

PAW 1834

Chapter 1834

Afternoon.

Five o'clock.

After wrapping up a series of tasks at Qing'e Mountain, Dong Xuebing didn't go home to change clothes but returned to the county committee compound still drenched. He could have done it if he were a lower-ranking leader, especially since someone higher up was covering for him; taking a few days off wouldn't have been an issue. But that wasn't the case now. Dong Xuebing was the top leader of the entire Jiaolin County; he couldn't afford to take time off, especially with the significant incident at Qing'e Mountain, which involved the safety of nearly a hundred people. Meanwhile, there were many ongoing matters in Jiaolin County. The county mayor, Zhang Dongfang, was already hospitalized and receiving IV treatment, and if Dong Xuebing were absent again, it would surely create chaos. He had to return to address other pressing issues.

Funding allocations.

Reward amounts.

Personnel arrangements.

Upon returning to his office, Dong Xuebing changed into clothes that Su Yan brought him, which he didn't even know whose they were, and then quickly began to tackle the remaining work.

Five minutes.

Ten minutes.

Finally, he completed everything.

Dong Xuebing let out a sigh of relief, glanced at the time, and instructed Su Yan before grabbing his bag to prepare to leave work. After a long day, he was utterly exhausted.

In the corridor.

The county committee office director, Meng Hanbing, approached him. “Secretary.”

“Director Meng, still not off work?” Dong Xuebing glanced at her.

Meng Hanmei replied, “I’m about to leave, too. I just need to finish these few documents before I go back.”

Dong Xuebing nodded. “By the way, I need to discuss something with you. Please notify a few Party Committee members tonight; let’s have dinner together.” Although he didn’t specify who to invite, the implication was clear. Meng Hanmei couldn’t misunderstand that he referred to the Party Committee members who supported Dong Xuebing today. Since they had expressed their position, Dong Xuebing had to reciprocate.

Meng Hanmei nodded slightly. “Okay, I understand.”

Dong Xuebing pondered for a moment. “How about at my place?”

His home was now a duplex, spacious enough to accommodate ten people.

“Sure.” Meng Hanmei glanced at him with concern. “Are you feeling alright? You should take care of yourself; otherwise, tomorrow...”

“I’m fine; just today will do. Let’s say seven-thirty tonight.” Dong Xuebing smiled. “I just got a little wet in the rain; a hot shower will do the trick.” He wasn’t someone who liked to procrastinate. If something was to be done, he preferred to take care of it immediately rather than wait until the next day. After speaking, Dong Xuebing ran his hand through his hair, which felt a bit long. “Is there a place near the compound to get a haircut? It doesn’t have to be fancy; just any place will do. My hair is getting a bit long.” He naturally wanted to maintain a respectable appearance as a county committee secretary.

Meng Hanmei blinked and suddenly smiled. “You go home first; I’ll find a place for you.”

“Okay, a haircut tomorrow is fine; it’s not urgent.” After saying this, Dong Xuebing headed home.

Before six o'clock.

Dong Xuebing returned home carrying groceries, tossed them into the fridge, and entered the bathroom for a thorough hot shower. Ah, it felt so refreshing, a complete comfort from head to toe, making Dong Xuebing unconsciously squint his eyes. This was the most enjoyable moment after a long day of hard work. Reflecting on his accomplishments throughout the day, he felt fulfilled and thought it was all worth the effort.

After finishing his shower,

Dong Xuebing emerged from the bathroom in his pajamas. He didn't plan to change into anything else. While pajamas might seem less formal, it was precisely because of this that when the Party Committee members arrived later, they would feel something special—that Dong Xuebing didn't regard them as outsiders, which is why he dressed so casually.

Ding-dong.

Ding-dong.

The doorbell rang.

Dong Xuebing was taken aback. He had planned to go to the kitchen to wash the vegetables but didn't expect someone to arrive so soon. As Sister Meng had notified, wasn't it supposed to be at seven-thirty? He suspiciously walked over and opened the door, revealing Meng Hanmei standing outside. She had changed clothes; although she had worn a raincoat today, she still got wet. Now she was dressed in new clothes—women's dress pants and a thick white sweater—indicating she had gone home. However, the bag she held puzzled Dong Xuebing; it looked pretty heavy, but he couldn't tell what it was.

“Director Meng.”

“Secretary, I'll come in first.”

“Of course, please do. Why did you come so early? I haven't even washed the vegetables yet.”

“You shouldn’t have to wash the vegetables; we women can handle that. Hehe, the real reason I came early was for something else. You mentioned needing a haircut, right?”

“Yes, I did. What about it?”

“I can cut your hair.”

“Ah, you know how to cut hair?”

“Did you underestimate me? Hehe, my grandfather was a hairdresser, an old craft. Later, he passed that skill on to me. After I learned this, I cut my parents' hair at home. You can try my skills if you don’t mind, but I can’t guarantee trendy styles. I can cut any hair, but I lack the taste and aesthetic sense, so even if I cut it, I wouldn’t know if it suits you. I wouldn’t want to embarrass myself; I can only cut it my way.”

Dong Xuebing laughed heartily. “Alright then, I’ll trouble you, Sister Meng. I don’t need a trendy hairstyle; something simple and decent will do.” As a county committee secretary, why would he want a flashy haircut? That would invite criticism. In China, moderation is valued, especially within the system; being ordinary is more than enough.

Meng Hanmei smiled and took out the tools she had been carrying. “Let’s go to the bathroom; we don’t want hair everywhere that’s hard to clean up.”

“Alright.” Dong Xuebing moved a chair into the bathroom.

Meng Hanmei stood behind him very professionally, wrapped a cloth around him, and used a comb to tidy his hair. After looking in the mirror and nodding, she began using the electric clippers to cut Dong Xuebing’s hair. Watching her movements, it was evident that she was quite skilled; she was efficient and precise, with each cut clean and neat. When a professional takes action, you can tell immediately; it doesn’t matter how well it’s done, but confidence and clarity in their movements can put anyone at ease.

It was clear that Meng Hanmei's skills were up to par.

Dong Xuebing squinted his eyes, feeling very comfortable. He was nearly dozing off, his head leaning back slightly—this was a natural response to drowsiness. As he leaned back, he suddenly

felt a soft sensation on the back of his head, as if his entire head had sunk into something soft and fragrant.

Dong Xuebing immediately woke up. “Uh.”

He glanced at the mirror and realized he had accidentally leaned against Meng Hanmei’s chest.

Meng Hanmei, however, was unfazed and continued to cut his hair expertly. “Don’t move.”