

Perish 131

Chapter 131: Rebel Leaders Reunite

Maximus looked at him, the corners of his mouth slightly raised, and said casually, "You just said that Spartacus's side has nearly 100,000 people now. Food and supplies must be tight. I've already run into conflicts with Cleonis even from this distance. If I were any closer, wouldn't we be fighting every day?"

Okmar was momentarily speechless, then chuckled awkwardly twice. "You have a point."

The messenger's notification had already been received, so Fesaros led his subordinate officers early to stand outside the camp gate to welcome them.

Although Maximus's army recruited soldiers with strict standards, its growth rate was still fast. It now numbered 15,000 soldiers, and including non-combat personnel, the total exceeded 20,000.

To facilitate more effective command in battle, Maximus reorganized his army at the end of last month into two legions and a personal guard. The legion structures were almost identical to the Roman Army's, with six battalions totaling 6,000 men each, while the personal guard temporarily consisted of three battalions. Based on seniority within Maximus's army, Fesaros and Torrelugo were appointed commanders of the First and Second Legions, respectively. Camillus and Oluus were made captain and vice-captain of the personal guard.

At this moment, Fesaros strode forward and delivered a firm military salute: "Leader Maximus, First Legion Commander Fesaros salutes you!"

Maximus returned the salute, then smiled and said, "Fesaros, you've done quite well leading the First Legion here. The Barians have even proactively offered to increase their tribute to us."

"That's all thanks to the brothers' efforts, and honestly, the group coming from the south is just too easy to handle." Fesaros, who had risen from his origins as a sailor, had developed a bit of a commanding aura after nearly a year of honing. Though inwardly proud, his words remained modest.

"Looks like you're quite comfortable here." Maximus eyed Fesaros and said with a half-smile, "How about next month you stay here with the First Legion and continue your post?"

"That won't do! Next month, it's the Second Legion's turn to station here!" Fesaros immediately raised his voice in protest. "Apart from training and patrolling, there's nothing else to do here. The brothers are already eager to return to Sarabia."

Maximus laughed heartily as he walked past Fesaros and approached the captain of the First Battalion. With a smile, he asked, "Lufus, what do you think of relocating your battalion from guarding Sarabia's city walls to this area?"

"The people coming from the south are too weak," Lufus replied succinctly.

"To be fair, they're just pastoral herdsmen who've recently picked up weapons. But when the Romans arrive, that will be the true test for you," Maximus said seriously.

"Don't worry, leader. When the Romans come, the First Battalion won't back down. We will form up and be the first to charge into battle against them," Lufus replied resolutely.

Maximus patted his shoulder in encouragement and continued with a smile toward the next battalion captain...

Standing off to the side, Okmar quietly watched this scene of Maximus meeting with his subordinates. Unlike Spartacus's army, where everyone lived in harmony without concern for rank or hierarchy, Maximus, though similarly talking and joking with his team officers, exuded a distinctly hierarchical dynamic. The reverence and obedience from the officers toward their leader in their every gesture reminded Okmar somewhat of the Roman Army. It surprised him...

"Okmar, long time no see," Fesaros's voice interrupted Okmar's thoughts.

Okmar looked at this young man who had once been unremarkable among the gladiators and responded, "Indeed, it's been a long time. In a blink, you've become a legion commander."

Fesaros straightened his chest, adjusted his feather helmet with his right hand, and said modestly, "I still can't compare to you. You're the only cavalry captain in our Free Italy forces."

Okmar snorted lightly in self-deprecation and replied, "Cavalry captain in name only. More than half of my men don't even have armor or shields. Their equipment isn't even as good as the cavalry from the Gaul Tribe I used to belong to. While we have more people, it's closer to being a group of mounted herdsmen."

"My brothers are in the same situation as yours. Don't worry; we'll gradually get all the gear needed," Fesaros said in a consoling tone while leaning in a bit closer. "I heard that Enomai, the leader, has fallen in battle. Is this true?"

Okmar nodded solemnly and replied, "It's true. This time, I've been ordered to invite Leader Maximus to Uriya primarily to discuss this matter."

Having gotten Okmar's confirmation, Fesaros didn't appear surprised. Being in a camp so close to Spartacus's main forces, the news had already spread. Fesaros adopted a serious demeanor and said, "Some people from your side have... been quite unfriendly toward us. If our leader is heading to Uriya, how will his safety be ensured?"

This is all the fallout from you driving back Cleonis's forces... Okmar thought to himself but kept a stern expression as he replied firmly, "Rest assured. Spartacus would never allow such a thing to happen!"

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After entering the camp, Maximus visited each tent to greet the soldiers of the First Legion. He also instructed the kitchen to slaughter sheep and chickens, making that night's dinner extraordinarily lavish. The camp was filled with laughter and joy.

Early the next day, Maximus led his troops out of the camp. Fesaros, concerned for his safety, suggested sending an additional battalion to guard him, but Maximus declined.

As the column marched along the road and left the zone controlled by the First Legion, the scenery before them began to change. Although the green fields stretched out as far as the eye could see, during this season of agricultural labor, there were no farmers working the land. Wild grass dominated the wheat fields, growing unchecked. Occasionally, among the vegetation, there lay scattered bodies, partially hidden. Wild dogs and small animals scavenged among them. In the midst of this sea of green, patches of silent black death appeared—villages burned to the ground...

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Maximus's mood grew heavy, especially when he encountered the bodies of women and children.

As they continued marching south, the vibrant greenery started to vanish. Trees had been felled, wild grass uprooted, replaced by makeshift hovels and tents scattered across the fields without fences or walls. People dressed in bizarre garments were everywhere; some cooking, others laughing, training, fighting, or abusing captives. The scene was chaotic and noisy, with the occasional harrowing screams of women coming from certain tents.

Maximus's furrowed brow tightened even further.

When these people noticed travelers on the now-deserted road, their eyes fell upon Maximus's troops. Yet, the Free Italy banner held high and the imposing soldiers dissuaded most from thoughts of robbery, though some still dared to block the path, demanding supplies.

At this moment, Okmar galloped forward, declared his identity, and fiercely reprimanded them for their insolence.

Most of these newcomers to Free Italy had seen this cavalry Great Captain beside Spartacus before in Uriya. Intimidated by Spartacus's reputation, they swiftly admitted their wrongdoing and stepped aside.

Maximus encountered no major obstacles, and the troops entered the Calabria region smoothly.

The terrain of Calabria, unlike Apulia's flat expanses, consists of rolling hills. Rivers are few, yet the soil is rich, renowned in Italy for livestock and orchard cultivation.

Maximus's forces continued their journey along the Appian Way. The further south they traveled, the more rebel camps they encountered, growing ever more organized and disciplined.

Passing through a stretch of hills and descending into lowlands, Maximus saw the great city of Tarentum, standing proudly within its azure, figure-eight-shaped bay.

Not far from Tarentum, a sprawling rebel camp stood in the fields, heavily guarded. According to Okmar, this camp was established by a rebel leader from Tarentum named Phitodorus, whose soldiers were mostly impoverished locals.

Maximus didn't have time to observe the famed city, revered in Sparta as the birthplace of "children of maidens" (children born in Sparta during the warriors' campaign in Masia). His troops continued southeast along the Appian Way, skirting Tarentum.

Near dusk, they finally arrived at Spartacus's encampment—Uriya.

On open, expansive fields, alongside a sturdy, straight highway, stood a small city surrounded by adjacent campgrounds. The place bustled like an enormous marketplace, vibrant and lively.

Having received news of their arrival, Spartacus, accompanied by several others, came out of the city to welcome them.

Maximus promptly dismounted, strode forward briskly, and called out loudly, "Leader Spartacus, I sincerely apologize for my delay!"

"Maximus, you're not late at all. They've just arrived not long ago as well," Spartacus replied with a warm tone.

Maximus's gaze turned to Hamilcar beside Spartacus, and with concern, he said, "Teacher, you look thinner than when we last parted at Benevento!"

"There's simply too much to worry about lately—how could I not lose weight?" Hamilcar grumbled briefly, then turned to look at the troops behind Maximus, saying, "Your camp site has already been prepared next to ours. You just need to set up your tents."

Maximus caught the implication in Hamilcar's words—staying close to Spartacus's army meant they had protection nearby, avoiding unnecessary conflicts. With gratitude, he said, "Teacher, truly thank you for the trouble!"

Hamilcar quickly instructed his men to guide Maximus's troops to their camp, while Spartacus invited Maximus to enter the city to discuss urgent matters.

The rebel soldiers watching from the sidelines immediately grew louder in their chatter as the arriving troops disappeared into the distance.

"Which unit is this? Their leader looks so young!"

"That's Leader Maximus's army. Don't underestimate him—he was one of the original gladiators who ignited the uprising."

"So that's Maximus?! The man who, to protect those treacherous wealthy elites, once sent troops to attack our own comrades—the traitor!"

"Hey, you're new here! Don't speak recklessly when you're uninformed! Maximus is an excellent leader. He established the Medical Team to ensure the injured among us receive proper treatment. He has repeatedly rescued us during critical moments of peril and provided aid when we faced food shortages. He is tremendously crucial to Free Italy! What qualifications do you have to slander him here?"

"Maximus is undeniably remarkable, but he is also selfish. He hoards spoils, refusing to share them with other units. Back in Pompeii..."

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On the highway outside Uriya City, disagreements erupted among rebel soldiers due to Maximus. Meanwhile, in a large house within Uriya City, Spartacus, Hamilcar, Antonix, and other rebel leaders were seated around a broad wooden table. However, rather than starting their discussions, they were first having dinner, as Maximus's arrival coincided with mealtime—also a way to save time.

A bowl of barley porridge, a piece of bread, and two apples—that constituted the entirety of the dinner. For leaders meeting for the first time since the division of forces in Campania, wasn't this meal a little overly modest? It seemed that the army's food supplies were indeed as Okmar had suggested—not particularly ample... Maximus thought to himself.

He reached out for the bread, took a big bite, and began observing the others in the room:

Spartacus ate his meal unhurriedly, his manner always exuding calm and confidence;

Hamilcar ate quickly—he was the type to exhaust himself perpetually;

Antonix ate while whispering softly to Hamilcar, his expression slightly worn, evidently strained from recent efforts;

Cross, instead of eating, stared disdainfully at the food, his plumper figure suggesting he had fared better during recent days in the Turi Plain;

When Maximus's gaze fell on Attutmus, their eyes met simultaneously. Smiling, Attutmus nodded his greeting. Whether during their march southward or after taking Canosa, the two maintained a cooperative rapport. Attutmus had even adopted some practices from Maximus's army—avoiding total exploitation of captured territories—thus showing great goodwill towards Maximus;

An empty seat beside Attutmus was meant for Enomai, clearly Spartacus's way of reminding everyone;

Atmidonos, once a shepherd among the Samnites, had led countless poor mountain dwellers through the Samnium Mountain Area to join the rebel army in Campania. Thanks to his efforts, the army managed to traverse the Samnium Mountain Area successfully, though Maximus hadn't had much interaction with him;

Tormas had a similar background to Atmidonos, but he hailed from the Lucania Mountain Area.

The other three individuals were unfamiliar to Maximus, though Spartacus had provided introductions earlier: Phitodorus, formerly a drifter from Tarentum, had proactively joined Spartacus's forces when they emerged from the Lucania Mountain Area, rallying impoverished people from Calabria to enlist. His contributions greatly facilitated Spartacus's forces in securing a foothold here;

Chapter 133: Revenge

Depeitimas, a Roman veteran residing near Brindisi, has a story somewhat similar to Quintus. He brought a group of people who had previously served in the Roman Army to join the rebel army, significantly boosting their strength;

Cleonis, a horse herder from the southern Calabria, is the rebel leader who led his team into conflict with the First Legion of Fesaros.

However, when Spartacus introduced Cleonis to Maximus, the former horse herder didn't display any radical behavior. He acted quite composed. Maximus was originally prepared to handle the criticism from some individuals, but so far everything remained calm. It seems Spartacus has made considerable efforts to reconcile the differences among the leaders.

While Maximus was quietly observing everyone, Cross suddenly struck the table forcefully and said, "I say, Spartacus, since we managed to gather today, shouldn't we have something good to eat and celebrate? You wouldn't say there's not even a bit of meat here, would you?"

Spartacus put down the bread in his hand, wiped the crumbs from his mouth with his finger, and quietly remarked, "I do have some meat here, but there are tens of thousands of brothers outside. If I stew meat here, should I share it with them? If given, it won't be nearly enough; if not given, we're all suffering brothers, and no one is nobler than the other. If just because we are leaders, we can eat more meat while they only drink porridge, would they be willing to follow us to the battlefield against the Romans?"

Seeing everyone's eyes on him, Cross laughed a few times: "I'm just making a suggestion, you're still the same, giving a lecture. Alright, alright, no meat, then no meat, but we can at least have some wine, right? This time you don't need to provide it, I brought a cartful, all fine wines from Turi, tasting no worse than those from Campania."

When Cross finished speaking, a few leaders instinctively swallowed.

"Tomorrow is Enomai's burial, drinking at this time might not be appropriate." Hamilcar gently reminded.

Spartacus saw Cross's face change slightly, and he quickly added, "Since Cross went through the trouble of bringing the wine, of course we should drink it. However, this moment isn't quite suitable. After we're

done with our current affairs, we'll gather to enjoy the wine from Turi properly. Cross, what do you think?"

"Whatever you all say." Cross leaned back in his chair, folded his arms, and with a low tone said, "Since Enomai is brought up, I have something to say. I'm deeply pained by Enomai's death! You all know that in the Gladiator School, I had a good relationship with him. Later in Campania, because we shared similar ideas, we often acted together, and even our campsites were adjacent. He even came to me proposing a joint move south to Turi..."

But, as people stay together for long enough, arguments are inevitable, especially since both Enomai and I have hot tempers. We once fought over a trivial matter. Fighting among ourselves in the Gladiator School was common, and I was planning to drink with him and make some compromises the next day, and the matter would be resolved...

But I didn't expect... didn't expect he would lead his team away from Turi... and even more unexpectedly, he would die at Metapontum..."

Cross's voice choked with emotion, and Maximus clearly saw tears flowing down his face, dripping onto his breastplate.

Is this true sorrow, or just an act?... Maximus watched with intrigue from the sidelines.

Cross took a deep breath, wiped his eyes, and suddenly glared wide-eyed: "But when I arrived here, I heard some rumors, saying that I killed Enomai, that I should atone for Enomai. What kind of bullshit is this!"

Spartacus was a bit surprised. Hamilcar whispered a few words in his ear, and his expression became serious. In a deep voice, he said, "These are likely words of anger spread by Enomai's fellow brothers. After Enomai died in battle, they came here, and some hold resentment against you, believing that if it weren't for you, Enomai wouldn't have led his team away from Turi to forcefully attack Metapontum, leading to his death..."

I spoke with them twice, and they promised not to speak recklessly anymore. It seems they've broken their promise. I will send someone to warn and punish them, ensuring no more rumors will spread—"

At this, his eyes shone as he looked at the others in the room, emphasizing his words: "Our Free Italy is composed of poor people and slaves from across Italy. To defeat the powerful Romans, we must unite as one. We absolutely cannot allow anyone to speak carelessly or spread rumors, as this will only lead to mutual suspicion in our vast army and eventual dispersal!"

"Spartacus, you're right! This should be made a decree of Free Italy, so all soldiers know!" Cross followed up grimly.

"I support Cross's proposal." Maximus seized the opportunity to speak, agreeing with Cross for a rare moment, as they both had similar troubles in this regard.

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This proposal was quickly approved, which somewhat surprised Spartacus as it wasn't on tonight's agenda. However, it was what he hoped to see.

Cleonis's face looked slightly unusual; without voting rights, he could only watch helplessly as the decree "forbidding rebel soldiers from slandering or criticizing others, with violators punished by military rods and severe cases beheaded" was formed.

Cross released his tightly embraced arms, reached out to grab some bread, and took a big bite.

Maximus exhaled lightly, feeling much more relaxed.

"Let's do this, let's discuss while eating." Spartacus, seeing that the meeting had started, straightforwardly said, "Atmidonos and Tormas joined our Free Italy more than four months ago. Our smooth move south was inseparable from their efforts.

After arriving here, they led their troops to fight everywhere, and our ranks have become as large as they are today, partly thanks to them. So I propose that Atmidonos and Tormas formally become members of our Free Italy Military Commander Conference."

Everyone unanimously approved Spartacus's proposal, which caused the eyes of the other three newcomers to become eager as well.

"Enomai unfortunately died in battle, which is a significant loss for us. He was a great warrior, a brave leader, and played an important role in our Free Italy's development until now! Unfortunately, he can no longer fight alongside us!" Spartacus said gravely.

Hamilcar, Antonix, and even Cross, his former gladiator companions, all showed expressions of sorrow.

Maximus covered his mouth with his hand, displaying a pained look, though he didn't feel much about Enomai's death. Instead, he thought Enomai was merely a brute, suitable for front-line combat rather than leading armies, and considered his unexpected death to be a good thing; otherwise, he could likely become an Achilles' heel in the battles against the Roman Army.

"... I have discussed with Hamilcar before; we thought a simple funeral for Enomai wouldn't suffice. It must be done very solemnly, so all the brothers know of Enomai's greatness!" Spartacus said solemnly:

"... Tomorrow morning, all the troops will gather in that open area north of the city. We leaders will carry Enomai's coffin around the field once, then place it in the center, where the priest will deliver a eulogy, cleanse his body, and place a silver coin. All brothers will observe a moment of silence and offer prayers. Finally, we will light the coffin."

"Spartacus, your plan is thorough. I fully agree; let Enomai journey to the netherworld like a hero!" Cross said sincerely.

Maximus and the others had no objections either.

"Then it's settled for tomorrow's burial." Spartacus continued, "After Enomai's departure, his army retreated here, but now, the ranks are a bit disorganized..."

Wolf wants to become the new leader of this army, but Wit disagrees, believing he is the most suitable candidate, while Pequot and several other leaders wish to lead their teams and join other armies..."

"What do you all think we should do?" Spartacus asked, looking at Cross, Maximus, and Attutmus.

Previously eager to speak, Cross didn't rush to speak this time because he realized Enomai's followers were dissatisfied with him, so he didn't want to start. Avoid saying anything wrong and sparking new trouble when any word might cause a new issue if it spread.

Maximus didn't respond initially but asked, "Do we know how many soldiers are left in Enomai's army?"

"There are less than 6,000 people, over 2,000 of them injured," Hamilcar replied.

Cross was shocked, "Why so few?! I remember Enomai had over 10,000 troops when he left Turi!"

"Enomai fought for more than half a month in Metapontum, with significant casualties, coupled with his unexpected death in a surprise attack. The troops attacking the city lost their command and quickly became chaotic. The enemies launched a counterattack, and many brothers died under the city without even having a chance to escape..." Spartacus said heavy-heartedly.

The organization and discipline of Enomai's army were the poorest among the rebel army, just as written. Such an army might win when the wind is favorable, but when adversity strikes, they easily collapse, regardless of their numbers... Maximus thought, then spoke up:

"Enomai's army suffered a severe defeat, their morale significantly affected. If they are made to fight independently again, they're likely to face another defeat... Hmm, I don't think Wolf or Wit have Enomai's prestige to command the entire army.

I heard even Pequot, who didn't want to be a leader, has far more support from the warriors than those two, so I think we should follow Pequot and the others' lead, allowing Enomai's soldiers to join other troops willingly based on their preferences."

Maximus focused on his own army, rarely interacting with other troops, but that didn't mean he was unaware of their situations.

Several key figures in Enomai's army were former gladiator companions, and Wolf and Wit were Germans, close confidants of Enomai.

Enomai wanted to be like Cross, recruiting as many Germanic slaves as possible to form a team. However, there were few Germanic slaves in Italy at the time, so other races in his army far outnumbered the Germans. As a leader, Enomai was relatively fair to his warriors. Wolf and Wit, on the other hand, had no such reservations, favoring their compatriots, making it impossible to win the warriors' loyalties.

Of course, this wasn't Maximus's main reason for opposing them as leaders.

The main reason was: initially, 200-something gladiators who escaped from Capua elected Spartacus, Cross, Enomai, Antonix, and Hamilcar as leaders. Maximus, through his clever operations, finally became one of them.

Apart from these six, even though the rebel army has grown significantly, other gladiators have mostly become team officers commanding hundreds or thousands but haven't gained the right to lead independently again. If Wolf or Wit were now elevated to leader status, would other gladiators have thoughts about it?

Not to mention the other teams, Maximus couldn't guarantee that Fesaros and Torrelugo, who had already become Legion Commanders in his army, would remain calm.

"I think Maximus is right; they should be allowed to join other teams voluntarily to avoid more defeats." Cross looked at Maximus and expressed his support once more, which was rare in itself.

"I also agree with Maximus's reasoning, and I support his opinion."

After Spartacus spoke, Antonix and Hamilcar also voiced their agreement; evidently, everyone considered it essential to ensure internal stability within the rebel army.

Attutmus's team did not include any rebel army elders from Capua gladiators, and his agreement was merely an expression of goodwill towards Maximus.

After finalizing the decision on handling Enomai's army, Spartacus lifted the pottery jar, sipped some porridge, and said in a low voice, "The Metapontum people killed Enomai and many of our brothers; we must avenge them! I propose we gather our troops and attack Metapontum once more. We must take it

to honor Enomai's loss and our numerous brothers and simultaneously intimidate other southern towns!"

Spartacus, holding the jar in his right hand and clenching his left fist, unleashed an imposing aura on his once-gentle face.

Chapter 135: Struggle for Command

Cross forcefully struck the table: "I also wanted to make this suggestion, we should take Metapontum to avenge Enomai! But Metapontum won't be easy to capture; we need to discuss it thoroughly, especially now that the Roman Army could march south at any time. Spartacus, you can't easily move your main forces.

Enomai was my good brother; I really want to avenge him. Just let me lead my troops to attack Metapontum, you just send two to three thousand as support, and I'll strive to take it within half a month and place the head of Metapontum's governor at Enomai's gravesite!"

Whether to deploy troops hadn't been agreed upon, but Cross was eager to lead his troops, seemingly wanting to reclaim the negative impact of driving away Enomai from the rebel army through a victory... Maximus pondered this internally, acknowledging that some matters had to be considered carefully from the leader's position.

"Cross, if you want to attack Metapontum alone, what will you do with your camp in Turi? Do you have enough soldiers?" asked Hamilcar.

Cross lifted his head proudly, replying: "I currently have nearly 40,000 men, with 30,000 young and strong soldiers. Even if I draw out half to besiege Metapontum, no one would dare to invade the camp in Turi!"

The forces in Cross's hands were indeed so numerous, surpassing every leader here!... Not only were veterans like Spartacus and Antonix surprised, but newcomers like Phitodorus were even more shocked.

Cross looked at Spartacus, his eyes flashing with a bit of pride.

Maximus observed this and suddenly realized the reason why this self-centered Gaul was so eager to lead troops; it was probably not just to avenge Enomai, but more importantly, to demonstrate strength, gain prestige, and contend with Spartacus for leadership within the rebel army.

It seems this guy is becoming inflated! ... Maximus decided to observe the situation first.

"Cross." Spartacus resumed his calm demeanor and softly said: "If the Roman Army moves south, whether they travel east or west, they will first pass by your camp or the camps of Attutmus and Maximus. The three of you should best not move lightly—"

Cross loudly interrupted: "The Roman Army might also take the Appian Way and strike directly here!"

Spartacus shook his head: "Taking the Appian Way here would take more time, and they would be isolated and easily surrounded by us. I think the Romans wouldn't make such a mistake."

Cross was momentarily at a loss for words, then stubbornly said: "That's just your opinion. The Romans see themselves as strong and might just take this perilous route."

Spartacus did not wish to continue arguing with him, but instead spoke earnestly: "I have an idea. Our last battle with the Roman Army was half a year ago, and it was only through everyone's combined efforts that we defeated them.

Now, each of our units is scattered, and although the number of soldiers has greatly increased, they have hardly fought together, lacking coordination, making unified command difficult. When facing the next Roman Army attack, we might encounter trouble...

So, I think for this attack on Metapontum, if everyone can draw part of their forces, not exceeding 3,000, preferably not exceeding 3,000 people, then we will have over 20,000 troops for this expedition. We should include as many team officers as possible in this battle to sharpen the units for future engagements with the Roman Army without weakening the defense of our camps. What do you think?"

"Ensuring the safety of the camps while training the troops sounds great, I agree with Spartacus's suggestion." Antonix immediately expressed his support.

"Spartacus's suggestion is safer; I also agree," said Hamilcar. Following him were Atmidonos and Tormas, new official members of the military council who had long followed Spartacus and thus naturally reciprocated his support with their own.

"I support Spartacus." Maximus said this, casting a glance at Kekros, although this guy had made friendly gestures towards him twice today, he believed Spartacus was more trustworthy.

Cross's face turned somewhat unsightly, and he suddenly slammed the table again, loudly saying: "Since you all agree with Spartacus's opinion, then I want to ask who will command this expeditionary force?!"

Spartacus, your people are too varied, and with so many units, conflict could easily arise from minor issues. I heard that recently this Cleo... Onis's unit got into a fight with Maximus's unit, causing quite a few injuries...

So, do you see? If Spartacus, you lead the army on an expedition, any disturbance here without you to maintain order could ignite a bigger turmoil, wouldn't that be troublesome?

I believe! At this crucial time, we must ensure the entire rebel army's stability. Spartacus, you should stay here and let me lead the army to attack Metapontum!"

Maximus's mouth was slightly open: Cross was blatantly demanding command, directly challenging Spartacus! It seemed that the expansion of his forces had also inflated his ambitions!

Others also showed expressions of surprise to various extents, but only Spartacus maintained relative calm. After all, they had been rivals since their time at the gladiatorial school, and they understood each other well.