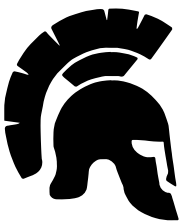




ROMULUS AND REMUUS



Illustrated by Jackie Abey
Retold by Ruth Merttens



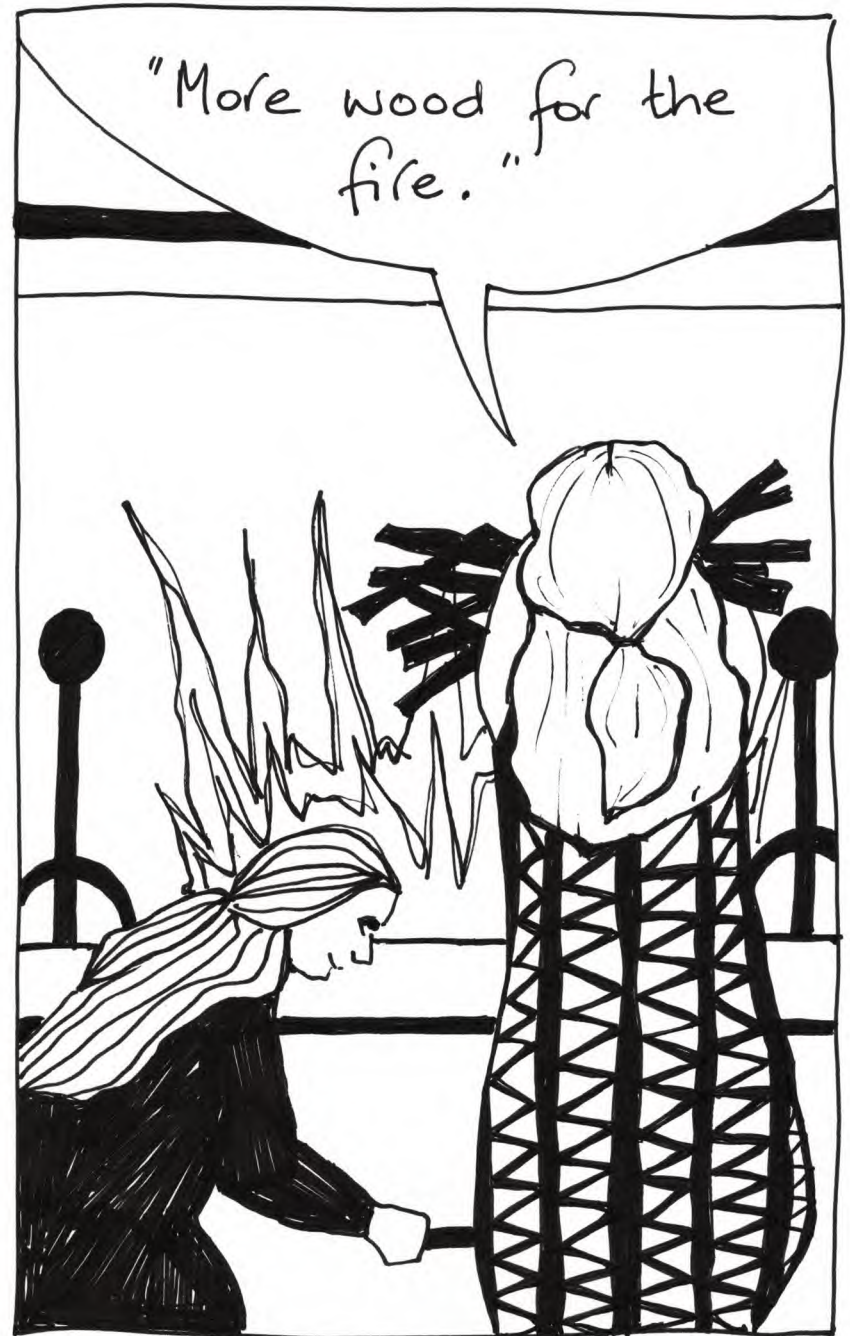
Once upon a time there was a beautiful lady called Rhea Silvia.



Rhea Silvia lived with other ladies. They guarded the sacred fire for the Roman Goddess Vesta. Their job was to make sure that the fire never went out.



Because their job was so important, and the ladies were so special to the Goddess, they were not allowed to marry or have children.



But Rhea did have children – she gave birth to twin boys. She named them Romulus and Remus.



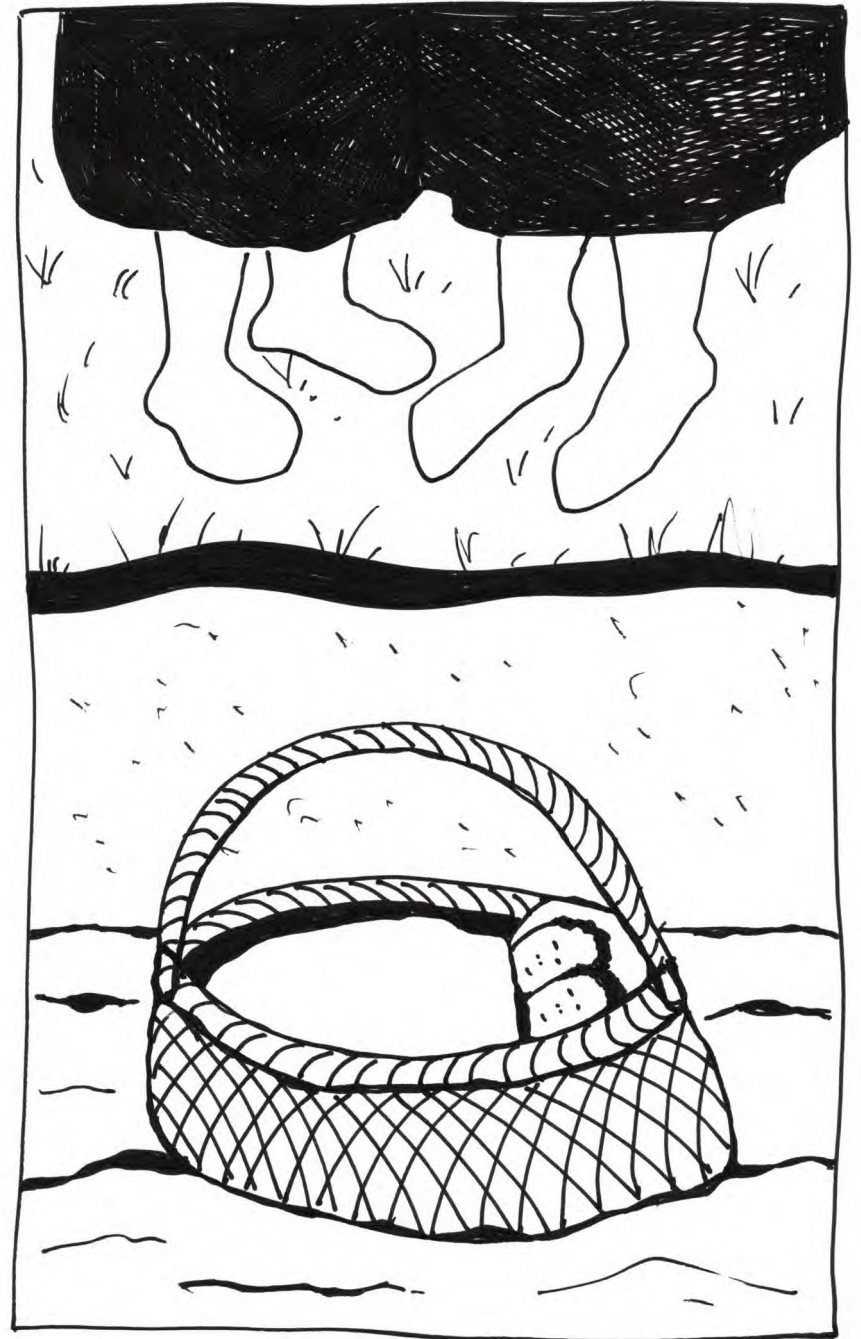
Because Rhea had broken the law, her babies were taken away from her. Rhea was kept in a prison for the rest of her life.



The king gave orders that the twins were to be thrown into the river Tiber where they would die. A servant took the babies away.



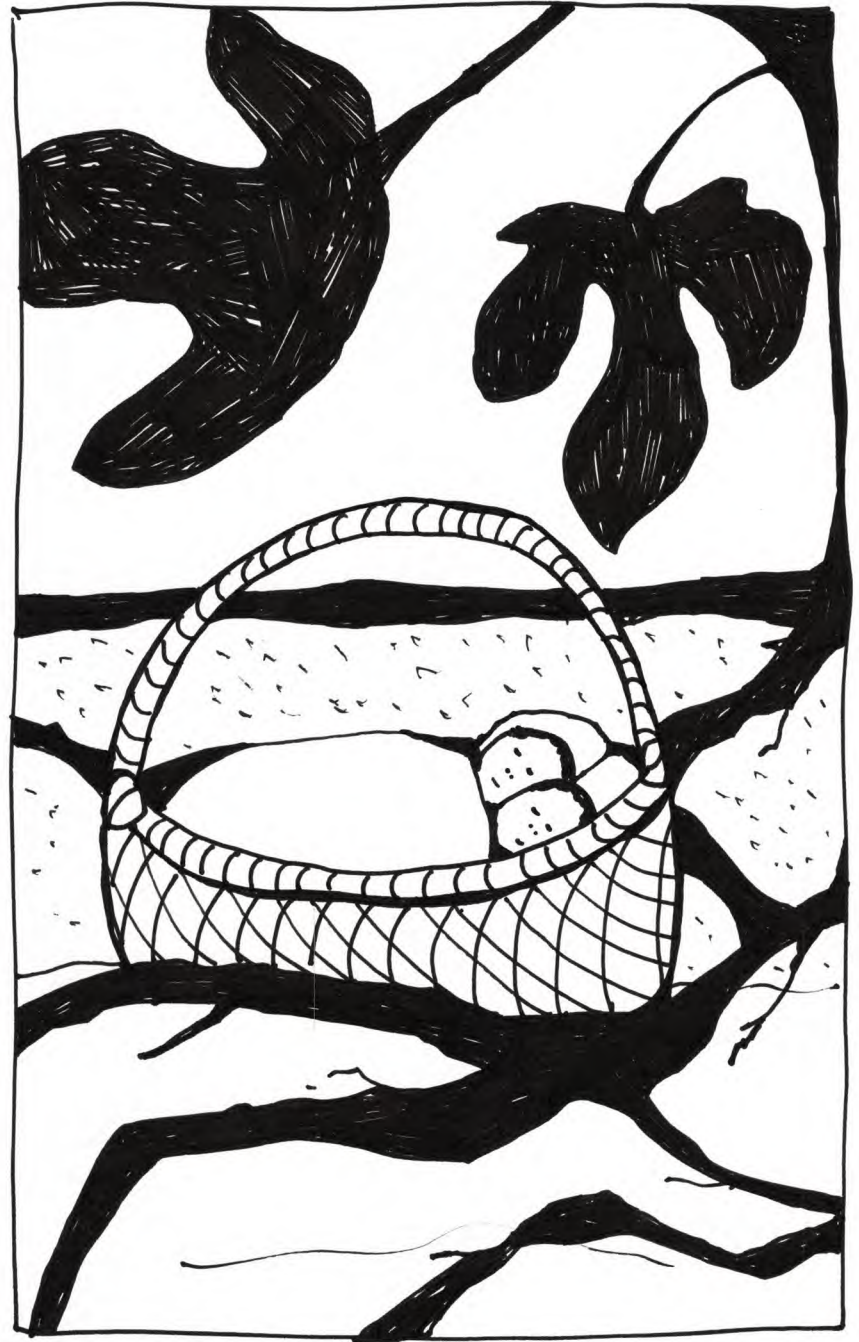
When the servant got to the river, he felt sorry for the twins. They were so tiny and innocent. He tucked them into a strong basket and set the basket on the river to float away.



Then he told the king that he had indeed thrown the boys into the river Tiber.



The basket floated down the river. Eventually, it stuck in the roots of a fig tree by the river bank.



A mother wolf was passing along the river bank when she saw the basket and heard the mewling cries of the hungry babies.



The wolf felt sorry for the babies and carried them off to her den. There she fed them and raised them with her cubs.



The babies grew strong on the milk of the mother wolf. When they grew old enough to have food, a woodpecker fed them.



As the boys grew older, they strayed from the den of their wolf family.

One day, they were spotted by a shepherd who was guarding his sheep from the wolves.



The shepherd and his wife had no children so they took Romulus and Remus into their small home and cared for them. Finally the twins were back amongst humans.



When the boys grew older and became men, they were both brave and strong.



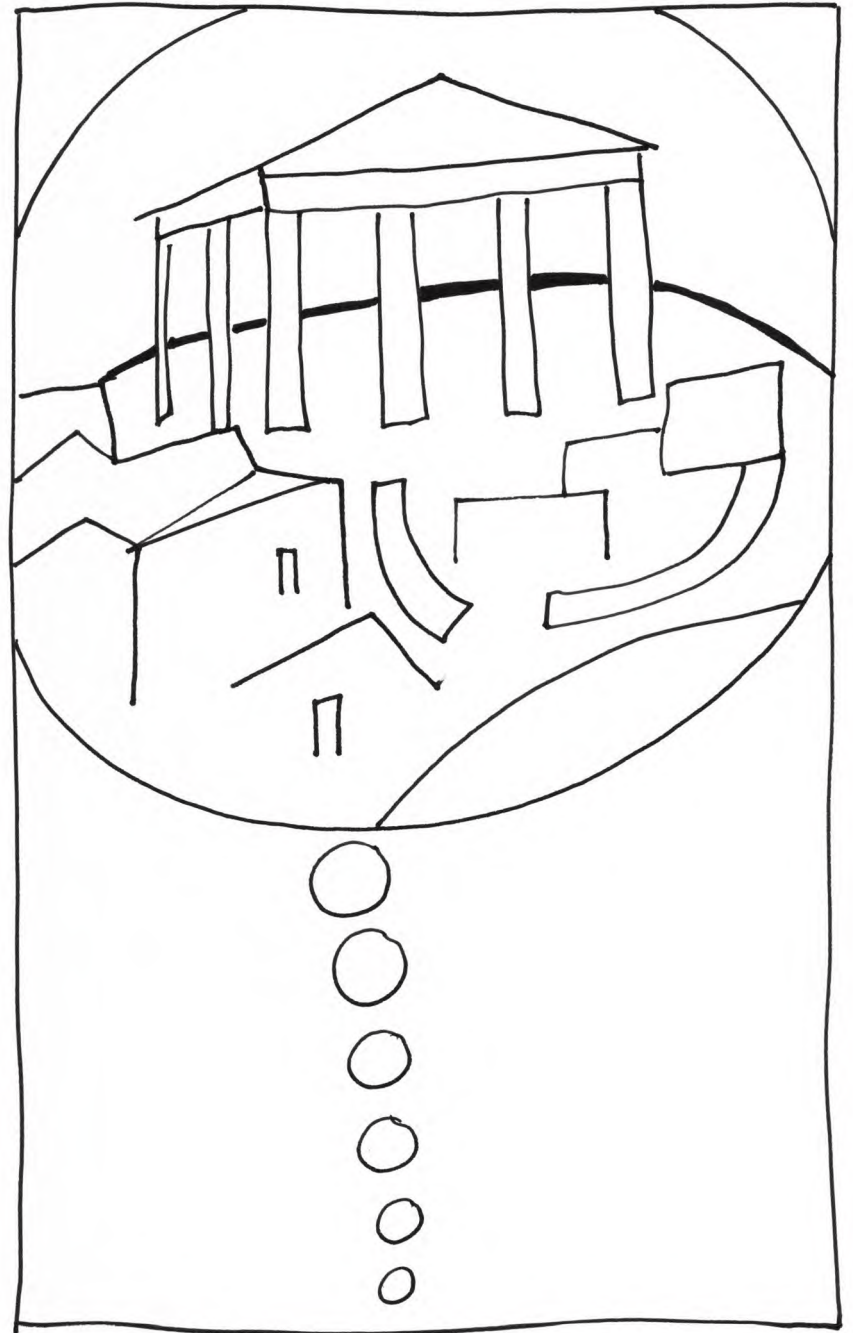
Romulus and Remus fought with the king who had put them in the river Tiber. They killed him to avenge their mother.



Romulus and Remus agreed that they wanted to found a new city. It was to be the most splendid city in the world, where people could live in peace and plenty.



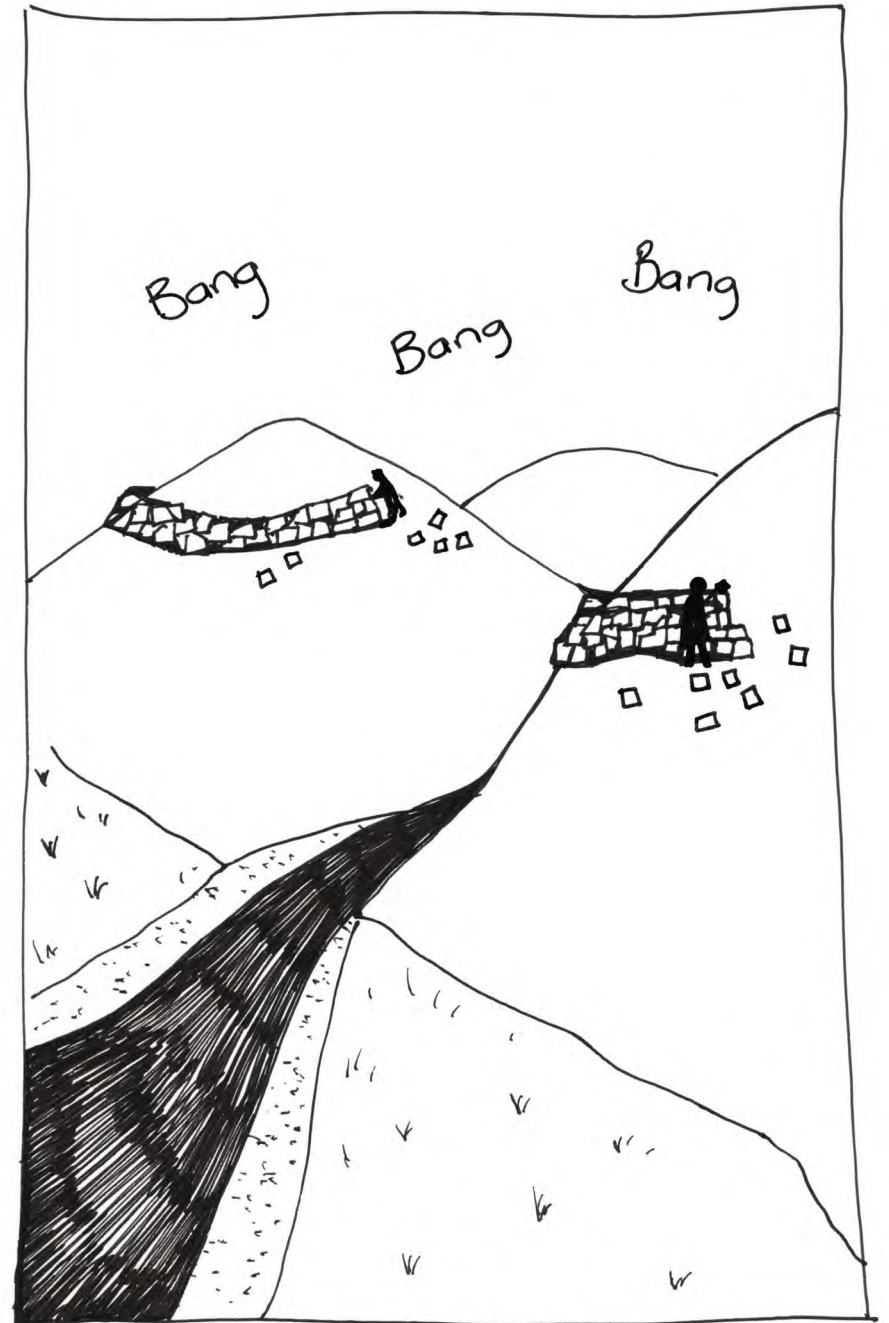
Both boys agreed that their new city should be on the top of a hill so that it would be safe from enemies. They also wanted it to be near the river Tiber.



However, at this point the two brothers fell out! Romulus wanted to build the city on the top of the Palatine Hill, but Remus wanted to build the city on top of the Aventine Hill.



The twins had a terrible argument. Eventually they both started to build on their own hills.



Romulus dug trenches and built a splendid wall around the top of his hill.



When Remus came to see what Romulus was doing, he laughed at the wall.

“Look at it!” he jeered.
“It’s pathetic. I can even jump over it!”



Remus leapt over the wall to mock Romulus.



Romulus was furious. In his anger, he fell on Remus and killed him.



When Romulus saw what he had done, he was filled with sadness and remorse.

He had killed his brother in anger and could never again have him back.



Romulus gave his brother a tremendous funeral. From then onwards, this date has been given as the founding of the city of Rome: April 21st in the year 753 BC.

