

PAW 1836

Chapter 1836

At Home.

"Time to eat."

The living room downstairs was spacious, and the kitchen was on the same floor. So Dong Xuebing joined everyone in setting up the table and pouring the drinks on the first floor.

"The food is ready." Meng Hanmei came out carrying a dish.

"Haha, finally!" Li Niu couldn't wait any longer.

Chang Lin praised, "I've tasted Lao Meng's cooking once before, it's top-notch."

Meng Hanmei smiled, "You guys just say that. Haha, but after we finish eating, you all have to do the dishes. I'm not dealing with that."

Dong Xuebing quickly invited her to sit down: "Sister Meng, you've worked hard. Please sit down and eat. We're all drinking baijiu; do you want to have some, too?"

Meng Hanmei took a seat, "I'm fine with anything."

"Alright then, we'll all drink baijiu." Dong Xuebing loved drinking baijiu wherever he went because it was more common in Beijing. At the very least, people would drink beer if not baijiu. Hardly anyone drank Western liquor or huangjiu. When close friends from Beijing drank together, they usually didn't go to bars. They would often sit at a small restaurant or street stall, drinking baijiu or beer, chatting without caring about the environment or the quality of the drinks. It was all about the atmosphere of the conversation. This might be the straightforwardness ingrained in Northerners.

"Give it a try."

"Oh wow, it's delicious!"

"Lao Meng's cooking skills are getting better and better."

Dong Xuebing took a bite. It was indeed very good.

They ate.

They drank.

They chatted.

Everyone was having a great time.

At this moment, Meng Hanmei glanced at her watch and said, "Isn't the news starting?"

Sun Changzhi nodded, "It should be starting now. How about we take a look?"

Only then did Dong Xuebing remember. Given all the events that had happened that day, he wanted to watch the news from Jiaolin County, so he said, "Let's watch." He picked up the remote and turned on the TV. This local station didn't look as polished as some provincial or national channels. It felt a bit makeshift, evident from the appearance of the host. But given the conditions, a small county's media couldn't compare to the province's.

The news had just started. They hadn't missed much.

A plain-looking female host reported with a serious face: "This afternoon, heavy rain suddenly fell. Nearly a hundred students and teachers from City No. 1 High School went missing on Qing'e Mountain. The situation is extremely dangerous. Under the instructions of Secretary Dong and County Mayor Zhang, the rescue team immediately initiated operations. Let's review the footage from the scene."

The scene cut to a downpour.

It was a live report from the foot of Qing'e Mountain in the afternoon.

In the footage, Zhang Dongfang appeared, saying to the camera, "The environment on the mountain is quite harsh. The biggest issue is that we currently have no contact with the missing students and teachers. The mountain is vast, and searching it entirely will take at least until tomorrow or the day after. However, everyone can rest assured that we will do our best in the rescue. We hope the children and teachers haven't strayed too far into the mountain." This segment was edited down, with most of it cut out.

Immediately after, the footage showed Dong Xuebing.

Dong Xuebing appeared sternly, saying, "Everyone, get out of the way. It's rescue time now. Stop causing trouble. Where is the fire department head? Why aren't they here yet?"

Sun Changzhi looked at Dong Xuebing's expression and said, "Secretary, I didn't intend to air this part. Although it was live, I thought it might be a bit... But when I returned to the office and reviewed it, I felt adding it would be better, so I had them include it directly."

When Dong Xuebing made those remarks, many people noticed and felt a bit uneasy. However, as Sun Changzhi mentioned, the effect might be positive after airing it. It created a sharp contrast with Zhang Dongfang's approach. Plus, more footage would clarify why Secretary Dong had such an attitude. Combined, it would deliver a strong visual impact and a sense of intensity. Sun Changzhi, having worked in ideological matters for many years, was sensitive to things that definitely surpassed that of others.

Dong Xuebing nodded slightly.

As the news continued, there were no more shots of Zhang Dongfang, only occasional appearances.

The footage mainly featured Secretary Dong. This wasn't an intentional attempt to flatter him or turn it into a political performance. The truth was that Dong Xuebing had been busy from start to finish, directing the rescue, finding the students, and even carrying out the rescues himself. Naturally, the camera mainly captured him.

On the TV:

Dong Xuebing strode forward and handed the only umbrella he had to a female student while he stood in the pouring rain, seemingly unaware of the downpour. Then, the scene cuts to him carrying two students with high fevers down the mountain. The footage jumped again to the foot of the mountain, showing Dong Xuebing placing the students in an ambulance and giving instructions to the doctor. The final scene captured parents surrounding him, crying and expressing their gratitude.

The video clip ended.

The part where Dong Xuebing scolded people was cut out. No matter how satisfying it might have felt to some, such a scene couldn't be broadcast.

The female anchor reported: "During the rescue, County Mayor Zhang was injured and is currently receiving treatment in the hospital. Secretary Dong was also at the forefront. In the most difficult moments, he gave his umbrella to the public and personally carried two severely feverish students down the mountain for emergency treatment. Secretary Dong was exposed to the rain for nearly an hour. Many students' parents and residents were crying; it was a touching scene."

After watching this segment, Dong Xuebing switched to the city news.

The tone of the city's report was noticeably different from that of Jiaolin County. Although Dong Xuebing appeared in the footage, his presence felt less significant. The city focused mainly on Zhang Dongfang in the hospital, praising his nobility and deep care for the people—how, despite his age, he went to the frontline to save lives and ended up hospitalized himself. This difference in coverage reflected the city's attitude towards Dong Xuebing and Zhang Dongfang.

Dong Xuebing didn't mind; it didn't surprise him.

Meng Hanmei, Chang Lin, or the other county committee members were surprised. They knew about Zhang Dongfang's good relationship with the city's Party Secretary. The coverage from the county's news segment was already more than sufficient. Secretary Dong's handling of this incident far outshone that of County Mayor Zhang, in political maneuvering and other aspects. Zhang Dongfang couldn't compare this time; Secretary Dong's rescue efforts were awe-inspiring. Watching the county's news broadcast, even Meng Hanmei and the others felt like applauding. The scenes were incredibly moving, and it was evident that Dong Xuebing's actions were genuine and not just for show.

This was Secretary Dong's first day at work.

With such a beginning, it could be called nothing less than perfect.