

Civilization 299

Chapter 299 - The First Confrontation_3

Xiulote was closely watching Aweit. He was keenly aware of his mentor's mood swings, and he suddenly felt a chill. The young man pondered for a moment before stepping forward and standing beside Aweit.

The King announced the awards with a calm expression, and the craftsmen thanked him on their knees one by one before withdrawing, until the last one, a potter girl.

"Talaya, you have made contributions to the study of gunpowder! I will award you with the position of a military nobility. The Capital City's Center for Craftsmanship lacks a gunpowder craftsman like you, so I hereby appoint you as the Director of Gunpowder for the Center, in charge of managing the distribution of the army's gunpowder! This is a heavy military responsibility, subject to military law. You must be careful and not dally!"

Hearing this, Xiulote sensed trouble. He glanced at Talaya's suddenly pale face, clenched his teeth and took a step forward.

"Respected King, Talaya is one of my most capable subordinates, and her work here is indispensable..."

Aweit narrowed his eyes. He looked at the young man who had stepped out of line, his gaze growing colder.

"Since this is the case, I won't forcibly conscript your capable subordinate. However, a contribution must be rewarded!"

Then, the King gazed at Talaya, his solemn stare like a heavy mountain pressing upon the young girl's shoulders.

"Talaya, you come from commoner origins, and at sixteen, you are of age to marry. There are several handsome and unmarried young men of the Royal Nobility in my family. I will allow you to choose one to be your husband, to take as your lawful wife. How about that!"

Hearing the King's words, Talaya felt as if she had been struck. She staggered back two steps, her eyes already brimming with crystal-clear despair.

Xiulote bowed his head slightly, sighing in his heart. He couldn't simply abandon Talaya and let her face the King's wrath alone; at this moment, the only option was to step forward... When the young man opened his eyes again, he had made his decision. He took two firm steps, his tall figure positioning itself in front of the helpless girl, and he replied in a low, resolute voice.

"Respected King, Talaya is my personal maid. Her marriage should be decided by me."

Looking at the student he valued before him, a surge of fury exploded within Aweit. He took a step forward, glaring into the young man's eyes, and suddenly shouted in anger.

"Xiulote, step aside! How dare you!"

Xiulote did not move. He took a deep breath, slowly exhaled, and then sincerely looked towards the King.

"Aweit, trust me. Alisa is the person I love most, the tender softness I cherish most in my heart. I will take good care of her and ensure she never suffers the slightest grievance. I swear by the spirit of my ancestors! And as for Talaya... I simply do not wish for her to marry someone else."

At Xiulote's promise, Aweit faltered. He observed the young man carefully, looking at his maturing contours, his calm expression, his sincere eyes, until the anger on his face gradually subsided and his expression subtly changed.

Not far off, Gillim gave a soft sigh, followed by a smile.

After a prolonged silence, Aweit extended his hand, suspending it in the air before him.

Seeing this familiar gesture, Xiulote immediately knelt on one knee and bowed his head to let the King grasp his hair.

Aweit paused for quite a while before he touched Xiulote's head, speaking word by word.

"Xiulote, my son-in-law, remember your promise!"

With that, the King turned and left without another word.

Xiulote remained in his kneeling position. He raised his head to watch the magnificent boat slowly move away, the King's flag slowly disappearing out of sight, and he let out a deep sigh.

Talaya could no longer hold back her tears. She wept with a mix of worry and joy, silently kneeling to the ground, clutching tightly at the Prince's broad back.

From a distance, Bertade released the longbow he had been clutching tightly, allowing it to fall to the ground, covered in dust. The wearied warrior tapped his forehead with his hand, showing a hint of frustration, and muttered to his predecessor monarch.

A breeze blew through, carrying the barely audible voice of the Head Warrior.

"The sky cannot have two suns... The sun belongs to the commoners in the fields and workshops... Only those of noble birth from among the commoners belong to the commoners... Witnessed by the Predecessor Monarch, I have no selfish desires..."

This confrontation between the King and the Prince, subtle as it was in the breeze, became intangible. As the long wind passed, it seemed as though nothing had changed, leaving only the drifting sound of the wind.