

Perish 276

Chapter 276: The Panoni Alliance Army Arrives_2

Andres decided to personally lead the campaign against the Skodisqi bandits.

Back when the Skodisqi Tribe here was annihilated, some remnants had escaped into the mountains, harassing the Segestica Tribe for several years before he was responsible for their extermination. He had a lot of experience with this.

After some reconnaissance and deployment, Andres led his army to strike the Skodisqi bandits who were plundering. After a battle, the Skodisqi suffered heavy casualties, and the remnants fled northwest into the mountains, temporarily restoring peace to the Segestica Territory.

During this time, reinforcements from the Pannonian Alliance arrived gradually. They included ten thousand Brochi warriors, among them 800 heavy warriors; five thousand Mazi warriors, with 200 heavy warriors; ten thousand Desitia warriors, with no heavy soldiers but 500 cavalry.

These three tribes were the only ones to provide reinforcements because their territories were all close to Segestica, allowing for quick deployment and low grain consumption, and because the Desitia had close ties to Segestica, while the Brochi and Mazi were concerned about the threat the Mercenaries posed to them, thus being more proactive in providing troops.

In mid-October, the reinforcements from the three major tribes gathered in the Segestica Territory. Andres had already summoned five thousand of his own tribe's warriors, and soon they set off together.

The large army majestically passed through the dense forests, crossed the Kupa River, and marched west along the South Bank.

At the same time, Andres sent out many scouts to carefully search the mountains along the coast... Even with a large army in hand, he was more cautious than the last time.

The scouts did not find any anomalies along the way.

But after crossing the Kolana River, they encountered interceptions from the rebel army, losing some scouts and failing to gather information about the rebels' camp.

This was within Andres' expectations because during his inactivity, this "Mercenary" force had even pushed their blockade to near the original Cabdes village, making it difficult for the scouts sent by Segestica to pass through. Even if they took a detour through the mountain roads, they never returned, leaving Andres completely in the dark about the situation west of the original Cabdes village.

At least this time, after the army set out, he knew that nothing unusual was found north of the Kolana River, except for extensive cultivated land around the Wallis Village, which had already sprouted seedlings.

These outsiders actually dared to farm here! It seems they truly intend to take this land for themselves! ... Andres was very angry at first, wanting the warriors to uproot all the seedlings in the field. But then he thought: once this Mercenary army is destroyed, won't the land they cultivated return to his tribe?

Turning his anger into joy, Andres was also reassured by the large swathes of cultivated land: why did the Mercenaries want to blockade this area? It turned out to be to protect their companions farming here...

As before, the Segestica Army used Wallis Village as their last camp, with the transported grain supplies stored there.

After a good rest for the night, Andres led the army to cross the Kolana River again early the next day. Not only did they not encounter interceptions from the "Mercenaries," but even the enemy's shadow was not seen.

It was clear the enemy knew of their strong military force this time and chose to evade. ... Andres felt disappointed by this.

The army continued westward, passing the site of their previous crushing defeat. Once a battlefield strewn with corpses and flowing blood, it had now become nothing but a withered yellow field of weeds, showing no signs of war, but still unnerving Andres.

Finally, the Panoni Alliance Army halted its advance because the "Mercenaries" camp was just over 300 meters ahead.

This time, the leader of the Desitia reinforcements was their Great Chief Temagis. He personally led the troops to assist out of friendship with Andres and his own curiosity about how the enemy, with fewer numbers, managed to defeat the battle-hardened Andres, wanting to see it firsthand.

At this moment, he asked Andres in shock, "Is this the Mercenaries' camp? This is practically a fortress!"

It's no wonder he was shocked; in his view, the Mercenaries' camp had about three-meter-high earthen walls with over two-meter-high wooden walls on top of them. Every now and then, there was a wooden tower built. Even the main fort in his tribe didn't have such towering walls and so many wooden towers as this camp did.

Andres looked grave. He did not respond but stared at the enemy camp for a while before saying, "Let's go take a closer look!"

Thus, Andres led 50 cavalry from his tribe, and Temagis led his 500 cavalry to ride out, circling halfway around the "Mercenaries" camp, losing any illusions: not only the side facing their troops was built with high walls, but apart from the side facing the river, the whole camp was surrounded by long walls and wooden towers.

Andres gritted his teeth, "Let's get a little closer and have a look."

Saying this, he galloped straight toward the "Mercenaries" camp, and the cavalry staggered forward, guarding him.

Temagis, too, followed closely with his cavalry.

The noise made by the 550 cavalry galloping together was enough to deter the enemy from launching a sudden attack from the camp.

The closer they got to the enemy camp, the wider Temagis' eyes became. He pointed forward and shouted, "Andres, do you see that?! Those rows of sharp wooden stakes sticking out of the ground!"

"I see them! I also see a deep trench between the stakes and the earth wall!" Andres, who was at the front, replied with a stern face.

"What?! There's a trench too?!" Temagis was startled, urging his horse forward, wanting to see more clearly.

At that moment, several sharp cries came from the front, as several warhorses rolled to the ground. The fallen cavalry who were thrown to the ground struggled to get up, only to fall again, clutching their feet and screaming miserably.

"There are enemy traps on the ground! Be careful! ..." The cavalry shouted in panic.

In haste, the leading cavalry reined in their warhorses, and those behind, unable to react in time, collided, leading to a chaotic mess of horse neighs and shouts...

Andres, however, managed to rein in his horse in time, and with the protection of his guards, he did not suffer from the collisions behind him.

Ignoring the objections of his guards, he dismounted, placing his feet on the soft grass with no detection of any threats, feeling relieved, cautiously moving forward while leaning down, searching through the grass...

Suddenly, he halted, his right foot tentatively resting on a sharp object. He squatted down, brushed away the loose soil with his hand, and pulled upwards forcefully.

Temagis, who had followed, focused his gaze on Andres' hand: it was a short wooden stick that the enemy had deeply buried in the soil, with one end sharpened into a point!

"Damn Mercenaries!" Andres cursed angrily, handing the stick to Temagis before carefully moving forward again, trying to help the two injured cavalry up...

Unbeknownst to him, standing on the wooden tower near the gate of the camp, tens of meters away, was the rebel army's leader Maximus.

Maximus looked calmly at everything happening in front of the camp, saying to Quintus beside him, "That man should be Andres, the Segestica Tribe's Great Chief. The armor he wears looks like the one Emmerich described."

"Additionally, the fact that the Segestica army had just arrived and this man led the cavalry to approach the camp for a risky reconnaissance, even taking the lead, matches the personality of the Segestica Great Chief described by Emmerich. He is likely the one.

But the person behind him, who also has a pointed helmet with long feathers, although not wearing golden armor, seems to be wearing something very refined. According to Emmerich, only a tribe's Great Chief could wear such armor. Who might he be?" Quintus asked curiously.

Chapter 277: A Show of Strength

"It might be the other Pannonian tribe great chief sent as reinforcements." Maximus suddenly showed interest, lightly patting an elder half-squatting in front of him and said half-jokingly, half-seriously: "Fortunius, this is a great opportunity. Two Pannonian great chiefs standing together. If you could shoot them dead with one arrow, we could win without a fight."

Fortunius, a Roman veteran, part of the Flannitus' batch of army slaves, was appointed by Maximus as the crossbow cannon team leader because he had previously served as a crossbow gunner in the Roman Legion, in charge of managing the six captured crossbow cannons of the rebel army, commanding 24 soldiers.

This crossbow cannon team could only be useful in Campania during a farm attack, and its last role was in the attack on Canosa. Due to running out of the already limited lead balls, it was temporarily sidelined.

During the rebel army's march north, they continuously defeated Roman armies and captured quite a few crossbows. Maximus requested an additional 10 crossbow cannons and some lead balls. Unfortunately, during the difficult march in the Illyria Mountain, some supplies, including cumbersome lead balls, were abandoned for the soldiers to move more easily. Even the crossbow cannon mounts

were dismantled and discarded. Only the most important torsion metal spring arms were treasured like gems by the crossbow team soldiers, carried along the way in turns, and finally brought to the temporary camp.

Then Fortunius went to see engineer Spukala, hoping he could find someone to help restore the crossbow cannons.

But after Capito learned of this, he thought that without lead balls, restoring crossbow cannons was pointless and suggested transforming them into crossbows to make them functional.

Fortunius strongly opposed, and the two had a heated argument, drawing Maximus' attention. In the end, he decided to support Capito's suggestion, instructing engineer Spukala to gather craftsmen from the engineering camp to promptly use the key components of these crossbow cannons to convert them into crossbows to strengthen the camp's defenses.

Ultimately, the engineering camp successfully converted 10 crossbows, while the rest remained in storage due to minor or major damage to the torsion metal spring arms, awaiting potential repair materials.

These ten crossbows were then moved to the newly built wooden tower.

Fortunius looked back at Maximus, eyes filled with anticipation: "Leader, if I shoot those two people you mentioned, what reward will I get?"

Just yesterday, during a Political Affairs Hall meeting with department chiefs, Maximus issued an order to everyone in the team regarding the Pannonian invasion: all tribe members must unite to rely on the camp's defenses against the enemy's attack. If successful, all ordinary tribe members would be promoted and become second-class tribe members, and promotion time for reserve tribe members would be reduced from three years to two!

This directive greatly boosted the morale of the newly formed Nix tribe members. So when the Pannonian Alliance Army arrived in force before the camp today, the Nix tribe soldiers standing on the wooden wall walkway readying for defense showed no fear but excitement - this included the soldiers operating the crossbows as well.

"You don't need to shoot them both. Just kill that Segestica great chief and you'll have achieved a great merit. I will grant you a two-level promotion, making you a first-class tribesman!" Maximus encouraged decisively.

"Just watch me!" Fortunius eagerly rubbed his hands, again lying prone behind the crossbow, sighting through the scope. He had previously fixed the firing angle and now fine-tuned it with great care.

The remodeled crossbow had several differences from the original crossbow cannon.

Firstly, the wooden stand below was not as tall as the crossbow cannon's but had stones attached to increase weight, ensuring the crossbow's stability during firing to improve shooting accuracy.

Secondly, unlike the crossbow cannon where the firing angle was only straight or slightly upward, the crossbow could adjust the firing angle downward since crossbow arrows wouldn't slide downward like lead balls.

Moreover, the wooden slide of the crossbow was narrow but longer than the crossbow cannon, as it held not round lead balls, but short spears...

"Brothers, draw the bow!" Fortunius commanded.

A supporting archer immediately turned the pulley, drawing the bowstring back.

Another supporting archer inserted a short spear into the slide, ensuring it fit perfectly.

Fortunius stared intently through the metal sighting hole above the slide at the person clad in dazzling golden armor.

The moment the person stopped moving, Fortunius swiftly pulled the trigger, and the torsion spring arm drove the bowstring to snap back rapidly, imparting powerful force to the short spear, heard with a "whoosh" as it flew and turned into a black dot in the sky in everyone's eyes.

Andres had just taken two steps when he unknowingly stepped into another trap. Just as he instinctively bent down to remove it, he heard the sharp whoosh and then the agonized cries of his warhorse and warrior behind him.

Andres turned sharply, greeted by a scene of shocking horror: a warhorse's neck had been sliced half through, and the warrior on its back, even clad in leather armor, had a large hole in his abdomen from which intestines spilled with blood. A blood-red short spear held him skewered diagonally to the ground...

Chapter 278: Disembark with Power_2

The normally brave Andres was also horrified at this moment: the distance from here to the enemy's encampment walls was more than 50 meters, yet the enemy's short spears could still be thrown this far with such terrifying power!

Andres didn't have time to think. He turned around to run back while shouting, "Quick! Retreat!—"

Just as the words left his mouth, a shadow flashed before his eyes, followed by a warrior's wretched scream. This time, two warriors were skewered together by a short spear.

Then another spear came flying...

Fortunius saw that the short spear he shot out did not hit the enemy's Great Chief, and he slapped his thigh in frustration, turning back a bit ashamedly to say, "Leader, I've only been using this crossbow for a few days, and I'm not fully accustomed to it yet—"

Maximus pointed forward, "He's still there, you have another chance."

Fortunius immediately lay back behind the crossbow to aim, shouting, "Quickly open the bow! Prepare the spears!"

As soon as he finished speaking, he saw the left wooden tower shoot out a spear, followed by the right one. Apparently, the crossbow archers on these towers mimicked Fortunius after his shot, as the cavalry in front of the camp were also within their range.

"These guys dare to steal my credit!" Fortunius roared, then calmed down and squeezed the trigger after aiming again.

Quintus saw that the Pannonian cavalry in front of the camp was somewhat confused under the crossbow's surprise attack and immediately suggested, "Leader, I think we can send some Centurions out of the camp to pursue them a little, boost our soldiers' morale."

"Alright." Maximus nodded.

Soon, the camp gate's drawbridge was lowered over the moat, and four Centurions rushed out one after another, sprinting along the safe road in front of the camp towards the Pannonian cavalry.

At that moment, Andres and Temagis were desperately scrambling backward on all fours, not daring to get back on their warhorses, as they dared not linger at all in the face of the constantly flying short spears.

Finally, they managed to retreat beyond the range, only to suddenly see several teams rushing out from the waiting Pannonian Allied forces at the rear, shouting loudly as they charged towards them.

It turned out that the Pannonian Allied forces, waiting at the rear, did not know that there were traps in front of the enemy camp and crossbow shooting due to the distance. They only saw their cavalry lingering there for a long time and then decided to charge out of the camp. Out of concern for their Great Chief, Segestica and Desitia each dispatched a thousand-man unit to come to the rescue.

Seeing the situation, Andres and Temagis hurriedly mounted their horses, waving and shouting urgently to the approaching warriors, "Stop! Go back! Go back!..."

The advancing Pannonian units had spread out during their charge, completely drowning out the shouts of Andres and Temagis. Apart from a few close to them, most soldiers not only didn't stop but instead accelerated because they saw the enemy in front finishing off their injured cavalry brethren, which ignited their rage...

Just then, the copper horn for retreat sounded in the camp, and the Nix Tribe Soldiers outside the camp began to withdraw...

The Pannonian warriors saw this and gave chase, but soon some warriors stepped into traps and fell with screams. At first, this didn't attract much attention until more fell, and everyone realized there were traps.

As they halted their pursuit, short spears shot out from the camp again, causing panic once more...

The Nix Tribe Soldiers, who were originally retreating, turned back and charged again. The Pannonian warriors lost their fighting spirit and retreated...

The Nix Tribe Soldiers took the opportunity to clean the battlefield and retrieved the short spears they had thrown.

Since the Nix Tribe was just established and hadn't set up a furnace to forge weapons, the short spears fired by crossbows were made by cutting down Segestica warriors' long spears they had captured before, with a wooden socket fitted to the end to hook onto the bowstring... This was quite wasteful, but there was no other choice, so they treasured them.

When the soldiers returned to the camp carrying five or six dying warhorses, a chorus of cheers erupted inside the camp.

Maximus, overseeing the cheering soldiers walking on the wooden wall, smiled, "I didn't expect the enemy to give us a victory just upon their arrival, helping us boost morale!"

"However, they'll learn from this. Next time they attack, they'll likely be better prepared, and it won't be so easy to repel them," Quintus reminded.

"I'm actually hoping their entire army presses on us so our camp can truly show its strength!" Maximus said confidently.

They exchanged smiles.

The Nix Tribe celebrated joyfully, while the Pannonian Allied forces were despondent after a small setback.

The previously confident Andres was now frowning. After a brief discussion with Temagis and the leaders of the other two reinforcements, he reluctantly gave the order for the "army to return to the eastern camp."

The army had just arrived and was already returning; it wasn't even noon yet... Andres made this decision out of sheer helplessness.

Due to the "mercenaries'" tight blockade earlier, he couldn't learn about the enemy's camp situation, so he was preparing to attack. But he never anticipated that these "mercenaries" could transform a simple camp into a well-defended fortress in just a month (Andres considered the mercenary camp's outer wooden wall better built than the Segestica Main Camp, hence it was not merely a camp but a fortress).

In his past battles, he had never attacked a fortress like this. This minor defeat made him realize that he needed ample preparation for future assaults, or else defeat awaited him.

The Pannonian Allied forces returned to the camp, and after a long discussion among Andres, Temagis, and other military leaders, they finally formulated an attack plan and sent a messenger to the Segestica Main Camp.

The next day, Andres led his army across the Kolana River, halting three miles from the "mercenaries'" camp.

Andres first dispatched cavalry to monitor the "mercenaries'" camp movements, then sent a third of his warriors into the western mountains to cut down trees, another third to clear the ground and set up tents...

He planned to construct several temporary camps between the two marshes to the east and the mountains to the west, allowing the allied forces to station there, thus facilitating a nearby advance on the "mercenaries'" camp.

Andres positioned his tribe's camp facing the "mercenaries'" camp, as it was the closest to the enemy. He felt it inappropriate to let the reinforcements take the highest risk, so he faced the front himself.

The Desitia reinforcements' camp was near the mountains, which also posed some risk since the enemy might flank the mountains for a surprise attack, so he had his closest ally, Temagis, lead troops to station there.

The camps of Brochi and Mazi reinforcements were arranged eastward, having already passed through the open ground between the marshes and extending to the Kolana River.

Each camp was spaced out, and the tents within were quite sparse, stretching the Pannonian Allied Camp four miles north to south and over five miles east to west...

Andres believed that, even if their camp was simply surrounded by wooden fences and did not serve much defensive purpose if the mercenaries dared to launch a raid, their camp's width and length would allow enough time for the rear forces to organize a counterattack, possibly encircling the enemy within the camp itself. He actually hoped for such a scenario, as it would be far better than a frontal assault on the enemy camp.

Andres was satisfied with his arrangements. The only slight issue was the abundance of mosquitoes near the marsh. However, the Pannonians originally lived along the Sava and Delaware Rivers, both equally swamp-laden. They had their ways of dealing with it, and having long been bitten by mosquitoes, their bodies were quite adapted.

Chapter 279: Pequot's Surprise Attack

After the Pannonia Alliance Army settled down, they vigorously built siege machinery while sending people to closely scout the situation in the "Mercenaries" camp, all the while waiting for reinforcements from the rear.

Meanwhile, the Nix Tribe showed no reaction to the commotion caused by the Pannonian Army these days, remaining holed up inside the camp with tightly shut gates.

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"Great Captain!" Adobag ran hurriedly into the camp, waving and shouting even before he reached Pequot.

Pequot frowned. Ever since he last reprimanded Adobag, the young man had behaved much more steadily in recent days. But today, why is he all agitated again!

Then, he saw another scout running over, panting heavily, with an anxious look on his face.

He immediately sheathed his finely polished short dagger, hung it at his waist, stood up, and asked, "What have you discovered?"

"Great... Great Captain!" Adobag gasped for breath and said, "A large... group! There are many carriages... all loaded with food, and... many of our people, but the enemy... not too many..."

Pequot looked at the other scout, Lapuzas, who was an old soldier that followed him from Turi, a Great Greek with experience in reconnaissance. Importantly, he could do calculations; however, due to unfamiliarity with the terrain, he was temporarily assisting Adobag.

Lapuzas quickly chimed in, "Great Captain, this group indeed has a lot of people, and the supplies they are transporting are considerable. There are more than 30 carriages, all carrying food, approximately 2000 Skodisqi men... ahem... people, their hands and feet are bound with ropes, and there are over 600 Pannonian warriors escorting them, but no heavy infantry."

"Over 600 Pannonian warriors..." Pequot mused.

Adobag anxiously urged, "Great Captain, 600 is not many, and they're spread throughout the entire group, while we can concentrate and strike at one point as you've trained us, then eliminate them batch by batch—"

"What do you know!" Pequot yelled sharply at him.

Adobag immediately cowered into silence, casting a pleading look towards Lapuzas.

Lapuzas made no gesture, but softly said, "Great Captain, before we left the camp, the leader instructed you to try to delay any assaults on the enemy's rear, so that the enemy can attack our camp without reservation, thereby consuming more of their forces...

But these past few days, the western enemy hasn't launched an attack on our camp. I wonder if... they are waiting for these escorted Skodisqi people?"

Pequot's gaze suddenly sharpened as he fell into contemplation.

The issue was actually quite clear; he had just received the news and hadn't had a chance to think it through. With Lapuzas's reminder, he immediately realized: the Pannonians typically used Skodisqi slaves as cannon fodder and to charge first in battles. This time, they hadn't assaulted their encampment, yet they were now transporting these Skodisqi slaves over, likely to use them as cannon fodder again to storm the camp.

In the camp are so many new Skodisqi soldiers. They surely wouldn't want to strike lethal blows at their own compatriots, just like this guy next to him. By that time, the leader would be in a difficult position. Should he try to induce defections again? But the enemy has already been fooled once; they wouldn't fall for it again...

Adobag saw Pequot standing with a thoughtful, unpredictable expression on his face and couldn't help but try to speak again, only to be held back by Lapuzas, who shook his head at him.

After a while, Pequot finally made up his mind: since the battle conditions had changed, he had to deploy earlier. As long as the assault was successful, he believed the leader would not only not blame him for disobeying but would instead be grateful for him eliminating a major headache!

"Where is this transport team now?" Pequot asked in a deep voice.

"They've just set camp at that Dry Fish Village (referring to the Anrotas tribe, nicknamed because their tribesmen like to hang the fish they catch from the river on wooden walls to dry). Tomorrow they will certainly continue along the river. At their pace, they'll probably reach the first village we captured (referring to Wallis's village) by dusk."

Pequot bent down, picked up a branch, and drew a simple outline of the midstream of the Kupa River on the ground, then added three small circles at different points along the line, representing three Pannonian villages... Ever since he became the leader of this surprise attack force, he personally came out to scout enemy positions on several occasions and was already quite familiar with the terrain there.

He stared at the ground for a moment, tapping a spot with the branch, and said in a deep voice, "Tomorrow morning we'll ambush the Pannonian transport team here!"

Lapuzas glanced down and was a bit surprised: "This... This is where we ambushed the enemy last time. I'm afraid they'll be on guard!"

"Don't worry, even if they take precautions, they'll still have to pass through here." Pequot tapped the ground confidently and said, "This location is far from both the Dry Fish Village and Bear Head Village (named after Wallis once personally hunted a black bear and hung its head above the village gate, boasting his bravery), making it difficult for them to send reinforcements in time.

Moreover, it's a very good place for concealment, making it hard for the enemy to spot us, otherwise the leader wouldn't have chosen this spot for an ambush in the first place.

By then, we'll divide our forces into two parts, concentrating our attacks on the head and tail of the transport team. Amidst the confusion, we'll insert a few of our new recruits into their ranks to rescue their compatriots, working with us to completely defeat the enemy!..."

Chapter 280: Pequot's Surprise Attack_2

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Due to the heavy losses suffered in the last battle, coupled with the subsequent harassment of the territory by the Skodisqi bandits, Andres initially did not plan to use the Skodisqi male slaves this time. However, after witnessing the might of the "Mercenaries" camp, to reduce the casualties of the tribesmen, he decided to let the slaves lead the charge as cannon fodder.

The Panoni Alliance Army had already completed its preparations for attack, awaiting the arrival of the Skodisqi male slaves. However, Andres received a shocking message: the transport team had been attacked by the mercenaries, resulting in hundreds of warriors being injured and the escape of all 2,000 slaves being transported, with the collected grain also burned.

Andres flew into a rage, cursing Cabdes's incompetence (as Cabdes was responsible for this matter) and hurling insults at the treacherous and shameless enemy.

After venting his anger, he had to face these questions: Should more slaves be sent over again? Should they launch an attack once they arrive?

The 30,000-strong army consumed a massive amount of grain daily. Fortunately, the reserves in the eastern camp could last for a few days, with Cabdes expedited the transportation of more grain. However, since arriving here, the warriors had only experienced one minor setback, and no combat for the following days. If this waiting continued, it would severely affect the morale of the Segestica Warriors used to swift battles and make the reinforcements question their motivations.

After all, the reinforcements came to help. If you, as the aggrieved party, are not actively fighting, how do you expect them to risk their lives to assist?... Thus, Andres made a decision: there should be no further delay, and action must be taken immediately.

However, the "Mercenary" force operating behind him made Andres feel uneasy and needed to be addressed quickly.

The Pannonians indeed did not have a department specifically in charge of logistics, but after years of warfare between Segestica and the Aldeans, Andres had crafted a method of sustaining the frontline troops. He arranged for a newly established tribe settlement and built camps every ten miles along the South Bank of the Kupa River. This strategy not only consolidated seized land but also created a safe supply line of grain, playing a crucial role in the battles against the Aldeans.

However, when the "Mercenaries" arrived, they swiftly captured the two frontmost camps.

This time, to fully concentrate on attacking the enemy, Andres verified the safety behind him after several days of investigation. He stationed over 1,000 warriors in the original Wallis camp to guard the grain stored there, but did not station troops in the original Cabdes camp, reasoning that since the transport team could reach the Wallis camp within a day after departing from the Anrotas camp, there was no need to waste more soldiers...

Now, he regretted this decision deeply. After discussing with Temagis and the other three allied generals, he decided to dispatch his capable subordinate Pulikas, leading 3,000 soldiers drawn from the army, to station in the Cabdes camp, hunt down and eliminate the "Mercenary" force, and ensure security in the rear.

On the second day, the sky was clear and clouds high, without wind or rain, making it a perfect day for combat.

The Panoni Alliance Army set out in a mighty surge towards the "Mercenaries" camp, halting 150 meters from the camp. Andres, Temagis, and the other commanders began deploying for the camp's assault.

The Nix Tribe's camp was roughly rectangular, with the south side running along the Murenica River Shore, the north side facing the mountains, the east end facing the Kolana River, and the west end towards the Budocaribas camp.

Initially, when the rebel army expanded the camp, Maximus wanted to extend the camp walls from the north bank of the Murenica River to the mountains, completely blocking the river shore passage, favorable for defense.

But later, two head officials of the Military Department, Quintus and Flanitnus, opposed this plan. They argued that the beginning of the northern mountains was relatively gentle, providing little barrier. Enemies could bypass and could potentially use the optimal terrain of the higher mountains to attack the camp from above. Extending the walls up the mountains would take time and effort, and the camp might remain unfinished by the time enemies attacked. Severing the river shore passage might ensure the safety of the Budocaribas tribe in the rear but brought no benefit to their side. Rather, it would be better to shrink the camp's width, exposing the western Aldean camp, giving the enemy pause during their assault.

Maximus wisely accepted these suggestions, directing the Engineering Camp to modify the camp according to Quintus and Flanitnus's suggestions immediately.

Indeed, Andres considered the Aldean factor, deciding to concentrate his forces to attack the camp from the east and north, while dispatching cavalry to the west to monitor the Aldean camp, preventing reinforcements.

After completing the arrangements, the Panoni Alliance Army began their action.

Siris, an ordinary tribesman from a sub-tribe of Segestica, had once followed Andres in the war against the Skodisqi. He was renowned in the tribe for his bravery. Later, due to his age, he wasn't drafted for the war against the Aldeans. After a string of defeats against the rebel army, Segestica suffered heavy losses, which led them to recruit many older soldiers like him, aged around forty or fifty, for this campaign.

Siris hadn't anticipated that, after over a decade back on the battlefield, his first mission wouldn't be combat but a special task.

"First, carefully check whether the wooden panels on your shoe soles are tied tightly, then each of you pick up a bundle of grass, run to the area with traps ahead, put the grass down, and run back... Remember, don't throw them randomly! Place them in rows one bundle at a time!..." The tribal leader repeatedly reminded his tribesmen, words he had said countless times before.

"...Begin the operation!" he finally commanded with a wave of his hand.

Yet no one responded, as the power of the short spears shot from the camp previously was too daunting.

Siris gritted his teeth, clutching a grass bundle, and was the first to rush forward.

He dared not run too fast, for after all, he had shoe-shaped wooden panels on his feet, making it easy to trip. As he ran, he kept his eyes fixed ahead, cautiously mindful of any short spears that might be shot his way.

Based on intelligence obtained by allied scouts at great risk, it was known that the enemy began to lay traps about 60 meters from the camp, with traps becoming denser the closer to the camp... Therefore, judging he was about 60 meters away, Siris stopped and placed his grass bundle down.

As he turned to run back, countless warriors were already advancing like him, clutching grass bundles.

Upon returning, the tribal leader specifically praised him, "Well done, Siris. You set a good example; truly a hero of ours!"

Siris ignored this, tugging at his shirt sticking to him, not because of sweat but because the grass bundles were soaked beforehand, mostly with freshly cut grass to prevent being ignited.

After catching his breath, Siris picked up another grass bundle and headed forward again.

By then, the area ahead was filled with Pannonian Soldiers, moving back and forth like a colony of ants relocating.

When Siris arrived at his position, the ground was already cluttered with grass bundles, making it hard to identify which one he had placed before. He carefully treaded on the grass bundles, moving forward and placing his bundle on an empty spot.