The year is 50 B.C. Gaul is entirely occupied by the Romans. Well, not entirely... One small village of indomitable Gauls still holds out against the invaders. And life is not easy for the Roman legionaries who garrison the fortified camps of Totorum, Aquarium, Laudanum and Compendium...
A few of the Gauls

Asterix, the hero of these adventures. A shrewd, cunning little warrior: all perilous missions are immediately entrusted to him. Asterix gets his superhuman strength from the magic potion brewed by the druid Getafix...

Obelix, Asterix’s inseparable friend. A menhir delivery-man by trade; addicted to wild boar. Obelix is always ready to drop everything and go off on a new adventure with Asterix — so long as there’s wild boar to eat, and plenty of fighting.

Getafix, the venerable village druid. Gathers mistletoe and brews magic potions. His speciality is the potion which gives the drinker superhuman strength. But Getafix also has other recipes up his sleeve...

Cacofonix, the bard. Opinion is divided as to his musical gifts. Cacofonix thinks he’s a genius. Everyone else thinks he’s unspeakable. But so long as he doesn’t speak, let alone sing, everybody likes him...

Finally, Vitalstatistix, the chief of the tribe. Majestic, brave and hot-tempered, the old warrior is respected by his men and feared by his enemies. Vitalstatistix himself has only one fear; he is afraid the sky may fall on his head tomorrow. But as he always says, ‘Tomorrow never comes.’
The Roman camp of Compendium is in a ferment. The prefect of Gaul, Cudius Asparagus, is paying a call on centurion Gracchus Armisipurus. The prefect arrives from the nearby coast where his galley has put in...

Present... Pilum!...

Ave, prefect! This is a great honour for me!

Ave, centurion! You're telling me!

And now for the purpose of my visit, centurion! I'm going to Rome on leave and custom decrees that I take Caesar a handsome present... something unusual and very valuable...

I did think of taking him a present from Lutetia. Maybe a marble memo tablet for him to carve down his appointments, but that's too ordinary...

Then I had a brilliant idea! Why not take Caesar one of the invincible Gauls from hereabouts?

What?!

But, prefect, about these invincible Gauls... there's just one snag!

Well, what is it?

They happen to be invincible!

That's what makes them so valuable! Set me one of these Gauls, and you won't regret it!

There's certainly one who's a bit more harmless than the others... Cacofonix the bard. He often goes for walks in the forest by himself looking for inspiration. Excellent! I must have this bard—and fast!

And in the Gaulish village...

Goodbye, Asterix, I'm going for a walk in the forest!

Goodbye, Cacofonix...
NO, CACOFONIX! DON'T GO TO THE FOREST!

I AM TOUCHED BY YOUR SOLITUDE, OBELEN!

IT'S NOT THAT! ONLY WHEN YOU SING IN THE FOREST YOU SCARE THE WILD BOARS AWAY!

ROOR! THE BOARS APPRECIATE MY MUSIC BETTER THAN YOU!

THAT'S ONLY NATURAL. YOU SING LIKE A PIG!

HA HA HA! HOO HO HO!

BARRIANS! PHILISTINES! SAVAGES!

IN THE FOREST...

GO AND CAPTURE A BARD, GO AND CAPTURE A BARD... IT'S EASY TO SAY THAT!

I'M ALWAYS PICKED ON TO VOLUNTEER FOR DANGEROUS MISSIONS! IT'S NOT FAIR!!!

QUIET! I HEARD A NOISE! TAKE COVER!

THIS WILL BE A GOOD PLACE TO SING...

maybe it's because I'm Armorican

that I love Armorica so...

THESE GAULISH SECRET WEAPONS OUGHT TO BE BANNED BY THE HELVETIA CONVENTION!
Right! I've thought of a way to counter the bard's secret weapon. We all stuff our ears.

What with?

Parsley, there's plenty of it around.

Parsley in my ears? I don't fancy that. I'll feel like something out of a butcher's shop.

Now back into ambush! When I give the signal we all attack the bard.

Not up your nose, idiot!

Soon afterwards...

Now... what shall I sing next?

??? The... the others didn't follow me!

A fan at last! Someone who appreciates good music. Stop right there, friend. I will now give you a recital!

Keep it down! I can't bear it! Shut up! Shut up!

???: What did he...

I'm only a bard in a gilted cage.

Well? Couldn't you hear me? Shouting, you cowardly lot?

Pardon?
Mission accomplished! We captured the Gaulish bard at the risk of our lives, especially mine!

Excellent! Excellent!

There it wasn't all that difficult...

The trouble is we can now expect reprisals from the others...

Oh...er...well, yes...well, I really must be going! Fetch my litter! The prisoner and I will leave at once to go on board the galley for Rome...

Meanwhile... That's good news but I don't suppose it'll be long.

Obelix, our bard Cacofonix hasn't come back yet.

Asterix! Asterix! I saw some Romans capturing Cacofonix!

Asterix, Asterix! Are you sure Picanmix?

I was out hunting wild piglets in the forest, and I saw it all!

What a funny idea of the Romans! Whyever should they want to lumber themselves with Cacofonix?

Anyway, we must avenge this insult! I'm off to tell our chief Vitalstatistix the news!

Higher!
O Vitalstatistix, our bard Califonix has disappeared!

You're just saying that to please me.

The Romans have captured him!

What?

By Toutatis! Even if it is a funny idea of the Romans, that's not playing fair! We can't have this sort of thing!

A Gaul must know how to make his enemy respect him! We shall organize a punitive expedition! Let the Druid prepare the magic potion!

Soon afterwards the Gaulish warriors are drinking the magic potion which gives them invincible strength...

No oiseau! Not you! I've already told you you don't need any potion! You're strong enough as you are!

What me strong? Not a bit of it! I'm as weak as anything!

Go on! I'll give you this nice menhir!

No, no and for the third time no!

Silence! Our chief Vitalstatistix is going to make a speech!

Friends, Gauls, countrymen! We must give these Romans a good lesson, by Toutatis!

And remember, we have nothing to fear but the sky falling on our heads!

In the Roman camp of Compendium the troops have been alerted...

And remember, Romans, we have nothing to fear but the Gauls!
The gauls! Sound the alarm!

Help! They're coming!

Cohorts into three lines... form!

Pilum at the ready!

Manoeuvre, by Jupiter!!!

We can't! The Gauls are in the way!

Sound the horns, trumpets and bucinas!
The battle is short...

Bang! Clinkclankclonk! Biff!

But sharp...

Swoosh!

I can't find Cacofonix anywhere... Ah, there's the Roman commander!

Bang! Sing!

I shall fight to the death!

Want me to thump you?

Oh all right! All is lost! I surrender! Alesia tecta est!

And let it be a lesson to you! Now give us back our bard, and don't do it again!

The fact is... your bard isn't here any more. At this moment he's on board a galley, sailing for Rome to be given to Caesar as a present...

!!

We're wasting our time...

A present? That's a really funny idea!

Look at this Asterix! I'm sure I've won our bet! And one legionary was fighting bare-headed too. It's against all the rules of warfare to go into battle improperly dressed! I've a good mind to report him!

The Gauls withdraw, leaving behind them the aftermath of battle...

They really let us have it, Eh, sir?

In the first place, get this camp back into order!!! What's all this untidiness in aid of? And don't anyone ever mention this battle to me again!!!
LATER IN THE GAULISH VILLAGE...

POOR CALEOFONIX, PRISONER ON BOARD A ROMAN GALLEY!

HE WAS SO NICE! SCRUNCH!
SO WELL BROUGHT UP! NEVER SANG WITH HIS MOUTH FULL! SCRUNCH!
PITY HE DIDN'T EAT MUCH...
SCRUNCH!

MEANWHILE...

I CAN'T WAIT TO GIVE YOU TO CAESAR!

YOUR CAESAR DOESN'T DESERVE ME, ROMAN!

STOP HAVING THOSE UNHAPPY SOULS WHIPPED! ROMAN! LOOSEN SOME OF MY BONDS! I WILL SING THEM A SONG TO LIVEN THEM UP!

MAKE THEM ROW FASTER!

BONG!
BONG!
BONG!
CRACK!
CRACK!

Farewell and adieu to you fair Celtic ladies...

Farewell and adieu to you ladies of Gaul...

CLICK! CLACK! CLUNK! CLANG!

STOP! MERCY!

WE'D RATHER HAVE THE WHIP!

YOU IGNORANT LOT! YOU BRUTES!
YOU'LL ALL END UP IN THE... WELL, YOU ALREADY HAVE!

OUR WORK ISN'T ALL FUN AND GAMES, BUT THIS IS INHUMAN. IF THE GAUL WILL SHUT UP WE PROMISE TO ROW OUR HARDEST!

I'M BEGINNING TO WONDER IF CAESAR REALLY DOES DESERVE THIS...
OBERIX! WE MUST GO TO ROME AND RESCUE CACOFONIX!

THAT'S ALL RIGHT BY ME... SCRUNCH/SCRUNCH...

BUT HOW DO WE GET THERE? IT'S A LONG WAY! SCRUNCH-

...AND SO WELL GO DOWN TO THE BEACH AND TAKE
THE FIRST BOAT FOR ROME!

IT'S RISKY, ASTERIX, BUT YOU'RE RIGHT: WE CAN'T LEAVE
OUR BARD IN THE Lurch, HE SINGS ATROCIOUSLY

BUT HE'S A GOOD SORT...

AN EXCELLENT SORT!

YOU COME WITH ME, ASTERIX, AND I'LL MAKE YOU A
GOARD OF MAGIC POTION...

I'LL JUST GO AND FIND SOMEONE TO DELIVER MY
MENHIRS WHILE I'M AWAY...

I DON'T KNOW THAT I'M CUT
OUT FOR THIS SORT OF WORK

I'M RELYING ON YOU; YOU NEEDN'T
DELIVER MORE THAN ONE AT A
TIME TO START WITH

COME ON, OBERIX, IT'S TIME TO
LEAVE!

COMING, ASTERIX!

TAKE CARE!

DON'T Worry!
IF THE ROMANS
AREN'T NICE TO US
WE'LL LEAVE THEIR
CITY FULL OF
RUINS!

ASTERIX WHAT'S THE LATIN FOR
WILD BOAR?

SINGULARIS PORCUS
BUT I DON'T KNOW IF
THEY HAVE THEM IN
ROME

NOW WE HAVE TO WAIT FOR
A SHIP...

LET'S HAVE A BET WHILE
WE WAIT. WE SEE HOW MANY
DOZEN OYSTERS WE CAN EAT, AND
THE ONE WHO EATS MOST WINS A
SINGULARIS PORCUS!

LOOK! A SHIP!
WE'RE IN LUCK!

AH, DON'T WE
WAIT FOR THE NEXT ONE?
THEN WE COULD HAVE
OUR BET!
Asterix and Obélix make the ancient Gaulish sign indicating a wish to be taken on board. Note the four clenched fingers and the thumb jerked in the desired direction. If you wish to go to Rome, the direction of the thumb is immaterial, since all roads lead there.

N.B. This gesture is still employed today, though not often to stop ships.

We're from Tyre in Phoenicia. My name is Ekonomikrisis. Would you like to buy any glass, jewels, textiles, purple, furniture?

No, we want to go to Rome.

Are those slaves?

Oh no, they're partners... when we floated the company, I drank up the contract and they failed to read it carefully before signing. I'm chairman and managing director.

It's kind of you to take us to Rome. I hope it doesn't mean going out of your way?

As it happens, we were planning to go to Rome. One of my predecessors abandoned his ship there...

It sank?

No, he sold it. He was a better salesman than sailsman.
A sail on the horizon, Mr. Chairman!

It must be pirates! They may take us prisoner, kill us or even worse, steal our merchandise.

Sure enough, on board the pirate galley...

Shiver me timbers, we've got 'em, me hearties! Pull away! That heavy Phoenician ship with all its cargo will never escape us!

Let's push the boat out!

My dear fellow directors, I think we shall be obliged to fight...

No no Mr. Chairman! Our contract says we have to row, but there's nothing in the small print about fighting!

Now, I suggest we change the contract. I have an important modification to make.

Me too!

We can't count on these chatterboxes to fight. We'll have to deal with this on our own.

Goody! There'll be more room! Look, here come the pirates. Poor things!

They're wearing helmets! We can have another bet like we did with the legionaries!

Giddy goat's horns, we'll make just one mouthful of them!

Vanitas vanitatvm et omnia vanitas!
AT 'EM HEARTIES!

BOING!

COME ON, OBELIX!
OO, YES!

NO! NO!
HI, NO!

I THINK THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE Fought ON A BOAT... MAKES A NICE CHANGE...

I SAY, WOULD YOU LEND ME THAT ONE TO FINISH OFF?

NOOOOO!

THOSE GAULS NEVER MISS THE BOAT.

AND WHEN OUR FRIENDS HAVE LEFT THE GALLEY...

THERE, THAT'S THAT. WE'D BETTER GET BACK TO THE PHOENICIANS.

I THOUGHT THEY HAD A BIGGER CREW ON THESE GALLEYS.
YOU HAVE SAVED WHAT IS DEAREST TO OUR HEARTS - OUR CARGO! NOW WE'RE BOSOM FRIENDS!

I ORIGINALLY INTENDED TO SELL YOU AS SLAVES WHEN WE CALLED AT THE NEXT PORT. BUT NOW I'LL TAKE YOU TO ROME AS AGREED.

YOU CERTAINLY DO HAVE BUSINESS ACUMEN.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT? AS I WAS SAYING TO MY PARTNERS, WE'RE ALL IN THE SAME BOAT, AND WE KISSTY REST ON OUR GARS IF OUR OVERHEADS ARE NOT TO MAKE US GO UNDER!

MEANWHILE, IN ROME...

AVE, CAESAR!

AVE, ODUS ASPARAGUS, PREFECT OF GAUL

HERE'S MY PRESENT TO CAESAR, A GALLISH BARD FROM THE TRIBE OF INDOMITABLE GAULS IN THE COMPENDIUM AREA.

I'VE BEEN BROUGHT HERE AS A SOUVENIR... JUST AS IF I WAS A YUGAR PAINTED SHELL.

A BARD? HOW INTERESTING!

YOU CAN KIT TILL THE ONES COME HOME BEFORE I SING FOR YOU... AND YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE MISSING!

THANKS FOR THIS ORIGINAL LITTLE PRESENT, PREFECT. YOU MAY GO!

SEND FOR CAIUS FATUOUS THE LANCIAN

CAIUS FATUOUS, CAN YOU MAKE A GLADIATOR OF THIS BARD?

DEAR ME, NO, O CAESAR! HE'S TOO WEAK... NOT ENOUGH MEAT ON HIM IF I WASN'T RESTRAINING MYSELF... VERY WELL THEN, THROW HIM TO THE LIONS AT THE NEXT GAMES. TAKE HIM AWAY!
WE'RE NEARING THE END OF OUR VOYAGE. ROME IS A FEW HOURS' WALK FROM THE PLACE WHERE WE'RE GOING TO LAND.

WE'LL BE STAYING HERE FOR A WHILE TO BUY AND SELL GOODS. IF YOU FINISH YOUR BUSINESS IN TIME WE'LL TAKE YOU BACK TO GAUL...

THANKS, EKONOMI-KRISIS!

HOIST THE FLAG!

SALE
FINAL CLEARANCE

JUST LOOK AT THIS OBELIX! IF THE ROADS ARE SO WIDE AND STRAIGHT HERE, WHAT MUST IT BE LIKE IN ROME?

WE'RE THERE!

HOW ABOUT THAT HELMET GAME AGAIN? WE COULD HAVE A LOVELY FIGHT WITH ALL THESE ROMANS.

WE MUST START MAKING INQUIRIES... AND I THINK I SEE WHAT WE NEED!
I'm trying to save up, and then I shall open a Roman restaurant in Lutetia.

We're looking for a friend, a bard who was given to Julius Caesar as a present.

We'll be with you in a minute.

Well, fancy that! Fellow countrymen! My name's Instantine. I've been living in Rome some time...

He went off without a word! Yes, he never took our order!

Come and see me this evening... I slipped my address into one of the boars...

Oh, that must have been the bit that was difficult to swallow... Bring us your address again inside another boar!
WE COULD GO BACK AND HAVE SOME MORE BOAR?

THE BATHS! I'VE OFTEN HEARD ABOUT THE ROMAN BATHS! LET'S GO AND HAVE A BATH!

GO AND GET UNDRESSED IN THE APODYTERIA.

THIS WAY, NOBLE LORDS.

IS IT US HE MEANS?

WE HAVEN'T GOT MUCH ON. I HOPE WE DON'T GET COLD!

IT'S HOT IN HERE! I WONDER IF WE COULD OPEN A WINDOW.

LOOK, CAUS! FATTORIO! YOU'RE ALWAYS ON THE LOOKOUT FOR GLADIATORS - WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THOSE TWO MEN?

INTERESTING. ESPECIALLY THE FAT ONE.

LET'S TRY IN HERE. IT MAY BE COOLER.

THIS WAS A FUNNY IDEA OF YOURS, ASTERIX, BY TOUTATIS!

HE SAID, BY TOUTATIS... THEY'RE GAULS...

WE MAY BE HARD-BOILED, BUT THIS IS OVERDOING IT!

YOU SEEM TO BE STRANGERS HERE. I'LL GUIDE YOU AROUND THE BATHS. I COME HERE REGULARLY FOR MY HEALTH, THOUGH IT IS A BIT OF A SWEAT...

YOU SHOULD GO TO THE FRIGIDARIUM AND DIVE INTO THE POOL OF ICY WATER. ICY WATER? I'M ON MY WAY!

WATCH ME DIVE, ASTERIX! WATCH ME DIVE!
SPLOSH!

Hey, where's the water? It went out when you went in Crelux. There isn't room for both of you.

What an imposing bulk!

And now it is customary to have some massage.

Massage?

Ouch!

Biff!

Sock!

You have no right to beat up my masseurs! They're horribly expensive this season!

He started it!

That's right! I saw him!

What strength!

...And go and have a bath somewhere else!

I think it's time for our date now...

This is where Instantmix lives - it's called an insula. That's a place where people live on top of each other...

These Romans are crazy.

I must have these two men. I'm going to get help.

Instantmix lives on the third floor...
I said knock! I didn't say smash it in!

Don't shout at me! You know knocking and smashing come to the same thing with me!

Er... does Instantmix live here?

No! He lives opposite!

What's all this?

I'll just knock...

Don't touch any more doors!

You keep on shouting! I didn't shout at you when you got us into hot water just now, did I?

What about my door? You think you can get away with this?

Let's have a bit of peace! We're trying to sleep, by Jupiter!

Come along in...

You've got a nerve, by Mercury! Practising the lyre every night.

Oh, and how about you, by Vulcan? Holding orgies every calends!

Nice place you've got here...

Oh, it's just a small flat - cubiculum, kitchen, triclinium, and you have to go down to the aqueduct for water...

And what do you call this sort of place?

Oh, these are GLC flats - greater Latin council...
WE'LL RESCUE HIM!

YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS? THE BARD HAS BEEN SHUT UP IN A CELL IN THE CIRCUS... AND IT'S A MAXIMUM SECURITY CIRCUS!

BUT THERE'S WORSE TO COME! THAT'S WHY I WARNED YOU TO BE CAREFUL. YOU MUST BE INDOMITABLE GALLS LIKE THE BARD! YOU MUST FLEE FROM ROME!

CAESAR, FATTOUS, WHO TRAINS THE GLADIATORS, IS LOOKING FOR MEN FOR THE GAMES... AND INDOMITABLE GALLS ARE IN HIGH DEMAND!

WE WILL RESCUE OUR BARD!

YOU ACT THE FINE LADY AND YOU CAN'T EVEN AFFORD A SLAVE TO DO THE HOUSEWORK!

SO I AM A FINE LADY!

SO YOU KNOW WHAT THE FINE LADY HAS TO SAY TO YOU?

BY JUNO, IF YOU DON'T SHUT UP I'M CALLING THE WATCH!

THESE ROMANS ARE CRAZY!

I'M THINKING OF SOMETHING NEW! LOOK, I DON'T EVEN TOUCH THEM, I SHAKE THEM... IT LASTS LONGER THAT WAY!

ALL RIGHT, ORELIX, PUT HIM DOWN NOW!

WILL YOU BE QUIET OUT THERE IN THE ROAD? WE CAN'T HEAR OURSELVES SHOUT HERE!

WE'RE BEING ATTACKED!

GOODY!
This inn opposite the circus will suit us nicely. Let's see if they have any room.

Right.

Soon afterwards... that will be 20 sesterii for the night and 40 sesterii for the door.

Meanwhile, in the house of Caius Fatuous the gladiator trainer...

Well, did you get them?

Er... no boss... they didn't want to come.

I must have those two men! Jump to it, everyone!

And next morning...

Sleep well, Asterix?

Yes, thank you, Obelix. Let's go and have breakfast now.

We must try to get into conversation with one of the circus guards and find out exactly where Cacofonix is imprisoned!

Waiter! Have you by any chance got some parsley?

Parsley? What for?

For putting in my ears! I've got a prisoner who keeps on singing something horrible.

That's Cacofonix!

The description fits, anyway!
LET'S TRY A FEW CRAFTY QUESTIONS ON THIS GUARD. WE MUSTN'T AROUSE HIS SUSPICIONS...

NO...

HEY YOU! WHERE'S CACOFONIX IMPRISONED?

?!

CELL XVII. FIRST BASEMENT DOWN. BUT IT'S A SECRET!

THERE!

SOON AFTERWARDS...

AND NOW FOR THE CIRCUS. I'LL DRINK A LITTLE MAGIC POTION

HERE'S MY PLAN! WE KNOCK DOWN EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING UNTIL WE FIND CACOFONIX AND THEN WE MAKE OFF WITH HIM.

THAT'S A CLEVER PLAN!

HALT! NO...

ENTRY!

CELL XV... CELL XVI... CELL XVII... WE'RE GETTING WARM!

OUR BET ABOUT THE HELMETS IS STILL ON, ISN'T IT?

CELL XVIII IS EMPTY!

HEY! WHAT ARE YOU TWO DOING HERE?
WHERE'S THE BARD, GUARD?

THEY CHANGED HIS CELL. HE'S SOMEWHERE IN THE THIRD BASEMENT DOWN. NO ONE COULD BEAR TO HEAR HIM ANY MORE. PLEASE WOULD YOU KINDLY STOP HITTING!

SOUND THE ALARM!

COME ON, THEN!

NO! WE MUST GET OUT OF HERE!

LET'S GO AND ASK OUR FRIEND INSTANTMIX'S ADVICE...

WELL, WHAT WERE THOSE TWO AFTER ANYWAY?

SOON AFTERWARDS...

I WARNED YOU! ONLY CONDEMNED MEN, LIONS AND GLADIATORS GET INTO THAT CIRCUS!

MEANWHILE, IN THE HOUSE OF GAULS FATUS...

TWO GAULS TRYING TO RESCUE THE BARD? THOSE MUST CERTAINLY BE MY MEN, AND THEY MUST CERTAINLY BE INDOMITABLE GAULS!

I WANT THE WHOLE STAFF TO COMB THE CITY IN GROUPS OF THREE! I MUST HAVE THOSE TWO GAULS! BRING THEM TO ME!

AND IF THAT DOESN'T WORK, PUT UP NOTICES EVERYWHERE! I'M OFFERING 10,000 SESTERTI TO ANYONE WHO CAPTURES THESE TWO INDOMITABLE GAULS!

YES, BOSS!

SOON AFTERWARDS...

THERE, THEY ARE!
I hope that Roman’s here... he said he came regularly, and the Romans have a bath every day...

Ah! There he is!

It’s still just as warm in here... why on earth don’t they open the window?

The Gauls!! They haven’t been captured and they’ve come to get even. They’ve got me in the hot seat. I’ll have to throw the towel in now.

We were looking for you!

Listen, can explain everything...

What a bit of luck! Tell us how we get to be Roman gladiators?

Glad... glad... gladiators!

You’ve come to the right man! I am Gaul Fatous, the biggest gladiator trainer in Rome!

Right, train us, then!

Come back home with me!

But I tell you I didn’t mean to fall into this pool!

That’s no excuse! It’s disgusting to keep your sandals on!!!

Hey! What’s been going on here?

Oh, they wanted to stop us getting into the baths... these Romans are crazy!

What first-class recruits for the games! Julius Caesar will be pleased. He’ll cover me with sestertii!
I must first win their confidence so that they'll sign the contract which will get them into my fat little hands...

Come along in... we'll have a light meal.

Couldn't we have a heavy meal instead?

Nice place you've got here!

Just taste these pasties! They're a new recipe - they cost a fortune!

Nightingales' tongues imported from the north of Gaul, sturgeon's eggs from the farthest barbarian lands, cockroaches' gums from Mongolia...

Well, what do you think of them?

Gulp!

Salty

Right! The fun's over, by Jupiter! Make your marks on these contracts!

Excellent! Up you get! Insalbrius!

Insalbrius, here are the two new gladiators! Train them for the circus - and jump to it!

I say Astérix, do you think the light meal's over?

They'll jump to it all right, Lanista! They'll jump to it!

Salty! Huh! These barbarians don't appreciate good food. Bring me the siblet jam!
Here are the gladiators' quarters. We'll start your training straight away.

That's good, we're in a hurry.

I'll make you into fighting machines. You'll be capable of any feat of arms when I've finished with you.

I've got cold feet already - that's a good start.

Stop it, Asterix! You'll give me the giggles again!

You fatty! Try and punch me!

Can I? Can really?

Ha, ha!

Ho, ho...

Asterix, tell him to stand still!

Thud!

21? 21?

See? I don't keep ducking about!

Right! Your turn, Titch. Try to...

Biff!

You just have to move a bit faster, Orelix. It's all those baths you made me take. They've sapped my strength.
Watch out, Gauls! I've got you marked down!

Insidious, I'm furious! I wouldn't give much for your chances.

You wouldn't have to if I were marked down.

Stop it! You'll make me laugh again.

You! I'm going to train you as a Retarius!

What's that?

You have a trident - we use a stick, in training - and a net. You have to catch your opponent in the net like a fish.

But what about you? Don't you have a stick?

I'm not training!

Fair enough!

Off we go!

Here... what are you doing?

They're using a net to catch fish.

Now, you! Stay still, can't you!!!

There, see how annoying it is?

Get me out of here!

Coming, coming!

He really is a great trainer!

Splat!
All right! I get the message!

In the midst of training...

I know a very good game. I ask questions and you have to answer without saying yes or no. Black or white, anyone who says any of those words is out. All right?

Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes!

You're out!

No!

You're out again.

It's not fair. I'm going to sulk!

Ha! Ha! Ha!

Meanwhile...

I want my wages. I'm packing it in. Those Gauls are too much for me. I'm going back to my father's lace factory!

Hohoho! Let's have a look at these amazing recruits who managed to get the terrible Insalibrus down!

What the... What are you doing?

We're playing a game. It's great fun. Want to join in?

No!

I don't pay you for games like that!!!

All right then. What about charades?
AND YOU, GLADIATORS, GET BACK TO YOUR TRAINING. I HAVE TO GO AND SEE CAESAR...

I SAY, OBELEX, SUPPOSE WE TOOK A LITTLE STROLL ROUND TOWN TOO?

NOT A BAD IDEA!

HALT, GLADIATORS! YOU AREN'T ALLOWED OUT OF YOUR QUARTERS!

PUT THAT HELMET DOWN, OBELEX! YOU'LL HAVE TO GET OUT OF THAT HABIT!

WHAT FOR? IT DOESN'T HURT ANYONE!

THESE MODERN CITIES ARE ALL VERY WELL, BUT THEY'RE NOT WHAT TO CALL FRENCH!

LET'S GO AND SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING OVER THERE WHERE ALL THOSE PEOPLE ARE READING THAT NOTICE!

MEANWHILE...

HERE'S THE PROGRAMME FOR THE GAMES, O CAESAR. I'VE HAD THESE TABLETS PUT UP ALL OVER ROME.

IF THE PEOPLE LIKE THE GAMES, I SHALL TREAT YOU GENEROUSLY. IF NOT, THE LIONS GET THE TREAT!

GRAND CIRCUS GAMES
IN COMMEMORATION OF CAESAR'S ASTURIAN CONQUESTS

CHARIOT RACES
GAULISH BARD THROWN TO THE LIONS; GLADIATORIAL CONTESTS WITH ASTERIX & OBELEX

NOT BAD... BUT YOU'LL BETTER NOT LET THE GAULS ESCAPE. THEY'RE THE STAR ATTRACTION.

DON'T YOU WORRY, O CAESAR, THEY'RE SAFELY LOCKED AWAY.

AT LAST I'LL BE ABLE TO BUY THAT LITTLE FARM AT ALBUM IN THE PROVINCE OF STERNUNI!

LOOK! IT ISN'T GOOD OLD FAITOSU!

SO IT IS! THERE'S A BIT OF LUCK!
WH... WHAT'S THIS?
YOU'VE GOT OUT??

NOT A BAD PROGRAMME, BUT WELL
WANT TO MAKE A FEW ALTERATIONS...

HE DOES SEEM SURPRISED TO SEE US AND PLEased.

YOU TURNED UP JUST AT THE RIGHT
MOMENT! WE WERE LOOKING FOR A
GUIDE TO SHOW US THE TOWN!

A GUI... A GUI...
A GUIDE!

KEEP A STIFF
UPPER UP... THE
MAIN THING IS
NOT TO LOSE
SIGHT OF THEM...

ALL RIGHT

YOU SEEM VERY SURE
YOU'LL GET OUT OF THE
CIRCUS ALIVE!

WELL OF
COURSE!

DON'T YOU WORRY
ABOUT US!

SUPPOSE I WENT
CARVING MY
NAME ON YOUR
PYRAMIDS, EH?

NOW LET'S GO
BACK TO YOUR
PLACE FOR
DINNER!

AND NO BORING
LITTLE PASTIES THIS
TIME - JUST ROARS!

DINNER IS MUCH ENJOYED
BY EVERYONE - WELL,
NEARLY EVERYONE...

YUM! GULP!
BRIGHT! SCRUNCH!

PATIENCE, PATIENCE!
THEY'LL BE LAUGHING THE
OTHER SIDE OF THEIR
FACES IN THE ARENA!

COME ALONG, IT'S TIME TO
GO BACK TO OUR QUARTERS!
I HOPE WE HAVEN'T OVERSTAYED
OUR WELCOME?

I SHOULD HAVE HAD
A BOAR FOR THE
ROAD...
I'm responsible for the fixtures, I am!

Open up, Servius Victorius, it's me, Appianus!

That's funny, there's no answer...

Let me have a go...

Craash! Our door!

What's going on here? Why don't you answer when we knock?

Pardon?

Love is a... menhir splendidia thing...

I can't bear it! I can't bear it! (sobs)

Cacofonix!

Asterix! Obelix! What brings you here?

We've come to rescue you!

Oh, I'm not afraid of these miserable Romans! But it's nice to see you!

We promised to get our gladiator friends out of a spot, we'll be leaving for Gaul straight after the games!

That's fine. I'd like to see the games. I've heard so much about them since I got here...

Just one more thing... Wait till we've gone before you start singing again.

Wha... what?

Philistines! Brutes! Barbarians!

Soon afterwards...

Roman in the gloamin'...

Mercy, mercy! I'll do anything you like, but stop that awful noise!
A huge crowd is forming outside the circus...

Wash your togas in Super Persic! Super Persic washes even purpler!

Score card! Score card!

Cushions! Cushions!

Chipolatae! Canes caldi! Chipolatae!

And inside the imposing arena the trumpets announce the arrival of Caesar in the imperial box...

Tantan Tara!!!

Everyone applauds the dictator...

Clap! Clap! Clap! Clap! Clap! Clap!

That Brutus... I can see I'm going to have trouble with him!

Clap! Clap! Clap! Clap! Clap! Clap!

This will be a great show, O Caesar!

I hope so, Calus patulous. If not, you'll be in on the act.

Let the games begin!

* You too, Brutus!

* An examination of Act III, Scene I of Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare will indicate the prophetic nature of this remark.
I wonder if the public really likes these commercial breaks?

Maybe not, but they pay for the sand in the arena.

Now you're going to see something... The chariot races are beginning!

But there is an emergency backstage...

Why isn't he in his chariot?

He's ill. He drank Jara wine before coming.

Ooooooooh!

Don't worry, we'll help you out?

The Gauls!

You should be locked up with the other gladiators! It's against the rules!

We wanted to see the show... So you're short of a chariot driver? We're not on yet - we'll step in!

Come on, Obelix!

Goody! Goody!

I'll drive. You shove off anyone who comes too close. Right?

Right!

Two men on a two-wheeler? It's disgraceful! I don't care for these flights of fancy, Caius Fatuous!
THE CHARIOTS ARE OFF...

THAT ONE IN FRONT WON'T LET US OVERTAKE!

AAAAARGH!

IF THOSE TWO COME NEAR ME, BY MERCURY, THEY'LL GET A TASTE OF MY WHIP!

THE LAST LAP!

YOU GO ON—LEAVE THIS TO ME! WE'LL HAVE SOME FUN!

YOU CAN LET GO NOW, OBELIX. I'VE WON!

LET GO, WILL YOU! LET GO THIS MINUTE!

HURRAH! BY JUPITER! PLAUDITE CIVES!

THE PEOPLE ARE PLEASED... AND THAT PLEASES ME!

CRUNCH!

AVE CAESAR!

BUT WE DON'T WANT THE GAMES TO BE ALL COMIC TURNS!

WHOOSH

NOOOOO!

BUT NO! AND NOW WE PRESENT A MAN BEING EATEN ALIVE BY THE LIONS!
We'll nat here, ready to step in. I'm going to take a little magic potion, just in case...

Don't worry. It's always all right on the night. I've got a touch of stage fright. That's all...

Hi, Julius!

They... er... They're not very polite!

Release the lions!

RRROAAOOO!

They're ravenous, as you may well imagine... All they've had since we captured them is a yoghurt a day!

Goodbye to the forum. Farewell, Colosseum.

Run for your life!

Will you shut up, Gaul?

I will sing, you ignorant lot! This is the first time I've ever sung in front of such a vast audience and I'm going to make the most of it!

For Gaul-aul! Lang Syne. My Dears...

Let me go, I say! Let me go!!!

Ha! Ha! Ha! Ho! Ho!

Take him away, by Juno!
I came I saw and I couldn't believe my eyes! Is it going on like this? If so I'll eat you myself if the lions haven't got over their fright!

Oh, the serious party's coming next... and now we present the gladiators! Blood, mortal combat, savagery, the lot...

Let's hope so, for your sake... or else...

EE-AI-ADDIO!

That's settled, then? You let me do the talking and I'll fix everything.

Ave Caesar! Morituri te salutant!

Hi, Julius, old boy!

Oh no! They really are not very polite!

Let the fighting begin... before I lose my temper!

Just a minute, there's a change in the programme. The gladiators have a new game to show you. We feel sure it will amuse you all!

Throw your weapons down!

That's a good start!
THE MIRVILLO IN THE MIDDLE ASKS THE QUESTIONS AND THE OTHERS HAVE TO REPLY WITHOUT SAYING THE WORDS YES, NO, BLACK OR WHITE. IF THEY DO THEY'RE OUT.

YOU, THRACIAN! WHAT COLOUR IS SAND?

IT'S LIGHT!

YOU SAID WHITE!

NO, I DID NOT! I DIDN'T SAY WHITE!

YOU'VE LOST! YOU'RE OUT!

HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!

EXCUSE ME! I HAVE THE RIGHT TO APPEAL TO CAESAR!

ARE YOU TRYING TO MAKE A FOOL OF ME, BY JUPITER? THE BIGGEST CIRCUS IN ROME, 250,000 SPECTATORS, AMONG THEM JULIUS CAESAR HIMSELF—ALL THIS JUST TO WATCH HALFWITS PLAYING SILLY ATRIUM GAMES!

GET FIGHTING!!!
OH, SO YOU WANT TO MAKE FUN OF ME, GAULS? VERY WELL - SEND IN A COHORT OF MY BEST LEGIONARIES!!!

SO YOU WANT TO SEE SOME FIGHTING, ROMAN? THEN YOU SHALL! SEND IN SOME OF YOUR CRACK LEGIONARIES. MY FRIEND OBELIX AND I WILL DEAL WITH THEM. LEAVE THOSE OTHER POOR DEVILS ALONE!

I'LL JUST FINISH OFF THE MAGIC POTION...

WELL, ARE THEY COMING OR DO WE HAVE TO GO AND FETCH THEM?

GOOD! HERE THEY COME, ALL WITH THEIR TIN HATS ON.

UNARMED, I WANT TO PROLONG THE PLEASURE! I WANT TO SEE YOU FLATTEN THESE TWO GAULS WITH YOUR BARE HANDS!

I PROTEST! IT WON'T BE A FAIR FIGHT IF THEY'RE UNARMED!

BOING!

BONG! BANG! BING!

YOU COMING? I'VE STARTED ALREADY!
CLANG! CLINK! CLONK! CLAHR!

CRUNCH!

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH YOUR HELMET THEN? WHERE'S YOUR HELMET, EH?

I WILL NOW GIVE YOU A SONG TO INSPIRE YOU WITH COURAGE...

NOOO!

AVE! LONG LIVE THE GAULS! ENCORE! ENCORE!

THE PEOPLE SEEM HAPPY!

GAULS, YOU ARE BRAVE MEN, AND I SHOULD KNOW. I DECLARE YOU THE WINNERS, AND AS YOU HAVE MANAGED TO ENTERTAIN MY FLOWERS, I WILL GIVE YOU ANYTHING YOU ASK, SUCH IS THE GENEROSITY OF CAESAR!

AVE! MAKE UP, CA-co-fonk! I'VE RESCUED YOU!

LONG LIVE CAESAR! THAT'S WHAT I CALL A CIRCUS! AVE!

ANYWAY, I WON! YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO CAP THAT!
AND AFTER A FEW HOURS WALK... O EKONOMIKOS, PHOENICIAN MERCHANT. WILL YOU KEEP YOUR PROMISE AND TAKE US BACK TO GAUL?

MY OLD FRIENDS, THE GAULS!!!

COME ABOARD FRIENDS! BUSINESS WAS GOOD. I HAVE SOLD EVERYTHING, AND NOW I HAVE TO STOCK UP AGAIN.

WHO'S THIS? A LITTLE SURPRISE FOR YOUR ROWING PARTNERS!

WHY DON'T I SING A LITTLE SOMETHING TO GIVE HIM UP?

THE VOYAGE IS UNEVENTFUL, EXCEPT FOR A SKIRMISH WITH THE PIRATES...

I FEEL WE MIGHT MAKE THIS ROMAN A PARTNER!

AN EXCELLENT NOTION, MR. CHARMAN!

CHEER UP, CAP'N! WE'RE ALL IN THE SAME BOAT!

HE'S GREAT!

WHAT AN OARSMAN!

HEAR, HEAR!
GAUL!!!

HURRAH, BY TOUTATIS!

Thanks for the trip, Ekonomikrisis. Promise to take the Roman home safe and sound and not sell him on the way.

What sell a partner? A friend?

We're very fond of Colas Fatoulios. He keeps us all going!

Right... off we go, partner! Let's speed our enterprise on its way!

The Gaulish village celebrates the return of its heroes with a great feast... and but for the fact that Cacofonix was the involuntary victim of a technical hitch, he would certainly have given them a song...