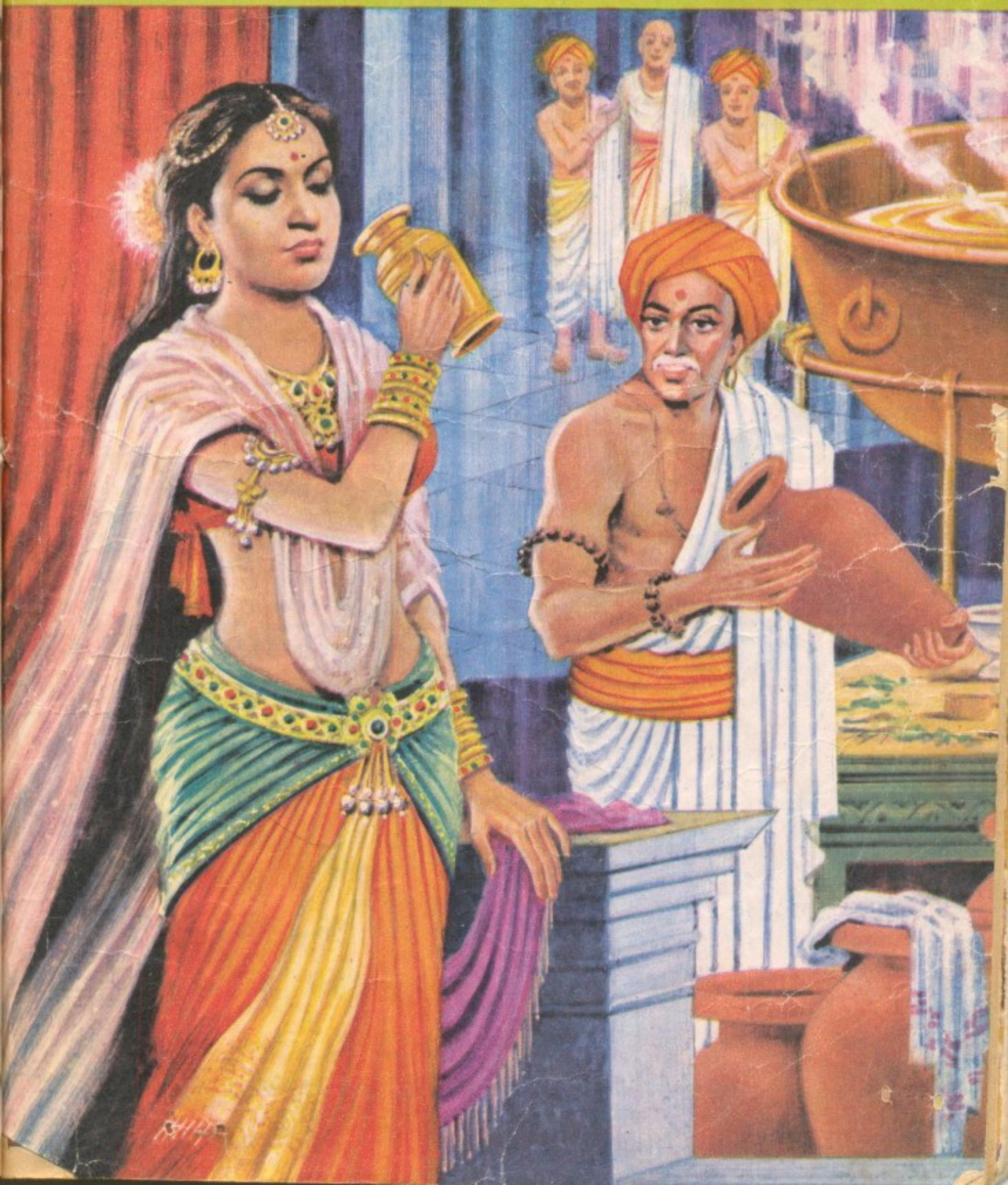




Shringabhuja

No. 378 Rs. 5/-

Based on a story from the Kathasaritsagara



Amar Chitra Katha

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KING VIRABHUJA OF VARDHAMANA RULED
OVER A FLOURISHING KINGDOM OF
HAPPY SUBJECTS SECURE IN THE
KNOWLEDGE OF A WISE AND JUST RULE.

THE KING HAD A HUNDRED WIVES, OF WHOM GUNAVARA WAS THE CHIEF QUEEN. THE KING WAS CHILDLESS, AND FELT UNHAPPY ABOUT IT.

I WORRY ABOUT MY KINGDOM. WHO WILL INHERIT IT?

IT IS A PITY, YOUR MAJESTY, THAT NOT ONE OF YOUR HUNDRED WIVES HAS BEEN ABLE TO GIVE YOU AN HEIR.



I CARE LITTLE ABOUT THE OTHERS. BUT I WISH YOU...

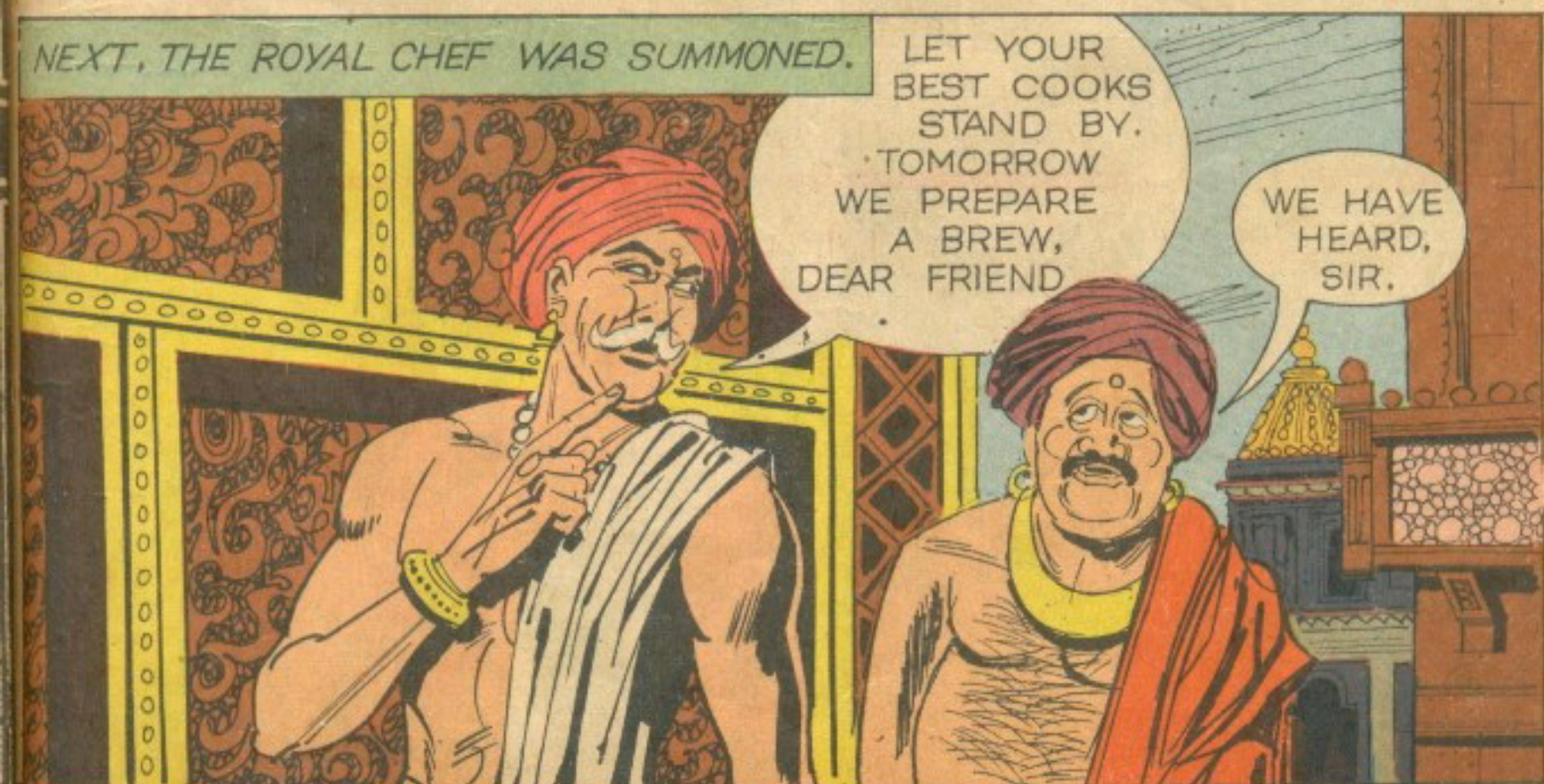
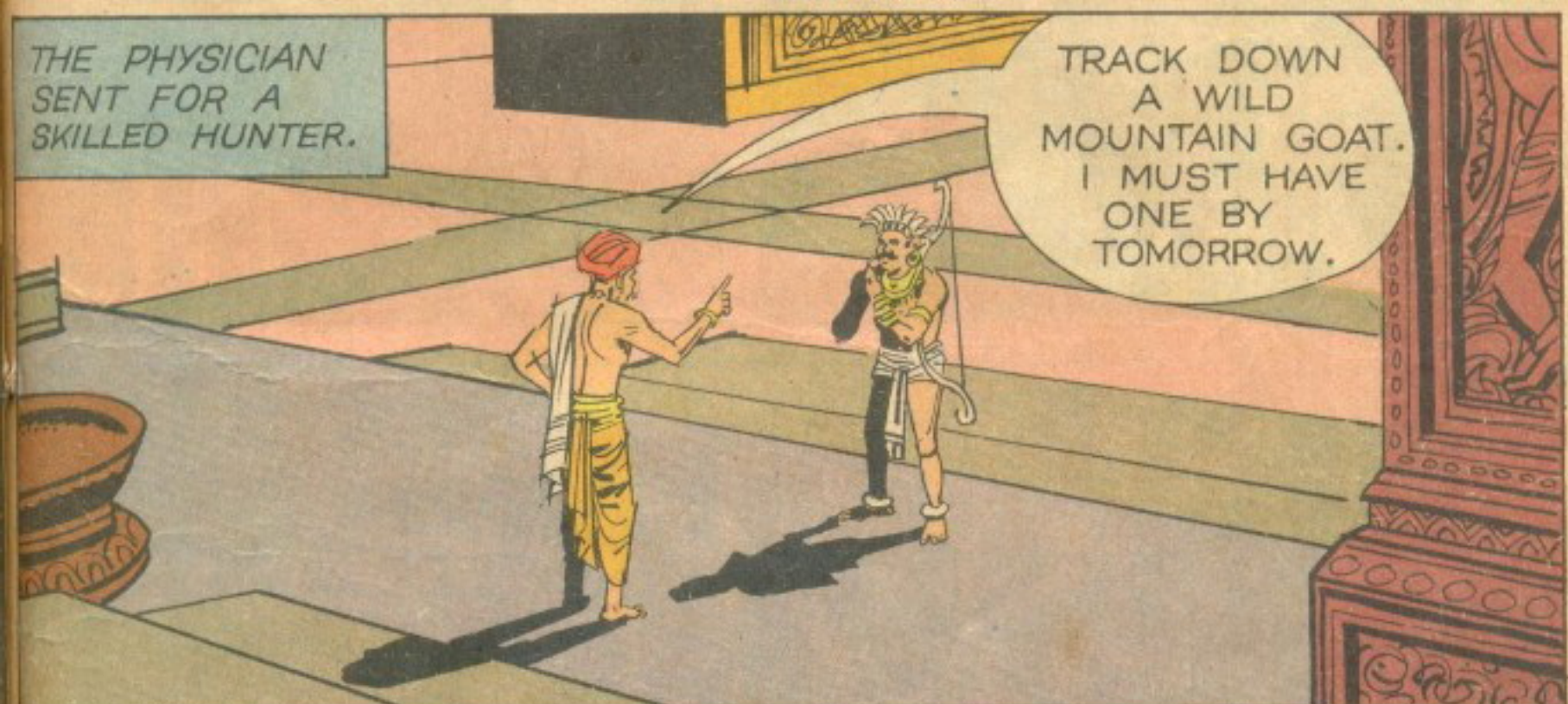
IT IS GOD'S WILL, MY LORD.

THE KING, HOWEVER, DID NOT RESIGN HIMSELF TO FATE. HE SENT FOR THE COURT PHYSICIAN.

YOU KNOW WHAT IS TROUBLING ME. IS THERE NO WAY?

THERE IS, YOUR MAJESTY.





THE QUEENS ASSEMBLED IN THE ROYAL DINING HALL. AYASOLEKHA, ONE OF THE QUEENS, NOTICED THAT GUNAVARA WAS NOT THERE.

GOOD. I HOPE SHE ARRIVES LATE. IF SHE HAS A SON, OUR CHILDREN DON'T STAND A CHANCE.



THE PHYSICIAN ANNOUNCED—

MY BREW IS READY!



THE PRIEST PRONOUNCED THE BLESSINGS...

ALL YOU QUEENS OF VIRABHUJA— MAY YOU BEAR HIM SPLENDID SONS!



...AND THE QUEENS DRANK UP THE MAGIC POTION.



JUST AS THE LAST CUP
HAD BEEN DRAINED—

QUEEN
GUNAVARA!
HOW COULD
WE HAVE
OVERLOOKED
HER?

THE KING
WILL NEVER
FORGIVE
US!



KING
VIRABHUJA
AND QUEEN
GUNAVARA
ARE HERE!



WHAT
SHALL WE
DO?

THE KING WAVED GUNAVARA
INTO THE ROOM.

MY QUEEN,
YOU HAVE FASTED
AND PRAYED FOR
THREE DAYS. MAY YOUR
DEVOTIONS MEET
WITH SPECIAL
SUCCESS.

HOW HE
DOTES
ON HER!





AS THE QUEENS, DREADING THE KING'S ANGER, HURRIED AWAY—



WHILE THE PHYSICIAN WAITED
FOR THE COOK TO ARRIVE—

MY LORD,
IF HE HAS SAVED
THE CREATURE'S
HORNS THERE
IS HOPE YET.

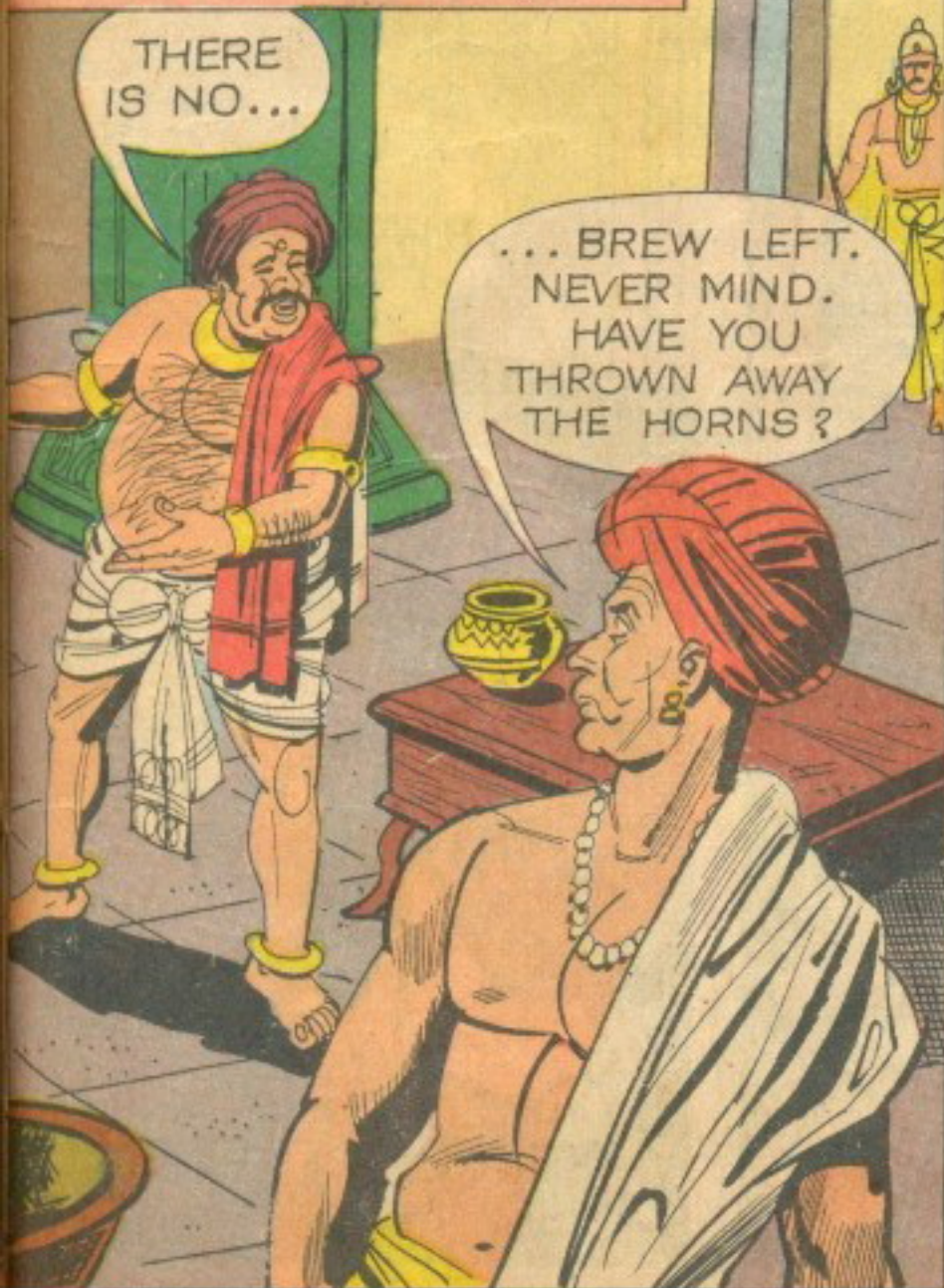
FOR
YOUR SAKE,
I HOPE
HE HAS!



THE COOK ARRIVED AND—

THERE
IS NO...

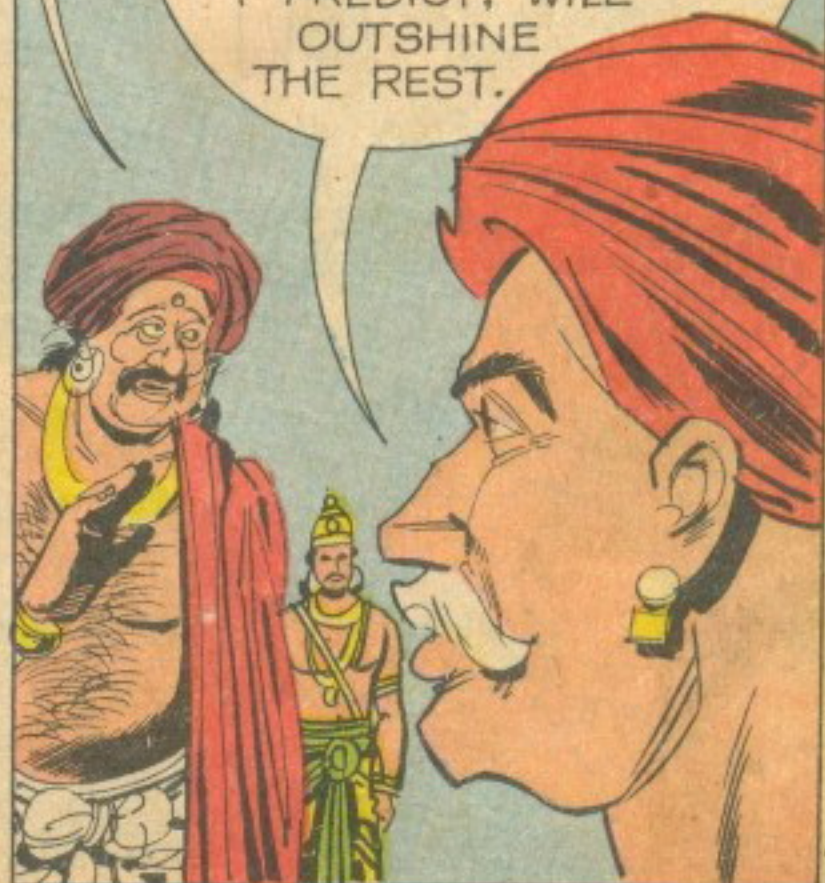
... BREW LEFT.
NEVER MIND.
HAVE YOU
THROWN AWAY
THE HORNS?



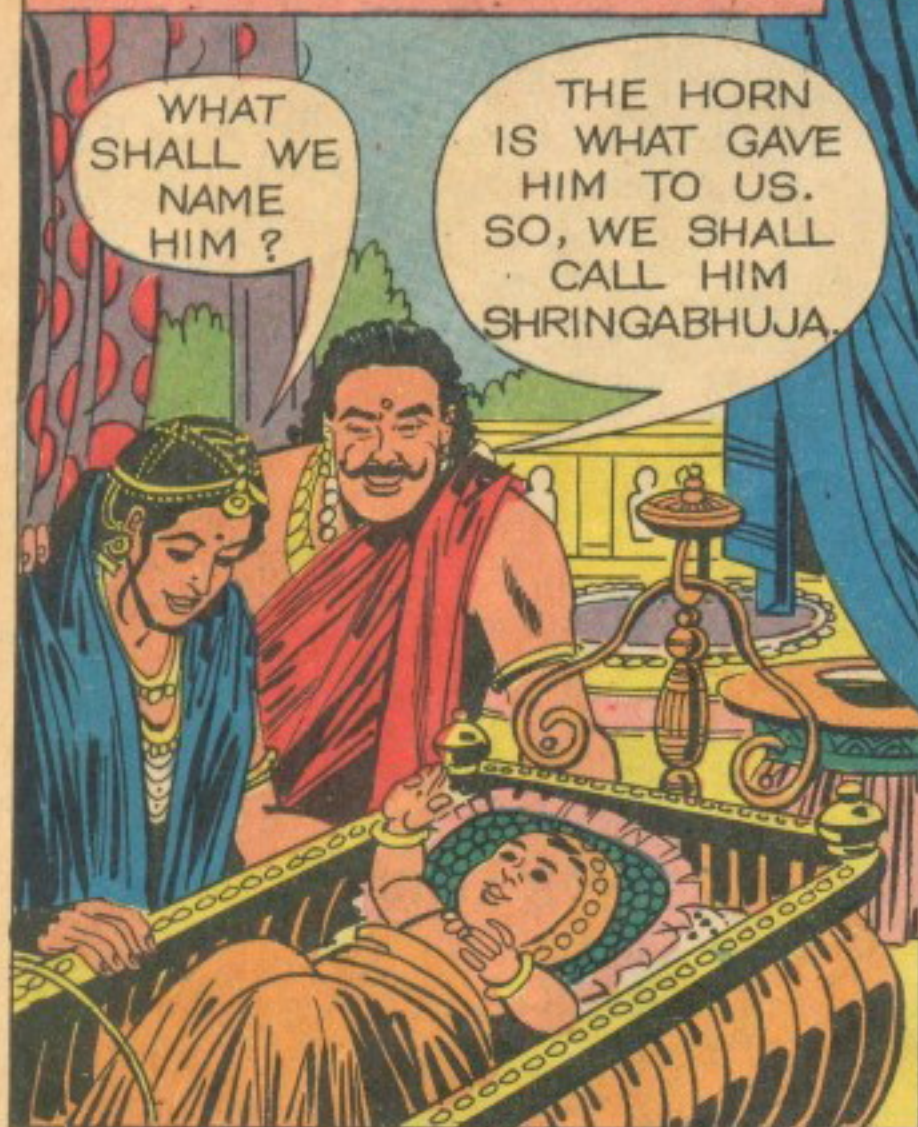
I SAVED THEM. THEY
WERE SO MAJESTIC
LIKE SLENDER
SCYTHES!

GOOD.

CRACK THEM OPEN,
REMOVE THE MARROW
AND PREPARE A SOUP
FOR QUEEN GUNAVARA.
THE SON SHE BEARS,
I PREDICT, WILL
OUTSHINE
THE REST.



HIS PREDICTION PROVED TRUE.



WHAT SHALL WE NAME HIM?

THE HORN IS WHAT GAVE HIM TO US. SO, WE SHALL CALL HIM SHRINGABHUJA.

SHRINGABHUJA BECAME THE UNQUESTIONED FAVOURITE OF THE KING. THE QUEENS WERE JEALOUS.



THE KING HAS NO EYES OR EARS FOR OUR SONS.

IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING SOON, THEY WILL HAVE NO SHARE IN HIS AFFECTIONS OR HIS KINGDOM.

AYASOLEKHA TOOK THE LEAD. SHE TALKED TO THE CHILDREN IN GROUPS, SPREADING HER JEALOUSY LIKE POISON.



THERE ARE NINETY-NINE OF YOU. IF YOU JOIN FORCES, SHRINGABHUJA CANNOT WIN.

AND AS FOR GUNAVARA, I WILL SEE THAT SHE FALLS FROM GRACE.



*'SHRINGA' MEANS 'HORN'

THAT NIGHT,
WHEN THE KING
VISITED HER—

YOU ARE NOT
YOUR USUAL
SMILING SELF.
WHAT'S WORRYING
YOU?

I DON'T KNOW
HOW TO SAY IT.
PROMISE YOU WON'T
BE ANGRY WITH ME.
ONLY THEN WILL I
TELL YOU.



I PROMISE.
NOW, WHAT
IS IT?

MY LORD...
QUEEN
GUNAVARA...



WHAT ABOUT
GUNAVARA?
WHY DO YOU
HESITATE?

MY LORD,
TODAY IT IS
PALACE GOSSIP.
TOMORROW
IT WILL BE
CITY GOSSIP.
SHE IS
UNFAITHFUL.





THE KING HAD LEFT—
ALMOST BEFORE SHE
FINISHED HER SENTENCE.



THE KING PACED UP AND DOWN
IN HIS APARTMENT, HIS THOUGHTS
IN A FURIOUS TURMOIL.



SURAKSHITA WAS SENT FOR. TO HIS
UTTER SURPRISE—

I HEAR YOU
HAVE KILLED A
MAN. YOU MUST
ATONE FOR THIS
GRIEVOUS SIN.
YOU MUST TRAVEL
TO THE HIMALAYAS
AND WASH AWAY
YOUR SINS IN
THE WATERS
OF THE HOLY
GANGES.

THERE
MUST BE SOME
MISTAKE.
I HAVE NOT
KILLED
ANYONE!

BUT THE KING
IGNORED HIS
PROTESTS.

THAT GETS
RID OF HIM.
NOW, FOR
QUEEN
GUNAVARA.
THIS IS
NOT GOING
TO BE
EASY.

HE SENT FOR QUEEN
GUNAVARA.

MY LORD,
YOU
SEEM
VERY
DISTURBED.

I AM, MY DEAREST.
THE ASTROLOGER
SAYS YOU SHOULD
BE IMPRISONED
FOR A YEAR.
FAILING THIS,
I WILL DIE AND
THE KINGDOM
COME TO
GRIEF.

IS THAT ALL,
MY LORD? PREPARE
THE DUNGEON AND
I SHALL GO INTO
IT ONLY TOO
WILLINGLY.



SHE LOOKS SO INNOCENT—AND SURAKSHITA LOOKED SO BEWILDERED. BUT I CAN'T TAKE ANY CHANCES!

WHAT A STRANGE SITUATION! BUT ONE MUST NOT QUESTION FATE.

WHEN SHRINGABHUJA HEARD THE NEWS—

FATHER, I CAN'T BEAR TO BE AWAY FROM MOTHER!

MY SON, IT IS FOR THE GOOD OF THE KINGDOM—YOUR KINGDOM SOME DAY.

AYASOLEKHA PUT THE REST OF HER WICKED PLAN IN ACTION. SHE CALLED HER SON, NIRVASABHUJA—

WATCH OUT FOR AN OPPORTUNITY SEE THAT THE KING IS REALLY DISPLEASED WITH HIM.

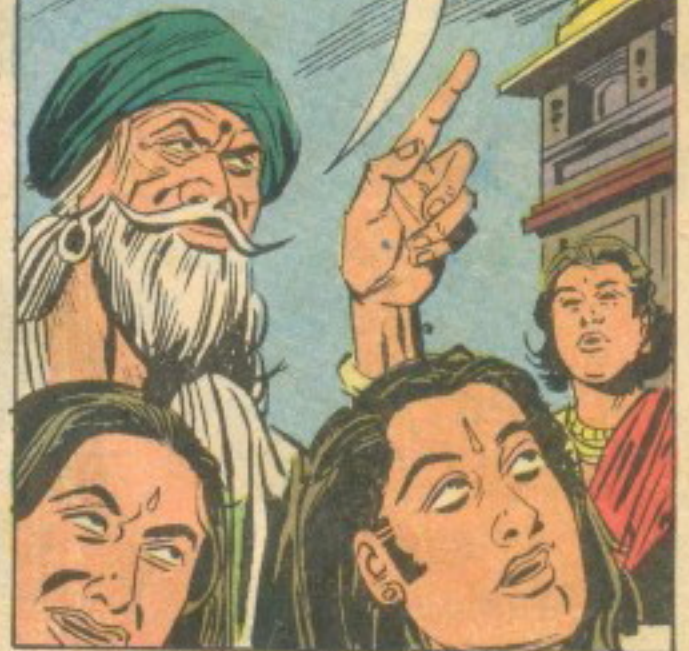
THE OPPORTUNITY SOON AROSE.
THAT VERY EVENING —

LOOK!
A MAGNIFICENT
CRANE. HE'S
FLYING QUITE
LOW TOO.



A PASSING MENDICANT
APPROACHED THEM.

THAT IS NO
ORDINARY CRANE.
IT IS AGNISHIKHA,
THE RAKSHASA KING.
IF YOU SHOOT HIM,
YOU WILL BE DOING
THE WORLD A
GOOD TURN.



THE PRINCES SHOT AT THE
BIRD, ONE BY ONE.

WE'VE
ALL
MISSED.

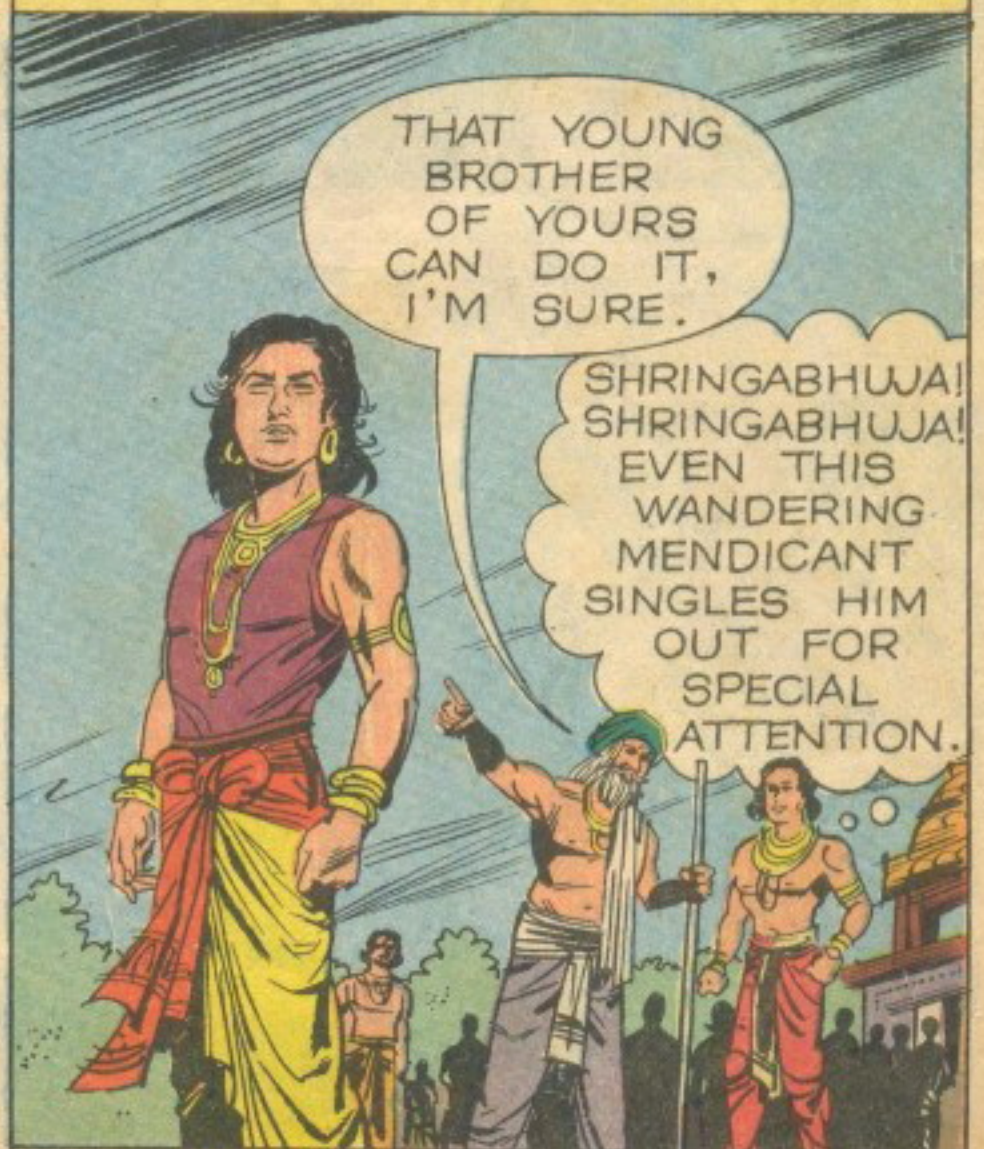
THE CRANE
IS STILL
CIRCLING.



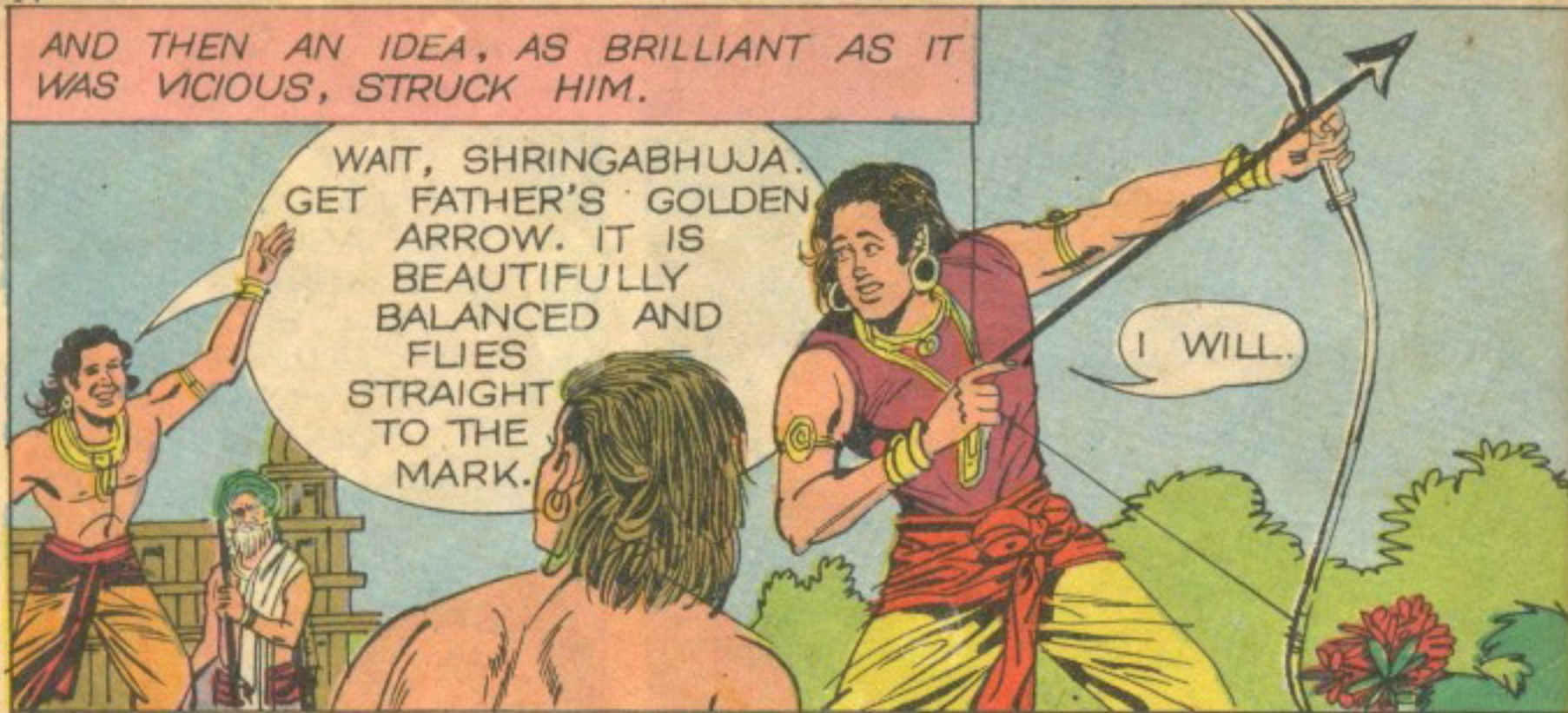
THE MENDICANT POINTED TO
SHRINGABHUJA WHO WAS STANDING
A LITTLE APART.

THAT YOUNG
BROTHER
OF YOURS
CAN DO IT,
I'M SURE.

SHRINGABHUJA!
SHRINGABHUJA!
EVEN THIS
WANDERING
MENDICANT
SINGLES HIM
OUT FOR
SPECIAL
ATTENTION.



AND THEN AN IDEA, AS BRILLIANT AS IT WAS VICIOUS, STRUCK HIM.

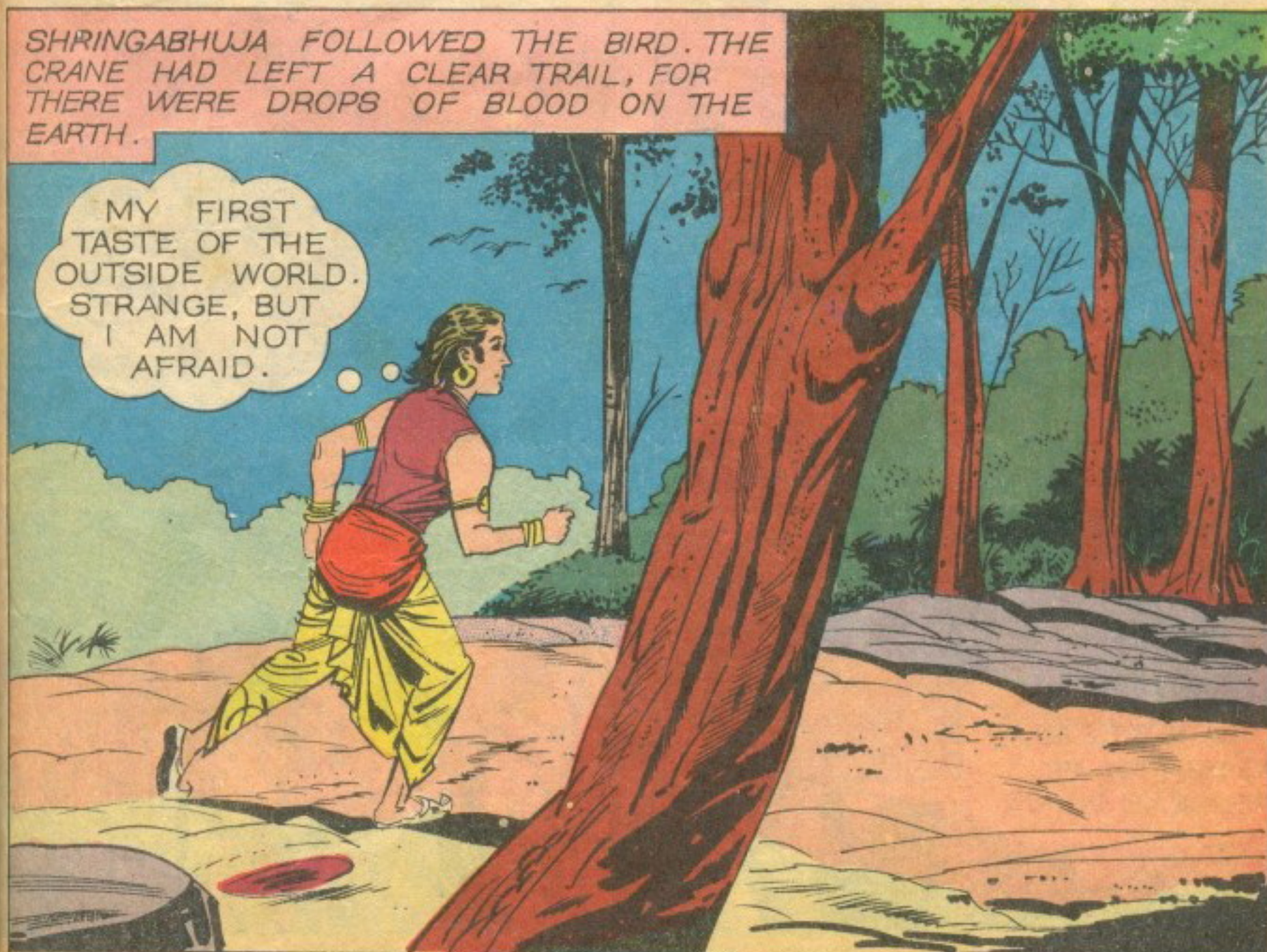


THE UNSUSPECTING SHRINGABHUJA RETURNED WITH THE WEAPON, TOOK AIM AND SHOT AT THE BIRD.





SHRINGABHUJA FOLLOWED THE BIRD. THE CRANE HAD LEFT A CLEAR TRAIL, FOR THERE WERE DROPS OF BLOOD ON THE EARTH.



Quiz

INDIA-6

Compiled by: Shobha Rao

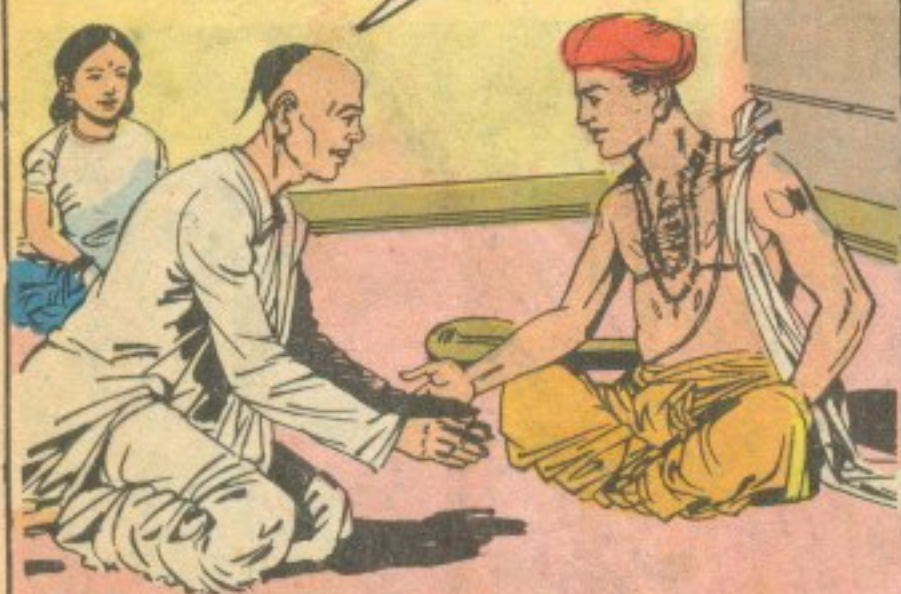
III

NAME THE THINGS SHOWN
IN THE ILLUSTRATION.

I IDENTIFY THE MEN.

LATER —

REVERED DASA, YOU HAVE
MADE MUSIC SIMPLE AND SWEET.
HEREAFTER, YOURS WILL
BE THE FIRST SONG
THAT I WILL TEACH A
BEGINNER.



II IDENTIFY THE SPEAKERS.

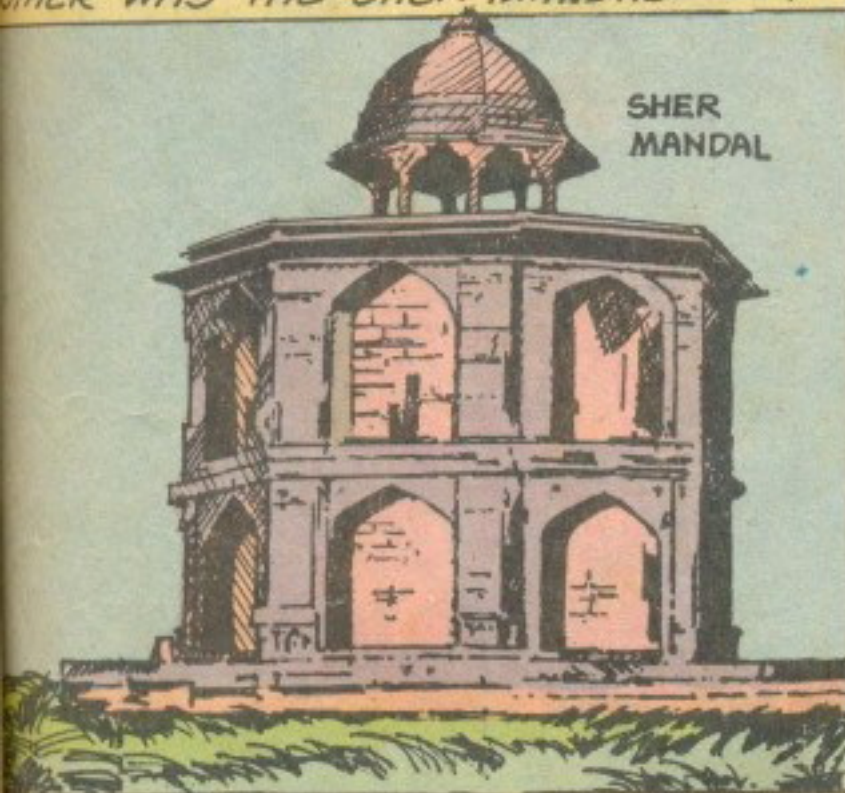
WITHOUT MY STICKS,
I WILL NOT BE ABLE
TO PERFORM MY
RELIGIOUS DUTIES.

WE WILL TRACK DOWN THE DEER AND BRING
BACK THE STICKS TO YOU.



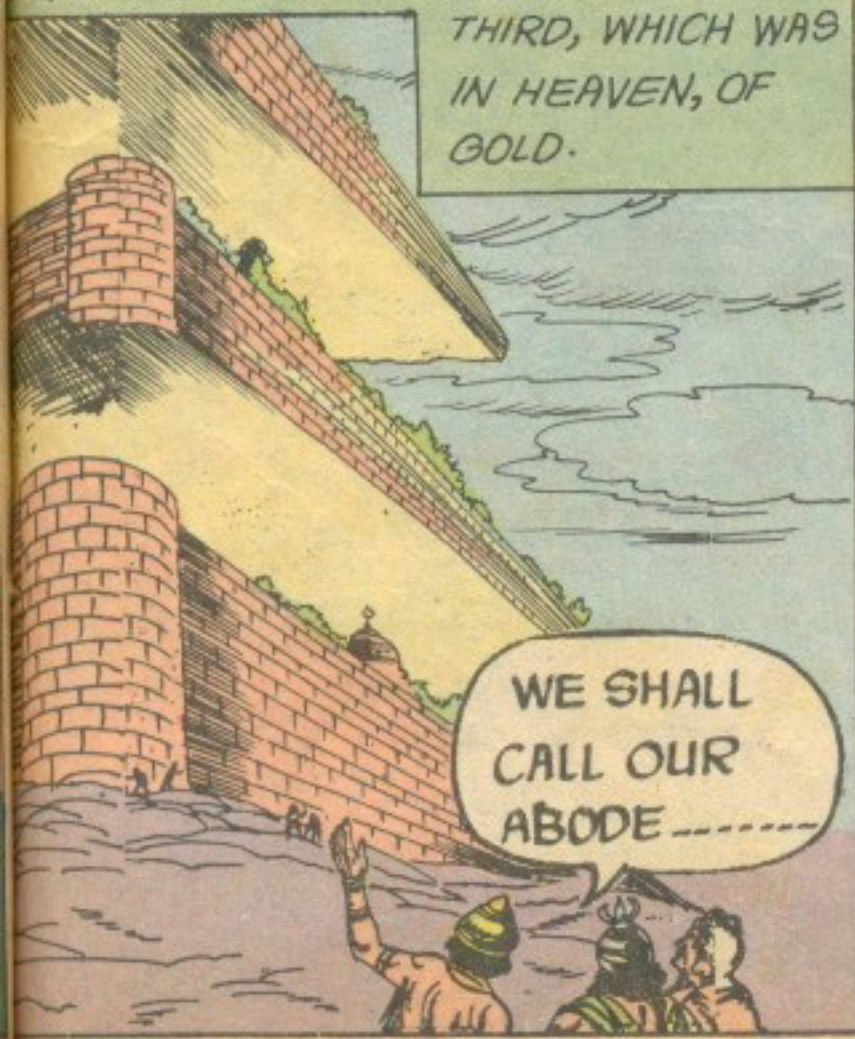
IV WHO IS THIS GREAT KING?

HE CONSTRUCTED TWO BUILDINGS WITHIN THE PRECINCTS OF THE PURANA GILA. ONE WAS A MOSQUE AND THE OTHER WAS THE SHER MANDAL.



V FILL IN THE BLANK.

THE WALLS OF THE LOWEST, WHICH WAS ON EARTH, WERE MADE OF IRON; THE WALLS OF THE SECOND, WHICH WAS IN THE SKY, OF SILVER; AND THE WALLS OF THE THIRD, WHICH WAS IN HEAVEN, OF GOLD.



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2. The first 50 all-correct entries received in our office will each receive 2 titles of Amar Chitra Katha.
3. Every correct entry will receive a green certificate.
4. Every one-error entry will receive a blue certificate.
5. Any participant who collects three green or six blue certificates till June 1987 will receive a free subscription of Amar Chitra Katha for six months.
6. Any participant who collects four green or eight or more blue certificates till June 1987 will receive a free subscription of Amar Chitra Katha for one year.
7. Any participant sending in five or more all correct entries till June 1987 will be awarded a cash prize of Rs. 5,000/-. If there is more than one claimant the prize will be equally distributed among those who have sent five or more all-correct entries.
8. If we do not receive five all-correct entries from anyone till June 1987, the prize will be distributed among those who have sent in four all-correct entries.
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10. While claiming your prize you must quote the reference number given at the base of the certificate won by you.

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Giving: Name, Age, Address, Answers

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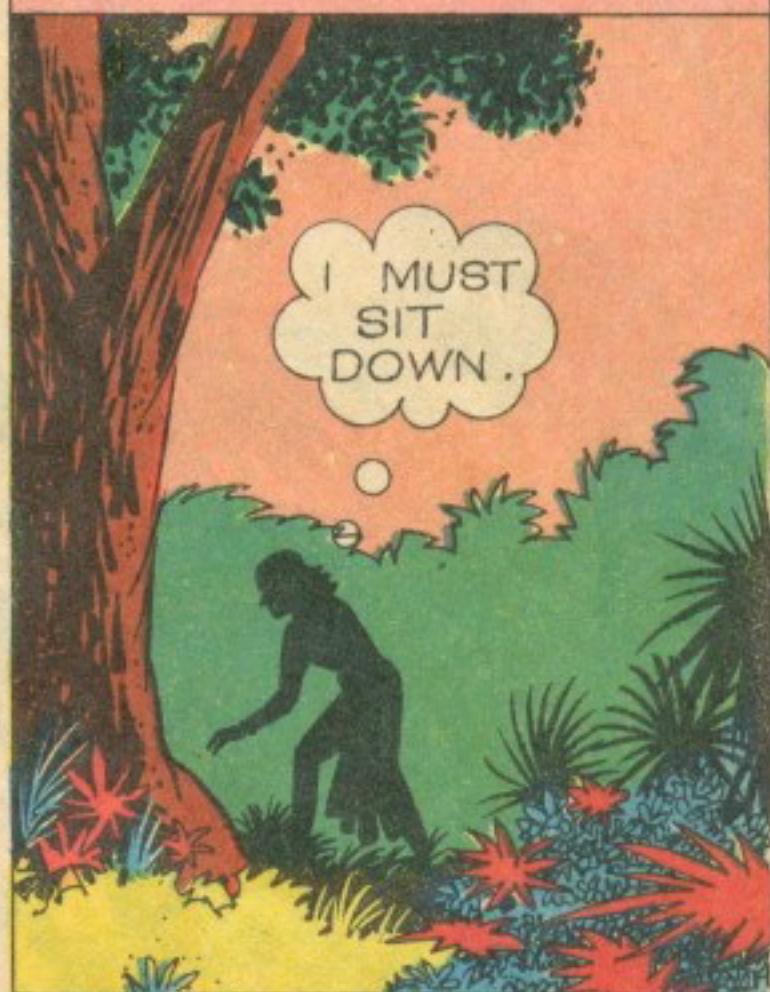
Answers to Quiz India-5

- I. Alexander should not have been shown wearing his helmet.
- II. These words were addressed to Parvati by Shiva for not paying attention to what he was saying.
- III. Kannappa removes his own eye to replace Shiva's.
- IV. a. Pundalik b. Humayun
- V. Satyabhama.

THE TRAIL STOPPED SUDDENLY AND HE FOUND HIMSELF IN A GARDEN CITY, AMIDST DENSE JUNGLE.



INDEED, IT WAS. THE TREES WERE ALIVE WITH SINGING BIRDS AND LADEN WITH SWEET-SMELLING FLOWERS.



AND SUDDENLY, OUT OF THE EVENING MISTS—



AS SHE MOVED CLOSER—



YOU ARE IN
DHUMAPURA. I
AM RUPASHIKHA,
DAUGHTER OF
AGNISHIKHA.

AGNISHIKHA!
THE VERY
RAKSHASA
WHO, IN THE
FORM OF
A CRANE,
I HAVE
WOUNDED.



BEFORE HE
COULD SPEAK—

I KNOW
OF YOUR
EXTRAORDINARY
SKILL IN ARCHERY.
MY FATHER IS
NOT AN EASY
TARGET.



THE EVENING WORE ON AS SHRINGABHUJA
TOLD HER ALL THAT HAD HAPPENED.

MY FATHER
HAS BEEN NURSED
BY MAGIC HANDS
AND IS VERY WELL.
THE ARROW IS
WITH ME—I
TOOK A FANCY
TO IT.

BUT
I MUST
HAVE IT
BACK.





RUPASHIKHA LEFT HIM, TO GO TO AGNISHIKHA. SHE WENT STRAIGHT TO THE POINT.



SHRINGABHUJA WAS BROUGHT BEFORE HIM, AND THE RAKSHASA WAS ALL SMILES.

MY DAUGHTER IS YOURS, IF YOU PROMISE NEVER TO DISOBEY ME. AND NOW GO. BATHE, CHANGE AND BE BACK IN AN HOUR.

VERY WELL, SIR.



AND RUPASHIKHA, BRING YOUR SISTERS HERE.



RUPASHIKHA HURRIED OUT AND CAUGHT UP WITH SHRINGABHUJA.

I KNOW WHAT FATHER HAS IN MIND. WHEN YOU COME, THERE WILL BE A HUNDRED WOMEN ALL ALIKE. YOU WILL BE ASKED TO SINGLE ME OUT.

WHATEVER WILL I DO?



JUST LOOK OUT FOR THE ONE WITH A GARLAND OVER HER EARS. THAT WILL BE ME.



IT WAS JUST AS RUPASHIKHA HAD SAID. BUT THE RAKSHASA HAD ANOTHER TEST UP HIS SLEEVE.

TAKE THIS LOT OF SESAME SEEDS—ALL HUNDRED BAGS OF THEM—AND SOW THEM IN THE FIELD OUTSIDE THE TOWN.

YES, SIR.

AGAIN, RUPASHIKHA WAYLAID THE DEJECTED SHRINGABHUJA.

I MAY HAVE TO USE MAGIC TO COMPLETE THE TASK BUT IT WILL BE DONE!

BUT THE BATTLE OF WITS WAS NOT OVER. WHEN SHRINGABHUJA RETURNED—

I'VE CHANGED MY MIND. GO, COLLECT ALL THE SOWN SEEDS AND PILE THEM UP AGAIN IN MY GRANARY.

RUPASHIKHA CAME TO HIS RESCUE ONCE AGAIN.

EMERGE, YOU ARMIES OF ANTS AND SET TO WORK !

AND THE ANTS SCURRIED ABOUT, COLLECTING THE SEEDS WHICH...

...SHRINGABHUJA PRODUCED BEFORE THE RAKSHASA.

SIR, I HAVE DONE THE IMPOSSIBLE. I HAVE UNSOWN A FIELD !

HE IS EXTRAORDINARY. BUT A FEW MORE TASKS WILL REALLY TEST HIM.

JUST ONE MORE ERRAND. MY BROTHER LIVES IN AN ABANDONED SHIVA TEMPLE, SOME MILES FROM HERE. GO AND INVITE HIM TO YOUR WEDDING TOMORROW.

RUPASHIKHA WAS MORE THAN A MATCH FOR HER SCHEMING FATHER.

MY UNCLE
WILL TRY AND
KILL YOU.
HERE—TAKE
THIS EARTH,
THIS
WATER...

...THESE
THORNS AND THIS
SMOULDERING FAGGOT.
JUST KEEP THROWING
THESE BEHIND YOU
ONE BY ONE,
EACH TIME MY
UNCLE CATCHES UP
WITH YOU.

HE RODE RUPASHIKHA'S MAGIC HORSE WITH
THE SPEED OF WIND. SOON, THE DESERTED
TEMPLE LOOMED BEFORE HIM, DARK AND MENACING.

DHUMASHIKHA!
YOUR BROTHER
INVITES YOU TO
THE WEDDING OF
HIS DAUGHTER,
RUPASHIKHA.

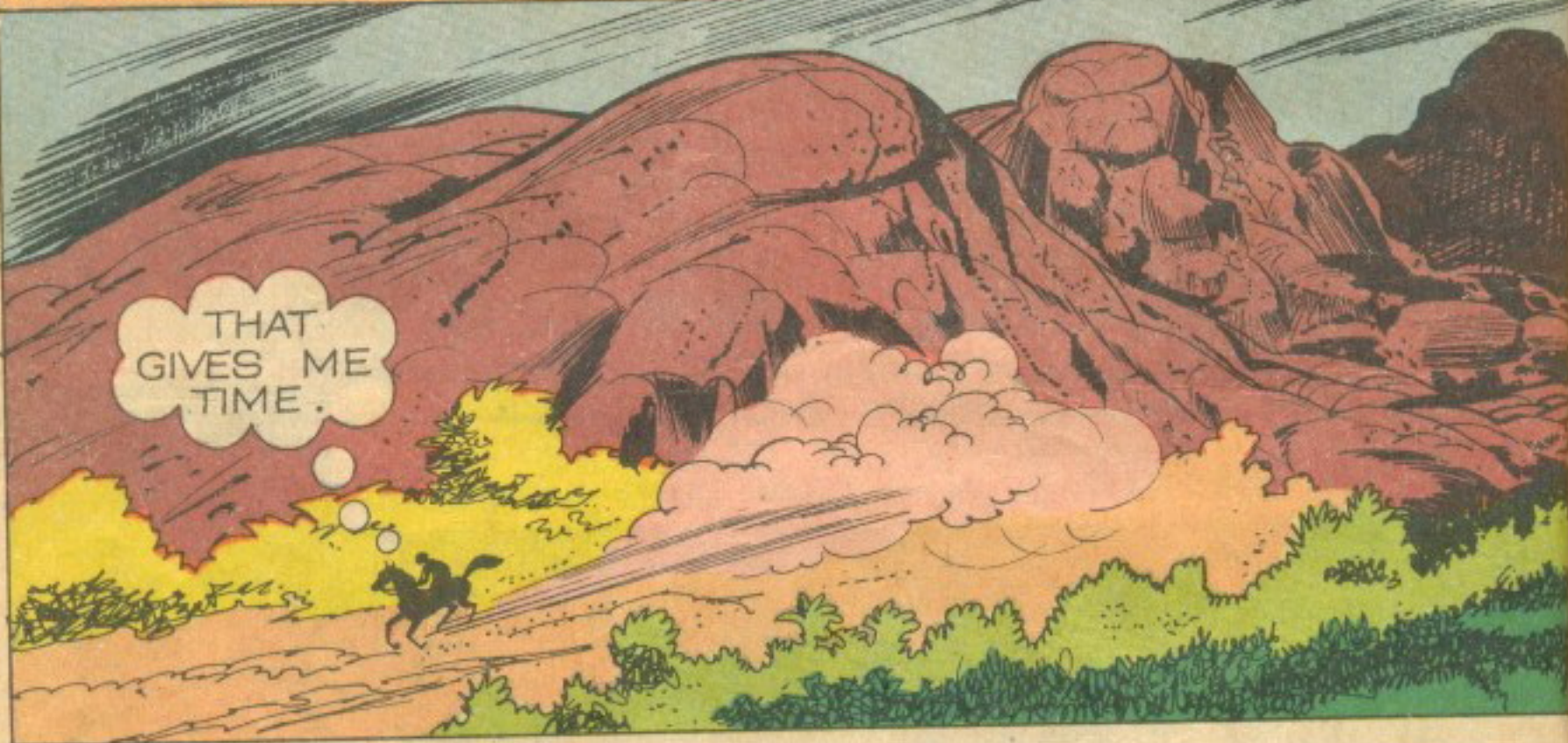
THEN, TURNING HIS HORSE, HE FLED,
URGING IT TO GO FASTER, EVER FASTER.

THERE COMES
THE OLD DEMON.
LET ME THROW
THE EARTH IN
HIS PATH.



AND LO! THE EARTH GREW INTO A HILL,
BLOCKING THE DEMON'S PATH.

THAT
GIVES ME
TIME.



A LITTLE FARTHER ON—

THERE'S
LIFE IN THE
OLD DEVIL
YET.



AND HE SPRINKLED THE
WATER BEHIND HIM...

...WHICH INSTANTLY BECAME A HUGE RIVER, EDDYING AND SWIRLING BEHIND HIM.

I'M NEARER HOME NOW, BUT STILL NOT OUT OF DANGER.

TWICE MORE HE BLOCKED THE DEMON'S PATH—ONCE WITH THE THORNS...

THIS THORN JUNGLE WILL TEAR HIM APART.

...AND FINALLY WITH THE FAGGOT WHICH SET THE SURROUNDING TREES ABLAZE.

I'M GOING BACK. THIS HUMAN BEING IS TOO MUCH HARD WORK. I'LL JUST WAIT FOR ANOTHER ONE TO COME ALONG.

AND HE WENT BACK, LEAVING SHRINGABHUJA FREE TO RETURN, TRIUMPHANT.

AS SHRINGABHUJA GALLOPED HOME—

THIS IMPOSSIBLE MAN! HOW DID HE ESCAPE MY BROTHER?

WELL DONE. NOW, YOU MAY MARRY MY DAUGHTER.

THE NEXT DAY THEY WERE MARRIED. A MONTH HAD PASSED.

RUPASHIKHA, WE MUST GET BACK TO VARDHAMANA.

THAT MEANS ANOTHER BATTLE OF WITS WITH MY FATHER.

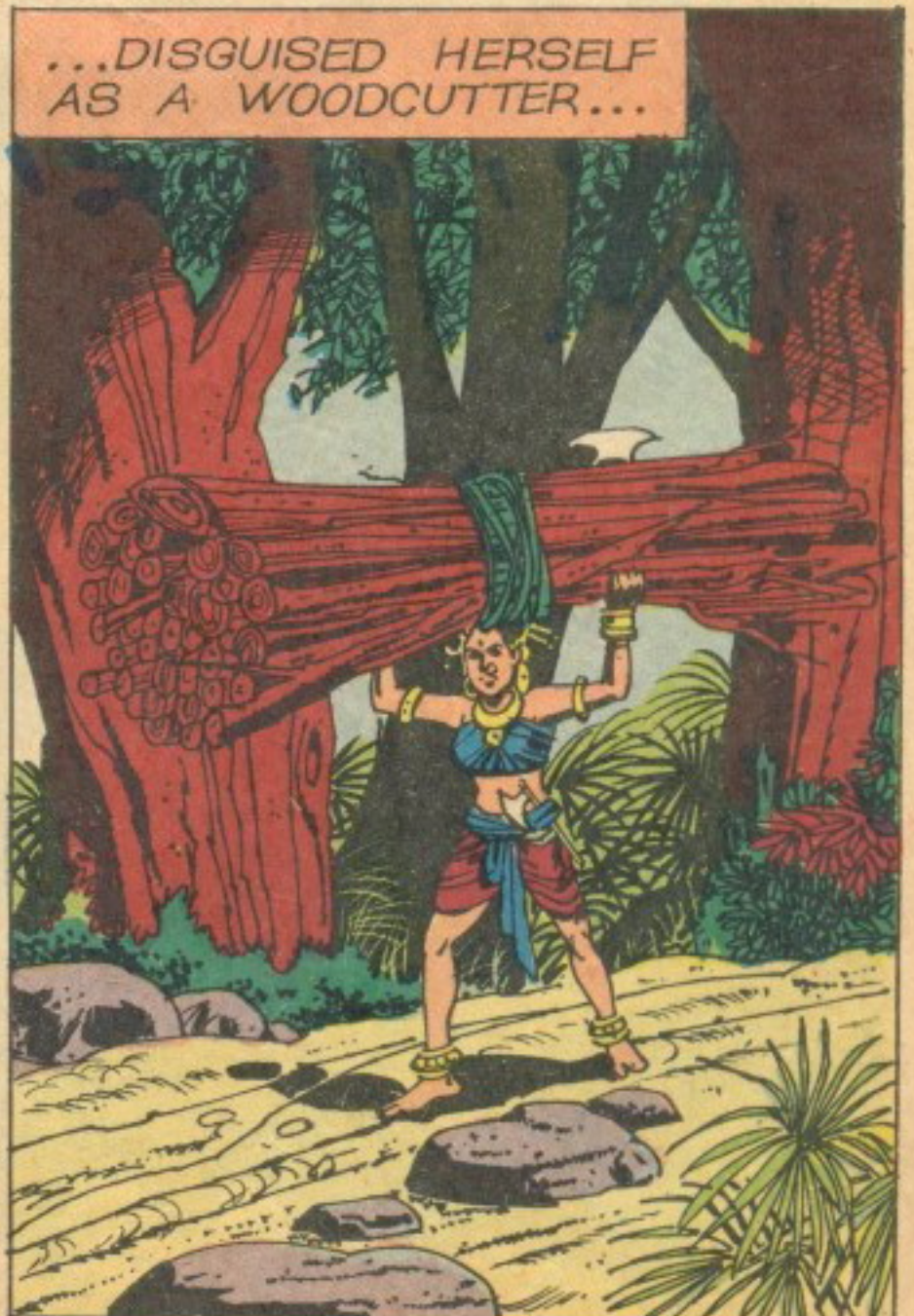
HOW DO WE DO IT?

JUST DON'T ANNOUNCE YOUR INTENTIONS. WE'LL HAVE TO MAKE A QUICK AND QUIET EXIT.

THE NEXT DAY—

WE'RE GOING OUT FOR THE DAY INTO THE FOREST.

VERY WELL, PRINCESS.



...AND JOINED A WOODCUTTER WHO HAPPENED TO BE THERE. SOON—

WE SAW NO ONE. WE HAVE BEEN CUTTING WOOD ALL DAY— FOR KING AGNISHIKHA'S FUNERAL PYRE.

DID YOU SEE A YOUNG COUPLE PASS THIS WAY?



WHAT! ME, DEAD? I MUST RUSH HOME TO CHECK.

MY FOOLISH FATHER!



AND SHE JOINED SHRINGABHUJA—

SURELY, HE MUST REALIZE HE'S NOT DEAD.

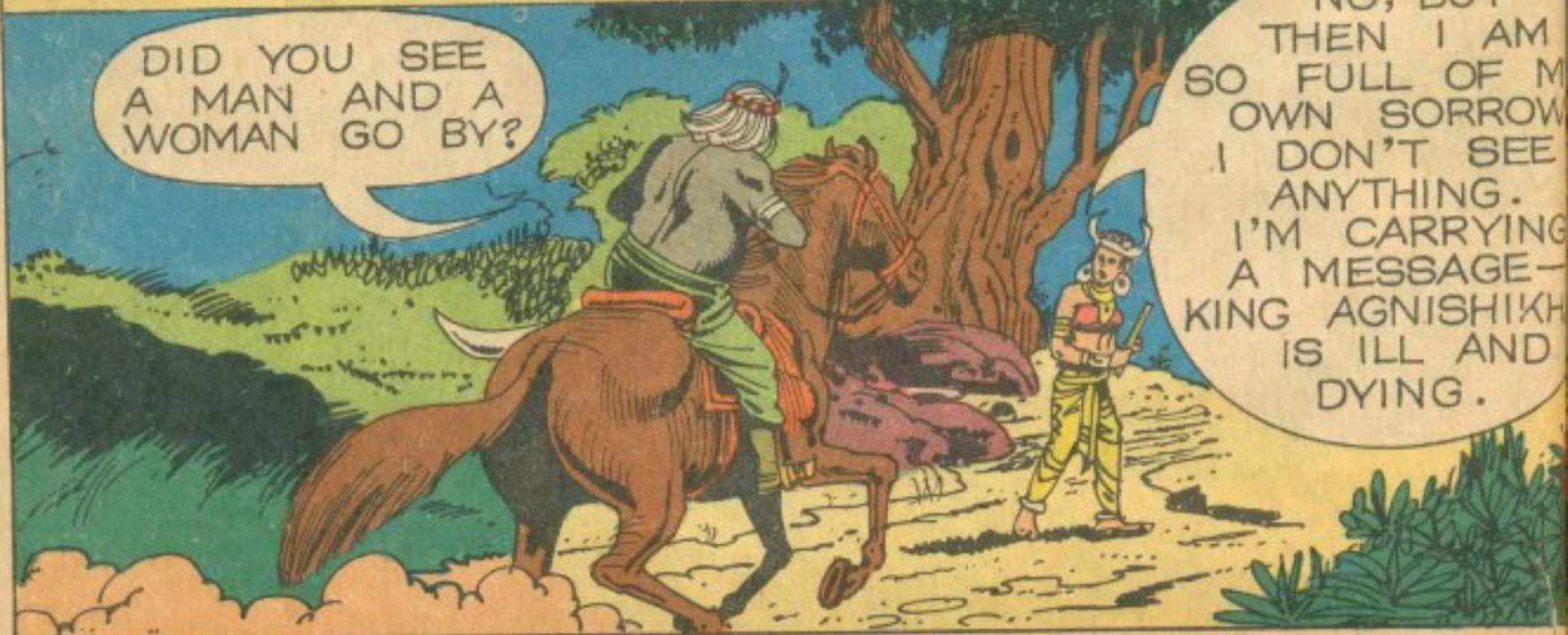
RAKSHASAS ARE BIG AND FOOLISH.

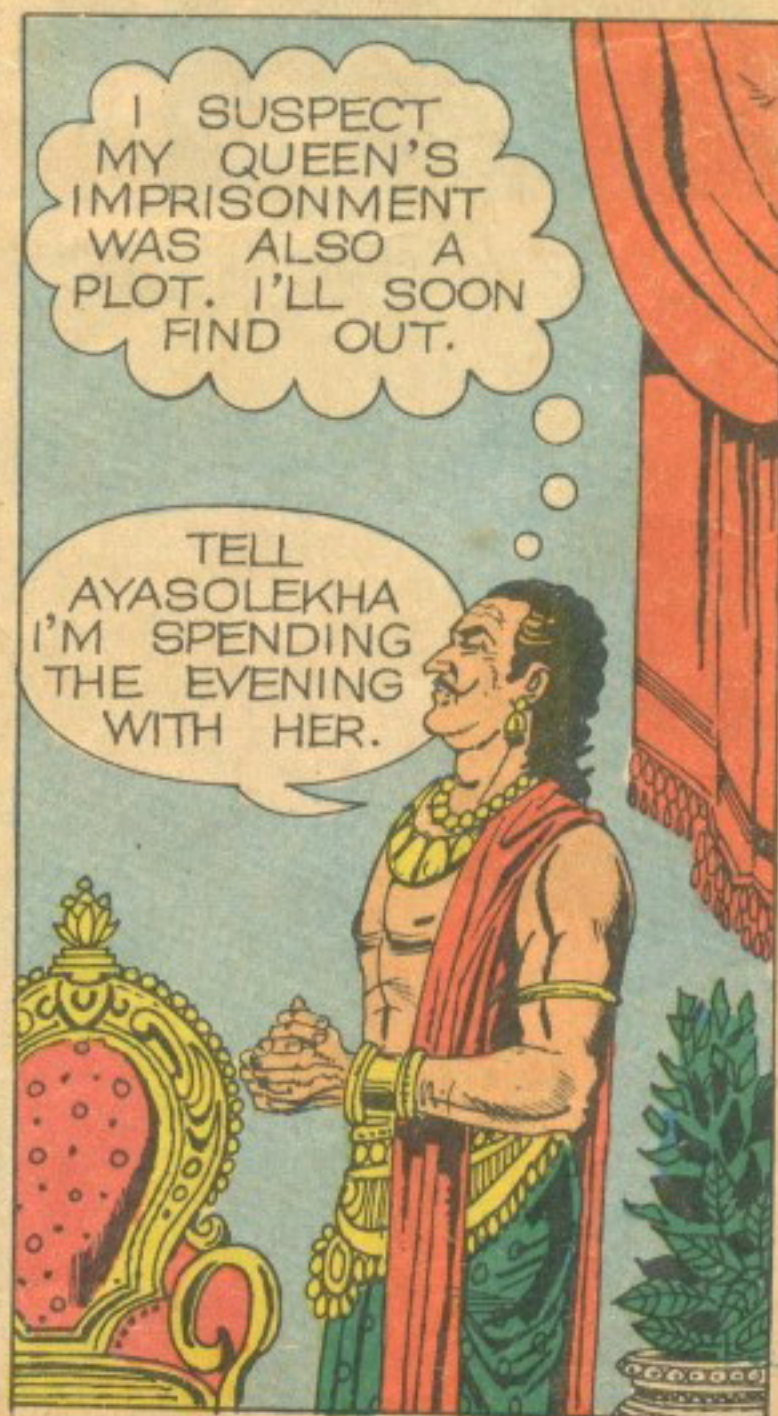
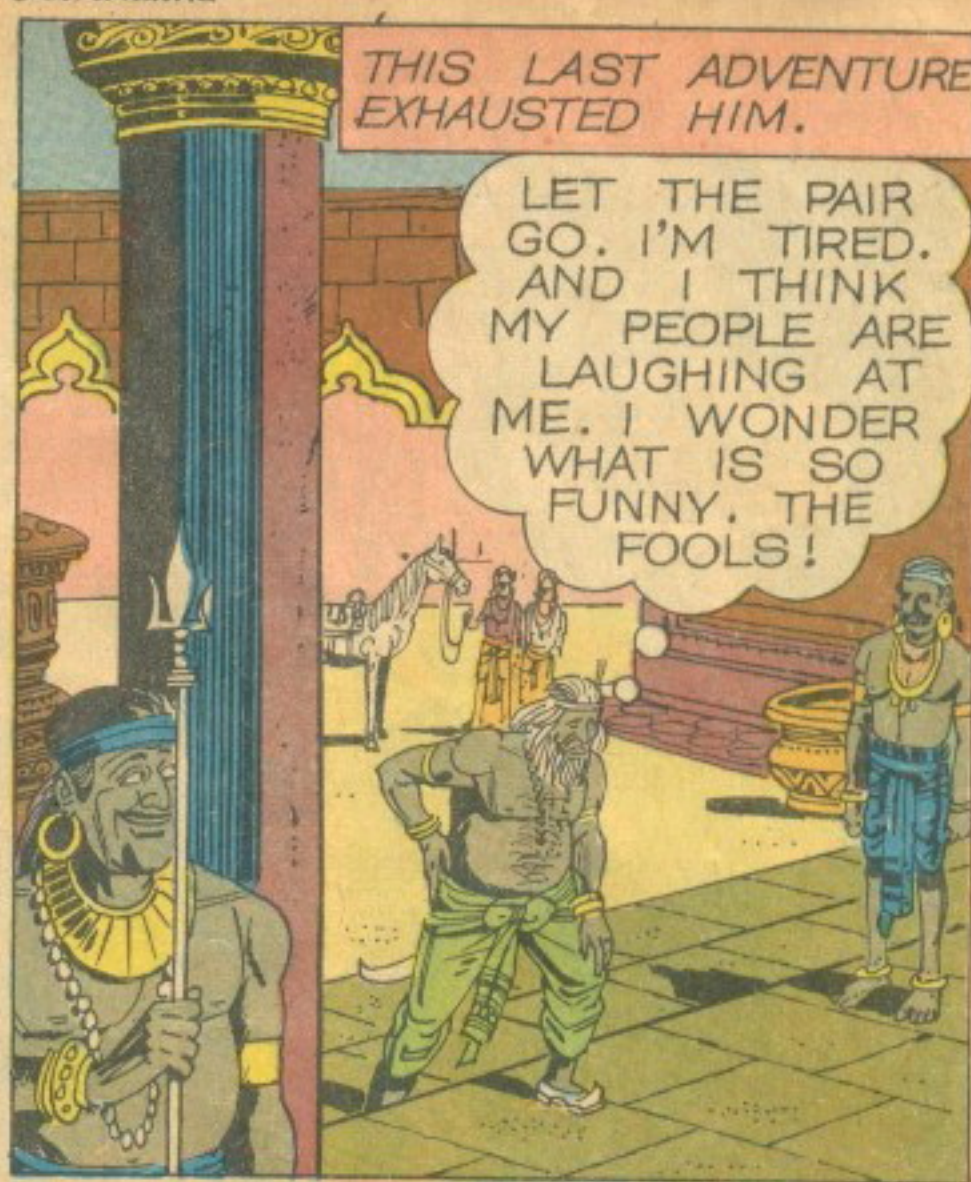


AGNISHIKHA WAS SOON BACK. THIS TIME RUPASHIKHA WAS IN THE GUISE OF A MESSENGER.

DID YOU SEE A MAN AND A WOMAN GO BY?

NO, BUT THEN I AM SO FULL OF MY OWN SORROW I DON'T SEE ANYTHING. I'M CARRYING A MESSAGE— KING AGNISHIKHA IS ILL AND DYING.





HE PLIED HER WITH WINE.

COME, DRINK, MY QUEEN.



SOON SHE WAS ASLEEP — AND MUMBLING.

GUNAVARA, IF YOU WERE NOT IN THAT DUNGEON, WOULD THE KING BE HERE?

AHA! THE WITCH.



THE KING ACTED QUICKLY. HE FREED GUNAVARA, RELATING ALL THAT HAD HAPPENED.

THE WITCHES! I'LL IMPRISON THE LOT.

FORGIVE THEM, MY LORD.



THE NEXT DAY, SHRINGABHUJA WAS ANOINTED CROWN PRINCE AND ALL WAS WELL IN THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD OF VARDHAMANA ONCE AGAIN.

GOD BLESS YOU, MY SON.

