2010

Vannius Deposed

Mark Halliday

Follow this and additional works at: https://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview

Part of the Creative Writing Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.6843
Goodbye Vannius, you must sail off to Pannonia, never to return. Your power in Suebia is history. Black water laps at the stern of your battered vessel and the wind wanders fecklessly across its canvas. Vannius, you were foolish to put any faith in your Sarmatian cavalry from the Jazyges! Their horses wandered feckless as wind on the Danube till the roaring throngs of the Lugii and Hermunduri charged upon them with a dozen spears for every rider. Vannius, what did your lipsmacking spirit expect?

There are always more Lugii, Vannius! And always more Hermunduri! The earth produces them like a million burning cabbages from grotty hell and cherishes no silver candle for a thick little king such as you, Vannius, you of the bulging eyes and the taste for green-flecked Suebian cheeses! Now your throne is shared by those sweaty pips, Vangio and Sido, hard-handed sons of your feckless sister. Vannius, goodbye. Wail temperately on your ship forlorn, as wailing changes nothing, except to obscure a strummed harp. From the black earth upspring ever new Vangios and Sidos.