



Marcus

At first, this young gladiator needs more practice to be a great warrior. He approaches his training with apprehension. He is also very homesick because he misses his mother. In the end, he proves himself to be worthy of the title gladiator.



Lucas

This young, strong gladiator is a confident warrior. He is excited to become one of the Emperor's gladiators. He is protective of his friend, Marcus. He respects Marcus for his grand decision during their battle together.



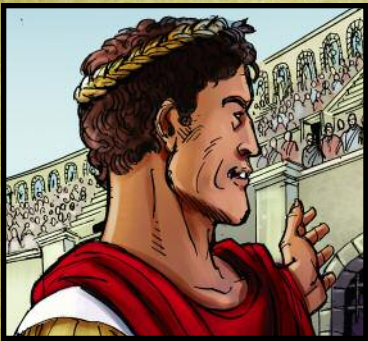
Festivus

This older gladiator is a retiarius. He uses a net and a trident when he is fighting in gladiatorial combat. He likes to brag about his victories.



Flavio

This man is a lanista who owns and trains the emperor's gladiators.



Constantine the Great

This Roman emperor doesn't enjoy watching men kill each other for sport. He feels that violence is not entertainment. During his reign as emperor, gladiatorial combat began to die out, particularly after he converted to Christianity.

Note: While the characters in this book are fictitious, the events surrounding them are not.

TRAINING

Marcus and Lucas start training right away. They work hard, and there is a lot to learn.



Today you will learn how to handle a practice sword. It is as heavy as a real sword, but it is not sharp.

This sword isn't so heavy. My muscles are strong after lifting weights.

Flavio watches the boys swing their swords in the air.

Not bad. Let's see you fight against each other.

