

PAW 1852

Chapter 1852

In the Courtyard.

Everyone had walked in, and the place looked empty and lonely. Yet, the big question on everyone's mind remained unanswered: how did Secretary Dong know? Why did he make such a seemingly absurd decision to demolish the new County Party Committee office building before any signs of trouble? Looking back now, it was evident that this decision was correct. However, it did seem wasteful and fueled even more public outrage. A lot of money had already been spent on the new building, and now it was being torn down without anyone even having moved in. It seemed even more unreasonable. If Li Gui'an were in charge, this action would raise questions, and he would also be implicated in the fallout. But Dong Xuebing was different. He had just assumed his position, and this new County Committee office building wasn't his project. Demolishing it would not directly reflect poorly on him.

The real mystery was how Secretary Dong managed to time the demolition perfectly. How could he have known that a provincial investigation team would arrive the next day? It seemed impossible! This whole situation appeared far too uncanny. Many people started looking at Secretary Dong with newfound respect and curiosity.

Huo Yibang, the Chief of the Urban Management Bureau, was most emotionally affected. Last night, Dong Xuebing had called him in for a private meeting, instructing him to level the new County Committee office building to the ground by the next morning. Huo Yibang still remembered his shock at the time. He thought Secretary Dong had lost his mind and perhaps had even been drunk when he made such a request. It was utterly incomprehensible to Huo Yibang. Ultimately, he was swayed by the confident look in Dong Xuebing's eyes and decided to take a gamble. He called in his subordinates and proceeded with the demolition. However, deep down, Huo Yibang was uneasy, believing this action to be a grave mistake.

But in the morning, he and his enforcement officers were dumbfounded when he heard the news reports from the provincial TV station about the investigation team being swiftly dispatched to look into issues in Jiaolin County. It was only then they understood Secretary Dong's true intention. They realized why he had urgently called them in for an all-night demolition. Dong Xuebing had anticipated this!

How did he know? How was Secretary Dong aware of what was coming?

Huo Yibang and his team didn't have the answers, but what Huo Yibang knew for sure was that he had developed a newfound respect for this young County Party Secretary. How could he not be impressed? In the face of such a significant political crisis, Secretary Dong managed to foresee it, react promptly, and make a decisive choice. Huo Yibang was genuinely convinced.

Would anyone else have made the same call? Even if they had some inkling of the impending trouble, very few would have had the decisiveness to demolish a new office building worth billions, a project that took years to complete. But Secretary Dong did it. He made that tough decision. Knowing this, Huo Yibang couldn't help but admire him.

Was Secretary Dong crazy?

Huo Yibang now realized how laughable his initial thought was. It wasn't Secretary Dong who had lost his mind; it was simply that they didn't have the foresight that Dong Xuebing had. What Secretary Dong saw was far beyond their level. They were playing on entirely different fields. How could they even compete?

Thus, Huo Yibang's attitude towards Dong Xuebing shifted again, becoming even more respectful. He felt fortunate for the choice he made the previous day, grateful that his gamble paid off. This new County Party Secretary, it seemed, was indeed no ordinary person.

The scene fell into silence once more.

Dong Xuebing broke the stillness, addressing Cheng Wei and the members of the provincial investigation team:

"I'm aware of the photos you've provided; I've also seen them. They are indeed the proposed site and construction images of the new County Committee office building planned by Jiaolin County. However, I need to clarify one thing: I didn't initiate this plan, nor was it my project. Before I took office, Secretary Li Gui'an led and was responsible for this decision. I'm not here to speak ill of anyone, but I must say this: Secretary Li's decisions were his own, and I respect that. But as an official and a person, I have my principles.

When I first saw this new County Committee building, I felt it was inappropriate. Our county isn't wealthy; although our economic conditions aren't the worst, we can't compare to some of the province's key counties. Many of our people still struggle to meet basic needs. And we're expected to move into a palace-like building? To live like local emperors? I couldn't accept that. After discussions with several county leaders, I issued the order yesterday to demolish and level this place. I know this will be seen as a waste and a drain on public resources, but I had to do it. I want the public to see the approach of our current County Committee leadership. If the people

disapprove of this building and criticize us, we'll tear it down! For the sake of the people, we're willing to do anything. Isn't that what public service is all about? It's as simple as that!"

Dong Xuebing's words were filled with a strong sense of righteousness, delivered so eloquently that they left no room for criticism. This is one of Dong Xuebing's strengths—his ability to articulate and persuade without needing a prepared speech.

Of course, specific points in his statement drew attention. For instance, Dong Xuebing mentioned that this decision resulted from discussions among several county leaders. However, judging by the expressions of Zhang Dongfang, Chang Lin, and Meng Hanmei, it was clear that Dong Xuebing had not consulted them. But Dong Xuebing framed it this way to shift the responsibility away from everyone involved. He wanted the provincial investigation team to understand that the decision to demolish the building wasn't solely his achievement but a collective decision by the county leadership. By doing so, he essentially tied everyone's fate together, making it harder for the provincial authorities to single out individuals for punishment or replace the entire county leadership.

Dong Xuebing was offering them an out.

Even Zhang Dongfang and his faction understood this very clearly and were somewhat surprised. Dong Xuebing could have easily claimed that the decision was made solely by him and his supporters, placing all the pressure on Zhang Dongfang and his faction. Instead, by saying it was a collective decision, Dong Xuebing showed the qualities expected of a County Party Secretary—a broad-minded leader who clearly distinguished between external and internal conflicts. He protected everyone, demonstrating a true patriarchal demeanor.

Cheng Wei remained silent, and the other members of the investigation team were also at a loss for words.

Dong Xuebing continued, "Comrades from the investigation team, we know this incident has had a very negative impact. On behalf of the county, I want to extend an apology to all of you, as well as to the people. We acknowledge our responsibility in this matter. However, I ask the provincial authorities to consider that we have already taken preemptive measures to mitigate the situation. I hope for leniency in your handling of this case. Additionally, please understand that our decision to demolish the new County Committee office building was not made under pressure from the provincial TV station or the investigation team. We dismantled it because we realized that Secretary Li Gui'an's initial decision was inappropriate, and we took proactive steps to correct it."

On the surface, Dong Xuebing admits fault, but his words subtly shift all the blame onto the former Party Secretary, Li Gui'an. After all, Li Gui'an had already transferred out, leaving this mess for Dong Xuebing to clean up. Otherwise, why would there be so many issues to deal with? Dong Xuebing didn't have a favorable opinion of him—they had no personal relationship—so if he wasn't going to push the blame onto Li Gui'an, then who else? Naturally, Dong Xuebing pinned everything on him, implying, "Don't give us trouble here in Jiaolin County; go look into Li Gui'an from the neighboring county. It was his bad decision-making!"

The room fell silent again.

Dong Xuebing turned to Zhang Dongfang, "County Mayor Zhang?"

Now that they needed a united front, Zhang Dongfang knew precisely what he had to say. Clearing his throat, he addressed Director Cheng, "Director Cheng, what Secretary Dong said is correct. I expressed my opposition when Secretary Li proposed the plan for the new County Committee office building. This time, Secretary Dong's order to demolish it was, in my view, the right decision. Our county government fully supports it. We can't let the people gossip about us!"

For once, Dong Xuebing and Zhang Dongfang were on the same page.

Following this, other County Committee members also began to voice their support. There was no dissent—everyone backed Secretary Dong's decision because the facts had already proven that Dong Xuebing's judgment was sound and appropriate. How could they not support him?

Cheng Wei and the investigation team found themselves at a loss for words.

What could they say? The new County Committee office building was already gone! What was left to discuss?

Had Dong Xuebing waited until the provincial TV station broke the news before hastily demolishing it, they would have had grounds to cause trouble for Jiaolin County or even replace the entire leadership. In their eyes, it would have been a reactive move, scrambling to fix things after the scandal erupted. But now, there was nothing to criticize—they had no basis for blame. Professional analysis confirmed that the building had been demolished the day before, before any public outcry or investigation. In this situation, how could they hold him accountable? They might still be able to nitpick, but their arguments would be significantly weakened and lack confidence.

What a move by Dong Xuebing!

What a County Party Secretary for Jiaolin County!

Cheng Wei took a deep look at Dong Xuebing. He couldn't believe that Dong Xuebing acted out of a sense of responsibility when he demolished the new County Committee office in advance. There had to be something else going on, but Cheng Wei couldn't figure out how Dong Xuebing knew about the impending investigation. He felt a surge of frustration, but there was no outlet for it.

Indeed, as the higher-ups said, Dong Xuebing was not ordinary. No wonder he dared to challenge the provincial authorities; he seemed so calm and confident—he had prepared for their arrival well in advance!

Even though Cheng Wei didn't like him, he couldn't help but be impressed. Unsurprisingly, after confronting his superiors, this man could still rise smoothly through the ranks. Dong Xuebing indeed had some skills!