

1 INT. TEMPLE OF APOLLO - NIGHT**1**

Pyrrhus walks into The Temple of Apollo seeking guidance from the Oracle of Delphi on whether he should help the Tarentines in their war against Rome. It is extremely dark out and torches light up the temple.

ORACLE OF DELPHI

What brings you to The Temple of Apollo?

PYRRHUS

I am Pyrrhus of Epirus. The Tarentines have asked me to help wage war on Rome and I seek your guidance.

ORACLE OF DELPHI

Why did they ask for you?

PYRRHUS

These people attacked Rome out of fear and now need a strong power for protection and help. Without a strong ally, they will be quickly defeated by Rome.

ORACLE OF DELPHI

I see. Let me ask the Gods what is favorable.

The oracle closes her eyes and prays in silence. Pyrrhus waits patiently.

ORACLE OF DELPHI

What do you think you should do.

PYRRHUS

I'm not sure. I think I have a right to an empire of my own and this may be the first step towards that. I have familial ties with Achilles and Alexander the Great, so it is in my blood to be a warrior and seek expansion. With that being said, Rome is powerful and I fear defeat.

ORACLE OF DELPHI

You are right with what you say. I would advise you to do it but there can be no hesitation. You must be a

confident leader if you want any chance against Rome.

PYRRHUS

If I choose to lead this army will I be successful?

ORACLE OF DELPHI

Yes, but you will need help. A larger army will be required, along with a superior strategy.

PYRRHUS

I can ask Ptolemy. He is King of Macedon and has a powerful army, along with war elephants.

ORACLE OF DELPHI

That sounds like a good idea. This could be the start of a new empire for you.

2 EXT. ROMAN BARRACKS WHICH ARE HOUSING SOLDIERS - AFTERNOON 2

Roman soldiers are training under the direction of Laevinus. When training is finished all of the troops are lined up and addressed by Laevinus.

LAEVINUS

We have received word that the Tarentines plan to attack again. But it will be different this time. They are getting help from Pyrrhus, a strong military leader from Epirus.

All of the troops seem relatively unbothered, overconfident in their ability to defeat the Greek power. Laevinus notices this and addresses the lack of concern.

LAEVINUS

This is not to be taken lightly or many of you will regret it. Our lives are on the line here and Pyrrhus is not to be underestimated. This man is a tyrant and will use whatever war tactic necessary to ensure victory. You are all dismissed but we must be prepared for a difficult battle.

This message is heard by the soldiers but doesn't sink in.

LAEVINUS

You are all dismissed to go back to
your barracks.

Maximus leaves and walks back to his quarters.

3 INT. MAXIMUS'S BARRACKS - DAWN

3

Maximus is lying in his bed talking to his bunkmates about
the upcoming battle.

MAXIMUS

I can't wait for this battle.

TITUS

Why is that?

MAXIMUS

We are Romans! No army will be any
match for us.

TITUS

I think you are being overconfident.
As Laevinus said, tyrants like
Pyrrhus will use whatever tactics
necessary to win.

MAXIMUS

No matter. Our troops and generals
are far superior. And on top of
that, we will win the right way!

TITUS

I think you should be careful come
battle. Our lives are on the line
here.

4 INT. PYRRHUS'S QUARTERS - DAY

4

Pyrrhus is in his home conspiring with Ptolemy about how to
defeat the Romans.

PYRRHUS

I am planning an attack on Rome.

PTOLEMY

What? How do you plan on defeating
them?

PYRRHUS

That's exactly why I called you
here. I need your help. If we form
an alliance we would have a great

shot at beating Rome and creating our own empire. If you could lend me any troops or cavalry I would certainly repay you and it would be helpful to my efforts.

PTOLEMY

What about war elephants? They wouldn't know how to respond. Our war elephants provide a force that most opponents can't handle.

PYRRHUS

Perfect. That might just give us the push we need.

PTOLEMY

I can give you twenty and that should be more than enough.

PYRRHUS

That is plenty. I plan on using phalanx infantry also so the combination of that tactic with the elephants will be hard to stop.

PTOLEMY

When do you plan to attack?

PYRRHUS

I plan to go soon. As soon as I have the troops and elephants I will be ready.

Over the course of a few weeks, Pyrrhus starts to assemble his army and prepares to take on Rome.

5 EXT. SOUTHERN ITALY - DAY

5

Pyrrhus has assembled his troops and marched into southern Italy where he is met by Roman forces. The Roman army is waiting as Pyrrhus's army approaches. It is a rainy day. Maximus is lined up next to Titus for the march in defense of Rome.

MAXIMUS

Are those elephants?

TITUS

That's what it looks like. I told you we better take this battle more seriously.

MAXIMUS

How are we supposed to stop them?
They are gigantic!

TITUS

I have no idea but it looks like we
are outnumbered on top of that. We
have bigger issues to worry about.

The battle begins. Many casualties occur on the front lines right away and Pyrrhus's troops have a lot of early success. Maximus and Titus are in the middle of the lines and are witnessing their soldiers being killed firsthand.

MAXIMUS

We are getting killed out here!

TITUS

Yeah and we are almost at the front.
Get ready to battle.

MAXIMUS

I can't die. We need to get out of
here!

TITUS

You can't just leave. We need to
stay and fight to defend Rome!

MAXIMUS

You can stay. I'm getting out of
here.

Maximus deserts the army and cowardly escapes out of the side. As he leaves, he is caught out by an enemy and eventually killed. Titus continues his fight and is able to make it out alive. While he survives, the Romans suffer many casualties and eventually lose the battle. They are overpowered by the slightly higher numbers of Pyrrhus's army and his war elephants. Eventually, the Roman army must retreat.

6 INT. LAEVINUS' S HOUSE - DAY

6

It is the following day now and Laevinus is in his house with another Roman general, Felix, talking about the result.

LAEVINUS

Pyrrhus caught me off guard
yesterday. I wasn't expecting war
elephants.

FELIX

I'm not surprised. No dignitas in winning like that. Only a tyrant would use such a weapon of mass destruction.

LAEVINUS

Say what you will but it worked. I think it is something that we should look into using in the future.

FELIX

I don't think that would be advisable. Do you realize what kind of implications that might have?

LAEVINUS

Please inform me.

FELIX

First of all, we aren't tyrants. Winning with the use of elephants would send the message to the Roman population that we are tyrants. Since we aren't kings, we will win the proper way.

LAEVINUS

I don't think people would care all that much as long as we win and protect Rome.

FELIX

I don't like the political implications that it would have. On top of that, we would be admitting that an opponent has superior strategy to our own.

LAEVINUS

And what's wrong with that? I'll be the first to admit that we aren't the best at everything.

FELIX

I just don't like it. We know we can defend Rome with what we have and I think we can do it honestly.

LAEVINUS

I hope you're right.

Felix leaves and Laevinus is left to ponder in his house alone, trying to conjure up the best way to ensure the safety

of Rome.