

Chapter 441: Pampered

At the moment, a hairpin was being auctioned off. It was not an antique, but it came off the table of a master jeweler. The design was beautiful, the workmanship impeccable; a lively dragonfly perching on top a pink lotus flower, with wings so soft as if to flap in unison in the winds.

The maker himself was absent from the auction but had sent this hairpin over as an auction item. The moment it was placed on the auction table, a small commotion was stirred up in the crowd. It appeared to be very popular, especially among the ladies.

Lu Xingzhi looked at Jiang Yao and felt a light tremble from her hand.

“Do you like it?” Lu Xingzhi whispered. She looked at him earnestly and nodded, like a kid asking for candy; his heart instantly softened. “Just go for whatever you like, after all you have control over the purse. If there’s not enough money, it means that I am not capable enough.”

Jiang Yao really liked the hairpin. It was love at first sight, having caught her attention instantly. With the pink lotus flower and the lively dragonfly, everything looked so lovely.

“It’s not worth it if it’s too expensive.” Even though it looked amazing and came out of the hands of a master, its value was still incomparable to an actual antique.

Lu Xingzhi gave Jiang Yao’s hand a light pinch and raised his number card.

The rest of the bidders looked at their new competitor and realized it was Lu Xingzhi. The ladies were looking at the woman sitting beside Lu Xingzhi with envy.

Lu Xingzhi was perhaps at the auction to make some purchases for his partner. Amongst the Masters of Jindo, Lu Xingzhi was considered the one with the lowest profile. He stayed in the military most of the time and did not socialize as much as the others in Jindo City; only a few people in Jindo City had ever seen him personally. Yet, his rumors were as plenty as the rest of the gang.

Between the five Masters of Jindo, Master Liang had recently married the daughter of the Luo family; Master Gu was always abroad and even more secretive than Master Lu; Master Zhou was a playboy, changing his partner regularly while Master Chen had been seen with a couple of different women over the years.

Only Master Lu was never seen with a female companion. He was always seen alone, unaccompanied to any events, as his buddies attended with their partners.

Undeniably, the girl in question was lucky to be spoiled by Master Lu.

After a few rounds of bidding, the hairpin’s price was raised a little above the market price. Plenty gave up right away, leaving only a few wealthy ladies in a bidding war with Lu Xingzhi. He kept at it and raised the price higher and higher, until the last of the bidder stopped raising her card.

Lu Xingzhi got what he wanted.

“Squeezing his fortune dry just to see Jiang Yao’s smile!” Chen Xuyao returned after his phone call and teased Lu Xingzhi. The hairpin was auctioned off at twice its market price; with Lu Xingzhi the one purchasing it, all because Jiang Yao liked it.

Lu Xingzhi was expressionless, he replied, "Dry, eh?"

Jiang Yao laughed with her hand over her mouth. "Obviously, Brother Lu has a little more money than that!" She was not familiar with Lu Xingzhi's other assets, but she was very sure that he had much more cash in his bank account than what he spent today.

Chapter 442: Leave Him Alone

The hairpin was certainly expensive, but the price meant nothing given Lu Xingzhi's financial capabilities.

Jiang Yao could not help but slap Lu Xingzhi on his wrist when she remembered that the hairpin fetched tens of thousands. "You prodigal boy!"

If she knew that this would happen, she would not say that she liked it.

It was just a hairpin, an impractical accessory. It certainly looked beautiful but there were only so many occasions where it could be worn.

"Don't you like it?" Lu Xingzhi was serious. "It's rare for you to see something you like. Doesn't make sense to let someone else have it, don't you think?"

Jiang Yao was extremely pleased to hear that; she liked it indeed!

"Brother Lu, how about the things that I like?" Zhou Weiqi approached them cheerily and pointed toward the stage. "Someone is actually auctioning a car off!"

"Where's your father? Ask him to buy it for you instead!" Chen Xuyao rolled his eyes at Zhou Weiqi.

Zhou Weiqi did not expect the counter from Chen Xuyao. Like a punctured balloon, he returned to his seat dejected and started lamenting.

Jiang Yao looked at Lu Xingzhi; she was growing increasingly fond of how stunning he looked. His confident and decisive manner charmed her little heart.

In her previous life, she avoided Lu Xingzhi like the plague. Her pride did not allow her to spend a single penny of the Lu family's wealth, oftentimes leaving her in a tight spot financially.

She wanted to be successful and make big bucks! Then, whenever Lu Xingzhi wanted something, she would buy it for him, no questions asked!

"You want that car, don't you?" Lu Xingzhi knocked on the table in front of Zhou Weiqi and continued, "Leave the Zhou family and I will make it yours."

The car was too big to be fitted into the auction hall; only pictures and some information of the car were displayed on stage.

It was an antique car with a retro feel. It was very well-maintained, and Lu Xingzhi happened to know the owner of the car. The car would be returned to the owner through a purchase by a pre-arranged acquaintance, the auction was just a formality.

"Don't push me!" Zhou Weiqi exhaled loudly and turned his face away. He sat there tensely, ignoring the people around him.

His desire for the car, however, was emblazoned loudly in his eyes.

Zhou Weiqi did not really have a hobby, other than collecting cars. He was a little picky though, preferring only to collect cars that were wilder in design and made by car manufacturers that he admired.

Coincidentally, the car auctioned today was manufactured by a German carmaker that he really liked.

He had the financial means and the capabilities to purchase it himself, although he could not do it. As long as he was still part of the Zhou family, he could only be the prodigal good-for-nothing playboy with very little money to his name.

Lu Xingzhi and Chen Xuyao were not ready to help him.

Jiang Yao noticed Zhou Weiqi's ire and quietly tugged on Lu Xingzhi's sleeve.

"Leave him alone." Lu Xingzhi replied crudely, to the dismay of Zhou Weiqi, who perked his ears up trying to listen if Lu Xingzhi had changed his mind.

When Lu Xingzhi's item—a calligraphy art piece—was placed on stage, the crowd in the hall was agitated. Jiang Yao was unaware of the actual reason, but she suspected that the item sent for the auction by Lu Xingzhi was not like any other ordinary art piece.

Even Old General Liang and General Chen raised their cards; two close friends, fighting each other over the ownership of the art piece. Chen Xuyao could not contain his laughter anymore.

"If Old General Liang loses out in the end, you are not getting away with this, Brother Lu!" Old General Liang had had his eyes on the art piece for quite some time, only Lu Xingzhi was reluctant to let it go.

Chapter 443: The Prodigal Son

Old General Liang wanted to buy it, but Lu Xingzhi did not need that money and refused.

He then tried to obtain the art piece by leveraging their relationship; only to be informed by Lu Xingzhi that he was keeping it for a friend. Having run out of ideas, Old General Liang gave up on his pursuit. He did not expect the art piece to appear in today's auction.

"Why didn't you give it to Old General Liang, since he liked it so much!" Jiang Yao could not understand. Lu Xingzhi was not in want financially; moreover, he had great respect for Old General Liang, if not he would not have gone personally to the frontline to rescue Old General Liang.

Lu Xingzhi looked at Jiang Yao sheepishly and said, "I thought you would like it."

That was why he spent a small fortune to purchase the art piece and held on to it even when Old General Liang wanted it badly for himself. It was not until later when he realized that Jiang Yao was not very interested in things like these. He then had people randomly pick an art piece from his collection to contribute to the auction only for this art piece to be picked.

Things that Jiang Yao did not like were worthless to Lu Xingzhi.

Seeing that the two elders were almost getting themselves into a fight, Lu Xingzhi raised his card and called out his bid. Immediately, the entire hall was stunned into silence.

Both Old General Liang and General Chen looked at Lu Xingzhi and gave him their deadliest glare. Whatever it was, a fight was averted.

Due to Lu Xingzhi's bidding, the art piece was ultimately returned to him.

"Filthy rich!" Chen Xuyao exclaimed.

"You prodigal boy!" Jiang Yao covered her face, trying to pretend that she did not know this random squanderer sitting next to her.

"If Brother Lu was my wife, he's going to get some from me!" Zhou Weiqi was back to his usual self and started making faces at the two elders sitting in front.

"Hush!" Jiang Yao rebutted. Only she could chastise her man, nobody else could!

"Jiang Yao." Zhou Weiqi's face turned sour. "I did it for you! Weren't you just unhappy with Brother Lu?"

"It's your fault if you are not able to earn enough money for your wife to spend," Jiang Yao lectured.

Zhou Weiqi extended his arms and continued, "I am not a money-printing machine, how can I do it like Brother Lu?"

Lu Xingzhi had a sudden urge to pull Jiang Yao into his embrace and give her a flurry of kisses. How could she be so adorable?

"So, you're saying that you are actually capable of getting yourself a wife?" Chen Xuyao patted Zhou Weiqi's back.

"Why not? Mrs. Zhou did the legwork for him, Zhang Lanxiang! It's buy one get one for free! Congratulations on being a dad, Weiqi!" Jiang Yao laughed wickedly.

Chen Xuyao looked at Jiang Yao and gave her a high five. "Good one!"

On the other hand, Zhou Weiqi was not in good shape after receiving abuses left and right. He thought that Chen Xuyao was his buddy!

Lu Xingzhi gave both Chen Xuyao and Zhou Weiqi a look before quietly leaving the auction hall with Jiang Yao.

Chapter 444: Think Carefully

Old General Liang and General Chen came rushing out just as the group of four exited the hall.

"Xingzhi, what was that all about?" Old General Liang was furious.

"I didn't want both of you elders to fight and cause a scene in the auction hall, that's why I had it returned to me," Lu Xingzhi casually explained. "If you like it, you're free to take it home with you. Just return it to me whenever you are done admiring the art piece."

"I'll have it first! Have someone send it over to the Liang family later!" Old General Liang reacted quickly and continued where Lu Xingzhi left off.

General Chen was annoyed. "Why does it have to be you?"

“That’s because Xingzhi is Yueze’s buddy! If Yueze calls me grandpa, Xingzhi has to follow suit as well!” Old General Liang was very pleased with himself.

General Chen had nothing to say in response. He looked at Lu Xingzhi’s wife, and sighed. His ideal granddaughter-in-law was now someone else’s wife.

“That’s it. You can split the art piece in two and take one half of it with you. I don’t mind.” Lu Xingzhi’s expression did not change when he said it.

He was greeted with eye-rolls in return.

“That’s very generous of you.” General Chen chided Lu Xingzhi. “Keep that art piece safe, its value will increase tremendously in the future!”

“Alright! Let’s admire it together, come over for dinner tonight!” Old General Liang cheerily said to General Chen and extended the invitation to Lu Xingzhi. “Come on over as well to the Liangs tonight. I’ll go with General Chen first, if you folks are busy, it’s fine to come a little later.”

“I’ll go right away; I am very free.” Chen Xuyao tucked his hands into the pockets of his pants and asked, “Jiang Yao, Brother Lu, are you guys going? Weiqi?”

“Jiang Yao needs a change of clothes; we’ll be there later,” Lu Xingzhi said. He turned to see Zhou Weiqi talking on his phone, and ending the call visibly upset. “Did the Zhou family ask you to go back?”

Zhou Weiqi nodded, rubbing his temples. “I need to go back.” It was his father on the other end of the line, reprimanding him for what happened just now in the afternoon.

“Weiqi.” Lu Xingzhi called out to Zhou Weiqi, who was on his way out. He walked over and pressed his hand on Zhou Weiqi’s shoulder. “Think carefully. Don’t ever think that you owe anyone anything. The person that takes the biggest blame in all these is the one that keeps saying he wants to atone for his mistakes.”

Not receiving any reply from Zhou Weiqi, Lu Xingzhi pushed him. “Think about the chance given to you by Jiang Yao. It’s the perfect opportunity for you to make a comeback and do what you want.”

“Thank you, Brother Lu, I’ll see you later.” Zhou Weiqi replied with a heavy heart. He sighed deeply and left.

Chapter 445: As Long as I Know It

What was waiting at the Zhou family for Zhou Weiqi was out of Jiang Yao’s comprehension. Chen Xuyao went straight to the Liang family’s house while Jiang Yao and Lu Xingzhi went back to Jin City after leaving the hotel together. On their way, Lu Xingzhi made a call and by the time they arrived at Jin City, a young man in a black suit and tie was there waiting at the guard house with a few paper bags in his hand.

Lu Xingzhi took the bags from him, thanked him and drove the car inside. The contents of the bags were clothes requested for Jiang Yao by Lu Xingzhi.

Jiang Yao came out of the bathroom to see that Lu Xingzhi had already laid everything, including a scarf and a pair of gloves, on the bed. She put on the jacket just as Lu Xingzhi came around and wrapped the

woolen scarf around her neck. He wrapped it two more times, stopping only after he was sure that the scarf would keep her warm.

“Isn’t this a little too much?” Jiang Yao sniffed. She was healthy and strong but having lived in the South for a long time meant that she was naturally averse to the cold.

“Give me your hands.” Lu Xingzhi did not care how she looked. He cared more about her not feeling cold in the chilly weather. After putting on the woolen gloves, he looked at the woolen hat, which was of the same series as the rest of the look and took it out after some hesitation.

“No! I don’t want to wear the hat!” Jiang Yao took a few steps back and refused. “It’s not even that cold! I’ll be laughed at if I walk out with the hat on!”

Some people were still wearing short skirts out on the street while she was here wrapped up like a furry polar bear.

“Come here.” Lu Xingzhi did not register Jiang Yao’s refusal. Using one hand, he pressed her head against his chest. He used his other hand and nimbly put on the pink woolen hat, looking satisfied after some adjustments.

He was pleased to see his wife wrapped up to a tee. After all, he did not like her exposing any part of her body when she was out and about. Only he could look at the clear and supple skin of his wife.

Jiang Yao looked in the mirror and was a little distraught seeing her outfit. She was dressed in pink from head to toe with a pink hat, a pink scarf, and a pair of pink gloves.

The scarf was wrapped a few times around her neck, covering her nose and mouth when she lowered her head. From the mirror, she could see that only her eyes were exposed. As she just came out of the shower, her eyes looked a little watery.

“Don’t you think I look like a high schooler?” Jiang Yao, who was wearing a pair of furry slippers, kicked Lu Xingzhi in the shins, who was dressing up. He put on a jacket with the same color scheme as her outfit.

“As long as I know that you are not, I don’t care about anything else.” Lu Xingzhi was not worried. He knew that his wife was not underage; what the rest said did not matter to him.

Lu Xingzhi’s heart softened seeing Jiang Yao’s sparkly eyes. He pulled her into her arms and kissed her on the forehead. Pinching the pom-pom on her heart, he happily led Jiang Yao out of the door.

Jiang Yao was the one driving to the Liang family. Knowing that Zhou Weiqi got her a driver’s license, Lu Xingzhi wanted to see her driving skills. If it were less than satisfactory, he would have to take back her driver’s license.

Chapter 446: Do We Have A Daughter

Since telling Lu Xingzhi her story, Jiang Yao felt much more at ease. She accepted the car keys given by Lu Xingzhi and got the car on the road in no time.

“Xingzhi, what do you think Weiqi’s father will do knowing that Mrs. Zhou and Zhou Ning made a fool of themselves and humiliated the Zhou family’s name?” Jiang Yao was very calm while driving. Even with Lu Xingzhi observing her from the passenger seat, she was not anxious and could even chat with him.

“No idea. Weiqi has to make his own decision, nobody else can help him,” Lu Xingzhi replied.

The rest of the gang had a lot of hope for Zhou Weiqi.

He seemed to be a carefree person, but he was the most trustable among the five of them.

Frankly speaking, the four of them thought that Zhou Weiqi was dumb.

Zhou Weiqi grew up in a less-than-ideal environment. The Zhou family gave him none of the love and affection, and yet he was part of the Zhou family’s bloodline and held on to a promise to his deceased mother.

Before meeting Lu Xingzhi and the rest, Zhou Weiqi’s mother was probably the only one in the entire world that treated him well and loved him.

Even the person who kept saying that he wanted to atone for his mistakes looked just like a joke to Lu Xingzhi and his buddies.

The greater Zhou Weiqi’s love for his mother, the harder it was for him to cut the Zhou family off.

A person who did not have enough love growing up would frantically grasp at any signs of affection given to them. Lu Xingzhi could not understand, nor could he empathize; for he grew up in a loving family.

Tired of talking about Zhou Weiqi’s affairs, Lu Xingzhi fixated his sight on Jiang Yao. Hot air circulated the interior of the car and her scarf was hanging loosely around her neck. She probably felt warm and had loosened it. Her woolen gloves were intentionally placed on Lu Xingzhi’s lap, mimicking her hands.

She looked a little childlike no matter how Lu Xingzhi looked at her, with her flushed cheeks and the furry scarf and the hat.

He flicked the pom-pom on her hat and suddenly asked, “Did we have a daughter together?”

Jiang Yao was a little surprised.

Not receiving any replies, Lu Xingzhi asked a few seconds later, “Is it a son?” He was slightly disturbed at the thought.

“None at all,” Jiang Yao answered. She did not know how to tell Lu Xingzhi that before her rebirth, they rarely saw each other after their wedding.

Lu Xingzhi did not expect that answer. He thought that she was lying, but it did not look like that was the case. After a brief silence, he asked again, “You cannot have kids?”

Jiang Yao retorted, “Why didn’t you ask if you were the one who’s infertile!”

Lu Xingzhi was relieved seeing her reaction; her body was fine.

As for him...

“Don’t you know best?” Lu Xingzhi chuckled. He would undergo a physical checkup every year in the platoon, so he knew for sure that if he wanted to, he could get her pregnant.

Chapter 447: Little Wife

“What’s with the sudden question?”

“I want a daughter like you,” Lu Xingzhi answered.

He decided to get the child version of what Jiang Yao was wearing, so that their daughter could wear it.

That was why he wanted to know if they had an adorable daughter, like her, together.

His beautiful wife, together with his cute daughter, that was all he wanted. Their own little family. His life would be complete when the time came.

“You went to Nanjiang Medical University back then? If you stayed at Jindo City for a few years, you would have gotten used to the cold.” Lu Xingzhi was reminded of this but felt a little weirded out after saying it. Let the past stay in the past, there was no point going after it again.

He believed that she did not come to Jindo City for work after her graduation, could it be that he transferred to where she worked back then?

Jiang Yao opened her mouth to reply but shut it at the last minute.

She did stay in Jin City but that was some years after, and she was there for only half a year. After he was transferred over, only then did she request to work at the rural village in the South.

She skipped the coldest times of the year during her stay at Jin City and left before it turned cold again; that was why she did not experience the brutal Northern winter.

Things were just as bad at the rural village though. With plenty of necessities lacking, the horrible weather compounded the already tough conditions she was living in. Her dislike of the cold was within her; she could never get over it.

The rest of the drive was silent. Jiang Yao was afraid that Lu Xingzhi would probe deeper and ask about the past, it was still embarrassing to talk about it. She pretended that she was completely absorbed in the drive and looked straight ahead.

Jiang Yao had a good memory. She visited the Liang family once and memorized the way to their house.

They were right on time as the party was just starting. The house was lively and bustling with noise. Old General Liang and General Chen were locked in an intense session of chess with Chen Xuyao and Liang Yueze spectating. Chen Xuyao was very much involved in the game and was even more eager than the two older people, commenting loudly and making noise, to the chagrin of the rest.

Mr. and Mrs. Liang Yuekai were on the other side playing a game of mahjong with Grandmother Liang and Chen Feitang. Mrs. Liang and Luo Ruoran were busy preparing dinner with the maids in the kitchen. In the living room, Mr. Liang and Chen Feibai could be seen staring each other down, with livid expressions on both their faces.

“What’s going on with those two?” Jiang Yao went straight to the kitchen after entering the house and asked after noticing the weird vibe in the living room.

“They got themselves into an argument after watching the news. Differences in political opinions, I suppose.” Luo Ruoran laughed. “I give Chen Feibai all my respect; he’s probably the only one daring enough to oppose Dad.”

After answering, Luo Ruoran looked at Jiang Yao and burst out laughing. She called out to Mrs. Liang and said, “Mom! Come look at Xingzhi’s underage wife!”

Chapter 448: Cutie Pie

Mrs. Liang stole a look at Jiang Yao, who was wrapped tightly like a dumpling, and laughed. “It’s only October! You’re afraid of the cold, aren’t you? There’s heating in the house though, you should be fine taking off your jacket and scarf here.”

Jiang Yao was just about to remove her scarf and her hat when Luo Ruoran, wiping her hands dry on her apron, called out, “Hold on! Hold on! Let me pinch those cheeks first!”

Using her thumb and index finger, Luo Ruoran lightly squeezed Jiang Yao’s rosy cheeks. “You’re lacking some meat here,” she complained.

Jiang Yao was skinny, together with her palm-sized face she looked frail. Fortunately, she exuded vigor, and her aura more than made up for her tiny frame.

She looked adorable cloaked in a dense layer of winter clothing, together with the pinkish color tones and her pair of big, sparkly eyes.

Luo Ruoran retracted her hands, but not before flicking the pom-pom on Jiang Yao’s hat and asked, “Did Xingzhi prepare these for you?”

“Who else can it be? And he’s just as annoying, always flicking the pom-pom on my hat.” Jiang Yao held her head up and exclaimed. She did not plan to put on the scarf before exiting the car as it was only a few seconds’ distance from the parking spot to the door. Yet, under Lu Xingzhi’s insistence, she had to pile on the winter warmers before leaving the car.

“Let’s go. We can’t cook anyways and are going to be a nuisance in the kitchen. Let’s catch up in the living room.” Mrs. Liang walked out with both Luo Ruoran and Jiang Yao. She smiled brightly, like a gentle breeze under the warm springtime sun.

Mrs. Liang had always liked Jiang Yao. Ever since the incident at the hospital, she liked her—a skinny yet assertive and capable woman—even more.

Tonight’s gathering at the Liang family was held to celebrate Lu Xingzhi’s discharge from the hospital. Knowing that he planned to visit the Purple Orchid Garden later in the night with Jiang Yao, the dinner at the Liangs started early.

Everyone else except Zhou Weiqi was there when dinner was served.

Jiang Yao turned around to see both Lu Xingzhi and Chen Xuyao checking their watches. She asked, “Should we give him a call?”

Chen Xuyao was about to agree when Lu Xingzhi and Liang Yueze replied instantly in unison.

“No.”

“No need to.”

They looked at each other and understood that they could only do so much for Zhou Weiqi. At the end of the day, he had to fight for what he wanted. Staying with the Zhou family was only going to bring him down.

“We’re not waiting for him, let’s eat.” Liang Yueze said to Old General Liang and General Chen. “He won’t starve to death.”

“You’re the best big brother around,” Liang Yuekai looked at Liang Yueze and remarked sarcastically. “I wonder if you’ll still be here if I did the same.”

Liang Yueze snickered and turned his attention back toward Lu Xingzhi. “You’re going back to the platoon the day after tomorrow, right? Isn’t the recognition ceremony on the same day as well?”

Chapter 449: The Name List

“Yeah. Colonel Lin will be discharged from the hospital on that day too. I’ll fetch him on my way back to the platoon.” Lu Xingzhi nodded, not showing much excitement and expectation about attending the recognition ceremony.

The recognition ceremony was held to honor the efforts of Colonel Lin and Lu Xingzhi. The Jin City platoon sent both as representatives to the rescue mission, to which they came back safely albeit with injuries.

“Xingzhi, I heard from Grandpa that the superiors are planning to bestow both you and Colonel Lin the Individual First-Class Merit Medal, is that right?” Luo Ruoran interrupted. “I also heard that the Jin City platoon is planning to form a special forces unit, with both Colonel Lin and you under consideration.”

“That’s right, but it will be some time until the special forces unit is active. It’s definitely not going to happen this year.” This was the discussion Lu Xingzhi had with Colonel Lin for the past few days; Old General Liang privately informed them of the news.

Jiang Yao was slightly perplexed hearing it. She knew nothing about the recognition ceremony nor the formation of the special forces unit. She spent almost every waking hour with Lu Xingzhi, and yet he managed to hide a lot of information from her.

Nonetheless, Jiang Yao was not upset.

First of all, Lu Xingzhi was not a person to brag about his achievements. Plus, before things were confirmed and set in stone, he would not divulge anything to anyone else.

“Feitang is under consideration too!” General Chen called out before looking at Chen Feibai and sighed, “On the other hand, Feibai here is driving me crazy!”

The people at the table were surprised to hear that Chen Feitang was also a candidate to join the special forces unit. Only Old General Liang was unmoved, which meant that he was the only one that knew it prior, not even Lu Xingzhi and his buddies were aware of the fact.

Jiang Yao remembered hearing from Lu Xingzhi that General Chen had a preference for boys, but it seemed like he was very happy with Chen Feitang as his granddaughter.

That was not part of Jiang Yao's concern anyway. Instead, she was worried that Chen Feitang and Lu Xingzhi were both accepted as members of the special forces unit. This meant that Chen Feitang would be together with Lu Xingzhi on a daily basis.

It was bad news for Jiang Yao.

She was unnerved at the thought. The more she thought about it, the more upset she became. She kicked Lu Xingzhi, who was busy eating, in the shins and immediately felt better seeing his puzzled reaction.

Why did her husband look so good? It irked Jiang Yao to realize that Lu Xingzhi was very popular with the ladies.

Zhou Weiqi was nowhere to be found even after dinner was over. Lu Xingzhi looked at his watch and pulled Jiang Yao toward the couch. He put the scarf and the hat on for Jiang Yao and said to Chen Xuyao, who was busy making faces at Jiang Yao on the side, "We are going to get Weiqi from the Zhou family, see you at the Purple Orchid Garden."

"Go!" Chen Xuyao laughed. "In Brother Lu's eyes, Jiang Yao is a person without use of hands. He has to do everything, and I mean everything, for her. If he can, he would have carried her on his back at all times to relieve her from the exhausting task of walking."

Chen Xuyao's teasing made both Lu Xingzhi and Jiang Yao blush out of embarrassment.

Chapter 450: Not Your Fault

Chen Xuyao blocked the pillow thrown at him by Jiang Yao but could not dodge the apple that came flying right after. He sat down on the couch and wailed in pain.

How could he forget about Liang Yuezhe and Luo Ruoran!

"You're in need of a beating." Luo Ruoran went over and kicked Chen Xuyao in the shins. "Why are you still here? Get going!"

Lu Xingzhi laughed. He grabbed Jiang Yao, said their goodbyes and left the Liang family.

It was a time for reunion and kinship as dinner time approached but things were different in the Zhou family as it turned into a condemnation of Zhou Weiqi.

Mr. Zhou, Mrs. Zhou and Zhou Ning were already there waiting for Zhou Weiqi when he arrived. The Du family came shortly afterward.

Upon arrival, Zhou Weiqi was greeted with an onslaught of criticism spearheaded by Mr. Zhou. Charges included disrespect toward Mrs. Zhou and Zhou Ning, causing humiliation upon them.

Mrs. Zhou was teary-eyed, evidently having fought with Mr. Zhou. He might have even hit her out of frustration.

Zhou Weiqi silently stood at a corner and kept smoking, the ashtray on his hand getting dangerously close to overflowing. Other than acknowledging his father when he arrived, he did not speak at all.

No matter how much he was insulted and criticized, he kept his mouth shut.

He was used to the abuse, after all; he knew better than to react to their tirade.

Staying silent did not mean that he was reflecting on his actions though, no, it was far from it.

He wanted to ask his father why someone like him—an illegitimate son and the shame of the family—was expected to look after the high-handed duo of the mother and daughter out in public.

Mrs. Zhou spent every ounce of her energy reprimanding Zhou Weiqi, only to see him standing like a scarecrow with his head hung low, not muttering even a single word. She was perturbed; it felt like everything she just said had fallen on deaf ears.

“Alright, alright. We’ll let it slide this time, your sister and I are not blaming you.” Mrs. Zhou waved her hand, pointing toward the couch and said, “Sit down and talk to us. Don’t just stand there with the cigarette in your hand, the smell of tobacco is overwhelming us.”

“What are you blaming me for? For not shamelessly offering you Brother Lu’s seat?” Zhou Weiqi chuckled. “Go on. I’ll stand here. Let me know once you’re done. I still have places to be.”

Zhou Weiqi did not think that Du Rongzhen—the most pompous and egotistical woman in the world—would be kind enough to actually ask him to sit down. He flicked the ashes on the ashtray and inhaled a big puff of smoke. Looking at his watch, he realized that it was getting late.

“Dad! Did you hear what Zhou Weiqi said?” Zhou Ning was dismayed. She stomped her feet and glared at Zhou Weiqi.