

PAW 1863

Chapter 1863

On the street.

The phone rang.

Just as Dong Xuebing had finished exiting the watch store, Fang Wenping's call came through. He quickly moved his things to one hand and answered the phone, "Hello?"

"Where are you?" Fang Wenping asked.

Dong Xuebing replied, "I'm already in the provincial capital, at the western bus station."

Fang Wenping said, "Not far now. Remember to buy vegetables when you come over."

Dong Xuebing felt awkward, "Do I still need to buy cake?"

"I don't want that," Fang Wenping said, then hung up abruptly.

Dong Xuebing was left listening to the busy tone of the phone. This "Sister Fang" always acted like this, leaving him with no temper. Well, what could he do? After all, she was a leader. He recalled how he'd touched her for quite a while before, and now he couldn't be tough with her anymore. Looking at a nearby food stall, he went inside to buy groceries. Afterward, he found a bus stop and saw a bus to the provincial party compound. It wasn't far—just three or four stops. When the bus arrived, Dong Xuebing carried the groceries and got on.

Why not take a taxi?

With his appearance, anyone would unlikely let him into a cab.

Five or six minutes later.

Dong Xuebing got off the bus, and his eyes landed on a relatively new neighborhood. It was no more than two or three years old, very clean, with good landscaping and surrounding facilities.

The area was large, but the buildings were not densely packed, giving it a spacious, upscale feel. Dong Xuebing had never been here before, so he checked the address Fang Wenping had sent him. Yep, this was the place. He couldn't help but mutter to himself, "Not long ago, they said our county's government compound was too luxurious. I was caught off guard, but I managed to avoid trouble thanks to my quick thinking. And now look at this—it's the same thing. The provincial party family compound isn't any different."

He entered the compound, but a security guard came out after walking a few steps.

"Wait, hey, who are you looking for?" the guard asked.

Dong Xuebing turned back, "I'm here to take care of something."

The guard frowned, thinking, "What is he doing dressed like this?" He then impatiently asked, "Who are you looking for? This isn't a place where just anyone can come in." This was a residence for provincial cadres, after all. Every year, there were people delivering gifts or causing trouble. Security was tight with all the comings and goings, and only authorized people could enter. This was for the safety of the leadership. They couldn't let someone in dressed like this; it looked suspicious.

Dong Xuebing was speechless. "Are you kidding? You can't even tell I belong here by looking at me? I've had the same problem entering official work units before, but I've never been stopped at a family compound. What's the big deal if I'm a bit dirty?" he thought.

Dong Xuebing didn't reply.

Another guard came out, holding something that looked like a baton.

Dong Xuebing sneered. This was just a small matter, something he didn't care about. But since he was there to celebrate Fang Wenping's birthday at the provincial level, he didn't want to cause trouble. He didn't mention who he was there to see. Instead, he casually reached into his coat, pulled out his work ID from Jiaolin County, and casually tossed it before the two guards.

The guards looked at the ID.

County Party Secretary of Jiaolin County.

Both guards froze, staring at each other in shock. They had seen many IDs before, but this one was different. Given his young age and how he was dressed, it didn't seem to fit, but they didn't need to check the authenticity. They could tell right away. They looked at each other and knew it was genuine.

The young security guard mumbled an acknowledgment, quickly returned the ID to Dong Xuebing, and said, "Sorry about that. Please go ahead."

His attitude had changed completely. What could he do? Although a county party secretary wasn't a high-ranking official at the provincial level, he was still a genuine leader with absolute power. It was usual for someone in his position to visit the provincial party compound to deliver gifts or handle some matters. They couldn't afford to stop him.

Dong Xuebing glanced at them but didn't say anything else. He turned and walked inside.

The two security guards stood behind him, pointing at his departing back, still puzzled. They couldn't understand how someone could come to see the leaders dressed in mud. There was no way he looked like a county party secretary.

Inside one of the buildings.

It seemed to be a duplex apartment on the top floor, much like Dong Xuebing's residence in Jiaolin County. However, the standards here were much higher than his. The duplex here was much more spacious, with significantly better decor and overall quality than the simple one in his compound. Obviously, this was the standard for a vice governor, a position several ranks above Dong Xuebing. Their statuses were not on the same level.

Dong Xuebing arrived at his destination.

He pressed the doorbell.

Ding-dong, ding-dong. After a while, footsteps could be heard from inside, not hurried, taking their time without any urgency.

The door opened.

Fang Wenping's face appeared.

Today, she was wearing tight coffee-colored leggings that accentuated her well-toned thighs. Her figure was already great, and her legs were especially stunning. She didn't look her age at all. The leggings made her thighs look even better. On top, she wore a loose white sweater that covered her full hips, her hair in a bun, and slippers. She looked both homely yet exuded a certain mature charm. A pleasant fragrance lingered in the air.

Dong Xuebing quickly glanced at her full thighs and hips but didn't dare to look any longer. "Governor Fang."

Seeing his appearance, Fang Wenping frowned deeply. "Where did you go, to the countryside?"

"Ah, just handled some things down there, got me all dirty," Dong Xuebing replied, not being formal. He walked right in. "You were in such a hurry for me to come. I didn't have time to change clothes at home. When I got to the provincial capital, I couldn't find any place to buy men's clothes, so... I just came directly."

Once inside, Fang Wenping closed the door behind them. "Go take a shower."

Dong Xuebing coughed, "Do you have any clothes I can wear?"

Fang Wenping looked at him and said, "I'm a widow. Do you think I have men's clothes here?"

"Ah, I didn't mean it like that. I was asking," Dong Xuebing laughed awkwardly. "I do need something to wear, though. You'll have to give me something, right?"

Fang Wenping replied impatiently, "My thermal underwear is dirty too."

Dong Xuebing nodded. "It's all covered in mud. Everything has to be changed."

"I only have my thermal underwear. If you can wear it, then that's fine. If not, there's nothing else," Fang Wenping said coldly.

Dong Xuebing didn't argue. "Alright, alright, anything works."

Fang Wenping glanced at him one last time, then returned to her room and opened the cabinet. After rummaging for a moment, she took out a set of white thermal underwear and tossed it to him. "Here."

The clothes were made of pure cotton but had some pilling on them. They were nothing new but something Fang Wenping had worn and washed. Though Dong Xuebing didn't mind, since she wasn't concerned about it, why should he be? Having something to wear was good enough. He quickly took the clothes and held them to his chest. "Alright, I'm going to take a shower now. I've bought the vegetables for you; they're over here; just put them away; I'll go first."

He didn't go upstairs but headed to the bathroom on the first floor. The body wash scent lingered in the air, suggesting that Fang Wenping had recently showered. After closing the door, Dong Xuebing stripped off his dirty clothes individually. He looked at them and grimaced—completely covered in mud and dirt. It was just too filthy. He didn't want to wash them piece by piece, so he set the washing machine, tossed the clothes in, and started it. It was afternoon, and with a few hours before evening, he didn't worry too much about whether they would dry in time. These clothes were too dirty to be worn again, and he certainly couldn't return wearing them. His colleagues at the compound would see him and probably think less of him. It would ruin his image as a leader.

After setting the clothes to wash, Dong Xuebing stepped into the shower.

The hot water streamed down his body, incredibly comforting, warming him from the inside out. He couldn't help but hum a tune. He had worn himself out on Qingluan Mountain earlier—climbing, descending, and digging. Finally, he could relax.

Five minutes.

Ten minutes.

It took Dong Xuebing quite a while to finish his shower. When he got out and dried off, the clothes were almost done. He opened the washing machine, pulled out the clothes, and tugged at them. He ran another spin cycle, but the clothes were still damp. Dong Xuebing was even surprised when he pulled out a light pink lace bra from his pile of clothes. It was very thin, and he could feel the roughness of the fabric in his hand. He realized that when he threw his clothes in, he must have mixed in some of Fang Wenping's underwear, which she had already thrown in earlier

without him noticing. Now, he had washed it all together. Dong Xuebing felt a bit embarrassed but decided to leave it at that.

He didn't have time to worry about it and quickly put on the clothes.

The thermal underwear fit fine in length, but the bottoms were a bit loose around his hips, as women's hips are generally wider than men's. Maybe the fabric had stretched from wear, losing its elasticity. Dong Xuebing felt the clothes were too loose, but the thermal shirt covered most of it, and at least it didn't look too bad. On the surface, it was decent enough.