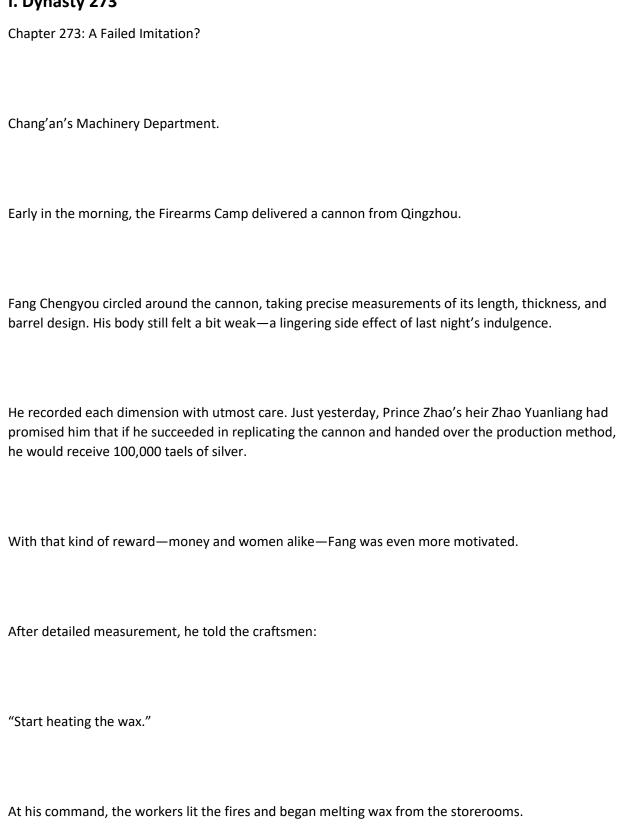
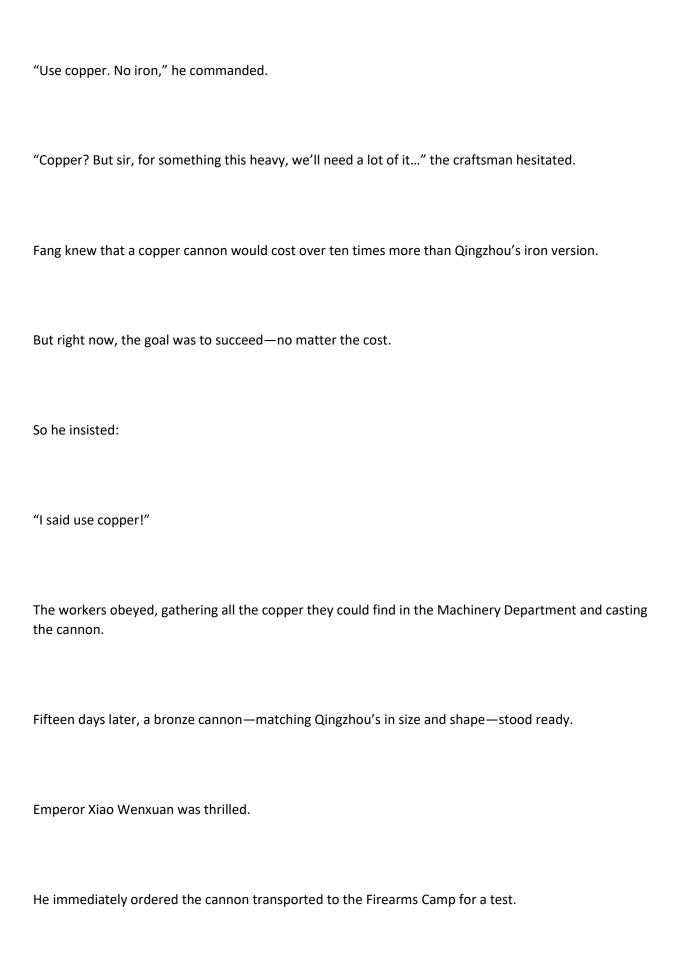
## I. Dynasty 273



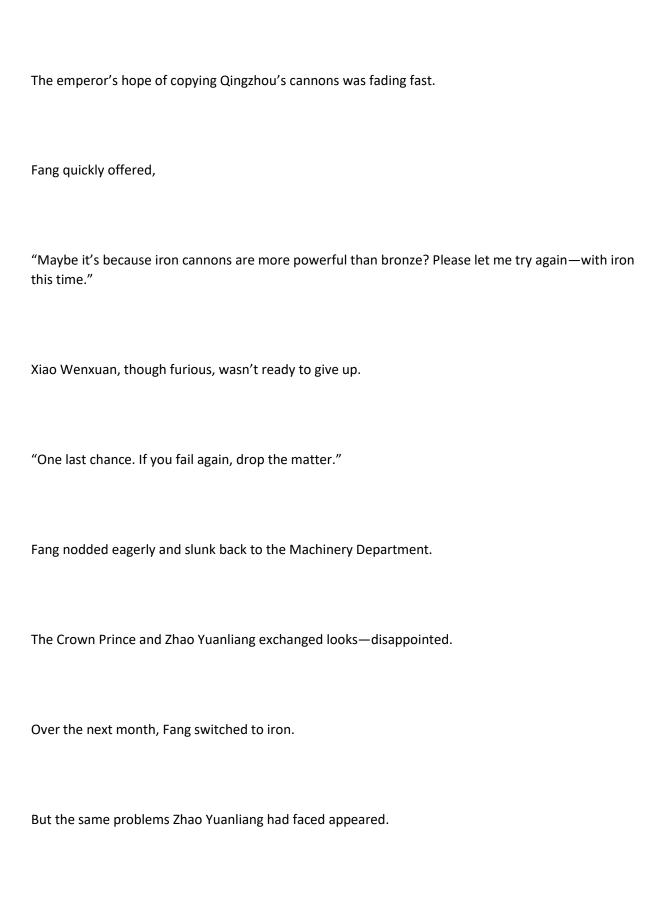
Fang Chengyou planned to use the lost-wax casting method to replicate Qingzhou's cannon.
This technique involved suspending the cannon in a pool, then pouring molten wax over it to create a mold.
Once the wax solidified, the layers would be cut and reassembled to form a full-size model.
Then, clay would be packed around it, and the wax melted out—leaving behind a perfect cannon mold.
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Seven days later, Fang had a complete clay mold.
"Director, the iron used in Qingzhou's cannon seems much higher quality than ours."
One of the craftsmen commented before casting.
One of the transmen commented before casting.
Fang already knew from Zhao Yuanliang that the last few replicas had exploded during test firing.
So he concluded that iron wouldn't work.
He also knew from his family's experience making fire lances that copper was far safer than iron.



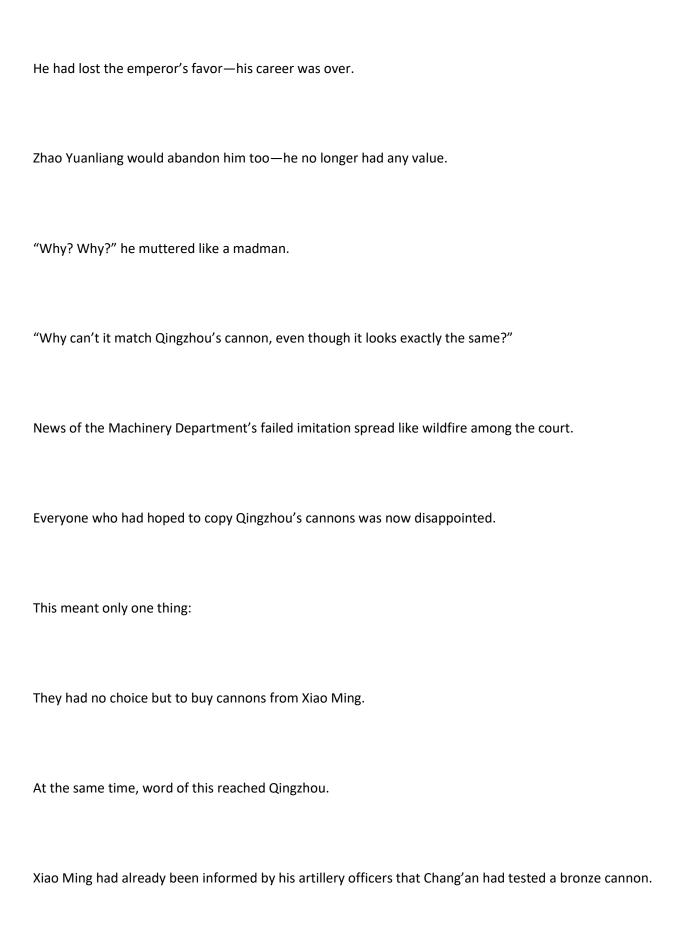
Several key officials arrived to witness it.
"That cannon's entirely bronze? Look at the color!"
Fei Ji practically ground his teeth as he said this. Such extravagance!
All that bronze—how much silver had they just melted?
Even Xiao Wenxuan's initial excitement faded as he laid eyes on the golden-hued cannon.
"So this is what the Machinery Department came up with? It certainly looks impressive."
The Crown Prince laughed.
In his eyes, it looked flawless.
Zhao Yuanliang's eyes sparkled. He was impressed that Fang had actually pulled it off.

Using bronze hadn't crossed his mind—but now, looking at the cost, he couldn't help but feel it wasn't worth it.
He would rather buy Qingzhou's cheaper iron cannons.
"Begin the test." Xiao Wenxuan said coldly.
If this cannon didn't match Qingzhou's in power, he might just kill Fang Chengyou himself.
At the order, the artillery crew loaded the powder and cannonball.
"BOOM!"
The cannon fired—the ball flew forward into the woods and thudded against a tree, falling to the ground.
The crowd of officials burst into laughter.
The power was nowhere close to Qingzhou's cannons.





After just a dozen test shots, each iron cannon exploded—causing the deaths of dozens of skilled craftsmen.
And the cannon's range and power still didn't match Qingzhou's.
"Why? Why?!"
After another explosion, Fang stared at the Qingzhou cannon in despair.
No matter how much he adjusted the process, he just couldn't match its power.
In one night, Fang aged ten years.
"Director, His Majesty sent word through Minister Feng," a craftsman said timidly.
"Stop wasting silver. The Emperor has called off the project."
At that moment, Fang was completely crushed.



"Your Highness," Pang Yukun asked curiously,
"They say this bronze cannon was nearly identical to ours. Why was its power so much weaker?"
Xiao Ming actually broke into a cold sweat when he heard the news.
The truth was: the bronze cannon from Chang'an was a qualified cannon.
In the early days of gunpowder warfare, bronze cannons and bronze-alloy cannons were the mainstream—until better-quality iron and steel became more widely available.
The reason the power was so low wasn't because of the cannon.
It was because of the gunpowder.
The artillery crew that went to Chang'an to assist had reported back:
Fang Chengyou had used locally made gunpowder—not Qingzhou's formula.