

PAW 1809

Chapter 1809

Inside the Secretary's Office.

Dong Xuebing brought up Su Yan's name.

Meng Hanmei, however, seemed visibly troubled, her expression indicating a certain disapproval.

“What’s the matter?” Dong Xuebing asked.

Meng Hanmei smiled wryly and said, “Compared to others, this person might not be as mature.”

Dong Xuebing blinked and took a sip of water. “Are there other issues?”

In truth, Dong Xuebing hadn’t originally settled on Su Yan. He didn’t want to dismiss Meng Hanmei's efforts and opinions outright, so he mentioned Su Yan after finding the other candidates less satisfactory. Being a deputy section chief in the County Office, Su Yan had merely crossed his mind. Dong Xuebing trusted his judgment but was not blind to the wisdom of considering Meng Hanmei's advice, especially since she had been in the neighboring county for many years and knew the ins and outs better than he did.

Meng Hanmei pondered for a moment before choosing her words carefully. “Su Yan doesn’t have major problems, but his personality isn’t the best fit for a secretary. Although he might not show it normally, he can be quite impulsive when things get tough. He’s very enthusiastic but struggles to control his emotions. Before you arrived, there were at least two incidents where Su Yan publicly argued with officials from another department during work. Once, while handling affairs in a township, he had a verbal altercation with residents. That time, he was suspended and had to reflect for a week.”

“Recently?” Dong Xuebing asked.

“Just not long ago,” Meng Hanmei replied.

Dong Xuebing considered this and said, “Not a party warning or disciplinary action, then?”

Meng Hanmei nodded. "It was just a suspension with no other disciplinary actions."

As long as it wasn't a formal party warning or disciplinary action, Dong Xuebing was willing to overlook it.

"Anything else?" Dong Xuebing inquired. "What about his interpersonal relationships and work capabilities?"

Meng Hanmei sensed Dong Xuebing's growing inclination and softened her tone, though she still conveyed her advice. "His interpersonal relationships are fine because he's very warm-hearted. As for his work ability, it's average—nothing outstanding, but he completes his tasks on time. That's about all I know." She paused momentarily and then continued, "There's another reason. The candidates in the files I gave you are all at suitable levels, either deputy section chief or section chief. However, Su Yan, despite being a deputy section chief, only holds the rank of a deputy section chief without any administrative level. So..."

No official rank.

He's essentially just an outsider.

Dong Xuebing understood Meng Hanmei's point. Typically, a secretary for a county party secretary would be at least a section chief level. Even though there might be exceptions, it was rare. At the county level, the title of "secretary" doesn't officially exist in the files; true secretaries are typically assigned only to officials at the bureau level or above. Even a county party secretary's secretary is generally referred to as a communications officer, often holding the position of a deputy director in the County Office. For instance, while deputy county heads may not have secretaries, many deputy county office directors are assigned as secretaries to each deputy county head. If Su Yan were to be assigned such a position, his rank would seem too low and out of place.

Dong Xuebing remained silent, deep in thought.

Meng Hanmei glanced at him and continued, "If you truly believe Su Yan is suitable, it's not impossible to arrange. We could promote him to deputy section chief and make him the deputy director of the County Office. Although other deputy directors in the County Office are section chief level, no rule says a deputy section chief can't be promoted." The County Office itself is at the section chief level. Meng Hanmei, as the director, is at a deputy division chief level, not because of the office's rank but because the position typically aligns with the level of a county

committee member, and the County Office and the County Government Office are on equal footing.

After a brief silence, Dong Xuebing lifted his head. "Meng Da-jie, please bring Su Yan's file to me to review and call him over. I want to talk to him."

Meng Hanmei immediately understood that Secretary Dong had made up his mind. She had given her warnings and suggestions, and since Dong Xuebing was proceeding with his decision, she didn't press further. A good subordinate knows when to stop and not overstep; excessive interference can annoy a leader.

"Understood," Meng Hanmei responded promptly. "I'll go fetch him."

Dong Xuebing nodded. "Thank you, Meng Da-jie."

Meng Hanmei smiled. "Please don't mention it. It's all part of my job. There's no trouble at all."

Once she left, Dong Xuebing looked around his office, opening drawers and scanning the bookshelves. He then entered the inner room to get a feel for the office environment. It was, to be honest, a bit disappointing. The desk and sofa were fine, but the building was quite old. The office buildings in Zhenxian County were in better condition. Still, he would make do for now. Dong Xuebing was not one to dwell on material concerns; he was never one for luxury so that he could manage.

Knock, knock.

Someone was at the door.

Dong Xuebing walked out and said, "Come in."

A female staff member from the County Office cautiously entered and handed him a file. "Secretary, this is the file Director Meng asked me to give you."

Dong Xuebing nodded. "Alright, leave it here. Thank you."

The staff member quickly replied, “No need to thank me, you’re too polite.”

The staff member glanced curiously at Dong Xuebing as she left and closed the door.

Dong Xuebing was used to such looks. Every time he took up a new position, people would view him with a mix of curiosity and skepticism—young, temperamental, unorthodox. These labels had been firmly attached to him. People would often feel uncertain when they first met him. Dong Xuebing was not surprised; proving oneself takes time. Whether he could fulfill his role as county party secretary would become apparent eventually. For now, words were meaningless.

On the other side.

In the County Committee Office.

After instructing a subordinate to get Su Yan’s file for Dong Xuebing, Meng Hanmei returned to her office. As she entered, a young subordinate approached her.

“Director Meng, you wanted to see me?” he asked.

Meng Hanmei nodded. “Xiao Chen, go to the driver’s team now and pick out a decent driver—preferably not too old, someone who drives steadily and is reliable. I’m leaving this task to you, so ensure you do it well. When you find someone, bring him to me.”

The young man immediately understood the gravity of the task: finding a driver for the county party secretary. Excited, he said, “Don’t worry, Director Meng. I’ll handle it well.” With Meng Hanmei’s specifications in mind, he knew exactly what kind of driver he needed to find.

Meng Hanmei was reassured. “Go ahead and take care of it. By the way, is Su Yan around?”

“Section Chief Su?” The young man was momentarily taken aback. He pointed inside, “He’s in the office area. I saw him just a moment ago.”

The young man was unsure why Meng Hanmei needed Su Yan. Su Yan had long been a peripheral figure in the office. Despite having decent interpersonal skills, his relationship with the leadership had always been strained. Although he appeared amicable and mild-mannered on the surface, Su

Yan tended to act impulsively and unpredictably under challenging situations. This contradictory nature made him less favored by the leaders.

Inside the office.

In the Secretarial Section.

Su Yan hadn't washed his hair today, and it looked disheveled. He was sitting in the corner of the office, talking on the phone in a hushed tone, as there were others nearby.

"How did you end up fighting again?"

"Mom, it wasn't my intention."

"You never stop giving me trouble. Now, the leaders are starting to have issues with you. Do you even want to keep this job?"

"We have a secure job here. It'll be fine."

"A secure job doesn't hold up against your constant troublemaking."

"He was taking things from the people. Why shouldn't I have hit him? Don't worry about it, Mom. I must go now; the new secretary is starting today, and I must be careful at work."

"Hold on a moment, you—"

Su Yan quickly hung up the phone with a sigh. Even as a deputy section chief in the Secretarial Section, he had little authority. He didn't even have his office; it was just a title without real power. Only the head of the Secretarial Section had a bit more status.

At that moment, Meng Hanmei walked in.

"Director Meng."

“Director Meng.”

Several people quickly set aside their work.

Meng Hanmei glanced around the room, motioned with her hand to quiet them, and said, “Keep working. I don’t have anything else for now.” Then she scanned the office until her gaze landed on Su Yan. She looked at him for two seconds before saying, “Xiao Su, come with me.” Without turning around, she waited for him to follow. Meng Hanmei had her judgment; she knew that Su Yan would likely become Dong Xuebing’s secretary and didn’t want to be neglectful.