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From the reign of Septimius Severus at the end of the second century A.D., the Roman Empire was continuously beset by internal unrest, revolts, usurpations, civil wars, and attacks along its far-flung frontiers. Scarcely a part of the empire was unaffected, and some areas were forced to deal with several serious problems at the same time. This book is the first comprehensive discussion of the Roman army during this period, and it shows how the army adapted itself to meet these growing threats and how effective it was in combating them.

Using a full range of original literary sources, modern Continental scholarship, and current archaeological research, Pat Southern and Karen Dixon provide a stimulating overview of the historical period, the critical changes in the army, and the way these changes affected the morale of the soldiers. The authors discuss in fascinating detail the organization and fighting methods of the army: the recruitment of soldiers, the physical conditions under which they served, the equipment they used, the fortifications they built, and the siege warfare they waged. They also describe the reforms of Diocletian and Constantine_particularly the creation of the field army and the frontier army_that shaped the final version of the late Roman army up to the beginning of the sixth century. Numerous illustrations accompany the text.

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