

## Chapter 71: I Believe Her

Upon hearing Lu Yuqing's comments about Jiang Yao, Lu Xingzhi was relieved.

"Sister, since you also believe in Jiang Yao, then I'll be honest to you about this. Please stay calm." Lu Xingzhi began to drop the bombshell. "Jiang Yao told me that she saw your husband and your assistant in the county. They were strangely close, and she even saw them going to the hospital for maternity checkups hand-in-hand, chatting and laughing."

"What does she mean by that?" As if struck by lightning, Lu Yuqing froze in extreme shock.

"Jiang Yao suspects that Zhao Zhuangzong is the father of the child your assistant is carrying, but you need to verify this matter for yourself. Please don't blame her if there are any misunderstandings, as she is still young and she may be overthinking this, but she did witness your husband being too intimate with your assistant. I think you should keep an eye on this, it's better to be safe than sorry," Lu Xingzhi said.

This was the reason he had asked for Lu Yuqing's impression of Jiang Yao in the first place. If Lu Yuqing had thought badly about Jiang Yao, he would not have involved Jiang Yao into this matter lest she be blamed one way or another.

However, since Lu Yuqing had a good impression of Jiang Yao, he decided to tell the truth. In this way, Lu Yuqing could go to Jiang Yao directly and he didn't have to be the messenger, which would be rather troublesome.

"You don't say. I know how to tell right from wrong." Lu Yuqing interpreted the underlying meaning in Lu Xingzhi's remarks in an instant—he might be concerned that she would be angry at Jiang Yao.

Lu Yuqing also believed that Jiang Yao was not a vengeful person. There was probably some hidden agenda in this matter since Jiang Yao had decided to be truthful to Lu Xingzhi about it. Where there's smoke, there's fire, and it was seemingly out of goodwill for Jiang Yao to ask Lu Xingzhi to convey the details.

Lu Yuqing was still in a state of extreme shock and disbelief after hanging up the phone. She had never expected that her husband, who was always so loving and tender, would have an affair with her assistant and even have a child together.

Lu Yuqing trembled as she thought about her assistant who had been working for her for several years. A while ago, she suddenly became pregnant out of wedlock and said that her boyfriend ran away to avoid responsibility and consequences.

Because of this, Lu Yuqing sympathized with her misfortune and provided her with a lot of physical and financial help financially. When she was unwell, Lu Yuqing permitted her paid leave. When she got closer and closer to her due date, Lu Yuqing felt sorry to see the young girl coming to work with her huge belly, so she permitted early maternity leave for her assistant based on Zhao Zhuangzong's offhand suggestion.

Thinking of this, Lu Yuqing couldn't help but shiver in indignation. If it was as Jiang Yao suspected and Zhao Zhuangzong and her assistant really had an affair and a child, then had she, as the man's wife and the assistant's boss, become a laughing stock to them?

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Close to midnight, Mr. and Mrs. Lu arrived home after the wedding dinner. They were sent home by Lu Haixing's driver. When they saw that the lights were still on after entering the house, they knew that Jiang Yao had not slept yet.

"It's getting late, why don't you call it a day and go to sleep?" After changing into indoor slippers, Mrs. Lu saw Jiang Yao sitting on the sofa holding a book. The book was purchased from the Xinhua Bookstore in the county. She saw Jiang Yao reading books on several occasions.

Unlike her peers who would go out with their friends, Jiang Yao was more of an introvert. She preferred to spend her time at home, reading books and so on.

Mrs. Lu also knew that despite being very popular in school and being able to mingle with everyone, Jiang Yao didn't really have a close friend whom she could spend her time and energy with.

## **Chapter 72: Love Me, Love My Dog**

"I was just reading some books while waiting for you," Jiang Yao said with a smile and stood up. "Mom, Dad, Xingzhi just called around dinner time. He said that he was sent to a mission right after he hopped off the plane, and that's why he didn't have time to call home."

Mrs. Lu chuckled. "See? I told you there's nothing to worry about. Are you finally relieved now that he's called home? You were so tense and anxious, but we didn't know how to comfort you."

"Next time, don't wait up for us. Go ahead and sleep," Mr. Lu said with a warm smile. "Oh yes, regarding your college's registration day, do you plan to go by plane or train? If you want to take the train, we must book your ticket in advance. Xingzhi said that your brothers will be accompanying you. Book three tickets then."

"I haven't purchased the tickets yet. Besides, it's very close by, so we can just take the train," Jiang Yao said. "Yes, my brothers will go with me."

This matter had been brought up when they had gone back to the Jiang family the other day. As Lu Xingzhi had expected, Jiang Lei couldn't be more eager when they talked about sending Jiang Yao to college. However, it was impossible for Lu Xingzhi to let Jiang Lei accompany her by himself. He was really afraid that Jiang Lei would absent-mindedly lose Jiang Yao on the way, so both her brothers would be her entourage.

"I'll make a call tomorrow to book the tickets in advance then." Mr. Lu added, "Your family's help is very much appreciated. We're not available to send you to college and have to trouble your brothers to do so."

"Dad, it's no trouble at all. My brothers love me very much, they're very happy to do it," Jiang Yao said. Then, she greeted them good night and excused herself.

After Jiang Yao went up the stairs and into her room, the delightful smile was still plastered on Mrs. Lu's face. "The child has become lively and active recently, she's getting more and more adorable."

"It's because she's starting to show affection to your son that you begin to find her likeable too. That's called 'love me, love my dog'," Mr. Lu said with a giggle. Then, he slowly walked to the kitchen half-drunk to have a drink of water.

Due to the long-awaited call, Jiang Yao was finally able to relieve the worries she had about Lu Xingzhi. Hence, she slept very well that night.

Early in the morning the next day, Jiang Yao saw Lu Yuqing entering when she went downstairs.

"Sister, you're here early," Jiang Yao said in surprise, she then shouted towards the kitchen, "Mom, Yuqing is here."

Mrs. Lu sprinted to the living room without wiping the water off her hands. "Yuqing, why are you here so early? Have you had breakfast?"

"No, not yet. Mom, please prepare some for me," Lu Yuqing said. "After breakfast, I'll take Jiang Yao to the county for shopping, then I'll see if I can manage to send her back by noon."

Jiang Yao instantly fathomed the reason that Lu Yuqing had come to see her.

"Jiang Yao, breakfast is not ready yet. Let's talk in the yard." Lu Yuqing waved at the stunned Jiang Yao.

Jiang Yao nodded and they walked to the yard.

"Xingzhi told me everything last night. I was so anxious and confused the entire night," Lu Yuqing cut to the chase and uttered. "Seriously, if it wasn't for Xingzhi telling me that you had seen it with your own eyes, I might never imagine that Zhao Zhuangzong would cheat on me. He worked overtime last night, so I cooked him supper. When he got home, he acted exactly the same as he did when we first got married. He felt sorry for me, so he held my hand and told me not to do this for him again. He even cleaned the table and did the dishes after that. He told me to leave all the household chores to him because my hands will not be smooth and pretty if I do too much household chores."

### **Chapter 73: Mrs. Zhao**

At this point, Lu Yuqing's eyes turned bloodshot and teary. "I'm so heartbroken, I didn't dare to confront him about this last night. I suppressed the urge to ask him very hard."

"Yuqing, you may not like to hear what I say, but I have to tell you that Zhao Zhuangzong is a scumbag, including his family!" Jiang Yao blurted out straightaway. She felt sorry for Lu Yuqing after thinking about how Zhao Zhuangzong had hurt her. "Yuqing, remember how your in-laws have always urged you to have a baby, but they don't do that anymore now? Think about it, did they stop their nagging around the time your assistant got pregnant?"

Lu Yuqing froze in extreme shock. "Do you mean that my in-laws know about the affair?"

"I guess," Jiang Yao said.

She didn't know how to explain her rebirth, so she couldn't be frank about knowing what happened afterward.

After having breakfast at home, Lu Yuqing went to the county with Jiang Yao. They went straight to the Western restaurant where Jiang Yao and Lu Xiaoxiao had seen Zhao Zhuangzong and her assistant.

At this hour, a lot of diners were at the restaurant to have coffee and dessert. A waiter greeted them as soon as they walked in.

Jiang Yao and Lu Yuqing sat face-to-face. Jiang Yao pretended to look at the menu as if she was unfamiliar with the food here. After a while, she lifted her gaze at the waiter and said, "Do you have any special recommendations for coffee and desserts? My brother told me that your food is very delicious. In fact, he even paid my bill when I came here for dinner the other day! It's so funny, I hadn't even ordered yet and he already paid for us. He said that he's a good friend of your boss."

Jiang Yao paused for a while and added with a smile, "My brother is Zhao Zhuangzong."

The waiter gaped in astonishment when he heard the name. "Oh, Mr. Zhao! Yes, Mr. Zhao and our boss are friends! I didn't know that he has such a lovely sister. Miss Zhao, could you please tell me what you prefer, so that I can recommend the best meal to suit your appetite?"

"My brother and I share similar tastes. What does he usually order when he drops by?" Jiang Yao smiled playfully. "You know what? Just get me anything that my brother usually orders, I bet I'll like it."

The waiter smiled too. "Mr. Zhao prefers something bland, but Mrs. Zhao likes her food aromatic and with strong flavor, perhaps because of her pregnancy. Every time they come to our restaurant, Mr. Zhao will accommodate his missus' preference and order the food that Mrs. Zhao likes."

"Really?" Jiang Yao noticed Lu Yuqing trembling slightly when the waiter talked about Mrs. Zhao's pregnancy and a slightly strong appetite.

"Mrs. Zhao's due date is just around the corner, isn't it? I heard that they went for checkups and it's a boy! Miss Zhao, you'll have a little nephew soon."

Then, the waiter recommended Jiang Yao several desserts and coffee, took their order, and walked away with a polite smile.

As soon as the waiter left, Lu Yuqing burst out crying, gritted her teeth, and cursed in a muffled scream, "Zhao Zhuangzong, you b\*stard! You scumbag!"

Jiang Yao reached out to grip Lu Yuqing's hand. "Yuqing..." She didn't know what to say.

As a woman who was always been portrayed as a happily married woman, this was undoubtedly a fatal and catastrophic blow.

Not only did Zhao Zhuangzong have an affair with her assistant, he had even gone the extra mile to introduce the woman as his wife! It must be devastating for Lu Yuqing when someone had addressed another woman as Mrs. Zhao.

#### **Chapter 74: Mrs. Jiang's Nagging**

“Jiang Yao, I’m not hungry right now, is it okay if you be by yourself? I need to be alone,” Lu Yuqing said as tears flowed down her cheeks.

“I’m okay, but are you sure you don’t need me to keep you company?” Jiang Yao was genuinely worried. It would be devastating for those involved when it came to the realization of such matters, especially for Lu Yuqing, who was always so ambitious and committed.

Lu Yuqing shook her head with her downcast eyes. Jiang Yao bit her lip and didn’t say anything. Since Lu Yuqing wanted to be alone, it wouldn’t be any help to be with her either.

After Lu Yuqing left, Jiang Yao stayed back to have a cup of coffee before leaving. She bought some food and groceries in the county, then took the bus and returned to her house.

Her parents were caught by surprise when she suddenly came home. They hurriedly rushed to her and helped her unload the bags in her hands.

They frowned as they saw the marks left on their daughter’s hands after carrying so many heavy bags and chided her. “You silly girl, I’m glad you’re home, but why did you buy so many things? You can just buy whatever you like though, what did you buy so much for? Look at your hands,” her mother murmured grumpily as she carried the bags from Jiang Yao’s hands. She placed the bags on the table, then turned around, took Jiang Yao’s hands into hers, and gently stroked them. “Don’t do this again, okay? A girl’s hands should be tender and delicate. You’re going to be a doctor soon, don’t ruin yourself like this.”

“Mom, why do you describe doctors as if they live in a wonderland and don’t need to work? Let me tell you, I don’t need delicate hands to be a doctor, but I have to be physically strong, with strong arms too. That’s so when I perform surgery, I can hold my scalpel steadily and I’m able to sustain my stamina and energy into performing surgery for long hours.”

“Yes, you’re absolutely right, my darling.” Mrs. Jiang nodded and smiled warmly. She looked at her daughter and imagined her as a great doctor in the future. “Yaoyao, do you still remember the old uncle living in the front village? He’s a typical patriarchal old man. Since you were a child, you’ve excelled academically that we couldn’t help but brag about your achievements. I bet he got jealous, so he joked that it’s a waste to send girls to school because they would eventually be married into another family. Hmph! Now, everyone knows that not only do you have a great husband, but you also study well. When you become a doctor, don’t treat those people who have badmouthed you. If they come to you, prescribe them with the most bitter and expensive medicine.”

There were many busybodies in the village who disagreed with the Jiang family for continuing to support Jiang Yao’s study. Most girls in the village dropped out of school after the completion of the compulsory five-year primary school education. Some fortunate few were lucky enough to further their studies to secondary school level. The Jiang family’s motto was to support any of their children who excelled in their studies and were able to further their studies, regardless of the financial constraint.

Jiang Yao’s education level would be higher than her brothers’ after graduating from college. Everyone babbled about how the Jiang family was crazy to sabotage Jiang Yao’s marriage for the sake of allowing her to continue studying, but surprisingly, she married the son of the wealthy Lu family at the tender age of eighteen.

Now, everyone in the village was envious that Jiang Yao was a child full of blessings. She was born into a happy family with her loving parents and brothers. She married the son of the wealthiest family in the county. Rumor had it that not only her husband was treating her very well, but her husband's family had even offered to financially support her studies up to college.

Jiang Yao giggled at her mother's remarks and said, "Okay, Mom, I'll take your advice. They'd better not come to see me, but if they do, I'll prescribe the most bitter medicine for them as an act of revenge. Serves them right for meddling in our family's affairs."

Mrs. Jiang quickly shook her head. "I'm just kidding. Listen, you must be a good doctor, don't bully your patients. Do you understand?"

### **Chapter 75: Getting to Know Him**

"Hey, stop preaching at her." Mr. Jiang laughed out loud. When he asked Jiang Yao if she would stay for dinner, he couldn't help but sigh dejectedly when Jiang Yao said she would go back after a while.

"Honestly, I think that you got married too soon. You already have another home after only being at home for less than two decades."

Jiang Yao went back to the Lu family after a short visit. Mrs. Lu got off work early today. When she saw Jiang Yao, she casually asked about Lu Yuqing's purpose for seeking her out. Jiang Yao assumed that Lu Yuqing had intended to keep the matter under wraps for the time being and handle it on her own.

Jiang Yao blurted out some excuses to get it over with. While she was helping Mrs. Lu prepare dinner, she asked about Lu Xingzhi's friends.

"Mom, does Xingzhi have a lot of good friends in Jindo? I remember some of his friends attending our wedding." Frankly speaking, Jiang Yao couldn't remember what happened or the guests who had attended their wedding because back then, she wasn't interested in Lu Xingzhi's business. Now, however, she was intrigued and wanted to get to know him more.

It was such a rare occasion that Mrs. Lu glanced at Jiang Yao with a mix of confusion and amusement. Then, she chuckled and teased, "I see that you've been very interested to know about Xingzhi lately. From what I've observed, you've miss him every second since he returned to the base. I think you might have gone after him to the base if you didn't have school, am I right?"

Jiang Yao wasn't feeling timid and shy after being teased. Instead, she smiled and admitted, "He's my husband, so of course I miss him. By the way, Mom, I won't be coming home for the National Day holiday. Xingzhi has asked me to visit him at the base."

"Alright, go ahead." Mrs. Lu laughed gently, then added, "Xingzhi has a few close friends in Jindo. The eldest is Liang Yueze, he's a young and successful businessman; the second eldest lives abroad, he is a professor in cultural studies or something. Xingzhi ranks third. The fourth is Zhou Weiqi, he works in the Jindo Industrial and Commercial Bureau. The youngest is Chen Xuyao, he is an architectural designer. He's said to be very famous in his field. These fellows are from wealthy and powerful families in Jindo, and they attended your wedding."

Jiang Yao couldn't recall any of their looks at all, but she figured any of these people should be famously known in Jindo.

"Oh yes, there's a girl named Luo Lauren, she's pretty and interesting. I think she and the second buddy are a couple, I can sense that they are very close and he takes care of the girl, but I'm not sure if I'm wrong because Xingzhi never mentions anything about them." Mrs. Lu began to gossip about Lu Xingzhi's friends. She got even more excited when she saw Jiang Yao listen enthusiastically, so after telling her about Lu Xingzhi's social circle, she began telling her all about Lu Xingzhi, from his childhood to his college days. Mrs. Lu shared Lu Xingzhi's life stories with Jiang Yao.

For Jiang Yao, getting to know Lu Xingzhi was like opening the door to a whole new world. She realized that Lu Xingzhi's dullness was au naturel. When he was born, he was very composed and calm unlike other children. He didn't cry often, he didn't throw tantrums, and he didn't even laugh much. However, he was a troublemaker and more fearsome than other children.

Jiang Yao didn't know that Lu Yuqing was preparing to deal with Zhao Zhuangzong's extramarital affair. In the blink of an eye, her college registration was just around the corner. She and Jiang Lei went to the county town to buy a suitcase and collect the train tickets.