

## I. Dynasty 318

### Chapter 318: Motivation

Outside the chemistry lab, a group of Chemistry Department students stood nervously, not daring to go back in.

After all, they'd read in textbooks that burning white phosphorus releases toxic fumes, and when the explosion happened, they all ran out.

After receiving high praise from Xiao Ming, Lu Tong couldn't stop smiling.

"Your Highness's textbook was so detailed—without it, we could never have made white phosphorus," he said humbly.

"You're modest, but it's true," Xiao Ming replied.

"Book knowledge is dead until you bring it to life.

You made this white phosphorus all on your own.

I'm very pleased. I hope you'll continue to make more chemical compounds and help build Qingzhou's chemical industry."

He had worried whether Lu Tong and the others could carry out independent experiments.

Now he felt reassured.

As long as they had the desire to learn, these chemistry students could continue exploring and innovating on their own.

“Don’t worry, Your Highness,” Lu Tong said, bowing.

“We owe everything—our food, clothing, shelter—to Your Highness.

Without you, we’d still be slaves on the grasslands.

For you, we would go through fire and water without hesitation!”

Xiao Ming helped him up.

“It’s good to be hardworking, but you must also stay safe.

You’re precious to me. Even losing one of you would pain me deeply.”

“Hehe...” Lu Tong blushed at the praise.

Then he added, almost like showing off,

“By the way, Your Highness, I’ve recently come up with a new kind of cannon shell!”

“A new shell?”

Xiao Ming raised his eyebrows in interest.

“Since when did you start designing ammunition?”

“It’s not an ordinary shell.

I got the idea from chemistry—it’s called a lime bomb.”

Xiao Ming’s eyes lit up. He was even more impressed.

The lime bomb was indeed used in the 18th and 19th centuries. It could even be considered an early form of chemical weapon.

“Go on,” Xiao Ming said, wanting to see just how far Lu Tong had come.

“Your Highness, lime powder burns when it gets into someone’s eyes—it causes intense pain and can blind them.

Soldiers sometimes used it in sieges.

If we make this into a cannon shell, we could use it from a distance to blind the enemy.”

“And they can’t rinse it out with water—only with oil.

The barbarians don’t have oil on the battlefield.

So they’ll have no defense.”

“Exactly right,” Xiao Ming said with a proud smile.

“It’s been a while since I checked in, and already you’re growing so fast.

Lu Tong, I'm going to recognize you publicly at Bowen Academy—you'll be a role model for all the students."

"Oh, please, Your Highness, that's not necessary. It was all thanks to your teachings," Lu Tong said, embarrassed.

"No, I insist. It's not just for you—it's for the whole Academy's future."

"Here's your reward: 5,000 silver taels!" Xiao Ming said generously.

It wasn't about the money. It was about sending a message—turn education into real achievements.

For Xiao Ming, five thousand taels wasn't much, but it showed he would always support those who contributed to Qingzhou's future.

"Since you came up with the lime bomb, go find Chen Qi and work together.

The two of you are to make it a reality."

"Yes, Your Highness!" Lu Tong replied excitedly.

Xiao Ming gave him a final nod and left with Zhao Long and Zhao Hu.

Lu Tong watched him disappear into the distance, then shouted with joy.

This was the first time Xiao Ming had praised him so highly—he finally felt he was truly doing something for Prince Qi.

Turning to the other chemistry students, he shouted:

“You all heard His Highness! He gave me 5,000 taels—but I’m not taking all the credit.

We did these experiments together. We’ll split the reward evenly.

And we’ll work even harder to repay His Highness’s trust!”

The students were thrilled.

That kind of money could give them a comfortable life.

Who could say no to silver?

Meanwhile, back at the palace, Xiao Ming sat down and wrote a public notice praising Lu Tong and the Chemistry Department.

It would be posted at Bowen Academy for all students to see—meant to spark a sense of competition.

After living in the Great Yu Empire for a while, Xiao Ming noticed something odd:

Neither the military nor the students had any competitive drive.

It puzzled him.

To him, it seemed like a side effect of long-term comfort and complacency.

So he was determined to change the culture—to ignite healthy competition at the Academy and in the military.

Achievement would be rewarded.

Lack of results would face criticism.

That's how ambition is stirred.

After finishing the notice, he sent Zhao Long to post it in the Academy cafeteria, where every student would see it.

"Wow, His Highness is really generous—5,000 taels!

The Chemistry kids can eat meat every day now."

As the notice went up, a crowd formed.

"Well, what can you do?

Lu Tong's team has made some real breakthroughs.

Honestly, they earned it."



“And to think we were making fun of them earlier for blowing up the lab—turns out that ‘boom’ was worth 5,000 taels!”

More and more students gathered. Some faces were flushed with envy.

“Hey, Physics Department! What’s wrong with you guys?”

Chemistry’s crushing it. Where are your results?”

“Yeah! Physics and chemistry go hand in hand.

If they’re winning prizes, why aren’t you doing anything?”

A group of Physics students walking past scowled in frustration.

The truth stung—they had been completely outshined.

“Relax,” said a calm voice.

“Who says Physics doesn’t have talent?”

Just wait—we'll catch up to Chemistry soon."

"Oh look, it's Lin Wentao from Physics.

You're still talking big? Careful not to bite your tongue.

Three years in a row and still no degree—how's a bookworm like you going to beat Chemistry?"

Someone from the Public Administration Department jeered.

"Hahaha!"

The crowd burst into laughter.

But Lin Wentao simply glared and said,

"Sparrows can't understand the ambitions of a swan.

Just wait and see.”