

PAW 1802

Chapter 1802

Noon.

Jiaolin County Police Station.

Everyone had gone to the cafeteria for lunch, but the cafeteria was right across from the duty room where Dong Xuebing was staying. Almost everyone passing the windows couldn't help but glance inside the duty room.

Curiosity.

Amazement.

Speechlessness.

That was the general reaction.

Dong Xuebing seemed so incredibly at ease and relaxed that no one could figure out his thoughts. He just smiled and cooked, ignoring the onlookers and unaware of being in a police station. His behavior was particularly self-centered.

Suddenly, a car drove into the courtyard.

"Director Chang!"

"Uh, Director Chang."

Several people quickly greeted him respectfully.

Chang Lin came in and asked, "Where is Secretary Dong?"

A police officer sighed and said, "In the duty room, cooking."

Chang Lin was taken aback and said, "Cooking? You let Secretary Dong cook for himself?"

The police officer quickly explained, "The deputy director told us to stay out. Someone tried to help with the cooking, but Secretary Dong refused and said we shouldn't interfere."

Chang Lin, hearing this, didn't say much more. He figured Dong Xuebing probably had this kind of temperament. But Chang Lin felt a bit awkward about cooking himself. He might have felt a bit guilty too. Dong Xuebing had come to assume his new position, and instead of being welcomed properly, he had been detained, beaten, and nearly run over by a minibus. The people in the black car were friends of the station head, Hu Hanbin. Chang Lin naturally felt uneasy about this.

Chang Lin walked briskly into the duty room, steadied his breathing, and lightly knocked on the door. Just two knocks—there's a technique to it. One knock or pressing the doorbell might seem too casual and complicated to hear inside, while three knocks might seem too impolite and urgent. Two knocks were considered the most appropriate.

Dong Xuebing said, "Come in."

The door wasn't locked, so Chang Lin turned the handle and entered. "Secretary Dong."

Dong Xuebing glanced at him. "I said I haven't taken office yet. Just call me Xuebing."

Chang Lin knew Dong Xuebing was probably just being polite. If he followed along, that would be foolish. Leaders sometimes say things like that just out of courtesy. They're not meant to be taken literally.

Chang Lin looked at the table with two dishes and a soup, pretending not to know. He asked, "Secretary Dong, why are you cooking yourself?"

Dong Xuebing smiled and said, "Can't I cook for myself?"

Chang Lin replied, "No, I will invite you for a meal."

Dong Xuebing waved his hand dismissively. “Forget it. I cook for myself at home, too. It’s cheaper and more convenient. It’s quite good.”

“I can see that.” Chang Lin smiled and glanced at the table. “Your cooking skills seem quite impressive.” He took a deep breath. “It smells really good.” Yesterday, they met for the first time and dealt with an unexpected incident. Chang Lin hadn’t had much chance to talk with Dong Xuebing. Today, he was trying a different approach, which was also somewhat of a test. He still didn’t fully understand Dong Xuebing’s temperament and needed time to adjust.

Dong Xuebing cheerfully said, “It’s just some casual cooking. Look at this local spicy soup. I had it for the first time this morning and am trying to replicate it. I’m not sure if it tastes right.” He paused and asked, “Director Chang, haven’t you had any?”

Chang Lin said, “I came to invite you to eat, but...”

Dong Xuebing waved his hand. “That’s just right. Come on, let’s eat together. It’s too much trouble to go out. I’ve just finished cooking, and the dishes are still warm.”

Chang Lin hesitated for a moment. “Well, if you insist, I won’t be polite.”

“Sit down.” Dong Xuebing gestured for him to sit and handed him a bowl.

Chang Lin quickly stepped forward, not daring to let Dong Xuebing serve him. He took the bowl, found a pair of chopsticks, and then pulled out a chair to sit down.

Dong Xuebing looked at him and asked, “Would you like something to drink?”

Chang Lin was taken aback. “Some alcohol? I’m flexible. Just tell me what you have.”

Dong Xuebing pointed to his suitcase. “I have some baijiu here, brought from home. If you’re okay with it, we can have a few drinks. I worry about you working in the afternoon; it might be inconvenient.”

Chang Lin immediately agreed. “I’m fine with it. I like drinking baijiu too. Being from the North, it’s not unusual.”

Dong Xuebing was pleased and rummaged through his suitcase, pulling out a box of Moutai and placing it on the table. The baijiu he brought was of high quality, and the Moutai was certainly not ordinary; it was aged and mostly gifted to him.

Chang Lin's eyes lit up when he recognized the quality. "Good liquor." He didn't wait for Dong Xuebing to open it. He took the box, opened it himself, and poured drinks for both of them, using large glasses typical of Northern drinking customs.

"Try the food first."

"Hmm, let me try. It's delicious, really delicious."

"Is it?"

"Yes, it's really good. And the soup is tasty too. You've never made this spicy soup before? Wow, that's impressive. I think even the spicy soup from the provincial capital doesn't smell as good as yours."

"Haha."

Dong Xuebing knew this praise was probably insincere and didn't take it seriously.

At this moment, Chang Lin lifted his glass and stood up. "Secretary Dong, I must toast you. I'm truly sorry for the trouble caused by my subordinates. They failed to recognize the importance of the situation and created a lot of trouble. Let me drink to this, and you can drink as you please."

Dong Xuebing was quite agreeable. He raised his glass and clinked it with Chang Lin's, emptying his glass as well.

Seeing that Dong Xuebing was so accommodating, Chang Lin felt somewhat reassured. This was a clear signal. He continued, "I've had people investigate the incident overnight, and today we have reached a conclusion. We're handling it because Hu Hanbin, the head of the Chengguan Police Station, is being dismissed and investigated for misconduct. The other officers involved are also under suspension and investigation. As for the people in the black car, they have been taken over by the county police and detained. There will be further actions taken."

Dong Xuebing smiled. "You're the director; I trust your judgment. No need to ask me." He then poured more wine and raised his glass. "Let's drink."

Chang Lin understood that Dong Xuebing was probably satisfied with this resolution and felt relieved. He had made a firm decision on the punishment, fearing Dong Xuebing's dissatisfaction. If Dong Xuebing had rejected the proposed handling, Chang Lin would have been in a difficult position. So, he decided to address everything that could be dealt with directly.