

Power and Wealth

Chapter 338 – Spending Lunar New Year together!

On New Year's Eve, a few kids in the County Party Committee Quarters woke up early in the morning and let off firecrackers in the compound. Xiang Zhiyong's son, Xiao Hua, was one of the kids. They let off 'two bangs' firecrackers, hanging firecrackers and fireworks. Dong Xuebing looks at the kids playing from his window while smoking.

Everyone loves Lunar New Year, so does Dong Xuebing. He looks at his watch, and it's time for him to call home.

It was Dong Xuebing's Uncle who answered. "... Hello? Xiao Bing? Happy New Year."

"Happy New Year to you too." Dong Xuebing laughed. "Is my Mum in?"

"Xiaoping and the rest are wrapping dumplings. Wait a while. I will call her to answer."

"No need. I am calling to let you all know that I will not be going back to the village today as I have some work to do. I will return tomorrow. Help me wish my Grandmother, Aunties, and the rest Happy New Year." Dong Xuebing said and snubbed his cigarette.

"Alright. Your work is more important." Dong Xuebing's Uncle knows Xiao Bing is no longer the same as before. He is now a leader in the County, and leaders are often busier during the Lunar New Year holidays. They must send, receive gifts, visit each other, etc. Furthermore, Xiao Bing was newly promoted to be the Chief of the Investment Promotion Agency. He must take note of establishing a good relationship with other leaders.

After hanging up, Dong Xuebing puts on his coat and drove out.

Dong Xuebing had been busy the past few days and had no time to prepare. He drove

to a nearby Cigarette and Alcohol shop and realized it was closed. He then drove to a supermarket along Commercial Street. He bought a carton of Zhonghua Cigarettes and a carton of Maotai. He paid and got the staff there to help him carry it onto his Mercedes backseats. After that, he went to a cosmetic shop and bought some cosmetics. These are gifts for other leaders.

On New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, government staff will normally send greeting messages or call each other.

From the second day to the fourth day, they will visit each other at their homes. Dong Xuebing had counted, and he must visit quite a several leaders. If he doesn't prepare now, he will not have enough time.

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

"Chief Dong, Happy New Year!" Liu Dahai is the first to wish Dong Xuebing.

Dong Xuebing laughed. "Thank you. I wish you a happy family and a good career."

"Hahaha... thank you."

After that, a lot of people called Dong Xuebing to wish him.

Who says government leaders are very free?

Dong Xuebing spent the whole afternoon answering and making phone calls.

At around 6 pm, the skies become dark.

Dong Xuebing felt it about time and called Xie Huilan. She does not have any relatives and friends here, and she should be alone. Dong Xuebing had planned to accompany her today, and that's why he did not return home. But Xie Huilan did not answer his call. He looked out of his window at the building opposite and called Hu Silian's number.

"Hello, Sister Hu. I'm Dong Xuebing."

"You think I don't recognize your number? What is it?" Secretary Hu was puzzled as they had just finished talking over the phone a while ago.

"Is Mayor Xie at home now? How come no one is answering?"

“Oh, the Mayor had gone to attend the County’s New Year Celebration Gala event.”

“Eh? I thought the New Year Celebration Gala event is tomorrow?”

“It is aired tomorrow, but it is not live telecast. That’s why they need to pre-record the show first. I am currently waiting for Mayor Xie outside the venue, and I think it will end around eight or nine pm.”

“Oh... Thank you, Sister Hu.”

“Haha... don’t mention it.”

Although Hu Silian’s position is the County Government Office’s Deputy Chief, her rank and position are lower than Dong Xuebing, but she is the Mayor’s secretary. Her status is different, and even after Dong Xuebing was promoted, he was still very polite. It is the same as Xie Huilan’s driver, Old Yan. Although Old Yan does not hold any rank, even the County Government Office Director had to greet him with a smile.

After hanging up, Dong Xuebing thought for a while and went to his kitchen. He found many chives among the vegetables the civilians gave him and took a box of minced meat and a bottle of Maotai before going downstairs. He looks around sneakily and quickly ran into the building opposite. After taking the elevator up, he looked around. He made sure there are no one around before using his keys to open Xie Huilan’s apartment.

An hour passed.

Two hours passed.

Suddenly, Dong Xuebing heard the sounds of keys, and the door opened.

After closing the door, Xie Huilan took off her heels and wore her slippers, and she noticed a pair of men’s shoes on the shoe rack. She looked inside her apartment and laughed. “Haha... when did you arrive?”

Dong Xuebing stood up. “I thought you will be bored to spend Lunar New Year’s Eve alone. So, I come over to accompany you.”

“I am fine. Isn’t your hometown in Hui Tian County?” Xie Huilan placed her heels onto the shoe rack. “Are sure it is fine for you to not go back?”

“It’s alright. I had called them.”

“Thank you.”

“What’s there to thank?”

Xie Huilan smiles and looks at Dong Xuebing. “I don’t know what I should say. I am very happy that you will be accompanying me today. Haha... On my way back, I was still thinking about what I should do tonight. Watch the gala show on TV alone? It seems boring... Hahaha... Since you are here, let’s make something to eat. Hmm... if I know you will be coming over, I should have bought some frozen dumplings.”

Dong Xuebing points to the kitchen. “I had wrapped the dumplings, and it’s ready to be cooked when you are hungry.”

“... you finish wrapping the dumplings?”

“Yes... I just finished wrapping them. It’s chives and minced meat dumplings.”

“Haha... this is the first time I am eating my Xiao Dong’s dumplings.” Xie Huilan looks into the kitchen and smiles. “I feel bad letting you cook for me every time. Alright... I shall cook two more dishes for us to eat while drinking. Hahaha... don’t give me that look. Although I am not good at cooking, I can still make some cold dishes. I cannot be letting you do all the work, right?”

Dong Xuebing’s face turns red when he heard Xie Huilan said ‘my Xiao Dong.’ “Let me help you.”

“No need.” Xie Huilan laughed and rolled up her sleeves. “You should be tired. Take a break and watch TV. Ah... the Gala night is starting. Switch to CCTV.”

“Ok. Just prepare a tossed cucumber in the sauce will do.”

“Hmm... I shall see what I have first.”

Dong Xuebing knew Xie Huilan does not have a gentle character. But these few days, her attitude towards Dong Xuebing had changed slightly. Dong Xuebing had held Xie Huilan’s hand and kissed her before his relationship with Qu Yunxuan was exposed. Since then, Xie Huilan is no longer as close to him as before. But now, her change of attitude had given Dong Xuebing hope. Who knows, he might get to hold her hands after a few months.

After about twenty minutes, the dumplings are cooked, and the cold dishes are ready.

Dong Xuebing and Xie Huilan sat in front of the TV to drink and eat.

Most Chinese from the northern region have the habit of watching CCTV’s gala night

on New Year's Eve. But the gala night performances are getting worse. Even the sketch which Dong Xuebing loves the most is getting worse. Luckily, some of this year's sketches are still fine.

Xie Huilan said. "Xiao Bing, your magic performance yesterday is good enough to be performed on Gala night."

"That's right." There are only the two of them in the apartment, and Dong Xuebing is not modest. "But... I am a civil servant, and it's not right for me to perform."

"Hahaha... I was only joking with you, and you treat it seriously?"

Dong Xuebing laughed and took a sip of Maotai. "Oh, do you like dumplings?"

Xie Huilan looks at Dong Xuebing and smiles. "Can our Xiao Bing's dumplings taste bad? It's delicious! Let me count how many have I eaten... twenty-five? Thirty?"

"Have more then. There some still uncooked ones in the kitchen."

"No... I'm full." Xie Huilan laughed and looks at her watch. "There are two more hours to midnight. Are we going to sit here and watch TV? This year's show is quite boring, right?" Dong Xuebing nodded, and Xie Huilan wiped her mouth with a napkin. "Are you full? Let's play cards. But we must have some punishment for the loser. How about the loser drink a glass of alcohol?"

Dong Xuebing quickly wave his hand. "I am not drinking. I can't drink anymore.

After getting drunk twice and embarrassing himself, Dong Xuebing is scared to disgrace himself again.

Xie Huilan laughed. "Then what do you suggest?"

Dong Xuebing joked. "Since your apartment's heater is so warm, the loser must remove a piece of clothing." After saying that, Dong Xuebing immediately regretted it. What was I thinking?!

Xie Huilan laughed as she looks at Dong Xuebing. "You are too much... Hahaha... Alright. Since I am in a good mood today, the loser will have to remove a piece of clothing." She stood up and continued. "I am not wearing a lot today. Is it against the rules if I go in and put on more clothing?"