

Civilization 1311

Chapter 1311: The Old Fox's Proposal, Aid and Reward

The chieftain's longhouse was filled with the aroma of herbs. The fire was bright and warm, without any choking smell. On closer inspection, the wooden house was designed with specialized flues, and the firewood had been pre-treated. All this indicated that the owner of the longhouse also possessed extensive knowledge. This knowledge did not come from books and texts, but was slowly thought out and summarized through long-term practice and reflection, having become an intrinsic part.

"Esteemed tribal shaman..."

Scholar Mikki remained silent for a long time before calming the emotions within him, recognizing the identity of the shaman wise man opposite him. The Shaman Chieftain Cedar's incisive questioning struck to the core, surprising him greatly. He had guessed the beginning of the story yet could not predict its development, thus losing the lead in the conversation.

Beside him, the cloaked hunter Le Tian also showed an expression of shock. He had never seen the usually amiable Cedar Shaman become so aggressive. But soon, he realized the reason behind the shaman's actions.

"Brown bears in the woods only roar when they feel threatened... Ancestors! Does Cedar Shaman truly view this newly arrived, just a few hundreds strong longboat tribe... as a threat that must be confronted?"

With this thought, the cloaked hunter Le Tian turned his head and stared at Scholar Mikki. Mikki pursed his lips, hesitated for a moment before deciding to speak candidly.

"Our fleet arrived here following the Supreme Main God's decree, guided by the Divine Revelator! We have two main objectives: firstly, to spread the faith of the Supreme Main God, guiding the Northern Tribes to convert under the banner of the Main God! Secondly, the exploration northwards, to continue seeking another great bay and a route to the western New Continent!..."

"Personally, I came to the North Bay Tribe to establish mutual trust, and perhaps even become allies sworn with blood. The fleet trekked across thousands of miles, reached the distant Golden Bay, indeed lacking some food. If you are willing to trade, we can exchange the supplies on our ships for the food you have stored... And the gift I present to you is the sample of trade, the price is sure to be fair!"

The Shaman Chieftain Cedar listens patiently, eyes flickering in the firelight. Only after Scholar Mikki finishes speaking does he ask the first question.

"The tribes on the longboat, I wish to inquire, where exactly do you come from?"

"We come from the distant south, south of the Lake of the Yaji People, south of the Wilderness... a land within a lake on the highlands, thousands of miles from your tribe!"

"South of the Yaji People? South of the Wilderness? That highland... thousands of miles away..."

Upon hearing Mikki's answer, the shaman unusually blanked out for a moment. Moments later, he squinted his eyes, looked at Mikki, and asked softly.

"The tribes on the longboat... While I was traveling in the south, I heard that further south of the highlands, there is a tremendously powerful tribe that reveres the Fierce Tiger and the Eagle, also living nearby the lake... Is that your tribe?"

"Ah!"

Scholar Mikki opened his mouth in surprise. Ever since leaving the Yomei Tribe to head north, this was the first time he encountered someone aware of the Mexica Alliance. He glanced at Cedar Shaman's keen eyes, hesitated again, before replying honestly.

"Wise shaman, you are referring to the Mexica Alliance, and we are the Kingdom of the Lake... a vassal of the Mexica Alliance. I know the alliance's human sacrifices are widely known in the wilderness... but our fleet headed north this time bearing goodwill! I swear in the name of the Supreme Main God, we bear no hostility towards the Miwock Tribes!"

"Hmm, I believe you."

Upon hearing Mikki's words, the Shaman Chieftain Cedar nodded. But then, he spoke calmly again.

"But aside from you, I will not trust anyone else, nor your tribes. Because, a personal promise does not represent a tribe's promise. A tribe has many people, many leaders, who often tend to be capricious..."

"So, the second question: In this fleet, are you the highest leader? Will there be another fleet following this one?"

"I..."

Scholar Mikki pondered for a long time before speaking again. He continued to be truthful, for lies were meaningless and hard to deceive the other party. Establishing mutual trust was the basis of everything.

"I am the Deputy Captain, the second leader of the fleet. But towards the Miwock Tribes, both I and the other leader share the same attitude, with no malice..."

"Our fleet is merely a vanguard of the Kingdom's exploration. Behind us, there will undoubtedly be other fleets, other people to follow. However, this next batch may take several years to appear. And when they arrive here, they should follow our orders..."

"So, esteemed Cedar Shaman, you can trust my promise! At least within four to five years..."

Upon hearing there would be follow-up fleets, the Shaman Chieftain Cedar lowered his head, gazed at the somewhat glaring flames. He then took a piece of Clarkia flower, placed it in his mouth to chew, and handed another piece to Mikki.

"Honest friend... taste the Clarkia flower of the tribe... chew slowly, it will be a little sweet, and also relax you..."

Scholar Mikki raised his eyebrows, stared at the Clarkia flower in his hand for a while, then looked at the chewing Cedar Chieftain before placing the Clarkia flower into his mouth. As he chewed lightly, the fresh sweetness permeated his oral cavity, invigorating him. The two just faced each other, chewing the flower like tobacco, and both visibly relaxed their faces.

"Friends from the sea, you just mentioned that the Great Prophet Chieftain from your tribe had a prophecy about the Golden Bay, which led you here?"

"Yes! The Divine Revelator, Your Majesty, told us that on the distant Northern Coast, there would be a vast bay never seen before. And on the land near the bay, there would be a golden Gold Mountain. So there... no, this is the Golden Bay!"

Speaking of the prophecy by Your Majesty, Scholar Mikki's eyes revealed an obvious fervor. He sincerely held the Amulet around his neck and prayed loudly in front of the Cedar Shaman.

"Praise the Supreme Main God! Praise the Divine Revelator, Your Majesty!..."

Seeing this, the Shaman Chieftain Cedar raised an eyebrow, then lowered his gaze. He quietly pondered within, contemplating the devotion of the Southern Tribes and thinking of the unknown, mysterious Great Prophet Chieftain.

"Hmm... to the East of our Miwoc Tribes is a range of continuous mountains. In those mountains, there truly are many golden stones and golden mountains. More accurately, they are gold mines."

The Shaman Chieftain Cedar maintained a calm surface, smiling as he inquired.

"Friends from the sea, you followed a mysterious prophecy to find the Golden Bay. So, are you settling here for the gold mines in the mountains?... I have traveled among the Southern Tribes and heard that even further south, the tribes revere useless gold and gemstones. I can assist you in mining the gold in the mountains..."

"But I suspect this cold Northern land might not compare to the fertile lands of the South, am I right? You are hundreds of elite Samurai from the tribe. Once you've collected enough gold, you should be able to return to places where you are needed more, right?..."

"No! Honorable Cedar Shaman, I think perhaps I haven't explained clearly before!"

Scholar Mikki paused for a moment, then responded word by word, facing the gradually severe gaze of the Shaman Chieftain Cedar.

"We followed the prophecy and arrived here, not for the gold in the mountains. In fact, the Kingdom has plenty of gold, the Alliance even more. Along the way, many other tribes also have Gold Mountains..."

"We came here, settled here, and won't leave! We'll farm here, stockpile enough and more food. Then the fleet will continue north, along the coast heading Northwest, deep into the icy cold harsh coast, through endless waves and storms, continually searching!..."

"Until we travel another ten thousand miles, finding that New Continent which must exist, as foreseen in the prophecy!..."

This time, the Shaman Chieftain Cedar remained silent for a long while. He gazed at Scholar Mikki's face, observing the other's sincere and straightforward expression and unwavering faith in his eyes. Hearing the fleet wouldn't depart, initially, his eyes had some intent to kill, but as he listened more, this intent gradually vanished.

After quite a while, he pursed his lips, looked at his aging hand, and said with a sigh.

"Honest friend... you might be completely unaware of the harshness of the Northern Coast. It is the domain of the Storm Gods, as well as a place shrouded by the disasters of the Snow God. There, endless waves are unyielding, along with perennial white snowy fields..."

"Cold, tides, fog, heavy snow, ice storms, desolation and hunger, endless lostness... No matter how sharp your weapons are or how strong your armor is, it's impossible to fight against nature, against the great spirit!... And if you continuously head north and west, your fate is destined to be devoured by the white sea..."

"The Chief Divine witness! Before going to sea, we have long since sworn to dedicate our lives to the Supreme Main God!"

Scholar Mikki clenched his teeth, grasped the Amulet on his neck tightly, raised it high, and declared decisively.

"Even if swallowed by the storms of the Northern Land, even if frozen to death in the cold desolation... our fleet must perish on the path of exploration!"

"...I see now! For the sake of northern exploration, you are willing to pay all, including your lives..."

Upon hearing this, the Shaman Chieftain Cedar was emotionally moved, finally nodding slowly.

"Respectable friend... if your fleet truly wishes to continue north... then indeed, I can offer you more assistance. Food, guides, translators... and the other vast bay you mentioned, far in the North..."

"Oh? Another vast bay? You... you know where it is?"

"Hmm, I know. It was recorded in the tribe's legacy. I have traveled north, and from the mouths of the Northern Tribes, I learned many things..."

The Shaman Chieftain Cedar stroked his chin, smiled, sat before the bonfire. It was unknown when his waist stooped again. His current smile made him look like an old fox.

"Friends from the mighty tribes... I truly admire your devotion! I can provide you with much help, as can my tribe... We might even form an alliance with you, allowing the Miwoke Tribes within hundreds of miles north to supply the fleet..."

"Of course, I need some return... we need some return... and this return should not be difficult for you..."

Chapter 1312: The Translation Books of Each Tribe, the Squeezed-Dry Tomato

More than twenty days later, Scholar Mikki returned with a ship full of food from the North Bay Tribe of Napa Valley. By now, it was mid-July, and the sunlight was clear as if it had been washed, with no trace of clouds or rain in the sky. At the West Mountain Port, two rows of huts had been built in the camp, and the fields by the river had been cultivated quite a bit, looking somewhat like a village.

It wasn't until Mikki stepped off the longship and set foot in the Kingdom's camp that he still felt a little dazed. He recalled the more than twenty days of exceptionally "fulfilling" teaching and learning, feeling like he was back at the Divine Power University in the Capital City.

"Chief Divine bless! Mikki, you've finally returned!"

Exploration Captain Zuwaro stood in front of Mikki with a face full of joy, his voice filled with excitement.

"If it weren't for you sending a samurai back to tell the camp that you were alright... I was about to lead the fleet to that North Bay Tribe to rescue you!"

"Uh... Chief Divine bless!"

Scholar Mikki shook his head vigorously to snap out of his daze. He looked at his excited friend and replied with a wry smile.

"Zuwaro, you have no idea, for more than twenty days, I haven't had a moment's rest... it's like I've been squeezed dry, like a tomato!"

"Huh? Squeezed dry like a tomato?"

Hearing this, Exploration Captain Zuwaro looked surprised. He glanced at the Mivok hunters unloading the tribe's food from the longship, then looked at the weary Mikki. Finally, his gaze lowered slightly, and he looked at his dark-circled friend with a sympathetic expression.

"...Mikki, you should have said earlier! I would have sent more samurai to help you. The Northern Tribes are so enthusiastic, how can you handle so much alone? If you die from exhaustion like this, how will I report back to the Kingdom?..."

"Uh? What?"

Scholar Mikki hesitated for a moment, his gaze following Zuwaro's downward glance before he twitched the corner of his mouth and shouted angrily.

"Chief Divine! What are you thinking? I meant my wisdom was completely squeezed dry by the old foxes of the North Bay Tribe!"

As he spoke, Scholar Mikki reached into his robe and took out a thick scroll of paper, handing it to Zuwaro.

"Here! Take a look! This is the main result, the translation book for cultural exchanges!"

Exploration Captain Zuwaro took the paper scroll, unfolded it slightly, and raised his eyebrows.

"Oh! It's really something impressive!... Written as 'sky', illustrated as a high blue mass, read as 'ilhuicatl' in Navajo, 'cúndiro' in Prepetcha, 'ñandú' in Yaji, 'ka'au' in Paiute, 'tii'chu' in Kumeyaay, 'helh' in Mivok, and 'sq'uq'əd' in Puget Salish/Lushootseed..."

Reading these tongue-twisting words, Exploration Captain Zuwaro paused and asked in confusion.

"Mikki, how could you possibly know so many tribal languages? We've heard of encountering the Yaji, Paiute, Kumeyaay, and Mivok people... but what is this 'Puget Salish'?"

"Puget Salish is the language spoken by the tribes along the coast after traveling more than a thousand miles further north. According to Cedar Shaman's description, another great bay in Your Majesty's prophecy is three thousand miles to the north. And the coastal tribes in that area also speak Puget Salish!..."

Scholar Mikki explained the further northern news with a serious expression as Zuwaro listened with a look of surprise. Then he shook his head and sighed.

"Chief Divine witness! There's no way I could know so many languages! Although I wrote this scroll, I only know Navajo, Prepetcha, and Yaji. The rest—Paiute, Kumeyaay, Mivok, Puget Salish—were all orally dictated by Cedar Shaman and then recorded by me..."

"And the language we communicate in is Yaji. However, in these days, he has already learned quite a bit of Navajo. Give him a few more months, and he'll be able to use Navajo to have everyday conversations with us..."

"Ah? Chief Divine! Such an impressive Shaman knows so many languages? Has he visited so many tribes?!"

"Yes! When Cedar Shaman was young, he traveled around for over ten or twenty years, learning the languages and herbal knowledge of various tribes. Aside from the western seas, he traveled far alone to the east, south, and north, familiar with the languages of the four major ethnic groups (language families), and over a dozen tribal languages..."

Hearing this, Exploration Captain Zuvaro was full of shock. He looked at the high mountains in the East, and the forests everywhere. There were nomadic tribes and fierce beasts in the mountains. He found it truly hard to imagine how one person could travel and learn in such a wild environment.

"This? How is it possible? Alone, wouldn't he be attacked by the wild tribes?"

"Zuvaro, he is a Shaman. A Shaman is not a chieftain staying in the tribe, nor is he an Elder Priest sitting high above, but a healer traveling everywhere, a doctor belonging to the vast tribes!"

Scholar Mikki explained earnestly, noting the tribespeople's heartfelt reverence for Cedar Shaman. He realized that the most important and influential identity of Shaman Chieftain Cedar was indeed "Shaman," not "Chieftain."

"In the Northern Continent, where transmission is difficult, the tribes are small, and life is very harsh. The lifespan of tribespeople, tribal hunters, and even small tribal chieftains is very short! They rarely live to forty, some die in their thirties, twenties. Because, frequently lacking effective medical heritage and with little contact among different tribes. Once someone gets ill beyond the tribe's knowledge scope, they can only watch as the illness worsens, step by step into death..."

"And at such times, only the healer traveling everywhere, the respected Shaman, can save them! The emergence of a Shaman often can save many lives in a tribe. So, in the traditions of the Northern Land, no matter how ferocious the tribes are, they would never attack a Shaman. Instead, they would

scramble to invite Shamans, send hunters to protect them along the way, provide enough food, and offer gifts as much as possible..."

Saying this, Scholar Mikki recalled the longhouse of Cedar Shaman, those herbs from various tribal territories, and the precious black bear pelts, red deer pelts, white fox pelts, unable to resist expressing his admiration.

"So many tribal gifts, who knows how many people Cedar Shaman has healed. But with his personality, he probably values more the herb heritage of each tribe, and various knowledge from afar... Once encountering new knowledge legacy, he's like a greedy old fox, squeezing the tomato tight in his claw, draining it dry..."

"Uh? ...Drained tomatoes..."

Hearing this, Exploration Captain Zuvaro shivered. In this vast and barren Northern Land, isn't the so-called new knowledge legacy precisely him and Mikki, two Divine Revelation Priests from the Kingdoms? Thinking of this, he sympathetically glanced at the dazed Mikki, then couldn't help but quickly lower his head, swiftly flipping to the end of the translation scroll in his hand.

"...Puglish Salish language, peace, 'sduhubš'; friend, 'swátəb'; exchange, 'tiwáqs'; food, 'čəlčələb'; sailing 'čəlčəlš'... Uh? Just these dozens or a hundred words? No more at the back?"

"No more! In these over twenty days, being able to write such a translation book is already quite good. Moreover, Cedar Shaman also spent lots of time learning the script and Navajo from me... Actually, with these words, it's roughly enough."

Saying this, Scholar Mikki cleared his throat, stretched out his hand, and with a genial smile, he mimicked the first meeting with the Northern tribes, and said.

"Swátəb! Sduhubš! Tiwáqs, čəlčələb... Friend! Peace! Exchange food..."

"Hmm, not bad!... If this translation scroll is really accurate. Then simple communication is indeed enough."

Exploration Captain Zuvaro thought carefully and nodded. Scholar Mikki smiled, took out a wood carving of a flying bird from his sleeve, and pointed to the cloak-wearing Hunter Le Tian standing proudly beside the longship.

"Don't worry! For our northern exploration, Cedar Shaman also gave me this token. This is what he wore when he healed various hunters during his past travels in the North. Although many years have passed, there should still be people who remember... Additionally, the cloak-wearing Hunter from Miwok Tribe is familiar with the northern coastline, can also speak a little more northern languages. He also knows some commonly used sign languages among tribes, better at gesturing than us!..."

Hearing this, Exploration Captain Zuvaro's face blossomed into a smile but soon collected again. He frowned, sizing up the tired yet excited Scholar Mikki, couldn't help but open his mouth to inquire.

"May Chief Divine witness! Cedar Shaman promised you so many benefits—gave you food, provided a guide, wrote you a translation book, gave you information about the North, your own token... It can't just be because he wants to marry off his daughter to you, so giving these for free? ...Mikki, what did you promise him?!"

Upon hearing this, Scholar Mikki's smile froze, and he guiltily lowered his head. At that moment, his thin frame, bowed head, was like a truly drained tomato.

Chapter 1313: Terms of a Win-Win Cooperation, Opportunities for the Northern Land Tribes

"Cough! Witness the Chief Divine! The Cedar Shaman promises to supply our entire fleet and over five hundred people with food for five months. In this way, along with one month's stock from the camp and hunting seals along the coast, it will be enough to last for half a year. And even if the grain harvested in the fields in October is insufficient, we will still have a surplus of food for two to three months..."

Miki the Sage pointed to the longship carrying the grain and explained softly.

"This is the first ship's food, and there are many more behind it!... In exchange, we will give the North Bay Tribe eighty copper spears, forty bronze axes, ten longbows, ten sets of leather armor, and one borrowed bronze cloth armor... With each batch of food received, we deliver a batch of equipment, and finally the cloth armor."

"Hmm, this exchange ratio... alright! It's quite reasonable."

Upon hearing this, Exploration Captain Zuvaro nodded slightly. The further north we go, the colder the weather becomes, and the surplus food of each tribe diminishes, making food more valuable. On this northern expedition, the fleet carries many bronze weapons, yet actual battles encountered are few. There are still plenty of weapons left, enough for each of the Kingdom's Warriors to have two spares. However...

"Miki, you've promised the bronze cloth armor?"

Exploration Captain Zuvaro furrowed his brow and asked in a subdued voice.

"How did the Cedar Shaman know that the fleet has cloth armor? Did you let it slip?"

"Uh... Cough!... The Cedar Shaman didn't consider battle, he just wants to borrow a set of Kingdom Armor to study... Once he understands it, he will return it. I think, letting him know the truly formidable might of the Kingdom can also elevate the fleet's status among the Mivok people!"

Miki the Sage's gaze flickered, inexplicably feeling guilty. In front of a truly cunning old fox, it's hard to keep secrets and resist his terms. Thinking of this, he touched his nose and lowered his voice again.

"Additionally, the Cedar Shaman will send dozens of tribespeople to help us with farming. We can direct them, compost, grind bone fertilizer, weed, plow... anyway, they can handle all the tedious farm work. If dozens of people aren't enough, they can recruit more for us. And after our autumn harvest, they are also willing to trade the harvested potatoes and sweet potatoes with us, using three times the weight of grain and meat! This way, even if the autumn harvest's grain isn't plentiful, there's no need to worry about food..."

"What? Sending tribespeople to assist with farm work? Three times the grain in exchange for potatoes and sweet potatoes?"

Exploration Captain Zuvaro paused, pondered briefly, and reacted explosively.

"Chief Divine! Miki, you've handed over the Kingdom's agricultural technology and new hardy crops to the North Bay Tribe?"

"Cough!... Zuwaro, don't rush, this is beneficial for everyone!"

Miki the Sage tugged at his hair and explained cautiously.

"The Cedar Shaman will not only send people to help us with farming, but also recruit scattered Mivok tribespeople from the surrounding mountain forests to join our camp. With his prestige, he can rapidly expand our settlement! And the grain we lack can only be provided by the powerful North Bay Tribe, which has enough surplus..."

"Moreover, before departing, Your Majesty also requested that we spread better agricultural technology and crops across the vast Northern Land! The North Bay Tribe producing more grain is equally beneficial to us! After all, they are already our allies. The more grain they have, the more they can trade with us..."

"Alright!... Your Majesty's request... Merciful Majesty!"

Exploration Captain Zuwaro was momentarily speechless, and had to nod in agreement. However, he quickly realized.

"What did you say? Allies? Did you and the Shaman Chieftain Cedar of North Bay swear a blood alliance?"

"Yes! Before I left, I swore a blood oath with the North Bay Tribe, formally becoming allies!"

Miki the Sage nodded, his expression also turning solemn.

"However, the one who allied with me was not the Cedar Shaman, but..."

While speaking, Miki the Sage pointed with his hand towards the proud and cloaked Hunter Le Tian in the distance.

"It's him! He is the representative of the North Bay Tribe and the most outstanding hunter among the tribes!"

"Hmm? Just him? The most outstanding hunter?"

Exploration Captain Zuvaro narrowed his eyes, glanced at the cloaked hunter carrying the Kingdom's longbow and bronze axe, and pondered.

"The gifts you brought to Chieftain Cedar, were they all forwarded to him?"

"Yes! The Cedar Shaman, in fact, has no interest in fighting and killing. He is a knowledge seeker, a very peaceful and wise old fox..."

Miki the Sage chuckled and affirmed.

"I can feel it, he wants to change the Northern Tribes and leave something behind. And our arrival has given him a wooden door, an opportunity for change!... His enthusiasm for learning the Kingdom's knowledge is even greater than that of most of the Kingdom Priests..."

"However, his attitude towards the Divine, even towards Mivok's All Gods, is inexplicably indifferent. Regarding the oaths witnessed by the Divine, he seems somewhat dismissive... He deliberately had Le Tian act as a representative, which is likely a consideration for some kind of tribal internal inheritance."

"Oh, Zuvaro, I'm digressing! Chief Divine as my witness! Le Tian is an outstanding Hunter in a cloak and a popular candidate for the next Chieftain. The oath between Le Tian and me was made under the witness of the entire North Bay Tribes! So, this alliance is genuine and effective!... By the way, the Chieftain succession among these Northern Tribes is mostly nominated by tribal Elders and Hunters, which is essentially an ancient tribal electoral system... just like the Kingdom's oldest epics."

"I see! The inheritance and change of the Northern Tribes?... Learning knowledge, not revering the Divine?... An alliance with a Chieftain candidate?... Tribal electoral system?"

The Exploration Captain Zuwaro stroked his chin, pondering for quite some time. He vaguely gained a deeper understanding of the Cedar Shaman of the North Bay Tribe and also had some guesses about the inner political structure of the Northern Tribes.

"Alright! In this Northern Land beyond the reach of the Kingdom, having one more ally is better than having one more enemy. No matter what this ally is plotting... when the Kingdom takes root in the North, capable of supporting thousands of Samurai... then no matter how strong they develop, they can only become a loyal ally and vassal of the Kingdom!"

The eyes of the Exploration Captain Zuwaro sparkled, contemplating the Kingdom's long-term future. He never had doubts about the brightness and vastness of the future!

"As long as Your Majesty leads us! As long as the sun doesn't set, the light of the Chief Divine will surely shine upon the Northern Land!... And this day, we will surely witness it, as long as we survive the exploration!"

Zuwaro murmured to himself, silently praying for a moment, then returned to the main topic of exploration.

"Miki, what agreements did you reach with the Cedar Shaman Chieftain? Did he tell you information about the North? Is the other great sea bay in His Majesty's prophecy three thousand miles to the north?"

"Yes! Chief Divine as my witness! The Cedar Shaman has traveled the North and is aware of that sea bay. He is very interested in His Majesty's prophecy, repeatedly inquiring... Around that sea bay, there is a coastal plain. It's indeed, as in the prophecy, the last place suitable for cultivation in the far north, although the harvest is minimal... Therefore, there are also several large tribes of a thousand people there. One of them is called the Duwamish Tribe, along the Duwamish River... and further north, there are only small tribes of hundreds or even a hundred people, constantly migrating after the prey..."

"Oh, right! In the local Puḡ Salish language, Duwamish means 'a rocky river.' So, it can also be called the 'Yanhe Tribe' on the rocky riverbank! The Cedar Shaman once healed several Hunters of the Yanhe Tribe, gaining his reputation with this tribe. As long as we take their Shaman inheritance token to the Yanhe Tribe, they will see us as friends and teach us the survival ways in the far north..."

Scholar Mikki was all excited, taking out the Cedar Shaman's wood carving of a Flying Bird, gently touching the mysterious, strange carvings on it. This Flying Bird had red eyeballs, blue wings, carved very primordially, also detailed with some green patterns resembling water ripples or tree branches. This wooden carving seemed to be very old, even possibly hundreds of years, exuding a mysterious and strange, indescribable feeling. And once seen, it is indeed unforgettable!

"Ah! The Northern great sea bay in the prophecy!... The Yanhe Tribe? The survival ways in the far north?"

The Exploration Captain Zuvaro clenched his fists, eyes flashing with joy. Controlling the strong desire for exploration within, he solemnly pursued more answers.

"Miki! You haven't said it yet! What price did you promise ultimately?!"

"Ah... um..."

Scholar Mikki tugged at his hair, lowering his head, softly replied.

"I... I promised to teach the North Bay Tribes the Kingdom's script and teach them the Chief Divine's Book of Ama Colley."

"Spreading the script, teaching the Book of Ama Colley, is disseminating the faith of the Chief Divine! This is what the Kingdom has always been doing and one of the tasks most valued by Your Majesty... this cannot be considered a price, but should rather be counted as a gain!"

The Exploration Captain Zuvaro squinted at Miki, who was looking down, sternly questioning.

"Chief Divine as my witness! What else did you promise? Did you give them the Bronze Formula?"

"Uh! No! I didn't!"

Hearing this, Scholar Mikki shook his head fiercely.

"The Cedar Shaman indeed mentioned this matter. He said that the Paiute and Shoshone in the eastern mountains could produce a small amount of copper ware. But their copper is red, soft, even less useful than stone..."

"I also told him that's because copper needs to be mixed with another metal to become sturdy bronze. But I have not seen such metal in the various Northern tribes!"

"The Cedar Shaman, although skeptical, also did not further question me about bronze..."

"Chief Divine as my witness! What else did you promise? Speak honestly!"

"Uh... alright!"

In front of the bay, the long wind blew by, the longship gently swaying. Scholar Mikki gazed at the longship that sailed thousands of miles, looking at the signs of damage and repair on it, and let out a light sigh.

"Chief Divine as my witness! I promised the Cedar Shaman... for the North Bay Tribe to provide sturdy timber, allowing the Craftsman and Hunters of the Mivok people to participate in the repair of the exploration longship!"

Chapter 1314: Your Majesty's Grand Ambition, the Alliance Leader of All America!

The bay of Gold Mountain is clear, with a hint of transparent green in the light blue. Beyond the bay, the large sea is a deep azure. The sunlight reflects on the different water surfaces, creating rippling waves, just like the moods of the two people at this moment.

"Oh Chief Divine! Miki, you... you also promised the structure and construction of the longship to the North Bay Tribe?!"

The Exploration Captain Zuvaro widened his eyes, staring intensely at Scholar Miki, just like the deep sea. His emotions surged as he grabbed Miki's arm and spoke in a deep voice, resembling the low roar of the sea.

"Damn it! If the Mivok people learn to build longships, then the Kingdom's superiority over ships in the Northern Land..."

"No! Zuwaro, building longships is not that easy!"

Scholar Miki shook his head, sternly interrupting.

"Chief Divine as a witness! The Mivok people have no metal tools, making it difficult to process large timber, let alone build large ships! With their production capabilities, even if they understand the longship, they can only imitate and create slightly larger canoes. Allowing them to have somewhat better ships, to fish and transport better, does not harm us... After all, they are our allies!"

"Allies? The alliance is only a few days old? It's the same with the Ypa Great Tribe! Miki, you trust those northern tribes too much!..."

Speaking of alliances, the Exploration Captain Zuwaro was evidently dismissive. Ultimately, he did not believe that those northern tribes with thousands of people truly had the strength and qualification to ally with the Kingdom.

"Zuwaro, the Blood Oath's alliance is witnessed by the Divine and Ancestors! It is built on mutual trust, in the hearts of both parties!... If you don't regard them as true allies and provide genuinely beneficial help... how could they possibly treat you as a true ally and come to assist you?"

Scholar Miki pursed his lips, his eyes clear like the bay of Gold Mountain.

"Mutual trust involves both parties, no one is a fool!... Zuwaro, the doctrine states that the tribes of the Northern Land are our brothers, the Jiao People, who dispersed thousands of years ago! Since we say so, and hope to reunite with our brother tribes... then we must truly act accordingly, treating them like brothers so they will see us as brothers and be willing to ally with us!"

"Chief Divine doctrine... Jiao People brothers..."

Upon hearing this, the Exploration Captain Miki raised his eyebrows. He looked into Miki's sincere eyes, and after a moment of silence, sighed helplessly.

"Ah! Miki, regarding the tribes of the Northern Land as brothers, treating them like brothers. You're indeed right, and it is also the Kingdom's doctrine. But..."

"Hmm?"

"Oh Chief Divine! When one lives long enough, sees enough, they become cunning like a fox. That Cedar Shaman is truly an old fox. He ate you up clean, just like eating a turkey..."

"Zuwaro, Cedar Shaman never pressured us with power, it has always been an equal exchange."

Scholar Miki frowned, explaining.

"The fleet has sailed thousands of miles to reach here, with many damages along the way. To repair the longship, sturdy timber is required... if we were to cut and process it ourselves, who knows how long it would take! Now, with the North Bay Tribe providing ready timber and manpower, repairs can be completed in just over ten days!..."

"Moreover, with the Kingdom's northern exploration, we will soon encounter the storms and waves prophesied. When that time comes, repair needs will become more frequent... Having a great tribe like North Bay providing timber and manpower, along with training a batch of shipwrights, the fleet's exploration will proceed much more smoothly!"

"Timber and manpower... a repair base for ships..."

Upon hearing this, the Exploration Captain Zuwaro opened his mouth, momentarily unable to refute. After a while, he pursed his lips, sincerely remarking.

"Miki, using power to pressure people is not that difficult. The rare thing is truly knowing what you need, and also knowing what we need! That Cedar Shaman is truly an old fox!..."

"Food, translation books, guides, pacts, intelligence, tokens, ship repairs... he grasped our needs for exploring northwards, each condition is irresistible and beneficial to both parties! And leveraging these cooperation conditions, he has obtained the knowledge he needs, leaving many future opportunities..."

"This is truly a formidable old fox! Among all the figures we've encountered on our journey north, he ranks as the top!"

Hearing Zuvaro's remarks, Scholar Miki pondered for a while. He recalled the diligent and persistent old shaman who learned text, language, and mathematics from him day and night, despite being aged yet robust, and couldn't help but nod in admiration.

"Zuvaro, you're right, he is indeed an outstanding figure! But anyway, the assistance he provided to the exploration fleet is substantial and unprecedented! He has expedited our northern exploration significantly!"

"As for how his tribe wants to develop and leap forward using the Kingdom's knowledge and technology, that is their business!"

At this point, Scholar Miki's thoughts wandered far, his eyes shining brightly, his voice became passionate.

"The Divine Revelation Majesty said, across the world, there are two continents, North and South, with miles upon miles of land! And on those lands, there are countless tribes with black hair and yellow skin, as well as countless outstanding figures! In the entire world, there are courageous heroes, and wise sages, so many of them! They just lack the opportunity, a bit of enlightenment..."

"The invasion of the white-skinned demons will not happen just once or twice, nor will it last just a year or two! They will continuously surge from the Northern Continent to the Southern Continent! To resist them, to protect the tribes' lands, and to guard the entire world, we must establish a worldwide alliance, becoming the leader of all tribes!"

"From the Far North land to the Extreme South Land, wherever the Kingdom Fleet reaches, His Majesty will spare no effort in spreading knowledge, technology, and new crops! He only regrets that the tribes of the North-South Continent are not developing quickly enough and will not hide anything, watching them remain stagnant and be destroyed by the white men..."

"A powerful Mexica Alliance, a leaping Kingdom of the Lake must become the leader of the entire world, serving as a lighthouse of the North and South coasts, leading all the tribes to advance continuously!"

"Ah! The ambitions of His Majesty! The leader of the world!"

Listening to Scholar Miki's resolute declaration, Exploration Captain Zuwaro clenched his fist and struck his chest. He felt a warm sensation throughout his body; his mind was passionately ablaze as if fueled by a raging fire. The surge of courage churned like unending sea tides within his chest!

"Miki! You're right! You're absolutely right! We must do as His Majesty says!"

After a while, Zuwaro calmed down. He took a deep breath and then looked toward Miki, with a trace of doubt in his eyes.

"Miki, when did His Majesty say those words? I don't recall... You're not making this up, are you?"

"Zuwaro, with my knowledge, could I make up such words?"

Scholar Miki raised his eyebrows, responding earnestly.

"This was a few years ago, when His Majesty was at the Lake Capital City of the Alliance. He said this to the accompanying Divine Revelation Priests. At the time, the Alliance wanted the Kingdom's cannon casting technique, so His Majesty gathered the Divine Revelation Priests, discussed, and decided to teach them the cannon casting hands-on! Also, at the Divine Power University, when facing the children of the noble chiefs from the tribes of Colima, the Kingdom did not hold back, teaching them mineral prospecting and metal smelting techniques..."

"Moreover, before our northward journey, His Majesty also sent a message: The tribes of the Northern Continent are our brothers and compatriots; letting them grow stronger and live better poses no harm! The land in the Northern Continent is vast enough to hold many strong tribes, alliances, even kingdoms. And if any Great Nobility wants to establish a fief on the distant Northern Continent, he would support it too!"

"Ah? Establish a fief on the Northern Continent?"

Hearing this news, Exploration Captain Zuvaro's heart was stirred, vaguely grasping something. Yet, before he could delve deeper into His Majesty's meaning, Miki grabbed his shoulder, interrupting his thoughts.

"Zuvaro! From Cedar Shaman, we have secured a supply of wood and labor for the repair base, which is essential for our ship repairs... It would take ages for us to gather and process the timber ourselves! But now with the wood and workforce from the North Bay Tribe ready and available, we could complete the repairs in just ten days or more!..."

Chapter 1315: Setting Sail from West Mountain Port, Seeking the New Continent

"The ocean from late spring to early autumn is like a gentle lakeside maiden. She has a calm and shy smile, silently extending an invitation. She will allow you to embrace her, letting you brazenly reach out your claws and explore the beautiful coast... But if you miss the time, as autumn comes to an end..."

"The gentle lakeside maiden will, without warning, suddenly transform into the ruthless ice and snow witch (Windego)! She will shoot piercing cold winds and ice arrows, freezing you and your ship into ice blocks. Then, she will use her thunderbolt-wielding claws to tear you apart, bit by bit, and devour you completely!..."

Miki the Sage looked serious, recounting the inherited poetry of the Cedar Shaman, and also relaying his warning.

"So, explorers heading north, seize the time! Because now is the best and last chance. If we delay further, we'll have to wait another year!..."

"Ah? Gentle lakeside maiden, ruthless ice and snow witch?"

Exploration Captain Zuvaro furrowed his brow, suddenly having a bad premonition. The entire journey north, sailing along the Western Sea Coast, though slow, had been quite calm. Could it be that this is not the true nature of this coastline?

"Miki, explain more clearly! We need to fully prepare for our exploration, what exactly does this Mivok people's inherited poetry mean?"

"With the Chief Divine as witness! Simply put, the climate of the Western Sea Coast is completely different from, even opposite to, that of the Kingdom."

Miki the Sage stroked his chin, his eyes focused with contemplation, along with a spark of wisdom.

"From April to October here is warm and dry, ideal for sailing. Like these last two months, there's been little rainfall, no storms, nor tempests! Therefore, when we traveled north, the journey was smooth and calm, without encountering a single heavy storm..."

"But after October, the climate becomes cold with frequent rain, and storms appear abruptly! The cold North howls its way to the warm sea, bringing endless rainstorms! And terrifying storms accompanied by thunderbolts,

can last for over half a month straight, with temperatures plummeting overnight. Navigating at that time will encounter not only gale winds, sea waves, thunderstorms, and fog but even floating ice from the North!..."

"Thus, if we want to reach the major northern sea port, we must set off quickly and settle down before October! The fleet's timing is very tight, which is why I agreed to so many cooperative transactions..."

"Chief Divine! Dry and rainless in summer, cold and rainy with thunderbolts in winter? And the mild climate only lasts until October?..."

Exploration Captain Zuvaro paused for a moment, then urgently stomped in concern.

"It's already mid-July, and we're still slowly constructing West Mountain Port! Unacceptable, if it's really like this, before October, we must at least reach the Grand Bay foretold by Your Majesty!"

"Yes! That's what I was thinking as well!"

Miki the Sage nodded, solemnly suggesting.

"Cedar Shaman invited us to repair the ships at the North Bay Tribe, but I temporarily did not agree. Later I'm taking three longships, to make a trip to North Bay Tribe, bringing their craftsmen and lumber. Then, we'll repair the longships outside the camp at West Mountain Port!"

"They will send a group of hunters and tribespeople to this camp to help, also further engaging with us. By the way, there are three Shaman apprentices who will stay in the camp to teach us local herb lore, while also learning the Kingdom's language. They also want to learn mathematics... Have Preaching Priest Jia Shu take them, using 'Book of Ama Colley' as the teaching material, to see if we can convert these successors of tribal traditions!..."

"First-level Preaching Priest Jia Shu? Do you mean leaving him here, no longer continuing north? Hmm, indeed..."

Upon hearing this, the Exploration Captain pondered for a while, expressing agreement. As the Kingdom Fleet had journeyed north from Reagan Town, to ensure dual leadership, only First-level Preaching Priests were brought.

Priest Jia Shu was the most knowledgeable and highest-ranked among these first-level priests. Because he was one of the grandsons of the Kingdom's Chief Minister, Sage Jatili, named symbolically with 'Book' for knowledge. Sage Jatili personally sent his grandson on the treacherous voyage, nine lives at stake, a promise to the King and a demonstration of support for the northern exploration. However, these two cannot truly use the Chief's grandson at the forefront of exploration, risking his life endlessly...

"Alright! Then let Jia Shu stay here and together with Warrior Leader Stonefirm, oversee West Mountain Port! The fleet's main force will head north, leaving two ships for them..."

"Zuwaro, continue northward exploration, there's no need for so many ships nor to bring too many people!"

Miki the Sage shook his head. He had talked with the Cedar Shaman for many days, not solely being probed, but also gathering much intelligence regarding the northern tribes and their survival situation.

"Further north along the coast, the tribes are mostly of hundreds in scale, with hunting and fishing as major food sources, so there's very little preserved food! This time going north, we can only take six ships, three hundred men... thus, even if we are trapped by ice storms at a tribe, we can manage to endure. And based on Cedar Shaman's suggestion, it's best to have fewer than two hundred in size..."

"Chief Divine bearing witness! Six ships heading north, four ships staying... meaning leaving two hundred and fifty people in West Mountain Port to pioneer..."

The Exploration Captain Zuvaro thought deeply, recalling Your Majesty's prophecy about the challenging Far North land and the edict to learn from local tribes, ultimately deciding to follow Cedar Shaman's advice. However, before the fleet's main force departed, there was still one important task to complete to ensure West Mountain Port's safety!

"Miki! Go to the North Bay Tribe again, and raise a request with Cedar Shaman! A request for an ally, please ensure they agree!"

"Ah? What request?"

"The fleet has just arrived, prepared some gemstones and cloth as gifts, and wishes to trade weapons for food... Invite the tribe leaders within two hundred miles to come here! And after giving gifts, we'll continue north, exploring the icy Far North land!..."

"Alright!..."

Distant thoughts like late-July Golden Bay sunshine penetrating the clear sea surface. Memories of the past few months, like illuminated sea waters, flashed clearly in Zuvaro's mind. He turned around, looking at the impressive lineup of ten longships and the rising smoke from the ships. Of them, six will sail northward, and the remaining three will visit surrounding tribes, trading for more food and fur. As for the last one, it will deliver news of the Golden Bay area's construction to Three Hills Port, over a thousand miles south.

The deafening cannon shots echoed like thunderbolts across the distant mountains. On the further coastal shore, Mivok leaders wearing feather crowns, all showing astonishment, trembling hands and feet, some even prostrating in prayer. Among the crouched crowd, only one strong as a bear, an old

Shaman stood upright, staring intently at the thunderous 'Copper Beast' on the longship, filled with disbelief and shock.

"Hahaha! Even the old fox, widely experienced, is shocked and loses composure when facing the unprecedented 'Divine Thunderbolt', doubting the Heavenly Divine!"

Exploration Captain Zuvaro laughed heartily, contentedly patting Miki's shoulder. At this moment, the Cedar Shaman on the shore undoubtedly harbors countless questions, but to know the answers, he must wait until Miki returns once more.

"Haha! Let that cunning old fellow endure a good few months of torment!"

Exploration Captain Zuvaro turned his head briskly, looking at the majestic West Mountain right before him and the narrow harbor being traversed. The truly vast and boundless sea lies ahead of the fleet, awaiting the exploration of Divine Revelation!

"Chief Divine bless us! Fleet full speed northward, seeking the prophesied Grand Bay!"

"Praise Your Majesty! We are getting closer to the Western New Continent, thousands of miles away!"

Chapter 1316: Bear Hunters, Le Tian Dancing

August on the Northern California coast is the clearest and most beautiful time of the year. The turquoise ocean, the brown beaches, lush forests and plains, and the greenish-brown eastern mountains constantly alternate in the view of the fleet, brimming with vitality.

This is the season of all life proliferating; most flowers of the Northern Land bloom during this time. Purple sea daisies appear on the beach and, along with the equally spectacular asters, splash colors across the saline tidal flats. Meanwhile, the white daisies grow on high cliffs, gently swaying in the wind. These low-lying little flowers have surprisingly deep roots to withstand the strong winds atop the cliffs. Between the tidal flats and cliffs, on the moist grassy lands traversed by rivers, pink sea thrift grows everywhere. These radiant flowers cluster together like umbrellas blooming from the earth, considered blessings from the Earth Mother by the Pomo people!

"Praise the Chief Divine! The August northern coast is so magnificent!..."

Exploration Captain Zuwaro stood at the prow, marveling at the varying colors along the coast, unable to hold back his admiration.

"So many summer flowers, such vibrant colors! They're even more dazzling and enchanting than the Priestess of the Kingdom! Ah! I want to lie on those flowers, singing a joyful spring song and frolicking with the most beautiful maidens..."

"Uh?..."

Hearing Zuwaro's exclamation, Scholar Miki's smile froze instantly. He grimaced, his gaze falling on the group of seals by the shore.

In the warm sunlight, these round, endearing animals were divided into two circles. One circle was fighting while the other lay lazily watching. Shortly, a male seal, victorious from the fight, eagerly crawled towards the circle of females to join them in frolicking.

"Uh!..."

Scholar Miki maintained his frozen expression, observing for a while. Then he turned his head, looking at his equally stunned friend Zuwaro, and teased.

"Zuwaro! So what you want is to be a seal!..."

"..."

After a moment, Exploration Captain Zuwaro twitched his mouth, gritted his teeth, and said fiercely.

"Damn it! This group of happy seals... just right to replenish the fleet's meat supplies!"

"No! No way!"

Hearing this, Scholar Miki shook his head and pressed his hand on his friend's shoulder.

"Chief Divine bless! August is the season of life proliferating, also the time when the tribes cease hunting. According to local tribal traditions, hunting of seals doesn't start until October, when mating is completed and female seals visibly exhibit pregnancy. The hunting targets are male seals and they never hunt pregnant females..."

"All living things in the Northern Land obey the cycle; whether hunting or fishing, they must maintain population balance! This is the tradition formed by the Northern Tribes over thousands of years, as well as the law of survival. If we disrupt these laws, we will be opposed by all tribes!"

"Uh! Northern traditions, the law of survival? This... okay!"

Exploration Captain Zuvaro pondered for a moment, sullenly glancing at the seals, then looked forward again. With the warm Alaskan current guiding them, the fleet pressed on northward without pause. Soon, the low villages of the Pomo people and their drifting canoes came into everyone's view.

"We have arrived at the hunting grounds of the Pomo! Ahead lies their most powerful coastal tribe! I've been there!"

The cloak-clad Hunter Le Tian gestured excitedly. It was about six hundred li from the Golden Bay where the North Bay Tribe resided, the limit of his past hunting ventures. The large coastal tribe ahead was also the northernmost tribe he had visited.

"Look! Great River! Totem Pole!... Ba'po! Ba'po! Up ahead is the Ba'po Tribe!"

"Ah?"

Scholar Miki stood on tiptoe, and after a while, saw a quiet river flowing into the Western sea. Then a tall totem pole was erected at the riverbank, marking the tribe's territory. The totem pole seemed to depict a fighting scene, and as they got closer, it revealed a female hunter wielding a spear against a giant bear!

"Hmm? Le Tian, what does the 'Ba'po' you shouted mean?"

"Oh! That's their language, one of the dialects in the Palapa large family. 'Ba'po' means bear, or one who fights with bears. The name of the Ba'po Tribe actually means 'Bear Hunting Tribe'!"

The cloak-clad Hunter Le Tian touched his chin, recalling tales from long ago and stories told by the Cedar Shaman, narrated intermittently.

"The Bear Hunting Tribe is the most powerful branch of the Pomo Tribes! Legend says their ancestor was a female hunter who wandered north. She was strong, brave, and even ventured alone into the woods to hunt bears! With a long spear in hand, she battled a legendary grizzly all night before finally killing it. But the bear also wounded her, and its blood flowed onto her and merged with hers..."

"Ah! A female hunter hunting bears alone? Wounded while killing the grizzly?"

Upon hearing this, Scholar Miki showed surprise and asked.

"What happened later? Did she bathe in the legendary bear's blood, becoming stronger and thus gaining divinity?"

"Eh? Why would you think that? The thoughts of the Southern Tribes are truly strange! Everything has spirit, and so do people..."

The cloak-clad Hunter scratched his head, looking at Miki oddly. There is no generationally inherited Divine Descendant Noble Chief here in the harsh and cold Northern Land, and the productivity doesn't allow it.

"...Then? Naturally later, the female hunter was tainted with bear blood, became pregnant, and gave birth to the bear-blooded Pomo people! And the Pomo became the strong Bear Tribe, capable of battling bears in the forests. As for the most powerful Pomo Tribe among them, it's known as the Bear Hunting Tribe!"

"Pomo people... Bear's Tribe... Bear Hunting Tribe..."

Listening to this Pomo ancestor myth, Zuvaro and Miki exchanged glances, unsure what to say.

The appearance of the exploration fleet quickly alerted the hunters of the Bear Hunting Tribe. These formidable forest hunters, accustomed to battle, quickly mobilized. The entire Bear Hunting Tribe rallied over four hundred tribal warriors, armed with javelins and hunting bows, "warmly welcoming" on the beach. From the swift mobilization of warriors, one could roughly deduce that the Bear Hunting Tribe's population was about three thousand.

"Chief Divine bless! These Pomo people are truly enthusiastic!..."

Seeing Bear Hunting Tribe in a combat stance, Scholar Miki sighed with a helpless expression. He pulled aside the cloak-clad Hunter Le Tian and asked in a low voice.

"Le Tian, you've been to the Pomo Tribes and surely speak their language, right? Can you negotiate on behalf of the fleet? Tell them we are allies trusted by the Cedar Shaman, passing through to the North, and need to replenish some food and water here..."

"Uh... I only know a few words in Pomo."

The cloak-clad Hunter Le Tian tugged at his hair and smiled sheepishly. But soon, he displayed a confident expression.

"But communicating? No problem! I'm familiar with it, no need for words at all!..."

"Praise the Chief Divine! Great! Then it's up to you!"

Soon after, the cloak-clad Hunter Le Tian went to the shore with a bow. Under the gaze of hundreds of Pomo warriors, he first raised his hand, showing his bow without an arrow, and placed it on the ground. Then he took off his leather coat, put down his dagger, and stood naked except for a bear-skin cloak. Finally, he spread his limbs, danced a war dance like a playful grouse, knelt on the sand, and opened his arms in anticipation.

"..."

Scholar Miki was dumbfounded, watching this seemingly meaningful but obscure dance and unable to discern anything.

But moments later, a strong tribal huntsman emerged from the Pomo warriors. He too laid down his bow and arrow, approached, touched Le Tian's bear-skin cloak, and cried out in surprise. Then he lifted Le Tian with both hands, and the onlookers erupted in enthusiastic shouts.

"Pomo'loktol! Nyi'tah!"

"Bear Hunter! Friend!"

Chapter 1317: The Wiyot People and Delicious Food...

"Bear-hunting warrior! Friend of the Pomo people!"

Amidst the welcome from the Pomo people, the cloaked Hunter Le Tian proudly declared his identity as a bear-hunting warrior and displayed the token from the Cedar Shaman. Chieftain Bear Wind of the Bear-hunting Tribe took the token, studied it for a while, and showed an expression of surprise and joy. Then, using gestures, he "chatted" with Le Tian for a while and loudly announced to the tribe's warriors.

"The rowing tribe from the South is a friendly friend! They are people of the Southern Shaman!..."

"Friends! People of the Southern Shaman!... Oh-huo!"

The celebratory cries echoed along the beach at dusk, and the fierce bonfire burned in front of the totem pole. After confirming the identity of the exploration fleet, the Pomo people of the Bear-hunting Tribe exhibited a different kind of exuberant enthusiasm. The bonfire feast, with songs and dances, lasted from dusk until dawn, leaving a deep impression that was unforgettable!

The exploration fleet docked at the Pomo Tribe for two days, using ten Long Spears and a small bag of Lake Gems to replenish food and fresh water. Then, Exploration Captain Zuvaro, on behalf of the fleet, presented Chieftain Bear Wind of the Bear-hunting Tribe with a Bronze Axe and a Longbow. In return, Chieftain Bear Wind joyfully gifted a black bear pelt he had personally skinned.

In the Pomo language, "Bear Wind" means the fastest runner and the most agile Hunter within the Bear-hunting Tribe. The Bear-hunting Tribe has a tradition of martial prowess, with nearly every chieftain being the most outstanding Hunter. This tradition, combined with legends of tribal origins, also gave rise to the Pomo people's unique, strong female Hunters!

"Huh!"

The dawn's light fell on the tribe's small huts. A strong female Hunter strode out from the hut, disdainfully curling her lips. Her strong and powerful arms could almost rival a young bear, and her walking posture was as steady and robust as a bear.

"Chief Divine...!"

Long after, a painful groan emerged from the hut. Exploration Captain Zuvaro appeared pale, shirtless, and trembling. As the leader of the fleet, he was regarded as the bravest warrior of the team and received special "welcome" from the Bear-hunting Tribe. The one who "welcomed" him was none other than the strongest female Hunter in the tribe!

This is also the custom of the Pomo people—to have the strongest women and the strongest outsiders unite to produce strong and healthy offspring, improving the bloodline of intermarriages within the tribe.

"Miki! Let's go! Hurry, we must leave today!"

"Huh? Leave today?"

"Yes! The brilliance of the Chief Divine constantly calls to me! I cannot wait here another moment! Quickly! Continue north!... "

That afternoon, the Kingdom's exploration fleet departed from the farewell of the Pomo Hunters and headed toward the desolate Northern Coast. Before leaving, Scholar Mikki was still regretful. In his view, these tall and strong Pomo Hunters, although few in number, were excellent warriors capable of donning Heavy Armor and wielding Greatbows! If only they could convert the chieftain Bear Wind, recruiting these forest Hunters into the fleet would be such a great addition of Samurai!

"What a pity!... Chief Divine bless! If given the opportunity, convert these Pomo people..."

The fleet continued north, following the ocean currents, traveling six hundred miles in five days, arriving at another valley surrounded by mountains.

In the midday sun, a wide river flowed from the mountains in the East, reaching the marshy coast and then merging into the Western sea. Observing closely, the river water was not exactly clear. Many tribespeople clad in grass garments were busy with some activities by the river.

"I heard the Shaman mention this should be the land of the Wiyot people!"

Hunter Le Tian observed the murky Great River, glanced at the grass baskets of the tribespeople, then confirmed.

"Yes! This is it! This Great River is called the Wik-ni River! It produces many 'Wik-ni'!... Sss! Very tasty!"

"The tribes by the river are not large. The truly large tribe is in the Northern Lagoon bay! It's a vast lagoon, taking a day to traverse, and a very good fishing ground! Inside the lagoon is a Great Tribe. I don't know where it is, only that it's called 'Tuluwat', 'Tribe's homeland by the lake', Lake Tribe!"

That afternoon, the fleet finally found the narrow entrance to the Lagoon bay thirty miles north of the Wik-ni River. The long grass along the coast grew densely in the swamps and shoals, attracting numerous water birds. The clear and tranquil lagoon stretched amidst the shoals encircling from both East and West, extending endlessly from North to South!

Soon, on the east bank of the lagoon, at the narrowest passage most suitable for fishing, appeared the small boats of the Wiyot people. Upon seeing the six arriving longships, one small boat headed back to

the eastern tribal village to report, while the remaining boats unexpectedly came forward to encircle them.

The Wiyot fishermen aboard the small boats were full of curiosity, observing the large ships they had never seen and the tribes from unknown origins. The foremost fisherman expressed enthusiasm, using the Wiyot language from the Algic language family, warmly greeting them.

"Maa-mam! Ne-'en-tsuq'! Hello to you! Welcome!... Friends from the sea!..."

"Um..."

Scholar Mikki pursed his lips and looked at Hunter Le Tian.

"Le Tian, do you know their language?"

"No, I don't!"

"Can you dance to express our intentions to them?"

"No, I can't!"

The cloaked Hunter Le Tian innocently blinked and naturally refused.

"The Wiyot people are a fishing tribe, they catch 'Wik-ni'... they are not forest Hunters, and they cannot understand the communication of Hunters at all!"

"..."

Helplessly, Scholar Mikki had to take out the translation book of the Cedar Shaman, searching carefully for a long time to find a few usable words, unsure if the Wiyot people could understand.

"Peyek, xemkwe?... Grain, exchange?"

Upon hearing this, the tribal fishermen on the boats scratched their heads and shook their hands.

"..."

Scholar Mikki awkwardly looked at Zuvaro but saw him stroking his chin, contemplating the friendly Wiyot people on the small boats, unsure what he was thinking. He pursed his lips, found another word, and tried again.

"Torek, xemkwe?... Food, exchange?"

This time, the Wiyot fishermen thought for a while and finally understood. Happily, from the boat, they picked up a fishing grass basket and shouted to the longships.

"Wik-ni! Xemkwe!"

It turns out the Wiyot people distinguished very clearly, "Peyek" referred to grains, excluding fish. Their tribe had limited grains, typically stored for winter, rarely exchanged with outsiders.

"Le Tian, does he want to exchange 'Wik-ni'? What is it exactly, fish?"

"Sss! That is delicious..."

Hunter Le Tian slurped and smiled.

"Exchange it! Tonight I'll show you my culinary skills!..."

"Delicious?..."

Scholar Mikki wore a puzzled expression and looked at Exploration Captain Zuwaro.

"Zuwaro, do you think it will be tasty?"

"Tasty indeed!"

Exploration Captain Zuwaro nodded affirmatively without hesitation. He stared at the amiable and joyful Wiyot fishermen, his eyes gleaming with excitement.

"Such friendly and kind tribes... It must be delicious!... Praise the Chief Divine! You will surely illuminate the North!"

Chapter 1318: The Simple Lake Garden Tribe, the Kingdom's New Port

"The ancient Heavenly Divine (Hulu), appeared from the deep, thunderous sea. Like a storm, He walked upon the land of the East, and like a storm, His soul dispersed into the vast world..."

As evening approached, the fleet anchored at the eastern shore of the lagoon, in the lake garden tribe of the Wiyot people. Their response to the arriving exploration fleet was calm, like the placid lake water, without vigilance or mobilization. Especially when Scholar Mikki presented the token from the Cedar Shaman, the old Chieftain Tu Jing personally came out to host the fleet leaders.

The Wiyot's lake garden tribe is situated at the lagoon's edge, on a lakeside plain of reeds and tall grasses. There are no trees here, and lumber for building is scarce. Among the two to three thousand people of the lake garden tribe, there isn't a single complete wooden house; all are low "wind shelter huts," densely spread along the lake.

These small huts of the Wiyot resemble a round cap worn on the ground, with a height of approximately 2-3 meters and varying diameters of 3-6 meters. At this moment, Scholar Mikki sat inside a hut, clearly seeing its pillars, made of relatively thin logs, while the spaces between them were filled with branches, bamboo, and reeds. Further outward are layers serving as insulation, made of tree bark, sod, and soil. As for the hut's roof, it's equally light, composed of tree branches, covered thickly with long grasses and reeds.

"A very simple hut, easy to set up, with materials readily available!..."

Scholar Mikki looked up, closely observing the chimney above the hut, seemingly aligned with the hearth below. The entire house lacked windows, with only a closed reed door, requiring one to bow down to enter.

"This little hut is quite warm! And its low height protects against the wind... Maybe we'll find it useful when we reach the far north land..."

"Ah ha ha! The Wik-ni is ready! Added some of Chieftain Tu Jing's seasoning! Come, eat while it's hot!..."

With these words, the cloak-clad Hunter Le Tian eagerly took down several skewers of roasted eel from the hearth, handing them to Exploration Captain Zuvaro, Scholar Mikki, and old Chieftain Tu Jing. Then, according to his appetite, he picked up his own, the largest skewer of roasted eel, and happily began eating.

"Sss! So fragrant! Wow! So fresh! Sss wow! Truly worthy of being roasted by me!..."

Indeed, what the Wiyot people call "Wik-ni" is a specialty of the Western Sea Coast, the delicious eel! Scholar Mikki, impatient, took a skewer as thick as his arm and bit down hard! Then, the rich aroma, savory juices, and slightly sweet taste all lingered in his mouth, his eyes glimmering.

"Chief Divine, how delicious! Mmm... truly delicious!"

Scholar Mikki took big bites, savoring the eel's crisp skin and tender, tasty flesh. Happiness filled his eyes, and even Hunter Le Tian's expression softened instantly.

"Praise Chief Divine! Your skill in roasting Wik-ni is truly blessed by Chief Divine!..."

Lake garden tribe's Chieftain Tu Jing also paused his singing of the tribe's epic, eating the delicious roasted eel. Despite being the chieftain, he had no significant power to use the tribe's stored food. So he could only take out a bit of his family's provisions to invite the fleet's leaders. His "wind shelter hut" where he lived was only slightly larger than others', without any special decorations.

In reality, the Wiyot people by the sea maintained a very ancient and loose tribal structure. The chieftain's power was minimal and even retained many characteristics of a matriarchal clan, deciding family affiliations based on the mother's heritage.

The lagoon plain they were in was bordered by mountains to the north, east, and south, with the sea to the west. Their daily life was generally fishing-based, supplemented by planting and gathering, with little mountain hunting. This isolated fishing lifestyle lacked external pressure and did not produce sufficient wealth to advance society further. Perhaps generations of fishing have led the Wiyot people to be both peaceful and patient, unlike the clans in the mountains, who are sharp, decisive, and volatile.

"The Heavenly Divine spreads across the world, giving all things spirituality! Just like the eel in our hands has a spirit too. We eat it to fill our bellies, yet also we are grateful for it; this is the natural cycle and gift..."

Old Chieftain Tu Jing rambled on, leisurely eating roasted eel, with a warm smile on his face. After a while, everyone finished a heap of eel, contently leaning against the hut's inner wall, enjoying the warmth of the hearth, with expressions of comfort and relaxation.

"Tribes from across the sea! You carry the token of the southern shaman, trusted guests from afar. You arrive at this lakeside camp, at our lakeside people's home, what is it you wish to do?..."

In the language of the Wiyot people, the meaning of "Wiyot" is "people," or "lake people."

"We, exchange, food!..."

Scholar Mikki stumbled, looking at the translation book, piecing together words. He kept gesturing, even drawing pictures on the hut's dirt floor, sweating in urgency.

Chieftain Tu Jing remained unhurried, slowly observed the simple drawings on the ground, leisurely guessing the intent.

"Hmm? Friend, are you not full? Do you need more scallop soup? Oh! You're sweating; I'll make some herbal tea for you!..."

As he spoke, Chieftain Tu Jing took some American wild mint, added some dried wild strawberries, and simmered them together in a clay pot. He handed each person a wooden cup, poured hot, aromatic herbal tea, and demonstrated taking a sip.

"Come! Friends! A cup of hot herbal tea, bringing our bodies in harmony with the Heavenly Divine's spirit..."

"Chief Divine, how troublesome is this language barrier..."

Scholar Mikki opened his mouth, unsure of what to say. The Wiyot people were so isolated; their language varied greatly from other tribes, with a very limited spread. Even the North Bay Tribe's Miwock translator couldn't communicate directly with them.

"Whew! Let's just drink the tea first. A cup of herbal tea... this tea is quite fragrant..."

A cup of hot tea downed, everyone became much more patient. Scholar Mikki gestured and drew persistently, finally making Chieftain Tu Jing understand his meaning.

"Oh! You want to exchange the tribe's food? Hmm, this isn't for me to decide; we need the elder grandfathers from each family to come and decide together!..."

"The exchange goods? Hmm? Beautiful stones! But they can't be eaten, so can't trade for food. Hmm, sharp axes and spears, but not useful for fishing. Big bows, sturdy leather armor? Seems like not much use..."

Chieftain Tu Jing sorted through the fleet's goods until finally seeing the cloth, causing his eyes to light up.

"Thick cloth for warmth! This is good; each family will be happy to trade food for it!..."

Seeing this, Scholar Mikki finally breathed a sigh of relief. Chieftain Tu Jing didn't want gemstones, nor bronze axes, copper spears, bows or leather armor! Indeed, the Wiyot people are a peaceful tribe, without desires for combat or conflict.

In later historical records, the peace of the Wiyot people persisted until around 1860, when Yankee expansion reached this distant corner of the world. Subsequently, a brutal massacre completely destroyed the lake garden tribe, leaving over ten thousand Wiyot endangered. Yankee's Eureka city was built on the lake garden tribe's grave. Ironically, over a hundred years later, to express remorse for the massacre of the Wiyot people, a monument was erected in the city to repent for the past atrocities...

All of future events were yet unknown and would certainly not repeat here. Next came the question from Exploration Captain Zuvaro. He gestured, drew pictures, repeatedly emphasized, stressing the fleet's needs.

"Honorable Chieftain Tu Jing! Chief Divine bears witness! We intend to leave fifty people around the lake garden tribe, to find a piece of lakeside land, to establish a Kingdom's port, a place to farm and build houses!..."

"Hmm? No rush, let's take it slow, step by step with gestures... You? Fifty people? New tribe? Land? Farming? Fishing? Building houses?..."

After a good while, old Chieftain Tu Jing understood Zuvaro's meaning. He smiled gently, gradually nodding. This request did not need discussion among the tribe's elders.

"All things have spirits, and the earth belongs to each tribe."

Chieftain Tu Jing spoke with a smile, his voice warm and kindly, like an elderly relative. He extended a finger and drew a lagoon. Then, he drew a small circle indicating the lake garden tribe's position. He continued to draw another small circle half a day's distance south from the lake garden tribe, roughly 30 miles away. Along the lagoon, there was precisely a river flowing from the south upstream.

"Tribes from across the sea! You have ships to fish yourselves. You have cloth to exchange for some food and can find tribespeople to assist. This lakeside tall grassland, without villages, nor any large prey..."

"You can build huts here, fish here, plant some beans around the lake... and then these sturdy men of yours can marry the tribe's women, and everyone will be family!..."

Chapter 1319: Breakthrough in Missionary Work—Devotion for Faith

In the middle of August, the exploration fleet established the first port of the northern Golden Bay on the wide eastern shore of the lagoon, Lake Bay Port. Its location corresponds to what would later be known as Humboldt Bay, the largest seaport in northern California. The German name comes from the fact that it was rediscovered in the early 19th century by German explorer Friedrich von Humboldt. As for the indigenous name of this bay, it has been lost to history.

The exploration fleet conducted simple scouting over two days. This wide lagoon bay stretches sixty li north to south, and around ten li east to west, with a water depth of at least ten meters, making conditions quite favorable. With the protection of the lagoon coast, ships need not worry about storms; it is an excellent natural harbor!

"Chief Divine bears witness! The Kingdom's harbor established at the wide lagoon bay shall be named Lake Bay Port!" Exploration Captain Zuvaro declared passionately, standing on the eastern shore of the lagoon, an expanse of reeds and tall grass plains along the river. He then looked towards First-level Preaching Priest Xifeng, gazing at his young, handsome face, and solemnly instructed him.

"Priest Xifeng! I entrust the Kingdom's Lake Bay Port to you! I will leave fifty men and a longship, to serve as the backbone for the development of Lake Bay Port..."

"The Wiyot's Lake Garden settlement is just thirty li north, making travel quite convenient! It's already August, so farming is too late, but we can start tilling the land in preparation for sowing next late spring. Of course, your most important task is to build enough windproof shelters, collect large amounts of hay and firewood, and prepare early for the coming winter!"

"Chief Divine bless! Praise the Chief Divine! Captain Zuvaro, I will lead the people with effort for the Kingdom's northward expansion and devote myself to spreading the glory of the Chief Divine!"

Under the bay's sunlight, First-level Preaching Priest Xifeng blushed, clutching the emblem of the Chief Divine as he solemnly pledged. He was just shy of twenty years old, having recently graduated from Divine Power University, and joined the northward exploration fleet. His wrinkled ritual robe had the insignia of the unassuming Crow Family, symbolizing his noble lineage.

In reality, young Priest Xifeng is the grandson of Chieftain Xiteli of the Crow Family, old nobility from the south of the Kingdom. During Xiulote's Southern Expedition, Old Crow Xiteli, seeing the situation deteriorating, was quick to capitulate to the King, sacrificing most of his fief and accepting reassignment to the barren north bank of the Lerma River. But he retained a fallback, by securing admission for several grandsons into Divine Power University, hoping for a rise in fortune for his descendants.

Four years swiftly passed, and with the rapid expansion of the Kingdom, the demand for culturally proficient priests also increased, with a widespread shortage. This effort by Your Majesty to promote the development on the Western Sea Coast provided these marginalized descendants of old nobles a valuable opportunity to return to the Kingdom's political stage!

Therefore, even though the northward exploration and development were fraught with danger, mystery, and the unknown, many old noble offspring joined in, inspired by family interests and faith in the Chief Divine. Among them, devout Priest Xifeng, was a typical example. His name was even changed by his grandfather to symbolize the Chief Divine—Hummingbird.

"Haha! Chief Divine bless! The Wiyot people are mostly peaceful, rarely engaging in disputes and lacking a solid divine faith... Xifeng, you must complete not only the camp at Lake Bay Port but also learn the Wiyot language, bringing these thousands upon thousands of Wiyot tribes into the embrace of the Chief Divine!..."

Exploration Captain Zuvaro smiled, gently patting Priest Xifeng on the shoulder. He then glanced again at Scholar Mikki, observing eels in the lake, and lowered his voice meaningfully.

"Xifeng, you must prioritize the Wiyot evangelization! Such a prime location for missionary work, with tens of thousands of simple tribespeople, there are untold numbers of Kingdom Priests who wish to stay here... And I have chosen you; this is your chance, also your family's opportunity!... Reflect on how the Songbird Priest rose to become a Third-level Main Priest and might ascend even further!"

"Ah! Thank you! Captain Zuvaro! I... I will certainly strive to preach, devoting myself to the Chief Divine!"

Upon hearing such grand promises, the young Priest Xifeng was full of excitement, his spirit uplifted. As he surveyed the lake shore, this reed-filled tribal hunting ground seemed to transform instantly into a thriving and affluent Main Priest district. Momentarily inspired, Priest Xifeng respectfully sought advice.

"Respected Captain... do you have any good suggestions for preaching to the Wiyots for the Kingdom? For example, where to start..."

"Hmm... suggestions... naturally, I have some!"

Hearing this, Exploration Captain Zuvaro raised his eyebrows, his eyes glimmering as he waited long enough. Glancing again at Scholar Mikki, ensuring he could not hear, he smiled and "guided" Xifeng.

"Chief Divine bless! Ahem! Xifeng, you previously spoke of devoting yourself to the Chief Divine, which is quite commendable! ... In truth, this is actually the best method for missionary work!"

"Ah? Devote... oneself?"

"Indeed! You fifty men, arriving fresh, not speaking the language. Slow communication with the Wiyot people, building mutual trust, who knows how long it would take to make a breakthrough. But as of now, since Wiyot doesn't mind intermarrying with outside tribes, then you fifty strong fellows are fifty marriageable sacrifices..."

Exploration Captain Zuvaro's lips curled up, teaching the young priest successor with somewhat exuberant enthusiasm.

"Fifty men marrying fifty Wiyot women would instantly double the population! Marrying more older women, especially those with half-grown children, could even multiply beyond that! The Wiyot people trace bloodlines through mothers, and behind these tribal women are large extended families... As long as you lead them all into the embrace of the Chief Divine, wouldn't hundreds of Chief Divine followers emerge right away!"

"Ah! Ah, this?!"

Hearing Zuvaro's proposition, the young Priest Xifeng was shocked, his eyes wide open. Speechless for a moment, he eventually praised with enthusiasm.

"Good! Really good! Captain Zuwaro, this is a great idea, I never thought of it!"

"Haha! Of course! I've been pondering for a long time how to quickly open up the situation. Actually, you can think of even more!..."

Exploration Captain Zuwaro stroked his chin, revealing a look of pride on his face. He glanced at Miki in the distance and, leaning close to the young Priest Xiufeng, guided him earnestly.

"Xiufeng, you are the Kingdom's Preaching Priest, guiding the believers in marriage arrangements is your responsibility! The winter here is long, sometimes lasting even half a year. As I said earlier, you must communicate back and forth, and during this winter, quickly arrange for everyone to get married!..."

"The power of the Kingdom in this Northern Land is always too weak. No matter what means are used, the more local tribal families are united and the more believers are converted, the more strength gained!..."

"In this barren and vast Northern Land, as long as it's for true faith, do whatever you can to be flexible! Xiufeng, you're young, you don't know how many years you'll stay here, and you can't remain single forever... And as a Priest, you should lead by example and dedicate yourself for the Chief Divine, not be constrained by old rules!..."

"Huh? Me? Dedicate myself and not be constrained by old rules?"

Upon hearing this, young Priest Xiufeng was stunned, vaguely guessing something, with an ominous premonition surfacing in his heart. He stammered, trembling a bit, even his handsome young face was shaking slightly.

"Captain Zuwaro, you mean? But, but as a low-level priest, I'm not allowed to..."

"Yes! That's exactly what I mean! I said, don't be constrained by old rules! Don't worry! In front of His Majesty, I'll vouch for you, as long as you succeed! Right now, there's a perfect opportunity, and that's why I particularly value you..."

Exploration Captain Zuvaro smiled broadly, gripping Priest Xiufeng's shoulder tightly, whispered in his ear.

"The day before yesterday, when the fleet exchanged food with the Wiyot Chieftains... A Wiyot female chieftain really liked your appearance and kept gesturing, asking me about you!..."

"Her husband was a minor chieftain who was swallowed by a storm while fishing at sea. She's not yet thirty, only ten years older than you. Even more amazing, she comes with three sons close to ten years old! Just raise them for a few years, they can become people of the Kingdom and continue to marry as your sons, expanding your family!..."

"Of course, most importantly, she has over a hundred tribespeople under her, along with several sisters who are heads of clans, all holding high positions in the clan village! Xiufeng, once you marry her, the Kingdom's mission here will suddenly become much clearer!..."

"Ah! This... this! A tribal female chieftain... ten years older than me? And three sons close to ten years old?!..."

The young Priest Xiufeng felt dizzy, his eyes filled with shock and loss, unable even to speak. But at this point, Zuvaro was not about to let him go.

"By the Chief Divine's witness! Xiufeng, answer me! You've come from afar, for what purpose?"

"For... to spread the Chief Divine's faith, for the revival of the Crow Family!..."

"Good! Then for the Chief Divine's faith and family revival, are you willing to offer yourself, fearlessly sacrificing? Huh? Answer me! Immediately! Right now!"

"I... I... I'm willing..."

"I can't hear you, louder!"

"I... am willing!"

"Good! Very good! Excellent!"

Exploration Captain Zuvaro showed a pleased expression, forcefully patting Xiufeng's shoulder. He took one last look at Scholar Mikki who was approaching after hearing the voices and spoke with a grin.

"By the Chief Divine's witness! I'm heading over right now! Representing the fleet, proposing for you! Haha! Before the fleet departs, I will certainly arrange this grand marriage affecting two tribes for you! Divine protection be upon us!"

Chapter 1320: The Beginning of Assimilating the Northern Land, The First Sacred Wedding!

"Boom boom boom! The divine sky, earth, shore, and mountains all gaze upon us!... Ding ding ding! This is the wedding blessed by ancestors, a fusion of the longship tribe from the sea, and our people by the lakeside!... Ah yo yo! The Heavenly Divine opens His eyes over the sea, laughing out a joyful storm!..."

The wedding blessed by ancestors is held on the beach at Lake Bay. According to the clan traditions of the Wiyot people, it's the bride's family that hosts the wedding, provides food, and entertains guests from various tribes. At this moment, hundreds of Wiyot tribespeople are beating the heavy Tuluwat drums, shaking celebratory wooden bells. They gather in piles along the shore, singing and dancing their hearts out.

Tu Jing, the chieftain of the Lake Garden Tribe, stands with a smile on an ancient stone platform, delivering blessings for the newlyweds. In front of the stone platform, on both sides are the family clans of the couple, with the newlyweds in the center.

The young Priest, Xi Feng, wears a white ritual robe and a gray windproof hat. Two long heron feathers are inserted into the hat, fluttering in the sea breeze. This is the ceremonial hat of the Wiyot Tribe, and from afar, it looks just like two reeds.

At this moment, beneath the reed hat, the young Priest Xi Feng stands motionless, seemingly a little lost. His figure is not weak, but he appears distinctly smaller next to the woman on the left. The woman on the left is none other than his new bride, the tribe's woman Chieftain Tu Lan. At present, Chieftain Tu Lan, wearing a bright blue robe, cheerfully greets her relatives and friends.

"Haha! The old chieftain is singing the Sacrificial Song! Tu Lan, soon you will have a husband again! Tsk tsk! And such a handsome little man!"

"Yes! Yes! The bears in the mountains are greedy, munching only on raw, tender little red berries!..."

On the left side, there is a dense crowd, the bride's tribe and relatives. Two robust women chieftains are grinning, shouting at Tu Lan, who's getting married in the center. Tu Lan wrinkles her brows, disregarding the ongoing wedding, and fiercely reprimands in tribal language.

"Get lost! You two berry-hungry fat foxes! This raw, tender little red berry is mine! Mine! Look one more time, and I'll throw you both into the lake one-handedly!..."

"Ah haha! Tu Lan is scolding her two sisters!... As for her children, she lets her three kids come over to cause a ruckus!..."

The Wiyot weddings are very joyous without any rigid rules, boisterous and lively. The mischievous tribespeople rally around, quickly calling over the three boys aged eight, nine, and ten. Then, the three boys swarm over to the stone platform, touching and examining the young Priest Xi Feng closely.

"Mama! Is this my new dad? Seems not very sturdy? Can he quickly give me a brother?"

"No! I already have two brothers, I want a sister, I want a sister born!"

"No way! You have brothers, but I don't! I want a brother to bully!..."

"Ah?! Three annoying little eels, get out and play outside! Stop burrowing around here!"

Chieftain Tu Lan glares, looking at the three purposely mischievous half-grown boys, a surge of anger rising. As a leader, regularly rowing and fishing, leading the tribe to build huts, she is stronger than most tribespeople.

Currently, she extends her strong and powerful arm, lifting her youngest son of fifty to sixty pounds. Then, with a low shout, she rolls him along the sand like a log, tossing him five to six meters away.

"Get out!"

"Ugh!!"

The naughtiest son rolls five to six meters, landing on the sand. He groggily clambers up, wipes his dusty face, and scampers away. This skillful display quiets the most boisterous two sisters, shrinking their necks, afraid to make noise.

"Tsk ts! Tu Lan's strength is why she once caught such a big Wik-ni!..."

"Isn't it! She could carry two logs while running before."

Witnessing his wife's skill, though not understanding the tribespeople's words, Priest Xi Feng's forehead sweats profusely at once. He immediately realizes that he very likely, no, definitely cannot win against these robust women chieftains, especially the outstanding one, his wife Tu Lan.

"Chief Divine! Hope tonight... she can... be gentle... I... I'm still..."

"Haha! Ancestors finally opened their eyes!"

Beside him, Tu Lan turns her head, looking at her new husband jubilantly. His fair complexion is much more handsome compared to the tribe's dark fishermen! Not only youthful and spirited, but with an indescribable wisdom, like the shamans who understand many things from various tribes. Only he doesn't seem too capable of working...

"No problem! If he can't work, I'll support him! Fishing and chopping trees, who can compete with me! I also made an agreement with the chieftain of the longship that I'll lead the tribe to live at the southern lakeside! That's our new home, ours! Hahaha!..."

Thinking this, Tu Lan joyfully and gently extends her hand to wipe Priest Xi Feng's sweat. Then, she tightens her arm, holding her new husband closer.

"Ancestor's blessing! This marriage blessed by ancestors is hereby concluded! You will establish a family hut by the southern lakeside. And your marriage, like the tribe's grass huts, will stand resilient on ancient land despite storms and rain!..."

Old Chieftain Tu Jing finishes singing the Sacrificial Song with a smile, and the surrounding crowd also blesses them. At this moment, both the kingdom's exploration fleet and local chieftains loudly and enthusiastically praise.

Although the two newlyweds have a language barrier, a ten-year age gap, hometowns separated by thousands of miles. One has three children, the other just came of age... but in everyone's eyes, in the eyes of both leaders, this is a sacred, fitting, beautiful wedding, blessed by the Divine and ancestors!

"After all, this unprecedented wedding officially symbolizes the kingdom's northern expansion and the beginning of tribal assimilation! And this is also the first fusion of the Highland's Jiao People heirs and their distant brothers on the Northern Continent!"

At this, Exploration Captain Zuvaro feels invigorated, his face radiating a heartfelt smile. He is utterly convinced that this sacred wedding will be etched in the kingdom's epic, inscribed in the Chief Divine's scripture, much like this exploration.

"Praise the Chief Divine! He sits high in the sky, compassionately watching over us!"

"Boom boom boom boom!"

Exploration Captain Zuvaro, with hundreds of crew members, prays in unison to the Chief Divine. Then, with a wave of his hand, the kingdom's fleet fires their celebratory cannons, for the first time displaying the Main God's majesty before the astonished Wiyot people. And for hundreds of Wiyot tribespeople, it's the first they learn of the powerful God of Thunder from the South!

"This is the Chief Divine's thunderbolt and His singing! He approves of this marriage and wants His divine name to remain on this distant land!"

"Praise to You! Huitzilopochtli! Praise the Supreme Main God!..."

"Vizilopo! Lopo! Chitli!"