

Civilization 1231

Chapter 1231: The Army Advances, Besieging Golden Bay

The sunset descended from the horizon, casting the battlefield in a blood-red glow. Corpses were piled upon each other, blood soaking into a pool. The slaughter had ended, and the outcome was decided. Soon, over a thousand of the Kingdom's Warriors were escorting multiple times their number of Totonac captives out of the adobe fortress by the river.

The captives, with dusty faces, exhibited expressions of fear, submission, and numbness. As they exited the fortress gates and saw the Kingdom's army's copper cannons, they showed undisguised fear, as if facing terrifying ghosts and gods. At times, some captive warriors would kneel, praying to the golden 'Copper Beast' for divine mercy.

Black Wolf Torc, with a cold expression, stood before the collapsed fortress wall, examining the head in his hands. The nostrils of the head were adorned with horizontal jade strips, with red and blue tattoos on the face, eyes tightly shut and bleeding... it was the leader of the Eastern Totonac Allied Forces, the great chieftain Kua Snake of the Hidden Serpent Holy City!

"What a head!"

Black Wolf looked at it for a moment, nodding slightly, and voiced his admiration. Then, he handed the head to his trusted aide beside him and instructed calmly.

"Wuta, process this head and add it to my spoils of war!"

"Yes, Leader!"

"May the Chief Divine bless us! Report, have the numbers of the surrendered army been tallied?"

"Black Wolf Leader, the five thousand defending army in the main fortress are all warriors and warriors from Hidden Serpent City. They had a thousand heavily wounded or killed, and over six hundred rowed away, leaving more than three thousand who surrendered!"

In this era, heavily wounded captives could not receive precious medicines, equating to death. The criteria for light or severe wounds typically determined whether they could walk and be transported back to camp.

"Hmm? We've accepted over three thousand more surrendered troops?"

Black Wolf slightly raised his brow, pondered briefly, then issued a calm order.

"Review all these surrendered troops. All noble chiefs and chieftains among them, execute without exception! Then, as per custom, have the accompanying priests convert the captives on the spot. Those unwilling to convert by blood oath should be sacrificed directly!"

"As you command, Leader! The accompanying priests are already prepared!..."

As dusk fell, the Chief God Priests began their hymns of prayer and lit the blazing Sacred Fire. The sacred conversion ritual thus began.

Black Wolf remained expressionless, watching the ritual of blood, fire, and spirits. He watched for a long while and was surprised to find that during this large conversion, none of the captives resisted! Even the renowned Totonac Warriors of the City-State prostrated themselves in awe at the feet of the accompanying priests, lowering their once-defiant heads.

"Praise the Chief Divine! The Totonac people's faith has finally collapsed under the 'Divine Punishment' of the firearms! They bow down and lie on the ground; this submission comes from the depths of their souls!..."

The conversion ritual concluded amidst the wafting blue smoke. Accompanying priest Taisir, with a joyful expression, reported back to Black Wolf Commander-in-Chief. His expression was exhilarated, eyes gleaming with wisdom, as he walked before the massive mortar cannon, proclaiming loudly.

"I must write a letter to His Majesty... This is the Copper Beast of Divine Punishment, a sharp tool for siege and a weapon for spreading religion! Its thunder and stone bullets will breach all fortresses around the world and shatter their beliefs! Therefore, to spread the glory of the Chief Divine, we need more, larger cannons!..."

Two days later, Xiulote received Black Wolf Army's victory report in the camp of Snake Lake Village and read the letter from the accompanying Priesthood. He chuckled softly, walked out of the grand tent, and gazed at the southeastern plains, coasts, and jungle.

He knew there was a ripening 'fruit' forty miles to the southeast. Moreover, after 'consuming' this fruit, there were many more fruits along the coast all the way to the Maya Lands!

"Royal Decree! The main army sets off! March southeast, eradicate the surrounding small fortresses in succession, and completely encircle Golden Bay City!"

The long wind howled, and war drums echoed. When the news of the adobe fortress's fall reached Golden Bay City, the chieftains of Totonac tribes fell into fierce arguments. Such a strong adobe fortress had held out for only three days!

Under the Mexica people's 'Divine Punishment,' the thousands of the Hidden Serpent Holy City's army were utterly destroyed, and even the great chieftain Kua Snake died in the fortress!

Faced with such a terrifying offensive, the chieftains of the Eastern Seaside tribes immediately considered retreating. The great chieftain Qiqini of Golden Bay's tribes tried to persuade several chieftains to stay but nearly got into a fight. Soon, over two hundred Totonac war boats were filled with City-State Warriors heading east.

However, the Mexica people's legions controlled the port and coast at the Adobe River. The Totonac navy had to row fifty miles east along the coast to disembark the retreating warriors. The navy rowed for two days, traveling a hundred miles round trip, to transport a thousand tribal warriors. But just two days later, three thousand Kingdom's Warriors crossed the river heading east, enforcing their sweep along the Eastern Coast, making it difficult for the Totonac navy to dock.

Five days later, several military fortresses around Golden Bay City were breached by the Kingdom's army, capturing another two thousand surrendered troops. Meanwhile, the Mexica's 'Divine Punishment' thunder spread more panic within Golden Bay City. The Kingdom legion had accepted and expanded to 34,000 warriors and warriors, with the proportion of Totonac surrendered troops being nearly half.

"The faith of the Chief Divine is spreading throughout Totonac lands! And the Golden Bay City before us is basking in the light of Divine Might!"

In late February, Xiulote led the army to Golden Bay City and joined forces with Black Wolf's legion. He looked at the surrendered troops from various tribes and at the Chief Divine emblems on their foreheads, nodding with satisfaction.

Subsequently, the Kingdom's legion established fortifications, completely encircling this seaside City-State, leaving only the sea-facing east side. Prepecha Warriors boarded the captured war boats, battling the Totonac navy along the Kingdom-controlled coast. Thus, the last escape route for Golden Bay City was completely blocked by the Kingdom, after three to four thousand warriors escaped!

"In Golden Bay City are the last over twenty thousand Totonac allied forces, including leaders and chieftains of various tribes!..."

The Royal Banner of the God of Death Black Wolf was erected outside Golden Bay City. Xiulote climbed a small hill, gazing at the various defending armies on the city walls, looking at the flags of the seaside City-States, and a smile appeared on his face. It was the smile of a 'fisherman' catching sight of the 'big fish' as he hauled up the net.

"Golden Bay City... the future Veracruz... now, it is mine!"

Xiulote murmured to himself, his eyes burning with battle intent. He surveyed the generals, personally stepping forward to raise Black Wolf's arm, praising his beloved general's feats. Black Wolf also held his head high, chest puffed out, confidence and excitement glowing.

Then Xiulote greeted the generals one by one, looking at their faces eager for battle, and issued the Royal Decree with pride.

"The entire army will rest for five days and prepare siege equipment! In five days, we will attack from three sides and surely take this city! May the Chief Divine bless us, the Kingdom will prevail!"

"May the Chief Divine bless us, the Kingdom will prevail! Bless Your Majesty!..."

The generals prostrated on the ground, accepting their orders with a thunderous response, and went their ways.

Chapter 1232: The Army Strikes, Blood-Red Siege

The sprawling kingdom encampments stood like forests, surrounding the city of Golden Bay on the seaside. More than thirty thousand Kingdom Legions gathered here, blocking all land routes and almost completely cutting off sea routes. At this moment, the vast city of Golden Bay resembled a 'fish trap' encircled by wooden bars, with the 'big fish' inside the trap finding it impossible to escape.

Faced with the siege of the great army, the Defending Army on the walls of Golden Bay was in a state of panic. The Feathered Serpent Priests and Sun Priests within the city prayed day and night, conducting sacrificial rituals to stabilize the morale of the Defending Army. Since the death of the Great Chieftain Kua Snake of Hidden Serpent City, the chieftains of various tribes from the East lacked cohesion and had differing thoughts. They held meetings every day but could not reach a consensus, almost creating an uproar within the council halls.

The Defending Army in the city was in chaos, while the besieging forces outside the city moved in an orderly manner, preparing for an assault. The five days set by the King quickly passed. By the morning of the sixth day, the attack officially began!

"Boom! Boom! Boom!..."

Under the terrified gazes of the Defending Army on the walls, twenty Copper Cannons were unfurled outside the flat West City. Then, under the protection of two thousand Kingdom's Imperial Guards, the Artillery Camp operated the 'divinely bestowed' Copper Cannons, unleashing round after round of 'Divine Punishment' Thunderbolt!

"Boom!..."

Ten Sun Divine Eagle Cannons accurately fired at the Defending Army on the walls, knocking down erected wooden plank shields, leaving blood-red streaks. Ten God of Thunder Mortar Cannons launched whistling large stone projectiles, smashing heavily inside and outside the city walls. The heavy stone projectiles crashed down, creating one breach after another at the top of the sturdy stone walls. Pools of blood gathered where the stone projectiles landed, resembling the juice flowing from squashed tomatoes.

"Chief Divine bless! Fire!..."

"Boom! Boom!"

After every synchronized prayer, a round of thunder followed! The Divine Eagle Cannons could fire twice a quarter, while the Mortar Cannons fired once a quarter. The terrifying bombardment lasted for half a day, firing hundreds of large and small stone projectiles before it finally came to an end.

The overheated Copper Cannons needed time to cool, but the Kingdom Legion had long been waiting. When the 'Divine Punishment' bombardment ceased, thousands of Totonac Defectors shouldered ladders under the cover of Kingdom Archers, climbing the city walls like ants.

"Chief Divine bless! The War God grants Divine Power, causing all tribes to fight for the gods! Only in this way can redemption be achieved!"

"Feathered Serpent bless! Hold Golden Bay City! The Aztecs, colluding with the demons of the volcano, are a tribe of fallen spirits!"

Warriors of both sides shouted different slogans in the same language, wielding the same weapons, stabbing into different bodies. In just a moment, the city walls were stained with fresh death marks. These bright marks caught the eyes of the young King, vivid and striking against the backdrop of the blue sky and sea.

The Defending Army on the walls of Golden Bay largely consisted of Warriors from the various Totonac City-States. They had no way to retreat; although their morale was low, their resistance remained somewhat tenacious. A large number of javelins, rolling stones, and lime jars were hurled down from the high city walls, taking the lives of squads of Defectors, as if cutting weeds on the ground.

"The sky and sea, the city and people, truly a vivid battlefield!... It seems the Defending Army in Golden Bay City still has a last breath sustaining them..."

Xiulote stood high, observing the massacre on the West City walls, lost in thought. He watched squads of Defectors climb the city like ants, braving the shooting to climb the ladders onto the cannon-battered

and dilapidated city walls. Then, these Defectors fought in close combat with the warriors on the walls, dying like ants on the city walls, with hundreds perishing every quarter!

Meanwhile, the stones and lime for defending the city were rapidly depleting, and even the arrows became sparse. However, the Totonac Warriors defending the city continued to receive new reinforcements, maintaining ample troop strength.

"Indeed, although the Mortar Cannon can breach the walls, the stone projectiles and gunpowder consumed are too immense. The walls of Golden Bay City are only five meters high; it shouldn't require complete demolition and might be taken with ladders!"

With this thought, Xiulote maintained a serene expression, lowering his eyes. The gunpowder weapons of the Kingdom Legion were transported from the Lake Capital City over thousands of miles. In a way, these precious siege weapons were even more valuable than the vast numbers of Defectors and would only be used at the most critical moment.

"Hmm... After two more days of attrition, the defending equipment should nearly be exhausted, and the morale within the city reduced to its lowest. Then, the Imperial Guard Legion's throwing vanguards can hurl explosive Clay Tribulus, attempting to breach gaps for the elite warriors of the main force to storm the walls!"

The sky gradually darkened, and the setting sun slanted west. The red clouds reflected the red blood, the city walls stained with death. When the horn to call back the troops sounded, the massacre on and beneath the city walls abruptly paused. The assaulting Defectors, covered in blood, leaped off the walls as if granted amnesty, retreating to the rear camp.

The Totonac Warriors defending the city also panted heavily, tidying up broken weapons and arrows. Their faces were mostly numb, showing fear, exuding exhaustion, and concealing sorrow.

After this day's slaughter, six to seven hundred perished on the walls, and over a thousand enemies were killed. These slayed enemies were all Totonac Defectors, driven by the Kingdom Legion to assault the city. The warriors on both sides of the wall were still comrades-in-arms of the same faction months ago, yet now they fought to the death! Amidst this, not a single genuine Mexica was killed—how could that make the enemy retreat!

"Oh, All Gods! The brutal Mexica possess such thunderous weapons and so many expendable Defectors..."

The Great Sun Chief Qiqini ascended the walls, inspecting the grim scene of bodies piled upon the fortifications, stepping over the battered and uneven damaged walls. His limbs suddenly became weak, his steps staggering.

"Ancestor bless! This Golden Bay City... it seems won't hold until the rainy season!..."

Chieftain Qiqini murmured softly, a hint of despair showing on his face. But beneath this despairing exterior, there seemed to be something hidden, just not yet resolved. After inspecting the ramparts and consoling the warriors of various tribes, he had just descended the city wall when he saw his trusted aide hurrying towards him, reporting urgently.

"Great Sun Chief! The chieftains of the Eastern tribes have gathered at the temple again! They are arguing over their casualties and are clamoring for you to go over!"

"Ah! The chieftains of the Eastern tribes... What do they want from me?"

"Witness of the Ancestors! They probably want our Golden Bay tribes to take on more city defense responsibilities, to send more warriors to guard the ramparts... They're saying it's the city-state of our Golden Bay tribes, not theirs!"

"Golden Bay City... is our city-state!..."

Upon hearing this, Chieftain Qiqini repeated softly, his inner scale swaying violently. Complex emotions showed on his face, with some angry words stifled in his chest, yearning to burst out but forcibly held back. After a while, he sighed, collected his thoughts, and nodded.

"Hmm, I'll go over there immediately! Have the city prepare some wine and beauties, and entertain the chieftains of the various tribes well!"

Darkness descended, mingling silence with the clamor, shadows flowing under the bonfire. When dawn came, it was another day of brutal siege, and then another day! The battlefield on and below the ramparts was already saturated with vibrant and dusky reds, heaped with various dead bodies. Such a sight of a mountain of corpses, even the kingdom's warriors who were seasoned in battle, found it somewhat alarming.

"Chief Divine, protect us! The morale on the top of Golden Bay City is nearly depleted, and the defending machinery is also exhausted. The surrendered Totonac soldiers have suffered four thousand casualties, reaching the threshold of what is bearable. So, starting tomorrow, we shall dispatch the javelin vanguard to begin the true and thorough assault!"

"Once Golden Bay City is captured, we must select a group of heroes who have achieved battle merits, reward them generously, and assign them to the Totonac vanguard camp! In this way, we can both consume and select, swiftly assimilating the surrendered army..."

Xiulote grasped the Scepter of the King, gazing into the distance, his face displaying the king's indifference. He turned back to the camp, looking away from the bloody battlefield, merely waiting for dusk's descent and the rise of a new sun.

Dusk deepened, the camp solemn. The young king sat in the tent, looking at the map of the Totonac land, his gaze already settled on the eastern bank of the Great River, near the forested plains along the river, precisely where the cities of Cone House and Coyote were.

"Family Head!"

Xiulote wore a thoughtful expression, absorbed in the view, when he heard a hushed call outside the tent.

"Hmm? Ecatl, what's the matter?"

"Family Head, an envoy has arrived..."

Guard Commander Ecatl lowered his head and entered the tent, followed by an envoy draped in a black robe and wearing a hood. As soon as the envoy entered, a faint scent of flowers spread throughout the tent.

Seeing this, Xiulote raised an eyebrow, his expression turned stern. Memories of long ago surfaced in his mind, and a hint of indigo blue seemed to flicker in his eyes.

"Ecatl?"

"Family Head, this envoy has been checked by the maiden Yilian... She carries no concealed weapons, nor any poison."

Guard Commander Ecatl reported cautiously to the king in the tent.

"Hmm?"

Upon hearing this, Xiulote raised an eyebrow and looked at the envoy in the hooded black robe.

"Honorable Death God Excellency! Please do not worry..."

The envoy laughed lightly, her voice magnetic and alluring. Then, with a gentle tug of her hands, she pulled off the black robe and hood, revealing a strikingly beautiful face, long flowing black hair, and a slender, graceful figure clad in pure white.

"As you can see, there is nothing on me... Absolutely nothing..."

Chapter 1233: The Envoy from Golden Bay City, the Serpent Priestess's Temptation

The orange bonfire flickered in the large tent, sparking the fresh scent of pine. Amidst this mild woody aroma, wafted a kind of enchanting feminine scent. It was rich and voluptuous like musk, reminiscent of the Temple of the Goddess of Fertility, yet as captivating as summer flowers.

"Hmm? Nothing at all?..."

"Indeed... Your Highness, if you don't believe, you can check for yourself..."

Xiulote sat cross-legged on a crocodile skin rug, scrutinizing the woman who entered the tent. His gaze moved from her meticulously groomed toes, slowly upwards along the exposed ankle, over a gracefully long path, pausing momentarily at a delicately pruned valley. Then, he raised his eyebrows, his gaze sliding over half an enticing arc, past a taut and smooth abdomen, then to the other half of a stunning arc, with a slight sigh in his heart. Finally, his gaze swept over her elegant neck, past slightly parted red lips, settling on a radiant and beautiful face.

The stunning view was unobstructed in its natural, captivating rise and fall. The young king maintained a calm expression, with his eyes still full of vigilance. He did not converse with the woman but looked towards the Guard Commander, Ecatl.

"Ecatl, has this woman washed her hands?"

"Family Head, according to the regulations set by Intelligence Officer Nashu, she has washed them."

The Guard Commander slightly bowed his head, reporting solemnly.

"The maid Yilian washed her. Even her nail beds on her fingers and toes were carefully washed with alcohol."

Hearing this, Xiulote nodded slightly, relaxing his expression. Most snake and frog poisons are toxic proteins or peptides. These toxins are all degraded by alcohol, thus losing their toxicity. In this era, the simplest method to counter toxins is alcohol. After confirming that the envoy was harmless, he finally stood up, directly facing the woman a few steps away, and asked in a deep voice.

"Envoy from Golden Bay City, who are you? Which tribe do you represent?"

The pale yellow firelight illuminated the fair-skinned woman, slightly lifting her black hair. The woman was washed clean, her lips were without rouge, and even her nails on hands and feet were transparent and pure. She lightly bit her lip, with some grievances showing in her eyes, coquettishly murmured.

"Honored Your Highness of the Death God Temple... I am the sister of Great Sun Chief Qiqini, a Priestess in Golden Bay City, representing the various tribes of Golden Bay... My name is Miyawakotel, you may call me Xiumiya..."

"Miyawakotel (miahuacoatl)? The legendary great serpent of the coast and earth, defeated by the Divine Descendant Warrior's long spear?"

Hearing this, Xiulote was slightly taken aback, with some suspicion.

"Xiumiya? (xomia)"

"Yes... Your Highness, I have come this time on behalf of the various tribes of Golden Bay, to surrender and submit to your great power! The chieftains and warriors of the City-State are willing to kneel, offer their hair to you, fight and battle for you! And I will serve you devoutly, as one serves the Supreme Divine, fulfilling your every need..."

Miyawa's eyes were like spring water, extending her nimble tongue to lick her moist lips. Her legs were closed tightly, rubbing together and making a rustling sound similar to a snake.

"Xiumiya, your Water Serpent! ...I am willing to prostrate beneath you, coiling like a snake around the Divine Tree, transforming into various positions... Ah, mighty Your Highness, please reveal your divinity..."

Upon hearing such words, Xiulote raised his eyebrows again. Inhaling the peculiar feminine scent, his gaze instinctively drifted, with a sudden flame igniting in his heart. The woman twisted her waist like a serpent, swaying a couple of steps away. A trickle of water was seeping from the trimmed valley, exuding an unspeakable allure.

"Your Highness... I am your snake! Soft, warm Water Serpent..."

Miyawa's cheeks flushed, her eyes slightly unfocused, evidently already aroused as if eagerly issuing an invitation. This alluring woman, under Xiulote's gaze, deftly crawled on the skin rug, revealing a snake-smooth back and enticing rounded curve. Then, like a serpent, she advanced two knee steps, bowing to

kiss Xiulote's foot. Then, the astonishing curves pressed against Xiulote's leg, gradually swaying upwards.

"Hmm..."

Xiulote's expression slightly changed, pursing his lips, feeling the full soft touch on his leg. His right hand rested on the long dagger drawn from his waist, a slight slice would end the woman's life. The woman, with a dazed look, gazed up at him, her lips curling into a smile. Afterward, she extended a nimble tongue, swiftly licked upwards across the ritual robe, then giggled coquettishly.

"Ah! ... Your Highness, how long has it been since you enjoyed a Serpent Woman's service? ... Without even entering the battlefield, your long spear is already like a giant's weapon... Truly a powerful Death God Your Highness!..."

"Hmm!..."

Xiulote's heart trembled, the flame burned more fiercely. Since Nashu became pregnant, he had abstained from women for a whole year. With a body strong as a Veteran Warrior at just over twenty, stronger primal impulses were present.

However, even with inner fluctuations, Xiulote's face remained unchanged. He calmly extended the sharp long dagger, placing it on Miyawa's slippery neck. Upon feeling the cold and slightly painful sensation, the alluring woman immediately froze, suddenly becoming as obedient and meek as a Water Serpent in an eagle's grasp.

"... Water Serpent Miyawa... you are unworthy of using the Death God's surname."

"Your Highness... please grant me a surname... I am willing to be your snake, of any kind..."

"No, I already have a snake."

Xiulote's expression was cold, gazing into Miyawa's tearful eyes, his lips slightly curved. At this moment, he suddenly thought of the little green snake in the Lake Capital City. His thoughts shifted, suppressing the flame in his heart once more.

"Miyawa, stop playing these seductive games. It doesn't serve the upcoming negotiation. If the various tribes of Golden Bay are to surrender, concrete terms are needed!... Mm, as a Divine Descendant of the Golden Bay tribes, are you one of the conditions? Are you supposed to offer yourself as a sacrifice in Golden Bay City's surrender to the Chief Divine?"

"Ah! To the Chief Divine?... Your Highness... I... no, not that..."

Upon hearing this, Miyawa shivered, her face revealing fear, her kneeling body trembling. As a Priestess of Golden Bay City, she clearly understood the Mexica people's obsession and fanaticism towards sacrificing Divine Descendants to the War God. Carefully avoiding the dagger, she gathered her long hair, wiped her tears, and her charming demeanor disappeared.

"Honored Your Highness of the Death God Temple! The tribes of Golden Bay are willing to open the gates, offer the entire City-State, all the wealth, and convert to worship the Supreme War God as the Chief Divine! Among our tribute, there are thousands of Allied Forces from the East... We humbly ask for you to accept the tribe's surrender, accept the loyalty of the chieftains and leaders..."

"Offering up the City-State, betraying the Allied Forces, and accepting the tribe's surrender and allegiance..."

Upon hearing this, Xiulote's eyes shifted, a smile crept up his lips. His right hand's dagger still rested on the woman's neck, but his left hand stretched out, ruffling her hair, giving it a squeeze. Then, he looked down at the woman kneeling beneath, lightly pinching her chin as if grabbing the water serpent the eagle's third inch.

"The Chief Divine bears witness! It seems we can finally have a good talk now!..."

Chapter 1234: Envoys of Golden Bay City—Negotiations Between the Eagle and the Water Serpent

The night was deep, and the fire flickered within the large tent, licking at the warm shadows. In the golden borders, the silhouette of Xiulote was tall and elongated, gradually swallowing the submissive

woman. He stood tall and upright, like a high-flying eagle, watching the graceful Water Serpent prostrate on the ground, his gaze cold as he ordered in a deep voice.

"Miyava, since Great Sun Chief Qiqini wishes to surrender and pledge loyalty to the Alliance... then I will give him three days to open the city gates and let the kingdom's legions enter the city!"

Upon hearing this, the Serpent Priestess Miyava lowered her eyes submissively, raised her head, revealing a face both pitiable and alluring, and softly pleaded.

"Mighty Highness!... All the tribes of Golden Bay wish to surrender to you. However, the chieftains of these tribes are all worried about the Alliance's tradition of sacrifice..."

"The eastern expedition against the Totonac is a war of faith spreading the glory of the Chief Divine! The divine descendants of the Totonac, unlike the divine descendants of Tlaxcala, are not commanded by divine decree to sacrifice all."

Xiulote remained calm, holding Miyava's smooth chin, and spoke mildly.

"If the chieftains of Golden Bay tribes can offer the city in surrender and hand over their Samurais... I will spare their lives and allow them to resettle in the Lake Capital City or the Qinchongcan Capital. I will grant them nobility titles, letting them enjoy a life of abundance."

Miyava initially felt joy at the king's words, then was startled internally.

If the chieftains of the Golden Bay tribes were to relocate to the two capitals, they would naturally have to abandon all their lands and lose the tribes and Samurais they had controlled for generations. In this era of inter-tribal conflict, without Samurais or ancestral lands, having just a noble title in the city teeming with Mexica great nobility offers no real status or wealth.

Such conditions are naturally unacceptable to the chieftains of Golden Bay, and falls far short of the minimum threshold instructed by Great Chief Qiqini before her mission.

Thinking of this, Miyava straightened her chest, carefully avoiding the blade. She enveloped the king's hand with her astonishing fullness and quietly pleaded again.

"Your Highness, the tribes of Golden Bay have settled here for generations, passing down for centuries... The Great Sun Chief is willing to swear a blood oath, to become your most loyal servant, offering all wealth and beautiful noble ladies... as long as we can guard Golden Bay for you..."

"Hmm?"

Upon hearing this, Xiulote raised an eyebrow. He felt the softness on his hand, calmly pressed the dagger, and spoke coldly.

"Is Qiqini still dreaming such beautiful dreams, wanting to keep Golden Bay City? If so, you can return! Clean your neck and chest, and await the kingdom's sacrifice!"

"Ah!..."

With the obsidian dagger pressed down, a blood line immediately appeared on Miyava's smooth neck. Kneeling, the Serpent Priestess' eyes widened instantly, and her whole body lightly trembled. She felt the sting on her neck, looking up at the king's shadowed face, a deep fear surged in her heart. Yet, within this fear of death, she also experienced a strange sensation she had never felt before.

"I am on the brink of death, looking up at a man as powerful as the God of Death, enduring his oppression. He controls my life, I breathe in his intense presence..."

Miyava raised her face, her gaze shifted, until it was close at hand. She trembled from her heart and yearned physically, unable to help but lick her lips and breathe shallowly.

"Ah... mighty Highness... I... have already washed clean, awaiting to be sacrificed to you..."

Hearing this response, Xiulote pursed his lips and furrowed his brow. He looked down at the woman at his feet, following her gaze as he lowered his head, and the flames in his heart suddenly spread like wildfire. The woman's expression instantly changed, showing reverent submission.

"Ah! Your Highness, your might is something I've never seen before!..."

"Miyava, stop playing such little tricks!..."

With a change of expression, Xiulote scolded out loud. He watched the woman's reverent yet bewildered eyes, felt her warm, low breath, and an instinctual joy and longing surged within his body. But this uncontrollable bodily instinct was like a burning fire, making him hot all over and restless like a beast. His gaze suddenly sharpened, revealing murderous intent in his voice.

"The kingdom's army, with the thunderbolt of the War God's divine punishment, can conquer Golden Bay City without spending even ten days! And the troops consumed in the siege are all the Samurais who surrendered from the tribes, without costing the kingdom's army a fraction! So, Miyava, my patience is very limited, and I have no time to waste words with you..."

"Now, give me a reason again, prove your value, and propose a practical condition!"

"Ah! Mighty Lord of Death... The tribes of Golden Bay can lead the kingdom's army into the city, allowing you to subdue the fifteen thousand East Allied Forces without much loss! Moreover, we are the allied leader of the Western Totonac tribes, and can send guides and envoys to persuade the jungle tribes of the southwestern inland to surrender to the kingdom's army..."

With lowered eyes, Miyava gazed with reverence at the standing king with eyes as gentle as water. She softly pleaded, softly intoned, swaying and rubbing her body like a snake stepped on by a Divine Eagle, trying to please the strong in a special way.

"Your Highness, we have no extravagant hopes of retaining Golden Bay City, willing to offer the city-state... just to keep our tribes, and obtain new territory in the South or West..."

"Offer the city-state, sell out allies, send envoys to subdue the inland, in exchange for preserving the tribes, relocating the territory..."

Hearing these terms, Xiulote reached out his hand, firmly grasping the woman's chin, stopping her alluring rubbing and swaying. In her cry of pain, he pondered in silence, showing contemplation.

The coastal city of Golden Bay, situated on the route to the East, with convenient maritime communication, must be controlled by the kingdom, even if in a manner of enfeoffment to offspring!

However, the location of Golden Bay City is indeed too remote. It is nine hundred li from the Lake Capital City of the Alliance, and as much as sixteen hundred li from the kingdom's Qinchongcan Capital! Being able to rely on the sea route, controlling the coastal key city-state is the extreme of what the kingdom can manage.

As for venturing inland, beyond a hundred or two li, the rolling jungles, swamps, and hilly terrain make it too complex and the distance too far. These areas, at the current level of transportation, are like the southern Yue of the Qin Han period, where the cost of governance is too high to incorporate into management, and even tribute is hard to extract decently.

Therefore, these vast inland territories will all be entrusted to the Alliance by Xiulote. Moreover, King Aweit will not directly rule these lands, only seeing them as enfeoffed territories, relocating the real power from the heartland of the Alliance to these regions.

In other words, the offer of a swap of territory by the Golden Bay tribes does not conflict with the kingdom's interests. However, they must leave enough population before migrating, as the basis for the kingdom's control over the city-state.

Having sorted out his thoughts, Xiulote lowered his head, looking at the tear-streaked, tear-stained face of Miyava, pinching her face as tender as egg white, and said calmly.

"Miyava, the tribes of Golden Bay offering the city-state, allowing the troops to enter and suppress the Allied Forces, then converting to worship the War God as Chief Divine, will preserve the chieftains and heads, preserving the wealth in their hands. Then, leave seventy percent of the tribes, send out guides and envoys to persuade... I will permit the rest to migrate and reestablish their city-state in the Totonac lands of the West!"

Chapter 1235: The Envoy from Golden Bay City, the Submissive Serpent Priestess

"Ah! Your Highness, leaving seven-tenths of the tribes and migrating with only three-tenths of the people?..."

Upon hearing this, the Serpent Priestess Miyava widened her eyes, licking her teeth, her emotions swirling. She knew that everything about the Golden Bay Tribes depended on the young king before her, so she transformed into a submissive Water Serpent, kneeling in front of the king, pleading aloud.

"Your Highness! Of the eighty to ninety thousand people in the Golden Bay Tribes, under the onslaught of the Great Alliance, some have scattered, some captured or killed... Today, only thirty thousand tribespeople remain in the city! Please have mercy on us... The chieftains of each tribe are willing to swear a blood oath, to kneel and pledge loyalty to you!"

"We will also do our utmost to assist the kingdom's army in capturing fifteen thousand Eastern Allied Forces alive! Among these allies, there are many Divine Descendant chiefs and chieftains of the City-States. As long as they are captured alive, the City-States and villages of the Eastern Totonac can be persuaded to surrender..."

"Hmm... Capturing the chiefs and chieftains of each tribe alive? Persuading the City-States of the East..."

Hearing this, Xiulote was intrigued, quite interested. The jungles of the East stretch endlessly, making logistics hard to maintain. If the difficulty of conquest can be reduced, even by one city or one village, it would greatly benefit the kingdom's campaign. He pondered for a moment, then made a promise.

"Miyava, if you and your brother Qiqini can find a way to capture the chiefs and chieftains of the Eastern tribes, helping the kingdom to subdue the allies... I will leave only ten thousand of the thirty thousand Golden Bay Tribespeople! The remaining twenty thousand, you may keep..."

Upon hearing this, Miyava's eyes gleamed with joy. She raised her head, looking into the eyes of His Highness, her expression pitiable.

"Mighty Your Highness! The Golden Bay Tribes are your eternal subjects, and I am your serving Water Serpent... Hmm, the remaining tribe population..."

"Witnessed by the Chief Divine! Twenty thousand, this is the final condition. However, if the tribes of Golden Bay migrate southwest and persuade the inland Feather Bird City and Earth River City tribes... The local tribes persuaded to surrender, you may also retain half!"

Xiulote, with a calm expression, laid out the final condition. He sheathed the dagger in his hand, one hand gripping the woman's chin, the other holding her hair, accepting her submission, speaking in a deep voice.

"Miyava, if you agree, you may leave. In three days, I want to see Qiqini's sincerity!"

"Ah, yes... Witnessed by All Gods and the Ancestors! I, the Serpent Priestess Miyava, am willing to follow the will of His Highness the God of Death and serve Him for life!..."

Miyava solemnly placed her hand on her heart, pledging an oath of loyalty and obedience. Then, the solemnity on her face suddenly vanished, revealing a seductive smile. She curled her red lips, her eyes enchanting, as she recounted ancient legends, even her breath becoming alluring.

"Your Highness, the sincerity of the Golden Bay Tribes doesn't require three days! In the epics inherited by the Tototanak people, there is a Chapter of the Divine Descendant Warrior and the giant serpent Miyawakotel, let me recite it for you..."

"The mighty Divine Descendant Warrior, wielding a long spear, fought fiercely with the sacred Water Serpent, causing the heavens and the earth to change color, and the sea waves to surge... In the end, he conquered the Divine Serpent, making it bow at the feet of the strong, and together with the Divine Serpent, birthed the ancestors of the Tototanak people..."

"Your Highness, among the Tototanak people, there has always been an ancient prophecy... Only when a warrior as radiant as the Sun unites with the divine giant serpent can the king of the Tototanak people be born!"

"Hmm? The prophecy of the Tototanak people?..."

Upon hearing this, Xiulote's eyes flickered, thoughtful. He gazed at the obedient and seductive Serpent Priestess Miyava before him, and she boldly gazed back at him.

"Miyava, it seems that what you want is quite a lot..."

"Your Highness, what I can give you is also quite extensive..."

The Serpent Priestess's eyes welled with spring water, her breath as fragrant as orchids, as she slowly approached. Her waist swayed dynamically, her whole body soft and supple, like a nimble Water Serpent, entwining and dancing around the king.

Xiulote raised his eyebrows, as if witnessing an ancient myth reappear before his eyes. After a few breaths, he bit his lip fiercely and suddenly reached out, gripping Miyava's neck, his gaze vigilant and dangerous like that of a wild beast.

"Miyava! What are you trying to do?..."

"Um... Your Highness... I want to... serve you... Cough, cough! Please... be gentle... I want to leave some... witness of the negotiation..."

Miyava's neck was grasped forcefully, gasping for breath like a Water Serpent caught at seven inches. Tears welled up in her eyes, her face showing a painful expression of suffocation, yet there was a strange trace within it, a trace of submission only to the strong.

"Leave some... witness of the negotiation?"

Hearing this, Xiulote raised an eyebrow. He took a deep breath, suppressing the surging flame of desire, and his strong hand gradually released. Then, he looked into the woman's watery eyes, reached out with another hand, and patted her flushed face, speaking coldly.

"Miyava, this is your way of serving, but I do not need it. A king does not submit to desire but makes desire submit!"

"As for the witness of the negotiation..."

Xiulote thought for a moment, then pulled out a delicate jade amulet from his bosom. The front of the amulet bore the emblem of the Chief Divine, and the back engraved with his name.

"Take it! This is my Jade Talisman; show this to Qiqini. In front of the Chief Divine, I never break my word. As long as he completes what should be done, he will receive what he deserves! I give him three days!"

"Ah... yes! His Highness the God of Death..."

Miyava pursed her lips, nodding. She stretched out her hands to receive His Highness's amulet, wearing it on her reddened neck as if it were some mark of ownership. Then, she looked up at His Highness, licking her white teeth, somewhat hesitantly asked.

"Mighty Your Highness, it seems you have been long without a joyful song... Why not let me serve you! The snake dance of the Serpent Priestess mimics the movements of a serpent, intertwining like a serpent... That would be an unforgettable experience you've never had..."

"Hmm?..."

Xiulote lowered his eyes, his whole body hot, as if burning on a charcoal fire. He hesitated for a few breaths and then quickly restrained himself, speaking calmly.

"Miyava, you may leave. The tasks I have ordered, execute them well. If done well... the twenty thousand Golden Bay tribespeople, you and Qiqini can have half each! The Tototanak tribes also have a tradition of matrilineal clans. For the Alliance, a Female Chieftain born of a Priestess is also possible!"

"Ah? Half each... a Female Chieftain commanding ten thousand tribespeople!..."

Upon hearing this, Miyava's eyes flashed, suddenly revealing a strong desire. Her ambition burned intensely, showing openly before the king without any concealment.

"Your Highness? Is this your... promise?"

"Hmm. Witnessed by the Chief Divine! This is my promise to you."

Xiulote nodded slightly, gazing down at the woman kneeling before him, affirming the promise just made. The Golden Bay Tribes have a heritage of hundreds of years, a Great Tribe in Tototanak land, prominent in reputation among all tribes. The Noble Chiefs of the western Tototanak land have been mostly swept away by the kingdom, the Divine Descendant noble lineage wiped clean.

Should the Golden Bay Tribes migrate southwest, deep into the difficult jungles, they must be dealt with first, split into two Great Tribes. The kingdom needs to plant its nails within these two tribes, preventing them from growing unchecked inland once the army departs. Given that Miyava offered herself and her status as a noble Divine Descendant Priestess, she happens to be the most suitable candidate!

"Of course, Miyava, you need to convert your faith to the Chief Divine, seeing Him as the Supreme and only one!"

"Praise the Chief Divine! Praise you, mighty His Highness the God of Death!"

Hearing such a promise, the Serpent Priestess Miyava's expression changed, intense desires and ambitions igniting instantly in her eyes. For a Serpent Priestess, power is the best aphrodisiac, and the pressure from the strong and death likewise...

"Your Highness! The War God is the Supreme Main God, and you are my only master... Please grip my neck, mark me with a witness of submission... I will be controlled by you, following your will, until I die for you!..."

"Hmm? A witness of submission..."

Xiulote lowered his head, observing the dreamy-eyed Serpent Priestess, thoughtful. After a moment, he slowly stretched out his hand, seizing the serpent's life and death...

The bonfire flickered, casting elongated shadows on the curtain, swaying like serpents. And the long wind of the night, coming from the Western Highlands, rustled the long grass in the lowland seaside of the camp. In the darkness, a majestic mountain eagle took flight, patrolling the jungle and seaside domain. It fell like an arrow, pouncing, from the reeds and marsh grabbed a struggling, hissing Water Serpent, then swiftly flew far away.

Chapter 1236: Song of the Nightshade

The spring wind stirred the tent, and the fragrance lingered within. The Serpent Priestess Miyava came quietly and left quietly, leaving the testament of submission on the leather rug in the tent.

Xiulote stood silently, gazing at the moist traces on the rug, a flame burning in his chest. His whole body felt unbearably hot, yet his eyes remained clear and bright.

"Family Head, the Totonac Serpent Priestesses are renowned for their revelry and cunning. Miyava's origins are unclear, her mind unpredictable... If you truly wish to bring her into your fold, have the female priestesses from the Temple take action, using Holy Water to properly instruct her! And for the purity of the family bloodline, it's best to monitor her for four months. If there's no visibility, only then can you touch her..."

Guard Commander Ecatl bowed his head, cautiously stepping forward to advise. He had been full of vigilance for the Serpent Priestess who arrived tonight, his hand always on the copper axe at his waist, never leaving it for a moment. In his heart, regardless of what submissive posture the other might present, only after undergoing the brainwashing of Holy Water could one truly be trusted!

"Hmm, I know. The scent on Miyava naturally has an aphrodisiac effect. Her display of such submission and abandon is nothing but a facade, half real, half false."

"The Serpent Priestesses' apparent admiration and submission, their allure and temptation, are merely means to manipulate the heart. They are adept at igniting men's desire to possess and their primal urges, thus seeking opportunities... However, in the current situation, the surrender of Golden Bay tribes should be genuine and undoubted. I can wait for three days!"

Xiulote's expression remained unchanged as he spoke calmly and unusually composed. Upon hearing such a reply, Guard Commander Ecatl showed admiration on his face. He took a step back, standing in respectful service without further words.

The campfire in the tent flickered, casting ripples of flame. The young king stood in place, took a deep breath, once again controlling his body's primal desires. Then, he gazed at the flickering fire before him, softly chanting.

"Divine witness! Everything that exists is like a dream and illusion, like dew or a flash of lightning, thus should be perceived..."

"All things in the world are superpositions of quantum field states. The desires of mortals are merely discrete electric field fluctuations. As a king, I must control desires. The error of being assassinated must not be repeated..."

Xiulote returned to the head of the mat, sitting cross-legged. However, the changes in his body made the sitting posture somewhat uncomfortable. He simply lay flat in the tent, closing his eyes to think.

"Next, the handling of Golden Bay City... Politically, we should integrate directly, culturally introduce Mexica customs and festivals, religiously spread the belief in the Chief Divine, economically reconstruct the east-west trade route. As for the most critical military, land should be divided and bestowed, elevating a group of the kingdom's and local samurai nobility as the foundation of governance..."

Looking at the reclining Your Highness, the Guard Commander lowered his head, pondering for a moment. Shortly after, he quietly stepped outside the tent, giving a couple of instructions. Soon, a wild and charming girl, barefoot with silver anklets, lightly entered the tent, coming to Xiulote's side.

"Jingle..."

"Hmm?"

Hearing the bell, Xiulote raised his head, showing surprise on his face. Although he hasn't seen her for four years, he recognized the girl before him with just one glance.

The girl had a generous appearance, wearing an obsidian necklace and a brightly colored short robe. Her eyebrows were delicate, her nose proudly raised, and her figure tall and agile like a leopard. Compared to four years ago, the difference was that her face now carried a subtle scholarly aura, and her figure was fully grown. At this moment, the girl looked at Your Highness, pouting stubbornly, her eyes filled with uncontrollable joy, yet hidden with admiration she could scarcely detect herself.

"Chief of Colima, Iymar's daughter, warrior Yilian?"

"Your Majesty, I am warrior Yilian. But I am also your tent's escort, the clerk official."

Clerk Official Yilian raised her head stubbornly, correcting. Seeing this familiar scene, Xiulote's lips curled into a smile, nodding in agreement.

"Alright! My Clerk Official Yilian. Over the past few years at Divine Power University in the Capital City, what have you learned?"

"Your Majesty, I learned the inherited scripts and poems, the sacred scriptures of the Chief Divine. I studied important astronomy and geography, the kingdom's governance and warfare... Also, the Divine Revelation Secrets personally written by you, left at Divine Power University!..."

Clerk Official Yilian smiled lightly, looking confidently into Xiulote's eyes. Hearing this, Xiulote raised his eyebrows, nodding. Subsequently, he smirked, pulling out a thick manual from the side of the seat cushion.

"Very good! Clerk Official Yilian, you are quite impressive! However, even though you're here responsible for recording documents, learning must not stop... Hmm, here's a mathematics manual I recently compiled, quite interesting. You can take it and do a few problems during your spare time every day..."

"Uh... math... mathematics manual?!..."

Upon hearing this, Clerk Official Yilian's confident expression collapsed instantly. She quickly jumped back, turning into a wild Tekos girl, vigorously shaking her head in refusal.

"By the Chief Divine, take it! As a clerk official, you need to know mathematics. If you don't understand something, you can come and ask me."

Under Xiulote's smiling gaze, Yilian accepted the "Village Priest's Introduction to Mathematics Manual" with a bitter look. She merely flipped through it slightly, feeling dizzy and bewildered. After a while, she raised her head again, looking hesitantly, speaking softly.

"Uh!... Your... Your Majesty... You must be tired? Let me rub your head... By the way! What song do you like to hear? I'll sing it for you..."

"Hmm... Despite the night being obscure yet exquisite, it holds death and murder... Then sing 'Song of the Night's Dusk'!..."

"Uh?... Your Highness, sing this song now?..."

"Why? This is one of the songs for nighttime prayers by the Alliance Priest, don't you know how to sing it?"

"Yes, yes."

Clerk Official Yilian hesitated, vigorously nodding. Then she cleared her throat, singing lightly, her expression distant and forlorn.

"... The Chief Divine's moonlight pours down. On the sea drifts the lone souls of the Feathered Serpent, along the river bank wander the ghosts of warriors slain...

Under eternal starlight, in the shadows by the riverbank, they silently roam, yearning for divine guidance...

When the first ray of dawn descends, the Heavenly Dog escorts the sun, while the cold fingertips of the departed rise...

You can hear their enraptured chant! It's the warriors' cries of battle before death!...

For the divines and glory, for wealth and belonging... The sacred battle approaches, not long now...

The seaside's white conches turn into the twilight's light in the sky. And the red death, under the gaze of the Chief Divine, arrives bright and swiftly!...

Xiulote lay with closed eyes, resting on the girl's thighs, listening to the melodious and gentle song, feeling the comfortable massage. He smelled the girl's fresh and serene fragrance, as if inhaling the wildflowers from Tekos Mountain, slowly relaxing. The fiery flame within him gradually diminished, burning subtly, leaving only tranquility in his heart, reflecting the starlight on the tent's top.

"Hmm... A truly unforgettable night! The death and dawn of Golden Bay City will soon... arrive..."

The king murmured softly, sleeping soundly in the girl's embrace, forgetting all desires, all fatigue, as if flying over the sea of stars and moon. And the girl, gazing at the king in her arms, sang gently, her eyes flickering like a stretch of starlight.

Chapter 1237: Murderous Intent Beneath the Night's Veil

The night star illuminates the earth, with a mysterious glow hidden in the forest. A black figure traverses silently through the woods, reaching the City-State by the seaside, and with the guidance of guards, quietly enters until it arrives at the Temple of the Feathered Serpent.

The great hall of the temple is lit with bonfires, carved with snake-shaped divine reliefs. The glow from the bonfires outlines the silhouette of a strong but indistinct figure in the dim side hall. That figure reaches out, touching the ancestral relief wall carvings, remaining motionless.

The flickering firelight casts the contours of the mural. To the left is a Divine Descendant warrior holding a Long Spear, as tall as a man. To the right is a giant serpent, half the size of the mural, battling with the warrior. Between the warrior and the giant serpent lies the earliest Totonac City-State!

"The legend of the Ancestor... The Descendant of the Sun God warrior, battling and merging with the giant serpent Miyawakotel..."

The Great Sun Chief Qiqini spoke softly, standing before the warrior on the mural. The faint light flickered, becoming difficult to describe. His shadow alternated between merging with and separating from the warrior in the mural, reflecting his complex, urgent, and anxious emotions.

"The Sun and the giant serpent, who is right and who is wrong?... "

"The divinity of the Sun and the divinity of the giant serpent are both inheritances from the Ancestors. The Sun is the father of the tribes, the light and honor; and the giant serpent is the mother who nurtures the tribes, darkness and cunning..."

A graceful figure in a Black Robe lightly steps to the front of the mural, standing on the serpent's side. Her lips curl up, and in the shadow of the serpent, she speaks, her voice low and hoarse.

"This is the duality of the Totonac people, merely for survival, there is no right or wrong to speak of..."

"Hmm... merely for survival, there is no right or wrong to speak of..."

Only then did the Great Sun Chief Qiqini shift his gaze to his vibrant sister in front of him, the Serpent Priestess Miyava. His eyes were a mix of complexity, lightly sniffing, and he asked in a low voice.

"Miyava, did you sing joyfully with the God of Death's eminence? Why can I only smell your scent and not a man's?"

"Brother, your nose is as sharp as ever, like the tongue of a serpent. It seems you are the one inheriting the giant serpent's divinity rather than me!..."

Miyava's eyes danced, and she replied with a smile. Then, she shook her head, her expression turning serious, somewhat resentful, yet inexplicably relieved.

"The God of Death's eminence did not touch me... He restrained his desires impeccably, just like the hardened blood jade in the southern mountain forest. He is a terrifying man, reminding me of the Divine Eagle atop the peaks, hunting the giant serpent in the mountains..."

"The Divine Eagle hunting the giant serpent? Are you saying?..."

"Yes. This man seeks to conquer the entire Seaside Lands, to conquer the Totonac Long Snake. The tribes' Golden Bay City is the center of the thousand-mile coast, more precisely the seven inches of the Totonac Long Snake. So, this City-State beneath our feet, he will capture it into his hands, he won't allow us to retain it!"

"Surrender the tribes' Golden Bay City..."

Hearing this, Qiqini lowered his eyes, remaining silent for a long time. After a while, his eyes turned dark, speaking in a low voice.

"Tell me, Miyava, since you have returned alive, then tell me... what terms did the God of Death propose to the tribes?"

Upon hearing this, the Serpent Priestess Miyava slightly lowered her head, her expression flickered inexplicably as she softly repeated Xiulote's original words.

"Within three days, we are to capture the chieftains and leaders of the Eastern tribes within the City-State. Invite the Mexica Army into the city to suppress and subjugate the Eastern Totonac Allied Forces... Once accomplished, the Golden Bay tribes will retain twenty thousand tribespeople to migrate to the southwest inland..."

"... After doing so much, even surrendering our City-State passed down through generations, we can only retain twenty thousand tribespeople?!"

Upon hearing such terms, the Great Sun Chief Qiqini's eyes flared with sternness, anger surging in his chest. He suppressed his fury, asking in a deep voice.

"Did you agree?"

"Mm. I agreed."

Miyava nodded, replying calmly.

"The God of Death promised that the Golden Bay tribes would convert to the Chief Divine, migrate inland, and seek new fiefs to settle. If we can subjugate Feather Bird City and Earthen River City, we can retain half of the tribespeople..."

"How can you agree to such terms betraying the Ancestors, betraying the Divine?!"

The Great Sun Chief Qiqini roared lowly, interrupting the words of the Serpent Priestess. A fierce look appeared in his gaze, directed at his sister's beautiful face, he spoke coldly.

"Miyava, the envoys sent to the Mexica Alliance have already brought back detailed responses. This Totonac eastern campaign is entirely the doing of the Lake Kingdom's God of Death's act alone, not part of the Mexica King's plan! Which means, this is the Lake Kingdom's army, not the Mexica Alliance's army! The situation within the Alliance is very delicate, if the God of Death's eminence were to perish here, both the King's faction and the Great Nobility's faction would welcome it, and they wouldn't launch a significant campaign of revenge...."

"The Lake Kingdom is thousands of miles away, relying solely on the Lord of the Lake's leadership over the various tribes. As long as he dies, the entire Kingdom will be instantly divided! Many Great Chiefs controlling legions will each occupy a land, engaging in mutual conflicts..."

"Therefore, as long as the Lord of the Lake dies, as long as he is killed! The Mexica's Totonac eastern campaign will collapse instantly, with no possibility of continuation!"

As he spoke, Qiqini's expression turned fierce, like a giant serpent ready to devour its prey. He extended his hand, pinching Miyava's chin, forcing her to look up at him, asking with a murderous intent.

"So, my sister, why didn't you assassinate the Lord of the Lake? Is it because you didn't bring the 'snake's fang'? Or is it that you're unwilling to sacrifice yourself for the continuation of the tribe?!"

"... Qiqini, if you don't want to die here, then let go of your hand!"

Facing Qiqini's questioning, the expression of the Serpent Priestess Miyava changed, putting away all her charms as a fierce look appeared on her face. She puffed her cheeks, her tongue moving in her mouth, like a sign of a serpent before its strike.

Seeing this scene, Qiqini felt a chill in his heart, immediately releasing his grip. He swiftly retreated two steps, drawing his Obsidian Long Dagger from his waist, vigilantly watching the Serpent Priestess.

The Serpent Priestess Miyava kept her cheeks puffed, her eyes vertical slits, coldly watching Qiqini for a while. Then, she deeply inserted a finger into her mouth, exerting a bit of force, and though a look of pain crossed her face, she didn't stop. She then fiercely extracted a perfectly embedded, unnoticeably abnormal 'tooth' from the gum where her wisdom tooth was located, spreading it in her hand!

In the dim firelight, this 'tooth' appeared slightly yellow, bearing the marks of time. The side and bottom of the tooth had clear carvings and embellishments, to fit the wisdom toothless gum of the Serpent Priestess.

In fact, this was a 'snake's fang' used by the Serpent Priestesses to mimic a venomous serpent's hunt, meant for assassination. The 'snake's fang' was extremely secretive, passed down only among the senior priestesses, used for a self-sacrificing attack on the most dangerous enemies. And this 'snake's fang' was also taken from a young woman's wisdom tooth, precisely sculpted, internally hollow, containing fresh blood-soluble snake venom, lethal when it draws blood.

"Qiqini, if you don't want to die here, then listen to me!"

With her face stern and her eyes cold, the Serpent Priestess Miyava glared at the silent Qiqini, and declared word by word.

"Witness the Ancestors! The God of Death's eminence was on guard the entire evening, he wasn't seduced by me, and we didn't sing joyfully. I had no opportunity to use the 'snake's fang' to draw his blood!"

"Moreover, by assassinating the God of Death's eminence, whether successful or not, I would truly have harmed the tribes and brought disaster to the Golden Bay Tribes! You must know, the Black Wolf Great Chief has been lurking like a wolf before his eminence, ready to pounce and bite us at any time! Think about it, you fool blinded by greed..."

Chapter 1238: Dance of the Nightshade

The night was deep, just before the dawn. Two revered Divine Descendants of the Golden Bay Tribes stood face to face before the murals of warriors and giant snakes, silent for a long time. The firelight reflected their changing expressions, like the coils of a snake in the shadows, swirling with complex and dark emotions.

"Miyava, the intelligence from the Alliance is indeed credible; it comes from the Lake Capital City. I am not deceiving you. As long as you assassinate the envoy of the God of Death, the kingdom's eastern expedition army will collapse! Even if they capture Golden Bay City, they will not be able to stay for long. The Divine Descendants of the tribes can leave by sea. And when we return, the land of the Totonac will still belong to the Totonac people!"

"Qiqini, I've said I have no opportunity to assassinate the envoy! Moreover, even if I sacrifice myself and succeed by luck, all that would be left for the tribes is destruction!"

The Serpent Priestess Miyava lowered her eyes and shook her head resolutely. Her face bore a fearless determination, though her thoughts were in turmoil. Holding the status of a Divine Descendant Priestess, she had broad retreat paths and better choices, unwilling to act like a Death Warrior and fetch chestnuts from the fire for others.

"The brutal Great Chief Black Wolf will break Golden Bay City and slaughter tens of thousands of the Golden Bay Tribes! Even if the Divine Descendants can leave and return once the kingdom's army retreats...without the Divine Descendants of the tribes, what does it mean? My brother, do you intend to sacrifice the entire tribe to save the so-called Totonac people?"

"...May the Ancestors and All Gods forgive me! Alas!"

The Great Sun Chief Qiqini sighed heavily after a long silence.

"In the end, the tribe's power is too weak. Even if a venomous snake can kill the Divine Eagle, it cannot escape the eagle's dying retaliation. Such a result would merely make us fodder for the hidden beasts in the dark..."

Upon hearing these words, the Serpent Priestess Miyava was moved inwardly and asked contemplatively.

"Brother, where exactly did you obtain the Alliance's intelligence from?"

"Hm...the source of the intelligence is an ordinary noble from the Lake Capital City, acquainted with the tribe's envoy, with no special background or origin. The news was obtained quite accidentally, leaked inadvertently by the man when he was drunk. Additionally, there are two rumors circulating in the Lake Capital City, which, through coincidence, also reached the envoy's ears. After the envoy got the intelligence, he was able to leave the Alliance's territory smoothly, bringing all the information back..."

The Great Sun Chief Qiqini spoke plainly, without any concealment.

"According to the Alliance's intelligence, assassinating the envoy of the God of Death is the East and West Totonac tribes' only and last chance!"

"Hehe! The serpent's hunt may seem like a rapid coincidence, but it is undoubtedly long planned..."

The Serpent Priestess Miyava laughed playfully, having listened to the origins of the information. A glimmer passed through her eyes, and she firmly judged.

"There must be a hidden venomous snake within the Alliance, eyeing the envoy of the God of Death!..."

"Yes, I know. Although that snake is concealed and acts without leaving traces, it cannot escape the perception of its kind. However, this matter does not concern us."

The Great Sun Chief Qiqini nodded slightly, his face calm. He closed his eyes, then opened them, and the anger and discontent from before vanished like smoke.

"The army presses upon us, and people's hearts are in turmoil. The Divine Punishment shakes the city walls, and Golden Bay City is on the brink of danger! At this point, there is nothing that can be done... The Ancestors have passed down the tribes of Golden Bay for four or five hundred years, and it cannot end in our hands! Since the envoy of the God of Death cannot be assassinated, to protect the tribe, a sacrifice must be made..."

As he said this, Qiqini narrowed his eyes, once again revealing ferocity. The Serpent Priestess Miyava licked her lips, her voice becoming seductive and dangerous once more.

"Brother, our time is very tight, only three days!"

"Three days' time...is enough!..."

The Great Chief Qiqini extended his hand, not to touch the relief warrior within reach, but to caress the snake's tongue of the giant serpent, as if absorbing its fresh danger and murderous intent. Moments later, he imprinted the murderous intent into his eyes and softly commanded.

"Miyava, tomorrow morning, gather many priests for a grand prayer ceremony, praying for the Divine Power of the Sun and the Feathered Serpent to resist the Mexica War God's Divine Punishment!"

"Hmm? Holding a prayer ceremony at this time?...You mean to, in the name of the ceremony, separate the chieftains and trusted aides from the East and gather them in the Temple for prayer...then secretly hide the Temple Warriors and wait for the opportune moment to act?"

The Serpent Priestess Miyava's eyes flickered, and she had quickly understood the entire procedure. The Great Chief Qiqini nodded in appreciation, smiling faintly as he continued.

"The first day of the ceremony will be held normally. I will send out an envoy to secretly notify the chieftains of each tribe: during the leader's prayer on the second day, secretly discuss the plan to retreat from Golden Bay City. The boats in the hands of each tribe are very limited, able to let only a thousand or so people escape. To keep the warriors in the city unaware, ask them to bring only their most trusted escorts, and meet in secret deep within the Temple... concerning life and death, they should all come!"

Hearing this, the Serpent Priestess Miyava raised her eyebrows and smiled. She pondered briefly and added a guaranteed step to the plan.

"Then I'll have the priestesses prepare special Blood Wine...after the discussion, you will certainly drink Blood Wine together to swear to the Divine! Once the discussion is over, the chieftains' vigilance will relax. The rich taste of the Blood Wine itself masks the narcotic hidden within, which is difficult to detect...even those with a keen sense of smell, like you, will assume it's just the heavy scent of blood!"

"Very well! I will personally drink the Blood Wine to ease their guard. At the perimeter of the secret chamber of the Temple, I will also hide a batch of Personal Guard Warriors as a final assurance."

As he spoke, Great Chief Qiqini raised an eyebrow and gave his sister a deep look. Today's Miyava seemed to be behaving a bit too stubbornly... When the Tribe is in a dire situation, his authority as the Great Chief is clearly shaken.

Thinking this, Great Chief Qiqini's gaze became deep, he extended his palm, looking at the Serpent Priestess in front of him.

"Miyava, you need to unlock the anesthetic for me as soon as possible. If all goes well, I will dispatch a secret envoy, coordinating the kingdom's legion to enter the city the night after next... At that time, I will appear before the God of Death's Temple as the Great Chief of Golden Bay and pledge my allegiance!"

"...Yes, as you command, Great Chief of Golden Bay!"

Upon hearing this, Serpent Priestess Miyava pursed her lips and bowed her head to Great Chief Qiqini according to the tribe's custom. Great Chief Qiqini grasped the hair of the Serpent Priestess before his face broke into a smile. He patted his sister's shoulder and spoke gently.

"Miyava, as long as the Tribe can be maintained... you and I will become the highest leaders in all the tribes of Golden Bay!"

Hearing this, the eyes of Serpent Priestess Miyava twinkled, and her lips curled slightly. She suggested with alluring eyes as she glanced at her brother and smiled.

"When the Mexica's army enters the city, there's always a need to clear out the stubborn old god followers who refuse to convert... among the tribes, those Elders who hold power and Warriors often oppose your opinions... Brother, we can only spare twenty thousand tribes, but they must belong to us!"

"Hmm? Are you saying, use the Mexica's hand to clear the tribe..."

Upon hearing this, Great Chief Qiqini was silent for a moment, then subtly nodded.

Seeing this, Serpent Priestess Miyava's eyes were filled with laughter, her demeanor even more seductive. As long as the stubborn Elders within the tribe are cleared, splitting the tribe in two, the resistance to assuming the role of Female Chief will disappear. Of course, she can't tell this to her brother right now.

"Praise the Ancestors and All Gods, may They protect us!"

"Hmm, praise the Ancestors!... May the Chief Divine protect us!"

Great Chief Qiqini emphasized in response, words slightly different.

"...Haha!... Brother, in front of the Mother of Serpents, Miyawakotel, you've already started praying to the Chief Divine? Truly an outstanding Totonac Warrior..."

Hearing Qiqini's prayer, Serpent Priestess Miyava was slightly taken aback before pointing at the giant serpent mural in front and laughed, swaying with excitement. Then, she walked barefoot to the center of the side hall and slowly removed her Black Robe. There she stood, boldly naked, and danced the Snake Dance that was unfinished that night.

In the cold, dark side hall, under the gaze of the spirit murals, with her brother's indifferent gaze, the graceful Serpent Priestess danced flexibly like a snake. She licked her red lips, flicking like a snake's tongue, and turned around to look back, as if her head was a snake's moving. Her enticingly undulating waist and abdomen waved like a snake's body, and her rising and lightweight bare feet, like a snake's tail, were captivating.

"The great serpent Miyawakotel swims in the darkness. Only a true Warrior like the Sun can have her submit, and produce the King of the Totonac people..."

Serpent Priestess Miyava danced the Snake Dance, chanting emotionally, her voice hoarse and alluring. During the interlude of the dance, she turned back, lowly panting while smiling flirtatiously, looking at her silent and unfeeling brother.

"Hmm huh!... My dear brother, tell me, are you truly a Warrior like the Sun?"

Upon hearing this, Great Chief Qiqini squinted, his gaze showing a flash of danger.

"Isn't the Divine Descendant of the Sun a Warrior? Didn't the serpent that once enticed him know?"

"Hmm, yeah!... The former serpent thought so too! That's why she offered herself, to let the Warrior taste fully..."

Serpent Priestess Miyava smiled nodding, licking her lips, showing relish.

"But now, the serpent doesn't think so! She's seen a true Warrior, stronger than the actual sun, invincibly strong!..."

"..."

Great Chief Qiqini remained silent, turned around, and left with large strides. Only the solitary dancing Serpent Priestess remained in the dark hall, dangerous like a snake, yet seductive like a snake. Until the dance ended, she leaned like a snake on the ground, grasping the Jade Talisman around her neck and lowly laughed in prayer.

"Praise the Chief Divine! May the temple grant me divine favor..."

Chapter 1239: Chieftains of the Eastern Tribes

The dawn light emerged from the horizon, illuminating the city-state poised between the jungle and the coast, marking another brilliant spring day. In Golden Bay City, the fresh shoots sprouted from the plants, while the ancient stone carvings shimmered with liveliness. The towering Temple of the Sun and the grand Temple of the Feathered Serpent stood side by side at the center of the city-state. And as the sun ascended to its zenith, a grand prayer ceremony was held simultaneously before these two sacred temples!

"The Sun God bestows divine power, the Feathered Serpent flies in the sky! The Aztec evil demon's divine thunder, under the protection of the gods, will lose its soul and fall into powerlessness!..."

The priests of the city-state ignited the blazing sacred fire and lifted the swirling divine smoke. They chanted within the divine smoke, performed sacrificial dances before the sacred fire, and wielded sharp obsidian daggers to sacrifice the chosen offerings.

Besides the thousands of samurais guarding the city, over forty thousand Totonac warriors and tribespeople gathered in front of the temple plaza, prostrating themselves in prayer. They harbored naive expectations, longing for the descent of divine power to protect the city-state and their tribes, resisting the Mexica's invasion!

"Oh gods! Please protect your citizens, protect the Totonac!"

Sincere cries echoed throughout the city-state, transmitting afar. Outside the city, the Mexica legion, seemingly holding reverence for all gods, was stirred by the prayer ceremony, temporarily halting their brutal siege. The prayer ceremony within the city thus grew even grander and more fervent. Totonacs shouted out the names of the Sun God and the Feathered Serpent, tears flowing in excitement, even slashing their cheeks.

Amidst this chaos and frenzy at the brink of despair, the envoys of the Great Sun Chief moved low-key, bringing the message of the next day's leaders' council to discuss the evacuation plan to the chieftains of various tribes.

The prayer ceremony on the second day was still bustling and boiling. Numerous tribal leaders held blessings and praises to the Sun God in the Temple of the Sun, shedding tears of devotion. Then, as the sun inclined to the west, the praying crowd dispersed, and the chieftains led a scant few trusted aides deep into the Temple of the Feathered Serpent. There, a discussion concerning the lives of everyone officially commenced!

"...Golden Bay City has 60 war boats, capable of carrying four hundred people. The first group to be evacuated could only be the Divine Descendants and warriors of the Golden Bay tribe!"

Qiqini, the Great Sun Chief, had a severe expression and was uncompromising in his words to the arguing great chieftains.

"As for the Divine Descendants of Rabbit Hill City and Grass Altar City, they must either wait for the second round of boats to return or take the war boats of other city-states... However, the two esteemed chieftains can go with me!"

"Yes! The ancestors bear witness! Our Conical House City tribe only has 40 war boats, barely enough to carry three hundred people. The first batch to board will be the tribal Divine Descendant warriors; there really isn't room for any more..."

Yoltzin, the Conical House City chieftain, replied loudly. After being defeated by the ambush of the Black Wolf by Adobe River, he retreated to the city-state across the Great River and then returned with new tribal warriors. For the holy war called by the Holy City, he participated devotedly without reservation. But now, the matter was about life and death, leaving no room for negotiation.

Thinking about this, he looked at his fellow misfortunate comrade, Lin Wolf Mayakun, the Coyote City chief, who also returned with his army after a defeat.

"Lin Wolf, your Coyote City has more than 50 war boats, what do you think?"

"Sigh, the ancestors bear witness! This time I returned with troops, bringing almost the last of the city-state's warriors!"

Lin Wolf Mayakun sighed, his face shadowed with an inextricable worry.

"Golden Bay City cannot be held. Next will be Conical House and Coyote Cities across the Great River. In any case, I must take the backbone of the tribal warriors back... like this, even if the city-state cannot be held, the tribe can still retreat into the jungle inland, and fight a guerrilla war with the Mexica in the jungle!"

Upon hearing this, Warrior Chief Teotllara of Ke Shi City frowned and pursed his lips without speaking. He glanced at Chief Ozli of Sacrificial Lake City tribe, both nodding slightly, confirming each other's intentions.

If Golden Bay City was the first line of resistance against the Mexica, then Conical House and Coyote Cities, located a hundred or two li to the east of Adobe River, were the second line. Going further east three or four hundred li was Ke Shi City and Sacrificial Lake City, acting as the third line.

Both of them led two thousand tribal warriors, traveling along the coast over four hundred li to provide support. Now, they had to abandon the city and retreat, so the essence and backbone of the tribe must be taken back as much as possible! With seasoned veteran backbone, it's possible to summon multiple times the able-bodied men from the tribe, train them day and night, and organize a continued resistance force!

"Ahem! Ke Shi City only has over 40 war boats... Divine Rabbit Tochina, you might have to wait for the second batch of boats..."

"Yes! Our Sacrificial Lake City is the same!"

"Damn! Wait for the second batch of boats? Nonsense! Will the boats even return after you escape? Would the Mexica allow you to return? This city of Golden Bay, without chieftains and Divine Descendants, how could abandoned warriors and tribespeople hold it any longer!"

Rabbit Hill City chief, Divine Rabbit Tochina, gritted his teeth in anger, his face filled with rage. He had led two thousand Rabbit Hill warriors from the depths of the southern jungle, at the intersection with the land of the Mistec people, traversing four hundred li of jungle to aid. He came by land, not a single boat under his command! Yet now these comrades planned to abandon him, fleeing alone!

"Ha! If you leave me behind and escape, I'll bring the tribal warriors to surrender to the Mexica!"

"Divine Rabbit Tochina, you dare to surrender to the brutal Aztecs? Coward!"

Upon hearing this, Chief Ozli of Sacrificial Lake City instantly turned red-eyed. His father, Chief Olo, was ambushed and shot dead by the Black Wolf chief of the Mexica, embroiling him in irreconcilable blood feud. To him, even if he had to fight to the last man, dying at the hands of the Mexica, he would never surrender!

"You will be sacrificed by the Aztecs, with your heart cut out! Your skull will be collected!"

"Ha! Our Rabbit Hill City Tribe is deep in the jungle, four hundred miles from the coast. What use is it to kill me? The city-state will just elect a new chieftain! Even if the Mexica have a large army, they will find it difficult to invade such a deep jungle."

The Divine Rabbit Tochina glared, his expression filled with anger, yet his words remained steady, clearly pondered over for a long time.

"Currently leading the Mexica legion is His Highness of the Death God Temple, bestowed by Divine Revelation! His wisdom is far superior to that of the Black Wolf who only knows how to bite! He will certainly accept my surrender!..."

"Divine Rabbit Tochina, the priests of the Hidden Serpent Holy City have proclaimed the will of the Divine! The chieftains and warriors of the Totonac tribes must resist the invading Aztecs to the end for the Divine and our ancestors!"

Grass Altar City Chieftain, Santu Tlaco, spoke for the first time with a solemn expression. Grass Altar City is located near the ruins of the First Ancient City, adjacent to the Hidden Serpent Holy City, and adheres closely to the priests' divine directives. Since the death of the Great Chief Qua Serpent of Hidden Serpent, Santu Tlaco has become vaguely the most highly esteemed among the chieftains.

"The Grass Altar City Tribe has over 40 war boats. Tochina, I will allocate 10 war boats to you! Take a few dozen trusted aides and leave with me... Regardless, you must maintain the independence of the Totonac tribe in the southern jungles and mountains!"

As he said this, Santu Tlaco's eyes deepened, his words growing heavier.

"Rabbit Hill City connects to the southern mountains, linked with the Mistec and Zapotec peoples. You have the best geographical advantage and can even retreat into the mountains! Perhaps, among the tribes, you are the final hope, able to hold out the longest!"

Upon hearing Santu Tlaco's words, the arguing chieftains gradually fell silent, their faces solemn yet determined. Great Sun Chief Qiqini lowered his eyes with a silent sigh, finally understanding why His Highness of the Death God Temple repeatedly demanded the capture of these chieftains and leaders of the Eastern tribes.

"These great chiefs are the true Totonac warriors among the Eastern tribes!... "

Great Sun Chief Qiqini pursed his lips, surveying the people in the Temple. These esteemed chieftains of the city-states, who responded to the call of the Holy City and led city-state warriors across hundreds of miles to aid, are the most unyielding resistance forces among the Totonac tribes!

No matter how they argue verbally, their hearts are with All Gods and ancestors, with the tribal soul inherited for hundreds of years! As long as they hold power in their city-states, the Mexica will have to conquer each city-state through hundreds of miles of jungle, fighting for years if not longer!

Complex emotions surged in Great Sun Chief Qiqini's heart. He slowly closed his eyes, silent for a moment, and when he reopened them, sincere emotion shone through.

"Ah! Santu Tlaco is right... Enough, sacrifices must be made for the future of the Totonac people! Hence, Golden Bay City will allocate 10 war boats to transport the divine warrior descendants of Rabbit Hill City!"

Hearing this, Santu Tlaco nodded. He waited for a moment, but no other chieftain spoke. He shook his head covertly before turning to the chief of Rabbit Hill City, speaking in a low voice.

"Divine Rabbit Tochina, with 20 large boats, depart with us! The tribe is not at its end; we must continue to resist!"

"...20 large boats, carrying over a hundred..."

The Divine Rabbit Tochina pressed his lips tightly, his expression changing. After a while, he nodded heavily, agreeing with a firm statement.

"Witnessed by the Ancestors! I will resist to the end!"

"Good! Praise the Ancestors and All Gods! With this, we have reached a consensus! Three days from now, we will gather all fleets and withdraw from the coast as one!"

At this, Great Sun Chief Qiqini's face showed determination. A heavy sorrow appeared on his face as he chanted low prayers to the Feathered Serpent Divine statue in the hall.

"May the ancestors of Golden Bay City, who bear spears, protect our journey! May the Great Serpent of the coast and land protect the path of the tribe!... One day we will return to this place and rebuild Golden Bay City for the Totonac people!..."

"May All Gods and ancestors protect us!..."

Witnessing this, all the Totonac great chieftains lowered their heads, devoutly praying to the divine statue. The chieftain of Grass Altar City, Santu Tlaco, carried a dignified and solemn expression, respectfully saluting Great Sun Chief Qiqini, who had decided to abandon the Golden Bay Tribes.

Great Sun Chief Qiqini raised his eyebrows, his expression remaining sorrowful but with a hint of something indescribable. In front of the chieftains, he managed to squeeze out a faint smile, attempting to present a composed demeanor.

"Witnessed by the Divine! The common ancestors of the Totonac people, protect the divine descendants of each tribe! We pledge an oath of resistance to the end, refusing to surrender to the evil demons of the Aztecs!... Next, let us drink blood wine together and swear our oath with blood!"

Chapter 1240: The Eastern Chieftains' Ambitions

"Let us drink the blood wine and swear an oath of blood!"

"Never surrender, fight to the death against the Aztecs!"

"Someone, quickly bring the blood wine!"

In the Temple, the chieftains of many tribes from the East were fervently shouting with excitement. Great Sun Chief Qiqini turned to whisper a few words to the Head Warrior Qiyang standing behind him. The latter gave a deep bow and headed out of the hall.

Soon, the Serpent Priestess Miyava swayed gracefully, carrying a clay pot filled with blood wine, accompanied by four lithe Serpent Assistant Priestesses. The strong smell of blood wafted from the opened clay pot, adding a sense of mystery and strangeness to the ancient Temple, while masking all other scents.

The Serpent Priestess bore a solemn expression, dressed in a pure white priestess robe, her neck as gracefully elongated as that of an egret. At this moment, her face held the purity and nobility of a High Priest, yet with an innate charm and allure. Her bright eyes flowed as she exchanged glances with each chieftain in the hall, offering a gentle smile, and poured out cups of crimson rice wine, personally handing them to the brave chieftains.

"...The Serpent Priestess Miyava is truly a rare beauty among the tribes!"

The chieftains in the hall accepted the blood wine, looking at the enchanting and sacred Serpent Priestess before them, their thoughts began to stir. The Golden Bay Tribes had a history spanning hundreds of years, with the Serpent Priestess carrying the bloodline of the Divine Descendants, granting her high esteem. The Serpent Priestess Miyava before them was also the sister of the Great Sun Chief Qiqini, and she too held the right to inherit leadership of the tribe.

If one were to marry her, not only could they enjoy the beauty of the priestess, but they would also have an excuse to seize control of the Golden Bay Tribes! It should be known that from the region around Golden Bay City, there were at least twenty to thirty thousand tribespeople who had fled to the Eastern Totonac tribes!

"...Just by marrying her, one could gain both beauty and the tribe!..."

Under normal circumstances, such thoughts would merely pass through the chieftains' minds. For, undoubtedly, this was challenging the Great Sun Chief Qiqini's rule over the tribe. But with the imminent evacuation, the Great Sun Chief could only lead away a few hundred samurai, soon becoming dependent on others, losing his foundational rule...

Thinking of this, Ozli, the young and ambitious chieftain of the Lake Sacrifice City tribe, could hardly restrain himself. He seized the opportunity when Miyava handed a cup, catching her delicate hand in return, eagerly extending his proposition to the alluring Serpent Priestess.

"Miyava, during this evacuation, why don't you join our Lake Sacrifice tribe by boat? I have just inherited the leadership of the Lake Sacrifice tribe and have yet to take a wife. Our powerful tribe needs a noble lady! Ah, let us sail the Sacrificial Lake, like our earliest ancestors, and pray to the spirits at the lake's bottom!..."

The so-called Sacrificial Lake refers to a vast Great Lake, situated west of the Great Divine Mountain of Fire, also an ancient site for sacrificial rites. Since the distant Olmec Era, it has been a tradition for the coastal tribes' ancestors to hold sacrifices there, praying to the spirits residing in the lake's depths. Typically, the first part of the sacrificial rite involves offering sacrifices imbued with life force into the lakebed, in hopes of tribal prosperity. The second part of the ceremony is where the young men and women of the tribe, aboard numerous small boats, sing and dance freely, receiving blessings from the spirits, and nurture new life.

Upon hearing such words, the chieftains in the hall were visibly stirred, gripping their wine cups, casting their gazes forth. The Great Sun Chief Qiqini narrowed his eyes, and a cold killing intent flashed briefly within them.

The Serpent Priestess Miyava remained at ease, seemingly unfazed. She chuckled softly, her fingers dexterously twisting, teasingly scratching the palm of Chieftain Ozli's hand. The slippery sensation triggered a tremor in Ozli's heart; his gaze locked onto Miyava, seeing only her alluring face.

"Oh! Mighty Miyawakotel, forever roams in the darkness. Only warriors as radiant as the Sun can emit beams of light to lay her down in submission!... Mighty Chieftain Ozli, are you truly such a Sunlit Warrior?"

Hearing this, Chieftain Ozli of the Lake Sacrifice tribe was invigorated. Raising his fist, he pounded his chest heavily, urgently pledging.

"May the ancestors be my witness! I am the most fearless and battle-hardened warrior in the City-State! Even if it's the Aztec's Eagle Warriors, I will personally sever their heads as an offering to the most beautiful you!"

"Indeed, Chieftain Ozli, I believe in you... and will wait for you..."

The eyes of the Serpent Priestess Miyava glimmered, displaying a maiden-like admiration. Thereupon, she blinked, gently withdrawing her hand while Chieftain Ozli's longing gaze lingered upon her, and she approached the last great chieftain, Santu Tlaco.

"Honorable Chief Santu, here is your blood wine! The All Gods witness your piety and self-discipline, for which I have always held deep admiration!"

Santu Tlaco maintained a calm demeanor, solemnly accepting the blood wine with both hands. Looking at the Serpent Priestess coveted by all, he paused in contemplation, then solemnly vowed.

"Respected Serpent Priestess, though you hold an esteemed position with the ancient priestly lineage of Golden Bay, if you do not wish to go to any tribal territory... I swear by the name of the ancestors! You shall have a place within the Temples of the Gods in the Hidden Serpent Holy City!"

...

Hearing this, Serpent Priestess Miyava raised her eyebrows and gave the Holy Land Chieftain a deep look. She understood the weight of this promise; it was a shelter from the prying eyes of the chieftains of the eastern tribes within the divine authority of the priests. If she really left with everyone and lost the foundation of the Golden Bay Tribes, she would also lose their protection. At that time, she would only have the position and power to protect herself by going to the Temple in the Holy Land and taking charge of a Goddess's temple!

"Thank you, Holy Land Chieftain..."

Serpent Priestess Miyava was silent for a moment, then gently nodded. She smiled gratefully at the Holy Land Chieftain and fluttered away gracefully like a butterfly.

"Alright! The Feathered Serpent Divine watches over everything, and also our choices!"

The Great Sun Chief Qiqini's face was as calm as water as he looked at the chieftains in the hall. The retreat had not yet begun, but these great chiefs of the eastern tribes were already contemplating the annexation of the Golden Bay Tribes. At this moment, he felt no guilt about the upcoming plan, and was even somewhat eager.

"Come! Let us drink the blood wine together and swear to the All Gods! All tribes must unite as one and fight to the death against the Aztecs!"

"Witnessed by the All Gods! United as one, fight to the death!"

The sky gradually darkened, and bonfires were lit in the Temple, casting the serene face of the Feathered Serpent Divine in a somewhat dim light. The chieftains swore in unison, then without hesitation, drank all the blood wine in their hands!

Serpent Priestess Miyava stood by the divine statue with a sacred yet gentle smile, watching the chieftains who had drunk the blood wine. She watched the devout Holy Land Chieftain sip it without spilling a drop of wine. The other chieftains were similar, without any doubt, and did not miss drinking the oath blood wine.

Only the Great Sun Chief Qiqini drank with a bold motion, spilling almost half of the blood wine while only drinking less than half a cup. The Sacrificial Lake City Tribe Chieftain Ozli watched the Great Sun Chief's actions and only followed suit, boldly drinking and spilling after the former finished. After drinking, he provocatively glanced at the Great Sun Chief and then raised his head with a smile at Miyava, like a stag competing for a mate.

"..."

Seeing this, Serpent Priestess Miyava gave a charming smile, nodded at Chieftain Ozli, and made a mysterious heart gesture over her chest. Then, she turned her head, ignoring Chieftain Ozli's excited expression, and glanced at her brother's most trusted aide, Head Warrior Qiyen.

Head Warrior Qiyen kept his head down, loyal and guarding closely by the Great Sun Chief's side. He cautiously held the red bronze axe at his waist, hardly leaving Qiqini's side. He only lightly sipped the blood wine earlier, not actually drinking it. Meanwhile, the trusted aides brought by the other great chiefs were completely unaware and drank the sacred blood wine.

"Haha! What good wine! This is the fine wine of the Totonac people, containing the blood of the divine, leaving an endless aftertaste! Hahaha!..."

Qiqini, having finished the blood wine, looked around at everyone and laughed heartily. Upon seeing this, the chieftains of the eastern tribes joined in the hearty laughter.

"Haha! Witnessed by the All Gods! The victory of the divine war will surely be ours with all tribes devoutly united!"

"Indeed! The warrior who fights most bravely against the Aztecs is truly like the Sun's warrior! And only a warrior truly like the Sun is qualified to possess the Serpent Woman imbued with divinity!"

"Praise the Ancestors! Our eastern tribes must resist to the end! Under no circumstances should we surrender to the Aztecs who force us to change beliefs and plunder our tribes!"

"Haha! The leader capable of leading all tribes to resist the Aztec invasion should become the king of the Totonac people! It is time for the Totonac tribes to produce a true king!"

"Hahahaha!..."

The chieftains laughed heartily, using the cover of the wine's influence to tentatively reveal their ambitions and thoughts in this rare occasion. Their eyes flashed, they exchanged glances, and continued to laugh heartily...

"Hahahaha! Hahahaha!... Uh!..."

As they laughed, their bodies suddenly paused, and their laughter abruptly stopped. Then, their gazes turned dazed, showing surprise on their faces, as they swayed and fell to the ground, like frogs leaping into a pond, "plop, plop."...

The bonfire cast flickering shadows on the statue of the Feathered Serpent Divine. Serpent Priestess Miyava's eyes curved beautifully, she smiled brightly, like a sacred Feathered Serpent.