

Perish 76

Chapter 76: Raid on Pompey_2

Although it was said to be assistance, it was mainly undertaken by the youth team. According to Volenus's requirements, they also needed to organize the warehouse, check the inventory, and even make a rough estimate of the consumption for the next few days. If they discovered any potential shortages, they had to report to him in time.

Compared to the military training in the morning, Valles preferred the labor in the afternoon. It made him feel like he could do things like an adult, giving him a great sense of accomplishment.

After dinner, Quintus came over.

"Valles, how do you feel staying here these days?" Quintus asked.

"It's okay." Valles answered nonchalantly, which was his habit when talking to his grandfather.

"If that's the case, in a few days we will go back."

"Why go back? It's nice here!" Valles became anxious immediately and said loudly, "Here I can have so many friends of my age, we train together, work together, and learn together. It's much livelier than at home, and I've learned a lot! Plus, I can have three meals here, and the food is delicious. Look, I've even grown a bit stronger!"

As Valles said this, he clenched his fist and stretched his arm in front of his grandfather.

Looking at his excited grandson, Quintus listened to him speak so much for once and said calmly, "It sounds quite good, so shall we... continue to stay here?"

"Yes, stay here all the time!" Valles nodded vigorously, then impatiently said, "Grandfather, is there anything else? I'm about to go study!"

"Child." Quintus looked at him and solemnly instructed, "If I don't come back, you must take good care of yourself here!"

"Grandfather, you—" Valles suddenly felt uneasy.

"Of course, the possibility of grandfather not coming back is very small." A faint smile crossed Quintus's aged face, "The greater possibility is that after I come back, we can live happily together in this unit as grandfather and grandson!"

After saying that, he turned and left, leaving Valles, who was guessing in his heart, standing silently for a long time.

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Late at night, the bright moon was in the sky, and the north wind blew southward.

Camillus led 200 fully armed soldiers, carrying wooden ladders and ramming wood, out of the Guard camp, and under the illumination of the moonlight, they quietly headed west, bypassing the First Battalion camp and the Fifth Battalion camp, finally reaching the seaside, and headed straight for the five single-masted merchant ships lined up on the beach.

The waves crashed on the beach making a "swoosh" sound, and the sea breeze blew incessantly...

Camillus shouted with all his strength so that everyone could hear, "Brothers, Leader Maximus and other brothers are already waiting in front of Pompeii City Gate, it's all on us now! Is everyone ready?!"

"Captain, stop talking, let's get on the ship, we can't wait any longer!"

"Yes! After training hard for these days, we can't wait to be heroes!"

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The soldiers shouted, and Camillus laughed and scolded a few times, glancing at Oluus beside him.

Oluus said in a deep voice, "Hurry up and give the order."

Camillus waved his hand and shouted, "Push the ship into the sea!"

The soldiers worked together to push the ships into the waves, then all jumped into the ships. The assigned sailors adjusted the angle of the sails, and as soon as the cloth sails were lowered, they caught the full north wind.

Under the strong pushing power of the wind, the other soldiers didn't even need to row the oars, and the ships quickly sailed away from the shore...

The soldiers piloted the ships, racing south along the coastline like arrows. Although the night wind was quite strong, from Misenum Cape to Atheneum Cape, including the coastal towns like Napolet and Pompeii, there was a circular bay (Napolet Bay), which weakened the waves from the open sea. Moreover, most of the soldiers were experienced sailors, so even when sailing at night, there were no significant risks along the way.

After more than ten minutes, the soldiers saw a bright light on the coastline ahead, which was the harbor lighthouse. However, the soldiers familiar with the local routes didn't take any action because it was Helanikum City.

A while later, when they saw the second bright light, Camillus standing on the lead ship immediately ordered to take down the sails, and the soldiers began to row hard, turning the ship swiftly toward the shore...

Camillus stared intently at the shore, and with the light of the lighthouse, he exclaimed, "Not this port, further ahead! ... This is the port, that's it! Row hard, rush in!"

The soldiers rowed vigorously, the ship broke through one black wave after another, and rushed into Pompeii New Port, which was the reception area for foreign merchant ships. The 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th ships followed closely, and soon the urgent sound of bells rang out in the port area...

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Maximus led the main force of the Guard and some of the heads of the Supply Camp away from the camp at dusk, leaving the entire Guard camp completely empty.

To avoid being detected by the First Battalion, the army first moved southward to the hilltop camp abandoned by the rebel army, then turned westward. After reaching the coast, they advanced rapidly southward along the flat coastal road.

Due to the existence of the rebel army, few people wandered outside in the Vesuvius Region during the day, and even more so at night.

The headquarters of the rebel army was about 20 miles away from Pompeii, and with no burden carried by the army, their marching speed was quite fast. After a few hours, they reached the north of Pompeii, at the time of absolute silence, lurking less than 500 meters from Pompeii City. This was the edge of the Vesuvius South Slope, with undulating terrain, densely wooded areas, and overgrown weeds, hard for the city gate sentries to detect.

The soldiers lay on the ground to rest, regaining strength.

Maximus gazed at the distant Pompeii City under the night sky, looking like a giant beast lying asleep, with the faint light of the torch on the Helanicum Gate resembling one of its eyes, always closed.

He turned his eyes to the west, where it was all pitch black, making it hard to distinguish between the sky and the sea, with only the constant sound of the waves echoing in his ears...

"It is still early, and the raiding team should not have set out yet," Quintus said beside him.

"How do you know?" Maximus asked curiously, not questioning. Traveling mostly under the cover of darkness, he didn't carry a water clock, so he had no way of knowing the time.

Quintus pointed ahead and said, "Look at those sentries. People become naturally tired late at night, and without supervision, sentries will instinctively ignore Military Law and rest against the wall. Only

those who have undergone rigorous training and experienced harsh battles will stick to discipline, knowing that temporary ease may lead to disaster. But clearly, the Pompeians aren't, as those sentries are still able to patrol back and forth, indicating there is still time, so Leader Maximus, you don't need to worry, you can rest properly first."

Maximus nodded, couldn't help but ask, "Quintus, aren't you worried?"

"If you are referring to the sea raid, I have no worries. Enough preparations were made in advance, and if it still fails, it can only be attributed to the arrangement of the Goddess of Destiny," Quintus said calmly. "The only thing I'm a bit worried about is that after the fall of the city, Areyous Vettius might escape."

Maximus looked at the weathered old soldier, then silently turned his eyes back to Pompeii City...

Previously, Maximus dared to make the decision of a night attack on Pompeii City because if it failed, his loss would be only 200 soldiers. Although he would face criticism from Spartacus and other leaders, it wouldn't shake his position as the head of the Supply Camp, and he could regain lost prestige through effort later.

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Once the night raid succeeds, not only will Maximus gain a large amount of urgently needed supplies and much-needed talents, but his prestige will also soar, deterring other leaders from underestimating his military prowess. The benefits clearly outweigh the losses, which is why he's daring enough to take such a gamble. But as he stands before Pompeii, he can't help but feel a mixture of anxiety and apprehension. After all, this counts as his first genuine battle personally commanded.

Too little experience... Maximus thought to himself, and he simply found a nearby flat patch of grass, lay down on his back, closed his eyes, and tried to empty his mind...

The similarly tense soldiers followed suit after seeing him, and for a while, the atmosphere of the entire troop lightened considerably...

Not knowing how much time had passed, Maximus was suddenly awakened by a vigorous push, with Fesaros's excited shout in his ear: "Maximus, look! Camillus has taken the city gate!"

In a daze, Maximus immediately came to his senses, leaped up, and looked into the distance, only to see a torch rapidly waving atop the city wall...

"What are we waiting for! Let's rush in!" Torrelugo shouted urgently and loudly.

At this moment, Maximus instead calmed down, recalling the pre-arranged plan. He glanced around at the soldiers slowly getting up and said aloud, "Brothers, don't rush. Sort out your gear, grab your weapons! Fesaros, Torrelugo, get your units organized right away!"

His words temporarily stabilized everyone's mood.

Moments later, the two Chief Centurions shouted in unison: "We're ready, leader, give your order!"

Only then did Maximus solemnly say: "Torrelugo, lead the second, fifth, and eighth hundred-man teams to rush into the city gate as fast as you can, then advance quickly along that main road toward the civic hall."

"Yes!" Torrelugo grinned, "Watch me, I'll catch the administrative officer of Pompeii for you when we get back."

Maximus didn't bother with him further and turned to say, "Flanitnus, I'll have to trouble you to lead the military advisory team to follow him and help keep the troops in order."

"Don't worry, leave it to us!" Flanitnus said firmly and gave Quintus a look. Ever since the Lukaiya people arrived at the Supply Camp, these former Roman Army slaves have felt competitive pressure. Although they refrained from open conflict due to Maximus, the hidden competition was everywhere, especially with tonight's night raid. Although it was the Lukaiya's plan and they were more familiar with the city's layout, Flanitnus and his men were determined to show they were stronger than the Lukaiya.

"Then I'll leave it to you." Maximus responded with a smile, fully understanding Flanitnus and the others' thoughts, and was pleased to see it all because competition fosters motivation.

Torrelugo, however, was completely unaware of this undercurrent. He was unhappy being bound by Flanitnus's group, raised his right hand with the short sword, and shouted, "Brothers, charge with me!"

After speaking, he ran forward first. The soldiers were about to rush up when Flanitnus, blocking them, shouted in unison with his companions: "Stop!... The second hundred-man team first!... Try to maintain your formation, don't mess up!... The fifth hundred-man team, follow! Maintain the formation!..."

Since Flanitnus and his group had always been responsible for the Guard's military training, the soldiers were accustomed to their reprimands, so at their commands, they instinctively complied, striving to maintain the hundred-man column formation, one after another, dashing forward in sequence.

Quintus silently watched, saying nothing.

After seeing Torrelugo leading his troops a long way ahead, Maximus then said: "Fesaros, you take the first, third, sixth, and seventh hundred-man teams, and advance with me."

"Brothers!" Fesaros was already a bit eager, "It's our turn to move out! Keep your formation like they did just now when advancing, don't let anyone laugh at us!"

"Roar!... Roar!!!..." The soldiers excitedly raised their arms and shouted. Despite not having armor or short swords, holding wooden shields, wooden spears, and even farming tools, their morale was high (Although the rebel army achieved a major victory at the Volturno River, capturing thousands of sets of armor and weapons, due to Cross's and Elomuy's strong opposition, the Supply Camp Guards didn't benefit, and still only half of them had armor and weapons. To ensure the success of the sea raid and for Torrelugo's vanguard to withstand enemy retaliation, by Maximus's orders, the soldiers of these hundred-man teams exchanged their original armor and weapons with them, of course, to be returned after the battle.).

Torrelugo was the first to charge through the city gate and saw Camillus, holding a torch and standing by the gateside, immediately praised him: "Hey, brother, well done!"

"You guys came pretty fast too!" Camillus replied.

"Fast? Way too slow!" Torrelugo, dissatisfied, turned around and forcefully waved his hand, "Hurry up!"

Seeing that the soldiers of the first hundred-man team had all passed through the city gate, Camillus finally breathed a sigh of relief and pointed to a middle-aged man next to him, saying: "Valerius will be your guide, to take you to the civic hall."

"I remember the location of the civic hall perfectly!" Torrelugo said, despite this, he didn't refuse Valerius's assistance, leading the first hundred-man team to march south along the road.

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The road running parallel to the district and the port is primarily used for transporting goods, so it is quite spacious, wide enough to accommodate six to seven people side by side, and fairly smooth. Torrelugo led his team forward without much reduction in speed.

On the west side of the road was the city wall, from which sporadic sounds of killing could be heard. Those were the soldiers under Camillus hunting down the remaining sentries atop the wall.

On the east side of the road were rows of houses, their lights gradually being lit. Awakened Pompeians peered through the windows, observing the rebel soldiers walking past their homes, while the rumbling footsteps and noisy shouts made their hearts pound with fear.

The faint indoor lights also illuminated the path ahead. After advancing a distance, Torrelugo saw countless silhouettes moving in front, with someone shouting loudly, "Citizens of Pompeii, drive the robbers out, protect our families!"

The people coming towards them were City Guard soldiers urgently assembled by the Pompeii City Mayor. Encouraged by the City Guard Captain, they roared and charged towards Torrelugo's troops.

Torrelugo, undaunted, excitedly shouted, "Brothers, kill with me!"

Under his command, the Second Centurion and the Pompeii City Guard clashed head-on, with the sounds of fighting instantly tearing through the darkness and reverberating throughout the district.

No matter how wide the road was, no more than eight people could engage head-on. The army couldn't deploy, instantly causing congestion. Those at the front couldn't retreat, while those at the back couldn't advance. Fortunately, the previous three battalions, under repeated reminders from the military advisory group, maintained a certain distance from each other. Once faced with the enemy, Flanitnus promptly stopped the reckless forward push by the subsequent two Centurions.

"Can we bypass here?" Flanitnus inquired of the guide Valerius, glancing at the houses beside the road.

"We can, there's a square not far ahead," Valerius replied.

"Then let's bypass and attack the enemy from the side and rear!" Flanitnus suggested to the Centurions of the Fifth and Eighth Centurions.

The two team officers, having been promoted by Maximus due to their outstanding performance in the Guard, though they had also participated in the first battle against the Romans and the night raid on Vesuvius, this was their first time commanding troops in battle. Particularly daunting was that their direct superior, Torrelugo, was stuck in the fight unable to issue orders. At this moment, having seasoned veteran Flanitnus give a suggestion, they both instantly agreed, saying, "Alright, we'll follow your lead."

With Valerius leading the way, the soldiers cautiously maneuvered through the narrow paths between residences. Yet, as the vanguard hadn't entered the square, they were spotted and intercepted by Pompeian soldiers, with the soldiers behind continuing forward only to be blocked...

The Pompeii City Hall was located on the south side of the square, not far from the Apollo Temple. The temple had high foundations, and from there, the Administrative Officer Casius Cominia Silo overlooked towards the west, vaguely spotting rebel soldiers moving through the residential district.

"The enemy is bypassing towards that small path forward! Quick, quick, quickly send troops to stop them!" Silo pointed forward and shouted anxiously.

Since these despicable slaves had successfully ambushed the Roman Army at Vesuvius and greatly increased their power, he had been worried about them coming to disturb Pompeii. Thus, for the past two to three months, he had been strengthening the city's defense repeatedly. Yet despite the thorough warnings, the enemy still breached the city. Alas, these timid and incompetent Pompeians!

In fact, Silo's instructions were unnecessary; Pompeian citizens gradually arriving at the City Hall to receive weapons and equipment hastily dressed and rushed to the battlefield, but their numbers were not great, causing him anxiety. Shouting loudly, he commanded, "Quick, send someone to urge Areyous! Tell him if he doesn't send reinforcements, the City Hall will be taken, and his luxurious mansion will be the next target!"

While Silo's attendants hurried towards the affluent eastern residential area, Maximus and Camillus, having entered the city, had already met up. Upon learning that Torrelugo's troop was obstructed ahead, he heeded Quintus's advice not to rush to assist but instead led over 500 soldiers along the road beside the city wall, quickly heading east. Upon reaching the Vesuvius Gate, they turned toward the central axis of the Pompeian District. Along the way, they scattered some Pompeian citizens rushing to the square. Just as they reached the district center, preparing to turn west, loud noises erupted from the front side.

"It's likely the reinforcements organized by the Pompeian wealthy; they have many guards and slaves," Quintus urgently reminded, "We should leave some soldiers here to block them!"

Maximus gazed towards the numerous silhouettes in the front side, once again heeding his advice, "Camillus, take your men and block this intersection for me!"

"Yes, Leader!" Camillus hastily gathered soldiers from the Third and Sixth Centurions.

Just as Maximus was about to lead his troop away, he suddenly remembered something and asked, "That Aurelius Vettius should be among these reinforcements, right? Aren't you going to stay with your men here?"

Quintus calmly responded, "The key now is the enemy at the square. Once they are quickly defeated, the city will fall. Since Aurelius hasn't fled yet, soon he won't have a chance to escape."

This old man is indeed calm enough on the battleground; he's truly worth learning from! ...Maximus admired in his heart, immediately stopping talking and led the run towards the western road first.

The soldiers of the First, Fourth, and Seventh Centurions closely followed. Even if they weren't wearing armor, they held wooden shields and spears, having run from the ambush point until now, a full three

miles. By then, everyone was somewhat winded, but after breaking out of the intersection, there was a vast square before them, and beyond a hundred meters was the battlefield roaring with cries of slaughter. The excitement overwhelmed the fatigue in the soldiers' hearts. Led by Maximus, they headed straight for the enemy fiercely blocking the edge of the square.

Maximus led his troops around most of the district, appearing on the south side of the square. At first, Silo was jubilant, thinking reinforcements had arrived. Only later did he realize it was the enemy, leaving him in shock. However, he had no soldiers left to dispatch, only able to watch with horror as these enemies, armed with simple weapons, ferociously charged towards the fighting Pompeian citizens...

He still held a sliver of hope that the fully armed Pompeian citizens could withstand the attack from behind.

However, the fact that Pompeian citizens could muster up to answer the call and join the combat was already their utmost effort inspired by defending their homes. Facing the fierce offensive from the rebel army, their skills in defense were already struggling. At this time, with a deafening roar coming from behind, some people instantly cowered, turning to flee without engaging, thus triggering a massive rout among the Pompeian citizens.

The two rebel army forces took the opportunity to unite, then aimed to encircle the Pompeii City Guard still defending on the road.

Subsequently, the Pompeii City Guard swiftly dispersed before the rebel army fully encircled them, with their captain and some soldiers captured.

By this time, Maximus had gained a deeper understanding of Quintus's words before the battle: the assault on Pompeii must be swift and decisive to quickly defeat them. Otherwise, even though the Pompeians might be timid, if the time drags on and they begin to adapt to the battlefield, inspired by defending their homes, they could potentially mount a drawn-out resistance. This would inevitably attract more Pompeians to join the fight, posing a disaster for our already outnumbered troops...

"Report to the leader, we've occupied the City Hall and the arsenal beside it, and caught a big fish—this is the administrator of Pompeii City!" Fesaros said, tossing the man in his hand to the ground.

Silo rolled to the ground, looking up at Maximus with a pleading expression, but he couldn't utter a word of begging.

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Maximus didn't even glance at Silo, and said with a smile: "Well done, Fesaros! Now, leave a Centurion here to guard the armory, and the rest follow me to support Camillus."

"Yes!"

This time, as Maximus returned to aid, he no longer marched urgently like before. Instead, he let the soldiers advance at a normal pace to recover some strength.

The reinforcements led by Areyous were slow because the wealthy district is located at the southeastern corner of the Pompeian District, the farthest from the Helanicum Gate. Upon learning of "a group of rebellious slaves attacking through the port and invading the district," the Pompeian aristocrats did not immediately send people to rescue. Instead, they first gathered the slaves and kept them under strict watch, then sent the family-owned guards to assemble in front of Areyous' mansion.

Although the army of 500 led by Areyous was cobbled together, they had decent equipment and courage (otherwise they wouldn't be enough to intimidate the slaves). Therefore, Areyous was confident in defeating the enemy in front of him, whose numbers were clearly less than his.

However, the 200 soldiers led by Camillus were well-equipped, and having successfully raided the port, they were high in morale. Among them were over twenty seasoned Roman veterans led by Oluus. They held the crossroads, preventing the Pompeian reinforcements from utilizing their superior numbers, thereby resisting Areyous' fierce assault.

As the battle dragged on, the intensity of the Pompeian reinforcements' attack began to wane. After all, they were just guards good at bullying slaves, not soldiers trained in military camps.

Camillus wanted to launch a counterattack but was stopped by Oluus, who didn't want the enemy to flee so quickly.

Areyous was shrewd in political and commercial matters but lacked military experience. It was only because he held great prestige in Pompeii that he organized these reinforcements. Anxious for the city's safety, he urged his soldiers to attack furiously since the enemy could only defend, not attack.

Nevertheless, at that moment, Maximus, taking advantage of the night, heeded Quintus's suggestion and chose to detour to reinforce.

When the rebel soldiers' shouts were heard from the rear of the Pompeian reinforcements, Areyous' face turned deathly pale. The only remaining armed force within Pompeii instantly became trapped like fish in a barrel, and the guards lost their fighting spirit and surrendered one after another...

Areyous rationally chose to abandon resistance and prepared to surrender, but then he heard a voice from behind: "Areyous, we meet again at last!"

This somewhat familiar voice shocked Areyous, and he opened his eyes wide, looking at the old man emerging from the darkness. His uneasy expression quickly turned to anger, and he forgot about his situation: "...Quintus, it's you! It must be you causing trouble, letting these slaves occupy Pompeii! Remember, you are a Roman, and this is treachery against Rome—"

"No, Rome betrayed me first!" Quintus said coldly: "It ignored decades of our blood-soaked loyalty, used dogs like you to forcibly seize our land and trample on our dignity! Areyous, I have previously accused you of murdering my son and daughter-in-law to Rome several times, but you found ways to make me lose every time. Tonight you can try again!" He said, drawing a dark short sword.

Areyous, terrified, turned to flee but was caught by Quintus grabbing his collar.

"Quintus, spare me! It's not my fault, it's all Little Sula who forced me to do it. He coveted your land, and I had no choice—" Areyous shivered all over, kneeling down with snot and tears flowing.

"The Protector of Pompeii turns out to be like this, so 'laws, justice' all seem like nonsense. Only force can reveal your true nature..." Quintus sneered, thrusting the short sword forward fiercely, piercing Areyous' chest, abruptly stopping his plea for mercy.

He pulled out the short sword and slashed again forcefully, severing the enemy's neck in one blow.

He raised the head high, displaying it to Oluus and the other Lukaiya people, who all shouted excitedly.

"Leader Maximus, the Pompeian aristocrats live not far in front. We must capture them all to completely control this town!"

Maximus felt a bit uneasy seeing Quintus holding Areyous' blood-dripping head. He understood that Quintus had a personal motive for saying this, as the enemies of these Lukaiya people included more than just Areyous; many Pompeian aristocrats were involved. But no matter what, their goals aligned.

With this in mind, Maximus looked around and shouted loudly: "Brothers, hold on a bit longer. Follow me to capture those Pompeian rich who exploit our slaves!"

"Roar!!!" the soldiers shouted excitedly in unison.

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"Leader, after roughly inventorying the spoils, we now have 450 sets of leather helmets and leather armor, 498 square shields, 515 short swords, 722 long spears, 988 pairs of leather sandals, and 1130 linen waistcoats ..."

The clerk Volenus was speaking when military warehouse manager Capito interrupted: "The actual amount of weaponry and equipment we obtained should be even more. Many soldiers stripped the armor off the enemies they killed or captured, put it on themselves, and used their weapons, making it difficult to make precise statistics."

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"No problem, after all, the meat is all in our own pot." Maximus thought for a moment and said, "Volenus, send someone to notify the three Chief Centurions to bring their soldiers who are still without weapons and equipment to the town hall to change outfits immediately."

Volenus whispered a reminder: "Leader, should we inform Spartacus and the others about the weapons we captured first?"

Maximus glared at him: "Spartacus and Cross won a big victory earlier, capturing more than enough Roman Army weapons and equipment. They wouldn't even look at our little stuff, so there's no need to mention it. By the way, Volenus, how many slaves in Pompeii are willing to join us?"

"Uh... Leader, since I entered the city, I've been busy with Capito counting the supplies and haven't had time to understand the situation with the Pompeii slaves." Volenus explained.

Maximus then remembered that due to the warehouse supervisor Gaius claiming old age and frailty, he didn't follow the army to Pompeii last night, so he temporarily assigned the task of counting supplies to Volenus.

Should the warehouse supervisor position be replaced with someone who can actively do the job? ...Maximus pondered, and then said: "Make sure to prioritize this matter later, get a clear picture of the situation of the slaves willing to join our Supply Camp, and quickly pick out the young and strong male slaves without special skills to be recruited into the Guard—"

At this point, Maximus suddenly asked, "Where is Flantinus?"

"He might be at the temple watching over the prisoners," Capito answered.

"Go and call him over immediately," Maximus said, then turned to Volenus again, "Besides weapons and equipment, what about the other supplies?"

Volenus carefully examined the records in his hand and said, "We have also gained over a hundred pounds of papyrus, enough linen to fill a large warehouse, many cattle hides, many wool woven blankets, many earthen pots of different sizes, many jars of wine, many jars of olive oil, and a large amount of grain and smoked meat... In addition, we acquired six large chests full of Dinar (silver coins) and two large chests full of Ore (gold coins). Because time is tight, we haven't had a chance to count in detail. However, these supplies are only those taken from the Pompeii town hall, treasury, temple, and the homes of captured wealthy individuals; we haven't searched the city's shops and port warehouses yet!"

"That's already quite a lot!" Maximus, who was initially tired, suddenly became spirited, excitedly speaking without reserve: "We're really hitting it big this time!"

"Hitting it big?" Volenus didn't understand the meaning of this phrase.

Maximus was too lazy to explain, thinking of another issue: "We've gained so many supplies, Pigeris's transport convoy might have to make several trips, and there's not enough space to store everything at the camp..."

The transport convoy led by Pigeris didn't set out with the troops last night. After all, driving carts at night easily leads to incidents and makes it easy to be detected. If the Pompeians became alerted, the surprise attack could have likely failed, so Maximus initially planned for them to be notified to come over the day after securing Pompeii.

"Leader, why not just establish Pompeii as the new camp?" Volenus suggested.

"Well..." Maximus tapped his fingers on the long wooden table before him. While Volenus's suggestion was very tempting to him, the special nature of the Supply Camp made him have to consider more: "This would require discussions with Spartacus, Cross, unless they are willing to move here, otherwise it's very difficult to station the Supply Camp so far from the main forces..."

As Maximus was pondering, Flantinus walked in: "Leader Maximus, you were looking for me?"

"Yes." Maximus observed the old man in front of him. Three months of life with the rebel army had washed away much of his worn-out demeanor. Even though he had been busy since last night and hadn't rested, he still appeared energetic, most importantly, there was a newfound respect in his eyes for Maximus.

"Caius Flantinus," Maximus solemnly stated loudly: "Given your many contributions to the Supply Camp, I have decided—you're appointed as the military officer! In future, you'll handle the military affairs of the Supply Camp, but you don't have the authority to mobilize or command the army."

Flantinus understood; this was a position akin to a camp officer in the Roman Army. He was somewhat excited about it. Having lived in such an operation and order similar to the Roman Camp for three months and supervising the Guard's training every day, he had garnered some sense of belonging to the Supply Camp, but outside of supervising training and offering some suggestions, he couldn't do much

more for the Supply Camp, nor fully integrate into the team. Now, Maximus granted him real power, resolving his inner regret.

"Thank you, Leader!" Flantinus gratefully said.

"You can select five individuals from the military advisory group to be your assistants," Maximus said earnestly: "Among them, there must be literate and numerate people. In the future, detailed records must be kept of the experiences of Guard soldiers and team officers. After every battle, the soldiers' achievements must also be recorded... All these have to be archived, do you understand?"

Flantinus was a bit dazed. This requirement seemed even higher than that in the Roman Army! There were indeed two literate comrades in the military advisory group, but it might be difficult to meet Maximus's requirement. Capito could probably do it, but he had already become the chief of the military warehouse...

Maximus saw that Flantinus did not respond and understood his dilemma. Due to Flantinus's own illiteracy, he was actually not very suitable for the position of military officer.

However, Maximus had observed him for so long, finding that he was, firstly, someone who valued relationships and commitments. Otherwise, when Sula's large army reached the city, while many Marius veterans chose to avoid the confrontation knowing they would fail, he chose to face it head-on. He had a very good relationship with the soldiers in the army slaves, and even the proud Capito respected him quite a bit. It was said that he often helped his comrades in the slave camp in Rome... People who value relationships often tend to be loyal. Secondly, he was diligent and steadfast in his work. The military training of the Guard had continued for three months, some military advisory group members had almost become statues on the training ground, yet he was still shouting at poorly trained soldiers every day, showing his seriousness and persistence. Managing military affairs requires a doer who is pragmatic... It was precisely because of these reasons that Maximus shared some of the military power he painstakingly held, giving it to Flantinus.

There was really no other way. When the Guard only had one or two hundred men, he could manage them easily. But once the number of soldiers exceeded 500, the affairs of the army increased, especially after taking Pompeii, the military affairs became more complex. As the leader of the Supply Camp, he couldn't focus all his energy on handling military affairs, so he needed someone to share the burden, which meant power had to be delegated.

Maximus even considered administrative affairs.

When he first appointed Volenus as the clerk, it was initially only to record the situation in the Supply Camp, so that Maximus could access it at any time. But later, it turned into various department heads compiling reports to Volenus, who then reported to Maximus. Moreover, sometimes to save time, Maximus directly sent Volenus with his opinions to solve some issues of the subordinate departments, and even let him be responsible for adult education within the Supply Camp...