

Civilization 288

Chapter 288 Personnel Appointment_2

Hearing His Highness's comment, Bertade silently shook his head. General Balda took the initiative by overseeing the new army's training. Having missed the opportunity to become a Legion Commander this time, he feared his future would be fraught with more hardship.

"Your Highness, approximately how many troops will the Northern Route Army deploy for this campaign, and from where will the logistics commence?"

Bertade looked toward the youth; March was nearly over, and April was upon them. The spring plowing was not far off, and the departure of the vanguard was soon as well.

Xiulote pondered for a moment. He had discussed the plan several times with his grandfather and had also made arrangements for what was to come.

"The Northern Route Army's forces will be divided into four parts. Firstly, there are the new army and trusted aides, totaling over ten thousand men, whom I will entrust to you and Monkey to command. Next is family support, with at least four thousand Teotihuacan warriors, likely to be commanded by the teacher Olosh. There will also be over two thousand Temple Guards, which I plan to hand over to the experienced elder warrior Etalik, while his current position will be succeeded by Elvi. In addition, there will be a group of accompanying priests."

Then come the warriors from the Capital City, Aweit will grant me a legion, probably around eight thousand men. Last time, the Great Nobility were imprisoned and couldn't participate in military discussions. This time, there definitely will be prominent members of the Capital City's nobility going to battle, leading separate forces from Balda to contain military power.

Last are the Northern City-States. According to recent responses, General Osellor is willing to lend the Otomi legion and is also deliberately keeping his distance from our family. Leading the vanguard on this mission, the primary task is to meet with the Northern generals and then to recruit a batch of Chichimeca Canine Descendants. Since Balamo has spent a long time in the North, let him command the Otomi warriors and the Canine Descendants.

The other Northern City-States can also provide several thousand warriors and militia, though the exact number is uncertain. As for logistics, most will come from the Lake Capital City, with the Holy City also providing a portion. The Western City-States will only offer supplementary support and cannot be relied upon as a main source."

Bertade silently calculated that the total warriors and regular legions would exceed thirty thousand, with a similar number expected for the auxiliary militia and naval forces. Even for a diversionary Northern force, there would be at least sixty thousand troops. Contemplating this, the war-weary Head Warrior smiled in admiration; what a powerful Alliance indeed!

Xiulote also calculated the approximate strength of the forces. His countenance remained calm, his eyes burning with desire. He longed to command even more troops, to seize more strategic and military advantages. On the battlefield, the many vanquish the few, the strong defeat the weak, and a skilled fighter seeks no conspicuous honors. Aweit had also taught him that a true warrior uses a pack of wolves to tear apart a solitary deer, securing a rightful victory when the enemy can be defeated!

"I need more warriors, and that depends on the support from various City-States,—as well as the promises and prices that must be paid."

Xiulote pondered in silence, watching the charcoal slowly burn out in the campfire and gently shaking his head. Many embers remained in the firepit, like the unyielding City-States within the Alliance.

As the night deepened and moonlight descended from the zenith, the two fell silent. The youth, now fatigued, gestured to the Head Warrior and fell soundly asleep under the moonlight.

The loyal Head Warrior stepped out of the tent to give a few instructions to the surrounding guards, then returned to the side of His Highness. The seasoned warrior watched over the youth for a moment before settling by the campfire, with his eyes slightly closed, waiting for dawn in the darkness of the night.

The night passed without incident. At dawn the next day, Xiulote awoke in the morning sun. Bertade had already prepared cold water, and the young man continued his willpower training, followed by his routine martial arts practice. He had spent a full month in the military camp, his daily routine exceedingly regular—the exception being his occasional returns to the Capital City, with the rest of his time devoted to training others and himself, leaving no time to even visit Alisa.

After breakfast, Xiulote summoned Balda and Ezpan. Balda was the first to enter the tent; after a brief exchange, the fierce Eagle Warrior nodded in agreement with a smile, offering his respects before leaving. Ezpan, curious about the joyful expression of the training officer, wondered about his new position. Following that, Ezpan was also summoned inside.

For the surrendered general in whom great hopes were pinned, Xiulote began with kind words of comfort and informed him that his next superior would be Kuluka. Then, His Highness solemnly ordered and presented strict assessment standards for the Spear Legion. After a mix of carrot and stick, Ezpan left, trembling and sweating from his forehead.

Having dealt with the subsequent camp affairs, Xiulote looked up to see the sun nearing noon. He quickly had lunch and then motioned with a forceful wave.

"To the Longbow Camp, to meet hunters from various regions."

Protected by two hundred guards, Xiulote left the Spear Legion's encampment and headed straight west.

The Longbow Camp was established in the western mountainous region, far away from the crowds, not far from Mount Estrella, the Holy Mountain near the Lake Capital City. Mount Estrella is one of the most sacred places in mythology and religion, situated dozens of miles to the west of the Capital City, and along with the underground Holy Lake, it is designated as the forbidden land of the Alliance.

Mount Estrella also symbolizes the Mountain God's Snake Mountain, and at its peak sits the Temple of the Sun, within which blazes the Sacred Fire. At the end of every 52-year cycle, the most esteemed Priest would hold a fire ceremony there, to rekindle the world and move it into the next cycle. After religious reform, it was also designated as the Chief Divine's Primitive Temple, an important religious sanctuary that periodically received pilgrimages from priests and devotees.

For the Royal Family and Great Nobility of the Alliance, the Holy Mountain is an environmentally pleasant vacation and leisure center, as well as a blessed place filled with the spirit of the divine. It lies within a geothermal-rich volcanic mountain range, with a warm climate all year round. Fertile volcanic ash near the Holy Mountain is planted with various beautiful tropical flowers and ubiquitous cocoa trees. At the foot of the Holy Mountain, there are also several warm and comfortable geothermal springs.

Now, in the chilly winter days, large groups of splendidly dressed travelers could often be seen on the road. The Nobility, along with their families and servants, under the protection of private escorts, were successively heading to the Holy Mountain Temple to pray. There, they sought solace for their souls and enjoyed the spring-like beauty of the mountain forests.

Xiulote stood amidst the mountain forest, gazing in the direction of the Holy Mountain. After months of busyness, he had never been to the Holy Mountain for vacation, nor did he know when he would next have leisure time. Perhaps he could take the lovely Alisa to enjoy the natural hot springs together.

Xiulote indulged in the thought for a moment before putting on his cloak again. He discretely led the Guards, leaving the crowded main road, turning southwest toward the deep forest and headed for the Longbow Camp.

As the sun began to set in the west, Xiulote finally arrived at the Longbow Camp. This was a large and historic wooden fortress, built during the early rise of the Mexica people, once housing heavy troops. However, as the Tepanec people in the west were ultimately fully conquered, the fortress gradually fell into disuse.

Now, with the arrival of the Samurai and Militia, the wooden fortress came alive with noise again. Hundreds of Longbow Warriors were stationed on the fortress walls, on high alert and extremely vigilant. The guards carefully inspected Xiulote's Identity Jade Token, then, recognizing the familiar and kind face of His Highness, they shouted joyfully.

Before long, hundreds of Samurai began to emerge from the camp. Most of these Warriors, born of followers, prostrated on the ground, offering their most thorough loyalty to His Highness with great reverence.

Xiulote smiled genuinely from the heart. He took off his traveling cloak and handed it to the Head Warrior, then strode forward, lifting each of his loyal followers one by one. The young man occasionally called out the names of those he recognized, sometimes laughing as he asked about their progress with their literacy lessons, causing the Warriors to look distressed and speechless.

Seeing this, Xiulote laughed heartily, patted the shoulders of the Warriors in the front row, and reminded them to study hard. Then, he strode deeply into the wooden fortress. Inside the fortress was a tight encampment and an expansive drill ground. Most of the drill ground had been converted into a shooting range, with wooden targets set at varying distances, many of which still had newly shot Wooden Arrows sticking out of them.

The young man observed the distribution of arrows on the wooden targets and nodded slightly with a smile. Then he looked toward the center of the drill ground, where thousands of Hunters were already densely kneeling. These Hunters were dressed simply, many clad in only a robe. On both sides and the back, there were also many tribal members bare-chested, with just a long cloth wrapped around their waists.

With the arrival of His Highness, the Longbow Warriors barked orders, and the noisy camp quickly quieted down. At that moment, thousands of people kneeled with heads bowed, orderly and so silent that you could hear a pin drop. Xiulote then glanced at the flagpole atop the fortress wall, where several heads were hanging, and he understood.

Xiulote turned to Bertade with a smile.

"Who's in charge of the camp here?"

Bertade paused for a moment, then replied with a smile.

"We just settled in not long ago. Toltec is temporarily acting as the camp's manager. He's a Samurai of common birth, one of the earliest followers, who later joined the Longbow Guards, and is excellent at Archery."

Hearing this, Xiulote recalled a young man with a frown on his face struggling with his literacy studies and laughed again.

"Call him forward!"