

## **PAW 971**

Chapter 971: Investigate to the end

Afternoon.

Commission for Discipline Inspection.

Everything was proceeding smoothly.

Deputy District Mayor Chu cannot escape Song Fei's statement. Embezzling government funds, and receiving bribes, are enough to bring him in. Discipline Inspection has several forms of investigation. Questioning over the phone was the least severe form of investigation, and the questions were mild. Inviting a leader over for 'tea' was another form of investigation. Most of these cases were complaint letters or reports without evidence. It was to find out what happened. A more serious investigation is to visit the person's office for questioning. It means there is evidence that Dong Xuebing had experienced it. His asset had exceeded his salary. The next level of investigation is to bring the person back to the Discipline Inspection from his workplace.

Dong Xuebing called Liu Hanqing over. "Old Liu, prepare the documents and bring Xi Ping District's Deputy District Mayor Chu back."

"Yes. I will do it now." Liu Hanqing took Song Fei's statement to get approval from Secretary Zhan.

Dong Xuebing thought for a while in his office and called Xie Huilan. "Huilan, it's me. How is it?"

Xie Huilan calmly replied. "I am handling the aftermath of Third Middle School's collapse. I just ended a meeting with the Education Ministry. I asked them to appease the students and their families first. How is your investigation? Never mind. The Discipline Inspection's investigation is confidential. You don't need to tell me."

Dong Xuebing laughed. "You will make my life difficult at home if I don't tell you."

"Haha.... Am I that petty in your eyes?"

"You will not ask if you don't want to know. This means I have to tell you everything."

Dong Xuebing replied. "It's not confidential. We just finished interrogating Song Fei, and he revealed Xi Ping District's Deputy District Mayor was involved. This is a breakthrough, and I had asked my men to bring him in."

"Song Fei admitted so quickly?!"

"Yes. I tricked him, and he fell into my trap."

"Oh.... Hahaha.... You are quite smart."

Dong Xuebing laughed. "I am not smart. It is the way the Discipline Inspection work. They only know how to use hard questioning. It would take ages for them to get anything out of Song Fei. I finally understand why the Public Security Bureau's investigation is much faster than the Discipline Inspection. Some of the Discipline Inspection's investigations took months without progress. Maybe it was because the suspects were civil servants and had to abide by the investigation rules.

Slowly, they got used to this way of interrogation. But I don't care about it. I applied what I did at the Public Security Bureau in Song Fei. See, it is effective. I did not say anything, and he admitted everything."

Xie Huilan narrowed her eyes. "Song Fei is a businessman and is easy to deal with. It won't be easy to investigate Deputy District Mayor Chu. They have tight lips."

"I know. But I have my ways of making them talk. Don't worry. Let's not talk about me. Do you have a chance to enter the Party Committee?"

"Haha.... Not sure."

"Not sure? Weren't Feng Jie got implicated in this case?"

"Deputy City Mayor Feng should not be involved or receive any bribes. He doesn't have the guts to do that, and this case did not affect him much."

"He refused to investigate the Third Middle school. Shouldn't he bear the responsibility?"

"But he had gone to the school for an inspection, and no one was killed."

"Hmph. That means he is still the top contender for the Party Committee seat."

"You can say so. The higher-ups already confirmed this."

"How can he.... Never mind. I will think of something."

Dong Xuebing was frustrated after hanging up. When Huilan wanted to investigate Third Middle School's building quality, Feng Jie refused and claimed there was no evidence. The building collapsed when I was there, and I saved you and many others. Because I saved everyone, and there are zero casualties, you get to enter the Party Committee?! What did you do other than run for your life?! You did nothing, don't need to bear any responsibility, and even get to enter the Party Committee?!

F\*\*k you!

How can there be such good deals!?

Dong Xuebing had achieved what he wanted in the Third Middle School collapse. He punished the evil businessman, Song Fei, arrested a corrupt government official, Deputy District Mayor Chu, and saved everyone's life from the collapse. However, he could not help Huilan get the Party Committee seat. He had forgotten about the consequences of zero casualties.

"Xiao Zhu! Xiao Zhu!" Dong Xuebing shouted.

Zhuzhu quickly entered Dong Xuebing's office. "Director."

Dong Xuebing paused for a second and said. "Check Deputy District Mayor Chu's mobile phone records. I want all his call records from yesterday. Go now."

"Yes." Zhuzhu left the office.

Zhuzhu returned around ten minutes later with a fax from the telecommunication department. "This is his call records."

The Discipline Inspection worked closely with several departments, and they could get what they wanted quickly.

Dong Xuebing looked at the numbers and frowned. "Have you checked the numbers on the list? Where are these places?"

Zhuzhu replied. "The page on the back numbers' information I gathered from official records. There are a few unknown numbers that are not registered. I did not have the time to check. I can check those numbers now if you want."

"No need. It is enough." Dong Xuebing pointed at a call record around 10 am.

"Secretary Song. Who is he working for?"

Zhuzhu replied. "He is Deputy City Mayor Feng's secretary."

"Good." Dong Xuebing flicked the call records. "Call Secretary Song and invite him here for tea."

Zhuzhu hesitated. "Invite Secretary Song? Err... Are you saying Deputy City, Mayor Feng... What about the evidence?"

Dong Xuebing pointed at Secretary Song's number in Deputy District Mayor Chu's call records. "Do you remember that Deputy Mayor Feng and Deputy District Mayor Chu was there when we were conducting an undercover investigation? Also, all the substandard construction materials were replaced and moved away. I suspect someone had tipped them off. It seems like we found the rat."

Zhuzhu hesitated.

Dong Xuebing looked at her. "What do you want to say?"

Zhuzhu replied. "Secretary Song might call Deputy District Mayor Chu for Deputy City Mayor Feng's inspection. Deputy City Mayor Feng had also mentioned he would send someone to investigate the anonymous complaint during the Mayor's meeting."

Dong Xuebing smiled and pointed at the call duration. "Look at the call duration. 8 minutes. Do you think a Deputy City Mayor's secretary needs to take so long to inform them about a leader's visit? This is suspicious, and they might be talking about something else."

Zhuzhu suddenly realized the call duration. "Oh..."

"Go and invite him now."

"Yes."

Dong Xuebing left his office and saw Luo Haiting. "Director Luo, Deputy City Mayor Feng's secretary, is coming over. Please handle him."

At the same time.

Deputy District Mayor Chu, who felt uneasy the whole day, received an unidentified call.

“Hello?” A middle-aged man said. “Someone asked me to pass a message. Song Fei had ratted on you, and the Discipline Commission people are coming for you. Secretary Song is also summoned to the Discipline Commission.”

Deputy District Mayor Chu knew this was coming but still inhaled deeply.

That man continued. “You will not keep your position, but you are still young. You can still make a comeback in the future. Even if you don’t think for yourself, you must consider others. You should know what to say at the Discipline Inspection, especially that phone call. Do you understand?”

“I understand.”

“Good. You must know that the more you say, the heavier your punishment is. That’s all I have to say.”

Deputy District Mayor Chu was in a daze after hanging up.

Even without this call, Deputy District Mayor Chu will not talk much. He knew keeping quiet was his only survival. Even if he were jailed, someone would protect him and his family.

The door opened, and Liu Hanqing entered with his men. He flashed his work pass. “We are from the Commission for Discipline Inspection. You are Deputy District Mayor Chu, right? Please come with us.”

Afternoon, 2 pm.

Dong Xuebing showed Deputy District Mayor Chu a statement. “Look at this. Song Fei gave you a sum of money two months ago. The time and location are clearly stated. We also have the contracts and bank transaction records. What else do you have to say?”

Deputy District Mayor Chu kept quiet.

“Can I take it as you are admitting to everything by keeping quiet?” Dong Xuebing asked.

Deputy District Mayor Chu continued to look at his feet and not say anything.

Dong Xuebing nodded. “One more thing. You had received a call from Secretary Song in the morning before the school building collapsed. Did he hint you to do something?”

Deputy District Mayor Chu frowned. “Nothing.”

“What do you mean by nothing?”

“He just told me Deputy City Mayor Feng is coming for an inspection.”

“Haha.... Coming for an inspection? Does he need to take 8 minutes to tell you that?”

“Secretary Song told me about the Leader’s itinerary, which took slightly longer. What’s wrong with that? Is that a law that states phone calls cannot exceed 8 minutes?”

Dong Xuebing laughed. “Alright. That’s all I wanted to ask.”

Zhuzhu, Ning Shaoyang, and the rest were stunned. Why did Director Dong give up so easily?

Chapter 972: You...

Commission for Discipline Inspection building.

Along the corridor.

Dong Xuebing asked. "Is secretary Song here?"

Ning Shaoyang replied. "He should be here. I will bring him over."

Deputy District Mayor Chu looked slightly nervous when he heard secretary Song had arrived. Ning Shaoyang and Fei Fan brought him to another department. Looking after civil servants under custody was handled by another department.

Suddenly, they heard Luo Haiting's voice from one of the offices they walked past.

Luo Haiting said. "Secretary Song, you say you did not tell Deputy District Mayor Chu anything other than the leader's inspection. You did not mention the leader's visit to the Third Middle School. Let's put this aside first. You said Deputy District Mayor Chu had received bribes. Can you tell us in detail? How do you know he received bribes last year and even know the exact date and amount? Is the Building Committee investigating him?"

"Yes." A man replied.

Luo Haiting nodded. "Your statement is what we needed. Thank you for providing information about Deputy District Mayor Chu's crime. Thank you for your cooperation."

"Ok."

Outside of the office, along the corridor.

Deputy District Mayor Chu looked terrible when he overheard the conversation.

F\*\*k! How dare you backstab me?! Didn't Feng Jie get someone to call me and say he would take care of my family if I kept quiet? You all are trying to push everything on me and silence me! You think I will be your scapegoat?! Dream on!

Deputy District Mayor Chu said. "I want to meet Director Dong."

Ning Shaoyang looked at him. "Why?"

"I got something to say."

Ning Shaoyang looked at him again and brought him back to the office.

Dong Xuebing looked at them. "Why are you here again?"

Before Ning Shaoyang and the rest could answer, Deputy District Mayor Chu said. "Secretary Song called me yesterday morning and hinted that someone among the higher-ups is targeting Third Middle School. He wants me to settle it as soon as possible and try to contain the situation. That's why I called the project's main contractor to move the substandard materials away. He also said this is what Deputy City Mayor Feng wanted. Nothing must happen during this period."

Dong Xuebing looked at Deputy District Mayor Chu. "Are you willing to bear the consequences of what you said?"

“Yes.”

“Then write it down.”

“Ok.”

Deputy District Mayor Chu was furious as he started writing. He had lost all hope and decided to drag everyone down with him.

After writing his statement, Dong Xuebing called the other department to bring Deputy District Mayor Chu away.

After that, Dong Xuebing brought his men to Luo Haiting’s office. They could hear Luo Haiting talking to secretary Song from outside. Before they could open the door, Ning Shaoyang, Zhuzhu, and Fei Fan saw Liu Hanqing walking with secretary Song at the end of the corridor. They nodded to Dong Xuebing and entered another office.

Ning Shaoyang was stunned. “Wasn’t secretary Song in this office?”

Dong Xuebing opened the door, and they saw Luo Haiting sitting opposite an Inspection First Office staff member. It was Xiao Zhang, a new staff member.

Xiao Zhang quickly stood up. “Director.”

Dong Xuebing patted his shoulder. “Well done.”

Luo Haiting stood up and laughed. “How was it?”

“He confessed.”

Ning Shaoyang, Fei Fan, and the rest realized what had happened. Director Dong had set another trap, and he asked Director Luo and Xiao Zhang to put up an act. They made Deputy District Mayor Chu think secretary Song betrayed him. No wonder they did not hear ‘secretary Song’ talking much, and everyone felt Director Dong was too wicked. Not only Deputy District Mayor Chu was fooled, but they were also fooled. Anyone would fall into this trap.

However, Deputy District Mayor Chu would not confess if he did not fall for this.

From another perspective, Director Dong’s method was very effective but immoral.

After a while, Dong Xuebing consolidated the investigation results into a report and went to Zhan Guiping.

Deputy Secretary Office.

Zhan Guiping read the report and nodded. “Inspection First Office acts fast. We had just handed this task to you, and you all completed the investigation in the afternoon.”

Dong Xuebing replied. “This is only the initial investigation. We need to continue investigating to find out who else was involved. However, we got a breakthrough, and the rest is only a matter of time.” He knew he could not catch any big fish in this case. At most, there will be a reshuffle in Xi Ping District. Deputy District Mayor Chu’s confession could only let Feng Jie receive minor punishment and nothing more. But minor punishment was enough for him to lose the Party Committee seat to Huilan, which was what Dong Xuebing wanted.

“Good. You all are quite efficient.” Zhan Guiping nodded and looked at Dong Xuebing. “However, I heard your Inspection First Office had broken the rules during the investigation.”

Dong Xuebing feigned ignorance. “Broke the rules? No.”

“What about the document with that signature?”

“Oh, I asked Director Luo to prepare it. I wanted to compare Deputy District Mayor Chu’s handwriting with the contract. However, Song Fei saw it accidentally and misunderstood. I did not expect it, and it is not our fault.”

“What about secretary Song’s questioning? Huh?”

“We have no intention of fooling anyone. I know Director Luo is not good with questioning techniques, and I taught her what to ask when she waited for secretary Song. We prepared different kinds of questions based on different investigation outcomes. She was practicing with the questions in her office and was overheard by Deputy District Mayor Chu. I also did not expect this to happen. Sigh....”

Zhan Guiping was amused by Dong Xuebing. “You ah... do you think I will believe you?” He paused for a second. “I will let you off this time as the Provincial Government wants the investigation completed as soon as possible. But no more next time.”

Dong Xuebing smiled. “Yes, Sir.”

Chapter 973: Wife got promoted

Dong Xuebing’s apartment.

Dong Xuebing was busy in the kitchen after work. He prepared the ingredients he bought from the supermarket and cooked a few dishes. He looked at the time and set the bowl and chopsticks on the table.

Ding dong... ding dong....

The doorbell rang, and Dong Xuebing quickly opened the door. “Didn’t you say you would be home around 7 pm?”

Xie Huilan replied lazily. “There was a last-minute meeting, and I got delayed. Hmmm.... Smells great. What did you cook?”

“I made all your favorite dishes.”

“You are so good to me. Haha....”

“Of course. Change your shoes, and let’s eat.”

“Ok. Let me drink water first.”

“Drink the soup I made while it is hot.”

After a while, both were seated at the dining table. Dong Xuebing kept putting food into Xie Huilan's bowl. "Try this. I have been working late the past few days, and I did not have the chance to cook for you. I made dinner today since I am free. See if my food standards are still the same. I called my Mum earlier to ask her how to cook the soup. It should be good."

Xie Huilan smiled as she drank the soup. "It's tasty. My husband's food is the best."

Dong Xuebing smiled. "Eat more if you like it." He paused suddenly. "Eh? Something is wrong. Why are you so sweet to me today? This is not your usual self."

"Haha.... Don't you like me to praise you?"

"No. I am not used to it. Did something good happen?"

"You are so smart. Let's talk about you first. How is the investigation?"

Dong Xuebing took a bite and said. "It's considered over today. The prosecution office had started gathering evidence against Song Fei, and Xi Ping District Deputy Mayor Chu was charged with corruption and sacked from the party. His criminal charges were still pending and would fall under the Prosecution Office. Anyway, our job is done. As for Deputy City Mayor Feng, he was given a warning from the Provincial Government and barred from promotion for a year. Oh, you should know about this. We also caught several small fries within the Xi Ping District. Our Inspection First Office has completed the investigations, and we can finally rest."

Xie Huilan continued drinking her soup and smiled. "I heard you made significant contributions in this case."

Dong Xuebing replied. "Ah? Saving lives is considered a significant contribution. I deserved it. As for the investigation, I was faster than others. I used some tricks I learned from the Public Security Bureau. I might not have the political wisdom like you, but I am good with these tricks. The other Discipline Inspection staff are no match for me." He was in a good mood these days as he had completed the mission perfectly. This credit goes to him, and it was what he needed now. He had planned everything before the building collapsed and finally got the results.

Xie Huilan laughed. "Alright. I will reward you for doing well. Come nearer." She picked some food with her chopsticks. "Open your mouth."

Dong Xuebing smiled and opened his mouth. "Ah...."

Xie Huilan laughed and fed him. "How is it?"

"Delicious." Dong Xuebing swallowed. "Let's talk about you. Why are you in such a good mood today?"

Xie Huilan glanced at him. "Didn't you hear anything? Are you pretending not to know?"

Dong Xuebing blinked. "What is it? I rushed home to prepare dinner after work."

"The City Party Committee called for a meeting at the end of the day, and I was called over."

"Didn't the City Party Committee have a meeting recently? Why are they having a meeting again?"

“The meeting is to announce my new appointment.” Xie Huilan smiled. “I am a Feng Zhou City Party Committee Member now, and I am taking over the former Deputy City Mayor’s duties. I will be assisting the City Mayor on human resources and deployment.”

City Party Committee?!

Feng Jie had dropped from the race, and Huilan won against the other Deputy Mayors.

Dong Xuebing cheered. “That’s great. You got a promotion.”

Xie Huilan laughed. “How is this a promotion? I am still holding the same rank.”

“A Deputy City Mayor in the Party Committee differs from an ordinary Deputy City Mayor. Those ordinary Deputy City Mayors cannot make any decisions, but a Party Committee Deputy City Mayor is different. There are only a dozen of Party Committee members in a city, and they get to vote on major decisions. You get to vote, and this is a promotion. Furthermore, you are only thirty-one and recently got promoted to Deputy Bureau Director. No.... we must celebrate with wine. Wait.... you are pregnant, and you cannot drink.”

Xie Huilan laughed. “This is the result of what you have done. If it weren’t for you, Feng Jie would not be punished, and I would not get this opportunity.”

“This seat belongs to you. People like Feng Jie don’t deserve it. How can he be not concerned about the disaster rebuilding efforts?” Dong Xuebing said. “You had reminded him, but he chose to ignore it. Serve him right.”

Xie Huilan continued eating and said. “Old Feng does his job well, and Deputy District Mayor Chu implicated him.”

Dong Xuebing scoffed. “Does his job well? Bullshit.”

Xie Huilan pointed at Dong Xuebing with her chopsticks. “Can you be more magnanimous? Don’t think so badly about others. Everyone has their good side.”

Dong Xuebing stopped talking. He was impressed by his wife’s virtues. She can remain calm and never criticize anyone behind their back, including those who clash with her. This was something he could not do. She is born to work in the government sector.

After dinner.

Around 8 pm.

Dong Xuebing walked out of the kitchen after doing the dishes and saw Xie Huilan on the sofa watching the news.

Xie Huilan had changed and taken off her sweater. She was wearing a white shirt and no pants. Her long legs were exposed, and Dong Xuebing could see the sides of her black lacy underwear.

Dong Xuebing got excited. “Don’t you feel cold? It’s winter.”

Xie Huilan replied without looking at him. "The heater is on."

"Ah.... Why are you always dressed up this way? Are you trying to seduce me?" Dong Xuebing sat beside her and caressed her tummy. "Oh, it is getting bigger."

"I am a few months pregnant. How can my tummy not get bigger?"

"Hehe.... Come closer. I want to talk to our baby."

Dong Xuebing leaned and pressed his head against Xie Huilan's tummy. He kissed and started chatting and singing to his baby. After a while, his hands started roaming, and he buried his head between her thighs.

"What are you doing?" Xie Huilan asked.

"We have not done that for a few days."

"Oh, I forget. Haha.... It's been a while."

"We did not do it since we returned from our honeymoon. How many days has it been? The doctor says we should do it in moderation. What do you think?"

Xie Huilan crossed her legs and smiled. "Let me think about it."

"What's there to think? It's settled. Let's go." Dong Xuebing carried Xie Huilan across his chest and entered the bedroom.

"I have not finished the news."

"There's a re-run tomorrow morning."

"You... just do whatever you want."

"That's how I am."

Dong Xuebing closed the door with his leg and carried Xie Huilan onto the bed. He took off all his clothes within seconds.

Xie Huilan tucked her hair behind her ears and laughed. She pinned her hair with a hairclip and leaned against the headboard. "I am in a good mood today, and I decided to reward you. Haha.... Tell me what you want me to do, but don't go overboard."

Dong Xuebing blinked. "Can you get on your knees?"

Xie Huilan smiled. "Huh? You want me to kneel?"

"I just want you to face down...."

"Do you think it's right?"

"Yes."

Xie Huilan thought for a second and replied. "Fine. I shall give in this time because of your good performance recently." She turned and kneeled. She held the headboard and lifted her ass.

“Are you sure?”

“What do you think?”

“You must not get angry with me later.”

“Why do you have so much to say? Are you doing it?”

Dong Xuebing swallowed his saliva excitedly and pounced on her. He quickly unbuttoned her shirt. Xie Huilan smiled and stroked his head. She pressed his head against her ears, letting him kiss them.

Dong Xuebing did what she wanted, and the bed started creaking a few minutes later.

The creaking sounds got faster, and Xie Huilan moaned softly.

Chapter 974: This is Xiao Dong?!

Dong Xuebing slept until the sun was up. He walked to the living room and saw Xie Huilan reading papers with a cup of tea.

“You finally wake up.” Xie Huilan said without looking up from the papers.”

“It’s already after 10 am. Why didn’t you wake me?” Dong Xuebing yawned.

“You have been busy for the past few days and should rest more since you are not working today.”

Xie Huilan suddenly looked up. “Oh, wear something presentable later. You need to accompany me to the Mayor’s home. Mayor Zhong and his wife invited us over for lunch. We did not visit them during Lunar New Year, and we must prepare some gifts. It was Mayor Zhong who supported me in entering the Party Committee. Without him, I could not even get nominated after you offended the City Party Secretary.”

“Mayor Zhong had helped you?! He should be trying to pull you over to his side.”

“Just watch what you say later.”

“I understand. I feel this is my credit as we had spent almost 3 million RMB buying Old Zhong’s calligraphy.”

“Old Zhong?! How can you call him that?”

“Haha.... There’s no one around.”

Dong Xuebing knew it was because of the auction. Although Uncle Yang and Mayor Zhong seemed to be close and had dinner together, the latter should know Huilan’s relationship with them. Huilan was transferred to Fen Zhou City for some time, but he did not approach her. His attitude changed after Dong Xuebing won the bid for his calligraphy piece. That’s why he felt his money spent was worthwhile. This was the reward, and Huilan did not need to work her way up slowly. It would take at least two years.

Of course, just spending money was not enough. Huilan would not enter the Party Committee if Feng Jie were not implicated in the case and punished.

An hour later.

Dong Xuebing and Xie Huilan carried some gifts to Mayor Zhong's apartment in the next building, within the Party Committee family quarters.

Many people, who saw Dong Xuebing and Xie Huilan, greeted them politely.

"Mayor Xie, Director Dong."

"Congratulations on your promotion, Mayor Xie."

Xie Huilan smiled and returned their greetings.

Xie Huilan had more power and authority after she entered the City Party Committee. Many staffs' attitudes towards her changed after her promotion. Dong Xuebing also received many friendly smiles from them because of her. However, he knew it was because Xie Huilan was beside him. These people will not dare to go near him if she is not around. They might be worried that Secretary Wan would see them talking to him.

Inside the apartment building.

Outside of the Mayor's apartment.

Xie Huilan pressed the doorbell while Dong Xuebing straightened his clothes.

A middle-aged woman, around fifty years old, opened the door.

"Hello, Sister Chen." Xie Huilan smiled and looked inside. "We are here to bother you, Mayor Zhong."

Madam Chen smiled and stepped aside. "It's not a bother. Come in."

Xie Huilan entered the apartment. "We are here to wish both of you a Happy New Year. I hope it's not too late. Something happened at home, and we could not visit you during the Lunar New Year holidays."

Dong Xuebing quickly steps forward with the gifts. "Mayor Zhong, Madam Chen."

Madam Chen pretended to be unhappy. "Why did you two waste money on gifts? Don't bring anything the next time."

"Sure, haha..." Xie Huilan bent to change her shoes.

"Hurry up and let them in." Zhong Zhengwei smiled. "Have a seat first. Lunch will be ready soon."

Xie Huilan and Dong Xuebing sat on the sofa beside Zhong Zhengwei.

If Dong Xuebing was here alone, he could not be so relaxed as he is only a department head within the Discipline Inspection. Mayor Zhong is Fen Zhong City, the second most powerful man in the city. However, Dong Xuebing was here today as Xie Huilan's husband and did not need to be so restrained. If he restrained himself, it would make Huilan look bad and distance themselves from

the Mayor. Xie Huilan has entered the City Party Committee and is on the same level as Zhong Zhengwei.

The four of them chatted in the living room.

Madam Chen looked at Dong Xuebing and smiled. "So, this is your husband. I had heard of Xiao Dong several times but did not have the opportunity to meet him. We have finally met. Hmmm.... Not bad. You are quite good-looking. You are so lucky, Huilan."

Xie Huilan laughed. "You must have heard a lot of bad things about him."

Dong Xuebing cleared his throat due to his embarrassment. He knew Huilan would tease him.

Madam Chen was amused. "Of course not. Xiao Dong made our Fen Zhou City proud because of his contributions during the earthquake. He also risked his life to save several people a few days ago. His character and actions should be praised."

Dong Xuebing was smiling in his heart, but he said modestly. "No... no.... You think too highly of me."

Xie Huilan added. "That's right. You must not praise him, or he will start showing off at home later."

They got closer after chatting and joking around for a while. This was also because both parties wanted to befriend each other.

Madam Chen was observing Dong Xuebing closely while chatting.

Madam Chen was not lying when she said she heard much about Dong Xuebing. She had always wanted to meet him. He is someone who is not afraid of the City Party Secretary, spent 3 million RMB for her husband's calligraphy, risked his life countless times to save others, fought off a tiger with his bare hands, etc..... She was curious about him and thought he was someone extraordinary. However, she was speechless after meeting him today. Dong Xuebing was too ordinary. He has ordinary looks and an ordinary character. If you throw him into a crowd, he will be the most ordinary person.

So, this person is the legendary God of Plagues.

This is the person everyone is talking about.

Madam Chen was speechless when she looked at Dong Xuebing on the sofa. This guy looks too ordinary.

Chapter 975: Appointed to be the Third Patrol Team's team leader

Mayor's apartment.

Zhong Zhengwei and his wife invited Dong Xuebing and Xie Huilan to the dining table for lunch. Madam Chen prepared lunch, and it was a feast. One could tell that Mayor Zhong and Madam Chen like Xie Huilan from the wide spread of dishes.

"Here, try this."

"Mmmm.... It's so delicious that I almost bit my tongue. Haha...."

"Have more. Don't need to feel restrained."

“Yes. We will take the food ourselves.”

“Try this fish. I just learned this dish a few days ago.”

Dong Xuebing’s mobile phone rang while they were eating. He did not want to answer as it was rude, but he saw the caller’s number. It was from the Discipline Inspection Office Director Gao Wenrong’s office. Old Gao would generally call to pass the Discipline Inspection Leaders’ message. Dong Xuebing had to answer this call. He apologized to Zhong Zhengwei and Madam Chen.

“Sorry, I got to take a phone call.”

Dong Xuebing stood up and walked to the windows. “Hello, Director Gao.”

“Secretary He called for a last-minute meeting this afternoon. The meeting is from 2 pm to 4 pm.”

“Ok. What is the meeting about?”

“It is about setting up a few Discipline Inspection patrolling teams.”

“Discipline Inspection patrolling teams?”

“Yes. I just received the notification and didn’t know the details.”

Dong Xuebing knew what a Commission for Discipline Inspection patrolling team was. It is a team formed by a few Discipline Inspection leaders, and they must visit the local areas to look for problems. If the team encountered any problems, they would try to settle them. If the team cannot settle it, they will escalate to the City and conduct an investigation. The patrolling team also acted as a warning and showed the City’s attitude towards corruption. The City does not form Discipline Inspection patrolling teams every year. The City recently decided to conduct this operation because of the collapse of the school building. The collapse uncovered a can of worms, and the City felt a need for a crackdown.

However, Dong Xuebing felt he had nothing to do. Even if he had to participate in this operation, he would not be the team leader. At most, he would be one of the members. He was too junior and inexperienced to lead the team.

Dong Xuebing returned to the dining table. “It’s a work call. Sorry.”

Madam Chen smiled. “It’s alright. Let’s continue eating.”

Zhong Zhengwei looked at Dong Xuebing and said. “It should be about the Discipline Inspection patrol starting next week.”

Dong Xuebing nodded. “Yes.”

Zhong Zhengwei asked. “Is the Discipline Inspection going to let you lead a team?”

Dong Xuebing shook his head. “No. They called to inform me of a meeting later. I am too young to lead a team.” He knew his biggest flaw was his age and experience. Team leaders must be at least 40 years old to suppress local authorities. The previous few Discipline Inspection patrolling operations never had a team leader in his twenties.

Madam Chen laughed. “What’s wrong with being young? Being young has an advantage too.”

Zhong Zhengwei smiled. "That's right. I envied your age, but I can't become young again. Haha.... Xiao Dong, I know your capabilities, and leading a team is not a problem for you."

Dong Xuebing's heart skipped a beat.

Do I have a chance to lead a team?

The Provincial Government leaders would pay attention to the Discipline Inspection patrolling teams. Being a team leader would be an outstanding credit. Even if Dong Xuebing visited the local areas and did not do anything, he would get credit. It would look good on his resume.

Xie Huilan interrupted. "He still lacks experience."

"I think he has enough experienced." Zhong Zhengwei smiled. "Xiao Dong had made significant contributions in Fen Zhou City. I can say he has more experience than many in Fen Zhou City. Haha...." This was the truth. Dong Xuebing had made many contributions to Fen Zhou City, and many people knew that. No one in the City can be compared to him regarding contributions.

Madam Chen smiled at Dong Xuebing. "I will ask Old Zhong to speak to them."

Zhong Zhengwei nodded. "Ok. I will call Old He and ask for his opinion. He is still making the decision in the Commission for Discipline Inspection."

High-ranking leaders would never make promises.

Dong Xuebing knew Zhong Zhengwei would not make any promises, but he knew he would become a team leader.

Dong Xuebing quickly thanked Zhong Zhengwei. "Thank you. I...."

Zhong Zhengwei waved his hand. "I recommend you because of your capability. The City and Provincial Government leaders are very concerned about this operation, and I am assured that you are leading a team. Haha.... I read your file and heard a lot about your feats. Not many people have your adaptation."

Xie Huilan smiled. "Let me thank you on behalf of my husband."

Madam Chen replied. "You don't need to be so polite. We are not outsiders. Hurry and eat before the food gets cold."

Afternoon.

Dong Xuebing returned to the Commission for Discipline Inspection.

During the meeting, Secretary He assigned everyone's roles in the Discipline Inspection Patrolling teams.

The Commission for Discipline Inspection decided to form three patrolling teams. Inspection Bureau Chief Xiao Bin will lead a team to inspect the city area. Deputy Secretary Zhan Guiping would lead a team to inspect a County city and two Counties. Dong Xuebing would lead the last team. He is in charge of Fen Zhou City's surrounding areas and two Counties. No one felt anything wrong with the first two team leaders. After all, they are the Discipline Inspections No. 2 and No. 3. Everyone was shocked by Dong Xuebing's appointment. He should not get this position with his

experience. He should be seventh or eighth in seniority and rank within the Discipline Inspection. Furthermore, he is only twenty-five, and no team leader was so young in the City's Discipline Inspection history.

Chapter 976: Meeting former classmates

Home.

Dong Xuebing woke up before 7 am and tried on a few sets of clothes in front of the mirror.

Xie Huilan walked out of the room and saw him. "What are you doing?"

"I am picking my outfit. Help me see which set looks better." Dong Xuebing replied.

"Why are you dressing up? Haha.... Are you going to meet your lover?"

"What are you saying? I am bringing a team out for inspection, and I must dress up nicely."

"You are so vain. Alright. This set looks good on you."

"Ok. I will listen to you. I will not be coming back these few days. You got to eat out. I estimate I will be gone for more than one week. If you cannot cope, call my Mum over. I worry about leaving you at home alone."

"I know how to take care of myself. Haha.... Just go to work."

"Give me a kiss before I go."

"Go. Why are you so troublesome?"

"Hurry up and kiss me. I got to go soon."

Dong Xuebing and Xie Huilan cuddled for a while before the former left with his luggage.

Dong Xuebing did not drive his car as it would be too prominent. That's why he drove a car from his workplace. It was a 2.8L Passat, and it was suitable for this task. It will not stand out, and it was not too shabby too. He had informed his team members that he would visit the locations first and meet them on Monday.

One hour....

Two hours....

Three hours....

Dong Xuebing drove into Ma Yang County before noon.

Ma Yang County used to be an impoverished county. But because it is located next to Beijing, the property prices rise brought them out of poverty. The properties nearer to Beijing were higher than Fen Zhou City's prime districts. This county has been doing well in recent years.

County city.

Along a busy street.

Dong Xuebing parked his car by the road and walked along the street. He looked around for a place to have lunch.

The wind was strong, and it was chilly.

Dong Xuebing tightened his collar and entered a nice restaurant.

When Dong Xuebing entered through the door, a couple tried to enter the restaurant beside him and knocked on him. He immediately frowned.

The couple frowned and shouted at Dong Xuebing. "Why are you trying to squeeze your way through?"

Dong Xuebing thought to himself. Who is the one trying to squeeze through the door? He was about to argue with them when he paused.

Dong Xuebing looked at that couple. "Eh? You are Dongdong."

The woman remembered Dong Xuebing and pointed at him. "Dong Xuejing?!" She remembered his name wrongly.

Dong Xuebing smiled and extended his hand for a handshake. "I don't know who Dong Xuejing is. I am Dong Xuebing."

Dujuan slapped his forehead. "Oh yes. I forgot."

Pang Shuo patted Dong Xuebing's shoulder. "We had not met for many years. I did not expect to see you here. Why didn't you attend our class gatherings in the past few years?"

Dong Xuebing sighed. "I was busy with work and did not have time."

Pang Shuo laughed. "Alright. Since we met today, you are not allowed to leave. Let's have a good meal. I will buy lunch. Let's go."

Dong Xuebing smiled. "No.... I will pay."

"I should pay since we are here. Let's go." Pang Shuo waved his hand.

Pang Shuo and Dujuan were Dong Xuebing's High School classmates. They had been dating then, and he did not expect them to be together after so many years. They were wearing wedding rings and should be married. He was not close with them in school and did not keep in touch after they graduated. He did hear from a friend that Dujuan and Pang Shuo had passed the civil servant exams and were posted to the Western region for work. He was not surprised they could not remember his name. During his High School days, he was a below-average student with below-average looks. He was also not good at sports and had nothing for others to remember him. It was a miracle when they remembered his surname.

Inside the restaurant.

The restaurant's boss came out to welcome Pang Shuo. "Oh, welcome, Chief Pang, Director Du. Please come in."

Pang Shuo smiled. "Give me a quiet private room."

"Sure. Please follow me." The boss said.

Dong Xuebing was surprised that Pang Shuo and Dujuan were so influential here.

Inside the private room.

Pang Shuo passed the menu to Dong Xuebing and smiled. "Just order whatever you want. Let's get Maotai. We must have a drink today."

Dong Xuebing ordered a few dishes and asked. "I heard both of you were posted to the western region after you all graduated from University."

Pang Shuo replied. "Yes. We were there for two years. It was tough."

"It's torture." Dujuan shook her head. "The environment there was harsh."

Dong Xuebing asked. "What about now?"

Pang Shuo said. "I used my connections, and we were posted to Ma Yang County during Lunar New Year. We finally made it. Sigh.... Being a Civil Servant is hard without experience. No one cares, even if you are capable. Never mind. You will not understand even if I tell you. Being a Civil Servant is not glamorous as others think. People don't understand how tough it is."

Dong Xuebing blinked. "Then are you two Directors?"

"Deputy Directors." Pang Shuo drank his tea and put down the glass. "I am working in the Construction Bureau. Dujuan works as a Deputy Director in the County Government Office Department."

A Deputy Chief and a Deputy Director.

Both of them held Deputy Section Chief rank.

Dong Xuebing said. "Both of you are doing well."

"Sigh.... We are only average." Pang Shuo said that, but he looked proud. "We suffered a lot for our Deputy Section Chief ranks."

Dujuan looked at Dong Xuebing. "What are you doing now, Xuebing?"

Dong Xuebing could not tell them what he was doing and lied. "Nothing much. I am in Ma Yang County for some business."

Pang Shuo patted his chest. "Call me if you encounter any problems. I can still pull some weight in this area."

Dong Xuebing smiled. "Sure. Thank you."

Pang Shuo waved his hand. "We are old friends. What's there to thank?"

Dujuan said. "All the dishes are here. Let's eat while it's hot."

Dujuan and Pang Shuo were considered to be doing well. They became Deputy Section Chiefs after two years and held positions with authority. They can be proud of their achievements and keep talking about their work. Although it was primarily complaints and winnings about their work, Dong Xuebing could tell they were satisfied with their lives. They just wanted to show off. He did not say much, as he was quiet during his school days. He sat there and listened to them.

After a few rounds of drinking.

Pang Shuo placed his arm around Dong Xuebing's shoulder. "Are you married now?"

Dong Xuebing smiled. "I just got married a few months ago. You two must be married now. I saw your rings."

Pang Shuo nodded. "We got married two months ago. How are you doing now? How much are you making now?"

Dong Xuebing replied honestly. "Around 4,000 RMB."

Pang Shuo was surprised. "Not bad. Considering the civil servants' benefits, we are making around the same amount."

Dong Xuebing replied modestly. "Haha.... How can I compare to you all?"

"Don't say that." Pang Shuo replied. "If you decide to quit your current company, look for me. I can recommend you a job with a few thousand RMB easily. I should be staying in Ma Yang County permanently. The job I recommend will surely be better than what you are doing now."

"Let's talk about this when the time comes."

"Sure. Just let me know when you need help."

Comparing among themselves is common during classmate gatherings. They would compare who's wife is prettier or whose salary is higher. Dong Xuebing did not care about all these as he was not someone who liked to show off to others.

After lunch.

Pang Shuo was slightly drunk. "I did not know you could drink so well now. You did not drink during our High School days."

Dujuan frowned. "Stop drinking. We still got work tomorrow."

Pang Shuo sighed loudly. "The City is making our lives difficult."

"Huh? What happened?" Dong Xuebing asked.

Pang Shuo replied helplessly. "The City Commission for Discipline Inspection had sent an inspection team. They will be arriving tomorrow. We don't know what they will pick on. The City Commission for Discipline Inspection Committee is making us busy. The County government ordered every department to prepare for the Discipline Inspection's leader's arrival. We cannot make any mistake, especially our Construction Bureau. I heard a school building had collapsed in Fen Zhou City, and they are focusing their inspection on us."

Dujuan also complained. "My side is also busy. We must make all the preparations to welcome the leaders. Can't these City Leaders conduct fewer inspections?"

Pang Shuo quickly stopped her. "Don't be so loud. People might hear you."

Dong Xuebing smiled wearily in his heart. They were talking about him.

## Chapter 977: Inspection

Dong Xuebing woke up, and his phone rang immediately. It was his former classmate, Pang Shuo. They exchanged numbers yesterday.

“Hello, Xuebing? Are you awake?”

“Yes. Thanks for helping me with the hotel.”

“Don’t mention it. How long are you going to stay in Ma Yang County?”

“I am not sure. But I should be here for at least three days.”

“Great. After meeting you yesterday, I remembered we had not held a class gathering for over a year. I called the rest of our classmates, most of whom were free. We might gather at least a dozen of them here, and I can bring you around Ma Yang County. This place is not far from Beijing, and they can come over easily. I will arrange their accommodation if they want to stay overnight here, and send them back the next day. We will meet them at Ma Yang Restaurant this evening at 8 pm. The name might sound awful, but it is the best restaurant in the County.”

“8 pm? Why are we meeting so late?”

“Dujuan and I might be late because of the Discipline Inspection leader visit.”

“Alright. I am fine with your arrangements.”

“Ok. Let’s meet later. Do you need me to pick you up?”

“No need. I will make my way there.”

“Alright. See you.”

Dong Xuebing washed up after hanging up and drove around Ma Yang County. He saw all the County Government staff cleaning up the streets. Many of the entertainment spots were closed for business. He shook his head and felt this was formalism. He remembered he was the same when he was a staff member. He would clean up his workplace if a leader is visiting and has no right to say them. This is something unavoidable in the government sector.

Morning, 11 am.

Dong Xuebing drove to the meeting spot and got out to smoke.

A while later, two City Commission for Discipline Inspection cars arrived. They stopped, and everyone got out.

“Director Dong.”

“Director.”

Dong Xuebing saw City Inspection Second Office Director Liao Huaxiong first. Old Liao held the same rank as Dong Xuebing and was an experienced Discipline Inspection leader. The higher-ups had appointed Dong Xuebing as the team leader, and his deputy should not be someone higher

ranked than him. The deputy must also be experienced, and Liao Huaxiong is the best candidate. Luo Haiting, Zhuzhu, Fei Fan, and two other Inspection Second Office staff followed behind.

The team consists of seven members.

Dong Xuebing walked over to greet them. "Where should we go first, Director Liao?"

Liao Huaxiong laughed. "You are the team leader. We will follow your instructions."

Dong Xuebing thought for a few seconds. "How about we drive around Ma Yang County and look around for any issues? We can visit the departments with issues tomorrow."

Liao Huaxiong replied. "Ok."

"Alright. Let's get into the car." Dong Xuebing said.

The team members drove towards Ma Yang County City in three cars.

Dong Xuebing was familiar with the roads when he arrived yesterday. Liao Huaxiong sat in the first car, and he directed the driver to drive toward the west. That was the only good road into Ma Yang County.

Around 15 minutes later.

When Dong Xuebing and his team entered the County City, many people and cars with banners stopped by the roadside to welcome them. A middle-aged man walked over to them.

The driver slowed down, and the cars behind them also slowed down.

Dong Xuebing frowned. "Did we inform them before we came?"

Liao Huaxiong shook his head. "No."

"How do they know which road we are traveling and when we arrive?"

Liao Huaxiong smiled. "This is the power of a grassroots leader. This should be the only road leading to the County City, and they must have found out what time we are arriving."

Dong Xuebing was slightly unhappy as he pointed in front. "What is this? Are we here for an inspection or a holiday? How would the civilians think of us? They might think we are here for a holiday under the pretense of coming here for an inspection. Don't they know the Central Government is clamping down on formalism?"

Liao Huaxiong nodded in agreement. "They had gone overboard. What should we do?"

Ma Yang County's Party Secretary had walked over. He is a middle-aged man with a mustache, and a group of leaders follows behind. Dong Xuebing saw his former classmate, Dujuan, among the group. However, she could not see him because of the tinted windows.

Dong Xuebing waved his hand. "Drive past them."

Liao Huaxiong was surprised. "This is their gesture of goodwill. Will it be too much if we ignore them?"

"It's fine. Just go." Dong Xuebing said.

Liao Huaxiong was speechless. Director Dong handles things differently from others and finally sees them with his own eyes.

Dong Xuebing does not mind formalism, but their cars cannot stop there. Many civilians were watching them, and he could not let them get the wrong impression. They were here for an inspection and could not do their work if they got close to the local authorities.

Dong Xuebing understood the Discipline Inspection job after so long and is becoming more like a leader.

Dong Xuebing and Liao Huaxiong had different views, but the driver knew who the team leader was. He stepped on the accelerator and sped past the shocked County Party Secretary. The two Discipline Commission cars behind were shocked for a second and quickly followed.

The Discipline Inspection left, leaving a cloud of dust.

County Party Secretary Sun Yitao was shocked. Dujuan and the other leaders were worried. None of them expected the Discipline Inspection to leave like this.

A leader took a deep breath and asked. "Secretary.... We...."

Sun Yitao looked terrible. "Keep all the banners and dismiss!"

The leader asked cautiously. "What about the Discipline Inspection leaders?"

Sun Yitao was unsure about the Discipline Inspection leaders' attitude. "Just dismiss everyone first."

Chapter 978 – Class gathering

County City. Ma Yang Hotel.

After driving around the city to look for suspicious activities, Dong Xuebing returned to Ma Yang Hotel with his team.

Liao Huaxiong asked. "Is our accommodation arranged by the County Government?"

Dong Xuebing nodded. "Although we ditched them this noon, we still need a place to rest."

"Director." Luo Haiting looked at Dong Xuebing. "It is after 5 pm now. I will book a private room for dinner."

Dong Xuebing shook his head. "You all can go ahead. I have a dinner appointment this evening."

They entered the hotel lobby and saw a big red banner, 'Welcome Commission of Discipline Inspection leaders.' However, Ma Yang County Party Secretary Sun Yitao had learned his lesson. He did not send anyone to receive them. Dong Xuebing nodded with satisfaction and looked around the lobby. A few men were sitting there, and he knew they were from the local Government. They were observing his team and him. He also noticed the hotel staff looking at them and pretended not to know.

Dong Xuebing said. "Let's go. Leave the luggage here."

Dong Xuebing went to the check-in counter and placed his identity card on the desk.

The staff saw Dong Xuebing's name and took a deep breath. She immediately smiled and led them to their rooms without collecting any payments.

Upstairs.

Dong Xuebing had a room to himself. He unpacked his luggage and brewed tea. Liao Huaxiong, Luo Haiting, and the rest should have gone for dinner. His class gathering is at 8 pm, and he planned to have dinner with them.

7 pm....

8 pm....

Dong Xuebing went downstairs and stood at the entrance, waiting for his classmates.

A while later, a car arrived, and a few familiar faces walked toward the hotel. Dong Xuebing knew they were his High School classmates, but he could not remember their names.

The car stopped, and two people alighted.

"Eh, Wang Lei?"

"Liu Tingting?! Zhou Ran?!"

"Hahaha.... It's you all."

"How are you? It's been a while."

"Still fine. What about you all? Did you all come together?"

They immediately exchange pleasantries and start chatting.

Dong Xuebing remembered some of their names from their conversation. He missed his High School days. It was a time when he had no worries.

Dong Xuebing reminisced for a while and went up to them. "Tingting, Zhou Ran."

Everyone looked at Dong Xuebing. "Eh, you are Dong... Dong Xue...."

Dong Xuebing smiled. "Dong Xuebing."

One of them said. "That's right. Dong Xuebing! Why are you here this time?"

A female classmate added. "That's right. You did not attend our previous gatherings."

Dong Xuebing replied. "I was busy with work. I am in Ma Yang County for work and met Pang Shuo and Du Juan." He did not attend the previous gatherings because no one called him. But he did not bring it up.

"We have not met for almost seven years, and you still look the same."

"You all did not change too. I recognized you all immediately, haha."

Dong Xuebing's former classmates felt Dong Xuebing had a drastic change, but his appearance was still the same. He gave them a different feeling. He felt more reserved and mature.

A few more classmates arrived.

Everyone exchanged greetings.

Dong Xuebing was a loner in class and did not have many friends. He could not join his former classmates' conversations as he did not know them well.

Pan Shou and Du Juan arrived.

They were doing the best among everyone and should be the last to arrive.

Everyone was excited after they arrived.

"Wow.... Du Juan, you are prettier now."

"Haha.... I worked in the Western region for two years. I am looking worse than before."

"Nonsense. Pang Shou and you still look the same. You were promoted to Deputy Section Chief and transferred to Ma Yang County last month. Both of you are doing great."

"That's right. Both of you are doing the best among our cohort."

Pang Shou felt this was not the right place to talk. "Let's go in first."

Du Juan also signaled to them to lower their voices. "Let's chat in the private room."

The moment they entered the hotel, they saw the banner.

Everyone immediately understood why Pang Shou and Du Juan seemed to be cautious. They knew why both of them looked so worried. All Civil Servants are afraid of the Commission for Discipline Inspection.

Everyone stopped talking about sensitive topics and entered the elevator quietly.

Inside the private dining room.

Pang Shou was at ease. "Just order whatever you want. I am paying for this meal, and you should enjoy yourself."

A close friend of Pang Shou added. "That's right. Just order whatever you want. He can ask for a reimbursement."

Du Juan laughed. "We cannot do that today. The leaders are here for an inspection, and we must pay ourselves."

"Oh...." One of their classmates said. "Then just order some simple dishes. The food here costs almost the same as Beijing's three-star restaurants."

Pang Shou laughed. "Are you teasing me? I can still afford this meal. But don't order expensive alcohol. I can't afford that. The higher-ups are strict on our reimbursements lately. I am paying to avoid getting into trouble."

Du Juan looked at the quiet Dong Xuebing. "Xuebing, you should order something. Let's order a dish each."

Dong Xuebing smiled. "Sure. I will order a Kung Pao Chicken. Haha...."

Everyone ordered something, and Pang Shou asked the waiter to bring in a bigger table.

The table was changed quickly as the waiter knew Pang Shou.

“Come....let’s sit at the table.”

“Pang Shou, you should be sitting at the head of the table.”

“No.... I cannot take that seat. Old Liu, you should be sitting there.”

“Why can’t you sit there? How about both you with Old Liu sit there?”

Pang Shou and Old Liu sat at the head of the table at the end. Old Liu is a businessman in Beijing, and he was one of the few in their class who did well. After everyone had found their seats, Dong Xuebing went to the last seat.

Ring... ring... ring.... Dong Xuebing’s phone rang.

Dong Xuebing was about to apologize to the rest before answering, but no one noticed him. He smiled to himself and walked away to the windows to answer.

Dong Xuebing answered the call. “Hello, Sister Luo?”

Luo Haiting replied. “Director, we are about to have dinner now. Do you....”

Dong Xuebing smacked his lips. “Why are you all having dinner so late? Didn’t I tell you not to wait for me?”

“We were not hungry earlier. Oh, Ma Yang County Party Secretary Sun Yishou came and wanted to treat us to dinner.”

“Just go ahead. I still have something on here and cannot join you all.”

“Should we accept his invitation or ignore him?”

“It’s just a dinner.” Dong Xuebing knew what Luo Haiting was worried about. “We ignored them in the afternoon because they had created a big commotion to welcome us. It’s fine to have dinner with him. Everyone is tired and should have a nice meal. We are here for an inspection and need the local authority’s support.”

“Okay. I understand.”

“Alright. Go and have your dinner. Remember, no one is allowed to drink alcohol.”

“Don’t worry. It will not happen.”

Dong Xuebing returned to the dining table after hanging up.

A former classmate said. “Pang Shou, I noticed everyone in Ma Yang County seems nervous, and there are many traffic police around. What are you all doing? Is it because of the City Discipline Inspection leaders’ inspection?”

Pang Shou smiled wearily. “The City Discipline Inspection leaders are not here to put on an act. The consequences are severe if they find anything. Everyone in our Construction Bureau is worried about their visit. Why do you think I set our dinner so late?”

That classmate grumbled. "Don't these leaders have anything else to do? They should just sit behind their desks. Why are they inspecting for no reason?"

Pang Shou just smiled and did not say anything.

Chapter 979: Who are you?

Inside the private dining room of the hotel.

Du Juan drank her wine and said. "We cannot decide what the City leaders should do, and we have no choice but to welcome them. They are from the City Commission for Discipline Inspection, and we must cooperate with them. You all have not met them. The Discipline Inspection leaders have no respect for our county. Our County Party Secretary and everyone from the County Office Department waited to welcome them. But they did not even stop for a second and drove past us. It was so embarrassing, and Secretary Sun's face changed.

A classmate was surprised. "They are so overbearing?"

Du Juan replied. "Yes. We called the Discipline Inspection leaders this afternoon to offer to bring them around, but they rejected flatly."

"Did you all offend them?"

"That's right. Could it be you all missed out something or did something wrong?"

"I felt we had done our best." Du Juan shook her head. "I don't know if we had offended them in any ways. But they are the leaders and even our Party Secretary, and Mayors got to bow and receive them respectfully."

Dong Xuebing smiled in his heart and did not interrupt them.

Businessman Old Liu said. "It's fine. Both of you will move up fast, and you will be inspecting others."

Pang Shou replied modestly. "Haha.... We are too far away."

Du Juan added. "That's right. It's not easy to move up. We need experience and cannot make any mistakes. Sigh.... Let's not talk about it."

Old Liu replied. "It's not easy for everyone now."

"You are right." another classmate added. "We would be in our thirties or forties before success."

"Yes. Especially the civil servants. It would take at least ten years to reach that level."

"Let's drink and stop talking about it. It's not easy for us to get together. Cheers!"

After drinking, one of the classmates suggested. "All of us have not met for more than a year. Let's share what you are doing now and which industry you are in. Du Juan and Pang Shou can skip. We know they are government officials. Haha...."

Pang Shou smiled. "We are just working for the government and not officials."

Old Liu started. "I am running a small company doing my own business."

Another classmate added. "I am working in a Beijing bank."

"Banking industry is good. How much is your pay?"

"A few thousand. It's not a lot."

Dong Xuebing listened to everyone and did not know if they were telling the truth. However, most were doing well, and the lowest salary was five thousand. They are working in Beijing and the salary there is higher than in other areas. Those not doing well should not have time to attend such gatherings.

Finally, it was Dong Xuebing's turn.

"Xuebing, what are you doing now?" A female classmate asked.

Dong Xuebing smiled. "Just busy with work. My salary is not as high as yours. I am getting around four thousand." His salary was around four thousand. Civil servants were highly paid, but it depended on the area. A staff member in Beijing is getting about the same amount as him. He works in Fen Zhou City, Hebei Province, and the salary cannot be compared to Beijing or the Central Government.

"It's not too bad."

"That's right. Four thousand RMB is quite good."

Everyone consoled Dong Xuebing for a while and stopped talking to him.

After everyone started working, class gatherings changed. They heard Dong Xuebing was not doing well, and they stopped talking to him. Dong Xuebing did not mind and continued drinking his wine. He had passed the age where he needed to impress others. He was only at the gathering to reminisce about his High School days.

Suddenly the door opened.

A middle-aged man, who is not a waiter, entered the private room.

Old Liu frowned. "What is it?"

Pang Shou and Du Juan quickly stand up. "Ah, Director Wang. Why are you here?"

Dong Xuebing can tell from Pang Shou and Du Juan's expressions that this man should be someone from the County Party Committee Office Department or the County Government Office.

Director Wang looked at Pang Shou and said. "Our Party Secretary is going to have dinner with the City leaders, but all the private rooms are booked."

Pang Shou immediately knew what Director Wang wanted, and he looked terrible. "The presidential suite and other ballrooms should be available."

Director Wang frowned. "The City leaders do not like to be extravagancy. I only know you two here. Can you all move to another room?" He looked at the table. "You all are also finishing."

Du Juan looked terrible but did not say anything.

Pang Shou was the same. This man is the County Party Committee Office Director. He is their leader, and they have to give up the room. Also, the Party Secretary is having dinner with the City Discipline Inspection leaders. Pang Shou and Du Juan cannot afford to offend any of them.

Director Wang looked at everyone. "Can you all move to another place?"

Pang Shou replied. "Alright. We are leaving now."

"Ok. Sorry to trouble you." Director Wang said.

Everyone was looking terrible. They were being chased away before they could finish their dinner. But they knew how powerful a County Party Secretary was. Pang Shou and Du Juan did not dare to say anything, and the rest kept quiet.

Pang Shou turned to his former classmates. "I am sorry for today. How about we end our dinner now?"

"Ok."

"We are full too."

"It's alright. Let's go."

Director Wang nodded and was about to inform the leaders the private room was ready.

Dong Xuebing, sitting quietly in a corner, suddenly said. He looked at Director Wang. "Why should we leave? Who are you to tell us to leave?!"

Chapter 980: Got recognized

Everyone in the private room was shocked.

Director Wang choked on his saliva at what Dong Xuebing said. Pang Shou and Du Juan were stunned.

Pang Shou quickly shouted. "Xuebing, what are you saying?"

Du Juan quickly added. "He is Director Wang from our County Party Committee."

Director Wang was furious. "Do I need to tell you who I am?"

Dong Xuebing looked at Director Wang and laughed. "Oh.... Why are you interrupting when we are enjoying our dinner? Do you still want to chase us away?! Who do you think you are?! Give me a good reason if you want us to leave. No? Then get out! Do you think you can chase others out just by standing there?! Huh? You think too highly of yourself. I don't care who you are and am not interested to know. Is there anything else? No? Then get out!"

Everyone agrees with Dong Xuebing.

Dong Xuebing's former classmates felt good. That's right. Why should we leave just because you want this room? This is unreasonable. Everyone looked at Dong Xuebing differently and felt he had changed a lot. He used to be invisible in their class. However, none of them dares to speak up. Deputy Division Chiefs might be common in Beijing, but they are influential in local counties. No one dares to offend him.

Pang Shou and Du Juan had just arrived in Ma Yang County, and they dared not offend Director Wang.

Du Juan shouted at Dong Xuebing. "Shut up, Xuebing."

Pang Shou looked at Director Wang. "Please don't mind him. We will leave now."

Director Wang looked at Dong Xuebing coldly. "Are these your friends?"

"They are our former classmates." Pang Shou said. "Please ignore him. He is drunk."

Dong Xuebing laughed. "I am not drunk. Don't look at me like this, Director Wang. Who are you trying to scare? I don't care which VIPs you treat or how important your dinner is. We still have not finished our dinner. If you want this private room, wait outside. Don't try to act like some big shots here!" He turned to his classmates. "Let's continue with our dinner."

Du Juan inhaled deeply. Do you know who this man is?! You still want to eat?!

Pang Shou knew that he and Du Juan would be in trouble if they ignored Director Wang.

The County Party Secretary wants to have dinner, and they refuse to give up the private room.

The Party Secretary will be offended, and they must bear the consequences.

Pang Shou stared at Dong Xuebing. "Stop it, Xuebing."

Another classmate tried to persuade Dong Xuebing. "Let's continue with our dinner somewhere else."

"That's right. Let's go elsewhere. The food here is not that great too."

However, Dong Xuebing refused to budge. He looked at Director Wang calmly and continued to sip his tea.

Director Wang was furious. This guy is asking for it!

Suddenly, a few men appeared behind Director Wang. Among them was County Party Secretary Sun Yitao. Secretary Sun asked. "What's wrong, Xiao Wang? Is the private room ready?"

Director Wang turned and showed a respectful expression. "Secretary, all the rooms are booked. This is the only room left, and they are about to finish. However, they refused to leave."

Sun Yitao frowned. "They are about to finish dinner and still refuse to leave?!"

Pang Shou and Du Juan quickly walked over to greet Sun Yitao. "Secretary Sun."

Sun Yitao looked at them. "Xiao Pang, Xiao Du. What is going on?"

Pang Shou quickly replied. "Nothing.... we will go now."

Sun Yitao nodded. "Sorry for interrupting your dinner. It's a special occasion today. We need to host a few leaders from the City."

"No worries." Du Juan replied cautiously.

Director Wang looked at them. "Hurry up! The leaders will be here soon."

“Yes.... Yes....” Pang Shou and Du Juan returned to the private room quickly. “Let’s go now.”

Everyone could hear their conversation along the corridor and knew the County Party Secretary was outside. All of them quickly got up and wore their coats.

Dong Xuebing remained in his seat and laughed. “Oh, another big shot has come. Who says we are about to finish our dinner? I am still hungry.”

Director Wang stormed into the room and shouted. “Are you doing this on purpose?”

Dong Xuebing smiled. “Who started this first? Who barged into our private room and demanded us to leave when we were enjoying our dinner? I am doing this on purpose?! Fine. What can you do to me?”

Director Wang was furious beyond words. “You!!!”

Du Juan pulled Dong Xuebing back. “Xuebing, please stop.”

Pang Shou added. “The County Party Secretary is waiting outside.”

Dong Xuebing is stubborn and refuses to listen. He knocked on the table and said. “So what if the County Party Secretary is here? Are you saying he can be unreasonable just because he is the Party Secretary?!”

Sun Yitao overheard and was mad. Who is this guy? He entered the room and took a glance at Dong Xuebing. He was stunned and almost cursed out loud.

F\*\*k! Isn’t that Dong Xuebing?!

What is he doing here?

Dong Xuebing looked at Sun Yitao. “County Party Secretary Sun?”

Director Wang shouted at Dong Xuebing. “What do you think?”

What’s wrong with this guy’s attitude? Dong Xuebing was about to say something when Sun Yitao shouted first.

To everyone’s surprise, Sun Yitao did not shout at Dong Xuebing. Instead, he shouted at Director Wang.

“Xiao Wang! Watch your attitude!” Although Director Wang is also a Party Committee member, he was groomed by Sun Yitao and is his subordinate. “I thought everyone had finished their dinner. But look at the food. They have not eaten half. How can you chase them out?!”

Director Wang was stunned. “Secretary....”

Sun Yitao gave him a stare to stop him from saying anything.

Director Wang seemed to catch the hint and kept quiet. He looked towards Dong Xuebing.

Sun Yitao smiled and extended his hand. “Director Dong.... Haha.... Nice to meet you. This should be our first meeting. I am Sun Yitao, Ma Yang County’s Party Secretary.”

Dong Xuebing stood up and shook his hand. “Dong Xuebing.”

Pang Shou, Du Juan, and the rest were stunned. What is going on?!