

BOOK 22

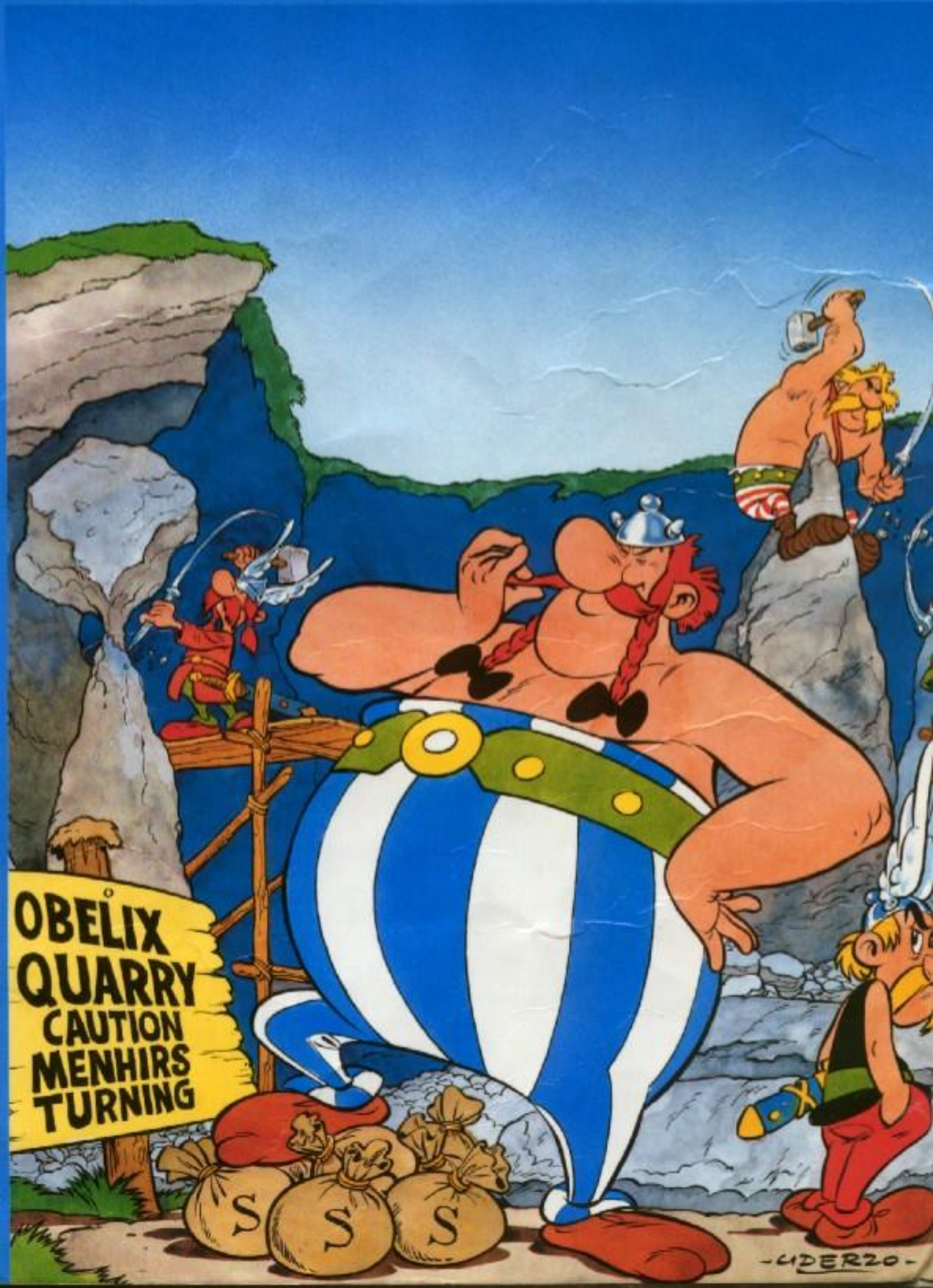
GOSCINNY AND UDERZO

Asterix

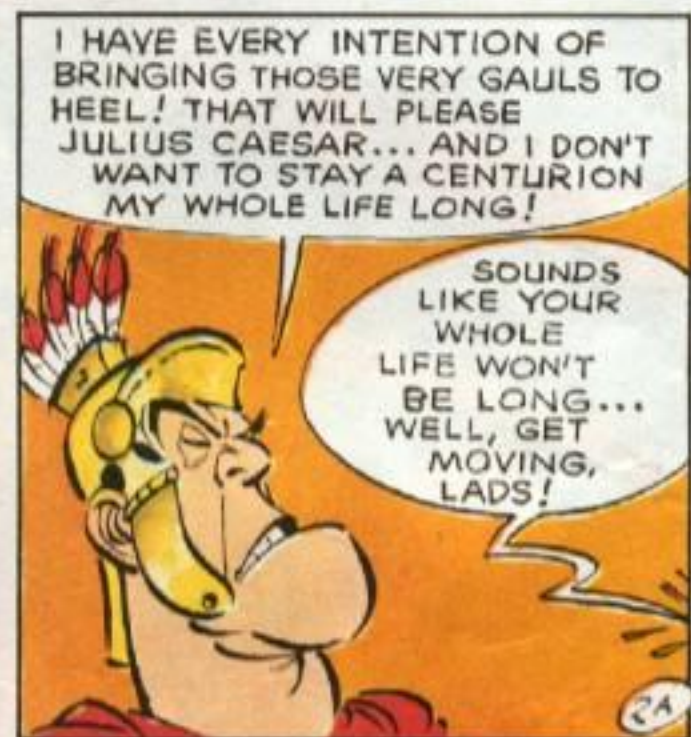
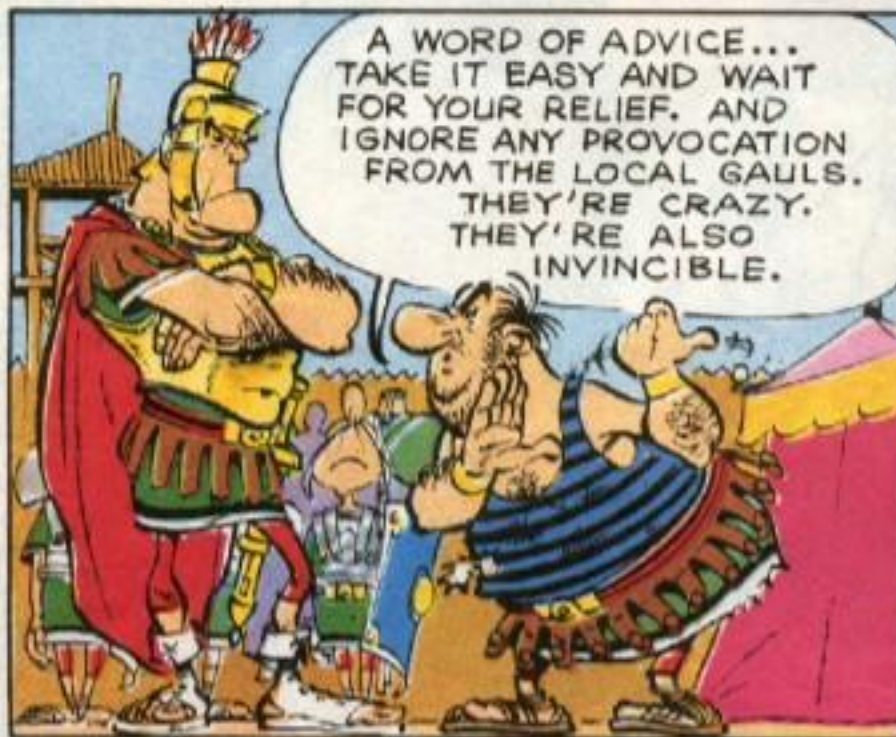
OBELIX and Co.

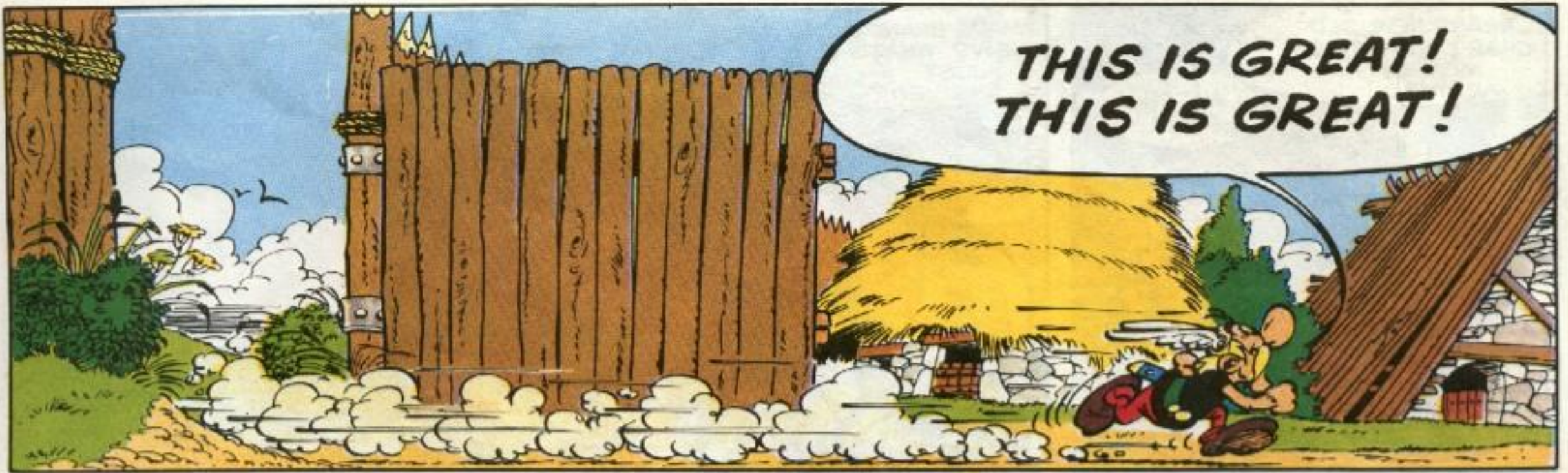
OBELIX

HODDER DARGAUD











... BRAND NEW, OLD CHAP! JUST THIS MOMENT ARRIVED!

WATCH OUT!

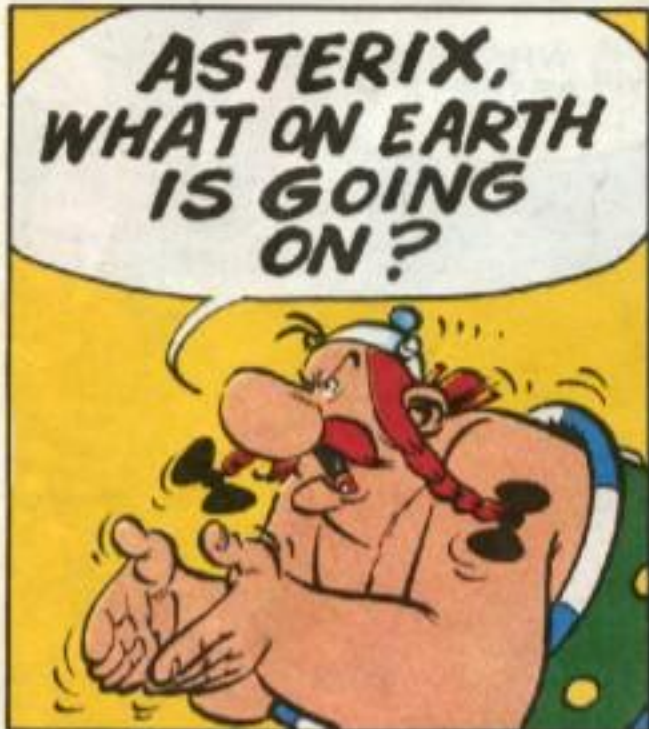


WHAT'S BRAND NEW? WHAT'S JUST ARRIVED?

HMPH?... WELL, NOT THESE FISH, ANYWAY!



TEEHEEHEE!



ASTERIX, WHAT ON EARTH IS GOING ON?



HMPH?

WHEREVER I SHOW UP, PEOPLE MAKE OFF GOING "TEEHEEHEE"! FULLIAUTOMATIX EVEN PASSED REMARKS ABOUT UNHYGIENIX'S FISH, AND INSTEAD OF FIGHTING THEY WENT "TEEHEEHEE"!



TEEHEEHEE!



THEM AND THEIR SECRETS! WE DON'T CARE, DO WE, DOGMATIX?



WE'LL HAVE OUR OWN SECRETS, SO THERE!



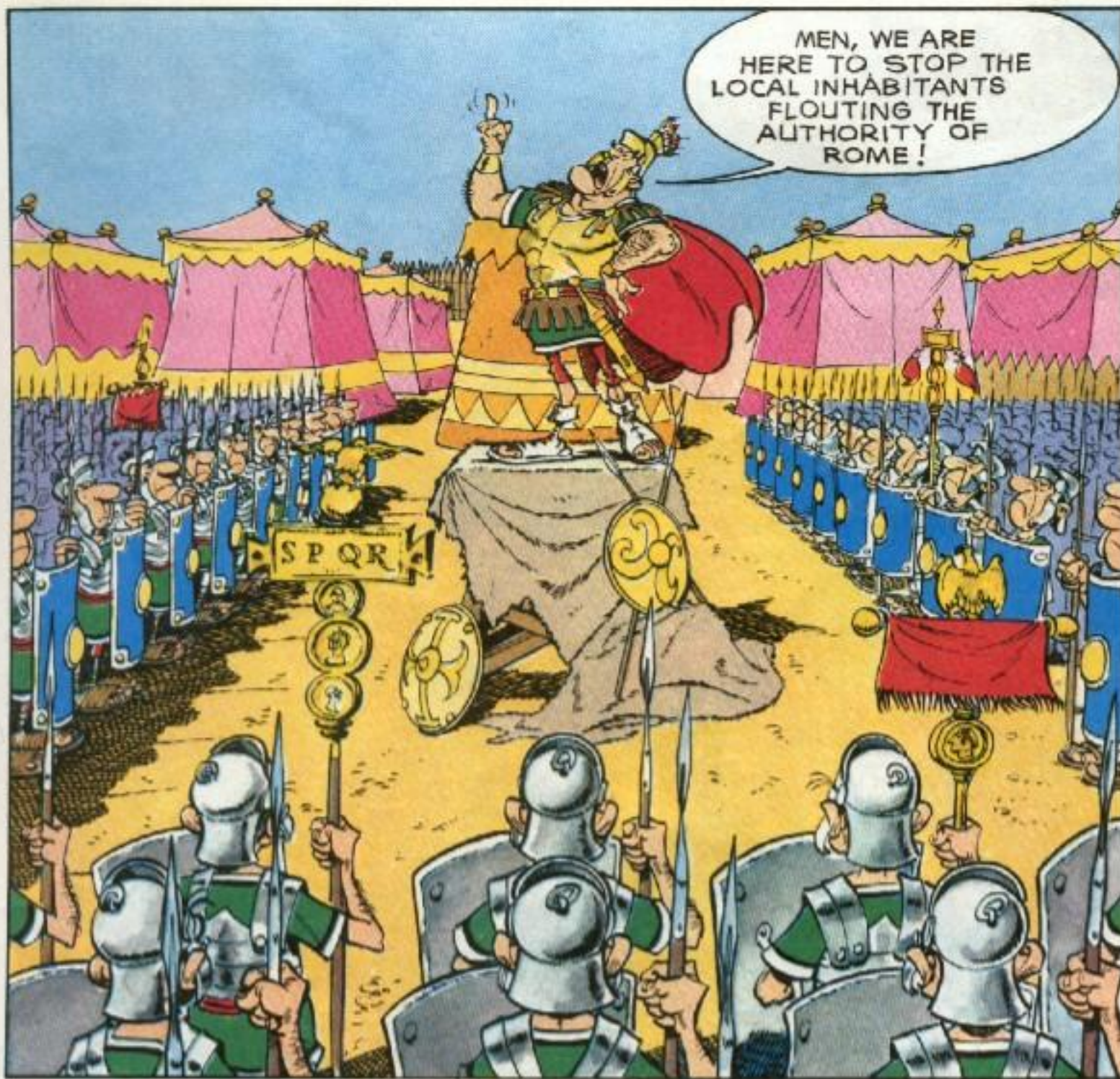
TEEHEEHEE!

!!!



I THINK HE SUSPECTS SOMETHING. SHALL I GO NOW?

YES. EVERYTHING'S READY.



MEN, WE ARE HERE TO STOP THE LOCAL INHABITANTS FLOUTING THE AUTHORITY OF ROME!



WE SHALL BRING THAT LITTLE GAULISH VILLAGE TO HEEL, AND WE'RE NOT STANDING FOR ANY NONSENSE!



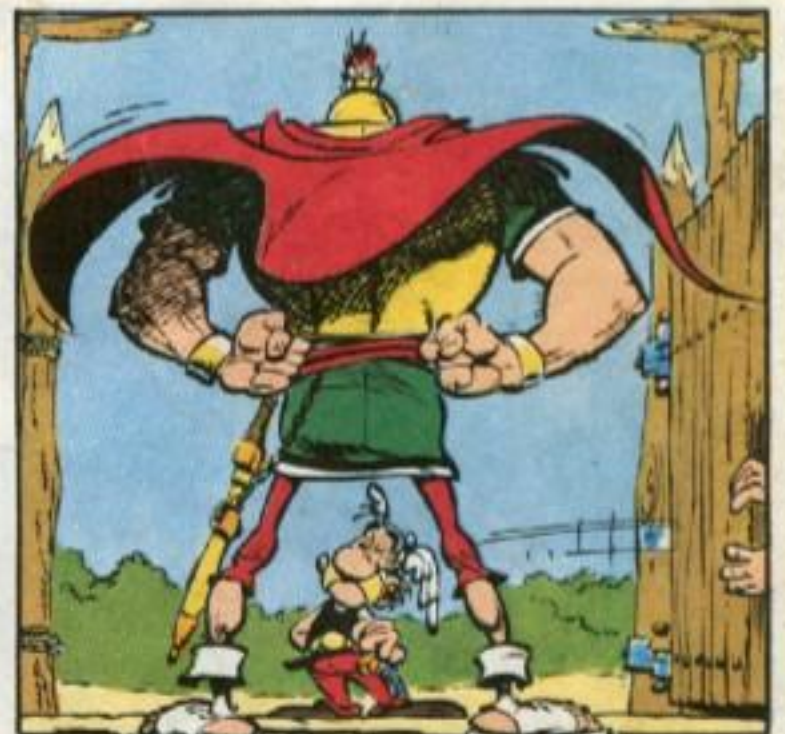
FRIENDS, ROMANS, COUNTRYMEN, WE SHALL COVER OURSELVES WITH GLORY!



THERE'S A GAUL AT THE CAMP GATES, CENTURION, SIR!



AHA! MAYBE THEY SENSED THAT THINGS WERE GOING TO CHANGE... OPEN THE GATES!



WELL, GAUL? COME TO SURRENDER?

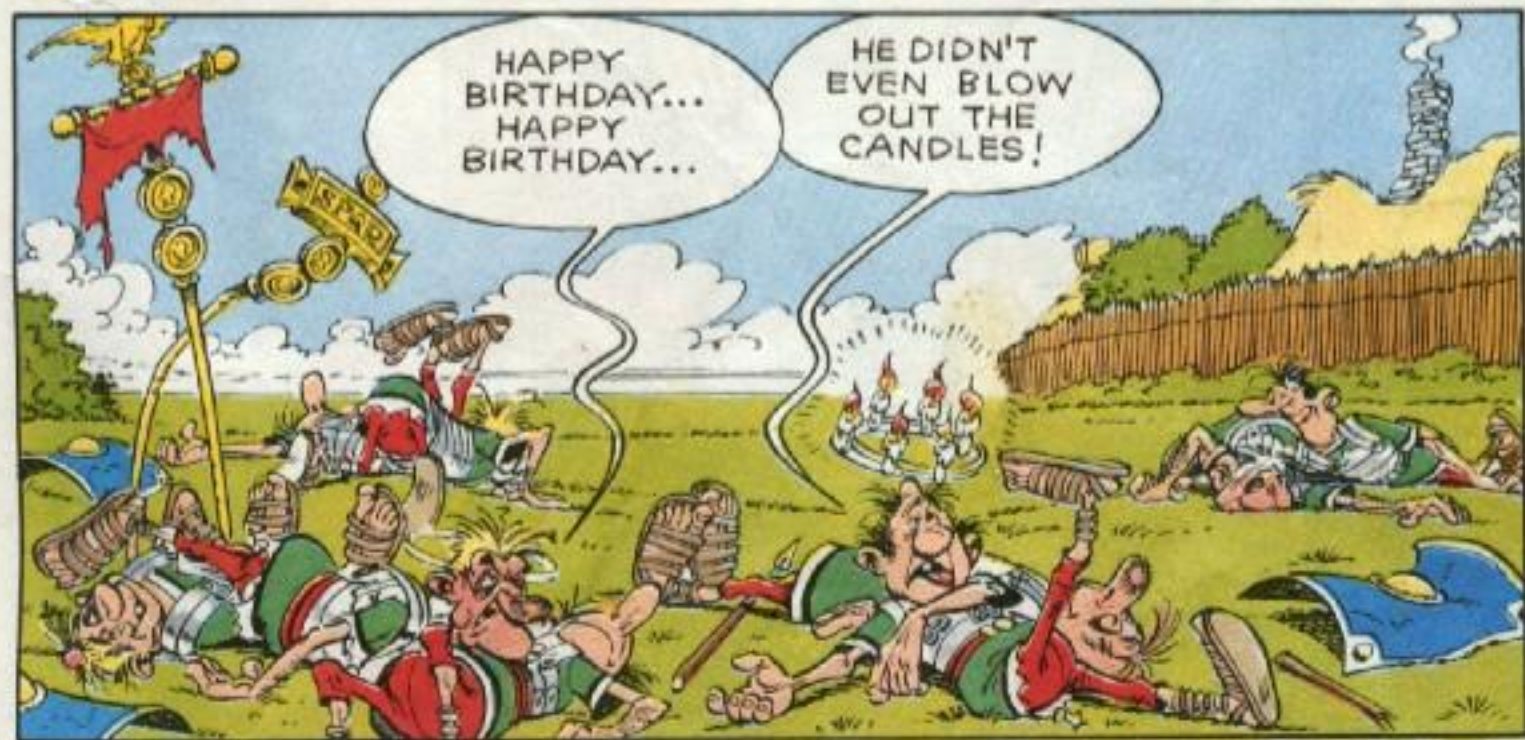
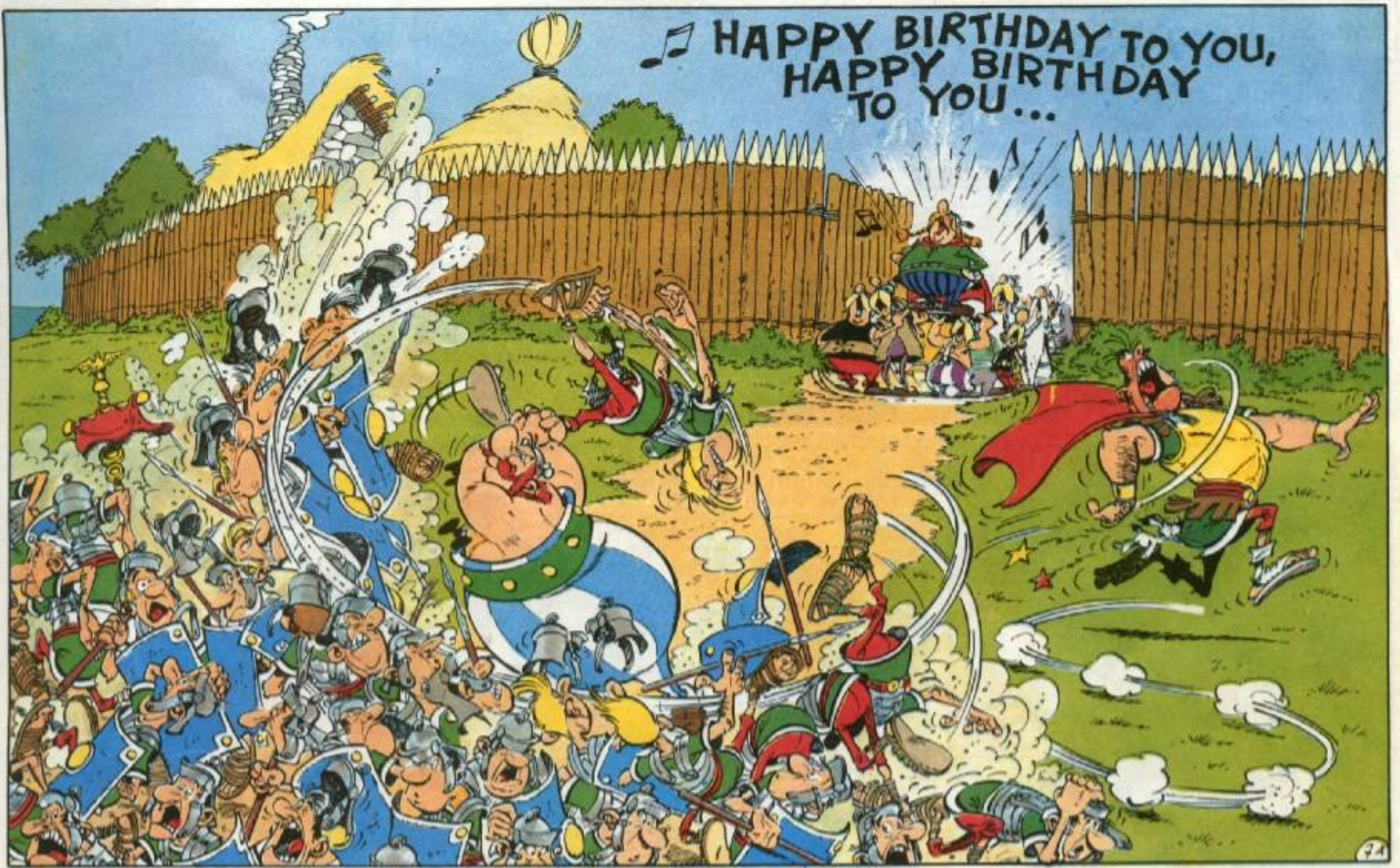


YAAAAAAAAAAAAH!



MEN, CATCH THAT MIDGET! WE'LL MAKE AN EXAMPLE OF HIM!





IN ROME...



ONE MAN!
ONE SOLITARY GAUL
MANAGED TO DEFEAT
AND DEMORALISE
MY CRACK
TROOPS!

THIS IS TOO MUCH! THESE GAULS
MAKE ME LOOK RIDICULOUS. WE
CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS, BY
JUPITER! WELL? I'M WAITING
FOR SUGGESTIONS!



WE COULD SEND
THE ENTIRE
ARMY...

YES,
BUT WE
MUSTN'T LEAVE
OUR FRONTIERS
UN-
GUARDED.



SUPPOSE WE SET UP A
COMMISSION TO STUDY THE
PROBLEM?

GOOD IDEA! WITH
SUB-COMMITTEES TO
CONSIDER THE VARIOUS
ASPECTS...

LET'S
HAVE A
WORKING LUNCH
TO DISCUSS
IT...

TAPTAPTAP!
TAPTAPTAP!



THEY ARE STRONG, SO
WE MUST WEAKEN THEM. THEY
HAVE NOTHING TO DO BUT
FIGHT, SO WE MUST KEEP
THEM BUSY SOME OTHER
WAY...



COME HERE, CAIUS
PREPOSTERUS. JUST HOW
WOULD YOU SET ABOUT WEAKENING
THE GAULS, WITH THEIR
MAGICAL STRENGTH?



GO ON! LET'S
SEE WHAT THEY
TAUGHT YOU AT THE
LATIN SCHOOL OF
ECONOMICS...

EASY, O CAESAR.
GOLD, THE
PROFIT
MOTIVE...



... WILL ENFEEBLE
THEM AND KEEP THEM
BUSY. WE MUST
CORRUPT
THEM.

YOU THINK
THAT WILL
DO THE
TRICK?



LOOK
AROUND
YOU, O
CAESAR!





NONSENSE!

THAT YOUNG KNOW-ALL HAS NO EXPERIENCE!

DON'T LISTEN TO HIM, O CAESAR. WHAT WE NEED IS A THINK TANK...



WE MUST OPPOSE FORCE WITH FORCE! REMEMBER OUR CAMPAIGNS, CAESAR? WE MADE THE WHOLE WORLD BOW BEFORE OUR LEGIONS!



I REMEMBER ALL RIGHT, LARCENUS. YOU WERE A BRAVE, ATHLETIC YOUNG TRIBUNE, YOU BROUGHT BACK A FORTUNE FROM OUR CAMPAIGNS... AND NOW LOOK AT YOU!



SEE WHAT ALL YOUR GOLD, YOUR VILLAS, YOUR ORGIES HAVE MADE OF YOU! YOU'RE DECADENT!



YOU, A THINK TANK? ALL YOU THINK OF IS TANKING UP!

HMPH? LUNCHTIME?



YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN TURN THOSE CRAZY GAULS INTO SOMETHING LIKE THEM?

YES, CAESAR!



MARK MY WORDS, THEY'LL SOON HAVE TOO MUCH ON THEIR MINDS TO GO FIGHTING!



BUT I'LL NEED GOLD ... LOTS OF GOLD!

YOU SHALL HAVE UNLIMITED CREDIT! GET TO WORK PRE-POSTEROUS!





SEVERAL DAYS LATER, IN THE CAMP OF TOTORUM...

YES, HE'S A FAT MAN. OFTEN GOES FOR WALKS WITH A MENHIR ON HIS BACK AND A LITTLE DOG AT HIS HEELS...



YOU MIGHT WELL RUN INTO HIM IN THE FOREST... SO WATCH OUT! EVEN THE LITTLE DOG IS DANGEROUS.



I'M OFF, YOU MEN, DON'T LEAVE CAMP.

NOT LIKELY! WE'RE NOT LEAVING TILL WE'RE RELIEVED.



SOON AFTERWARDS...



PICKED UP A SCENT? LET'S HAVE A LOOK...

GRRRRR!



?



OH, HOW BEAUTIFUL! JUST LOOK WHAT'S BEHIND YOU!

BEHIND ME?



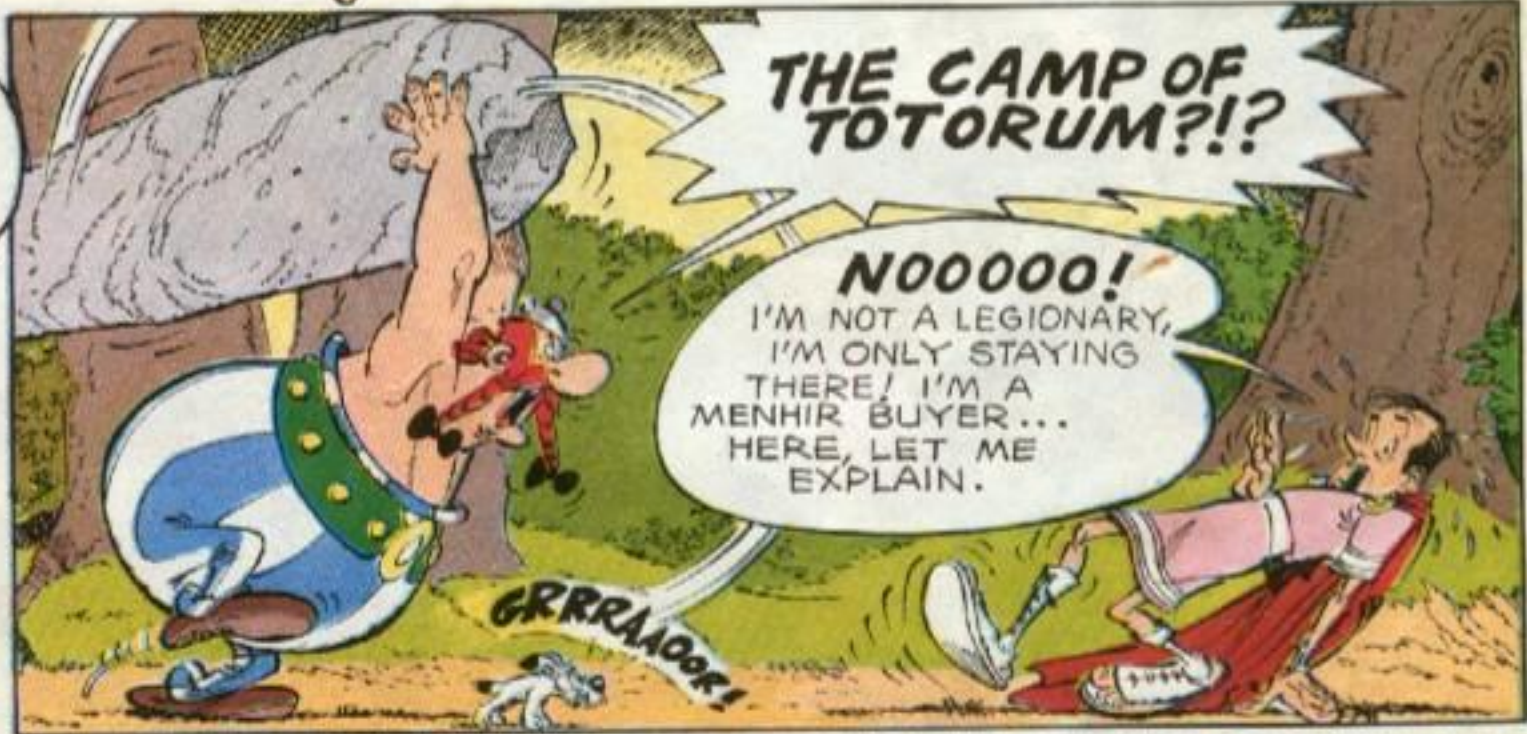
BUT THERE ISN'T ANYTHING BEHIND ME!

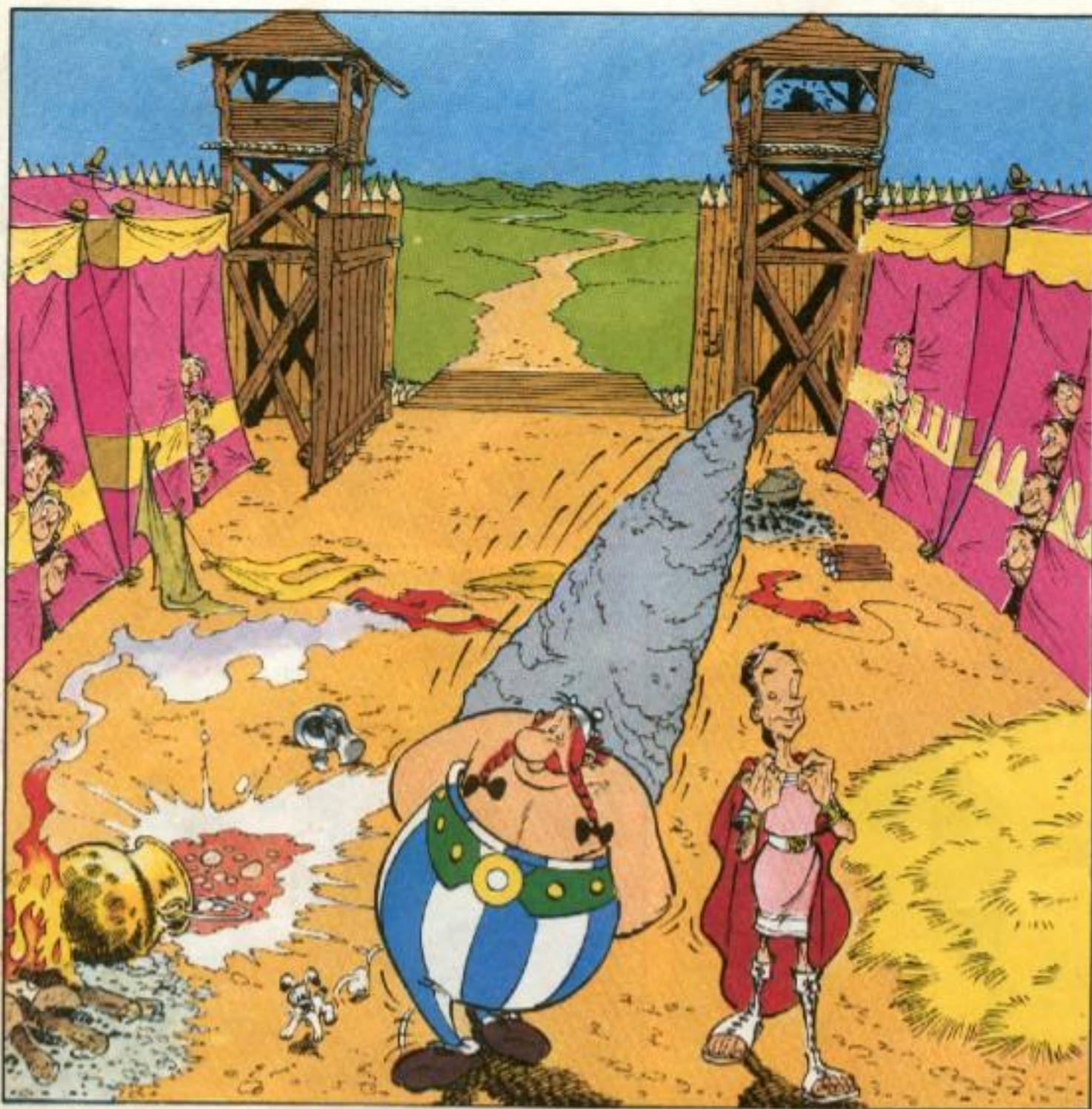
YES, THERE IS! THAT MENHIR!

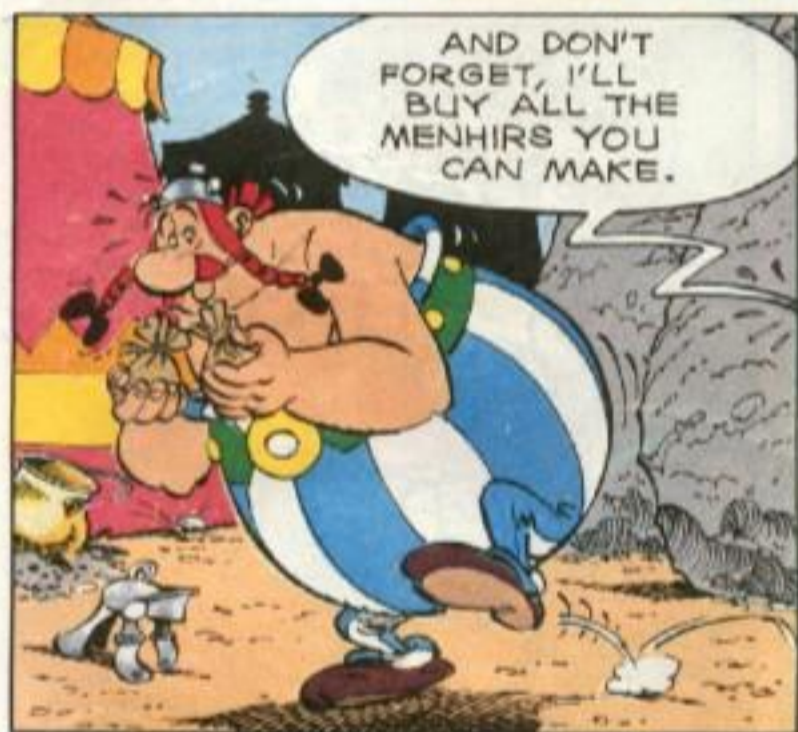


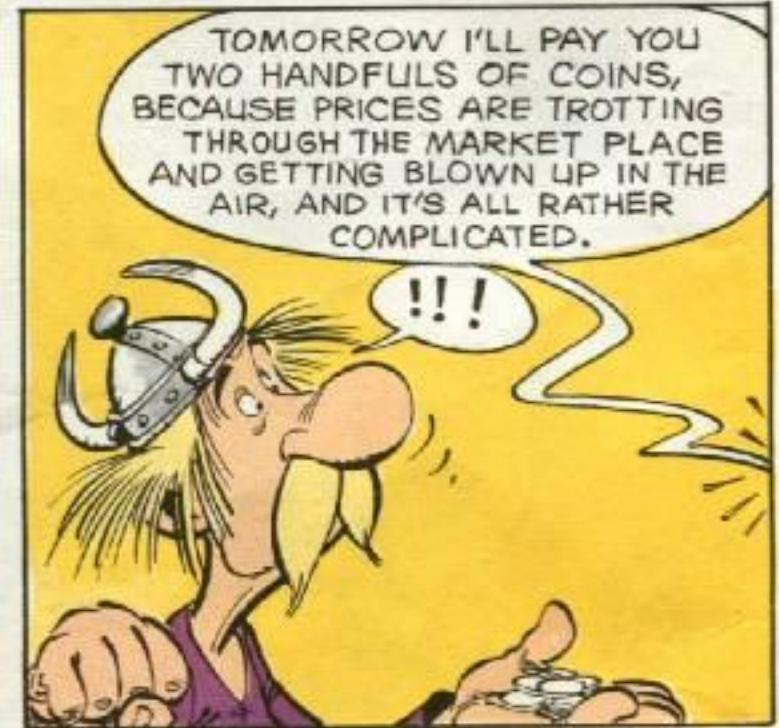
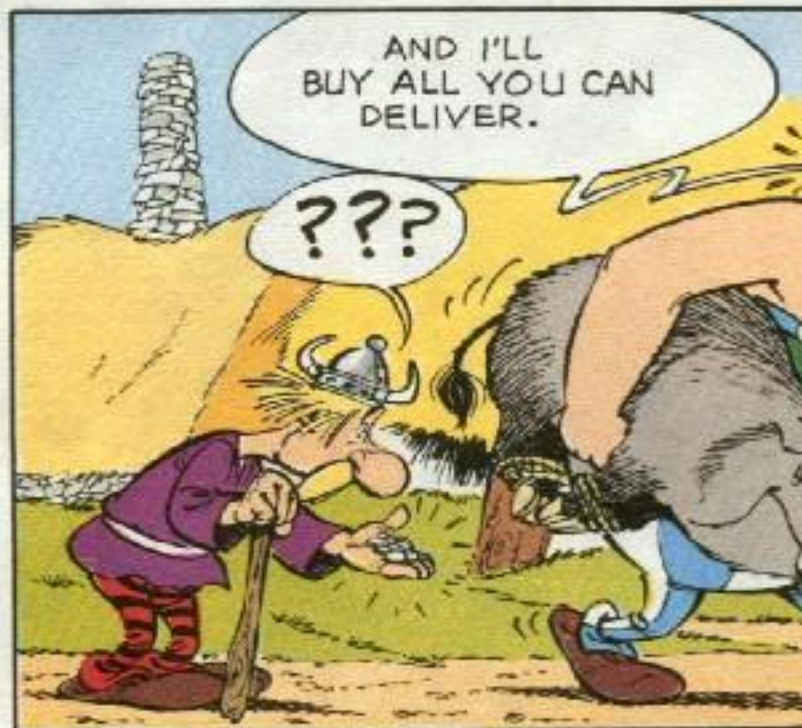
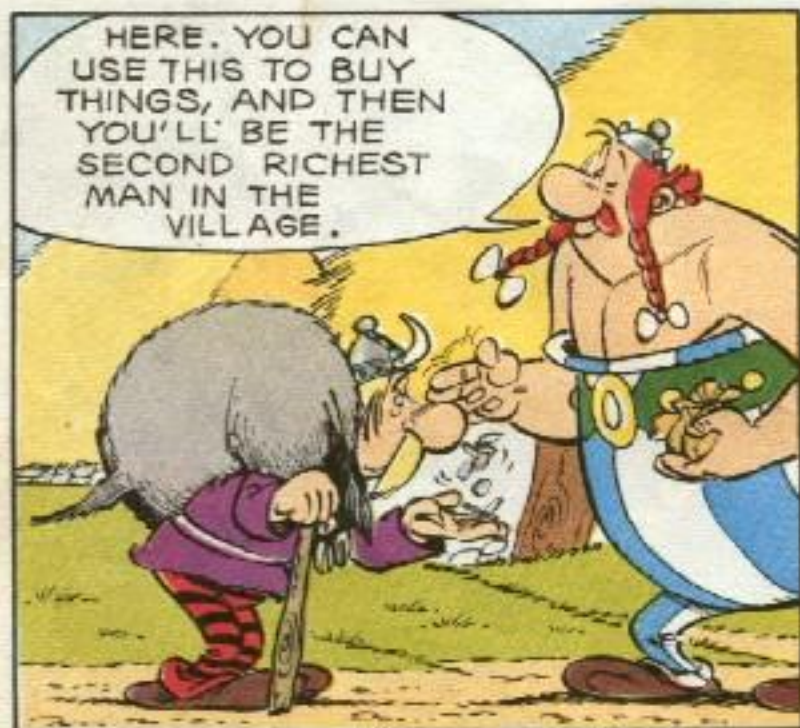
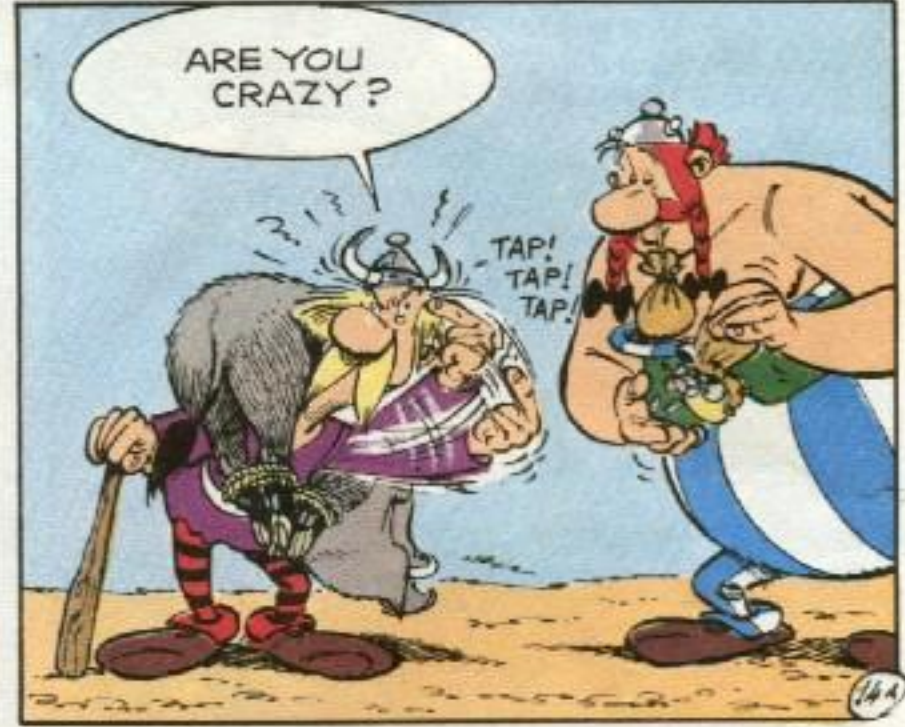
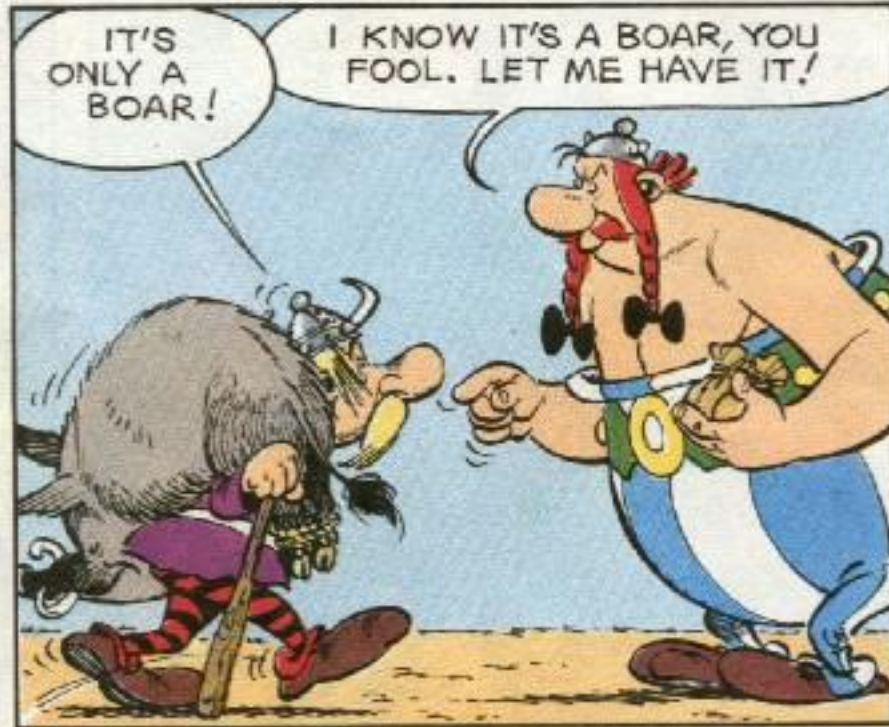
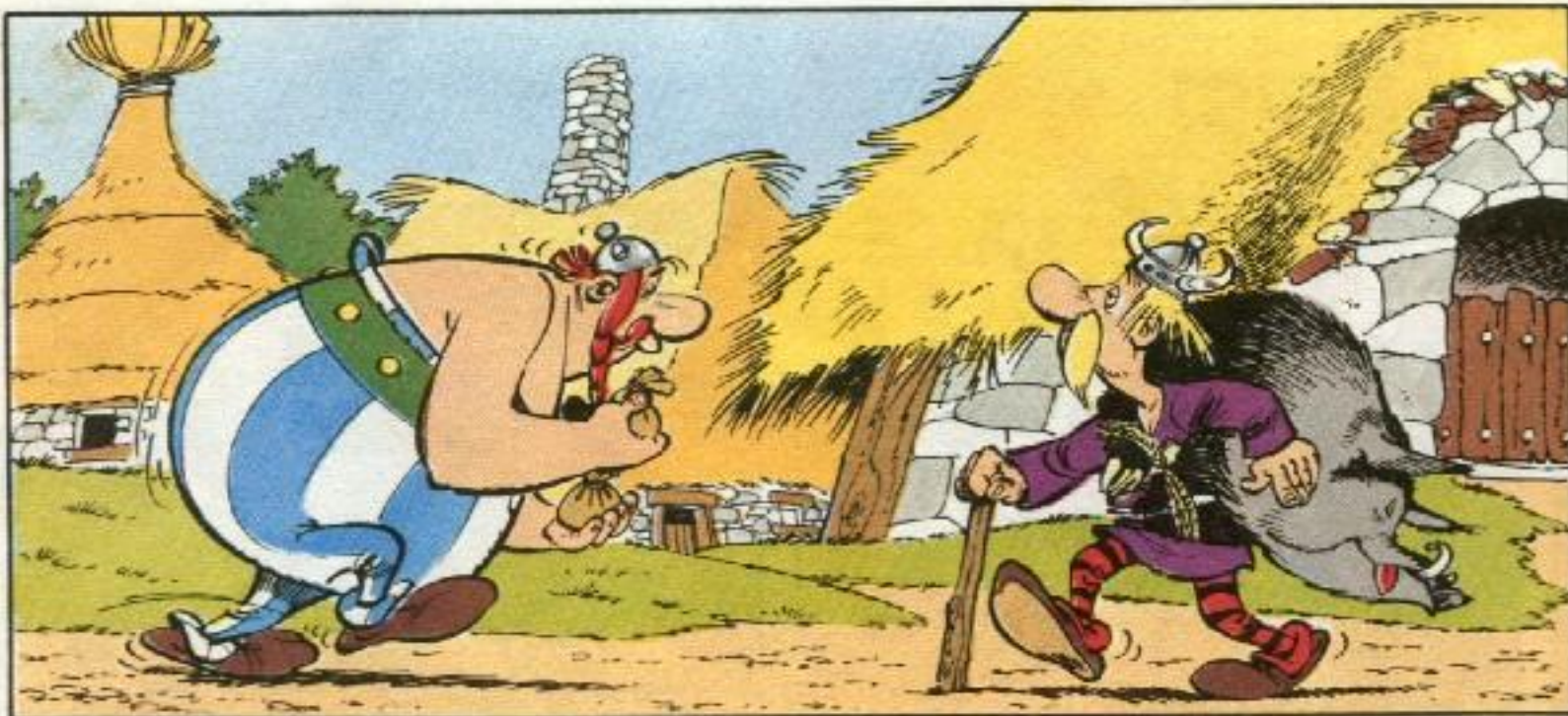
OH YES, I FORGOT... IT'S ONLY A MENHIR.

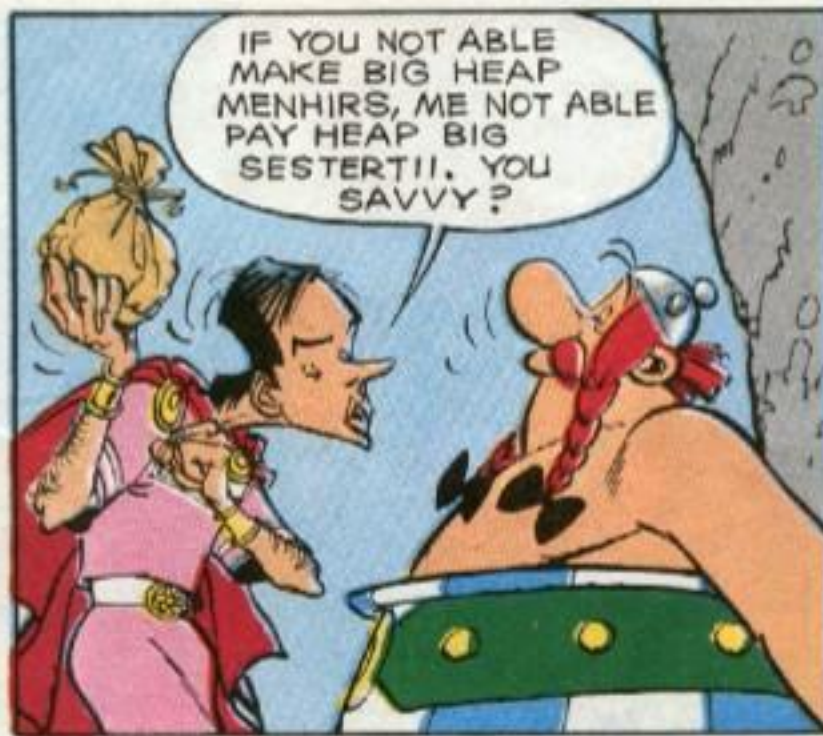
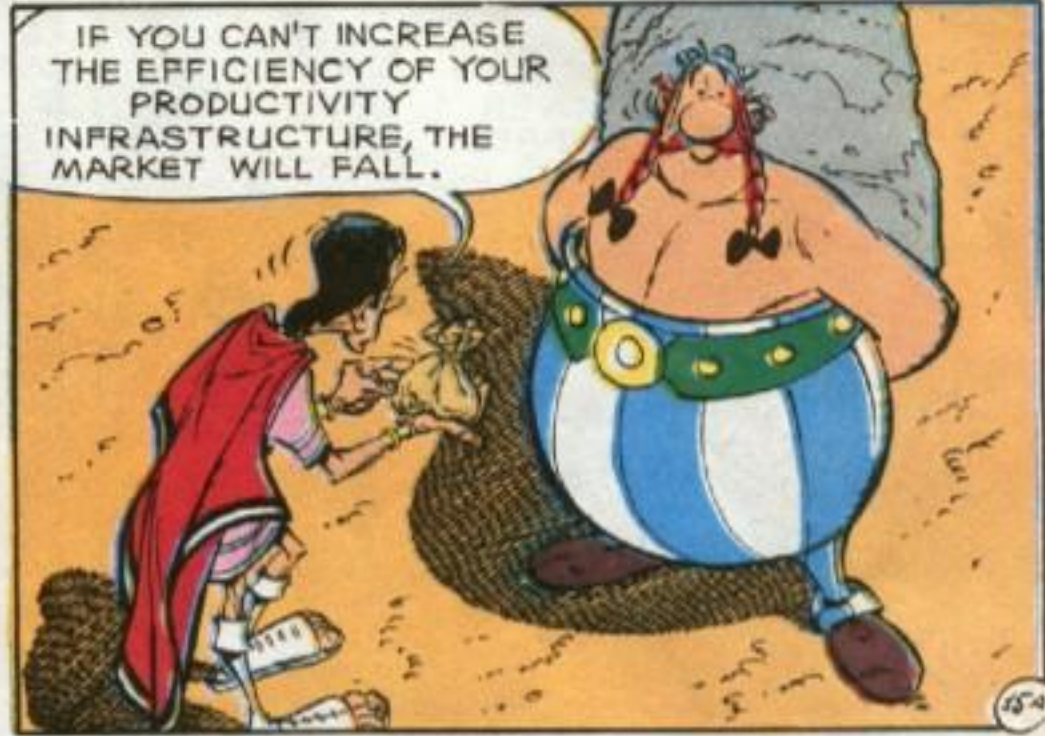
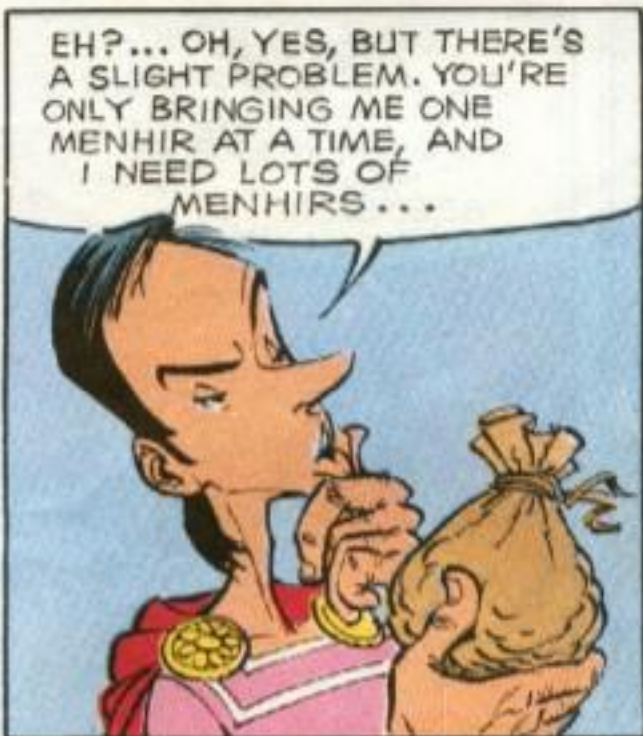
MAGNIFICENT!

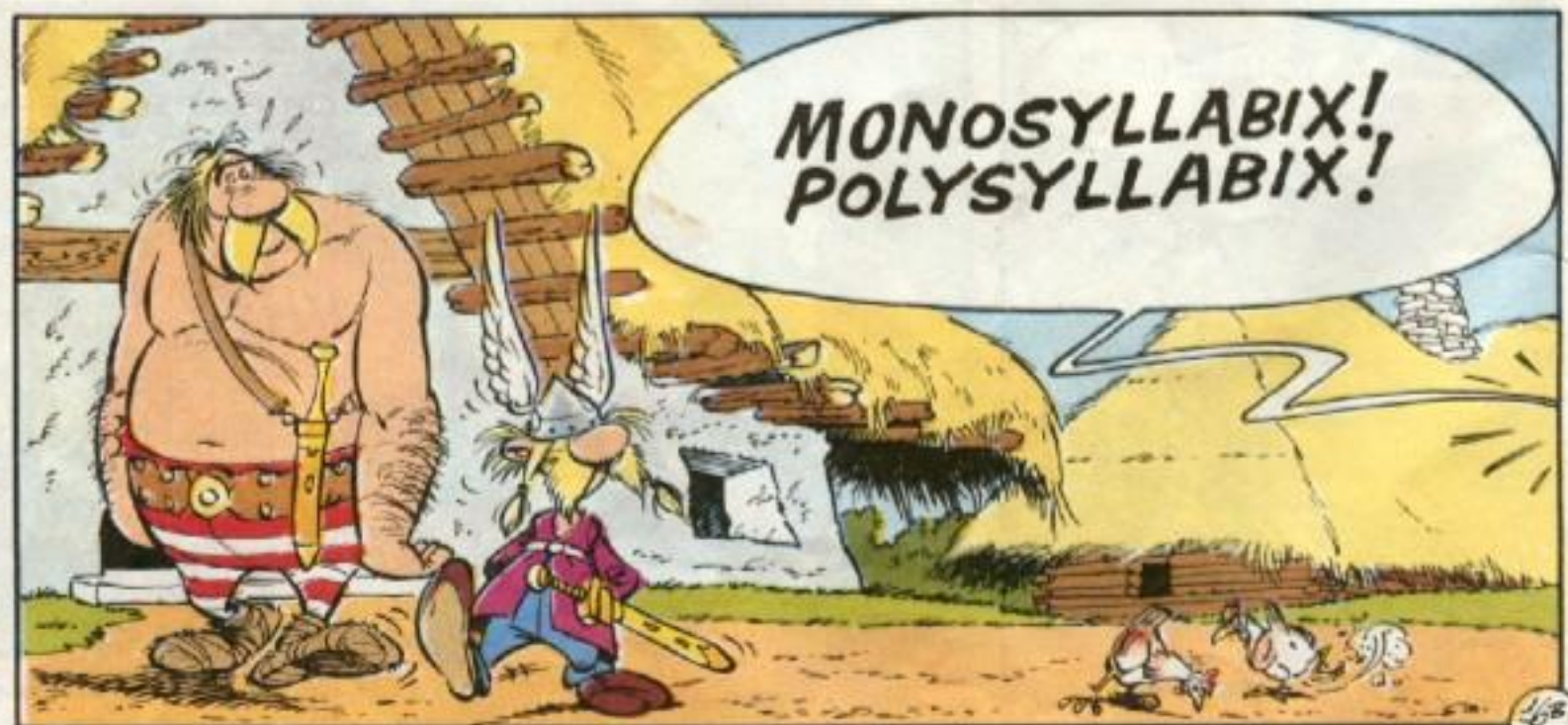
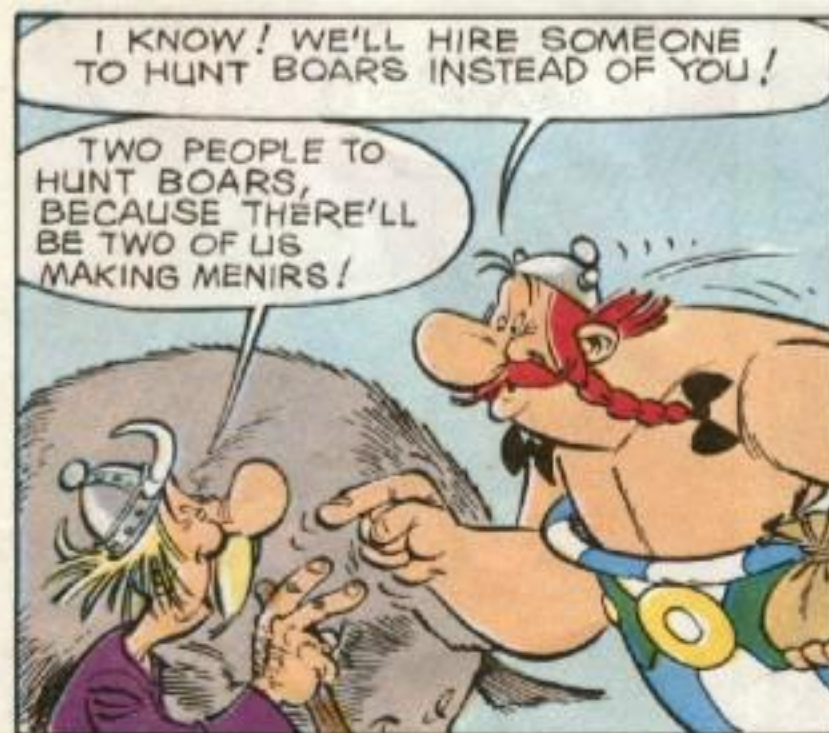
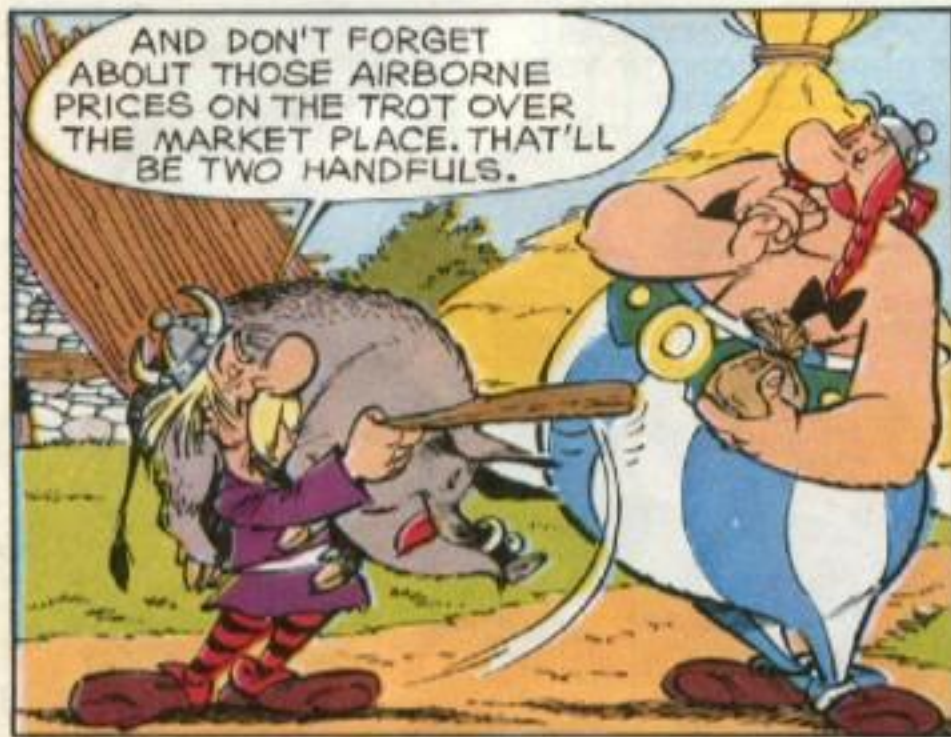
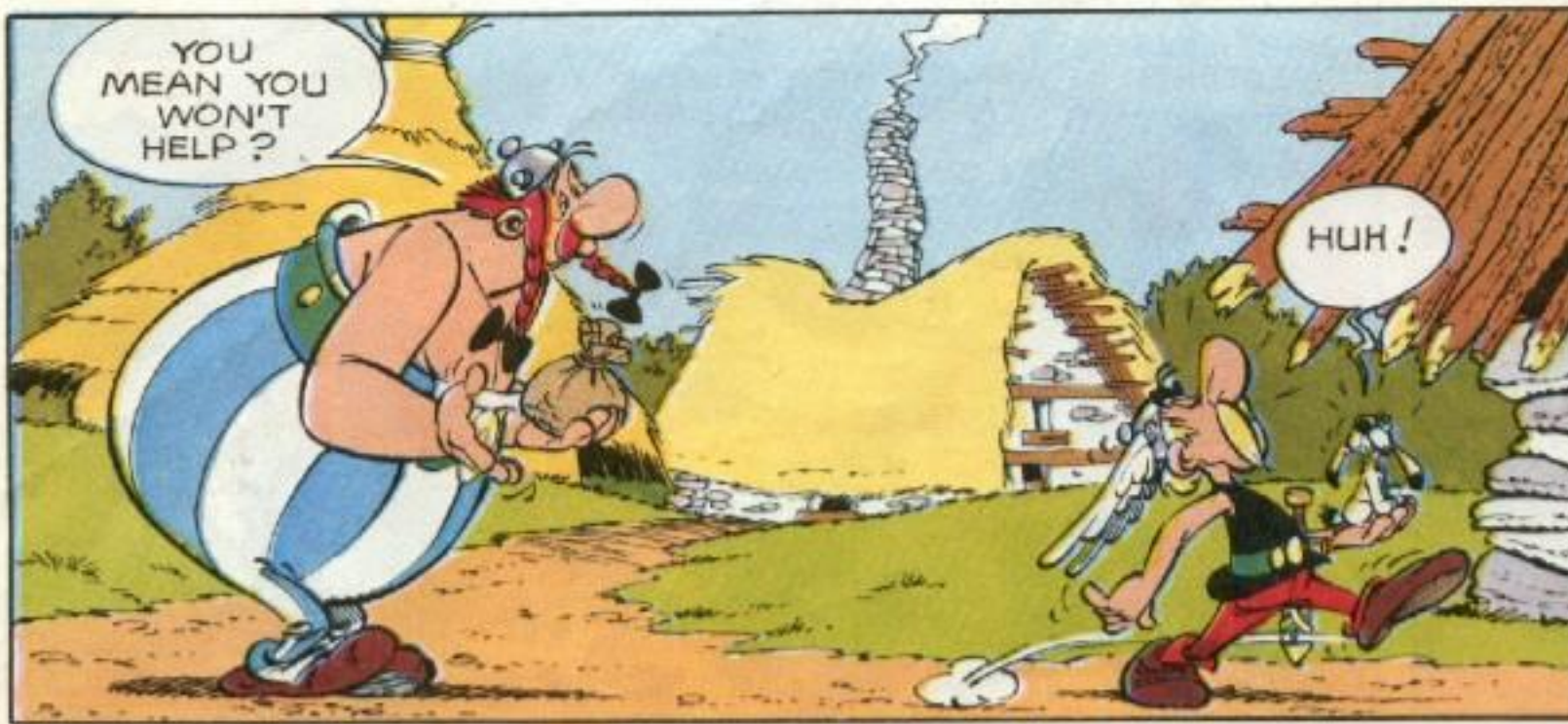


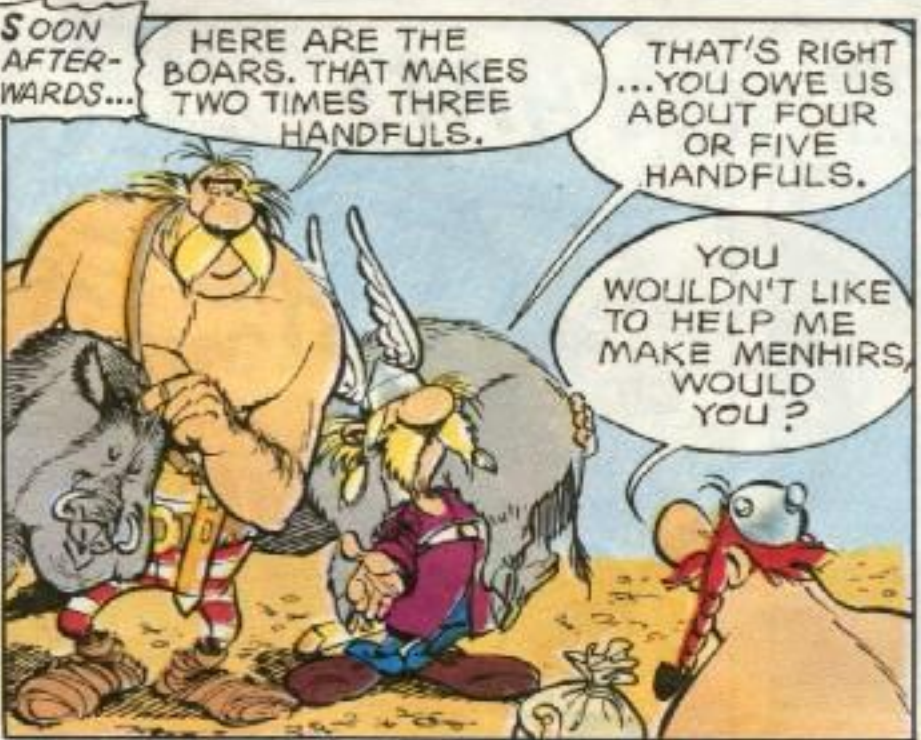
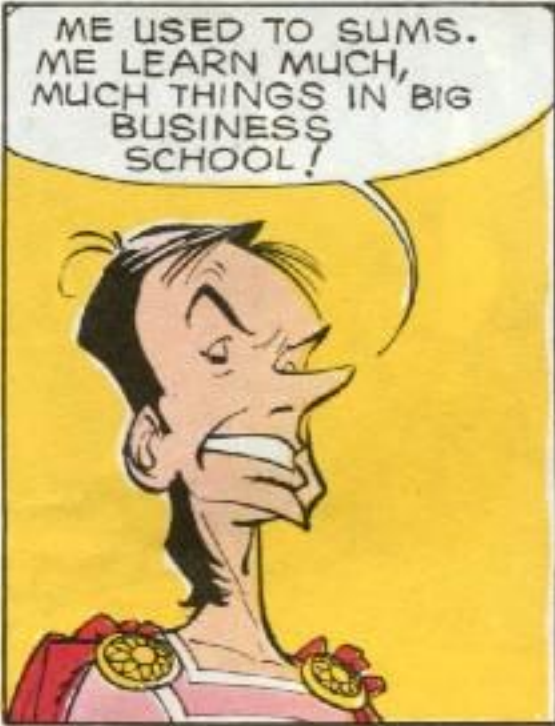


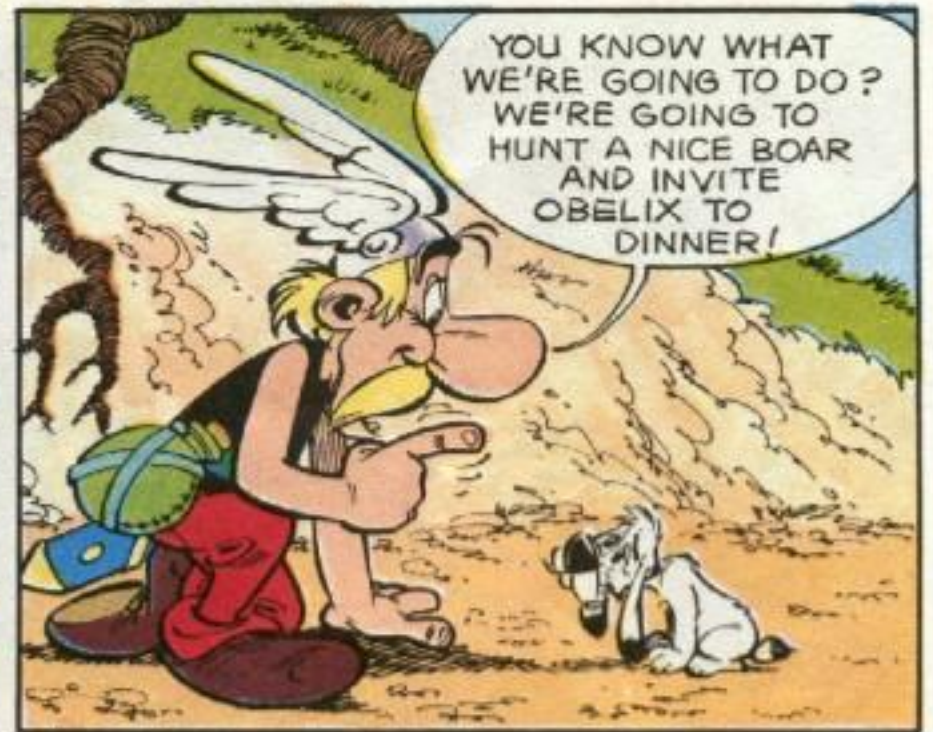
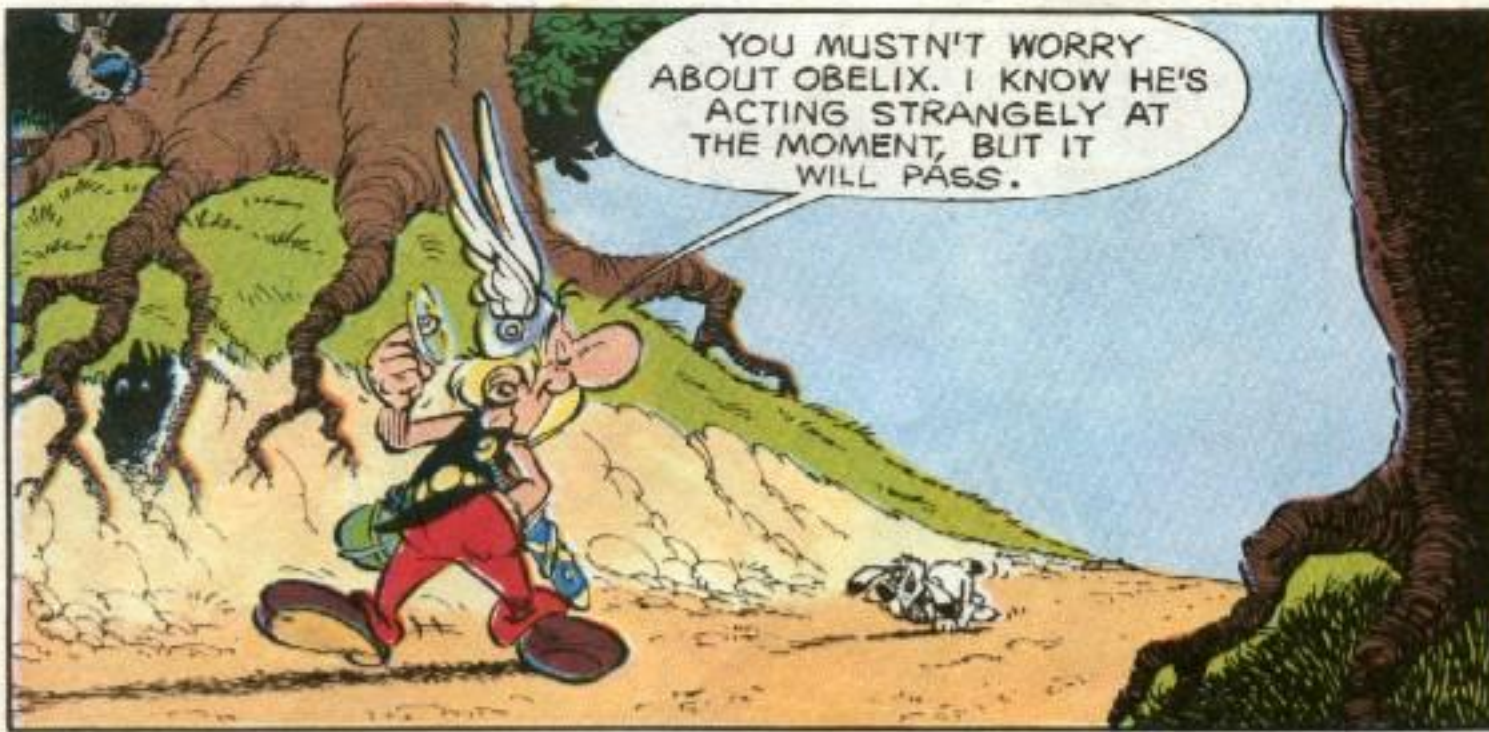


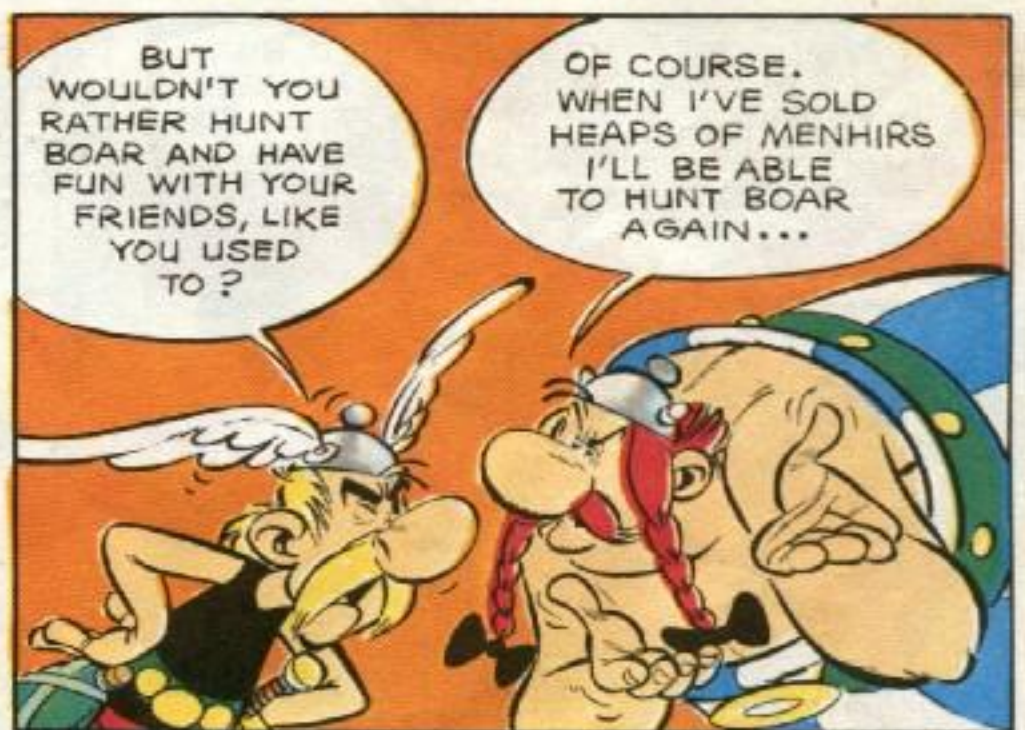
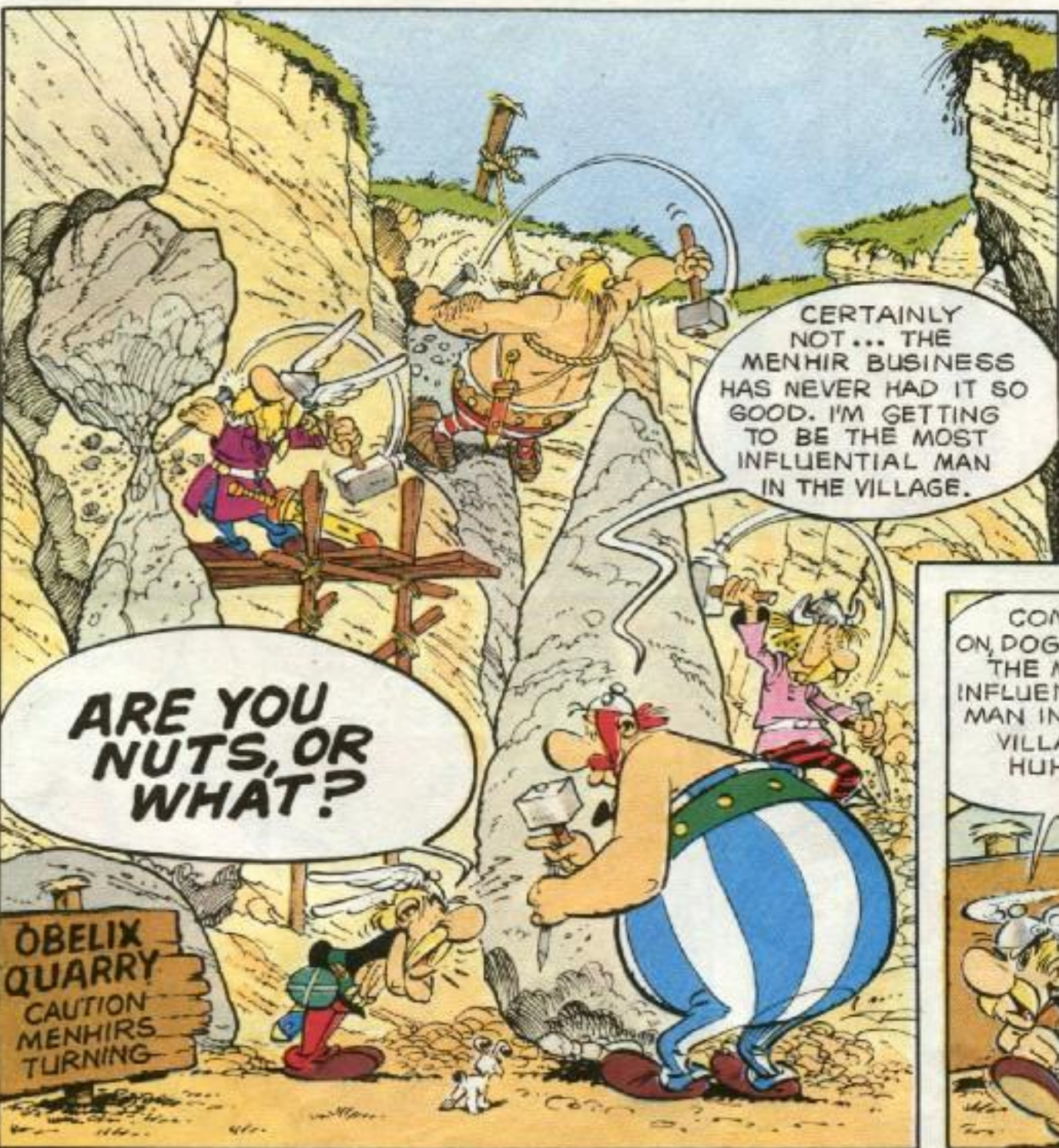
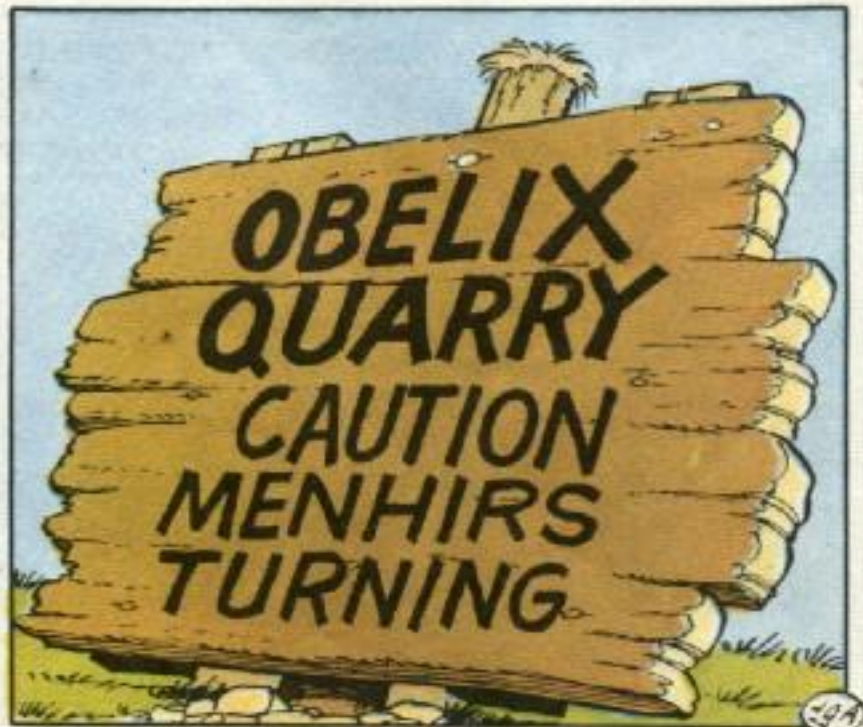










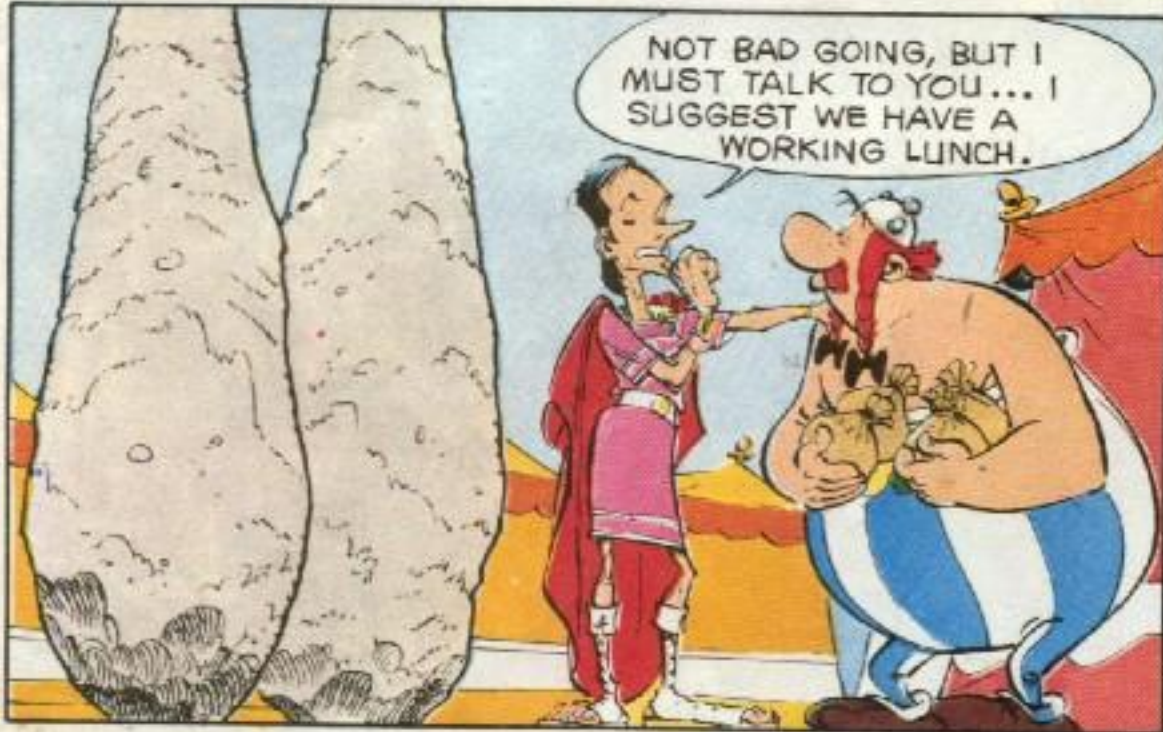




I DON'T THINK IT'S ANYTHING SERIOUS...



BUT WHAT BOTHERS ME IS THIS SUDDEN PASSION THE ROMANS HAVE FOR MENHIRS...



NOT BAD GOING, BUT I MUST TALK TO YOU... I SUGGEST WE HAVE A WORKING LUNCH.



THAT'S LUCKY. SOMETHING SEEMS TO HAVE KEPT MY HUNTERS IN THE FOREST TODAY.



PRODUCTION HAS INCREASED, BUT YOU STILL HAVE A DELIVERY PROBLEM. YOU NEED TO STEP UP THE EFFICIENCY OF YOUR DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS.

UH?



SORRY, I FORGOT... YOU NOT BRING PLENTY MENHIRS ALL ONE TIME. YOU BRING MORE MENHIRS QUICK QUICK!



ME NOT FIND PLENTY DELIVERY MEN...

WELL, THINK THE PROBLEM OVER. WE'LL BE IN TOUCH AND HAVE ANOTHER WORKING LUNCH.



AND ANOTHER THING: YOU WANT TO START SPENDING YOUR SESTERTII. YOU NEED SOME SMARTER CLOTHES...

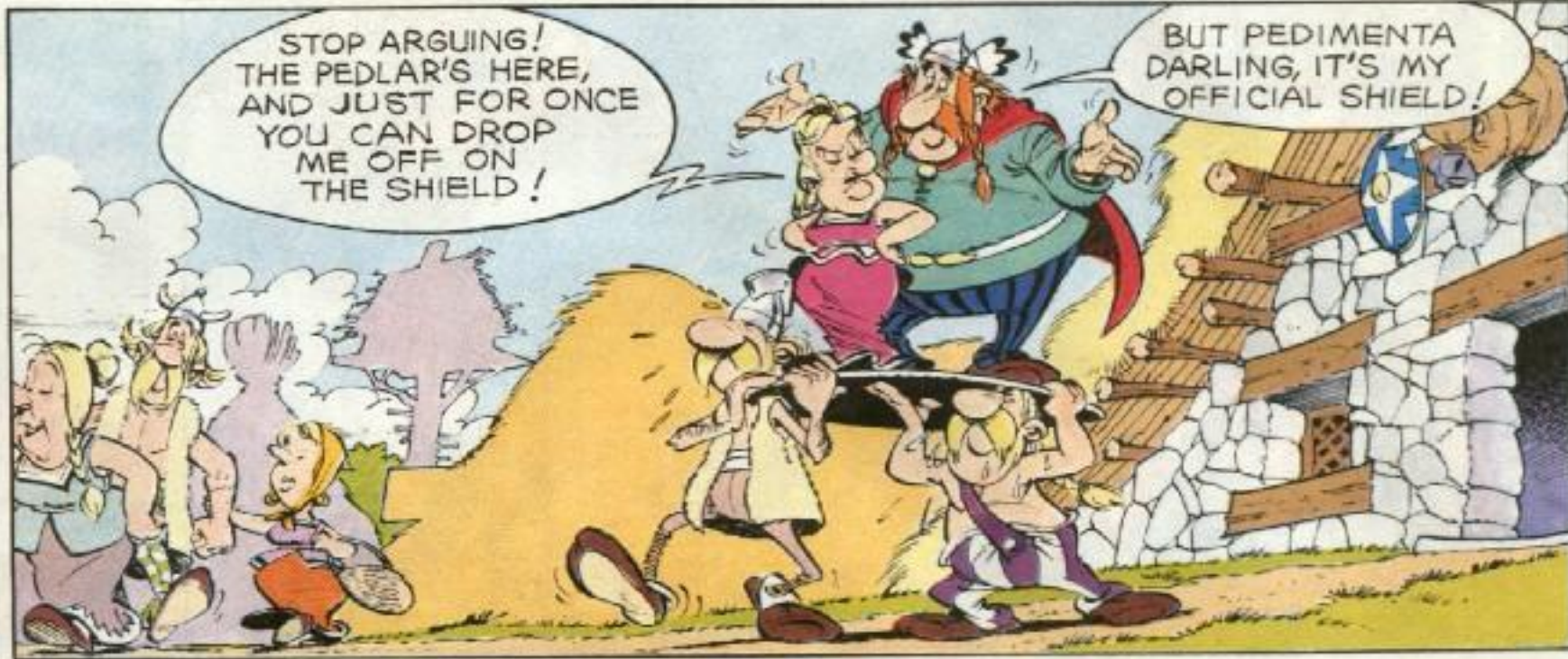


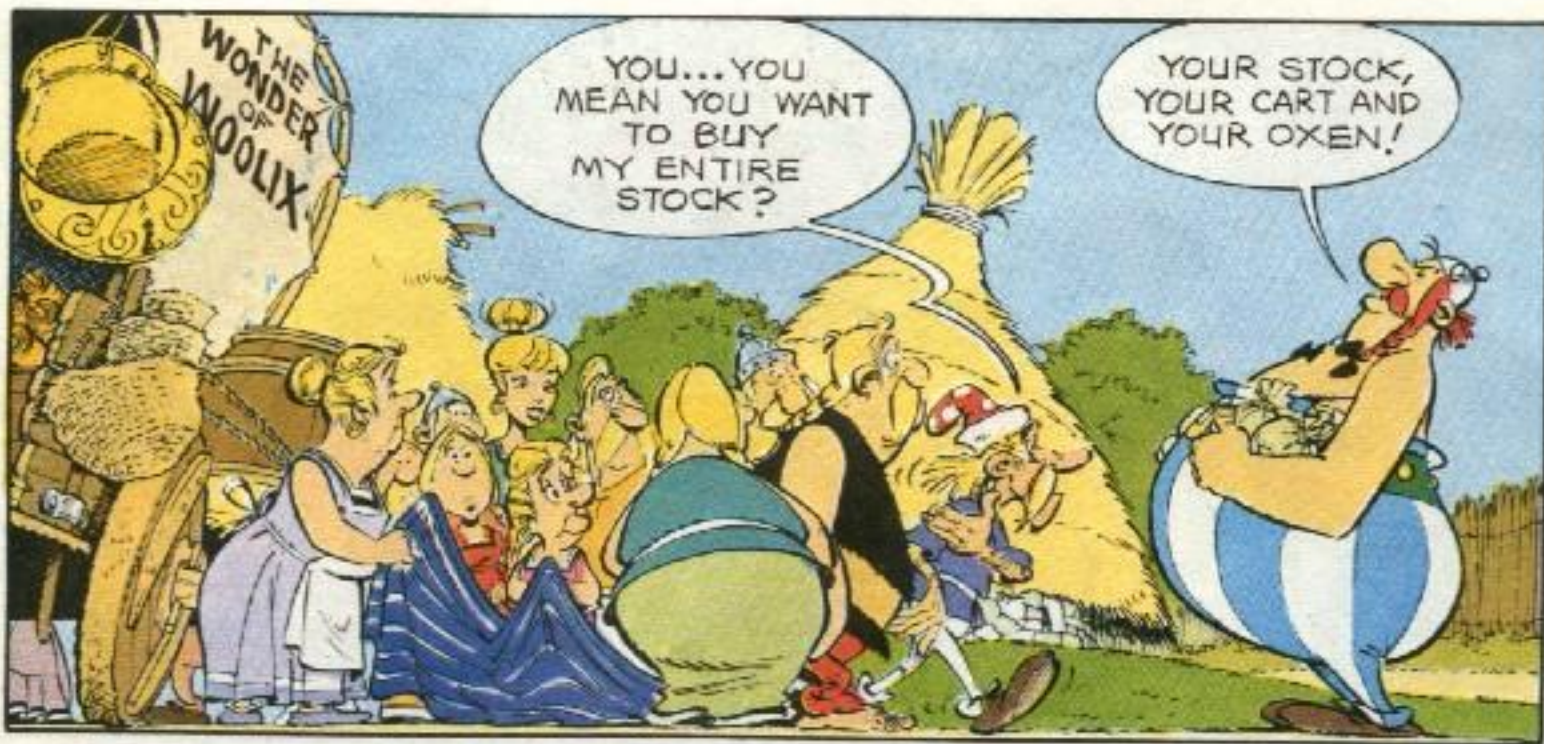
WHY? WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH MY BREECHES?

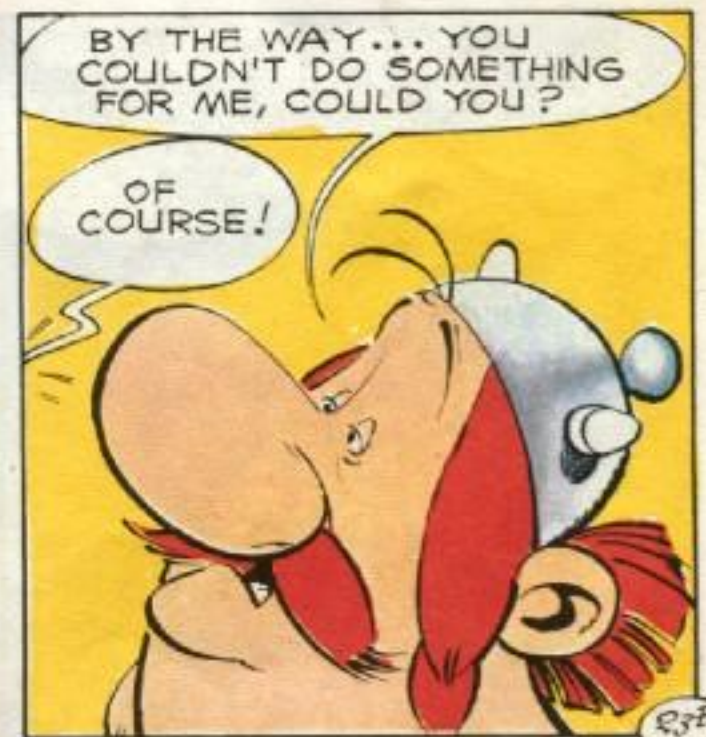
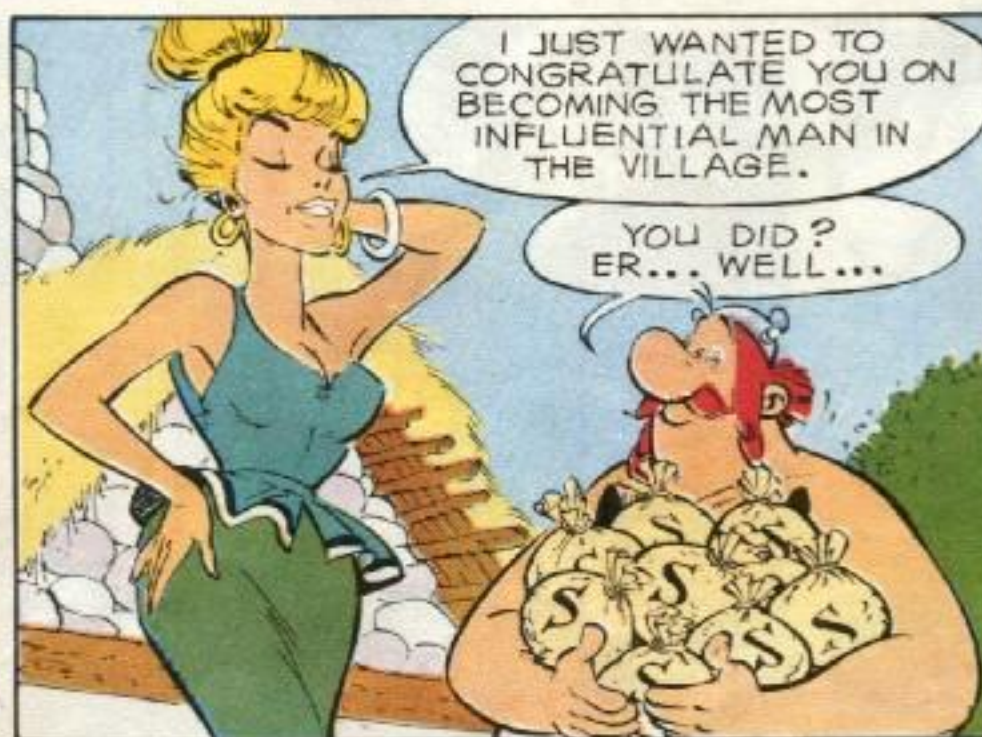
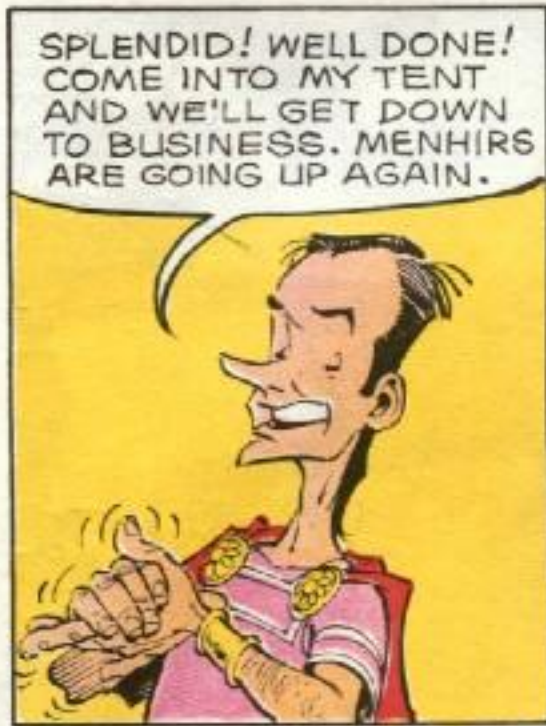


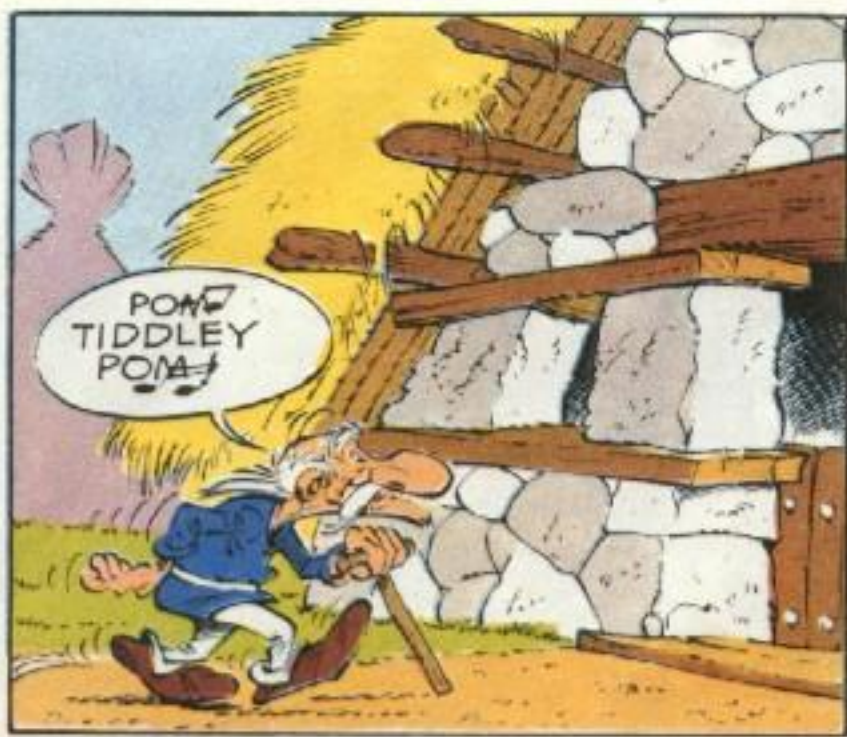
IT'S NOT THE WAY FOR A MAN WHO'S DOING SO WELL IN MENHIRS TO DRESS.

IT ISN'T?







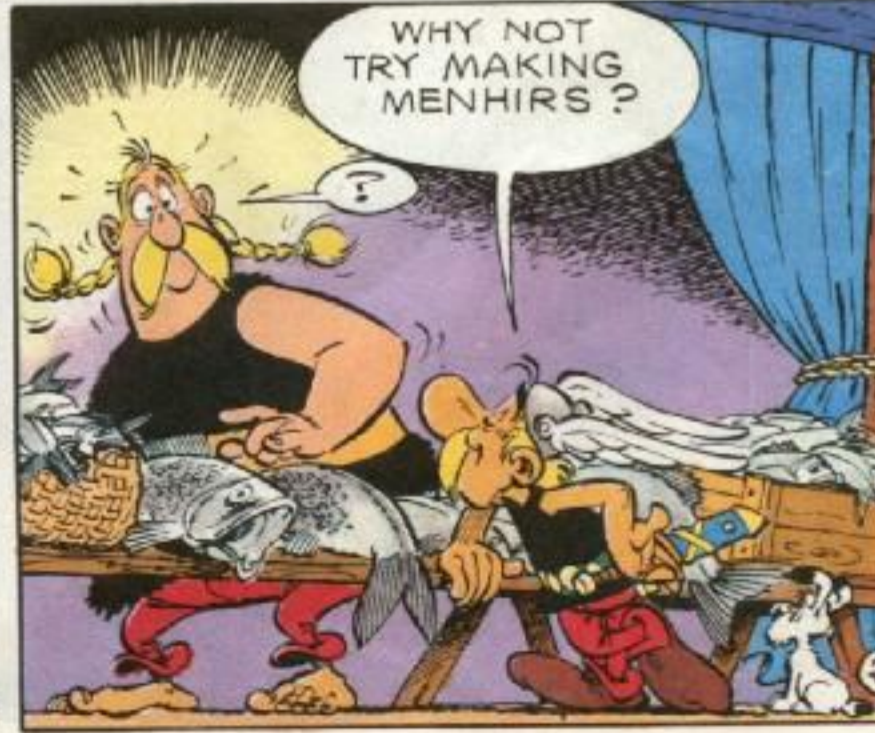
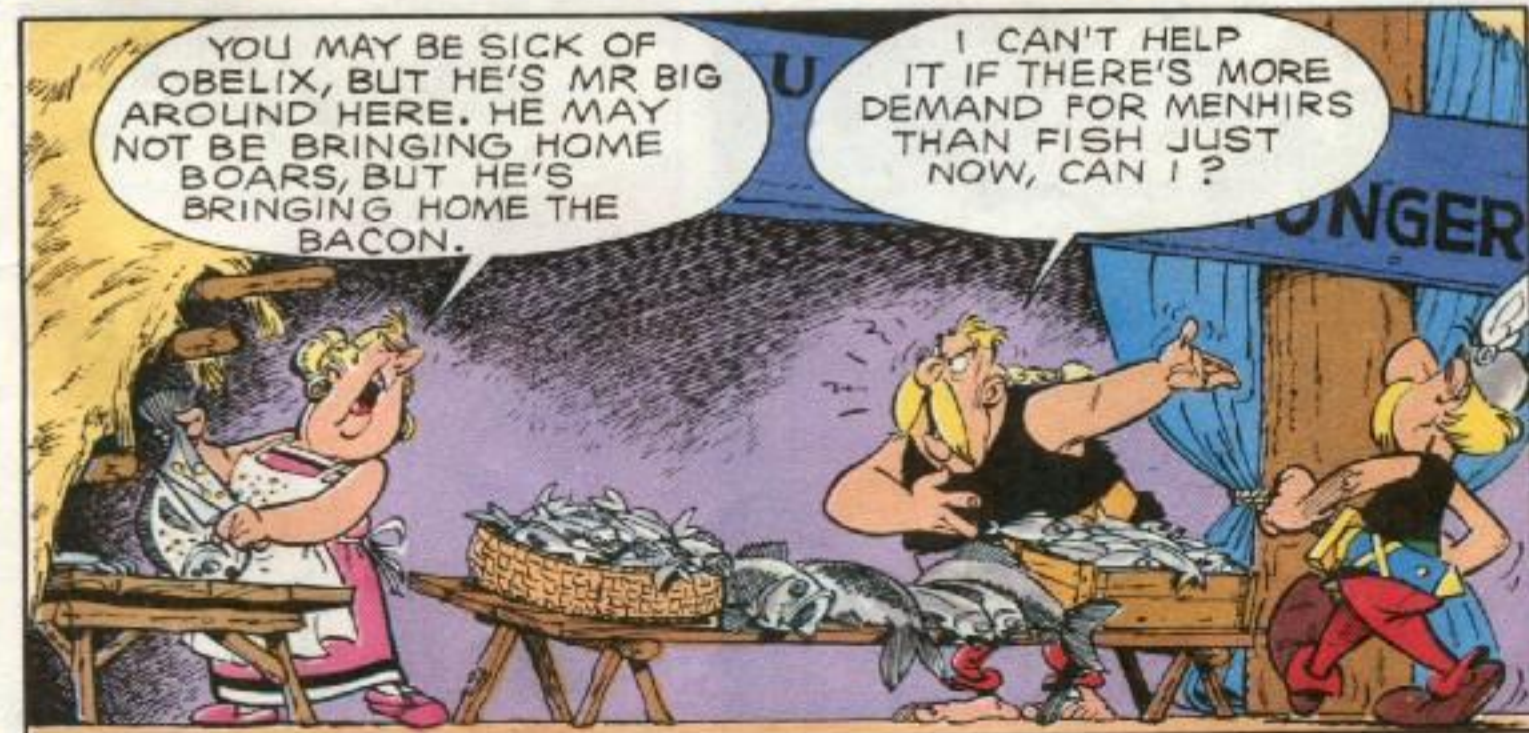
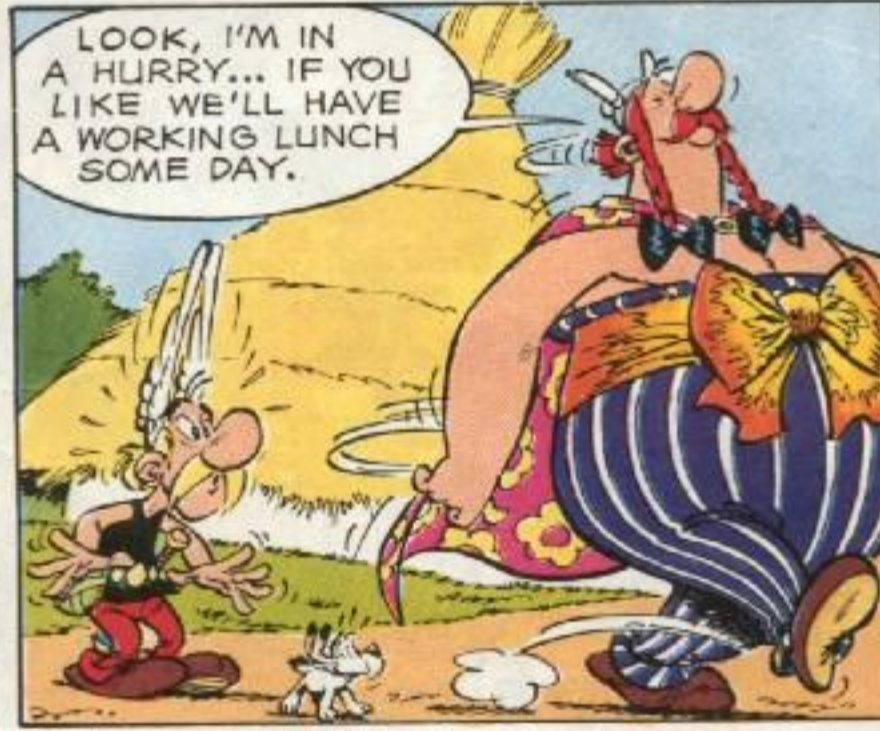
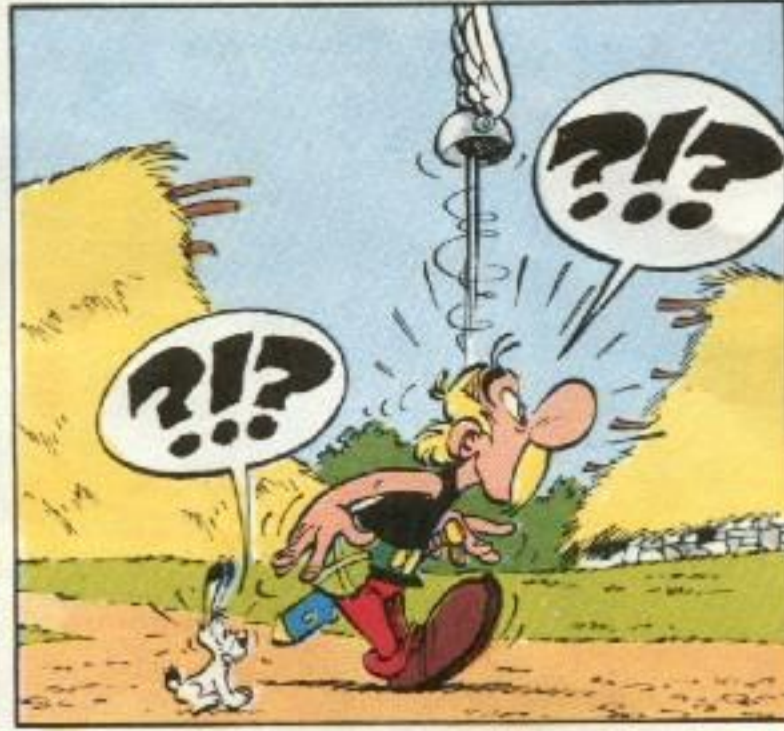
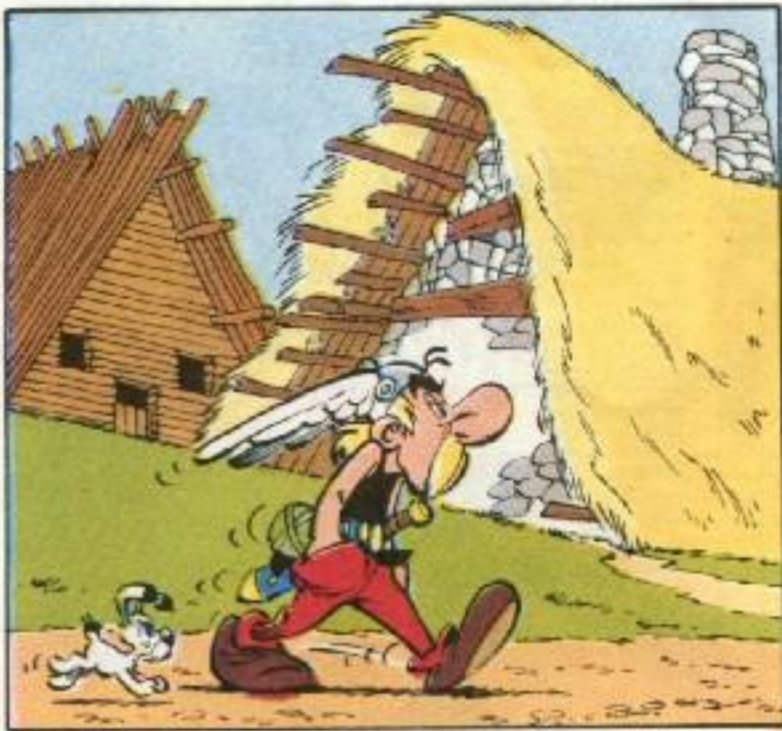


OBELIX ASKED ME TO MAKE HIM SOME CLOTHES. HE'S GOING TO PAY HAND-SOMELY...



A LITTLE LATER...







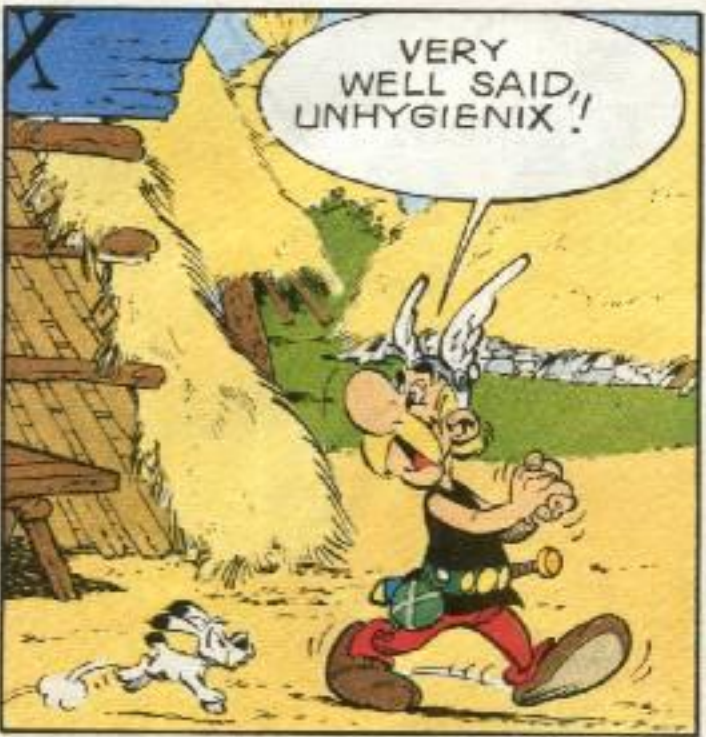
MAKING MENHIRS? BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW TO MAKE MENHIRS!

OH, YOU DON'T NEED A DRUID'S DEGREE TO LEARN.

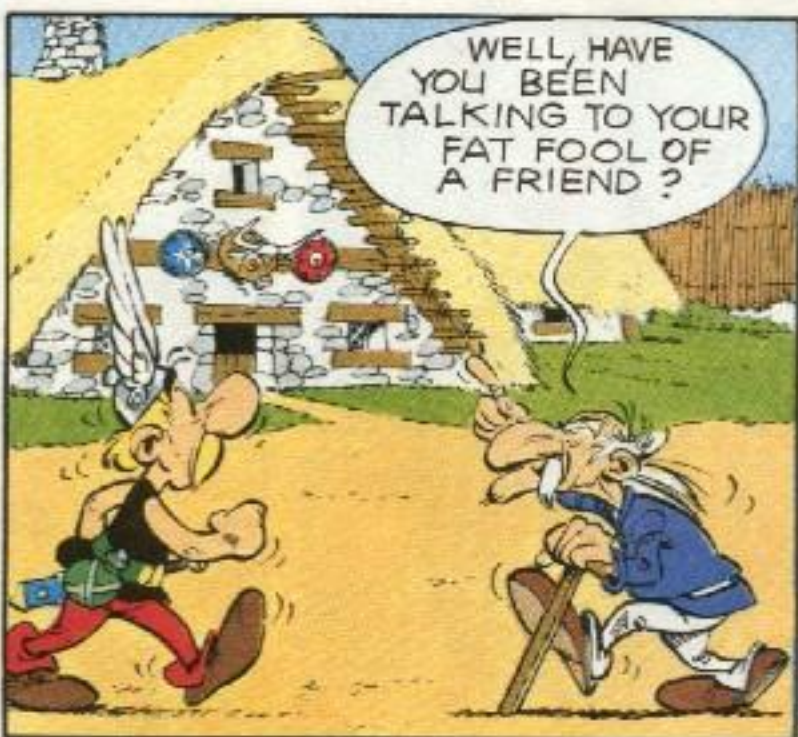
THE THING IS, MENHIRS ARE HEAVIER THAN HERRINGS! NOW OBELIX IS STRONG...



I'M FED TO THE BACK TEETH WITH OBELIX! IF I CAN CARRY A HERRING I CAN CARRY A MENHIR!



VERY WELL SAID, UNHYGIENIX!



WELL, HAVE YOU BEEN TALKING TO YOUR FAT FOOL OF A FRIEND?



I'VE GOT A BETTER IDEA: YOU CAN FIGHT HIM WITH HIS OWN WEAPONS. YOU CAN MAKE MENHIRS!

MENHIRS!



THE FACT IS...

DON'T WORRY, I'LL SEE TO EVERYTHING!



OHO! THAT GLEAM IN YOUR EYE TELLS ME YOU HAVE AN IDEA!

YES, I HAVE! IF THE ROMANS WANT MENHIRS, WE'LL PROVIDE THEM!



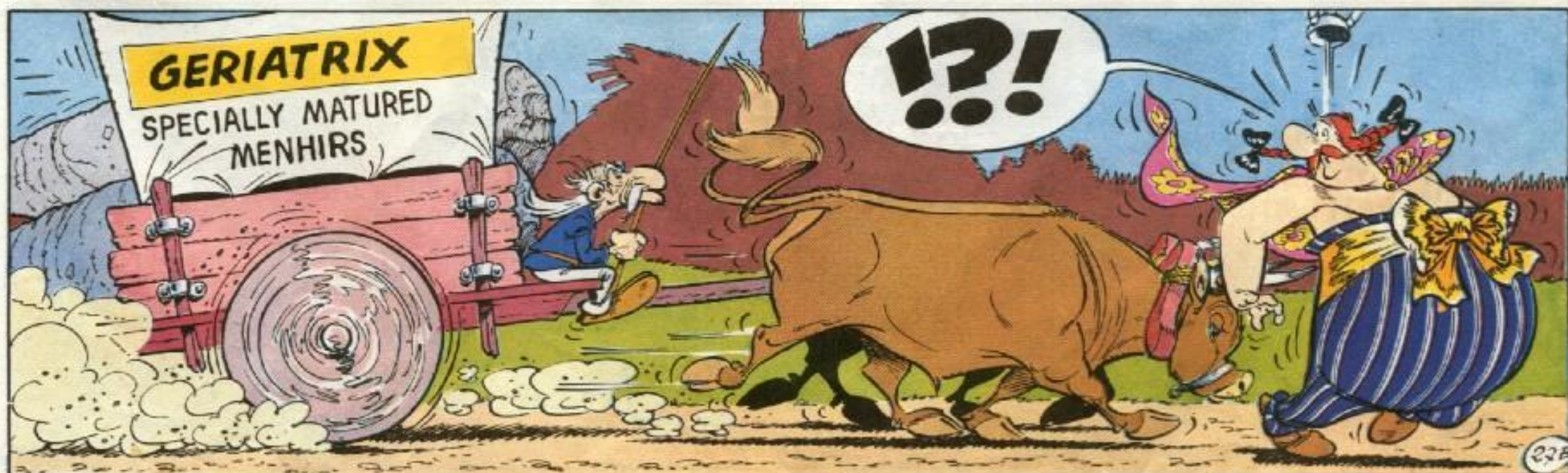
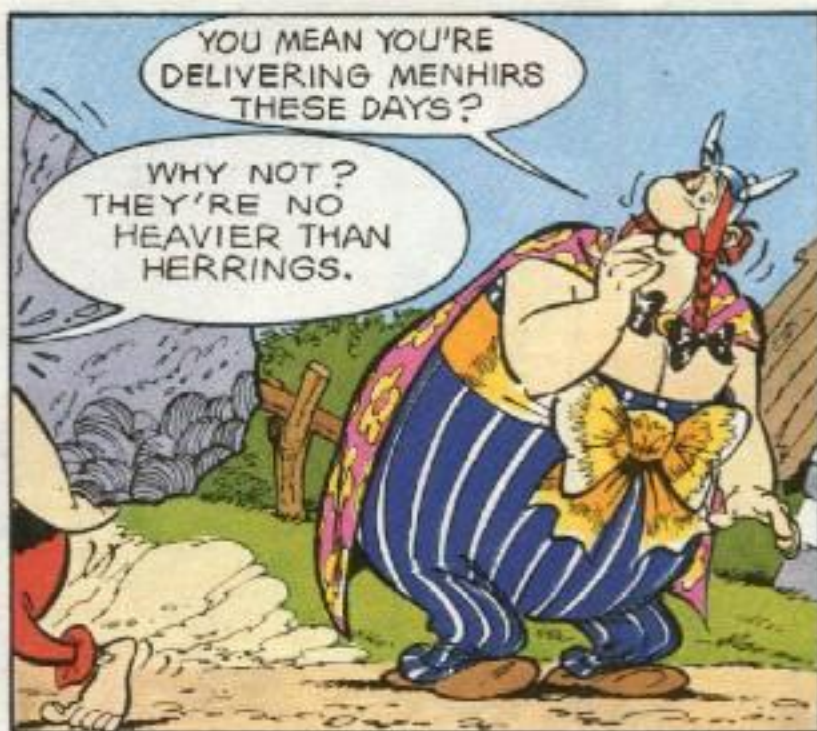
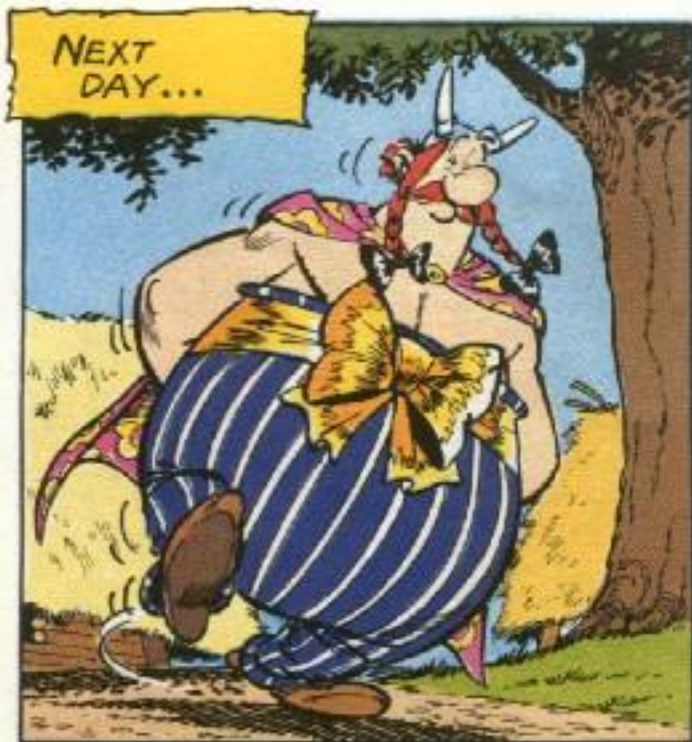
WILL YOU LAY ON MAGIC POTION FOR EVERYONE WHO WANTS TO MAKE MENHIRS?

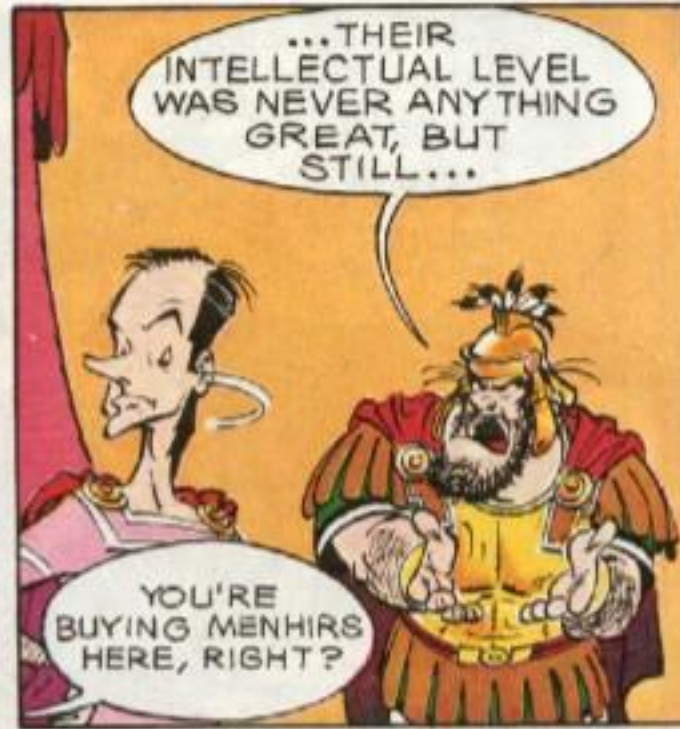


BY ALL MEANS! LET US PROMOTE THE GROWTH OF THE MENHIR INDUSTRY! OUR VILLAGE WILL BECOME THE BIGGEST MENHIR PRODUCTION CENTRE IN THE ENTIRE ANCIENT WORLD!



AND THE FUNNY THING IS, WE STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT MENHIRS ARE FOR!







JUST WHERE DO YOU THINK ALL THESE MENHIRS WILL GET YOU?

I DON'T WANT THEM TO GET ME ANYWHERE. I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU, I CAME AND I CONQUERED!



THE GAULS ARE ALL USING THEIR MAGIC POWERS TO MAKE MENHIRS, INSTEAD OF THUMPING OUR LEGIONARIES...



THEY HAVE BEEN DEFEATED BY THE PROFIT MOTIVE! GOLD AND HIGH LIVING WILL WEAKEN THEIR MORAL FIBRE. DON'T YOU AGREE?

WELL... MAYBE...



WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO WITH THIS BIG HEAP OF MENHIRS?

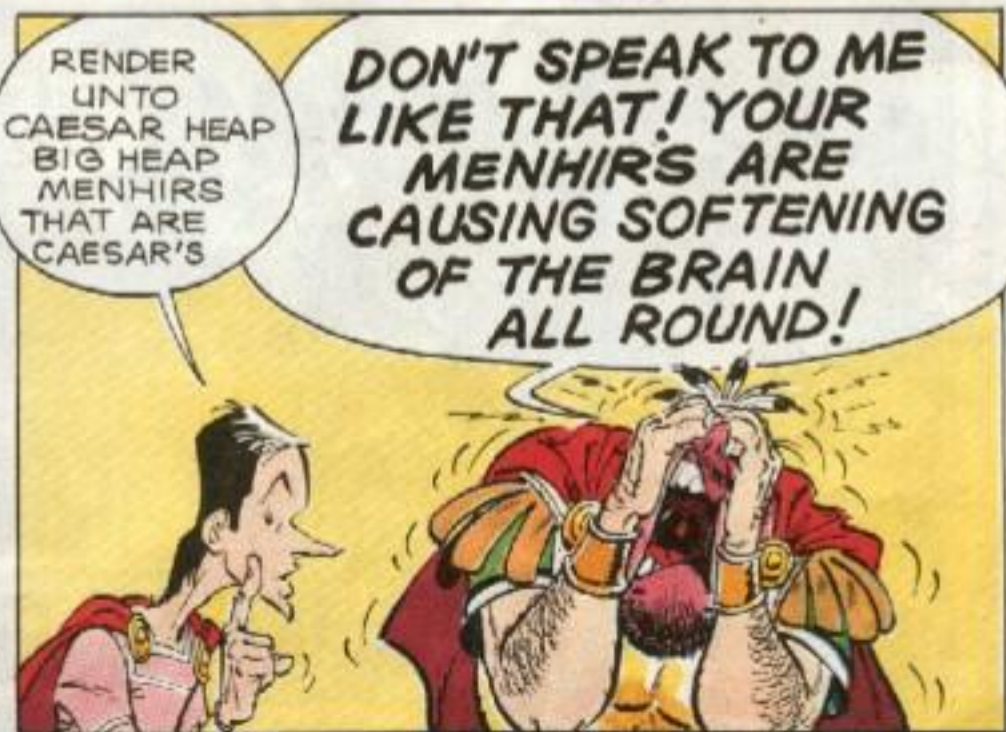


BUT TAKE A LOOK AT THIS!



REDDE CAESARI QUAE SUNT CAESARIS.

UH?

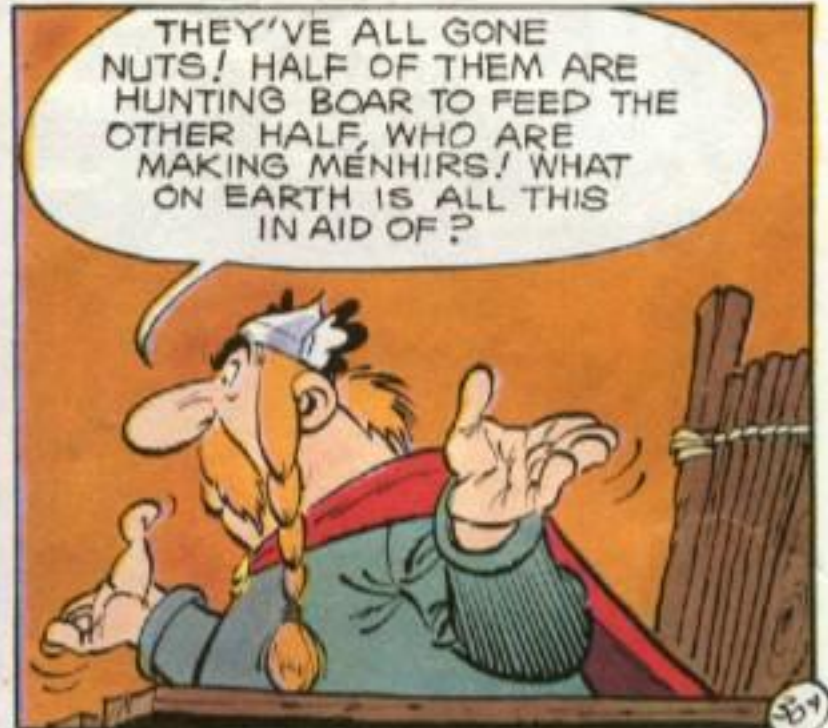


RENDER UNTO CAESAR HEAP BIG HEAP MENHIRS THAT ARE CAESAR'S

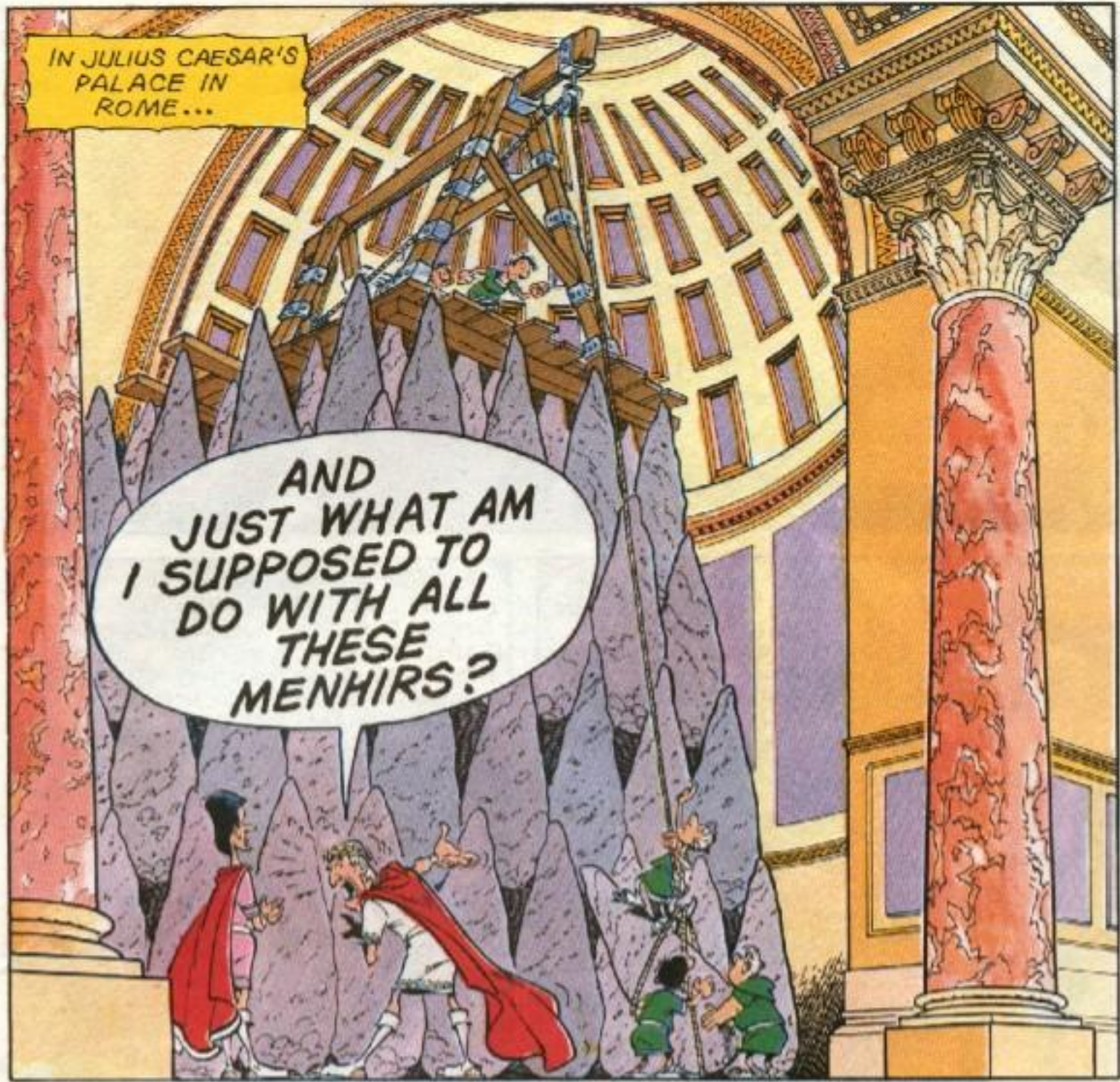
DON'T SPEAK TO ME LIKE THAT! YOUR MENHIRS ARE CAUSING SOFTENING OF THE BRAIN ALL ROUND!



CAESAR HAS PAID FOR THESE MENHIRS, SO IT'S ONLY RIGHT FOR ME TO DELIVER THEM. WHILE I'M AWAY, CARRY ON BUYING MENHIRS, AND KEEP RAISING THE PRICE. SI VIS PACEM, BUY MENHIRS!



IN JULIUS CAESAR'S PALACE IN ROME...



AND JUST WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO WITH ALL THESE MENHIRS?



BUT CAESAR, THOSE MENHIRS ARE THE PROOF OF MY SUCCESS! THE GAULS ARE TOO BUSY MAKING MENHIRS TO FIGHT, SO...

MAYBE, BUT YOU'RE DRAINING MY TREASURY TO KEEP A FEW MADMEN BUSY!



PEACE IS BEYOND ALL PRICE... SI VIS PACEM...



YOUNG MAN, I MAKE THE CLASSICAL REMARKS AROUND HERE, ALEA JACTA EST AND ALL THAT, AND WHAT'S MORE, YOU HAVEN'T ANSWERED MY QUESTION: WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO WITH ALL THESE MENHIRS?



SELL THEM O CAESAR.

SELL THEM?



THAT'S RIGHT. THAT WAY, YOU NOT ONLY RECOVER YOUR EXPENSES, YOU MAKE A PROFIT TOO.

BUT WHO'D WANT MENHIRS? THEY'RE NO GOOD FOR ANYTHING!



PRECISELY! WE MUST DRAW UP A PLAN OF CAMPAIGN, DECIDE ON OUR STRATEGY, SET OUR SIGHTS ON THE RIGHT TARGET!



CAMPAIGN? STRATEGY? TARGET? THAT'S THE KIND OF THING I LIKE TO HEAR! I'LL GIVE ORDERS FOR THE LEGIONS TO PREPARE FOR BATTLE!



NO, NO! LET ME EXPLAIN...

THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR THOSE OF YOU UNACQUAINTED WITH THE ANCIENT BUSINESS WORLD TO UNDERSTAND, ESPECIALLY AS, THESE DAYS, SUCH A STATE OF AFFAIRS COULD NEVER EXIST, SINCE NO ONE WOULD DREAM OF TRYING TO SELL SOMETHING UTTERLY USELESS...



AT THIS PRESENT MOMENT IN TIME THE DEMAND FOR MENHIRS IS VIRTUALLY NIL. THEREFORE WE MUST BE CREATIVE... FIND HOW TO APPEAL TO THE POTENTIAL CONSUMER...



LET US STUDY THOSE FACTORS WHICH WILL ALLOW US TO HOME IN ON OUR TARGET...



PEOPLE WILL BUY:
A: SOMETHING USEFUL;
B: SOMETHING COMFORTABLE;
C: SOMETHING THAT'S FUN;
D: SOMETHING TO MAKE THE NEIGHBOURS ENVIOUS. WE HAVE TO AIM FOR **D!**



A CAMPAIGN CENTRED ON A CAREFULLY DEFINED AREA SHOULD ALLOW US TO MAKE RAPID CONTACT WITH A LARGE BODY OF CONSUMERS ABLE TO ABSORB OUR STOCKS AT MAXIMUM SPEED...



INSTANT RECOGNITION OF THE PRODUCT WILL BE OBTAINED BY INTENSIVE REPETITION OF THE QUALITIES OF THE AFORESAID PRODUCT...



...WHICH MAY BE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS: **A:** DURABILITY; **B:** SOLIDITY; **C:** OTHER QUALITIES.



THUS I MAKE NO RASH PROMISES WHEN I SAY THAT WE SHOULD SUCCEED IN OBTAINING POSITIVE RESULTS, SALESWISE, AT NO VERY DISTANT DATE.



UH?



ME THINK YOU ABLE SELL HEAP BIG HEAP MENHIRS PLENTY QUICK.

UDERZO
 GOSINNA
 ALBO
 NOTAMBA
 LAPILLO

A FEW DAYS LATER,
ON EVERY WALL
IN ROME...

YOUR DEAREST WISH...

A MENHIR

IT'S BIG, IT'S
BEAUTIFUL,
IT'S A
MENHIR

ON SALE IN ALL THE BEST
TEMPLES, BATHS AND FORUMS

YOU OWN A VILLA, A
CHARIOT, SLAVES...
BUT...

DO YOU OWN A MENHIR?

AND NOW, FOLKS, AS WE
WAIT FOR THE NEXT ACT,
THERE WILL BE A SHORT
INTERLUDE...

IT'S THE RIGHT ONE,
IT'S NOT THE LIGHT ONE,
IT'S A MENHIR...

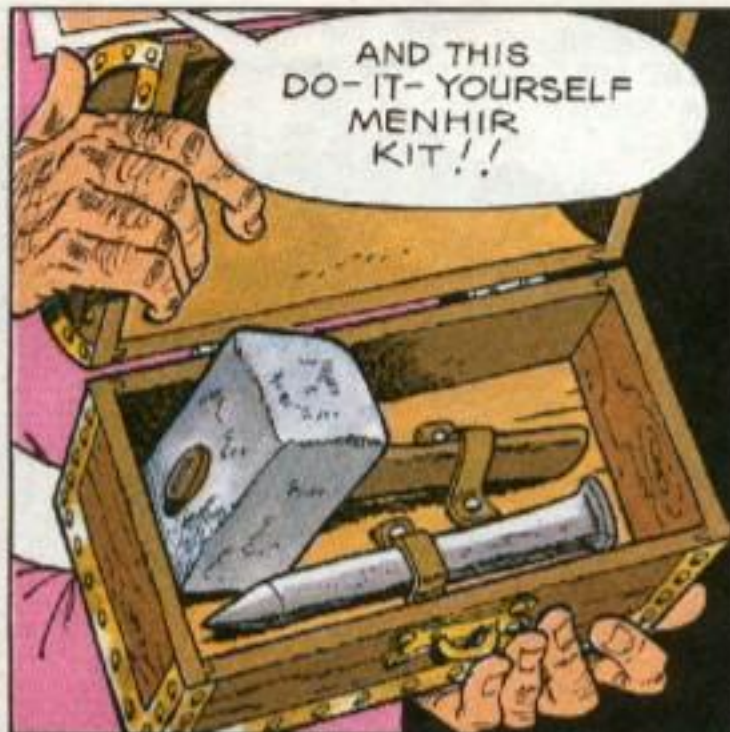
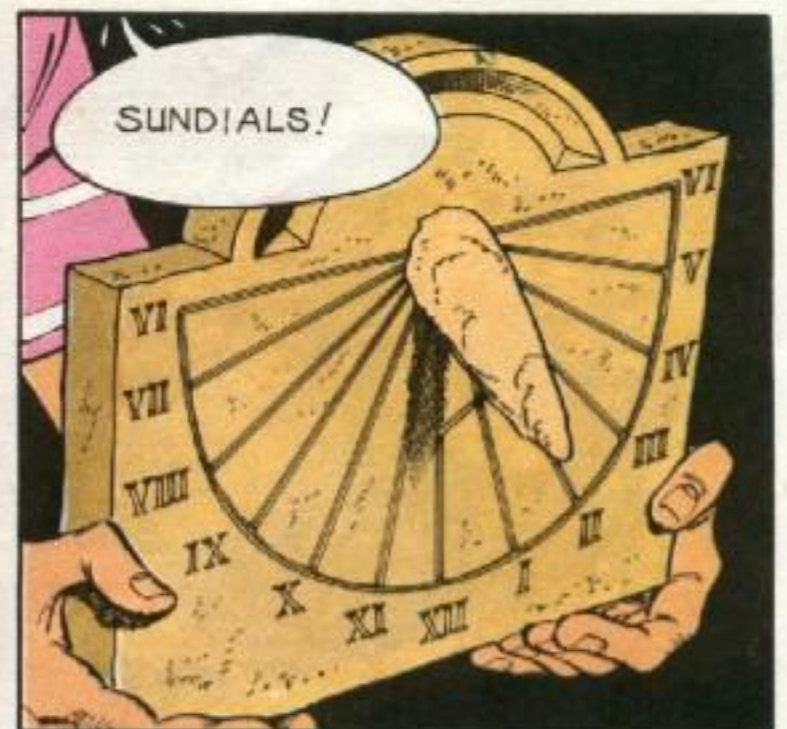
A MENHIR...

YOU KNOW, INCONGRUOUS AND
HIS WIFE NEXT DOOR BOUGHT A
MENHIR. THEY'RE VERY
PLEASED WITH IT!

A MENHIIR!

AND THE RESULTS OF THE
PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN ARE
NOT LONG COMING IN...

IT'S A KNOCKOUT!
MENHIRS ARE
SELLING LIKE
HOT CAKES!



WE OUGHT TO MAKE MENHIRS IN SOMETHING LESS DURABLE. BUILT-IN LACK OF OBSOLESCENCE ISN'T GOOD FOR BUSINESS, AND...

CAESAR!



SOON
AFTERWARDS...



WHAT'S THE BIG
IDEA, MERETRICIUS?
SINCE WHEN
HAVE ROMANS
BEEN
MANUFACTURING
MENHIRS?

SINCE PEOPLE
STARTED BUYING
THEM, O CAESAR.



WELL, I
FORBID YOU TO
SELL ANY
MORE
MENHIRS!



I REPRESENT THE ENTIRE ROMAN
MENHIR INDUSTRY, AND I CANNOT
COUNTEenance AN EDICT
WHICH ENDANGERS THE JOBS
OF SO MANY WORKERS!



BUT THE
WORKERS
ARE
SLAVES!

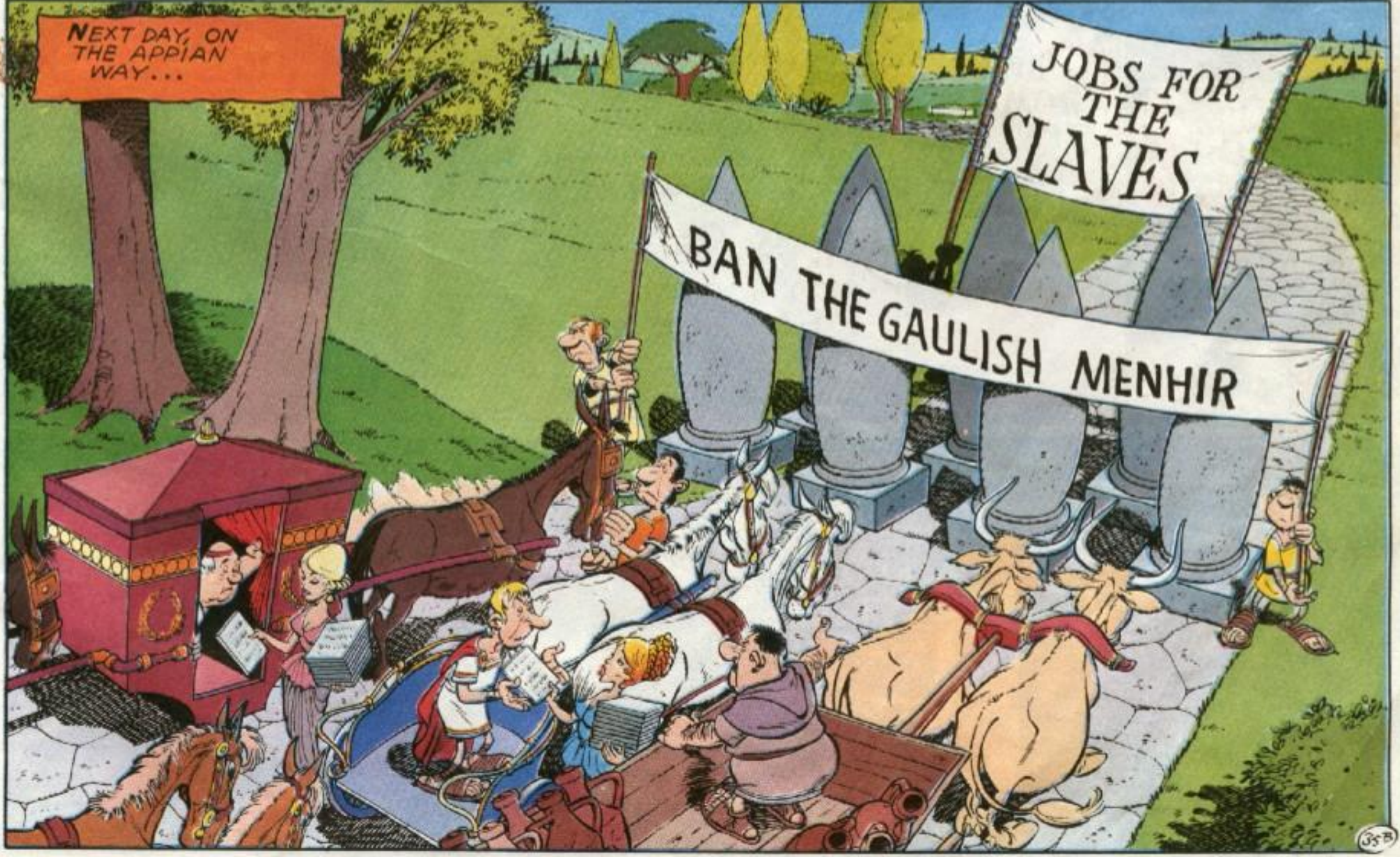
EXACTLY! THE RIGHT
TO WORK IS THE ONLY
RIGHT A SLAVE
HAS. HE MUST
NOT BE DEPRIVED
OF IT!

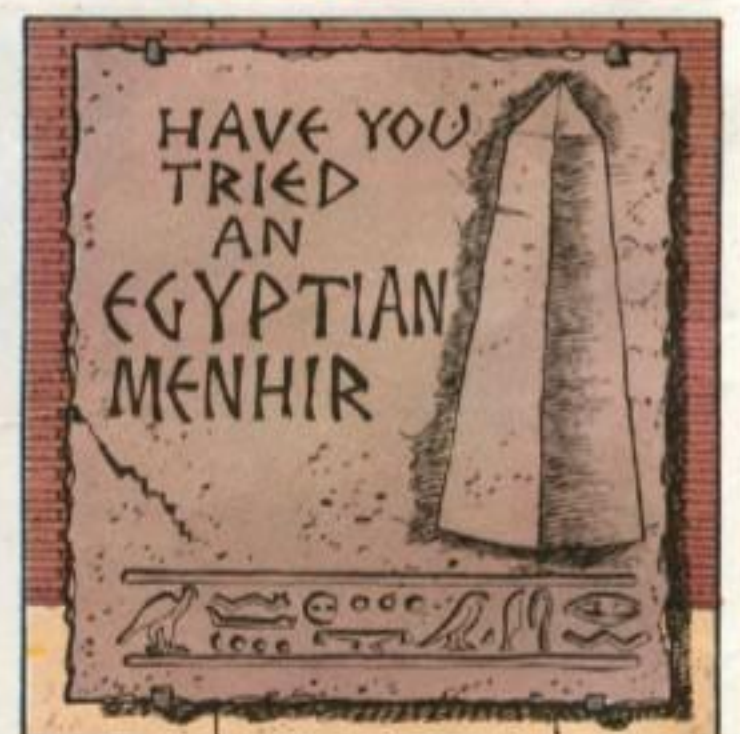


IF YOU GO
ON CIRCULATING
MENHIRS
YOU'LL FIND
YOURSELF IN
THE CIRCUS!

RIGHT. YOU
LEAVE ME NO
ALTERNATIVE.

NEXT DAY, ON
THE APPIAN
WAY...





IN ROME, THE BOTTOM IS DROPPING OUT OF THE MENHIR MARKET.

FREE GIFT OF 11 BLUE SHIELD MENHIRS WITH EVERY SLAVE PURCHASED



PEOPLE DON'T EVEN WANT THEM AS A GIFT... WELL, THAT'S TOO BAD! I'VE LOST A FORTUNE, BUT LET'S FORGET IT...

THE THING IS...



YES?

WELL, IT'S LIKE THIS, O CAESAR...



I WANTED TO KEEP THE PEACE IN GAUL, SO BEFORE I LEFT I GAVE ORDERS FOR THEM TO GO ON BUYING MENHIRS... AND RAISING THE PRICE.



WHAT? YOU KNOW THE STATE OF MY FINANCES? AND YOU SAID WE'D MAKE A KILLING! GET BACK TO GAUL AND STOP IT!!!



ER... YOU WOULDN'T LIKE TO SEND SOMEONE ELSE, WOULD YOU? I HAVE A FRIEND WHO WAS AT BUSINESS SCHOOL WITH ME. HE...



YOU'RE GOING YOURSELF, YOU IDIOT! IT'S YOUR FAULT I NEARLY HAD A CIVIL WAR ON MY HANDS! ROME MIGHT HAVE BEEN RUINED! EVEN BRUTUS HAS BEEN GIVING ME NASTY LOOKS!

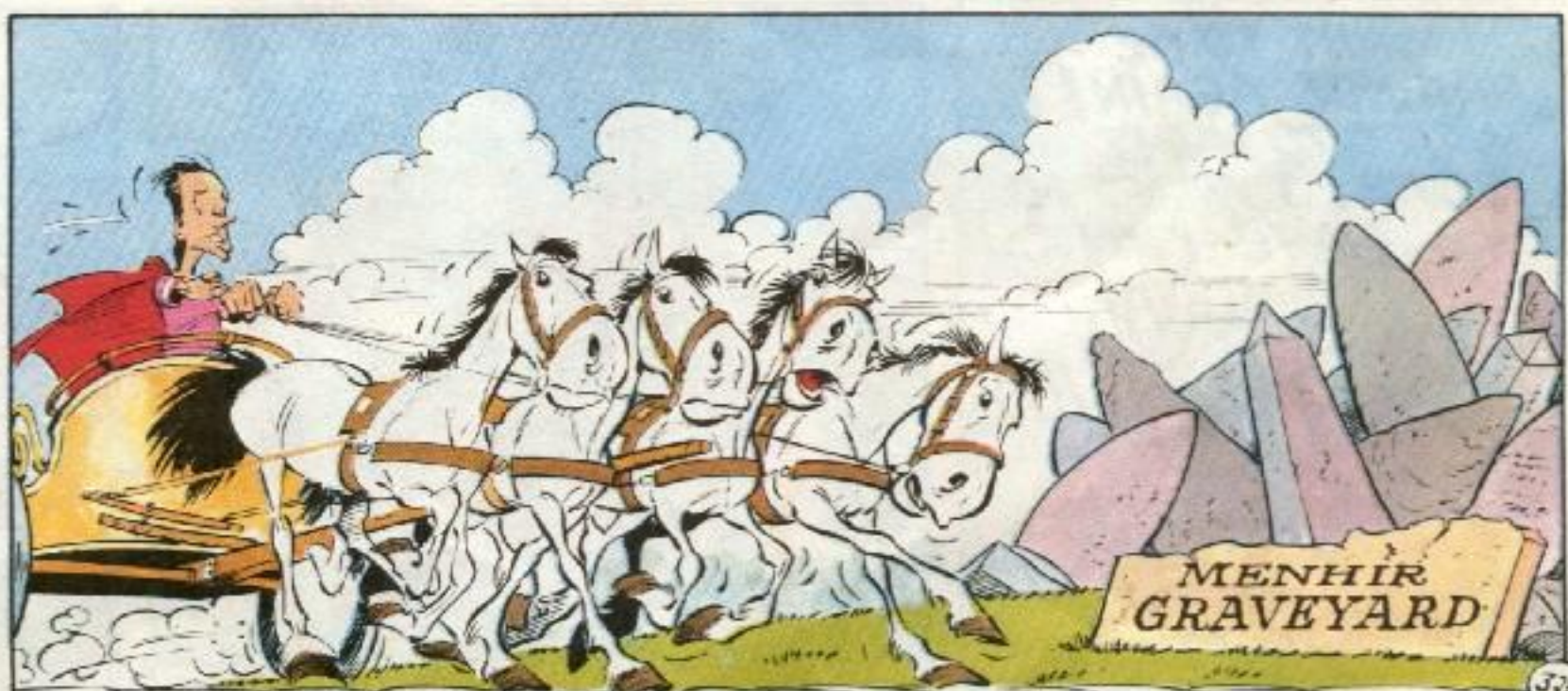


BUT... BUT THEY'LL KILL ME!

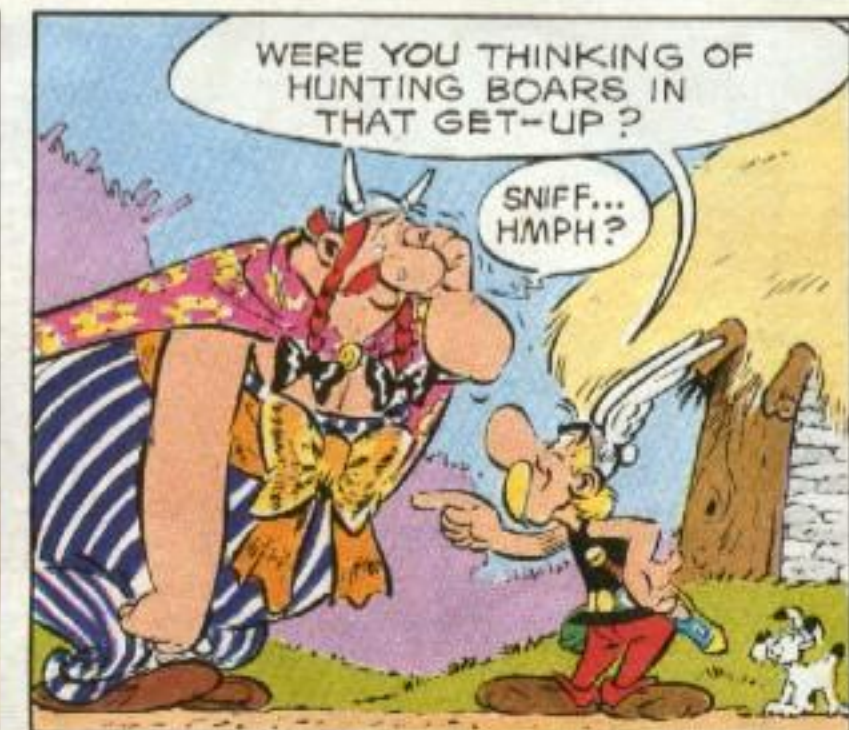
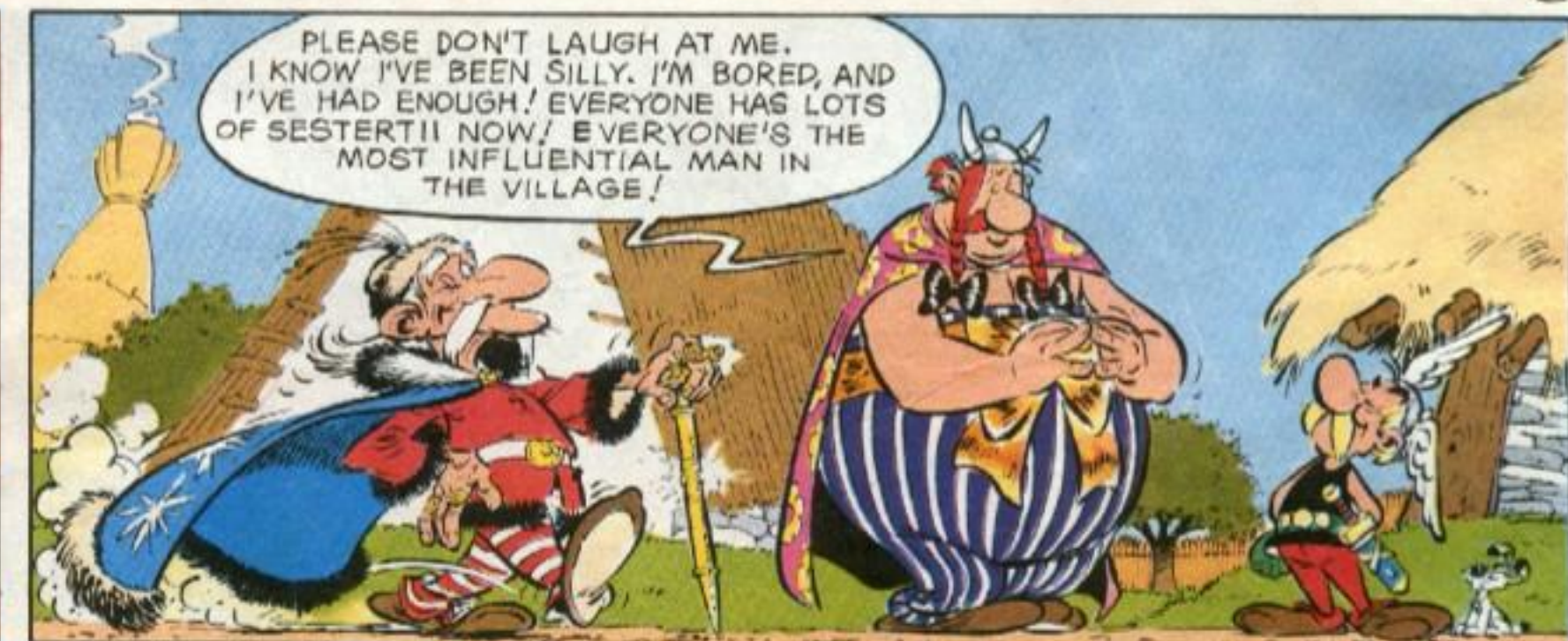
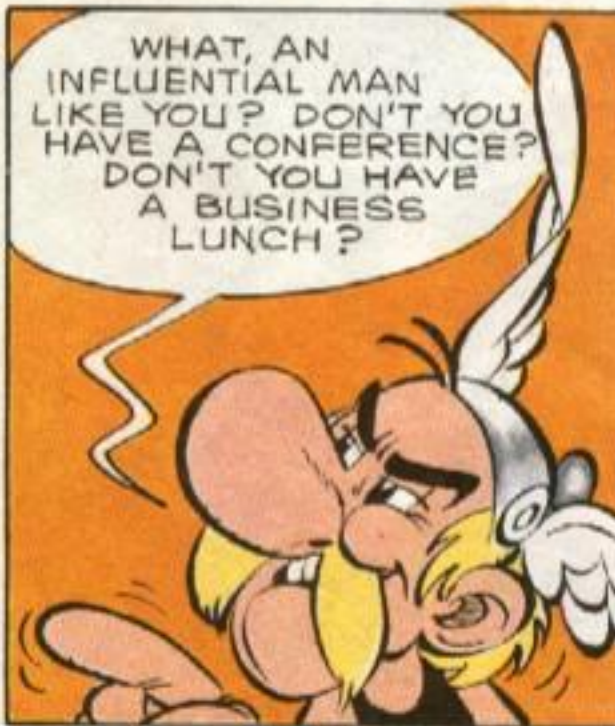
THAT PARTICULAR KILLING WOULDN'T WORRY ME!



ANYWAY, IF YOU DON'T GO I'LL HAVE YOU THROWN TO THE LIONS!!



MENHIR GRAVEYARD



THE CAMP OF TOTORUM...

HEY, WHAT DO YOU KNOW? OLD PREPOSTERUS IS BACK!



AVE, PREPOSTERUS! I CARRIED OUT YOUR ORDERS; WE HAVE VAST STOCKS OF MENHIRS...

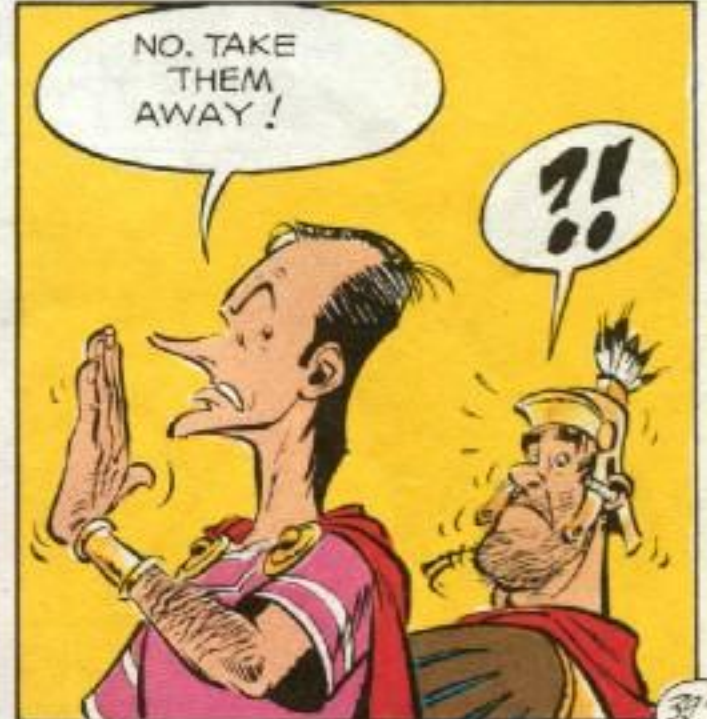


AND I HOPE YOU'VE BROUGHT PLENTY OF SESTERTII, BECAUSE...

WATCH OUT, YOU LOT, HERE COMES ANOTHER CLOWN!



HERE ARE SOME MORE MENHIRS. YOUR LEGIONARIES CAN UNLOAD THEM.

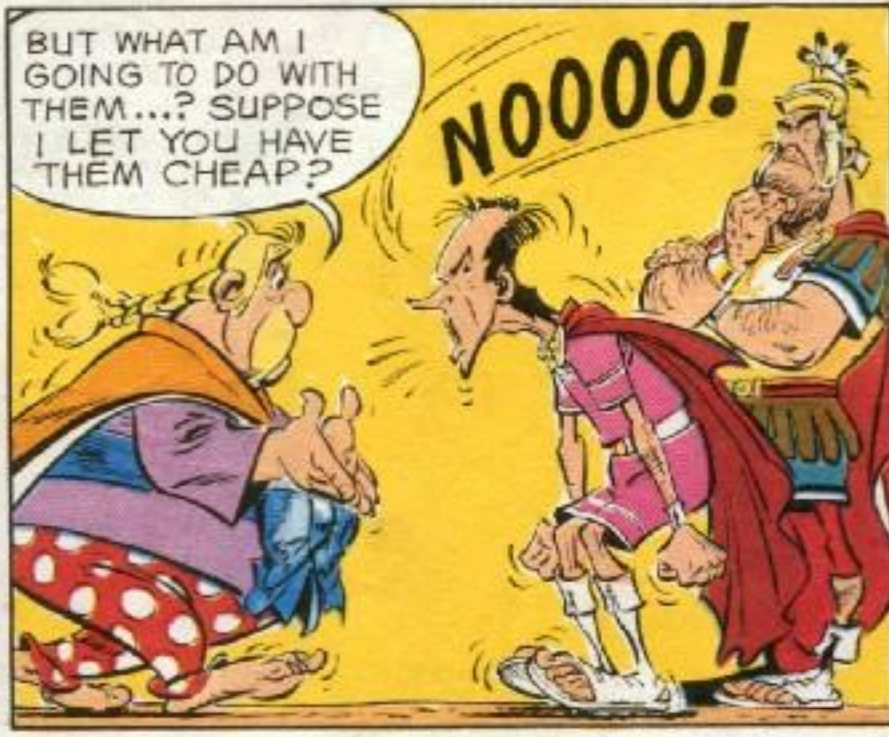


NO. TAKE THEM AWAY!



WHAT?

I'M NOT BUYING ANY MORE MENHIRS.



BUT WHAT AM I GOING TO DO WITH THEM...? SUPPOSE I LET YOU HAVE THEM CHEAP?

NOOOO!



NO MORE MENHIRS! GET OUT!

WELL, HONESTLY!



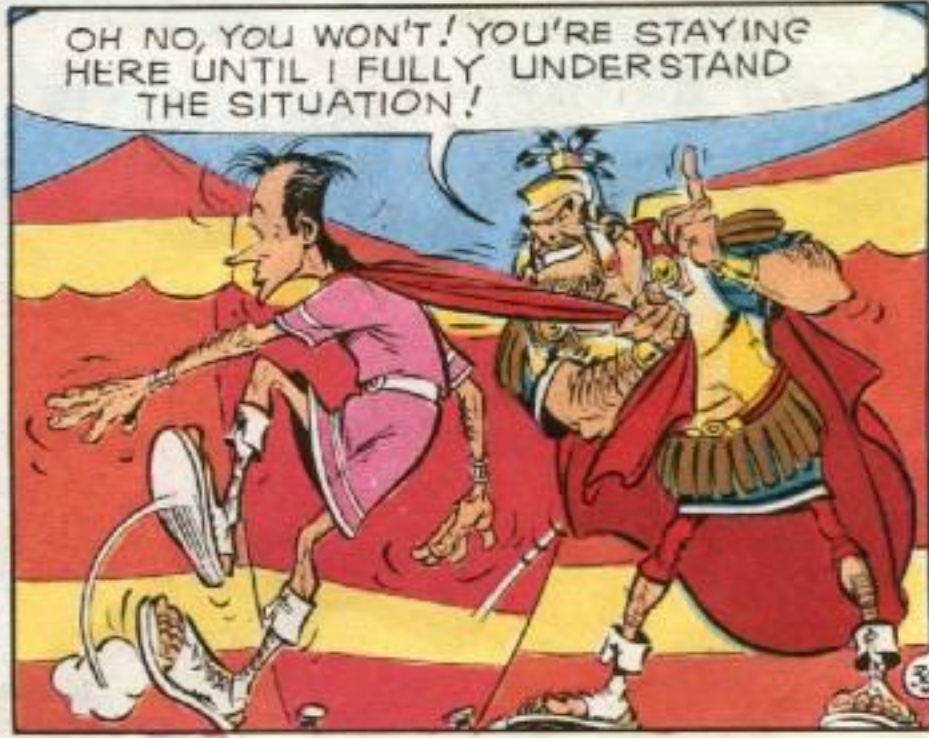
I DON'T KNOW THAT I UNDERSTAND YOUR NEW STRATEGY...

THERE ISN'T ANY STRATEGY. WE'RE NOT BUYING ANY MORE MENHIRS, THAT'S ALL!

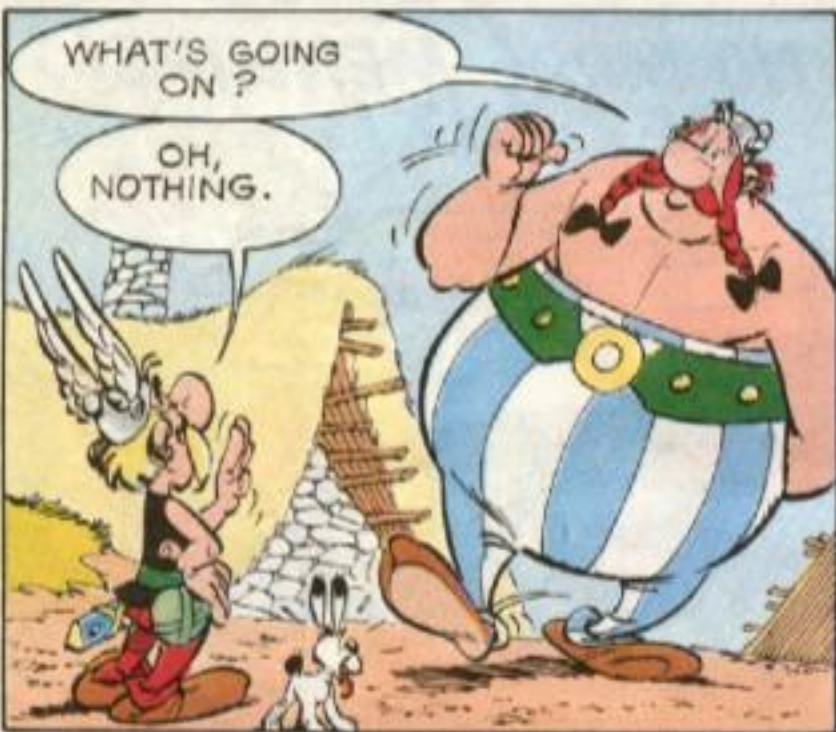
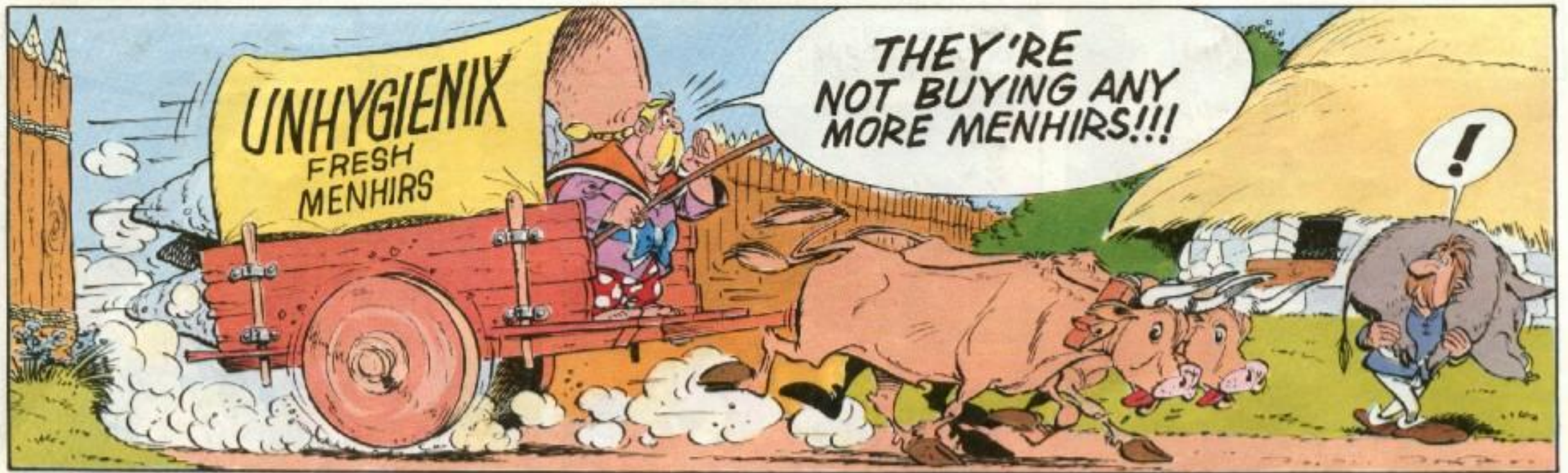


RIGHT! I'LL BE OFF. AVE!

?!



OH NO, YOU WON'T! YOU'RE STAYING HERE UNTIL I FULLY UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION!





THAT ROMAN TOLD ME HE NEVER WANTED TO SEE ANOTHER MENHIR IN HIS LIFE!

HO!

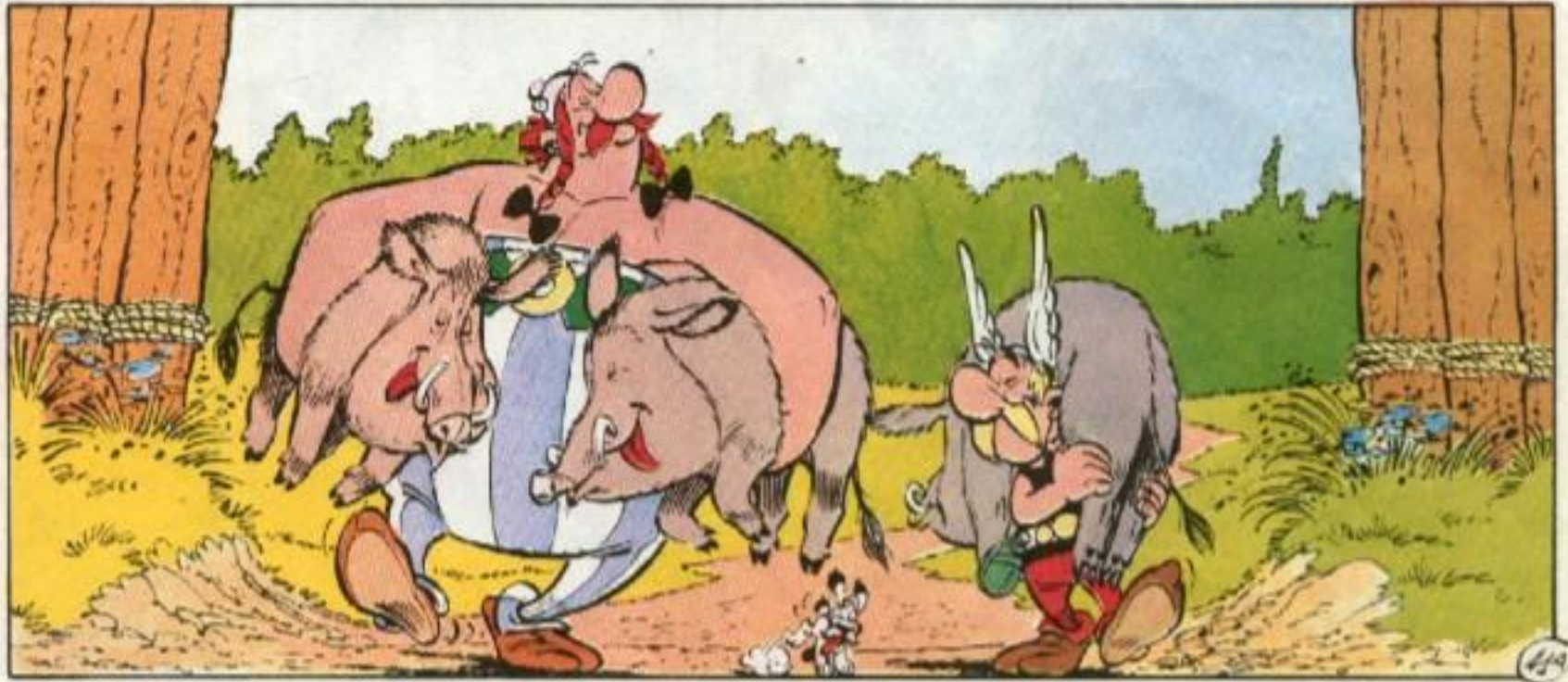
BUT... BUT... WHAT'S TO BECOME OF ME? HOW AM I GOING TO PAY ALL THE PEOPLE WORKING FOR ME?



I'M GLAD TO HEAR IT! NOW I'LL BE ABLE TO GET MY SHIELD-BEARERS BACK!



LOOK!



OBELIX HAS STOPPED MAKING MENHIRS!

SO HE KNEW THE ROMANS WOULDN'T BE BUYING ANY MORE ... AND HE DIDN'T WARN US!

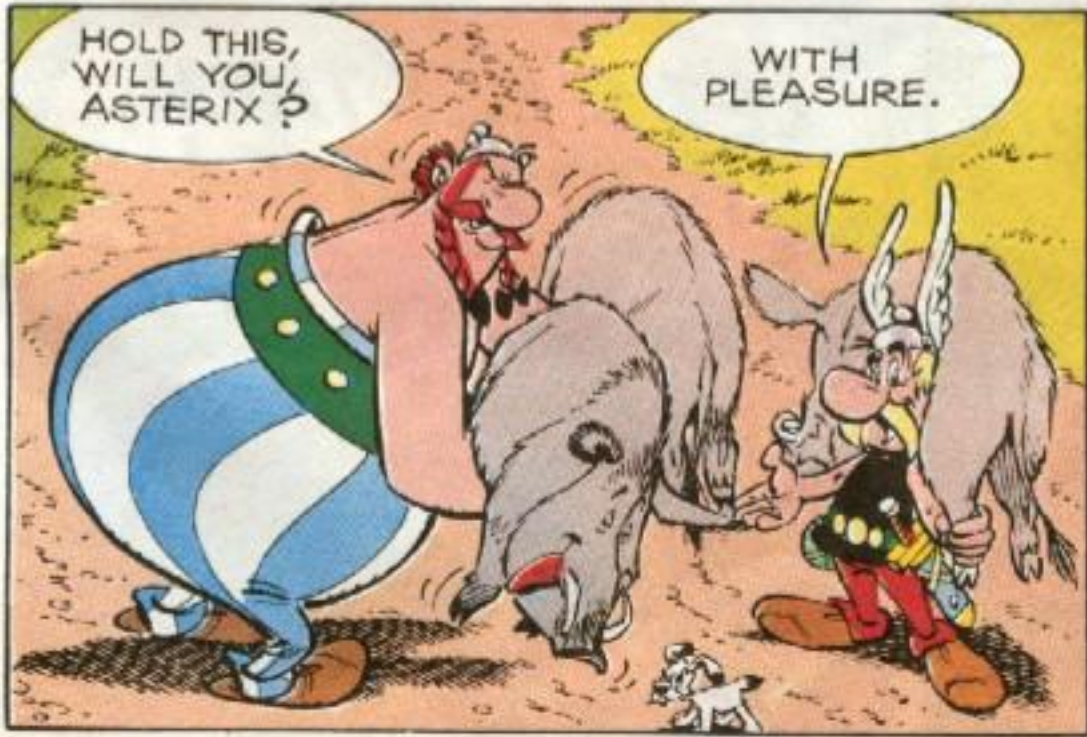
AND IT'S ALL HIS FAULT WE STARTED MAKING MENHIRS IN THE FIRST PLACE!



HE'S A TRAITOR!

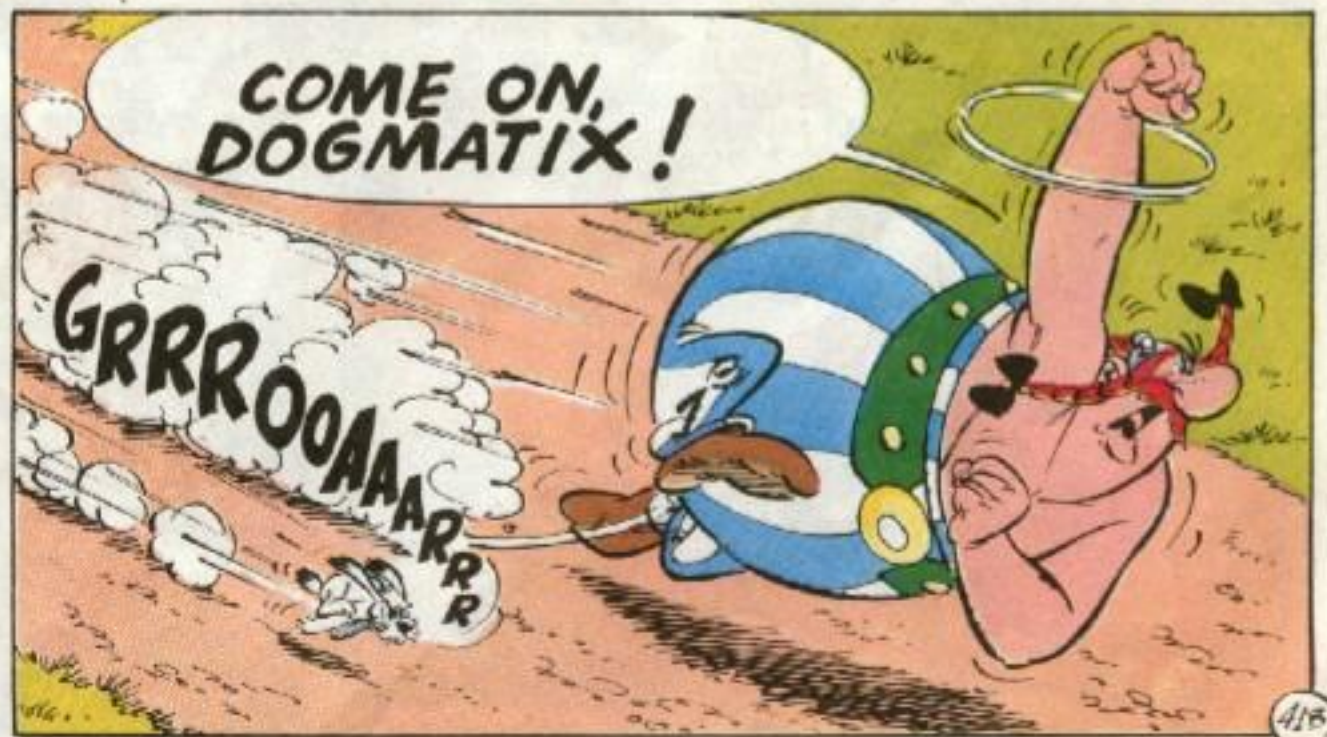
IT'S ALL HIS DOING!

WE OUGHT TO TEACH HIM A LESSON!



HOLD THIS, WILL YOU, ASTERIX?

WITH PLEASURE.



COME ON, DOGMATIX!

GRRROOAAARRR

