

# 《Power and Wealth》

## Chapter 16 – General Affairs Department

Monday.

Morning, at 8 am.

Dong Xuebing was walking towards Western District State Security Branch Bureau. He was still thinking about the ridiculous goal he set for himself two days ago. But when he remembers that he had not even reported for work and he was already dreaming of becoming a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, he blushed. If his mother or his classmates knew about his dreams, they would surely laugh at him. But Dong Xuebing will not give up so easily. He will work hard to achieve this goal.

Western District, Zhixin Road.

West side of a cross junction.

Looking at the time, it was only 8.20 am. There was still time before 9 am. Dong Xuebing walked over to a roadside stall and bought an egg crepe for breakfast. He ate the crepe behind a pirated book store. He was familiar with this area. The venue for his written test, No. 15 Middle School, was just ahead. Just across the walkways was the South entrance to Jiangong Hospital. Further east was the northern entrance of Tao Ran Ting gardens.

Just after Dong Xuebing finishes his crepe, he saw a bus entering a bus stop in front of him.

A man alighted from the bus. All the passers-by turned to look at him. He was a young man about 1.9m in height and about 150 Kg in weight. He should be about Dong Xuebing's age and had a fierce look. All the other office workers at the bus stop thought he was a hooligan and stepped away from him.

After alighting from the bus, the tall and fat man looked around and walked towards Dong Xuebing.

When Dong Xuebing thought that he was going to be beaten up by this big size hooligan, that big size man squats down on a step 1 m away from him. He reached out his hand and patted a dirty stray cat sleeping on the steps. He stroked the cat, and the cat was meowing and licking that man's hand.

“Are you hungry?” That man asked the cat gently. “What do you want to eat? I will go and buy now.”

The cat was meowing and playfully scratching that man with its claws.

That big size man played with the cat for a while before walking over to a roadside stall to buy a sausage and start feeding the cat. “Eat slowly. Don't choke.” His actions were a stark contrast to his outer appearances. Dong Xuebing was still not accustomed to this, but he felt that this was a caring person.

It was finally 8.50 am.

Dong Xuebing walked past that big size man and made a turn around the corner. He walked towards a rusty gate. He could see 2 old buildings which were built in the 70s or 80s in the compound. The metal gates were closed, and there was only an opened window by the side of a small guardroom. A few people were pushing their bicycles slowly through the gate. Dong Xuebing felt he was in the wrong place. He thought this was an office building and the condition of this place was too poor. There were even no guards outside. This was more like a state-owned factory, rather than a State Security branch.

There were no signages at the entrance.

Dong Xuebing looked around and then tried to follow a middle age man, who was pushing his bicycle, through the gates.

“Eh! You. Wait!” An old man's head sticks out of that open window of the guardroom. “Who are you looking for?”

Dong Xuebing immediately replied: “Is this the Western District State Security Branch Bureau? I have just passed my Civil Servant test this year, and the Political Section office had called me to report today at 9 am. My name is Dong Xuebing.”

The old man nodded and picked up the landline phone to make a call. After a few seconds, that old man hung up the phone and nodded to Dong Xuebing. He hands over a registration book to him. “Sign this, and you can enter. The Political Section office is at the southeast building. That grey colored building. It is on the second floor, right at the end of the corridor. You proceed there straight. Don't wander around.”

“Ok. Thank you.”

The mood in the compound was very different from other government agencies. Beijing people were very hospitable and will greet and chat for a while when they see someone they know. They will talk about some meaningless stuff, like “Have you eaten breakfast?” “how’s your flu?” “Are your kids in school?” Etc. But in this compound, the people only nodded to each other and did not speak. Only when they saw a leader, they will open their mouths and greet them “Good morning, Section Chief.” Or “Good morning, Director.” There was no pointless chatting.

Grey building.

Second floor’s corridor.

Dong Xuebing saw the sign “Political Section office” on the wall. But there were lots of offices there, and he does not know which office to enter. When he was hesitating, he heard footsteps behind him. He turns around. Huh? It was that big size man he met at the bus stop. Was he also from the State Security?

“Excuse me.” Dong Xuebing asked. “This is my first day. Do you know which office should I go?”

That big size man paused and scratched his head embarrassedly. “I am also here to report, and I am also looking for the office.”

“Huh? What a coincidence.” Both kept quiet. Dong Xuebing could feel this person was not good at talking like him. He cleared his throat and said: “Errrrmmmm..... My name is Dong Xuebing.”

That big size man smiled: “I am Sun Zhuang. I have just graduated from University. My friends in school call me Zhuang Zhi (means pillar in Chinese).”

Both shook hands and walked into an office nearest to them. They entered the correct office. A staff member in civilian clothes told them to wait there. A Deputy Chief from the Political Section office entered the room and go through all the paperwork and told them the rules and regulations within the department.

More than an hour past.

The Deputy Chief took a sip of tea: “That’s all. The both of you will be posted to the General Affairs Department. I heard that the department is short on manpower. Try to familiarize yourselves with this place. Tomorrow will be your official first day. As for your uniforms, we will give it to you when it is ready. Anyway, other than some meetings in the City Bureau, we do not need to wear the State Security uniforms. This

is not important.”

After finishing what he had to say, he asked the staff member to show Dong Xuebing and Zhuang Zhi where their office was.

The General Affairs Department was located on the ground floor. It was a partitioned small office. There were 8 to 9 desks in it.

That staff member from the Political Section office walked in and said: “We have newcomers. Both are fresh graduates. This is Dong Xuebing, and this is Sun Zhuang.”

Dong Xuebing knew the first impression was essential and he modestly said: “I am new here and do not know anything. Please guide me along in the future. Thank you.”

Zhuang Zi heard Dong Xuebing, and he quickly said: “Me too. Please guide us along.”

The people in the office look at both of them from head to toe.

One girl in the office laughed. “Don’t worry. Once you enter this office, we are one big family.”

That staff member from the Political Section office pointed to the 5-6 people in the office. “Chief Zhou had gone to the doctor? He does not seem to be around. This lady is Tan Limei, that is Old Yan, Guo Panwei, Guo Shunjie, Changjuan.....”