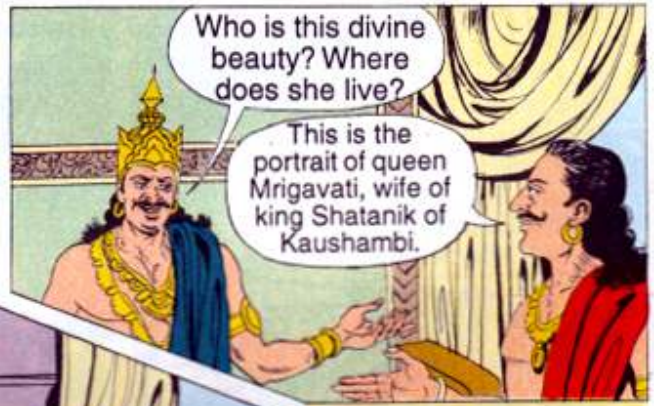
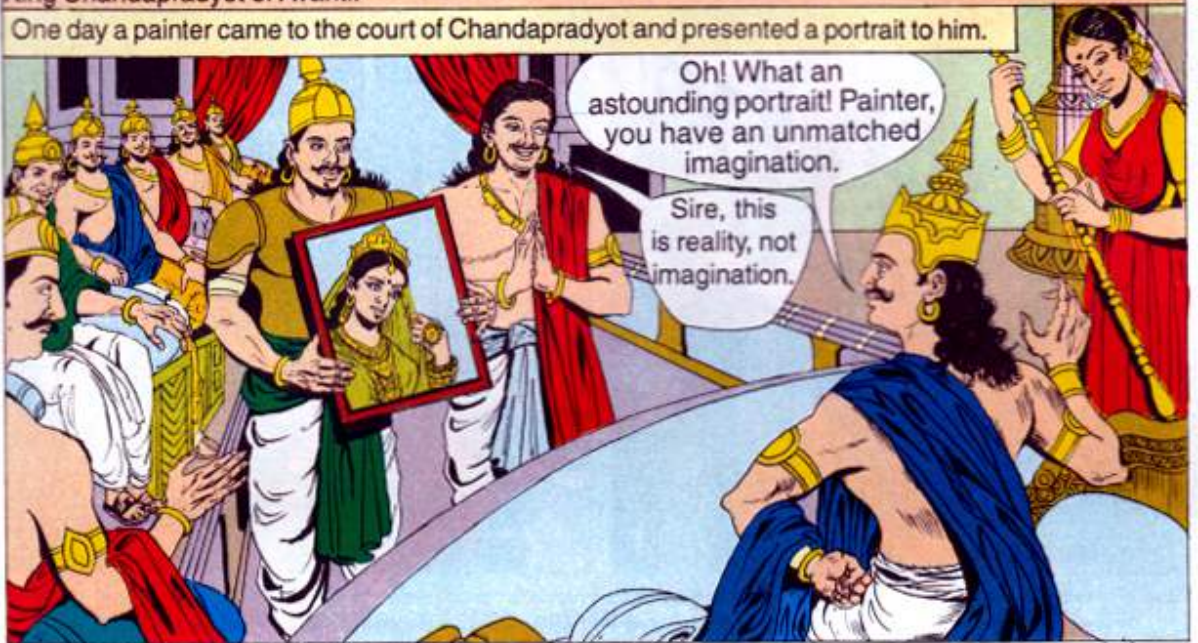


UDAYAN AND VASAVADATTA

Vaishali was the capital of the ancient Indian republic of Vajji. Chetak, the king of Vaishali had seven daughters. The third daughter, Mrigavati, was married to King Shatanik of Kaushambi. Queen Mrigavati was considered the most beautiful woman of that period. The fifth daughter, Shiva Devi was the wife of King Chandapradhyot of Avanti.

One day a painter came to the court of Chandapradhyot and presented a portrait to him.



Udayan and Vasavadatta

Chandapradhyot looked at the picture for long and said to his prime minister—

Minister, the best among the women should be the pride of my palace.



The perplexed prime minister looked at the king.

But, sire, king Shatanik is husband of your wife's sister?

Relations are no hurdles in the way of Chandapradhyot's desires.



These words from Chandapradhyot forced everyone to look at each other. The king beckoned his emissary from his seat—

Vajrajangha, go to Kaushambi and convey this message to king Shatanik that I want queen Mrigavati. He should, therefore, gift her to me. In return he may seek anything he desires.

As you say, sire.



Vajrajangha left for Kaushambi.

After four days the emissary arrived at Shatanik's court in Kaushambi and gave Chandapradhyot's message. Shatanik lost his temper and said—

I could have beheaded you for this audacity but as an emissary enjoys immunity, you are forgiven. But you will certainly suffer for the impudence.



Then the guards gave him a good thrashing and threw him out of the court.

Udayan and Vasavadatta

With torn clothes and in wounded condition the emissary came to Chandapadyot in Avanti and reported.



Chandapadyot ordered his commander—

Prepare to attack Kaushambi.

Chandapadyot's army laid a siege on Kaushambi. A terrible battle ensued.



The ministers and commanders of Kaushambi deliberated—

To protect the glory of our kingdom we will fight till the end.

Minister, it is a brave decision to protect your motherland, but what if we cannot protect it even by sacrificing our lives ?

