

Perish 231

Chapter 231: Segestica Great Chief Andres

Maximus naturally wouldn't speak to them, but he would speak to every nurse or doctor who remained in the ward, using Illyrian, in a loud and firm voice to remind them: they must take good care of these wounded soldiers. Though they are enemies now, they are also Illyrians, and a hundred years ago, they stood united with other Illyrian tribes, as close as brothers. He believes that one day in the future, the Pannonians and them will bond as one family again, just as they did a century ago.

No matter whether the wounded soldiers were moved or not, after leaving, Maximus further instructed Horace to ensure that doctors and nurses who spoke Illyrian deliberately impart similar words to the wounded soldiers as often as possible.

Horace gave him his assurance.

Maximus waited for a while outside the house where the Skodisqi wounded resided, and saw Emmerich approaching.

He had changed into a clean linen robe, which was probably found for him by Akegu. He had also trimmed his long hair and shaved his beard, though unevenly and a bit patchy, the transformation was significant—it was as though he had become a different person.

Maximus was pleased with Emmerich's actions, feeling that his effort showed not just compliance with the Medical Department's rules but also his resolve to join the Nix Tribe and become one of them.

After entering the house, Maximus gave Emmerich the lead role.

Emmerich was genuinely concerned for each Skodisqi wounded soldier, especially his severely injured compatriots, and his mood remained heavy as he saw them.

Despite this, he patiently comforted them, assuring them they could heal without worry because they were now members of the Nix Tribe, and the Nix people would take good care of them. Of course, he didn't forget to introduce the Nix Tribe's leader, Maximus, praising him as a capable, trustworthy, and compassionate leader who could protect them, and so forth.

After that, Maximus stepped forward to express his care for the wounded soldiers and made promises: after joining the Nix Tribe, they would attain freedom, and their lives would only improve from then on...

Their teamwork grew increasingly seamless.

Finally, they arrived outside Florist Luscia's ward, and to their surprise, Nexia was inside.

"Leader, why have you come here?" Nexia asked in surprise and delight.

Maximus gestured toward the room with his lips and asked softly, "How is the patient's condition?"

"Two ribs are broken, and the lungs have sustained some injuries, but it's not too serious. Minujus has already secured them, but she's too frail; her previous meals weren't nutritious, and her body has other minor issues. She needs thorough care to gradually recover to proper health..."

Nexia explained in detail, and there was a unique tenderness on her face that Maximus hadn't seen before.

He naturally did not know that due to Emmerich's previous pleas, Volenus and Capito, whom he had helped, both wished the Medical Department could take good care of this unconscious girl. This heightened attention from several department heads piqued Nexia's curiosity.

Through her inquiries, she easily learned about the girl's ordeal in the Segestica Tribe, which inevitably reminded her of her own past years in slavery. That naturally sparked a sense of shared suffering, leading to her extra care for the girl.

"May I ask if the child is awake?" Emmerich interjected.

"Who is this?" Nexia asked, looking at Maximus.

"This is my newly appointed Medical Officer, your colleague Emmerich. He's a renowned Skodisqi scholar, well-versed in herbal medicine, adored by many Skodisqi people."

Maximus introduced them: "This is another of our tribe's Medical Officers, Nexia. She's also the head nurse of the Medical Department and has trained many exceptional nurses, ensuring the wounded are well cared for!"

"Using specially trained women to care for patients—I find this a fascinating treatment approach. I'll have to consult you more in the future," Emmerich spoke sincerely, intrigued by the unique medical practices of the Nix Tribe since he joined the Medical Camp.

Nexia was equally curious. She could sense Maximus's high regard for this older man, but this was evidently not the right time to investigate further. She smiled and said, "You're too kind. We are in need of doctors like you. In the future, we can all learn from each other. By the way, the young lady has already woken up. You can go in and see her, but she is still very weak, so don't stay too long."

Maximus followed Emmerich into the room, which contained only one hospital bed. Florist Luscia lay quietly on the bed.

She had a slender figure and delicate limbs. Her grayish-brown hair reached her waist, not dense and lacking luster. Her upper body was tightly wrapped in linen.

Upon hearing footfalls, she laboriously turned to her side.

Maximus first noticed her bright, clear eyes, framed by long, curled lashes. Her skin was pale, nearly white, and there were visible bruises in certain areas. Her chin was sharp, clearly lacking the fullness that proper nutrition would provide. She looked as fragile and sensitive as a timid fawn.

Maximus found it hard to imagine such a shy and delicate young girl managing to kill the Segestica Tribe's Great Leader, especially since he had seen the leader's corpse—it was impressively strong.

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Florist Luscia's delicate face revealed joy as she softly called out, "Sage."

"Child, how is your injury?" Emmerich stepped forward and asked with concern.

"That elder sister said I need several months of rest to recover." Florist Luscia glanced at Nexia standing by the door.

Nexia gave her a gentle smile.

She quickly lowered her gaze and said, "But I don't feel particularly uncomfortable now."

"She is right. You must listen to them and patiently accept their treatment..." Emmerich walked to the bedside, his withered palm gently brushing her head as he spoke with a kind expression and a solemn tone, "Child, all the suffering is behind us now. We are free. Life will gradually improve from here on."

Florist Luscia raised her head, gazing up at the elderly man she had always trusted, her eyes shimmering as she asked in a trembling voice, "...Is it true?"

"It's true!" Emmerich nodded firmly.

Tears glistened and flowed from the girl's eyes...

Maximus suddenly felt out of place in the room and walked out in silence...

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Cabdes was not like Wallis, with the courage to fight to the death. Having fled the battlefield once before, when his village was breached, he again took his son and followers and boarded a small boat at the village's river port, escaping the rebel army's encirclement.

The small boat traveled downstream, and before long, they arrived at another riverside village in Segestica.

The leader of this tribe, Anrotas, had already learned from the envoy Cabdes had sent earlier that "Wallis led an army to engage the enemy to the west and suffered a crushing defeat; the village was under siege." Yet, he could not have imagined that even Cabdes' village would fall. He immediately grew extremely anxious.

The strength of his tribe was inferior to Cabdes' and far less than Wallis'. With both tribes wiped out in a single day, he reckoned his own tribe would meet its end sooner rather than later.

Cabdes could only console him, advising him to strengthen the defenses of the village while he himself intended to seek aid from the Great Chief, urging him to dispatch powerful reinforcements to defeat the enemy as soon as possible.

Thus, Cabdes managed to obtain some of the tribe's few remaining horses before continuing east with his son and followers. They soon crossed the Kupa River and headed northeast, traversing forested paths until another wooden village—Lin Kou Village—rose before them.

Lin Kou Village was originally established to guard against the Aldeans to the west but had now become a forward base for campaigns into the midstream plains of the Kupa River.

Cabdes did not linger, bypassing the village to press onward. His vision widened; a vast, flat expanse stretched before him, with a mighty river cutting across the plain in the distance—that was the mother river of the Pannonians: the Sava River.

Cabdes felt invigorated, urging his horse forward past numerous villages. These villages lacked walls, their homes scattered, with tribesmen leisurely herding cattle and sheep, some idly chatting in the fields. The sounds of barking dogs, crowing chickens, playful banter, and laughter echoed through the villages—a scene of pastoral tranquility.

The tribesmen, buoyed by the harvest, were blissfully unaware of the devastating news ahead. Cabdes silently hoped the coming war would go smoothly...

To the west bank of the Dawa River lay a bustling village, part of Segestica's Main Camp extending westward across the river. Most of the Main Camp was on the east bank, backed by towering mountains

and cradled by the broad river, granting a defensive advantage. Its elevated terrain made it safe from floodwaters during the rainy season, providing security.

Cabdes passed through the West Village and stepped onto the floating bridge. Under the glow of the setting sun, he entered Segestica's East Camp.

When he set foot in the tribal hall, Cabdes felt a wave of unease. Though he was the uncle of Andres, he greatly feared this nephew.

At just over forty years old, Andres was the youngest among the Great Chiefs of the Pannonian Tribe Alliance. While his position as the chief of Segestica was due to his lineage, the entire tribe revered him. By the age of twenty, he had already joined the battlefield in the war against the Scodisqi people.

During the decisive battle against the Scodisqi Tribe that initially occupied this region, he personally led an assault that shattered the enemy's central forces and slew the Scodisqi Great Leader, allowing the Segestica people to reclaim their land.

In his thirties, Andres became the tribe's chief. Unlike his father, who was content with maintaining order, Andres harbored ambitious plans to make his tribe the dominant force in both the Pannonian Tribe Alliance and the entire Great River Plain. Thus, he soon launched campaigns westward, repeatedly defeating the Aldeans who lived along the banks of the Kupa River.

His victories also provoked another major Pannonian tribe along the Sava River—the Brochi. Imitating his campaigns, they further weakened the already crippled Alde Tribe, who lost their eastern hill territories.

Just as Andres, brimming with confidence, prepared to lead his army to completely annihilate the Aldeans and fully claim the Kupa River and its tributary territories, extending his tribe's domain far to the west, devastating news reached him: his most trusted Wallis had suffered a disastrous defeat!

Now, he sat on the main throne, stroking his Celtic-style mustache, his eyes sharp as he looked at the entering Cabdes and asked in a somber tone, "My uncle, you've come so late—is it to deliver good news?"

With a loud "plop," Cabdes fell to his knees, choking back tears as he cried out, "Great Chief, please forgive me. I have lost my village!"

"What?!" Andres bolted upright. Earlier, he had received a report from Cabdes' messenger stating, "Cabdes is now advancing to rescue the besieged Wallis." At the time, he had held onto a shred of hope, thinking Cabdes' reinforcements would allow Wallis to hold out for a few days, buying enough time for Andres to bring his army to the front. Yet now, even Cabdes' village had been taken!

"How was it lost?!" Andres roared, his expression darkening.

Cabdes hurriedly recounted the entire battle.

Having heard the details, Andres grew even angrier: "You previously sent a messenger telling me that Wallis fell into the enemy's trap and suffered defeat. What wisdom did you gain from that experience? None! Instead, you fell into the enemy's ambush just as easily. Has your mind failed you?"

Cabdes cried out in defense: "Great Chief, I was desperate to rescue Wallis. Seeing his warriors valiantly defend the walls, I baited the enemy forces away, thinking Wallis would lead his warriors out of the village to counterattack. By then, it wouldn't be me surrounded but the enemy defeated. Yet the gates stayed closed—the entire time—with my tribesmen trapped and surrounded, they never opened...

Great Chief, I am not blaming Wallis. I have fought alongside him for years; I understand him. If he were truly directing the battle from inside the village, he would have undoubtedly led his people out."

Andres widened his eyes at these words: "You mean to say Wallis is already dead?!"

"The enemy employed the same tactic to crush my village; they could certainly use it to break Wallis' stronghold. His village isn't much more fortified than mine."

"So Wallis is dead, and his village is lost as well!..."

Andres' expression showed traces of sorrow. His bond with Wallis was extraordinary—they had grown up together, fought side by side against the Scodisqi people, and Wallis had loyally supported Andres'

western campaigns. Wallis often led his tribesmen to fight on the front lines, earning significant battle merit. Now, that reliable arm had been severed, leaving Andres deep in grief.

Chapter 233: Maximus's Request

"Perhaps he was simply captured by the enemy..." Cabdes said cautiously.

"With Wallis's personality, even if he were injured, he would rather take his own life than be captured by the enemy," Andres said in a deep voice.

Cabdes felt a tightening in his heart, his face showing shame.

But Andres did not scold him further. For a moment, his surprise suppressed the anger in his heart: "Within just one day, the enemy not only defeated you twice but also captured two of our villages!... Those weak Aldeans can't have such abilities. Where exactly did this enemy come from?"

"Great Chief," Cabdes hurriedly said, "these enemies are definitely not Aldeans! When fighting them, I saw them wearing thick armor, holding large red shields, standing in a tight formation, and using short swords as weapons—"

Andres's eyes suddenly narrowed: "Are you saying they are... the Romans!"

His voice was slightly trembling.

The Pannonians had the courage to overthrow their original masters precisely because of the great war between the Skodisqi and Romans a dozen years ago. Though he was too young to participate, Andres had heard many times from his father and the older tribesmen about that battle, and everyone praised the strength of the Romans.

"I participated in that great war back then. The weapons, equipment, and appearance of this enemy are indeed very similar to the Romans!" Cabdes said confidently.

No matter how courageous Andres was, at this moment, he couldn't help but be nervous: "Could the Romans have crossed the western mountains and come here?!"

"Great Chief, Rome is an extremely powerful kingdom. If it were to attack here, it would naturally do so with great momentum. How could they sneak around like this enemy?" Cabdes consoled, having pondered this carefully on his way back. "Perhaps the Aldeans hired mercenaries."

"The Aldeans are so poor. How could they afford to hire mercenaries?" Andres was somewhat skeptical.

"But they have many tribesmen working as pirates outside, who can know quite a few people," Cabdes reminded.

Andres fell silent, pacing back and forth in the hall. Suddenly, he asked, "If these mercenaries were hired by the Aldeans, how many do you think there would be?"

Cabdes estimated, "Previously, according to Wallis's confidant, they had dispatched about 4500 people to fight. The enemy they fought, including those disguised as farmers, was only slightly fewer in number. Then, these enemies chased all the way to Wallis's village, so it's impossible that they still had the strength to fight my warriors.

Afterwards, the enemies that intercepted my army and surrounded us all wore armor, were in excellent condition, and outnumbered the 2500 warriors I led. Clearly, they were another group of enemies...

If those we fought today were all of them, I estimate these mercenaries number around 10,000."

"10,000..." Andres stroked his handlebar mustache.

Cabdes continued, "Great Chief, on my way here, I had Anrotas, the leader of the river village I passed through, send someone to investigate this enemy's situation. I believe we will have news tomorrow or the day after."

At this point, Andres felt a reduction in resentment towards his uncle, who was experienced in handling things. He kicked the wooden chair beside him hard and said angrily, "No matter where this enemy comes from, whether they are many or few, if they dare to confront me, Andres, they must pay a heavy price!

I will immediately notify all the tribes to gather all the warriors within the tribe, head to the banks of the Kupa River, eliminate this enemy, flatten the Aldean villages, and rescue our captured tribesmen as soon as possible!

So, Uncle Cabdes, I now assign you a task—investigate and find out the detailed situation of this enemy, as quickly as possible!"

In fact, after receiving the message sent back by messenger from Cabdes, Andres had already gathered 4000 warriors in his main camp to prepare for aid the next day. But now, after hearing Cabdes's account, he felt those 4000 warriors would not suffice. He would have to exert the full strength of his tribe to annihilate this powerful enemy in one fell swoop.

"Yes, Great Chief, I guarantee to complete the task!" Cabdes responded excitedly, seeing hope in reclaiming his village.

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The next morning, Maximus led his troops, escorting prisoners and transporting supplies, heading west back to the temporary camp. Capito, Volenus, and other leaders also organized personnel to come and assist.

The rebel army, having been separated for a day, reunited.

In just one day, the entire rebel army swelled rapidly, for they suddenly increased by more than 18,000 prisoners, including over 5100 Skodisqi slaves, more than 3500 Segestica warriors (excluding those seriously injured), and nearly 10,000 Segestica prisoners with only about 400 old men, some 6000 women, more than 3000 children, and some artisans with special skills such as blacksmiths, carpenters, builders, straw weavers, furriers... there were even itinerant merchants, totaling about 150 people.

In addition, there were over 600 Pannonians with special status. They came from other major Pannonian tribes and were exiled due to various reasons, becoming tribal refugees. To survive, they chose to work for Segestica leaders and nobles as hired hands, or farm, herding, or do housework for the nobles, essentially becoming a form of slavery.

Chapter 234: Maximus's Request_2

Not only has the number of the rebel army more than doubled, but the grain and supplies they have seized are also piling up like mountains, with poultry and livestock running around everywhere...

As a result, the temporary camp of the rebel army underwent an emergency expansion yesterday, stretching from the banks of the Murenica River to the northern foothills, divided into inner and outer camps. Of course, the camp's structure is still very rudimentary, and time must be spent gradually perfecting the entire camp.

When Budocaribas and Karsipengpas, who rushed over upon hearing the news, saw the captive troops lined up in long queues, weeping incessantly, they knew the news they heard yesterday was true—Maximus' forces had indeed captured two Segestica villages; otherwise, such a big gain wouldn't be possible.

Likewise, Aldean Great Chief Acoupaigos and elder Cleobrotas, who also arrived upon receiving the news yesterday afternoon, found it unbelievable: these outsiders had just settled down and so hastily waged war against the Segestica people. It seemed too rushed!

However, this was good news for the Alde Tribe, indicating that the young leader indeed kept his word.

Although Acoupaigos had limited mobility, this was an important matter for the Alde, so he naturally had to come and see for himself. However, he wasn't planning to rush over right away as that would seem too deliberate, lacking in restraint, so they only arrived at the temporary camp the next day.

As a result, the scene of being overcrowded with supplies on the ground left them both dumbfounded, and even more so, they were shocked that the rebel army had broken through two Segestica villages in just one day.

Such good news even caused the old Acoupaigos to break his usual stoicism, coming forward to congratulate: "Congratulations to Leader Maximus on gaining a glorious victory!"

"Now the Great Chief can finally relax, right?" Maximus looked at him with a faint smile.

Acoupaigos replied with an unchanged expression: "I have always had faith in you, Leader Maximus. Otherwise, I wouldn't have invited your troops to settle in our territory."

"It was precisely to repay the Great Chief's trust that I hastened to launch an attack on the Segestica people." Maximus said with a worried expression, "However, after achieving victory, I've also encountered a problem."

"What problem might Leader Maximus have encountered?" Cleobrotas asked.

"Yesterday's battle will certainly anger the Segestica people, and I believe it won't be long before they launch a massive attack. By then, I must exert all my strength to fight back, which might leave me unable to guard so many Segestica prisoners. If they start a riot, it would affect our operations, and that would be quite troublesome!" Maximus said with a serious expression.

"Why don't you just kill them? You know, that's exactly how the Segestica people treated our Alde prisoners before. They cruelly chopped off our warriors' heads, impaling them on wooden stakes, and used them to taunt us at our village or simply left them on their wooden walls, exposed to the wind and rain..." Budocaribas interjected, his words laced with anger.

Budocaribas' village is at the frontline, evidently having experienced quite a few of such instances.

Yet, Maximus showed no intention of appeasing him and calmly said: "If we kill all Segestica prisoners, it would surely enrage the Segestica people, making our upcoming battles more difficult to win! Moreover, killing all Segestica prisoners like that would be too easy for them."

"Then, what does Leader Maximus intend to do?" Cleobrotas asked.

Maximus looked at the four people in front of him and voiced the proposal he had considered along the way: "I understand the pain inflicted on you by the Segestica people, so I can hand over all the Segestica nobles among the prisoners to you for free.

They should be the initiators of the war between the Segestica and Alde, and have benefited the most from it, deserving severe punishment! You may use them for sacrifices or kill them directly to console the departed souls and ease the tribesmen's minds.

As for the nearly 4,000 Segestica warrior prisoners, I would like you to temporarily help me guard them, treating them like cattle or sheep is fine, but do not disable or sicken them, as I will carefully inspect them when I want them back.

However, now I cannot hand them over to you yet. I need to use them as labor to quickly build the camp."

The four looked at each other, and Budocaribas hesitated before advising, "I think this proposal is acceptable."

Acoupaigos did not respond immediately, instead, he turned around to ask: "Why does Leader Maximus not hand over the rest of the Segestica prisoners to us?"

Maximus seriously replied, "During the Segestica Army's attack and our combat with them, these Segestica prisoners might play a rather special role."

"What special role might they play?" Cleobrotas curiously asked.

"You will know when the time comes." Maximus did not elaborate, and everyone refrained from further questioning.

"Can you tell me, how will you deal with the Skodisqi people?" Acoupaigos asked again.

"I plan to grant them some freedom, allowing them to work for us," Maximus vaguely replied.

"They're Celts; their relationship with us Illyrians wasn't good before," Budocaribas reminded.

Maximus seriously explained: "Yes, I know, but they hate the Segestica people even more! And I have saved them, so they are somewhat grateful to me. I can try to persuade them to serve us well, which could greatly weaken the Segestica people's power and strengthen us. We should certainly do that, shouldn't we?"

The Alde had nothing more to say to this, only telling Maximus: when he is ready to transfer Segestica prisoners to the Alde Tribe, he can directly contact Budocaribas, who will be responsible for the matter.

Due to his ill health, Acoupaigos couldn't stay long and soon set off back with Cleobrotas.

"Great Chief, was my previous judgment wrong?" Cleobrotas suddenly asked.

Acoupaigos knew what he was referring to and ponderingly said: "This young man has his own ideas and strong initiatives to realize them; his army's combat effectiveness is indeed not bad; he does somewhat resemble that person.

However, the war has just begun; the storm will soon arrive, and if this young tree gets blown down, everything will just be an illusion. My greater concern is that the anger of the Segestica people might extend to us!"

"I can see that young man knows what's coming next and is preparing for it, otherwise he wouldn't have asked us to help guard the prisoners. He's so young yet so clear-headed; it's truly rare!"

Cleobrotas first praised, then solemnly said: "Great Chief, I think even without yesterday's battle, judging from the Segestica people's actions over the past year, it's evident that their massive attack on us wasn't too far off! If Leader Maximus truly cannot hold them off and the flames of war reach us prematurely, wouldn't we still have the courage to defend our homeland just like these outsiders? Let's just rally all tribesmen and rise to resist! Didn't you say, after all, there's no difference whether we perish sooner or later."

Chapter 235: Segestica Army Attacks

"You always retort with that line now," Acoupaigos pointed at the other man helplessly, then spoke in a low voice, "I can see that young man is just humoring us. He wants to turn those Skodisqi slaves into his people, and maybe he hopes to make those Segestica prisoners submit too. That way, his forces can quickly grow."

"I have the same feeling," Cleobrotas acknowledged. Maximus' act couldn't fool their experienced eyes, but Cleobrotas had a different thought: "Perhaps the Skodisqi slaves can be won over, but the Segestica

people will be tough. If he can really achieve that, it would actually be a good thing, because then our northern side would be completely safe."

"With the threat from the Segestica people gone, a new threat might arise—" Acoupaigos stopped midway, clutching his chest to suppress a coughing urge, resting for a moment before murmuring, "The future is hard to predict, let's just see how it goes for now..."

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After Acoupaigos and his companion left, Karsipempas also bid farewell, "Leader Maximus, I am truly sorry! I should stay to face the upcoming Segestica Army with you, but I have been away from my fleet for too long, and I am somewhat worried about their safety!

I also need to check on my tribe, I am unsure of how they are living now, so—"

"Elder Karsipempas, if you continue, I might be too ashamed to see you!" Maximus said sincerely, "Our successful arrival here and getting permission from the Alde Tribe to settle was all thanks to your tireless efforts over the past few months!

Without your dedicated help, we might still be exhausting ourselves marching on the land of Italy or wandering aimlessly in the mountains, so my people and I will forever remember your kindness!"

Karsipempas was pleased by the praise, waving his hand repeatedly, "You overpraise, you overpraise! You also helped us greatly before, what I did was well warranted!

Besides, you are now our neighbors and allies, we help each other!"

"Yes, we are neighbors now and also friends, let's interact more in the future!" Maximus caught on and said earnestly, "I heard your tribe is in the mountains with a harsh environment, the people lack food and clothing... If there are any difficulties, please be sure to tell me, I will do my utmost to assist!"

"Uh, well... They're getting by now, and besides, it's quite far from here..." Karsipempas, out of his tribal leader's dignity, tactfully tried to decline.

Maximus continued, "You roam the seas for long periods, and should any difficulty arise in the tribe, you might not resolve it in time. The surrounding tribes might not be doing well either and can offer little help, but I can!"

Maximus confidently pointed at the mountains of supplies in the camp, "Why not send a capable subordinate to be stationed here long-term, so if your tribe encounters any difficulty, he can directly inform me. Then I can dispatch people to transport needed supplies there, and the problem will be solved!

Of course, this is not gratuitous help. I also need you to assist me in keeping tabs on the situation of my comrades in Italy and the situation in Rome, from which we are now isolated.

Sometimes I will also need to purchase items unavailable here, for which I will need your help... You see, mutually assisting each other benefits both of us, wouldn't you agree?"

Karsipempas thought for a moment and nodded, "Yes."

"Shall we settle it then?" Maximus extended his hand.

"Settled." Their hands clasped firmly together.

"So who will you send?"

Karsipempas thought again and said, "Rochemnix, my second son."

Karsipempas had only two sons, which showed his emphasis on this matter.

Maximus smiled, "Great, I will await his arrival eagerly!"

Karsipempas was about to take his leave, but Maximus spoke again, "Karsipempas, there is something I want to remind you!

I hear that pirates have been rampant around the seas near Italy in recent years, severely affecting the Italians' trade and travel. Rome, being the master of the Mediterranean, likely won't allow such a situation to exist for long and will eventually find time to focus on resolving the maritime security issue.

At that time, I hope you can retreat in a timely manner. Of course, that means you won't be able to provide material support for your tribe anymore. But no worries, for I believe by then I have already defeated the Pannonians, and I will designate a fertile piece of land as territory for your tribe, making farming and grazing convenient for them... Think it over."

On his way back, Karsipempas was a bit absent-minded.

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The rebel army had experience dealing with prisoners.

They separated the Segestica Soldiers from the other Segestica people, feeding them until half full, making them build the camp under the watch of soldiers during the day to exhaust them completely; and at night, they were grouped in tens, with their hands and feet tied to the same long rope, repeatedly warned that if one escaped, the remaining nine would be executed along with their wives, children, and parents."