

Chapter 41: Don't Mess Around

"There's nothing to be ashamed of, you two are husband and wife after all," Mrs. Lu chuckled while looking at Jiang Yao, who stood there blushing and fidgeting with her fingers helplessly. "Been there, done that. There's nothing to be shy about. It's just that that naughty boy is at the base all year long and you hardly see each other. Now that he's back, he might take the opportunity to be intimate with you. But he wouldn't know how to recognize his strength, all men are like that. If you feel uncomfortable, you must let him know, don't hold it back. Otherwise, you will be the one to suffer. Do you understand?"

Mrs. Lu was sincere in offering her advice. As a mother, she knew her son like the back of her hand.

He was a tough guy who trained and drilled at the base all day long. He had endless strength and energy in him.

As a woman, Mrs. Lu worried that her daughter-in-law might be embarrassed to express her distress and pain. If she continued to let Lu Xingzhi be rough, it would hurt Jiang Yao, which would in turn hurt Lu Xingzhi too.

Jiang Yao nodded and muttered, "Okay." However, her voice was inaudible that even mosquitoes would be unable to hear her.

In her heart, she wanted to drag Lu Xingzhi back from his jogging to bite him to death. If it wasn't for his overly compassionate actions last night, would she be so embarrassed now?

Mrs. Lu only offered some advice. She would definitely not interfere with the personal affairs between the young couple. She proceeded to take some eggs from the refrigerator and fry them.

When the father and son came back from the morning run, they brought a few buns back. Then, they went to take a shower. When they came downstairs, feeling refreshed and rejuvenated, it was about time for breakfast.

After breakfast, Lu Haixing's driver drove the car to the gate. He greeted them at the door, left the car key with Lu Xingzhi, and left.

"Mom, Dad, I'll see myself off with Xingzhi. See you at Uncle's house tonight," Jiang Yao greeted her in-laws before getting into the car with Lu Xingzhi.

Lu Xingzhi got his driver's license when he was in college. Since then, he had been driving for many years. It wasn't only limited to cars, as he could also maneuver a tank.

There was no need to pass through the county from the town to the city. It took more than an hour to enter the city area by using the provincial road.

The urban area was much more developed as compared to the county. There were already many large department stores at the time with ample parking spaces too. There was a parking space near the department store.

"You go ahead, I'll park the car and look for you later." Lu Xingzhi stopped the car at the entrance of the department store and let Jiang Yao get off the car. After seeing her enter the department store, he started the car and parked it in the designated parking space.

Jiang Yao rarely visited the city, but she knew that Lu Xingzhi had brought her to the largest and most high-end department store in the city. In fact, many famous and luxurious brands were only available in this particular department store.

After entering the department store, Jiang Yao went straight into the women's clothing shop with the latest arrivals. Jiang Yao fancied the brand and the line of clothes, as well as the fashion styles. Glancing at a lake-blue dress on display, she reached out and felt the fabric with joy. The dress was made of silk, just like the bedding at home. It was exquisitely smooth and soft, and it must be very comfortable to wear in the summer.

"Miss, this dress is very expensive, it's silk. Don't mess around. Careful, don't ruin the thread. Once broken, considered sold."

Just when Jiang Yao turned around and wanted someone to show her the dress, a saleswoman suddenly stood next to her. She eyed her skeptically and then uttered that with a scornful and sarcastic expression.

Jiang Yao was stunned. She retracted her hand sheepishly and looked down at her outfit.

Did the saleswoman simply assume she couldn't afford the dress and had she wanted to drive her away because of her casual and skimpy outfit?

Chapter 42: Buy It If You Like It

School uniforms were compulsory at Jiang Yao's high school. Hence, she hardly wore casual clothes. Because of this, most of her casual clothes had been purchased before marriage, and they were mostly from ordinary and modest brands.

After she got married, she had only purchased two sets of clothing in winter. It was not as if the Lu family was too stingy, but she focused more on her studies and did not have time for shopping. The winter clothes were bought for Chinese New Year and Mrs. Lu had taken her to the county department store to buy them during the winter holidays.

Although the clothes were purchased the county department store, their price tags was pretty impressive. When she had worn them to school, many female classmates were envious upon seeing the clothes.

As it was summer now, she was wearing a summer dress which she had bought when she was in sophomore year.

"Miss, this is the best department store in the city. You can't afford to shop here. Why don't you go and check out the big market? The clothes there and their price tags are better suited for people like you."

The saleswoman was a little agitated as she glared at the scanty-looking young girl who was reluctant to leave and scoffed, "Don't just stand here, leave! You're giving our brand a bad image. People who are clueless would think that we're selling junk. Also, let me warn you not to simply touch our clothes. You'll have to pay for any damage caused. You'll come and beg for mercy if you can't afford to pay."

As she mocked her, the saleswoman flung the price tag of the clothes arrogantly in front of Jiang Yao. Three digits, eight hundred dollars. This value was equivalent to several months of wages for some people. It was also an astronomical figure for the poverty-stricken people who lived on minimum wages.

Jiang Yao glanced at the cocky saleswoman and she felt her blood boil. She snorted and reached over to touch the clothes as the saleswoman glared at her furiously. "I like the material. Take it down, I want to try it."

The saleswoman's face turned green and blurted, "You...you...you are so shameless!"

At this moment, Lu Xingzhi came in after parking his car. As soon as he walked into the store, he heard the saleswoman chiding Jiang Yao while pointing a finger at her. He frowned, his expression darkening, and he strode towards Jiang Yao. He pulled Jiang Yao aside, away from the pointing finger, wrapped his arm around her waist, and asked, "What's going on?"

"I like this one and want to try it. She wouldn't even let me touch it, for she says I can't afford it. I insisted on trying and she scolded me for being shameless." Jiang Yao looked innocently at Lu Xingzhi and pouted. "It's eight hundred dollars. It's very comfortable, I think it's made of the same material as our bedsheets, silk. Try and feel it, am I right?"

"Buy it if you like it." Lu Xingzhi glared coldly at the saleswoman and exclaimed, "Call your manager. Tell him I'm from the Lu family."

Yup, Lu Xingzhi was not looking for the store manager—he was talking about the manager of the department store.

At this moment, it wasn't just the manager of the department store—even if the owner of the store was here, he would have to put up a smiling face when he saw Lu Xingzhi.

Lu Xingzhi heaved a sigh of dismay while looking at Jiang Yao's unhappy and pouty face. How dare this saleswoman point at his wife and scold her?

The saleswoman had not expected such a handsome young man to appear out of nowhere. Although he was dressed casually, his overall charisma was extraordinary. She had seen all kinds of customers throughout her working hours, and at a glance, she could tell that this man must be very influential socially.

Chapter 43: Pet Cushion

Blood drained from the saleswoman's face when the charismatic man asked to see the manager of the department store directly. Nevertheless, she was a little clueless when he mentioned his surname, Lu.

"Why are you still standing here? Go!" Everyone in the world knew that Lu Xingzhi had a bad temper and that he had no patience too. So, as the saleswoman was still standing in a daze, he frowned agitatedly and called for the nearby security guard to get the manager.

The security guard was clueless as to what actually happened, but still sprinted all the way to get the manager.

After five minutes, Manager Zhang rushed over. When he recognized Lu Xingzhi from a distance, the doubt on his face was immediately replaced with a wide smile.

“It’s really you, Master Lu!” Manager Zhang stretched out his hand to offer a handshake as soon as he approached them, but Lu Xingzhi looked at him and his hand without any reaction, so Manager Zhang embarrassedly retracted his hand. “The security guard told me that someone with the surname Lu is here. I guessed it must be your family, but I didn’t expect it to be you, Master Lu. Have you come back from the base for a break?”

The way Manager Zhang was speaking humbly and his smiling face even after the man gave him a cold shoulder surprised the saleswoman and security guard.

“I called you here to ask you since when is your saleswoman allowed to point her finger at my wife and scold her? Since when is my wife not allowed to even touch the skirts in your department store?” Lu Xingzhi’s tone, eyes, and expression radiated the same level of frigidness that made all of them shudder in shock.

He was angry. He was very, very angry.

The woman he wanted to adore and pamper dearly had been scolded by some hooligans.

Manager Zhang comprehended the situation instantly.

This department store was the largest and most high-end in the city. It was inevitable that the salespeople would occasionally judge a book by its cover and behave scornfully toward the poor. Manager Zhang had always felt that poor people would comprehend their status and not simply visit the store and hence, he always turned a blind eye to his staff’s misbehavior. Unexpectedly, they had made such a horrible mistake today and caused him a great disaster.

What did the Lu family represent?

Although the Lu family lived in the county, their name was frequently mentioned throughout the city and the whole province.

They were the Lu family with the largest food and brick factories. Even when the owner of the department store lacked working capital, he had gone to Lu Haixing for some quick loan. Today, even if it was his boss standing here talking to Lu Xingzhi, he would be ever so modest and humble.

“Go to the human resources department to settle your salary. You don’t have to come in to work after today.” Manager Zhang fired the saleswoman immediately. He then turned to Lu Xingzhi and apologized profusely. “Master Lu, I’m very sorry for the incident today, it’s my fault for not properly training my staff. I sincerely apologize on behalf of the department store. Have a look around today and whatever you like, just take it, it’s on the house.”

Lu Xingzhi snorted irritably. “Whatever my wife fancies, I’ll buy it for her. You don’t have to pay my bills for me. That’s it, you can go now.”

Then, he turned to another salesperson and asked her to take down the skirt that Jiang Yao was looking at and proceed to the cashier.

Jiang Yao tugged at Lu Xingzhi and said, “I haven’t tried it yet, I don’t know if it fits.”

“It’s just a few hundred dollars. If you can wear it, just wear it. If it doesn’t fit, give it to Xiaoxiao’s dog as its pet cushion,” Lu Xingzhi smirked without a hint of hesitation and distress. He took Jiang Yao’s hand and walked toward the cashier.

Chapter 44: I Won’t Fall For That

Manager Zhang froze like a statue with his eyes wide opened and his mouth gaped in shock. Only the wealthy Lu family would use an eight hundred dollar dress as a pet cushion. What a great stroke of luck to be the Lu family’s pet dog.

Even if it sounded a little too exaggerated, Manager Zhang was certain that Master Lu meant it. After all, the Lu family was ‘Richie Rich’ rich.

Manager Zhang was well aware of Lu Xingzhi’s temperament. He was a reserved man and didn’t like bickering. Based on today’s incident, it was proven that the young Master Lu adored his wife very much. His rage of fury must have been triggered because his wife was offended.

Pondering the consequences, Manager Zhang thought about distributing the photos of everyone in the Lu family to his company’s employees from today onwards. He would force them to memorize their faces and not offend any of them, especially the young Master Lu. Master Lu was the hardest to get along with, and he was also a soldier in the Jindo military team.

The Lu family was wealthy, Master Lu was affluent, plus, he had a network of powerful people in the capital. If they enraged Master Lu, it might be as easy as flicking his fingers to close down the department store.

After paying, Lu Xingzhi pulled Jiang Yao and went up to the third floor of the department store. Jiang Yao glanced at the paper bag in his hand and quietly observed his expression. Then, she sighed. “Lu Xingzhi, you are such a big spender. The dress is eight hundred dollars! If I can’t fit in it, are you really going to use it as a pet cushion? Even though your family is rich, you can’t waste money like this!”

“Do you feel sorry?” Lu Xingzhi looked at her mischievously while shaking the paper bag in his hand. “Don’t worry, I can afford this, I can support you.”

“No, it’s your parents’ money, you don’t earn much in the military too,” Jiang Yao relented. “So, we cannot be so lavish.”

Lu Xingzhi stopped upon hearing her remark. He was silent for a while before saying, “Are you questioning my ability? Do you think that I can’t support you without help from my parents?”

Jiang Yao gaped and shook her head. “No, no.” She simply felt that she shouldn’t simply spend the money so extravagantly.

A while later, Lu Xingzhi chuckled abruptly and said, “I’ve never asked my parents for money since my junior year, so don’t worry, I’m spending my own money now.”

Jiang Yao stared at him dubiously. Lu Xingzhi explained, “You are right about the salary of a soldier being rather low, but I have other sources of income. If you want to know, come visit me at the base on National Day, I’ll explain it to you one by one.”

“Kickbacks? Bribes? Off-the-books?” Jiang Yao blurted out the first thought that came to mind, and then she shook her head and said, “But you’re not this kind of person.”

Lu Xingzhi heaved a sigh of dismay and tapped her head. “What kind of nonsense is in your head? If you are really curious, come see me at the base on National Day.”

Jiang Yao pouted. “Don’t think that I don’t know you’re coaxing me to agree. Your main purpose is to trick me into visiting the base during the National Day golden week holiday. I won’t fall for that.”

Lu Xingzhi was as sly as a fox. He used this explanation as bait to trick her to visit him on National Day. Jiang Yao wouldn’t believe what he said.

Lu Xingzhi was speechless. It was exactly what he had planned.

Because he would leave for the base the next day, but he was particularly reluctant to leave home. In other words, he didn’t want to leave her.

He wanted Jiang Yao to come to the base on National Day, but he couldn’t find a reason for her to go.

“You will come,” Lu Xingzhi declared matter-of-factly and glimpsed at Jiang Yao’s expression.

“No, I will not,” Jiang Yao snorted and swaggered ahead, leaving Lu Xingzhi behind her.

He sighed and quickly strode forward while thinking to himself that he was being too rash in this.

They had just reconciled their relationship, but he was rushing to get it fired up.

Chapter 45: Belongs to Her

It was more than an hour later when they both emerged from the department store. When they headed for the entrance, a middle-aged man with a briefcase rushed towards the department store. Just as he was about to dash past them, the middle-aged man hurried back a few steps and called out.

“Master Lu! Yikes, my useless eyes, I almost missed you!”

The man was the owner of the department store. He had hurried over from another place when he received a call from the manager.

“Master Lu, you are such a rare guest at our store. Why don’t I treat you and your missus to lunch?” Mr. Li, the boss, had rushed back just to invite them for lunch, mainly to evaluate the situation with Lu Xingzhi. If he was still so angry about the incident that he goes back to complain to the two elders, his intention for a loan would be thrown out the window.

His hands were tied at the moment. He had started a company in another province but it turned out to be a bad investment. He urgently needed the money.

“No thanks.” Lu Xingzhi refused in an instant. “I’m rarely home, my time belongs to her.”

Then, he held Jiang Yao’s hand and walked directly to the parking lot without another word to Mr. Li who had rushed here.

“Where are we going now?” Jiang Yao sat shotgun and looked at the roadside, but she felt an extraordinary sensation inside her heart. Just this morning alone, Lu Xingzhi’s image in her heart took a complete overhaul over the incident.

She wasn’t aware at all that even the owner and the manager of the department store addressed Lu Xingzhi as Master Lu. When she thought about his emotionless reaction to the title, she figured that he was used to it.

Jiang Yao looked at Lu Xingzhi and mumbled, “Master Lu?”

Lu Xingzhi parked the car in front of a restaurant, but he didn’t get off in a hurry. Instead, He exchanged glances with Jiang Yao and asked, “In this case, should I call you Mrs. Lu? Or Young Mistress Lu? Or Madam Jiang?”

“No, never! It’s so awful! It sounds like the old and rich socialites in the capitalist era of the old society!” Jiang Yao shook her head in irritation and was ready to open the door and get off the car. However, she pushed it twice to no avail. It was only after she heard Lu Xingzhi’s faint chuckle that she realized the situation. He had locked the door, it was no wonder she couldn’t open it.

Jiang Yao glared at Lu Xingzhi and huffed, “Open the door.”

Lu Xingzhi nodded with a smile and unlocked the door. They got off the car.

Lu Xingzhi had selected a famous Cantonese restaurant in the city for lunch. Since it was a popular restaurant, it was almost a full house.

Jiang Yao looked around in confusion as Lu Xingzhi walked forward and spoke to the waiter. Then, the waiter hastily stood upright in a respectable manner and led them to a window seat.

Lu Xingzhi ordered the dishes for them. She watched him named a few dishes without even flipping through the menu. Apparently, he was very familiar with this place.

After the waiter left with the menu, Lu Xingzhi said when he saw Jiang Yao scanning around curiously, “I didn’t make a reservation, so the private rooms are all occupied. The first floor is quite crowded and noisy, please bear with it.”

Jiang Yao nodded and looked earnestly at the man sitting opposite her. He was taking the teacup in front of her and pouring tea for her. A scent of very fragrant chrysanthemum wafted into her nose. He had ordered a pot of chrysanthemum tea that had the function of reducing internal heat, a perfect drink in the summer.

Lu Xingzhi was very skillful and elegant in preparing the tea, donning a neutral expression. He noticed Jiang Yao watching him, so he simply raised his eyes to meet hers without saying anything. He placed her teacup in front of her before pouring for himself.

Jiang Yao stunned for a while before holding the teacup and blowing into it. It was too hot for her to sip.