

PAW 1876

Chapter 1876

Evening.

It was 7 PM.

Everyone was having a lively meal in the small banquet hall, enjoying large portions of fish, meat, fine cigarettes, and wine. It was a rare occasion for such lavish spending, but because they entertained foreign guests and city colleagues, they ordered so much food and drink. Nowadays, there are strict rules about using public funds for meals and entertainment, and no one wants to make a mistake or risk being publicly criticized by the city or province. So, they were indulging this time.

However, the atmosphere at the dinner table was not the typical one you'd expect at a meal.

Because of the earlier events, everyone still had something weighing on their minds.

“Did Secretary Dong scold someone again?”

“Yeah, and this time it was a city official.”

“Damn, if this goes to the city’s disciplinary committee, it’s going to be a problem.”

“Even if it goes to the committee, it shouldn't be too serious. After all, they were the ones who messed up. The most they’ll do is criticize Secretary Dong’s approach. Even though he’s a city official, the deputy director doesn't have as much power as Secretary Dong.”

“But what if it goes higher, to the next level of the disciplinary committee?”

“Don’t forget what Secretary Dong did before he became the county party secretary. He was a disciplinary official and even worked at the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection. He knows how to handle these things. Otherwise, he wouldn't have dared to curse them out. He has that confidence. Did you see his expression? He didn’t take it seriously at all.”

“But the other party was accompanying foreign guests, which changes the nature of things.”

“Yeah, that’s true. The foreign guests complicate things.”

“Not just complicate it, it could have serious repercussions. The provincial and city authorities highly regard this foreign exchange event. If something goes wrong, we won’t be able to handle it.”

While everyone was angry at the foreign guests, they were also very worried.

They were all civil servants, so they were careful about what they said. Even when chatting, they avoided discussing sensitive topics. But the entrepreneurs were different. They spoke more freely, many of them having come from humble beginnings, with no pretenses. They spoke bluntly, and while they might not have criticized city officials, they didn’t hold back when talking about the foreign guests because those British visitors didn’t have any direct relationship with them. So, they spoke without reservations, and with a few drinks, many began to vent.

“These sons of bitches.”

“I’ve never liked the British.”

“Exactly! When I applied for a UK tourist visa with Old Zhou and the others, they made us wait for over a month, and in the end, they rejected it. They didn’t approve it at all, messing up all our plans. I don’t get it; it was just a tourist visa, so why make it so difficult? Why keep the people of our Republic out? This time, they came to Beijing saying they wanted to simplify the visa process, but after all the talks, what do we get? It’s a vague statement that there’s no fixed date, just telling us to wait. What kind of nonsense is that? They don’t welcome people from our Republic. They still think we’re their colony and look down on us. The British media doesn’t have a single positive thing to say about us, yet they want us to invest there. Screw them.”

“Old Zhang is right. They have a huge bias against our country. Why did they suddenly want to simplify the visa process? It’s because they want our money. They see that we have money, and now they’re jealous. But this time, they’re the ones asking us to invest. If you want us to invest, you need the right attitude, right? But look at how they treated us. They act like high-and-mighty nobles, showing up when they feel like it and not showing up when they don’t feel like it. They didn’t even notify us. That’s a slap in our face!”

“The city is still groveling to them. I don’t know what they’re thinking.”

“They want us to invest, yet they treat us like this. Those foreigners don’t consider us human.”

“The attitude from above is mostly due to political needs. This situation is more complicated than it looks.”

“Even so, they can’t treat us like this. What kind of exchange is this? They came here to boss us around. Look at Secretary Dong. He’s already lost his temper!”

A group of entrepreneurs began to curse the foreign guests in small groups. Among them was also the influence of Dong Xuebing. As a county party secretary, Dong Xuebing had already expressed his anger in front of everyone. Now that the county party secretary was scolding people, it didn’t matter if they joined in, too.

Everyone discussed the situation during the meal, and their opinions were almost identical. They were all very displeased with the foreign guests and the city officials who accompanied them. But despite their dissatisfaction, the work still had to be done. It was already 8 PM, dinner was over, and didn’t the city say the foreign guests would be staying here tonight?

Meng Hanmei said, “I’ll go arrange the accommodation.”

Zhang Dongfang reminded Old Meng, “Keep it under control no matter what. They’ll leave tomorrow, so don’t let anything go wrong.”

Meng Hanmei nodded. “Got it.”

But Dong Xuebing suddenly said, “Arrange accommodation for what?”

Meng Hanmei was taken aback. “For the foreign guests, the hotel has already been booked. I’ll go check on it.”

Dong Xuebing directly interrupted, “Accommodation? You call them up right now and cancel all the reservations.”

Zhang Dongfang and Wei Zhixuan were stunned, and Meng Hanmei quickly said, “Secretary, but where will the foreign guests stay?”

Dong Xuebing coldly responded, “I don’t care where they stay. They can sleep on the street if they have nowhere else to go. As for their accommodation, the county won’t spend a single penny. And Old Meng, don’t put the bill under our county’s name. You send the bill to the city and let the city reimburse it. It’s a reception for foreign guests. We could have canceled if they had informed us in advance, but now it’s too late to cancel. We’ll have to eat it ourselves. The city messed up, and now they must pay for the damages. It’s only right.”

Meng Hanmei hesitated, “So... send the bill to the city for reimbursement?”

Everyone was dumbfounded. They had never heard of such a thing before.

But Dong Xuebing was completely confident, “If they won’t reimburse, who will? Just hand the bill to Deputy Director Niu and tell him I said so.” Dong Xuebing knew the city would never reimburse them for the cost, but that wasn’t his real purpose. He wasn’t interested in the money. Dong Xuebing’s style was to annoy the person who had just insulted them—Deputy Director Niu.

As for the accommodation?

“Go to hell.”

“You think I’ll arrange accommodation for you? Dream on.”

“Secretary, this...” Meng Hanmei smiled bitterly.

Dong Xuebing firmly said, “Do as I say.”