

2010

# Vannius Deposed

Mark Halliday

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview>

Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Halliday, Mark. "Vannius Deposed." *The Iowa Review* 40.1 (2010): 46-46. Web.  
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.6843>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by Iowa Research Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Review by an authorized administrator of Iowa Research Online. For more information, please contact [lib-ir@uiowa.edu](mailto:lib-ir@uiowa.edu).

## VANNIUS DEPOSED

*from the Latin of Publius Pomponius Tertius, Suebiad 264*

Goodbye Vannius, you must sail off to Pannonia,  
never to return. Your power in Suebia is history.  
Black water laps at the stern of your battered vessel

and the wind wanders fecklessly across its canvas.  
Vannius, you were foolish to put any faith  
in your Sarmatian cavalry from the Jazyges!  
Their horses wandered feckless as wind on the Danube

till the roaring throngs of the Luggii and Hermunduri  
charged upon them with a dozen spears for every rider.  
Vannius, what did your lipsmacking spirit expect?

46

There are always more Luggii, Vannius!  
And always more Hermunduri! The earth produces them  
like a million burning cabbages from grotty hell  
and cherishes no silver candle for a thick little king

such as you, Vannius, you of the bulging eyes  
and the taste for green-flecked Suebian cheeses!  
Now your throne is shared by those sweaty pips,

Vangio and Sido, hard-handed sons of your feckless sister.  
Vannius, goodbye. Wail temperately on your ship forlorn,  
as wailing changes nothing, except to obscure a strummed harp.  
From the black earth upspring ever new Vangios and Sidos.

**The Iowa Review**