

KRISHNA: AN ALLY OF THE PANDAVAS

PAREEKSHIT WHO HAD BEEN LISTENING WITH RAPT ATTENTION TO SHUKADEVA NOW INTERRUPTED THE SAGE'S NARRATION OF KRISHNA'S EXPLOITS.



"DVIVIDA, WHO WAS SAID TO POSSESS THE STRENGTH OF TEN THOUSAND ELEPHANTS, WAS ENRAGED BY THE SLAYING OF NARAKASURA.



"HE CREATED HAVOC IN THE REGION OF ANARTA."



"HE THREW HUGE BOULDERS ON HOUSES.

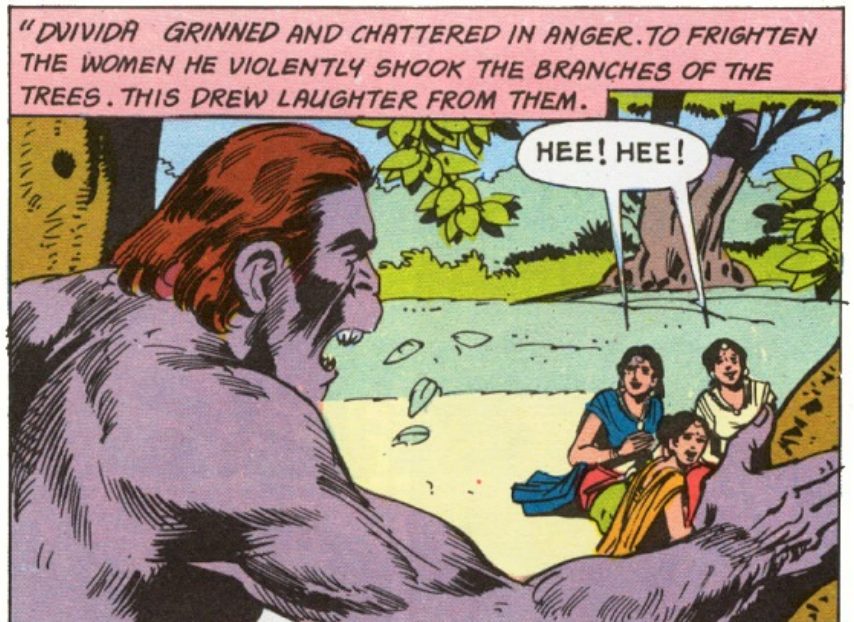
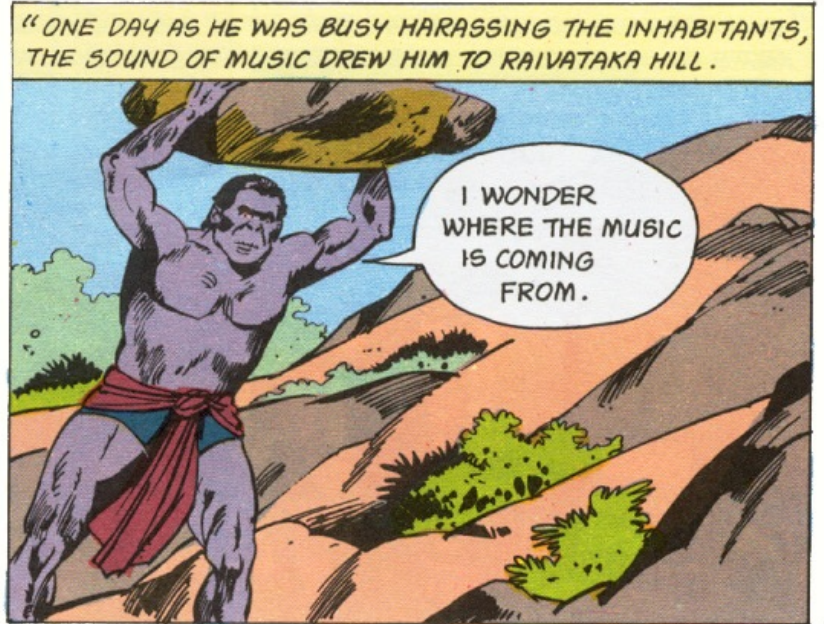
"HE STOOD IN THE SEA AND CHURNED THE WATER WITH HIS HANDS ...



"...TILL THE COASTAL VILLAGES WERE SUBMERGED.



* CORRESPONDING TO MODERN SAURASHTRA.



"DVIVIDA NOW PICKED UP A JAR AND BROKE IT.



"WHEN DVIVIDA SAW BALARAMA APPROACHING HIM WITH HIS FAVOURITE WEAPONS, HE UPROOTED A SALA TREE.



"BUT BALARAMA PARRIED THE BLOW WITH HIS LEFT HAND AND HIT DVIVIDA WITH HIS PESTLE.



"DVIVIDA'S HEAD WAS CRACKED OPEN BUT HE FOUGHT ON USING TREES AND ROCKS AS WEAPONS.



"BUT THEY WERE ALL CRUSHED BY BALARAMA. FINALLY DVIVIDA LUNGED AT HIM, BAREHANDED.



"BALARAMA CLENCHED HIS FIST AND HIT AT THE COLLAR BONE OF DVIVIDA. THE APE COLLAPSED AND THE ENTIRE FOREST SHOOK AS HE FELL.



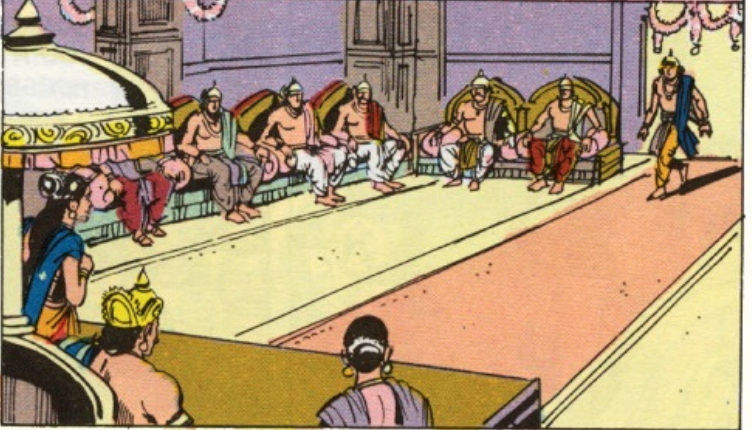
"WHEN BALARAMA RETURNED TO DWARAKA, HE WAS WARMLY RECEIVED BY THE CITIZENS.

GOOD THAT YOU
KILLED THAT DVIVIDA.

HE HAD BEEN
TERRORISING
THE PEOPLE.

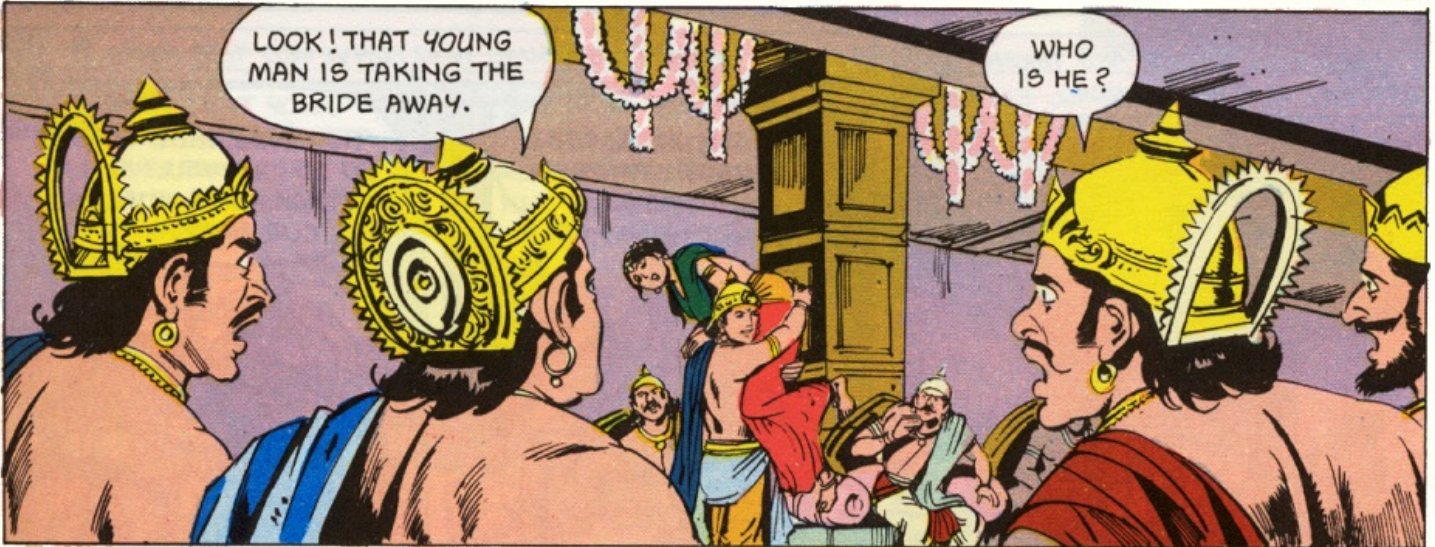


"IT WAS SOME TIME AFTER THIS EVENT THAT PRINCE DURYODHANA ARRANGED THE SWAYAMVARA OF HIS DAUGHTER, LAKSHMANA. IT WAS ATTENDED BY KINGS AND PRINCES FROM FAR AND NEAR.



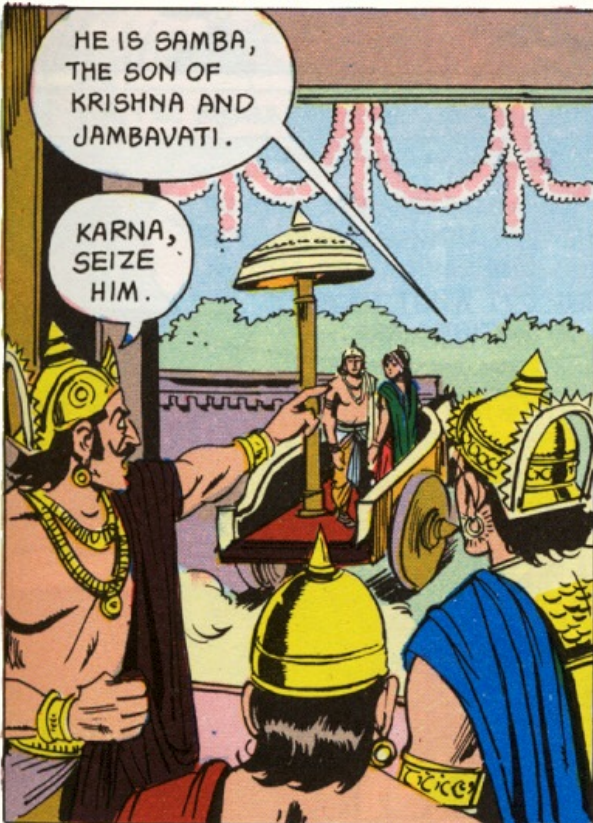
LOOK! THAT YOUNG
MAN IS TAKING THE
BRIDE AWAY.

WHO
IS HE?



HE IS SAMBA,
THE SON OF
KRISHNA AND
JAMBAVATI.

KARNA,
SEIZE
HIM.



"KARNA, DURYODHANA AND OTHERS FOLLOWED SAMBA.

WE WILL CAPTURE
HIM. LET THE
YADAVAS COME
AND FREE HIM
THEN.



"BUT KRISHNA'S SON FACED THE WARRIORS ALONE."



"HE SHOT ARROW AFTER ARROW TO COUNTER THEIR ATTACK."



LET US SURROUND HIM. YOU ATTACK HIS HORSE WHILE I AIM AT THE CHARIOTEER.

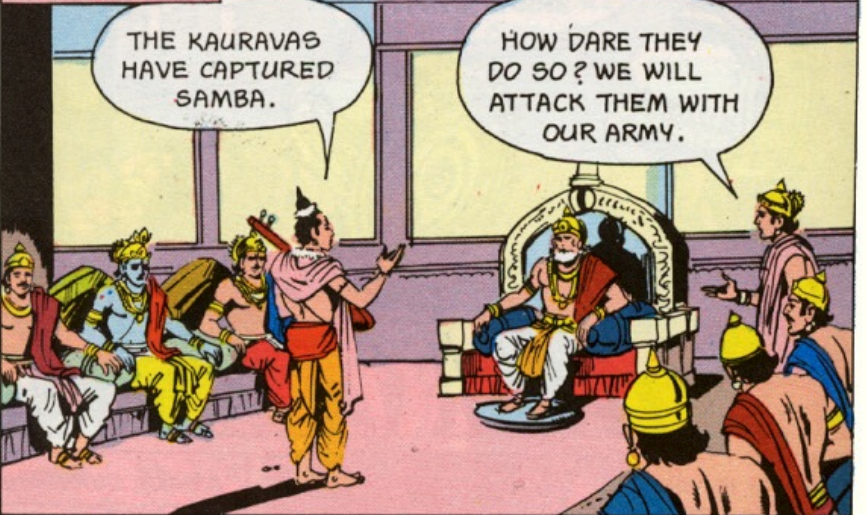
"AT LAST THE KAURAVA WARRIORS OVERPOWERED SAMBA."



"SAMBA WAS TIED UP AND TAKEN CAPTIVE TO HASTINAPURA."



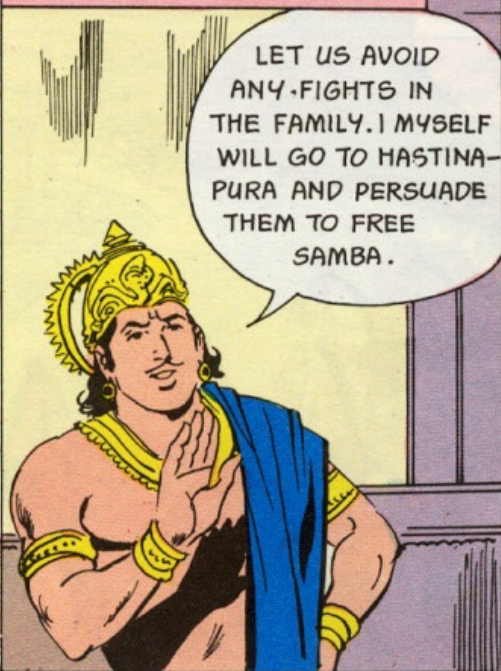
"IT WAS NARADA, AS USUAL WHO CONVEYED THIS NEWS TO THE YADAVAS."



THE KAURAVAS HAVE CAPTURED SAMBA.

HOW DARE THEY DO SO? WE WILL ATTACK THEM WITH OUR ARMY.

"BALARAMA INTERVENED —"



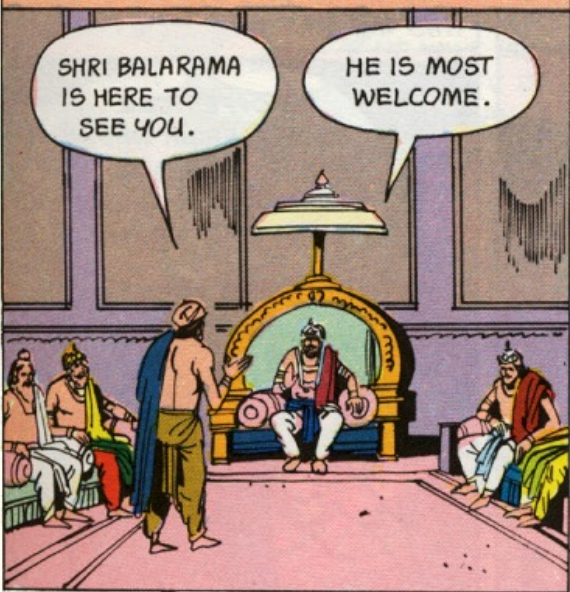
LET US AVOID ANY FIGHTS IN THE FAMILY. I MYSELF WILL GO TO HASTINAPURA AND PERSUADE THEM TO FREE SAMBA.

"ACCOMPANIED BY SOME WISE OLD MEN, BALARAMA SET OUT FOR HASTINAPURA."

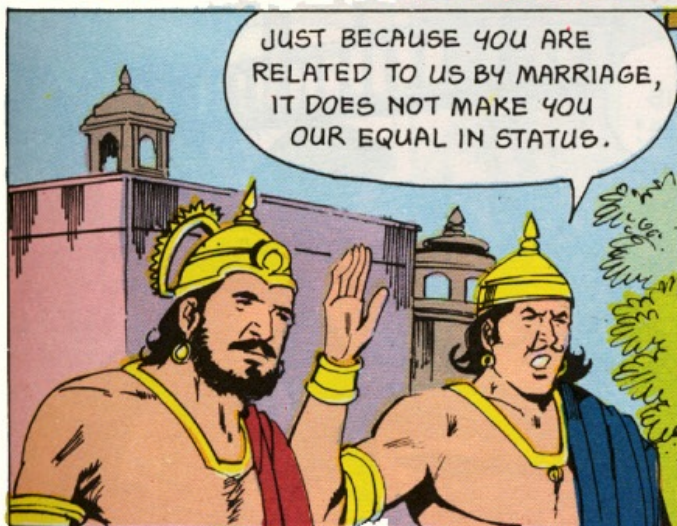
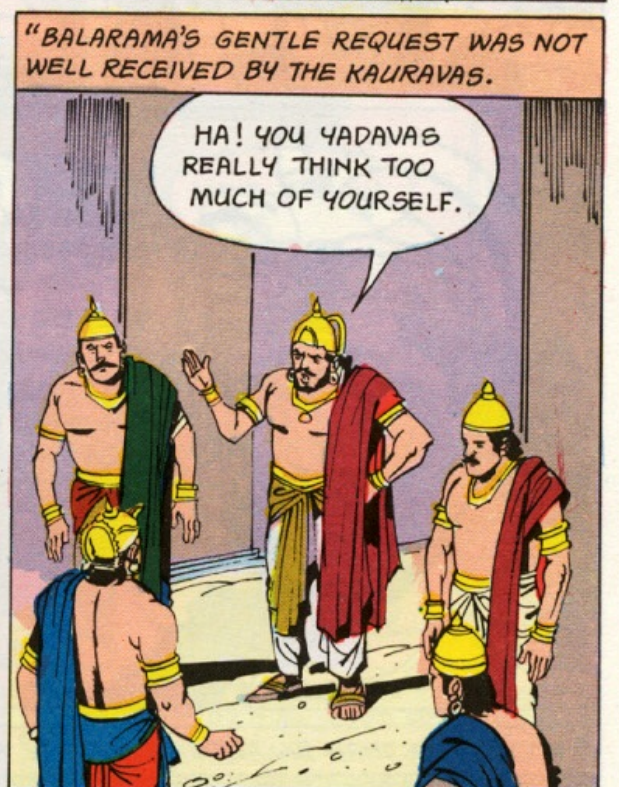
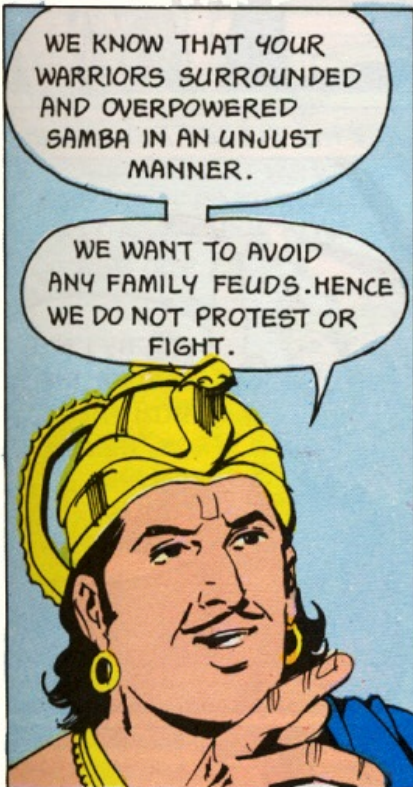
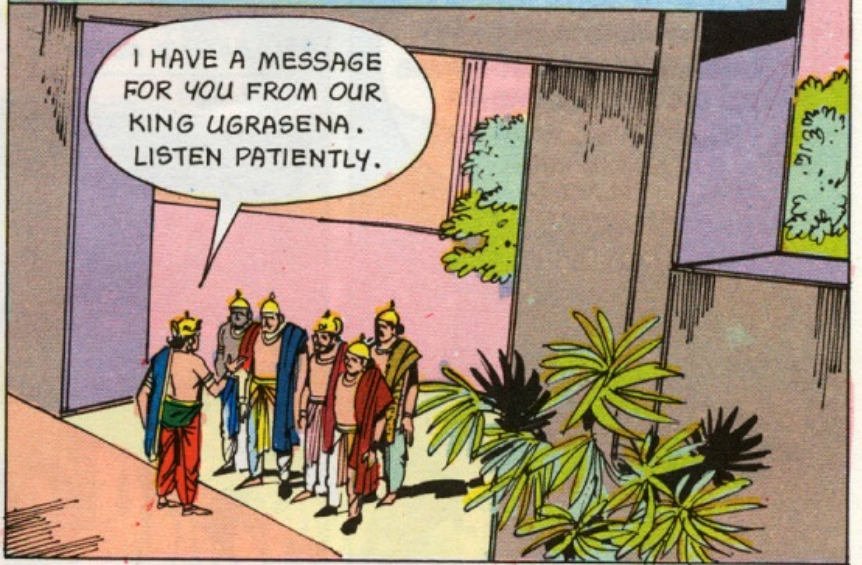


WE WILL STOP HERE OUTSIDE THE CITY. UDDHAVA, YOU GO TO KING DHRTIRASHTRA AND FIND OUT WHAT THEIR INTENTIONS ARE.

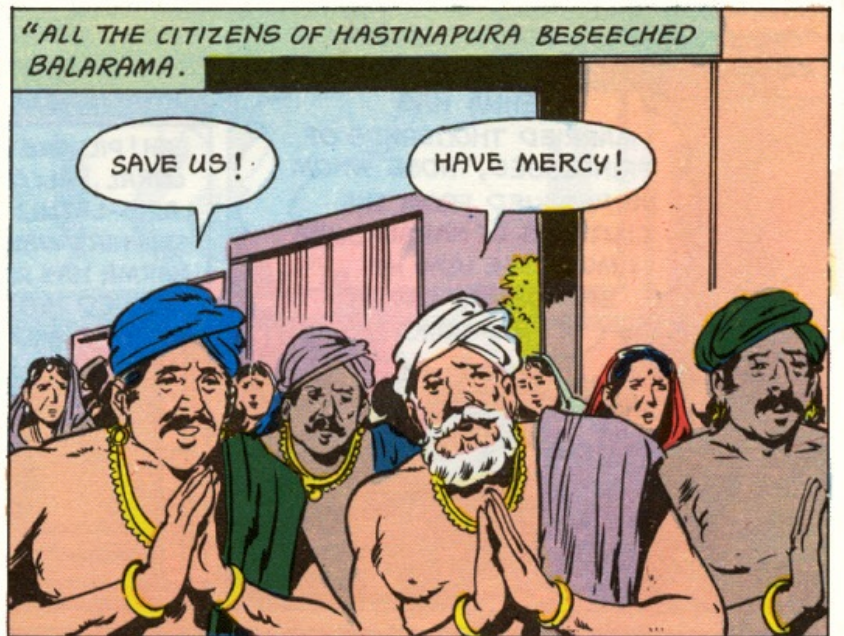
"UDDHAVA ARRIVED AT THE KAURAVA COURT.



"BALARAMA WAS WARMLY WELCOMED BY THE KAURAVAS. AFTER GREETING THEM BALARAMA SAID—



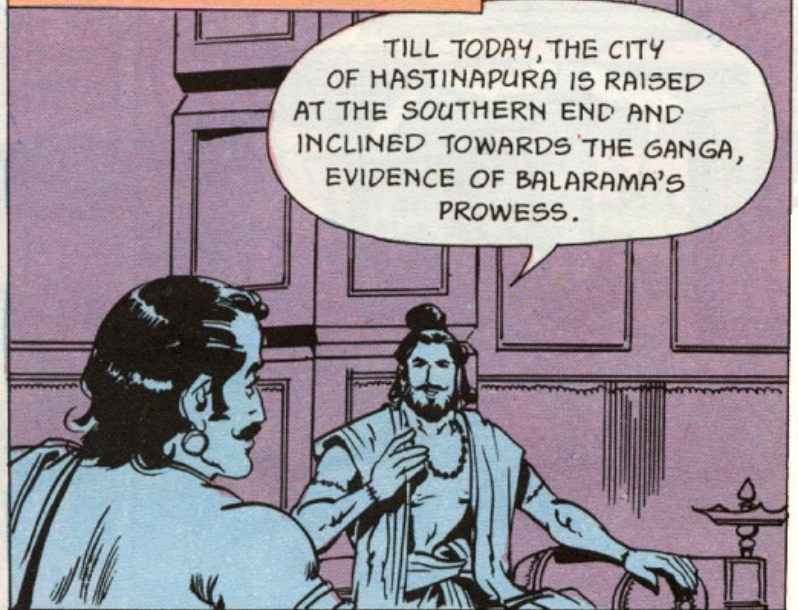




"BALARAMA RELATED THE EVENTS IN THE COURT OF DWARAKA.



SHUKADEVA PAUSED FOR EFFECT.



"ONE DAY, NARADA DECIDED TO VISIT KRISHNA.



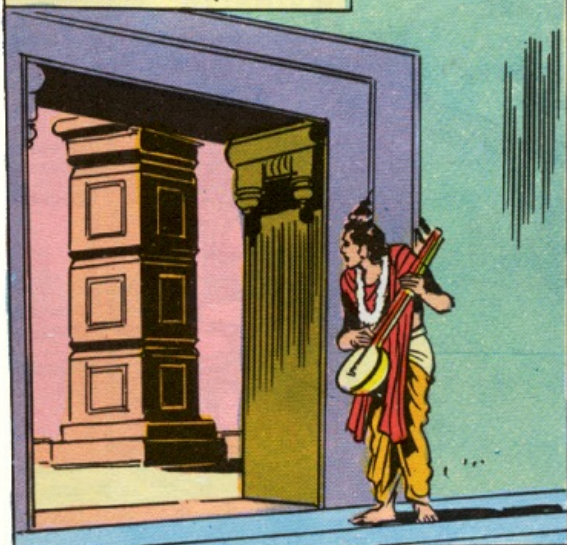
"WHEN NARADA ARRIVED AT THE RESPLENDENT CITY OF DWARAKA, HE BEHELD THE BEAUTIFUL INNER CHAMBERS OF THE QUEENS.



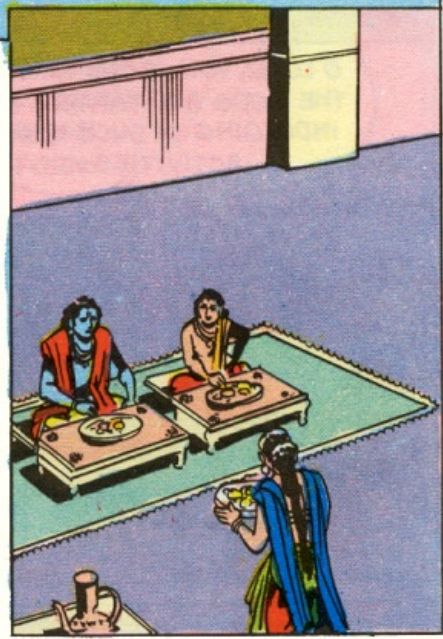
"NARADA FOUND KRISHNA IN RUKMINI'S PALACE.



"AFTER EXCHANGING PLEASANTRIES WITH KRISHNA AND RUKMINI, NARADA'S CURIOSITY LED HIM TO THE PALACES OF THE OTHER QUEENS.



"HE WAS ASTONISHED AT THE SIGHT THAT MET HIS EYES IN THE VARIOUS PALACES.



"HE SAW KRISHNA PLAYING CHESS IN ONE.



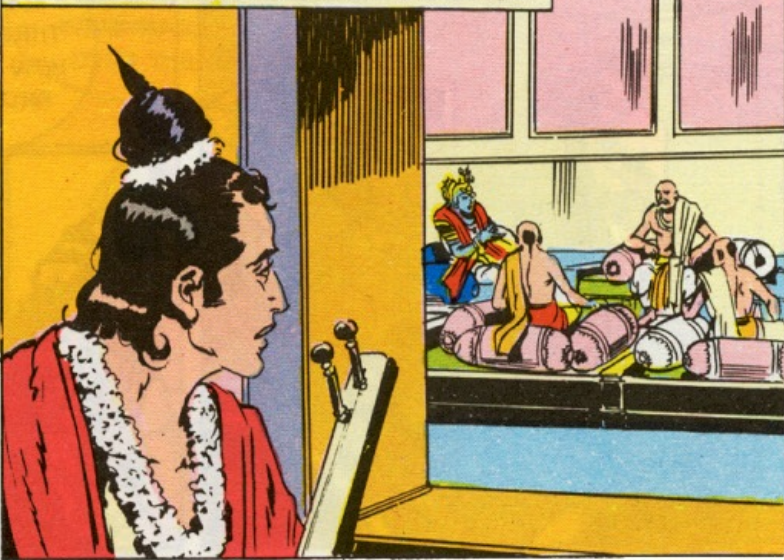
"WHILE IN ANOTHER KRISHNA APPEARED TO BE ENGROSSED IN PERFORMING A YAJNA.



"HE BEHELD KRISHNA ROMPING PLAYFULLY WITH HIS CHILDREN IN ONE ROOM.



"WHILE A MINUTE LATER, HE SAW KRISHNA IN SERIOUS DISCUSSION WITH LEARNED PANDITS.



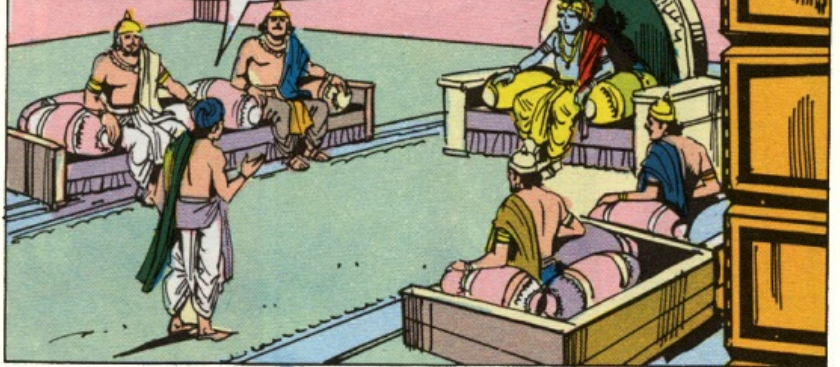
"BEFORE LEAVING, NARADA TURNED TO KRISHNA, AND SAID —

O LORD, YOU ALONE AMONG THE GODS ARE CAPABLE OF INDULGING IN SUCH HUMAN ACTIVITIES.



"ONE DAY WHILE KRISHNA WAS IN THE COUNCIL HALL CALLED SUDHARMA SABHA, A STRANGER RUSHED IN —

O LORD, YOU ARE THE SAVIOUR OF ALL. I HAVE COME TO SEEK YOUR HELP.

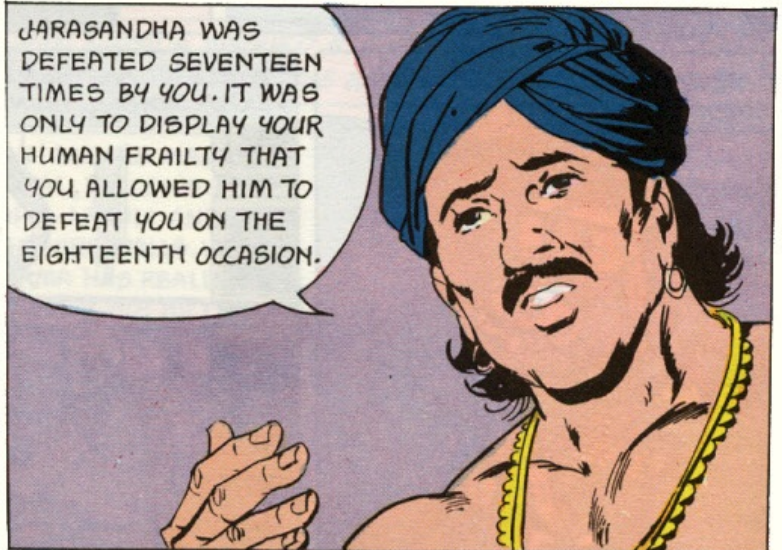


"HE WAS THE MESSENGER SENT ON BEHALF OF THE THOUSANDS OF KINGS HELD CAPTIVE BY JARASANDHA IN GIRIVRAJA.

THE IMPRISONED KINGS HAVE IMPLORED YOU TO HELP THEM.

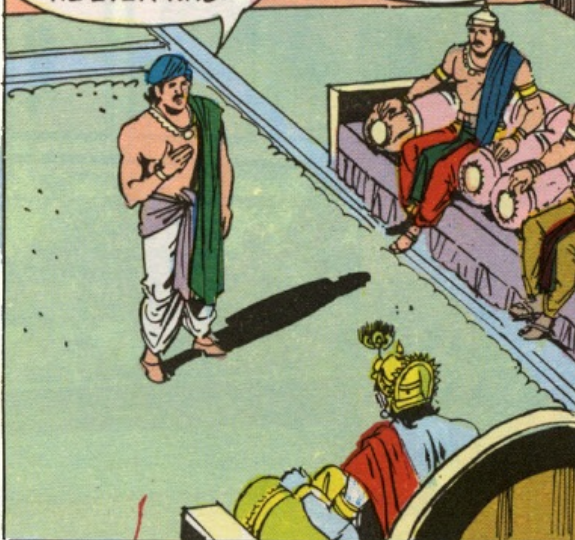


JARASANDHA WAS DEFEATED SEVENTEEN TIMES BY YOU. IT WAS ONLY TO DISPLAY YOUR HUMAN FRAILTY THAT YOU ALLOWED HIM TO DEFEAT YOU ON THE EIGHTEENTH OCCASION.



BUT THIS ONE VICTORY HAS MADE JARASANDHA MORE ARROGANT THAN HE EVER WAS.

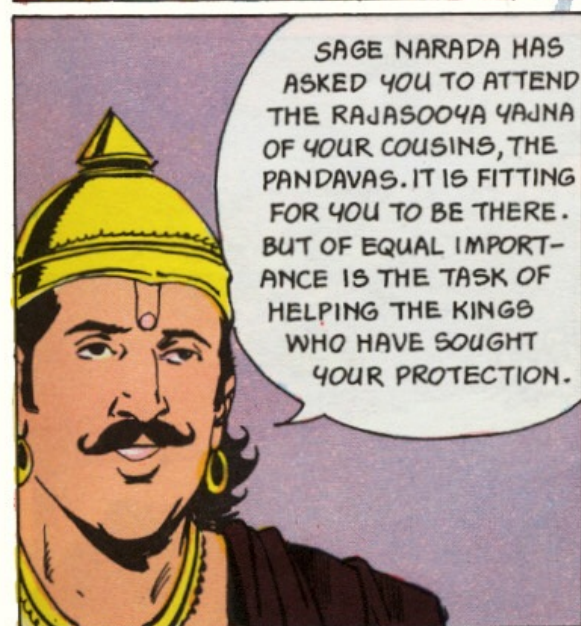
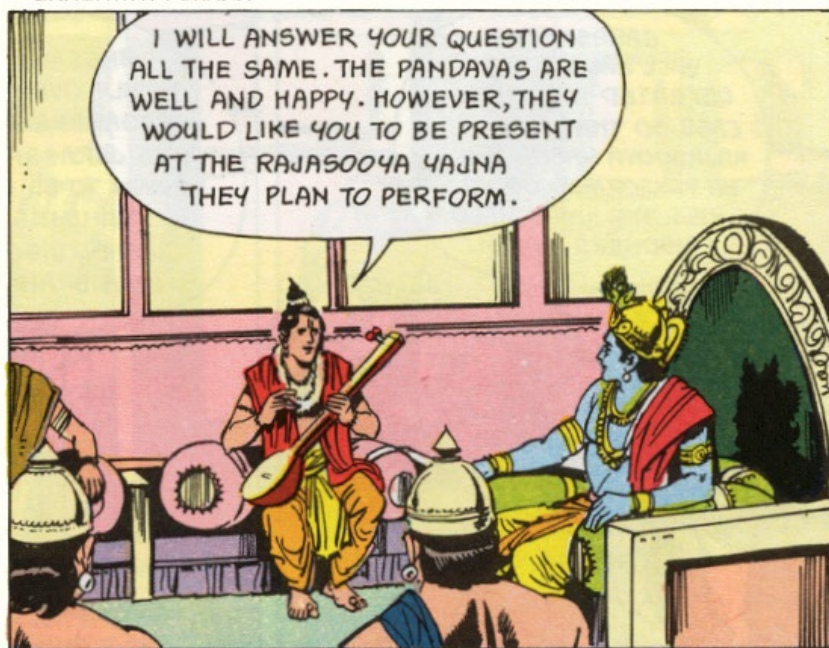
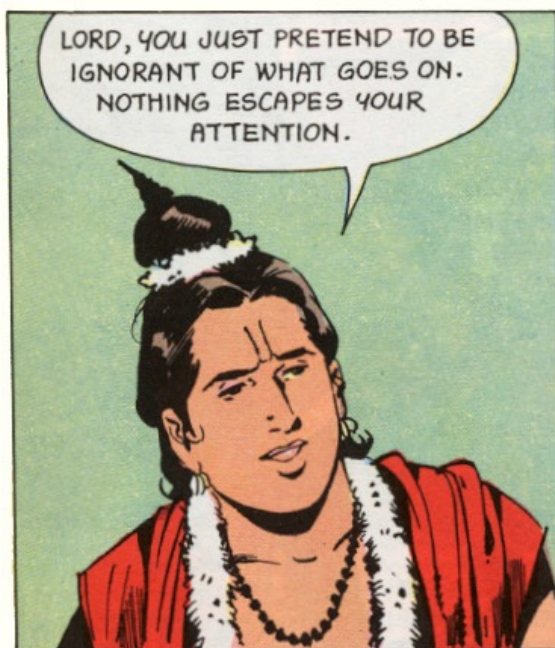
THE CAPTURED KINGS DEPEND ON YOUR HELP, O KRISHNA.



"JUST THEN NARADA ARRIVED ON THE SCENE. AFTER WELCOMING HIM WITH DUE RESPECT, KRISHNA SAID —

O NARADA, YOU ROAM FREELY IN THE THREE WORLDS. TELL US, HOW ARE YUDHISHTHIRA AND THE OTHER PANDAVAS?



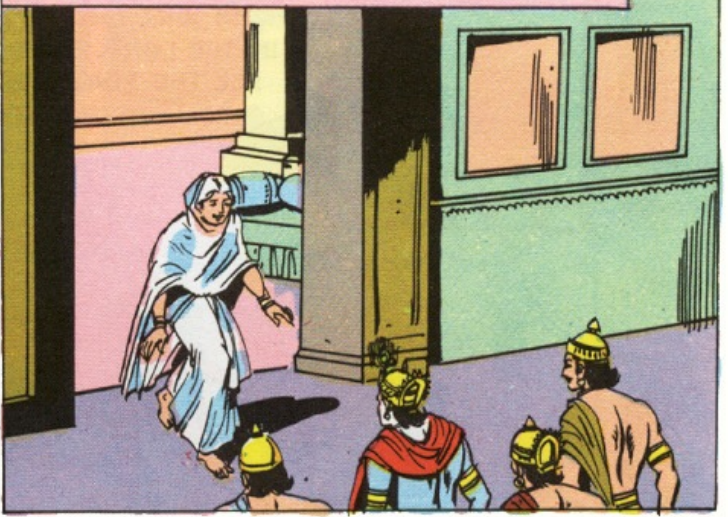




"THE PANDAVAS WERE OVERJOYED TO SEE THEIR BELOVED KRISHNA."



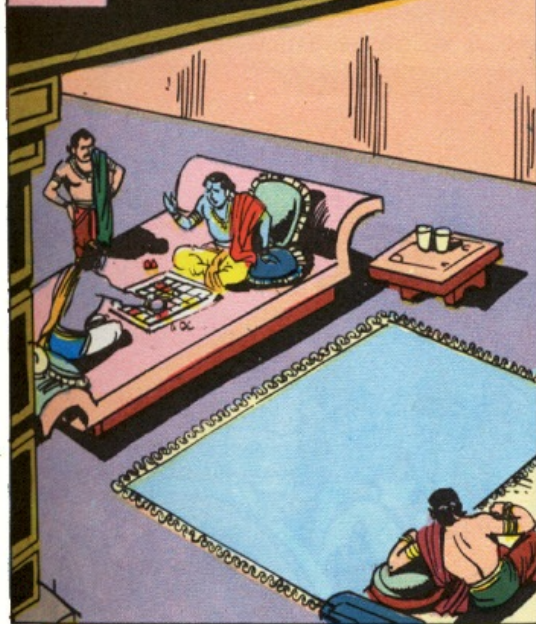
"KUNTI RUSHED TO GREET HER DEAR NEPHEW."



"DRAUPADI WELCOMED KRISHNA'S WIVES RUKMINI, SATYABHAMA, JAMBAVATI, KALINDI, MITRAVINDA, BHADRA, SATYA AND LAKSHMANA WITH PRESENTS OF GARMENTS, JEWELS AND FLOWERS."



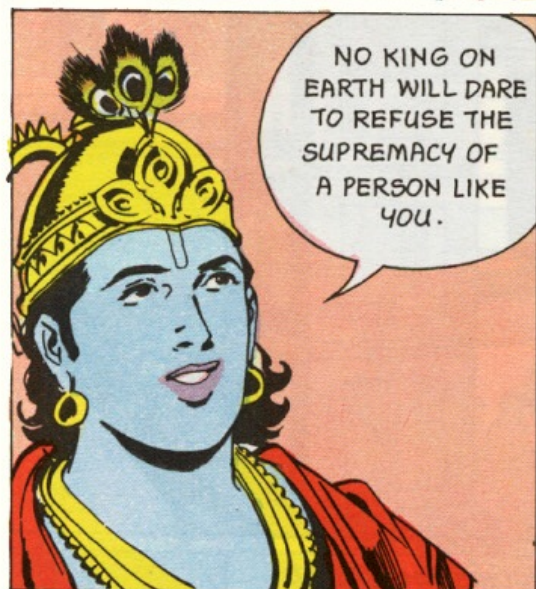
"KRISHNA AND HIS ARMY WERE PROVIDED WITH COMFORTABLE PALACES IN INDRA-PRASTHA AND SPENT MANY HAPPY DAYS THERE."



"ONE DAY AT COURT, YUDHISHTHIRA SAID—

O KRISHNA, I WISH TO PERFORM THE RAJASOOYA YAJNA. I REQUEST YOU TO HELP ME IN THIS TASK.





"YUDHISHTHIRA WAS DELIGHTED TO HEAR THIS. ENTHUSED BY KRISHNA'S ENCOURAGEMENT HE GAVE INSTRUCTIONS TO HIS BROTHERS.

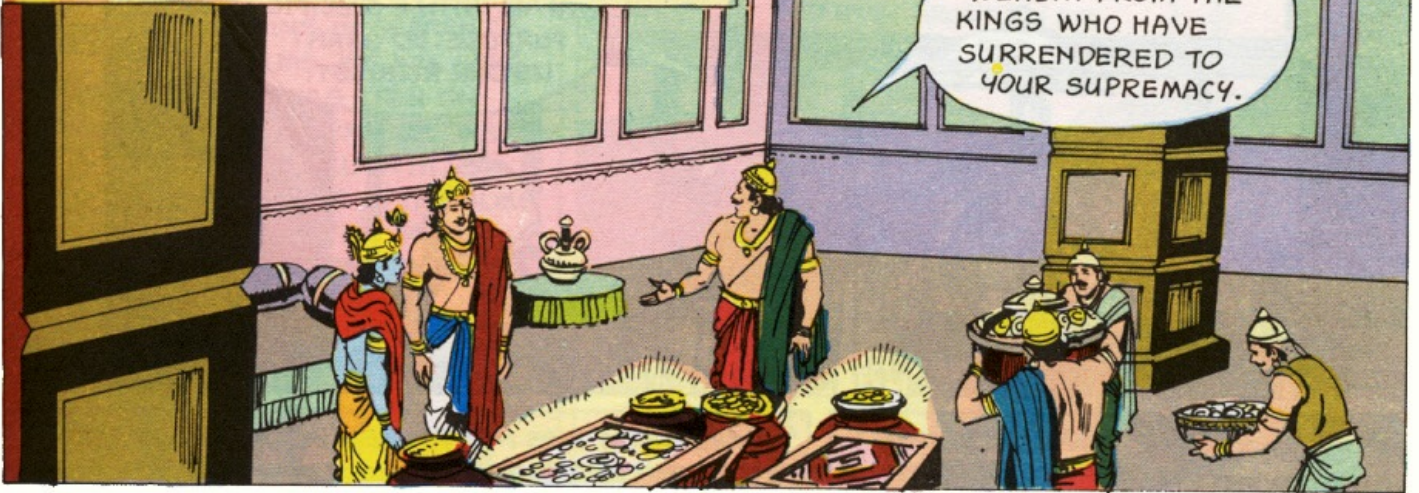


"AS INSTRUCTED BY YUDHISHTHIRA, THE FOUR BROTHERS SET OUT TO CONQUER THE VARIOUS REGIONS.



"THEY RETURNED VICTORIOUS, LADEN WITH THE TREASURES GIFTED BY THE CONQUERED KINGS."

HERE IT IS, THE WEALTH FROM THE KINGS WHO HAVE SURRENDERED TO YOUR SUPREMACY.



HAVE ALL THE KINGS AGREED?

YES, EXCEPT JARASANDHA.



"SEEING YUDHISHTHIRA'S ENTHUSIASM BEING DAMPENED BY THIS NEWS, KRISHNA SAID —

UDDHAVA HAD SUGGESTED A WAY OF CONQUERING JARASANDHA.



"HE THEN UNFOLDED HIS PLAN."

"SOON BHEEMA, ARJUNA AND KRISHNA REACHED GIRIVRAJA, THE CAPITAL OF JARASANDHA, IN THE GUISE OF BRAHMINS."



"WHEN THEY ARRIVED AT JARASANDHA'S PALACE —

GLORY TO YOU, O KING. WE HAVE TRAVELLED FROM AFAR WITH A SPECIFIC PURPOSE. DO GRANT US OUR REQUEST.



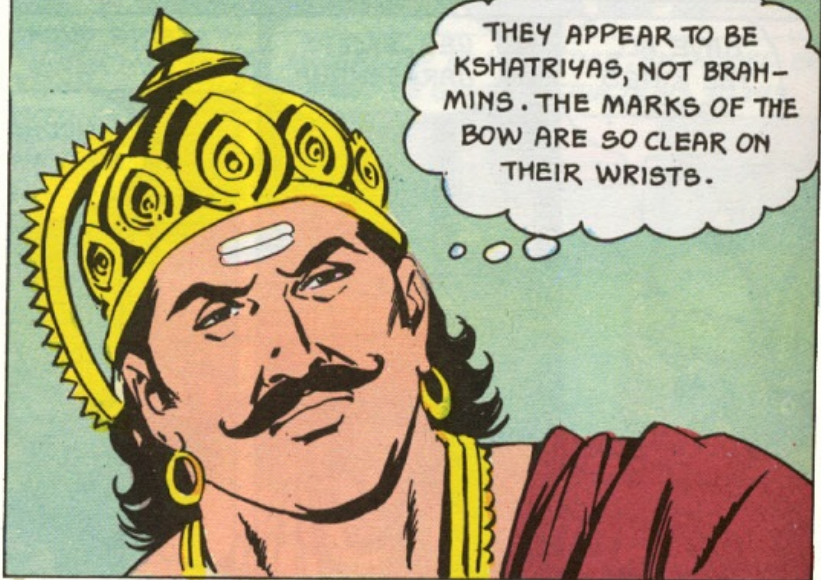
DO NOT DISAPPOINT US, O KING.

YOU KNOW HOW HARISHCHANDRA, RANTIDEVA, SHIBI AND BALI, ATTAINED SALVATION BY GIVING AWAY ALL THEY HAD TO THEIR GUESTS.



"JARASANDHA WAS NOT FOOLED BY THEIR DISGUISE.

THEY APPEAR TO BE KSHATRIYAS, NOT BRAHMINS. THE MARKS OF THE BOW ARE SO CLEAR ON THEIR WRISTS.



YET, PROBABLY IT IS OUT OF FEAR OF ME THAT THEY ARE IN DISGUISE. I WILL GIVE THEM WHATEVER THEY ASK.



"ALOUD HE SAID —

O BRAHMINS, TELL ME WHAT YOU DESIRE. I AM EVEN READY TO GIVE UP MY LIFE FOR YOU.



"KRISHNA SAID —

WE ARE NOT BRAH-
MINS IN SEARCH OF
ALMS. WE ARE KSHA-
TRIYAS KEEN ON
FIGHTING. WE WANT
A DUEL WITH YOU.
THAT IS THE ALMS
WE SEEK.

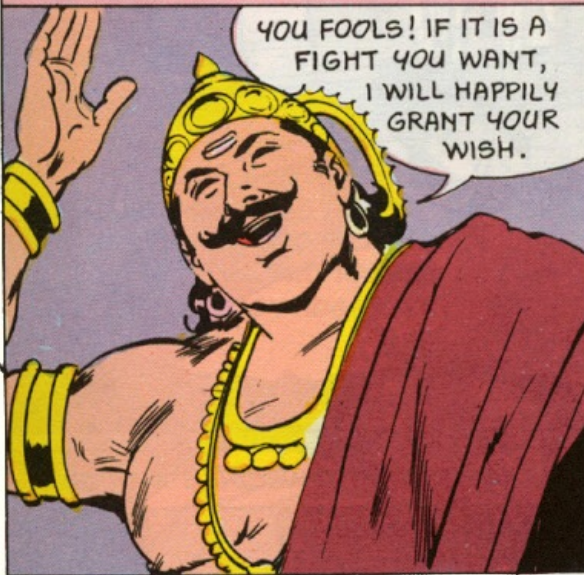


THIS IS PANDU'S SON
BHEEMA AND THIS IS HIS
BROTHER ARJUNA. I AM
THEIR COUSIN AND YOUR
ARCH ENEMY KRISHNA.

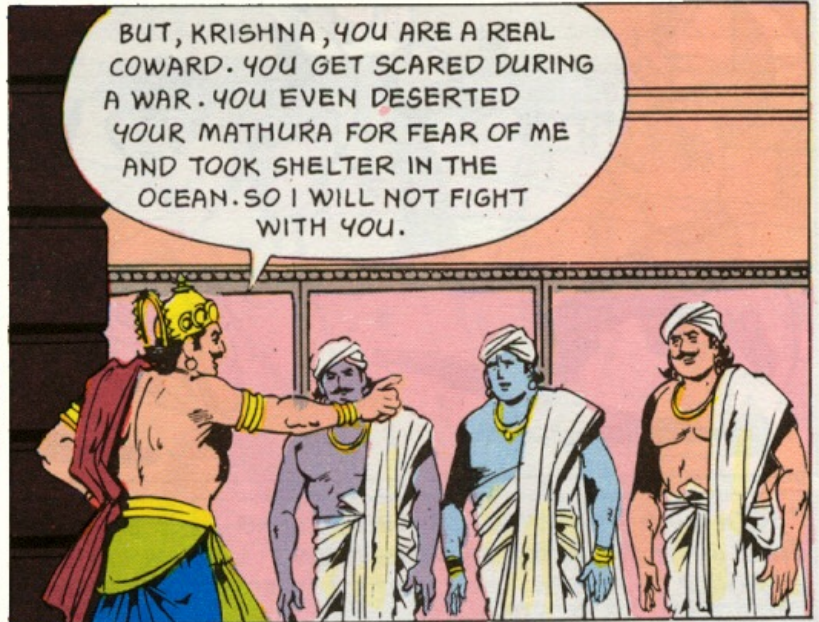


"JARASANDHA ROARED WITH LAUGHTER.

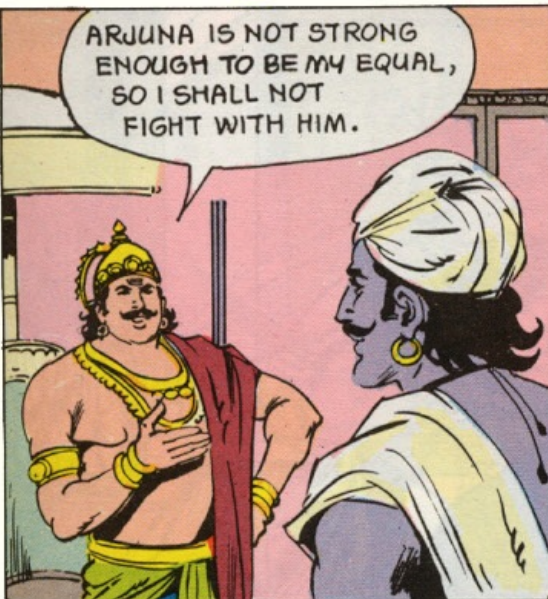
YOU FOOLS! IF IT IS A
FIGHT YOU WANT,
I WILL HAPPILY
GRANT YOUR
WISH.



BUT, KRISHNA, YOU ARE A REAL
COWARD. YOU GET SCARED DURING
A WAR. YOU EVEN DESERTED
YOUR MATHURA FOR FEAR OF ME
AND TOOK SHELTER IN THE
OCEAN. SO I WILL NOT FIGHT
WITH YOU.



ARJUNA IS NOT STRONG
ENOUGH TO BE MY EQUAL,
SO I SHALL NOT
FIGHT WITH HIM.



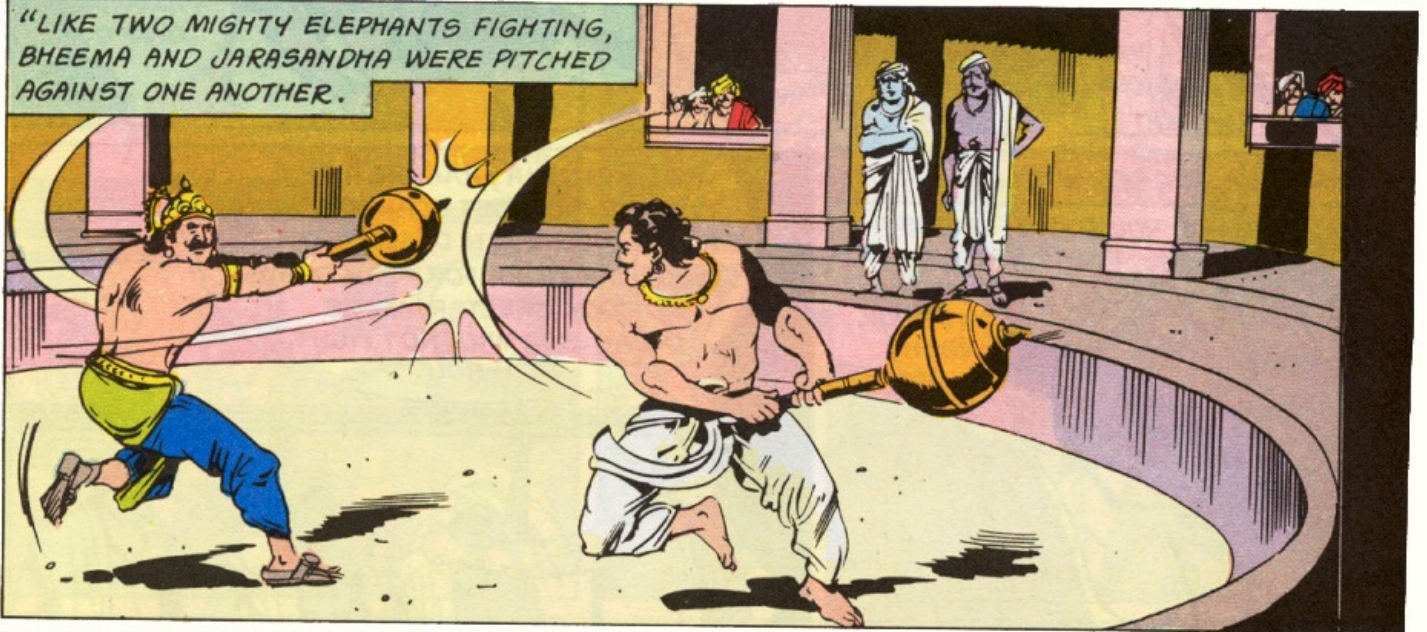
THAT LEAVES ONLY
YOU, BHEEMA. HERE,
TAKE THIS MACE.



"TAKING UP ANOTHER MACE HIMSELF JARASANDHA LED BHEEMA TO THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY.



"LIKE TWO MIGHTY ELEPHANTS FIGHTING, BHEEMA AND JARASANDHA WERE PITCHED AGAINST ONE ANOTHER.



"SUCH WAS THE IMPACT OF THEIR BLOWS THAT BOTH THEIR MACES WERE SOON CRUSHED TO PIECES.



"BAREHANDED, THEY BEGAN TO WRESTLE WITH ONE ANOTHER.



"BEING WELL MATCHED IN STRENGTH, SPIRIT AND SKILL, THE FIGHT WENT ON AND ON FOR DAYS.

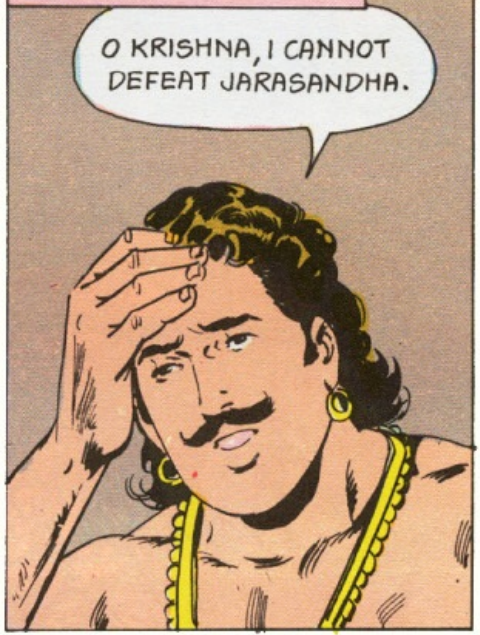


"THEY WOULD STOP THE FIGHT AT DUSK AND RESUME AT DAWN.



WAKE UP, BHEEMA, IT IS TIME TO START AGAIN.

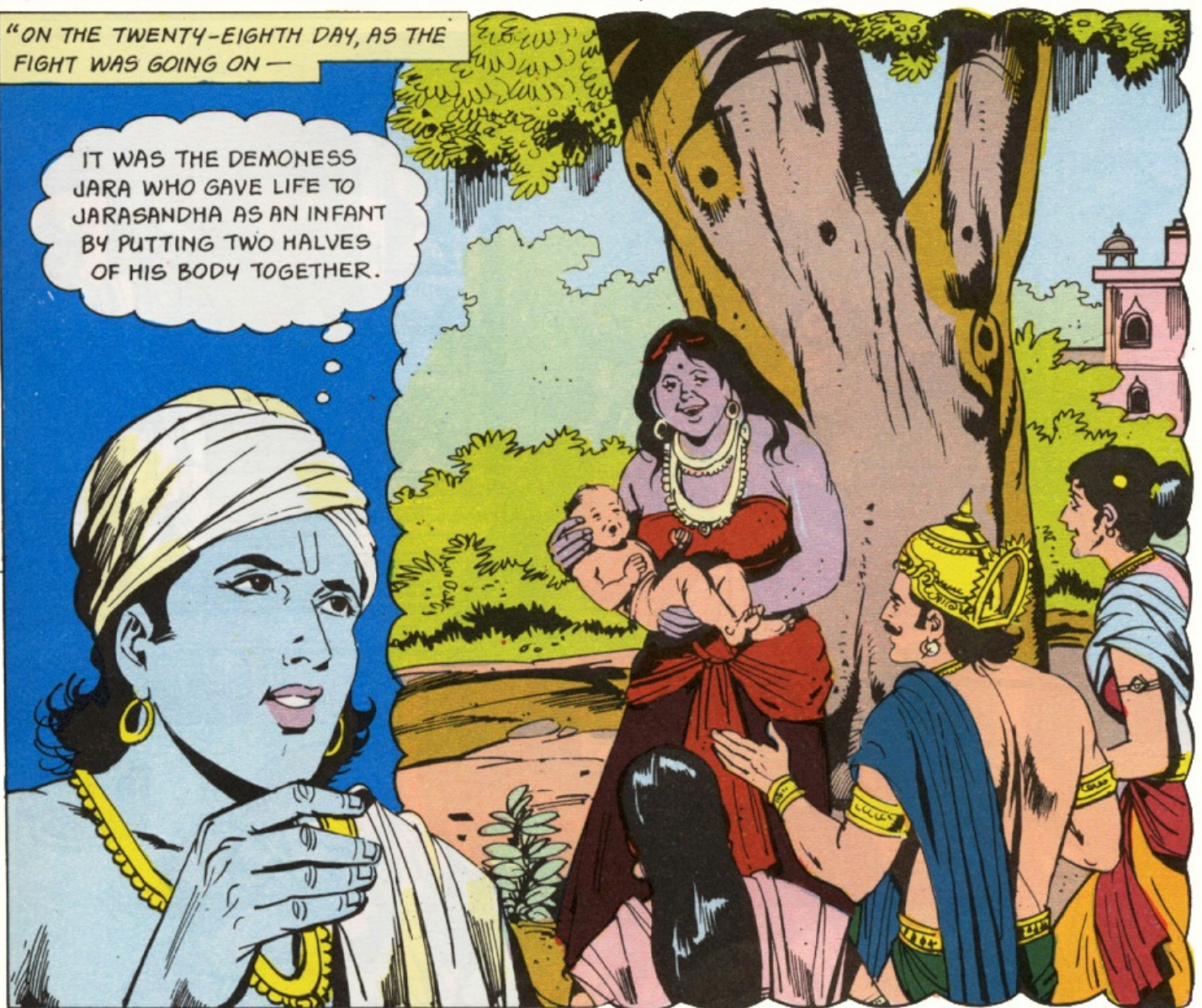
"AT THE END OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY BHEEMA CONFIDED TO KRISHNA.



O KRISHNA, I CANNOT DEFEAT JARASANDHA.

"ON THE TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY, AS THE FIGHT WAS GOING ON —

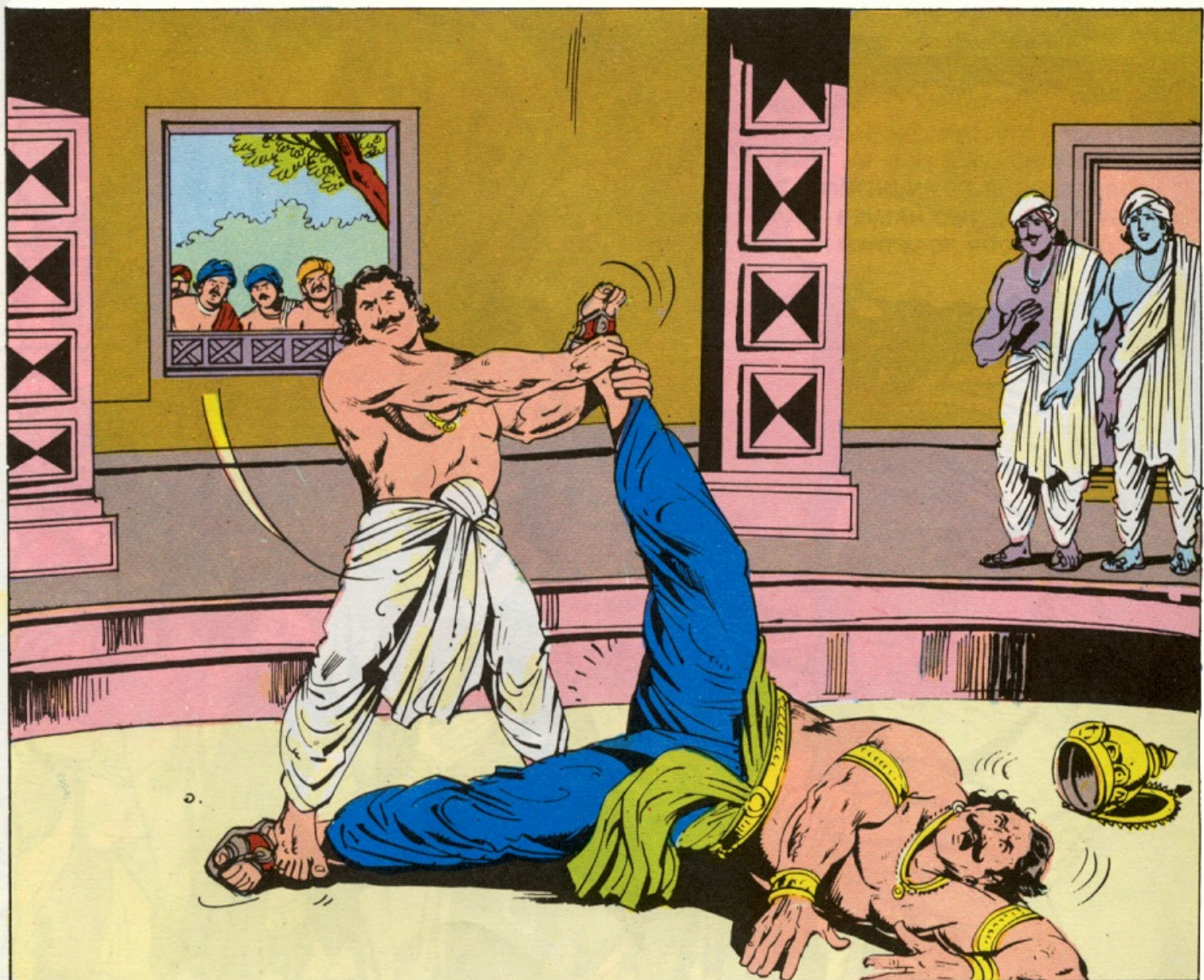
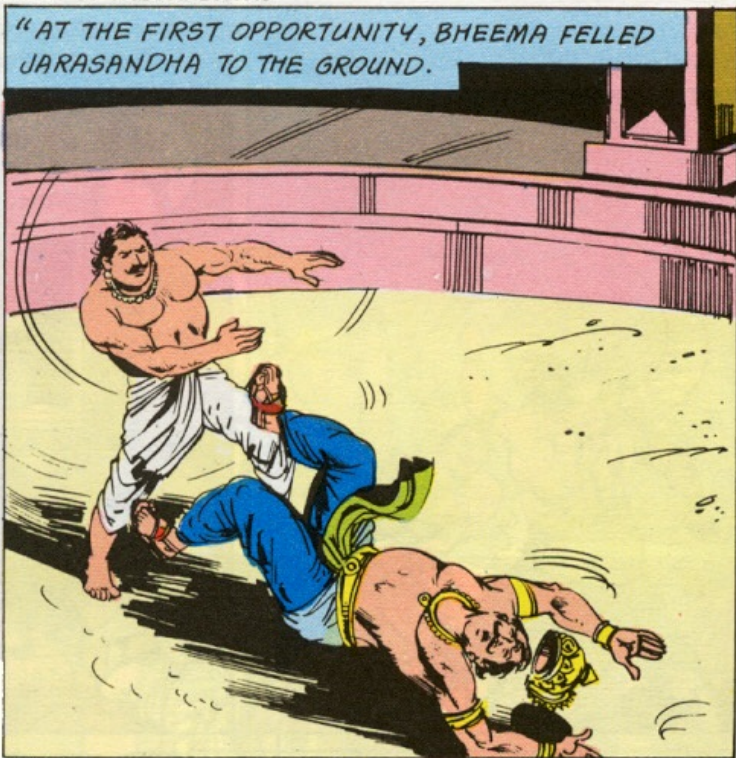
IT WAS THE DEMONESS JARA WHO GAVE LIFE TO JARASANDHA AS AN INFANT BY PUTTING TWO HALVES OF HIS BODY TOGETHER.



"TO GIVE A HINT TO BHEEMA. KRISHNA TOOK UP A TWIG IN HIS HAND AND BROKE IT INTO TWO.



"AT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY, BHEEMA FELLED JARASANDHA TO THE GROUND.



"WITH A SINGLE STROKE, BHEEMA TORE JARASANDHA'S BODY INTO TWO."



"AMIDST THE LOUD CRIES OF THE SPECTATORS, ARJUNA AND KRISHNA EMBRACED BHEEMA."



"JARASANDHA'S SON SAHADEVA WAS INSTALLED AS THE KING BY KRISHNA."



LET US NOW
FREE THE
KINGS.



"THE THOUSANDS OF KINGS WHO HAD BEEN IMPRISONED BY JARASANDHA IN A FORT WERE FREED AT LAST."



"THEIR WEARY AND WORN FACES LIT UP WHEN THEY BEHELD KRISHNA IN HIS DIVINE FORM."



YOU ARE INDEED THE REMOVER OF ALL TROUBLES AND FEARS, O KRISHNA.



"KRISHNA SAID—

IT WAS THE VANITY OF THEIR POSSESSIONS THAT LED THE LIKES OF RAVANA, HEHAYA AND NAHUSHA TO LOSE THEIR POSITIONS. WITH YOUR SENSES UNDER CONTROL AND YOUR MIND FIRM, LOOK AFTER THE SUBJECTS OF YOUR KINGDOM.



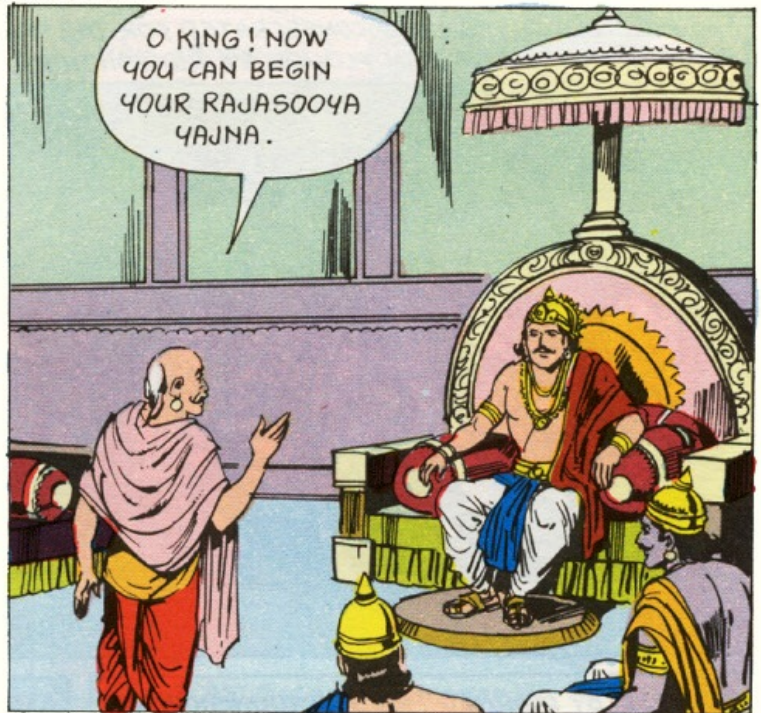
"THEREAFTER KRISHNA ARRANGED FOR THE KINGS TO BE BATHED AND REFRESHED. UNDER KRISHNA'S GUIDANCE, THE NEW KING SAHADEVA GAVE THEM PRESENTS BEFITTING ROYAL GUESTS."



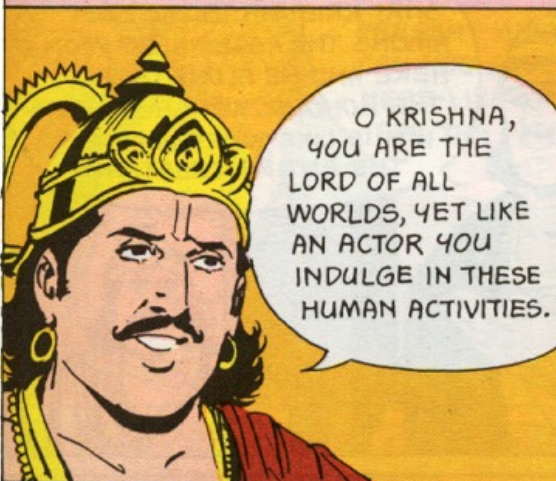
"THE VARIOUS KINGS WENT BACK TO THEIR KINGDOMS ON BEJEWELLED CHARIOTS, SINGING THE PRAISES OF KRISHNA ON THEIR WAY."



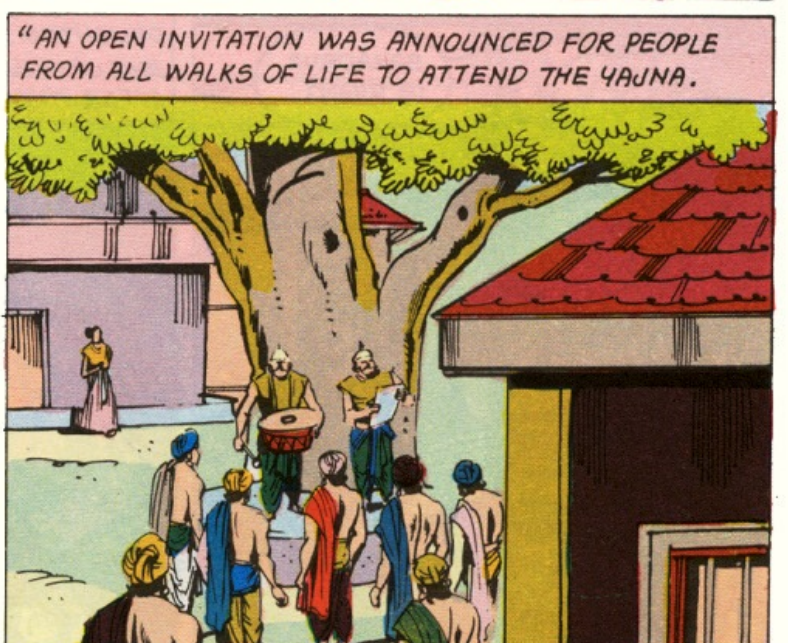
"LATER, KRISHNA, ARJUNA AND BHEEMA TOO RETURNED TO INDRAPRASTHA. THE SOUND OF THEIR CONCH-SHELLS ANNOUNCED THEIR ARRIVAL.



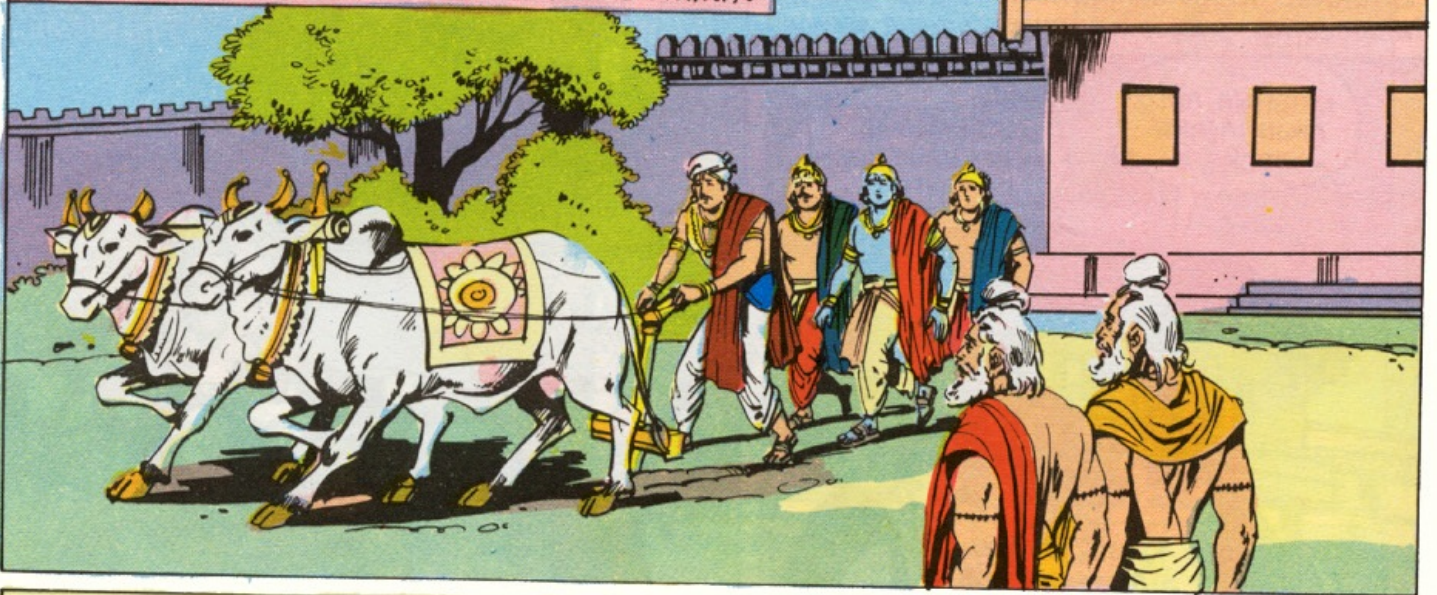
"YUDHISHTHIRA'S EYES DIMMED WITH TEARS OF JOY WHEN HE MET KRISHNA.



"WITH KRISHNA'S PERMISSION, YUDHISHTHIRA BEGAN THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE YAJNA.



"AS PER CUSTOM, THE LAND CONSECRATED FOR THE YAJNA WAS PLOUGHED WITH A GOLDEN PLOUGH BY YUDHISHTHIRA.



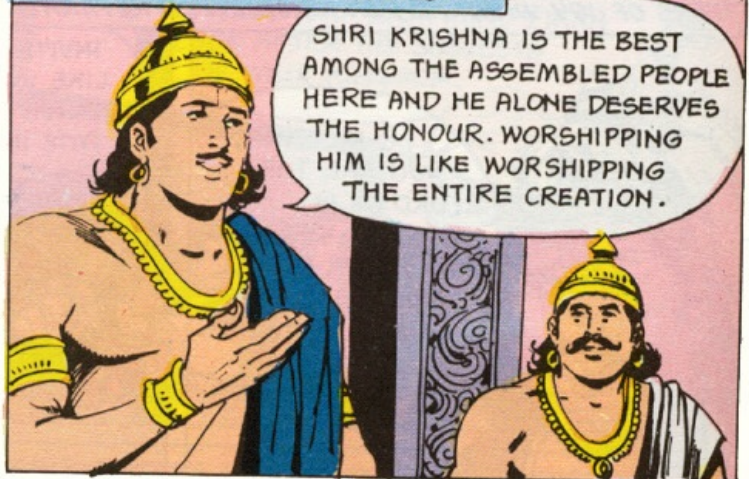
"GUIDED BY LEARNED PRIESTS, YUDHISHTHIRA PERFORMED ALL THE REQUISITE RITUALS OF THE RAJASOOYA YAJNA.

NOW THE MAIN CEREMONIES ARE OVER. TO WHOM WILL YOU OFFER THE FIRST WORSHIP?



"EVERYONE PRESENT HAD A DIFFERENT OPINION AS TO WHO MERITED THE HONOUR OF BEING OFFERED THE FIRST WORSHIP. SAHADEVA SAID —

SHRI KRISHNA IS THE BEST AMONG THE ASSEMBLED PEOPLE HERE AND HE ALONE DESERVES THE HONOUR. WORSHIPPING HIM IS LIKE WORSHIPPING THE ENTIRE CREATION.



"SAHADEVA'S PROPOSAL WAS HEARTILY WELCOMED.

VERY CORRECT.

SAHADEVA IS RIGHT.

WELL SAID.

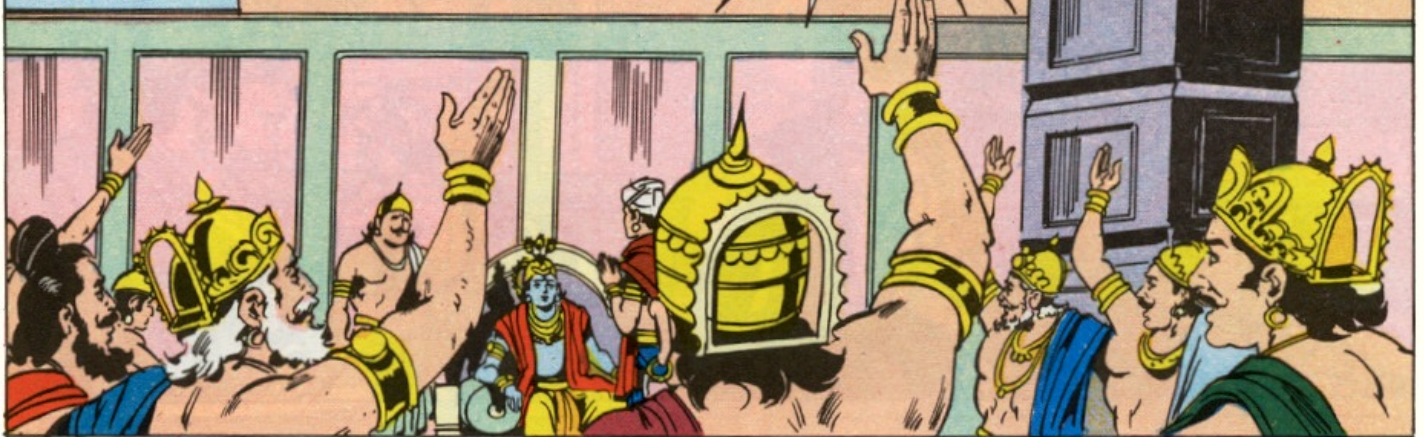


"YUDHISHTHIRA WAS DELIGHTED TO HEAR THIS AND JOYFULLY BEGAN TO OFFER PRAYERS TO KRISHNA.



"WHEN HE GIFTED YELLOW SILK GARMENTS AND COSTLY JEWELS TO KRISHNA THE HALL WAS FILLED WITH JOYOUS CHEERS OF FELICITATION."

HAIL KRISHNA!



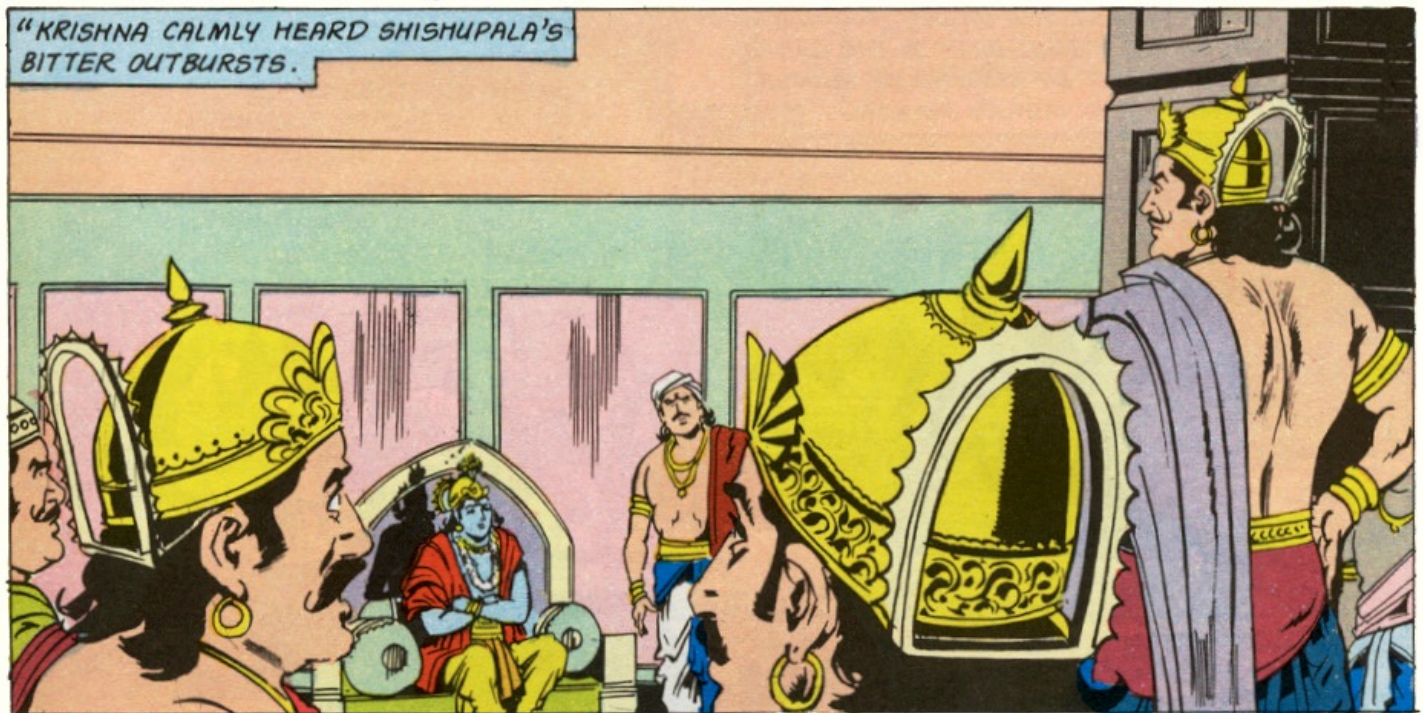
"SHISHUPALA, THE PRINCE OF CHEDI, COULD NOT BEAR ALL THIS."

HOW CAN YOU PEOPLE BE MISLED BY A YOUNG FOOL LIKE SAHADEVA? WITH SO MANY LEARNED VENERABLE SAGES PRESENT HERE, HOW CAN YOU SELECT A COW-HERD LIKE KRISHNA FOR THE FIRST WORSHIP?

HE BELONGS TO NO CASTE OR CREED. NOR DOES HE HAVE ANY VIRTUES. HE IS A BLOT ON HIS FAMILY'S HONOUR.



"KRISHNA CALMLY HEARD SHISHUPALA'S BITTER OUTBURSTS."



"BUT THE OTHERS COULD NOT BEAR TO HEAR KRISHNA BEING INSULTED. WHILE SOME PEOPLE LEFT THE PLACE IN DISGUST, OTHERS TOOK UP ARMS TO ATTACK SHISHUPALA."



"WHEN SHISHUPALA CHALLENGED HIS OPPONENTS, KRISHNA STOOD UP AND TRIED TO CALM THEM DOWN."



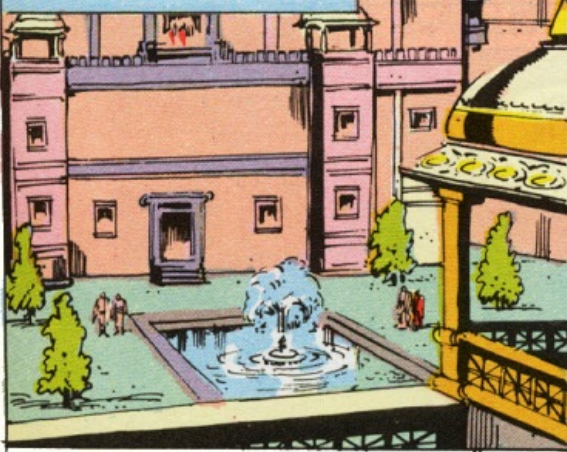
"BUT WHEN SHISHUPALA LUNGED AT HIM, KRISHNA RELEASED HIS CHAKRA AND CUT OFF HIS HEAD."



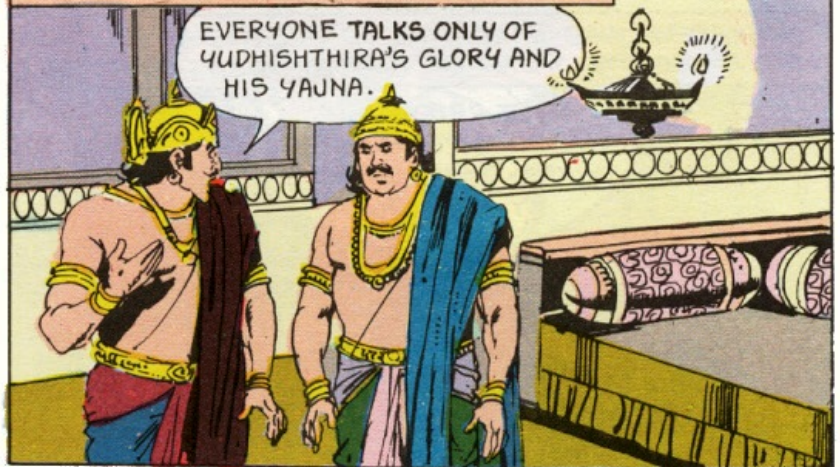
"AFTER COMPLETION OF THE YAJNA, YUDHISHTHIRA PROCEEDED FOR HIS RITUAL BATH IN THE GANGA. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY HORDES OF PEOPLE, SINGING, DANCING AND MERRY MAKING."



"DURYODHANA AND THE KAURAVAS, KRISHNA AND HIS WIVES WERE PERSUADED TO STAY AND SPENT SOME HAPPY DAYS IN THE WONDERFUL PALACE BUILT BY MAYA.



"THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE RAJASOOYA YAJNA WAS A SOURCE OF JOY FOR EVERYONE EXCEPT DURYODHANA. HE BURNED WITH ENVY SEEING THE INCREASED WEALTH AND GLORY OF THE PANDAVAS.



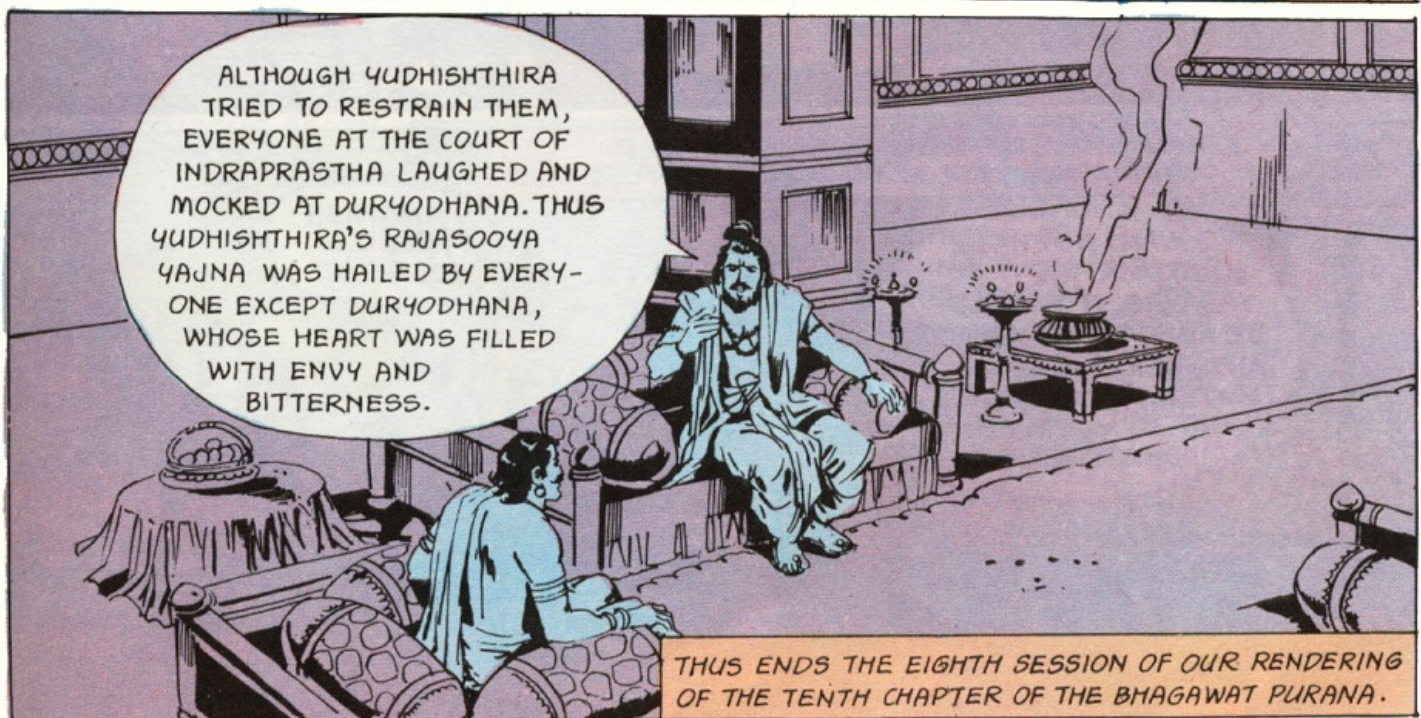
"ONE DAY HE WAS CONFUSED AS HE AMBLED ALONG IN THE PALACE SO BUILT BY MAYA AS TO CAUSE ILLUSIONS.



"MANY PEOPLE INCLUDING BHEEMA AND THE QUEENS BURST INTO LAUGHTER AT DURYODHANA'S FLIGHT.



ALTHOUGH YUDHISHTHIRA TRIED TO RESTRAIN THEM, EVERYONE AT THE COURT OF INDRAPRASTHA LAUGHED AND MOCKED AT DURYODHANA. THUS YUDHISHTHIRA'S RAJASOOYA YAJNA WAS HAILED BY EVERYONE EXCEPT DURYODHANA, WHOSE HEART WAS FILLED WITH ENVY AND BITTERNESS.



THUS ENDS THE EIGHTH SESSION OF OUR RENDERING OF THE TENTH CHAPTER OF THE BHAGAWAT PURANA.