

PRAPUSZCZA

BARBARIANS AND ROMANS



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prapuszczka
edu

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ALMOST TWO THOUSAND YEARS AGO, IN THE AREAS OF PRESENT-DAY MASURIA, LIVED PEOPLE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM TODAY. THE ROMANS CLAIMED THEY WERE WILD AND BARBARIC. BUT THEY SAID THAT ABOUT EVERYONE...



QUIET, QUIET!
THE PRIESTESS
WILL SPEAK.



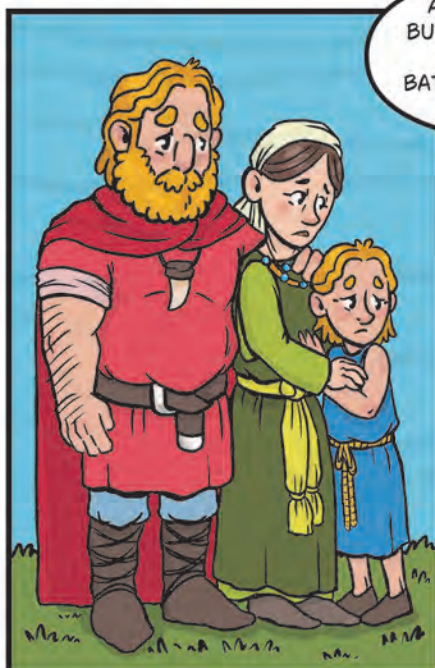
FAREWELL TO
GAUDARS, OUR
CHIEF!

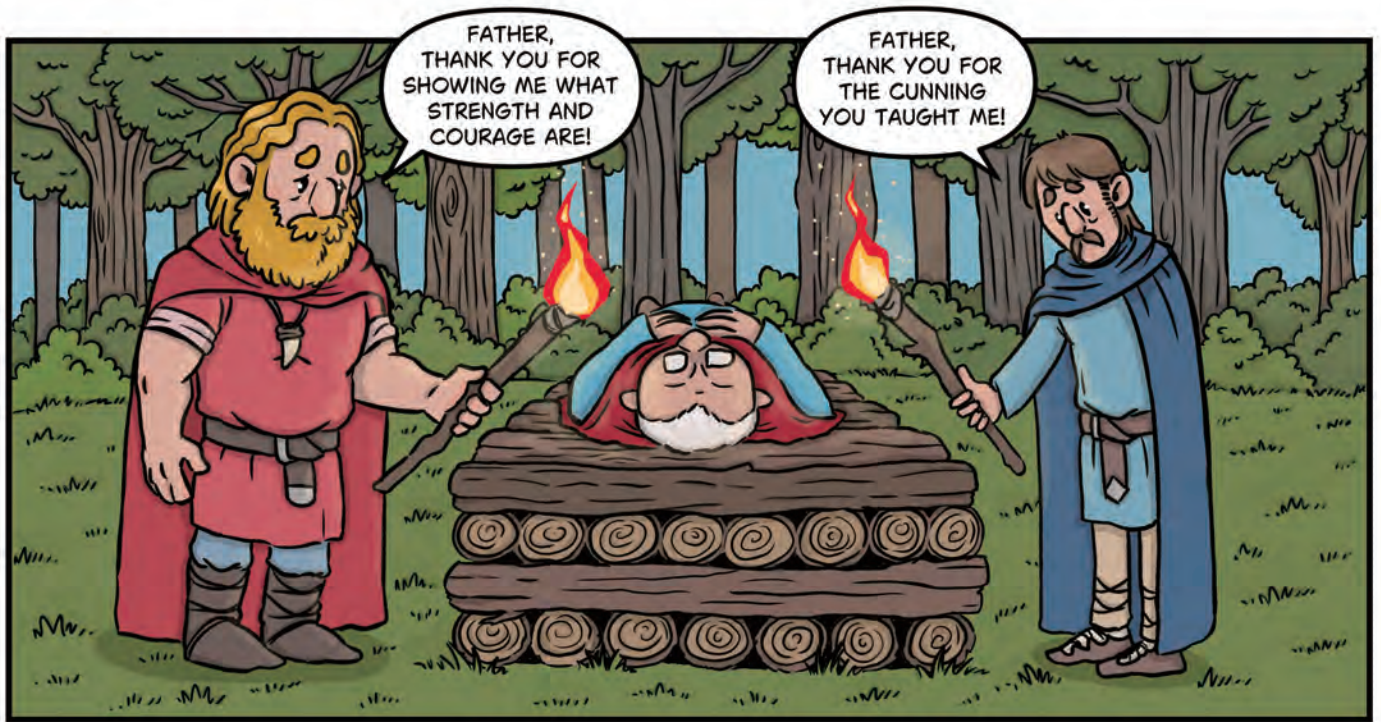


A LEADER STRONG AND BRAVE,
BUT ABOVE ALL WISE, WHO COULD
STOP ARGUMENTS AND END
BATTLES WITH JUST A FEW WORDS
BEFORE BLOOD WAS SHED.

FATHER OF TWO
SONS, A LOVING
AND BELOVED
FATHER.

MAY HE UNITE
WITH THE GREAT
MOTHER!













DO NOT FEAR! MY FATHER HAS DIED BUT I WILL LEAD YOU.



HEY, BROTHER! JUST STRENGTH ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH TO LEAD US! I AM THE CLEVEREST OF THE WHOLE CLAN; I SHOULD BE THE CHIEF!



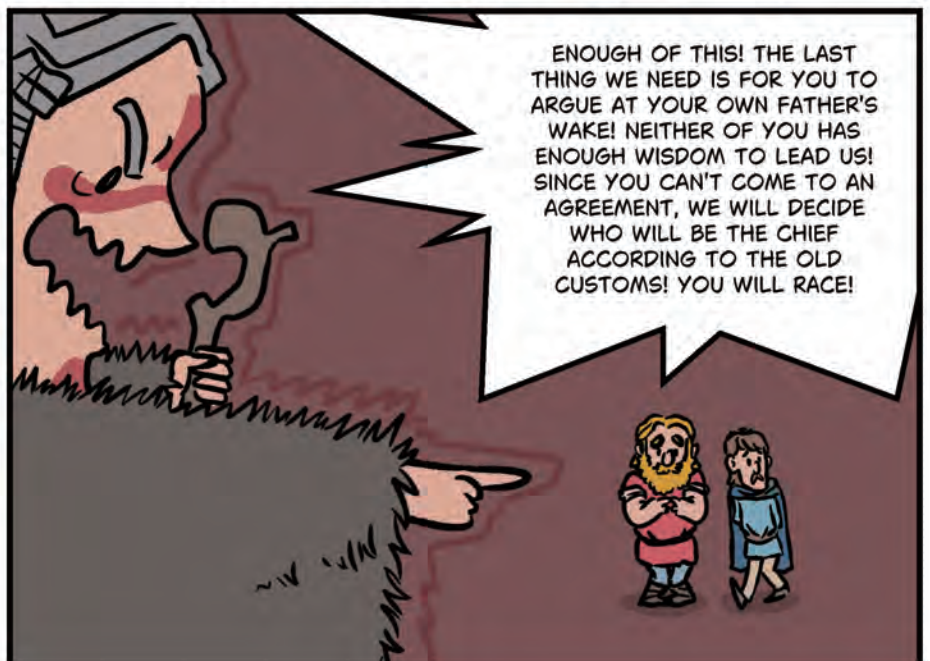
SO THAT'S HOW IT IS! YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN JEALOUS, AND NOW THIS! YES!? DO YOU WANT TO SEE HOW MUCH STRENGTH I HAVE IN THIS FIST!? DO YOU WANT ME TO SHOW YOU!?



HUH!? YOU WANT TO JUMP RIGHT INTO A FIGHT? YOU'RE AS STUPID AS A ROCK! DO YOU THINK A FIST IS ENOUGH TO BE A CHIEF? TRY IT! JUST COME CLOSER! WELL, PLEASE!



BLAH BLAH BLAH!
BLAH BLAH BLAH!



ENOUGH OF THIS! THE LAST THING WE NEED IS FOR YOU TO ARGUE AT YOUR OWN FATHER'S WAKE! NEITHER OF YOU HAS ENOUGH WISDOM TO LEAD US! SINCE YOU CAN'T COME TO AN AGREEMENT, WE WILL DECIDE WHO WILL BE THE CHIEF ACCORDING TO THE OLD CUSTOMS! YOU WILL RACE!

MEANWHILE, DEEP IN THE FOREST.

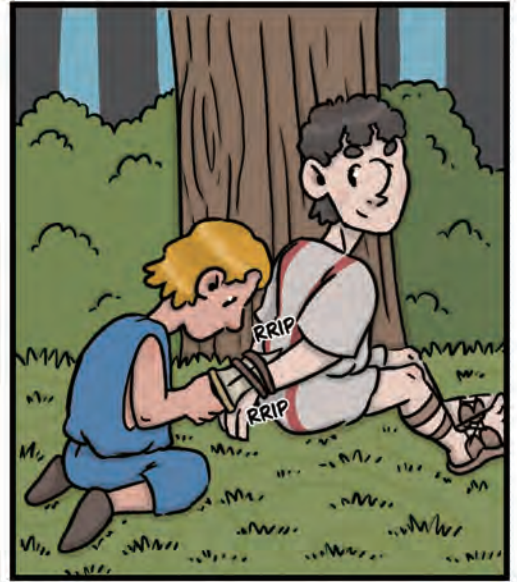










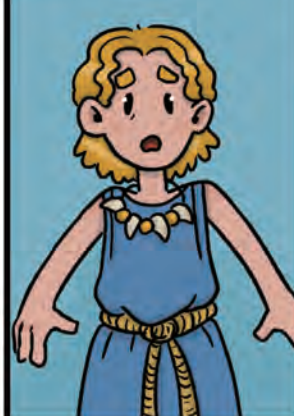


HORUM LATRONUM UNUS
GLADIUM MEUM HABET. HUNC
A PATRE DONO ACCEPI NEC SINE
EO IN CASTRA REVERTI AUDEO.
ONE OF THOSE ROGUES HAS MY
SWORD. I RECEIVED IT AS A GIFT
FROM MY FATHER, AND I WON'T DARE
RETURN TO THE CAMP WITHOUT IT.

NOLI SOLLICITUS ESSE. EGO SUM
MARCUS FLAVIUS, EQUES ROMANUS.
LECTIONES BELlicas HABUI APUD
OPTIMOS MAGISTROS ET PRO CERTO
HABEO ME NON FORE DETERIOREM TAM
TURPI BARBARO.

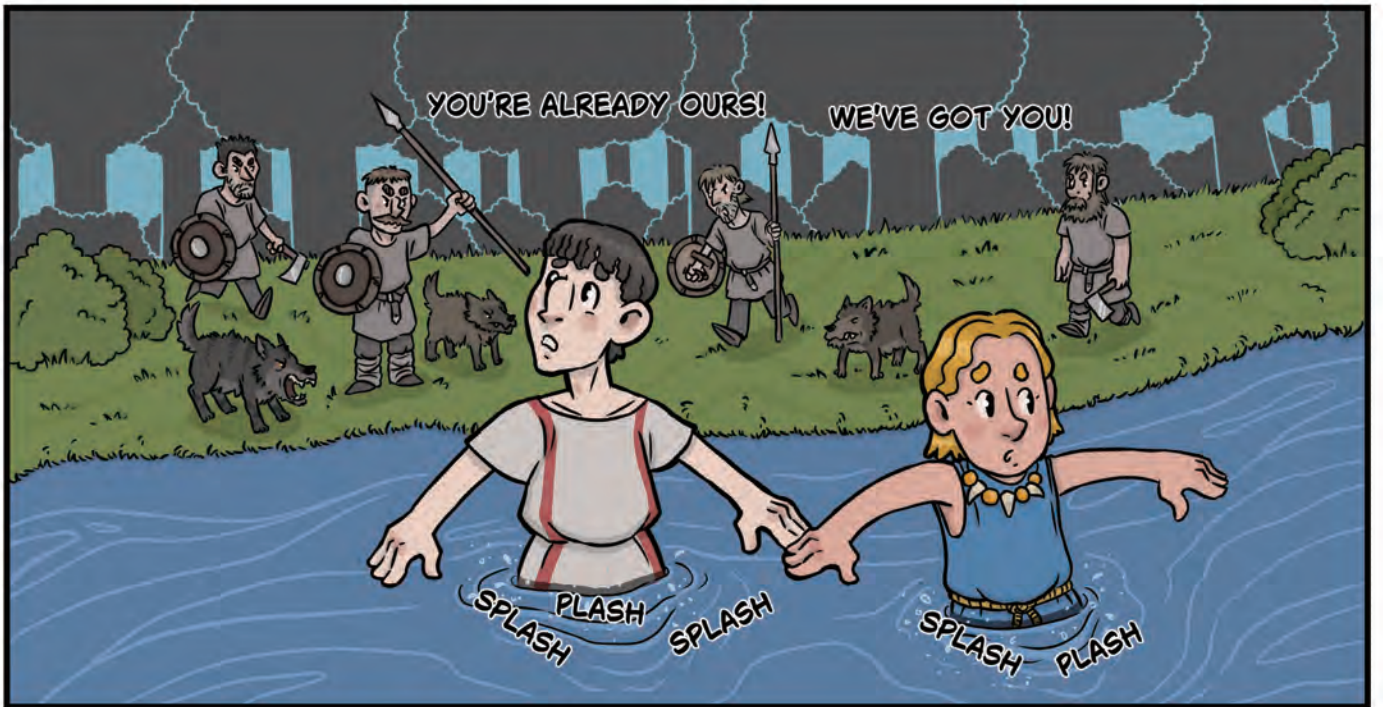
DON'T WORRY. MY NAME IS MARCUS FLAVIUS.
I AM A ROMAN EQUESTRIAN. I HAVE TRAINED
WITH THE BEST TEACHERS IN COMBAT - I
DEFINITELY WON'T BE WORSE THAN SUCH A
DIRTY BARBARIAN!

CETERUM,
PULCHRUM MONILE
HABES. ELECTRUM
EST, VERE?
AND BY THE WAY,
YOU HAVE A BEAUTIFUL
NECKLACE! IT'S AMBER,
RIGHT?

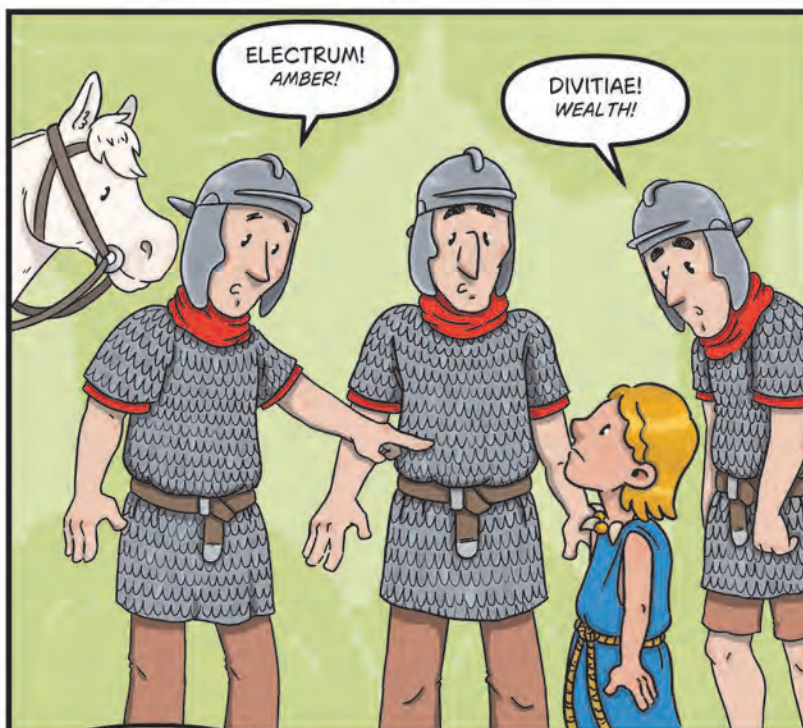
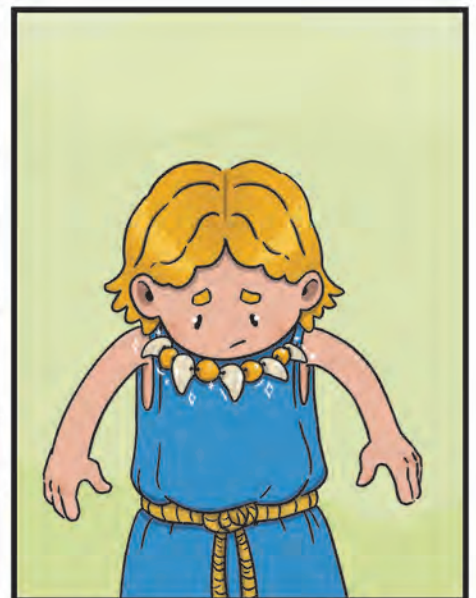


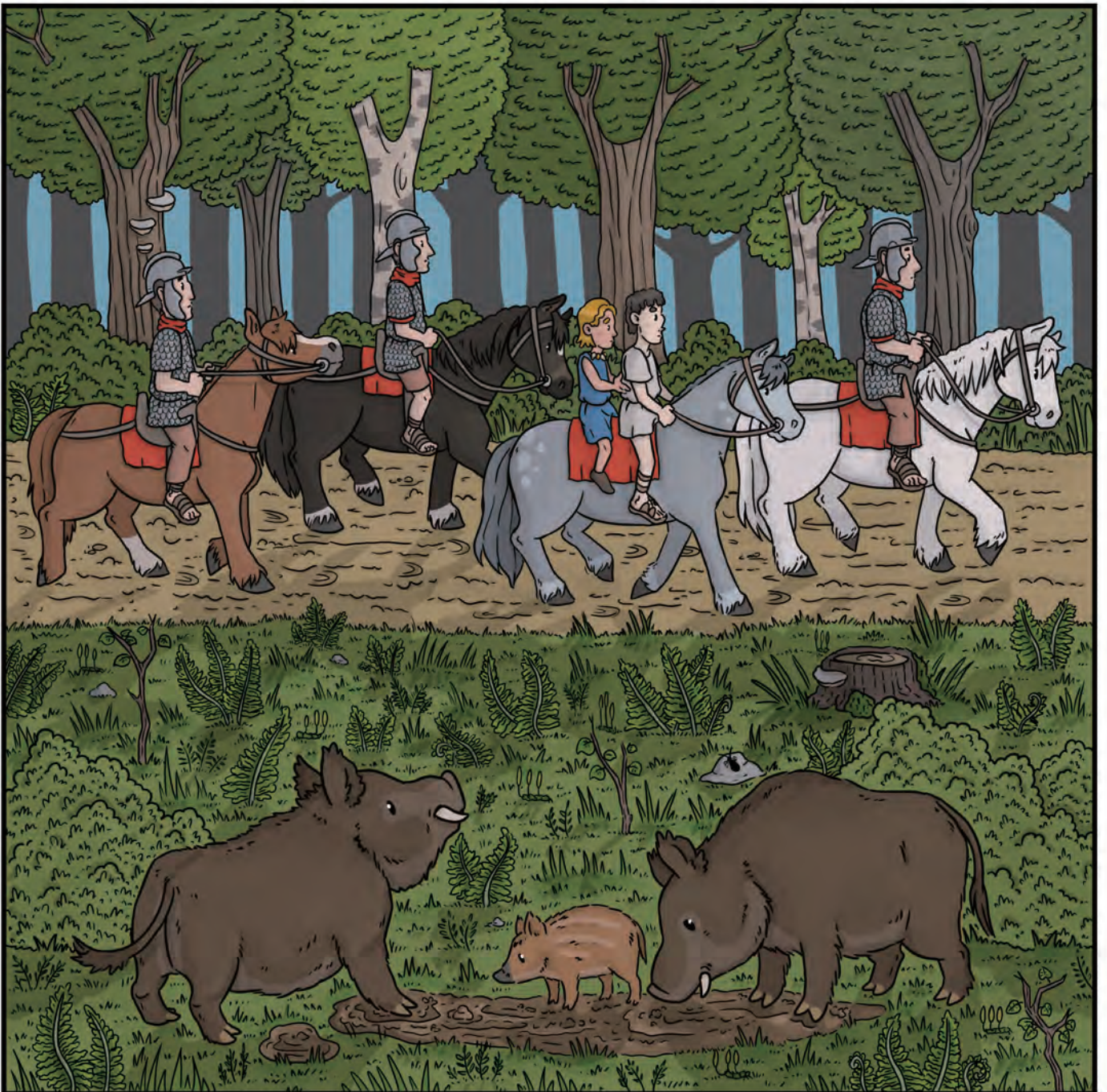


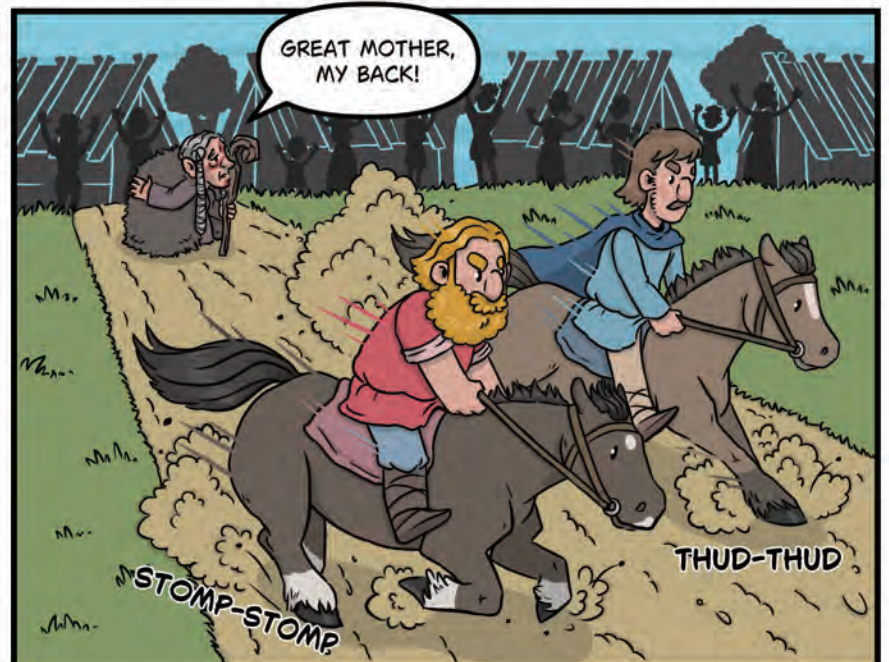
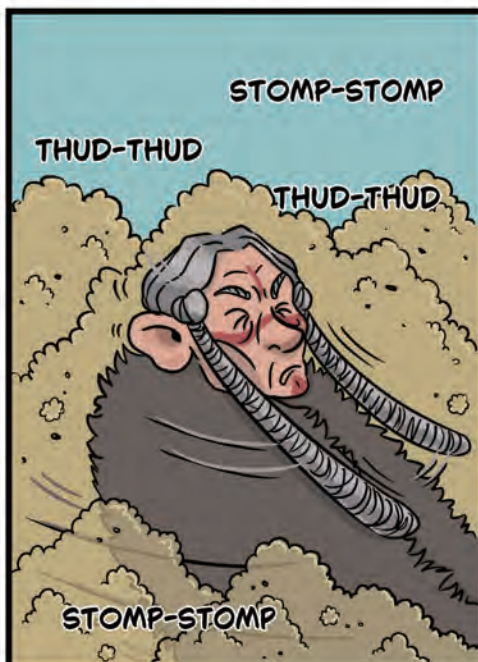
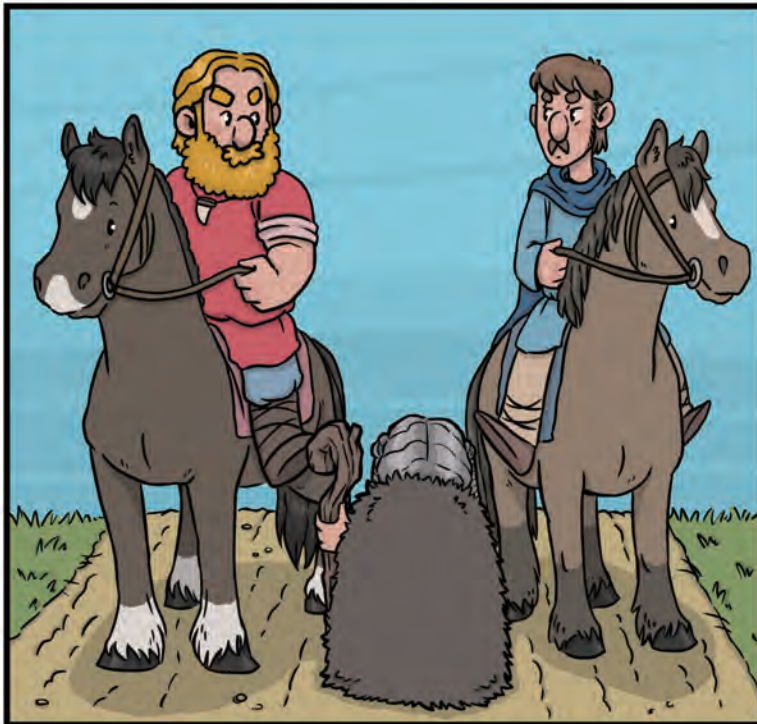
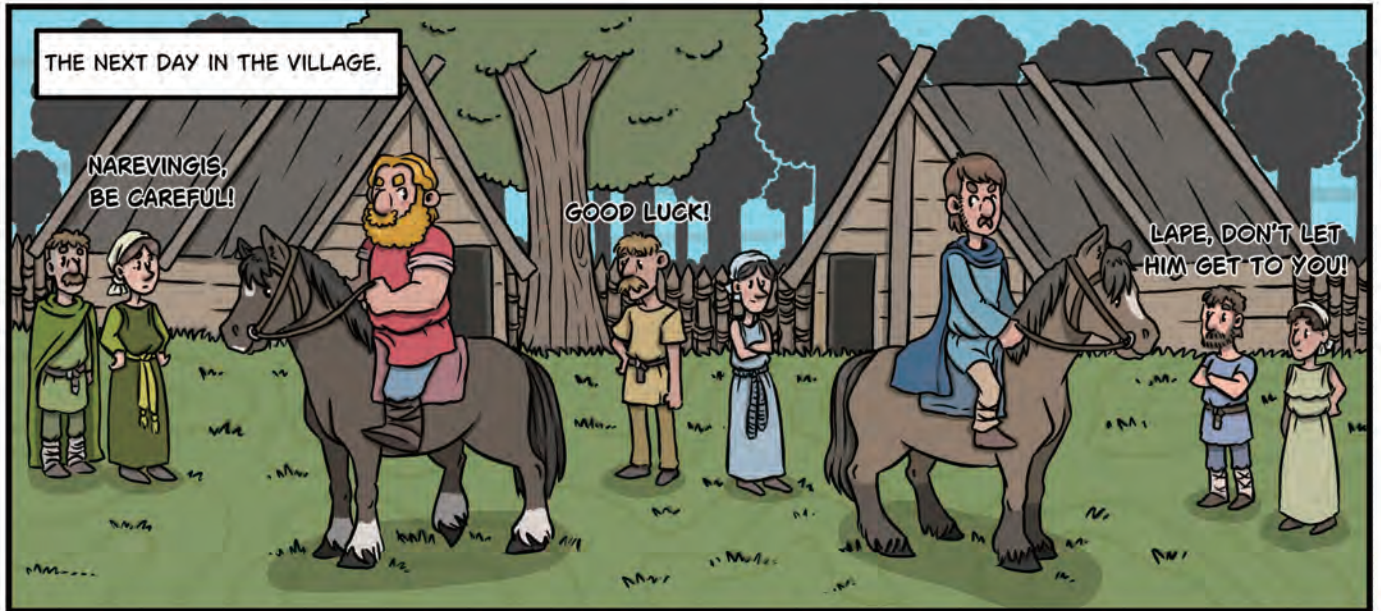


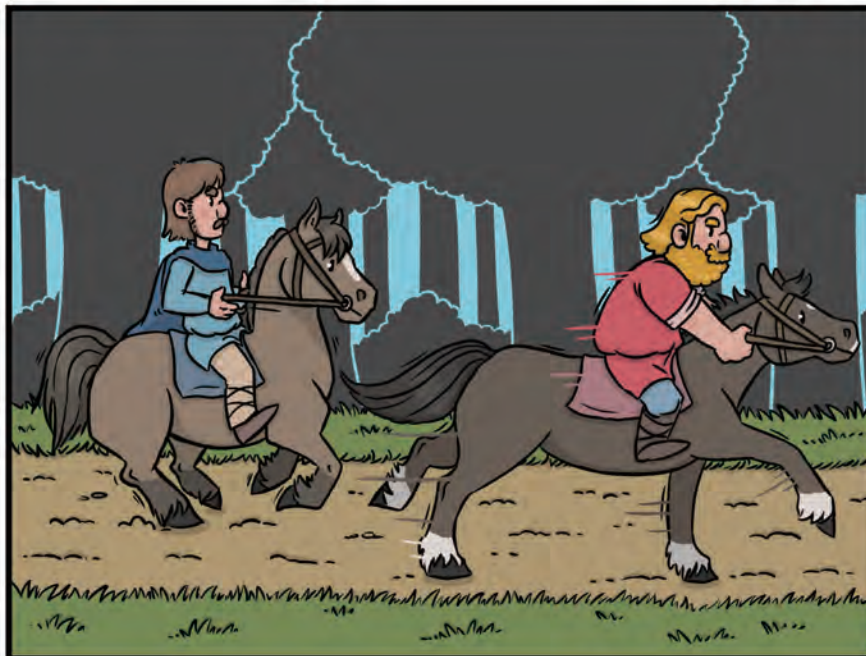
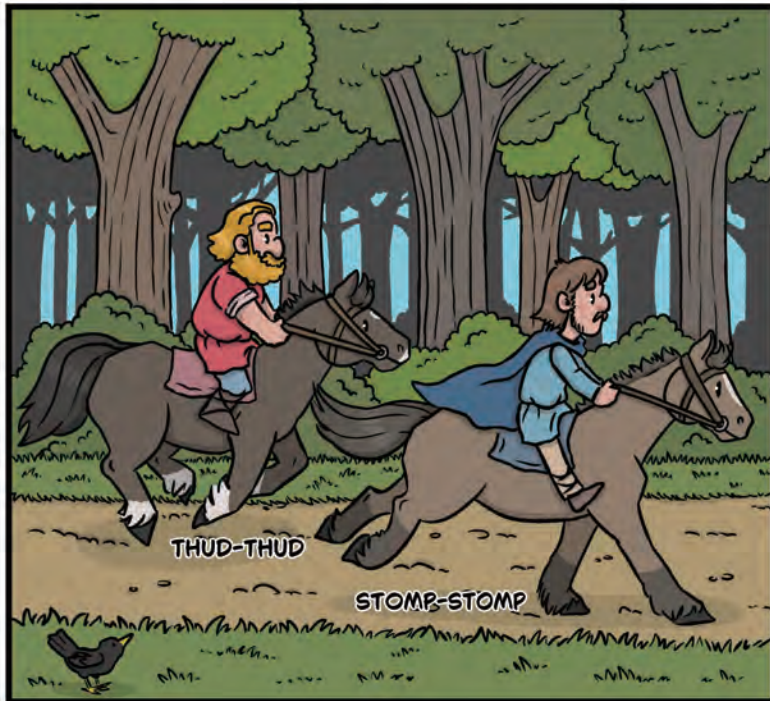


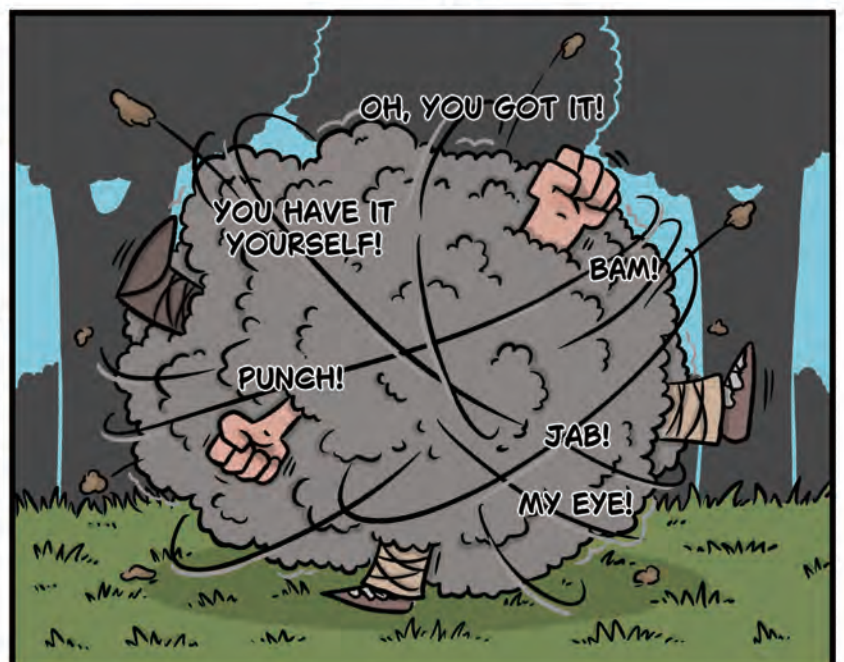


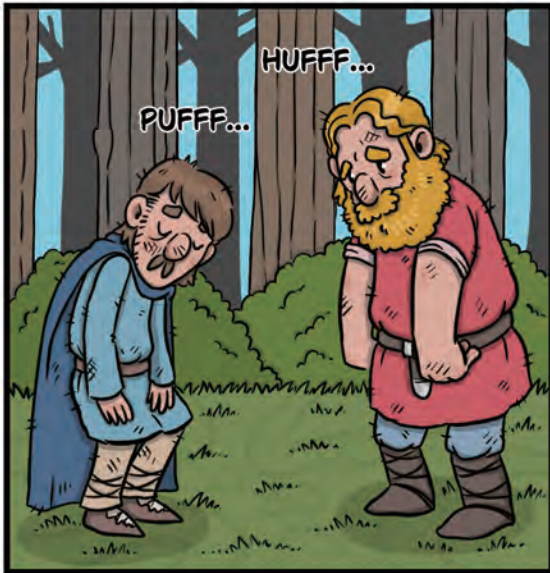
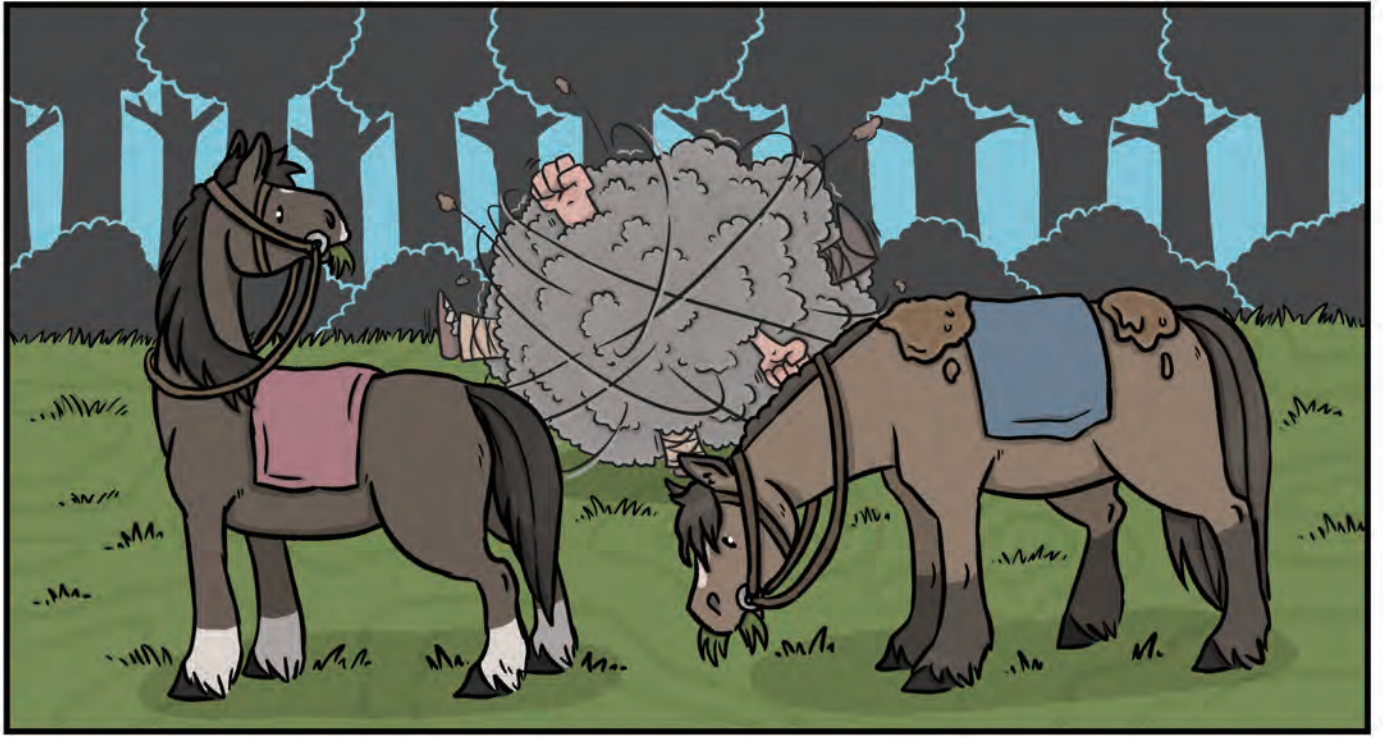


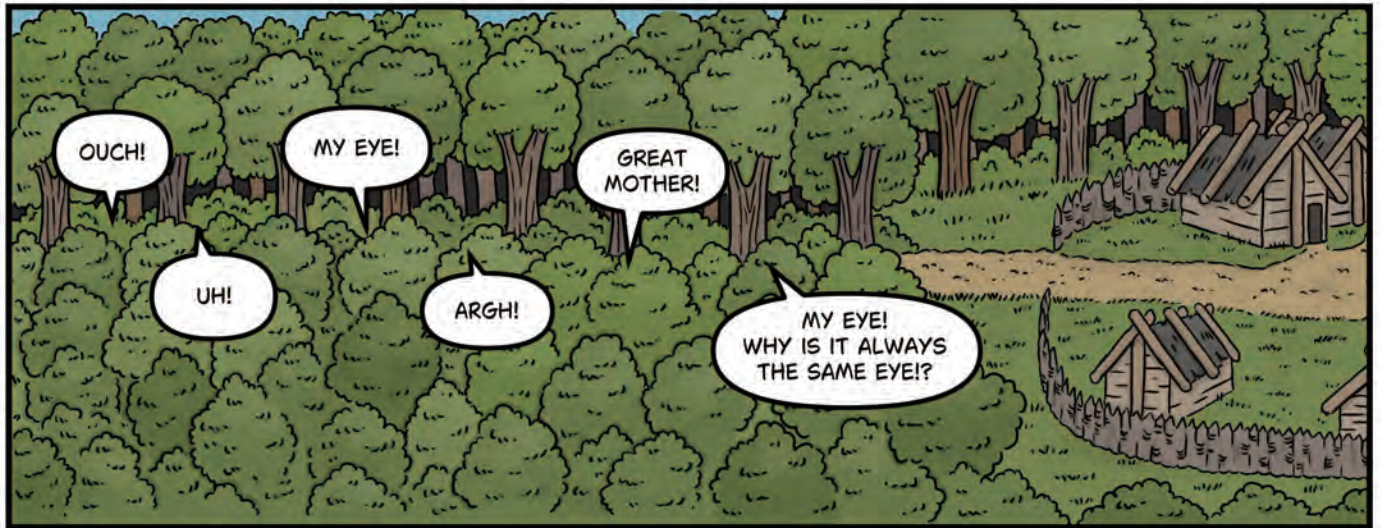


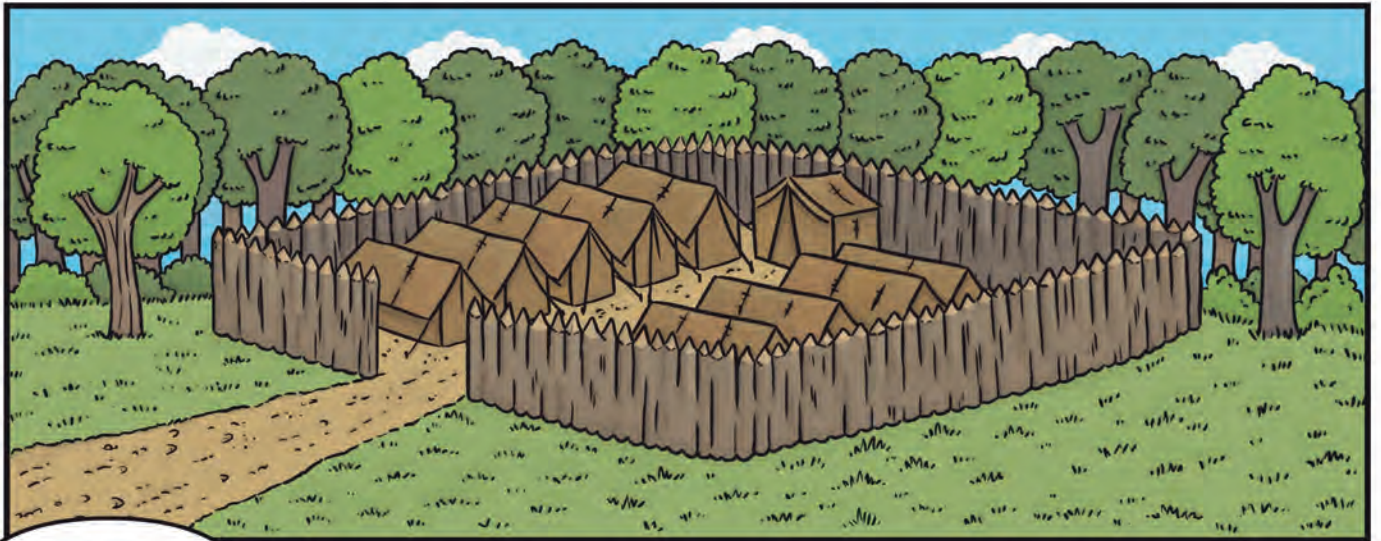












SO THOSE WOLFEN
WANT TO ATTACK MY
HOMETOWN! EVERYONE IS
IN DANGER! I MUST GO
BACK AND WARN THEM! I
HOPE IT'S NOT TOO
LATE...



SCIS, QUID
ILLA DICAT?
WHAT'S SHE
SAYING?

NESCIO...
I HAVE NO IDEA...



VOCATE
AESTULFUM!
CALL AISTULF!



SO THOSE
WOLFEN WILL
ATTACK MY LOVED
ONES! PLEASE, LET
ME GO HOME SO
THAT I CAN WARN
THEM.

DIXIT...
SHE SAYS
THAT...



PATER,
ADDERE VOLO AB
EISDEM... QUOMODO
EOS ILLA VOCAVIT?...
LUPARIIS ME ETIAM
COMPREHENSUM ET
ALLIGATUM ESSE.

FATHER, I'LL ADD
THAT SHE... WHAT DID
SHE CALL THEM?...
THOSE WOLFEN
CAPTURED ME AND
TIED ME UP.

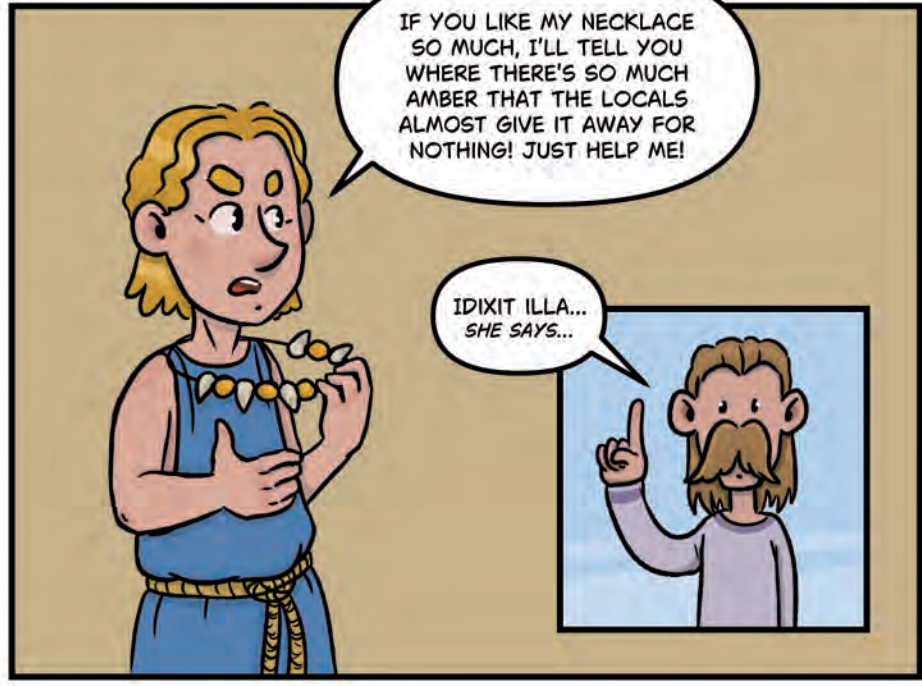
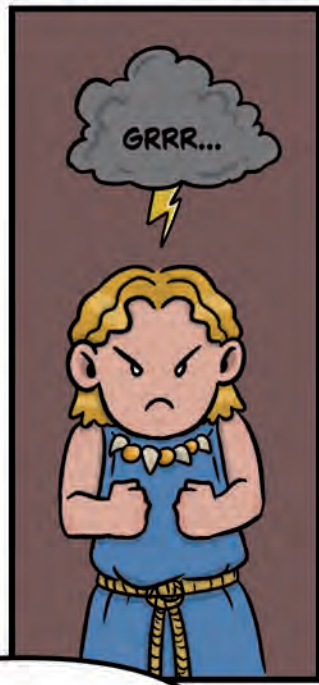


BENE... SED
QUID EST
NOBIS?

MULTO MAIORIS
MOMENTI
HABEMUS RES.

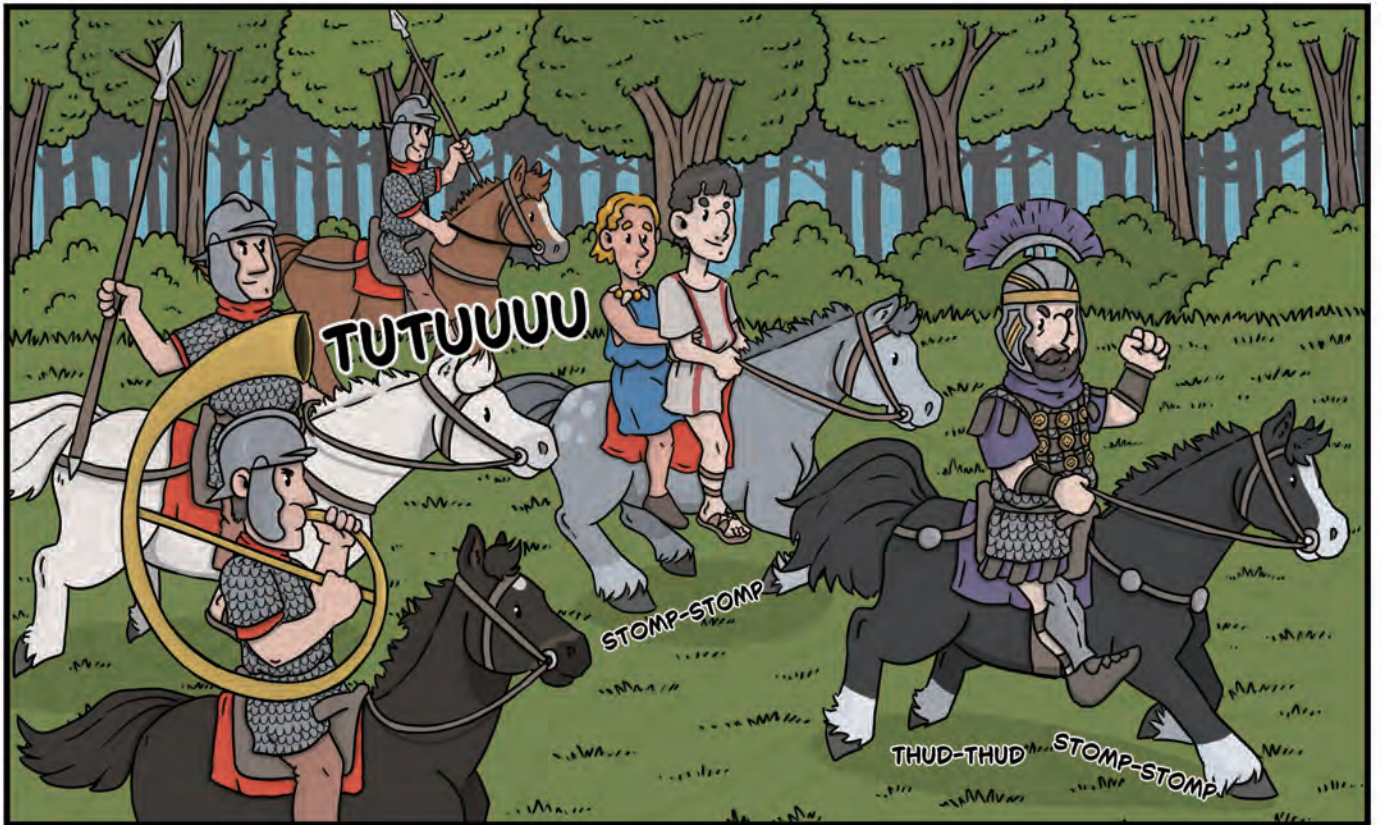
WELL, YES, BUT
THAT'S NOT OUR
PROBLEM.
WE HAVE MUCH
MORE IMPORTANT
MATTERS.



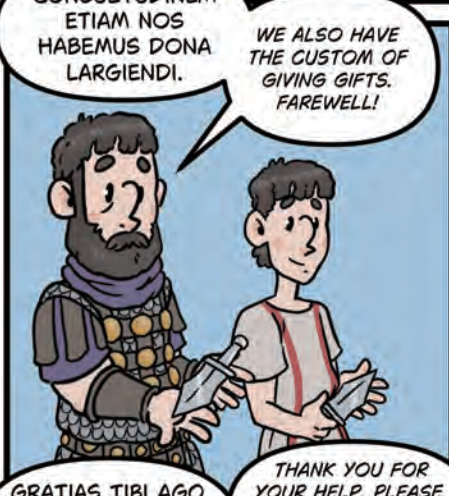


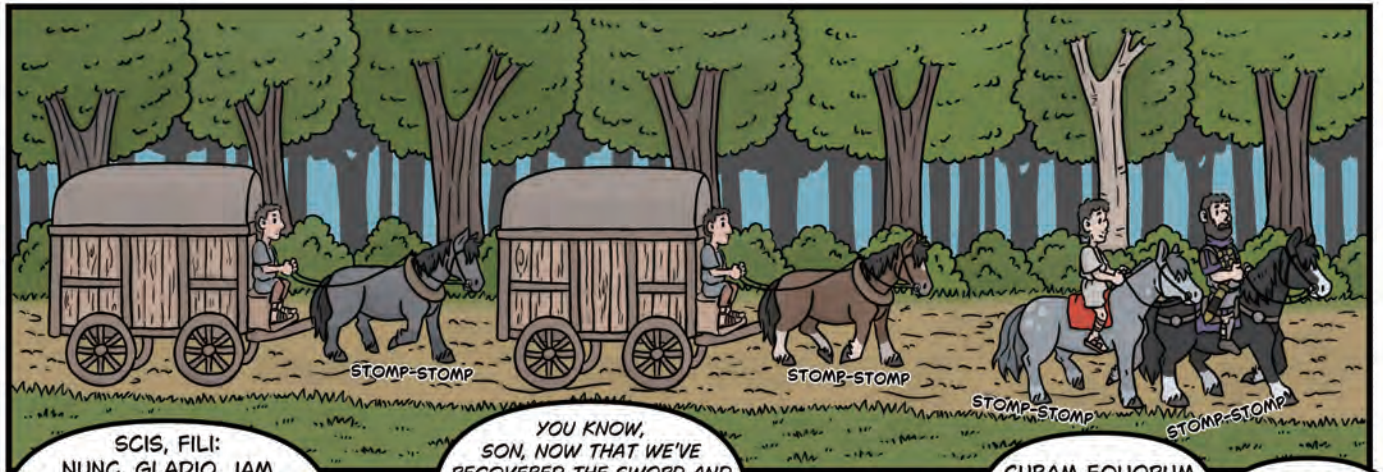












SCIS, FILI:
NUNC, GLADIO IAM
RECUPERATO VIAQUE AD
TERRAM ELECTRI COGNITA,
NIHIL PROHIBET, QUIN
ITERUM RES MAGNAS
CUREMUS.

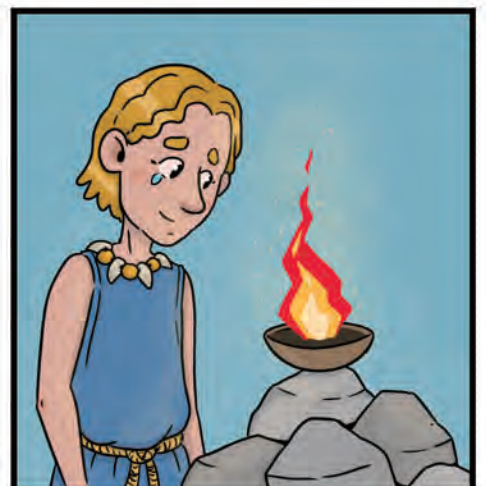
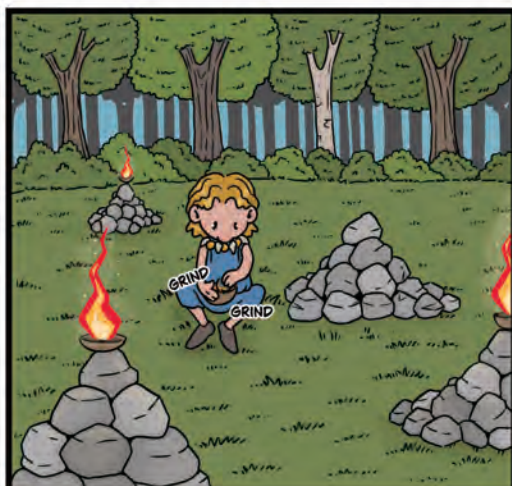
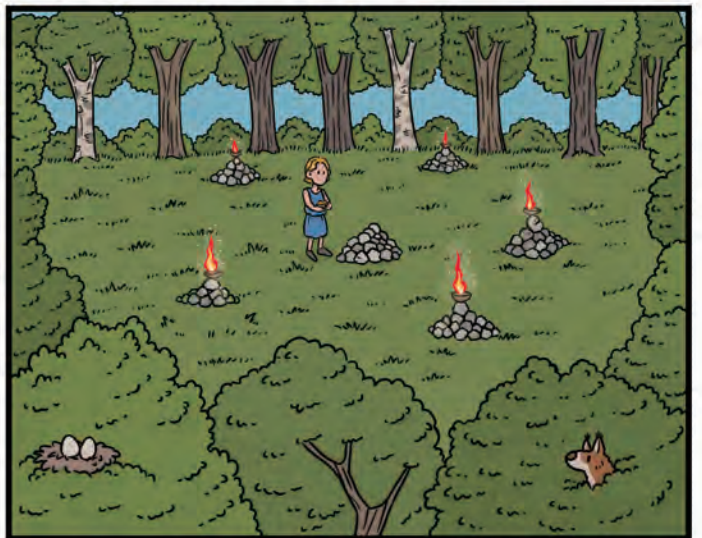
YOU KNOW,
SON, NOW THAT WE'VE
RECOVERED THE SWORD AND
KNOW THE WAY TO THE LAND
OF AMBER, NOTHING STANDS
IN THE WAY OF US GETTING
BACK TO IMPORTANT
MATTERS.

HAEC EST
DISCIPLINA...

THAT'S
DISCIPLINE...

CURAM EQUORUM
HABEBIS USQUE AD
FINEM NOSTRI
ITINERIS. OMNIUM.

YOU'LL BE
TAKING CARE OF
THE HORSES FOR
THE REST OF
OUR JOURNEY.
ALL OF THEM.



THE END



Afterword - who were the Balts?

Dear Readers!

The comic book you are holding in your hands was prepared by archaeologists, historians, and educators. We have tried to provide you not only a good story, but also some knowledge about what we know about eastern Masuria in ancient times. And we do know quite a bit!

We have taken you back to the beginning of our era, when the Roman Empire was flourishing in southern Europe (today Rome is the capital of a fairly large country, but it used to be the main city of a huge empire!). From Roman records we know that they loved amber. Unfortunately, it did not occur in the Mediterranean Sea, where they lived – they had to travel all the way to the Baltic Sea to get it (or look for it among other merchants who had wandered into those parts). Historical sources tell us, among other things, about a great expedition during the reign of Emperor Nero. This is how the Romans appeared in our story.

Those who lived outside the empire were called barbarians. They did not speak the language of the Romans, dressed differently and had different customs. Barbarians also inhabited the area of present-day Poland, and those from the region of Masuria are referred to by us archaeologists as the Balts. Adle and her fellow tribesmen belonged to this people. The name “Balts” was coined by researchers to emphasize that the peoples hidden under this name spoke similar languages, used similar objects, and had similar customs and rituals. Of course, they were divided into various tribes, which could cooperate with each other, but also fight! Just look at Lapego and Narevingis from our story – they are not exactly models of self-control, are they? Today, we include Lithuanians and Latvians to the Balts. Those who lived in Masuria have disappeared forever...

Unfortunately, the Balts did not leave any records behind, so we do not know what they called themselves. We also do not know their names or specific tribal names – we had to invent them for the purposes of the comic. This is the story of the treacherous Wolfmen who kidnapped Marcus and Adle. For the names, we turned to the reconstructed Old Prussian language brought back by enthusiasts (the medieval Prussians living in Masuria were also Balts!). As for beliefs and the cult of the Great Mother, we referred to the ancient historian Tacitus and his works on the barbarian lands.

Fortunately, we do have sources that have survived and can tell us today what life was like for the ancient inhabitants of what is now the Borecka Forest and the surrounding area. These sources are objects and traces of ancient buildings hidden in the ground. Long ago, someone abandoned or lost them. Two thousand years later, we find them during archaeological excavations and meticulously examine them to piece together the history of a forgotten people. We do not know everything – no complete clothing or buildings have survived to our times, so we had to imagine certain things. However, we gathered all our knowledge about the costumes and houses of various barbarians inhabiting the territory of present-day Poland and presented the most likely version in the comic. Are we right? We will probably never know. All we can do is give free rein to our imagination. Unless, of course, new discoveries or descriptions of the ancient Balts emerge in the future – then we will draw a new comic for you. ;)

Regardless, during excavations we uncover numerous decorations, fragments of tools and weapons – and we can show you these items. The heroes of our story use them and wear them. And to make it easier for you we have prepared a short lexicon of the most difficult terms below.

Equestrian – wealthy Roman who could afford to buy and maintain a horse. This group included merchants and bankers, as well as military officers. From the works of the ancient historian Pliny the Elder, we know that it was an equestrian who traveled to the Baltic Sea with the task of buying amber for Emperor Nero.



Gladius – a short sword used by Roman legionnaires (soldiers).



Barrow – a tomb in the form of a mound made of earth and stones. Over the centuries, many peoples buried their dead in this way. In some parts of the world, burial mounds were enormous – for example, in Ukraine and Sweden. The Balts of the Borecka Forest built smaller structures; most were no taller than an average school desk.



In the comic, you can see a funeral ritual that corresponds to our knowledge of barbarian burials in the former Eastern Masuria: the deceased was burned on a pyre, and his remains were placed in an urn called an cinerary urn and buried in a pit in the ground. A barrow was built over it (although there are also graves without them – we then say that they are flat).

Pugio – a Roman dagger carried by legionnaires. Such finds are very rare in northern Europe and always arouse excitement, as they may be evidence of a Roman's travels. And this is where the questions begin: What happened to him? Is the pugio a loss or a war trophy of some barbarian?



A brooch – also known as a fibula. It is a decorative clasp, for example for a cloak. Two thousand years ago, there were no zippers, so clothes were fastened with them. And besides, they looked chic! The brooch not only held the cloak on the shoulders, but also decorated it. People have loved decorations for centuries, which is why fibulas changed their forms, helping archaeologists determine the period and area from which the find may come from. In the comic book, you can see brooches found in the Borecka Forest.

Enamel – sometimes brooches were enameled, especially imported ones. Enamel is a mixture of several substances – mainly powdered glass and dyes. Metal objects were decorated with this paste.

Prapuszcz – means the primeval forest (more or less).

The e-book is available at
terradesolata.pl

