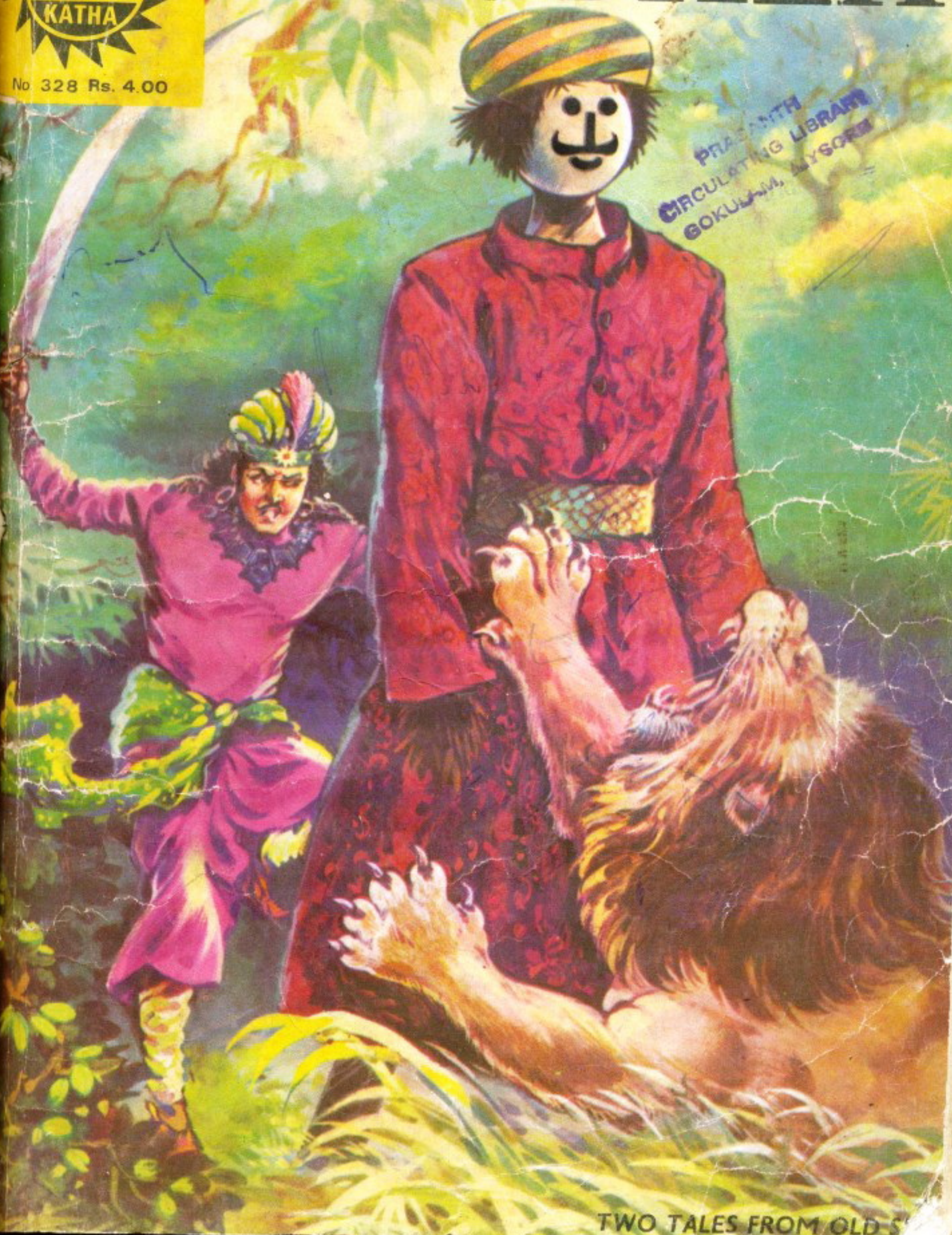




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RAJBALA

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TWO TALES FROM OLD S

Amar Chitra Katha

No. 328

March 1, 1985



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RAJBALA

There are many who love to tell a story and many more who love to listen to one. And each time a story is retold, it acquires a new colour and a fresh dimension.

The grandmother who heard a story as a little girl from her grandmother, tells the same story to her grandchild but with a few embellishments of her own. The traveller from a distant land who happens to hear a story in the course of his travels, later tells it to his own people, modifying it to make it more dramatic or more acceptable to his audience. That is how stories which had first been told centuries ago have been kept alive and why we find recurring themes in the tales told in different regions separated by hundreds of miles.

This Chitra Katha retells two folktales from Sind, now in Pakistan.

We regret because of labour trouble we have not been able to bring out the issue dated February 15, 1985. Subscriptions will be adjusted accordingly.

Also because of this change in schedule the second issue of March and thereafter the second issue of every month will be the Mahabharata series in Amar Chitra Katha.

— Editor

OUR NEXT RELEASE ON

March 15, 1985

Mahabharata-1 Veda Vyasa

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RAJBALA

ONE DAY, TWO HORSEMEN RODE TO THE PALACE OF RANA JAGAT SINGH OF UDAIPUR...

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307

...AND SOUGHT AN AUDIENCE WITH HIM.

SEND THEM
IN.

WHEN THE YOUTHS STOOD BEFORE THE RANA

WHO ARE
YOU?

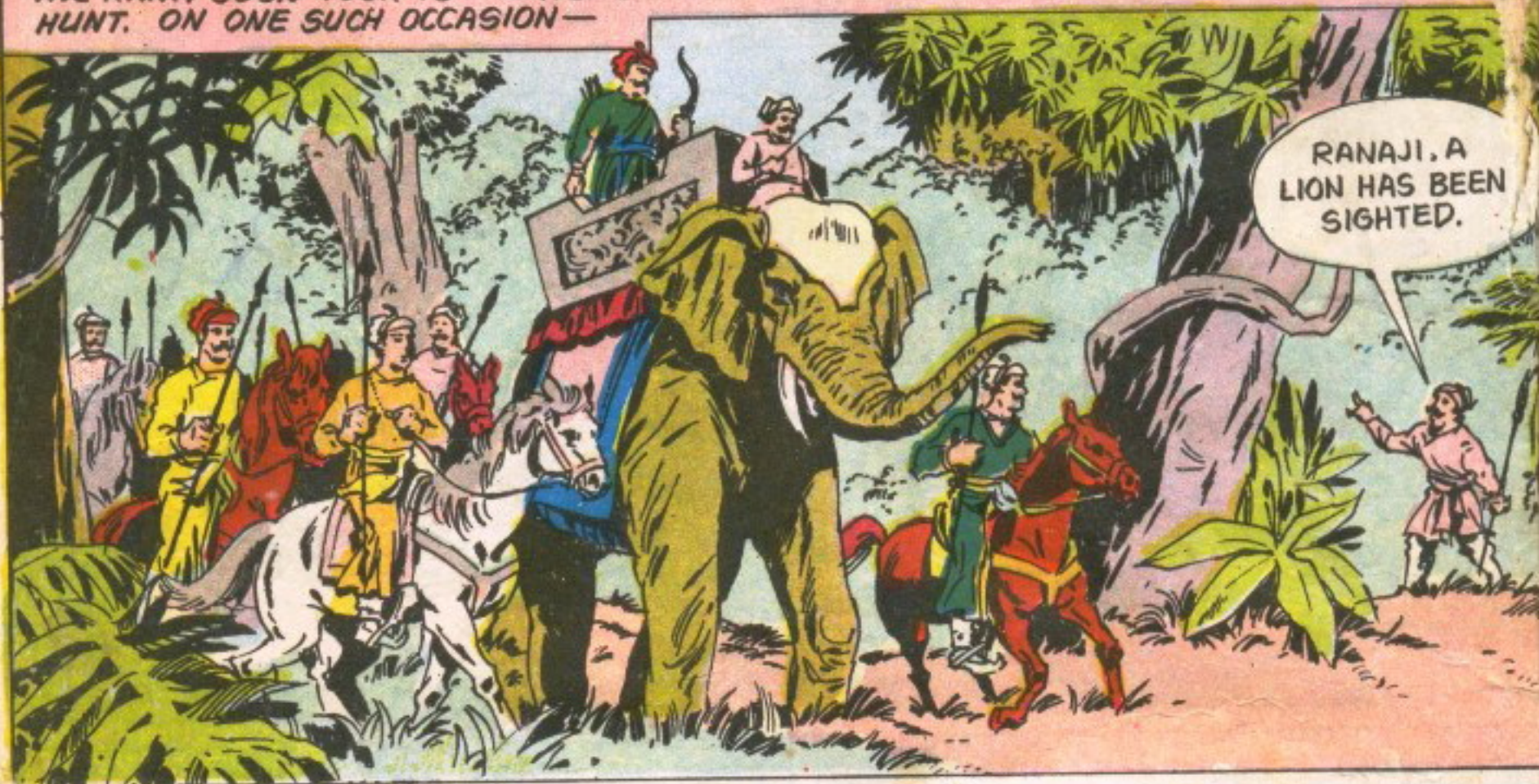
WE ARE RAJPUTS IN NEED OF
WORK. MY NAME
IS AJIT SINGH.

AND
YOURS?

I AM GULAB
SINGH, HIS
BROTHER-IN-
LAW.

VERY WELL. BOTH OF YOU MAY
STAY HERE. YOU WILL BE
PAID FIVE RUPEES A DAY
FOR YOUR SERVICES.

THE RANA SOON TOOK TO THE NEWCOMERS AND THEY OFTEN ACCOMPANIED HIM ON THE HUNT. ON ONE SUCH OCCASION—



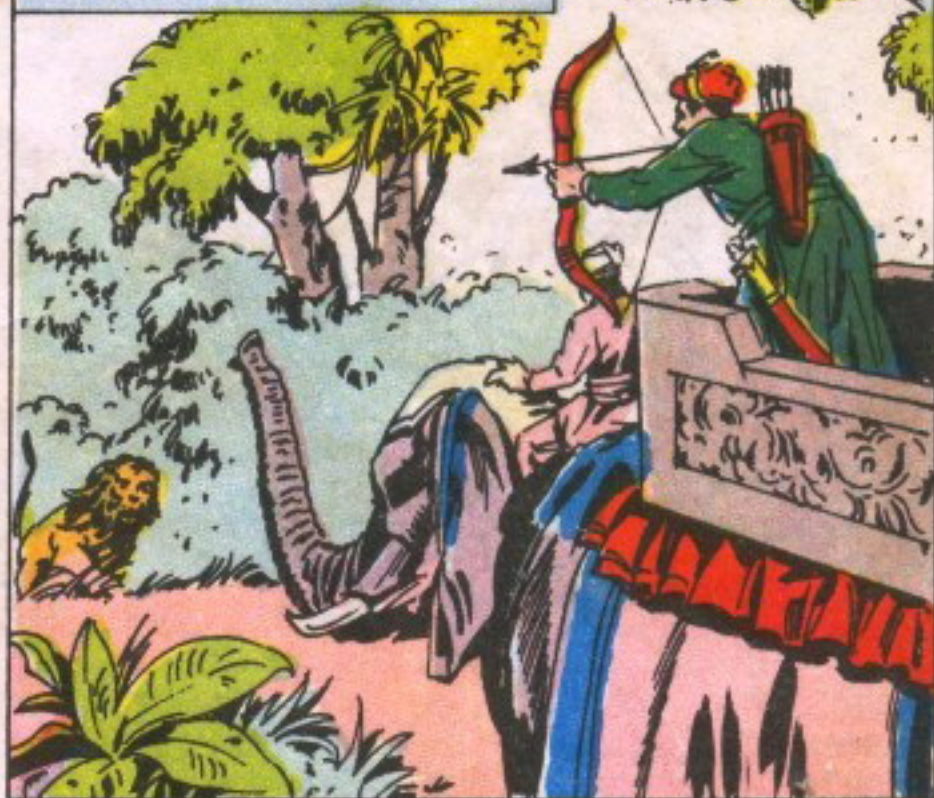
THE BEATERS CREATED A DIN TO BRING THE ANIMAL OUT INTO THE OPEN.



THE BEATERS BEGAN CLOSING IN FROM THREE SIDES AND DROVE THE ANIMAL...



... TOWARDS THE RANA.



THE LION SUDDENLY ROARED AND CHARGED AT THE RANA'S ELEPHANT.



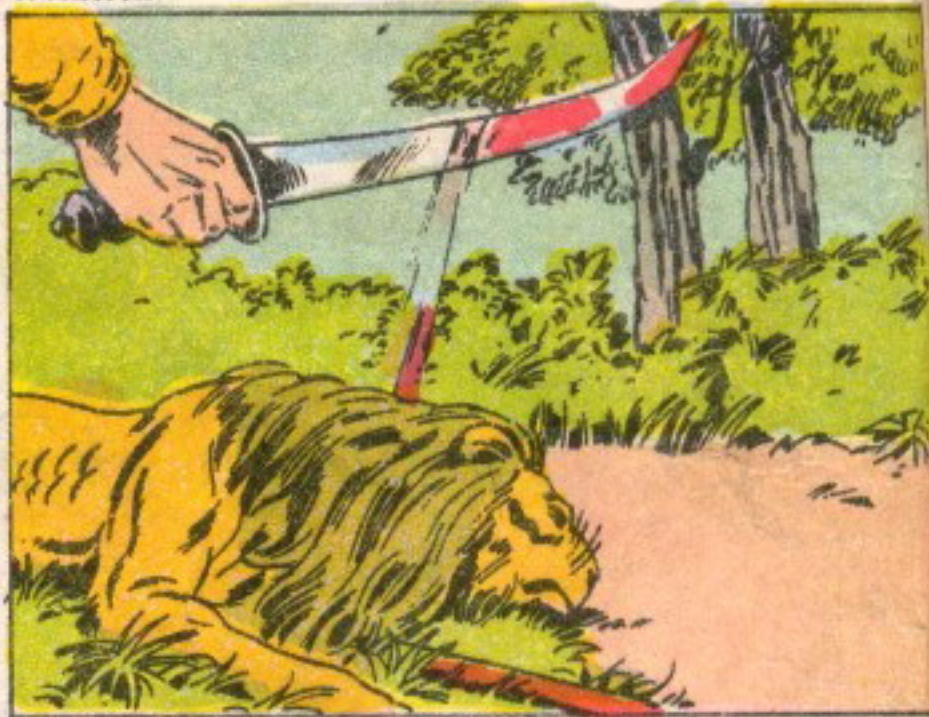
TAKEN UNAWARES, THE RANA DROPPED HIS BOW AND ARROWS.



BEFORE THE LION COULD POUNCE ON THE RANA...



... GULAB SINGH'S SPEAR PIERCED IT.



WELL DONE, GULAB SINGH. YOU WILL BE REWARDED FOR THIS.

I ONLY DID MY DUTY, RANAJI.



LATER AT THE PALACE THE RANA PRESENTED A ROBE OF HONOUR TO GULAB SINGH.

GULAB SINGH, YOU SHALL NOW BE THE CAPTAIN OF MY GUARD.



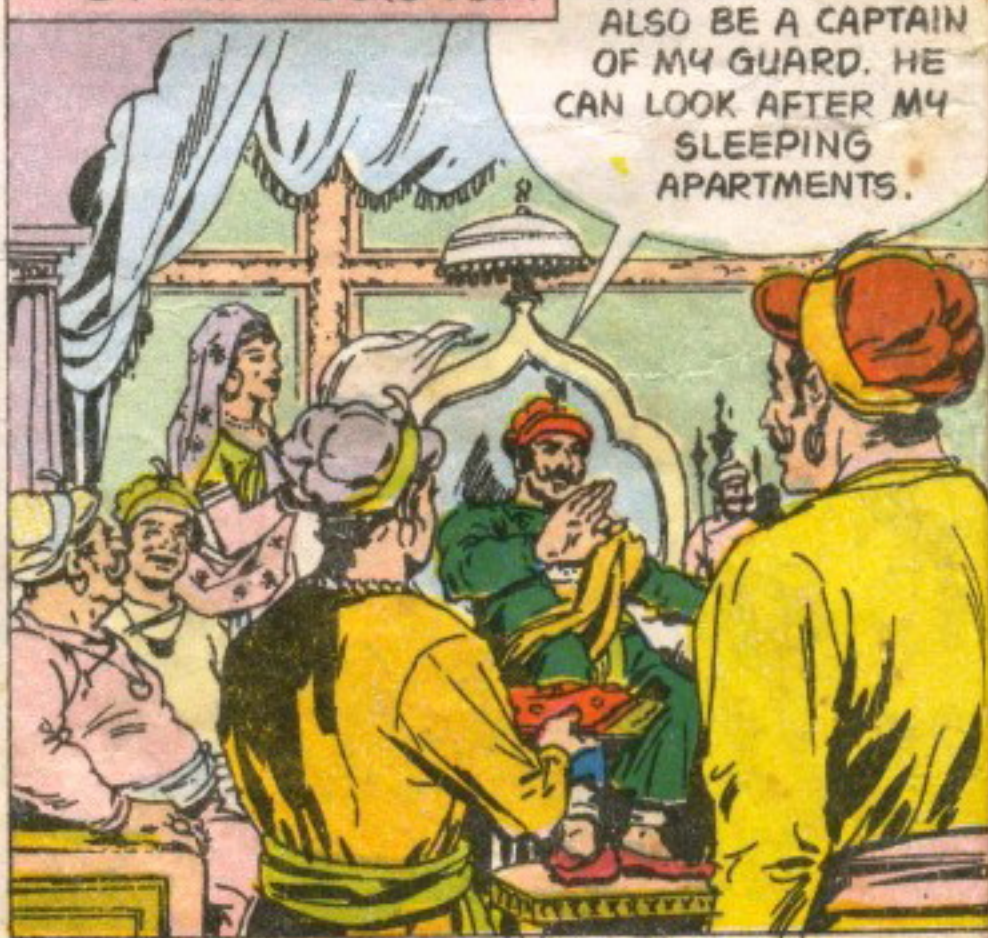
FROM NOW ON YOU WILL BE IN CHARGE OF MY STATE PALACE.

I AM HONOURED, RANAJI, BUT... BUT... AJIT SINGH AND I...



THE RANA UNDERSTOOD.

AJIT SINGH SHALL ALSO BE A CAPTAIN OF MY GUARD. HE CAN LOOK AFTER MY SLEEPING APARTMENTS.



ONE COLD STORMY DAY, GULAB SINGH WHO WAS ON DUTY AT THE STATE PALACE SUDDENLY BROKE OUT INTO A SAD TUNE.

THE DARK RAIN POURS,
THE RIVER ROARS
THE LIGHTNINGS FLASH THE
STORM GOD'S IRE,
THE RAIN-SOAKED GROUND
GLEAMS ALL AROUND
AND YET, WITHIN, MY HEART'S
ON FIRE.

ON HEARING THIS AJIT SINGH REPLIED.

THE LORD IS JUST, IN HIM I TRUST
HEAVEN WATCHES STILL THOUGH
EARTH BE SLEEPING.
SOME SIN DONE IN SOME FORMER
LIFE
IS NOW MY HEART FROM YOUR
HEART KEEPING.

BEAUTIFUL OUT-
POURINGS! BUT
MYSTERIOUS.

NEITHER WAS AWARE THAT THE RANA'S WIFE
HAD HEARD THEIR SONGS.

THAT NIGHT —

RANAJI, OF THE TWO
CAPTAINS OF YOUR
GUARD ONE IS A
WOMAN.

DO YOU MEAN
GULAB SINGH AND
AJIT SINGH?

YES,
RANAJI.

HA! HA! THEY ARE
BROTHERS-IN-LAW.

RANAJI, I MAY
BE WRONG. STILL,
THERE IS NO HARM
IN QUESTIONING
THEM.

VERY WELL, IF
YOU INSIST.

THE NEXT DAY, AS AJIT SINGH AND GULAB SINGH WERE GETTING READY TO LEAVE FOR THE PALACE, THEY HEARD A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.



THE RANA WOULD LIKE TO SEE BOTH OF YOU AT ONCE.



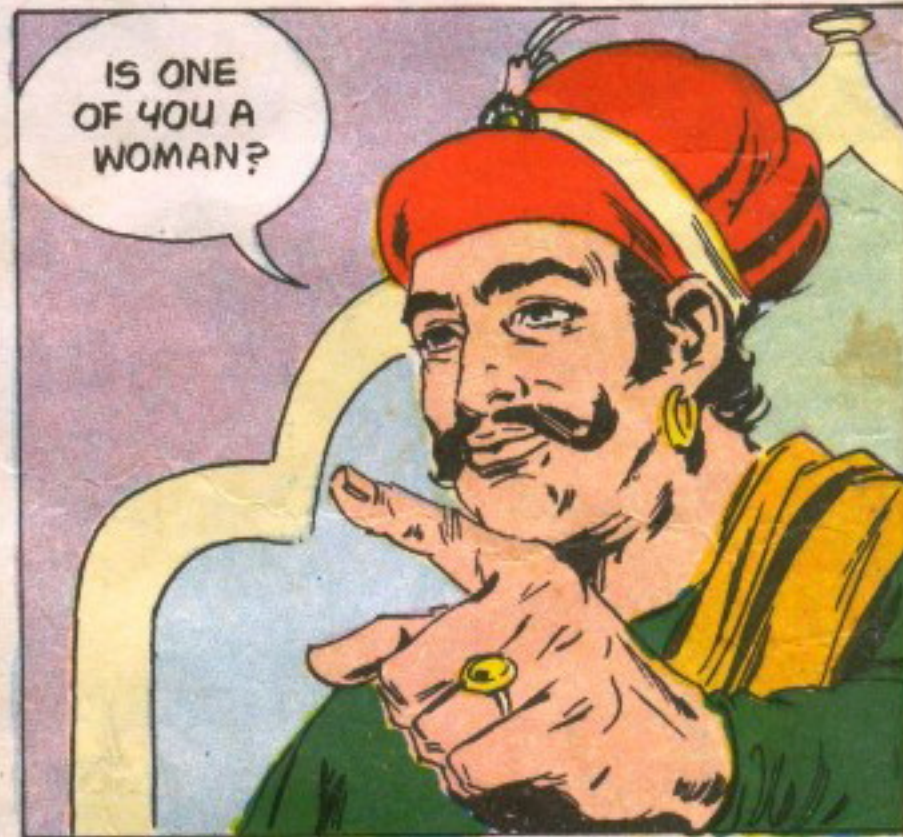
AT THE COURT—

DID YOU SEND FOR US, RANAJI?

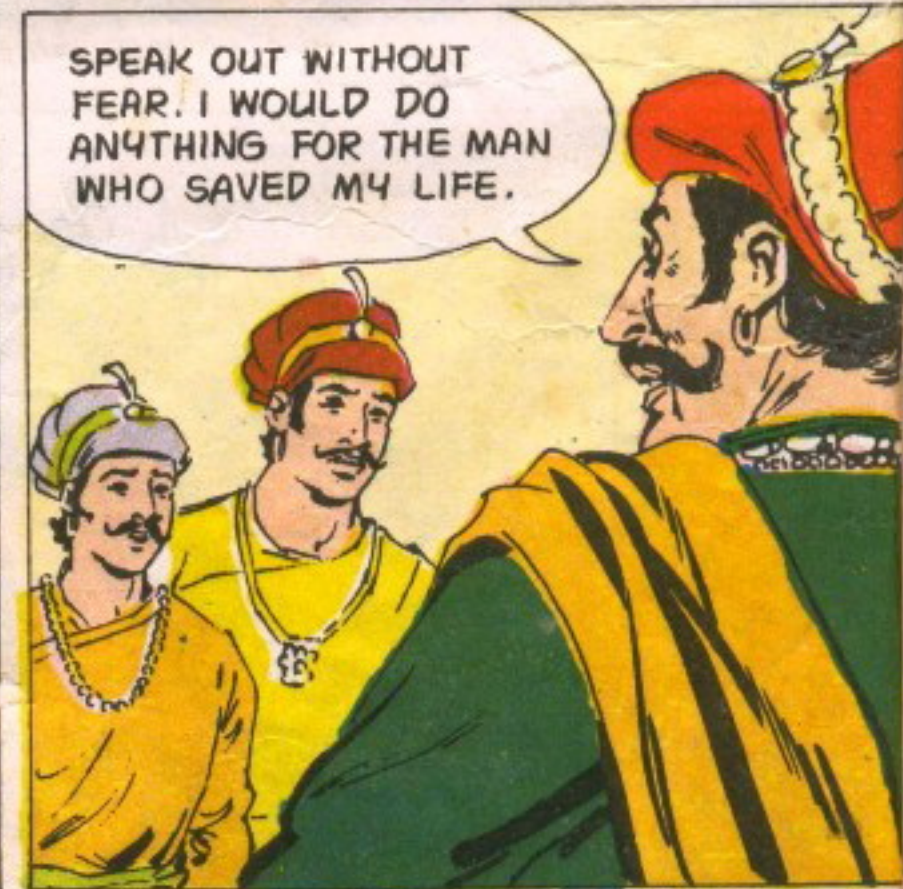
YES. NOW ANSWER ME, TRUTHFULLY.



IS ONE OF YOU A WOMAN?



SPEAK OUT WITHOUT FEAR. I WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR THE MAN WHO SAVED MY LIFE.



FORGIVE US, RANAJI, I AM AJIT SINGH. MY FATHER WAS RAJA AMAR SINGH OF UMARKOT.

OH!

MY FATHER'S LANDS WERE SEIZED BY THE RAJA OF SIND AND HE DIED A POOR MAN. I WAS BROUGHT UP BY MY WIDOWED MOTHER.

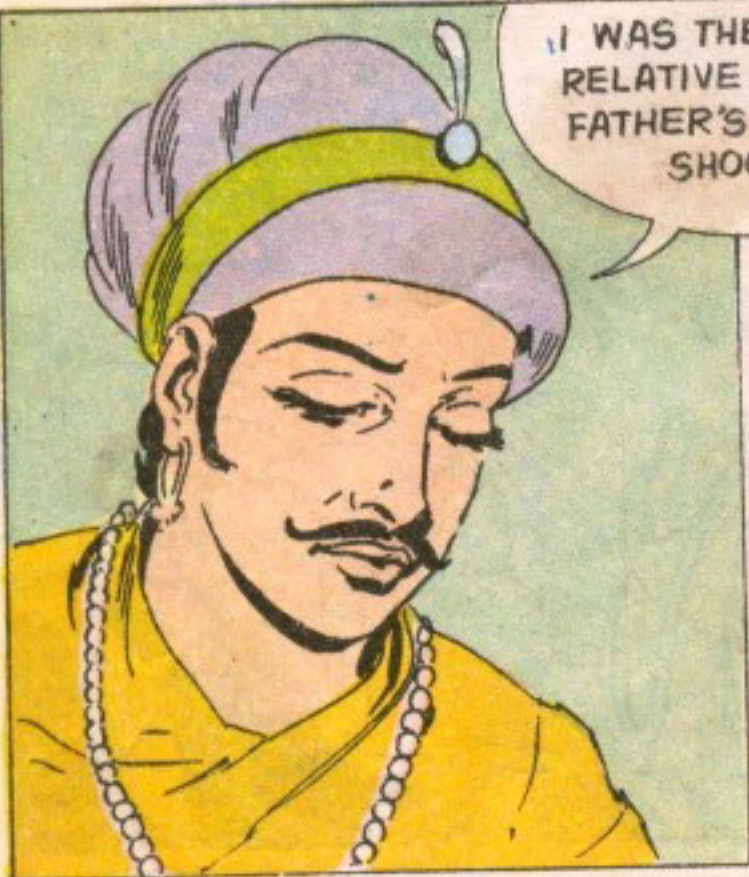
THEN, GULAB, YOU MUST BE THE WOMAN.

YES. I AM HIS WIFE, RAJBALA, THE DAUGHTER OF THAKUR PRATAP SINGH OF VISHALPUR.

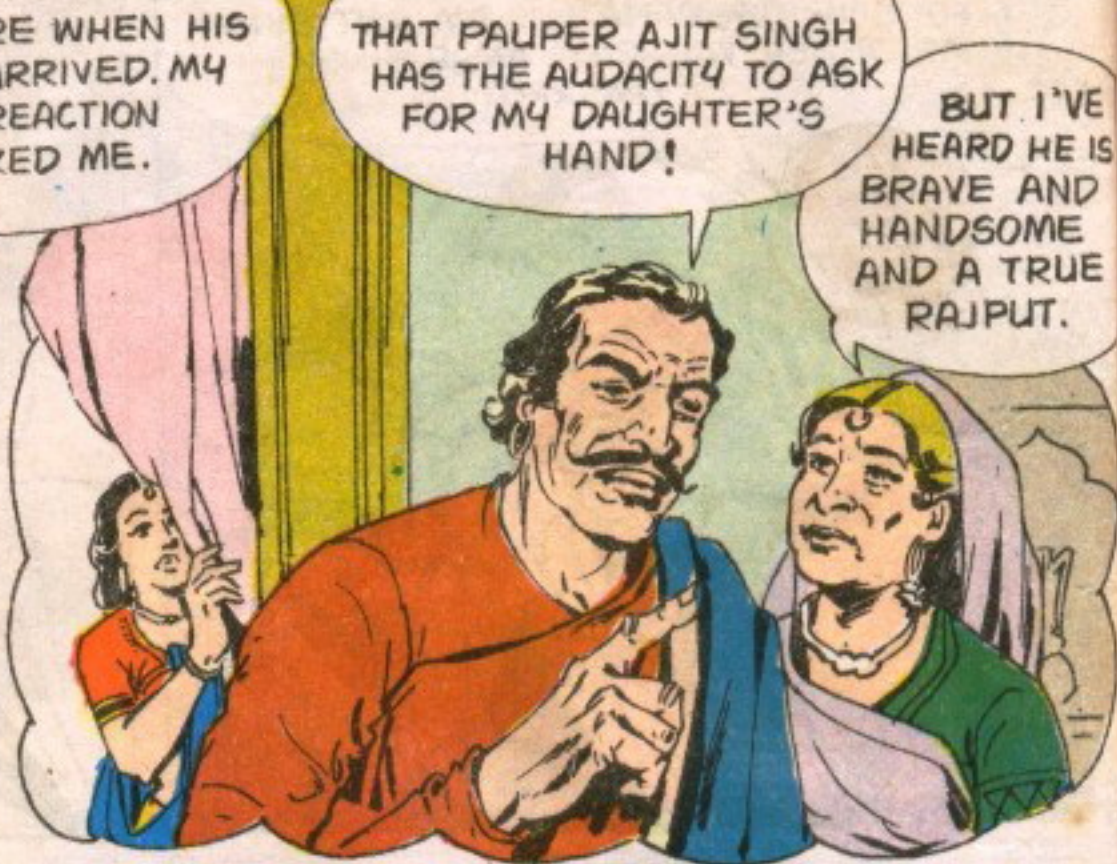
THEN WHY ARE THE TWO OF YOU HERE?

WHEN WE WERE INFANTS, RAJBALA WAS BETROTHED TO ME.

AS I GREW UP, MY MOTHER TOO DIED. LONELY AND FORLORN, I SENT AN ELDERLY RELATIVE TO PRATAP SINGH TO REMIND HIM OF HIS PLEDGE.

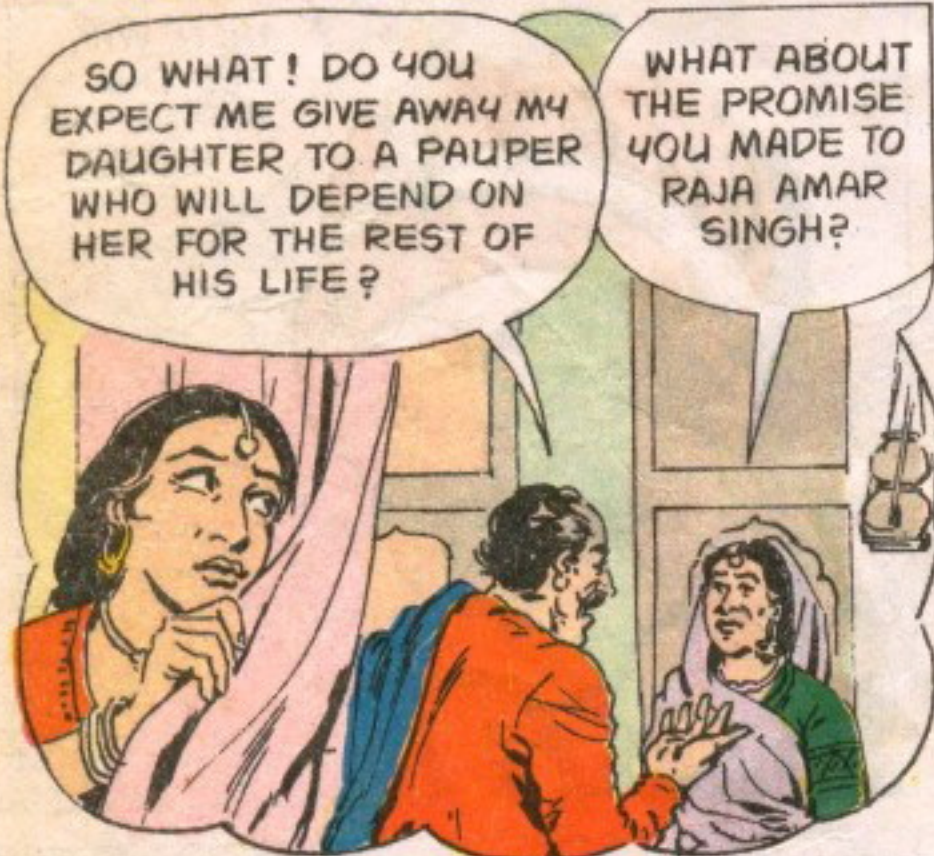


I WAS THERE WHEN HIS
RELATIVE ARRIVED. MY
FATHER'S REACTION
SHOCKED ME.



THAT PAUPER AJIT SINGH
HAS THE AUDACITY TO ASK
FOR MY DAUGHTER'S
HAND!

BUT I'VE
HEARD HE IS
BRAVE AND
HANDSOME
AND A TRUE
RAJPUT.



SO WHAT! DO YOU
EXPECT ME GIVE AWAY MY
DAUGHTER TO A PAUPER
WHO WILL DEPEND ON
HER FOR THE REST OF
HIS LIFE?

WHAT ABOUT
THE PROMISE
YOU MADE TO
RAJA AMAR
SINGH?



IT DOESN'T
BEFIT A RAJPUT TO
GO BACK ON HIS
WORD.



ALL RIGHT.
I CAN'T GO BACK
ON MY WORD.
BUT...



...I COULD SET A
CONDITION WHICH HE
WOULD NEVER BE
ABLE TO FULFIL.

I WALKED BACK TO MY ROOM DETERMINED TO WED MY BETROTHED AND NONE ELSE. I REQUESTED HIS RELATIVE TO CONVEY MY DECISION TO HIM.

THAT WAS WHEN I DECIDED THAT COME WHAT MAY I WOULD FULFIL THE CONDI-
TION.

WHAT WAS THE CONDITION?

I COULD MARRY RAJBALA IF I GAVE THE THAKUR TWENTY THOUSAND RUPEES.

OH!

AND I DIDN'T HAVE EVEN TWENTY RUPEES WITH ME.

SO I RODE TO JAISALMER AND SAW A MONEY-LENDER. MY FATHER HAD OFTEN HAD DEALINGS WITH HIM. I ASKED FOR HIS HELP.

YOUR FATHER WAS A GOOD FRIEND OF MINE AND I WILL BE GLAD TO HELP YOU.

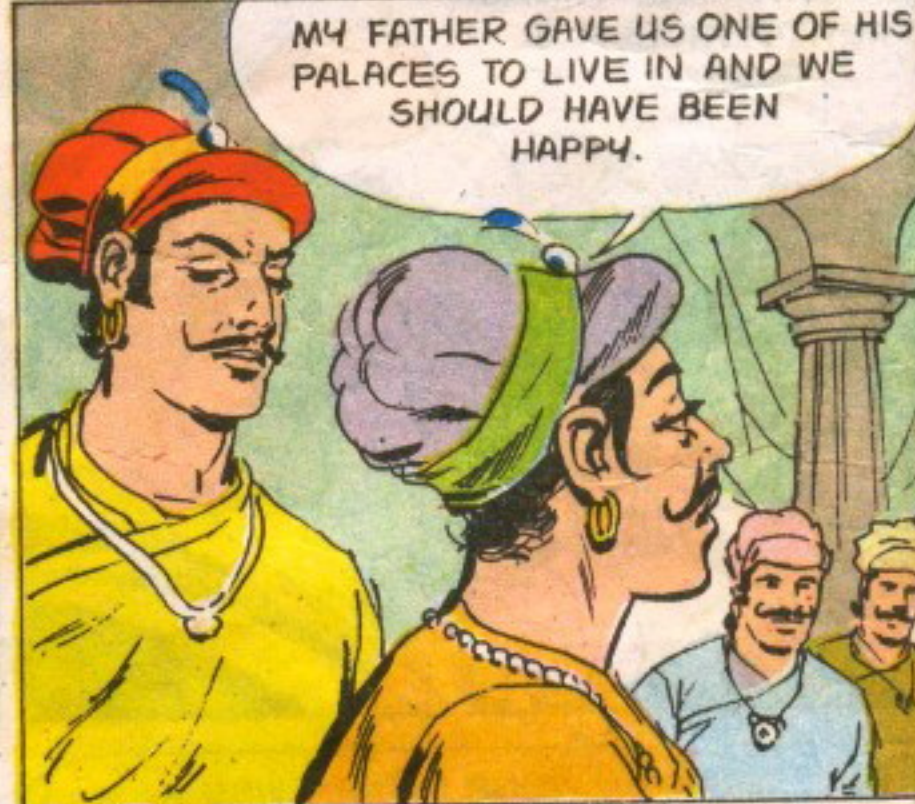
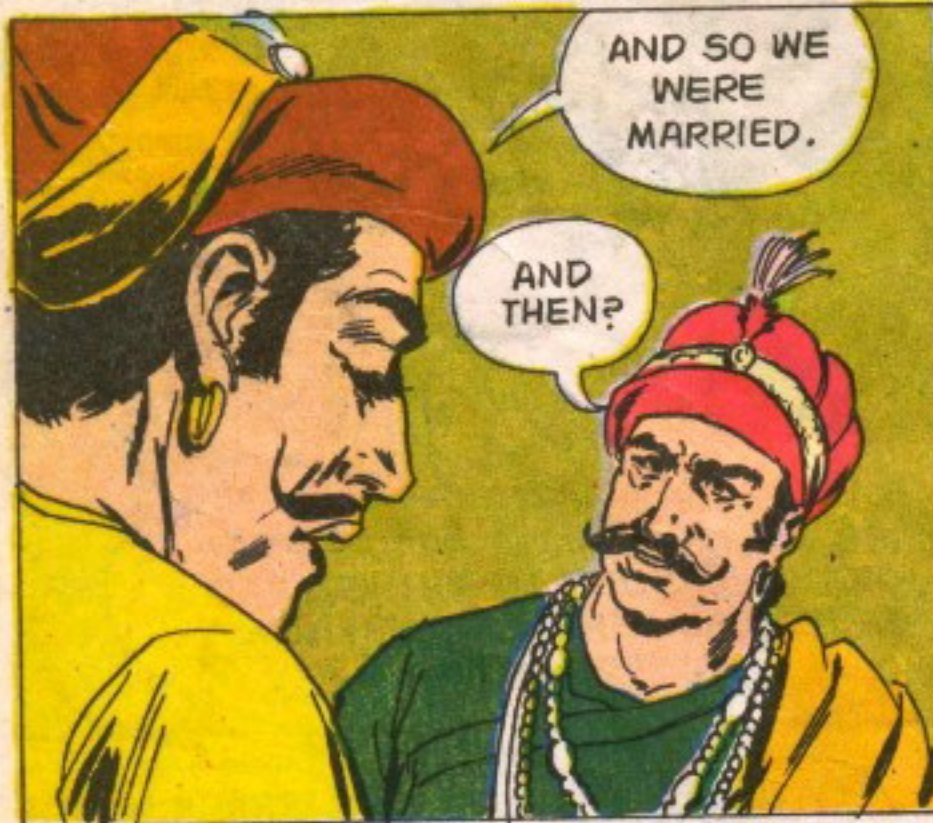
TAKE THIS MONEY AND GO AND MAKE RAJBALA YOURS.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH. I WILL REPAY IT TO YOU AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

"I WENT TO VISHALPUR AND SOUGHT AN AUDIENCE WITH THE THAKUR."



"THE THAKUR WAS UNHAPPY WITH THE TURN OF EVENTS. BUT HE COULD NOT GO BACK ON HIS WORD."



"BUT AS THE DAYS WENT BY, I FOUND MY HUSBAND BECOMING MOODY AND WITHDRAWN."



"THEN ONE DAY I DECIDED TO FIND OUT WHAT THE MATTER WAS."



HAVE I DONE
SOMETHING
WRONG? HAVE
I LOST YOUR
LOVE?

NO! NO!
I LOVE YOU
RAJBALA.
BUT...



BUT WHAT? I AM YOUR
WIFE NOW. YOU HAVE TO
SHARE YOUR JOYS AND
SORROWS WITH ME.
PLEASE TELL ME WHAT
IS WORRYING YOU.



SO I TOLD HER
ABOUT THE LOAN
I HAD TAKEN.



...I WILL
HAVE NO PEACE
TILL I REPAY
IT.



I WILL HAVE TO
EARN THE MONEY
BY GETTING
SOME WORK.

BUT THAT CAN'T
BE DONE HERE IN
VISHALPUR.



I KNOW. I WILL HAVE TO
LOOK FOR WORK IN SOME
OTHER KINGDOM, BUT I CAN'T
BEAR THE THOUGHT OF
BEING AWAY FROM
YOU.

I WILL
COME WITH
YOU WHEREVER
YOU GO!

BUT YOUR
FATHER WILL
NEVER AGREE
TO IT.

WE WILL
GO WITHOUT
HIS KNOWLEDGE
THEN. TONIGHT
ITSELF.

AND SO WE CAME
HERE DISGUISED AS
BROTHERS-IN-LAW
TO EARN TWENTY
THOUSAND RUPEES
TO REPAY A
LOAN.

WELL, YOU
HAVE MORE THAN
EARNED IT BY
SAVING MY
LIFE.

THE RANA CALLED FOR A MAID.

OUR GULAB IS TRULY A PRANARAKSHAK DEVI*. GIVE HER THE ROBES AND JEWELS BEFITTING HER STATUS.

HE CALLED FOR HIS TREASURER.

BRING ME TWENTY THOUSAND RUPEES.

WHEN THE MONEY WAS BROUGHT, THE RANA GAVE IT TO AJIT SINGH.

REPAY THE LOAN WITH THIS MONEY.

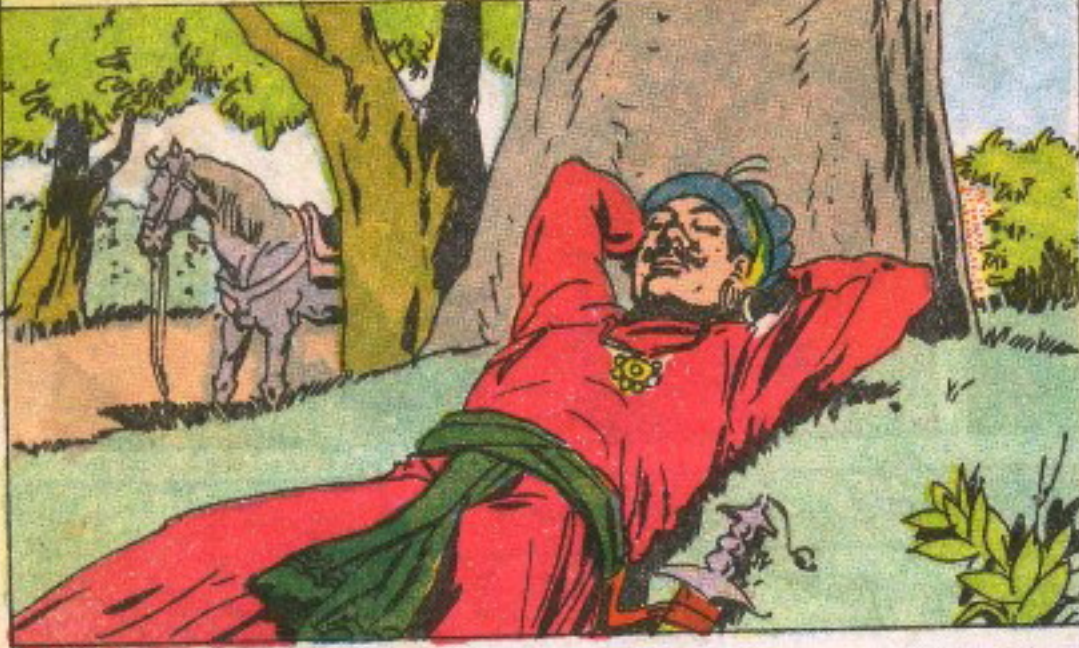
MAHARAJ!

THEN HE GAVE ONE OF HIS PALACES AND A LARGE ESTATE TO RAJBALA...

... WHERE AJIT SINGH AND HIS COURAGEOUS, RESOURCEFUL WIFE, LIVED HAPPILY, TILL THE END OF THEIR DAYS.

BIR SINGH AND SUNDERBAI

BIR SINGH, THE CROWN PRINCE OF VALLABHIPURA, LOST TRACK OF HIS COMPANIONS WHILE HUNTING. HOT AND TIRED HE DECIDED TO REST FOR A WHILE IN A GARDEN FULL OF SHADY TREES.



SUDDENLY HE HEARD SOMEONE SING.



BY THE TIME HE REACHED THE SPOT, THE SONG WAS OVER AND A DISCUSSION WAS ON.

WITHOUT A MOTHER OR A WIFE, MEN ARE LOST AND YET THEY HAVE NO RESPECT FOR WOMEN.

HOW MEN TREAT WOMEN DEPENDS VERY MUCH ON THE WOMEN THEMSELVES.

HOW TRUE!



I HAVE DECIDED TO MARRY BIR SINGH, THE RAJKUMAR OF VALLABHIPURA.

HOW INTERESTING!



AND IF HE DOES NOT TREAT ME AS I EXPECT HIM TO...



...I'LL TEACH HIM
TO DO SO BY SHOWING
HIM THAT WOMEN CAN
BE AS CLEVER, BRAVE
AND STRONG AS MEN.

HEAR!
HEAR!

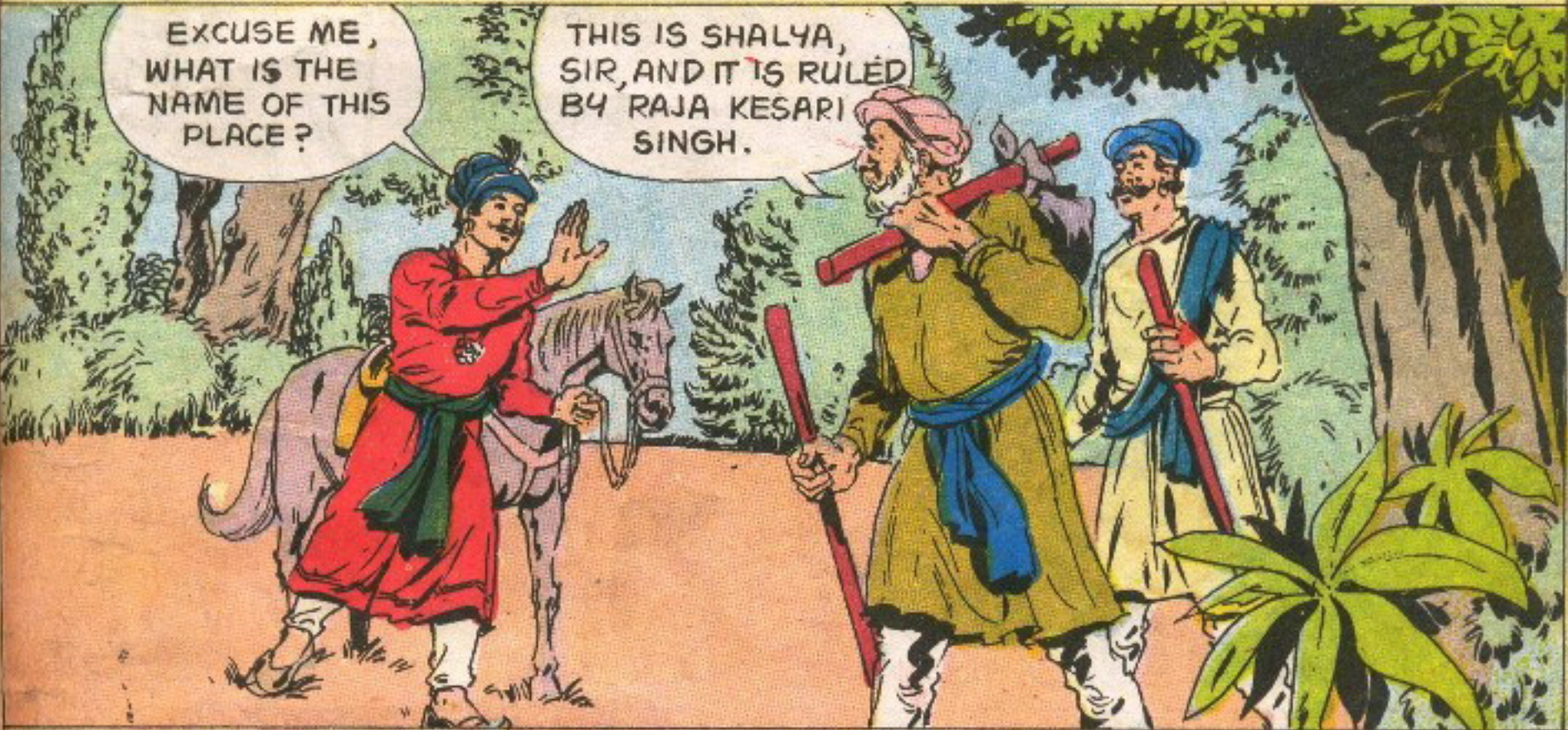
A VAIN BOAST!
BUT CHARMING
NEVERTHELESS.



BIR SINGH WAS ABOUT TO LEAVE THE GARDENS, WHEN HE MET A FEW MEN OUTSIDE.

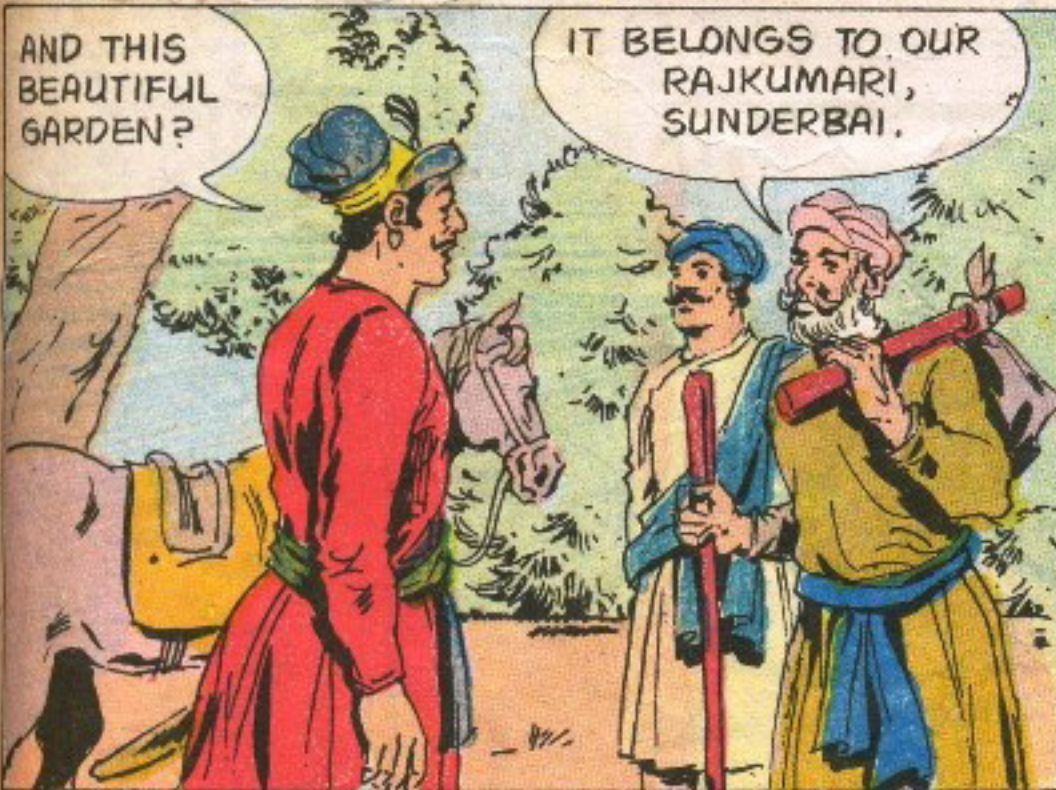
EXCUSE ME,
WHAT IS THE
NAME OF THIS
PLACE?

THIS IS SHALYA,
SIR, AND IT IS RULED
BY RAJA KESARI
SINGH.

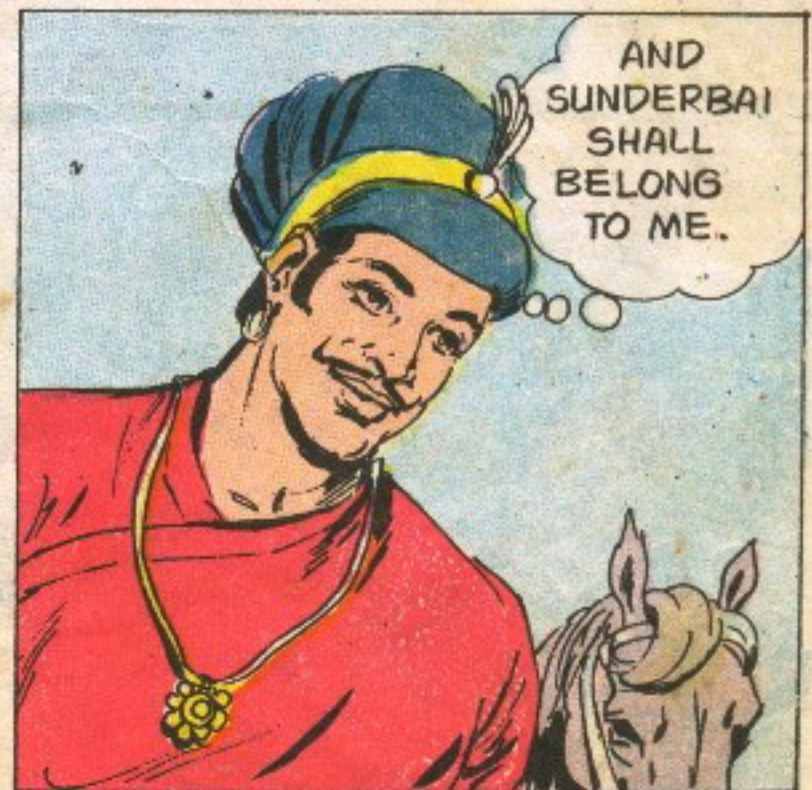


AND THIS
BEAUTIFUL
GARDEN?

IT BELONGS TO OUR
RAJKUMARI,
SUNDERBAI.



AND
SUNDERBAI
SHALL
BELONG
TO ME..

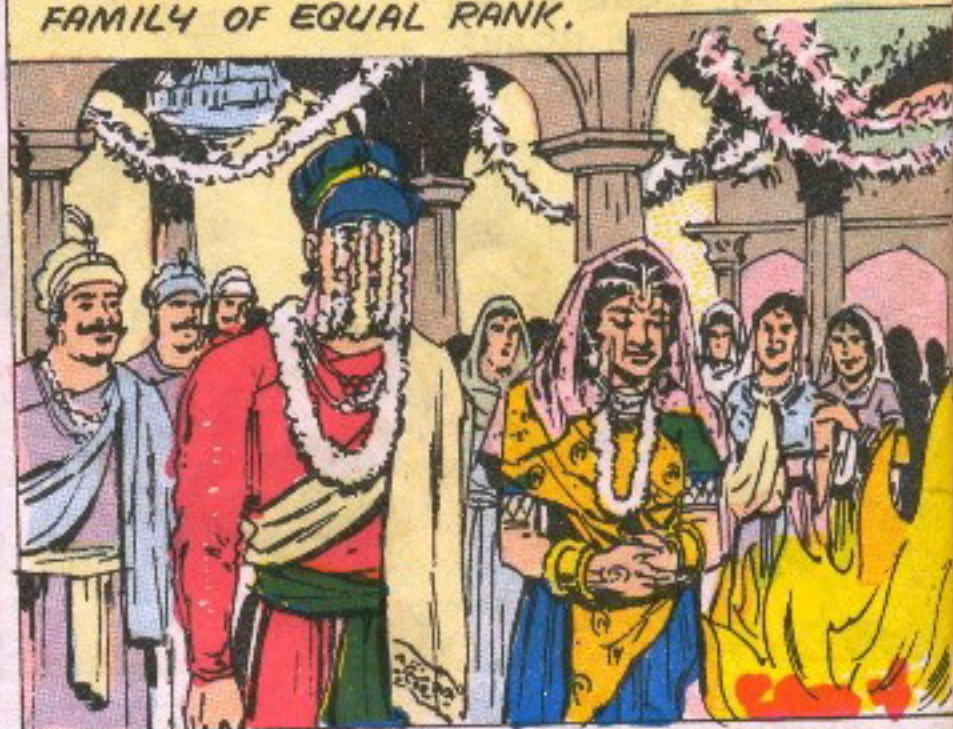


A FEW DAYS LATER, A PRIEST CAME TO THE PALACE OF RAJA KESARI SINGH.

THE RAJA OF VALLABHIPURA SEEKS THE HAND OF YOUR DAUGHTER RAJKUMARI SUNDERBAI FOR HIS SON RAJKUMAR BIR SINGH.



RAJA KESARI SINGH READILY ACCEPTED THE PROPOSAL SINCE IT HAD COME FROM A FAMILY OF EQUAL RANK.



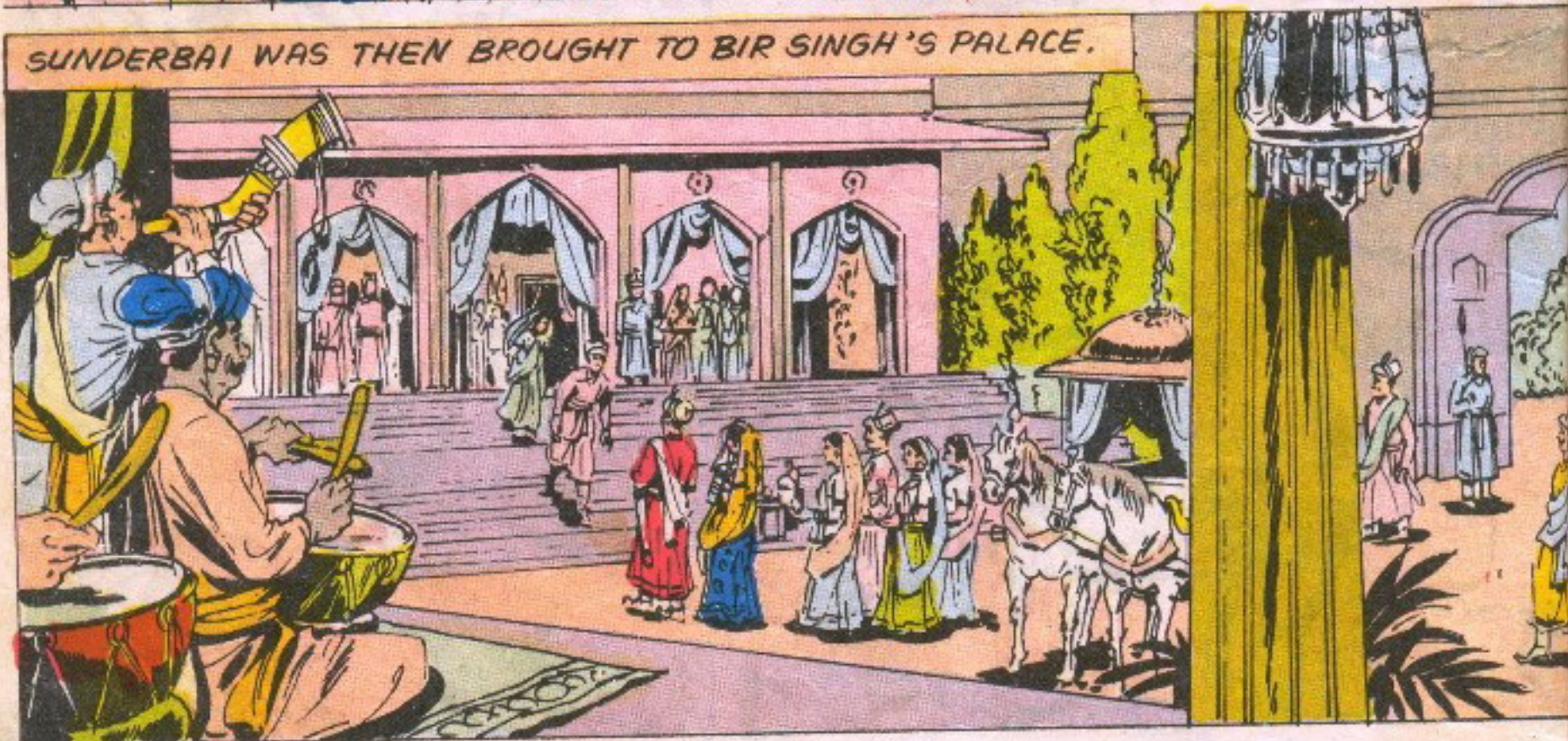
AS SUNDERBAI WAS ABOUT TO LEAVE FOR HER HUSBAND'S HOME —

SUNDERBAI, MY PRECIOUS CHILD, MAKE USE OF THIS RING IF THE NEED ARISES.

I WILL, FATHER.



SUNDERBAI WAS THEN BROUGHT TO BIR SINGH'S PALACE.



THAT EVENING SUNDERBAI WAITED IN HER ROOM FOR BIR SINGH.



MANY DAYS PASSED BUT BIR SINGH DID NOT COME TO HER.



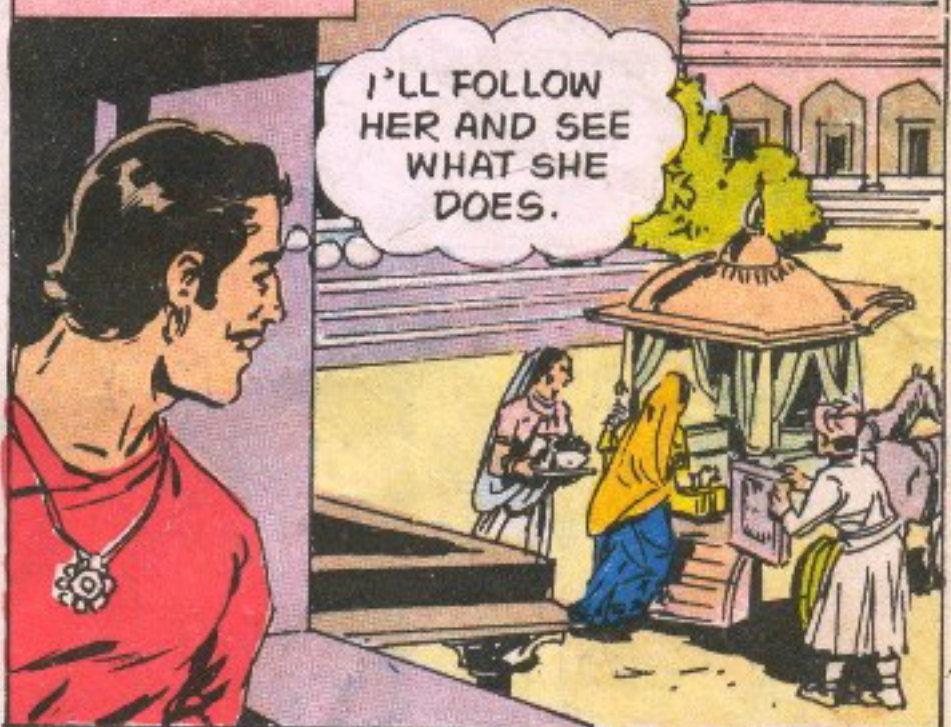
THEN ONE DAY —

PRINCESS, THERE IS A FESTIVAL AT THE TEMPLE. WHY DON'T YOU GO TO IT? IT WILL CHEER YOU UP.



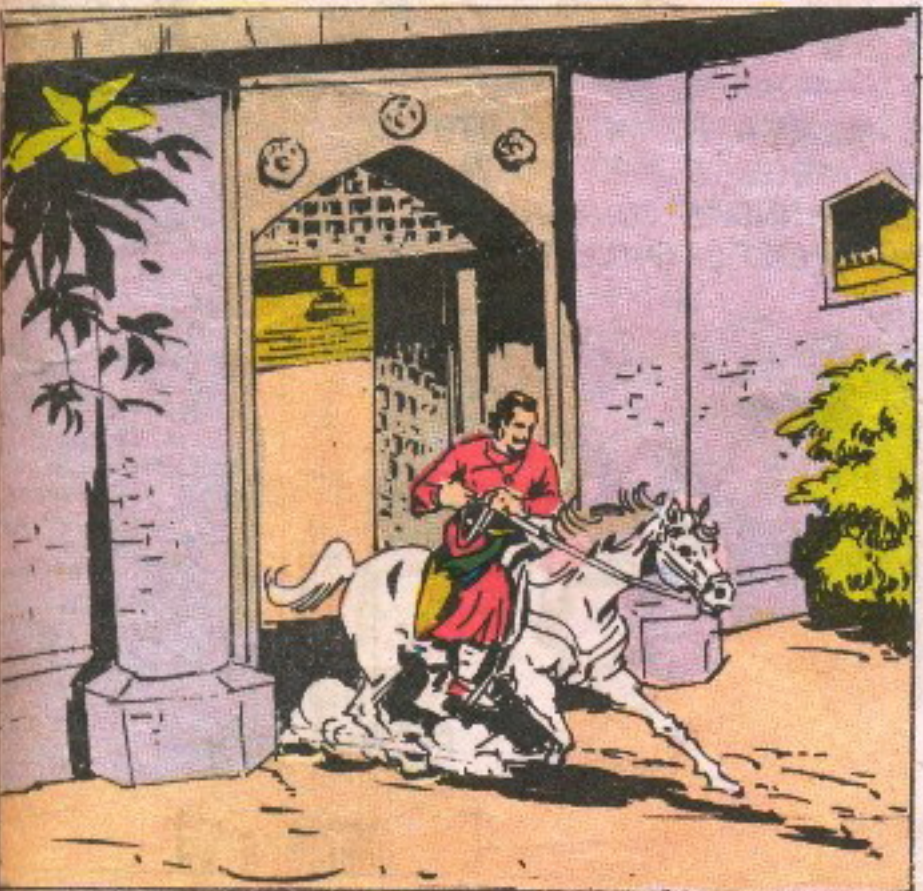
AS SUNDERBAI LEFT FOR THE TEMPLE WITH HER MAIDS —

I'LL FOLLOW HER AND SEE WHAT SHE DOES.



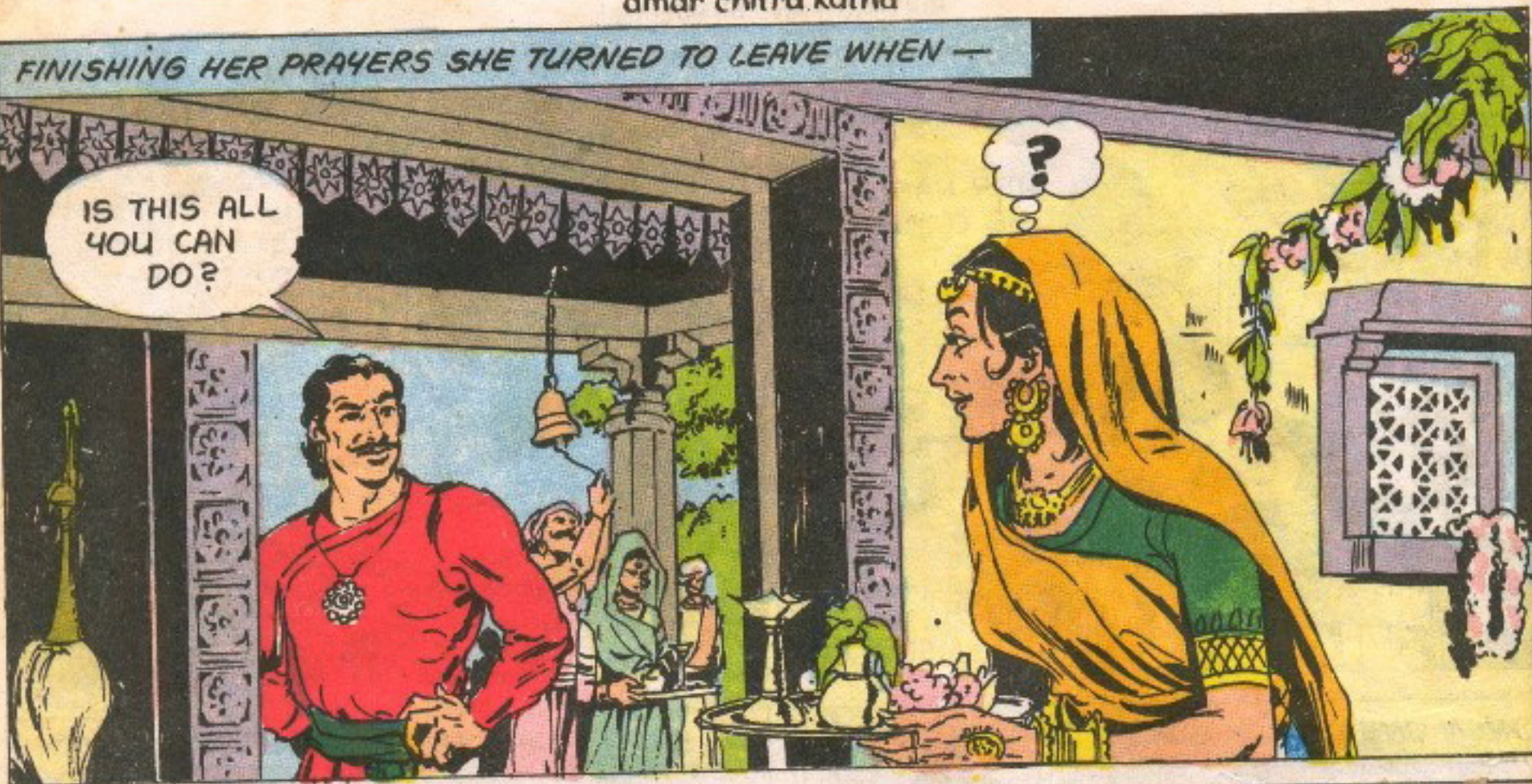
INSIDE THE TEMPLE, SUNDERBAI PRAYED TO PARVATI.

OH GODDESS, BLESS MY HUSBAND IN EVERY WAY.



FINISHING HER PRAYERS SHE TURNED TO LEAVE WHEN —

IS THIS ALL
YOU CAN
DO?

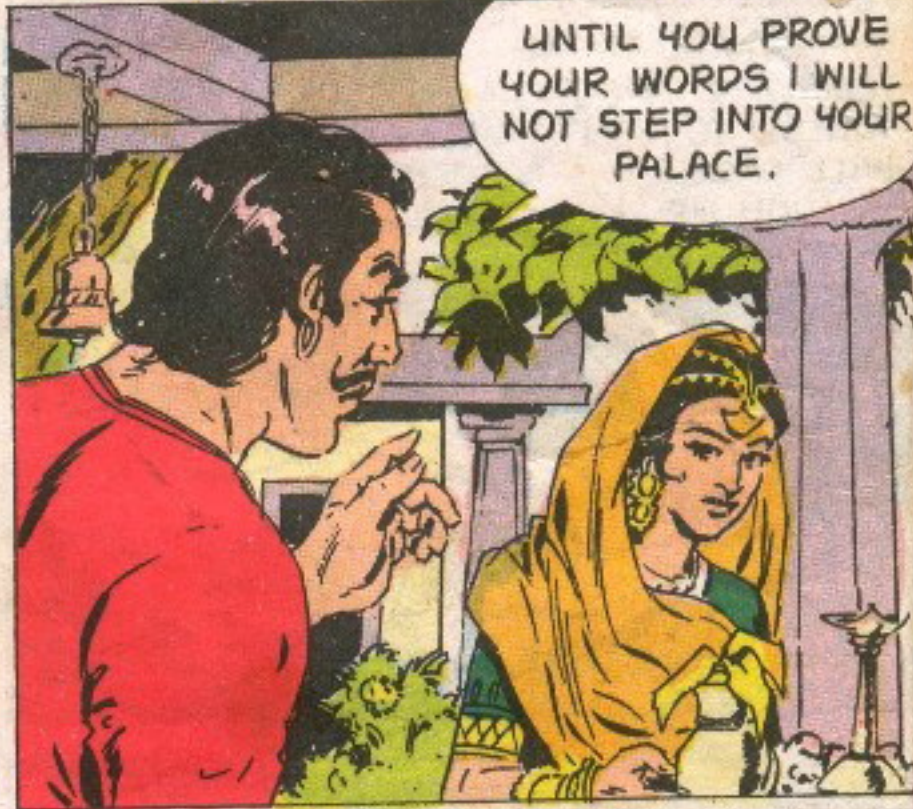


WHERE IS THE STRENGTH
AND VALOUR OF WHICH
YOU BOASTED IN YOUR
GARDEN?

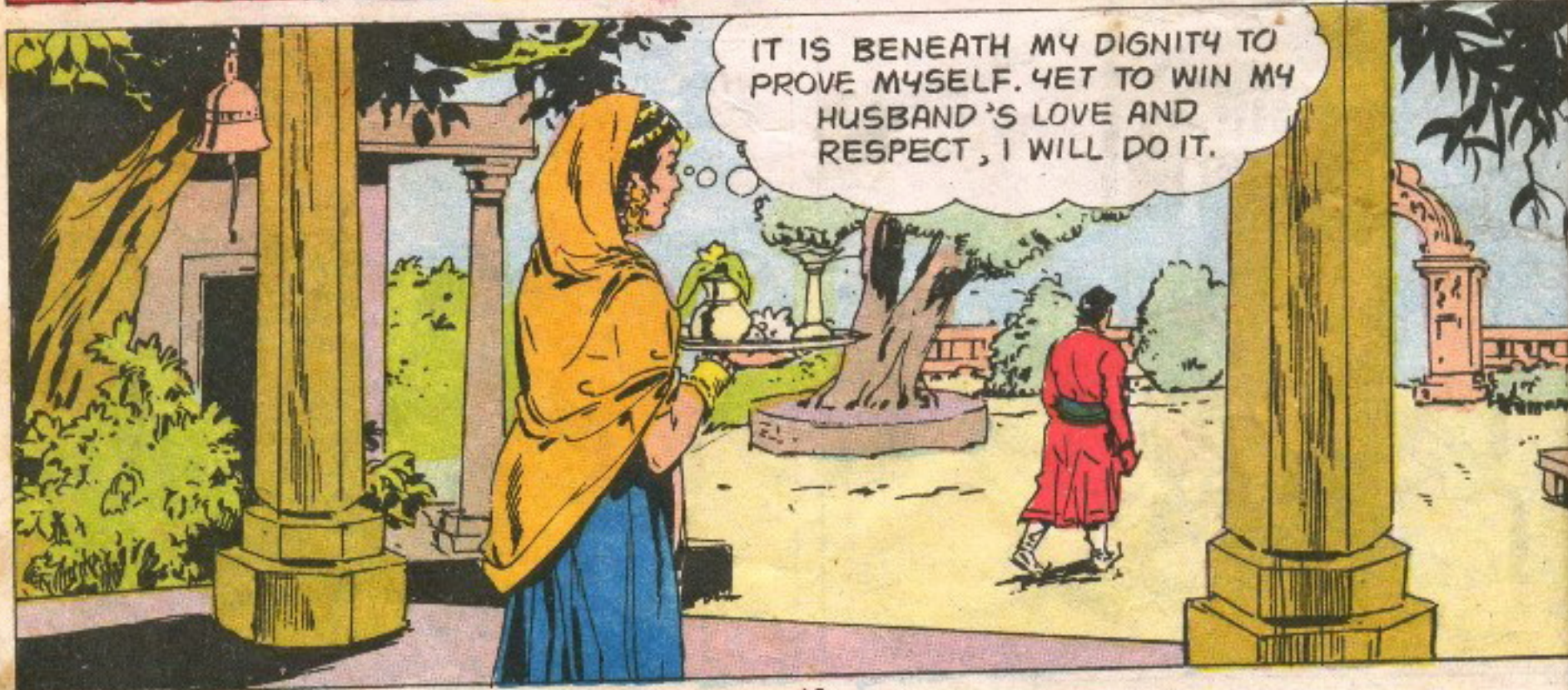
OH! SO
HE HEARD
ME THAT
DAY.



UNTIL YOU PROVE
YOUR WORDS I WILL
NOT STEP INTO YOUR
PALACE.



IT IS BENEATH MY DIGNITY TO
PROVE MYSELF. YET TO WIN MY
HUSBAND'S LOVE AND
RESPECT, I WILL DO IT.



FOR MANY DAYS SUNDERBAI
PONDERED OVER THE MATTER.
FINALLY —

IF I AM TO ACHIEVE
ANYTHING, I MUST
GET AWAY FROM THE
PALACE.

SHE THEN SENT FOR HER MAID.

TAKE THIS RING
TO MY FATHER AND
TELL HIM TO
REPLACE THE
JEWEL.

YES,
PRINCESS.

THE MAID WENT TO SHALYA AND GAVE KESARI SINGH
THE RING AND THE MESSAGE.

OH MY CHILD, WHEN
I GAVE YOU THE RING
I HAD FULL FAITH THAT
YOU WOULD NEVER
NEED TO USE IT.

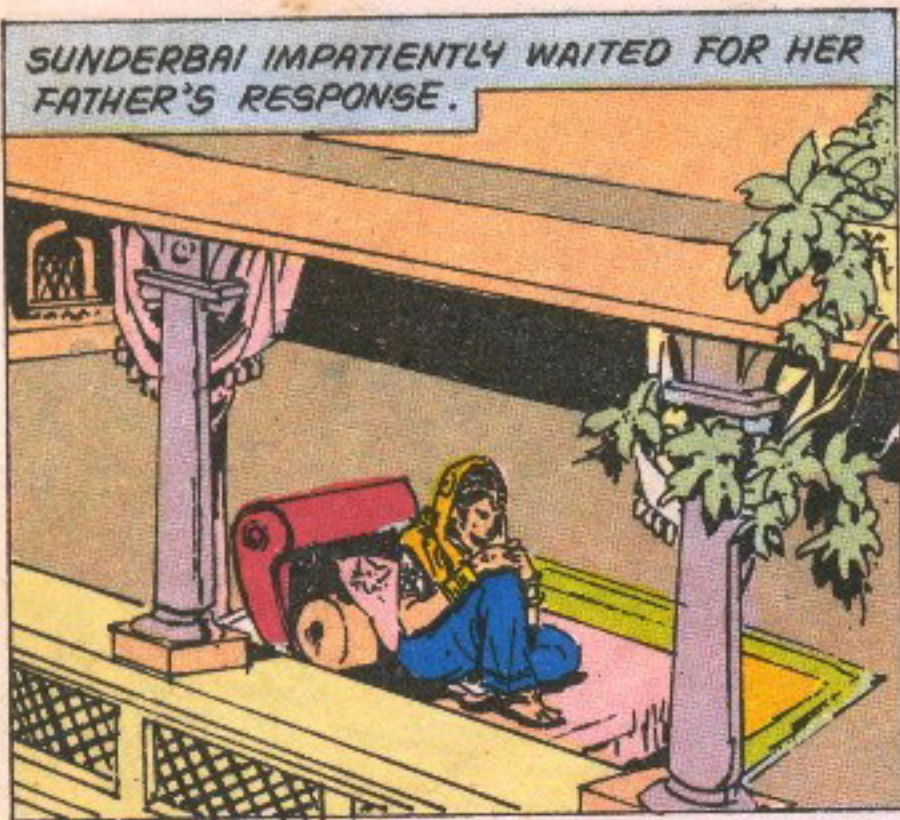
BUT AS THE KING REMOVED THE
JEWEL —

A NOTE!

I AM IN TROUBLE.
PLEASE SEND ME A
MAN'S DRESS, A SUIT
OF ARMOUR AND A
SWIFT HORSE* BUT
LET NO ONE KNOW
OF IT.

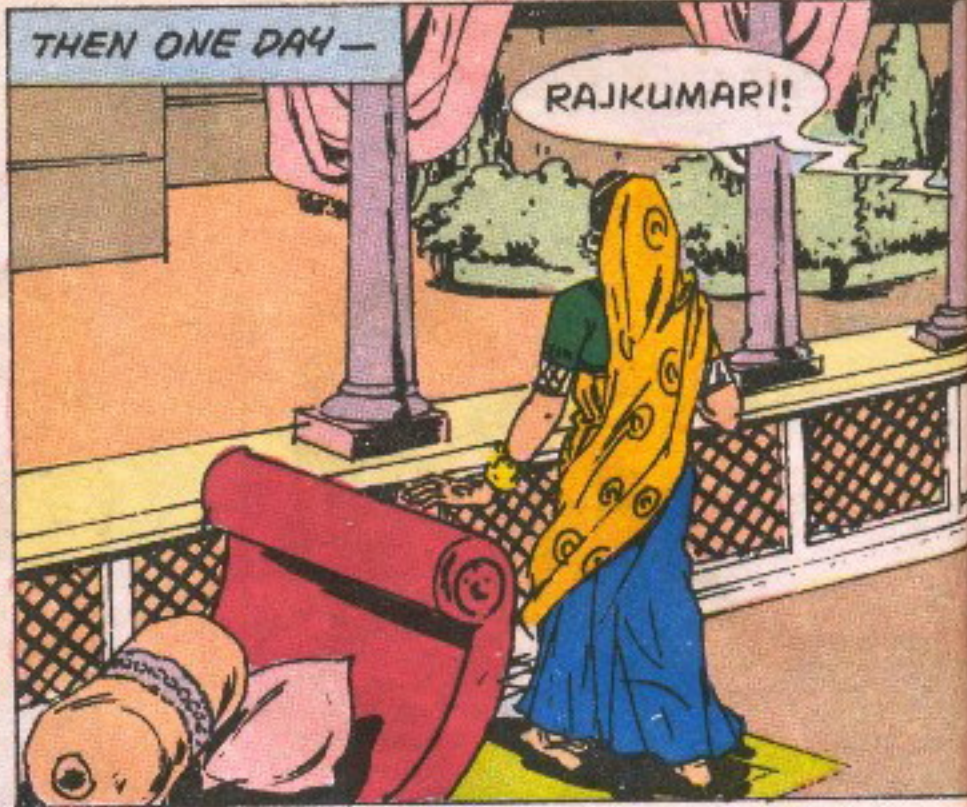
I MUST SEND
HER THE THINGS
SHE REQUIRES, AND
WITHOUT LETTING
OTHERS KNOW.
HM-M-M.

SUNDERBAI IMPATIENTLY WAITED FOR HER FATHER'S RESPONSE.



THEN ONE DAY —

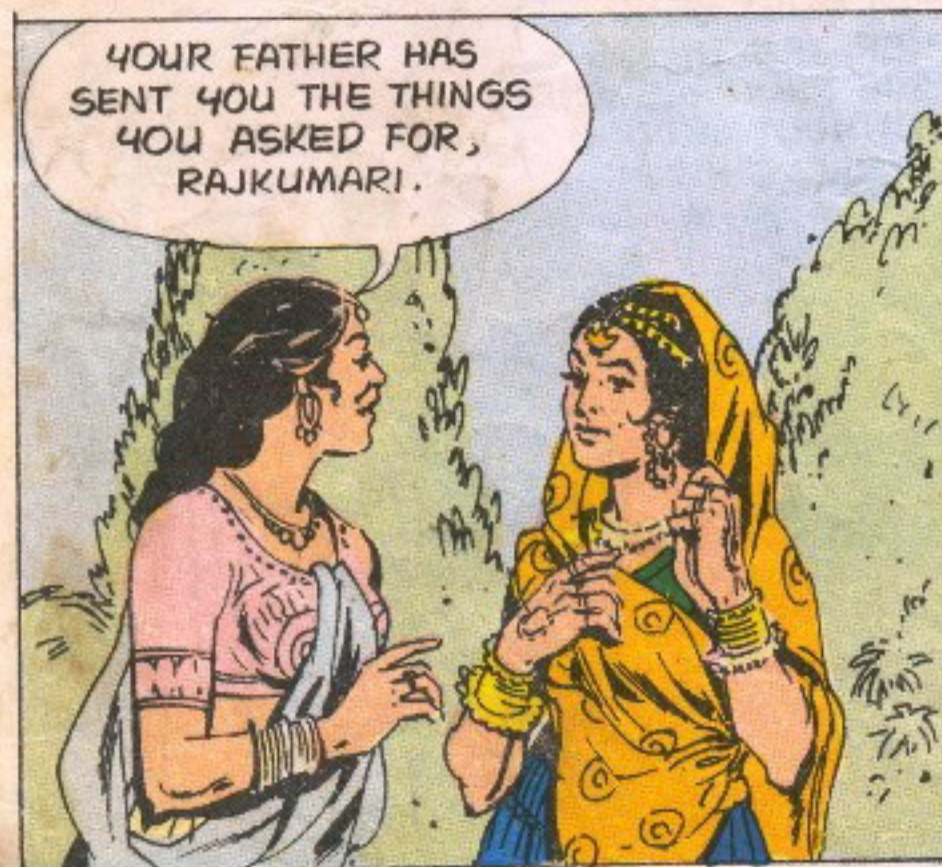
RAJKUMARI!



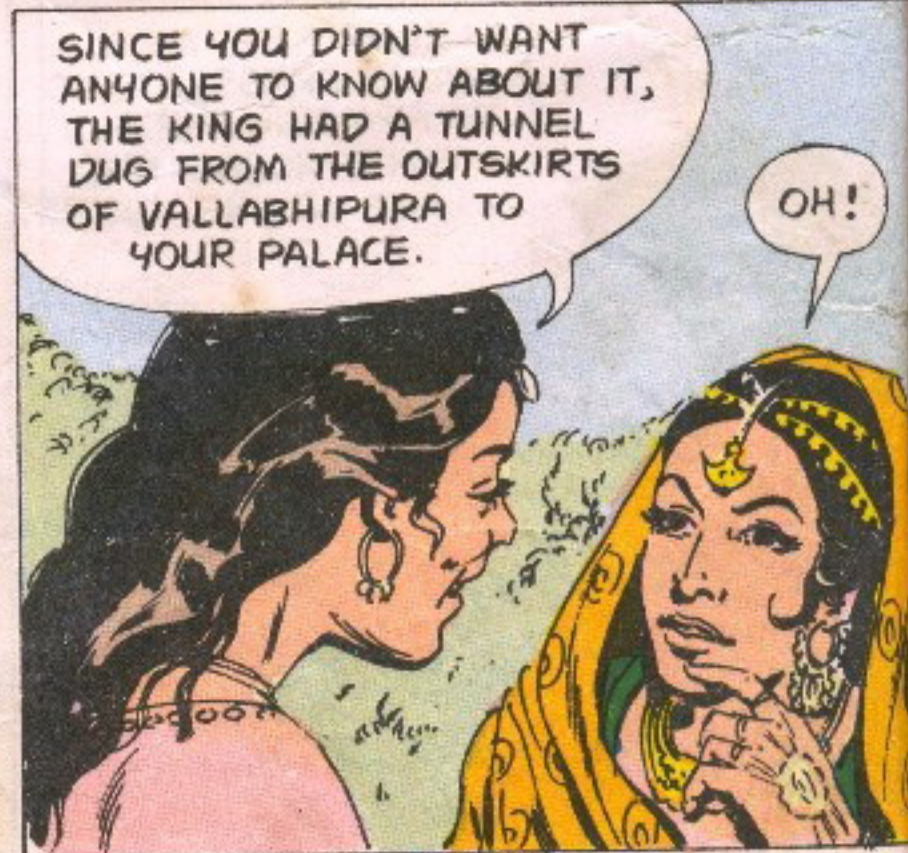
HERE, RAJKUMARI. LOOK HERE.



HOW DID YOU GET THERE?

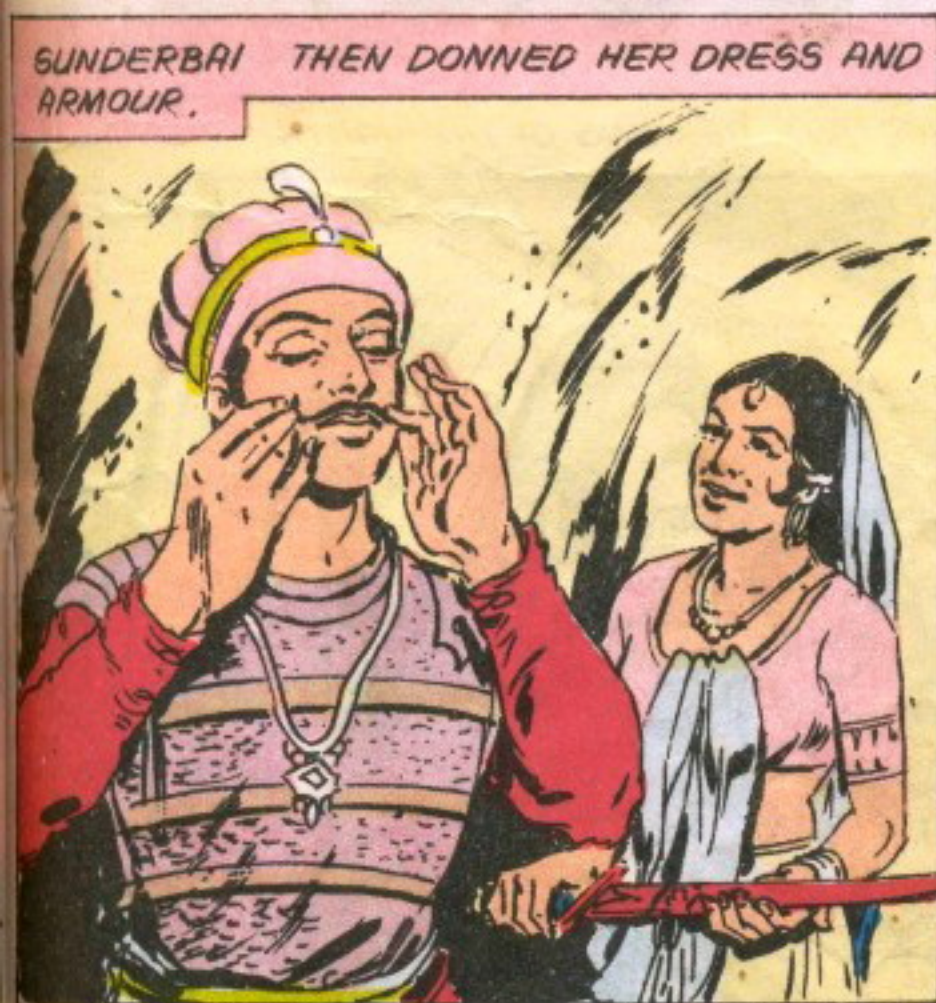


YOUR FATHER HAS SENT YOU THE THINGS YOU ASKED FOR, RAJKUMARI.



SINCE YOU DIDN'T WANT ANYONE TO KNOW ABOUT IT, THE KING HAD A TUNNEL DUG FROM THE OUTSKIRTS OF VALLABHIPURA TO YOUR PALACE.

OH!



TWO DAYS LATER A HANDSOME YOUTH PRESENTED HIMSELF BEFORE THE RAJA OF VALLABHIPURA.

I AM A RAJPUT, MAHARAJ, AND MY NAME IS RATAN SINGH.

I CANNOT REVEAL MY FATHER'S NAME, BECAUSE I HAVE QUARRELLED WITH HIM. I AM HERE IN SEARCH OF EMPLOYMENT.

GIVE ME A CHANCE TO PROVE MY WORTH.

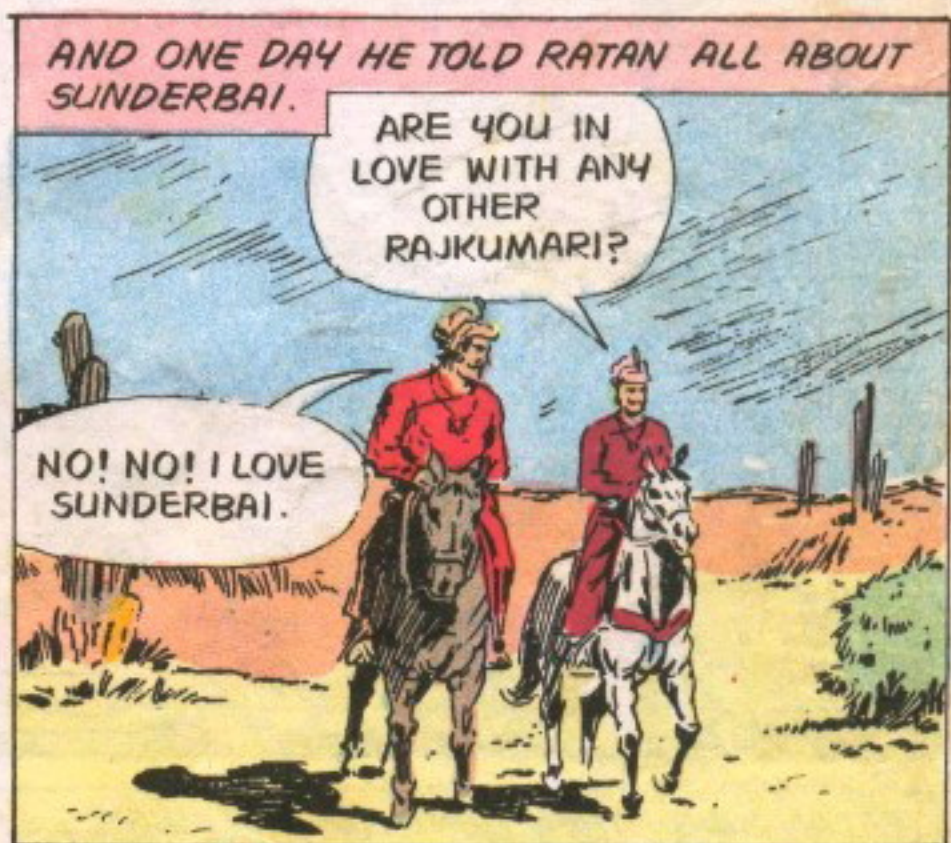
THE RAJA WAS IMPRESSED BY THE CONFIDENCE AND BEARING OF THE YOUTH.

YOU SHALL TAKE A PLACE AMONG MY NOBLES, RATAN SINGH.

RATAN SINGH SOON WON THE ADMIRATION OF THE RAJA AND BIR SINGH.



OVER THE DAYS BIR SINGH DEVELOPED A DEEP AFFECTION FOR THE YOUTH.



ONE DAY —

MAHARAJ, A LION IS CREATING HAVOC ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY.

ALL THE NOBLES HAVE TRIED BUT THEY HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO CAPTURE OR KILL IT.



RATAN SINGH...



I'D LOVE TO TRY MY HAND AT KILLING IT.

NO, RATAN SINGH, I WON'T LET YOU.



HE WILL AND I AM SURE HE WILL SUCCEED.

THANK YOU, MAHARAJ.



RATAN SINGH THEN SENT FOR THE KING'S WORKMEN.

MAKE ME A HOLLOW IRON IMAGE OF A MAN.



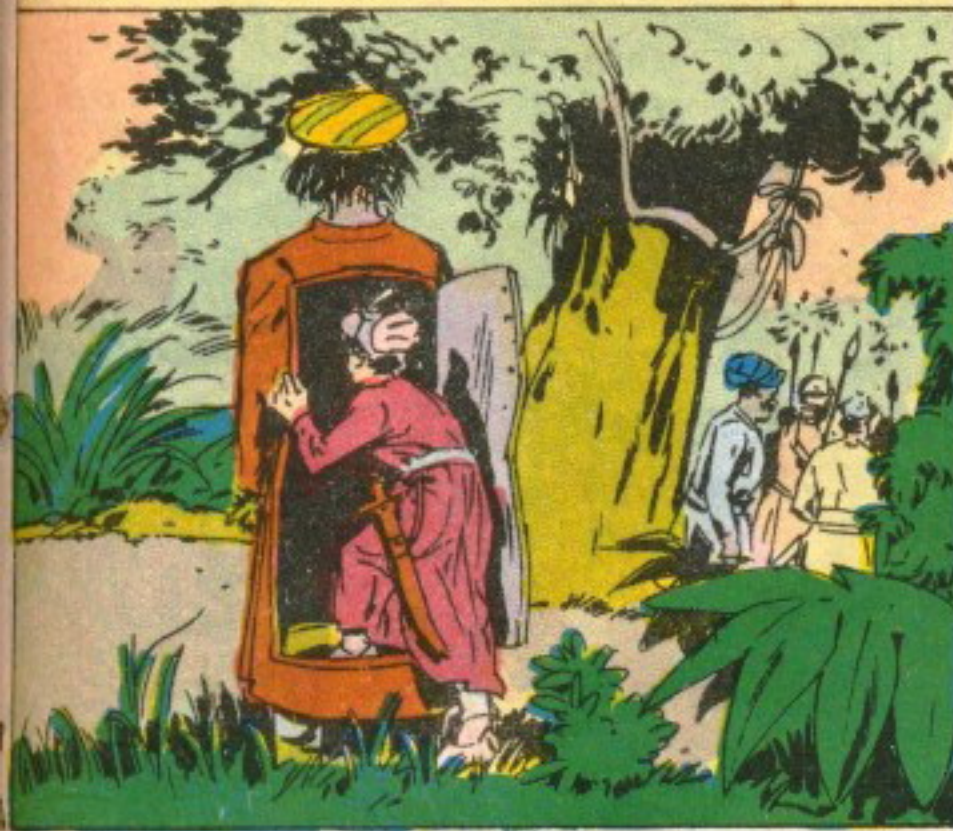
SOON —

HERE IS THE IMAGE, SIR.

EXCELLENT! NOW LET US TAKE IT TO THE SPOT WHERE THE LION COMES EVERY DAY.



WHEN THE IMAGE WAS INSTALLED, RATAN SINGH SENT THE MEN AWAY AND GOT INTO IT.



AT MIDNIGHT THE LION CAME.



IT RUSHED AT THE IMAGE AND TRIED IN VAIN TO KNOCK IT DOWN.



RATAN SINGH WAITED FOR THE RIGHT OPPORTUNITY TO ATTACK. WHEN IT CAME HE SLIPPED OUT...



... AND WITH A SINGLE BLOW OF HIS SWORD, KILLED THE BEAST.



THE RAJA WAS VERY PLEASED.

RATAN SINGH,
I HONOUR YOU WITH
THIS ROBE AND A GRANT
OF LAND FOR YOUR
COURAGEOUS ACT.



ONE DAY THE RAJA DECIDED TO GO TO A FAR-OFF JUNGLE TO HUNT.

ISN'T BIR SINGH JOINING US?

NO. HE IS NOT FEELING WELL.

IT WAS WHEN THE PARTY WAS RESTING THAT A HORSEMAN CAME RIDING TOWARDS THEM.

MAHARAJ, ALL IS LOST!

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

MAHARAJ, AFTER YOU LEFT WE WERE SUDDENLY ATTACKED. VALLABHIPURA HAS BEEN TAKEN OVER BY MARAUDERS.

AND...AND BIR SINGH HAS BEEN TAKEN CAPTIVE.

NO! OH MY SON!

MAHARAJ, TAKE HEART. I WILL WIN BACK VALLABHIPURA AND BRING BIR SINGH TO YOU.

HOW CAN YOU DO THAT SINGLEHANDED?

RAJA KESARI SINGH IS MY KINSMAN. I WILL TAKE HIS HELP.

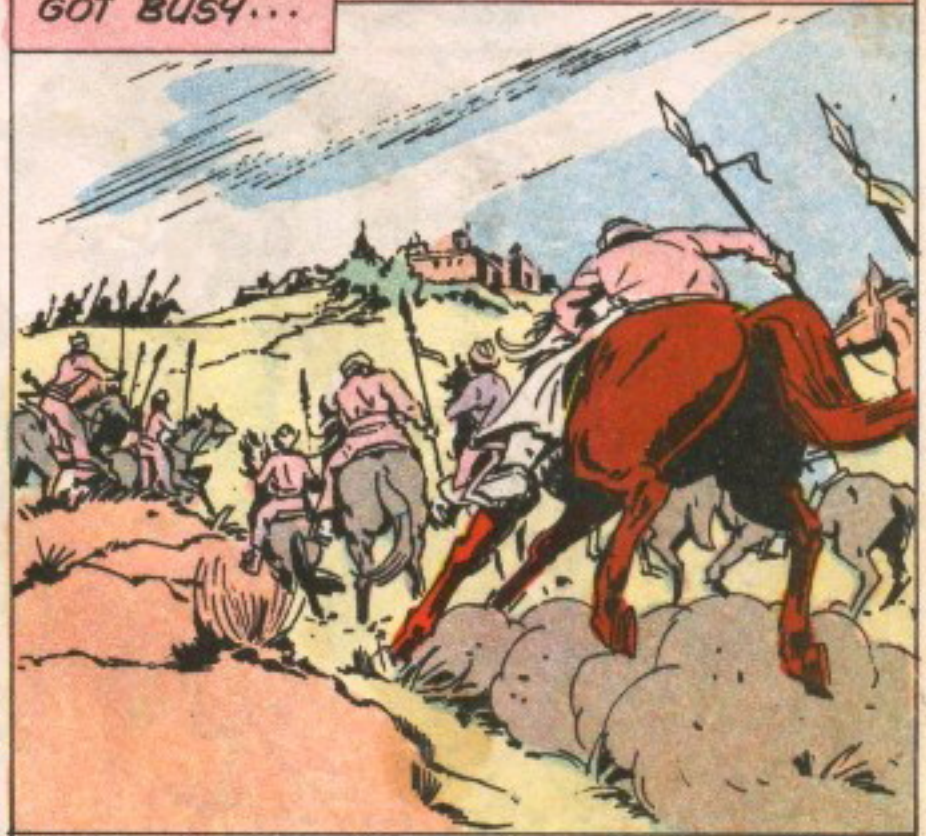
RATAN SINGH RODE OUT TOWARDS SHALYA...

...AND SOON RETURNED WITH THE PICK OF
RAJA KESARI SINGH'S LANCERS.

YOU LAUNCH A MOCK ATTACK ON
THE CITY FROM THREE SIDES.
I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE
REST.



WHILE THE THREE GROUPS OF LANCERS
GOT BUSY...



...RATAN SINGH LED HIS GROUP TO THE ENTRANCE
OF THE TUNNEL.

WHILE THE ENEMY
REJOICES OVER ITS
VICTORY, WE WILL
ENTER THE CITY
THROUGH THIS
TUNNEL.



INSIDE THE FORT THE INVADERS WERE
CELEBRATING THEIR VICTORY.

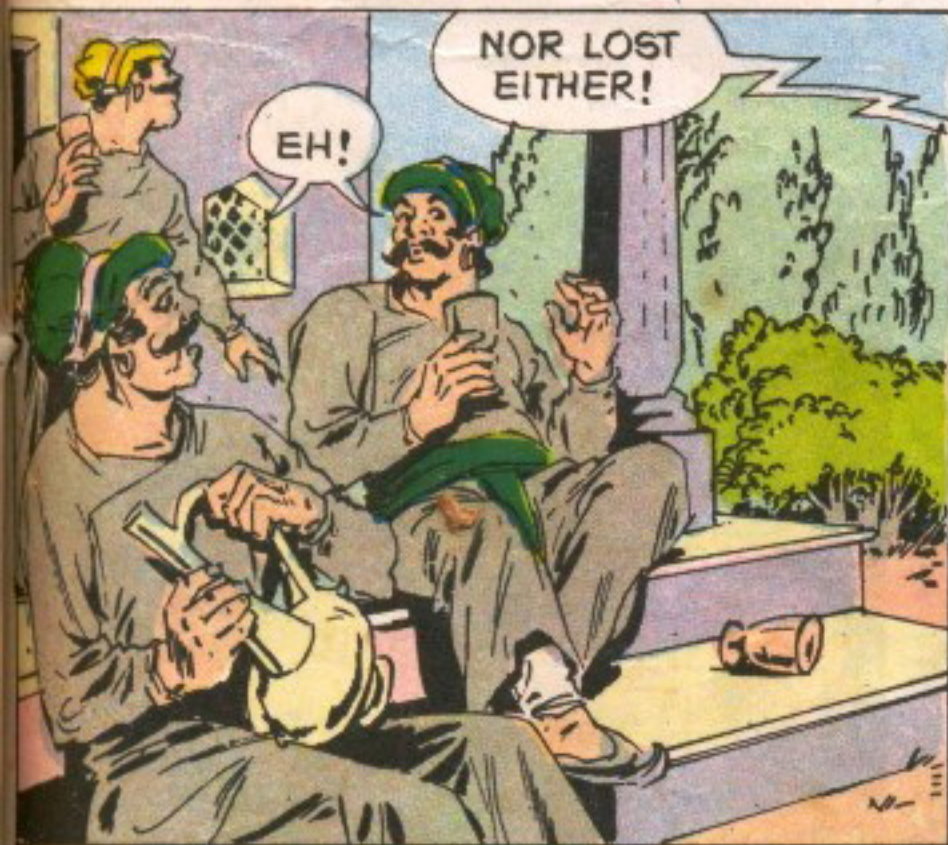
NOT AN ARROW
WAS SHOT! NOT A
DROP OF BLOOD
SHED!

NEVER WAS
VICTORY SO
EASILY
GAINED!



NOR LOST
EITHER!

EH!



DON'T MOVE! YOU ARE
SURROUNDED!

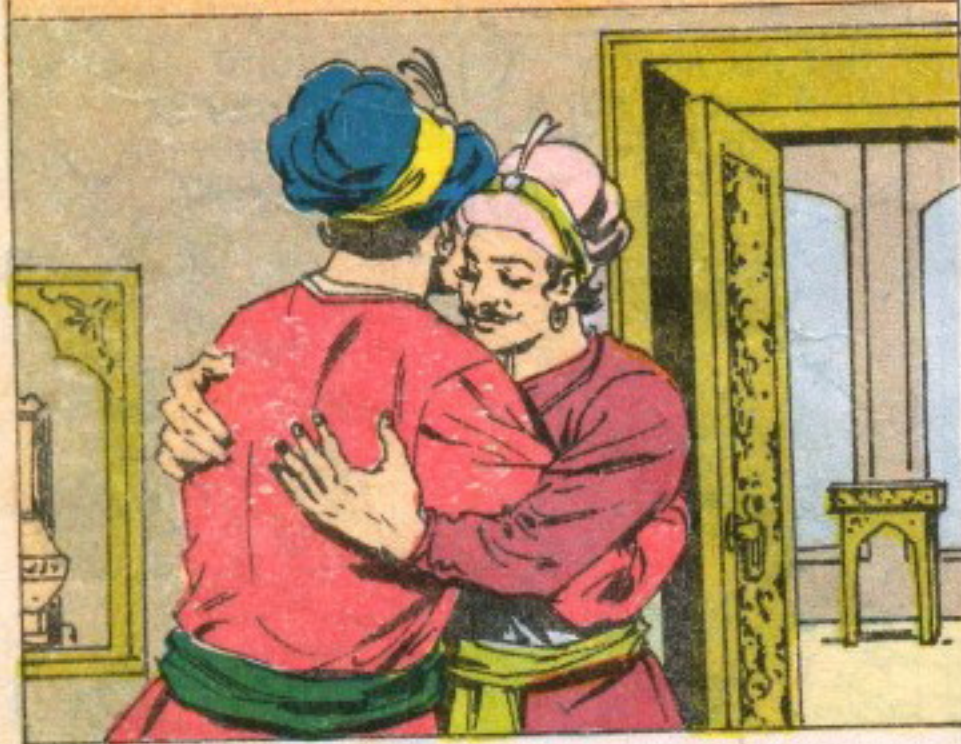


RATAN SINGH THREW OPEN THE GATES OF THE FORT. MORE TROOPS POURED IN...



...AND THE ENEMY WAS SOON VANQUISHED.

RATAN SINGH THEN FREED BIR SINGH...



...AND TOOK HIM TO HIS FATHER.

RATAN, HOW CAN I REWARD YOU FOR SAVING MY KINGDOM AND MY HEIR.

IT WAS MY DUTY, MAHARAJ.



MAHARAJ, I WOULD LIKE TO MEET SOME OLD FRIENDS WHO HAVE COME TO SEE ME. MAY I...

YOU MAY GO, RATAN.

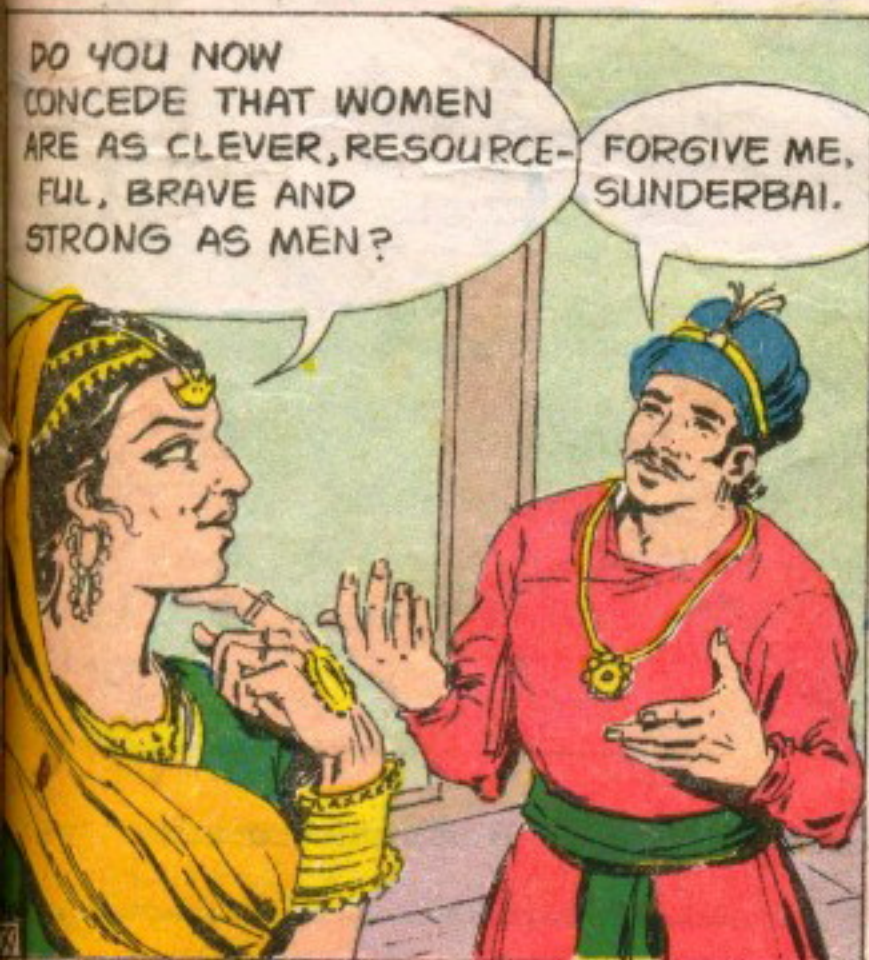
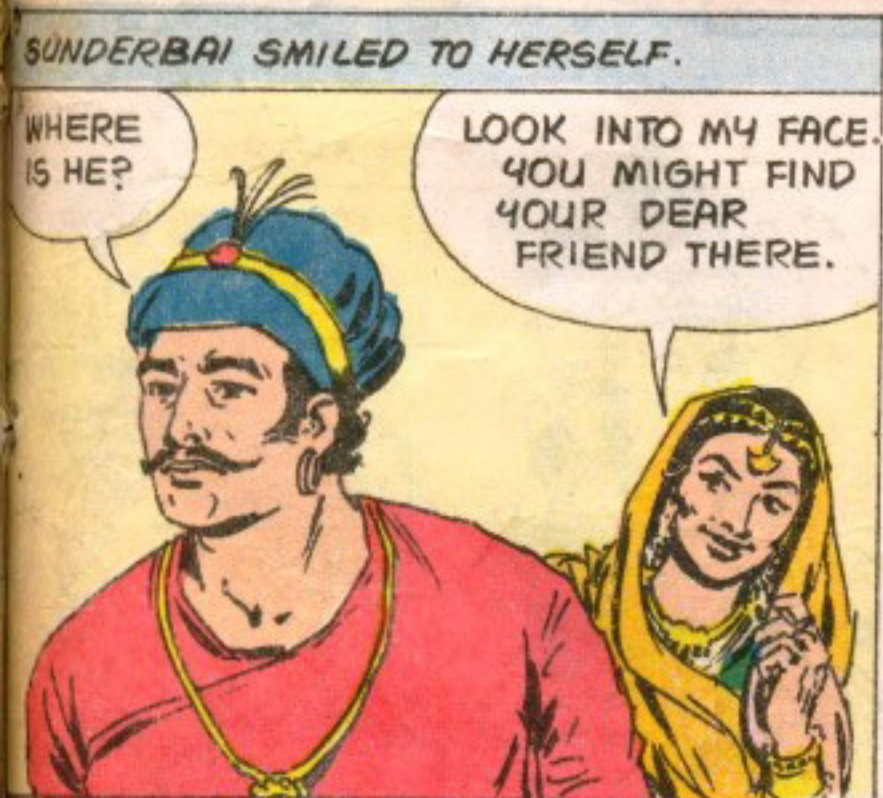
BUT BE BACK SOON.



BIR SINGH WAITED IMPATIENTLY FOR RATAN SINGH. AT LAST HE WENT TO LOOK FOR HIM.



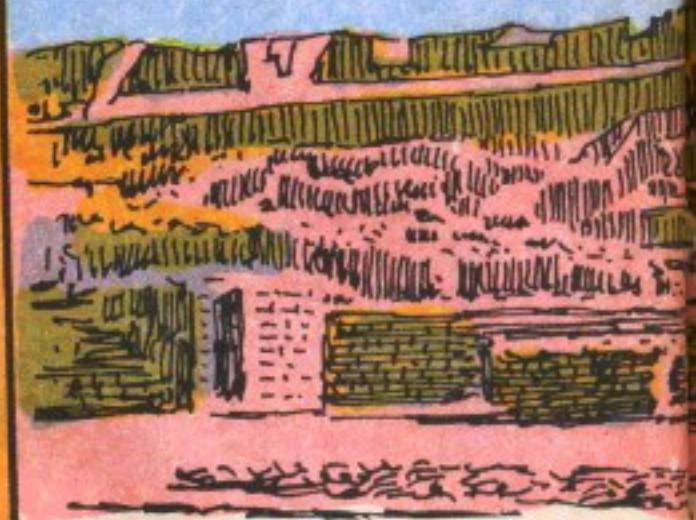
AH! I WILL ASK THEM THEY MIGHT KNOW.



QUIZ-17 INDIA

Compiled by: Swarn Khandpur

Illustrated by: S.K. Parab



A "Mound of the civilization flour"

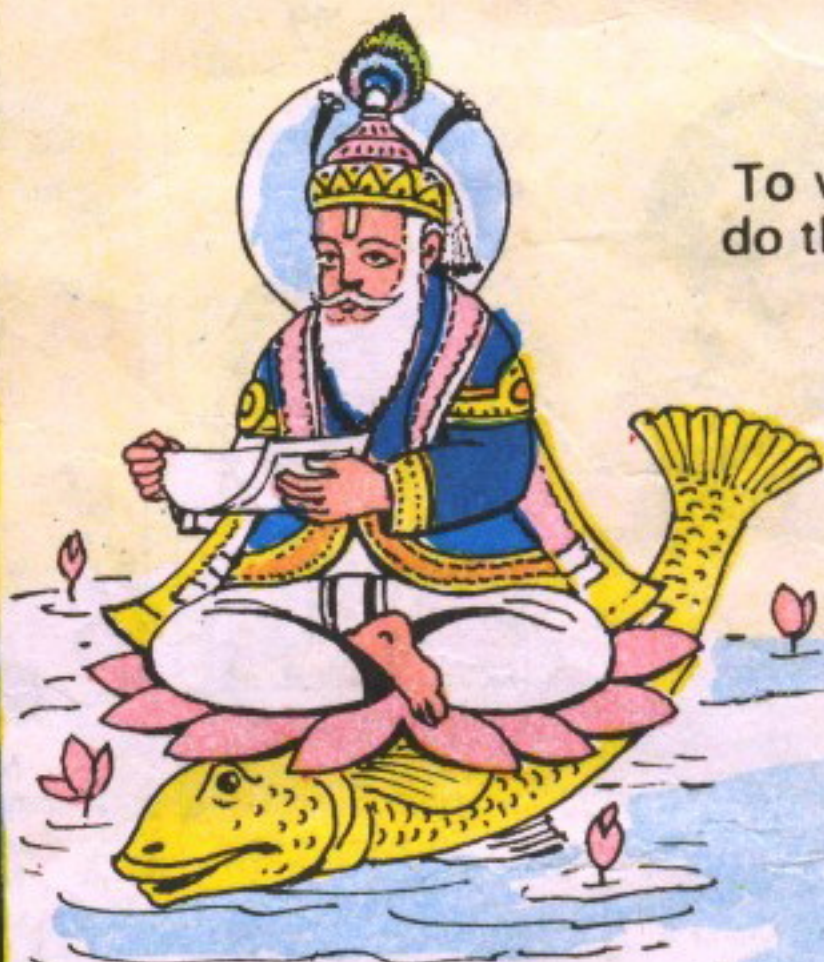


DID YOU KNOW...

...that decorated beads of varied shapes and materials have been found in all Harappan sites?

...that some beads of gold found are smaller than a pin-head in size and the steatite (soft stone) ones are as thin as paper and are referred to as "wafer beads"?

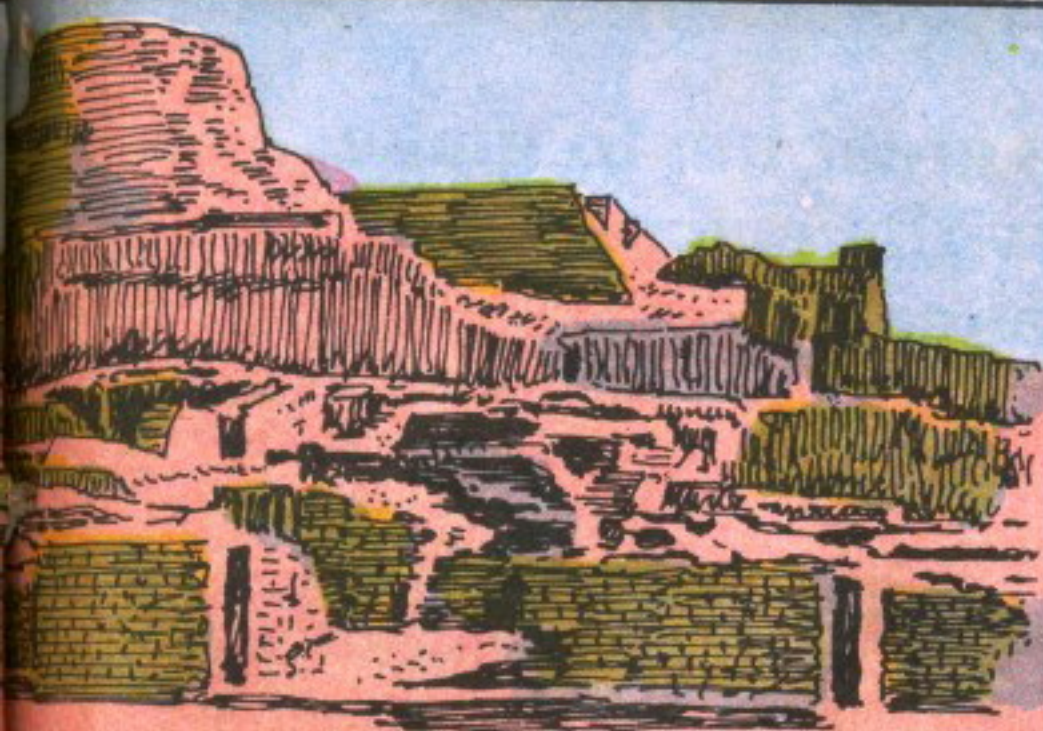
...that some of the beads measure one to three millimetres in length and one millimetre in diameter?



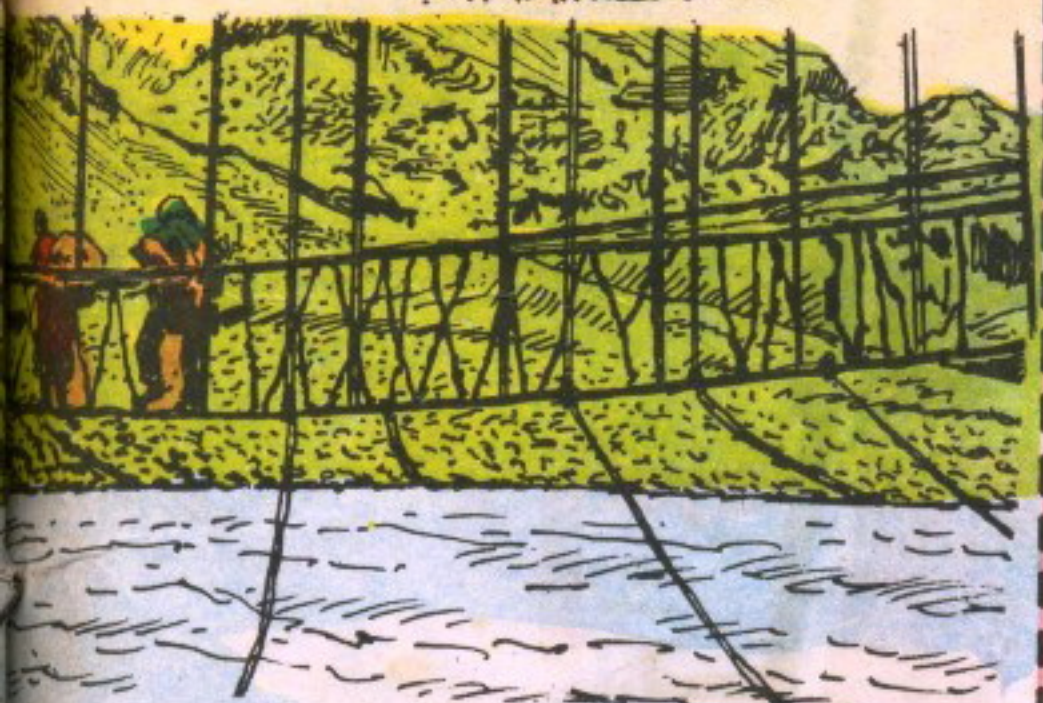
C To which community do these art belong?

B Which community worships Jhulelal—God of Water?

D Lake of U



The local name of a place where a great
more than 4000 years ago. What was its name?



is a suspension bridge. Near which town
is this bridge?

param

D. Tiruvalluvar

Rules:

1. The first fifty all-correct entries will each win a prize of Rs. 10.
2. The remaining all-correct entries will each win a colourful picture post card.
3. The decision of the judges is final and binding.
4. Mail your entries, (entry form given below) to:

AMAR CHITRA KATHA QUIZ CONTEST
Post Bag No. 16542
Cumballa Hill P.O., Bombay-400 026.

Quiz-17
INDIA

ENTRY FORM

Name : _____

Age : _____

Address : _____

State : _____

Pin Code : _____

MY ANSWERS

A _____

B _____

C _____

D _____

The last date for receiving
entries 31. 3. 1985