

Herald 20

Chapter 20 Alexander's Counter-Attack

Alexander found Camius standing outside the tent, fear written all over his face.

Clearly, he had heard everything.

"Let's go." Alexander ordered in a hard voice, taking large strides to get away from this circus.

Camius had never heard him speak in such a harsh tone and it made him instinctively shiver.

But soon the motor mouth recovered and started talking.

"Those were some choice words, doc. Haha...you sure showed them." He praised.

"I shouldn't have ranted like that. Lost my cool there." Alexander lampooned.

"Yeah, I guess. Particularly at the end. I wanted to rush in to stop Nestoras but I figured it was all part of your plan to get him all riled up. Heh heh..." Camius seemed to praise himself for figuring out a masterful plan.

"Bullshit, that was really dangerous for a moment. Didn't think I would let my mouth run off like that. If not for Aristotle, I would be likely dead." Alexander internally cursed.

"No, it's more likely Cambyses would be dead. I need to re-educate that idiot." He subconsciously clenched his fist as he felt his heartbeat momentarily increase.

Somehow the thought of her death was scarier than his own.

"Camius, next time you get such feelings, use your gut and not your brain," Alexander advised.

And it would turn out that this simple advice would one day help Alexander survive an assassination.

"Alexander, wait....." A distant, high-pitched cry wafted through the air towards the men.

"Boy, don't do anything stupid. Calm down." A calm, concerned voice also urged him to stop.

The voices seemed to get louder and louder and soon the owners of the voice caught up with them.

It had to be noted that it was very strangely convenient that the place they caught up was a secluded part of the camp, away from prying eyes.

Like someone had deliberately chosen this place.

"Alexander please....." Cambyses cried out.

"Don't worry, I will convince the troops to oppose Nestoras..." Menes tried to explain his plan.

"You're all here. Good. I have tasks for all of you." Alexander suddenly stopped and said in a loud, cheerful voice, a bright smile plastered on his face.

"What...?" Menes asked confused, clearly a bit slow on the uptake.

They had never seen Alexander display such mercurial mood swings.

The trio looked wide-eyed in shock at Alexander, finding it difficult to connect the amicably smiling gentleman to the raging maniac from a few moments ago.

But Alexander paid no heed to the extra attention and started giving out orders.

"Menes, rally the troops as Nestoras ordered. Do it quickly before it gets dark. Make sure to emphasize it's the commander's orders."

"What? But just now you..." Menes asked, perplexed.

"Just get everyone in formation." Alexander urged, cutting him off. "Now go, quickly."

"Okay, okay. Just don't do anything stupid, alright? Nestoras is out for blood." Menes warned as he quickly turned around and sped towards the soldiers' tents.

"Camius, I believe you heard everything, right?" Alexander turned his head to look at him.

"Yes. Caught every word." Camius gave a clear reply. This wasn't the first he spied for Alexander.

"Good. I want you to spread these three rumors over all the camps."

He raised his index finger and said, "One -The gods have struck twice. We have offended them and thus we shouldn't fight."

Raising his middle finger, he continued, "Two -The mercenary contract was signed by General Agapios and only he can give us orders. We demand to see General Agapios, Samaras is a cheat trying to scam us."

Lastly raising his ring finger, he finished, "And three, we want our last two months' pay. No silver, no sword."

Listening to what Alexander wanted him to do, Camius stared at his commander dazed and confused, as if his soul had been sucked out.

This task was nothing like the petty spying, snitching and rabble-rousing he did before in his own group.

This was instigation over the entire army.

"You got it?" Alexander asked, forcefully gripping Camius's shoulder with both his hands.

"Alexander, these words are very dangerous. Are you planning to disobey direct orders?" Cambyes suddenly interjected, fear coursing through her question.

She had always thought of herself as brave and fearless, capable of snatching the very moon for Alexander, but now, when she was actually witnessing Alexander play with fire, she found herself afraid.

After all, defeated and stranded in enemy territory, the last thing that they needed was an internal power struggle and rebellion.

"Yes. I am. They want to push us into the abyss. We can't just sit still and see our heads get decapitated." Alexander very plainly stated.

"You know I will follow you to the ends of the world, doc." Camius declared. "But tell me, why are you so against this attack? Attacking the flanks of some defenseless slingers and rescuing our brothers seems pretty easy. Even this exhausted we can so handily."

Camius seemed to share the same optimistic view as the higher-ups.

He was also afraid. If he got caught, he would be lucky to keep the skin on his back.

"If we can see such a flaw, so can the opposing general. He must have a counter plan." Alexander confidently hypothesized.

"I highly doubt it, doc. He must have assumed we have been routed and can't counterattack and so got greedy. At least I can't think of a way to save both the slingers and keep the cauldron closed." Camius gave his opinion.

"Just because you can't think of a way doesn't mean others can't, or that it doesn't exist." Alexander tried to persuade him.

"Then you tell me how he could do it." Camius asked, putting his hands on his hips and pointing his chin upward.

"Can you tell me how he got those slingers who were supposed to be hundreds of kilometers away here? But it happened." Alexander pointed out.

"That's different. There are no trees to hide behind now." Camius simply dismissed the question.

Seeing this exchange going nowhere. Alexander understood something very important.

He realized that his method of reason and deduction wasn't suitable for everything.

Being a man of science from the 21st century, Alexander instinctively tried to use the Monty Python method to get his point across.

But this way wasn't always useful, because people of this time were inherently different.

No matter how everyone liked and respected him, to make them do anything against their superior would not be easy.

They were not his loyal followers, but interested observers and beneficiaries.

Even Camius, whom he found laying across a ditch, the street tout who was stabbed multiple times in the stomach, and whom he stitched back to life was not his sycophant.

They were all pragmatic people who would follow the one who gave them the greatest benefit.

Understanding this, he decided to change tact. Instead of reason, he decided to use emotion.

"Maybe you're right, Camius. But if I had to explain my reason in one word, it's this - instinct. Do you trust my instinct...friend?" Alexander asked with a light smile on his face.

Camius was stunned for a moment. Never had Alexander before argued without reason.

"Well, you should have said so sooner, doc. If it's your gut, then it must be true." Camius let out his big teeth to form a huge grin. "Okay, I am going right now."

"Wait, go to the medical camp first. Bartholomew should be there. Take him with you." Alexander advised.

"Camius, Remus is there too. Tell him and Mean to spread it there among the wounded." Cambyeses added.

'Right! The wounded and the extra personnel from all the different camps are there. How could I have forgotten that? Darn, I must be too tired to think.' Alexander cursed in his mind.

"Great idea." Alexander praised. "Now go, we haven't got much time."

"Gotcha doc." Camius responded sprinting ahead, without turning his head back