

Civilization 246

Chapter 246: Cutting Hair, Blood Oath, and Conquest_2

"My child, come, cut a lock of your hair and cast it into the sacred fire before you. From this moment on, under the witness of the chief divine, you shall burn away your past transgressions and offer your wholehearted devotion to embrace the light of the chief divine!"

The middle-aged priest's voice was magnetic and gentle, seducing the heart with his words.

Natali's spirit was uplifted. Under the watchful eyes of the Temple Guards, he took the Obsidian's short dagger without hesitation, cut off a lock of his hair, and then threw it into the fire basin.

Watching his black hair burn and smelling the scent of charring, the young Samurai felt a sudden release on his shoulders. The darkness in his heart was slowly consumed by the sacred ritual, and the light in his chest began to bloom with the warmth of the flames.

"I...devote...faith, I...sinless...light..."

Natali murmured repeatedly, his eyes shining with fervor and a smile gracing his lips.

Bravo nodded in satisfaction. This was a devout believer, perhaps even a zealot. It was unbelievable to have such faith only a few months after the first group of Otomi Warriors had surrendered!

"My child, come, drink this cup of sacred wine, and pray to the chief divine. From this moment on, under the witness of the chief divine, you shall swear an oath to Him, receive a sacred duty, and shine the glory of the chief divine!"

Natali was resolute. With even more solemn attention from the Temple Guards, he obediently took the Blood Wine and faced the burning fire basin to gulp it down in one go. Immediately, redness ran down his chin and fell into the basin, rising and scattering. This was the brilliance of the Sacred Fire, the reach of Divine Might, all-powerful. It could dispel the souls on one's hands, elevate the blood in one's mouth, and ignite the light within one's heart.

Smelling the pungent scent and tasting the bitterness of the sacred wine, the young Samurai felt his chest warm and his heart beating strongly. He was infused with endless drive and possessed a new purpose and mission:

To bring light to all the lost souls on this land where he had grown up!...to let them feel the warmth of the divine...for them to be like him...

"I...accept...the divine's duty, I...disseminate...the divine's glory!"

Natali whispered to himself. He clenched his fist, pressed his arm tight against his chest, feeling the heartbeat of his soul.

Hearing this, Bravo nodded once more, impressed by the Samurai's promising future. He pondered for a moment before removing a brand new silver necklace amulet from around his neck and handing it to Natali.

"My child, come, put it on, for it symbolizes the chief divine. Henceforth, you are a warrior of the chief divine, born for Him, fighting for Him, dying for Him! After death, you shall ascend to the Divine Kingdom!"

Natali reverently accepted the silver necklace, carefully placed it around his neck, then grasped the amulet to pray. At the front of the necklace was a gold Sun Amulet, which had a stylized image of a Hummingbird resembling a simple "Dagger" carved within the sun. The Hummingbird and the sun, symbolizing the War God and Sun God, and now, He is the supreme chief divine!

"The almighty Huitzilopochtli, I fight for Him..."

Natali continued to chant, fully immersed, his eyes shining with an otherworldly splendor.

Bravo marveled in astonishment, such a natural believer!

Meanwhile, on a not-so-distant platform, Uguel also wore a smile, watching the Otomi Warriors who had taken the Blood Oath with satisfaction.

Unexpectedly, these thousand surrendered soldiers were excellent believers. Their souls were completely cleansed and filled with a longing for faith and salvation. Just infuse them with the divine's glory and rebuild their belief, and these men would become the most zealous Temple Warriors, fighting for the Mexica Alliance... no, firmly under the control of the High Priesthood in the north!

Soon, all thousand surrendered soldiers completed the hair-cutting and blood-drinking rituals. Everything progressed smoothly, with only a minor interruption.

"Elder Uguel, one of the Otomi Warriors has no hair, how should we carry out the hair-cutting ritual?"

The High Priest approached the stage and softly inquired.

Uguel frowned slightly. He shook his heavy stone crown, thought for a moment, and said,

"If there is no hair, then sacrifice a section of a finger! I seem to have heard someone say that this is another way to erase sins. Let it be so from now on!"

The High Priest was momentarily stunned. He was learned and knowledgeable but had never heard of such a ritual. He looked again at the Elder's slightly furrowed brows and respectfully bowed his head before silently retreating.

"Well, the sacrifice of one's own flesh and blood always inspires greater devotion!"

The High Priest stepped off the platform, shaking his head silently, and hurried away.

Next were the over four thousand newly surrendered Otomi Warriors. The Mexica Warriors divided them into groups of one hundred each, guiding them in batches to perform the hair-cutting conversion and blood oath swearing.

The hair-cutting conversion, similar to a Samurai's loyalty, now meant burning away one's sins to pledge allegiance to the chief divine in the new doctrine. The blood oath swearing was an oath to the divine to take on the divine-distributed duty and spread the divine's glory. The Priesthood determined different standards for the blood oath based on the level of sacrifice to distinguish among the faithful. The blood oath ritual itself also symbolized a kind of religious qualification, and currently, the Priesthood did not plan to popularize it.

These newly surrendered Otomi Warriors were pale and hesitant. In their view, there were many gods in the world and to believe in the War God was no hindrance. But to regard the War God as the sole chief divine from now on, to believe He was all-powerful, supreme, and that all other gods were merely his subordinates, or even just ordinary saints... this represented a massive shock to their cognition, a complete reformation of their beliefs, difficult to achieve in a short time.

The Otomi's priests were dead, their Temples utterly burned, and the vast majority of Otomi Warriors chose to lower their heads and convert, burning the cut hair. Then, with the decline of the Divine Descendant's Royal Family, when the Blood Wine was placed before them, some Otomi Warriors could no longer endure. They excitedly grabbed the sacrificial dagger, and before they could strike at the Mexica Priests before them, they were forcefully knocked down by the ready Temple Guards wielding War Clubs.