

PAW 1822

Chapter 1822

Inside the room.

The tense atmosphere was almost palpable.

Many people were sipping tea, perhaps to mask their inner emotions and conflicts or maybe to hide their hesitation.

Dong Xuebing was the first to cast his vote.

Zhang Dongfang glanced at Dong Xuebing and didn't back down. It was already a showdown, and there was no way Zhang Dongfang would retreat. Nor did he need to. His gaze was firm, and he said, "I stand by my position and respect the findings and recommendations of the Organization Department. I believe Liu Ping is more suitable for the Deputy Director of the Finance Bureau position." Zhang Dongfang spoke confidently, choosing his words carefully. By saying he respected the Organization Department's investigation and opinion, it seemed he was painting Dong Xuebing as opposing the Organization's findings as if Dong didn't respect their investigation. Even though the "Organization" he referred to wasn't the same, it still gave the impression that Dong Xuebing was running a one-man show.

The tension was rising.

The atmosphere in the meeting became even more intense.

Dong Xuebing smiled, unconcerned.

Han Wu, the County Party Organization Department Minister, naturally had to speak up in support. He fully backed Zhang Dongfang's choice. After all, this was the issue he had raised. He took over Zhang Dongfang's stance and fired back at Dong Xuebing: "I support County Mayor Zhang's proposal. The Organization Department has conducted thorough research, and we all believe that Liu Ping is more capable of this role. Sun Anshi is still too inexperienced, too young."

Young again.

Han Wu had used this word twice today.

Meng Hanmei couldn't bear it anymore. She felt that if people from Zhang Dongfang's faction continued to gain momentum, the situation would become difficult to manage. She decided to cut them off and also help establish the stance of Dong Xuebing's side. "Secretary Dong already mentioned that youth isn't a disadvantage. Minister Han, you're not exactly old yourself. If you're such a strong advocate for seniority, why not give up your position to some of the older comrades?"

Han Wu became furious. "This is an organizational appointment. We have to consider everything thoroughly."

Meng Hanmei coldly replied, "But from what I see, you're not considering everything. You're only fixated on age. How many times have you mentioned 'young'? Is this your idea for thorough consideration?" Without giving Han Wu a chance to retort, Meng Hanmei continued, "I support Secretary Dong's proposal. I think Sun Anshi is the better choice."

With that, Meng Hanmei officially took her stance. If she had only been leaning toward Dong Xuebing before, her words made her allegiance clear today.

Dong Xuebing was pleased. He hadn't expected Sister Meng to be so sharp-tongued. He couldn't help but glance at her a few times, smiling, then he looked at the others, waiting for their votes.

The tally was now two to two.

Dong Xuebing and Zhang Dongfang were tied.

Finally, another heavyweight spoke—County Party Deputy Secretary Wei Zhixuan, the third most influential figure in the county. His words carried considerable weight since his influence in the county was nearly equal to Zhang Dongfang's. "Liu Ping." These three simple words clearly indicate his support for Zhang Dongfang. No one was surprised by this.

Three to two.

Executive Deputy County Mayor Xu Zhuang seized the opportunity and added, "I also support Mayor Zhang's proposal. Liu Ping is more suitable for the position than Sun Anshi."

Deputy County Mayor Song Hefei, a Party committee member, said, "I support Mayor Zhang as well."

Both county government officials backed Zhang Dongfang, indicating Zhang's strong influence over the county administration.

The five traditional members of Zhang's faction had all spoken.

Five to two. Zhang Dongfang's side was now far ahead. If one more person supported Zhang Dongfang or abstained, he would win without further opposition. The Party committee only had eleven members, and with five votes already secured, Zhang Dongfang needed just one more to clinch victory. On the other hand, Dong Xuebing's side faced too much uncertainty. The remaining committee members hadn't aligned themselves with either side, at least for now. They were still waiting and observing, but Dong Xuebing had forced them into a position where they had to decide, and the outcome was far from predictable.

This passage conveys the intensity and strategic maneuvering within a political meeting, with factions forming and votes being cast. The stakes are high, and both sides are playing their cards carefully, knowing that a single vote could determine the outcome.

One second.

Two seconds.

Chang Lin, the Party Secretary of the Political and Legal Affairs Commission and the Director of Public Security was the first to make this decision. He had already aligned himself with Dong Xuebing earlier. He raised his head and said, "I support Secretary Dong's proposal."

Zhang Dongfang glanced at him but said nothing.

No one from Zhang's faction seemed particularly surprised either. Chang Lin had often clashed with Zhang Dongfang's side under the previous Party Secretary. Even though Zhang Dongfang might outwardly accept him, there would inevitably be some lingering resentment. This wouldn't benefit Chang Lin's future work, and he was likely aware of this. So, after some brief hesitation, he decided to align himself with Dong Xuebing.

Five to three.

Silence followed.

The atmosphere remained thick with hesitation.

Clearly, the remaining county committee members, who hadn't yet taken a side, were unprepared for this moment, and their indecision was even more apparent.

A few seconds later, Wang Binhe, the Secretary of the Discipline Inspection Commission, finally spoke. "I agree with Secretary Dong's opinion." His tone was hesitant, but he had chosen his side.

Dong Xuebing could hear the reluctance, but he didn't mind. Hesitation wasn't necessary—as long as the decision was made, things would settle in time.

Wang Binhe's choice didn't elicit much reaction from the others. After all, Wang was from the Discipline Inspection Commission, and before Dong Xuebing took office, he had been a leader in the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection. His strong connections there made it unsurprising that Wang Binhe would align himself with him for the sake of future benefits.

Five to four.

Zhang Dongfang hadn't expected everyone to join his camp, mainly since previous political struggles existed. So, his mindset remained steady. However, he paid close attention to the next person, staring intently at his face and eyes.

It was Li Niu, the head of the United Front Work Department.

Li Niu was a marginal figure. Although technically a County Party Committee member, he didn't attend meetings as frequently as others. When he did, it often felt more like a formality. Under the old Party Secretary Li Gui'an, Li Niu had been somewhat aligned with the Secretary but rarely clashed directly with Zhang Dongfang's faction. Zhang even privately spoke to him to win support, so he cared about the outcome.

Dong Xuebing didn't know how Li Niu would vote and looked at him.

Li Niu himself was somewhat hesitant. In truth, it didn't matter to him which side he chose since his primary focus wasn't on this particular battle. But he was a rather emotional person, prone to personal feelings. When he heard about how Dong Xuebing had kicked over a minibus on his first day in office, he found it unbelievable and became quite curious about the new Party Secretary. Now that he was forced to choose, he gritted his teeth and finally said, "I support Secretary Dong."