

Civilization 91

Chapter 91 Withering_3

Xiulote was stunned. Had Montezuma truly spoken these words? Born of the Royal Family himself, he had not heard a single sentence of it. He suddenly felt a chill in his heart: Even someone as great as Montezuma, once he died, all records unfavorable to the Priests and Great Nobility would be quietly erased.

The young man thought for a moment, and then urged, "Then come and help us! If you wish to inherit Montezuma's will and reform the Alliance, we still need external conquests to gain the military prestige needed to assume control. You can help us to accelerate the realization of this great future!"

Totec did not speak. After a moment, he answered.

"My duty was to guard the King, but I failed."

"I made mistakes. I should not have recommended Aweit for the role of Commander-in-Chief of the Southern Army under the siege camp at Otapan City, giving him the opportunity. I should have persuaded the King not to rashly choose to battle Aweit and suffer such a crushing defeat. I should have identified Xiuxoke earlier, but I did not. I was supposed to protect the King as he moved south, yet I still failed to fulfill that duty."

"I made an oath to guard, and now the oath is unfulfilled! I assumed the responsibility and now the responsibility has failed! As a Samurai, what else is there to say? All that remains is death."

Totec's voice finally wavered; his low murmur echoed between heaven and earth, carrying an unwavering will.

Finally, in a burst of urgency, the young man shouted, "Don't you care about the King's body? Who will guide his spirit? What about your comrades-in-arms? Will you just let them die?"

Upon hearing this, Totec nodded, "Thank you for reminding me."

He looked around at the last 80 Tonsured Guards: "After my death, you are not to commit suicide. Swear loyalty to the new King! This is my final command!"

The Imperial Guards simply knelt on one knee in silence, bowing their heads in obedience.

Then, facing the young man, Totec said seriously, "The body of the King I leave to you. The King was Aweit's elder brother by one, and for the sake of the new King's reputation, Aweit will surely give the King a grand funeral."

"The King should not have laid siege to Otapan City; it caused the hearts of the people to scatter and invited interference from other Tribes, it also allowed Aweit to rise opportunistically. This was the root of all failure, but alas, I could not persuade him."

"After this war, the Otomi people have been greatly weakened and no longer pose a threat to us. You can sign treaties with them and save the captured Samurai. If they refuse to negotiate, then use your catapults to take down Xilotepec City. Shielded by forests and hills, they cannot threaten us. Do not besiege the Mountain city of Otapan any longer!"

"If the new King is prepared for external conquest, target the Mistec or Zapotecs to the south, their rudimentary city fortifications and Wealth will satisfy the Nobility and Samurai. Alternatively, target the isolated Tarasco to the west; their copper mines will strengthen the nation!"

"Do not first attack the people of Tlaxcala, for that is like a pond where the birds rest. Throw a stone, and you will startle flocks into flight. They will call for reinforcements from the Nava and Mistec people. The Holy Land of Cholula, once threatened, will eventually choose to support them. The King of Tarasco is far-sighted and will definitely come to their aid."

"This Divine Staff is very important to the Quetzal. If Aweit needs support from the Quetzal, he could use this Divine Staff as a bargain. If you plan to deal with the Quetzal, then keep it safe."

"Finally, my Predecessor Monarch once said that after death, spirits naturally go to the Divine Kingdom, and there is no need for anyone to guide them. Such a ritual is merely a tool for the Priests to control the hearts of the people."

"After I die, please bury me simply, without a mark, and I ask that you not hold a Sacrificial Rite..."

Xiulote was shocked in his heart. The seemingly cold and reticent Totec had always had a mind clear as a mirror!

He now felt a belated fear, realizing that if it weren't for Tizoc's constraint, letting Totec act freely, both he and Aweit would likely have ended up with no place for burial!

Having said all that had been weighing on his heart for a long time, Totec's face finally took on the breath of life; as if he had broken free from shackles that had bound him for years, he had attained inner freedom at last.

In the end, he lifted his gaze towards the beautiful clouds on the horizon, revealing a vivid smile.

"A Samurai is like a fading flower:

The flower fades naturally, I remember its beauty,

It's time I should peacefully pass away, leaving behind my own beauty.

Because a flower never longs for the beauty of the world,

It chooses to die quietly on a beautiful day...

With his final words spoken, Totec naturally lifted the Copper Dagger in his right hand, gently sliding it across his neck. He allowed the bright red to flow silently, quietly watching the distant sky, smiling, revealing the surprise of reliving memories, and then he fell to the ground without a sound.

The young man watched this scene in a daze. Tears involuntarily slid down his cheeks.

This was the withering of a flower, in the most beautiful season. This was the death of a Samurai.