Option 2.3 - A Day in the Life

I wrote the poem below from the perspective of a scribe caught in Library of Alexandria while the Alexandrian mob battled with Caesar’s army. Although scholars debate the exact date and time of the destruction of the Library of Alexandria, Caesar sought refuge in the palace while he occupied Alexandria and books from the library burned in the resulting fray.

Poem
I hear the screams on the street . . .
the yells of the mob and
the cries of the conquered
I feel the heat from the flames
crawling nearer to my skin
devouring parchment and papyrus
I am caught between
the searing blaze of the fire
the stabbing gladius of the Roman soldier
the rough uncaring hands of the mob
What escape can I seek?
I am a simple scribe
Sitting in the nook
Copying texts from merchants
Pompey, your death proceeded mine but a moment in time
Didymus, tell my tale
Speak for me Chalkenteros
I had sought refuge in wisdom and knowledge
between the Hellenic columns
away from the typical toil in the fields
Only to find my demise
With a reed in hand

Black and red ink by my side . . .
Oh rolls stored in wooden caskets
Alphabetized and marked
Veni, copi, victi sumus
We came, I copied, we were conquered.

Bibliography