

EPICS &
MYTHOLOGY



BHANUMATI

GRANDDAUGHTER OF KRISHNA

Vol 766 | ₹50

BHANUMATI

Bhanumati is the granddaughter of Krishna. One day, wandering in the forest, she runs into Sage Durvasa. Known for his short temper, Durvasa curses her to be abducted by a demon. Though Durvasa regrets his words, a curse once made cannot be taken back.

When Bhanumati is older, the curse comes true, and a powerful demon named, Nikumbha, carries her off. He turns her and himself invisible so they cannot be followed.

Now Krishna, Arjuna and Pradyumna must find and defeat Nikumbha and rescue Bhanumati.

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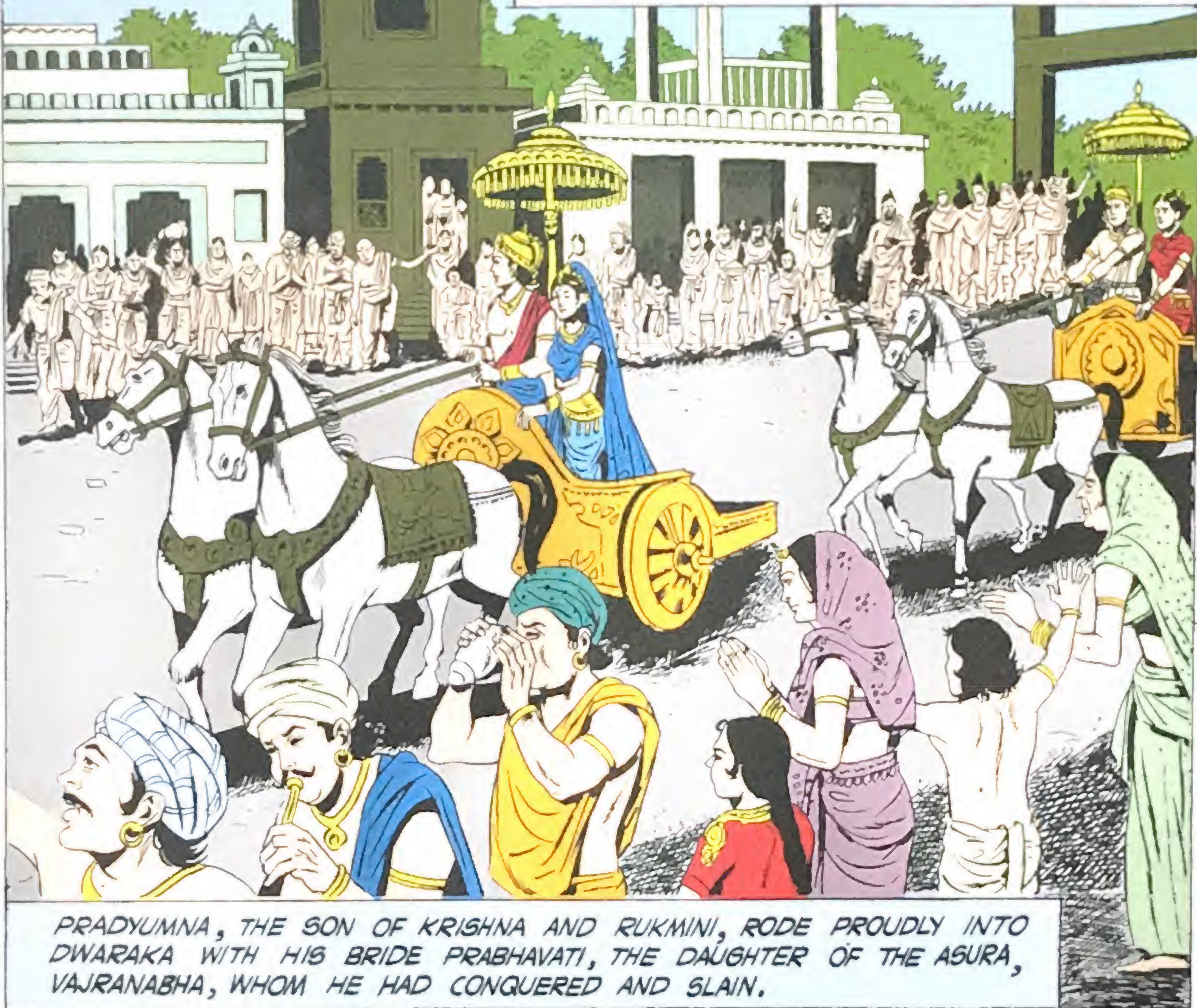
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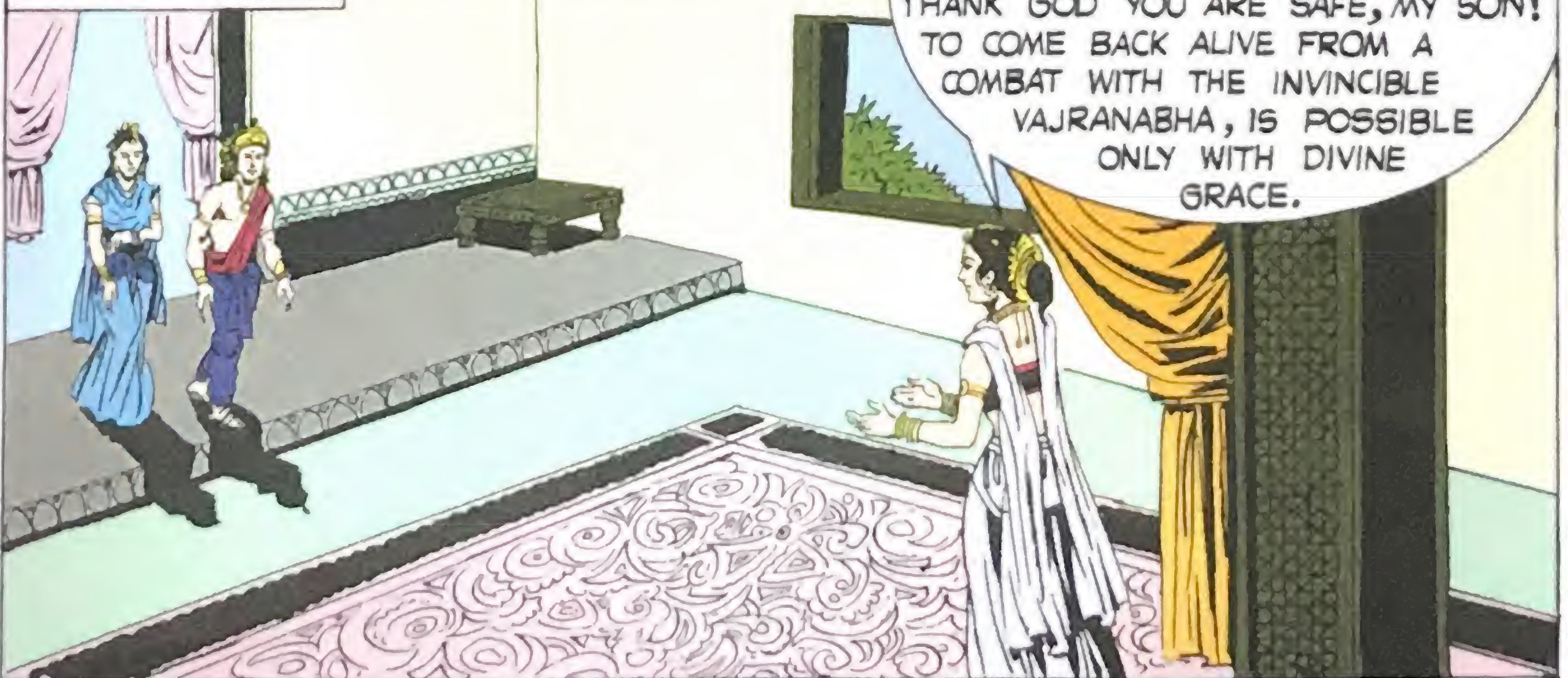


BHANUMATI



PRADYUMNA, THE SON OF KRISHNA AND RUKMINI, RODE PROUDLY INTO DWARAKA WITH HIS BRIDE PRABHAVATI, THE DAUGHTER OF THE ASURA, VAJRANABHA, WHOM HE HAD CONQUERED AND SLAIN.

TEARS OF JOY FILLED RUKMINI'S EYES AS SHE LOOKED ON HER SON LEADING PRABHAVATI IN.



THANK GOD YOU ARE SAFE, MY SON!
TO COME BACK ALIVE FROM A
COMBAT WITH THE INVINCIBLE
VAJRANABHA, IS POSSIBLE
ONLY WITH DIVINE
GRACE.



EARLY NEXT MORNING, KRISHNA SET OUT FOR RAIVATAKA ACCOMPANIED BY HIS OFFSPRING, KINSMEN AND RETINUE.



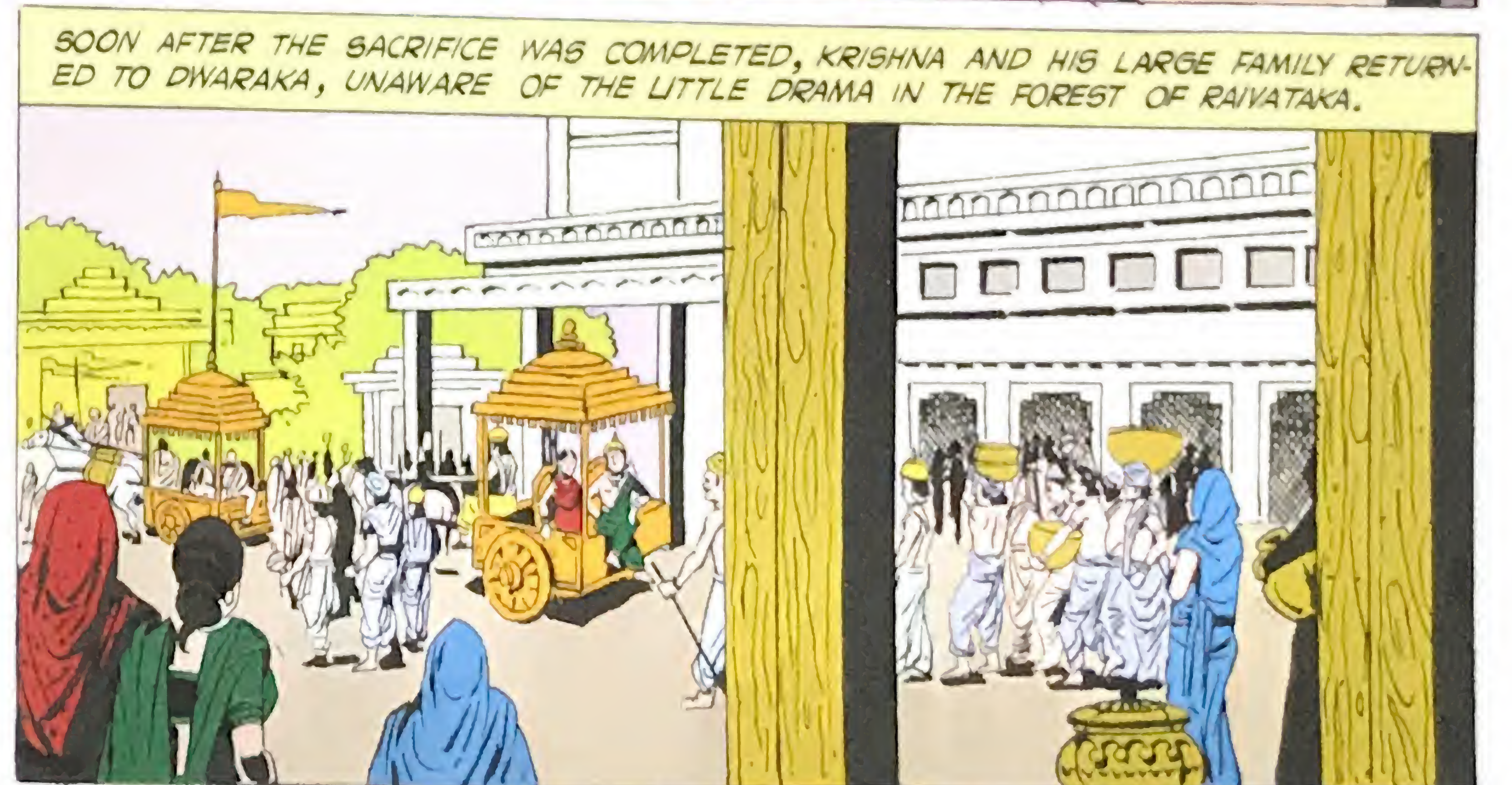
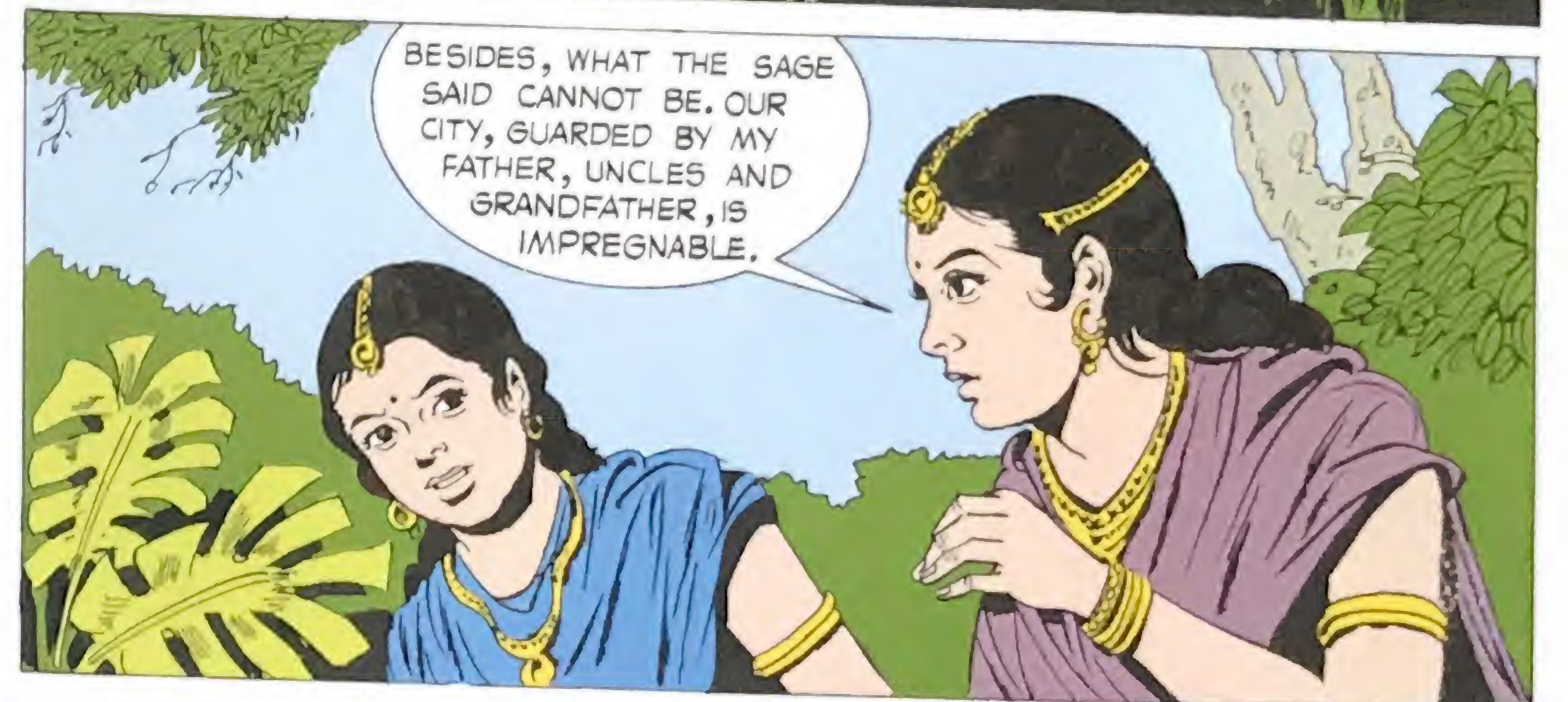
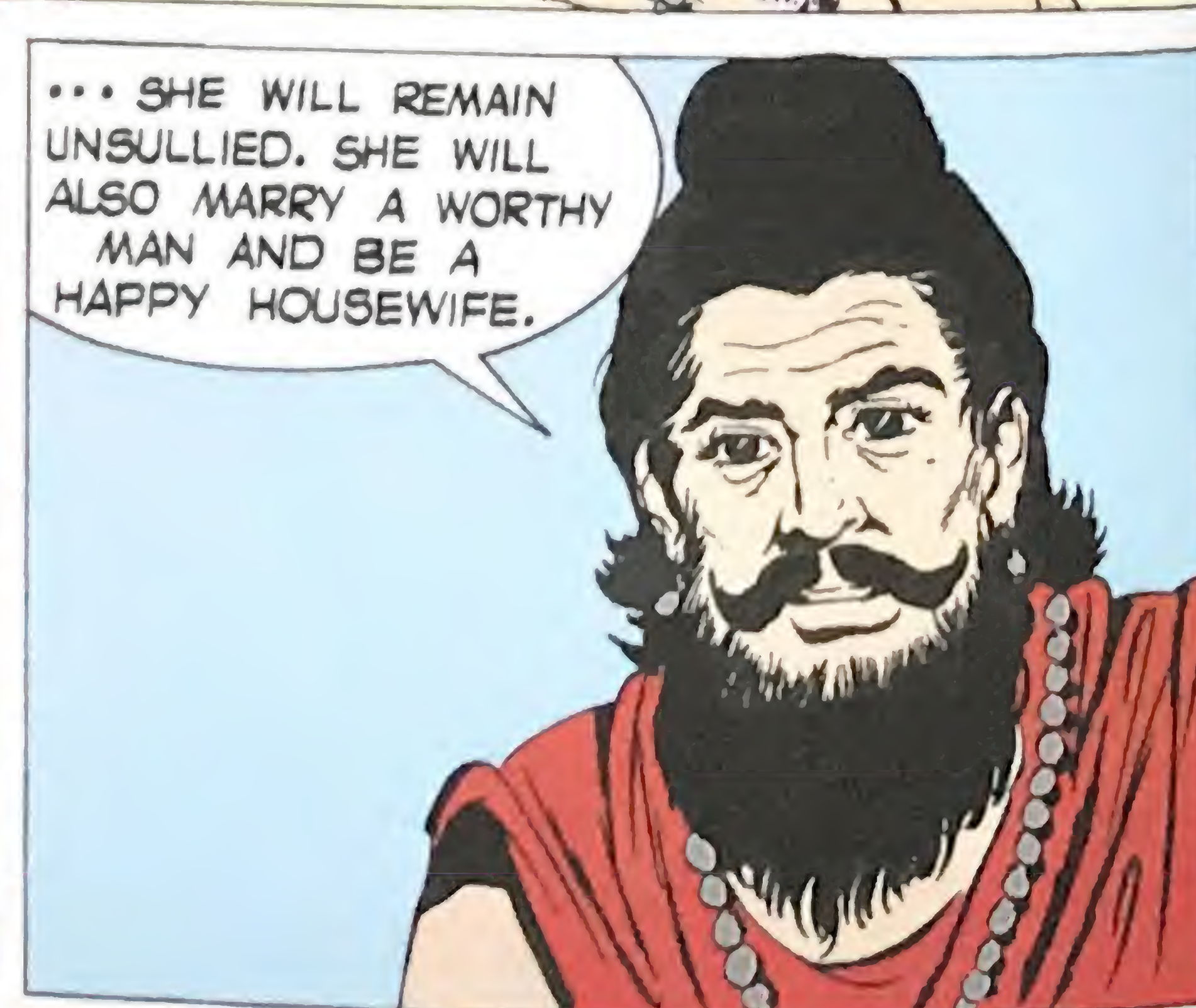
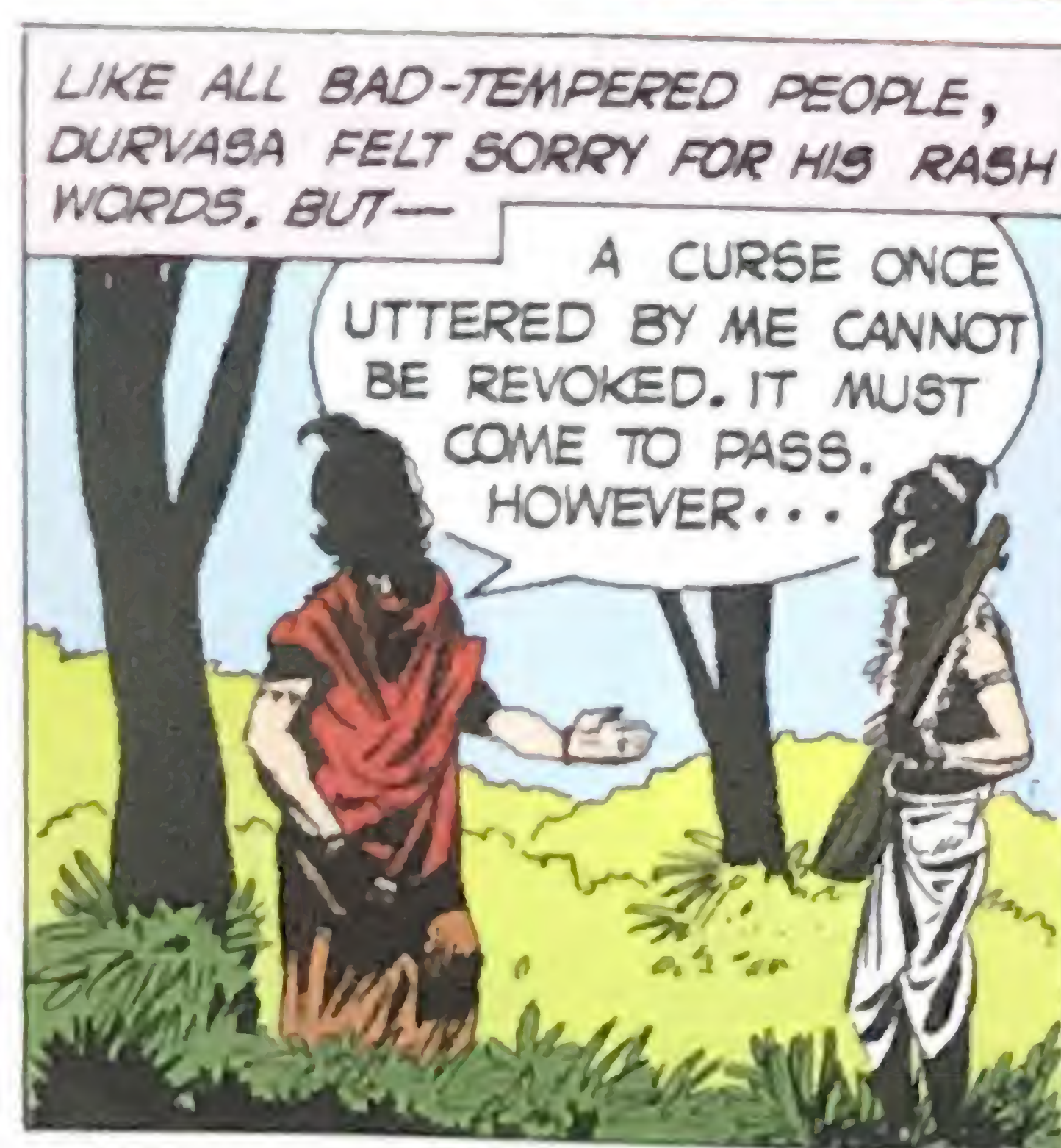
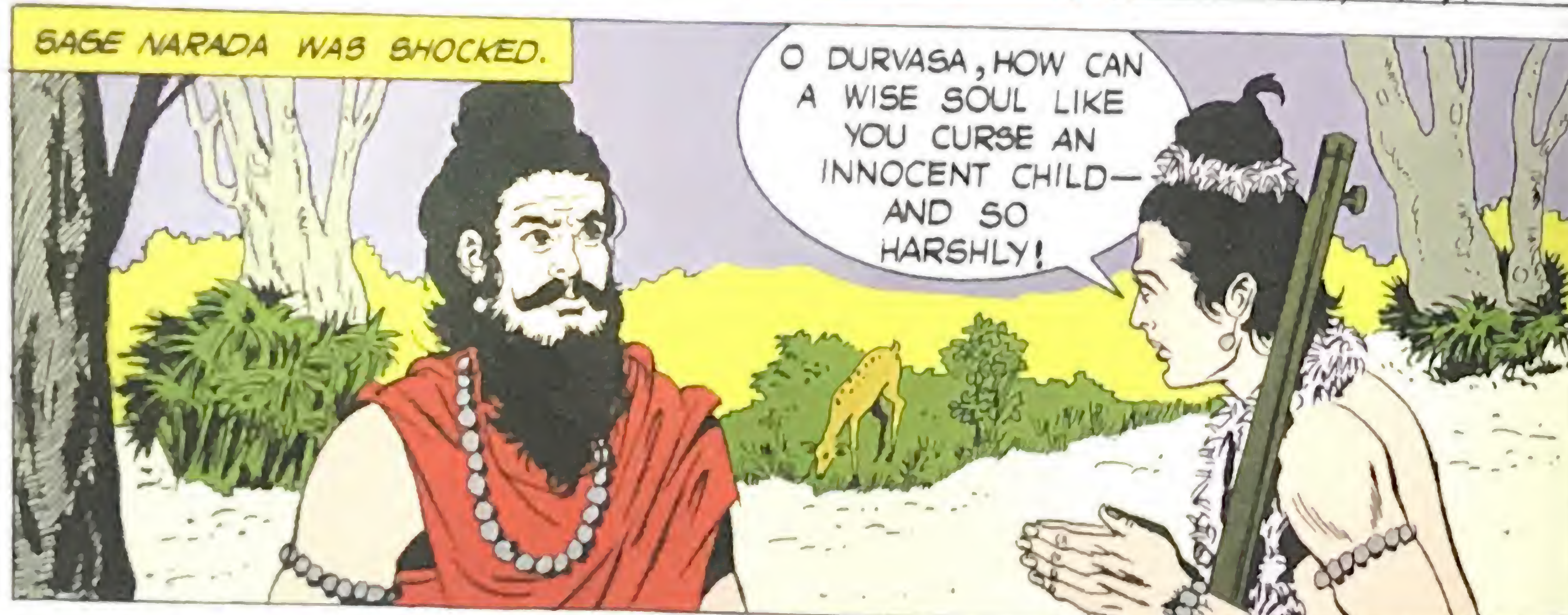
WHEN THEY REACHED RAIVATAKA, AS THE ELDERS GOT OUT OF THE CHARIOTS AND WALKED TOWARDS THE SACRIFICIAL ENCLOSURE —



AS SHE RAN BLINDLY INTO THE WOODS, BHANUMATI BUMPED INTO A SAGE.

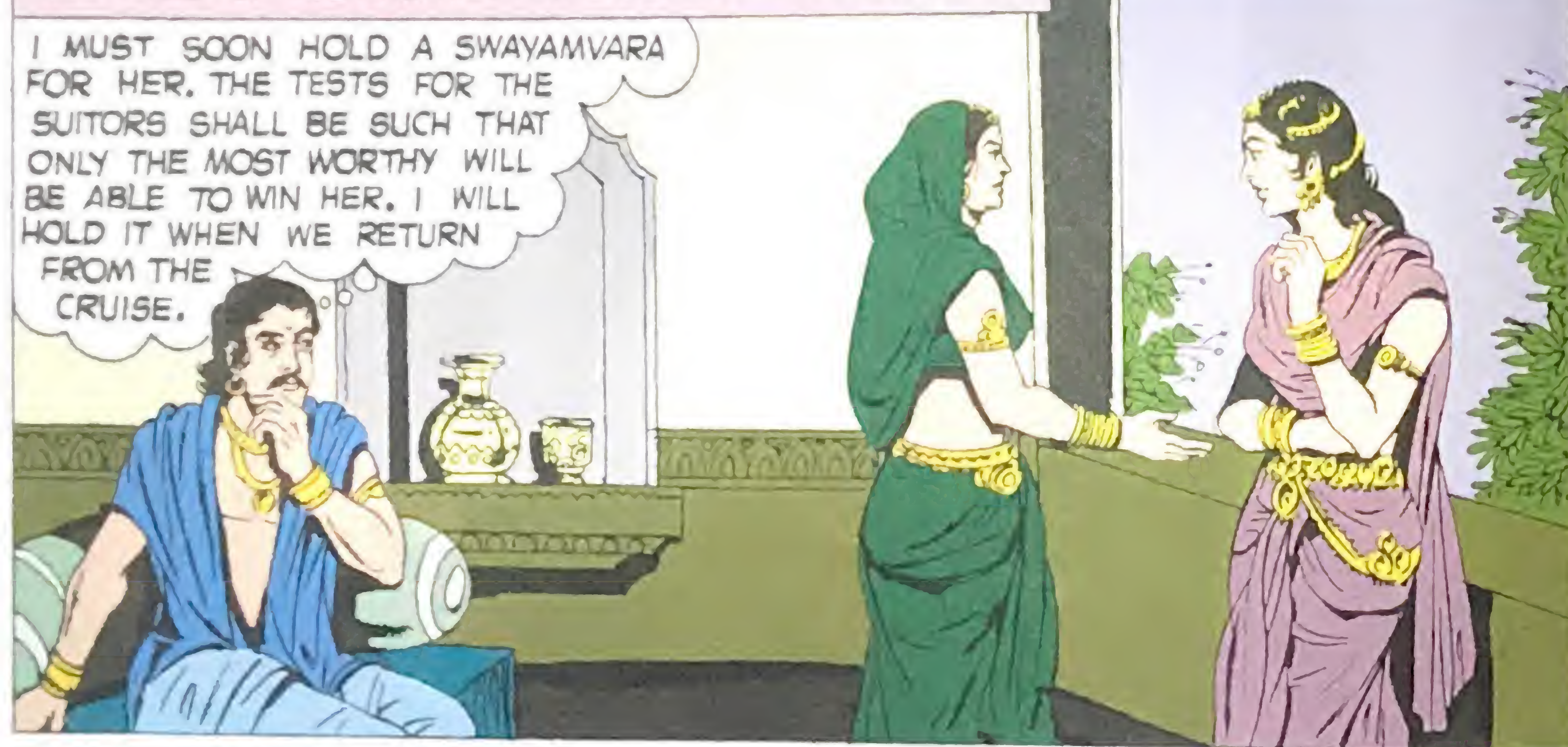


IT WAS THE IRRITABLE DURVASA, KNOWN FOR HIS BAD TEMPER.



THE YEARS WENT BY, BHANUMATI GREW UP TO BE A BEAUTIFUL MAIDEN DELIGHTING THE EYES OF ALL AND HER FATHER BHANU *IN PARTICULAR.

I MUST SOON HOLD A SWAYAMVARA FOR HER. THE TESTS FOR THE SUITORS SHALL BE SUCH THAT ONLY THE MOST WORTHY WILL BE ABLE TO WIN HER. I WILL HOLD IT WHEN WE RETURN FROM THE CRUISE.



MEANWHILE AT SHATPURA, VAJRANABHA'S BROTHER, NIKUMBHA, SAT BROODING.

SINCE THAT FATEFUL DAY WHEN I FLED FROM THE BATTLE OF VAJRA AND CAME HERE, I'VE ONLY ONE THOUGHT. I MUST DESTROY THE VAIN YADAVAS.



ALL THESE YEARS OF WAITING HAVE NOT SHOWN ME THE WAY TO AVENGE MY BROTHER'S DEATH.

LORD! LORD! I HAVE GOOD NEWS FOR YOU! DWARAKA IS VIRTUALLY UNGUARDED.

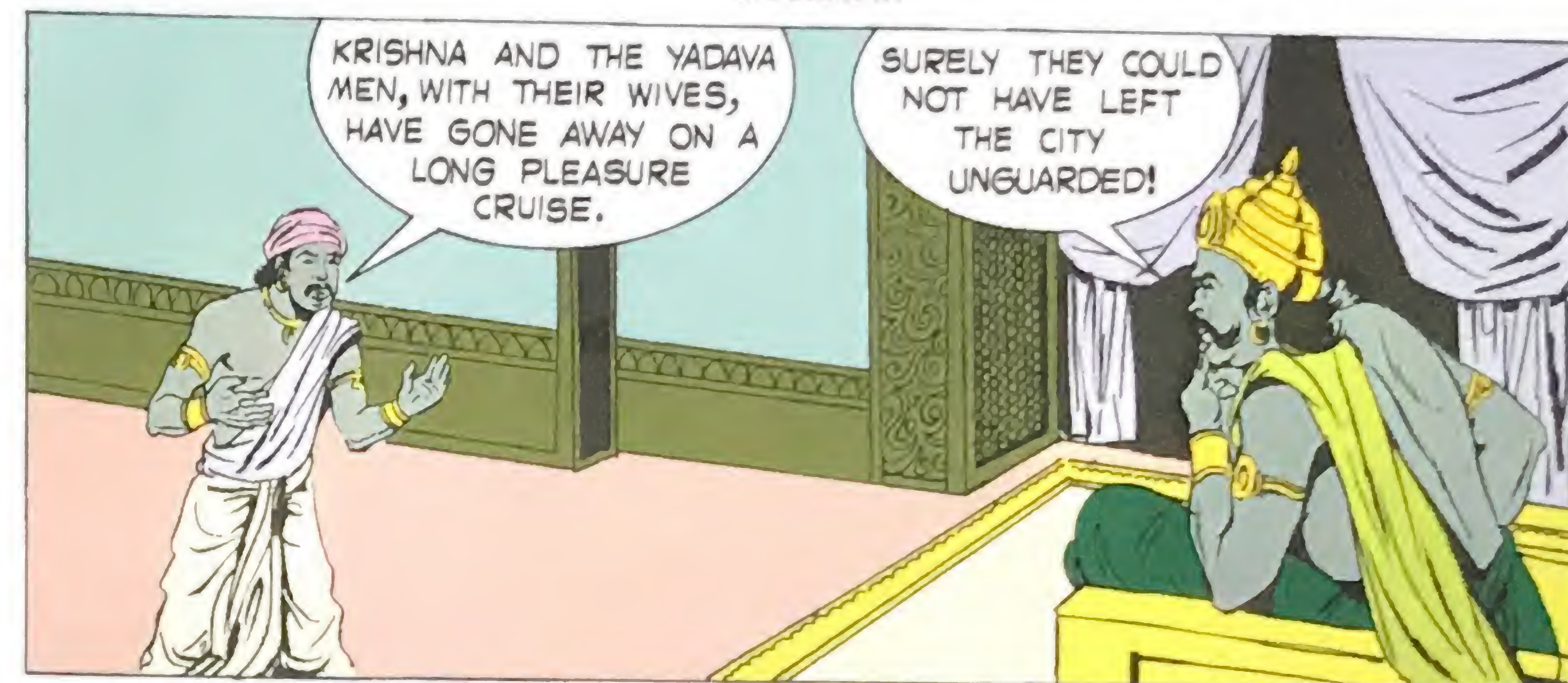
IT WAS ONE OF NIKUMBHA'S SPIES.



* SON OF KRISHNA AND SATYABHAMA

KRISHNA AND THE YADAVA MEN, WITH THEIR WIVES, HAVE GONE AWAY ON A LONG PLEASURE CRUISE.

SURELY THEY COULD NOT HAVE LEFT THE CITY UNGUARDED!



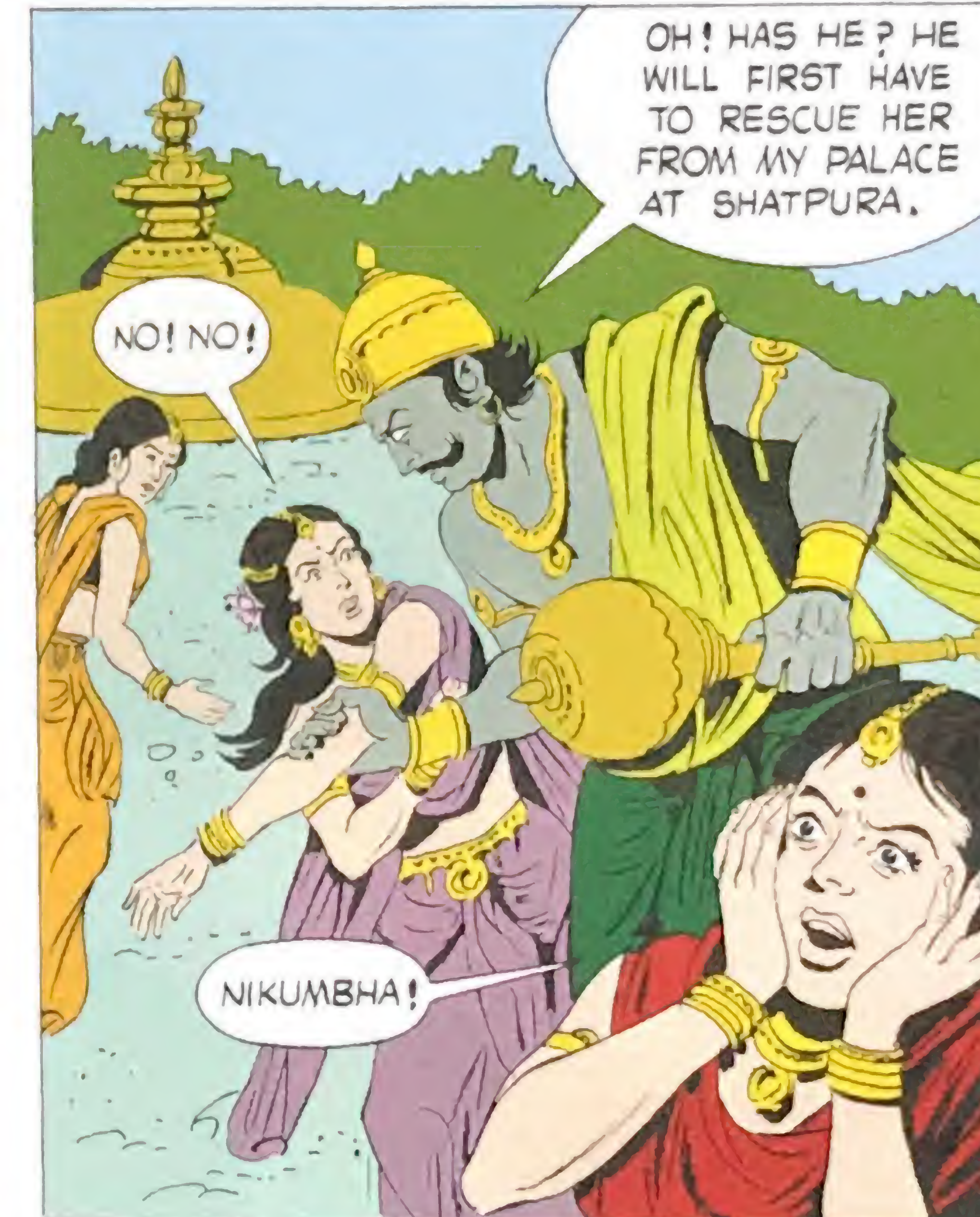
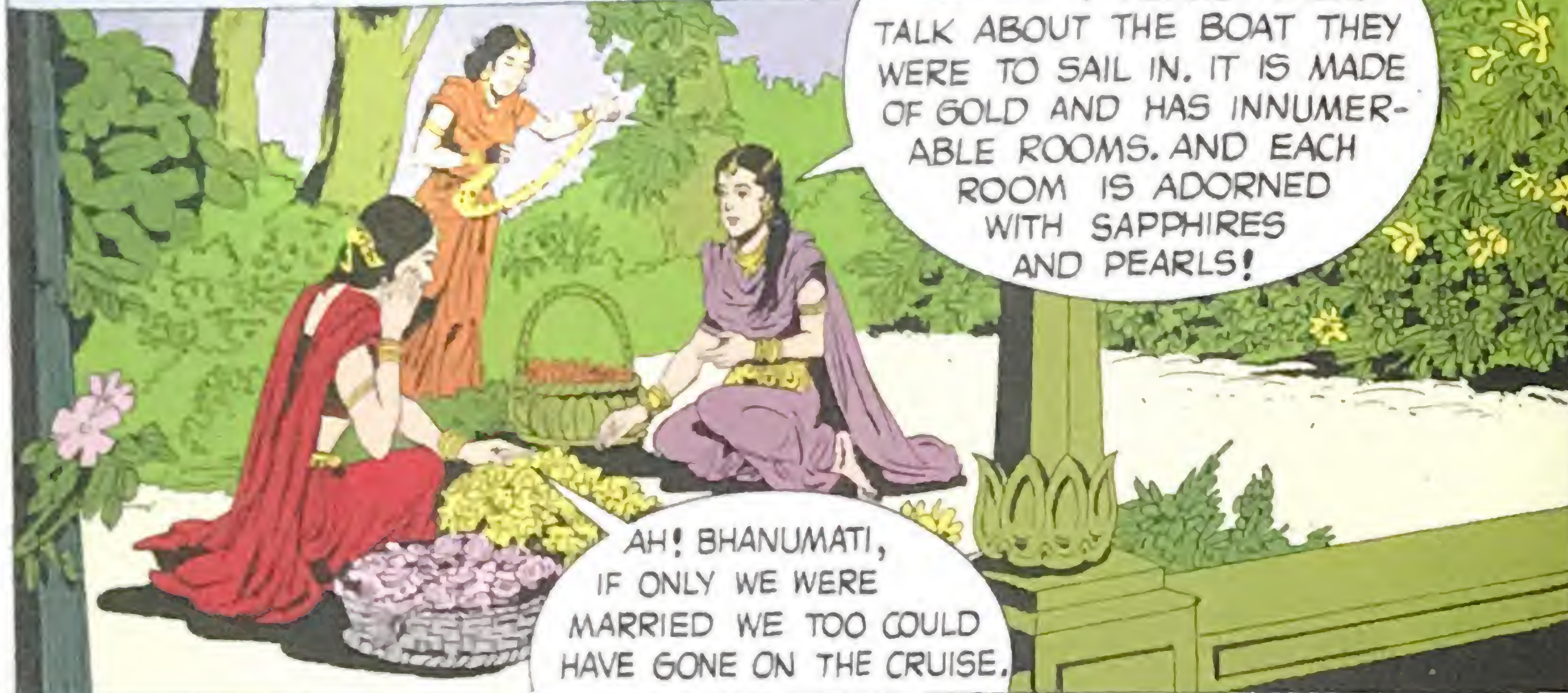
WELL! THE AGED UGRASENA AND VASUDEVA HAVE STAYED BEHIND. AND, OF COURSE, THE YOUNG MAIDENS OF THE FAMILY ARE THERE; WITH THE OLD MAIDS TO WATCH OVER THEM.

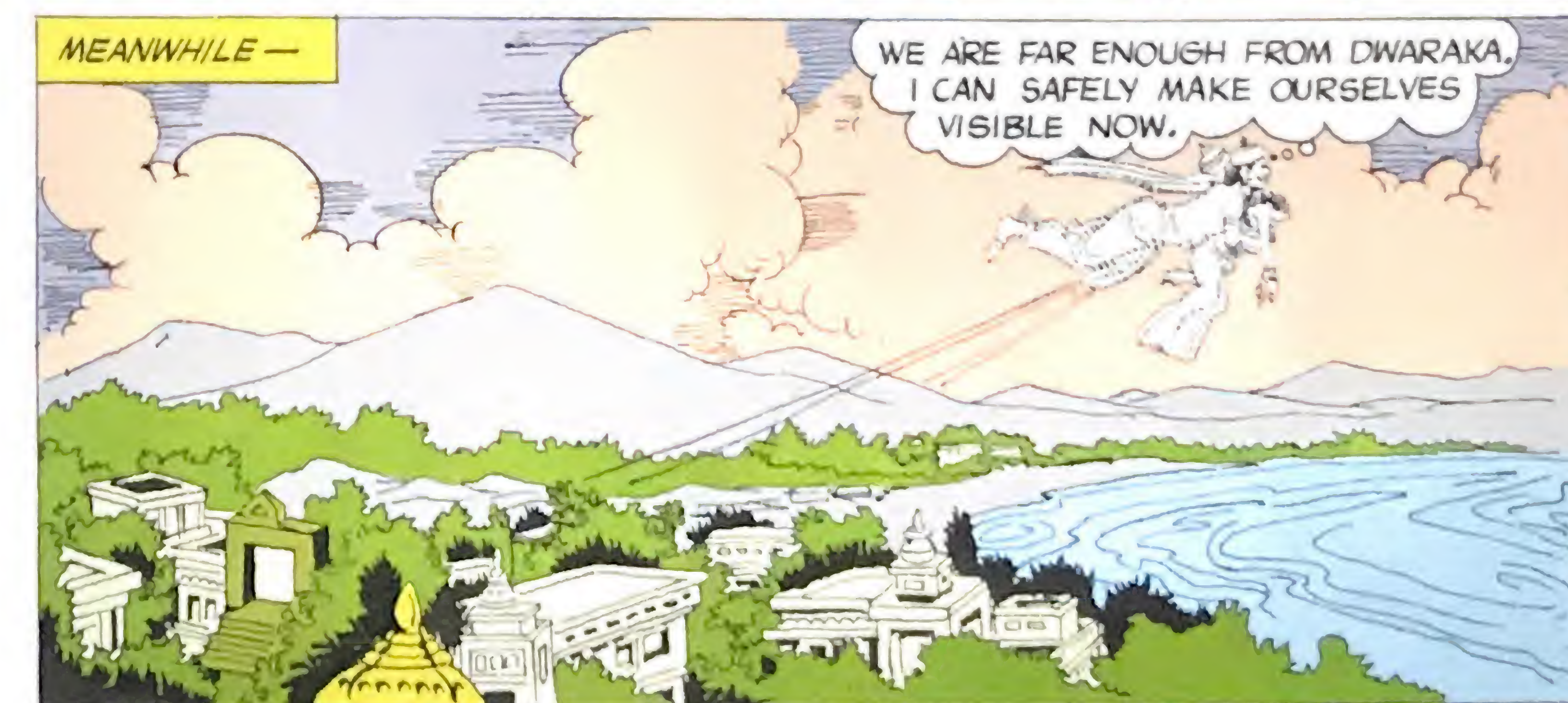
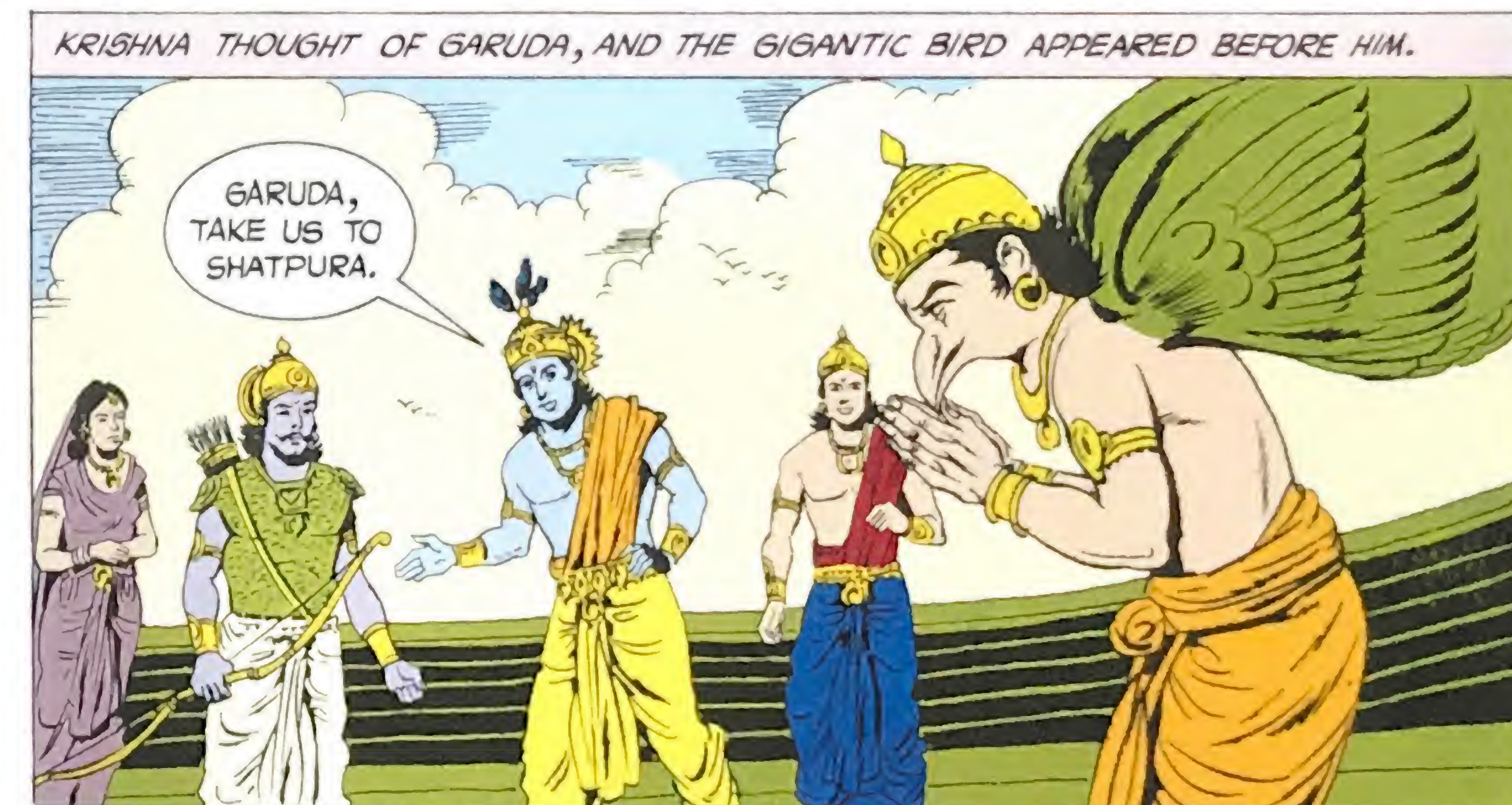
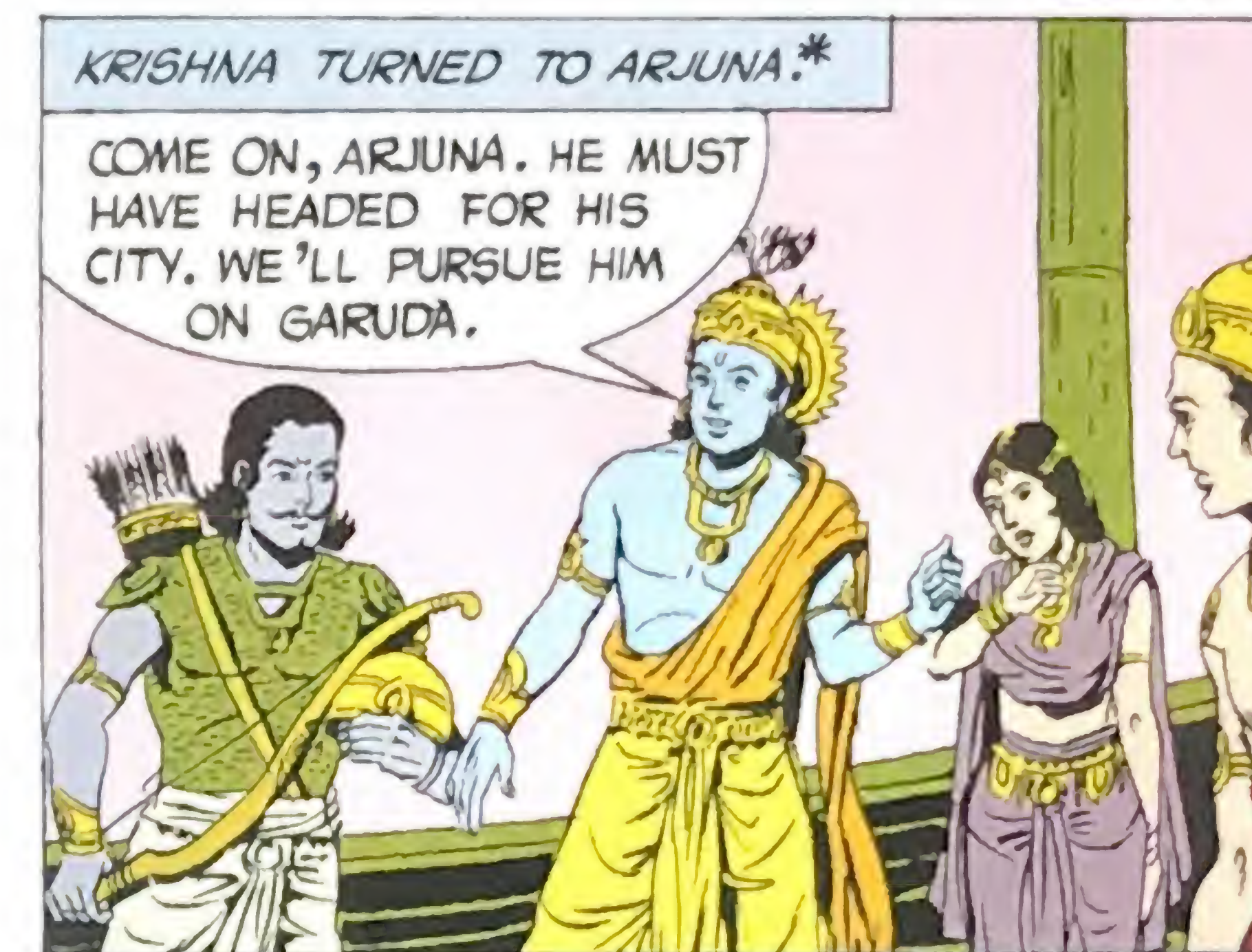


WITHOUT WASTING A MOMENT, NIKUMBHA LEFT FOR DWARAKA.



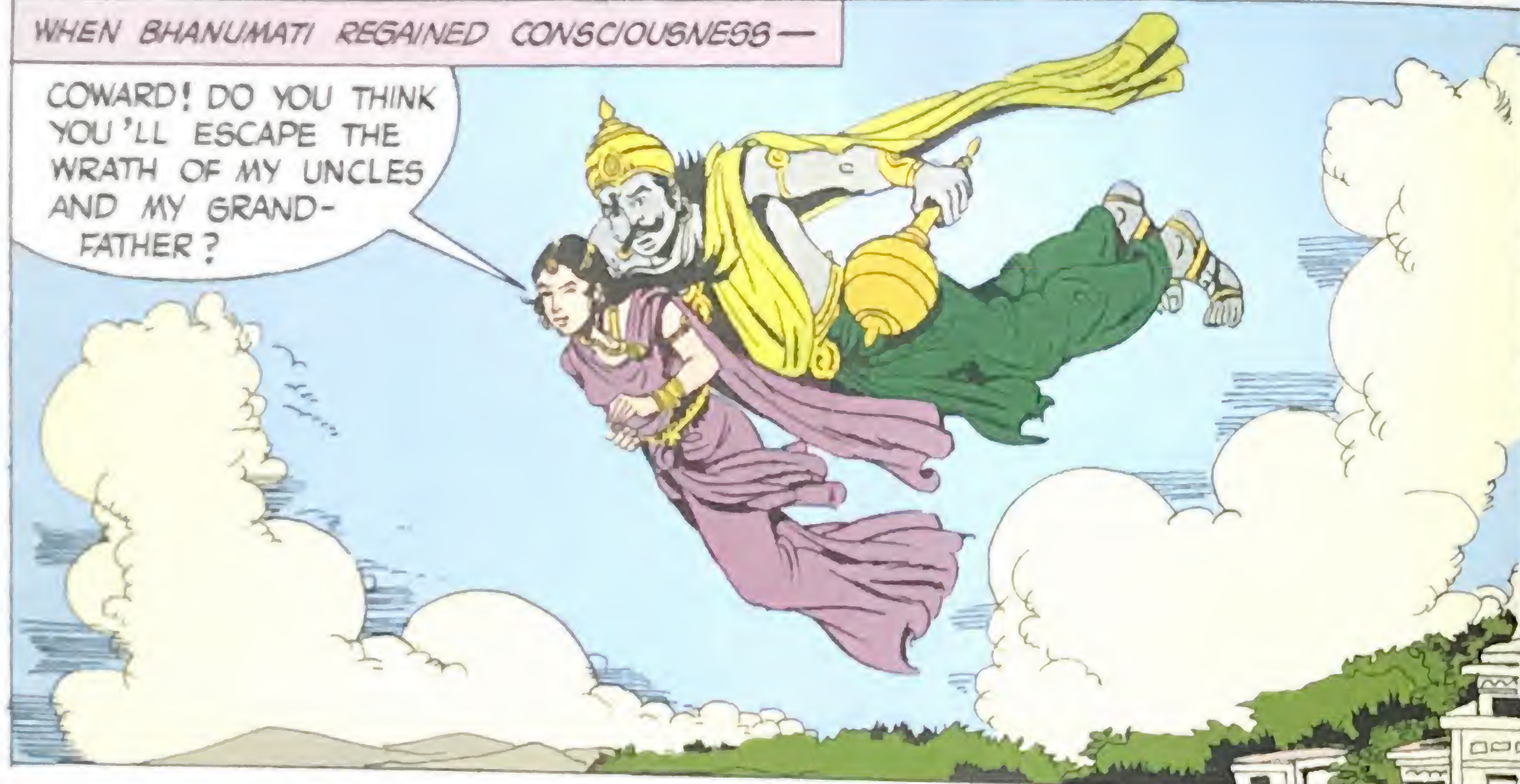
AT DWARAKA, BHANUMATI AND HER COMPANIONS WERE OUT IN THE GARDENS OF THE SECLUDED INNER APPARTMENTS OF KRISHNA'S PALACE.





WHEN BHANUMATI REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS—

COWARD! DO YOU THINK YOU'LL ESCAPE THE WRATH OF MY UNCLES AND MY GRAND-FATHER?

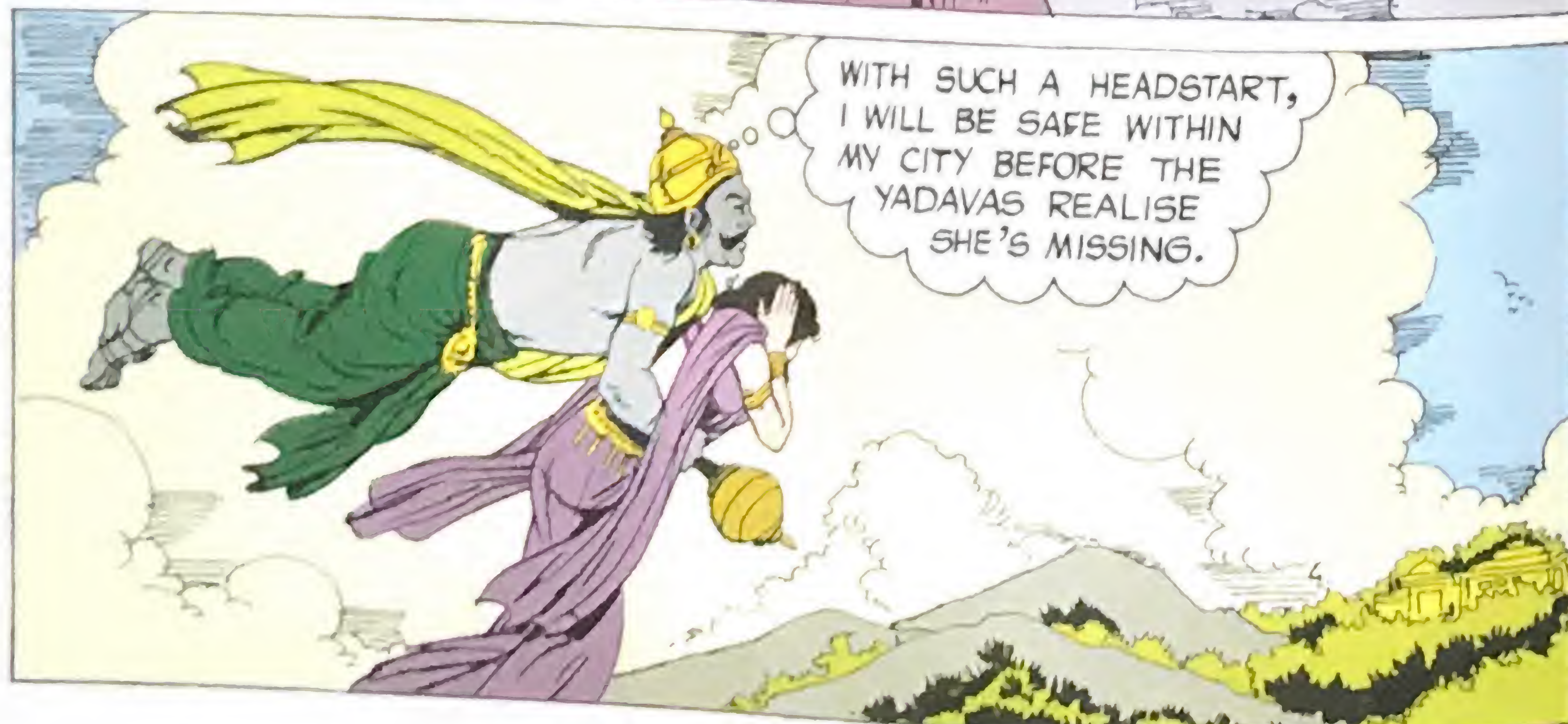


TAKE ME BACK, AND I'LL ASK THEM TO SPARE YOUR LIFE.

ONCE WE REACH SHAT-PURA, IT IS THEIR LIVES THAT YOU WILL HAVE TO BEG FOR.



WITH SUCH A HEADSTART, I WILL BE SAFE WITHIN MY CITY BEFORE THE YADAVAS REALISE SHE'S MISSING.



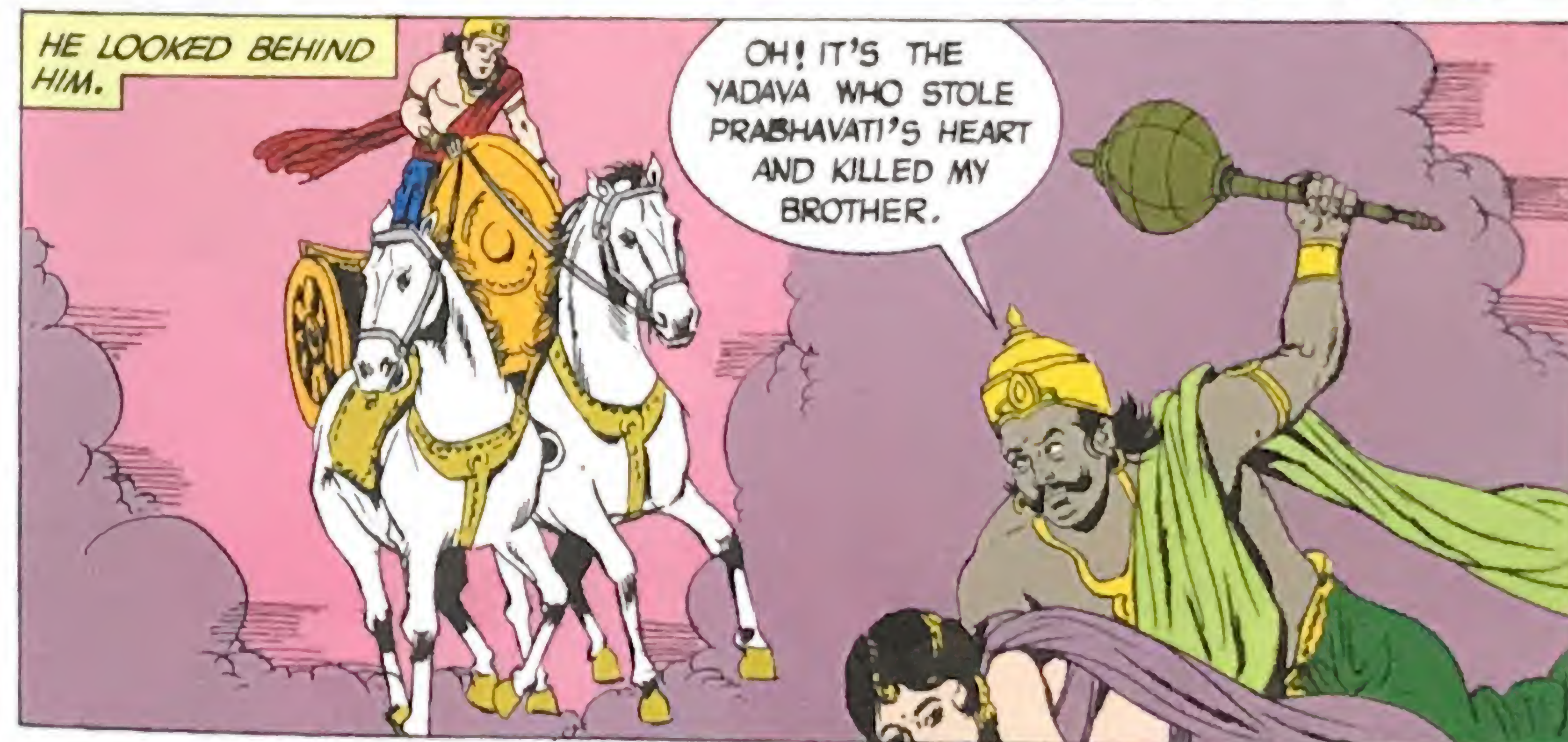
AS NIKUMBHA PROCEEDED COMPLACENTLY, A GREAT SHADOW COVERED HIM.



IT'S GARUDA! KRISHNA HAS CAUGHT UP WITH ME!

HE LOOKED BEHIND HIM.

OH! IT'S THE YADAVA WHO STOLE PRABHAVATI'S HEART AND KILLED MY BROTHER.



NIKUMBHA HAD TO THINK FAST.

I'LL USE HER AS A SHIELD AND DEFEND MYSELF.



TERRIFIED, BHANUMATI FAINTED. KRISHNA, ARJUNA AND PRADYUMNA DARED NOT STRIKE NIKUMBHA WITH THEIR MACES.



AND ARJUNA SHOT HIS ARROWS WITH UNERRING PRECISION.

A-A-AH! THE PANDAVA IS NOT KNOWN TO BE THE BEST ARCHER OF ALL TIMES FOR NOTHING. I WILL NOT BE ABLE TO DEFEND MYSELF AND KEEP MY HOLD ON THE GIRL.



SO NIKUMBHA SUDDENLY VANISHED WITH BHANUMATI.

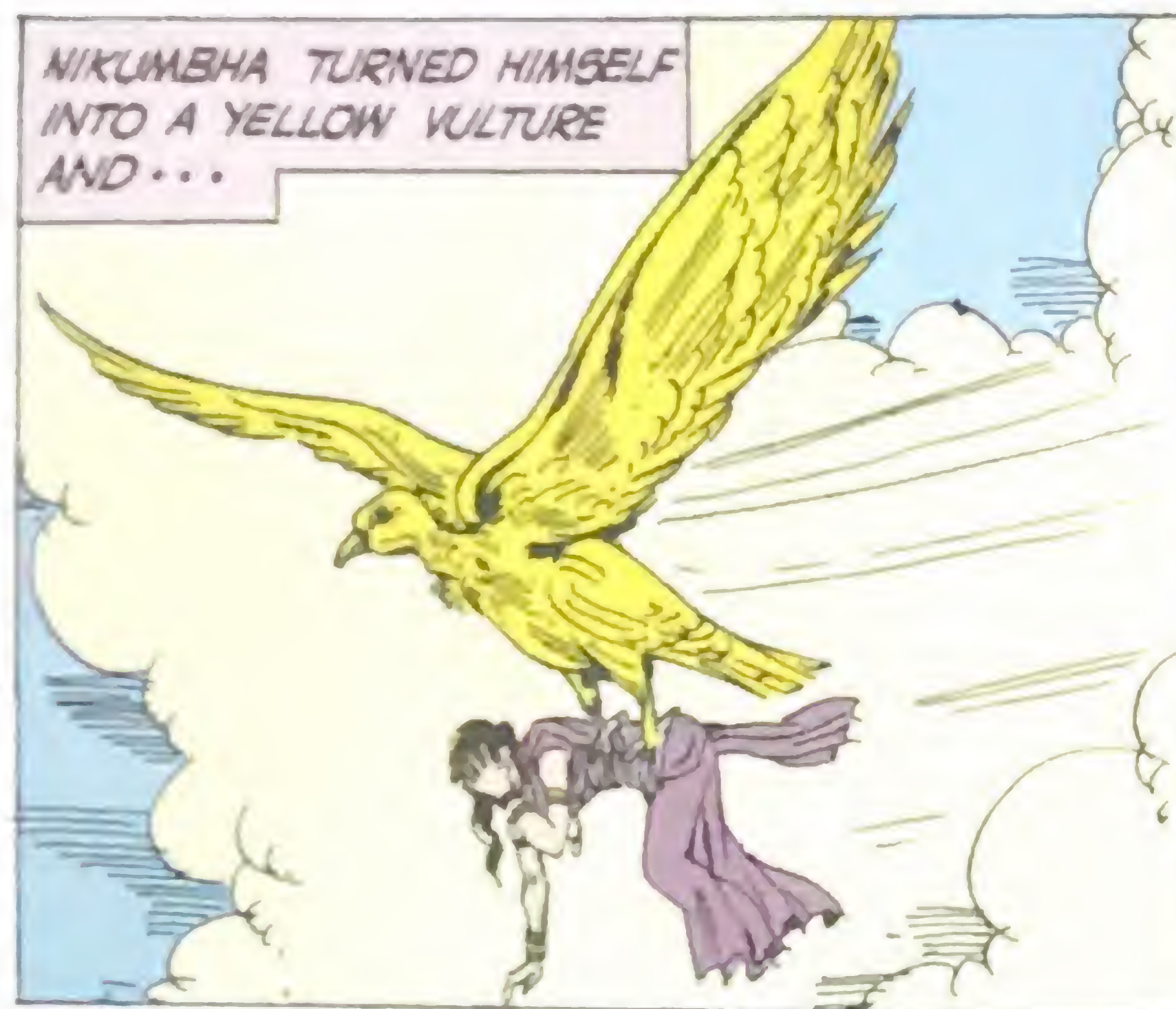


BUT NIKUMBHA HAD NOT RECKONED WITH PRADYUMNA.



WHEN THEY WERE CLOSE UPON NIKUMBHA—





NIKUMBHA TURNED HIMSELF INTO A YELLOW VULTURE AND...

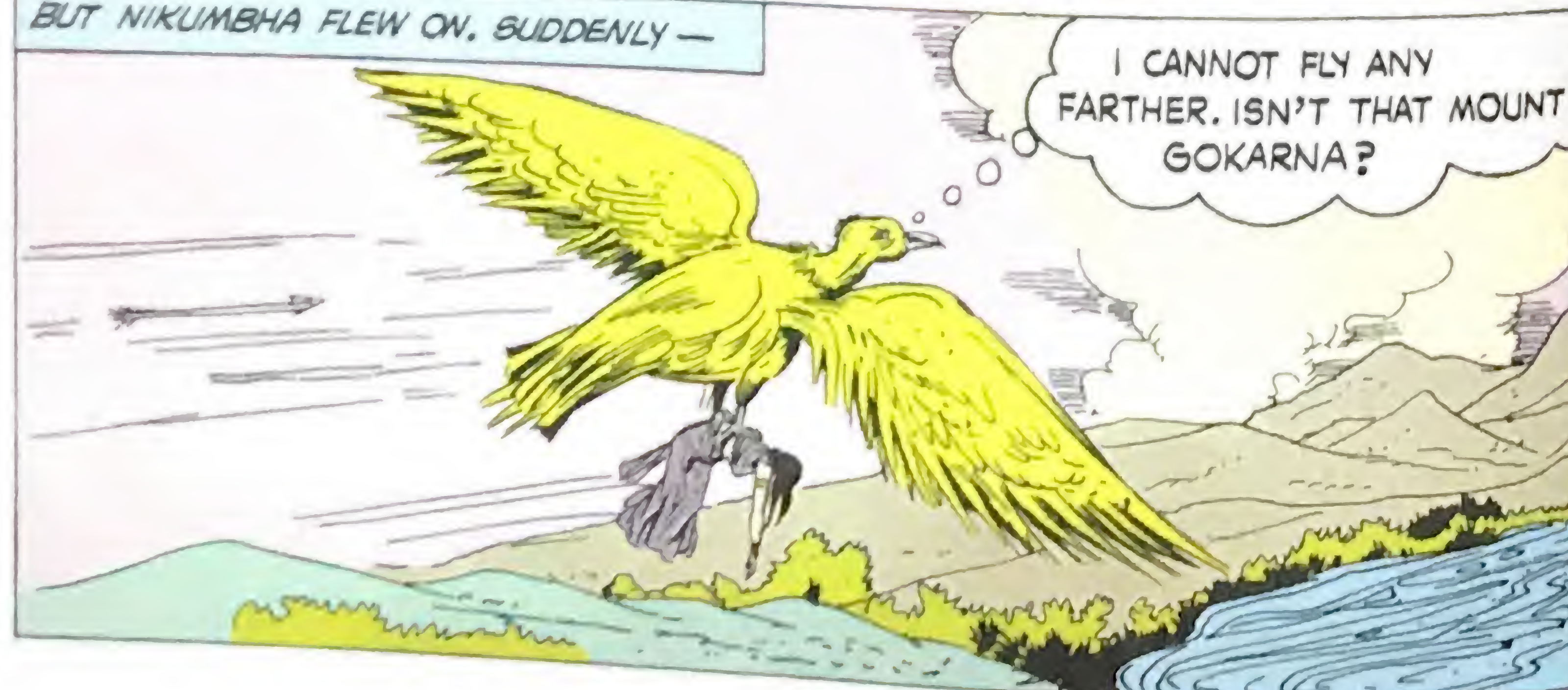


... HOLDING BHANUMATI IN HIS TALONS, FLEW ON.

ARJUNA KEPT SHOOTING ARROWS AT HIM, PIERCING HIS VERY VITALS.



BUT NIKUMBHA FLEW ON. SUDDENLY —



I CANNOT FLY ANY FARTHER. ISN'T THAT MOUNT GOKARNA?

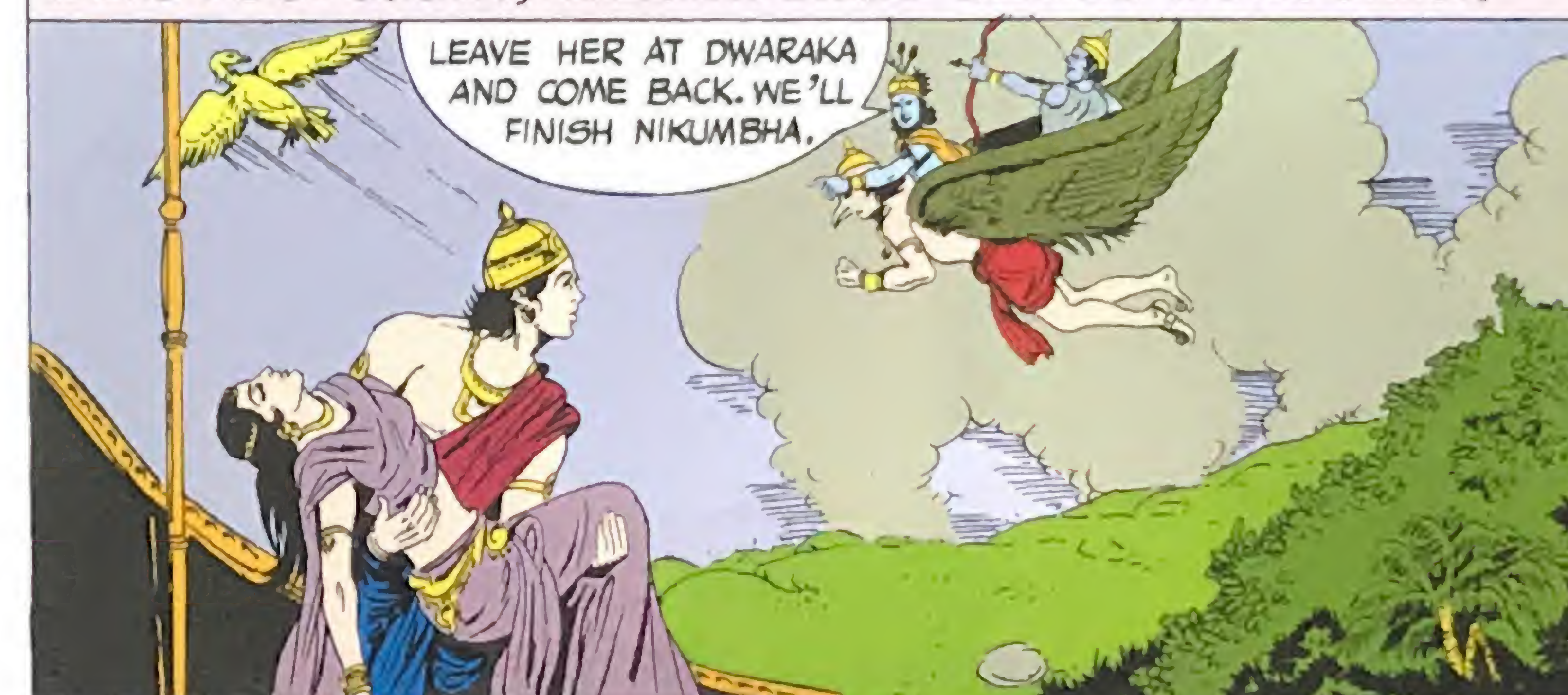


TAKING A SUDDEN DIP...



... HE DROPPED DOWN EXHAUSTED.

SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITY, PRADYUMNA CARRIED BHANUMATI INTO HIS CHARIOT.



LEAVE HER AT DWARAKA AND COME BACK. WE'LL FINISH NIKUMBHA.

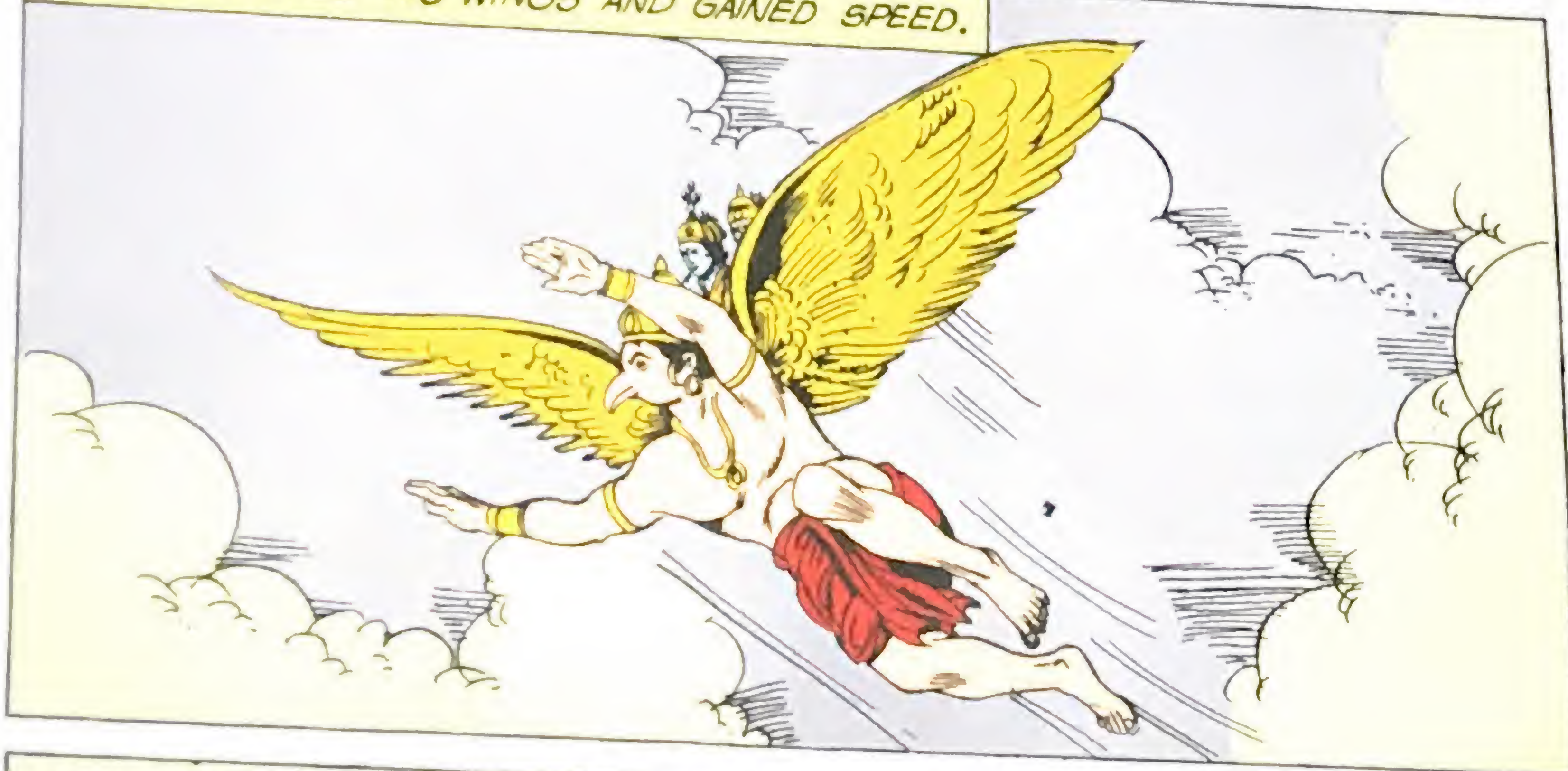
AS KRISHNA AND ARJUNA ASSAILED HIM, NIKUMBHA LEFT THE NORTHERN RANGE OF GOKARNA...



... AND FLEW TOWARDS SHATPURA.



GARUDA FLAPPED HIS WINGS AND GAINED SPEED.



BUT WHEN THEY WERE ALMOST UPON HIM, NIKUMBHA ENTERED THE CAVE ...



... AND WITH HIS LAST OUNCE OF
STRENGTH BLOCKED THE INNER ENTRANCE.



ALAS! HE'S
GONE. WHAT
SHALL WE DO?



EARLY NEXT MORNING, PRADYUMNA RETURNED FROM DWARAKA.



PRADYUMNA RAISED HIS VOICE AND BEGAN TO TAUNT NIKUMBHA.

THE ASURAS ARE A VALOROUS PEOPLE INDEED! WHEN ASSAILED, THEY HIDE BEHIND WOMEN OR THE GATES OF THEIR CITY.



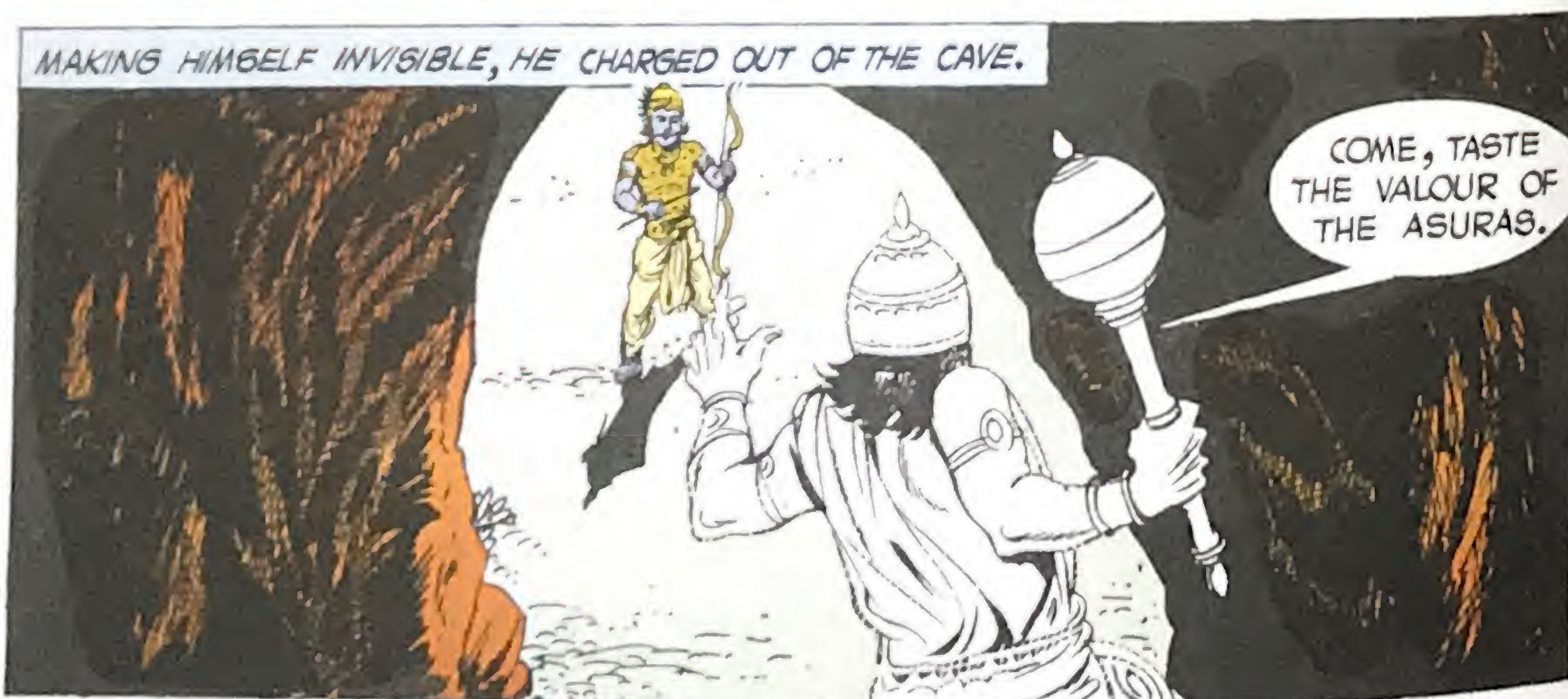
THE TAUNT WENT HOME. NIKUMBHA SEETHED WITH FURY.

THE YADAVAS MUST BE TAUGHT A LESSON. I'LL GO OUT AND FINISH THEM.

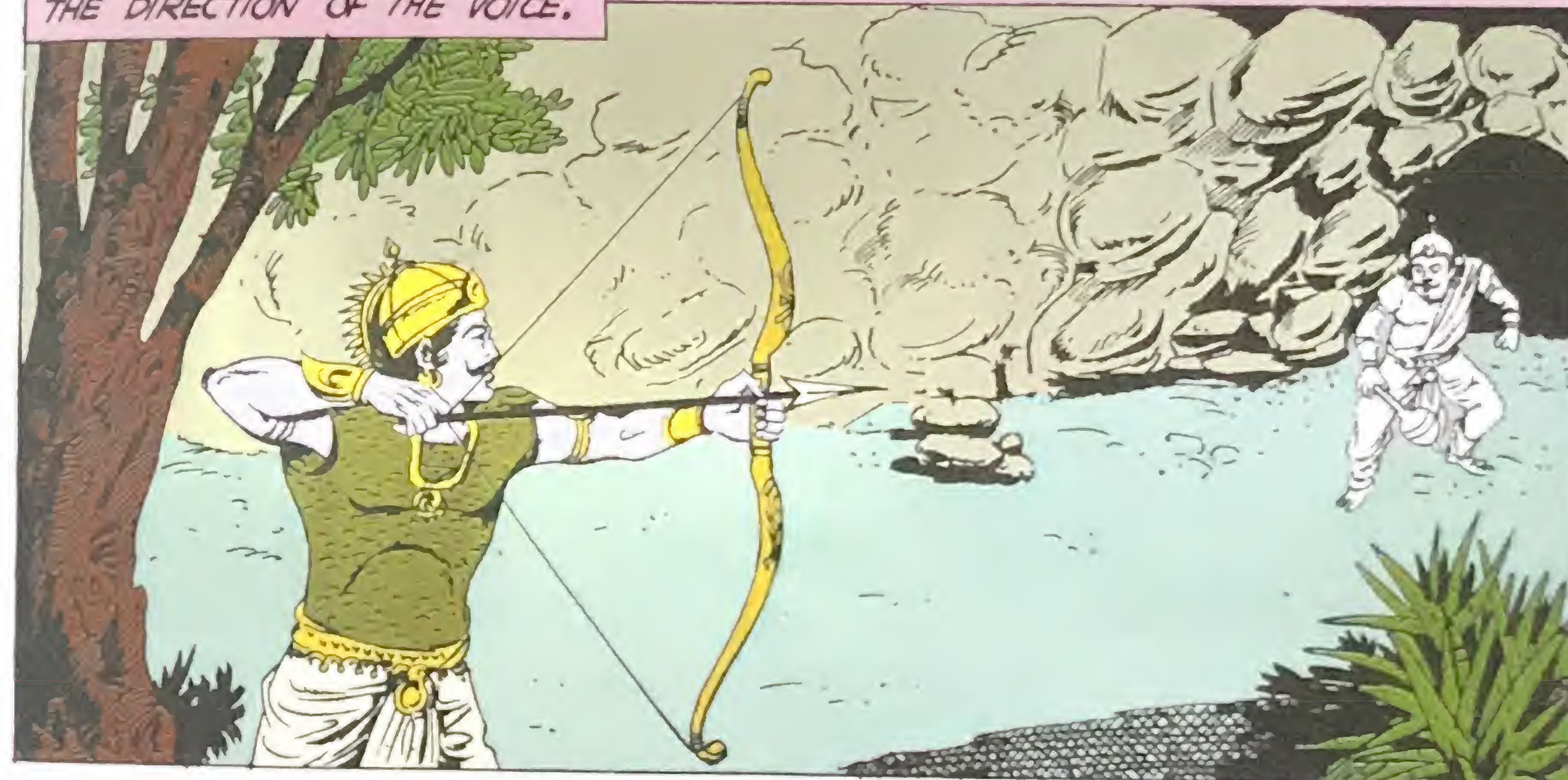


MAKING HIMSELF INVISIBLE, HE CHARGED OUT OF THE CAVE.

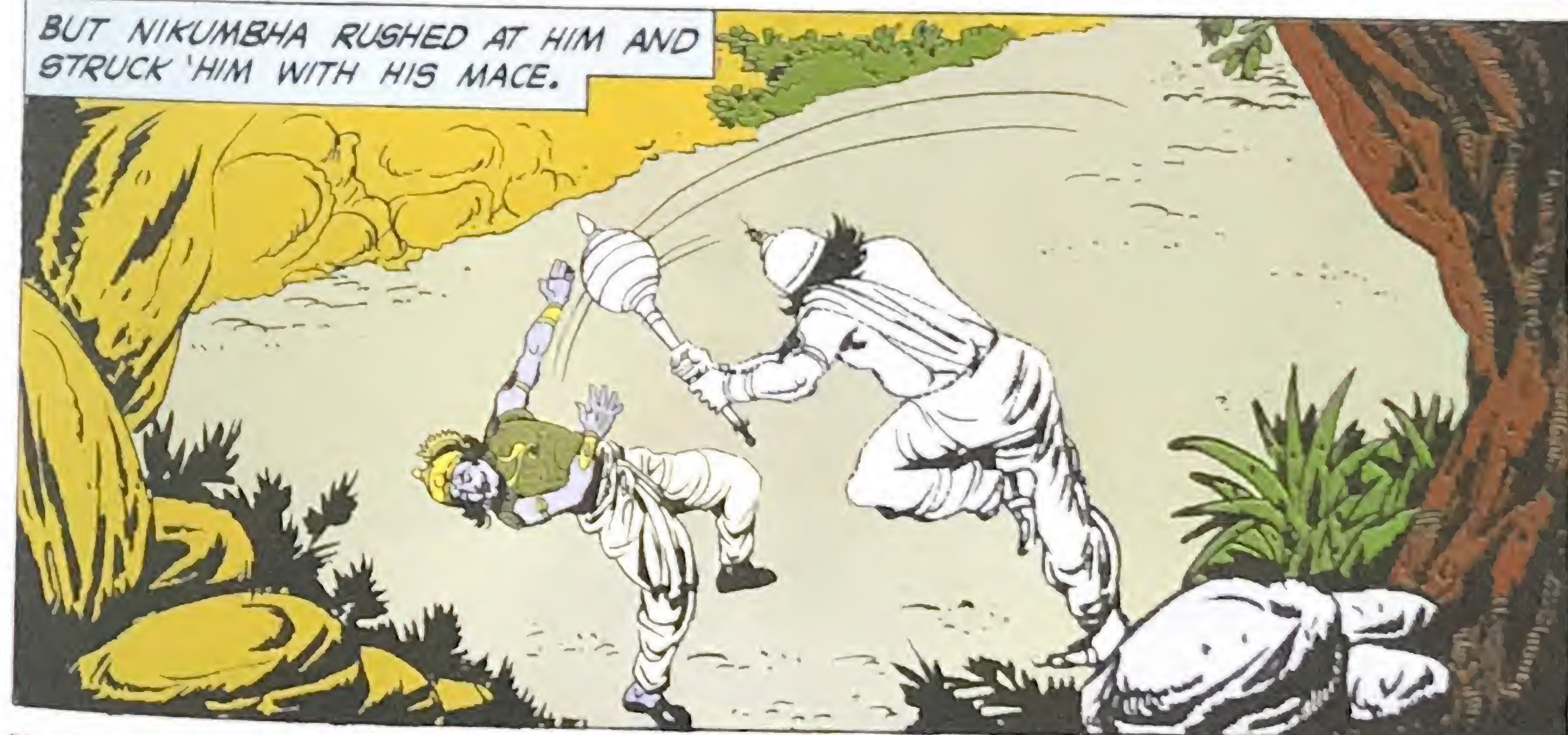
COME, TASTE THE VALOUR OF THE ASURAS.



IMPATIENT TO WREAK VENGEANCE ON THE EVIL ASURA, ARJUNA RAINED ARROWS IN THE DIRECTION OF THE VOICE.



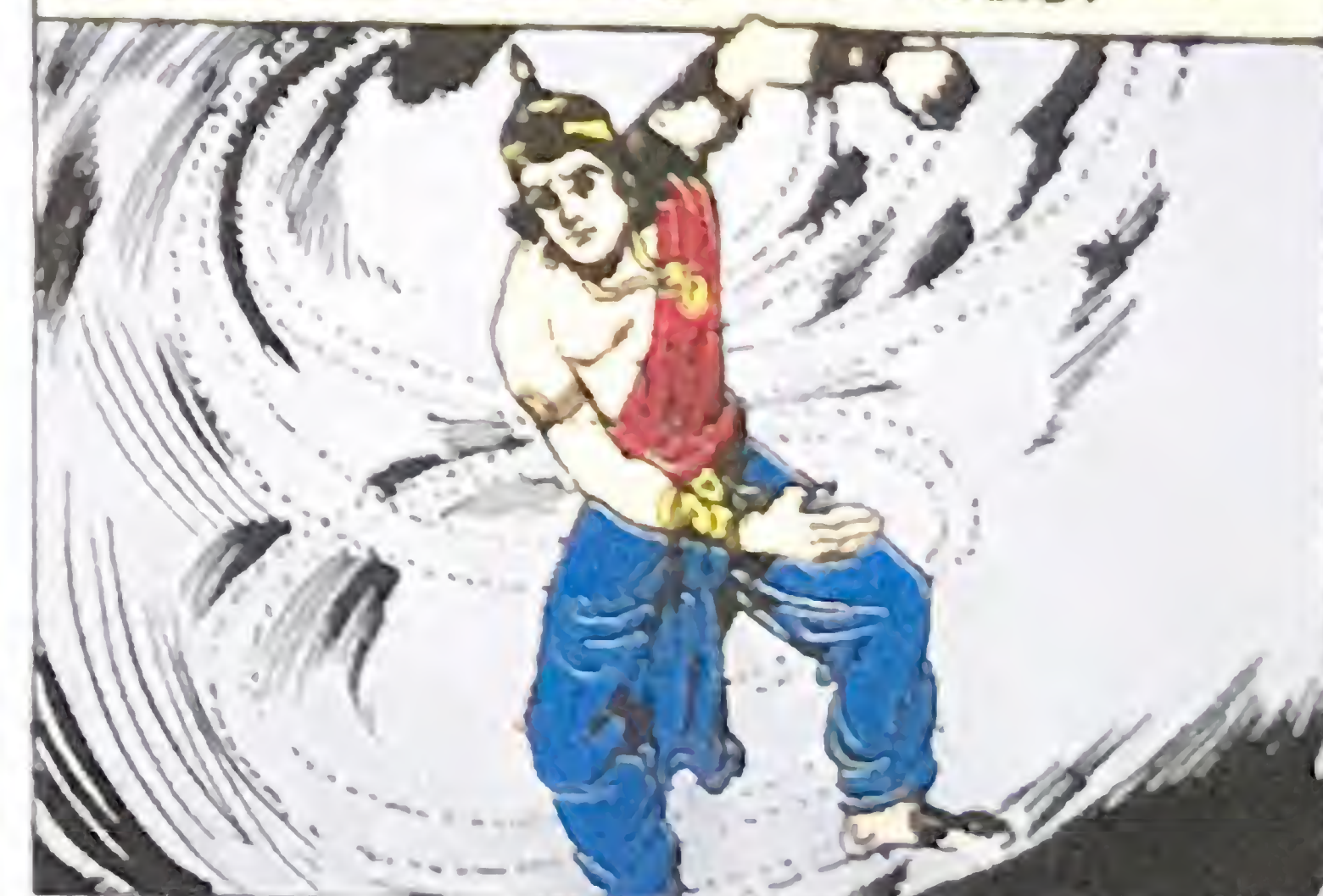
BUT NIKUMBHA RUSHED AT HIM AND STRUCK HIM WITH HIS MACE.



ARJUNA FELL UNCONSCIOUS.



PRADYUMNA USED HIS SUPERNATURAL POWERS TO EXPOSE THE ASURA...



... AND ATTACKED HIM.



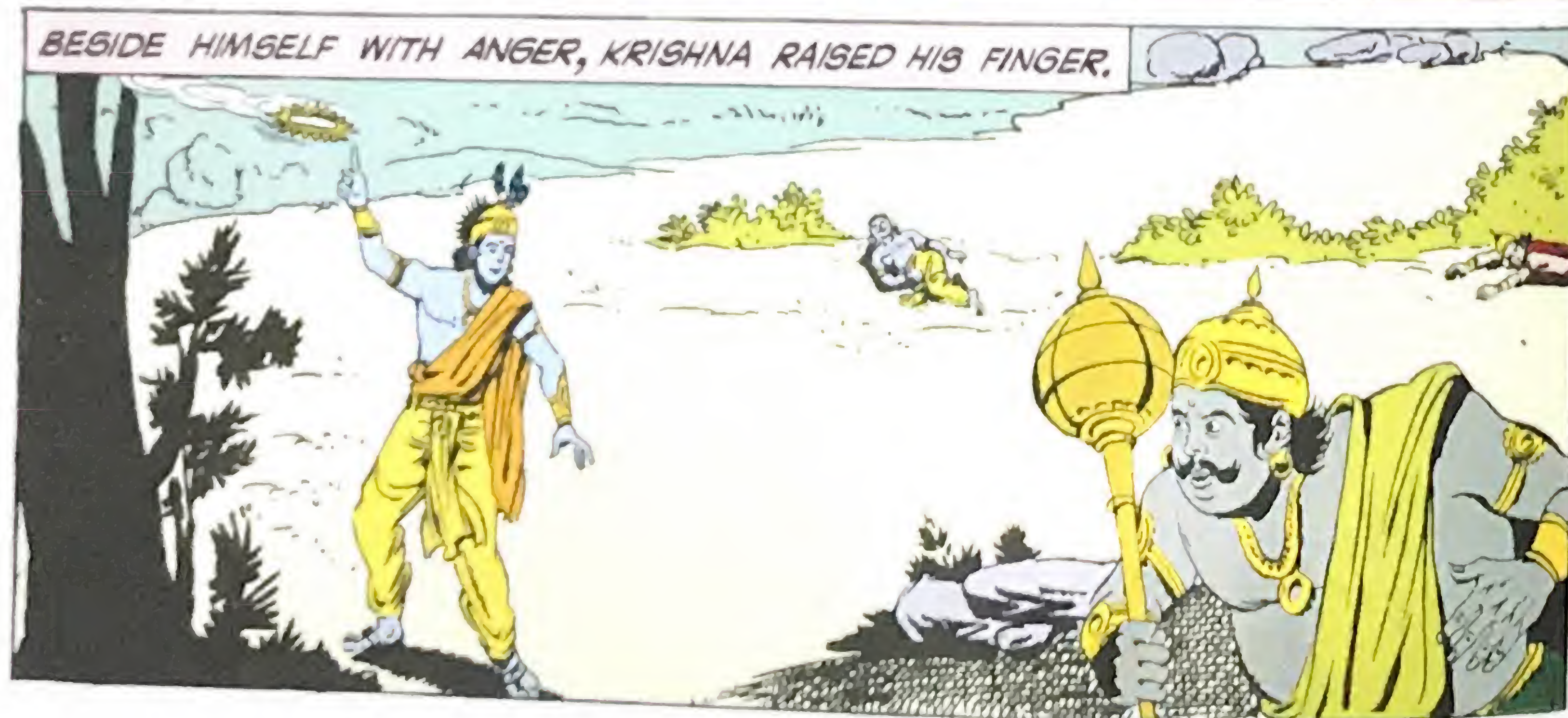
BUT HE TOO WAS HIT...



... AND FELL.



BESIDE HIMSELF WITH ANGER, KRISHNA RAISED HIS FINGER.



WHEN NIKUMBHA SAW THE DEADLY DISCUS FLYING TOWARDS HIM...



... HE LEFT HIS BODY AND FLED.



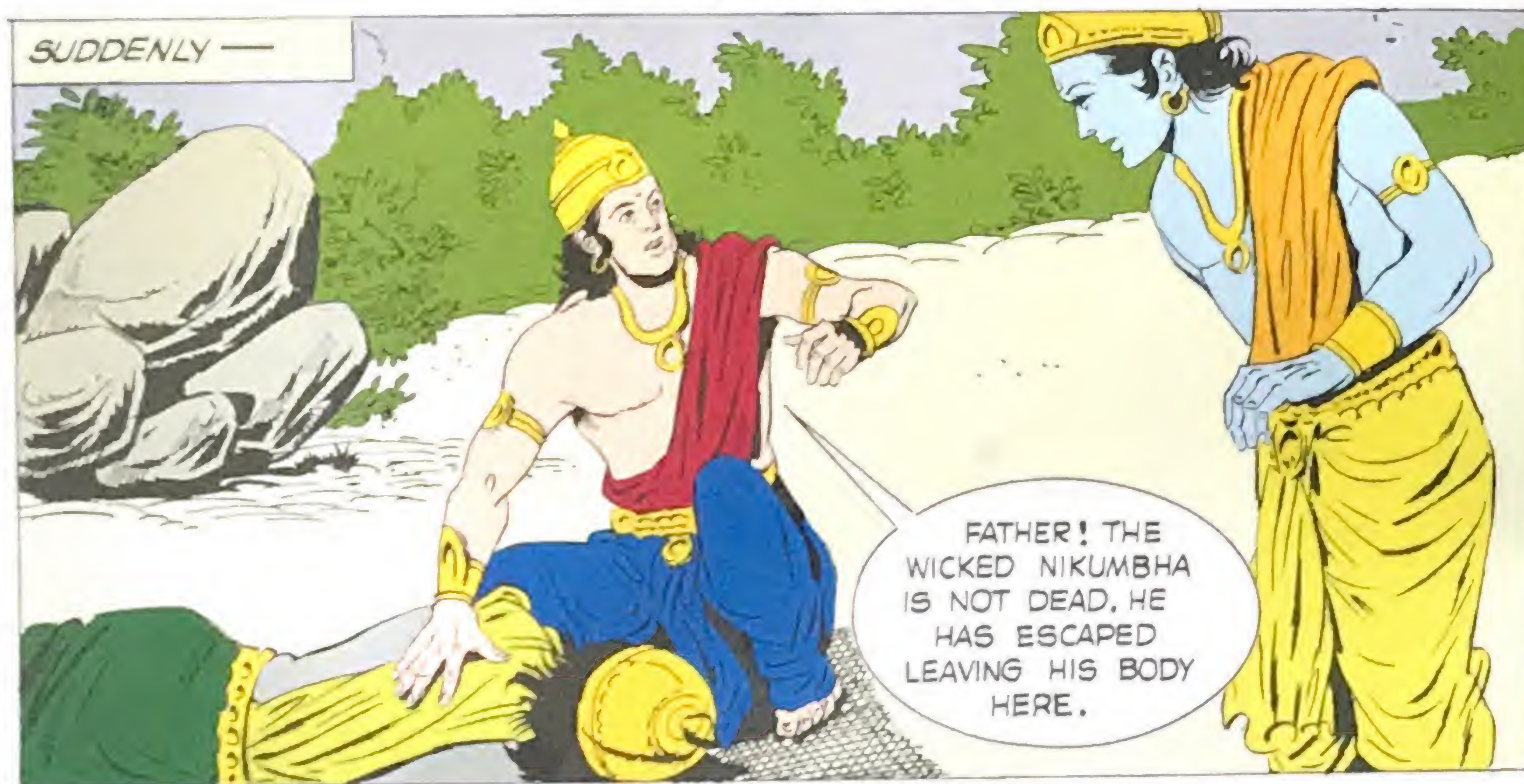
HE'S DEAD. THE VERY SIGHT OF MY WEAPON DID IT.



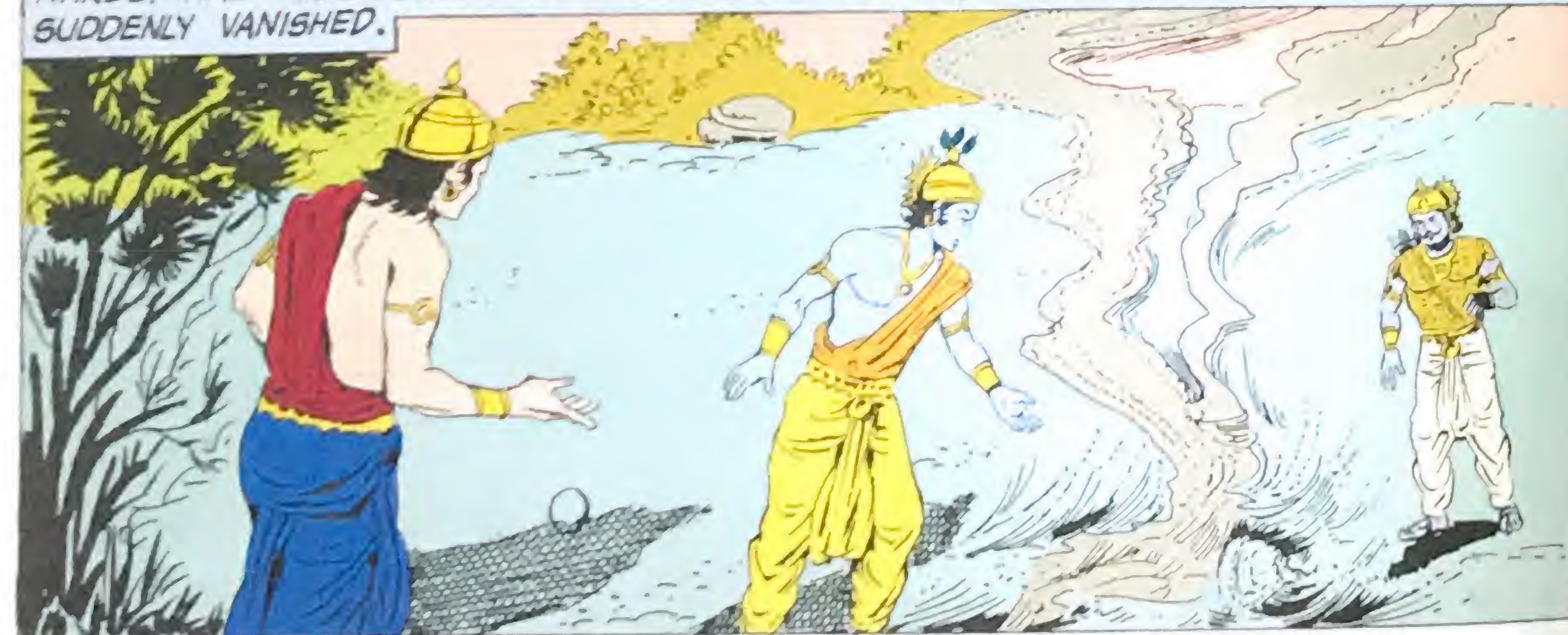
BY THEN, ARJUNA AND PRADYUMNA REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS.



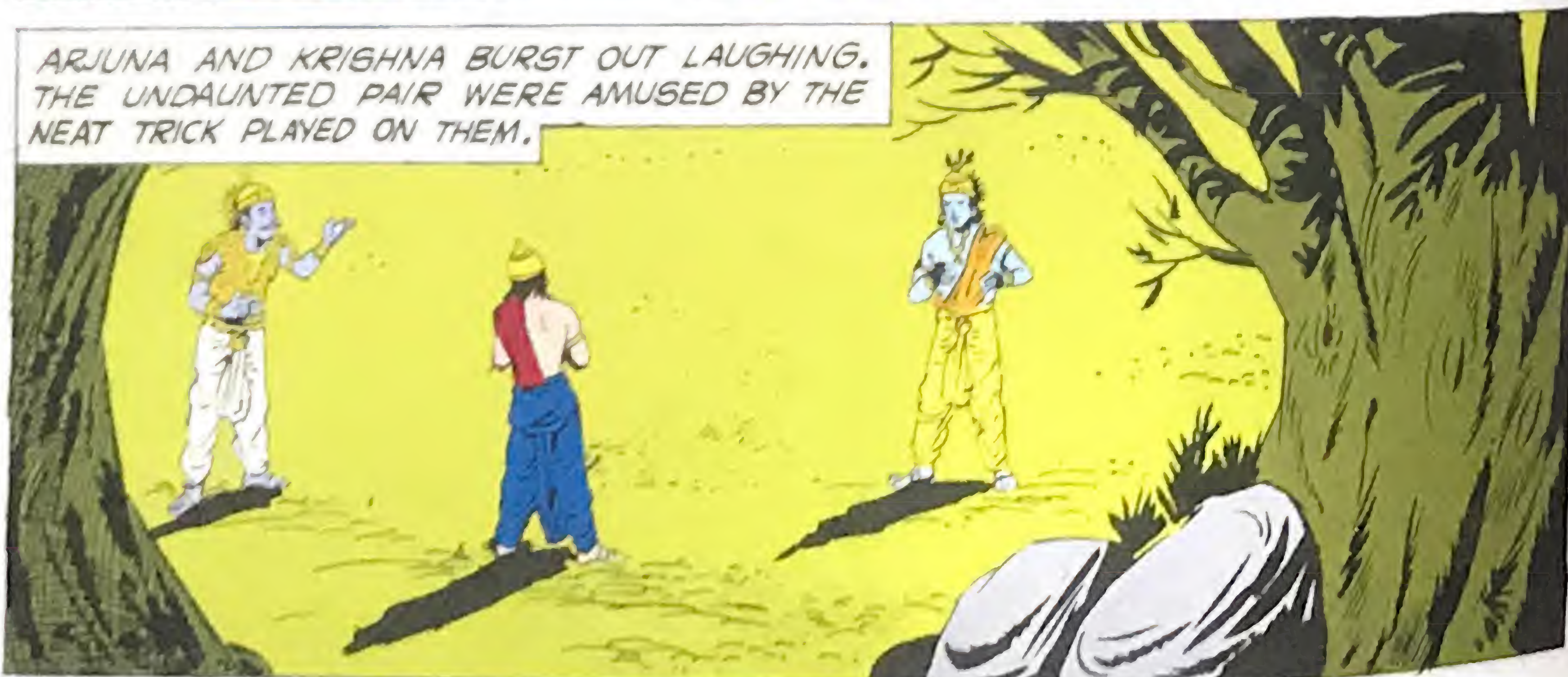
SUDDENLY —



HARDLY HAD PRADYUMNA UTTERED THESE WORDS, WHEN THE BODY OF NIKUMBHA SUDDENLY VANISHED.



ARJUNA AND KRISHNA BURST OUT LAUGHING. THE UNDAUNTED PAIR WERE AMUSED BY THE NEAT TRICK PLAYED ON THEM.



WHILE THEY WERE STILL ROARING WITH LAUGHTER, THEY SUDDENLY SAW THE SKY AND THE EARTH FILLED WITH THOUSANDS OF NIKUMBHAS.

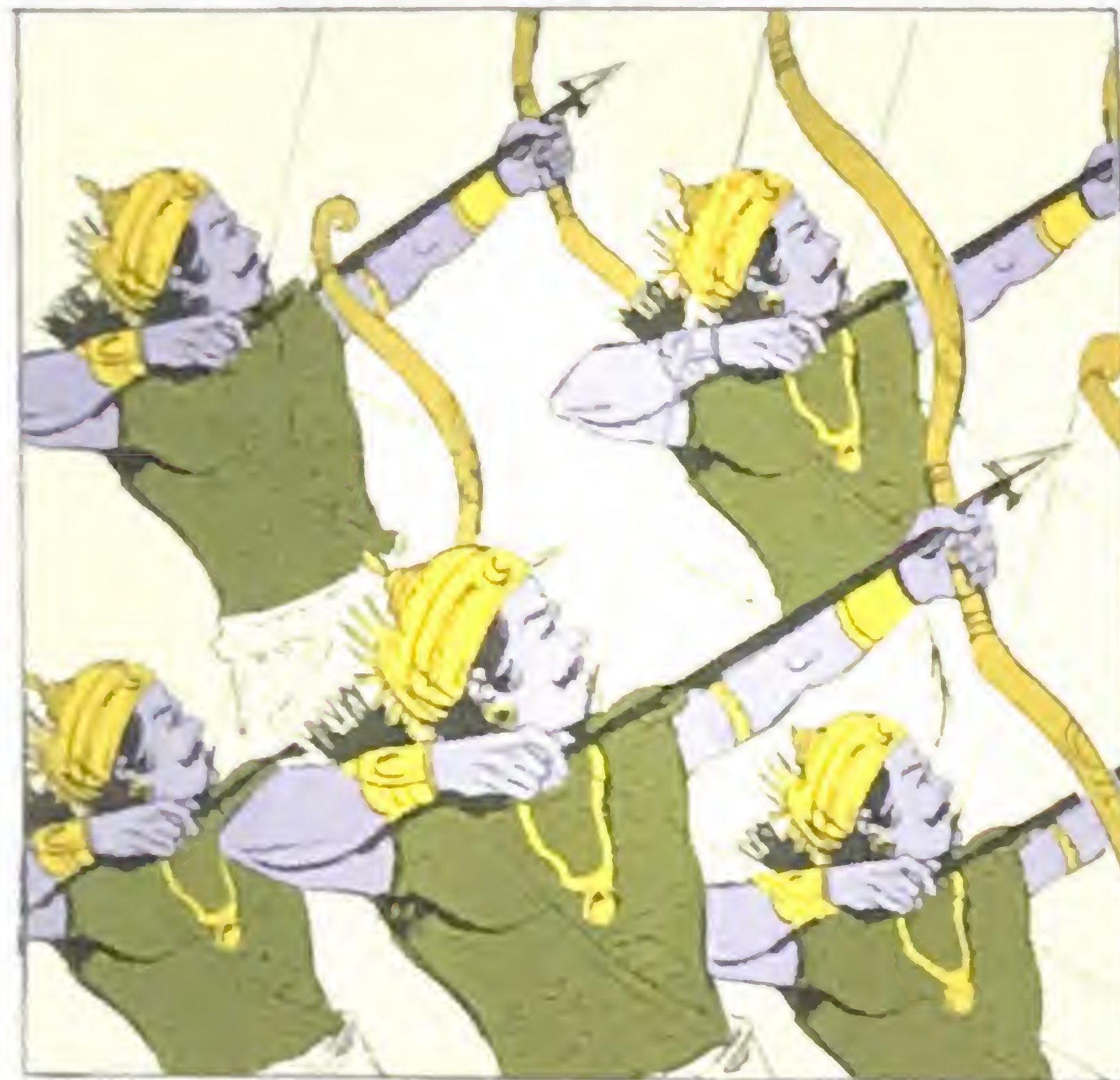


HE HAS SPLIT EACH FRACTION OF HIS BODY INTO SEPARATE BITS AND COVERED EACH BIT WITH AN ILLUSORY BODY. WE'LL DO THE SAME.



AND THE THREE OF THEM TOO SPLIT INTO INNUMERABLE FORMS.





I MUST SEIZE THE FORMS OF ARJUNA. THE DEADLIEST ARROWS ARE HIS.



SO THE VARIOUS FORMS OF NIKUMBHA CAUGHT THE VARIOUS FORMS OF ARJUNA.



AS SOON AS THE INNUMERABLE FORMS OF ARJUNA WERE CAUGHT, THEY FUSED INTO ONE.



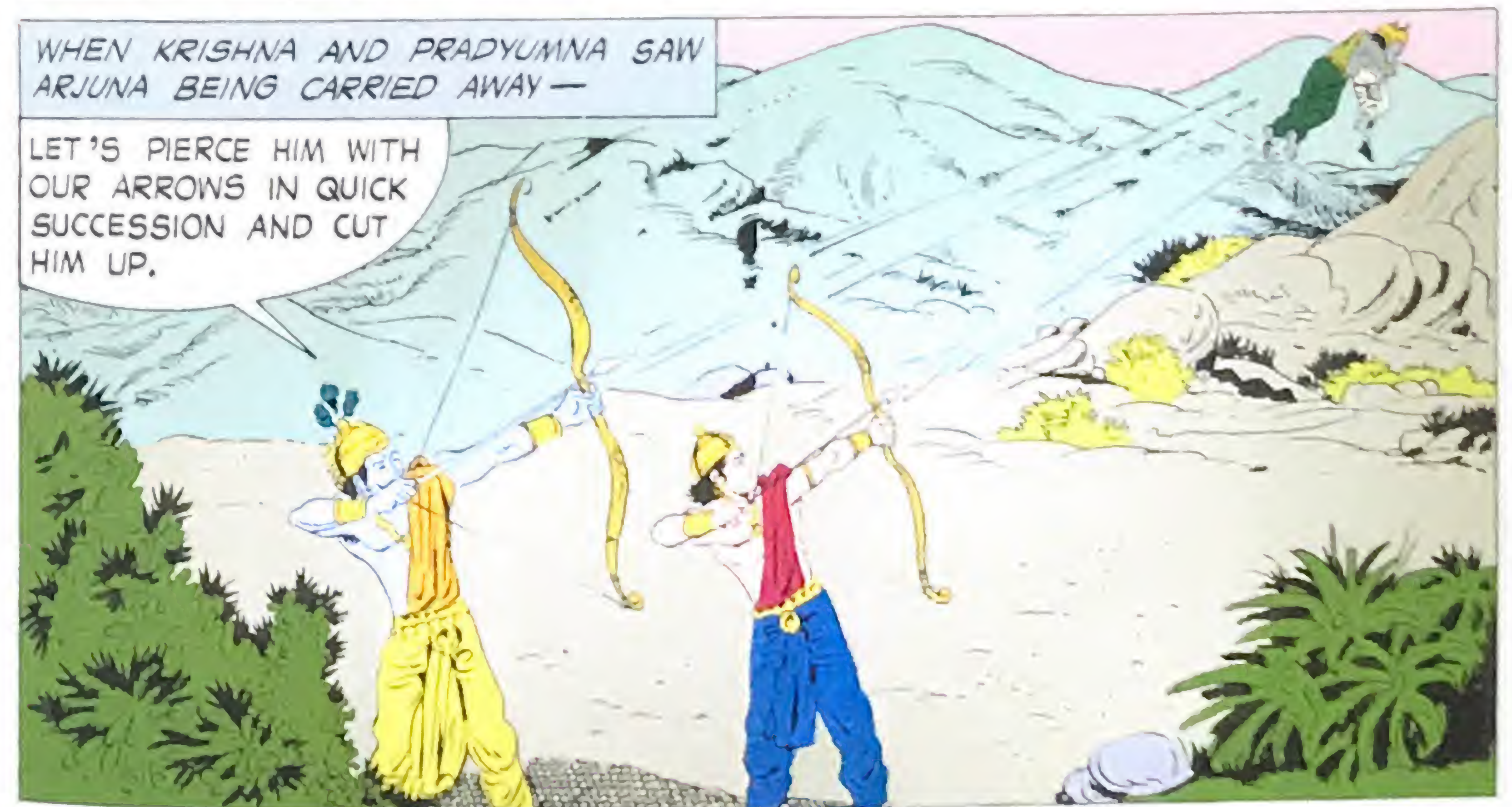
THE INNUMERABLE FORMS OF NIKUMBHA TOO FUSED INTO ONE.

I SHALL CARRY HIM AWAY, LEAVE HIM INSIDE MY CITY AND RETURN TO TACKLE THE OTHER TWO.



WHEN KRISHNA AND PRADYUMNA SAW ARJUNA BEING CARRIED AWAY —

LET'S PIERCE HIM WITH OUR ARROWS IN QUICK SUCCESSION AND CUT HIM UP.



BUT TO THEIR AMAZEMENT EACH FRAGMENT OF NIKUMBHA ...



... SPRANG UP AS TWO OF HIM; EACH HOLDING AN ARJUNA!





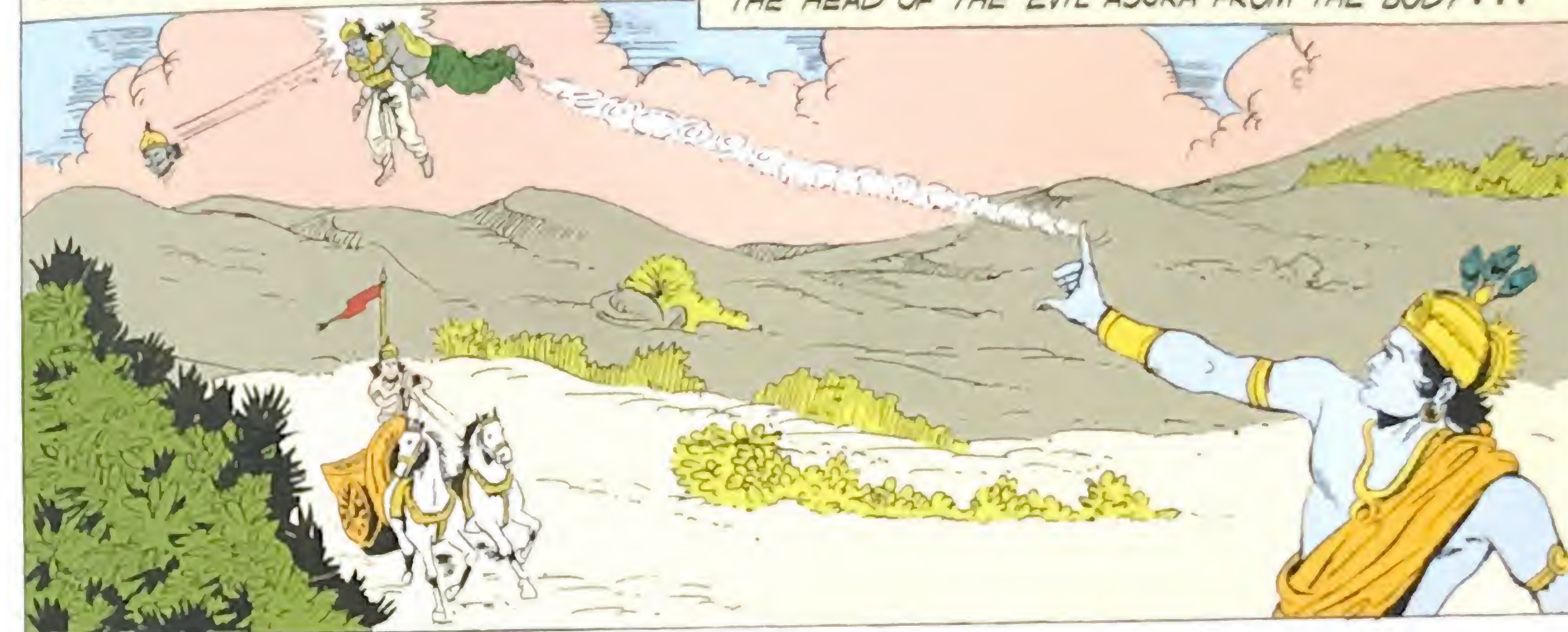
AS SOON AS HE PERCEIVED THE TRUE NIKUMBHA STANDING OUT BRIGHT AND CLEAR FROM THE ILLUSORY ONES...



... KRISHNA TURNED TO PRADYUMNA.



AS PRADYUMNA BROUGHT HIS CHARIOT BENEATH NIKUMBHA, THE DISCUS SEVERED THE HEAD OF THE EVIL ASURA FROM THE BODY...



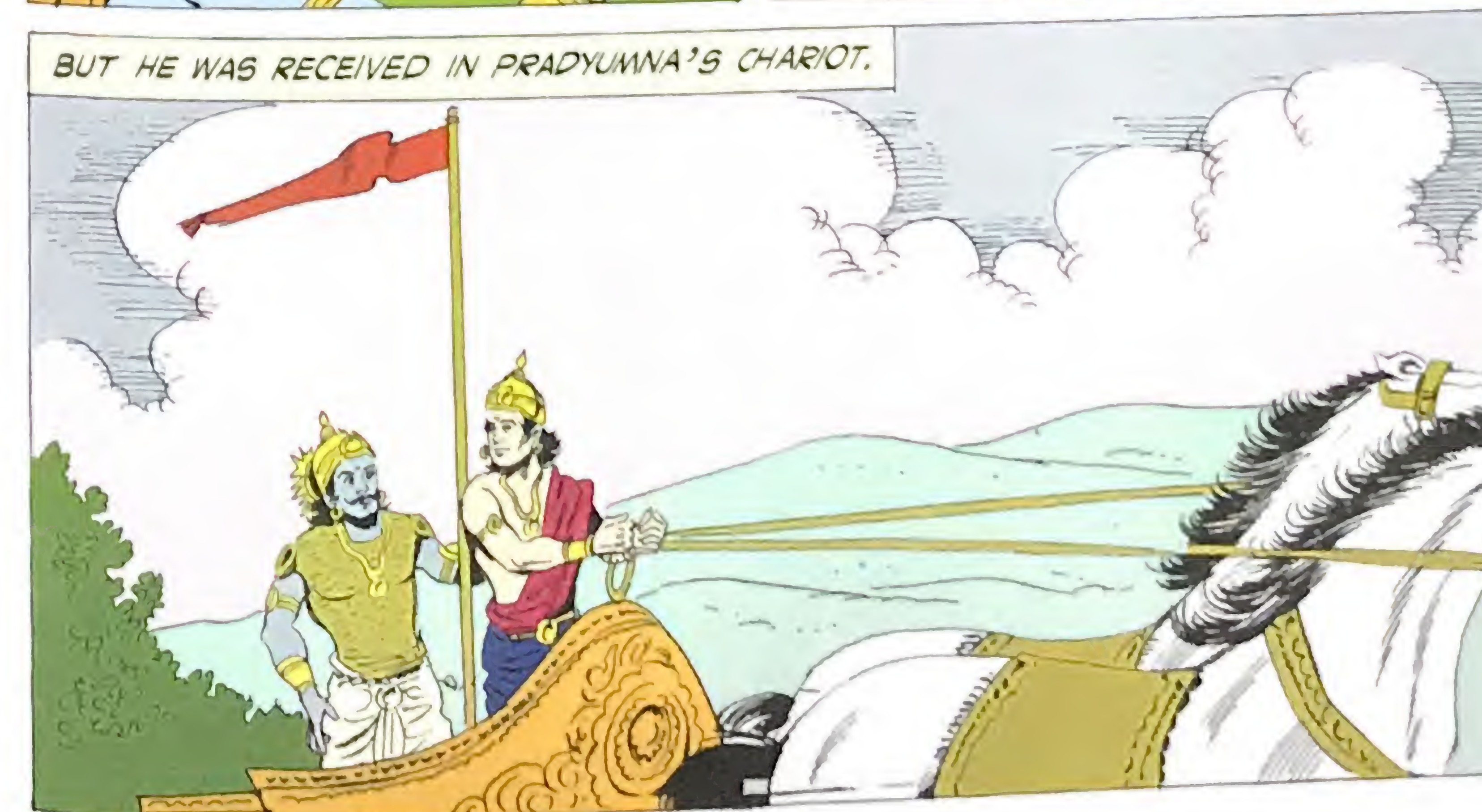
... AND RETURNED TO KRISHNA.



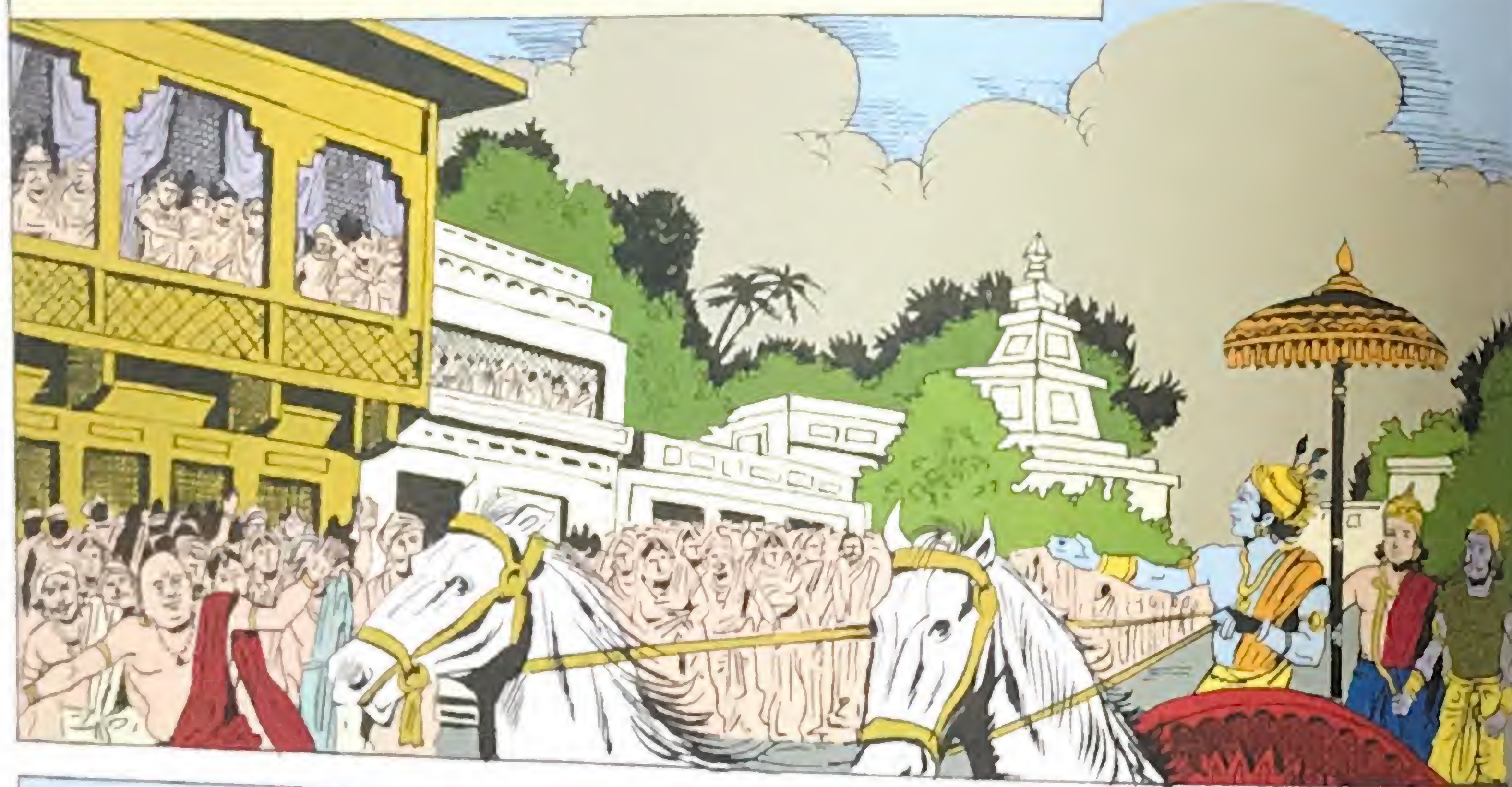
AS THE ASURA HURTTLED DOWN, ARJUNA SLIPPED FROM HIS GRASP.



BUT HE WAS RECEIVED IN PRADYUMNA'S CHARIOT.



AS THE THREE HEROES ENTERED DWARAKA IN TRIUMPH...



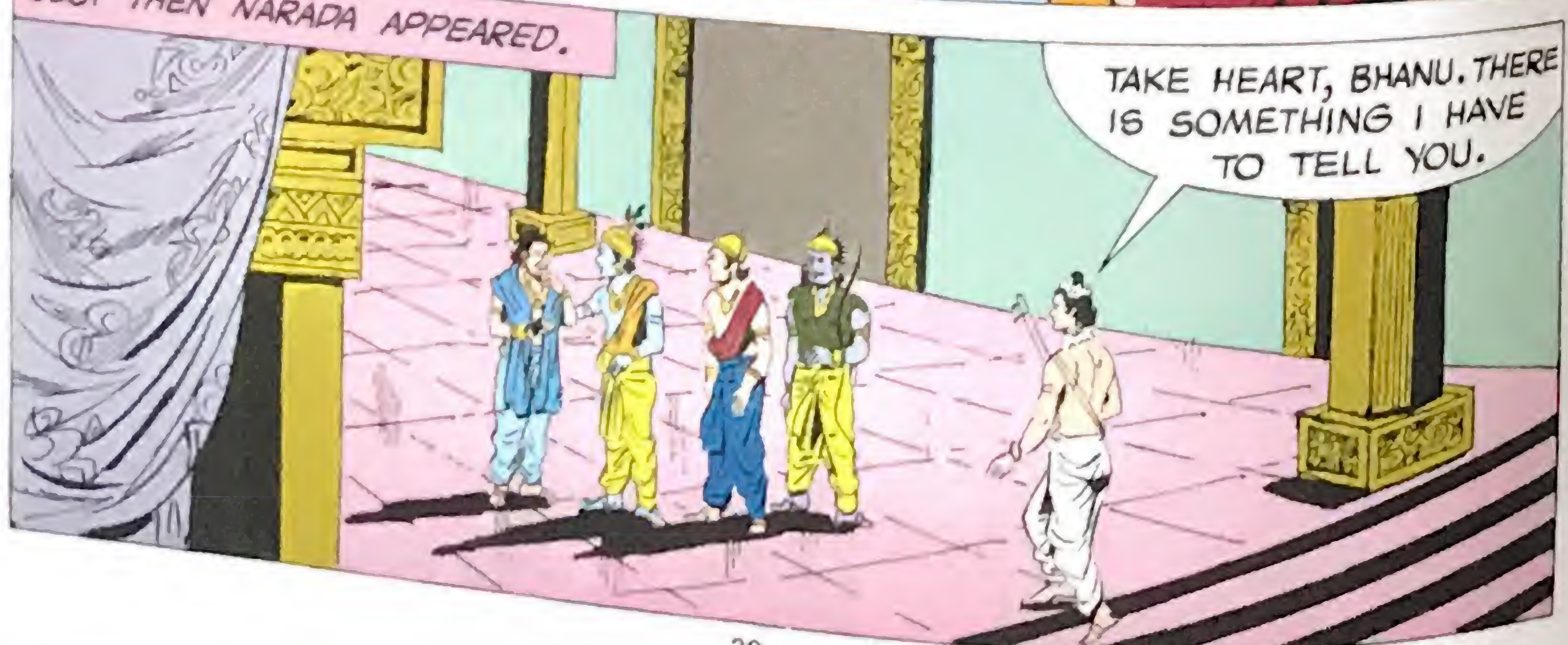
... A WAILING BHANU MET THEM.

THE ASURA IS SLAIN. BUT THINK OF THE SHAME! HE ABDUCTED MY DAUGHTER AND TARNISHED HER REPUTATION. WHO WILL MARRY HER NOW?



JUST THEN NARADA APPEARED.

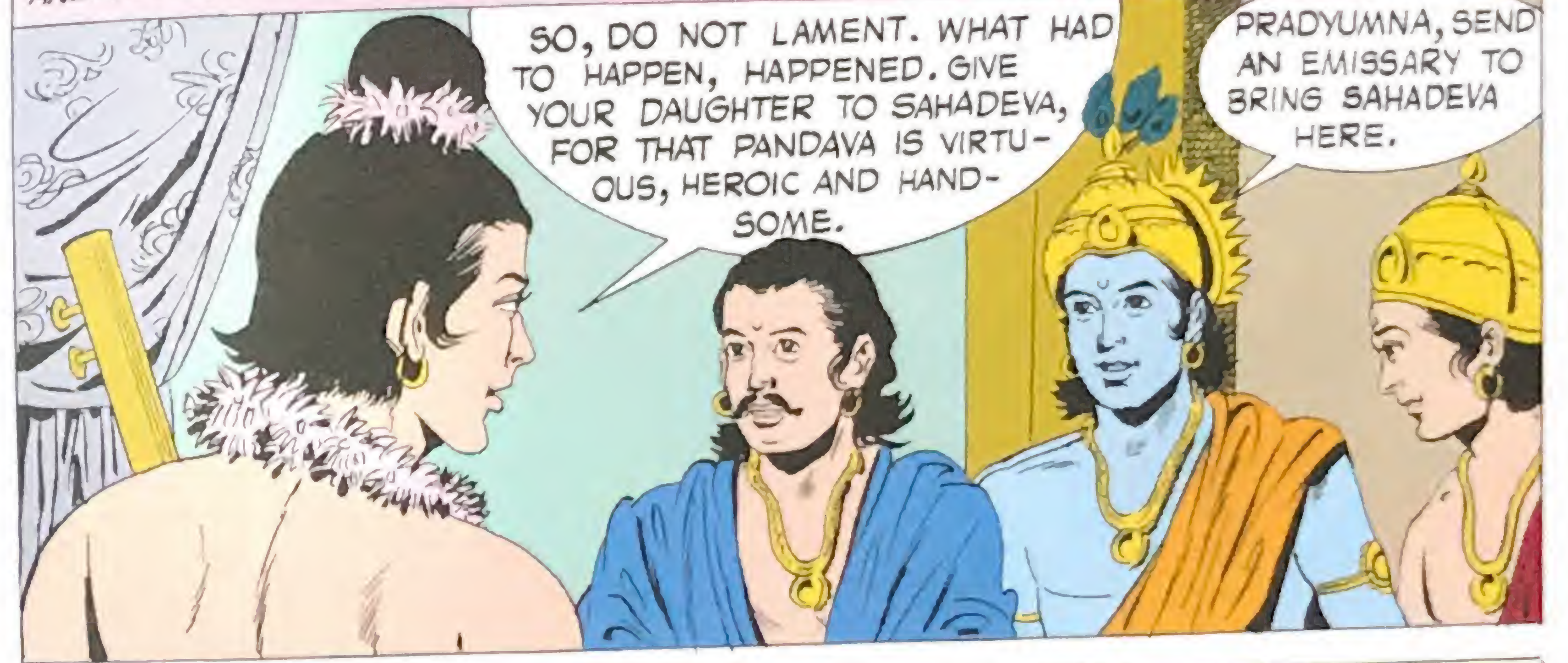
TAKE HEART, BHANU. THERE IS SOMETHING I HAVE TO TELL YOU.



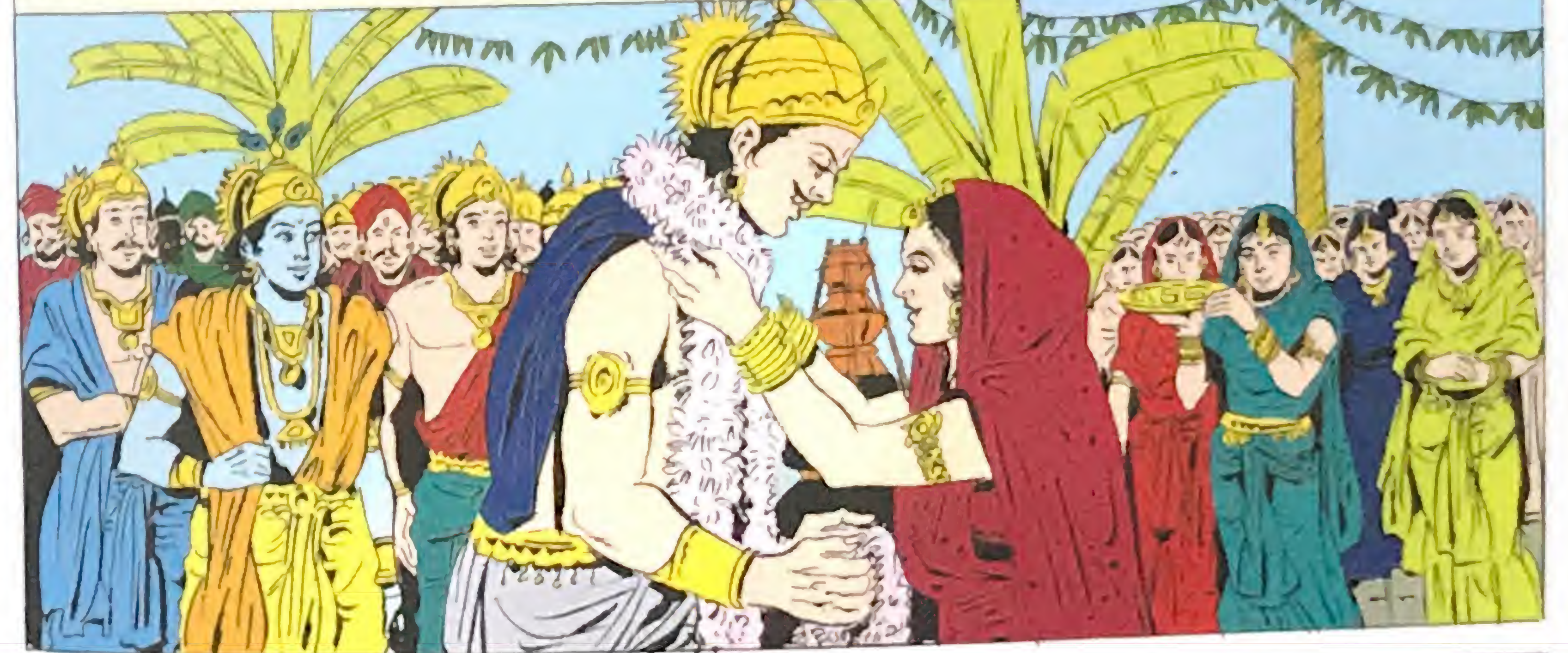
AND NARADA TOLD THEM ABOUT DURVASA'S CURSE AND HIS BLESSINGS.

SO, DO NOT LAMENT. WHAT HAD TO HAPPEN, HAPPENED. GIVE YOUR DAUGHTER TO SAHADEVA, FOR THAT PANDAVA IS VIRTUOUS, HEROIC AND HANDSOME.

PRADYUMNA, SEND AN EMISSARY TO BRING SAHADEVA HERE.



AS SOON AS SAHADEVA REACHED DWARAKA, BHANUMATI WAS MARRIED TO HIM.



AFTER THE WEDDING, AS THE COUPLE LEFT FOR SAHADEVA'S CITY—

THE SAGE'S CURSE DID COME TRUE AFTER ALL. BUT SO HAVE HIS BLESSINGS. WHO WOULD BE A BETTER HUSBAND THAN THIS POWERFUL PANDAVA?

