

## PAW 1753

Chapter 1753

Night.

In the snow.

Under the pavilion.

Each word is beautiful, and the woman under the pavilion is also beautiful. Dong Xuebing's current mood, which is very exciting, adds to this.

Fang Wenping agreed.

There is hope that the transfer will be arranged.

Moreover, it's about reassigning the Party Secretary of Jiao Lin County.

According to Dong Xuebing's worst-case scenario, he would have accepted it even if it were the county chief position. After all, it is a rare opportunity to elevate from a county to a county-level city. Even as the second-in-command once the county is elevated, the second-in-command will be directly promoted to the deputy department level, saving Dong Xuebing at least three years. What can one do in three years? How many three-year periods does a person have in a lifetime? How many three-year periods are there in a political career? Time is life, and it's the most precious thing for a politician. Therefore, Dong Xuebing would have accepted it even as the county chief. But to his surprise, Fang Wenping agreed to make him the Party Secretary of Jiao Lin County, which is the best outcome. Being the top leader, he will be directly promoted to the city Party Secretary once the county is elevated. It's like reaching the top in one step. Dong Xuebing couldn't be happier and was surprised at how readily Fang Wenping agreed. Usually, whenever he asked her for a favor, she would drag her feet and put on a stern face, but today was different.

"Come on, drink with me," Fang Wenping handed him the bottle.

Dong Xuebing, feeling ecstatic, didn't hesitate, "Sure."

After he finished drinking, Fang Wenping grabbed the bottle and took a swig herself, "I'll make you repay this favor in the future, so be prepared."

Dong Xuebing responded with acknowledgment, "How do you want me to repay it?"

Fang Wenping said, "I haven't decided yet, but keep it in mind."

"Just as long as it doesn't go against my principles," Dong Xuebing said.

Fang Wenping looked at him, "If I asked you to break up the relationship between my Xiao Ling and your Xie Ran, you'd have to agree, understand?"

Dong Xuebing immediately shook his head, "That's not going to happen. I don't interfere in other people's relationships. What kind of person would that make me? It would go against my principles."

Fang Wenping said, "I don't care about your principles."

Dong Xuebing shook his head, "No way, definitely not."

Fang Wenping said, "I haven't asked for anything yet. It was just an example."

Dong Xuebing deflected, "We'll talk about it then, but not that. I'm their brother-in-law. How would that make me look? You don't want to be the bad guy, so you push it all onto me? That's not going to happen. I'm not that kind of person."

Fang Wenping said, "Then what kind of person are you?"

"The kind with principles. I don't believe you don't know my character. We have similar personalities. This is the first time I've met someone with a personality so much like mine, and it happens to be a woman. So whatever you're thinking, I probably think the same way." Dong Xuebing lit a cigarette and said, "Anyway, clear the Party Secretary position in Jiao Lin County first. I'll repay the favor in the future. If I say it, I'll make it happen, but the premise is still the same—it can't go against my principles."

Whoosh.

A gust of wind blew.

The snow was heavy. Although it was forecasted to be moderate snow, it already felt like a heavy snowstorm.

Fang Wenping didn't say anything, she just instinctively tightened the collar of her fur coat. When she pulled it up, Dong Xuebing caught a glimpse of the clothes she was wearing underneath—it seemed to be just a long-sleeved T-shirt, the same one he had seen her wearing as sleepwear at home. She shivered. No wonder she was cold. Wearing so little inside in such weather with strong wind and heavy snow, it would be strange if she wasn't cold. Dong Xuebing was wearing a sweater under his coat, and even with his physical resilience, he was freezing. Beijing winters are very cold, especially in an open, wind-exposed pavilion amidst the chilling wind.

It was truly cold.

That's why it's called a pavilion.

Seeing this, Dong Xuebing decided to show some chivalry. He took off his coat and draped it over Fang Wenping, "Put this on."

Fang Wenping frowned, "No need."

"Put it on quickly," Dong Xuebing insisted.

Fang Wenping said, "I'm not as frail as you think, okay?"

Dong Xuebing stubbornly covered her with his coat, "Just put it on. I'm hot right now, and I wore too much today. Enough said, hurry up. You know my physical condition—this icy, snowy weather is nothing to me. I could walk bare-chested in Antarctica." This was true, but with a caveat: Dong Xuebing's ability to reverse time allowed him to endure extreme conditions, which were impossible for ordinary humans.

Fang Wenping hesitated but accepted the coat, draping it over herself and taking another swig of the liquor to warm up.

As soon as Dong Xuebing took off his coat, he felt the cold biting into his skin and gasped, quickly grabbing the bottle to take a drink himself.

Half the bottle was gone.

Dong Xuebing asked, "When are we heading back?"

"Are you in a hurry?" Fang Wenping glanced at him.

Dong Xuebing said, "Not in a hurry, it's just that sitting out here in such cold weather, what's the point?"

Fang Wenping said, "So, being with me makes you uncomfortable? Am I that annoying?"

Fang Wenping had already shared her feelings with Dong Xuebing, and he had sensed her loneliness in her words. After all, she had sent her ex-husband to prison, which must have been hard on her. This incident made others wary and fearful of her, isolating her further. Dong Xuebing had experienced similar periods, so he understood Fang Wenping well. He knew she just wanted a quiet place and someone to talk to, especially during the New Year when others are happily reuniting with their families.

Thinking of this, Dong Xuebing said, "Alright, I'll keep you company tonight. Whatever you want to do, we'll do. I have nothing to do if I go back anyway."

Fang Wenping said indifferently, "If you have something to do, you should go."

Dong Xuebing smiled, "I've visited family, colleagues have come by, and now I'm free. We're quite similar. Given our level and family background, we should have a lot of subordinates coming to pay their respects during the New Year, right? But every year, only a handful come to see me. Forget about crowds or lines. I've never seen such a thing. Do you know why? Although we're not the same, our work styles are quite similar. We've offended too many people, and they can't figure us out, so barely anyone dares to come." Saying this, Dong Xuebing felt a bit bitter. He believed he had a clear conscience in his work over the years, but he wasn't as well-liked as some corrupt officials. Only a few current subordinates would visit him during the New Year. Like Fang Wenping, he sometimes felt he had failed as a person. However, Dong Xuebing knew neither

he nor Fang Wenping had any regrets. They were simply people with strong personalities and principles, with no need to apologize for that.

As a song lyric by Leslie Cheung goes:

"I am what I am, and I like being me. No need for makeup, just standing in the light."

Fang Wenping said, "You're much stronger than me."

"Not really. Let me tell you a few things." With the liquor loosening his tongue, Dong Xuebing began to talk more, "You got your husband dismissed and investigated. I, on the other hand, have cursed at and hit my superiors, not just once or twice. I can't even count how many times. Can you imagine that? Others might not, but I bet you can. A small official beating up their superior—what kind of feeling is that?"

Fang Wenping laughed a bit, "Did that happen?"

Dong Xuebing gave a wry smile, "Of course. Would I brag about such a disgraceful thing? But they provoked me first. Damn it, I hit them because they crossed me. Who do I fear? Nobody. They can dismiss me, and I don't care. As long as I feel good, that's what matters. What's the point of always considering others and caring about their opinions? Isn't that exhausting? I'm not like that. I live for myself. If I'm happy, that's all that matters. Who cares what others think?" This attitude might be partly due to his upbringing in Beijing, where people are often carefree and bold.

Fang Wenping smiled, "I like this attitude."

Dong Xuebing said, "I like your attitude too. I've never seen anyone send their spouse to prison. I'm not flattering you; I think it's admirable. Living should be straightforward. If you're constantly worried and hesitating, what's the point of living? You might as well be dead. My principle is that I do it if I want to do something. I don't consider the consequences too much. I live a carefree life. Who cares what others think? If I'm happy, that's what matters."

Fang Wenping, intrigued, asked, "What else have you done that's worth mentioning?"

Dong Xuebing thought momentarily and said, "Well, let me tell you about that time. I was still the director of the district office. Our district party secretary angered me by being ungrateful. Later, that secretary fell ill and needed urgent surgery, a complicated diabetes operation. He knew I had

good medical skills and came to me. Damn it, now he remembered me? Why didn't he think of me before? Why should I care if he lives or dies? I didn't bother with him at all, and I just ignored him. Did he want my help? He can forget it."

Fang Wenping laughed heartily, "What happened in the end?"

"In the end, he stepped down, and I'm still here," Dong Xuebing said.

Taking a sip of her drink, Fang Wenping said, "Interesting. Tell me more."

Dong Xuebing said, "My stories would take three days and nights to tell. Let me tell you about the time I cursed out my superior."