

Civilization 235

Chapter 235: Papermaking Improvements, Price of Gold for Bones, and Craftsman Scholar_3

Blood sprayed violently, accompanied by a piercing scream. Bertade looked up, puzzled, only to see Xipak, who had fallen to the ground in terror.

The young craftsman had been standing too close. He had stared at Tezroca's fate and, getting sprayed in the face, collapsed, screaming in horror. Now, his nose and mouth were covered in warm liquid, and the thick smell of blood filled the air. In his heart were the terrifying, desperate eyes of Tezroca in the last moments, complete with pupils violently contracting.

The Head Warrior chuckled dismissively. Then, he grabbed the wet hair from the ground, lifted the still-bleeding head as if it were a pumpkin freshly cut, and walked back to the youth with a calm expression.

Xiulote calmly glanced at it, then averted his gaze as his anger subsided slightly.

"How many accomplices does Tezroca have?"

The craftsmen were already trembling and collapsing to the ground, prostrate with fear. Upon hearing the terrible query of His Highness, they immediately pointed out five craftsmen whose faces had turned pale with fear.

Bertade asked again quietly, bowing.

"Your Highness, how should they be dealt with?"

Looking at the indifferent expressions of the warriors, looking at the fearful and waiting faces of the craftsmen, Xiulote slightly lowered his eyes. He remembered the rules that prevailed in this era. He also remembered yesterday's vow to become a farmer.

Moments later, he broke the silence, speaking calmly, yet sighing inwardly.

"Execute them all! Hang their heads at the gate of the Divine Revelation Place for three days to show the public!"

Upon hearing the stern command of His Highness, five elite warriors stepped out immediately. They took their bronze axes and skillfully forced the five men to the ground. In just a moment, five more pools of blood and five headless corpses lay on the ground. Afterward, the warriors took the head from Bertade, picked up wooden racks and ropes, and headed straight for the gates of the Divine Revelation Place.

Now that authority had been established, rewards naturally followed. After pondering for a moment, Xiulote turned his gaze to Xipak, who had collapsed on the ground.

"Xipak, get up and speak!"

Xipak wiped the blood from his face. He struggled to rise from the ground but found himself weak. Eventually, he managed only to kneel obliquely on the ground, his head turned in the direction of His Highness.

"Xipak, how did you discover the two improved techniques for papermaking?"

The young craftsman thought for a while and answered, trembling.

"Your Highness... I used to be a carpenter. I remember that cactus sap can alter the surface of wood... As for the Stone of the Dead, my father was a War Priest, who died on a campaign to Tarasco years ago, leaving behind some of the Stone of the Dead... Later, I couldn't become a priest, so I spent a long time studying these divine objects..."

Xiulote nodded slowly. It seemed these techniques were indeed Xipak's original creations. After being a priest, a craftsman, an inventor... it truly was like finding a priceless stallion!

The youth pondered for a bit, recalling his promise to improve paper, and thinking of his own grand plans. He then looked once more at Xipak, showing a smile that hinted at fate.

"Xipak, you have improved paper, putting forward two processes, so I shall reward you doubly! From this day forth, you shall be the Master Craftsman of papermaking at the Divine Revelation Place, equivalent to the military nobility of the Alliance!

The Divine Revelation Place falls under the High Priesthood. Since you are the offspring of a priest and have inherited knowledge, I appoint you the First Level Explorer of the Divine Revelation Place. Your holy office shall be equivalent to that of a First Level Priest!"

"From now on, you will be the head of the papermaking department! As promised, I will recruit a Royal Warrior from your family as a follower, reward you with a hundred bolts of cotton cloth, ten acres of Milpa, and a chest of gold and silver!"

Hearing this extraordinary promotion and generous reward, Xipak's eyes widened to their fullest, his expression resembling one in a dream-like trance, and then he collapsed to the ground once again. Destiny's smile had completely floored him, yet his mind was still incessantly calculating.

The title of a Craftsman Master is almost that of nobility; a First Level Priest is akin to an official position, while the head of the papermaking department is a job title, supplemented with abundant land and wealth. Titles, official positions, job posts, and riches, in a moment's time, he had leapt from an ordinary craftsman that others could easily mistreat to a true ruling class member of the Alliance!

Xiulote glanced around at everyone's expressions. The faces of the craftsmen changed from fear to boundless desire and anticipation; the elite warriors' faces were also filled with envy. The youth then nodded silently—this was the atmosphere he wanted.

Such a generous reward was not solely meant for Xipak, but rather aimed at the craftsman and priest communities. First, he wanted to ignite the enthusiasm for research among the craftsmen, spending huge sums to push technological innovation to its extreme. Second, he intended to open up a path of advancement for Craftsman Masters, offering them a small number of priest positions.

Last, and most importantly, under the name of the Divine Revelation Place, he planned to establish a branch of craftsman scholars among the priests during the tumultuous period of religious reform!

The clerical system, as decided by the High Priesthood, was rough and simple, specifically divided into five levels. Below the Fifth Level were the Zero-level Assistant Priests, who are the starting point for all

priests. Going upwards, the Third Level High Priests overseen ecclesiastical districts, aided by several Second Level priests.

Fourth Level Supreme High Priests enter the Priesthood's central authority and take charge of the various departments. Locally, they govern the local ecclesiastic province, which is essentially the Elder Priest of each City-State. Eleven States would determine eleven Supreme High Priests, with the rest serving as deputy positions. The current highest position, the Fifth Level Supreme High Priest, consists of twelve cardinal elders within the High Priesthood, with the first being the High Priest. The corresponding clerical positions have not yet appeared locally; in the future, they will manage ecclesiastical provinces.

Currently, Xiulote's clerical position was that of a Fourth Level Supreme High Priest, involved in compiling doctrine, devising ecclesiastic laws. In addition, within the Priesthood, the department he was in charge of was the Divine Revelation Place, the path of the craftsman scholars among the priests, also the planned center for scientific research.

To distinguish from other priests, he specially prepared new names for the Fifth Level clerical positions within the Divine Revelation Place: First Level Explorers, Second Level Scholars, Third Level Wood Drillers, Fourth Level Fire Transmitters, Fifth Level Divine Revelators. Explorers embody the essence of a hummingbird's flight, Scholars emphasize the importance of broad knowledge, Wood Drillers must diligently delve into their studies, Fire Transmitters pass on the sacred flame, and Divine Revelators were himself. Of course, since his position was only at the Fourth Level, Fire Transmitters would remain undisclosed for the time being.

Science and technology are the primary productive force, and these names embodied his deep and earnest hopes: to explore the unknown, acquire extensive knowledge, then delve into a field of study, ignite the sparks of new technologies, and consequently become the developers of technology, fostering the flame of civilization!

This was Xiulote's ambition and vision. Not long ago, the youth had spoken in detail with his grandfather about this matter.

The High Priest nodded calmly, agreeing to the establishment of the Divine Revelation Place. As for these names, he neither approved nor disapproved but simply smiled and said,

"My child, remember that power always flows from the top down, not the reverse."

Xiulote fell silent for a moment. Then, he firmly countered,

"It is so now, but it will definitely not be that way in the future. The Divine Revelation Place will change our future!"

Upon hearing this, the High Priest looked at the youth's resolute expression with satisfaction yet responded with laughter and no answer.

At that moment, Xiulote once again recalled his grandfather's meaningful smile. The youth was momentarily distracted, then as always, he was resolute. He made a final check of the papermaking process, understanding all the details, then left with clarity.

Before leaving, Bertade looked at the dazed Xipak and shook his head inwardly. With such exceptional promotion and being singular in his pursuit, the path of the first craftsman scholar was bound to be challenging.

"Of course, in this world resembling a jungle, who has an easy path? It's nothing but clearing the thorns, slaying the tigers and leopards, and following the sun," he thought.

With that in mind, the Head Warrior smiled slightly and turned on his heel, heading in the direction of the sun.