

# **Rome Must Perish**

## **#Chapter 41 - 40 Arrangements (Continued) - Read Rome Must Perish Chapter 41 - 40 Arrangements (Continued)**

### **Chapter 41: Chapter 40 Arrangements (Continued)**

"Military advisory group?" Flantinus felt unfamiliar with the term.

"It's essentially a team that can provide us with military assistance at any time." Maximus glanced at the others and explained, "For example, if we want to build a camp, how should it be constructed? You will guide us; or, if we are going into battle, how should the battle be fought? You will draft the strategy, and once we reach a consensus, we'll fight according to the plan..."

Isn't that just a camp officer in the Roman Army? No, it seems to have more authority than a camp officer... Flantinus thought to himself: For a young man responsible only for the Supply Team to set up such a small team with military functions, he must have quite the ambition... but it makes sense, given he's the kind of man who can make those speeches and tell those stories.

"Military advisory group, is it? I suppose I can give it a try." Flantinus's tone was indifferent, but there was already a shift in the look he gave Maximus.

Maximus seemed not to notice this shift, and continued, "There is currently a matter that requires the military advisory group. Although this time we won, it was with some luck. In yesterday's face-off, we were actually heavily defeated, so the leaders plan to implement strict military training for the Soldiers, and naturally, our Guard is no exception. I want you to lead the military advisory group and conduct rigorous training for our Guard Soldiers according to Roman Army requirements, can you do that?"

Before Flantinus could respond, Fesaros jumped in and said, "Maximus, our Guard can train on our own, there's no need for outsiders to intervene."

"Train on your own?!" Maximus's expression turned serious as he questioned, "Do you know how to lead the Guard in marching orderly? Do you know how to construct a Defense Camp? Do you know how to form ranks during a confrontation? Do you know how to use the copper horn and drum to command the Soldiers to charge or retreat?..."

Fesaros was left stunned by the series of questions, and after a long pause, he managed to squeeze out, "I know how to teach the brothers to fiercely fight the enemy!"

"Enhancing individual combat ability is just a basic skill for Soldiers in war, we have many other things to seriously learn so that next time we won't retreat in chaos like yesterday," Maximus said solemnly. "Flantinus used to be a Centurion of the Roman Army, with extensive war experience. He will be an excellent teacher for us."

"He was a Centurion of the Roman Army?!" Fesaros was somewhat surprised. He originally thought Maximus valued Flantinus because he had been in the Roman Army for so long as an old slave, learning many skills. He did not expect him to have such a status.

The others were also surprised, their expressions towards Flantinus became complex.

"Hey!" Maximus shouted to remind them, "Don't forget what I just mentioned in the courtyard: whether Centurion or a common Roman Soldier, they are all of Italian plebeian origin. Flantinus went through a lot of hardships going from Centurion to a slave, sharing the same plight as us. Since he joined us and fights against Rome with us, he is my brother, and we should welcome him with open arms!"

As soon as Maximus finished speaking, Acronis immediately smiled, "The captain's right, no matter what Flantinus's past status was, he's one of us now. And having a Centurion in the Supply Team makes me feel even safer!"

Pigeris reluctantly said, "Roman Soldiers captured and arrested at will in Little Asia, which is why I became a slave. I only feel hatred, not fondness for Roman Soldiers. But you used to be a Roman Soldier and are now a slave, and since the captain has spoken... anyway, welcome to the Supply Team."

"Are you a Sabine?" Gaius asked.

Flantinus was a bit taken aback, and nodded, "Yes."

"I noticed your accent was similar, always wanted to ask," Gaius smiled, and then inquired, "Which town are you from?"

"Kunos."

"I used to be in Aeluntum, very close to you," Gaius's smile widened, "We should keep in touch often."

"Sure." A slight smile finally appeared on Flantillus's face.

"Wel... welcome to the Supply Team," Seksepis said with some nervousness.

Fesaros took quick strides to stand before Flantinus, startling Maximus, who thought he might mean harm to Flantinus, but was surprised to see his full smile, saying

enthusiastically, "So you were a Roman Army Centurion, you should've told us earlier, you're certainly better at strategy and tactics than me, please teach me more!"

Maximus let out a sigh of relief, realizing that with this young man's personality, no conflict was likely.

Flantinus also breathed a sigh of relief. Seeing everyone eventually accepting his true identity and him and other army slaves showed how well respected Maximus was within the Supply Team. Thus, he earnestly said, "Our military advisory group will conduct rigorous training on the Guard, but with so few Guard members, practicing formation might be challenging."

"Start training anyway, we'll have more people in the future."

Maximus's response further solidified Flantinus's belief: this young man would not be content with just being a Supply Team Captain.

Maximus glanced at the others and added, "Not only the Guard needs training, when you have free time, lead your subordinates in training too."

"Ah? We have to train too?!" Acronis exclaimed in surprise, and the others widened their eyes.

"Yesterday, after our troops' defeat, we at the rear could have safely retreated to the mountains as planned if we didn't panic and lose formation....,"

Maximus said solemnly, with a heavy tone, "Our fight against the Roman Army will be long and challenging. With each battle having potential victories and losses, our Supply Team, with our weak combat strength and abundant supplies, will often become a prime target for enemy assaults. My purpose for training you isn't to teach you how to kill the enemy, but to teach you to follow orders, listen to commands, and retreat quickly and safely in danger, understand?"

Yesterday's incident profoundly reminded Maximus, since the rebellion of Spartacus in history involved continuous migration, with the Supply Team being the slowest due to carrying various supplies. Without enhancing the organizational skills and crisis responding capabilities of the squad, such painful lessons would continue to repeat.

His reminder made the others realize this point, and they all expressed agreement.

At this moment, Flantinus also spoke up, "In fact, even the slaves doing odd jobs in the Roman Army need to undergo some military training to keep up with the Army without holding it back."

Maximus's reminder, coupled with the reinforcement from Flantinus, finally made the others realize the importance of training, shifting from reluctant agreement to active cooperation.

"Oh, by the way, Flantinus," Maximus remembered something and continued, "In the past, I've taught the Supply Team to read, do arithmetic, and tell stories every night, just like tonight. You can also be a teacher and impart some knowledge to them."

"Me? Be a teacher?" Flantinus's expression became more animated as he waved his hands in refusal, "That... I can't do it!"

"You definitely can!" Maximus earnestly persuaded, "You have such rich military experience, something we've never experienced. You can combine your war experience to tell us what to watch for during training, what's crucial in building camps, what preparations are necessary before battle, and how to kill the enemy while protecting oneself... You can even share a specific battle you participated in, or discuss a failure you faced... I'm sure everyone would be very willing to listen to your stories and learn a lot from them!"

## **Chapter 42: Chapter 41 Decree**

Maximus' words inexplicably stirred something within Flantinus: He was a farmer in his youth, later became a refugee, then was recruited as a soldier, eventually becoming a Centurion in the Roman Army. But even so, he was just an ordinary member of Rome's vast military machine. After retirement, he became an ordinary farmer again, and later turned into a slave... His life was unremarkable, like tiny dust, unnoticed and meaningless. But now he could become a teacher, and many would listen to his words, just like Maximus did tonight. What he would gain was a respect he had never had before!

Flantinus took a deep breath and solemnly said, "I can give it a try."

Maximus noticed the change in his expression, his lips slightly curled, and said, "Then it's settled!"

He then looked towards Fesaros: "Apart from training, ensuring the safety of the Supply Team is your Guard's duty. Starting tomorrow, you need to take responsibility for this, especially since the women in our team are always being harassed by soldiers from other brigades. I hope such incidents won't happen again in the future."

"If those soldiers don't listen to our dissuasion and forcefully try to break into our camp, what if a conflict erupts?" Fesaros looked troubled, having heard of such incidents before.

Maximus replied without hesitation, "Then arrest them and hand them over to me. Don't worry about making a big deal; I have a way to handle it."

"Alright, we'll follow your lead." Fesaros shrugged, revealing slight helplessness.

Maximus did not pay much attention to him and once again looked around at everyone, solemnly saying, "We have another very important task ahead! The number of people in our Supply Team has increased to nearly 300, and it will continue to grow. To prevent confusion, we must establish some decrees applicable to the Supply Team to facilitate management and maintain the stability of the entire team. I've thought of a few, but I'm not sure if they are suitable for us, so let's discuss them together."

Does the rebel army have legal provisions? No. After all, this team was formed only a month ago and has been busy expanding the team and struggling to survive; such considerations were far from their minds. Even when they eventually settle, Spartacus and other leaders might not immediately realize this.

But Maximus was different. Coming from the China of a past life, he deeply understood the importance of ruling by law. Moreover, he was a fan of Zhuge Liang, a grand figure in Chinese history known for attacking the powerful Wei Country with the power of a single state and launching six expeditions to Qishan. Although this exhausted the national strength greatly, Shu Country remained stable, officials were clear-minded, powerful were subdued, and the people lived peacefully, all mainly relying on ruling by law... Therefore, he wanted to plan and constrain his subordinates with decrees while the team was still weak. This way, they would encounter fewer obstacles when the team grew larger.

Others didn't think much of it, but Flantillus was shocked: Rome is an extremely lawful country, with countless decrees established and passed since its founding as a City State. As a Roman citizen, he deeply felt this, and now a small department of a rebel force, with less than three hundred people and occupying less than a mile, was going to establish decrees!

Flanitus was already amazed by Maximus' talents, and now he looked upon him even more highly.

"The first one—" Maximus raised a finger, stating solemnly, "We are a team resisting Rome. So anyone voluntarily joining us should have this resolve. If anyone attempts to defect after joining, or secretly conspires with the Romans to harm us, upon discovery and capture, they will be put to death. What do you all think of this one?"

"Agreed!"

"A traitor should meet such an end!" Acronis, Pigeris, and Fesaros all shouted, while Gaius and Seksepis nodded repeatedly.

Only Flanitus frowned slightly, thinking that Maximus' first line seemed mainly targeted at them, these army slaves, so he decided to remind those fellows seriously afterwards not to act foolishly!

"The second one, any resolutions passed in our Supply Team meetings must be conscientiously executed. Non-implementation, or wrongful implementation, constitutes dereliction of duty and should be punished!"

After Maximus finished speaking, everyone was internally startled, as this rule was clearly targeting them.

"The third one, everyone in the Supply Team should diligently perform their duties. Anyone slacking off must be punished.

The fourth one, the materials stored in the Supply Team belong to the whole team, and no one is allowed to steal. Otherwise, they will be punished.

The fifth one, individuals in the Supply Team are not allowed to cause trouble without permission. Otherwise, they will be punished."

Since the rebel army was just formed, the people in the Supply Team all lived together without their private properties, thus Maximus temporarily thought of these five rules.

After some discussion, there were no additions or deletions to the rules, only some extensions were made on the details, such as the severity of penalties depending on the severity of the delicts.

After the meeting, Maximus kept Acronis, Vorenus, and Fesaros behind.

"In the coming period, your Guard should particularly keep an eye on these Roman Army slaves who have just joined our Supply Team and be on guard against any attempts of escape," Maximus whispered to Fesaros.

"Ah, how can this be! Haven't they all joined us? I think that Flanitus is quite cooperative!" Fesaros was a bit astonished.

"Spartacus told me that some of them were not very willing when joining our team... In any case, your Guard should pay more attention to them. I also do not want to see anyone violating the first decree shortly after it's issued!" Maximus said gravely.

Tonight, he delivered a speech, told stories, and had Flanitus attend their meeting. All this fuss was mainly to win these Roman Army slaves over. He could tell that Flanitus was somewhat reconciled by the end, but even though Flanitus had considerable prestige among those slaves, it couldn't be guaranteed that no one would act foolishly.

After Fesaros left, Maximus walked over to Vorenus, a former farm manager, who was busy taking notes during the meeting without uttering a word, thanks to the good education of a home-born slave.

Maximus picked up the papyrus Vorenus had written on. The tasks assigned and the five decrees established tonight were all clearly written on it.

Maximus nodded in satisfaction, "Very good, it is clearly written. I will officially announce these decrees to everyone tomorrow night. Vorenus, starting tomorrow, every new member joining our Supply Team must be vetted by you, including their birth, race, experiences... and most importantly, what they can do. Whether they are skilled at woodworking, weaving, farming wheat, or sailing... Record all these categories for me for better assignment of tasks."

"I can do these things, but I'm afraid the papyrus might not be enough," Vorenus reminded.

"That's an easy matter. In the future, I'll ask other leaders to pay attention to collecting more papyrus when leading teams out."

After Vorenus left, only Acronis was left in the room. She eagerly asked, "Captain, quickly tell me, how can we make those guys in the kitchen work better?!"

"Don't rush." Maximus' voice was clear, with a slow pace as he analyzed, "You see, the work in your kitchen can generally be divided into three categories: chopping wood and lighting the hearth, cooking porridge, meat, and soup, and baking bread.

Chopping wood and lighting the hearth is time-consuming and labor-intensive. From now on, the Guard will handle this work. For them, it is just an additional project to their daily military training. Your kitchen can then save on manpower and only assign two or three people specifically to keep an eye on the hearth each day and ensure the fire doesn't go out—"

"Captain, your solution has really solved our big problem!" Acronis said happily.

### **Chapter 43: Chapter 42: Moving the Camp**

"You, you want to manage everything, but even if you stand in the kitchen every day overseeing them, shouting and calling, their work efficiency won't improve much. You need to learn how to delegate tasks to your subordinates and motivate them to work."

Maximus saw that Acronis seemed a little confused, so he explained patiently: "Take the boiling porridge, soup, and cooking meat in the kitchen, for example. You can divide people who are good at these tasks into two or three groups, appoint a leader for each group, assign them tasks, and reward the group that finishes the best or fastest. For instance, give them half a day off, give them an extra piece of meat, or regularly gather your people and publicly praise the group that performs well..."

Don't be fooled by how well Maximus speaks; in his previous life, he chose to be a freelancer because he feared trouble and didn't want to manage people. However,



coming into this chaotic world, for the sake of survival, he had to change his habits from his previous life, striving to learn how to do things and manage people to acquire more power and ensure his safety.

Acronis, scratching her head and feeling somewhat excited, said, "Captain, your methods are excellent! I'll... I'll give it a try, but I'm pretty slow and may not do it well!"

"No one is born knowing how to do everything. As long as you work seriously and work hard, you can definitely do it well in the end, don't worry!" Maximus encouraged earnestly, as this was his recent realization.

Acronis, gaining confidence from his words, immediately decided to adjust the kitchen according to this method starting tomorrow.

"Also, when you're using the stone mill to hull and grind wheat, why not use the donkey continuously instead of having people push it often? It's wasting manpower, and the efficiency isn't very high."

"If we keep letting the donkey pull the mill, it'll get too tired, but we have plenty of people, so taking turns isn't a big deal," Acronis explained.

Indeed, thriftiness and frugality are ingrained in the laboring masses... Maximus smiled wryly and said loudly, "Acronis, you need to understand that people are more important now, not the donkey! I'll ask Spartacus to help us get a few more donkeys. From now on, let the donkeys do the work, just assign someone to oversee it."

"Hmm... okay." Acronis seemed a bit reluctant.

"Now, don't you feel short-handed anymore? Can you send a batch of young women to the Medical Team as I mentioned before?"

Acronis thought for a moment and resolutely said, "It should be possible."

"Then, who do you think among these people you're sending out is suitable to lead?"

"Nexia." Acronis answered without hesitation.

Maximus, very familiar with the kitchen affairs, immediately pictured a young and charming woman in his mind. He nodded in approval and said, "It's very late now; hurry back to rest. You have a lot to do tomorrow. Call the kids in after you go out; they're probably half asleep by now."

After Acronis left, Maximus looked up at the pitch-black night outside the window, stretching lazily: A lot was done tonight; tomorrow will be a new beginning!

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The next morning, after breakfast, the entire rebel army moved to relocate the camp to the farmhouse at the foot of the hill.

Although the distance was short, each large battalion of soldiers appeared somewhat disorganized due to a lack of effective organization.

The Supply Team had made arrangements in advance, but they had so much to take along that it slowed them down considerably. As captain, Maximus didn't simply stand aside and watch; he personally led by example, helping move things and carry the wounded, so naturally, no one dared to slack off, and the work enthusiasm among the team was high. By noon, the Supply Team had settled into the farm.

Next, Flanitnus led those thirty-four army slaves to start setting up military tents outside the farm's gate. Maximus once again led others to help.

Within two hours, the Medical Team's tents were all set up.

Maximus didn't immediately bring the wounded inside. Instead, he first gathered the Medical Team together.

The newly formed Medical Team consisted of: the newly appointed Medical Team Leader Putrius Horace, five men from the Roman Army slaves, and thirty-two women sent over from the kitchen by Acronis, making a total of thirty-eight people, with men and women distinctly grouped together.

Seeing this situation, Maximus jokingly reminded them: "Brothers and sisters, you are going to collaborate with each other from now on; don't stand so far apart. Gather in."

Except for Horace, these Roman Army slaves were relatively young and had long been interested in the women, but being newcomers they didn't dare to act recklessly. Now hearing Maximus' words, they immediately smiled and moved closer.

The women from the kitchen, having been harassed by rebel soldiers over the month, were very wary. But since Maximus had spoken, they reluctantly moved, which also showed Maximus' prestige in the Supply Team.

Seeing this, Maximus said seriously: "Let me emphasize first, in our Supply Team, if both sides mutually consent, I won't say anything if you get intimate. But if a woman doesn't agree and the man forces it, the lightest punishment is a beating, the heaviest is stabbing with a sword. So, you'd better think carefully before making such mistakes!"

Being tall and strong and now the leader of a team, Maximus' words carried weight and authority, causing the male slaves to shudder and bringing smiles to the women's faces: The captain was indeed on their side.

Maximus then looked at Horace, who as a Roman veteran had a rough appearance, younger than Flanitus but appearing older: "Horace, you are now the leader of our Medical Team—"

"Captain Maximus!" Horace quickly interrupted: "Don't listen to Flanitus; I don't know how to treat diseases. I only know how to bandage wounds and care for the wounded. I'm willing to work in the Medical Team, but let those skilled in medicine be the leader."

Maximus appreciated Horace's candid words and shook his head: "My requirement for the leader of the Medical Team is, first, to genuinely care for the wounded and consider the patients. Second, to manage the team well, directing them to better care for the patients and to respond to any emergencies faced by the Medical Team in war. As for whether one's medical skills are good, that's irrelevant to being the leader."

Horace listened, thought carefully, and said: "Then I can give it a try."

"I have a few requirements for the Medical Team." Maximus, without further ado, looked at him and said directly: "First, seriously injured and immobile soldiers should be separated from those with ordinary injuries, and given focused care; second, your Medical Team camp should remain clean, with no garbage or excrement accumulation, and minimize the presence of mosquitoes and rats inside the tents; third, use boiled water to clean wounds, and the cloth used to bandage wounds must also be boiled in water, dried before use; fourth, the work of cleaning, bandaging wounds, and caring for the wounded mainly falls to the women."

After Maximus finished, the women didn't think there was anything wrong, as most of them were inexperienced in taking care of the injured. Several male slaves then started to discuss: "We used to take care of injured teammates; there were never this many troubles."

"Yes, looking after the wounded never involved cleaning the tents, boiling water, or heating cloth... I've never heard such things!"

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"Those who want to slack off and don't want to do more work, leave the Medical Team now, and stop making noise here!" A woman stepped out, scolding loudly.

This was a girl only twenty years old, with smooth black hair, slightly dark skin, a pair of charming brown eyes, a delicate nose, lips slightly thick, and a graceful figure.

Upon seeing that the woman who scolded them was beautiful, the male slaves were unwilling to be outdone and retorted: "Who are you? Do you know how to care for the wounded?"

#### **Chapter 44: Chapter 43 Horace and Nexia**

"She's called Nexia, the head nurse of the Medical Team and also the deputy leader!" Maximus shouted loudly.

Nexia, a Greek female slave, was bought by a steward from a nearby farm to be a concubine, suffering various abuses and experiencing two miscarriages. When the rebel army attacked the farm, she incited the slaves there, directly killed the steward and his subordinates, and joined the rebel army. Though she appeared fragile and was good at social interactions, she was strong-willed and very enduring.

At this moment, upon hearing Maximus' words, Nexia felt both surprised and puzzled, "What is a head nurse?"

"Soldiers who care for and tend to the wounded are called nurses, and the leader of these nurses is called the head nurse." Maximus deliberately distorted the meaning of 'nurse'.

Nexia and the other women immediately showed joy, being referred to as soldiers evidently elevated their status within the rebel army.

Nexia then asked, "If these injured soldiers behave... rudely towards us while we're taking care of them, what should we do?"

Maximus sternly replied, "For each soldier who enters the Medical Team's camp, they should be reminded in advance that if harassment occurs again, you can issue a warning, and if they continue, they will be expelled from the Medical Team. We won't accept such soldiers!"

"Alright!" Nexia smiled, feeling satisfied with Maximus' response.

Having heard Maximus' request and fallen into contemplation instead of clamoring like other army slaves, Horace then asked, "Why do we need to boil water to soak the linen used to bind wounds?"

Maximus was well-prepared and said earnestly, "We often see tiny creatures in the bottom of some ditches in the wild, but these are just the ones we can see. There are even more that are invisible to us, living on filthy things around us. They can cause us to fall ill with high fever, but usually, our skin acts as armor, protecting us tightly, combined with strong health, so we live normally. But if wounded and weakened, they can easily enter our bodies through wounds, causing pus, high fever, and eventual death. High temperatures can kill these creatures, and a clean environment can also reduce their presence..."

Maximus' words not only startled Horace but also made others nervously glance around instinctively.

With a matter-of-fact demeanor, Maximus made Horace half-believe, half-doubt. He eagerly asked, "From which physician did you learn these things?"

Maximus, unwilling to explain in detail any further, emphatically said, "Don't worry about where I learned it; just try it out first, and see in some time if it works. If it works, continue implementing it; if it doesn't, then go back to your original method of caring for the soldiers, alright?"

Horace, not being trained in medicine, did not adhere to any particular theory or reject other "heresies." Instead, he felt that Maximus' words made some sense, and he, being a farmer by birth, didn't find it troublesome to do more work.

"Okay, we will try it as you said first."

Horace's reply made Maximus breathe a sigh of relief, having already decided: if Horace opposed, he wouldn't mind replacing him with someone more compliant as the head of the Medical Team.

Maximus looked at Nexia then at Horace, speaking sincerely, "I hope you two can work together to make our Medical Team successful, helping more injured soldiers to recover!"

Nexia immediately stated, "I will fully cooperate with the leader, leading the sisters to do a good job!"

Horace, however, said, "I have never been a leader before, I don't know if I can do it well, but I will do my best!"

An honest man! At their first meeting, Maximus had a good impression of Horace.

Next, the three of them, after making a simple plan for the Medical Team's camp based on the severity of the soldiers' injuries, began transferring the injured into the tents.

At this time, Maximus leaned close to Nexia and whispered, "Nexia, I have another task for you. While you and the sisters are tending to the injured, subtly persuade them to stay after they recover, to join our Supply Team."

This was another reason Maximus established the Medical Team. Since several leaders were unwilling to allocate more soldiers to the Supply Team, he decided to work on the injured soldiers. After all, the rebel army now used a voluntary principle for joining, but most people were unaware of the internal situation of the rebel army, so they could be directed. If the injured insisted on staying in the Supply Team, others couldn't oppose. Moreover, those injured had already experienced battle, making them better qualified than new recruits.

"I understand, we will persuade them quietly," Nexia whispered, flashing him a flirtatious glance, "If I do well, leader, how will you thank me?"

Maximus felt his heart skip a beat at her gaze but replied evenly, "If you do well, it proves I didn't misjudge you."

Her eyes fluttered over Maximus' face, and Nexia burst into laughter.

Of course, moving the injured into the tents wasn't solely the Medical Team's effort, Maximus also called on the Guards to help, so within half an hour, the injured were all settled in.

Then, Maximus tirelessly visited each one, intentionally telling the injured soldiers: he himself had taken the initiative to propose to the leaders the establishment of the Medical Team, to ensure their full recovery throughout the process.

Since the start of their injuries, the rebel army had been busy for the past two days, resulting in neglect and no care, leaving them extremely low in spirits. Now, hearing that the Supply Team specifically sent women to care for them, they felt as if they had gone from hell to heaven, not only extremely grateful to Maximus but also promising to be as respectful as possible to the women who would tenderly care for them.

According to Horace's instructions, several army slaves were chopping firewood and boiling water outside the Medical Team's camp, preparing to wash and disinfect the linen. Horace then began carefully teaching Nexia and the others how to clean the wounded areas, stop the bleeding, and bandage wounds...

Seeing the Medical Team's work getting on track, Maximus quietly left, thinking of the grateful looks on the injured soldiers' faces just now, deciding: from now on, he would come here every day for a walk, continually earning the favor of the injured soldiers, which was a worthwhile and effortless task.

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The rebel army, numbering merely two thousand, could completely fit within the simple camp previously set up by the Roman army at the olive oil farm. However, even so, the soldiers were busy all day, only settling down late at night.

Early the next morning, Spartacus and Cross, leading the troops, escorted the hundreds of Campanian captives towards Napolet.

Napolet City was located in the northwest direction of the current rebel army camp, merely twenty miles away.

By midday, the troops had arrived at the city gates.

The Neapolitans, already informed of the impending attack by the rebel army, had long sealed the city gates, with all City Guard soldiers deployed atop the city walls, treating it as a major threat.

Spartacus shouted loudly below the city, claiming: they rose in rebellion only because they could no longer endure the oppression of the Romans, originally without malice towards the Neapolitans. However, Neapole assisted the Romans, dispatching troops to help the Roman army attack their camp. Now the Roman army had been defeated by them, and most of the Campanian soldiers, primarily from Neapole, had been captured. The rebel army decided to punish the Neapolitans, unless Neapole provided five hundred sets of armor, five hundred short swords, five hundred long spears, and five hundred shields to exchange for these captives' lives; otherwise, they would be executed here.

Spartacus' proclamation caused a commotion among the Neapolitan officials, council members, and City Guard soldiers observing from the city walls.

Through the defeated soldiers who escaped yesterday, the Neapolitans were already aware of the Roman army's devastating defeat. Having seen no soldiers of their own family return, the families of the Neapolitan soldiers were already preparing for funerals, and the city echoed with grief.

Now, seeing so many Neapolitan soldiers still alive, and hearing their pitiful cries from below the city, most people wanted to agree to Spartacus' terms.

#### **Chapter 45: Chapter 44: Conflict**

Neapole is the second-largest town in the Campagna Region, second only to Capua, and it boasts the most prosperous port for maritime trade in central Italy. Not only can they afford this quantity of weapons and armor, but they can also provide them. The Napoli Soldiers dispatched for battle are not vagrants but landowners and asset holders—Neapolitans (naturally also Roman citizens). Previously, Neapole officials and council members agreed to Grabo's request to send City Guards to assist the Roman Army. However, after suffering a disastrous defeat, with most soldiers never returning, they faced intense criticism from the townspeople. Saving even a portion of the soldiers could help alleviate their predicament.

But the Neapole administrative officer disagreed, as he was a Roman appointed by the Roman Senate as the administrative officer of Neapole. Naturally, he would not permit these rebellious slaves to gain weapons and armor, thereby strengthening their position and complicating future suppression efforts by the Roman Army. Despite the rebel army outside the city being fully armed, they appeared strikingly similar to a Roman Army—only lacking the Eagle Banner.

The administrative officer's refusal fueled a heated dispute atop the city walls.

The rebel army grew impatient after waiting outside. Chief Cross immediately dragged five captives to the front of his troops and, without a word, stabbed them to death one by one with a short sword.

The city erupted in cries of shock.

Cross shouted a threatening ultimatum: If Napolet did not provide a satisfactory response, he would continue killing captives at regular intervals!

Listening to the tearful pleas of the captives below and facing accusations from others on the city walls, the administrative officer dared not insist further; otherwise, the anger of the townspeople would soon render his position in Napolet untenable.

The Napoletans agreed to the demands of the rebel army, but fear prevented them from opening the city gates. They suggested shipping the requested weapons and armor to a port outside the city via boat and receiving their released captives back the same way (at that time, Napolet maritime trade was flourishing, with ports scattered across Napolet Bay).

Spartacus agreed.

This tense exchange ultimately proceeded relatively smoothly. The rebel army kept their promise, releasing all Campania captives.

The Napoletans breathed a sigh of relief but failed to realize that despite Napolet's maritime prosperity, countless dock laborers had built this success with their blood, sweat, and tears. The rebel army's impressive display at the port would soon spread across Napolet's dozen ports, entering the ears of countless suffering underclass citizens.

Having obtained the weapons and armor they sought, the rebel army left satisfied.

The rebel soldiers, who had previously merely followed Spartacus and other leaders to attack manor estates, kill overseers, and guards they loathed, could hardly comprehend the impact their uprising would have on the world. But today, witnessing the high-and-mighty Napoletan Nobles cower under their armed pressure filled them with immense satisfaction and heightened their sense of allegiance to the rebel army.

Spartacus could sense the shift in his soldiers' morale and discussed with Cross whether they should organize regular armed marches to nearby towns in the future. Such marches could simultaneously force Nobles to provide urgently needed supplies and boost the morale of new recruits.

Just then, a few riders galloped ahead, led by Okmar, who waved and shouted, "Leader Spartacus! Leader Cross! Something bad has happened!"



Spartacus and Cross both looked alarmed: "What happened?!"

"The Supply Team... and soldiers from the Second Battalion... they're fighting!" Okmar panted as he reached them.

...

As it turned out, considering the weak combat prowess of the Napoletans, they hadn't taken all their soldiers along. Instead, they left some behind to train alongside other battalion soldiers under Hamilcar's military instruction. After a morning of training, the soldiers replenished water and took a break before continuing.

A few soldiers from the Second Battalion took advantage of this idle time to sneak into the Medical Team's camp, attempting to harass the nurses there. However, the Guard swiftly arrived to prevent their misconduct. Rather than listening to reason, the soldiers flew into a rage and began brawling with the Guard. Outnumbered, the Second Battalion soldiers were quickly subdued, but one managed to escape and riled up others, claiming the "Supply Team was using their numbers to bully our brothers," which sparked further anger and rallied more soldiers to the Medical Team's camp...

By midday, Hamilcar, resting in his tent, received reports that several Second Battalion soldiers were brawling with the Guard inside the Medical Team's camp.

Hamilcar rushed to the scene and found the conflict escalating. Attempting to mediate, he discovered the Second Battalion soldiers, caught up in their anger, were unwilling to listen.

At this point, Okmar arrived to report that Spartacus and Cross had successfully completed their earlier plan and were returning with their troops.

Hamilcar, too preoccupied to rejoice, instructed Okmar to inform the two leaders to come quickly to resolve the matter.

...

"How did the conflict start exactly?" Spartacus, though worried, sought clarity.

"I just arrived and don't know the full details. It seems the Guard detained a few soldiers from the Second Battalion—"

Okmar hadn't finished speaking before Cross erupted in anger: "The Supply Team has the audacity to detain my brothers! How is Maximus managing his troops?!"

"Cross, don't jump to conclusions. Maximus is usually thoughtful in his actions. There's surely a reason behind this. Let's clarify the situation first," Spartacus urged.

"I think he's been given too much power, becoming arrogant and overreaching!" Cross snorted angrily, grabbed the reins of a warhorse offered by a scout, mounted it, and galloped away.

Spartacus couldn't abandon his troops immediately, so he delegated leadership to a trusted Centurion, Argolis, who had also previously been a gladiator, giving him a few final instructions before riding off with Okmar.

Cross arrived at the camp and saw hundreds of people crowding around the Medical Team's entrance, blocking the pathways completely. Many were shouting loudly, but there were no sounds of fighting or cries of pain.

"What are you all standing here for? Move aside!" Cross roared.

"It's Chief Cross!"

"Chief Cross, you're finally back! The Guard has detained several of our brothers and refuses to release them!"

"Chief Cross, you weren't here, and we've been bullied endlessly! Even Leaders Hamilcar and Antonix sided with the Supply Team and sent the Third Battalion to help the Guard drive us out of the Medical Team camp."

...

The more Cross listened, the darker his expression grew, unable to contain his fury as he finally yelled, "Enough! I've heard enough!"

Second Battalion soldiers immediately stopped complaining, while Fourth Battalion soldiers, who had come to watch the commotion, stepped aside voluntarily, making way for Cross, who stormed forward until faced with a wall of neatly arranged soldiers in front of him.

"What's this? You dare block my way?!" Cross glared menacingly, his eyes brimming with rage.

"Chief Cross, Leaders Hamilcar and Antonix have requested you come inside to discuss matters." The speaker was a Centurion from the Third Battalion, also a gladiator and an acquaintance of Cross. He glanced cautiously at the crowd behind Cross. "To avoid further escalation, everyone else must wait outside for now!"

Cross stared at the Centurion, who met his gaze unwaveringly.

Moments later, Cross turned around and shouted, "What are you lot still standing here for? Go about your own business!"

The Centurion turned and walked ahead, with soldiers parting to create a path. Cross followed, visibly displeased.

Inside the Medical Team camp, three individuals stood in the clearing before the tents: Hamilcar, Antonix, and Maximus.

Upon seeing Cross, Hamilcar immediately began explaining: "Cross, you've finally returned. I was concerned the conflict might escalate, so I sought Antonix's assistance to summon the Third Battalion to separate your soldiers from the Guard—"

Cross ignored him completely, charging toward Maximus and yelling, "Maximus, so this is your idea of leadership!" As he spoke, he raised his fist and swung it at Maximus's face.