

Perish 176

Chapter 176: Advice for Spartacus_2

"I'll go back and discuss this with Spartacus. I think we can make it happen," Hamilcar replied without hesitation, and then asked with concern: "Is this your only request? Food, weapons, horses, money—whatever you need, Spartacus and I will do our utmost to provide it."

"I don't have any other requests," Maximus shook his head. After hearing Hamilcar's words, the anger and resentment he had felt began to dissipate. After a brief hesitation, he spoke earnestly: "Even if we must part ways, I sincerely hope you can continue to achieve victory here, and that the aspirations of you and Spartacus can ultimately come to fruition. For that reason, I'd like to offer a few suggestions. I hope both of you will seriously consider them and adopt them as necessary!"

Hamilcar, moved by Maximus's serious demeanor, assumed a grave expression himself: "Go ahead."

"First, don't go to Sicily. It's just an island—surrounded by sea, with limited territory and not a large population. Even if the people there are willing to join your rebellion against Rome, you lack a strong navy. Once the Roman Fleet blockades the island, you'll be trapped. Rome could easily muster a large force to surround and eradicate you, and the confined space of Sicily would leave you with no room for maneuver. The final outcome would be all too predictable."

Maximus, recalling the factors that contributed to Spartacus's failure in his previous life, chose his words carefully: "Secondly, Italy's land is not particularly vast. South of Turi and even further south of Tarentum, the territory becomes narrow. You must avoid leading your army further south, as it would make it easier for the Roman Army to encircle you and force you into a direct confrontation with a defense-ready Roman force.

Furthermore... if, in the future, you're forced to leave Italy, do not blindly trust promises made by major pirates and waste time waiting for ships. Many pirates maintain connections with the nobles of Italy's city-states. They might take your money but fail to provide ships, and secretly inform the Roman Army of your whereabouts. This delay would cost you precious time and potentially lead to serious trouble. It's best to tread cautiously!—"

In truth, Maximus wanted to say, "Perhaps one day I could provide you with a fleet to help you escape Italy."

But after some thought, he held back: given the history from his previous life, Spartacus's rebel army was destined to be annihilated within a year. Even if they heeded his advice now, it could only postpone their inevitable destruction slightly. Moreover, Maximus wasn't certain he could establish a stable base and assemble a fleet in such a short time. Perhaps one or two ships were feasible, but would Spartacus and Hamilcar abandon their troops to flee alone? That was impossible!...

Maximus snapped back to reality, his tone growing firmer: "Additionally, though your army is vast, the pressure on logistics and supplies is immense. Relying solely on plundering barely meets your needs—it's unsustainable in the long term. If you could capture some towns, allocate land to Italy's impoverished masses, and govern the towns and lands effectively, you'd secure a steady supply of food and wealth.

Moreover, Italy's abundance of impoverished people is due to the nobles and wealthy landowners seizing their lands. If you take this approach, you'll gain their fervent support, and the strength of the rebel army will be greatly enhanced. However, this also has a trade-off: the Roman Army would then have clear targets for attack. To defend the lands and towns you acquire, you'd have to abandon mobile warfare and adopt a more defensive strategy. This comes with both advantages and disadvantages—something worth considering."

"Oh... one last thing: if the new commander of the Roman Army happens to be Crassus, you must remain vigilant! This man, a Roman Elder, is incredibly wealthy and has extensive wartime experience, having served under Roman dictator Sulla in his younger years. He's cunning, ruthless, and challenging to deal with..."

Hamilcar initially thought Maximus's suggestions were merely farewell advice, and didn't give them much weight. But as Maximus continued, Hamilcar grew increasingly alarmed. By the time Maximus had finished speaking, Hamilcar remained standing in place, pondering for a long time. Finally, he sighed and remarked, "Maximus, I really should suggest to Spartacus that we detain you, so you can't continue northward. Our forces truly need someone like you—a leader with clarity and foresight!"

Maximus didn't respond.

After a brief pause, Hamilcar added, "I don't know much about the barbarian tribes north of the Alps, so I can't offer you any advice. But I believe your talent will be more than sufficient to lead your forces and establish yourselves beyond the mountains. You've called me 'teacher' for so long—I suppose I should do something meaningful for you..."

Hamilcar, his expression tinged with regret and nostalgia, thought for a while, then earnestly stated, "Alright, I'll return and suggest to Spartacus that he inform the various units: any soldier wishing to leave Italy can join your forces in continuing north."

"Thank you, Teacher!" Maximus said gratefully.

"When do you plan to depart?"

"We still need to make preparations today. We'll depart early tomorrow morning."

"Tomorrow... Spartacus and I won't be sending you off. Take care of yourself!" Hamilcar extended his right hand solemnly.

"You too, take care of yourself. I hope we meet again someday!" Maximus also extended his right hand.

The two men shook hands firmly.

Hamilcar turned and strode away.

Maximus stood still for a long time. He had initially hoped Spartacus might escort him as far as the Alpine foothills. But now, before even reaching the Northern Italy Province, this figurative crutch was gone. The rest of the journey would depend on him alone.

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Inside the army tent, the room was packed.

The military leaders present included: Military Officer Frantinus, Staff Officer Quintus, Military Judge Sedonius, First Legion Commander Fesaros, Second Legion Commander Torrelugo, Third Legion Commander Camillus, Deputy Legion Commander Alus, Guard Captain Pecot, and Cavalry Captain Haguks.

The administrative leaders included: Administrative Officer Wallerius, Temporary Chief of Supply Camp Capito, Kitchen Director Acornis, Commerce Officer Pigeris, Medical Camp Director Horace, Nurse Chief Nexia, Chief Doctor Minujus, Female Camp Captain Karina, Construction Team Captain Gaius, Engineer and Deputy Captain Scapula, Transport Team Captain Secksipus, and Former Warehouse Supervisor Gaius...

Additionally, there was Finance Officer Magus, Akegu, Casius, and others.

Maximus sat at the center, surveying the room full of people. A twinge of uncertainty grew in his heart. These were the individuals he'd worked so hard to identify and nurture during his more than a year with the rebel army. At this critical juncture, would they stand by him and follow him unwaveringly?

Maximus steadied himself and began to speak: "Ladies and gentlemen, today we leaders held another discussion about whether the army should continue moving north. Aside from me, everyone else firmly opposes heading north. Just now, I privately discussed this with Hamilcar, who was sent by Spartacus, and after our talk, I've made my final decision—"

Maximus's gaze swept across each face. Perhaps they sensed that today's meeting was unusual, as everyone wore serious expressions and paid close attention.

"I have decided that our forces will separate from the main army and head north on our own!"

As soon as the words left his mouth, a wave of commotion rippled through the tent.

Some, like Acornis, displayed a resolute attitude, ready to follow whatever decision the leader made without surprise. Others, like Quintus and Frantinus, seemed relieved, as though they'd felt this course of action was long overdue. But then there were others, like Wallerius, who appeared utterly flabbergasted, struggling to comprehend the decision...

Chapter 177: Clarify Objectives and Unify Understanding

"Everyone!" Maximus took in everyone's expressions and raised his voice to speak loudly, "You are all my valuable assistants and my most trusted subordinates. I've gathered you here to ask if you are willing to follow me north to create our own home?!"

If you are unwilling, I won't blame you. I've already discussed it with Hamilcar, and you can join other leaders' teams and stay in Italy... Time is tight, so will you follow me north, or will you stay? Make your choice now!"

As soon as Maximus finished speaking, Acronis stood up and shouted loudly, "What's there to choose? Of course, I'll follow you, Leader! Since our team was formed last year, we've been better fed, better dressed, and lost fewer people than other teams...

This is because Leader Maximus is more capable than the other leaders! So, I firmly believe that since you choose to head north, going north must be the best way out for us! If anyone chooses to stay, it's not just foolish, it's betrayal!"

Though her words were crude, they were not unreasonable. Acronis indeed remained as strong as ever! ... Maximus thought, but verbally he criticized, "Acronis, as I said earlier, everyone chooses voluntarily. If someone stays, it's also to resist the Romans, and they're still comrades of Free Italy, not traitors."

"But whoever does that would be betraying your trust." Acronis muttered.

Maximus did not refute her further.

"Leader, you should have made this decision sooner. These days, following the main troops has delayed us quite a bit!" Flanitnus shouted as a reminder.

"Leader, all of us from Rome understand Rome's strength very well. Staying in Italy will only lead to a dead end! The only way is to follow you to places outside of Italy and take a chance. That's the best way out!" said Quintus, who rarely spoke loudly, but now firmly expressed his attitude.

"Quintus is right, heading north is the way out. I am willing to follow you to unfamiliar places and continue fighting!" Oluus said with great enthusiasm.

"Leader, I am your compatriot, I will never let you leave me behind!" Fesaros said loudly, unwilling to be outdone.

"Going north is our Gaul territory; how could it be done without me!" Torrelugo laughed loudly.

"In the past, I've followed the leader in multiple victories. I believe we can achieve more victories in the future!" Camillus responded loudly, hitting his chest with his right hand.

"Leader, no matter what decision you make, I will follow your steps and strive to do everything you instruct well!" After overcoming the initial shock, Volenus also made his commitment. Having been a domestic slave for decades, he was used to obeying, and now he had already regarded Maximus as his master.

"It's time to leave Italy immediately and find a place for our team to settle down—farming, mining, trade... anything will do. Otherwise, at this rate, our supplies will be exhausted!" Temporary Chief of Supply Camp, Capito not only made a choice but also offered suggestions.

"Great, Leader, the plan you previously discussed with me can finally be carried out!" Pigeris cheered.

"What plan?" Others were puzzled.

Maximus didn't address him and loudly asked, "Is there anyone among you who chooses to stay?"

There was no response.

This was actually quite normal; those whom Maximus promoted were either slaves or determined anti-Rome veterans from Lukelia. They originally didn't have much attachment to Italy. Plus, usually, Maximus subtly hinted to them that "there's no future in staying in Italy," so everyone's thinking was unified and quite resolute. Only some hadn't considered that other rebel army teams wouldn't follow north.

"Since you all trust me and are willing to follow me north——" Maximus looked around at everyone with a solemn expression and said, "I also promise to share hardships and blessings with you from now on and will not fail any of you!" Saying this, he raised his hands and closed his eyes in prayer.

Everyone looked solemn, but each one was excited, watching Maximus, waiting for him to open his eyes again.

"Alright, let's discuss how to continue heading north next." Maximus looked at everyone and said seriously, "First, after you return, be patient in explaining to your subordinates why we are heading north alone, and try your best to persuade them to come with us! If anyone insists on staying, there's no need to force it. However, Capito and Spukala, your areas are quite special; all the craftsmen and engineers are very important to us, and they must all come with us!

Oh, right, and Horace, those doctors under you! Volenus, the people under you who can read and write, and understand arithmetic! They are our talent; regardless of their wishes, not a single one can stay behind—they all have to come with the team! Understood?!"

"Rest assured, Leader, not one of them will escape." Capito responded calmly, as he had been doing this since the march began.

Maximus noticed Horace and Volenus were at a loss and remembered something, saying, "Capito, I almost forgot. During the march, you are the temporary chief of the supply camp; you must oversee the craftsmen of the engineering team, the personnel under Volenus, and the doctors and nurses in the medical camp—don't let a single one escape!"

Chapter 178: Clarify Objectives and Unify Understanding_2

"Leader, rest assured, leave it all to me!" Capito responded arrogantly. He truly enjoyed the feeling of being entrusted with numerous responsibilities.

"Leader, if the soldiers are allowed to choose voluntarily, I'm afraid there won't be many left in the Third Legion!" Oluus warned loudly.

"That's right, Leader!" Camillus also protested: "Most of the Third Legion are new recruits now, and the majority are poor citizens from Pisenum. They've barely spent any time here and are still unfamiliar with our forces. I'm afraid they'll all choose to stay behind!"

The Third Legion suffered heavy losses in the battle at the Womans River. Originally, Maximus had planned to restore the legion's full strength gradually after stabilizing the forces. However, the rebel army's successive victories in Pisenum attracted a flood of enthusiastic impoverished citizens to join.

The majority of rebel leaders saw their forces swell rapidly, but Maximus remained steadfast and unimpressed. He eventually relented under the persistent pleas of Camillus and Oluus, opting to lift the restriction and allow the Third Legion to accept new recruits. Within two days, the legion became fully manned, and Camillus finally took on the role of a genuine Legion Commander.

"The Third Legion is different from the Engineering Camp and the Medical Camp; they are all soldiers. If they don't want to follow us, then we must allow them to leave. Don't force them, or it could lead to future troubles and jeopardize our smooth arrival at the destination. Understood?!" Maximus said sternly.

"Understood." Camillus nodded reluctantly.

Maximus coughed lightly. "However, you two can rest assured, as Spartacus has promised me he will notify the other forces that soldiers willing to leave Italy can join our march. Even though most will likely choose to stay behind, there should still be thousands willing to leave. When that happens, these troops will be prioritized for the Third Legion. But you two must promise me that they will be quickly settled and managed properly during the march without causing any trouble!"

Camillus and Oluus exchanged glances and responded in unison, "No problem!"

"Additionally... the Guard will likely see many departures as well." Maximus looked at Pequot. The Guard had also suffered significant losses during the Womans River campaign, but it had been permitted to recruit new soldiers. "They will also be prioritized for allocation to the Guard."

"Thank you, Leader." Pequot responded calmly. While others had been expressing their opinions earlier, he had remained silent, considering it unnecessary to speak on the matter.

As an Illyrian, Pequot naturally had no desire to remain in Italy. His former subordinates weren't Illyrians or Gauls; they would also undoubtedly choose to head north. As for the newly recruited soldiers who had joined only days ago, he felt little attachment. If they wanted to leave, so be it—he had no regrets.

"Leader, if we march north on our own, where will we go after leaving Italy?"

"Yes, Leader, this is exactly the time for you to tell us—where is our new homeland?"

Fesaros's words struck a chord among the group, as everyone shared the same sentiment.

Previously, Maximus often spoke to them about the advantages of leaving Italy. Yet whenever they asked, "Where are we going?" he would habitually dodge the question.

"Indeed, the time has come to tell you all." This time, Maximus didn't evade the question. He spoke solemnly, "Acronis, bring over the large map."

"Yes!"

A large wooden panel was brought before the group. On it was a map of the Mediterranean personally drawn by Maximus using a pen and ink, based on memories from his previous life. The map included not just Italy but also the Iberian Peninsula, Greece, Little Asia, Egypt, Nubia... Only Italy was marked with mountains, rivers, and numerous towns; other areas were only labeled with names.

Nonetheless, the map amazed everyone in the tent. Even Acronis, who could not read, whispered in excitement to Volenus after glancing at the map and widened her eyes in astonishment. She mumbled softly, "So this is what the Mediterranean looks like! Egypt! Egypt is here!..."

Others, including Flanitnus, Quintus, and even the lofty Capito, gathered around the map with similar expressions of astonishment. This map was far more detailed, precise, and visually impressive than the ones drawn by Rome.

Acronis, noticing the group's shocked expressions, felt a surge of pride, as he had contributed significantly to assisting Maximus in creating the map. He stood straight with an air of self-importance.

Quintus examined the Italy section of the map carefully while marveling internally: To his knowledge, this young leader had never left Italy, yet he had drawn such an incredible Mediterranean map. It was simply astounding! Just when Quintus believed he fully understood Maximus, the latter managed to astonish once again. Was this someone truly born with innate wisdom? Or had he been favored by the gods?!...

While Quintus was deep in thought, Flanitnus directly asked, "Leader, when did you create this map? Why have I never seen it before?"

"Just two days ago, after setting up camp, I found some time to work on it," Maximus responded nonchalantly. "Due to the rush, I didn't have time to investigate details about each place, so some areas may not be accurate. Let's make do for now."

Flanitnus crouched to examine the map closely and said seriously, "I'm not sure about other places, but I do know Nubia, Iberia, and Inner and Outer Gaul relatively well. The regional outlines on this map aren't much different from those I've seen on military maps before. I think this map should be highly reliable.

However, I do want to ask, Leader, how were you able to draw such a comprehensive Mediterranean map? Even in Rome, few would have the ability to do so."

Maximus didn't answer directly. Instead, he raised his voice sternly, "From the moment I escaped the Gladiator School, I began contemplating where we could build a homeland if we ever managed to leave Italy.

The location must be somewhere that Roman forces cannot reach for a considerable time, surrounded by other powers that aren't too strong to threaten our safety. At the same time, it must allow us to thrive and expand..."

Everyone became more alert, focusing their attention on Maximus.

"When we were in Sarabia, I finally made up my mind about where we would go—" Maximus began to explain but noticed Pigeris making exaggerated facial expressions. He glared at him to signal calmness.

"The reason I've kept this a secret is that the place is quite remote. If word were accidentally leaked, and the Romans prepared for it, it could cause immense trouble. But now is the time to reveal our destination. I hope you will keep this secret and refrain from discussing it with others. Also, lead your troops wisely and follow me to our new homeland!"

As Maximus spoke, his emotions grew fervent. After all, this location represented the fruit of countless sleepless nights reflecting on history from his past life. He extended a hand and pointed to a spot on the map, declaring loudly, "Our new homeland is here!"

Chapter 179: Crossing the Rubicon River

After Hamilcar returned, he detailed his encounter with Maximus to Spartacus.

Spartacus pondered for a while before asking, "What do you think of Maximus's suggestions?"

"I've thought carefully about it on the way back..." Hamilcar said seriously, "Maximus suggests that after we capture a few towns, we should distribute the land to the soldiers and then govern well... This suggestion is unworkable.

Let's not even consider if we have the ability to manage a town. Once we stop moving and defend one place, it's exactly what the Romans hope for, as they will have ample time for attack preparation. Even if we, Free Italy, put all our effort into defense, it would be hard to stop their attack for long."

Spartacus sighed: "Indeed, the Romans have strong siege capabilities. I remember when we first saw those giant siege machines made by the Romans, everyone was stunned..."

"As for some of Maximus's other suggestions, I think there is some sense to them." Hamilcar looked at Spartacus and gently reminded him, "Besides having more people than the Roman Army, our advantage is our flexibility. The narrow terrain south of Turi does indeed not favor us showcasing our strengths.

Moreover, we know nothing about seafaring. To go to Sicily, we must take a ship. Regardless of who we find, placing our lives in others' hands is indeed dangerous. We need to think it over carefully!"

Back in Tarentum, Spartacus had heard that decades ago there was a revolt in Sicily no less significant than theirs against Rome. At the time, he had thought about rekindling the flames of the Sicilian uprising and had privately discussed with Hamilcar several times.

So when Maximus mentioned the suggestion regarding Sicily, Hamilcar was startled; he did not know how the other party had learned of this secret matter.

Spartacus was silent for a moment, then slowly shook his head, "Maybe Maximus is right, but things on the battlefield change too much for anyone to predict accurately. It's best not to limit ourselves before the battle. Sometimes, disadvantages can turn into advantages...

Hamilcar, don't forget, our goal is to destroy as much of the Roman Army as possible and cause them as much trouble as we can. For life and death... they mean nothing to us, so why worry about ships and Sicily? If successful, it troubles the Romans; if we fail, it's just death."

"... You're right." Hamilcar was relieved.

"But Maximus did have one good point; we once made a promise to grant everyone freedom..." Spartacus said in a leisurely tone, "Call in the other leaders in a bit, and let's have another meeting. Hopefully, they can inform their soldiers that those willing to leave Italy can follow Maximus's group."

"Alright."

"Honestly, I truly do not wish for Maximus to leave. He is a very capable person and has greatly helped Free Italy!" Spartacus looked toward Maximus's camp with a somewhat regretful expression, "But since he insists on leaving, I can't force him to stay. I think with his abilities, even if he goes north, he will manage well... This way, if one day we fail, at least someone will remember us... remember what we once did!..."

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The three left Spartacus's tent, and after walking a short distance, Cleonis couldn't help but say resentfully, "Damn! This Maximus is indeed cunning, seeing the situation is bad and wants to slip away alone. If he stayed another day or two, our plan could have been executed, and by then, we could have detained him; his troops would have had to obediently go south with us!"

"Things aren't that simple." Depeitimas reminded, "Spartacus, Hamilcar, and Antonix all came out of the Gladiator School with Maximus and have always had a good relationship with him. Even though they don't support continuing north, they definitely won't allow us to humiliate Maximus like this. Plus, his troops aren't easy to handle. If we lose control and things get out of hand, it wouldn't be good for our whole group!"

"That's true, let him go north alone in disgrace; then we, Free Italy, won't have disputes and can stay in Italy to fully deal with the Romans," Phitodorus interjected, "But Spartacus and his group are quite biased, even specially asking us to notify the soldiers that those wanting to leave can go!"

"That doesn't affect us much." Cleonis said meaningfully, "Our soldiers are either from Calabria or Pisenum, and they won't leave Italy. But in the forces of Spartacus, Antonix, and Attutmus, there are quite a few slaves and barbarians; some might choose to leave, but that's actually good for us, isn't it?"

Phitodorus and Depeitimas exchanged a knowing glance but said nothing.

"Even if these people join Maximus's ranks, his strength won't increase." Cleonis continued with a sneer, "In his troop, there are also many newcomers, poor people from Pisenum, who will absolutely not go north with him. Also, once he leads his team out of Italy, without the threat of the Romans, will those barbarian soldiers and slaves still want to follow him? I doubt it, though I can't witness the tragic scene of him being surrounded by Gauls."

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Cleonis looked towards the north, with a gloating expression. The humiliation of being defeated by Maximus's forces was always etched in his heart.

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"Brothers, we're setting off tomorrow morning. Are you all ready?" Stags walked into the tent.

"We're ready!" the soldiers in the tent responded in unison.

Stags looked at Casaridaoa, who shouted the loudest, and said half-jokingly, half-seriously, "Eh, why are you still here, kid?! Didn't some soldiers from Italy leave our ranks already?"

"They are them, and I am me; I am quite comfortable here, why should I leave?" Casaridaoa replied impatiently. He had been asked similar questions by several comrades before: "Not only did I stay, but the few brothers who joined our ranks with me also stayed!"

"Captain, do you think these people are foolish? Leader Maximus has said many times that staying in Italy offers no hope and only leads to death. But following our leader, we can secure a piece of land beyond Italy, allowing everyone a share. It's such a good opportunity, and they don't want it. What a pity!" A soldier remarked regrettably.

"I think it's mainly because they haven't been in our ranks long enough. They haven't chatted with our leader or heard his stories, so they don't believe he can achieve it." The centurion Proconsus offered his opinion: "We previously had soldiers from Italy too. I heard that most of them chose to follow the leader north, myself included, of course. Isn't that right, Captain?"

"That's right." Stags nodded.

This immediately sparked discussions among the other soldiers, each voicing their opinions, making the tent lively.

Casaridaoa did not participate in the discussion nor intently listen to his comrades; he had chosen to stay simply because after the battle at the Womans River, no one in the ranks looked at him differently anymore. They were comrades who shared hardships, caring for and helping each other, and he enjoyed this atmosphere greatly.

"Ha, why is it so lively in here?!" The tent flap was lifted, and another person came in.

"Great Captain, why are you here?" Stags looked at the newcomer in surprise.

"I've been looking for you for a while, didn't expect you were hiding here in broad daylight." Bubius jokingly scolded.

"Is there something you need?"

Bubius gestured for him to follow outside, with a strong man standing outside the tent.

Bubius pointed to the strong man, saying, "We've assigned a new recruit to your unit, oh no, he's not exactly a new recruit. He joined Free Italy around the same time as you but was initially part of Spartacus's ranks."

Stags glanced at the strong man and pulled Bubius aside. He whispered a complaint, "Great Captain, my centurion unit is short a few men, why did you only give me one! I heard we transferred thousands from other units this time!"

"Thousands indeed, but the Third Legion takes priority. Besides, some people are willing to head north with our ranks but are unwilling to officially join us." Bubius said bluntly, "I'm already giving you one, which is pretty good. Onomax didn't get even one for his unit. If you're unhappy, I can transfer this person to them and you'll have to ask the leader for reinforcements yourself."

As he spoke, he moved to leave, but Stags quickly held him back, "No, no, Great Captain, that's my fault. Thank you for looking after our unit, I've taken this new recruit."

"I'm telling you, don't truly treat him like a new recruit. In Spartacus's ranks, he was also a Centurion like you!" Bubius sternly reminded, "But the leader insists that anyone joining our ranks must start as a new recruit. It's because of this that some people are reluctant to join our unit. He, however, agreed without hesitation, so you better take good care of him!"

"I understand. Don't worry." Stags immediately promised, then walked over to the strong man, extending his right hand, "I am Stags, Centurion of the Second Centurion Unit, Second Great Unit, First Legion of Maximus's Army. Welcome to our ranks!"

"I'm Polikamus, a Thracian, I used to follow Spartacus, and now I'm delighted to be a soldier under Leader Maximus!" the strong man grinned, firmly shaking Stags's hand.

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The next morning, the sky was clear, and the rising sun cast its warmth while the sea breeze blew gently. The climate was pleasant.

While most of the other rebel soldiers were still dreaming, Maximus's army had already left the camp.

As usual, the First Legion, Second Legion, Supply Camp, and Third Legion each formed their ranks in front of the camp. Then, in an orderly fashion, they set off down the road ahead.

There were no trumpet calls, no clamor of voices, just a quiet and swift march. As in the past, when they served as the vanguard of the entire rebel army, this time, however, there were no other units following, nor any to see them off.

Only a few leaders such as Spartacus, Hamilcar, Antonix, and Attutmus, along with a few elderly gladiators, silently watched them depart amidst the wailing sounds of the sea breeze...

The road taken by Maximus's army was not the coastal Bobilia Avenue but the Emilia Avenue stretching directly northwest from Rimini to Piacenza. The road was extremely flat, allowing the army to march quickly. By noon, they encountered a river ahead.

This was a small river, no more than 10 meters wide and knee-deep, with gently flowing waters and lush banks, nothing particularly unique compared to other rivers they had crossed.

However, Quintus pointed at the river and remarked with a sigh, "This is the Rubicon River. Crossing it, we'll enter the Northern Italy Province. Strictly speaking, it's as if we've left Italy."

Maximus reined in his horse and suddenly recalled the famous historical event of crossing the Rubicon River from his past life. After being lost in thought, he suddenly made a throwing gesture, "The die is cast."

"Leader, what did you say?" Quintus didn't quite catch it.

Maximus smiled, "I said we're changing history."

"Let's go, we cross the river!" Maximus, spirited, waved his hand and urged his warhorse to gallop towards the stone bridge not far away.

In this life, it's uncertain whether the great Caesar will still have his chance to cast his die.

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The Northern Italy Province is the province closest to Rome, encompassing the entire Po River Plain. It is a rather fertile and affluent region.

This area was once predominantly inhabited by powerful Gauls, who grazed horses and sheep, cultivated the land here, and occasionally raided the south, posing multiple threats to the security of the Romans, even briefly capturing Rome more than 200 years ago, becoming a nightmare for the Romans.