

Perish 301

Chapter 301: New Homeland

"I understand. Should I also remind the others behind us?"

"Hmm, sure, you go ahead. Volenus, can you tell me which field is planted with soybeans, which with chickpeas, and which with lentils?..."

"Leader, the field right next to us is planted with chickpeas. Look, its stems are already as tall as half a person, and when fully grown, they can reach a full person's height. Soybeans don't grow this tall. Take another look at the edges of its leaves, they have serrated edges and feel prickly..."

Maximus listened attentively as Volenus explained the crops in the fields, and before he realized it, they had reached the front of the village.

"Leader, we're home!" Fesaros' slightly excited voice interrupted Volenus' explanation.

Maximus looked up at the gate of the village. Above the gate was a brand-new wooden board, which he had specifically ordered to be placed yesterday. On the board, he had personally carved Latin words with his knife—"Snowdonia," transliterated into the Illyrian language, meaning "First Home." This was the name he had given to this village. The village further east had been named "Westeni," meaning "Second Home"—simple and direct, which appealed to everyone, so there had been little opposition when he proposed it yesterday.

Home... Maximus stared at the wooden plaque, feeling emotional. Then he turned back and said, "Raise the flag of our tribe here."

"I'll do it!" Fesaros enthusiastically took the flag from the cavalryman, pushed open the slightly ajar village gate, and walked in. Soon, he was atop the gate and quickly secured the flag against the wooden wall.

In the gentle breeze, the flag unfurled and fluttered. The divine dragon Maximus had personally drawn bared its teeth and roared, as if proclaiming to the world: This is the territory of the Nix Tribe!

"Let's go, we're going home!" Maximus shouted excitedly.

The soldiers responded with cheers.

The gates of the village swung wide open, and the procession marched grandly into Snowdonia.

Most areas of the village, having been uninhabited for over a month (earlier, the Pannonian Army had stationed only 1,000 men here, occupying a small central portion of the village), were covered in dust, fallen leaves, and cobwebs. Various buildings were beginning to deteriorate...

However, in the past few days, the Nix Tribe had dispatched many people to clean and organize the entire village and make some repairs to damaged buildings. So, when the soldiers entered the village, they saw a relatively tidy environment, with no obvious foul smells, quite different from the scene they'd encountered the last time they captured the village. This made them all the more delighted.

Maximus' residence was, of course, in the main house at the center of the village. Several mansions that once belonged to the Segestica nobles, situated next to the main house, were assigned to the nine departments of the Nix Tribe for use as their offices. The houses of Segestica commoners were first allocated to newlywed Nix couples who had completed marriage registrations, while the remaining houses for commoners were temporarily used for shared living by single Second-class Tribe Members.

Reserve Tribe Members and Segestica Prisoners were temporarily housed in the areas that had originally been inhabited by Scodisqi slaves.

Supplies transported from the temporary camp were stored in the warehouses within the village.

Originally, Snowdonia had been built for approximately 15,000 members of the Segestica Tribe, so it was clearly insufficient to accommodate the more than 36,000 members of the Nix Tribe. However, Maximus and his people had planned ahead, relocating the entire Second Legion and Third Legion—a total of around 13,000 soldiers and their families, along with some Reserve Tribe Members—to Westeni.

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"Creak—" The door creaked open, and a sliver of light spilled in.

Anfel walked into the somewhat dim room with a face full of delight, only to find it empty. Feeling puzzled, she suddenly heard a loud "Wah!" from behind her, scaring her into a scream. She turned to run outside but was caught firmly by a pair of arms. A familiar voice rang in her ears: "Why are you so late? I've been waiting forever!"

"What time do you think it is, and you're still playing childish games like this? Are you trying to scare me to death? Go find someone else next time!..." Anfel scolded him while smacking Tini Bazus on the head.

Tini Bazus offered no resistance, standing still and willingly taking the hits.

After a few blows, Anfel's anger subsided. With a feigned sternness, she asked, "Before I got here, you were just sitting around in the room doing nothing, weren't you?"

"Who says I did nothing!" Tini Bazus loudly protested his innocence, then grabbed something from the corner of the room and proudly displayed it. "I found a long wooden stick, pulled out some dry grass and twigs, and spent half the day making a broom. Take a look—pretty good, huh? I even went to the Supply Camp and borrowed a wooden bucket to fetch water from the river..."

"Hmm, not bad." Anfel's earlier dissatisfaction completely vanished from her heart, though she still pretended to look stern. After scanning the entire room, she said, "Let's clean up this place first."

"As you command." Tini Bazus grinned, eager to please.

Although the tribe had sent people to thoroughly clean and tidy the village earlier, none of the individual houses had been touched. The roof was draped in cobwebs, and the floor was coated in thick dust...

The two got to work immediately.

Removing cobwebs, sweeping the floor, wiping down the room, making the bed, folding the blankets... Both were accustomed to hard work, and their efficiency showed. In no time, the room looked completely transformed.

Anfel wiped the sweat from her forehead. Looking around the now spotless room, a sense of happiness welled up within her.

Tini Bazus embraced her again, this time with an eager tone, "Anfel, the room is clean now, so should we... go to bed?!"

Chapter 302: New Home_2

Anfel, both embarrassed and angry, snapped, "What are you doing sleeping in broad daylight? Aren't you afraid of being laughed at?"

"We're already husband and wife; who's going to laugh at us? Besides, with the door closed, no one would know what we're up to in our own home!" Tini Bazus retorted.

As a nurse, Anfel had plenty of experience dealing with uncooperative patients. She turned around, gently wiping the sweat off Tini Bazus' face with a piece of linen, and said softly, "Why are you in such a hurry? I'm already your wife now; where do you think I'd run off to? Spend some time with me looking at our home, and I promise I'll keep you company properly tonight, okay?"

"Okay, whatever you say." Tini Bazus agreed readily.

Anfel smiled and led Tini Bazus to the center of the house.

On the ground was a small square fire pit. Although it had been cleaned, years of smoke and fire had left the soil inside blackened and compacted.

"This will be the place where we cook—" Before Anfel could finish, Tini Bazus chimed in, "That's right, I've seen Aldean houses like this. They hang ropes from the roof beams, tie a big pottery jar to them, and use the fire pit to steam and cook food... Plus, the fire pit isn't just for cooking—it keeps the house warm in colder weather."

Looking up at the beams blackened by smoke and fire, Anfel noticed a straight chimney: "There seems to be cobwebs in the chimney."

"I'll go up on the roof later and clean them out."

"During the rain, won't water flow down the chimney and into the house?" Anfel asked with concern. As someone who grew up in Italy, she wasn't familiar with living in such houses.

"You don't have to worry. During rain, you can climb up on the roof and cover the chimney with wooden boards, and it'll be fine. I specifically asked the Aldeans about it."

"Wow, aren't you attentive?"

"Of course I am! I'm the man of this house; I have to care about these things!" Tini Bazus said proudly, lifting his head.

Anfel shot him a look, then glanced around the room: the ceiling was over three meters high, and two wooden beds were placed in opposite corners. Aside from that, there was nothing else, making the room feel rather empty...

"We need a wardrobe, a storage jar, a wooden bucket for water, a big pottery jar, a kitchen knife, an axe, some ropes, iron hooks..." Muttering to herself, Anfel was already planning what supplies they would need for their home.

Tini Bazus couldn't help but interject, "You don't need to think about that now. According to our Legion Commander, since we've just settled here, we can't make anything yet. Our allies, the Aldeans, are as poor as we are, so we won't be able to get the things you mentioned anytime soon. If we really need something urgently, we can borrow it from the warehouse, but we have to make sure to return it on time."

"Do I need you to remind me? Our head nurse already told me all about that. We can't have the things for now, but can't I at least dream about them?" Anfel glared at him, annoyed.

Tini Bazus quickly nodded, "Alright, of course you can!"

"Tomorrow, you need to chop some firewood and stack it indoors so we can keep the fire pit burning. Also, I want to set up a statue of Hestia in the house to pray for her blessings on our home and its prosperity."

"Hestia is?"

"The Greek God of Stove."

"Oh, so she's like Vesta to the Romans. You're absolutely right; we should put her statue in the house. I happen to know a carpenter in the Supply Camp; I've heard he's skilled at carving. I'll ask him to make one."

"Then make sure you go find him tomorrow."

"I will!"

"Let's go look at the courtyard." Anfel said, pulling Tini Bazus outside.

"This part of the fence has a hole in it, and that part too. You'll have to fix them when you have time."

"Alright."

"Here's a livestock pen. We can raise a few sheep and donkeys here in the future—"

"And cows."

"Yes, definitely cows. That way, it'll be easier to plow the fields."

"Also horses."

"No, horses won't do. They're too expensive, too delicate, they poop everywhere, and they're too troublesome to raise."

"This isn't Italy. Horses aren't expensive here. Plus, they run fast, are strong, and are convenient for transporting goods. They're better than cows and donkeys."

"Uh... Alright, we'll raise some when we can afford it. Look over there; there are also some small wooden structures."

"Those should be chicken and duck coops."

"Right, we need to raise chickens and ducks too. That way, we can have eggs to eat every day."

"There's something behind the house as well."

"What is it?"

"Go take a look and you'll see."

Anfel followed Tini Bazus around the house and saw another wooden livestock pen. It was about the same size as the one in the front yard, but the wooden boards weren't as high, and it wasn't divided into small compartments. A long stone trough lay on the ground, with a drainage ditch dug around the edges.

"What is this?"

"A pigsty!" Tini Bazus said with some excitement, "I heard from the Scodisiqi New Soldiers that Celts are very good at raising pigs, and the Pannonians learned it from them. Pigs are easy to raise—they eat anything and rarely get sick. If fed properly, they can grow to nearly a hundred pounds in half a year. At the end of the year, you slaughter them, make smoked meat, and have meat for the whole year!"

"But pigs are so dirty." Anfel hesitated.

"We lived in places worse than a pigsty before, sometimes going hungry. Now we can eat meat; what's there to complain about? Besides, look at this pigsty's design—stand outside and rinse it with water, and all the filth will flow out through the ditch... The Legion Commander told me that while pigs poop a lot, it's great fertilizer. Spread it in the fields, and the crops grow better!"

"Fine, if they're so great, then let's raise a few. When do you think our 80 acres of land will be allocated? (After the victory of the camp defense battle, former rebel army members were promoted to second-class tribesmen. Per Maxim's promise, if both members of a couple were in the rebel army, they'd receive 120 acres of land. However, since this amount was too much for two people to cultivate, the Political Affairs Hall decided on 80 acres to balance the envy of other tribesmen who hadn't married rebel women)."

"It might take some time. Think about it—measuring all the land outside the camp and dividing it among so many people won't be done in just a day or two. But don't worry; our share of the land won't be short." Tini Bazus said seriously, "Has Leader Maximus ever failed to fulfill a promise?"

"Don't talk nonsense. I wasn't doubting Leader Maximus! Hey, what should we plant if the land gets allocated to us?" Anfel's eyes lit up at the mention of land.

"Don't get too excited yet. Think about how we're going to cultivate all that land properly, avoid criticism from the Agricultural Department, pay taxes well, and ensure we don't affect our household rewards and promotions."

"That's true; 80 acres is a lot for just the two of us. Can we manage it?" Tini Bazus' reminder brought a hint of worry to Anfel's face.

"Don't think too much about it. It's not just us facing this issue; there will be solutions when the time comes. Let's go check on Samoras."

"I wonder how that guy's time alone with Yulovina went today?"

Indeed, thanks to the help of Tini Bazus and Anfel, Samoras and Yulovina were now husband and wife. As a matchmaker, Anfel naturally cared about them, so the couple headed to Samoras' house.

It turned out that their worries were unfounded. Despite Samoras being a bit simple and having a language barrier with his new wife, the two shared similar circumstances and were both honest people. They didn't talk much, but a few hand gestures were enough for communication. They even competed to do chores and were getting along very well.

Chapter 303: Measuring Fields and Repairing Bridges

When Tini Bazus and his wife arrived at Samoras's house, the Samoras couple had already tidied up their house and yard perfectly, much better than their own home.

In contrast, Sistos, as one of the many blacksmiths in the Supply Camp, also participated in the matchmaking event that day. Although the women in the rebel army were well aware of his disgraceful history of defection and looked down on him, he was a blacksmith, a respected profession in any tribe in the region. Moreover, he was tall and strong, so Skodisqi women and Segestica women, unaware of his past, naturally favored him.

After being single for forty years with high standards, Sistos finally got his wish by choosing a fair-skinned and beautiful young woman from Segestica.

When the tribe subsequently assigned him a house, his dissatisfaction with the rebel army completely dissipated.

But now he somewhat regretted it; it was true what they said: delicate women are not suited for work.

In fact, the woman he chose was the daughter of a deceased clan leader of the Wallis Tribe, and the household chores were always done by slaves. So the moment she entered the room, she sat on the polished bed plank, shaking her head at everything Sistos gestured for her to do.

No choice, the decision made by a man must be carried through, even with tears... So Sistos tirelessly cleaned the entire house alone.

Of course, among the blacksmiths, not many were as unlucky as him. The happiest ones were Pessianaxis and his son.

His son, Pasipidas, joined the rebel army because he received excellent treatment at the Medical Camp after being seriously injured, during which he fell in love with the nurse Luxina who took good care of him. Eventually, they successfully became a couple.

His father, Pessianaxis, although older, also had several women choose him due to his status as a blacksmith. Considering his son, he eventually married a middle-aged woman from the Skodisqi.

The tribe, considering their father-son relationship, assigned their houses near each other, and Pessianaxis, with his wife, first went to his son's home to help arrange the house.

The four of them worked while chatting and laughing, lively and harmonious.

After all the tribesmen moved into the village, they were all busy like Tini Bazus and his family, cleaning and organizing their houses or dwellings. Even those reserve tribe members and Segestica prisoners who hadn't been assigned houses and had to live collectively were busy making beds, patching leaks, or pitching tents under the supervision and direction of tribal officials...

By dusk, all the tribe members queued up to receive food outside the main house according to their residential area.

Meanwhile, the chief officers leading the tribe members in the preliminary completion of the relocation gathered in the main hall of the main house to attend the Political Affairs Hall meeting convened by Leader Maximus.

"Snowdonia Village has allocated 2815 sets of houses to those newlywed couples, and Westeni has allocated 2070 sets..." First, Agricultural Officer Volenus reported on the situation of the tribesmen settling in the two villages.

After listening, Maximus said, "This means our accommodation situation here is very tight, and many reserve tribe members and prisoners need to pitch tents to have a place to stay. The housing situation in Westeni is relatively better; whether personal or collective, everyone can live in a house..."

"Yes, Leader. Fortunately, the Segestica people built a fairly large lumber storage yard on the west side of the village, which was originally intended for building docks and ships. Later, the lumber was used for

attacking our camps, so we could set up many tents in that vacant area, otherwise, some people might have had to live outside the village," Volenus added.

"Given the current limited conditions, let the tribespeople temporarily squeeze together a bit, at least it's better than sleeping in the open," Maximus smiled and said, "You've done well with this tribe relocation, Agricultural Department. No major problems occurred throughout the process, and everyone moved into the village... Next, you need to concentrate on measuring the land and then dividing it among the tribesmen. This is the top priority, everyone is eagerly waiting. Can you complete it in five days?"

Volenus shook his head like a rattle drum: "Leader, there's so much land that it can't be measured in just five days. Land allocation is a major tribal event, and not even the slightest error is allowed. It must be done with extreme seriousness and precision!

Moreover, not many in our tribe know how to measure land; most of them are in the engineering team. If Spukala could bring people to help us scrutinize, we could not only speed up the land measurement but also ensure its accuracy."

Maximus thought for a moment and said, "Land measurement and allocation is the foremost priority for our tribe, and the Agricultural Department is primarily responsible for this major task. Volenus, I give you this authority; you can select suitable people throughout the tribe to assist you in completing this work, and anyone selected must fully cooperate! If anyone is unwilling to contribute or even evade responsibility—

Karina, you and the Civil Affairs Department must manage this, it must be noted down during their advancement assessment. Of course, those with outstanding performance should also be noted."

"Yes, Leader, I will assign subordinates to supervise and record the performance of all tribesmen measuring the land," Karina replied.

Chapter 304: Measuring Fields and Repairing Bridges_2

"Volenus, now you have all the manpower you need. Tell me, how many days will it take to complete the task of land measurement and allocation?"

"Hmm... about 15 days."

"15 days is too long. I'll give you 10 days."

"10 days is indeed a bit too short, leader. I just mentioned, even if you allow me to draw people from the entire tribe, there are very few who actually know how to measure land—"

"Don't worry for now." Maximus confidently turned his gaze toward the Ritual Officer not far from Volenus: "Kefisofon, how many of our children are proficient in arithmetic and capable of calculating the areas of geometric shapes?"

The Chief Officer of the Cultivation Department, Kefisofon, thought for a moment, then uncertainly said, "Around seventy or eighty children, I think."

"It's not enough for the children to just learn; they must be able to apply their knowledge in practice," Maximus said warmly. "In the coming days, you'll be in charge of leading these children to assist the Agricultural Department in measuring the land. What do you think?"

"No problem! I believe the children can perform excellently," Kefisofon replied earnestly. "And I'll bring other children to observe. I only hope that after they complete the task, leader, you can give them some encouragement to spark their enthusiasm for learning and let them understand that what they learn is truly useful!"

Maximus approvingly said, "You are a good teacher! Rest assured, not only will I encourage them, but I will also reward them. If they do well this time, they will have even more opportunities in the future to apply their knowledge!"

"I thank you on behalf of the children!" Kefisofon bowed to Maximus.

"Volenus, you've heard everything now. Do you still think there's not enough manpower?" Maximus asked leisurely.

Volenus hesitated slightly, mainly doubting the children's capabilities: "I'll give it a try... tentatively 10 days to measure and divide the land."

"Good. Tomorrow, inform the tribesmen that the land will be allocated in 10 days!" Maximus promptly gave the instructions, addressing Casius and Akegu standing behind him. They now belonged to the Secretariat under Maximus. One of the responsibilities of the Attendant Office within the Secretariat was to convey the leader's orders and announcements to the tribesmen.

Maximus then asked, "Volenus, do we have enough land to allocate at the moment?"

"Leader, over the past few days, I've ridden around several times from Snowdonia to the Westeni area and carefully examined the situation. With my years of farming experience, I believe there should be enough land..." Volenus said with confidence. "Currently, we have one First-class Tribesman who needs 80 acres of land. There are 14,872 Second-class Tribe Members, each needing 60 acres of land. Among them, there are 2,897 couples, also Second-class Tribe Members, who each require 80 acres. Altogether, we need over 776,000 acres of land. The land we currently possess should be sufficient; no additional clearing is required.

However, a considerable portion of the land is on the northern bank of the Kupa River. The Segestica people have not built a floating bridge over the Kupa River. Westeni Village at least has a dock and boats for ferrying, but the Segestica people probably found it troublesome, so the northern land is rarely cultivated.

As for Snowdonia, there isn't even a dock. The land the Aldeans originally cultivated on the northern bank has been abandoned for several years and is now overgrown with weeds. If we want to measure the land on the northern bank and allocate it for cultivation, it would be best to build a bridge across the river!"

Maximus had long considered this issue. He nodded and said, "Constructing a floating bridge over the Kupa River to connect the southern and northern banks is essential for the tribe's overall development! Capito, can the Public Works Department accomplish this?"

"Leader, over the past few days, the Public Works Department has also recognized the necessity of building a bridge over the Kupa River," Capito said with pride. "But instead of a floating bridge—which, while easy to construct, would block the river and hinder its transportation—we want to build a real wooden bridge so that ships can pass underneath without obstruction."

"Building a proper wooden bridge would, of course, be ideal. However, it will likely take quite a long time and require significant manpower. I'm concerned it may disrupt the planning of the tribe's overall territory," Volenus said with some apprehension.

"It's just a wooden bridge; it won't take much time," Capito said lightly. "Winter is approaching, the water levels of the Kupa River are decreasing, and the narrowest part of the river is less than 50 meters wide. Spukala's engineering team has already conducted a detailed survey and determined the location for the bridge. He estimates that it will take less than 15 days to complete a wooden bridge. If we build another bridge in the Westeni area, even constructing two wooden bridges wouldn't take more than a month."

"Only 15 days to build a wooden bridge over such a large river as the Kupa?!" Several tribal leaders, except for Quintus and a few veteran soldiers, were astonished. While they had seen engineering teams quickly and safely build camps during marches, and the crafts of the Supply Camp artisans were both exquisite and practical, they still believed building bridges to be an overly challenging task—beyond the capabilities of their newly established tribe, composed mostly of Roman slaves and poor citizens.

However, Maximus was not surprised. Capito's words reminded him of the time, over a decade later, when Caesar, serving as the Governor of Gaul, constructed a wooden bridge over the wide Rhine River in just over ten days to strike against the Germanic people, which shocked them. Road-building and bridge-making had always been hallmarks of the Roman Army, and so it was only natural that the rebel army's engineering teams, which had former Roman veterans as their backbone, had inherited this expertise.

"Of course, we can!" Capito declared confidently before adding, "but—" He paused. "To expedite the bridge construction, the Public Works Department would need the leader to meet some of our requirements."

"Go ahead, what do you need?"

"Constructing a bridge is a complex task that allows no room for error. Only Spukala has the extensive experience required, so he must oversee and guide the construction process at all times. During this period, he won't be able to handle other tasks."

By comparison, land measurement is much simpler, and several members of the engineering team are skilled in this area. I can dispatch experienced personnel to assist the Agricultural Department in completing the task."

Maximus turned to the Agricultural Officer and asked, "Volenus, what do you think?"

"As long as the land measurement can be completed quickly and accurately, I have no objections," Volenus replied.

"I can guarantee it," Capito said decisively.

"Fine. Spukala will be in charge of constructing the wooden bridge, while Capito, you will reallocate personnel from the engineering team to assist the Agricultural Department with the land measurement. Do you have any other requests?"

"Not only do we need a substantial amount of timber for the bridge construction, but we will also require it for expanding the settlement and building new houses. Therefore, I hope the leader can mobilize the tribesmen to go into the mountains to fell trees and stockpile as much timber as possible."

"That won't be a problem. Before the land is allocated, most tribesmen are relatively idle aside from tidying up their homes. This will be a good opportunity to give them something productive to do.

Flanitus, you will be responsible for organizing this. Arrange for the three legions and the Guard to take turns going into the mountains to cut trees and stockpile timber for constructing the bridge and expanding the settlement."

"Yes, leader," Flanitus acknowledged as he rose to his feet.

"Are there any other requests?" Maximus continued to ask.

"Not for now," Capito shook his head.

"But I have a request for the Public Works Department," Maximus said, fixing his gaze on him and speaking with heightened emphasis: "While constructing the bridge and expanding the settlement are urgent priorities, we also need to establish the Iron Workshop, the Pottery Workshop, and the brick kilns

to meet the needs of the tribe and its people. Does the Public Works Department have any plans in this regard?"

Chapter 305: Various Workshops' Preparations

"In the past two days, I have discussed this issue with my subordinates," Capito replied seriously.

"Whether it's forging iron tools, firing pottery, or making bricks, charcoal is essential. Therefore, we must first build a charcoal kiln, and we also need to construct a timber drying house..."

In the Supply Camp, we have three Charcoal Makers who 'joined' the team back in Sarabia. They have twenty to thirty years of experience in charcoal production, and our Public Works Department has decided to assign them the task of charcoal making."

"That's fine."

"With charcoal, pottery can be fired, and there are many more people in the Supply Camp who can make pottery compared to the Charcoal Makers. There are even a few who can paint bottles—"

"Are they also from Sarabia?"

"Some joined the team in Sarabia, and others are from Pompey. Our Public Works Department has decided to have them construct a large pottery workshop to produce ceramics for the tribe.

In the past two days, they have specifically investigated the mud of the Validosi Swamp and the silt by the river. They believe that the wet soil here is entirely suitable for making pottery. However, we need to wait until the pottery is fired to know the color and quality before further improvements can be made."

Maximus nodded to show his understanding.

"The brick kiln goes without saying; if we can make pottery, we can also fire stone bricks. There are also a few brick kiln workers in the Supply Camp. Additionally, our Public Works Department plans to build a large Furniture Workshop. Now the tribesmen have their houses, but there's nothing inside. They need cups, chairs, tables, wooden barrels..."

The most numerous craftsmen in the Supply Camp are carpenters, with two hundred sixty-five people. Among the remaining Segestica prisoners, there are also more than twenty who can do carpentry work. So, we can certainly build a large Furniture Workshop to produce various types of furniture for the tribesmen. Moreover, this is more convenient than making pottery or stone bricks, as it only requires wood."

"Hmm... that's possible..." Maximus listened attentively.

"However, the Iron Workshop is more troublesome. Although we brought almost the entire team of iron smelting, forging, and casting from Sarabia, they have all become our tribesmen and are very willing to work for the tribe.

But firstly, iron ore is harder to acquire. Although the Noric are not far from us, the Yapodes and Pannonians are in between, and we must detour, taking the route we originally took to enter the mountains, to the Istria Peninsula to purchase the iron ore traded there by the Noric. This journey back and forth takes nearly two months, and the transportation is quite difficult—"

"No need to make it so complicated; we can simply buy iron ore directly from our allies," Maximus said in a relaxed tone.

"Is there iron ore within the Aldean Territory?" Capito immediately reacted.

"I heard from Budocaribas that there is an iron mine on the western mountain slopes, not far from the upper reaches of the Kupa River—"

"Isn't that the place we enter after crossing the mountains into Aldean Territory?" Capito asked.

"I'm not exactly sure where it is; you can take some time to check it out later. Budocaribas told me that since the iron mine is not an open pit, mining is somewhat difficult. Previously, the Aldeans did not heavily exploit the mine, mainly using the iron ore for themselves.

Later, they waged war with the Pannonians, and the young and strong members of the Aldean Tribe greatly decreased. Therefore, the iron mine was almost abandoned in recent years. However, this time we gave them so many Segestica prisoners, they have restarted the mining operation...

I specifically told Budocaribas that we will need a large amount of iron ore in the future and can purchase it from them. I believe that the Aldeans will increase mining efforts."

After listening, Capito did not appear relaxed and said, "The issue of iron ore is solved, but there are other problems. Spukala believes that although the Kupa River seems sizable, the flow rate is not fast. To increase the water's power to drive the Water Hammer, we must select a good spot by the Kupa River, divert some of the river's water, and create an artificial height difference to strike the Water Hammer's blades with greater force..."

"I understand your point. Precision machinery like the water mill and Water Hammer can only be designed and built by Spukala, and he is currently responsible for bridge construction and has no time. But that's okay; first, design the entire Iron Workshop and then make plans. Determine what your current workforce can accomplish, and get started on it. Don't let everyone idle; this will save time, won't it?"

Maximus seriously stated, "I have another suggestion: charcoal kilns, pottery houses, brick kilns, the Iron Workshop, and lime kilns... they all need charcoal and kiln firing. Is it possible to arrange them all in one area and keep them away from the village and farmlands? This ensures that these workshops can support each other, obtain raw materials more conveniently, and won't impact our normal lives..."

Additionally, the Iron Workshop requires a large amount of water and produces considerable slag. Can the used wastewater and slag not be discharged into the Kupa River? Over time, the clear river water may become polluted because of this—"

"The leader is right; we will rely on the Kupa River water in the future. None of us wants to see the Kupa River water turn black one day, making it undrinkable," Gaius said loudly, resonating with everyone.