Are You Tittering Centurion

The Stolen Eagle

Outstanding Directing – Drama Series. During the Siege of Alesia in 52 BC, Centurion Lucius Vorenus of the 13th Legion commands his men as Gallic warriors

"The Stolen Eagle" is the series premiere of the British-American historical drama television series Rome. Written by series creator Bruno Heller and directed by Michael Apted, the episode first aired in the United States on Home Box Office (HBO) on August 28, 2005, and on the BBC in the United Kingdom and Ireland on November 2. Rome was given a budget of $100 million, making it the largest amount both networks had ever spent on a series. Heller centered the series' narrative on the perspectives of two common soldiers, similar to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern from Shakespeare's Hamlet. Apted shot the episode at Cinecittà, the Roman studio where the epic films Ben-Hur and Cleopatra were filmed. On the set, realism and authenticity were emphasized more than grandiosity, with depictions of a cosmopolitan city of all social classes.

As the wars in Gaul come to an end, Julius Caesar (Ciarán Hinds) is faced with both triumph and tribulation. On the heels of his victory comes news of his daughter's death. Awarded with the adulation of the people, he also garners the enmity of politicians in Rome, including Pompey the Great (Kenneth Cranham). In Rome, Pompey must balance honor and politics as he is urged to betray his former friend. Meanwhile, Caesar's niece Atia of the Julii (Polly Walker) tries to steer her family on the dangerous path between the growing divisions of power. In the Gallic countryside, two unlikely allies (Kevin McKidd and Ray Stevenson) journey to reclaim the stolen standard of the Roman legion.

HBO described its marketing strategy as "its largest, most aggressive for a new series," and media outlets estimated its cost at $10 million. On its first broadcast, an estimated 3.8 million US viewers watched the episode. On its first airing in the UK and Ireland, it secured an estimated audience of 6.6 million people. Critical reception was largely mixed, with several reviewers writing that the episode suffered from slow storytelling. "The Stolen Eagle" garnered four major awards, including the Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Special Visual Effects and the Directors Guild of America Award for Outstanding Directing – Drama Series.

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