

PAW 1845

Chapter 1845

The next day.

Around seven in the morning.

Ding ding ding, ding ding ding—the phone rang urgently.

Dong Xuebing was still sleeping on the second floor. He returned very late the night before and was feeling quite tired. When he answered the phone, he sounded lethargic.

"Hello, who is it?" Dong Xuebing mumbled, eyes still closed.

"It's Secretary, it's me, Meng Hanmei!" On the other end was the anxious voice of the county office director, Sister Meng. "Have you seen the morning news? Something's happened!"

"News? I'm still asleep," Dong Xuebing replied calmly.

Meng Hanmei immediately said, "Please check it out and online. It's causing a stir."

Dong Xuebing casually reached for the remote control on his bedside table and turned on the TV. "Which channel?"

"It's the provincial TV station," Meng Hanmei replied anxiously. "It's about the county committee complexes and residential buildings in several counties in Baohong City being built too lavishly, wasting resources and causing harm to the people. It's all happening suddenly, and we haven't received any information. I know that the city didn't even get any information. The first thing that happened was a post on several major websites with photos of the county committee complexes in our counties. Especially the new county committee complex in Jiaolin County was at the top. It was all exposed. Normally, a single post wouldn't be anything, but now, with so many views and discussions, it's causing a huge uproar. Just after it went up this morning, the reposts and comments have already reached hundreds of thousands, all criticizing us. Now, even the provincial morning news has reported it. We don't know the province's attitude on this yet."

Dong Xuebing just responded, "I see."

Meng Hanmei urged, "Secretary, please come to the county committee. Mayor Zhang and the others are almost here. I'm on my way, too. This situation is..."

Dong Xuebing calmly replied, "Okay, I understand."

Meng Hanmei was confused, wondering why Dong Xuebing's voice was so calm. "Secretary!"

"Go ahead and discuss it first. I'll come after breakfast, just like that." Dong Xuebing hung up the phone and stretched with a yawn, completely at ease.

Meng Hanmei was almost dizzy. What was going on? Breakfast? You're still thinking about breakfast at a time like this? The situation is urgent! If it were just ordinary online discussions, that would be one thing, but now even the provincial TV has reported it. This could be a warning signal. Even if online discussions don't harm them, public pressure from the province could force them into action, which would be disastrous for Jiaolin County and other counties involved. Who would want to see that? If the province gets angry, the responsibility will fall heavily on them, and who knows how many people will get dragged into this. Yet, Dong Xuebing's voice remained so calm, leaving Meng Hanmei at a loss for words. She should have been the one to worry the most since the construction of the new county committee complex was spearheaded by the county committee, with Dong Xuebing in charge now. He should be the one most anxious, shouldn't he?

This calmness?

What does it mean??

Of course, Meng Hanmei couldn't have known that Dong Xuebing already knew about the situation. The issue was triggered by a post published by some netizen just a few hours earlier. Dong Xuebing's voice showed he was still sleeping, and Meng Hanmei only found out about it when she saw the morning news. She had no idea that Dong Xuebing had known about it already. So, she never considered that Dong Xuebing might have some way of foreseeing the future.

Dong Xuebing got out of bed, and indeed, he was about to make his breakfast. Of course, it wasn't that complicated—he just boiled a couple of eggs to make do.

The phone rang again just as the eggs were put into the water.

This time, it was a call from Fang Wenping's phone number.

Dong Xuebing picked up the phone. "Hello, Director Fang... Governor Fang?"

Fang Wenping got straight to the point. "Is the new county committee complex in your county led by the county committee?"

"Yes," Dong Xuebing replied, "It was decided by Secretary Li Gui'an before, and now I'm taking over."

Fang Wenping said, "It seems you know about the situation now. Well, get ready to take responsibility. The province might take some action!"

Beep beep beep.

The phone call ended.

Dong Xuebing wasn't angered by her tone; instead, he smiled slightly, feeling a sense of reassurance. He knew Fang Wenping's temperament well, understanding that she always spoke like this—she didn't care much for formalities. What Dong Xuebing had picked up from the call wasn't her criticism but rather a reminder. Even though Dong Xuebing already knew how things unfolded, he appreciated her phone call. He hadn't expected Fang Wenping to give him a heads-up, which showed she still cared about him. Perhaps it was a little late—after all, the news had just broken that morning, and no one could have predicted how big it would get, forcing the province to intervene. But Dong Xuebing didn't think it was too late. He had already taken care of the necessary matters, which is why he felt so at ease, so calm. That's why he was able to smile.

The eggs were done.

Dong Xuebing ate slowly without any pressure. He glanced at the clock—already eight o'clock—but he wasn't in a hurry, taking his time and eating carefully.

The phone rang again.

It rang twice, as many people were trying to reach him.

The first call was from Meng Hanmei, followed by Zhang Dongfang. Dong Xuebing picked up Zhang Dongfang's call, exchanged perfunctory words, and hung up.

The third call was from Su Yan.

Dong Xuebing talked a little longer with him because there was something important.

"Secretary, there's trouble in the county. What do you think we should do?" Su Yan asked.

Dong Xuebing didn't immediately address that issue. Instead, he finished the last bite of egg yolk, chewed it slowly, and swallowed before saying something else. "Xiao Su, do we have any places to rent in the county?"

Su Yan was startled. "Rent? Do you want to rent a place?"

"Yes, I need to rent a relatively large area," Dong Xuebing said.

Su Yan asked, "What about the environment? Do you have any requirements?"

Dong Xuebing thought for a moment. "Requirements? The cheaper, the better."

Su Yan replied, "In that case, it would be the area near the new county committee complex. The houses are cheaper because the new county committee complex will be moved there, and many new houses will be built nearby. The cheapest option would be row houses used for rural health clinics. They're not expensive. Some can be rented for one or two months for just one hundred RMB."

Dong Xuebing asked, "How many row houses are in that area?"

"Oh, quite a lot," Su Yan said. "There are dozens, at least. But the purpose of those houses isn't very clear. I think they haven't been rented out yet. If you want something a little better, there are office buildings and some newly developed residential areas. It depends on what you want to do. The office buildings are a bit more expensive, but considering our county's situation, they're relatively affordable."

Dong Xuebing nodded. "Never mind, just the row houses then. Dozens, you said? Alright, I'm giving you a task. Don't do anything else. First, get this done for me. Go over there, talk to the person in charge, and negotiate in the name of our county committee. Rent all the row houses for me."

Su Yan was taken aback. "In the name of the county committee?"

"Yes, do as I said," Dong Xuebing replied.

Su Yan was confused. "What do we need these row houses for in the county?" He immediately realized his mistake, though—after all, it wasn't his place to question the leader's decision.

Luckily, Dong Xuebing wasn't a rigid leader, and he didn't get angry. "I have my reasons. Just get it done, and remember—the quicker, the better. It would be best if you could finish it by this morning. Don't worry about the details for now. You'll understand what it's for in a few hours. Heh-heh."

Su Yan immediately responded, "Understood!"

Dong Xuebing said, "Alright, go ahead and get to work."

Su Yan hesitated before asking, "As for the county's situation, you—"

"You don't need to worry about that," Dong Xuebing interrupted. "If anyone calls you looking for me, don't answer. Just handle it yourself."

Su Yan was genuinely confused. He couldn't understand what Dong Xuebing was doing. He knew about the trouble in the county, and with such a big issue at hand, Zhang County Head and the other county committee members were all rushing to their offices to discuss countermeasures. But Dong Xuebing wasn't in the slightest bit anxious or concerned, not even bothering to look into it. And as for ordering these row houses? Those places might be cheap, but they were in terrible condition—almost no soundproofing, with some barely held together by cheap materials. What would he need those shabby houses for? Su Yan didn't understand, but as it was the county committee secretary's order, he had no choice but to follow through, no matter his doubts.

The call ended.

Dong Xuebing finished his meal.

He washed his dishes, then changed clothes. After trying on one outfit and not being satisfied, he changed into another. Only then did he grab his bag and head downstairs to get into the car driven by Xiao Wang, his driver.

On the way.

Sitting in the back seat, Dong Xuebing called Huo Yibang, the head of the County Urban Management Bureau. "Hello, Director Huo. How's everything on your end?"

Huo Yibang sounded out of breath. "It's... done. Everything's taken care of."

Dong Xuebing asked with concern, "Everything okay, old Huo? You sound a bit off."

Huo Yibang chuckled, "Yeah, I had to step in last night when I saw we were short on hands. I got a little anxious, so I worked through the night. But it's almost done. Fewer people were here, and the confidentiality measures were good—no one found out. Everything was done according to your instructions."

Dong Xuebing sincerely replied, "Thanks to everyone for all the hard work. I appreciate it."

"Don't mention it. We must carry out your orders. By the way, the wall over there—should we tear that down too? What are we keeping it for? Get it down quickly and move it out!" Huo Yibang said, shouting commands at his subordinates. In the background were the sounds of clanking metal, indicating they were still working on some finishing touches. Dong Xuebing had given them such a tight deadline—one whole night—so the workload was considerable.

Dong Xuebing said, "Once this is all done, I'll treat everyone. It's been a tough job!"