

PAW 1798

Chapter 1798

Inside the police station.

The news had spread to everyone who needed to know.

And to those who didn't need to know as well.

Reactions varied widely. No one had anticipated such a situation. After all, Dong Xuebing did not fit the image of a typical county party secretary. He was too young, looking more like a college student in his early twenties. His demeanor was unremarkable, lacking any sense of maturity or composure. Most strikingly, his work style was a mix of being a troublemaker and a bully, with an almost supernatural fighting ability—nowhere near what one would expect from a county party secretary. While the situation in other places was unknown to them, the people in Jiaolin County had never seen such a leader.

But reality was right before their eyes, and they had no choice but to accept it.

So, the entire police station was immersed in incredulous discussions.

At the same time.

In the interrogation room.

Dong Xuebing continued to eat his instant noodles and pickles, taking his time and chewing slowly. This was far from his usual decisive manner. Those who knew him well would understand that this was merely an act. Dong Xuebing wasn't inept at being a leader; after all, he had been in leadership roles for months. He wouldn't have reached his current position if he were truly as naive as he seemed. Dong Xuebing deliberately ate slowly. He wasn't in a hurry and had no reason to be, ignoring Chang Lin entirely.

This was, in essence, a display of attitude.

It could also be seen as a signal.

Chang Lin received it. Although he didn't show impatience and waited politely without speaking further, he was undoubtedly anxious inside. He couldn't gauge Dong Xuebing's personality or attitude.

One minute

Three minutes

Five minutes

By the time Dong Xuebing finished eating, the soup had gone cold. He tilted his head back, drank the soup, and wiped his mouth with a napkin.

Only then did Chang Lin speak again, "Secretary."

Dong Xuebing glanced at him, "You've got the wrong person, haven't you?"

Chang Lin forced a bitter smile, "I'm sure this is the right person."

Hu Hanbin and several officers sat restlessly on the side. They couldn't leave or stay without a word from the leader, feeling extremely uncomfortable. Knowing Dong Xuebing's identity, they felt like they were constantly being roasted over a fire, too afraid to make a sound. Of course, given their rank and position, they had no right to interject before a county party secretary and the political and legal affairs secretary. Even if Hu Hanbin and the others wanted to explain, they could not speak unless directly addressed, making the situation more awkward.

Dong Xuebing slowly cleaned up the remnants of his meal on the table.

One of the officers, noticing, quickly came over to assist. "Let me help."

Dong Xuebing ignored him, tossing the items into the trash can. He then sat back down, lit a cigarette, and took a few puffs. Looking at Chang Lin, he said, "Political and Legal Affairs Secretary Chang Lin?"

Chang Lin replied solemnly, “Yes, that’s me. This was indeed a lapse in our work. Secretary, I’m truly sorry. We’ve caused you distress.” This was standard procedure, but Chang Lin felt uneasy after speaking. It was clear that Dong Xuebing was not in the least bit distressed whether before his identity was revealed or afterward, others had been startled, not Dong Xuebing.

The police were shocked by the assault.

One attack stunned a group.

Kicking over a minibus astonished another group.

To mask the awkwardness of his previous statement, Chang Lin quickly added, “Many people know of your arrival—the Director of Propaganda, the Secretary of the Discipline Inspection Commission, the Minister of the United Front Work Department, and many others. They’re all waiting in the courtyard to welcome you.” At their level, how they speak is very deliberate, with the order and names reflecting their importance and relationships. For instance, by mentioning the names in this order, Chang Lin implied that these were regular county committee members. If County Governor Zhang Dongfang had also come, he certainly wouldn’t have been mentioned last or in a vague manner. The governor wasn’t present.

Whether due to official duties, a trip, or simply choosing not to attend, Dong Xuebing was aware, but he didn’t dwell on it. He understood that many things weren’t based on speculation but on facts. Overthinking could lead to misunderstandings, while underthinking could cause inaccuracies. Dong Xuebing had experienced this in his past roles and had learned to gauge the right balance.

The county governor's absence didn’t change Dong Xuebing’s stance. He subtly acknowledged his position, addressing Chang Lin as “Chief Chang.”

As the Secretary of the Political and Legal Affairs Committee and the Public Security Bureau Chief, he was used to calling himself Director. This wasn’t meant to belittle Chang Lin but reflected Dong Xuebing’s discontent with the local police system, which hadn’t met his expectations—perhaps he was even quite disappointed. Nevertheless, he still aimed to handle the situation diplomatically. “You should not call me Secretary; it’s inappropriate. Even if you haven’t mistaken me for someone else, the new Secretary of Jiaolin County has only been in office for a few days and hasn’t reported to the City Organization Department, so it’s not appropriate to address him as ‘Secretary.’”

Chang Lin quickly responded, “Of course, you’re right.”

Dong Xuebing affirmed, "That's the case."

"Secretary, everyone is waiting for you, don't you think?" Chang Lin tested the waters.

Dong Xuebing waved his hand, "Tell them that until I'm officially in office, I don't wish to meet anyone. We'll have plenty of opportunities to communicate once I'm officially appointed. I'm not the Secretary yet." If the county mayor had come, Dong Xuebing would have had to meet him, as he was the second-in-command. Ignoring him would be inappropriate and could lead to conflicts. But with the mayor absent, Dong Xuebing saw no need to alter his approach. He preferred to describe who he was and his style indirectly.

Chang Lin immediately replied, "No, everyone here has been eagerly waiting for you. The formal appointment or not is just a formality."

Hearing this, Dong Xuebing studied him more closely. He wondered if Chang Lin's words indicated that he was from the old Secretary's faction or if Chang Lin was dissatisfied with how the matter was handled, which might explain his warm reception. Dong Xuebing noted this in his mind. While he preferred to judge the situation with his own eyes, he also received the underlying message from Chang Lin's words. Leaders often communicate subtly at their level, and understanding the unspoken signals signifies political maturity.

The conversation remained incomplete, touching on sensitive points.

This form of communication also reflected traditional Republican values and styles.

This form of communication is particularly evident in a system marked by intrigue and deception. It's a way of negotiating and self-protecting.

Dong Xuebing said, "I won't meet anyone."

Chang Lin smiled and said, "Everyone's here, so..."

"Tell them to go back and continue their duties," Dong Xuebing said flatly. He was neither willing nor able to meet anyone, as he had not officially assumed office.

Chang Lin realized that the new Secretary had decided and did not press further. "Alright, I'll go inform everyone."

Dong Xuebing acknowledged with a nod.

Chang Lin asked, "Shall I arrange a hotel for you?"

This question was another form of probing. Chang Lin wasn't sure about Dong Xuebing's stance. To Chang Lin, the best solution was to get Dong Xuebing out of the police station as soon as possible. It was inappropriate for a county Secretary to stay in an interrogation room; it would be quite embarrassing if higher-ups found out. Chang Lin wanted Dong Xuebing to leave quickly, and he felt that dealing with the matter later was acceptable. As the Chief of Public Security, Chang Lin also felt awkward about the situation, especially since his subordinates had detained Dong Xuebing. Directly suggesting a hotel might seem too blunt, so he subtly tested Dong Xuebing's reaction, hoping to give him a bit of face and ease the situation. After all, it was not a good look for a new Secretary to be detained by the police on his first day.

But Chang Lin didn't understand Dong Xuebing well.

Dong Xuebing was accustomed to such situations and didn't see it as a loss of face. He had his judgment and objectives.

Dong Xuebing replied directly, "No need for a hotel. The matter here isn't resolved yet. I did assault a police officer and injure someone; that's a fact."

This was a pointed remark.

Chang Lin, taken aback, turned to Hu Hanbin and the other officers nearby with a stern look. "What are you doing? Have you understood the situation? Just arresting people without reason? Are you blind? Apologize to Secretary Dong immediately!" He continued to give Dong Xuebing an out, genuinely wanting him to leave quickly.

However, Dong Xuebing remained indifferent. When Hu Hanbin tried to speak, Dong Xuebing cut him off, saying coldly, "No need for apologies. The matter should be handled appropriately. As I've said, I won't leave until it's resolved. Regardless of my position, as a citizen, I have to cooperate with the police investigation, right?" Looking around, Dong Xuebing made a surprising declaration, "I'll stay at the police station for the next few days and fully cooperate with the investigation."

