

## Civilization 86

### Chapter 86: Fleeing South\_2

Over a hundred Imperial Guard Warriors formed a tight double-shield formation, yet long arrows kept piercing through the shields and finding gaps. The warriors in the front row kept falling to arrows, and then the warriors in the back row would prop up the bodies of the fallen, continuing to block the arrows, contributing their final loyalty.

Upon hearing the twang of Greatbows, Totec looked back again and saw the Royal Banner in a shower of arrows. Even with his rock-solid will, he now felt despair: wavering all the way, the army's morale had long since dissipated; at this point, there was no turning back.

For the fourth time, Totec let out a deep roar, calling for the two hundred ever-loyal, blood-soaked Imperial Guards locked in combat. Then, he gave up on the Eagle Nobility warriors who were within arm's reach but beyond his command and turned to charge toward the direction of the Longbow Guards.

Upon hearing the roar yet again, Xiulote felt much calmer. He glanced at the approaching Imperial Guard Warriors and confidently ordered the Longbow Guards to shoot at Totec.

At that moment, Totec was hunched over, hiding behind a Great Shield. His body moving quickly, his center of gravity remained stable at a fixed height, his steps consisting of constant small hops, repeatedly accelerating himself. This was a sprint reminiscent of a Jaguar's hunt, with speeds that could even reach ten meters per second.

From over two hundred meters away, two volleys from the Longbows killed only thirty to forty Imperial Guards and failed to focus fire on the swiftly moving Totec.

Xuilot's eyelid twitched, and without hesitation, he turned and ran, blowing the retreat horn as he went. Bertade did not bother with the Longbow Warriors, instead, covering Xuilote's retreat.

"In the end, there are too few Archers!" the young man complained as he ran. "With a thousand Longbowmen, let alone a running tiger, even if it were a flying eagle, I'd shoot it down!"

Before the youth had gotten far, Totec caught up to the tail of the Longbow Warriors, swinging his staff horizontally and vertically, and in the blink of an eye, nearly ten warriors lay on the ground.

Moments later, the Copper Spears warriors who were coordinating on the side finally arrived. Stanley avoided Totec, simply directing his warriors to form a dense formation to approach and try to entrap Totec, while Aweit's Royal Banner stood tall in the distance, maintaining a safe separation from the unmatched fierce general.

After more fighting, Totec scattered the Longbow Guards. Looking around, only a hundred or so Imperial Guard Warriors remained. Looking farther away, the Eagle Warrior Battalion was still entangled with the Jaguar Warrior Brigade, and the warriors directly under the Royal Family also formed a square formation, lightly clashing with the familiar warriors opposite them.

He let out a resigned sigh, turned, and ran toward the Royal Banner, like a lonely Jaguar.

"King! The army's morale is gone; we are defeated! We must leave quickly! I will protect you as we head south!" Totec knelt on one knee, bowing his head before Tizoc. Blood and sweat flowed from his body, dyeing the ground beneath him red.

"They have all betrayed me! They all deserve to die!... Totec, can I trust your loyalty?" Tizoc was disheveled, his face covered with dust that revealed a sickly paleness underneath, and only his fierce eyes shimmered with madness.

"To death for you!" Totec replied, once again clenching his fist with one hand and placing it over his chest. His hands were full of tiny cuts, just like his armor was scarred all over his chest.

"Good! Let's go!" Tizoc briskly handed the Royal Banner to an Imperial Guard and discarded the encumbrance on his back.

"Protect this banner until you die! I promise your offspring a future!" Although he did not remember the name of the Imperial Guard behind him, that did not hinder the King's final promise.

The Tonsured Guard bowed his head in acknowledgment, then quickly stood up and silently took over the Royal Banner. Over a decade of special training had instilled absolute loyalty in these guards; they had long since abandoned self.

"Let's go!" Tizoc gave the battlefield one final look, as if to etch all the betrayals into his heart.

"When I return to the Capital, I will send everyone to the sacrificial altar, and let their blood drain!" The King's eyes were filled with blood-colored hatred.

"The Otomi as well!" that was the last bit of madness.

Tizoc did not hesitate to flee south. Over a hundred remaining Tonsured Guards escorted him southward, leaving only a few dozen to protect the Royal Banner. Totec continued to lead the charge, while the warriors directly under the Royal Family scattered, clearing the way for the march.

Exhausted, Xiuxoke lay on several Leather Armors, surrounded by City-State Warriors who were guarding him. Shielded by the shield and double-layer Leather Armor, he had been shaken by Totec's blow, breaking two of his ribs; he was now unable to move. Fortunately, his internal organs were unharmed, and he was not in mortal danger.

At that moment, he managed to raise his head and saw Tizoc fleeing south. Suppressing the pain in his chest, he shouted with determination: "Chase him! We must not let him escape!"

Olosh sighed, gently laying Xiuxoke's head down. Tizoc disappeared from his sight in an instant, replaced by the resigned face of the Head Warrior.

"Commander, don't be anxious. The overall situation is settled; Tizoc's defeat is inevitable. With me, the tracking master here, he can't escape! Do you remember when we were young, watching Jaguars hunting together? The prey's final struggle is the most dangerous. The Jaguar does not take risks; it simply keeps inflicting wounds, following behind the prey until the prey bleeds out and exhausts its strength, then it strikes lethally!"

Xiuxoke recalled the carefree youth, a time before he had to shoulder the responsibilities of his father and the family, the exhilarating years. He and his old friend adventured in the Jungle unrestrained, chasing tigers and leopards, seeking hawks and falcons... Calming down, his steadfast face broke into a smile.