

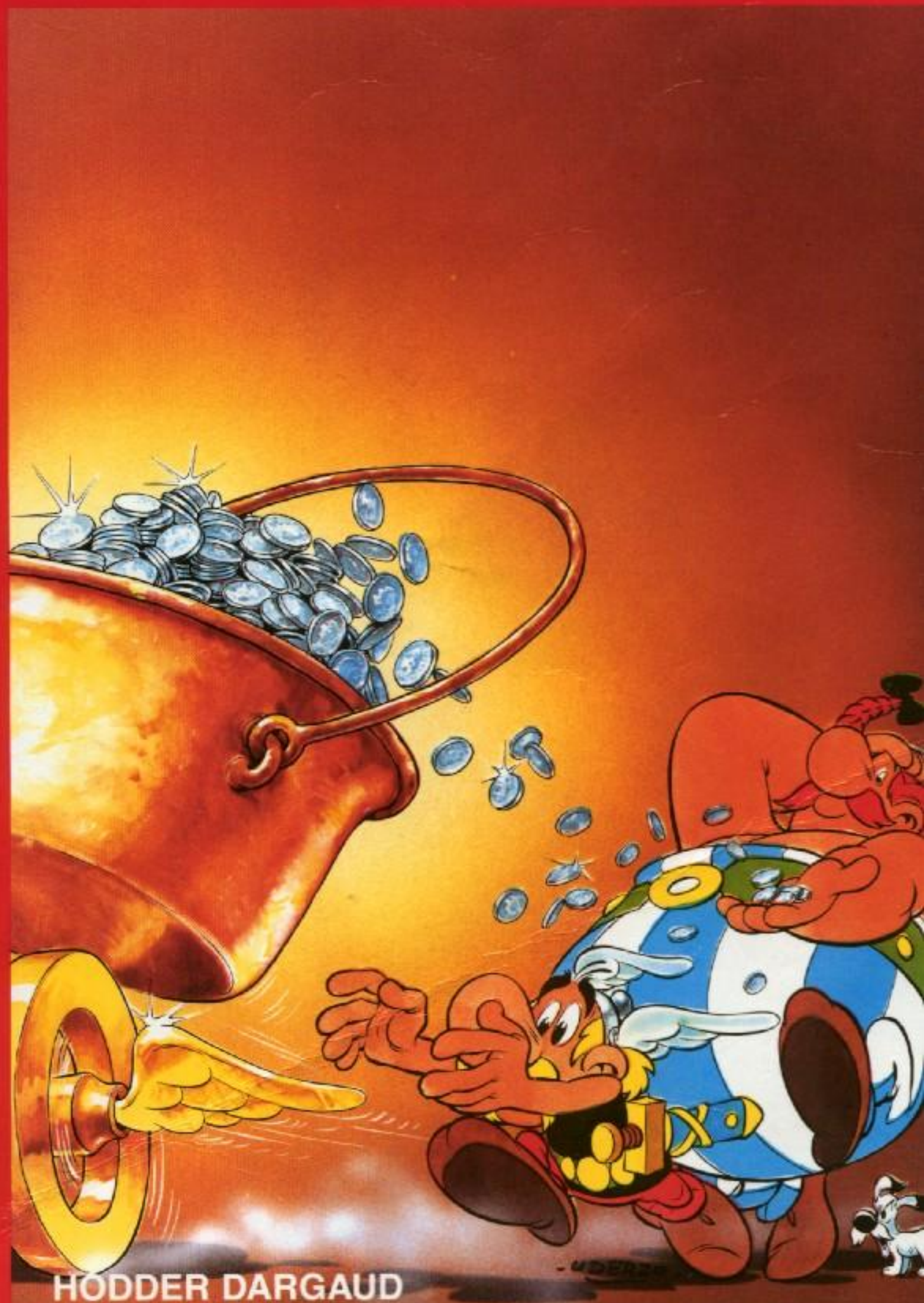
BOOK 17

GOSGINNY AND UDERZO

Asterix

AND THE CAULDRON

ASTIX



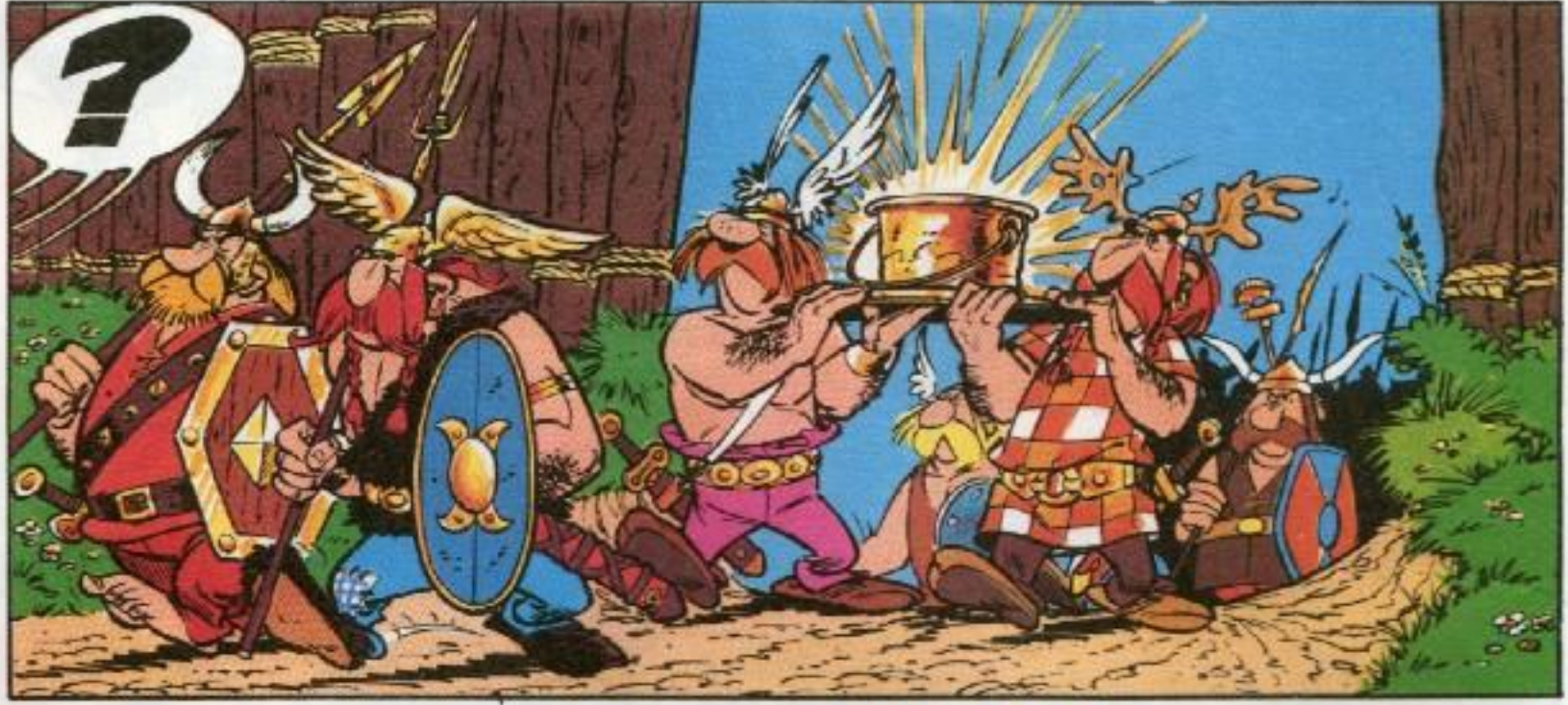
HODDER DARGAUD





HAVE YOU COME ALL BY YOURSELF LIKE THAT?

OH, NO! HERE'S MY RETINUE.



WHAT THE... IT'S A CAULDRON!

YES, THAT'S WHY I HAD TO WALK. THERE'S NOT MUCH ROOM ON THESE SHIELDS.



YOU MEAN YOU GAVE UP YOUR SHIELD TO THIS CAULDRON? WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT IT?

IT'S FULL OF SESTERTII, BY TOUTATIS! COME OVER HERE... I'VE GOT SOMETHING TO TELL YOU.



JULIUS CAESAR IS IN GRAVE FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES. HE'S USED THE TAXES WHICH WERE GOING TO PAY HIS GARRISONS HERE IN GAUL TO EQUIP HIS ARMIES FOR NEW CAMPAIGNS...



I HEARD THAT CAESAR WAS ABOUT TO LEVY NEW TAXES, SO I PUT ALL MY PEOPLE'S SAVINGS IN THIS CAULDRON, AND I'VE BROUGHT IT TO YOU FOR SAFE KEEPING... I BELIEVE YOU DON'T PAY ANY TAXES?...



WELL, A TAX COLLECTOR DID SHOW UP ONE DAY... WE HAVEN'T PAID ANY TAXES SINCE!

DEAR ME!... I'LL NEVER FORGET HOW WE SHOWED HIM UP!

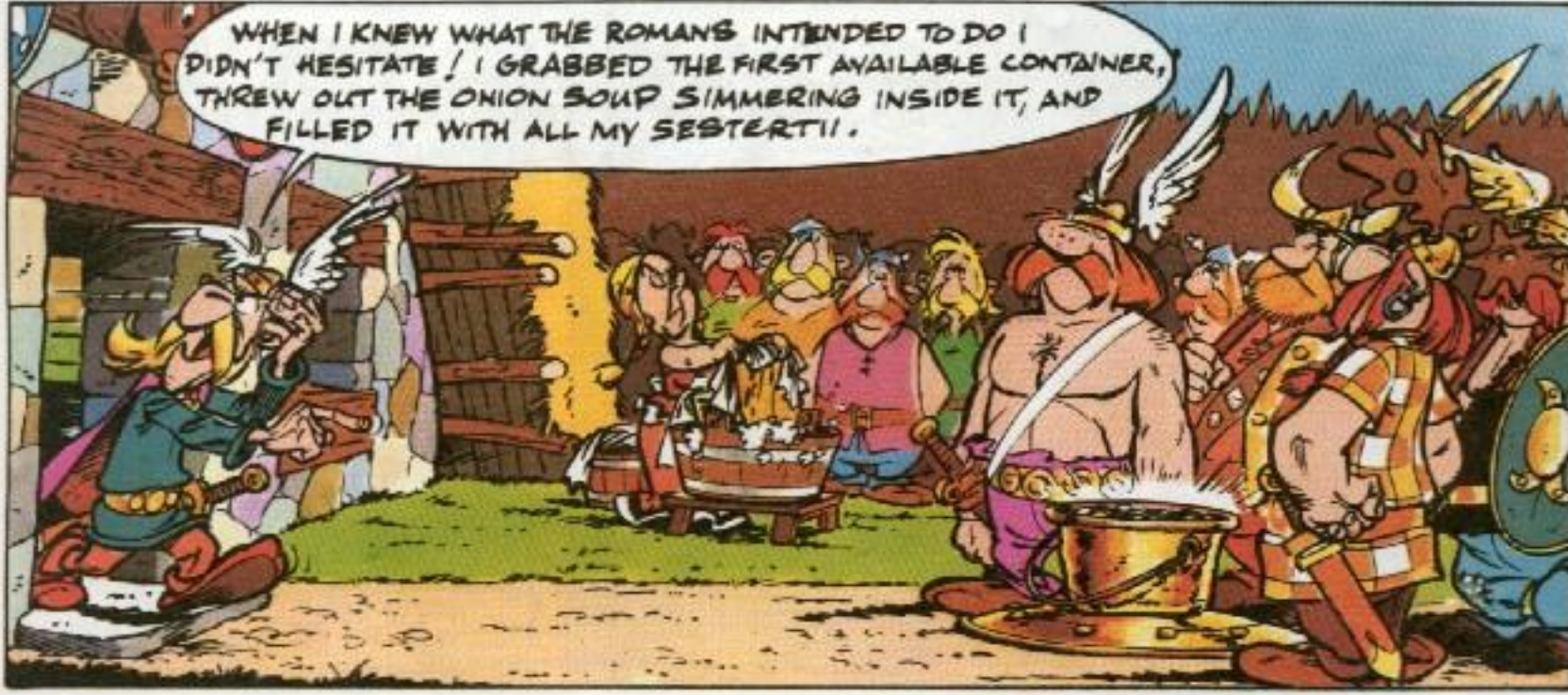


WHAT FUN WE HAD! REMEMBER WHEN...?

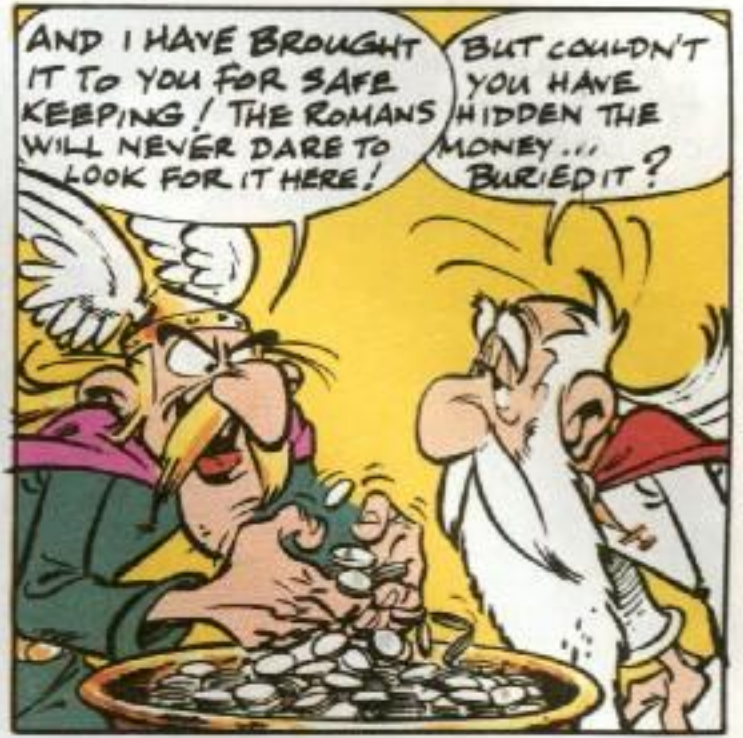
OH, DO STOP! HOHOHO!

YOU MEAN HE NEVER RETURNED?

THAT'S RIGHT. NO RETURN, NO TAX RETURN NO TAXES!



WHEN I KNEW WHAT THE ROMANS INTENDED TO DO I DIDN'T HESITATE! I GRABBED THE FIRST AVAILABLE CONTAINER, THREW OUT THE ONION SOUP SIMMERING INSIDE IT, AND FILLED IT WITH ALL MY SESTERTII!



AND I HAVE BROUGHT IT TO YOU FOR SAFE KEEPING! THE ROMANS WILL NEVER DARE TO LOOK FOR IT HERE!

BUT COULDN'T YOU HAVE HIDDEN THE MONEY... BURIED IT?



NO. THE ROMANS ARE ALWAYS EXCAVATING... THERE ARE SO MANY BURIED TAXES ABOUT THEY'LL PROBABLY BE GETTING DUG UP FOR CENTURIES TO COME!



IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO PREVENT THE ROMANS GETTING THEIR HANDS ON THIS MONEY...

IT IS, ISN'T IT?



...BUT I THOUGHT YOU WERE IN THEIR GOOD GRACE... ESPECIALLY AS THE ROMANS LIKE PEOPLE WHO PAY THEIR TAXES REGULARLY.

WHAT?



YOU'VE NO RIGHT TO DOUBT MY PATRIOTISM! I MAY DO BUSINESS WITH THE ROMANS...



... BUT I ALWAYS MAKE THEM PAY TWICE THE PRICE I'D HAVE CHARGED MY GAULISH CUSTOMERS!

THAT'S GOOD!

VERY GOOD!



AND DO YOU DO MUCH BUSINESS WITH GAULS?
NO... THE ROMANS BUY EVERYTHING I'VE GOT TO SELL!



VERY WELL, WE'LL LOOK AFTER YOUR CAULDRON UNTIL THE TAX COLLECTOR HAS BEEN.



I WILL PUT IT IN THE HANDS OF MY MOST TRUSTWORTHY WARRIOR: **ASTERIX!**

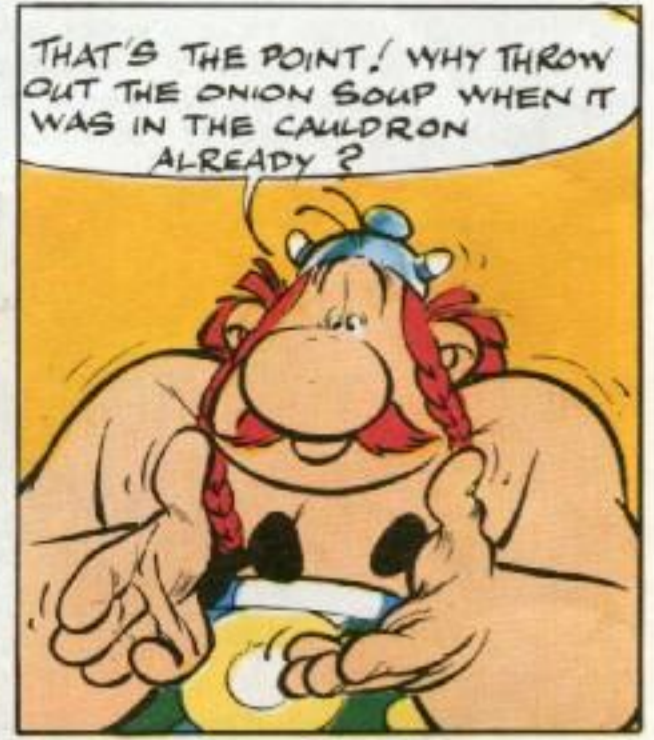


I'M GOING TO PUT THE CAULDRON IN MY HAT.

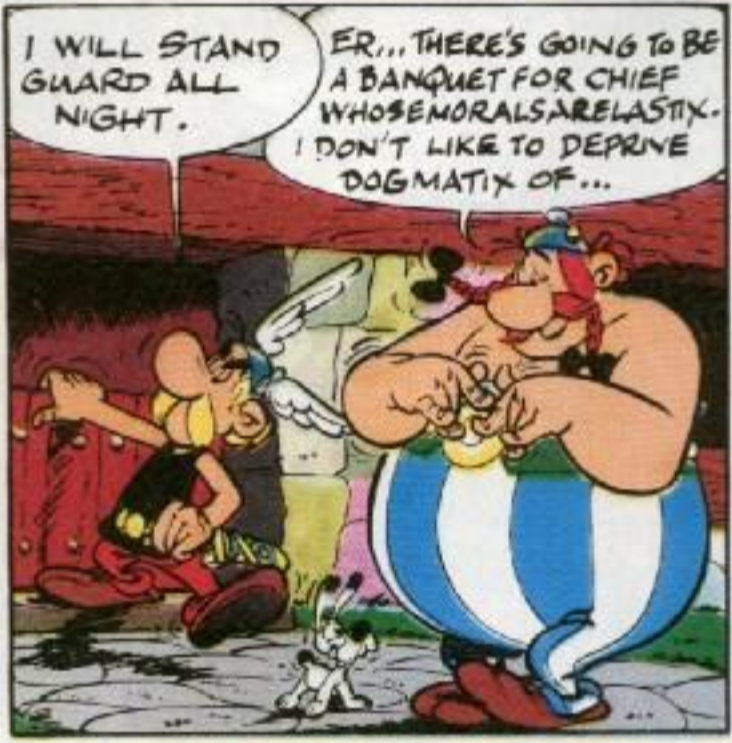


HOW SILLY! FANCY THROWING OUT GOOD ONION SOUP TO MAKE ROOM FOR SESTERTII!

BUT OBELIX, WITH SESTERTII YOU CAN BUY ONION SOUP!



THAT'S THE POINT! WHY THROW OUT THE ONION SOUP WHEN IT WAS IN THE CAULDRON ALREADY?



I WILL STAND GUARD ALL NIGHT.

ER... THERE'S GOING TO BE A BANQUET FOR CHIEF WHOSE MORALS ARE ELASTIX. I DON'T LIKE TO DEPRIVE DOGMATIX OF...



OFF YOU GO, OBELIX, OLD CHAP!

I'LL BRING YOU SOMETHING TO EAT!

WOOF! WOOF!



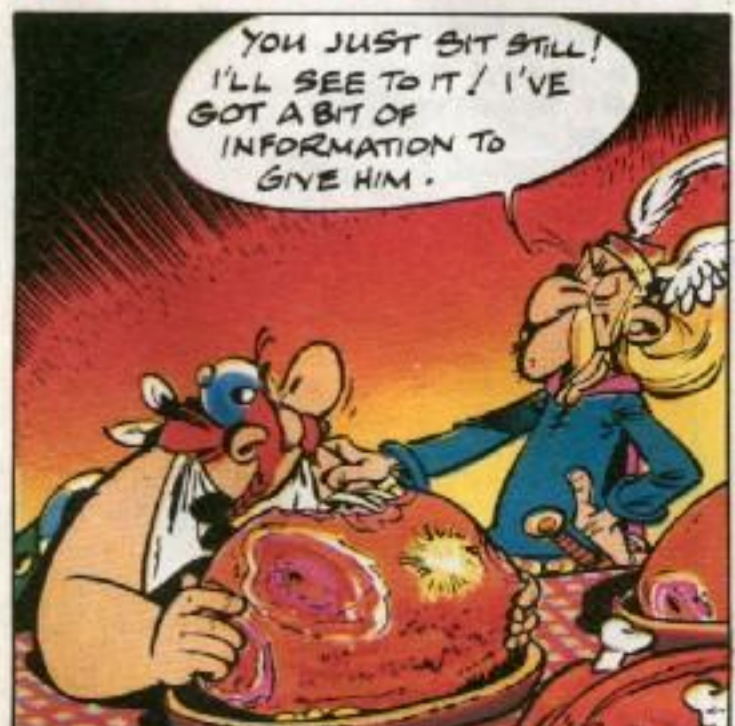
SOON AFTERWARDS...

YAM! SCRUNCH! GLOUP!

BY TOUTATIS! YOU EAT WELL!



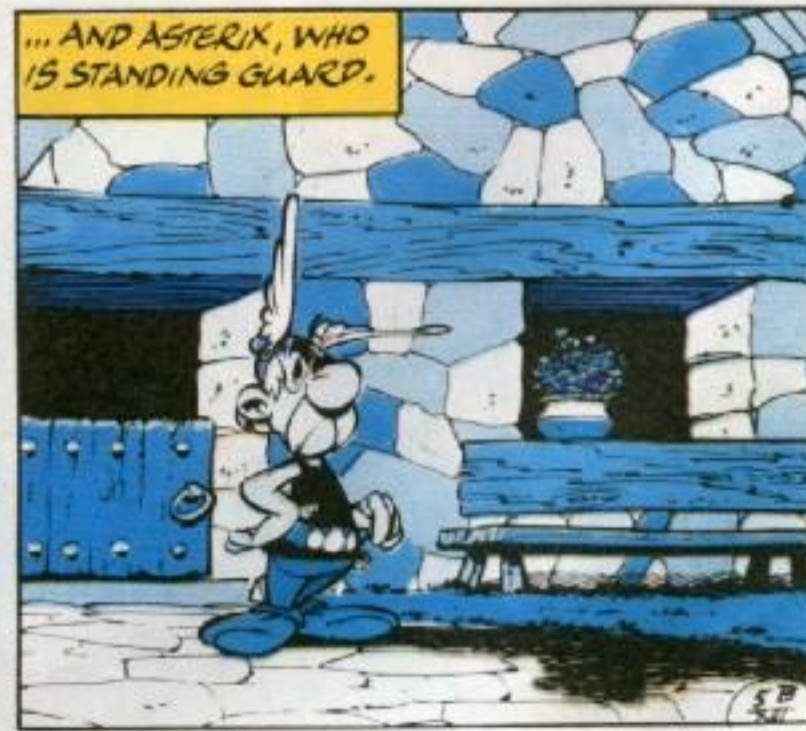
EAT?... GLOUP!... EAT? I'D FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT ASTERTIX! I MUST TAKE HIM SOMETHING TO EAT!

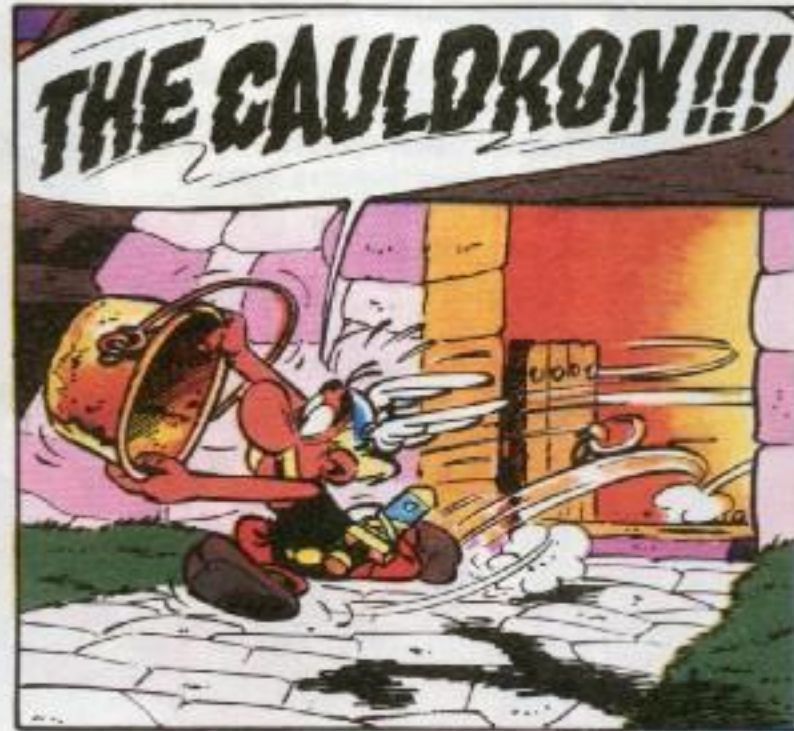


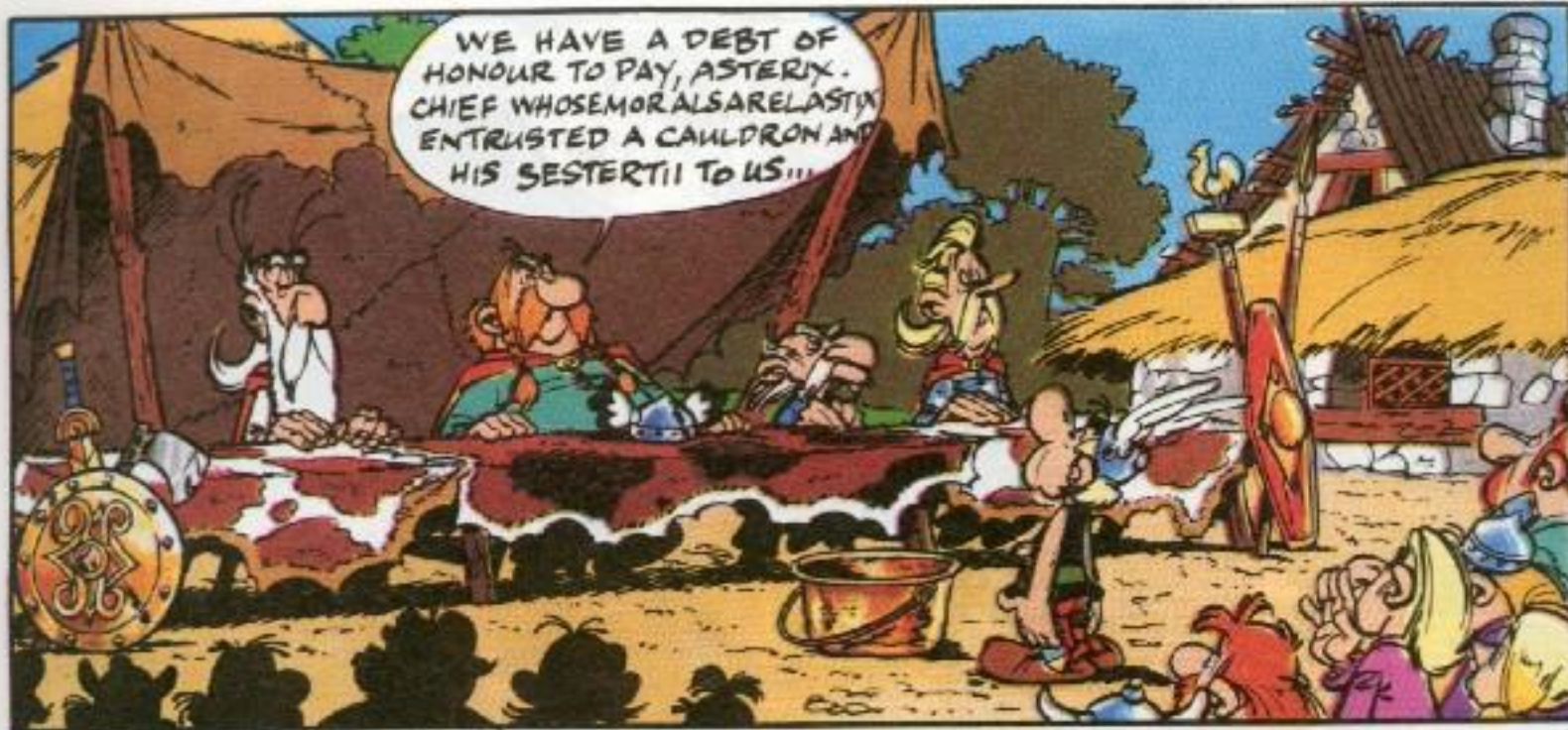
YOU JUST SIT STILL! I'LL SEE TO IT! I'VE GOT A BIT OF INFORMATION TO GIVE HIM.



YOU'RE WELCOME... SCRUNCH!... I HATE BREAKING OFF BETWEEN TWO... YUM!... BOARS!







WE HAVE A DEBT OF HONOUR TO PAY, ASTERIX. CHIEF WHOSEMORALSARELASTIX ENTRUSTED A CAULDRON AND HIS SESTERTII TO US...



GIVE HIM BACK HIS CAULDRON! THAT WILL PAY OFF HALF THE DEBT, AND ...

SILENCE, OR I'LL HAVE THE VILLAGE CLEARED!!!



IT WAS UP TO YOU TO LOOK AFTER THE CAULDRON, AND YOU FAILED IN YOUR DUTY. YOU HAVE BROUGHT DISHONOUR ON OUR VILLAGE. YOU KNOW HOW STRICT OUR LAWS ARE ...



BAD AS IT IS FOR US TO TAKE THIS STEP, YOU ARE BANISHED FROM THE VILLAGE YOU MAY RETURN ONLY IF YOU MAKE UP FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE!



I SHALL RETURN WITH THE CAULDRON FULL OF SESTERTII, OR I SHALL NOT RETURN AT ALL!

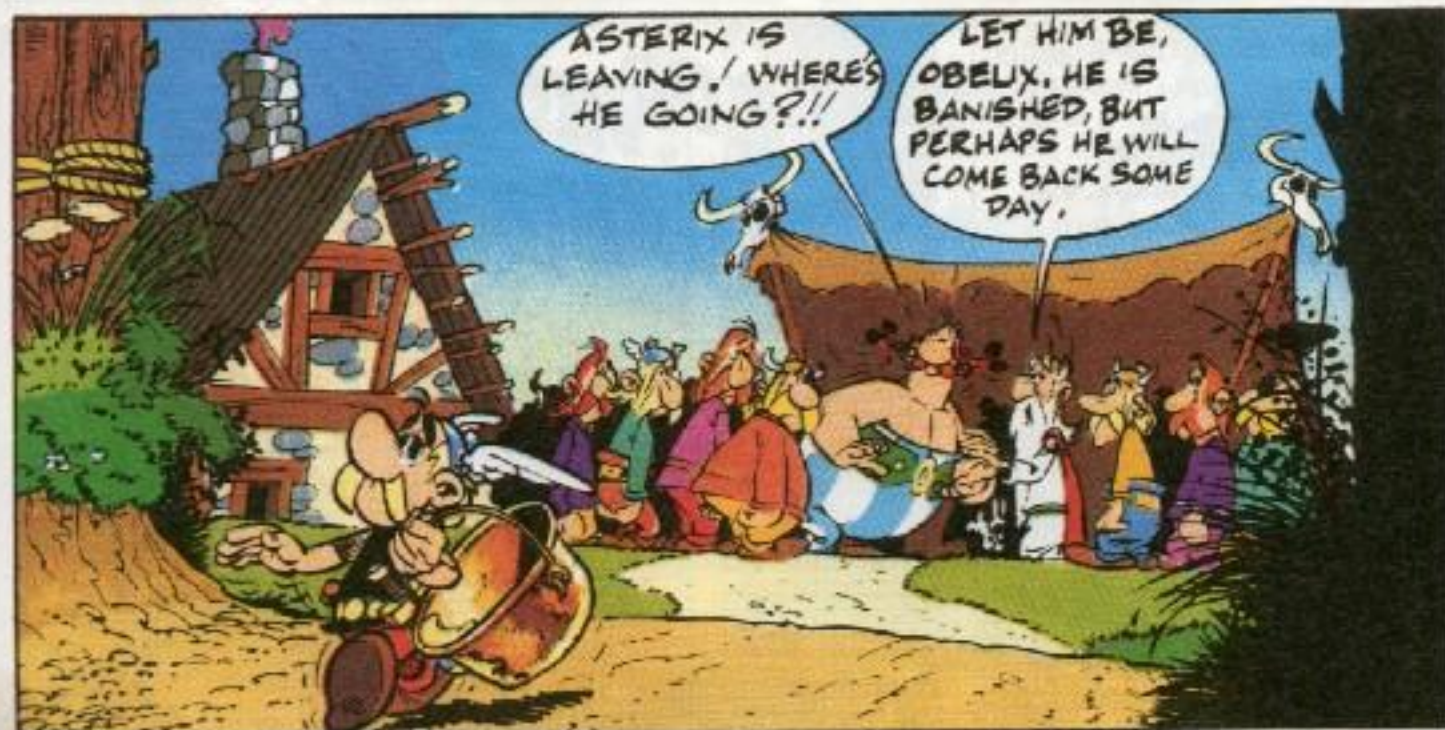


WELL SPOKEN, BY TOUTATIS! COME BACK WITH YOUR CAULDRON OR IN YOUR CAULDRON!



YOU KNOW THE MAGIC POWERS OF THIS POTION. IT WILL GIVE YOU INVINCIBLE STRENGTH! NOW GO, MY BOY, AND USE IT WISELY!

THANKS, O DRUID!



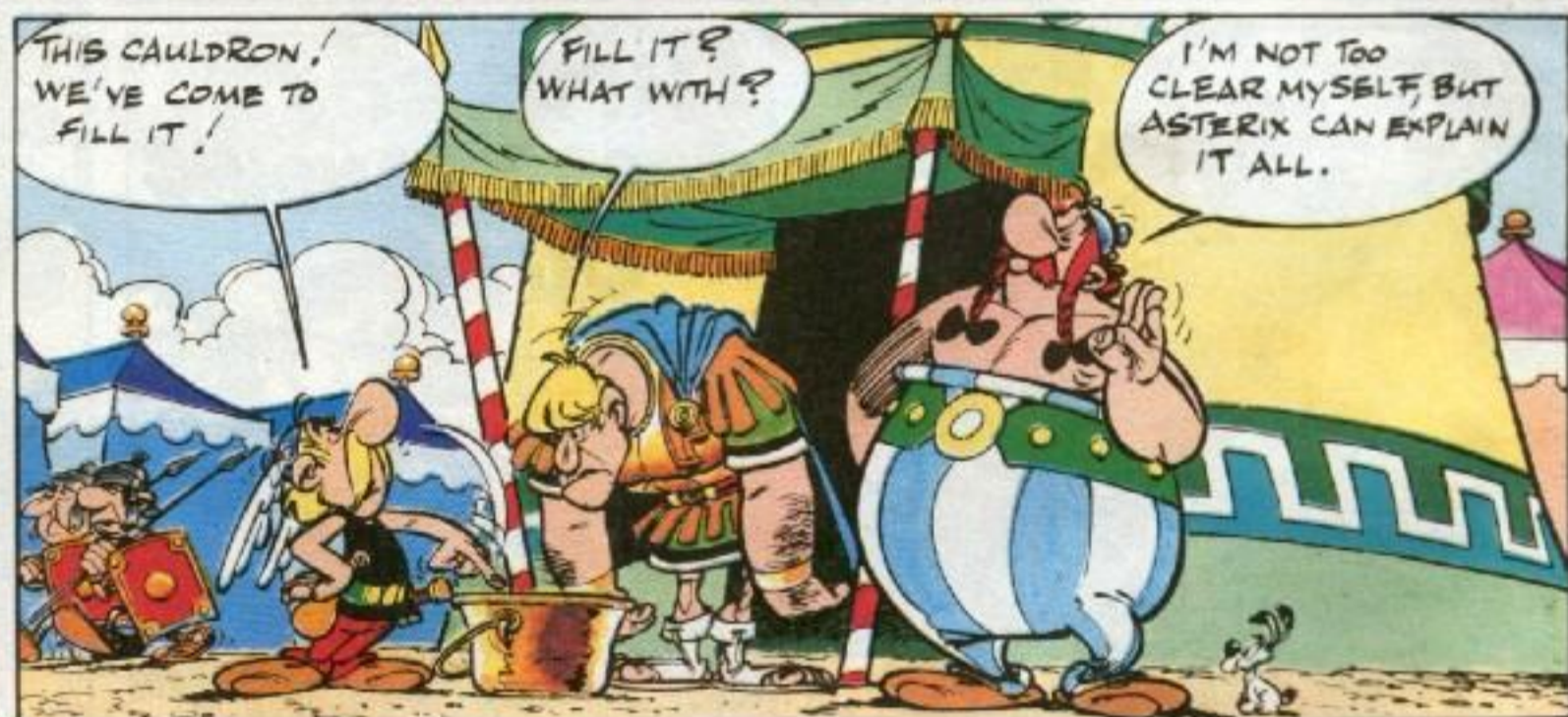
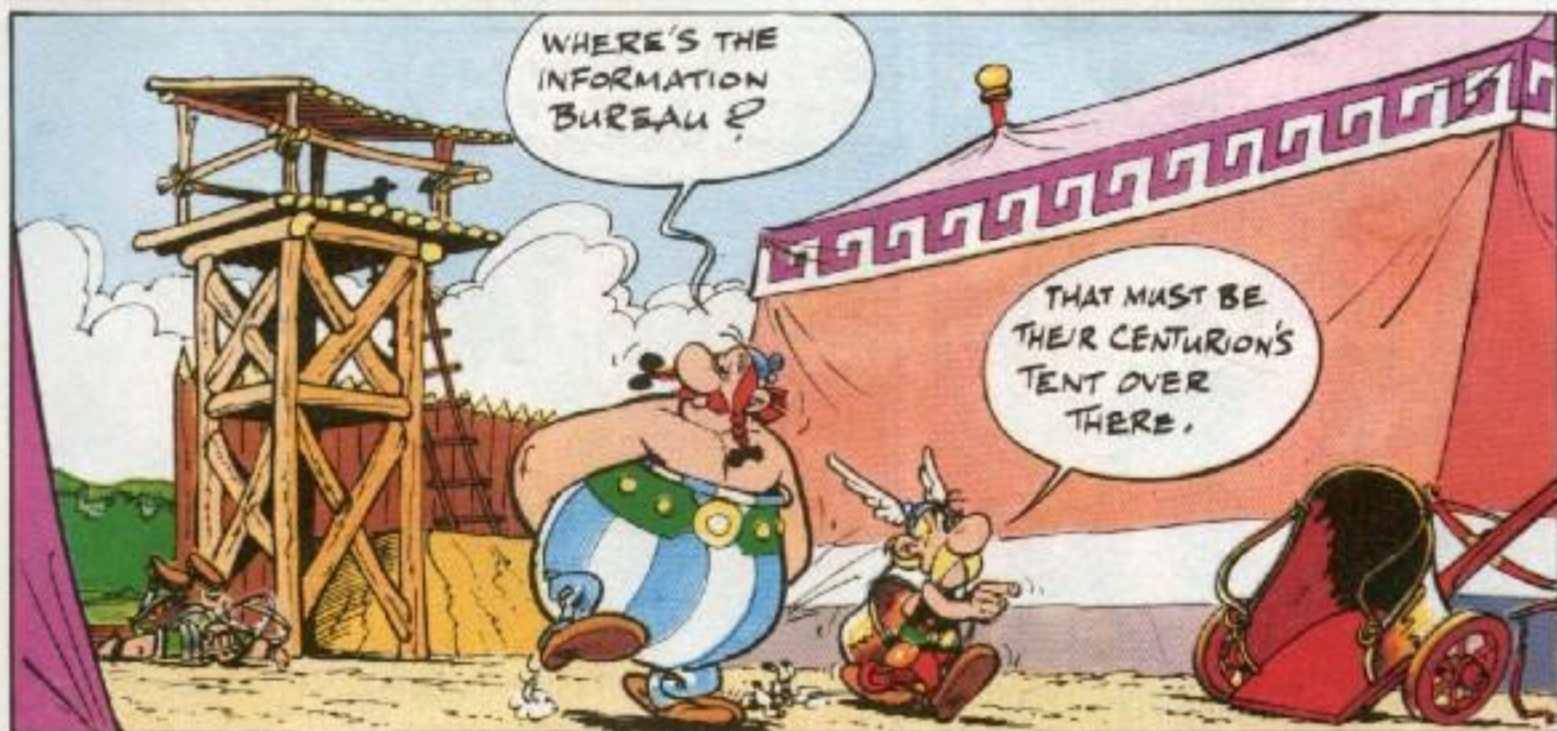
ASTERIX IS LEAVING! WHERE'S HE GOING?!!

LET HIM BE, OBELEX. HE IS BANISHED, BUT PERHAPS HE WILL COME BACK SOME DAY.



ARE YOU ALL OFF YOUR HEADS? LETTING ASTERIX GO OFF LIKE THAT, ALL ALONE? HOW DO YOU EXPECT HIM TO GET BY IF DOGMATIX AND I AREN'T THERE TO ADVISE HIM?







???

THAT'S FUNNY. WHY WOULD THE GAULS BE PAYING US?

VAE VICTIS, AS THE MAN SAID, OLD BOY.

IN ORDER OF HEIGHT / LITTLE ONES FIRST! LITTLE ONES FIRST!



WHAT ON EARTH ARE THEY DOING? ARE THEY QUEUING UP TO GET BASHED NOW?



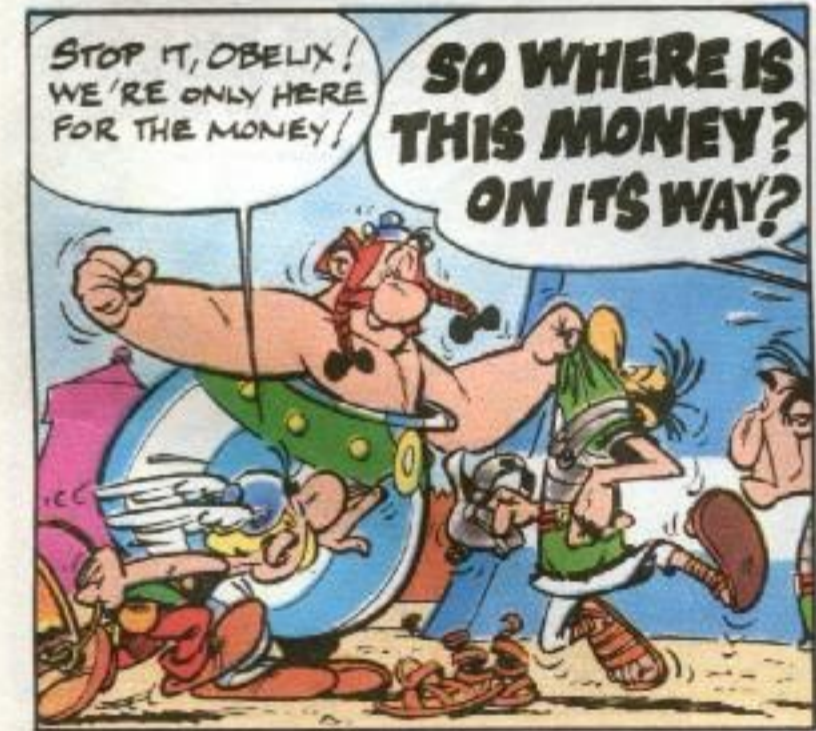
COME ON, START HANDING IT OUT!

I CAN?



HEY! DON'T PUSH BACK THERE, OR WE'LL ALL GET A HAND-OUT!

PAF!

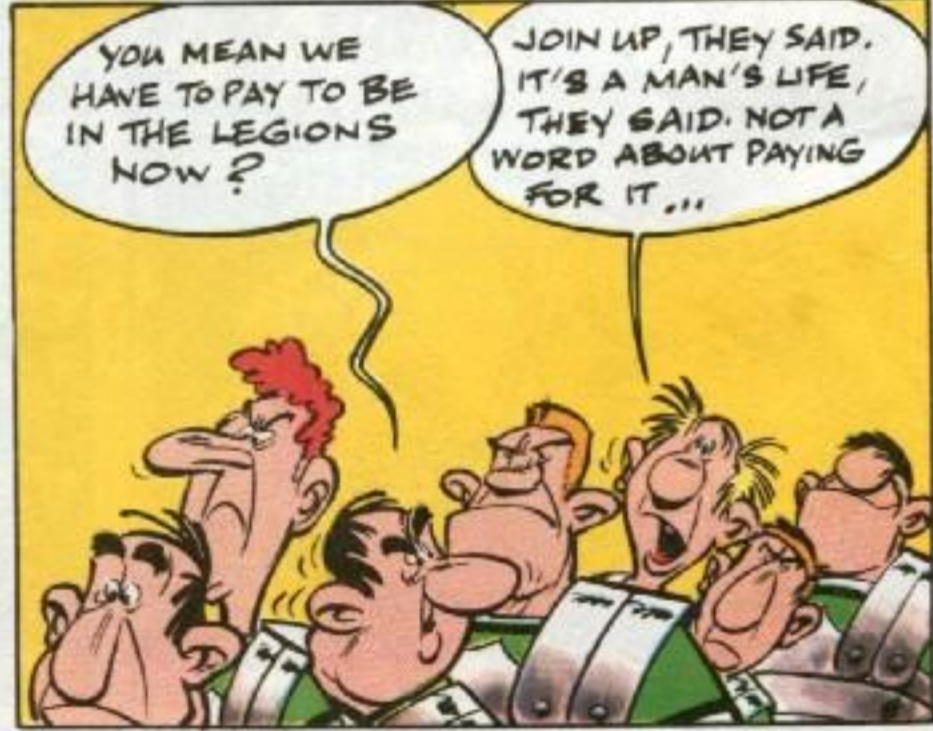


STOP IT, OBELIX! WE'RE ONLY HERE FOR THE MONEY!

SO WHERE IS THIS MONEY? ON ITS WAY?



I HOPE SO! START HANDING OUT!



YOU MEAN WE HAVE TO PAY TO BE IN THE LEGIONS NOW?

JOIN UP, THEY SAID. IT'S A MAN'S LIFE, THEY SAID. NOT A WORD ABOUT PAYING FOR IT...



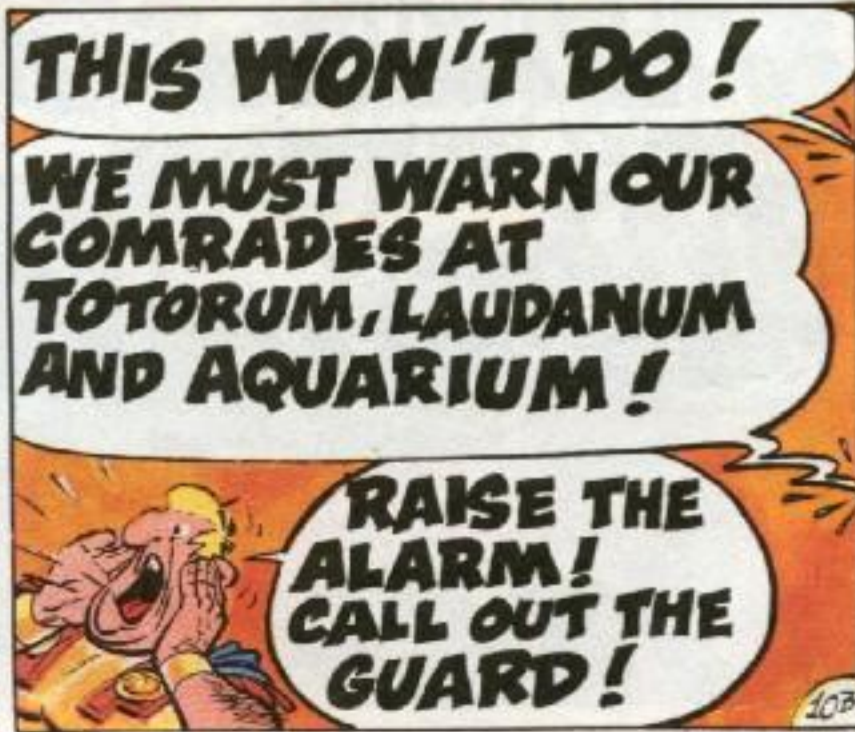
KEEP CALM! JUST KEEP CALM!

I WILL NOT KEEP CALM, BY JUPITER! I REFUSE TO PAY!

LET'S DO SOME COLLECTIVE BARGAINING. I PROPOSE WE SET UP A WORKING PARTY TO...

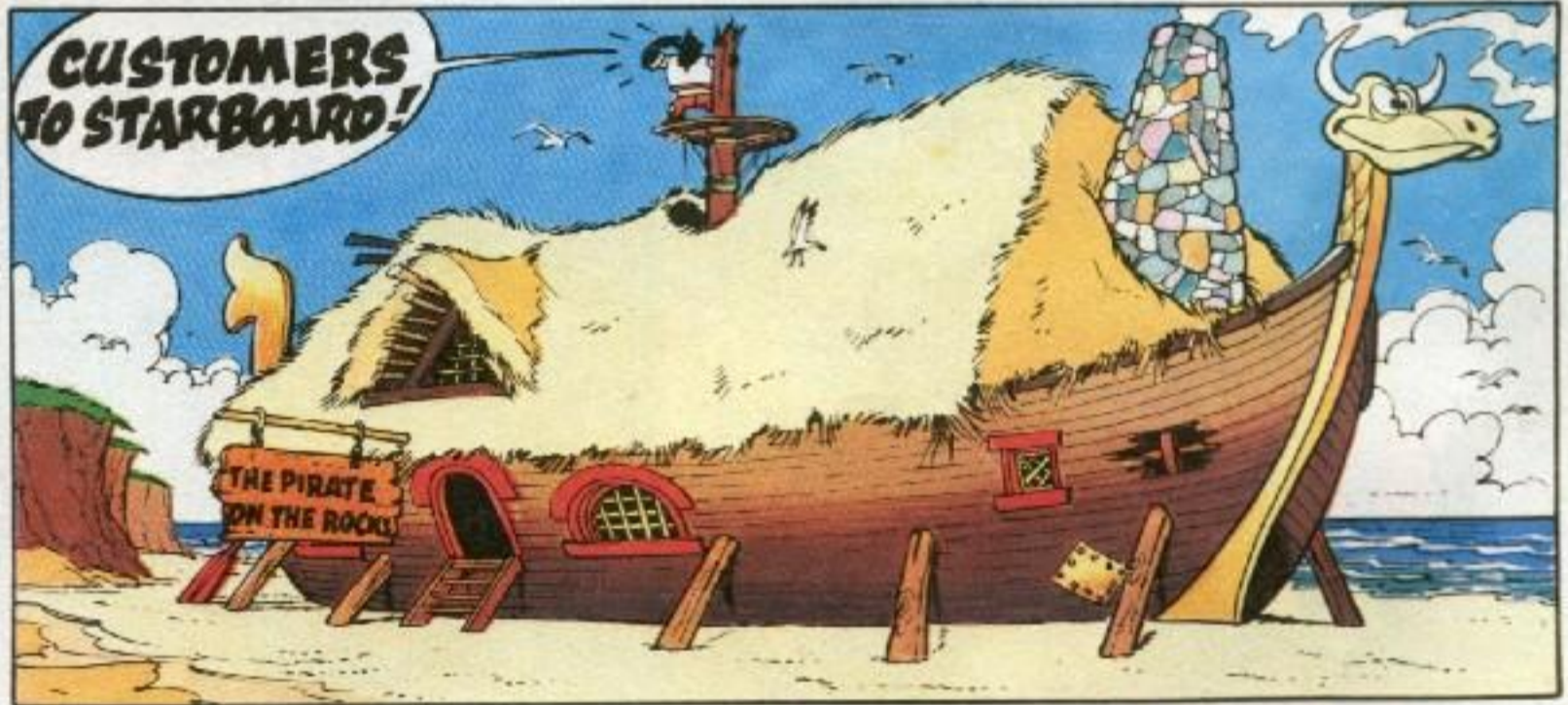
ARE YOU OFF YOUR HEAD?

WE OBJECT! WE SHALL TAKE MILITANT ACTION!



THIS WON'T DO! WE MUST WARN OUR COMRADES AT TOTORUM, LAUDANUM AND AQUARIUM!

RAISE THE ALARM! CALL OUT THE GUARD!





COME IN, COME IN, GENTLEMEN!



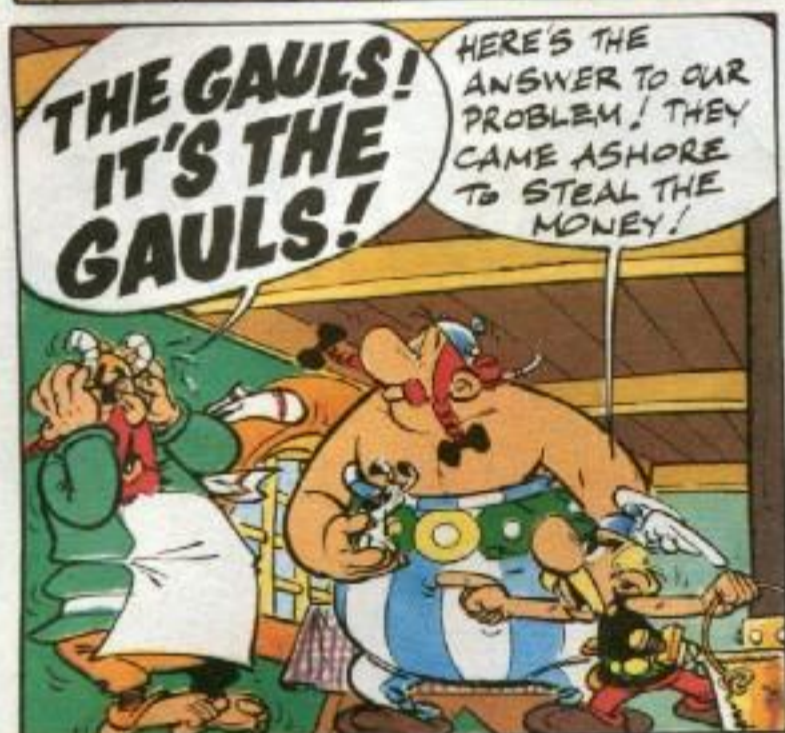
DO THEY TAKE POT LUCK, OR ARE WE OFFERING THE GOURMET MENU?

?!?



THE GAU... THE GAU...

RIGHT, THE GOURMET MENU!



THE GAULS! IT'S THE GAULS!

HERE'S THE ANSWER TO OUR PROBLEM! THEY CAME ASHORE TO STEAL THE MONEY!



WH...WHAT MONEY?

GLUG GLUG GLUG



HEEEELP!

SEARCH THE WHOLE PLACE!

OH, GOODY!

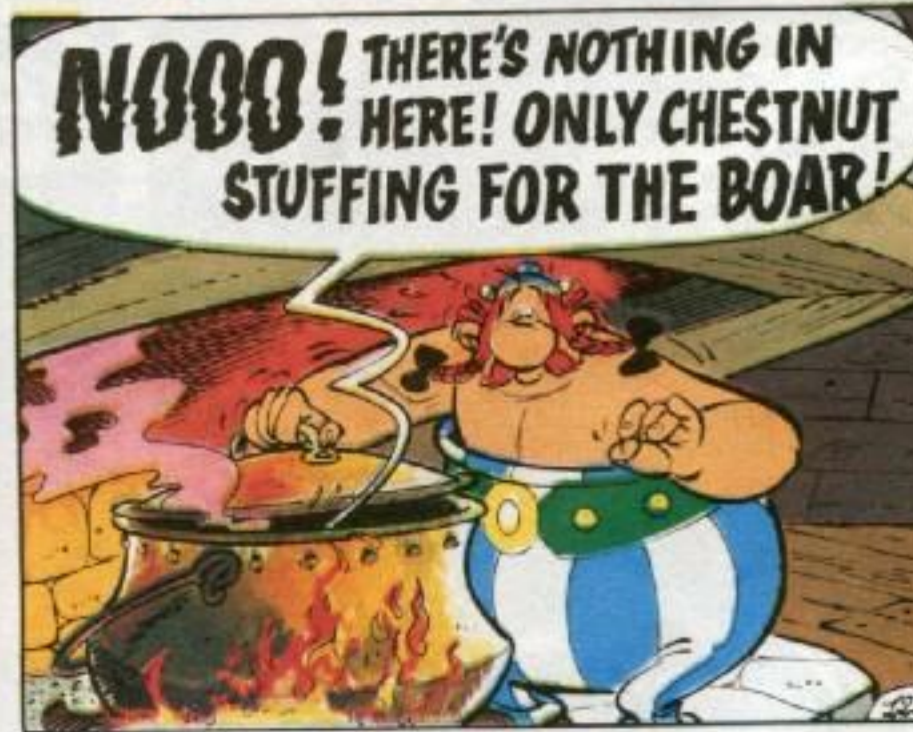


I DON'T LIKE THEM SO MUCH NOW THEY'RE LANDLUBBERS. THEY SEEM OUT OF THEIR DEPTH HERE... ALL AT SEA...

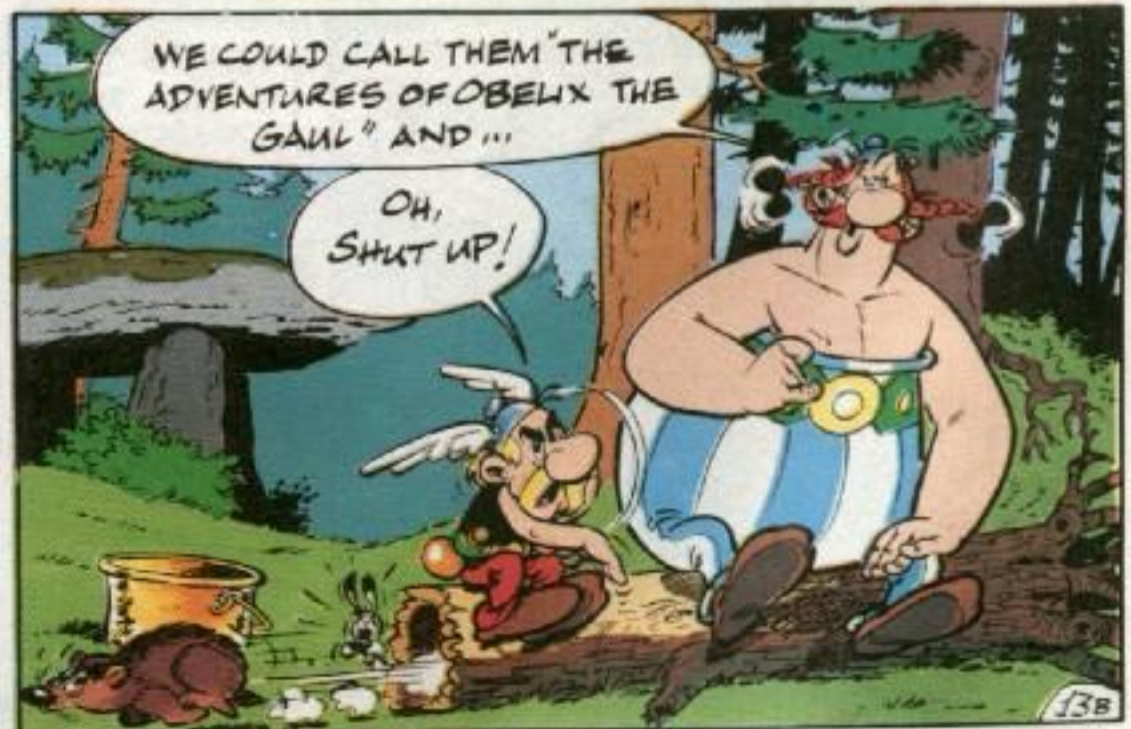
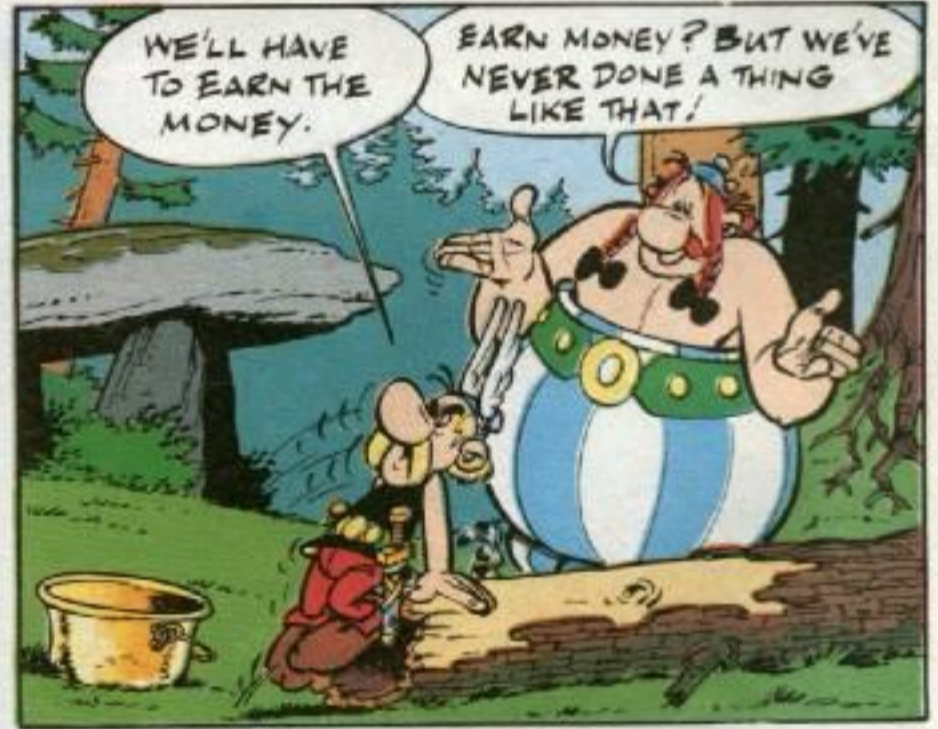
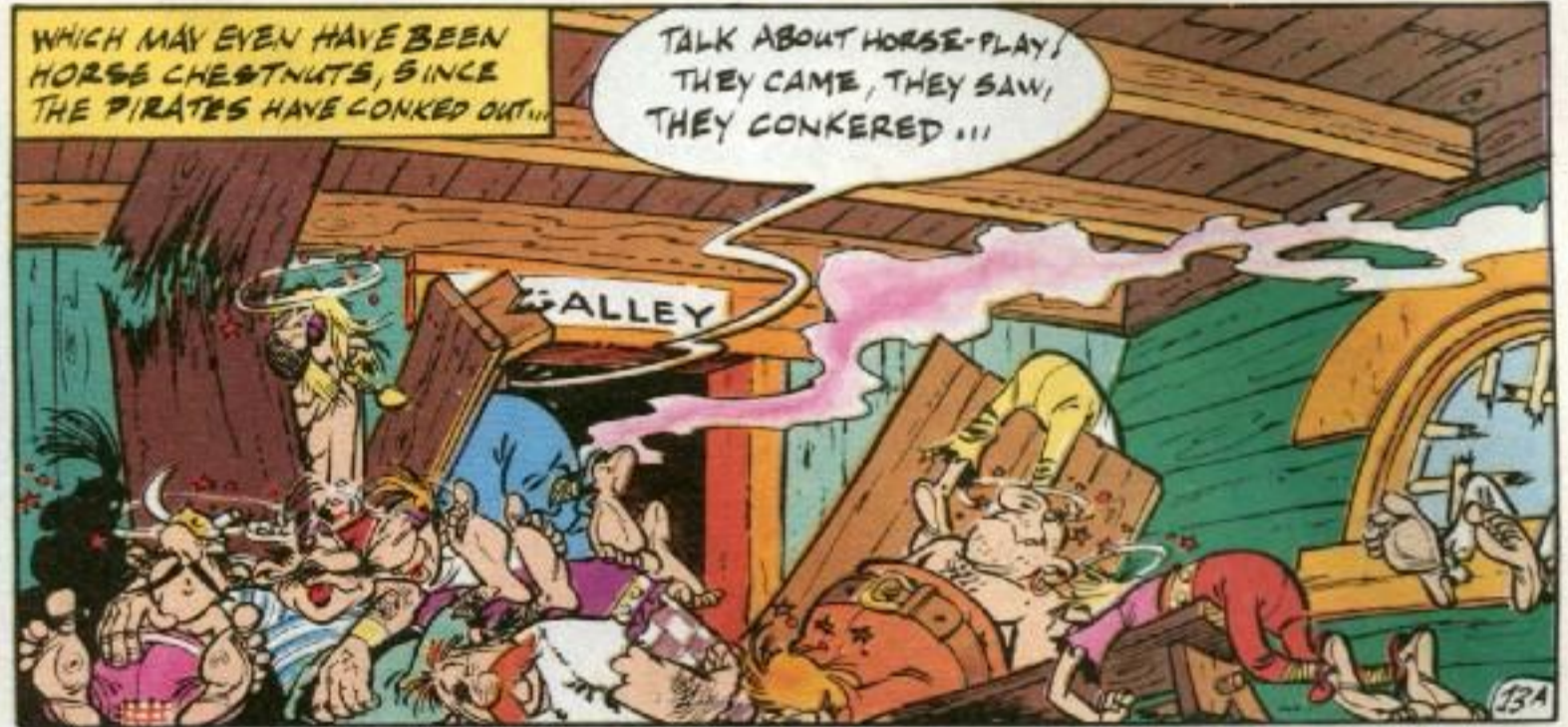
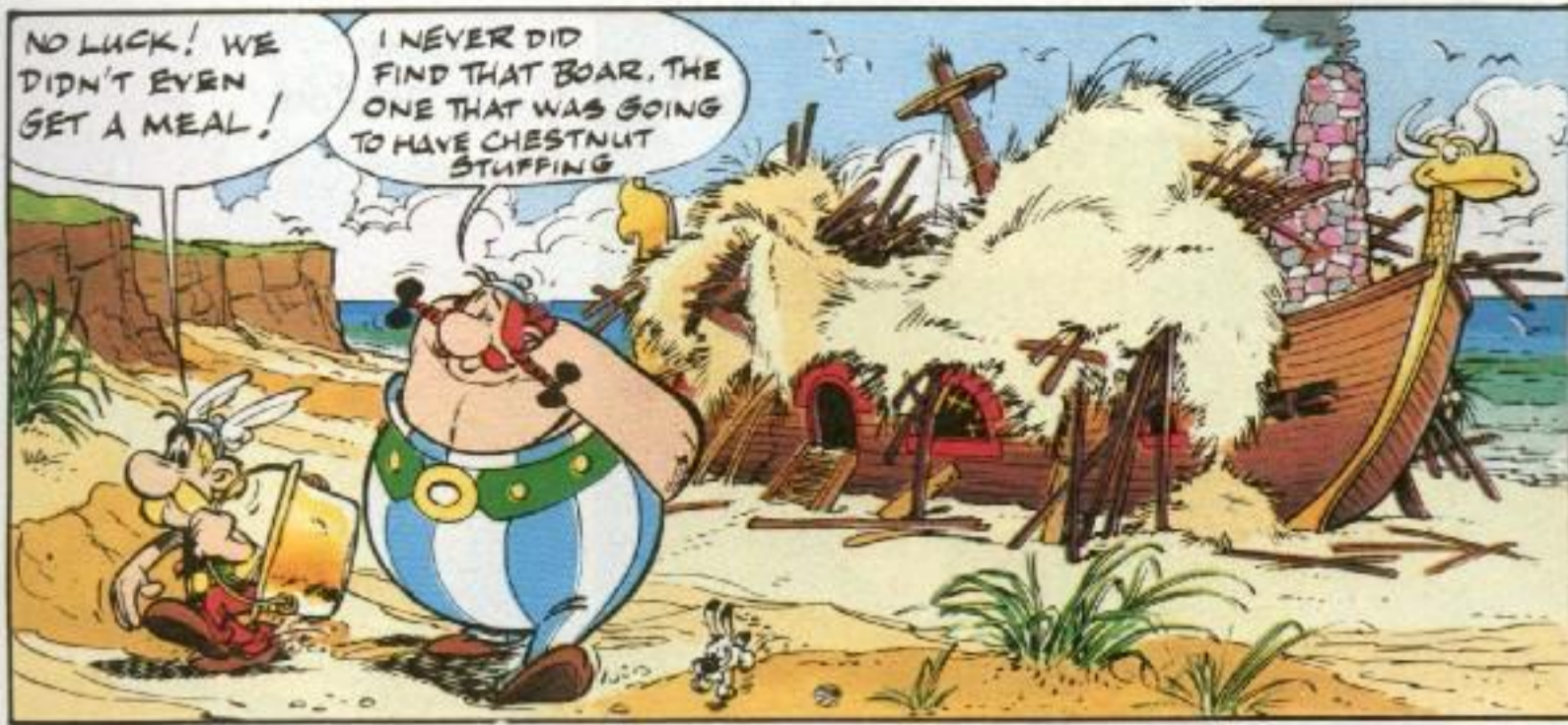
GO AND LOOK IN THE KITCHEN.

BONG!

CRASH!



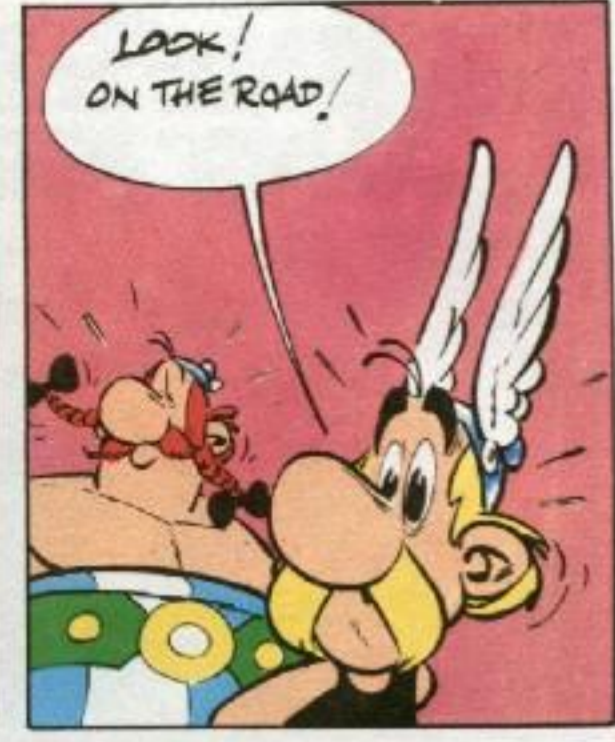
NOOO! THERE'S NOTHING IN HERE! ONLY CHESTNUT STUFFING FOR THE BOAR!



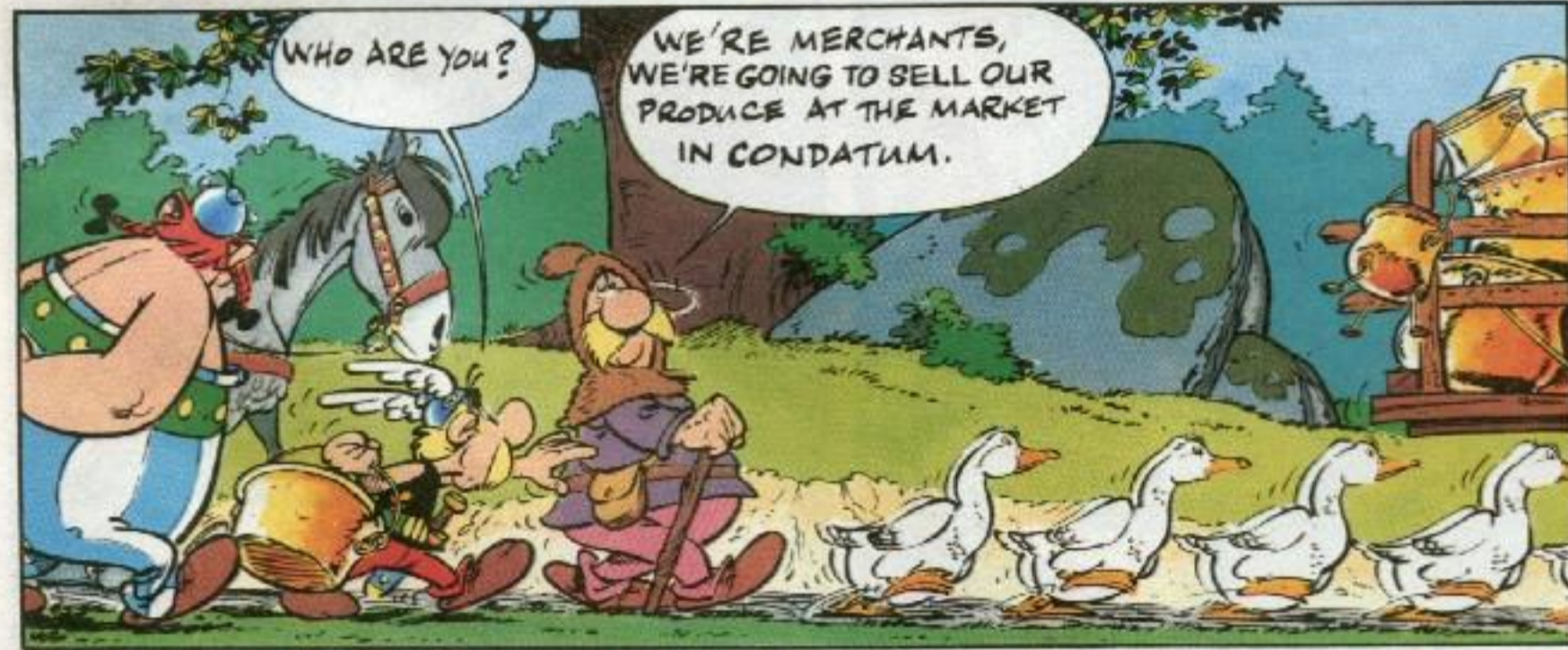


LET'S SEE, WHAT CAN WE DO?

I CAN DELIVER MENHIRS, TRAIN DOGS, HUNT BOAR, FISH, EAT, DRINK, DANCE, BASH THE ROMANS...



LOOK! ON THE ROAD!



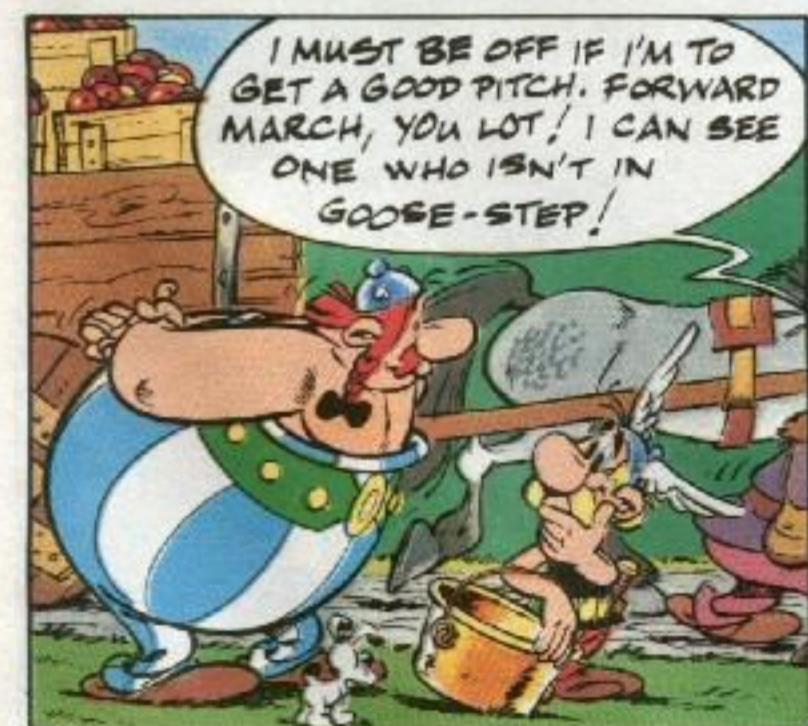
WHO ARE YOU?

WE'RE MERCHANTS, WE'RE GOING TO SELL OUR PRODUCE AT THE MARKET IN CONDATUM.



AND YOU EARN MONEY THERE?

I WOULDN'T SAY THAT. WHAT WITH THE ECONOMIC CRISIS AND TODAY'S PRICES... WE JUST ABOUT MAKE ENDS MEET.

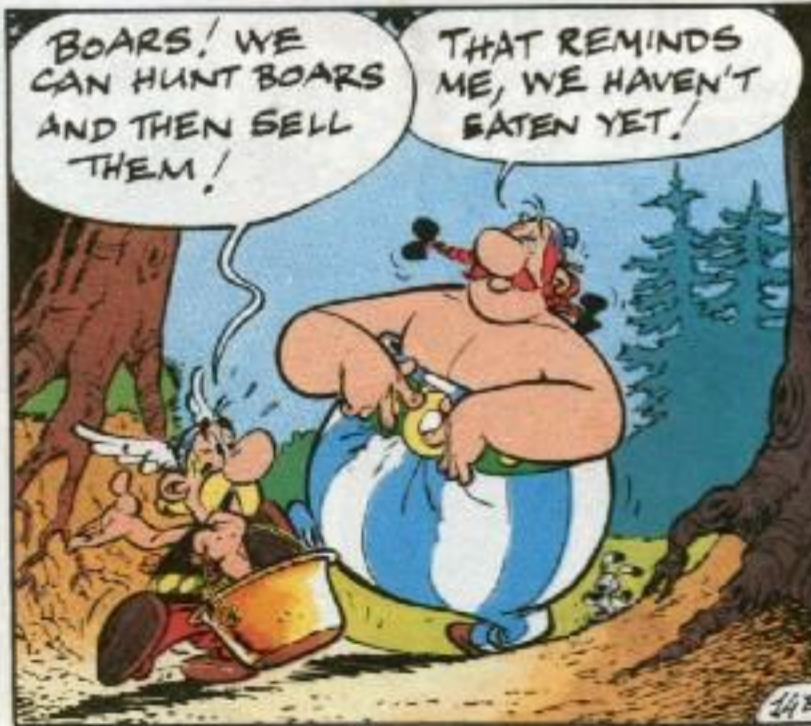


I MUST BE OFF IF I'M TO GET A GOOD PITCH. FORWARD MARCH, YOU LOT! I CAN SEE ONE WHO ISN'T IN GOOSE-STEP!



THAT'S THE WAY TO FILL THE CAULDRON! WE'LL SELL THINGS AT THE MARKET!

SELL WHAT THINGS?

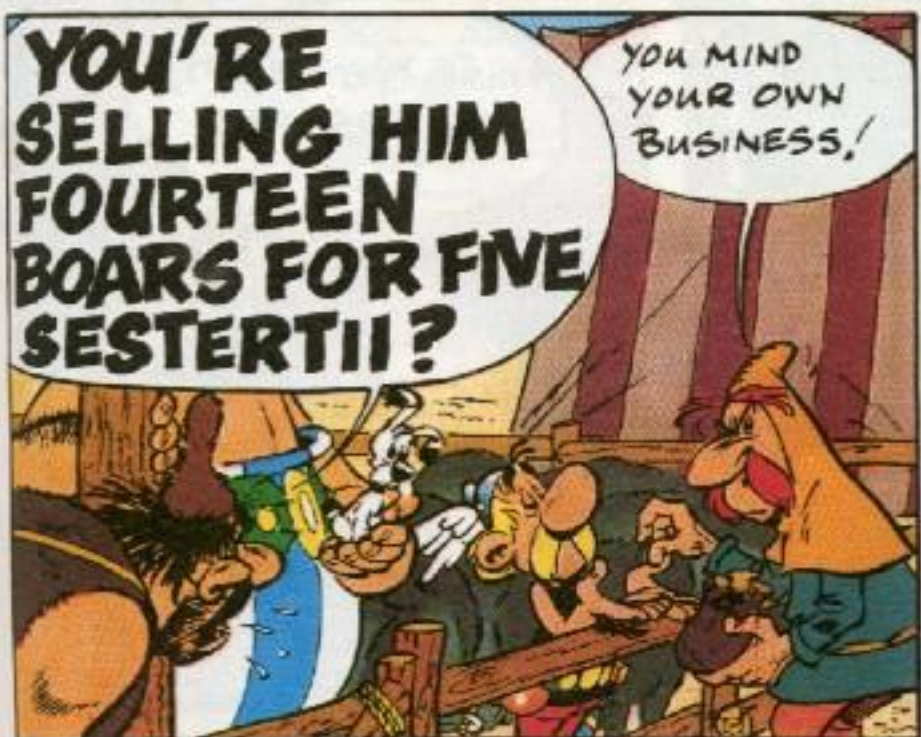
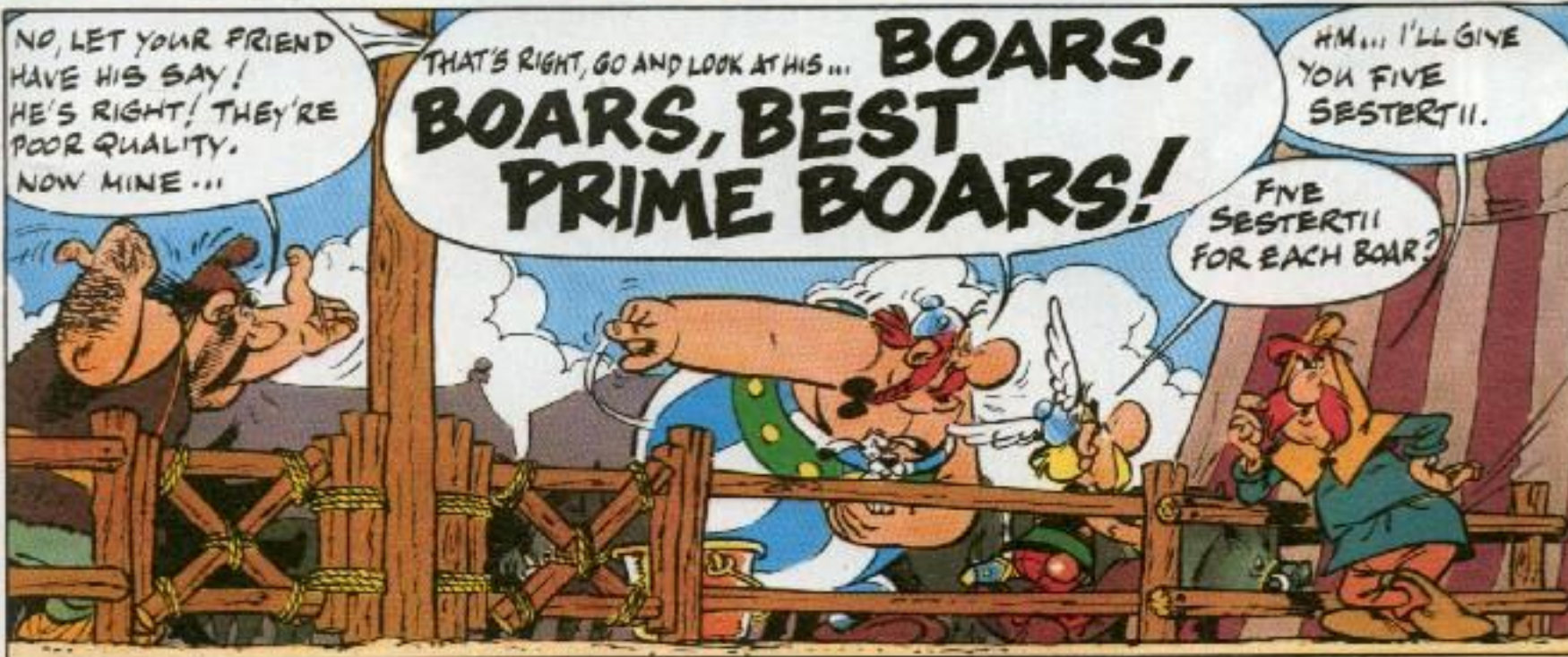


BOARS! WE CAN HUNT BOARS AND THEN SELL THEM!

THAT REMINDS ME, WE HAVEN'T EATEN YET!









YOU'RE MAKING PRICES TUMBLE!
IT'S DAYLIGHT ROBBERY! IT'S A CRIME!
FOURTEEN PRIME BOARDS LIKE THAT
FOR FIVE SESTERTII! THE BOTTOM
WILL FALL OUT OF THE MARKET!

OH, THEY WEREN'T AS
PRIME AS ALL THAT...
ONLY TIDLERS. I WAS
JUST TELLING
ASTERIX...



IS IT YOU
SELLING BOARDS
AT FIVE
SESTERTII FOR
FOURTEEN?

?!



YOU SEE? I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
PREVENTS ME
FROM...

?



TCHAC!

I DO!



RIGHT. WHEN HE
GETS BACK, TELL
HIM TO KEEP A
GROSS FOR
ME.

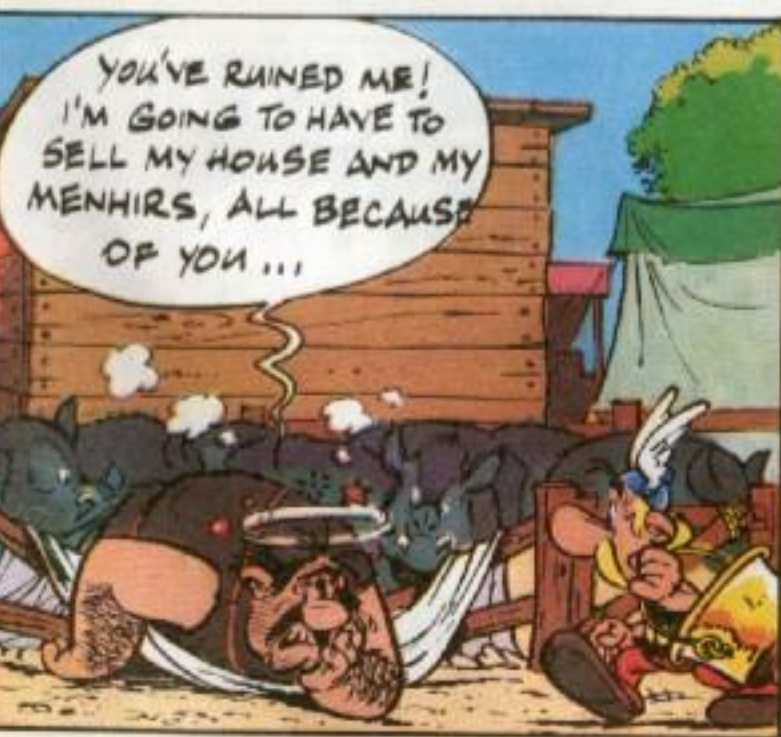
A GROSS?



THAT'S
WHAT I SAID:
FOURTEEN
FOURTEENS.

CRASH!

HAH!



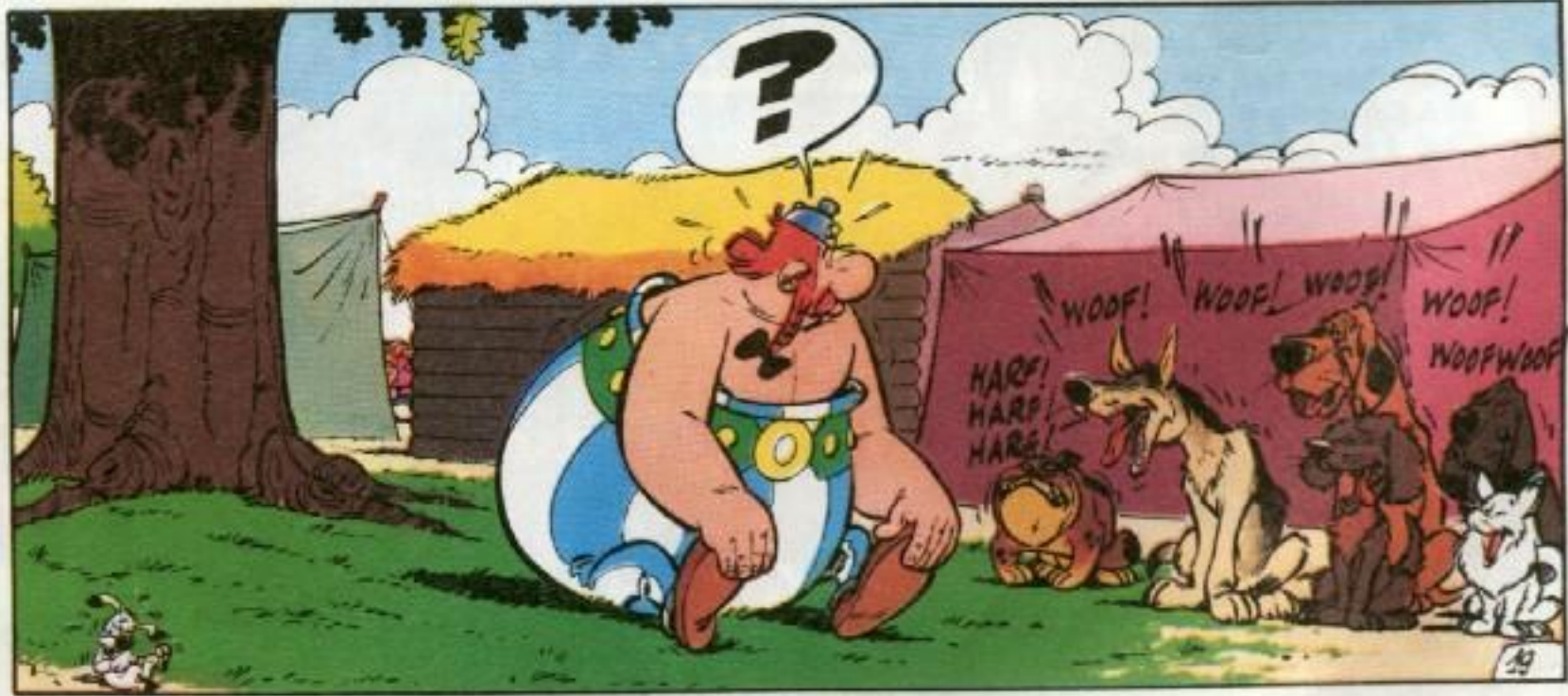
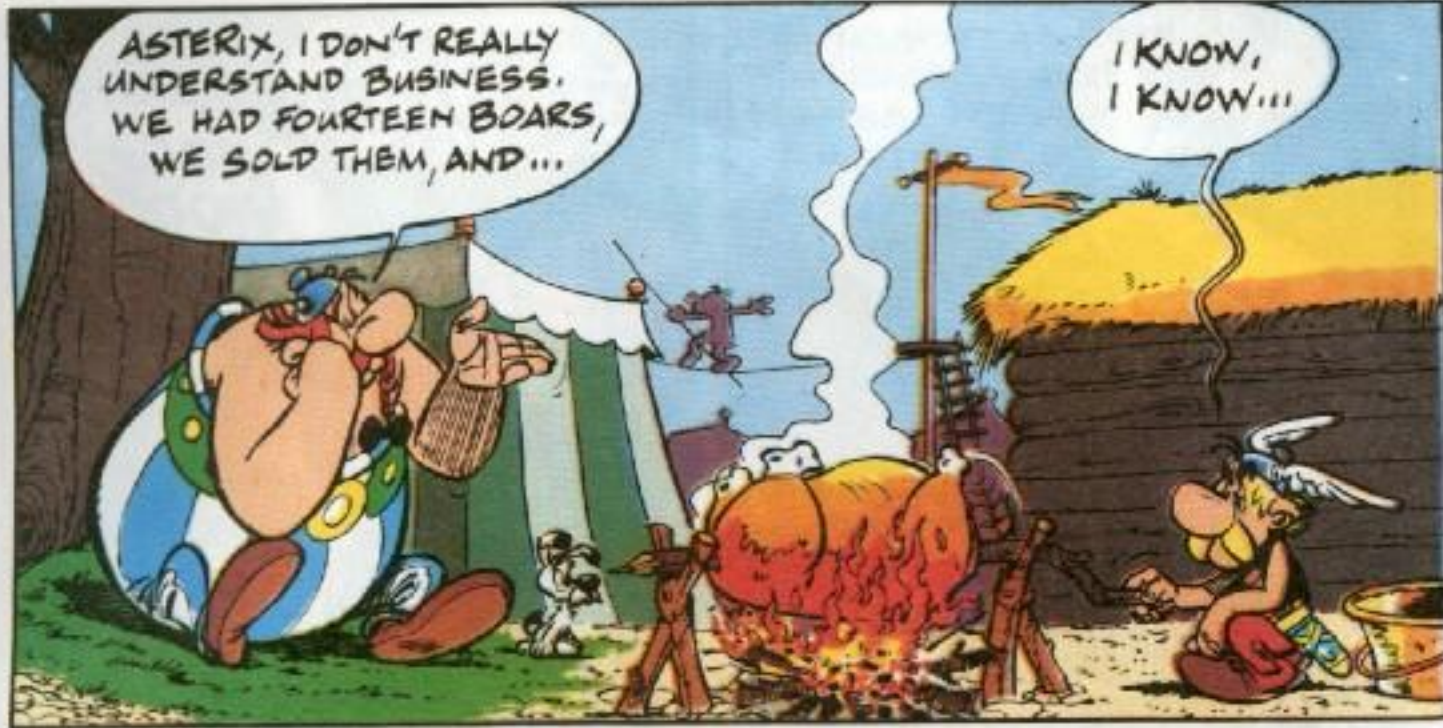
YOU'VE RUINED ME!
I'M GOING TO HAVE TO
SELL MY HOUSE AND MY
MENHIRS, ALL BECAUSE
OF YOU...

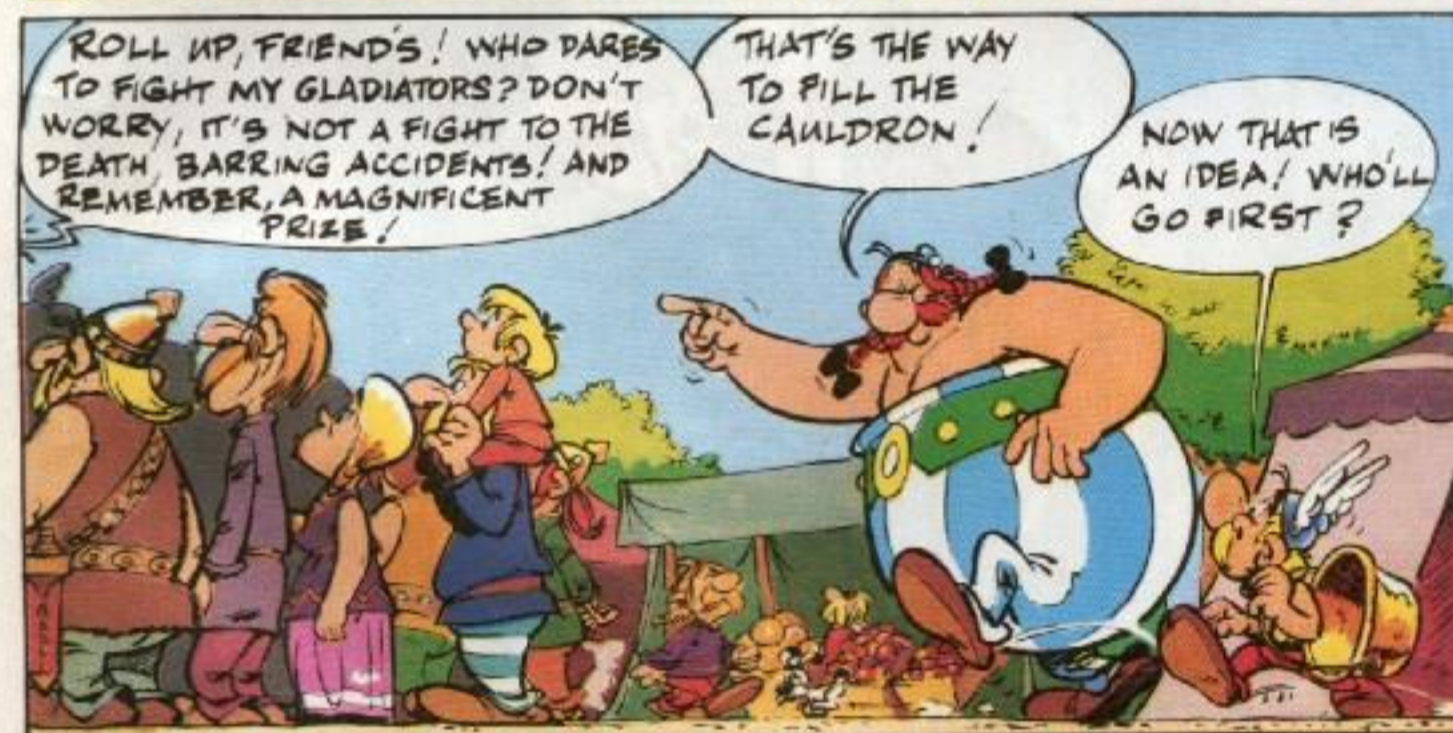
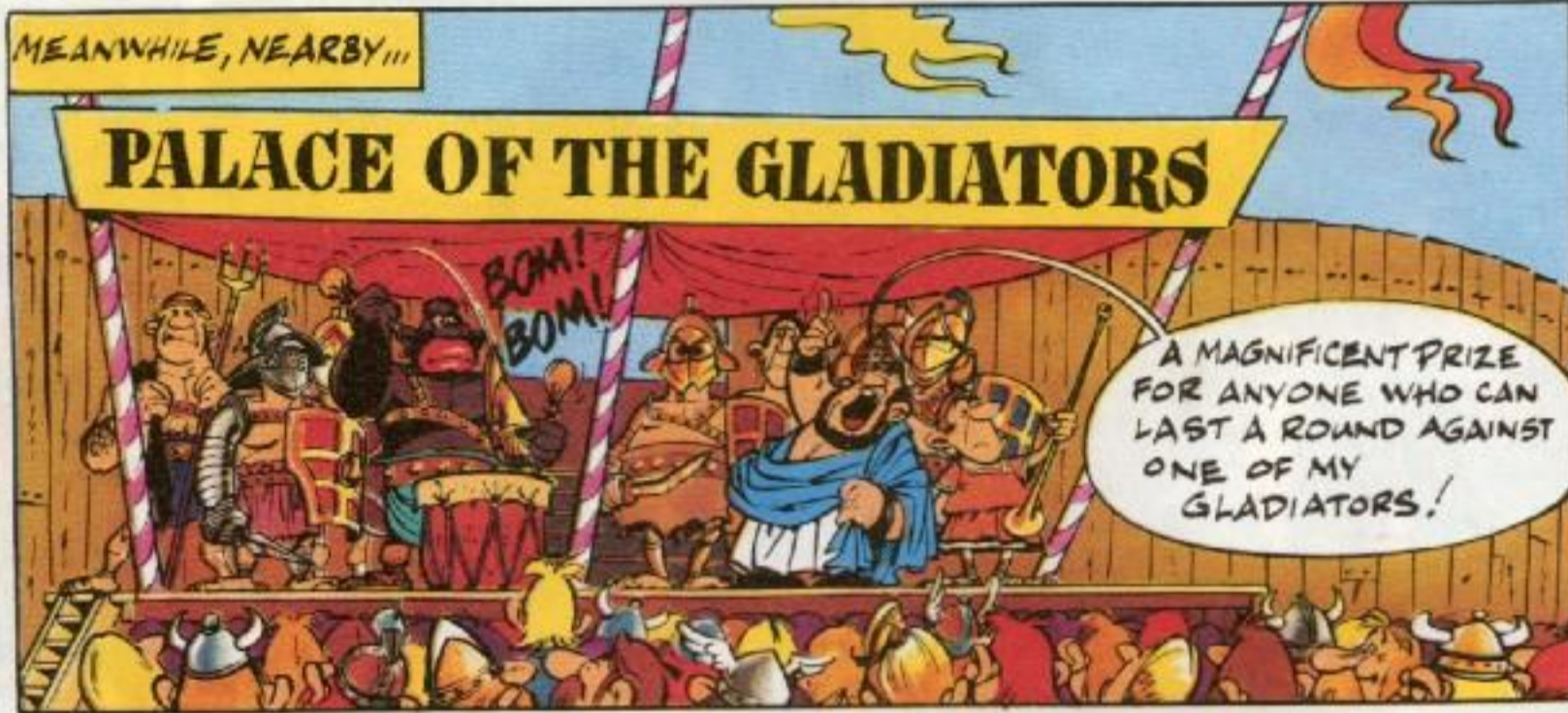


COME, COME, CALM
DOWN... ANYWAY, WE
HAVEN'T EATEN YET.
HOW MUCH ARE YOUR
BOARDS?



TO YOU, MY BOY,
FIVE SESTERTII
EACH!









COME ON, NEXT!
I HAVEN'T GOT
ALL DAY!

THERE
ISN'T ANY
NEXT!



YOU'VE FINISHED OFF MY
EIGHT GLADIATORS. WHAT'S
MORE, THEY'VE JUST
GIVEN IN THEIR NOTICE;
THEY SAY THEY'D RATHER
GO BACK AND FIGHT IN
THE CIRCUS !!!



... THE SAME OLD
GRIND: AVE CAESAR,
MORITURI TE SALUTANT,
AND ALL THAT JAZZ.

YES, YES... NOW THEN,
WHAT ABOUT THE
MAGNIFICENT PRIZE,
PLEASE?



!?



WE'LL HAVE
TO WAIT CENTURIES
FOR THIS LOT TO
BE WORTH
ANYTHING!



WAIT HERE. I'M GOING TO
TRY AND GET SOME
MONEY FOR THEM.

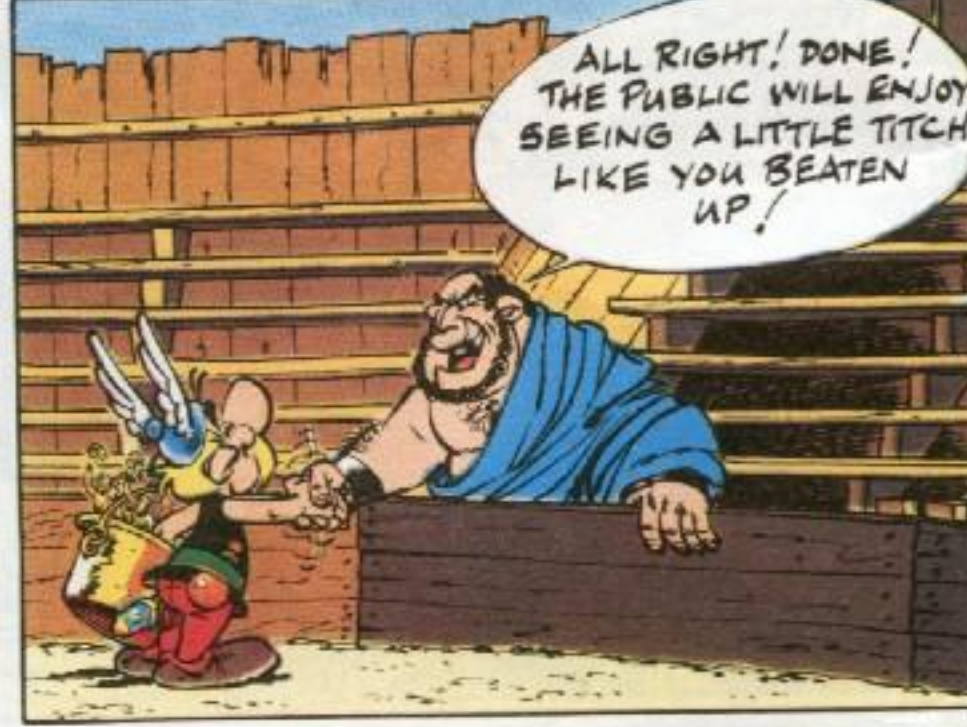


WE'RE CLOSED.
I'VE RUN OUT OF
GLADIATORS.



WHY NOT TAKE
ME ON? I'VE
GOT A CAULDRON
TO FILL.

THIS MUST
BE SOME
NEW FAD!



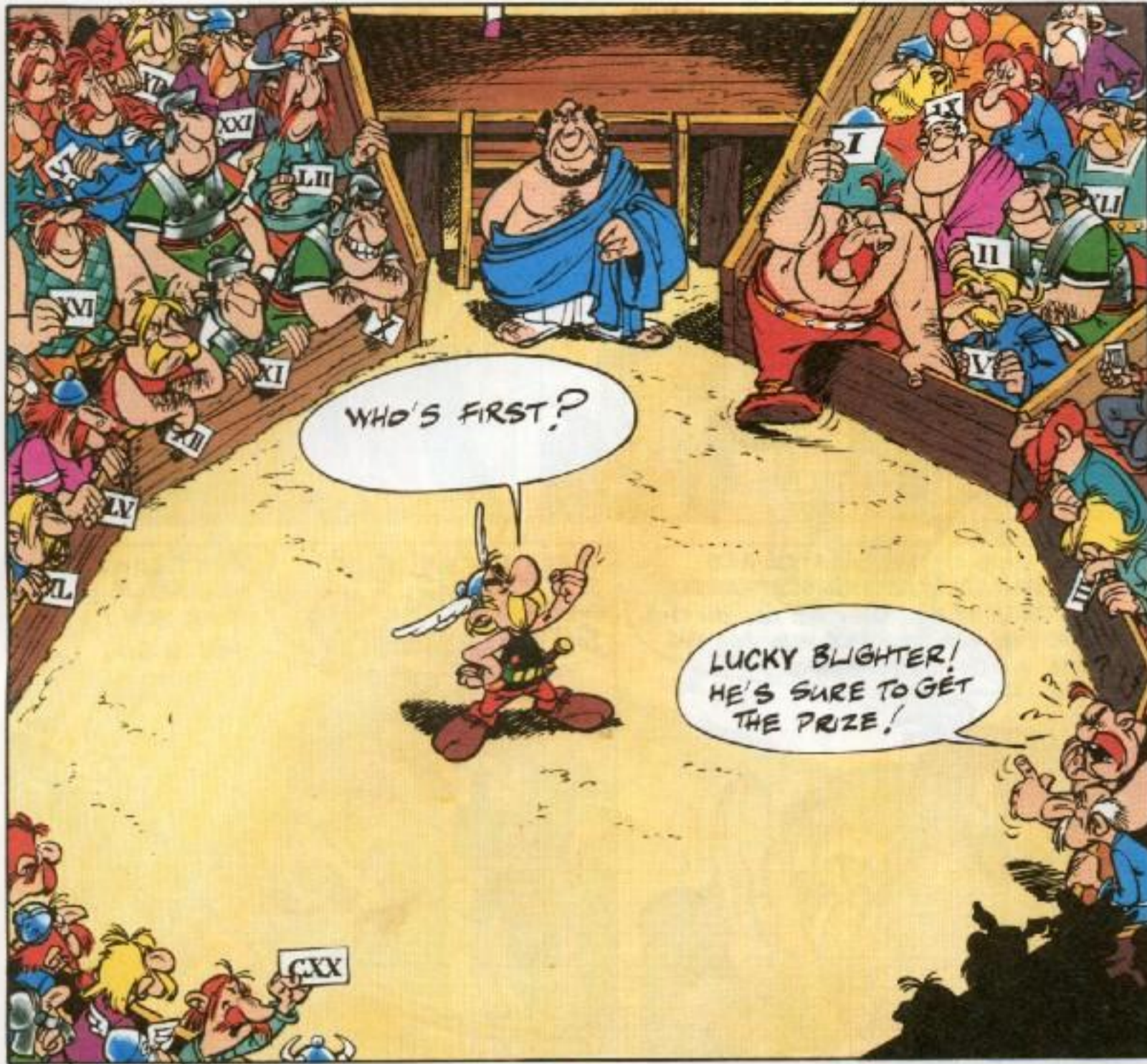
ALL RIGHT! DONE!
THE PUBLIC WILL ENJOY
SEEING A LITTLE TITCH
LIKE YOU BEATEN
UP!

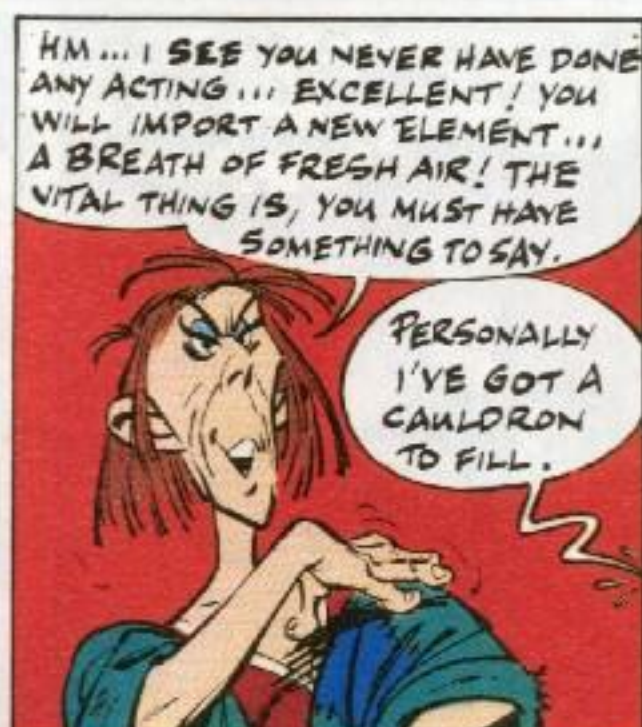
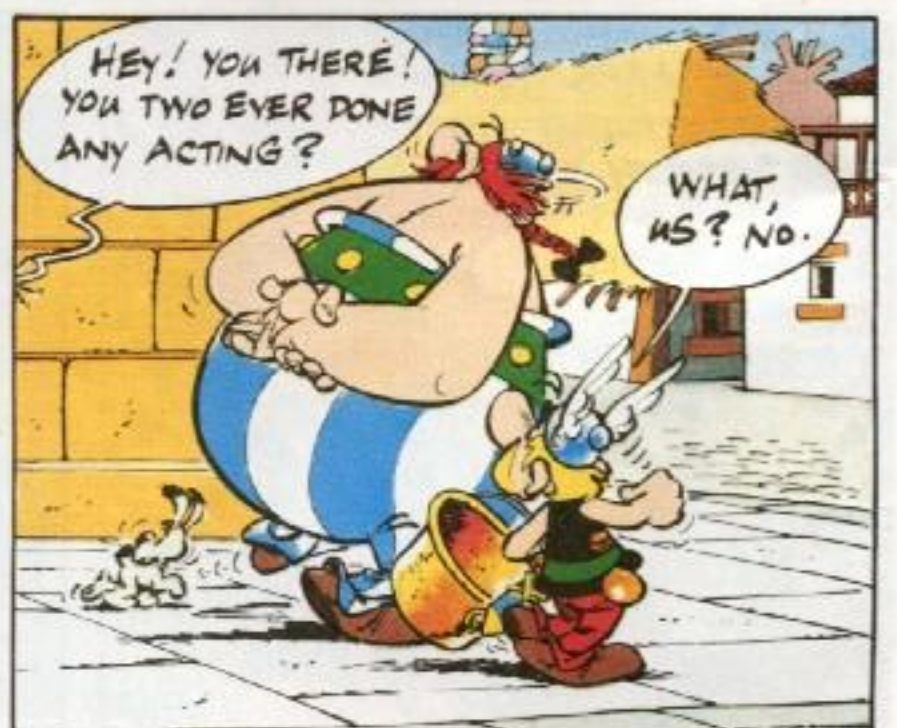
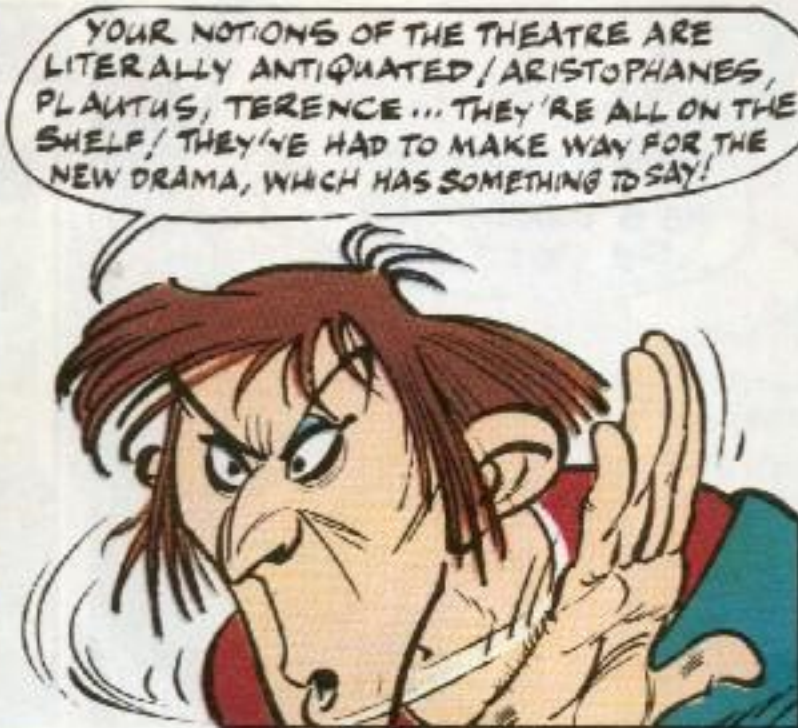
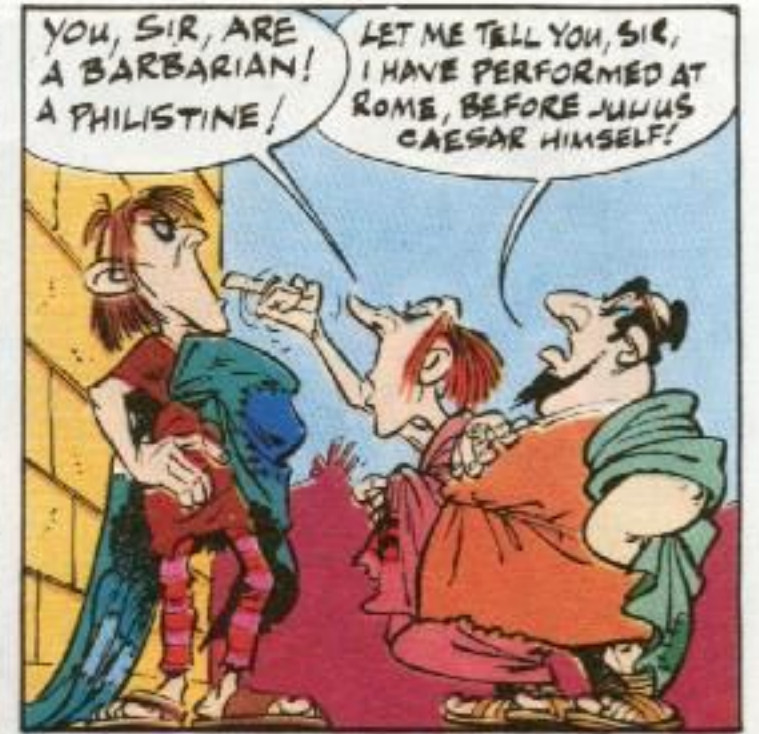
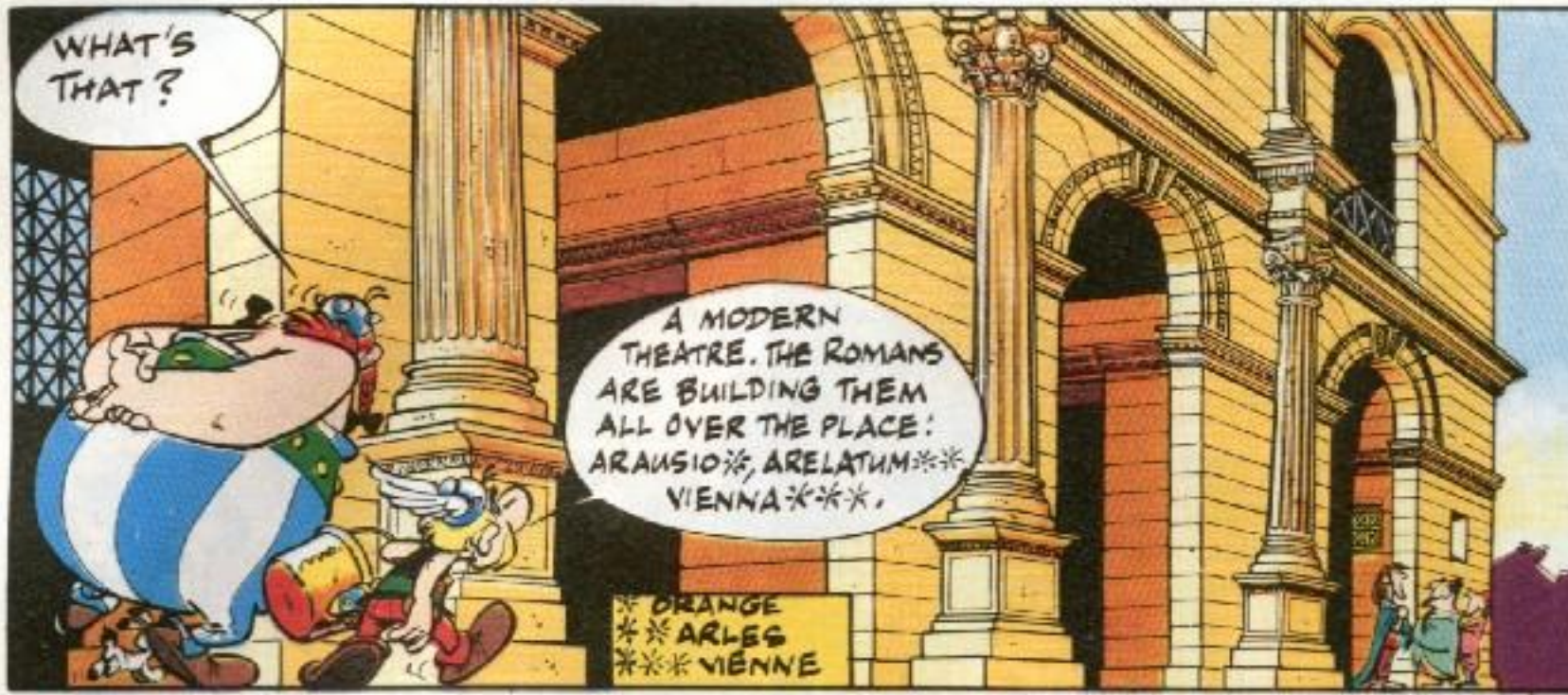


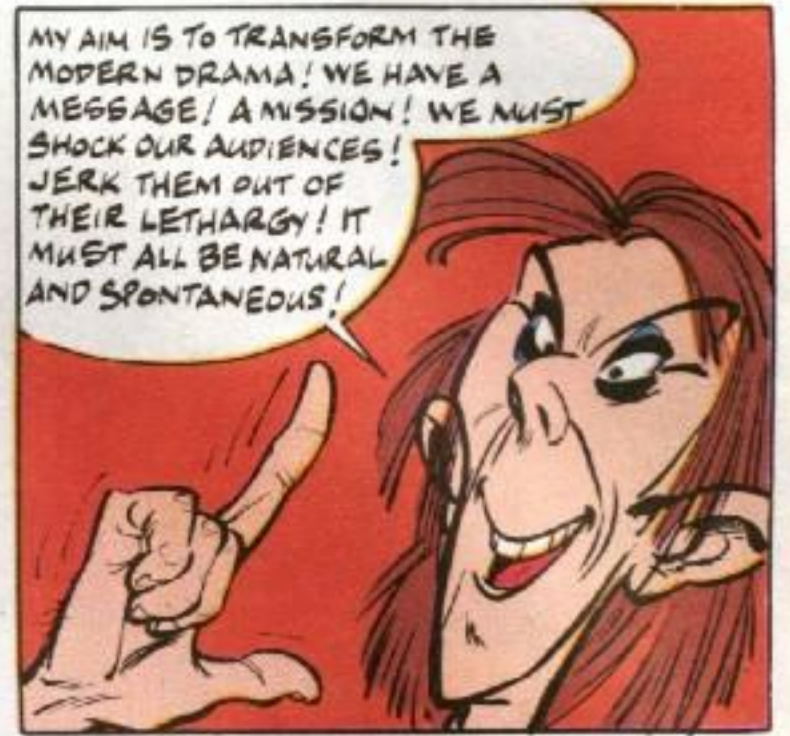
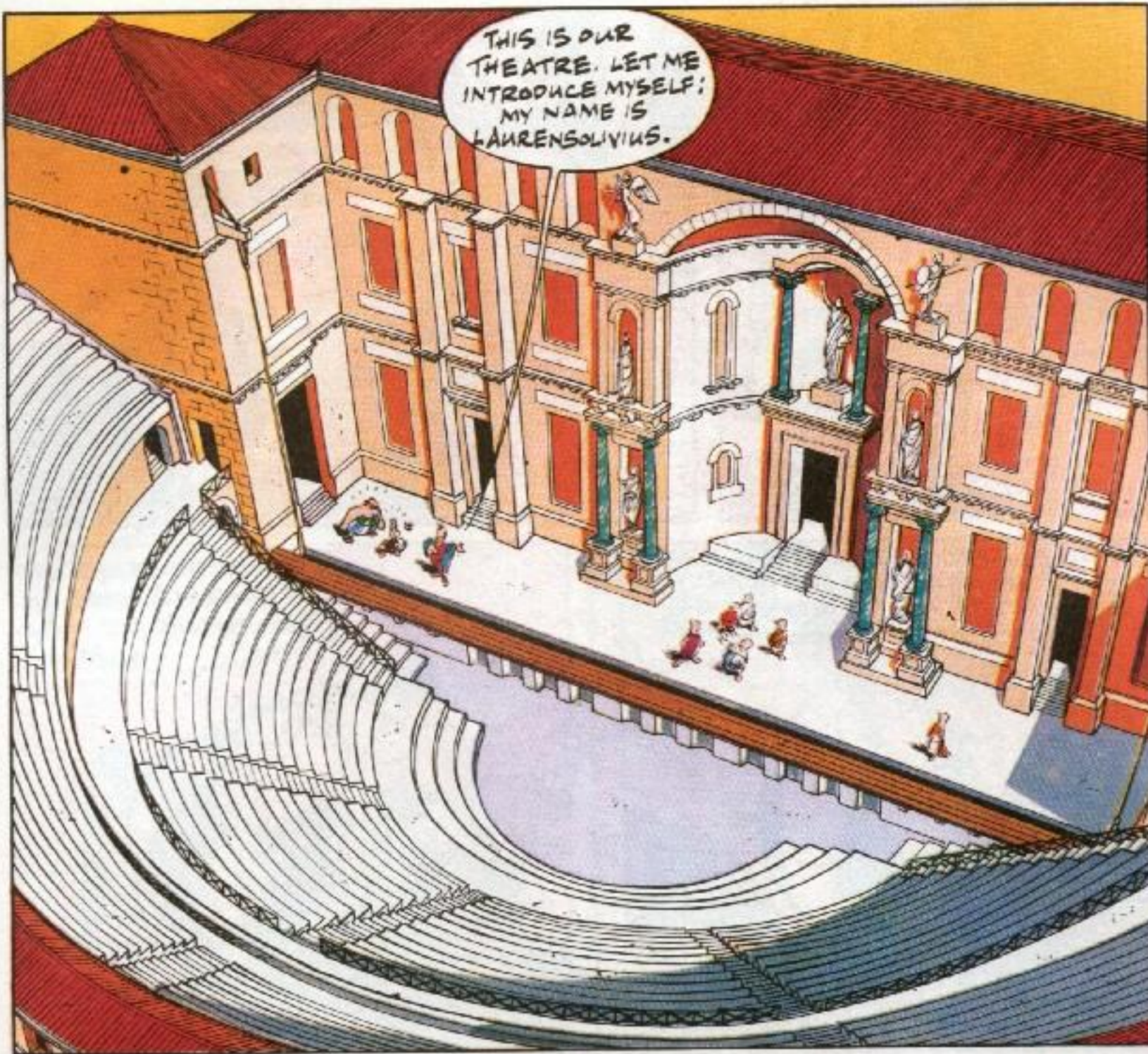
SOON AFTERWARDS...
**A MAGNIFICENT PRIZE FOR
ANYONE WHO CAN LAST A ROUND
WITH THIS YELLOW-
WHISKERED MIDGET
OF UNCERTAIN AGE!!!**

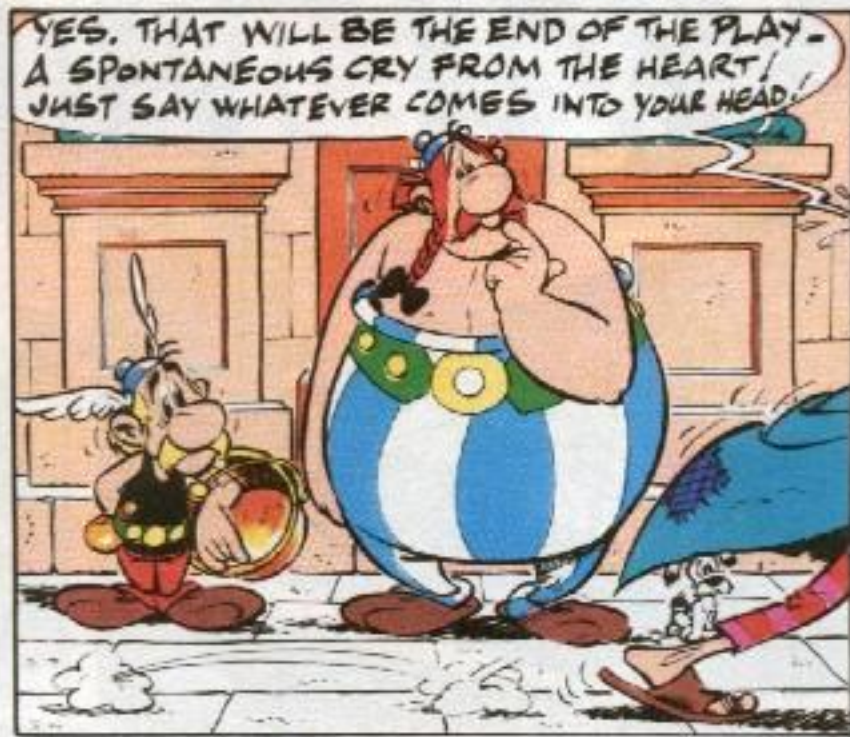


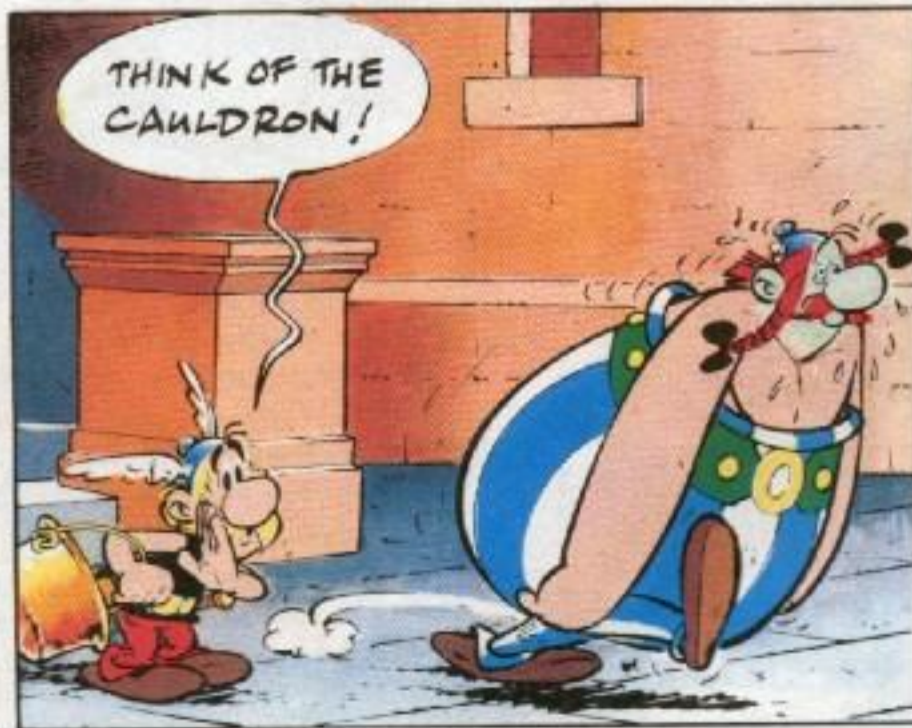
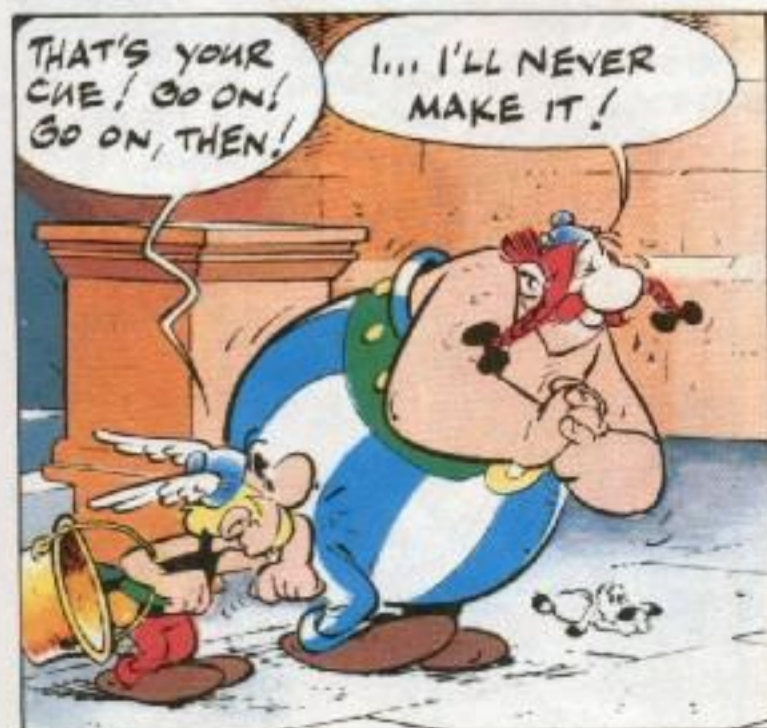
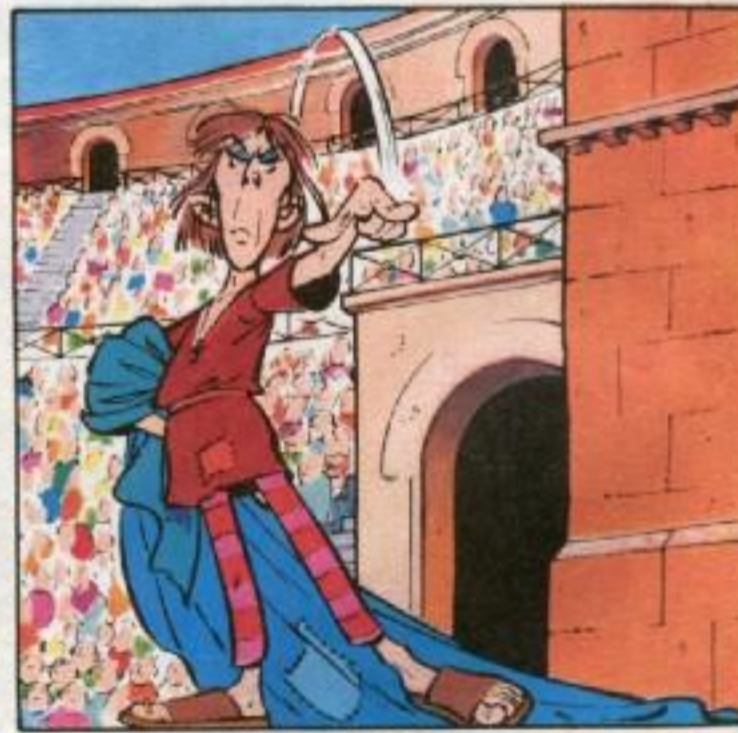
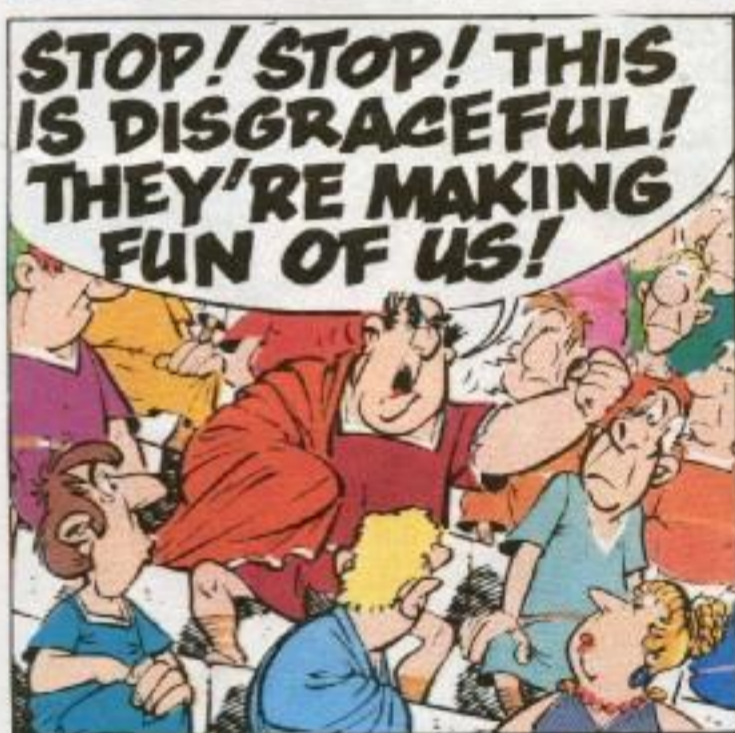
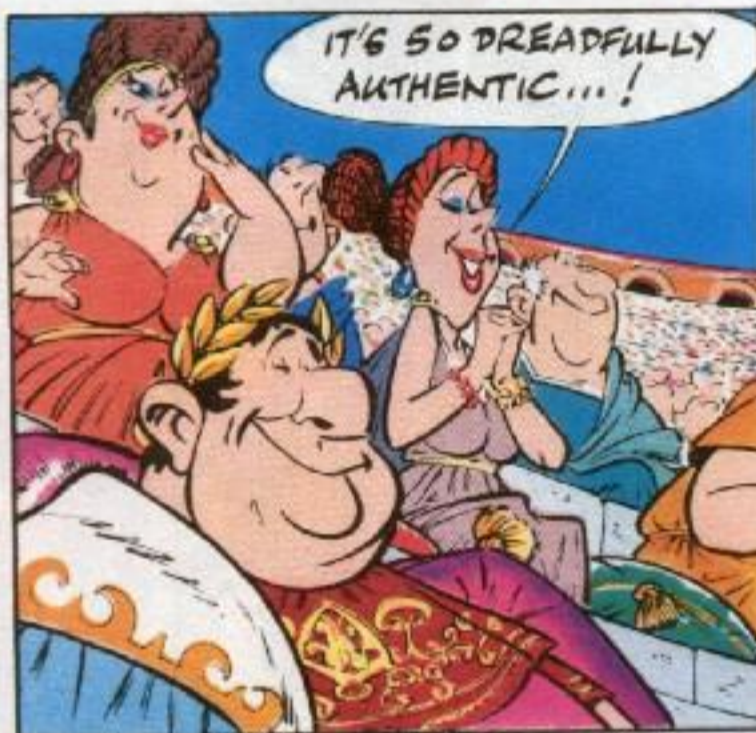
**ME! ME! I SAW
HIM FIRST!**
**THERE WON'T
BE ENOUGH TO
GO ROUND!**
**LET ME HAVE
A GO!**

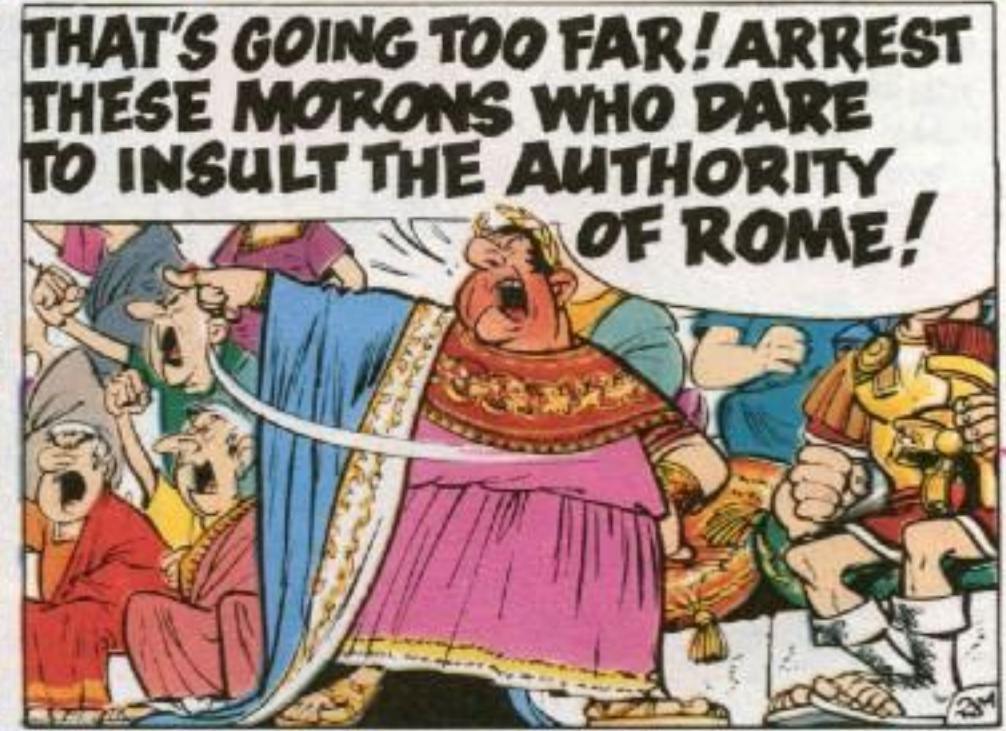
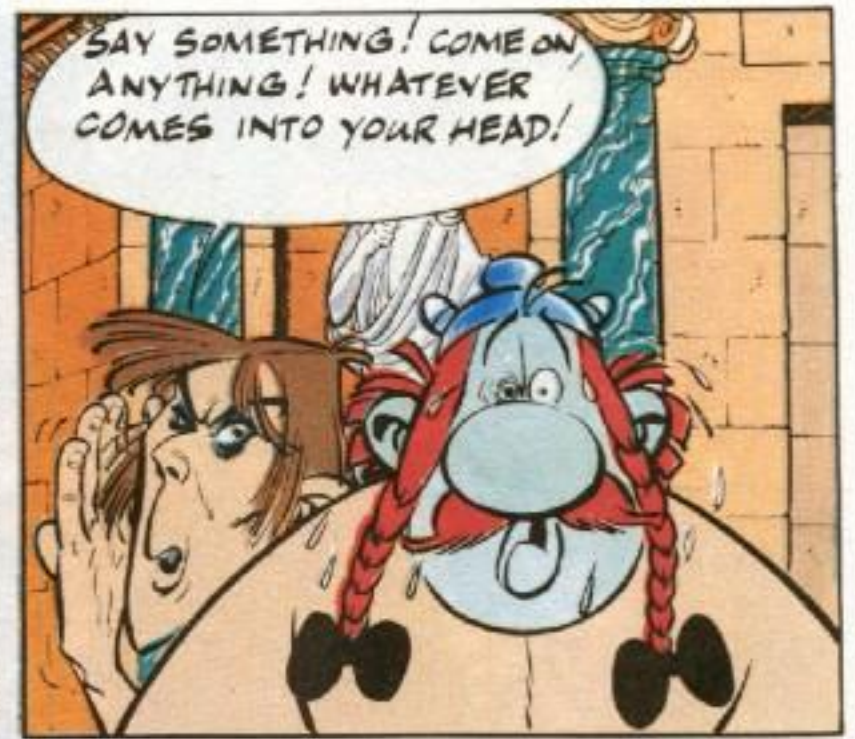
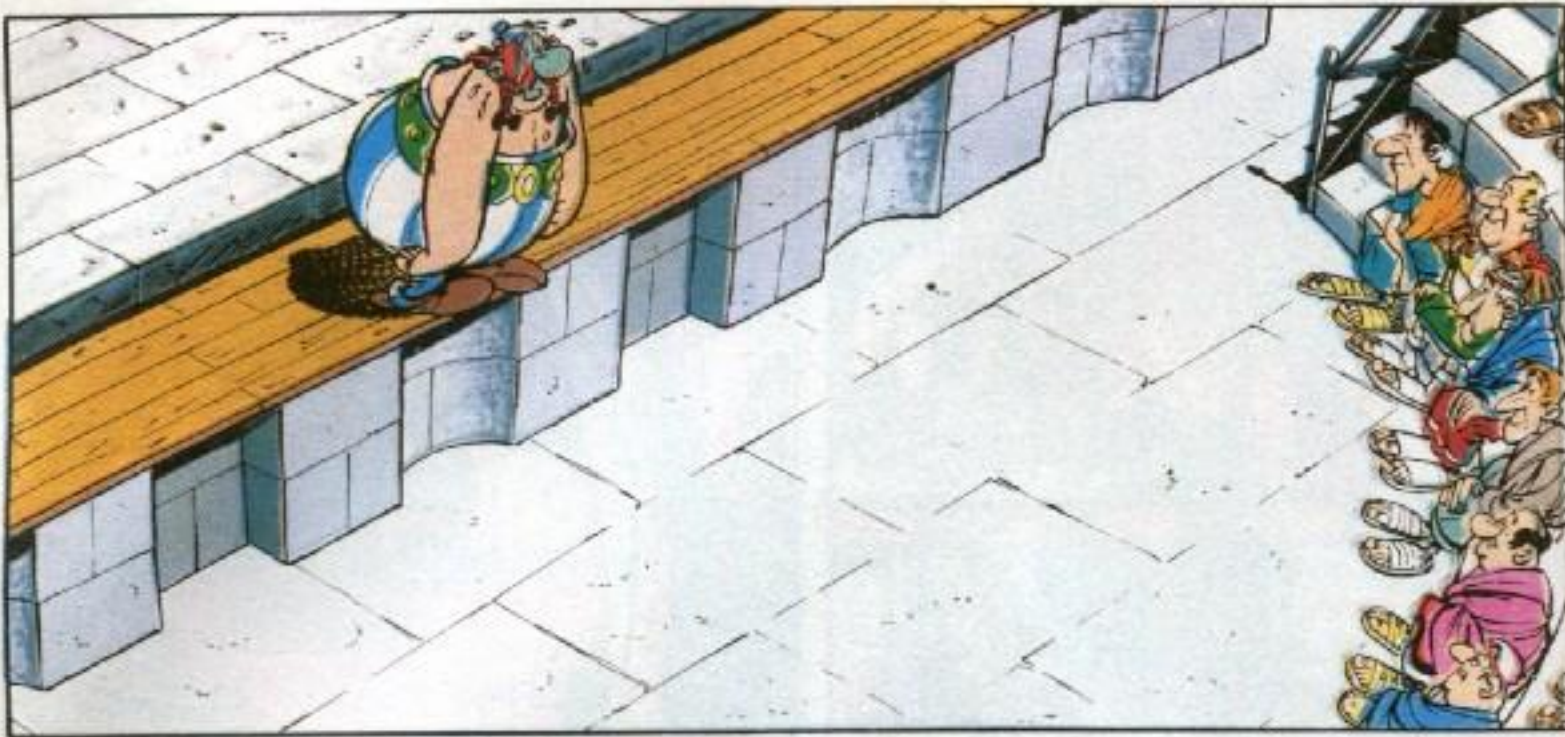


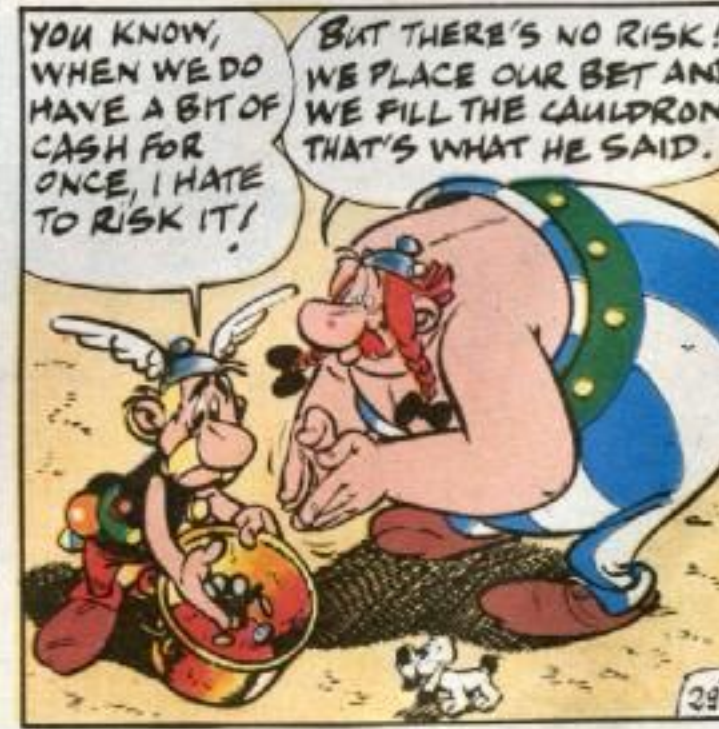
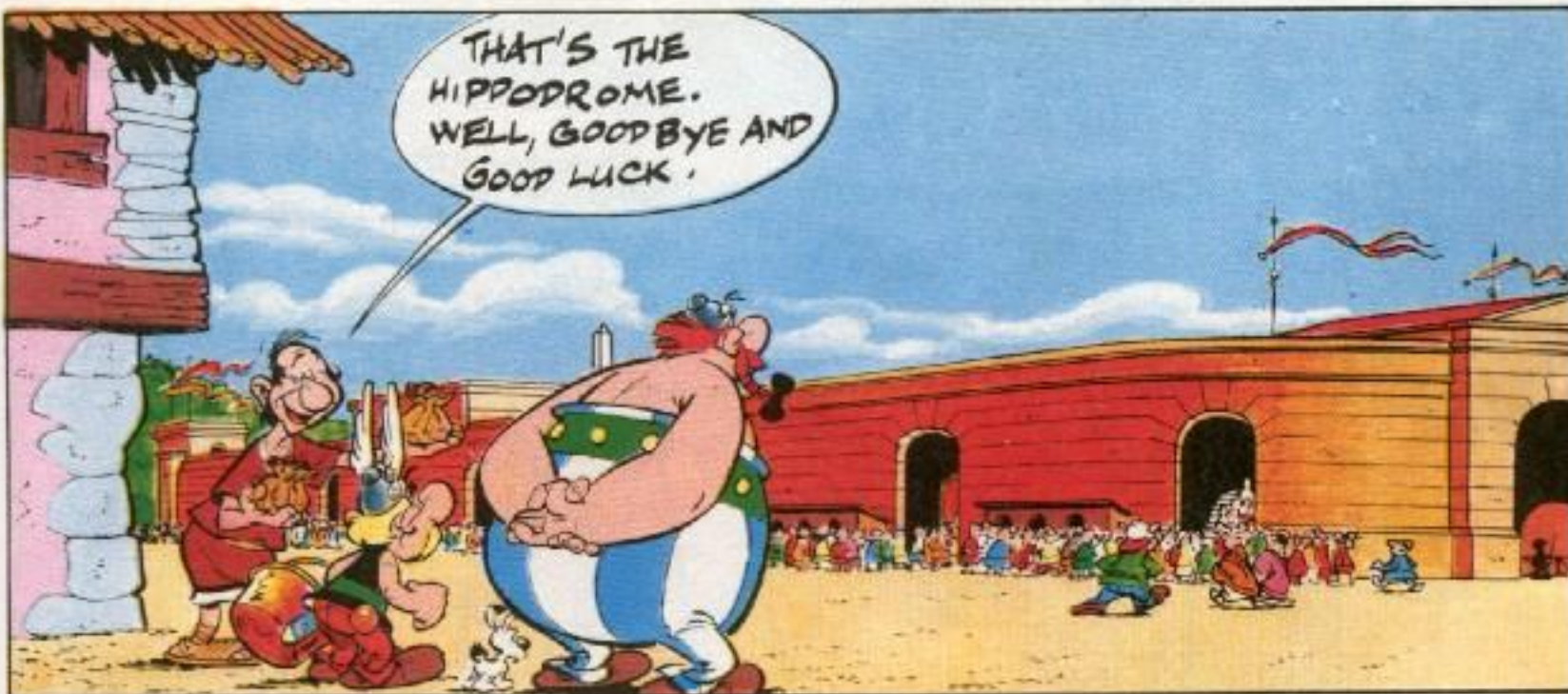
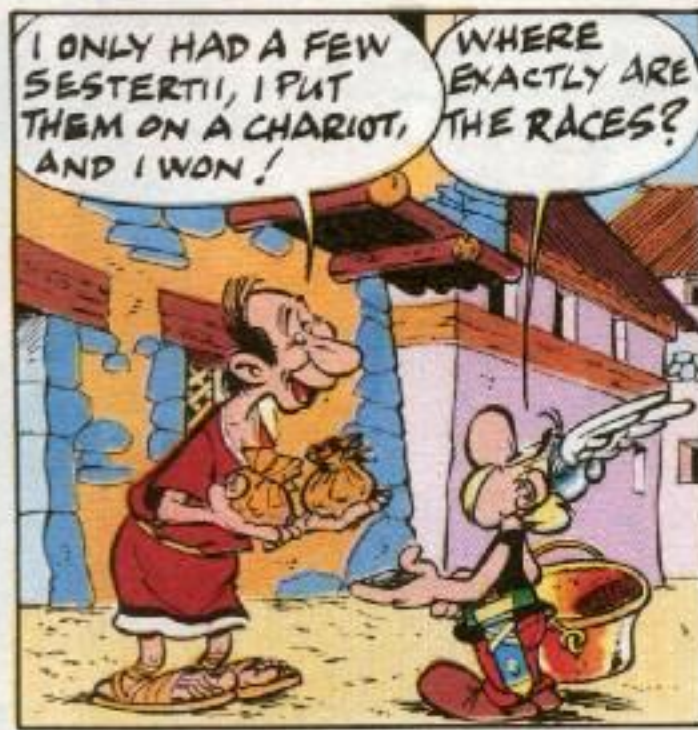
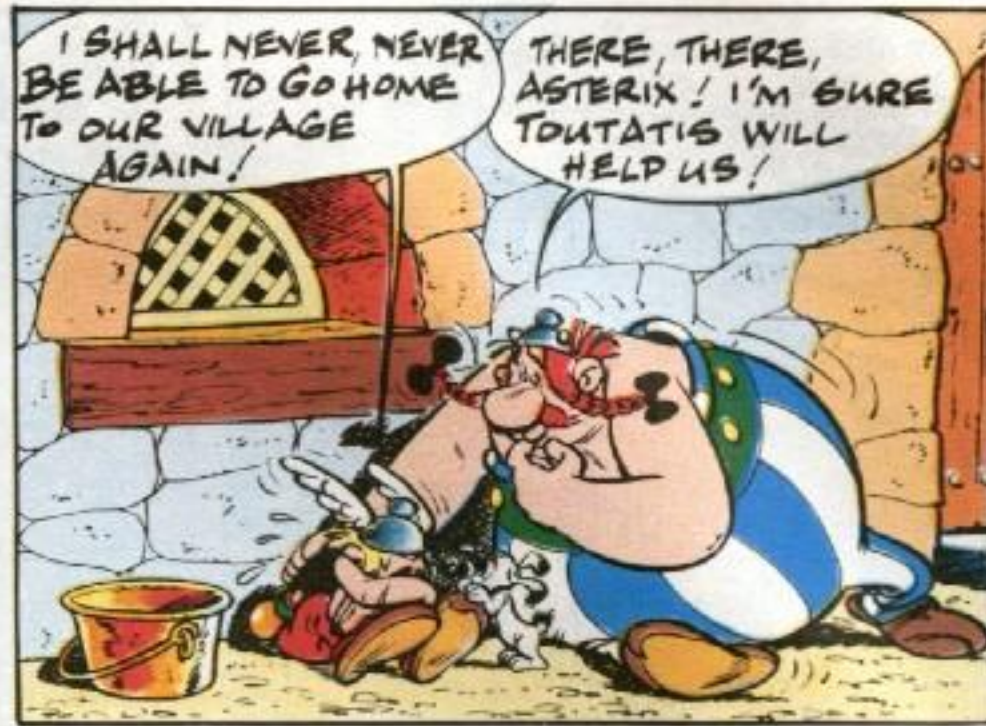
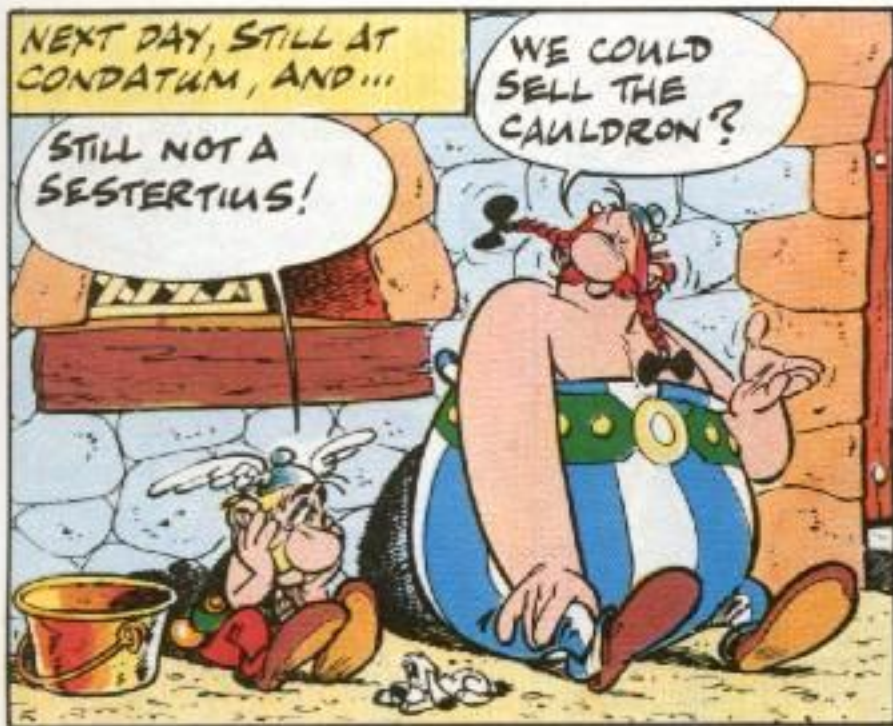


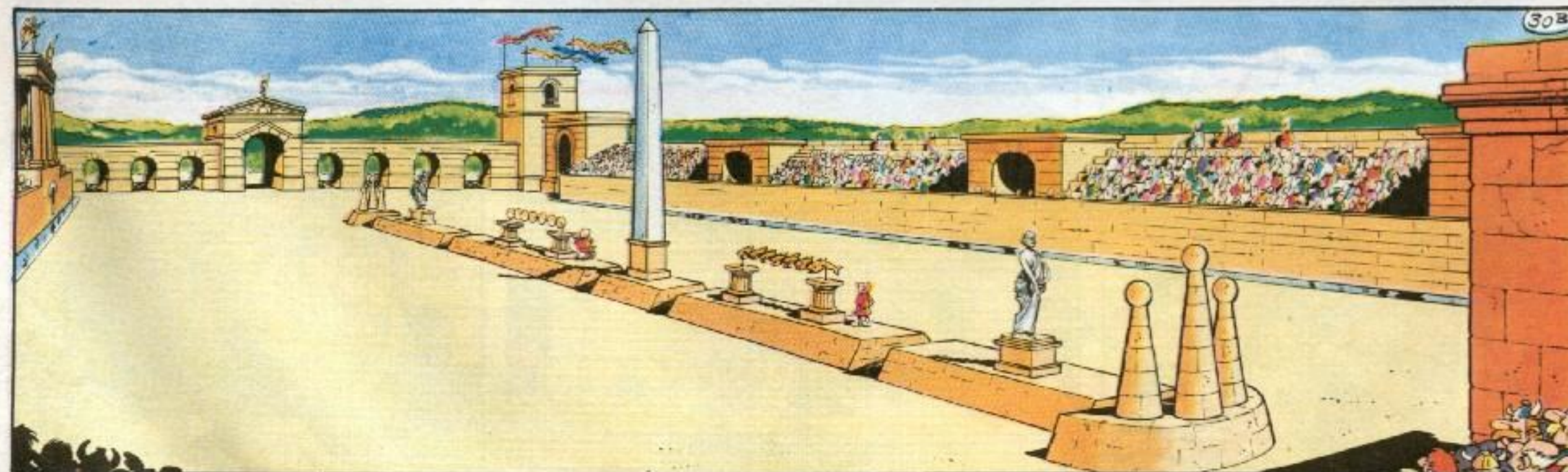
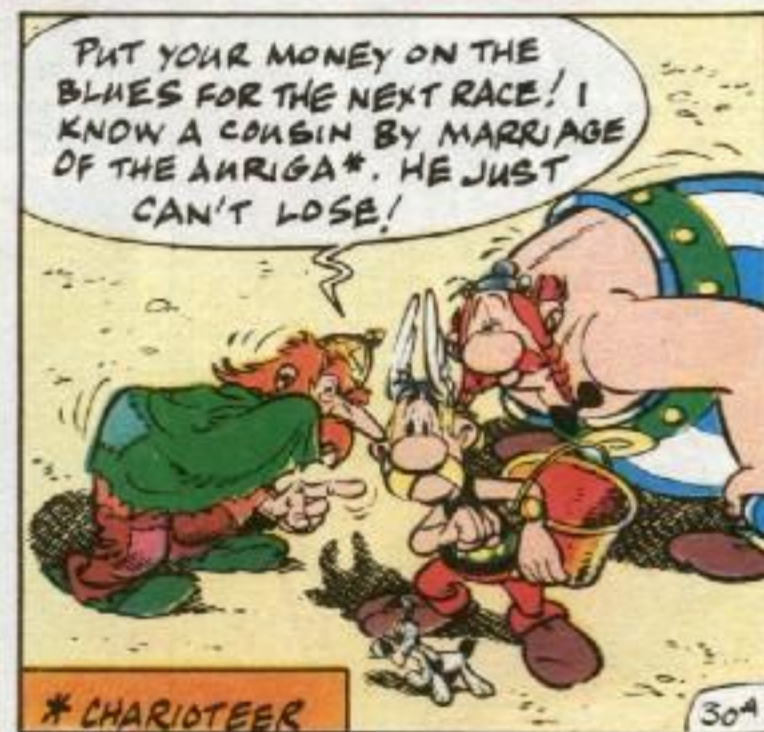
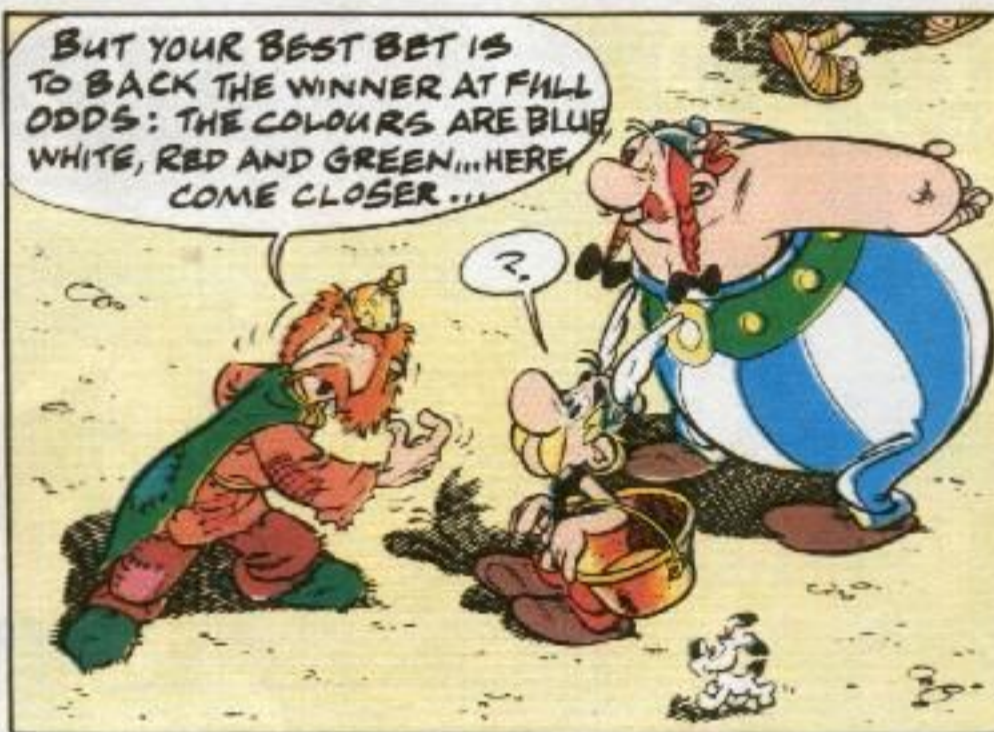
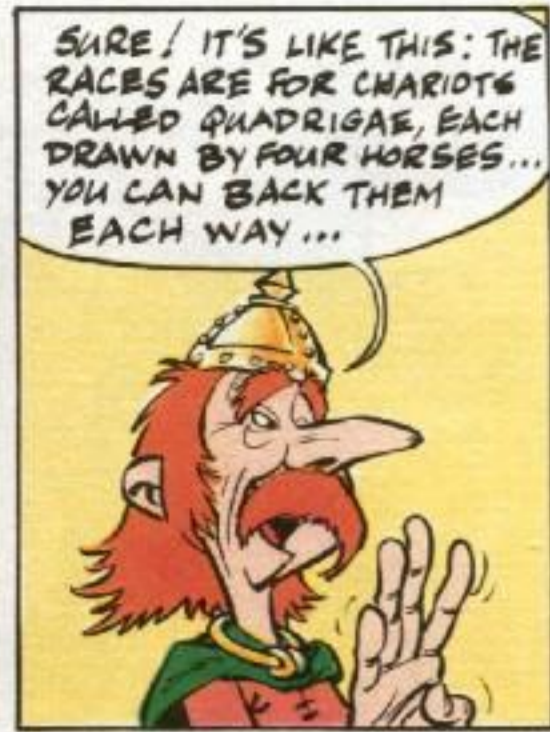
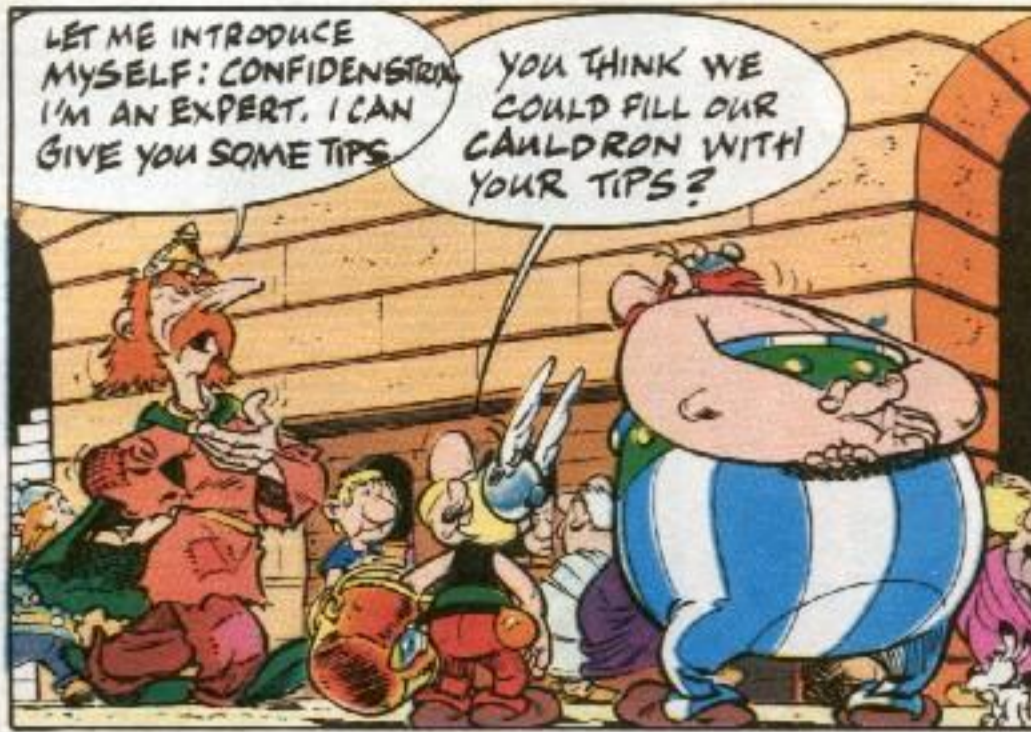


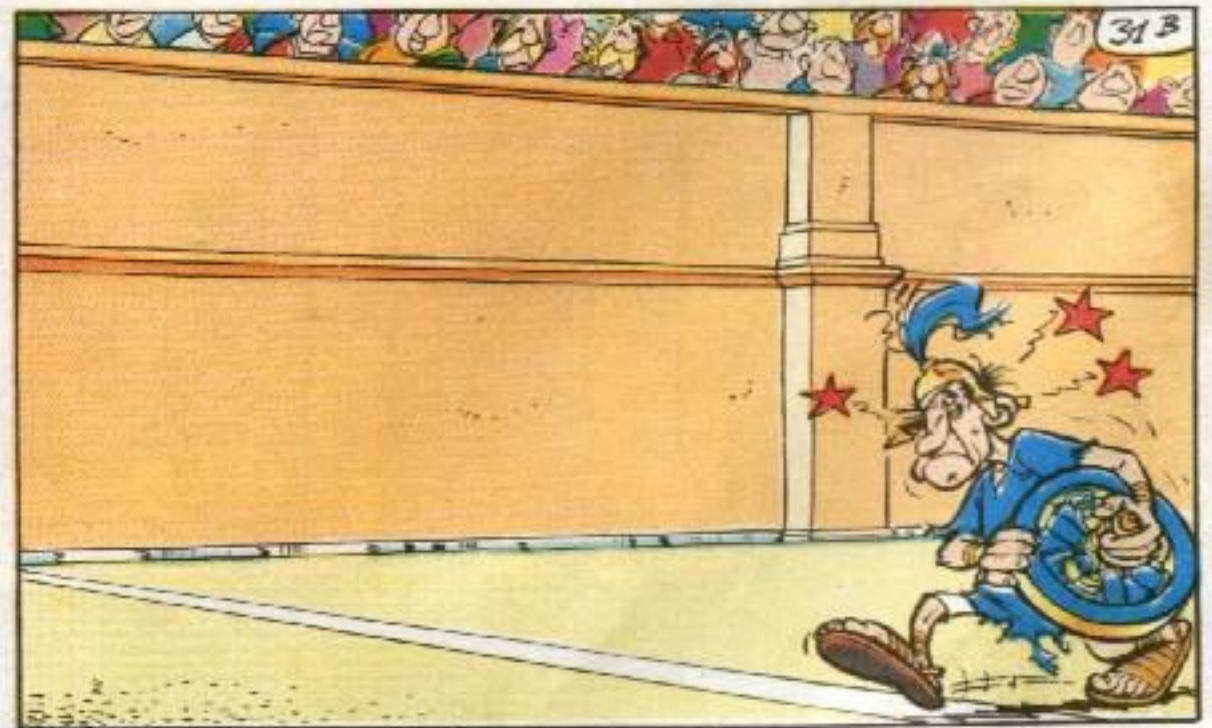
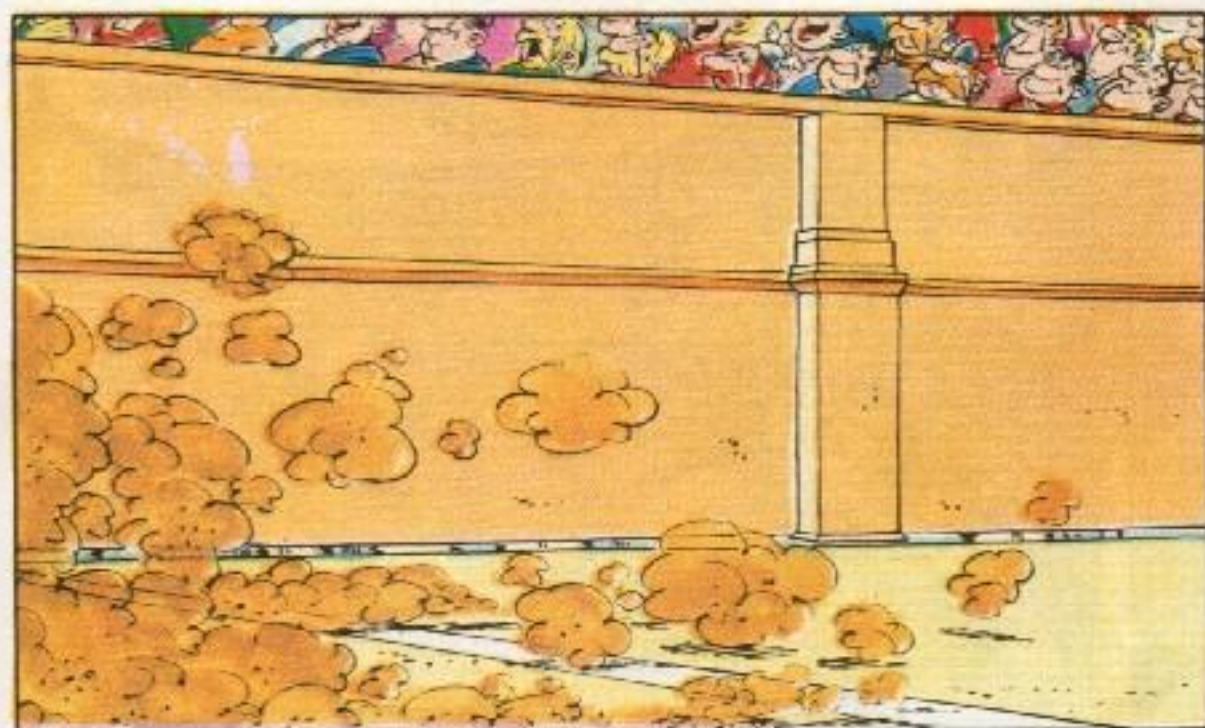
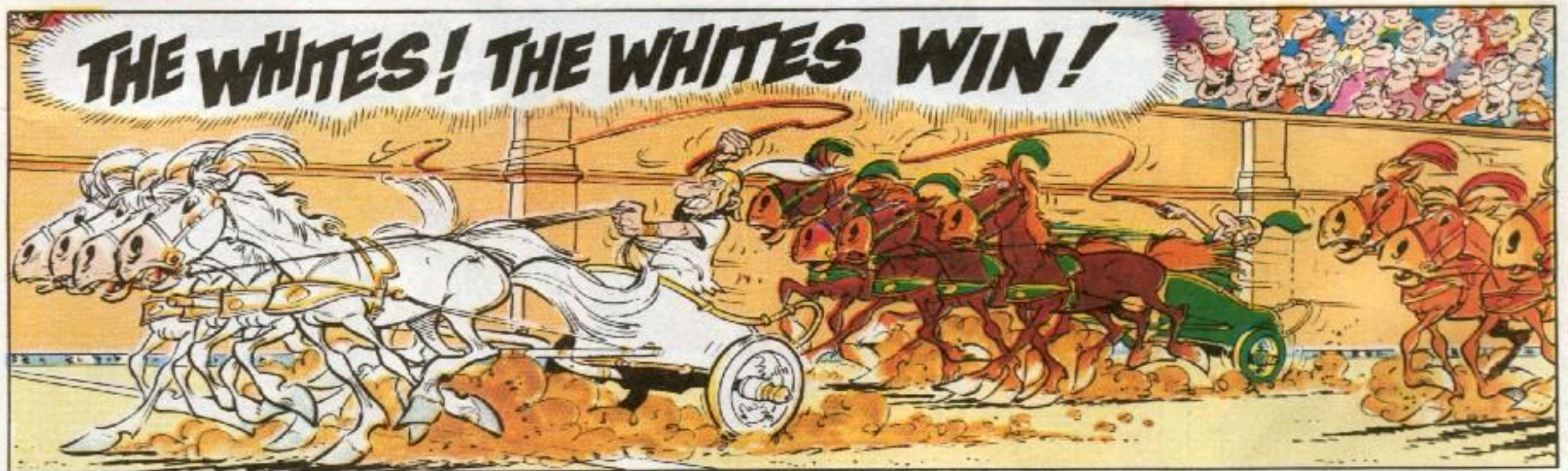


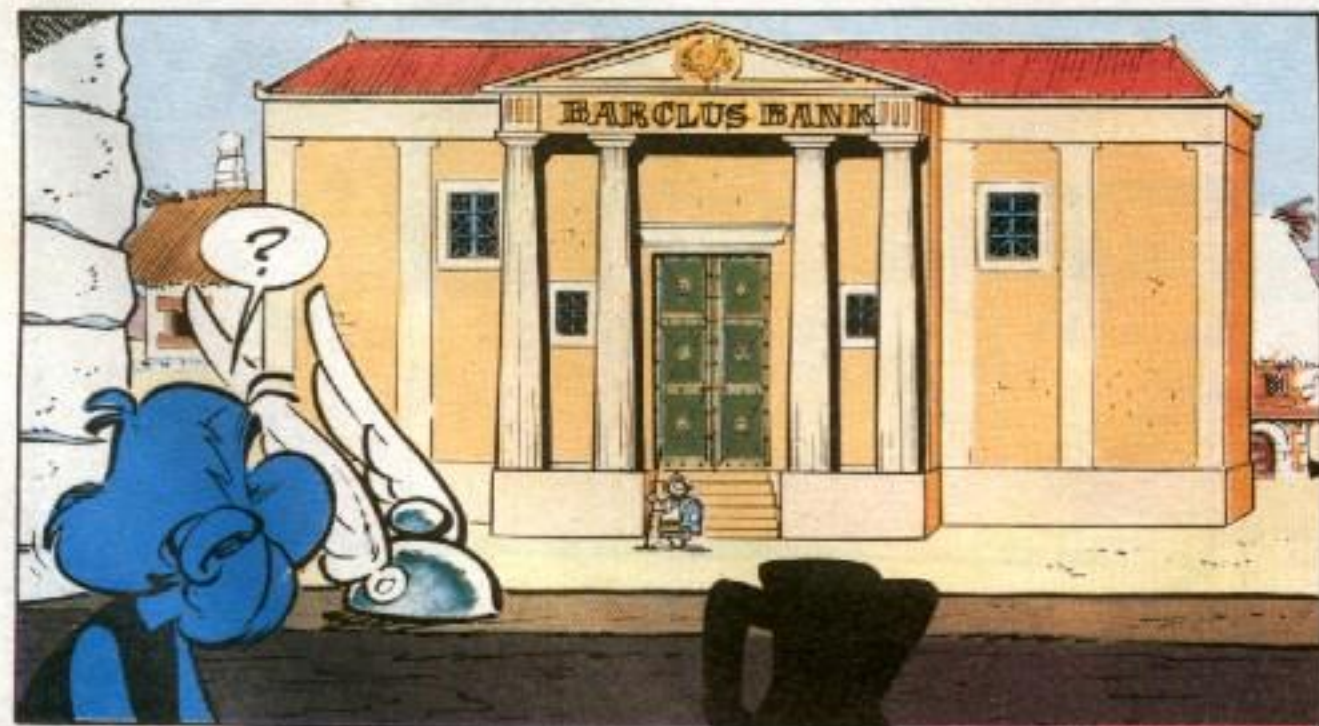
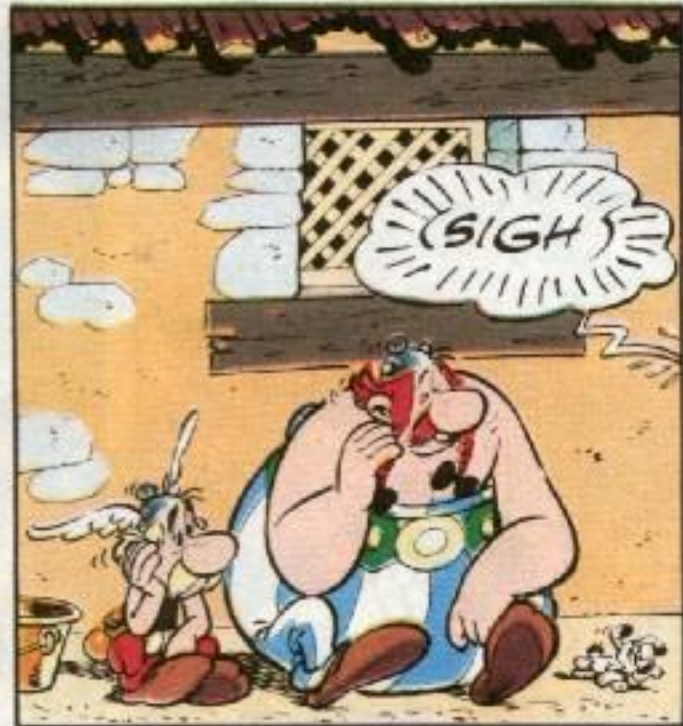


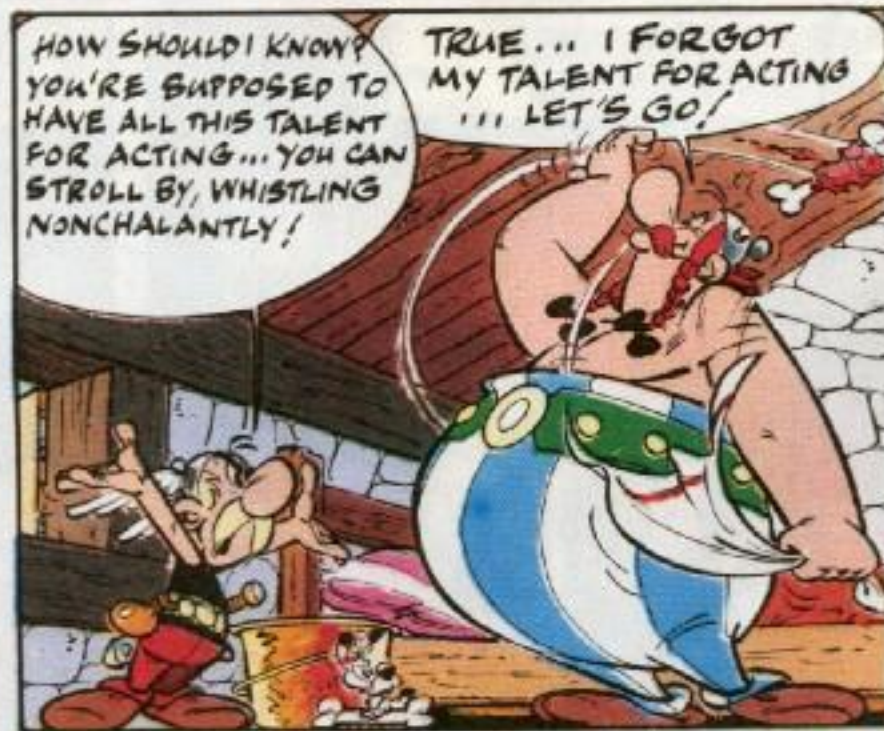
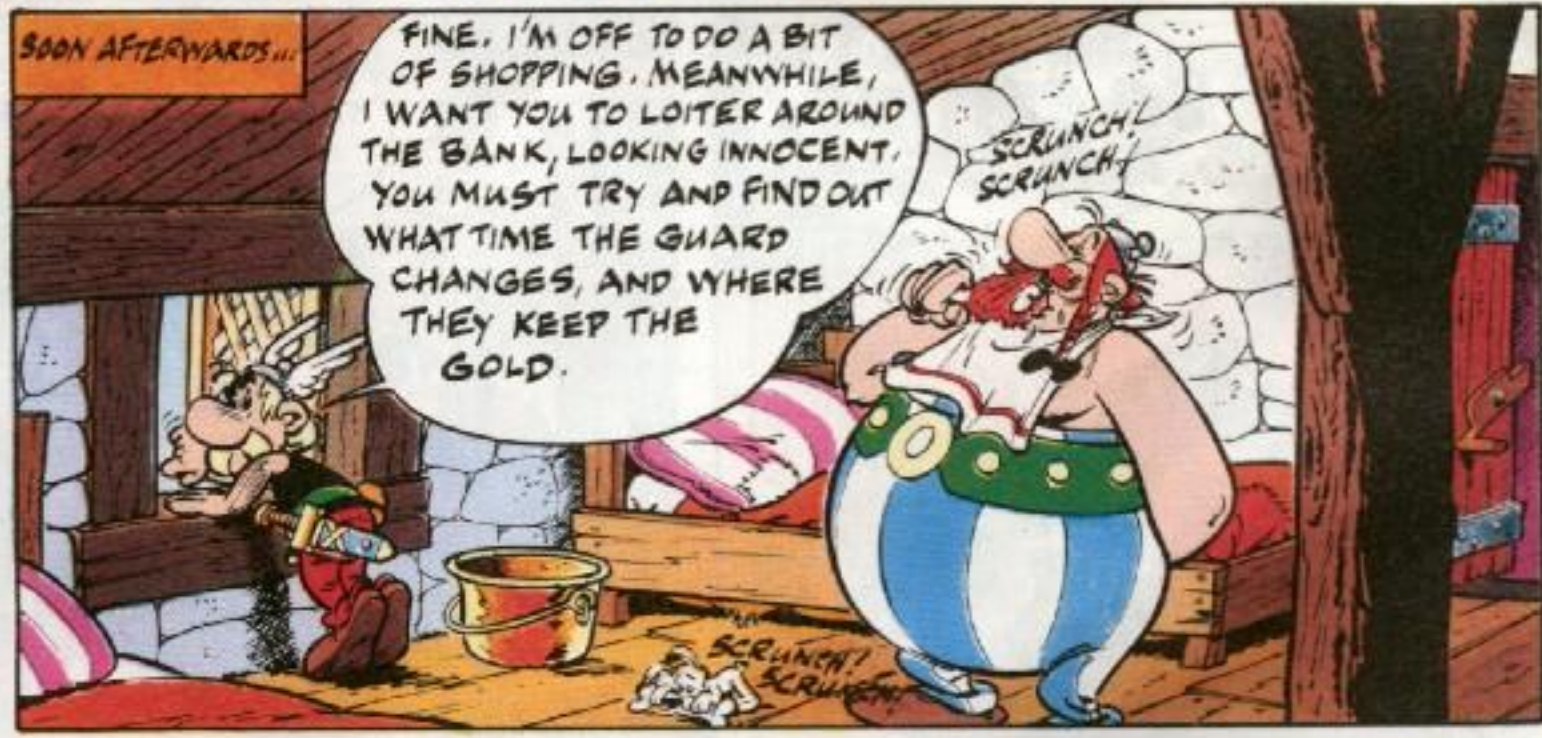
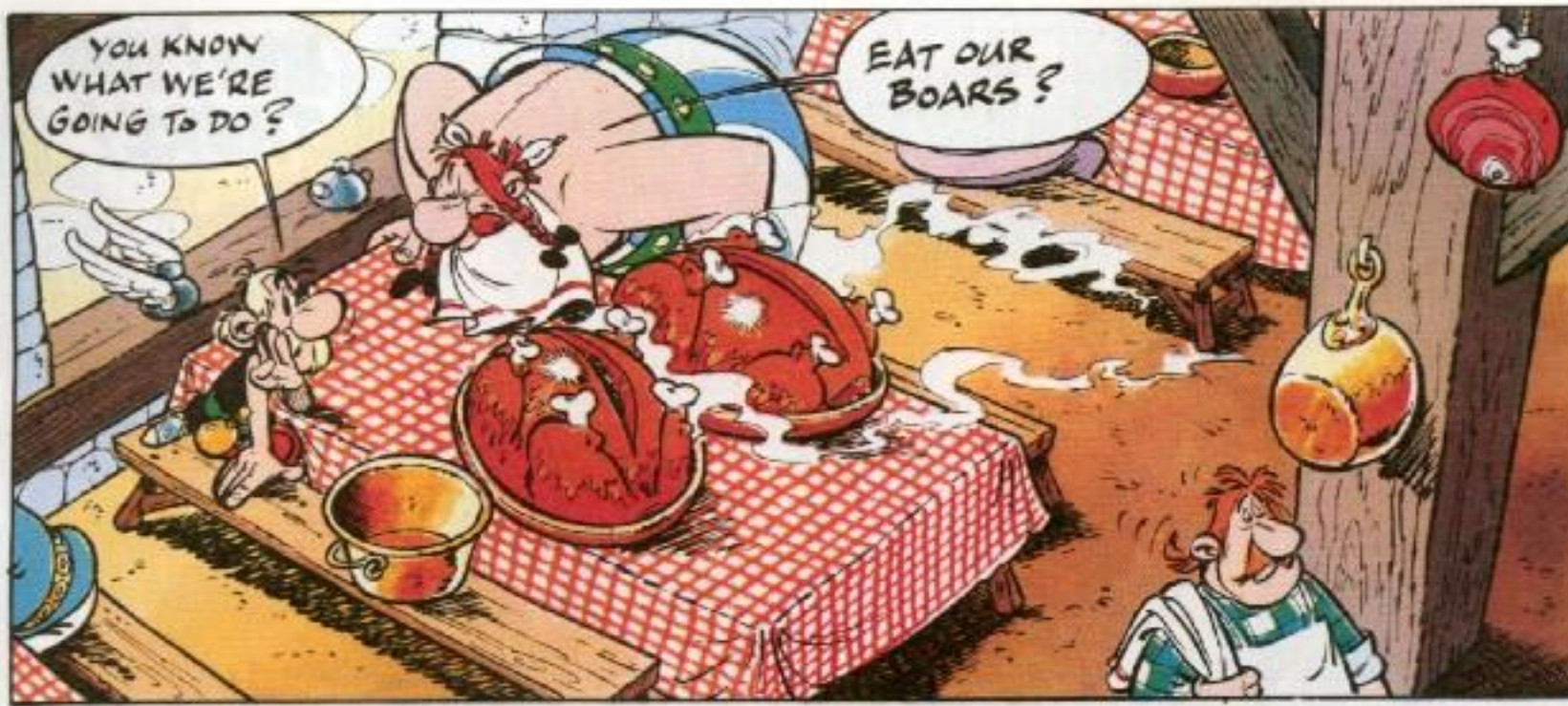


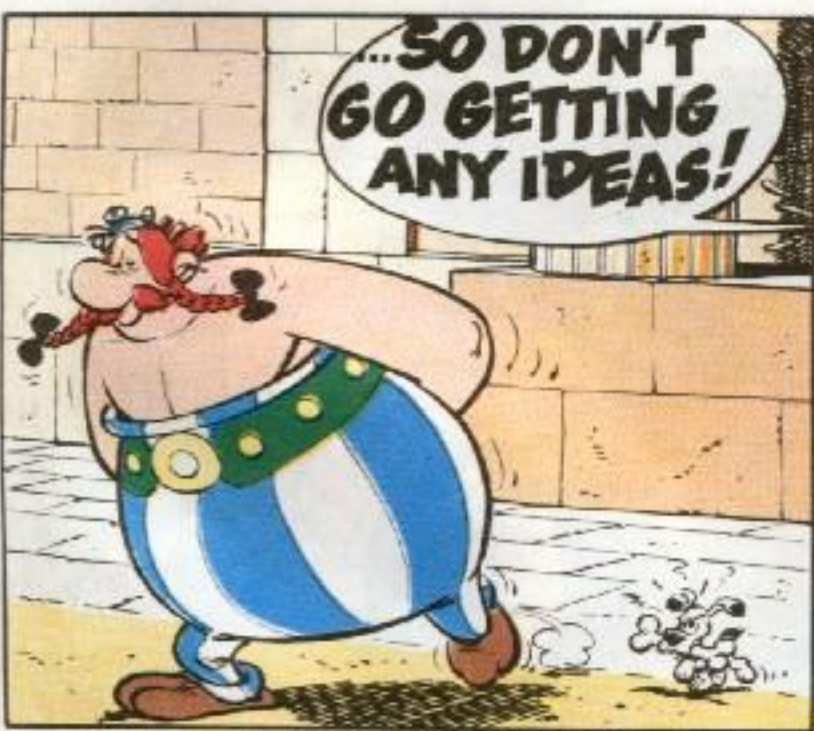
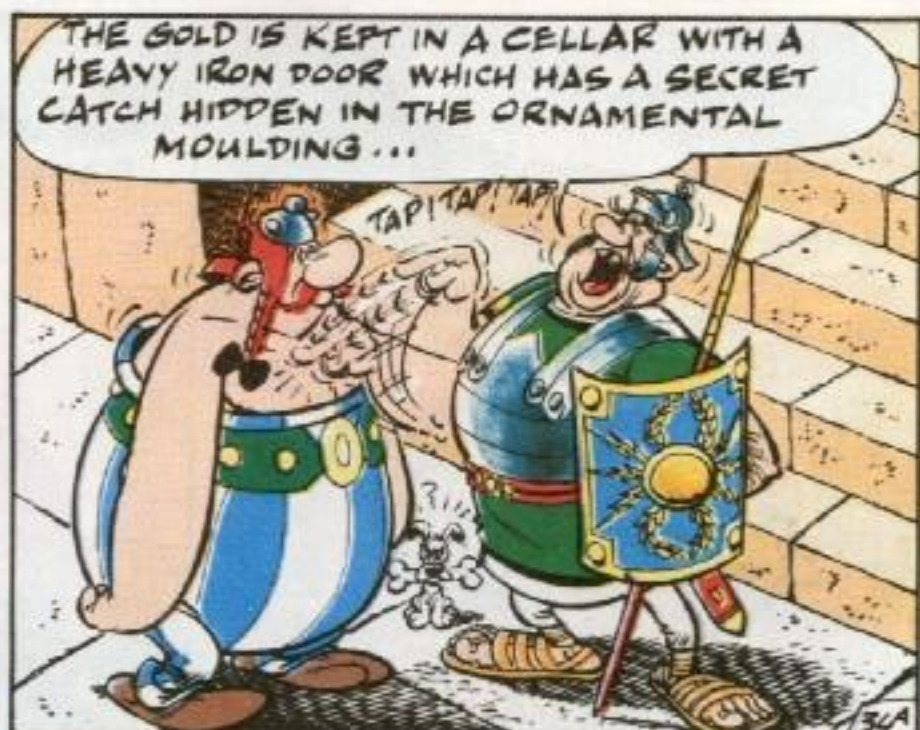
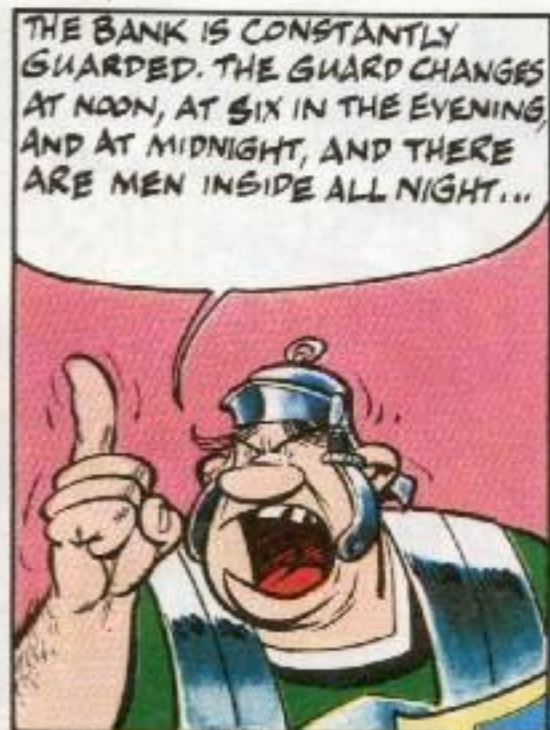
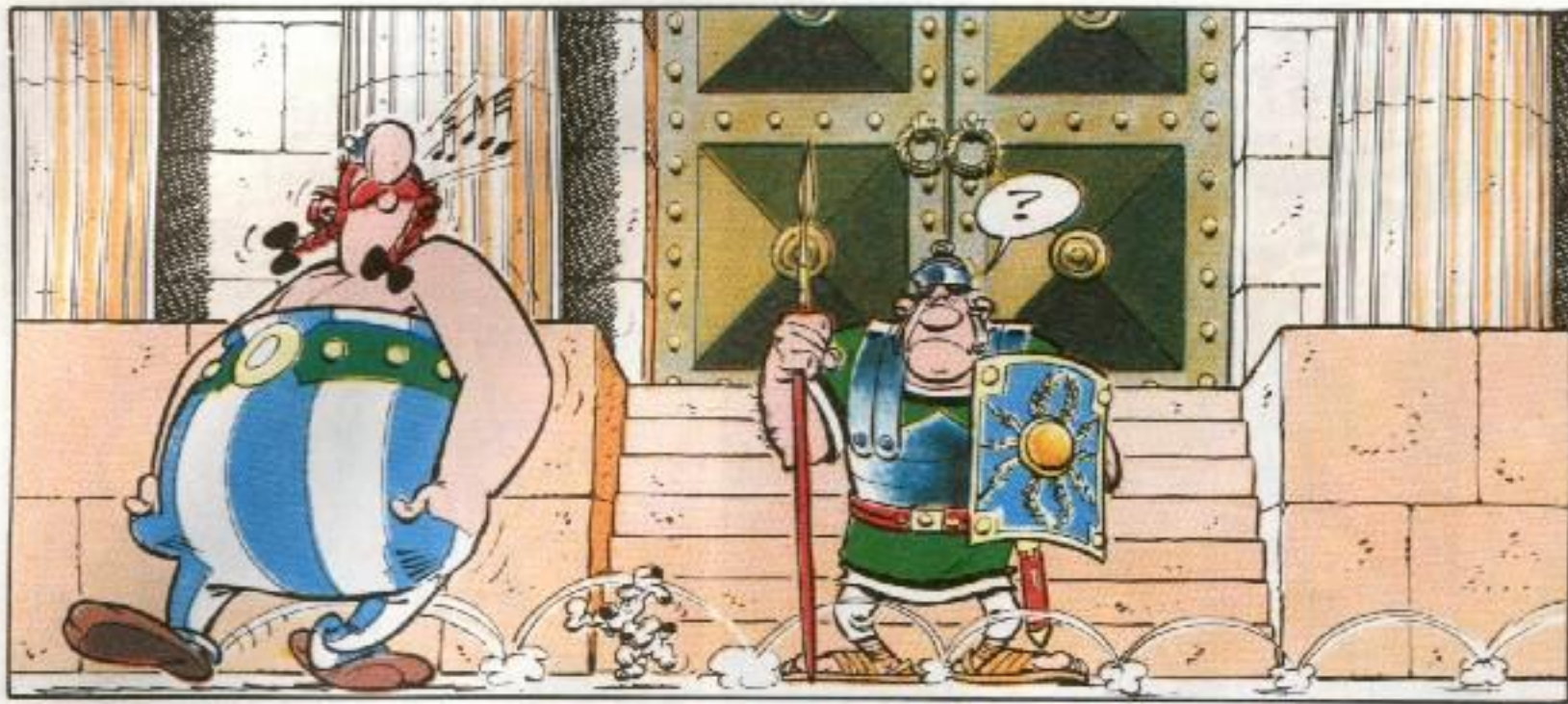


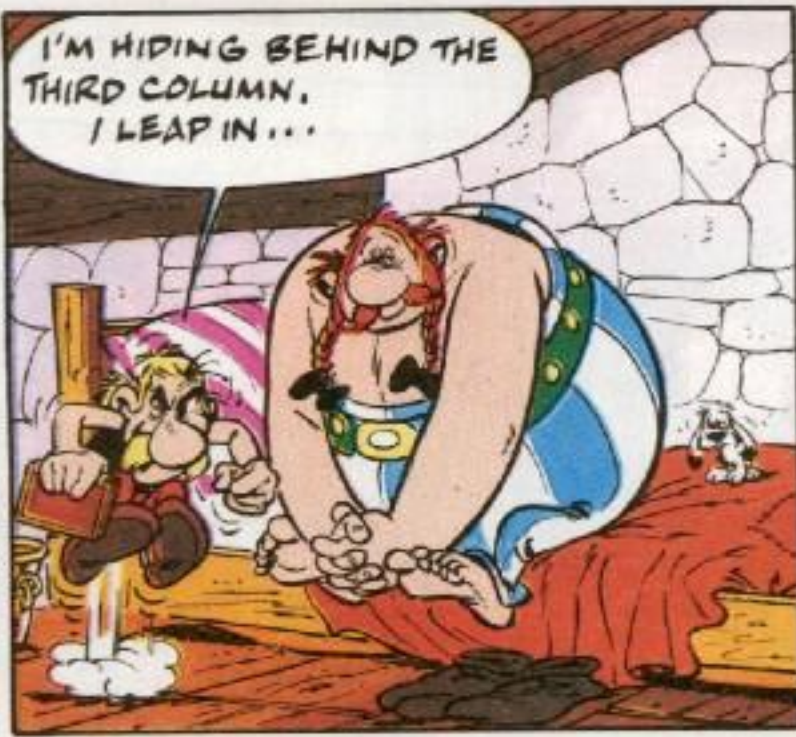
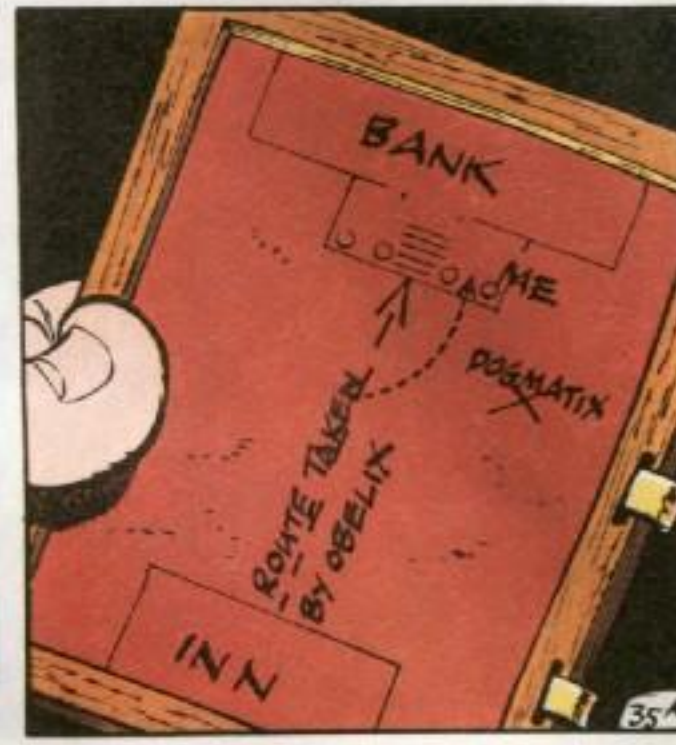
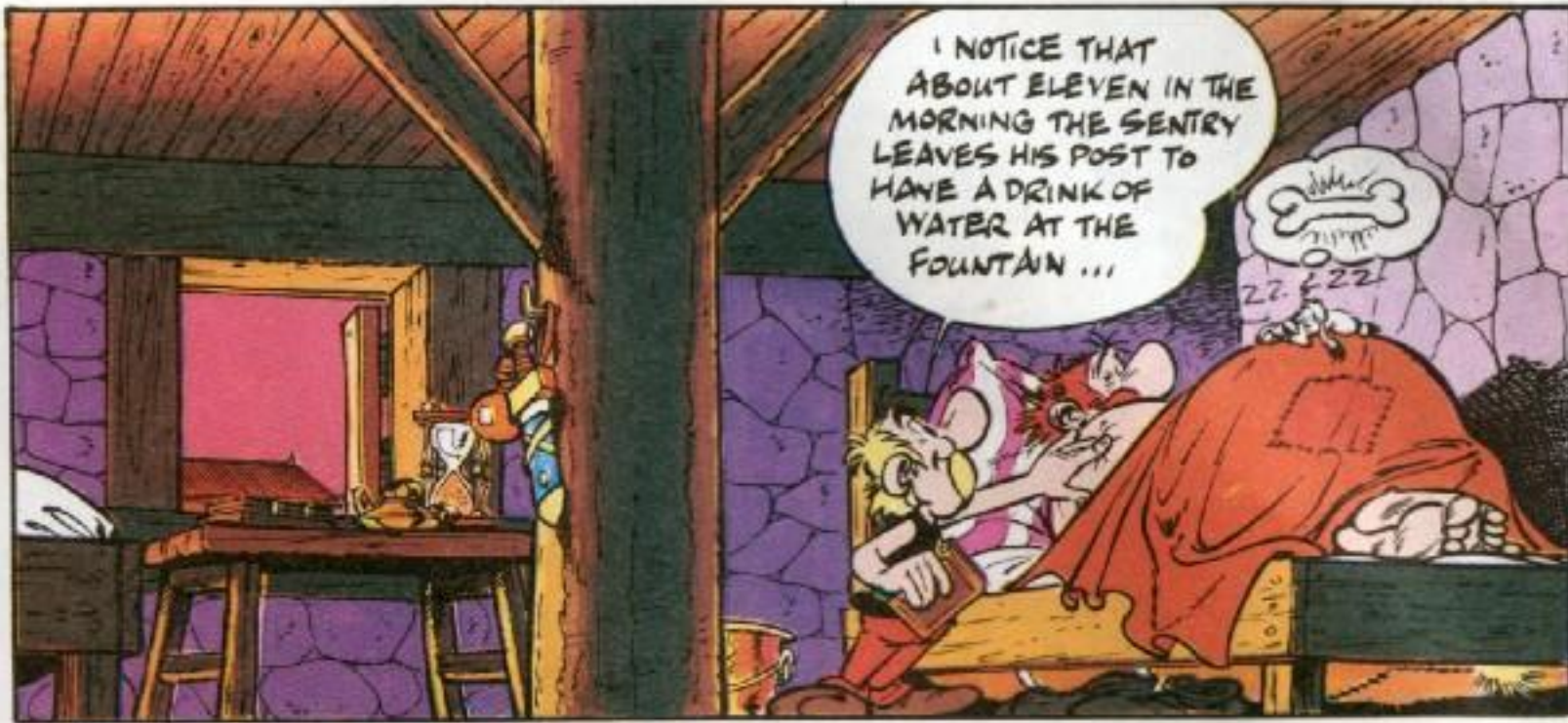


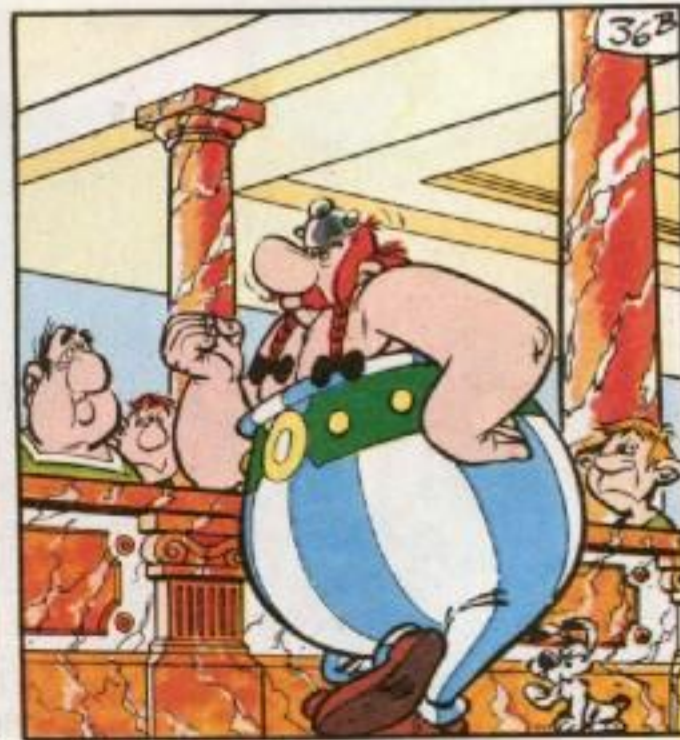
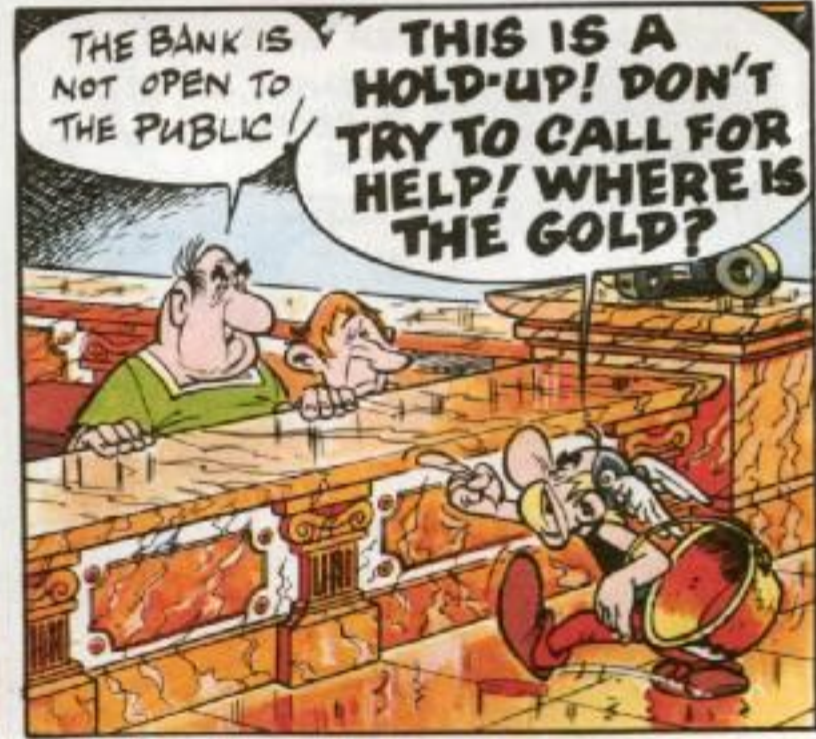


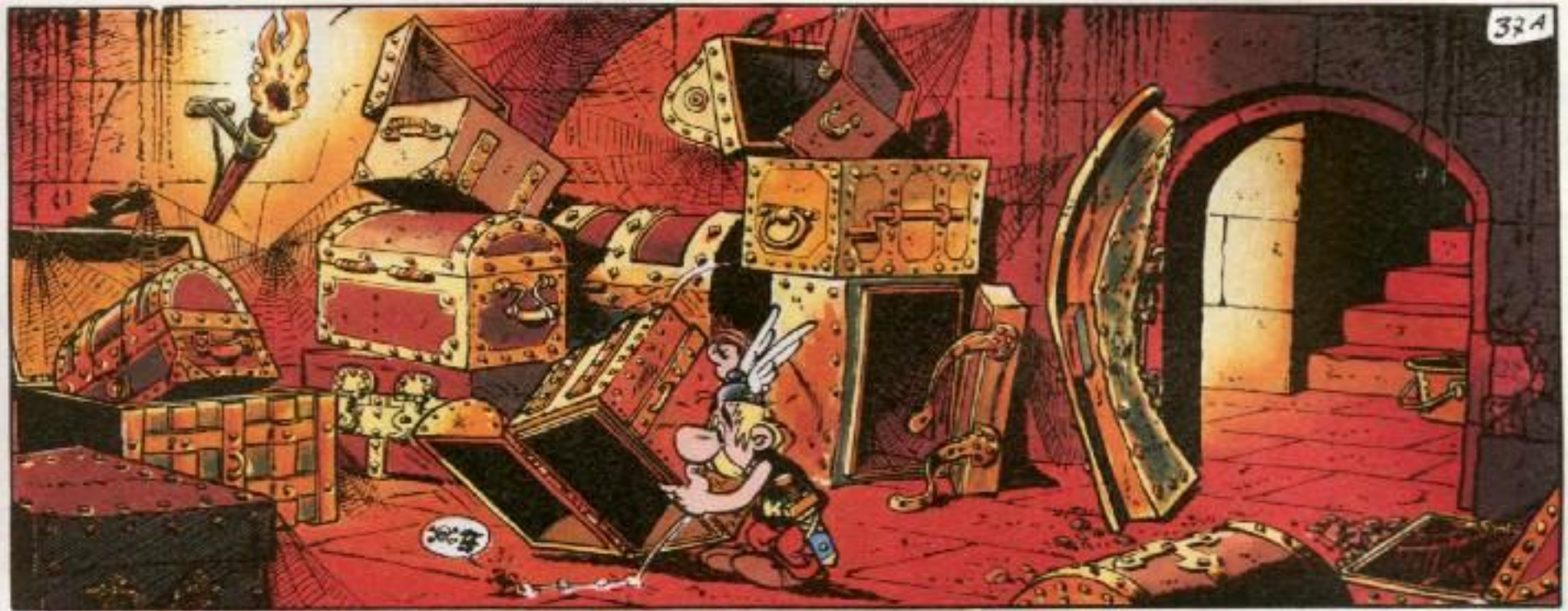
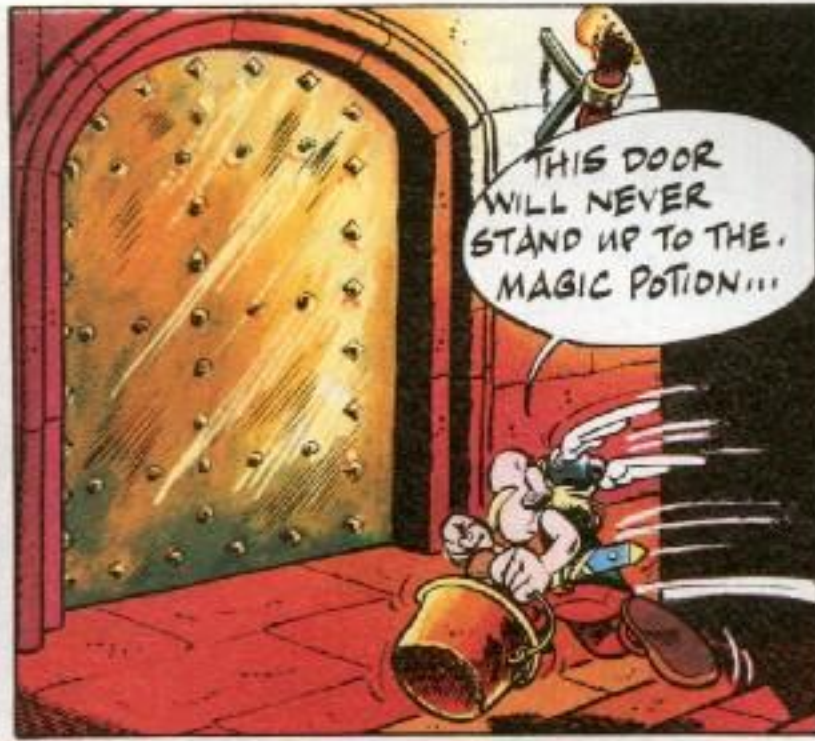
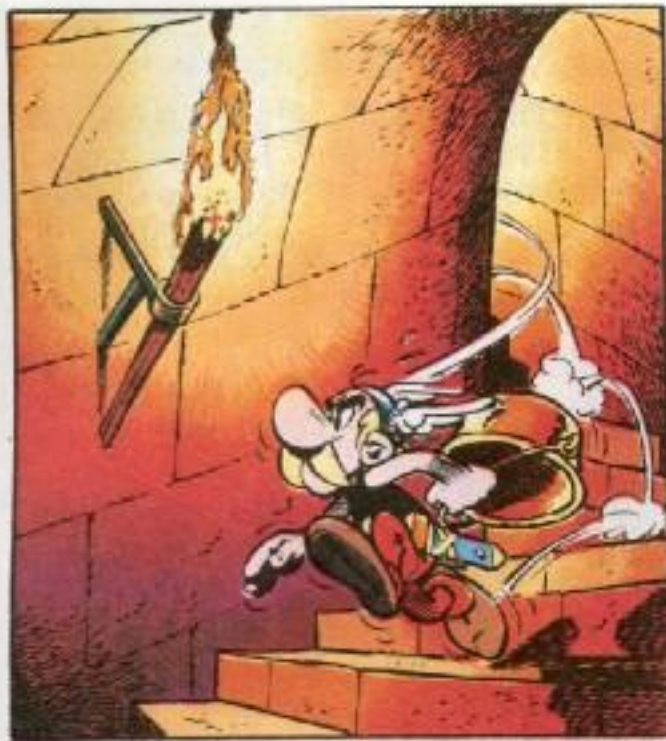












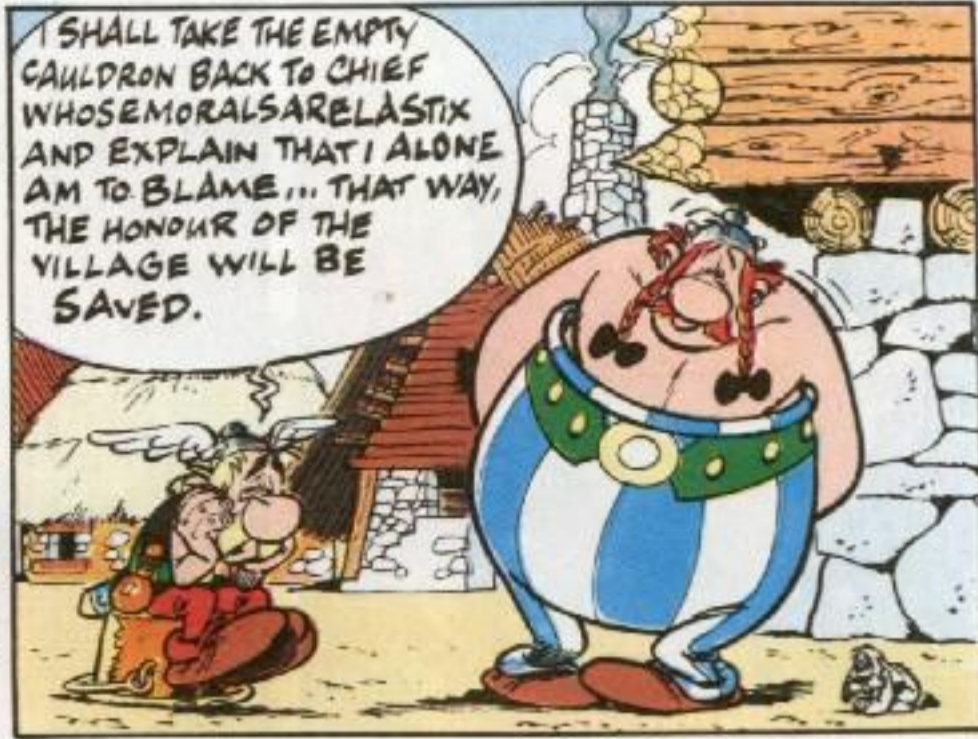


IT DIDN'T COME OFF, THEN?

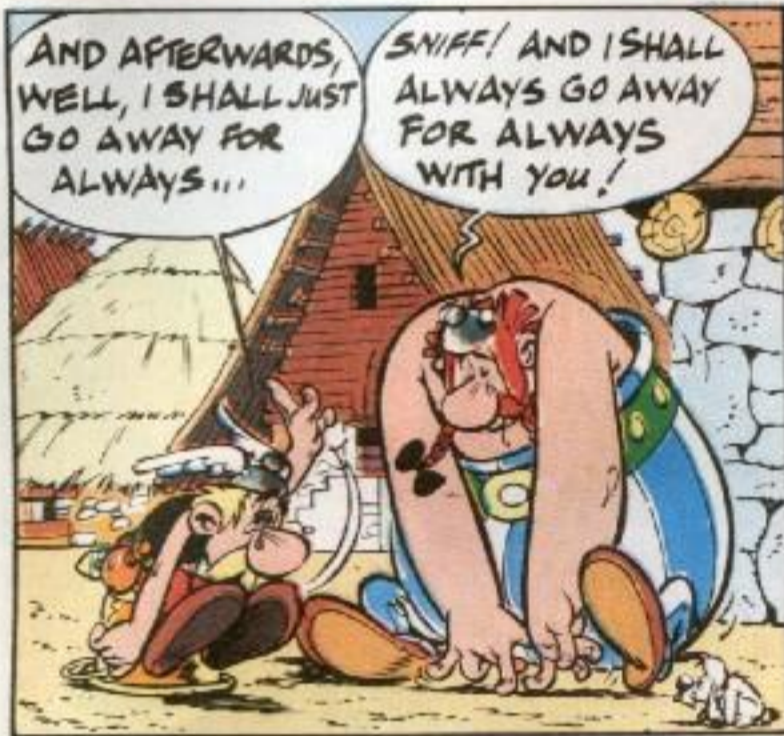
NO.



THE CAULDRON IS STILL EMPTY, AND I DON'T THINK WE'RE EVER GOING TO FILL IT...



I SHALL TAKE THE EMPTY CAULDRON BACK TO CHIEF WHOSE MORALS ARE LASTIX AND EXPLAIN THAT I ALONE AM TO BLAME... THAT WAY, THE HONOUR OF THE VILLAGE WILL BE SAVED.



AND AFTERWARDS, WELL, I SHALL JUST GO AWAY FOR ALWAYS...

SNIFF! AND I SHALL ALWAYS GO AWAY FOR ALWAYS WITH YOU!



BOOHOOHOO! BOOHOO!

HOOWWW!



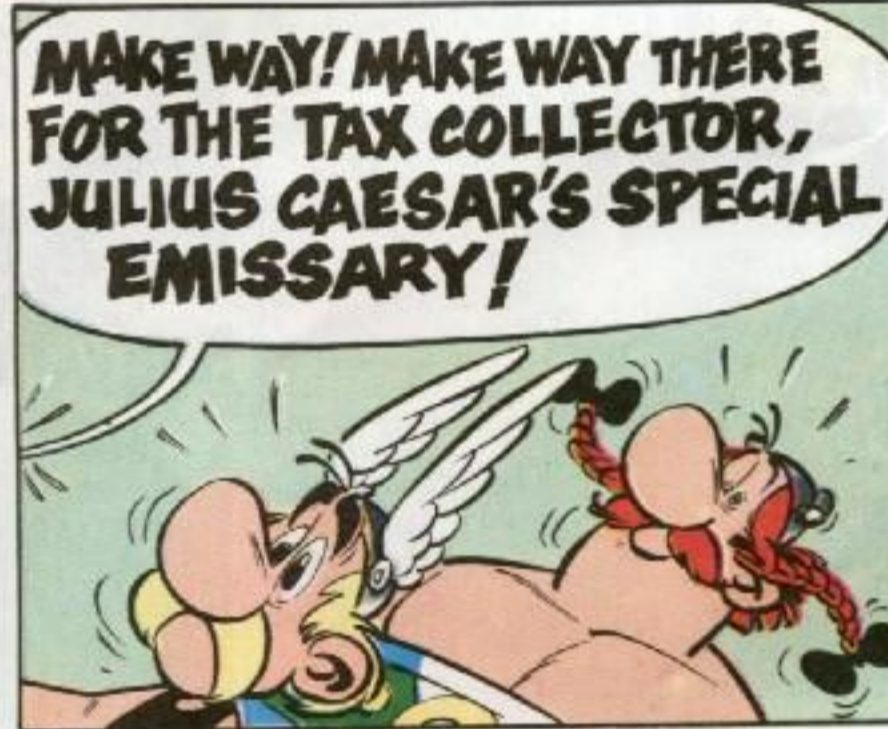
IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO TAKE THEM BACK THE CAULDRON. AT LEAST THEY'LL STILL BE ABLE TO MAKE ONION SOUP.

I'M SURE THAT WILL BE A GREAT COMFORT!

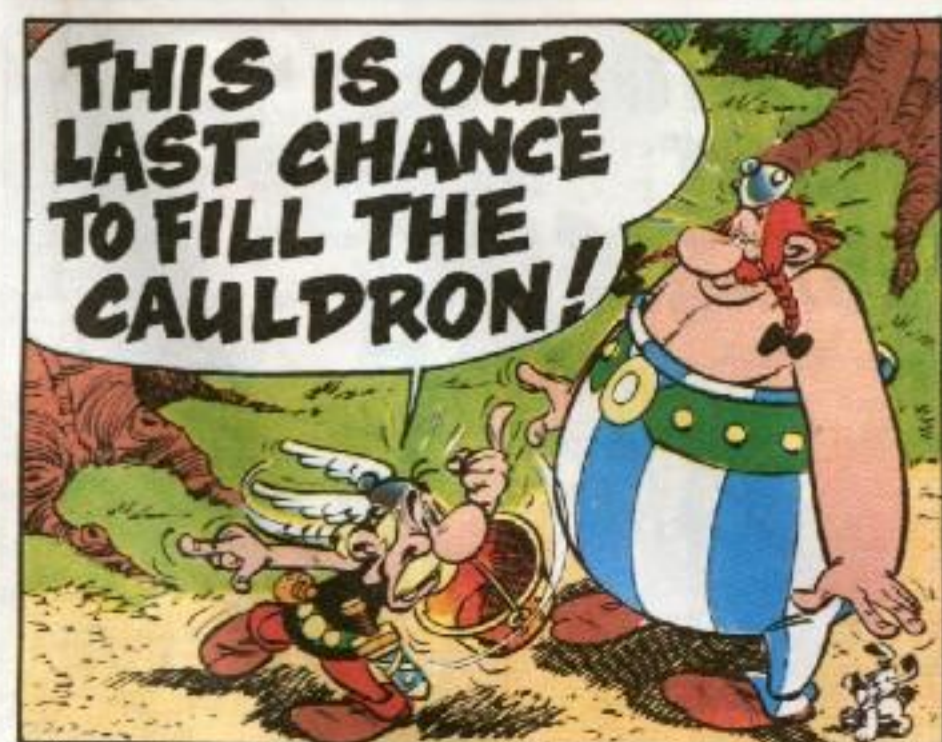


AND AFTER A FEW DAYS' JOURNEY...

WE'RE GETTING CLOSE TO CHIEF WHOSE MORALS ARE LASTIX'S VILLAGE. IT'S ON THE CLIFF-TOP BEYOND THIS WOOD.



MAKE WAY! MAKE WAY THERE FOR THE TAX COLLECTOR, JULIUS CAESAR'S SPECIAL EMISSARY!



THIS IS OUR LAST CHANCE TO FILL THE CAULDRON!

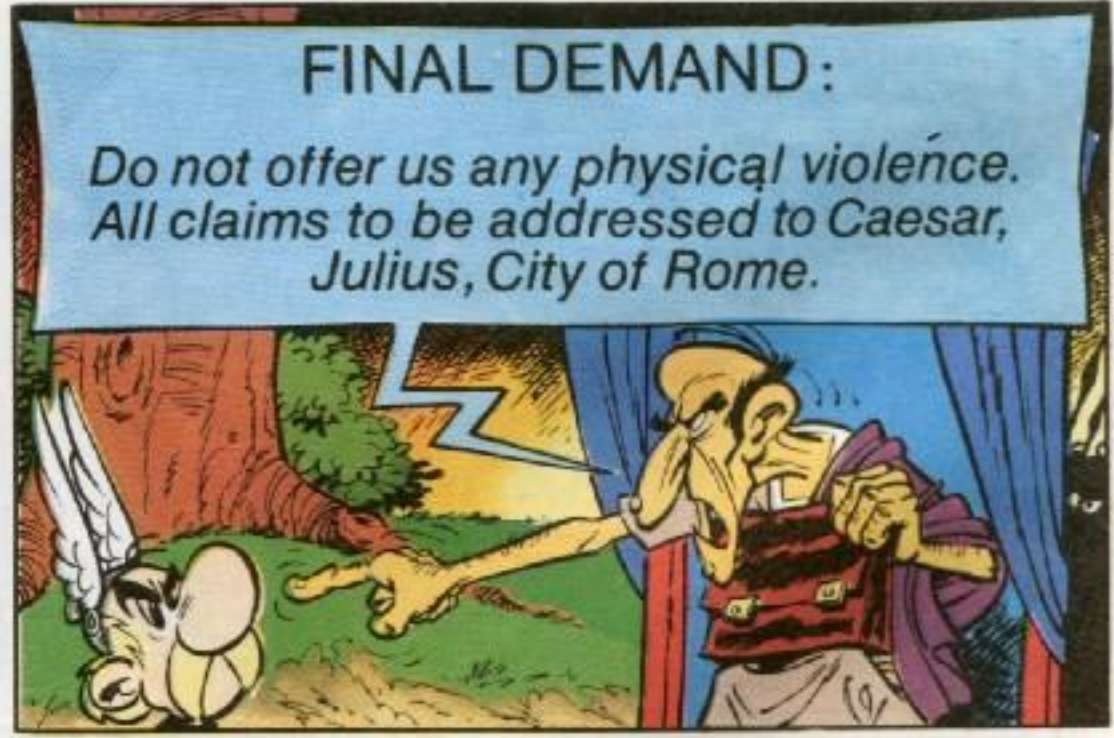
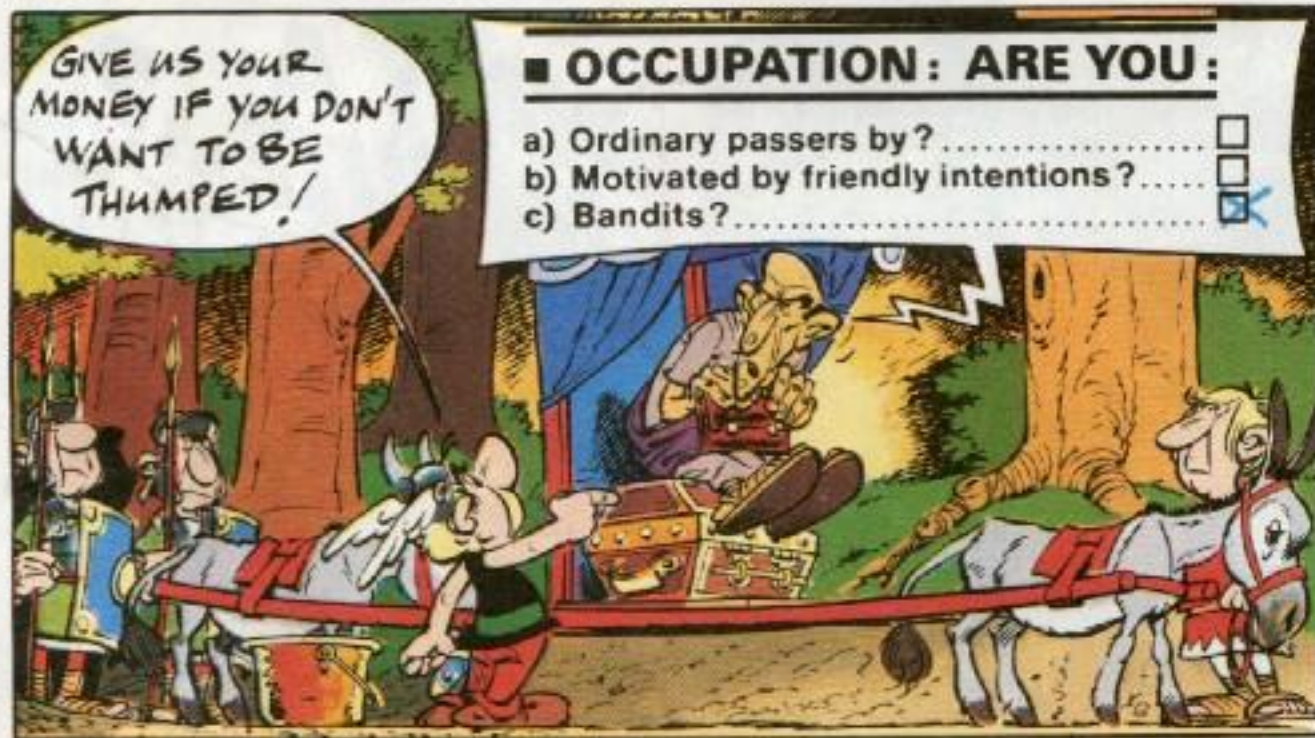
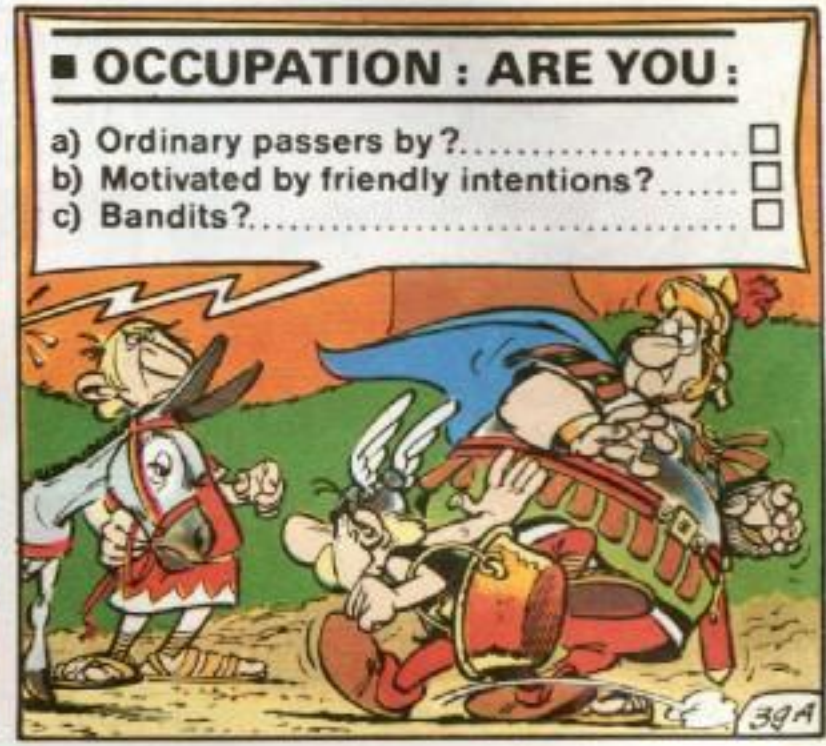
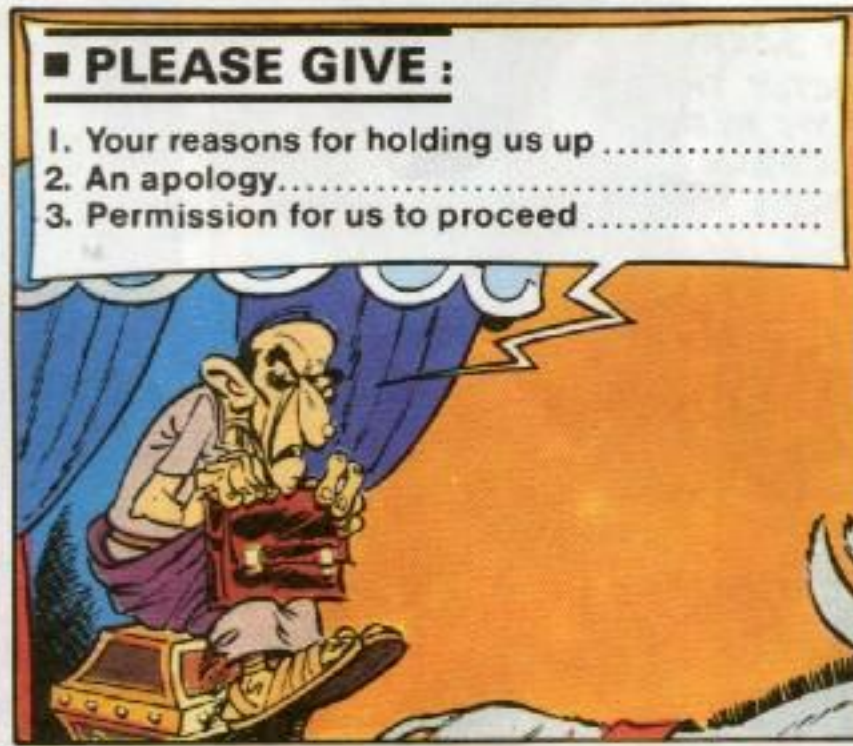
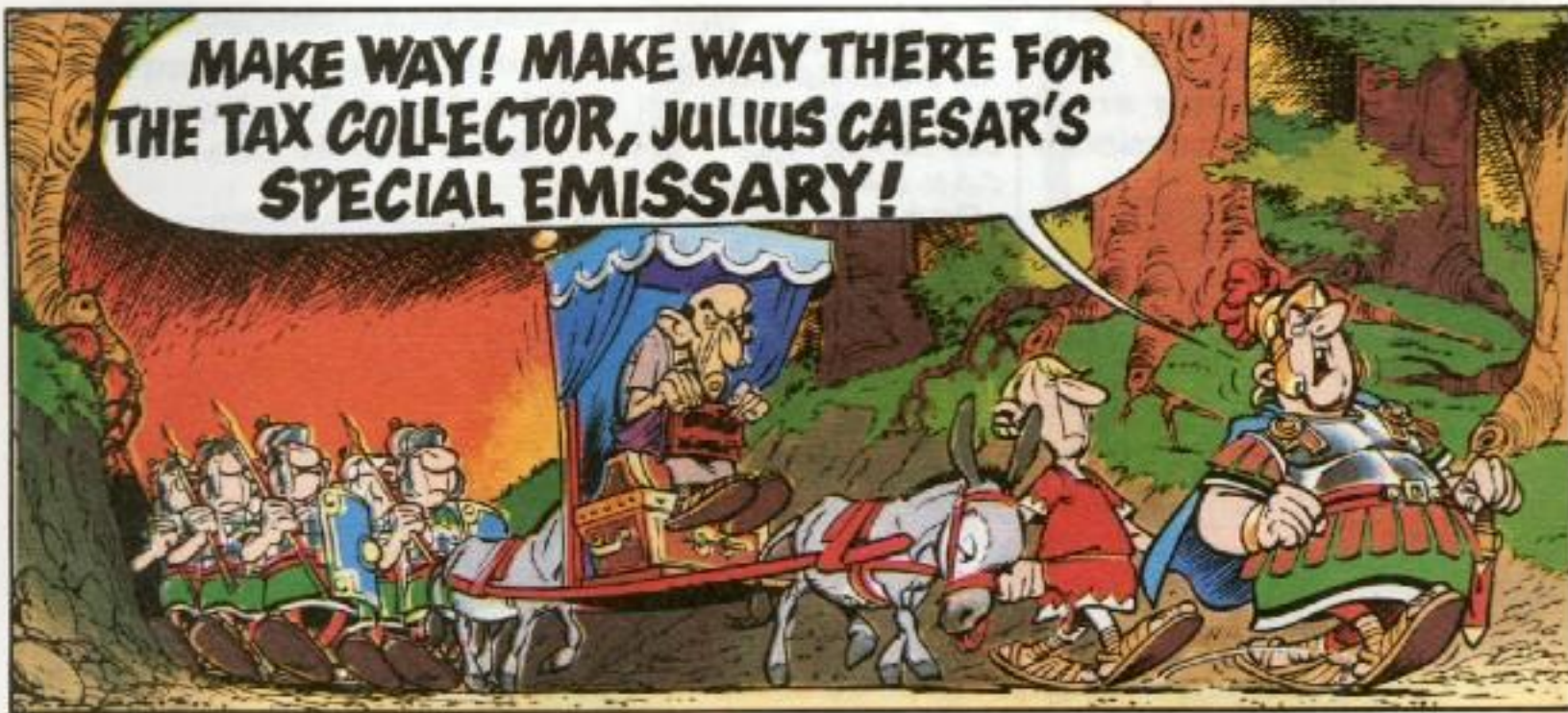


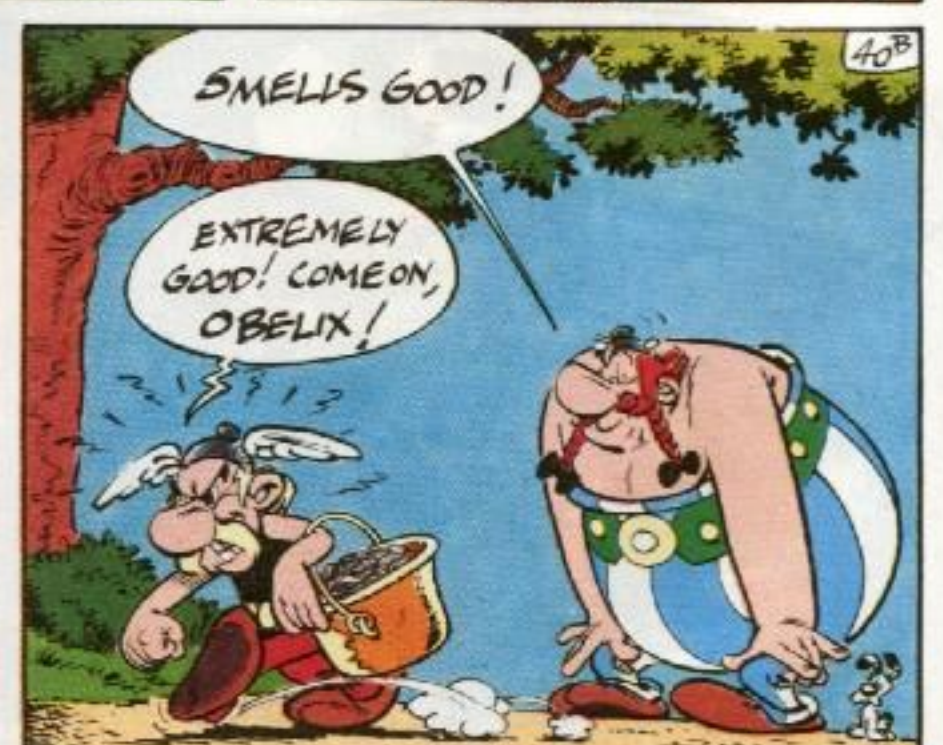
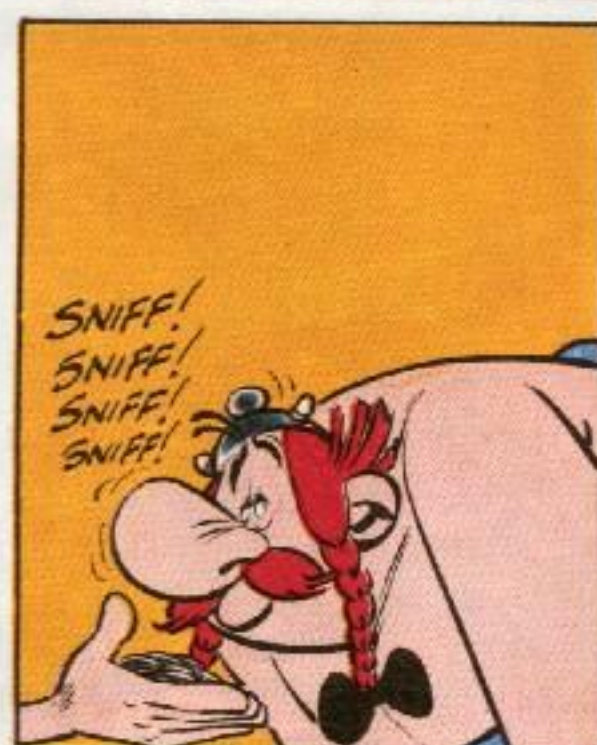
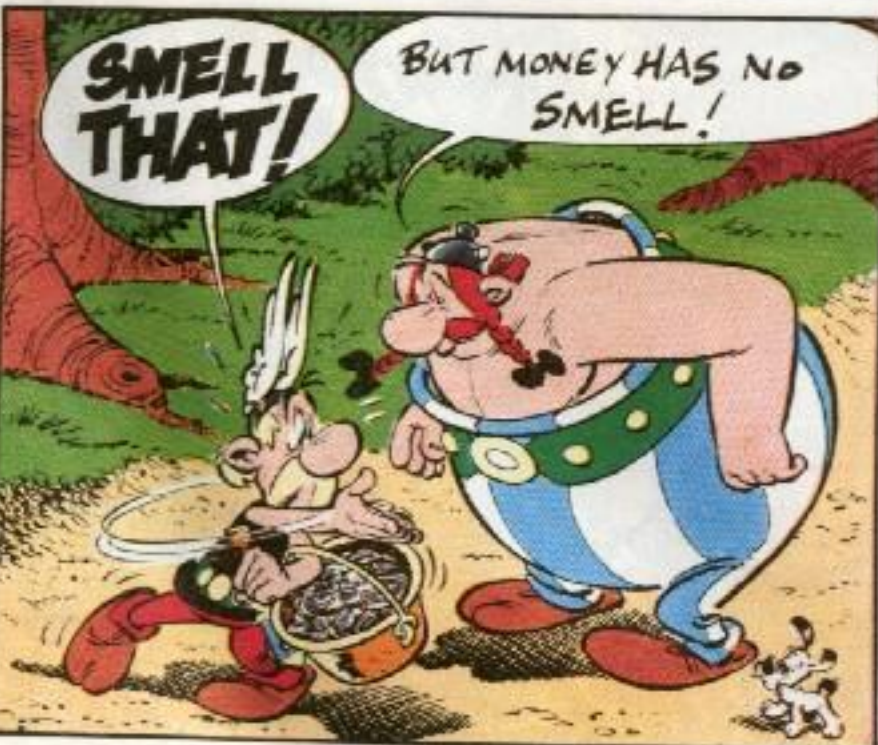
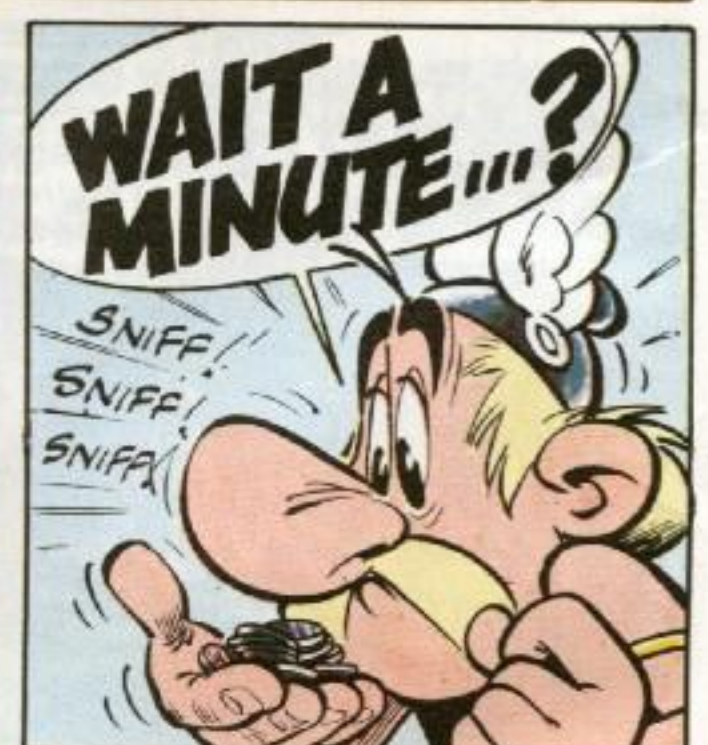
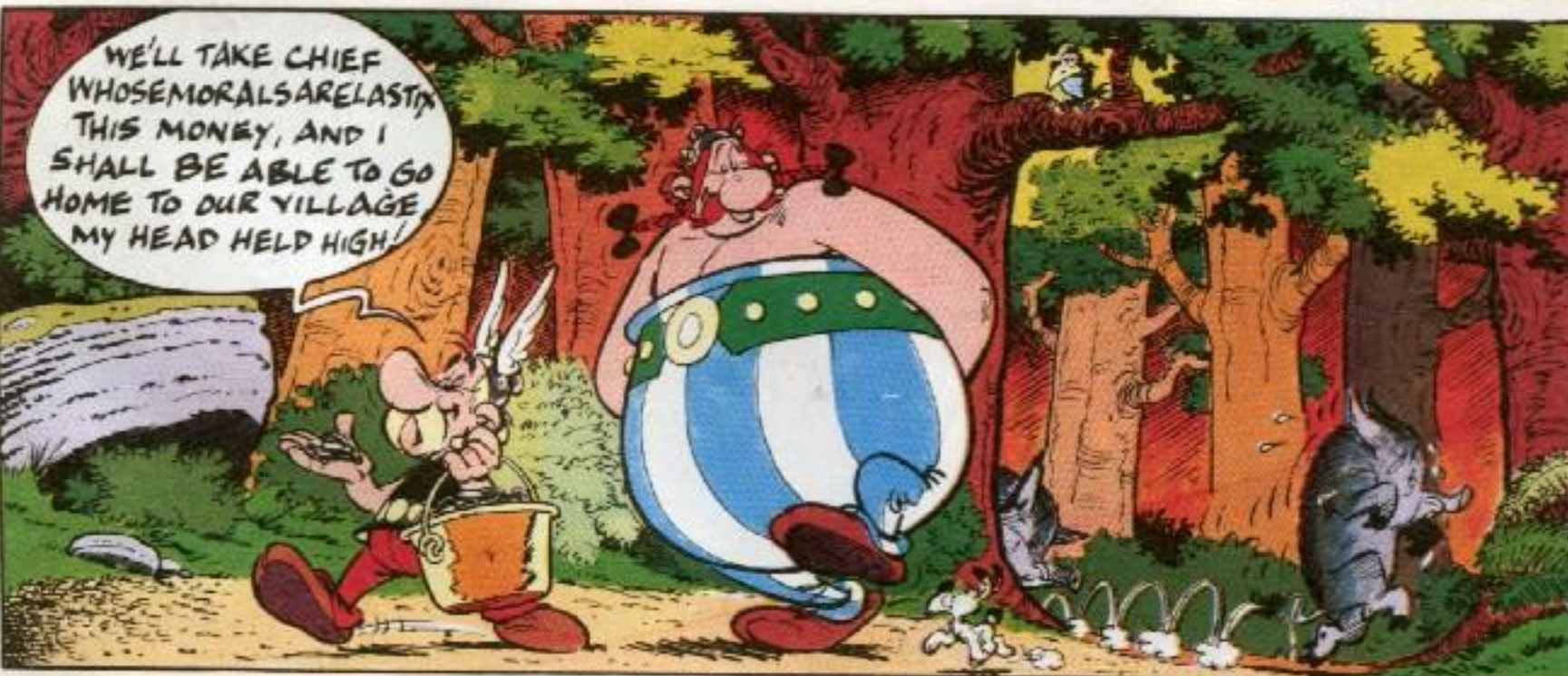
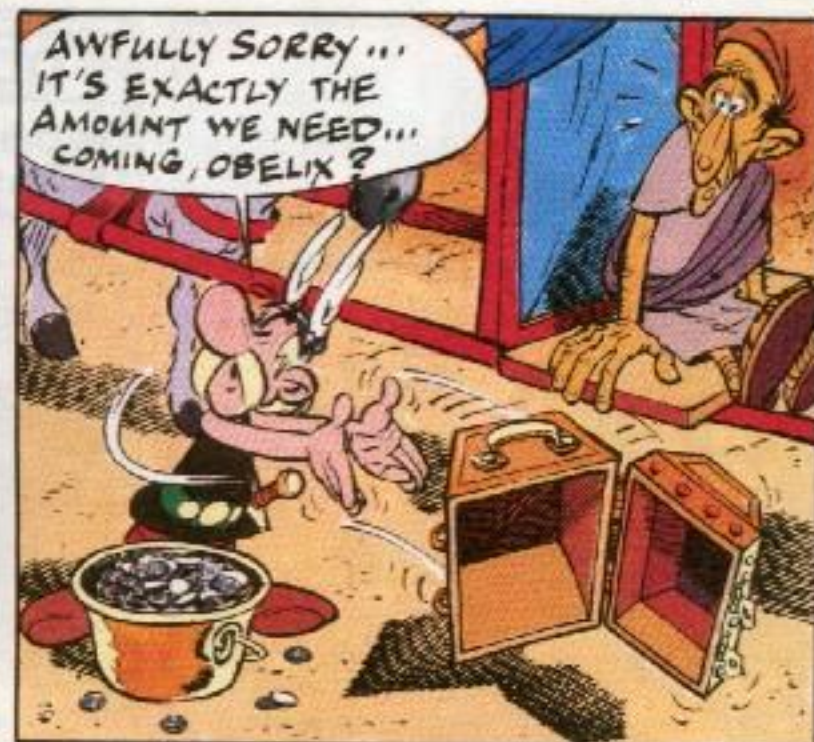
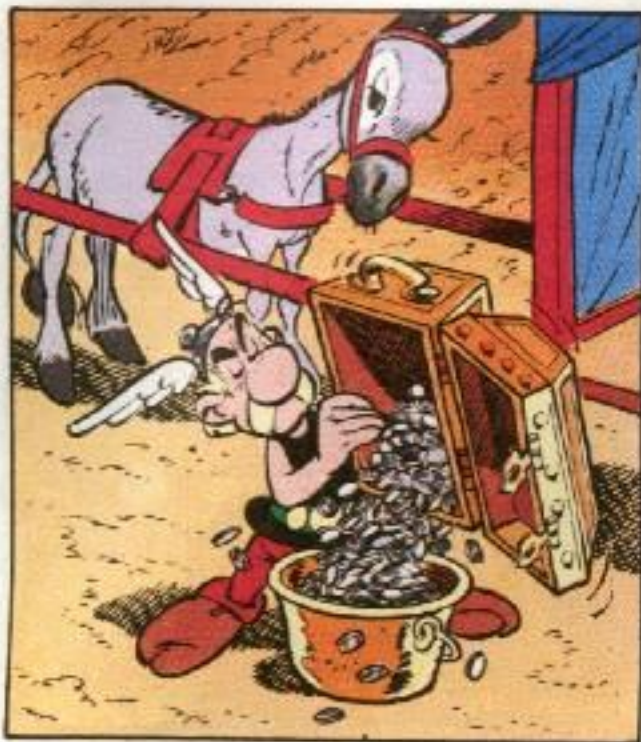
GLUG! GLUG! GLUG! GLUG!

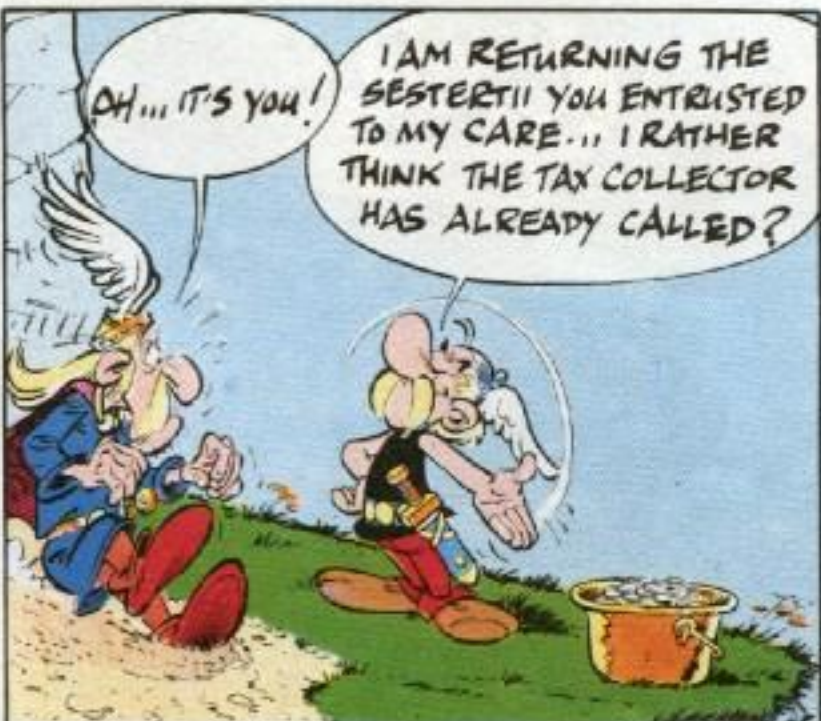
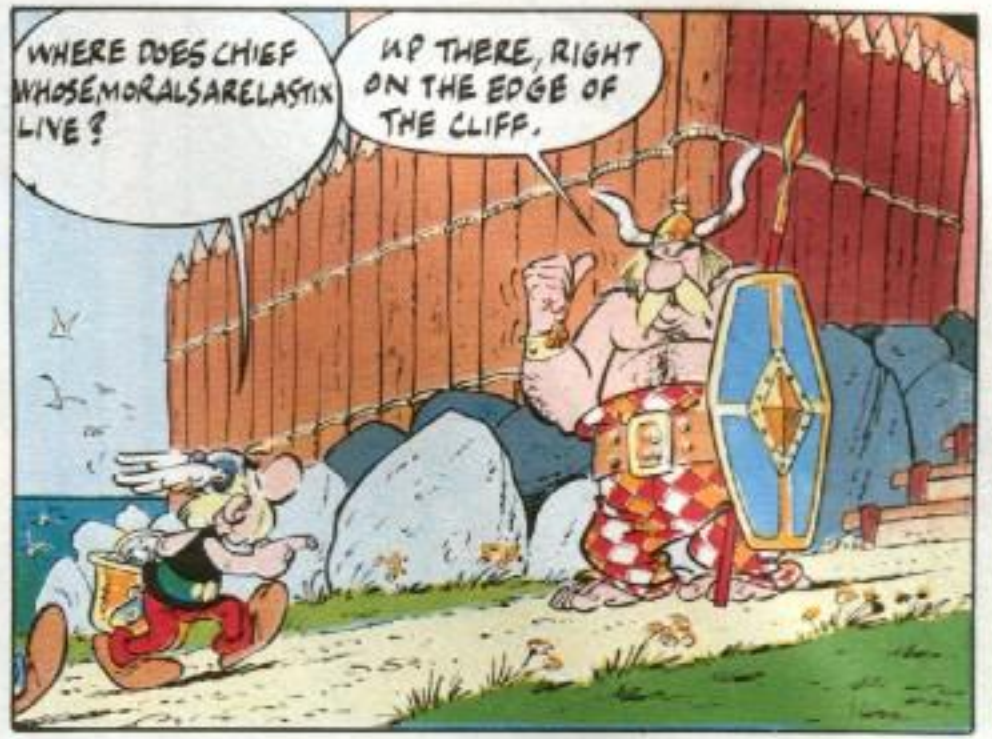
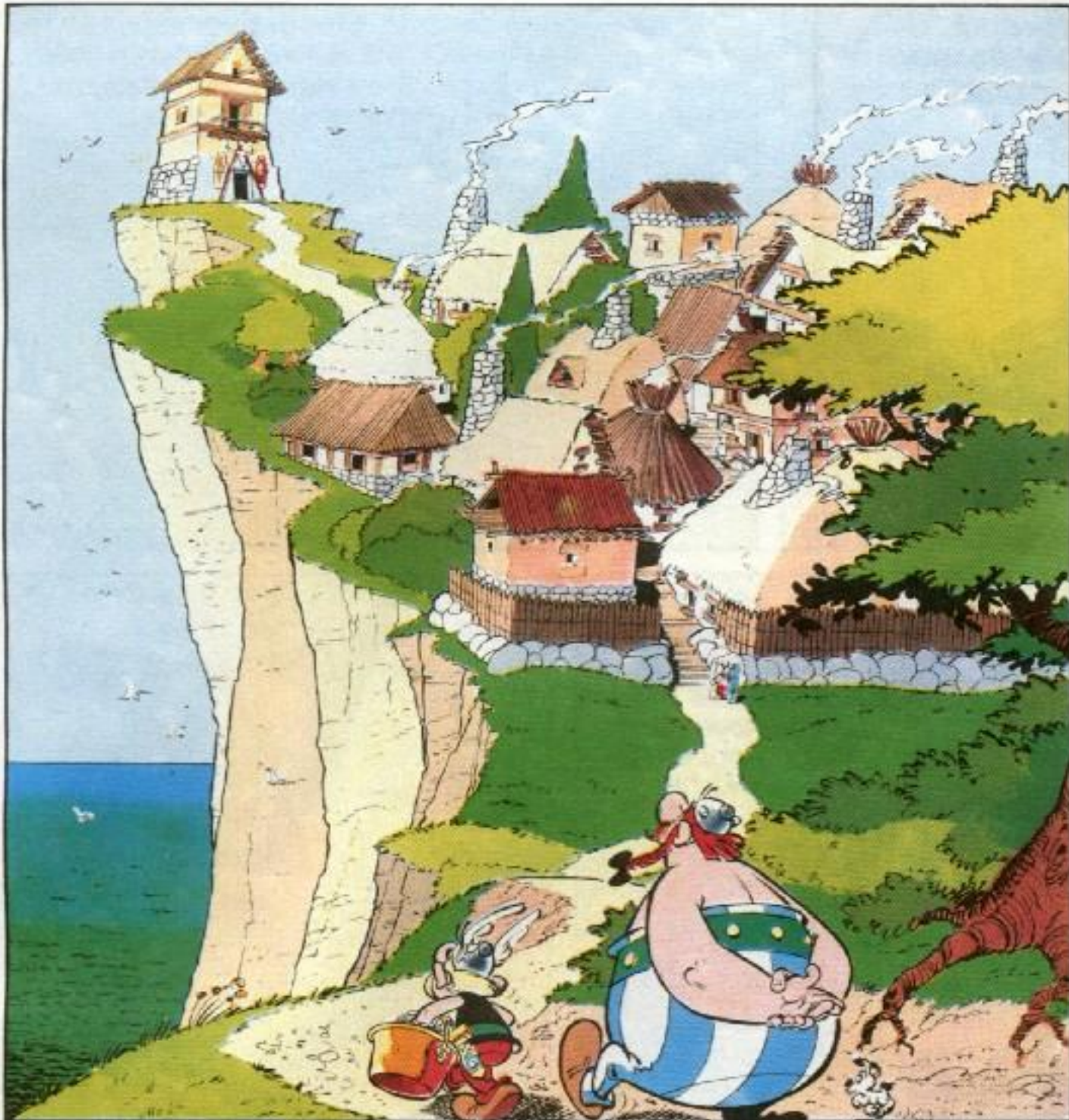


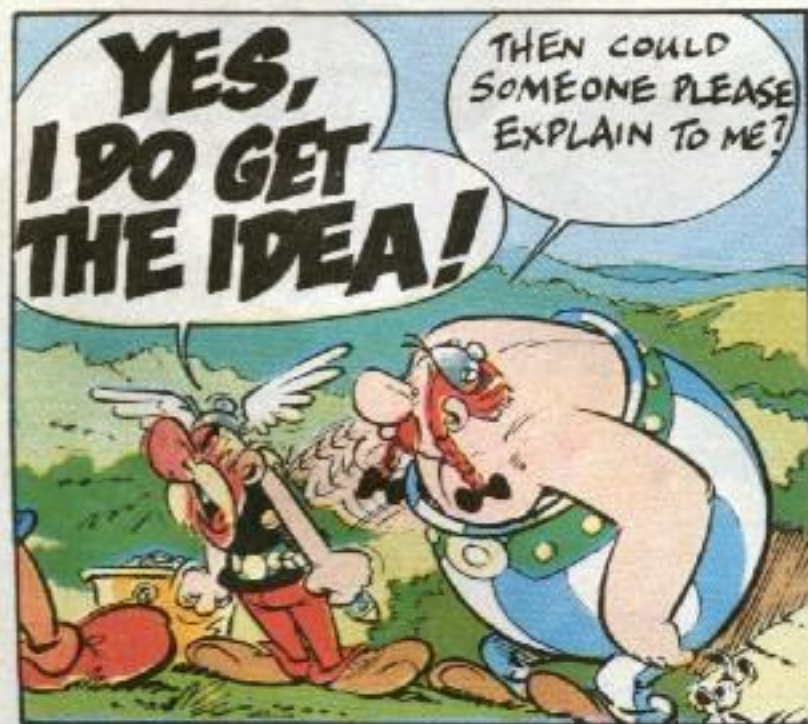
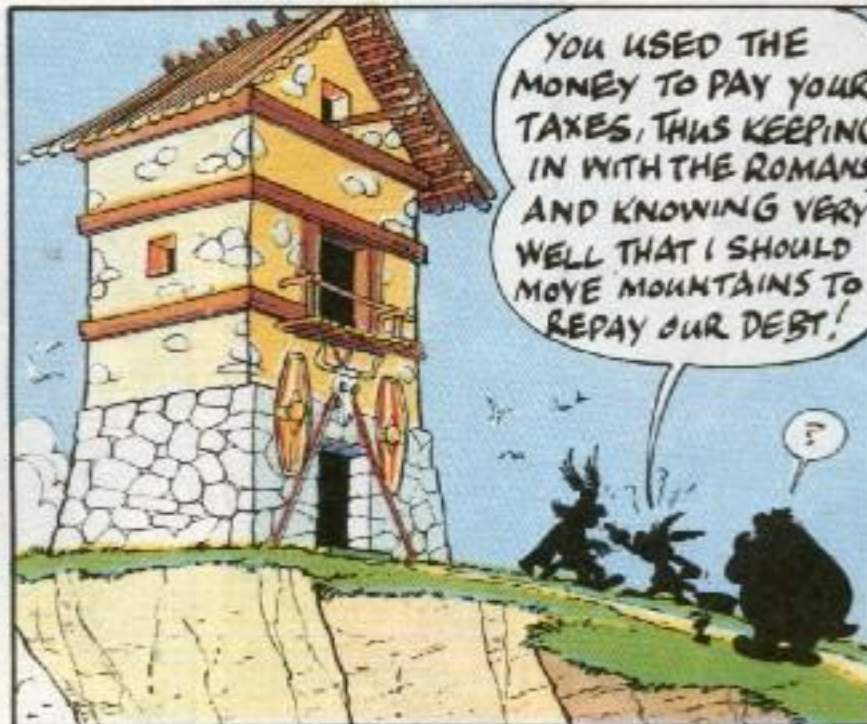
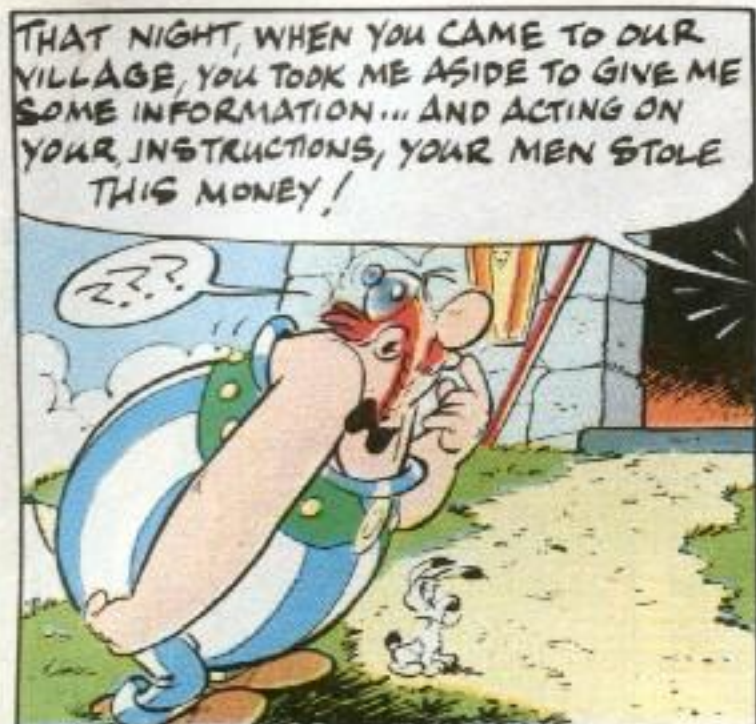
COME ON!

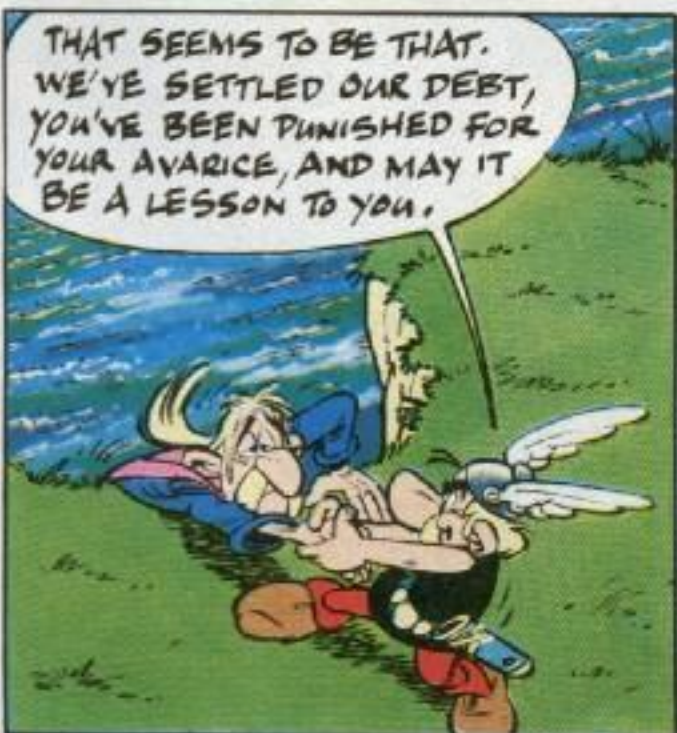
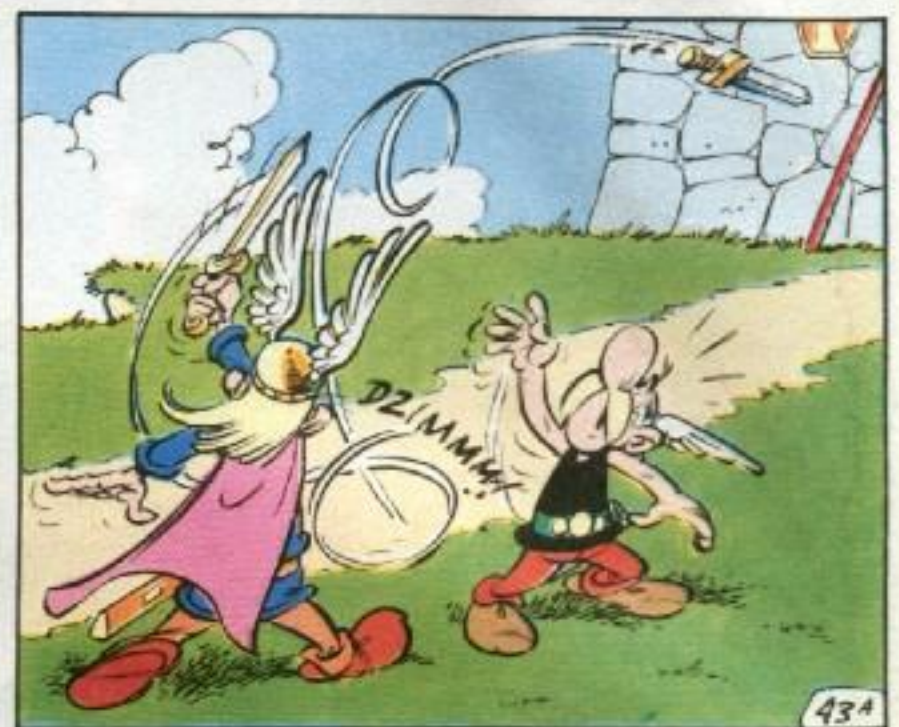
TRALALALA!



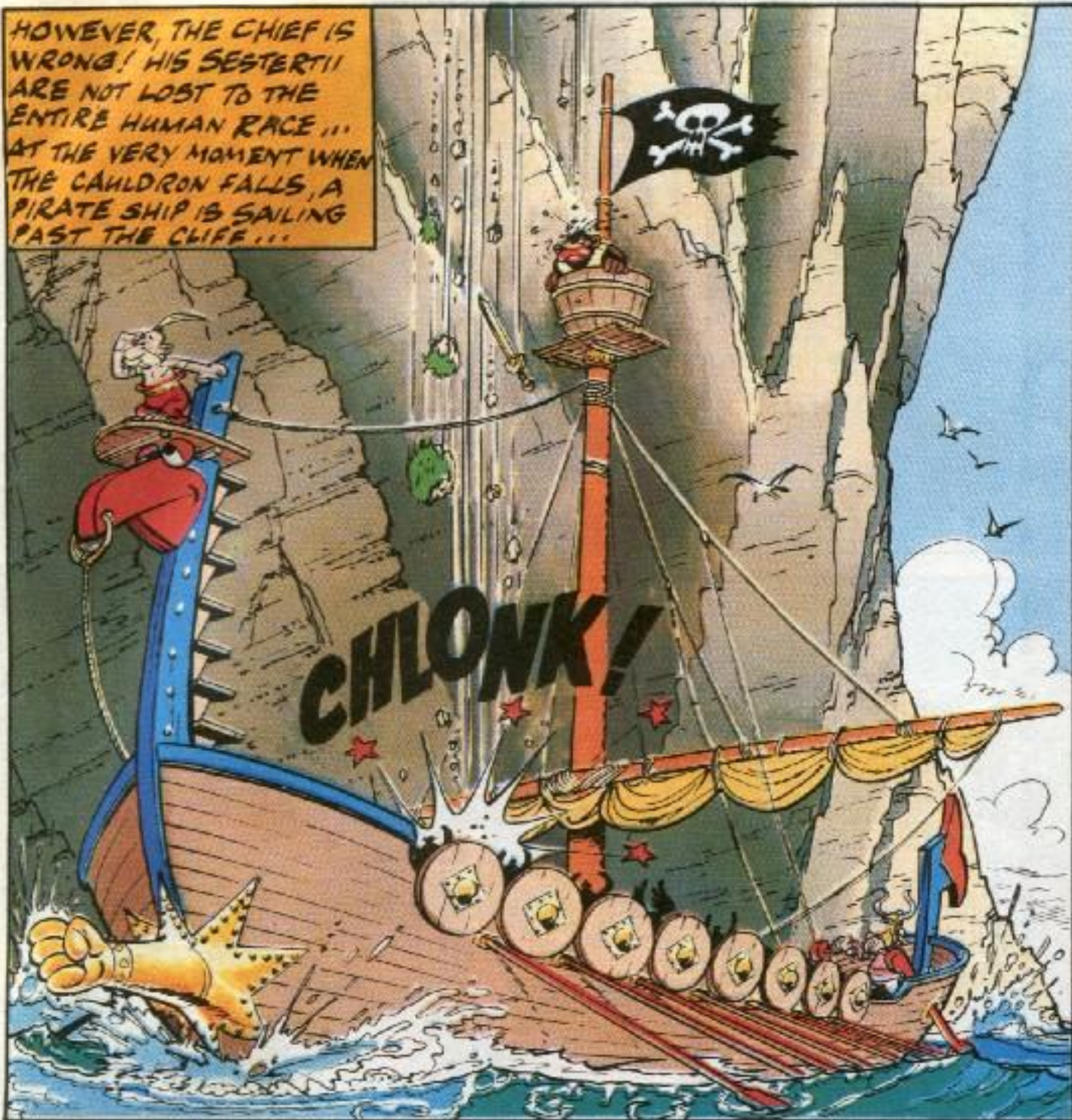








HOWEVER, THE CHIEF IS WRONG! HIS SESTERTII ARE NOT LOST TO THE ENTIRE HUMAN RACE!! AT THE VERY MOMENT WHEN THE CAULDRON FALLS, A PIRATE SHIP IS SAILING PAST THE CLIFF!!



MUTINY! SUFFERING SEASERPENTS, WHO DARED CROWN ME WITH A CAULDRON!



AND FOR ONCE, JUST FOR ONCE, THE PIRATES ARE HAPPY!

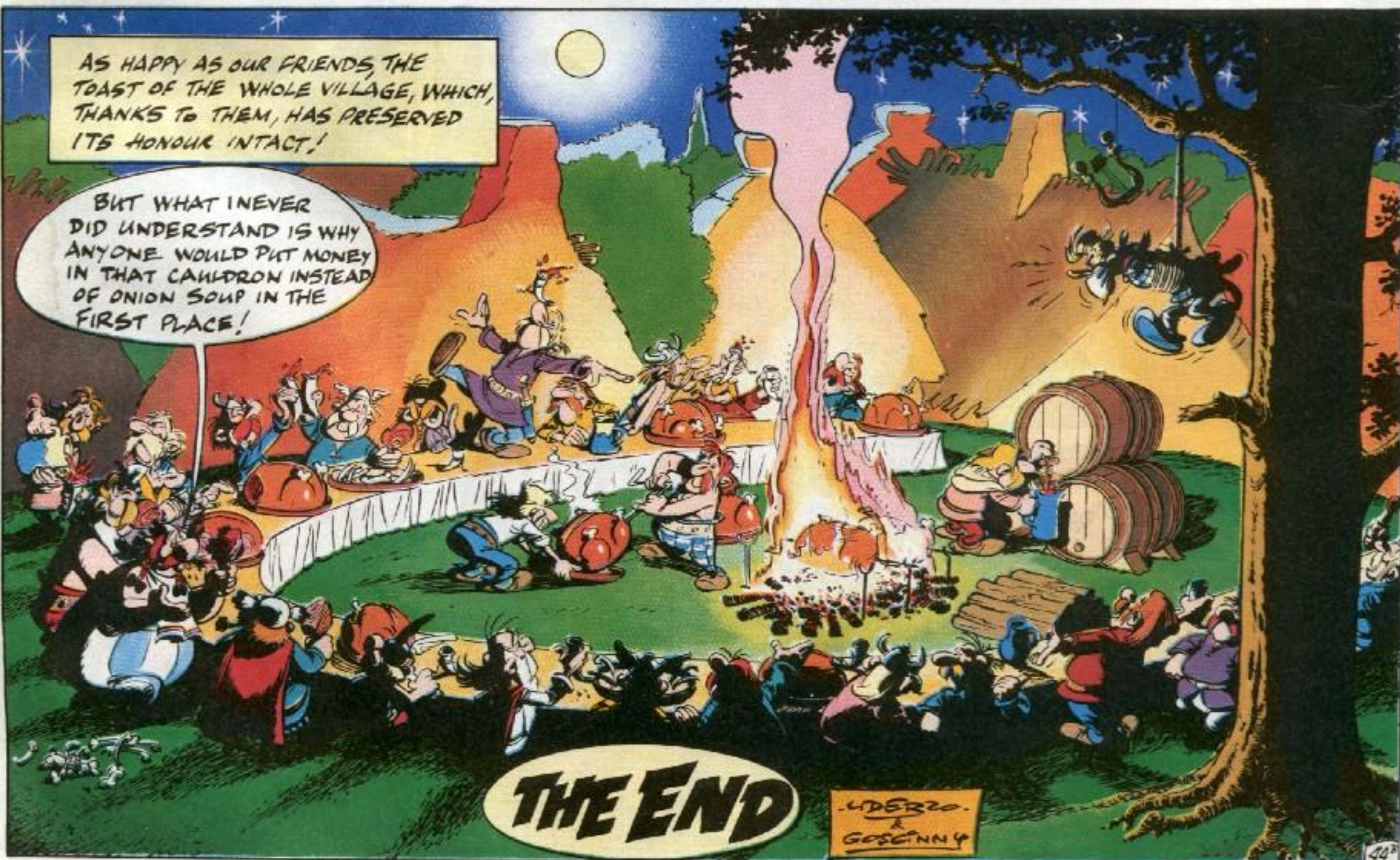


ONION-FLAVOURED, TOO! MY FAVOURITE KIND!

SESTERTII FROM OLYMPUS! THIS SHOULD KEEP OUR HEADS ABOVE WATER!

AS HAPPY AS OUR FRIENDS, THE TOAST OF THE WHOLE VILLAGE, WHICH, THANKS TO THEM, HAS PRESERVED ITS HONOUR INTACT!

BUT WHAT I NEVER DID UNDERSTAND IS WHY ANYONE WOULD PUT MONEY IN THAT CAULDRON INSTEAD OF ONION SOUP IN THE FIRST PLACE!



THE END

UDERZO & GOSCHNY