

Androcles had a bumpy ride to Rome. The city was crowded and noisy.



He had never seen so
many people.



Then he noticed a big, round building. "What's that?" he asked.



"It's the arena*," said the soldier. "That's where you're going."

28

*say a-ree-na

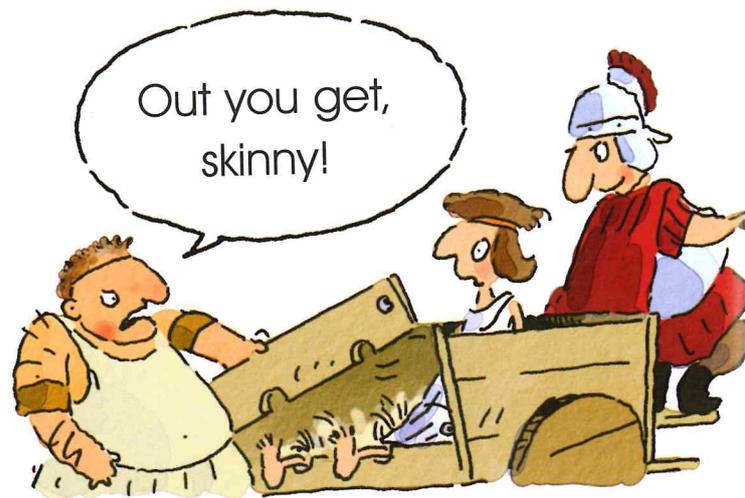


“What happens there?”

asked Androcles.

“You’ll see,” the soldier said.

A man called Clinkus
pulled Androcles off the cart.



He led Androcles into the
arena, past a cage of lions.



They weren't as gentle
as Leo.

ROAR! SNARL!



“Why are they here?”
Androcles asked nervously.
“You’ll see,” said Clinkus.

Androcles was locked in a prison with a man called Marco.

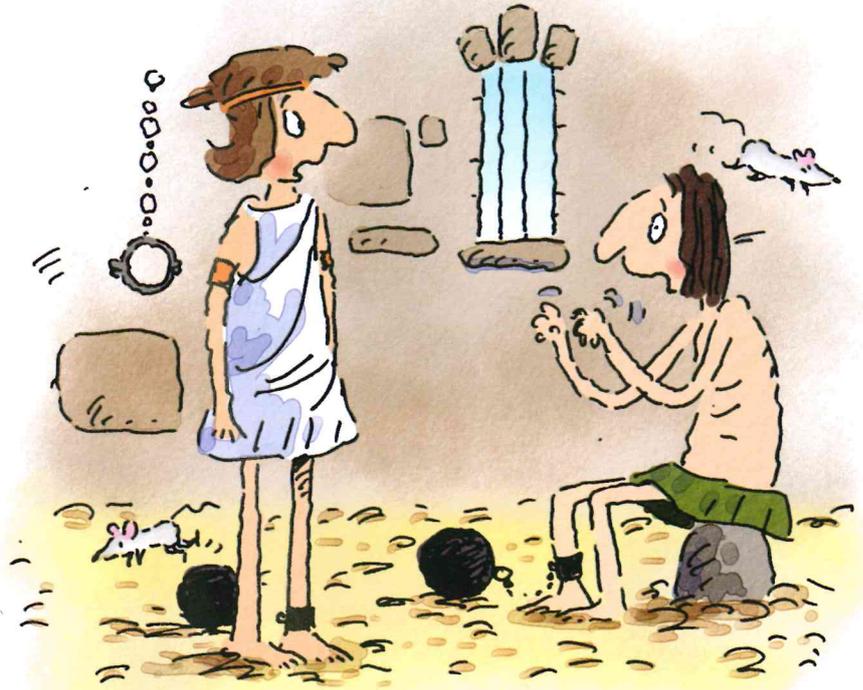


“What happens now?”
asked Androcles.

“We fight in the arena,”
said Marco.

“But I don’t want to fight you,” said Androcles.

“We don’t fight each other...” Marco sighed.



“We fight the lions.”

Androcles gulped.



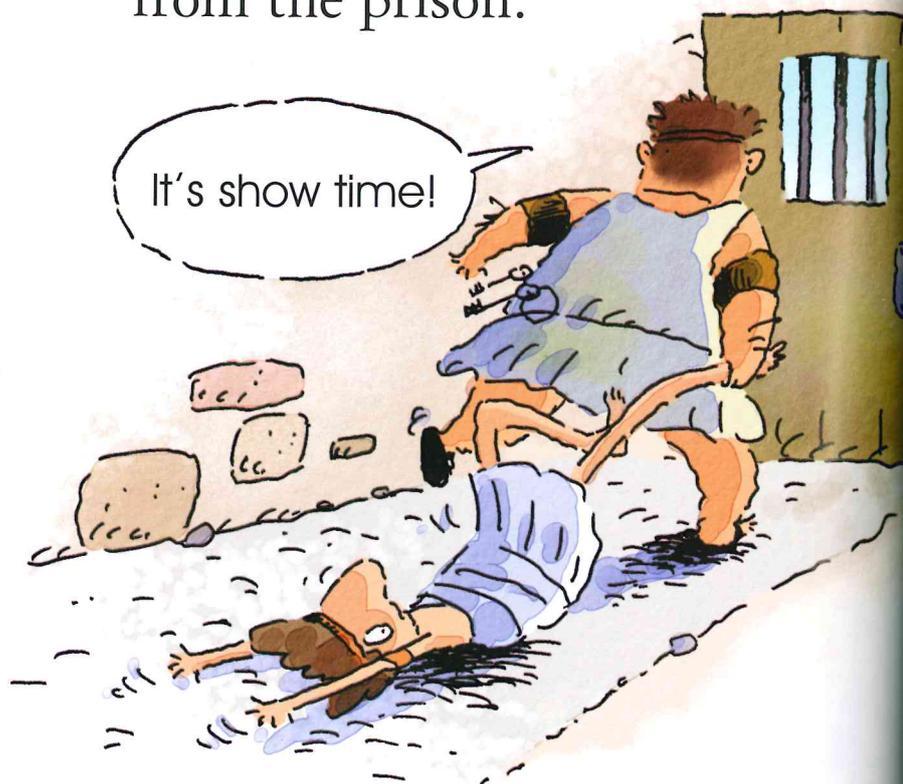
“Everyone in Rome comes to watch,” said Marco. “Even the Emperor.”

“Our fights are tomorrow
afternoon,” he added.



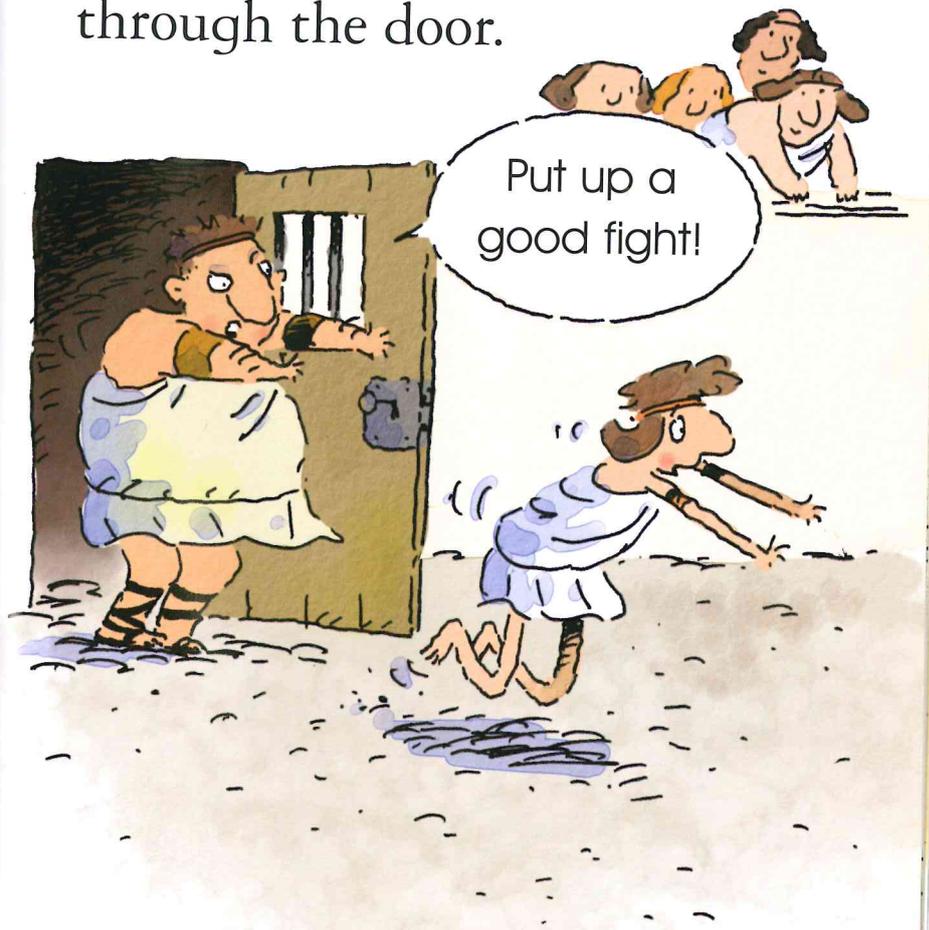
Androcles and Marco didn't
get much sleep that night.

The next afternoon,
Clinkus dragged Androcles
from the prison.



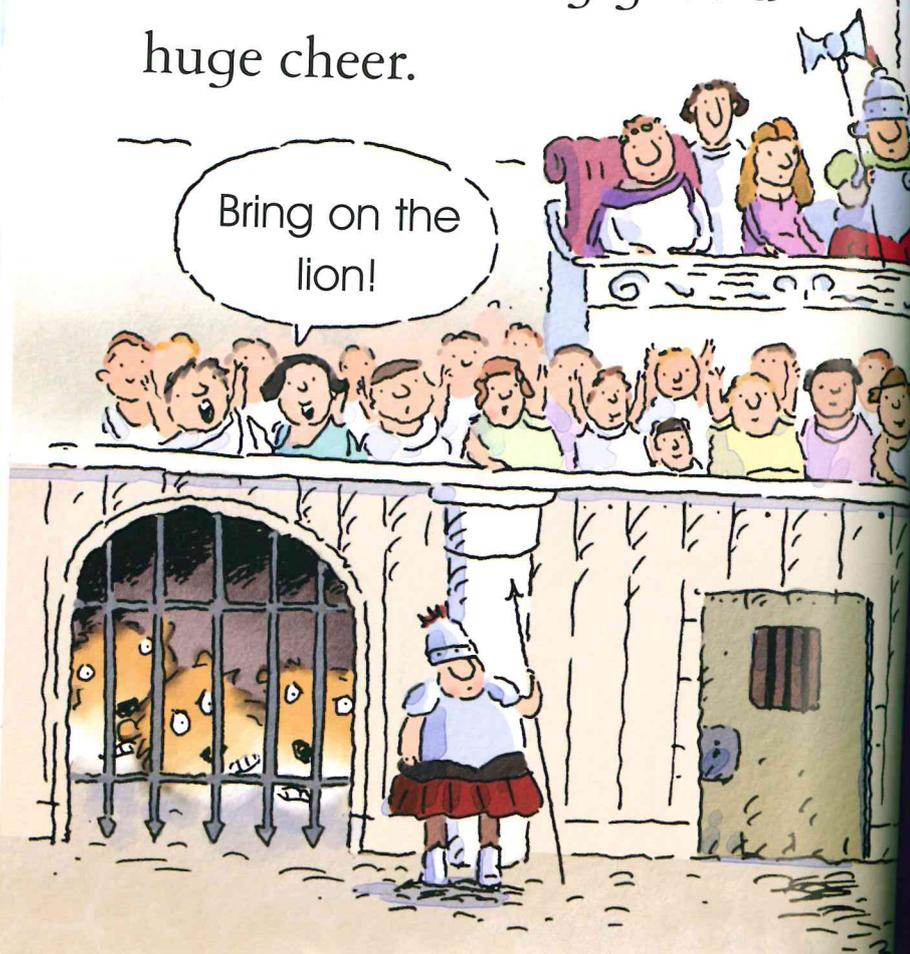
He took him down a long,
dark tunnel to a doorway.

Clinkus pushed Androcles through the door.



Androcles stood in the middle of the arena.

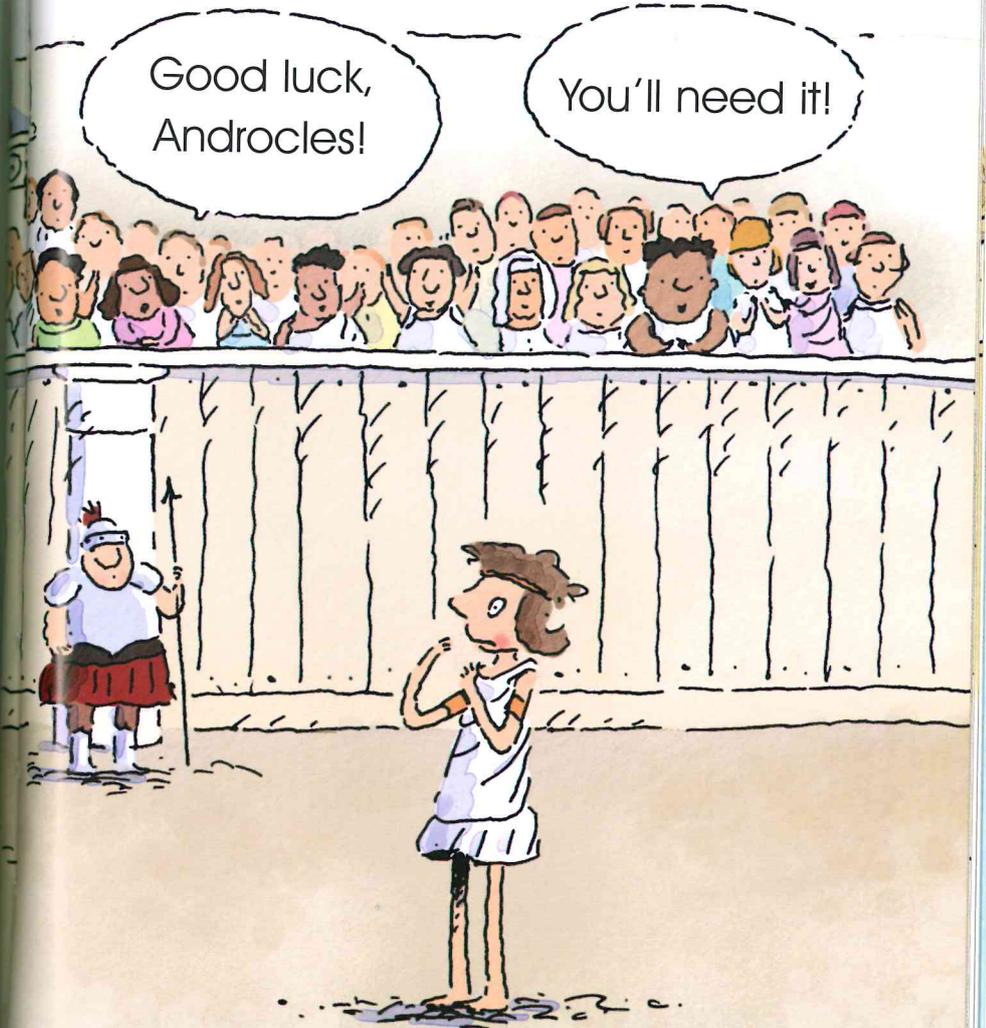
Thousands of people sat
around him. They gave a
huge cheer.



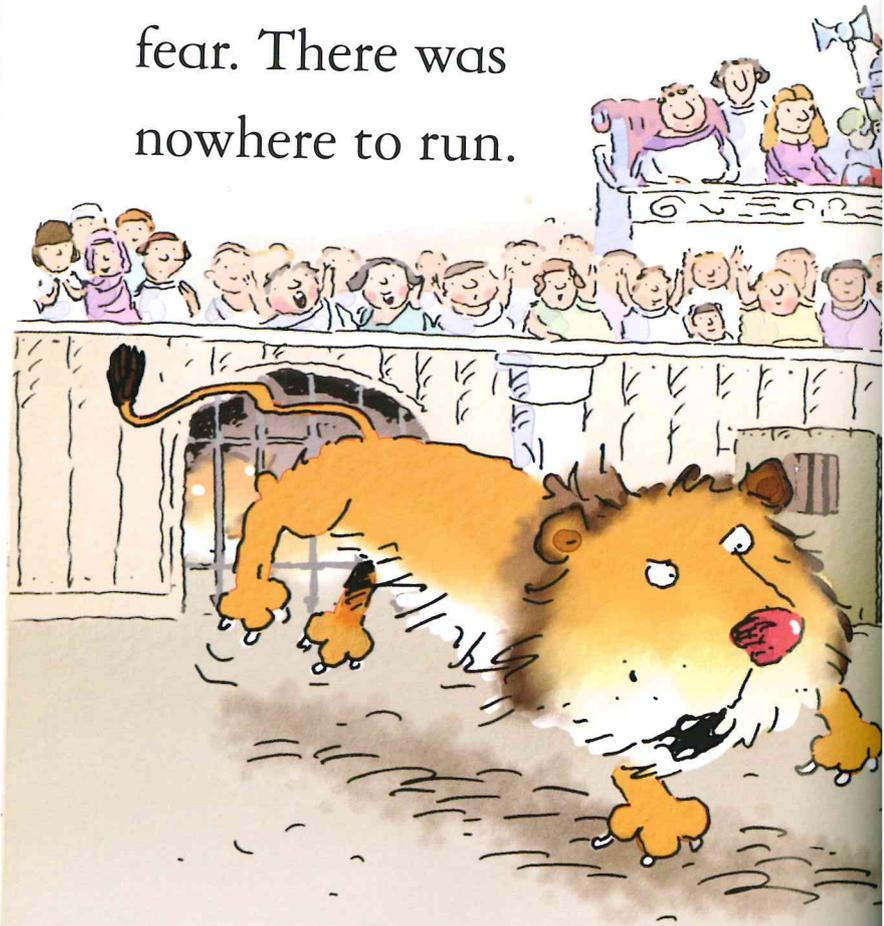
A gate opened in a side wall, and an **enormous** lion charged out.

Good luck, Androcles!

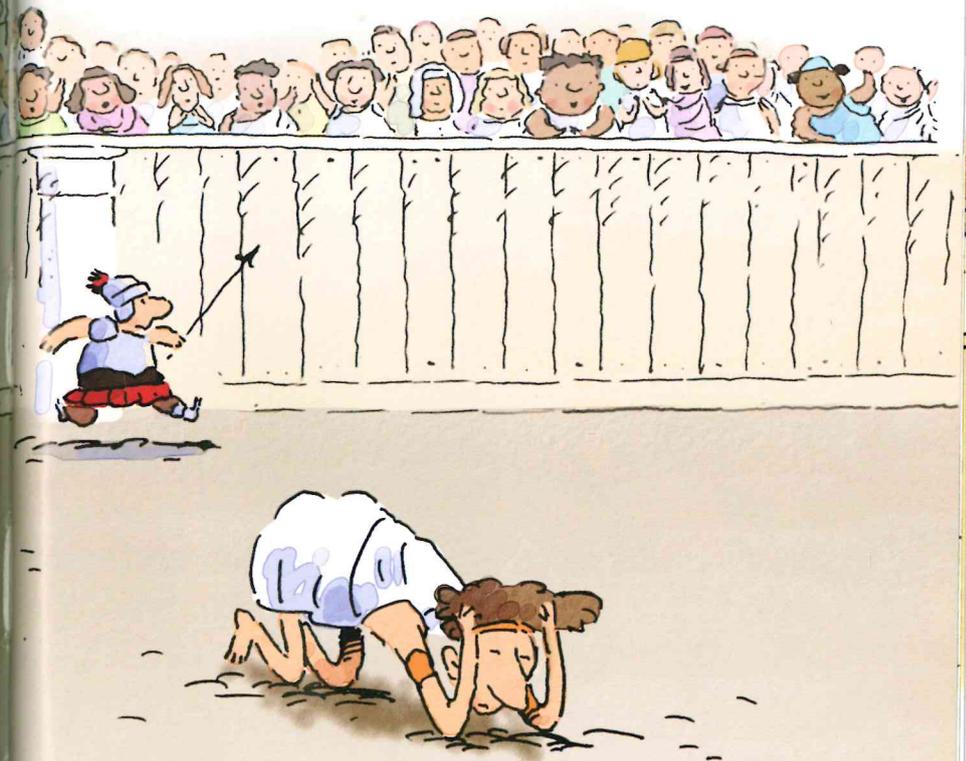
You'll need it!



Androcles trembled with
fear. There was
nowhere to run.

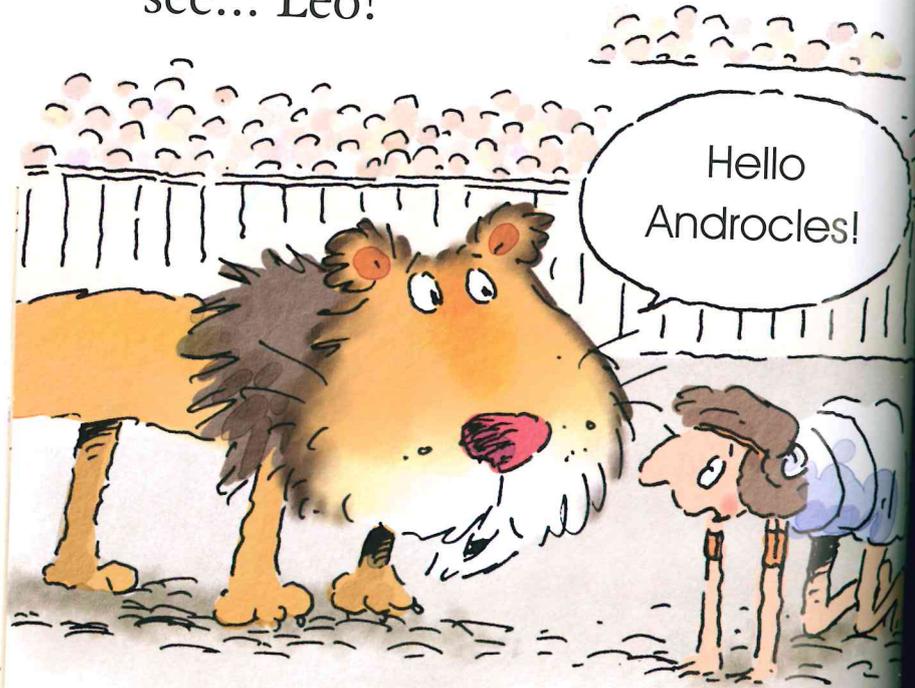


Androcles closed his eyes.
“I hope it’s over quickly,”
he thought.



Then something strange
happened...

Androcles felt a lick on his hand. He opened his eyes to see... Leo!



"I was caught last night," said Leo. "They brought me here to fight."

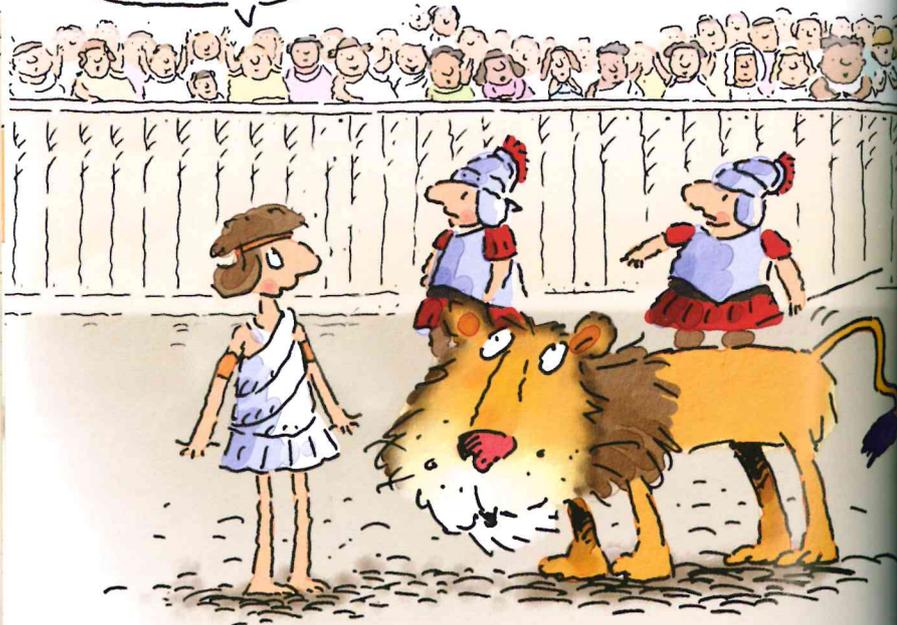
Androcles hugged his friend.
The crowd couldn't believe it.



“Androcles has tamed
the lion,” they cried. “What
a hero!”

Androcles!

Androcles!



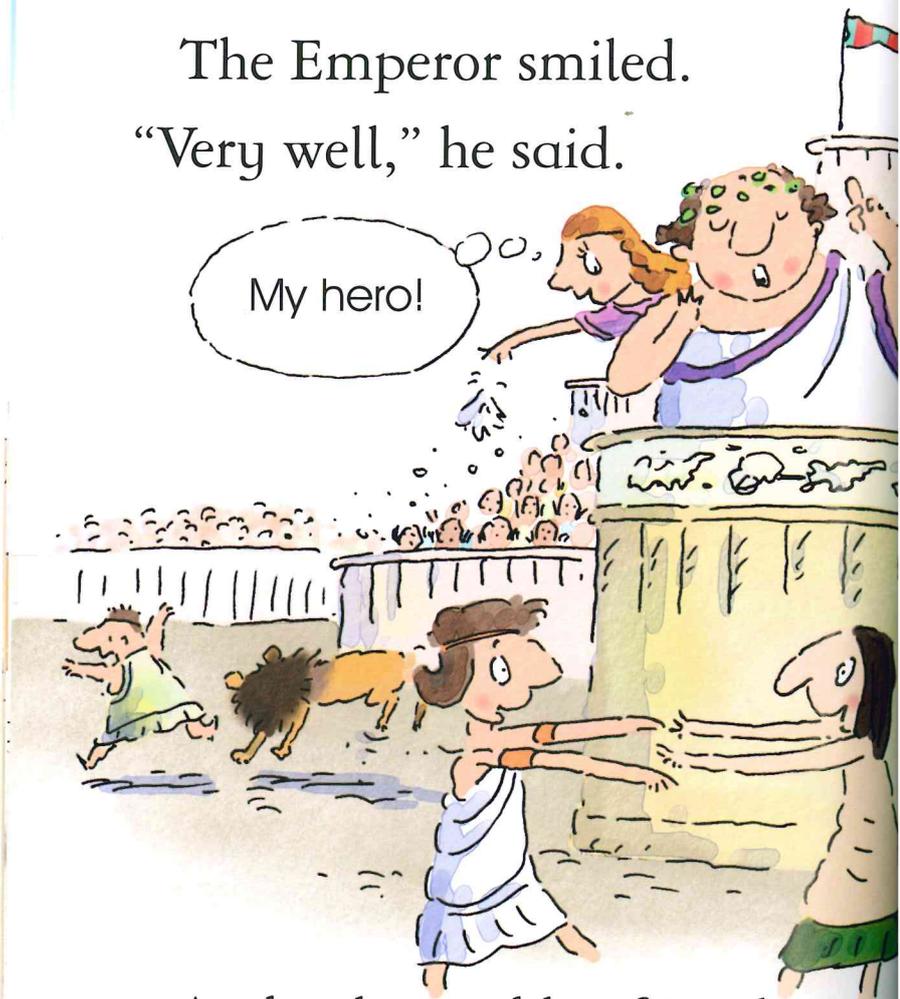
Clinkus took Androcles to
the Emperor.

“You were very brave,”
said the Emperor. “I think I’ll
set you free.”



Androcles thought of his
friends. “Please will you free
Marco and the lion too?”

The Emperor smiled.
"Very well," he said.



Androcles and his friends
left Rome and started their
own show.

And no one had to fight.

Come and see
the friendly lion.

Buy your
tickets here!



Androcles and the Lion is based on one of Aesop's Fables. These are a collection of short stories, told in Greece about 4,000 years ago. The stories always have a moral (a message or lesson) at the end. The moral of this story is: be kind to your friends and they will never forget you.

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USBORNE FIRST READING: LEVEL FOUR



Androcles and the Lion

It's a hard life being a slave in Ancient Rome.
So Androcles escapes to the forest – and comes face
to face with a lion. But could the mighty beast and
the runaway slave help each other out?



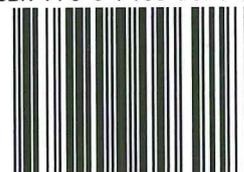
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