

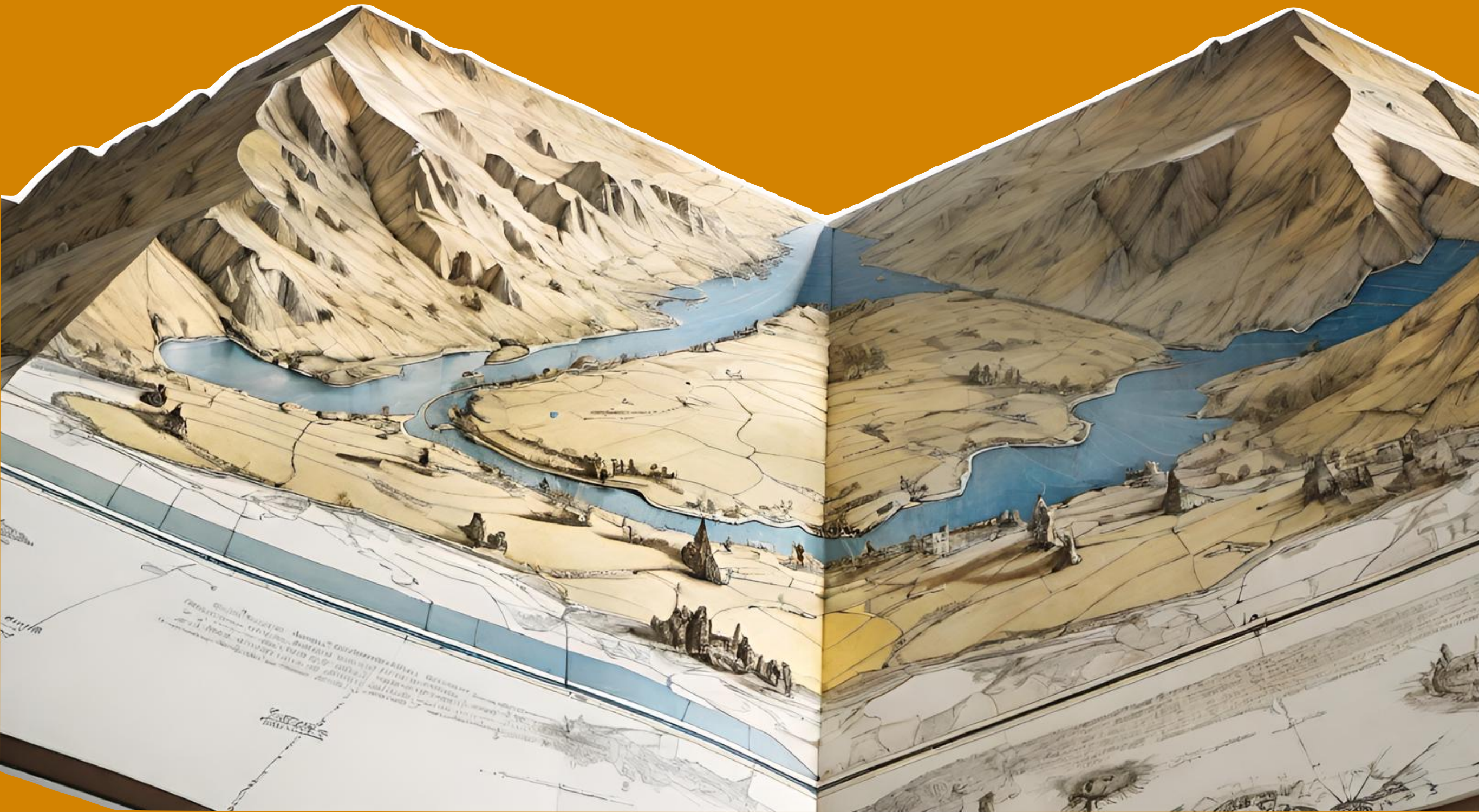
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# WAITING FOR THE **CONKERS** TO FALL

BY SAMI-COLLARD AND SUSANNAH PULHAM.

- ANOTHER KNATURALLI KNUTTI CHAPTER : BOOK 2





# WAITING FOR THE CONKERS TO FALL

This book is available in PDF and ePub formats. It is written in Pages for optimal viewing on an iPad split screen. The authors themselves completed the book's artwork and editing. The illustrations are by Brian Injury Art **B'Art**, adding a personal touch that hopefully enriches the reading experience.

'Madness is to see the world as it is and not as it should be.'  
- Miguel de Cervantes: Don Quixote.



[www.KnaturalliKnutti.com](http://www.KnaturalliKnutti.com)

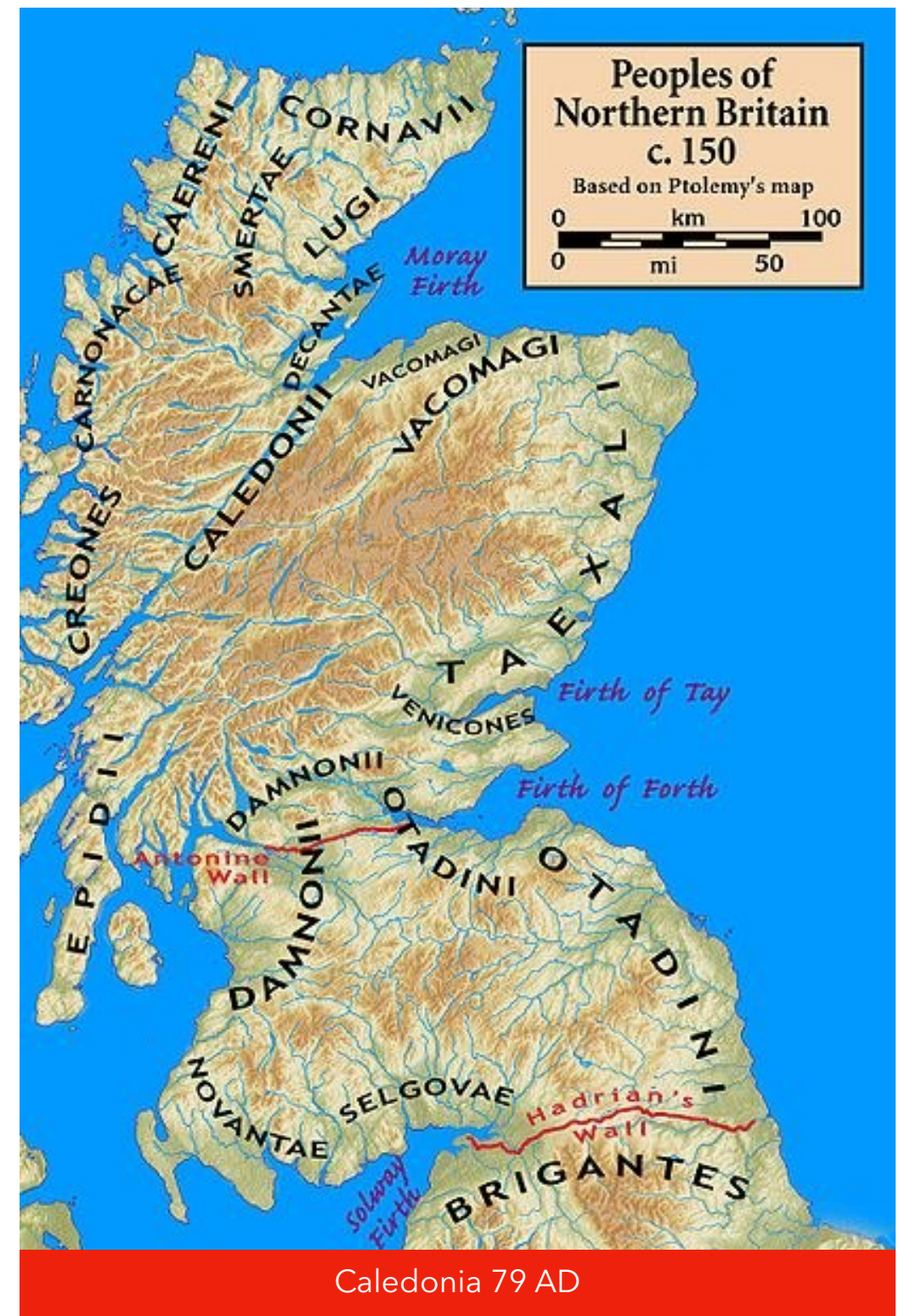
# PROLOGUE

Caledonia is a wild and mysterious place filled with old pine and fir trees. The mountains are tall and rocky, and in winter, they get covered in lots of snow and ice. Long ago, tribes like the Caledonians and Picts lived there, protecting their traditions in the misty, magical landscape. The land is tough and dangerous, with rocky paths and marshy areas.

In 79 AD, Roman soldiers came to the northern part of Britain to fight the tribes in the Grampian mountains. This fight lasted four years and ended with the Battle of Mons Graupius in 83 AD. The Romans wanted to take the tribes' winter food supplies, but the tribes fought back using clever tactics and their knowledge of the land.

The tribes usually lived in round houses near a big hill fort, but they were eventually beaten by the Romans' strong fighting skills and advanced tools.

At the same time, a group of space travellers from a place called Tagais arrives on Earth in Caledonia, starting a new adventure in this ancient land.





YR 3009



The spacecraft Tagais fighter construction programme.



## CADET TRAINING-GLIESE 12B

In the world of aerial dogfights, pilots often crash because they lose or, if they're lucky, escape just in time. Sometimes, they come out without a scratch and jump right back into the action. Every pilot and plane is super important, and these brave flyers are always trying to outsmart and defeat their enemies. Every second counts in a fight, and every move is important and expected.

Skoobie and Eoin met in the tough Tagais hinterland during the final two-week survival exercise for the top cadets. Out of twenty, only they managed to outsmart the searching instructor in the final challenge, staying ahead at every step. Skoobie saw Eoin first, waiting and observing him, or maybe it was the other way around. Acknowledging this, she said, "Are you following me or am I following you, numpty?" Skoobie joked with a cheeky grin. They instantly teamed up, focused on their shared goal. Their decision caught the instructors' attention.

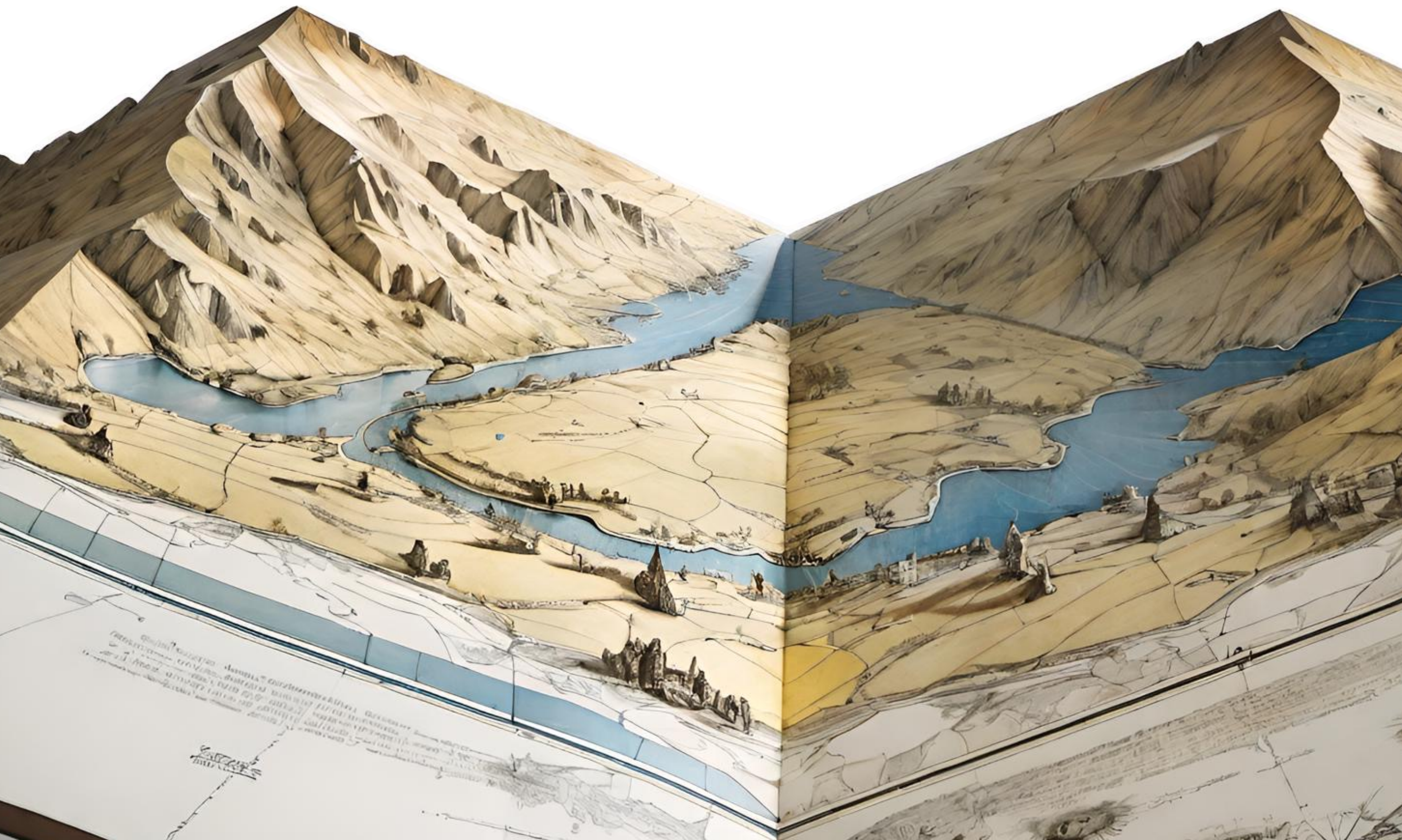
In their long academy training, they learned about aerodynamics, propulsion, and avionics, getting hands-on experience with the Tagais airship programme. This included fixing and designing

aircraft. Their strong engineering backgrounds and disciplined mindset helped them make smart decisions, risk-takers who did well under pressure. They had even joined and designed and tested the latest fighter modules.

Skoobie was the top student, showing great leadership and inspiring her classmates. Even though they had a rivalry, they developed a deep respect for each other. Off duty, they bonded over jokes and coffee. Skoobie often stood to Eoin's left, wearing a T-shirt with an arrow and the phrase "I am a rubbish cadet but at least I am better than him." Eoin didn't like it at first – something Skoobie knew well.

Their leadership council's latest mission was top secret: an unauthorised flight from their home planet Tagais 12B. They carefully erased Maxwell Armstrong's name from the records to hide their tracks. As pilot and co-pilot, along with their six-person crew, they set off on their mission – armed with skill, courage, and determination. Their target was the unrecorded time-travel trip back to 83 AD on Earth to find Maxwell Armstrong, the Explorer, and his crew.







## WEEKLONG REST

After a week of resting and getting ready, Skoobie and seven crew members were all set to explore the mysterious Rannoch Moor and beyond. Eoin climbed up high to keep an eye out and help the team. As they walked around, they carefully collected different plant samples because they needed them to make Scrannos, which was an important part of their food. Wearing tough clothes with cool digital gadgets, they ventured into a place with rolling hills and big, tall mountains.

In late summer, there was lots of wildlife everywhere. Eoin was super excited because he wanted to find Maxwell's emergency food stash, if it was really there like Tagais said. His scans showed new information that could help them save time and maybe even lives. With hope and determination, he went off to see if Maxwell and his team were still alive.

Eoin woke up on the seventh day feeling super ready for what was coming. His training had really helped him prepare. The night before, he and Skoobie had made a detailed plan. Eoin

carefully unzipped the tent just as the morning sun filtered through, shining on his digital map. He quickly packed a survival kit and left without making a sound.

Moving higher, always randomly up, down, and sideways, he walked two kilometres across the tough upper glen. He often went back on his steps, changed his height and view, and stopped to listen carefully. The land was really hard to walk on—steep hills covered in loose rocks.

Looking at his digital map, views fed from the high-flying drone, Eoin studied a group of about twenty people heading south at a fork in the glen. They were being chased by a bigger, slower group about a kilometre behind, hidden in the morning mist that covered this lower glen.







## EOIN FOUND A CAVE

Eoin stood on a rocky spot, thinking about a risky shortcut through Rannoch Moor. This place is a big area with shallow bogs and small lakes. Eoin wore light, strong armour and watched his team as they carefully moved over the loose rocks. The moor can be both safe and dangerous because the weather changes quickly and there are hidden animals. The tribes there often fight over resources. After spending the day looking for food, the group had a meal of fresh trout and wild greens by the fire. Then, Skoobie told everyone that Eoin had something important to say.

Eoin shared that he had found an empty cave nearby. Inside, there were old wall paintings and signs that someone had left quickly. He thought it could be a safe place to keep their extra equipment, so they could travel with less stuff. The group was curious and asked about Maxwell's team, Scrannos, and if the cave was safe. Earlier, Eoin and Skoobie decided to tell everyone about the cave and planned to move their gear secretly at night, resting during the day to stay hidden and safe.







## WE GO WEST

As the sun went down, painting the sky with a warm, golden light, the seven crew members stopped to enjoy the amazing view. The smell of the soil mixed with the fresh scent of wild plants around them. Rushes, grasses, and sundews sparkled like jewels in the soft, fading light, gently swaying in the evening breeze. The crew was amazed by the beautiful highlands, where Earth's rugged landscapes showed off their glory. A cool breeze played with the clouds, keeping the annoying bugs away, so the crew could enjoy the peaceful and grand scenery.

They moved carefully and confidently through the digital world, their camouflage helping them hide and stay alert for any dangers. Excited to discover new things, they had their gear ready and their spirits high with hope. "We head west," Skoobie said confidently, leading the way with determination. Meanwhile, Eoin stayed super alert, his sharp eyes checking the ridges and looking out over the vast area for a kilometre in every direction, but he remained unseen.





Caledonia Rannoch Moor 83 AD



## 'THE LUGI'

Maxwell and his crew were really scared and confused after their spaceship crashed on a rocky shore next to a calm lake. They landed on Earth in September 79 AD, four years earlier than planned, and didn't have much time to figure out what was happening before they were attacked. A group of fierce Lugi warriors, armed with nets, sharp spears, and torches, quickly captured them. The crew was taken north into Lugi land and locked up in dark, damp cells made of wood and animal skins. For five terrible months, they were left there, starving and thirsty, getting weaker every day.

One night, under a full moon, something horrible happened. One by one, the crew members were sacrificed. Already weak, they had to go through these scary events while a scary Druid watched. The Druid wore a hood, and his eyes glowed with a strange light as he held a staff with bones and charms. The sacrifices happened on an old stone altar, and the tribe cheered and drank the victims' blood. In the end, the bodies were thrown into a nearby pool. These scary events still give Maxwell nightmares.

The next morning, Maxwell realised that every full moon, about every 29.5 days, he would be sacrificed because of ancient magic. But every 19 years in February, a rare black moon would appear, stopping his fate for a while. Even though he was badly hurt, Maxwell managed to escape. The Lugi warriors kept chasing him, determined to find and kill him because they wanted blood and victory.







# 'CERONES GHILLIES'

Maxwell was running as fast as he could through the dark and spooky Caledonian forest. His heart was beating really fast because he saw bloody footprints and heard angry dogs barking behind him. The night was quiet, and the moon was barely shining, making everything look misty and creepy. It had been snowing heavily for two hours, and the strong wind made it hard to see. Maxwell was tired and desperate, tripping over rocks and tree roots. Finally, he fell into a pile of wet, smelly leaves and started to lose consciousness.

When Maxwell woke up four hours later, he was in a small, dimly lit cave. The firelight flickered on the walls, making shadows that seemed to move. He was wrapped in a damp, smelly blanket, and his clothes were dirty and torn from his escape. Surprisingly, he wasn't tied up; his captors just wanted to keep him warm. They gave him a strange, sour drink made from berries, and even though they looked rough, they were sometimes kind to him. These people were the Cerone's ghillies, who were really good at living in the forest and tracking things.

The ghillies stayed in the cave until the sun went down, then led Maxwell through the snowy forest. They took care of his wounds with special plants like heather, yarrow, and willow bark, using their hands skilfully. For three nights, they moved quietly and carefully, avoiding anyone who might be looking for them. They blended into the snow so well that it was hard to tell they had been there. Every morning, they watched out for any signs of people chasing them. Three days later, Maxwell and the ghillies crossed the Minch by boat, carefully going around the rocky coasts of Mull and Skye. They were heading to the island of Lewis, Tairbart, a safe place away from the dangers that had chased Maxwell through the forest. It was also Angus Ogs' country.







# THE ANGUS OG AND THE DRUID

Maxwell Armstrong got off the boat with a confident walk, catching everyone's attention. Even though his legs were a bit wobbly from rowing, he looked impressive. People on Tairbart beach were curious and came closer to see this tall, mysterious guy who had just arrived in the chief's fancy boat.

As the sun rose and turned the sky golden, Maxwell found himself near the big wooden fortress of Angus Og, the clan chief. With some gentle help from the locals, he kept going. Even though he looked a bit messy, Maxwell had a calm and strong presence that made people want to listen to him. His clothes were simple, showing he was humble, but his confident moves and sharp eyes made him seem wise and kind, almost like he was from another world, which he was.

At first, the village kids were a bit shy, but Maxwell's warm smile and friendly wave quickly made them feel comfortable. When Angus Og heard about Maxwell's arrival, he came to say hello. It soon became clear to everyone that Maxwell wasn't just a curious visitor, but he didn't seem dangerous. Angus showed him

traditional Highland hospitality by giving him a sturdy reed and a wooden house on the edge of the village, with views of green fields and the big ocean.

Having faced tough times before, Maxwell was really grateful to be seen as a traveller and merchant. He knew a little bit of Gaelic, enough to chat, and he quickly learned more, making him seem like he fit right into the community.







# THE DRUID

Maxwell Armstrong is waiting for Angus's druid, who is super important for the Caledonian tribe's ritual. While he waits, he watches the busy village, listens to people chatting, and makes friends with the locals. Max is really good at fixing houses and setting up clinics with herbal medicine, so the villagers respect him a lot. Even though he's not from there, they see him as a healer and a great storyteller because of his wisdom and good advice.

Even though Max is always busy, he seems tired, hinting at a tough past. He shows hope and strength, trying to get better from what the Lugi did to him. Inside, he really wants justice against the Lugi tribe, who once captured him and tried to kill him. There's a famous story about his brave escape through the Highlands, and now he's known as Shadow Max. He's promised to face the Lugi Chief and the mysterious druid when the moon is full.

The Lugi hunters are often talked about in local stories, where they chased the 'Druid' but ended up being chased themselves. This has turned into the legendary tale of the 'Shadow Druid' in Caledonia. Max has become a legend too, with kids telling stories of him as a 'bogeyman' after his escape across the Minch.

Even though the chase has stopped for now, Max soon meets Rhona, Angus Og's daughter. She visited him when he was resting.

"Hello, young Druid. You don't seem well; you had a fever and you collapsed. You've been through the wars," Rhona says softly, her voice calm and soothing. She's the most beautiful girl he's ever seen—or maybe it's just the fever making him think that? She gently wipes his sweaty forehead, seeing how weak he is.

Rhona starts a fire and tries to give him some soup, but his swollen tonsils make it hard to swallow. Still, he holds her hand and whispers, "Thank you, thank you." "We need to break this fever before it gets worse if you want to get revenge," she whispers gently, her words comforting him.







# THE DRUID

Maxwell Armstrong was in a really bad spot. He had been captured four months ago and was stuck in an old wooden cage that was half underwater because of the strong tides. This made him very weak and at risk from the weather. The changing seasons, not having enough food, and his untreated wounds made things even worse for him.

For three tough weeks, Maxwell was in and out of being awake. But with some kind and careful help, he started to get better. He could walk again, which gave him a bit of hope. He got new clothes, including a cool battle tunic, and a nice haircut and beard trim, which were the first steps in his recovery.



Max took walks on the beach



# THE LORD OF THE ISLES

Max knew that the Romans would soon try to take over their land, and his friend Angus Og agreed. Max imagined different battles, especially those at sea near dangerous coasts where rocks and strong currents could help them. The Romans called Angus's tribe the Cerones, a name that made people both respect and fear them because they were so independent.

Max was excited as he talked about planting new trees on hills with good soil. He also wanted to find coal to power their tools and make weapons. This winter, he planned to explore nearby islands, making maps and taking notes, with the help of a skilled boat builder.

Max wanted to gather 500 men to plant forests and hire fifty carpenters and sailmakers to fix and improve their ships. They would take care of the forests so they would always have enough trees and stay strong for many years. In April, their warriors would start tough training to get really good at rowing and fighting with short swords and special shields made from alder wood. Their oars, made from hickory and ash, showed they were

well-prepared. They would have fun tug-of-war matches to beat Roman ships and even build battering rams to sink enemy ships up close. When the Romans came, they needed to be ready. Max had travelled a lot, which was very helpful. People said he went south to Londinium and Itius in Gaul during the winter to learn more about building ships, travelling over a thousand kilometres. Angus Og was curious and asked, "How big a fleet will we need?" Max replied, "You, Angus, shall become the Lord of the Isles." Angus smiled at this and invited Max to dinner.





WE WILL PICK THE BEST  
TREES FROM THE HILLS  
AND AND MAKE A PLAN  
TO PLANT NEW ONES  
QUICKLY

CERONES



# RHONA AND MAX

The event was calm and quiet, with lots of sneaky glances and silent watching. They had a simple but tasty meal, starting with fresh salmon, followed by hot venison and oats. These dishes were special because they came from successful hunting and fishing trips.

Rhona, who was always curious, watched the druid to learn more about his travels. She noticed he played with his food, especially the meat, but left the veggies and scones alone. Her brothers ate everything and teased her, which made her laugh.

As the evening went on, they continued talking about their walk. Angus's two oldest sons were full of energy and dreams about the future. Rhona, on the other hand, was more reserved, with lots of thoughts and questions in her mind. Maxwell, feeling tired from the long talk, said goodbye politely and joked, "Thank the cook." Rhona smiled warmly and said, "Well, that's me, young druid." Embarrassed, Maxwell quickly left, missing Rhona's soft whisper: "I really like him. Not perfect, but perfect for me."

Then she invited Max to join her for breakfast, knowing he'd enjoy it more.

Angus Og watched his daughter being clever with pride and encouraged her to ask the wizard questions. He had given him a small hut on the village's edge.

Maxwell was charming and nice, but he was a true traveller—quiet about his family and often not saying much when asked. His Gaelic was okay but not great, which is normal for someone from another place learning the language. He spoke a few languages, understood local dialects, and probably read Latin. As a wanderer, he loved exploring but agreed to stay through the winter, building a simple house deep in the forest.



## RHONA AND MAX

Max worked at the village clinic, helping with small illnesses. He noticed that the Earth people were a lot like the Tagais, probably because they lived in similar places. Max spent a lot of time with the boat builders and blacksmiths, and he practiced fighting with Angus Og's sons, young Angus and Col. Everyone saw that the druid was getting stronger and could fight pretty well. Later, Max would explore the woods, help fix boats, and learn how to build things.

One late May day, Max surprised Rhona during one of their walks. This time, he led her through the forest, where she used to play with her brothers when she was little. They got close to a clearing that she knew well, her favourite spot. Rhona had once told her young brothers, Angus and Col, that she wanted to make this place her home when she got married.

In awe, she stopped, looked at Max, and teased him, "Do you maybe like me, young wizard?" And, of course, he did.







## THE DRUID RETURNS

The next day, Rhona is not happy when Angus Og's helper comes back after inviting Maxwell for breakfast. But they don't know that Maxwell had already left Tarbert early in the morning. He walked without his boat because winter was starting to end. Maxwell goes on a tough journey across the North Island, Lewis, which is a big and wild place, much smaller than Great Britain. He's looking for answers to important questions. While he's on this adventure, he accidentally misses the Druids' meeting. But after three hard and life-changing months, he comes back with a simple map of the island that he drew from his experiences. During his journey, the chief hears bits and pieces of Maxwell's adventures, each one more exciting than the last. When Maxwell and the

boat builder come back, they look tired and thin, showing how tough their journey was.

When Rhona sees how skinny Maxwell is, she jokes, "Hello, young druid. I see why they call you Shadow Druid." This makes Angus Og laugh loudly, and Maxwell is confused and doesn't know what to say because he didn't expect the joke.

"I'm leaving, dad. Someone needs to eat. Invite this one for some informal tea; it's too early for ale or whisky. I'll tell the cook!"



# THE BUILDING OF GLIESA

Maxwell was always proud of Gliesa, but he decided his true home is wherever Rhona is. Rhona sometimes calls him “Max, the Druid” when she’s upset with him. Maxwell has an amazing connection with nature that fascinates everyone he meets. He has trained a group of deer to stay just outside the forest, always watching for danger. Above them, a stunning flock of birds, including buzzards, falcons, and eagles, flies gracefully, catching everyone’s attention with their sharp eyes.

A pack of wolves roams his forest, using their instincts and teamwork to protect the nearby village. Some villagers say the ancient oak woods are haunted, but Max believes he understands the forest animals better than anyone. The alder trees are thought to be magical portals for fairies, with many stories about their special powers.

This strong bond with nature has turned Gliesa into a peaceful sanctuary, a beautiful place where animals and humans live happily together. It’s full

of calm and energy, attracting those who want to experience its magical charm.

Meanwhile, the Shadow Druid carefully plans the diet of the Scrannos to keep it healthy and smart. Eating Scrannos is said to bring a good future because it offers the perfect mix of nutrition and growth. Gliesa was given to Rhona by her father, Angus Og, and now Maxwell is her protector. Maxwell even built places for the Tagais to stay when they arrived!







# RHONA AND MAX

Max had a super cool idea inspired by Tobar Moire on the Isle of Mull. He wanted to make a special place called Gliesa where people could feel better and solve their problems. This magical spot is surrounded by awesome old trees like rowan, oak, and willow, and there's a gentle stream running through it. Gliesa is powered by a wind and water mill, so it can take care of itself. Max uses eco-friendly colours and hidden holograms to keep it a secret, so only a few people know about it. He shares old herbal remedies, learning from the wisdom of the Celtic Druids.

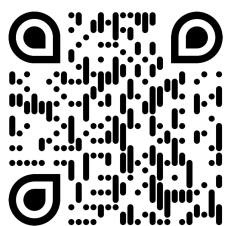
Life in Gliesa is peaceful and all about nature. People raise goats and chickens, eat oats and fresh fish, and grow lots of veggies in their gardens. There are stories that say Odin, a powerful god, sent Max to protect the forest and its animals from danger.

Max also built a nice little house for his friend Angus Og, who often visits for fun chats and laughter. Angus's family, Rhona, young Angus, and Col, join in too, sharing meals and drinks. The woods are filled with the sounds of friendship and stories, making Gliesa a magical and warm place.

In Tarbert, the landscape is rugged and windy, with the remains of the Caledonian Forest showing how strong it is. There are old tree stumps and twisted trees that have grown in the wind. These woods are important because they provide wood for building ships, homes, and furniture. Skilled artisans turn these woods into beautiful works of art.

Skilled Celtic artisans would use the tin, lead, silver, and gold mines for decorative purposes. Maxwell and the villagers also established nearby field crop laboratories.





Knaturali

Knutti

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Sami-Collard and Susannah Pulham had big bumps on their heads, which made things tough for them. Some people might think they're different because of that, but that's not true. A healthy brain makes things easy, but when it's hurt, it can be tricky.

A doctor suggested they try new things to help their brains heal. They haven't fully recovered yet, but they've made a lot of progress. They love a story called "Don Quixote," which tells us it's okay to dream big.

They met at a poetry group and decided to create a book together. One was a teacher, and the other was a builder. They became great friends and supported each other. They wrote a fun book for kids with big letters and pictures. After their injuries, remembering words and simple things was hard. But they want to help others too. They plan to donate most of the money from their book to assist people with brain injuries.

Their home website, branded as knaturali-knutti 🤪, can be found at <https://www.knaturali-knutti.com>.

Both believe that education is a lifelong journey.

All mistakes are their own. 🤪 After all, they're two brain injury victims sharing a story.







