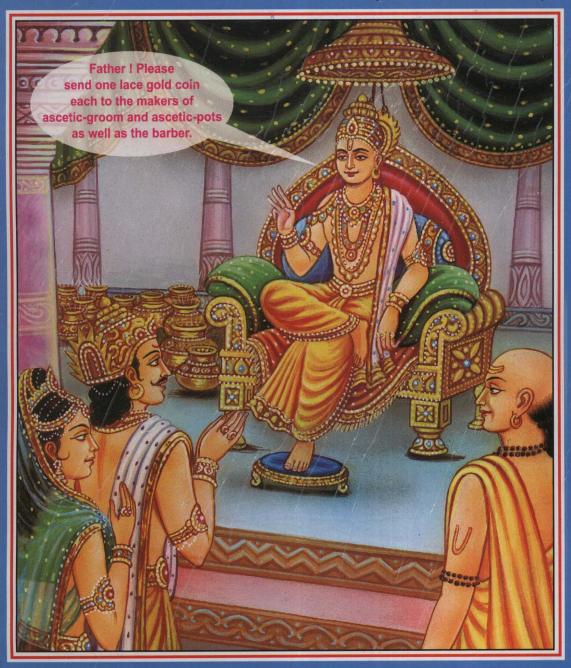
A Mahavir Seva Trust Presentation



Atimukta Kumar & Arfun Malakar (Garland Maker)

Vol 59 Rs. 25.00



(Two Interesting Tales)

ATIMUKTA KUMAR AND ARJUNA MALAKAR

Bhagavan Mahavir said 'Soul is Supreme-soul (The God)'. Right effort, with pure feelings, in spiritual practices takes a soul to the level of Supreme Soul. We have presented the stories of two such virtuous souls who attained the state of liberation (*Moksha*) through their own efforts. The first story is – 'Sage Atimukta'. The story of his life is available in *Antakritdashanga Sutra* and *Bhagavati Sutra*.

Ganadhar Gautam, the chief disciple of Bhagavan Mahavir, was once moving about seeking alms in Polaspur city. A boy saw him and brought him home with earnest request. After collecting alms, when Gautam Swami started back the child followed him to Bhagavan Mahavir's religious assembly (*Samavasaran*). Listening to Bhagavan's pious words, he was filled with feelings of detachment and finally got initiated.

After rains ascetic Atimukta one day accompanied the senior ascetics to jungle for nature's call. Looking at flowing water his playful child nature surfaced. Raising a sand wall he blocked the flowing water and put his ascetic pots on the surface to float. Then he uttered with joy, "Float my boat! Float!" The moment senior ascetics saw this activity of Atimukta defying ascetic-discipline, anger was visible on their faces. Atimukta corrected himself and was remorseful of his deed. With earnest repentance he purified himself. When the ascetics returned to Bhagavan they told him about this incident and asked, "After how many rebirths he will get liberated?" Bhagavan said, "This is his last birth before he gets liberated. Though small in body, his soul is great." After vigorous austerities ascetic Atimukta attained liberation.

The second story is about Arjuna Malakar. His story is available in the eighth section of Antakritdashanga Sutra. How a simple garland-maker (malakar) turned to be a cruel murderer and then how his life suddenly changed when he was about to hit Shravak Sudarshan merchant. He came to Bhagavan Mahavir's Samavasaran and after listening to the Sermon got initiated. From Arjuna Malakar he became ascetic Arjuna and took to the path of ascetic-discipline. As people knew him only as a ferocious murderer, they hit him angrily with sticks and stones when they saw him unarmed and dressed in white. Ascetic Arjuna endured all this with equanimity and forgiveness. Within a short period of six months he cut the Karmic bonds and got liberated. It is a unique and astonishing story.

These tales published as a comic-book will leave permanent imprints of forgiveness, compassion, austerity, generosity and righteousness on your mind.

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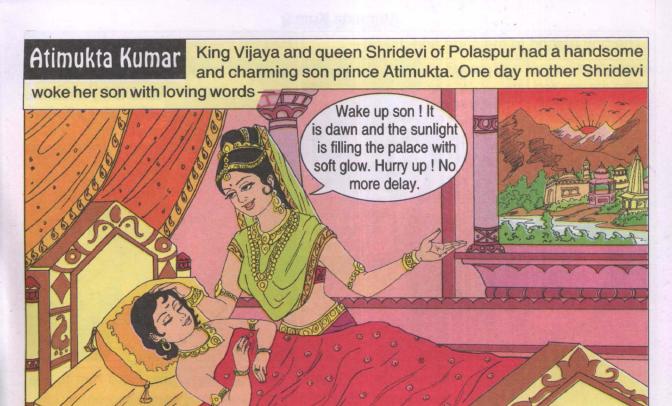
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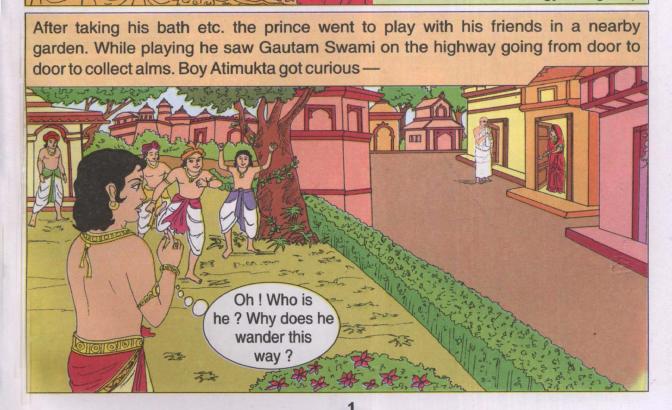
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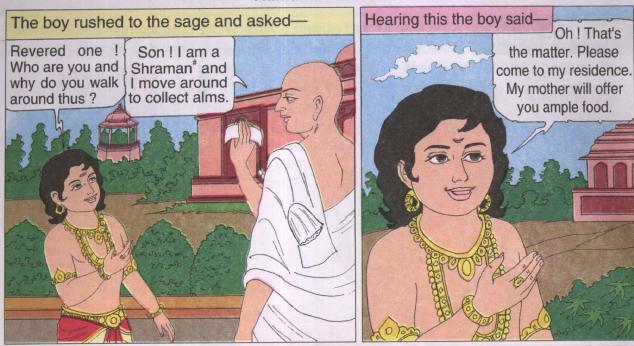
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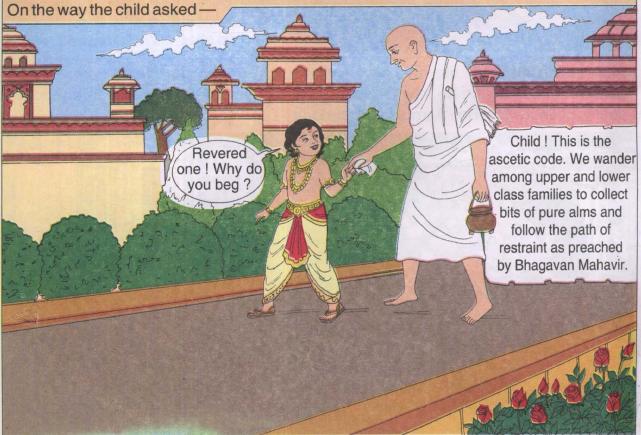




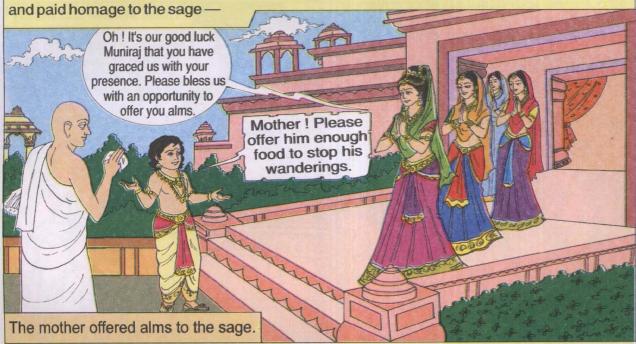
The child shed his lethargy and got up.

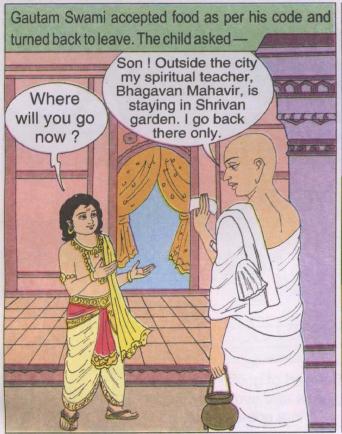


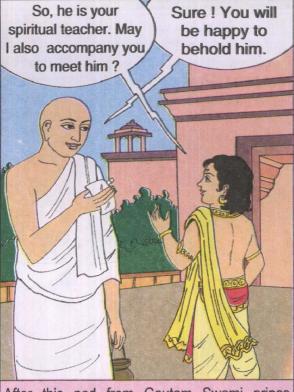
With these words prince Atimukta held Gautam Swami's finger and lead him to the palace. The innocent love and request of the child made Gautam Swami accompany him.



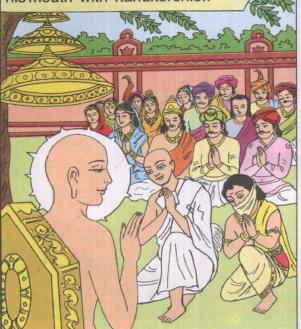
Thus while talking they came near the palace. Mother Shridevi was overwhelmed with joy when she saw Atimukta leading Gautam Swami holding his finger. She rushed to the gate



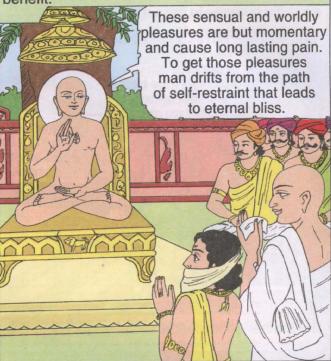




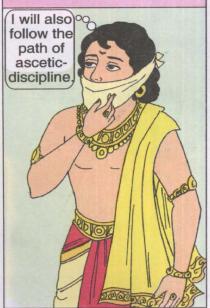
On reaching the garden, Gautam Swami paid homage to Bhagavan by bowing and going around him thrice. Prince Atimukta also bowed with devotion after covering his mouth with handkerchief.



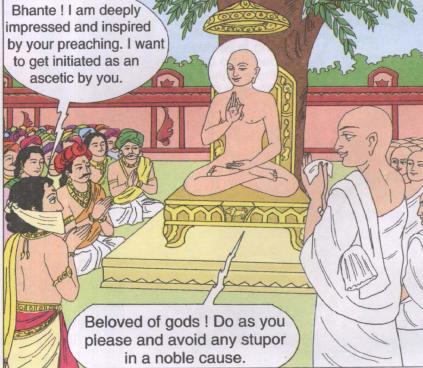
Bhagavan Mahavir gave his sermon in the large assembly and narrated pious tales for Atimukta's benefit.



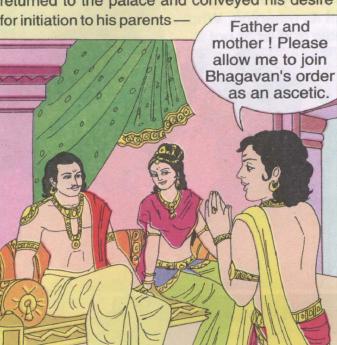
Prince Atimukta was deeply impressed by the sermon. Imprints of piety from the past birth evoked desire for spiritual bliss in his mind.



With this resolve he requested Bhagavan with folded hands-

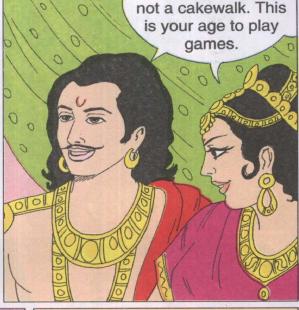


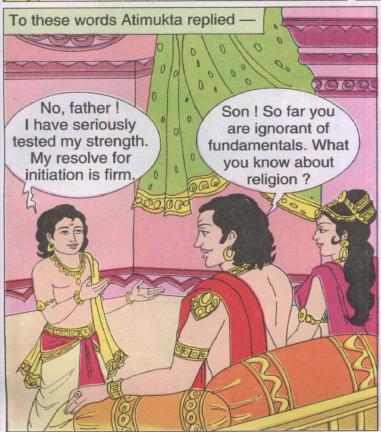
Getting Bhagavan's permission prince Atimukta returned to the palace and conveyed his desire for initiation to his parents -

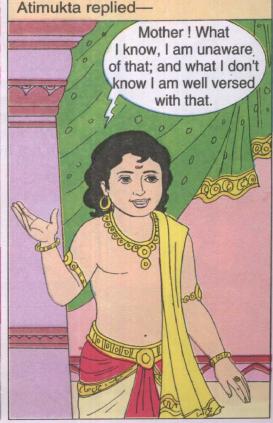


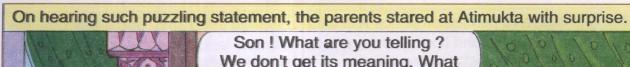
Hearing about their son's lofty goal the parents laughed and said-

> Son! You are a small kid. Initiation is not a cakewalk. This is your age to play games.

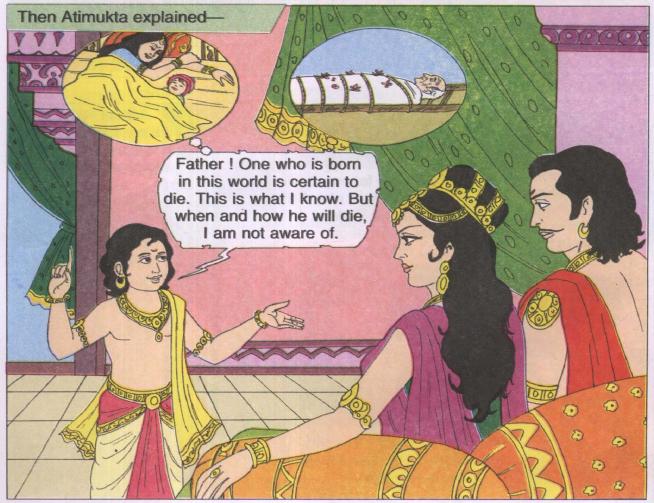


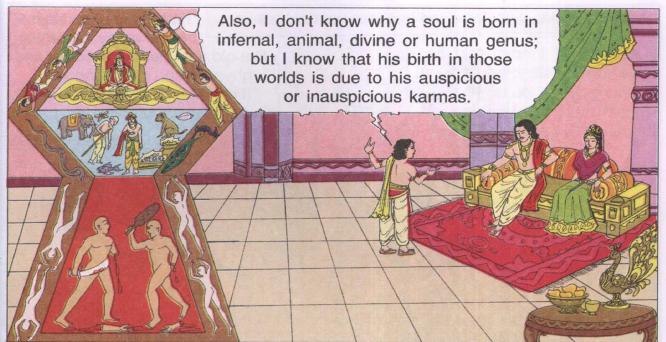




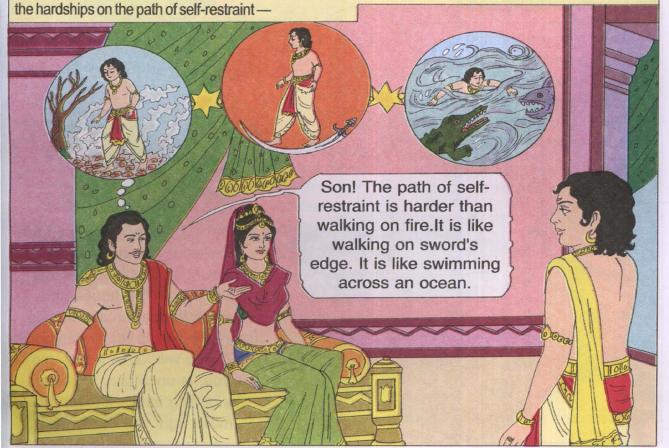


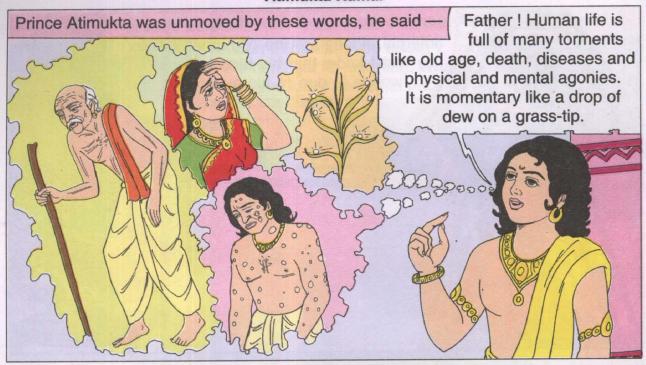


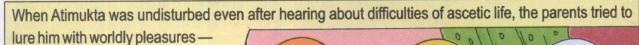




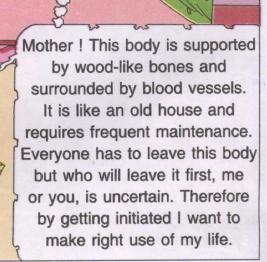
Listening to such deep and mysterious speech by Atimukta the parents realized that his determination was firm. His wish to renounce the world was very strong. Still they tried to frighten him by cleverly telling about

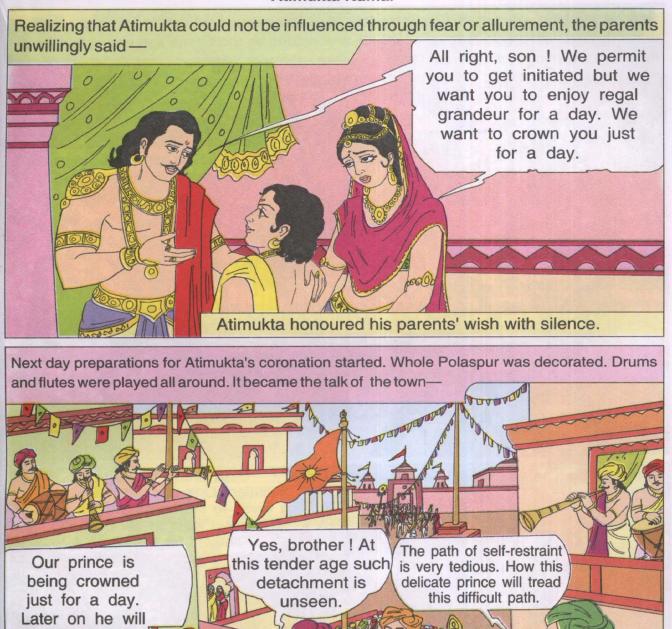






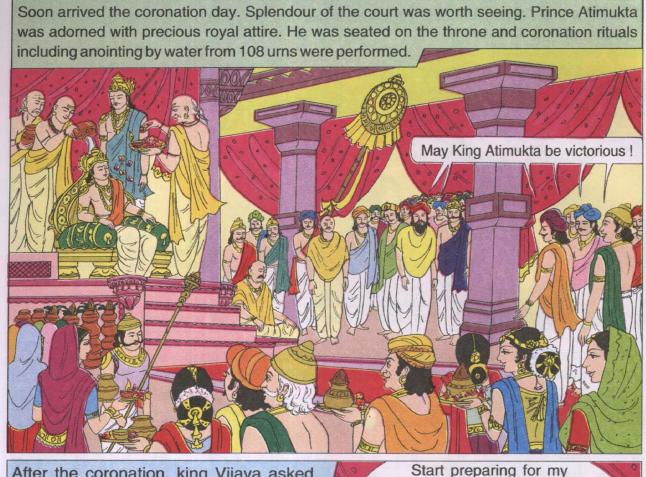
Son! You are healthy, handsome and born in a royal family. Enjoy your good-luck, youth and beauty. After we die and when you get old enough you may go for initiation.

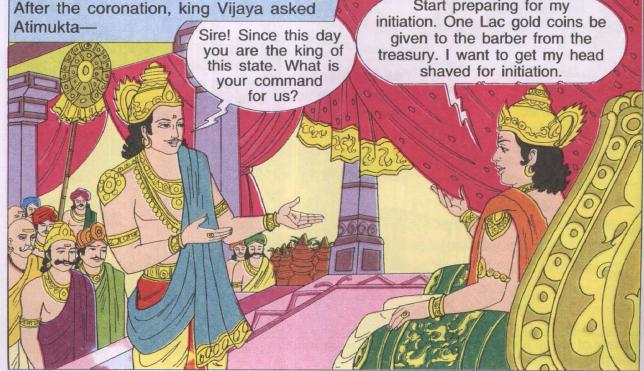


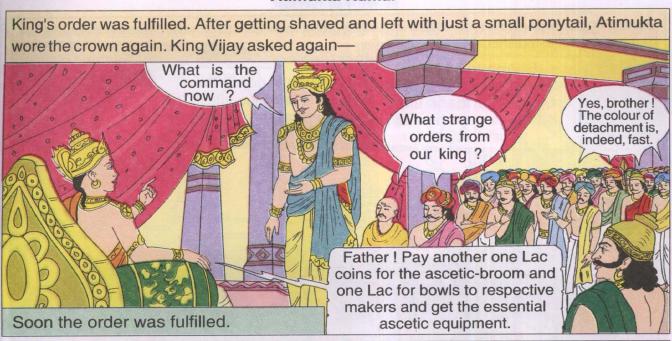


Variety of views floated in the air and eagerness of the people to witness the coronation of their prince increased.

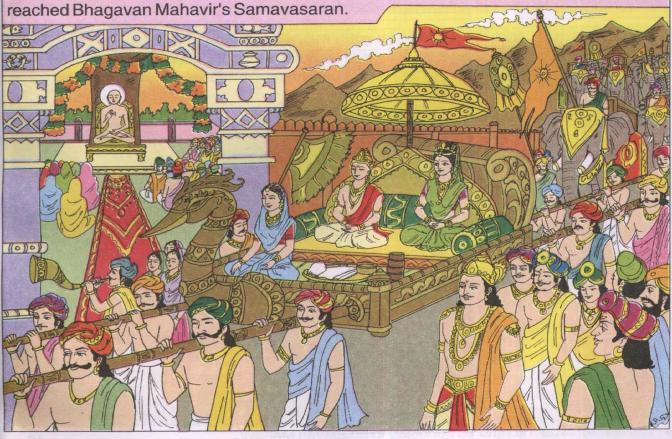
get initiated.

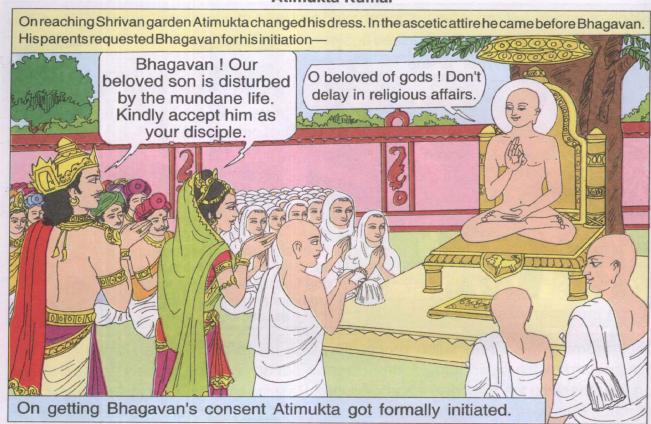




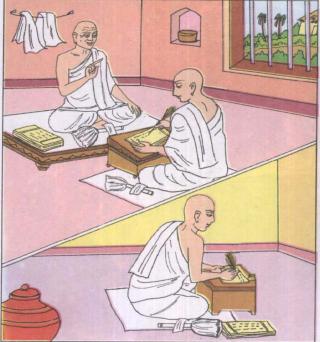


Next morning the renunciation procession was taken out. Prince Atimukta left for Srivan garden in a palanquin. Mother Shridevi sat on one side and his governess sat on the other with the bowl and ascetic-broom. Passing through the city the procession

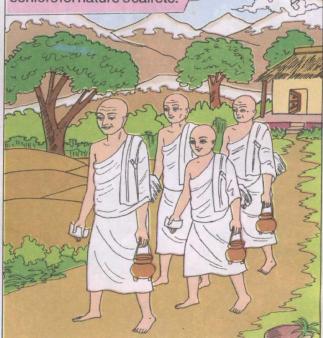




After the initiation ritual saint Atimukta got deeply involved in the study of eleven Angas including Samayik.



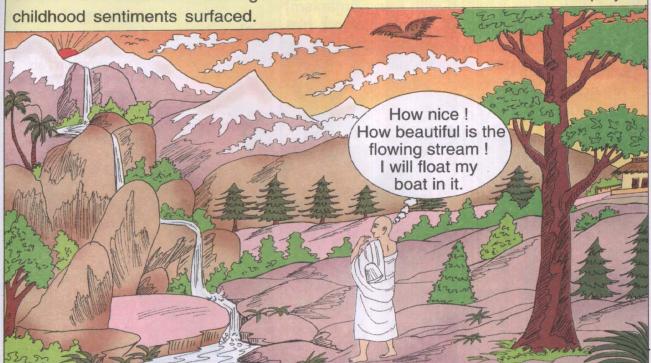
Then started the monsoon season*. One day it had rained heavily. Saint Atimukta set out with seniorsfornature'scalletc.



The corpus of Jain scriptures attributed to Bhagavan Mahavir.

* Chaturmas
Jain Education International

Near a hill the saints dispersed for nature's call. Saint Atimukta returned before others. He saw rain water flowing downhill in streams with musical sound. His playful



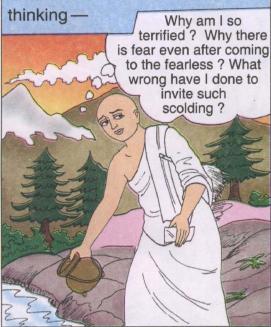
From one side he blocked the water flow by raising a sand dam, put his bowl on the surface and moved it around with his fingers. He sang with joy—

I may also swim! As my boat floats!

While he was playing, the seniors returned. They saw ascetic Atimukta playing in Sachit water [raw water infested with living organism] and got furious. One of them scolded him

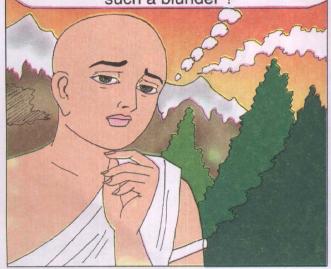
Atimukta muni!
This act does not suit you. Stop it at once.

The first scolding of his life and Atimukta muni trembled with fear. He at once took his bowl out from water and started

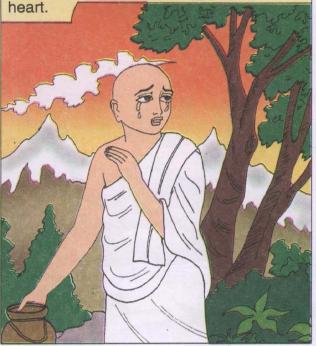


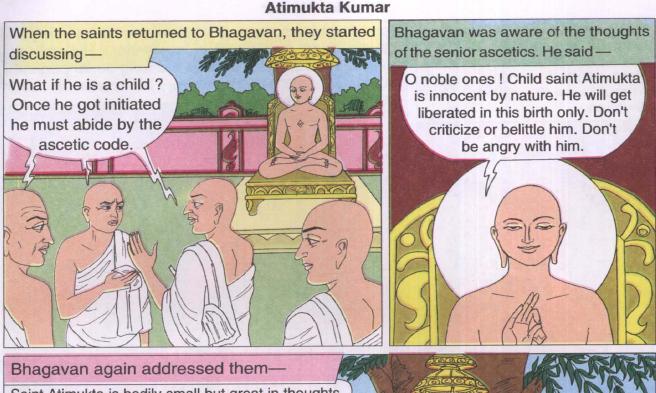
He tried to search within for the cause of the anger of the seniors. He soon became aware of his restrictions and repented—

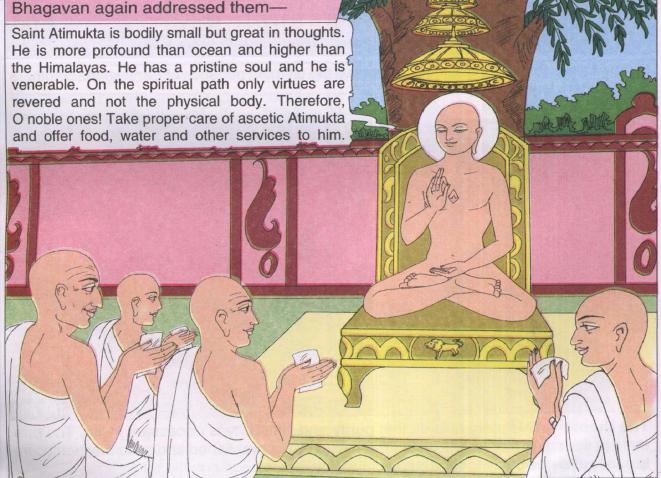
Oh! By floating the bowl in raw water I violated the ascetic-discipline.
O Bhagavan! How could I commit such a blunder?



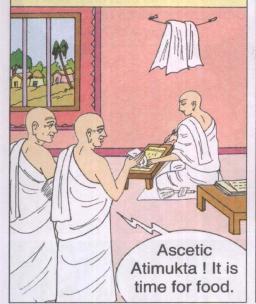
Lightning of wisdom sparked in the sky of his mind and rains of self-censure started. Pure water of repentance cleansed his



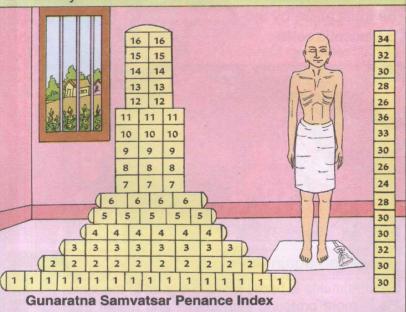


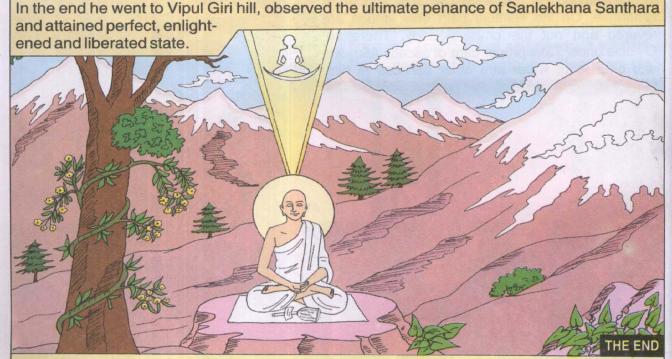


These noble words of Bhagavan Mahavir removed all doubts in the minds of the senior ascetics. They started serving ascetic Atimukta with respect and devotion.



Saint Atimukta spent many years strictly observing the ascetic code and rigorous austerities. His delicate body withered. He observed the long serial penance called Gunaratna Samvatsar. This made his body extremely weak.

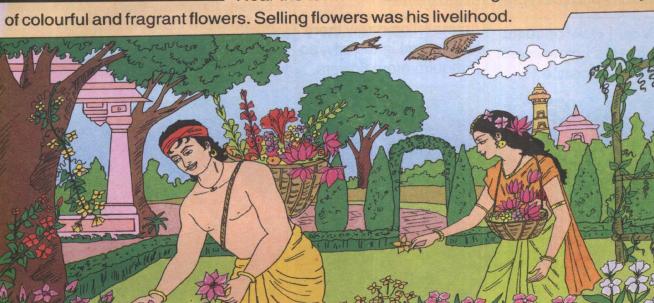




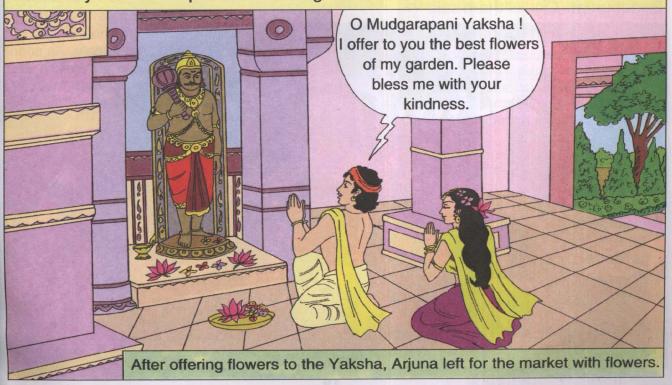
The theme— This story tells us that purity and simplicity is necessary in life. The rare state of liberation that is difficult to attain even by accomplished and scholarly practicers is easily attained by unspoiled, simple and pure souls.

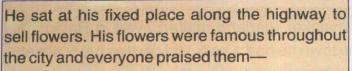
ARJUNA MALAKAR

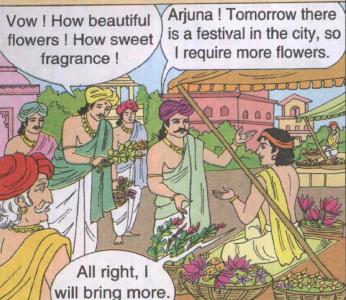
Arjuna malakar (garland maker) lived in Rajagriha. Near the town he had a beautiful garden full of variety



Each morning, as a rule, he first of all plucked flowers and offered to a Yaksha[#] image in a nearby Yaksha temple. One morning—





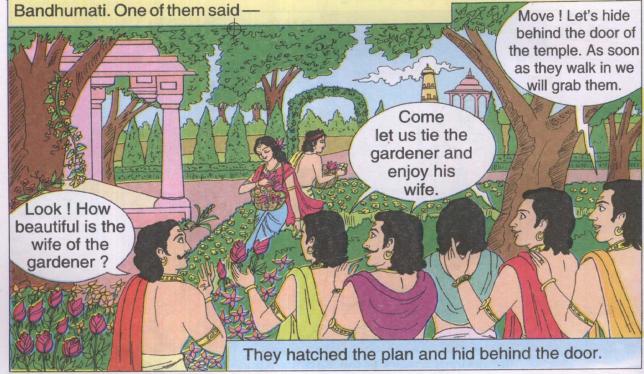


In the evening Arjuna returned home and told his wife Bandhumati—

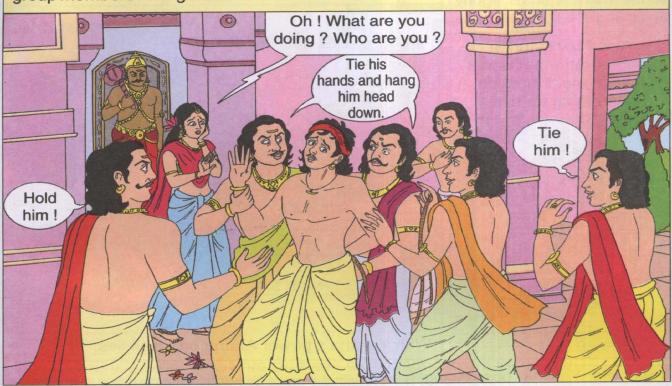


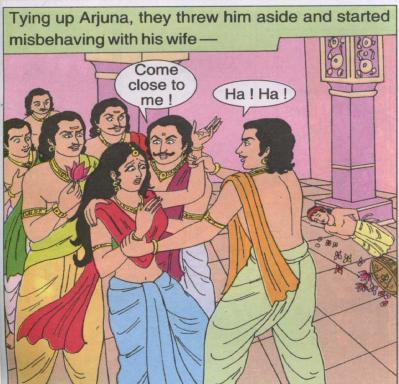
Next day they got up early and left to collect flowers.

In the town lived a group of six friends, popularly called Gaushtak Mandali. The king had granted them amnesty and the group became rowdy and wild. By chance next morning when the group was enjoying in the garden the members saw Arjuna and



After some time Arjuna entered the temple to offer flowers. Suddenly all the six group members hiding behind the door attacked.





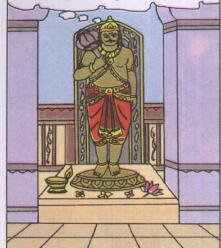
Helpless Arjuna was highly perturbed. He thought —

Oh! This Yaksha I worship from my childhood is, in fact, not a Yaksha or a god, else he would definitely come to my rescue at this hour of need. It is just a wooden statue.



Mudgarapani Yaksha (mace bearing deity) from within the statue read Arjuna's agony and thought—

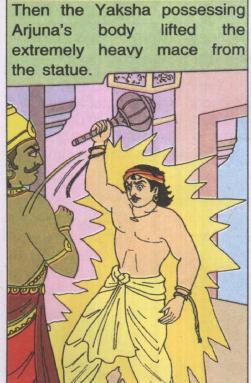
Alas! My staunch devotee Arjuna has lost faith in me. I must do something for him.

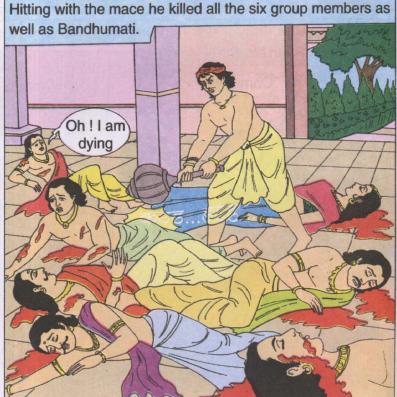


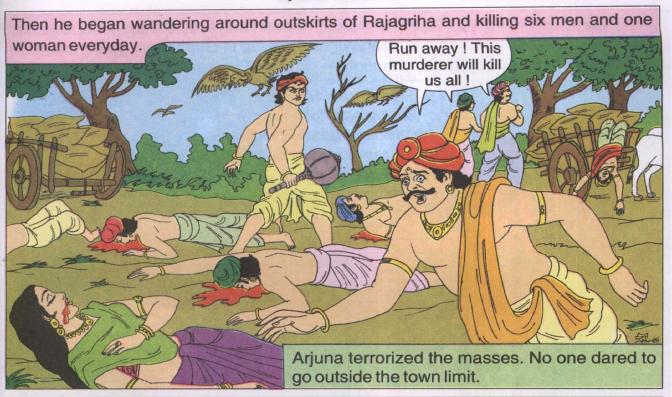
With this spark of thought the Yaksha came out of the statue and entered Arjuna's body.

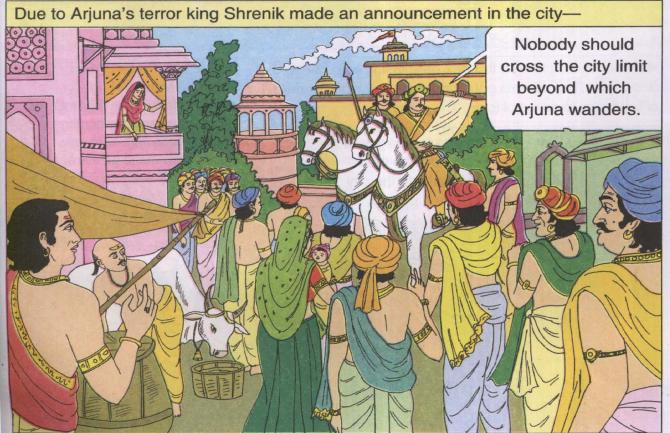


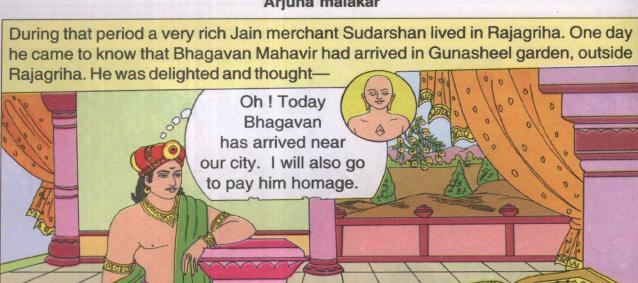
With Yaksha's power Arjuna broke all ties.



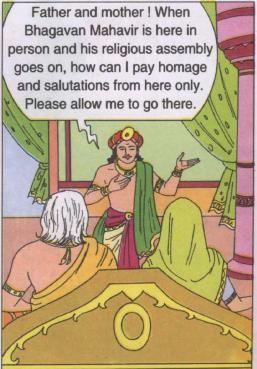


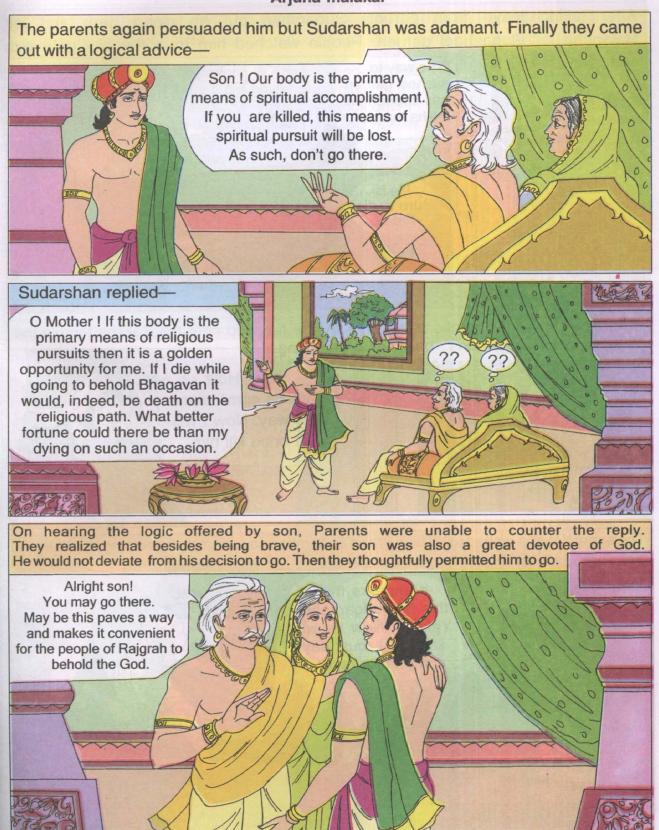


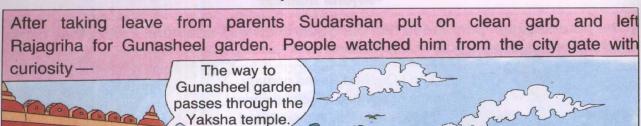




He went to his parents to seek permission to go behold Bhagavan. The parents got afraid the moment they heard of his desire to go out of town. They said -Son! Pay homage to Bhagavan from here only. Don't go there. Arjuna wanders outside the city and kills innocent people.





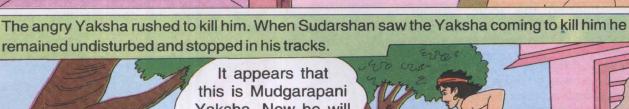




Sudarshan was moving ahead carefree. As he reached near the Yaksha temple the Yaksha possessing Arjuna's body saw him coming.

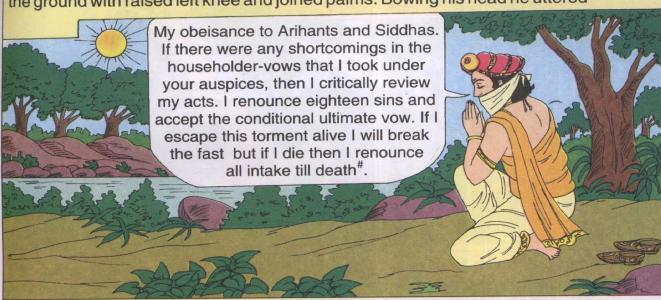


Hey! How dare he come alone this way. Now I will at once kill him.

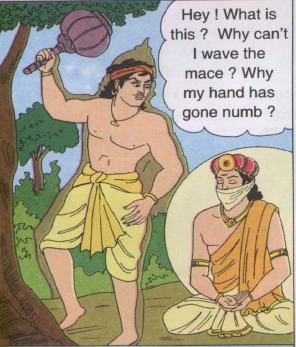


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He then wiped the ground with his scarf and covered his mouth. Facing east he sat on the ground with raised left knee and joined palms. Bowing his head he uttered —

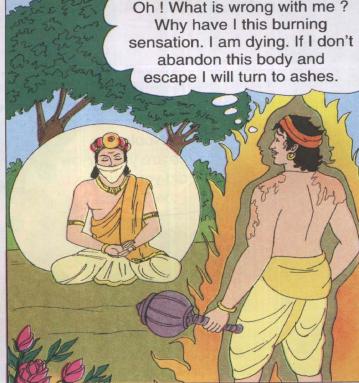


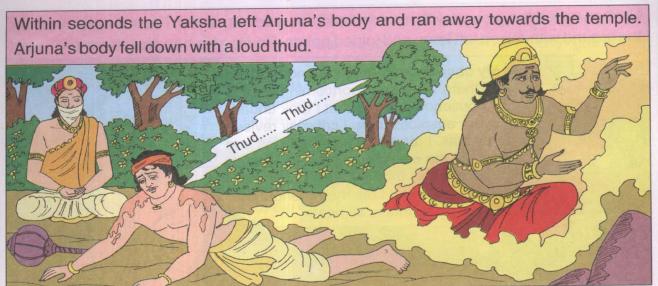
Thus after taking the ultimate vow he sat in meditation focusing on Bhagavan. The Yaksha came near and tried to hit him waving the mace, but—

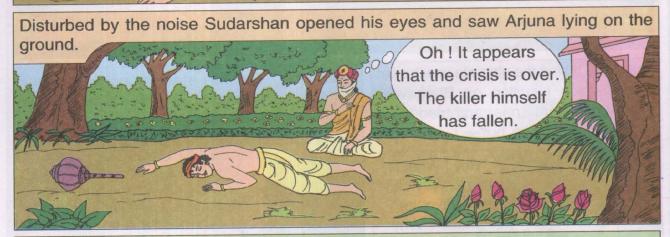


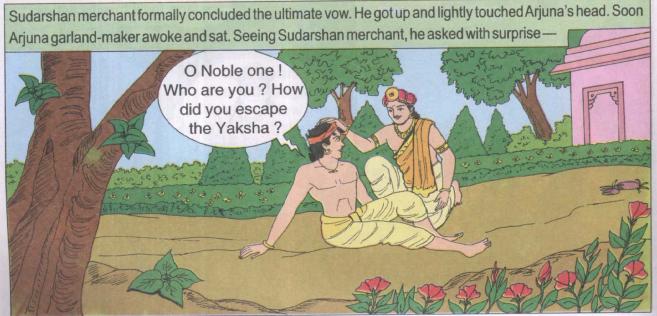
The Yaksha tried hard but failed to hit Sudarshan merchant.

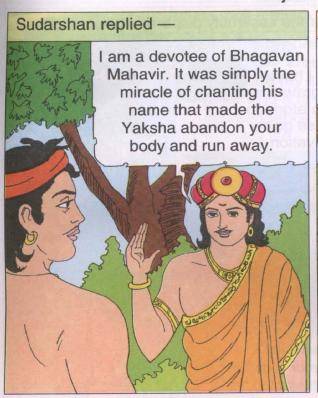
Then the Yaksha started going around Sudarshan merchant. He was still unable to strike him with the mace. At last he stood still facing Sudarshan and stared at him. Suddenly—

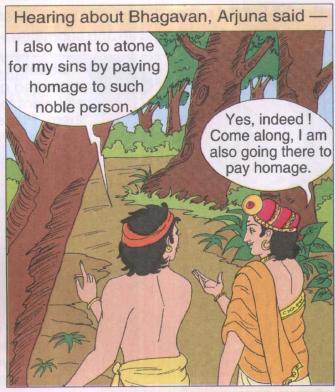


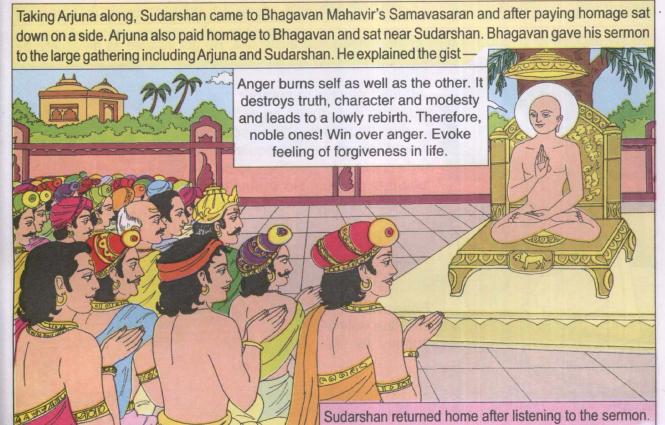


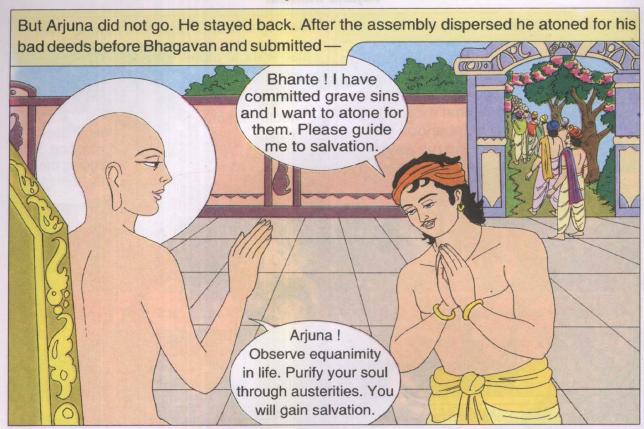


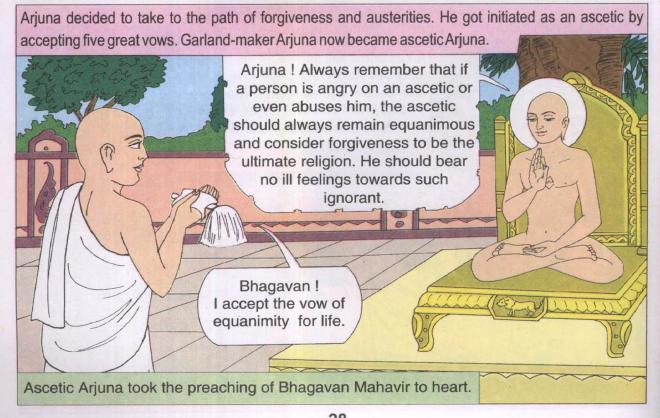


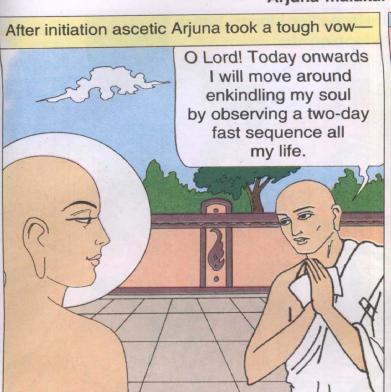


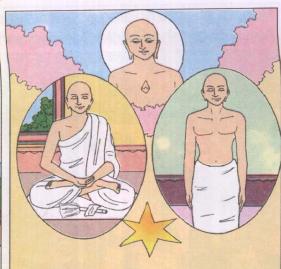




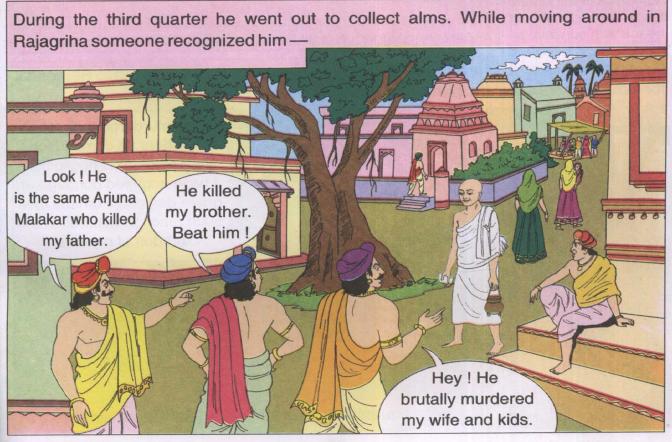


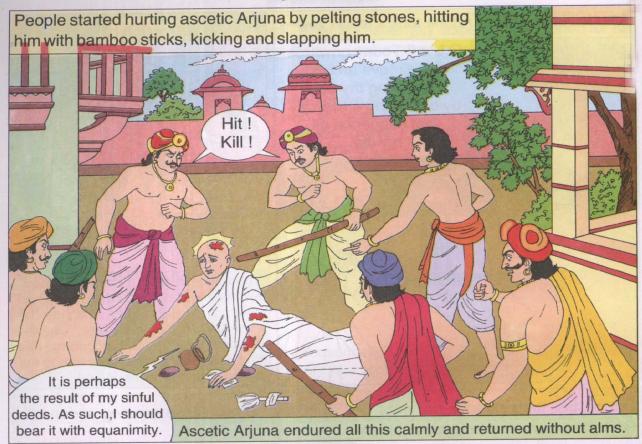




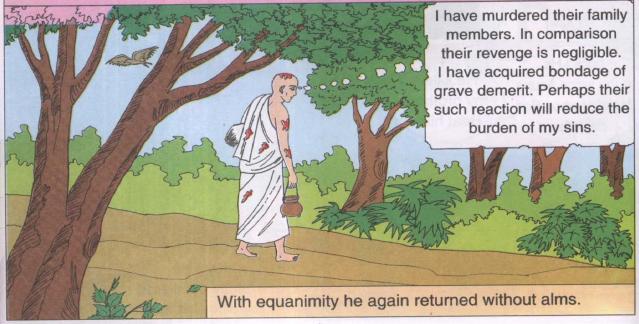


Then ascetic Arjuna devoted himself to cleansing his soul of the sins he had committed. Just after initiation he observed a two-day fast. On the breakfast-day he studied during the first quarter of the day and during the second quarter he meditated.

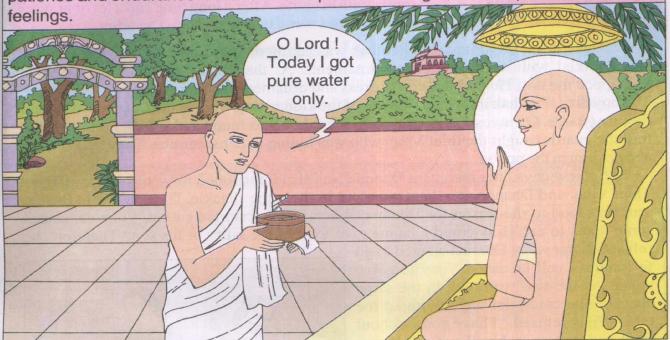




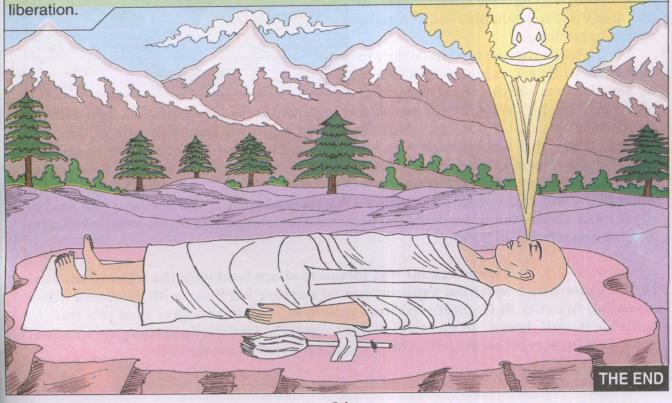
Next day he again observed two-day fast. After two days he again came to Rajagriha for alms. People again insulted and beat him. He again returned calmly.



This way ascetic Arjuna continued to wander for alms, facing afflictions with patience and endurance. Whatever little pure alms he got, he accepted without any ill feelings



Ascetic Arjuna purified his soul by great austerity of alms-collection and observed the ascetic code for six months. After that he observed the ultimate vow for fifteen days and attained



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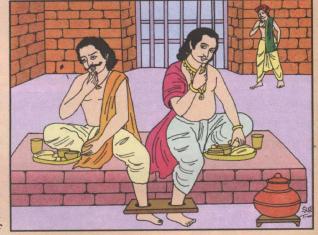
n Rajagriha city a merchant named Dhanna lived happily with his wife. After a long time and a lot of prayers the couple got a son. They named him Devadutt.

One day a servant named Panthak was taking out Devadutt for playing. The boy was adorned with costly dress and ornaments. At that time a thief known as Vijay kidnapped the boy. He took his costly dress and ornaments and threw him in a deep well. The boy died. Panthak informed Dhanna of the kidnapping who, in turn, at once informed the city guards. On investigation the body of the boy was found in the well. Following the trail the guards caught the thief Vijay who was hiding in dense shrubs. They beat him up and put him in the prison.

A few days later merchant Dhanna was also imprisoned for some minor offence. Thief Vijay and Dhanna merchant were put in the same shackle. Dhanna's wife Bhadra sent rich food to the prison for Dhanna. When Dhanna started eating, Vijay demanded some items to eat. How could Dhanna give food to the killer of his son? Therefore, he

refused. Later when Dhanna wanted to go for nature's call he asked Vijay to come along. As the two were tied in the same shackle one could not move without the other. Vijay refused, "I have gone without food and water; so I will not go. If you want you may go alone." For some time Dhanna tried to contain the urge. But how long could he? At last Dhanna had to promise Vijay to share his food before he agreed to go along.

Panthak was the servant on duty to take food for Dhanna to the prison. When he saw Dhanna sharing food with thief



Vijay, he thought, "What sort of person this merchant is? He is sharing his food with the murderer of his child." On his return the servant informed Dhanna's wife of this. She became angry that her husband was nurturing the killer of her son. After some time Dhanna was released. When he reached home and saw his wife in anger he asked. "Are you not happy that I am back from the prison." Bhadra said, "You shared food with the killer of my son, that is why I am angry." Dhanna explained, "I did not offer him food as my duty or charity but to facilitate the unavoidable nature's call." This satisfied Bhadra and she was relieved of her anger.

Message — The merchant was forced to share food with the killer of his son. In the same way a spiritual aspirant has to nurture his body with food and other essentials in order to facilitate spiritual practices. As Dhanna gave food to a thief to fulfil his essential need, an ascetic eats food merely to facilitate pursuing his spiritual goal. This important message has been lucidly presented in this tale.

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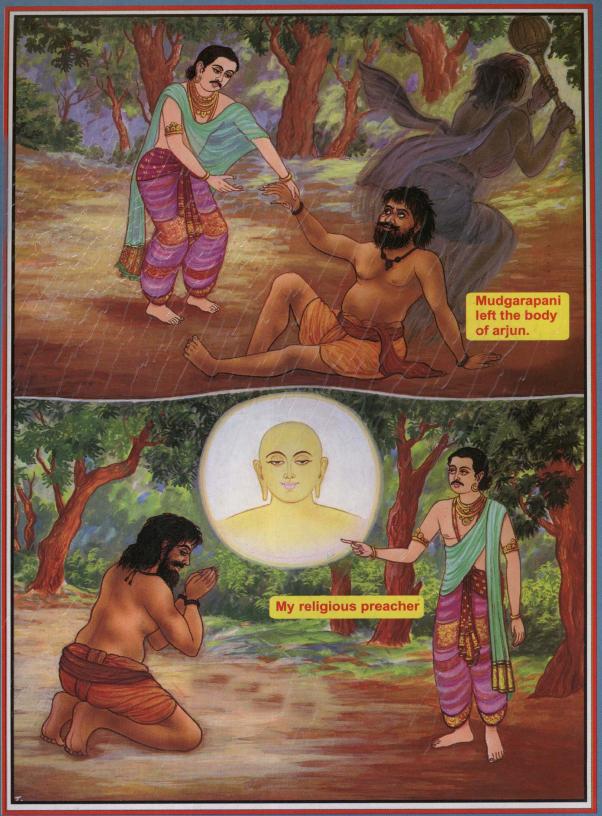
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