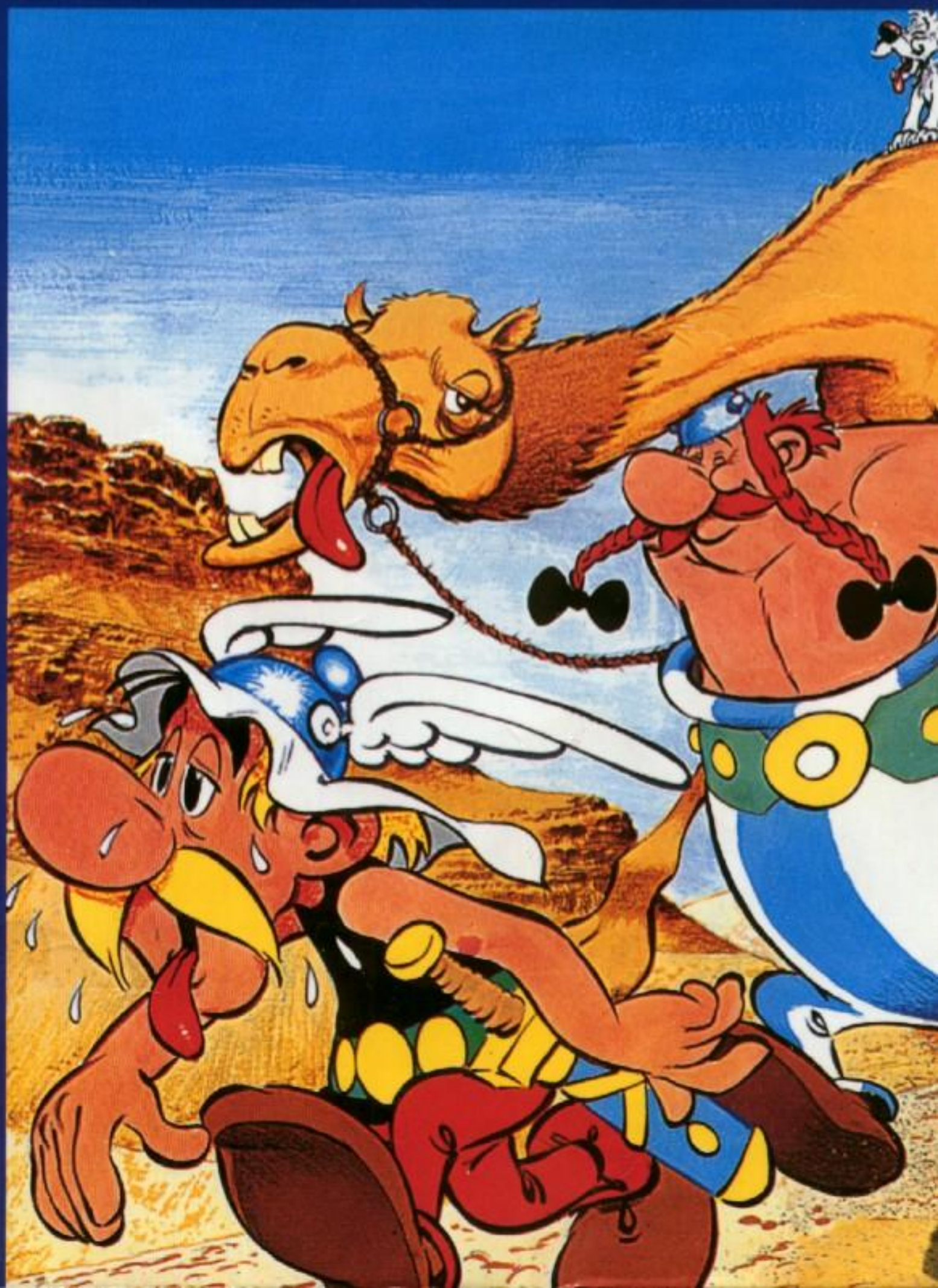


BOOK 27

GOSCINNY AND UDERZO

# Asterix

## AND THE BLACK GOLD



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!!!



CALM DOWN! NO NEED TO GO RANTING LIKE A BARNSTORMER\*. I ADMIT THEY'RE GOOD AT BRINGING HOME THE BACON...

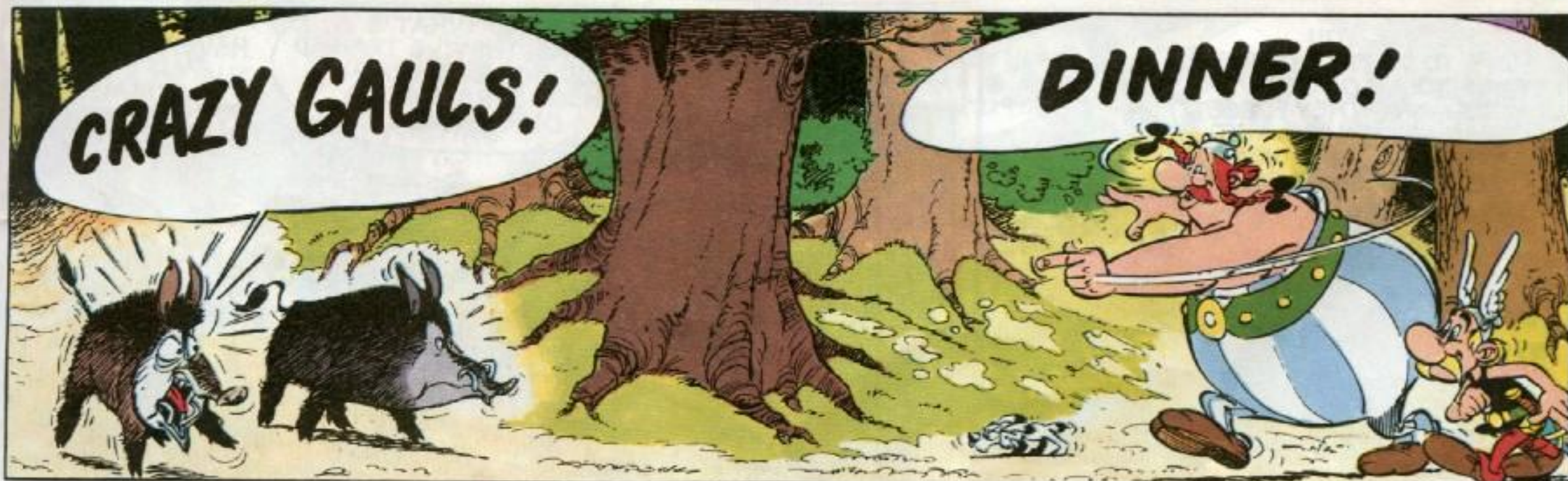


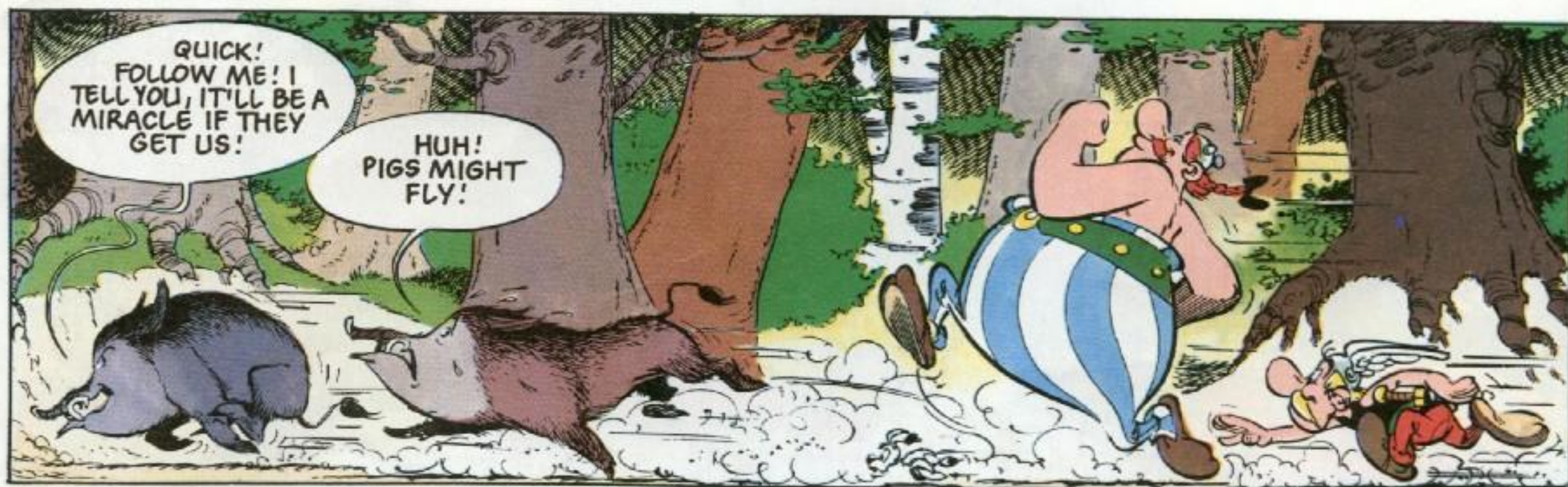
... BUT AS WHAT MUST BE CURED CAN'T BE ENDURED, I'VE WORKED OUT AN INFALLIBLE SYSTEM! I'LL BET YOU ~~WE~~ NEVER FEATURE ON THE GAULS' MENU!

AND WHO WINS IF YOU LOSE YOUR BET?



CRAZY GAULS!





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!

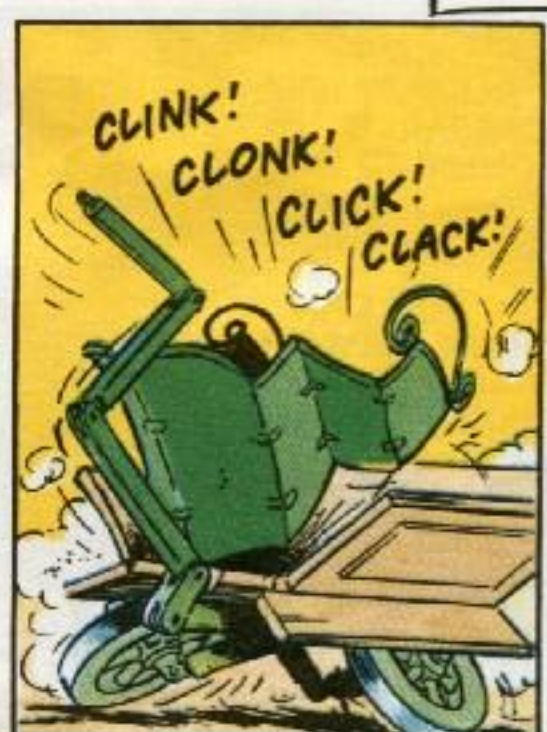
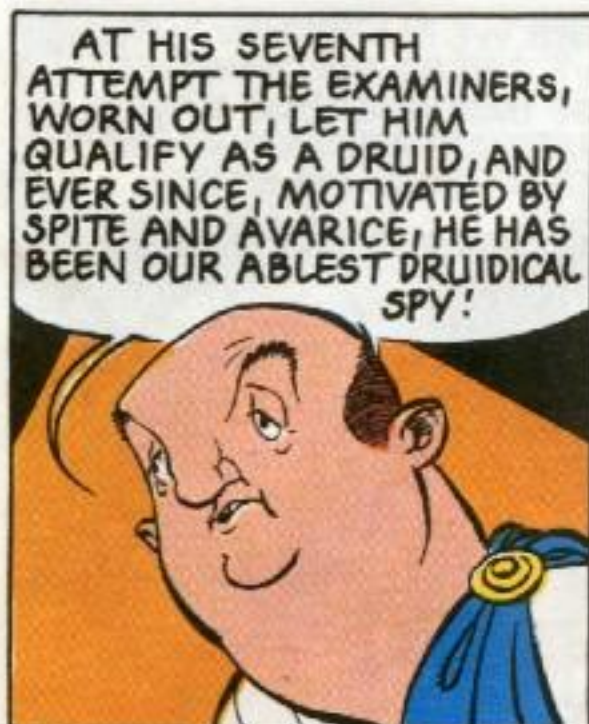
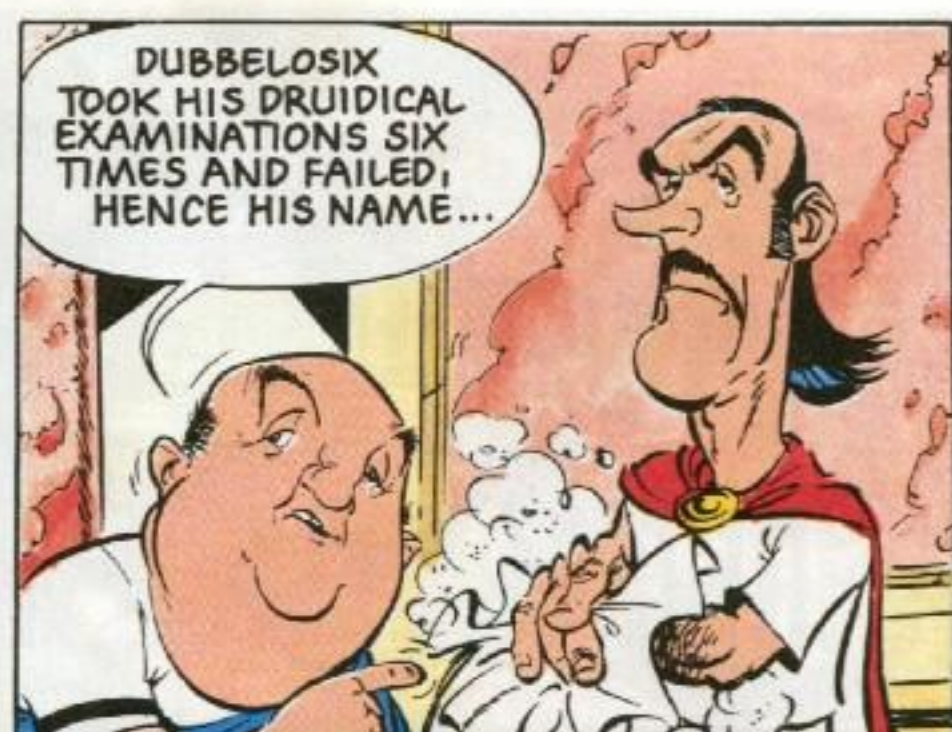
HE'S ALREADY HERE, CAESAR, QUITE CLOSE TO YOU!

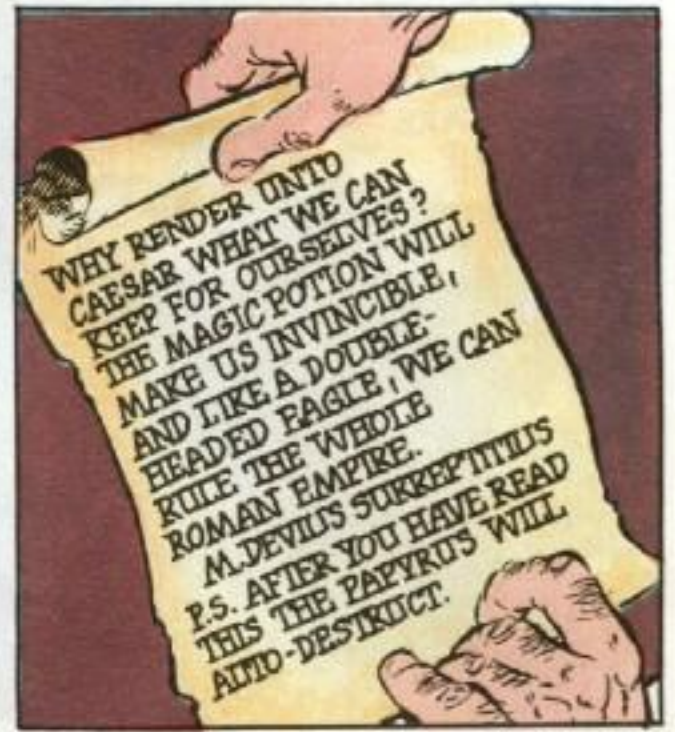
?!?

YOU CAN COME DOWN FROM YOUR PEDESTAL NOW, DUBBELSIX!

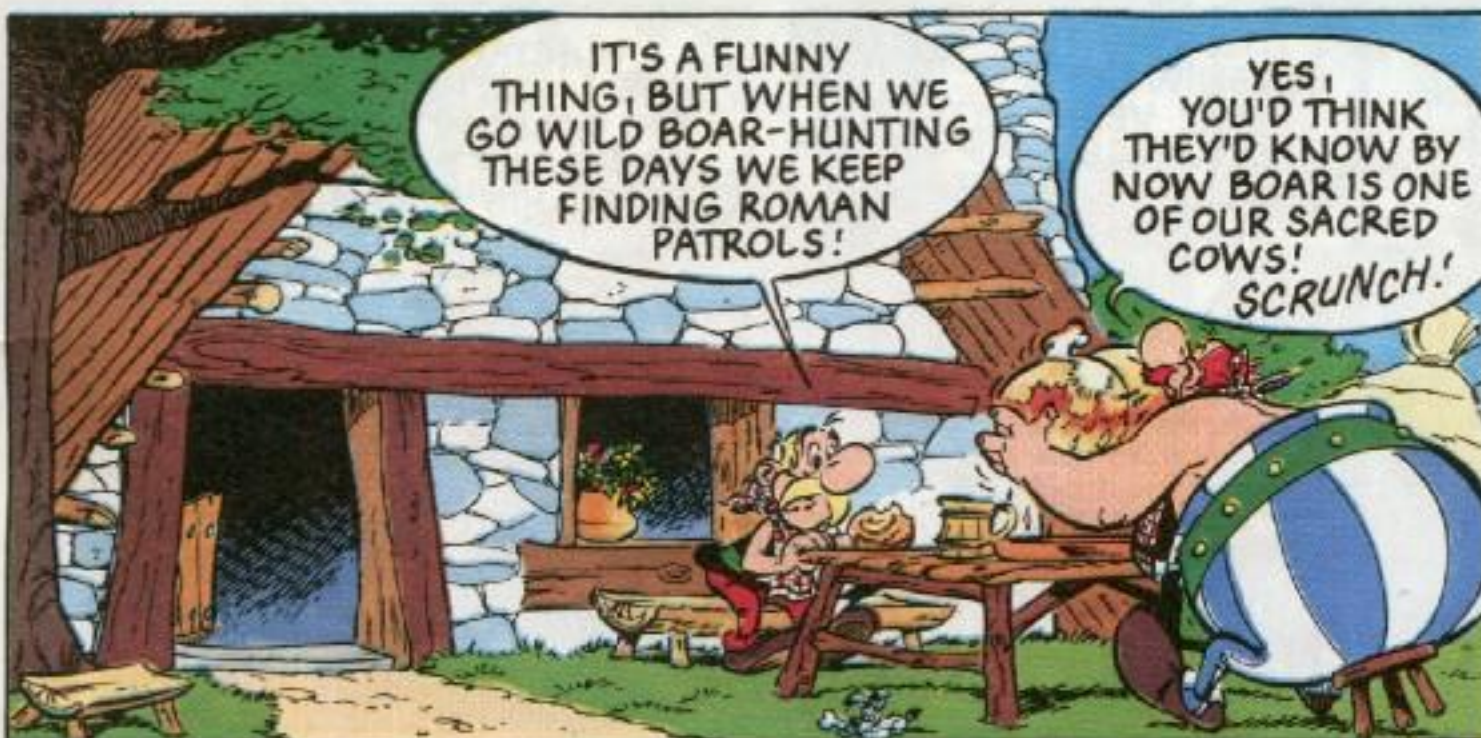
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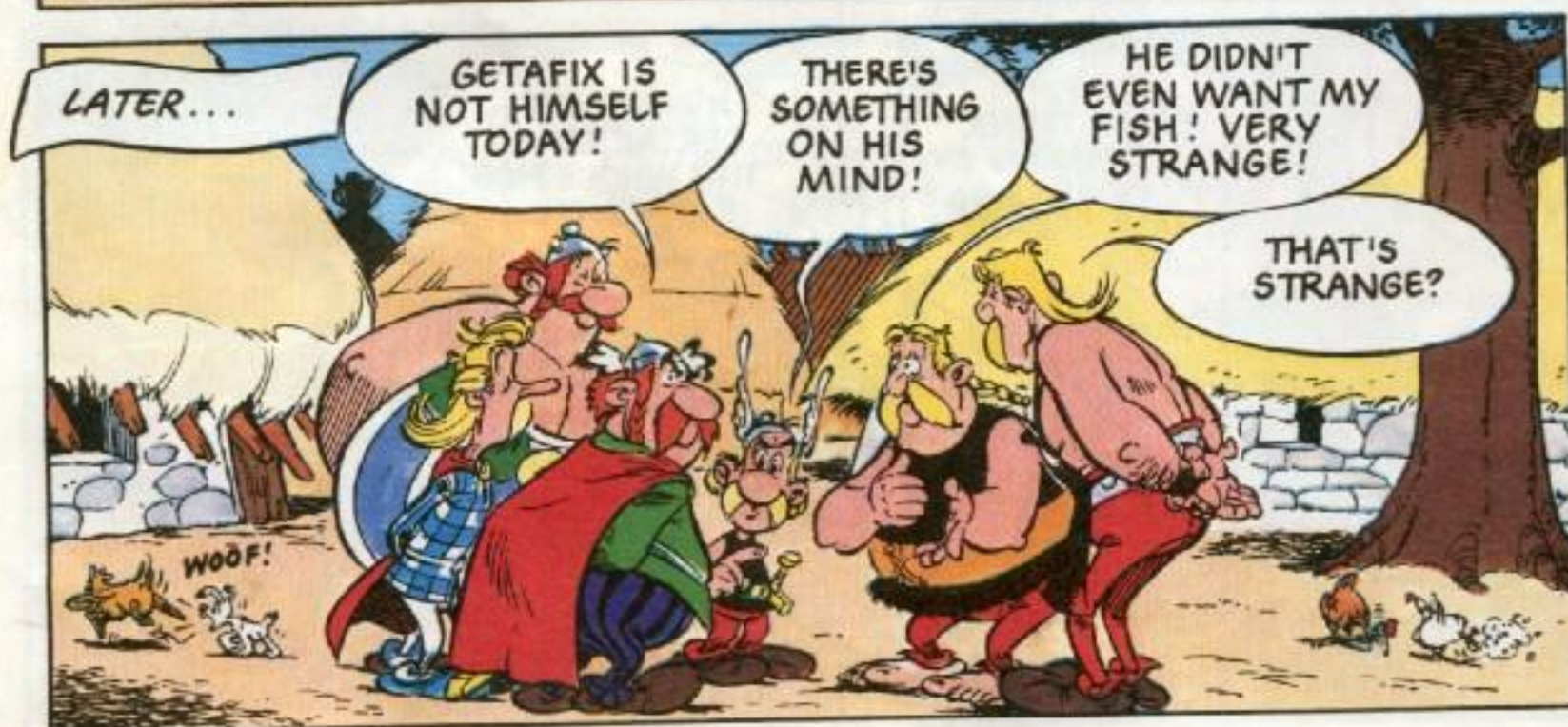
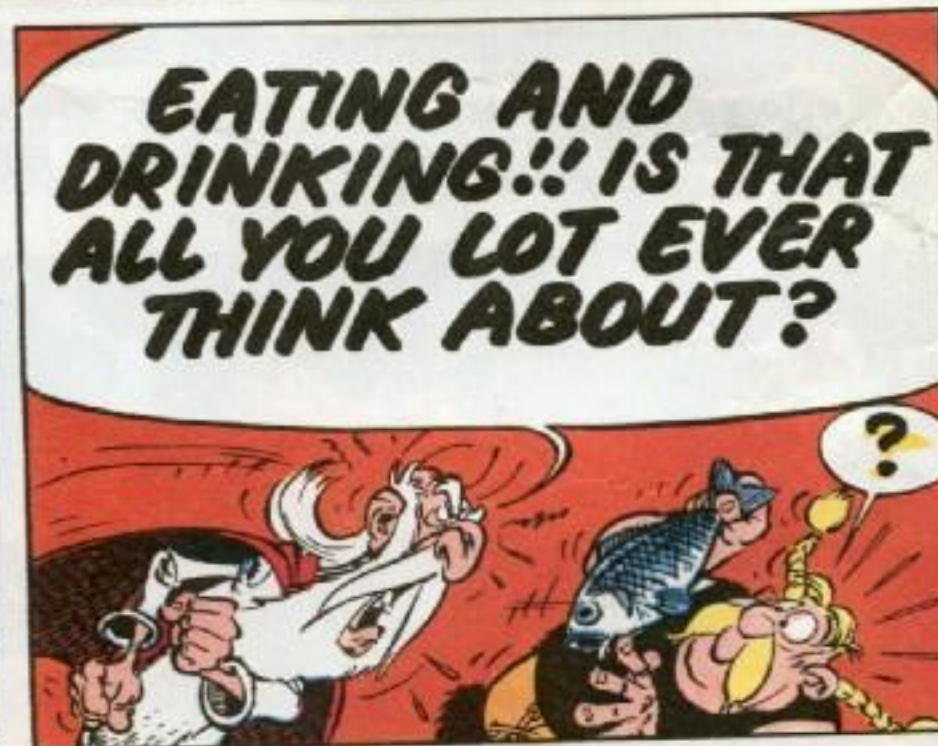
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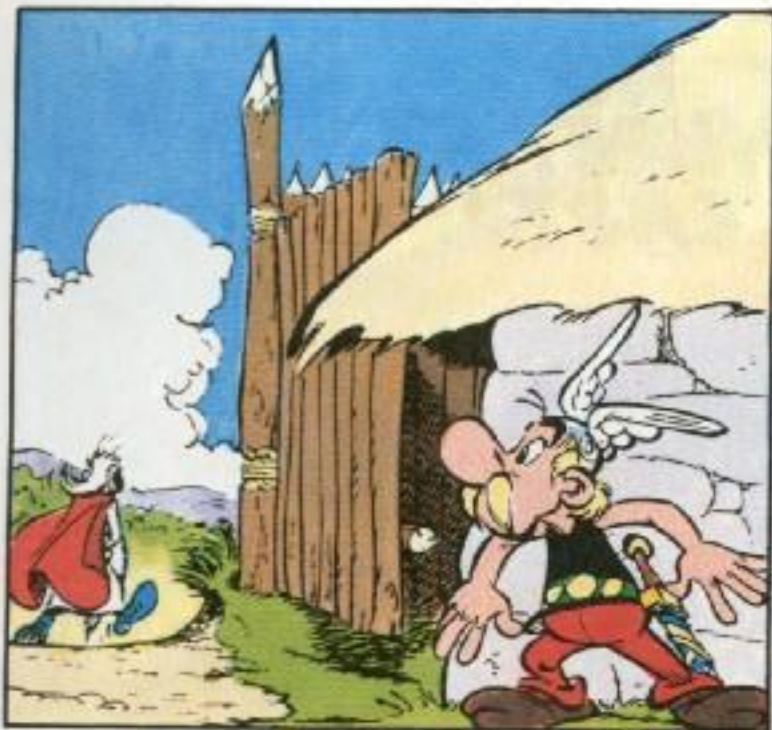




MEANWHILE, ON THE ARMORICAN COAST, ALL IS PEACEFUL IN THE LITTLE GAULISH VILLAGE WHERE ASTERIX AND HIS FRIENDS LIVE.







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, VITALSTATIX!  
DON'T FORGET!

?!

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

?!?

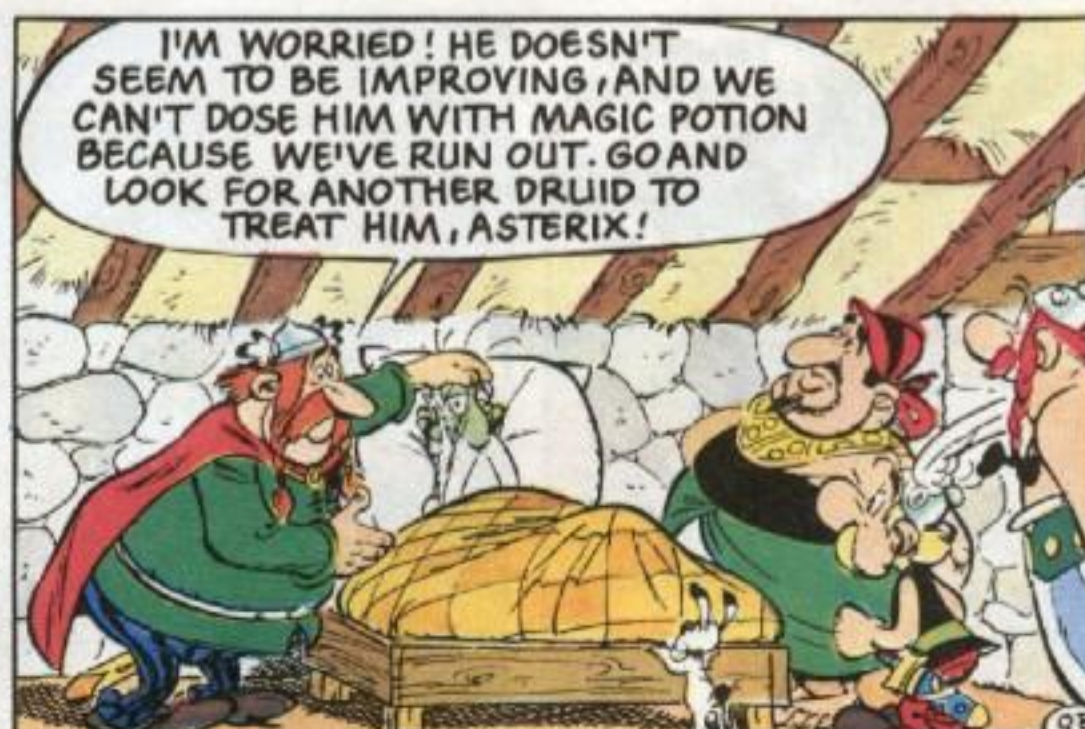
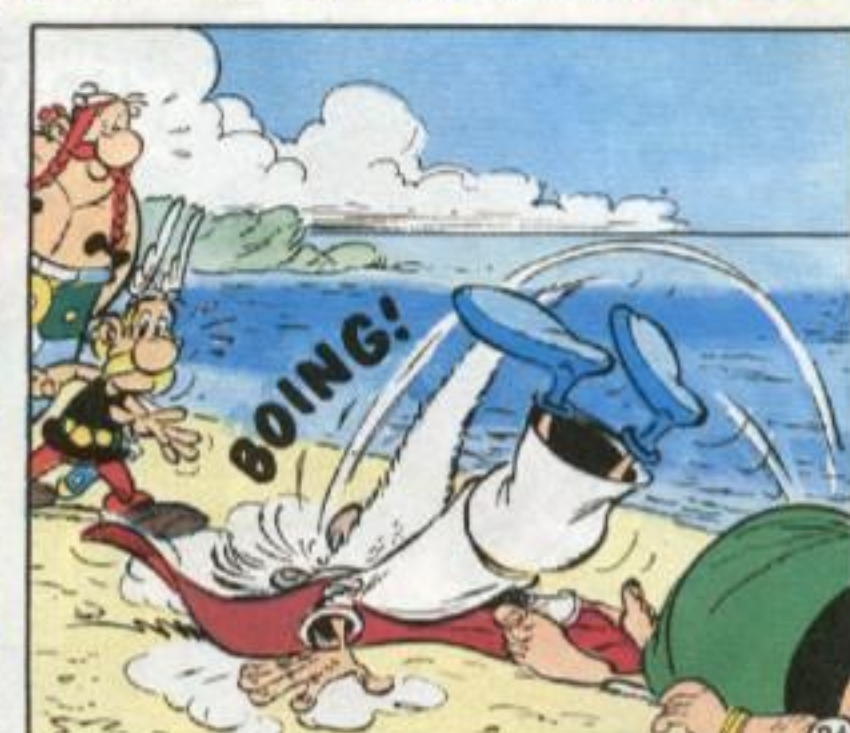
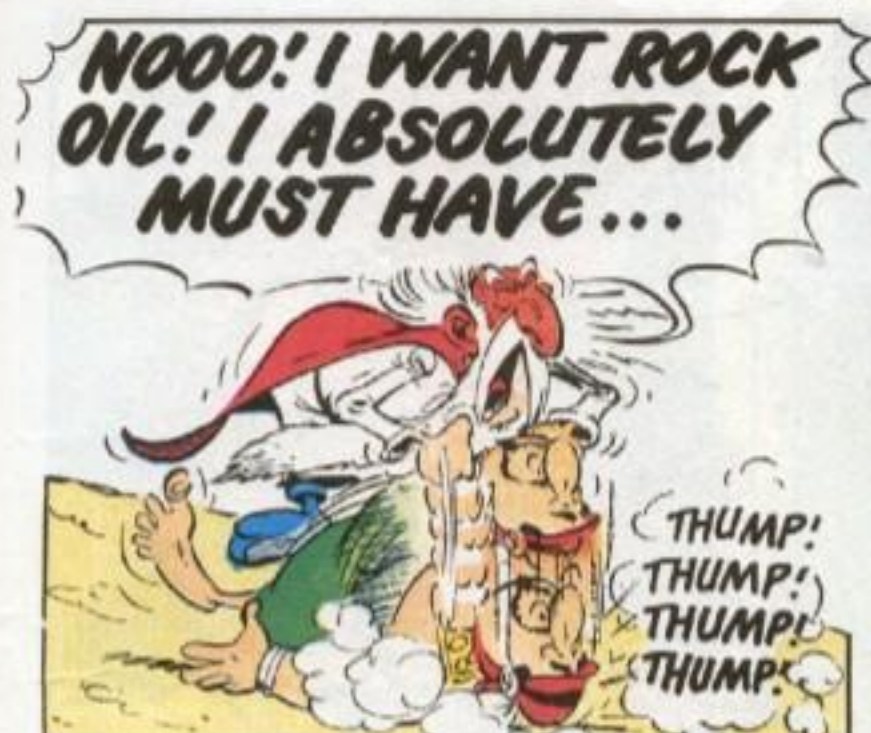
SO GETAFIX  
WAS WAITING FOR  
EKONOMIKRISIS  
AND HIS CARGO!

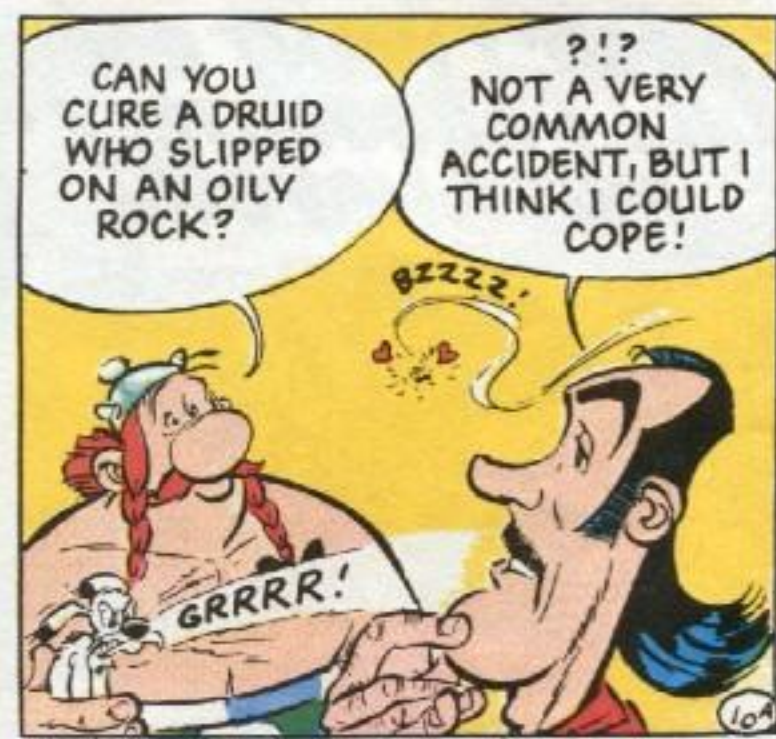
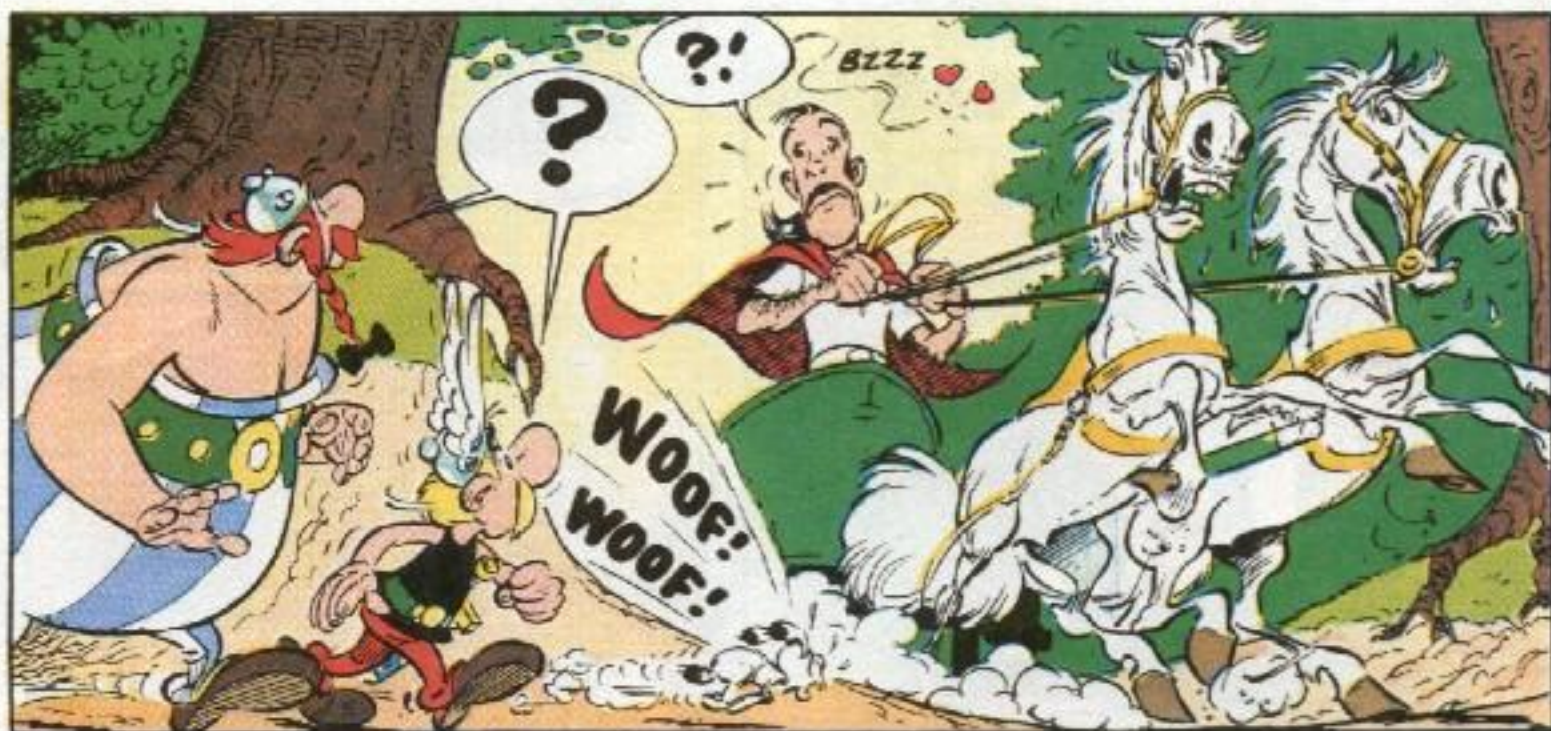
AND HE  
APPRECIATED  
MY FISH, SO  
THERE!

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

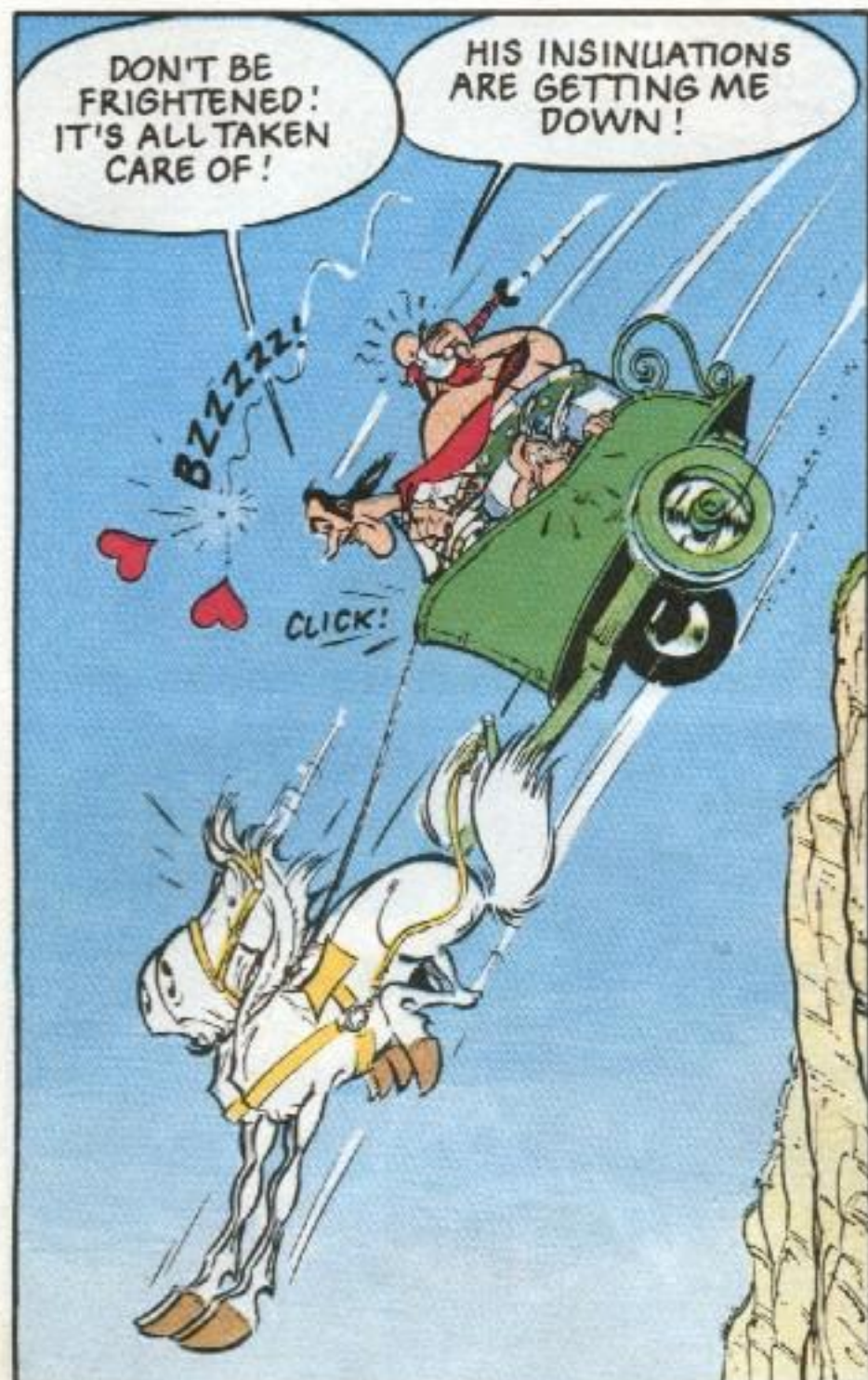
HERE YOU ARE AT LAST,  
EKONOMIKRISIS, OLD CHAP!

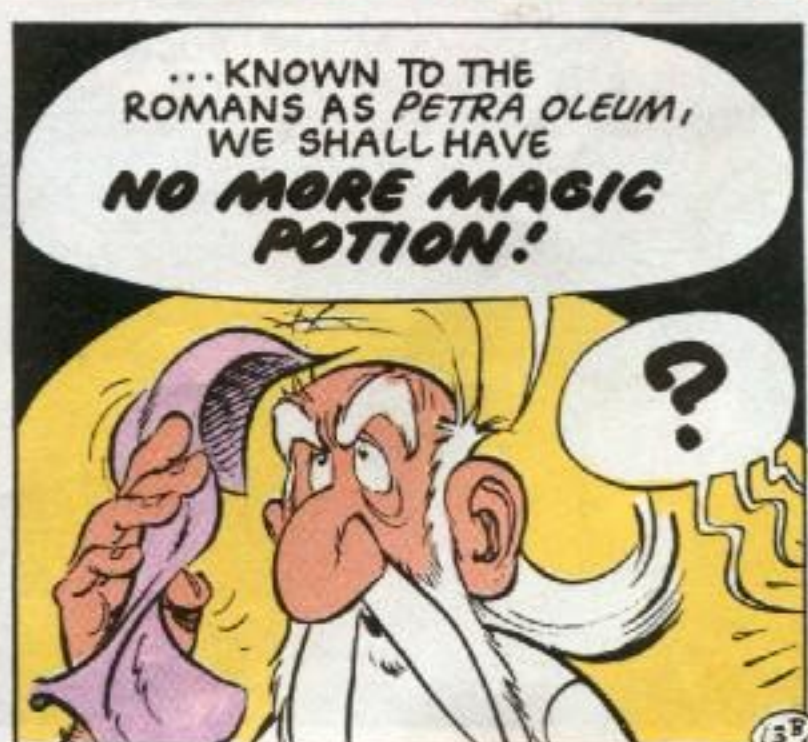
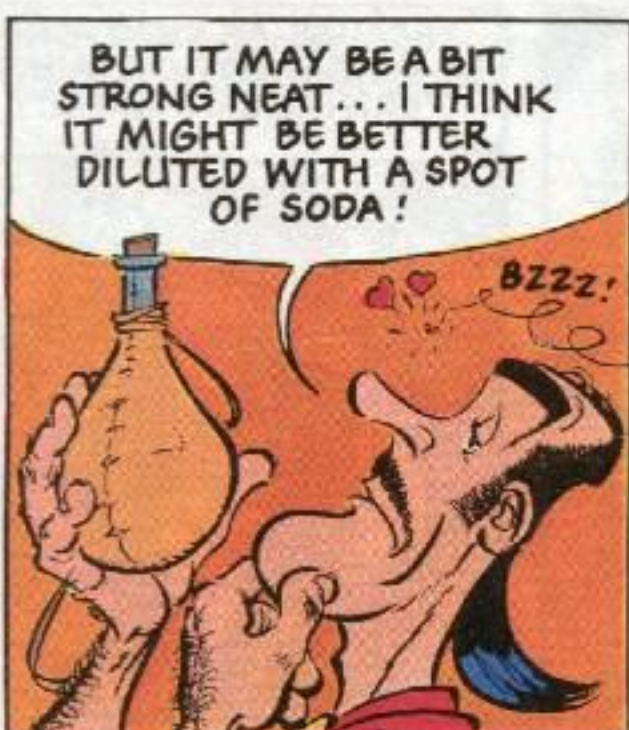
HULLO THERE, GETAFIX! I'VE  
BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO  
SEEING YOU ALL AGAIN EVER SINCE  
MY LAST VOYAGE! LOOK WHAT  
I'VE BROUGHT FROM TYRE,  
SPECIALLY FOR YOU!

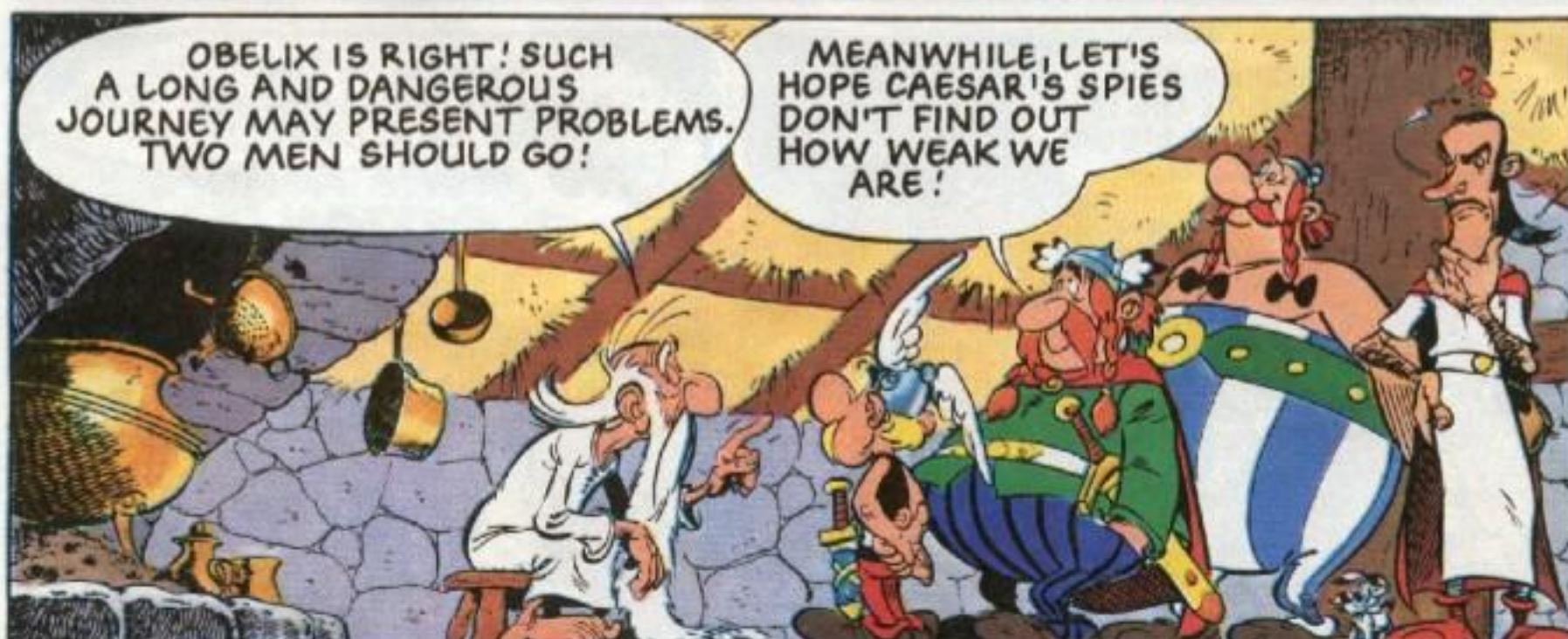
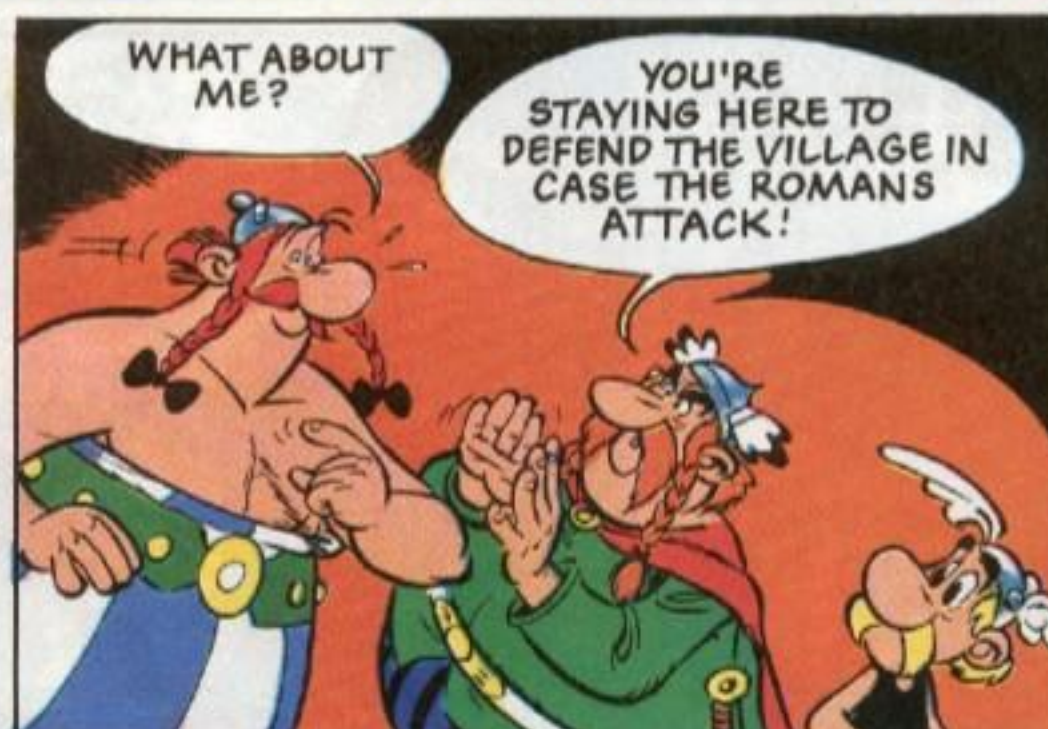
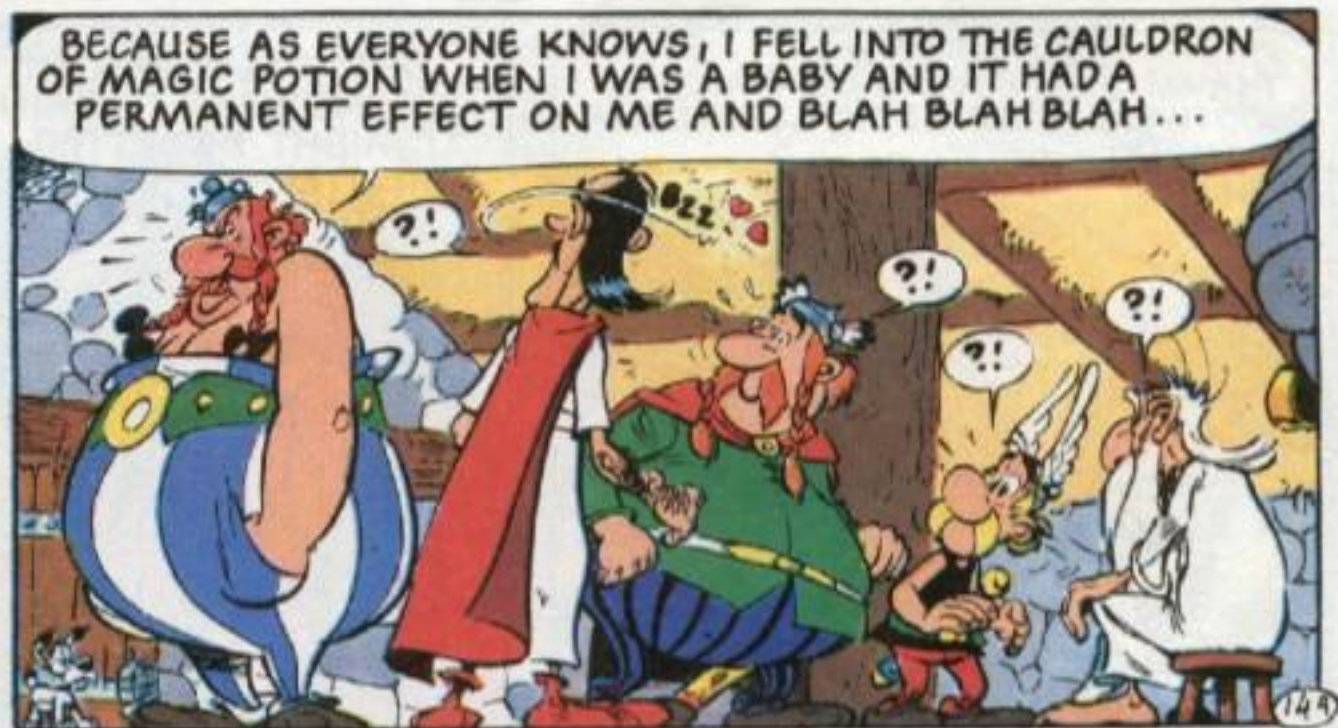
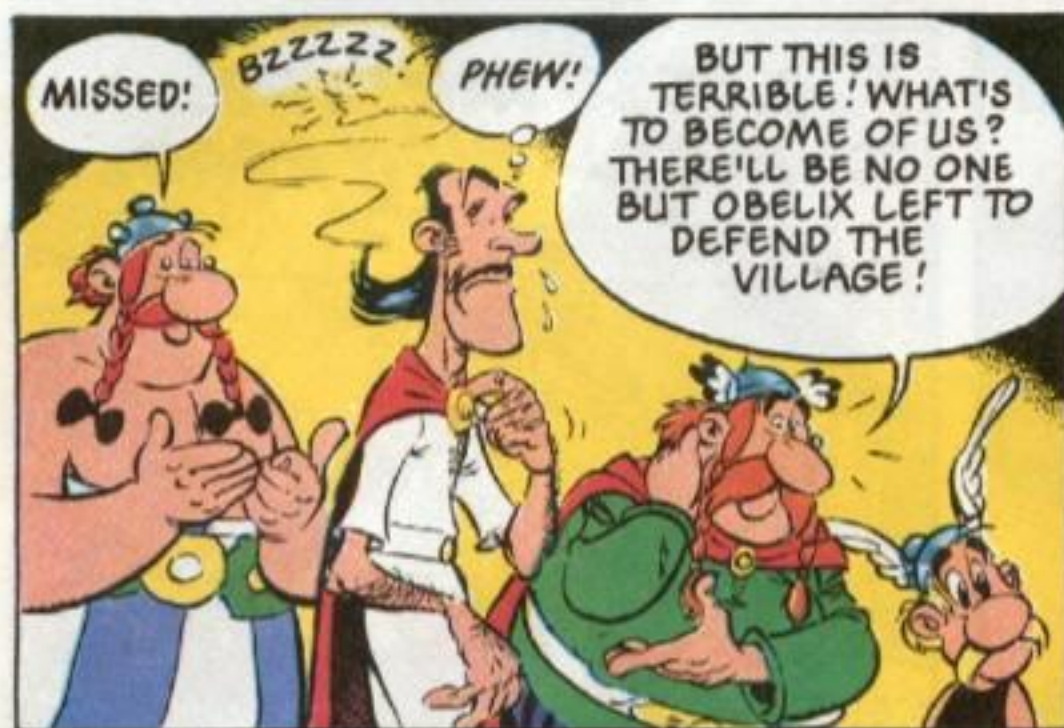
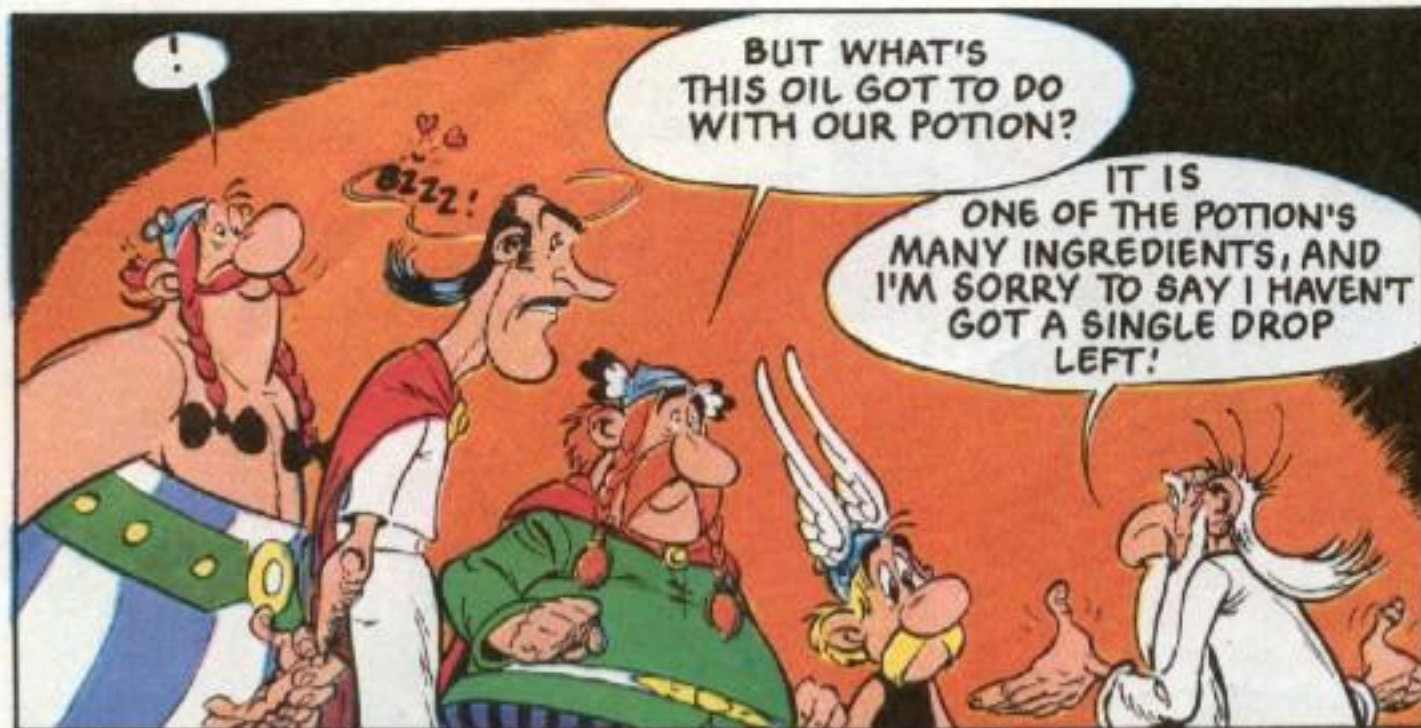


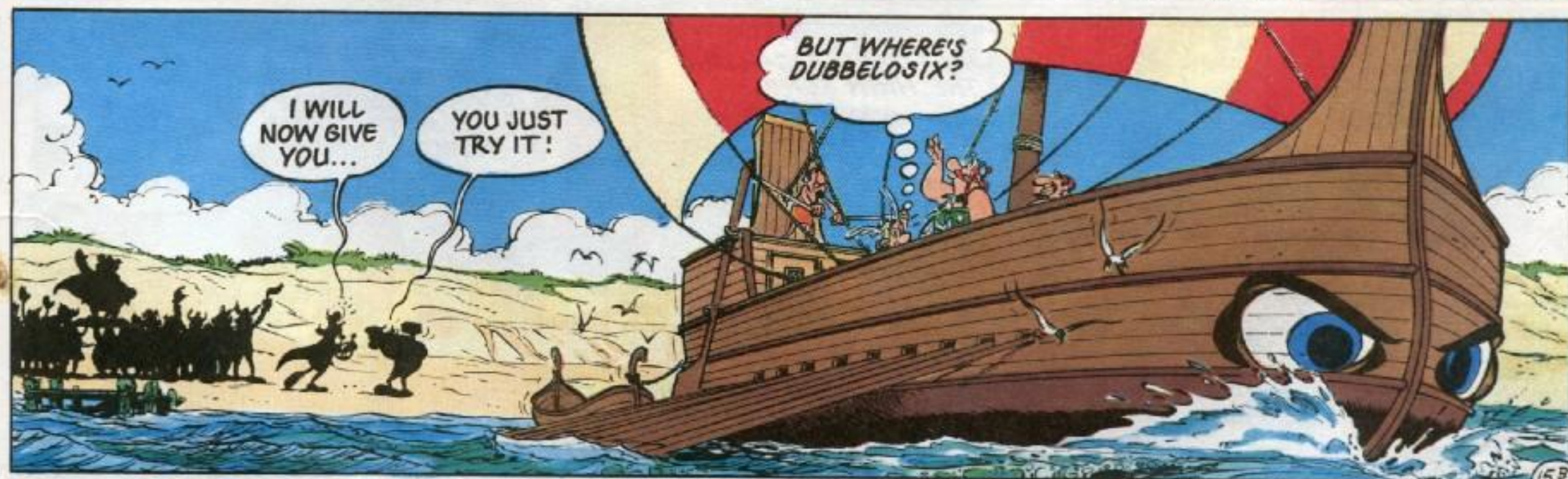
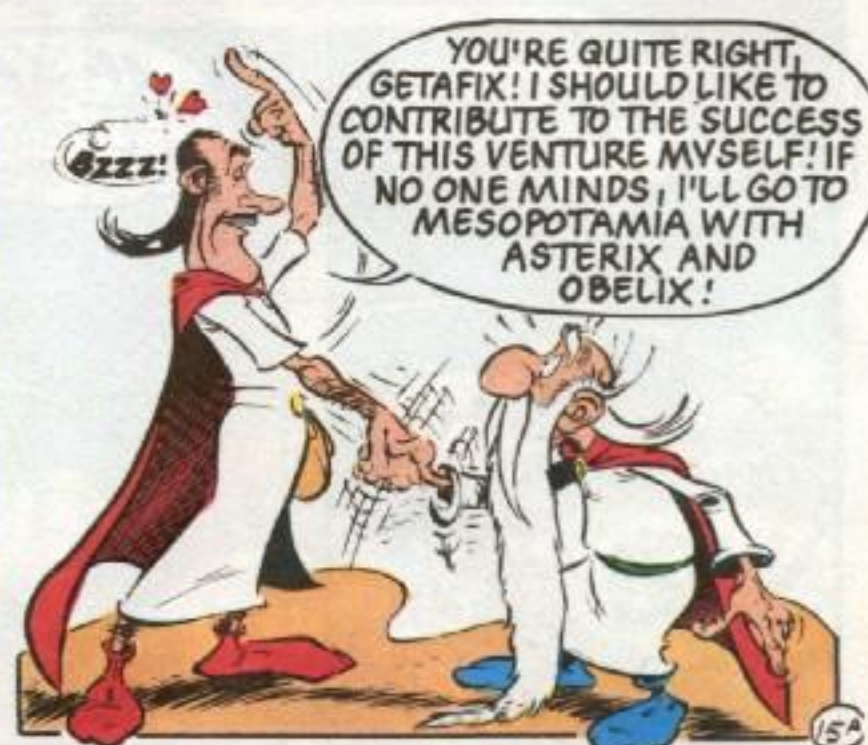
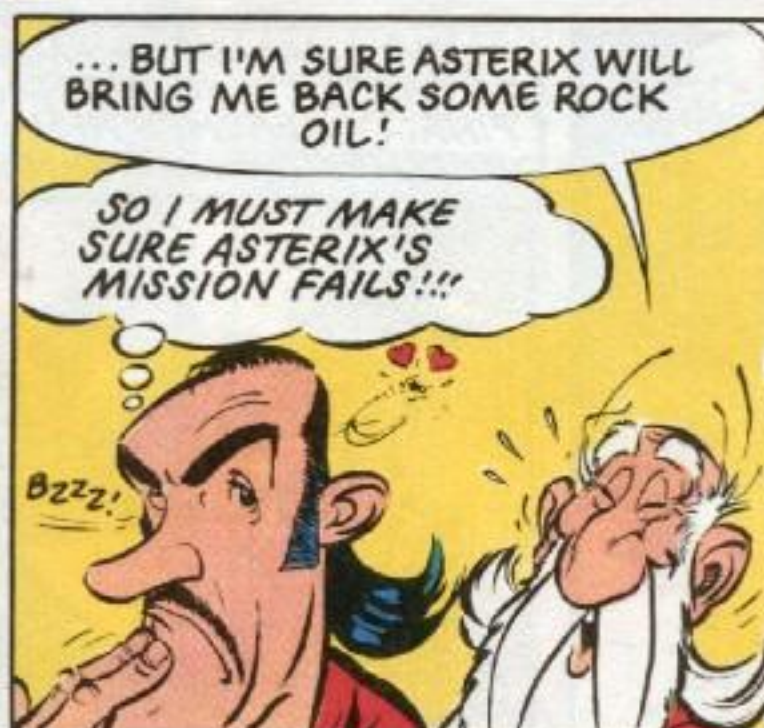
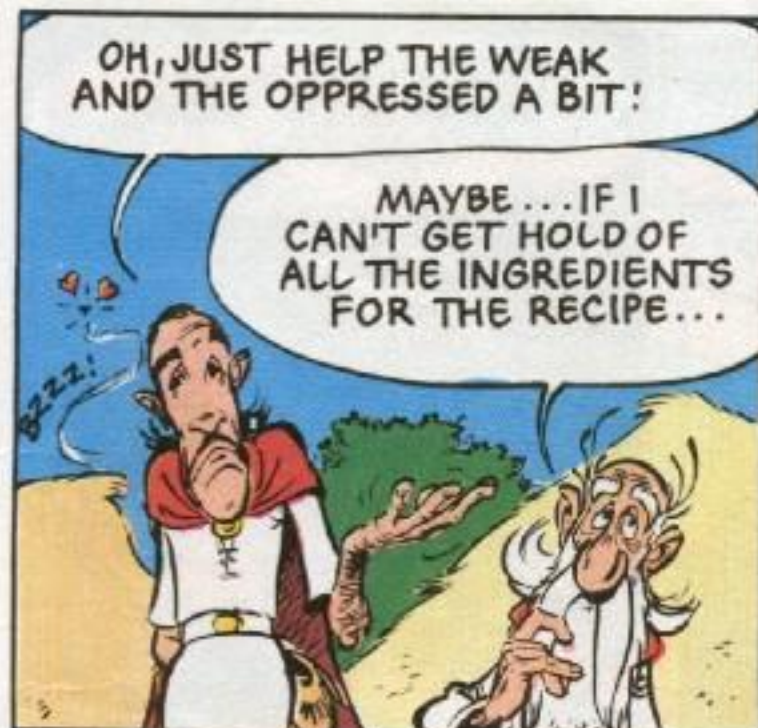
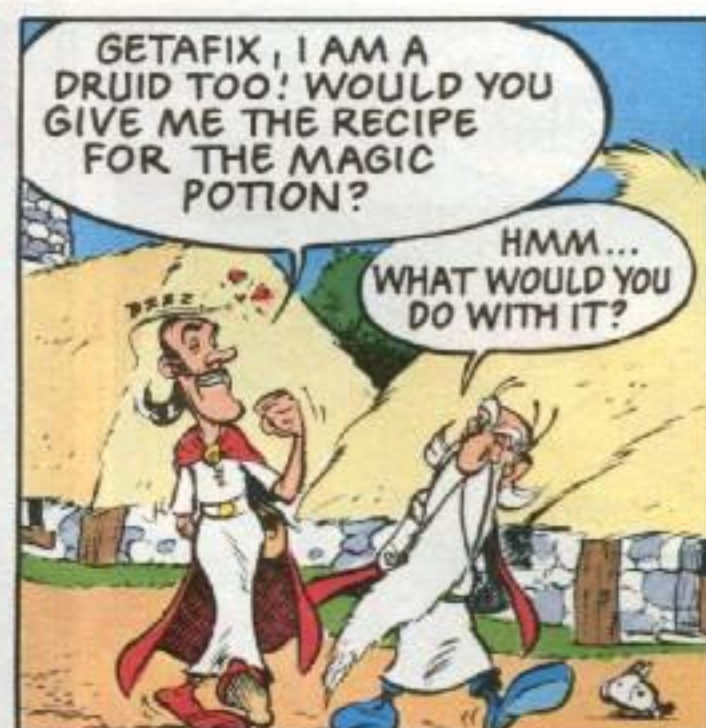
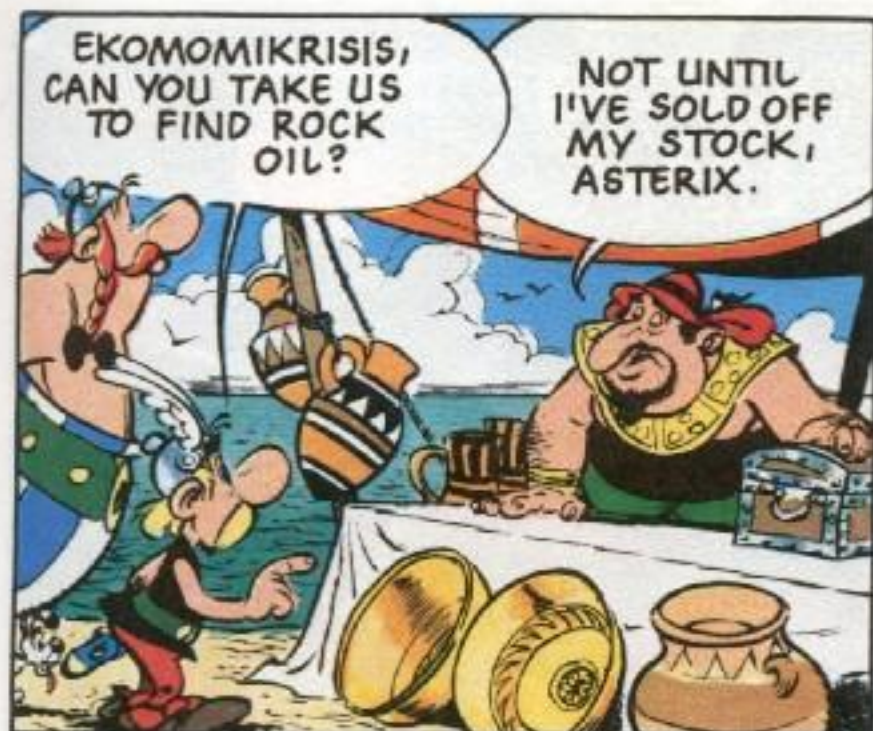






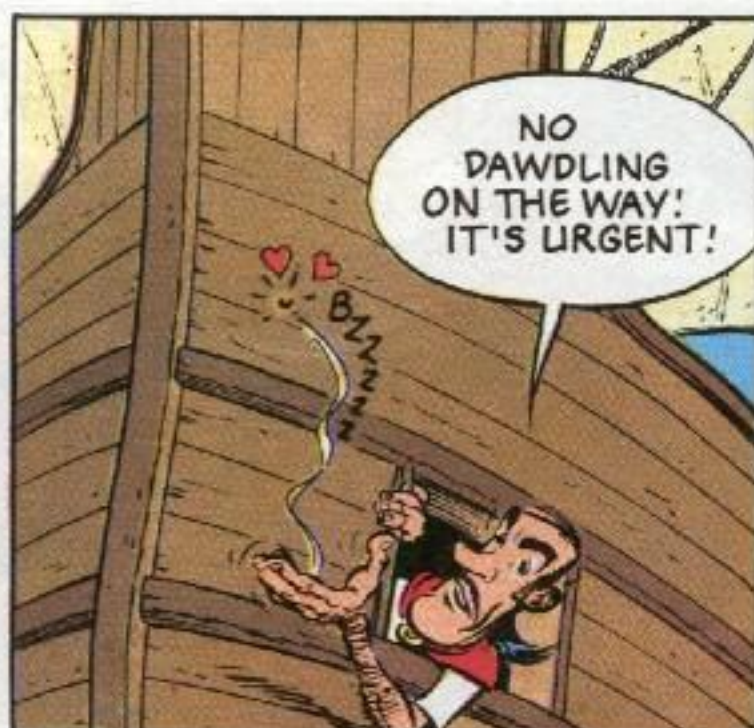








NOW, TAKE MY MESSAGE TO SURREPTITIUS!



NO DAUWLING 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!!!

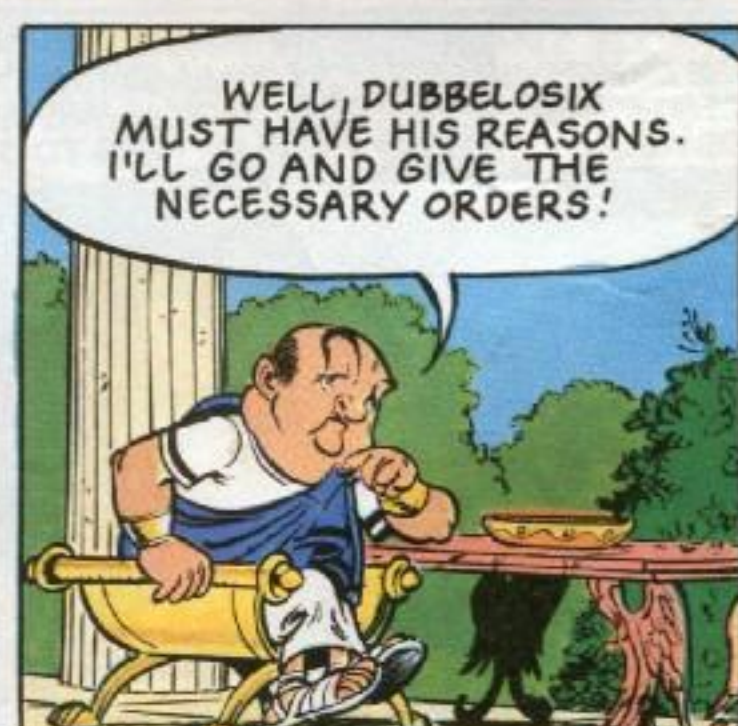


EUGGH!

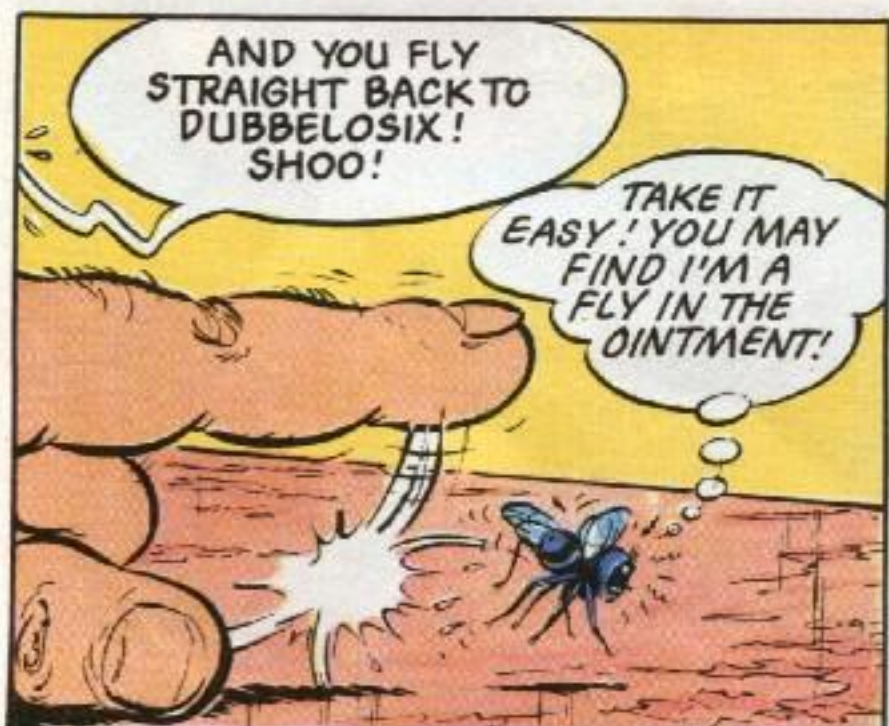
WHY WAS I IN THE SOUP? WHAT'S BUGGING HIM?



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!

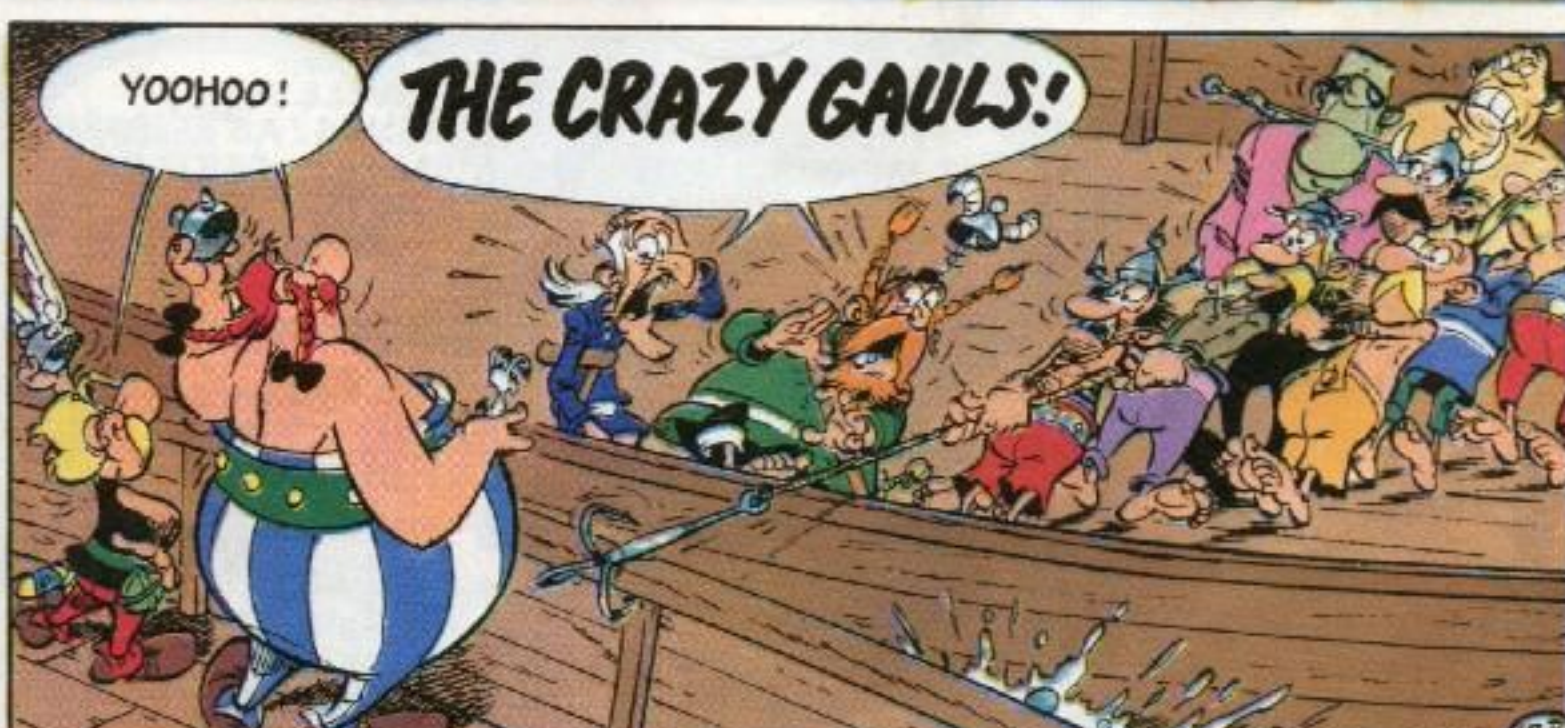
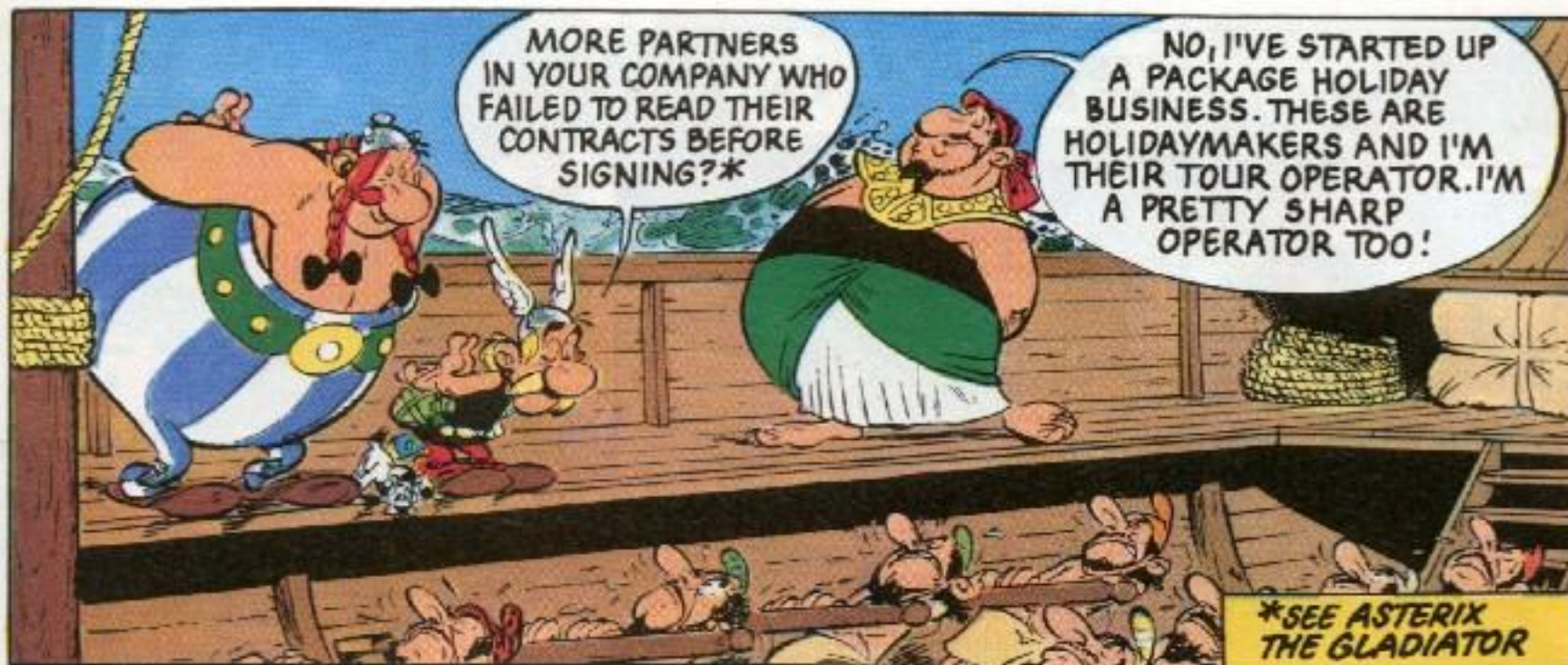
TAKE IT EASY! YOU MAY FIND I'M A FLY IN THE OINTMENT!



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 AFTER-  
WARDS...

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!

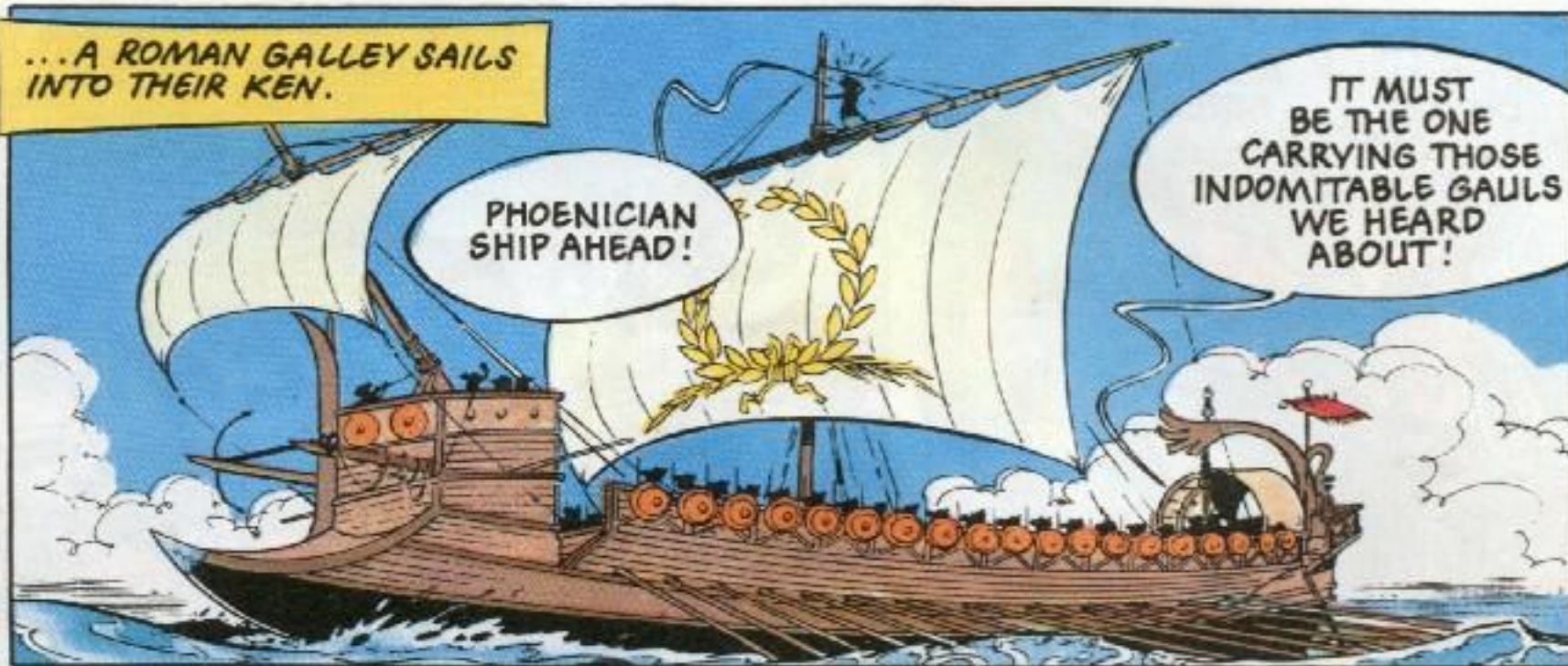
WELL?  
I SAVED  
THE SHIP,  
DIDN'T I?

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

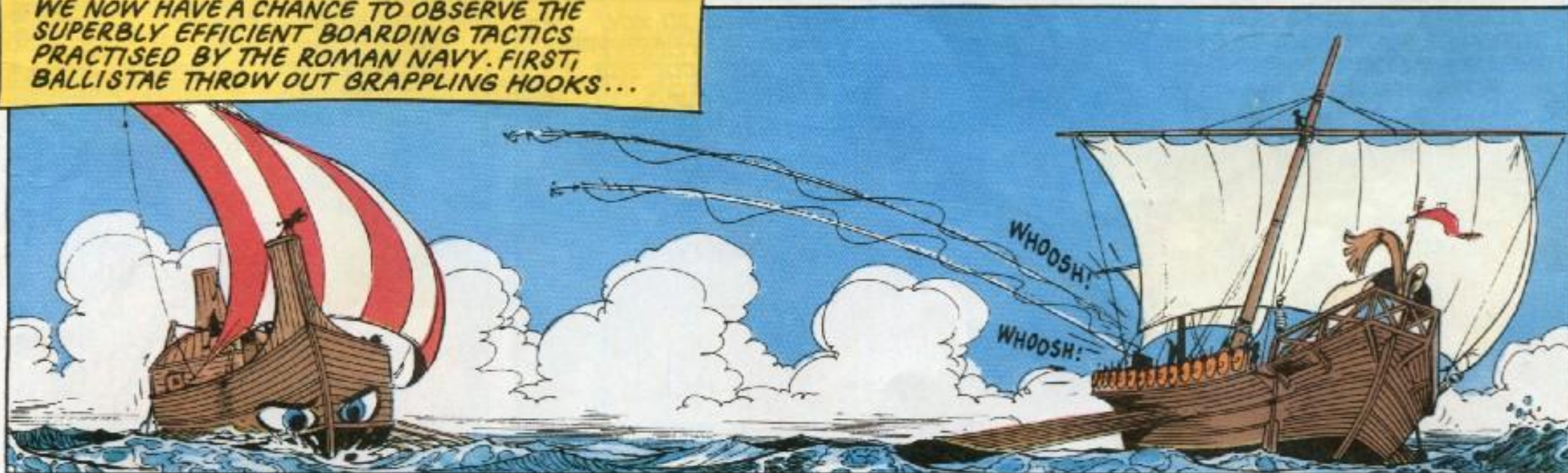
WELL DONE,  
FRIENDS! AS SALES-  
MEN, YOU CERTAINLY  
PACK PLENTY OF  
PUNCH!

THEY SHOULD  
WIN A FREE  
HOLIDAY!

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

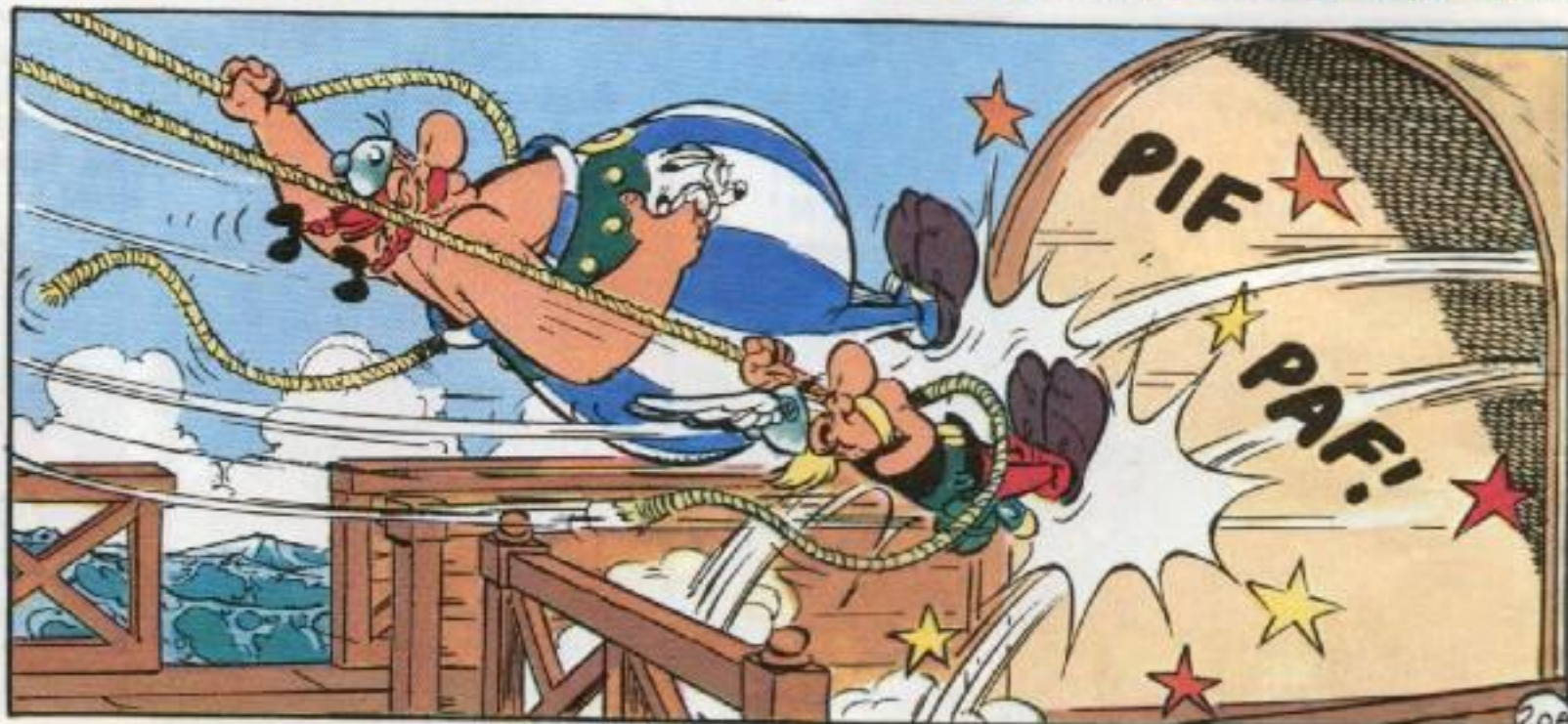


WE NOW HAVE A CHANCE TO OBSERVE THE  
SUPERBLY EFFICIENT BOARDING TACTICS  
PRACTISED BY THE ROMAN NAVY. FIRST,  
BALLISTAE THROW OUT GRAPPLING HOOKS...



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





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!

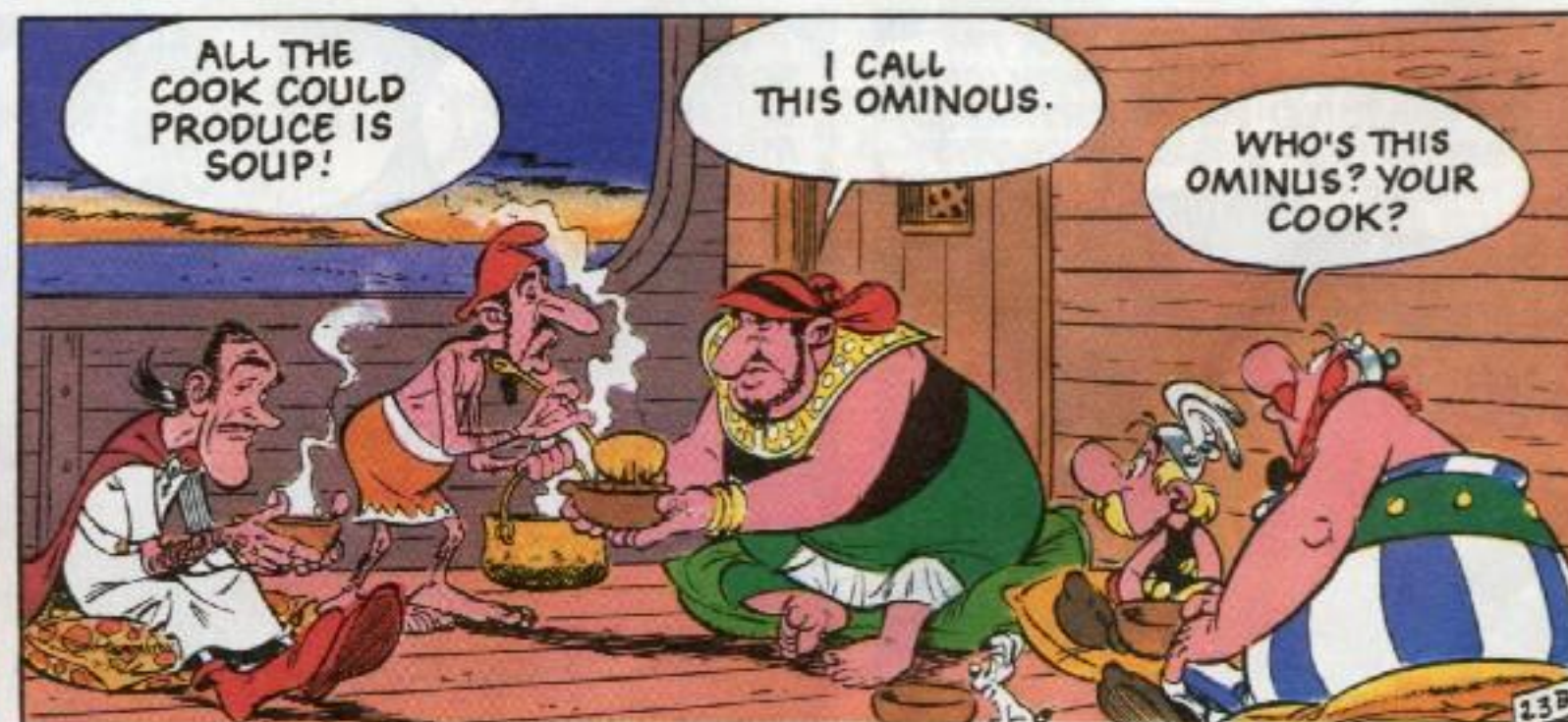
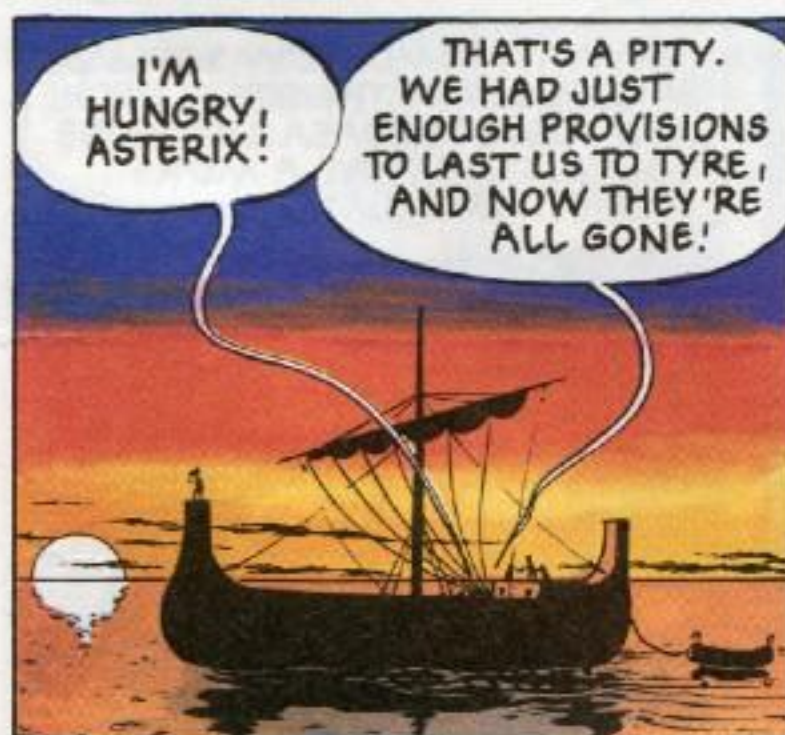
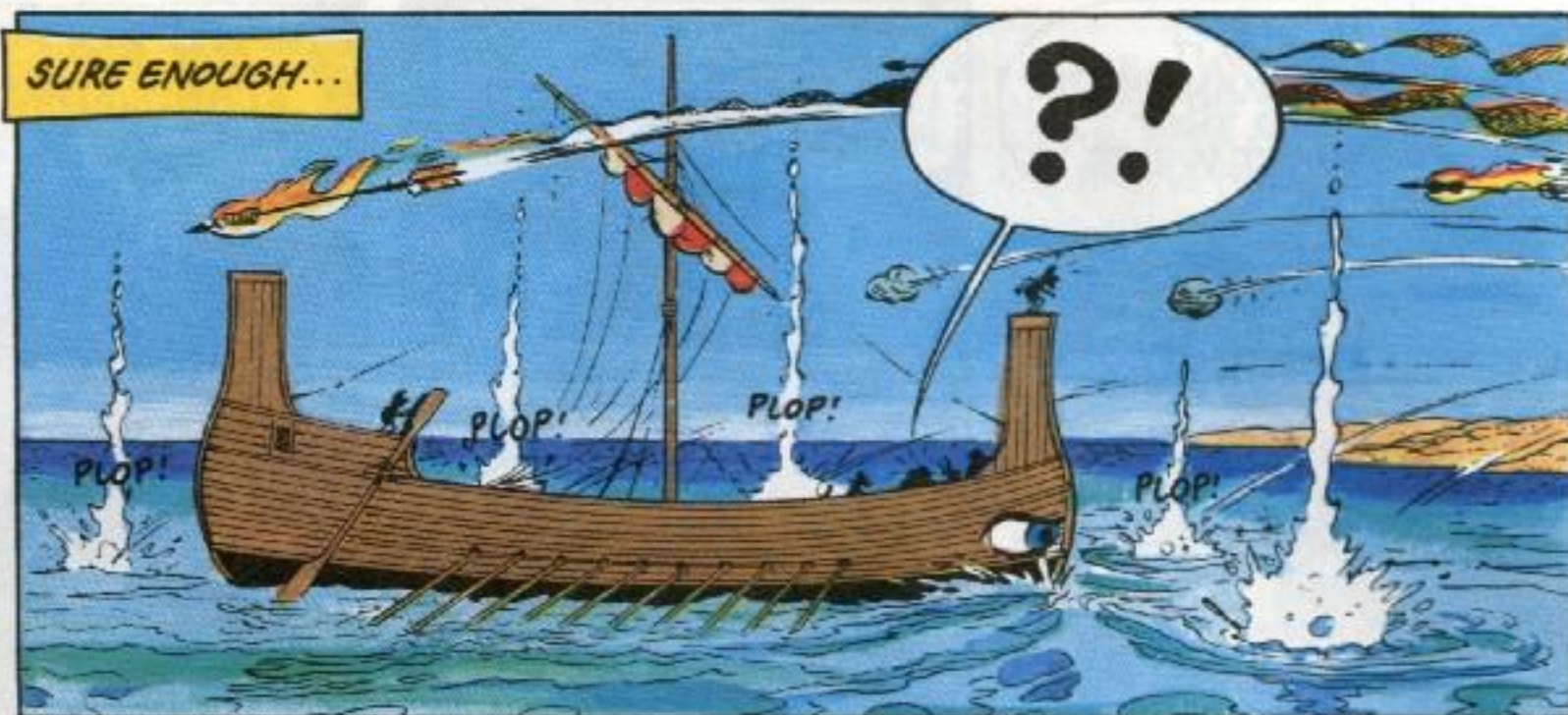


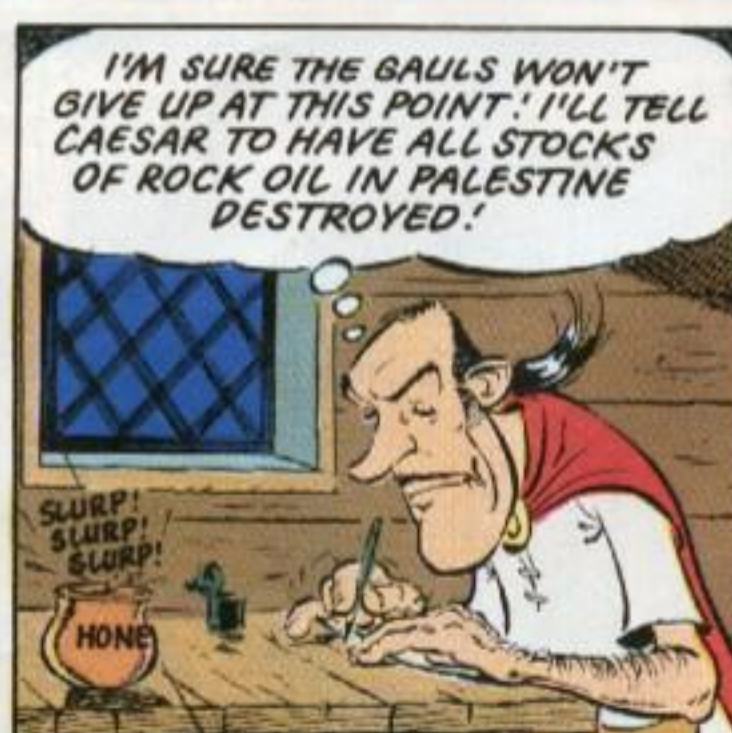
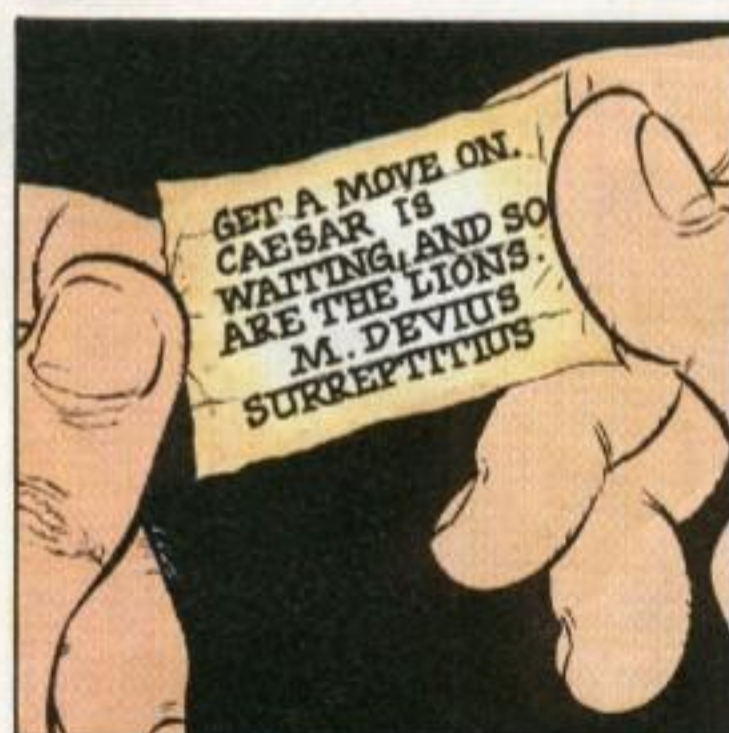
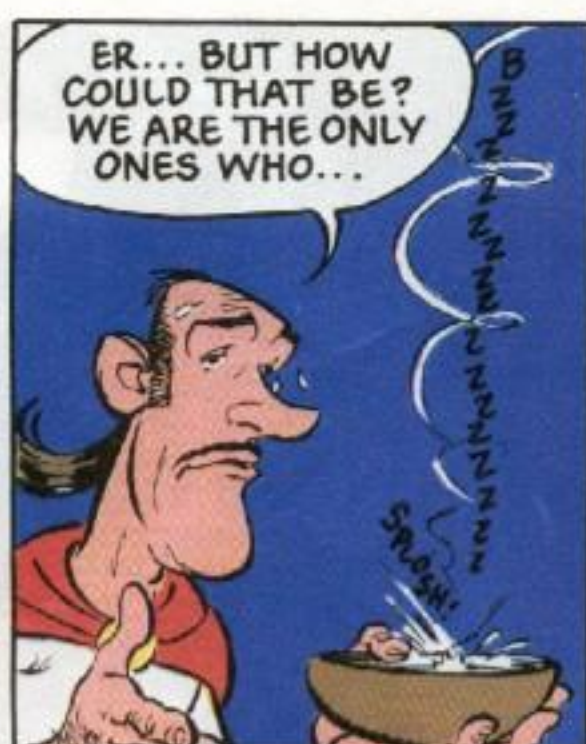
EMERGING FROM ITS NAVAL CAMPAIGN, THE PHOENICIAN SHIP SAILS PEACEFULLY ON ITS WAY.



BUT ONE OF THE FINEST OF PHOENICIAN TRADING PORTS HAS BECOME INACCESSIBLE. THE HARBOUR MOUTH IS BLOCKED BY BIREMES, TRIREMES, QUADRIREMES AND QUINQUIREMES.







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 OUR-  
SELVES! LET'S JOIN  
FORCES!

MY NAME'S  
JOSHUA BEN  
ZEDRIN.

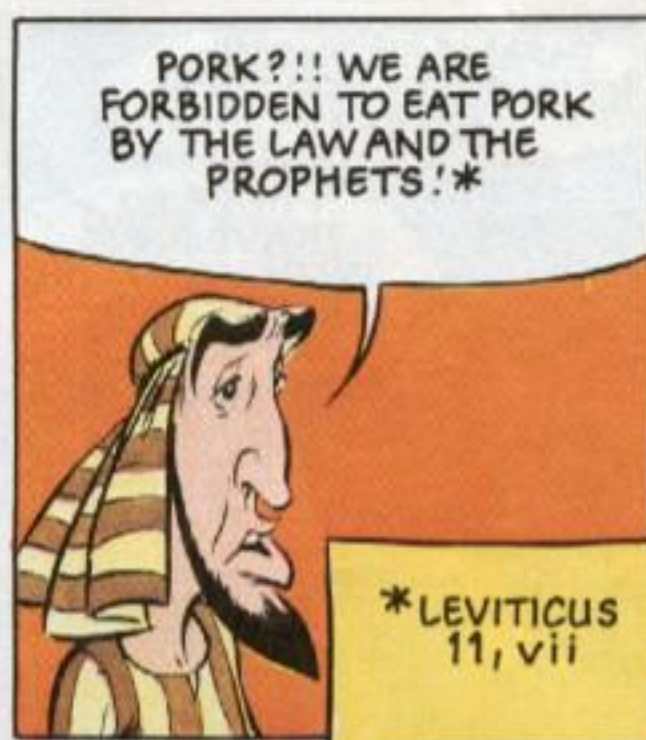
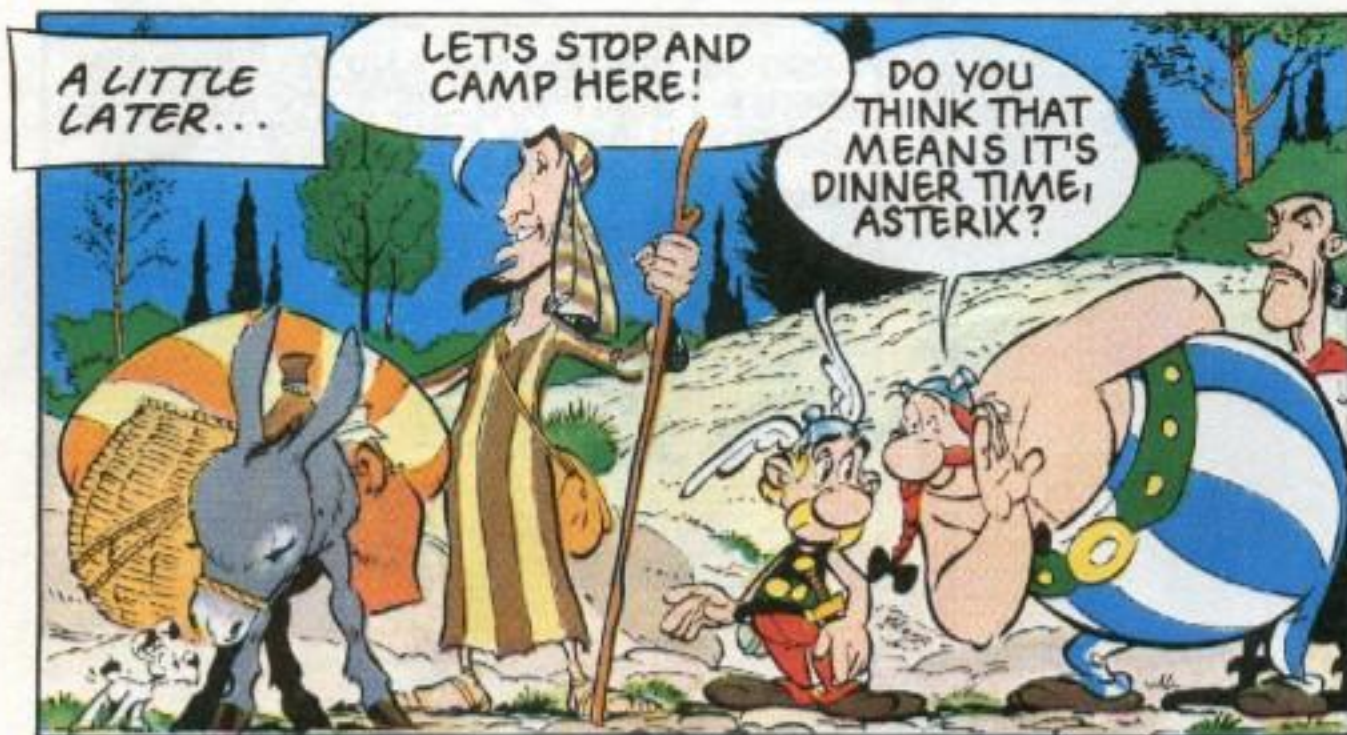
I'M ASTERIX.  
MEET OBELIX,  
DOGMATIX, AND  
DUBBELOSIX  
THE DRUID!

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

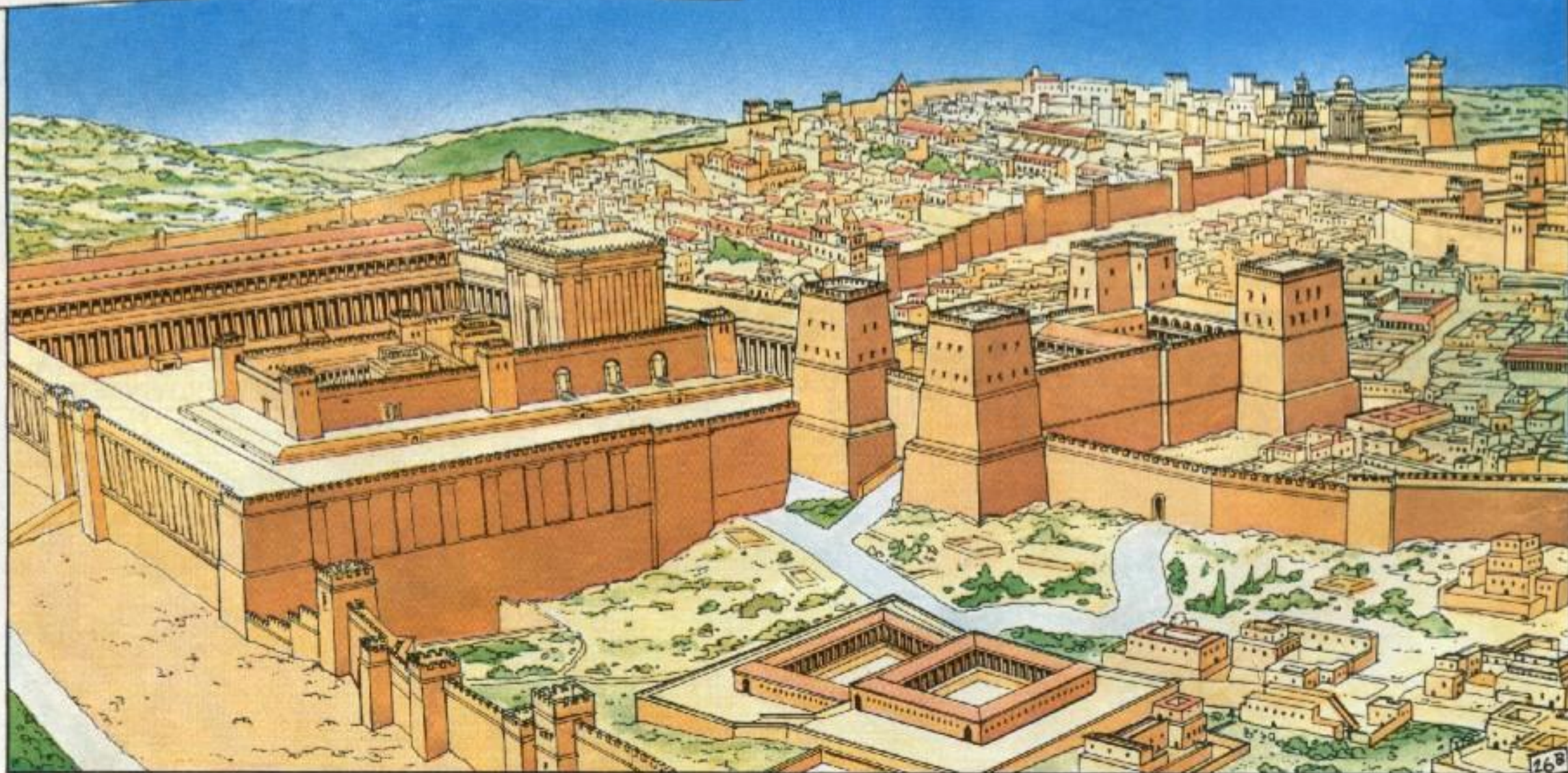
I WOULDN'T  
HAVE THOUGHT  
ANYONE WOULD  
COME SO FAR  
FOR THAT!

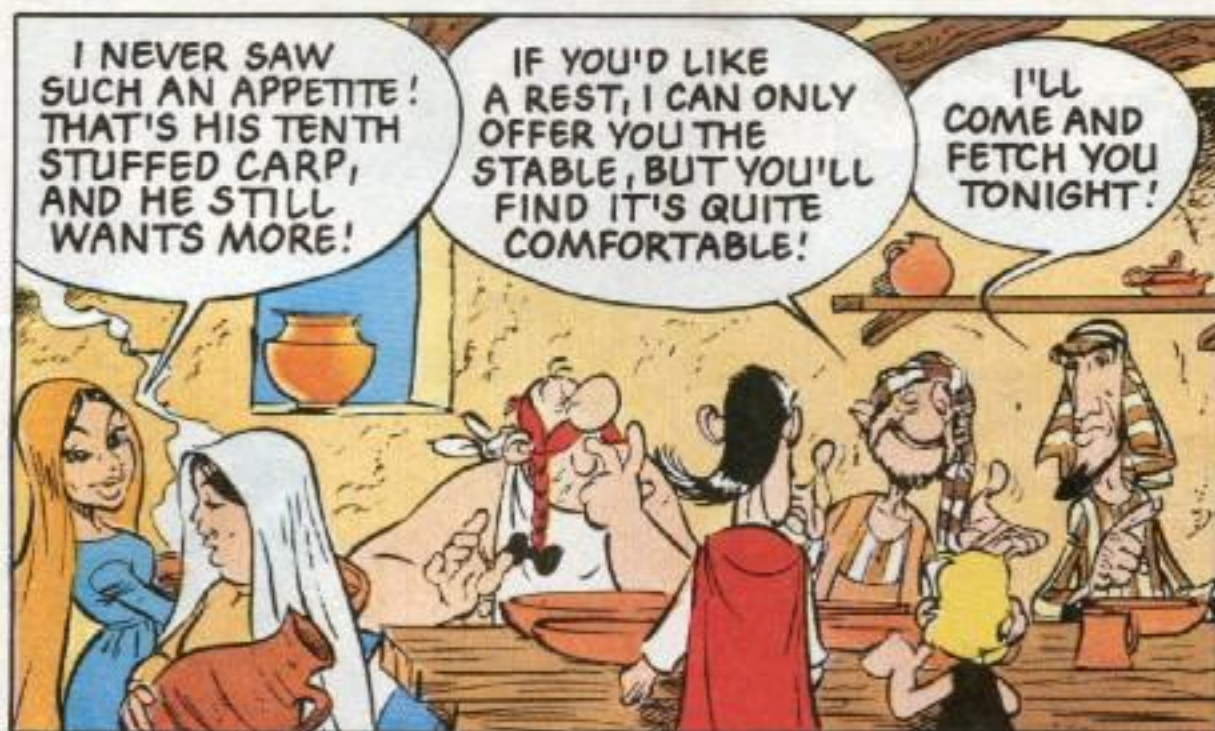
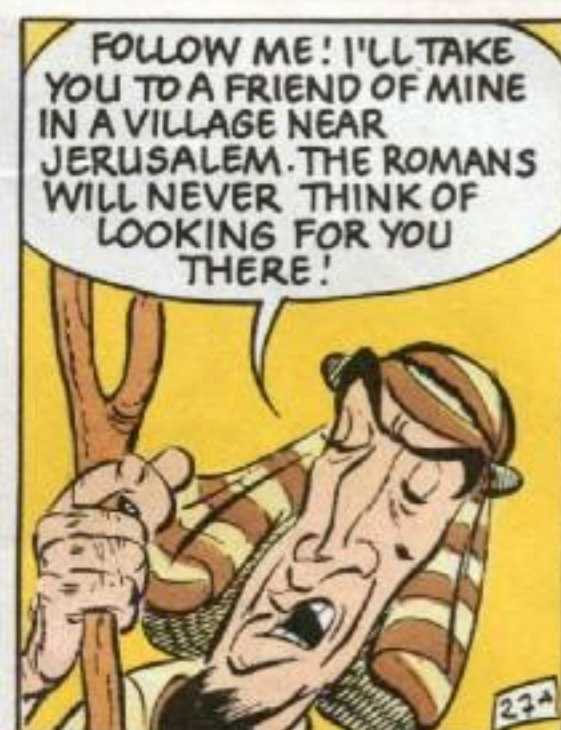
ARE  
THERE MANY  
ROMANS  
HERE?

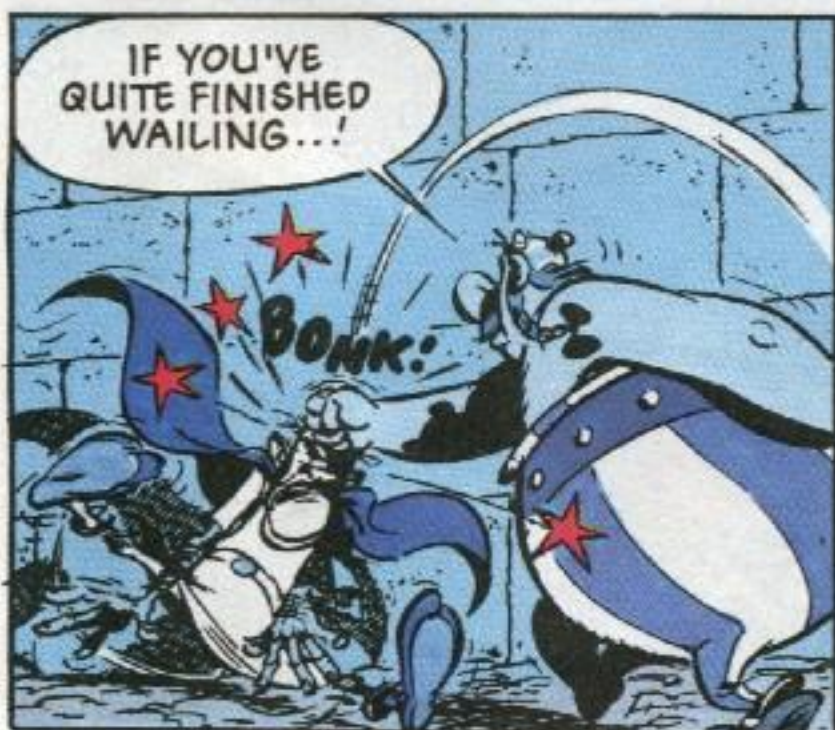
NOT AS MANY AS IN  
PHOENICIA. THAT'S A  
ROMAN PROVINCE. WE'RE  
ONLY A PROTECTORATE,  
AND THE ROMANS DON'T  
HAVE A STRONG GARRISON  
IN JERUSALEM!

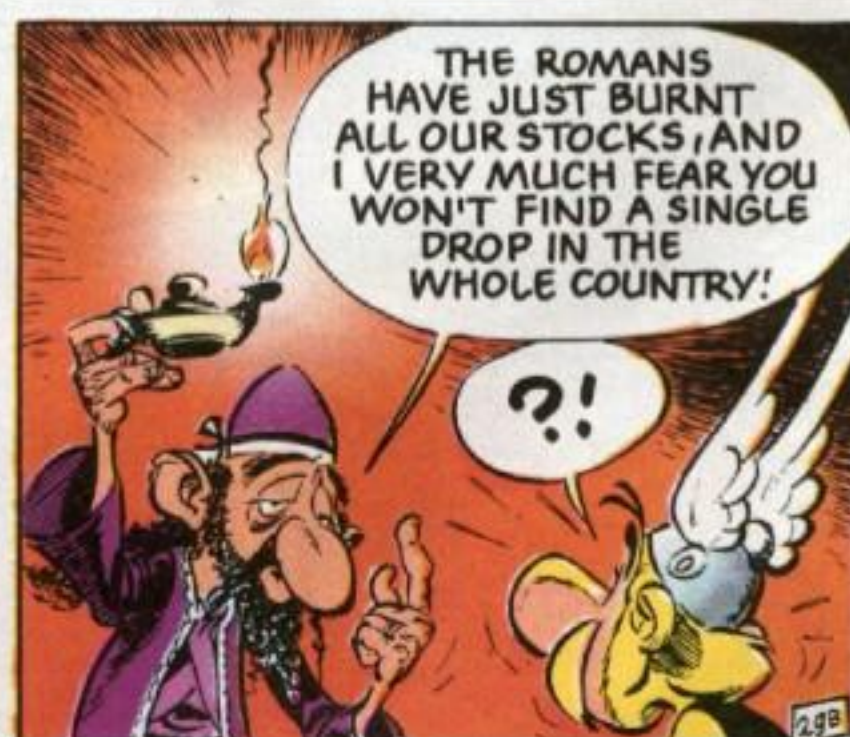
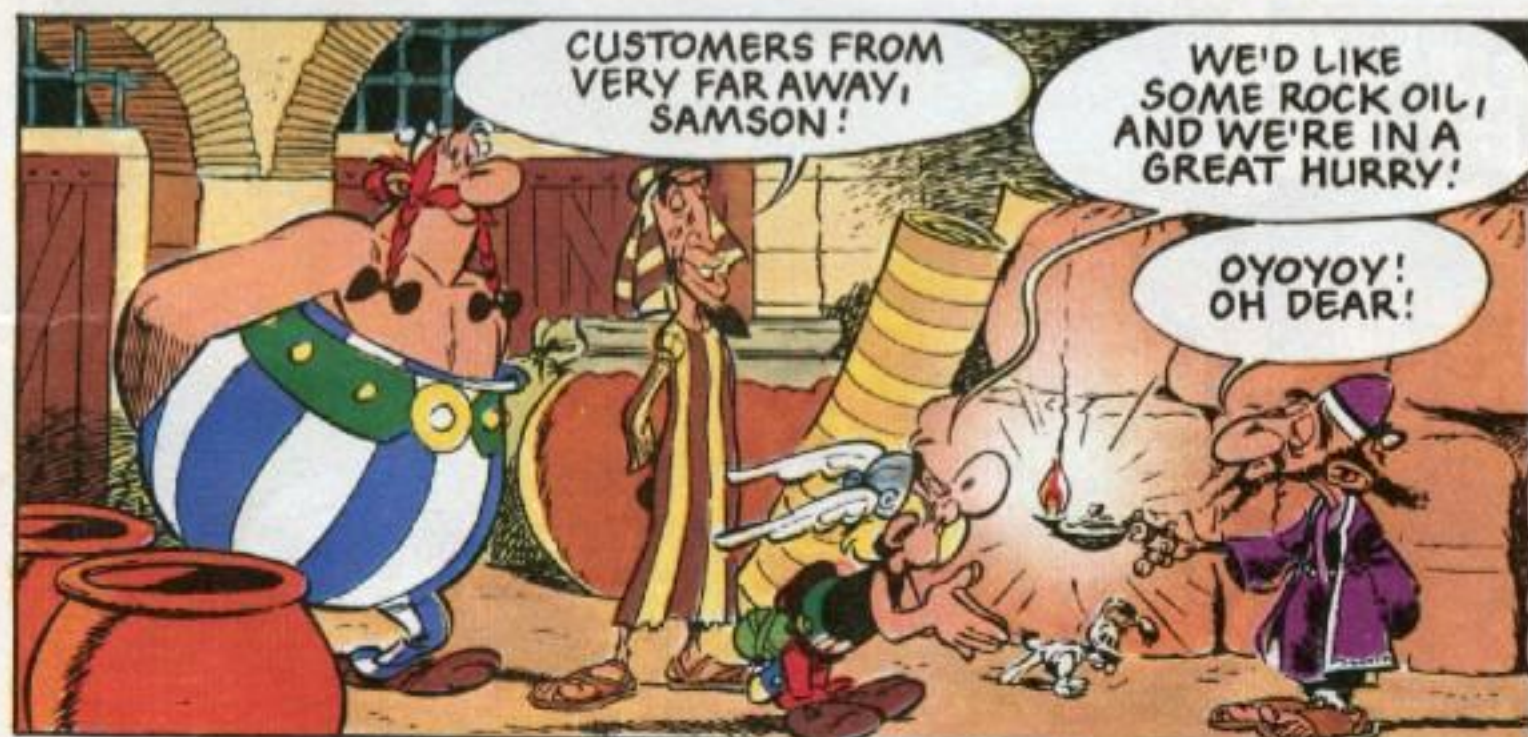


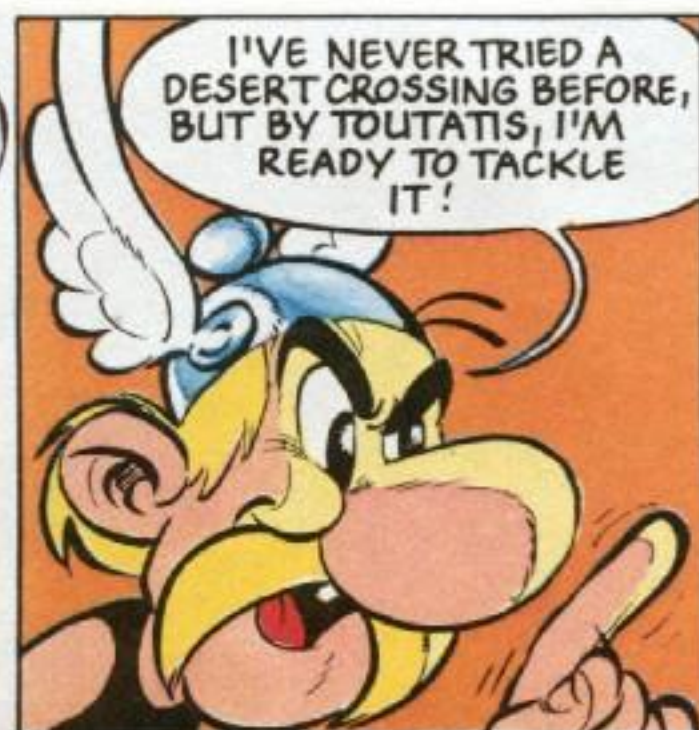
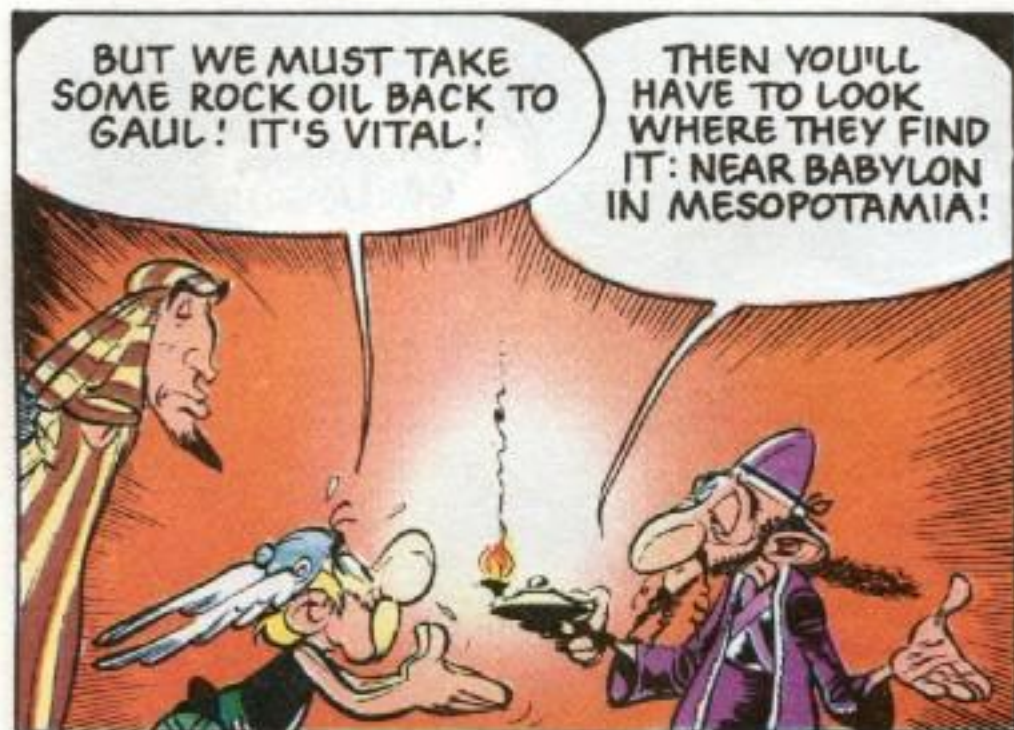
AT LAST, AFTER SEVERAL DAYS ON THE ROAD, OUR FRIENDS ARRIVE IN JERUSALEM, THE GREAT ROYAL CITY BEHIND ITS HIGH WALLS, LATER TO OPEN ITS GATES TO ALL THE FAITHS OF THE WORLD.











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 DISCRIMI-  
NATION PRACTISED AGAINST  
BOARS IN THIS COUNTRY!

?!?

THE SEA!  
YIPPEE!!!

IT'S SO HOT,  
I COULD DO WITH  
A NICE DIP!

HEY,  
WAIT!

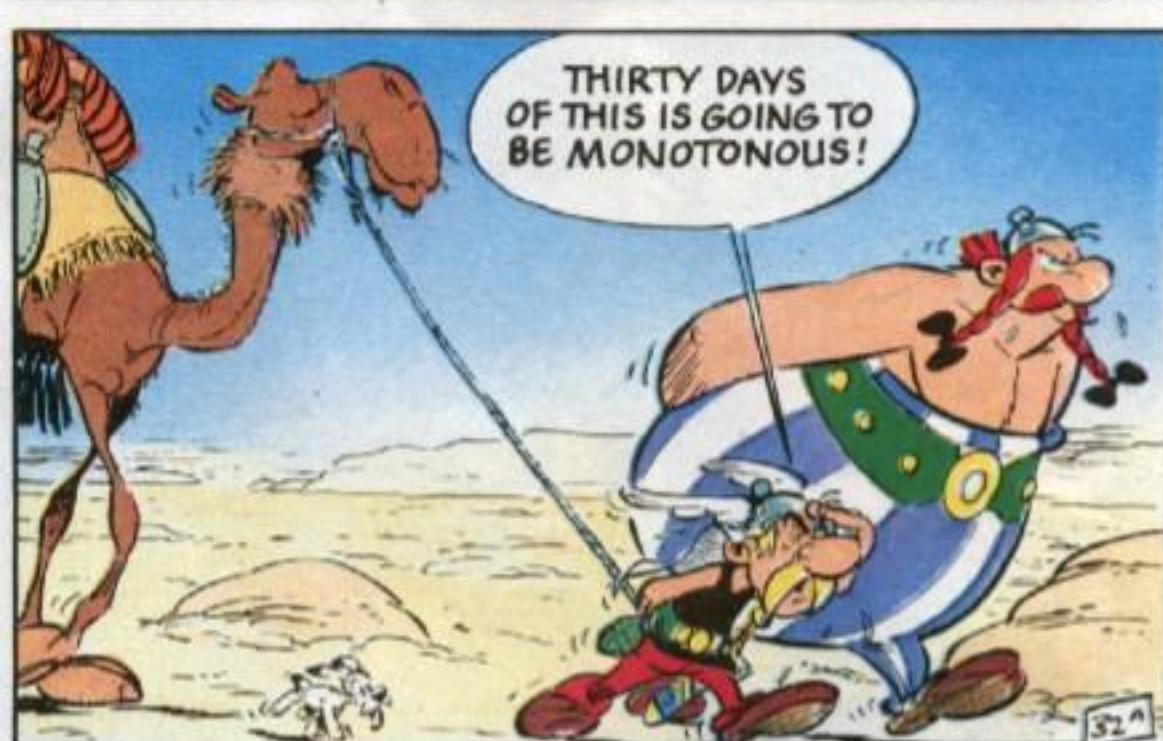
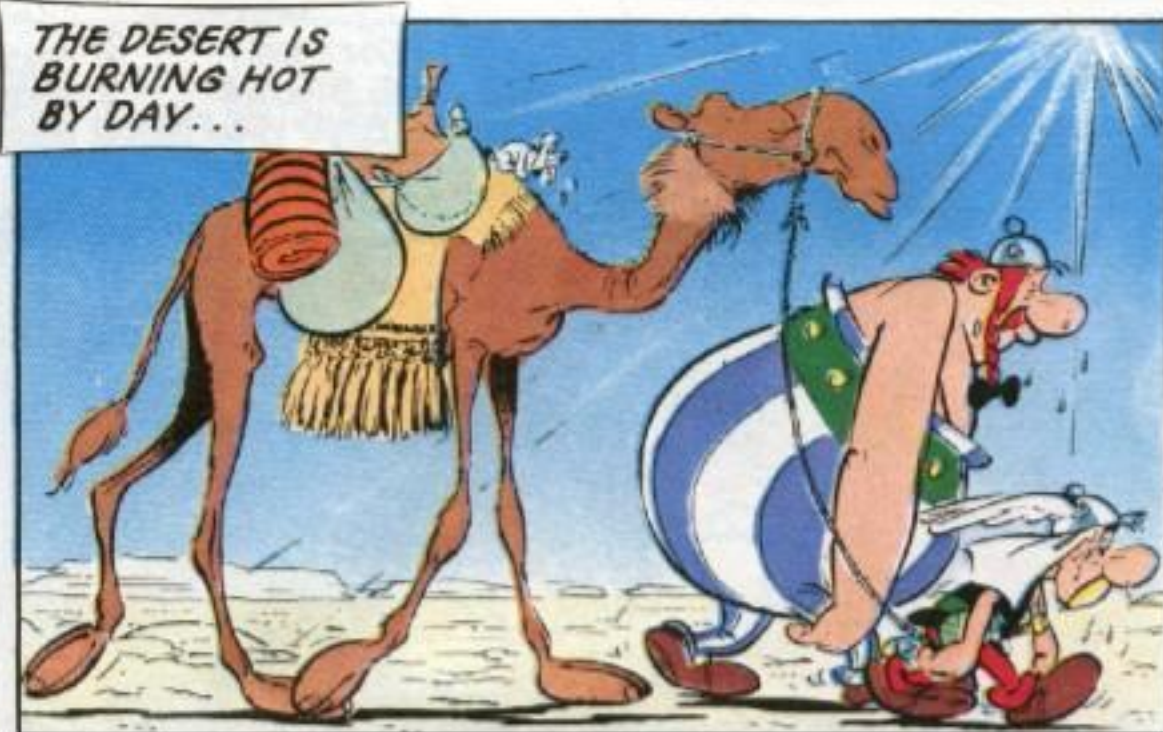
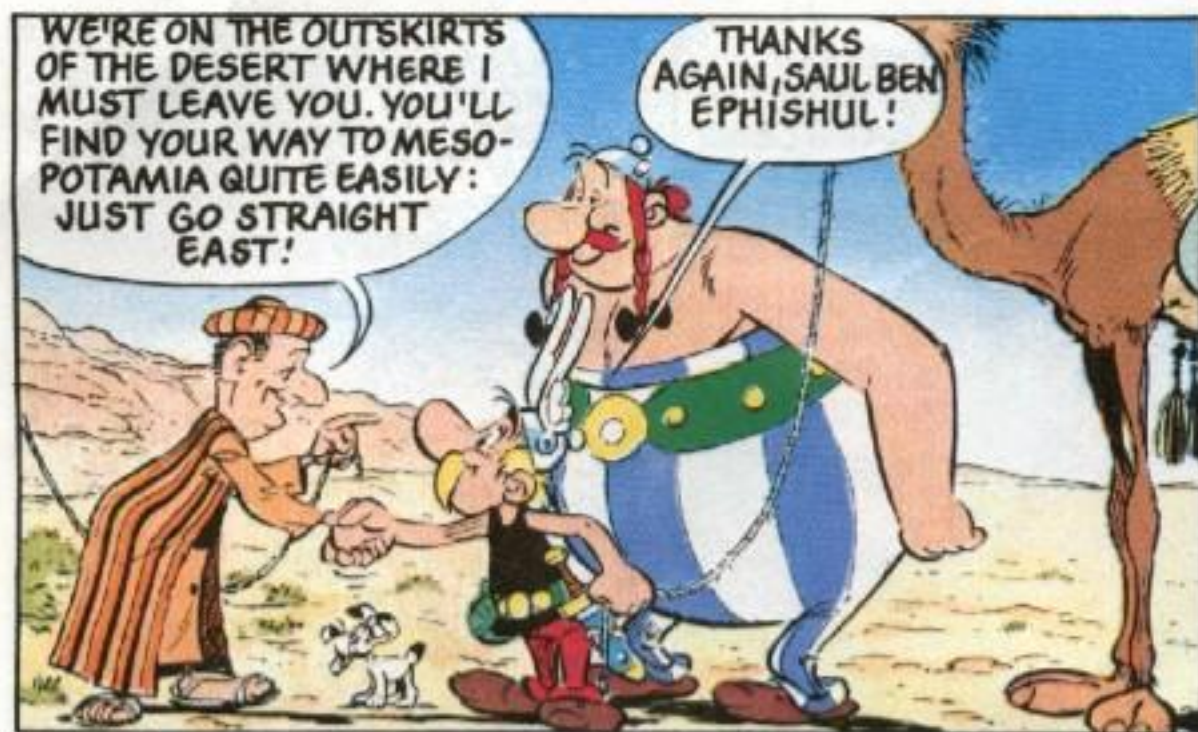
HERE  
GOES!

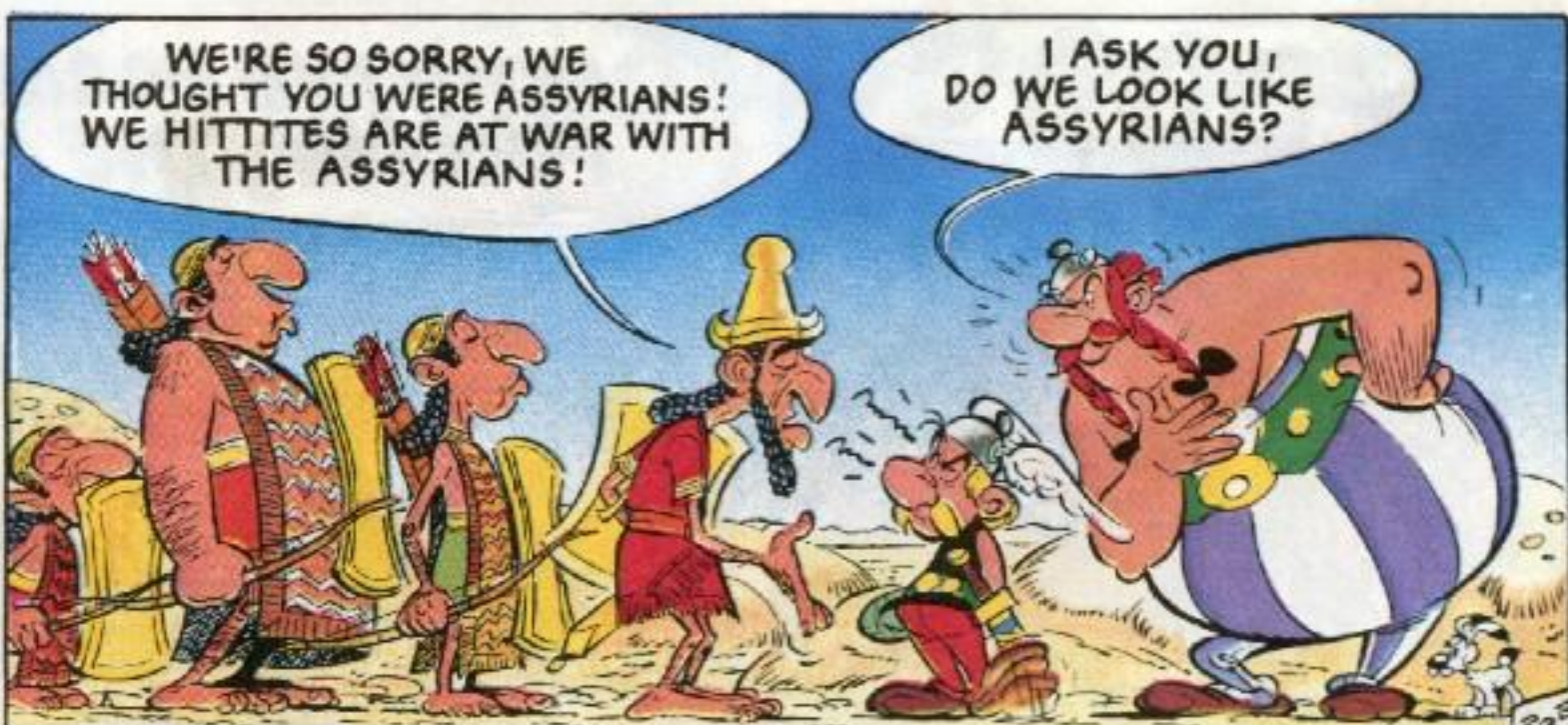
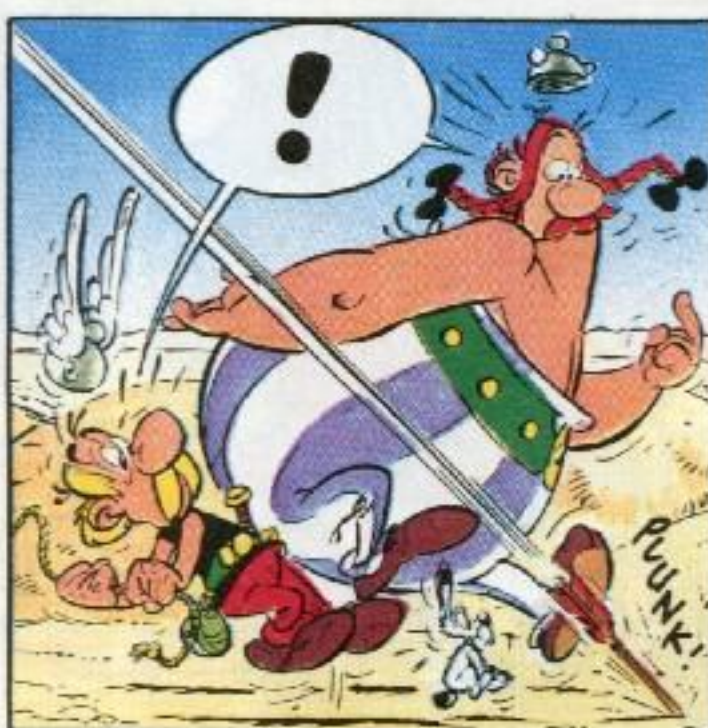
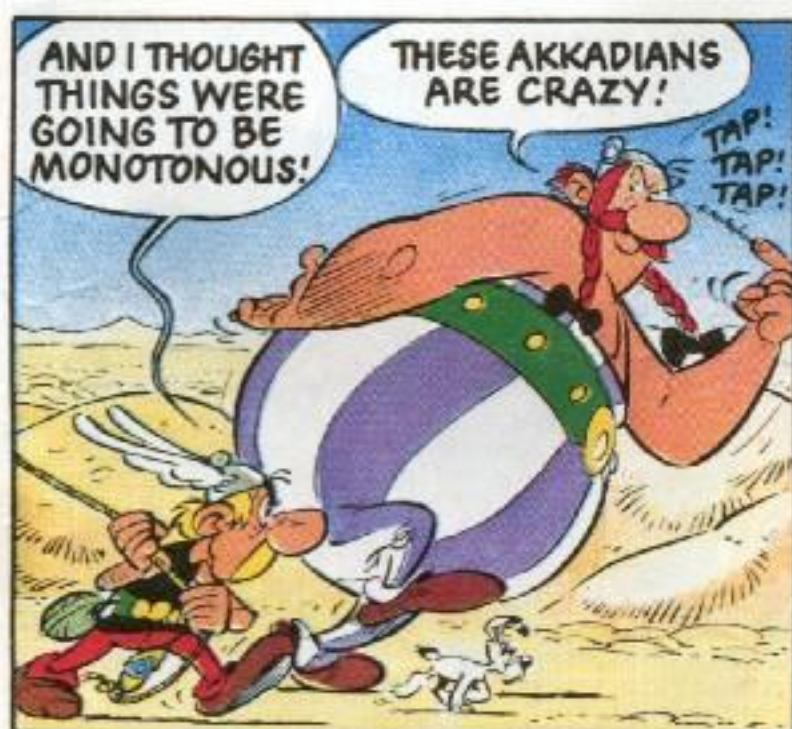
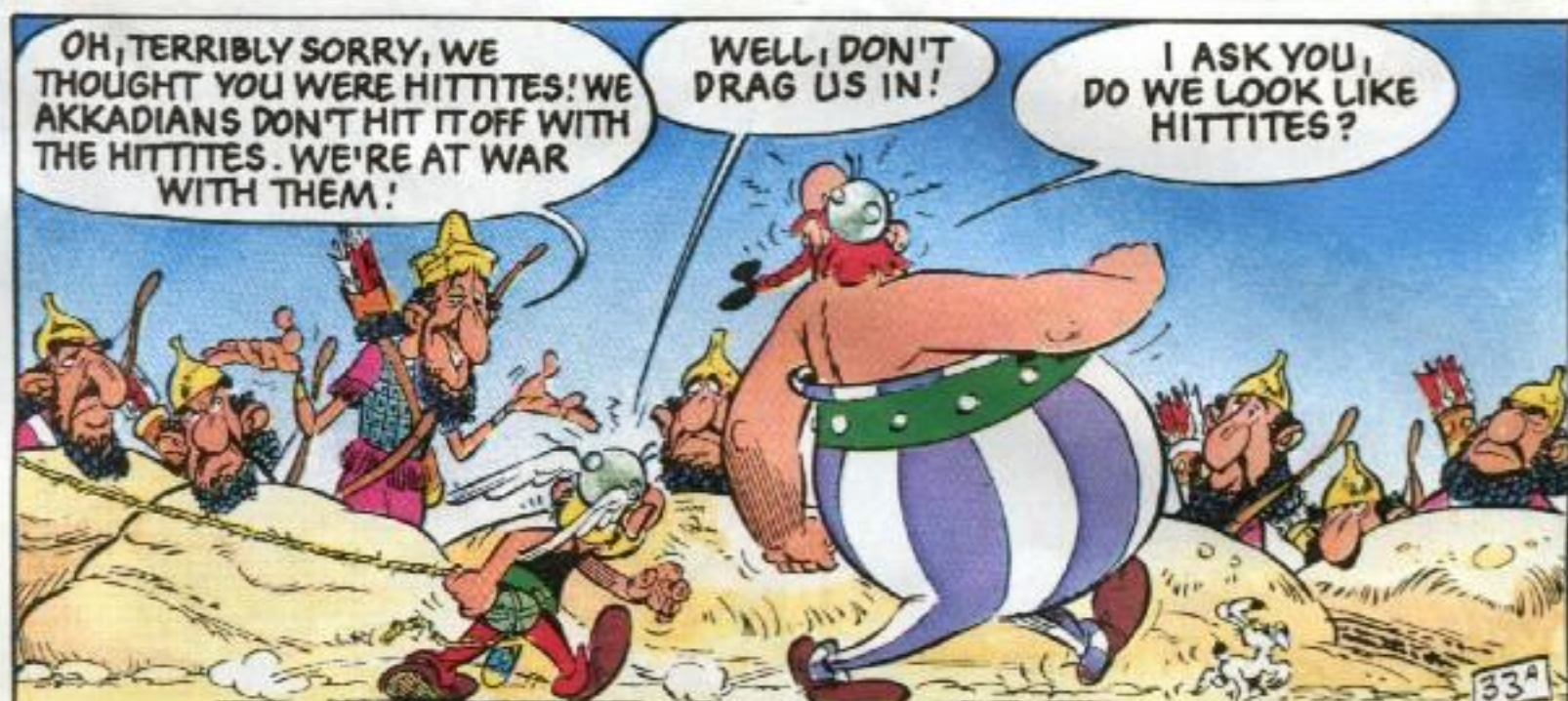
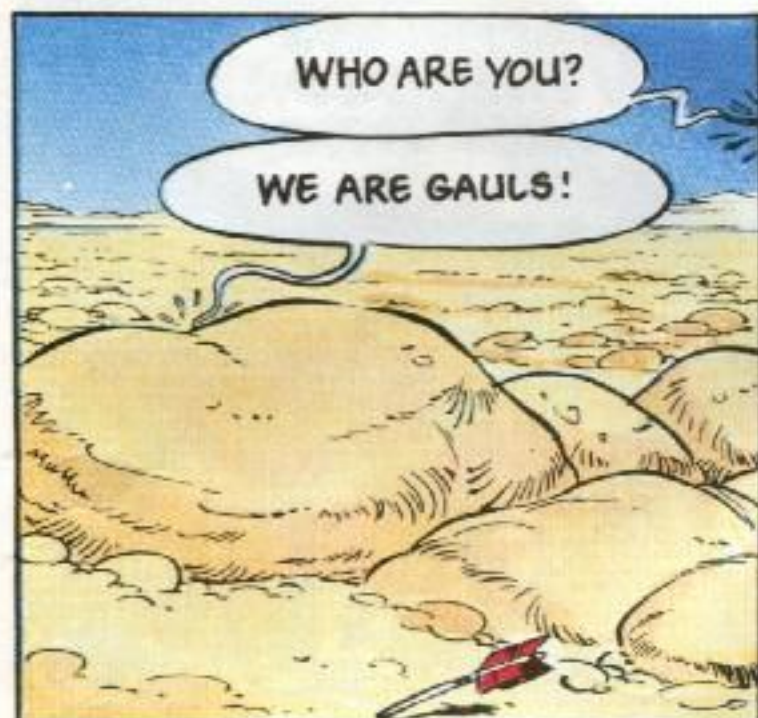
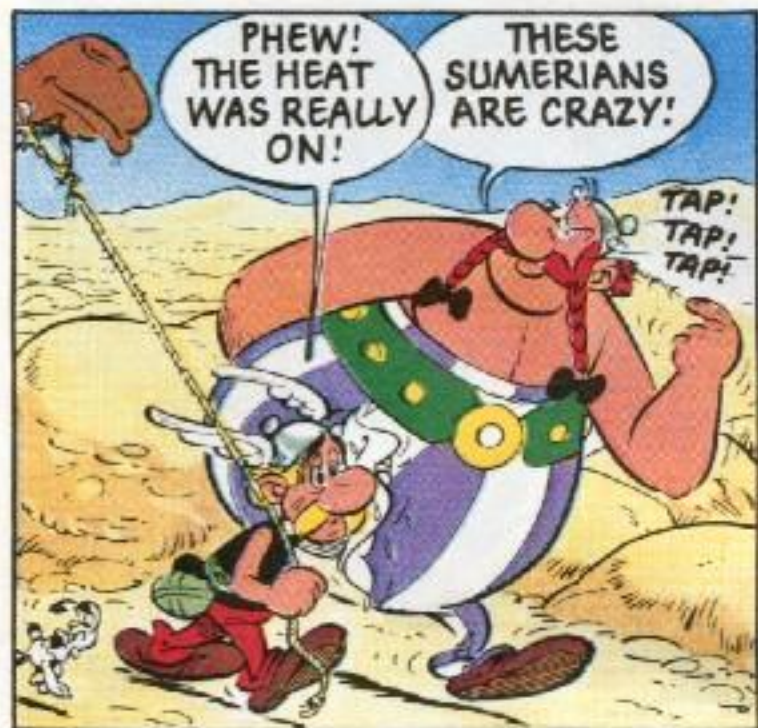
?

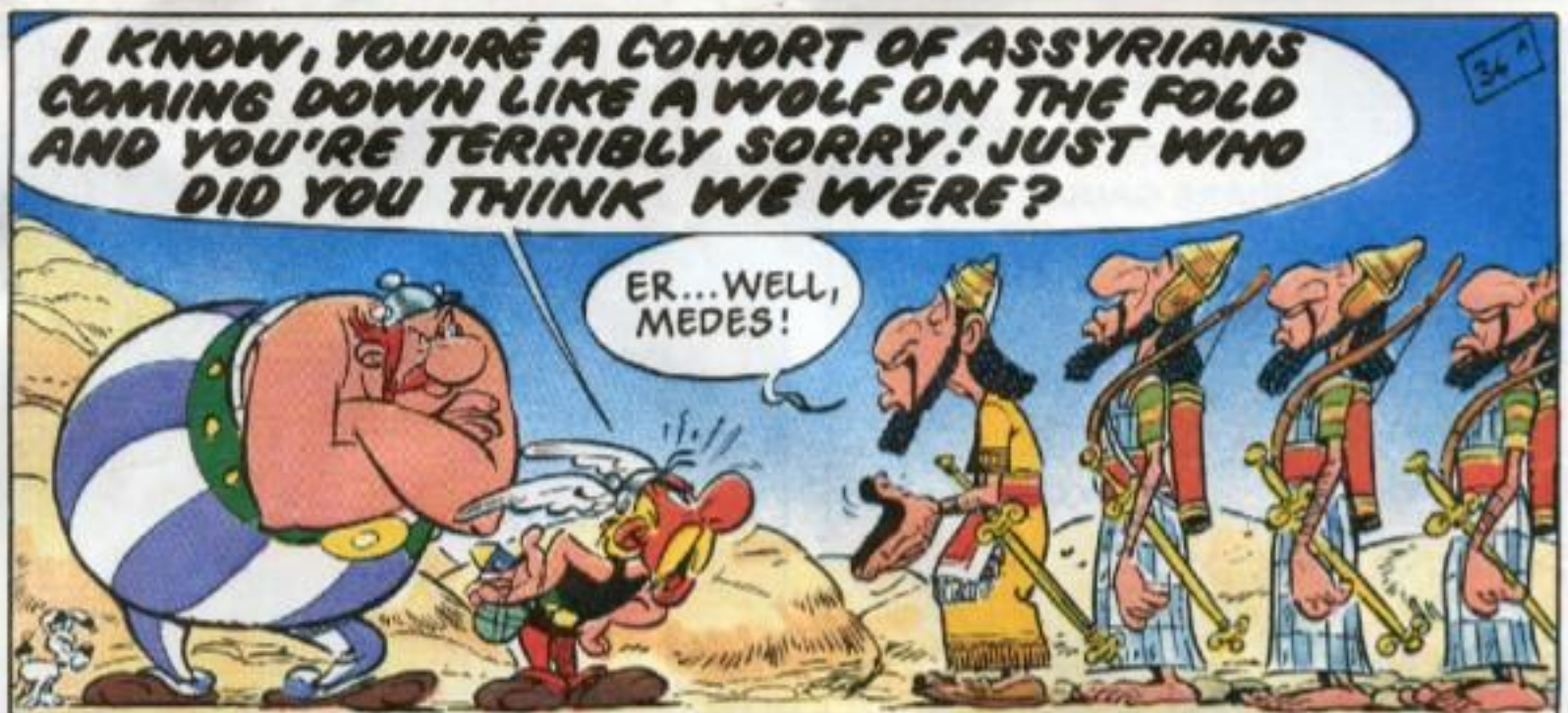
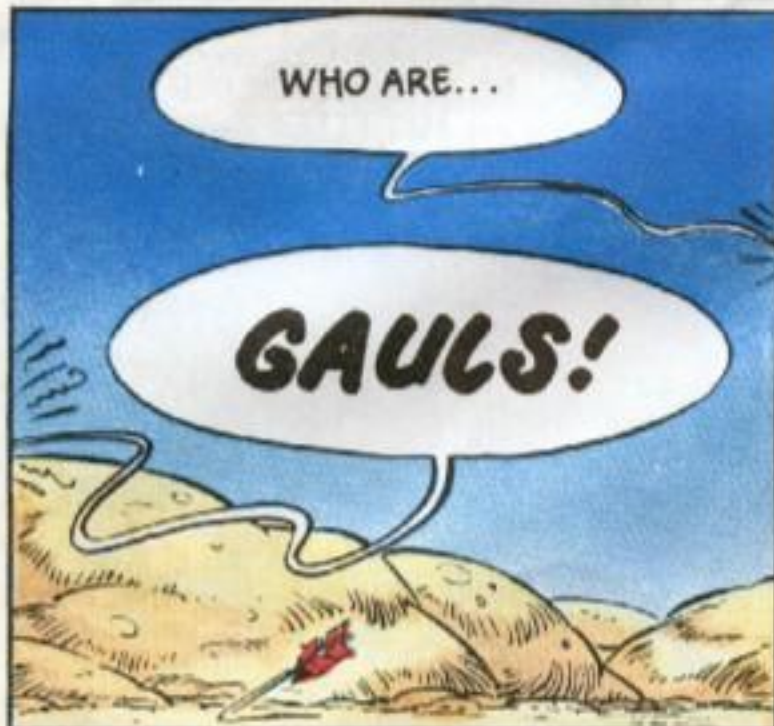
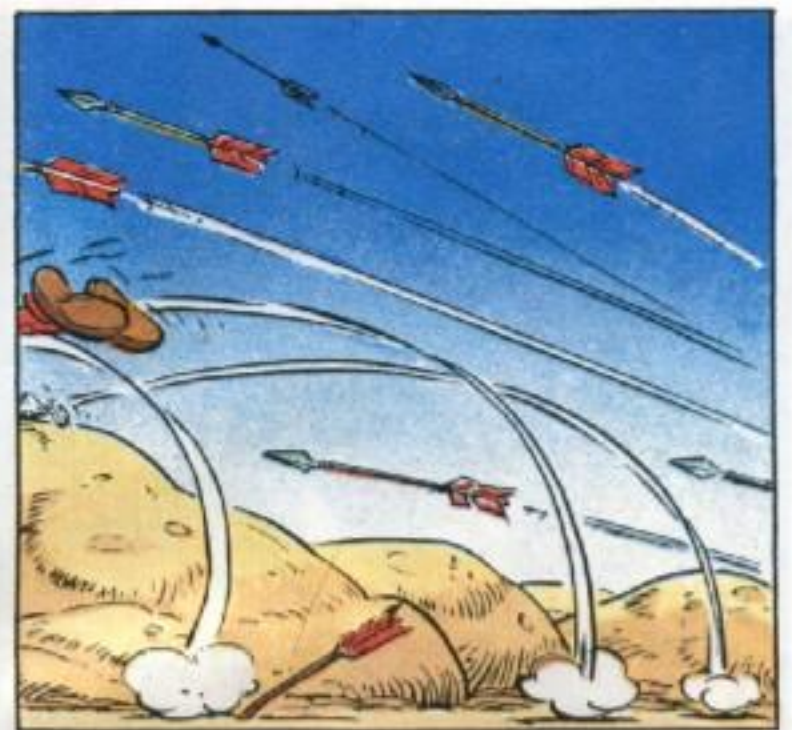
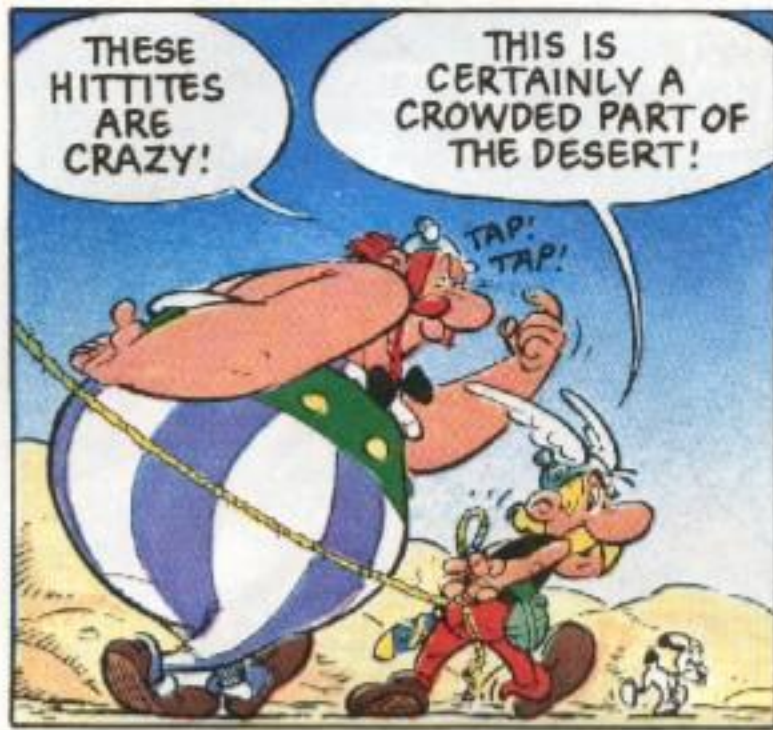
I WAS GOING TO WARN YOU: THE DEAD  
SEA HAS A SALT CONTENT SIX TIMES  
HIGHER THAN THAT OF OTHER SEAS, AND  
ITS DENSITY IS SUCH THAT THE HUMAN  
BODY JUST FLOATS ON TOP!

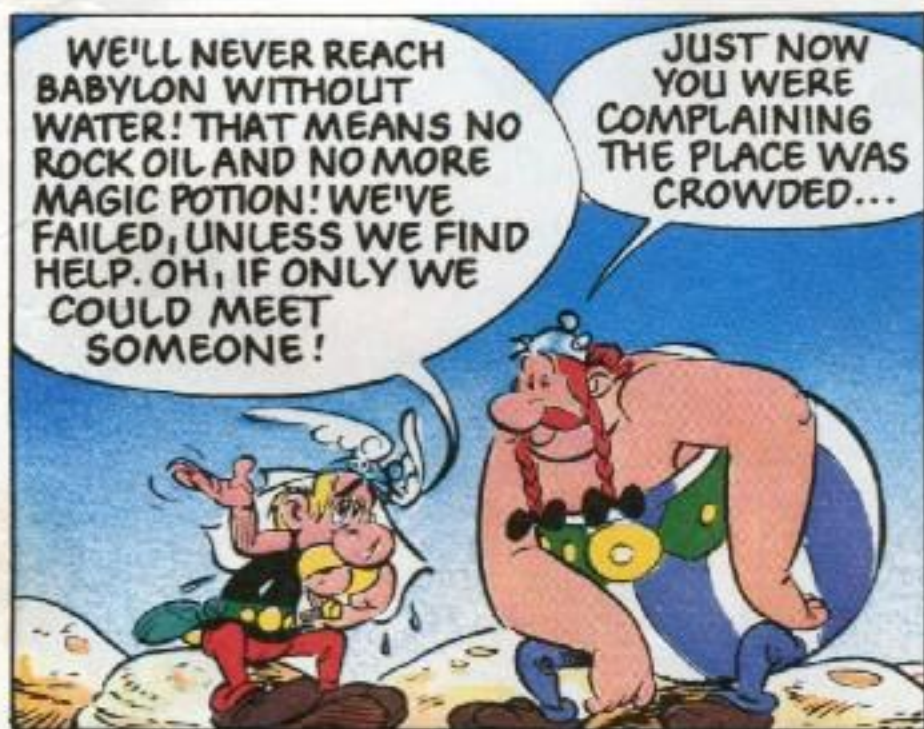
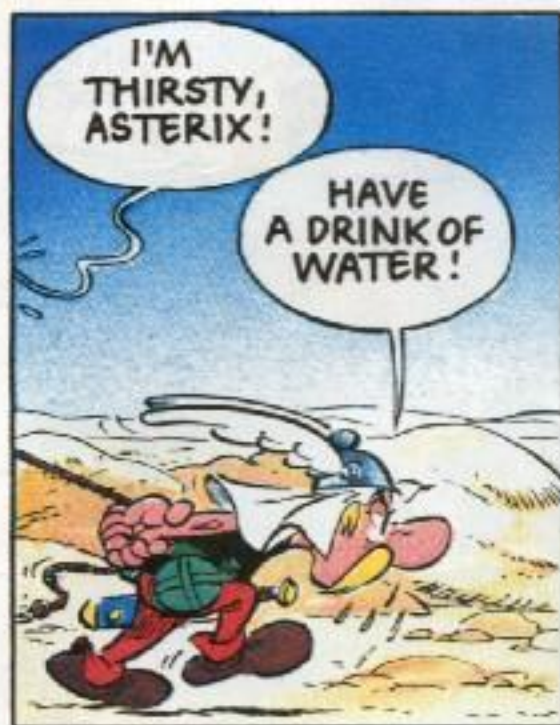
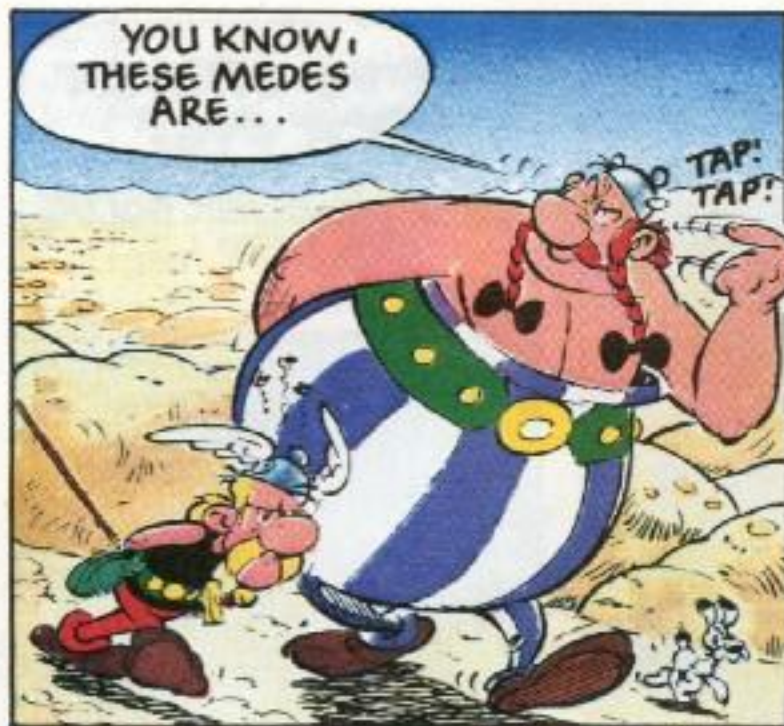
HOHOHO!  
HAHA!

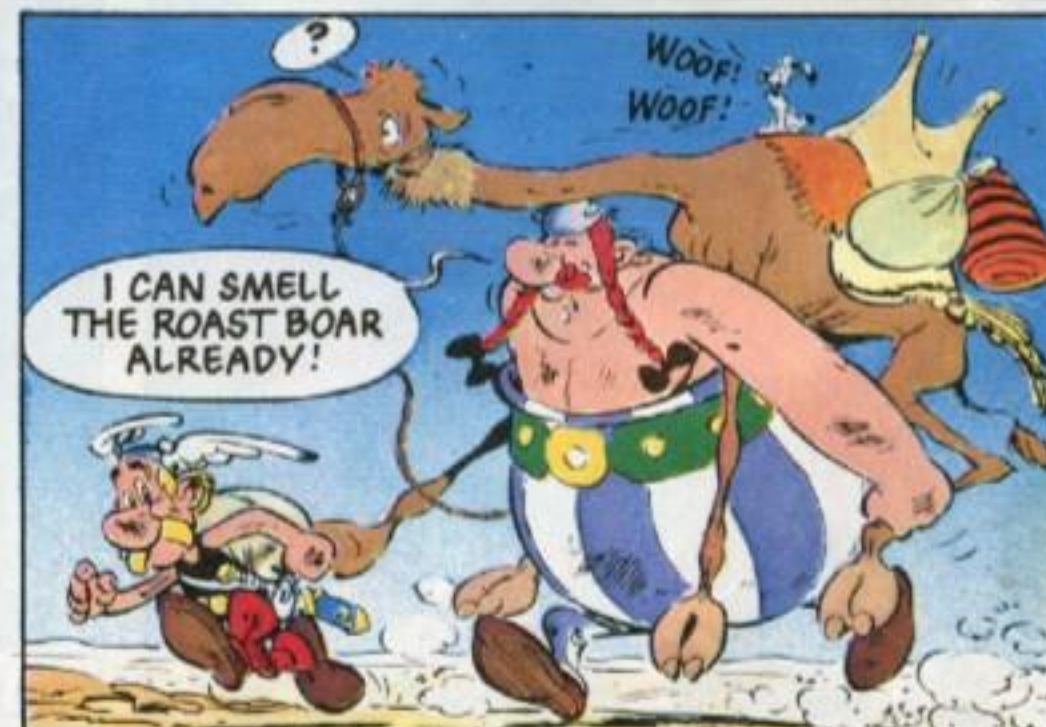
ARF!  
ARF!  
ARF!









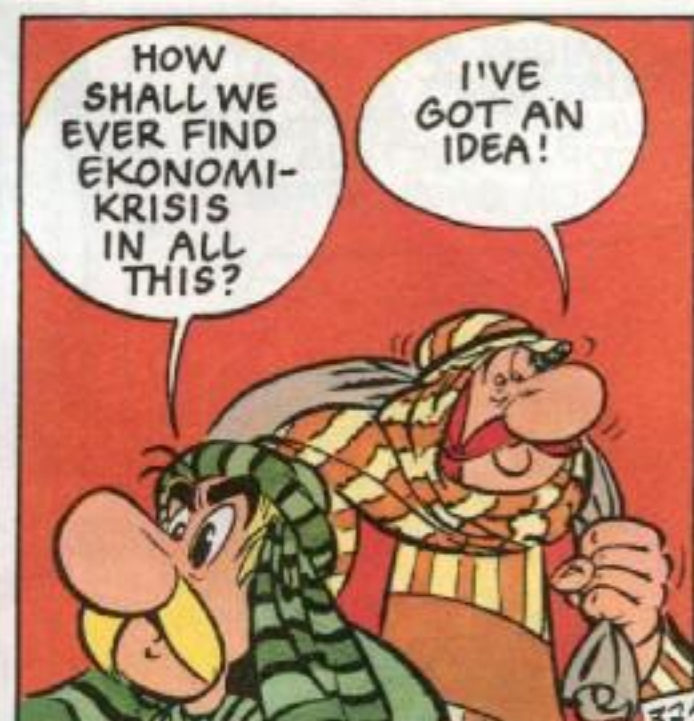


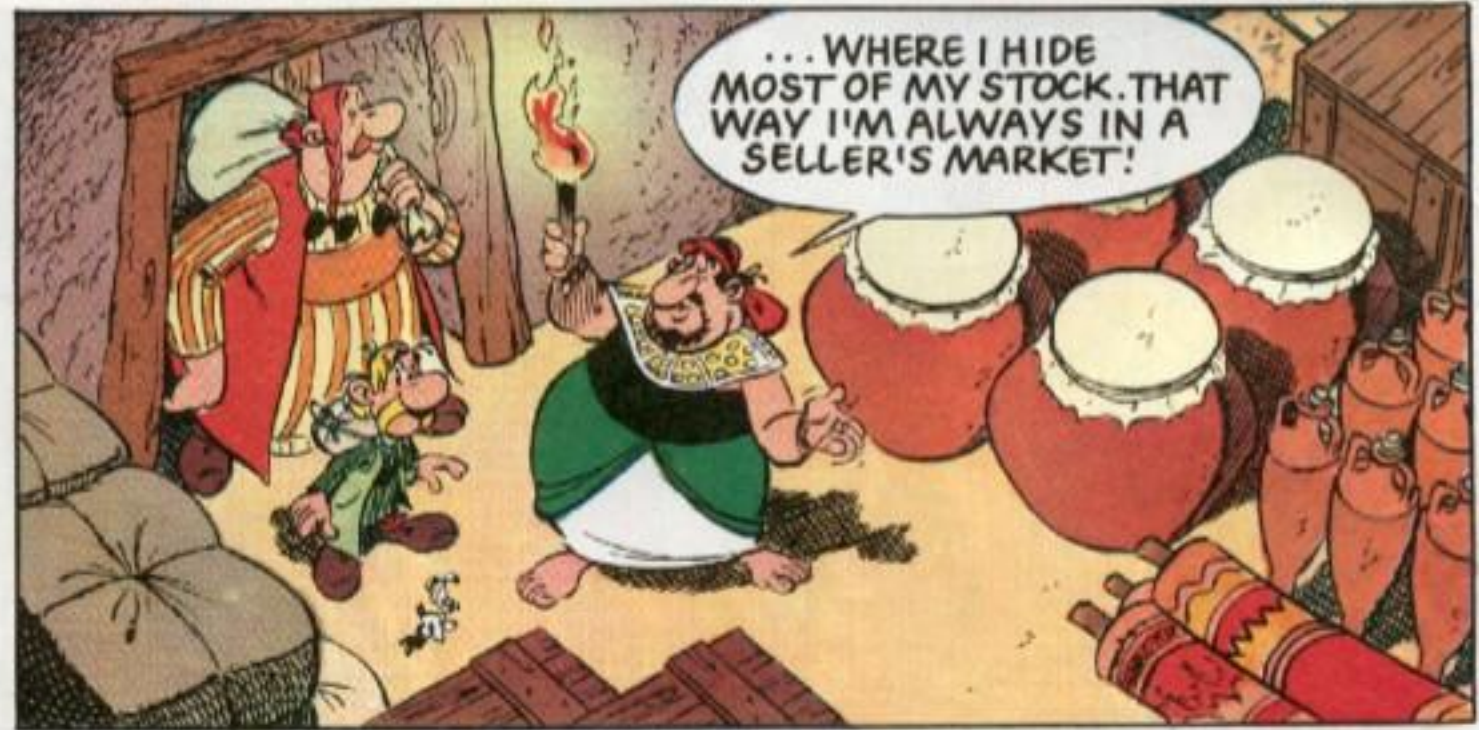
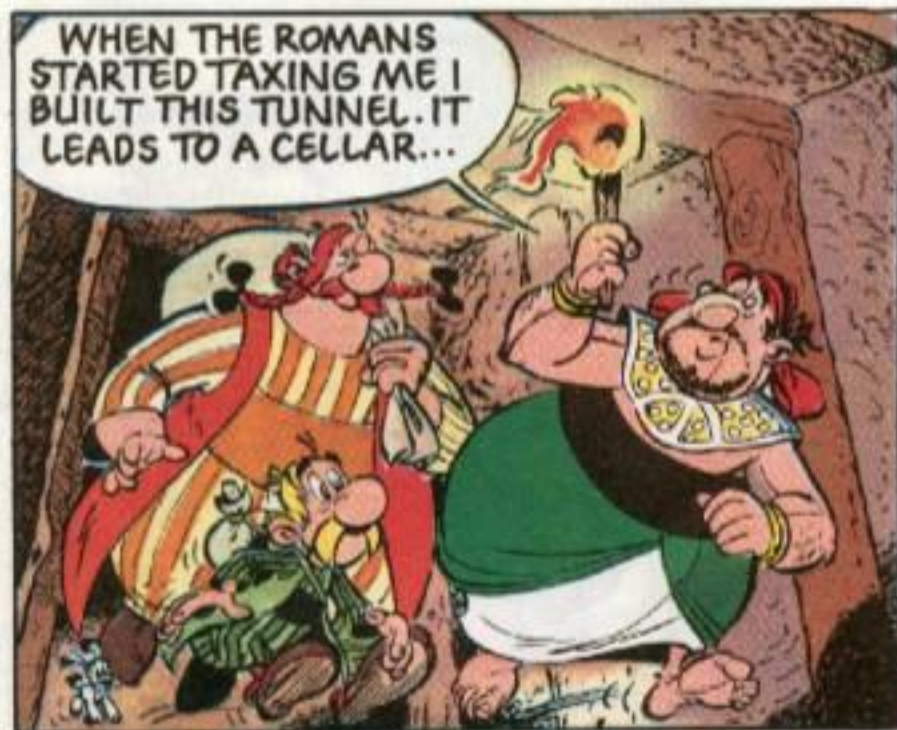
AFTER A TIRING JOURNEY WITH THE SHIP OF THE DESERT...

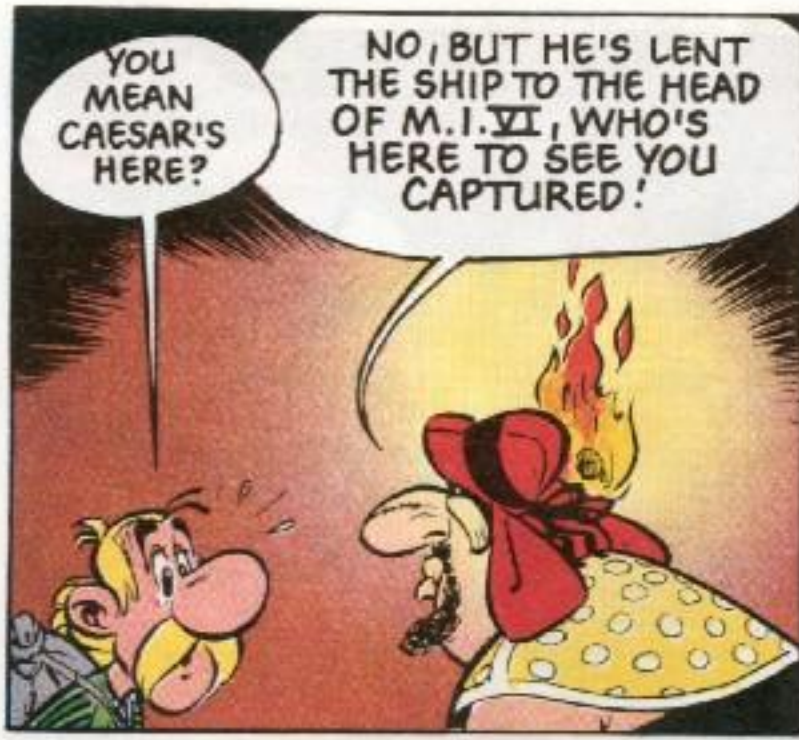


...OUR FRIENDS RETURN TO TYRE.

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







YOU MEAN CAESAR'S HERE?

NO, BUT HE'S LENT THE SHIP TO THE HEAD OF M.I.VI, WHO'S HERE TO SEE YOU CAPTURED!



SURE ENOUGH, ON BOARD CAESAR'S GALLEY...

CAESAR IS GETTING IMPATIENT, DUBBELSIX! WHAT ABOUT THAT MAGIC POTION?

I ONLY HAVE TO DISPOSE OF ASTERIX AND OBELIX, WHICH SHOULDN'T TAKE LONG. THEY'VE JUST BEEN SPOTTED IN HEBREW DISGUISE!



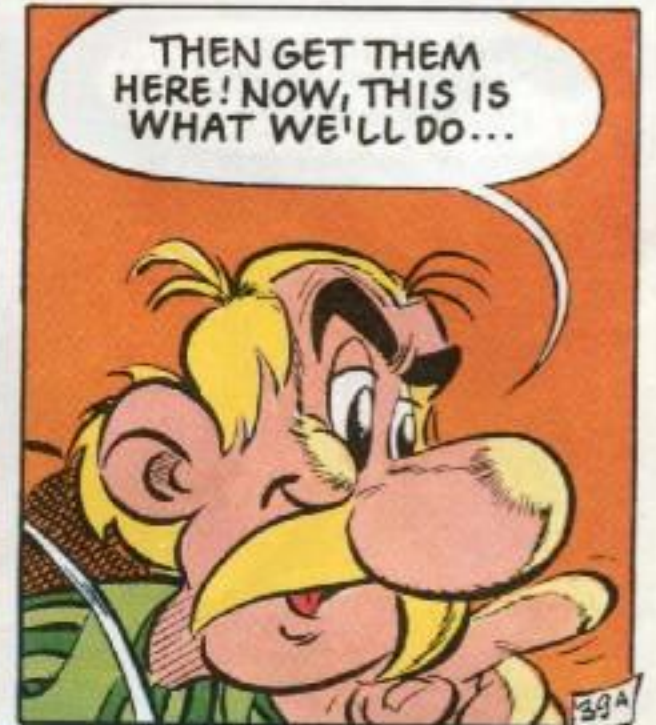
I'VE GOT AN IDEA!

HUH! COPYCAT!



IS YOUR CREW STILL AROUND, EKONOMI-KRISIS?

YES, BUT THEY'RE NOT PACKAGE TOURISTS NOW. THEY'RE THE WINNERS OF A COMPETITION... ALL THE PRIZES WERE A SEA CRUISE EXCLUSIVE OF EXPENSES. I'M THEIR C.O.: COMPETITION ORGANISER.



THEN GET THEM HERE! NOW, THIS IS WHAT WE'LL DO...



AT NIGHT-FALL...



EVENING, SOLDIER!

HALT!!! WHO GOES THERE?



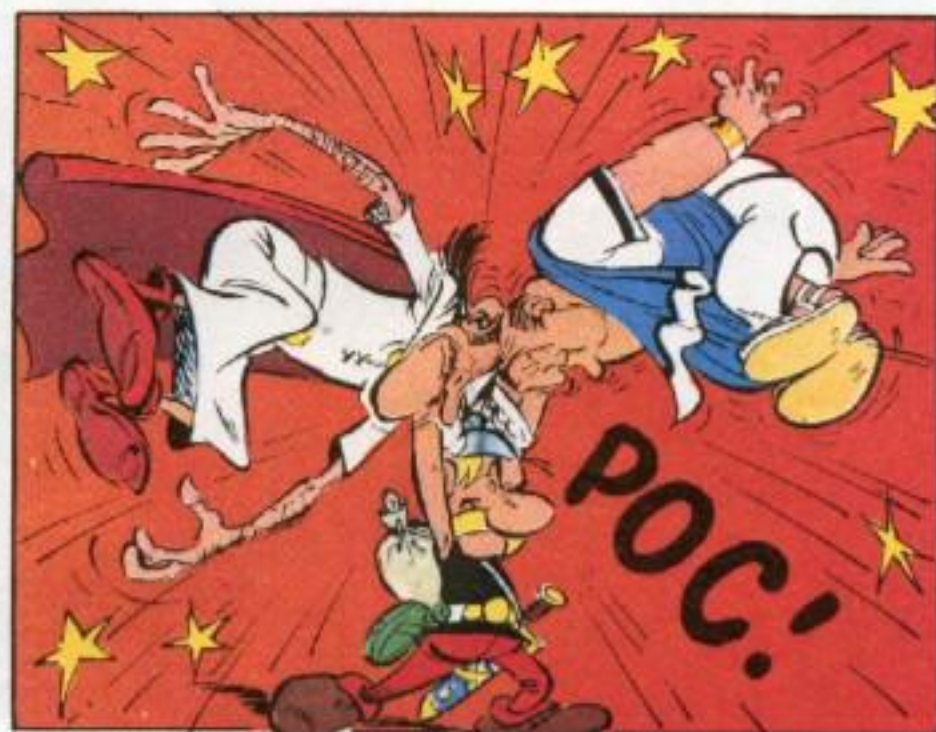
YOU'RE IN LUCK, GAUL: FOR A MOMENT I THOUGHT YOU WERE IN HEBREW DISGUI...



BING!



QUICK, LET'S GET THE CARGO ON BOARD!



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!

PRRRFFFFF

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?!



