

## PAW 1777

### Chapter 1777

The next day.

The sky was already bright.

Dong Xuebing had forgotten to draw the curtains in the hotel room last night. He was jolted awake by the glaring light and groggily stumbled over to pull the curtains shut. He then collapsed back into bed, intending to get some more sleep. He was too tired—Fang Wenping had left in the early hours, and that troublesome incident had kept Dong Xuebing awake, his mind racing and unable to rest. He had probably stayed up smoking through the night to calm down. By the time he fell asleep, it was already three or four in the morning. So now, some sleep seemed insufficient, and Dong Xuebing thought he could easily sleep for another seven or eight hours.

Hmm.

The sky was bright.

Dong Xuebing suddenly became more alert. When the sky is this bright in winter, it's usually already morning, not early morning anymore.

Oh no.

He forgot the time.

Dong Xuebing hurriedly checked his watch. It was already ten o'clock.

At this moment, Dong Xuebing's phone started ringing incessantly. Seeing the number, Dong Xuebing felt a headache coming on—it was Fang Wenping calling.

He answered.

"Hello, Director Fang." Dong Xuebing picked up the phone, feeling much less sleepy now.

Fang Wenping said, "Let's go. I've packed everything."

Dong Xuebing broke into a sweat, "Uh, I'm not quite ready yet. I'll be there soon."

Fang Wenping said impatiently, "Not ready yet? Didn't I tell you we were supposed to leave at ten this morning? Are you ignoring what I said?"

Hearing her tone, Dong Xuebing snorted internally and said, "I still need to get my things together."

There was a pause before Fang Wenping asked, "Dong Xuebing, don't tell me you're still in bed."

Dong Xuebing coughed, "I'm up. I'm up early." Suddenly, the line went silent. Dong Xuebing was puzzled, "Hello? Hello?"

A moment later, there was a knock on the door.

"Open up." Fang Wenping's voice was loud.

Dong Xuebing was speechless. He couldn't hide it anymore, so he quickly put on his bathrobe, not bothering with slippers, and shuffled to the door to open it.

Outside, Fang Wenping was dressed in winter clothes, her coat already on, looking ready to go. Dong Xuebing, on the other hand, had messy hair, eye-crusts, and a sleepy expression, wrapped in a wrinkled bathrobe that made it obvious he had just woken up.

Fang Wenping looked at him coldly, "This is what you call waking up early?"

Dong Xuebing had no words. "I stayed up late last night. I didn't expect it. I even set an alarm." But what he thought was: You're blaming me now? If you hadn't left suddenly yesterday, would I have slept so late? I spent the whole night figuring out what you were thinking. You have no self-awareness, acting as if nothing happened yesterday. You're something—thick-skinned and brazen.

Fang Wenping said coldly, "Not up means not up. No excuses."

Feeling impatient, Dong Xuebing said, “Wait outside for me. I need to wash up and get dressed first.”

“I’m a leader. Am I supposed to wait for you?” Fang Wenping pushed past him and entered the room, checking the time. “Hurry up, I’ll give you ten minutes.”

Dong Xuebing thought, This is someone driven to work by me, and she’s still picky.

Fang Wenping sat on the sofa, crossed her legs, and said, “You have nine minutes and fifty-eight seconds left.”

What can you do? She’s the leader. Dong Xuebing thought he might end up working under Fang Wenping in the future, so he hurried to shower. As a man, showering was quick. He didn’t use body wash; he just shampooed his hair quickly, which took less than five minutes. While showering, he also brushed his teeth with a toothbrush. After drying off, Dong Xuebing came out of the bathroom.

Inside the room.

Fang Wenping was bent over the table, searching for something.

Dong Xuebing blinked and asked, “What are you looking for?”

Without turning around, Fang Wenping replied, “A hairpin.”

Dong Xuebing then remembered that Fang Wenping had her hair up when she arrived last night, but now it was down. The hairpin must have fallen here. He recalled where it might be and walked over to the corner of the room. Sure enough, he found it on the floor and picked it up, “Here it is.”

Fang Wenping looked at it and gave a small acknowledgment.

Dong Xuebing handed it to her, “I need to get dressed.”

Fang Wenping, with an indifferent attitude, said, “Go get dressed in the bathroom.”

Dong Xuebing wanted to give her a piece of his mind, but then he glanced at her chest and remembered last night's encounter. He swallowed hard, and his irritation softened considerably. He took his clothes and socks and went to the bathroom. Once inside, he got dressed and tidied up his things. There wasn't much to organize, just grabbing his wallet, phone, and other small items. Their luggage was in the trunk of the Land Rover.

Done.

Just in time—ten minutes exactly.

Fang Wenping stood up and said, "Let's go."

Dong Xuebing looked at her back and, with a glance, took in the curve of her well-rounded rear. Since Fang Wenping didn't bring up last night's incident, Dong Xuebing didn't know how to approach it. He couldn't ask her why she left suddenly or changed her plans at the last minute. It was awkward, but seeing her attitude, Dong Xuebing decided not to bring it up and pretended not to notice. He had to let it go for now.

Downstairs.

Dong Xuebing used the back door to go to the parking lot to retrieve the car.

When he drove to the front entrance, he noticed several vehicles parked outside and about a dozen people gathered there. Looking closer, he saw a person at the forefront talking with Fang Wenping, who was smiling. It seemed to be a local county leader. Dong Xuebing wasn't surprised. Although Fang Wenping wasn't a local leader, she was a Deputy governor, and that rank was significant. For an economically underdeveloped small county, they couldn't afford to offend a Deputy governor from any province. Especially considering the previous day's incident, where Fang Wenping was almost attacked, they had to make amends. It was clear that everyone in the county knew about the incident by now.

"Deputy Governor Fang, we're truly sorry."

"Alright, is there anything else?"

"Well, could you please join us for lunch?"

“I’m leaving now. Skip the lunch. We’ll do it another day.”

“Please, Deputy Governor Fang, we—”

“I don’t repeat myself. My car has arrived. Please make way.”

Fang Wenping saw the Land Rover and walked towards it without further engagement.

The middle-aged man, probably another county leader, immediately said, “Safe travels, Deputy Governor. We will deal with those criminals severely and not let them go.”

Fang Wenping didn’t respond, opened the passenger door, and said to Dong Xuebing, “Drive.”

Dong Xuebing acknowledged with a grunt, took one last look at the anxious faces of the county officials, and pressed the accelerator to drive out. He turned onto the highway and headed toward their destination. The distance to northern Shaanxi wasn’t very far. Since they had already covered half the distance yesterday, Dong Xuebing estimated that they would arrive by evening even if they drove slowly today. So, he wasn’t in a hurry. He couldn’t afford to rush anyway, as he had barely slept the previous night and was still feeling sleepy, making this a case of fatigued driving.

After about an hour of driving.

They stopped at a service area and had a quick bite to eat. They hadn’t exchanged much conversation on the way and continued their journey.

Fang Wenping noticed Dong Xuebing’s fatigue. She furrowed her brows and looked at him for a while before asking, “Are you alright?”

“I’m fine, what’s wrong?” Dong Xuebing perked up a bit, gripping the steering wheel more tightly.

Fang Wenping waved her hand, “Enough, pull over and let me drive.”

Dong Xuebing clicked his tongue, “No need for that.”

“Look at how tired you are. If you crash somewhere, I’m not going down with you,” Fang Wenping pointed to the roadside, “Pull over.”

Dong Xuebing thought about it and decided to pull over. Fang Wenping got out and took the driver’s seat while Dong Xuebing moved to the passenger side.

The car started moving again.

Fang Wenping was quite adept at driving.

Sitting beside her, Dong Xuebing, though reluctant, felt pretty good about having a Deputy governor drive for him. Who gets this kind of treatment? He couldn’t help but smile to himself and closed his eyes, preparing to catch a few winks. However, just a few minutes later, Dong Xuebing regretted letting Fang Wenping drive.

At first, the speed was steady.

But then it started to increase—faster and faster.

Fang Wenping seemed to be speeding up, yet her expression remained indifferent and aloof as if she hadn’t noticed the car had exceeded the speed limit.

Dong Xuebing wiped his sweat, “Slow down, it’s too fast.”

“Your car is fine,” Fang Wenping ignored him.

Dong Xuebing said, “We’ll get a ticket if we keep this speed. We’ll get in trouble.”

Fang Wenping replied, “Nothing will happen, and with your license plate, they won’t fine you anyway.”

With the Beijing license plate 6666, who wouldn’t think twice before pulling them over?

But the problem wasn't just that. Dong Xuebing, who was usually quite bold, felt uneasy watching the speedometer. It was one thing if he were driving himself, but now that safety was in someone else's hands, Dong Xuebing felt uneasy. This old Fang was too unreliable.