCIPLE, WHO LATER BECAME A GREAT SAGE.

PRAJAPATI

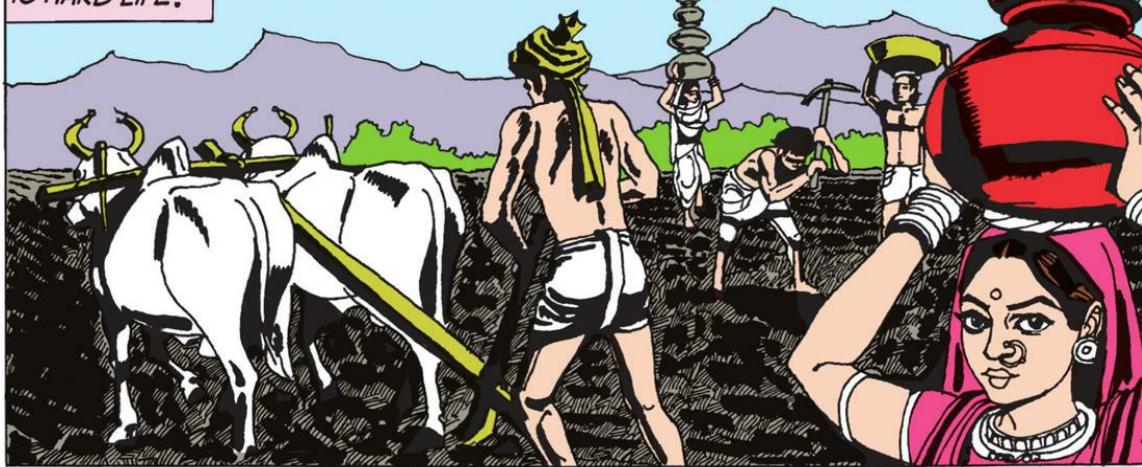


THE DEVAS, THE CELESTIAL BEINGS, HAD ALL THE COMFORTS THEY COULD ASPIRE FOR AND LED A LIFE OF PLEASURE.



THEY ALL LEFT FOR THE ABODE OF PRAJAPATI, THE FATHER OF ALL CREATION.

UNLIKE THEIR BROTHERS IN HEAVEN, THE MANAVAS—MEN ON EARTH—WERE LEADING TO HARD LIFE.



A GOOD HARVEST!
OUR FUTURE IS
SECURE.

ON NO ACCOUNT WOULD THEY PART
WITH WHAT THEY HAD GAINED.

GO AWAY,
YOU WICKED BIRD.
STEALING MY
GRAIN!

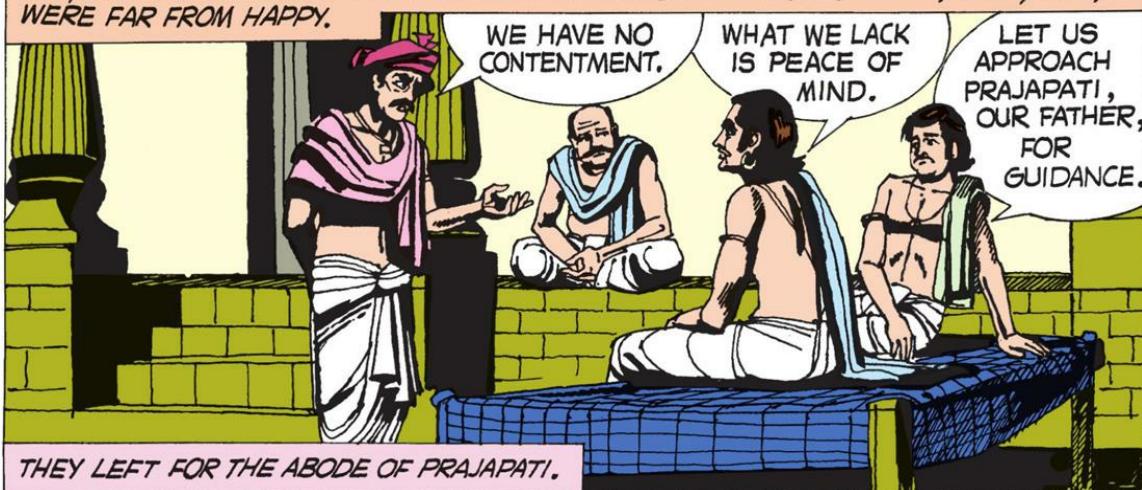


YET, DESPITE ALL THE RICHES THEY HAD EARNED AND STORED AWAY, THEY, TOO,
WERE FAR FROM HAPPY.

WE HAVE NO
CONTENTMENT.

WHAT WE LACK
IS PEACE OF
MIND.

LET US
APPROACH
PRAJAPATI,
OUR FATHER,
FOR
GUIDANCE.



THEY LEFT FOR THE ABODE OF PRAJAPATI.

THE ASURAS, THE DEMONS, INSPIRED FEAR AMONG BOTH THE MANAVAS AND THE DEVAS.

SPARE MY LIFE. SHOW MERCY.

MERCY? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN? PREPARE TO DIE!



BUT THE ASURAS, TOO, WERE OVERCOME BY A FEELING OF DISSATISFACTION.

ALTHOUGH WE ARE POWERFUL AND FEARED BY ALL, WE ARE NOT HAPPY.

LET US GO TO PRAJAPATI, OUR FATHER, AND SEEK HIS GUIDANCE.

THE DEVAS, THE MANAVAS AND THE ASURAS PRAYED TO LORD PRAJAPATI.

O FATHER, TELL US WHAT WE SHOULD DO TO ACHIEVE CONTENTMENT AND PEACE.



PRAJAPATI, THE FATHER OF ALL BEINGS, UTTERED JUST ONE SYLLABLE.

DA

EVERYONE WAS PERPLEXED.

DA? WHAT COULD THAT MEAN?

I THINK IT IS THE FIRST SYLLABLE OF A SECRET WORD WHICH WILL TELL US WHAT TO DO.

I THINK HE WANTS US TO DISCOVER THE WORD FOR OURSELVES.

THEY ALL LEFT FOR THEIR RESPECTIVE HOMES TO PONDER OVER THE SYLLABLE.

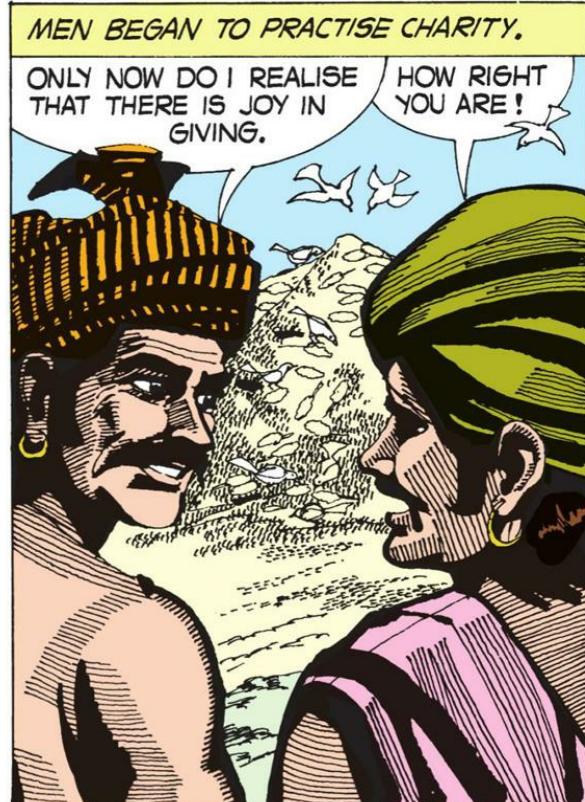
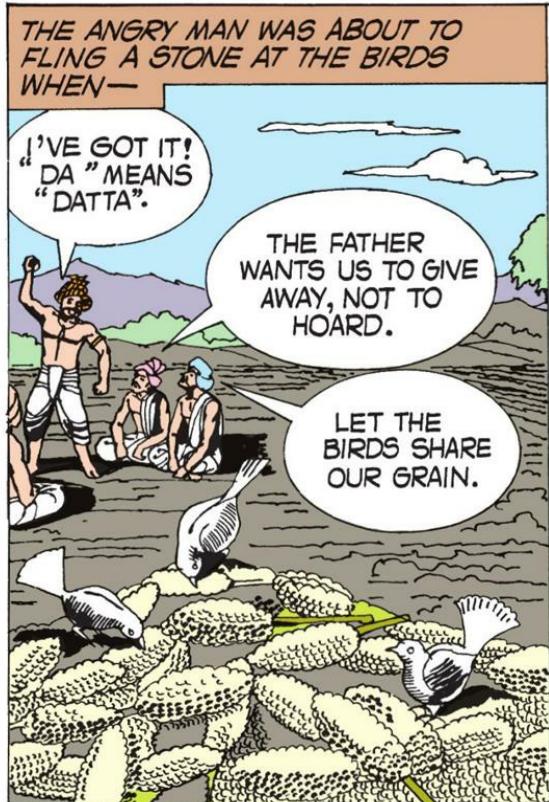
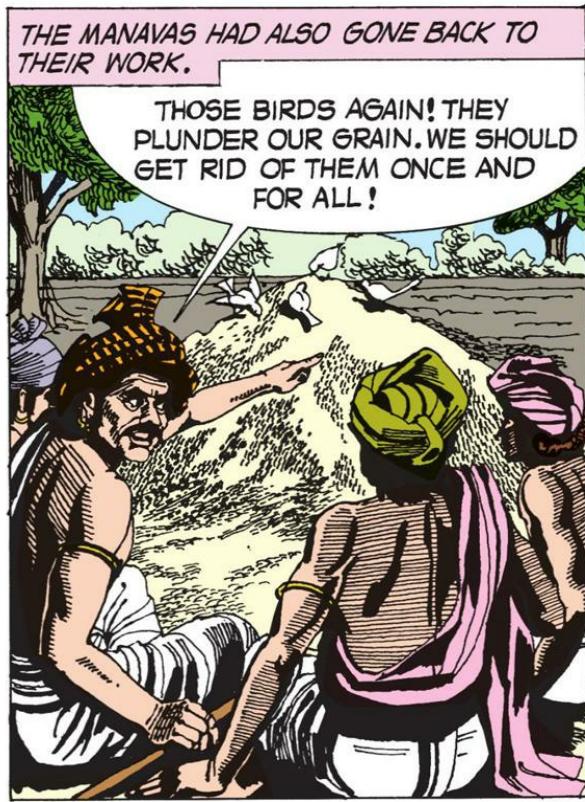
ON RETURNING TO THEIR CELESTIAL WORLD, THE DEVAS WERE ABOUT TO RESUME THEIR LIFE OF PLEASURE —

I'VE GOT IT!
I KNOW WHAT "DA" MEANS!

TELL US
WHAT IT
MEANS.



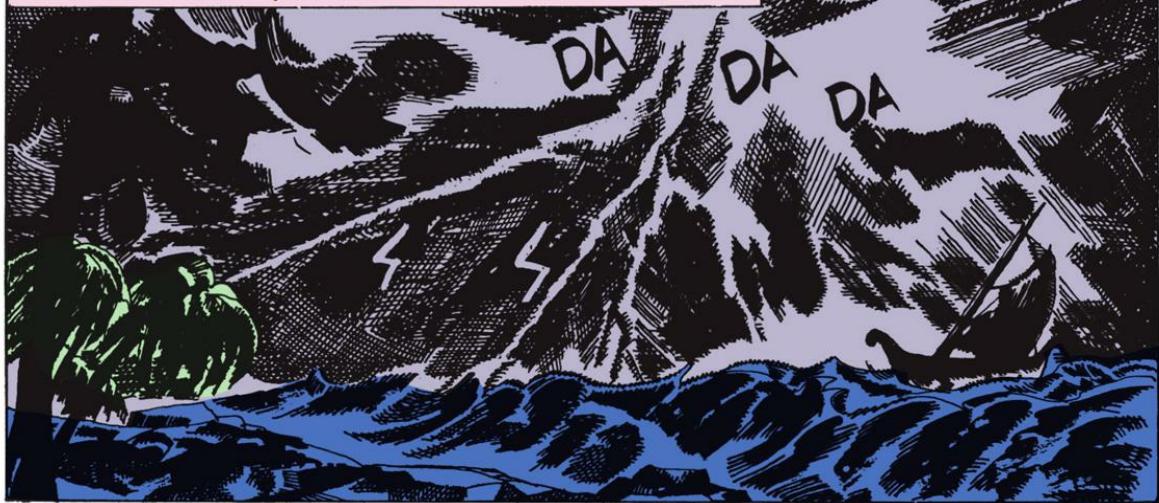
ALL THE DEVAS PUT ASIDE THEIR PLEASURES. THEN THEY BEGAN TO PRACTISE SELF-CONTROL AND EXPERIENCED A SATISFACTION NEVER KNOWN BEFORE.



WHEN THE ASURAS WERE ABOUT TO RESUME THEIR ACTIVITIES —



TO REMIND PEOPLE OF THE THREE CARDINAL VIRTUES, SELF-CONTROL, CHARITY AND COMPASSION, IT THUNDERS NOW AND AGAIN —



WHICH OF THE ACKS HAVE YOU STILL NOT READ?

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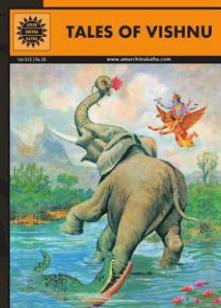
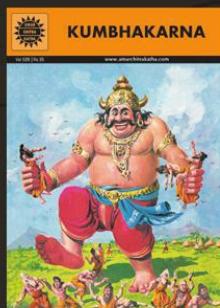
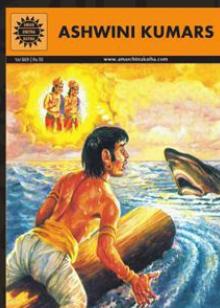
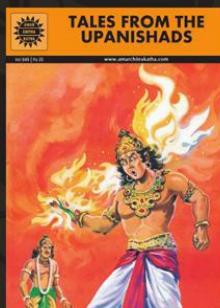
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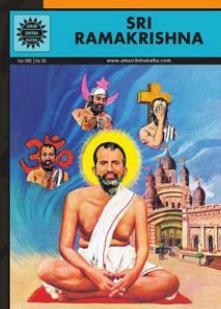
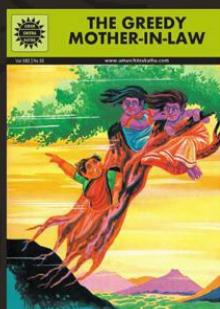
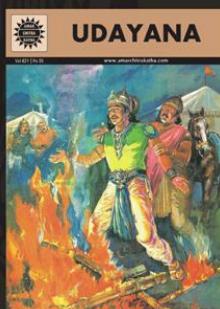
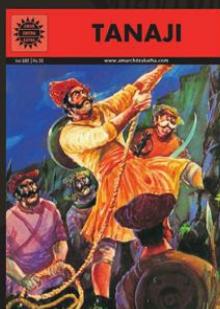
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