

VASAVADATTA

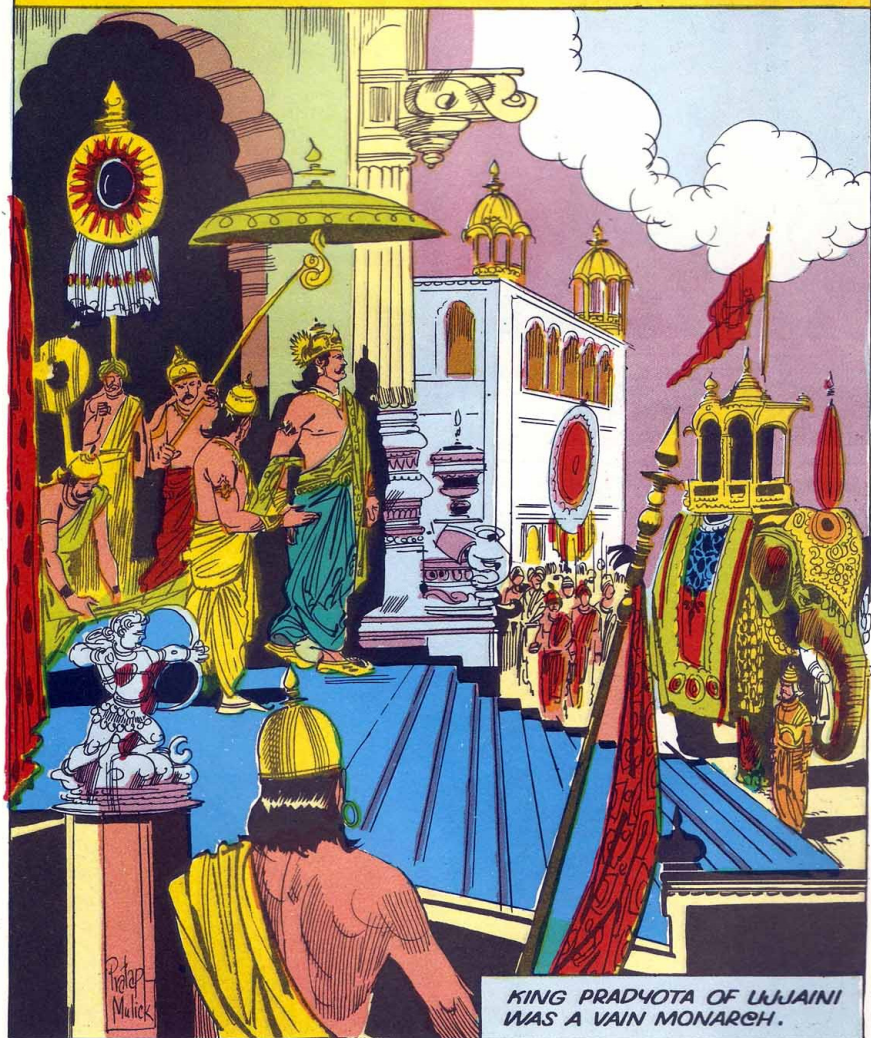


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Vasavadatta

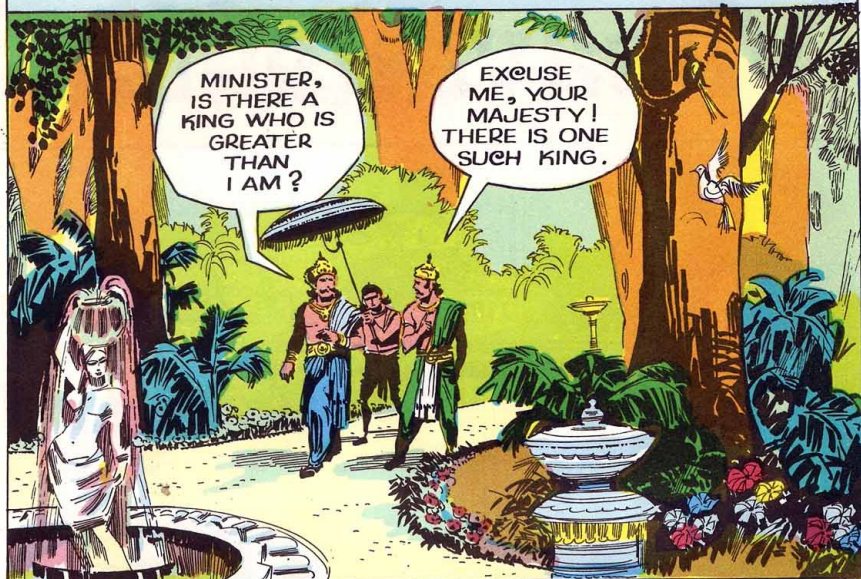


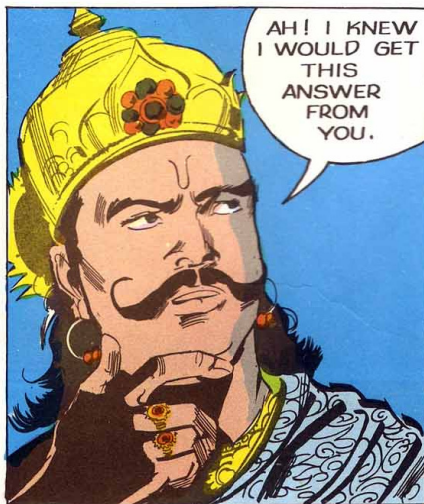
Vasavadatta



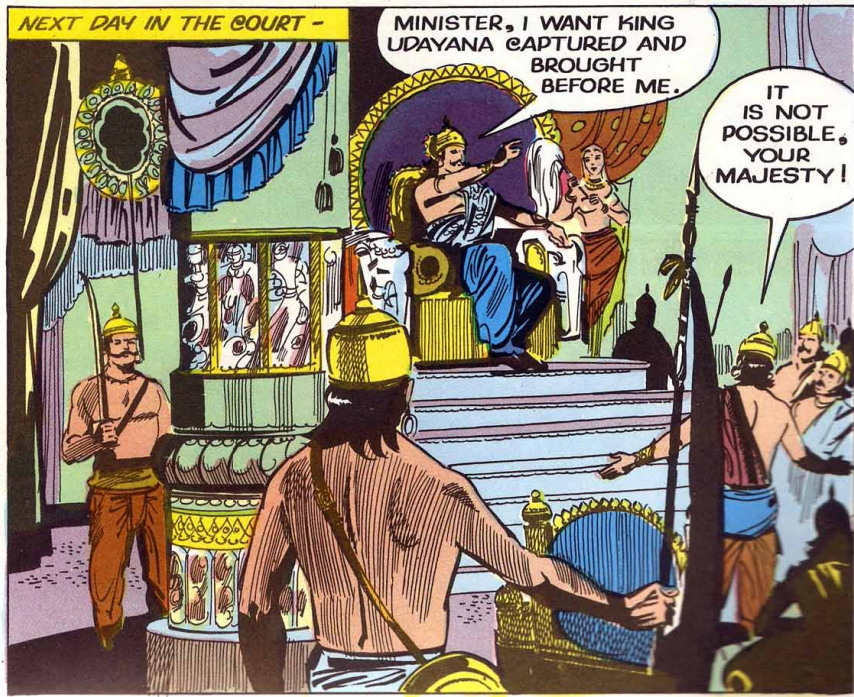
KING PRADYOTA OF UJJAINI
WAS A VAIN MONARCH.

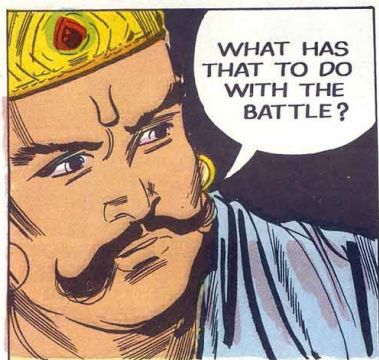
ONE DAY, AS HE WAS RETURNING FROM HIS GARDEN -

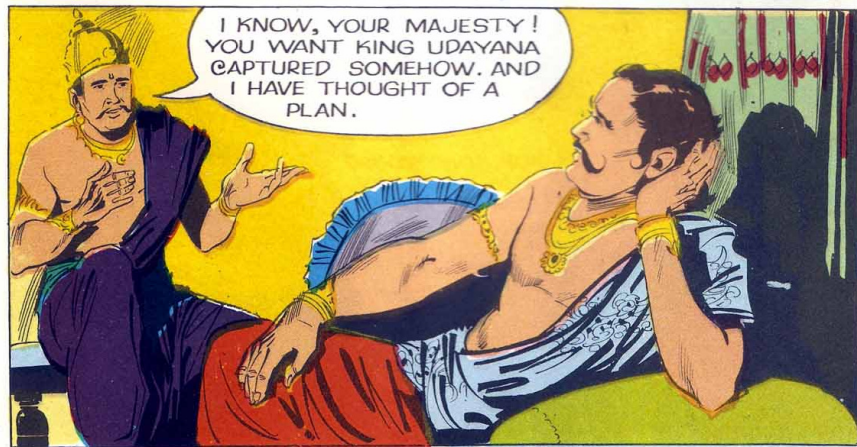
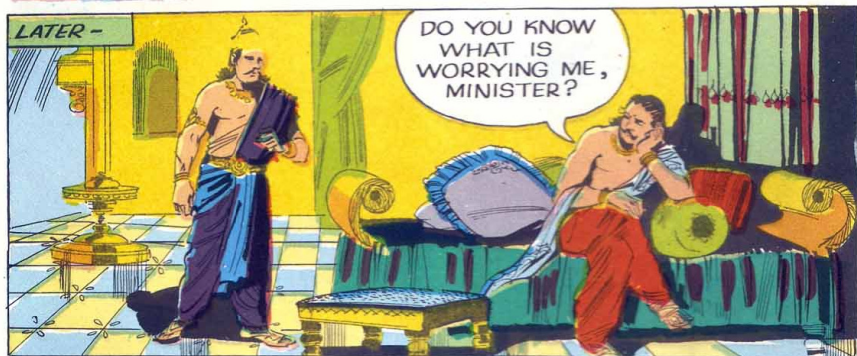




NEXT DAY IN THE COURT -



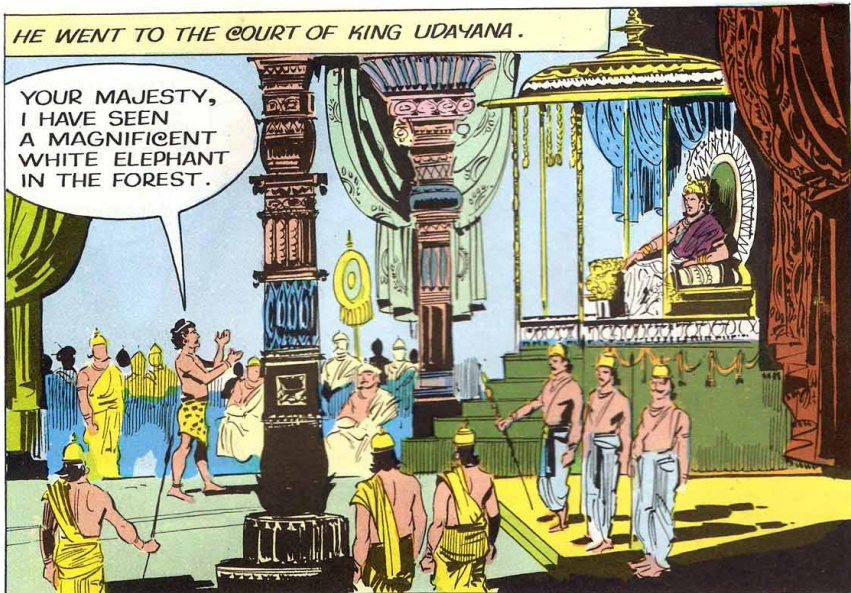




THERE WAS A THICK FOREST BETWEEN THE KINGDOMS OF UDAYANA AND PRADYOTA. ONE DAY, A FOREST DWELLER SAW A BIG WHITE ELEPHANT.

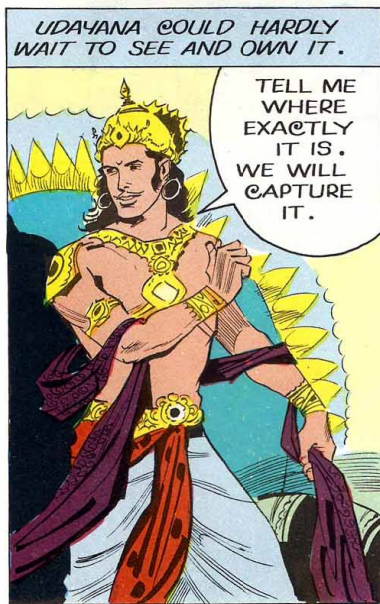


HE WENT TO THE COURT OF KING UDAYANA.



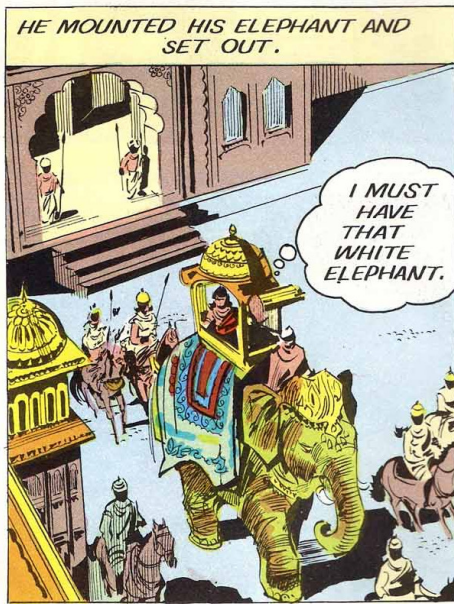
YOUR MAJESTY,
I HAVE SEEN
A MAGNIFICENT
WHITE ELEPHANT
IN THE FOREST.

UDAYANA COULD HARDLY
WAIT TO SEE AND OWN IT.



TELL ME
WHERE
EXACTLY
IT IS.
WE WILL
CAPTURE
IT.

HE MOUNTED HIS ELEPHANT AND
SET OUT.



I MUST
HAVE
THAT
WHITE
ELEPHANT.

THE SPIES OF KING PRADYOTA WERE ALERT.



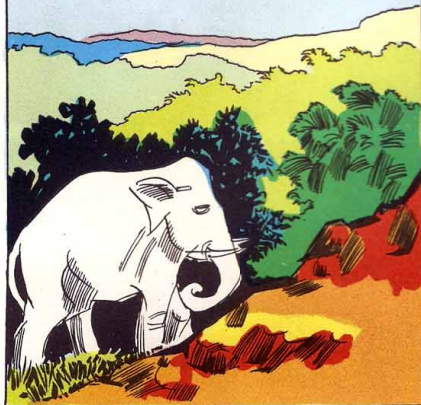
AT THE COURT OF KING PRADYOTA-



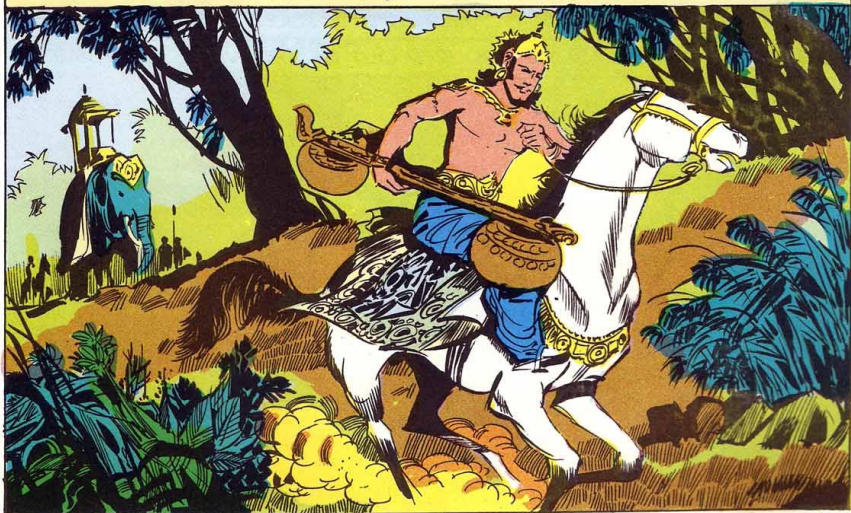
THE KING THEN TURNED TO HIS COMMANDER.



MEANWHILE, INSIDE THE ELEPHANT -



AT THE SIGHT OF THE MAJESTIC WHITE ELEPHANT, UDAYANA GALLOPED FASTER, LEAVING BEHIND HIS MEN.





SUDDENLY, PRADYOTA'S MEN POURED OUT OF THE WHITE ELEPHANT.



WHEN THE MEN OF KING UDAYANA REACHED THE SPOT -

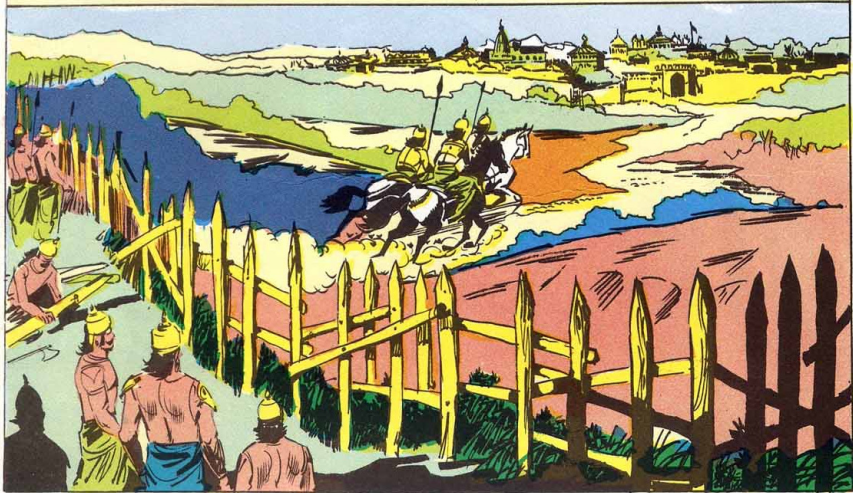


BUT, KING UDAYANA'S MINISTER WAS NOT A MAN TO LOSE HEART EASILY.

LET US BUILD A STOCKADE OUTSIDE UJJAINI AND PLAN TO FREE OUR KING.

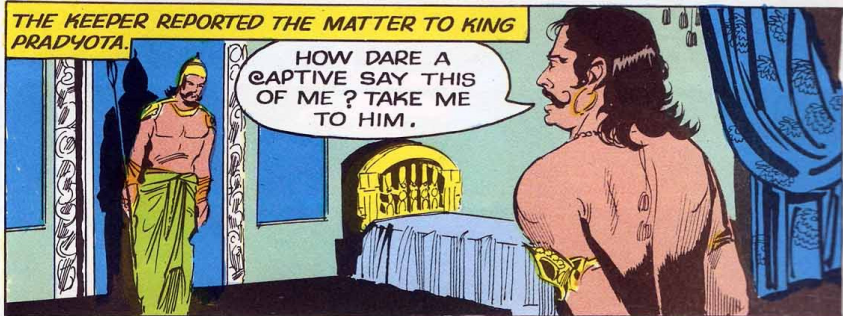
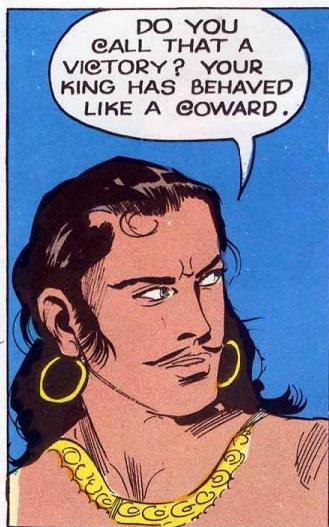


A STOCKADE WAS BUILT OUTSIDE UJJAINI AND THE MINISTER SENT MEN TO OBTAIN NEWS OF KING UDAYANA.



UDAYANA, MEANWHILE WAS HELD CAPTIVE IN PRADYOTA'S KINGDOM.









THAT
I WILL, BUT
ONLY IF I RECEIVE
DUE SALUTATION
FROM YOU.

DO YOU
REALLY
WANT ME
TO PAY
HOMAGE
TO YOU ?



WHY DO YOU LOOK
SURPRISED ? ISN'T
IT CUSTOMARY
FOR A PUPIL TO
PAY HOMAGE TO
HIS TEACHER ?



I WON'T
PAY YOU
HOMAGE .
AND IF
YOU DON'T
TEACH ME,
I WILL
HAVE
YOU
KILLED !

DO SO,
BY ALL
MEANS. YOU
ARE THE LORD
OF MY BODY,
BUT NOT
OF MY
MIND.

KING PRADYOTA LEFT THE PLACE IN A RAGE.



AT THE COURT, THAT DAY -

I DON'T WANT TO ATTEND TO ANYTHING. LEAVE ME ALONE.



THE MINISTER SOUGHT THE KING'S AUDIENCE IN HIS PRIVATE CHAMBER. ON HIS WAY, HE SAW PRINCESS VASAVADATTA.

A WAY OUT OF THE KING'S PREDICAMENT CAN BE FOUND, IF PRINCESS VASAVADATTA LEARNS THE SECRET FROM KING UDAYANA. OUR KING WILL BE SPARED THE HUMILIATION OF PAYING HOMAGE TO A PRISONER; THE SECRET WILL BE SAFE WITHIN THE FAMILY.



THE KING TOO HAD THE SAME IDEA.

MINISTER, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF VASAVADATTA LEARNING THE SECRET OF TAMING THE ELEPHANTS, FROM KING UDAYANA ?

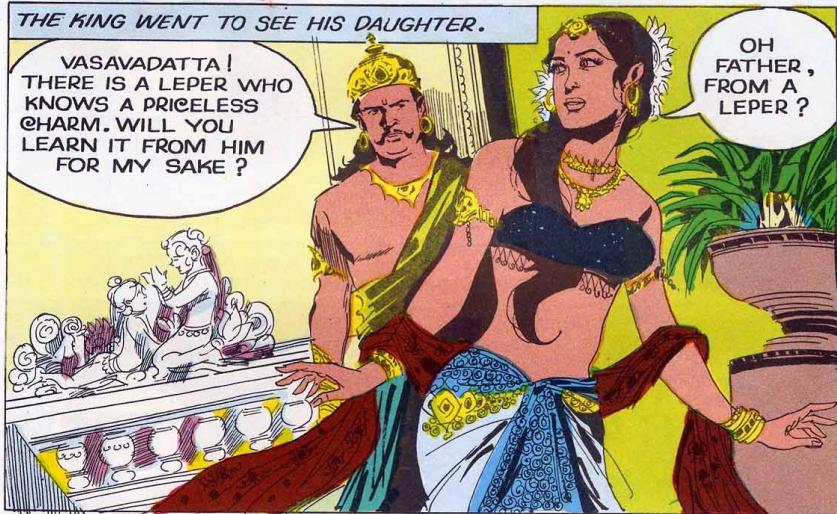
A GOOD IDEA ! I TOO HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT IT.

BUT I MUST ENSURE THAT THEY DON'T SEE EACH OTHER.

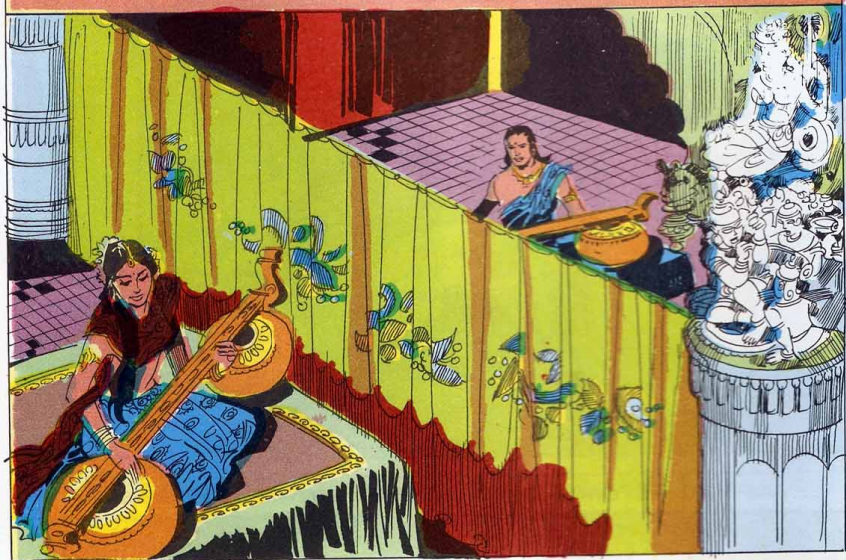
KING PRADYOTA WENT TO THE PRISON.

WILL YOU TEACH THE CHARM TO ANY ONE OF MY RELATIVES ?

YES, WHY NOT ?



AND VASAVADATTA BEGAN HER LESSONS WITH UDAYANA.



REPEAT
THIS VERSE
EXACTLY AS
I SAY IT.

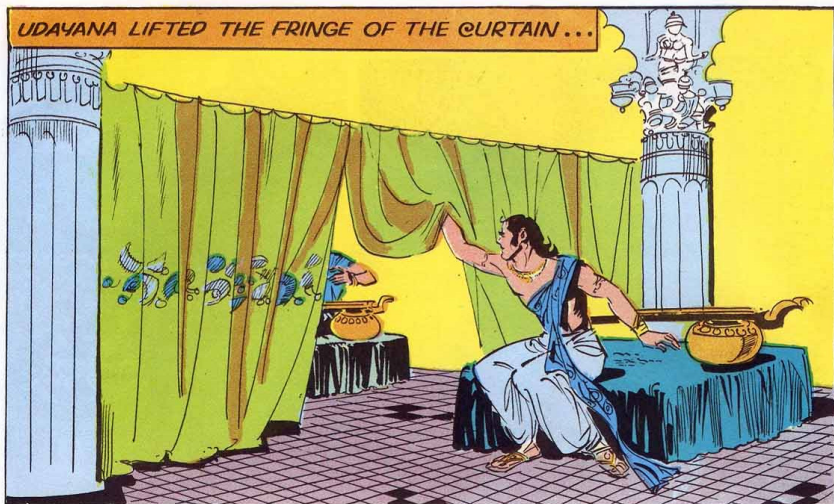
I'LL
TRY.



NO!
WRONG
AGAIN! YOU
DUNCE OF A
HUNCH-BACK!
ARE YOUR
LIPS THICK,
TOO?

YOU
VILLAIN
OF A
LEPER!
HOW DARE
YOU
CALL ME
A HUNCH-
BACK?

UDAYANA LIFTED THE FRINGE OF THE CURTAIN ...



...AND WAS ASTONISHED TO SEE THE BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS.





THE INEVITABLE HAPPENED. BOTH FELL IN LOVE WITH EACH OTHER
AND STARTED MEETING SECRETLY WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF
KING PRADYOTA.



ONE DAY, KING PRADYOTA CAME TO VASAVADATTA'S CHAMBER.

DEAR DAUGHTER,
HAVE YOU
MASTERED
THE CHANT?

NOT YET,
FATHER.



IF YOU
NEED MY HELP,
YOU HAVE ONLY
TO ASK
FOR IT.

THANK
YOU,
FATHER.

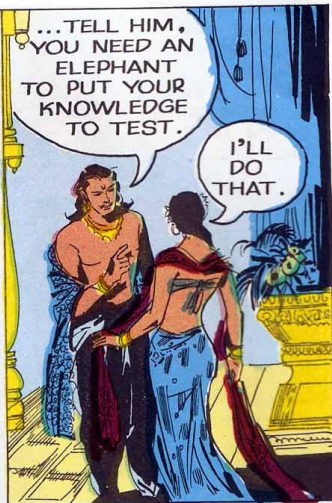


NEXT DAY, VASAVADATTA FOUND UDAYANA IN A PENSIVE MOOD.

WHY DO YOU
LOOK SO SAD?
WHAT IS THE
MATTER?

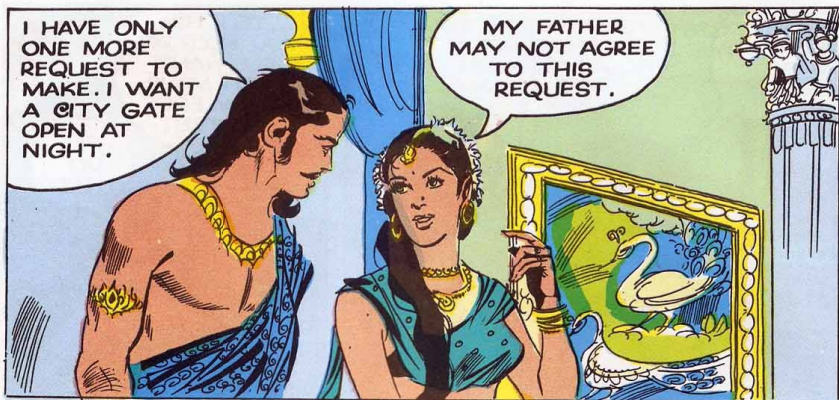
HOW LONG
CAN I REMAIN
A CAPTIVE?
BESIDES YOUR
FATHER WILL NOT
HESITATE TO
KILL ME IF HE
LEARNS OF
OUR LOVE.





THE KING READILY ACCDED TO HIS DAUGHTER'S REQUEST AND AN ELEPHANT WAS PLACED AT HER DISPOSAL.





BUT WHEN KING PRADYOTA HEARD THE STRANGE REQUEST...

I THINK, THIS
MUST BE A RUSE
WORKED OUT BY
UDAYANA TO
ESCAPE FROM
HERE.

VERY
WELL, A
GATE WILL
BE LEFT
OPEN.

THANK
YOU,
FATHER.

THE KING CALLED FOR HIS SPIES.

LISTEN
CAREFULLY.
DON'T LET KING
UDAYANA KNOW
THAT HE IS BEING
FOLLOWED.
CAPTURE HIM
ONLY IF HE
TRIES TO
RUN AWAY.

AS YOU
WISH, YOUR
MAJESTY.

KING UDAYANA MOUNTED THE ELEPHANT ,
AND WENT TO THE FOREST .



SO FOR THREE SUCCESSIVE NIGHTS , UDAYANA PRETENDED TO
LOOK FOR THE HERBS .



THE SPIES WERE THROWN OFF THEIR GUARD
AND WERE NOT ALERT ANY MORE .



ON THE FOURTH NIGHT, KING PRADYOTA WAS AMUSING HIMSELF
IN THE PALACE GARDEN.



UDAYANA WAS QUICK TO
SEIZE HIS OPPORTUNITY!



VASAVADATTA ALSO MOUNTED THE
ELEPHANT.



HERE! TAKE THESE
SACKS. THEY
WERE BROUGHT
TO ME IN
SECRECY.



THEY ARE
HEAVY. WHAT
HAVE YOU
GOT IN
THEM ?

THIS ONE
IS FULL OF
SILVER COINS.
THE OTHER
HAS GOLD
COINS.



WHAT
ARE YOU
GOING TO DO
WITH THESE
SACKS ?

THAT
YOU WILL
KNOW SOON.
QUIET
NOW.



AFTER SOME TIME,
A MAID-SERVANT WENT TO THE
CHAMBER OF VASAVADATTA.

SHE ISN'T
IN! WHERE
COULD SHE
BE ?



THE SERVANTS SEARCHED
FRANTICALLY.

NO, SHE
ISN'T
HERE
EITHER!

WE MUST
REPORT THIS
TO THE KING
IMMEDIATELY.

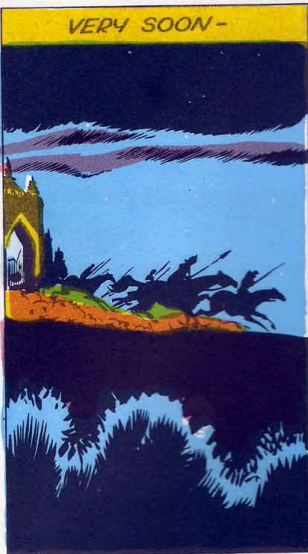


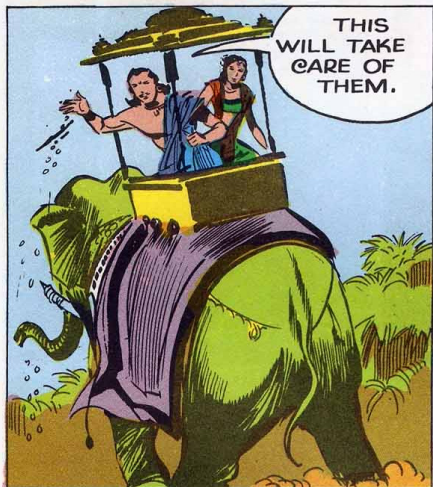
WHEN THE KING HEARD IT -

GO QUICKLY
AND BRING THEM
TO ME, DEAD OR
ALIVE !



VERY SOON -





SOME OF KING PRADYOTA'S MEN, WHO CARED MORE FOR THEIR DUTY, CONTINUED THE PURSUIT. THEN -

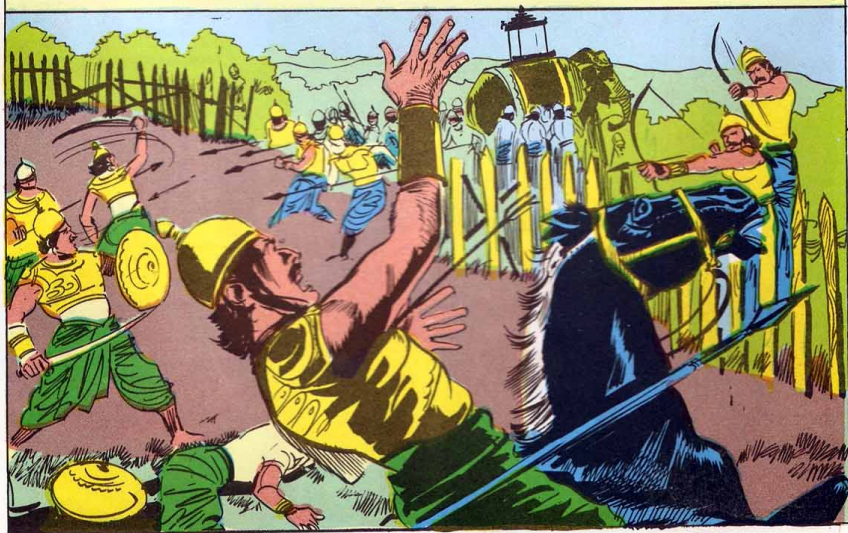


BY THEN KING UDAYANA HAD REACHED THE BORDERS OF UJJAINI.

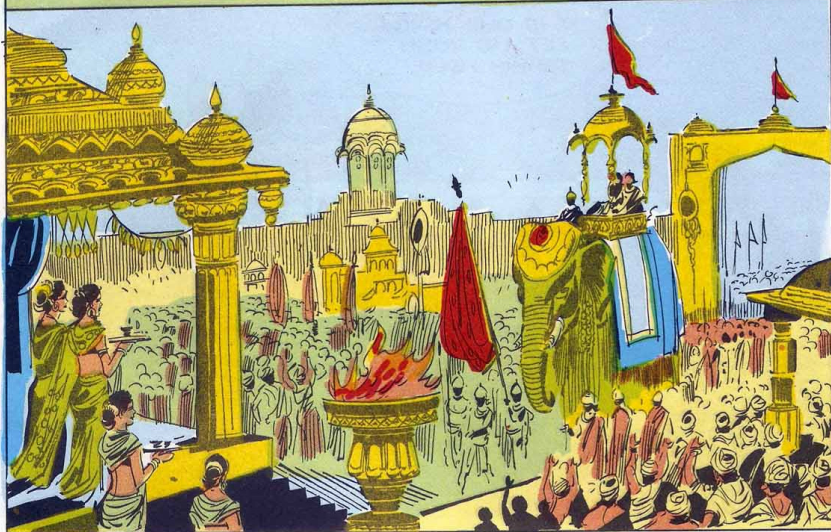
IT IS OUR KING!
LET US RUSH
TO HIS HELP.

UDAYANA'S MINISTER WHO HAD BEEN
IN TROUBLE WITH HIM ALL THESE DAYS,
WAS THERE TO RECEIVE HIM.

THE TIRED AND EXHAUSTED SOLDIERS OF KING PRADYOTA WERE
EASILY OVERPOWERED BY KING UDAYANA'S MEN.



BACK IN KAUSHAMBI,
KING UDAYANA WAS GIVEN A WARM WELCOME BY HIS PEOPLE.



PRINCESS VASAVADATTA WAS MARRIED TO HIM AMIDST GREAT REJOICING.





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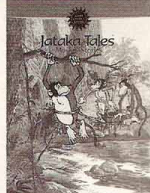


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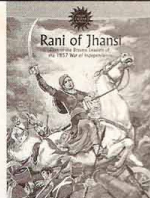


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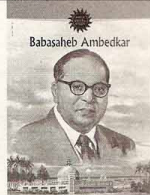


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The story of King Udayana and Princess Vasavadatta was very well known in ancient India. Early writers were inspired by this story and made it the subject of poems and dramas. Bhasa wrote *Swapnavasavadatta* in Sanskrit, which is unique for its literary value. *Vasavadatta* by Subandhu is another great work on the same theme.

This popular story was re-echoed in Pali and Prakrit literature. In *Dhamma-pada-atthakatha* (5th century AD), on which this illustrated classic is based, we get an elaborate account of the story of Vasavadatta and Udayana.

King Pradyota of Ujjaini is disturbed to learn from his minister that King Udayana of Kaushambi is a greater king than he is. He tricks Udayana into captivity. Pradyota then wants Udayana to teach him the secret of taming elephants. Udayana refuses to do so until Pradyota himself pays him the homage due to a guru. As Pradyota's pride does not permit this, he sends his lovely daughter Vasavadatta to Udayana for the lessons, with a curtain screen separating them. Vasavadatta is told her teacher is a leper, and Udayana is told that his pupil is a hunch-backed relative of Pradyota.

What follows thereafter is encapsulated in this romantic tale.

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Script: Meena Talim Illustrations: Pratap Mulick Cover: Pratap Mulick

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