**GAIUS MARIUS - The Jugurthine War begins**

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|  | During the period of time where Marius was rising through the political ranks, Rome was facing a crisis in its northern African provinces.  In 118 BC the king of one of Rome's allied kingdoms, called Numidia, had died. The kingdom was inherited by his two sons, called Hiempsal and Adherbal.  However, their half-brother, named Jugurtha, challenged them for the throne. Jugurtha, had Hiempsal killed and then attacked Adherbal.  As an ally of Rome, Adherbal had sought Roman military aid in the war with his half-brother.  Instead of sending the soldiers that Adherbal requested, in around 116 BC, the Senate ordered the two men to divide Numidia into two separate kingdoms: each ruled by one of the claimants to the throne.  While Jugurtha and Adherbal initially obeyed these orders, in 113 BC, Jugurtha decided to take matters into his own hands and invaded his brother’s kingdom.  The Roman Senate did not immediately respond with military force. Instead, they sent a number of delegations to Jugurtha to try and resolve the situation.  However, in the meantime, Jugurtha besieged Adherbal in his capital city of Cirta. When the city fell in 112 BC, not only was Adherbal was captured and executed, but a large number of Roman traders were massacred as well.  This event shocked the Roman world and the Senate finally declared war on Jugurtha in 111 BC.  The Roman armies had little success in the first few years of the war, since Numidian forces, which were predominantly composed of cavalry, often avoided pitched battles with the Roman infantry armies.  So, in 109 BC, one of the Metelli family, Quintus Caecilius Metellus, was elected as consul and was sent to Numidia to take control of the campaign.  One of the military legates that Metellus took with him to Numidia was Marius. During his year in command, Metellus had little more success against Jugurtha than the military commanders before him.  By the end of the year, Marius believed that he could turn to tables on the Numidian king, but needed to be elected as consul to do so.  When Marius informed Metellus that he wanted to be released of his military duties in order to return to Rome to stand for the consular elections, Metellus refused to give him permission.  Metellus believed that Marius was being far too ambitions for a *novus homo*. However, Marius was not dissuaded and, in direct defiance of the commander, Marius left the military camp and sailed back to Rome. |
| SUMMARISE THIS TEXT BELOW: | |