



Tales of Durga

Vol. 514 Rs. 25



Amar Chitra Katha: the Glorious Heritage of India



Tales of Durga

Goddess Durga is as widely worshipped as Vishnu and Shiva. She is the fierce form of Devi who, as Shakti, is considered the personification of universal energy. According to the Devi Bhagavata the Universe is but Her manifestation – and even Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva worship Her. Durga is worshipped in sixty-four forms as Ambika, Kali, Chamundi, Devi, Uma, etc.

The worship of Durga is supposed to be more than 4,000 years old in India. The names of Uma and Parvati occur in the Taittiriya Aranyaka and the Kena Upanishad. Some Indologists are of the opinion that the figure seated on a lion in the coins of Azes I, the Shaka ruler (c. 5 B.C. to A.D. 30), represents Ambika or Durga.

Durga is worshipped in one form or another in almost every Indian village.

This Amar Chitra Katha is based on the Durga-Saptashati of the Markandeya Purana.



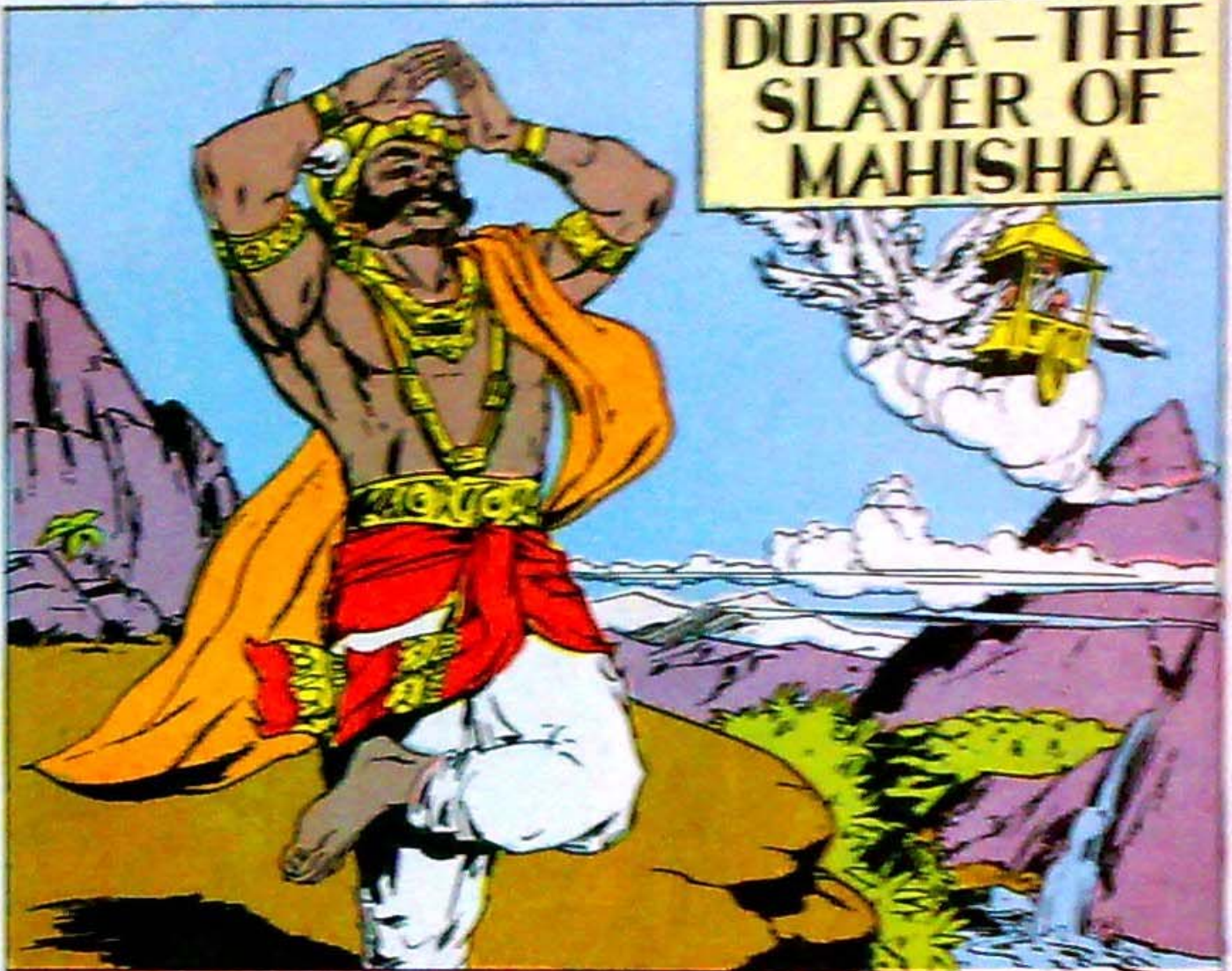
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Artwork: Suren Roy

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DURGA - THE SLAYER OF MAHISHA



THE ASURA, MAHISHA, ONCE PERFORMED SEVERE PENANCES TO PROPITIATE BRAHMA. PLEASED WITH HIS AUSTERITIES, BRAHMA APPEARED BEFORE HIM.



LORD, MAKE ME IMMORTAL.

ALL WHO ARE BORN MUST DIE. YOU CANNOT ESCAPE DEATH.

MAHISHA BECAME THOUGHTFUL.

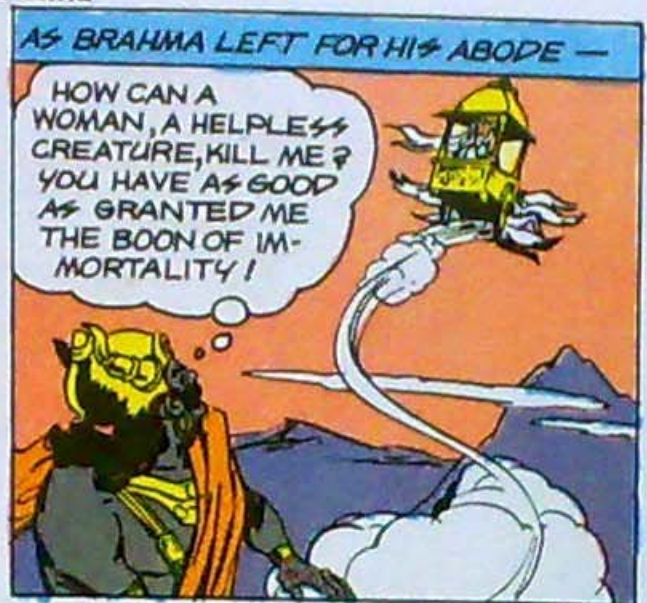
WHAT SHALL I DO? HAVE I PERFORMED ALL THOSE PENANCES FOR NOTHING? AH! I HAVE IT!





IF I MUST DIE, LORD, LET IT BE AT THE HANDS OF A WOMAN.

SO BE IT.



AS BRAHMA LEFT FOR HIS ABODE —

HOW CAN A WOMAN, A HELPLESS CREATURE, KILL ME? YOU HAVE AS GOOD AS GRANTED ME THE BOON OF IMMORTALITY!

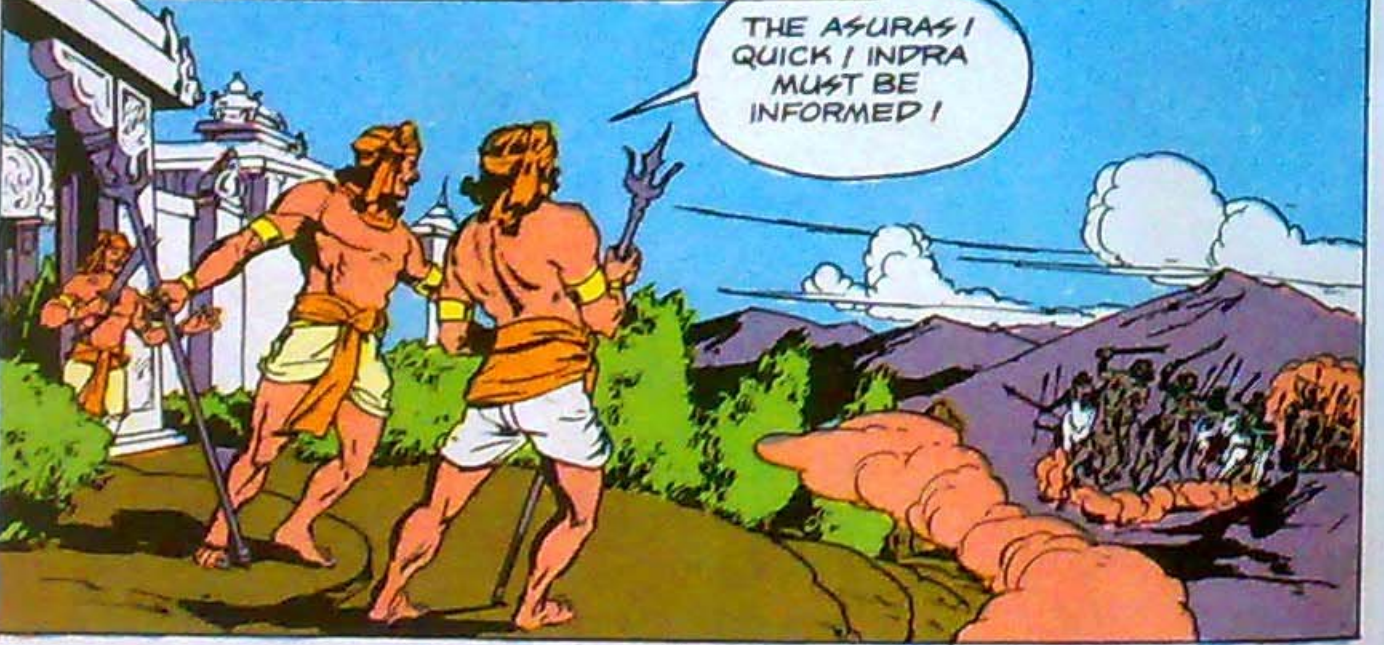
JUBILANTLY, MAHISHA HURRIED BACK TO THE NETHER WORLD AND HIS MEN.



VICTORY TO MAHISHA ASURA!

FROM NOW ON, THE DEVAS ARE POWERLESS AGAINST ME. ON TO HEAVEN!

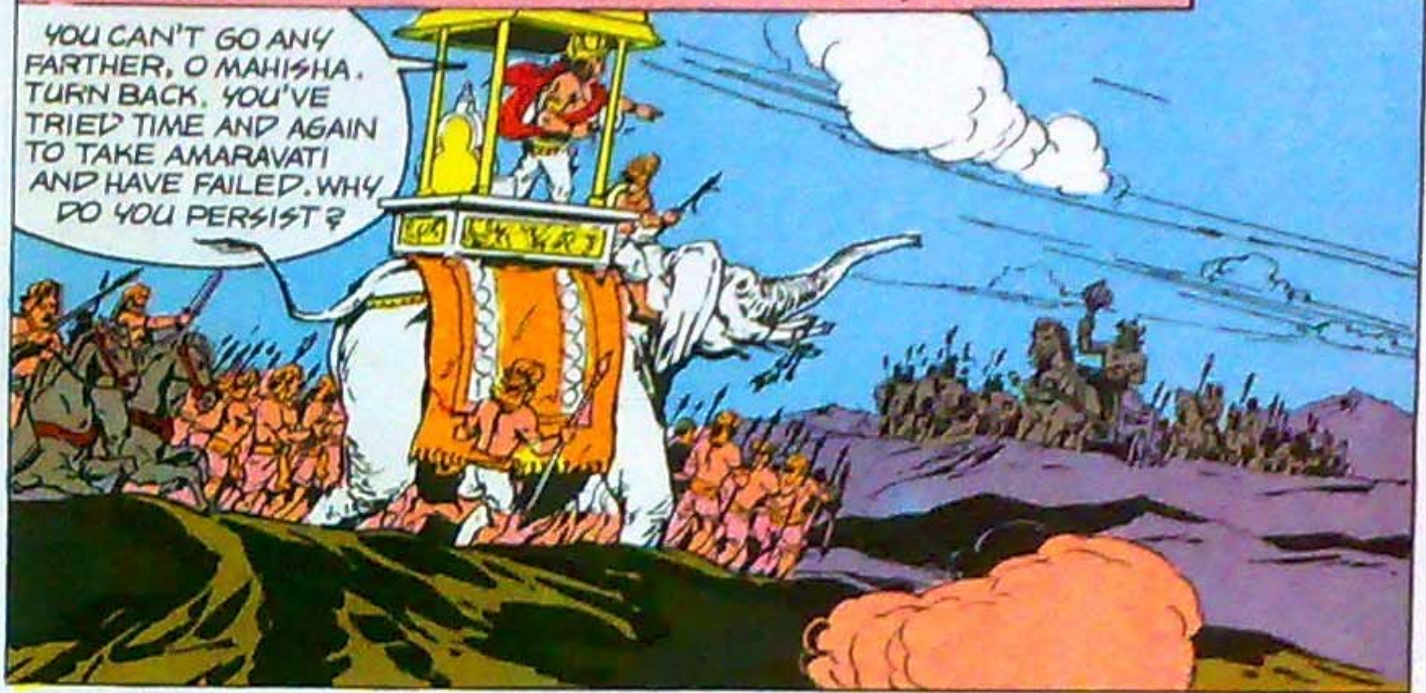
AS MAHISHA AND HIS ARMY APPROACHED HEAVEN —



THE ASURAS! QUICK! INDRA MUST BE INFORMED!

A LITTLE LATER, INDRA RUSHED OUT OF AMARAVATI, HIS CAPITAL.

YOU CAN'T GO ANY FARTHER, O MAHISHA. TURN BACK. YOU'VE TRIED TIME AND AGAIN TO TAKE AMARAVATI AND HAVE FAILED. WHY DO YOU PERSIST?



INDRA, I'VE COME TO FIGHT! NOT TO TALK. USE YOUR WEAPONS INSTEAD OF YOUR TONGUE!

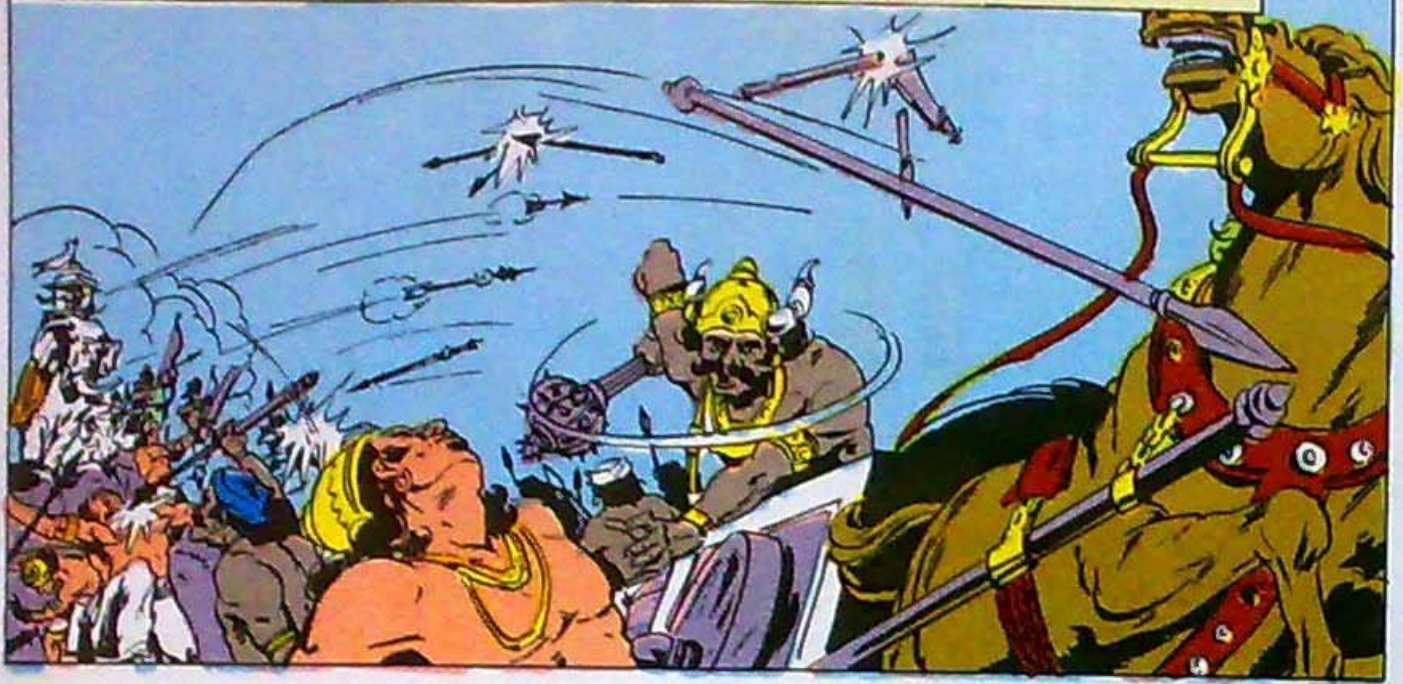


STUNG BY MAHISHA'S WORDS, INDRA DARTED FORWARD BRANDISHING HIS WEAPON — THE THUNDERBOLT.

ATTACK, O DEVAS. LET NO ASURA ESCAPE.



THEN ENSUED A FIERCE BATTLE BETWEEN THE DEVAS AND THE ASURAS.



SEVERELY BEATEN, THE DEVAS HAD TO RUN FOR THEIR LIVES.

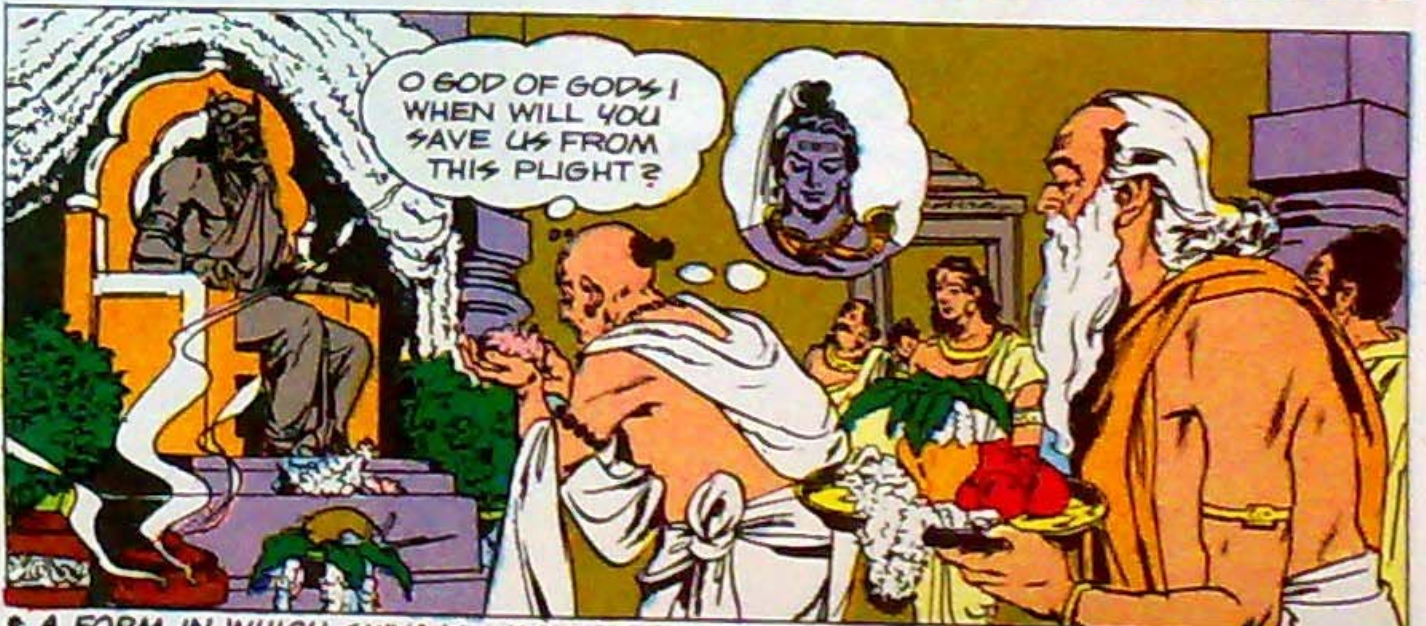


AFTER DRIVING THE DEVAS OUT OF AMARAVATI, MAHISHA ASCENDED INDRA'S THRONE.

I AM THE LORD OF LORDS.
HENCEFORTH I ALONE SHALL
BE WORSHIPPED. THE WOR-
SHIP OF BRAHMA, VISHNU
AND SHIVA SHOULD BE
STOPPED FORTHWITH.



MAHISHA'S MEN BEGAN TO HARASS THOSE PIOUS MEN WHO CONTINUED TO WORSHIP VISHNU OR SHIVA.



* A FORM IN WHICH SHIVA IS WORSHIPPED

MEANWHILE, UNKNOWN TO THEM, THE DEVAS HAD ALREADY ASSEMBLED AT KAILAS, THE ABODE OF LORD SHIVA.

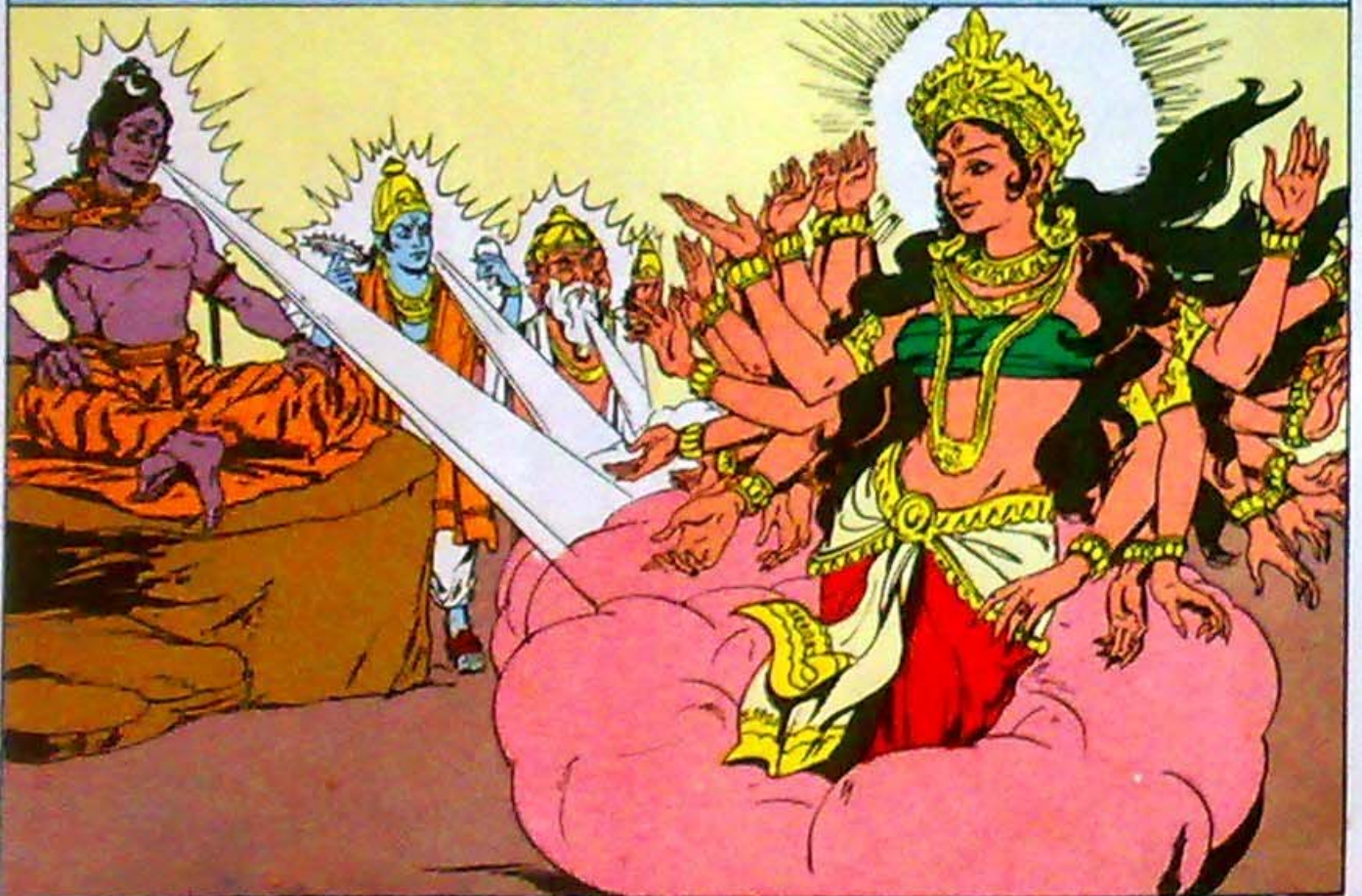
WE ARE HELPLESS AGAINST MAHISHA. WILL EVIL TRIUMPH OVER RIGHTEOUSNESS?



EVEN AS THE DEVAS SPOKE, AN INTENSE LIGHT ISSUED FORTH FROM THE ENRAGED FACES OF SHIVA, VISHNU AND BRAHMA.



IT WAS JOINED BY SIMILAR RAYS OF LIGHT FROM INDRA AND OTHER DEVAS. AND LO! THE NEXT MOMENT, OUT OF THAT LIGHT A FEMALE FORM WITH A THOUSAND ARMS CAME INTO BEING! IT WAS DEVI PURGA.



O DEVI, YOU ARE THE ORIGIN OF ALL THE WORLDS. YOU ARE DURGA. YOU ARE THE INNER FORCE, THE SOURCE OF ALL STRENGTH. DESTROY MAHISHA AND PROTECT US!



SHIVA DREW FORTH A TRIDENT FROM HIS OWN TRIDENT...



...AND OFFERED IT TO DURGA.



VISHNU AND OTHER DEVAS, TOO, OFFERED WEAPONS TO DURGA.

O DEVI, ACCEPT THIS DISCUS.

— AND THIS THUNDERBOLT.

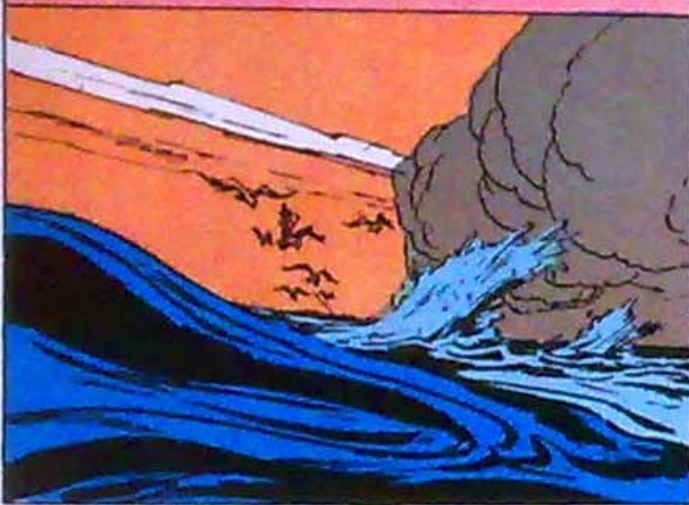


ARMED WITH THE CELESTIAL WEAPONS AND MOUNTED ON A LION, DURGA EMITTED A BLOOD-CURLING ROAR.



I'LL SEEK OUT AND DESTROY THE EVIL MAHISHA.

THE SEA TREMBLED...



...THE EARTH SHOOK AND THE MOUNTAINS ROCKED.

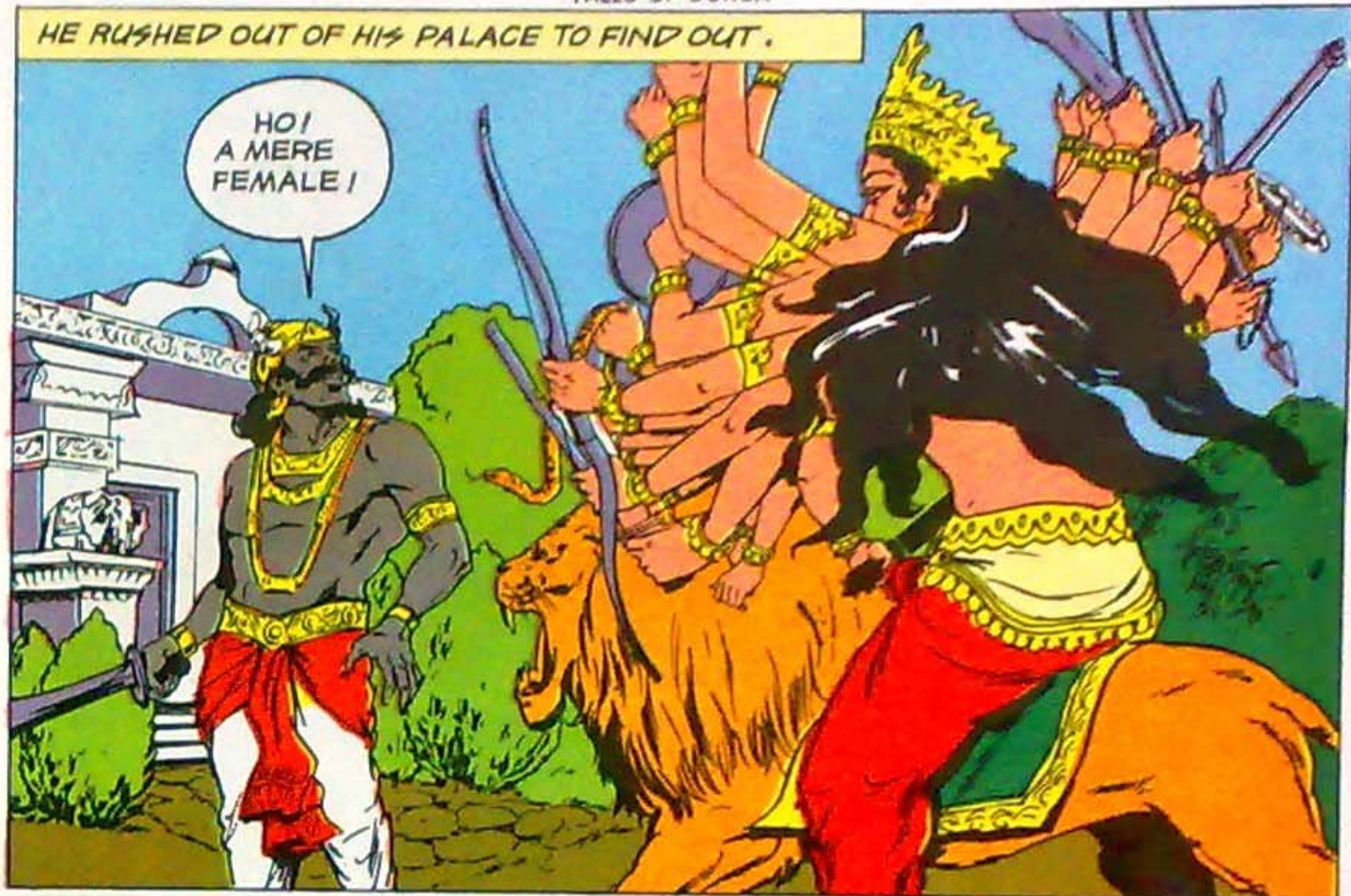


MAHISHA'S HEART MISSED A BEAT.



WHAT'S THAT?

HE RUSHED OUT OF HIS PALACE TO FIND OUT.



HO!
A MERE
FEMALE!

NO! I AM NO
MERE FEMALE!
I HAVE COME TO
FULFIL BRAHMA'S
BOON. YOU WANT-
ED TO DIE AT THE
HANDS OF A
WOMAN, DIDN'T
YOU?



MAHISHA HASTILY STEPPED BACK
AND CALLED TO HIS MEN.



GET
HER! KILL
HER!

AS THE ASURAS HURLED VARIOUS WEAPONS AT HER, DURGA BREATHED HARD.



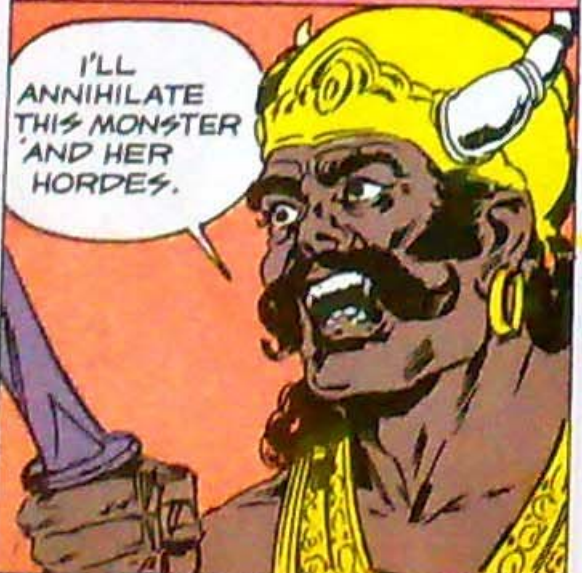
AS SHE BREATHED, THOUSANDS OF SOLDIERS CAME INTO BEING AND FOUGHT AT HER SIDE.



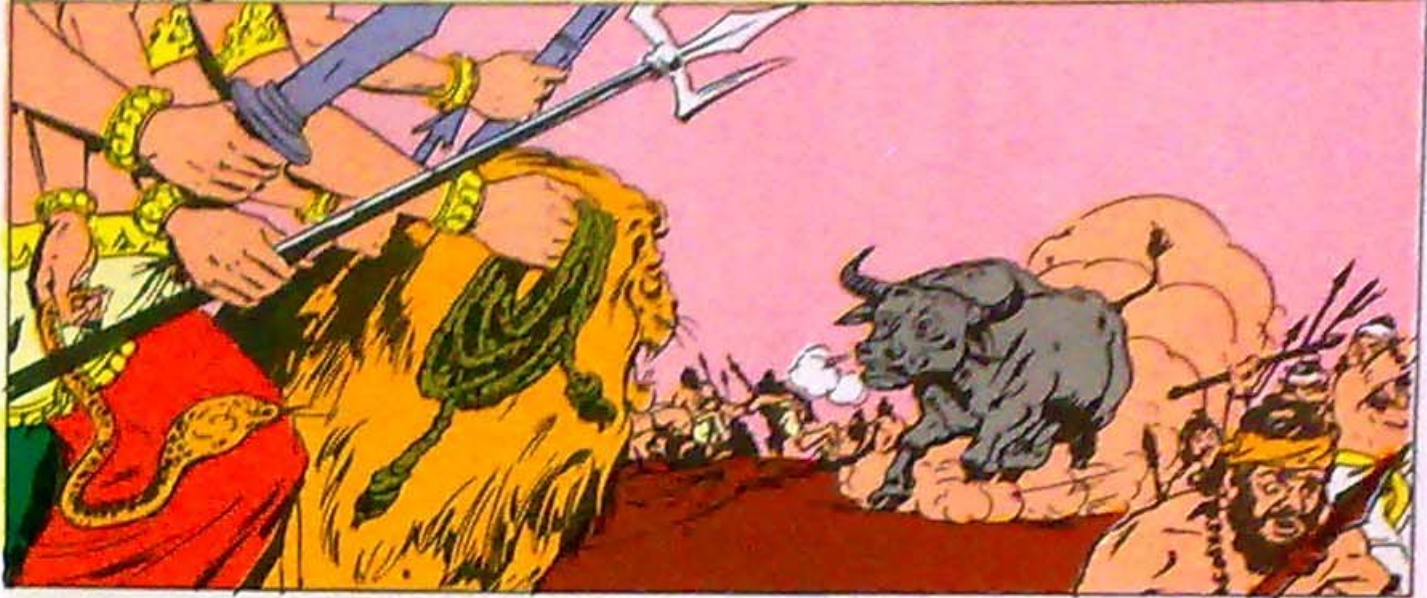
HER MOUNT STRODE THROUGH MAHISHA'S ARMY, DESTROYING THOUSANDS OF ASURAS.



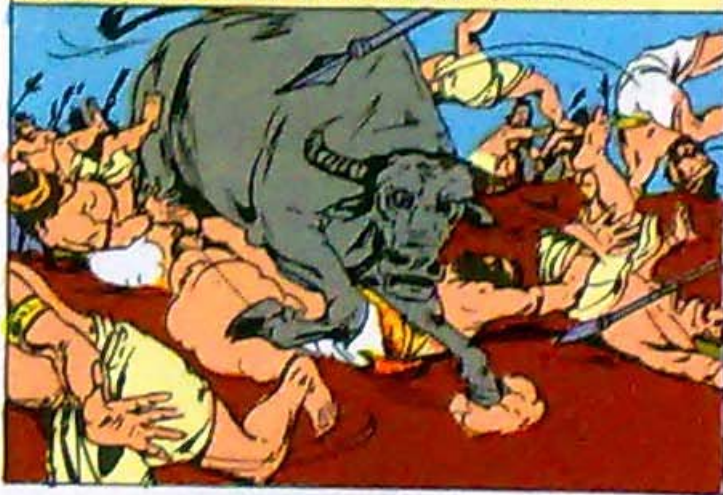
MAHISHA SEETHED WITH FURY.



ASSUMING THE FORM OF A BUFFALO, MAHISHA CHARGED FORTH SNORTING AND BELLOWING.



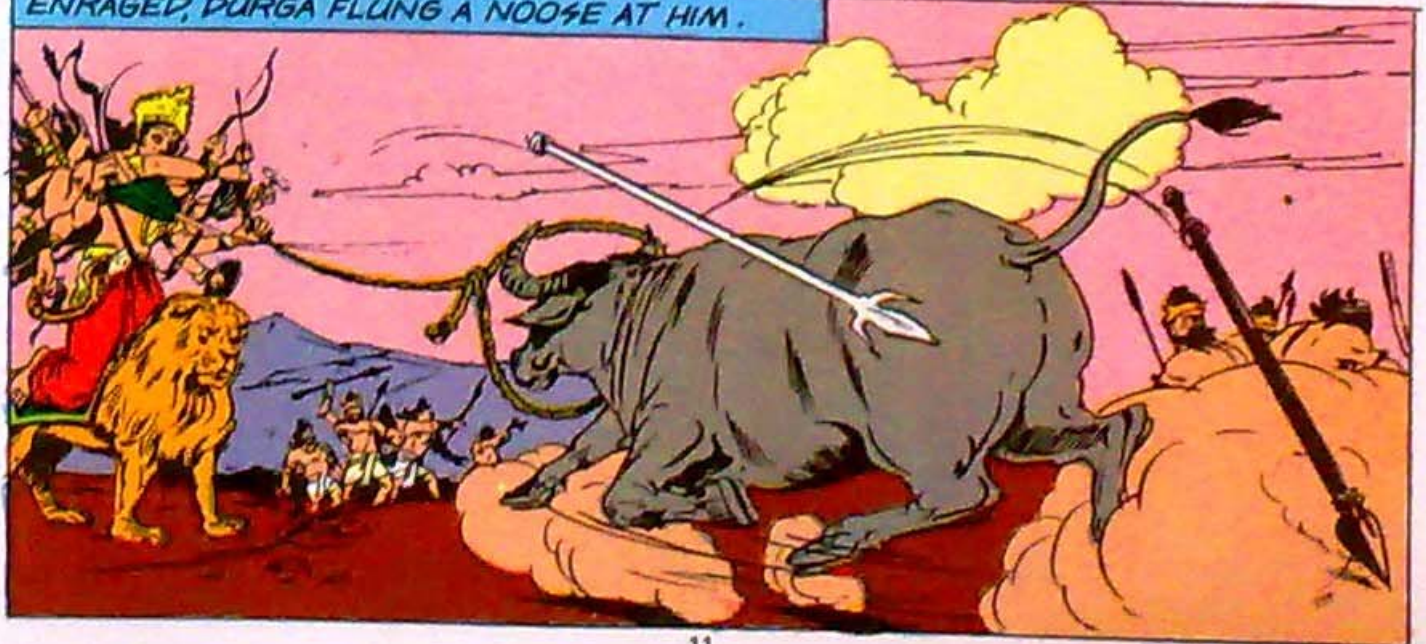
HE TRAMPLED UPON DURGA'S MEN . . .



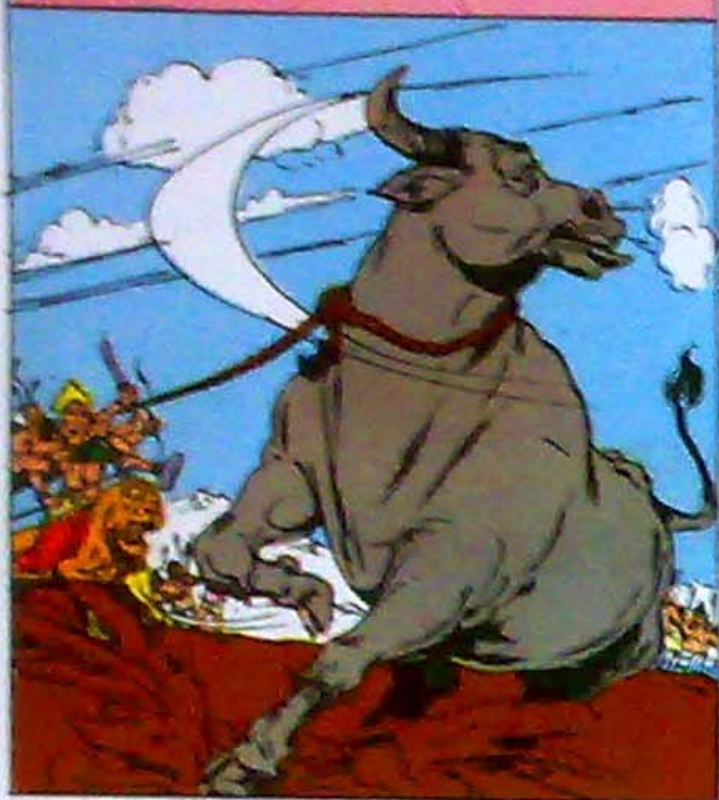
... AND LASHED AT THEM WITH HIS TAIL . . .



ENRAGED, DURGA FLUNG A NOOSE AT HIM .



MAHISHA HOOK HIMSELF WITH ALL HIS MIGHT ...



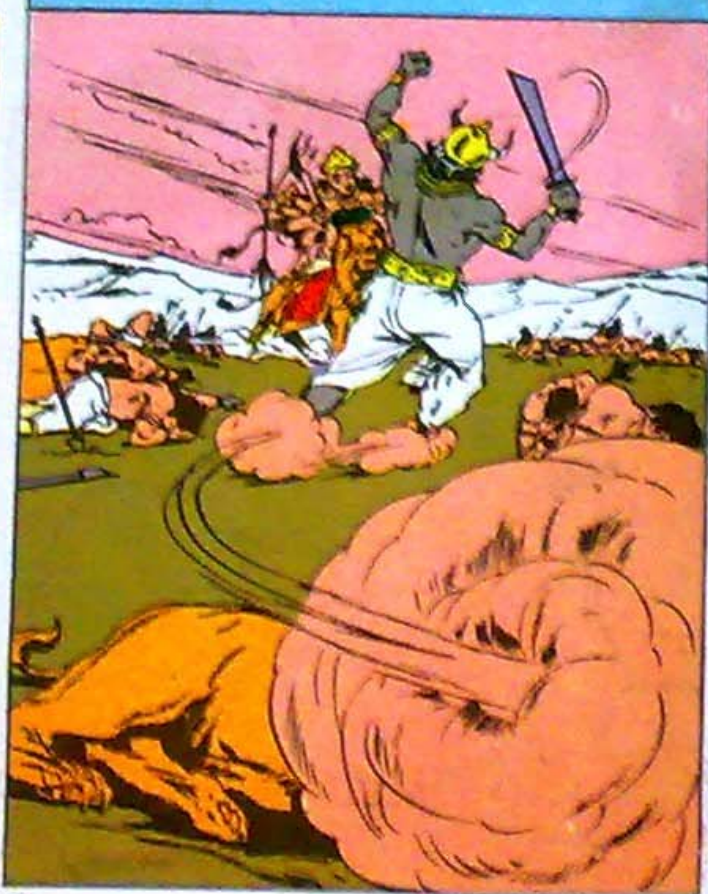
... TRANSFORMED HIMSELF INTO A LION AND POUNCED UPON DURGA.



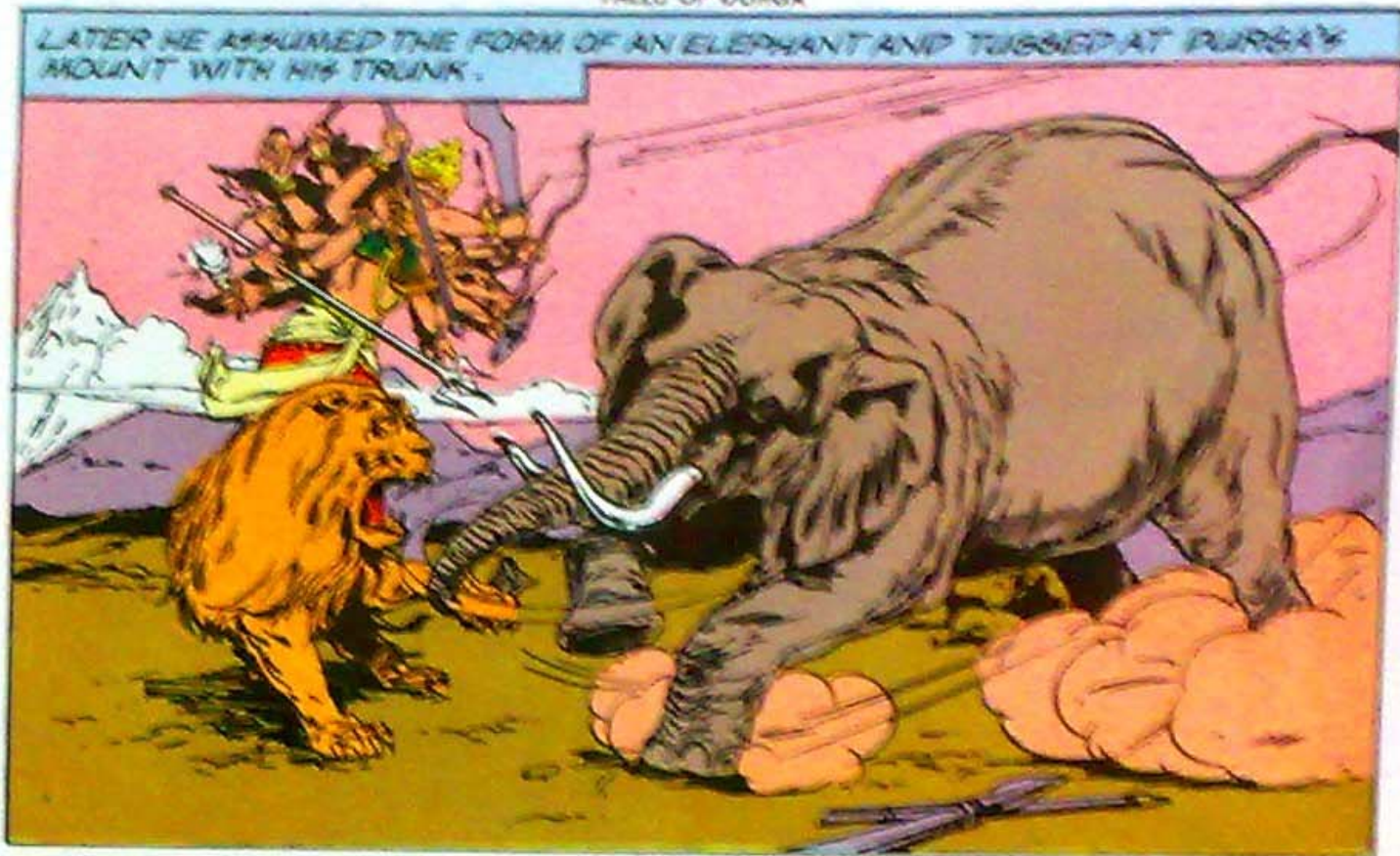
AS DURGA CHOPPED OFF THE HEAD OF THE LION ...



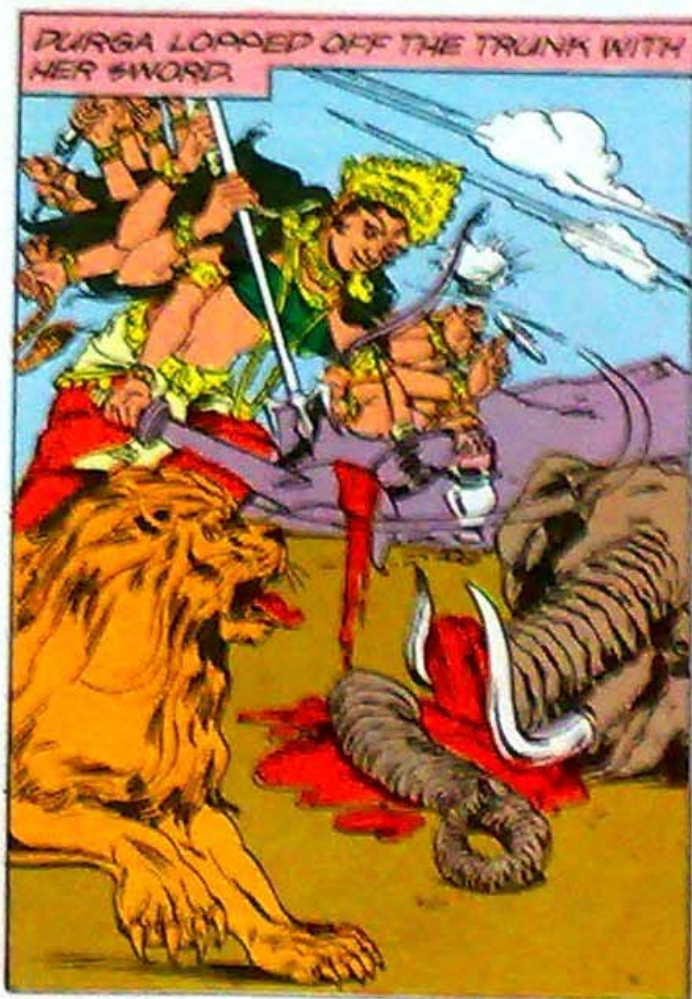
... MAHISHA ROSE IN HIS OWN FORM AND CHARGED.



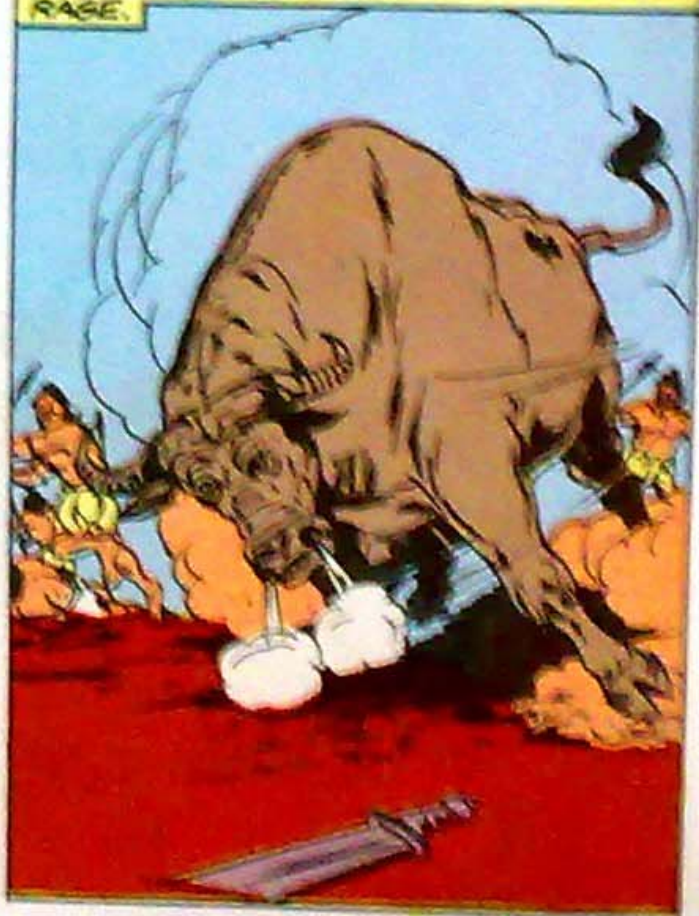
LATER HE ASSUMED THE FORM OF AN ELEPHANT AND TUGGED AT DURGA'S MOUNT WITH HIS TRUNK.



DURGA LOOPEE OFF THE TRUNK WITH HER SWORD.



MAHISHA AGAIN ASSUMED THE FORM OF A BUFFALO AND SNORTED WITH RAGE.



DURGA LOOKED AT HIM WITH CONTEMPT.

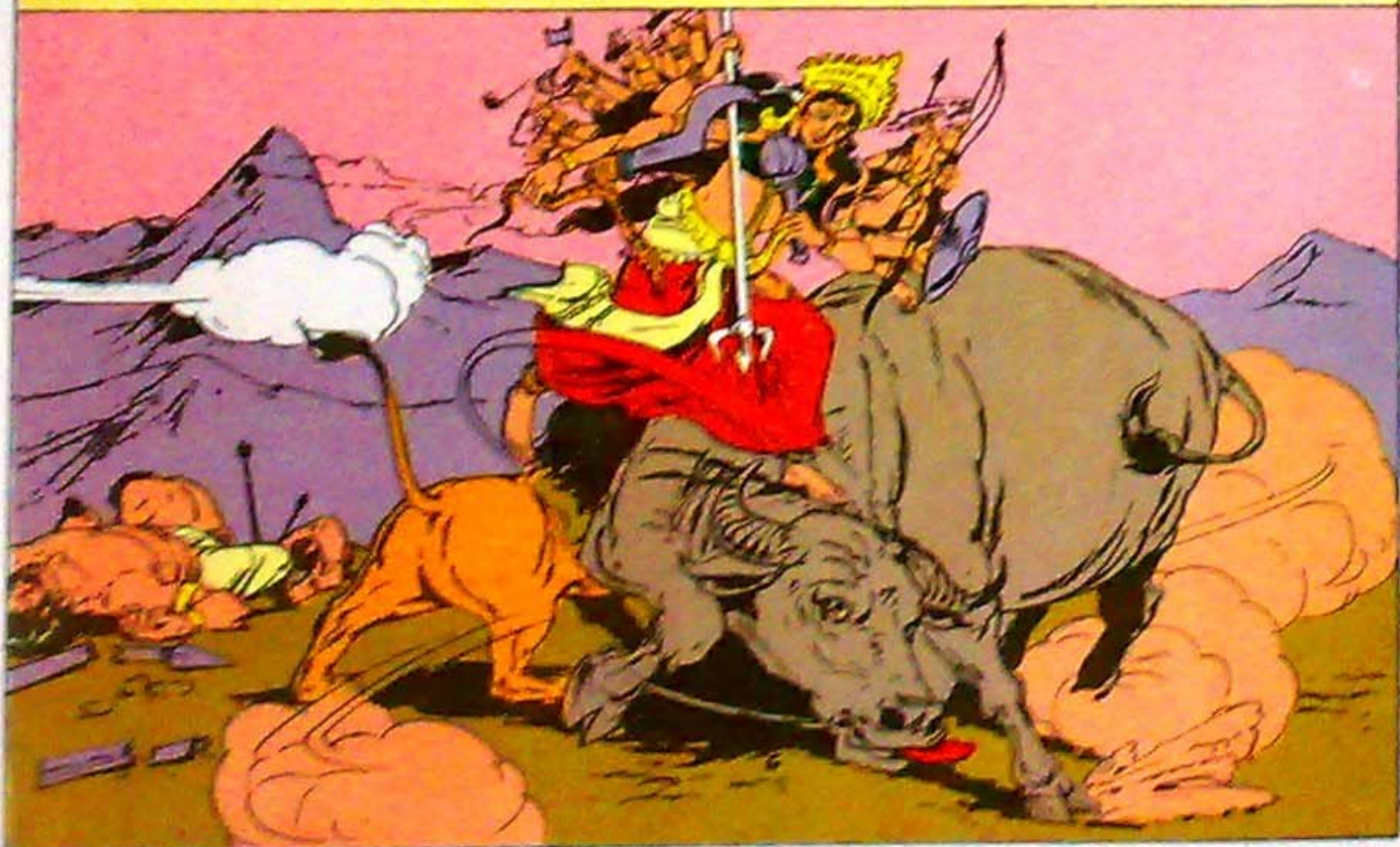


SNORT,
O FOOL! IN A
MOMENT, THE
DEVAS WILL
ROAR IN TRIUMPH
AT THIS VERY
PLACE, WHEN
YOU ARE
SLAIN!

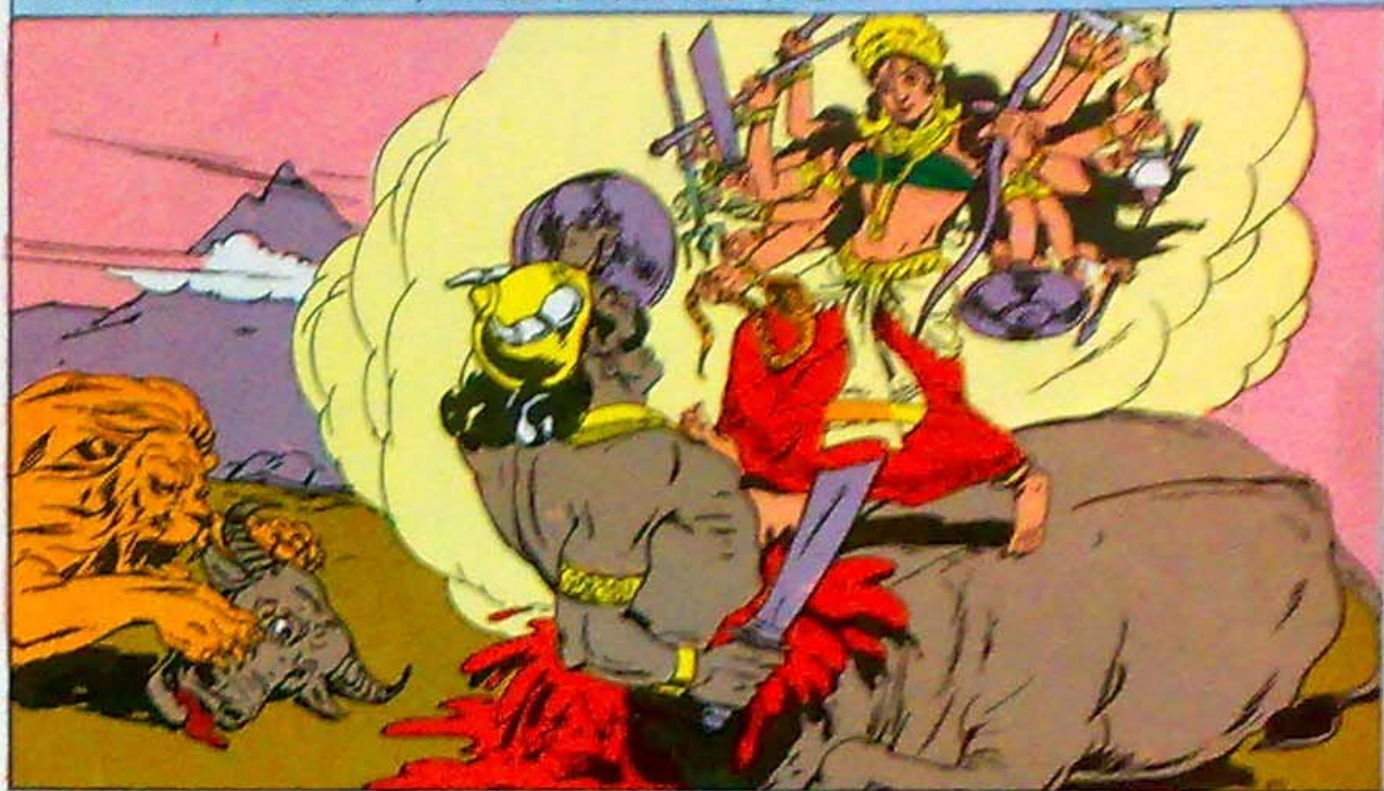
ENRAGED, MAHISHA RUSHED AT HER.



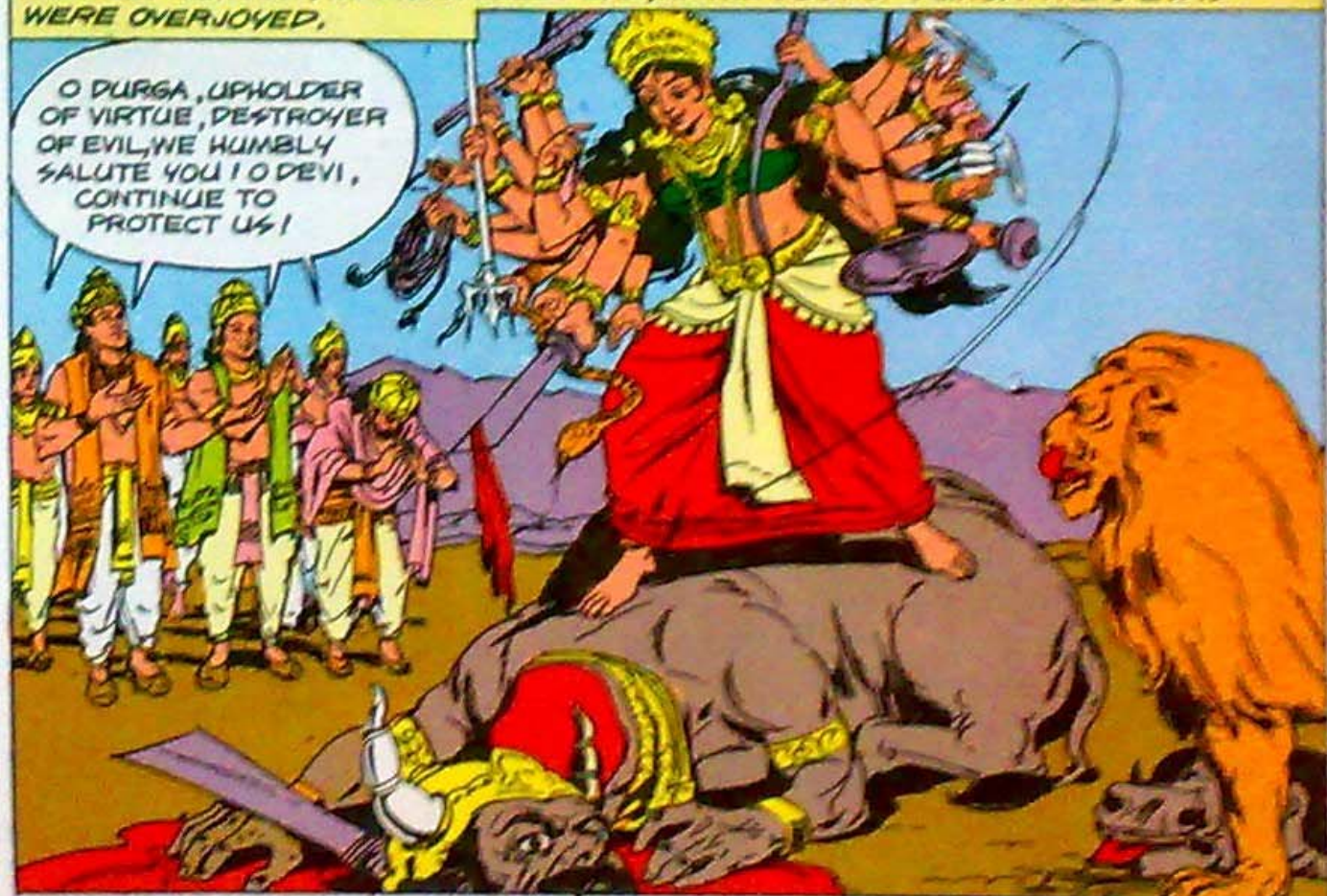
BUT DURGA LEAPT UPON HIM AND PINNED HIM DOWN.



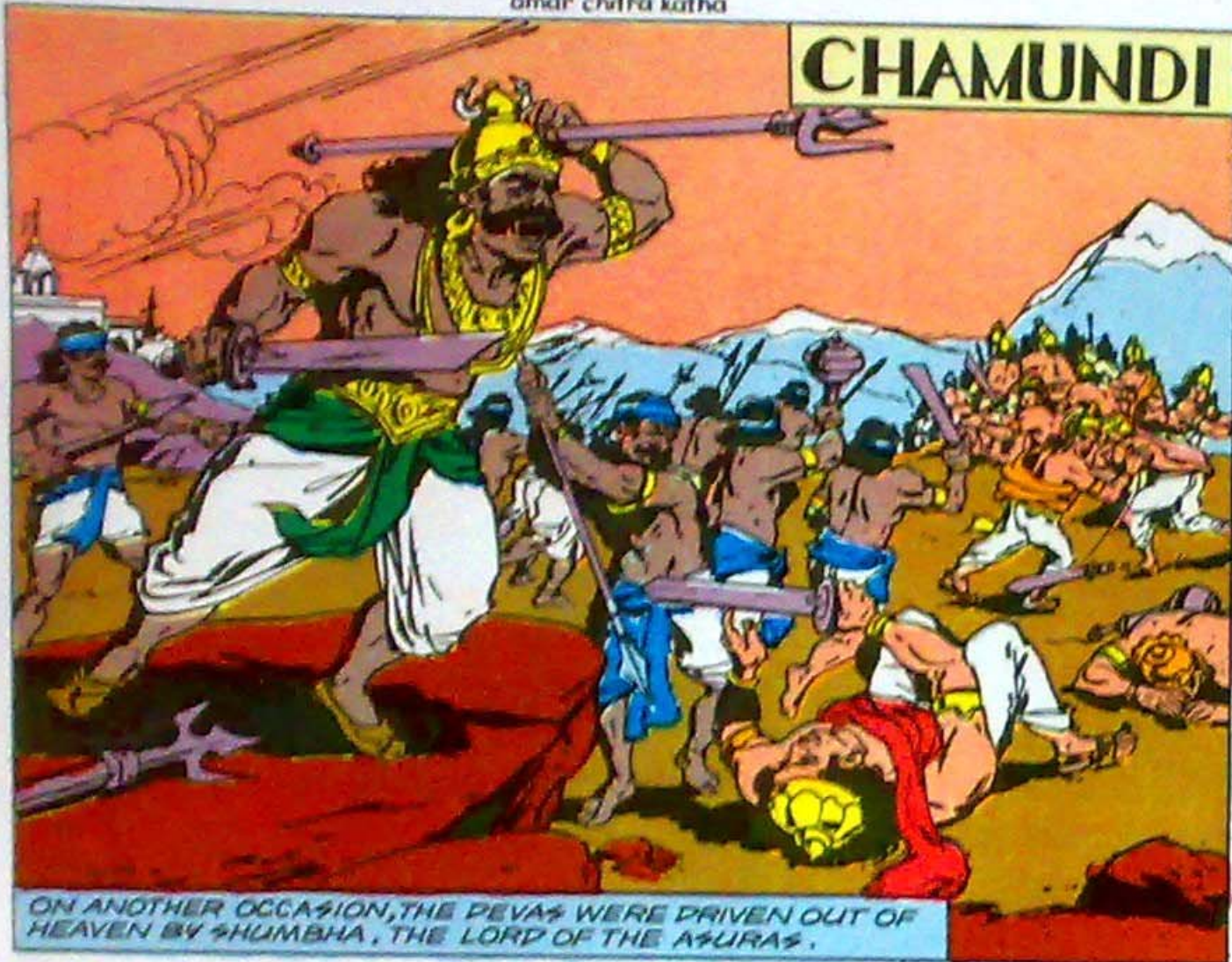
MAHISHA STRUGGLED TO FREE HIMSELF, AS HALF OF HIM EMERGED FROM THE MOUTH OF THE BUFFALO, DURGA RAISED HER SWORD.



THE NEXT MOMENT, MAHISHA FELL DEAD, AT THE FOOT OF DURGA. THE DEVAS WERE OVERJOYED.



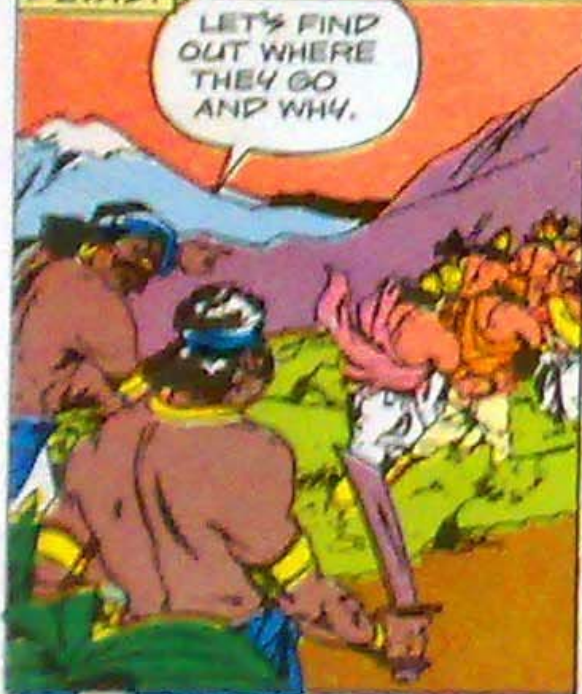
CHAMUNDI



ON ANOTHER OCCASION, THE DEVAS WERE DRIVEN OUT OF HEAVEN BY SHUMBHA, THE LORD OF THE ASURAS.

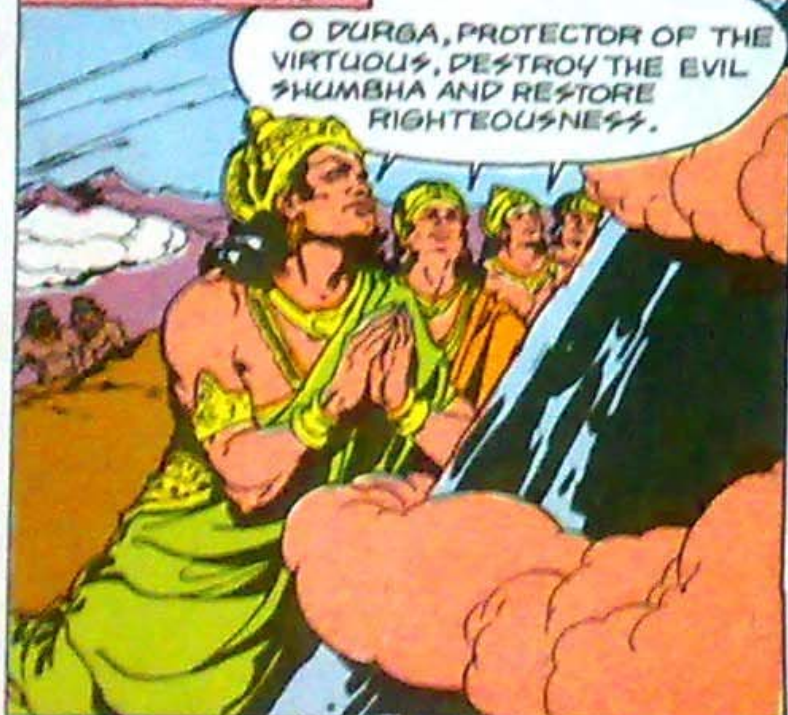
CHANDA AND MUNDA, SHUMBHA'S COMMANDERS, FOLLOWED THE DEVAS.

LET'S FIND OUT WHERE THEY GO AND WHY.



THE DEVAS WENT TO MOUNT HIMAVAT AND PRAYED TO DURGA.

O DURGA, PROTECTOR OF THE VIRTUOUS, DESTROY THE EVIL SHUMBHA AND RESTORE RIGHTEOUSNESS.



JUST THEN PARVATI, SHIVA'S CONSORT, WHO WAS ON HER WAY TO THE RIVER, HAPPENED TO PASS BY.



AND LO! THE NEXT MOMENT, GODDESS AMBIKA* SPRANG FORTH FROM THE BODY OF PARVATI.



WHAT A BREATHTAKING BEAUTY! WE SHOULD INFORM SHUMBHA.

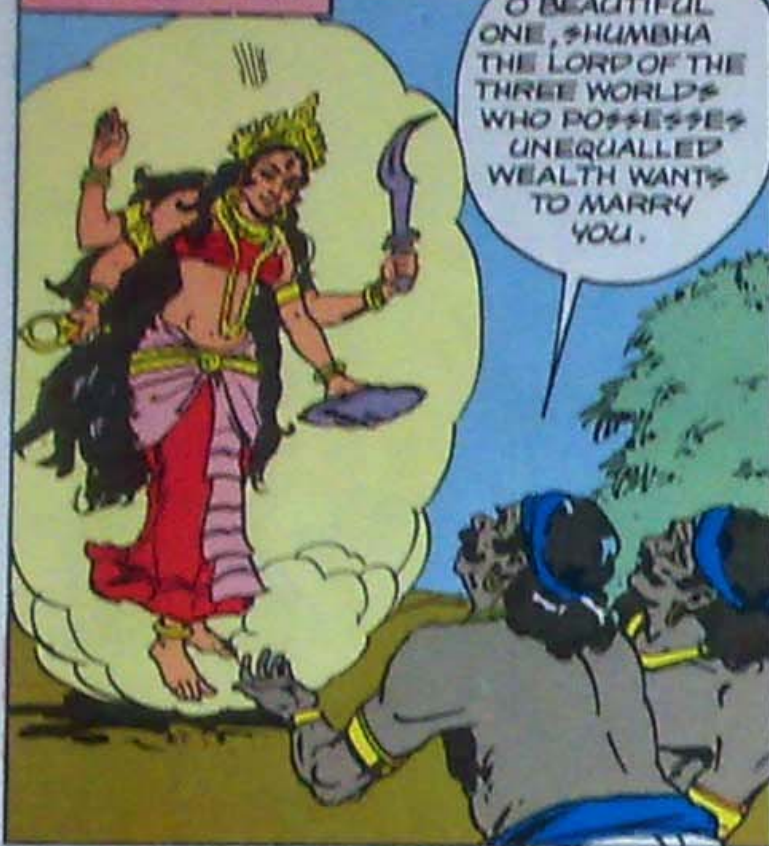
LET'S RUN TO OUR MASTER.

WHEN CHANDA AND MUNDA RUSHED TO THE PALACE OF SHUMBHA AND DESCRIBED AMBIKA TO HIM.



THAT BEAUTIFUL ONE SHALL BE MINE! BRING HER TO ME!

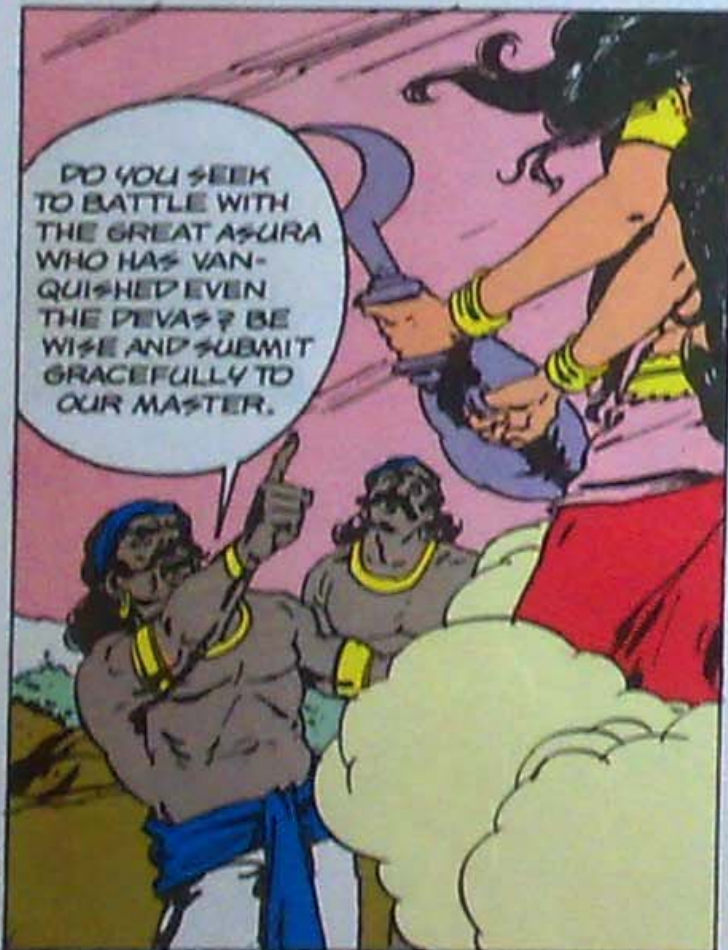
CHANDA AND MUNDA RUSHED BACK TO MOUNT HIMAVAT.



O BEAUTIFUL ONE, SHUMBHA THE LORD OF THE THREE WORLDS WHO POSSESSES UNEQUALLED WEALTH WANTS TO MARRY YOU.



I'VE TAKEN A VOW THAT I'LL MARRY ONLY HIM WHO CAN CONQUER ME IN BATTLE AND HUMBLE MY PRIDE.



DO YOU SEEK TO BATTLE WITH THE GREAT ASURA WHO HAS VANQUISHED EVEN THE DEVAS? BE WISE AND SUBMIT GRACEFULLY TO OUR MASTER.



I KNOW I AM FOOLISH BUT I AM BOUND BY THE ILL-CONSIDERED VOW TAKEN LONG AGO.

WE'LL INFORM OUR MASTER.

WHEN CHANDA AND MUNDA CONVEYED AMBIKA'S MESSAGE TO SHUMBHA —



THEN HE TURNED TO ANOTHER OF HIS COMMANDERS, DHUMRALOCHANA.



DHUMRALOCHANA TOOK AN ARMY TO MOUNT HIMAVAT AND CONFRONTED AMBIKA.



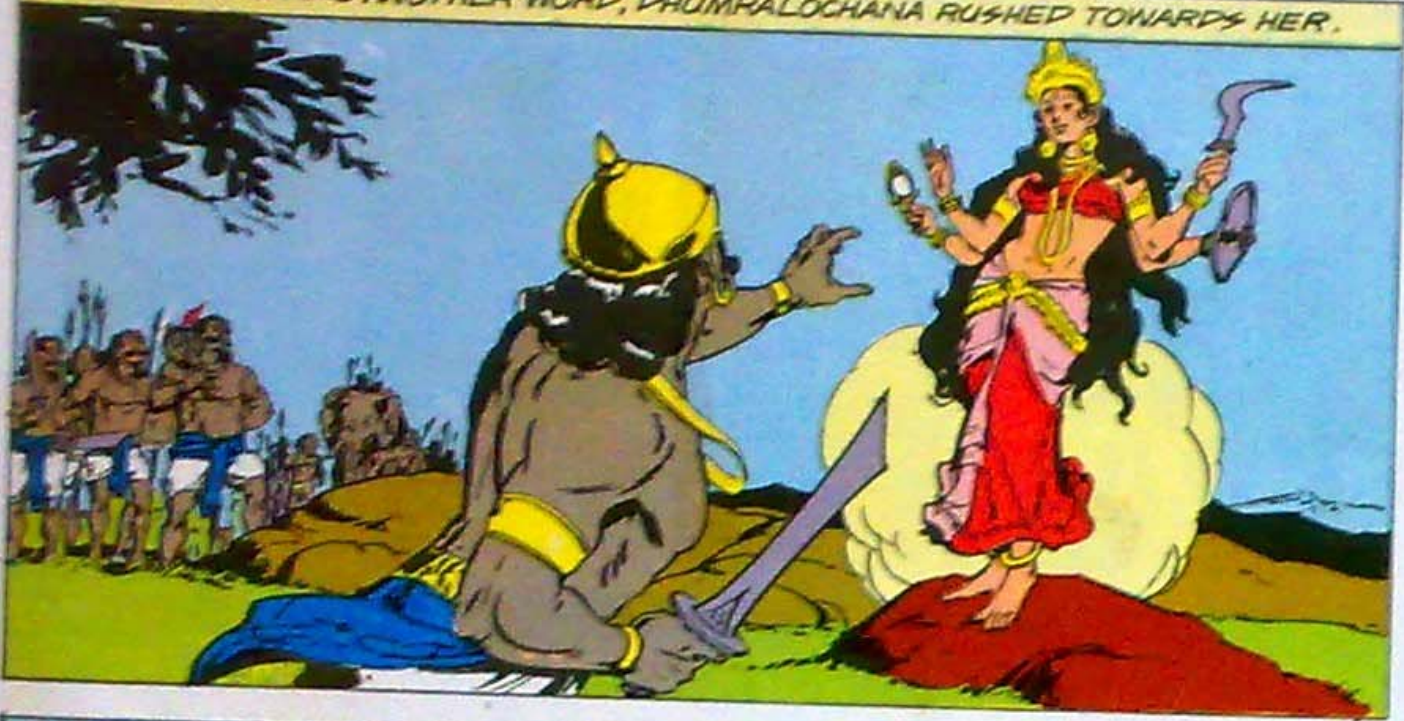
AMBIKA PRETENDED TO BE AFRAID.



THEN MARRY OUR LORD!



WITHOUT WASTING ANOTHER WORD, DHUMRALOCHANA RUSHED TOWARDS HER.



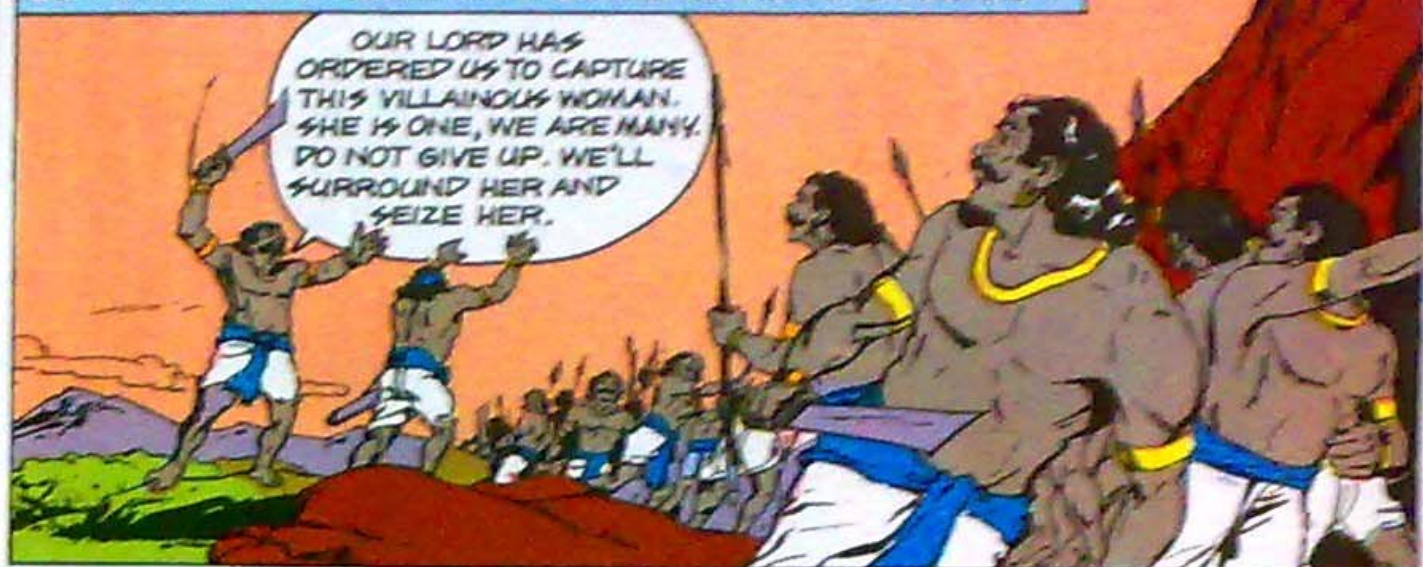
WITH UTTER CONTEMPT FOR THE ASURA, AMBIKA UTTERED A SINGLE SYLLABLE.



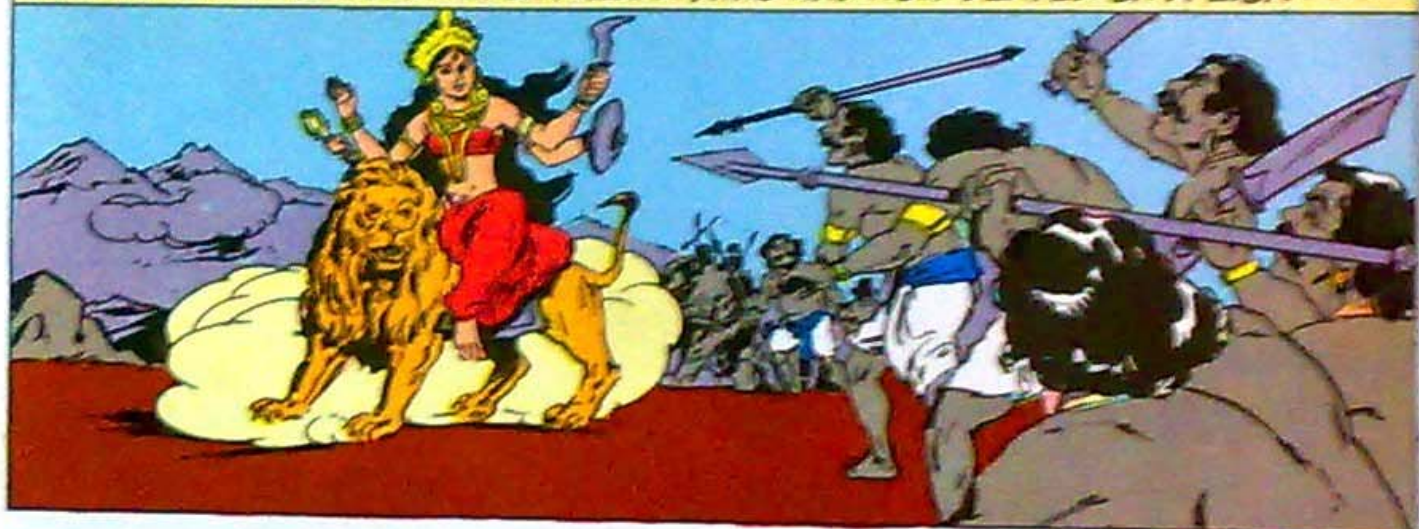
THE NEXT MOMENT, A HANDFUL OF ASHES SMOULDERED WHERE THE MIGHTY ASURA ONCE STOOD.



BUT CHANDA AND MUNDA STOPPED THE RETREATING ASURAS.



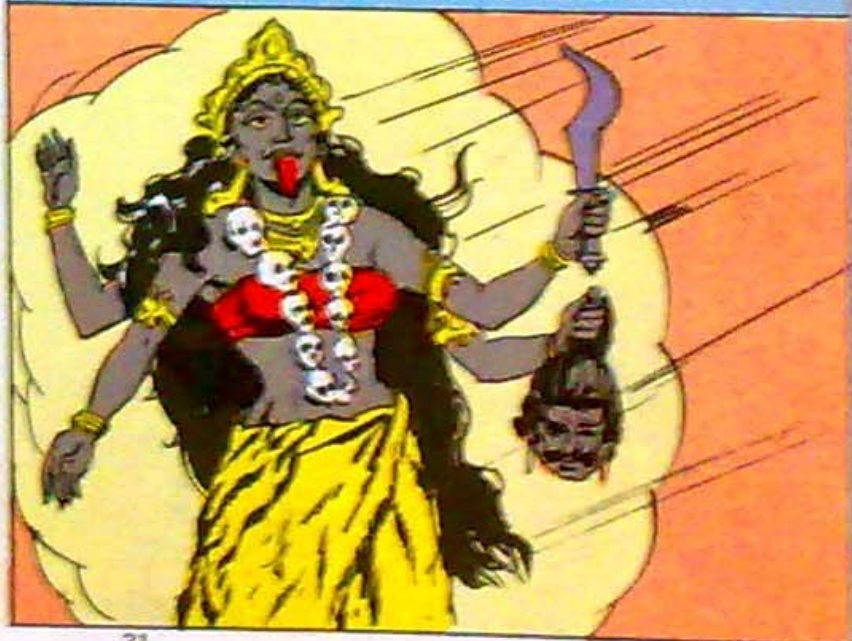
WHEN THE ASURAS CLOSED IN ON AMBIKA, WHO WAS NOW SEATED ON A LION...



...SHE FROWNED.



OUT CAME KALI* FROM HER FOREHEAD...



* AN INCARNATION OF DURGA

... AND CHARGED AT THE ASURAS.



SNATCHING AN ELEPHANT WITH ONE HAND. . .



... SHE HURLED IT AT THE ASURAS AND CRUSHED THEM TO DEATH.



CHANDA RUSHED AT KALI.



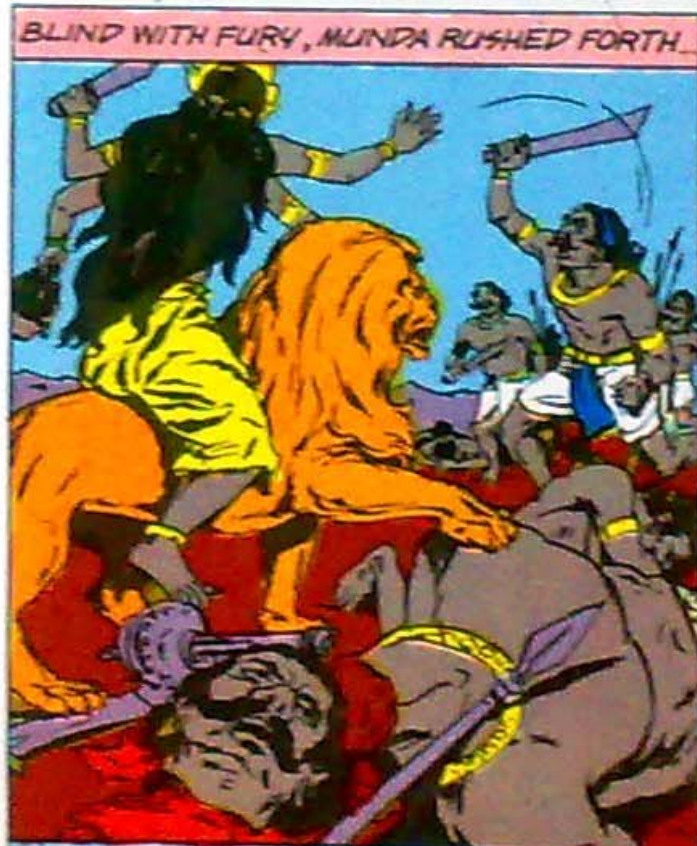
I WILL
KILL YOU
AND PROVIDE
A FEAST
FOR THE
VULTURES!

KALI SEIZED HIM BY THE HAIR...



... AND BEHEADED HIM.

BLIND WITH FURY, MUNDA RUSHED FORTH.



... ONLY TO MEET WITH THE SAME FATE!

AMBIKA SMILED AT KALI.



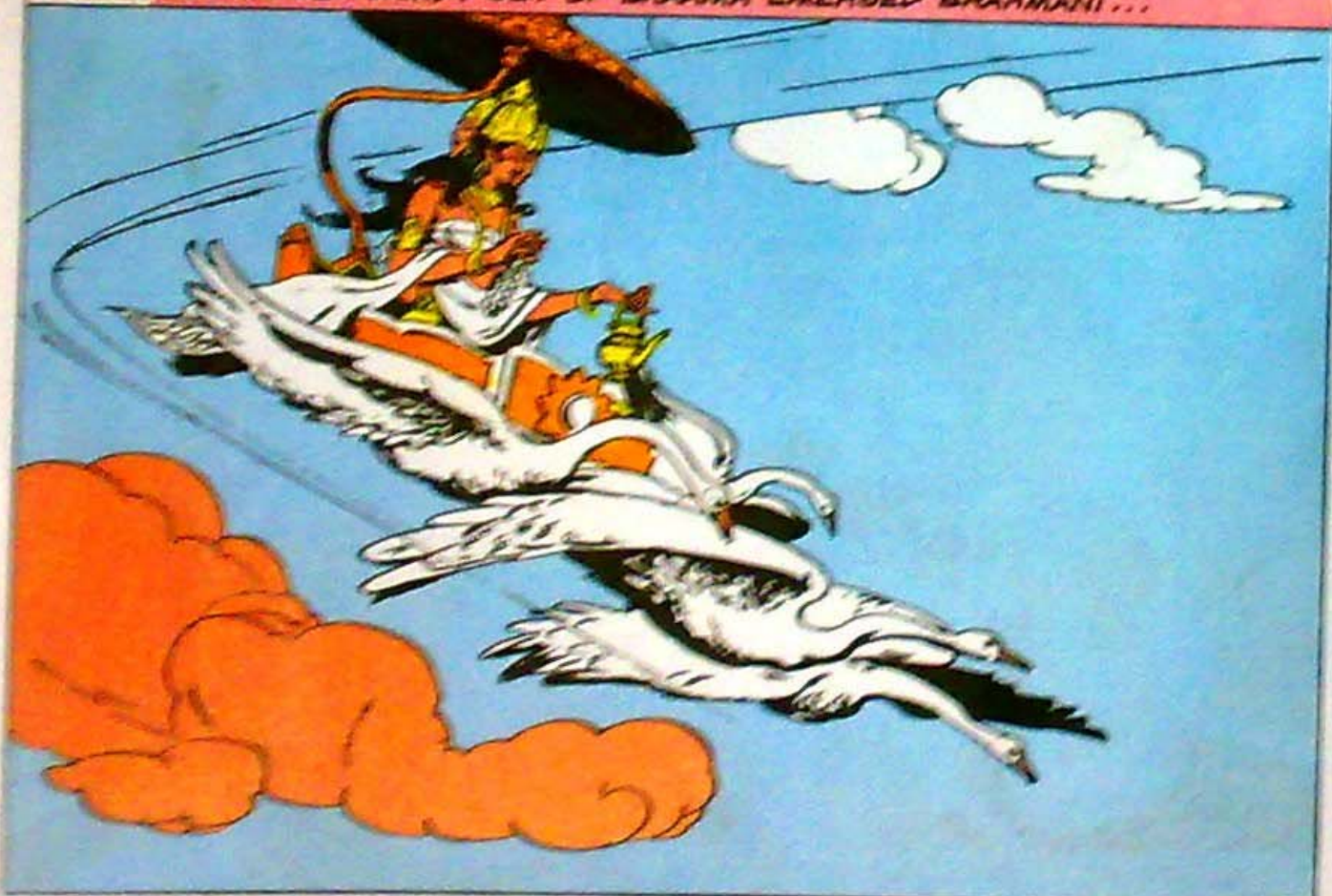
YOU HAVE KILLED
CHANDA AND MUNDA.
HENCEFORTH YOU SHALL
ALSO BE KNOWN AS
CHAMUNDI.

HOW DURGA SLEW SHUMBHA



WHEN SHUMBHA LEARNED THAT CHANDA AND MUNDA HAD BEEN KILLED, HE CAME IN PERSON TO DEAL WITH AMBIKA. HIS HUGE ARMY SURROUNDED AMBIKA AND KALI.

THEN THE SHAKTIS — THE INNER FORCE OF VARIOUS GODS — ISSUED FORTH ASSUMING FEMALE FORMS*. OUT OF BRAHMA EMERGED BRAHMANI...



* EACH OF THESE FORMS IS CONSIDERED TO BE AN INCARNATION OF DURGA

... OUT OF VISHNU, VAISHNAVI ...



... AND OUT OF MAHESHWARA, MAHESHWARI.



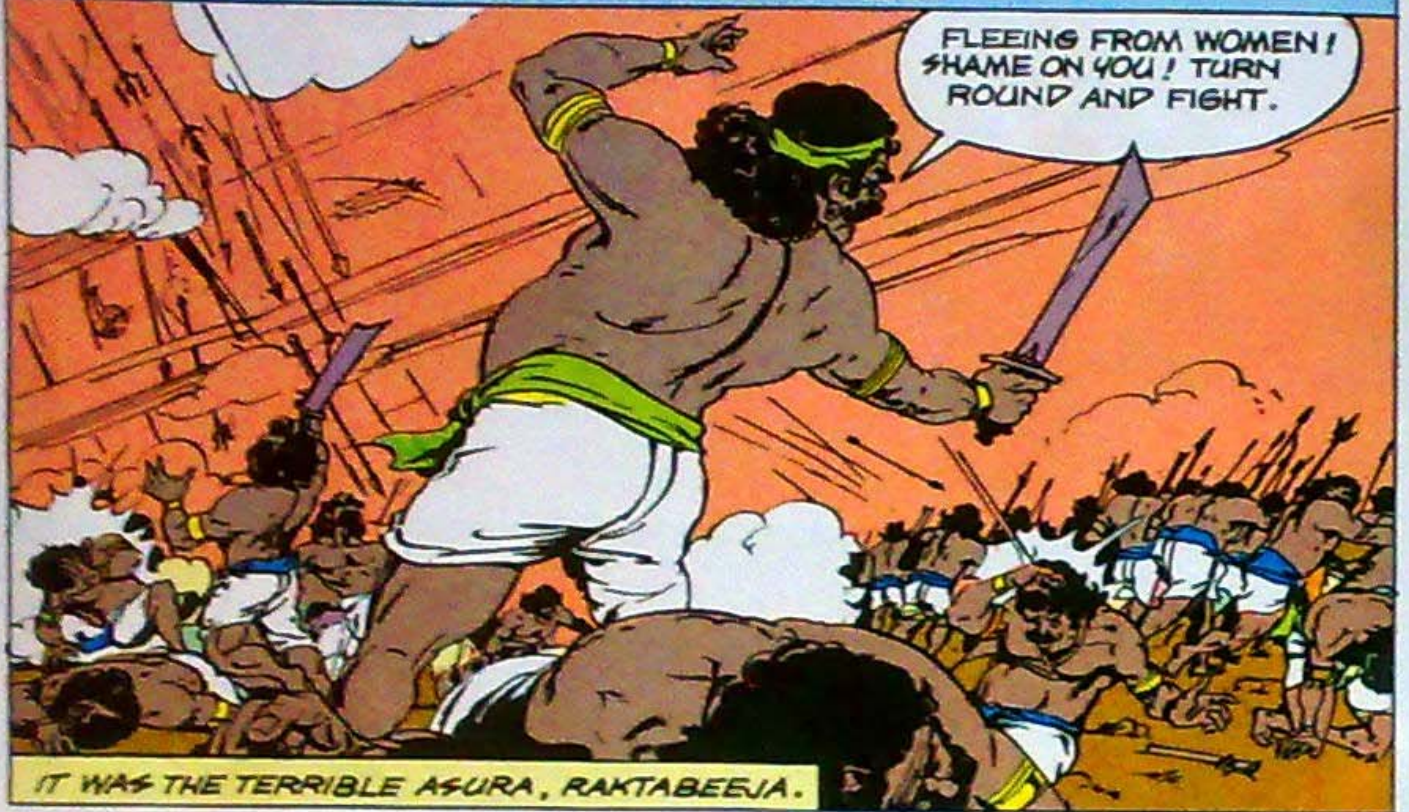
FINALLY OUT OF AMBIKA EMERGED CHANDIKA, SOON THE SKY WAS FILLED WITH HUNDREDS OF SHAKTIS.



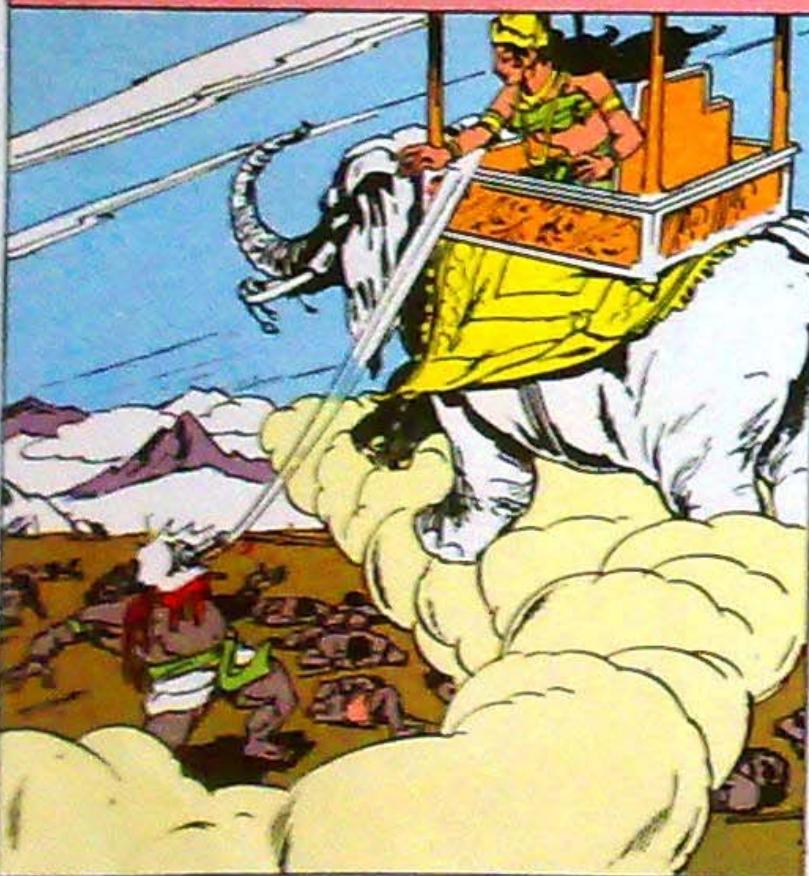
IN THE GREAT BATTLE THAT FOLLOWED, BRAHMANI SPRINKLED WATER FROM HER KAMANDALI ON THE ENEMIES, MAKING THEM WEAK AND INERT.



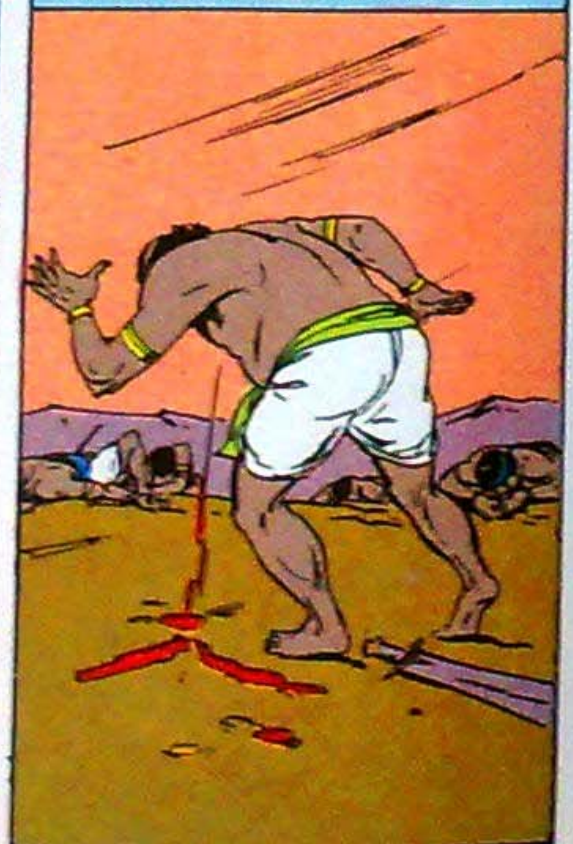
VAISHNAVI FOUGHT WITH THE DISCUS, MAHESHWARI WITH THE TRIDENT, AND VARIOUS OTHER SHAKTIS WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE WEAPONS. UNABLE TO FACE THIS ONSLAUGHT, THE ASURAS BEGAN TO FLEE.



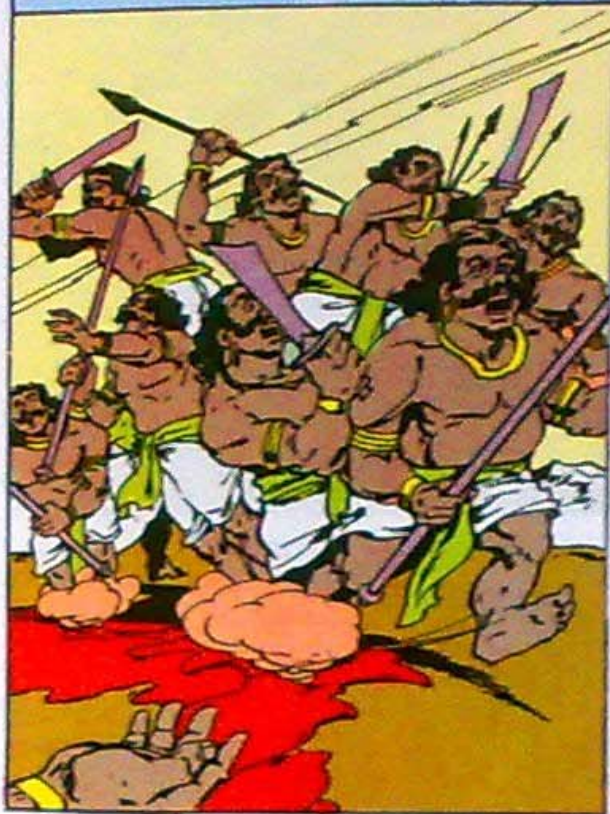
AS RAKTABEEJA RUSHED FORTH, INDRA'S SHAKTI STRUCK HIM WITH HER THUNDERBOLT.



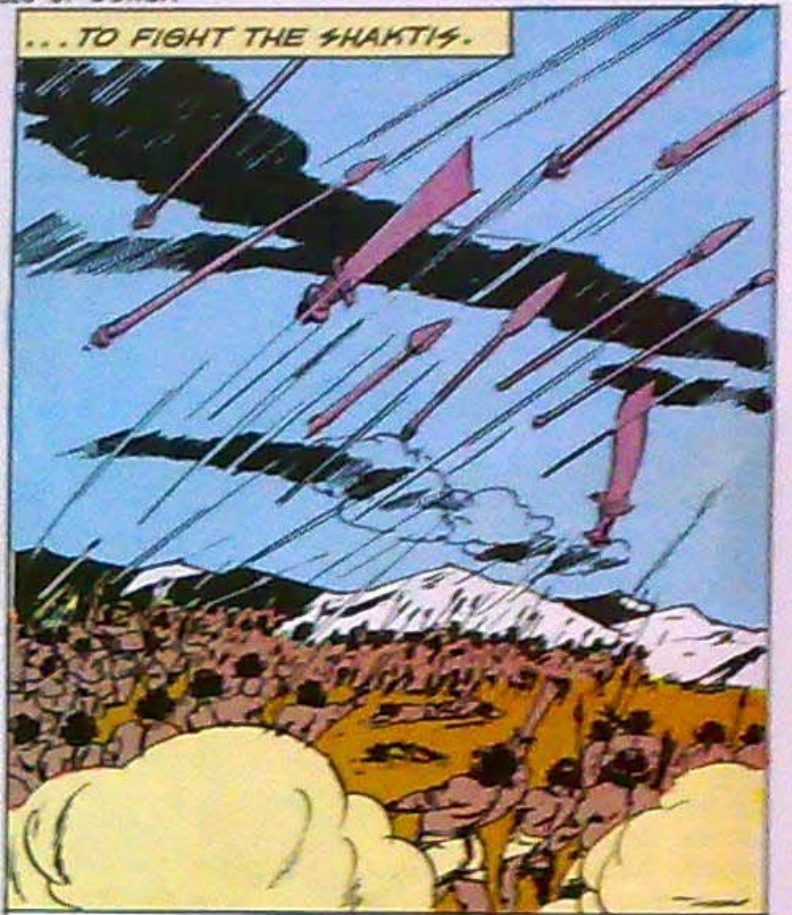
AS EACH DROP OF THE BLOOD FLOWING FROM HIS WOUND TOUCHED THE GROUND...



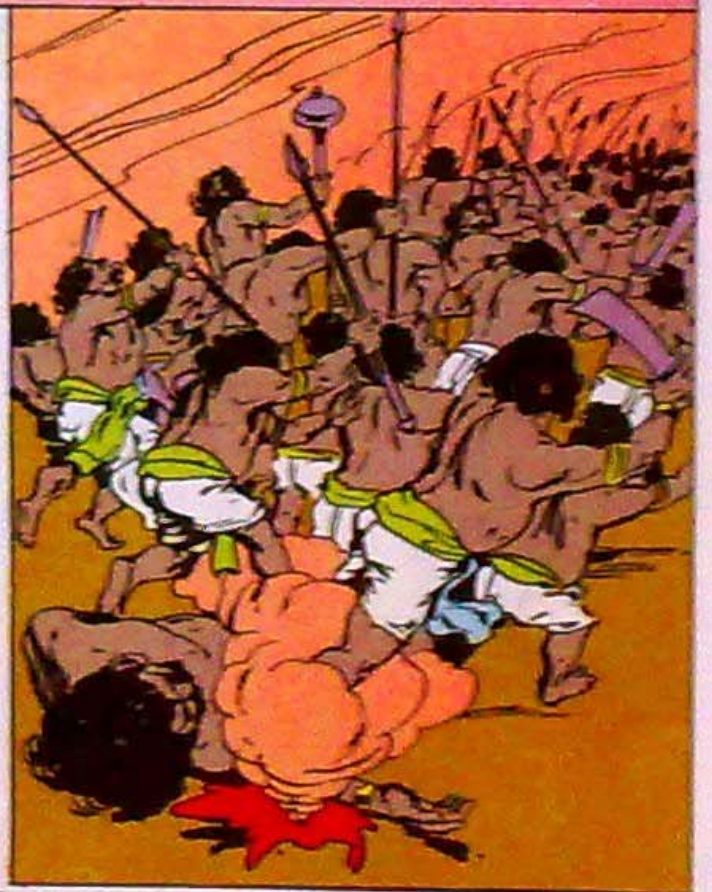
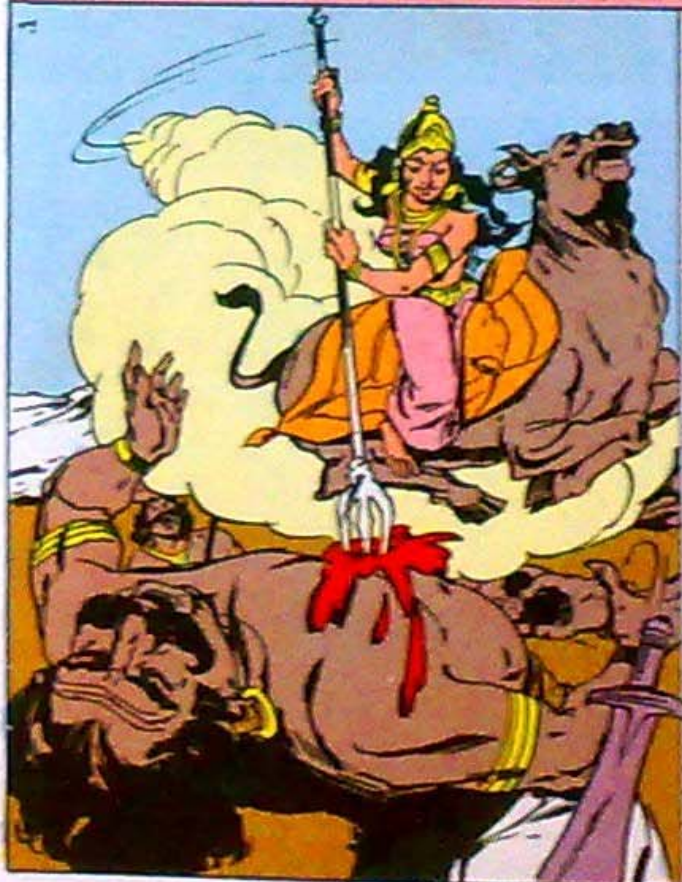
... THERE ROSE A MIGHTY ASURA,
HIS EXACT REPLICA ...



... TO FIGHT THE SHAKTIS.



AS THE SHAKTIS WOUNDED EACH OF THE ASURAS THUS BORN, OUT OF HIS
BLOOD ROSE MANY MORE ASURAS ...



... AND SOON THE BATTLE SCENE WAS FILLED WITH THOUSANDS OF RAKTA-BEEJAS, WHO FOUGHT THE SHAKTIS.



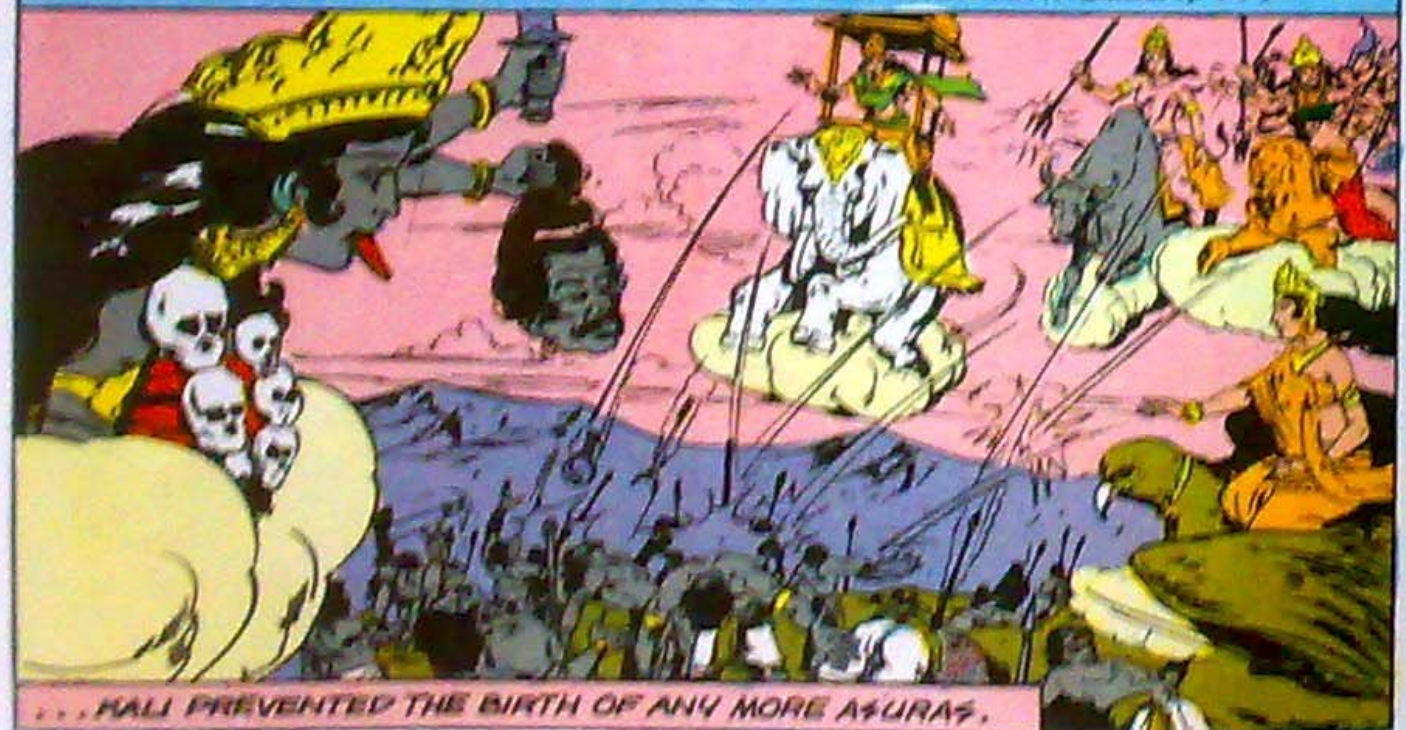
CHANDIKA TURNED TO KALI.

O CHAMUNDI, THESE RAKTA-BEEJAS CAN BE ANNIHILATED ONLY IF WE PREVENT THEIR BLOOD FROM FALLING TO THE GROUND.

LEAVE IT TO ME. NOT A DROP OF THEIR BLOOD SHALL STAIN THE EARTH AGAIN.



AS CHANDIKA AND THE OTHER SHAKTIS ATTACKED THE RAKTABEEJAS...



... KALI PREVENTED THE BIRTH OF ANY MORE ASURAS.

SOON THE HUNDREDS AND THOUSANDS OF RAKTABEEJAS THAT HAD ARISEN WERE WIPED OUT. RAKTABEEJA WAS FURIOUS.



AND RAKTABEEJA RUSHED TOWARDS CHANDIKA.



AS CHANDIKA STRUCK HIM . . .



... AND RAKTABEEJA FELL DEAD, TO THE JOY OF THE DEVAS.



SHOULDERS AND HIS BROTHERS
WARRIORS WERE TRAINED
WHEN THEY WERE THE BEST.



SHOULDERS, YOU
ALONE ARE CAPABLE
OF KILLING ME.

ALL THE
MEN OF
DRAGON

BUT THE MOST POWERFUL ARMED,
SHOULDERS, TAKE NO MATCH FOR
DRAGON.



IF I
WANT
TO
KILL
YOU



O SHOULDERS,
I AM THE
MOST POWERFUL
ARMED MAN
IN DRAGON
LAND.
I CAN KILL
YOU.



I AM ALONE THE
MOST POWERFUL
ARMED MAN
IN DRAGON
LAND.

THEY TO THE AMAZEMENT OF SHAKURNA, THE VARIOUS SHAKTHI MERGED INTO DURGA.



HELDING DURGA, SHAKURNA RODE INTO THE BAY.



AFTER A FIERCE BATTLE IN MID-AIR, DURGA FLUNG THE SHAKRA PONY ...



... AND SLEW HIM WITH HER SPEAR, REJOICING, THE FEARS HEARD BY INDIA APPEARED ON THE SCENE.



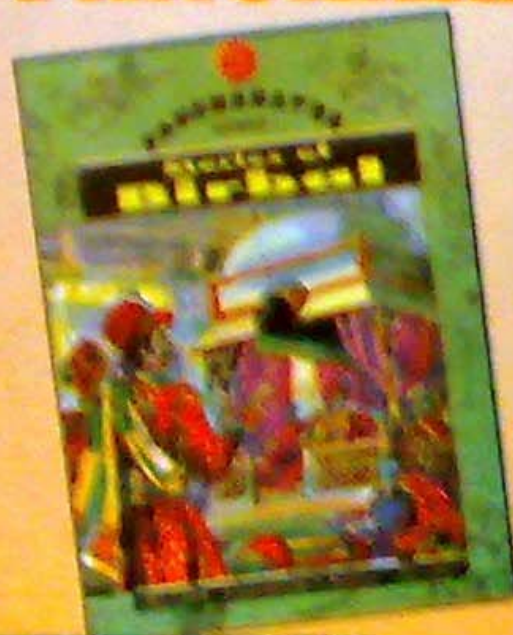
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503 THE SONS OF RAMA	555 JATAKA TALES - DEER STORIES	594 MAHAVIRA	642 SHAH JAHAN
504 RAMA	556 HITOPADESHA - CHOICE OF FRIENDS	595 SRI RAMAKRISHNA	643 RATNAVALI
505 THE GITA	557 BIRBAL THE WITTY	596 RAJA BHOJA	644 GANDHARI
506 SHIVA PARVATI	558 BIRBAL THE CLEVER	597 TALES OF SHIVAJI	645 LOKMANYA TILAK
507 NALA DAMAYANTI	559 BIRBAL THE JUST	598 VIKRAMADITYA'S THRONE	646 THE PANDIT AND THE MILKMAID - TALES TOLD BY RAMAKRISHNA
508 CHANAKYA	560 PANCHATANTRA - HOW THE JACKAL ATE THE ELEPHANT	599 VISHVAMITRA	647 LAL BAHADUR SHASTRI
509 GANESHA	561 PANCHATANTRA - CROWS AND OWLS	600 KALIDASA	648 SAMUDRA GUPTA
510 BUDDHA	562 THE BRAHMIN AND THE GOAT	601 SAJ BABA	649 TALES FROM THE UPANISHADS
511 SAVITRI	563 RANA PRATAF	602 THE QUICK-WITTED BIRBAL	650 MAHATMA GANDHI - THE EARLY DAYS
512 TALES OF VISHNU	564 SHIVAJI	603 ANBAR	651 THE ADVENTURES OF BADDU & CHHOTU
513 HANUMAN TO THE RESCUE	565 DRONA	604 PRITHVI RAJ CHAUHAN	652 ARJUN AND UTTANKA - TALES FROM THE MAHAABHARATA
514 TALES OF DURGA	566 SURYA	605 PAOMNI	653 JAYADRATHA
515 GANGA	567 INDRA AND SHACHI	606 RAHI DURGAVATI	654 TALES OF BALARAMA
518 KRISHNA AND RUKMINI	568 VIKRAMADITYA	607 A BAG OF GOLD CORNS	655 ANAND MATH
517 VIVEKANANDA	569 MALAVIKA	608 BHAGAT SINGH	656 ADI SHANKARA
518 KRISHNA AND JARASANDHA	570 DASHARATHA	609 FRIENDS AND FOES - ANIMAL TALES FROM THE MAHAABHARATA	657 VASANTASENA
519 ELEPHANTA	571 DHARMA AND ASHTAVAKRA	610 RAVANA HUMILED	658 JAHANGIR
520 TALES OF NARADA	572 ANCESTORS OF RAMA	611 BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR	659 DEVI CHANDURANI
521 ANGULIMALA	573 JATAKA TALES - BIRD STORIES	612 URVASHI	660 AJATASHATRU
522 KRISHNA AND NARAKASURA	574 JATAKA TALES - THE MAGIC CHANT	613 SOORDAS	661 KACHA AND DEIVAYANI
523 RAMAN OF TENALI	575 JATAKA TALES - THE GIANT AND THE DWARF	614 JATAKA TALES - TRUE FRIENDS	662 THE LEARNED PANDIT - TALES TOLD BY SRI RAMAKRISHNA
524 INDRA AND SHIBI	576 JATAKA TALES - THE MOUSE MERCHANT	615 JATAKA TALES - STORIES OF COURAGE	663 ANURUDDHA - A TALE FROM THE BHAGAWAT
525 TALES OF ARJUNA	577 HARSICHANDRA	616 JATAKA TALES - TALES OF MISERS	664 KING KUSHA - A BUDDHIST TALE
526 MAHARAVANA	578 PARASHURAMA	617 THE HIDDEN TREASURE - A JATAKA TALE	665 THE DEADLY FEAST - A BUDDHIST TALE
527 BHEEMA AND HANUMAN	579 VALMIKI	618 BIRBAL TO THE RESCUE	666 KANNAGI - BASED ON A TAMIL CLASSIC
528 KUMBHAKARNA	580 BIRBAL THE INIMITABLE	619 JATAKA TALES - NANDIVISHALA	667 BIKAL THE TERRIBLE - FOLKTALES FROM MADHYA PRADESH
529 KARTVEEYA	581 RAMAN THE MATCHLESS WIT	620 HITOPADESHA - HOW FRIENDS ARE PARTED	668 THE ACROBAT - BUDDHIST TALES
530 SHAKUNTALA	582 MAHAABHARATA	621 UDAYANA	669 ASHVINI KUMARS - TALES FROM THE VEDAS
531 KARNA	583 PANCHATANTRA - THE GREEDY MOTHER-IN-LAW	622 THE TIGER AND THE WOODPECKER	670 THE GOLDEN MONGOOSE - TALES FROM THE MAHAABHARATA
532 SUDAMA	584 GOPAL THE JESTER	623 KABIR	671 THE COWHERD OF ALAWI - BUDDHIST TALES
533 ABHIMANYU	585 PANCHATANTRA - THE DULLARD AND OTHER STORIES	624 DAYANANDA	672 THE PRICELESS GEM - A JATAKA TALE
534 BHEESHMA	586 JATAKA TALES - STORIES OF WISDOM	625 BATTLE OF WITS	673 AYYAPPAN
535 MIRABAI	587 BIRBAL THE GENIUS	626 THE PANDAVA PRINCES	
536 ASHOKA	588 GURU GOBIND SINGH	627 HARSHA	
537 PRAHLAD	589 KRISHNA AND SHESHUPALA	628 RAMANA MAHARSHI	
538 THE CHURNING OF THE OCEAN	590 GURU NANAK	629 ULOOPI	
539 RANI OF JHANSI	591 THE SYAMANTAKA GEM	630 RANA SANGA	
540 PANCHATANTRA - THE JACKAL AND THE WAR DRUM		631 CHAITANYA MAHAPRABHU	
541 THE LORD OF LANKA		632 VIDYASAGAR	
542 DRAUPADI		633 TALES OF MARYADA RAMA	
543 JATAKA TALES - MONKEY STORIES		634 CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA	
544 SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE		635 AMRAPALI	
545 BIRBAL THE WISE		636 KRISHNADEVA RAYA	
546 VALI		637 YAYATI	
547 GARUDA		638 KING SHALIVAHANA	
548 RABINDRANATH TAGORE		639 KRISHNA AND THE FALSE VASUDEVA	
549 TALES OF SHIVA			
550 SATI AND SHIVA			
551 TULSIDAS			
552 TANJEN			