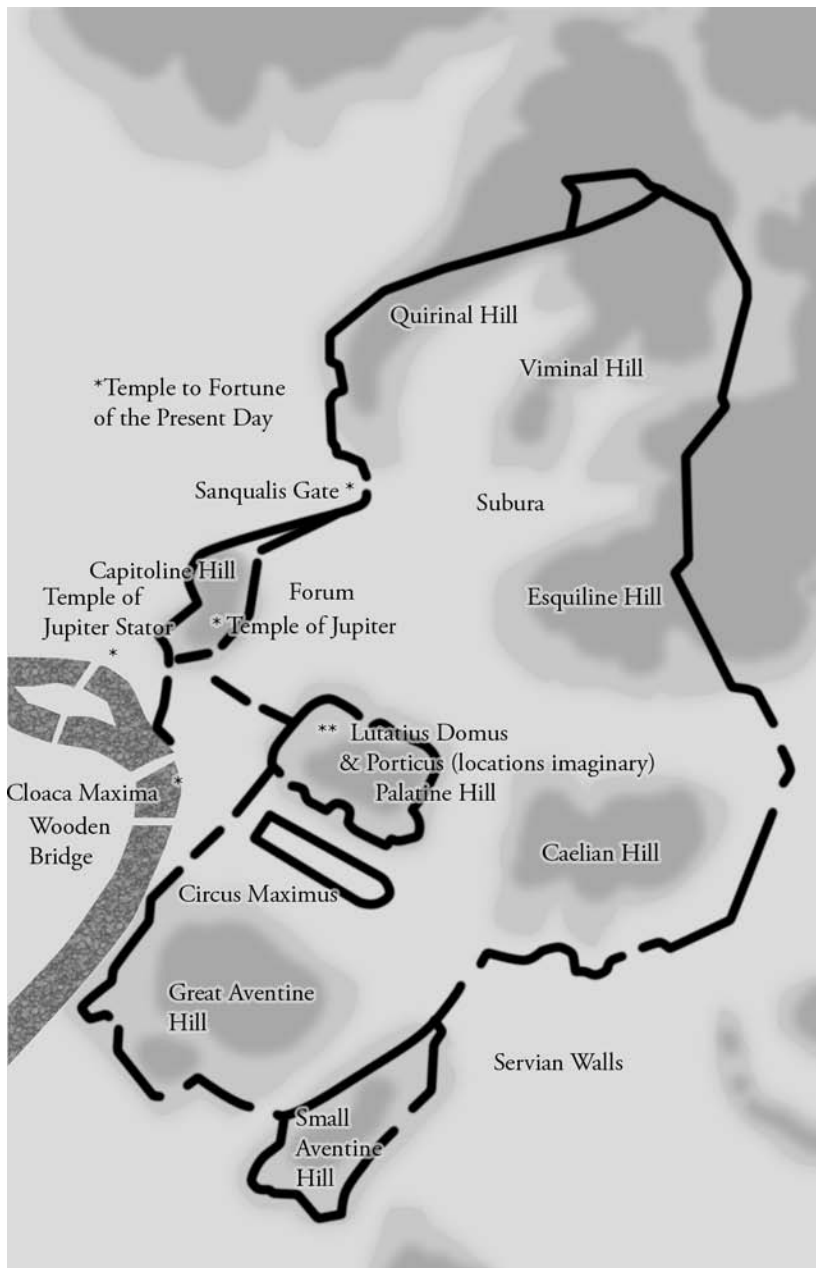


GETORIX
THE EAGLE AND THE BULL



Ingalls Publishing Group, Inc.

2006



Rome in 101 B.C.E.

GETORIX THE EAGLE AND THE BULL

by Judith Geary



Ingalls Publishing Group, Inc.

2006

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INGALLS PUBLISHING GROUP, INC.
197 New Market Center, #135
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www.claystonebooks.com
editor@highcountrypublishers.com

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Summary: In 101 B.C., Getorix, a fourteen-year-old Celt, is deprived of the honor of being sacrificed beside his father when the son of one of their Roman captors requests him as a servant, forcing Getorix to seek another way to what he believes is his fate.

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Orson Scott Card first told me I could write, and said of the short story I turned in for his class: “This is a young adult novel. Expand it and send it out.” His assertion that he read history “for pleasure” inspired me to the discovery of history as continuing human stories rather than lists of battle dates as it was taught in the schools of my youth.

Dinah Stevenson, senior editor of the Clarion Books imprint at Houghton Mifflin, worked with me for over two years before we both realized our visions weren’t converging. Her example gave me a sense of what it was to be a “real writer” and has served me in my own experience as an editor.

Albert A. Bell, Jr., extraordinary mystery writer in any age, and New Testament scholar, gave me the favor of his time and attention in reading more than one draft and his thoughtful and constructive criticism.

Faye Turner, writer and mystic, gave me a new perspective on point of view and introduced me to Brosch.

Sandy Horton, a wonderful teacher with over 25 years experience in curriculum development for gifted students, accepted the challenge to become my partner in creating teaching materials to go along with the *Getorix* books, but has become essentially editor for the entire project.

Others who contributed immeasurably along the way include: Dr. Alice P. Naylor, author and Director of the Language, Reading and Exceptionalities program at Appalachian State University, read an early draft and made suggestions. Carolyn Howser, president of High Country Writers, actually read a draft aloud to me in support of my struggle for the perfect voice. Other members of High Country Writers critiqued portions of various drafts.

Verda Ingle read the final draft with a discerning eye for detail and punctuation. Any remaining errors are entirely my own.

John, my husband, and my children variously groaned at the time and energy this project consumed and cheered my efforts.

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To James, who followed Getorix from the beginning and
contributed irreplaceably at the end.

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

(The Main Characters)

Historical fiction blends actual people and historical detail from the past with fictional characters and a plot. With this book, the reader enters the time of the Roman Republic. Historical figures are noted with an (H) and fictional characters with an (F). In all cases the names of the fictional characters are based on history or on naming customs of the time.

The Celts:

The Romans would have referred to these people as “Germans.” However, they spoke a Celtic language and would most likely have identified themselves with the rest of the Celtic people. In fact, the meaning of “German” has been defined as “central Celt.”

Boiorix: (F) The son of the leader, Boiorix (H) of the confederacy of Celtic tribes that invaded Italy.

Claodicos: (H/F) Claodicos was the name of one of the Celtic leaders. However, we have no record of what happened to him or of who was executed at the triumph.

Getorix: (F) Son of Claodicos, “almost fifteen winters.”

Senius: (F) A druid. The name means “wisdom.”

Starkaos: (F) A druid. Getorix’s foster father and teacher.

Teutobod: (H) The leader of the Teutone tribe.

The Romans:

Aurelia: (H) Wife of Gaius Julius Caesar and mother of the more famous Julius Caesar the dictator.

Lucius Cornelius Sulla: (H) Roman of a decayed aristocratic family. He served as questor to Marius for many years.

Gaius Julius Caesar: (H) Father of the more famous Julius Caesar the dictator. He was a legate, a senior military officer, to Marius in the Celtic campaigns.

Lucius: (F) Thirteen-year-old son of Catulus.

Characters continued:

Quintus Lutatius Catulus: (H) Scholar and a gentleman. He was consul in 102 B.C.E. and was still acting as a general the following year (see proconsul.)

Gaius Marius: (H) This famed military leader broke precedent (and the Republican Roman Constitution) by standing for election as consul—and winning—seven times.

Quintus: (H) Catulus' son, around twenty and studying in Greece.

Selia (Servilia): (H) Catulus' wife, Lucius' mother, mistress of the Lutatius household.

Slaves of the Lutatius Household:

All are fictional.

Atlas: Blacksmith. He also acts as occasional bodyguard and enforcer.

Brosch: Weaver, thirteen years old. She was captured after Marius' victory at the battle of Aquae Sulis.

Cardeus: Doorman for the front door.

Eumaios: Steward in the Lutatius household. An authority figure to the slaves.

Idios: Messenger boy.

Keltus: Bodyguard. The name is taken from the Greek word for the Celtic people.

Leia: Sister to Idios. Servant to Selia

Malumpus: Doorkeeper at the back door.

Pellia: Slave companion to Mistress Selia since her youth. She manages the slave household.

Theano: Assistant to Eumaios the steward.

Thorvaldt and **Olav:** Brosch's brothers.

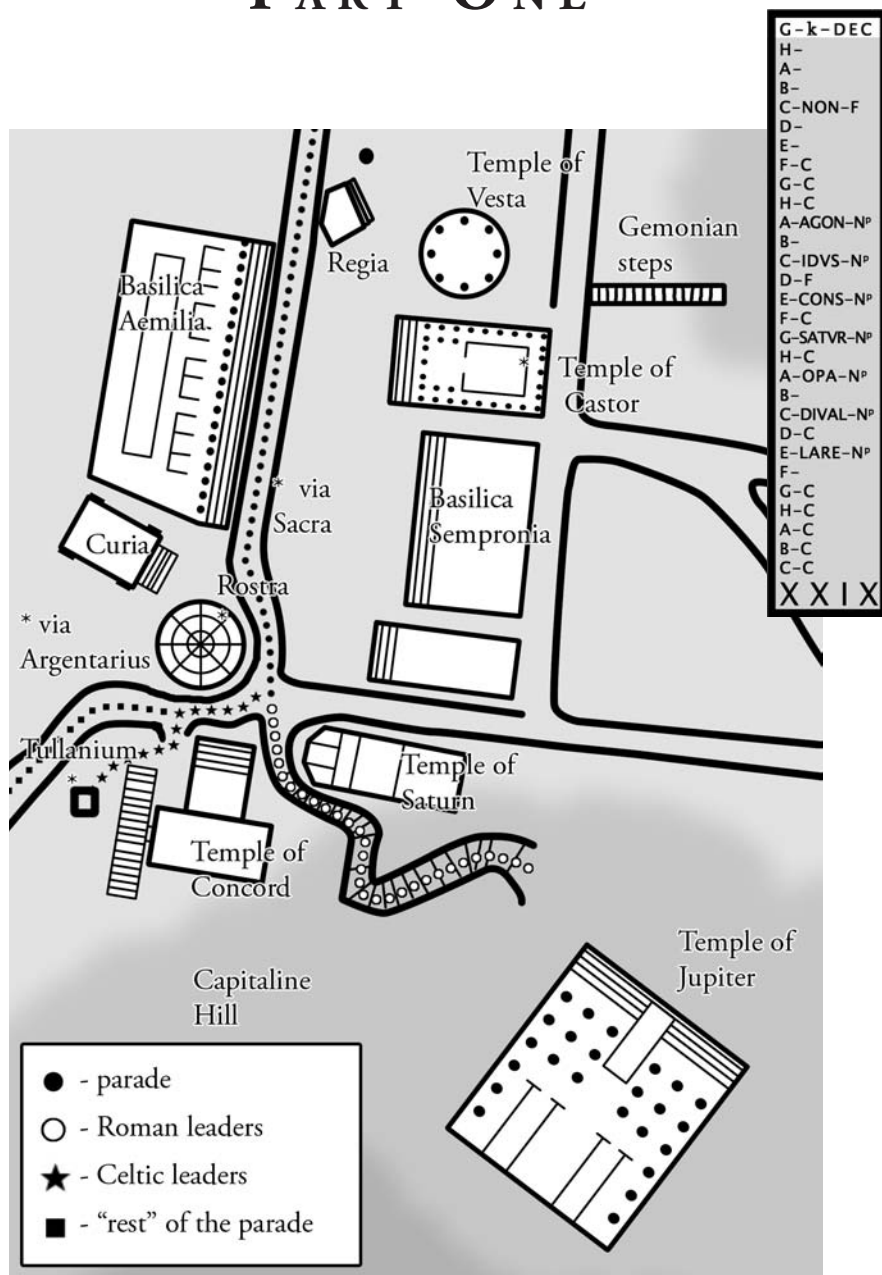
Slave of the Cornelius Household:

Chrysogonus: (H) Slave to Lucius Cornelius Sulla.

HISTORICAL NOTE

IN THE YEAR our calendar labels 101 B.C.E (652 A.U.C. by the Roman calendar), Roman legions under the command of the Consul Gaius Marius and Proconsul Quintus Lutatius Catulus challenged the invasion of a confederacy of Celtic tribes who were migrating into northern Italy. The final battle took place on the Plain of Vercellae where the invading Celts were defeated. As was their custom, the Romans staged a triumph parade to the glory of Rome and the victorious generals. In it, they paraded the spoils of war and the enslaved survivors and their leaders before the Roman people. This tradition of triumph included the execution of defeated leaders, or substitutes if the leaders themselves did not survive, in the Carcer, an underground cell beneath the Tullanium, at the base of the Capitoline Hill.

PART ONE



The Roman Forum and the Temple of Jupiter
101 B.C.E.



Marius



I

G-k-DEC
kalendae decembris.
kalends December
(first day of December)
hora decima
(about 2:15 p.m.)

THE TRIUMPH: GLORY AND DEFEAT

“**SUCH A BROAD AND HEAVY BLADE** will take our heads cleanly at the first stroke,” Claodicos whispered. “We can be grateful for that.”

Claodicos nudged his son’s hand through the thick wool of the robes, and Getorix followed his gaze upward to the top of the hill before them. The afternoon sun flashed, brilliant and lightning sharp, on the polished blade of the magnificent bronze axe as the headsman paraded back and forth across the lip of the temple hill.

Getorix nodded silently and touched the brooch on his shoulder for courage. *We can be grateful for something, at least.* There had been little to be grateful to the gods for, so far this day. The Roman mob, gathered in the Forum behind them, roared as the headsman exhibited his axe. But the rabble had been shouting, hooting, and cursing along the sides of the road all the way. So Getorix couldn’t tell if they were cheering the headsman or just making more noise. Blaring trumpets that assaulted their ears all day. At least they had, mercifully, gone with the rest of the procession out toward the river.

Aromatic smoke rose from behind the spectacle of the headsman, from the altar fire, surely. Getorix could smell it even over the odors of the Roman mob, over the cattle dung in the streets and on their boots, and over the acrid scent of his own dread. That was good as well. The flames would release their souls quickly and cleanly to cross over to the Otherworld.

Words from Starkaos his druid teacher echoed in Getorix’s memory: “It matters little what the body endures in passing, so long as

CHAPTER I

the spirit steps over with a glad heart.” *My heart will truly be glad at the crossing*, Getorix thought, *for this world has become unbearable*.

The same afternoon sun that lit fire to the headsman’s ax licked at his head and back. Sweat streamed from under the heavy helmet on his head, beneath the woolen robe, inside his leather trousers, and into the ill-fitting leather boots. The salty sweat burned the spots the chains had rubbed on his hands and set fire to the blisters on his feet.

Romans lined the long steps all the way to the top of the temple hill. They looked fat like beribboned pigeons in their white robes rimmed with blood crimson. They had to hold their draped togas in place with their hands when they moved. Their skinny legs stuck out like pigeon’s legs as well. Some wore long wool stockings. They seemed not to feel the heat, to believe it was truly close to mid-winter as one of the legionary guards had said. Many of them wore crimson boots as well.

Do the red boots mark the ones who assist in the sacrifices? If so, there would be a great many Romans to help them die. He pointed this out to his father. Claodicos said that all the Roman leaders, the senators, wore crimson boots as a mark of their office.

Only a dozen or so steps above where Getorix and Claodicos watched surrounded by guards, stood an eagle-faced general. Getorix remembered him from the day of the battle. Catulus they called him. He wore a white robe embroidered with gold and purple leaves and a plain laurel wreath on his head, though a golden crown was held over his head by a sweating servant.

A moon-faced boy stood beside the victorious Roman general. He had ridden beside the general all day in his golden chariot.

Through the long day of the triumph parade, Getorix and his father Claodicos trudged along the endless Roman streets. They were weighted down by heavy chains and horned helmets, prodded forward by the legionary guards when they faltered. This Roman boy had been watching them whenever Getorix looked in his direction. Getorix had pointed the boy out to his father, wondering, hoping, that he might be a bard in training. He might compose an ode that would glorify the Romans, of course, but praise the Celts as well to add luster to the Roman victory. Now Getorix watched as the boy waved at the crowd, moon-faced and wide-eyed. The awe in his face

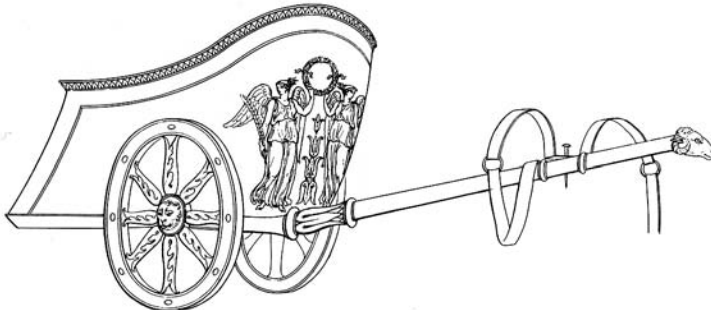
The Triumph: Glory and Defeat

betrayed him as a pretender in the affairs of adults. Something hung around his neck sparkled green in the sunlight. As Getorix stared, the boy tucked it inside his clothing. *Does he fear, even now, that Celtic raiders will steal his treasure?*

Just below Catulus and the boy, another Roman positioned himself squarely in the middle of the broad stone step, giving himself pride of place. This man wore a robe of purple with gold leaves, and a more elaborate crown was held over his head. His face was painted minim red like the terra cotta faces from ancient temple statues—or a common clay pot. His chariot, shaped like a golden tower, had been in front of Catulus' chariot in the parade. So Getorix hadn't had much chance to look at him. The crowds cheered as he passed. "Marius! Savior of Rome!" the mob roared. "The gods and Marius! ... Imperator!"—over and over, a new wave around every bend in the road.

The mob had not cheered so for the general Catulus. *Perhaps that was the reason,* Getorix thought, *the general looked so sour on this day of his triumph.* The line of his mouth curved down so that it mirrored the great downward curve of his nose.

Getorix drew himself upright next to his father. His right hand touched once again the bull's head cloak brooch that had belonged to Claodicos. He prepared himself to receive with dignity the traditional victor's salute to the vanquished. But the general Marius gave no sign he saw them, as



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if they were no more than the stones of the road. He just raised his arms to receive the cheers of the crowd.

Getorix glanced around, snatched at a moment's hope. *Have we vanished from the eyes of the Roman rabble as well? Will Lugh, god of light, appear to conduct us out of danger?*

The moon-faced Roman boy saw them, certainly. As Getorix glanced in his direction, the boy's palm came up as if in greeting. Getorix dropped his hand from the brooch on his shoulder, and gripped his own wrist beneath the shackles. What could the foolish Roman boy be thinking? Did he believe that Getorix, son of King Claodicos of the Cimmeri, would recognize kinship with a Roman?

A hand on his shoulder, not the soft touch of a priest but the calloused palm of a legionary, signaled that the time had come.

Claodicos had said he looked forward to meeting his death in this place at Rome's heart. Getorix had vowed to meet it with him and with courage. *I need no assistance to climb the hill No Romans will drag me to the sacrifice. And I will be the one to steady my father's steps should he require it.*

"Let me die as a prince of the Cimmeri," Getorix prayed softly. "Let me not flinch from the headsman's ax or from the hand of the priest. If it cannot be in battle, better this than an old man's death before the hearth." Those had been his father's words, and now Getorix clung to them as his own.

He placed his foot on the bottom step, hand clasped with Claodicos'. He was determined to use the climb to the top of the temple hill to say goodbye to the people and things he had cherished in this life, and hoped to meet again in the next: swimming with his best friend Cian in a mountain stream with trout leaping silver around them, crisp skin of roasted boar, his brothers laughing and singing around a bonfire, his mother—surely his mother waited—and books. His breath caught at the thought that the Otherworld was ruled by the gods of the druids. There might be no books.

The legionary's grip tightened, and Getorix's hand was torn from his father's. They were not led up the long stairway but in the opposite direction, through the mob gathered in the Forum.

Getorix glanced back over his shoulder at the shining temple disappearing beyond the lip of the hill. The moon-faced Roman

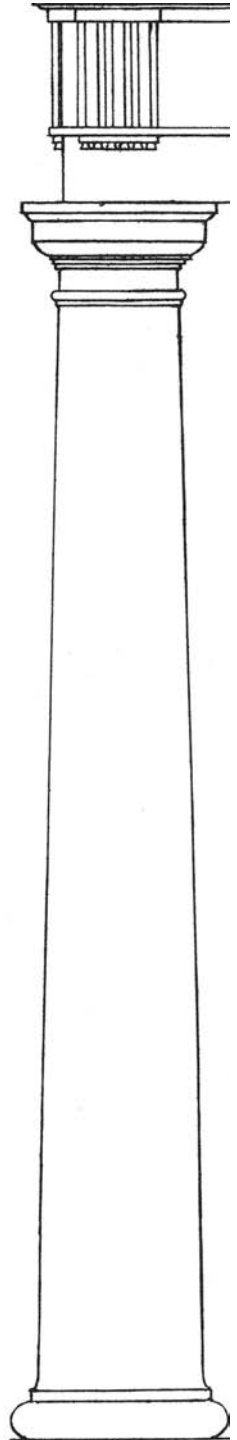
The Triumph: Glory and Defeat

boy tugged at his father's robe as both turned to ascend the steps.

Getorix gazed about in confusion as the legionary dragged him, stumbling sideways, away from the temple hill. Those closest in the crowd backed hastily before the legionaries' boots. They opened a pathway toward a squat stack of massive stone blocks standing alone in the middle of littered pavement. He wanted desperately to ask his father what this might mean. *Why are we being led away from the steps to the temple?* But Claodicos was surrounded by guards, as he was. Speech between them was not possible.

Getorix's vision of the day had placed them at the temple hill—he and his father climbing the steps as honored sacrifices. But the misery of the day's ordeal had been nothing like his vision. Now the legionaries had pulled them away from the steps and were forcing them in the opposite direction.

“What gods can inhabit this place?” Getorix whispered. The Roman legionaries shoved them through a rough-framed opening into the interior of the squat stone pile.





II

*G-k-DEC
kalendae decembris.
kalends December
(first day of December)
hora decima
(about 2:15 p.m.)*

THE TULLANIUM: DEATH WITH DISHONOR

ONLY the echos of the footsteps from the stones and the pounding of his own heart filled his ears. As the legionaries shoved Getorix and his father across the threshold, even the noise of the Forum crowd outside died away. It was as if the space had been hollowed from within the huge block of stone by the gods.

Torch-light flared, picking out a half-dozen hideous faces against the glittering black dome of the low ceiling. The space barely made room for the two captives and the men who awaited them. These were not legionaries, who had become familiar during the months of captivity and the day's long march. These men wore light colored tunics and might have been quite ordinary in the afternoon light outside. They didn't look like priests as Getorix had imagined, though his mind struggled to see them in that way. His hand found his father's open and waiting, though a glance saw only questions in his father's eyes as well.

A deeper darkness in the center of the floor signaled an opening into the underworld. Getorix had many times cast gifts for the underworld gods into sacred wells or springs—but in the open air and before the eyes of the people, not a pit hidden within stone. Water sounds, but of an unnatural sort, not like the steady flow of a river, and a foul odor filled the cave-like space.

"Let's get it done," one said, and the circle closed in, hands outstretched. The golden torcs were pulled from their necks, the

The Tullanium: Death with Dishonor

soft metal yielding easily. One of their captors tucked the golden torcs and cloak brooches into a wallet bound around his waist.

Getorix refused to ask to hold his father's signet as he died. Claudicos had said they would not ask for mercy, but face bravely whatever their roles in the sacrifice demanded, and Getorix took his father's words as a *geis*, a sacred duty.

Their robes, trousers and boots were dumped into a chest against the wall. Even the iron shackles and chains were removed, leaving the captives naked and isolated among the guards.

Getorix shivered, though the room was close and warm from so many bodies. It was fitting, he knew, that a man leave this life as naked as he entered it, whether in battle or in sacrifice. Yet before these Romans his hand crept to cover himself as if he were ashamed.

Something is very wrong, Getorix thought. *This is not the proper place for a sacrifice*. There wasn't room to swing an ax or a sword. The stones beneath his feet held only death, no whispers of a holy place. *Why haven't we been taken to the temple?* He wanted to ask, but his throat was too dry to speak.

Shadows replaced the guards' eyes, hiding their souls, leaving only demons' faces. Some hung back, as if waiting for another to begin. The uncertainty Getorix felt in his own heart he saw also in his father's eyes, and dread of death gave way to icy terror of the unknown.

"Is this where we are to be sacrificed?" Claudicos asked, carefully, in the Roman tongue. His voice was hoarse but steady.

"You can call it that." The man who spoke carried a wooden tablet. "We're here for an execution. You were told."

"I heard," Claudicos said. "Yet it seemed so unthinkable, so barbarous, I did not believe. ... Please. My son is but a boy."

"Father!" Getorix's voice echoed back, surprising his own ears. "I am prepared. Do not beg for me."

Claudicos' eyes widened, then he smiled. Getorix drank in the pride shining in his face through the smoky darkness. In that moment, Getorix knew at last he truly was ready to face his death.

The scrape of wooden soles drew everyone's attention to the doorway. A stranger peered into the gloom, his bulk blocking the outside brightness. His fair coloring and great size marked him

CHAPTER II

as a Celt, though he wore a dark tunic in the Roman style. He ducked to enter the low doorway and nodded respectfully to the man with the tablet.

“Speak.” The man recognized his silent request.

“I come for the young one, lictor,” the Celt said. His accent marked him as from one of the western tribes, not of the Cimmeri or one of their allies.

“We have orders for his execution.” The lictor waved his tablet as though it gave him unquestioned authority.

“I am of the household of Quintus Lutatius Catulus.” The Celt’s face worked hard at the memorized formula. He pulled a small scroll from his belt. “I have other orders.”

The lictor studied the square, tipping it to catch the light from the door. “Did your master consult with the consul Marius?”

“My master is a general also.” He shrugged. “And these captives are his to do as he wishes.”

“Well, they can do what they want, of course.” The lictor wrinkled his nose. “Though I do wish they’d give us more warning when they change the plans. The boy is the same as dead, I suppose, but I’m staffed for two executions.”

A guard with a broad pock-marked face dug his elbow into Claodicos’ ribs as if they were old drinking friends. “The boy ain’t dying for nothing after all, old man. Sounds like the great generals will sport with ’im at their feast.”

“We’ll be finished here soon.” Another guard cackled, his face narrow like a swamp rat. “If ya need another hand to the whip or the iron, tell your master I’ll come gladly.”

“No!” Claodicos’ voice thundered in the closed-in space. He glanced at those who laid their hands on him and bowed his head to the Celt. “Please. I beg you, take me instead. Surely a thane would provide them with more sport than a mere child. Tell them the boy was dead when you arrived.”

Getorix stared from one face to another. His father had said they would not beg for their lives, no matter what the Romans promised, no matter what horrors threatened. Yet twice now Claodicos had shamed himself for his son.

“I have orders, sir,” the Celt said. “I cannot bargain with you.”

The Tullanium: Death with Dishonor

“No ... no, of course, you cannot,” Claodicos said. “The gods forgive me for suggesting such a dishonorable thing.”

Claodicos stepped around the lip of the pit and placed his hands on his son’s shoulders. No one moved to stop him. “My son, if I could go in your place, leave you with my easy crossing, I would do it.” His voice broke, and Getorix could see the pain that filled his eyes. “But it has not been given to me to show the Romans the heart of our people in facing death. That honor is given to you. Take courage from who you are and what comes after. We must only get through this ordeal to the other side.”

His lips smiled, though his eyes were sad. “I will be waiting to welcome you to the Otherworld.”

Getorix might have fallen on his father’s neck, might have disgraced himself with tears before the Romans, but the Celt’s hands pinning his arms to his sides held him upright. A wiry guard, the rat-faced one who had offered to lend his hand to the torture, dropped to sit with his legs into the hole. He had a number of cords looped through his belt, and what looked like a loosely strung bow across his shoulders. At his signal two others brought a heavy knotted rope and, when he wrapped his legs and hands around it, they lowered him through the opening. Claodicos’ death would be swift when it came, for the garrotte—the bow—wrenches the bones of the neck apart with a violent jerk.

Claodicos looked over his son’s head to the Celt. “Do what you can to ease his passing. He is but a child.”

Then Claodicos, King of the Cimmeri, turned to embrace his fate. He stared straight ahead as they bound his wrists and ankles and lowered him into the pit to the waiting executioner.

The guards peered into the pit to watch, but the Celt held Getorix well back. It seemed that everyone held their breath. Getorix listened, unable to turn his awareness anywhere else, for wet snap of flesh wrenched suddenly asunder. When the moment came, however, he could be sure only that it was marked by the murmurs of the watchers and the single sob he himself could not swallow. Finally, from below, a creak of hinges and a heavy splash as Claodicos’ body was tossed into the sewer.

The guards moved to clean up as from any task. A couple

CHAPTER II

dropped the knotted rope to help the garrotte man climb out of the lower chamber.

The lictor turned to the Celt. "You may tell your master and Consul Gaius Marius that the execution proceeded according to plan. Do you want help with the boy?"

My father died well, with courage and grace, Getorix cried inside. *Can you not even give him honor for that?* The Romans put their hands on him and Getorix struggled within himself, determined to show courage before them. They tied a rope around his neck and bound his hands.

"Will you take him to the generals at their feast?" the lictor asked.

"I obey my master's orders," the Celt said, turning his back. He used the difficulty of maneuvering his own bulk, with its burden, through the low doorway, to block further questions.

Outside, he hoisted Getorix off the ground with one arm and set off at a trot through the crowds. Burly men, some of them apparently Teutone from their size and coloring, carried trestles and long boards, setting up tables in the Forum. Getorix bounced uncomfortably from the arm around his waist and very nearly got a board in the face before the Celt ducked away. If anyone thought it odd to see someone carrying a bound naked boy through the Forum on a feast day, they gave no sign. Pungent odors of blood and burning fat, wine and spices lay heavy on the air, and not just from the temple hill. The whole city celebrated Rome's victory with feasting.

"Stop!" Getorix commanded after a few hundred paces, for he was sick and out of breath. He was surprised when the Celt obeyed and set him on his feet against a wall in a narrow alleyway between two massive stone foundations. The huge slave was barely breathing hard.

"You're well out of that, at least." The Celt spoke in their common tongue. He leaned a hand on the wall over the boy's head and looked around.

"Tell me my fate," Getorix said. It was all he could get out, though his mind whirled with questions. The pock-faced one had spoken of taking Getorix to the Romans' feast for sport. Might he fight as a gladiator? The stories of Roman blood sports had reached far into Gaul, including the rumor that the Romans had not the courage to partake in such sports themselves, but set captives

The Tullanium: Death with Dishonor

to fight against each other or against wild beasts for the mob's entertainment. Would he be expected to fight against someone of his own tribe, someone he knew? What would his father expect him to do then? Should he try to send his opponent honorably across to the Otherworld or die himself? Surely it would be better to face a wolf or a lion, for such a beast could be trusted to deliver a killing blow quickly. Better that than the torture the rat-faced one promised—

“Soon enough, fate overtakes you.” The Celt's words broke into the whirl of Getorix's thoughts like a stone tossed into a pool. “It is enough for now to know you are alive and in the hands of Catulus himself instead of the *great* Gaius Marius.” The Celt spat on the ground as he said the name.

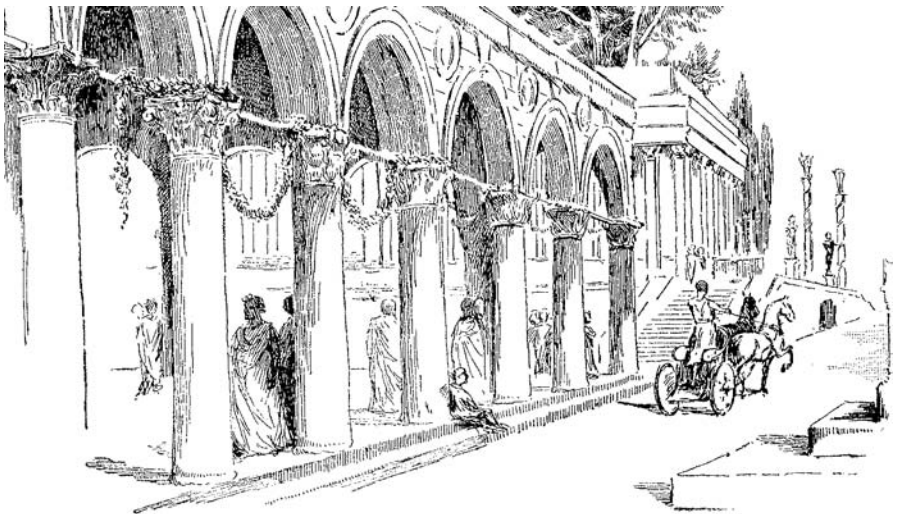
“Are you taking me to suffer torture before the Romans, to show a Cimmeri's heart in dying?” Getorix searched the big Celt's eyes for a truth he didn't relish, but that he must know. Would he at least be able to fight as he died, instead of merely to wait and pray for the moment to come quickly?

“It pleased the Roman weasels to think I took you to such a fate—and your father also, in his own, sad way.”

“I must know the truth. How else can I prepare?”

“You are spared, little one.” He laid his hands on the boy's shoulders as his father had, but Getorix shook them off.

“What do you mean? Spared?” Getorix looked around, desperate for some omen of change in the alleyway, a messenger



CHAPTER II

crow, a hooded crone, but nothing appeared. "This isn't how it's supposed to be. My father waits for me in the Otherworld. If I don't join him quickly he'll think I've abandoned my duty."

"We don't choose our fate, little one," the Celt said. "You'll accept your own with time."

The rat-faced executioner was clear in his intent. Surely that man would send him to his father.

"I must—I *will* go back!" He tried to break away, though the Celt stopped him easily with a grip on his arm.

"You can't go back." The Celt pinned Getorix to the wall, an arm across his chest and his feet barely touching the ground. "The world you have known is gone. You must understand. I am taking you to your new life."

"It's you who doesn't understand!" Getorix shouted and struggled, threw his head back and forth against the wall, knocking bits of mortar loose, kicking out at the Celt in his desperation.

"Lugh's eyes!" The Celt raised his free hand as if to strike but checked himself and shook his head. Instead, he heaved Getorix across his shoulders as one carries a calf with a firm grip on his bound hands and one leg, and set off at a steady pace.

The Celt's pace slowed only slightly as he left the main road and started up a long hillside set with stone steps. Getorix had stopped struggling, but only because his tactics had changed. He shifted, looking for an unprotected spot. He took a deep breath, closed his eyes and attacked. The Celt roared like a wounded bear when the boy's teeth found their mark.

Getorix clung to the vision of a sudden awakening in the Otherworld, of his father's hand reaching out to welcome him across. But he knew only being hurled through the air and a bright splash of pain.

KELTUS squatted, rubbing the spot on his shoulder where the little cur had bitten him, and studied the boy on the ground as he groaned and struggled with the idea that he still lived. He would take a little time to catch his breath. The boy had spirit, Keltus would give him that, and a carelessness of this life that would have served him well as a warrior. But he wasn't a warrior. He was a slave

The Tullanium: Death with Dishonor

and the quicker he learned to bear it, the easier it would be for everybody.

“Likely I’ll be the one who has to teach him,” Keltus muttered. Master Catulus had spared the boy, giving in to pleas from Master Lucius. Lucius had called him a prince, but Lucius had an imagination worthy of a bard.

Keltus’ brow furrowed as he examined the naked youth. Maybe he was a prince if he was the blood son of Claodicos, the minor king the legion had managed to get home with after High King Boiorix died in battle. If the boy was as young as he first appeared, it was more likely he was the old king’s foster child. Likely he wasn’t yet ready to take his place in his father’s tribe. His blond hair was still in a child’s curls, not bound in braids, but his hands and feet didn’t look oversized like one on the verge of a man’s growth. Even Brosch was taller than this boy, and she claimed only thirteen winters, but the weaver girl was a Teutone, and they tended to height.

Keltus shifted from one haunch to the other, impatient to get moving.

GETORIX’S vision of the Otherworld fled from his head before the Celt’s intense stare. The pain in his back told him that the Celt had slammed him hard—but not hard enough to kill. The blood he tasted might have been the Celt’s, or his own. “I’m still alive. Try again.”

The Celt sighed and hauled Getorix to his feet. He would not rise to the bait this time.

“You are a Roman’s dog,” Getorix said, from between clenched teeth. Every joint cried out as the Celt pulled him up, as if his body were a bag of rattling bones. “Worse, a sheep in his flock, without a thought beyond following the tap of his staff. I will *not* obey you!”

“As you say.” The Celt started off with a jerk on the rope the lictors had put around the boy’s neck.

Bound though he was, Getorix grabbed the rope with both hands and planted his feet, determined not to be led around like a pet goat. Anything this Roman’s dog wanted him to do, he wanted just the opposite.

In the end, his choice was follow or be dragged though the muck. The walls that swept past his eyes as Getorix stumbled along

CHAPTER II

wore colors that were beautiful in the faces of flowers or winking from river rocks, but were garish and horrible stretched and spread onto giant blocks. Everywhere, the hands of men had shaped the stones, leaving no room for the spirits of the woods and meadows. Lonely spindles of green straggled up between the stones of the pavement or crept over the tops of walls as if struggling to escape.

The Romans had even given the honorable custom of displaying the heads of fallen enemies over to the stonemason. Faces stared back from roofs and corners and doorways, eyes starting from their heads like one strangled, mouths stretched into mocking smiles or hideous frowns. Even the Romans' springs had been given faces. Water poured from open mouths into hollow stone blocks, spilling over the sides into the street.

Getorix had been marched and carried and dragged all over Rome's hills this day. And he wanted water so much he could smell it over the odor of the dung that spotted the streets and the scent of roasting meats that filled the air. But the Celt seemed interested only in setting a pace that honored the wings of Weiland the magic smith. Though his head pounded and his mouth and nose seemed filled with dirt, Getorix vowed he would ask the Roman's dog for nothing.

"We're home," the Celt said, finally stopping at a man-sized door in a wall, though Getorix could see nothing of home in the windowless expanse of ochre yellow plaster that stretched to the street corner in both directions. The Celt knocked, the bolt slid back from the inside, and the door swung open.





III

G-k-DEC
kalendae decembris.
kalends December
(first day of December)
hora undecima - eleventh hour
(about 3:30 p.m.)

THE DOMUS LUTATIUS: A CONFRONTATION WITH FATE

“**WHAT** is this place?” Getorix knew Romans lived in great fortresses of stone, had been inside a few of the buildings the Cimmeri raided in the northern settlements. But this surely housed an entire village.

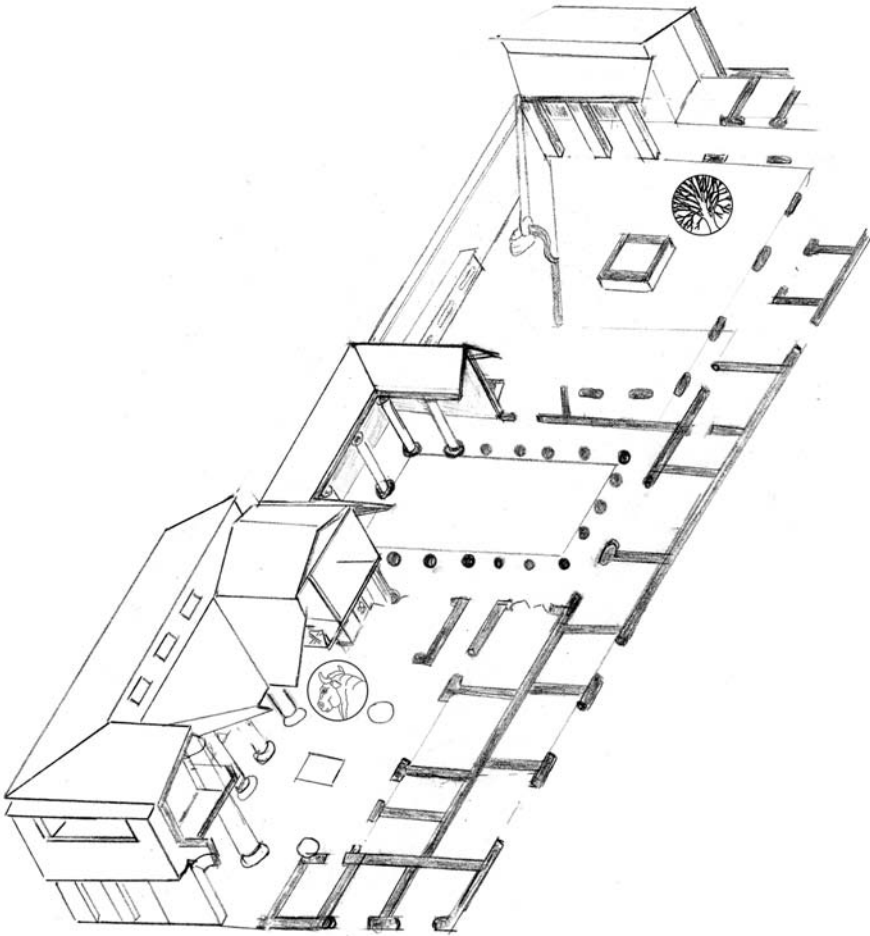
Even in the smoky light of late afternoon, Getorix could see that doorways opening off the main area led into deep passages. A water-filled cistern, a quarter the size of the whole, filled the sacred center of stone pavement ten strides across in each direction. The water’s surface was dappled by golden leaves dropped from the branches of a huge plane tree that grew from the stones beside it.

Around three sides, brick pillars supported a tile roof shading the doorways of craftsmen’s shops. Work benches held objects in leather, metal and wood, with tools laid out ready for the workmen’s return. A brick oven in the far corner was flanked by an anvil and a pile of charcoal with hammers and tongs in an array of sizes hung on the wall behind. A hand loom propped on a stool against the closest pillar carried a fabric of interwoven stripes in rich browns and grays. The familiar pattern looked like those the Teutone tribe wore, except for a flame red thread that spoiled the design.

Faces of molded terra cotta fronted the roof tiles, mouths open to direct rainwater into pipes from the roof to the cistern. A breeze stirred the water’s surface, drawing the cool wet scent into the air.

“This is Lutatius Catulus’ house.” The Celt looked around with a satisfied nod. “Master Catulus himself bought the block and

CHAPTER III



Domus Lutatius

The Domus Lutatus: A Confrontation with Fate

built his house around it. This is the servants' quarters. The master and mistress love beautiful things. So, they collect the artisans who make them too. Everybody's out—on holiday because of the master's triumph, or to serve at feasts. It is fit for Lugh's house, truly."

Getorix glared at him. For this Roman's dog in the shape of a man to call upon Lugh, the god of light, was heresy. And to even imagine that any god of the Celts would prefer to live within stone instead of in a sacred grove under the open sky—to speak of his owners with pride that should rightly be preserved for his tribe—his slavery had wrung out of him the last drop of what it meant to be a Celt and a man.

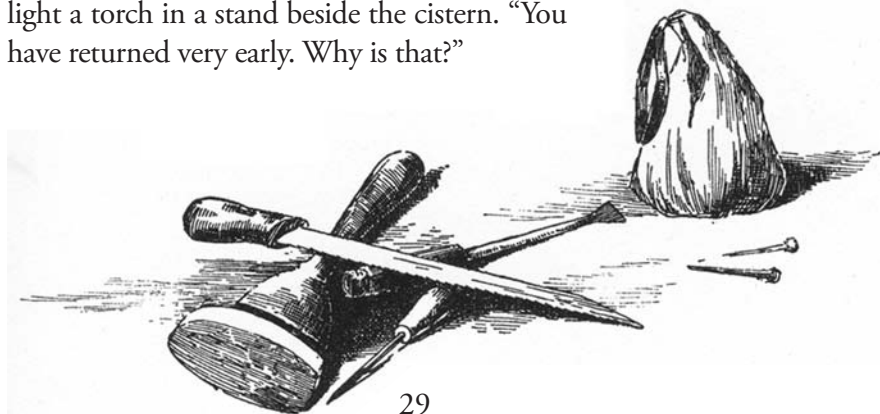
Was this the fate that he claimed the gods had prepared for him? Was this what the Celt had meant when he said Getorix was spared? ... *Never!*

They were close beside the cistern. The Celt pulled the dipper from a bucket on its wide stone wall and drank noisily. The water bathed his chin and spilled onto his russet tunic in sparkling drops.

He offered the dipper finally, and Getorix drank, shame burning his throat even as the cool water poured down it. Celtic shamans sit at an evil-doer's door and die before the eyes of his whole clan to bring disgrace to the lodge, but Getorix lacked the resolve to refuse a simple drink of water to shame this Roman's dog.

"Keltus!" The woman charged briskly from a doorway on the opposite side. She wore a dress of the same russet brown as the Celt's tunic, but belted with bright stripes, and a necklace of painted seeds and copper beads. She carried a small pottery oil lamp in the shape of a fish.

"Keltus," she repeated as she used the lamp to light a torch in a stand beside the cistern. "You have returned very early. Why is that?"



CHAPTER III

Keltus. So, Getorix thought, this is how the Celt is called. Not even a real man's name, but a bastard sound taken from the Greek word for the name of the people, a name like a man hangs on his horse or his dog. And who was this strangely ornamented woman, with her thin neck and dark eyes, but who carried herself like she believed herself beautiful? Was she the mistress of this house?

"Duty, Pellia," Keltus said in the Roman tongue. "I ended up saddled with a task that brought me back early. Where are the others?"

"Your golden Arachne is with Theano and Atlas. I expect she'll be late."

"Brosch is like a daughter to me, Pellia."

"So you say," Pellia said. "But she doesn't need a father, or a tutor, to teach her to weave, and Atlas will keep both of the girls safe"

Getorix's ears pricked like a wolf. Brosch was a Teutone name. Was there a Teutone woman in this household? And did the edge in Pellia's voice mean that she was jealous of this *Brosch*?

"What about the family?" Keltus' words were mild, his face bland, but Getorix could feel the tension in the muscles of his hands.

"Master Lucius is exhausted, of course," Pellia said, "though he denies it. The whole procession is a great deal for anyone to endure, and he still isn't strong." She raised an eyebrow. "He climbed the steps at the Temple of Jupiter. He laid his laurel wreath on the altar, and said the prayers aloud. He seems old for such mimicry, but Master Catulus was quite proud of him." She sighed. "I was frantic by the time Mistress Selia finally sent us home."

Mistress Selia sent them home. A servant then, but an arrogant one. The others she spoke of must be slaves as well. Getorix listened, eyes half-closed, feet braced far apart to stay upright. His wrists and neck burned where the bonds had rubbed; his hands throbbed; his skin itched with dust and grime and sweat and blood. He gazed into the cool water of the cistern and thought how a plunge with one deep breath could carry him from this world to the next. Of course, that was not possible, for the one called Keltus had him on a short leash, and it would surely be a coward's crossing in any case.

"They did let him stay for the first of the sacrifices, of course." Pellia said.

Sacrifices. The word jerked Getorix bolt upright to attention.

The Domus Lutatius: A Confrontation with Fate

So someone had met an honored fate at the Romans' triumph after all. But who?

"The sacrifice. It went well?" Keltus said in his Roman voice.

"Thank the gods. The bullock stretched his neck out as if welcoming the axe. Dropped like a stone, blood everywhere. It was perfect!" Pellia wrinkled her long straight nose and pursed her narrow lips. "I don't know what we'd have done if we had to go through the whole thing again."

The Bullock. Who was this Bullock? It was very like the word the Romans had used for his father's bronze good luck symbol, the image they had captured in a raid on one of the Greek settlements north of the mountains, the image Getorix was supposed to have protected during the battle. He winced at the memory. *Perhaps the sacrifice was a man chosen for his good luck. But who?* If he got the chance, Getorix vowed, he would ask.

"Master Lucius must see such things." Keltus said.

She sighed. "Perhaps. But his sandals are ruined from all the blood. He was so excited I had Charon's own time getting him to rest." Pellia peered around Keltus' bulky body. "He said you were bringing his new servant, a Cimbri prince." Her gaze settled on Getorix. Disgust showed in the flare of her nostrils and the creases in her forehead. "Surely not!"

"This is the only Cimbri prince I got." Keltus looked his charge over from the feet up. Getorix glared back. Mockery tugged at the corners of Keltus' mouth. "He's not fit for much yet, but he'll make a servant for Master Lucius ... when he comes around."

She raised an eyebrow. "But Lucius said he was the son of the Cimbri king. This boy looks a total savage."

What are they talking about? Getorix thought. *Our tribe are the Cimmeri people. Surely this Keltus knows we don't call ourselves Cimbri, not raiders. Is he such a Roman's dog he doesn't care to correct her? And the woman. Savage, am I? I could show her!* But show her what—that he spoke Greek and had manners enough when he chose—that he was good enough to be servant to her precious Lucius? ... *Never!*

Getorix spat on the woman's skinny foot.

Keltus backhanded him to the ground without shifting his stance.

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Fair enough. So spitting wasn't allowed here any more than among the Celts. Getorix sat up cross-legged on the wet pavement and traced patterns with his finger, determined not to rub his jaw or pay them particular attention at all.

But—who was this Lucius, that he must be cared for? They talked of turning Getorix over to him—as if he would ever be servant to a Roman, victorious general or not. *What would my father think!*

They honored this Lucius with the title “Master” like a druid or a teacher. Perhaps he was the general's father. He must be a wise and learned man to need care like an invalid, yet still be respected. A warrior or a king who felt his body failing would put himself in the thick of battle or set himself an ordeal that would take him to the Otherworld with honor. At least among the Celts, he would. *Who knows with Romans?*

“Obviously, the Cimbri have a different idea of nobility than we do.” The woman sniffed and washed her foot with water from the cistern.

The gate rattled, and Getorix noticed for the first time that an old man sat on a stool beside its hinges, with a cord to draw back the bolt. He was stooped and hairless, but his black eyes were bright, watching them. Keltus had spoken as if the courtyard were empty, as if he were no one at all; yet the old man controlled entry to the house like a god.

The gate swung inward and a boy dashed in, glanced around, straightened his tunic, cream with russet bindings, and strode up to Keltus. “The master sent me to get you. He says to bring the Cimbri prince to him at the banquet in the temple.” He glanced around again, finally saw Getorix. “Is that him? What's he doing on the ground?”

Keltus lifted Getorix to his feet by an arm. “He's not ready for showing off yet, Idios. Surely the master doesn't expect—”

“They're not looking for him to serve the oysters,” Idios said. He had a narrow nose like a Greek, with his shoulders pulled back so that he looked as if he had a pole up his backside. “They just want to get a look at him while they argue what to do.”

“So it isn't decided?” Pellia's eyebrows shot up and she smiled, tight lipped.

The Domus Lutatius: A Confrontation with Fate

"It seems not," Idios said. "I'd clean him up a bit, if I were you." He started back for the gate, then looked over his shoulder just before he passed through. "But hurry. Himself is in no mood for patience this evening."

"Well," Pellia said, rubbing her hands together. "We don't really have time to heat the water, but a bit of oil and a strigil—"

"We don't need hot water for soap," Keltus said. "If you'll watch him—"

"I'll get the soap," Pellia said, heading for another doorway. "Do what you can to make him ready otherwise."

"Good luck working with that one," Keltus muttered, watching her swaying figure retreat. He slipped a dagger from inside his tunic and sliced the knot in the cord around Getorix's hands. "Master Lucius would be better off without everyone spoiling him."

"Keltus?" Getorix tried out the name. He glanced around to see if anyone was nearby. Only the gatekeeper, and he appeared to be sleeping on his stool, slumped against the wall. "Will you answer a question?"

"If I can." Keltus watched Getorix closely, his fists on his hips, all attention.

"Who did the Romans sacrifice at their temple today? What warrior did they deem worthy of the honor of such a special celebration? Was it one of their own?"

Keltus laughed at the boy's ignorance. "The Romans? The practical Romans do not sacrifice anything they cannot eat." He studied the boy as he spoke, his face more solemn as he understood the meaning of the question. "At Jupiter's Temple today they sacrificed a pair of bullocks—young bulls—a pair of rams, and a pair of pigs, also. Other temples held other sacrifices, but all animals. The Romans don't commonly sacrifice men."

Getorix struggled to fit Keltus' words into his idea of the world. These sacrifices were to be *eaten*? Not to honor the gods or to carry the prayers of the people to the Otherworld? There must be more to it than he understood. "Were they special beasts?" *Did they have the power of speech, or had they been the best of those captured from the Celts?*

"Certainly, they were special. They were white—the bulls and rams, anyway—and without a spot or scar on them anywhere. They

CHAPTER III



Lucius

The Domus Lutatius: A Confrontation with Fate

had been trained to look up and to bow on command so they seemed to be consenting to their death. It's all very well planned. They're even fed drugged grain in the morning to keep them easy to handle."

"The Romans kill these special beasts and burn them up in honor of their gods." Getorix still struggled to understand.

"The practical Romans have practical gods as well. Luckily for them, their gods are particularly fond of the fat that covers the organs, and the smell—just the smell—of meat roasted with sweet herbs and wine. That means that after a sacrifice, the Romans have many joints of roasted meat that their gods have no interest in."

"They just ... ?"

"That's right. The Romans feast on all that meat."

"How is that a sacrifice?" Getorix knew only the sacrifices of the Celts, where emissaries crossed over to the Otherworld or massive amounts of captured weapons or treasure were dedicated to the gods and sunk in a lake or a river. Anyone who tried to steal such dedicated goods, or even touched any part of it, would be cursed forever.

Keltus rubbed his chin as if searching for an answer. Could it be, Getorix wondered, that Keltus had never seen the irony of his masters' calling a celebration by a holy name it didn't own?

Before Keltus could answer, the boy from the triumph emerged from one of the many doors. He wore a long-sleeved robe that flapped about his calves, the braided trim swinging like a bell.

"Behave," Keltus hissed in his ear. "It's Master Lucius."

"Him?" Getorix pointed and felt Keltus nod. So the revered one was not an old man after all, or even a baby that needed care, but a boy—and a boy didn't need a servant. "That moon-faced toad is no man's master. Certainly not mine."

"You will show respect," Keltus said through his teeth and tugged sharply on the rope around Getorix's neck.

"Respect is earned." Getorix could talk through his teeth as well. "Not merely demanded."

Keltus' reply was cut off as Lucius approached.

"You brought him after all." Lucius grinned. "I knew my father wouldn't let them take him. Can I have him now?"

Lucius' gaze shifted to Getorix, and they took each other's measure as boys always will. They were very nearly the same height,

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so Lucius was tall for a Roman, as Getorix was short for a Cimmeri. Getorix was thinner than usual, after three months in the cell, and out of condition, so Lucius was the heavier by close to a stone. Not with a man's muscles, but fat like a baby not yet walking.

"You may speak." Lucius crossed his arms and stared at a point between the captive's eyes.

"Tell me why." Getorix's nose twitched, for the Roman boy smelled sharp, like spiced wine, but like roses too.

"What?" Lucius leaned forward.

"You heard me, I think," Getorix said. His Roman was perfectly clear, even if he had learned it in the military camp. "Tell me why you brought me here, *Minimus*. I won't serve you, you know." Getorix hoped the Roman word was a bad name. The legionaries had laughed when they used it. If it was, Keltus apparently hadn't caught it, or he surely would have at least pricked Getorix with the dagger he carried.

"Oh, I think you'll do whatever I say, if you know what's good for you, anyway." Lucius drew himself up and squared his shoulders. "You should be down on your knees in gratitude to your gods, and to me, for your life and your good fortune. Few barbarians have the opportunity to serve in the household of patricians of the Roman Republic."

"Fortunate, my ass!" Getorix was brought up short, for Keltus twisted his finger in the rope around his captive's throat and forced an arm up behind him. Getorix wanted to hurl himself at the arrogant Roman toad. He could imagine how easily the Roman would go down on his own well-fed weight, and how neatly his fine garment would slide along the stones. But Getorix was firmly in Keltus' grip and had learned not to shame himself by struggling when he saw no chance of success.

Besides, Getorix thought, words were the weapons of civilized men, at least according to the druid Starkaos' captive Greek. He would meet this Roman on his own ground. The Roman boy nodded, and Keltus released his hold on Getorix's neck, though he kept a grip on the arm behind him.

"Barbarians speak no Greek," Getorix said, in careful Greek. It had been many months since his lessons. "My people count our own wisdom too precious for a trader's tongue. That does not make us your inferiors."

The Domus Lutatius: A Confrontation with Fate

Getorix had hoped surprise would put the Roman off his guard, but Lucius' face opened up as if the challenge gave him pleasure.

"My father defeated your father on the field of battle," Lucius retorted, also in Greek. "And I spared your life. That makes you my slave."

Getorix ignored the statement about being the Roman's property and pulled a dagger from memory to attack him. "If your father was the hero, why was he given the *second* chariot with the *black* horses? And why did the people cheer the *other* as a god and *not* your father?"

Lucius crossed his arms and drew his shoulders far back, looking down his considerable nose. "My father allowed Marius to triumph first because Marius' military victories are all he has to give him ... *auctoritas*," Lucius said, forced back into his own tongue. His face flushed close to the minim red of the face-paint the general Marius had worn in the triumph. "You should be grateful you are in the household of a true Roman patrician instead of that *nemo* from Arpinum."

"I'm not grateful, and I won't bow to a Roman. If I can't be a leader of my own people, I'll be honorably dead like King Claodicos, my father."

"Honorably dead? What good did your father's honor do him in the end? He was marched in a Roman triumph and disposed of in the Tullanium. His resting place is in the sewer with the rest of the dung!"

Getorix could have killed the Roman with his bare hands. Lucius had said nothing Getorix didn't already know, yet to hear it from this toad's lips was like a blow to his gut. Getorix wanted to hurt the Roman as much as Lucius had hurt him, but Keltus' grip made combat out of the question. "Your father's grave will be a stinking hole no matter what his fate," he hissed. "May the furies send him his own Marius to get him there!"

"You insolent, underbred ... savage!" Lucius snapped, breathing heavily. He pulled the green jewel from the neck of his garment by the cord, and Getorix could see that it was a tiny glass bottle with a silver top.

"Enough!" Keltus rumbled in Getorix's ear, tightening his grip. He could have said as much to the Roman, in Getorix's opinion, but the big Celt had already let him say more than he expected.

"Master Lucius." Pelli's voice was quiet but firm. She had

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appeared while Lucius and Getorix challenged each other, her arms laden with towels and a large pottery bowl. She ignored Getorix and spoke directly to Lucius. "You need to rest now. We have work to do to get the boy ready to present to your father."

"He needs a bath, all right." Lucius fiddled with his bottle, working the top loose. Pellia placed her burden on a bench next to the cistern and turned to Lucius. "Do you need the tincture now? It seems to interfere with your sleep—perhaps some wine instead."

Getorix watched the two of them. It was hard to tell if she was speaking as a servant to the Roman toad, or if she had some authority over him. Perhaps both.

Lucius glared at her, but he dropped the bottle back inside his robe. He turned on his heel, then paused looking back over his shoulder. "We'll see how you fare with my father, without me to stand up for you."

I touched him, surely, Getorix thought, *for he walked away without giving me a chance to answer.*

Keltus rumbled in Getorix's ear. "Baiting him was not good. He was your champion."

"That smelly brat? I want no such champion." Getorix was sure he'd bested the Roman puppy in their word-match, but what did it matter? Lucius was in the power of his father's servants.

"Sit." Keltus pulled Getorix to a bench beside the cistern and shoved him down on the end of it where Pellia stood waiting. The weight of the day seemed to come down on him all at once, and Getorix collapsed where the Celt aimed him.

"Be stubborn. That's fine with me," Pellia said, laying out an array from the bowl along the bench. "I'd like to get you all fixed up and give you to Cornelius Sulla. I've heard he has a taste for blond boys."

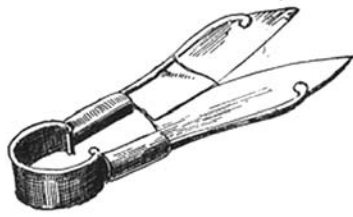
Keltus snorted, but he didn't reprove her.

She had a couple of pots with wooden lids; a sponge from the sea, a comb; shears, triangular blades attached with a spring; what looked very much like an ornamented dog collar and some bright ribbons. Getorix didn't like the look of it.

Getorix submitted as they lathered and scrubbed, combed and clipped and dowsed him with water scooped from the cistern. It felt good to be clean, and the ointment they rubbed into the

The Domus Lutatius: A Confrontation with Fate

scrapes left by his bonds soothed his wounds. Whatever ordeal they were preparing him for, at least his body would be respectfully clean when his spirit met the gods.



Pellia looped silk ribbons around Getorix's wrists over the marks the shackles had left. She clipped the cord from around his neck then picked up the dog collar and worked at a tiny key in the clasp.

"We don't need that." Keltus took it from her.

"And if you lose him? What then?"

"I won't lose him. And if I do, having him carry the master's name won't save me."

"Don't you think Himself will expect you to take the precaution at least?"

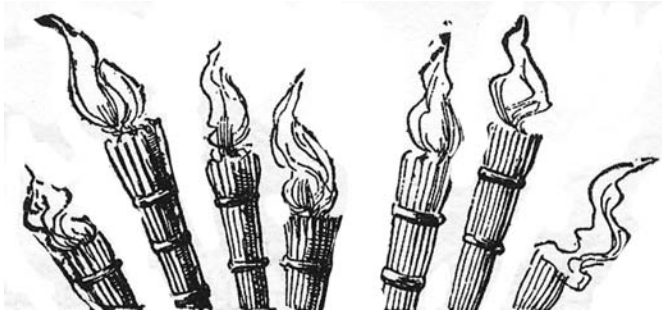
While they debated whether to tag him like a dog, Getorix balled up a bit of the cord that had been around his neck and secreted it in his hand. A bit of strangler's cord made a poor memento of his father's death, but it was all he had.

"That's better, at least." Pellia surveyed her handiwork. She didn't look better. The front of her dress was soaked and strands of hair hung down the sides of her face. But she didn't have a dog collar around her neck and Getorix did, for in the end Pellia had won the debate.

Getorix slumped on the bench in the middle of a puddle of suds and his own curls. His hair had been almost long enough for a braid down his back, and he had been proud of it, but Pellia had clipped it short, and it hardly mattered now. What did matter was that he needed to pee. Getorix wondered if people had such needs in the Otherworld. His father had said a banquet would greet them, so if people ate they would surely need to relieve themselves, but he wasn't at that banquet. He was in a Roman courtyard, with a spreading puddle on the stones.



CHAPTER III



“Keltus!” the woman shrieked. “Didn’t you even show the little savage where to do that?”

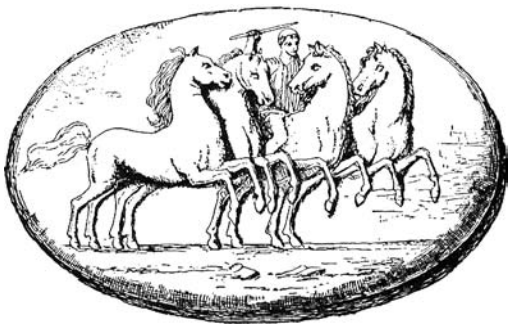
So a jar was necessary, at least around a woman, even if the stones were already wet. The people in this household, the servants anyway, made use of a tiny courtyard that had benches with holes and the jars underneath. Keltus showed him, and when they returned, Pellia had gathered up the curls and dried off the bench. She had kept his hair, but Getorix doubted he needed to worry about her magic. She shook out a tunic, cream with russet trim like Idios the Greek’s, and Getorix balked. He was not going to meet his fate, whatever it was, dressed like Idios the messenger boy.

“Let’s just use a towel and belt for a loin cloth,” Keltus said. “They’re going to want him naked, but we may be able to get by with that because of the ladies.”

“You’d best hurry if you want to get there before the women leave.” Pellia said, glancing upward as she wrapped her implements in the tunic. “Wouldn’t you know, it’s starting to rain.”

Keltus accepted the oiled leather hooded cape the old gatekeeper offered, but waved aside a second one. “He’s not going to get far enough from me to need it.”





IV

*G-k-DEC
kalendae decembris.
kalends December
(first day of December)
evening*

JUPITER'S TEMPLE: THE ORDEAL DEFINED

“**WILL** the executioner be there?” Getorix asked, using the Roman word.

“What?” Keltus swung the leather cape over his head and shoulders and hooked the metal clasp at the neck with one hand. He had Getorix clamped tightly to his side with an arm and the boy could just see the way in front of them by holding the cape out like a tent.

The alley was dark as the inside of a cave, but Keltus knew his way. A single turn to the left and the light from a torch marked the roadway ahead. Keltus had no trouble with the footing, but Getorix's bare feet slipped on the rain-slicked cobblestones, making it hard for him to keep up Keltus' hurried pace.

“The rat-faced one. From the death cell,” Getorix said, already starting to breathe hard. “You're taking me to the Romans' feast, and he said if you needed another hand to the torture, he'd come.”

“Hmmm.”

“You don't know, or you're not saying?” Getorix grasped the belt across Keltus' chest to steady himself and pulled himself around so he could see up into the big Celt's face as they passed close by another torch at a crossroads. Odd, that Keltus should wear such a belt when he wore no sword.

“I don't know,” Keltus said. “I really don't know what the Romans will do with you now.”

When Getorix slipped again, Keltus asked, “Do you want me to carry you? No biting this time.”

AUTHOR'S NOTES

LIKE ANY WORK of fiction, this one began with imagination. Initially, I imagined only the scene where Lucius and Getorix see each other in the triumph parade and connect in a way neither understands. The resulting short story was submitted to a class taught by Orson Scott Card, and he encouraged me to pursue it as a young adult novel. I was not a history buff at the time, but knew I needed to find out enough to discover the physical and cultural setting that could have made this moment possible.

That began a process of research that has become a passion. And no passion is worthwhile unless it is shared. In the process, the two boys matured until they are both on the verge of manhood, but still with the open hearts of youth.

In seeking the political and cultural situation that could have produced the scene I imagined, I discovered first the Roman victory over a confederacy of Germanic tribes at Vercellae, and the fact of the triumph parade. No record has survived of the leader marched through the city and symbolically executed, but it was a Roman custom, and we may assume there was one. The primary leader, Boiorix, was killed in the battle, but there were many tribes and subgroups in the Celtic migration, and I was able to choose a name of a leader from among them. Claodicos was the name of a leader of a tribe from the Jutland peninsula who joined the group late enough that a young man of “almost fifteen” might have some memory of the event.

“Getorix” was originally a working name, one I planned to replace. However, it was in use at the time as were names similar in form, such as Gaesorix and Vercingetorix, a Celtic rebel leader in the time of Julius Caesar. After a time, the character grew into his name, became who he was, and there was no changing him.

The Limits of Historical Research:

One problem with researching Celtic history is that you will almost certainly access mostly “neo-Celtic” paganism sources, or sources detailing Irish culture of a much later period

What we believe about Celtic culture of 100 B.C.E comes from what we can piece together from accounts by the Romans and others they came in contact with and from the art and artifacts discovered by archaeologists. The philosophy quoted by Getorix that the druids counted their wisdom too precious to be written down so that it could be “bought or sold or cut with a knife” is speculation. But the fact is that, while Celtic people of this period engaged in trade with both the Greeks and

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the Romans, and produced documents and literature in these languages, writings of their own religion and mythology have not been found.

I have tried to be careful in choosing names for Celtic people and Celtic gods, to select ones that were not easily traceable to relatively modern Irish mythology, but to go back as far as possible. Also I searched for references from the areas of Denmark and Germany as being closest to the cultural background Getorix would have enjoyed. In putting words in Getorix's mouth, I have chosen terms attributed to old English or German rather than Latin roots where possible. The Germanic band the Romans called the Cimbri had been migrating through Europe for at least 15 years, though the group I've used as a model for Getorix's tribe joined somewhat later, so they were relatively cosmopolitan in the language and stories of their experience.

The civilization of Rome, Republic and Empire, lasted over a thousand years. Remember that, any time you hear pronouncements about how things were in the Roman world. The story of Getorix takes place in 101 B.C.E. and conditions at this time might be different than only a few years before or after.

Roman civilization was more complex than it is possible to portray in a single movie or a single novel. The Romans and others who lived in their world were human beings, as remarkable and individual as people are today. In the end, that is the story I have tried to tell.

The Celts and Germans:

Celt (pronounced like it begins with a "K") is the general name for a group of people who began in Asia Minor before 1000 B.C.E. The word comes from the Greek term Keltoi, originally referring to a particular tribe, but generalized to the entire people. One meaning for "German" is "central Celt" and all the Celtic people spoke dialects of a similar language and seem to have considered themselves one people. They are believed to have spread widely from India to Scotland to Spain, and of course, eventually, to the New World, intermarrying and influencing the culture wherever they went. Some writers credit the admixture of Celtic genes and Celtic mythology with the caste system in India. The Macedonia that produced Alexander the Great was populated by Celtic people. Julius Caesar supposedly had a Celtic tutor (Cornelius Nepos), son of a freed slave.

The Romans looked with wonder on the fantastic carvings of wood and stone thought to represent Celtic Gods. However, rather than finding out the Celtic names for these gods, they used the name of the Roman god that seemed the closest in its aspects, or powers.

We know that the Celts were sophisticated in metallurgy from the

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remains of weapons and decorative objects discovered in bodies of water and in barrow tombs. Metal tools, and even objects of wood and leather, from this and earlier periods, have been discovered in salt mines. We know that the human head was of special significance, for structures with niches for skulls and representations of severed heads remain from this time. We know they wove fabrics with plaid patterns from remains discovered with bodies preserved in peat bogs in northern Europe and Britain.

The Celtic custom of “fostering out” children as apprentices is reported by the Romans. Representations from the time of Augustus (about 75 years after the novel), show a child wearing a torc in the party with the emperor. It is speculated that this was a son of a Celtic leader.

The Historical Characters:

The Romans—Gaius Marius, Quintus Lutatius Catulus, Lucius Cornelius Sulla, Gaius Julius Caesar, Aurelia, and Servilia—are historical figures. Their character and relationship is as close to the truth as I have been able to glean from the writings of the time and modern studies. Certainly the antagonism between Marius and Catulus and the ambiguity of Sulla's relationships is consistent with later events. Colleen McCullough's fiction series on the leading figures of Republican Rome was invaluable in providing an overall sense of continuity and excellent glossaries and notes. However, she seems to be an avowed Marian, and my characterizations owe more to Plutarch than to her point of view. See the biographies for notes on these Romans.

As I read farther, I discovered that during this period the Roman Republic was in the process of devolving into an empire ruled by a series of emperors. The Republic lasted for over four hundred years, from the overthrow of the Etruscan kings in 509 B.C.E. into the first century B.C.E. During this period, the common people, the plebs, gained an increasing role in government. Women were beginning to make their mark in art and business, if not in government. However, the people's fear over the threat of invasion from outside forces caused them to give up their hard-won freedoms in favor of the “safety” of a series of strong military leaders. The next hundred years saw a series of Civil Wars, the rise of Julius Caesar and the emperors that followed.

Women, at least those who did not become notorious, seldom appear in the records of the time. Again, I owe much to Colleen McCullough for a framework for who the Roman leaders' wives might have been, though I have searched nonfiction sources for confirmation of names and dates. I have attempted to get out of their way and give these women their own voice, whether they were wives or slaves.

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The Fictional Romans:

Lucius is fictional, though a boy of thirteen might ride in his father's chariot in a triumph, and older sons might ride horseback in attendance. History records one son, also named Quintus Lutatius Catulus, but he would have been about twenty years old at this time, judging by the dates he held certain elected offices. A purely fictional character also gives me more latitude in his future adventures.

The slaves in the Roman household are imaginary, but are similar to people everywhere in that they have learned to accommodate to the realities of their lives with varying degrees of success. The household is more harmonious and the working facilities for the slaves more commodious than is usually presented. However, since slaves, freedmen and free citizens worked side by side at similar tasks, it is not outside possibilities. Brosch is the spiritual child of another author, Faye Turner, who writes historical fiction in the time of Alexander the Great, and I am grateful for the gift.

The Point of View:

The story unfolds almost entirely from Getorix's point of view. Therefore, the details of the story are sometimes at odds with the historical record—which was written by the Romans, of course. The Celts and Germans of the time did not commit their stories to written records, though many apparently could write Greek or Latin and used it in trade. Since "Cimbri," the name the Romans used in referring to Getorix's people, was a Celtic word meaning raiders, I chose to emphasize the differences in perspective by choosing another possibility: Cimmeri. Jean Markale's excellent study of the Celts quotes writers from Homer to Cicero who connect the name Cimmeri with mysterious people who lived either underground or so far north as to experience long periods of darkness. She does not advocate the substitution of one name for the other, but the connection is sufficient to justify our hero having a name other than the one the Romans used for his own people. There is also disagreement over whether the Cimbri should be considered Celts or Germans. Since they are reported to have spoken a Celtic language, their names were characteristically Celtic, and they had traveled through central and western Europe for many years, I have given Getorix a more Celtic cultural identity, while retaining the ambiguity as part of the different characters' perspectives.

THE CALENDAR:

The Roman calendar evolved from a lunar calendar, likely based on those used by the Greeks and and Babylonians, to the solar-based calendar instituted

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by Julius Caesar. It seems to have been a laborious process, beginning with a ten-month calendar that ignored, or left unnamed, 60+ days in midwinter, and adding two months and the first “leap days” along the way.

The calendar at the end of the Republic:

By the first century B.C.E., the time of the events in the novel, *Getorix: The Eagle and The Bull*, the Roman calendar was hopelessly confused. The year, based on a combination of the phases of the moon and the solar seasons, totaled 355 days, about 10 1/4 days shorter than the solar year. The occasional intercalation of an extra month of Mercedonius, was intended to keep the calendar roughly in step with the seasons. However, the offices of the priests, the Pontifices, were politically connected, and the length of the months and years might be altered to extend or cut short the offices of particular magistrates.

The calendar for December, 101 B.C.E. which appears on the part pages in the novel is a projection based on the earliest Roman calendars we have. (See the author's website for a more complete explanation and links to other materials.) Therefore, it may not be an absolutely accurate depiction of the calendar for that year, but is as close a representation as I could create using the materials available to me at the time.

Reading the Calendar:

The calendar was arranged in vertical bars with each bar representing a month. The calendar on the part pages of the novel is for the month of December. Each line represents a day. The first day of each year was designated “A” and continued through “H” before beginning again. The Nundinae, the market day, rotated through the first eight days, so the next letter defined the market day for that year. The final letters identify the day for the purposes of legal business, religious observances or commerce.

C = “dies comitiales,” days when committees of citizens could vote on political or criminal matters.

F = “dies fasti,” days on which legal action was permitted.

N = “dies nefasti,” days on which no legal action or public voting was permitted.

NP = days set aside for some form of religious observance. They seem to be connected with holidays, but the precise definition has been lost.

Holidays:

The calendar used as a pattern for this one also included abbreviations for holidays and religious observances.

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k = Kalends, the first day of the month.

AGON = Agonalia Indigeti, a festival celebrated four times a year in which the main feature was the public sacrifice of a ram. The origins are unclear.

IDVS = Idus or ides, the 13th of the month of December.

CONS = Festival of Consus, a god of the lower world, or of secret deliberations. It was celebrated with horse races and gladiatorial games in the circus.

SATVN = Saturnalia the celebration of the Feast of the god Saturn. The celebration grew in magnitude and length until it continued until December 24th. Even though our calendar does not indicate it, we may assume the celebration continued.

OPA = Opalia was said to be the wife of Saturn, so this relatively minor holiday was celebrated on the third day of the Saturnalia.

DIVAL = Divalia, the day of the true winter solstice (division of the year?)

LARE = Larentalia. This festival is variously attributed as a celebration of the wolf that suckled Romulus and Remus, of their human nurse, named Acca Larentia, or of the household gods (Lares). The date is also a celebration of Sol Invictus (unconquered), and a festival of the goddess of death, Dea Tacita (the silent goddess.)

THE HOURS:

Romans of the Republic counted 24 hours in the day as we do. However, their count started at dawn rather than midnight, and they assigned twelve hours to the day and twelve to the night. This meant that during the summer months, the daylight hours were longer than the night, and in winter the hours of darkness were longer. Only two days of the year saw 24 hours of equal length: the spring, or vernal equinox, around March 21, and the autumnal equinox, around September 21. I have chosen to leave the hours of darkness unnumbered. The Romans could count them using marked candles, water clocks and other mechanical devices, but Getorix would not have commonly had use for these devices.

A chart, adapted from *Daily Life in Ancient Rome*, by Jerome Carcopino, pp.167-8, was used to translate the mid-winter hours.

For more information, visit the author's website:
www.judithgeary.com

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BIOGRAPHIES

Many of the characters of the story are real people who lived at this time in history. The details may differ in different sources, but I have tried to select the things that make these people significant.

The Celts:

The Romans would have referred to these people as “Germans.” However, they spoke a Celtic language and would most likely have identified themselves with the rest of the Celtic people. In fact, the meaning of “German” has been defined as “central Celt.”

Boiorix: The leader of the confederacy of Celtic tribes which the Romans called the Cimbri. He defeated Roman legions who came looking for him more than once in the ten years prior to our story, but was defeated at the battle of Vercellae. He is believed to have died in that battle.

Claodicos: Claodicos is recorded as the name of one of the minor leaders of the Celtic tribes. However, we have no record of what happened to him or of who was executed at the triumph Marius and Catulus shared.

Getorix: The name was borne by several Celtic kings, but the character is fictional.

Teutobod: The leader of the Teutone tribe, defeated the year before the time of the novel by Marius' legions. Historical accounts differ on whether he died in the battle, was executed, or was taken to Rome and exhibited. I have chosen the latter option for the story.

The Romans:

(Alphabetized according to the family name)

Aurelia: Wife of Gaius Julius Caesar and mother of the more famous Julius Caesar the dictator. The famous Julius Caesar was born in July (Quintillis in the Roman calendar at the time) but I have made his mother's pregnancy more apparent than it would have been.

Lucius Cornelius Sulla: Roman of a decayed aristocratic family, Sulla clawed his way back into upper crust society with highly questionable methods. He served as Marius' quaestor through a number of campaigns, but eventually became his enemy in the civil wars that led to the fall of the Republican system and the rise of the emperors.

Gaius Julius Caesar: Father of the more famous Julius Caesar, the dictator. He was a legate, a senior military officer, to Marius in the Celtic campaigns.

Quintus Lutatius Catulus: Patrician and a scholar. He was consul in 102 B.C.E. and was still acting as a general the following year. (See

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proconsul in the glossary.) He was not known for military competence, and came close to losing his army when Marius intervened and took command. He later published a commentary on the works of Homer, which has been lost. History says he was born into the patrician Julius family, and adopted into the Lutatius family when there was no heir. This was common practice among Roman aristocrats of the time. He was a first cousin to the Gaius Julius Caesar above.

Gaius Marius: This famed military leader broke precedent, and the Republican Roman Constitution, by standing for election as consul—and winning—seven times. His military prowess, at a time when Rome felt threatened by enemies on all sides, certainly accounts for his success in Roman politics. He was a “new man”—the first in his family to hold a consulship—and from Arpinum, a rural area, so his success in a system that placed most of the power to elect in the hands of the ruling elite is especially impressive. His determination to remain in power was one factor in the civil wars that led to the downfall of the Republic.

Selia (Servilia): That Catulus was married to “a Servilia” is only mentioned in the historical record. I have chosen to give her a nickname, since Servilia has a “severe” ring to modern ears, not appropriate to my character.

Lucius Valerius Flaccus: Junior consul for the year 100 B.C.E. Marcus Valerius Flaccus was a freedman teaching in the home of Quintus Lutatius Catulus, son of the one in our story. Our Quintus Lutatius Catulus purchased a grammaticus to assist him in his studies and writing about Homer's works and immediately freed the man. Commonly, citizens who freed a slave as a reward made the man a citizen and the freedman took the name of the Roman who freed him. I have chosen to connect the dots and make these the same people. This also supports a friendship between Valerius the consul and Catulus.

And one slave:

Chrysogonus: Slave to Lucius Cornelius Sulla. He appears in the historical record as a favorite of Sulla's who started as a gardener but ended up as a freedman, and a villain, who profited greatly from the political turmoil that accompanied the civil wars.

For more information, see the article on Republican Roman naming customs on the author's website: www.judithgeary.com

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Icons at the ends of chapters and at scene changes, and not otherwise identified, are from the font *Kells* from the P22 type foundry.

*My gratitude goes to a very talented artist and designer, my son James Geary, who took less than perfect images from many sources and my rough sketches and magically transformed them into what I imagined they should be.

GLOSSARY

Achians: Achilles belonged to this tribe of Greeks.

Aedui: tribe of Celts from what is now France, who were allies of the Romans at this time.

aphorism: an old saying. “Haste makes waste” is one from our culture.

aqueduct: channel supplying water to Rome, sometimes over great distances, over arches and through tunnels.

Aquae Sextiae: place in northern Italy. It was the site of the battle in 102 B.C.E., the year prior to the novel, where Marius’ army defeated the Teutone. Brosch and her brothers would have been captured in this battle.

Arachne: In Greek mythology, Arachne was a mortal well known for her weaving skill, and for her beauty and grace in executing her art. She challenged the goddess Athena to a weaving contest, and when it was over, Athena turned her into a spider. When Pellia refers to Brosch as “Arachne,” she’s being catty.

aristocrats: the upper classes, composed of patricians and nobles.

Arpinum: rural town southeast of Rome. It was the birthplace of Gaius Marius, and later, of Marcus Tullius Cicero.

as: smallest Roman coin.

atrium: central area of a Roman house. Originally, it held the hearth, but by this time, the homes of the wealthy contained an impluvium (basin to catch rainwater) with an opening overhead to direct the water from the tile roof.

A.U.C.: Ab Urbe Condita: literally, years since the founding of Rome.

auctoritas: credibility, respect, honor as perceived by others. A Roman’s auctoritas was extremely important.

Auverni: Celtic tribe from what is now France. Defeated by the Romans about 20 years before the time of the novel.

baldric: belt designed to support a sword. It crossed the body diagonally so that some of the weight would be carried on the shoulder.

basilica: public building used for a variety of purposes. In construction, it was a high-ceilinged, central hall with side aisles. Many modern churches are constructed on this pattern with the addition of an altar or raised platform at one end. A primary function of the Roman calendar was to record the activities that would be permitted in these buildings on a particular day: commerce or market stalls, court proceedings or meetings of public bodies or committees.

B.C.E.: before the common era. A non-religious designation for what is sometimes referred to as B.C. (before Christ). We are currently in

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the common era, in the years after 2000 C.E.

Bona Dea: literally “good goddess.” The Bona Dea celebration was held twice a year (May and December) in the household of the presiding consul. Since the consuls presided in alternate months, this meant both households received the honor. It involved only women, and was so secret that the name was not even spoken before a man. The vestals presided and a pig was sacrificed. Beyond that we know little, though several instances are recorded of men who tried to disguise themselves and observe, so the Romans were as curious as we might be.

Brennos/Brennus: Celtic hero credited with defeating the Roman army in the 390 B.C.E. I have used two forms of the name, Greek and Latin, as one more symbol of the different perspectives of the characters. To the Celts, he may also have been known as Bran or Branwyn. A Celtic hero of the same name sacked Delphi in 279 B.C.E.

bullock: a young bull.

caco: feces. implies an expletive, like “shit”.

Calchus: In the Iliad, Calchas is a Spartan seer who accompanies King Agamemnon of Sparta in the war against Troy. In the Lutatius household, Calchus is the name of the front door guard.

calendar: See section in the author’s notes on the calendar.

Camillus: the general whom the Romans credit with finally defeating and killing Brennus in 390 B.C.E. after his sack of Rome.

Campus Martius: floodplain outside the Servian Wall and along the Tiber River. It was originally used for military maneuvers. That was still its function at this time, but a few temples and permanent structures had been built. The Temple to Fortune of the Present Day, which Catulus funded to honor his part in the victory over the Celts, can be seen in the excavated area in the center of Largo Argentina in modern Rome.

Capitoline Hill: smallest of Rome’s seven hills, the Capitoline held the original citadel, or fortification, and the Temple of Jupiter. Today, the Campidolio, as it is known, has three museums arranged around a pavement designed by Michelangelo.

Carcer: lower chamber associated with the Tullanium. This underground cell at the base of the Capitoline Hill apparently started out as a water cistern. The lower chamber was the execution cell used to dispose of defeated leaders of Rome’s enemies at the end of the triumph.

Catamitus: a taunting name based on the word “catamite” meaning a child slave kept for sexual purposes.

Cernunnos: the Celtic god of the forest and of nature. I can’t be certain this is the name Getorix would have used for this deity, but it is a widely used one.

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Charon: In Greek mythology, Charon is the ferryman who conveys souls across the river Styx to the land of the dead. He is similar to the Etruscan Charun, and also appears in Michelangelo's painting of the Last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel.

Cimmeri: Speculation continues about exactly who were the people referred to as the Cimmeri. This term could have been used to refer to the Danish tribes of Celts among those defeated by the Romans in 101 B.C.E. Since "cimbri," the word commonly used historically to refer to these people, is a Celtic term for "raiders," I have chosen to consider Cimbri a name based on reports by the Romans and their political allies, and to dramatize the differences in the two cultures.

Cincinnatus: Roman leader and hero of the fifth century B.C.E. His story was known by all Romans at this time.

cistern: tank of stone, wood or metal to catch and hold rainwater. In Roman houses, gutters of wood or lead caught rainwater from the terra cotta roofs and directed it into a cistern in the middle of the courtyard or atrium.

citadel: fortification. The citadel on the Capitoline Hill in Rome had already been replaced by a Temple to Juno Moneta at the time of the novel and today by Santa Maria in Arcoeli.

clivus: stepped street up a hill. Since most traffic in Rome was on foot, steps were the most efficient way to build a street up a hillside.

colonnade: covered walkway, with the roof supported by columns, along a wall and over doorways. A colonnade would commonly surround the atrium and sometimes the peristyle garden and courtyards of a Roman house or public building.

consul: top elected official in Republican Rome. Two consuls were elected each year. The one receiving the most votes was designated the senior consul, the other the junior. The senior consul presided in January, the junior in February, and so throughout the year. Supposedly, strict rules forbade a man being elected more than twice in succession, or three times in his life, but the senate had the power to set aside such rules if conditions called for it, and perceived threats from the enemies of Rome and Gaius Marius' talent as a military leader enabled him to hold the consulship a total of seven times. At the time of the novel, he was beginning his sixth term, his fifth in succession.

crossroads shrine: Crossroads were sacred to the Romans. With few exceptions, each had a shrine dedicated to the gods of the crossroads.

Cu: Celtic word for dog.

Cyheraeth: Celtic name for a goddess of death.

crypta: monument.

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to depictions of the Mother Goddess. They also evoke the Celtic concept of the domains of material existence: earth, water, and sky, and their interrelations.

triumph: officially declared celebration of a Roman general over a foreign enemy. History says that Marius and Catulus celebrated their triumph together at Marius' insistence because he had already distributed most of the spoils of his victory over the Teutones to his men. The more recent victory over the "Cimbri" provided the treasure to parade before the Roman people.

Tullanium: upper chamber associated with the Carcer. This underground cell at the base of the Capitoline Hill apparently started out as a water cistern. The lower chamber was the execution cell used to dispose of defeated leaders of Rome's enemies at the end of the triumph.

vae victis: Latin for, "woe to the vanquished." The story of Brennus includes the report that when the Romans complained about the amount of tribute he demanded, he cast his sword on the balance scale, and declared, in the Roman tongue, "vae victis."

Vestals: priestesses of the Temple of Vesta. Honors included privileges generally reserved to Roman male citizens. They could retire at age 35 and marry, though many elected to remain. Six women served at any one time, including young girls in training.

Vercellae: site, in northern Italy, of the battle that preceded the action in the novel.

via Argentarius: Silver Road. Cities in Roman times often included streets or neighborhoods dedicated to one product or craft. The name indicates silversmiths (and possibly other metal working) were concentrated along this road.

via Sacra: Sacred Road. "Via" is road or street and the via Sacra formed the way to the Capitoline Hill and the Temple of Jupiter.

via Subura: Subura Road. One of the main streets in the section of Rome, between the Viminal and Esquiline hills. A crowded, low income neighborhood with apartment houses

victimarius: the one who killed the sacrificial victims.

votive offerings: symbolic offerings, usually representative of the prayer. A person with foot problems might make or purchase a small representation of a foot, in bronze or other material, and throw it into a sacred well or leave it on the altar. Throwing coins in a fountain to wish for good fortune is likely a modern remnant of this custom.

Wieland the magic smith: god of smiths and metalworkers in Norse mythology. Smiths were revered for their ability to seemingly toy with fire and submit iron to their will.