

## Kaurava The Aryavarta Chronicles 2 Krishna Udayasankar

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Emperor Dharma Yudhisthir of the Kauravas and Empress Panchali Draupadi rule over a unified Aryavarta, an empire built for them by Govinda Shauri with the blessings of the Firstborn and by the might of those whom everyone believes long gone - the Firewrights. Now the Firewrights rise from the ashes of the past, divided as before in purpose and allegiance, and no one, it seems, can stand in the way of the chaos about to be unleashed on the land - not the Firstborn, not the kings of Aryavarta, and not Govinda Shauri. As sinister plans are put in play and treacherous alliances emerge, Aryavarta transforms into its own worst enemy. Dharma Yudhisthir gambles away his empire, the tormented empress is forced into a terrifying exile and the many nations of the realm begin to take up arms in a bid to fight, conquer and destroy each other. His every dream shattered, Govinda is left a broken man. The only way he can protect Aryavarta and the woman in whose trusted hands he had left it is by playing a dangerous game. But can he bring himself to reveal the terrible secrets that the Vyasa has guarded all his life - secrets that may well destroy the Firstborn, and the Firewrights with them?

'Nothing left to fight for is nothing left to lose... Emperor Dharma Yudhisthir of the Kauravas and Empress Panchali Draupadi rule over the unified realm of Aryavarta, an empire built for them by Govinda Shauri with the blessings of the Firstborn and by the might of those whom everyone believes long gone - the Firewrights. Now the Firewrights rise from the ashes of the past, divided as before in purpose and allegiance, and no one, it seems, can stand in the way of the chaos about to be unleashed on the land - not the Firstborn, not the kings of Aryavarta, and not Govinda Shauri. As sinister plans are put in play and treacherous alliances emerge, Aryavarta transforms into its own worst enemy. Dharma Yudhisthir gambles away his empire, the tormented empress is forced into a terrifying exile and the many nations of the realm begin to take up arms in a bid to fight, conquer and destroy each other. His every dream shattered, Govinda is left a broken man. The only way he can protect Aryavarta and the woman in whose trusted hands he had left it is by playing a dangerous game. But can he bring himself to reveal the terrible secrets that the Vyasa has protected all his life - secrets that may well destroy the Firstborn, and the Firewrights with them? In Kaurava, the second book in The Aryavarta Chronicles series, Krishna Udayasankar continues to recreate the world of the Mahabharata and the lives of its characters through stunning imagination and powerful storytelling. This is the epic like it was never told before.

For generations, the Firstborn dynasty of scholar-sages, descendants of Vasishtha Varuni and protectors of the Divine Order on earth, has dominated here.

For just as long, the Angirasa family of Firewrights, weapon-makers to the kings and master inventors, has defied them. In the aftermath of the centuries-long conflict between the two orders, the once-united empire of Aryavarta lies splintered, a shadow of its former glorious self. Now, the last Secret Keeper of the Firewrights is dead, killed by an unknown hand, and the battle for supreme power in the empire is about to begin. As mighty powers hurtle towards a bloody conflict, Govinda Shauri, cowherd-turned-prince and now Commander of the armies of Dwaraka, must use all his cunning to counter deception and treachery if he is to protect his people and those whom he loves. But who holds the key to the fantastic and startling knowledge of the Firewrights, which in the wrong hands will bring doom upon the empire? And does Govinda have it in him to confront the dark secrets of his past and discover the true meaning of being Arya, of being noble?

The empire that was Aryavarta fades under the shadow of doom. As the bitter struggle to gain control of the divided kingdom ensues, both Krishna Dwaipayana Vyasa of the Firstborn and the Secret Keeper of the Firewrights can only watch as their own blood, their kin, savage and kill on the fields of Kurukshetra. Restraint and reason have deserted the rulers who once protected the land and they manipulate, scheme and kill with abandon - for victory is all that matters. At the heart of the storm stands Govinda Shauri, driven by fickle allies and failed kings, to the very brink of darkness. He may well be the greatest danger Aryavarta has faced yet, for he is determined to change things forever. Reforging the forsaken realm in the fire of his apocalyptic wrath, Govinda prepares to destroy everything he loves and make the ultimate sacrifice for the sake of one last hope: that humanity will rise. There will be revolution.

"THE MAHABHARATA ENDURES AS THE GREAT EPIC OF INDIA. While Jaya is the story of the Pandavas, told from the perspective of the victors of Kurukshetra, Ajaya is the tale of the Kauravas, who were decimated to the last man. From the pen of the author who gave voice to Ravana in the national bestseller, ASURA, comes the riveting narrative which compels us to question the truth behind the Mahabharata. THE DARK AGE OF KALI IS RISING and every man and woman must choose between duty and conscience, honour and shame, life and death... o The Pandavas, banished to the forest following the disastrous games of dice, return to Hastinapura. o Draupadi has vowed not to bind her hair till she washes it in the blood of the Kauravas. o Karna must choose between loyalty and gratitude, friend and Guru. o Aswathama undertakes a perilous mission to the mountains of Gandhara, in search of the Evil One. o Kunti must decide between her firstborn and her other sons. o Guru Drona has to stand with either his favourite disciple or his beloved son. o Balarama, having failed to convince his brother about the adharma of violence, walks the streets of Bharatavarsha, spreading the message of peace. o Ekalavya is called to make the ultimate sacrifice to uphold a woman's honour. o Jara, the beggar, sings of Krishna's love while his blind dog, Dharma, follows. o Shakuni can almost see the realization of his dream to destroy India. As the Pandavas stake their claim to the Hastinapura throne, the Kaurava Crown Prince, Suyodhana, rises to challenge Krishna. As great minds debate dharma and adharma, power hungry men prepare for an apocalyptic war. The women, highborn and humble, helplessly watch the unfolding disaster with deep foreboding. And greedy merchants and unscrupulous priests lie in wait like vultures. Both sides know that beyond the agony and carnage the winner will take all. But even as gods conspire and men's destinies unfold, a far greater truth awaits. \*\*\*\*\* One of the six most remarkable writers of India. DNA An Amazing read. The WEEK Unique voice of a rebellious author telling the story from the other side, a feat a few have dared or managed so well. Bihar Times"

THE MAHABHARATA ENDURES AS THE GREAT EPIC OF INDIA. But while Jaya is the story of the Pandavas, told from the perspective of the victors of Kurukshetra; Ajaya is the narrative of the Unconquerable Kauravas, who were decimated to the last man. At the heart of India's most powerful empire, a revolution is brewing. Bhishma, the noble patriarch of Hastinapura, is struggling to maintain the unity of his empire. On the throne sits Dhritarashtra, the blind King, and his foreign-born Queen Gandhari. In the shadow of the throne stands Kunti, the Dowager-Queen, burning with ambition to see her firstborn become the ruler, acknowledged by all. And in the wings: Parashurama, the enigmatic Guru of the powerful Southern Confederate, bides his time to take over and impose his will from mountains to ocean. Ekalavya, a young Nishada, yearns to break free of caste restrictions and become a warrior. Karna, son of a humble charioteer, travels to the South to study under the foremost Guru of the day and become the greatest archer in the land. Balarama, the charismatic leader of the Yadavas, dreams of building the perfect city by the sea and seeing his people prosperous and proud once more. Takshaka, guerilla leader of the Nagas, foments a revolution by the downtrodden as he lies in wait in the jungles of India, where survival is the only dharma. Jara, the beggar, and his blind dog Dharma, walk the dusty streets of India, witness to people and events far greater than they, as the Pandavas and the Kauravas confront their searing destinies. Amidst the chaos, Prince Suyodhana, heir of Hastinapura, stands tall, determined to claim his birthright and act according to his conscience. He is the maker of his own destiny or so he believes. While in the corridors of the Hastinapura palace, a foreign Prince plots to destroy India. And the dice falls

The South Asian subcontinent is home to nearly a billion people and has been the site of fierce historical contestation. It is a panoply of languages and religions with a rich and complex history and culture. Drawing on the newest and most sophisticated historical research and scholarship in the field, *Modern South Asia* is written in an accessible style for all those with an intellectual curiosity about the region. After sketching the pre-modern history of the subcontinent, the book concentrates on the last three centuries from c.1700 to the present. Jointly written by two leading Indian and Pakistani historians, it offers a rare depth of historical understanding of the politics, cultures and economies that shape the lives of more than a fifth of humanity. In this comprehensive study, the authors debate and challenge the striking developments in contemporary South Asian history and historical writing. The book provides new insights into the structure and ideology of the British raj, the meaning of subaltern resistance, the refashioning of social relations along lines of caste, class, community and gender, the different strands of anti-colonial nationalism and the dynamics of decolonization. This book is a work of synthesis and interpretation covering the entire spectrum of modern South Asian history - social, economic and political. The authors offer an understanding of this strategically and economically vital part of the world.

It was always the same dream, a dream that began with darkness and blood.' When Assistant Commissioner of Police Aditi Kashyap is called upon to solve a gruesome triple homicide in a Mumbai suburb, she is dragged into the terrifying world of the Saimhas-werelions-who have lived alongside humans, hiding amongst them, since ancient times. Faced with the unbelievable, Aditi has no choice but to join hands with Prithvi, an Enforcer called in to hunt down this seemingly otherworldly murderer. But can Prithvi overcome the nightmarish burdens of his dark and violent past to unravel the mystery hidden deep within this secret world of werelions? Can he be trusted to save lives, or will he choose to serve a different, more powerful, master? Read on, as Aditi and Prithvi race through the dark underbelly of Mumbai-from quiet suburbs to gritty brothels, from forgotten colonial tunnels to the lights and glamour of the inner city-in search of a dangerous truth. In search of a monster.

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