

Civilization 61

Chapter 61 Waiting

The setting sun painted the sky a hazy red, as if the eyes of the gods were watching over the earth, reveling in the grand slaughter of humanity, savoring the sacrificial rites and offerings. Then, with a smile, He caused ripples of crimson to dance upon the Long River, sweeping away all the icy sacrifices, before contentedly closing His eyes, plunging the world into darkness.

The fierce battle finally drew to a close, with small fires sparking to life on both banks of the great river. The Militia had already cleaned up the battlefield. They buried the fallen warriors, collected the remaining weapons and Armor, and gathered the prisoners together.

The battle to cross the river lasted an afternoon, and the Tarasco people suffered devastating casualties.

Blocked by the Long River, the Spear-carrying Militia and the foreign Mercenary units were annihilated. Only a few lucky survivors managed to swim across the Long River and escape to the southern bank. The losses of the two elite Militia units totaled ten thousand, while the last batch of landing Samurai also suffered nearly a thousand casualties. At this moment, on the southern shore, Priests once again ascended the sacred platform, igniting the ethereal blue flames, guiding the departed souls to the infinitely beautiful underworld.

The Mexica people also faced significant losses. Three hundred Samurai fell in combat against the Spear-carrying Militia, and the clash with the Mercenary units cost nearly four hundred warriors, totaling seven hundred fallen Samurai, along with one thousand eight hundred Militia. The majority of casualties occurred during the brutal melee and entanglement phases, particularly against the Canine Descendants. These fearless Light Infantry instilled a deep wariness in Xiulote.

The Aztec Alliance was accustomed to conquest and had a well-established healing system. At this time, the injured were being treated. The limited amount of agave juice and inkwood leaves used for stopping

blood and disinfection were reserved for those with severe injuries. Xiulote, along with his followers, boiled water to sterilize cloth strips, performing simple disinfections and bandaging for those with minor wounds.

In this battle, the Longbow Warriors played a decisive role. In an America without Cavalry, the tactical importance of Archers was irreplaceable. The close-quarter shooting of the Longbow Warriors completely disrupted the densely packed Spear formations, allowing Samurai to break through and engage in close combat.

Furthermore, the output from Longbows was sufficiently powerful; the damage exceeded everyone's expectations. Medium-range Longbow shots were enough to threaten targets wearing Leather Armor. For the first time, the Samurai's lives were so fragile. Landing Samurai on the riverbank fell like cherry blossoms under Longbows, causing the command of the opposing Commander to falter immediately. After roughly estimating the potential casualties among the Samurai, the Tarasco people decisively retreated to the south bank.

After nightfall, a grand funeral took place. With limited food supplies for the isolated army, many prisoners were captured, but the young Priests only deliberately preserved dozens of the Spear-carrying Militia. The rest were given over to the fire pits, ceremonial dances, prayers, Sacrifices, and Blessings.

At the end of the sacrificial rite, dawn lit the sky. After loudly bidding farewell to the Guardian God, the Warriors respectfully added the names "Aweit" and "Xiulote." They blessed the victorious Commander and the divinely protected Priest, offering earnest respect and loyalty from their hearts.

A profound battle, a sacrifice, the hearts of the people, and a glimmer of the future.

The Mexica people held the southern bank, and what followed was a prolonged standoff. The Tarasco people quickly ferried three to four thousand Militia across the river upstream and downstream, making a gesture of flanking with over a hundred Samurai leading the way.

Yet Aweit remained unmoved, simply amassing boats to block the river passages upstream and downstream. An enemy without a stable supply line posed no threat; the morale of the three to four thousand Militia who crossed quickly diminished, and their formations became disordered. The Commander dispatched five hundred Mexica Samurai to scatter the crossing Militia groups, annihilate the enemy's Samurai core, and left the remaining Militia to their fate.

The ten thousand main force of Mexica Samurai remained closely gathered, relying on the sturdy fortification of their camp, waiting for the Tarasco army. However, the Tarasco people suddenly lost the desire for a major offensive. They merely continued to build strong fortresses on the south bank and assembled more boats.

The Samurai of both sides looked across the river at each other, the Priests' ceremonies were unceasing, and Commanders faced each other from a distance, yet they maintained a strange calm.

Over the course of more than half a month, Xiulote continued the rigorous training of the Samurai. The physical condition of a Warrior was not built overnight, and firm will was shaped through sweat and hardship. Bertade's Archery skills improved remarkably rapidly. Given his foundation in Javelin throwing and thirty years of training as a Samurai, he was now only missing a poplar tree away from being able to shoot through one from a hundred paces.

The youth also began to learn Archery. In this era of military revolution, even if heroes like Lv Bu and Zhao Yun were resurrected, they could not stand against Matchlock Guns and cannons. Archery, at least, was considered to be a safe and powerful option. For the rest of his time, he kept a close eye on Kuode's Longbow making. The elderly Craftsman and other craftsmen were kept close at hand by Aweit, nominally as engineers for the fortress construction. Over this half a month, the Longbow Guards indeed acquired twenty more Longbows.

In the afternoon, there was a new breakthrough in the organization of written characters. Xiulote found that his followers who were learning Chinese characters would actively make familiar patterns and symbols from their life to assist in understanding and annotating pronunciation.

Aweit enthusiastically took part in the second phase of script development: relying on the complete system of Chinese characters, integrating the Mexica's nascent pictographic characters to organize simple phonetic and semantic symbols, aiding in the learning, understanding, memorization, and pronunciation for ordinary people. In this way, for the Priest and Great Nobility classes, they had the cultural capacity to grasp the complete system of Chinese characters. For the average warrior and commoner, mastering daily written characters and traditional language was sufficient.