

BOOK 19

GOSCINNY AND UDERZO

Asterix

and Caesar's Gift

Asterix



HODDER DARGAUD

OUR STORY OPENS MELODIOUSLY IN A BAR IN A DISREPUTABLE PART OF ROME. AS THEY USED TO SAY IN THE COLLOQUIAL IDIOM OF THE TIME, 'VINUM ET MUSICA LAETIFICANT COR'...

♪ AND WHEN I'M DEAD DON'T BURY ME AT ALL, ♪ JUST PICKLE MY BONES IN ALCOHOL, ♪ AN AMPHORA OF WINE AT MY HEAD AND FEET, ♪ AND THEN I'M SURE MY BONES WILL KEEP....

HIC!... DE MORTUIS NIL NISI BONUM!





SOON AFTERWARDS...

HOW LONG HAVE YOU DONE THEN, SON?

TWO YEARS.



ONLY EIGHTEEN MORE TO GO, SON! THE ENDS IN SIGHT!

YES! THIS TIME XVIII YEARS WHERE SHALL I BE? NOT IN THE ROMAN INFANTRY!

* OLD ROMAN ARMY SONG, AN ADAPTATION OF WHICH IS STILL CURRENT IN ENGLISH SCHOOLS TODAY.



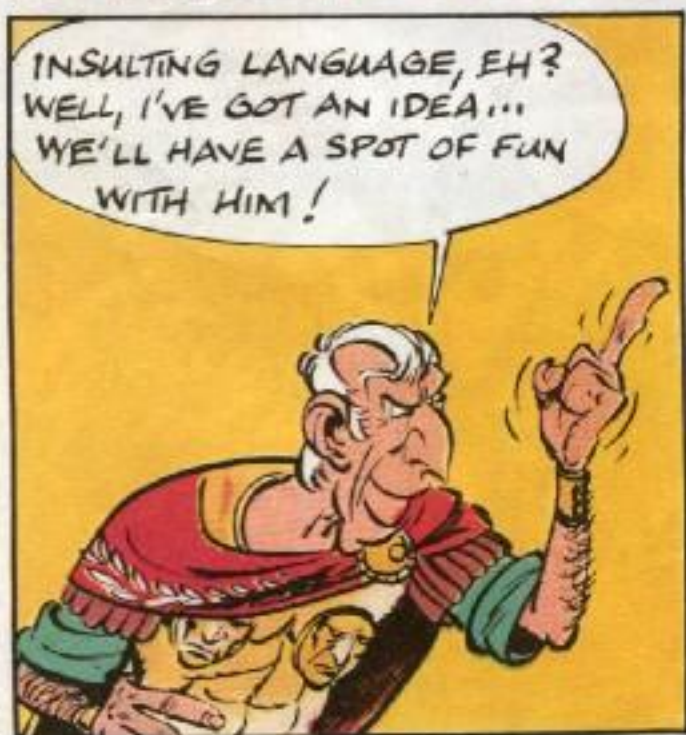
NEXT MORNING, IN JULIUS CAESAR'S PALACE...

WELL, CENTURION, SO SOME OF OUR VETERANS GET THEIR HONESTA MISSIO TODAY. ALL MEN WITH GOOD CONDUCT RECORDS, I HOPE?

YES, THEY'VE DONE FINE, O JULIUS CAESAR... BARRING ONE OLD SOAK WHO HASN'T BEEN SOBER IN TWENTY YEARS.



IN FACT HE'S IN THE GLASSHOUSE THIS VERY MOMENT. HE WAS USING INSULTING LANGUAGE ABOUT YOU LAST NIGHT.



INSULTING LANGUAGE, EH? WELL, I'VE GOT AN IDEA... WE'LL HAVE A SPOT OF FUN WITH HIM!



GET HIM OUT OF PRISON AND HAVE HIM LINED UP FOR THE PRESENTATION CEREMONY ALONG WITH THE REST.

YOU'RE GOING TO THROW HIM TO THE LIONS, O CAESAR?



WORSE! I'M GOING TO GIVE HIM A PRESENT!



SOME HOURS LATER...

ATTEN-SHUN!



LEGIO EXPEDITA!

HMM?



HEY, YOU! LEGIO EXPEDITA!

OH... RIGHT...

LEGIONARIES, YOU HAVE COMPLETED YOUR TWENTY YEARS' MILITARY SERVICE. WITH THIS LITTLE FORMALITY BEHIND YOU, YOUR WHOLE LIFE LIES BEFORE YOU...



YOU HAVE SERVED ROME WELL, AND I AM GOING TO REWARD YOU BY GIVING YOU PLOTS OF LAND IN OUR COLONIES...



HERE ARE YOUR TITLE DEEDS TO LAND AT NEMAUSUS*

* NIMES



YOU HAVE BEEN ALLOTTED LAND NEAR ARELATUM*

* ARLES



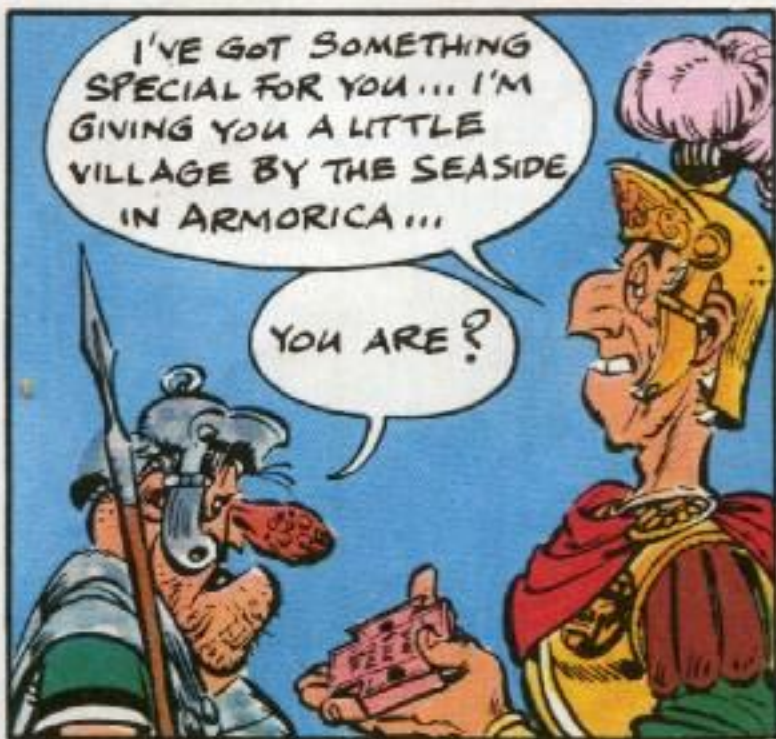
AND IT'S AQUAE SEXTIAE* FOR YOU...

* AIX



THIS IS THE MAN.

I'D NEVER HAVE GUESSED!

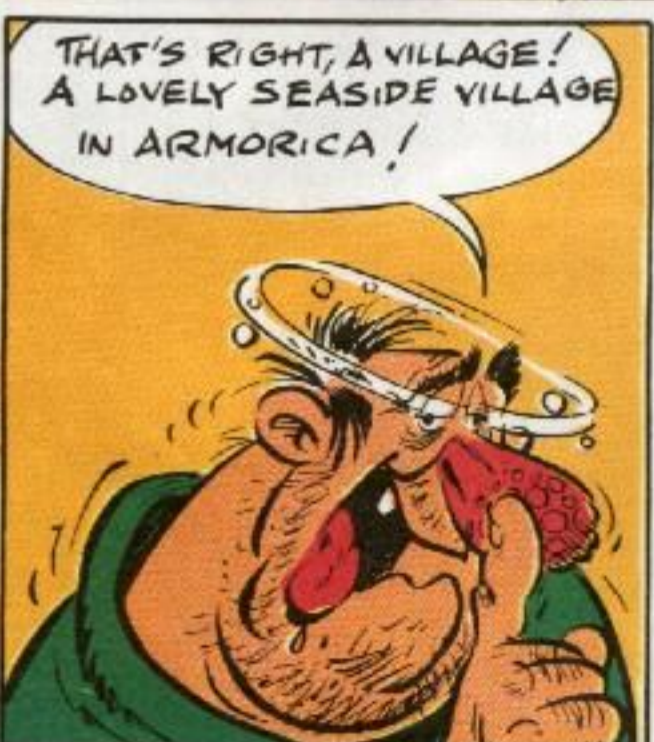


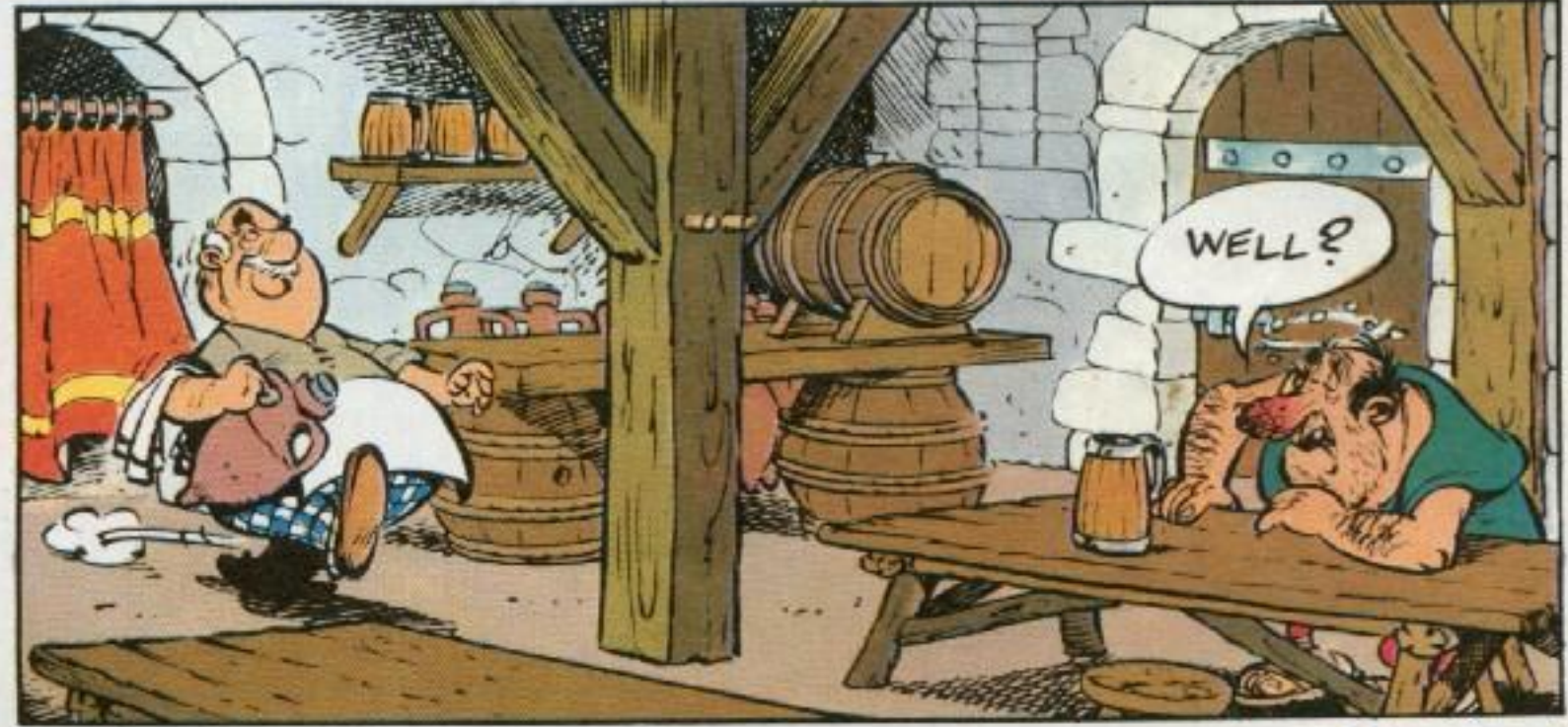
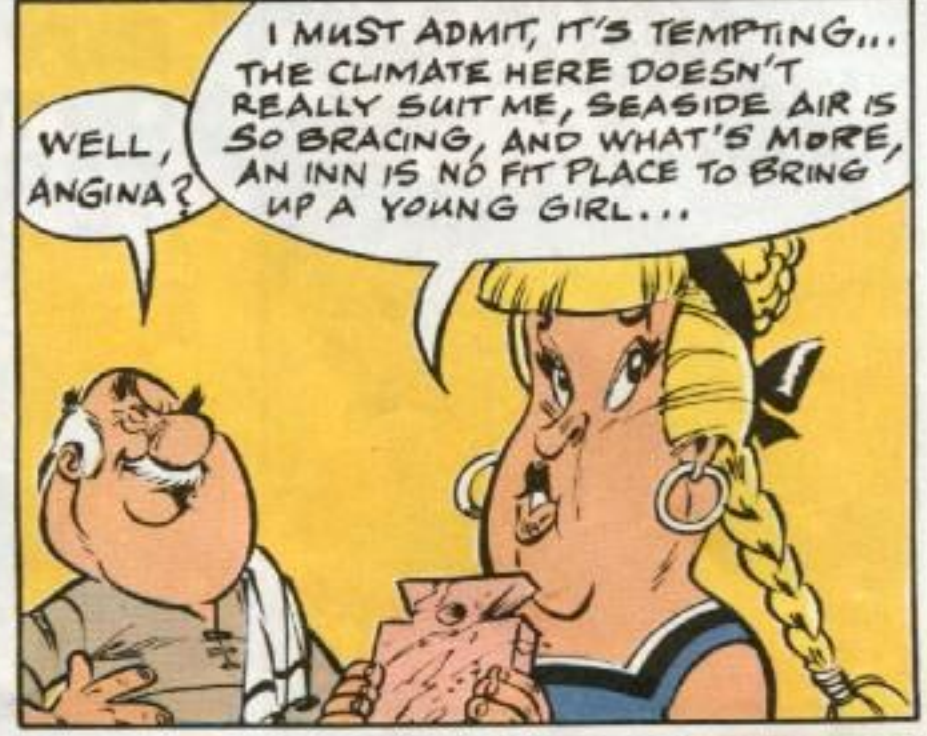
I'VE GOT SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR YOU... I'M GIVING YOU A LITTLE VILLAGE BY THE SEASIDE IN ARMORICA...

YOU ARE?



... A LITTLE GAULISH VILLAGE SURROUNDED BY FORTIFIED ROMAN CAMPS.





YOU MEAN YOU'D GIVE ME THIS VILLAGE, JUST FOR THE PRICE OF A MEAL AND A LITTLE WINE?

I MUST ASK MY WIFE.

DON'T FORGET THE WINE ON YOUR WAY BACK.

... AND LOOK AT THIS! AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT! WITH JULIUS CAESAR'S OWN SEAL! I'VE ALWAYS DREAMT OF OWNING LAND...

I MUST ADMIT, IT'S TEMPTING... THE CLIMATE HERE DOESN'T REALLY SUIT ME, SEASIDE AIR IS SO BRACING, AND WHAT'S MORE, AN INN IS NO FIT PLACE TO BRING UP A YOUNG GIRL...

SPECIALLY AS OUR LITTLE INFLUENZA WAS NEVER HAPPY ABOUT LEAVING LUTETIA TO COME HERE.

WE COULD SELL THIS INN...

WELL?

IT'S A DEAL!

FILL IT UP!

AS IT HAPPENS... THE LITTLE VILLAGE WHICH HAS CHANGED HANDS FOR A HUNK OF BREAD AND A FEW MUGS OF WINE...

...IS THIS VILLAGE!

GAULISH VILLAGE
COMPENDIUM
LANDANUM
TOTORUM
AQUARIUM

YES, A TYPICAL LITTLE GAULISH VILLAGE, COMPLETE WITH WARRIORS, CRAFTSMEN, TRADESMEN, DRUID AND BARD...

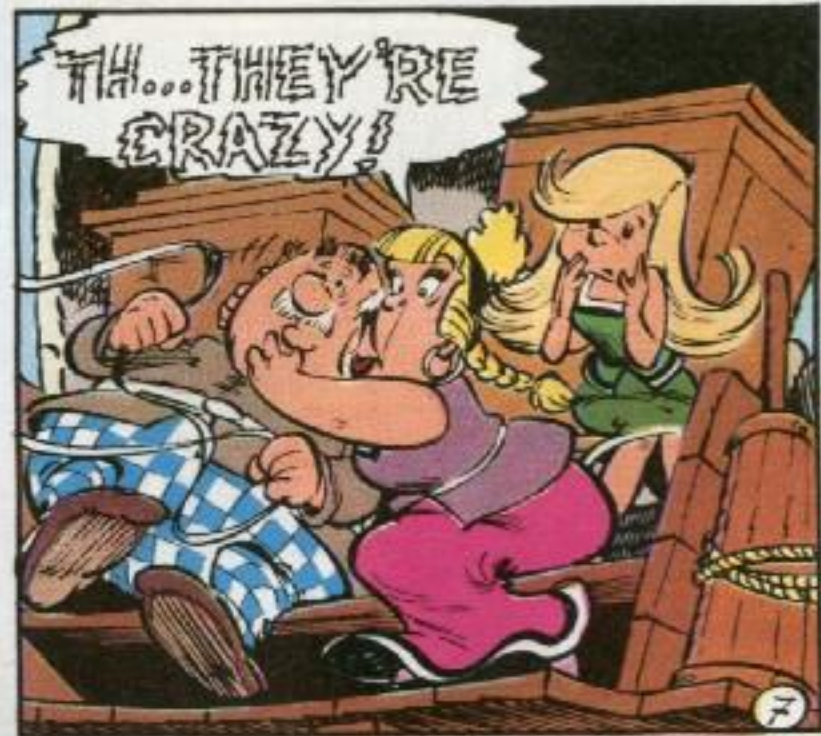
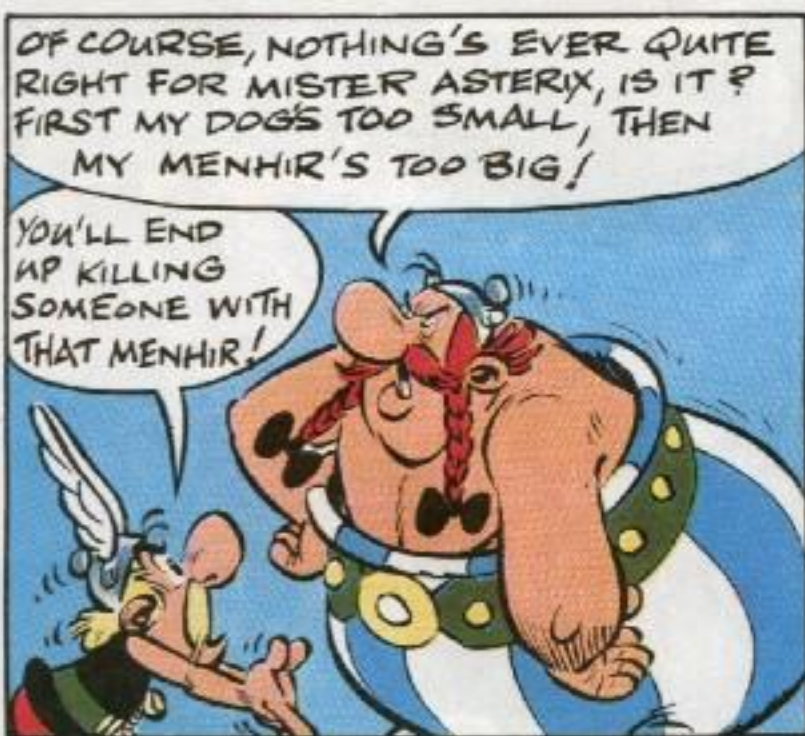
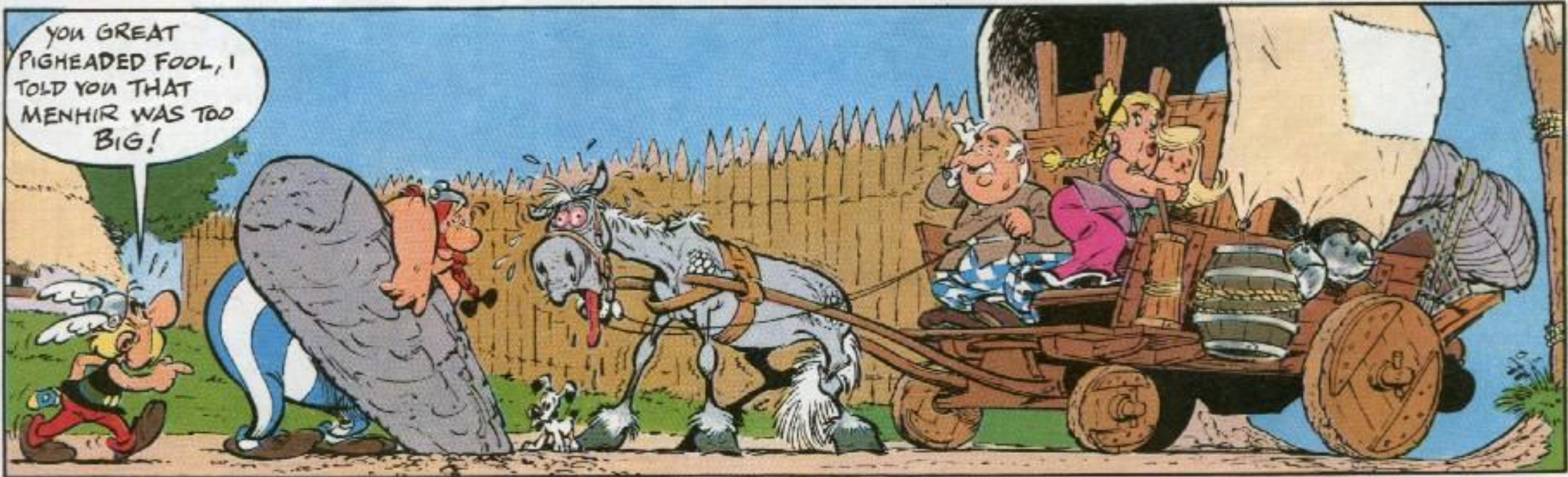
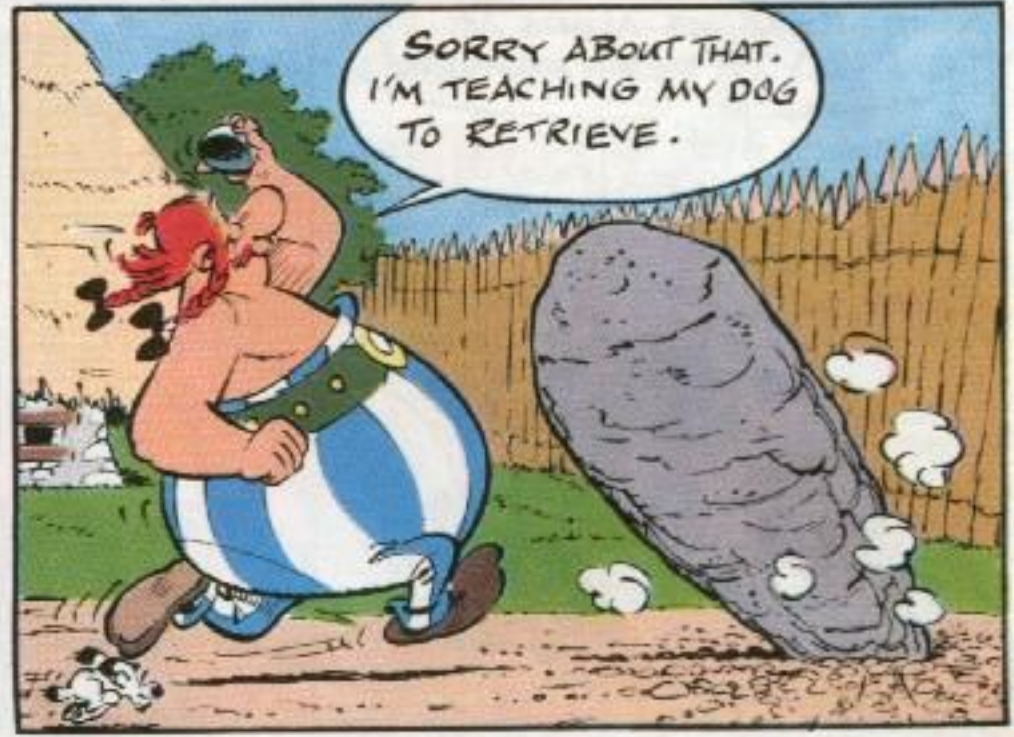
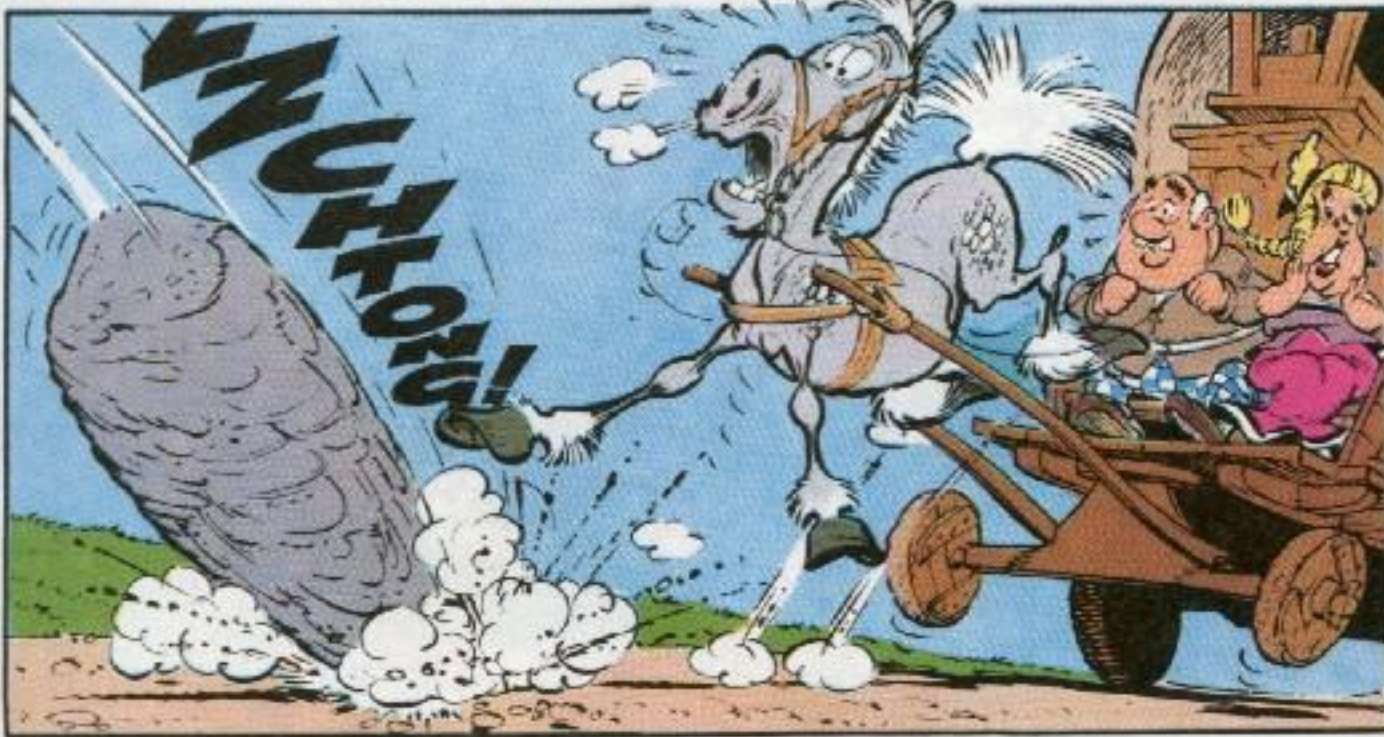
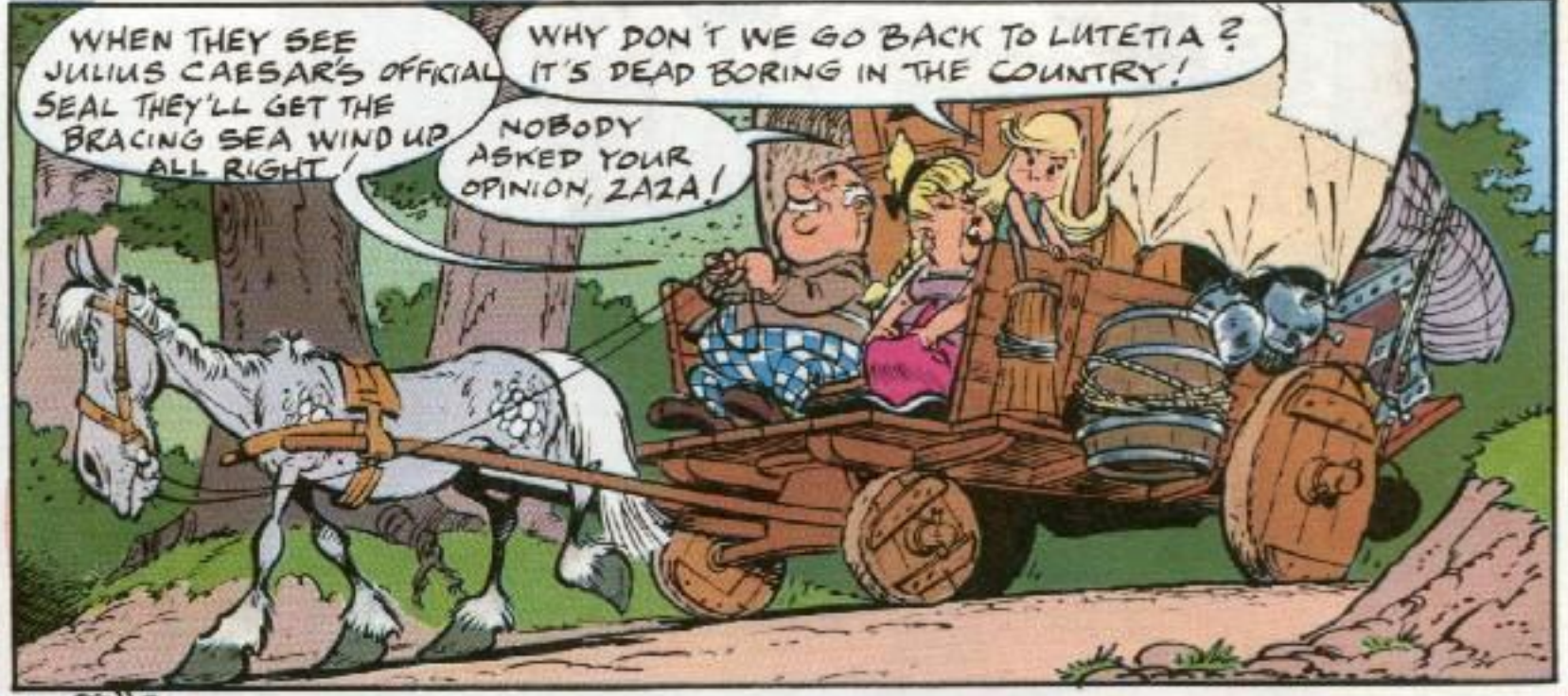
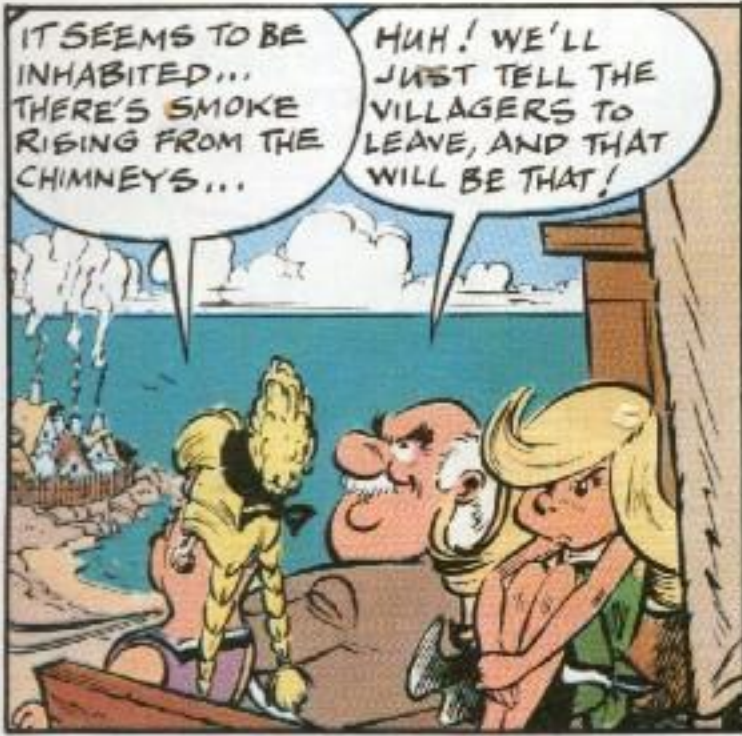


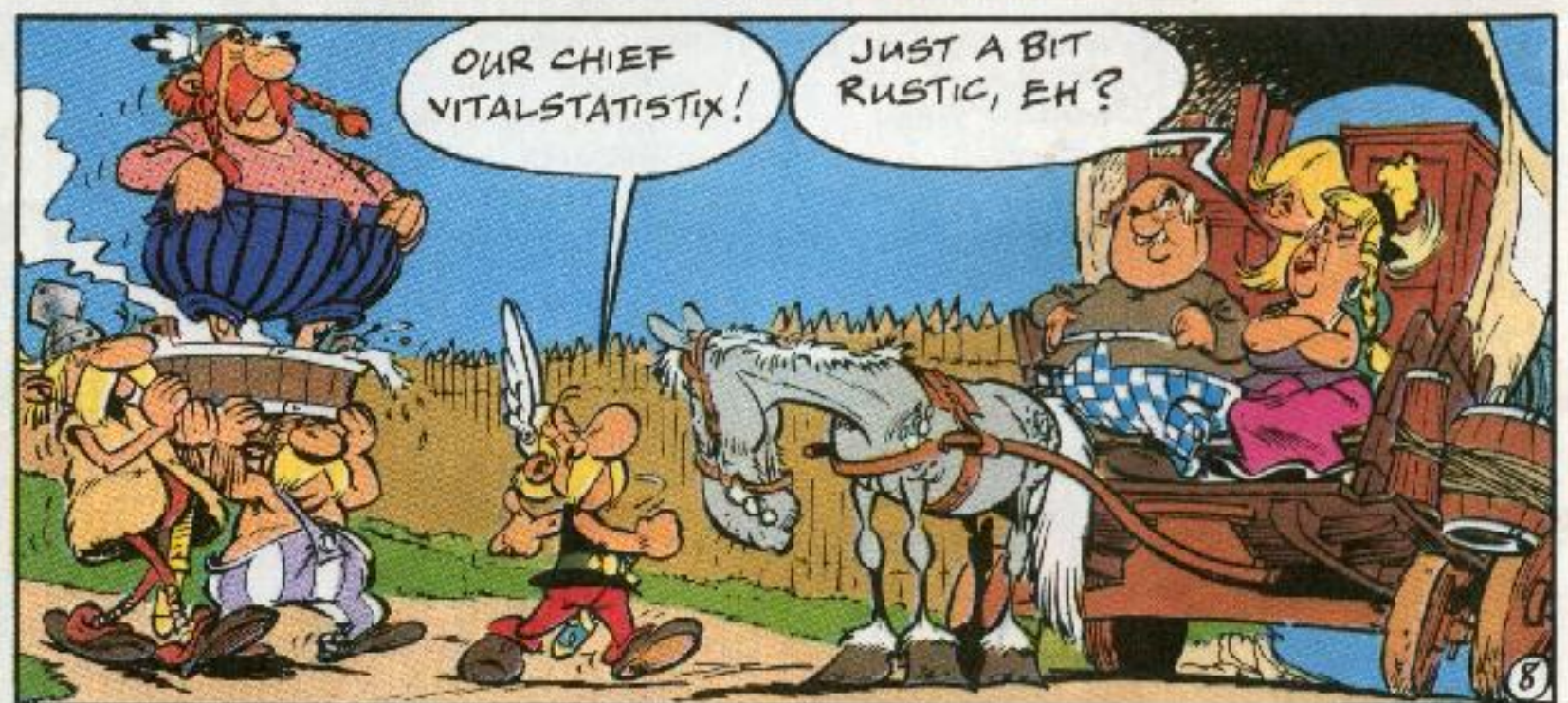
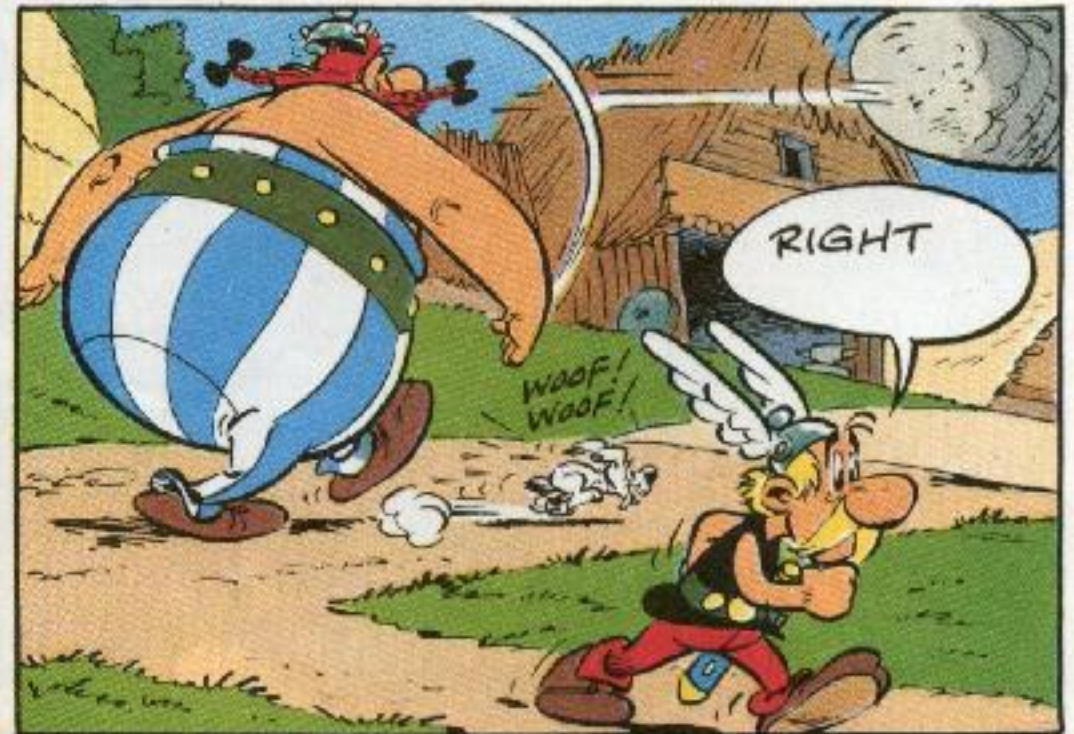
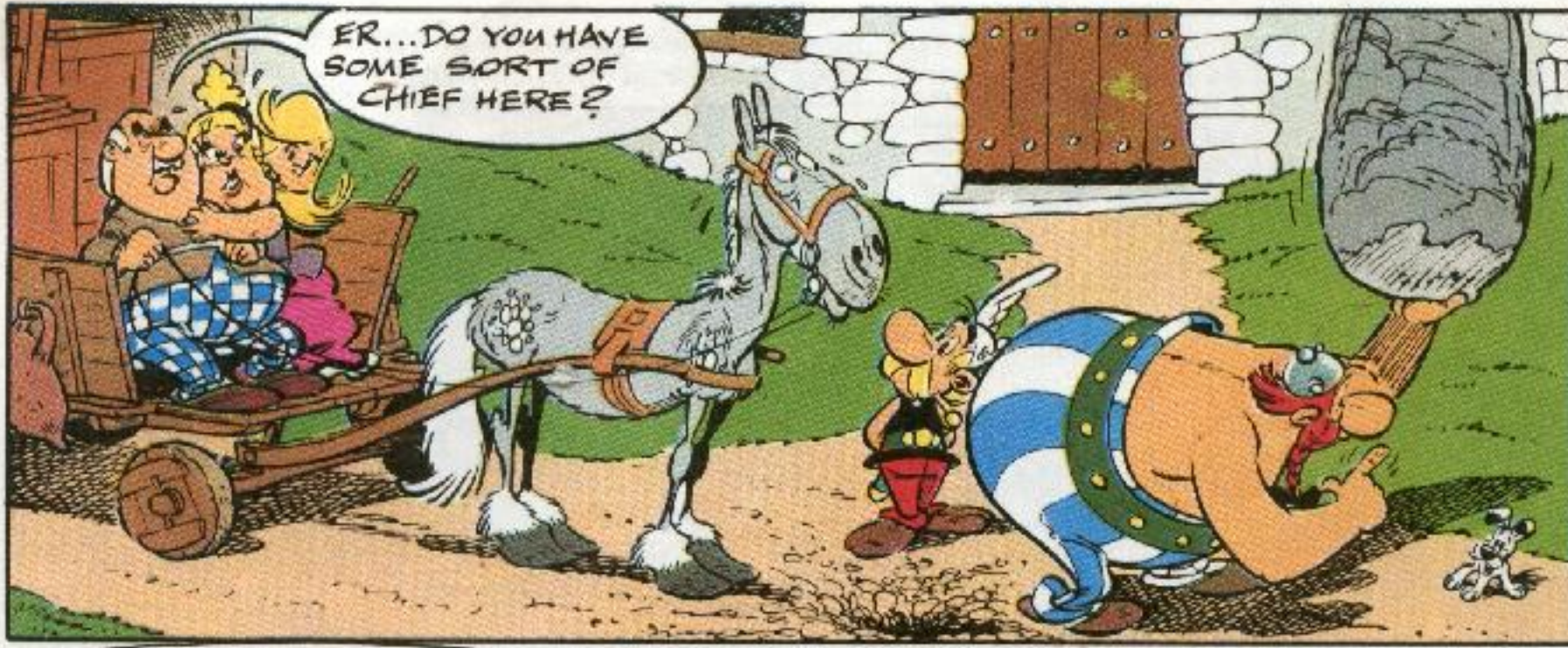
... AND A CHIEF WHO IS EASY GOING, THOUGH INCLINED TO STAND ON CEREMONY...



BUT DIDN'T I FORBID YOU TO SNEEZE WHEN CARRYING ME?









WHO ARE YOU, AND WHAT DO YOU WANT?

MY NAME IS ORTHOPAEDIX, AND I MUST ASK YOU AND YOUR MEN TO LEAVE MY VILLAGE.



WHAT WAS THAT AGAIN?



I SAID THIS VILLAGE IS MINE, AND YOU MUST LEAVE, ALL YOU GAULS, WORTHY AS YOU MAY BE. I'M A MAN OF PROPERTY NOW...
TAP! TAP! TAP!

??



THIS PROPERTY, AND HERE ARE THE TITLE DEEDS.



BRING ME THAT TABLET.

RIGHT, CHIEF!



?

NO, DOWN HERE!



SEE THAT SIGNATURE?

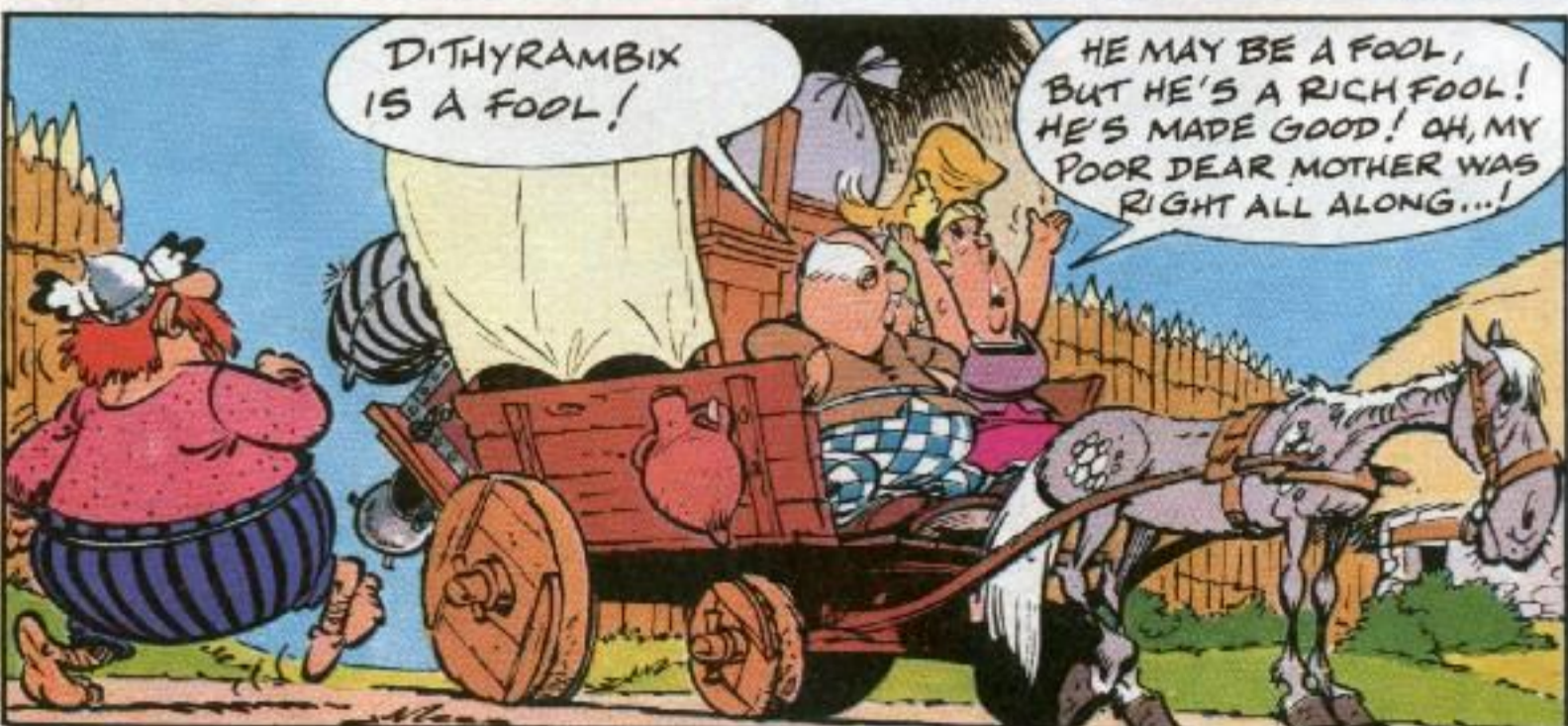
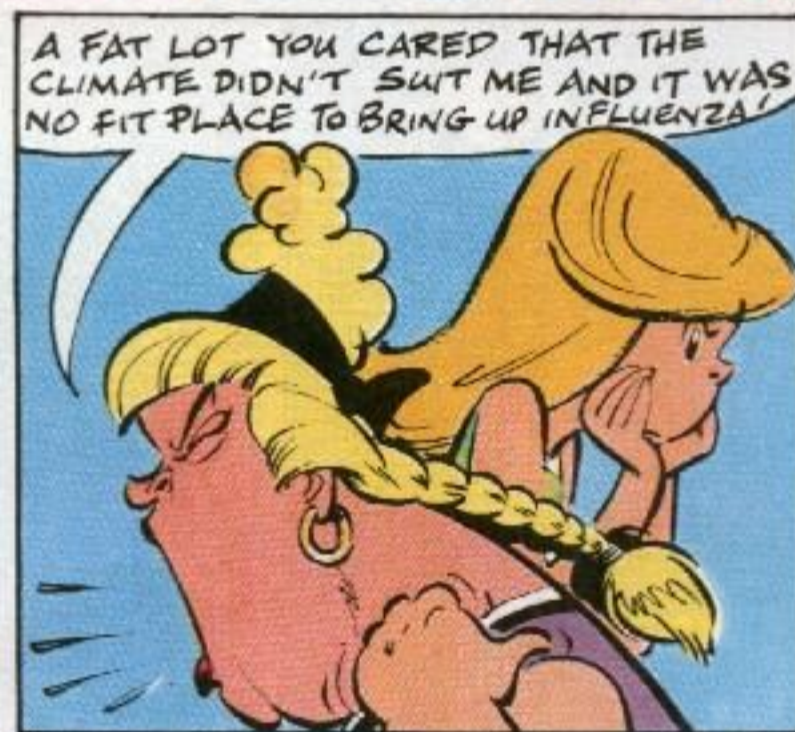
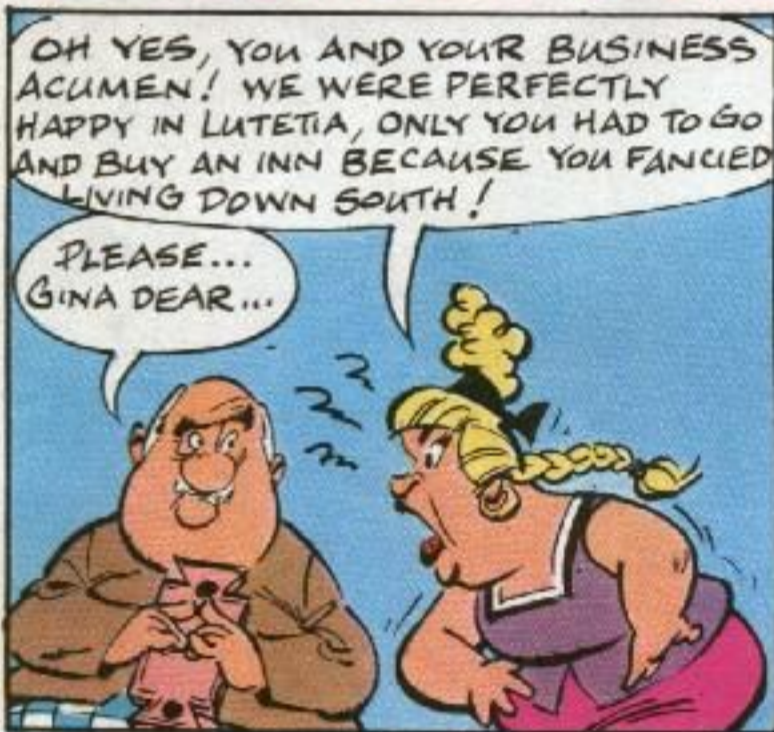
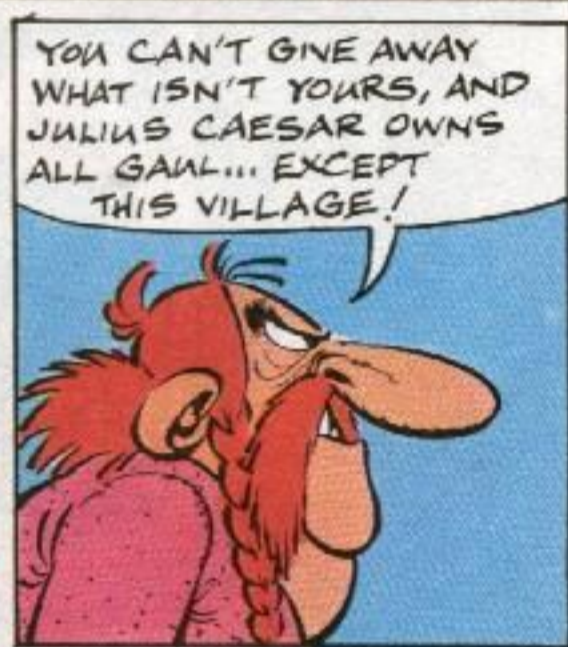
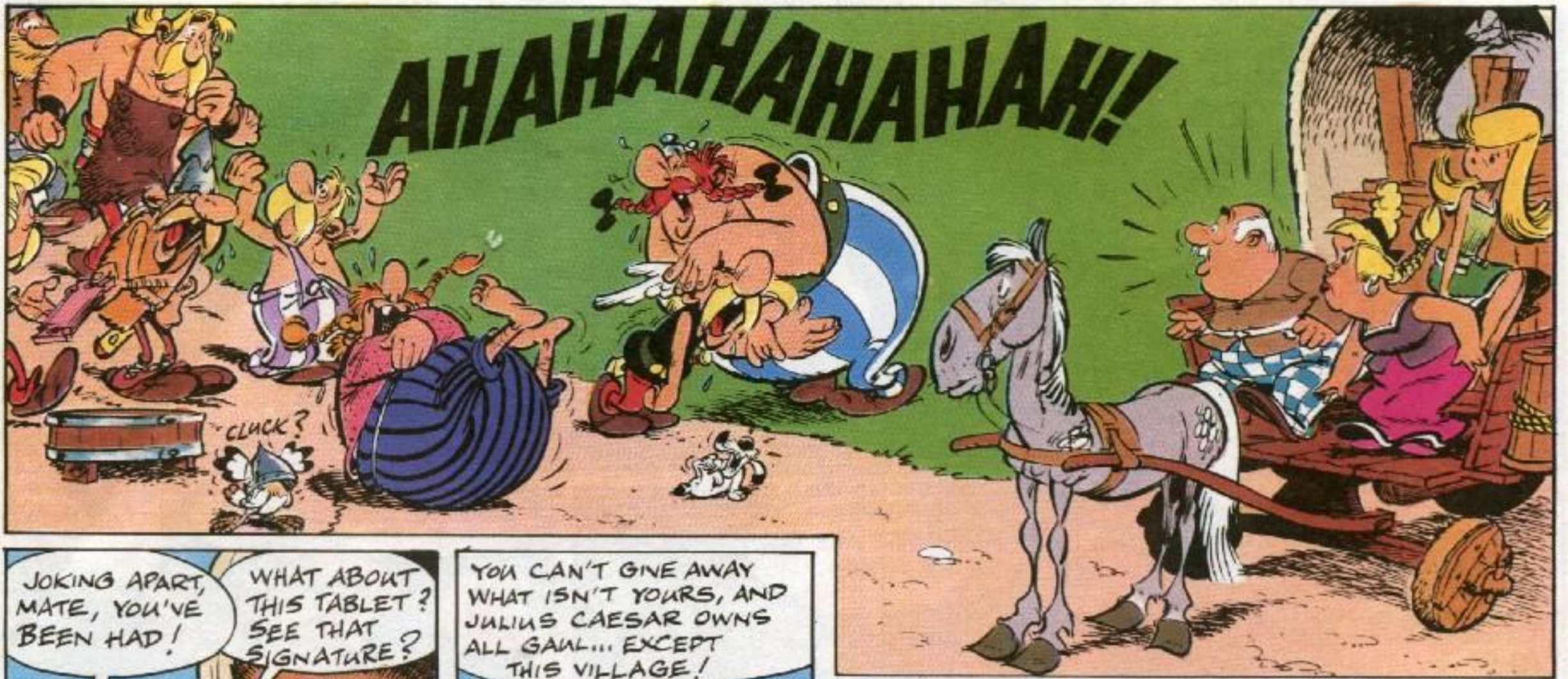


HMPH? HAHA...



HAHAHAHAHAHA!

?





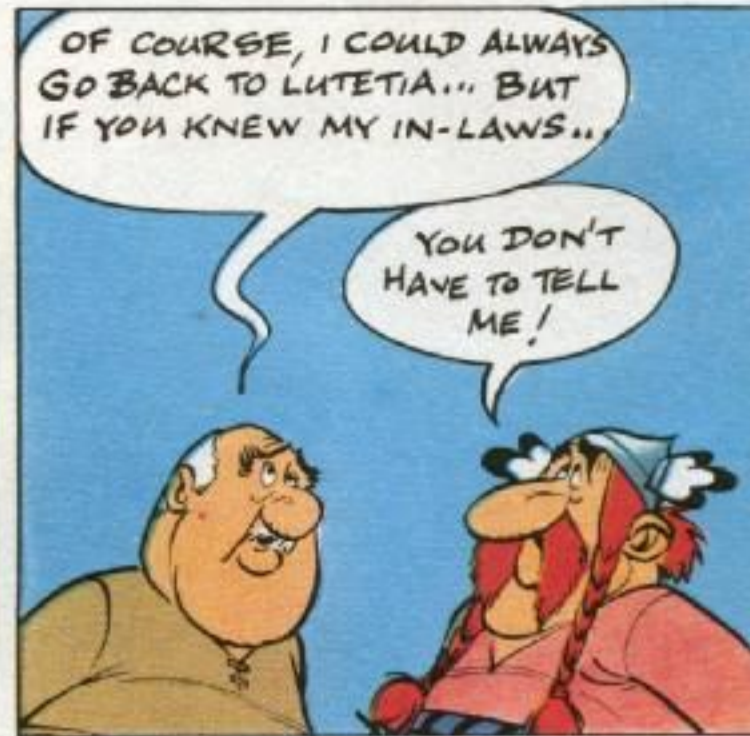
LET'S GO OVER HERE, OUT OF THE WAY...

?



YOU'VE GOT PROBLEMS, RIGHT?

WELL, YES... THE THING IS, I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO GO NOW...



OF COURSE, I COULD ALWAYS GO BACK TO LUTETIA... BUT IF YOU KNEW MY IN-LAWS...

YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME!



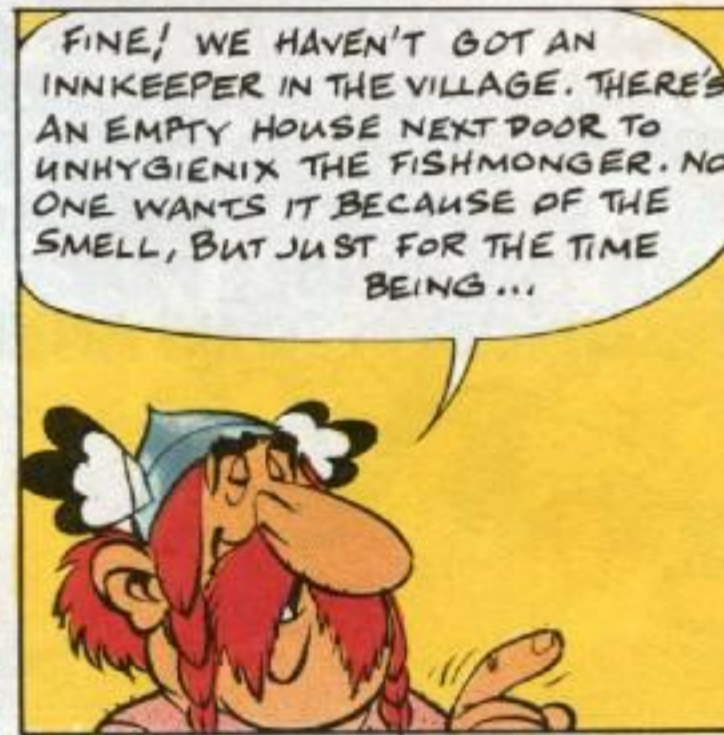
YOU MEAN YOU HAVE THE SAME SORT OF PROBLEMS...?

SSH! NOT SO LOUD!



LISTEN, I WANT TO HELP YOU... WHAT'S YOUR LINE?

WELL, I USED TO KEEP AN INN.



FINE! WE HAVEN'T GOT AN INNKEEPER IN THE VILLAGE. THERE'S AN EMPTY HOUSE NEXT DOOR TO UNHYGIENIX THE FISHMONGER. NO ONE WANTS IT BECAUSE OF THE SMELL, BUT JUST FOR THE TIME BEING...



SOON AFTERWARDS...

YOU CAN GET DOWN. WE'RE STAYING.

OH, GOOD! SO YOU MANAGED TO STAND UP FOR YOUR RIGHTS AFTER ALL!



WELL... SORT OF... I GOT COMPENSATION



HEY, YOU THERE! WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? AREN'T YOU GOING TO HELP ME DOWN?

HMMM...



YOU... YOU'RE LIGHTER THAN A MENHIR...



YOU'VE REALLY GOT A WAY WITH THE GIRLS, HAVEN'T YOU!

OOH, I SAY!

LOOK, YOU CAN PUT ME DOWN NOW.

GRRRR



HERE WE ARE. THE CHIEF HAS GIVEN US THIS HOUSE FOR OUR INN.

UNHYGIENIX F... DNGER

WHAT? YOU MEAN WE'VE LEFT OUR NICE INN AT ARAUSIO JUST TO OPEN ANOTHER IN THIS WRETCHED VILLAGE, WHEN THE WHOLE PLACE BELONGS TO US ANYWAY?

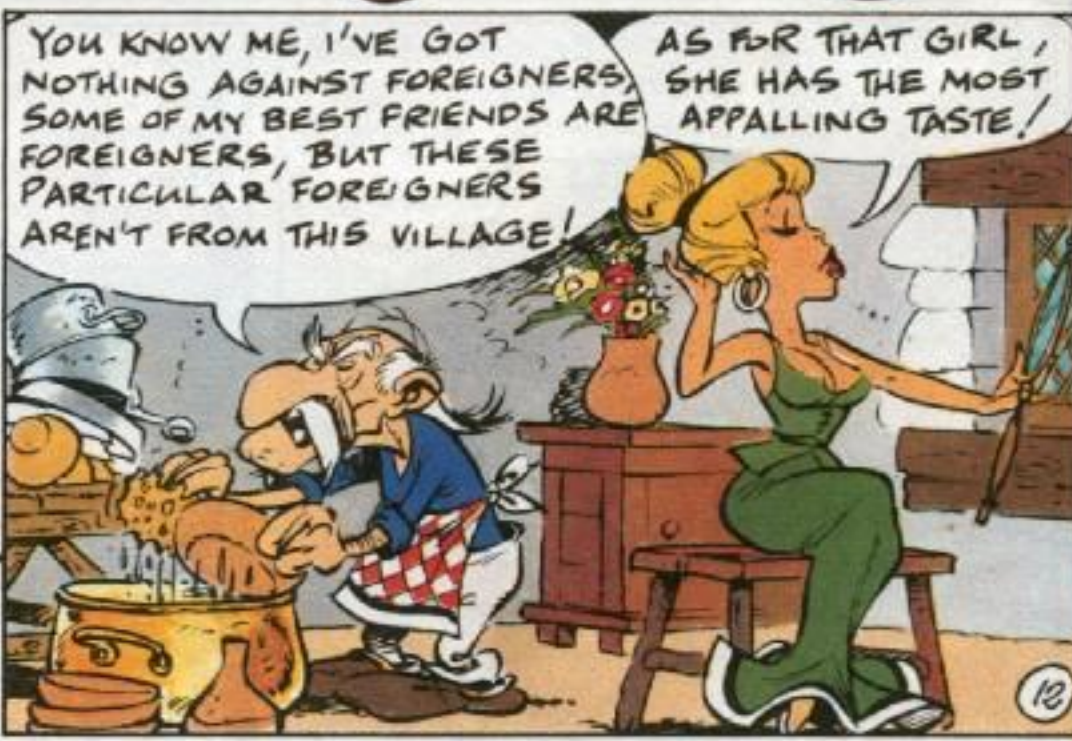
BUT THEY DON'T WANT TO GIVE US THE VILLAGE!

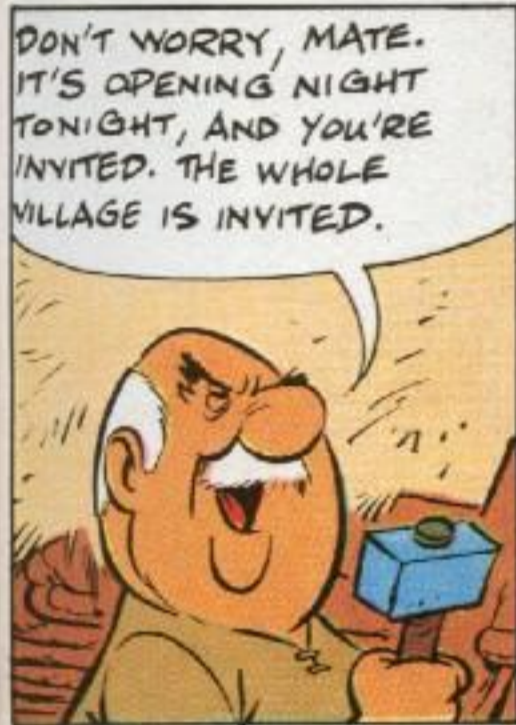
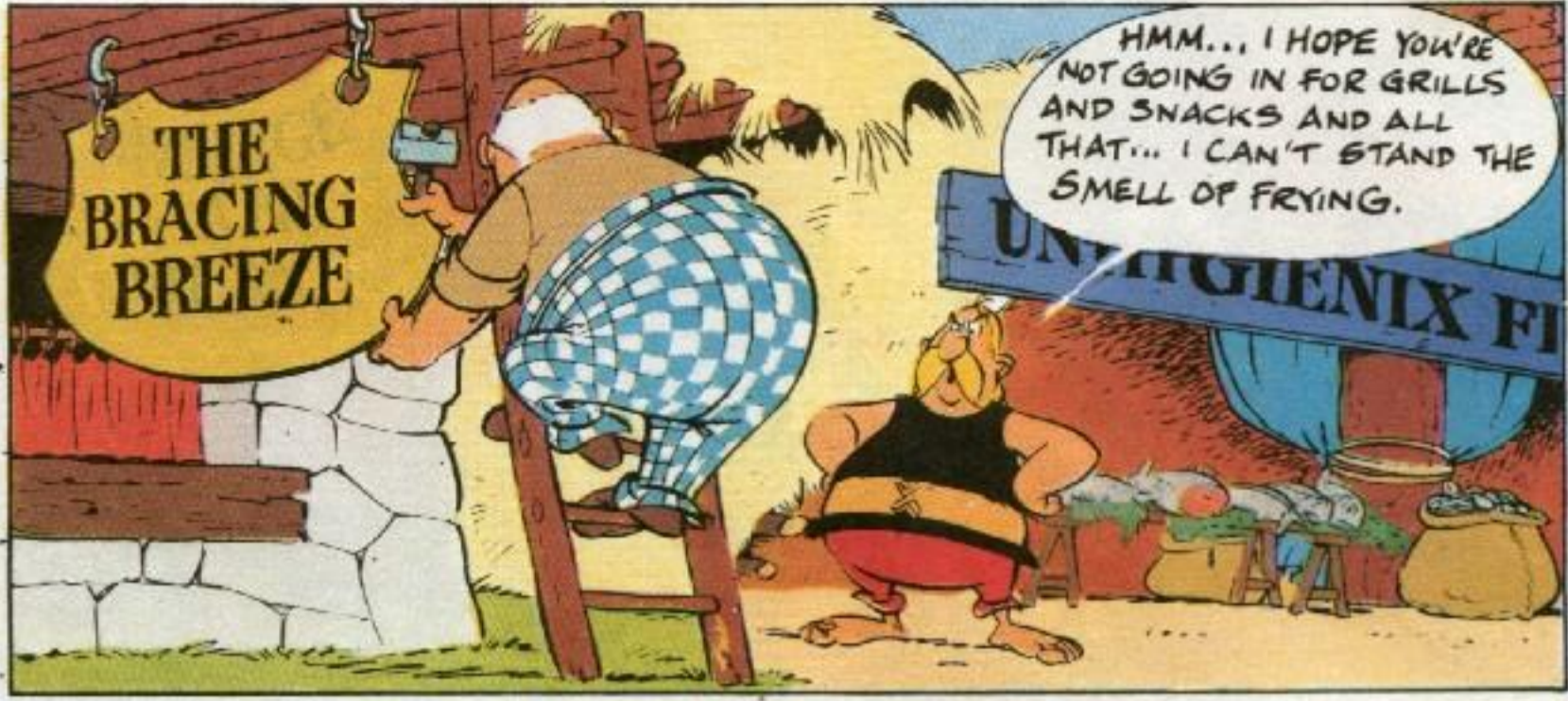
OH, LET'S GO BACK TO UNCLE DITHYRAMBIX IN LUTETIA!

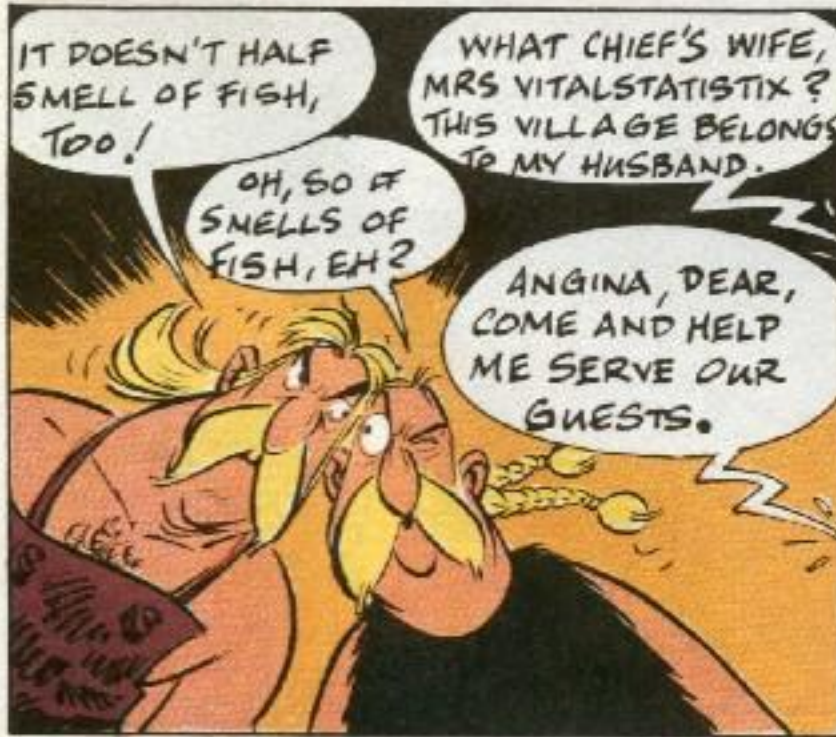
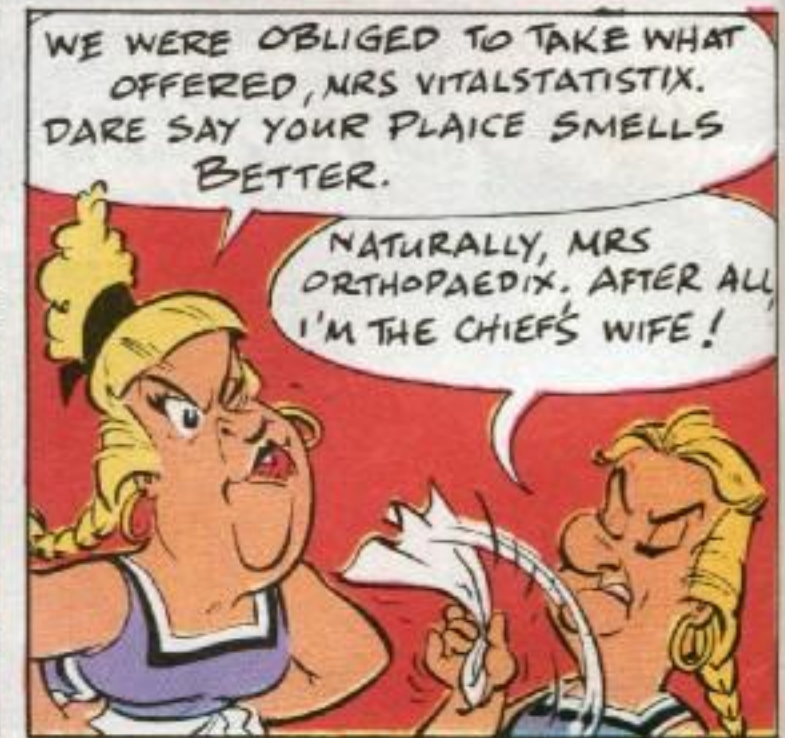
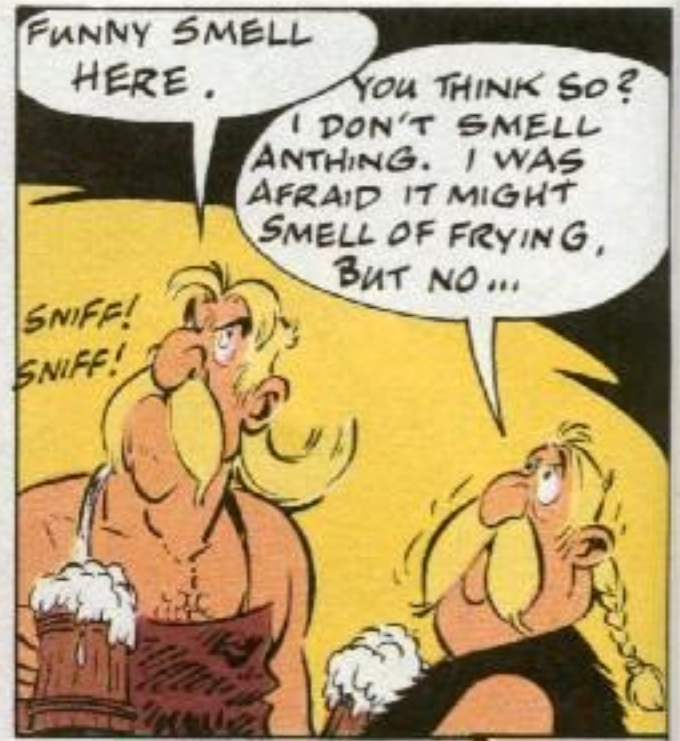
NO, NO! WE SHALL BE VERY COMFORTABLE HERE... AND THE AIR'S SO BRACING!

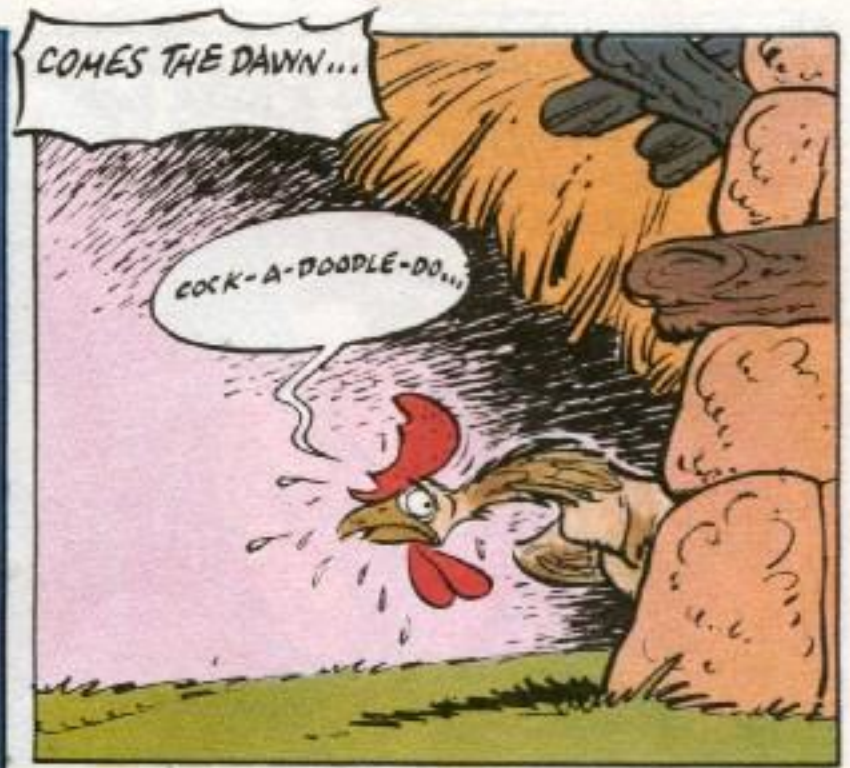
BRACING? IT STINKS OF ROTTEN FISH!

SNIFF! SNIFF!











WE'VE COME TO HELP YOU CLEAR UP THE MESS... OUR FRIENDS MEAN WELL, YOU KNOW. THEY'RE JUST A BIT HIGH-SPIRITED, THAT'S ALL...

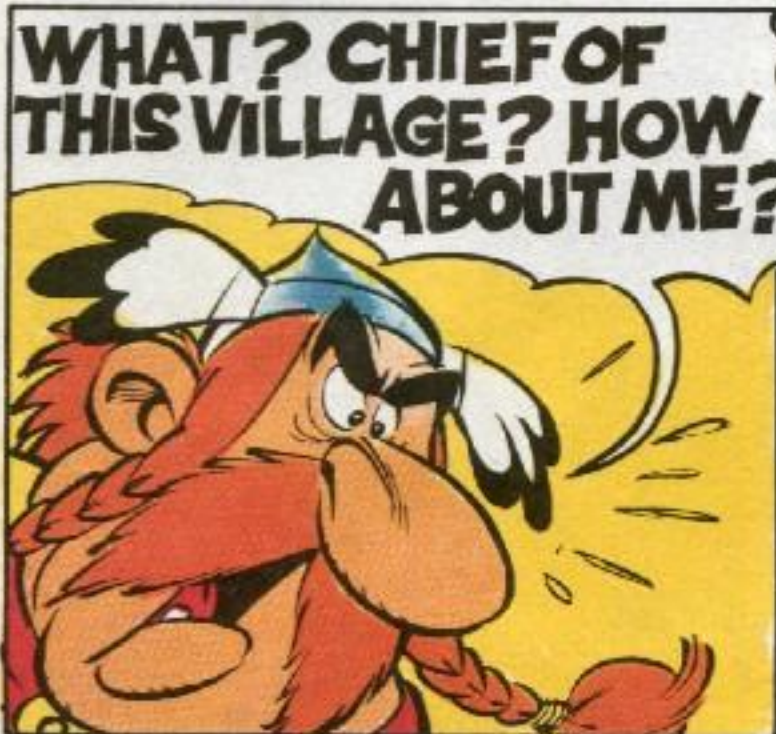
AND I'VE BROUGHT YOU A BOAR FOR BREAKFAST.

I DON'T THINK THIS IS QUITE THE MOMENT...

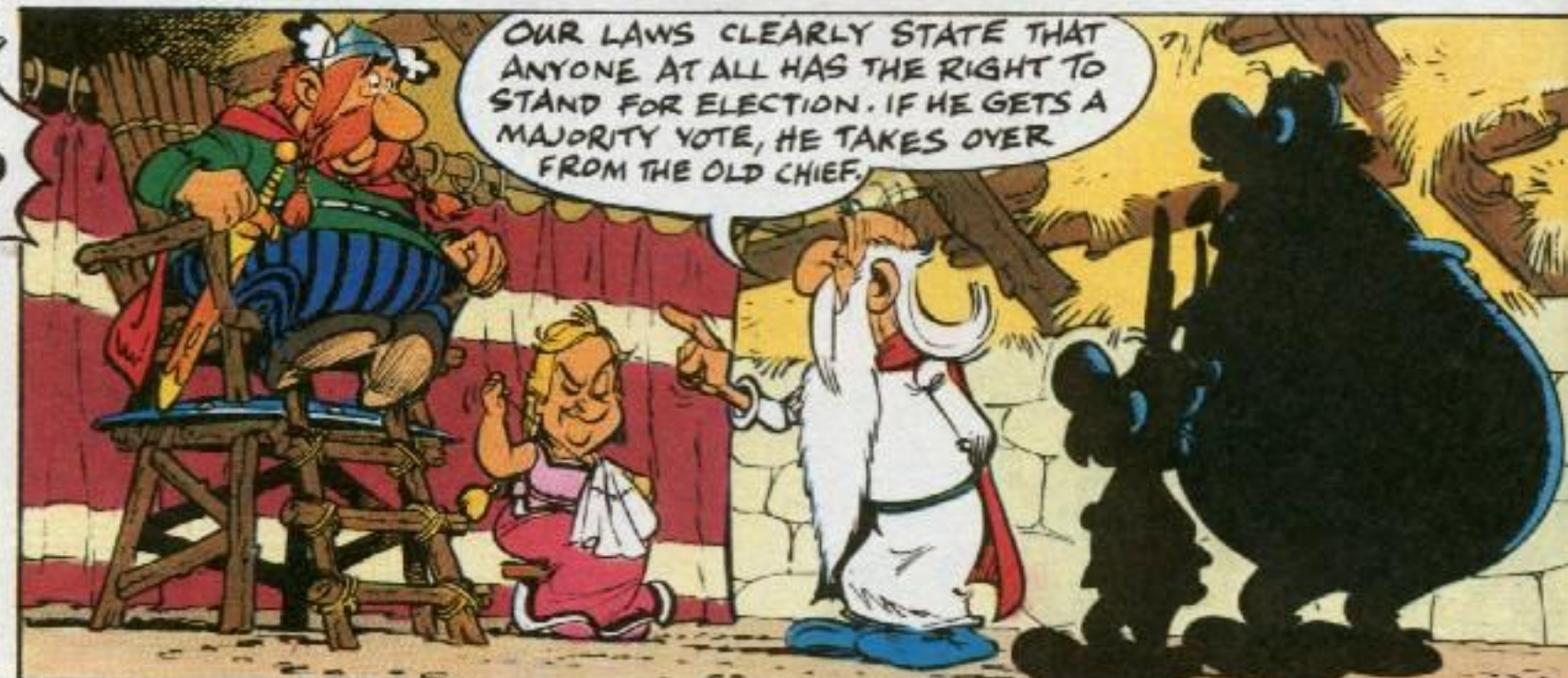
OH YES IT IS! WE SHAN'T FORGET YOUR KIND GESTURE...



ESPECIALLY AS MY HUSBAND ORTHOPAEDIX INTENDS TO BECOME CHIEF OF THIS VILLAGE



WHAT? CHIEF OF THIS VILLAGE? HOW ABOUT ME?

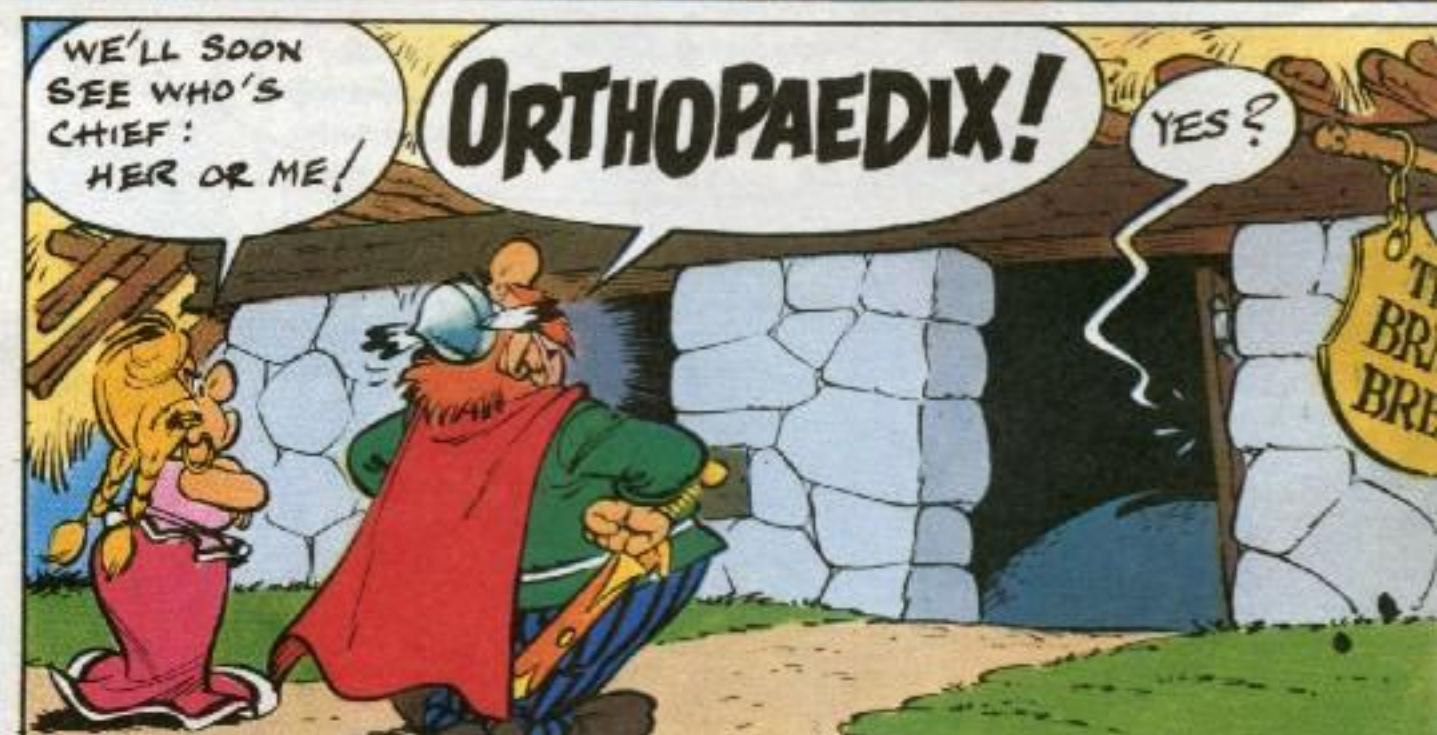


OUR LAWS CLEARLY STATE THAT ANYONE AT ALL HAS THE RIGHT TO STAND FOR ELECTION. IF HE GETS A MAJORITY VOTE, HE TAKES OVER FROM THE OLD CHIEF.



I'M GOING TO FLING HIM OUT OF THE VILLAGE, I AM!

OH, LET HIM MAKE A FOOL OF HIMSELF. WHEN HE FINDS NO ONE WANTS HIM FOR CHIEF HE'LL LEAVE, ALONG WITH THAT FAT WIFE OF HIS!



WE'LL SOON SEE WHO'S CHIEF: HER OR ME!

ORTHOPAEDIX!

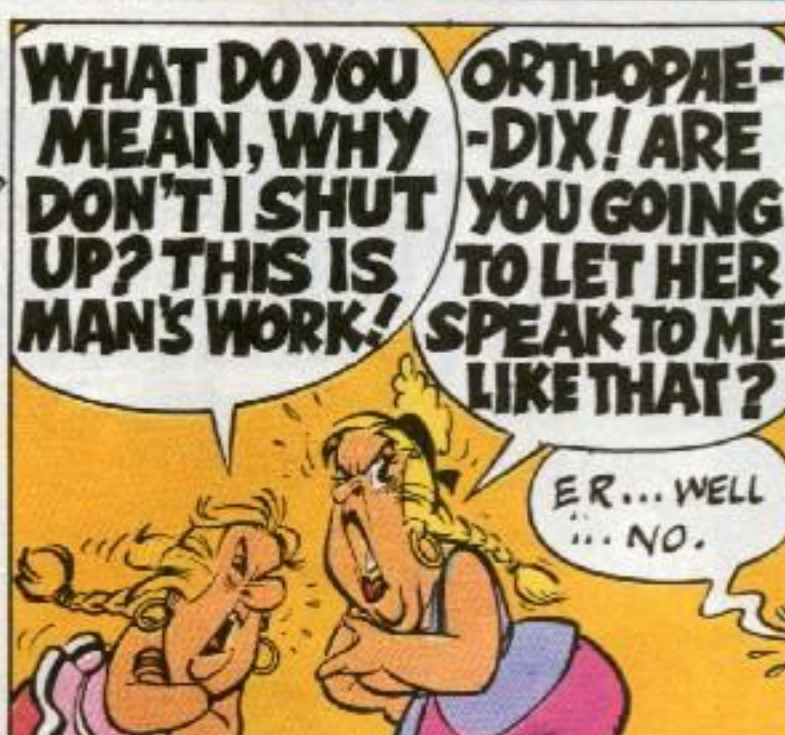
YES?



SO YOU'RE THINKING OF TAKING OVER FROM ME AS CHIEF?

ER...

THAT'S RIGHT!



WHAT DO YOU MEAN, WHY DON'T I SHUT UP? THIS IS MAN'S WORK!

ORTHOPAEDIX! ARE YOU GOING TO LET HER SPEAK TO ME LIKE THAT?

ER... WELL... NO.



THE FESTIVAL OF THE GOD LUG IS IN FIFTEEN DAYS' TIME! IF YOUR FOOL OF A HUSBAND GETS MORE VOTES THAN MINE THEN, AND ONLY THEN, HE BECOMES CHIEF OF OUR VILLAGE!

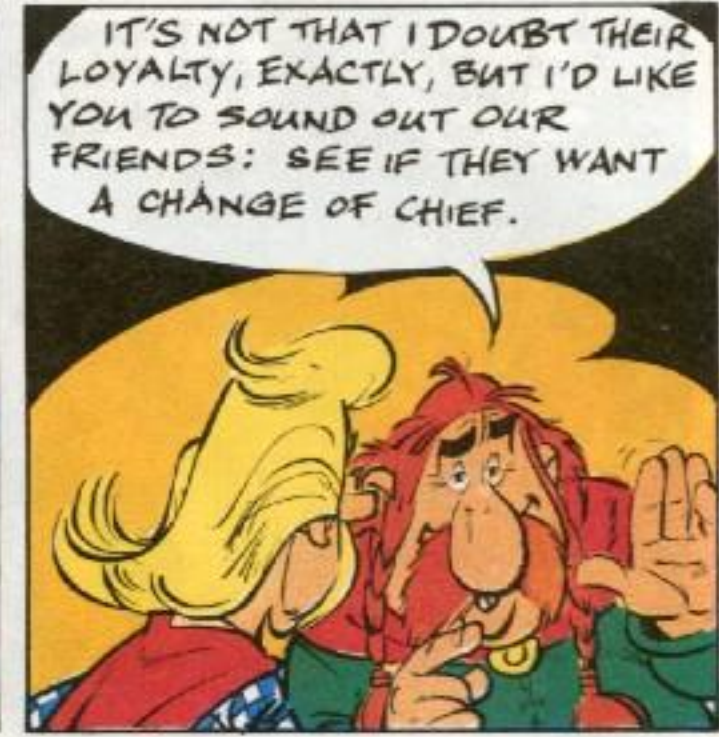
RIGHT!

WHAT?



YOU WANTED ME, VITALSTATISTIX?

THAT'S RIGHT, CACOPHONIX... I'VE GOT A LITTLE JOB FOR YOU...



IT'S NOT THAT I DOUBT THEIR LOYALTY, EXACTLY, BUT I'D LIKE YOU TO SOUND OUT OUR FRIENDS: SEE IF THEY WANT A CHANGE OF CHIEF.



LATER...

WELL, WHAT NEWS?



GERIATRIX IS BACKING YOU. HE SAYS HE'S GOT NOTHING AGAINST FOREIGNERS BUT THEY DON'T BELONG HERE. THE OTHERS DON'T MIND ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, SO LONG AS THEY STILL GET PLENTY OF BOARS AND ROMANS...



FULLIAUTOMATIX THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO SOUND HIM OUT IN SONG SO HE KNOCKED ME OUT FIRST.



YOU HAVEN'T VOICED YOUR OWN OPINION YET...?

HUH! YOU DON'T LIKE MY VOICE ANY MORE THAN THE REST OF THEM!



WHAT, ME? I SIMPLY LOVE YOUR VOICE!

YOU DO? LISTEN TO THIS NEW PROTEST SONG I'VE JUST COMPOSED, THEN...



WE SHALL OVERCOME... WE SHALL OVER-COME...

*FREEDOM FIGHTERS THE WORLD OVER OWE THIS SONG TO CACOPHONIX. THE ORIGINAL TUNE HAS, OF COURSE, BEEN EXTENSIVELY REVISED...



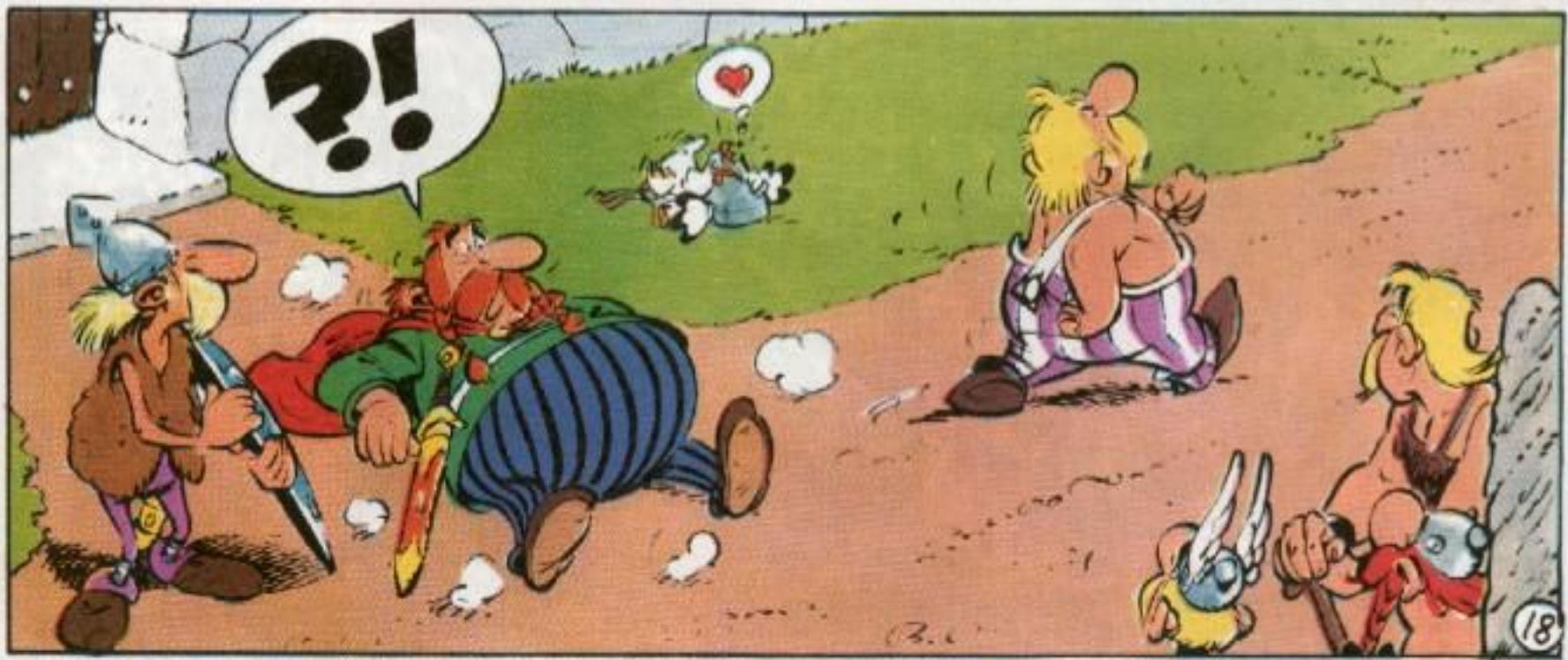
STOP! I'M OVERCOME ALREADY! THIS IS A PROTEST... MARCH!

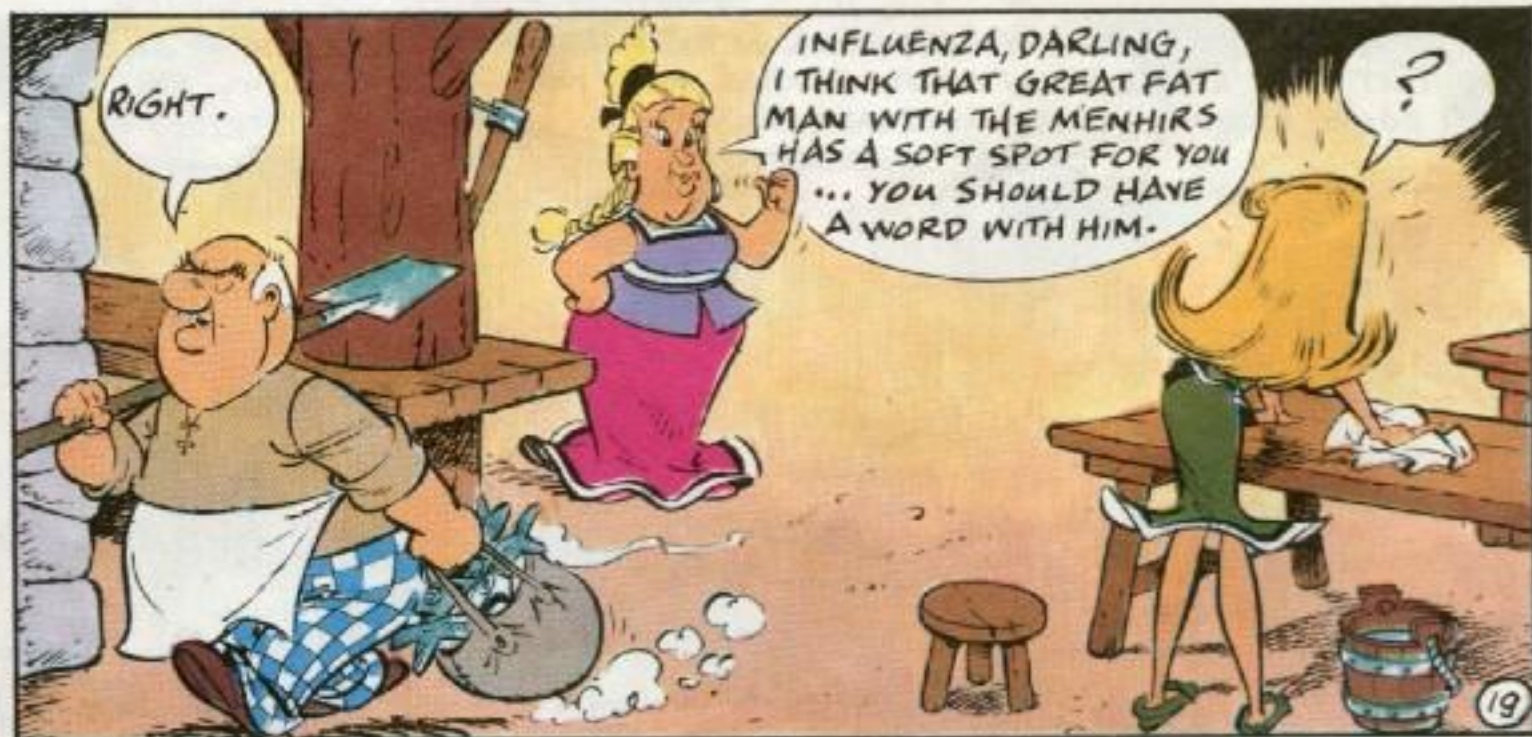
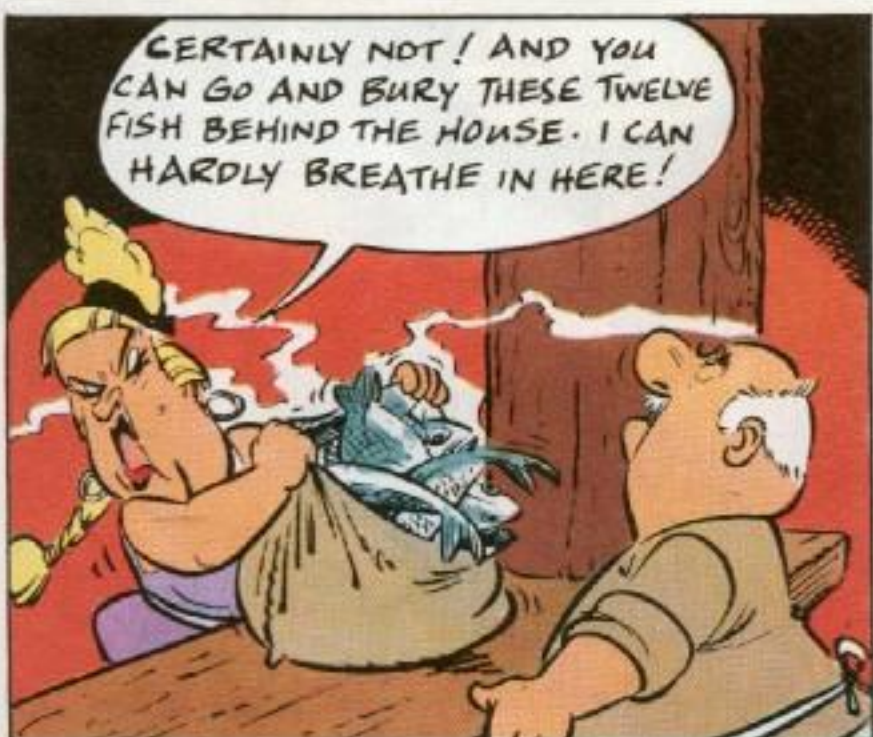
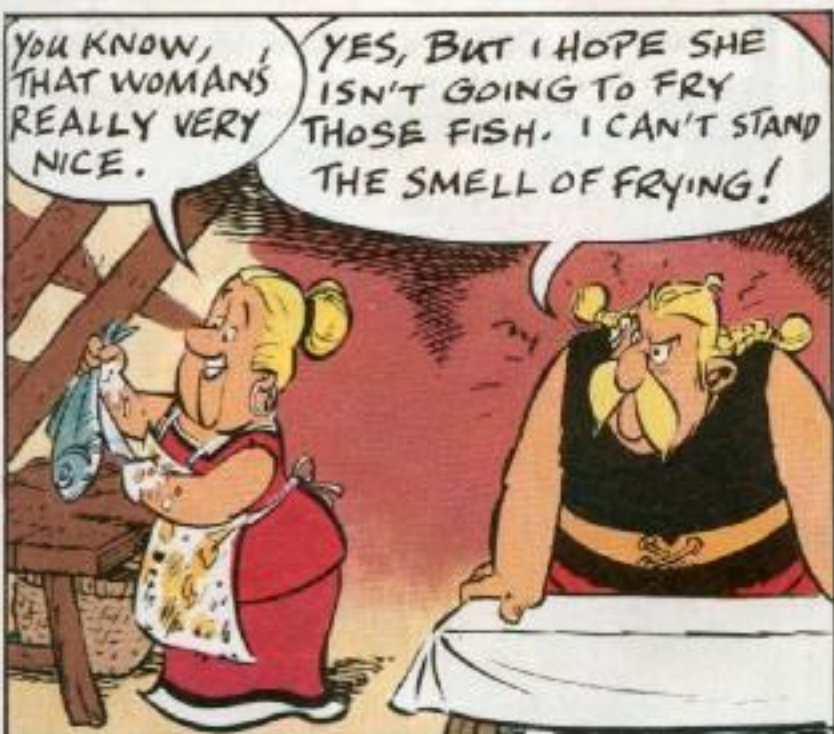
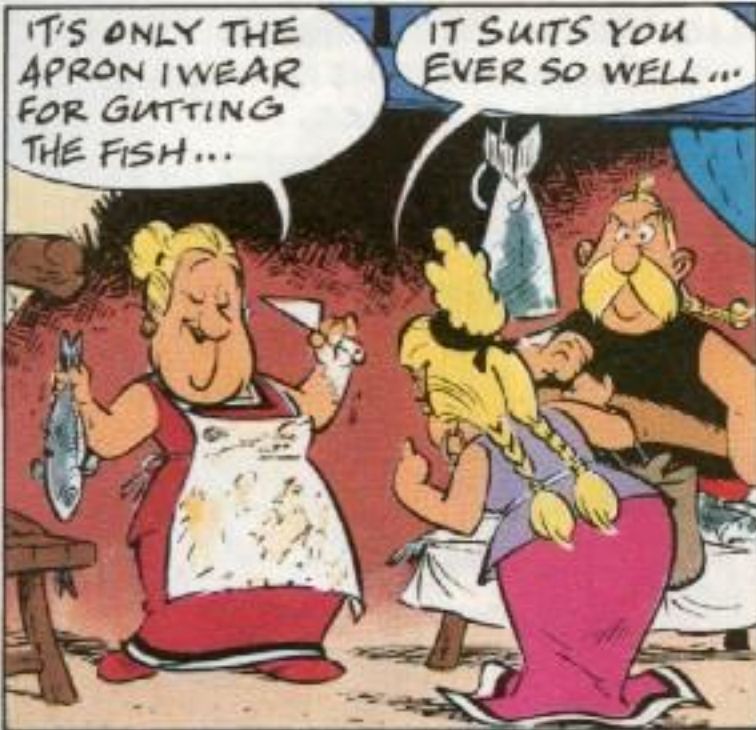
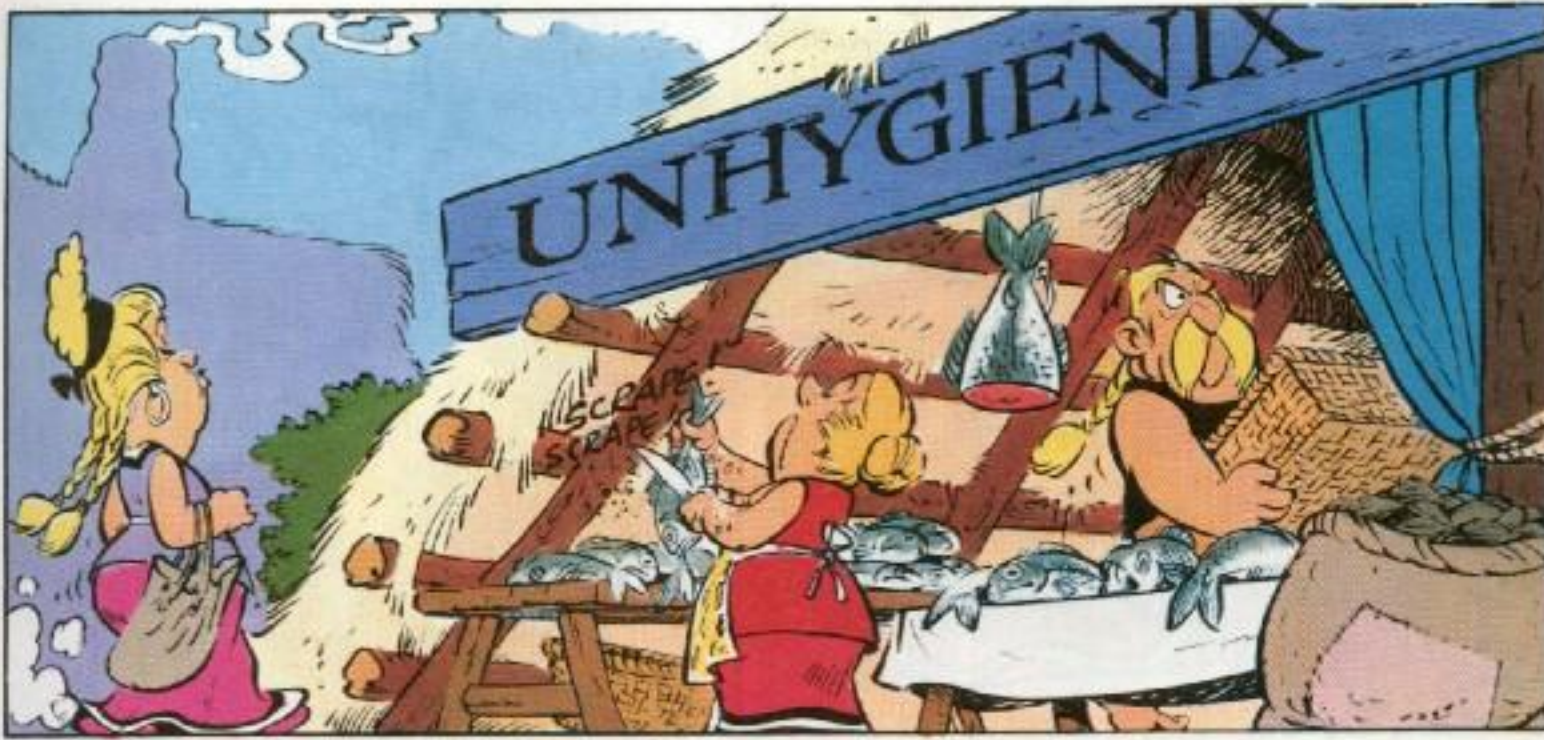
ALL RIGHT, ORTHOPAEDIX CAN HAVE THE BENEFIT OF MY SONG! MAYBE HE'LL APPRECIATE IT!!!



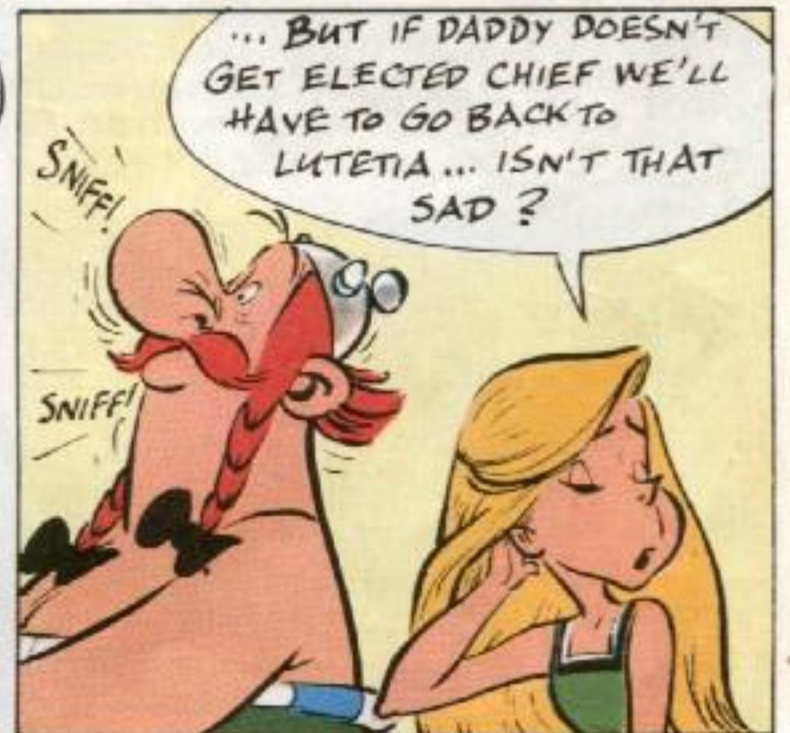
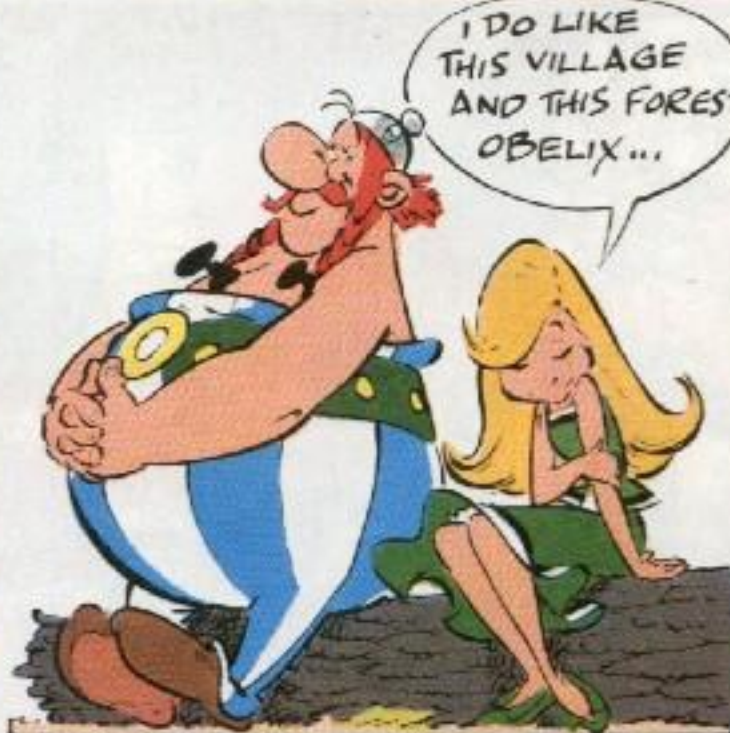
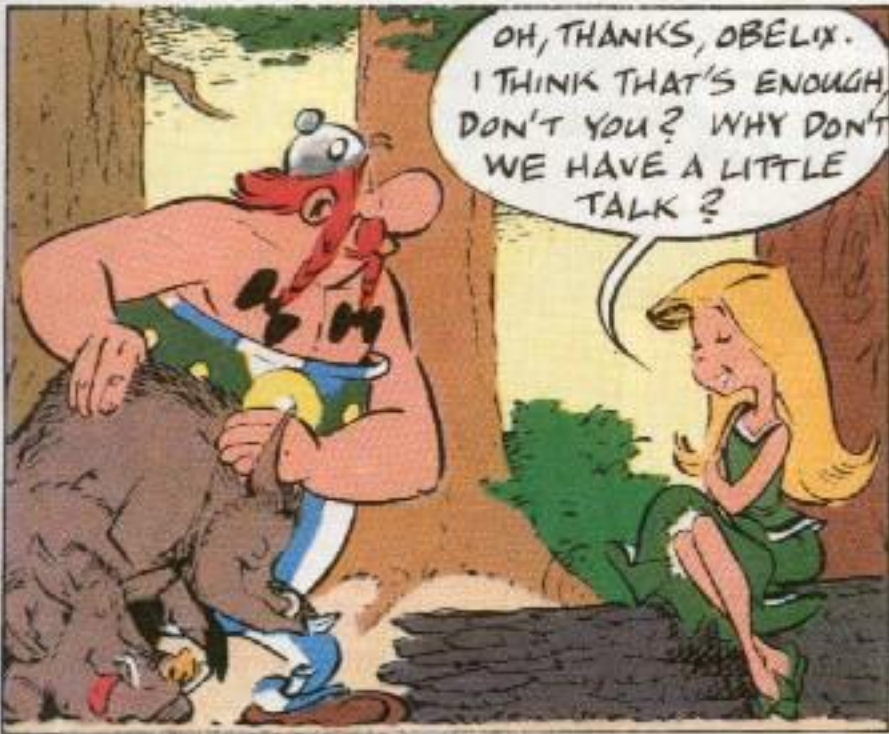
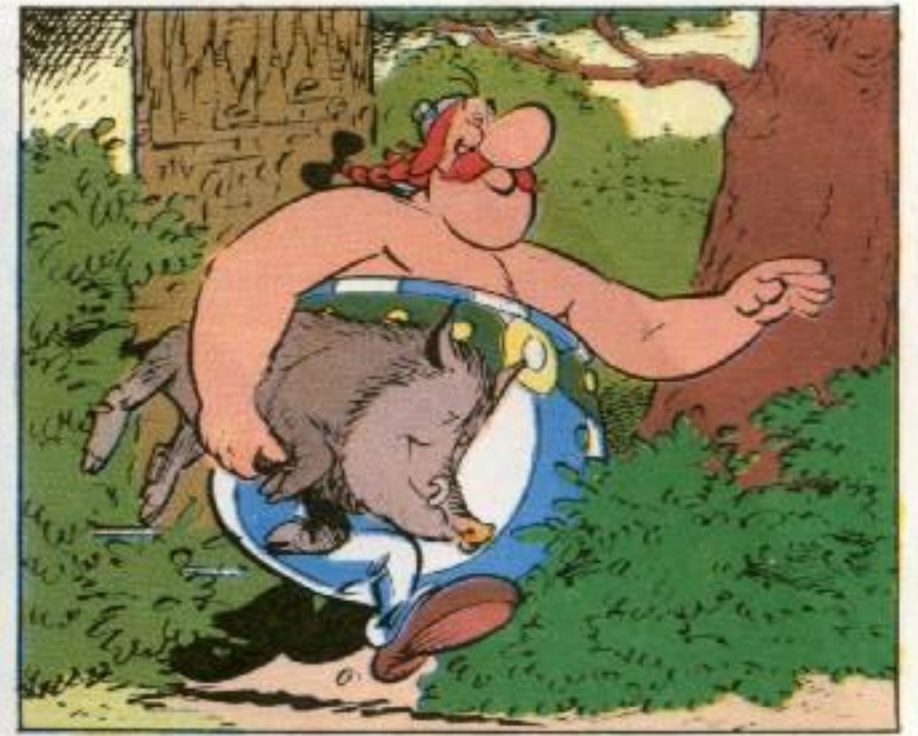
PEDIMENTA, I FEEL WE MAY HAVE MADE A MISTAKE... THAT'S ONE PROTEST VOTE ALREADY!

WHY NOT ADDRESS YOUR PEOPLE? ROUSE THEM UP A BIT?





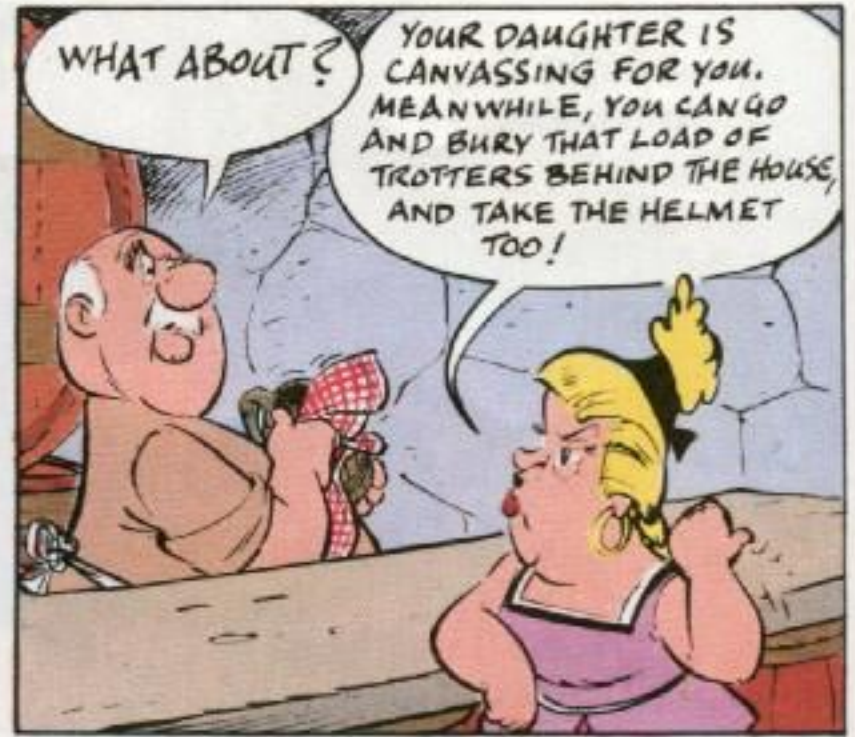






WELL, HOW DID IT GO?

OH, HE'S NOT INTERESTED IN ANYTHING EXCEPT BOARS AND ROMANS. BUT I DID TALK TO HIM.



WHAT ABOUT?

YOUR DAUGHTER IS CANVASSING FOR YOU. MEANWHILE, YOU CAN GO AND BURY THAT LOAD OF TROTTERS BEHIND THE HOUSE, AND TAKE THE HELMET TOO!



IF ANYONE EVER DECIDES TO GO DIGGING UP THE PAST BEHIND THIS HOUSE, HE'LL HAVE A FEW ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS ON HIS HANDS!



MEANWHILE ...

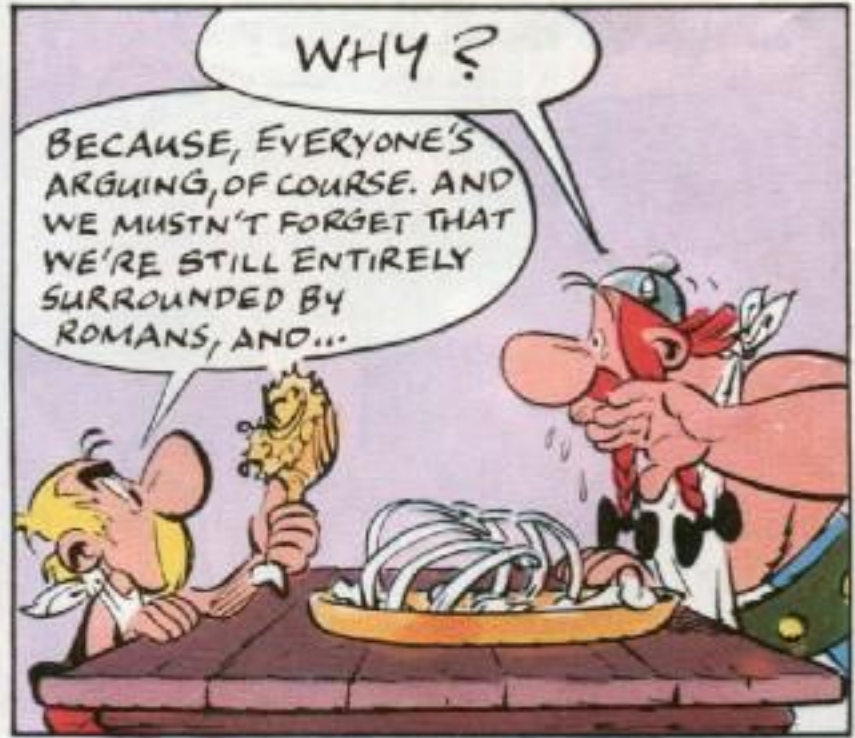
HEY, ASTERIX, CAN WE COME TO DINNER? I DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO GET ANY BOARS FOR US.

YES, OF COURSE, OBELIX.



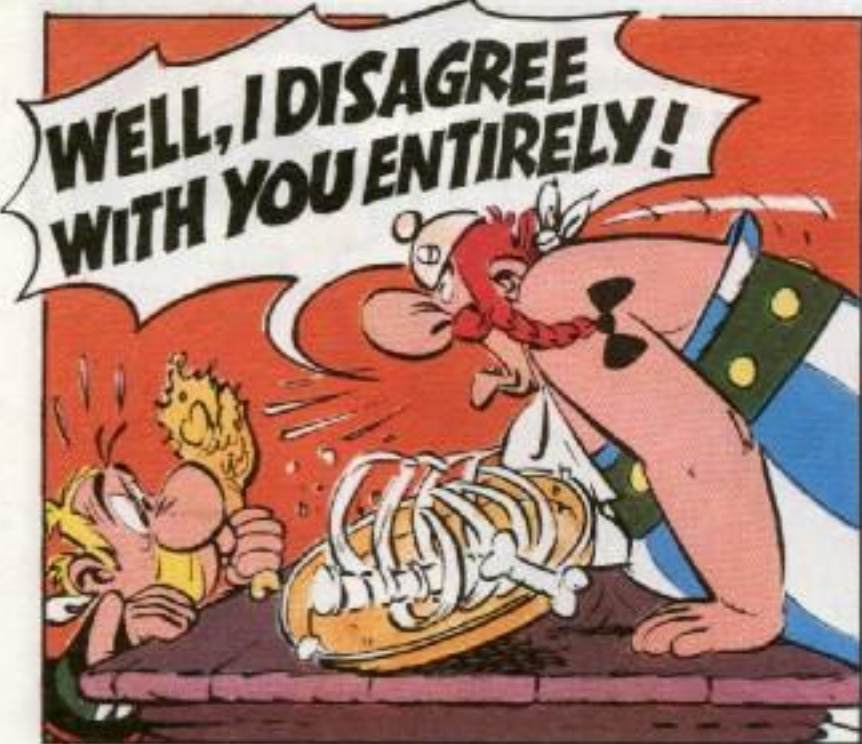
I'M WORRIED, OBELIX ... THERE'S A LOT OF BAD FEELING IN THE VILLAGE. I DO WONDER IF IT MIGHT NOT BE BETTER FOR THE ORTHOPAEDIX FAMILY TO GO ...

SCRUNCH! GROUPE!

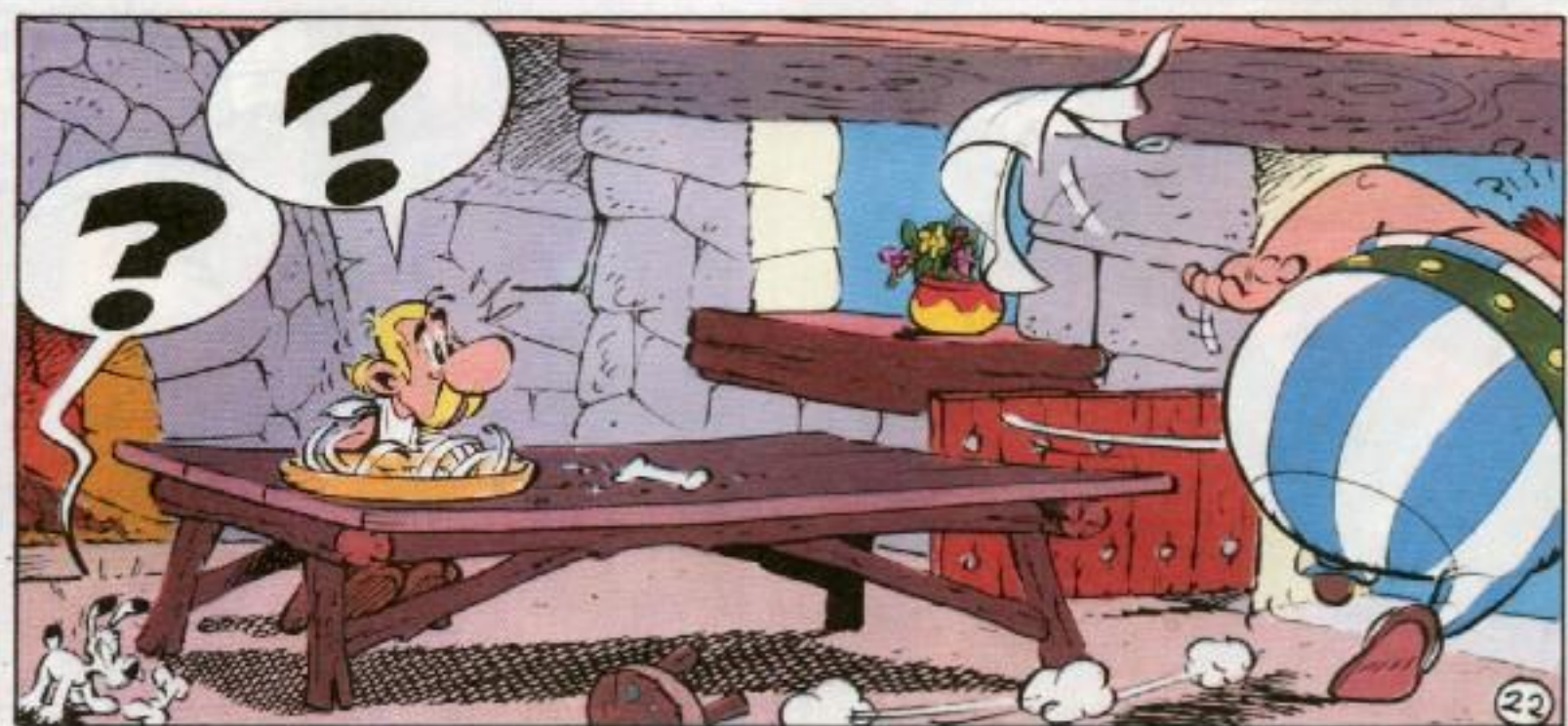


WHY?

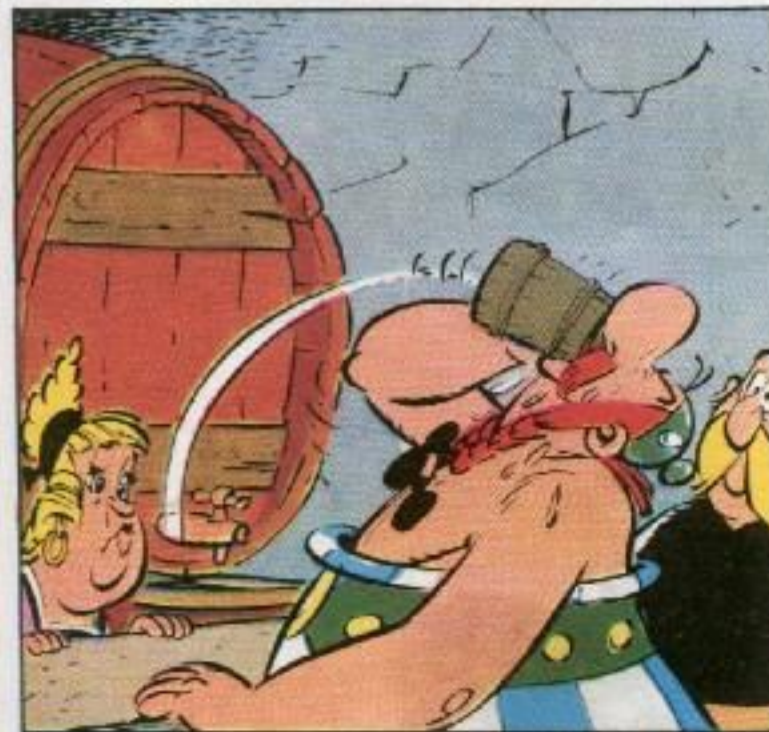
BECAUSE, EVERYONE'S ARGUING, OF COURSE. AND WE MUSTN'T FORGET THAT WE'RE STILL ENTIRELY SURROUNDED BY ROMANS, AND ...



WELL, I DISAGREE WITH YOU ENTIRELY!



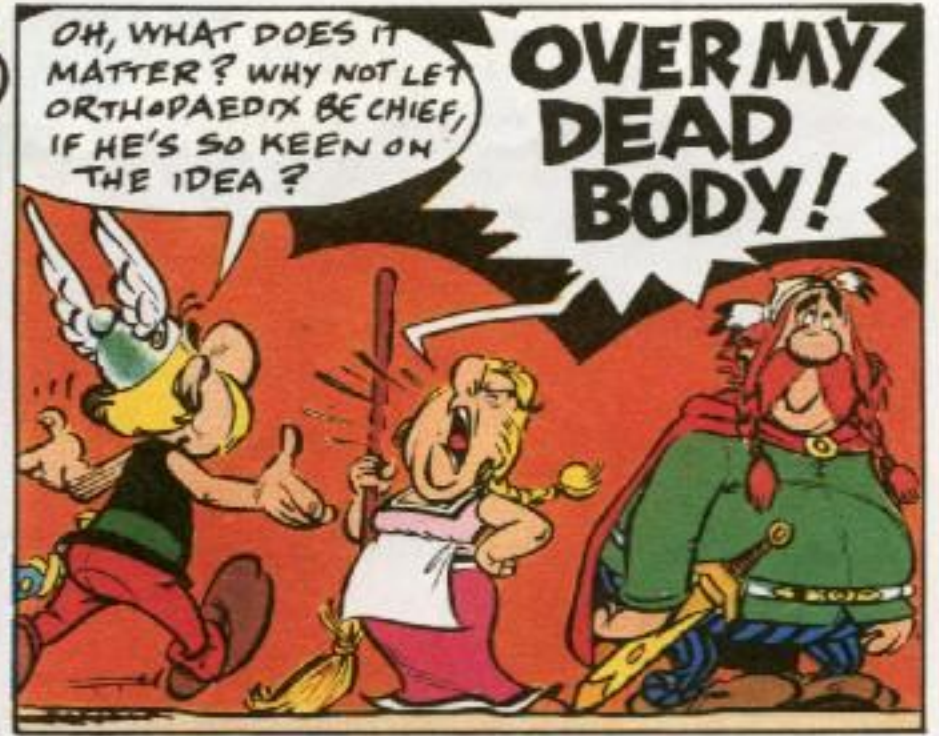
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... AND I SAW CACOFONIX GO INTO THAT FOREIGN INN, NOT TO MENTION UNHYGIENIX AND OBELIX ...

OBELIX?!



OH, WHAT DOES IT MATTER? WHY NOT LET ORTHOPAEDIX BE CHIEF, IF HE'S SO KEEN ON THE IDEA?

OVER MY DEAD BODY!

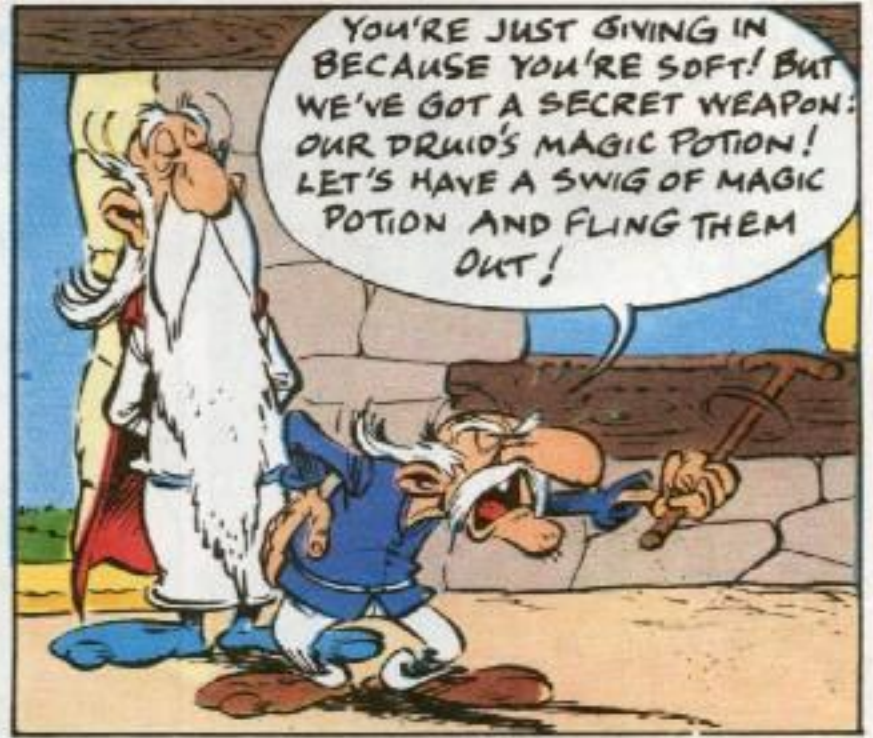


GIVE IN TO THAT... THAT USURPER? NEVER!

IT'S JUST THAT THINGS AREN'T GOING TOO WELL, PEDIMENTA DEAR... LOOK EVEN OBELIX ...



AND YOU KNOW, ASTERIX MAY BE RIGHT: ALL WE REALLY WANT IS A QUIET LIFE BASHING UP ROMANS AND HUNTING BOAR IN THE FOREST WITH OUR FRIENDS ...



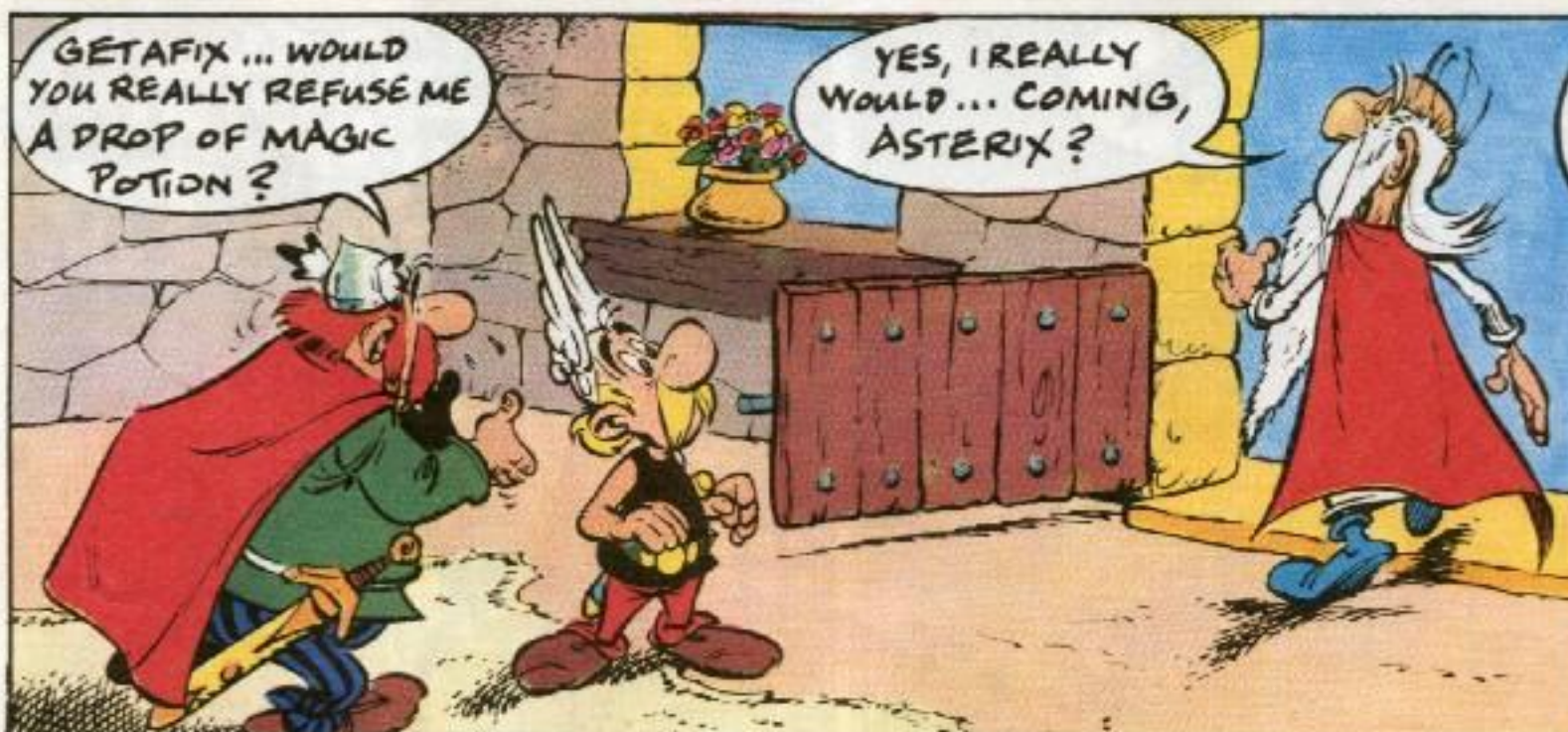
YOU'RE JUST GIVING IN BECAUSE YOU'RE SOFT! BUT WE'VE GOT A SECRET WEAPON: OUR DRUID'S MAGIC POTION! LET'S HAVE A SWIG OF MAGIC POTION AND FLING THEM OUT!



NOTHING DOING! THE MAGIC POTION MAY BE USED ONLY IN SELF-DEFENCE, NOT DOMESTIC DISPUTES!



YOU'RE ALL SOFTIES! WELL, I KNOW WHAT TO DO ABOUT THAT!

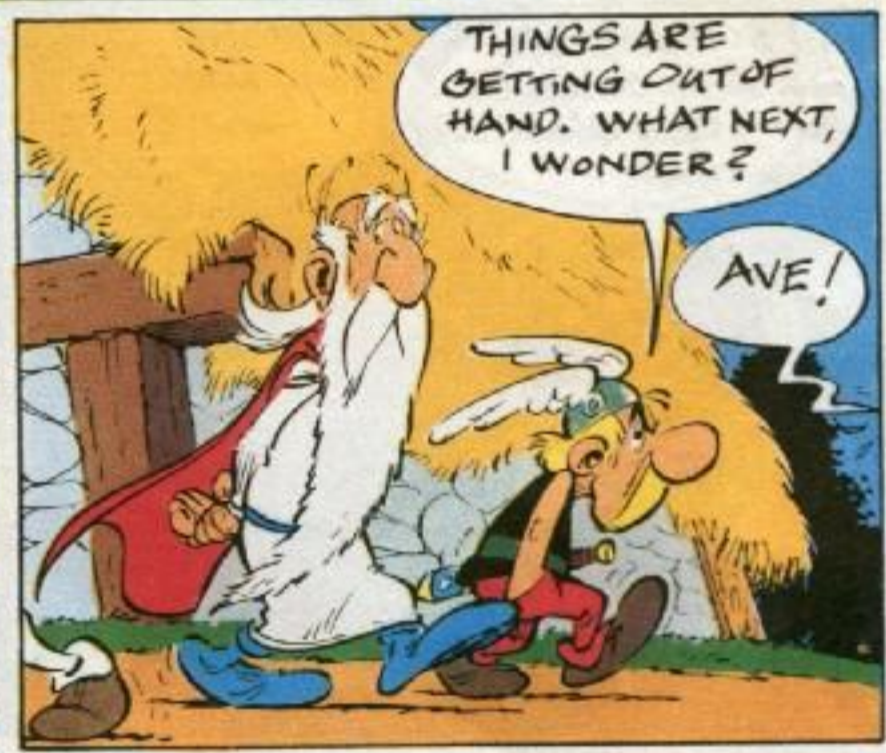


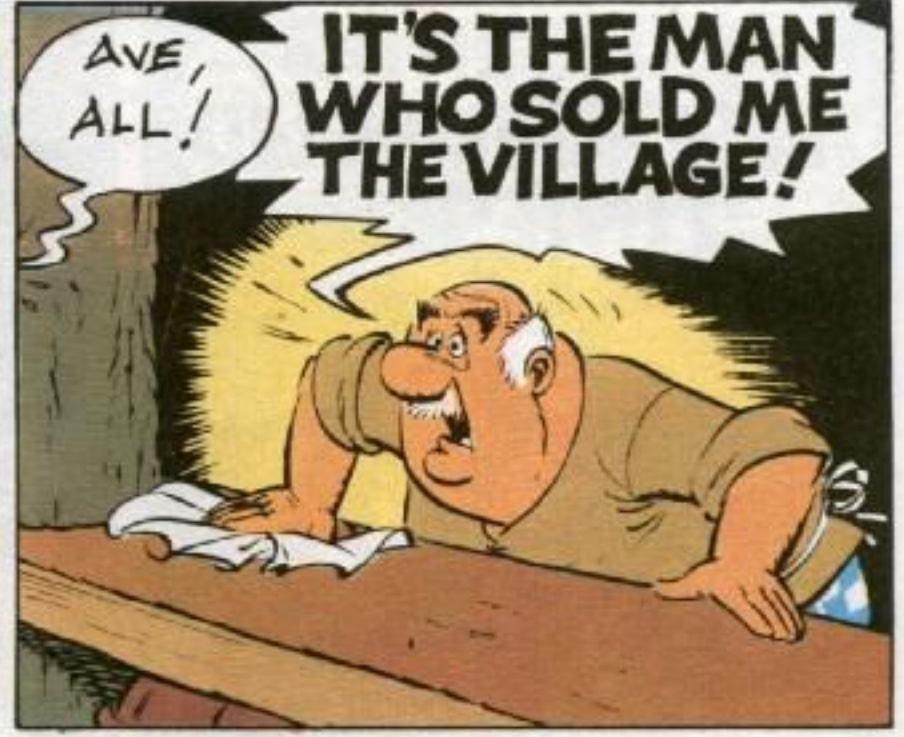
GETAFIX ... WOULD YOU REALLY REFUSE ME A DROP OF MAGIC POTION?

YES, I REALLY WOULD ... COMING, ASTERIX?



ET TU, ASTERIX? THEN FALL, VITALSTATISTIX!





AVE, ALL!

IT'S THE MAN WHO SOLD ME THE VILLAGE!



'SRIGHT. TREMENSDELIRIUS, AT YOUR SERVICE!

WH... WHAT DO YOU WANT?



A DRINK, FOR A START!

WE ONLY HAVE GOAT'S MILK.

BANG!



AH, SO THAT'S WHY YOU LOOK SO GLUM... BUT I CAN CHANGE ALL THAT.

OH? AND HOW, MAY I ASK?

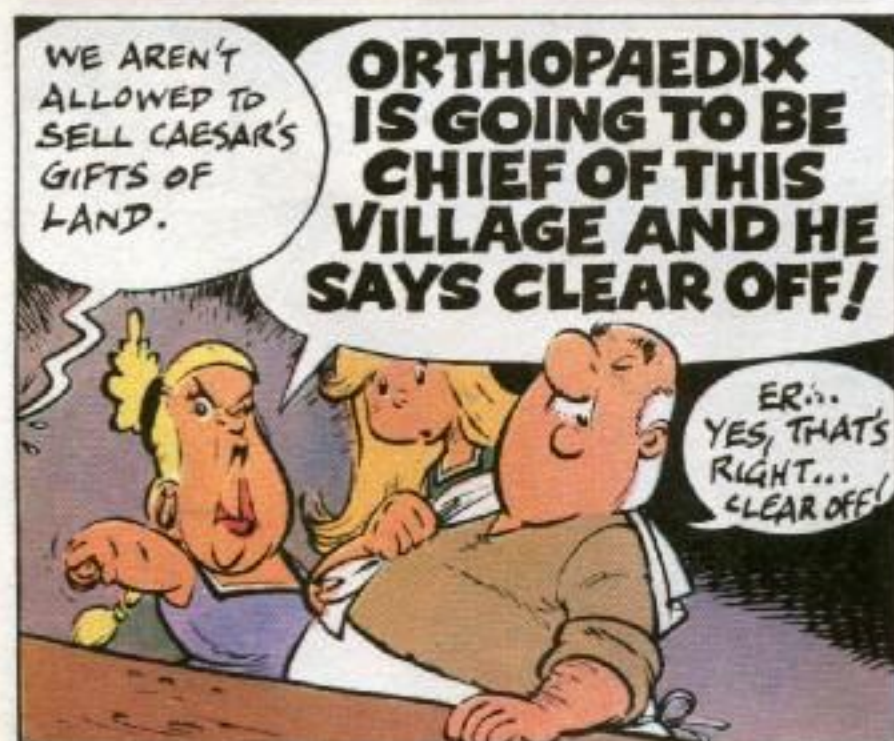


WELL, I HAVEN'T HAD MUCH LUCK SINCE WE LAST MET... I'VE TRIED ALL SORTS OF JOBS... I EVEN SKINED ON AS A PIRATE, ONLY UNFORTUNATELY THE PIRATE SHIP GOT SUNK...



NOW I WANT MY VILLAGE BACK, CAESAR GAVE IT TO ME!

BUT YOU SOLD IT TO ME!



WE AREN'T ALLOWED TO SELL CAESAR'S GIFTS OF LAND.

ORTHOPAEDIX IS GOING TO BE CHIEF OF THIS VILLAGE AND HE SAYS CLEAR OFF!

ER... YES, THAT'S RIGHT... CLEAR OFF!



LOOK HERE, YOU... SEE THIS LITTLE MEMENTO OF MY ARMY SERVICE?

EEEEEEK!

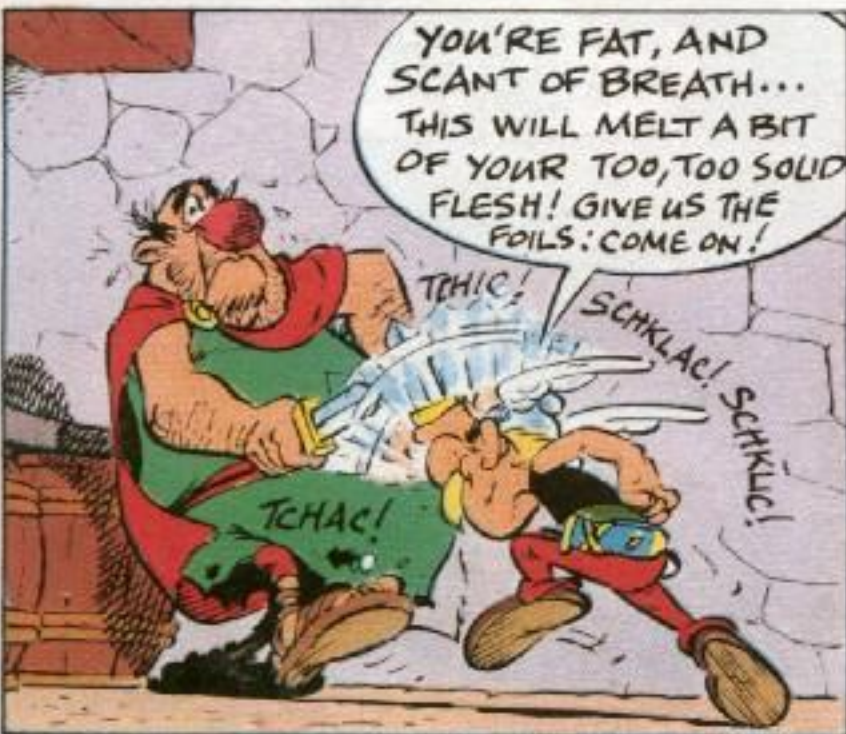


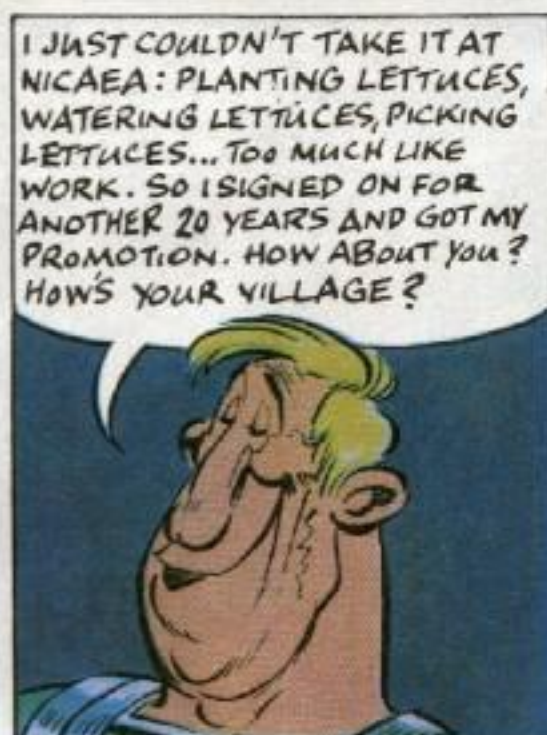
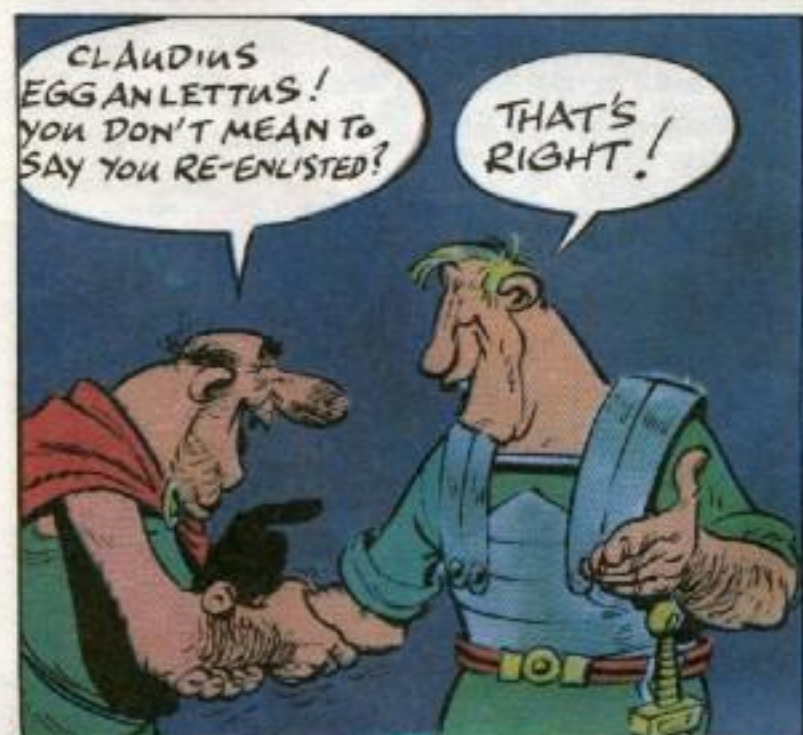
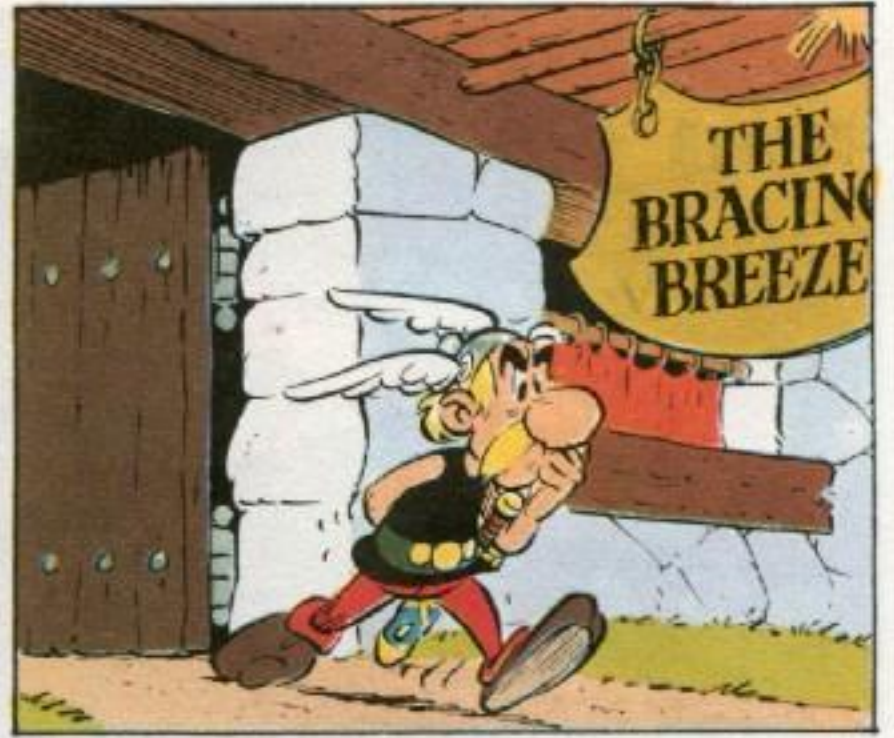


* FLAMEN: HIGH-RANKING ROMAN PRIEST



SCHKLAC! SCHKLIC!







AVE, CENTURION TONSILLITUS! THERE'S AN OLD SOLDIER HERE TO SEE YOU!

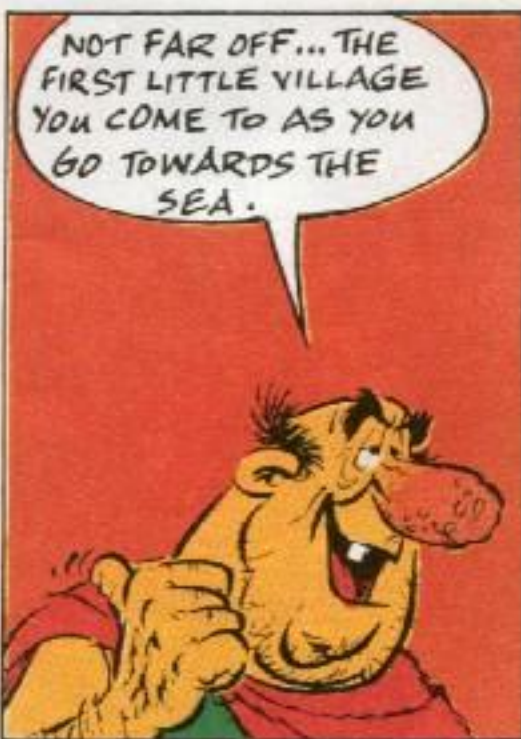
SEND HIM IN!

BONG!



IT'S ABOUT THIS GAUL WHO STOLE THE PLOT OF LAND JULIUS CAESAR GAVE ME WHEN I WAS DEMOBLED.

DISGRACEFUL! WE'LL SOON PUT THAT RIGHT! WHEREABOUTS IS YOUR LAND?



NOT FAR OFF... THE FIRST LITTLE VILLAGE YOU COME TO AS YOU GO TOWARDS THE SEA.

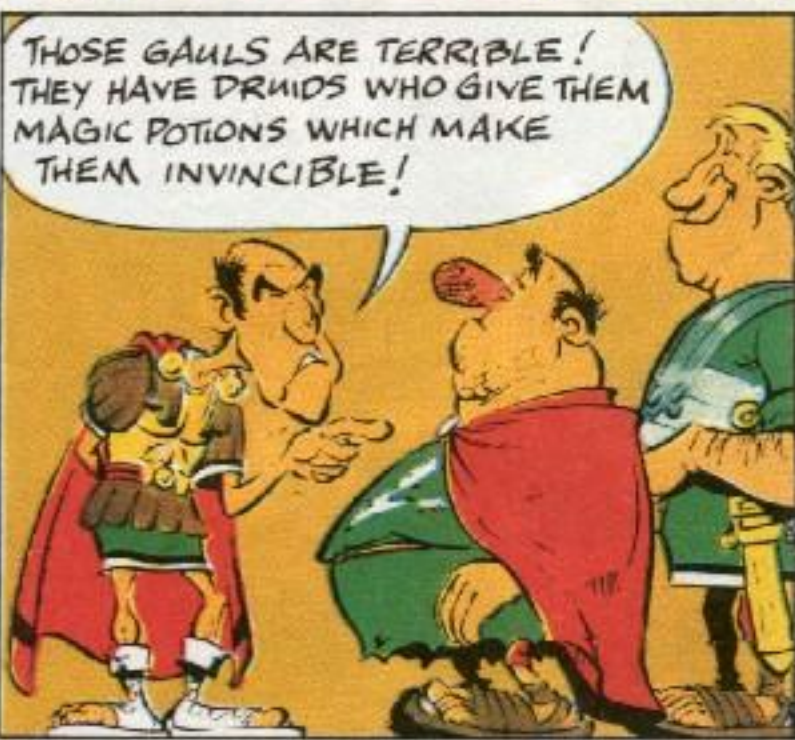


WHAT? THE VILLAGE FULL OF MADMEN? CAESAR GAVE YOU THAT VILLAGE FULL OF MADMEN?!



THAT'S RIGHT; I WAS THERE.

WHEN I WANT YOUR OPINION, OPTIO, I'LL ASK FOR IT!



THOSE GAULS ARE TERRIBLE! THEY HAVE DRUIDS WHO GIVE THEM MAGIC POTIONS WHICH MAKE THEM INVINCIBLE!



YOU'D BETTER FORGET THE WHOLE THING... WHY NOT RE-ENLIST LIKE THIS OTHER IDIO... LIKE YOUR FRIEND HERE?

NO! I WANT MY VILLAGE!



CAESAR WOULDN'T LIKE TO THINK OF GAULS GETTING THE BENEFIT OF THE GIFTS HE GIVES HIS OLD SOLDIERS.

THAT'S RIGHT. WHEN I TELL HIM, HE WON'T LIKE IT ONE LITTLE BIT!



OH, ALL RIGHT. WE'LL GET READY... LUCKILY I'VE JUST GOT SOME NEW SECRET WEAPONS IN.

THANKS, CENTURION!

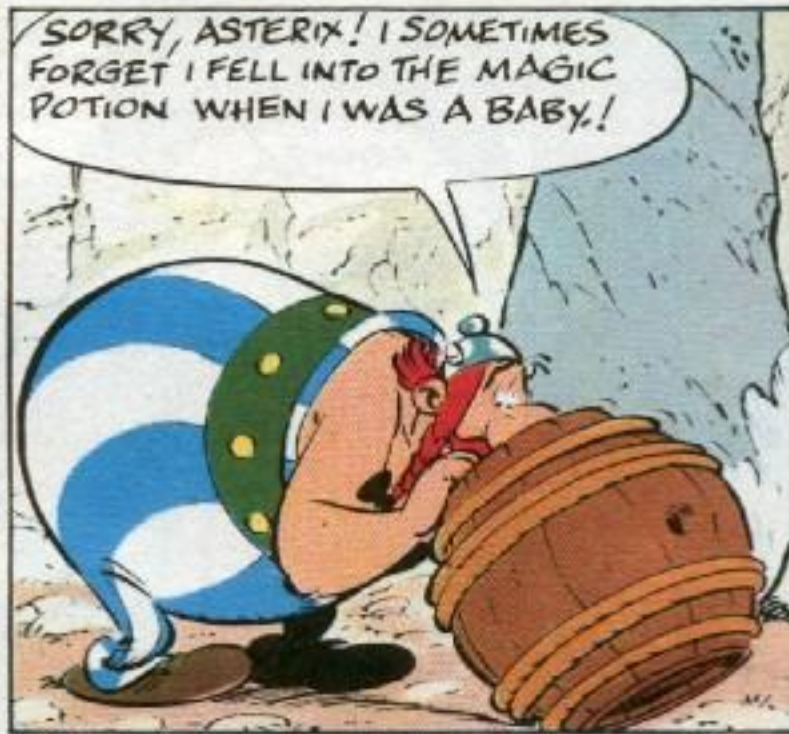


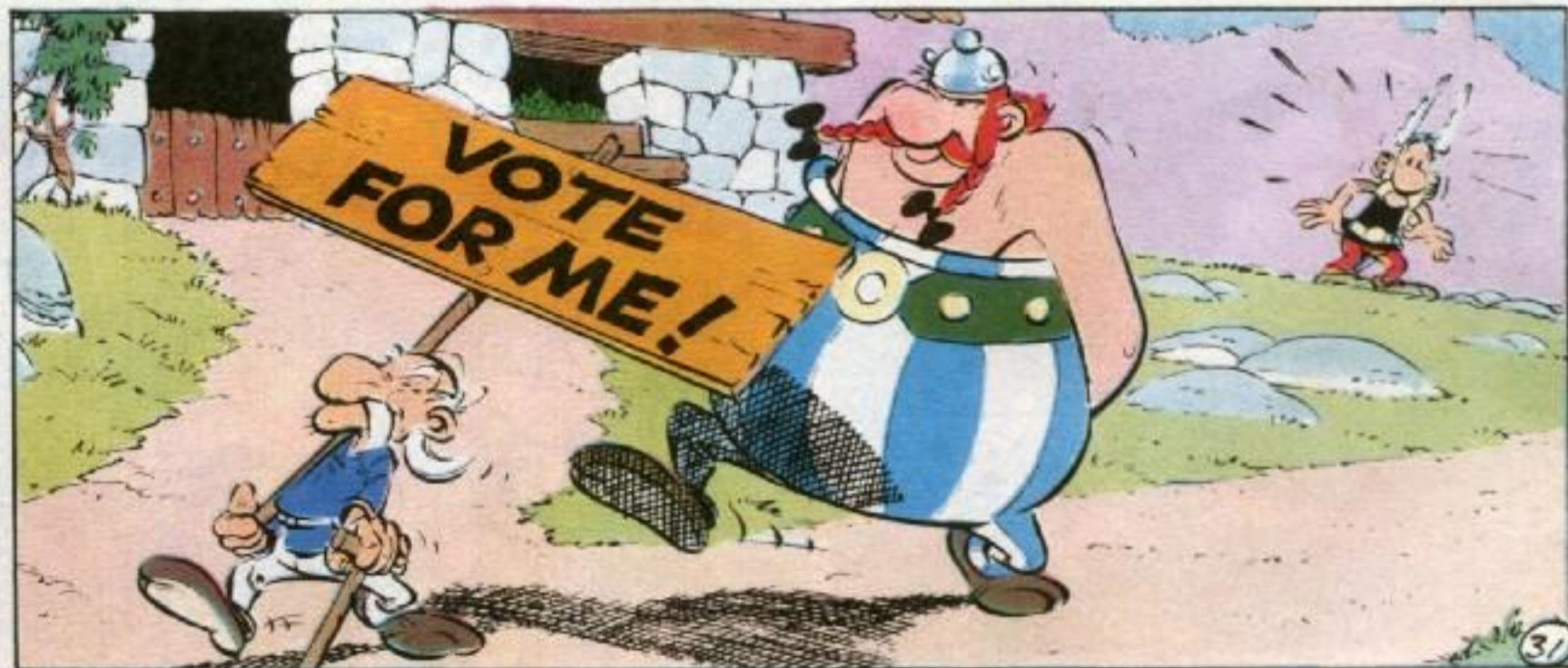
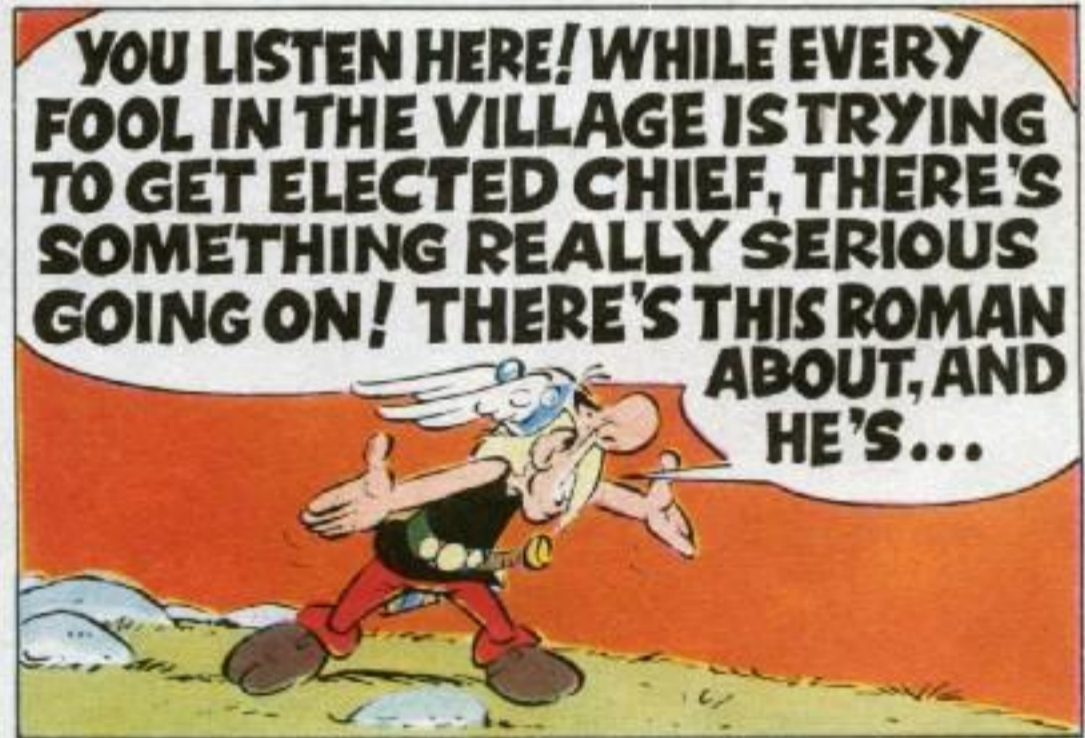
OH, AND BY THE WAY, OPTIO...

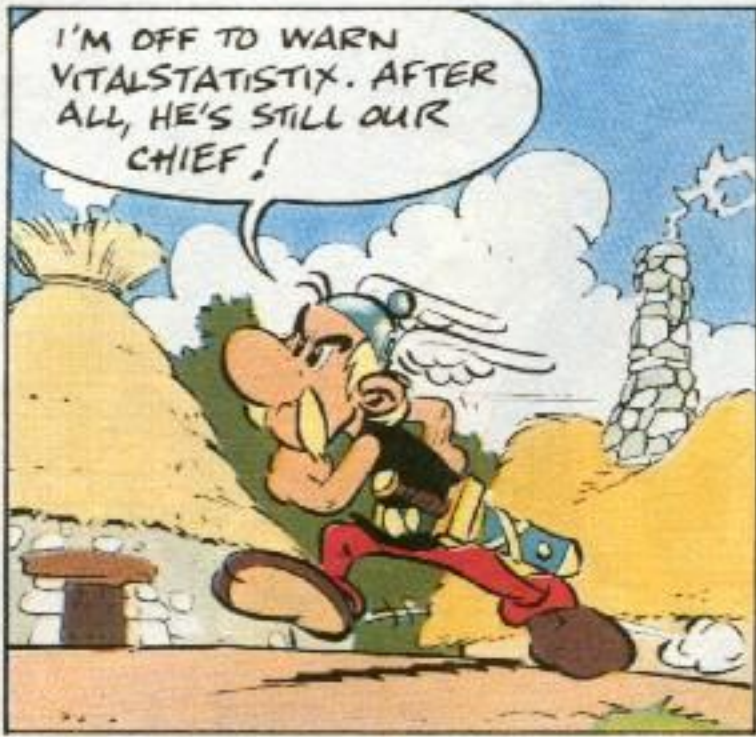
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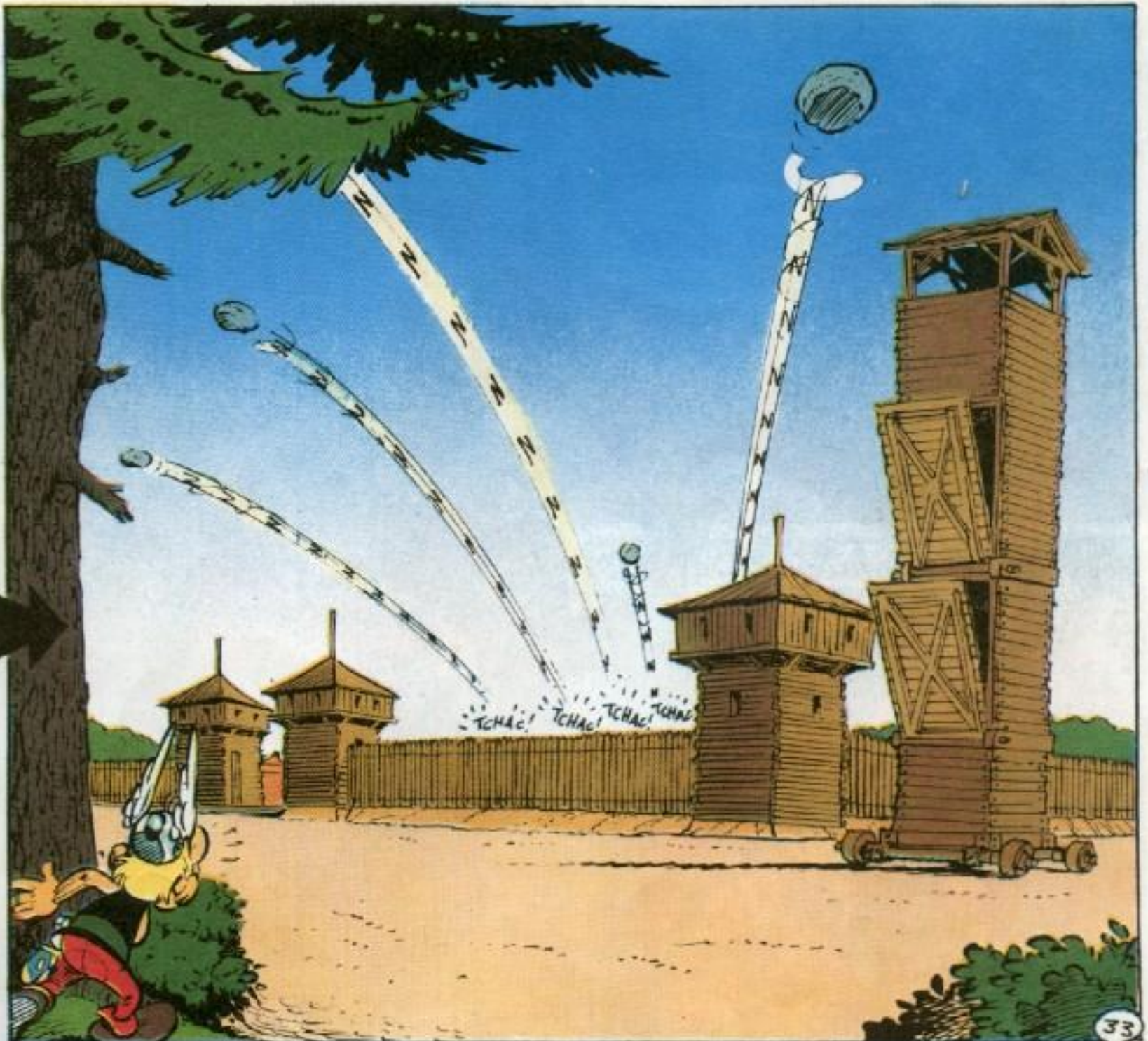
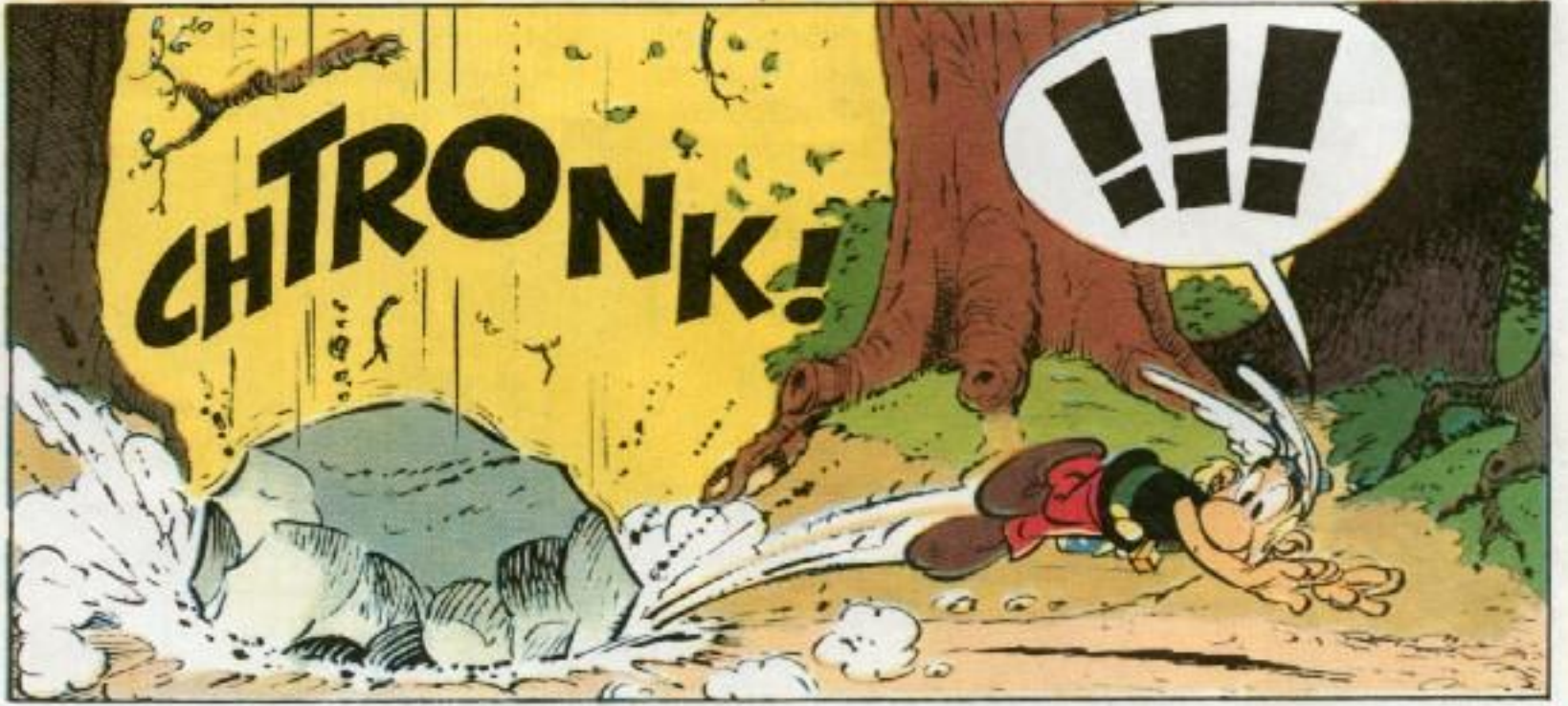
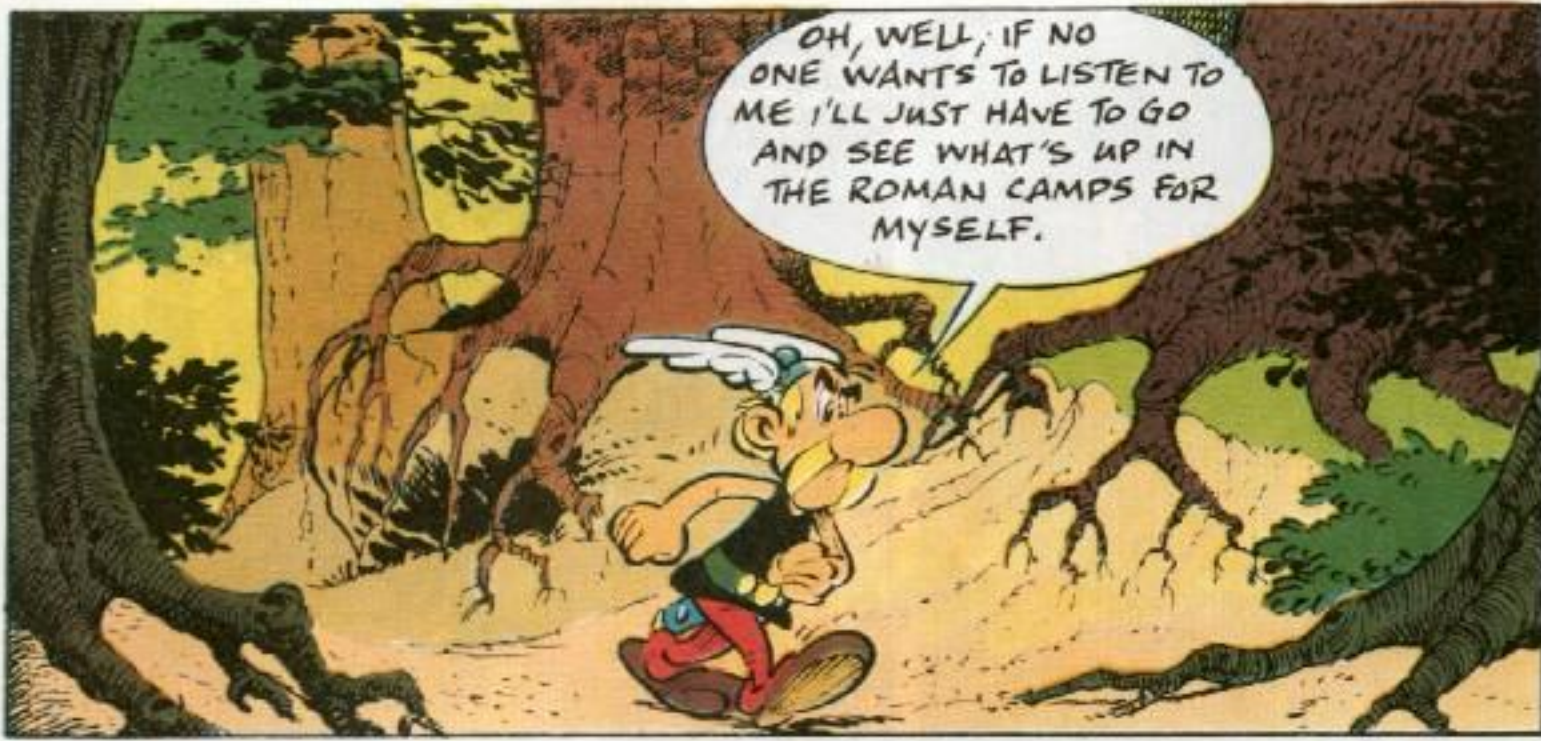


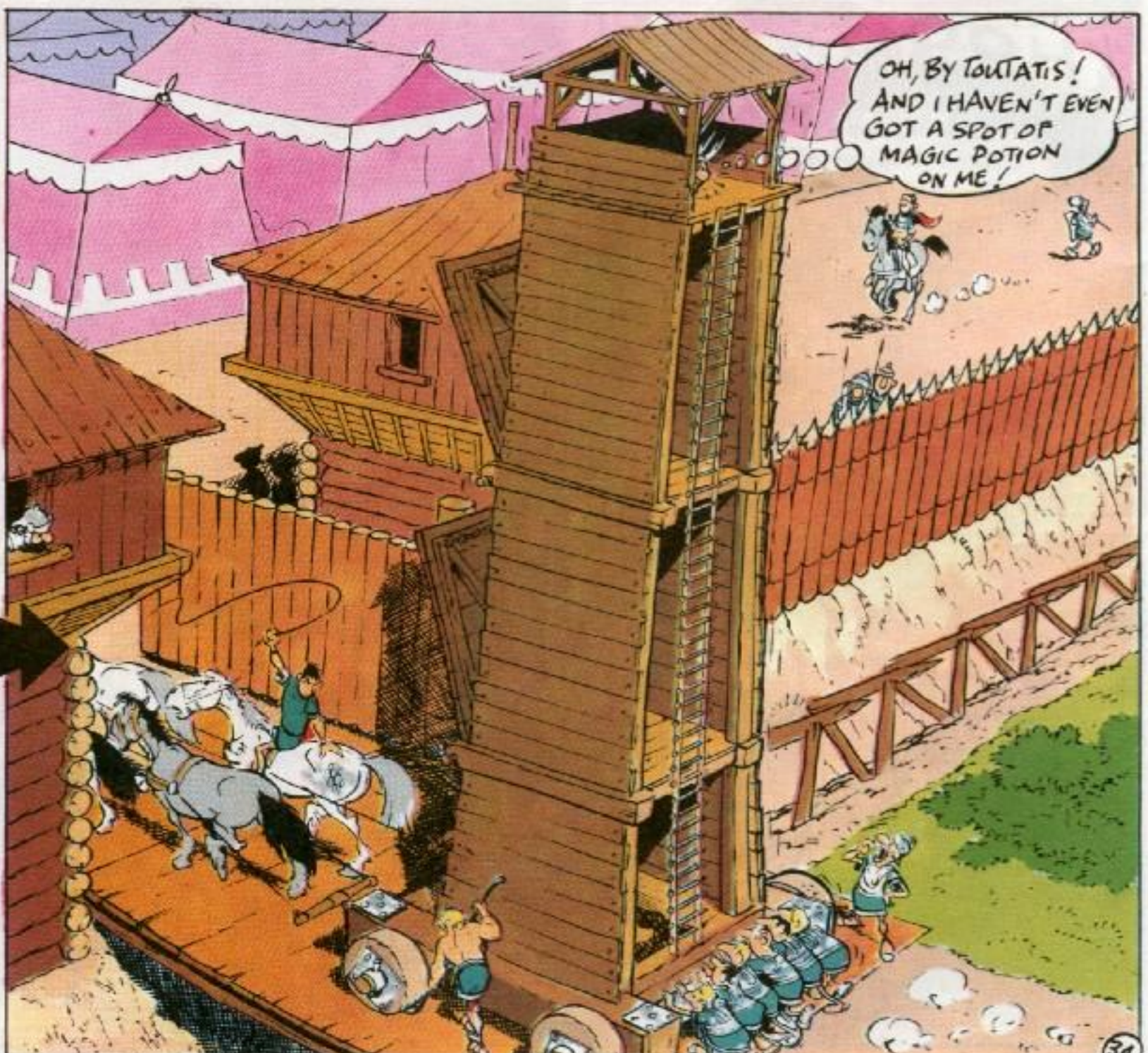
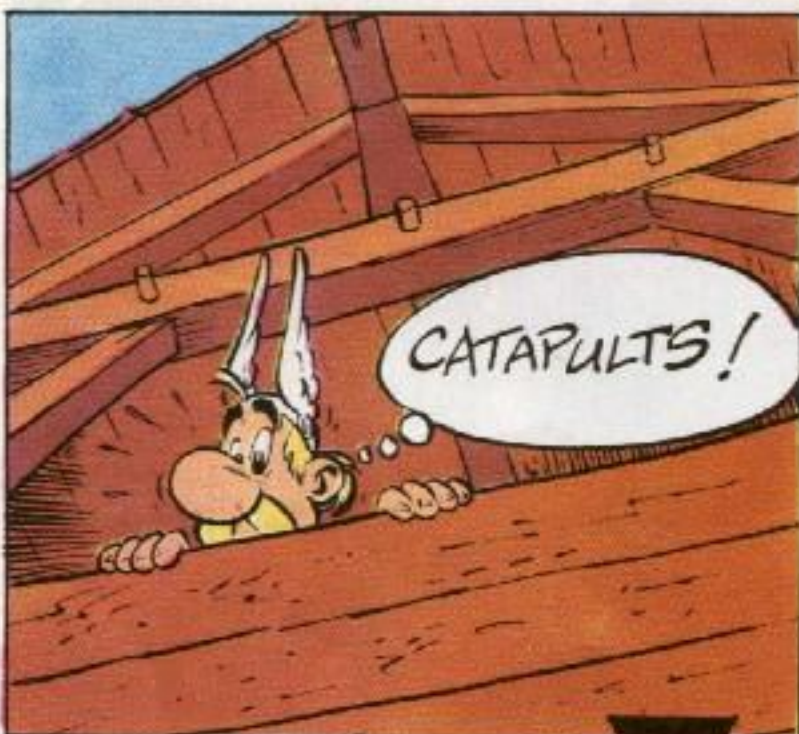
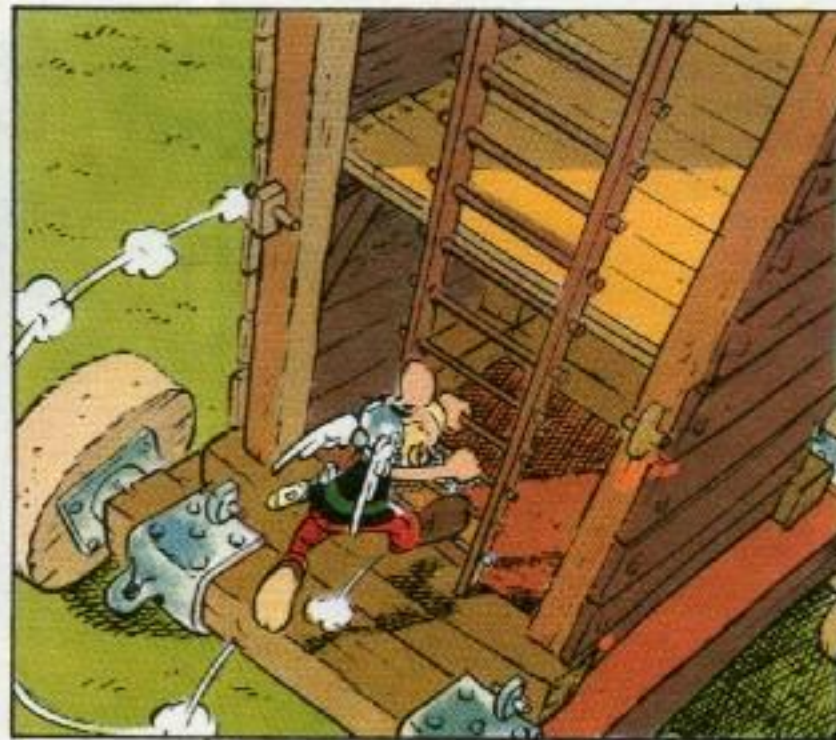
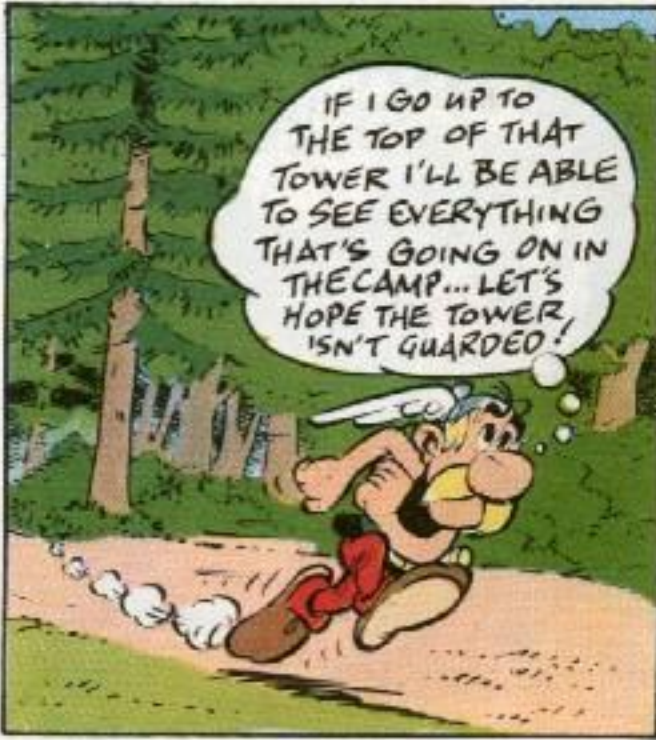
YOU'RE NOT AN OPTIO ANY MORE, YOU'RE DEMOTED TO LEGIONARY, SECOND CLASS.





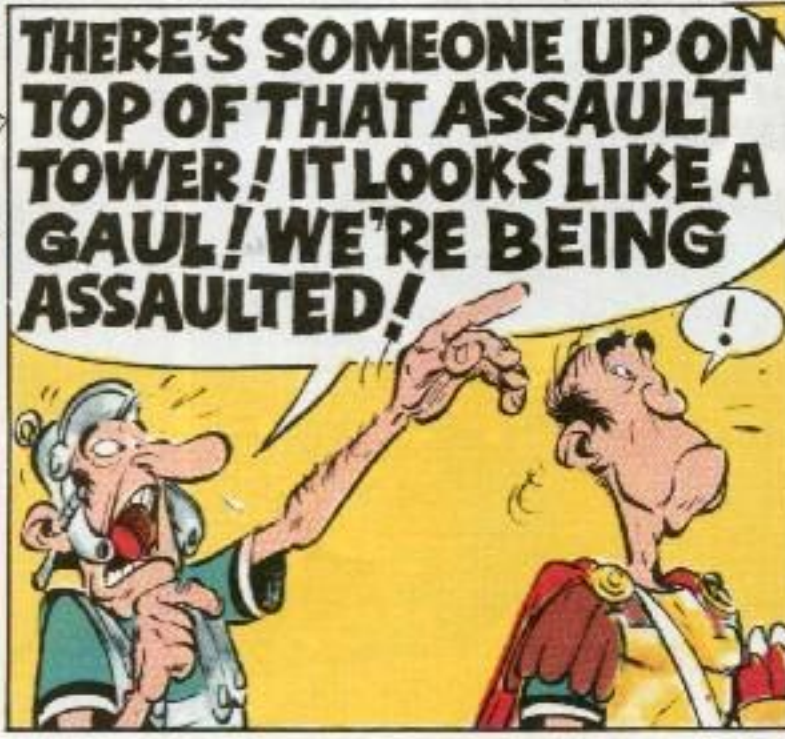








CEN... CEN... CENTURIOOOON!



THERE'S SOMEONE UP ON TOP OF THAT ASSAULT TOWER! IT LOOKS LIKE A GAUL! WE'RE BEING ASSAULTED!



RAISE THE ALARM!

CALM DOWN! WE'VE GOT ENOUGH PROVISIONS TO HOLD OUT FOR A LONG, LONG SIEGE...

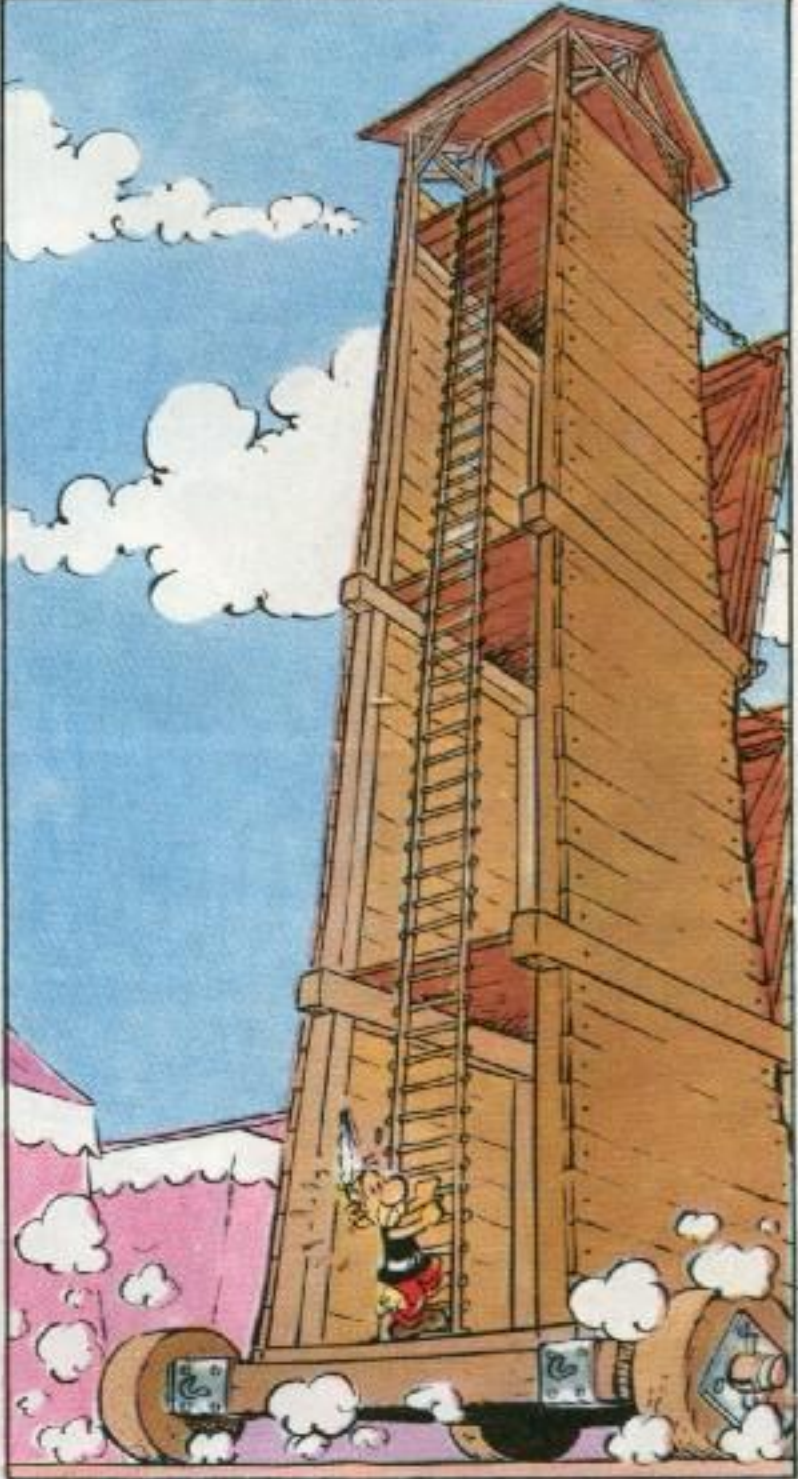


COME DOWN FROM THERE, WHOEVER YOU ARE!

IF YOU SAY SO.



I KNOW HIM! HE'S ONE OF THOSE GAULS WHO KEEP KNOCKING BACK THE MAGIC POTION!



HEY, DON'T YOU THINK YOU'RE OVER-REACTING A BIT? THERE'S ONLY ONE OF HIM, AND YOU...

YOU FATHEAD, HE'S FULL OF MAGIC POTION!



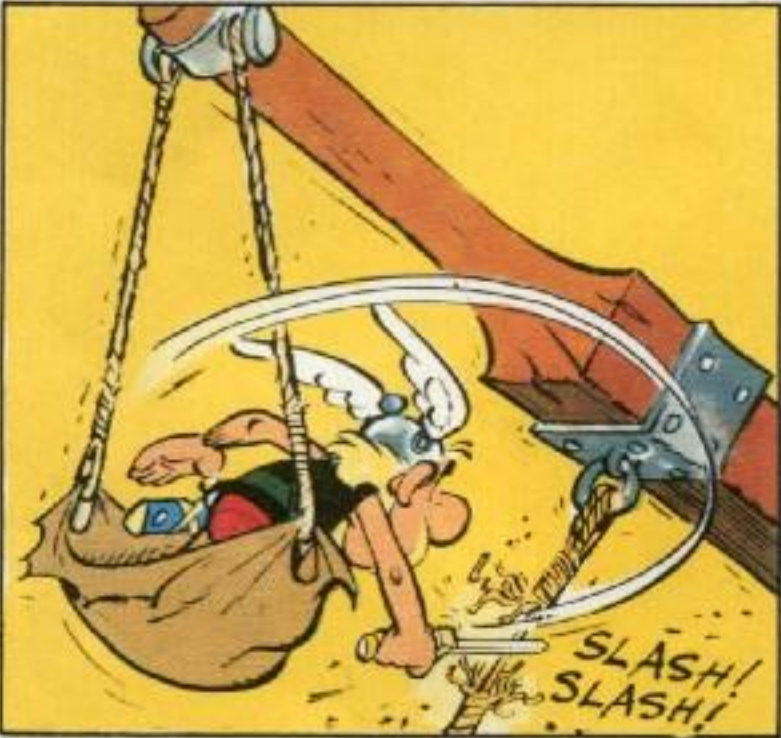
I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF THIS CAMP BEFORE THEY NOTICE ANYTHING FUNNY...

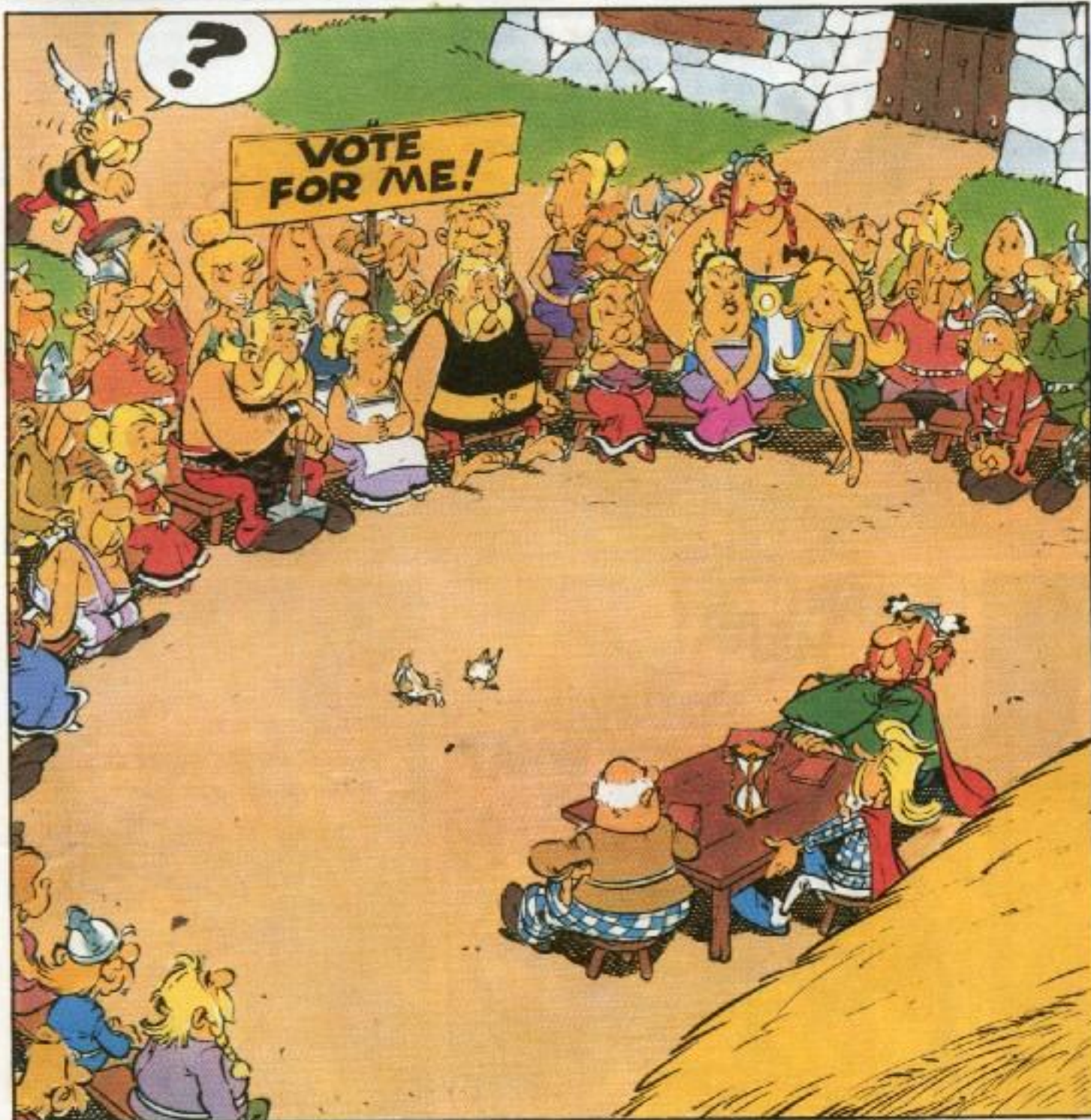


LOOK... LOOK, HE'S RUNNING! AND IF HE'S RUNNING FOR IT, THAT MEANS HE ISN'T FULL OF MAGIC POTION AFTER ALL!

CHAAAARGE!







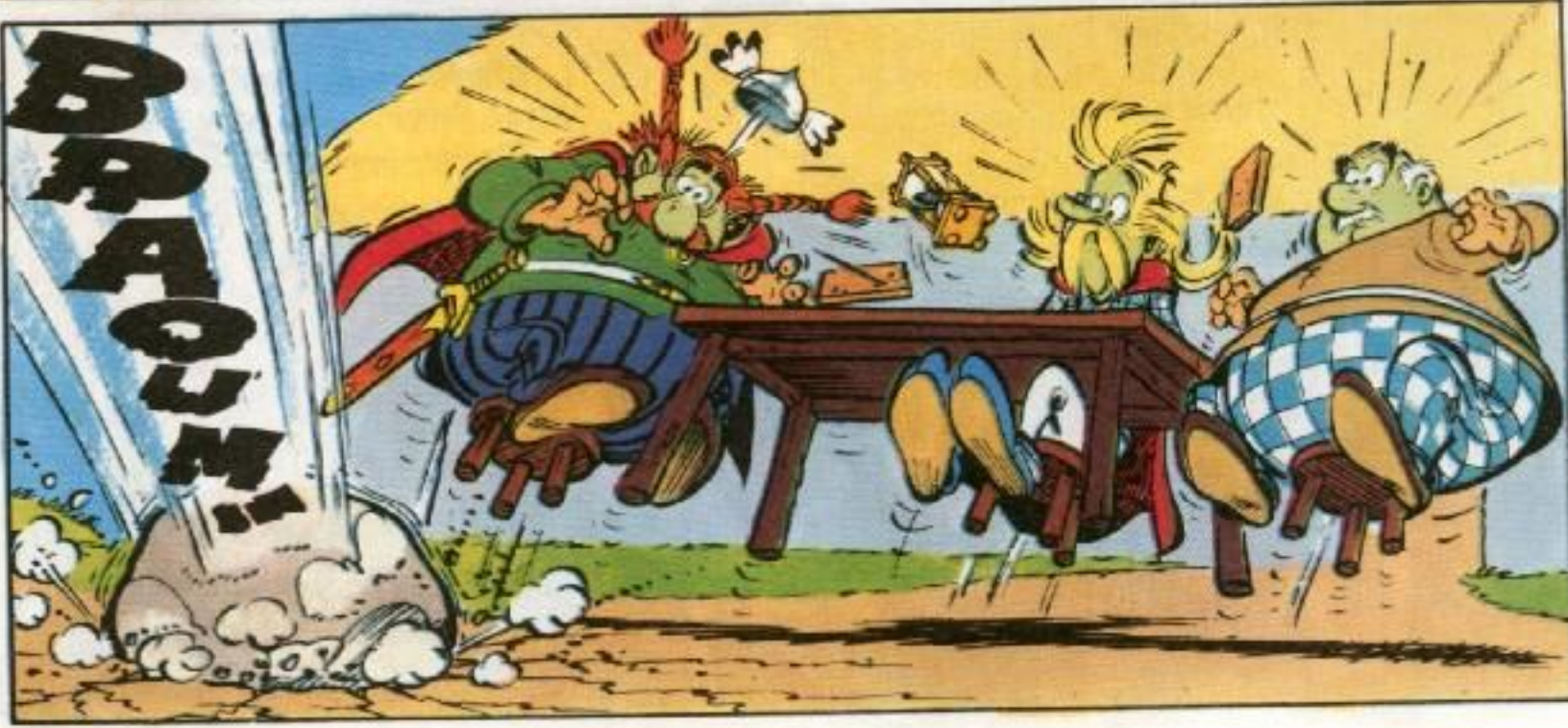
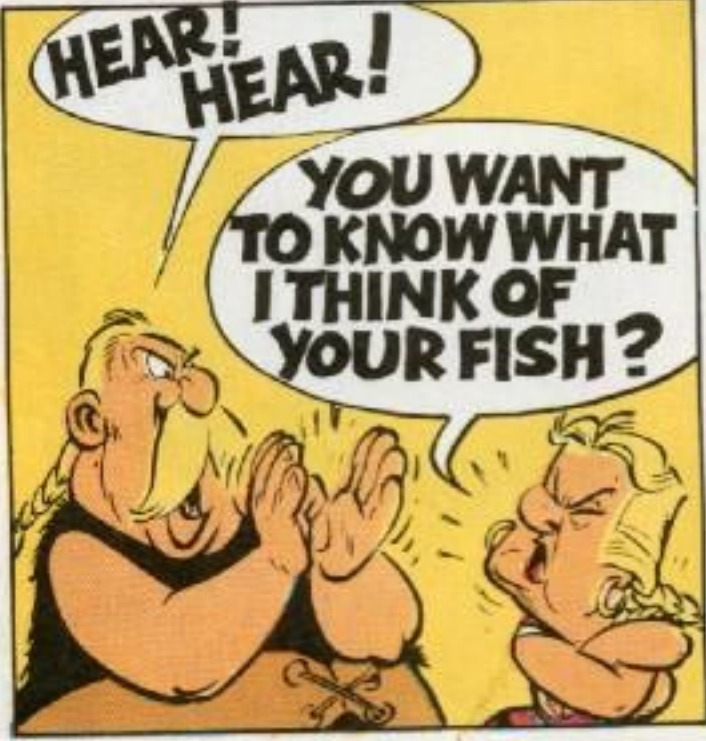
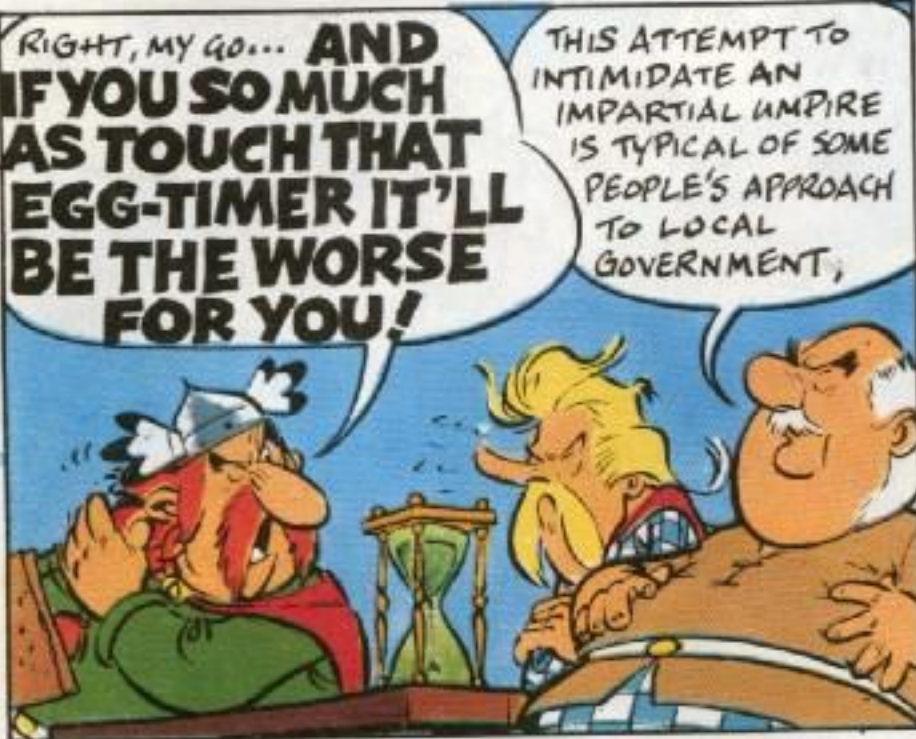
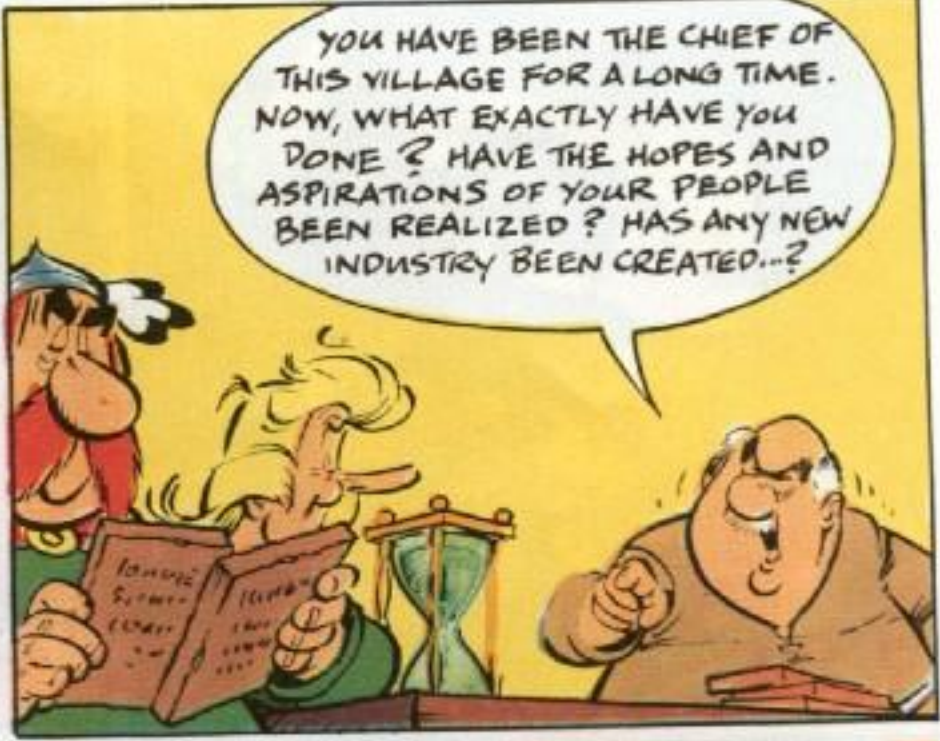
WILL YOU JUST LISTEN TO ME? THE ROMANS...

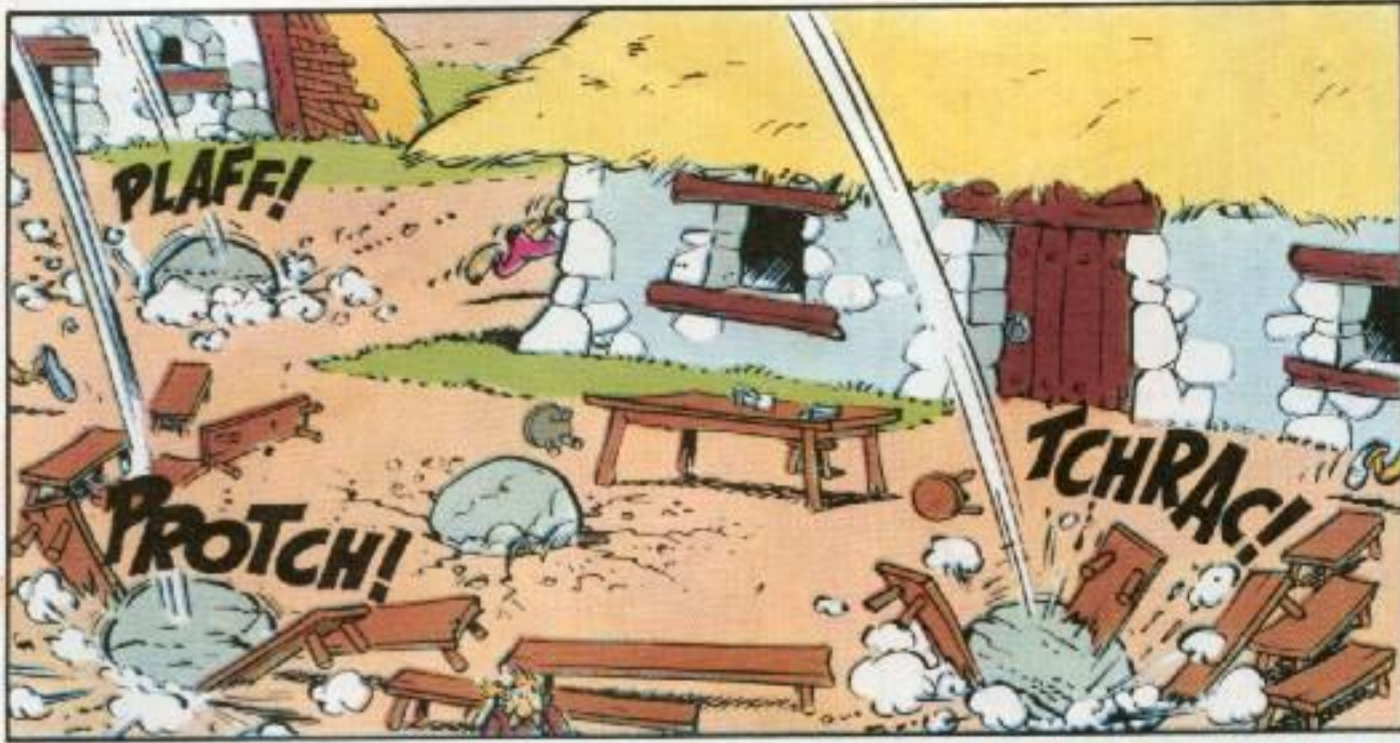
SILENCE!

SSH!

SIT DOWN!

SHUT UP!





WHAT'S GOING ON?

I'VE BEEN TRYING TO TELL YOU! THE ROMANS ARE ATTACKING US WITH THEIR NEW WEAPONS!



LIKE ANTS! THEY'RE RUNNING LIKE ANTS!... TREMENSDELIRIUS, I SHALL OWE THE FINEST VICTORY OF MY ENTIRE CAREER TO YOU!



GETAFIX! WE NEED SOME MAGIC POTION! QUIICK!

I SAID NO!



IT'S ALL MY FAULT! I OUGHT TO HAVE WARNED YOU!



LET ME GO! I WANT TO GO AND TALK TO THE ROMANS!

NO! THEY'LL SLAUGHTER YOU!

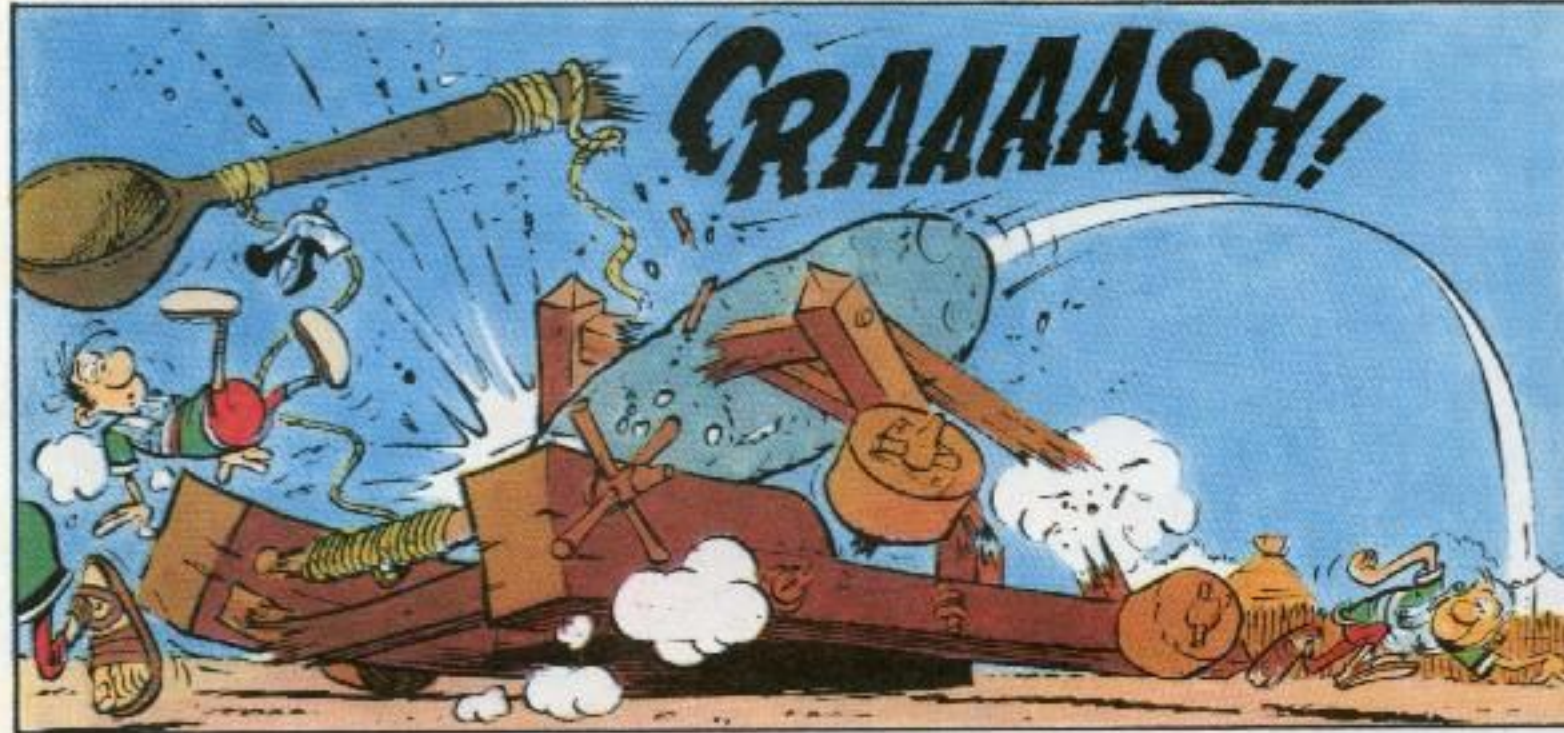
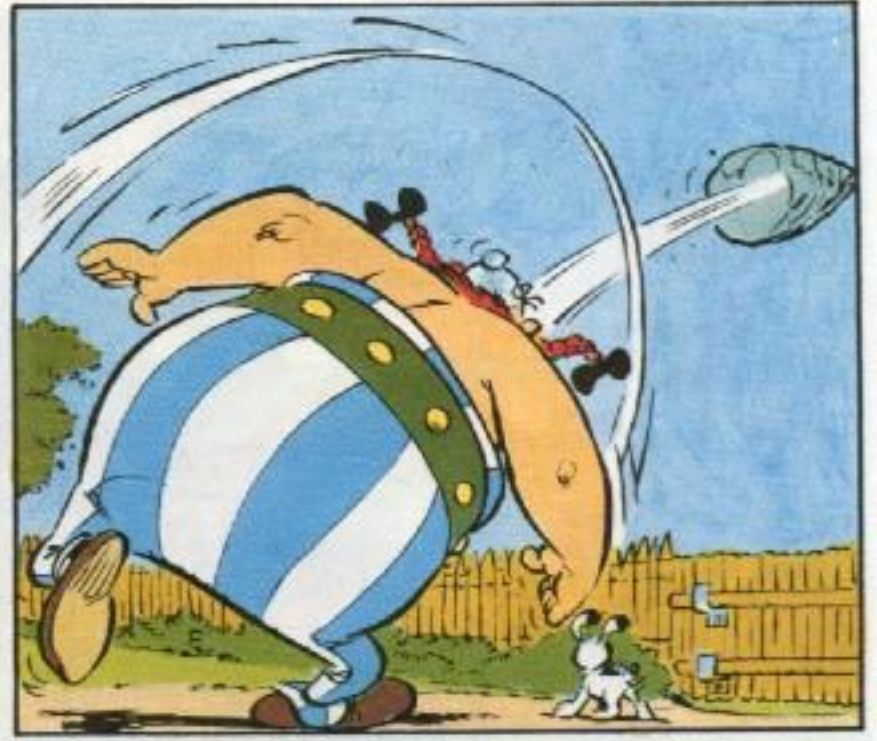


LET THEM SLAUGHTER ME! IT SERVES ME RIGHT! IT'S ALL MY FAULT!

GETAFIX! MAGIC POTION, PLEASE! NOT FOR ME, FOR ORTHOPAEDIX!



OH, WELL, THAT'S A DIFFERENT MATTER ENTIRELY!





**DOGMATIX!
YOOHOO!**



MEANWHILE ...
**IT'S READY,
LADS!**



AND...

CRAAAAASH!

**DOGMATIX!
HERE!**

**BUT WE KEEP
TELLING YOU HE
ISN'T HERE!**

**REVERSE,
YOU FOOL!
REVERSE!**

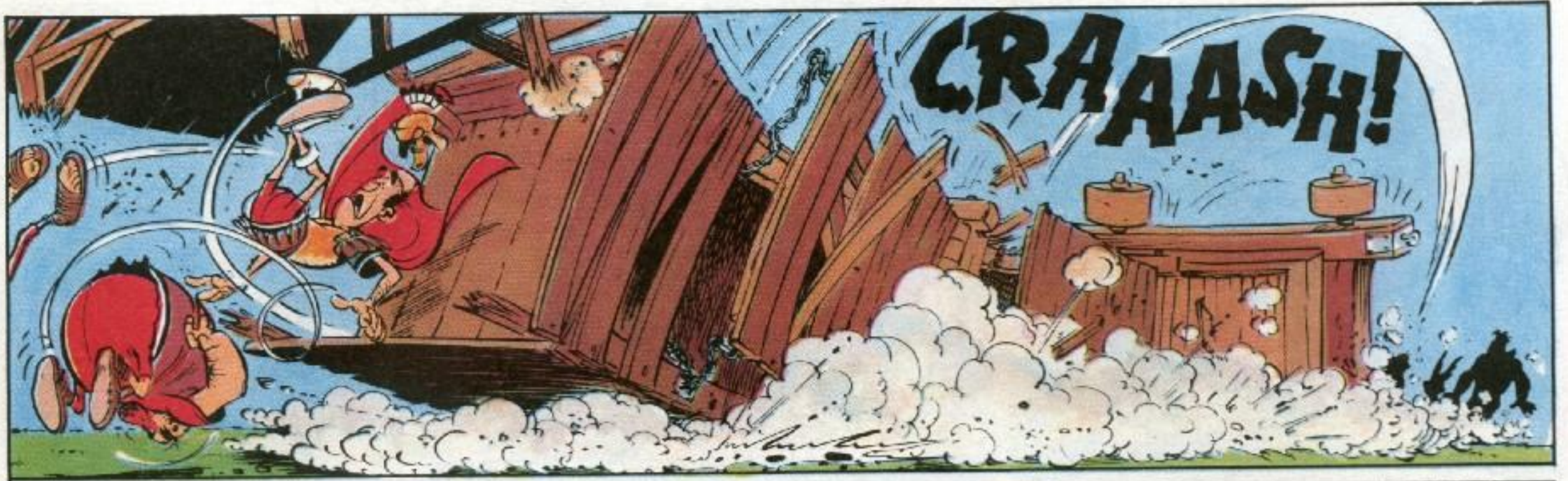


**HEY, THERE'S
SOME OF THEM UP
ON THAT TOWER.
SHALL WE GO
UP?**

**NO, LET'S GET
THEM DOWN!**



**LET ME DOWN!
I TELL YOU, LET ME
DOOOOWWN!**



DON'T HURT ME! I'M A CIVILIAN! IF YOU WANT TO FIGHT, GO AND FIGHT THE SOLDIERS! FIGHT MY FRIEND OVER THERE ... HE RE-ENLISTED!



I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU, FAR FROM IT. I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU BACK YOUR PROPERTY ...

Caesar's Gift!



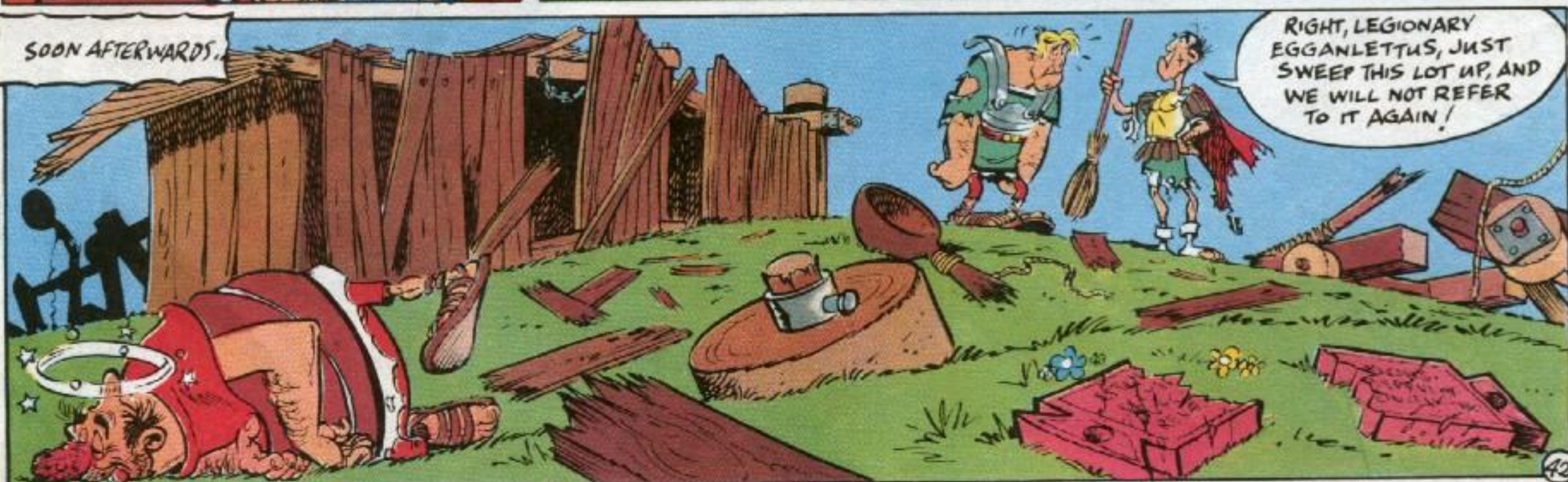
SO NOW ALL YOU'VE GOT TO DO IS DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH CHIEF VITALSTATISTIX AND HIS MEN!

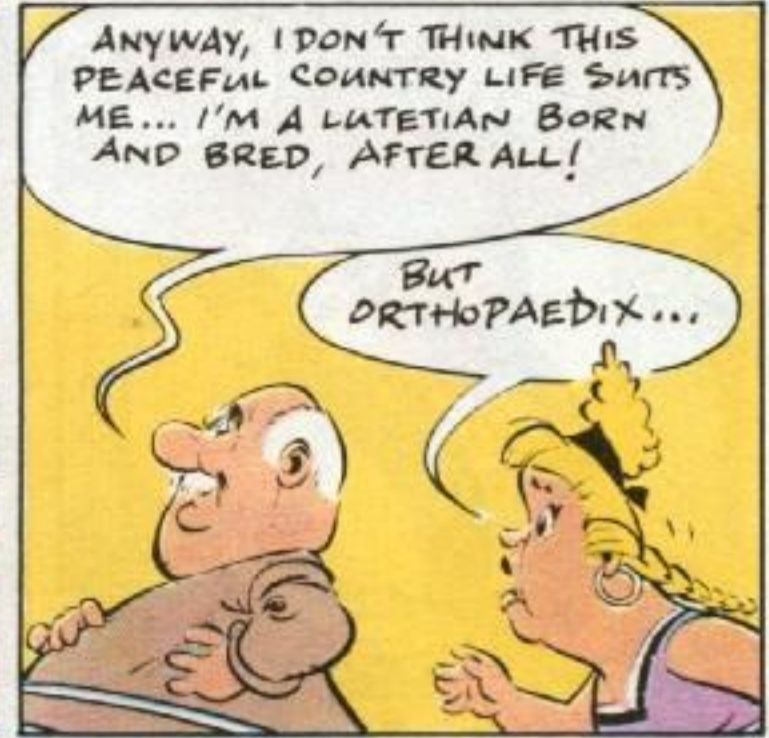


HEY, WAIT A MINUTE! YOU WOULDN'T DO A THING LIKE THAT TO AN OLD FRIEND, WOULD YOU?



SOON AFTERWARDS...







IN FACT, EVERYONE IS FRIENDS AGAIN. UNDER THE STARRY SKY, ALL PARTIES ARE RE-UNITED AROUND THE TABLE. ALL PARTIES... FOR WE MUST NOT FORGET THAT THIS HAPPENED VERY LONG AGO, ABOUT 50 BC, AND IN THOSE DAYS SUCH MATTERS WERE NOT SO VERY IMPORTANT...



UNDER 20 GO PUNNY