

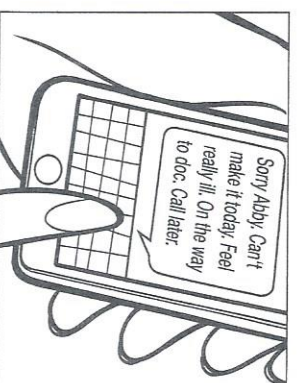
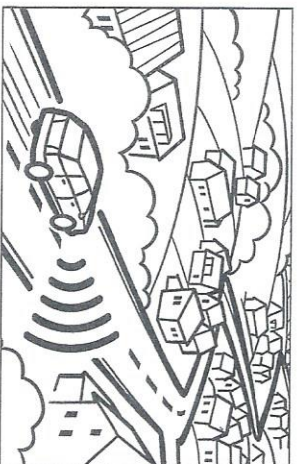
Chapter 1 At the doctor's

Maya opened her eyes. The sun was shining straight through her bedroom window.

"Ooooooww!" Maya groaned, so loudly that her mother heard her from the kitchen. What was wrong with her daughter?



On the way to the doctor's, Maya texted Abby:



They arrived at the doctor's and went into the waiting room. Suddenly, Mrs Sen's phone rang. "I have to take this. Back in a minute, Maya," she said and went outside again. Maya looked around. One of the other patients coughed.



A door opened. The doctor came out and spoke to the man.

"Hi, Mark. Sorry about the wait."

"I haven't got all day, Dr July," the man said and coughed again.

"You needn't worry, you'll be next, I promise. That cough doesn't sound too good."

"No, it doesn't. And it's not just a cough. I have a sore throat too!"

Next to Mark was a boy about Maya's age. He caught her eye as she walked across the room. Maya smiled.



The boy got up and went over to a bowl of sweets on the counter.

"Hey, Marsha," he called to a girl who was sitting near Maya. "Want one?"

"No, thanks," said the girl.

The boy turned to Maya. "How about you?"

"No, thanks," Maya answered. "I don't feel very well."

"Oh, yeah, sorry – that's why you're here."

He walked over and sat down on the seat next to Maya.

"What's wrong?" he asked.

"I've got a temperature."

"That's bad," he said and pointed at his finger. There was a plaster on it.

"What happened?" Maya asked.

"I...," he began. At that moment Mark, the man with the cough, interrupted.

"Can't you kids stop talking for a minute? You're giving me a headache. Just go outside if you can't be quiet."

"Sorry," said the boy.

Mark frowned and the boy started to whisper in Maya's ear:



Dr July opened her door again. "Come in now, Mark," she said.

A moment later Maya's mother came back.

"How are you now, dear?" she asked. "I hope we won't have to wait much longer."

"You can go in before me, if you like," Phil smiled. "My finger can wait a little."

When Mark came back out, Maya and her mother stood up to go in.

Some moments later, while the doctor was examining Maya, Mrs Sen's mobile beeped again.

"Oh," she said. "I'm really sorry, Doctor, but my dentist's appointment has changed. I'll have to go now, but I can be back in an hour ..."

"That's OK, Meera. Well, Maya, you have a virus infection, so I'm going to give you something for that. It will make you a bit sleepy ..."

"I'm sleepy anyway," Maya said.

"Then you can lie down and wait for your mum in the next room."

"That's a good idea," Mrs Sen said. "Are you hungry, Maya? I could get you something from that nice vegetarian takeaway."

"No, thanks, Mum."

"Some fruit maybe, an apple, some strawberries?"

"No, Mum, really."

"All right, dear. I hope you'll feel better soon." Mrs Sen kissed Maya and left.

Dr July took Maya into the next room and gave her two tablets.

"So, how has your year at school been, Maya?"

Maya smiled. "It's been good ... we went on a trip last week. To Bath. We had a really funny guide at the ... er ..."

"At the Roman baths?"

"That's right," said Maya.

"I love the old Roman ruins in Britain," Dr July said. "Look, I've got a lovely book about the Roman villa at Bignor here."

When Mark came back out, Maya and her mother stood up to go in. Some moments later, while the doctor was examining Maya, Mrs Sen's mobile beeped again. "Oh," she said. "I'm really sorry, Doctor, but my dentist's appointment has changed. I'll have to go now, but I can be back in an hour ..."



Chapter 2 Meeting Philo

Maya looked up at Dr. July while she was talking. The doctor's black eyes flashed and for the first time Maya noticed her strange hair. It looked like ...
 "... snakes," the doctor said.
 "Yes," thought Maya. "Snakes."
 The doctor's voice seemed to hiss softly. Ssssnakesssss ...



Maya was feeling very sleepy now.
 "All right, Maya. I would try and rest for a bit," the doctor said. "So just lie here and wait for your mum." She looked back at Maya as she walked away and her black eyes and snake hair seemed to flash again before she left the room. Maya lay on her back and stared at the mosaics in the book. Her eyes felt heavy and soft. It was warm under the blanket, like the sun was shining on her. And it was so peaceful in the doctor's room. Easy to fall asleep. She heard the doctor call in her next patient.
 "Come in now please, Phil – Phil, Phil, Philo ..."

"Philo! Philo!" The voice was shouting now. It was a young girl's voice. Maya opened her eyes. She gave a loud groan as the sun hit her face and neck. She was lying in a field of grass full of flowers and bees. The grass smelled so fresh.
 Then a shadow blocked the sun. She looked up to see a boy with fair hair and a smile on his face.
 "Philo!" The voice came again and soon a girl stood by the boy's side.



Slowly, Maya got up onto her knees.
 "Where am I?" she asked.
 "Where are you?" Philo laughed. "Well, we're just outside Iscalis."
 "Iscalis?"
 "Yes, Iscalis. Britannia. The Roman Empire. But what about you? What's your name? And where are you from?"
 "Oh, sorry," Maya said. "I'm Maya. I'm from Pl. ...". She stopped for a moment and then a strange word came into her head. "I'm from ... Dumnonia."
 "Dumnonia? Wow!" said Philo. "You're a long way from home. Come with us – we'll take you to Iscalis."

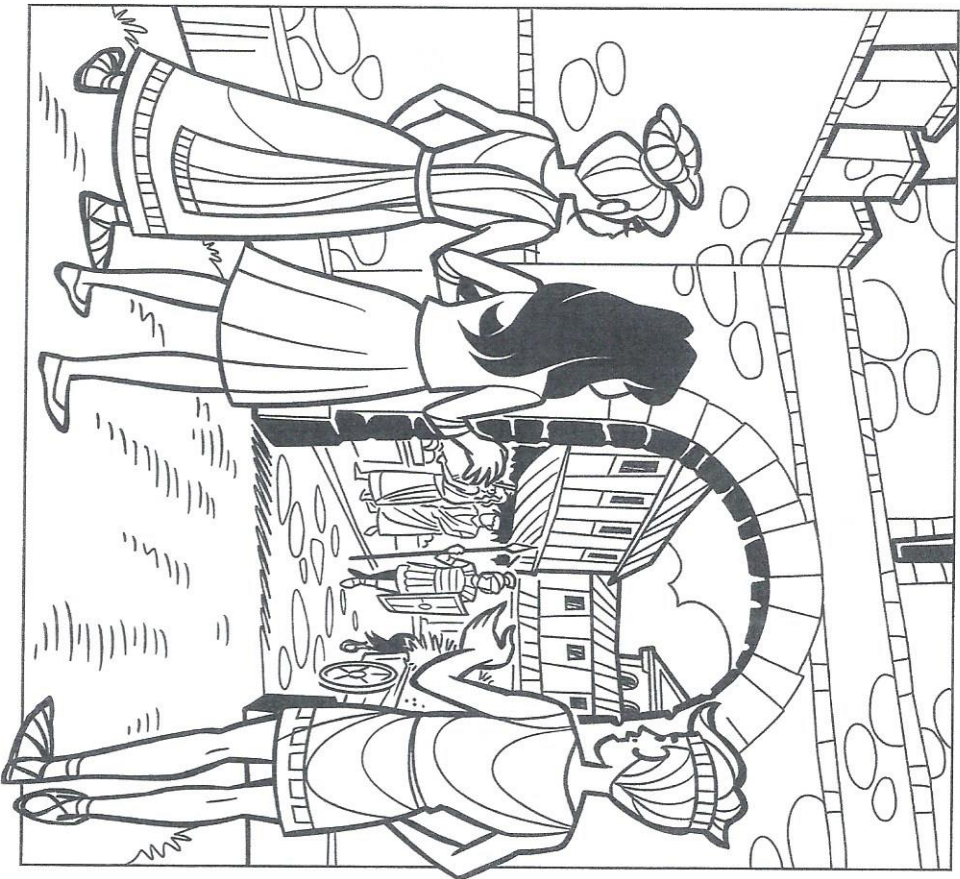
On the way, they saw some cliffs in the distance.

"There are deep, dark caves in those cliffs," Philo said. "I played in them as a child. They store cheese in there."

"And there's Iscalis!" Martia cried, and pointed to the town.

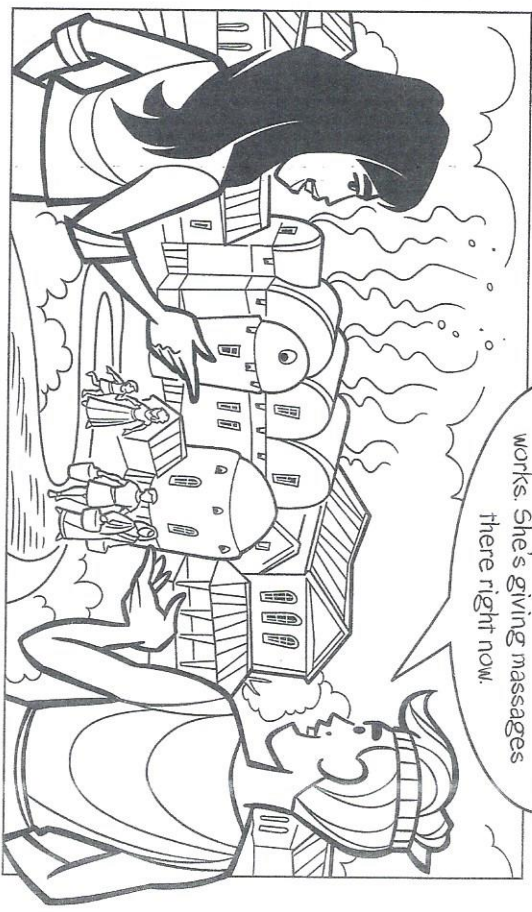
A little later, they turned onto a narrow road, crossed a bridge over a river and arrived at the town gate.

It was a busy day in Iscalis. Everywhere people were walking about, talking, arguing, and selling food. Children were playing games. A soldier was marching towards the gate.



They entered Iscalis and soon they came to the baths.

I bet you don't have baths like these in Dumnonia. This is where our mother works. She's giving massages there right now.



Then they passed the market.

We sell vegetables here sometimes. Not often, because we eat most of what we can grow. We only have a small piece of land.

What size melon would you like?

