

## Civilization 169

### Chapter 169 Destiny\_3

The elder looked at Uguel a few times and calmly instructed,

"Uguel, stop trembling, you still have time. The two High Priesthoods will merge, with Xutel as the Chief Priest and you as his deputy. Xutel will compile the religious scriptures, and you will handle the merger."

"Tonight and tomorrow, we must eliminate the Texcoco lineage. Call together the Priesthood, reassure the people. Tell them the Texcoco Prince was dissatisfied with Trol's death, poisoned Chief Priest Quetzal, and plotted treason, a crime unforgivable. The Tlacopan Prince was not involved, let him stay at peace. The other Nobility are innocent if unaware. If they are unsettled, continue to accept their bribes as usual."

At these words, Uguel felt a chill in his heart. He kowtowed forcefully, his head banging on the ground with thudding sounds.

"Respected elder, I will return the bribes I received in the past..."

"Uguel, look up." The elder watched him impassively.

Uguel immediately stopped. He lifted his head slightly to meet the elder's unemotional gaze, feeling waves of coldness in his heart.

"Do as I have said. Lock up those from the Nobility who are unstable, but do not kill anyone. You still have time, learn more scriptures in the future."

Uguel cautiously confirmed the elder's gaze. Then, with reverence, he bowed and trembled as he accepted his fate.

"You may go. I am tired. Take Quetzal's body out. Make the arrangements so that the Nobility can see. The poison he took was Texcoco's 'Death Vine Water'. Tell this to the Nobility, and don't get it wrong."

Uguel kowtowed again as a sign of respect. His steps wobbled as he retreated. Two Guards carried Quetzal's body, like emotionless terra-cotta figures, quietly following by his side.

After arranging everything, the elder finally closed his eyes and rested against the stone throne. The Guard Captain laid a Jaguar skin on the throne and covered the elder with a duck down blanket. Then, he moved the bonfire to the back of the stone throne.

In the warm darkness, the elder fell asleep silently. In his dream, he saw his long-separated elder brother, the Poet King of Texcoco, and his departed dear friend Coyote. The three Marshals fought side by side, breaking through the Tepanec army's formation, storming their Capital City. Then, they drank merrily with comrades and brothers until dawn before the burning Temple of the Tepanecs, hearts open to each other.

The elder brother started a vigorous War Dance, playing a brilliant Bamboo Flute. Coyote then sang aloud:

"The flowers that bloom today, trampled under the feet of Samurai.

The stubborn enemy standing firm, will turn to dust by tomorrow.

Though rocks are solid, nothing can endure forever.

We revel in today's joy, forgetting tomorrow's pain will come!

Transient glory is destined to vanish like an illusion.

How can humanity, so insignificant, ever outlast time?

Only withering is cherished by us all.~~"

In his sleep, the elder smiled faintly. Yes, only withering remains in this life, fear it's a silent farewell. The flickering bonfire lit the elder's hair, now completely white.

At the elder's feet, Uguel walked out from the Chief Minister's palace. He took a deep breath, as if stepping out from the realm of the God of Death. Then, he wiped his sweat-soaked forehead with his sleeve, but it remained wet—the clothing had already been drenched through.

Turning around, Uguel saw that the Guards behind him had also stopped. Looking at Quetzal's serene smile, he first sighed softly and then laughed with pleasure. Eventually, he couldn't help but bow his head, whispering to Quetzal,

"Old man, you've been prestigious for so many years, always outshining me, and this is the end you've met! The wise egret is sacrificed to the spirits, the foolish turkey lives on. I am indeed uncarvable rotting wood but I still have time, what about you? I'd rather be greedy and stupid, a threat to no one, and enjoy my days!"

Having said that, Uguel laughed again with self-satisfaction. Then, he waddled away, his corpulent body shaking with laughter, towards the enclave of the Temple of the Priests. Behind him, Quetzal remained silent and still.