

PAW 1857

Chapter 1857

Before 10:00 AM.

In the new office.

Dong Xuebing's office had become a signpost—every passing leader, cadre, or ordinary government employee couldn't help but glance inside. Originally, many people had complaints about the working environment, but seeing Dong Xuebing so focused and adapting so well, they couldn't help but feel reassured. The leader's attitude certainly influenced others, and soon, everyone started working more efficiently.

Dong Xuebing had mastered these small tricks.

He might not have much great wisdom or political savvy, but when it came to street-smart tactics, Dong Xuebing was never lacking.

After all these years, Dong Xuebing knew himself well. When he encountered his shortcomings, he made up for them using his unique abilities—like his natural lack of political wisdom. For small tricks, he had his methods. Over the years, Dong Xuebing developed his own set of experiences, and he refined them well. He was no longer the naïve young man he once was.

One minute.

Five minutes.

The changes in the people around him were becoming increasingly obvious.

These were subtle, almost imperceptible changes, like a process in which one person influences ten, and ten influences a hundred.

Su Yan also noticed the transformation in everyone and found himself admiring Dong Xuebing even more. Earlier, when Dong Xuebing told him not to close the door, Su Yan didn't understand why. Now, he finally understood its purpose, and the results were significant. Su Yan realized there was so much he still needed to learn. He now had a clear goal and direction: he wanted to be

like Dong Xuebing. Though Su Yan might be a year or two older than Dong Xuebing, after spending time with him, Su Yan felt that Dong Xuebing truly deserved to be the county party secretary. His young age and bad temper might seem like disadvantages, but perhaps those qualities made his role as county party secretary even more valuable. Whether in terms of combat effectiveness or political maneuvering, Su Yan was now fully convinced of Dong Xuebing's abilities. He couldn't have imagined a young county party secretary could be formidable and possess many tactics. Because of his admiration, Su Yan now looked up to him with respect and awe. At this moment, Su Yan's mindset was one of deep admiration, and he genuinely wanted to learn from Dong Xuebing.

After entering the room, Su Yan spent a moment thinking before speaking. "Secretary, the temporary meeting room is ready. The county party standing committee meeting will start soon."

Dong Xuebing looked up. "Has Director Huo arrived?"

"He has, just a moment ago," Su Yan replied.

"Good. Let him head directly to the meeting room. He'll attend as an observer," Dong Xuebing said.

Su Yan blinked. "Director Huo asked me what the meeting was about, but I didn't know, so I didn't say anything. Should I have him meet with you first, or...?"

Dong Xuebing glanced at his watch. "No need. It's too late now. We'll discuss it in the meeting."

"Okay, then I'll go set up the meeting room," Su Yan said before leaving.

It wasn't that Dong Xuebing didn't want to greet Huo Yibang first, but the lack of soundproofing in the office made it difficult to talk. People in the adjacent rooms could overhear normal conversations, and if he shut the door and spoke in a hushed voice, it wouldn't look very dignified for a county party secretary. So, Dong Xuebing didn't bother calling Huo Yibang over. It didn't matter much anyway. He had already made up his mind. Huo Yibang and his Urban Management Bureau played a pivotal role this time. The county might not have avoided disaster so smoothly if it weren't for them. Huo Yibang had earned praise, and Dong Xuebing planned to acknowledge his contributions.

How to Grant Reward

A vacancy had opened up in the county yesterday, and it was a rather good position—the deputy county mayor of the County Administration Bureau.

The provincial investigation team had indeed come up empty-handed this time. They didn't manage to take down Dong Xuebing or replace the leadership in the neighboring county, but that didn't mean they hadn't uncovered anything. It didn't mean they were returning empty-handed. By noon yesterday, a Deputy County Mayor, Sun, surfaced while investigating the construction funds for the new county party compound. A series of issues concerning the use of these funds were uncovered. While the issues weren't major, they were backed by solid evidence. Sun could hardly defend himself, and the investigation team wouldn't let him off the hook. They strictly followed the directive from provincial leaders. Things always need to be explained, and someone has to take the fall. Sun just happened to be the scapegoat. The evidence was conclusive, and he was detained almost immediately. The provincial authorities quickly removed him from his post and launched an investigation. Naturally, the deputy county mayor position became vacant.

Dong Xuebing didn't know much about Deputy County Mayor Sun, not even an impression. Of course, he didn't care much, either. Sun was from the County Administration Bureau, under Zhang Dongfang's faction, so Dong Xuebing cared even less. If Sun was removed, so be it. This situation presented a perfect opportunity for Dong Xuebing to reward merit. It also allowed him to consolidate his control over the neighboring county's political power further. This was exactly what Dong Xuebing wanted.

Huo Yibang held a regular deputy division chief rank. Regarding rank, he had no issue moving up to the deputy county mayor position. However, moving from the relatively obscure position of the Urban Management Bureau director to the deputy county mayor was a significant leap. It wasn't an easy move to make. But Dong Xuebing had already thought this through. He was confident he could push Huo Yibang up to the role. Even if there were uncertainties, he still had a good chance. Dong Xuebing was confident in this, or else he wouldn't have convened this standing committee meeting today.

Time passed.

Dong Xuebing adjusted his clothes and walked out of his office toward the temporary meeting room at the end of the row of offices. He entered the room.

Inside, everyone was already present.

All ten county standing committee members, besides Dong Xuebing, were seated. Huo Yibang was sitting off to the side in an additional seat at the outermost edge. The table was large, seemingly moved from the old county party compound, and there were enough seats. However, Huo Yibang didn't have the right to sit at the main table. This was a matter of seniority. He could only attend as an observer, not as a member with a place at the table. The system was strict about such things. Even if Huo Yibang were a deputy county mayor who hadn't yet joined the standing committee, he still wouldn't be qualified to sit at the main table. The standing committee's table always only had seats for the standing committee members—just eleven people.

Even the head of the People's Congress.

Even the chairman of the Political Consultative Conference.

These two officials, of the same rank as Dong Xuebing and Zhang Dongfang, would also only be seated as observers at the standing committee meetings. They could speak but had no voting rights. The system had clear boundaries—everything was distinctly separated.

Dong Xuebing took his seat.

Su Yan immediately closed the door and sat in the corner, ready to take the minutes of the meeting.

Dong Xuebing took a sip of the hot tea Su Yan had prepared for him, licked his lips, and said, "Let's start the meeting."

However, as soon as he finished speaking, there was a chatter from the neighboring department; the voices weren't loud but irritating.

Zhang Dongfang furrowed his brow.

The other county standing committee members were also uneasy.

Su Yan blinked and said, "Secretary, I'll ask them to lower their voices."

Dong Xuebing hesitated momentarily, then waved his hand, "Forget it. Everyone has their difficulties. Let's all bear with it. I'll keep it brief and focus on the main points. I'm sure everyone

knows Deputy County Mayor Sun has been removed from office. There's a vacancy in the County Administration Bureau, and we need to fill it."

Upon hearing this, everyone understood the situation.

Huo Yibang also understood. He realized why Secretary Dong had asked him to come. His heart skipped a few beats—being offered the deputy county mayor position overwhelmed him with excitement.

Dong Xuebing got straight to the point: "I propose Huo Yibang, Director of the Urban Management Bureau, to take this position. Old Huo made a significant contribution to the recent demolition work. As a senior colleague, he didn't just supervise but personally participated in the demolition tasks. That's very admirable. Moreover, his qualifications are sufficient, and he is fully capable of taking on this role."

Meng Hanmei was the first to speak, "I agree. Director Huo is the most suitable candidate."

Chang Lin, Sun Changzhi, Wang Bin, and other members of Dong's faction all voiced their support, echoing the same sentiment. Dong Xuebing's reputation was high at the moment, and as members of his faction, they had no reason not to support him.

On Zhang Dongfang's side, however, there was a noticeable silence. After exchanging glances with Zhang County Mayor, even the members of Zhang's faction remained quiet.

Dong Xuebing turned to Zhang Dongfang and called, "Mayor Zhang?"

Zhang Dongfang looked up, "I also agree."

It was clear that Zhang Dongfang's agreement wasn't from genuine enthusiasm. Anyone could see that Huo Yibang was now firmly aligned with Dong Xuebing. If Huo Yibang were appointed, it would be like driving a wedge into the County Administration Bureau. But Zhang Dongfang had no other choice. Dong Xuebing's momentum had peaked with yesterday's events, and Dong had done him a favor. Moreover, the earlier speeches from several county standing committee members had already resulted in a majority of six votes in favor. Even if Zhang Dongfang disagreed, the decision would still proceed. After weighing the pros and cons, Zhang Dongfang also gave his approval.

The proposal to appoint Huo Yibang was thus passed.

However, it was only a proposal for now because the appointment of a deputy division-level official was a decision to be made by the city authorities. The county could only discuss and make recommendations. If the county standing committee reached a decision, the city would mostly respect their opinion. But the current situation was a little more complicated due to the city's low regard for Dong Xuebing and their poor impression of him.

So, the city's decision was still uncertain.

But Dong Xuebing believed there was an 80% chance the city would approve. If he waited another half month, the outcome might change. But for now, with the city under investigation by the provincial team, it was unlikely they'd engage in any conflict with Dong Xuebing. This was why Dong Xuebing had moved quickly to propose Huo Yibang's appointment—he wanted to take advantage of the chaos.