

Civilization 165

Chapter 165 Scouting Ahead

The setting sun bathed the city of White Stone, casting magnificent shadows over the pristine white walls, mirroring the fates of the noble.

In the eastern part of the Lake Capital City, on the outskirts of the palace district, there stood a broad mansion with a red roof and white walls, close to the ferry port that led to the east of the capital. Within half a day's distance, one could board a canoe and travel to the city of Texcoco on the eastern shores of Lake Texcoco.

The mansion was rare with its two stories, exceeding the commoner's regulations. Dozens of rooms and halls were neatly arrayed, solemn and imposing. The south-facing residence was spacious and bright, adorned with patterns of obsidian and volcanic rock, which belonged to the master of the house.

Behind the main house was a platform as tall as the house itself, with long wooden benches meant for the Mexica nobility's favored pastimes of sunbathing and cooling off. In a corner of the mansion, there was a specially made toilet covered with straw and lime plaster, where incense burned at the entrance.

At this moment, a gracefully dressed young man was reclining on the bench, watching the splendid but fleeting sunset, reflecting on past glories. His face wore a gentle melancholy, and his eyes sparkled with reminiscence.

"The coronation of the Mexica king, what an immense and glorious ceremony it was! Today, I remember you, Coyote, my great father. If I were to meet you again, across the long years, with the brilliant twilight, how could I speak to you? With silence, with tears, with sighs... The lost glory of Texcoco, forever unforgettable."

Next to the young man was a middle-aged samurai, his face showing resolve.

"Respected King, we shall surely revive the city-state and lead the alliance! The people of Tenochtitlan have once again plunged into cruel civil war, their brutal rule will not last long. The old thief will eventually die!"

Hearing the samurai's words, the young man nodded slightly. Then, he solemnly sat up, his eyes twinkling with determination.

"In front of outsiders, do not call me king, I am merely a prince now."

The middle-aged samurai, filled with indignation, blushed and lowered his voice to shout.

"The people of Tenochtitlan are merely one of the three factions that formed the alliance. They are savage tribes stranded on an island, rebellious vassals who betray their suzerain, how can they compare with the people of Texcoco who have a cultural legacy spanning three hundred years! Our great library contains millennium-old wooden mural paintings, and the poetry of the kings through the ages surpasses all others! Back then, we did not succumb to the Tepanec, and we will not bow to the Tenochtitlan people now!"

The young man also straightened his spine, his expression solemn and studious.

"You are right! We shall rise again! Time treats all mortals equally, even the immortal sun will eventually die. Now, uncle still controls eight thousand warriors of the city-state. We just need to persevere quietly, and we will wait for our future opportunity!"

After speaking, the two looked at each other for a long time, their firm beliefs burning in their eyes.

Just then, a retainer hurriedly rushed over from the main hall.

"Respected Prince, the Chief Priest of the alliance is visiting, currently waiting in the great hall. Please go to meet him."

Prince of Texcoco instantly restrained all his sharpness, transforming into a vulnerable, gentle young man. He nodded to the samurai and walked steadily towards the great hall. Shortly, the Chief Priest, adorned with a Feather Crown, appeared before him holding a Divine Staff in one hand and a red-bottomed wooden box in the other.

"Respected Prince Biril, fasting prince, in the name of the Guardian God, I salute you!" Quetzal smiled warmly.

"Respected Chief Priest, descendant of Acolhua greets you, welcome! What can I do for you?" Prince Biril bowed slightly, expressing respect to the spokesperson of the god.

Quetzal paused, then sighed softly.

"I am here on an immortal elder's orders to inform you of a tragedy. Uncle Tlotrol lost the supply line, leading to the failure of the siege of Otapan, an unforgivable fault. He felt guilt and has already sacrificed himself during the coronation, bearing the deserved responsibility. This is his head."

Saying this, Quetzal handed the red-bottomed wooden box to Biril, his hands stained red with blood.

Upon hearing this, Biril trembled violently. He struggled to open the wooden box and saw the unwilling and angry face of his uncle. After a moment, he decisively closed the box, his eyes brimming with tears.

Quickly, Biril gathered his tears. Suppressing his anger, his face expressionless, he bowed again in thanks to Quetzal and then turned back to place the wooden box in the center of the sacrificial altar in the main hall.

Using this gesture, Biril quickly contemplated his next move. When he turned around again, his face was full of tears. He seemed unable to control his body, immediately falling onto the stone table, bowing his head to cover his expressions, and then began to sob loudly.

Quetzal, too, looked on with a sorrowful expression, nodding slightly in his heart. Although Prince Biril was only eighteen, he was quite clever. At this moment, it was neither appropriate to show too much outrage nor to be too enduring, pretending nothing had happened. Sobbing was indeed the best option.

"It seems, Prince Biril is indeed a fine match for marriage. He could also restrain King Aweit." Quetzal thought to himself and then comforting spoke kindly.

"Respected Prince, uncle Tlotrol by his noble self-sacrifice has cleansed all his wrongdoings. He shall return to the Divine Kingdom of the Sun to continue fighting for the light! There's no need for excessive grief, Your Highness. The elder has no intention to continue blaming you."

Quetzal gave a slight smile, his face beaming like spring.

"In the kingdom of gods, Uncle Tlotrol will continue to bless you. I hear you are yet unwed, Your Highness. I have a niece, fourteen years old, calm and graceful, not yet promised to anyone. Would you consider, under the blessing of the Guardian God, taking her under your wing to teach her the poetry of Texcoco?"