

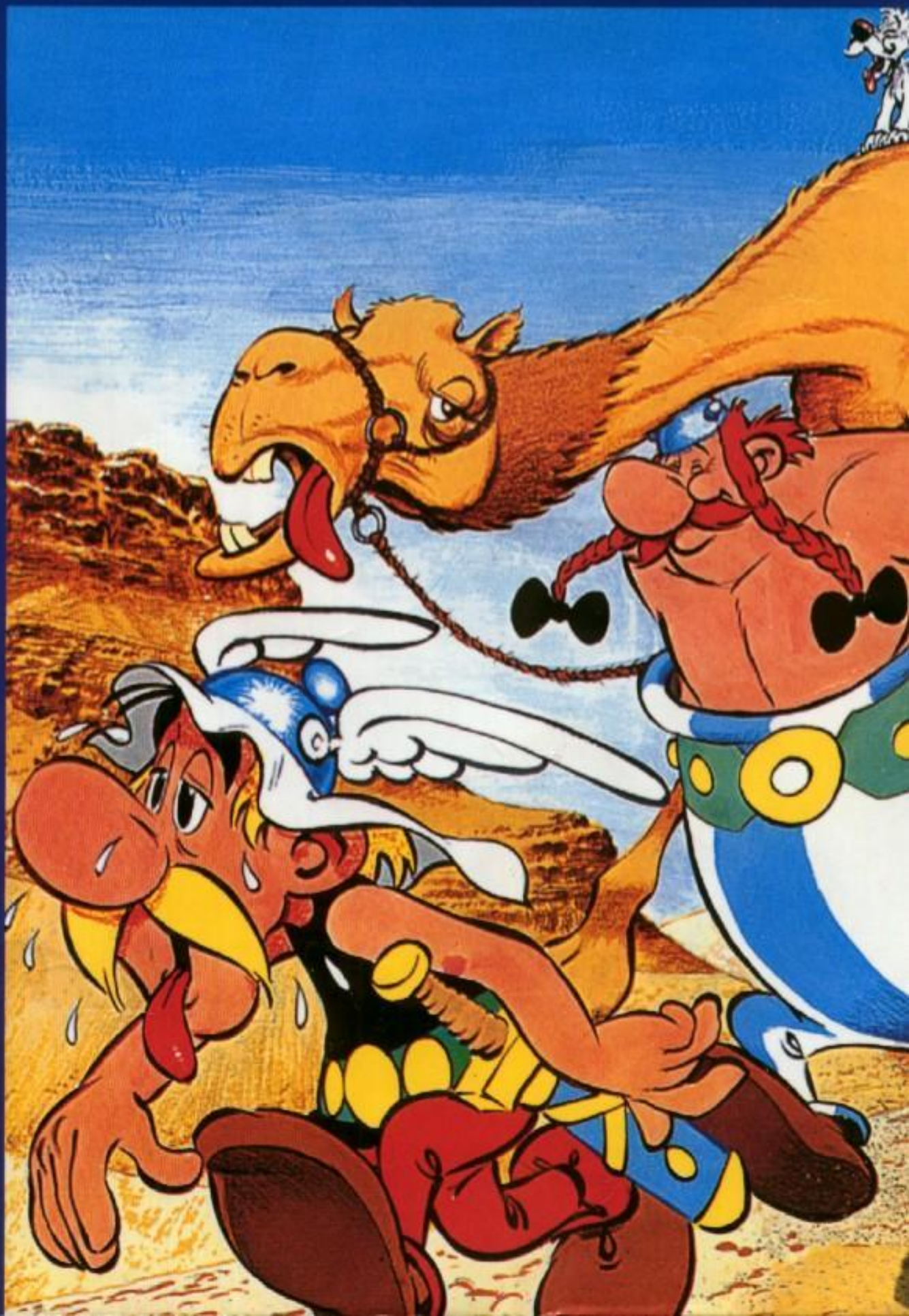
BOOK 27

GOSCINNY AND UDERZO

Asterix

AND THE BLACK GOLD

ASTÉRIX



IN THE QUIET, PEACEFUL DEPTHS OF THE GAULISH FOREST, EVERYTHING SEEMS TO INDICATE THAT IT IS DINNER TIME...



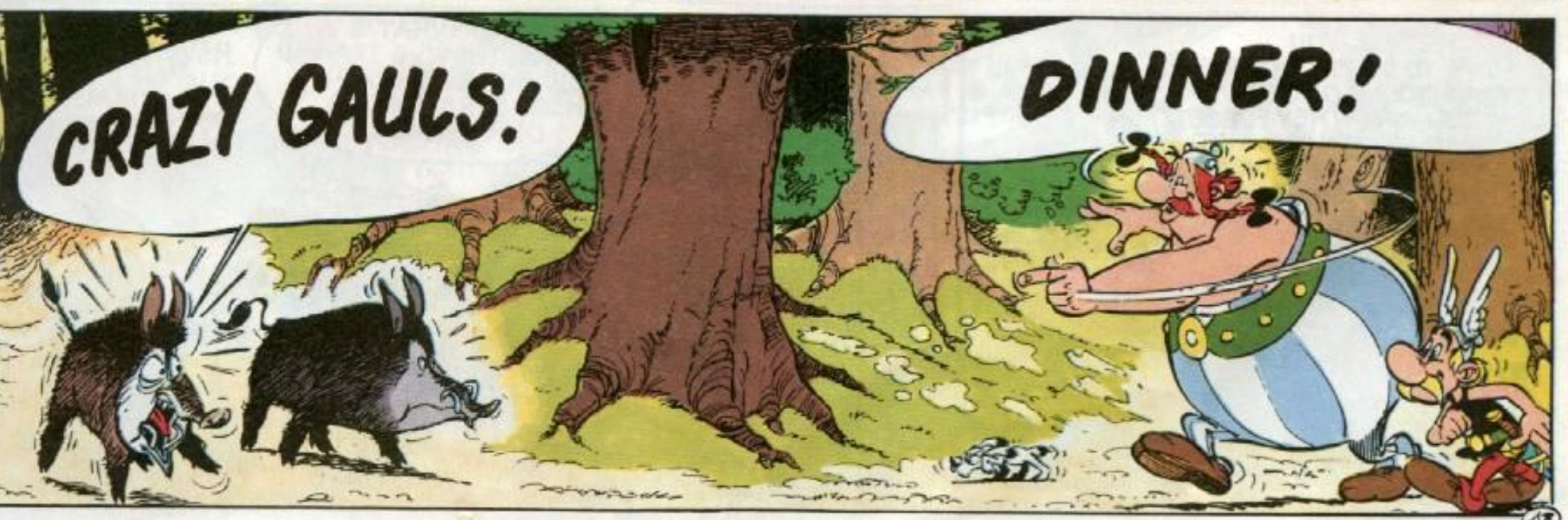
... BUT SOME OF THE FOREST DWELLERS HAVE LOST THEIR APPETITES.

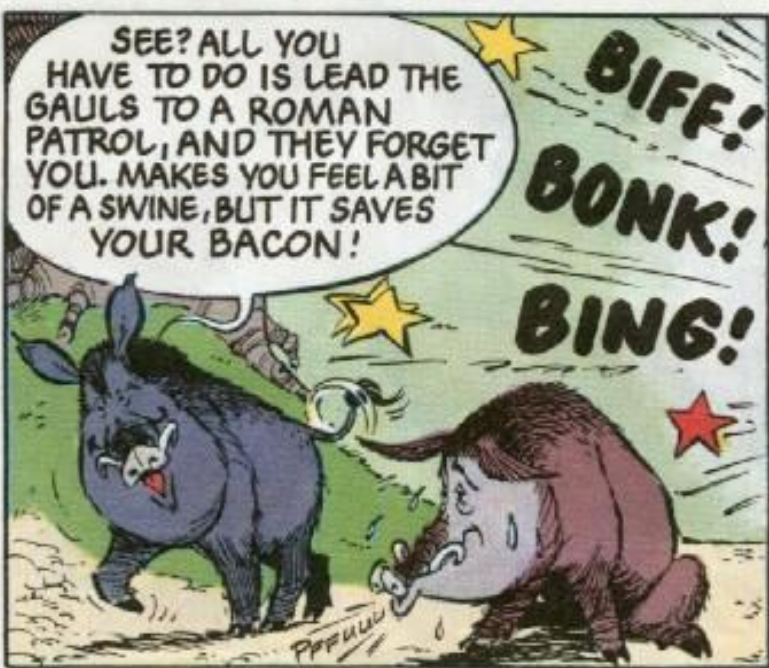
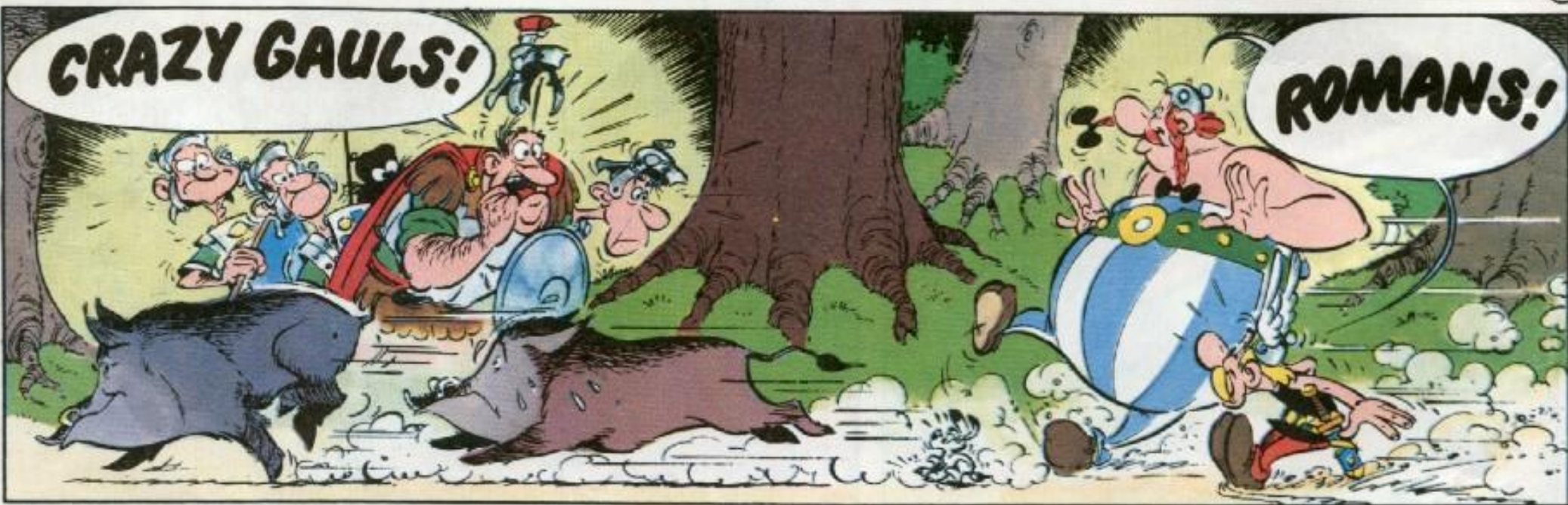
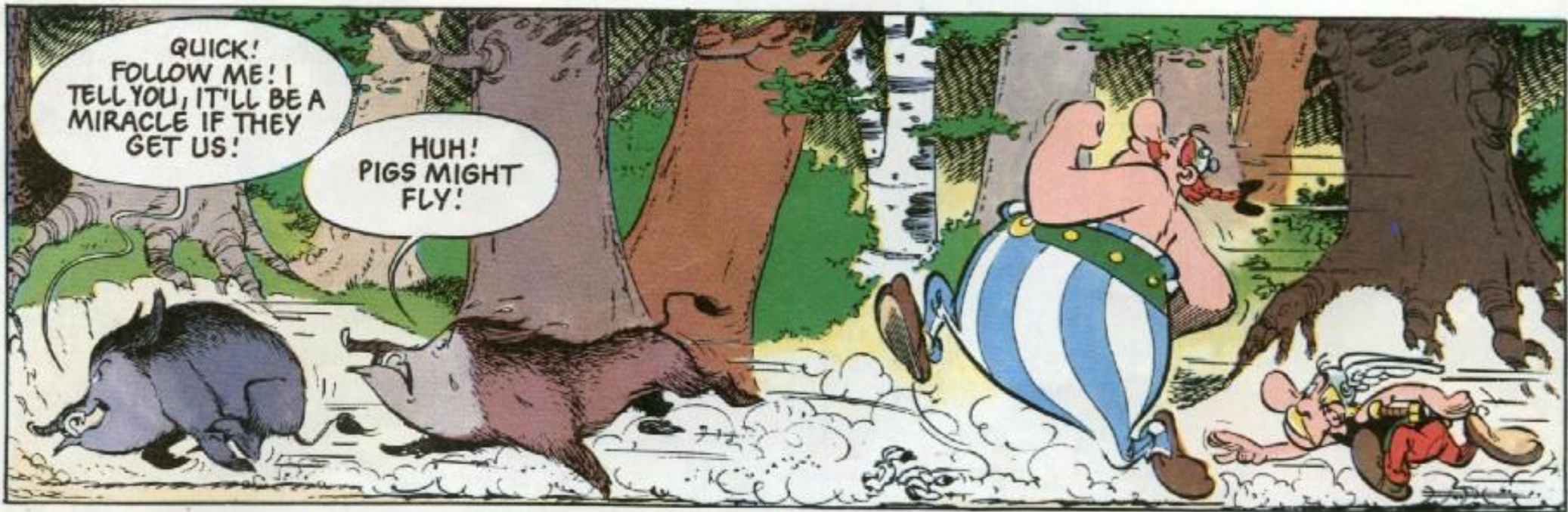


(AUTHOR'S NOTE: WITH APOLOGIES TO PURISTS, WE PROVIDE A DUBBED VERSION TO FACILITATE YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE DIALOGUE.)



BECAUSE THEY'VE WOLFED DOWN, SCRUNCHED, CRUNCHED AND GOBBLED UP MY WHOLE HERD, AND I AM THE SOLE SURVIVOR OF A LARGE FAMILY, THAT'S WHY!!!





IN ROME...

NO, WE MOST CERTAINLY CAN'T HAVE THIS!!!

THAT ARMORICAN VILLAGE IS STILL HOLDING THE MIGHT OF ROME UP TO RIDICULE!

AND I HEAR THAT MY LEGIONS NOW HAVE TO FACE HORDES OF WILD BEASTS!

THE MORALE OF MY TROOPS IS AT ROCK BOTTOM, AND I AM THE LAUGHING STOCK OF MY ENEMIES IN THE SENATE!

AS WE ALL KNOW, WE HAVE FAILED TO CONQUER THOSE INDOMITABLE GAULS BY FORCE, CORRUPTION, OR EVEN KIDNAPPING, AND YET...

M. DEVIUS SURREPTITIUS, YOU'RE CHIEF OF MY SECRET SERVICE, M.I.VI. IF YOU HAVE AN IDEA, BY JUPITER, LET'S HEAR IT!

O CAESAR, THE SECRETS OF THE DRUIDS ARE PASSED ON ONLY FROM DRUID TO DRUID BY WORD OF MOUTH!

WHAT ABOUT IT?

SIMPLE! NO ONE BUT A DRUID WHO IS ALSO SPYING FOR US CAN OBTAIN AND PASS ON THE RECIPE OF THAT MAGIC POTION WHICH MAKES THE GAULS INVINCIBLE!

AND AMONG MY AGENTS I HAVE JUST SUCH A DRUID!

THEN WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? FETCH HIM!

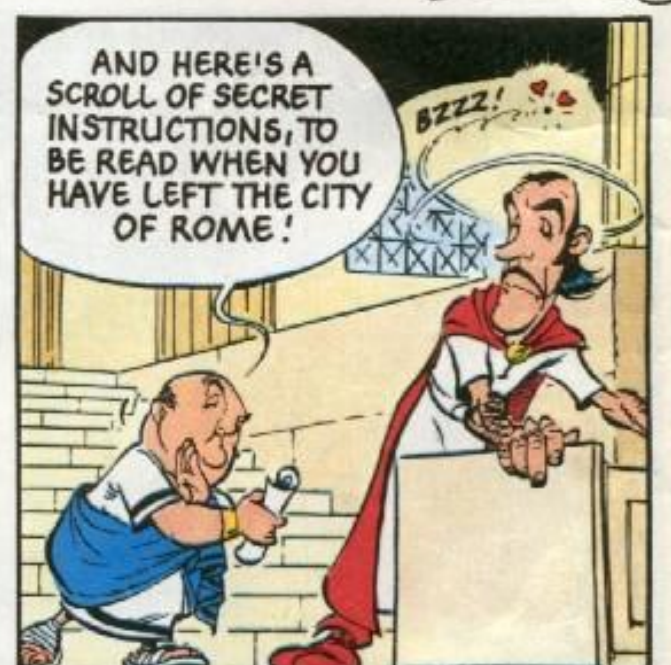
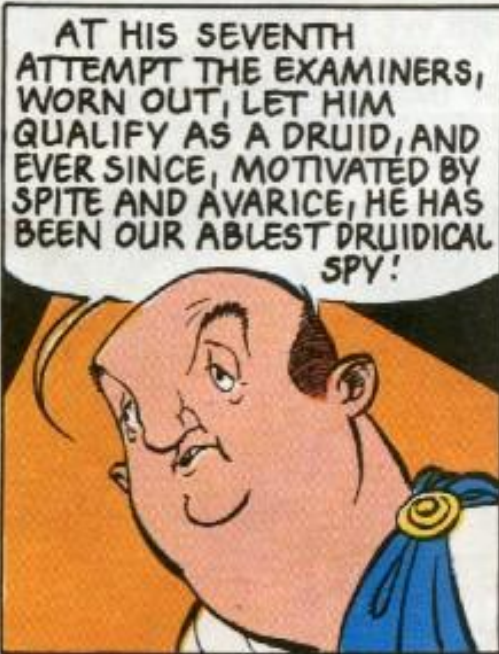
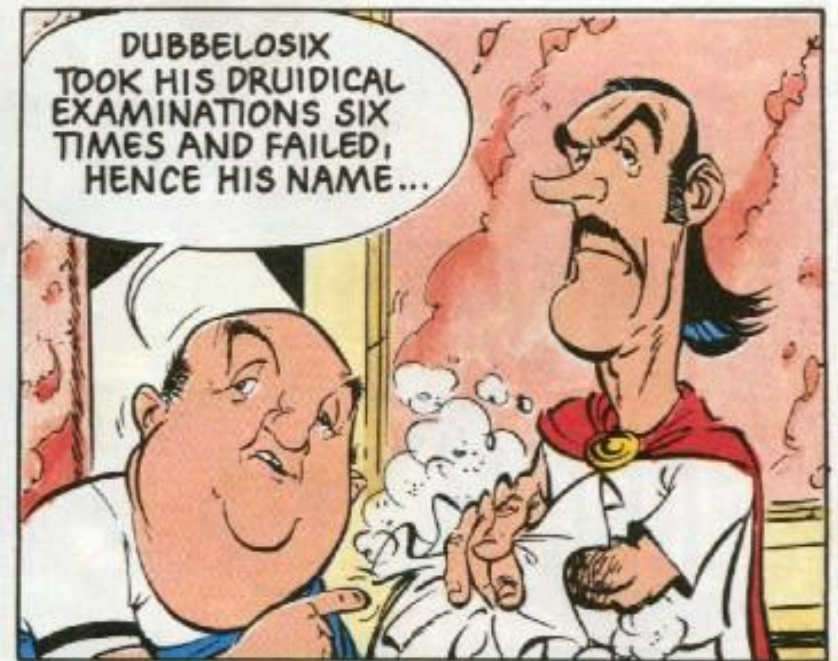
HE'S ALREADY HERE, CAESAR, QUITE CLOSE TO YOU!

?!?

YOU CAN COME DOWN FROM YOUR PEDESTAL NOW, DUBBELSIX!

3A

3B



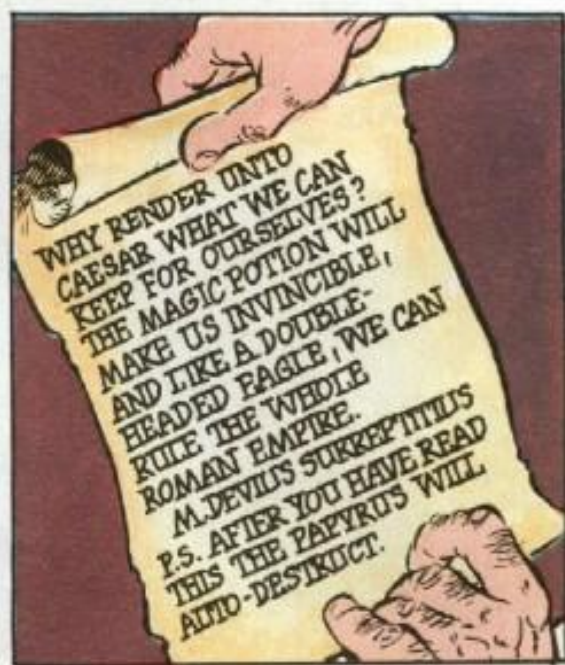


LATER...

WHOA!

TIME TO READ SURREPTITIUS'S SECRET INSTRUCTIONS!

BZZZZ!

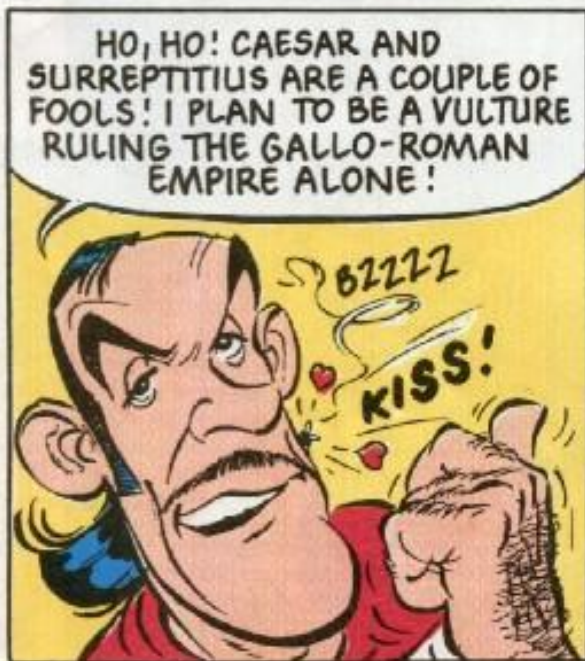


WHY RENDER UNTO CAESAR WHAT WE CAN KEEP FOR OURSELVES? THE MAGIC POTION WILL MAKE US INVINCIBLE, AND LIKE A DOUBLE-HEADED EAGLE, WE CAN RULE THE WHOLE ROMAN EMPIRE. M. DEVILS SURREPTITIUS P.S. AFTER YOU HAVE READ THIS THE PAPYRUS WILL AUTO-DESTRUCT.



?!?

PSSCHCH...



HO, HO! CAESAR AND SURREPTITIUS ARE A COUPLE OF FOOLS! I PLAN TO BE A VULTURE RULING THE GALLO-ROMAN EMPIRE ALONE!

BZZZZ

KISS!

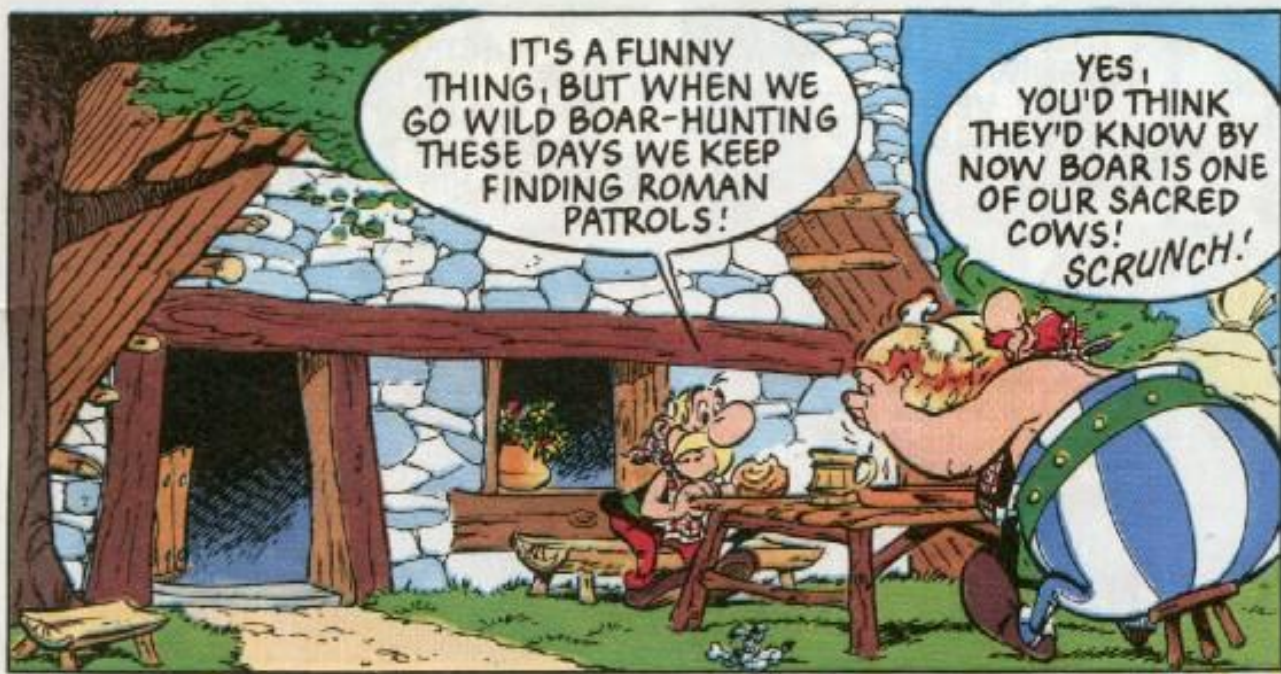


OH LEAVE ME ALONE, YOU WRETCHED CREATURE!

BZZZZ



MEANWHILE, ON THE ARMORICAN COAST, ALL IS PEACEFUL IN THE LITTLE GAULISH VILLAGE WHERE ASTERIX AND HIS FRIENDS LIVE.



IT'S A FUNNY THING, BUT WHEN WE GO WILD BOAR-HUNTING THESE DAYS WE KEEP FINDING ROMAN PATROLS!

YES, YOU'D THINK THEY'D KNOW BY NOW BOAR IS ONE OF OUR SACRED COWS! SCRUNCH!



AND YOU CERTAINLY GO THE WHOLE HOG EATING IT!

SCRUNCH! MUNCH! SCRUNCH!

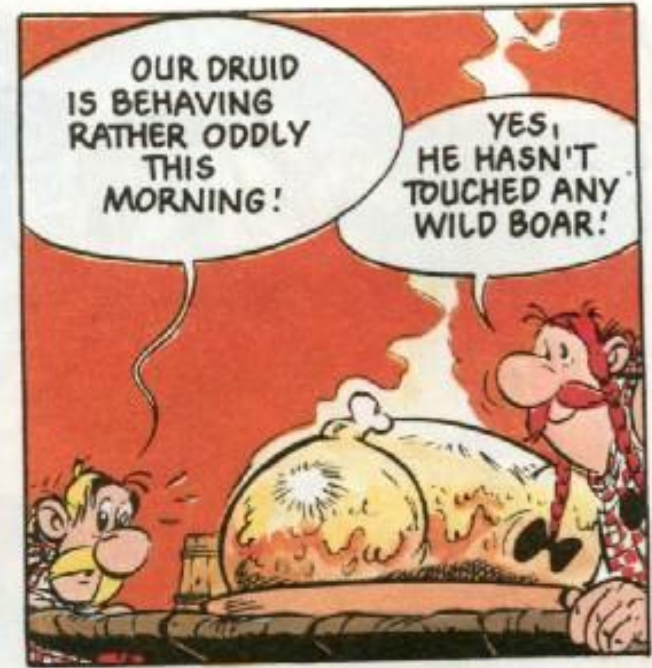
5A

5B



HULLO, GETAFIX, HOW ARE YOU?

MPH? OH, ALL RIGHT.



OUR DRUID IS BEHAVING RATHER ODDLY THIS MORNING!

YES, HE HASN'T TOUCHED ANY WILD BOAR!



HULLO, O DRUID! I'VE JUST TAPPED A NEW BARREL OF BEER. HAVE SOME?

I'M NOT THIRSTY!



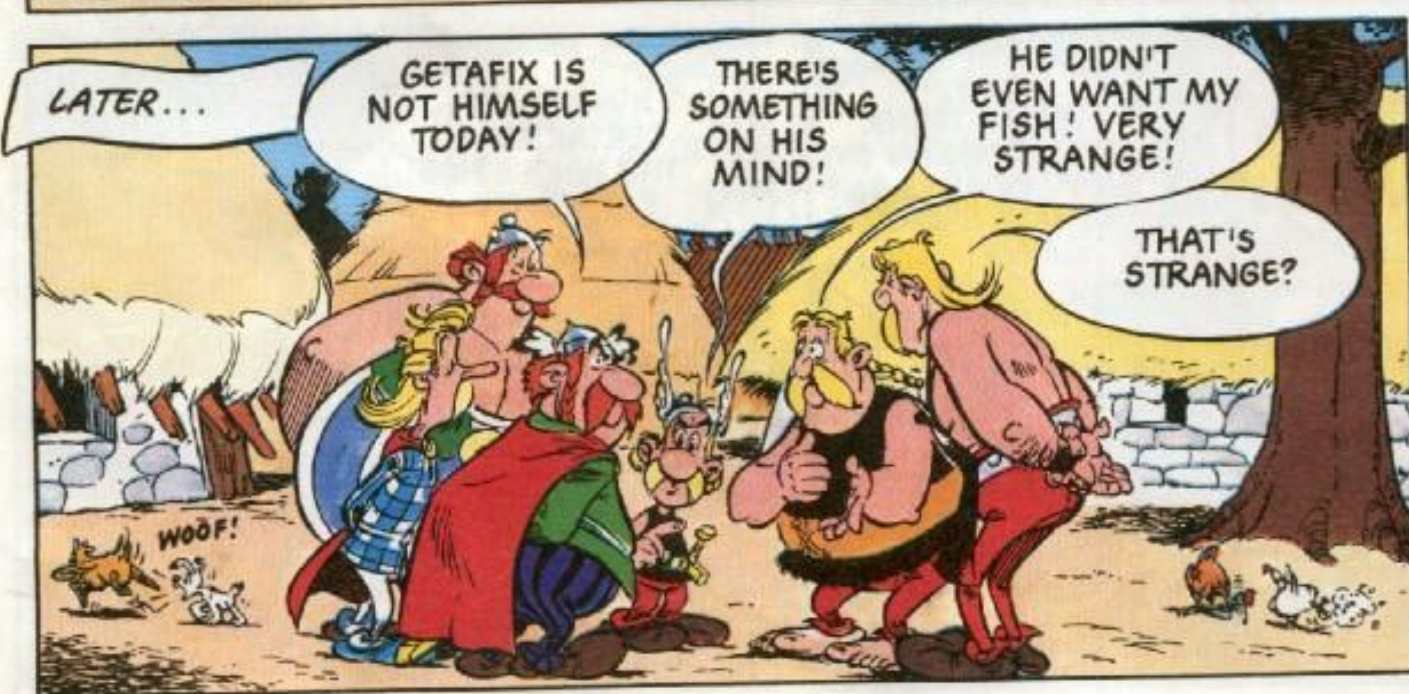
????? WHAT DID I SAY?



HERE, GETAFIX, YOU CAN HAVE THIS LOVELY FRESH FISH ALL THE WAY FROM MASSILIA! IT'LL ASTONISH YOU!



EATING AND DRINKING!! IS THAT ALL YOU LOT EVER THINK ABOUT?



LATER...

GETAFIX IS NOT HIMSELF TODAY!

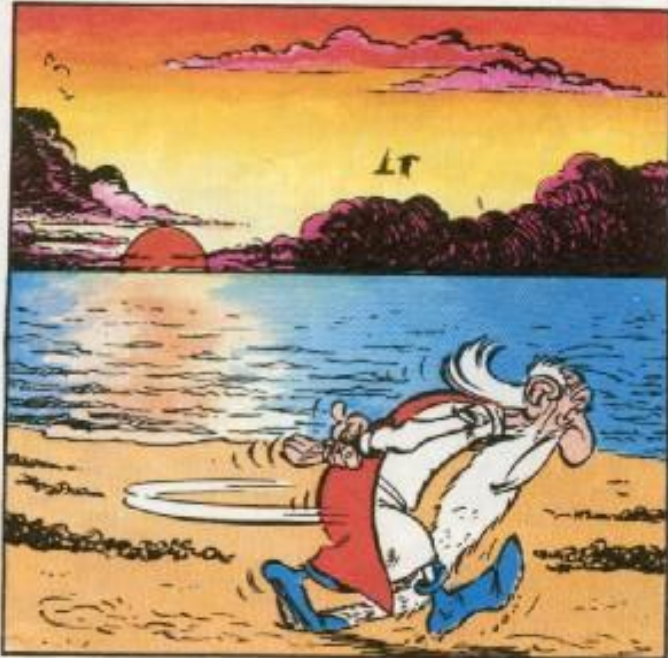
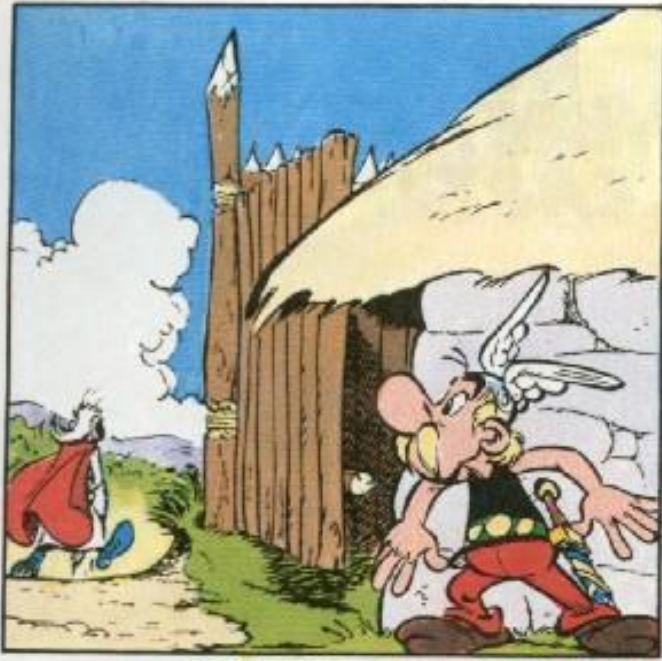
THERE'S SOMETHING ON HIS MIND!

HE DIDN'T EVEN WANT MY FISH! VERY STRANGE!

THAT'S STRANGE?



IF GETAFIX HAS A PROBLEM, WE MUST HELP HIM! ASTERIX, YOU FOLLOW HIM DISCREETLY. YOU MAY FIND OUT THE REASON FOR HIS STRANGE BEHAVIOUR!



BUT NEXT MORNING...

COME QUICKLY!
EKONOMIKRISIS THE
PHOENICIAN MERCHANT
HAS LANDED ON
THE BEACH!!!

HE'S
HERE! AT
LAST!!

HULLO,
ASTERIX!
NICE DAY,
ISN'T IT?

?!

I WOULDN'T MIND
TASTING YOUR NEW BARREL
OF BEER, VITALSTATISTIX!
DON'T FORGET!

?!

MMM! YOUR
FISH HAS A REALLY
INTERESTING AROMA,
UNHYGIENIX!

?!?

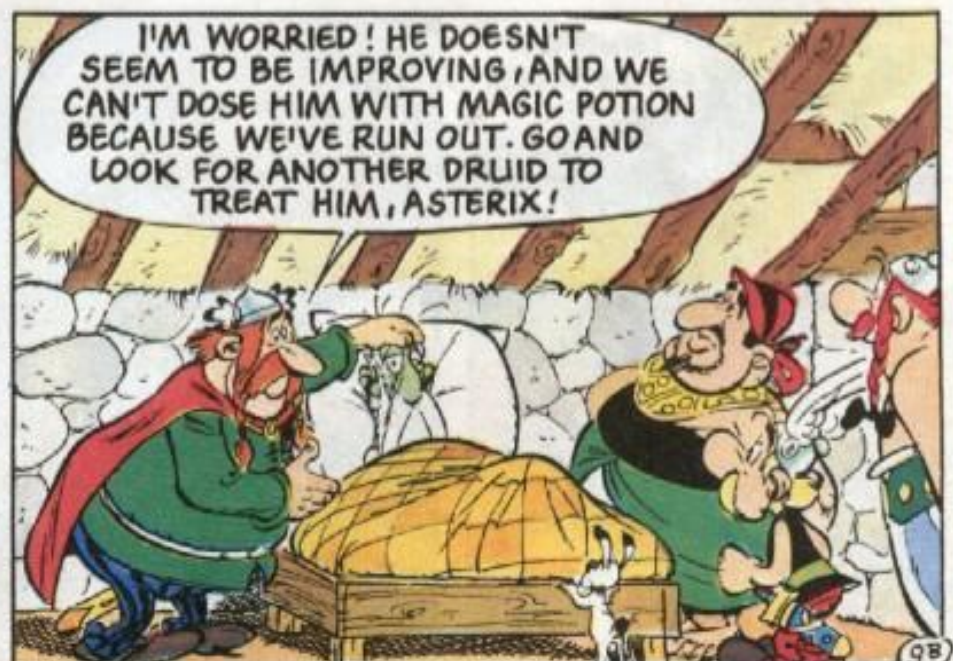
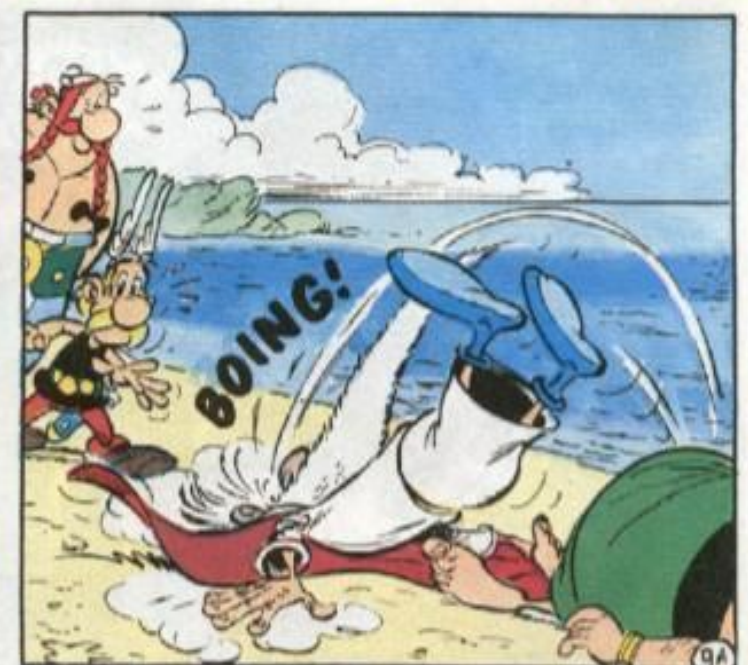
SO GETAFIX
WAS WAITING FOR
EKONOMIKRISIS
AND HIS CARGO!

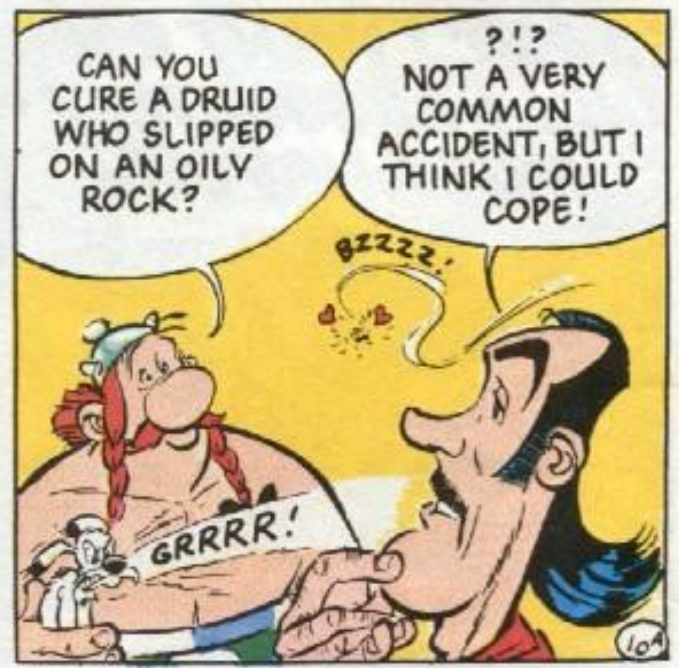
AND HE
APPRECIATED
MY FISH, SO
THERE!

THAT'S
WHAT WORRIES
ME. ANYONE IN THAT
STATE MUST BE ON
THE BRINK OF
SUICIDE!

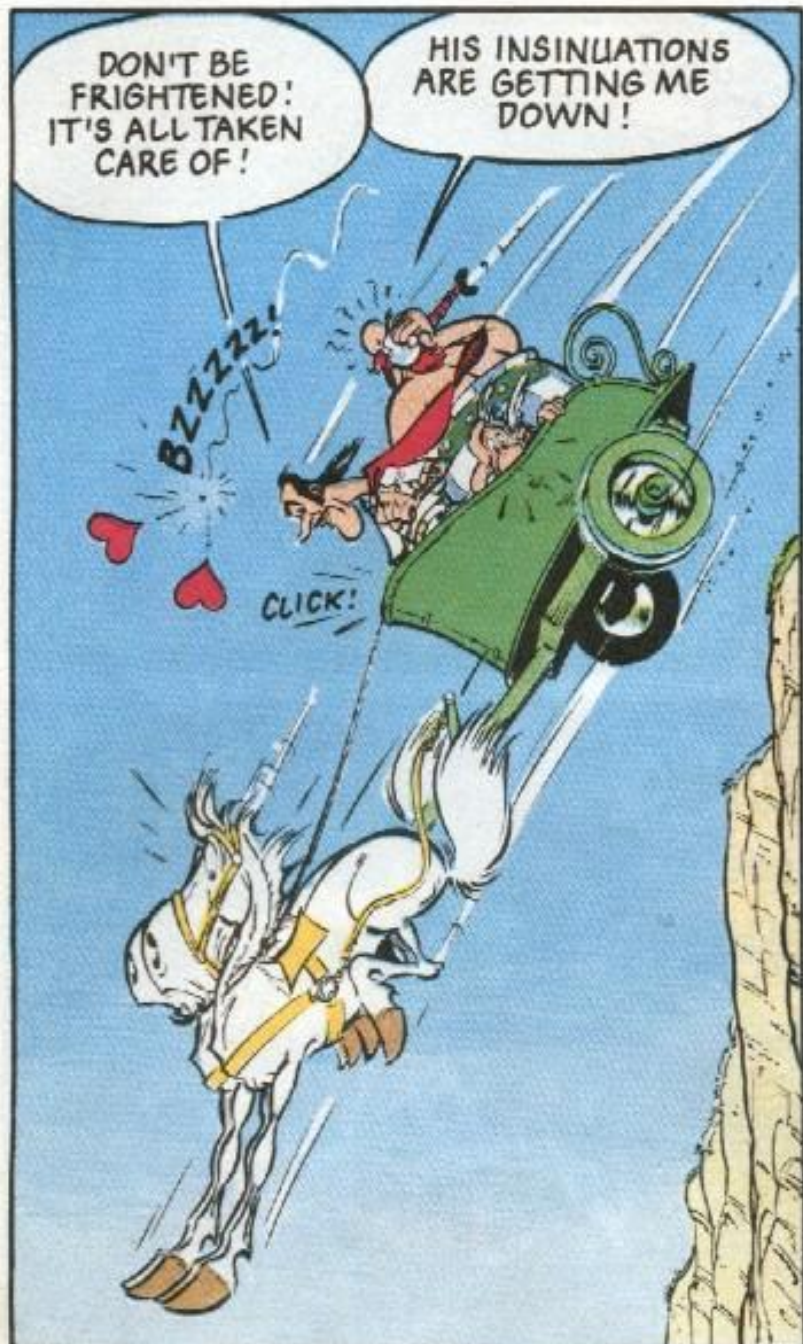
HERE YOU ARE AT LAST,
EKONOMIKRISIS, OLD CHAP!

HULLO THERE, GETAFIX! I'VE
BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO
SEEING YOU ALL AGAIN EVER SINCE
MY LAST VOYAGE! LOOK WHAT
I'VE BROUGHT FROM TYRE,
SPECIALLY FOR YOU!



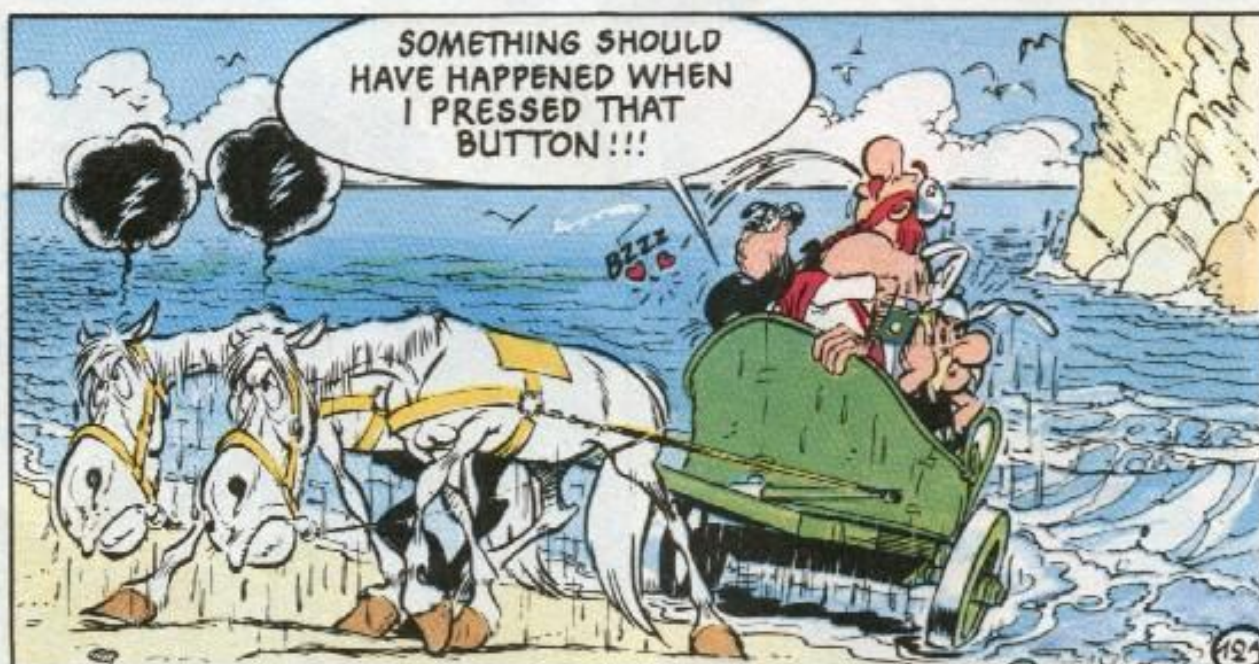






DON'T BE FRIGHTENED! IT'S ALL TAKEN CARE OF!

HIS INSINUATIONS ARE GETTING ME DOWN!



SOMETHING SHOULD HAVE HAPPENED WHEN I PRESSED THAT BUTTON!!!



SOON AFTERWARDS...

WELL, WE WERE MORE FRIGHTENED THAN HURT!



HEY YOU, HOLD YOUR HORSES!!! NOW JUST LISTEN HERE, YOU!!!



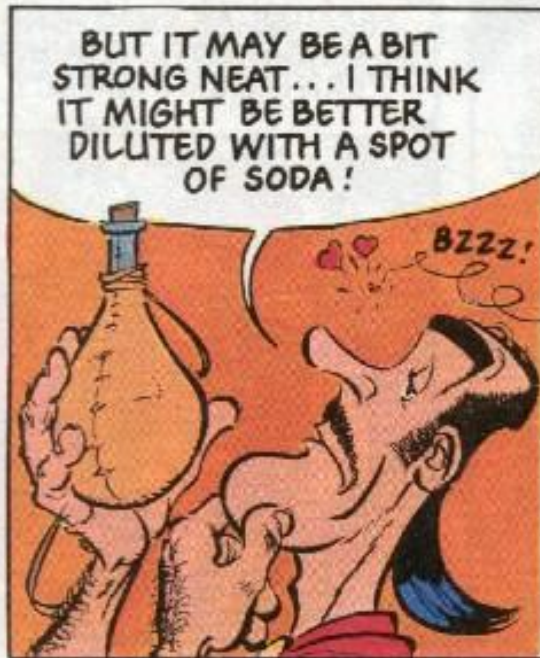
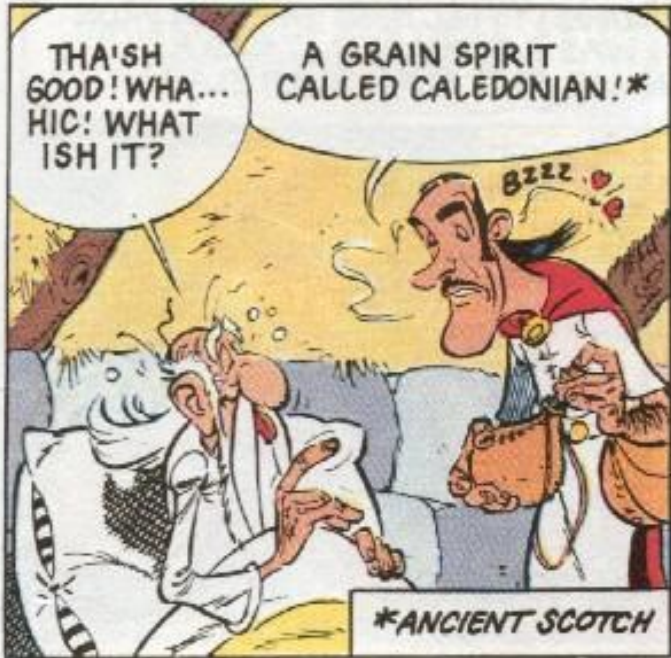
YOUR FRIEND QUITE FRIGHTENS ME SOMETIMES!

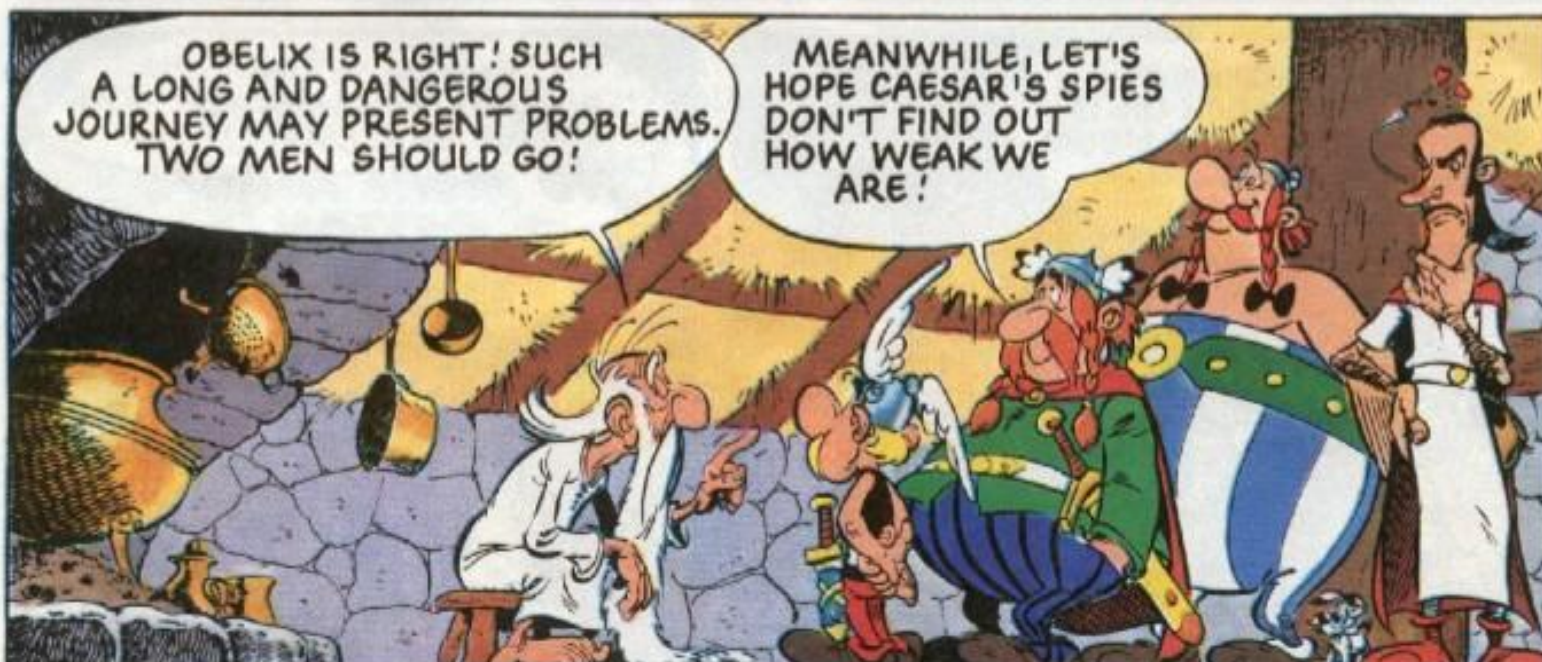
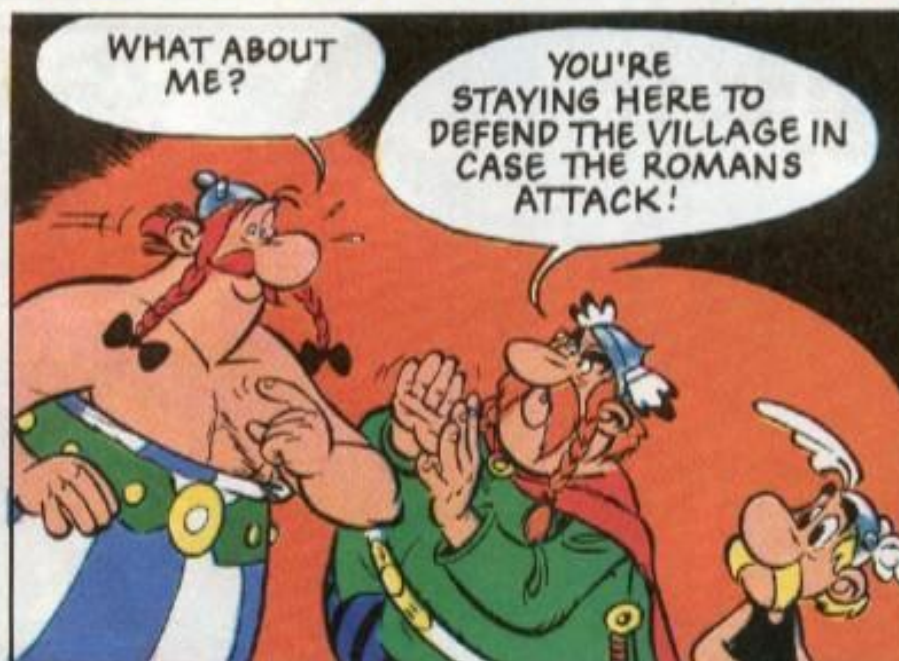
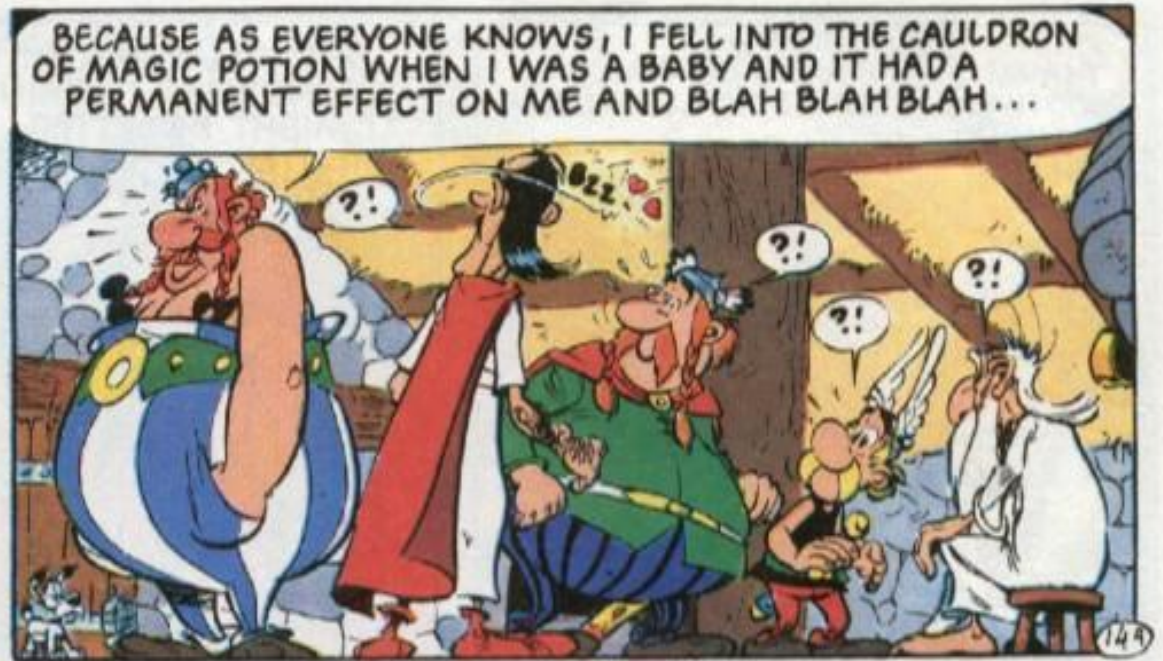
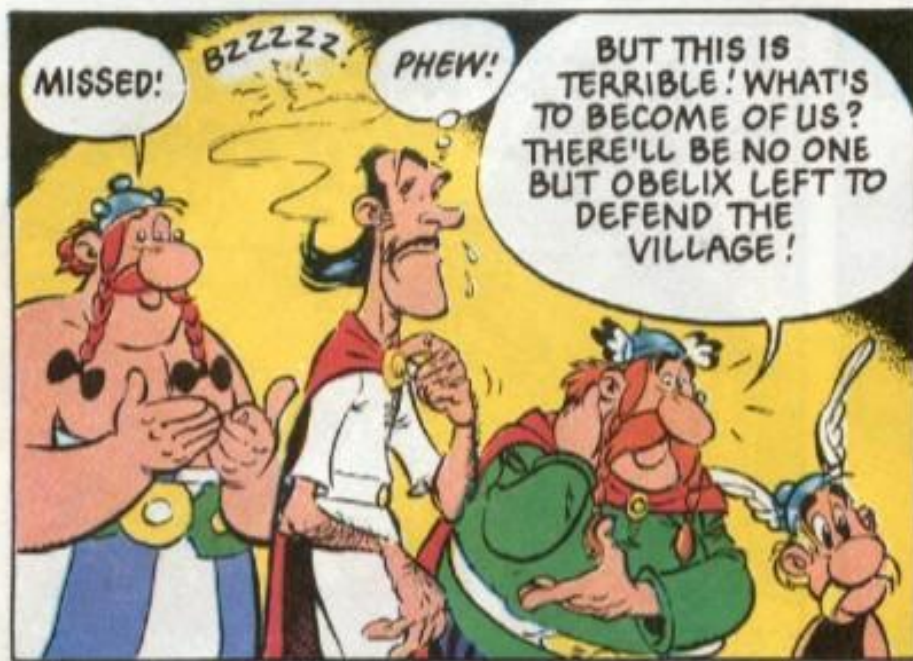
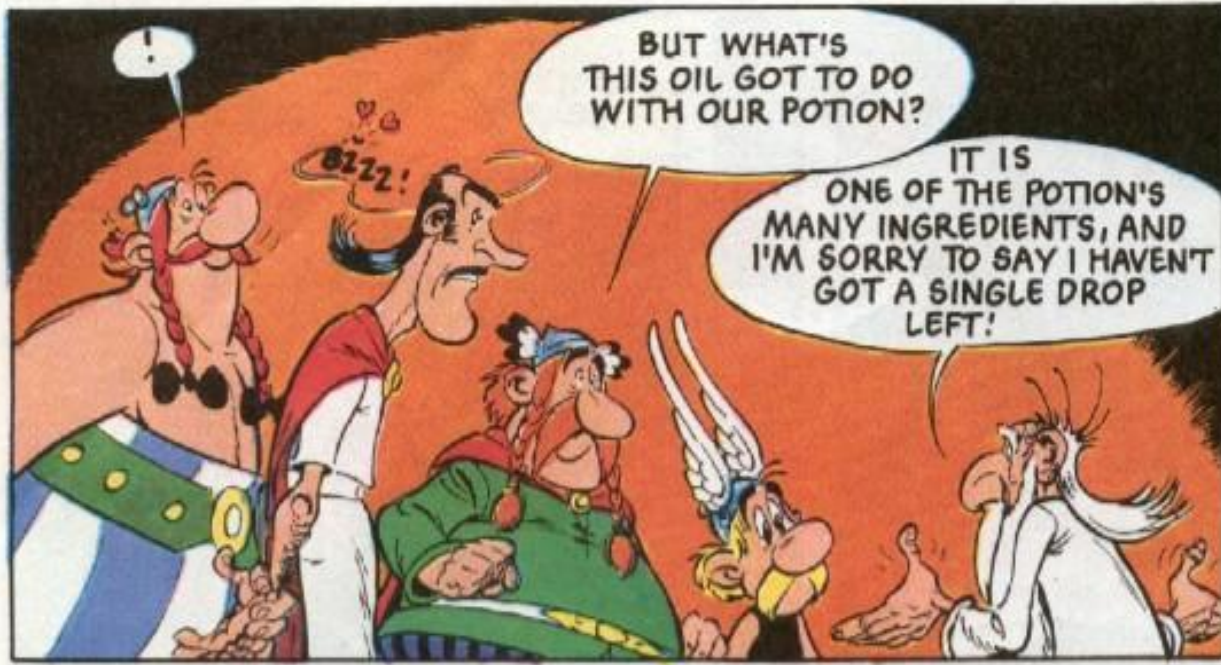
HE'S A BIT TOUCHY, BUT HE'S GOT A HEART OF GOLD!

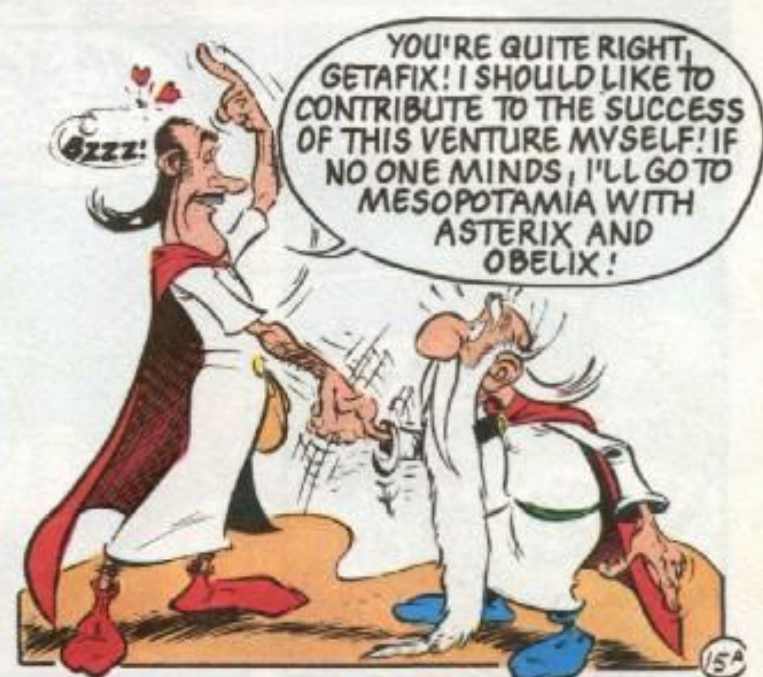
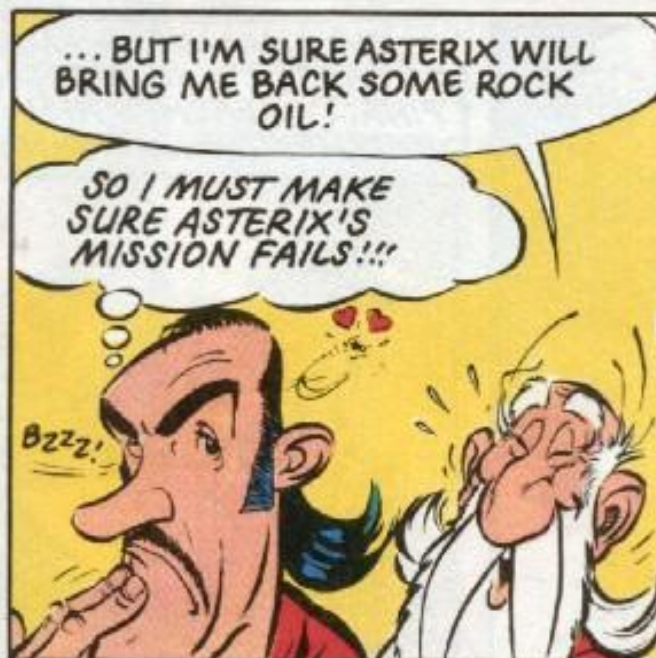
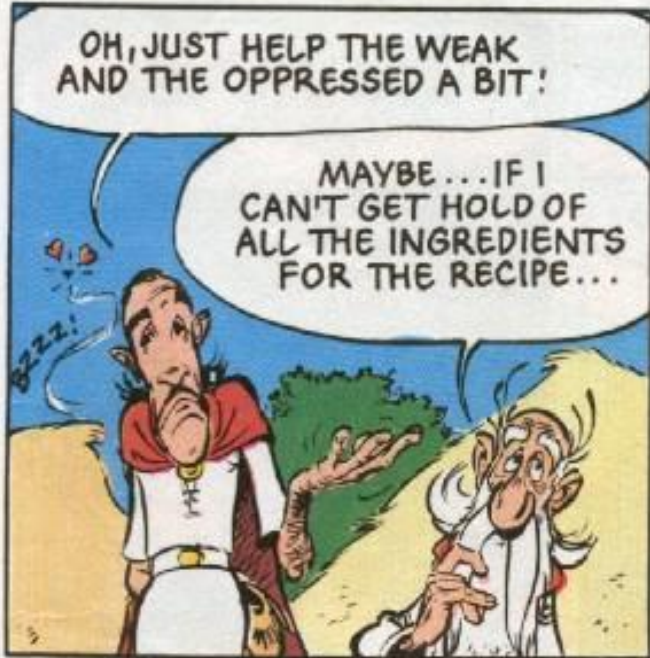
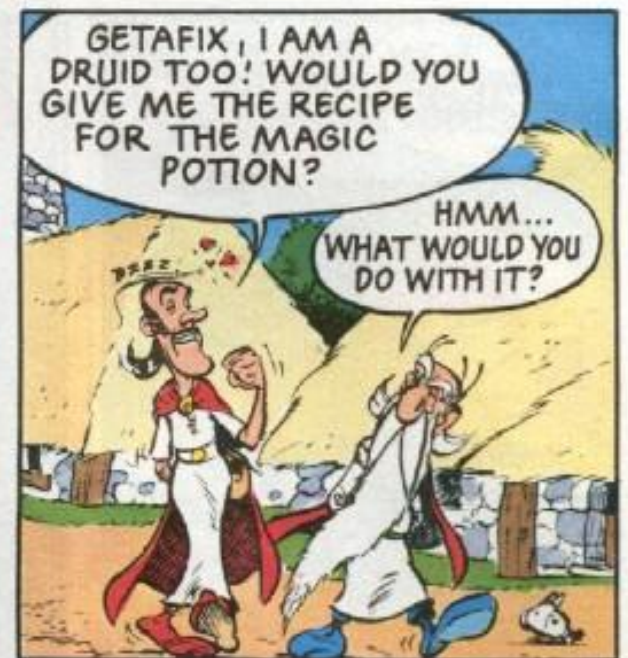
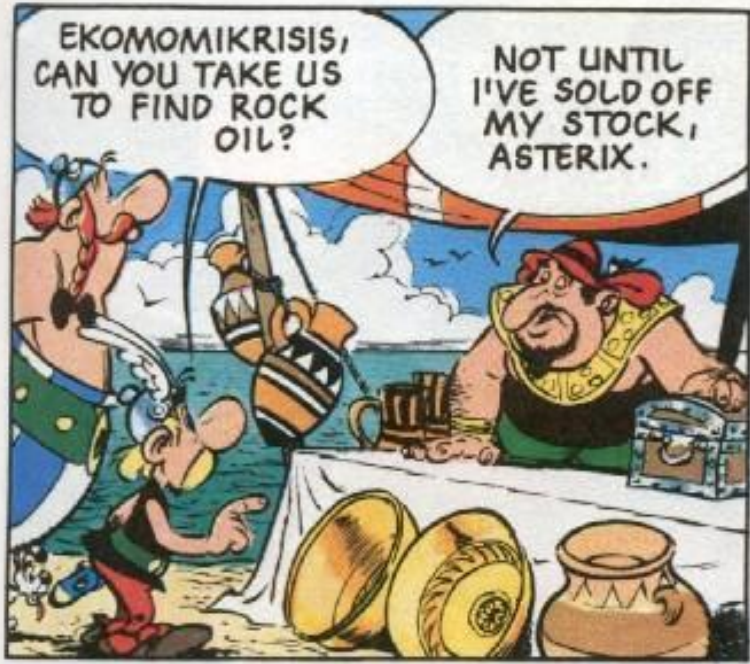


I'M REALLY WORRIED! GETAFIX HASN'T COME ROUND YET!

THIS IS THE TONIC HE NEEDS TO BUCK HIM UP!









NOW, TAKE MY MESSAGE TO SURREPTITIUS!



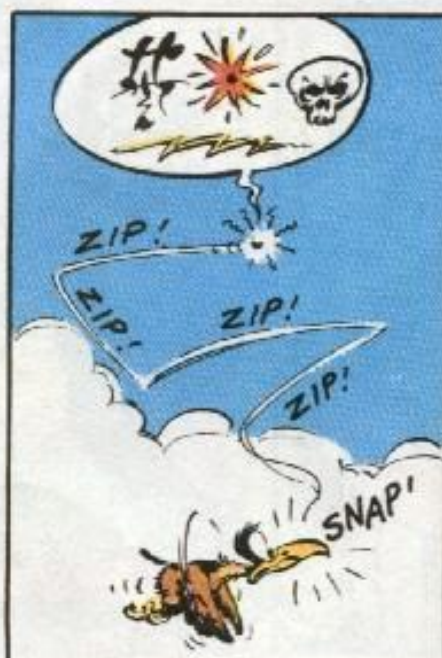
NO DAUWDLING ON THE WAY! IT'S URGENT!



AND SO THE DIFFICULT AND DANGEROUS MISSION OF THE CARRIER FLY BEGINS. FACING STORMS...



...AND MANY OTHER PERILS...



... THE SMALLEST MEMBER OF CAESAR'S SECRET SERVICE FINALLY REACHES HER JOURNEY'S END, WORN OUT.



YUK! A FLY IN MY SOUP!! HOW REVOLTING!!!

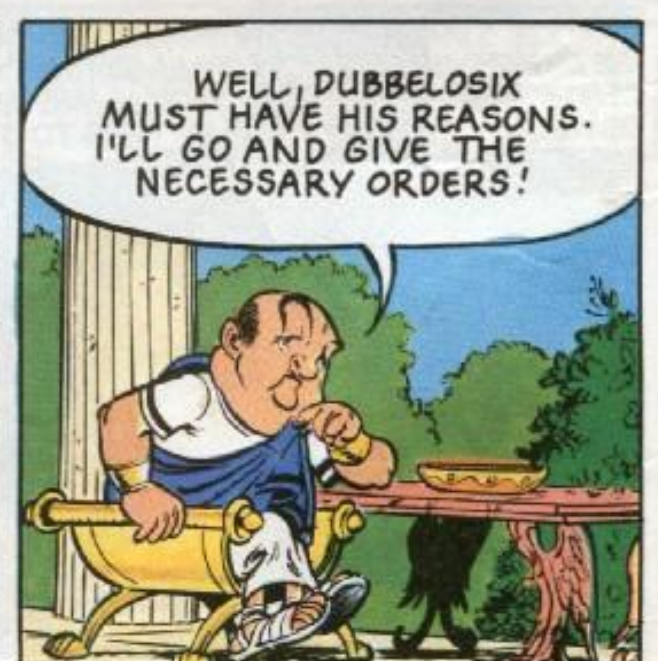


EUGGH!

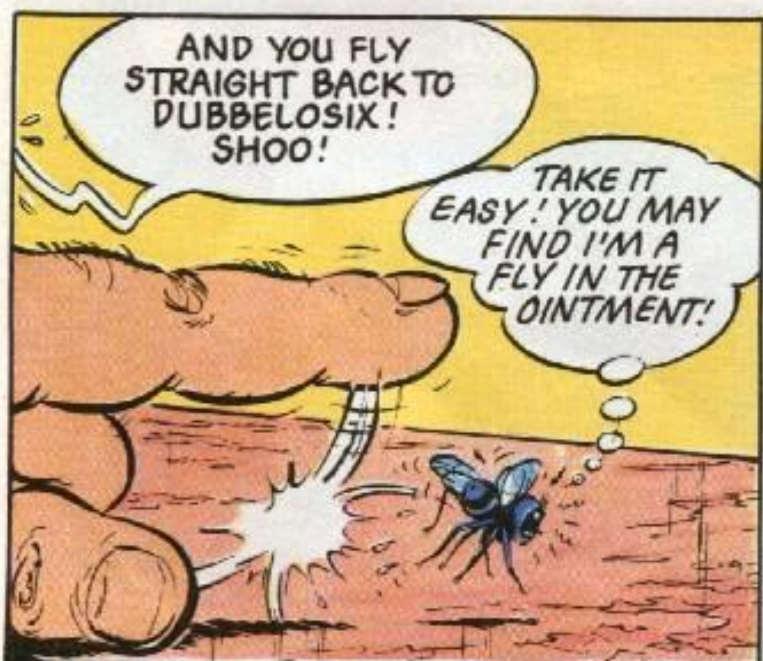
WHY WAS I IN THE SOUP? WHAT'S BUGGING HIM?



LET'S SEE WHAT DUBBELOSIX HAS TO SAY. "AM ON PHOENICIAN SHIP BOUND FOR MESOPOTAMIA, WITH INDOMITABLE GAULS. AT ALL COSTS PREVENT LANDING."



WELL, DUBBELOSIX MUST HAVE HIS REASONS. I'LL GO AND GIVE THE NECESSARY ORDERS!



AND YOU FLY STRAIGHT BACK TO DUBBELOSIX! SHOO!

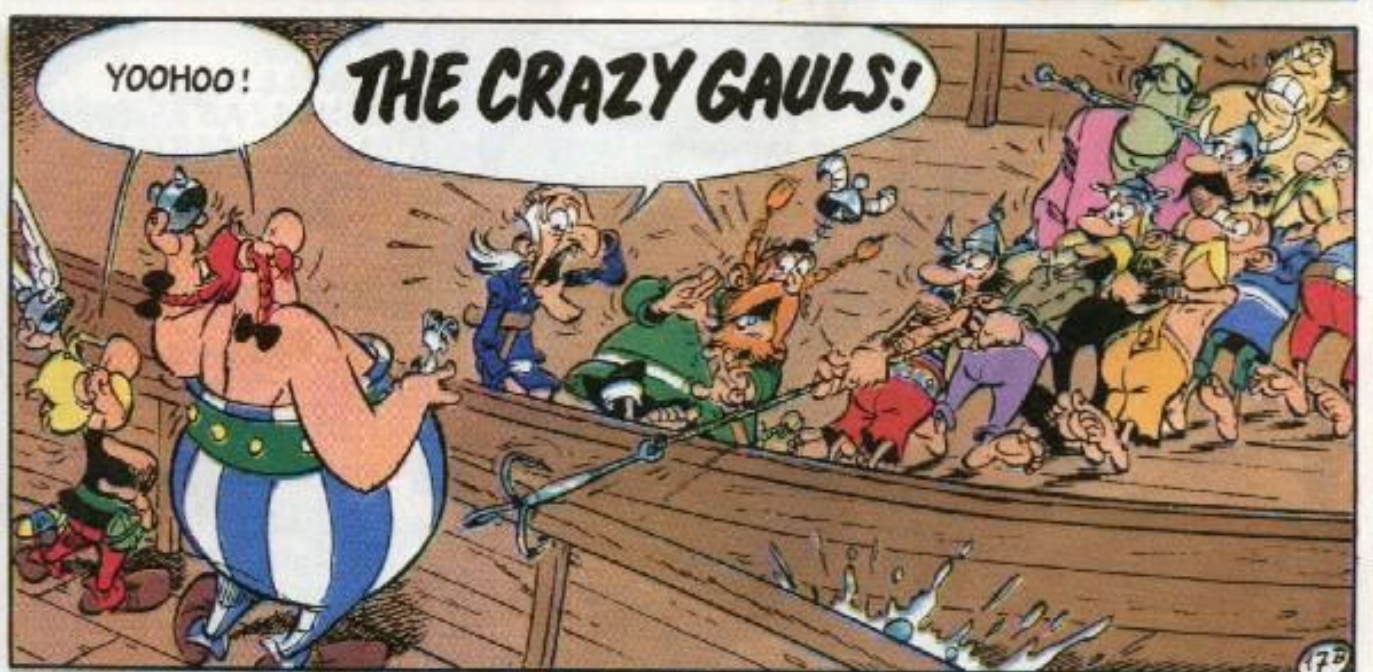
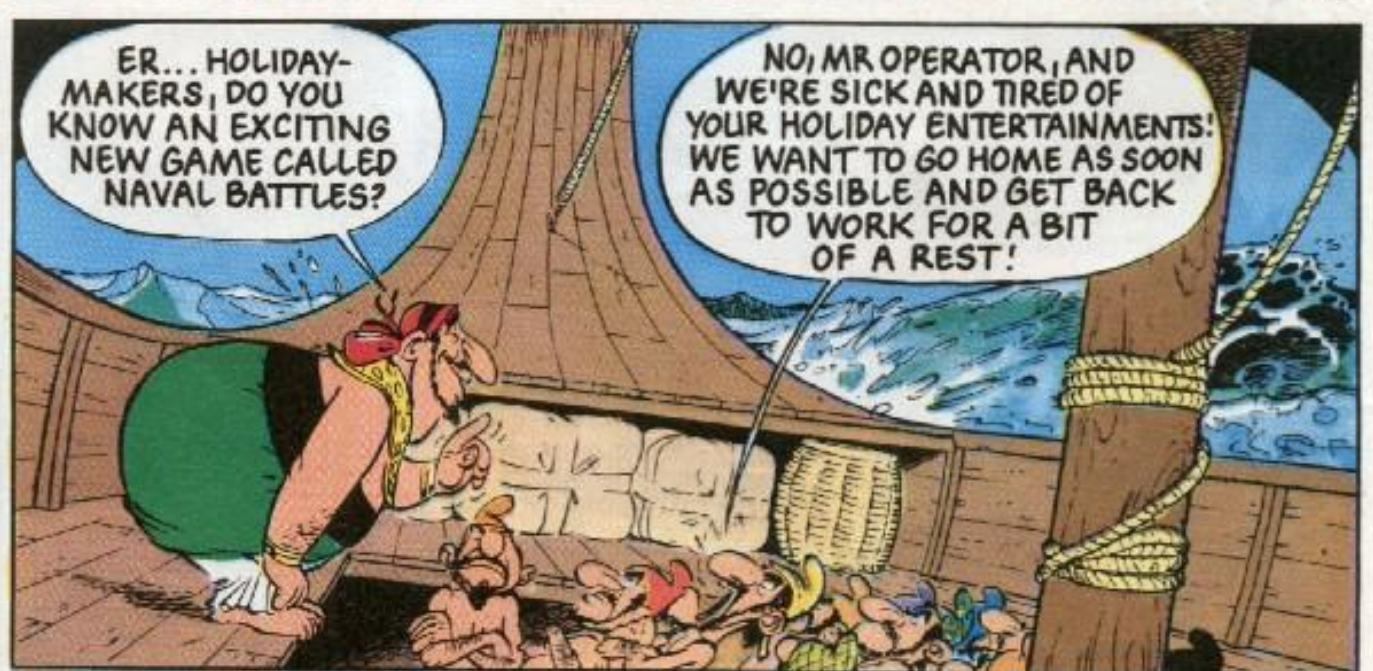
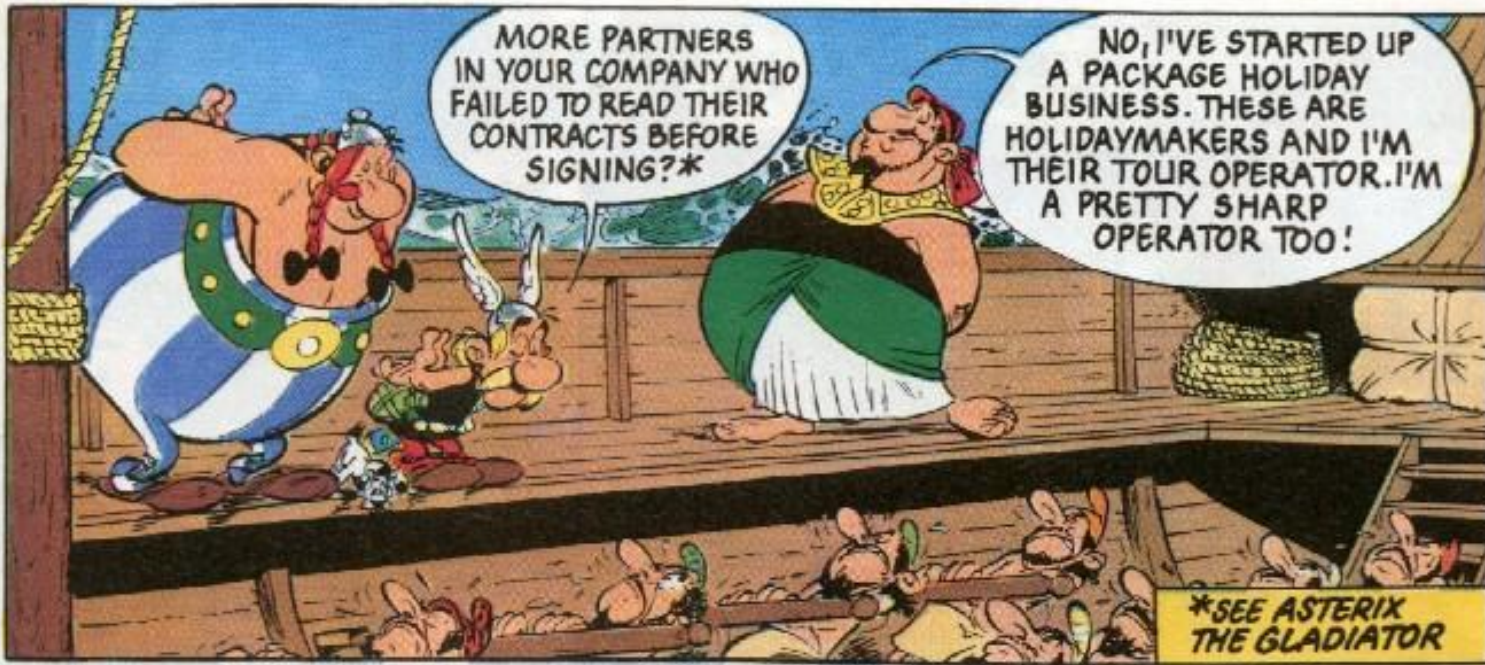
TAKE IT EASY! YOU MAY FIND I'M A FLY IN THE OINTMENT!



MEANWHILE, SAILING THE HIGH SEAS...

IT'S A FUNNY THING, ASTERIX, DUBBELOSIX HASN'T BEEN ATTRACTING INSECTS LATELY!

NO, I FANCY THERE ARE NO FLIES ON HIM!





THEY SEEM A BIT SOFT, ASTERIX, IN SPITE OF THE BRACING SEA BREEZES!

YES, THEY'RE ALL AT SEA, OBELIX!

BOING!

SMACK!



BY ESUS! WE'LL HAVE OUR WORK CUT OUT TO STOP THOSE TWO LANDING SAFELY!



WELL, HOLIDAYMAKERS, DIDN'T I PROMISE YOU GOOD CLEAN FUN ON THIS VOYAGE?

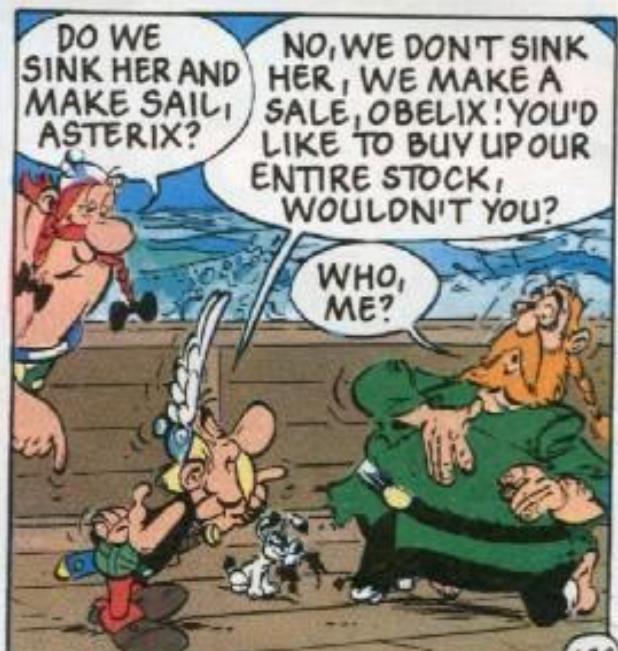
IT'S THE FUNNIEST THING I EVER SAW!

YES, A PITCHED SEA BATTLE ISN'T A BAD NOTION!



SOON AFTERWARDS...

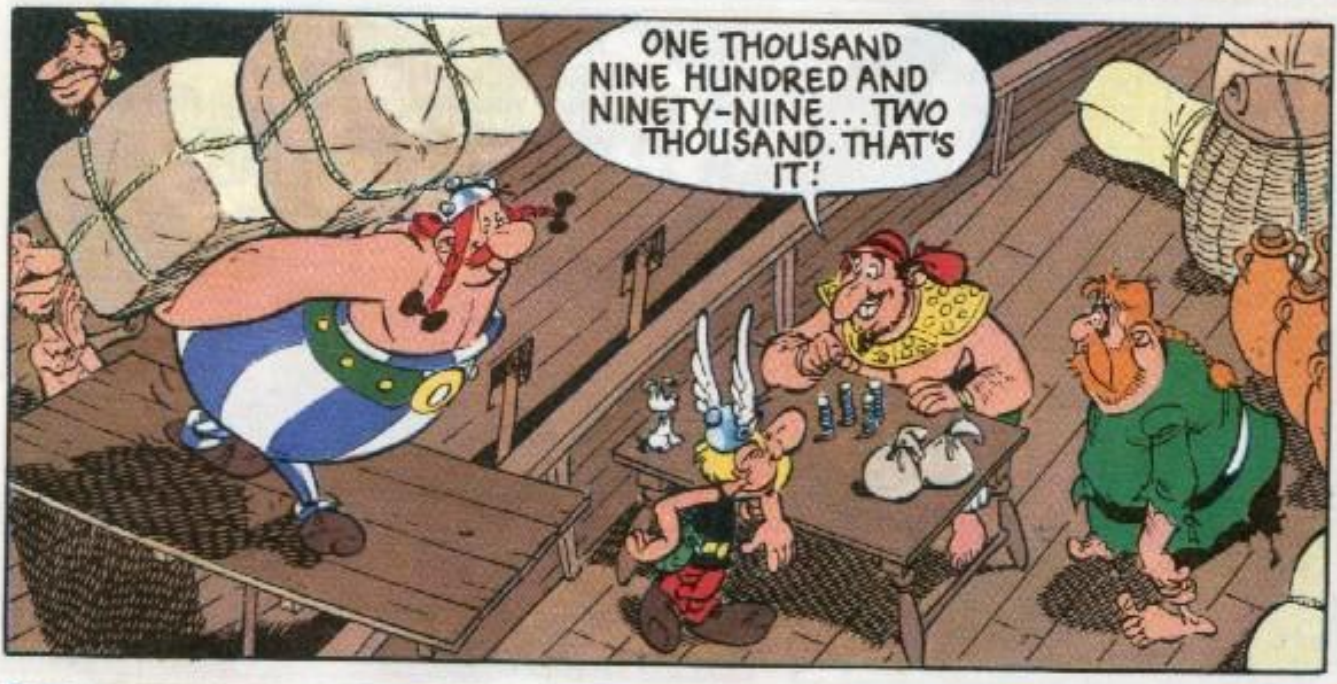
PLEASE SPARE MY SHIP! I HAVEN'T FINISHED PAYING FOR HER YET!



DO WE SINK HER AND MAKE SAIL, ASTERIX?

NO, WE DON'T SINK HER, WE MAKE A SALE, OBELIX! YOU'D LIKE TO BUY UP OUR ENTIRE STOCK, WOULDN'T YOU?

WHO, ME?

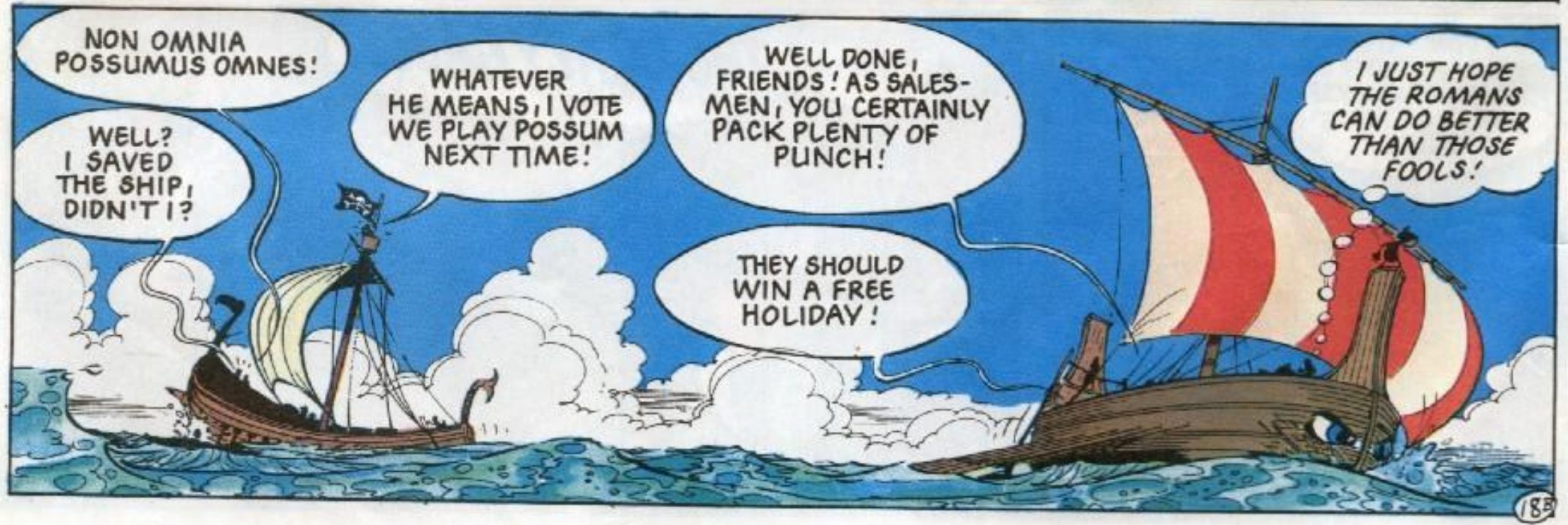


ONE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED AND NINETY-NINE... TWO THOUSAND. THAT'S IT!



YOU'VE RUINED ME! HOW WILL I PAY THE LAST THREE INSTALMENTS ON MY SHIP?

RE-SELL OUR MERCHANDISE, OF COURSE!



NON OMNIA POSSUMUS OMNES!

WELL? I SAVED THE SHIP, DIDN'T I?

WHATEVER HE MEANS, I VOTE WE PLAY POSSUM NEXT TIME!

WELL DONE, FRIENDS! AS SALESMEN, YOU CERTAINLY PACK PLENTY OF PUNCH!

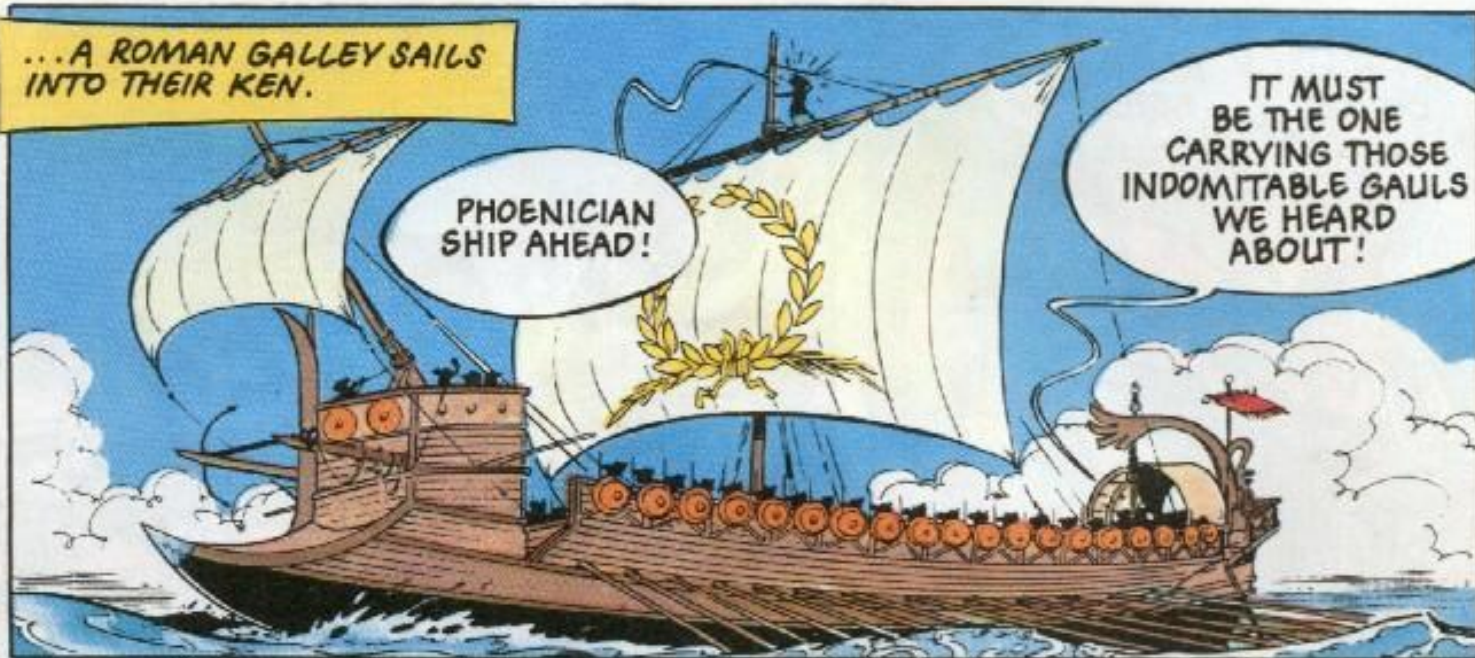
THEY SHOULD WIN A FREE HOLIDAY!

I JUST HOPE THE ROMANS CAN DO BETTER THAN THOSE FOOLS!



AND JUST THEN...

SAIL
AHOY, MR
OPERATOR!



... A ROMAN GALLEY SAILS
INTO THEIR KEN.

PHOENICIAN
SHIP AHEAD!

IT MUST
BE THE ONE
CARRYING THOSE
INDOMITABLE GAULS
WE HEARD
ABOUT!



NOW FOR
A GREAT DISPLAY
OF NAVAL
OPERATIONS,
ROMAN FASHION!
MY MAGNUM
OPUS! *

REMEMBER
CAESAR WANTS
THIS OP TO
SUCCEED,
CAPTAIN!

*IN FACT, THE
CAPTAIN'S OP. No. 1



GOODY!
ROMANS! NOW
FOR SOME FUN
AT LAST!

SOMETHING
TELLS ME
THEY'RE NOT
HERE FOR
FUN!

THE FLY HAS
DELIVERED MY MESSAGE
ALL RIGHT! WELL DONE
THE SECRET
SERVICE!

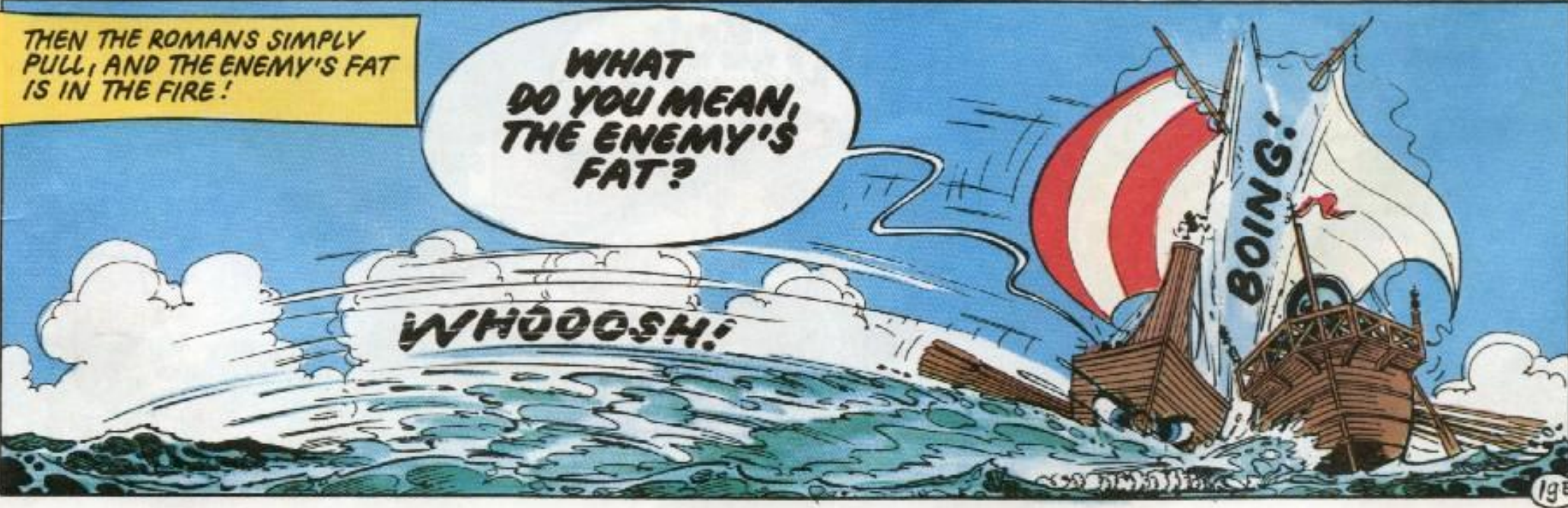
CLAP!
CLAP!
CLAP!

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WE NOW HAVE A CHANCE TO OBSERVE THE SUPERBLY EFFICIENT BOARDING TACTICS PRACTISED BY THE ROMAN NAVY. FIRST, BALLISTAE THROW OUT GRAPPLING HOOKS...



THEN THE ROMANS SIMPLY PULL, AND THE ENEMY'S FAT IS IN THE FIRE!

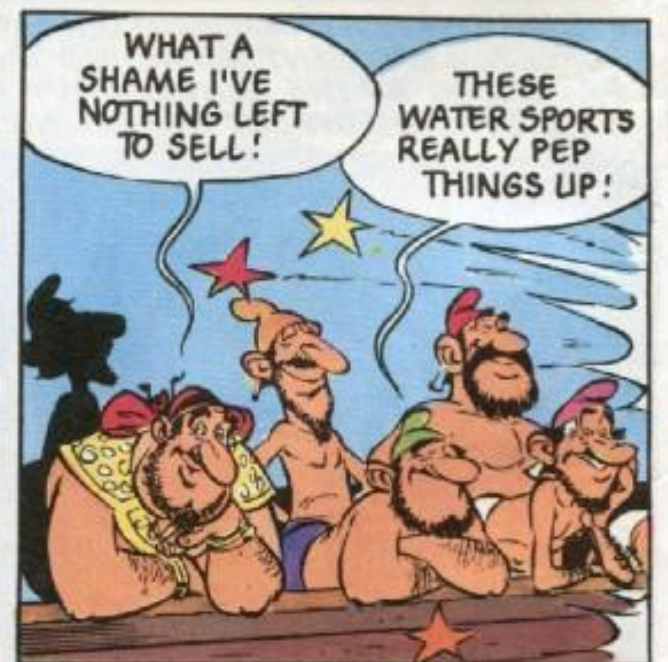
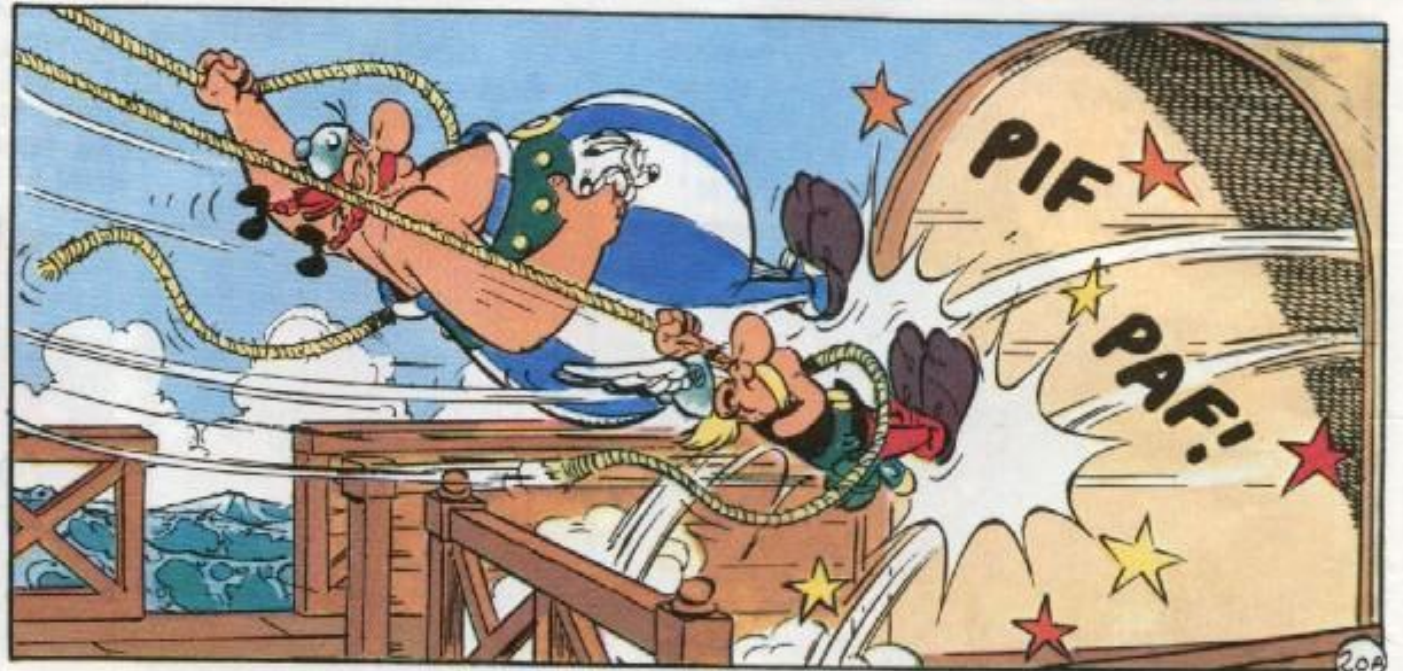
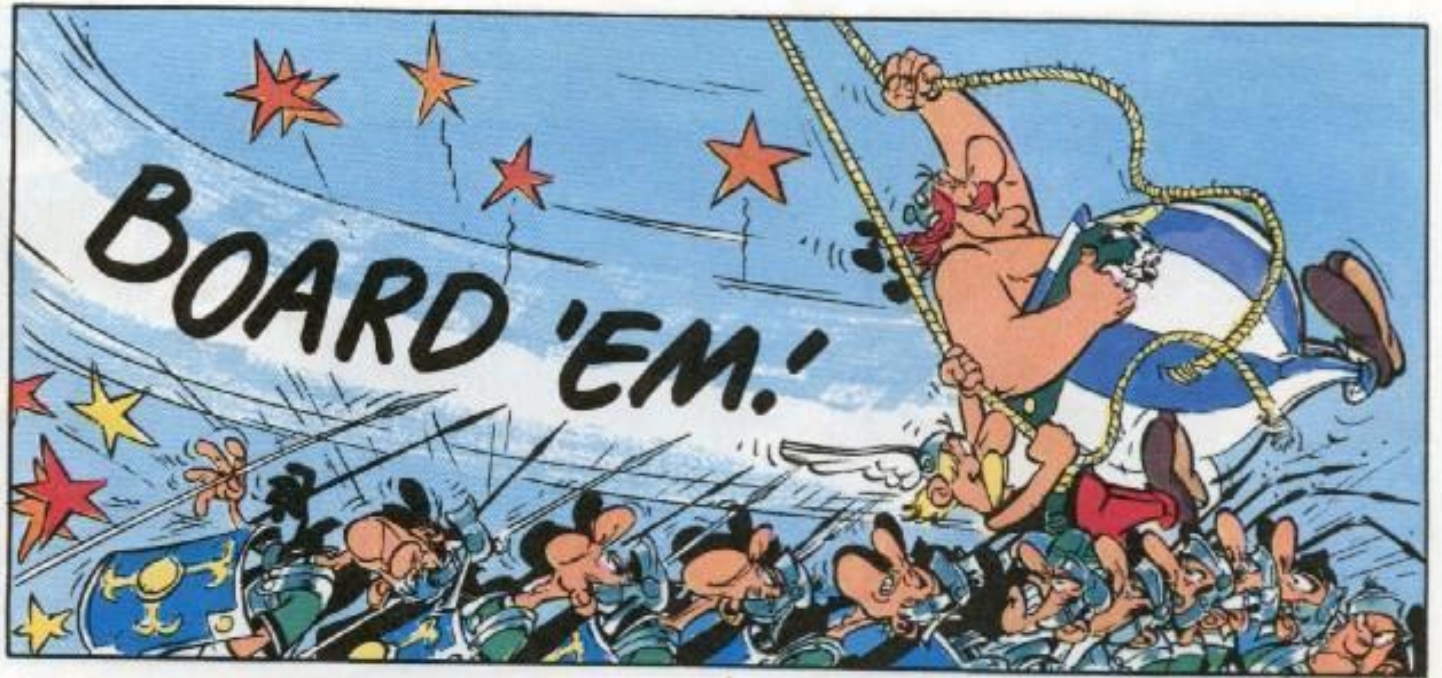


WHAT
DO YOU MEAN,
THE ENEMY'S
FAT?

WHOOOSH!

BOING!

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AND ONCE AGAIN...

ROMAN GALLEY AHoy, MR OPERATOR.

... THE NOW CLASSIC BOARDING TACTICS...

BONG!

... ARE FOLLOWED BY AN EQUALLY TRADITIONAL FIGHT AND ITS AFTERMATH.

WE'RE HAVING FUN, AREN'T WE, ASTERIX?

YES, BUT IT SEEMS ODD FOR THE ROMANS TO BE SO KEEN ON FIGHTING US, OBELIX!

EVERY TIME I SEE IT AGAIN I FIND SOMETHING ELSE TO APPRECIATE!

BUT IN ROME...

BY JUPITER, THEY SHALL FEEL THE ANGER OF CAESAR! I'LL HAVE ALL THE MEDITERRANEAN PORTS BLOCKADED!

AND LOOK SHARP! I DON'T EXPECT MY NAVAL COMMANDERS TO STOP AND CONTEMPLATE ANY NAVELS! *

*POPULAR MEDITERRANEAN FRUIT

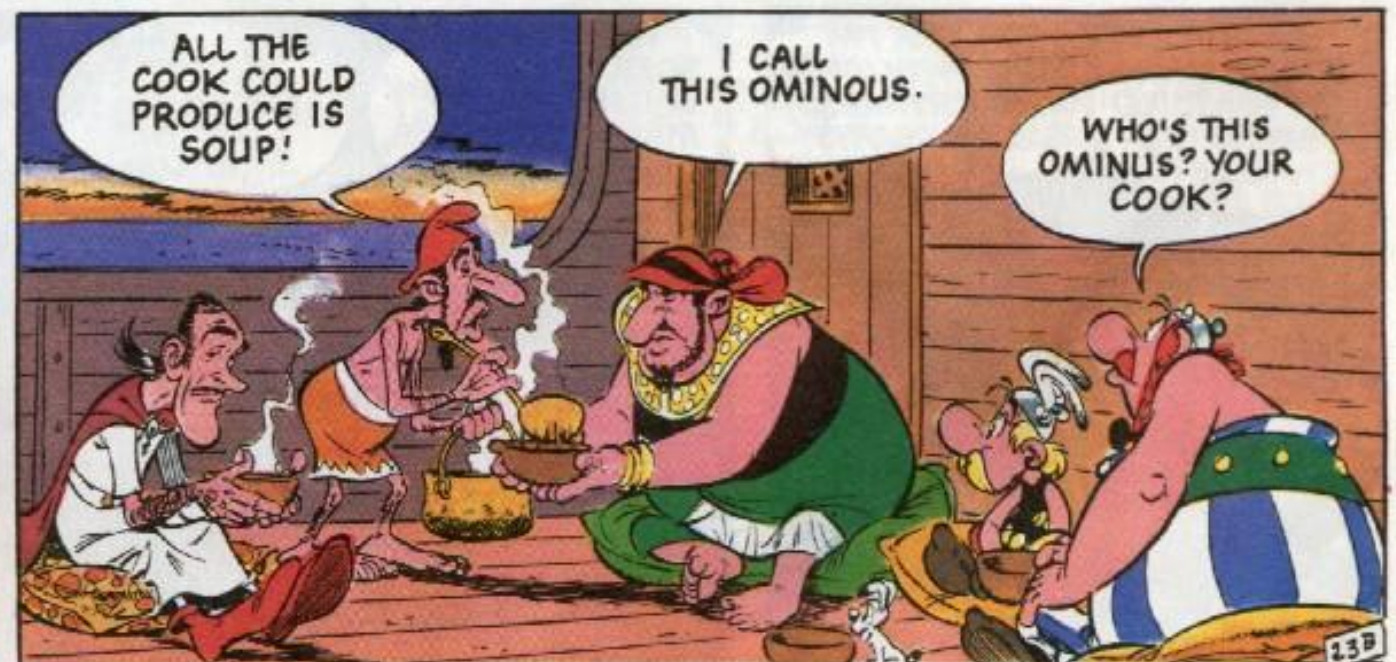
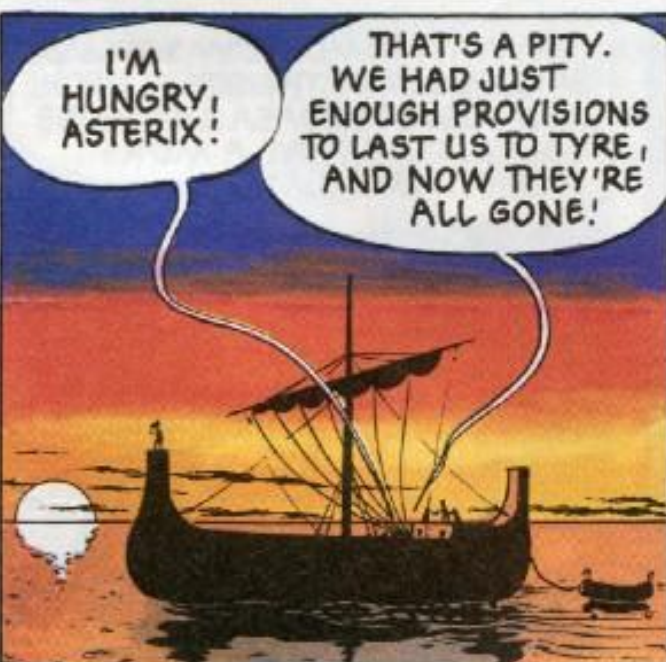
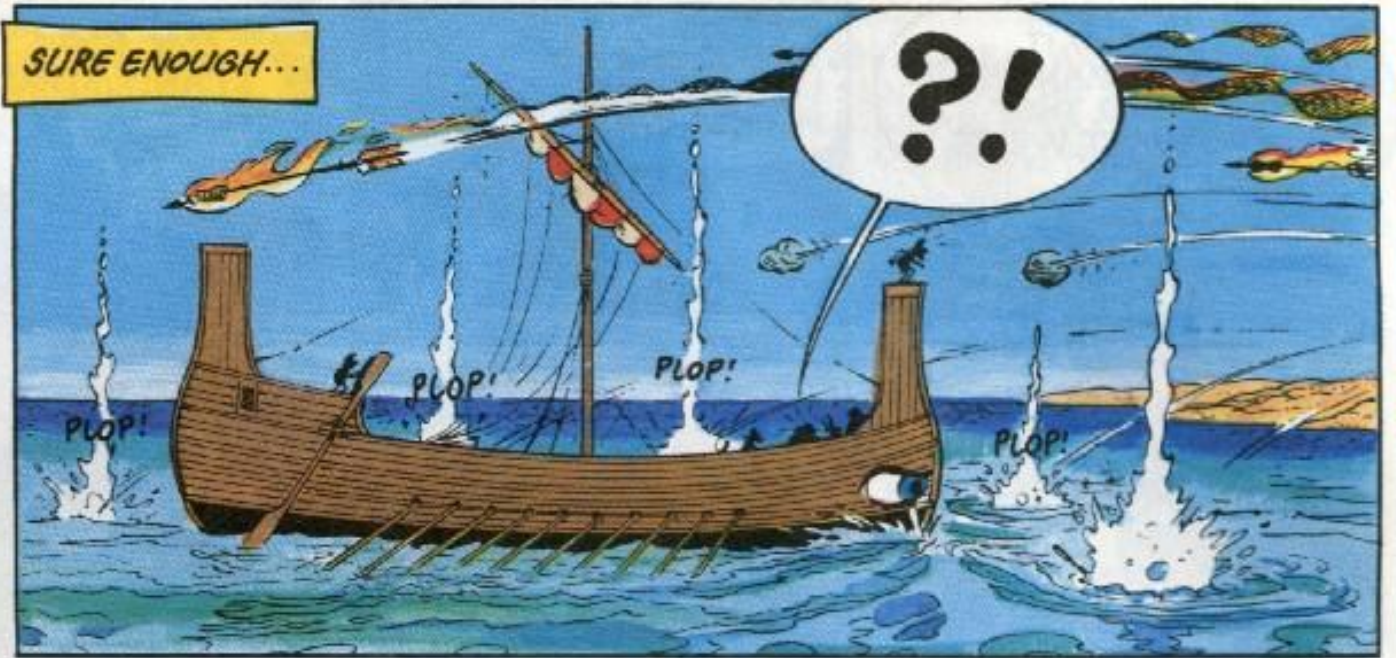
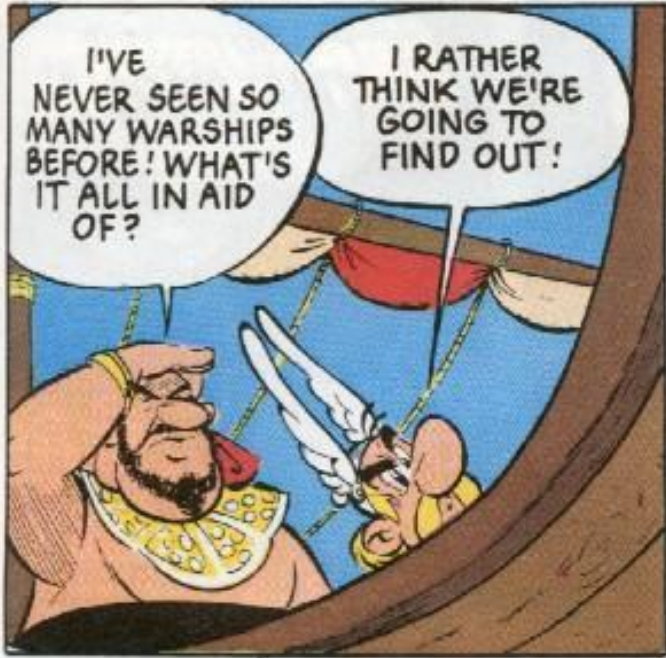
I WANT TO MAKE SURE NOT EVEN A FLY COULD GET THROUGH THE NET!

HM... AND THINKING OF FLIES...

SURREPTITIUS!

ANY NEWS OF YOUR AGENT DUBBEL... DUBBEL SOMETHING?

I'M AFRAID WE HAVE A COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEM, O CAESAR!





I'M SURE OF IT NOW: THE ROMANS HAVE BEEN WARNED. THEY KNOW WHAT WE'RE AFTER!



ER... BUT HOW COULD THAT BE? WE ARE THE ONLY ONES WHO...



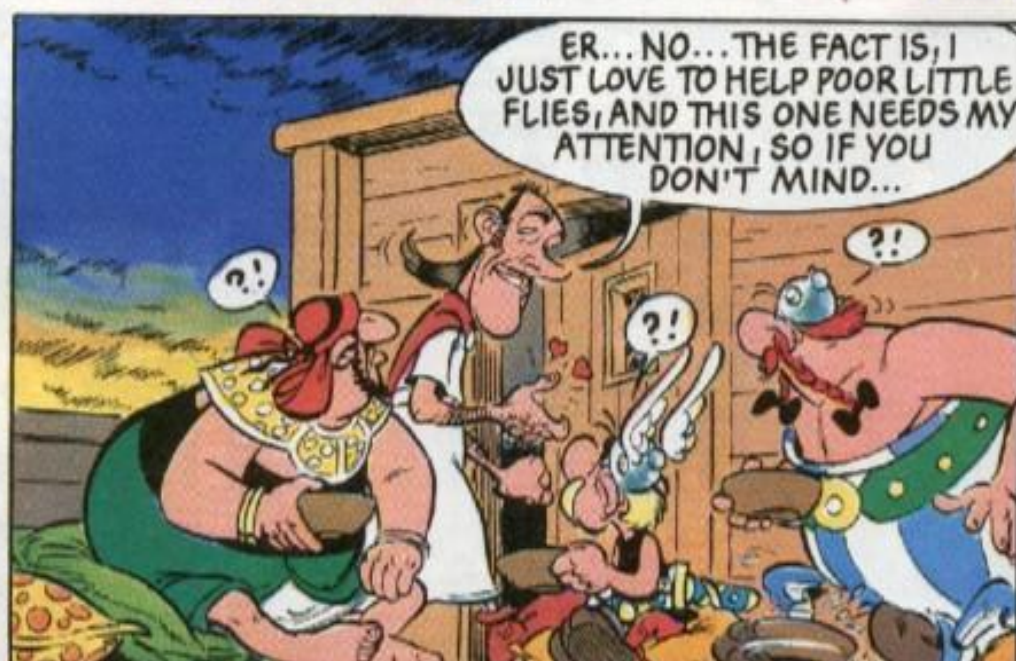
OH NO! I CAN'T STAND FLIES IN MY SOUP!!!



?!?! BUT... IT'S THE BUG!



YOU CAN SEE WE'RE GETTING NEAR THE COAST; HE'S ATTRACTING THEM AGAIN!

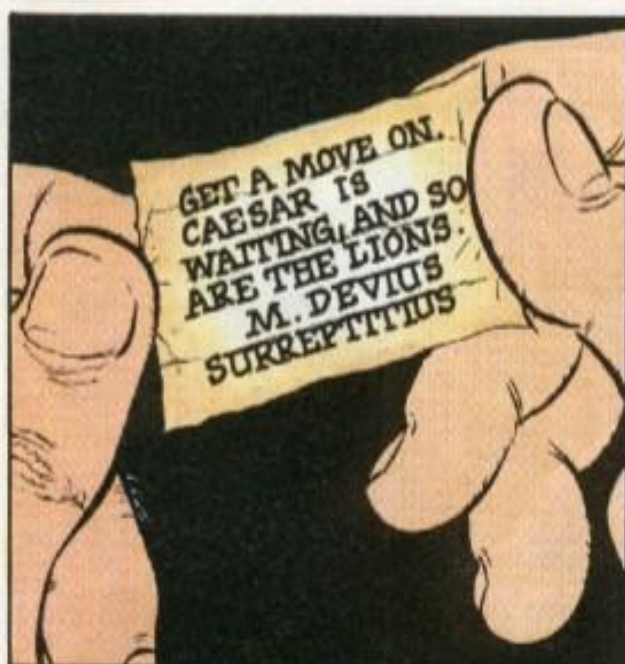


ER... NO... THE FACT IS, I JUST LOVE TO HELP POOR LITTLE FLIES, AND THIS ONE NEEDS MY ATTENTION, SO IF YOU DON'T MIND...

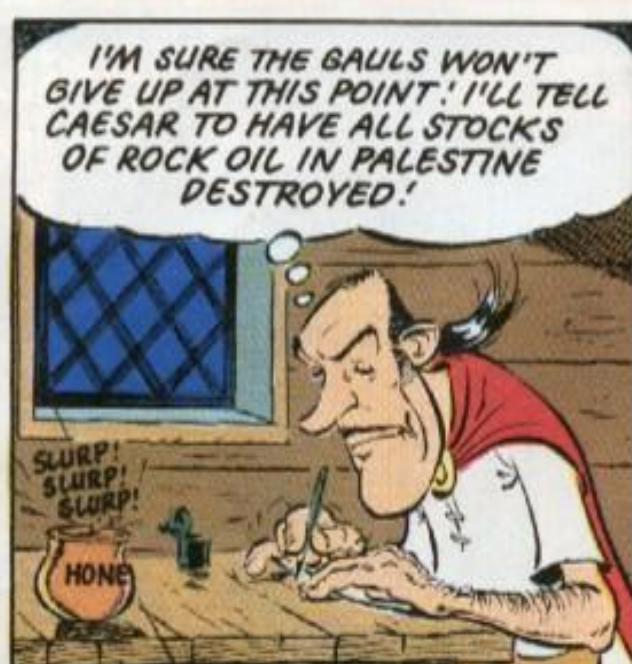


THAT DRUID IS CRAZY!

HOWEVER, HE WOULDN'T HURT A FLY!



GET A MOVE ON. CAESAR IS WAITING, AND SO ARE THE LIONS. M. DEVIUS SURREPTIUS



I'M SURE THE GAULS WON'T GIVE UP AT THIS POINT! I'LL TELL CAESAR TO HAVE ALL STOCKS OF ROCK OIL IN PALESTINE DESTROYED!



PHEW! THAT'S BETTER! THE WORST OF THESE LONG-DISTANCE FLIGHTS IS THE JET-LAG!



BE QUICK! SUCCESS AND MY FORTUNE DEPEND ON YOU!

TO THINK I'M STUCK WITH LOVING HIM! MEN ARE SO INCONSIDERATE!



WE'RE VERY SORRY TO HAVE CAUSED YOU SO MANY PROBLEMS, EKONOMIKRISIS!

OH, I RATHER LIKE COCKING A SNOOK AT THE ROMANS!



ANYWAY, TOMORROW WE'LL BE SAILING DOWN THE COAST OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAEA. I PROMISE YOU'LL FIND THAT A MORE HOSPITABLE LAND!

NEXT MORNING...

THERE'S THE PROMISED LAND, ASTERIX!

GO TO JERUSALEM AND TELL SAMSON ALIUS I SENT YOU. HE'S MY SUPPLIER: YOU'LL BE ABLE TO GET ROCK OIL FROM HIM.



THANKS, EKONOMI-KRISIS! SEE YOU SOON, MAYBE!

I HOPE SO! TRAVELLING WITH YOU IS AN ENRICHING EXPERIENCE!

AND I'M STILL HUNGRY! DO YOU THINK THERE ARE ANY WILD BOARS HERE?

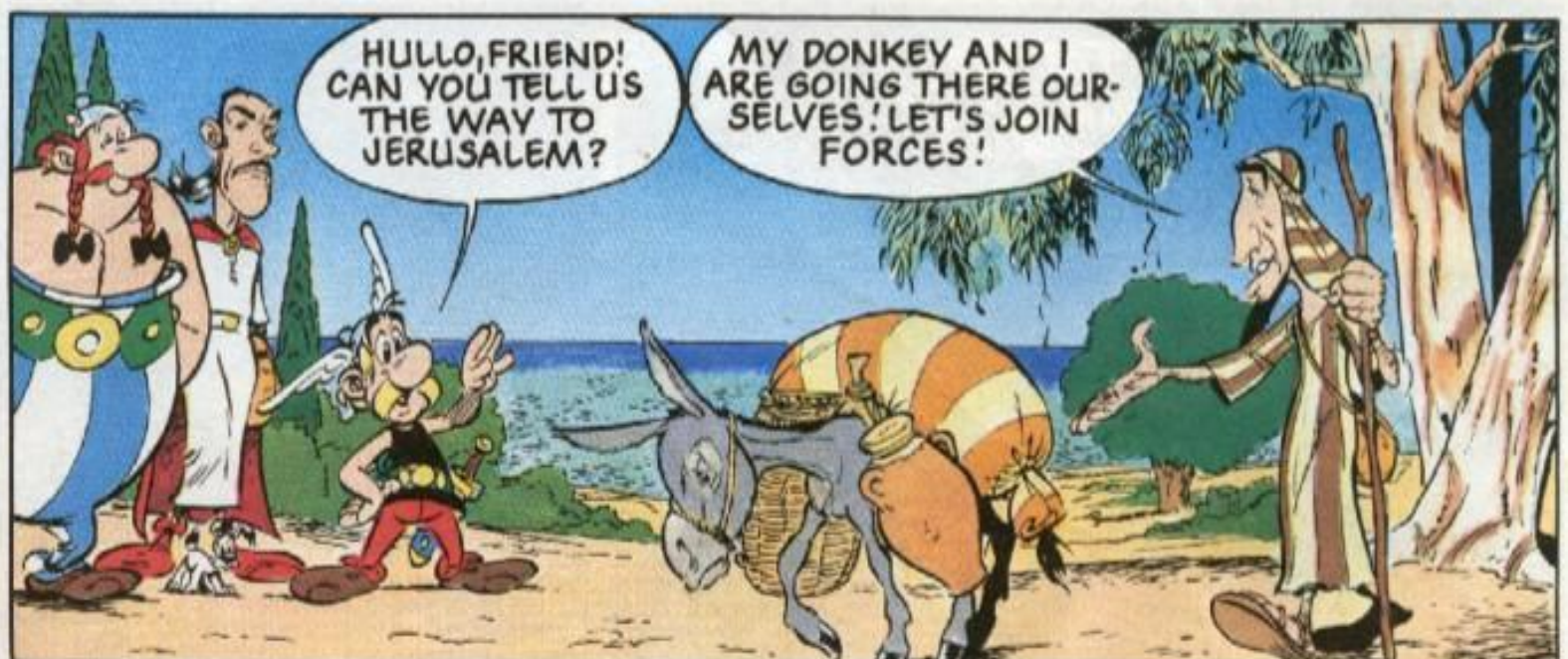
NEVER MIND THAT. WE'VE GOT TO FIND OUR WAY!



THERE'S SOMEONE WHO MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP US!

HULLO, FRIEND! CAN YOU TELL US THE WAY TO JERUSALEM?

MY DONKEY AND I ARE GOING THERE OURSELVES! LET'S JOIN FORCES!



MY NAME'S JOSHUA BEN ZEDRIN.

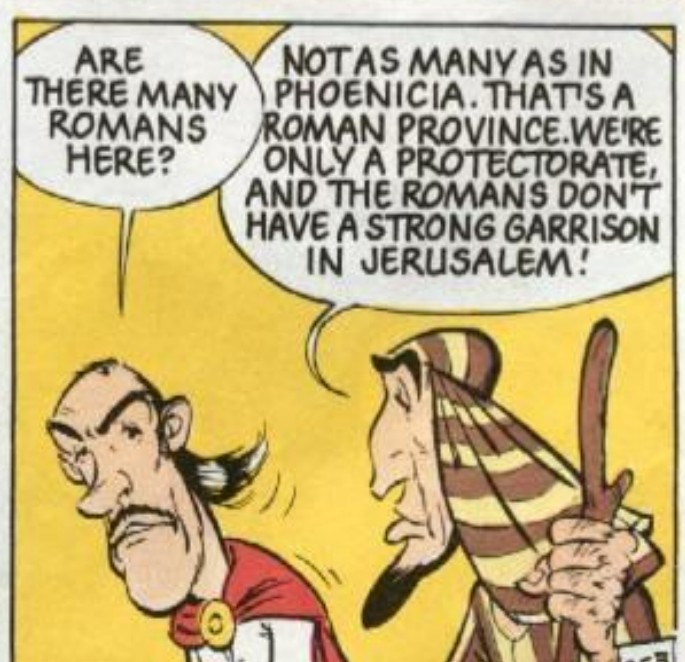
I'M ASTERIX. MEET OBELIX, DOGMATIX, AND DUBBELOSIX THE DRUID!

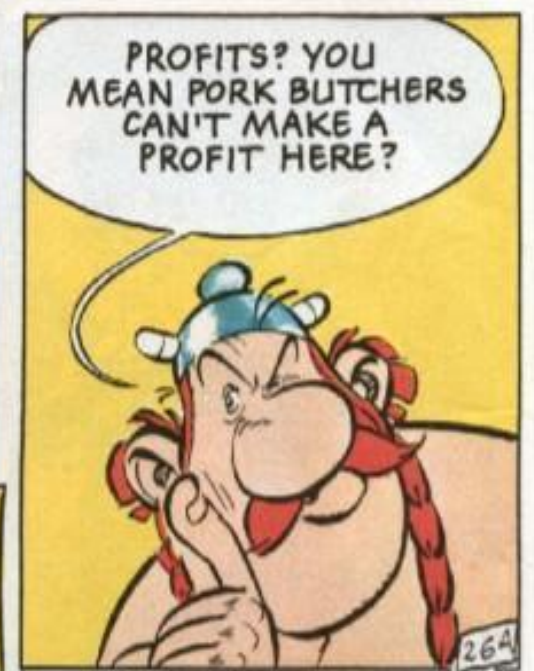
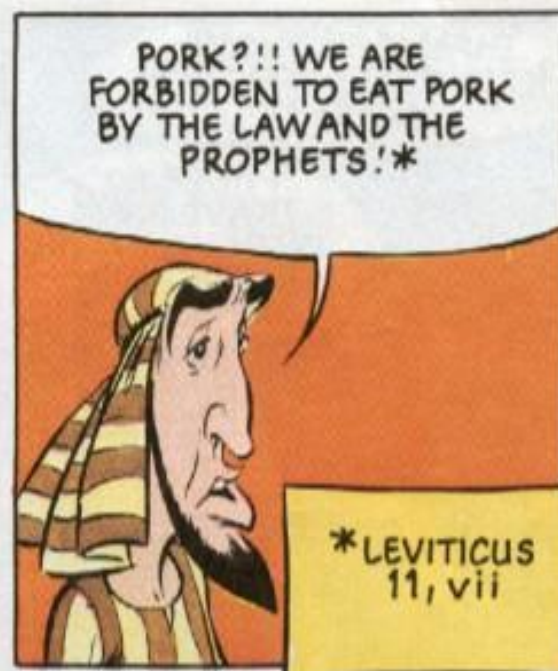
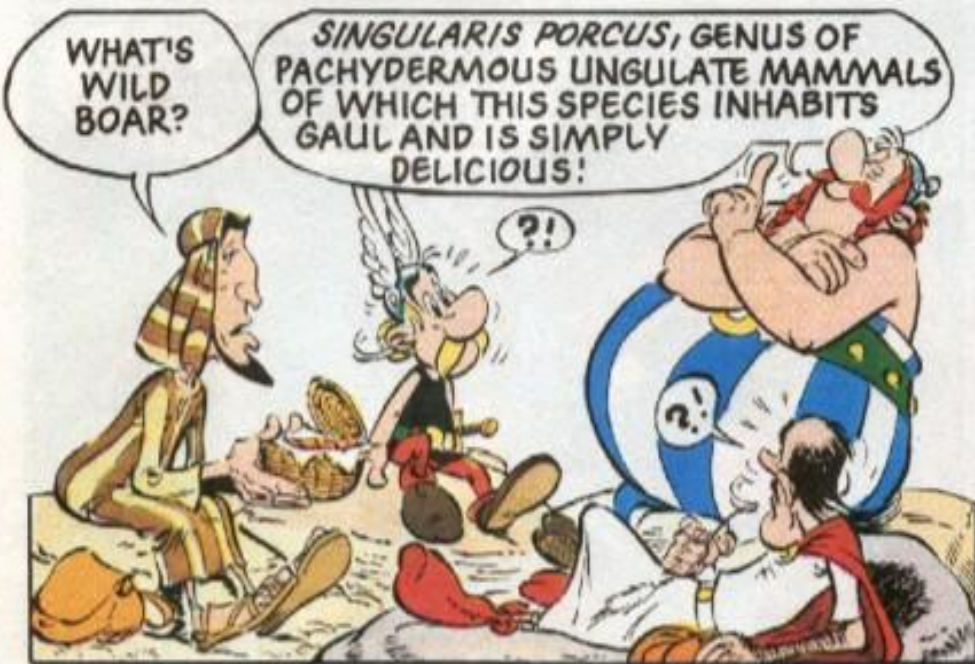
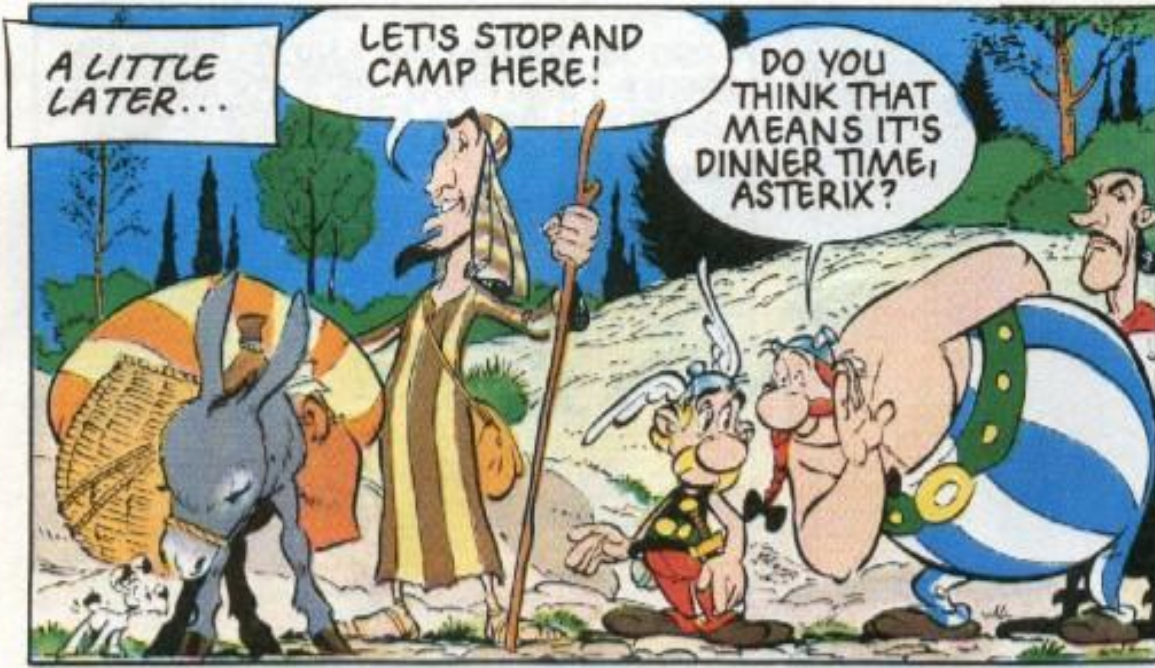
WE'VE COME FROM GAUL TO BUY ROCK OIL FROM THE MERCHANT SAMSON ALIUS.

I WOULDN'T HAVE THOUGHT ANYONE WOULD COME SO FAR FOR THAT!

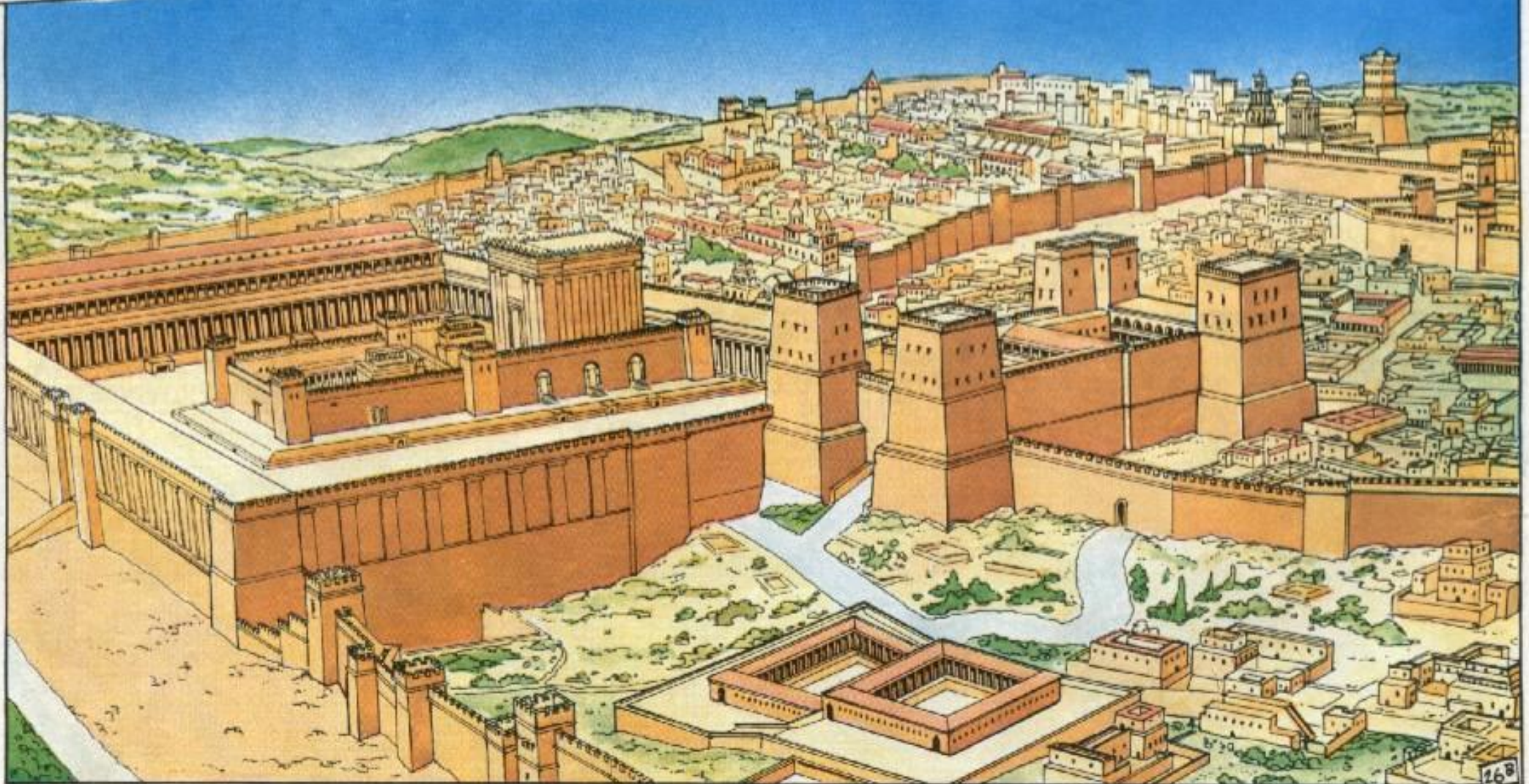
ARE THERE MANY ROMANS HERE?

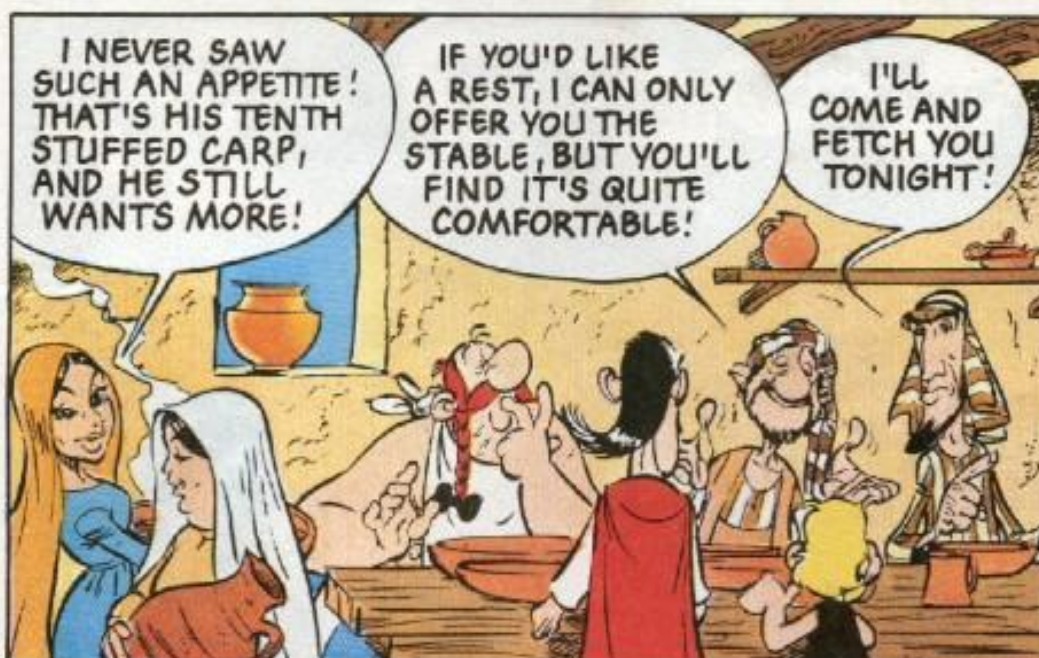
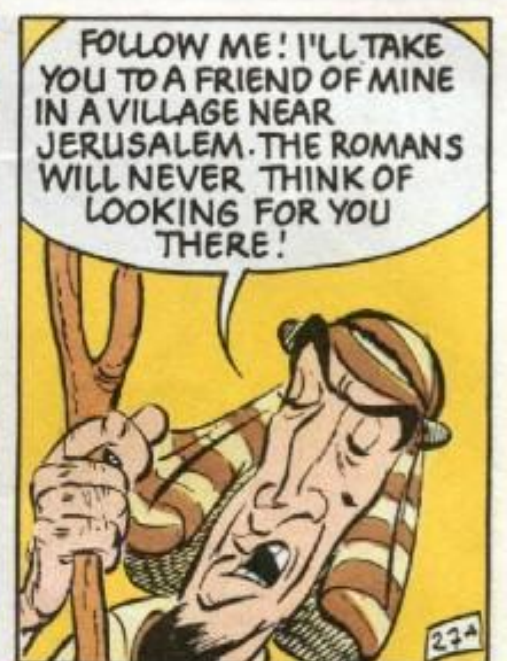
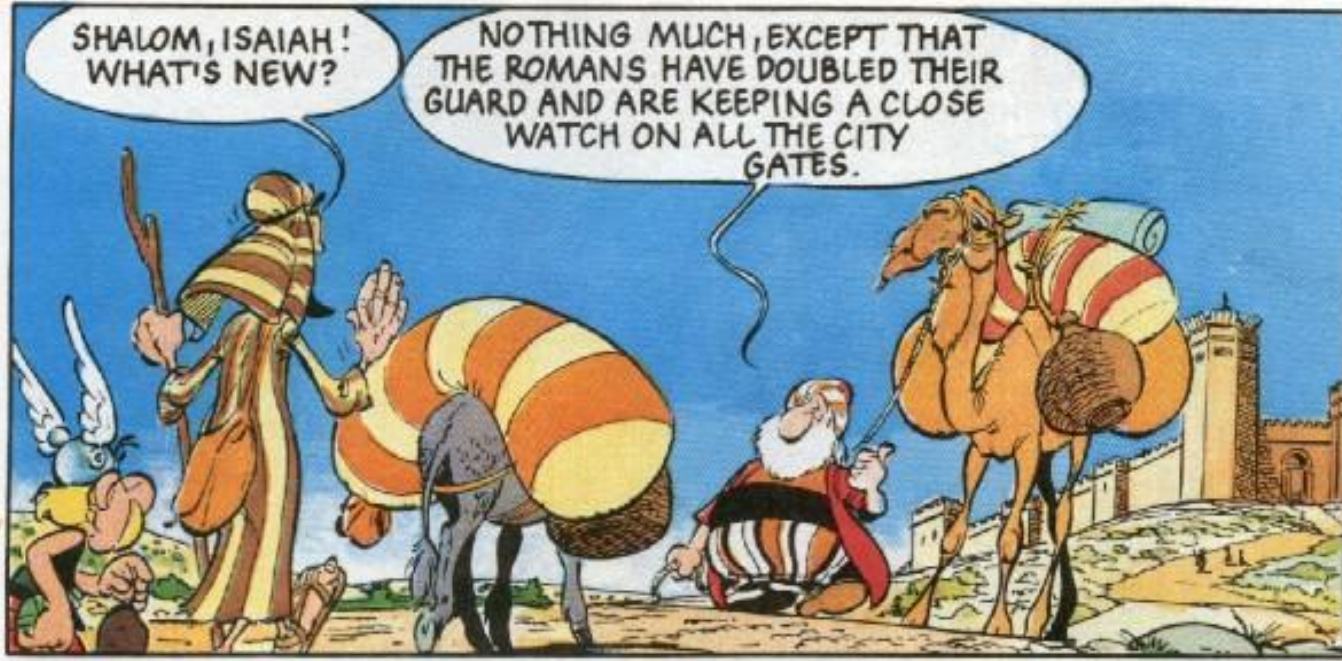
NOT AS MANY AS IN PHOENICIA. THAT'S A ROMAN PROVINCE. WE'RE ONLY A PROTECTORATE, AND THE ROMANS DON'T HAVE A STRONG GARRISON IN JERUSALEM!





AT LAST, AFTER SEVERAL DAYS ON THE ROAD, OUR FRIENDS ARRIVE IN JERUSALEM, THE GREAT ROYAL CITY BEHIND ITS HIGH WALLS, LATER TO OPEN ITS GATES TO ALL THE FAITHS OF THE WORLD.







TIME TO LEAVE!
THERE ARE FRIENDS
WAITING FOR US ON
THE WALLS OF
JERUSALEM!



HERE WE ARE!
KEEP QUIET: I'M
AFRAID THE ROMANS
MIGHT SURPRISE
US!

THEY'RE
THE ONES WHO'D BE
SURPRISED!

I MUST TIP
OFF THE SENTRIES
SOMEHOW... SUPPOSE
I TIP MYSELF
OFF?



YOUR
TURN!



HERE
GOES!



OUCH!

?!



OUCH! EEEK! OW!
I HURT
MYSELF!

OH, SHUT
HIM UP,
OBELIX!!!



IF YOU'VE
QUITE FINISHED
WAILING...!

BONK!



THE... THE
ROMANS!!!

GOODY,
GOODY, GOODY!

IT'S THEM!
GET THEM!

WOOF!



THESE ROMANS ARE CRAZY! I'M AT MY BEST WITH MY BACK TO THE WALL!

I'M COMING, OBELIX!

WHOOOSH!

GRRRR!

GLUG!
GLUG!
GLUG!



BADABLAM!



QUICK, OVER THE WALL! THE ROMANS ARE ON THE ALERT NOW!

I WOULDN'T CALL THIS LOT VERY ALERT AT THE MOMENT.

YES, THEY SEEM A BIT SOFT ON TERRA FIRMA!

29A

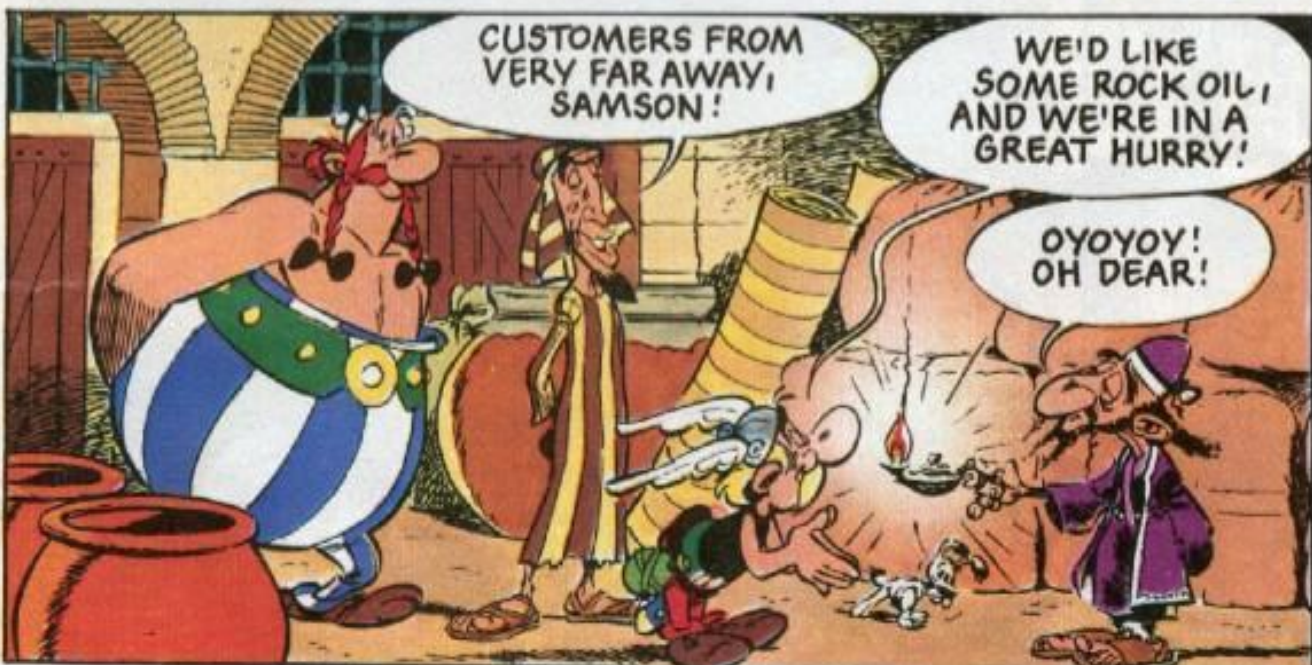


BY YAHVEH! YOU AND THOSE ROMANS... IT WAS LIKE DAVID FACING GOLIATH, BUT WHAT A BEATING THEY TOOK!

YES, AND I'M NOT SORRY TO BE RID OF THAT SPYING DRUID EITHER!



THIS IS WHERE SAMSON ALIAS THE MERCHANT LIVES.



CUSTOMERS FROM VERY FAR AWAY, SAMSON!

WE'D LIKE SOME ROCK OIL, AND WE'RE IN A GREAT HURRY!

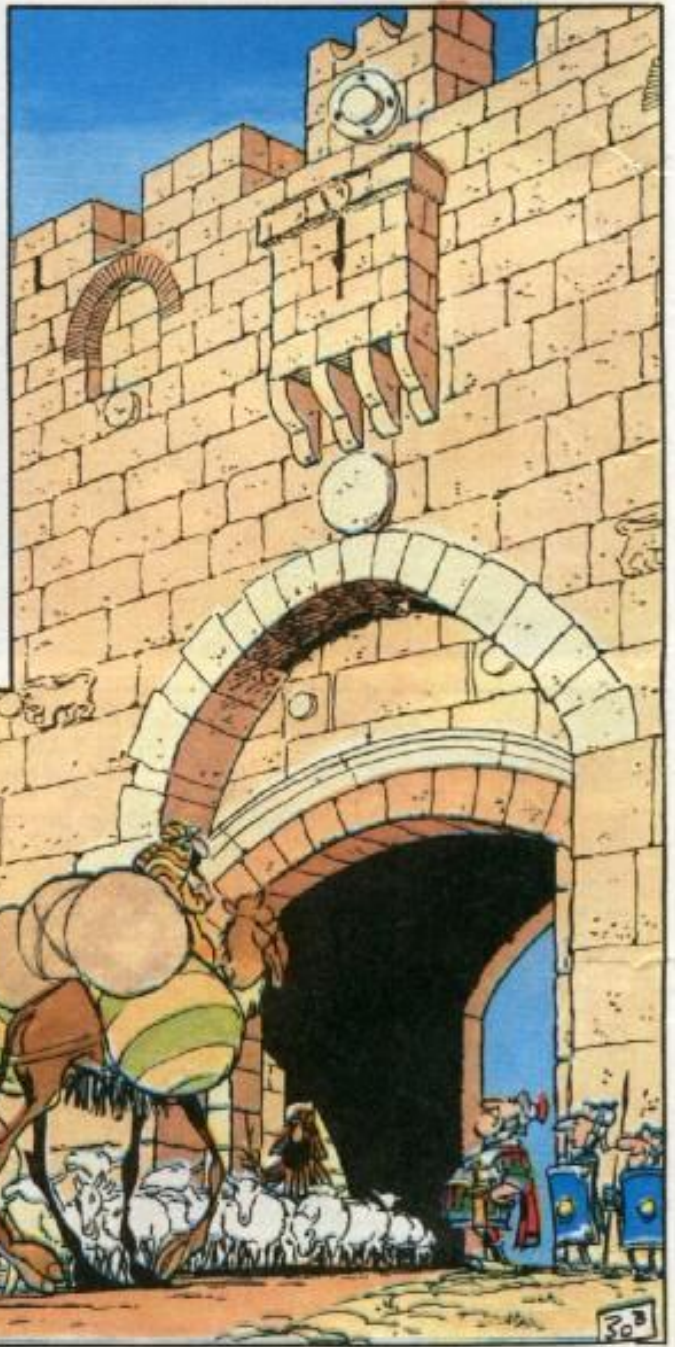
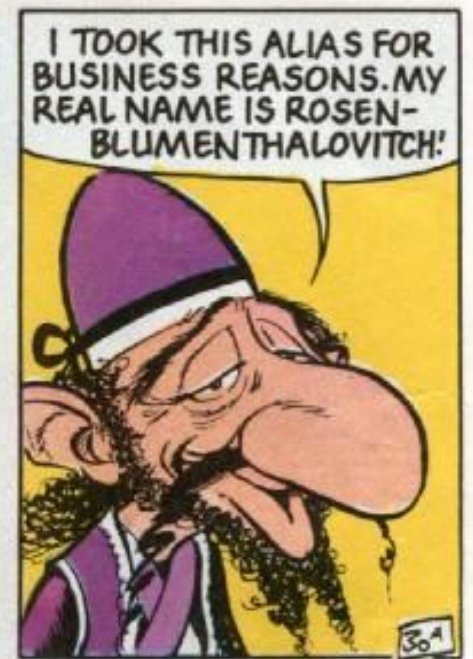
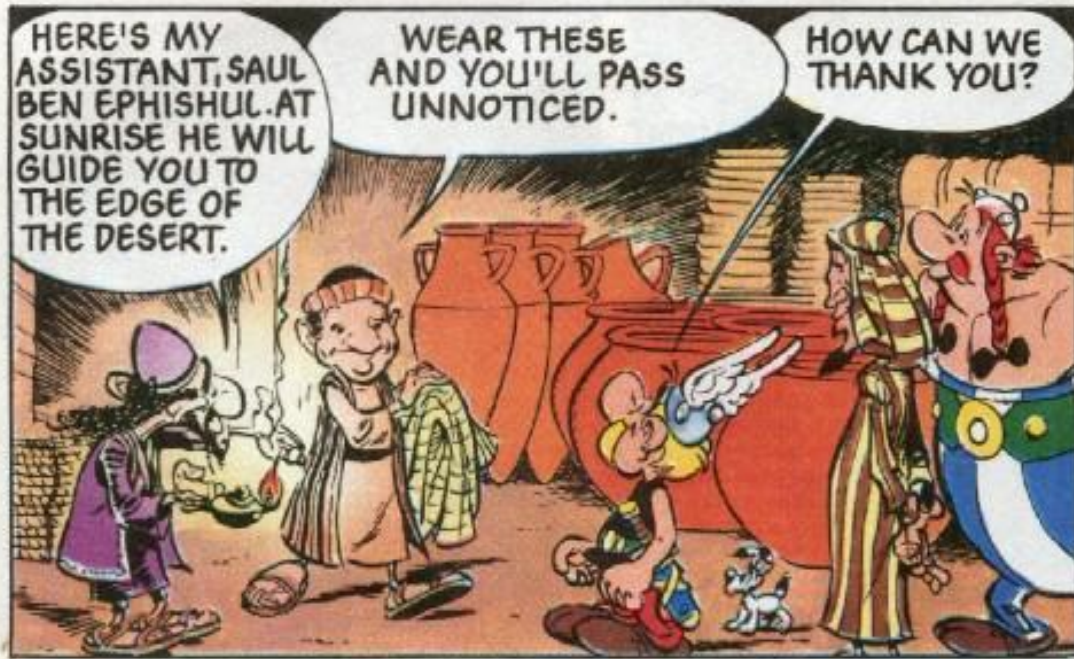
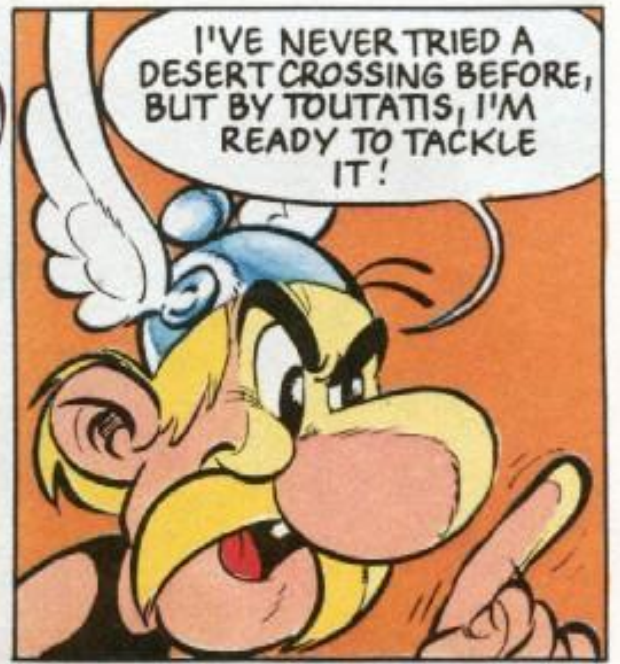
OYOYOY! OH DEAR!



THE ROMANS HAVE JUST BURNT ALL OUR STOCKS, AND I VERY MUCH FEAR YOU WON'T FIND A SINGLE DROP IN THE WHOLE COUNTRY!

?!

29B



AT THE ROMAN PROCURATOR'S PALACE...

AVE, O PONTIUS PIRATE! THE GAULS GOT AWAY, AND WE FEAR THEY'VE MADE GOOD THEIR ESCAPE NOW!

ONCE THEY'RE OUTSIDE MY TERRITORY, MY DEAR DUBBEL-OSIX, I COULDN'T CARE LESS WHAT THEY DO!

I WISH HE'D STOP WASHING HIS HANDS THE WHOLE TIME!

WELL, NEVER MIND! ASTERIX AND OBELIX ARE BOUND TO GO BACK ON BOARD SHIP, AND WHEN THEY DO WE'LL BE WAITING, WITH QUITE A RECEPTION COMMITTEE!



MEANWHILE...

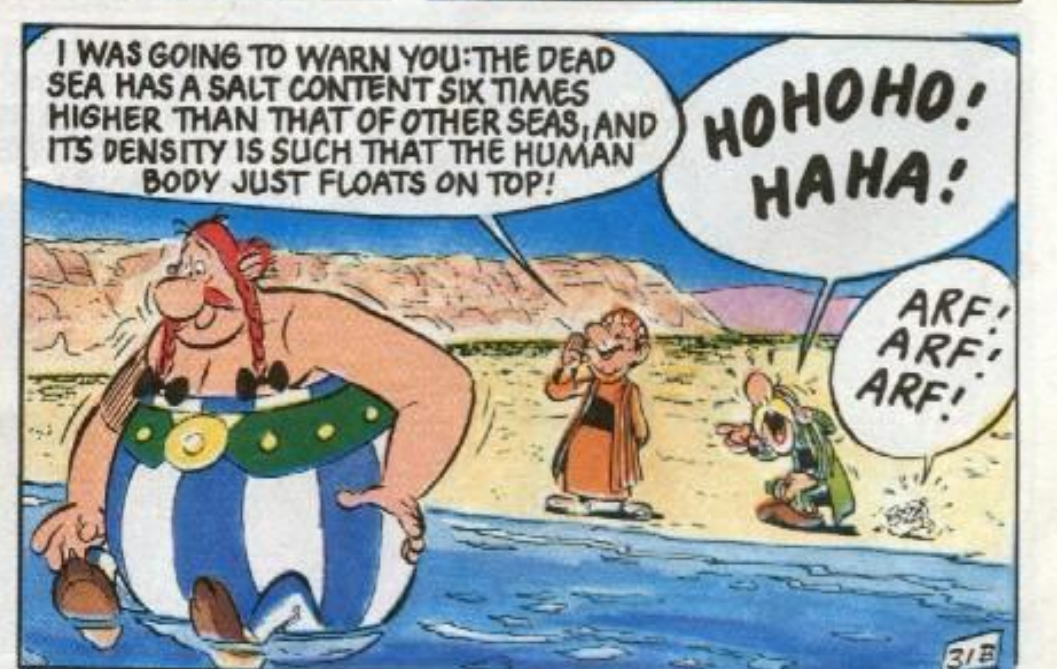
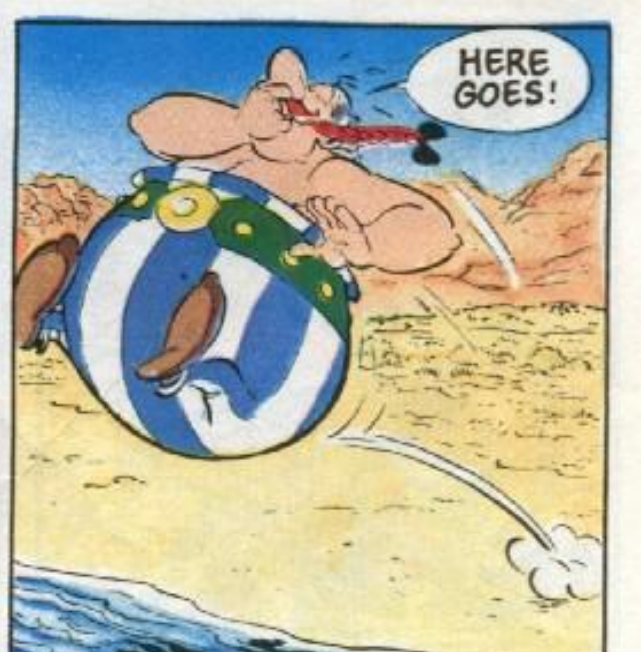
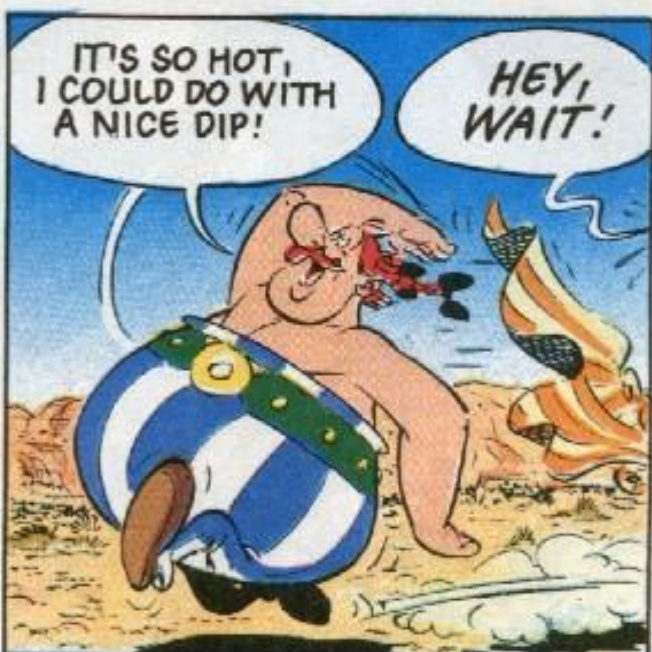
WE'RE COMING TO THE DEAD SEA!

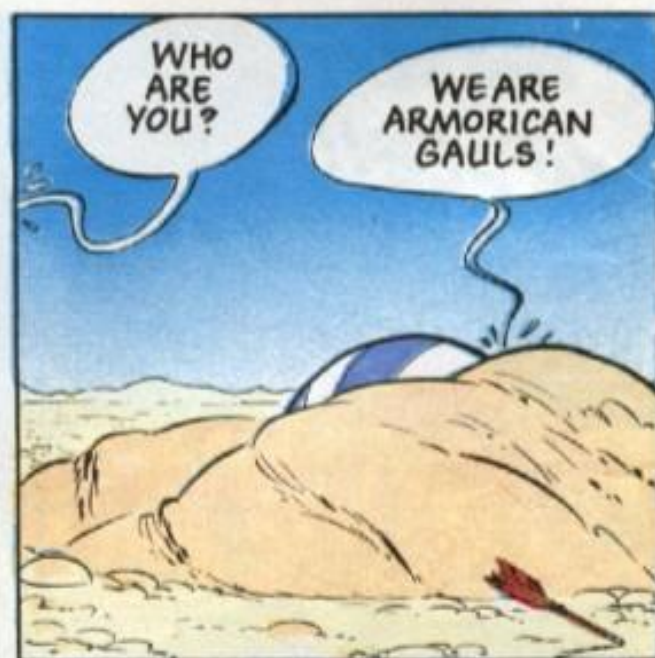
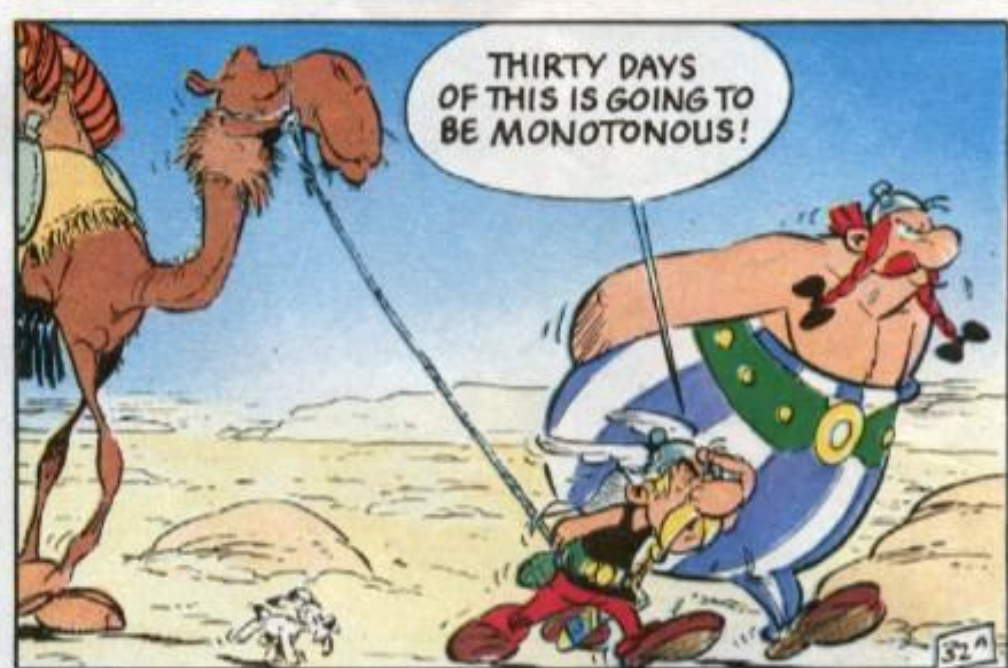
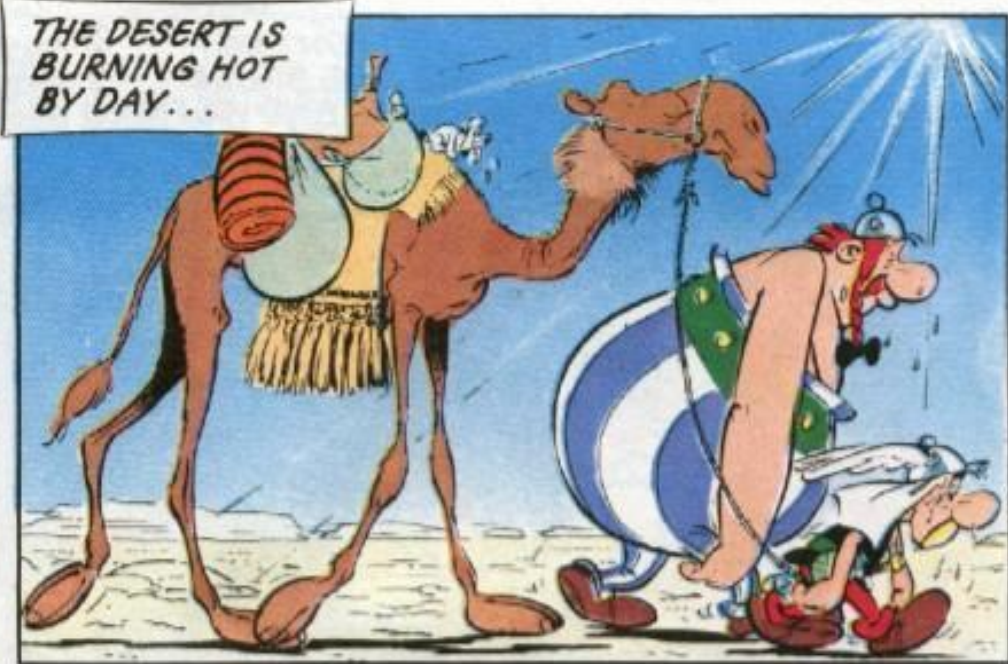
IT MAKES ME SICK, ASTERIX!

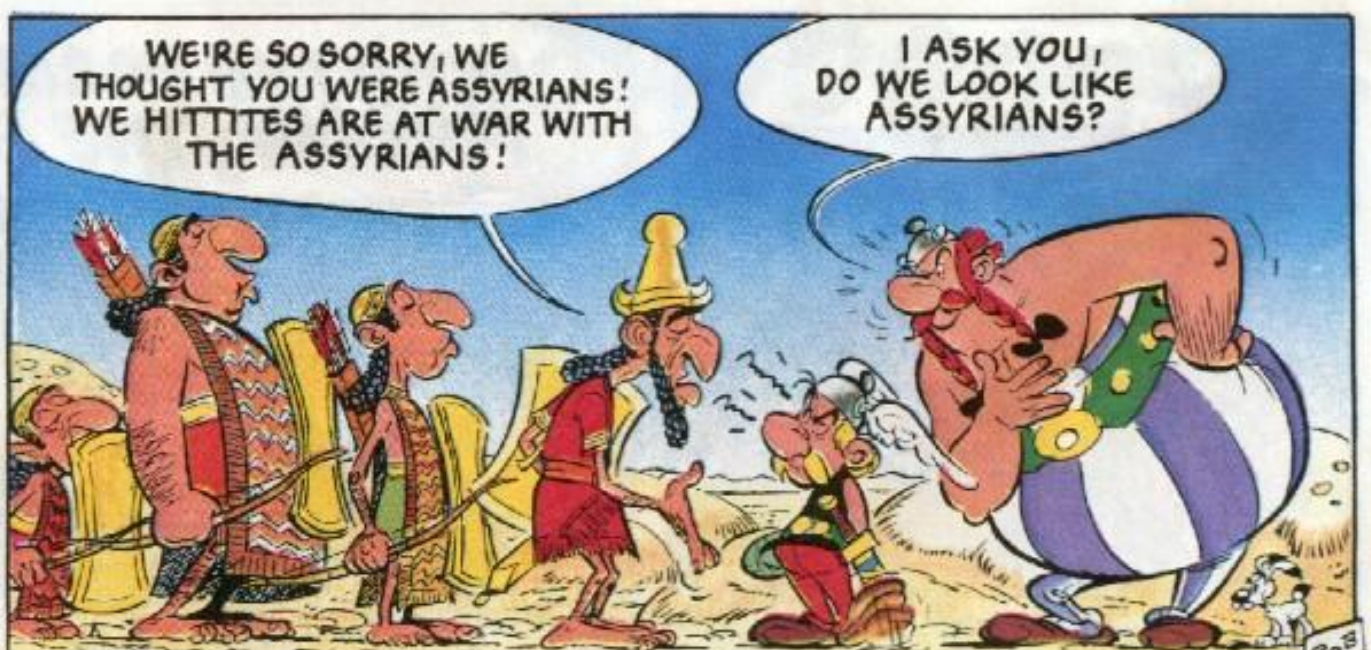
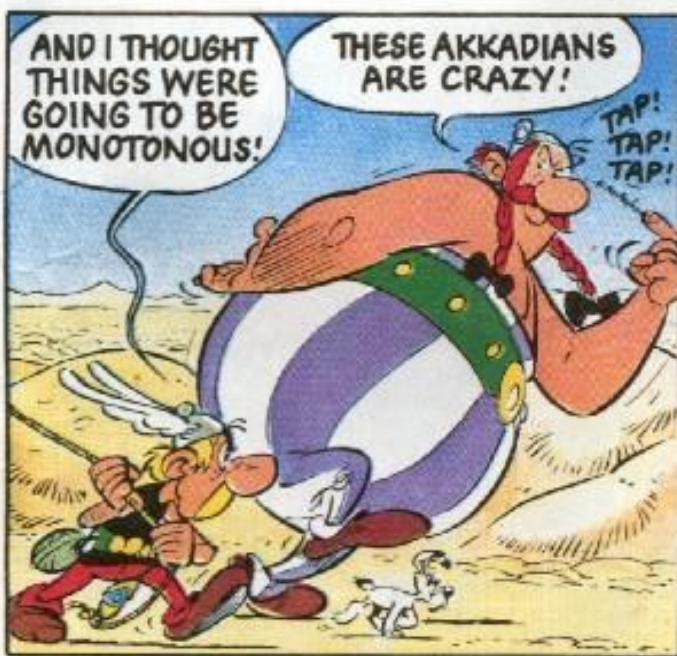
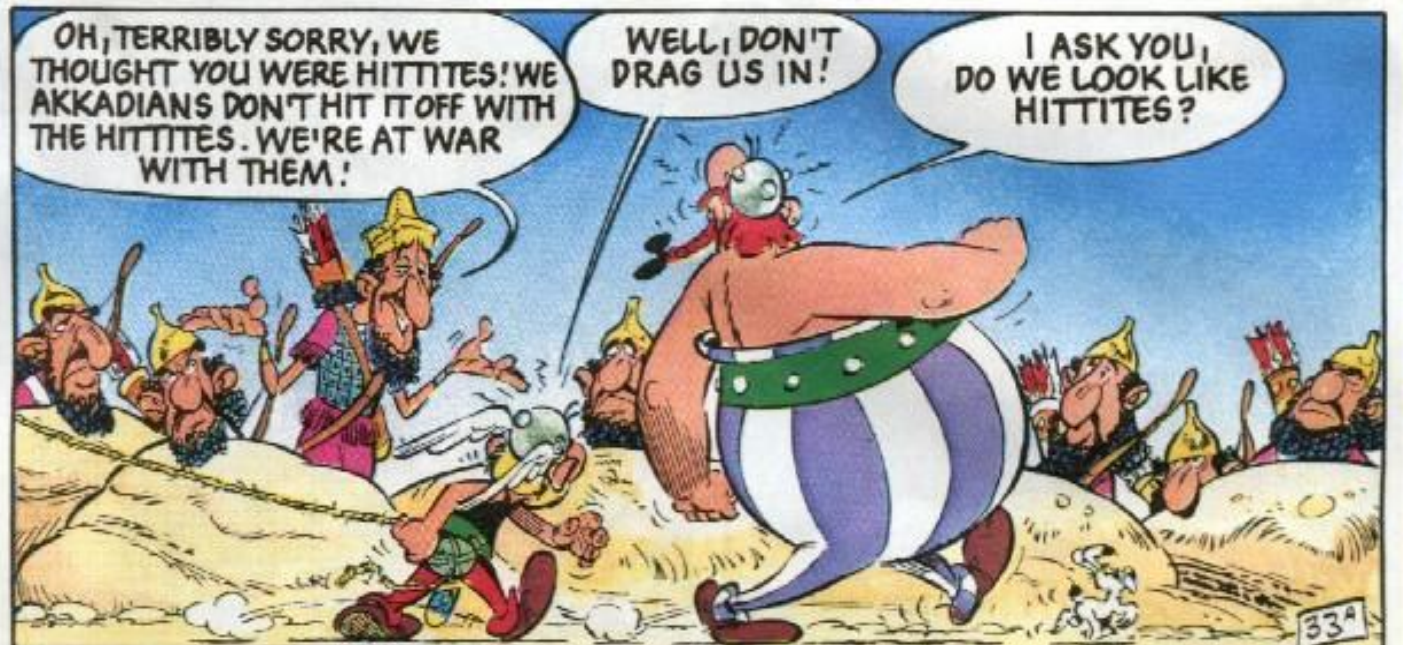
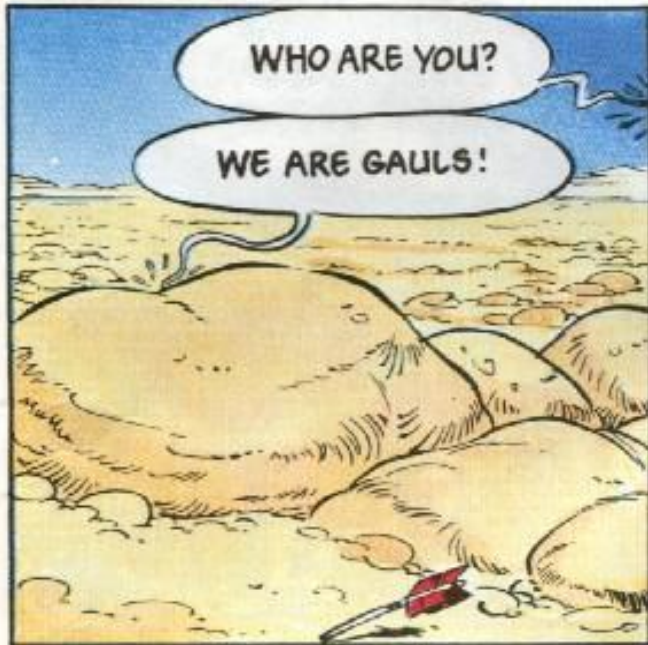
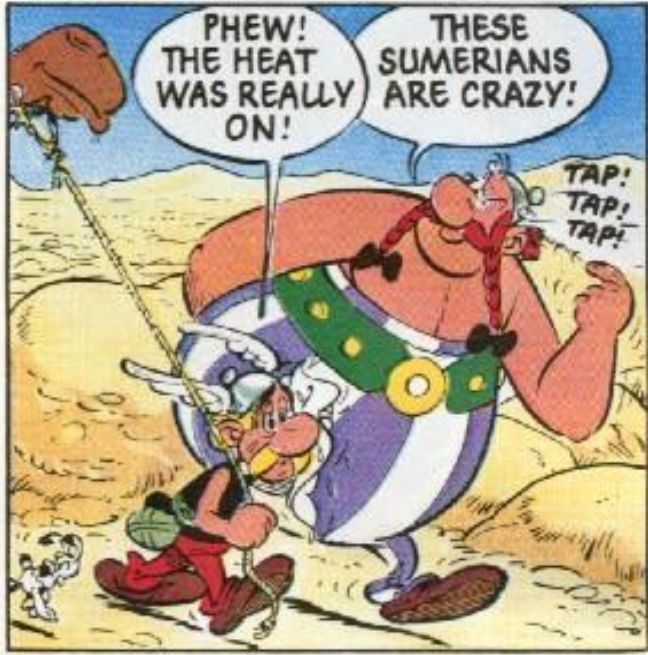
I HAVE TO ADMIT THESE MOUNTS ARE RATHER BUMPY!

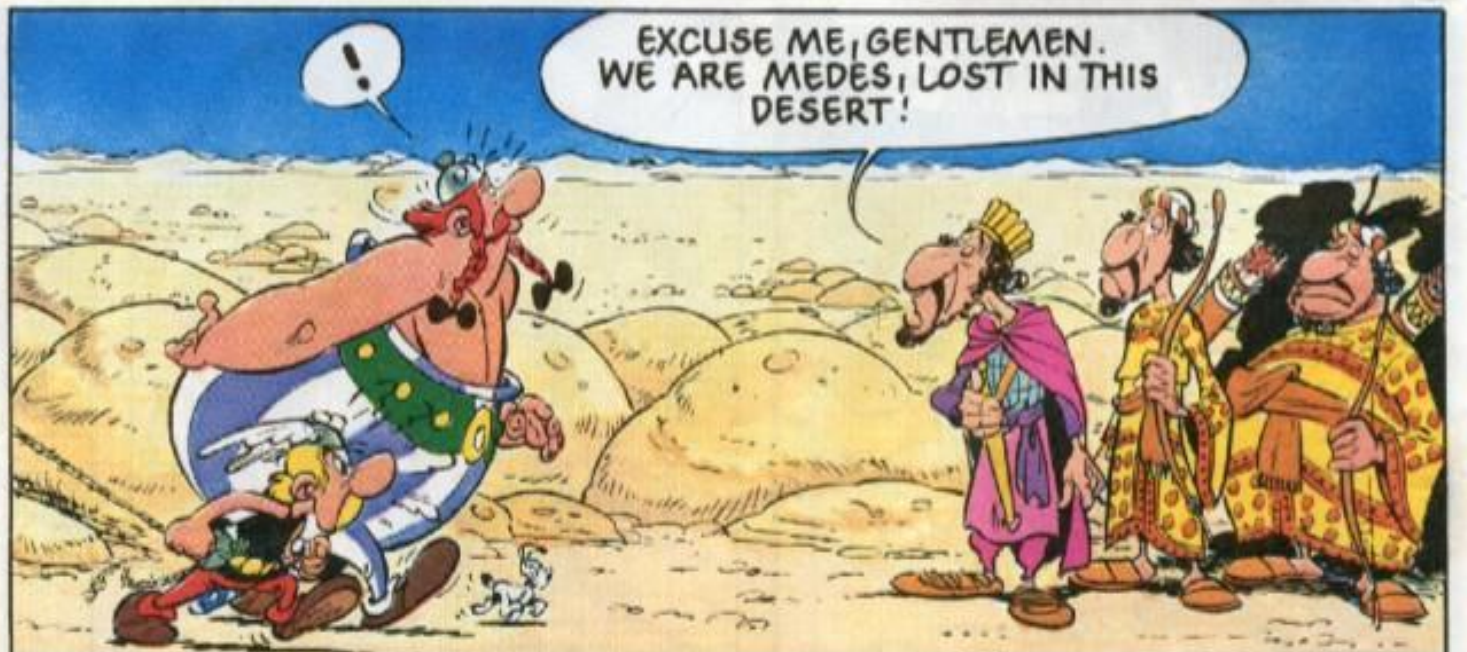
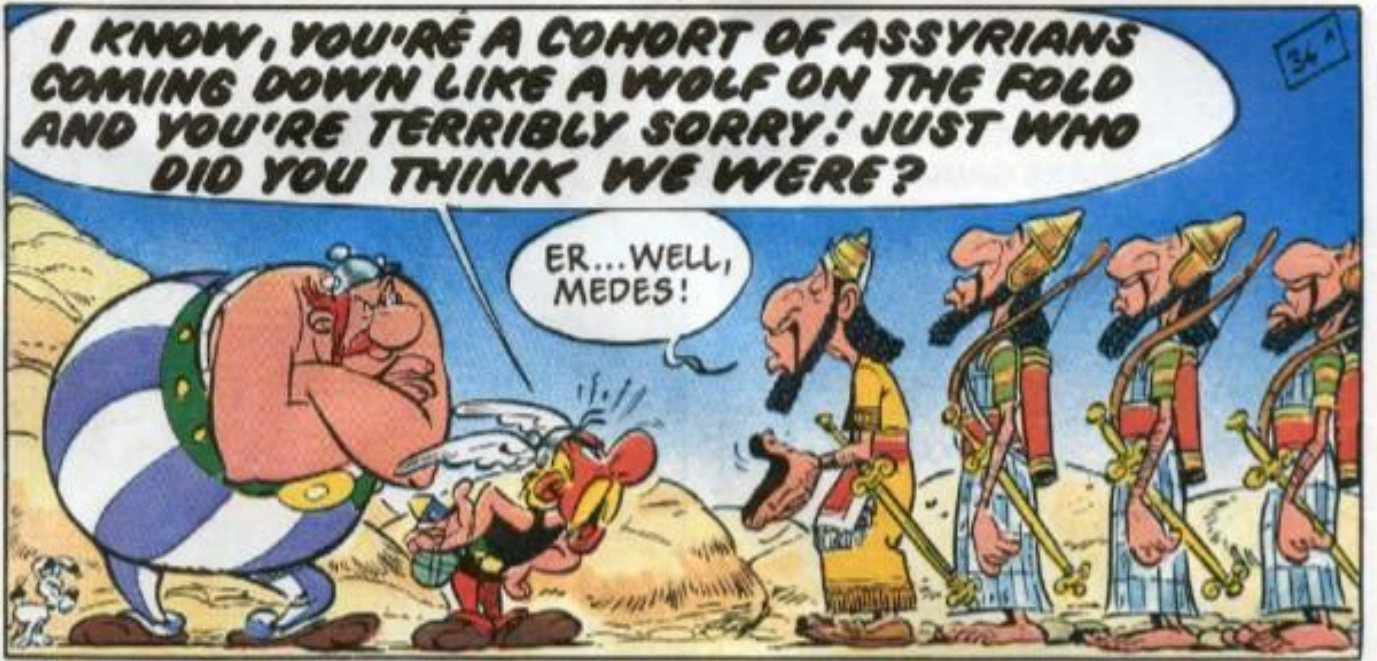
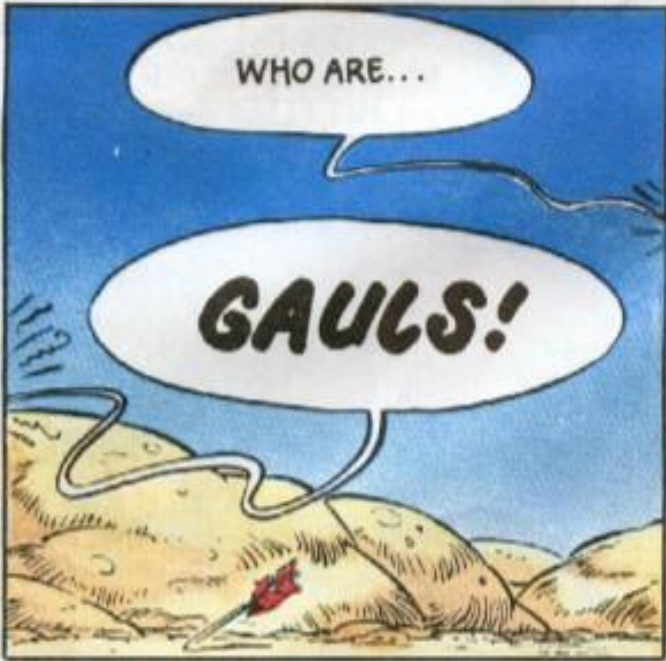
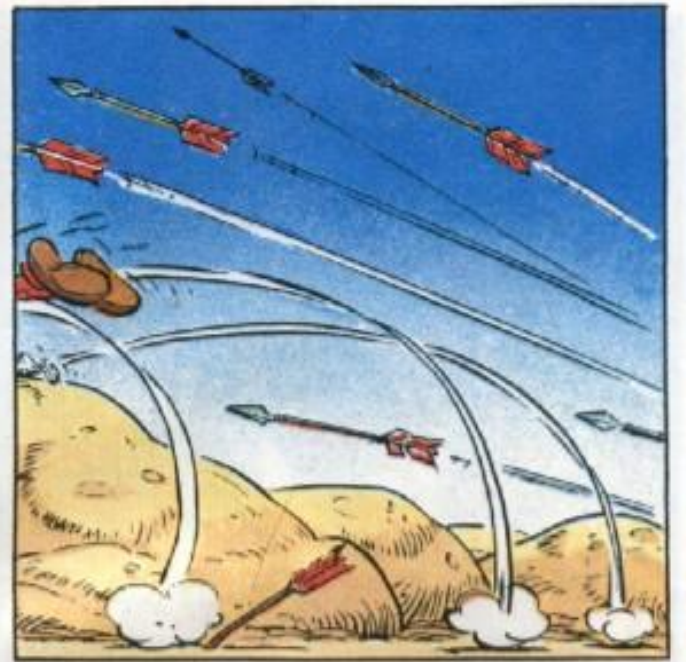
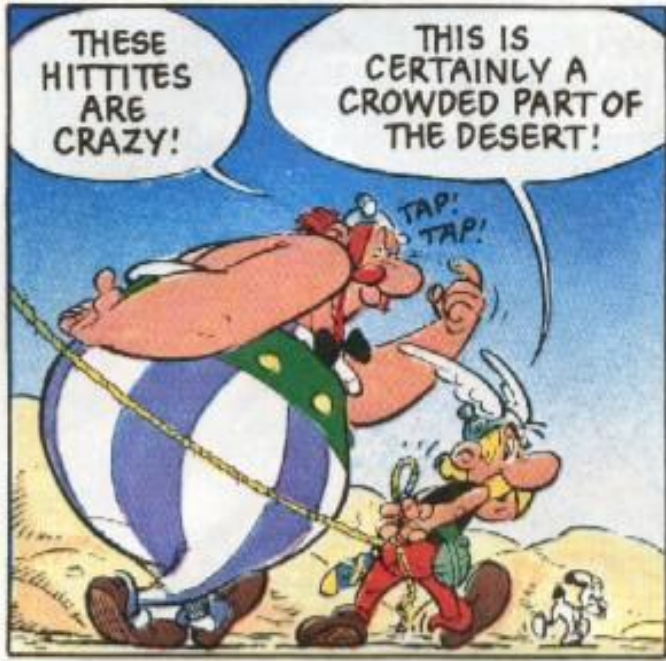


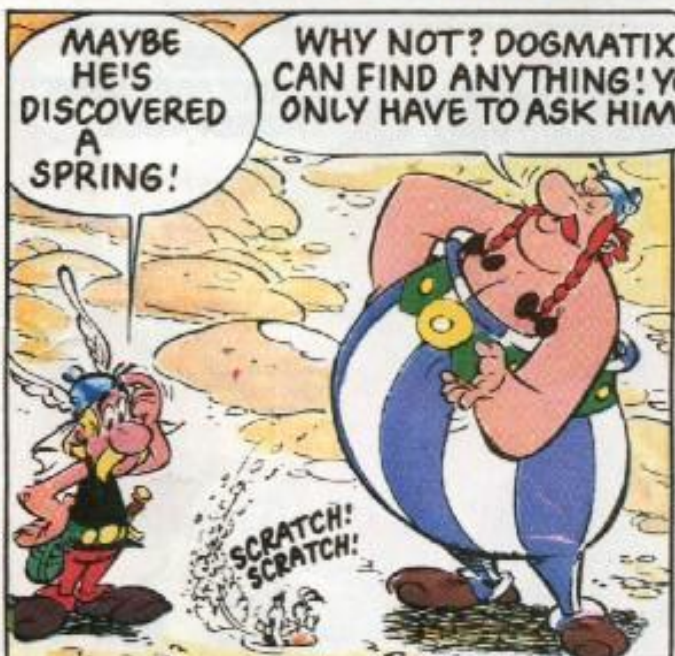
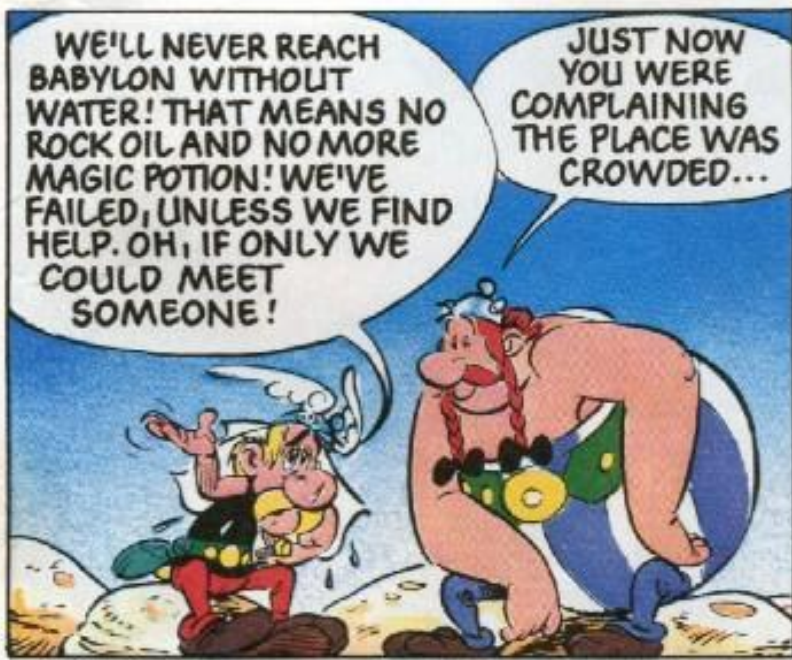
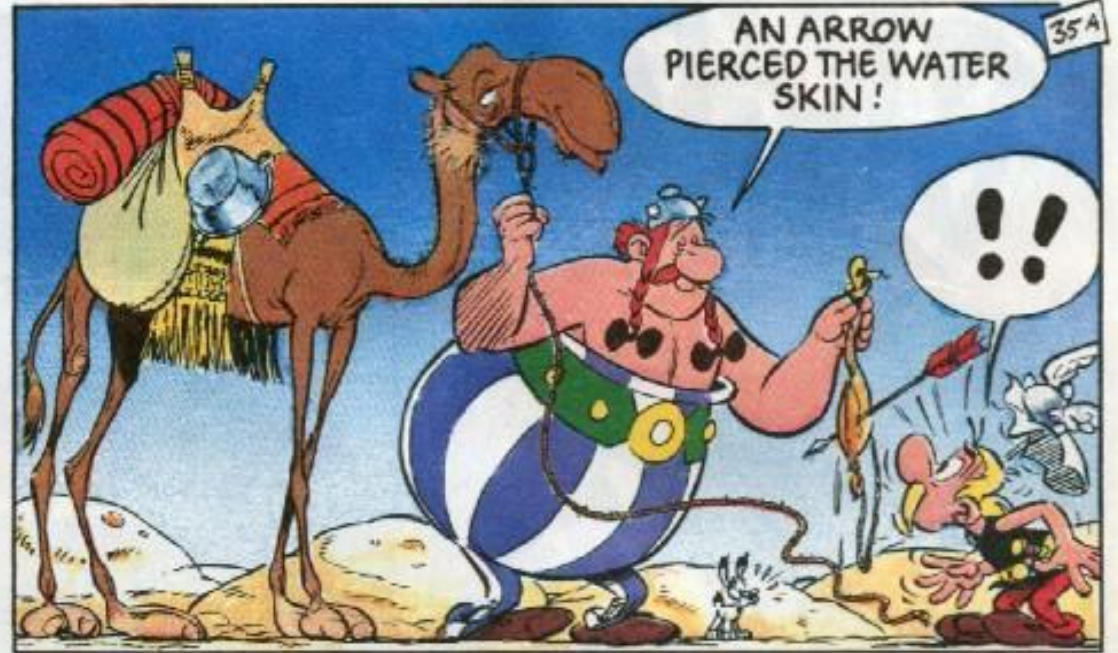
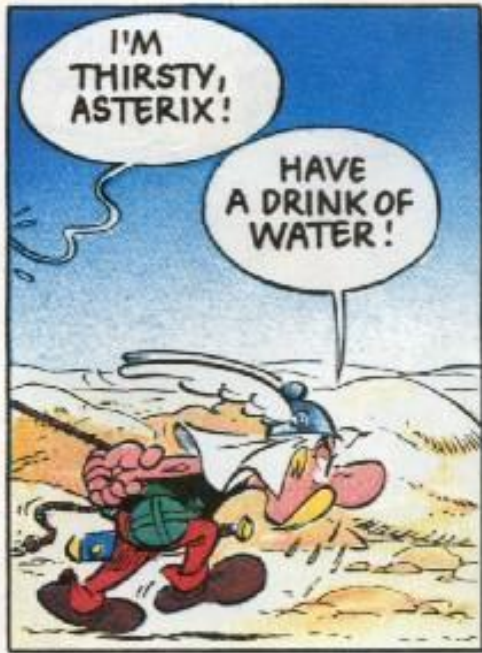
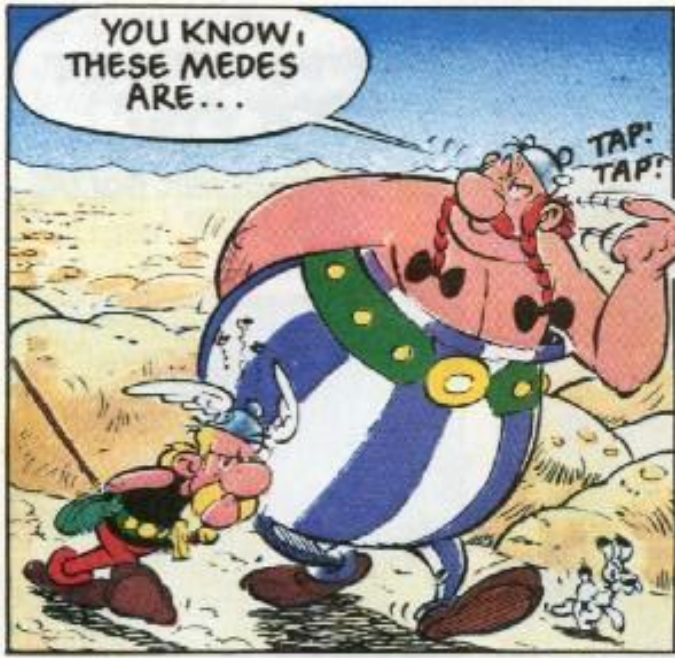
I DIDN'T MEAN THAT! IT MAKES ME SICK TO THINK OF THE RACIAL DISCRIMINATION PRACTISED AGAINST BOARS IN THIS COUNTRY!

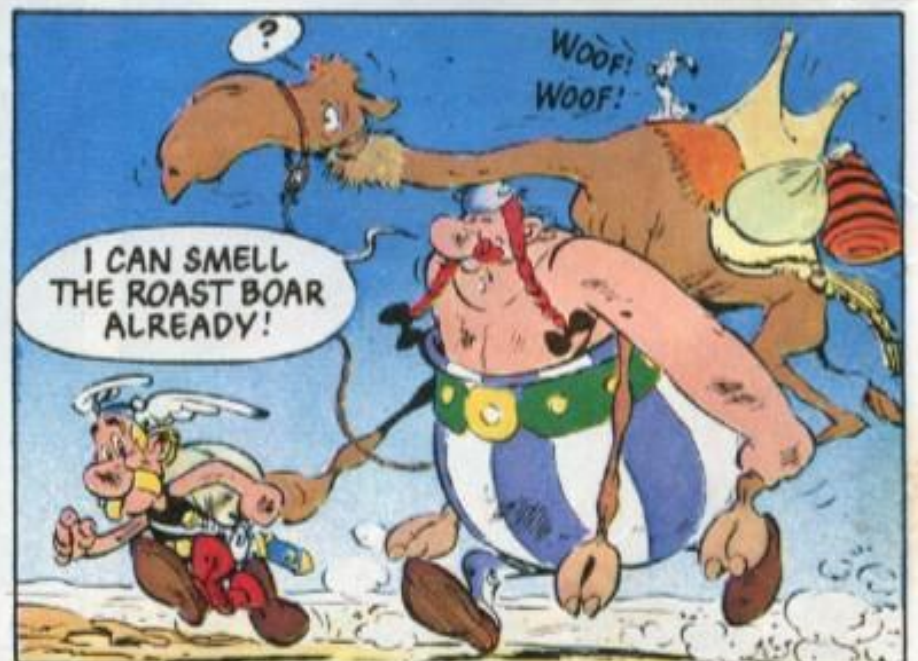












AFTER A TIRING JOURNEY WITH THE SHIP OF THE DESERT...



ALL RIGHT, OBELIX?

ME? YES, WHY?

YUK! I FEEL SEA-SICK!

...OUR FRIENDS RETURN TO TYRE.

LET'S USE SAMSON ALIUS'S DISGUISES AGAIN, TO HELP US GET INTO THE PORT UNNOTICED!



BEING HUMPED ABOUT REALLY GIVES ME THE HUMP!



THE PLACE IS FULL OF ROMANS. WE MUST BE CAREFUL!



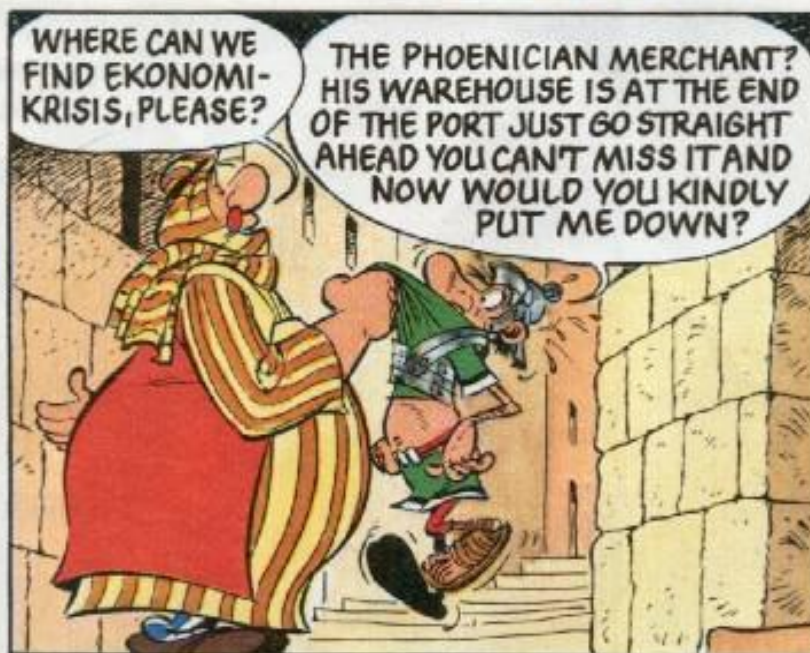
HOW SHALL WE EVER FIND EKONOMI-KRISIS IN ALL THIS?

I'VE GOT AN IDEA!



'SCUSE ME, SOLDIER...

MPH?



WHERE CAN WE FIND EKONOMI-KRISIS, PLEASE?

THE PHOENICIAN MERCHANT? HIS WAREHOUSE IS AT THE END OF THE PORT JUST GO STRAIGHT AHEAD YOU CAN'T MISS IT AND NOW WOULD YOU KINDLY PUT ME DOWN?



BLING!



YOU SEE? GOOD MANNERS WILL GET YOU ANYWHERE!

OH, WHAT A BRILLIANTLY STRIKING IDEA! YOU'LL BRING THE WHOLE ROMAN GARRISON OF TYRE DOWN ON US!



EKONOMIKRISIS IMPORT-EXPORT

OF COURSE, WHEN IT'S NOT MISTER ASTERIX'S IDEA...

HERE WE ARE!

THERE THEY ARE. AFTER THEM!

37A

37B



QUICK, EKONOMIKRISIS, WE MUST WEIGH ANCHOR! WHERE'S YOUR SHIP?

GONE! I HAVEN'T GOT A SHIP NOW!



WHAT DO YOU MEAN, GONE?

THE ROMANS SANK MY SHIP ON JULIUS CAESAR'S ORDERS. YOU FIND ME SUNK IN GLOOM: MY BIGGEST ASSET'S BEEN LIQUIDATED!

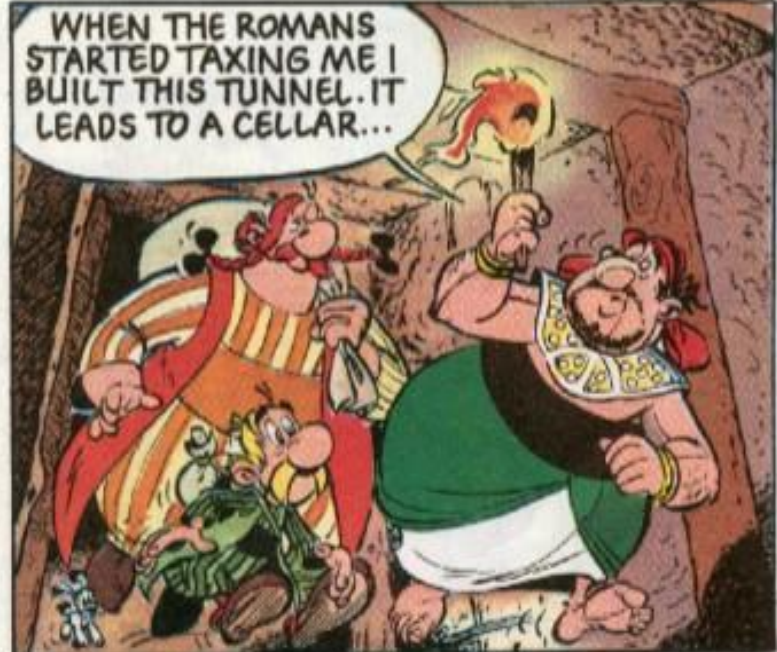


I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN DUBBELOSIX WOULD WARN THE ROMANS TO STOP US SETTING SAIL FOR GAUL AGAIN!

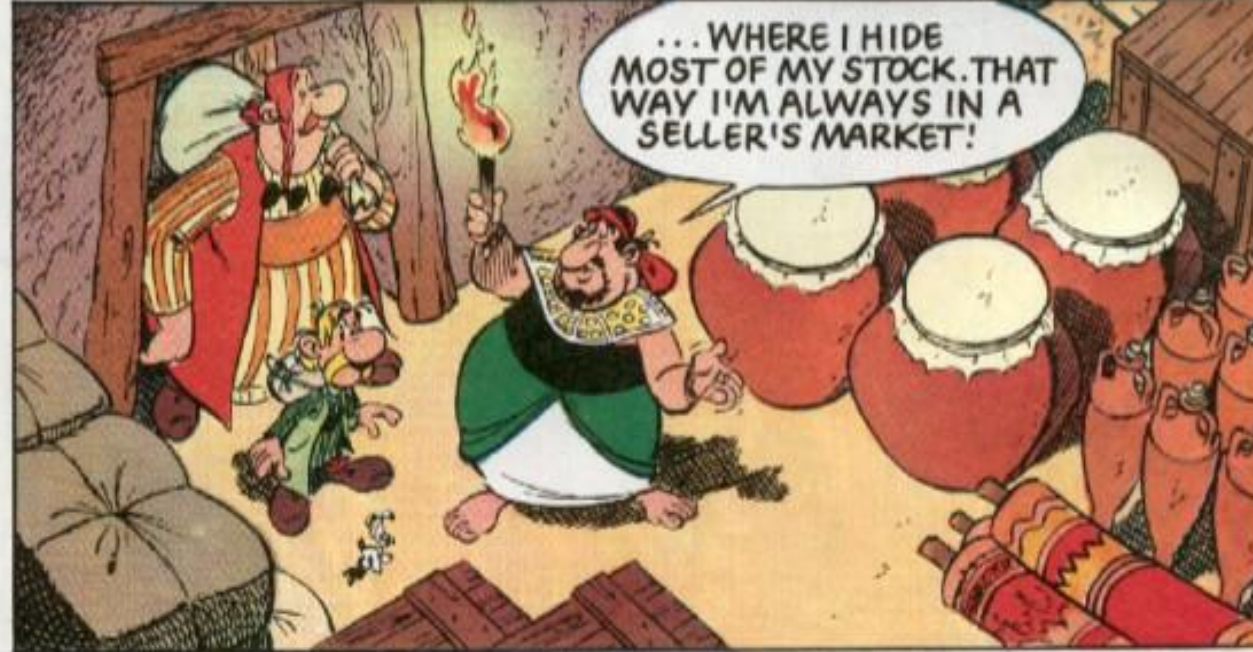


THEY'RE IN HERE!!! SEARCH THIS WAREHOUSE!

HERE! FOLLOW ME!



WHEN THE ROMANS STARTED TAXING ME I BUILT THIS TUNNEL. IT LEADS TO A CELLAR...



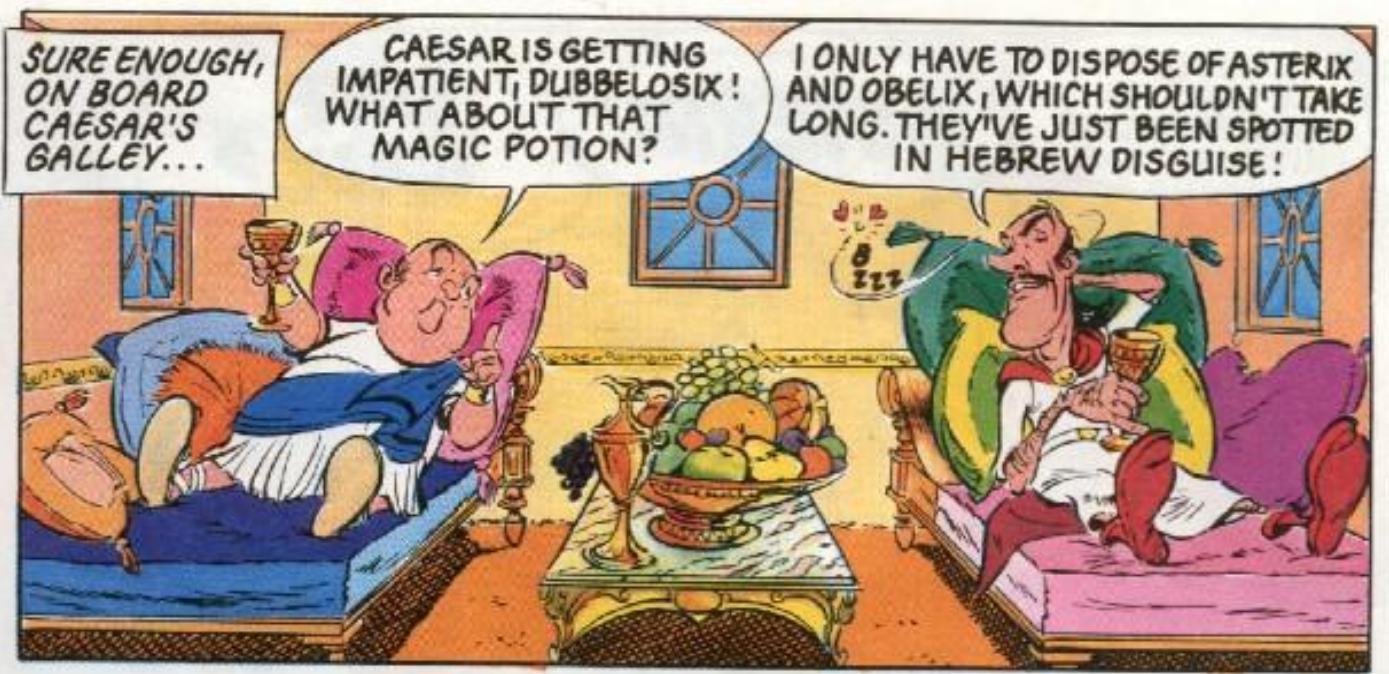
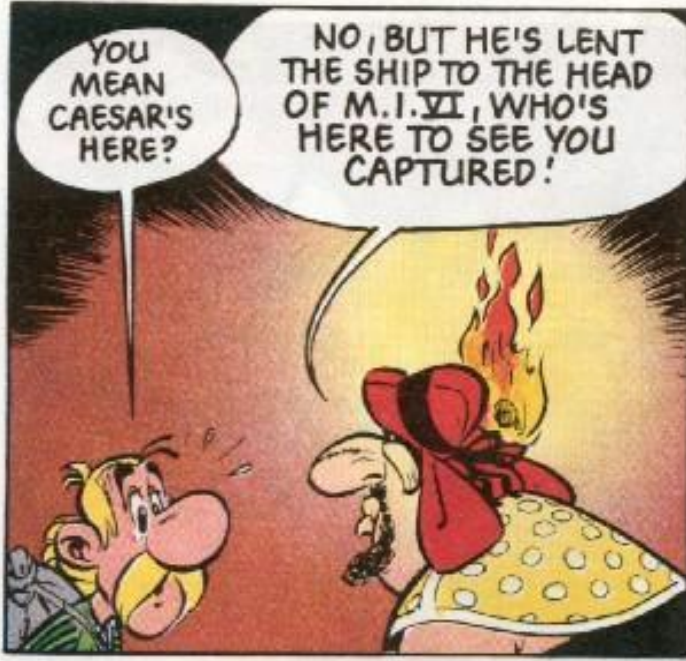
... WHERE I HIDE MOST OF MY STOCK. THAT WAY I'M ALWAYS IN A SELLER'S MARKET!

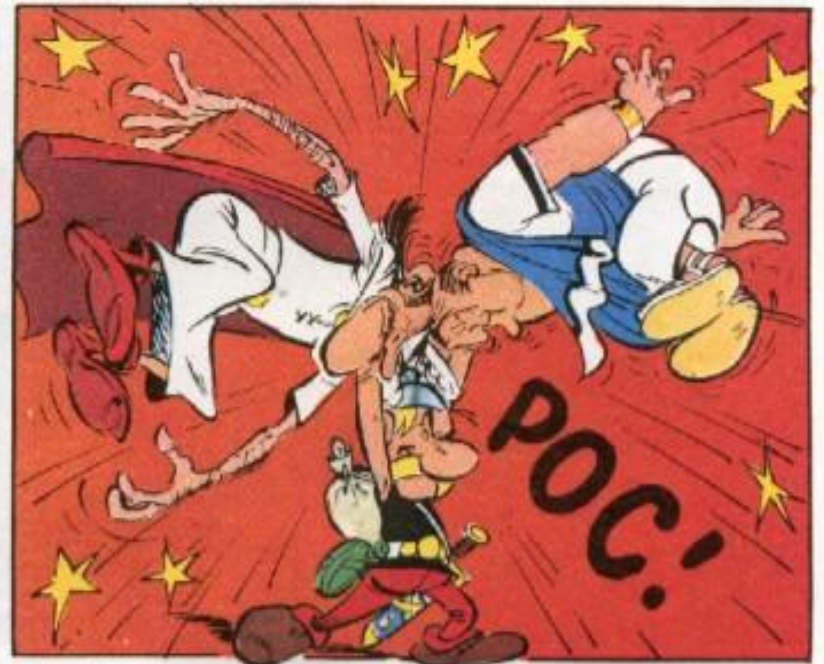


WE'RE JUST BELOW THE MAIN QUAY...



... AND IRONICALLY, OPPOSITE JULIUS CAESAR'S FLAGSHIP!







THE RETURN JOURNEY IS A PLEASANT IF ROUTINE KIND OF CRUISE...

PIRATE SHIP AHOY, C.O.!

CUSTOMERS!



ROMAN GALLEY TO STARBOARD!

WE'RE NEUTRAL! EVERYONE KNOWS THAT! I WAIVE THIS ONE... LET THE ROMANS RULE THE WAVES!



BUT THEY'RE NOT WAVERING! THEY'RE GIVING CHASE!

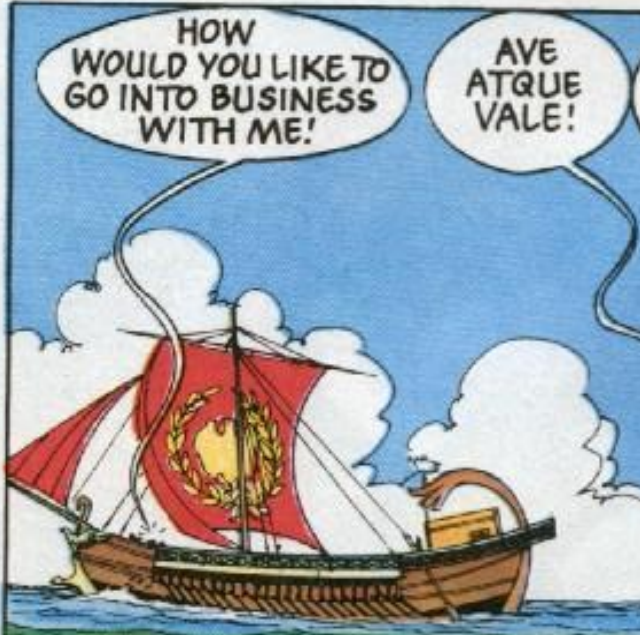


LATER...

FOUR THOUSAND SESTERTII! THAT'S IT!

BUT THAT'S TWICE LAST TIME'S PRICE!

YOU KNOW HOW IT IS WITH THE INFLATION!



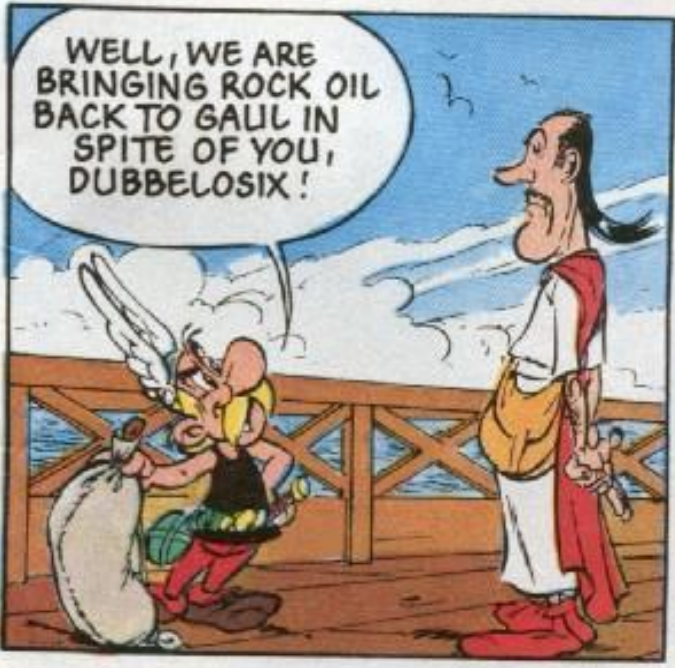
HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO INTO BUSINESS WITH ME!

AVE ATQUE VALE!

NEVER MIND THE VEILED REFERENCES, HOW AM I GOING TO SELL THIS LOT?



FLOAT A COMPANY!



WELL, WE ARE BRINGING ROCK OIL BACK TO GAUL IN SPITE OF YOU, DUBBELSIX!

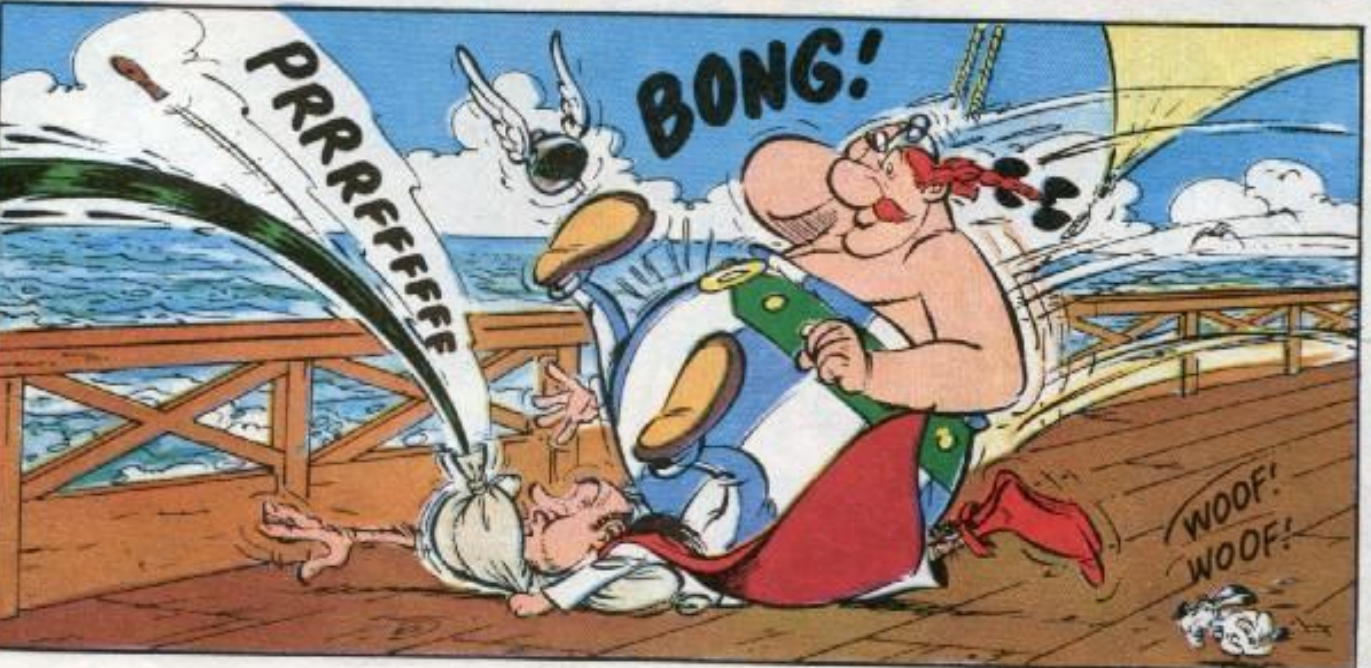


?!

I'M NOT SO SURE ABOUT THAT!



NO, OBELIX! NOOOO!



PRRRFFFF

BONG!

WOOF! WOOF!

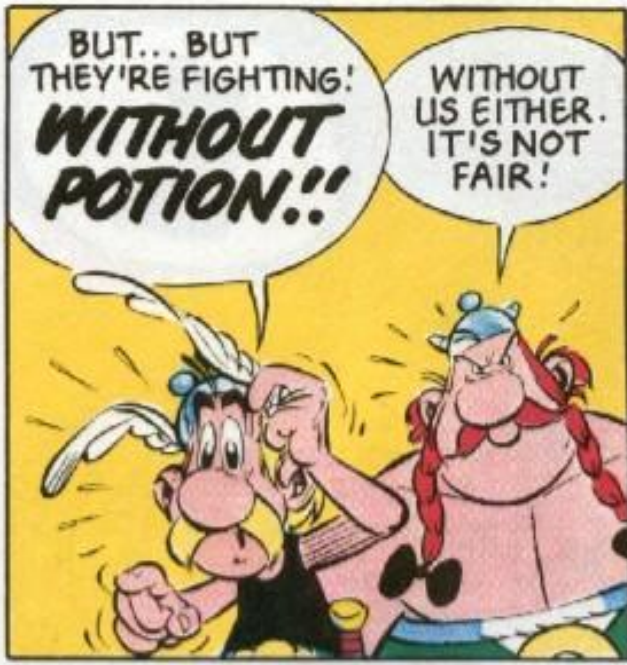


AND THE WATERS OF THE CHANNEL ARE POLLUTED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY.

OH NO! DON'T SAY YOU'RE STARTING ALREADY?!



AT WHAT AGE CAN A LEGIONARY RETIRE IN GOOD ORDER?



BUT... BUT THEY'RE FIGHTING! **WITHOUT POTION!!**

WITHOUT US EITHER. IT'S NOT FAIR!



GETAFIX, WHAT IS THIS MIRACLE? WHAT'S GOING ON?

HULLO, ASTERIX, HAD A NICE TRIP?



I'M AFRAID I HAVEN'T BROUGHT ANY ROCK OIL BACK, GETAFIX!

ANY WHAT OIL?



ROCK OIL, OF COURSE! BLACK GOLD! THE VITAL INGREDIENT OF THE MAGIC POTION!

OH, YES, PETRA OLEUM!



DON'T WORRY! FORTUNATELY, AFTER CONDUCTING A FEW EXPERIMENTS, I MANAGED TO SUBSTITUTE BEETROOT JUICE INSTEAD. WE RUN JUST AS WELL ON BEETROOT JUICE, AND IT TASTES NICER!

BONK!



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IT'S A STROKE! I'VE SEEN THIS BEFORE. MY BROTHER-IN-LAW HAD ONE WHEN...

WANT ME TO THUMP YOU?

GO AWAY! I'LL TREAT HIM FOR SHOCK.



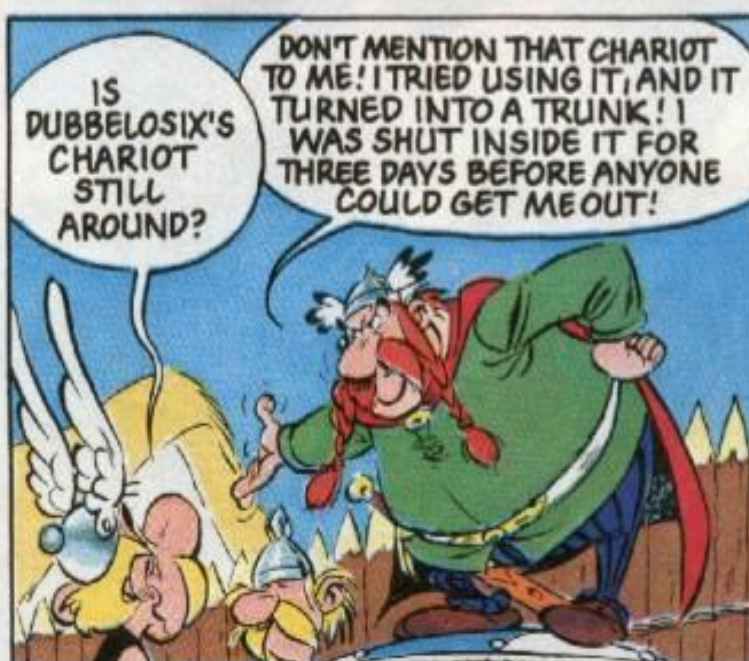
YOU'RE RIGHT. THE NEW MAGIC POTION DOES TASTE NICER, BUT ANOTHER TIME I WISH YOU'D CONDUCT YOUR EXPERIMENTS BEFORE SENDING US TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH, GETAFIX!

I WILL, ASTERIX!



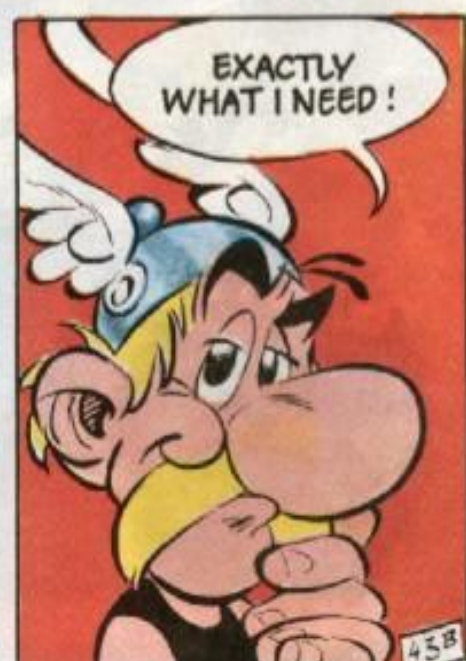
HEY, ASTERIX, WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH THESE TWO?

WHAT WITH ALL THE EXCITEMENT I'D ALMOST FORGOTTEN THEM!



IS DUBBELOSIX'S CHARIOT STILL AROUND?

DON'T MENTION THAT CHARIOT TO ME! I TRIED USING IT, AND IT TURNED INTO A TRUNK! I WAS SHUT INSIDE IT FOR THREE DAYS BEFORE ANYONE COULD GET ME OUT!



EXACTLY WHAT I NEED!

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