

Chapter 351: This is My Answer (1)

A picture he never dared to hope for in his dreams was becoming a reality.

A tinge of sadness surfaced in He Jichen's eyes, and he instinctively turned his head and looked far away.

He spent two seconds to force himself to calm the raging storm in his chest then he looked back at Ji Yi. He didn't reply with the simple "yeah" as he did before, but with a "How have you been recently?"

With just these five words, he knew what he wanted to say next. Ji Yi beat him to the punch by saying, "Let's not lie to each other."

How have you been recently? Let's not lie to each other.

Those were the words she said when she took the initiative to apologize during their first misunderstanding.

Later, they got into an argument. No matter if he was the one who went to look for her, or if she went to look for him, someone had to speak up first.

It was like their secret law; as long as they were on speaking terms, even the greatest misunderstandings between them would disappear.

They quietly stared at one another. He knew what she was thinking, and he knew what was going through her mind.

Neither of them said anything. As they stared and stared, the corners of Ji Yi's lips curved into a smile.

Seeing her smile, He Jichen also curved his lips and said in a soft voice, "Hello, my most important friend, Ji Yi."

On hearing this, Ji Yi smiled, revealing her teeth. "Hello, my most important friend, He Jichen."

As the afternoon drew closer, bright sunlight shone on their faces, making them look incredibly clean and pure.

They were smiling at each other, but beneath their eyes, there was a faint watery refraction of light.

—

Having returned to how they were before, He Jichen and Ji Yi met in private more often and talked more often outside of work.

As an outsider, Chen Bai could tell that He Jichen's mood was better day after day. He even noticed that He Jichen's lips would randomly curl into a smile during work or during meetings.

In the past, Chen Bai would dream of his boss becoming a little more sensitive to people's needs just so his days would be a bit more relaxed. Now that it had become a reality, he realized that not only was he not relaxed, he was actually even more exhausted.

Since He Jichen spoiled Ji Yi endlessly, he wanted Chen Bai to prepare breakfast for Ji Yi every morning. In the early afternoon, he wanted Chen Bai to prepare desserts for Ji Yi on her breaks after shooting scenes. In the mid-afternoon, Chen Bai had to make sure that no one disturbed Ji Yi during her afternoon break. In the late afternoon, Chen Bai had to prepare fruit for Ji Yi, and in the evening, Chen Bai would have to drive away mosquitoes for Ji Yi during their evening shots...

After finishing the shoot with much difficulty, he thought he could finally head back to the hotel to get some rest, but because of Ji Yi mentioning her hunger, He Jichen asked him to run out to buy dinner.

What made him fall apart was when He Jichen learned that Ji Yi didn't have any sanitary towels ready when her period came... He felt like it was inappropriate for Chen Bai to buy her personal items, so he had to buy them personally. However, he still woke up Chen Bai from his sleep to be his personal driver.

Day by day, Chen Bai thought he had to endure unparalleled hardship.

"Three Thousand Lunatics" finally finished shooting in mid-June.

The Shanghai Film Festival happened to be going on, so the after-party for their filming was held at the Shanghai Starlight Hotel.

Aside from the cast and important crew members in attendance, there were also industry investors invited for support.

Ji Yi followed He Jichen's car from Hengdian to Shanghai. After they reached Starlight, the two of them headed upstairs to their respective rooms to get changed.

When Ji Yi came down to the second-floor hall, He Jichen was already dressed in an all-black suit with a glass of wine in hand. He stood gracefully in the crowd, politely engaged in conversation.

An attendant greeted Ji Yi, and in return, she smiled and picked up a glass of wine from the tray.

She put it by her lips and was about to take a sip when she saw He Jichen waving at her.

Ji Yi didn't think too much of it and charged right at him in her high heels. However, just as she was about to reach him, she saw someone she didn't want to see...

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Ji Yi didn't think too much of it and charged right at him in her high heels. However, just as she was about to reach him, she saw someone she didn't want to see.

Her footsteps suddenly came to a stop, and her fingers instinctively clutched the wine glass tightly in her hands.

A second ago, He Jichen called Ji Yi over. Then a second later, his words made Mr. Li, who was standing next to him, look away.

He raised his glass with one hand and turned his head to listen earnestly to what Mr. Li was saying. Every now and then, he would let out a soft "Mhm" in respect.

About a minute later, he sensed Ji Yi standing about twenty meters away. She hadn't come to his side yet, so he slowly turned his head and looked over at her.

She had stopped about seven to eight meters away, looking frozen, and her eyes were transfixed to his right.

What's... with her?

He Jichen furrowed his brows as he was about to apologize to Mr. Li, who was chatting away and walk over to Ji Yi. In the end, before he could take action, Ji Yi sensed someone was staring at her, so she turned to look at his face. When she met his eyes, she was completely stunned for a few seconds before she came to her senses and rushed over to him.

But she didn't walk with the same calm as she did when he first called her over. Instead, her footsteps seemed obviously hesitant and slower.

She clearly has something on her mind...

Even though He Jichen was still chatting with Mr. Li, his thoughts wandered every now and then to Ji Yi.

When she reached him, He Jichen politely stopped talking to Mr. Li and started to introduce each and every person surrounding them to Ji Yi.

To be able to stand beside He Jichen, the people he patiently had to entertain were no ordinary people at all. On a normal day, they would have others surrounding them, but after He Jichen finished introducing Ji Yi to those people, they became evidently more natural and friendly as they greeted her.

Ji Yi knew they only bothered with her just to give He Jichen some face. She maintained her most fitting smile, clinked glasses and shared a few casual words with every person.

However, when it came to introducing the final person on He Jichen's right-hand side, Mr. Sun, Ji Yi wasn't as polite as she was previously. Instead, she lowered her eyelids.

She waited until He Jichen finished introducing Mr. Sun before she lifted her eyelids seconds later to see a smirking Mr. Sun.

In her lifetime, Ji Yi had smiled involuntarily countless of times, but this time, it was most insufferable for her.

"Hello." Ji Yi spent a lot of energy to force herself to say it. She merely gave him a greeting; she didn't share any polite small talk like she'd done with the others.

"Hello there, Ji Yi. Long time no see." Mr. Sun spoke in a tone of voice that sounded much friendlier than Ji Yi.

Someone next to them couldn't help but say, "Mr. Sun, so you know Miss Ji."

"I don't just know her, we were very close back in the day..." replied Mr. Sun with a smile as he stared at Ji Yi. "...Isn't that right, Ji Yi?"

Ji Yi knew just how stiff her smile was. She didn't actually want to respond to Mr. Sun, but she was afraid to embarrass He Jichen, so all she could do was endure the annoyance in her heart and force out the word "Yes."

"It's such a small world. We have to have a good drink to that!" As Mr. Sun said this, he handed Ji Yi a glass of wine.

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Ji Yi knew she should raise her glass to Mr. Sun, but no matter how hard she tried, she couldn't lift her arm.

There were capitalists all around them; each incomparably insightful. Ji Yi hesitated for just a moment, but someone sensed that something was wrong and noted the suspicion in both her and Mr. Sun's eyes.

Mr. Sun handed the glass in his hand to Ji Yi again and pretended to be just as dazed as Ji Yi while silently plotting to win some face back. "Ji Yi?"

Hearing this, Ji Yi raised her eyes and glanced at the smile on Mr. Sun's lips.

It was the same fake smile he used back then. Her expression changed slightly as her fingers reached for the glass. It felt like a giant boulder was weighing down her arms, making it even more difficult for her tensed-up body to clink his glass.

The atmosphere around them became awkward from Ji Yi's silence.

Mr. Sun looked evidently agitated, but he didn't act out because He Jichen was standing next to him, so instead, he let out a soft cough.

Ji Yi knew people around them were looking at her, and she knew that He Jichen had called her over to introduce her to some important people in the industry. For her to react so late would not only create a poor impression of her, but she would also be making it difficult for He Jichen.

Deep down inside, Ji Yi tried hard to convince herself to reach her arm out to clink Mr. Sun's glass in front of all these strangers.

As she was overly unwilling, her fingertips clutched onto her wine glass tightly until they were a little white.

But before her fingers reached an inch away from Mr. Sun's glass, a long, slender finger pulled away her hand. Then she heard the usual mild-mannered voice of He Jichen in her ears. "Apologies, she can't really take her alcohol. She drank some earlier and now, her stomach probably feels uncomfortable."

After he said this, He Jichen didn't wait for everyone around him to react and cried, "Chen Bai."

"Mr. He." A second later, Chen Bai practically appeared by He Jichen's side.

"Please escort Miss Ji to the lounge to rest for a moment," ordered He Jichen flatly.

“Yes.” Chen Bai walked over to Ji Yi’s side and before he could quietly say: Miss Ji, please follow me, He Jichen added, “Find Miss Cheng to give her some medicine for stomach pain.”

“Yes, Mr. He.” Chen Bai politely nodded at the people around them then escorted Ji Yi out.

As soon as they entered the lounge, Chen Bai hinted for Ji Yi to take a seat then he immediately went to find Cheng Weiwan for the medicine that He Jichen instructed.

The room was silent. Since Ji Yi was now alone, the forced smile on her lips immediately vanished right off her face. She stared at the dark night’s sky outside the window and reflected on what happened between her and Mr. He. Her fingers couldn’t help but clutch onto her handbag as she started to purse her lips.

Not long after, the doors to the lounge opened again.

Ji Yi thought Chen Bai had returned, so she quickly adjusted the expression on her face and turned her head to look at him.

It was He Jichen.

Ji Yi was stunned for a moment as she thought back to how she forgot her manners earlier. In deep embarrassment, she couldn’t help but lower her head.

She was just about to apologize to him when he walked in front of her and spoke first, “Unhappy?”

Ji Yi never imagined that He Jichen would ask her this. She looked up and glanced at him then gently shook her head.

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The people she was unfamiliar with sensed her indifference, and what’s more, he...

At first, he thought something was on her mind until he introduced her to Mr. Sun. That was when he saw her eyes instantly become disheartened and realized that the problem was with Mr. Sun.

At the time, I could clearly see her unhappiness, yet she’s shaking her head at me now...

He Jichen knew Ji Yi wouldn’t say anything, so he said, “Because of Mr. Sun?”

Ji Yi’s fingers trembled for a moment but she shook her head. “No...”

She immediately tried to change the topic: “Sorry about earlier. I put you in a difficult position by doing that.”

“You don’t have to entertain people if you don’t want to, and you don’t have to worry about who you embarrass,” He Jichen replied so bluntly with hints of rare arrogance. “Including myself.”

Ji Yi’s heart shook as she looked up at He Jichen.

He was standing and she was sitting, so all she could see was his perfect lower jaw.

His words comforted her, yet Mr. Sun's appearance troubled her heart. The mixed feelings she had seemed to build up in her chest. They tumbled around in her mind and no matter how hard she tried, she couldn't shake them off. He Jichen stared at her for some time without saying a single word.

The doors to the lounge opened again. It was Chen Bai, back with the stomach pain relief medicine. As soon as he saw He Jichen, he impatiently said, "Mr. He, so here you are. Mr. Xia was looking for you."

He Jichen gave a gentle nod. He reached his hand out, took the medicine from Chen Bai and signaled with his eyes for him to leave first.

Chen Bai knew what to do, so he swiftly disappeared from the lounge. The second he shut the door, He Jichen lowered his head and looked over at Ji Yi. "You don't like Mr. Sun?"

By reflex, Ji Yi wanted to nod but she thought that wasn't appropriate, so she quickly stopped.

"Forget it. You don't have to tell me – I can tell." He Jichen paused for a moment and said, "Wait here for a moment, I'm stepping out for a bit."

Ji Yi figured that He Jichen must've been talking to Mr. Xia when he stepped away to find Chen Bai. She let out a soft "Mhm."

He Jichen turned to leave the lounge.

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After about ten minutes, Chen Bai knocked on the door of the lounge to let Ji Yi know that the production party was almost over.

Ji Yi hurriedly got up and went to the restroom to fix herself up a little first. When she returned to the hall, the host was already on stage giving a speech.

Ji Yi took a seat in the second row. Besides the production team sitting in the front row, there were also some people He Jichen introduced to her earlier.

However, there was an empty seat to the right in front of her, in the front row. There was still someone missing.

After the host finished speaking, He Jichen went up on stage to give a speech, followed by the assistant director.

The two of them didn't speak for long; they spoke for perhaps over ten minutes. After they finished, during the applause, Ji Yi accidentally overheard someone sitting in front of her with their head tilted whispering to the person next to him.

"Mr. Sun just sent me a message. He said Mr. He mercilessly kicked him out of the party over a woman!"

"Are you serious?" exclaimed the other person in shock.

"It's true! Look, the seat next to mine was for Mr. Sun, but it's empty right now!"

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“Oh it really is true...”

The speech at the end of production party was over, so the two people sitting in front of Ji Yi left, one after the other.

Having overheard everything they said, Ji Yi remained in her seat for some time before getting up. As she passed the empty seat, she leaned forward a little to look at the name behind the chair: Sun Zhounan.

What they said was true – it’s Mr. Sun’s seat...

Ji Yi averted her gaze and scanned the entire hall. She searched several times over but she couldn’t see any sign of Sun Zhounan.

So what I just heard was all true?

He Jichen asked me if I disliked Mr. He, but before I could answer, he made his own call to kick Mr. Sun out of the party?

Someone from the production team came to make casual conversation with Ji Yi. She came to her senses and took a glass of wine from a nearby attendant.

Though she was busily chatting away, her eyes glanced over at He Jichen every now and then.

After the people around him finally dispersed, he seemed tired of entertaining people, so he found a seat by the window.

Ji Yi politely excused herself from the conversation with the people around her: “Apologies, please excuse me.” Then she walked over to He Jichen.

The sound of her footsteps was very quiet, but he was still able to sense someone walking over to his side. His hands fell from his face and he turned to look at her.

Seeing that it was her, he didn’t say anything. He pointed over at the empty seat beside him then he raised his hands again and massaged his temples.

Ji Yi knew he meant for her to take a seat. She bent over and put the glass down on the coffee table first. Then she smoothed out her dress and sat down.

After two seconds of silence, Ji Yi asked, “Did you kick out Mr. Sun?”

He Jichen casually let out an “Mhm” then continued to massage his temples.

She realized what happened long ago, but his neutral “Mhm” made her thoughts fluctuate for a moment.

Ji Yi took a sip of her wine, composed herself, and asked, “You didn’t even want to clear things up with me first?”

She wasn’t sure how tired He Jichen was, but he didn’t listen carefully to what she said nor did he reply to her for some time. All of sudden, he stopped massaging for a moment and replied with some degree of suspicion: “Mhm?”

"I said, you didn't even want to clear things up with me first? What if I was the one in the wrong?" asked Ji Yi, providing some clarification.

"Oh, you're asking about that..." He Jichen looked down at his hands then turned his head and looked into Ji Yi's eyes. "... Then answer me this first, do you not like him?"

He Jichen already kicked him out, so he didn't need to hide anything. Ji Yi gave a gentle nod. "Yes."

"That's all I needed to know," said He Jichen.

Ji Yi was stunned, unable to keep up with He Jichen.

He Jichen shifted into a more comfortable position as he picked up his wine glass on the coffee table. He took a gulp. Seeing as Ji Yi didn't respond, he remained completely laid back as he spoke again in his usual leisurely tone of voice: "Didn't you ask me to not ask why? Your reply was all I needed to know."

—"Do you not like him?"

—"Yes."

—"That's all I needed to know."

This went to say: Ji Yi didn't like Mr. Sun, so why should he allow Mr. Sun to stay? As for why she didn't like him, he simply didn't care.

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Ji Yi wasn't stupid; she instantly got the meaning behind He Jichen's words. Her heart skipped a beat then it started to race uncontrollably.

So this is how it feels to have someone care about me like this... It's like you're being carefully protected in someone's hands; it's like you're the center of the world and everything revolves around you.

Ji Yi stared right at He Jichen for a long time before she withdrew her gaze. Her eyes instantly fell and she faintly sensed the corners of her eyes starting to water.

She realized she was moved by his actions. The gloomy feeling she had from meeting Sun Zhounan seemed to have disappeared long ago, and in this very moment, her heart was filled completely with warmth.

She was moved by everything He Jichen did, but she didn't want him to think she was someone who liked to hold grudges. After Ji Yi calmed down, she started to recount to He Jichen all the grievances she had against Sun Zhounan.

She met Sun Zhounan four years ago. At that time, Sun Zhounan wasn't the capitalist he was today. At the time, Sun Zhounan was the assistant director in her production team. What's more, at the time, she was a new actress in the entertainment industry.

At first, she thought Sun Zhounan was a good person, unlike the others who'd been working in the industry for a long time who liked to show off what little status they had.



This was until she realized later on that everything she knew about Sun Zhounan was wrong. In private, he was despicable and he especially liked to use women to grow his business.

And she... was the person he had his eyes set on.

At the time, Ji Yi didn't think too much of it when he invited her for a meal – she thought it was normal for the production team to spend time together. When the time came, she realized that aside from the cast and crew, there was also a rich man from Beijing in attendance. That night, she was arranged to sit next to Sun Zhounan, and he worked with the rich man to try to get her to drink.

If it wasn't for her luck that night, she wouldn't have accidentally overheard Sun Zhounan ordering other people to drug her drink as she returned from the restroom. He said it'd be easier to get her into the rich man's bed. She became extremely cautious and didn't touch any food afterward. She was afraid she was going to turn out like all those innocent girls who went to parties and became some kind of bargaining chip Sun Zhounan used to trade for business.

He Jichen didn't make a sound and stayed very silent as he listened to Ji Yi's detailed account. But when he heard her mention the "drugging" at the end, his eyes instantly turned cold.

Ji Yi hadn't finished, so she continued, "He's probably never failed before, so I was an exception. He didn't give up. Later, he invited me to a party under the guise of the production team, but I rejected his invitation. He was probably annoyed, so that's when he started meddling with my reputation. Four years ago, when my first movie just came out, he created rumors out of nothing behind my back by bribing all the media companies..."

Even though it happened many years ago, Ji Yi still pursed her lips like she was still upset.

In contrast to her long explanation, He Jichen's reply was very simple: "Mhm."

Just when Ji Yi wondered whether or not he actually heard her, He Jichen pulled out his phone from his pocket and made a call.

Before the call even went through, He Jichen hung up.

Then after about ten seconds, Chen Bai appeared. "Mr. He, you were looking for me?"

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"Mhm," responded He Jichen softly as he played on his phone. After about two seconds, he looked up and shot Chen Bai a glance. He didn't wait for Chen Bai to speak as he opened his mouth. "Is Sun Zhounan staying at the Tianhua Hotel?"

"Yes," replied Chen Bai.

He Jichen calmly said, "Send someone to invite him back."

Chen Bai looked as though he'd just heard the most unbelievable thing. His eyes shot wide open from being overly shocked. He stuttered as he spoke, "In-invite him... back?"

As Ji Yi stared at He Jichen sitting beside her, she wore the same astonished look on her face as Chen Bai.

In contrast to their reactions, He Jichen looked as calm as a sheet of white paper. He lazily mumbled the word “Mhm.”

“It’s just that... Mr. He, you asked me to privately ask Mr. Sun to leave, yet now you want me to send someone to invite him back. This...” Before Chen Bai could finish protesting, He Jichen looked impatient as he glanced over at Chen Bai from the corners of his eyes. Chen Bai was so afraid that his lips trembled and his endless chatter changed direction. “Yes, I’ll go invite Mr. Sun. Please wait, Mr. He.”

After he said this, Chen Bai turned around, swiftly carrying out He Jichen’s orders.

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Tianhua Hotel was just about a thousand meters away from Starlight. In ten minutes time, Sun Zhounan followed behind Chen Bai, appearing before He Jichen and Ji Yi’s eyes.

Chen Bai stopped walking and said in a low voice, “Mr. He, Mr. Sun has arrived.”

He Jichen raised his head and silently swept a look at Sun Zhounan standing behind Chen Bai.

As their eyes met, Sun Zhounan unexpectedly spoke up: “Mr. He, I thought you were a smart person. You won’t really pick a fight over a woman.”

“After all, women are women, and business is business. Nobody would give up on a big business deal over a mere woman!”

As he said this, Sun Zhounan looked over at Ji Yi with disgust in his oddly clear eyes.

Ji Yi looked away with an evidently colder look in her eyes.

Sun Zhounan didn’t care in the slightest for Ji Yi’s reaction. He shifted over to He Jichen on the sofa as he said, “Honestly speaking, when you kicked me out, I was really angry. Was there any need for you to do this on behalf of a third-rate minor celebrity?”

Third-rate minor celebrity... He Jichen pinched his phone a little harder as the air around him instantly turned a lot colder.

Sun Zhounan completely disregarded Ji Yi and continued to say, “Who knows how many people know about this and how many people are laughing at you behind your back. But luckily, you sent someone to escort me back so we can get over this and become good friends in the...”

After Sun Zhounan was saying this, he walked over to sit on the sofa. Just before he sat down and his mouth could say the word “future,” He Jichen broke his silence as he suddenly blurted out, “Did I offer you a seat?”

Sun Zhounan’s words suddenly came to a stop. He stayed crouched, and after ten whole seconds, he turned to look at He Jichen.

He Jichen knew Sun Zhounan was looking right at him. Without even looking at him, He Jichen continued to tell him bluntly, "I invited you back for no special reason. I just realized I didn't ask you to leave publically enough, so I just wanted to ask you to leave again!"

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"After all, you just said it yourself... who knows how many people would laugh behind your back for doing this on behalf of a third-rate celebrity..."

He Jichen's brows raised slightly with harsh contempt as he said, "...Unfortunately, I've never experienced the taste of ridicule, but today, I just so happened to have the chance to give it out!"

After he said this, He Jichen didn't give Sun Zhounan any chance to react. He turned his head and looked over at Chen Bai as he raised his voice loudly: "Chen Bai, call security to escort Mr. Sun out!"

Quite a few people nearby heard what He Jichen said and turned their heads towards the scene, one after the other.

Sun Zhounan never imagined that He Jichen would ever invite him back to his hotel only to embarrass him even more. With his face flushed, he stared at He Jichen's changing expression for a moment and forced out the words, "He Jichen, don't test me!"

"Don't test me?!" It was like He Jichen heard something hilarious as his lips curved into a smirk. "If you didn't remind me, I would've forgotten I was even testing you. What can you do about it?!"

As he said this, He Jichen turned to look over at the two security guards Chen Bai called over and said, "Sorry, I used the wrong words. I didn't mean to say escort Mr. Sun out – please kick Mr. Sun out!"

As He Jichen was about to finish, he shot Chen Bai a look. Chen Bai understood what He Jichen meant. When He Jichen spoke his last word, he immediately waved the two security guards over to make their move.

When was Sun Zhounan ever this resistant? He struggled and fought to prevent the security guards from touching him, but how could he take on the strength of two people by himself? In the end, he was dragged out of the hall in embarrassment under everyone's gaze.

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The atmosphere in the hall was chaotic after Sun Zhounan was dragged away screaming.

Everyone's attention lingered on He Jichen and Ji Yi; quite a few people got together and started to gossip about what just unfolded.

The sounds of everyone talking grew louder and louder. Overhearing some of their conversations, Ji Yi blinked gently, turned her head slightly and looked over at He Jichen.

He looked calm as though what just happened had nothing to do with him at all.

She was curious as to why He Jichen invited Sun Zhounan back, but she never imagined that the reason was for him to throw Sun Zhounan out again as everybody watched!

Although this matter was unpleasant, the first time he asked Chen Bai to see Sun Zhounan out discreetly, so he still left Sun Zhounan some face. He didn't destroy their relationship entirely, but now, considering what just happened... he and Sun Zhounan would probably never work together again...

It was just like Sun Zhounan said, women were women, business was business. How much business would someone give up over a woman?

He Jichen spoke up but didn't answer her inquisitive gaze as he asked, "Released all that pent-up anger?"

Ji Yi knew he was referring to inviting Sun Zhounan back and kicking him out. She gave an honest nod. With everything that just unfolded, it really did help relieve her anger.

A hint of satisfaction came over He Jichen's face. He then leaned back against the sofa with his eyes shut as though he was exhausted. He spoke with a clear voice, but all Ji Yi could hear was two words: "That's enough."

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—"Released all that pent up anger?"

—"That's enough."

In that instant, Ji Yi understood what He Jichen meant. It didn't matter if this incident affected his business – it wasn't important. What mattered to him was allowing her to release all her pent-up anger.

Ji Yi's heart suddenly started to waver and she felt like she had an infinite number of things to say to him. Most of all, she wanted to say "thank you" to He Jichen. She also wanted to tell him that she was delighted he did that for her and that she hoped he would continue to be considerate towards her in the future. However, those words were stuck in her throat, and all of a sudden, she was left speechless.

I should probably start by thanking him...

Ji Yi remained quiet for some time before she finally decided to tell He Jichen what was on her mind. But suddenly, she heard a crisp, fragile voice nearby: "Jichen."

In that instant, the words Ji Yi wanted to say stopped in her mouth. She hesitated for a second then slowly turned her head towards the source of the sound.

It was Chen Bai. He was escorting a young, beautiful girl to where she and He Jichen were sitting.

The woman's skin was very fair and she had prominent facial features. Although she was dressed in business attire with her hair up, it couldn't mask her feminine air. Not to mention her effect on guys, but with just one look, even Ji Yi's breath was taken away by her beauty.

"Mr. He, Miss Xia..." Chen Bai walked over and eventually came to a stop in front of He Jichen. Before Chen Bai could finish his introduction, the woman greeted He Jichen, ran over to him and said with a bright smile, "Jichen, are you surprised by my sudden appearance?!"

Ji Yi wasn't sure if He Jichen was pleasantly surprised by this "Miss Xia" who Chen Bai introduced, but he was silent for a few seconds. Then his lips moved: "Why are you here?"

The woman was in no rush to reply but instead, she rushed over to Chen Bai who was standing beside her and demanded, "Chen Bai, fetch me a glass of water first. I'm parched."

There was quite some space between Ji Yi and He Jichen on the sofa – enough space for a person to take a seat. After the woman withdrew her gaze from Chen Bai, she looked over at the empty space next to He Jichen and replied to He Jichen, "It's all your fault. You haven't come back to Sucheng for so long, so I wanted to see you. Seeing as your party was at Shanghai Starlight, I wanted to give you a pleasant surprise, so I secretly came over..." She brazenly sat down, forcing Ji Yi and He Jichen to separate.

She gestured with her arms as she spoke. When she said that, the smell of her perfume drifted endlessly into Ji Yi's nostrils.

"...Jichen, since tonight's the end-of-production party, you're free tomorrow, right? Why don't you come with me to Shanghai for two days..."

Her voice sounded so nice, but for some reason, after listening to her for some time, Ji Yi started to get a headache. Even her perfume felt like it was piercing her nose.

"...I want to go on a night cruise on the Huangpu River. I also want to go to Disneyland, and I want to go shopping..."

Chen Bai returned and interrupted the woman's words. "Miss Xia, your water."

"Thank you." The woman took it, turned her head and told He Jichen, "... Jichen, I still want to go to the Oriental Pearl Tower..."

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The woman said so much, yet He Jichen didn't say a peep in reply. She was probably afraid of getting rejected by him, so she reached her hand out and pulled on his sleeve. She started to whine sweetly and sway her body like a child. "Jichen, promise me, won't you? Please, pretty please..."

He Jichen seemed a bit impatient with her pestering, so he called out her name, "Xia Yuan..."

So her name's Xia Yuan... Not only is she beautiful, but her name also sounds so good...

Ji Yi had never met such an exceptional woman in her life; never before had she paid this much attention to another woman's looks, body, voice, and even her name.

What's even more, Ji Yi didn't notice just how much she took note of everything that this woman called "Xia Yuan" looked at or what she knew.

He Jichen, who had never really been a patient person, didn't erupt in a fit of rage at Xia Yuan, but he just furrowed his brows slightly. Then he silently reached over with his other arm and gently plucked Xia Yuan off his sleeve. He looked over at Ji Yi and continued to speak to Xia Yuan, "...Let me introduce you for a moment. This is Ji Yi, the new artist signed to my company."

As soon as she heard He Jichen mention her name, Ji Yi immediately tossed aside all her thoughts to the back of her mind and looked over at He Jichen.

Noticing her gaze, He Jichen spoke again, "And this is Xia Yuan, my professor's daughter and my classmate from school."

Oh, so she's from a prestigious school; she's totally an honor student... What's more, she was probably raised in a rich family. Is she what people call a "debutante"?

Considering what He Jichen said, Ji Yi's mind started to revolve around Xia Yuan several times.

Having heard He Jichen's introduction, Xia Yuan, who had been sitting on the sofa for so long, finally noticed Ji Yi. She turned her head to look at Ji Yi with a dazzling smile, then she reached her slender, lily-white hands out. "Hello, Miss Ji. I'm Xia Yuan, delighted to meet you," said Xia Yuan warmly to Ji Yi.

When Ji Yi heard Xia Yuan speak, she flashed her a smile and looked back at her. However, for some reason, after hearing Xia Yuan's natural and outspoken introduction, the smile on her face turned stiff. She tried her best to raise the corners of her lips as the words from her mouth came out hoarse, "Hello, I'm Ji Yi."

After the two of them politely shook hands, Xia Yuan and Ji Yi continued to share a few courteous words.

Every word Xia Yuan said didn't stray far from the topic of He Jichen. If she didn't talk about how remarkable he was in school, she'd talk about interesting things that happened to him in school...

Ji Yi wasn't part of He Jichen's old life at his university, so she couldn't talk about it with Xia Yuan; all she could do was wear a slight smile and listen feebly.

When Xia Yuan started to talk about the time He Jichen received an award in university, she turned to look over at He Jichen and said with an unusually sweet voice, "Jichen, did you know? Two days ago, my dad brought up the time you received an award in conversations. He even called you the most outstanding student amongst all his students. When are you free? My dad really misses you. He always bugs me about you coming over to our house to play chess with him when you have some free time..."

Ji Yi wasn't sure what was wrong with her, but when she heard this, her chest felt incredibly stifled for some reason.

She suddenly didn't want to sit there like a fool, listening to them chat about things she had no idea about.

She didn't wait for He Jichen to reply and beat him first to say, "Apologies Director He, Miss Xia. You two continue to chat, I'm just going to take a look over there."