Asterix
AND THE
CAULDRON

BOOK 17
GOSCINNY AND UDERZO

HODDER DARGAUD
THE SPRINGTIME CALM OF THE LITTLE VILLAGE WAS KNOCKED ONCE AGAIN BY THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN OFFICIAL VISIT... IF YOU THINK ID TAKE PART IN ANY GLEEFUL GAMES, YOU'LL GET TAKEN APART BY THE WAY... ANY MORE, SNEAKING AROUND WILL LEAD TO AN AUTOMATIC...+

CHIEF WHOSE Morals ARE UnLASTIX AND HIS MEN ARE ON THEIR WAY!

STRAIGHT AWAY, A MEETING IS CALLED.

WHO IS THIS CHIEF WHOSE MORALS ARE UNLASTIX?

HE'S THE CHIEF OF A VILLAGE ON THE CLIFF TOPS. I DON'T LIKE HIM MUCH. HE'S TIGHT-FISTED AND HE'LL DO ANY SORT OF DEAL WITH THE ROMANS FOR MONEY.

BAN HEROES NOW THEN, BOYS! DECOURMT, DIGNITY, NOBILITY!

HERE HE COMES, CHIEF!

HOWEVER, HE IS A GAULISH CHIEF. WHEN A GAULISH CHIEF MEETS ANOTHER GAULISH CHIEF, PROTOCOL MUST BE OBSERVED. LET PREPARATIONS BE MADE TO WELCOME HIM!

WOTCHE, MATE! BIT WARM, EH? HOW ABOUT A JAR?
WHAT THE... IT'S A CAULDRON!

YES, THAT'S WHY I HAD TO WALK. THERE'S NOT MUCH ROOM ON THESE SHIELDS.

YOU MEAN YOU GAVE UP YOUR SHIELD TO THIS CAULDRON? WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT IT?

IT'S FULL OF SESTERTIIS. BY TONTATIS! COME OVER HERE... I'VE GOT SOMETHING TO TELL YOU.

WELL, A TAX COLLECTOR DID SHOW UP ONE DAY... WE HAVEN'T PAID ANY TAXES SINCE.

YOU MEAN HE NEVER RETURNED?

WHAT FUN WE HAD! REMEMBER WHEN...?

OH, TO STOP! HOOHOO!

THAT'S RIGHT. NO RETURN, NO TAX RETURN NO TAXES!
WHEN I KNEW WHAT THE ROMANS INTENDED TO DO I DIDN'T HESITATE! I GRABBED THE FIRST AVAILABLE CONTAINER, THREW OUT THE ONION SOUP SIMMERING INSIDE IT, AND FELLED IT WITH ALL MY SESTERTIUS!

AND I HAVE BROUGHT IT TO YOU FOR SAFE KEEPING! THE ROMANS WILL NEVER DARE TO LOOK FOR IT HERE!

BUT COUNCIL YOU HAVE HIDDEN THE MONEY... BURIED IT?

NO, THE ROMANS ARE ALWAYS EXCAVATING... THERE ARE SO MANY BURIED TREASURES ABOUT THEY'LL PROBABLY BE GETTING RUG UP FOR CENTURIES TO COME.

IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO PREVENT THE ROMANS GETTING THEIR HANDS ON THIS MONEY!

IT IS, ISN'T IT?

...BUT I THOUGHT YOU WERE IN THEIR GOOD TABLETS... ESPECIALLY AS THE ROMANS LIKE PEOPLE WHO PAY THEIR TAXES REGULARLY.

WHAT?

YOU'RE NO RIGHT TO DOUBT MY PATRIOTISM! I MAY DO BUSINESS WITH THE ROMANS...

...BUT I ALWAYS MAKE THEM PAY TWICE THE PRICE I'D HAVE CHARGED MY GALLIC CUSTOMERS!

THAT'S GOOD!

VERY GOOD!

AND DO YOU DO MUCH BUSINESS WITH GALLIC?

NO... THE ROMANS BUY EVERYTHING I'VE GOT TO SELL!

VERY WELL, WE'LL LOOK AFTER YOUR CAULDRON UNTIL THE TAX COLLECTOR HAS BEEN.

I WILL PUT IT IN THE HANDS OF MY MOST TRUSTWORTHY WARRIOR: ASTERIX!
I'm going to put the cauldron in my hut.

How silly! Fancy throwing out good onion soup to make room for sestertii!

But Obelix, with sestertii? You can buy onion soup?

That's the point! Why throw out the onion soup when it was in the cauldron already?

I will stand guard all night.

Er... there's going to be a banquet for Chief Moravia's son.

I don't like to deprive Lug Matix of...

Off you go, Obelix.

Old chap!

I'll bring you something to eat!

You just sit still! I'll see to it! I've got a bit of information to give him.

You're welcome... scrunch... I hate breaking off between two... yum... boars.
HALT! WHO GOES THERE?

IT'S ONLY ME. GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE ON THE ALERT. I KNOW THE CAULDRON WILL BE SAFE WITH YOU.

I'M ONLY DOING MY DUTY.

YOU'LL BE MORE COMFORTABLE OVER HERE WHILE YOU EAT.

I WANTED TO WARN YOU THAT SOME ROMAN PATROLS SPOTTED US ON OUR WAY HERE.

YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR! THE ROMANS WON'T GET THEIR HANDS ON YOUR SESTERTII. I SHALL BRING THEM BACK TO YOU MYSELF.

I FEEL MUCH EASIER IN MY MIND NOW!

CHEERIO, O VITAL STATISTIKIN! I'M COUNTING ON YOU!

OUR HONOUR IS THE GUARANTEE OF YOUR PEACE OF MIND!

EVERYONE HAS GONE TO BED... EVERYONE, THAT IS, EXCEPT OBERK, WHO IS FINISHING OFF A FEW BOARS...

YUM! SCRATCH SCRATCH...

...AND ASEROK, WHO IS STANDING GUARD.
CLUCK! THE SUN WILL SOON BE RISING... I MUST GET READY TO WAKE THEM ALL UP...

AHHH... IT'S NEARLY DAWN... I'M GOING TO GET SOME REST!

THE CAULDRON!!!

THE CAULDRON IS EMPTY!!!

GOODY! SCRUNCH... WE CAN MAKE SOME ONION SOUP IN IT. ONION SOUP IS GOOD AFTER A LATE NIGHT!!

THEY MADE A HOLE IN THE BACK OF MY HUT! THE THIEVES GOT IN THAT WAY!

KEEP CALM! THEY MAY STILL BE IN THE VILLAGE!

THAT'S RIGHT, LET'S HAVE A LOOK!

HERE GOES!

TALK ABOUT INDEPENDENCY!
WE HAVE A DEBT OF HONOUR TO PAY, ASTERIX. THE CHIEF WASMOURA SARELAAS ENTRUSTED A CAULDRON TO HIS SESTERTII TO US.

GIVE HIM BACK HIS CAULDRON! THAT WILL PAY OFF HALF THE DEBT, AND ...

SILENCE, OR I'LL HAVE THE VILLAGE CLEARED!!!

IT WAS UP TO YOU TO LOOK AFTER THE CAULDRON, AND YOU FAILED IN YOUR DUTY. YOU HAVE Brought DISHONOUR ON OUR VILLAGE. YOU KNOW HOW STRICT OUR LAWS ARE ...

BAD AS IT IS FOR US TO TAKE THIS STEP, YOU ARE BANISHED FROM THE VILLAGE. YOU MAY RETURN ONLY IF YOU MAKE UP FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE.

I SHALL RETURN WITH THE CAULDRON FULL OF SESTERTII, OR I SHALL NOT RETURN AT ALL!

WELL SPOKEN, BY TOUTATIS! COME BACK WITH YOUR CAULDRON, OR IN YOUR CAULDRON.

YOU KNOW THE MAGIC POWERS OF THIS POTION. IT WILL GIVE YOU INVINCIBLE STRENGTH, NOW GO, MY BOY, AND USE IT WISELY!

THANKS, O DRUID!

ASTERIX IS LEAVING. WHERE IS OBELIX HE GOING?!

LET HIM BE, OBELIX. HE IS BANISHED, BUT PERHAPS HE WILL COME BACK SOME DAY.

ARE YOU ALL OFF YOUR HEADS? LETTING ASTERIX GO OFF LIKE THAT, ALL ALONE? HOW DO YOU EXPECT HIM TO GET BY IF DOGMAATIX AND I AREN'T THERE TO ADVISE HIM?
YOOHOO, ASTERIX! YOOHOO... WAIT FOR ME!

GO BACK TO THE VILLAGE, OBLIX. YOU MUSTN'T FOLLOW ME... I AM BANISHED.

BANISHED? WELL, WE'LL BE BANISHED TOGETHER!

DID YOU REALLY THINK I WAS GOING TO LET YOU DO A BANISHING ACT ALL BY YOURSELF? WITHOUT PAGNIAT AND ME, YOU WOULDN'T BANISH VERY ME!

BOOHOO! BOOHOO!

NOW WE ARE TOGETHER I'M SURE WE'LL BE ABLE TO TAKE THE CAULDRON BACK FULL!

OF COURSE! WHERE CAN WE FIND SOME ONION SOUP TO PUT IN IT?

WE DON'T WANT ONION SOUP, WE WANT SESTERTII! MO-NEY!

YOU AND YOUR MONEY! YOU'RE GETTING ON MY NERVES!

WELL, I DIDN'T ASK YOU TO FOLLOW ME!

FORGIVE ME, OBLIX! I'M SO UPSET!

IT'S MY FAULT, ASTERIX. BUT DON'T YOU WORRY, WE'LL GET THAT CAULDRON FULL OF ANYTHING YOU LIKE! WE'RE SO CALM AND SENSIBLE WE CAN'T FAIL!

BOOHOOHOO! BOOHOOHOO!
Soon afterwards...

We're not far from Compendium, let's go and ask them...

The entrance to the fortified Roman camp or Compendium...

Halt! Quo Vadis? No ent...

Schkonk!

Where's the information bureau?

That must be their centurion's tent over there.

Sails! Who gave you permission to enter our camp?

What cauldron?

This cauldron! We've come to fill it!

Fill it? What with?

I'm not too clear myself but Asterix can explain it all.

To fill it with money, our money! Money! Do you get it? The money! The money!

The money? The money! Our pay has arrived! And not too soon!

Our money! Our money!
WE R= R£
TH&O!
STAKTHAPlM
OUTf
PATU TO.
ACTION!
THIS WWr /
COMttAQiZ At
AVP AQUARIUM/
(./WAKE TH^ 14
COME ALONG, OBELIX. WE MUST HAVE MADE A MISTAKE. THERE'S NOTHING HERE TO FILL OUR CAULDRON.

TELL ME, WHAT WAS IN THAT CAULDRON?

OH, LOOK, ASTERIX! A NEW INN!

WELL, LET'S GO AND HAVE A BITE TO EAT. IT WILL GIVE US A CHANCE TO REST.

AT LAST! SINCE THE GAULS RAN AS ABROAD, THE ONLY CUSTOMERS WE'VE HAD ARE LEGIONARIES WHO PUT THEIR DRINKS ON THE SLATE!

WAIT FOR ME! I WANT MY SHARE!

CUSTOMERS TO STARBOARD!

HABITATIONEM FACIUNT, PACE M APPELLANT. THIS IS NO TIME FOR FACETIOUS COMMENTS. ALL HANDS ON DECK!

I'M OFF TO COOK SOMETHING UP. WE MUSTN'T MAKE A HASH OF IT THIS TIME!
COME IN, COME IN, GENTLEMEN

DO THEY TAKE POT LUCK, OR ARE WE OFFERING THE GOURMET MENU?

THE GAUL... THE GAUL...

THE GAULS! IT'S THE GAULS!

HERE'S THE ANSWER TO OUR PROBLEM. THEY CAME ASHORE TO STEAL THE MONEY.

WH... WHAT MONEY?

CRASH!

SEARCH THE WHOLE PLACE!

PAP!

OH, GOODBYE!

I DON'T LIKE THEM SO MUCH NOW. THEY'RE LANDLUBBERS. THEY SEEM OUT OF THEIR DEPTH HERE... ALL AT SEA...

BONG!

SO AND LOOK IN THE KITCHEN.

CRASH!

NOOOO! THERE'S NOTHING IN HERE! ONLY CHESTNUT STUFFING FOR THE BOAR!
NO LUCK! WE DIDN'T EVEN GET A MEAL!

I NEVER DID FIND THAT BEAR, THE ONE THAT WAS GOING TO HAVE CHESTNUT STUFFING.

OH, NUTS! IT ISN'T EVEN THE CHESTNUT SEASON...

-YOU BEEN ROBBED? I'M GOING BACK! OH, WHAT A BORE!

COME ON! YOU AND YOUR HOUND CHESTNUTS!

TALK ABOUT HOPE-PLAY! THEY CAME, THEY SAW, THEY CONQUERED...

LIFE ABORE ISN'T ALL FUN AND GAMES... COME ON, LADS, LET'S GET BACK TO SEA!

DON'T THINK WE'RE GOING TO FIND THE THIEVES. WE MUST THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE...

WE'LL HAVE TO EARN THE MONEY.

EARN MONEY? BUT WE'VE NEVER DONE A THING LIKE THAT.

WELL, WE MUST START... BUT HOW?

SUPPOSE WE TOLD PEOPLE THE STORY OF OUR ADVENTURES? THEY MIGHT PAY TO LISTEN.

I'M NOT MUCH OF A BUSINESSMAN, BUT I CAN TELL YOU THAT WOULDN'T MAKE ANY MONEY!

WE COULD CALL THEM 'THE ADVENTURES OF OBELIX THE GAmE' AND...

Oh, Shut up!
Let's see, what can we do?

I can deliver merchandising, train dogs, hunt boar, fish, eat, drink, dance, bash the Romans...

Look! On the road!

Who are you?

We're merchants, we're going to sell our produce at the market in Condatum.

And you earn money there? I wouldn't say that. What with the economic crisis and today's prices... We just about make ends meet.

I must be off if I'm to get a good pitch. Forward march, you lot! I can see one who isn't in goose-step!

That's the way to fill the cauldron. We'll sell things at the market.

Selling what things? Bears! We can hunt boars and then sell them!

That reminds me, we haven't eaten yet.
GOOD! THAT MAKES FOURTEEN; THAT'LL BE ENOUGH!

RIGHT! SHALL WE EAT NOW?

NO! IF YOU EAT THEM WE WON'T HAVE ANYTHING LEFT TO SELL ANYWAY. YOU ATE A FEW WHILE WE WERE HUNTING. I SAW YOU!

OFF WE GO!

THEY WERE ONLY LITTLE ONES!

IT MAKES ME QUITE ILL TO SEE ALL THAT FOOD IN FRONT OF ME. ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE THOSE POOR DUMB CREATURES WALK FAR?

TO CONDATUM MARKET, THEN WE'LL SELL THEM!

WOOF! WOOF!

THE GREAT MARKET AT CONDATUM.

I'D LIKE A NICE LEG OF MUTTON FOR AN OLDY. THERE'LL BE FIFTEEN OF US!

SOMEBEFORE OVER THERE, IT BOILED.

SO WHERE'S THE LETTUCE ORDERED YESTERDAY?

THIS IS OPPAL!

APRIZE EVERY TIME
**Asterix, I'm Hungry!**

We must find a good pitch to sell our boars.

**If we don't sell them, do we eat them?**

We are going to sell them!

**Antibiotix~ Boars**

**Ah! Here's a free pitch. Let's get our wares into it!**

**Boars, Boars, Best Prime Boars!**

You see? It isn't difficult. If we just copy him we'll sell all our boars!

**Hum!**

Boars, Boars, Best Prime Boars!

Boars, Boars, Best Prime Boars.

Boars, Boars, Best Prime Boa-aars!

Boars, Boars, Best Prime Boooooaaars!

Boors, Boars, Best Prime Booooaaaars!

What are they doing to those boars? Cutting their throats?

No, just selling them.
YOU'RE SELLING HIM FOURTEEN BOARS FOR FIVE SESTERTII?

HOW MUCH ARE YOUR BOARS?

HOW MUCH? ...ER... I DON'T KNOW... HOW MUCH WILL YOU GIVE ME?

AM... LET'S SEE THE GOODS...

THEY'RE NOT VERY BIG.

THERE, WHAT DID I TELL YOU? THEY'RE VERY SMALL!

SHUT UP OBEIX!

NO, LET YOUR FRIEND HAVE HIS SAY! HE'S RIGHT! THEY'RE POOR QUALITY, NOW MINE...

THAT'S RIGHT, GO AND LOOK AT THIS... BOARS, BOARS, BEST PRIME BOARS!

HMM... I'LL GIVE YOU FIVE SESTERTII.

FIVE SESTERTII FOR EACH BOAR?

ER... NO, FOR A DOZEN... I MEAN FOURTEEN. YOU'VE GOT JUST ENOUGH.

VERY WELL. DONE.

YOU MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS.

I'LL TAKE THEM AS THEY ARE; YOU NEEDN'T WRAP THEM UP.

HE'S TAKING THEM ALL!

FOR FIVE SESTERTII!
YOU'RE MAKING PRICES TUMBLE! IT'S DAYLIGHT ROBBERY! IT'S A CRIME! FOURTEEN PRIME BOARS LIKE THAT FOR FIVE SESTERTII! THE BOTTOM WILL FALL OUT OF THE MARKET!

OH, THEY WEREN'T AS PRIME AS ALL THAT... ONLY TIDPLERS. I WAS JUST TELLING ASTERIX...

IS IT YOU SELLING BOARS AT FIVE SESTERTII FOR FOURTEEN?

YOU SEE? I DON'T KNOW WHAT PREVENTS ME FROM...

RIGHT, WHEN HE GETS BACK, TELL HIM TO KEEP A GROGS FOR ME.

A GROGS?

THAT'S WHAT I SAID: FOURTEEN FOURTEENS.

CRAAAASH!

YOU'VE RUINED ME! I'M GOING TO HAVE TO SELL MY HOUSE AND MY MENHIRS, ALL BECAUSE OF YOU...

COME, COME, CALM DOWN... ANYWAY, WE HAVEN'T EATEN YET. HOW MUCH ARE YOUR BOARS?

TO YOU, MY BOY; FIVE SESTERTII EACH!
Asterix, I don't really understand business. We had fourteen boars, we sold them, and...

I know, I know...

I don't think we're cut out to be businessmen... the cauldron is still as empty as ever, and the magic potion won't help us to...

Encore!

By the right! Quick march!

Cac! Clap! Clap! Clap!

Asterix, I've got it! I'll tell you who's going to fill our cauldron! Dogmatix!

I'll teach him some tricks, and people will throw us lots of money!

Sigh!

Come along, Dogmatix! Beg like this!

Now, on your front paws, like this!

Roll along the ground like this...

Woof! Woof! Wolf!
DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME, DACSIMIN
WILL NEVER MAKE A PERFORMING DOG.

NOT A PERFORMING DOG? DOGMATH?
YOU JUST SEE WHAT I'VE TAUGHT HIM...

DOGMATH, TWO AND TWO, HOW MANY?
WOOF! WOOF! WOOF!

MEANWHILE, NEARBY...

PALACE OF THE GLADIATORS

A MAGNIFICENT PRIZE FOR ANYONE WHO CAN LAST A ROUND AGAINST ONE OF MY GLADIATORS!

ROLL UP, FRIENDS! WHO DARES TO FIGHT MY GLADIATORS? DON'T WORRY, IT'S NOT A FIGHT TO THE DEATH, BARING ACCIDENTS! AND REMEMBER, A MAGNIFICENT PRIZE!

THAT'S THE WAY TO FILL THE CAULDRON!

NOW THAT IS AN IDEA! WHO'LL GO FIRST?

ME! ME!

ME!

ME!

ME!

ME!

ME!

ME!

AT LAST, A GAUL WHO IS ONLY AFRAID OF ONE THING, THAT THE SKY MAY FALL ON HIS HEAD... WHICH MIGHT VERY WELL HAPPEN!


ALL OF THEM, OF COURSE!

HOHOHO! THESE GAULS ARE CRAZY!

24
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN... GLADIATOR NUMBER ONE!

ER... WELL DONE... BRAVO! WELL, YOUNG MAN, YOU'VE WON A MAGNIFICENT WORK OF ART WHICH...

NEXT! I've got a cauldron to fill!

TANTANTARA!

I WISH I'D GONE IN FOR PIRACY LIKE MY FIRST COUSIN... I MIGHT HAVE RISEN IN THE WORLD...

TANTARA!

CHONK!

NEXT!

This is a poor show... Sure is...

Come on, let's go.
Come on, next! I haven't got all day!

There isn't any next!

You've finished off my eight gladiators, what's more, they're just given in their notice; they say they'd rather go back and fight in the circus...

...the same old grind: and Caesar, moriatur te salutant, and all that jazz.

Yes, yes... now then, what about the magnificent prize, please?

Wait here. I'm going to try and get some money for them.

We'll have to wait centuries for this lot to be worth anything.

We're closed. I've run out of gladiators.

Why not take me on? I've got a coliseum to fill. This must be some new fad!

All right! Done! the public will enjoy seeing a little thing like you beaten up.

Me! Me! I saw him first!

There won't be enough to go round!

Me! Let me have a go!

A magnificent prize for anyone who can last a round with this yellow-whiskered midget of uncertain age!!
WHO'S FIRST?

LUCKY BLIGHTER!
HE'S SURE TO GET
THE PRIZE!

AND NEXT COMES THE NEXT.

CHLAC!

AND THE NEXT!

AND THE NEXT!

AND THE NEXT!

AND THE NEXT!

AND THE NEXT!

AND THE NEXT!

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AND THE NEXT!

AND THE NEXT!

AND THE NEXT!

AND THE NEXT!
I've toured Alexandria! Queen Cleopatra threw a party for me!

I've got a standing ovation at Maggilia!

I can replace you by the new two idiots who come my way. And what's more, I'll gain the deal.

Hey! You there! You two ever done any acting?


Well, I've got something to say all right!

Don't lower yourself, dear boy! Let's go!

Hey! You there! You two ever done any acting?


Marvellous! Great! What a line! You'll make theatrical history. Come with me! You've got talent!

Personal... I've got a cauldron to fill.

Like to have a go? Does it pay?

Hm... I see you never have done any acting... Excellent! You will import a new element... a breath of fresh air! The vital thing is, you must... something to say.

You, sir, are a barbarian! A Philistine!

Let me tell you, sir. I have performed at Rome, before Julius Caesar himself!

What a line! You'll make theatrical history. Come with me! You've got talent!
This is our theatre. Let me introduce myself! My name is Laurensivius.

My aim is to transform the modern drama. We have a message, a mission! We must shock our audiences! Jerk them out of their lethargy! It must all be natural and spontaneous!

Now, let's get on with the rehearsal! Take up your positions!

Orgies! Orgies! We want orgies!

Hold on a moment! Where's our disgusted audience? Where's Alecgynius got to...? You're late, Ducky.

Just coming!

Right. Start again.

Orgies! We want...

Sorry. Orgies! Orgies! We want orgies!

Stop! This is disgraceful! They're making fun of us!

Very good. Alecgynius, very good... it might be an idea if you threw things at him...

No, it might not! That would look vulgar!
AND WHEN I GIVE THE SIGN, YOU COME UP IN THE FRONT OF THE STAGE, DOING A LITTLE DANCE, AND SAY SOMETHING! ANYTHING!

YES, THAT WILL BE THE END OF THE PLAY. A SPONTANEOUS CRY FROM THE HEART, JUST SAY WHATEVER COMES INTO YOUR HEAD.

AND THEN SHALL POINT AT YOU. YES, YOU, FATSO.... HIS NAME IS OBELIX.

WHAT'S HIS NAME? OBELIX?

BUT SOMETIMES NOTHING COMES INTO IT!

So how about the message? Don't you care about the message?


I THINK THIS SHOULD BE ENTERTAINING, O PREFECT!

I HEAR THEY'RE QUITE DISGUSTING!

UNSPEAKABLE, I HAD A LOT OF TROUBLE GETTING SEATS!
THE SHOW STARTS...

WHAT AN UGLY LOT YOU ARE! WE MAY BE UGLY TOO, BUT YOU'RE WORSE!

YAAAH!

IT'S SO DREADFULLY AUTHENTIC!

ORGIES! ORGIES!
WE WANT ORGIES!

STOP! STOP! THIS IS DISGRACEFUL!
THEY'RE MAKING FUN OF US!

HE'S RIGHT!
NO, HE ISN'T!
THROW HIM OUT!
MUSEUM PIECES!
ROMAN RELICS!

THAT'S YOUR ONE, GO ON, GO ON, THEN!

I... I'LL NEVER MAKE IT!

THINK OF THE CAULDRON!
SAY SOMETHING! COME ON! ANYTHING! WHATEVER COMES INTO YOUR HEAD!

THESE ROMANS ARE CRAZY!

WHAT?

THAT'S GOING TOO FAR! ARREST THESE MORONS WHO DARE TO INSULT THE AUTHORITY OF ROME!

VERY WELL PRODUCED, THIS SHOW!

YES, IT'S GETTING GOOD!

THEY'RE OVERDOING IT A BIT NOW! THAT'S NOT VERY LIFELIKE.

OH, IT'S THE NEW DRAMATIC CONVENTION. PERSONALLY, I THINK IT'S EFFECTIVE.

COME ON! WE DON'T WANT TO HANG AROUND. THIS IS NONE OF OUR BUSINESS. WE'VE GOT BETTER THINGS TO DO.

LATER, OUTSIDE THE TOWN JAIL...

WOU D YOU LIKE US TO GET YOU OUT OF THERE?

NO FEAR! I'VE JUST BEEN BOOKED FOR THE CIRCUS AT ROME. A ONE-NIGHT STAND, OF COURSE, BUT WHAT A SHOW! LIONS, TIGERS, THE WHOLE WORKS! DEAD GOOD!

BY THE WAY, FATSO—YOU OUGHT TO GO IN FOR THE THEATRE, PEAR! WHAT PERSONALITY! WHAT A GALL!
Next day, still at Condatus, and...

Still not a sestertius!

We could sell the cauldron? How would that help fill it?

I shall never, never be able to go home to our village again!

There, there, Asterix! I'm sure Toutatis will help us.

?!?!

I hate to see people looking sad when I'm so happy! I've just won a packet.

Ding ding ding!

?!?!

Hey! Won it? Won it how?

At the races, mate! At the races!

I only had a few sestertii, I put them on a chariot and I won!

Where exactly are the races?

In the hippodrome, follow me; I'm going back to make another pile.

There, Asterix, what did I say?

That's the hippodrome, well, goodbye and good luck.

You know, when we do make a bit of cash for once, I hate to risk it!

But there's no risk! We place our bet and we fill the cauldron! That's what he said.
ANY IDEA JUST HOW WE PLACE A BET, OBELIX?

MAYBE I COULD HELP YOU, FRIENDS!

LET ME INTRODUCE MYSELF: CONFIDEHORNE, I'M AN EXPERT. I CAN GIVE YOU SOME TIPS.

YOU THINK WE COULD FILL OUR CAULDRON WITH YOUR TIPS?

SURE! IT'S LIKE THIS: THE RACES ARE FOR CHARIOTERS CALLED CHARRIGA, EACH DRAWN BY FOUR HORSES... YOU CAN BACK THEM EACH WAY...

... THAT IS, FOR A PLACE IN THE FIRST THREE, AT REDUCING ODDS, WHICH COMES TO TWELVE HORSES IN ALL...

BUT YOUR BEST BET IS TO BACK THE WINNER AT FULL ODDS: THE COLOURS ARE BLUE, WHITE, RED AND GREEN. HERE COME CLOSER...

GIVE ME YOUR MONEY, AND I'LL PLACE YOUR BET... ALL I ASK IS HALF YOUR WINNINGS.

YOU'RE SURE HE CAN'T LOSE?

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE... NOW YOU GO INTO THE HIPPODRONE, WE'LL MEET AT THE EXIT.
Up the Whites! Up the Blues! Up the Reds! Up the Greens!

Tantaraaaa! They're off! Come on the Blues!

Blues! Blues!

Blue...

The Whites! The Whites win!
HARD LUCK, FRIENDS!
BUT MY BROTHER-IN-LAW
HAPPEINS TO KNOW THE
NEPHEW OF THE AURIGA
OF THE GREEN CHARIOT IN
THE NEXT RACE.
AND HE...

WE HAVEN'T GOT
ANY MORE MONEY!
AND YOU TOLD
ME IT WAS
IMPOSSIBLE FOR
THE BLUE CHARIOT
TO LOSE!

IMPOSSIBLE IS NOT
A GAULISH WORD,
MY FRIENDS!

COME ON, OBELIX.
I'VE STILL GOT A FEW
BRONZE COINS LEFT.
LET'S HAVE A BITE
TO EAT.

SIX MONTHS LATER,
I RECOMMEND THE BOAR; IT'S
VERY GOOD VALUE JUST NOW.
PRICES
HAVE FALLEN; BOAR ARE BEING
SOLD FIFTEEN TO THE POLE.
THEM AT
THE MOMENT.

WHAT'S
THAT?
A TEMPLE?

NEAR ENOUGH, IT'S A ROMAN
BANK, WHERE THEY KEEP THEIR
GOLD.
NO! WE ARE GOING TO ROB THAT BANK! THE ROMANS TAKE OUR MONEY, SO IT'S NO CRIME TO TAKE IT BACK FROM THEM!

BUT HOW DO YOU ROB A BANK?
I HAVE A PLAN... LANDLORD!

CAN YOU LET US HAVE A ROOM WITH A VIEW OF THE BANK?

A VIEW OF THE BANK?

WELL, HAVE YOU GOT A ROOM WITH A VIEW OF THE SEA?

WHAT, IN CONJUNCTION OF COURSE NOT!

RIGHT, ONE WITH A VIEW OF THE BANK, THEN!

THAT SEEMS LOGICAL... FOLLOW ME.

BAM AFTERWARDS...

FINE. I'M OFF TO DO A BIT OF SHOPPING. MEANWHILE, I WANT YOU TO LOITER AROUND THE BANK, LOOKING INNOCENT. YOU MUST TRY AND FIND OUT WHAT TIME THE GUARD CHANGES, AND WHERE THEY KEEP THE GOLD.

LOOK INNOCENT? HOW DO I DO THAT?

HOW SHOULD I KNOW! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO HAVE ALL THIS TALENT FOR ACTING... YOU CAN STROLL BY, WHISTLING NONCHALANTLY!

TRUE... I FORGOT MY TALENT FOR ACTING... LET'S GO!

WE'LL MEET BACK AT THE INN. BE CAREFUL.
ME?

YES, YOU. YOU LOOK TO ME LIKE SOMEONE WHO'S THINKING OF ROBBING A BANK, BUT YOU HAVEN'T GOT A HOPE!

THE BANK IS CONSTANTLY GUARDED. THE GUARD CHANGES AT NOON, AT SIX IN THE EVENING, AND AT MIDNIGHT, AND THERE ARE MEN INSIDE ALL NIGHT...

THE GOLD IS KEPT IN A CELLAR WITH A HEAVY IRON DOOR WHICH HAS A SECRET CATCH HIDDEN IN THE ORNAMENTAL MOLDING...

...SO DON'T GO GETTING ANY IDEAS!

I DIDN'T LEARN ANYTHING. HE SAW THROUGH ME BEFORE I COULD GET ANY IDEAS.

NEVER MIND. WE CAN WATCH THE SENTRY COMING AND GOING FROM THIS WINDOW.

WE SHALL HAVE TO TAKE TURNS. KEEPING WATCH... WRITE EVERYTHING DOWN. INCLUDING THE TIMES...

AND FOR TWO DAYS AND TWO NIGHTS...

...OUR FRIENDS TAKE TURNS.
There we are, Obelix! I've worked out the times they change guard!

That's our moment to act.

I notice that about eleven in the morning the sentry leaves his post to have a drink of water at the fountain...

Look, I've drawn up a plan.

Gromm will keep watch and warn us if the sentry comes back sooner than expected... you break down the door...

I'm hiding behind the third column, I leap in...

We shall have five minutes to carry out the operation before the sentry gets back. During this time, we have to question the staff and find the gold... get it?

No.

Right, never mind. We plough into them, we pick up the cash, and we beat it.

I get that!

BANG BANG!
ASTÉRIX, AM I SUPPOSED TO LOOK INNOCENT?

COME ON, OBLIX, OPEN UP THE DOOR!

CRRAAAACK!

FOLLOW ME!

THE BANK IS NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!

THIS IS A HOLD-UP! DON'T TRY TO CALL FOR HELP! WHERE IS THE GOLD?

WELL, USUALLY IT'S DOWN IN THE CELLAR, BUT...

YOU STAY HERE, OBLIX, AND IF ANYONE MISBEHAVES, SHUT HIM UP! I'M GOING TO FILL THE CAULDRON, I'LL BE BACK.

QUIET!

O.K.
HEX, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? IF YOU WANT TO DEPOSIT MONEY, YOU HAVE TO DO IT AT THE COUNTER, UPSTAIRS.

I DIDN'T COME TO DEPOSIT MONEY, I CAME TO TAKE SOME.

OH, I THOUGHT IT WAS A BIT STRANGE.

BUT WE DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY LEFT! MY POOR FELLOW, NOT A SUSPICIOUS THING. THAT'S WHY CAESAR LEAVES TAKES QUADRIGA ONCE, OLD CHAP. AT LEAST, PLENTY OF QUADRIGA TO CAESAR, BUT PRECIOUS LITTLE FOR ANYONE ELSE. OH, CAESAR'S A REAL OLD PRO!

COME ALONG, OBELIX!

AND STOP THAT WHISTLING!
"IT DIDN'T COME OFF, THEN?"

NO.

"THE CAULDRON IS STILL EMPTY, AND I DON'T THINK WE'RE EVER GOING TO FILL IT..."

"I SHALL TAKE THE EMPTY CAULDRON BACK TO CHIEF WHOSE MORALES ARE ELASTIC AND EXPLAIN THAT I AM ALONE TO BLAME; IN THAT WAY, THE HONOUR OF THE VILLAGE WILL BE SAVED."

"AND AFTERWARDS, WELL, I SHALL JUST GO AWAY FOR ALWAYS..."

"SNIFF! AND I SHALL ALWAYS GO AWAY FOR ALWAYS WITH YOU!"

"BOOHHOOOH! BOOHHOO!"

"SOME AFTERWARDS..."

"IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO TAKE THEM BACK THE CAULDRON. AT LEAST THEY'LL STILL BE ABLE TO MAKE ONION SOUP."

"I'M SURE THAT WILL BE A GREAT COMFORT."

"AND AFTER A FEW DAYS' JOURNEY..."

"WE'RE GETTING CLOSE TO CHIEF WHOSE MORALES ARE ELASTIC'S VILLAGE. IT'S ON THE CLIFF-TOP BEYOND THIS WOOD."

"MAKE WAY! MAKE WAY THERE FOR THE TAX COLLECTOR, JULIUS CAESAR'S SPECIAL EMISSARY!"

"THIS IS OUR LAST CHANCE TO FILL THE CAULDRON!"

"COME ON! TRALALALALA!"
MAKE WAY! MAKE WAY THERE FOR THE TAX COLLECTOR, JULIUS CAESAR'S SPECIAL EMISSARY!

ONE MOMENT. PLEASE.

PLEASE GIVE:
1. Your reasons for holding us up
2. An apology
3. Permission for us to proceed

OCCUPATION: ARE YOU:
a) Ordinary passers by?
b) Motivated by friendly intentions?
c) Bandits?

OCCUPATION: ARE YOU:

FINAL DEMAND:
Do not offer us any physical violence. All claims to be addressed to Caesar, Julius, City of Rome.

CHARGE!

AT LAST! I thought we were never going to get through all these formalities.

CRAAAACK!
HAS EVERYONE BEEN DONE?

NOW THEN, HAND OVER YOUR MONEY!

A FEW BOTTLES LATER...

You will be taxed on the sum of which you are about to take possession.

I WANT TO FILE MY CALLDRO. IF THERE'S ANY MONEY LEFT OVER YOU CAN HAVE A TAX RETURN.

Your instalment on account will be deductible from the sum finally due.

A RECEIPT! I WANT A SIGNED RECEIPT!

AWFULLY SORRY... IT'S EXACTLY THE AMOUNT WE NEED... COMING, OBELIX?

WE'LL TAKE CHIEF WHOSE MORAALS ARELAST, THIS MONEY, AND I SHALL BE ABLE TO GO HOME TO OUR VILLAGE MY HEAD HELD HIGH.

WAIT A MINUTE...?

SNIFF! SNIFF! SNIFF!

SMELL THAT!

BUT MONEY HAS NO SMELL!

SNIFF! SNIFF! SNIFF!

SMELLS GOOD!

EXTREMELY GOOD! COME ON OBELIX!
Where does Chief WhoseMoralSarelax live?
Up there, right on the edge of the cliff.

CHAIR WHOSE M corroalsarelax! Here's the money!

Money? Where? Where?

Oh... it's you!
I am returning the sight! You entrusted to my care... I rather think the tax collector has already called?

That's right... He didn't find any money here, so he left... well, thanks very much...

Just a moment!
These sestertii smell of onion soup!

Yet they come from the Roman tax collector's chest!

And if these sestertii smell the same as those you entrusted to me, it's because they are the same!

That night, when you came to our village, you took me aside to give me some information... and acting on your instructions, your men stole this money!

You used the money to pay your taxes, thus keeping in with the Romans and knowing very well that I should move mountains to repay our debt!

In fact, we were to pay your taxes for you!

I see you get the idea...

Yes, I do get the idea!

Then could someone please explain to me?

To me, men!

You see to the rest. All right, but you will tell me afterwards, won't you?

I do hope Asterix will explain. I generally like to know why we're fighting.

Paf!
WAIT A MINUTE! NO FIGHTING BETWEEN BROTHERS, RIGHT...?

TCHAC!

PARTICULARLY IF SOME BROTHERS ARE STRONGER THAN OTHER BROTHERS!

TING! TCHAC! TING!

AHA! AND NOW TO SETTLE OUR ACCOUNT, BY BELENOS!

MY SESTERTIIII!

MY SESTERTIII!

THAT SEEMS TO BE THAT. WE'VE SETTLED OUR DEBT, YOU'VE BEEN PUNISHED FOR YOUR AVARICE, AND MAY IT BE A LESSON TO YOU.

MY SESTERTIIII! THEY'RE NO GOOD TO ANYONE NOW!

COME ON, OBELIX. LET'S GO HOME.
MUTINY! SUFFERING SEASERPENTS, WHO DARED CROWN ME WITH A CAULDRON!

AND FOR ONCE, JUST FOR ONCE, THE PIRATES ARE HAPPY!

ONION-FLAVOURED TO MY FAVOURITE KIND!

SESTERTIUM FROM OLYMPUS! THIS SHOULD KEEP OUR HEADS ABOVE WATER.

AS HAPPY AS OUR FRIENDS, THE TOAST OF THE WHOLE VILLAGE, WHICH, THANKS TO THEM, HAS PRESERVED ITS HONOUR INTACT!

BUT WHAT I NEVER DID UNDERSTAND IS WHY ANYONE WOULDN'T PUT MONEY IN THAT CAULDRON INSTEAD OF ONION SOUP IN THE FIRST PLACE!

THE END