

Rome Must Perish

Chapter 46: Chapter 45 Soldier Conference

Cross's angry appearance was like a ferocious wolf, sending a shiver through Maximus's heart, but with the dozens of eyes from the Medical Team watching him, as the captain, he couldn't back down! So after swiftly dodging the fist from the opponent, he threw a punch back towards him.

This traitor dared to fight back! ... Cross's fury grew even stronger, he turned his body to the side, pressed his right foot to the ground, and charged his entire body forward.

Maximus couldn't evade in time and was knocked to the ground by the opponent, the two began scuffling on the ground...

Soon, a pair of strong hands pulled Cross, who was throwing punches, away, and Hamilcar helped Maximus, who had taken two punches, up.

Spartacus released Cross, sternly rebuking both of them loudly: "You two, as leaders of your respective teams, what can't be discussed properly? Why must you brawl here like ruffraff, is this how you set an example for the other brothers!"

"This traitor dared to detain my men from the battalion, why shouldn't I beat him!" Cross remained furious, but did not strike again. He glared at Hamilcar and Antonix: "And you two, are helping him bully our Second Battalion!"

Hamilcar righteously replied, "The Guard detained a few soldiers from the Second Battalion because they intruded into the Medical Team's camp, harassing women tending the wounded, causing chaos within the Medical Team. Detaining them was the Guard fulfilling its duty to safeguard the entire Supply Team!"

Moreover, these soldiers not only attacked sisters within their own team causing chaos in the Medical Team, but one escaped the Guard's pursuit, returned to the Second Battalion spreading rumors, and incited them to brawl with the Guard. If not for the timely intervention of the Third Battalion, it would've nearly triggered an internal conflict, so I request severe punishment for these soldiers!"

Cross was stunned for a moment, not expecting such a situation, but quickly retorted dissatisfiedly: "Hamilcar, you're exaggerating, aren't you? These brothers just wanted to relax with the Supply Team after intense military training, didn't they always do that? Not just them, hasn't anyone from your battalion done the same?"

Cross sneered at Antonix, then at Spartacus, and finally his gaze shot directly at Maximus: "This is just a way for brothers to relax under the constant threat of a Roman

Army attack, wasn't it always fine before? But today, you Maximus specifically targeted us of the Second Battalion, taking them into custody, that's what fueled the anger of the brothers in the Second Battalion, so the ones truly at fault should be Maximus and the Guard!"

Maximus laughed in anger, not even glancing at Cross, and turned to Spartacus, solemnly saying: "We built this force to resist the Romans, to free all those suffering. Our brothers and sisters in the Supply Team joined us because they believed in us, working tirelessly day and night to prepare delicious food for the brothers, feeling heartache seeing so many wounded brothers, and proactively requesting to care for them. The brothers and sisters of the Supply Team truly see everyone in the team as family!"

But some soldiers of different battalions, and even some leaders, overlook the efforts of the Supply Team, not even regarding the sisters of the Supply Team as family. They've just escaped from the estates of nobles, to then turn around and wantonly humiliate sisters of the Supply Team who have also suffered. How does their behavior differ from those nobles, those farm managers we despised! We risked our lives to revolt, is it to become those we hated?!"

Maximus's righteous questions pierced deeply into everyone's hearts.

His voice was loud and clear, every Soldier watching could hear him; originally whispering among themselves, they suddenly fell silent, some even unconsciously bowing their heads.

"The harassment from certain soldiers towards the sisters of the Supply Team should have been stopped a long time ago, otherwise it will only chill the hearts of those who truly love and fight wholeheartedly for our goal! This time we must severely punish the soldiers who broke the rules and restore our military discipline!" Finally, Maximus declared powerfully.

"Absolutely not!" Cross instinctively opposed.

Spartacus was not very concerned about the soldiers harassing the women of the Supply Team, but Maximus's words deeply moved him, and he noticed the strange demeanor of those soldiers listening outside the Medical Team camp. So he thought for a while and seriously asked, "What punishment do you propose?"

"Public caning!"

"Absolutely not!" Cross once again strongly objected: "That's an enormous humiliation for the brothers!"

"So their harassment of the Supply Team's members isn't an enormous humiliation!" Maximus loudly refuted, pointing to the camp's wooden fence: "There's a wooden sign

here, clearly stating 'Anyone who intrudes into the Medical Team without permission shall be punished.' Your soldiers knowingly acted against this rule, and should be severely punished!"

"Who can understand the things you've written!" Cross shouted: "Besides, who gave you the authority to set rules arbitrarily without our consent! —"

"Alright, everyone stop arguing!" Spartacus said in a deep voice, "Let's do this, we'll hold a Soldier Conference, let the brothers decide whether or not to punish these men."

Maximus feigned hesitation.

Cross said without hesitation: "Alright, I agree!" Because he felt that with the Second Battalion comprising a quarter of the entire army, the soldiers would undoubtedly side with their comrades, and soldiers from other battalions had also done the same thing with the Supply Team before, they surely wouldn't agree to Maximus's proposal, making it improbable for him to win majority support from the soldiers.

"Alright then." Maximus appeared somewhat helpless.

Soon, the soldiers were all gathered together with the people from the Supply Team and sat encircling the camp, Spartacus standing in the middle of the camp neutrally narrated the events leading to today's conflict.

Then, it was Cross, who strongly requested to speak first, who walked to the center of the camp, bringing along the four soldiers who caused the disturbance earlier. These men were no longer as tense as when they were detained, and hearing the soldiers of the Second Battalion shout their names, they arrogantly waved back in response.

Next, Cross briefly introduced these men to the army, detailing their heroic actions in the two battles against the Roman Army, how many enemies they killed, how many comrades they rescued, etc., but completely avoided mentioning them intruding into the Medical Team camp.

Hearing words of admiration from the surrounding soldiers, the four became even more proud and defiant.

"Brothers, you are all warriors for confronting the mighty Romans! As warriors, we should, of course, be respected and taken care of, right?!"

"Yes!!!..." The soldiers shouted in unison.

Seeing the soldiers' enthusiastic response, Cross eagerly called out again: "Brothers, I believe you wouldn't want to see comrades who fought alongside you be disgustingly humiliated over such a trivial matter, right?!"

"Yes!!..." The response was slightly smaller, but still far more than a majority, leaving Cross satisfied and looking at Maximus with scorn as he left the field.

"What shall we do? Looks like these bastards might not get punished!" Acronis felt nervous.

"The captain hasn't spoken yet, he should have a solution, right?" Nexia felt nervous too.

"If these soldiers dare let these bastards off without punishment, then our Supply Team might as well stop cooking for them!" Acronis angrily said.

"If you do that, it will only make Maximus unable to be our captain anymore!" Pigeris warned.

"You—Pigeris, which side are you on?!" Acronis cursed angrily.

Chapter 47: Chapter 46 Bubius and Torrelugo

Flanitus on the side ignored their quarrels, not caring whether they would be punished. As he focused on the center of the field, he scanned the lively crowd around. What interested him was the rebel army's way of soliciting opinions from everyone.

Although the Roman Army had many military laws and quite strict military discipline, he, with years of military life, knew that the ultimate decision of life and death for a Legion Soldier was in the hands of the Legion Commander, and ordinary soldiers had no chance to appeal. The rebel army, however, seemed to hand this power of punishment to the soldiers even without military law. Is this what they call freedom?

Maximus walked into the center of the camp, followed closely by two trembling young women. They were thin, their eyes red and swollen, and one even had a clear red handprint on her cheek.

The soldiers curiously watched Maximus standing in the center. Many new recruits might not have known this young Supply Team Captain two days ago, but it's not surprising, as the new recruits were busy raiding farms every day and rarely interacted with Maximus, who always stayed with the Supply Team. It was only when they fought and retreated to the back mountain that Maximus stood up and showed everyone how to turn defeat into victory, drawing everyone's attention for the first time. But this time, he became the center of attention again to punish their comrades, which made everyone's feelings a bit complicated.

Maximus, unaware of the soldiers' mixed feelings, introduced the two women with a loud and heavy voice and emphasized the suffering they endured.

Under the whip and stick's drive, endless work was the common experience of every slave in the team, and young female slaves with a bit of beauty had to endure some unspeakable violations and pains similar to Nexia's experiences.

Perhaps it was Maximus's narration that brought back the terrible memories, causing the two women to begin to sob uncontrollably.

Maximus stopped the narration, raised his voice, and said, "They joined our team full of hope, thinking they came from hell to Elysian Paradise, so they worked tirelessly every day to make delicious food for everyone and now actively take care of the wounded. But what they got in return was these few people's shameless violation!"

Maximus's final stern accusation brought silence to the entire assembly.

Cross began to feel uneasy but then relaxed. He understood his soldiers, knowing that they might feel guilty now, but if Maximus continued his accusations, it would only make them support the four people's innocence more. By doing so, they'd feel innocent themselves.

Maximus looked around and said, "What I said in the Medical Team's camp, you all must have heard, so I won't repeat it. I want to invite two other people to speak."

Two other people?... Cross was somewhat surprised and soon saw Maximus escort the two women out of the assembly center, followed by another person walking in.

This person, leaning on a wooden cane, with his right leg wrapped in linen, awkwardly stood in the center, causing a commotion among the second squad's soldiers.

"I... I am Bubius of the second squad," he said nervously, "The day before yesterday, during the fight with the Romans... I was stabbed in the leg by a Roman short sword... I ran desperately... ran... barely escaping their pursuit, reaching the back mountain. After that, my right leg wound swelled and hurt so much that I couldn't sleep, wishing to chop off my leg to end the pain..."

My teammates were busy attacking the Romans and relocating our camp, no one knew how much pain I was in! For two days straight, I barely ate or slept, weak all over, unable to open my eyes, thinking I was going to die..." Bubius's excitement and fluency grew as he continued, "Thankfully, the Medical Team was formed, and those girls became our nurses, carefully cleaning my wound, bandaging it, feeding me, comforting me not to worry... After just one night, I could stand up with a cane!"

Moved to tears, Bubius choked, "Apart from my mother when I was little, no one had ever cared for me like this! These women are kind-hearted! Oleks, you damn bastards! How dare you violate them, you're not fit to be my teammates, you deserve punishment!"

Bubius vigorously struck the ground with his cane, shouting in anger.

The assembly hall instantly erupted into commotion.

Cross felt intense unease and quickly asked a few of his Centurions, "Is he really one of our squad's soldiers?!" Previously, the second squad exceeded a thousand soldiers, and the time spent together was short, making it impossible for Cross to know everyone.

"Bubius is a soldier of our squad," a Centurion answered.

"That crafty Maximus!" Cross cursed under his breath, finding himself at a loss.

Then he saw four Guard soldiers carrying a stretcher into the assembly center. On it lay a person, and when he was helped to sit up by the guards, Cross recognized his face and was immediately shocked.

Torrelugo, a Gladiator from Gaul, had a good relationship with Cross and was a Centurion of the second squad. During the battle with the Roman Army, the second squad was defeated. He fought to the death, eventually breaking through the Romans' encirclement and led his soldiers to escape the Roman Cavalry's pursuit, retreating to the back mountain. When the soldiers rejoiced at their escape, he collapsed, his whole body covered with sword wounds, and the blood dyed his armor red. Even Cross thought, seeing such severe injuries, he wouldn't survive long, yet he didn't expect him to appear in the assembly center now.

In fact, most severely injured in the Medical Team's camp were Gladiators. Their ferocity and resilience led to severe injuries, and their rich arena experience allowed them to run to safety despite heavy wounds, and Torrelugo was just one of them.

"These soldiers are damned!" Despite his pale face and weak breath, Torrelugo's angry expression shocked the soldiers around him as soon as he spoke.

"I owe my survival and ability to speak here to these women's careful care! Any bastard bullying them is an enemy of mine and other wounded! Anyone agreeing that these bastards should not be punished, I will suggest to the Medical Team that if they get injured, they should not be treated and be left to die in misery!"

Torrelugo's words, though angry and impulsive, stirred greater agitation among the soldiers.

Damn Maximus!... Cross cursed in his heart. He didn't know about other squads, but straightforward Torrelugo was quite influential in the second squad. With his scolding, those supporting these soldiers would likely dwindle.

On the other side, Maximus whispered praise to Nexia, "It's impressive you got Torrelugo to stand up for you!"

"My sisters only followed your orders, taking care of these badly wounded," Nexia, instead of being proud, complained with a face full of grievance, "They're unable to move, and my sisters have to bandage their wounds, wipe their bodies, even deal with their excrement, it's not only tiring but also very..."

"But it was all worth it, wasn't it!" Maximus pointed to Torrelugo in the center of the assembly.

Then Torrelugo was carried off, and Spartacus entered the center again: "Now both sides have stated their reasons, and you brothers must have made your decision. Those agreeing to punishment, please raise your arms!"

Chapter 48: Chapter 47: Rome Sends Troops Again

Such a decision-making method is quite simple, but at least it's better than the old Spartan Citizen's Assembly (where the decision of a proposal depended on the loudness of the citizens' shouts). Moreover, more than half of the soldiers raised their hands, eliminating the need for a detailed count. After all, the testimonies of the two wounded soldiers had made them realize the importance of these women in the rebel army.

"More than half of the brothers think they should be punished. According to the proposal of the Supply Team Captain, Maximus, they are to be flogged in public!" Spartacus declared with a stern expression.

Initially, when Maximus proposed forming a medical team, Spartacus didn't find it novel, as the Roman Army also had similar medical teams. However, he didn't expect Maximus to have women care for the wounded, and judging from the earlier defense, the results were indeed remarkable. Therefore, he, who wasn't too concerned about the harassment of women in the rebel army, paid close attention. The verdict brought him relief, and he instinctively glanced towards Maximus on the sidelines: this young man, once considered a traitor, constantly surprised him!

The decision reached by the Soldier Conference brought cheers of joy from the women in the supply team, as they knew everything would be different from then on!

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At the initiative of the Governor, the Roman Senate convened a meeting. Over five hundred elders sat in their designated places, with this year's two governors standing in the center of the hall, and behind them seated 7 legal officers (originally 8, but Grabo was absent).

Governor Marcus Trementius Varo Lucullus was the younger brother of Lucius Licinius Lucullus, a top military figure under Dictator Sulla. Last year, Licinius Lucullus's term as Governor ended, and he departed for Little Asia to assume office as Provincial Governor. However, even in his absence from Rome, Varo Lucullus was still elected as this year's Governor, highlighting the influence of Licinius Lucullus within the Sulla Faction.

Though Varo Lucullus rose to power relying on his brother, he himself had been campaigning in Little Asia for many years and achieved considerable military merits; his abilities were not weak, making many elders quite agreeable to his election.

With a robust physique, he scanned the hall and spoke in a deep voice: "I have just received a war report stating that the army led by Grabo suffered a disastrous defeat at Vesuvius. He was killed, and the soldiers suffered over half the casualties, failing in the encirclement of those gladiators. Therefore, I propose to once again form an army to quickly exterminate that group of rebellious slaves!"

Upon hearing the news of the Roman Army's defeat, only a small commotion echoed from the back of the hall. After all, the Campagna Region is very close to Rome, with a pleasant climate and fertile lands, where many elders own farms and villas, always monitoring the situation and already informed.

The other Governor, Gaius Cassius Longinus, clearly had a prior understanding with Varo, immediately responding: "I agree with Varo's proposal; we must quickly send troops to quell the rebellion and restore peace in Campagna!"

After both governors expressed their opinions, all eyes turned to an elder seated in the first row, left first seat of the Senate.

Quintus Lutatius Catulus, former Roman Governor and Dictator Sulla's most reliable ally in politics, was renowned for his integrity in Rome. Back then, Sulla had commissioned him to rebuild the Jupiter Temple, burned during the civil war, which he constructed magnificently. Sulla wanted his name inscribed on the temple's architrave, but Catulus, considering the terror Sulla inflicted upon Rome that left many disgruntled, defiantly refused the immensely powerful Sulla and bravely inscribed his own name instead. Though Sulla was furious, he could do nothing in the end, earning Catulus praise from the Roman populace.

Now, Catulus, a respected Chief Elder, gently pinched his purple-edged toga robe and stood up leisurely. Despite his age, his voice was clear and resounding: "I believe everyone here agrees to send troops to suppress the chaos, but how many soldiers should we deploy? Who shall lead? These are issues we need to deliberate seriously. Grabo was prudent and not weak in military capability, yet he also perished in defeat. Shouldn't we pay more attention to these rebels?"

No sooner had his words fallen than another elder beside him stood up and said loudly: "Based on the situation I have learned, Grabo was a fool! He had already routed those slaves; continuing the pursuit would have secured victory. However, he was overly cautious, intending to trap the fleeing rebels on the mountain, yet failed to reinforce the camp's defenses, resulting in a successful assault by the slaves... Therefore, it's not the gladiators' prowess, but Grabo's utter stupidity! I believe just deploying a competent commander and 3,000 soldiers, as before, would suffice."

The Chief Elder's opinion was directly opposed, to no surprise from the elders, as the speaker was Publius Cornelius Cetegus, also an influential figure in the Roman Senate. He was quite displeased with Catulus becoming the Chief Elder, believing himself more qualified. Therefore, their confrontation in the Senate had become all too common in recent years.

Many elders internally agreed with Cetegus's opinion. Despite the catastrophic defeat of the Roman Army, they indeed did not take the rebel army's combat strength to heart, attributing the failure to Grabo's foolishness. However, the rebellion in Campagna, having lasted more than two months, continued to expand, threatening to spiral out of control. The only way to suppress the unrest and restore Campagna's order was to increase the strength of the expeditionary forces.

After deliberation, the elders reached a consensus: to form a legion.

The vast majority also believed that to annihilate a band of lowly gladiators and slaves, there was no need for the Governor to act personally; thus, the commander should still be chosen from among the legal officers.

In stark contrast to the previous reluctance from legal officers to volunteer for the campaign, this time, the majority actively expressed their willingness to assume command. Though quashing a band of lowly gladiators offered no glory, if they defeated the Roman Army and slaughtered Roman Soldiers, obliterating them to win public applause would be quite an appealing choice.

Ultimately, most elders selected Legal Officer Publius Valerius. Compared to other legal officers, his past campaigns under Sulla in Little Asia were significant credentials that won the elders' favor.

After the meeting adjourned, the elders began to disperse.

"Crassus! Crassus! Wait for me!" A middle-aged man shouted urgently as he hurriedly exited the Senate.

As he called out, one of the elders descending the steps paused and turned around.

This individual was tall, with a square face, broad forehead, high nose bridge, thick eyebrows, and big eyes, exuding a sharp gaze that seemed somewhat imposing, yet the smile on his face added a touch of warmth.

He was Legal Officer Marcus Licinius Crassus, the wealthiest man in Rome.

Seeing the caller, he turned back with an even broader smile: "Sulla, what's so urgent that you call me like this?"

Publius Cornelius Sulla was the nephew of Dictator Sulla. During Sulla's occupation of Rome and purge of his political enemies, he had cooperated closely with Crassus, amassing considerable wealth, resulting in a close relationship between them.

Little Sulla hurried over, pulled Crassus to the side, and whispered: "Why didn't you, like the others, volunteer to lead the expedition? It's a great opportunity to earn honor! In military ability, Valerius is not your match."

Chapter 49: Chapter 48: Military Training

Crassus smiled faintly: "Sula, you have to understand, when buying a house, it's best not to purchase it when the price is still decent. Wait until it hits rock bottom—then you'll profit even more."

Little Sula immediately widened his eyes: "You... you think Valerius is going to fail?!"

"No one can predict the outcome of a war." Crassus glanced back at Valerius, who was passionately speaking with several Elders at the Senate's gate, and said indifferently, "But when it comes to doing business, sometimes you need to dare to gamble. Even if I misjudge, it's not like it'll cost me anything."

Little Sula shrugged and said, "True. Spending time defeating a group of slaves that nobody cares much about is far less worthwhile than using that time to make more money."

Shifting the topic, he continued: "Have you heard? The Iberian campaign is progressing well. Pompey has already led his army to capture several rebel strongholds. That Sedulius isn't as arrogant as he used to be."

Crassus' expression changed momentarily but quickly reverted to normal. He sneered and said, "The Senate granted Pompey enormous support—he commands nearly a hundred thousand soldiers. To deal with the remnants of the Civilian Faction, it's taken so long. What's there to celebrate?"

After saying this, he continued walking forward, though a sense of urgency had begun to grow within him.

Little Sula deliberately lagged two steps behind, a smirk creeping onto his face: Haha, Crassus, for all your wealth, you still have things you can't have your way with. After all, the land that you built your legacy upon has now become someone else's training ground for cultivating followers and drilling troops—no one would feel comfortable about that!

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"Before you stands your enemy. They not only robbed you of your land, turning you into slaves, but now they also aim to take your lives! You must grip your swords tightly and slay them—only then will you avenge yourselves, understood?!" Flantinus barked loudly.

"Understood!!" The fully armed Guards shouted in unison as they struck the wooden stakes before them with wooden shields and clubs.

"Aim to strike the enemy's exposed skin—hands and feet. Even the smallest injury can cause them pain and bleeding, weakening their strength and morale, giving you the upper hand... Always remember, when you wield your short sword, your long shield must cover you entirely. Otherwise, you'll be struck down before you even land a blow on your enemy."

The Guards listened intently to Flantinus' teachings. Their wooden clubs and shields were crudely crafted, yet heavier than real swords and shields. As they practiced stabbing, feinting, and charging against wooden stakes repeatedly, members of the military advisors group patrolled the training grounds, correcting their movements. Any soldier caught slacking off was immediately reprimanded and forced to do extra training, so hardly anyone dared to slack.

Flantinus watched the soldiers drenched in sweat. A trace of satisfaction flickered across his face. Over his decades-long career, he had trained countless recruits, and these soldiers' dedication to training was by far the best he'd seen. Of course—it was no surprise. Slaves were always the most resilient and hardworking.

Flantinus' gaze landed on Maximus, who was enduring the grueling exercises alongside the Guards. On the very first day of military training, this Supply Camp Captain (whose growing team prompted him to rename it from "Supply Team" to "Supply Camp") had requested to train just like an ordinary soldier. Initially, Flantinus had hesitated, worrying that Maximus might use favoritism and disrupt the discipline of the training.

But over the past three days, Maximus had consistently followed Flantinus' commands and diligently fulfilled his requirements. His actions had a positive influence on the Guard soldiers, especially their captain, Fesaros, ensuring that every one of Flantinus' orders was executed smoothly—a great relief for him.

For this, Flantinus felt grateful. He understood that Maximus was helping solidify his authority. In truth, Maximus didn't need to train with the wooden stakes, as such exercises were fundamental skills for gladiators.

"Time's up. Wooden stake training is over!" Flantinus shouted, "Fall into formation!"

At his command, the soldiers concluded their training and, gripping their wooden shields and clubs, gathered in formation, panting heavily. They lined up in two columns, with Maximus and Fesaros standing at the forefront. Achieving this deceptively simple formation had taken repeated practice to perfect.

"March around the camp at a steady pace." Flantinus took the lead immediately after speaking.

Maximus and Fesaros exchanged a glance and led the group, closely following behind him.

Since the rebel army had seized supplies from the Roman Army, their reserves were now plentiful. These past few days, they hadn't needed to send out troops for raids, instead dedicating all their efforts to military training. The various battalions spread out around the camp, clearing trees and crops that obstructed the drills. Dust swirled as shouts filled the air everywhere.

As the Guards marched through the training grounds, they inevitably drew some peculiar looks: "Is it really necessary for such a small unit like the Guards to train?"

"I don't think so. They should just keep those women in check. Battles are our job; we're the ones protecting them."

"Hey, watch your mouth! Be careful! If they report back, those women in the Medical Team might refuse to tend to us if we get hurt."

"Right, right, you're absolutely correct."

...

The murmurs reached the ears of the Guards, but despite their frustration, none of them argued back. They knew better than to waste energy on verbal disputes during this armed march. Maintaining neat formation was essential, and the pace, though slow, required focus. Falling out of step or lagging behind would incur punishment in the form of extra training from Flantinus, so even Maximus and Fesaros pressed on silently. By the time they returned to their initial training spot, the fatigue in their arms had mostly subsided.

"Start shield collision training!" Flantinus commanded. Paired soldiers faced off, gripping their wooden shields. They rammed into each other; whoever was forced backward

would lose. Losing three consecutive rounds meant punishment, while winners gained precious rest time. The soldiers spared no effort in this exercise.

Both the wooden stake and shield collision training were aimed at honing individual combat skills for battles fought in formation. Prolonged use of the heavier wooden shields and clubs helped strengthen soldiers, ensuring ease and agility when wielding real swords and shields on the battlefield, thereby boosting their confidence.

After the collision training, another march around the camp ensued. This wasn't just to prepare the soldiers for long-distance marches; it also taught them how to relax while marching, as the next item on the agenda was agility training, which demanded higher intensity.

In Flantinus' initial training plan, the third stage of individual drills involved heavy spears. However, given the rebel army's current situation, the battalions wouldn't have sufficient heavy spear supplies for some time, not to mention the Guards. Hence, this stage was temporarily skipped.

The third individual drill focused on agility training, crucial for heavily armored soldiers needing to scale ladders and overcome barriers.

The military advisors constructed a training course, placing a wooden bar between two wooden stakes, at an adult's knee height. Soldiers were required to leap over the bar while running. Though seemingly easy, wearing helmets and breastplates made it much harder. Even those who succeeded often lost their balance, falling to the ground. The uneven surfaces inside their armor left bruises in their wake. Over these past few training days, nearly every soldier except Maximus and Fesaros had developed significant bruising.

By now, the soldiers had grown accustomed to the drill. This time, none of them stumbled. Just as they began to feel relieved, the military advisors increased the number of wooden bars on the course, requiring the soldiers to leap continuously without interruption.

Chapter 50: Chapter 49 Military Training (continued)

Amid the soldiers' sighs, Maximus chuckled inwardly. Flantinus had once detailed the military training plan to him, and he knew this was just the beginning. Later, the height of the wooden poles would increase, and the soldiers would even need to leap over them with short swords and shields. According to Flantinus, those who excelled in the agility training of Rome's new recruits were key candidates for the cavalry.

By noon, each battalion would send personnel to wait at the farmhouse entrance, then drive back to their training grounds with carts full of food prepared by the Supply Camp, allowing soldiers to line up in long queues to receive their meals one by one.

This was a suggestion made by Maximus to the Military Commander Conference, where each battalion would collect and distribute the food from the Supply Camp, avoiding chaos and instilling discipline in the soldiers, thus gaining approval. Of course, for Maximus, his main goal was to save manpower in the Supply Camp.

Just after lunch, Fesaros approached, "Captain, when are you going to increase the manpower for our Guard?"

"Wasn't your Guard just fully staffed?" Maximus feigned surprise.

"That's the number our Guard originally had, but you said before that you would increase our Guard's manpower!" Fesaros reminded him.

"I did say that." Maximus nodded in acknowledgment and explained seriously, "But now that our Supply Camp has established a Medical Team, an armory, a construction team... all of which are urgently lacking manpower, and several leaders are focused on these areas. New recruits, of course, need to first satisfy these teams' needs so that they can operate normally. Otherwise, if the Supply Camp's original duties are neglected, and we rush to increase your Guard's manpower, what would the leaders think?"

Fesaros said nothing further.

"Don't worry." Maximus patted his sweaty shoulder, encouragingly saying, "Now we have so many people joining our ranks every day, the manpower distributed to our Supply Camp has increased several times over. The Guard will soon be expanded. My only worry now is, as the number of soldiers increases, will we be able to train them well and command them effectively in battle?"

Fesaros wanted to answer but hesitated. In the past, he would have blurted out, "Yes," but after experiencing Flanitus's strict military training and evening lectures over the past few days, he realized that war was not just about brawling but required a lot of knowledge to win.

As they talked, Flanitus's voice came from a distance, "Soldiers, assemble! Form a phalanx!"

Maximus and Fesaros immediately picked up their swords and shields and joined the group.

The soldiers gathered, shouting and jostling, all trying to find their positions in the formation as quickly as possible. Some soldiers flailed around like headless chickens, drawing a flurry of curses from the instructors of the military advisory group, making the whole scene appear chaotic.

Standing at the front of the rank, Maximus was unfazed by this. In his previous life, primary school students could easily form phalanxes because they had been educated in this manner since childhood. In contrast, these slaves, numb and ignorant from noble oppression, could hardly achieve such a feat after just two or three days of training. After all, a tightly-knit phalanx of ten rows and ten columns was far more challenging than a simple two-column formation.

After much effort, they finally managed to form the formation. Flanitnus shouted loudly, "A little faster than yesterday's formation, but still not enough! I hope you use your brains and remember who is to your left and right. Next time you disrupt the formation because you can't find your position, your entire row will be punished!"

The phalanx buzzed with unrest, and even those who were previously gloating felt a twinge of nervousness at that last sentence.

Flanitnus said no more, shouting loudly, "Listen carefully, move forward!"

This was merely a command for the soldiers to move forward at a normal pace, but executing it well was no easy feat. The soldiers, clad in armor and holding swords and shields, moved forward in a relatively tight formation. Not only did each have a different stride length, but their forward directions varied, resulting in lateral jostling and front-to-back collisions after just a few steps. The military advisory group's instructors shouted from the sidelines, "Slow down a bit!... Look at your teammate on the left and try to maintain the same formation!... Increase the distance from the row in front, don't get too close!... Pull your short sword back to avoid injuring the teammate in front!"

In just a short while, the instructors stopped shouting because the formation had already fallen apart. Some soldiers complained to each other, while a few fell to the ground, crying in pain.

Maximus watched this, lamenting internally that training soldiers was truly no easy task! Just forming ranks and marching were so difficult!

Flanitnus did not rave nor scold but yelled loudly, "Reform ranks!... March!"

More than 100 soldiers of the Guard practiced formation drills repeatedly.

On this training ground, it wasn't just the Guard being drilled. Personnel from the kitchen, transport team, warehouse, Medical Team, and others belonging to the Supply Camp took time out, led by their leaders and guided by the military advisory group, to perform simple exercises in formation and marching.

This was at Maximus's insistence, aiming for everyone in the Supply Camp to undergo militarized management, become accustomed to following orders, and obey commands to facilitate future operations.

As a result, this training ground in the Supply Camp was different from the rest; it had a few more women and an added vibrant scene, but no soldiers slacked off because of it. Instead, they trained even harder.

Finally, Flanitus issued the command to rest, and the fatigued soldiers sat directly on the ground.

"Thank you all for your hard work, have some water to quench your thirst!" Acronis led her team, pushing a cart filled with jars of cool water, and rushed over. Such was the benefit of being in the Supply Camp.

"Captain, for you." Acronis handed Maximus a pottery jar first.

"Give it to the instructors and brothers first!" Maximus licked his lips and shouted loudly.

No matter what Acronis said, only after seeing that everyone else had a water jar in hand did he reach out to take one.

Just after taking a sip, a rider came galloping, "Captain Maximus, Leader Spartacus summons you to a meeting!"

"Understood, I'll head over immediately." Maximus took two more gulps of water before standing up and walking over to Flanitus. He tapped his right fist against his left chest, "Reporting to instructor, I request temporary leave!"

Flanitus was momentarily stunned, then nodded and said, "Approved."

Watching Maximus's departing figure, Flanitus's evaluation of him rose a notch in his heart. As the Supply Camp's captain, Maximus accepting training like an ordinary soldier was already beyond his expectations. But he did not expect this young man to fully adhere to his regulations. Even needing to attend a meeting, he reported first, signaling that no soldier would dare to disobey orders!

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"You all know that quite a few people have joined our ranks in the past few days, but this morning, over seven hundred people came at once. They are either laborers or sailors from various ports of Napolet, led by someone named Attutmus. He led these people away from Napolet to join us. However, he had others wait west of our camp and came to meet me alone. He hopes that after these port laborers and sailors join our ranks, they won't be broken up, and they can lead their team themselves—" Spartacus looked seriously at the four, saying, "That's why I've gathered you all here, to discuss whether to agree to their request and let them join our ranks?"

Antonix frowned and spoke first, "After these past few days of reorganization, we've finally achieved some order in our ranks. Now, with so many people wanting to join

without being under our control, if they mess around, it might affect the other soldiers, and all our efforts over the past few days will be for nothing."

"Port laborers and sailors are not like ordinary slaves. They have courage and strength and, with a little training, can become good soldiers!" Enomai reminded excitedly.