



Vol. 514 Ru. 25

# Tales of Durga



Amar Chitra Katha: the Glorious Heritage of India



# Tales of Durga

Goddess Durga is as widely worshipped as Vishnu and Shiva. She is the fierce form of Devi who, as Shakti, is considered the personification of universal energy. According to the Devi Bhagavata the Universe is but Her manifestation – and even Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva worship Her. Durga is worshipped in sixty-four forms as Ambika, Kali, Chamundi, Devi, Uma, etc.

The worship of Durga is supposed to be more than 4,000 years old in India. The names of Uma and Parvati occur in the Taittiriya Aranyaka and the Kena Upanishad. Some Indologists are of the opinion that the figure seated on a lion in the coins of Azes I, the Shaka ruler (c. 5 B.C. to A.D. 30), represents Ambika or Durga.

Durga is worshipped in one form or another in almost every Indian village.

This *Amar Chitra Katha* is based on the Durga-Saptashati of the Markandeya Purana.



Script: Subba Rao

Artwork: Souren Roy

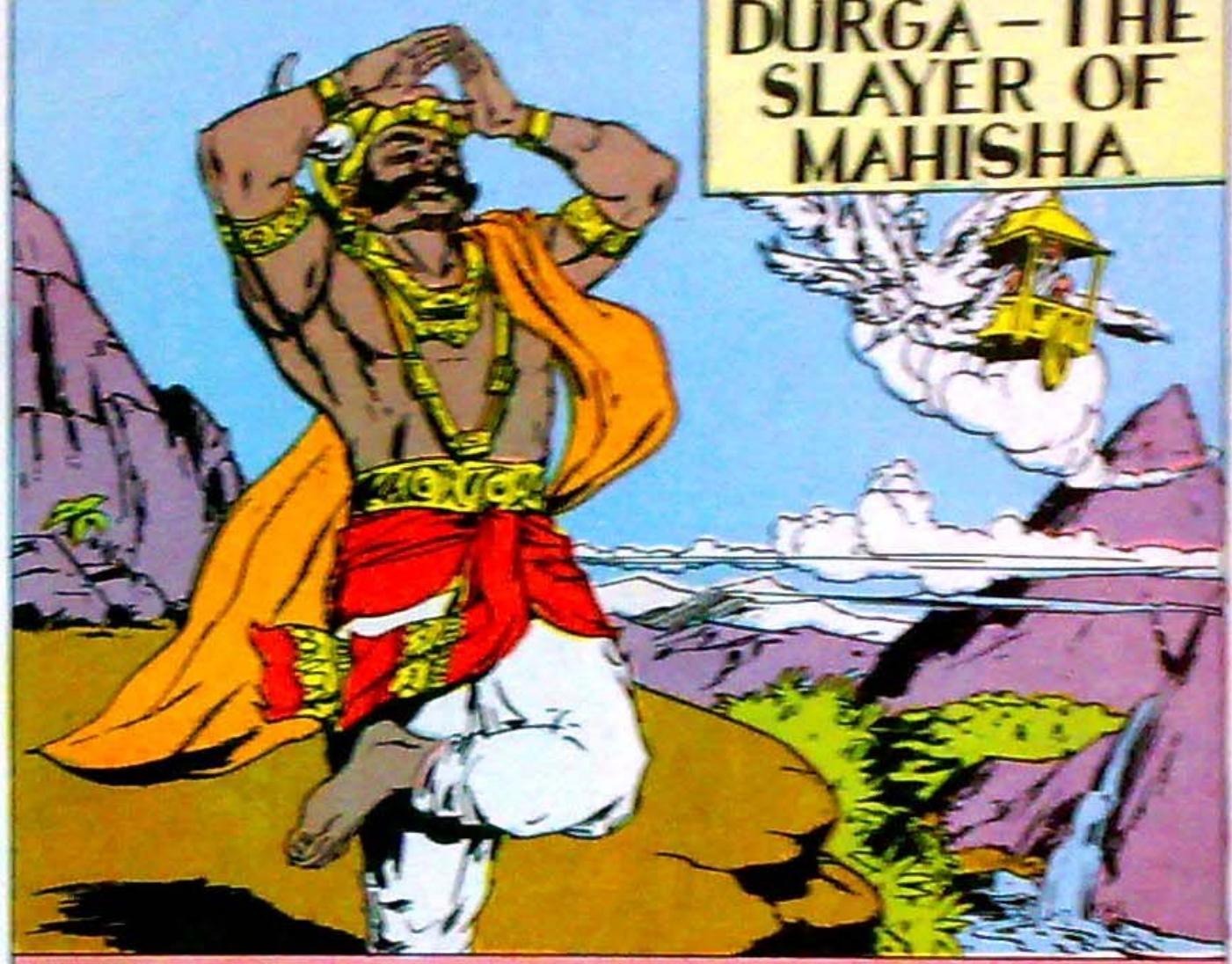
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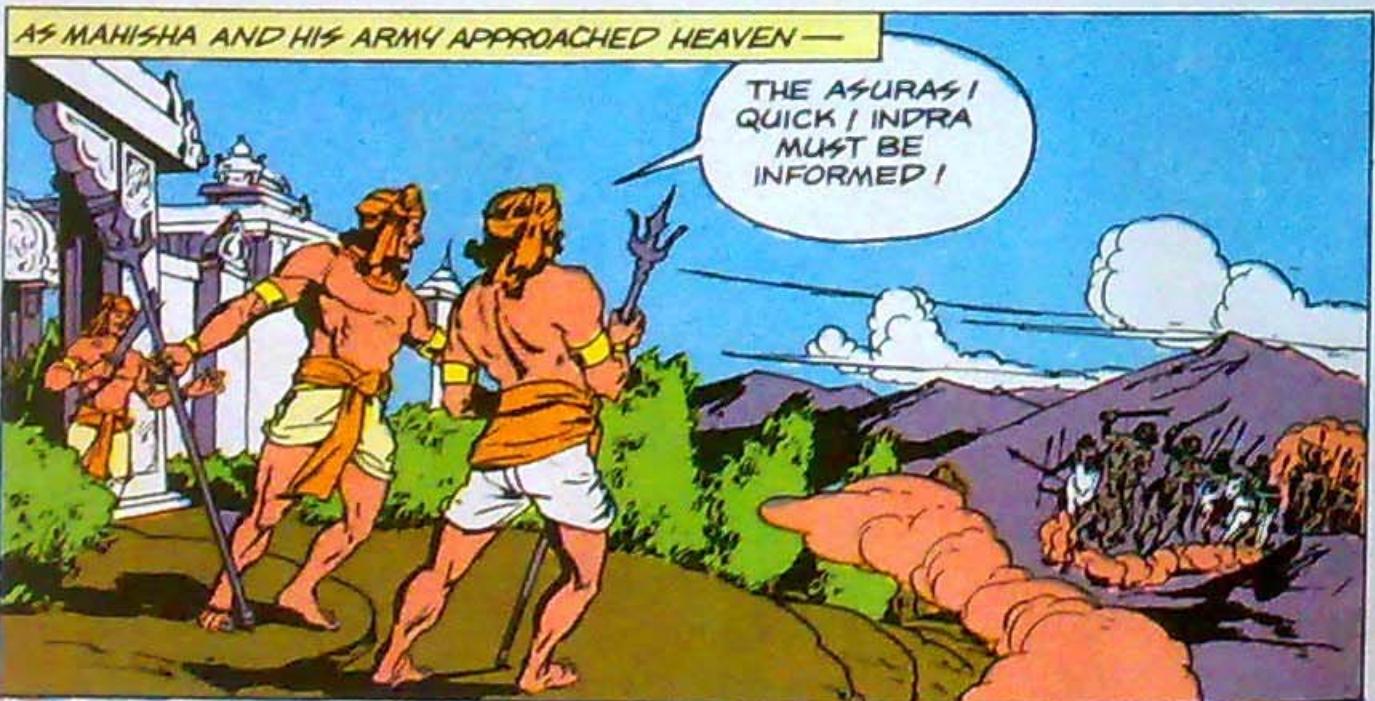
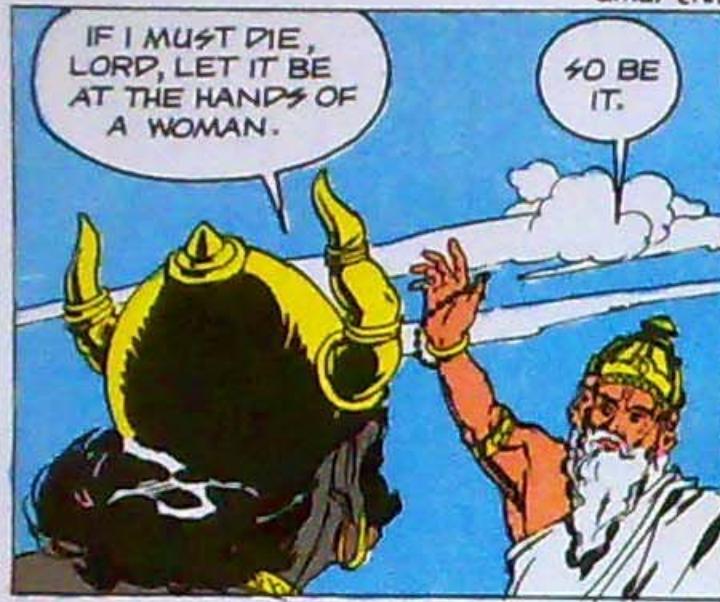
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# DURGA - THE SLAYER OF MAHISHA



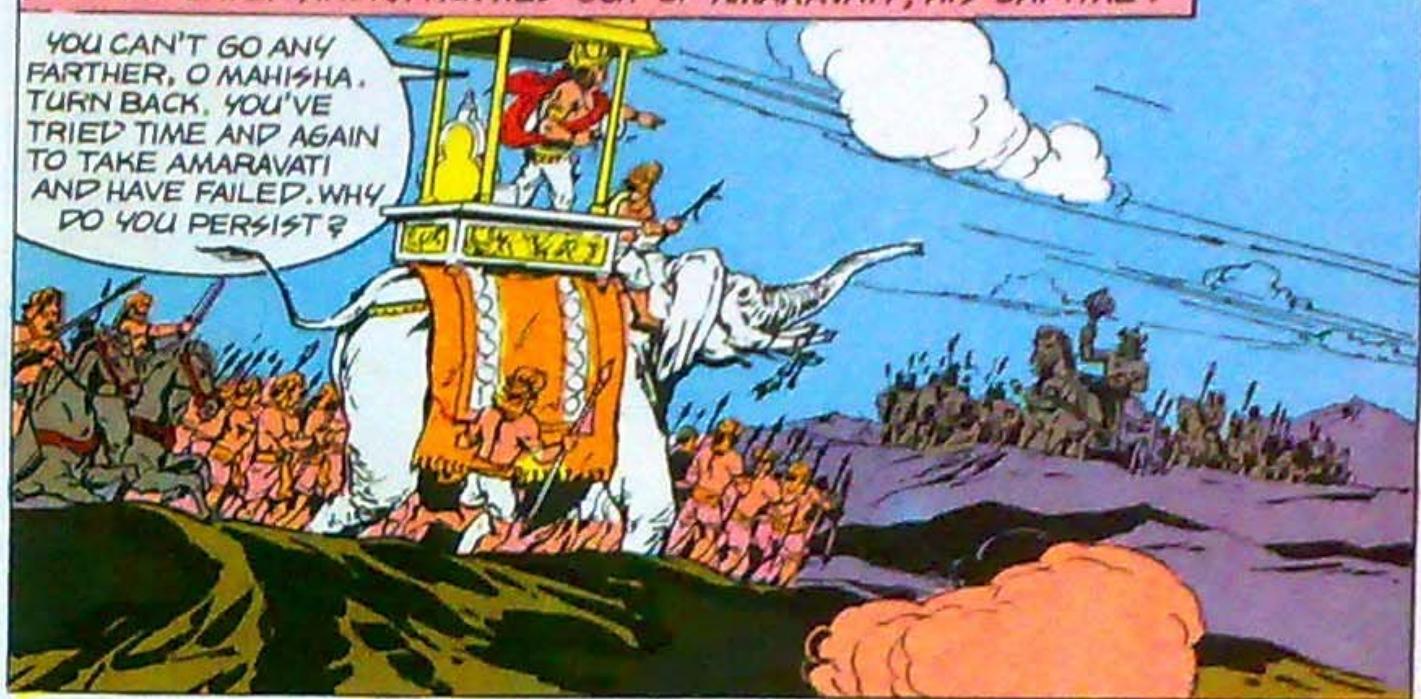
THE ASURA, MAHISHA, ONCE PERFORMED SEVERE PENANCES TO PROPRIATE BRAHMA. PLEASED WITH HIS AUSTERITIES, BRAHMA APPEARED BEFORE HIM.





A LITTLE LATER, INDRA RUSHED OUT OF AMARAVATI, HIS CAPITAL.

YOU CAN'T GO ANY FARTHER, O MAHISHA. TURN BACK, YOU'VE TRIED TIME AND AGAIN TO TAKE AMARAVATI AND HAVE FAILED. WHY DO YOU PERSIST?



INDRA, I'VE COME TO FIGHT, NOT TO TALK. USE YOUR WEAPONS INSTEAD OF YOUR TONGUE!

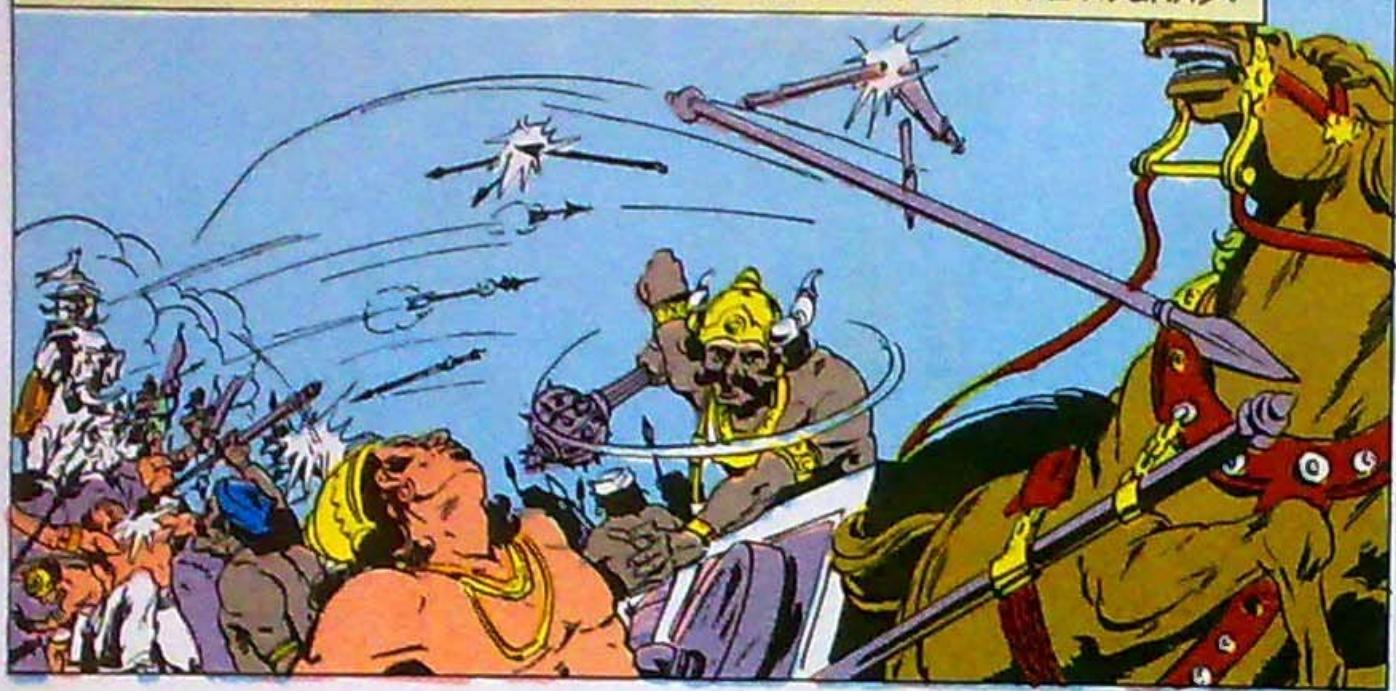


STUNG BY MAHISHA'S WORDS, INDRA DARTED FORWARD BRANDISHING HIS WEAPON — THE THUNDERBOLT.

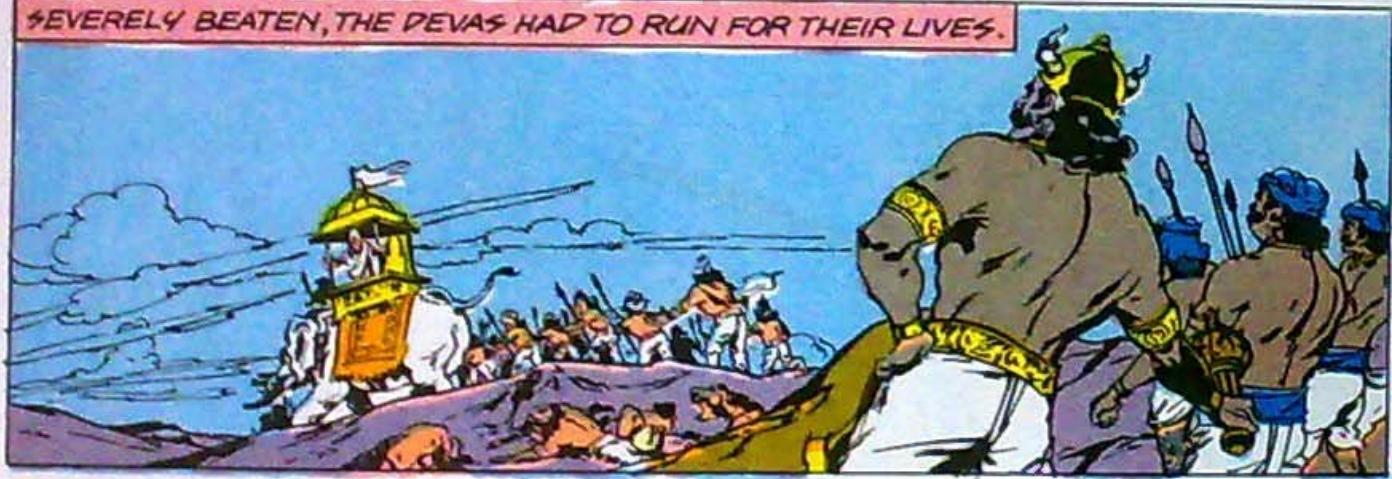
ATTACK, O DEVAS. LET NO ASURA ESCAPE.



THEN ENSUED A FIERCE BATTLE BETWEEN THE DEVAS AND THE ASURAS.



SEVERELY BEATEN, THE DEVAS HAD TO RUN FOR THEIR LIVES.

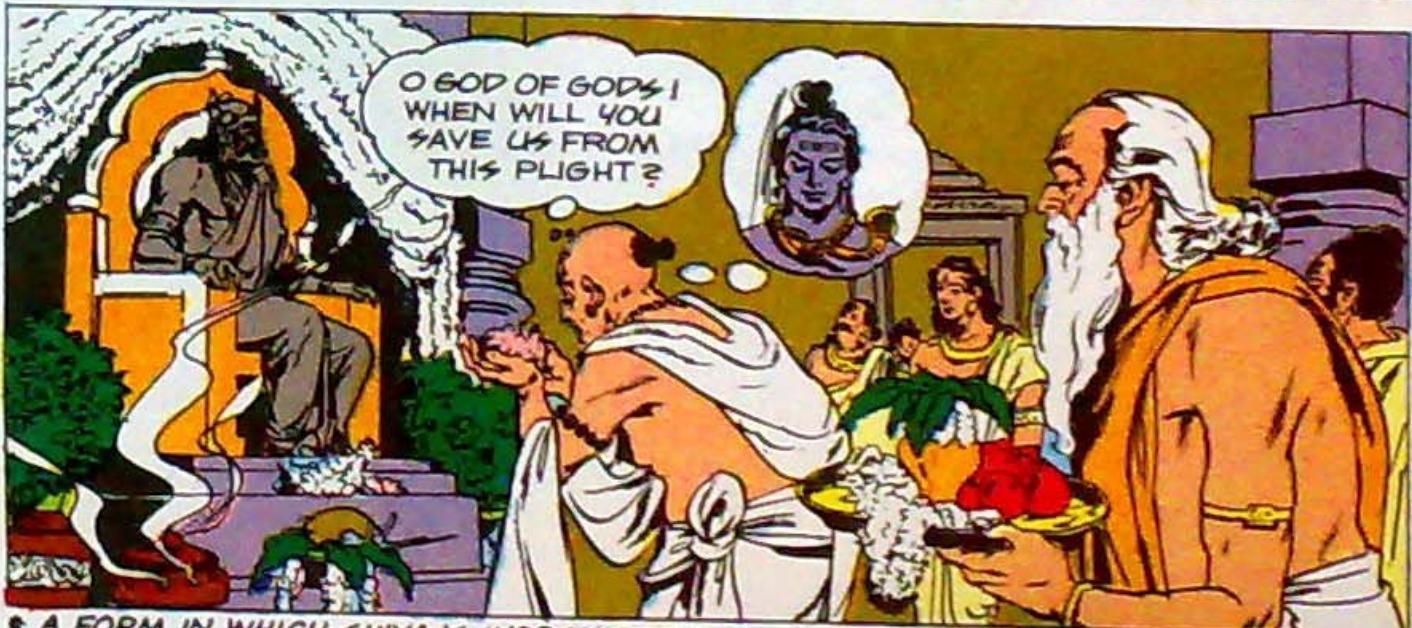
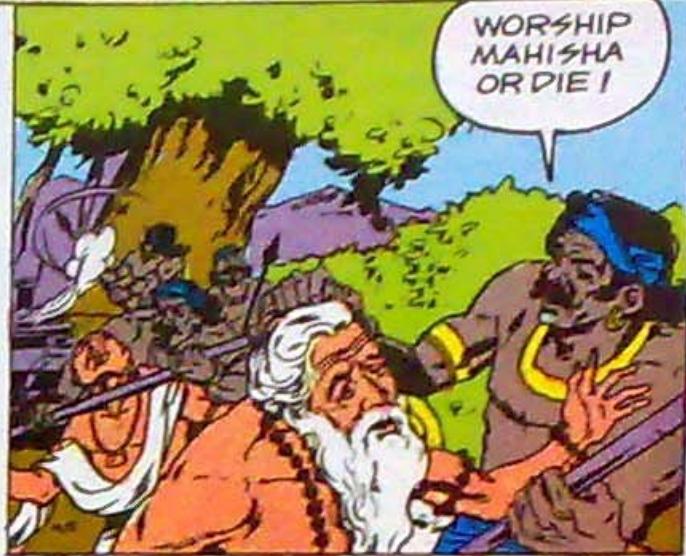


AFTER DRIVING THE DEVAS OUT OF AMARAVATI, MAHISHA ASCENDED INDRA'S THRONE.

I AM THE LORD OF LORDS.  
HENCEFORTH I ALONE SHALL  
BE WORSHIPPED. THE WOR-  
SHIP OF BRAHMA, VISHNU  
AND SHIVA SHOULD BE  
STOPPED FORTHWITH.



MAHISHA'S MEN BEGAN TO HARASS THOSE PIous MEN WHO CONTINUED TO WORSHIP VISHNU OR SHIVA.



\* A FORM IN WHICH SHIVA IS WORSHIPPED

MEANWHILE, UNKNOWN TO THEM, THE DEVAS HAD ALREADY ASSEMBLED AT KAILAS, THE ABODE OF LORD SHIVA.

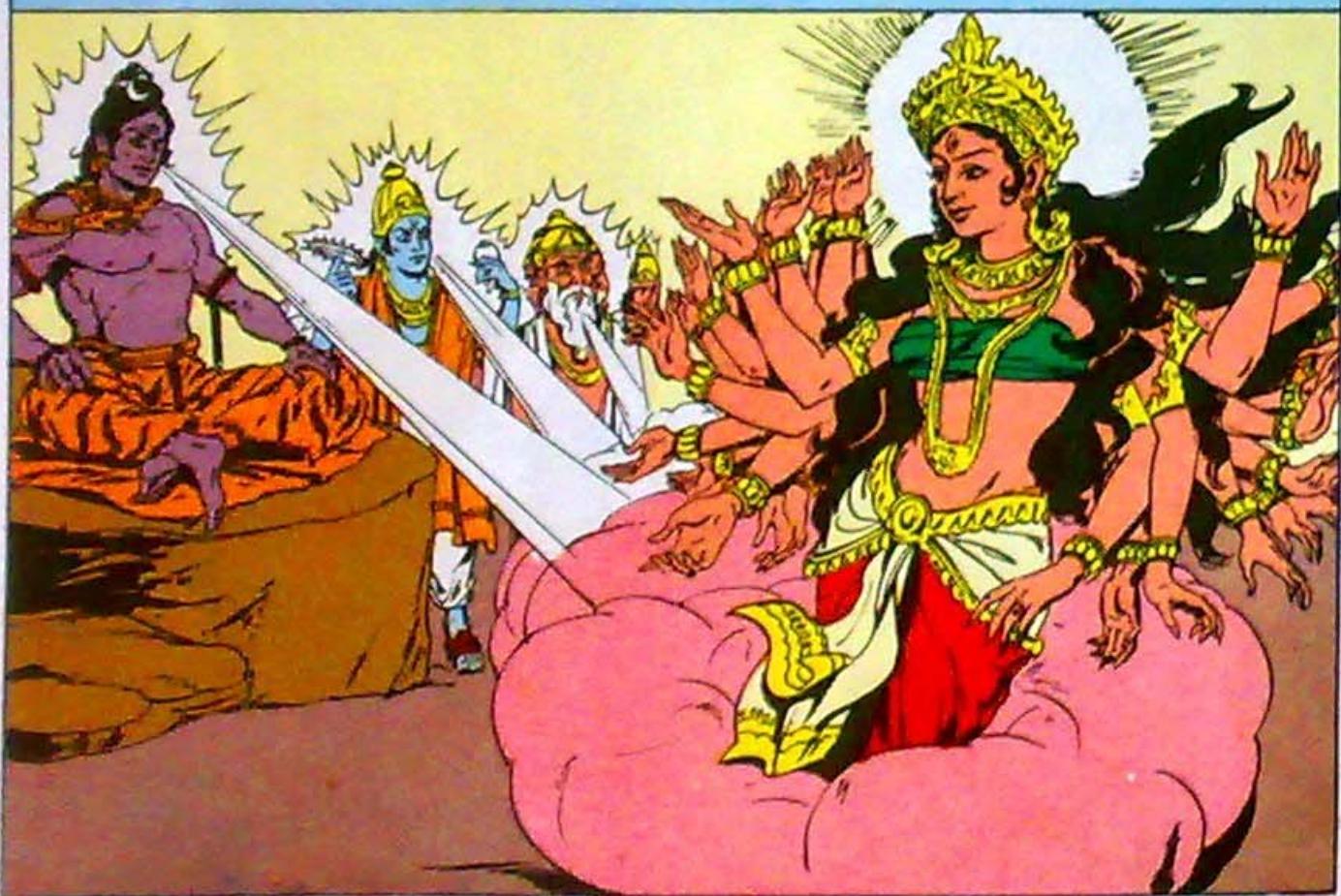
WE ARE HELPLESS AGAINST MAHISHA. WILL EVIL TRIUMPH OVER RIGHT-EOUSNESS?



EVEN AS THE DEVAS SPOKE, AN INTENSE LIGHT ISSUED FORTH FROM THE ENRAGED FACES OF SHIVA, VISHNU AND BRAHMA.



IT WAS JOINED BY SIMILAR RAYS OF LIGHT FROM INDRA AND OTHER DEVAS. AND LO! THE NEXT MOMENT, OUT OF THAT LIGHT A FEMALE FORM WITH A THOUSAND ARMS CAME INTO BEING! IT WAS DEVI DURGA.



O DEVI, YOU ARE THE ORIGIN OF ALL  
THE WORLDS. YOU ARE DURGA. YOU ARE  
THE INNER FORCE, THE SOURCE OF ALL  
STRENGTH. DESTROY MAHISHA AND  
PROTECT US!



SHIVA DREW FORTH A TRIDENT  
FROM HIS OWN TRIDENT...



...AND OFFERED IT TO DURGA.



VISHNU AND OTHER DEVAS, TOO, OFFERED WEAPONS TO DURGA.



O DEVI,  
ACCEPT  
THIS  
DISCUS.

— AND THIS  
THUNDERBOLT.

ARMED WITH THE CELESTIAL WEAPONS AND MOUNTED ON A LION, DURGA EMITTED  
A BLOOD-CURDLING ROAR.



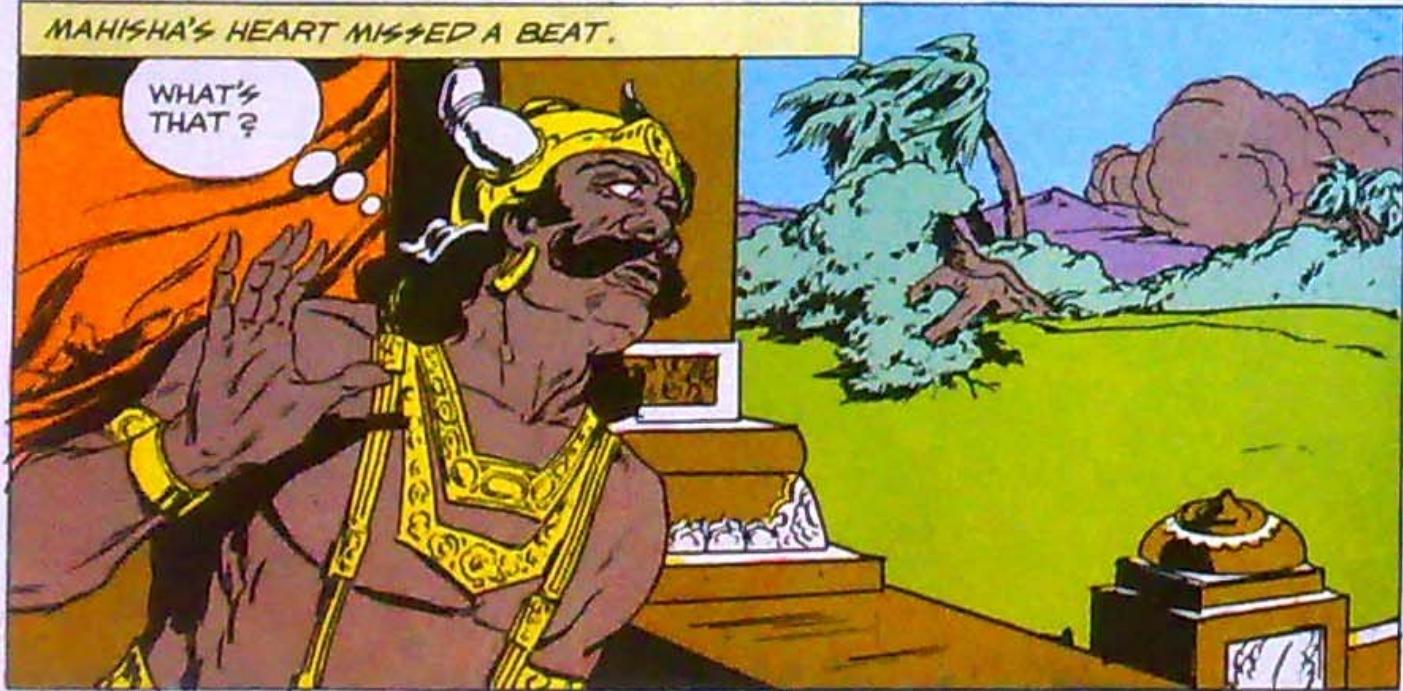
THE SEAS TREMBLED...



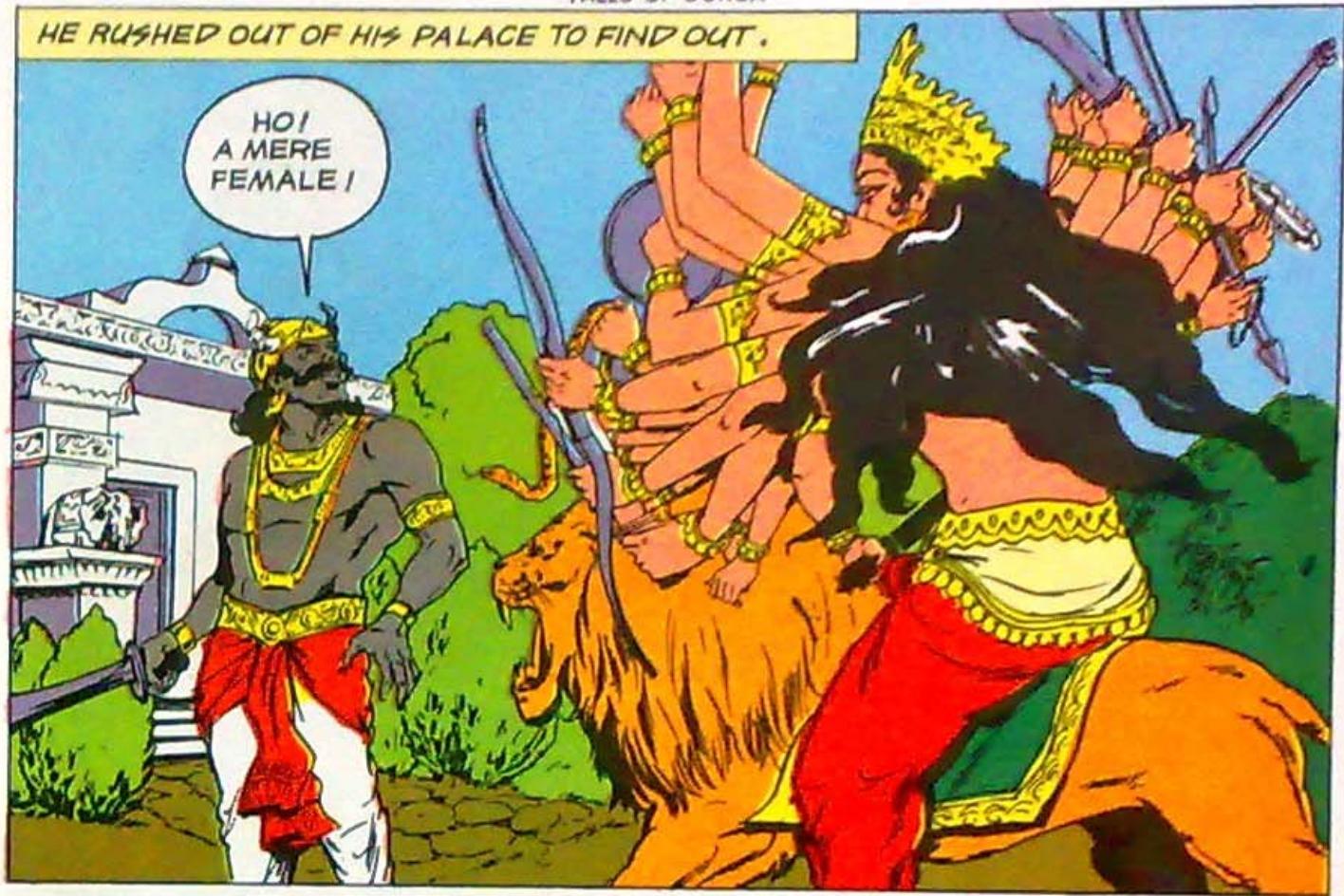
...THE EARTH SHOOK AND THE MOUNTAINS ROCKED.



MAHISHA'S HEART MISSED A BEAT.



HE RUSHED OUT OF HIS PALACE TO FIND OUT.



AS THE ASURAS HURLED VARIOUS WEAPONS AT HER, DURGA BREATHED HARD.



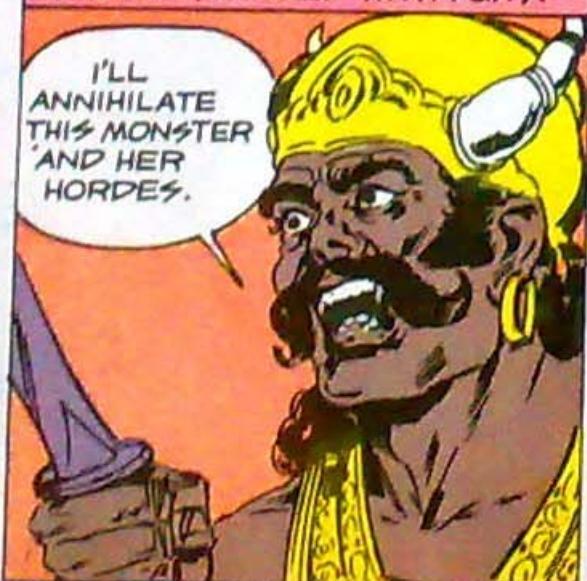
AS SHE BREATHED, THOUSANDS OF SOLDIERS CAME INTO BEING AND FOUGHT AT HER SIDE.



HER MOUNT STRODE THROUGH MAHISHA'S ARMY, DESTROYING THOUSANDS OF ASURAS.



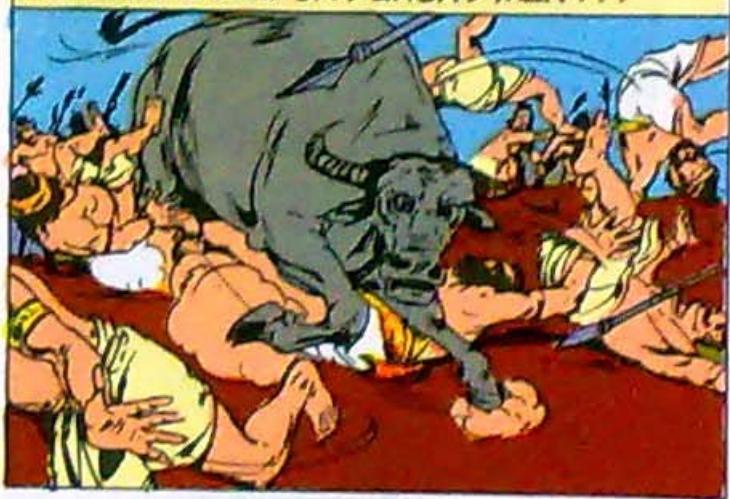
MAHISHA SEETHED WITH FURY.



ASSUMING THE FORM OF A BUFFALO, MAHISHA CHARGED FORTH SNORTING AND BELLOWING.



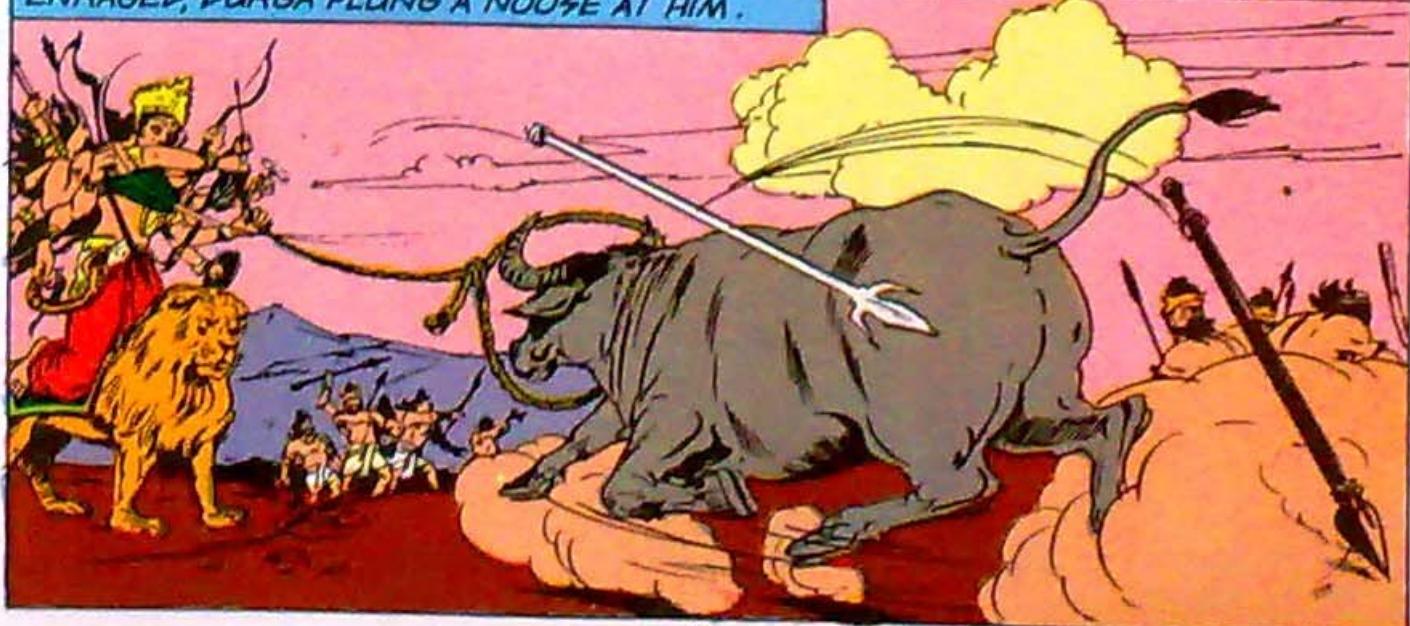
HE TRAMPLED UPON DURGA'S MEN . . .



. . . AND LASHED AT THEM WITH HIS TAIL .



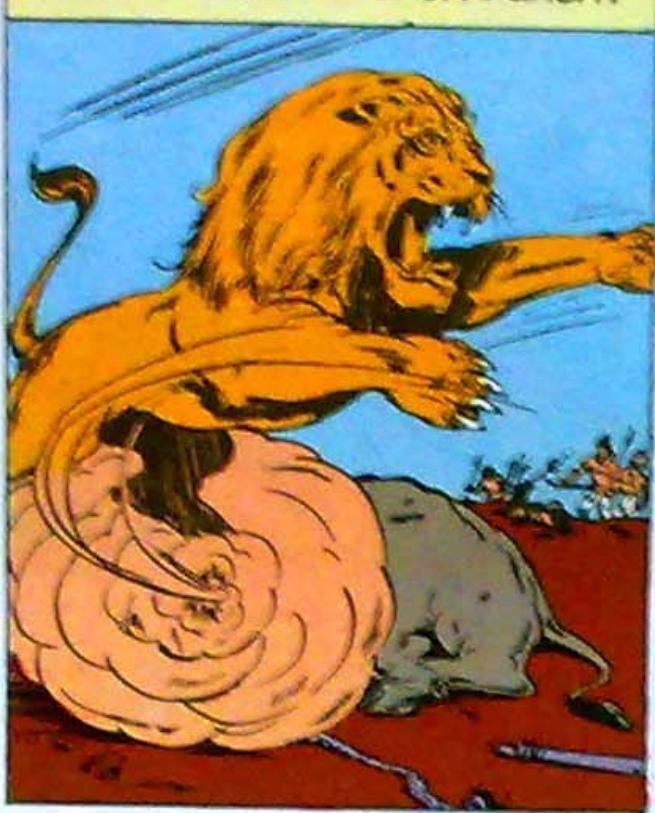
ENRAGED, DURGA FLUNG A NOOSE AT HIM.



MAHISHA THREW HIMSELF WITH  
ALL HIS MIGHT ...



... TRANSFORMED HIMSELF INTO A  
LION AND POUNCED UPON PURSA.



AS PURSA CHOPPED OFF THE  
HEAD OF THE LION ...



... MAHISHA ROSE IN HIS OWN  
FORM AND CHARGED.



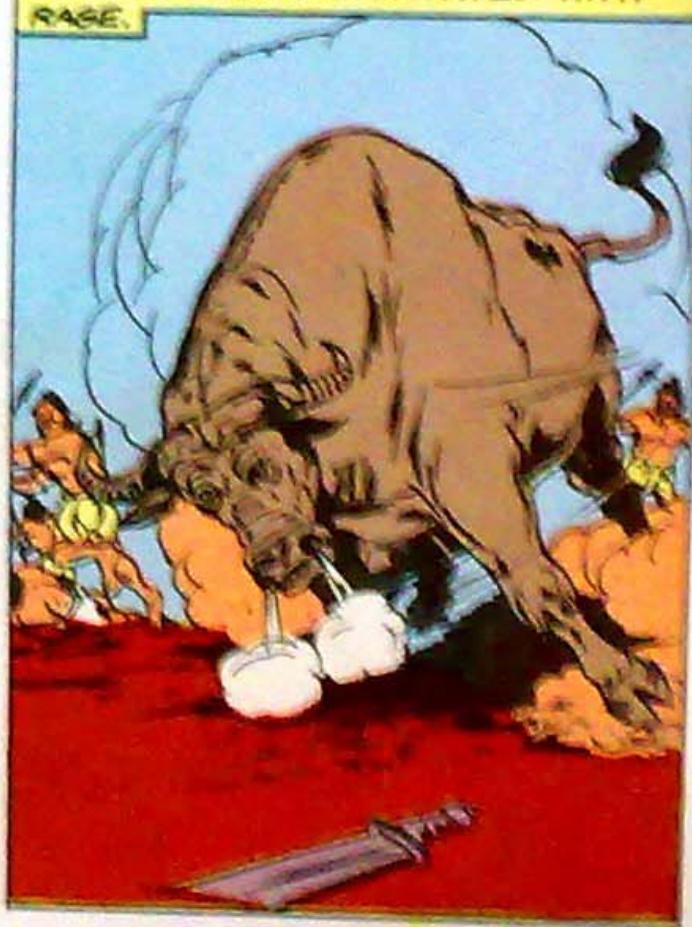
LATER HE ASSUMED THE FORM OF AN ELEPHANT AND TUGGED AT DURGA'S MOUNT WITH HIS TRUNK.



DURGA LOPPED OFF THE TRUNK WITH HER SWORD.



MAHISHA AGAIN ASSUMED THE FORM OF A BUFFALO AND SNORTED WITH RAGE.



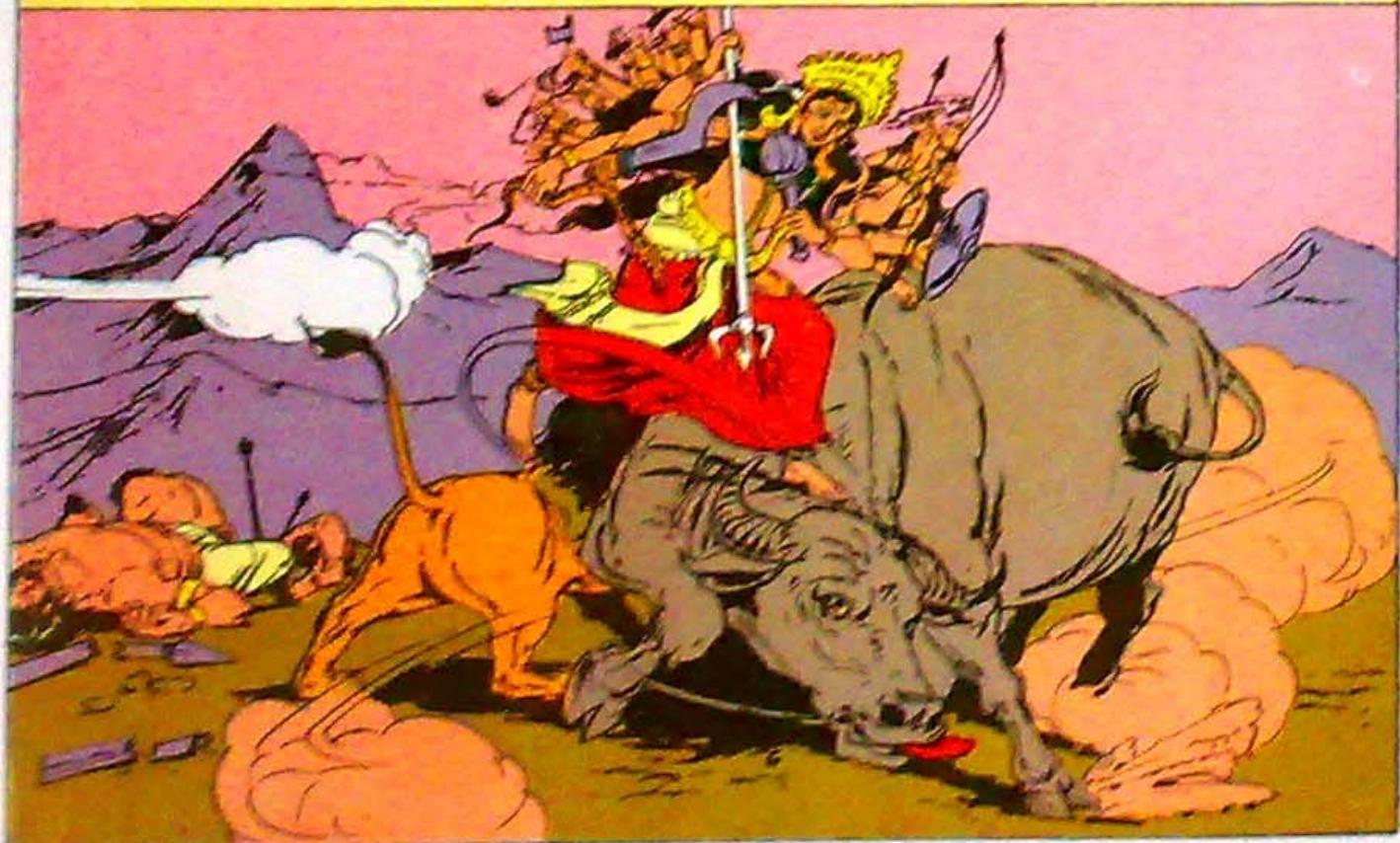
DURGA LOOKED AT HIM WITH CONTEMPT.

SNORT,  
O FOOL! IN A  
MOMENT, THE  
DEVAS WILL  
ROAR IN TRIUMPH  
AT THIS VERY  
PLACE, WHEN  
YOU ARE  
SLAIN!

ENRAGED, MAHISHA RUSHED AT HER.



BUT DURGA LEAPT UPON HIM AND PINNED HIM DOWN.



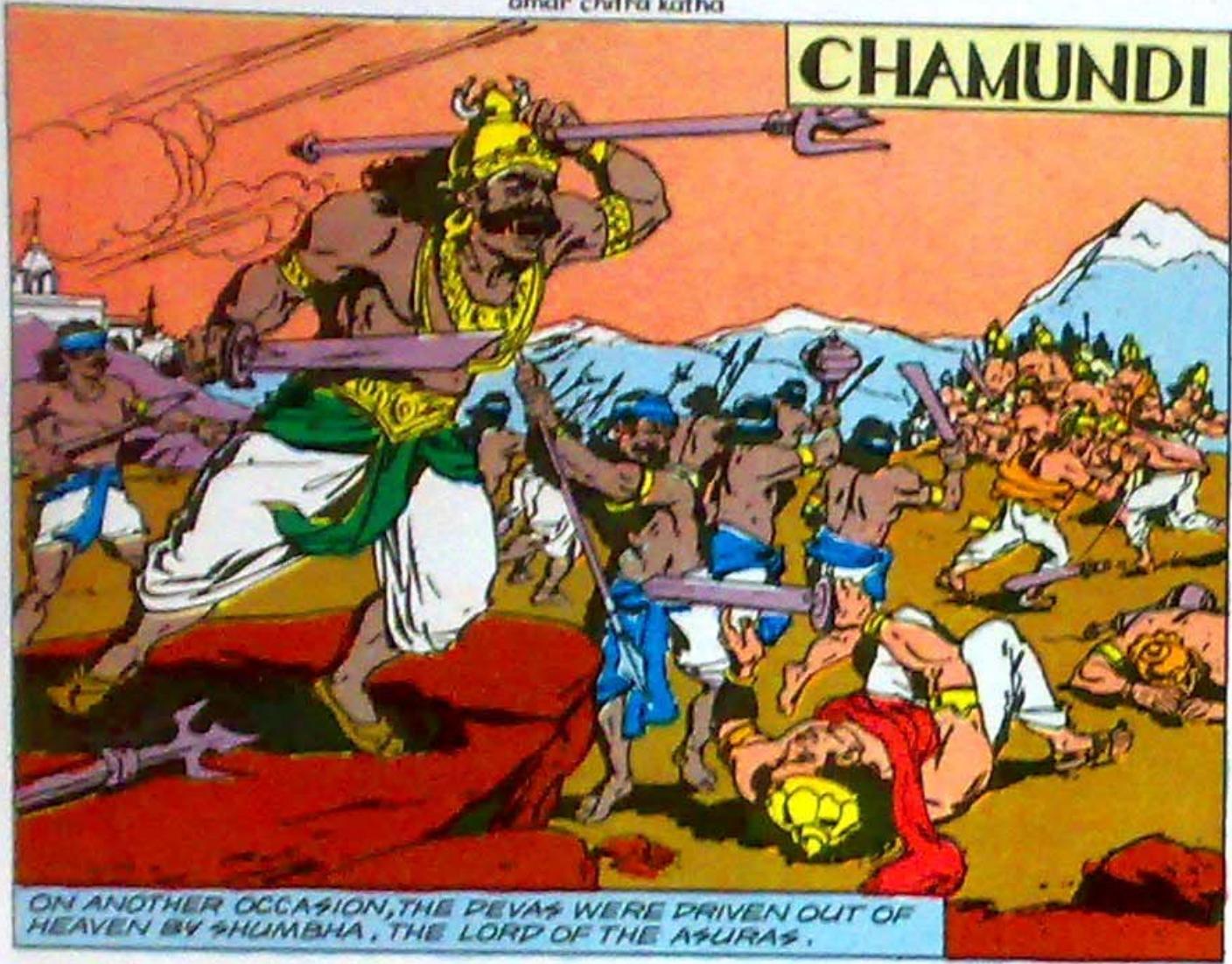
MAHISHA STRUGGLED TO FREE HIMSELF. AS HALF OF HIM EMERGED FROM THE MOUTH OF THE BUFFALO, DURGA RAISED HER SWORD.



THE NEXT MOMENT, MAHISHA FELL DEAD, AT THE FOOT OF DURGA. THE DEVAS WERE OVERJOYED.



# CHAMUNDI



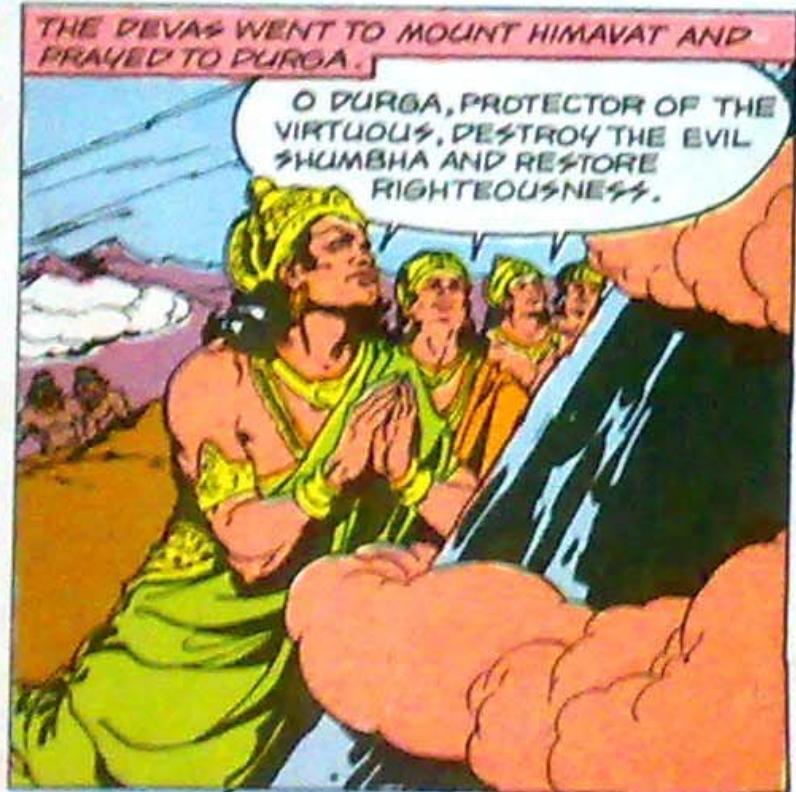
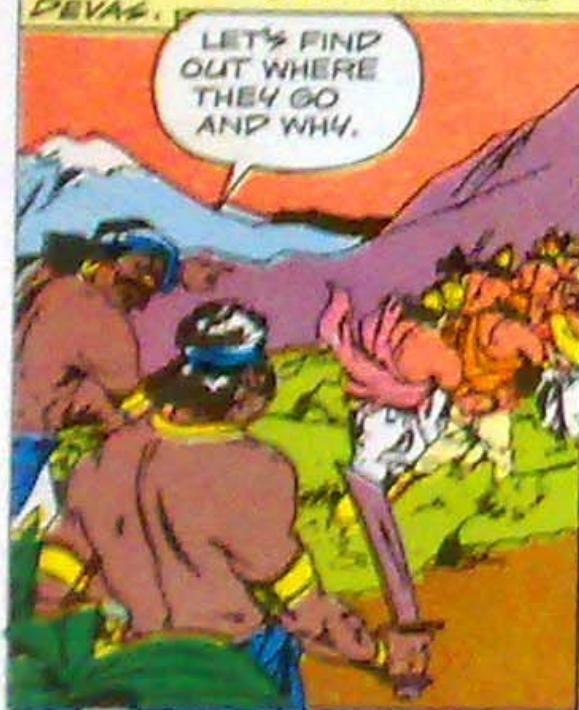
ON ANOTHER OCCASION, THE DEVAS WERE DRIVEN OUT OF HEAVEN BY SHUMBHA, THE LORD OF THE ASURAS.

CHANDA AND MUNDA, SHUMBHA'S COMMANDERS, FOLLOWED THE DEVAS.

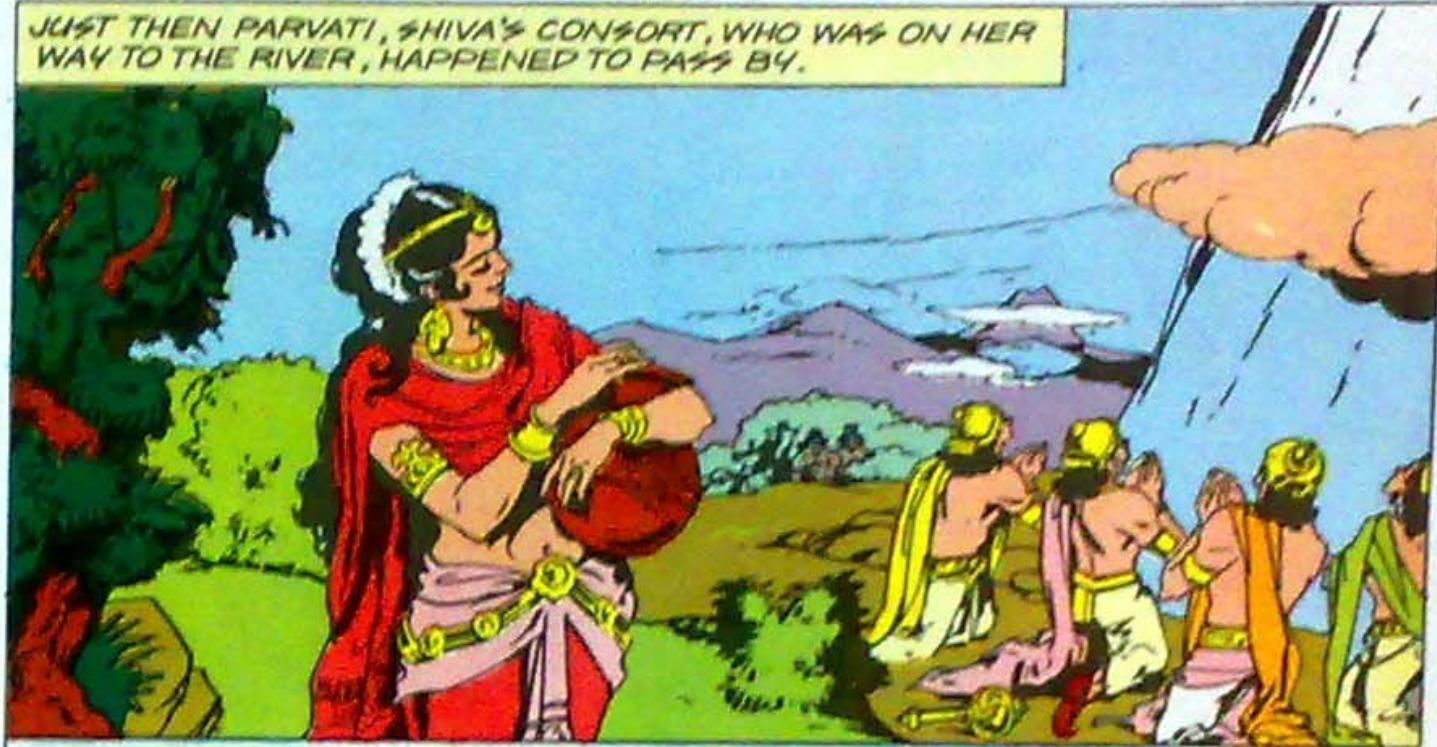
LET'S FIND OUT WHERE THEY GO AND WHY.

THE DEVAS WENT TO MOUNT HIMAVAT AND PRAYED TO DURGA.

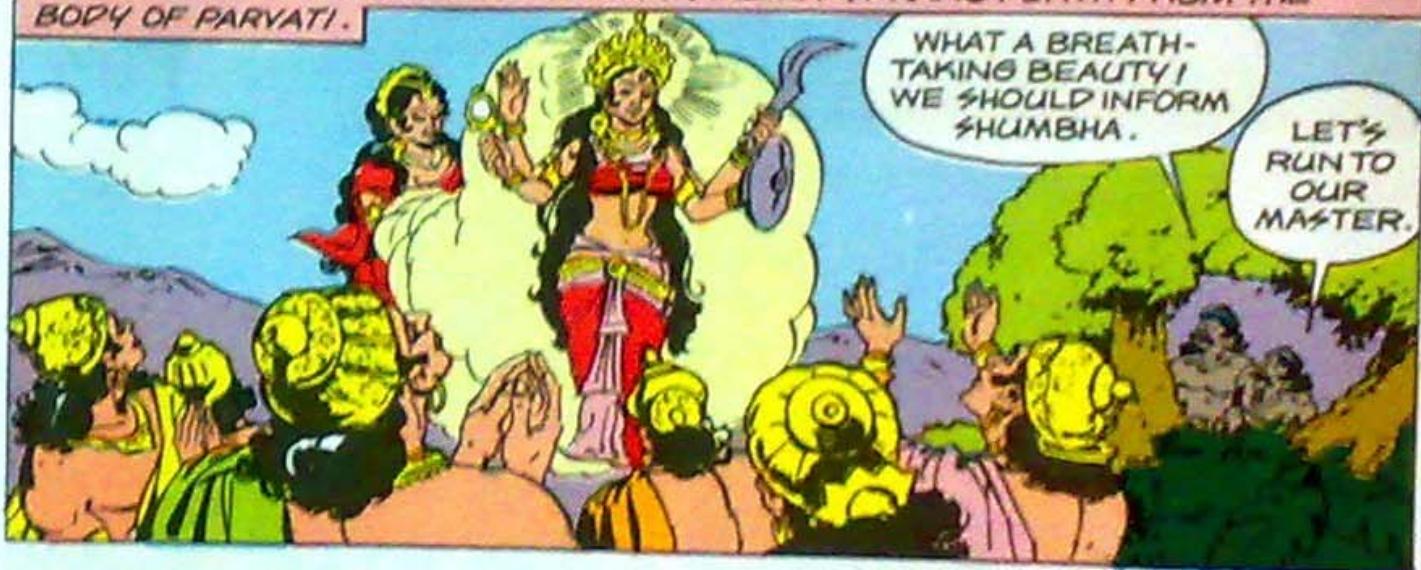
O DURGA, PROTECTOR OF THE VIRTUOUS, DESTROY THE EVIL SHUMBHA AND RESTORE RIGHTEOUSNESS.



JUST THEN PARVATI, SHIVA'S CONSOFT, WHO WAS ON HER WAY TO THE RIVER, HAPPENED TO PASS BY.



AND LO! THE NEXT MOMENT, GODDESS AMBIKA \* SPRANG FORTH FROM THE BODY OF PARVATI.

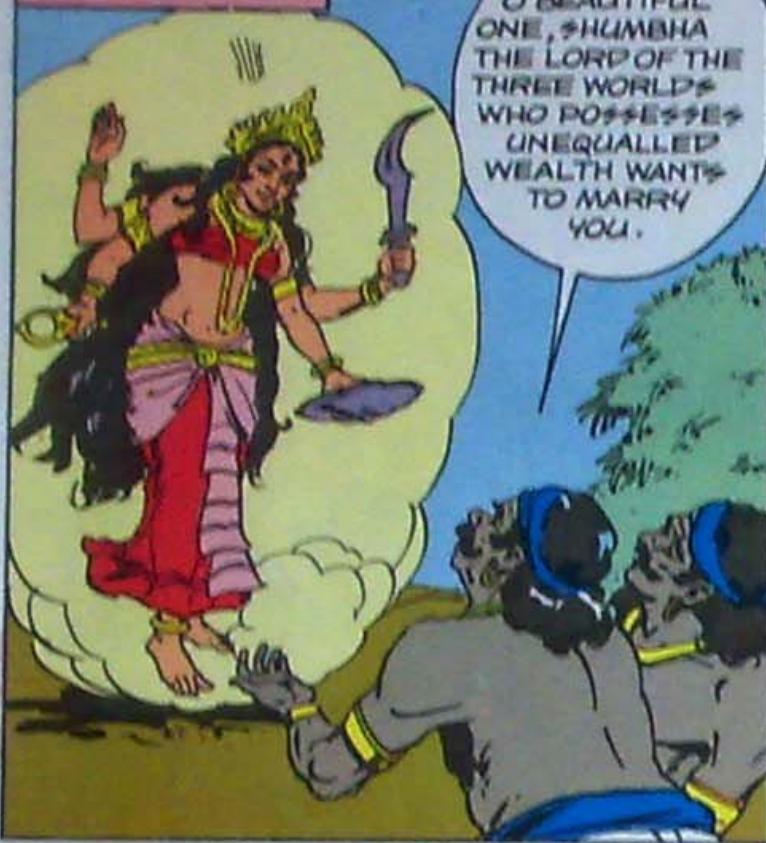


WHEN CHANDA AND MUNDA RUSHED TO THE PALACE OF SHUMBHA AND DESCRIBED AMBIKA TO HIM.

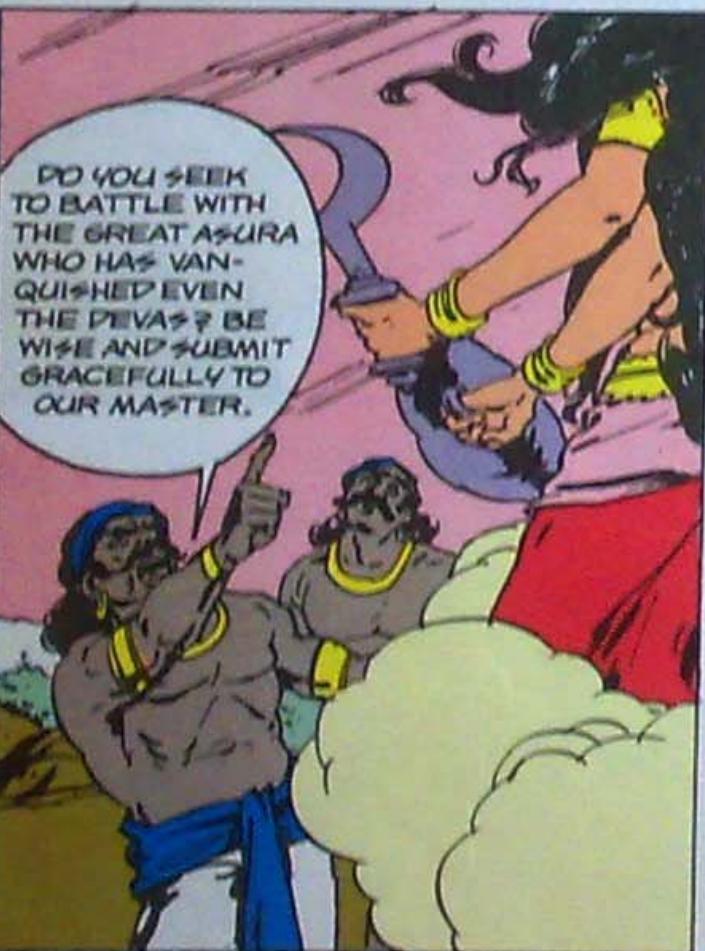


CHANDI AND MUNDA RUSHED BACK TO MOUNT HIMAVAT.

O BEAUTIFUL ONE, SHUMBHA THE LORD OF THE THREE WORLDS WHO POSSESSES UNEQUALLED WEALTH WANTS TO MARRY YOU.

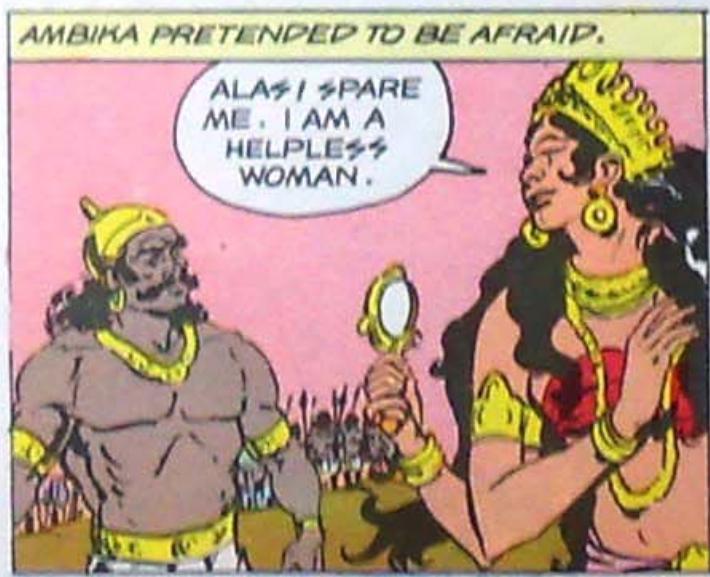
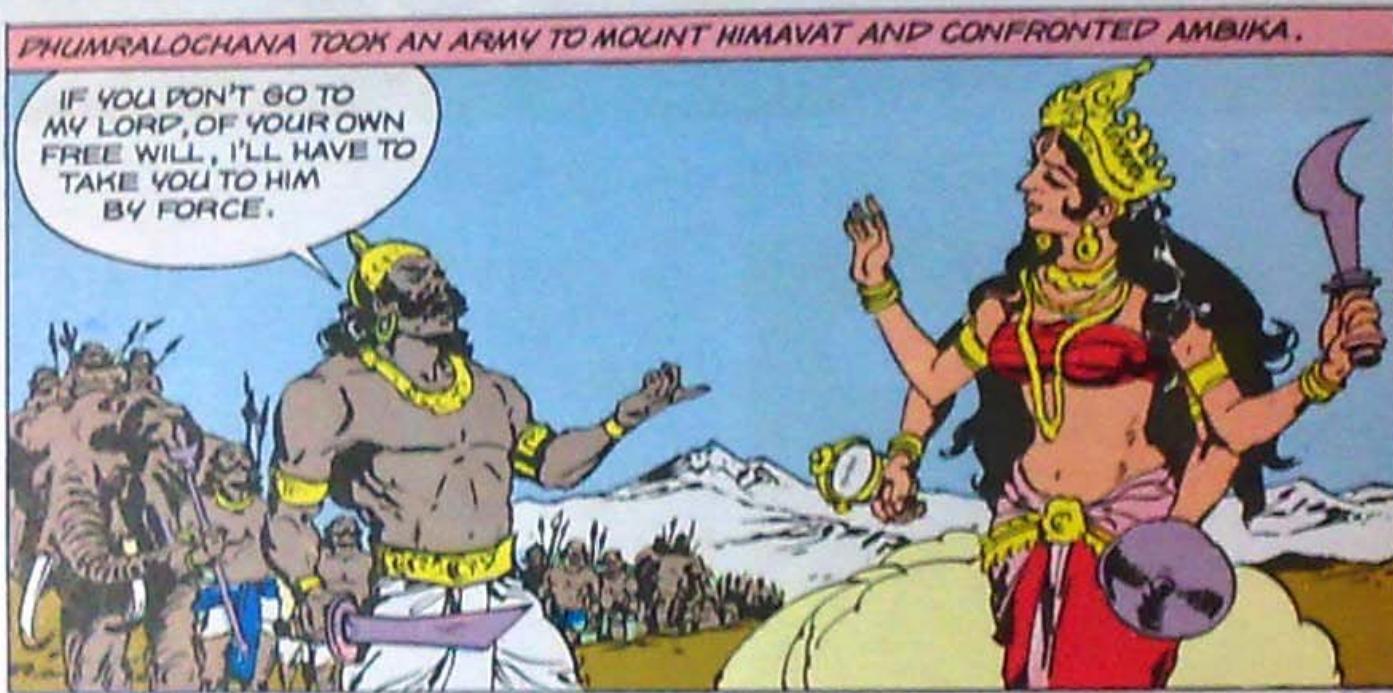
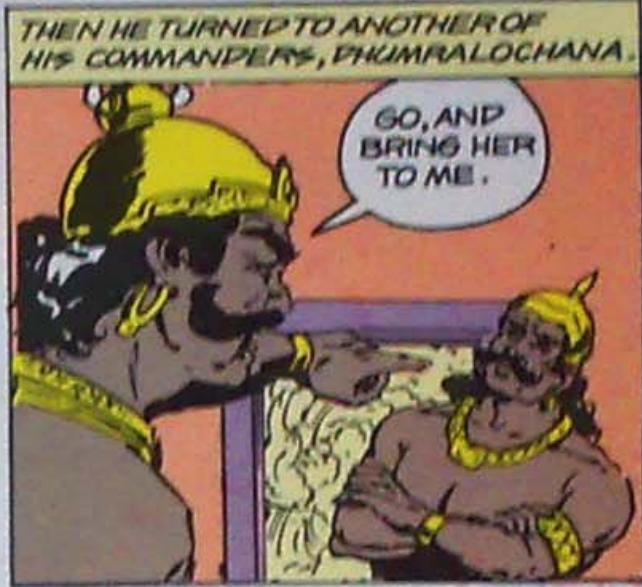
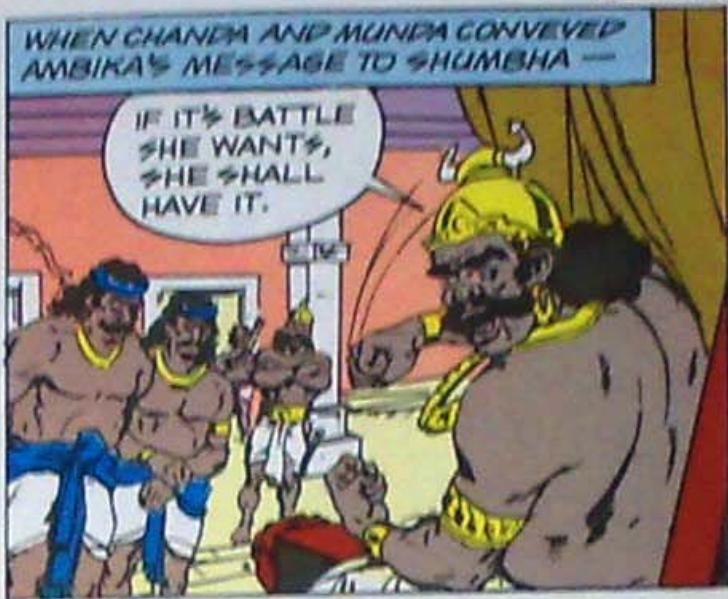


I'VE TAKEN A VOW THAT I'LL MARRY ONLY HIM WHO CAN CONQUER ME IN BATTLE AND HUMBLE MY PRIDE.

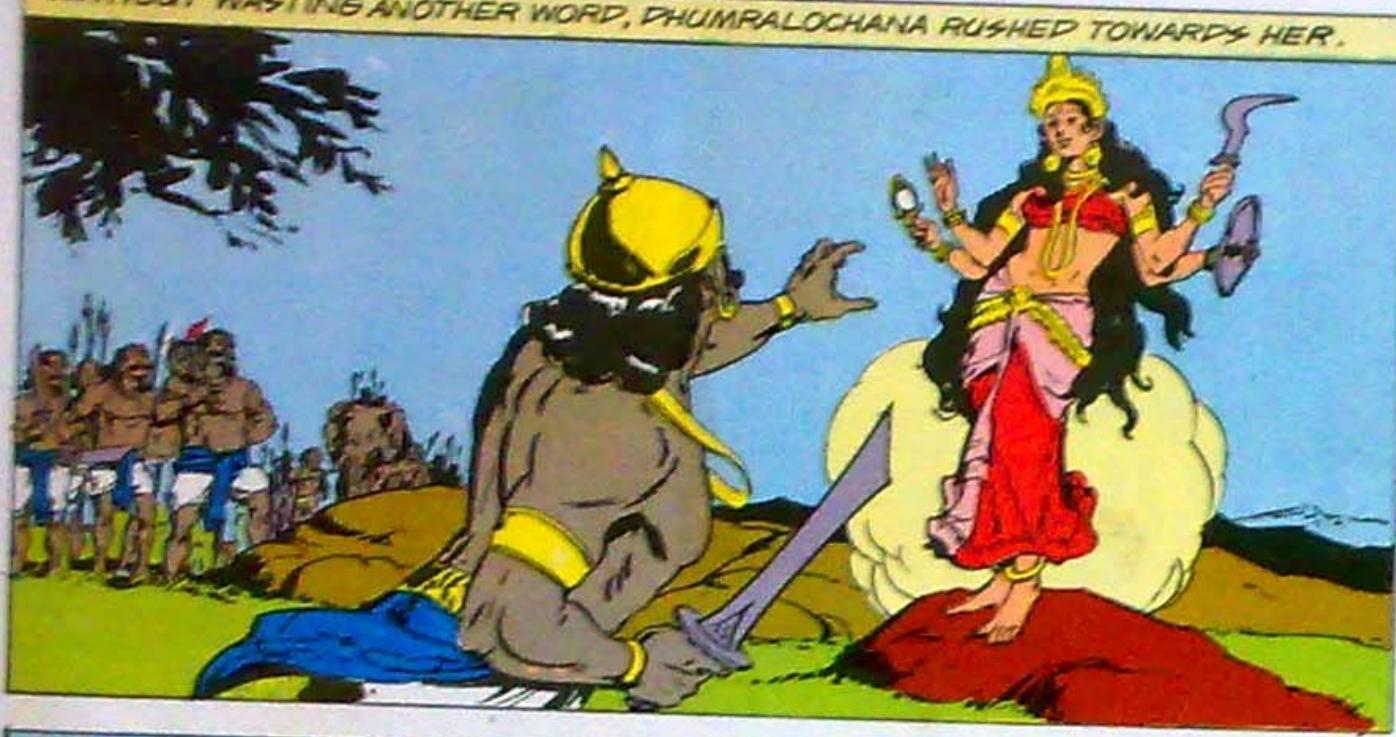


I KNOW I AM FOOLISH BUT I AM BOUND BY THE ILL-CONSIDERED VOW TAKEN LONG AGO.





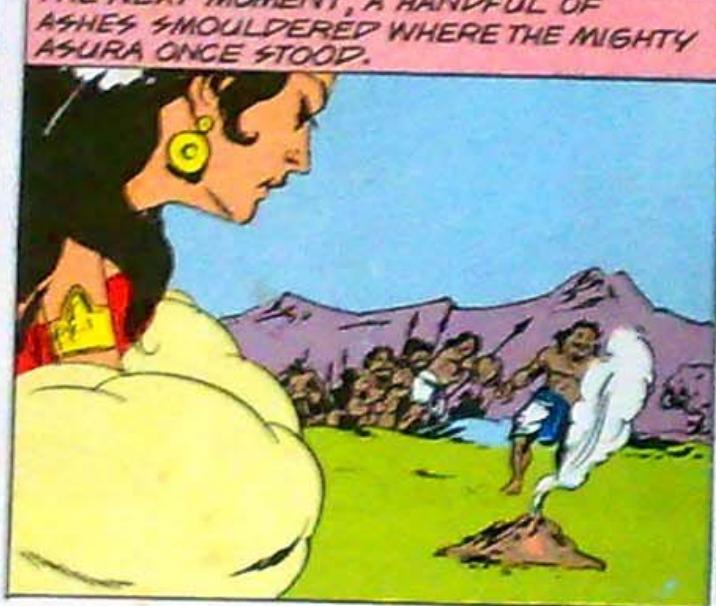
WITHOUT WASTING ANOTHER WORD, DHUMRALOCHANA RUSHED TOWARDS HER.



WITH UTTER CONTEMPT FOR THE ASURA, AMBIKA UTTERED A SINGLE SYLLABLE.

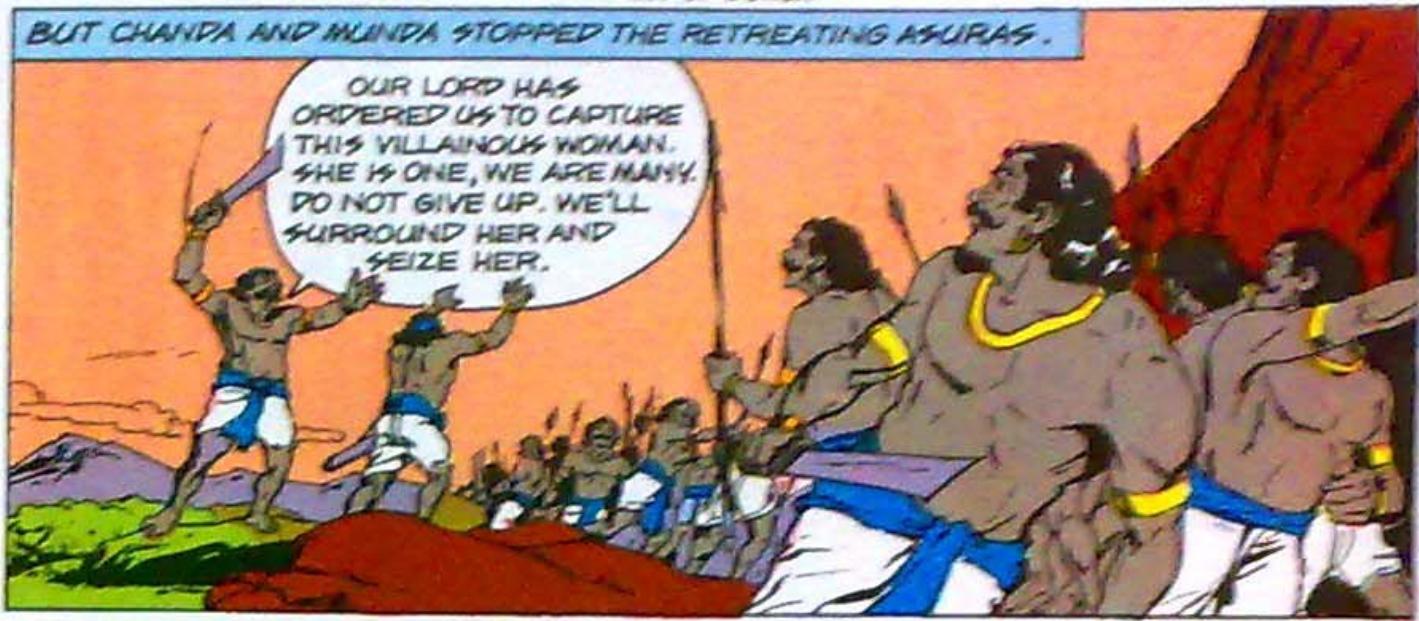


THE NEXT MOMENT, A HANDFUL OF ASHES SHOULDERED WHERE THE MIGHTY ASURA ONCE STOOD.

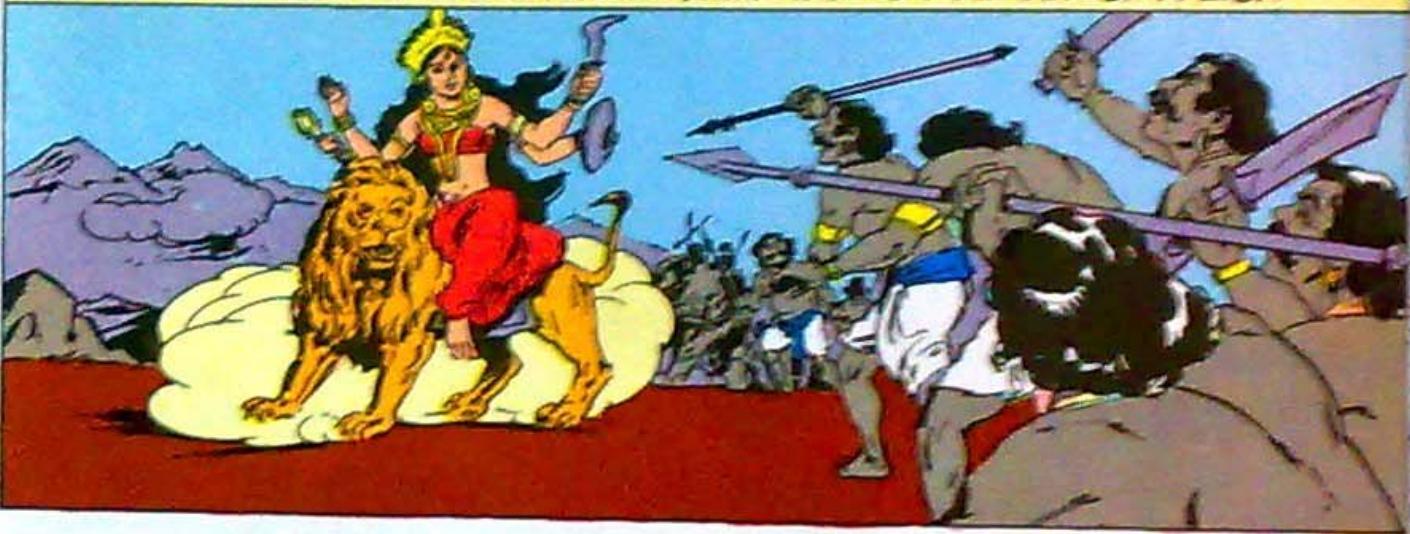


BUT CHANDA AND MUNDA STOPPED THE RETREATING ASURAS.

OUR LORD HAS ORDERED US TO CAPTURE THIS VILLAINOUS WOMAN. SHE IS ONE, WE ARE MANY. DO NOT GIVE UP. WE'LL SURROUND HER AND SEIZE HER.



WHEN THE ASURAS CLOSED IN ON AMBIKA, WHO WAS NOW SEATED ON A LION ...



... SHE FROWNED.



OUT CAME KALI FROM HER FOREHEAD ...



... AND CHARGES AT THE ASURAS.



**SNATCHING AN ELEPHANT WITH ONE HAND.**



... SHE HOIRLED IT AT THE ASURAS AND CRUSHED THEM TO DEATH.



CHANDA RUSHED AT KALI.

KALI SEIZED HIM BY THE HAIR...



I WILL  
KILL YOU  
AND PROVIDE  
A FEAST FOR  
THE VULTURES!



...AND BEHEAPED HIM.

BLIND WITH FURY, MUNDA RUSHED FORTH.



...ONLY TO MEET WITH THE SAME FATE!

AMBIKA SMILED AT KALI.

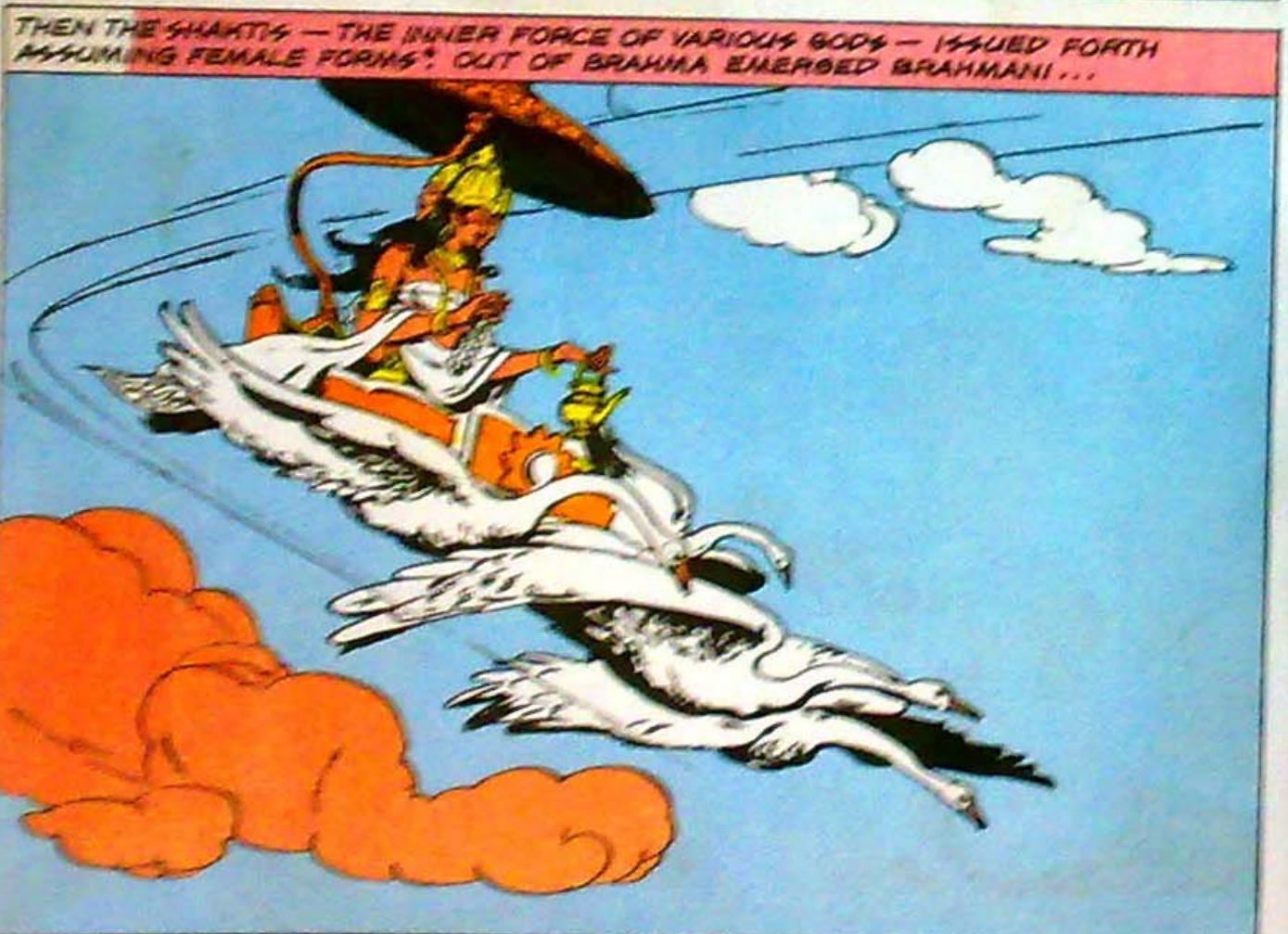
YOU HAVE KILLED  
CHANDA AND MUNDA.  
HENCEFORTH YOU SHALL  
ALSO BE KNOWN AS  
- CHAMUNDI.



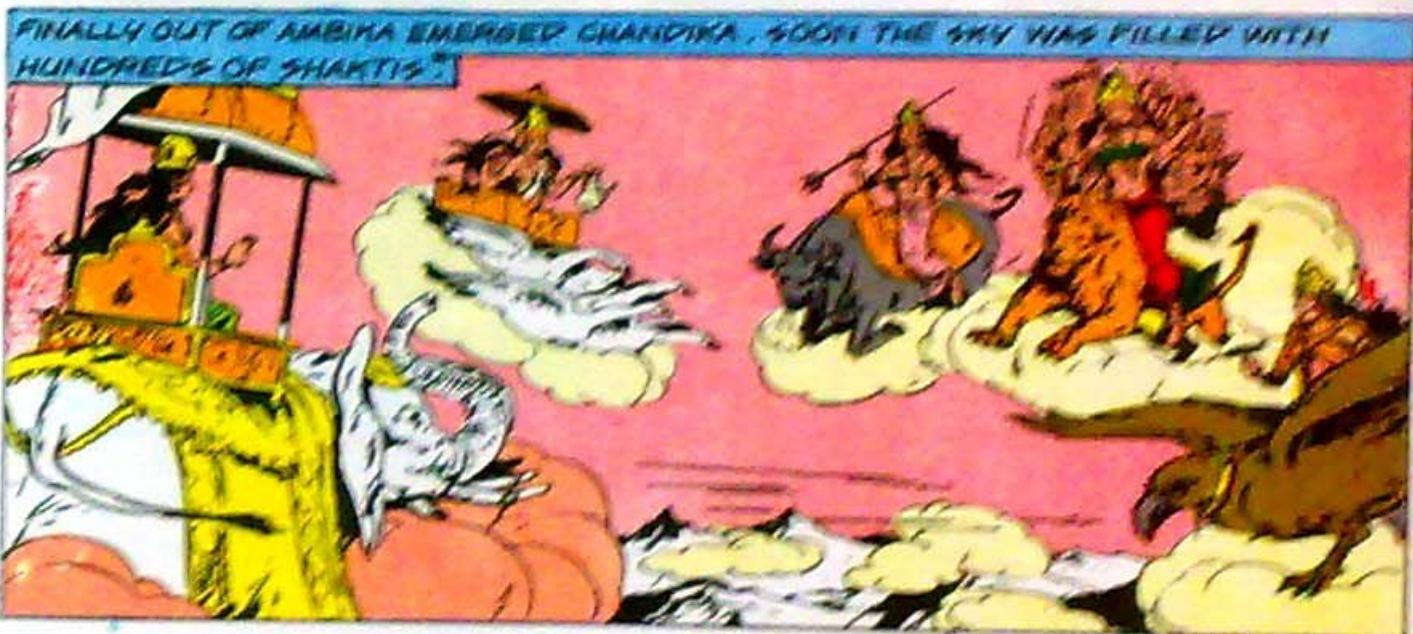
# HOW DURGA SLEW SHUMBHA



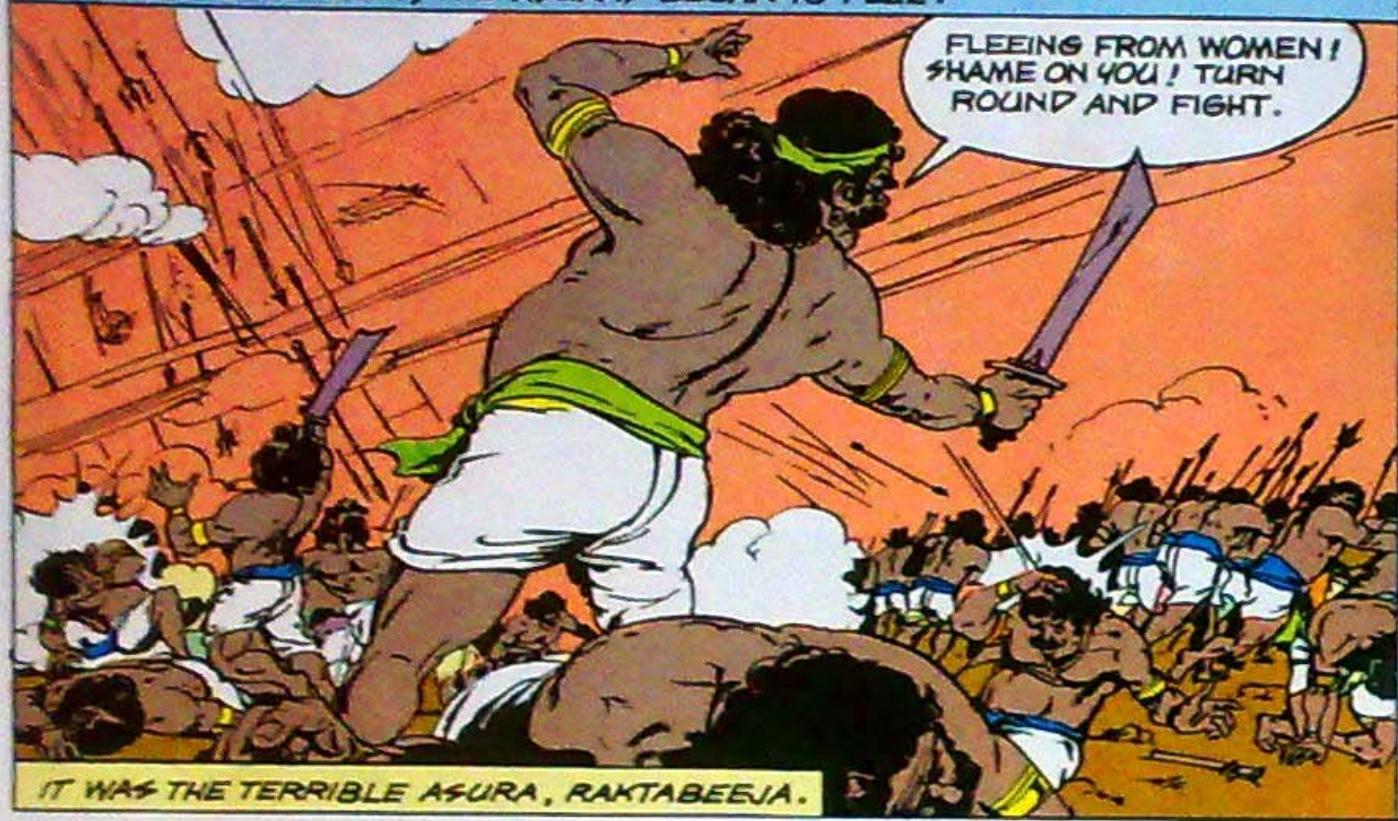
WHEN SHUMBHA LEARNED THAT CHANDA AND MUNDA HAD BEEN KILLED, HE CAME IN PERSON TO DEAL WITH AMBIKA. HIS HUGE ARMY SURROUNDED AMBIKA AND KALI.



\* EACH OF THESE FORMS IS CONSIDERED TO BE AN INCARNATION OF DURGA



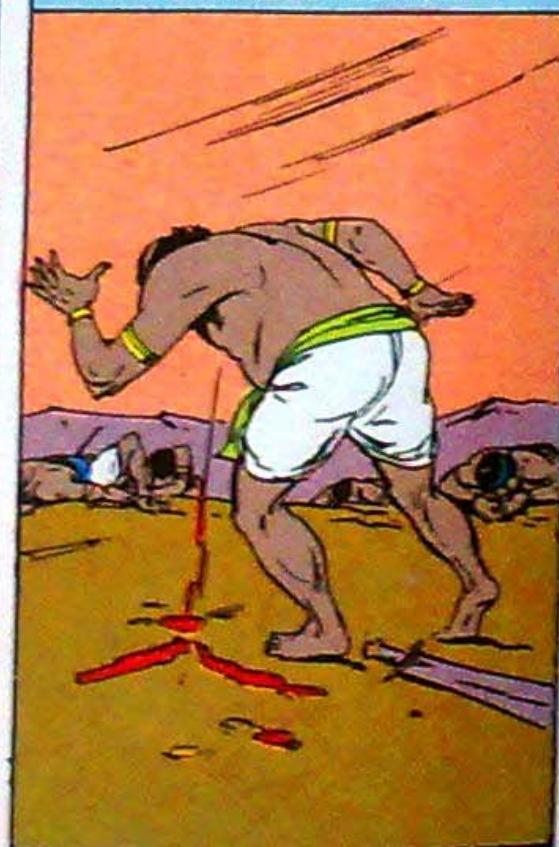
VASHNAVI FOUGHT WITH THE DISCUS, MAHESHWARI WITH THE TRIDENT, AND VARIOUS OTHER SHAKTIS WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE WEAPONS. UNABLE TO FACE THIS ONSLAUGHT, THE ASURAS BEGAN TO FLEE.



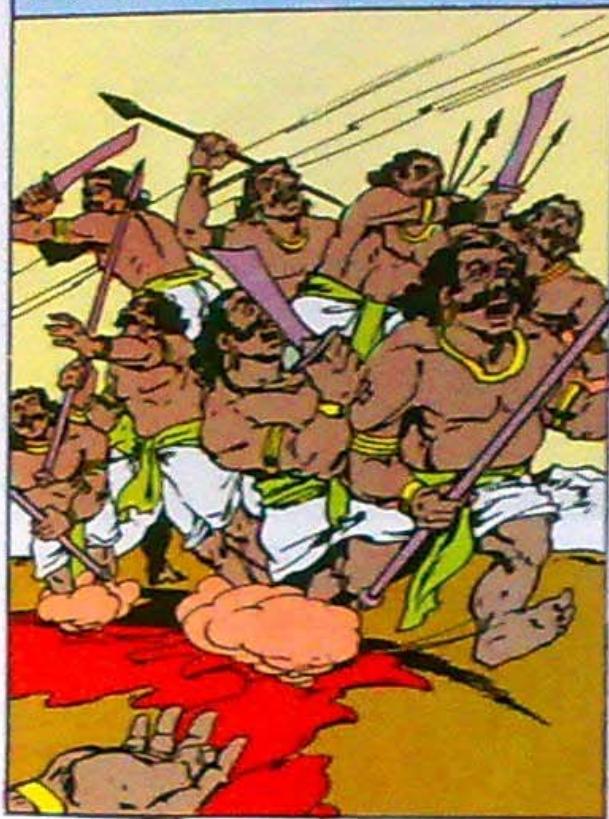
AS RAKTABEEJA RUSHED FORTH, INDRA'S SHAKTI STRUCK HIM WITH HER THUNDERBOLT.



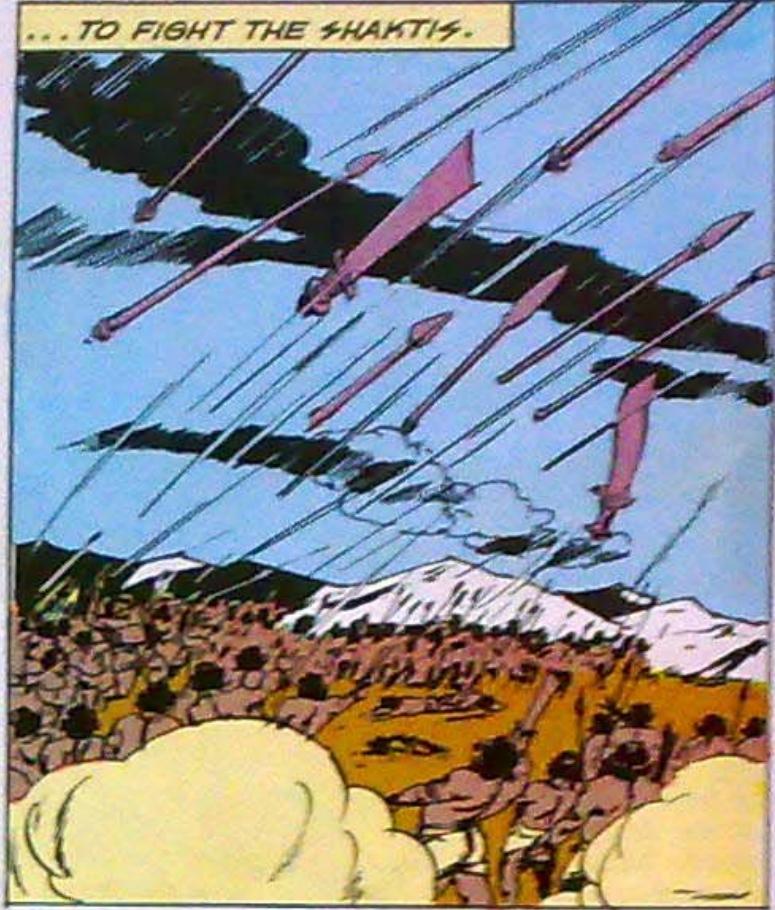
AS EACH DROP OF THE BLOOD FLOWING FROM HIS WOUND TOUCHED THE GROUND...



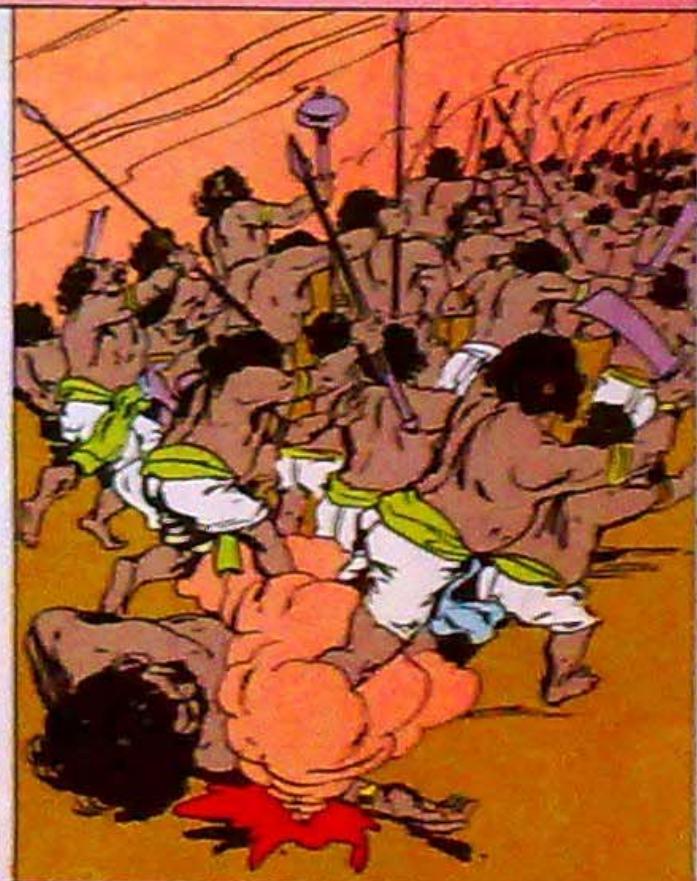
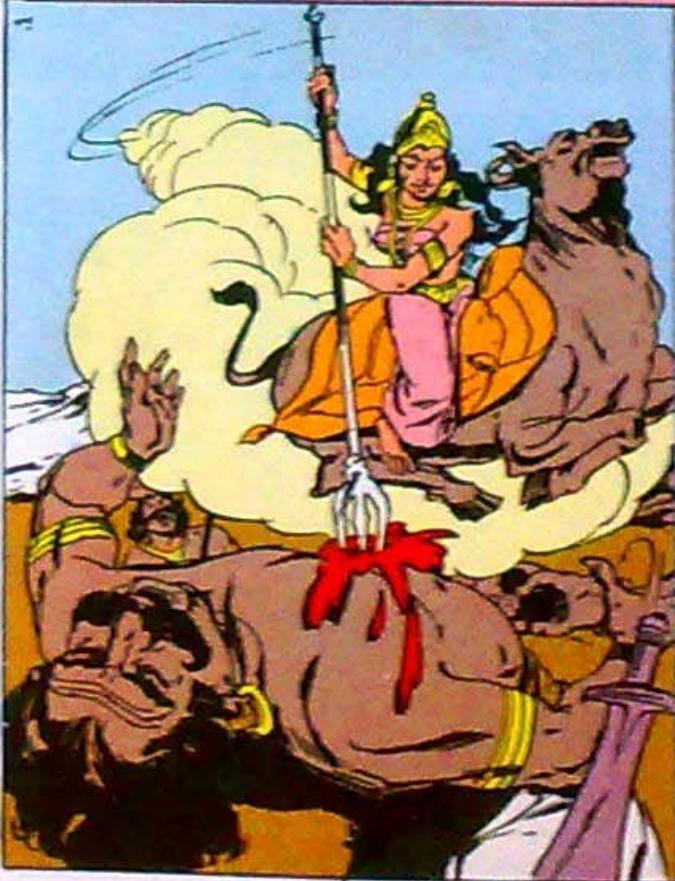
... THERE ROSE A MIGHTY ASURA,  
HIS EXACT REPLICA ...



... TO FIGHT THE SHAKTIS.



AS THE SHAKTIS WOUNDED EACH OF THE ASURAS THUS BORN, OUT OF HIS BLOOD ROSE MANY MORE ASURAS ...



... AND SOON THE BATTLE SCENE WAS FILLED WITH THOUSANDS OF RAKTA-BEEJAS, WHO FOUGHT THE SHARTIS.

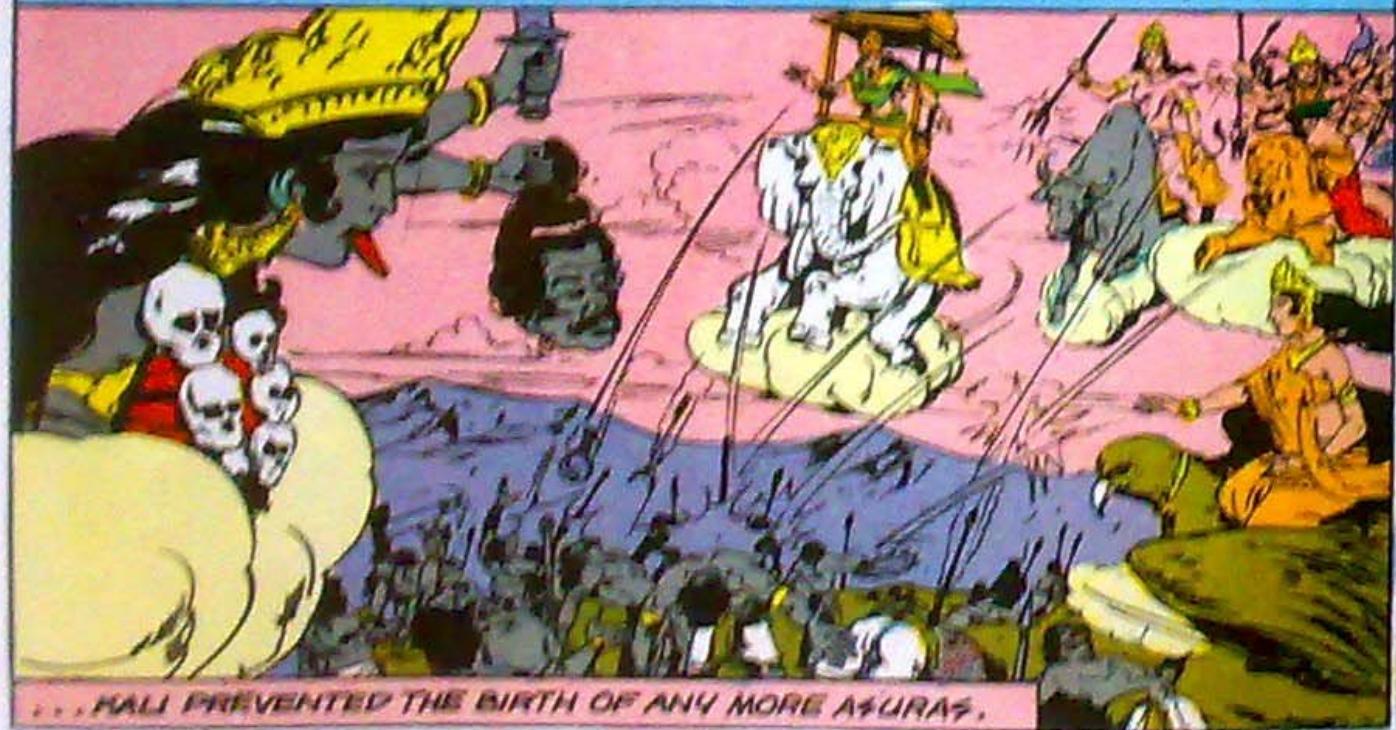


CHANDRA TURNED TO KALI . . .

O CHAMUNDI,  
THESE RAKTA-BEEJAS CAN BE  
ANNIHILATED ONLY  
IF WE PREVENT  
THEIR BLOOD FROM  
FALLING TO  
THE GROUND.

LEAVE IT TO  
ME. NOT A DROP  
OF THEIR BLOOD  
SHALL STAIN  
THE EARTH  
AGAIN.

AS CHANDRA AND THE OTHER SHARTIS ATTACHED THE RAKTABEEJAS . . .



. . . KALI PREVENTED THE BIRTH OF ANY MORE ASURAS.

"SOON THE HUNDREDS AND THOUSANDS OF RAKTABEEJAS THAT HAD ARisen WERE WIPEP OUT. RAKTABEEJA WAS FURIOUS.

I MUST KILL HER BEFORE SHE STRIKES THE FATAL BLOW.



AND RAKTABEEJA RUSHED TOWARDS CHANDIKA.



AS CHANDIKA STRUCK HIM . . .



. . . KALI PREVENTED HIS BLOOD FROM TOUCHING THE EARTH . . .

. . . AND RAKTABEEJA FELL DEAD, TO THE JOY OF THE DEVAS.



DARSHAN AND HIS BROTHERS  
WERE ACCUSED OF KILLING  
THEIR FATHER THE KING.

MANGALADA, YOU  
MAY BE CAPABLE  
OF KILLING HIM.

AT THAT  
HE IS PROTECTED.

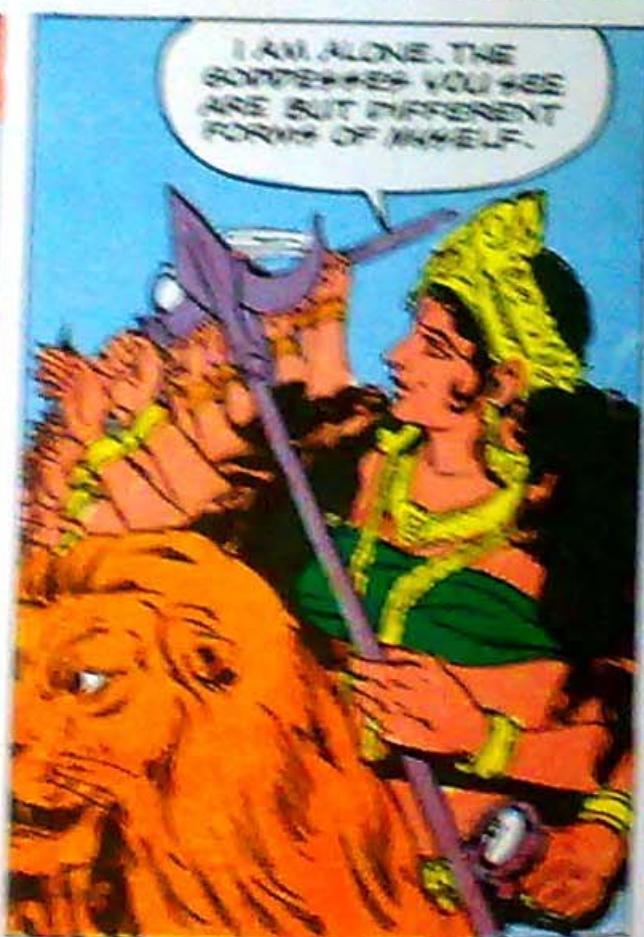
BUT THE MOST POWERFUL ARMED  
MANGALADA, HAS NO MATCH FOR  
DHANAKA.

I AM MY  
BROTHER'S  
KEEPER.



O DHARSA,  
THERE IS NO  
SLAYER IN YOUR  
VICTORY. HELP  
ME BY CONSECRATING  
YOU'VE BEEN  
TRANSMITTED TO ME.

I AM ALONE. THE  
COMPANIONS YOU HAVE  
ARE BUT DIFFERENT  
FORM OF MACHE.



THEN TO THE AMAZEMENT OF MAMANGA, THE VARIOUS SHRAVATHS MERGED INTO DURGA.



MEANWHILE, DURGA RODE  
INTO THE BATTLE.



AFTER A FIERCE BATTLE IN  
MAMANGA, DURGA FLUNG THE  
MONSTER DOWN...



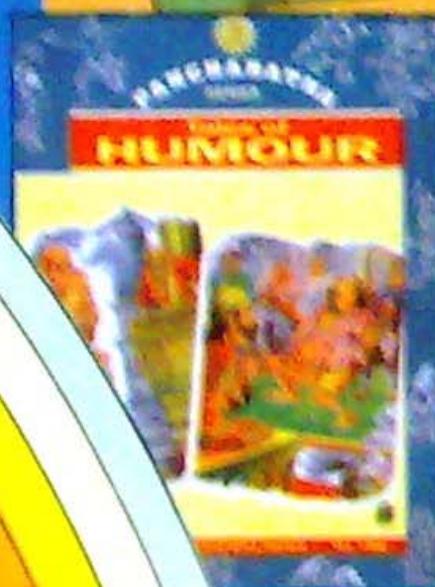
...AND SLAIN HIM WITH HER SPEAR. REJOICING, THE PEAK HEATED BY DURA  
APPEARED ON THE SCENE.



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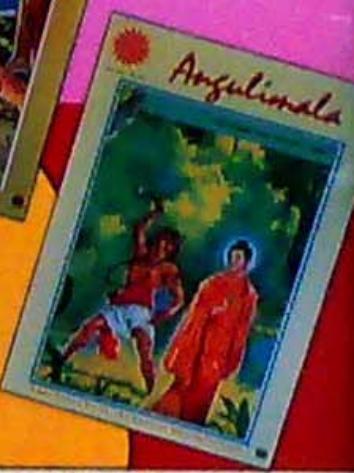
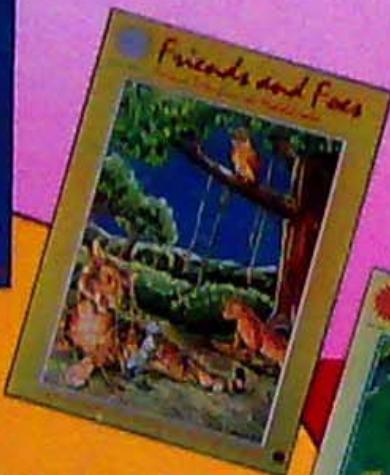
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508 CHANAKYA	560 PANCHATANTRA - HOW THE JACKAL ATE THE ELEPHANT	599 VISHNAMITRA	647 LAL BAHADUR SHASTRI
509 GANESH	561 PANCHATANTRA - CROWS AND OWLS	600 KALIDASA	648 SAMUDRA GUPTA
510 BUDDHA	562 PANCHATANTRA - THE BRAHMIN AND THE GOAT	601 BAI BABA	649 TALES FROM THE Upanishads
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512 TALES OF VISHNU	564 SHIVAJI	603 AKBAR	651 THE ADVENTURES OF BADDU & CHHOTU
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514 TALES OF DURGA	566 SURYA	605 PADMINI	653 JAYADRATHA
515 GANGA	567 INDRA AND SHACHI	606 RANI DURGAWATI	654 TALES OF BALARAMA
516 KRISHNA AND RUKMINI	568 VIKRAMADITYA	607 A BAG OF GOLD COINS	655 ANAND MATH
517 VIVEKANANDA	569 MALAVIKA	608 BHAGAT SINGH	656 ADI SHANKARA
518 KRISHNA AND JARASANDHA	570 DASHARATHA	609 FRIENDS AND FOES - ANIMAL TALES FROM THE MAHABHARATA	657 VASANTASENA
519 ELEPHANTA	571 DHIRUVA AND ASHTAVAKTRA	610 RAVANA HUMBLED	658 JAHANGIR
520 TALES OF NARADA	572 ANCESTORS OF RAMA	611 BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR	659 DEVI CHAUDHURI
521 ANGULIMALA	573 JATAKA TALES - BIRD STORIES	612 URVASHI	660 AJATASHATRU
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524 INDRA AND SHIBI	576 JATAKA TALES - THE MOUSE MERCHANT	615 JATAKA TALES - STORIES OF COURAGE	663 ANIRUDDHA - A TALE FROM THE BHAGAWAT
525 TALES OF ARJUNA	577 HARISCHANDRA	616 JATAKA TALES - TALES OF MISERS	664 KING KUSHA - A BUDDHIST TALE
526 MAHARAVANA	578 PARASHURAMA	617 THE HIDDEN TREASURE - A JATAKA TALE	665 THE DEADLY FEAST - A BUDDHIST TALE
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