

Chapter 81: How Have You Been? Let's Not Lie (1)

Though his older brother He Yuguang passed away three years ago, every time he went in front of his gravestone, a heavy, indescribable pain crept into He Jichen's heart.

After a while, he calmed down as he repeatedly stroked the word "Guang" and spoke in a deep voice, "Bro, I've come to visit you."

He Jichen knew that nobody would reply, but he still quietly waited for a while before he continued, "Bro, how have you been? Let's not lie..."

He Jichen knew he would never in his life see He Yuguang scribbling replies on his whiteboard ever again. He lowered his eyes and gulped hard. Then he pulled his hand back from the gravestone, turned around and sat down on the ground. He rested his head on the gravestone and stared up at the sunny skies. He smelled the tobacco of a cigarette he lit up, and he slowly said, "...I've been good. I'm not lying... Really good. She woke up, and she's doing alright... How about you, Bro?"

He was met with silence.

It wasn't until a gust of wind blew in and made the leaves from the surrounding trees rustle that He Jichen spoke again as though he was talking to himself, "Bro, can I ask you a question? Have you ever really wanted to start over with someone?"

He Jichen paused for three seconds then blinked softly. An infinite sense of sadness washed over his body, which in turn made his voice sound dejected. "Bro, I have..."

He Jichen said just three words before he stopped. Yet, he clearly said the words in his heart: I really want to start over with her; I want to go back to the moment she said her name. I really really want to start over with her; I want to start from the moment she first stepped into our house.

It wasn't until four years ago that he realized no matter how he confidently thought he would be as close as He Yuguang was in Ji Yi's heart, that wasn't the reality. His confidence had no use at all.

He Jichen lit another cigarette and slowly shut his eyes. Amongst the faint smell of tobacco, he continued his reminiscing about the beautiful memories of the past that he had the night before in the bar.

...

Soon after He Jichen and Ji Yi met each other, they had to take their high school examinations.

Ji Yi's results were good, and she easily entered Sucheng Yizhong's senior high experimental class 1. As for He Jichen, who left four out of five test papers blank and got only twenty points on one test, he barely made it into Sucheng Yizhong even after the He family donated a hundred computers. However, he didn't get into the experimental class but was in the ordinary class instead.

After graduating to senior high, aside from still being as ignorant and boastful as he was in junior high, he also learned a new skill: to protect.

He learned this new skill in the second month into the start of senior high.

It was a Wednesday afternoon. Ji Yi didn't go home after school but went with a few girls to have lunch, then she headed to the Happy Internet Cafe.

Coincidentally that day, He Jichen, Fatty and the gang met up for a game at the Happy Internet Cafe.

But she was on the first floor, and they were on the second floor.

Halfway through his game, he went to the washroom. Since the second-floor toilets were occupied, he had to go to the first-floor toilets. He picked up a pack of cigarettes while he was there.

After he grabbed his cigarettes at the front desk, he nonchalantly headed upstairs. That was when he incidentally caught glimpse of her through the windows, sitting in the internet cafe.

He instinctively stopped walking and looked back.

Chapter 82: How Have You Been? Let's Not Lie (2)

She and two other girls sitting next to her were chatting and joking around as they played a popular game.

He remembered those two girls—they were her classmates. He often saw them together in school. One of them was a slightly popular child actress called Ge... or something.

The radiance of the late summer sun cut through the window and fell on her fair face, emphasizing the wholesomeness and beauty of her occasional smile.

He Jichen stopped tearing open the pack of cigarettes and stared at her in a daze.

He didn't avert his eyes until an acquaintance from the internet cafe brushed past him and called out "Chen Ge" out of respect.

He exchanged a few polite words with this person, but after he left, He Jichen walked back down to the first floor as he sneaked a few glances at Ji Yi. Since he was quite high up, he realized he wasn't the only one dazed by her beauty—there was also a group of thugs sitting not too far behind her staring at her intently.

He Jichen knew the gang belonged to the previous Laoda of Yizhong, Sun Zhang. After graduating junior high, he stopped going to school. Since he was still young and there was nowhere for him to go, he often hung out with his gang, fooling around in this internet cafe.

He recently caught wind that this gang liked a pretty girl from Research Yizhong, so they often ambushed the girl when she left school and forced her to go out with them.

Sun Zhang sat right in the middle of the gang. He checked Ji Yi up and down, and every now and then, he'd turn to look, point and whisper about Ji Yi.

It was noisy in the internet cafe, and he was still a little far from Ji Yi. He Jichen didn't know what Sun Zhang was talking about, but he felt so annoyed for some reason... like someone had his eyes on something that belonged to him.

Sun Zhang complimented Ji Yi just a little then suddenly got up and walked over to where she was sitting. The moment he brushed past Ji Yi, he deliberately pretended to accidentally sprain his ankle so he could fall into the back of Ji Yi's chair.

He Jichen clearly saw Sun Zhang's hand clasp Ji Yi's shoulder.

Without a second thought, He Jichen turned around and rushed down the stairs. As he reached the last flight of stairs, Fatty, who was still at the top of the stairs, called out, "Chen Ge!"

Just then, Sun Zhang pretended to steady himself and reluctantly removed his hand from Ji Yi's shoulder.

With an ominous look on He Jichen's face, his feet came to a stop.

"Chen Ge, what's wrong?" asked Fatty as he caught up to He Jichen. He Jichen pointed at Sun Zhang who was now at the front desk. He gave a few nonchalant nods then deliberately emphasized the word "invite" as he said in a sluggish drawl, "Invite that Sun guy upstairs. Tell him I want to see him."

Chapter 83: How Have You Been? Let's Not Lie (3)

"Yes, Chen Ge." Fatty pounded down the rest of the stairs, and when he reached the main floor, he bolted over to Sun Zhang.

In the past, He Jichen and Sun Zhang fought to be the Laoda of Sucheng, so they often had run-ins with each other, but Sun Zhang was defeated every time. Sun Zhang knew Fatty was He Jichen's "handy assistant", so when he saw Fatty coming, his body instinctively shivered. He tried to bolt so fast that he didn't even pick up his change from the assistant at the front desk.

Though Fatty was fat, he had quick reflexes. Sun Zhang took a step back, but Fatty already had his arms around his shoulders and smiled like they were brothers. Fatty pointed upstairs. In a half menacing way, like he was going to abduct him, Fatty pressured Sun Zhang to walk up the stairs.

As he caught sight of that image, He Jichen didn't linger any longer and turned around to walk back up the stairs.

When he reached the second floor, He Jichen didn't bother with the yelling from the groups of enthusiastic people playing games. He pulled out a chair and sat facing the corridor by the stairway.

Seconds later, Fatty and Sun Zhang came into his view.

After taking two steps towards He Jichen, Fatty presented Sun Zhang like he was presenting a treasure. "Chen Ge, the person you wanted."

He Jichen ignored Fatty and stared straight at Sun Zhang.

Sun Zhang felt his insides squirming under He Jichen's gaze. He didn't dare meet He Jichen's eyes as he spoke carefully, trying to kiss up to him as he said respectfully, "Chen Ge."

He Jichen didn't say a word. He reached his hand out towards Sun Zhang like he wanted to shake his hand.

He had never been this polite with Sun Zhang. Sun Zhang stared at He Jichen's hand, a little stunned at his friendliness. He snuck a glance at He Jichen to confirm that he wasn't hiding any rage, then he slowly reached both hands out to He Jichen.

He Jichen clutched the part of Sun Zhang's hand where he touched Ji Yi's shoulder.

Seeing as everything was fine, Sun Zhang relaxed and asked, "Chen Ge, why were you looking for..." before the word "me" could slip out, Sun Zhang let out a blood-curdling screech.

He Jichen now clutched Sun Zhang's hand tightly, spraining his wrist. Everyone downstairs heard his anguished howl as he tried to run.

Fatty promptly took a step downstairs to block Sun Zhang's escape route and giggled as he pointed behind him. "Zhang, you're going in the wrong direction. Our Chen Ge is over there."

With that, Fatty shoved Sun Zhang back in front of He Jichen.

Without a second thought, He Jichen raised his foot and kicked Sun Zhang's stomach.

When Sun Zhang fell to the ground in the pain, He Jichen was like a spring as he jumped up from the chair and onto Sun Zhang. He showered Sun Zhang with punches and kicks.

After his anger had been released, He Jichen clapped his hands and got up. Then he took a step back.

He straightened his clothes and glanced down while towering over the panting Sun Zhang. He furrowed his brows and was overcome by an impulse to beat him again. He kicked him with the tip of his foot. "Get out!"

Chapter 84: How Have You Been? Let's Not Lie (4)

Sun Zhang climbed up from the floor and staggered to the stairway. However, he hadn't even taken two steps when all of a sudden, He Jichen reached his hand out to grab the back of Sun Zhang's collar and pulled him closer. "I don't care if you touch Yizhong girls, but the girl you just touched downstairs—she's mine. I'm warning you, stay away from her! If I see you try anything with her, I'll cripple you!"

Sun Zhang frantically nodded with a flushed face and repeatedly said "yes."

He Jichen let go of Sun Zhang's collar in disgust like he'd seen enough of his face for a lifetime. He then waved his hands to signal him to get lost.

Sun Zhang didn't dare stay any longer, nor did he want to stay. He walked around Fatty and scampered down the stairs.

After all that fuss with Sun Zhang, He Jichen lost the mood to continue gaming. He sat back in his chair and smoked one cigarette after another, quickly finishing off an entire pack. He turned his head and glanced downstairs. Ji Yi and her two friends were still there with all sorts of guys sitting around them. Some were smoking, so every now and then, she furrowed her brows, coughed and covered her nose.

He Jichen also furrowed his brows. He looked away and swept his eyes around the group of noisy people around him playing games. Suddenly, he reached his hand out and slapped the computer desk twice.

The entire second floor fell silent. Everyone removed their headphones, and one after the other, they turned to look at He Jichen.

He Jichen flicked the cigarette ashes away and pointed at Ji Yi's back. "Each and every one of you sitting here—go downstairs. You see that girl? Besides her and her friends, tell everyone else to get lost!"

After hearing He Jichen's orders, the group of people immediately got up.

"Also, when you're down there, don't come back up. After kicking those guys out, sit in a circle around her!" If his people sat around her as protection, there wouldn't be any other pests bothering her like Sun Zhang.

"But Chen Ge, we reserved the second floor..." whined someone with a cigarette in his mouth. Before he could finish, He Jichen shot him a violent stare and he immediately changed his tone. "Yes yes yes, Chen Ge, don't worry. We'll be downstairs."

He Jichen then saw a few of them exhale clouds of smoke. He furrowed his brows, pointed at them, and spoke again, "Also, put out your cigarettes. Nobody is allowed to smoke next to her!"

After seeing each cigarette get put out, He Jichen finally looked satisfied. He gave a slight nod as a signal for them to leave. As they made their way downstairs, he added, "Treat her with a little respect!"

From that day onwards, there was an unspoken rule among He Jichen's people: as soon as Ji Yi turned up at the Happy Internet Cafe, they immediately made the people sitting around her move and they completely surrounded her like a barricade of human shields. Even though the gang didn't know Ji Yi personally, if she accidentally looked at one of them, they had to smile. As long as Ji Yi was around, none of them smoked. Even if the urge came, they knew better and went outside to smoke.

At the time, He Jichen and Ji Yi weren't familiar with one another, and when they were in each other's presence, they barely said anything. However, He Jichen's people all knew she was a treasured woman in Chen Ge's heart. At Sucheng Yizhong, Chen Ge wasn't number one any longer—Ji Yi was the true number one.

Chapter 85: How Have You Been? Let's Not Lie (5)

Fatty had known He Jichen since elementary school. When He Jichen "established himself" during the first year of middle school, Fatty was always unwaveringly loyal by his side.

After all these years, Fatty had never seen He Jichen treat a woman this well. Oh, correction, he's never looked a woman in the eyes.

Ji Yi was the first, and Fatty knew she would be the last.

No matter how many years passed, if someone asked how a man should treat a woman, Fatty would think of the way Chen Ge treated Ji Yi. He had never seen a man so devoted to a woman in his life.

Fatty thought it was enough for He Jichen to get all the guys to protect Ji Yi to “put on a show” for her at the Happy Internet Cafe. Later, he learned this was just the start.

A week passed after the incident with Sun Zhang. From the first year of middle school, no one had ever seen He Jichen read a textbook, write essays or take his studies seriously like he did now.

As He Jichen’s desk mate, Fatty thought He Jichen was just doing everything for show, but after weeks passed and He Jichen scored in the top one hundred on the mid-term exam, Fatty realized Chen Ge wasn’t playing. He was serious.

Fatty asked He Jichen, “Chen Ge, now that you’re Yizhong’s Laoda, are you trying to fit in with all of Yizhong’s nerds?”

As He Jichen flipped through his math book, he flatly replied Fatty with a “No.”

No? Then why are you studying so hard? Before Fatty could ask, He Jichen said, “I want to help someone.”

“Help someone? Help who?”

He Jichen didn’t answer.

At the time, Fatty didn’t know any better. He didn’t understand that everything He Jichen did was for the woman “Ji Yi”, so he kept pestering He Jichen. He Jichen eventually smacked the back of Fatty’s head with the book to make him shut his mouth.

He Jichen was smart. When he took his studies seriously, his scores skyrocketed. At the end-of-term exam, he managed to make it into the top twenty of his year, compared to Ji Yi’s fifth place.

After the first term of their first year of high school ended, everybody was on winter break. When Chinese New Year was over, everyone welcomed the second term of school.

After starting school again, besides focusing on his studies, He Jichen took it upon himself to study the key points of every subject.

Fatty felt that He Jichen was going overboard, so he mumbled to himself, “You already know everything, Chen Ge. Why are you tormenting yourself over these key points? Are you trying to help me? I can study everything about picking up girls, but I can’t study for school...”

He Jichen looked unfazed as he continued to read the textbook and highlight important points, but his mind pondered what Fatty said.

Who am I tormenting myself over these key points for? Do I need to ask? The person I want to help is Ji Yi...

It was the first year of high school. The only reason he did this was because when he came back home one day, he accidentally overheard Ji Yi complain to He Yuguang, “Yuguang gege, I think senior high’s curriculum is so hard...”

Chapter 86: How Have You Been? Let’s Not Lie (6)

She just complained a little, but it made him determined to study for no reason other than helping her.

As time passed, he was actually able to help her. His mum practically invited her over for dinner every day, so she spent most of her time studying at his house. When she wasn’t in the study room, he took the chance to sneakily go in, flip through her textbook and figure out the focal points so he could help her later.

In the second year of high school, art and science classes were split up. Since He Jichen’s scores shot up, he and Ji Yi were put in the same science class.

She and He Jichen seats were on opposite sides of the room, so the two of them still didn’t really interact with each another.

There were more assignments for Yizhong’s second years than first years, so the school started to ask students to study more during the evenings. Every day at nine in the evening, Ji Yi rode her bike back home alone from He Jichen’s house.

During early October that year, there was an awful story going around about a girl from a neighboring school who came home from school in the evening and got gang raped by several drunk men.

He Jichen never cared about these silly rumours, but when he heard this, he immediately ordered Fatty to send two people to secretly guard Ji Yi on her way home in the evenings.

He Jichen had commanded Fatty and the gang to do so much for Ji Yi. After seeing that He Jichen and Ji Yi didn’t even interact after all they’d done to help her, the guys gradually started to feel upset, like all their efforts weren’t worth the trouble.

These upset individuals reached their limit during a school foundation event.

Ji Yi, who was an outstanding student, signed up to perform a song with the chairman of the student union at the event.

Because the pressure was on, Ji Yi and the chairperson practiced after evening study sessions. He Jichen got the two people who guarded Ji Yi on her way home to sit outside the classroom she practiced in until she finished.

Through the window, He Jichen’s guys always saw Ji Yi and the chairman chatting away and joking around.

The picture of them together was an eyesore for He Jichen’s guys. This was clearly their Laoda’s woman, and their Laoda put so much time and effort into treating her so well. Why didn’t she smile whenever she saw Laoda, but smiled so cheerfully with that scrawny student union chairman?

The guards often got together and complained about this, which made them even angrier. One particular day, it was coincidentally the day of the school's celebration and also He Jichen's birthday. A few of the guys got together and secretly made plans. Just like how Sun Zhang "invited" girls at the school gates to go out with him, they would surprise He Jichen by "inviting" Ji Yi to their KTV birthday party for him.

That day, He Jichen arrived quite early as the guys mysteriously surrounded him, calling out "Chen Ge" and pushing the doors into the private room open for him.

There Ji Yi was, sitting on the sofa in the private room in her beautiful costume.

Chapter 87: How Have You Been? Let's Not Lie (7)

At first, he was stunned by the sight of her beauty, but then he looked suspiciously at his men standing to one side. Just as he was going to ask why she was there, Ji Yi saw him come in and suddenly got up from the sofa to dump a glass of beer on his head. Before he could speak, she said, "He Jichen, did you know there's only twenty-five minutes until it's my turn to perform? Do you think it's cool to casually ambush people outside school? From the way I see it, it's absolutely disgusting! Why don't you learn from your brother?! Look at your older brother, then take a look at yourself..."

He Jichen was left bewildered by Ji Yi dumping beer on his face.

Each and every member of the gang was upset by Ji Yi's sharp-tongued rant. So much so that someone angrily said, "You want to say that again? Who gave you the right to talk to Chen Ge like that?!"

"That's right! Do you know how our Chen Ge treats you..."

Before the second person could finish, the silent He Jichen suddenly spoke up. "Enough!"

"Chen Ge, did you hear what she said about you? What's more, what you did..."

"I said, enough!" He Jichen's voice was so terrifyingly cold that it shocked everyone in the room into silence. They didn't even dare breathe too loudly.

He Jichen's dark eyes swept around the people in the room and asked, "Who brought her here?"

He was met with a wall of silence.

"Who brought her here?!" repeated He Jichen.

This time, a few of them obediently stepped forward with heads bowed, lacking the enthusiasm from earlier when they plotted to "invite" Ji Yi. "Chen Ge, we saw that she..."

He Jichen didn't want to hear their excuses. He interrupted them and shouted, "Go apologize!"

The few of them who felt they did no wrong just stood there without flinching.

He Jichen roared again, "I said, go apologize!"

This time, several people faced Ji Yi and cried, "Sorry."

He Jichen still looked upset as he waited for the final person to apologize. He then took a step aside and moved from the KTV room door. "I don't care how you do it, but I'll give you ten minutes to take her back to school! If you hold up her performance, you'll have to face the consequences!"

They replied with a "yes" as someone called a taxi and the others escorted Ji Yi out.

In the end, Ji Yi didn't care to wait for her escorts. Instead, she left the KTV place and hailed a taxi herself without even a glance at He Jichen's guys.

That night, the carefully planned birthday celebrations for He Jichen fell to pieces.

That night, He Jichen lashed out at the guys in a fit of rage and warned them that he'd never forgive anyone who bothered Ji Yi. Then he yelled at everyone to leave.

Chapter 88: How Have You Been? Let's Not Lie (8)

That night, He Jichen drank many bottles of beer by himself in the KTV room. When he came home feeling shattered, he coincidentally saw Ji Yi sleeping under He Yuguang's blanket. The moment she came out of He Yuguang's room, he happened to bump right into her. She was still angry at him, so instead of being rude or calling him an estranged "He Tongxue", she didn't even look at him as she brushed past his shoulders and closed He Yuguang's bedroom door without turning back.

That must've been the first time she gave him the cold shoulder—it lasted an entire two weeks. During that time, his mood was terrible. He didn't smile at all, and his friends kept as much distance as possible from him after class in fear that they'd accidentally set him off.

The last time they spoke was because of Sun Zhang.

One night after he came home, he went upstairs and heard Ji Yi's distressed voice talking to He Yuguang. "Yuguang Gege, you don't know how annoying Sun Zhang is. Lately, he's been harassing me all the time. Today, he went completely overboard. Not only did he call me cheap, but he grabbed me..."

He Jichen couldn't see inside the room, but he guessed that He Yuguang must be replying to Ji Yi on his whiteboard.

After a while, Ji Yi's voice was heard. "Ask He Jichen? But we're not even close."

He Yuguang must've written something as Ji Yi replied, "Yuguang Gege will help me ask?"

He didn't even have to wait for He Yuguang to ask him for help—the moment he heard her mention that Sun Zhang laid his hands on her, his anger spiked. He didn't even stop to put his backpack down as he rushed downstairs and gave Fatty a call. Over the phone, he told Fatty that even if he had to turn Sucheng upside down, he had to find Sun Zhang.

It wasn't until the afternoon of the following day that he found out where Sun Zhang was.

He didn't wait for Fatty to call his posse over before heading out on his own.

At three in the afternoon, a hair-raising incident happened on the sports field of Sucheng Yizhong.

The handsome man was like a blood-soaked hero as he publicly dragged Sun Zhang with his shirt dishevelled in the middle of Ji Yi's P.E. class.

With no consideration for the surrounding young men and women, he raised his leg and forced Sun Zhang to bow in front of Ji Yi.

He stared right at Ji Yi and spat out a word directed at Sun Zhang, "Speak!"

Sun Zhang struggled to get up as He Jichen violently kicked him. Sun Zhang crawled to Ji Yi's feet.

He Jichen kept his leg glued to Sun Zhang's back as he remained silent this time. Seeing as Sun Zhang wasn't doing anything, he gradually increased pressure on his back, causing Sun Zhang to finally blurt out, "Sorry, Ji Yi, sorry, sorry, sorry..."

As Sun Zhang said "sorry," Fatty counted beside him. When he reached a hundred, He Jichen finally released his leg from Sun Zhang's back.

Chapter 89: How Have You Been? Let's Not Lie (9)

He shot Fatty a look, which prompted Fatty to immediately come over and drag Sun Zhang away by his collar.

Everyone on the field, including Ji Yi, was silent as they watched it all unfold.

As he soaked in the sun, the bright red splotches stood out on He Jichen's white shirt. He stared unwaveringly at Ji Yi for a while, then said, "He won't harass you anymore." As though he felt like those words weren't quite enough, he added, "Nobody will ever harass you anymore." He then turned to leave.

That wasn't the end of that incident. Even though a fight hadn't broken out in school, the principal was alerted.

In addition to He Jichen's parents being called again, He Jichen was given another major demerit and was punished to clean the toilets for another month.

After school that day, He Jichen lazily leaned up against the window sill for the millionth time as he directed Fatty and the gang to clean the toilets.

Something was different this time. As the rowdy gang was cleaning, Ji Yi appeared in her school uniform and backpack in front of He Jichen.

Fatty and the others stared at Ji Yi with gaping mouths in a daze, then looked at He Jichen before repeatedly calling out "Woah!" in succession. Before they could finish, He Jichen shot a glance at them, causing them to immediately seek shelter in the toilet stalls. Because they ran in such haste, a few of them crashed into each other hilariously.

Ji Yi lowered her head and pursed her lips into a smile.

The sun shone alluringly over Ji Yi's head and over her face. The atmosphere was like something straight out of a movie.

Her faint smile was like a shockingly beautiful flower blooming inside He Jichen's heart.

In that instant, all the sorrow he felt on his birthday was suddenly wiped clean. He turned to glance at her and smiled too.

After a while, He Jichen retracted his smile and asked nonchalantly, "Did you need something?"

"No..." replied Ji Yi, also nonchalantly.

"Oh." He Jichen's tone of voice didn't sound as relaxed as before.

Ji Yi's eyes smiled brightly and she said, "Thank you."

He Jichen knew she was thanking him for what happened that afternoon. Thinking about it, this was the first time she spoke to him like that since he met her. All of a sudden, He Jichen was flustered for a good moment before he averted his eyes out the window, pretending like it was nothing. "It was no big deal."

Silence fell between the two of them again.

After about a minute, He Jichen suddenly asked, "Wanna go home?"

Ji Yi let out a "Mm."

He Jichen picked up his backpack sitting on the window sill. "Let's go."

Ji Yi casually looked over at the toilets. "Is it okay for you to leave just like that?"

He Jichen knew what Ji Yi meant. This time, the school punished him to clean the toilets on his own. He turned his head and shouted in the direction of the toilets, "Clean up good for me!"

"Yes!" came an ear-splitting roar from inside the toilets.

Amidst the roar, He Jichen strode off with Ji Yi. The two of them walked, one after the other, down the stairs.

Chapter 90: How Have You Been? Let's Not Lie (10)

That was the first time He Jichen and Ji Yi walked home together after knowing each other for over two years.

He Yuguang caught wind of the incident of He Jichen grabbing Sun Zheng and forcing him down on the sports field to apologize to Ji Yi, so just as He Jichen and Ji Yi entered the residential area, they saw He Yuguang waiting for them at the door.

Ji Yi, who stood shoulder-to-shoulder with He Jichen, sped up and reached He Yuguang first. Her voice sounded crisp as she cried out, "Yuguang Gege."

He Yuguang smiled at Ji Yi and reached his hand out to take her backpack, then he looked over at He Jichen. He didn't write anything on his whiteboard but pointed at the house behind him.

He Jichen understood his older brother meant for him to go inside, so he nodded slightly. He took two big steps forward and grabbed Ji Yi's bag from He Yuguang. "Bro, let me."

He Yuguang didn't resist.

He Jichen swung Ji Yi's bag onto his back and took two steps forward. When he was certain the two of them couldn't see his expression, his lips finally broke into a smile because he got to help Ji Yi with her bag. Yet, since his smile was so wide, a cold shiver came over him and he grimaced in pain from the cut on his face from fighting Sun Zhang's guys earlier that afternoon. He pushed open the door and strutted in with two backpacks on his back while the other two followed behind him. Just as he walked in and changed into his slippers, he caught a glimpse of her pink backpack from the corner of his eyes and he smiled again.

That night, He Yuguang helped He Jichen with his wound while Ji Yi helped.

That afternoon, He Jichen went to look for Sun Zhang on his own, but there were five to six people next to Sun Zhang. He took on several of them on his own, and although he won gloriously, he was pretty beaten down.

He Yuguang's heart ached at the sight of him as he helped He Jichen apply some medicine. He couldn't help but write the words "Does it hurt?" on his whiteboard.

At the time, He Jichen was young and foolish. In front of the girl he loved, he only wanted to act like a hero. Even if it hurt, he didn't want to show a single sign of it, so when He Jichen heard what He Yuguang said, he forcefully repressed the pain by digging his fingers into his thigh and replied in the most relaxed voice and shook his head, "Nope."

It was ten in the evening when they finished applying the medicine on He Jichen.

Ji Yi's grandma was downstairs talking with the twins' mother. She had come over to urge her to go home to sleep.

When Ji Yi packed her bag and went downstairs, He Yuguang wrote something for He Jichen, "Jichen, thank you."

That morning, He Jichen had received a text from He Yuguang about Sun Zhang harassing Ji Yi. He knew what He Yuguang was thanking him for. He Jichen wanted to see Ji Yi off, but because He Yuguang was next to him, he said, "Bro, what are you saying? You're my brother. You asked me for help, so how could I not?"

He Yuguang wore a smile, lowered his head, and wrote on his whiteboard, "Then, please take good care of Manman in school."