

“A fun and clever twist on the story of the Maccabees. I wish comics like this had existed when I was in school.”

—**Steve Sheinkin**, author and illustrator of
The Adventures of Rabbi Harvey

Our story begins just before the very first Hanukkah...

Greeks and Jews are living in an uneasy peace in ancient Judea. Jonathan, a Jewish boy, sees a Greek boy attacked by bullies, and stands up to defend him. They become best friends. But when war comes to their land, Jonathan joins the Maccabees while his friend Jason joins the Greek army.

They seem destined to fight one another.

How will their friendship survive?



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SHIELD OF THE MACCABEES

WRITTEN BY
ERIC A. KIMMEL

ART BY
DOV SMILEY

LETTERED BY ROD OLLERENSHAW

COVER BY DOV SMILEY

To Catriella

— **EAK**

To my students, both in-person and virtual

— **DRS**

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PROLOGUE: ANCIENT JUDEA

IN THE YEAR 351 BCE
ALEXANDER THE
GREAT CREATED A
NEW KIND OF EMPIRE.



HE OPENED
THE DOORS TO THE
RULING GREEK
CULTURE AND INVITED
PEOPLE OF ALL
NATIONS TO JOIN IN.



NO MATTER WHO
YOU WERE, IF YOU
LEARNED TO SPEAK
GREEK, DRESSED AS
A GREEK, FOLLOWED
GREEK CUSTOMS, AND
WORSHIPPED GREEK
GODS, YOU TOO
COULD BECOME
A GREEK.



BUT NOT EVERYONE
APPRECIATED THIS
GIFT. IN JUDEA, LAND
OF THE JEWS (NOW
KNOWN AS ISRAEL),
MANY OF THE JEWISH
PEOPLE HAD DOUBTS.



THE GREEKS
CERTAINLY HAD MUCH
TO OFFER...

BUT MANY OF THE
PEOPLE OF ISRAEL
WERE NOT
COMFORTABLE WITH
HOW MUCH THEIR NEW
RULERS WANTED THEM
TO CHANGE.



GIVING UP THEIR
CUSTOMS, THEIR
IDENTITY, AND THE
RELIGION OF THEIR
ANCESTORS SEEMED
TOO GREAT A PRICE
TO PAY.

IF FORCED TO DO
THAT, THEY WOULD
FIGHT.



OUR STORY BEGINS
AT THE TIME OF THE
FIRST HANUKKAH.

IT STARTS WITH
JASON
AND
JONATHAN,
TWO BOYS FROM THE
COASTAL TOWN OF
SEBASTE IN THE
PROVINCE OF JUDEA.



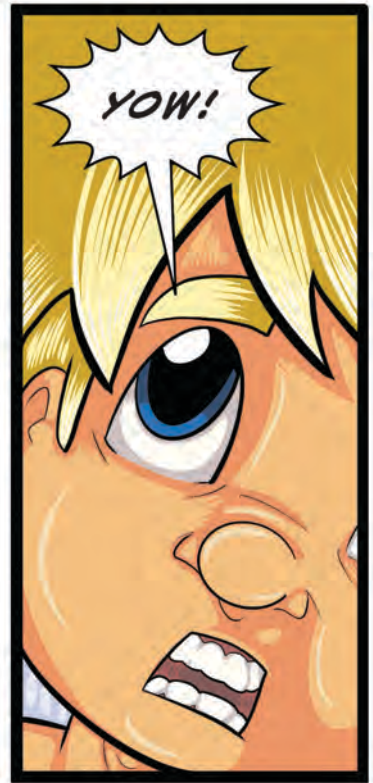
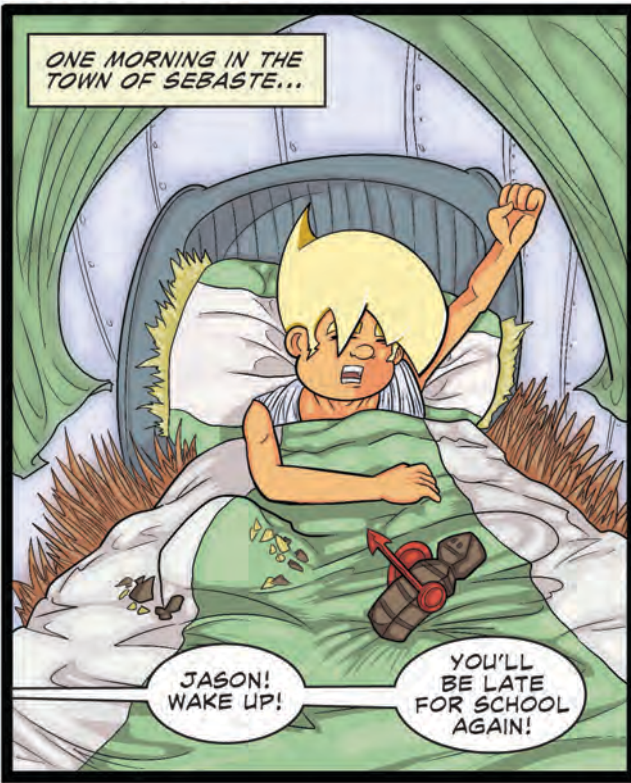
THEY LIVE IN
DIFFERENT
COMMUNITIES,
JEWISH AND GREEK.

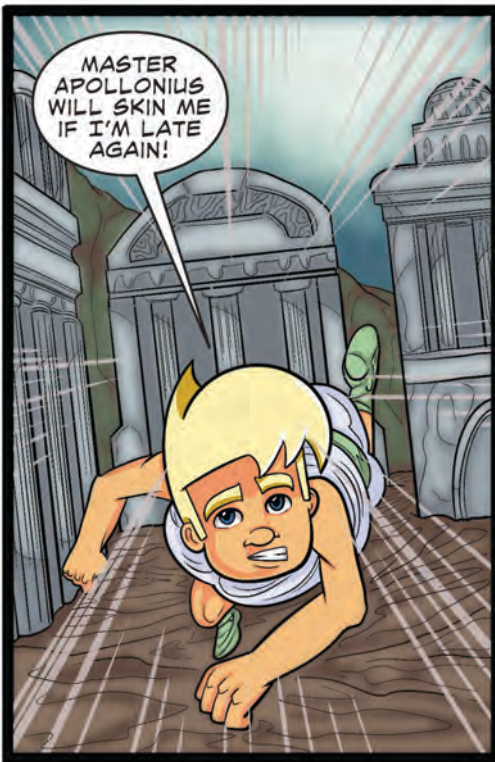
THEY DON'T KNOW
EACH OTHER YET. BUT
THEY ARE ABOUT TO
BECOME BEST FRIENDS.

AND THEY WILL PLAY A
PART IN SOMETHING WE
NOW CALL A MIRACLE.



CHAPTER 1: THE BOYS



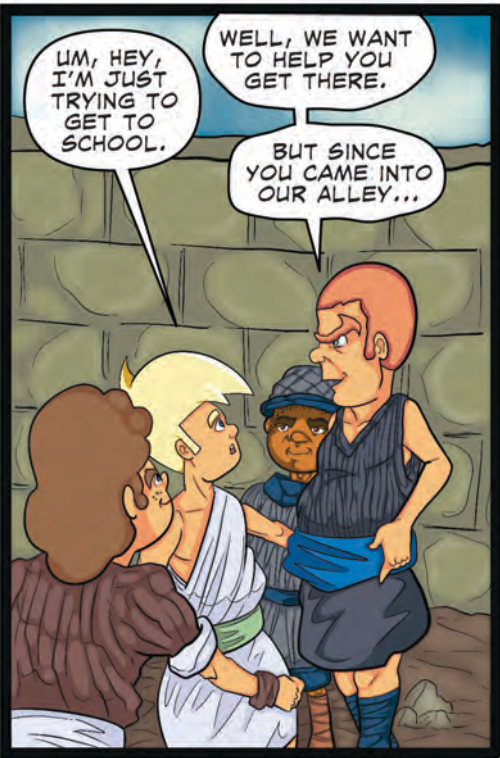




WHAT'S THE HURRY, GREEK BOY?



WHY SO FAST?

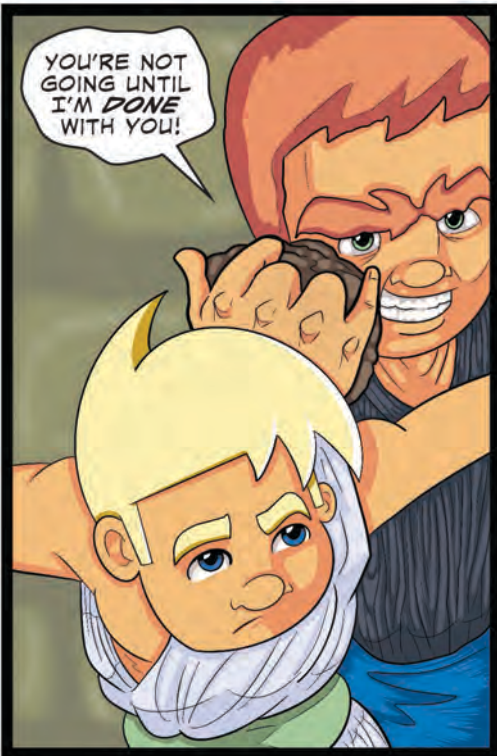


UM, HEY, I'M JUST TRYING TO GET TO SCHOOL.

WELL, WE WANT TO HELP YOU GET THERE.

BUT SINCE YOU CAME INTO OUR ALLEY...







LET HIM GO, OR I'LL MAKE YOU LET HIM GO.



STAY OUT OF THIS, JONATHAN!

SINCE WHEN ARE YOU FRIENDS WITH GREEKS?



I HAVE NOTHING AGAINST GREEKS.



BUT THREE AGAINST ONE IS JUST PLAIN WRONG!

LET'S EVEN THE ODDS!

OOOOFF!!!

