

The background of the cover is a complex, layered illustration. At the top, a classical city with numerous columns and domes is depicted. Below this, a large eagle with its wings spread is shown in profile, facing left. In the lower foreground, there are several circular medallions or coins. One features a profile of a man's head, and another shows a seated figure with a staff. The overall style is reminiscent of a woodcut or a detailed engraving, with fine lines and a rich, aged color palette of browns, yellows, and greys.

THE GENERAL'S LETTER

A SHORT STORY
WRITTEN BY:
THEODIS HOUSTON

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This story is historical fictional; the situation is based on
historical events but the story and characters are fictional.

Battle of the Nile 47 BC

Mith of Pergum and his legion of soldiers march to the Land of Pyramids to assist the Caesarean Republic's leader who has his back against the water after joining the lands civil war. The Legion of soldiers take refuge in a forest in the Kingdom of Licia twelve days before they reach The Land of Pyramids. They enjoy this time of peace with their last feast until battle. Mith writes a letter with essential information for a very important person. He needs the letter delivered before fighting begins so he entrusts a discouraged soldier with this task, vaguely giving information except that the letter is for the Kingdom of Pontus.

A burly man with hair running throughout his body sits in the most elegant attire a soldier could wear. He has a bushy black lengthy head of hair with black eyes and an unkept beard mimicking a lumberjack. He sits at a wooden table with a silver helmet from the finest metals placed to his side, a bold mohawk the color of apples dominates the middle of the helmet, made from animal skin formed into thin strands standing straight. He is wearing a wool shirt that is royal red stretched to rest six inches above his knee. The royal red tunic on his body resembles the herd it comes from, due to the hardships of his travel. He carries a sword on his left and a dagger on his right, his chain mail armor is neatly hanging next to him with a wool cloak darker than night. His armor hangs but he is not unprotected, wearing a leather plate on his chest and back. The plates each have six shields stitched as a silhouette, camouflaged into the shady tanned armor. The man sits, writing, placing quill to parchment, isolated from the Legion he abides with.

Rain falls racing to the ground while thunder shakes the skies. The legion takes shelter off the coast of a roaring sea in the middle of winter, resting in cabins they've built from the woods surrounding their camp. Mith, the soldier jotting

away, is separated from the legion sitting in the palm of nature as she breaths, unaffected thanks to a tent derived from a protective walrus hide.

Mith and these soldiers are southeast of their homeland, Pergum. Mith and the Legion are stationed along a southeastern forest in The Small East, in a Kingdom known as Licia. The forest is to the east of the Sea of Seas adjacent to the land's south shore.

Pergum is a Kingdom in the northwest of The Small East; a regional province to the Caesarean Republic. The Small East is a monumental land partly responsible for the creation of the Caesarean Republic, symmetric to a ladder through time filled with cultures and history. It borders three seas the Dark Sea to the north, the Achilles Sea to the west and the Sea of Seas bounded to its southwest.

Mith continues to write placing his quill to parchment. Mith, signs his writing adding the official stamp of the Caesarean Republic, a Shewolf with two newborns. He rolls the letter, ties it, and places it in a majestic envelope made of an ox hide; fabricated as the color royal purple. He places the letter in a leather kilt along his waist that sits above his wool-red tunic. Mith walks out of his tent through the harsh storm and enters the legion cabinets. Inside this enormous shelter, are stations to cook, a table for a feast, torches mounted to the wall, and soldiers who fill the space. The troops, like Mith, wear red tunics as well but most have different plated armor made of metal. With the occasional troop having leather plates. The troops keep their swords holstered to their right, with the occasional soldier holstering theirs to the left in a similar fashion to Mith. Their helmets are off and their shields are nowhere in sight. Fires continue roasting, food sizzles, and soldiers beg for drinks to be poured away by barkeeps. The air radiates with ecstasy and the legion of brute men ignore their uniforms celebrating like there is no tomorrow. The tap-dancing rain slows down as if it was led by an orchestra conductor, succeeded by greyer skies.

Mith stands in the atmosphere looking for something or someone. Soldiers fly past Mith some ignoring their General racing to food and entertainment and some acknowledging him with a salute. He acknowledges who acknowledges him but is searching for something particular, obvious by his fluttered demeanor. When suddenly a soldier who wears his sword to the left and wears leather plates just like Mith. Mith rushes to the soldier with great enthusiasm.

“Darius, I need you to do something for me,” Mith directed a young soldier who halts his movements like his fate depended on it. The soldier's leather plate's shade of tan is as light as the desert sand. He carries an enormous fish dropping it like a coin, initiating his salute before the perch kisses the ground. “At ease soldier,”

Mith says to the eager lad chuckling to himself. “We’re not on the battlefield yet, but I do love the urgency,” Mith told the young soldier. The soldier relaxes picking up the fish he disregarded.

“I guess I’m a bit nervous, it’s my first time fighting under the Caesarean’s main troops as Centurian, my first battle as such and it’s against the great City of Pyramids, such luck,” Darius told his general charismatically, leaning in closer speaking secretively “between me and you are we fighting in this Civil War because of Julian’s girlfriend? That’s the rumor going around,” Mith chuckles, “war over beauty, it wouldn’t be the first,” Darius whispered to his general.

“Don’t believe everything you hear young soldier, to be deceived is to be a fool,” Mith told Darius. The cabin is spry as time grows closer to the feast, “our great Republic is built off principle, we need the alliance with the people of The Pyramids, they possess greater knowledge than our homeland Pergum,” Mith continued to tell Darius. The drinks the soldiers beg for start to arrive on platters inspiring cheers so avid it could be mistaken for the coliseum. “The reasoning doesn’t matter in total honesty, what matters is we have been called by the Republic’s leader himself and we will show up no matter the cause,” Mith told Darius.

Mith, lit with excitement, grabs a wooden cup brimmed with an elixir made from the grapevines along the seashore. He holds the cup to the sky with all his might catching the attention of every troop, they react in unison, mimicking Mith. “I, your General, Mith of Pergum will lead us through the darkness of battle! We move forward with faith and honor towards the God of War, Mars. Blood will be spilled and lives will be lost in the honor of the sacred Republic, protecting what we hold dear to our heart. As your General I shall not abandon you, lie to you, besiege myself, nor play the role of Achilles but more so Aeneas,” his troop’s breakout in laughter. The general has taken the characters of two works of ancient literature and compared himself to a Caesarean counterpart, Aeneas* (Virgil. *The Aeneid* of Virgil. Toronto; New York :Bantam Books, 1981). “in twelve days we will reach The Origin of Lands to back up Julian and his troops taking down Tommy XIII of the Ancient Pyramids, stopping their civil dispute and initiating peace in the land and gain a faithful ally. I ask you to protect your brother and put your life on the line as will I. Bring forth all the might given to us by Jupiter and we will win! It won’t be easy, but we will prevail because no journey is worth walking unless history can be made!” Mith finishes his speech, and the soldiers break into cheers, toasting their drinks on account of their Generals’ words.

“Let the final feast begin!” Mith screamed. The legion is jovial in its celebration similarly to pirates, enjoying the peace they understand fades with every sun

that rises. Mith through all of the chaos reaches into his kilt pocket minding the letter he had finished writing before his glorious speech. The festivities continue with the soldiers cheering, drinking, singing, and writing letters. The legion then gathers around the table to feast together eating the main course like animals. They indulge in the finest meats, fish, and fruits the Seas of Seas have to offer, drinking a recently fermented wine from the renowned grapevines allocated to the Sea.

The sun has fallen from the sky replaced by its illustrious counterpart, the moon. The rain ceases and snow subtly begins to fall, surprising the army because of the unusual climate change associated with the forest. The army heads outside ecstatic setting fires that illuminate the night and burn with optimism during this brief pause of the winter storm.

While the legion of soldiers enjoys harmony, food, and drinks, Mith walks up to Darius and a group of soldiers who relish the moment unapologetically, feasting and guzzling down wine. Mith has a letter in his hand protected by a purple leather envelope in the shape of a scroll. "That's a purple envelope, made of an ox. when'd you get so important, General? That's for someone like King Attilin, or Virgil," one soldier asked the General.

"This is an urgent message that needs to head to the Kingdom of Pontus," Mith told Darius, blatantly ignoring the other soldier's question. "It's a message I need you guys to deliver to the nearest Caesarean province," Mith ordered the soldiers with little vitality though as rigid as an orator. He stands above the four as they sit on the ground, the ignited fire beacons the bottom half of his face. The general seems stronger than a mountain and more menacing than a trojan.

"You're having it hand-delivered? It must be for your brother Pharny, are you trying to get him to retreat his forces?" Darius asked the General.

"At the moment, I have no desire to slow down Pharny. Once this battle concludes I have no doubt the republic will conquer him," Mith told Darius staring at the stars somberly. "My brother won't be allowed to roam disparaging the republic for long, he and my father have done enough," The warriors who sit with Darius look at each other ingeniously, lost in this conversation between two superiors.

A soldier leans into the other soldier and begins to speak discreetly, shielding his words with his hand. "You think he might have had a little too much to drink?" The soldier asked another soldier privately.

So who is it for? Distant relative?" Darius asked.

“It’s for my legacy,” Mith told the soldiers, “first thing sunrise you guys take this out and have it delivered, it must be delivered before we reach The Origin of Lands”. Mith briefed the soldiers handing Darius the letter and heading back towards his tent, he no is no longer convivial, he has become attentive not looking to do any unnecessary talking and rejecting redundant movements. “Darius you’re responsible for this, watch out for Boso and Pontus troops as well, you know the situation unfolding,” Mith told Darius before he left his sight.

“He’s ready for war eh?” a soldier pungently asked.

“The purple envelope must have gone to his head, he thinks he’s the King?” another soldier said.

“He couldn’t even tell us who it’s for, you thinking what I’m thinking?” the soldier from before asked. The soldier smiles “General Mith, must have been shot in the bum by Cupid,” the soldier said bursting into hysterical laughter.

A soldier amongst the group sits finishing a mug of wine and the scraps of meat on a hog leg. “It’s still plenty of food and drinks why’d he choose us?” the soldier asked, letting a rumbling belch out impetuously after. “Does he not see we’re eating?” The soldier asked after his thunderous burp.

“You should probably slow down. That’s gotta be your twelfth plate,” a soldier told the soldier who feasts.

“No way we won’t eat like this until we group with Julian, and even then-” the soldier takes a bite and a gulp of his wine “Who knows so we got to eat up man.”

“If you eat up all the meat, what’re we going to use as a sacrifice to the gods?” Darius asked to humor the soldiers.

The four soldiers sit at the fire finishing their drinks and food while every other soldier sits serene and ignorant of these soldiers’ tasks. “He’s the General, he has a lot of things to worry about besides smiling and drinking, we’ve got it easy compared to him, think about it we go to battle in twelve suns so he probably has a lot on his mind,” Darius told the soldiers. He grabs the letter entrusted to the four soldiers “his legacy?” Darius mused. He looks at the receiver of this letter and sees the name Mith Megas.

“Fine!” Darius said aloud. “Let’s go guys we’re going to deliver this now,” Darius

said standing up and walking towards the horses.

“What!?! We just got done with the feast and it’s dark,” A soldier complained. Darius continues to walk ignoring the bantering soldier.

“He said we can wait till the sun breaks, let’s rest while we can,” another soldier added.

“Rest comes deserved, our General gave us an order and you all see the envelope, meaning this letter is important and has to be delivered urgently, you Tiros might even gain some rank,” Darius told the soldiers who got up and succeeded him to the horses.

“This is what we get partying with a Centurion,”

“I bet you won’t be saying that in the field,” Darius said chuckling as he straddled onto the top of his horse with the three other soldiers seconding his actions. “Easier said than done,” Darius mused.

“I guess you didn’t move this far up the ranks for nothing, he’s a bum kisser,” a soldier teased, stabilizing himself to his horse. Darius chuckles at the banter.

“For you three to be newbies you sure fit right in,” Darius told the four soldiers galloping his horse, “Off we go!” Darius directed riding off to the Kingdom of Pontus. The three other soldiers devotedly follow him.

Mith lays down on a bed made of leaves and hay; he sits outside under the stars, the fires surrounding him burn reflecting an orange glare onto the inches of snow that accumulated through the night. “Great Jupiter and Great Saturn be kind to us as we leave for war, we honor Mars and ask that he stays with us. This is war, so I understand not many of us will make it, so I ask that Pluto guide my people to the afterlife and I ask to all of the Gods, that I am provided with the strength of Aeneas and the divinity you all possess to lead my men to victory. For the Republic and my rightful land Boso,” Mith meditated, praying to the gods. “With the strength provided by you all, I will succeed, for, Mith Megas, because I must pass on my lineage and culture, I will not die until the throne of Boso is mine and I restore my family’s name. I promise.” Mith began nodding off into a slumber.

Twelve Days Later, Present

Miths legion of twenty-five hundred men march along the coast of the Sea of Seas entering The Land of The Ancient Pyramids. The Land of Pyramids is in the

Origin of Lands, a Mainland surrounded by many Oceanias and Seas. They march towards a city out yonder, parading forward still acres out from the town as Mith leads the legion.

Mith wears chainmail armor over his red tunic, with an all-black wool cloak along his back wearing a silver helmet decorated with a red leather Mohawk down the middle. He stands out from every soldier in the legion with the persona of a majestic figure. He carries a three-foot grapevine in his right hand riding in a carriage pulled by three black horses. “There it is the Guardian City of The Land of Pyramids,” Darius told Mith riding next to him mounted on a horse. Ten other soldiers of Darius’ stature ride beside him and the General creating an even split from the point of Mith, with Darius being the first soldier on his right. Darius and these ten soldiers wear scale armor, unlike the rest of the legion who wear bronze plating in the front and back of their bodies. This armor is reminiscent to the skin of the animals Neptune controls, colored a grey silver with the scales being meshed together. Their helmets possess a cross made of horsehair dyed red to distinguish them from the regular militia. The regular militia marches on foot with a scarce amount of riding horses and carriages.

“Seems they were expecting us,” Mith said looking through a one-eyed telescope capturing the land as they prepare for war. The city is built off the coast home to an army base. “Get ready for battle men! We will strike at Dawn!” Mith told the legion. They continue to march while the mountains and the forest offer camouflage. “Once we get through our first obstacle it’s straight to Julian!” Mith announced to the legion. “He should be expecting us as well,” Mith mused while pulling a rolled parchment from his leather kilt. Looking at the parchment Mith reads, *To Mith of Pergum* from Julian, written on the opened letter. “It seems he got my update from the Serious Kingdom and plans to meet us by The Land of Pyramids Great River.”

“Sir?” Darius asked the General interrupting Mith’s thought.

“Yes, Darius.”

“If you don’t mind me asking, who is Mith Megas, and how’d a nobleman like you get a purple envelope? An envelope entitled to the republic for war updates or important figures?” Darius asked. Mith stops his carriage during his talk with Darius, he sits his staff in the carriage and hops onto a gorgeously kept stallion that is the color mercury, a stud fit for a king. The carriage Mith once rode is now controlled by two soldiers within the legion.

The army continues to march in rows of ten separating by Century– how the

Legion breaks up to fight. These Centuries are controlled by Centurions the top soldiers beside the three generals and Mith himself. Each Century consists of eighty men.

“I do mind,” Mith told Darius. The Legion breaks apart into formation. Mith chuckles at the expression of Darius who is unsatisfied with the answer. Darius’ Century breaks off with Mith following him. “You might not know it, but this battle is bigger than helping Julian’s mistress, you’ll see once victory is claimed the Caesarian Republic will evolve with this alliance and they will recognize Julian’s reinforcements, led by Mith of Pergum, as the ones who pushed the change,” Mith said. The legion completely separates and moves into attack formations. Mith takes off towards his team of three during this battle, “We fight for honor and I will make sure we are rewarded, by the way, the letter should be arriving soon. I just want to say, thanks,” Mith graciously told Darius riding off. He draws his sword from the left side of his body with his right hand. “Remember what I told you, Darius,” Mith trots into the distance mounted on his horse. The words the general just spoke evoke compassion and confidence in Darius, who gallops opposite of his general.

“We won’t fail, Men! Are you ready to battle!” Darius passionately screamed to his Century. They ride off at full speed into the forest, drawing their swords and adding a lust for blood.

In the rough mountains of The Pontus Kingdom, two soldiers with similar armor to the soldiers in Mith’s regular militia ride on horses, the epitome of darkness, through a village for laborers. They pull a carriage of mail that consists of only letters rolled into purple envelopes made of animal hide. Snow falls gracefully throughout the village landing on inches of snow from days before. The village shines with an ember, provided by torches placed thoughtfully merging with the moonlight. The area is desolate with everyone returning to their domiciles after their domesticated labors. The soldiers arrive at a wooden home built similar to all the other residencies strictly made from oak. It is large enough for four people it has three dogs playing in the front, and two torches mounted at the door. The soldiers rest their horses in front of the home’s small patch of land currently covered by snow, feet away from the residence. The soldiers proceed towards the entrance. They reach the door and knock with a ferocity strong enough that snow falls from the roof to the ground. The dogs begin to bark but the barwire restricts their movements. A woman with dark black hair and sea-blue eyes peeks out the window opening the door for the soldiers immediately after catching a glimpse of the uniform.

“Can I help you fine men?” the woman asked the soldiers. She wears the linen

of a field worker. A young man around the age of fifteen pops his head around the corner in very similar attire. His hair is bushy and as dark as the woman's; with dark pupils blacker than a kettle. He has the body of a laborer with the presence of puberty. The soldiers look at the boy with a glaring eye of superiority adding hostility to a simple situation.

“An urgent letter from General Mith of Pegum, for Mith Megas!” the soldier said, handing the letter to the boy bypassing the woman in front of him. The soldiers return to their carriage galloping their horses and riding off. The young man and his mother look in awe at the purple leather surrounding the letter.

“Red, Fire, and Boom come on in boys,” Mith Megas said towards the hounds running through the snow. Mith Megas releases them from the barwire entrapment. The dogs run into the home and Mith Megas shuts the door. “A letter from Father, a Purple Leather Envelope, Father is just a regular general how can he send something of this urgency to me?” Mith Megas asked. He holds the letter anxiously “Could he be—” Mith Megas is cut off by his agitated mother.

“Your father is one of the most brilliant and strongest soldiers that descended from this great land Pontus, no matter his superficial identity, we deserve these luxuries instead of this wretched village but he was cursed at birth as the product of infidelity,” the boy's mother tells him vivaciously, clenching her fist.

The boy sits at a study, an empty table meant for reading and learning, and a fireplace is lit before it due to the winter season. Mith Megas opens the envelope and pulls the letter out, able to see the parchment wrapped with a formal leather bow. Mith Megas mother paces back and forth more irritated with each step. She lashes out, “How dare your father leave us in his father's lost land while he enjoys the fruits of his youth while I, unwedded, am left with shame and a small allowance he sends for mostly you, randomly sending words of love directed at you as well, has he forgotten the maiden that held his pride?” The woman says spilling her combusted feelings. “my youth is still present, right? You're getting older and once you start your studies I won't have to be such a laborer anymore stained by my product of lost love. I'll finally be able to marry a king, I'll finally be able to rest, how about that Mith of Pergum,” Mith Megas' mother exclaimed, completing her rant preluded by years of outbursts related to Mith of Pergum. Mith Megas pulls the bow and unrolls the letter, “Let's see what he wrote,” Mith Megas says ignoring his mother's feelings.

To Mith Megas,

Hello, my lad, I hope everything is well with you. I write to you with what I can only consider great news my son. I have been offered the kingdom of the first great

dynasty to Hellen's culture. The kingdom your grandfather Mith VI would flee to and control when he foolishly challenged our great Caesarian Republic. Yes, my son, The Boso Kingdom. The great general Julian has entrusted me to make the land great once again, as I do not blame him for I am a descendant of the Gods. One who possesses the battle strength of Heracles and the wits of Homer. A man fit for duty.

Ecstatic you and Athenari might be, this title will not come without the spill of blood and dangling of my life. Just like any great King, one must be ready to put his life in harm's way against any threat or man that challenges him and his people. I am currently off to battle with the troops entrusted to Julian, our leader of the Casaerian republic and will assist him in the civil dispute amongst the Land of Pyramids. The general has met his match in Tommy XIII, the man who killed Julians rival hours before he arrived; he is currently enclosed against the land's renowned river. The battle is rumored to be incited by a blood-rushing love, with Julian and a beautiful mistress and rightful heir to the throne. I can't blame him for I might do the same only if she resembled Helen yet we still march with no regrets as a soldier should. Though love may be the reason, all is fair, with the possibility of a great alliance with the Seventh Thea, once we claim the battle.

I would lie and say I have no fears, but my son, I cannot and will not lie to you. The reality of this battle is I might perish before I get to touch the throne. With my mind wandering rampant sometimes, I can only trust in Mars and my training trying to keep my mind as clear as possible but sometimes it's only rum that can calm me. The throne is something I deserve exiled away by my father because of his love affair. The thought of coming so close and failing comes and goes. As the General, I shall not waiver because many wives are counting on me to bring these men home no matter our circumstances. It breaks my spirits to know we all won't make it back but it is the reality of war, though we fight for advancement, protection, and love it should not be waged barrenly. A soldier's life is not sacrificial because we have values, War is when men have come together to risk their lives under one nation my son, it is something a soldier honors living his life and risking his life for the advancement of his people, being all he can be. With the lives, we lose we fight stronger so that they live on with meaning. As I would hope the same for me when the day comes.

That is why I must conquer my fears, because fear is the feeling you get before, you reach your full potential. The full potential of a soldier can only be met when he faces those fears on the battlefield and through that pressure one day may rise a King.

Victory is what I seek and it is what I dream. Though this battle might be for euphoric pleasures I have greater reasoning for being here. From my father abandoning me as a bastard, his unholy wars and treachery against the Caesarians, family feuds with my father killing my brother and my brother Pharny killing my father. Now Pharny and Asher, his son in law, are abusing The Kingdom of Boso and putting them in harm's way in efforts against Julian. Beware of your uncle son,

as he is rumored to be roaming through Pontus in efforts of taking the kingdom from the republic. He continues to act as a fool not even acknowledging me when I reach out, trying to be a wolf amongst the sheep but forgets the herd has a Shepard. I Mith of Pergum am here to cleanse our family bloodline and restore honor to our family, as we are descendants of the Gods, Mith Megas. I will not die until the throne is yours, my first and only son, with the fear of death and the wisdom of battle just making me a better soldier, one fit to be the king and raise a king. The Kingdom of Boso will be ours upon victory as the demise of Pharny.

While I continue my honesty, I must say there lies selfishness in my heart, though do not mistake it for greed. Being ostracized from my family pushed away from my birthplace, the Kingdom you reside in, and my people, I see that now is my chance to gain something I lost, I now have something to fight for more than just the Republic. Triumph in this battle means my dreams become a reality. I will be able to form a kingdom that will live beyond me. I will belittle my father's and brother's legacy from the foolish Mithridatic Dynasty cleansing our name in history.

I have people in Pergum who will assist me in battle and follow me the second after the coronation has halted. I have not told any of my brothers at arms, but under my command, they shall follow. You and Athenari are the first to hear. As I write I must relinquish another of my fears, betrayal from King Atillin. Another reason I will wait to tell the army which rightfully belongs to the King of Pergum. Though once this battle is over they will be under my command relinquished to me by the republic. My issues with trust don't arise from across the seas, as a King, you understand that treachery is written on the parchment.

I don't write this letter for you to sweat, as this will not be my first sight of manslaughter, and I do not plan to see Pluto, but for you to understand your history and to understand the trials of a soldier. Understanding the mind of a soldier will prepare A future King like yourself, someone who will become a general in my legion. Once this battle is over, I'll head to Boso with Julian and take down my brother and his son-in-law. With the kingdom mine, you and Athenari, blessed by our brief amour to hold the fruit I plant, will live like royalty with your names forever engraved under my new dynasty, The Mithology Dynasty. I urge you to study son and train for once I get back I will have you join us in battle. The life of a soldier is a pleasurable one filled with brotherhood, wisdom, and spirituality, not forgetting the women infatuated by uniforms, but you must be careful passion may just get you trapped. Though that is something we can spill about in person.

I will show you the greatest Library I've witnessed, coming from my land, something you shall inherit as well, so that you may be a wise man indeed. The knowledge a king has will separate him from the lot, so once again I urge you to continue your studies and training until we meet again. Farewell, my lad, I will see you at the Kingdom of Boso, to my future Prince, from your future King, King Mith of Boso.

Mith and his army are besieging the palace of the city they have just conquered and head to Julian. It is hours after midday while they ride through a field of lilies heading for the desert. The city burns along the horizon behind the legion, Mith is covered in blood and scars leading the way. Every soldier in the legion marches viciously, especially Mith, with his sword in one hand and his other guiding his horse, projecting a scream that could reach the heavens. While he rides he honors his soldiers lost cutting black pieces of wool from his cloak, burning the wool, and dropping it as he rides off to continue the battle.

Far off behind the legion, Darius is seen holding two soldiers on his horse, they are covered in soot and ash as blood and scars dominate their bodies. Darius' scale armor is ripped badly on his ribs only with minor wounds compared to his two friends who succumbed to the harshness of battle. They appear to be the Tronies who assisted him with delivering Mith's letter. Darius gallops his horse to move full speed and catch up to the legion. Mith notices Darius and the two soldiers on his horse. Darius checks on the soldiers who seem to be alive and attentive but suffer major wounds. Mith grins continuing to lead the legion on a horse, while most of the militia move on carriages and foot.

Two Days Ago

"I come from an indentured family enslaved to a senator of the republic, gaining my freedom from battle sir," Darius tells Mith. The two sit in Mith's chariot.

"I see so you also fight for more than just the republic," Mith stated. They continued to ride off towards the battle. Still, two days away from The Guardian City they traveled reservedly through the mountains in the Kingdom of Serious. It was nighttime, the stars and moon coexisted lighting the skies while they walked through the pause of a rainstorm. Stomping through a muddy terrain.

"Sure you can say that," Darius said. He took off his helmet and admired the centurion cross made from horsehair. "I have to continue to gain strength so that I can pay my family's debt,"

"Well use that to conquer your fears, your promotion to Centurion was not the luck of Mercury, but from the way you harness the strength provided to you by the almighty," Mith said. Darius grips his helmet enlivened. "You won't be able to get your family if you die young soldier, though our chances to do so increase in two days, it will continue to increase if you let fear control you," Mith said. He handed him a shred of black hog skin. "You are strong kid, believe that, and if doubt ever arises burn a piece of this skin to regain your trust in Mars," Darius

analyzed the skin with a method. "Remember the goal of a soldier is to reach his full potential, something only a soldier himself knows," He proceeded to leave the carriage "But if I have anything to say you're on the rise," Mith concluded.

Darius walled to his horse. "You must have studied some of Julian's writings, Thanks General," Darius told Mith.

"It's just wisdom something you gain with time," Mith replied.

The End.

