

## Gladiator Script

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- Sir.
- General.

Sir.

Lean and hungry.

- Still nothing?
- Not a sign.

- How long has he been gone?
- Nearly two hours.

- Will they fight, sir?
- We shall know soon enough.

Soldier, I ordered you  
to move those catapults forward.

- They're out of range.
- Range is good.

- The danger to the cavalry--
- Is acceptable. Agreed?

They say no.

Steady! Steady!

People should know  
when they're conquered.

Would you, Quintus?

Would I?

- Strength and honor.
- Strength and honor.

At my signal,  
unleash hell.

Load the catapults.

Infantry form up for advance.

- Archers ready.
- Archers!

- Nock!
- Nock!

Fratres!

Maximus!

Three weeks from now,  
I will be harvesting my crops.

Imagine where you will be,

and it will be so.

Hold the line!  
Stay with me!

If you find yourself alone...

riding in green fields  
with the sun on your face...

do not be troubled.

For you are in Elysium,  
and you're already dead!

Brothers...

what we do in life...

echoes in eternity.

Pull!

Pull! Pull!

Catapults ready, sir!

Archers, ignite!

- Ignite!  
- Ignite!

Archers, draw!

Loose!

Loose!

All right, men, ready!

Hold the line!

Draw! Loose!

Loose! Loose!

Reload!

Hold the line!

Draw! Loose!

Stay with me!

Stay with me!

Roma victor!

Roma victor!

Do you think  
he's really dying?

He's been dying  
for ten years.

If he weren't really dying,  
he wouldn't have sent for us.

Maybe he just misses us.

And the senators?  
He wouldn't have summoned them if--

Peace, Commodus.

After two weeks on the road, your  
incessant scheming is hurting my head.

He's made his decision.

He's going to announce it.

He will name me.

The first thing I shall do...

when--

is honor him with games  
worthy of His Majesty.

For now, the first thing  
I shall do is have a hot bath.

Your Highness?

We seem to be  
almost there, sir.

- Sire.
- Where's the emperor?

He's at the front, sire.  
They've been gone for        days.

The wounded are  
still coming in.

My horse.

My lord.

Kiss?

You have proved your valor  
yet again, Maximus.

Let us hope  
for the last time.

There's no one  
left to fight, sire.

There is always  
someone left to fight.

How can I reward  
Rome's greatest general?

Let me go home.

Ah. Home.

They honor you, Caesar.

It's for you, Maximus.  
They honor you.

Have I missed it?  
Have I missed the battle?

You have missed the war.

Father, congratulations.

I shall sacrifice a hundred bulls  
to honor your triumph.

Save the bulls.

Honor Maximus.  
He won the battle.

- General.  
- Highness.

Rome salutes you,  
and I embrace you as a brother.

It has been too long,  
my old friend.

- Highness.
- Here, Father.

Take my arm.

I think it is time  
for me to leave.

So much for  
the glory of Rome.

Magnificent battle.

- General.
- Still alive?

- Still alive.
- The gods must have a sense of humor.

- The gods must love you.

- Valerius.

Back to barracks, General?  
Or to Rome?

Home. My wife,  
the son, the harvest.

Maximus the farmer.  
I still have difficulty imagining that.

You know, dirt cleans off a lot  
easier than blood, Quintus.

- Here he is.  
- Highness.

Senator Gaius, Senator Falco.

Beware of Gaius. He'll pour  
a honeyed potion in your ear...

and you'll wake up one day and all  
you'll say is, ''Republic, republic.''

Well, why not?  
Rome was founded as a republic.

Yes, and in a republic  
the senate has the power.

But Senator Gaius isn't  
influenced by that, of course.

Where do you stand, General?  
Emperor or senate?

A soldier has the advantage  
of being able...

to look his enemy  
in the eye, Senator.

Well, with an army behind you,

you could be extremely political.

I warned you.  
Now I shall save you. Senators.

Maximus.

I'm going to need  
good men like you.

How may I be of service,  
Highness?

You're a man who knows  
what it is to command.

You give your orders, the orders  
are obeyed and the battle is won.

But these senators scheme and squabble  
and flatter and deceive.

Maximus, we must save Rome  
from the politicians, my friend.

Can I count on you  
when the time comes?

Highness, when your father releases me,  
I intend to return home.

Home? Well, no one's earned it more.

Don't get too comfortable.  
I may call on you before long.

Lucilla's here.  
Did you know?

She's not forgotten you.

And now you're the great man.

If only you  
had been born a man.

What a caesar  
you would have made!

Father.

You would have been strong.

I wonder,  
would you have been just?

I would have been  
what you taught me to be.

How was your journey?

Long. Uncomfortable.  
Why have I come?

I need your help.  
With your brother.

Of course.

He loves you.  
He always has.

And...

he will need you now  
more than ever.

Enough of politics.

Let us pretend that  
you are a loving daughter...

and I am a good father.

This is a pleasant fiction,  
isn't it?

Good morning.

I need three more horses.

Two! Three!

Four!

One! Two!

You sent for me, Caesar?

- Caesar?
- Tell me again, Maximus.

Why are we here?

For the glory of the empire, sire.

Ah, yes.

Ah, yes, I remember.

Do you see that map, Maximus?

That is the world  
which I created.

For        years...

I have conquered, spilt blood,  
expanded the empire.

Since I became caesar,  
I've known four years without war.

Four years of peace in        .

And for what?

I brought the sword.  
Nothing more.

Caesar, your life--

Please.  
Please don't call me that.

Come. Please.

Come sit.

Let us talk together now--

very simply-- as men.

Maximus, talk.

Five thousand of my men are  
out there in the freezing mud.

Three thousand of them  
are bloodied and cleaved.

Two thousand will never  
leave this place.

I will not believe that they  
fought and died for nothing.

And what would you believe?

They fought for you and for Rome.

And what is Rome?

I've seen much

of the rest of the world.

It is brutal and cruel and dark.  
Rome is the light.

Yet you have  
never been there.

You have not seen  
what it has become.

I am dying, Maximus.

When a man sees his end...

he wants to know there was  
some purpose to his life.

How will the world speak my name  
in years to come?

Will I be known  
as the philosopher?

The warrior?

The tyrant?

Or will I be the emperor who  
gave Rome back her true self?

There was once a dream  
that was Rome.

You could only whisper it.

Anything more than a whisper  
and it would vanish...

it was so fragile.

And I fear that it will not

survive the winter.

Maximus...

let us whisper now...

together, you and I.

You have a son.

Tell me about your home.

My house is in the hills  
above Trujillo. A very simple place.

Pink stones  
that warm in the sun.

A kitchen garden that  
smells of herbs in the day...

jasmine in the evening.

Through the gate  
is a giant poplar.

Figs, apples, pears.

The soil, Marcus-- black.  
Black like my wife's hair.

Grapes on the south slopes,  
olives on the north.

Wild ponies play near my house.  
They tease my son. He wants to be one.

- Remember the last time you were home?  
- Two years,            days and this morning.

I envy you, Maximus.

It's a good home.  
Worth fighting for.

There is one more duty...

that I ask of you  
before you go home.

What would you  
have me do, Caesar?

I want you to become  
the protector of Rome after I die.

I will empower you  
to one end alone--

to give power back  
to the people of Rome...

and end the corruption

that has crippled it.

Will you accept this great honor  
that I have offered you?

With all my heart, no.

Maximus...

that is why it must be you.

But surely a prefect,  
a senator...

somebody who knows the city,  
who understands her politics.

But you have not been  
corrupted by her politics.

- And Commodus?

- Commodus is not a moral man.

You have known that  
since you were young.

Commodus cannot rule.

He must not rule.

You are the son  
that I should have had.

Commodus will accept my decision.

He knows that you command  
the loyalty of the army.

I need some time, sire.

Yes.

By sunset,  
I hope you will have agreed.

Now embrace me as my son.

And bring an old man  
another blanket.

- My father favors you now.
- My lady.

- It was not always so.
- Many things change.

Many things.  
Not everything.

Maximus, stop.

Let me see your face.

- You seem upset.
- I lost many men.

What did my father  
want with you?

To wish me well  
before I leave for home.

You're lying.

I could always tell when you were lying  
because you were never any good at it.

- I never acquired your comfort with it.
- True.

But then you never had to.

Life is more simple  
for a soldier.

Or do you think me heartless?

I think you have  
a talent for survival.

Maximus, stop.

Is it really so terrible  
seeing me again?

No. I'm tired from battle.

It hurts you to see  
my father so fragile.

Commodus expects that my father will  
announce his succession within days.

Will you serve my brother  
as you served his father?

I will always serve Rome.

Do you know...

I still remember you  
in my prayers.

Oh, yes. I pray.

I was sad to hear  
of your husband's death. I mourned him.

- Thank you.
- And I hear you have a son.

Yes. Lucius.

He'll be nearly  
eight years old.

My son is also nearly eight.

I thank you for your prayers.

Ancestors, I ask  
for your guidance.

Blessed Mother, come to me  
with the gods' desire for my future.

Blessed Father, watch over  
my wife and son with a ready sword.

Whisper to them I live  
only to hold them again.

Ancestors, I honor you...

and will try to live with  
the dignity you have taught me.

Cicero.

Sir.

You don't find it hard  
to do your duty?

Sometimes I do  
what I want to do.

The rest of the time  
I do what I have to.

We may not be able  
to go home after all.

Are you ready to do  
your duty for Rome?

Yes, Father.

You will not be emperor.

Which wiser, older man  
is to take my place?

My powers  
will pass to Maximus...

to hold in trust...

until the senate  
is ready to rule once more.

Rome is to be  
a republic again.

- Maximus.
- Yes.

My decision disappoints you?

You wrote to me once...

listing the four chief virtues.

Wisdom, justice...

fortitude...

and temperance.

As I read the list,  
I knew I had none of them.

But I have other virtues, Father.

Ambition.

That can be a virtue  
when it drives us to excel.

Resourcefulness.  
Courage.

Perhaps not on  
the battlefield, but...

there are many forms of courage.

Devotion to my family...

and to you.

But none of my virtues  
were on your list.

Even then it was as if  
you didn't want me for your son.

You go too far.

I searched the faces  
of the gods...

for ways to please you,  
to make you proud.

One kind word...

one full hug...

where you pressed me  
to your chest and held me tight...

would have been like the sun  
on my heart for a thousand years.

What is it in me  
you hate so much?

All I've ever wanted...

was to live up to you, Caesar.

- Father.
- Commodus.

Your fault as a son...

is my failure as a father.

Come.

Father.

I would butcher  
the whole world...

if you would only have loved me!

Maximus, the emperor needs you.

It's urgent.

Lament with me, brother.  
Our great father is dead.

How did he die?

The surgeons say  
there was no pain.

His breath gave out as he slept.

Father.

Your emperor asks  
for your loyalty, Maximus.

Take my hand.

I only offer it once.

Quintus.

Hail, Caesar.

I must talk to the senators.  
I need their counsel.

Wake Gaius and Falco.

- Sword.
- Sword.

Maximus, please be careful.  
That was not prudent.

Prudent?  
The emperor has been slain.

The emperor died  
of natural causes.

- Why are you armed, Quintus?
- Guards!

Please don't fight, Maximus.

I'm sorry.  
Caesar has spoken.

Ride until dawn...

and then execute him.

Quintus, look at me.  
Look at me!

Promise me that you will  
look after my family.

Your family will meet you  
in the afterlife.

Kneel.

Blessed Father,  
watch over my wife and son.

Whisper to them that I live  
only to hold them again.

At least give me a clean death.

A soldier's death.

The frost, sometimes  
it makes the blade stick.

Praetorian!

- Remember the last time you were home?
- Two years,            days and this morning.

Blessed Father, watch over  
my wife and son with a ready sword.

Whisper to them I live only to hold them  
again, for all else is dust and air.

Whisper to them  
I live only to hold them again...

for all else is dust and air.

Papa! Papa!

Don't die.

You'll meet them again.

Not yet.

No. They will clean it.

Wait and see.

Don't die.

They'll feed you to the lions.

They are worth more than we are.

Better now?

Clean. You see?

Proximo!

My old friend.

Every day is a great day  
when you are here...

but today  
is your most fortunate day.

Those giraffes you sold me...

they won't mate.

They just walk around eating...

and not mating.

You sold me...

queer giraffes.

- I want my money back.
- Not a chance.

I do special price for you.

On what?

Have you seen my new stock?  
Come and see them.

Do any of them fight?  
I've got a match coming up.

Some are good for fighting,  
others for dying.

You need both, I think.

Get up.

What's your trade?

I was a hunter.

I bought him from a salt mine

in Carthage.

Sit down.

Mark of the legion.

- Deserter.
- Maybe so. But who cares?

- He's a Spaniard.
- I'll take six.

- For one thousand.
- One thousand?

The Numidian alone is worth .

These slaves are rotten.

It all adds to the flavor.

Wait, wait. Wait!

I can negotiate.

I'll give you ...

and four for the beasts.

That's for an old friend.

Come on! How long does it take  
to get into my own house?

I am Proximo.

I shall be closer to you  
for the next few days...

which will be the last

of your miserable lives...

than that bitch of a mother that  
brought you screaming into this world.

I did not pay good money for you  
for your company.

I paid it so that I could  
profit from your death.

And as your mother was there  
at your beginning...

so I shall be there at your end.

And when you die,  
and die you shall...

your transition  
shall be to the sound of--

Gladiators...

I salute you.

- Red.
- Red.

Yellow.

Yellow.

Good.

- Red.
- Red.

Spaniard.

That's enough for the moment!

His time will come.

Next.

Spaniard.

Why don't you fight?

We all have to fight.

Is that the sign of your gods?

Will that not anger them?

The gods favor you.

Red is the gods' color.

You will need their help today.

Some of you are thinking  
you won't fight...

and some that you can't fight.

They all say that...

until they're out there.

Listen.

Kill! Kill! Kill!

Thrust this  
into another man's flesh.

They will applaud  
and love you for that.

And you--

you may begin to love them...

for that.

Ultimately...

we're all dead men.

Sadly, we cannot choose how, but...

we can decide  
how we meet that end...

in order  
that we are remembered...

as men.

On the left,  
draw your shields!

On the right,  
draw your swords!

Kill! Kill! Kill!

Pair them up--  
red with yellow.

Next!

Move it!

- Go away!
- You'll never rule us, Commodus!

He enters Rome like a conquering hero.

But what has he conquered?

Give him time, Gracchus.  
He's young.

I think he could do very well.

For Rome, or for you?

Go to your mother, Lucius.  
It's what she'd like.

Lucius!

Mother!

Hail, Caesar.

Senators.

Rome greets her new emperor.

Your loyal subjects  
bid you welcome, Highness.

Thank you, Falco.

And for the loyal subjects,  
I trust they weren't too expensive.

- Caesar.
- Gracchus.

All Rome rejoices  
in your return, Caesar.

There are many matters  
that require your attention.

To order, please!  
To order!

For your guidance, Caesar, the senate  
has prepared a series of protocols...

to begin addressing  
the many problems in the city...

beginning with basic sanitation  
for the Greek quarter...

to combat the plague  
which is already springing up there.

So, if Caesar--

Don't you see, Gracchus?

That's the very problem,  
isn't it?

My father spent  
all his time at study...

at books of learning  
and philosophy.

He spent his twilight hours  
reading scrolls from the senate.

And all the while  
the people were forgotten.

But the senate  
is the people, sire...

chosen from among the people  
to speak for the people.

I doubt many of the people  
eat so well as you do, Gracchus...

or have such  
splendid mistresses, Gaius.

I think I understand my own people.

Then perhaps Caesar will be so good  
as to teach us...

out of his own extensive experience.

I call it love.

I am their father.

The people are my children.

I shall hold them to my bosom  
and embrace them tightly.

Have you ever embraced someone  
dying of plague, sire?

No, but if you interrupt me again...

I assure you that you shall.

Senator,  
my brother is very tired.

Leave your list with me.

Caesar shall do  
all that Rome requires.

My lady, as always...

your lightest touch  
commands obedience.

Who are they to lecture me?

Commodus, the senate has its uses.

What uses?  
All they do is talk.

It should be just...

you and me...

and Rome.

Don't even think it.

There's always been a senate.

Rome has changed.

It takes an emperor  
to rule an empire.

Of course,  
but leave the people their--

Illusions?

Traditions.

My father's war  
against the barbarians--

He said it himself: it achieved nothing.  
But the people loved him.

The people always love victories.

Why?

They didn't see the battles.

What do they care about Germania?

They care about  
the greatness of Rome.

The greatness of Rome.

Well, what is that?

It's an idea--

greatness.

Greatness is a vision.

Exactly. A vision.

Do you not see, Lucilla?

I will give the people a vision of Rome,  
and they will love me for it.

And they'll soon forget the tedious  
sermonizing of a few dry old men.

I will give the people  
the greatest vision of their lives.

White and red wine  
for your drinking pleasure!

Games.

One hundred and fifty days  
of games.

He's cleverer than I thought.

Clever.

The whole of Rome  
would be laughing at him...

if they weren't so afraid  
of his praetorian.

Fear and wonder--  
a powerful combination.

You really think the people  
are going to be seduced by that?

I think he knows what Rome is.

Rome is the mob.

Conjure magic for them,  
and they'll be distracted.

Take away their freedom,  
and still they'll roar.

The beating heart of Rome...

is not the marble of the senate.

It's the sand of the Colosseum.

He'll bring them death...

and they will love him for it.

Spaniard.

Are you not entertained?

Are you not entertained?

Is this not why you are here?

Spaniard! Spaniard!

What do you want?

Girl?

Boy?

You sent for me.

Yes, I did.

You're good, Spaniard,  
but you're not that good.

You could be magnificent.

I'm required to kill, so I kill.

That is enough.

That's enough for the provinces,  
but not for Rome.

The young emperor...

has arranged  
a series of spectacles...

to commemorate his father...

Marcus Aurelius.

I find that amusing...

since it was Marcus Aurelius--

the wise,  
the all-knowing Marcus Aurelius--

that closed us down.

So, finally, after five years  
of scratching a living...

in flea-infested villages...

we're finally going back  
to where we belong--

the Colosseum.

Oh, you should see  
the Colosseum, Spaniard.

Fifty thousand Romans...

watching every movement  
of your sword...

willing you to make  
that killer blow.

The silence before you strike...

and the noise afterwards.

It rises.

It rises up like--

like a storm...

as if you were  
the thunder god himself.

You were a gladiator?

Yes, I was.

You won your freedom?

A long time ago, the emperor...

presented me with a rudis.

It's just a wooden sword.

The symbol of your freedom.

He touched me on the shoulder,  
and I was free.

You knew Marcus Aurelius?

I did not say I knew him. I said  
he touched me on the shoulder once.

You asked me what I want.

I, too, want to stand

in front of the emperor...

as you did.

Then listen to me.

Learn from me.

I wasn't the best  
because I killed quickly.

I was the best  
because the crowd loved me.

Win the crowd...

and you'll win your freedom.

I will win the crowd.

I will give them something  
they've never seen before.

So, Spaniard,  
we shall go to Rome together...

and have bloody adventures...

and the great whore  
will suckle us...

until we are fat and happy  
and can suckle no more.

And then...

when enough men have died...

perhaps you will have your freedom.

Here. Use this.

It's somewhere out there--

my country...

my home.

My wife is preparing food.

My daughters carry water  
from the river.

Will I ever see them again?

I think no.

Do you believe you'll see them again  
when you die?

I think so.

But then...

I will die soon.

They will not die for many years.

I'll have to wait.

But you would wait?

Of course.

You see...

my wife...

and my son...

are already waiting for me.

You'll meet them again.

But not yet.

Not yet, unless--

Not yet.

Not yet.

There.  
There it is.

Out.

Go! Go! Out!

Good to see you again,  
old friend.

Bring me fortune.

Have you ever seen anything  
like that before?

I didn't know men  
could build such things.

Win the crowd.

Get inside! Move!

Inside!

He sleeps so well  
because he's loved.

Come, brother. It's late.

I will make Rome  
the wonder of the ages.

That is what Gracchus and his friends  
don't understand.

All my desires  
are splitting my head to pieces.

Drink this tonic.

I think the time is almost right.

I could announce  
the dissolution of the senate...

at the celebration  
to honor our father.

Do you think I should?

Are the people ready?

I think you need your rest now.

Will you stay with me?

Still afraid of the dark,  
brother?

Still.

Always.

- Stay with me tonight.
- You know I won't.

Then kiss me.

Sleep, brother.

Come on!

Take me.

All right, that's enough.

The emperor wants battles, and I don't want to sacrifice my best fighters.

The crowd wants battles,  
so the emperor gives them battles.

- And you get the battle of Carthage.
- The massacre of Carthage.

Why don't you go down to the prison,  
round up all the beggars and thieves?

We've done that.

If you want to give away the best  
gladiators in the whole of the empire...

then I want double the rates.

You'll get your contract rates,  
or you'll get your contract canceled.

You don't like it?

Then you can crawl back down  
that shithole that you came from.

Cassius, please!  
Cassius!

Gladiator, are you the one  
they call the Spaniard?

Yes.

They said you were a giant.

They said you could crush  
a man's skull with one hand.

A man's? No.

A boy's.

- They have good horses in Spain?
- Some of the best.

This is Argento...

and this is Scarto.

They were my horses.

They were taken from me.

I like you, Spaniard.  
I shall cheer for you.

- They let you watch the games?
- My uncle says it makes me strong.

- And what does your father say?
- My father is dead.

Master Lucius, it is time.

I have to go.

Your name is Lucius?

Lucius Verus, after my father.

Lower!

Claudius!

- Yes?
- More shields!

When the emperor enters...

raise your weapons, salute him...

and then speak together.

Face the emperor...

and don't turn your back on him.

Go, and die with honor.

Hail, mighty Caesar!

Caesar! Caesar!  
Caesar! Caesar!

We who are about to die  
salute you!

On this day...

we reach back  
to hallowed antiquity...

to bring you a re-creation...

of the second fall  
of mighty Carthage!

On the barren plain of Zama...

there stood the invincible armies...

of the barbarian Hannibal.

Ferocious mercenaries  
and warriors...

from all brute nations...

bent on merciless...

destruction...

conquest.

Your emperor...

is pleased to give you...

the barbarian horde!

Anyone here been in the army?

Yes.

I served with you at Vindobona.

You can help me.

Whatever comes out of these gates...

we've got a better chance of survival  
if we work together.

Do you understand?

If we stay together, we survive.

The emperor is pleased to bring you  
the legionnaires...

of Scipio Africanus!

To the death!

Kill! Kill! Kill!

Stay close!

Come together!

Staggered columns!  
Staggered columns!

- Soon all your men will be slain.
- You don't have a chance.

Lock your shields!  
Stay as one!

Hold!

Hold!

As one!

Well done!

Hold!

Down low! Down low!

Yes!

Hagen!

This column to the chariot!  
This column stay with me!

Quickly!

- Get out there!
- Hurry!

Maximus!

Single column!  
Single column!

We win!

My history's a little hazy,  
Cassius...

but shouldn't the barbarians  
lose the battle of Carthage?

Yes, sire.

Forgive me, sire.

No, I rather enjoy surprises.

Who is he?

They call him the Spaniard, sire.

- I think I'll meet him.

- Yes, sire.

Hail to the barbarians!

Forward! Arms at ready!

Drop your weapons.

Gladiator,  
the emperor has asked for you.

I am at the emperor's service.

Rise. Rise.

Your fame is well deserved,  
Spaniard.

I don't think there's ever been  
a gladiator to match you.

As for this young man, he insists you  
are Hector reborn. Or was it Hercules?

Why doesn't the hero reveal himself  
and tell us all your real name?

You do have a name?

My name is Gladiator.

How dare you show  
your back to me?

Slave!

You will remove your helmet  
and tell me your name.

My name is  
Maximus Decimus Meridius...

commander of  
the armies of the north...

general of the Felix Legions...

loyal servant to the true emperor,  
Marcus Aurelius...

father to a murdered son...

husband to a murdered wife...

and I will have my vengeance,  
in this life or the next.

Arms!

Live! Live! Live! Live!

Guards, at rest!

Maximus! Maximus!  
Maximus! Maximus!

Why is he still alive?

I don't know.

He shouldn't be alive.

It vexes me.

I'm terribly vexed.

I did what I had to do.

If Father had had his way,  
the empire would have been torn apart.

You do see that?

What did you feel  
when you saw him?

I felt nothing.

He wounded you deeply, didn't he?

No more than I wounded him.

They lied to me in Germania.

They told me he was dead.

If they lie to me,  
they don't respect me.

If they don't respect me,  
how can they ever love me?

Then you must  
let the legions know...

their treachery...

will not go unpunished.

Poor sister.

I wouldn't want to be your enemy.

What will you do?

This way.

Rich matrons pay well to be pleased  
by the bravest champions.

I knew your brother  
would send assassins.

I didn't realize  
he would send his best.

Maximus, he doesn't know.

My family was burnt and crucified  
while they were still alive.

- I knew nothing--

- Don't lie to me!

I wept for them.

As you wept for your father?  
As you wept for your father?

I have been living in a prison of fear  
since that day.

To be unable to mourn your father  
for fear of your brother.

To live in terror  
every moment of every day...

because your son  
is heir to the throne.

Oh, I have wept.

My son...

was innocent.

So is mine.

Must my son die, too,  
before you'll trust me?

What does it matter  
if I trust you or not?

The gods have spared you.  
Don't you understand?

Today I saw a slave become more powerful  
than the emperor of Rome.

The gods have spared me?

I am at their mercy,

with the power only to amuse the mob.

That is power.

The mob is Rome, and while Commodus  
controls them, he controls everything.

Listen to me.

My brother has enemies,  
most of all in the senate.

But while the people follow him...

no one would dare stand up to him  
until you.

They oppose him,  
yet they do nothing.

There are some politicians

who have dedicated their lives to Rome.

One man above all.

If I can arrange it,  
will you meet him?

Do you not understand?

I may die in this cell tonight,  
or in the arena tomorrow.

I am a slave!

What possible difference can I make?

This man wants what you want.

Then have him kill Commodus!

I knew a man once...

a noble man,  
a man of principle...

who loved my father...

and my father loved him.

This man served Rome well.

That man is gone.

Your brother did his work well.

Let me help you.

Yes...

you can help me.

Forget you ever knew me...

and never come here again.

Guard!

The lady is finished with me.

Maximus.

You commanded legions?

You had many victories?

In Germania?

In many countries.

General!

You have a great name.

He must kill your name  
before he kills you.

Yes, at the far end.

- Senator Gaius.
- Hello.

Senator Gracchus.

Don't often see you enjoying  
the pleasures of the vulgar crowd.

I don't pretend to be  
a man of the people, Senator...

but I do try to be  
a man for the people.

Caesar! Caesar!  
Caesar! Caesar!

People of Rome!

On the fourth day of Antioch...

we can celebrate  
the th day of the games.

And in his majestic charity...

the emperor has deigned this day  
to favor the people of Rome...

with an historical final match.

Returning to the Colosseum today,  
after five years in retirement...

Caesar is pleased to bring you...

the only undefeated champion...

in Roman history...

the legendary Tigris...

of Gaul!

He knows too well  
how to manipulate the mob.

Marcus Aurelius had a dream  
that was Rome.

This is not it.  
This is not it!

Marcus Aurelius is dead, Maximus.

We mortals  
are but shadows and dust.

Shadows and dust, Maximus!

Representing the training lyceum  
of Antonius Proximo...

Caesar is proud to give you...

Aelius Maximus!

They embrace him  
like he's one of their own.

The mob is fickle, brother.  
He'll be forgotten in a month.

No, much sooner than that.

It's been arranged.

We who are about to die  
salute you.

We're with you, Maximus!

Pull! Pull! Pull!

Loose! Loose!

- Gut him!  
- Kill! Kill!

Kill! Kill! Kill! Kill!

Kill! Kill!

Maximus the Merciful!

Forward, guards!  
On battery!

What am I going to do with you?

You simply won't...

die.

Are we so different, you and I?

You take life when you have to...

as I do.

I have only one more life to take.  
Then it is done.

Then take it now.

They tell me your son...

squealed like a girl...

when they nailed him to the cross...

and your wife...

moaned like a whore...

when they ravaged her...

again and again...

and again.

The time for honoring yourself

will soon be at an end...

Highness.

General!

General!

- General!
- Cicero!

- Where are you camped?
- Ostia.

- We love you, Maximus!
- Praise the victor!

Tell the men their general lives.  
Find me.

- Move along!

- Find me!

Can they hear you?

Who?

Your family, in the afterlife.

- Oh, yes.

- What do you say to them?

To my boy...

I tell him

I will see him again soon...

and to keep his heels down  
when he is riding his horse.

To my wife...

that is not your business.

And now they love Maximus  
for his mercy.

So I can't just kill him,  
or it makes me even more unmerciful.

The whole thing  
is like some great nightmare.

He is defying you.

His every victory  
is an act of defiance.

The mob sees this,  
and so do the senate.

Every day he lives,  
they grow bolder.

- Kill him.
- No.

I will not make a martyr of him.

I have been told...

of a certain sea snake...

which has a very unusual method  
of attracting its prey.

It will lie at the bottom of the ocean  
as if wounded.

Then its enemies will approach...

and yet it will lie quite still.

Then its enemies  
will take little bites of it...

and yet it remains still.

So...

we will lie still...

and let our enemies come to us  
and nibble.

Have every senator followed.

Cicero, my old friend. I thought  
perhaps I'd seen you for the last time.

- I thought you were dead.
- Close.

- How long have the men been in Ostia?
- All winter.

- And how do they look?
- Fat and bored.

- Who's in command?
- Some fool from Rome.

How soon could they be ready to fight?

For you, tomorrow.

I need you to do something for me.

Come see. If you haven't been in the arena, you can see the show here.

Giant Maximus is defeating our emperor Commodus.

What are we to do?  
He's defying everyone.

My goodness!

- He got him! He's defeated!
- Give way! Give way!

My lady?  
I served your father at Vindobona.

- Back.
- My lady.

I served your father at Vindobona.

Back!

And I served General Maximus.  
I serve him still.

Stop.

Stop.

Stand back.

The general sends word  
he will meet your politician.

For your loyalty, soldier.

Thank you, my lady.

Leave us.

Senator Gracchus.

General.

I hope my coming here today  
is evidence enough...

that you can trust me.

- The senate is with you?
- The senate?

Yes. I can speak for them.

You can buy my freedom  
and smuggle me out of Rome?

To what end?

Get me outside the city walls.

Have fresh horses ready  
to take me to Ostia.

My army is encamped there.

By nightfall of the second day,  
I shall return at the head of           men.

But the legions all have  
new commanders...

loyal to Commodus.

Let my men see me alive and you  
shall see where their loyalties lie.

This is madness.

No Roman army has entered the capital  
in a hundred years.

I will not trade  
one dictatorship for another!

The time for half measures  
and talk is over, Senator.

And after your glorious coup,  
what then?

You'll take your warriors  
and leave?

I will leave.

The soldiers will stay  
for your protection...

under the command of the senate.

So...

once all of Rome is yours,  
you'll just give it back to the people?

Tell me why.

Because that was the last wish  
of a dying man.

I will kill Commodus.

The fate of Rome  
I leave to you.

Marcus Aurelius trusted you.

His daughter trusts you.

I will trust you.

But we have little time.

Give me two days...

and I will buy your freedom.

And you--

you stay alive...

or I'll be dead.

Now we must go.

It won't work.

The emperor knows too much.

And as for me...

it's becoming dangerous.

You'll be paid on my return.

I give you my word.

Your word?  
What if you don't return?

Do you remember what it was  
to have trust, Proximo?

Trust?

Who am I to trust?

- I will kill Commodus.
- Why would I want that?

He makes me rich.

Oh, I--

I know that you are  
a man of your word, General.

I know that  
you would die for honor.

You would die for Rome.

You would die for  
the memory of your ancestors.

But I, on the other hand--

I'm an entertainer.

Guard!

He killed the man  
who set you free.

Praetorians, master.

Halt!

Where have you been?

I sent for you.

Please, brother.

What's troubling you?

Does Gracchus have a new lover?

I don't know.

I thought you'd seen him.

He infects everyone  
like a putrid fever.

For the health of Rome,  
the senate must be bled.

And he will bleed too.

Very soon.

But not tonight.

Do you remember  
what our father said once?

'It's a dream...

a frightful dream--

life is.'

Do you think that's true?

I don't know.

I think it is.

And I have only you  
to share it with.

Open your mouth.

You know I love you.

And I love you.

Out. Get out!

Move!

Congratulations, General.

You've got very persuasive friends.

My brother's had Gracchus arrested.

We daren't wait any longer.  
We must leave tonight.

Proximo will come at midnight  
and take you to the gate.

Your servant, Cicero,  
will be waiting there with horses.

You have done all this?

Yes.

You risk too much.

I have much to pay for.

You have nothing to pay for.

You love your son.  
You're strong for him.

I am tired of being strong.

My brother hates all the world,  
and you most of all.

- Because your father chose me.  
- No.

Because my father loved you.

And because I loved you.

A long time ago.

Was I very different then?

You laughed more.

I have felt alone all my life...

except with you.

I must go.

Yes.

There. There.

And I got you.

Isn't it late  
to be playing legionnaire?

I'm not a legionnaire.

- Not a legionnaire?
- I'm a gladiator.

A gladiator?

Gladiators only fight  
in the games.

Wouldn't you rather be a great  
Roman warrior like Julius Caesar?

I'm Maximus,  
the savior of Rome!

The savior of Rome?

And who said that?

Where's Lucius?

He's with the emperor.

- She couldn't.
- Yes, she did.

She took it from a basket...

and pressed it to her breast,  
right here above her heart.

It bit her in the breast?

Yes.

You see, Lucius,  
sometimes royal ladies...

behave very strangely and do  
very odd things in the name of love.

I think it's silly.

So do I.

So do I.

Sister, join us.

I've been reading to dear Lucius.

- I've been reading too.
- Yes.

He's a very clever little boy.  
He'll make a grand emperor one day.

We've been reading about the great  
Mark Antony and his adventures in Egypt.

And the queen killed herself  
with a snake.

And just wait until you hear  
what happened to our ancestors.

If you're very good, tomorrow night I'll  
tell you the story of Emperor Claudius.

He was betrayed...

by those closest to him...

by his own blood.

They whispered in dark corners...

and went out late at night...

and conspired...

and conspired.

But the Emperor Claudius knew  
that they were up to something.

He knew they were  
busy little bees.

And one night he sat down  
with one of them...

and he looked at her...

and he said...

'Tell me what you've been doing...

busy little bee...

or I shall strike down  
those dearest to you.

You shall watch  
as I bathe in their blood.''

And the emperor was heartbroken.

The little bee  
had wounded him more deeply...

than anyone else  
could ever have done.

What do you think  
happened then, Lucius?

I don't know, Uncle.

The little bee  
told him everything.

Open, in the name of the emperor!

Proximo!

Open the gates,  
in the name of the emperor!

Open the gates!

Open the gates, Proximo.

Do you want to die, old man?

Here.

Everything is prepared.

It seems  
you have won your freedom.

Are you in danger  
of becoming a good man?

-Juba.  
- All enemies of the emperor die!

Open the gates!

Pull!

Move!  
Form a column on the left!

I only need moments, so do not  
be careless with your lives.

If you don't want any part of this,

go back to your cells.

We'll wait here for you, Maximus.

- Strength and honor.
- Go.

Strength and honor.

Aim. Arch your bows!

Shadows and dust.

I'm sorry.

It's done.

And what of my nephew?

And what of his mother?

Should they share  
her lover's fate?

Or should I be merciful?

Commodus the Merciful.

Lucius will stay with me now.

And if his mother...

so much as looks at me...

in a manner that displeases me...

he will die.

If she decides...

to be noble...

and takes her own life...

he will die.

And as for you...

you will love me...

as I loved you.

You will provide me with an heir...

of pure blood...

so that Commodus and his progeny...

will rule for a thousand years.

Am I not merciful?

Am I not merciful?

They call for you.

The general...

who became a slave.

The slave  
who became a gladiator.

The gladiator  
who defied an emperor.

A striking story.

Now the people want to know  
how the story ends.

Only a famous death will do.

And what could be more glorious...

than to challenge the emperor himself  
in the great arena?

You would fight me?

Why not?

Do you think I'm afraid?

I think you have been afraid  
all your life.

Unlike Maximus the Invincible,  
who knows no fear?

I knew a man who once said,  
'Death smiles at us all.

All a man can do is smile back.'

I wonder.

Did your friend smile  
at his own death?

You must know.

He was your father.

You loved my father, I know...

but so did I.

That makes us brothers,  
doesn't it?

Smile for me now, brother.

Strap on his armor.  
Conceal the wound.

Ring formation!

Quintus, sword.

Give me your sword.

Sword! Give me a sword!

Sheathe your swords.

Free my men.

Senator Gracchus  
is to be reinstated.

There was a dream  
that was Rome.

It shall be realized.

These are the wishes  
of Marcus Aurelius.

Free the prisoners. Go!

Lucius is safe.

Go to them.

You're home.

Is Rome worth  
one good man's life?

We believed it once.

Make us believe it again.

He was a soldier of Rome.

Honor him.

Who will help me carry him?

Now we are free.

I will see you again.

But not yet.

Not yet.