

Chapter 171: A Billion Stars Can't Amount to Her (1)

If he truly believed her, why would she need to explain herself?

Before she let any words slip out, Ji Yi suddenly realized just how incredibly funny the situation was.

After all, she was too soft-hearted. Seeing how he brought her home that night from Lin Zhengyi's clutches, she had a change of heart about him. After she heard those stories about his current plight, she was full of guilt and felt sorry for him.

What's more, she clearly knew Lin Zhengyi was scheming against her, yet she still went straight into the lion's den with the recordings just to win his investment back.

She never spoke so softly and submissively or let someone force her to drink so much before. After she woke up from the car accident, she never thought of using dishonest methods to return to the entertainment industry. Instead, she patiently waited for over half a year for the right opportunity.

In an instant, Ji Yi's mood became slightly complicated.

She refused to be taken so lightly by He Jichen. She was upset over being mistaken as a traitor by him, and she felt wronged after being indiscriminately treated like that by him.

The bitterness in her eye grew more fierce, but she stubbornly refused to cry in front of him.

Compared to how flustered and afraid she was when she witnessed He Jichen's scathing anger in the past, she wasn't actually that scared at this very moment. In fact, she stared unwaveringly into He Jichen's eyes that were a thousand times colder than the dead of winter.

In any case, she was already worthless in his heart, so there was nothing to worry about.

At that thought, Ji Yi went ahead and said to He Jichen, "Yeah, since I saw that nothing was happening with 'Three Thousand Lunatics,' I went to find Lin Zhengyi to see if he could give me a role. He can give me whatever role I want, so why wouldn't I look for him?"

He Jichen's eyes squinted slightly as an aura of violence poured out from his body.

Ji Yi felt his fingers on her chin start to tremble. She knew he was furious, yet she scoffed as she spoke with no hint of stopping, "You asked since I stayed with him, why couldn't I let you touch me? You can, Mr. He, but I want to know what role you can give me? What perks can you offer me?"

He Jichen was so angry that his lips quivered, but he was also completely paralyzed; he couldn't say a word.

Ji Yi gave an even more charming and sweet smile as her voice turned gentle. She said, "Mr. He, now we can chat, and once we finish talking, however you want me to be of service to you, I'll do it..."

All of a sudden, He Jichen gripped her chin frighteningly hard. The pain stopped Ji Yi from finishing her sentence.

In a rage, He Jichen looked unexpectedly emotionless as he stared at Ji Yi with bloodshot eyes. She had no idea what he was going to say as the words seemed to build up in his mouth. Then, as though he was itching to ferociously peel her skin off, he said, "You want to make a deal? Do you really think I care about you? If it weren't..."

He Jichen paused for a moment, then he had a sudden thought and continued by saying, "... If I wasn't asked to help you, I never would've even bothered with you! I'm telling you, I never mess with prostitutes because I think they're dirty..."

Mess with prostitutes... think they're dirty... Ji Yi's fingers quivered. She didn't wait for He Jichen to finish before she interrupted him on her own tangent.

Chapter 172: A Billion Stars Can't Amount to Her (2)

"Oh look at me... How could I forget? Mr. He once said: 'Wasn't it disgusting enough to sleep with me?' We did it once four years ago, and that was enough to make Mr. He vomit!"

He Jichen's body froze. Seconds later, he realized those were indeed the words he once said to her.

"Mr. He also said that even if I stood barenaked in front of Mr. He, Mr. He wouldn't be the least bit interested! I was wrong; I shouldn't have overestimated the power of my words and mocked Mr. He..."

As Ji Yi repeatedly said "Mr. He," she fired He Jichen's own words back at him to fatally attack him to the point where he couldn't say a word.

He Jichen felt the ball of fire in his chest could explode at any time. He was afraid he'd lose his senses as he tried his hardest to control himself. However, he couldn't control his feelings in the end; his heart hurt and he had to use an infinite amount of strength to force down the words "Shut your mouth".

Meanwhile, Ji Yi had no intention of stopping, so she kept talking with a beautiful smile on her face. "But don't worry, Mr. He. Mr. He isn't the only benefactor in the world. You may reject me, but there's bound to be someone who will accept me and wants to talk to me. For example..."

Ji Yi tilted her head and appeared to ponder it seriously then she deliberately raised her voice as she enunciated the name one word at a time, "...Lin. Zheng. Yi..."

Those three words were like a live wire, igniting a spark in He Jichen's body.

He couldn't take it any longer and rapidly shifted his hand from her chin to her arm. He forcefully picked her up, and without so much as a second thought, he swung his hand towards her face. Before his hand reached her face, it stopped in midair.

But it paused there for just a second before he waved his hand and chucked her to the sofa beside them.

The sofa was soft, so Ji Yi didn't get hurt, but her head was in disarray for a moment as she fell from He Jichen's sheer force.

Before she could snap back to her senses, she heard a loud "bang!" by her ear.

Her body shuddered in shock as she turned her head to see that He Jichen had kicked the coffee table two meters away.

Her fingertips instinctively grabbed the cushions on the sofa, and just as she wondered whether He Jichen was going to tear her apart, she heard footsteps coming from behind her. Before she could turn her head to look, the hotel room doors were pulled open and slammed shut.

He Jichen left?

Ji Yi was afraid she was hallucinating, so she turned her head and carefully scanned all around the hotel room. When she was certain He Jichen had truly left, she picked up the clothes he tore off her. She was barely able to cover her body before she buried her face into the sofa and started to quietly cry.

Ji Yi's silent tears went on for some time until her eyes were dry and sore and no more tears were left. She finally struggled to climb up from the sofa and grabbed the phone beside her. She called the front desk to give them her measurements and asked them to bring some clothes up for her. Then she swayed over to the bathroom.

Ji Yi stood under the hot shower for a long time before she heard the doorbell ring. She snapped back to her senses, quickly turned the shower off, and wrapped herself in a bathrobe in a panic. She didn't even have time to dry her hair as she ran over to the door.

Chapter 173: A Billion Stars Can't Amount to Her (3)

She was afraid He Jichen had returned, so she peered through the peephole first, only to see a female hotel attendant standing there. She opened the door.

The attendant politely handed her a paper bag with smile. "Miss, these are the clothes you requested. May I ask, will you be paying by cash?"

"Thank you, cash." Ji Yi took the invoice, glanced at the total, and turned to the living room. She found her purse, counted out the cash, and handed it to the attendant.

Ji Yi waited for the attendant to give her the change before she shut the door, grabbed the bag, and walked into the bathroom.

Just as she grabbed a towel and patted her hair and body dry, she saw in the mirror that her skin was filled with marks all over.

They were all marks left by He Jichen's fingers and teeth... Ji Yi stopped brushing her hair for a moment as she felt a pulsing ache creeping upon her.

She was afraid she'd cry again, so she hurriedly lowered her eyes, pretending as though she hadn't seen anything. She patted her hair quickly then used the hair dryer to frantically dry the rest of it before getting dressed.

After she was all ready, Ji Yi didn't linger in the bathroom. When she got out, she put her ripped clothes into the paper bag that the attendant delivered her new clothes in. Then she hastily grabbed her bag and left He Jichen's room.

While she took the elevator down, Ji Yi called for a taxi.

In the chill of the winter night, the room was unusually cold. Ji Yi didn't wait for the taxi in the warm lobby of the Four Seasons Hotel but stood right by the side of the hotel. She found a lamppost and stood under it as she waited.

After about a minute passed, the phone in Ji Yi's pocket rang.

She thought it was the taxi driver calling to say her ride had arrived. The cold forced her body to shiver as she pulled out her phone to see an unknown number calling. She picked up the call immediately and asked, "Sir, where are you?"

The call was silent for a couple of seconds when a familiar voice was heard, "Miss Ji Yi, it's me."

It was Lin Zhengyi's voice.

Ji Yi was stunned as she realized she'd made a mistake and hurriedly changed her tone, "Mr. Lin, my apologies. I thought the taxi I called arrived."

"Don't worry about it, Miss Ji Yi." After Lin Zhengyi politely replied, he spoke again seconds later. "I'm calling to give you my answer."

Ji Yi knew this answer referred to the conversation about the recording tonight.

She let out a soft "Mhm". "Mr. Lin, go on."

"I agree to all the terms you mentioned tonight at Yue Yuan. I'll even add twenty percent of my original investment, so..." Lin Zhengyi came to a stop.

Although he didn't finish, Ji Yi already knew what he meant. "Mr. Lin, about your investment. It's a collaboration with YC Corp, so you should contact them directly. As long as you re-sign with YC Corp, I'll hand over all the recordings in my possession. As for deleting or keeping those recordings, that'll be up to you to decide."

Upon hearing Ji Yi's swift response, Lin Zhengyi sounded a lot more relaxed. "Alright, I und... No, I'll order someone to speak to YC Corp now. When everything is finalized, I'll contact you again."

"Alright, goodbye for now, Mr. Lin." Ji Yi was just about to hang up when all of a sudden, she remembered something and said, "Mr. Lin..."

Chapter 174: A Billion Stars Can't Amount to Her (4)

Lin Zhengyi was probably about to hang up when he heard her voice and replied, "What's wrong? Is there anything else?"

"It's like this..." Ji Yi paused for a moment then continued. "...As for your plans to reinvest, if anyone asks, I hope you can think up an excuse to brush them off. Don't say you changed your mind after I came to see you."

"Why?" asked Lin Zhengyi out of curiosity.

He didn't wait for Ji Yi to answer before he suddenly realized what Ji Yi meant and said, "I get it. You're afraid if this gets out, I would lose face, right? Xiao Yi, don't you worry. I'll think of an explanation. Ah, you really thought things through..."

Upon hearing how happy Lin Zhengyi was, Ji Yi realized he misunderstood her intentions.

She wasn't afraid of news getting out that she blackmailed Lin Zhengyi with the recordings, but rather, she didn't want He Jichen to know her true objective for being with Lin Zhengyi. Her objective wasn't to get close to Lin Zhengyi, but it was all because she was trying to protect He Jichen!

Anyway... He Jichen didn't believe her, so there was no need to accept his gratitude.

What's more, she was partly responsible for Lin Zhengyi pulling his investment for "Three Thousand Lunatics" in the first place, so she viewed this as her way of paying him back.

After everything, the two of them were now even.

With that thought, Ji Yi didn't bother to explain her true intentions to Lin Zhengyi over the phone, but instead, she politely said "Goodbye" and hung up.

A cold breeze rushed in, causing Ji Yi to shiver.

She hugged her shoulders as her neck shrank into her clothes. She continued to wait by the side of the road for a while before she finally saw her taxi slowly driving over.

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When He Jichen charged out of the Four Seasons Hotel boiling with rage, he coincidentally bumped right into the hotel manager delivering a fruit tray next door.

The manager recognized him, so he immediately stood aside with the tray and was about to greet him politely when he saw his furious expression. He was so frightened that he didn't dare to speak and held his breath as he stood unflinchingly against the wall.

He Jichen didn't even shoot him a glance as he brushed right past him with large strides. He headed for the elevator and pressed the button.

When the elevator doors opened, He Jichen stepped in and headed right for the underground parking lot.

The things Ji Yi said in the room just now rang repeatedly in his ears.

"Yeah, since I saw that nothing was happening with 'Three Thousand Lunatics,' I went to find Lin Zhengyi... Oh look at me... How could I forget? Mr. He asked: wasn't it disgusting enough to sleep with me...? But don't worry, Mr. He. Mr. He isn't the only benefactor in the world. You may reject me, but there's bound to be someone who will accept me and wants to talk to me..."

With those words, He Jichen felt his flesh sear in pain with the pain coursing through his blood around his entire body. The pain made his temples pulse and his entire body started to tremble uncontrollably.

No! He couldn't think about it any longer or he'd really go crazy!

At that thought, He Jichen violently shook his head and hurled the words out from his ears.

He had to find something else to do or else he really would lose control, go back upstairs and beat up the feeble, sharp-tongued little woman to pieces!

That's right! He had to do something...

Chapter 175: A Billion Stars Can't Amount to Her (5)

But what was he doing?

A second ago, He Jichen was racking his brain over what to do, and the next second, he shot a glance at his own car. Without even thinking about it, he pulled the car door open and got in. As he stepped on the gas and sped out of the parking lot and onto the main road, he drove aimlessly around the city and wandered recklessly.

He didn't know what road he was on exactly nor how fast he was going, but he knew to stop at a red light and to go at a green light. He drove like he was a mindless puppet up until his car ran out of gas and he was forced to stop. He didn't even realize he ran out of gas when he kept furiously stepping on the pedal. He furrowed his brows with the faint pain radiating from the soles of his feet. Finally, he snapped back to his senses, lowered his head, and glanced over at the meter. Ah, the car ran out of gas...

But he just topped his tank up that afternoon... With that thought, He Jichen slowly turned his head, stared at the night sky out the window and realized it was already quite late.

That was when he shot a quick glance at the time on the car; it was almost midnight.

He had actually been driving around Beijing aimlessly for almost three hours.

He rubbed his sore eyes from driving for such a long time. Then he pulled out a cigarette from his pocket, put it to his mouth, and lit it up. He didn't take a drag but let it quietly burn out between his fingers.

The car windows were shut tight so the smoke quickly filled the area around him, gradually calming his extremely tense mood. He then found his phone and called the insurance company to send someone over to top the tank up.

After he hung up the phone, He Jichen lowered his car seat and laid down. As he stared at the dazzling night sky out the window, he lit up one cigarette after another.

When he reached for the final cigarette left in the pack, he blindly reached for his phone on the front passenger seat and brought it to his face.

There were many unread We Chat message notifications.

After he clicked on them, the first message that popped up was sent by Tang Huahua an hour ago.

"He Xuezhong 1, after Xiao Yi got out of bed in the early afternoon, she left campus and hasn't returned to the dorm."

“I gave her a call but she didn’t answer. At half past ten, her mum called her at the dorms to say that she wasn’t picking up her phone. I was afraid her mum was overthinking things, so I gave her a random excuse.”

He took her to the Four Seasons Hotel and tore off her clothes. She wasn’t back at her dorm yet, so she must still be in the hotel room...

He Jichen didn’t reply to Tang Huahua’s message but went straight to the company’s WeChat group chat.

It was late so there weren’t many people on, but when he casually scrolled through the group, he saw the messages some people left about Ji Yi...

He was always like that – no matter how upset he made her... how angry he made her... even if his rage made him want to kill her, there was no way he could let other people criticize her.

All throughout the past few years, he knew clearly that he wasn’t in her heart, yet he still deeply loved her unwaveringly.

He appeared as someone who was calm and collected, but in reality, he had loved her with a burning insanity for far too long. It had been so long, yet he still hadn’t seen the slightest hope she had any feelings for him, and her unintentional cuts always pierced the deepest corners of his heart, making him lose his senses.

Just like what happened tonight – when he saw those videos, saw her come out from the lounge Lin Zhengyi was in, and heard her say those things... he completely lost control.

Chapter 176: A Billion Stars Can’t Amount to Her (6)

After coming back to his senses from his fit of rage against her, he was more remorseful than anyone, but he just couldn’t contain himself. In the end, it was because he loved her too much.

At that thought, a hint of heartbreak appeared on He Jichen’s face. It was raw and solemn.

His fingers slowly slid across the phone screen as he stared at all the criticism about her. He eventually closed WeChat. Though it was late at night and his secretary was probably already resting, he opened his call logs and found his secretary’s number.

He was just about to call him when he realized he had quite a few missed calls. Besides getting calls from his secretary, he also received two missed calls from Han Zhifan.

His brows twitched as he suddenly remembered he was originally playing cards with him and some clients when the situation with Ji Yi came up. He left without so much as a goodbye.

He stopped dialing his secretary and called Han Zhifan instead.

The call rang for a long time before it was picked up. It seemed like Han Zhifan had gone home and was just about to get in the shower as he could hear the faint sound of running water. Han Zhifan didn’t wait for him to speak first and said, “You still know how to call me back huh?”

He Jichen didn't reply to Han Zhifan's sarcastic taunts and cut to the chase, "What's the situation?"

"You left, so it most probably fell through..." replied Han Zhifan.

He Jichen didn't say anything but tightened his grip on his phone.

Han Zhifan probably felt his anxiety because a second later, he heard the "poof!" sound of laughter over the phone. "Say, Jichen, you weren't like this before. It's not like projects haven't fallen through in the past when we worked together, and you've never been so worried. Tell me, why do you care so much about this series, 'Three Thousand Lunatics'? Is there some kind of hidden secret?"

"Also, you got a call tonight and without even saying goodbye, you just left. In all the years we've known each other, I've never seen you forget yourself like that before. I noticed that you've recently become increasingly more secretive..."

He Jichen, who hadn't made a sound, cleared his throat to remind Han Zhifan to get back on topic.

"Oh, I forgot..." Han Zhifan heard the sound of his cough and understanding his meaning, went straight to business. "I was just joking. The negotiations are all done. They agreed to invest in 'Three Thousand Lunatics,' and I helped you draft up the contracts already. They're in your inbox, so remember to check it. If there are no problems, I'll set up an appointment to meet at the office tomorrow for the signing... Now that business is over, we can go back to what we were just talking about. Jichen, tell me, are you dating someone? Lately, why..."

When He Jichen heard this, he didn't wait for Han Zhifan to ramble on but mercilessly hung up the phone. Then he dialed his secretary's number.

The secretary called him a few times that night. Since the call was picked up immediately, he probably was waiting up for him about something, so he didn't go to sleep. "Mr. He, you finally called back."

He Jichen twitched his brows at how eager the secretary sounded. He put out the cigarette between his fingers and replied leisurely, "Did something happen?"

"Nothing bad. It's good news. Mr. Lin's secretary just contacted me to say that he wants to reinvest in 'Three Thousand Lunatics,' and what's more, he wants to invest twenty percent more than..."

Before his secretary could finish his report, He Jichen flatly spat out the two words, "Decline it!"

Chapter 177: A Billion Stars Can't Amount to Her (7)

"Eh?" The secretary was left stunned by He Jichen's reply. After a while, as he asked again to make sure, "Reject it?"

He Jichen carelessly let out a "mhm."

"Mr. He, weren't you recently worried about the investment for 'Three Thousand Lunatics'? You asked me to sell all your shares, and you even wanted to sell your apartment! Now, all you have to do is accept Mr. Lin's investment and everything will be resolved, right? Mr. Lin originally invested a total of two



billion, so with an additional twenty percent, that's four hundred million extra! Mr. Lin will invest two billion and four hundred million..."

"So what?" replied He Jichen nonchalantly after the secretary's long monologue.

What does he mean by "so what"?

This was practically a gift from the heavens falling right into his lap! Not only were they going to get their investment back, there was going to be four hundred million more. Four hundred million was enough to pay an A-list actor. This was basically a large sum of money they could invest into production at a later stage...

The secretary was stunned by those two words for quite some time before he forced himself to speak, "Mr. He..."

The secretary wanted to tell He Jichen what was on his mind, but he only managed to say two words before He Jichen said softly, "Do as I asked."

He was probably tired as there seemed to be some exhaustion in his voice, but even so, the secretary still felt an intense stifling feeling. He didn't dare try to persuade him again and said quietly, "Yes, Mr. He."

He Jichen remained quiet for a long time over the phone as though he was in deep in thought, then he moved his lips. "Had he not pulled his investment back then, I would've made him pull his investment!"

Since Mr. He had plans to refuse Mr. Lin's investment before he pulled it... The secretary's eyes suddenly shot wide open as he thought he misheard. He Jichen boldly mumbled to himself over the phone quietly, a little puzzled, "She's the woman I'm protecting. How could I let someone else casually come in and mess with her and take matters into their own hands..."

Though he was quiet, the secretary heard every word clearly.

He Jichen was obviously transparent with his emotions when he said that. The secretary wasn't sure if he was hallucinating, but he suddenly felt an intense shock.

It felt like something hard had crashed into the secretary's heart as he suddenly fell into a daze.

After staying quiet for some time, He Jichen suddenly remembered the secretary had called to talk business. He hurriedly snapped back to his senses, cleared his throat, and flatly said, "Oh, right. Tell everyone in the company on the WeChat group that they're not permitted to leak any of tonight's videos out about the supporting actress of 'Three Thousand Lunatics'!"

Those videos have implications for her reputation. Even if she degraded herself, I'll still pretend to be deaf and mute and protect her to the end.

"Also, fire that 'meow meow meow' person who uploaded the videos to the group..." After a pause, He Jichen was afraid the secretary would interpret this to mean he had feelings for Ji Yi, so he added, "'Three Thousand Lunatics' is really important to our company. I can't allow anyone to make any mistakes!"

“Yes, Mr. He, as soon as I get to the office in the morning, I’ll take care of it.” Just as He Jichen hoped, his secretary’s suspicious seemed to be diverted.

Translator’s Thoughts

Paperplane Paperplane

Shout out to Aln!

Chapter 178: A Billion Stars Can’t Amount to Her (8)

He Jichen said no more and was just about to hang up.

But before he lowered the phone from his ear, the secretary spoke again, “Mr. He? I...”

“Mm?” responded He Jichen, thinking the secretary still had matters to discuss.

The secretary just blurted out He Jichen’s name without thinking, but when he realized he was going to cross a line, he stopped himself. However, after hearing He Jichen’s patient reply, he hesitated for a moment before pushing forward with the question he wanted to ask earlier. “Mr. He, you just said she’s the woman you’re protecting and you can’t let anyone mess with her. That woman, is she the woman you like?”

He Jichen never imagined that his secretary would suddenly care about his personal life. He furrowed his brows.

Over the phone, the secretary was nervous as hell while he waited for He Jichen to reply. All of sudden, he lost his confidence and said, “Sorry, Mr. He, I...”

Before the secretary could finish apologizing, He Jichen blinked and composed himself then flatly responded with an “Mhm.”

In that instant, the secretary was stunned when he caught his response.

He never imagined Mr. He would actually share his personal matters with him...

He Jichen wasn’t sure what came over the secretary, but after a few seconds of silence, he said, “Yes, she’s the woman I like...”

The secretary didn’t understand his history, so he didn’t know about his and Ji Yi’s complex relationship. Moreover, He Jichen felt overly saddened after reflecting on what he did to Ji Yi out of anger. Having never revealed his feelings to anyone before, this was the first time he revealed his feelings deep down inside.

What’s more, He Jichen’s reply was just a way for him to release the intense feelings he kept hidden in his heart all these years.

His gaze softened as he held the phone, but he didn’t wait for the secretary to answer and continued to add, “...I’ve liked her since the first time I saw her.”

If he thought about it, after working for He Jichen for so long, this was the most he'd ever spoken to his boss.

Because He Jichen revealed so much, the secretary felt a little more daring. When he finished speaking, the secretary asked the question he had on his mind: "Mr. He, I'm having trouble imagining the woman you like. What kind of woman is she?"

What kind of woman is she?

He Jichen held his phone as he stared unblinkingly out the window for a long time. He suddenly realized there were stars glistening in the dark sky. At that moment, seven words flashed across his mind, and with a soft voice, he said, "...A billion stars can't amount to her..."

The secretary didn't clearly hear what he said, so he asked, "What?"

He Jichen snapped back to reality and responded with an "Mm" before saying, "Her? She casually barged into my life and silently filled it up..."

He Jichen didn't give the secretary any time to respond and hung up.

He stared transfixed at the glistening stars up in the sky as the words he said circled his mind.

What kind of woman is the woman I like?

Simple. Her name is Ji Yi and in his heart, a billion stars couldn't amount to her. She was Ji Yi, who casually barged into his life and silently filled it up...

Chapter 179: A Billion Stars Can't Amount to Her (9)

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He Jichen continued to sit in the car for a while after the insurance company sent someone to fill up his tank before he finally started the car up again.

He followed the silent and empty road for about half an hour with no idea where he was headed. Then he hit the brakes and slowly came to a stop.

He turned his head to look through the window and realized that he had returned to the entrance to the Four Seasons Hotel.

The doorman recognized his car and quickly rushed over to wait for him to get out.

He Jichen rolled his window down and waved at the doorman to signal for him to leave.

After the doorman left, He Jichen rolled his window back up and started to contemplate whether to go to the university or back home next.

He spent an awfully long time over such a simple decision, yet he still couldn't decide. His gaze involuntarily traveled up to the top floor of the Four Seasons Hotel.

I wonder how that woman is doing now?

When he left, he kicked the coffee table over, and from the corner of his eye, he caught a glimpse of her slender frame on the sofa, shivering violently. She stared straight at him with red eyes full of terror as though she was about to cry at any moment.

He didn't linger for long before he left her alone in the hotel room. Did she actually cry?

Also... He Jichen's gaze shifted from the top floor of the Four Seasons Hotel back to his own two hands on the steering wheel.

Did I drag her too hard all the way from Yue Yuan? I even showered her with cold water, and when her words pissed me off, I even threw her aside...

Tell me, why do I always lose control with her and erupt in anger?

And why did she say those things to me? I was clearly angry, yet she still triggered me...

At that thought, He Jichen's head started to ache. He raised his hand and pressed his temples, trying to stop himself from thinking, yet the thoughts in his mind simmered even more.

Such a cold night, yet she was showered with so much cold water. Who knew if she'd end up with a fever like last time. Her wrist was also still injured. Who knew if that healed up yet...

He Jichen suddenly reached his hand out, pushed the door, and got out of the car.

He didn't even lock the car before walking right into the hotel lobby.

The hotel manager was coincidentally talking to the staff at the front desk. Seeing him walk in, he immediately walked over and greeted him, "Mr. He."

It was only when He Jichen heard the manager's voice that he realized what he was doing. His footsteps suddenly stopped as he stared at the elevator for a while. It was so late now, that woman was probably long asleep by now, right? He was going to go up to sneakily see her. If she was alright, then he'd leave again...

With that, He Jichen lifted his feet again, ignored the hotel manager, and headed for the elevator.

When he reached the top floor, He Jichen stepped out of the elevators and headed right for the room door.

He Jichen gently swiped the key card and pushed the door open.

The lights in the room were still on, and the coffee table was still flipped over, just as he left it. The tissue box and remote control were spread out over the floorboards.

The lights in the bathroom were also on, and through the door, he could see there were two towels thrown on the ground.

But she wasn't on the sofa.

Chapter 180: A Billion Stars Can't Amount to Her (10)

After I left, did she take a shower and go to get some rest in the bedroom?

With that thought, He Jichen tiptoed over to the bedroom door.

Afraid to wake Ji Yi up from her sleep, he opened the door gently.

The lights were off in the bedroom and it was completely pitch-black. With the light coming from the living room, he could see that the room was spotless as though nobody had entered at all.

He Jichen furrowed his brows and instinctively reached for the light switch on the wall.

The lights turned on and the empty bed instantly came into sight. The bedsheets were neat and no one was there...

He Jichen's heart instantly jumped as he strode over to the bed and pulled the covers to the floor. When he confirmed there was no one there, he immediately turned back to the living room.

He glanced around the room to make sure that she wasn't hiding anywhere then he looked in the bathroom, bathtub, and sauna. He couldn't find any trace of her...

Only then did He Jichen realize that the clothes he ripped off the woman had also disappeared.

She couldn't have left wearing those torn clothes, right?

He Jichen leaped over to the phone and called the front desk. After he asked for the manager, he immediately hurled the question, "1001, Where is the person I brought here?"

"Mr. He, please wait..." Over the phone, He Jichen heard the manager asking the lady at the front desk. After waiting for about a minute, the hotel manager said, "Mr. He, the lady you brought asked us to bring a set of clothes three hours ago, paid for them herself then left."

Left three hours ago... He Jichen hung the phone up and immediately pulled his phone out from his pocket and glanced at the time.

Meaning... she left a little over half an hour ago... It wasn't even nine at the time and Tang Huahua messaged him at eleven to say she hadn't returned to the university, and she didn't return home... That was a two-hour gap, so where did she go?

He Jichen was still a little uneasy as his mind pondered over those questions. He immediately opened WeChat and sent Tang Huahua a message: "Is she back at the university yet?"

Tang Huahua must've been asleep since she didn't reply.

He Jichen paced restlessly around the living room for some time before he realized he might be fussing over nothing. She wasn't back at the university at eleven, but now it was already one in the morning. Maybe she returned at half-past eleven or twelve?

She was an adult and public security in Beijing was good. Before she left, she even asked the hotel to bring her some clothes so she would've been just fine...

He Jichen forced himself to calm down then stood in front of the floor-to-ceiling windows and stared at the night sky for a long time. Then he went back to the bedroom and slept on the bed.

He Jichen didn't know just how long he slept as he groggily heard his phone ring "ding dong!", which completely woke him up.

The curtains were drawn. It was already light outside, and the morning sun filled the room with a red glow.

He Jichen sat up, grabbed his phone, and opened WeChat. The first message was a reply from Tang Huahua. "Xiao Yi didn't come home last night. I just called her, but no one picked up."

Didn't come home all night? No one picked up?

He Jichen immediately punched in Ji Yi's number and made the call. Just like Tang Huahua said, the phone rang until he heard the message: "Sorry! The person you are calling is unavailable right now. Please try again later." Ji Yi didn't pick up his call.