


THERE WE GO.. WITH THIS, YOUR
FINAL LOOK IS COMPLETE

SEE, I
TOLD YOU, VARSHA
IS AN EXPERT IN
THIS.



WOW MAA,
WHERE HAVE YOU
BEEN HIDING THESE
OLD EARRINGS?

IT FEEL'S SO WEIRD
TO FEEL SOMETHING
PULLING MY EARS
DOWN.

THESE AREN'T
JUST ANY NORMAL
EARRINGS.

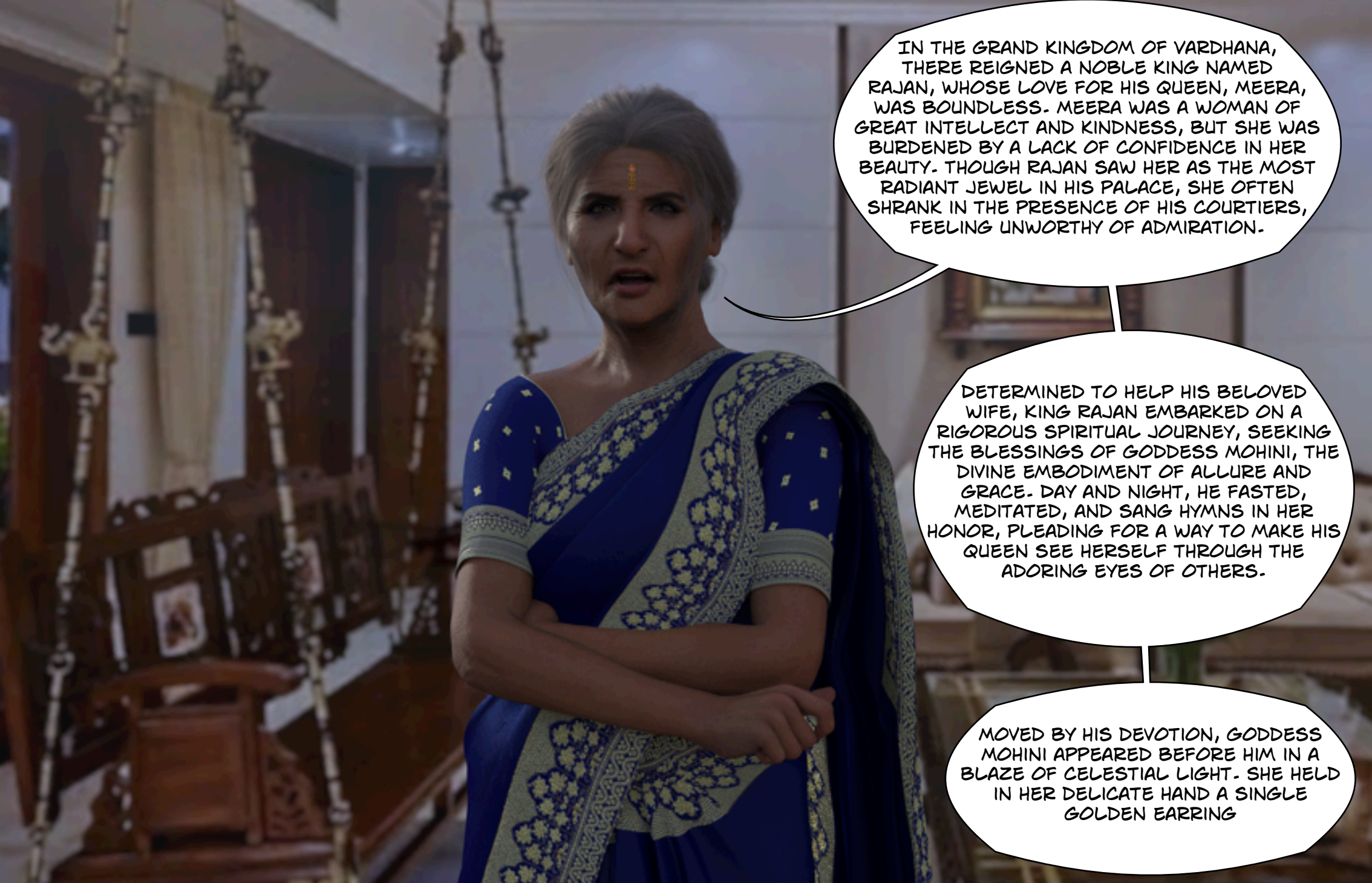
THESE EARRING HAVE BEEN IN
OUR FAMILY FOR GENERATIONS AND
BELEIVE IT OR NOT, IT HAS SOME
SPECIAL MAGICAL POWERS

MAA, YOU CAN'T BE
SERIOUS!

OMG! WHAT IS SHE
SAYING!??

WHAT KIND OF
POWERS.. MAA JI?

TO KNOW ABOUT THE EARRING, YOU
FIRST HAS TO KNOW WHERE IT CAME FROM
AND HOW IT ENDED UP IN OUR FAMILY.



IN THE GRAND KINGDOM OF VARDHANA, THERE REIGNED A NOBLE KING NAMED RAJAN, WHOSE LOVE FOR HIS QUEEN, MEERA, WAS BOUNDLESS. MEERA WAS A WOMAN OF GREAT INTELLECT AND KINDNESS, BUT SHE WAS BURDENED BY A LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN HER BEAUTY. THOUGH RAJAN SAW HER AS THE MOST RADIANT JEWEL IN HIS PALACE, SHE OFTEN SHRANK IN THE PRESENCE OF HIS COURTIERS, FEELING UNWORTHY OF ADMIRATION.

DETERMINED TO HELP HIS BELOVED WIFE, KING RAJAN EMBARKED ON A RIGOROUS SPIRITUAL JOURNEY, SEEKING THE BLESSINGS OF GODDESS MOHINI, THE DIVINE EMBODIMENT OF ALLURE AND GRACE. DAY AND NIGHT, HE FASTED, MEDITATED, AND SANG HYMNS IN HER HONOR, PLEADING FOR A WAY TO MAKE HIS QUEEN SEE HERSELF THROUGH THE ADORING EYES OF OTHERS.

MOVED BY HIS DEVOTION, GODDESS MOHINI APPEARED BEFORE HIM IN A BLAZE OF CELESTIAL LIGHT. SHE HELD IN HER DELICATE HAND A SINGLE GOLDEN EARRING

"O DEVOTED KING," SHE SAID, HER VOICE LIKE MUSIC IN THE WIND, "I GRANT YOU THIS ENCHANTED EARRING. ITS MAGIC LIES NOT IN ALTERING THE WEARER'S FORM BUT IN SHAPING PERCEPTION. WHEN YOUR QUEEN DONS IT, THE MINDS OF THOSE AROUND HER WILL BE DRAWN TO SEE HER AS SHE DESIRES TO BE SEEN. BUT SHE MUST BE MINDFUL—THE ENCHANTMENT IS TEMPORARY, AND EVERY FEW HOURS, SHE MUST REAFFIRM HER IMAGE IN THE MIRROR, WILLING THE REFLECTION THAT OTHERS WILL PERCEIVE."

SHE LEANED BACK AND SIGHED, THE PAST UNFOLDING IN HER MIND LIKE AN ANCIENT SCROLL. "QUEEN MEERA WORE THIS EARRING NOT TO CHANGE HER BEAUTY BUT TO SHAPE HOW OTHERS SAW HER. EACH MORNING AND EVENING, SHE GAZED INTO HER MIRROR, LETTING HER HEART DECIDE HOW THE WORLD WOULD VIEW HER. FOR YEARS, SHE WAS SEEN AS THE VERY EMBODIMENT OF GRACE AND PERFECTION, NOT THROUGH DECEPTION BUT THROUGH THE POWER OF BELIEF. SHE'S STILL KNOWN TO EVERYONE IN THEIR VILLAGE AS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL QUEEN EVER LIVED.

MANY BELIEVED THE EARRING WAS LOST WHEN VARDHANA FELL. THE QUEEN'S JEWELRY WAS SCATTERED, LOOTED BY INVADERS OR DESPERATE SERVANTS FLEEING THE DOOMED PALACE. THE EARRING CHANGED HANDS, PASSING FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION, UNTIL IT BECAME JUST ANOTHER RELIC FORGOTTEN BY TIME.





WAHHH--

AM I REALLY WEARING SOMETHING THAT DIVINE!??



"BUT 120 YEARS AGO, MY GRANDFATHER—YOUR GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER—DISCOVERED IT. HE WAS NOT JUST A MERCHANT; HE WAS A HISTORIAN, A SEEKER OF LOST STORIES. HE SPENT HIS LIFE STUDYING ANCIENT ARTIFACTS, GATHERING FRAGMENTS OF HISTORY. ONE DAY, IN A DUSTY PAWN SHOP ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF AN OLD MARKET, HE STUMBLED UPON THIS VERY EARRING."

IT'S THE ONE THAT'S ADORNING YOUR EARS RIGHT NOW. UNTIL YOUR DISGUISE IS OVER, I WANT YOU TO WEAR THIS.



I DONT KNOW IF I SHOULD FEEL PROUD OR DISGUSTED BY THESE EARRINGS.

I DON'T BELIEVE IN THESE STUFFS, BUT IF IT MAKES THEM HAPPY, WHY NOT!

AND ALONG WITH IT, I WANT YOU TO STAND IN FRONT OF A MIRROR WHENEVER YOU GET TIME, STARE AT YOUR REFLECTION FOR A GOOD AMOUNT OF TIME AND SAY TO YOURSELF, THAT VARSHA'S HUSBAND MUST SEE YOU AS A WOMAN, SEVER TIMES, OVER AND OVER.

COULD YOU DO THAT FOR US, AKSHAY? PLEASE?

AH-H- YESS-YES, MAA JI.

OMG! ITS
THE DOOR BELL.
HER HUSBAND IS
HERE!

CLING
CLING

AKSHAY, QUICK, GO TO
THE KITCHEN AND STAY
THERE.

YOU
BEING AWAKE AT
THIS HOUR MIGHT CREATE
SUSPICION. DON'T COME
OUT UNTIL WE CALL
YOU

YEAH I WAS THINKING
ABOUT THE SAME



LIVING ROOM

I'M KIND OF NERVOUS
MA

GO ON VARSHA, OPEN THE
DOOR.

DONT WORRY! I PROMISE
YOU, EVERY THING IS GOING
TO BE ALRIGHT

YEA THAT WAS KINDA
COMFORTING. ALRIGHT
I'LL OPEN THE DOOR.

YOU DID A REMARKABLE
JOB ON AKSHAY. HE WILL
NEVER FIND OUT ABOUT HIM.




HOLA DARLING.. IT'S
SOO GOOD TO SEE YOU
AFTER A LOOONG TIME.

ARE YOU GIVING A
LOT OF TROUBLE TO MY
SWEET MOTHER IN LAW?
SHE LOOKS A BIT
TIRED!

YOU JUST GOT HERE
AND YOU'RE ALREADY TAKING
MY MOM'S SIDE. AND MOM, I
DONT REMEMBER YOU EVER
BEING FAT!

ALRIGHT! ALRIGHT!
LET'S CALM DOWN
EVERYBODY!

THANK GOD BETA
(SON), YOU'RE HERE,
SHE'S NOT BEEN FEEDING
ME WELL. LOOK HOW
SKINY I'VE BECOME!!

A man and a woman are standing in a living room, facing each other. The woman is on the left, wearing a teal tank top and black pants. The man is on the right, wearing a black t-shirt and grey cargo pants. They are both looking at each other. The room has a beige sofa, a wooden coffee table, and a ceiling fan. There are three speech bubbles overlaid on the image. The first is on the left, the second is on the right, and the third is at the bottom right.

WHAT? YOU'RE TOO SCARED TO FIGHT!?

OH YOU WANT ME TO PUNISH YOU?


WHAT IF I SAY NO?
ARE YOU GONNA PUNISH ME?

HOW ARE YOU
PLANING TO DO THAT
MISSY?



AHEMM..

CLOSE YOUR EYES AND
LET ME SHOW YOU HOW!




WHY DONT YOU KIDS GO TO YOUR ROOM AND PUNISH EACH OTHER IN SILENT. ITS ALMOST 3 IN THE MORNING.

MAAA.. STOP IT.. WE'RE LEAVING.

SHITT.

A woman with short grey hair, wearing a blue saree with a gold floral border and a gold bindi on her forehead, stands in a well-furnished living room with her arms crossed. The room features a large wooden swing set on the left, a tufted sofa with cushions, and a coffee table with a vase of flowers. A thought bubble above her head contains the following text:

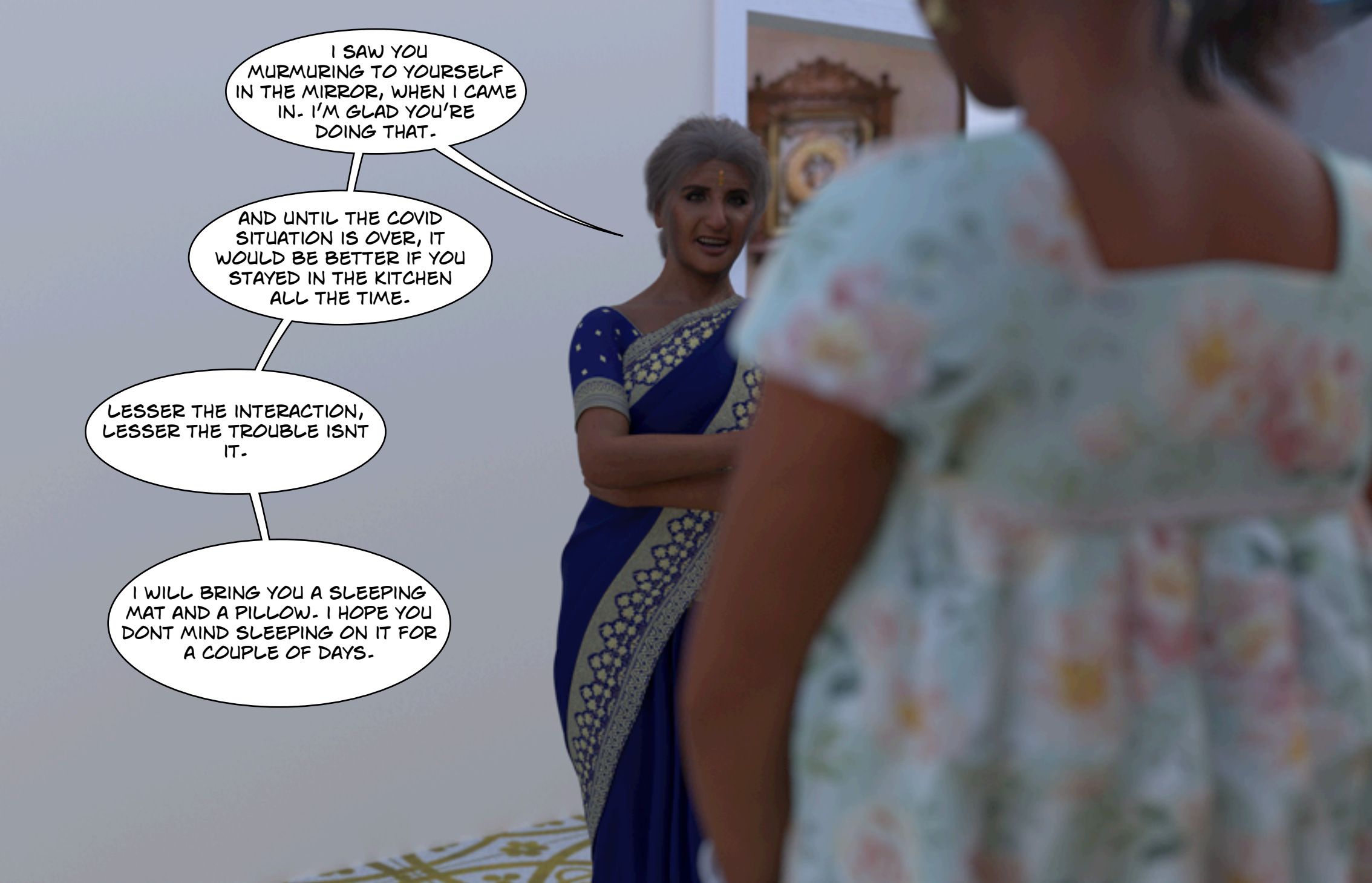
TIME TO CHECK ON AKSHAY. I
REALLY FEEL SORRY FOR HIM. HOPE THIS
DRAMA ENDS SOON AND HE RETURNS TO HIS
HOUSE SAFE.



IS EVERYTHING
ALRIGHT? IS HE GETTING ANY
SUSPICION?
WHAT HAPPENED OUT
THERE?

HAHA.. SLOW DOWN AKSHAY,
NOTHING TO WORRY. HE HASN'T
SEEN YOU YET AND HE WON'T
UNTIL TOMORROW.

VARSH WILL TELL YOU
WHAT TO DO TOMORROW.
WE'RE SORRY FOR GETTING YOU
INTO THIS. FOR NOW YOU TAKE
REST. EVERYTHING WILL BE
ALRIGHT.




I SAW YOU MURMURING TO YOURSELF IN THE MIRROR, WHEN I CAME IN. I'M GLAD YOU'RE DOING THAT.

AND UNTIL THE COVID SITUATION IS OVER, IT WOULD BE BETTER IF YOU STAYED IN THE KITCHEN ALL THE TIME.

LESSER THE INTERACTION, LESSER THE TROUBLE ISNT IT.

I WILL BRING YOU A SLEEPING MAT AND A PILLOW. I HOPE YOU DONT MIND SLEEPING ON IT FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS.



YES MAA JI, I AGREE,
THIS WOULD BE A BETTER
OPTION FOR ME. SO THAT I DONT
HAVE TO FACE HER HUSBAND
VERY OFTEN.

GOOD. LET ME LEAVE
THAT TO YOU THEN. GOODNIGHT
DEAR.

VARHA'S HUSBAND
SHOULD SEE ME AS A
WOMAN.

VARHA'S HU..ND
SHO..D SE. M..AS A
WOM..

VAR.. HUS..S..ULD S..
...E AS A WO..N.

Z...Z.Z.Z.Z.

NEXT MORNING

YOU CAN LEAVE THE
COFFEE ON THE TABLE.

I'LL COME TO THE KITCHEN IN
A FEW MINUTES TO TELL YOU
WHAT TO COOK FOR TODAY.





IS SHE THE MAID, YOU TOLD ABOUT LAST NIGHT?

IS SHE MUTE? ONLY AIR CAME OUT OF HER MOUTH

YEA **NAVEEN**. SHE UNFORTUNATELY GOT STUCK HERE BECAUSE OF COVID. AND WE NEEDED SOME HELP WITH HOUSEHOLD WORK SO WE ASKED HER TO STAY WITH US.

SHE'S JUST HAVING A TROAT INFECTION **NAVEEN**.

OK YOU THINK, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO HAVE FOR LUNCH, I'LL BE BACK.

HOPE HER VOICE IS AS SWEET AS HER CUTE FACE.

IS IT BECAUSE OF MY ACTING SKILLS OR THESE EARRINGS!?

THAT WAS FANTASTIC AKSHAY. YOU DID EXACTLY WHAT I ASKED. I'M SO PROUD OF YOU. HE TOTALLY BELIEVED YOU WERE OUR MAID.

THAT'S AMAZING!!

ALTHOUGH HE DID ASK ABOUT YOUR VOICE. WE HAVE TO SORT THAT OUT SOON.

AND ONE MORE VERY IMPORTANT THING. WE CAN'T USE THE WORD "AKSHAY" ANYMORE.

A WHAT NOW!?

YOUR NAME IS GOING TO BE **AKSHAYA**, FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS. AND WE ARE GOING TO USE ONLY FEMALE PRONOUNS

AKSHAYA!?

VARSHA!

I GUESS MY HUSBAND HAS FINALLY DECIDED WHAT HE WANTS TO EAT.

AKSHAYA, I'M GOING TO DO SOME YOGA, WHY DONT YOU TAKE A QUICK SHOWER? YOU LOOK A BIT OFF.

YOU CAN WEAR THE SAME NIGHTIE FOR NOW, I'LL BRING YOU A NEW BRA.

**VARSHA DIDI
(RESPECTFULLY)**

JUST A FEW MORE DAYS AND THEN THIS WILL ALL BE OVER.

OK VARSHA!

SERIOUSLY!??

**YESS..VARSHA
DIDI**