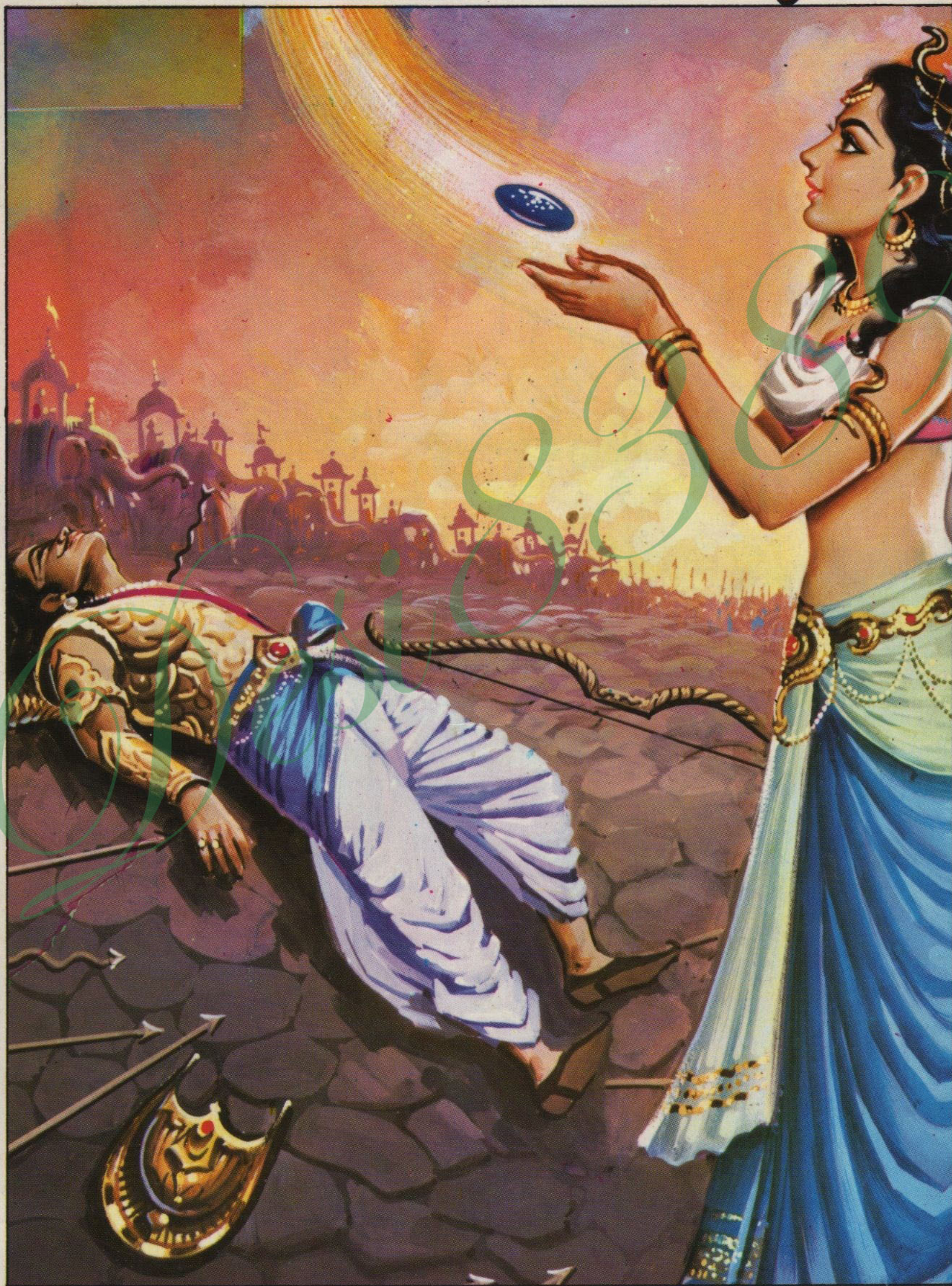




Vol. 629 Rs 25

Uloopi



Amar Chitra Katha: The Glorious Heritage of India



ULOOPi

Uloopi was the daughter of Kauravya, king of the Nagas. The Nagas are a historical race and there are many references to them in the Puranas and Mahabharata. According to mythology, Nagadwipa was one of the seven divisions of India. There were Naga kingdoms in Mathura, Padmavati and Eastern India. Perhaps like the Asuras, Daityas and Danavas, the Nagas, too, offered strong resistance to the spread of Aryan culture. The favourite theory is that the Nagas were so named because they worshipped serpents (Nagas) and held them in awe. Mythology describes them as having the face and torso of human beings but the lower extremities of serpents.

Of the various racial groups that inhabited India at the time of the advent of the Aryans, the Nagas seem to have been in a sufficiently advanced stage of civilization. There are accounts of many Aryan princes marrying Naga princesses. Arjuna met Uloopi when he was in exile. Uloopi wielded great influence on Babhruvahana, the king of Manipur, who was her step-son. Hence her story assumes importance in the Mahabharata.

Retold by:
Kamala Chandrakant

Artworks:
S.S. Havaladar



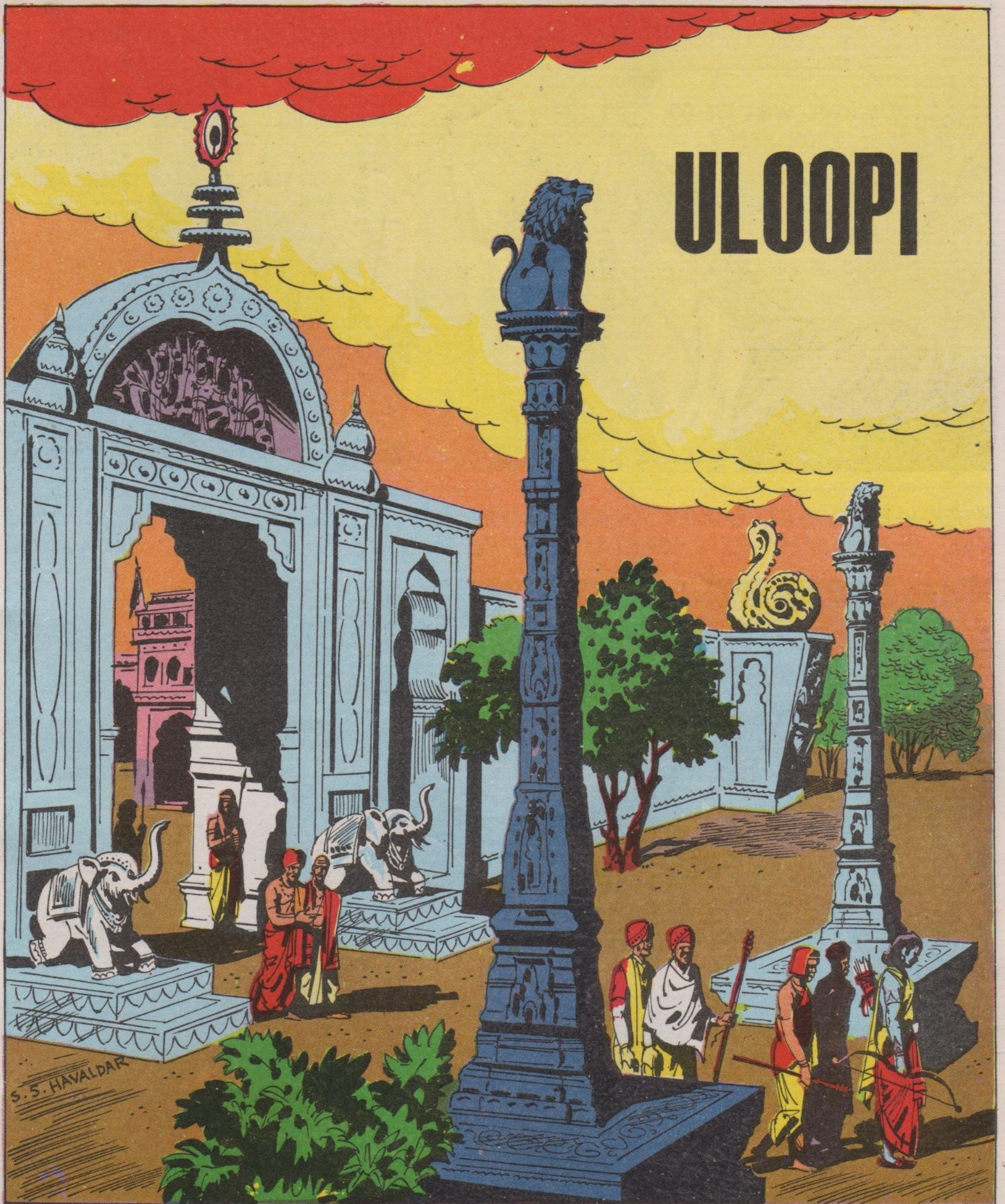
Editor : Anant Pai

© India Book House Limited, 1974. Reprinted December 1996

ISBN No. 81-7508:053:1

Published by Anant Pai for India Book House Limited, Fleet Building, Mathuradas VasANJI Road, Marol Naka, Andheri (E), Mumbai - 400 059 and printed by him at Prasad Offset Press, Shed B&CS, No. 42, Hissa No. 2, Sativali, Vasai Kaman Road, Vasai Taluka, Thane District.

ULOOPI



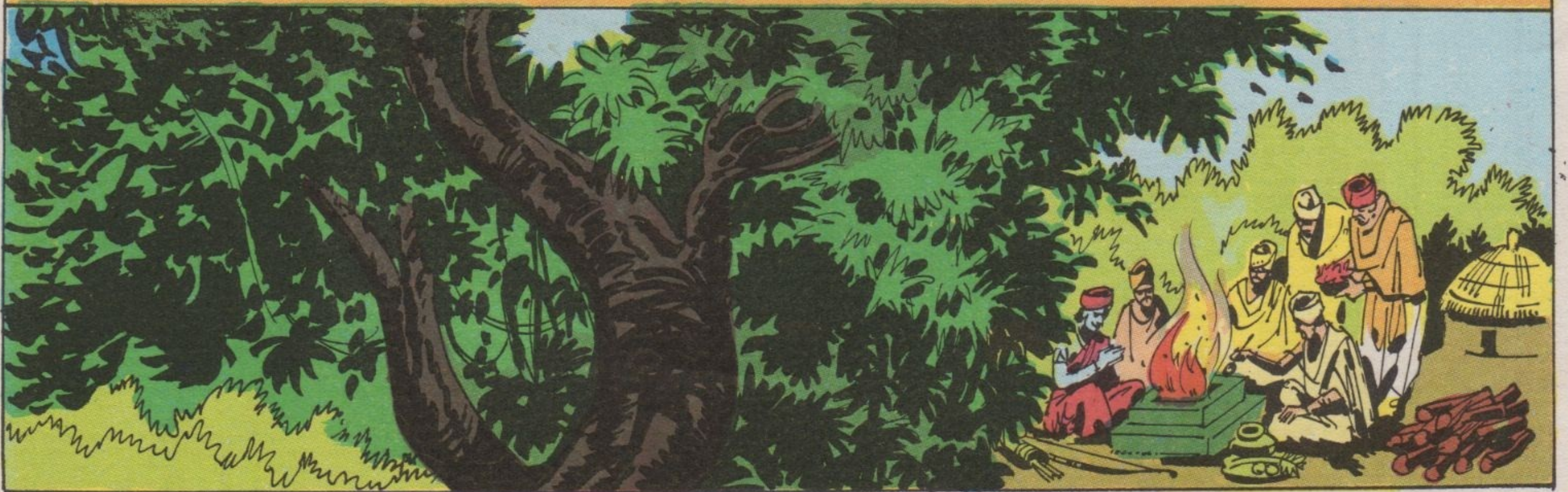
ARJUNA, THE PANDAVA, ONCE BROKE A VOW. FOR THIS OFFENCE, HE HAD TO GO ON AN EXILE FOR TWELVE YEARS. ACCOMPANIED BY BRAHMANS HE SET OUT FROM INDRAPRASTHA, THE CAPITAL.

HIS FIRST HALT WAS AT GANGOTRI, THE SOURCE OF THE RIVER GANGA.

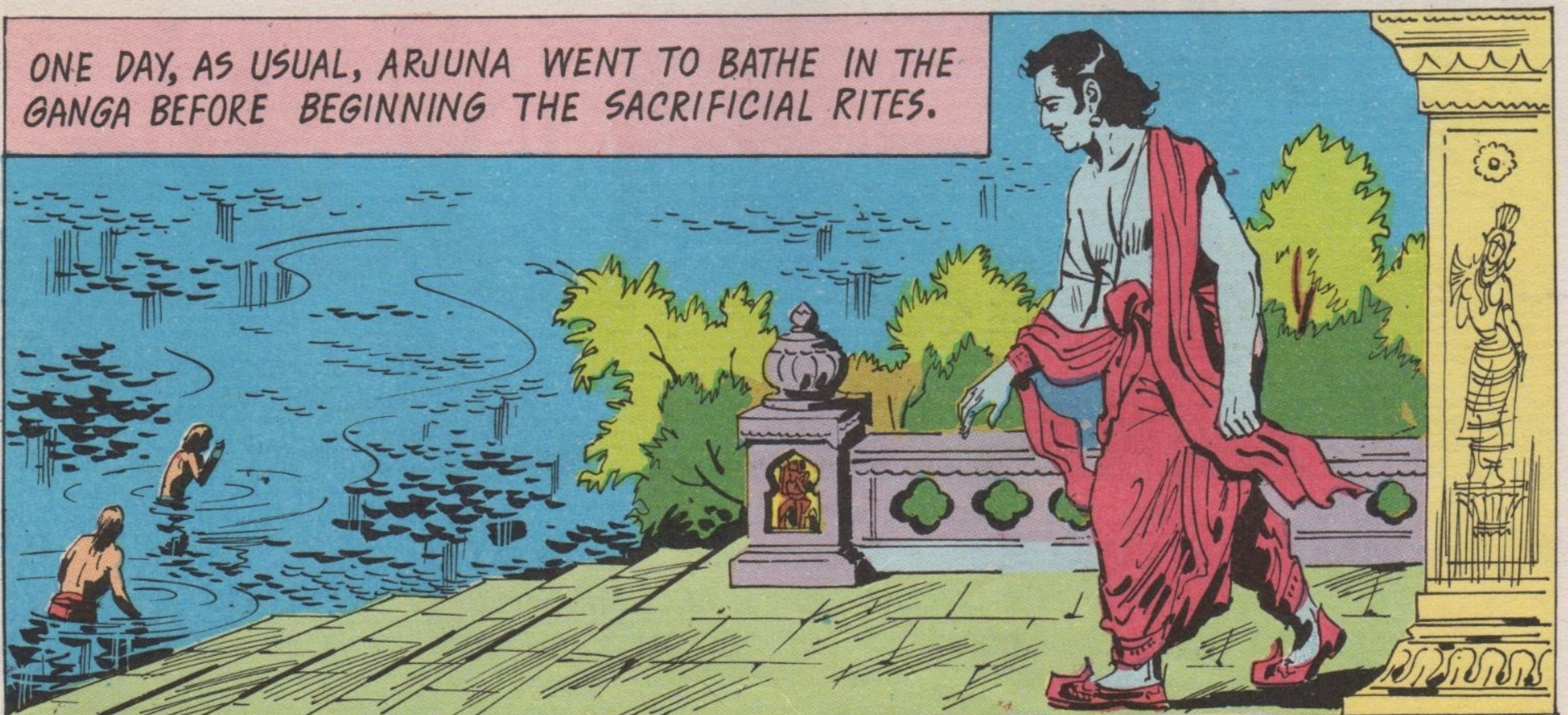
WHERE WILL WE GO
FROM HERE?

I'LL VISIT
THE HOLY
PLACES OF
THE LAND.

WHEREVER HE WENT, ARJUNA PERFORMED THE FIRE SACRIFICE. HE LOOKED UPON
THIS AS HIS SACRED DUTY. SOMETIMES, A FIRE SACRIFICE CONTINUED FOR MANY DAYS.



ONE DAY, AS USUAL, ARJUNA WENT TO BATHE IN THE
GANGA BEFORE BEGINNING THE SACRIFICIAL RITES.



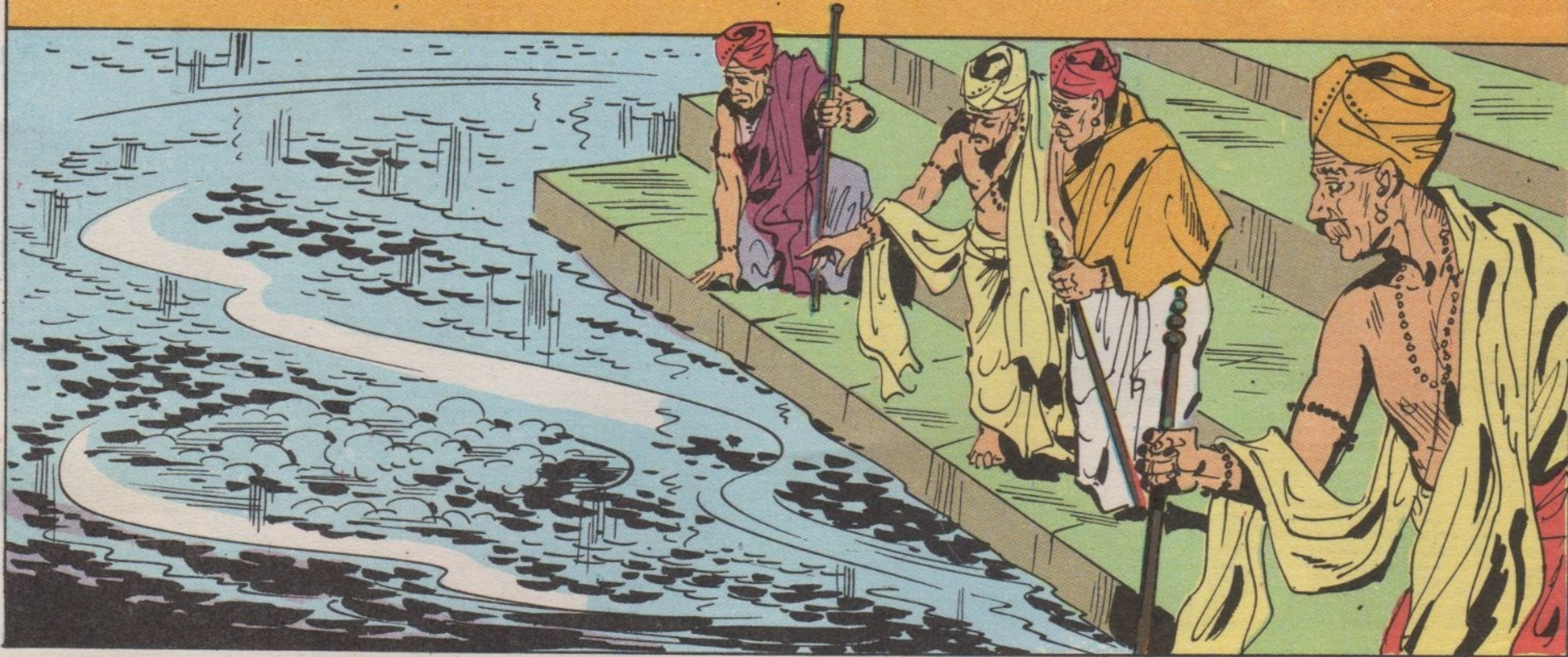
AS HE WAS ABOUT TO STEP OUT—



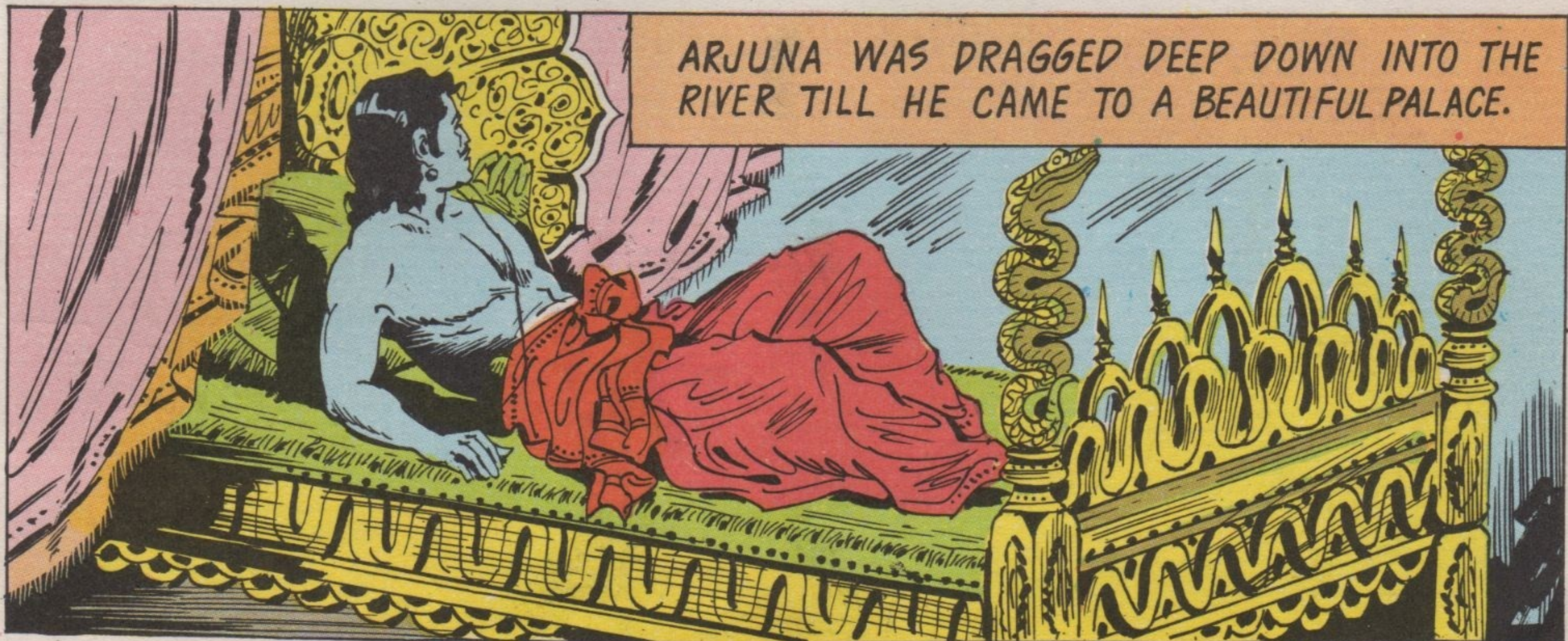
THE BRAHMAN RUSHED FORWARD TO HIS RESCUE.

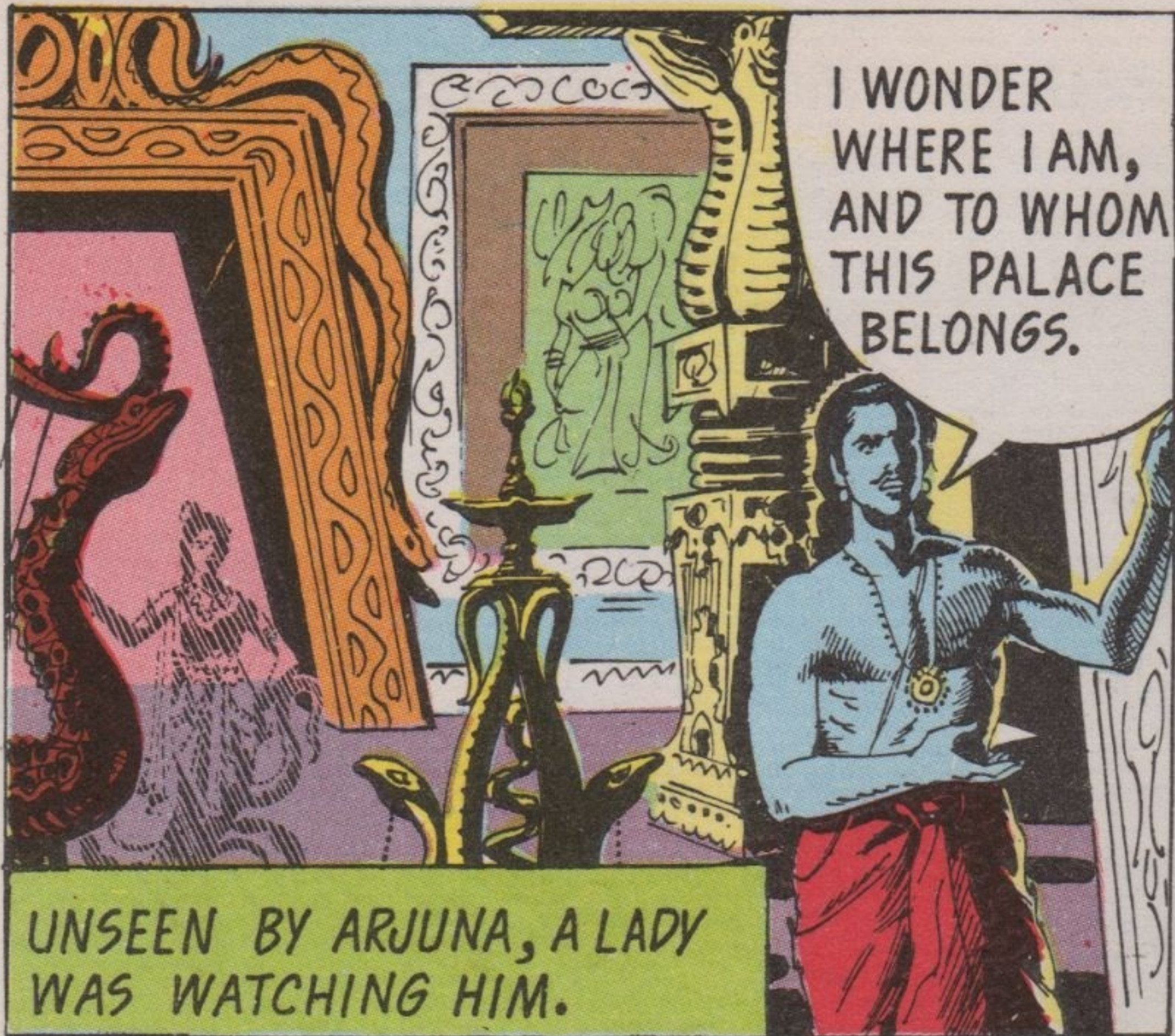


BUT WHEN THEY REACHED THE SPOT, ARJUNA HAD VANISHED FROM SIGHT.

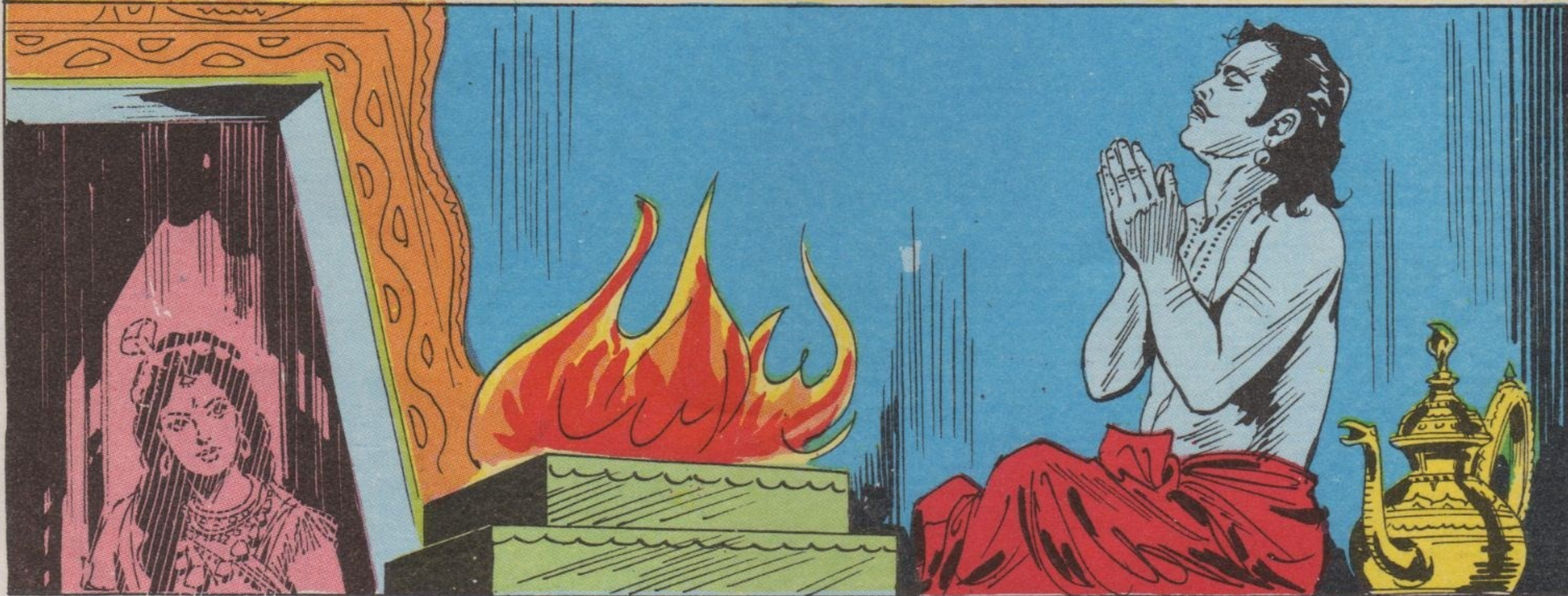


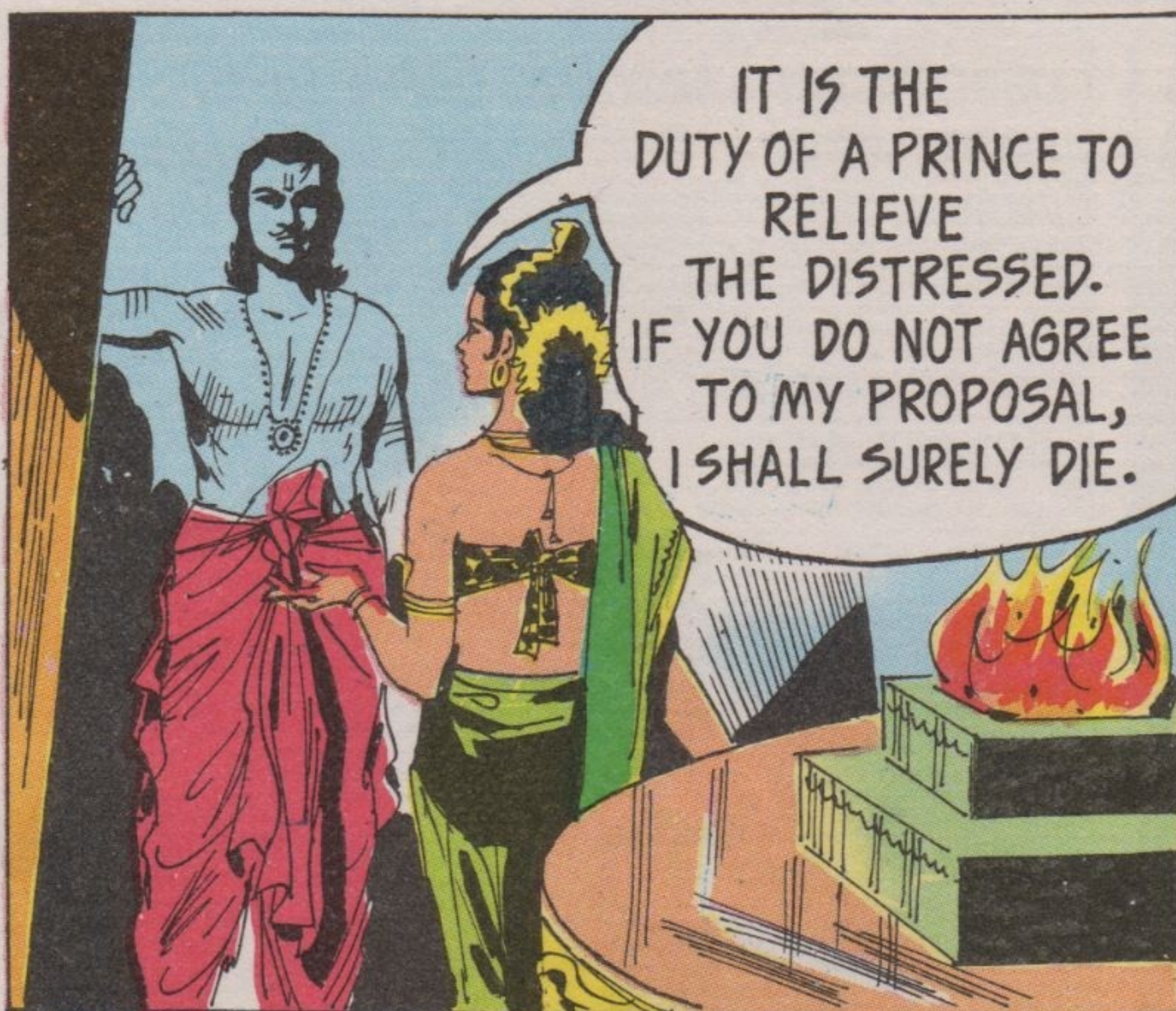
ARJUNA WAS DRAGGED DEEP DOWN INTO THE RIVER TILL HE CAME TO A BEAUTIFUL PALACE.





HE SAT BEFORE THE SACRIFICIAL FIRE AND PERFORMED HIS RITES WITH DEVOTION.





THROUGHOUT THE HOURS OF HIS STAY, ULOOPI LOOKED AFTER HIS EVERY NEED WITH TENDERNESS AND AFFECTION.



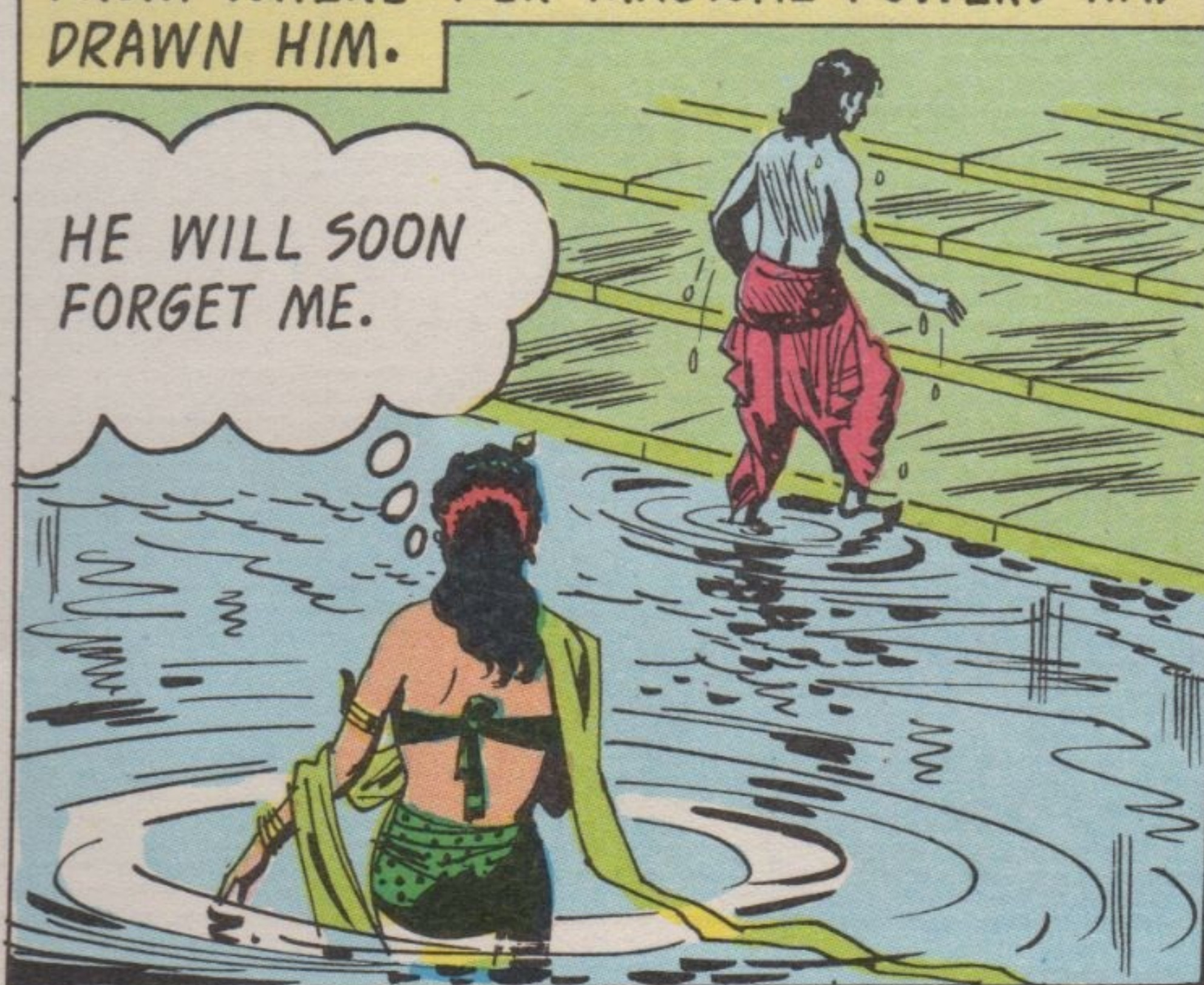
NEXT MORNING—

YOU HAVE SAVED MY LIFE. I AM GRATEFUL TO YOU, MY BELOVED HUSBAND. I SHALL TAKE YOU BACK, AS I PROMISED.

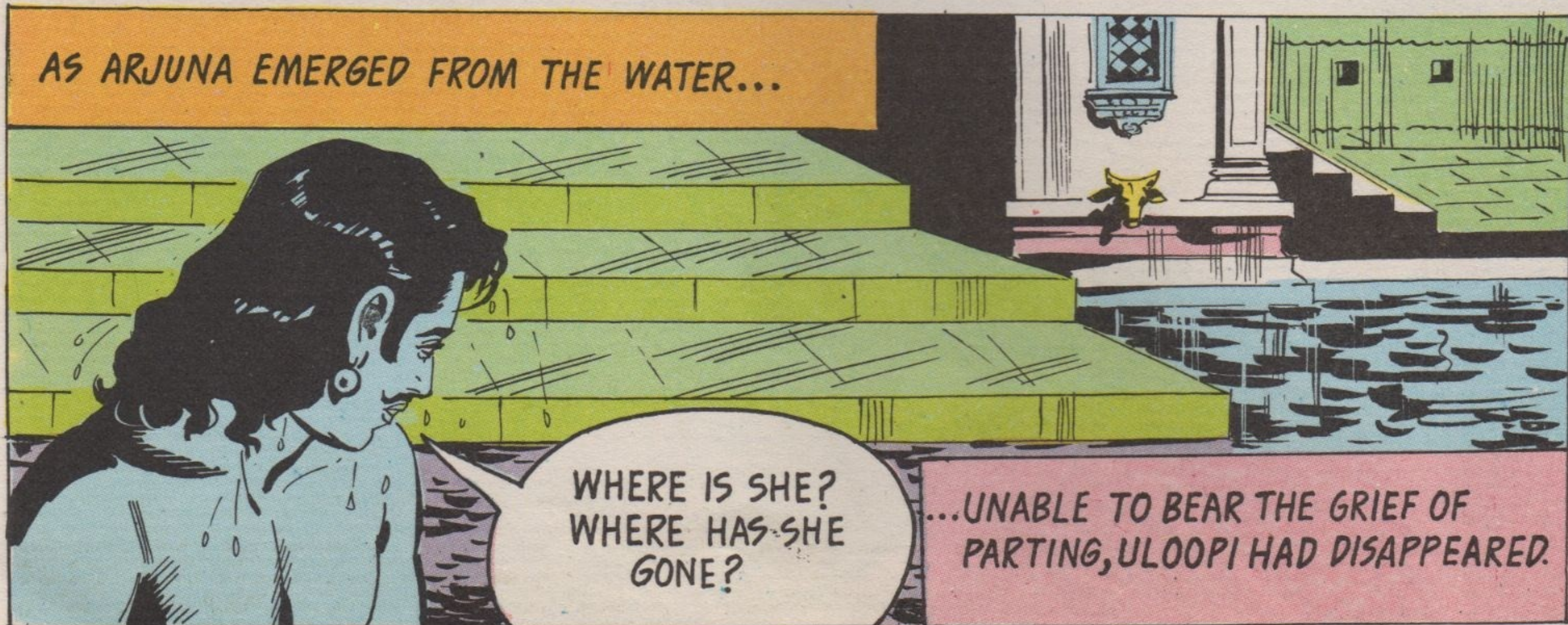


ULOOPI LED ARJUNA BACK TO THE SPOT FROM WHERE HER MAGICAL POWERS HAD DRAWN HIM.

HE WILL SOON FORGET ME.

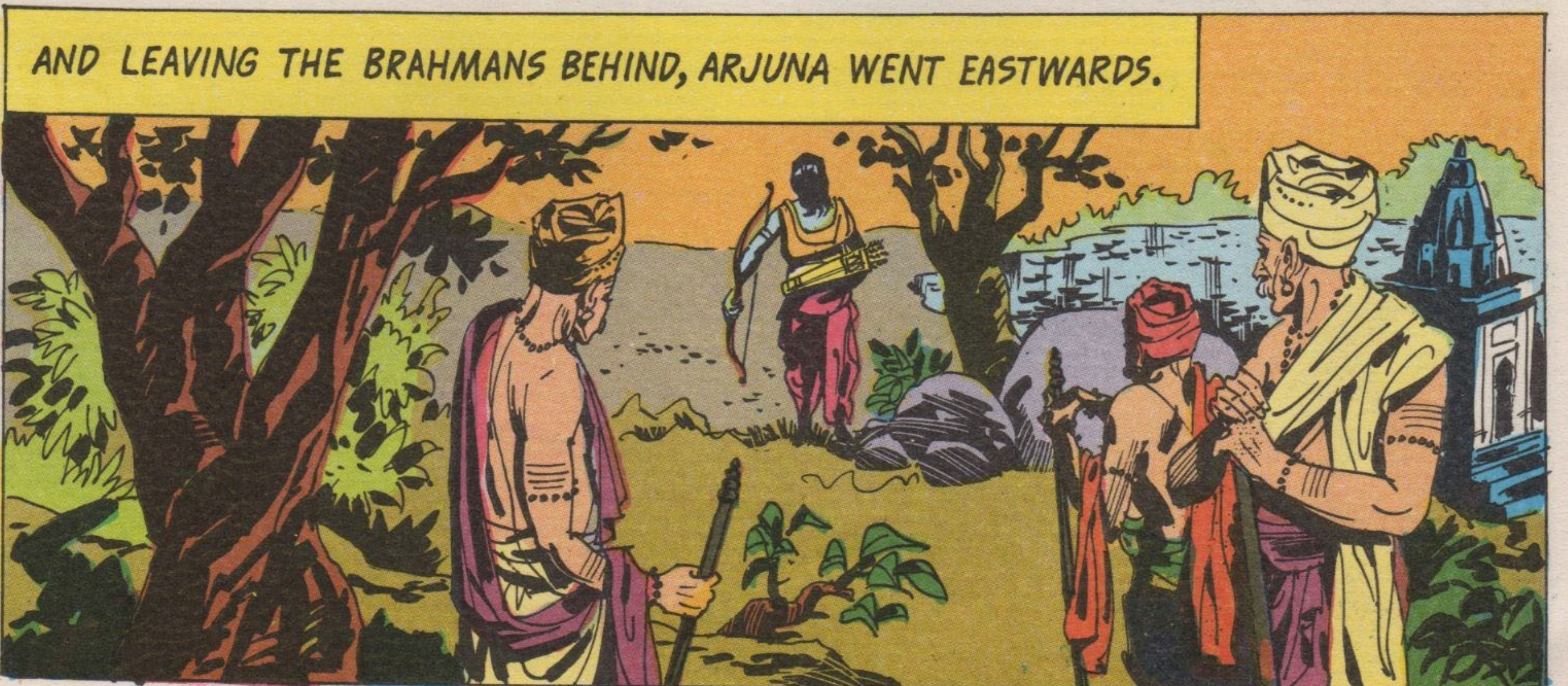
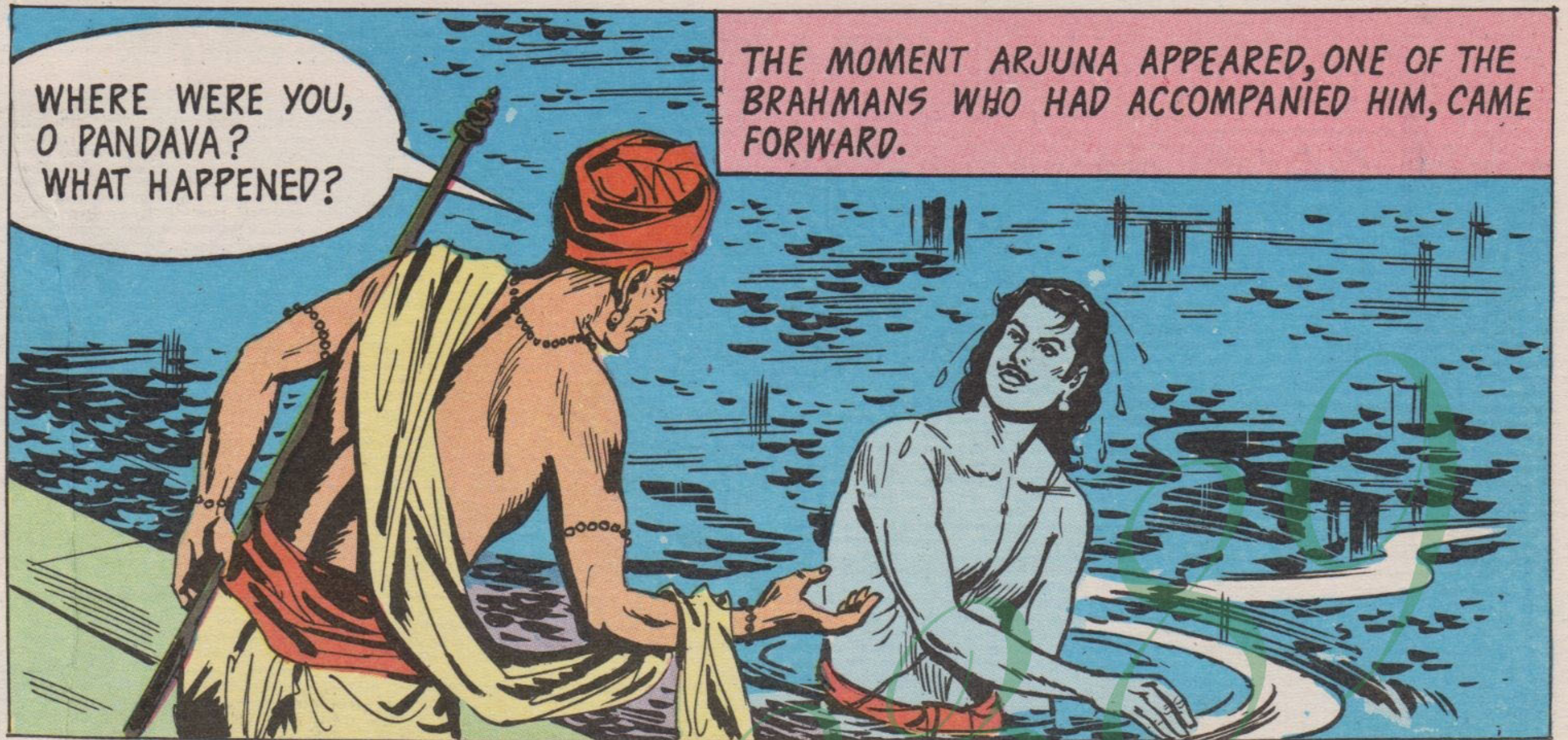


AS ARJUNA EMERGED FROM THE WATER...

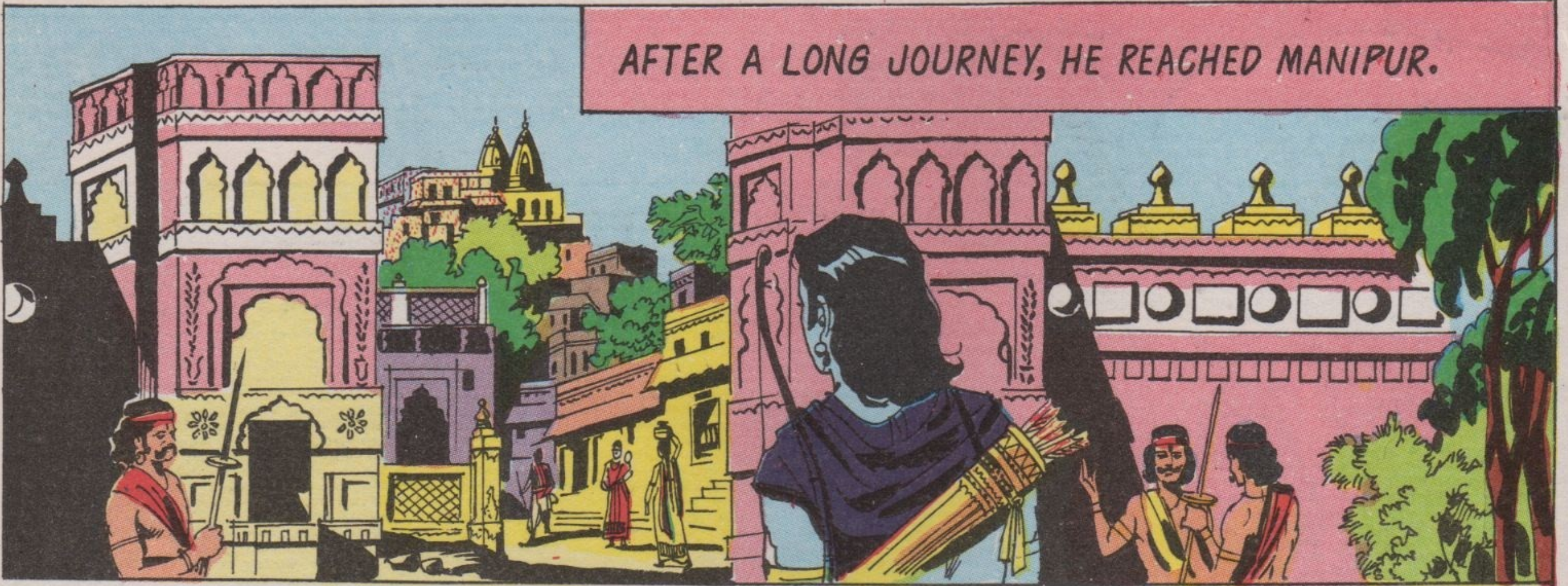


WHERE IS SHE?
WHERE HAS SHE
GONE?

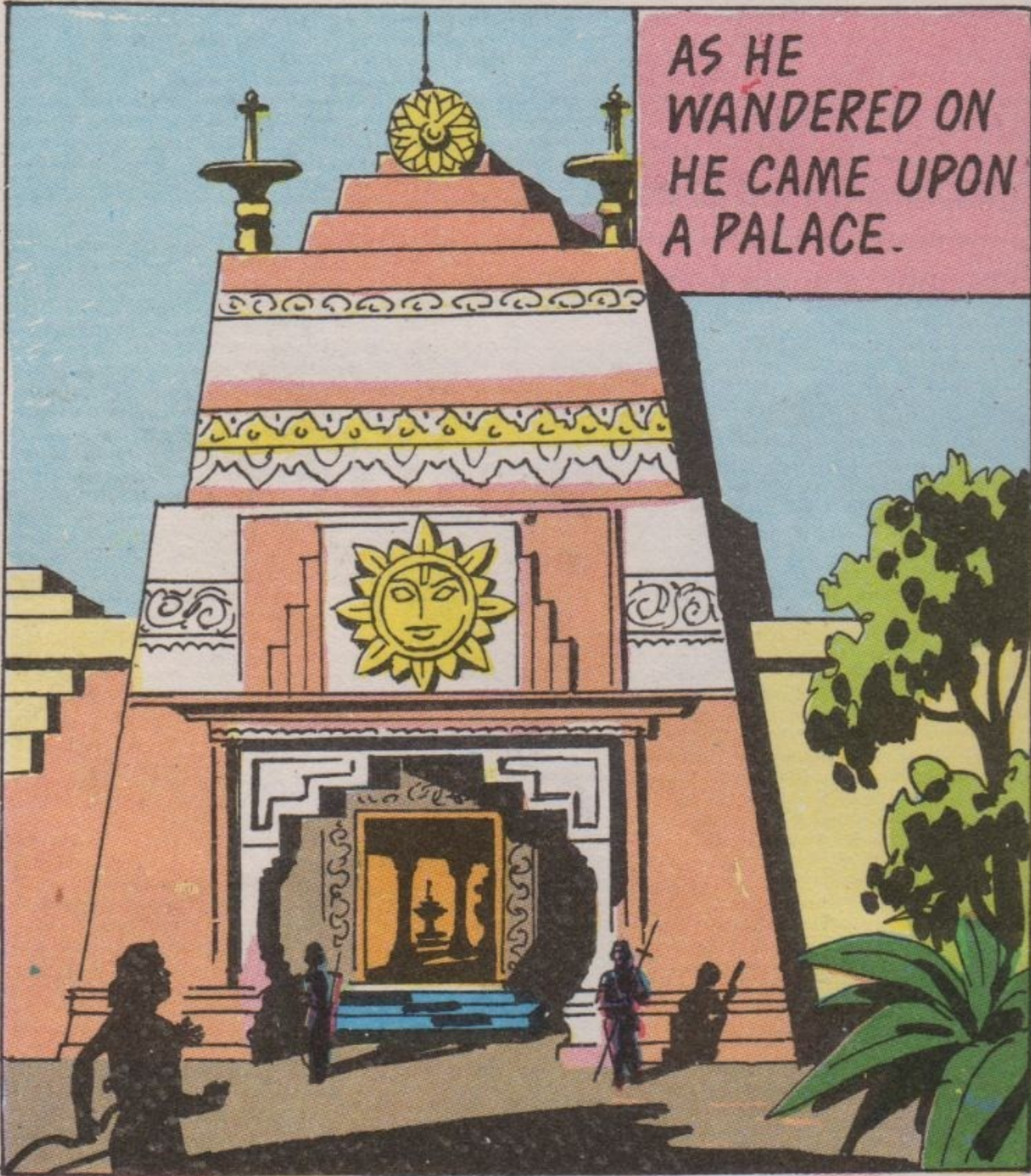
...UNABLE TO BEAR THE GRIEF OF PARTING, ULOOPI HAD DISAPPEARED.



AFTER A LONG JOURNEY, HE REACHED MANIPUR.



AS HE
WANDERED ON
HE CAME UPON
A PALACE.

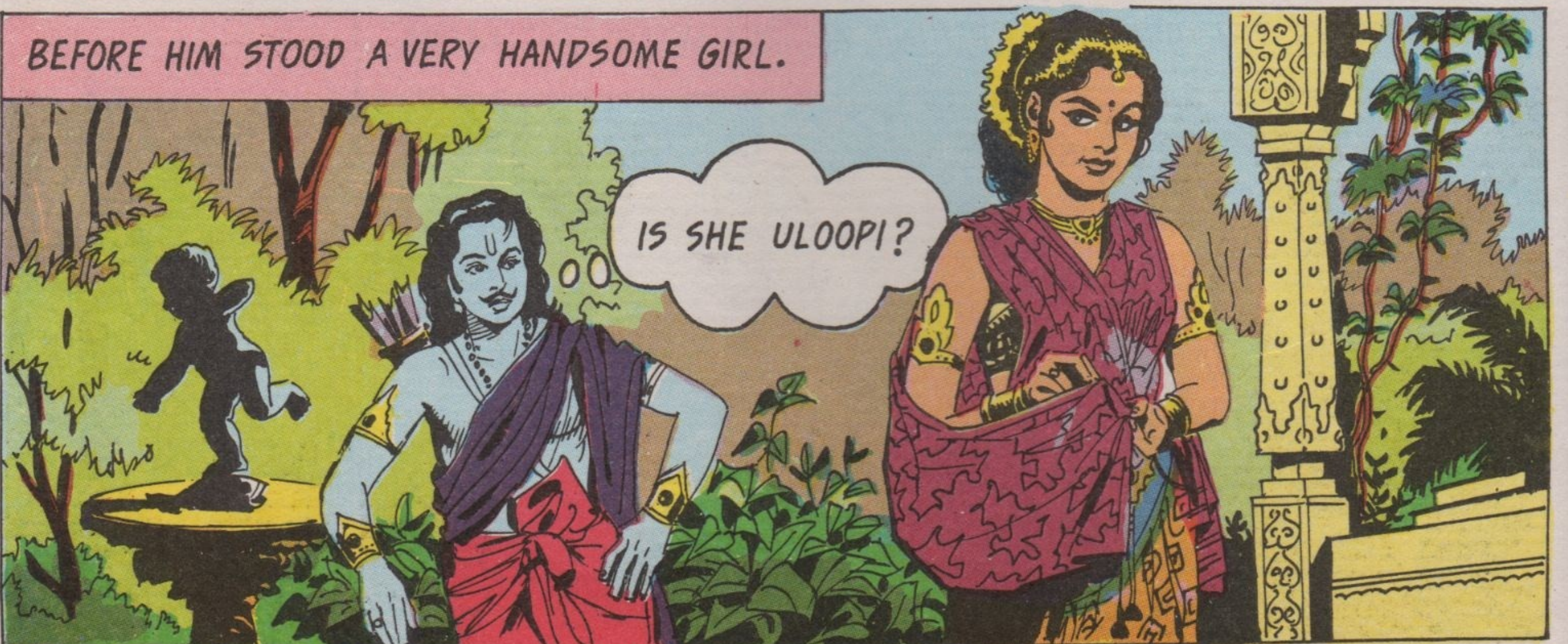


HE ENTERED THE PALACE GARDENS...



... AND SUDDENLY STOPPED.

BEFORE HIM STOOD A VERY HANDSOME GIRL.



HE WENT CLOSER STILL.

NO, SHE IS NOT ULLOPI.

WHO ARE YOU, FAIR MAIDEN?



I AM
CHITRANGADA,
THE DAUGHTER
OF THE KING
OF MANIPUR.



THEN CHITRANGADA SUDDENLY TURNED HER
FACE, BLUSHING IN CONFUSION.



WHAT POWER IS IT THAT
DRAWS ME TOWARDS HER?

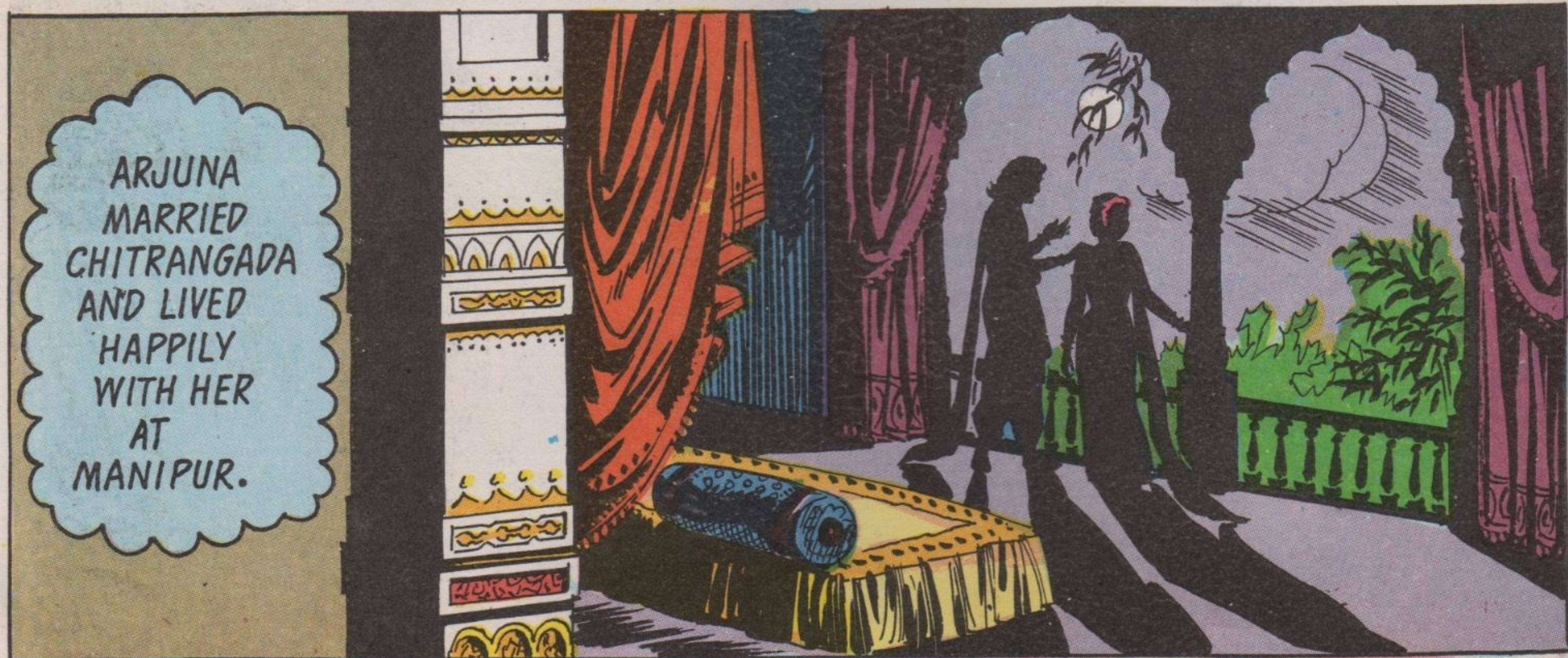
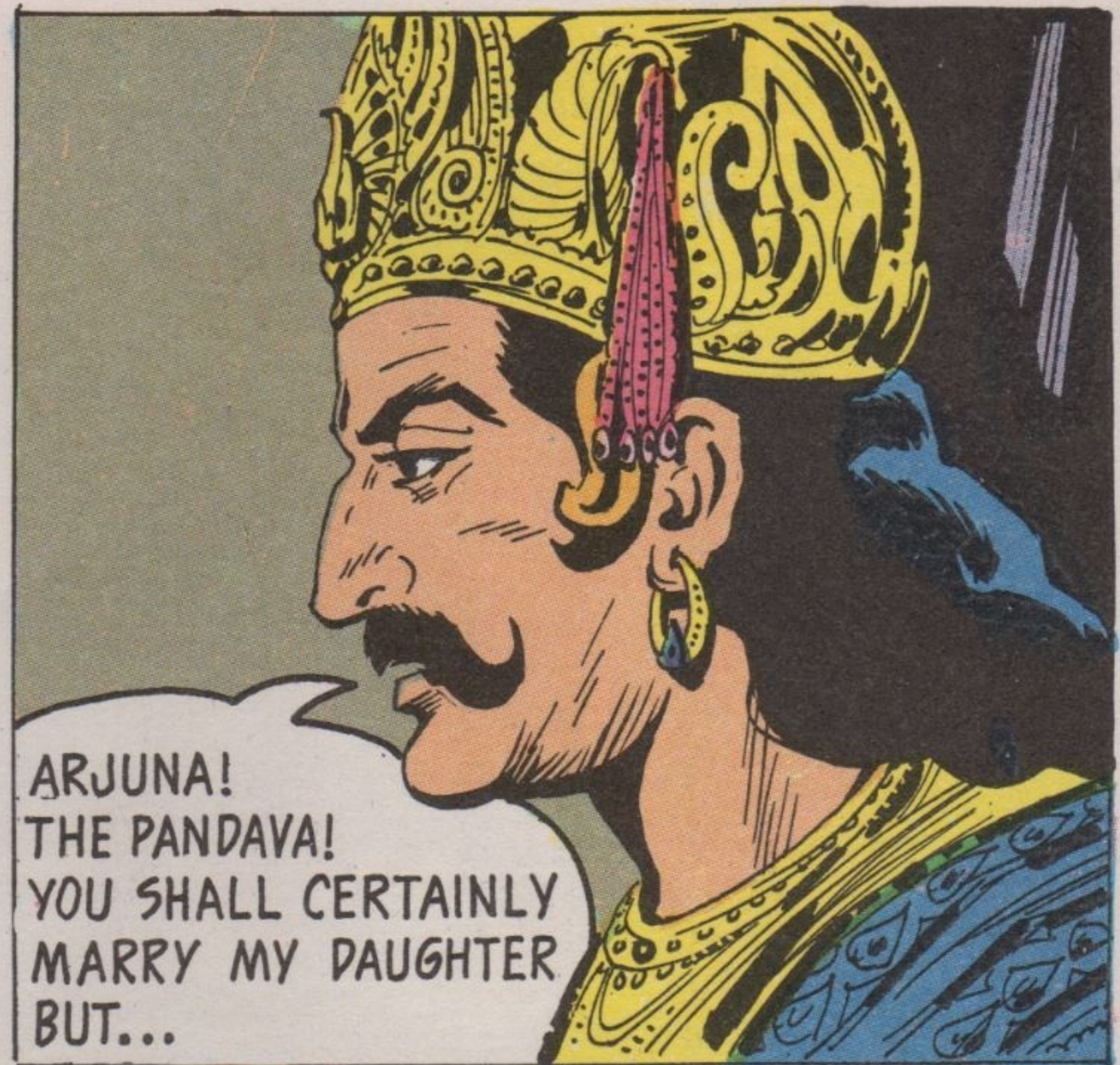
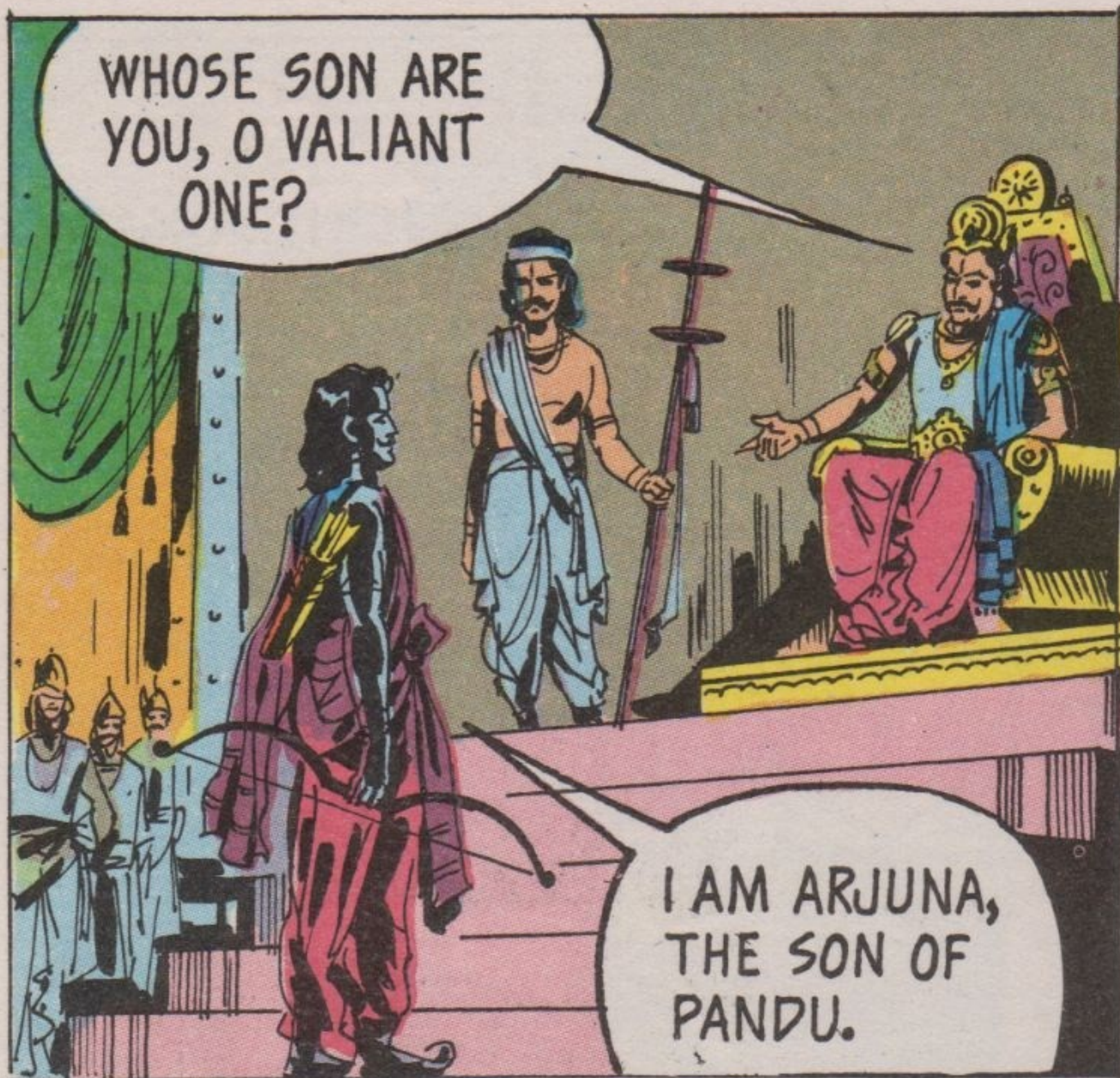
I SHALL SEEK AN
AUDIENCE WITH THE
KING.

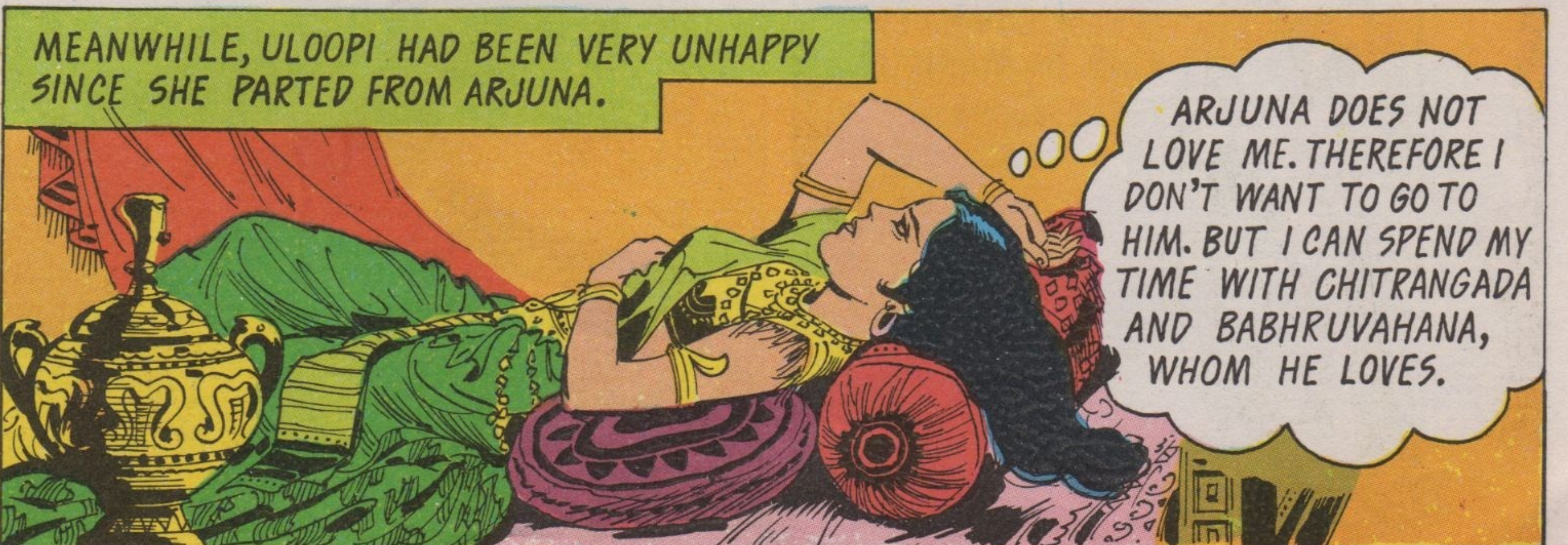
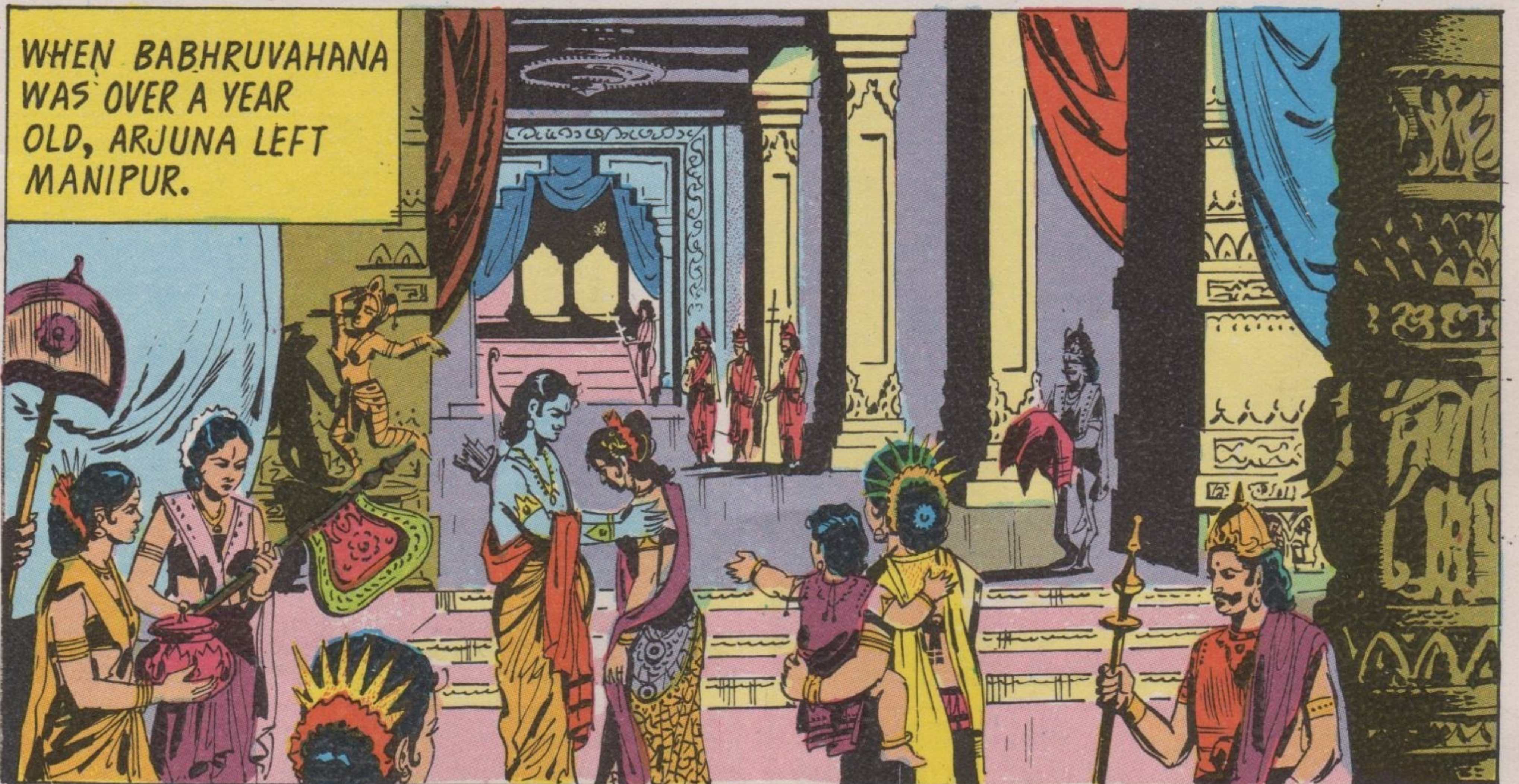


LATER, AT THE COURT—

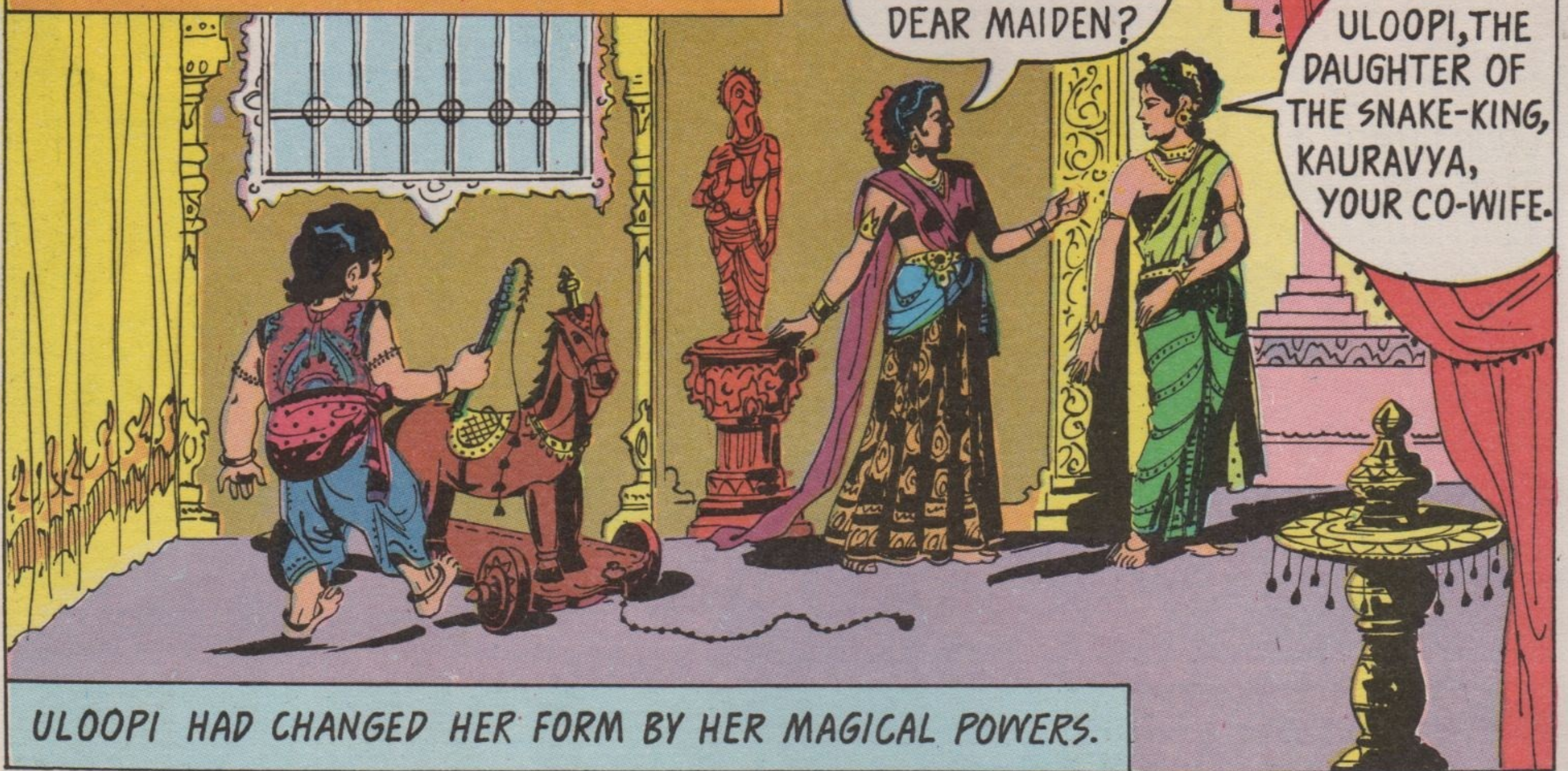
O KING! I AM A NOBLE
KSHATRIYA'S SON. I WISH
TO MARRY YOUR
DAUGHTER.







ULOOPI DECIDED TO VISIT CHITRANGADA.



AS BABHRUVAHANA GREW UP, ULOOPI, TRUE TO HER WORD, OFTEN VISITED.
SHE WIELDED A GREAT INFLUENCE OVER HIM.



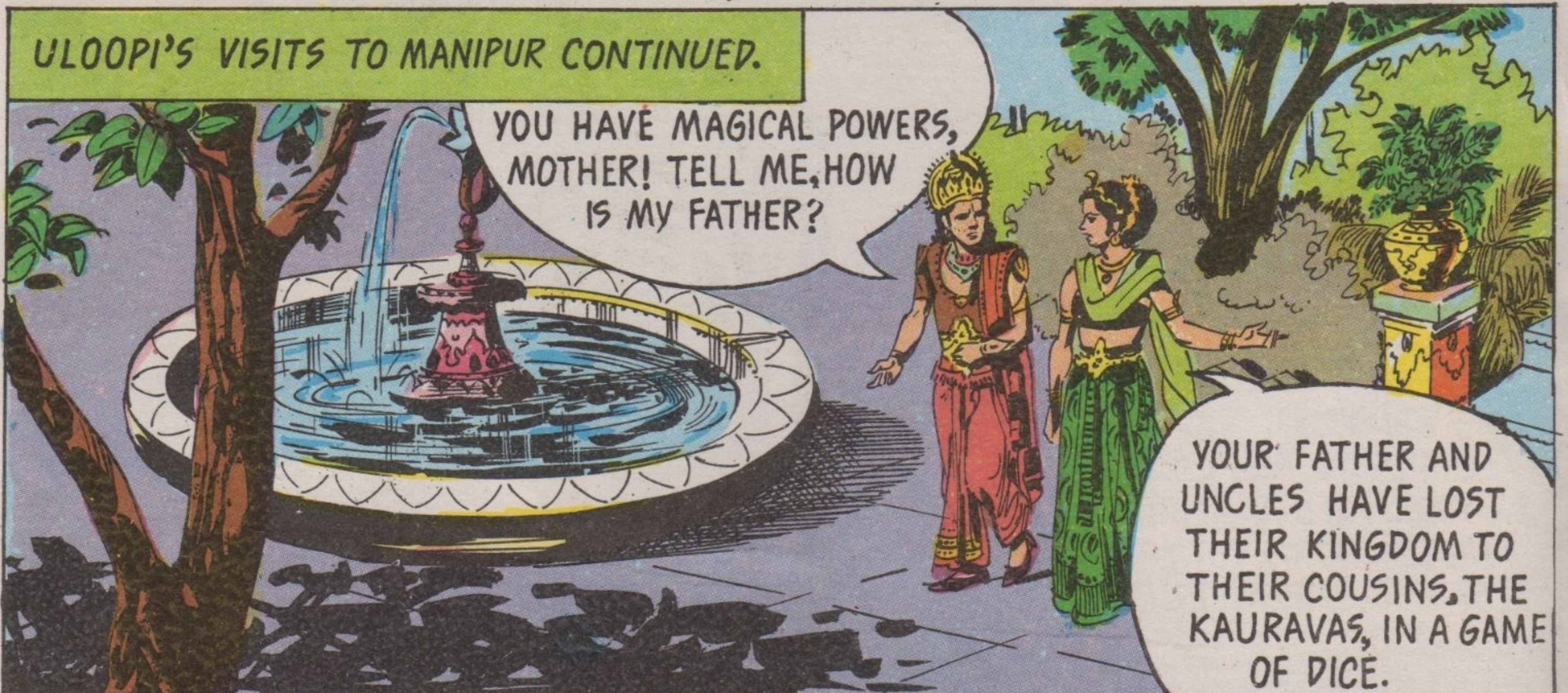
ULOOPI TOLD HIM STORIES ABOUT
ARJUNA'S ACHIEVEMENTS.



AND WHEN BABHRUVAHANA BECAME KING, AFTER HIS GRANDFATHER'S DEATH HE BECAME A FIT SUCCESSOR.



ULOOPI'S VISITS TO MANIPUR CONTINUED.

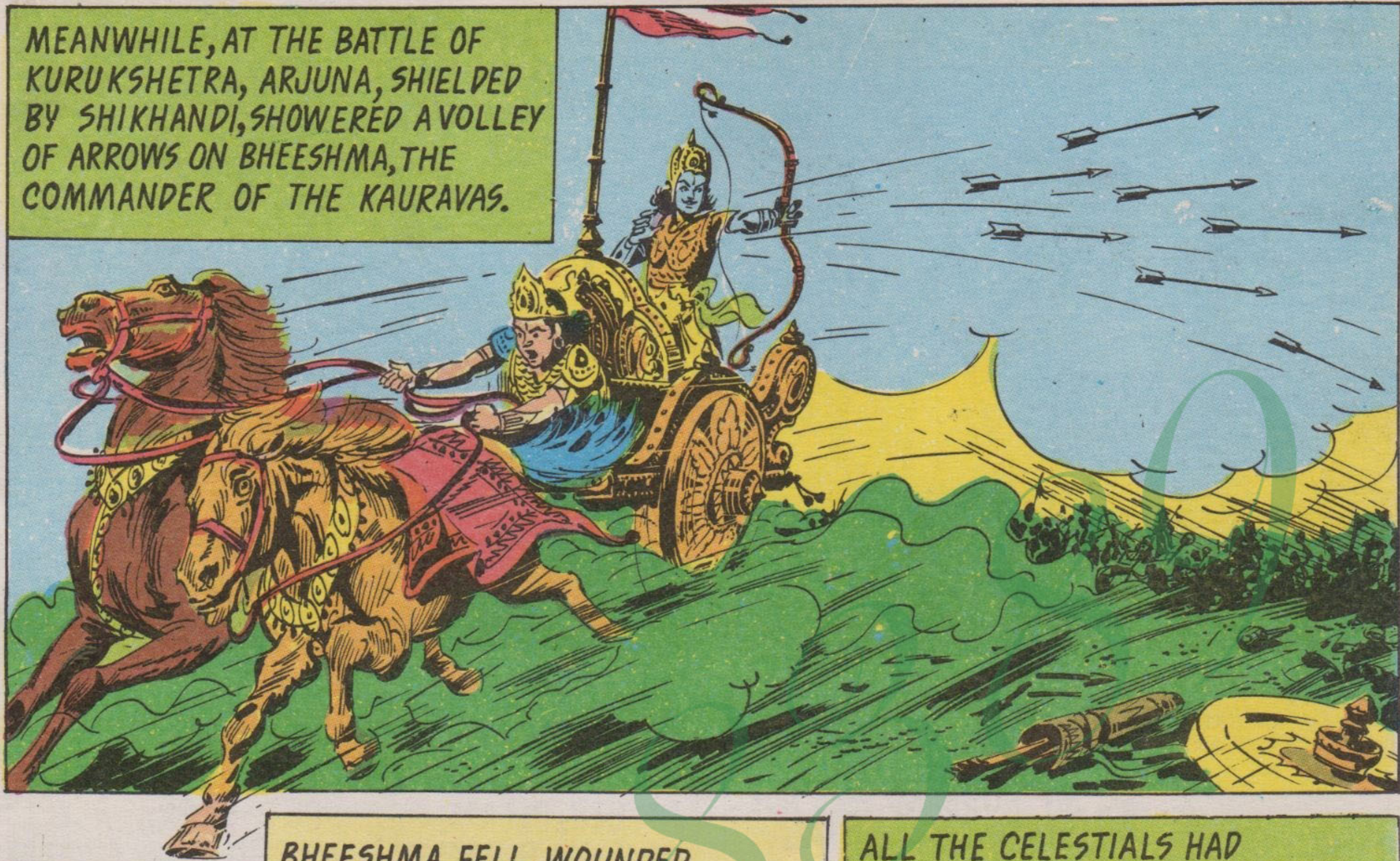


ONE DAY—

NOW YOUR FATHER IS PREPARING FOR THE BATTLE AGAINST THE KAURAVAS. IT IS TIME I LEFT.



MEANWHILE, AT THE BATTLE OF KURUKSHETRA, ARJUNA, SHIELDED BY SHIKHANDI, SHOWERED A VOLLEY OF ARROWS ON BHEESHMA, THE COMMANDER OF THE KAURAVAS.



BHEESHMA FELL, WOUNDED.



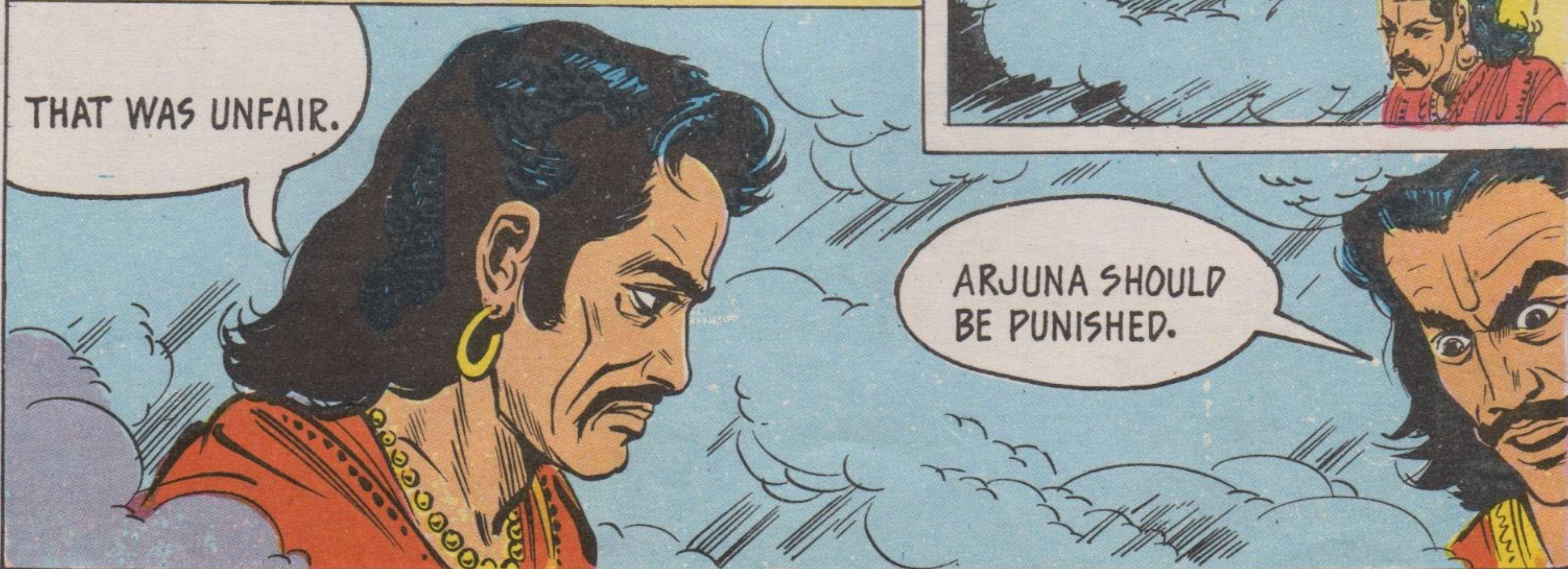
ALL THE CELESTIALS HAD GATHERED IN THE SKY TO WITNESS THIS BATTLE.



AMONG THEM WERE THE VASUS, THE BROTHERS OF BHEESHMA.

THAT WAS UNFAIR.

ARJUNA SHOULD BE PUNISHED.



THE VASUS WENT TO GANGA, THEIR MOTHER.

ARJUNA HAS SINNED.
FOR THIS HE SHOULD
GO TO HELL WHEN
HE DIES.

SO BE IT.



ULOPI, UNOBSERVED, HEARD EVERYTHING.

MY HUSBAND DOES NOT
DESERVE SUCH A FATE.
WORSE SINS HAVE
BEEN COMMITTED ON
THE BATTLEFIELD OF
KURUKSHETRA.



SHE WENT TO HER FATHER, KAURAVYA.

FATHER, PLEASE
SAVE MY HUSBAND
FROM HELL.

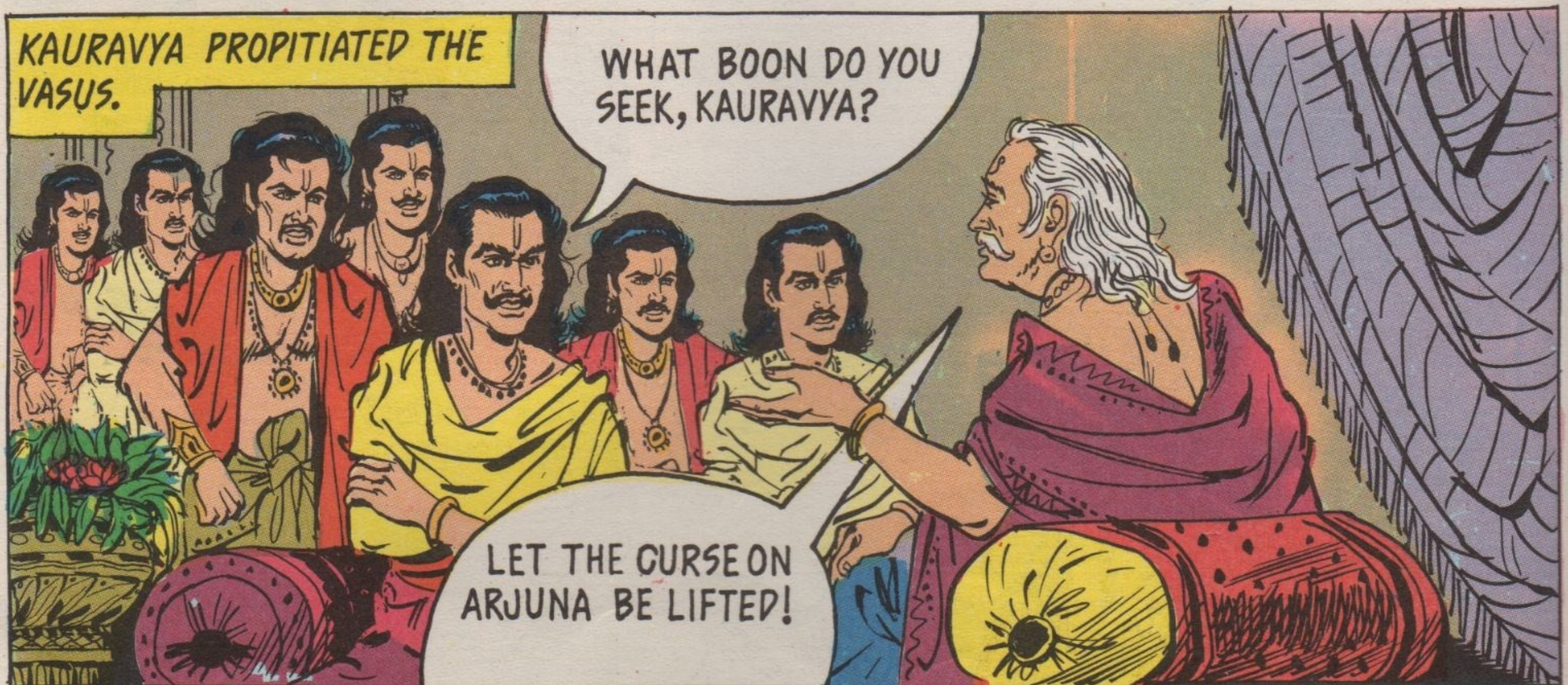
DON'T WORRY,
MY CHILD.



KAURAVYA PROPITIATED THE
VASUS.

WHAT BOON DO YOU
SEEK, KAURAVYA?

LET THE CURSE ON
ARJUNA BE LIFTED!

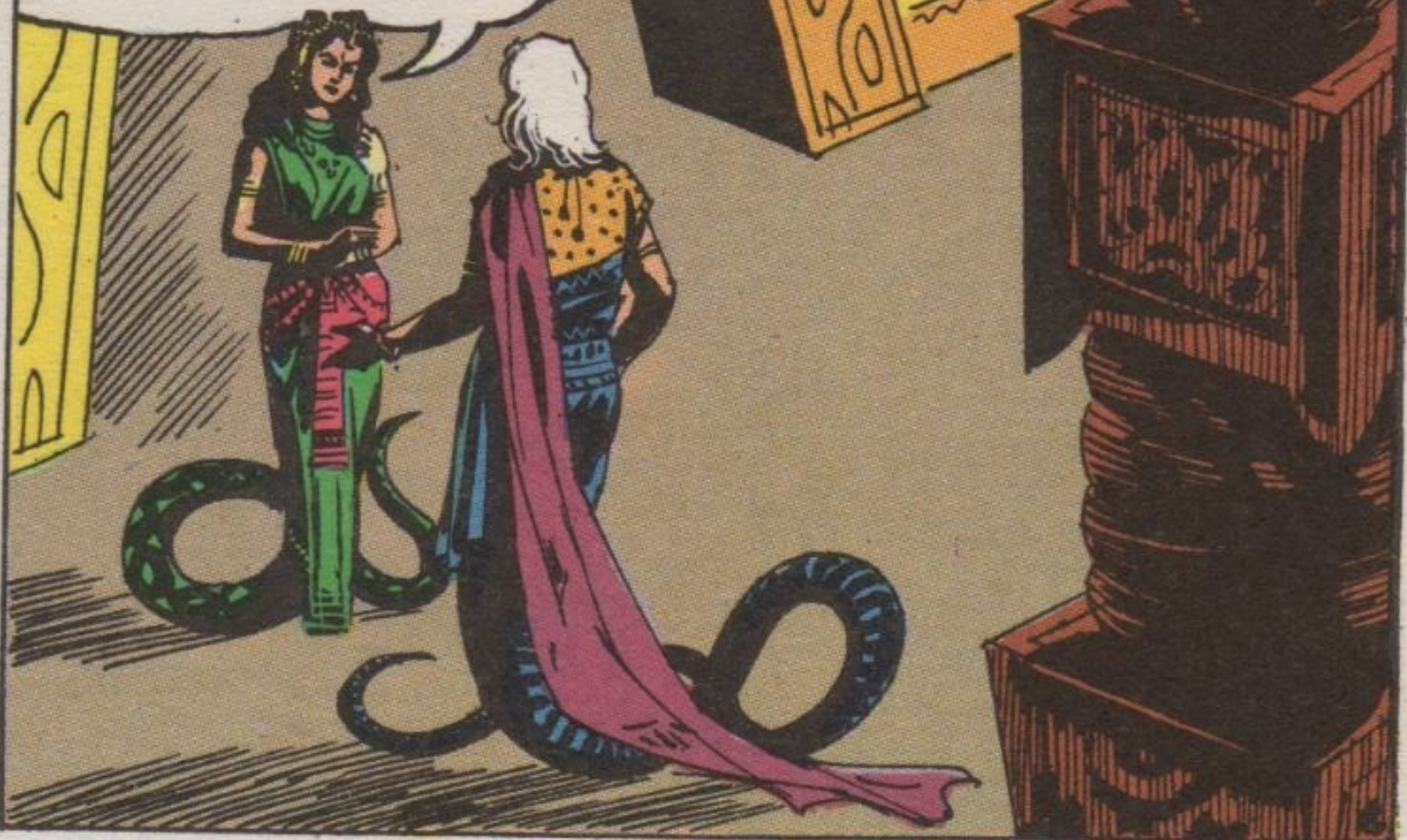


THE CURSE WILL
BE REDEEMED IF
ARJUNA IS KILLED IN
BATTLE BY HIS SON,
BABHRUVAHANA.

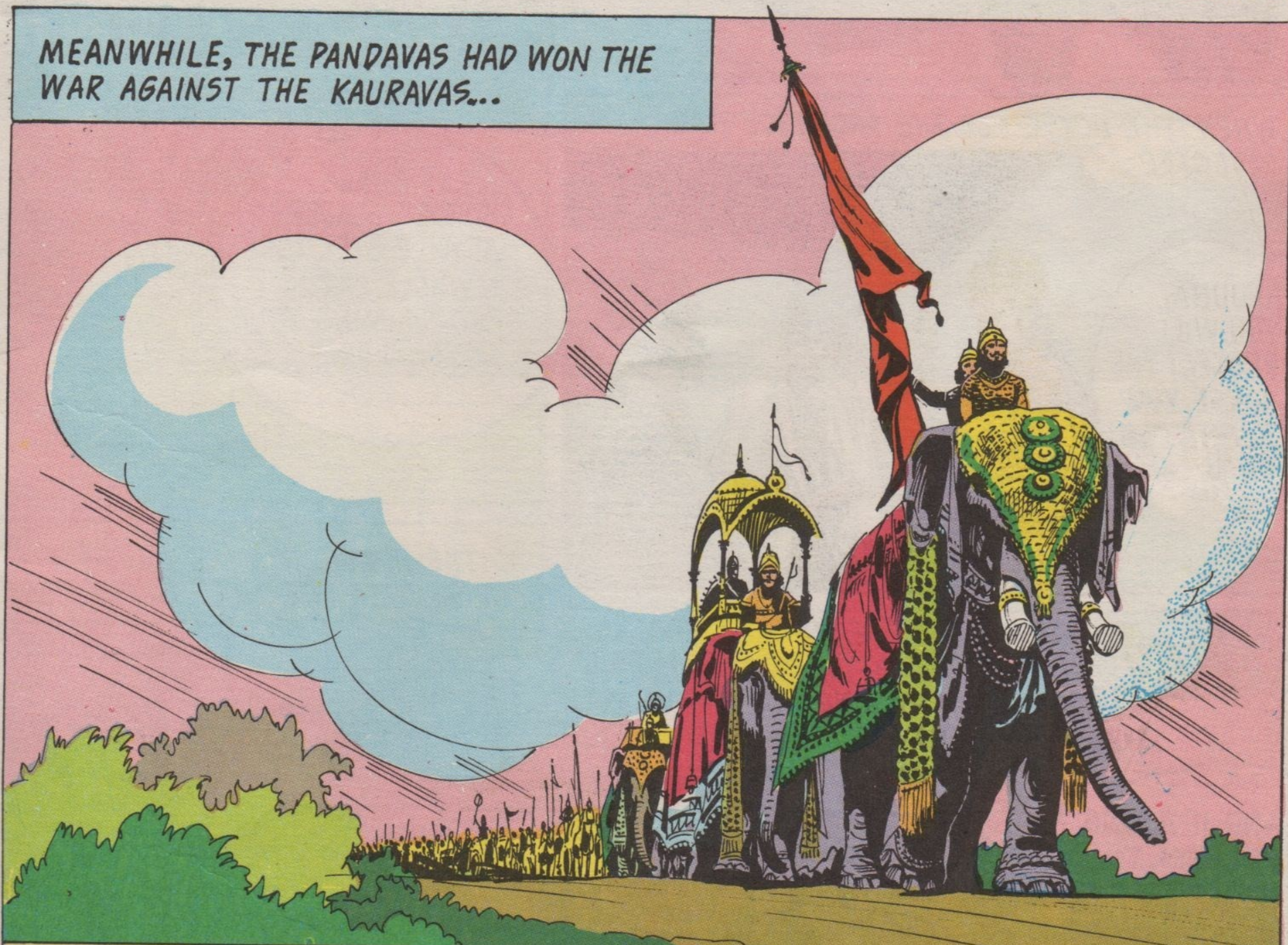


KAURAVYA CAME BACK TO HIS
DAUGHTER AND TOLD HER ABOUT IT.

THAT IS BAD.
WHEN THE TIME
COMES, I WILL HAVE
TO BE THERE TO SAVE
MY HUSBAND.

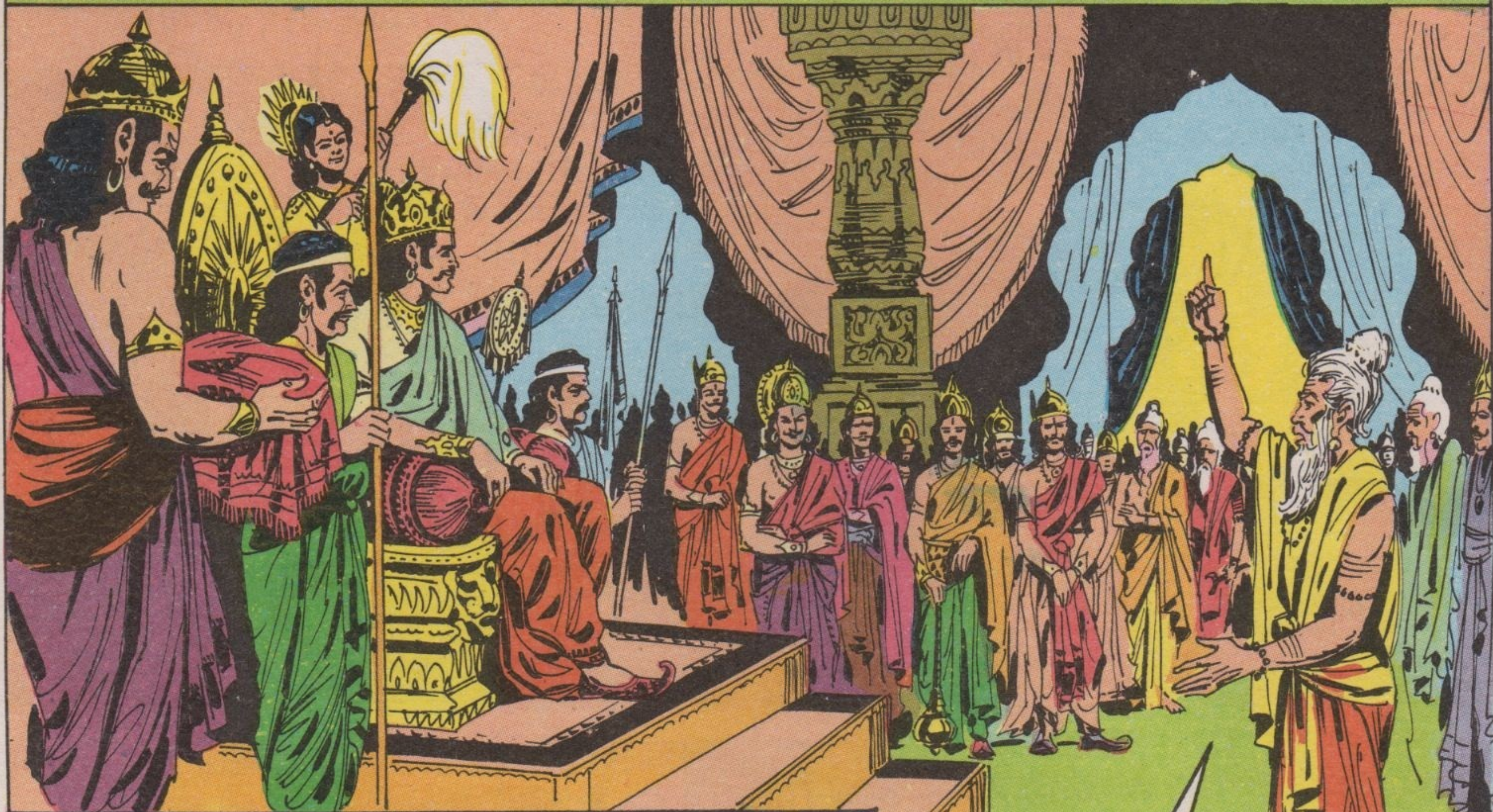


MEANWHILE, THE PANDAVAS HAD WON THE
WAR AGAINST THE KAURAVAS...



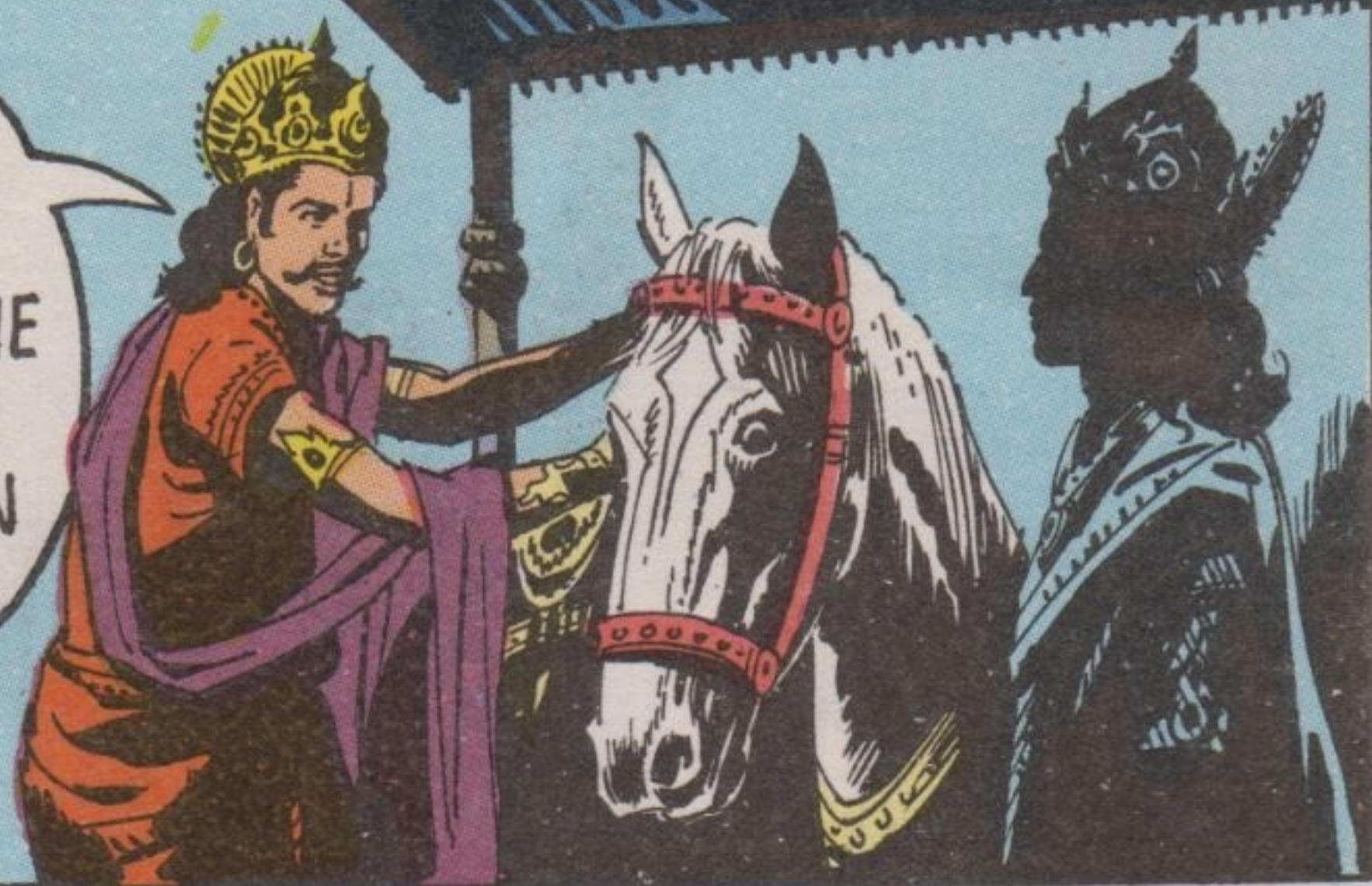
... AND YUDHISHTHIRA, THE ELDEST OF THE
PANDAVAS, WAS CROWNED KING.

SOON AFTERWARDS, YUDHISHTHIRA, DECIDED TO PERFORM THE HORSE SACRIFICE.



WHEN THE HORSE FOR THE SACRIFICE WAS SELECTED—

ARJUNA, YOU WILL PROTECT THE HORSE. YOU ALONE CAN DO IT.

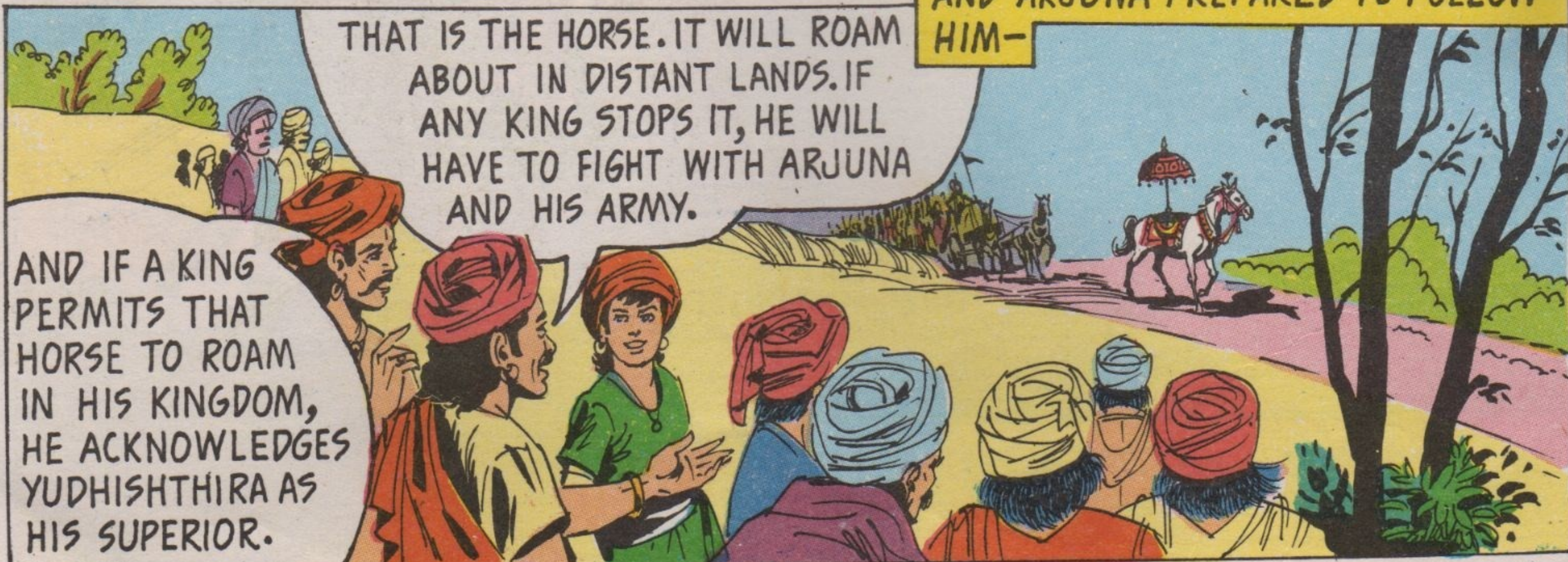


LET THE HORSE WANDER AT WILL OVER THE WHOLE EARTH, PROCLAIMING YOUR GLORY, O KING!

AS THE HORSE WAS LET LOOSE AND ARJUNA PREPARED TO FOLLOW HIM—

THAT IS THE HORSE. IT WILL ROAM ABOUT IN DISTANT LANDS. IF ANY KING STOPS IT, HE WILL HAVE TO FIGHT WITH ARJUNA AND HIS ARMY.

AND IF A KING PERMITS THAT HORSE TO ROAM IN HIS KINGDOM, HE ACKNOWLEDGES YUDHISHTHIRA AS HIS SUPERIOR.



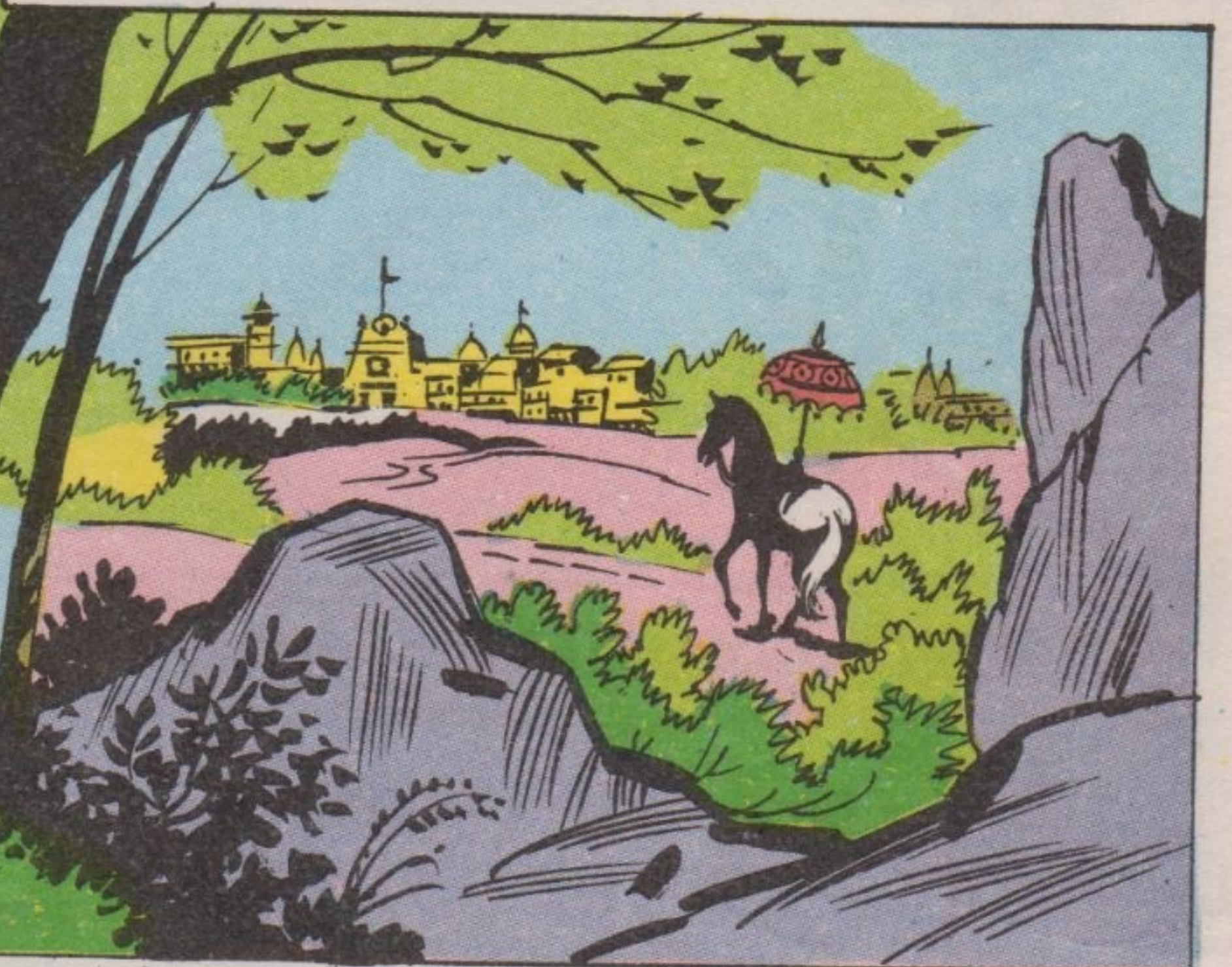


AT LAST, THE HORSE ARRIVED AT THE KINGDOM OF MANIPUR.

ARJUNA FOLLOWED THE SACRIFICIAL HORSE AS IT WANDERED AT WILL THROUGH VARIOUS KINGDOMS EITHER WINNING OR CONQUERING ALLIES FOR THE PANDAVAS.



A GREAT KINGDOM! MY SON IS ITS KING. I HOPE, HE PREPARES TO FIGHT WITH ME LIKE A TRUE KSHATRIYA.

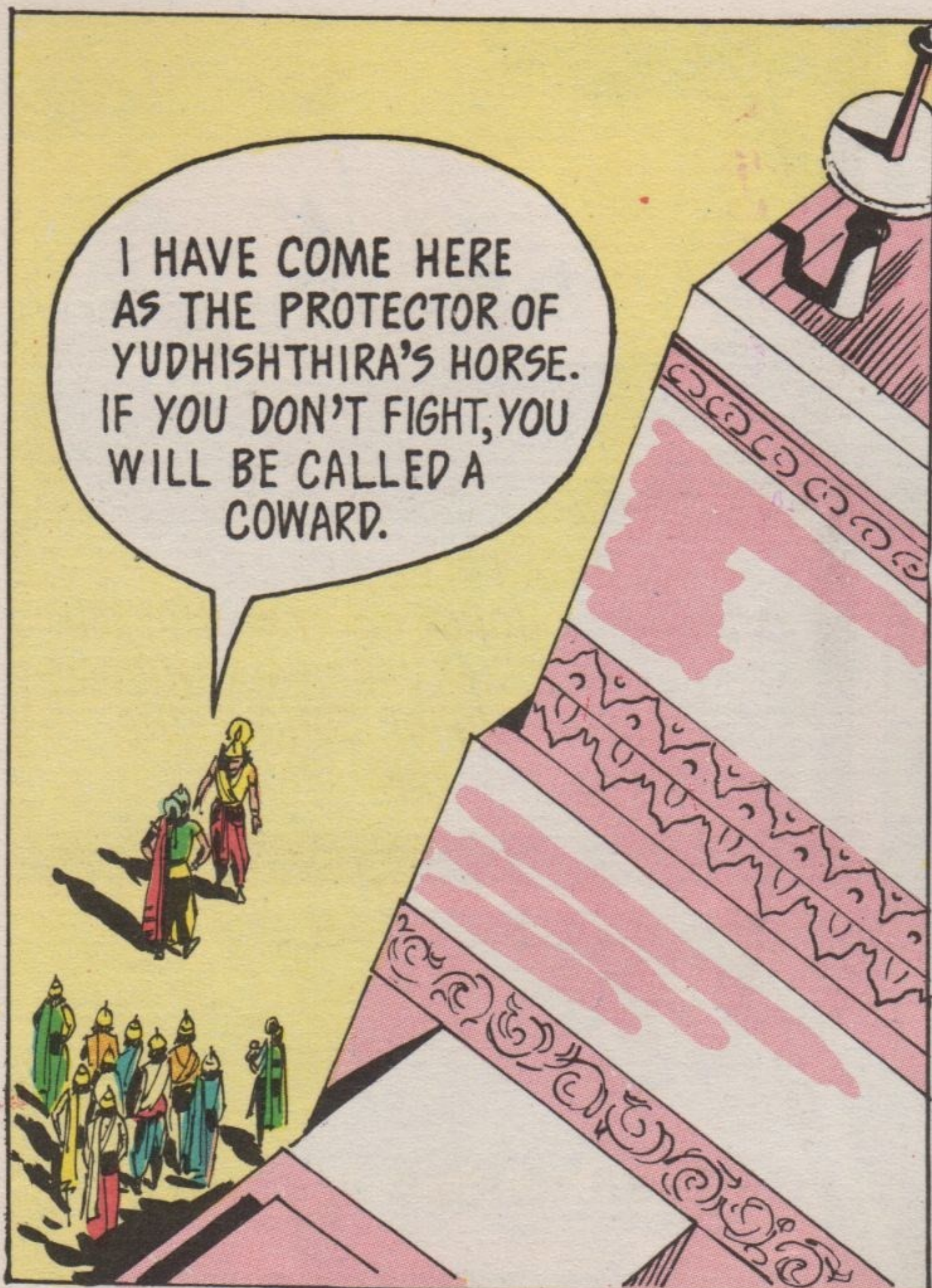


BUT BABHRUVAHANA CAME FORWARD TO WELCOME HIM.

FATHER, I AM PROUD TO BE YOUR SON. I WELCOME YOU TO MY KINGDOM.



OH KING! THIS IS NOT PROPER. YOU HAVE FAILED IN YOUR DUTIES.



I HAVE COME HERE
AS THE PROTECTOR OF
YUDHISHTHIRA'S HORSE.
IF YOU DON'T FIGHT, YOU
WILL BE CALLED A
COWARD.

BABHRUVAHANA WAS STUNNED BY
THESE WORDS.

HOW CAN I FIGHT MY
BELOVED FATHER?



JUST THEN, ULOOPI ARRIVED ON THE SCENE.

DO AS I TELL YOU, MY SON.
DO NOT HESITATE. FIGHT
YOUR FATHER. IT IS THE
ONLY RIGHTEOUS AND
DUTIFUL THING FOR YOU
TO DO.

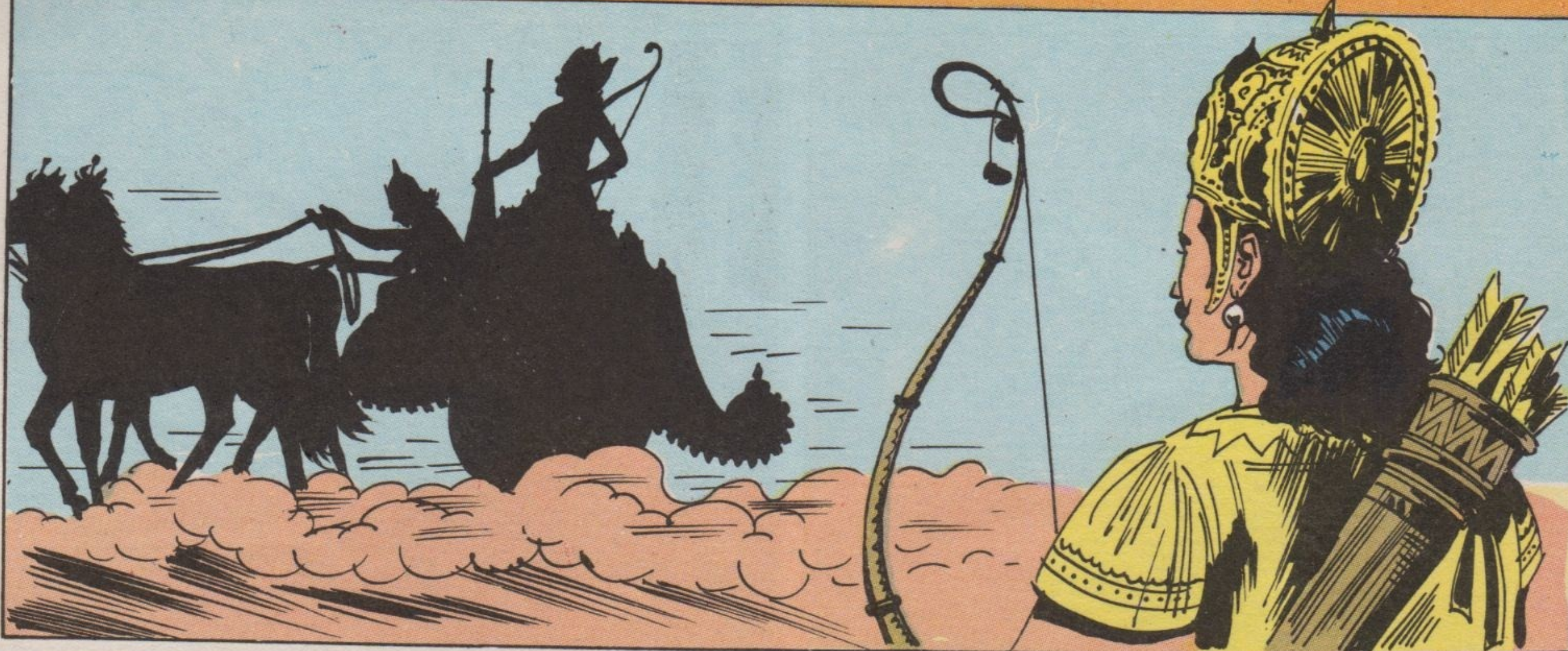


BABHRUVAHANA THOUGHT FOR A
WHILE.

I HAVE LOST MY
FATHER'S RESPECT.
I CAN WIN IT BACK ONLY
BY FIGHTING HIM. I WILL
FIGHT.



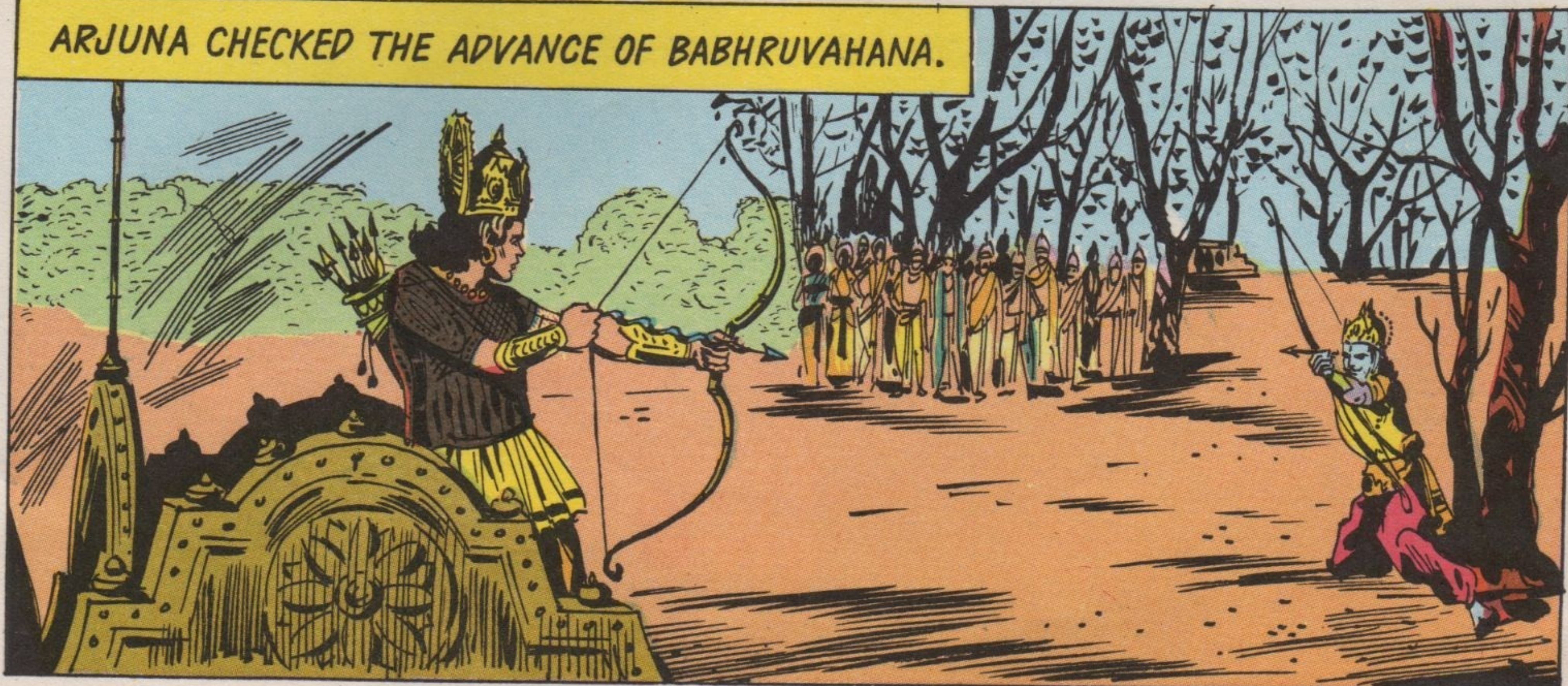
HE PUT ON HIS ARMOUR, MOUNTED HIS CHARIOT, DROVE UP TO THE SACRIFICIAL HORSE...



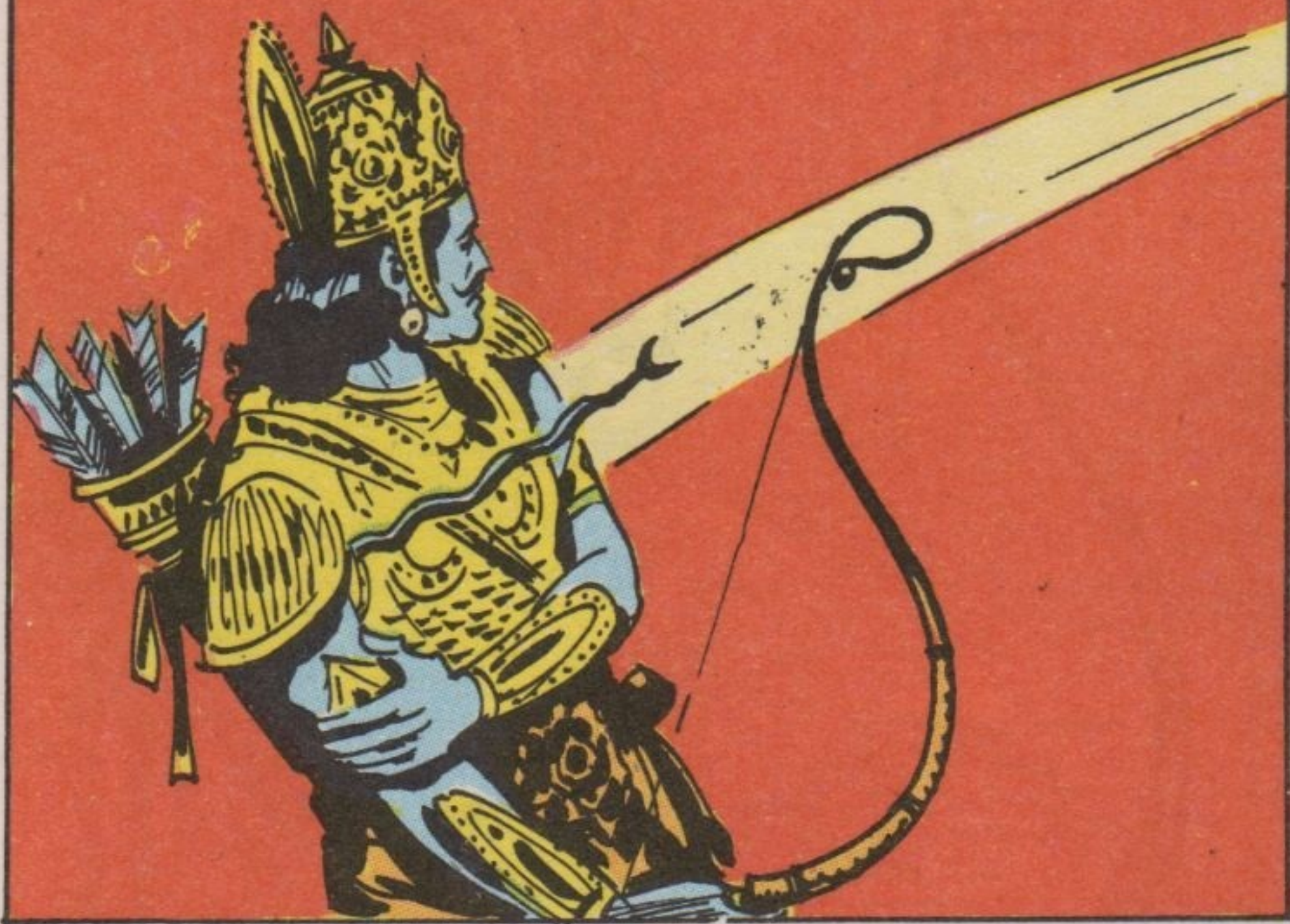
... AND HAD IT SEIZED BY HIS MEN.



ARJUNA CHECKED THE ADVANCE OF BABHRUVAHANA.



AN ARROW SENT BY BABHRUVAHANA
PIERCED ARJUNA THROUGH THE SHOULDER.



WEAK WITH PAIN, ARJUNA RESTED
AWHILE LEANING AGAINST HIS BOW,
LOOKING ALMOST DEAD.



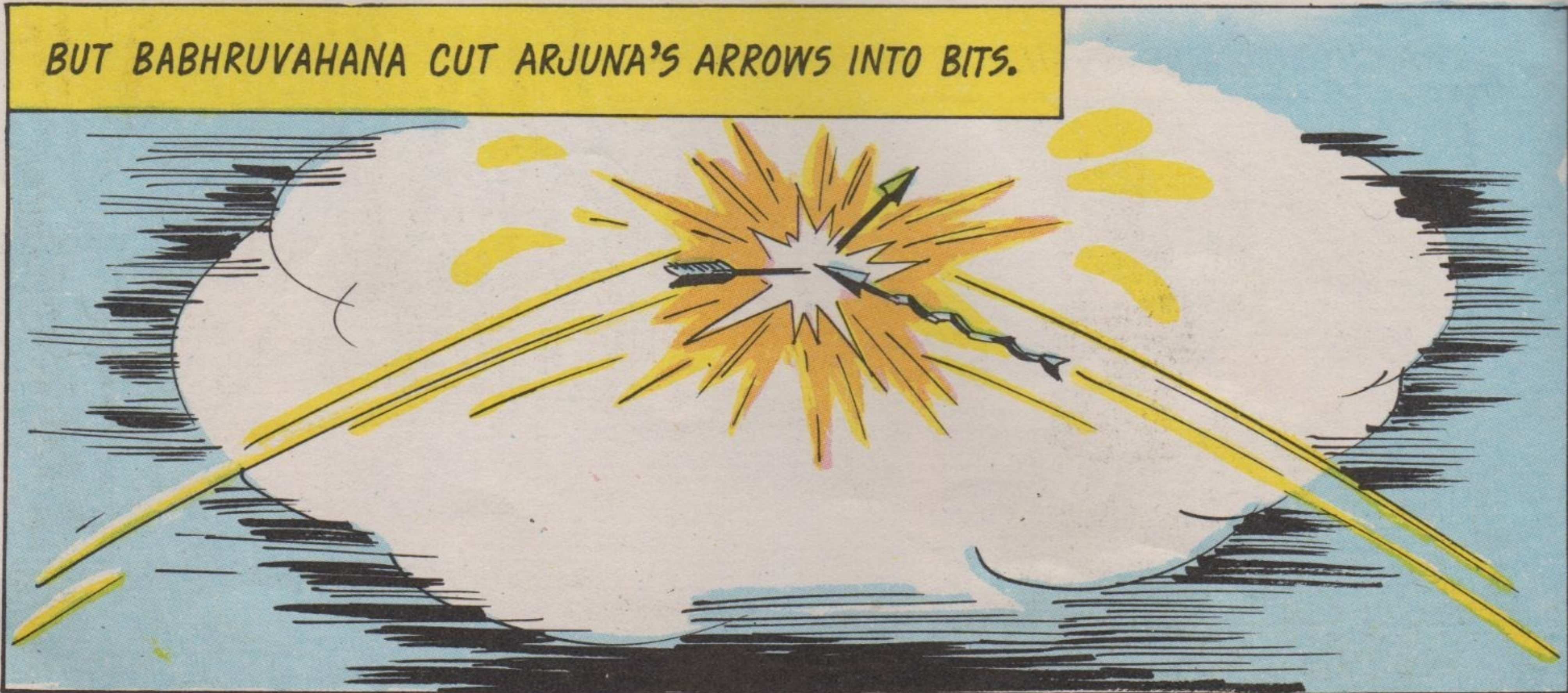
THEN AS HIS STRENGTH CAME BACK TO
HIM



NOW FACE MY ARROWS
AND FIGHT WITHOUT
RUNNING AWAY.



BUT BABHRUVAHANA CUT ARJUNA'S ARROWS INTO BITS.



ARJUNA CUT OFF THE STANDARD ON
BABHRUVAHANA'S CHARIOT AND...



... KILLED THE HORSES.



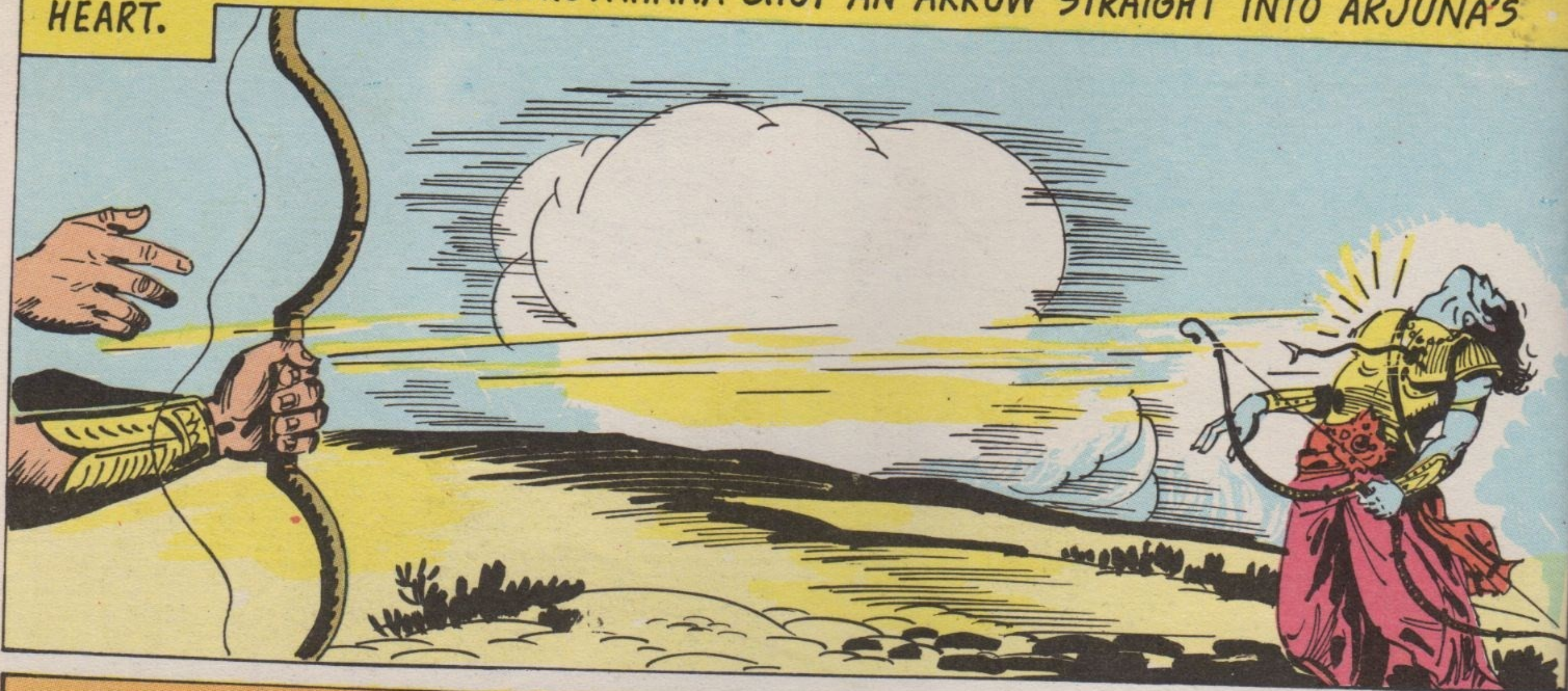
INFURIATED, BABHRUVAHANA GOT DOWN
FROM HIS CHARIOT AND FOUGHT HIS
FATHER ON FOOT.



ARJUNA ATTACKED HIM RELENTLESSLY
TILL...



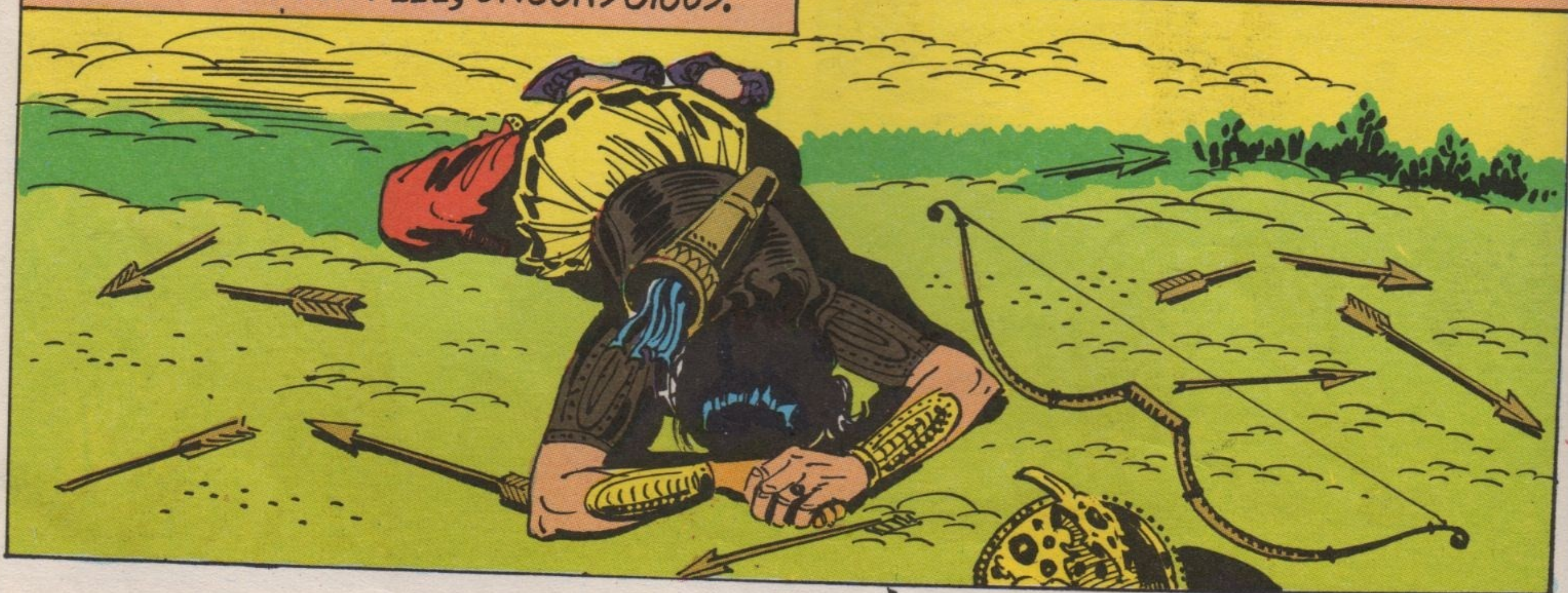
... BLINDED BY RAGE BABHRUVAHANA SHOT AN ARROW STRAIGHT INTO ARJUNA'S HEART.



ARJUNA DROPPED DEAD ON THE FIELD.



AT THE SAME MOMENT PARTLY THROUGH EXERTION BUT MORE OUT OF GRIEF BABHRUVAHANA FELL, UNCONSCIOUS.



AND ALL THE TIME ULLOOPI STOOD WATCHING THE SCENE, UNPERTURBED, A PICTURE OF SERENITY.



A MESSENGER RAN TO CHITRANGADA.

I HAVE SAD NEWS FOR YOU. YOUR HUSBAND HAS BEEN KILLED BY THE KING WHO HIMSELF NOW LIES IN A SWOON.

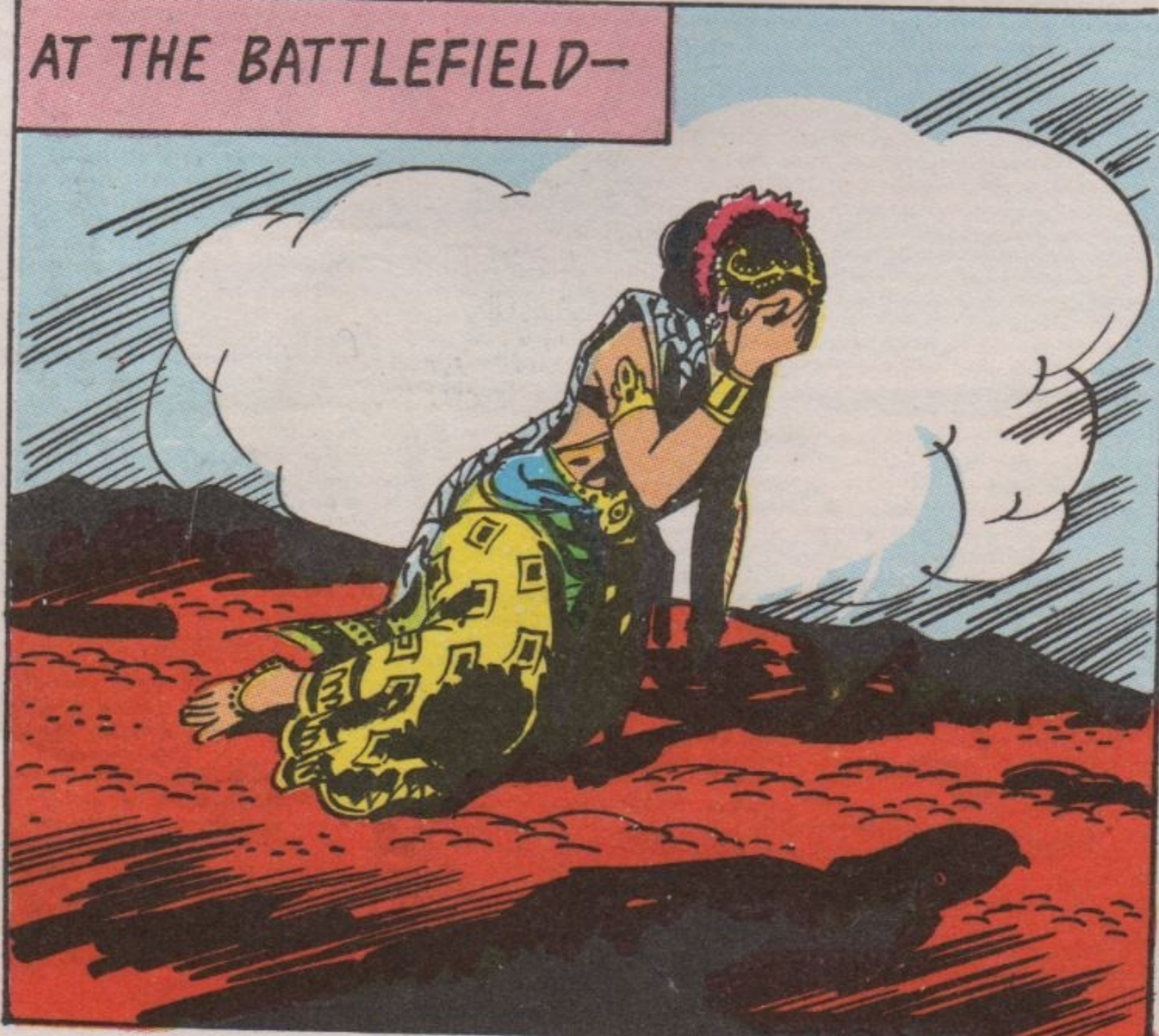


CHITRANGADA TURNED PALE.

TAKE ME TO THE BATTLEFIELD.



AT THE BATTLEFIELD—



WHEN SHE CAME TO HER SENSES, SHE SAW ULLOOPI.

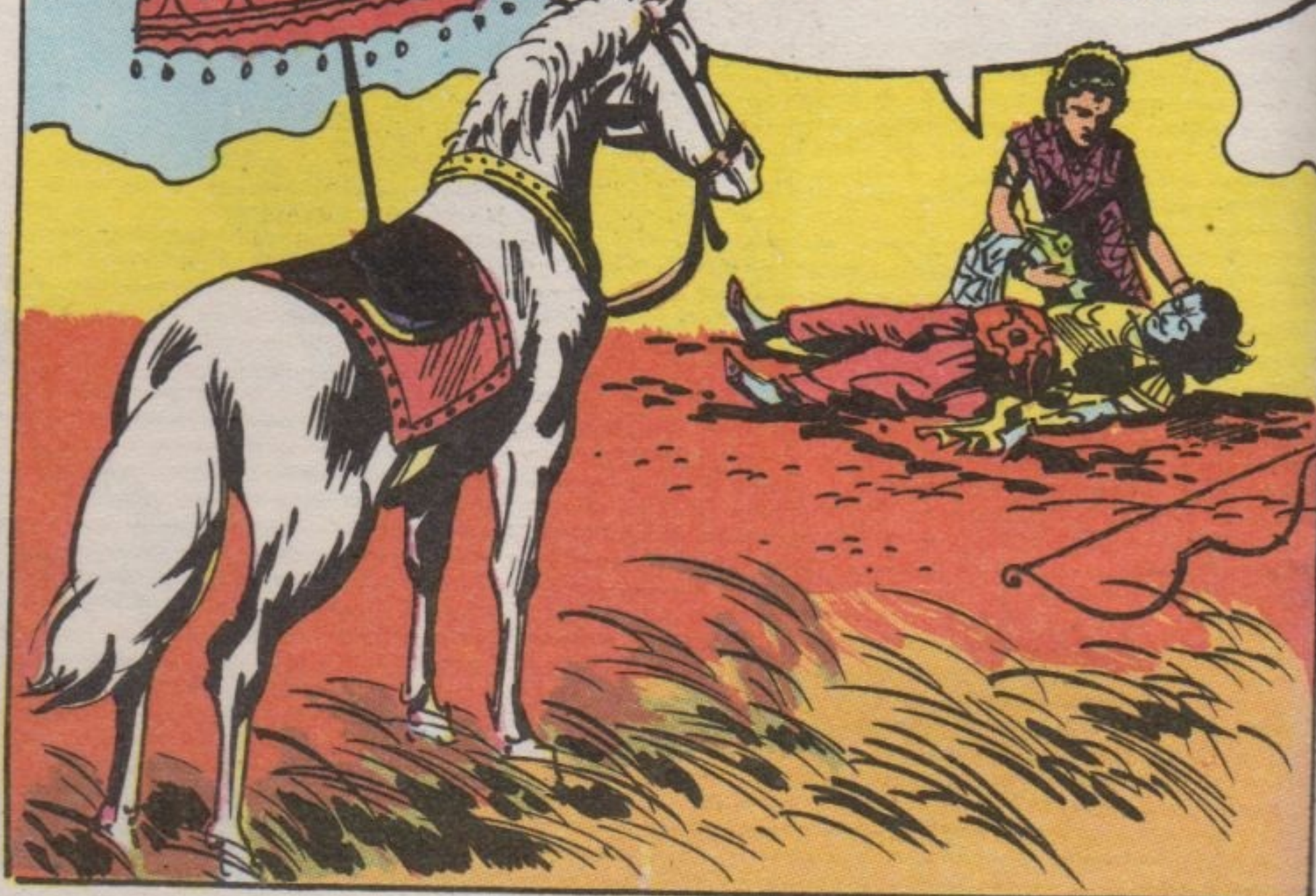
O ULLOOPI! I KNOW HOW DEVOTED YOU ARE TO OUR HUSBAND. YET I DO NOT FIND YOU GRIEVING.



WHEN ULLOPI SHOWED NO SIGN OF EMOTION, CHITRANGADA WENT TO ARJUNA.



I HAVE SET IT FREE. YOU MUST FOLLOW IT AND PROTECT IT. RISE, DEAR HUSBAND, AND FULFIL YOUR DUTY.



SHE FOUND THAT ALL HER ATTEMPTS TO REVIVE ARJUNA WERE IN VAIN, SO SHE TURNED TO ULLOPI.



BUT ULQOPI REMAINED UNMOVED.

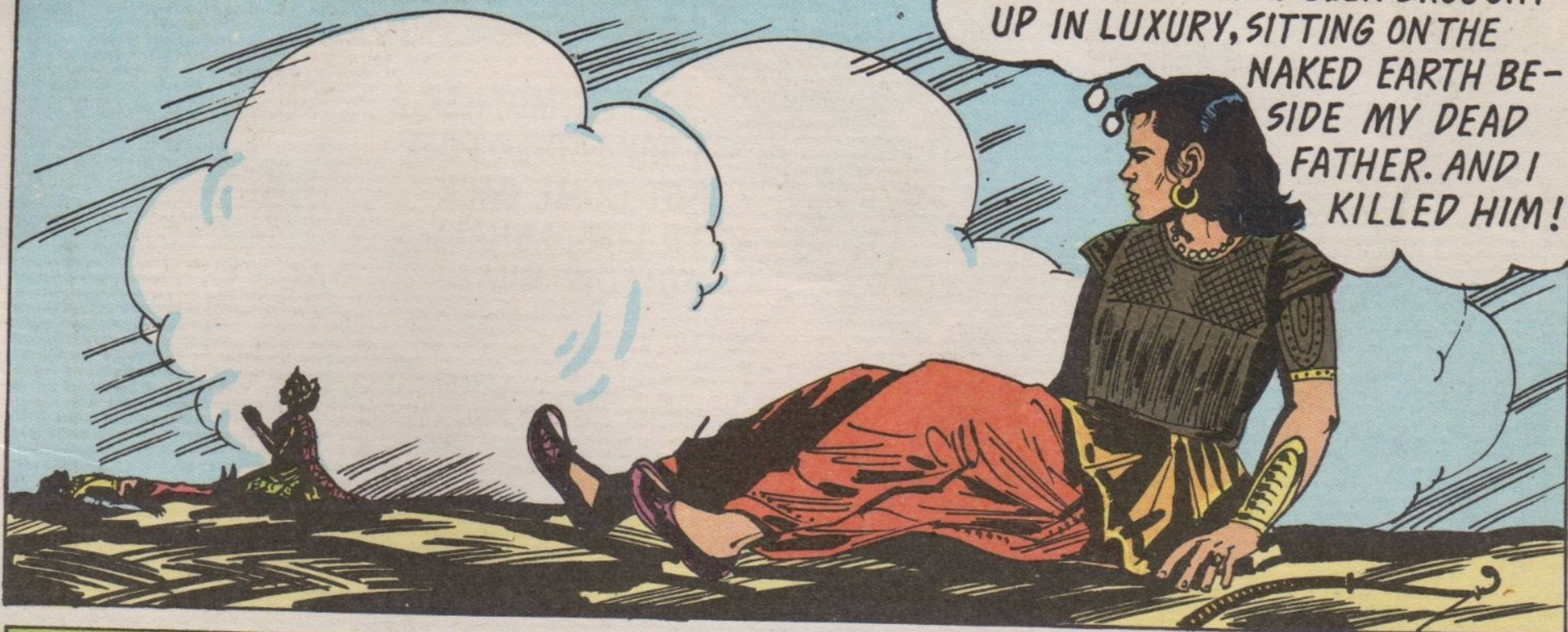


CHITRANGADA SAT AT ARJUNA'S FEET.



JUST THEN BABHRUVAHANA REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS.

ALAS! WHAT A PAINFUL SIGHT! MY MOTHER WHO HAS BEEN BROUGHT UP IN LUXURY, SITTING ON THE NAKED EARTH BESIDE MY DEAD FATHER. AND I KILLED HIM!



THEN HIS GAZE FELL ON ULOOPI.

O MOTHER! YOUR HEART SEEMS TO BE VERY HARD. IT DOES NOT BREAK EVEN ON SEEING YOUR HUSBAND LYING DEAD BEFORE YOU!



ULOOPI HEARD THESE ACCUSATIONS IN SILENCE.



WHY SHOULD IT? BY KILLING ARJUNA IN BATTLE I HAVE DONE WHAT YOU WANTED OF ME.



BUT FOR ME THERE IS NO REDEMPTION. I SHALL HAVE TO SINK INTO HELL. SO DREADFULLY HAVE I SINNED IN KILLING MY OWN FATHER.



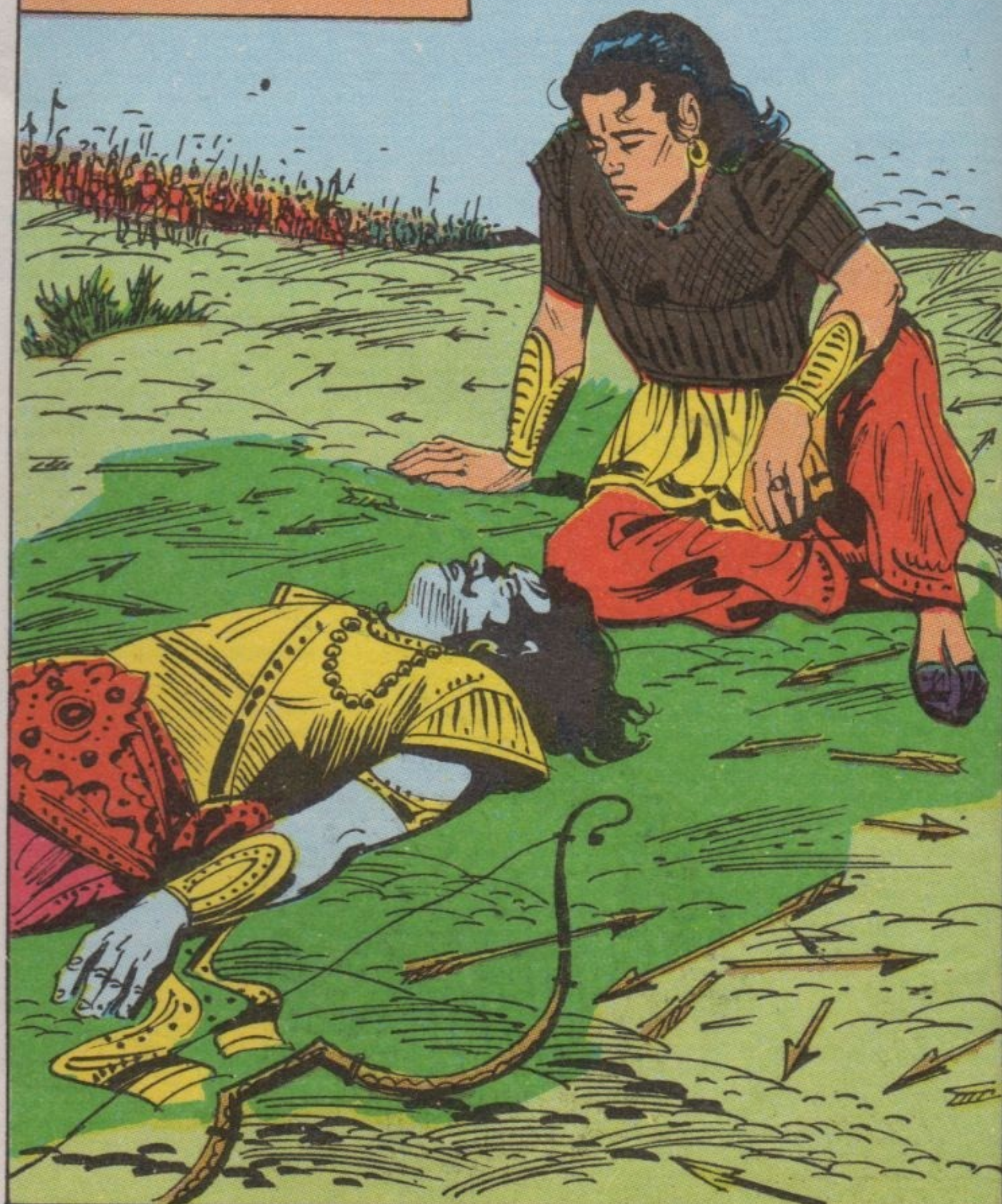
BABHRUVAHANA WAS STRICKEN WITH GRIEF.



I SHALL STARVE MYSELF TO DEATH
RIGHT HERE ON THE BATTLEFIELD,
NEXT TO MY FATHER. REJOICE
MOTHER! YOUR SON TOO WILL
DIE BEFORE YOUR EYES.



AND BABHRUVAHANA SAT NEXT
TO HIS PARENTS.



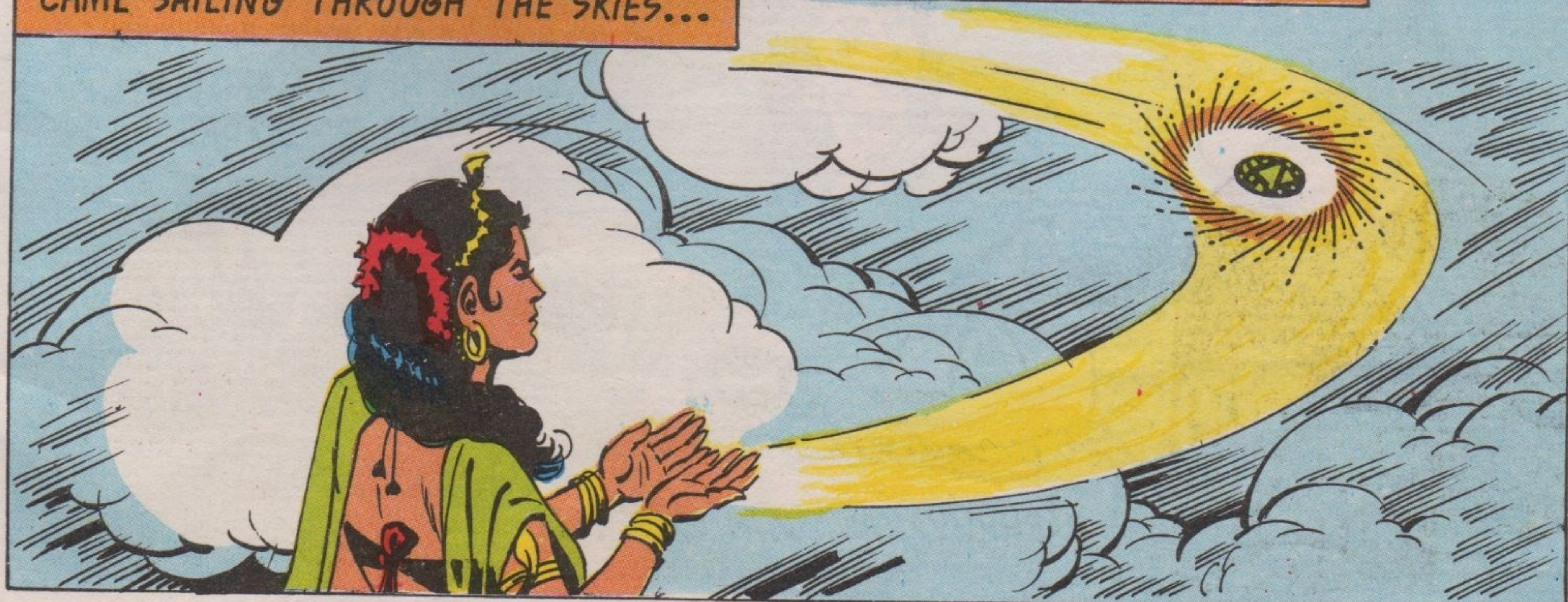
ULOOPI WATCHED THE THREE OF THEM.



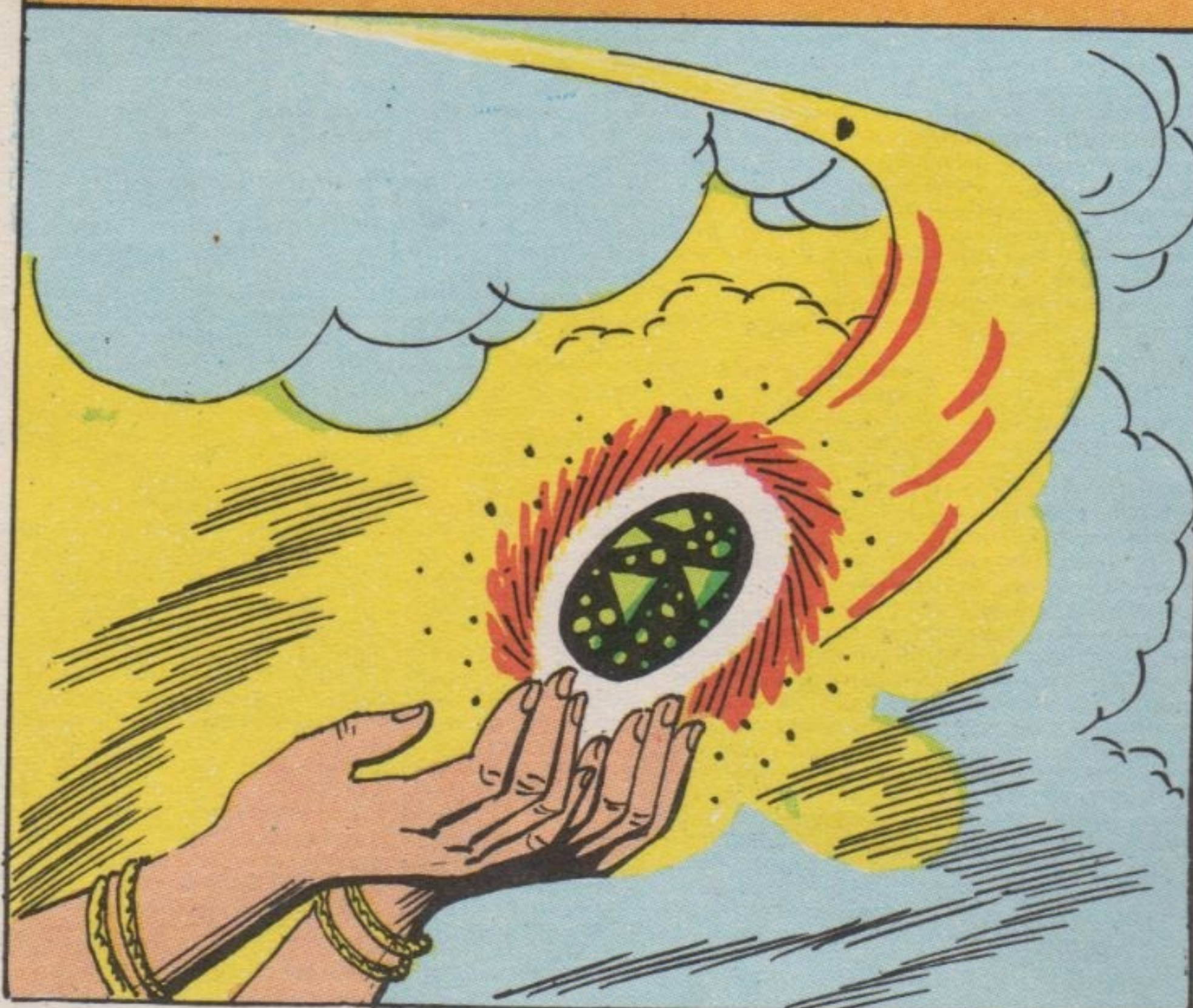
SHE CLOSED HER EYES AND THOUGHT OF THE GEM OF THE SNAKE PEOPLE, WHICH COULD REVIVE THE DEAD.



AND LO, THE GEM, THE MOST PRECIOUS POSSESSION OF THE SNAKE PEOPLE, CAME SAILING THROUGH THE SKIES...



... AND DROPPED INTO HER PALMS.



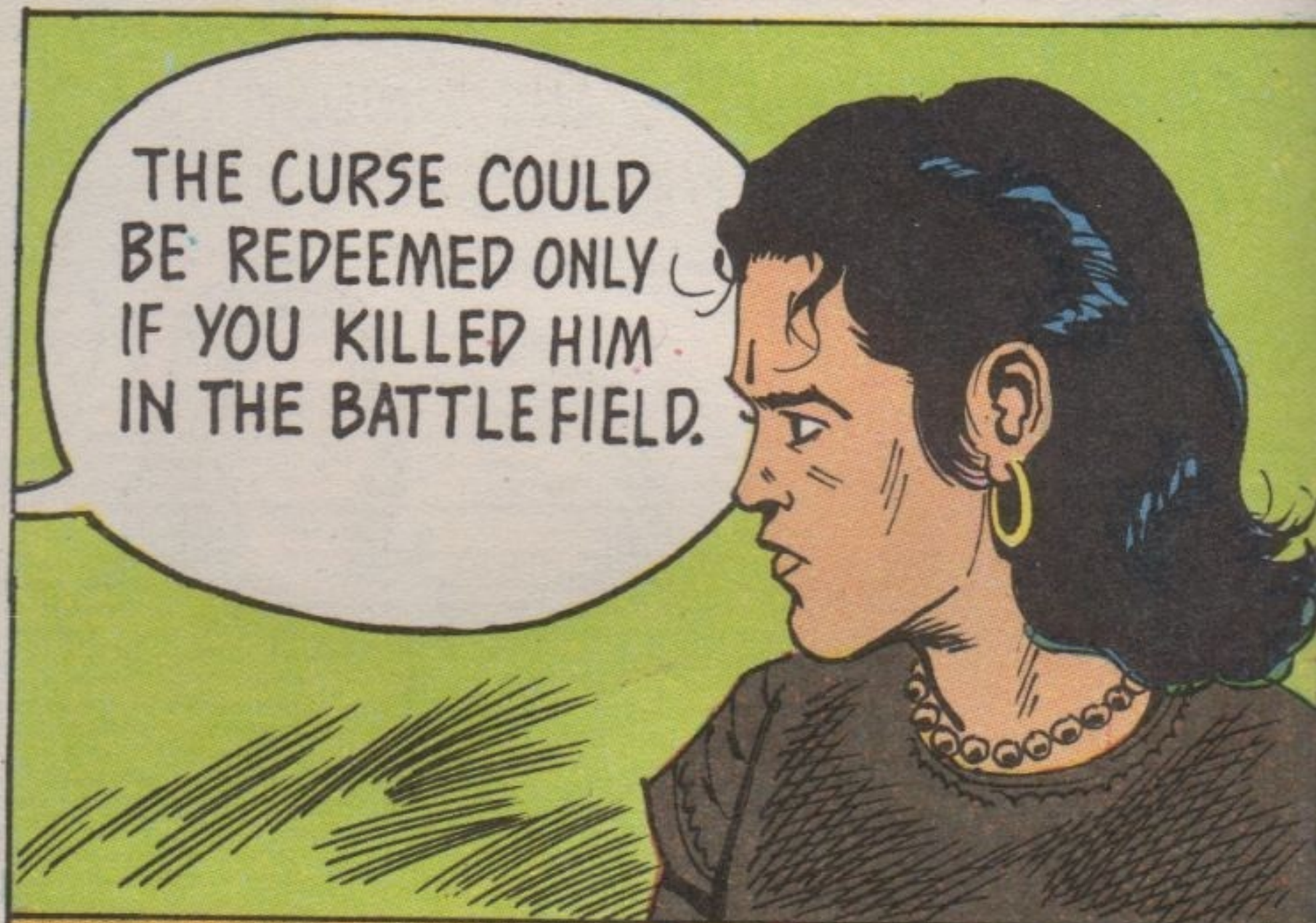
ULOOPI WENT TO BABHRUVAHANA.



HE HAD BEEN CURSED
BY THE VASUS TO GO
TO HELL.

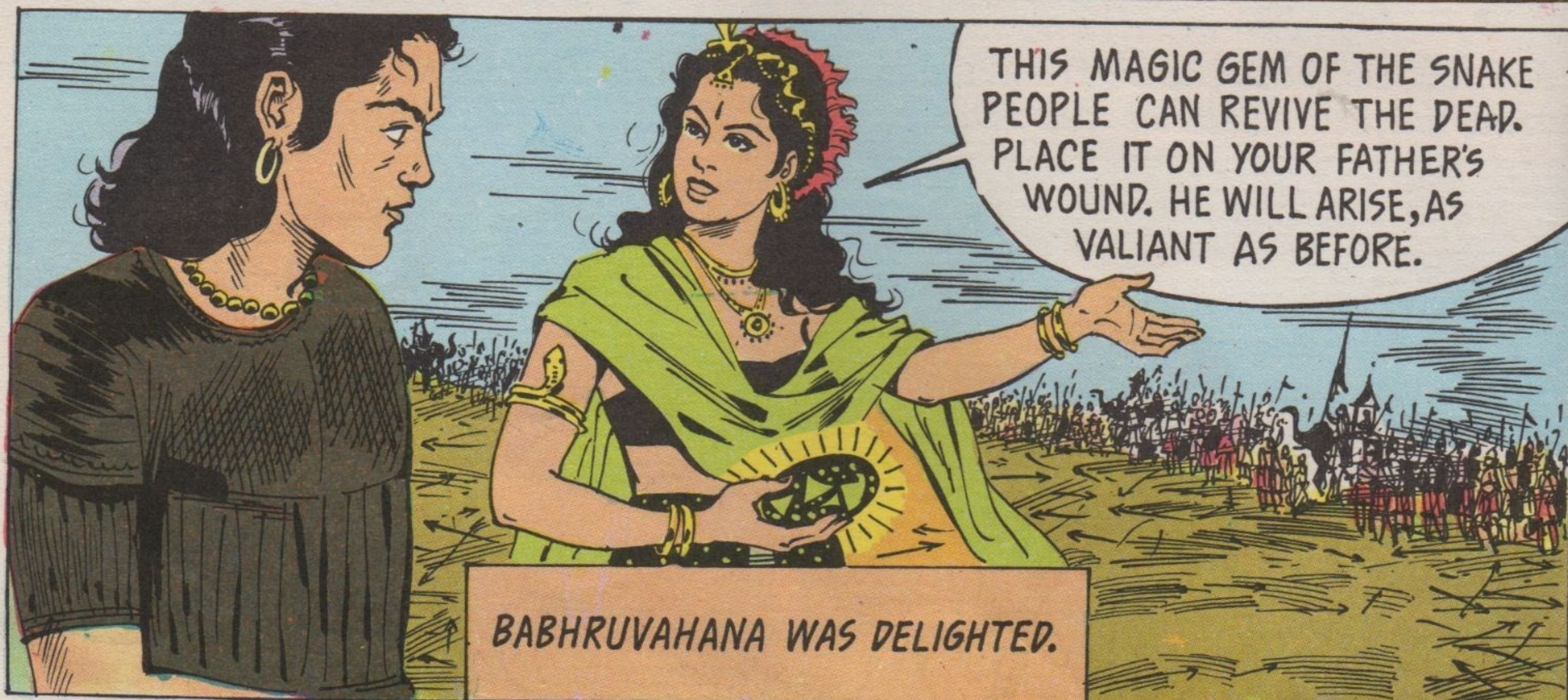


THE CURSE COULD
BE REDEEMED ONLY
IF YOU KILLED HIM
IN THE BATTLEFIELD.



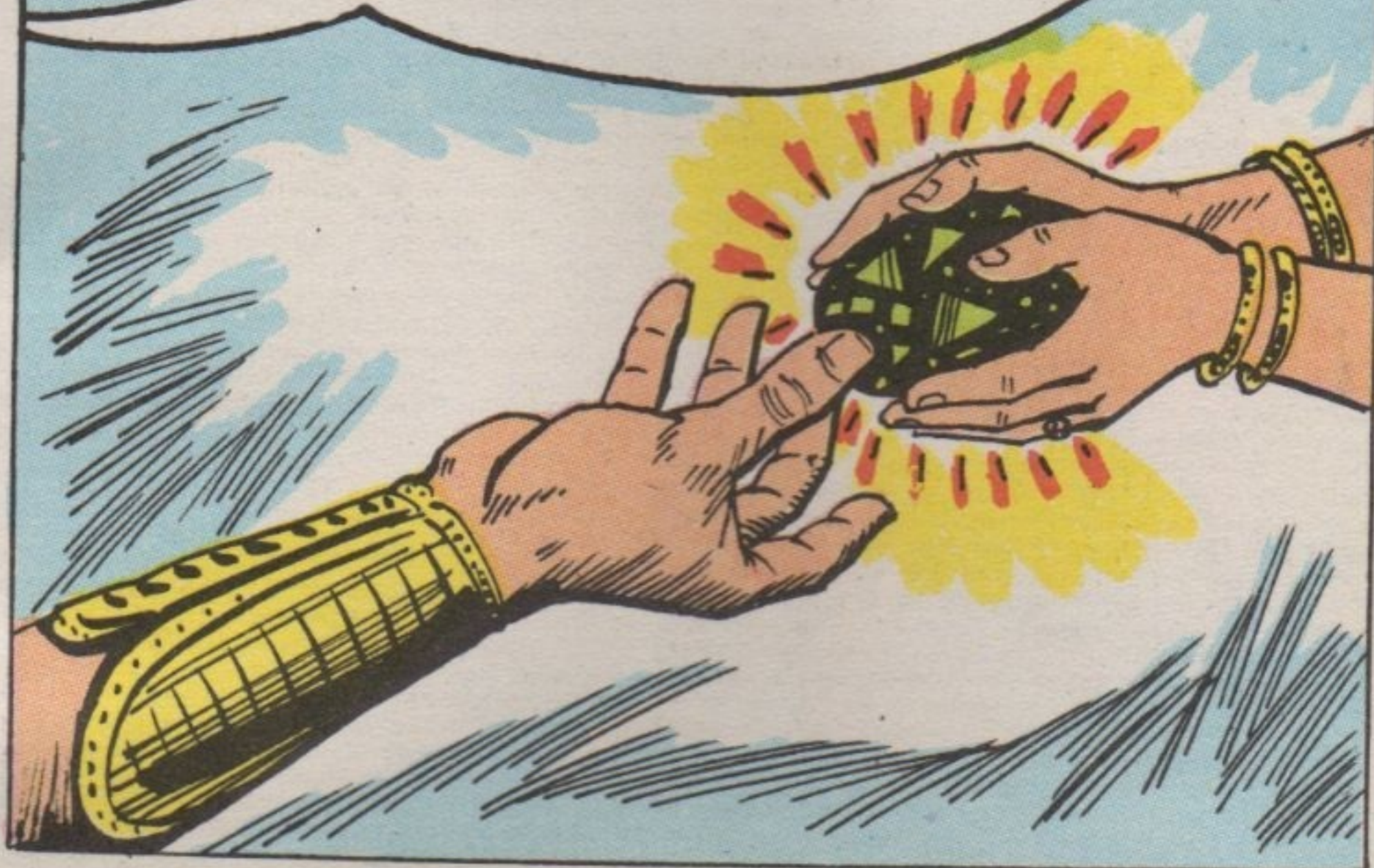
THE WORDS DID NOT CONSOLE
BABHRUVAHANA.

THIS MAGIC GEM OF THE SNAKE
PEOPLE CAN REVIVE THE DEAD.
PLACE IT ON YOUR FATHER'S
WOUND. HE WILL ARISE, AS
VALIANT AS BEFORE.

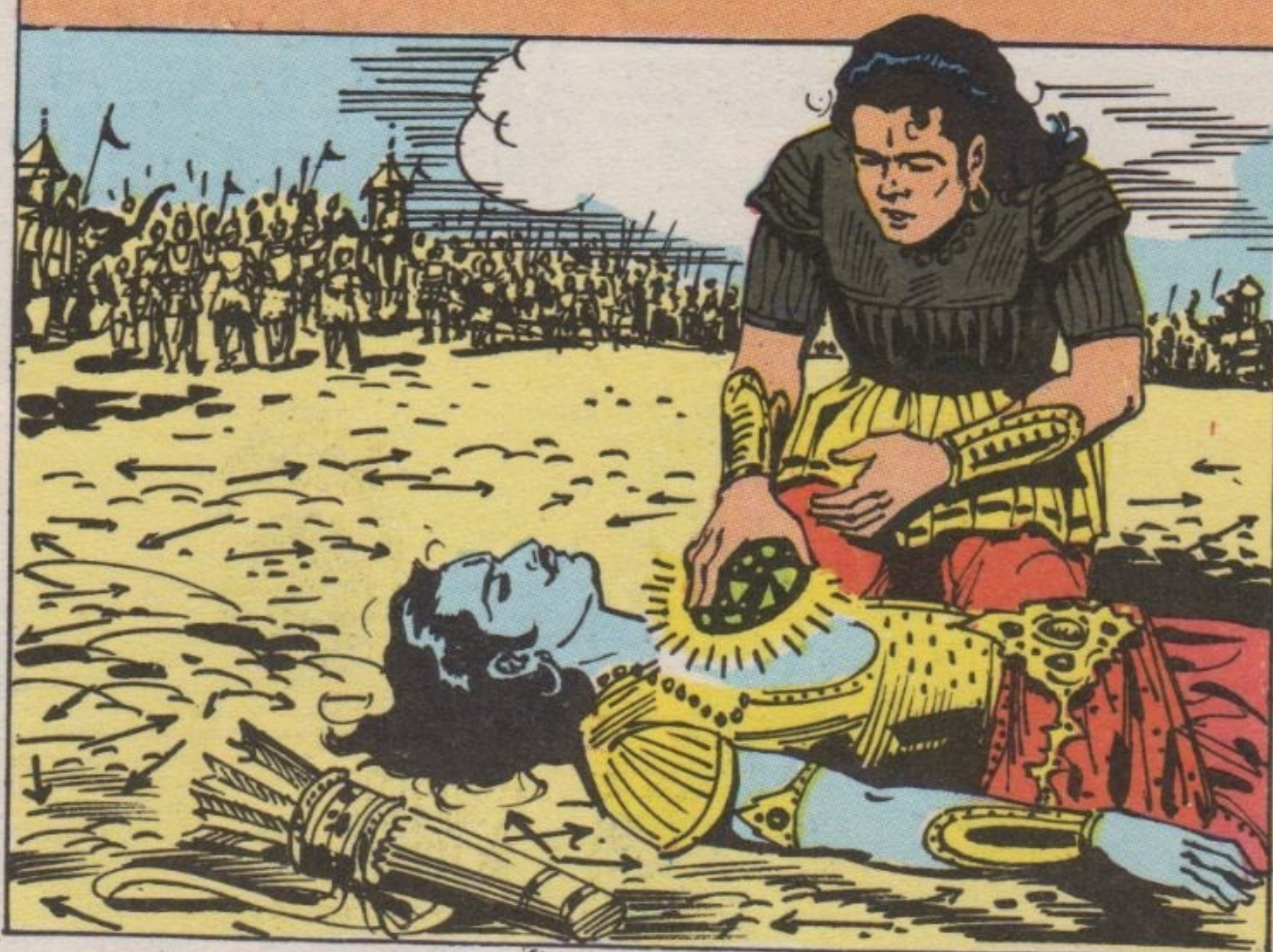


BABHRUVAHANA WAS DELIGHTED.

DEAR MOTHER, HOW COULD I HAVE EVER DOUBTED YOU? PLEASE FORGIVE ME. I AM EVER GRATEFUL TO YOU.



HE WENT UP TO ARJUNA AND PLACED THE GEM ON HIS CHEST WHERE THE ARROW HAD PIERCED HIM.



ARJUNA WOKE UP RUBBING HIS EYES LIKE ONE WHO HAD BEEN FAST ASLEEP FOR A LONG TIME.



HE SAW BABHRUVAHANA LOOKING AT HIM IN WONDER.



MY SON, I AM PROUD OF YOU. YOUR VALOUR IS UNMATCHED!



ONLY THEN DID ARJUNA NOTICE CHITRANGADA AND ULOOPI. HE TURNED TO BABHRUVAHANA.

WHAT ARE YOUR MOTHERS DOING ON THE BATTLEFIELD?

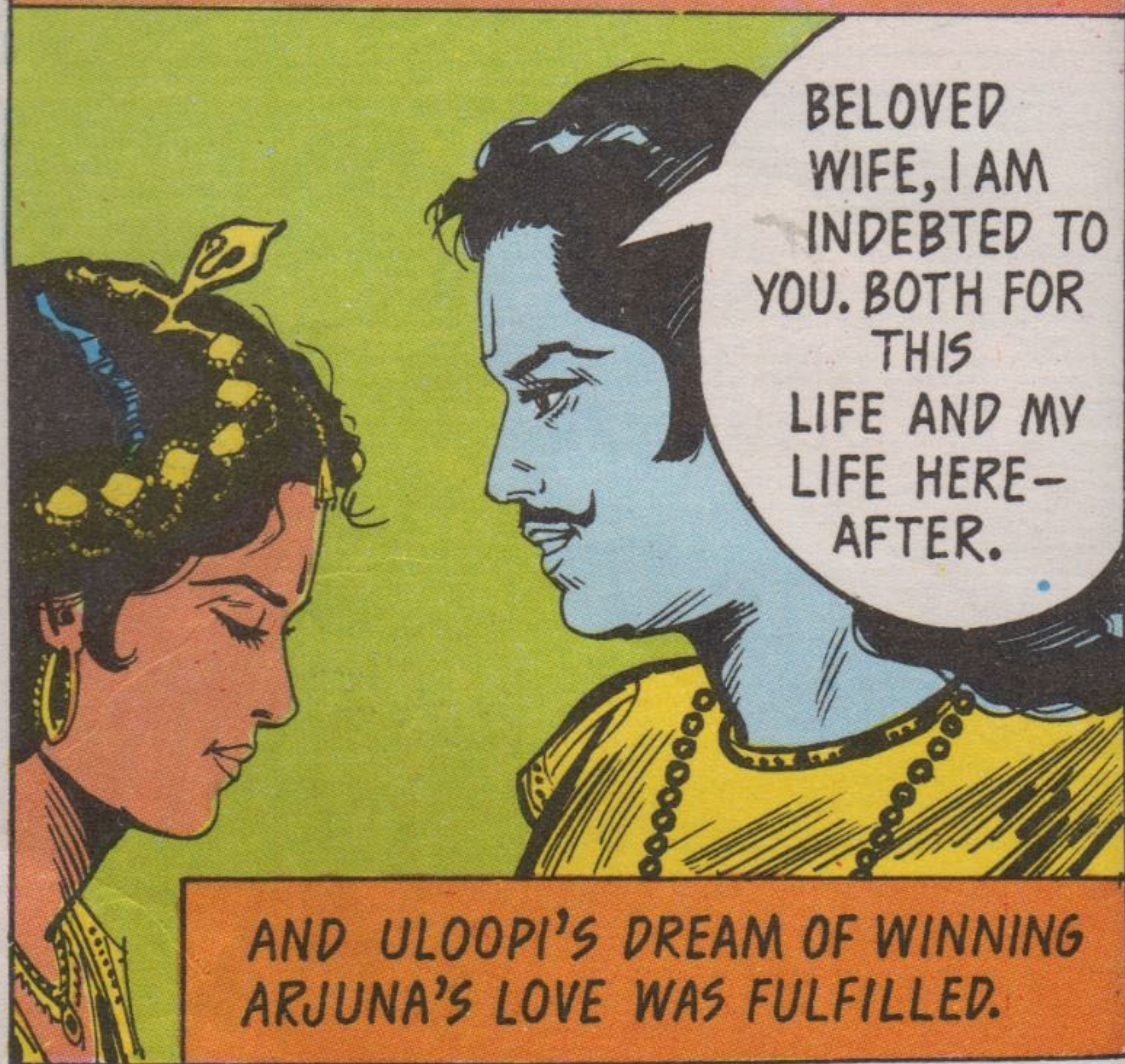


BABHRUVAHANA BOWED HIS HEAD RESPECTFULLY.

MOTHER ULOOPI WILL EXPLAIN ALL.



ULOOPI TOLD ARJUNA ALL ABOUT THE CURSE OF THE VASUS.



BELOVED WIFE, I AM INDEBTED TO YOU. BOTH FOR THIS LIFE AND MY LIFE HERE-AFTER.

AND ULOOPI'S DREAM OF WINNING ARJUNA'S LOVE WAS FULFILLED.