

## Civilization 117

### Chapter 117 The Original Cast

October's morning sun rose into the sky, illuminating the dawn in the East, spreading the hope of a new day.

Xiulote gasped for breath, his body drenched in sweat. He had just completed his morning agility training. Despite having drunk some alcohol the night before and talking late into the night with his father, he still woke up before dawn and underwent Bertade's Samurai training.

Bertade nodded in satisfaction. The youth's martial arts had taken root, and he had reached a level of proficiency. He could now anticipate his enemy's attacks, and his body was able to keep up with his mind's reactions to dodge effectively. Now, as the weather was gradually getting colder, it was time to switch to willpower training that endured the cold.

After training, the young man silently admired the magnificent sun, with familiar melodies occasionally surfacing in his mind, bringing long-lost memories.

As for everything happening across the distant waters of the East, he was still powerless. The tide of the age had begun, and everyone would rise and fall within it. Great individuals would go with the flow and carve their own paths through the waves.

The strength of any nation and civilization originated from the trials and sacrifices during its growth and from the national characteristics forged through unity. The tribes of Black Africa had endured tropical diseases for tens of thousands of years to evolve their physical bodies, gaining strong resistance, and establishing a foundation in the tropical regions of the New World.

In the future, these diasporas from Black Africa scattered across the New World would also endure more than four hundred years of hardship before they would gradually unite their identity through the recognition of Voodoo culture, shaping their spirit of "Negritude", and eventually break free from the colonialism and racism imposed by the West.

A nascent American civilization would inevitably go through countless difficulties and sacrifices, numerous diseases, and sacrifices to forge itself into shape. Like the Celestial Empire across the ocean, it would form a unified national consciousness, as well as a resilient and industrious national trait, to truly stand tall among the world's nations.

As long as there are people and land, there is hope for the future. As long as there is an unbroken lineage, there will be a day when national character coalesces.

Xiulote hoped he could become a guide for the civilization of Central America, protecting it through its most perilous moments. He wanted to ensure that its vulnerable infancy wouldn't die in bud, wouldn't have to shave their heads, change clothes and kneel in submission, and wouldn't have the spiritual backbone pulled out by Missionaries, forever losing their native cultural confidence.

This land was his new home. He wanted to watch his nation and civilization grow strong, to grow into upright trees, bloom into vibrant flowers, and bear the fruits of prosperity!

The youth longed for this and then smiled bitterly in his mind. The hallucinogenic potion from Gillim still had side effects, making his thoughts wander and preventing him from concentrating fully.

Xiulote went back into his house, had a simple breakfast of corn tortillas and black bean paste, and discussed the marching plan with Bertade. Then, he looked at the time, assuming everyone had eaten breakfast. The youth donned his Leather Armor, put on his Beast Helmet, wore the Priest's war robe, and majestically summoned the war generals.

The first to arrive was Kuluka, a commoner by birth. He wore a simple war robe and bowed slightly as he entered, his quick eyes scanning over Xiulote's masked helmet and the upright Bertade, before respectfully bowing his head in greeting.

"Merciful Priest Commander, may you always be fortunate in war!"

Xiulote nodded slightly, indicating for Kuluka to sit beside him. The Monkey Warrior carefully sat down cross-legged. It seemed after Aweit's sharp words, Kuluka had become much more submissive. But to truly win over the spirited commoner commander's loyalty wasn't going to happen overnight.

The youth was unsure about the upper limit of the commoner commander's talents but was certain he was smart, had nimble hands, and his math was good enough to handle complex military and administrative tasks. The youth had high hopes for Kuluka but not enough trust.

Xiulote was convinced that under normal circumstances, he could command the commoner commander. But if they faced a real disadvantage... Well, it was best to avoid such situations for now. Upon returning to the Capital, he would still want to conscript Kuluka's son into the army in the name of teaching him to read and write.

Then, Balda, who was born to a minor noble, arrived. This warrior was rather straightforward. He wore his finest Armor, with a face that showed three parts submission and seven parts reluctance, to serve the man who was once just a little War Priest.

Xiulote smiled faintly, stood up, and warmly took Balda's hand, also guiding him to sit beside him. Kuluka subtly bowed his head, hiding his expression, while his gaze moved onto Balda.

Balda was slightly surprised, and finally, a smile spread across his face. He bowed and said,

"Priest Commander Xiulote, may the War God bless us!"

"May the War God be with us!" Xiulote responded with a smile.

In the judgment of the young commander, Balda's mind was relatively straightforward—he was a traditional Samurai. He possessed the sense of honor typical of a Samurai and demonstrated sufficient loyalty after he pledged allegiance. Based on his performance during the initial engagement, it was clear he was a valiant War General capable of leading an army of three thousand men without the slightest issue. As for his other abilities, they would have to be evaluated based on his future performance.

Then came the supply officer of commoner origin, Begire. The tall and thin supply officer had a pale complexion, indicating that his days in custody had not treated him well. He wore a simple robe, even sporting patches in places. Upon entering, he knelt on one knee and paid Xiulote a respectful tribute.

"Honored Priest, I thank you for your assistance. In the name of the Guardian God, I am ready to serve you!"

Xiulote returned the salute with equal solemnity and gestured for Begire to sit. The supply officer maintained a strict posture, sitting up straight. The young commander appreciated his discipline and seriousness, and he had specifically requested him to be released from captivity at the camp, preparing to put him in charge of managing the army's provisions and expenses.

The young commander had already asked the Head Warrior to prepare a basket of food with a long shelf life, a sack of daily necessities, several bolts of versatile cotton fabric, and two sets of fine clothes. After the military council meeting concluded, he intended to hand these items over to the supply officer Begire to improve his quality of life.

The last to arrive was the teacher Olosh, of noble origin. The warriors of Jaguar, fully armed, entered with big strides. With a stern face, Olosh bowed to Xiulote and performed a courteous salute.

"Respected Commander-in-Chief, may the War God be with us!"

Xiulote returned the salute solemnly and then gave a nod of acknowledgment. Olosh did not hesitate to sit cross-legged opposite the young commander. Olosh had agreed with him the night before that the young commander had to maintain the dignity of the Commander-in-Chief today.

In the heart of the young commander, the 3,200 Teotihuacan warriors led by Olosh were truly his core Personal Army, capable of fighting for him to the very last moment!

Head Warrior Bertade, the monkey Kuluka, the young nobleman Balda, supply officer Begire, and the ally Olosh—these were the initial mainstays of his own legion. Xiulote pondered with feeling, his expression calm and serious.

The military council was conducted swiftly and efficiently, as Xiulote had plans already formed in his mind, and now he issued his orders one by one. Olosh was to lead the 3,000 City-State Warriors and 200 Jaguar warriors as the primary group of his central forces, to move together with his banner of command, serving as the core strength of the legion.

Bertade was to lead the original 3,000 direct Samurai as the second group forming the rearguard. These warriors, having experienced the southern campaign and the battles against Tizoc and Totec, demonstrated noticeably higher loyalty and were now suited to rest in the position of rearguard. From among them, five hundred were to be handed over to the supply officer Begire, who would lead 5,000 Militia to guard the supply transport and fortify camps along the route. Upon hearing his appointment, Begire's lean face slightly blushed with a mix of excitement and joy that was hard to hide.

The 4,000 direct warriors from the main camp at Xilotepec were to form the third group, the Vanguard. These warriors had been conserving their energy for some time now and were well-suited to serve as the advance force.

Kuluka was given 3,000 of them to launch the initial assault on the next mountain encampment. Tizoc had abandoned this site during his all-out battle, and now it was occupied by a few hundred Otomi guerrilla fighters. Balda, on the other hand, was tasked to lead the remaining 1,000 men, ready to make contact with Casal, who was trapped at the first encampment.

Once contact was made with Casal and he agreed to surrender, Casal's troops would be given to Balda to command. As for Casal himself... Xiulote thought for a moment that he certainly would not be able to command this experienced officer and decided it would be better to entrust him to Aweit.

In addition to the 10,200 Samurai, Xiulote also had 500 private soldiers of followers and 150 Longbow Warriors. These were the Commander's Personal Guard, and he would temporarily lead them himself. A thousand troops are easy to obtain; one general is hard to come by. And finding a completely loyal Guard Captain was exceedingly difficult!

Xiulote sighed softly. He remembered the young Samurai who had died for him in the Otomi attack, Kusola—a man who would have made an excellent Captain of the Personal Guard.

Continuing to reflect, the young commander also recalled the simple Samurai, Ters, who had accompanied him during his first capture. He asked Olosh to bring Ters over and place him among his followers for an initial observation period. Lastly, the young commander instructed Bertade to carefully select from among the followers and recommend a trustworthy candidate for Captain of the Personal Guard.

After the military council concluded, the commanders dispersed, each rallying their warriors. The young commander personally grasped the hand of the supply officer Begire, handing him the prepared fine clothes and gifts. Begire was slightly stunned before bowing deeply to accept these gifts. Then, he knelt on both knees to show his allegiance, turned away with emotion, and left.

Watching the departing commanders, the young commander removed his helmet, finally revealing his delicate yet resolute face. He mulled over the reactions of his generals, learning how to be a qualified commander, growing steadily stronger.

After half a day of mobilizing the troops, the forces assembled. As the midday sun shone down, lighting up the woodland paths, 11,000 warriors donned their Armor and shields, marching off towards the West, carrying a surge of murderous intent. Five thousand Militia struggled under the weight of twenty days' food supplies for 20,000 men, slowly following behind. More supplies would be continuously delivered in the future.

Under Aweit's distant gaze, the Xiulote legion gradually disappeared into the dense forest. The King smiled slightly; the fledgling eagle would finally spread its wings and soar above the vast Highland!