

## Should Bran Escape from the Romans?

Early on in Jim Eldridge's eventful story - which is called *Roman Invasion* - Bran and his fellow Carvetii warriors launch a surprise attack against the conquering Romans. However, the attack is unfortunately not a success and Bran is taken prisoner alongside his mother, sister and cousins. He is then forced to join a legion of Roman soldiers who are marching east to build the Stanegate Road. Yet, should Bran co-operate with the Romans or should he try and escape? Let's take a look at the For and Against sides of this argument.

First of all, many readers believe that Bran should escape from the Romans because as the male heir to the Carvetii tribe (after his father died in battle), he surely should be with his people, leading, supporting and protecting them. Indeed, after the latest battle, that was in the first chapter, his people would definitely need a strong leader to look up to and give them hope. Furthermore, a large number of readers think that Bran should escape because if he co-operates even one bit with the Roman enemy, he would be betraying his Carvetii people and his own values. Can you imagine if Bran became friendly with any of the soldiers or shared their unfamiliar, foreign food and drink? His people would undoubtedly be disgusted! Finally, other people are convinced that Bran must escape because sooner or later, the Romans might go back on their deal and slaughter him when he is not expecting it. This could happen in the middle of the night (when he is sound asleep) or possibly in broad daylight when his back is turned. Whatever the case, Bran would not see it coming.

On the other hand, there are quite a few readers who argue that Bran should not escape from the Romans because the instant he does do - or even tries to and fails - his mother and sister would be killed. Indeed, there's certainly no doubting that the callous, cruel Roman governor (who is back at the fort) would hesitate to do so once he got wind of Bran's actions. What's more, some people believe that it would be unwise for Bran to escape because as a prisoner, who has to remain tied up most of the time, he is in the perfect position to observe the Roman legion and find out more about their plans, tactics and beliefs. If he could somehow pass this information to his Carvetii tribe, then this might give them an advantage over the all-powerful Romans! Lastly, there are a small minority of readers who think that Bran should definitely not escape because he may be able to gain the Romans' trust and strike some kind of deal that could protect his tribe from further attacks. Surely Bran's most important role as a prince is to safeguard the lives of his tribe, isn't it?

After looking at both arguments, we believe that Bran should not escape from the Romans. Although his people are desperate for leadership and might think that he is betraying them, Bran can simply not run the risk of his mother and sister being executed because of his actions.