

I. Dynasty 315

Chapter 315: Discipline and Training

White smoke lingered over the training ground of the Qingzhou military camp, as the 500 soldiers of the Vanguard Battalion took turns firing their new weapons.

At this moment, the first firearm unit of the Qingzhou Army was officially born, and soon, more soldiers would be transitioned into flintlock rifle units.

“Now you understand the structure of the flintlock rifle and how to use it to kill. But this is just the beginning,” Xiao Ming shouted.

“From this point on—and always—you are one team.

You will undergo stricter training and obey stricter discipline.

Only with this will your weapons lead you to victory. Do you understand?!”

“Understood!”

The soldiers of the Vanguard Battalion answered in unison, their voices loud and clear.

Xiao Ming nodded, then turned to Lu Fei, Niu Ben, Luo Xin, and the other officers.

“From today forward, you will learn formal battlefield tactics—how to lead a flintlock-armed army.”

In this moment, Xiao Ming stood not just as a prince but as the supreme commander of Qingzhou.

All the officers saluted him and responded with pride:

“Yes, Your Highness!”

Now that the Vanguard Battalion was equipped with the first batch of flintlocks, the next challenge was discipline and intensive training.

Proper battlefield discipline meant that even under fierce attack, troops would not break formation.

Even if a comrade fell beside them, they had to calmly reload—not panic and forget how many bullets were in the barrel.

Only with this level of training could the Qingzhou Army face the charging barbarian cavalry without flinching, as immovable as a mountain, and strike like fire.

“Commander Niu, schedule a time for the officers to attend Bowen Academy. I’ve arranged a classroom there. You’ll see even more advanced things.”

“Understood, Your Highness!” Niu Ben responded seriously.

Xiao Ming then gave instructions on how the five hundred rifles should be used.

Though they were issued to the Vanguard Battalion, that didn’t mean the unit would keep them permanently.

Instead, the rifles would rotate between units for training, allowing every soldier to learn how to load and shoot.

At the same time, they would begin training in firing formations, including small and large columns, horizontal formations, and how to quickly switch between them during battle.

The most important tactic was the hollow square formation—perfect for countering cavalry charges.

This formation had stood the test of time in real history and would be key against the barbarian riders.

After laying out the training roadmap, Xiao Ming left the camp.

On his way back to the city, he saw many commoners in the fields catching locusts.

The sight made him smile—but the drought still weighed heavily on his mind.

Then he thought of Yue Yun.

If he could bring back corn, potatoes, and peanuts, then even dry soil wouldn't lead to famine.

Xiao Ming silently hoped Yue Yun would return soon...

Meanwhile, at sea...

Cold waves slapped against the bullet-riddled hull of a Qingzhou galleon.

In the distance, a British warship was sinking, surrounded by flames, blood, and dozens of British corpses.

Behind Yue Yun's galleon, two British warships were closing in.

They were third-rate ships-of-the-line, each with twice the firepower of his fifth-rate galleons—capable of sinking him in one broadside.

As Xiao Ming worried for him, Yue Yun had just survived a naval battle and was preparing to retreat.

Because he didn't fully trust Wilson, Yue Yun hadn't let him off the ship at the Indian port.

Instead, he told the dock workers to bring the requested corn, peanuts, and potatoes first. Only then would Wilson be released.

To Yue Yun's surprise, the British agreed—these crops weren't considered valuable by them.

Still, Yue Yun remained cautious.

When the goods nearly filled all three galleons, Yue Yun was preparing to let Wilson go—

when he suddenly saw British warships slowly sailing out from the harbor.

That's when he realized—the whole deal had been a delay tactic.

The British didn't care about Wilson.

They wanted the Qingzhou galleons.

As one warship left the port, Yue Yun immediately ordered his ships to open fire.

The British returned fire at the same time.

Thanks to their agility, the Qingzhou galleons dodged the next British broadside and returned fire again.

The British warship was sunk—but two more followed, trying to flank them.

One of the enemy ships heavily damaged two Qingzhou galleons.

Yue Yun knew: if they continued fighting, they'd be destroyed.

He made a swift decision—retreat.

Their mission was complete. They had the goods. That was enough.

“Wilson! This is how you British treat guests?!”

Yue Yun's eyes burned with rage.

They had killed dozens of his men—over thirty on his ship alone, and he didn't yet know the toll on the others.

Though the ships hadn't sunk, the damage was severe. They'd need repairs before sailing further.

He pressed a cold blade to Wilson's throat.

"This wasn't my fault!" Wilson cried, trembling.

"Any British officer seeing a galleon like yours would investigate. They would never let you go!"

Yue Yun looked back.

The British warships were still chasing them. One of their masts had already snapped.

"If we die—you die with us."

He pressed harder on the blade.

Wilson's face turned pale.

"Don't kill me! There's a place only your kind of ship can pass through. The British warships can't follow you there. I swear!"

"Captain, what now? Can we trust him?"

Yue Yun hesitated.

Then he looked at the pursuing warships and said grimly:

"We can die—but if we fail His Highness, everything is lost. Fine. One more chance. If we die, we die together!"