

## I. Dynasty 295

### Chapter 295: Uniforms Are Also a Kind of Combat Power

At the Qingzhou Military Camp, the carts loaded with military uniforms were completely surrounded by excited soldiers.

Hearing the news, troops led by their officers hurried over, eyes filled with anticipation.

“You can’t let Lu Fei snatch all the uniforms! Our artillery corps needs them too!” Luo Xin shouted as he squeezed his way up to Xiao Ming.

He added, “Everyone knows how important the artillery corps is! We should be the first ones to get the new uniforms.”

“Bah! You artillery cowards just hide behind city walls firing cannons. My men fight hand-to-hand beneath the walls—why should you get them first?” Lu Fei spat.

“Yeah! Why should you!” Lu Fei’s men echoed loudly.

“And what’s wrong with us firing cannons from the walls? Without our artillery support, would you have it so easy?” Luo Xin sneered back, shouting to his men, “Am I right?”

“Right!” his soldiers roared.

Sitting on horseback, Xiao Ming watched them bicker with amusement.

Just then, the soldiers parted to make way—Niu Ben had arrived.

Seeing him, both Lu Fei and Luo Xin immediately quieted down and stood aside respectfully.

Glancing at them sternly, Niu Ben looked at the carts filled with uniforms, heart full of expectation.

“Your Highness personally delivering the uniforms—such an honor,” Niu Ben said respectfully.

“It’s nothing,” Xiao Ming smiled. “I promised before the New Year to deliver these. It’s a little late, and the quantity isn’t enough for everyone yet—but let’s get the men dressed first.”

To Xiao Ming, military uniforms weren’t just clothes—they symbolized the Qingzhou Army’s move toward formalization and professionalism.

Moreover, these new uniforms were different from traditional plate armor. Soldiers could wear them not just in battle, but when going home, or even in public.

Thus, Xiao Ming had designed them to appear dignified and grand, highlighting the heroic spirit of young men.

The uniforms weren't traditional Great Yu-style round-collar shirts, but standing-collar tunics—straight-cut, tailored at the waist, and slit at the knees. The fabric was black-green, with epaulettes on the shoulders.

When Xiao Ming first saw the finished design, he had looked forward to seeing the soldiers and officers wearing them—they would certainly look impressive.

Taking a package from the frontmost cart, he retrieved the officers' uniforms. Each officer's uniform had epaulets with different numbers of yellow bars to denote rank.

"Governor Niu, Lu Fei, Luo Xin, Hu Changfei..." Xiao Ming called out the names one by one, distributing the uniforms.

"Thank you, Your Highness!" the officers replied joyfully.

Feeling the sturdy fabric, they couldn't help but grin from ear to ear—the craftsmanship was truly excellent.

After the officers received their uniforms, Xiao Ming said, "Go change—let the soldiers see how you look."

Niu Ben and the others immediately returned to their barracks, quickly removing their plate armor.

Before long, they reappeared, wearing the black-green standing-collar uniforms.

Xiao Ming was very satisfied. Once they put on the uniforms, their entire aura changed.

The tailored fit, combined with their natural military bearing, made them look dignified and heroic. If word spread about these uniforms, countless young men would surely be envious. After all, military uniforms themselves were a kind of combat power.

“Right—there’s one more thing,” Xiao Ming said, suddenly remembering. He took out several leather belts from the cart and tossed them over.

That winter, Liang Dahai had acquired many slaves, and Li Kaiyuan had gathered plenty of livestock hides. Lu Luo had stitched these into belts.

“Your Highness, how do we use these?” Luo Xin asked, confused.

Xiao Ming personally demonstrated. These belts were simple—each had a metal ring and a metal tongue that fit through a punched hole in the leather strap.

Understanding dawned on the officers. They fastened the belts around their waists, instantly tightening the uniforms and enhancing their sharp appearance.

The soldiers' mouths dropped open. They were full of envy—these uniforms looked even better than what noble sons wore!

"How do I look?" Lu Fei asked, grinning so widely his mouth almost split.

"Sir, you're dashing now! Like a phoenix rising from a chicken coop!" one soldier joked.

Lu Fei's face instantly turned green. "Phoenix rising from a chicken coop, huh? You little rascal!" But he couldn't help laughing—he was obviously very pleased.

At that moment, Luo Xin suggested, "Governor, don't you have a mirror in your room? Let's go have a look!"

"Right, right! Let's go!" Lu Fei said eagerly.

Niu Ben didn't object. Moments of celebration were good for morale.

They hurried to Niu Ben's quarters and, facing the mirror, finally saw themselves properly.

"Your Highness," Luo Xin said, spinning proudly in front of the mirror, "if I walked into Chang'an wearing this, noble ladies would be lining up to propose marriage!"

Xiao Ming laughed. “They wouldn’t be after you—they’d be after your uniform.”

Lu Fei joked, “It really is like turning a chicken into a phoenix. Your Highness, these uniforms are truly excellent.”

Niu Ben looked at his officers, now upright and dignified in their new outfits, and sighed.

“Your Highness always surprises me. I never thought I’d live to see the day soldiers dressed like this.”

Xiao Ming smiled and said, “Old General, this is only the beginning. In a few more months, the Qingzhou Army will undergo an even greater transformation.”

“An even greater transformation?” Niu Ben asked, full of doubt and curiosity.

First cannons, then mounted crossbowmen, now these stunning uniforms—what could possibly come next? It felt like Xiao Ming’s vision was always one step ahead of their understanding.

“This new equipment,” Xiao Ming said, “will shake the very foundations of the Great Yu Empire.”

He gazed northward and added, “Once it’s ready, I’ll lead a northern expedition to drive the barbarian tribes beyond Shanhai Pass.”

Niu Ben was startled. “Your Highness, the Youzhou barbarians aren’t an easy threat to eliminate. There’s no need to rush.”

Xiao Ming understood Niu Ben’s concern about being reckless.

“Old General, in time, you’ll understand my intentions,” Xiao Ming said calmly.

Overall, the uniforms fit perfectly and looked incredibly sharp on the officers.

From now on, the soldiers’ public image would be elevated. When ordinary citizens saw them, they would feel admiration, and young men would aspire to join.

As for how the uniforms would be distributed among the soldiers, Xiao Ming left that to Niu Ben to handle.