

Civilization 270

Chapter 270 Planning the Western Expedition Part 1

Under the same starlit sky, Alisa followed the guard back to the familiar and warm Montezuma Palace. As she walked through the corridor, where the lights flickered, and entered the slightly dim main hall, she saw her father had been waiting for a long time.

Dressed in a luxurious home robe embellished with exquisite, gold-inlaid suns—a tribute from the people of Mistec—Aweit held a very large, ancient wooden plank in his hands, discussing something in a low voice with Gillim. The two occasionally pointed to a certain part of the plank, their fingers measuring, their expressions serious and solemn.

Upon seeing Alisa's return, Aweit's face broke into a smile, looking tenderly at his beloved daughter.

"Alisa, did you have a good time today?"

"Yes, Father. I'm very happy when I'm with Xiulote."

Alisa smiled genuinely, the corners of her mouth cutely upturned. She stepped forward, clutching her father's hand and inadvertently glancing at the wooden plank he held.

On the plank was an abstract representation of mountains, rivers, lakes, and towns, seemingly a map passed down through many years. At the very center of the map was presumably the Lake Capital City, marked by a large, golden sun. Many additions and modifications had been made to the map's west.

The most eye-catching feature on the map was a large red circle, marked on another lake to the west of the center, opposite Lake Capital City over a series of tall mountains. A long blue river ran north and south, including both the red circle and the capital within its path. Near the rivers on the northeast and southeast sides of the red circle were two blue circles.

"Father, what is this?"

Alisa tilted her head to the side, looking at the detailed map and asking out of curiosity.

"Nothing much, just some plans for the future."

Aweit affectionately stroked his daughter's head and then tenderly pinched Alisa's cheek, his eyes filled with a rare tenderness.

Gillim gave the princess a solemn bow. Then, he gently slid the wooden plank out, cradling it in his arms, and quietly stepped back a few paces.

Feeling Aweit's affection, Alisa gently nestled into her father's embrace. Her face once again beamed with happiness as she whispered.

"That's wonderful. Father, I want to stay with you and Xiulote forever, just like this."

At her words, Aweit paused, his expression briefly freezing before resuming its warmth as he smiled at his daughter.

"You will. As long as I am here, you need not worry about anything."

Then, Aweit looked down with a smile, gazing into Alisa's innocent eyes.

"My daughter, what did you and Xiulote do today?"

Alisa blinked. She thought for a moment, her cheeks turning slightly red.

"We went boating on the lake, looked at flowers in the garden, then saw animals and fish, and finally went up the pyramid to watch the stars. Xiulote told me many interesting stories, and he also said he would find me a teacher and picture books, to study alchemy."

As per her agreement with the young man, she didn't mention the story about the starlit sky; it was a secret shared only between the two of them.

Looking at Alisa's blushing face, Aweit's heart sank. His hands rested on his daughter's shoulders as he observed her with worried, serious eyes.

"Alisa, did Xiulote... do anything strange to you?"

"Strange?" The girl tilted her head, her eyes showing confusion.

"...Like getting very close to you... standing too close, or the sound of singing..."

Aweit described cautiously. In his heart, his daughter was still the innocent little sprite.

Alisa thought for a moment, her gaze clear as she looked at her father with a pure smile.

"Father, are you talking about the songs of courtship? No, Xiulote just hugged me and kissed my cheek. He mentioned he wanted to have children with me, but he seemed unsure of how the songs of courtship work, innocently thinking it involved the offering to the spirits... Hmm, I think I know how it's done, maybe I can teach him later."

Aweit first felt relieved but then a bit irritated at the young man. Following his daughter's last words, the dignified King was flabbergasted. His heart felt like a garden in the February wind, its petals scattered all around.

"...Alisa... how do you know about the content of the songs of courtship..."

Alisa smiled joyfully, her radiant smile clear and innocent.

"It's all on the murals and in the poems of the Spirits; it's our way of reproduction and also another form of male conquest. The murals depict it very clearly. Uncle Asayacatl was once defeated in the south and captured by the Chalko City-State, and he used the songs of courtship to conquer the female Chieftains there.

Uncle even left a poem, which detailed the process of conquest... The last line is 'Young man, lie down slowly, empty your spirit. Ah, my beloved, King Asayacatl.'..."

As his daughter recited the poem, the dignified King and the cold Commander-in-Chief both pressed a hand to their foreheads, overwhelmed with headache. That was his elder brother's poetry... After a while, the gentle father managed to collect himself, smiling ruefully.

"Alisa, when did you see this? I never showed you your uncle's poetry."

Not receiving the praise she anticipated, Alisa's cheeks puffed slightly. She looked at her father with a somewhat disheartened demeanor.

"Um, Father, when you were away these past two years, I saw all the murals here and memorized all the poems. After that, I could only watch the flowers and trees, noting their shapes... Did I get it wrong? Then I'll check again when I get back..."

"No, no, no, you're not wrong, Alisa. But these poems are beyond you, don't worry about them..."