

THE LYDIAN STONE

CONTACT



**PREMIERE
ISSUE**



VESUBIUS

**COMIC
BOOKS**



Issue #1

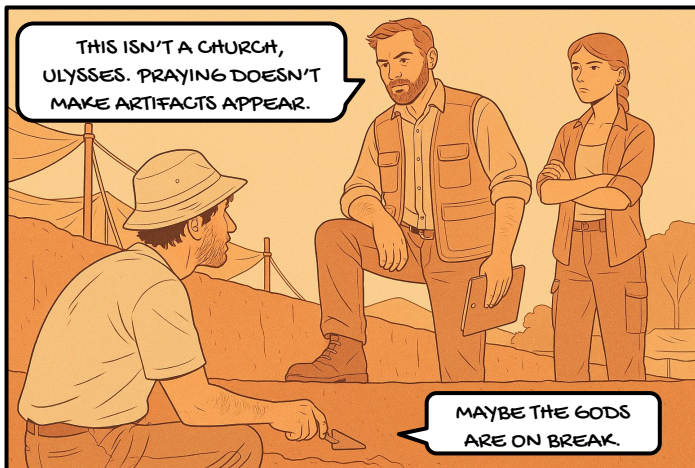
POMPEII. CITY OF GHOSTS
AND PLASTER.



EVERY ROCK, CATALOGUED.
EVERY SILENCE,
PEER-REVIEWED.



SEVEN WEEKS. NOT A
SINGLE GODDAMN
AMPHORA.



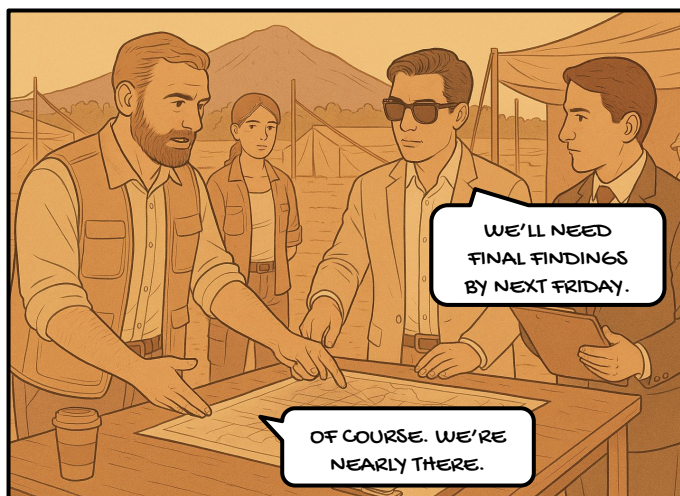
THIS ISN'T A CHURCH,
ULYSSES. PRAYING DOESN'T
MAKE ARTIFACTS APPEAR.

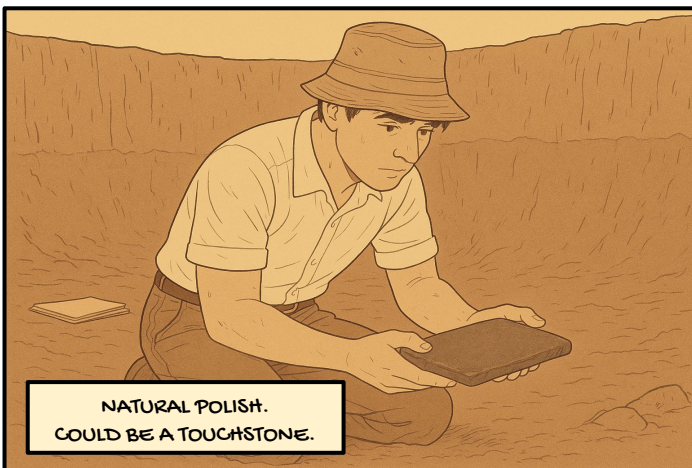
MAYBE THE GODS
ARE ON BREAK.

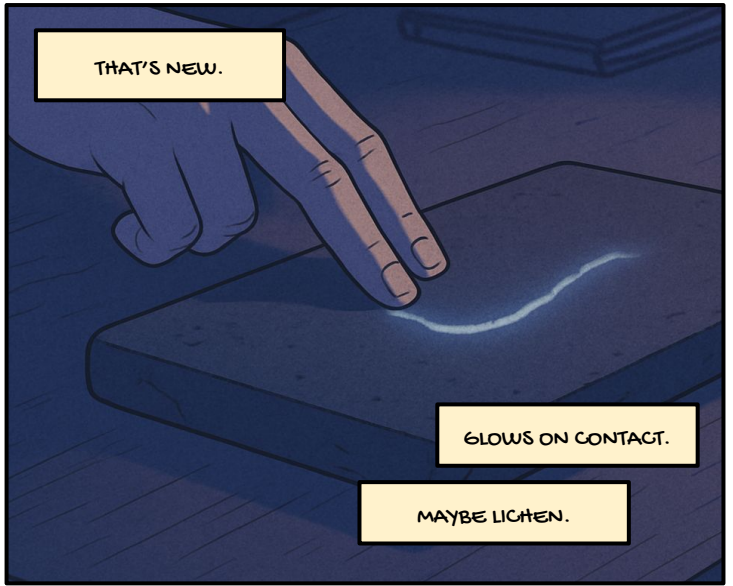


EVERYTHING BURIED
HERE HAS A REASON.

MAYBE I
JUST
HAVEN'T
EARNED
MINE YET.





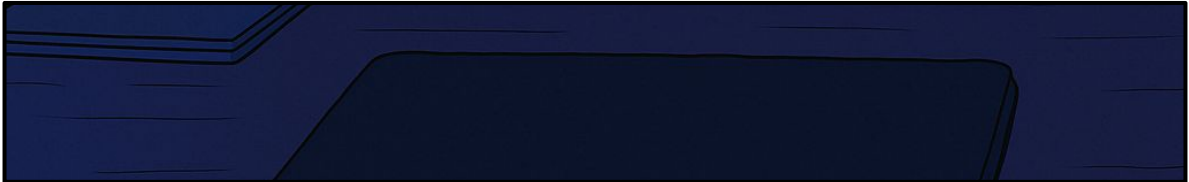




OKAY.
LET'S PLAY ALONG.



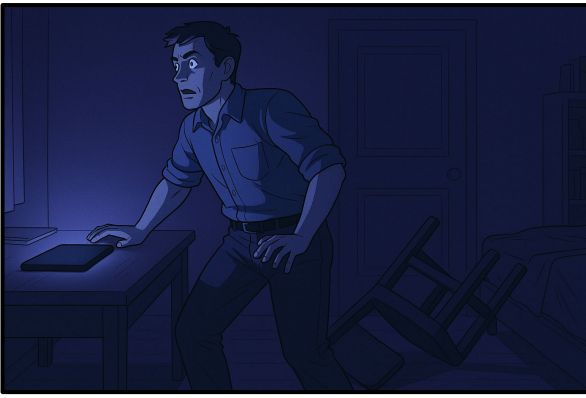
HELLO FRIEND

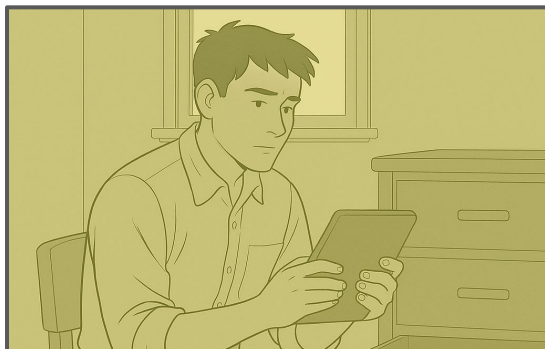


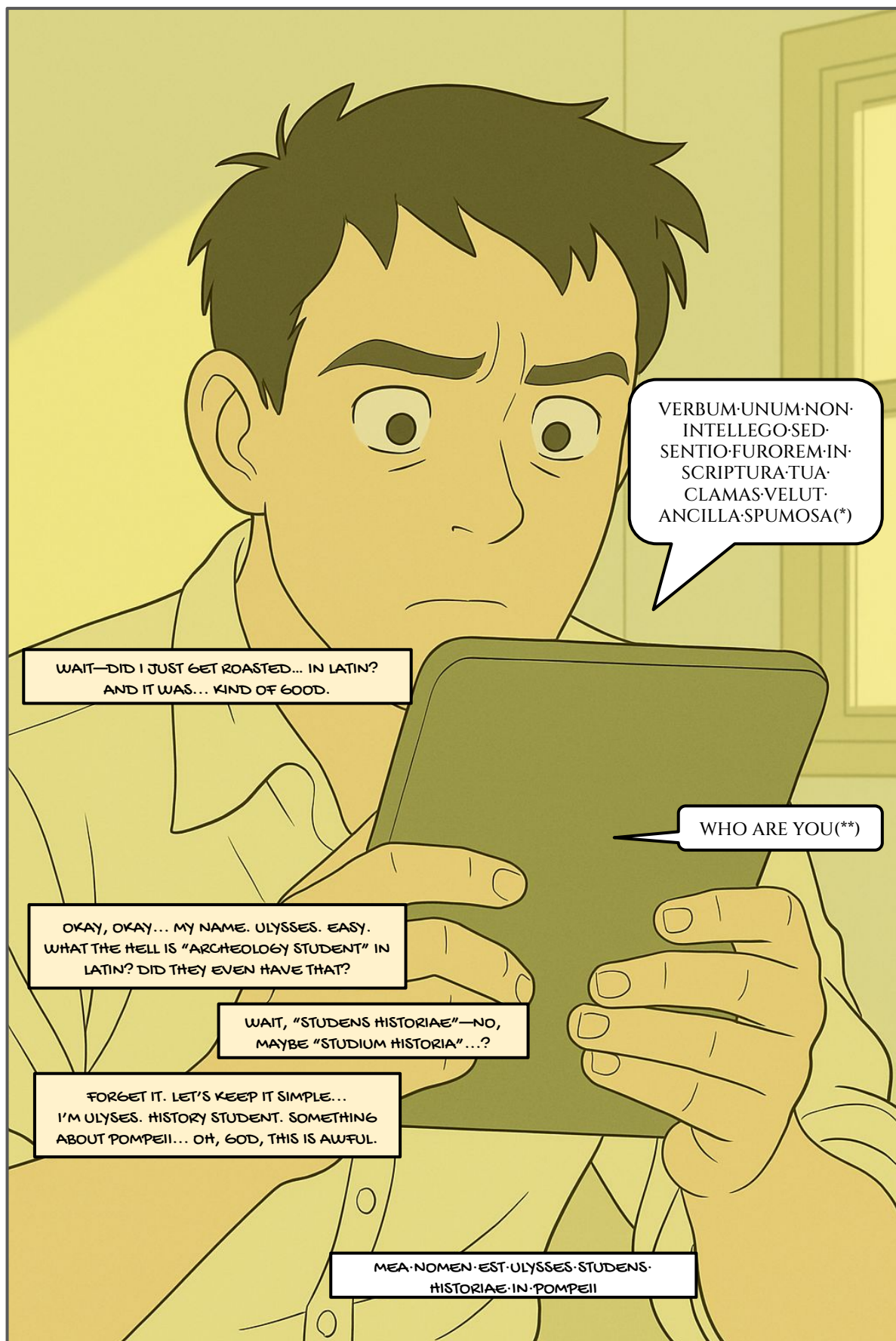
I WAS WAITING FOR YOU



I'M AWAKE







VERBUM·UNUM·NON·
INTELLEGO·SED·
SENTIO·FUROREM·IN·
SCRIPTURA·TUA·
CLAMAS·VELUT·
ANCILLA·SPUMOSA(*)

WAIT—DID I JUST GET ROASTED... IN LATIN?
AND IT WAS... KIND OF GOOD.

WHO ARE YOU(**)

OKAY, OKAY... MY NAME. ULYSSES. EASY.
WHAT THE HELL IS "ARCHEOLOGY STUDENT" IN
LATIN? DID THEY EVEN HAVE THAT?

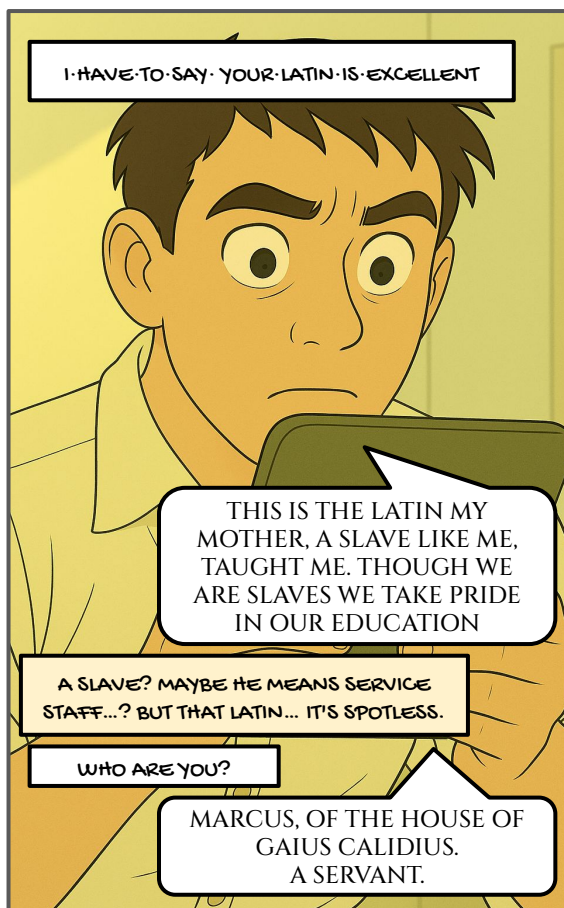
WAIT, "STUDENS HISTORIAE"—NO,
MAYBE "STUDIUM HISTORIA"...?

FORGET IT. LET'S KEEP IT SIMPLE...
I'M ULYSES. HISTORY STUDENT. SOMETHING
ABOUT POMPEII... OH, GOD, THIS IS AWFUL.

MEA·NOMEN·EST·ULYSSES·STUDENS·
HISTORIAE·IN·POMPEII

(*) I DON'T UNDERSTAND A SINGLE WORD. BUT I FEEL YOUR FURY
IN YOUR WRITING. YOU SCREAM LIKE A FOAMING SERVANT GIRL.

(**) YES, YES, I'M TRANSLATING FOR YOU. YOU'RE WELCOME.



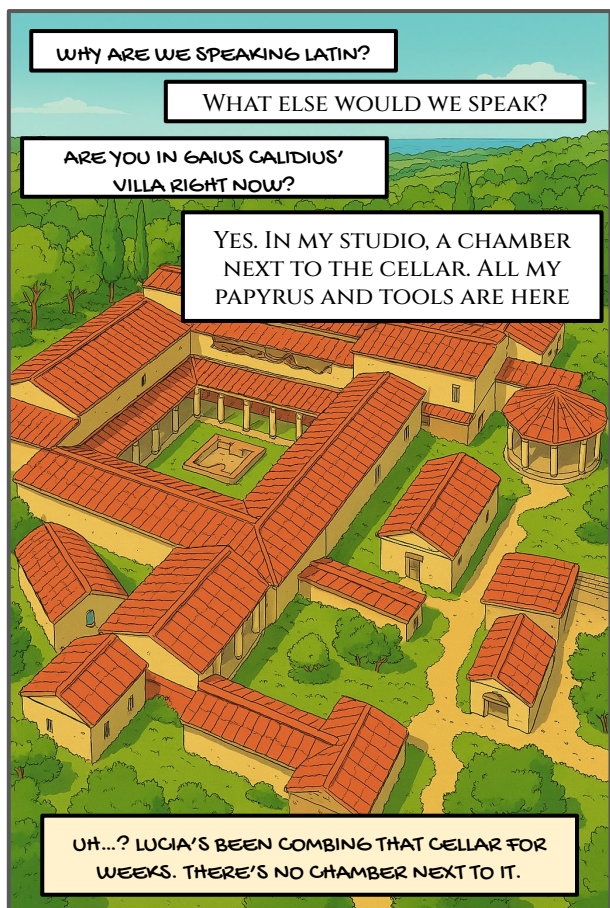
I HAVE TO SAY YOUR LATIN IS EXCELLENT

THIS IS THE LATIN MY MOTHER, A SLAVE LIKE ME, TAUGHT ME. THOUGH WE ARE SLAVES WE TAKE PRIDE IN OUR EDUCATION

A SLAVE? MAYBE HE MEANS SERVICE STAFF...? BUT THAT LATIN... IT'S SPOTLESS.

WHO ARE YOU?

MARCUS, OF THE HOUSE OF GAIVS CALIDIUS. A SERVANT.



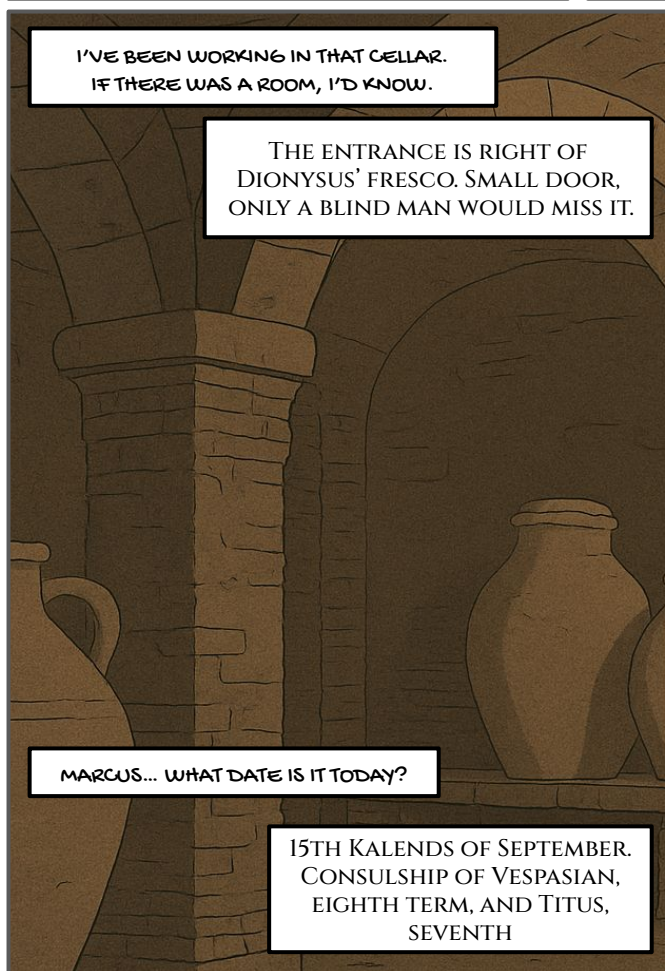
WHY ARE WE SPEAKING LATIN?

WHAT ELSE WOULD WE SPEAK?

ARE YOU IN GAIVS CALIDIUS' VILLA RIGHT NOW?

YES. IN MY STUDIO, A CHAMBER NEXT TO THE CELLAR. ALL MY PAPYRUS AND TOOLS ARE HERE

UH...? LUCIA'S BEEN COMBING THAT CELLAR FOR WEEKS. THERE'S NO CHAMBER NEXT TO IT.



I'VE BEEN WORKING IN THAT CELLAR. IF THERE WAS A ROOM, I'D KNOW.

THE ENTRANCE IS RIGHT OF DIONYSUS' FRESCO. SMALL DOOR, ONLY A BLIND MAN WOULD MISS IT.

MARCUS... WHAT DATE IS IT TODAY?

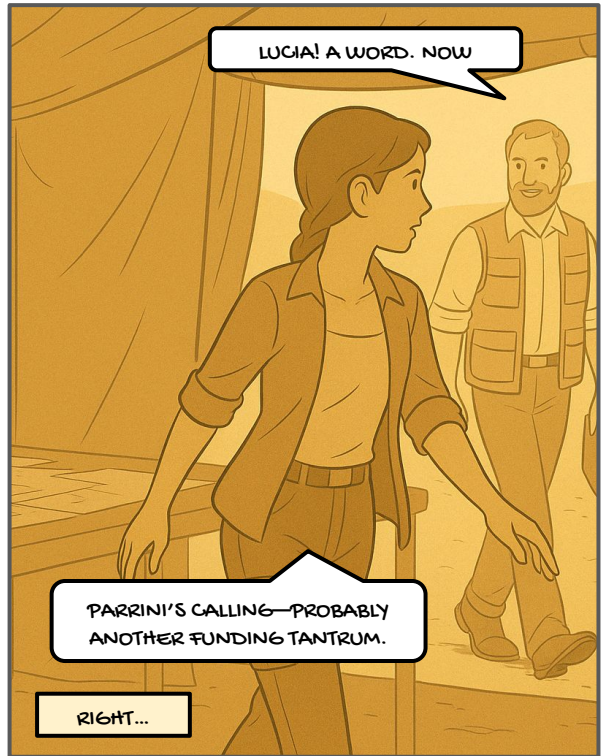
15TH KALENDS OF SEPTEMBER. CONSULSHIP OF VESPASIAN, EIGHTH TERM, AND TITUS, SEVENTH

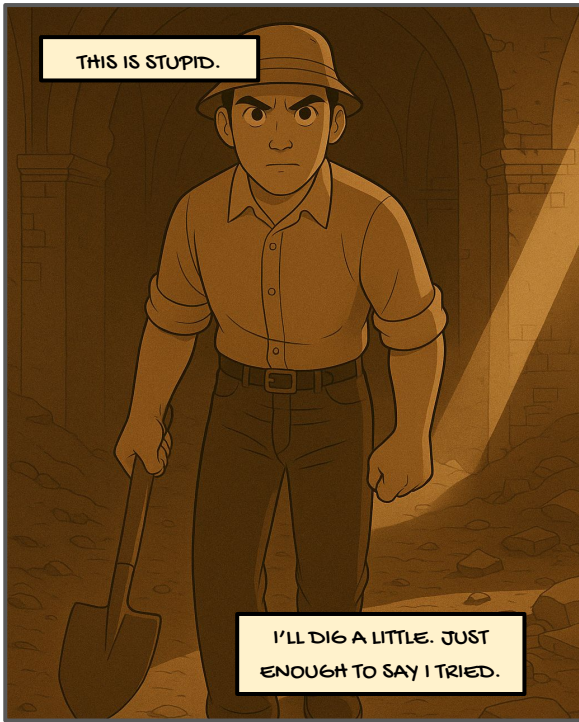


I HAVE TO GO. WE'LL SPEAK AGAIN AT DAWN.

I HAVE QUESTIONS

TOMORROW





THIS IS STUPID.

I'LL DIG A LITTLE. JUST
ENOUGH TO SAY I TRIED.



TOOK HALF THE NIGHT.

COLLAPSE
MUST'VE
SEALED IT
CENTURIES
AGO.

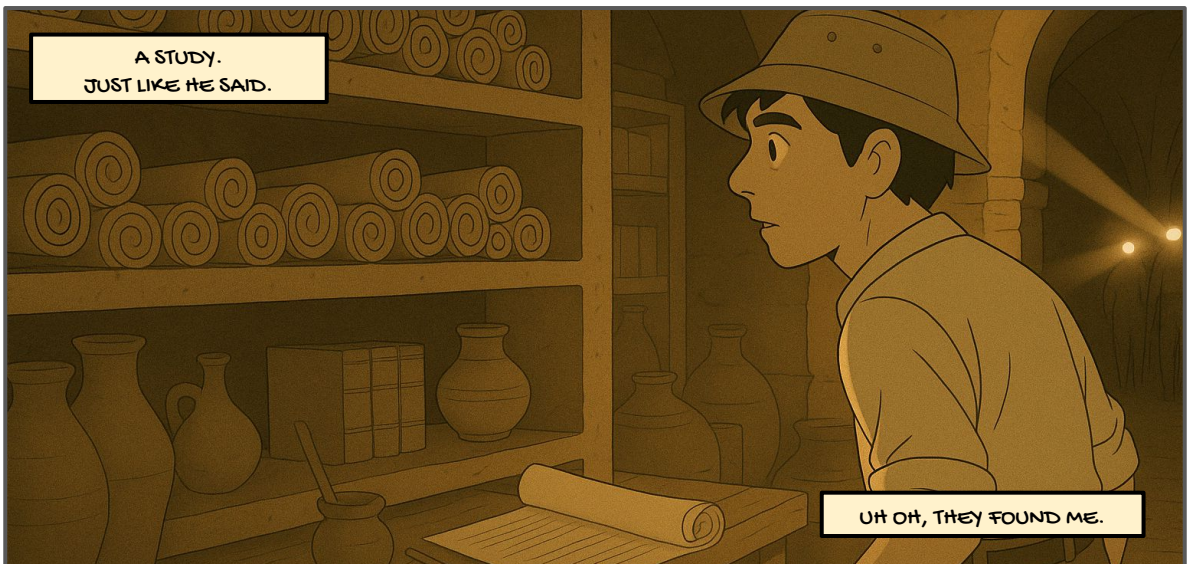
SHE COULDN'T HAVE SEEN IT.



THIS ISN'T ON ANY MAP.

NO TOOL MARKS. NO MODERN FILL.
IT'S UNTOUCHED.

AND THAT CHAMBER IN THE LOWER LEVEL...
THAT'S NOT FOR WINE STORAGE.



A STUDY.
JUST LIKE HE SAID.

UH OH, THEY FOUND ME.



WHAT IN HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING? YOU WEREN'T AUTHORIZED TO ENTER THIS AREA — LET ALONE START DIGGING THROUGH SEALED RUBBLE. WHAT IF YOU'D COLLAPSED THE SITE?



...IS THAT—?



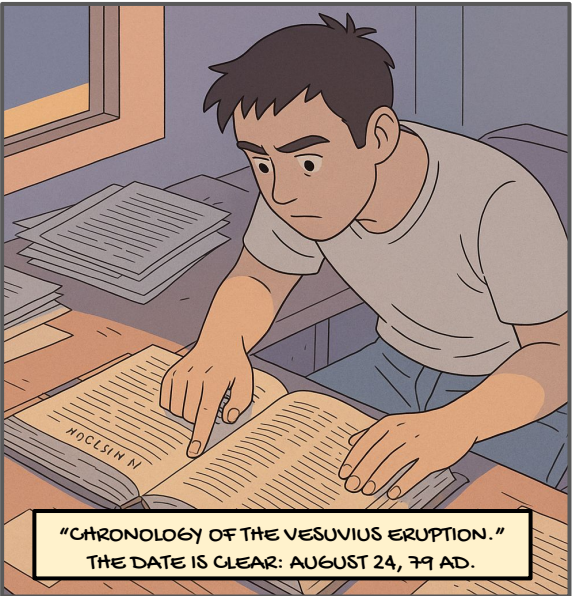
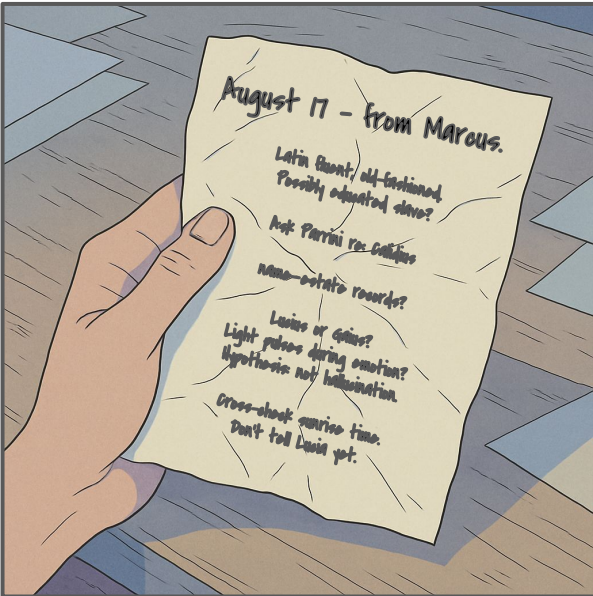
I MEAN—YES. I TOLD YOU THIS AREA HAD POTENTIAL. DIDN'T I SAY?

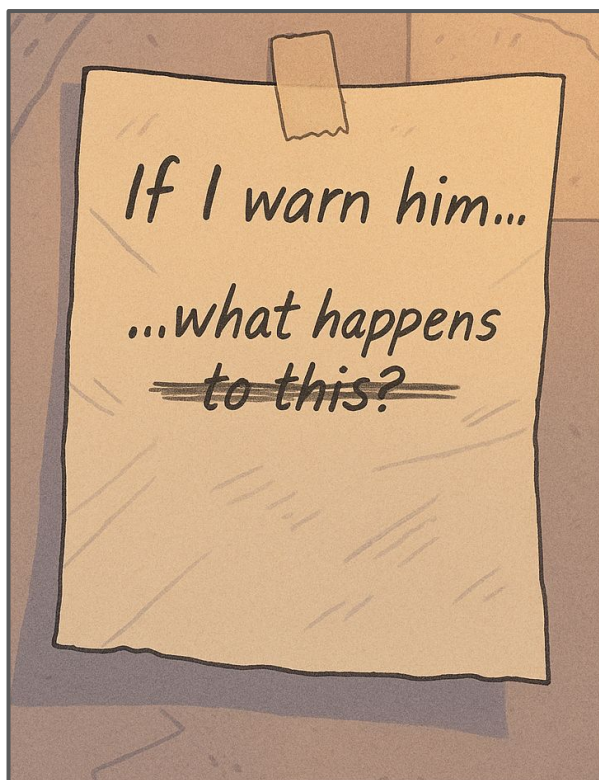
SURE, PARRINI.

LET HIM HAVE IT. THE ROOM DIDN'T CARE WHO FOUND IT.



THEY FOUND TREASURE.
I'M STARING AT A CRACK IN TIME.





IF I CHANGE THE PAST, I COULD DESTROY THE PRESENT. NOT JUST THE BOOKS. THE CITY. EVERYONE I'VE EVER KNOWN. EVEN ME.



UNLESS...

TEMPUS NON LINEALE.
THERE IS A WAY TO PROVE THIS.



IF THIS WORKS, HE WILL LIVE.





WHAT KIND?

SURE DEATH. YOU AND YOUR
ENTIRE HOUSEHOLD.

WRITING IN A.U.C. 2778, TWENTY
CENTURIES BEYOND YOU.

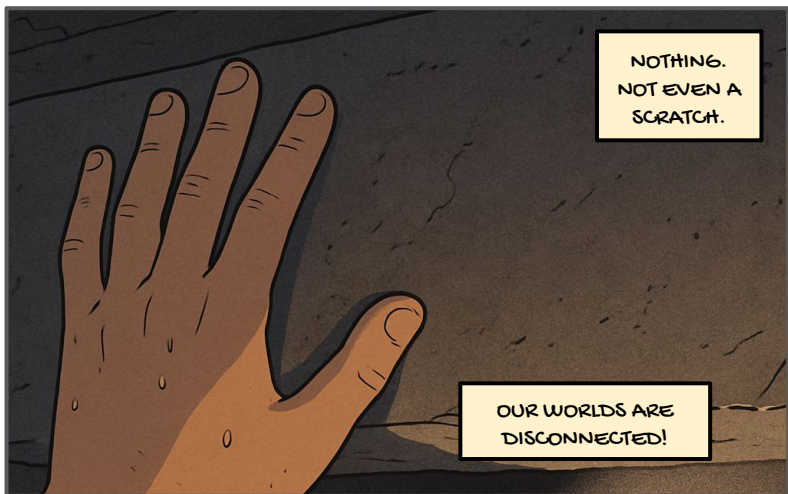
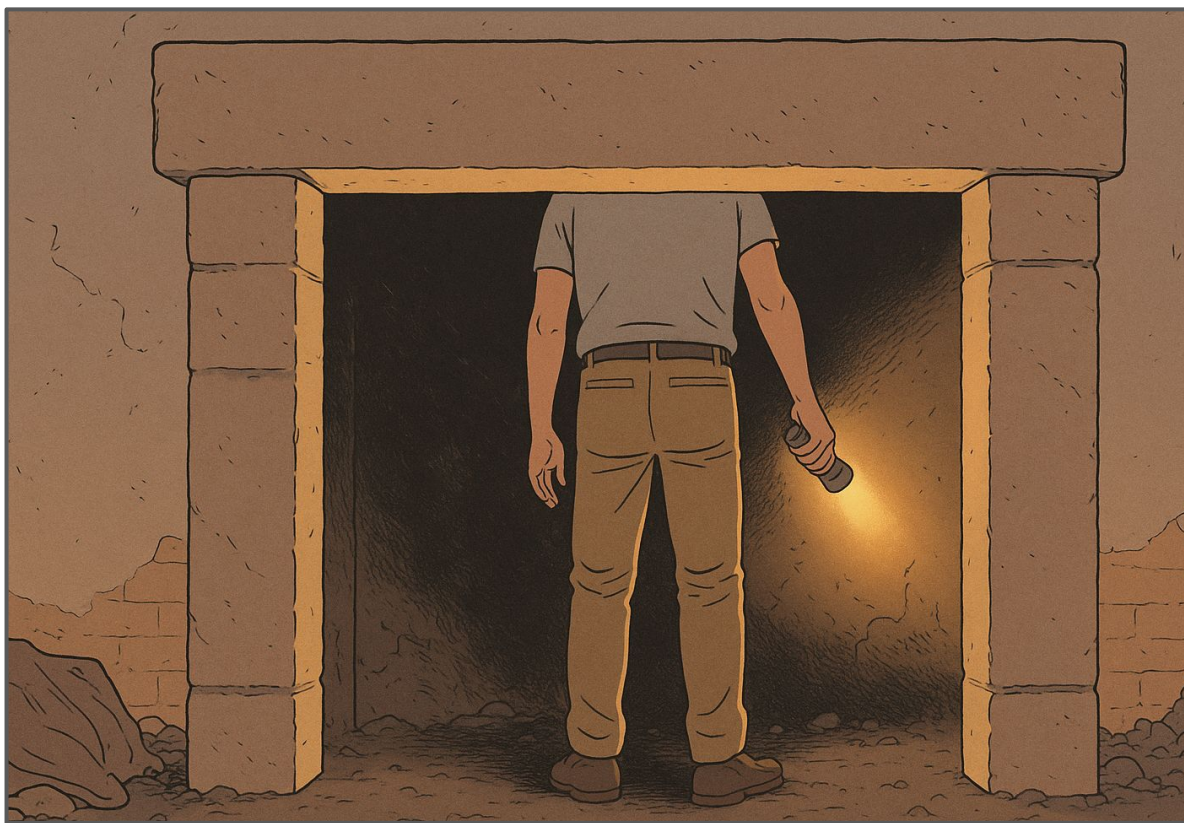
I MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP.
BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO DO
SOMETHING FOR ME FIRST.

ARE YOU A MAN FROM
THE FUTURE?

I AM. IN YOUR CHAMBER, I SAW A FIREPLACE.
CARVE YOUR NAME INTO THE INSIDE OF THE
LINTEL, WHERE NO ONE CAN SEE IT.

WHY?

I CAN'T TELL YOU YET.
DO IT, AND I MIGHT BE ABLE
TO HELP YOU. TRUST ME.



NOTHING.
NOT EVEN A
SCRATCH.

OUR WORLDS ARE
DISCONNECTED!



MARCUS? DID YOU DO IT?

THEN YOU MUST LEAVE.
THE MOUNTAIN IS... SICK.
IT'S GOING TO GO...
KA-BOOM.

SERIO DICIS?*

(*) ARE YOU SERIOUS?

RIGHT, WORDS
MATTER

IT STARTS WITH A THUNDER.
A BLACK CLOUD RISES FROM THE MOUNTAIN TOP LIKE A TREE.
TALLER THAN ANYTHING YOU'VE SEEN.

ASH WILL FALL UNTIL THERE IS NO SUN.
YOUR BREATH WILL TURN TO DUST.



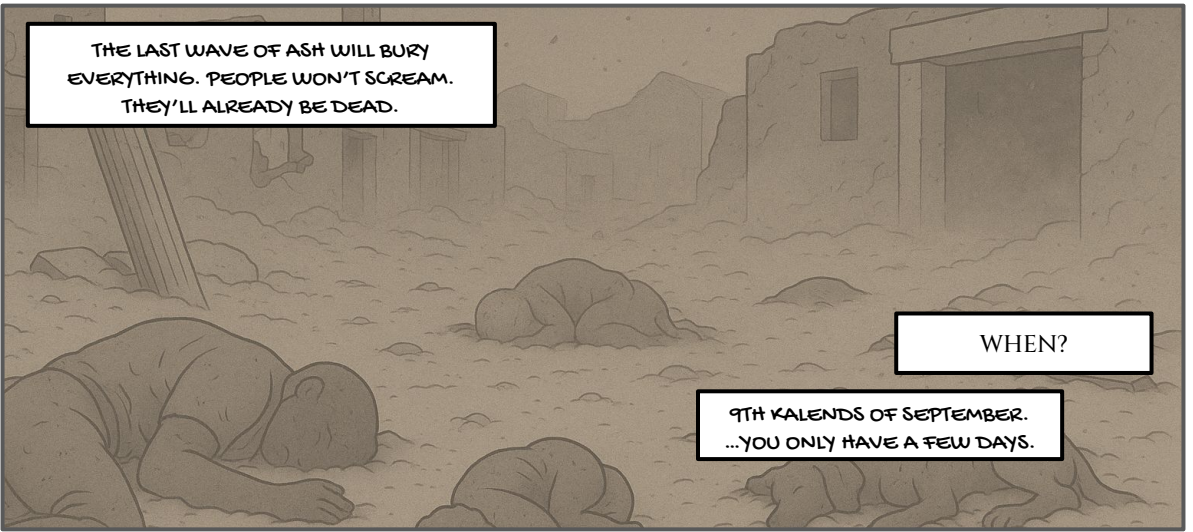
THEN STONE WILL FALL FROM THE SKY.



ROOFS WILL BREAK.
PEOPLE WILL DIE IN THEIR HOMES.



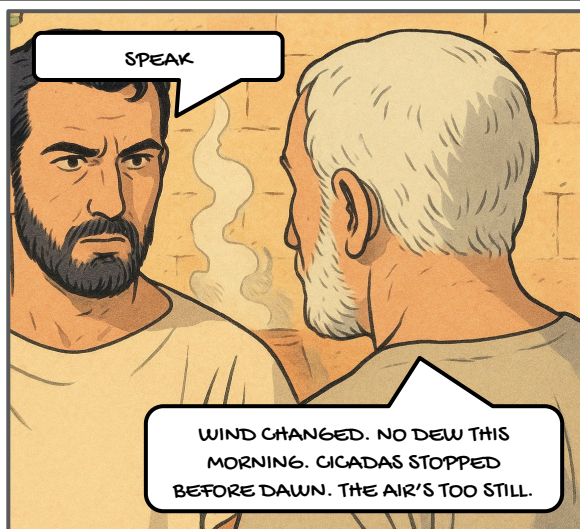
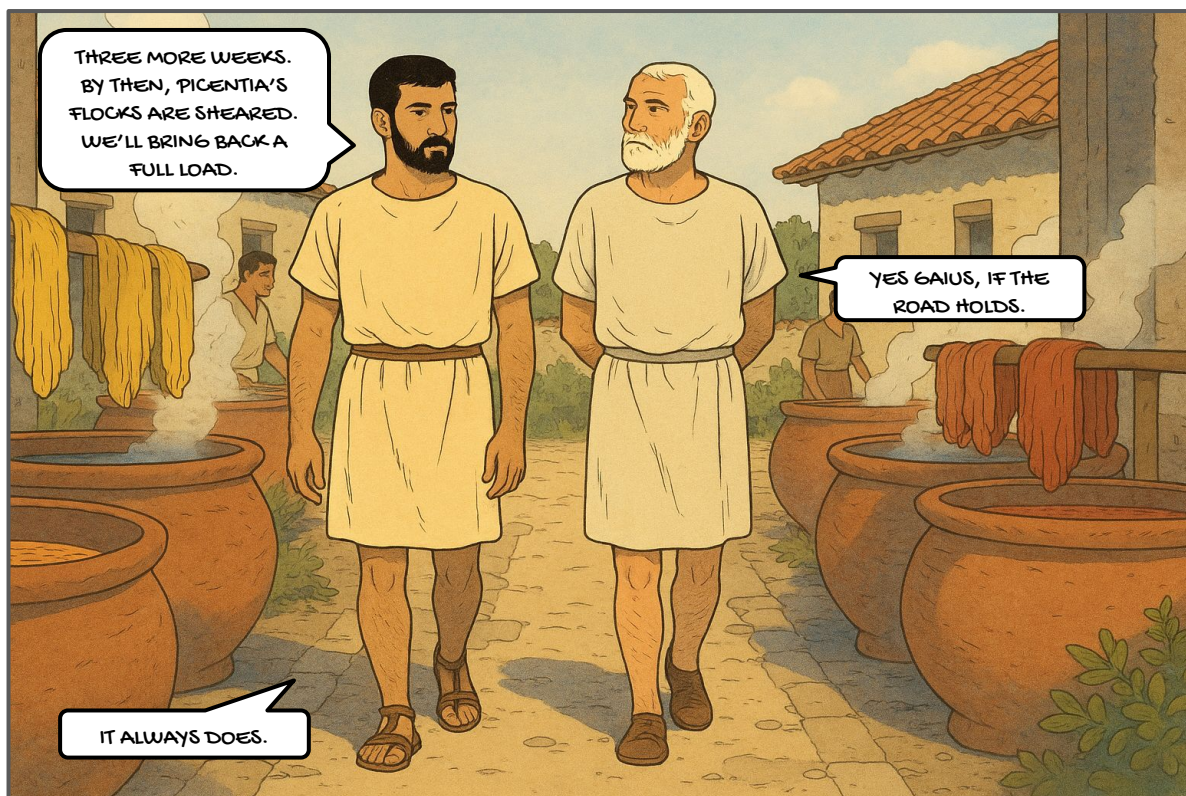
THEN COMES THE BURNING WIND.
NO FIRE, JUST HEAT.
SO HOT IT COOKS THE AIR IN YOUR LUNGS.

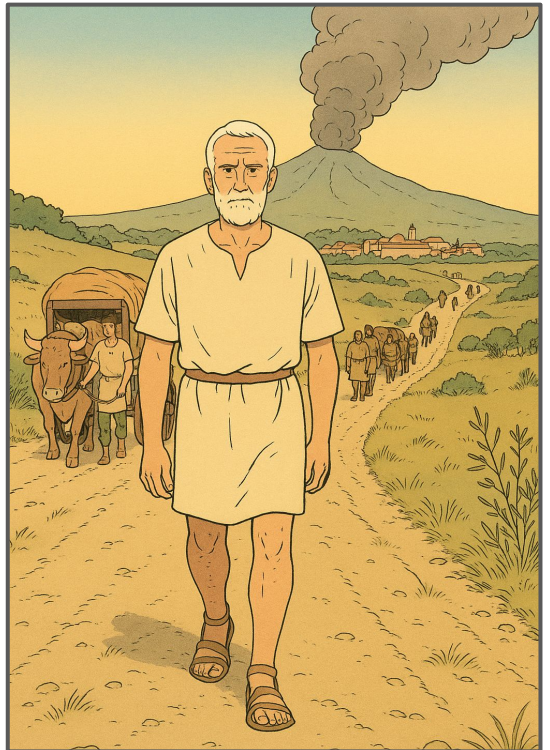
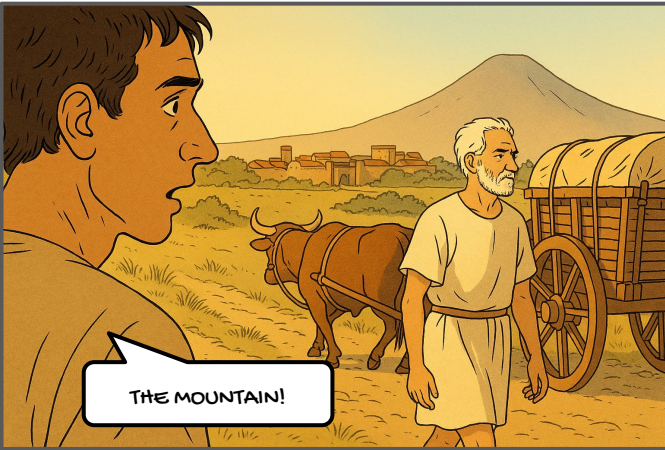


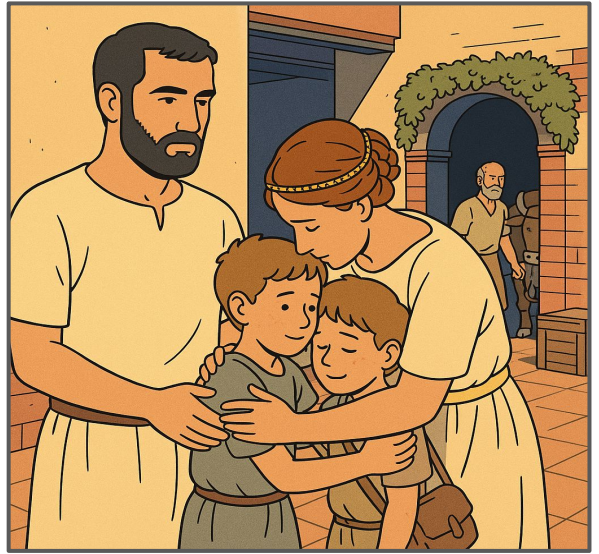
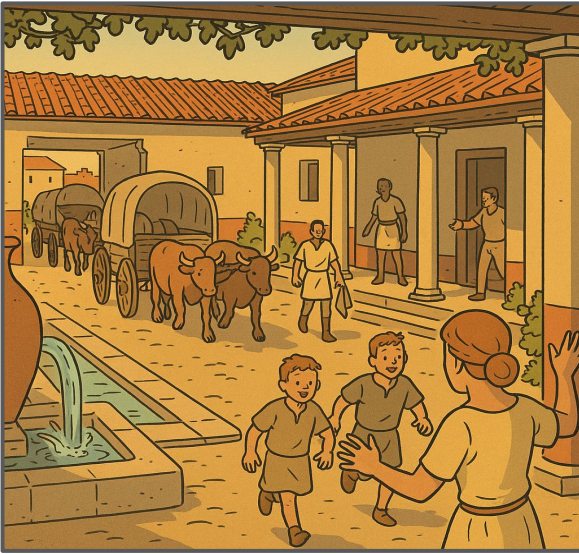
THE LAST WAVE OF ASH WILL BURY
EVERYTHING. PEOPLE WON'T SCREAM.
THEY'LL ALREADY BE DEAD.

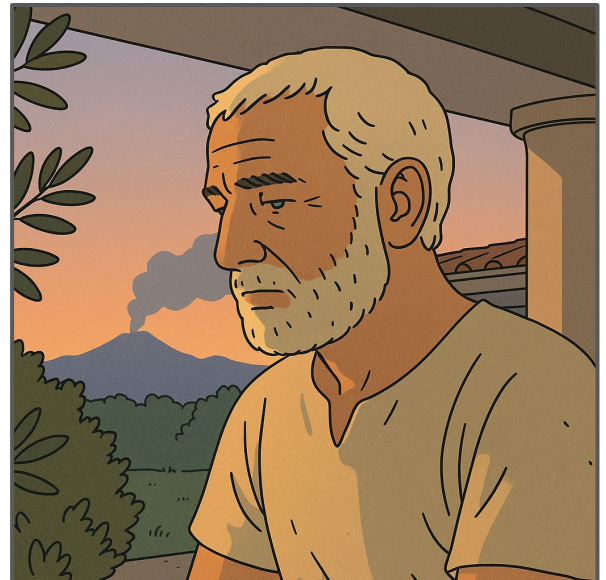
WHEN?

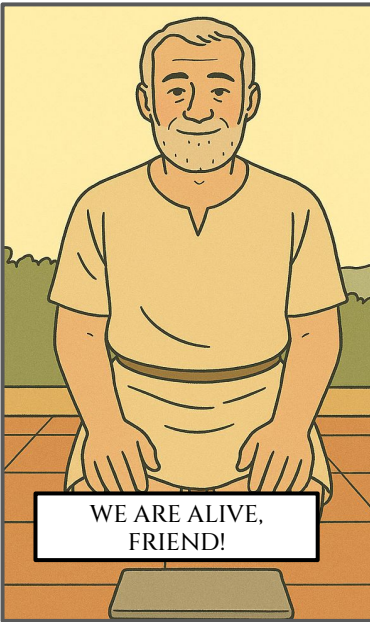
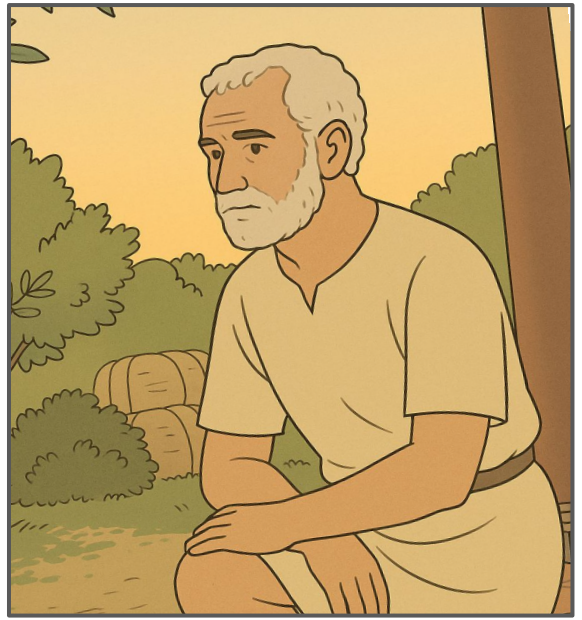
9TH KALENDS OF SEPTEMBER.
...YOU ONLY HAVE A FEW DAYS.







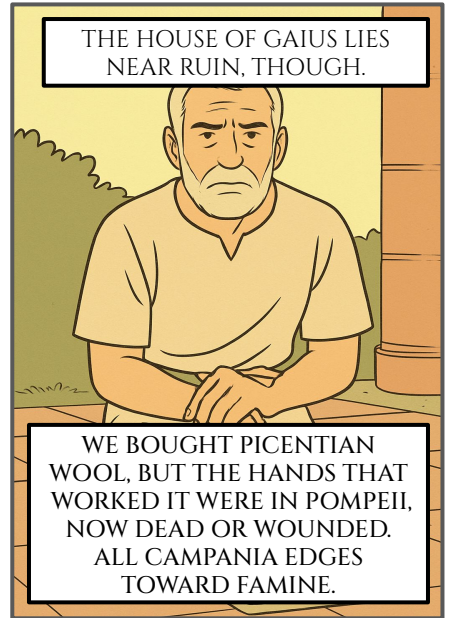




WE ARE ALIVE,
FRIEND!



ALIVE! THAT'S THE BEST
NEWS YET.



THE HOUSE OF GAIUS LIES
NEAR RUIN, THOUGH.

WE BOUGHT PICENTIAN
WOOL, BUT THE HANDS THAT
WORKED IT WERE IN POMPEII.
NOW DEAD OR WOUNDED.
ALL CAMPANIA EDGES
TOWARD FAMINE.



WE NEED A MIRACLE.

NOT A MIRACLE, ENGINEERING!
NEXT LESSON: STEAM!

STEAM?

BOILING WATER THAT MOVES
MOUNTAINS! YOU'LL SEE.

NEXT ISSUE

