

Stay At home 111

Chapter 111: Quite A View

At lunch, Mag made two roujiamos for Yabemiya. His lunch was the same as Amy's—a plate of fried rice and a roujiamo.

"Try it, Sister Miya. It's very good," Amy said as she ate the fried rice, watching the young waitress who was holding a roujiamo with two hands.

Yabemiya nodded. "Okay." She stared at the roujiamo, eyes shining with excitement. She had swallowed many times as she watched customers eating in the morning. After a busy morning, she finally got to enjoy her roujiamo. She took a bite solemnly, all expectant.

"It tastes so good!" Yabemiya exclaimed in delight.

Inside the soft, sweet bai ji bread was soft meat. As she bit into it, tasty juice was released. Every taste bud of hers was cheering and dancing. The taste was wilder than Yangzhou fried rice's. She closed her eyes and swallowed, and the aftertaste of the meat remained in her mouth.

After she swallowed, the pleasant food suddenly became violent. It turned into a hot current and rushed within her, stimulating her blood. Her face became red suddenly, feeling as if something were trying to get out of her body. She rose quickly to her feet and let out a long roar.

One button on her dress gave way and a part of her breasts was showing through. Then a tail covered with golden scales popped up from under her dress and overturned her chair.

Mag and Amy lifted their heads, swallowed the rice, and gave a startled look at the same time.

Mag raised an eyebrow. *She burst her clothes too! Is this devolution?* He saw her white breasts and cleavage. *Wow, quite a view.* Then he dropped his gaze to her tail.

The golden scales as large as the top knuckle of a little finger covered her tail, shining like gold. She wagged her tail uneasily. If she could become a dragon someday, she would be a golden one.

"Wow, a dragon tail!" Amy exclaimed as she watched Yabemiya.

Ugly Duckling saw the tail too. It seemed surprisingly unafraid, but it was baring its teeth and lifted its paw as if before an enemy.

Mag frowned. *She is okay, I hope... Yabemiya should be happy if she could become a dragon. After all, dragons are the most powerful beings on the whole continent.*

Yabemiya's roaring stopped. She opened her eyes slowly. The golden light from her left eye faded. Her face was red, her brow was covered by a sheen of sweat, and her eyes were dreamy. She felt the beast in her had been released just now. Her legs went weak from exhaustion.

Then she felt a warm feeling in her body. It was like a magical energy, soothing her every cell. She had never experienced this feeling before. She felt so good and let out a moan of comfort despite herself.

Then she saw Mag and Amy, who were staring at her with a spoon in their hand each, frozen with surprise.

She looked down and saw her breasts. Her red face became even redder. She straightened and tried to cover them with her hands.

In nervousness, her tail overturned another chair. She looked back and saw her new part. "What... What is this?!" she cried as her face turned white, close to tears.

Mag gently put his hands on her shoulder. "Calm down, Miya. You're a half-dragon. This roujiamo has made you devolve or evolve. You look more like a dragon now. You should be happy," he said softly, looking into her eyes.

She was only 17, and she had been through so much that she always had a feeling of insecurity. Besides, a dragon tail was too big a surprise for anyone to stay calm.

Mag's gentle eyes eased her tension. "But... But I don't want a tail. I don't like those looks on their faces. This pair of horns was already making me look strange. I can't imagine how they would look at me if they found out I had a tail..."

Mag shook his head, smiling. "I don't think you're strange. I think you're cute," he said, looking at her with caring eyes.

"Yes, your tail looks very cute, Sister Miya. If you become a dragon, you can take me and Ugly Duckling for a flight," Amy said solemnly, nodding.

"But I just want to be normal. I want to work here, but now..." she said worriedly. The hands on her shoulders made her feel warm, and Mag and Amy's encouragement relieved her anxiety, but the golden tail was really not helping.

Mag looked at Yabemiya and felt sorry for her. *Normally one would be thrilled at the prospect of becoming a dragon.*

Now she had a chance to become a powerful dragon that others looked up to, and to pay back the people who had mistreated her.

But she didn't want it. Instead, she was worried that this tail might cost her her job. It seemed she didn't hate her old boss and those who had treated her so badly. She just wanted a peaceful life.

"Don't worry. You're my waitress, with or without a tail," Mag said seriously.

"Boss..." Yabemiya looked up at Mag, eyes red and watery.

Mag took his hands away. "And maybe you can retract your tail," Mag said with a smile. *Yabemiya is not the first to have such a dramatic change after eating roujiamo. Amy and Sargerass both changed for the better, and the system promised that there wouldn't be any bad side effects. So, she may be able to control this change.*

Yabemiya's eyes lit up. "Retract it?" She closed her eyes and clenched her fists. A short while later, with a sudden flash of golden light, her tail disappeared.

Amy looked down. "It's gone," she said with surprise.

Yabemiya's face lit up. "It's really gone!" She twirled around, making her dress fly up a little. The tail vanished. "Boss, I really made it disappear!" she said to Mag, excited.

Mag was also relieved. *The system is pretty reliable.* Then, out of curiosity, he said, "Good. Are there any other changes?"

She coiled her hands into fists. "I feel I have limitless power. I think I can work a whole day without getting tired," she said with surprise.

Mag nodded, smiling. "That's a good thing." He dropped his gaze to the roujiamo on the table. "Do you still want it?"

Chapter 112: Mission Accomplished

Yabemiya looked at the roujiamo on the table, hesitant. The blissful experience she had just had from eating the roujiamo was itching at her. It tasted completely different from Yangzhou fried rice. It would be a shame if she could only have one bite.

"Sister Miya, your breasts are showing through," Amy said with her hand pointing at Yabemiya's chest.

The young waitress froze for an instant. She looked down and blushed immediately. She quickly turned to button her dress. Then she turned back, head bowed and face red with embarrassment.

Mag was very calm. He had seen this stuff so often that it didn't even affect him anymore. *She's just a little girl; besides, she's my employee.*

"Sister Miya, you can hide your tail after finishing your roujiamos," advised Amy as she ate the fried rice. "If it's any consolation, we find it very cute."

Mag nodded. "I think it's a good idea if you still want to eat them. Nobody would know that you have a tail."

Yabemiya looked at the genuine look in the eyes of Mag and Amy, hesitated a moment, and nodded. She picked up the overturned chairs, lifted the roujiamo on the table, let out her breath in a long exhalation, and took another bite.

The pleasant taste spread in her mouth and turned into a violent current. Her tail popped up again. She didn't roar, though. Her chest heaved slightly, but she didn't burst her dress.

She wagged her golden tail behind her with joy. After a while, she finished the two roujiamos. Looking at the empty bag in her hand, the young waitress ran her pink tongue over her red lips, not quite satisfied.

"Sister Miya, it's very delicious, right?" Amy asked proudly.

Yabemiya nodded earnestly. "Yes. The roujiamo made by boss is very tasty!" She had never had anything this good before. In fact, she had never imagined that such divine food existed. "And I think my strength has increased a little. It seems to have a special effect on me."

“Then you can eat roujiamo instead of fried rice for lunch if you want,” Mag said, smiling, and took a bite of his roujiamo. He felt very good with two girls praising him every day.

After lunch, Mag had a rest. At 11:30 am, he opened the door.

Although Yabemiya wasn’t able to control her transformation right now, she only needed a minute to retract her tail. It wasn’t too big a trouble for her, so her worries had lessened greatly.

Her strength had increased, making Mag a little envious. She seemed to have inexhaustible energy in her skinny body. Even hundreds of trips a day between the kitchen and the dining room wouldn’t even tire her a bit.

After dinner, Yabemiya cleaned the restaurant. Then she said goodbye to Mag and Amy, who were about to wash the dishes. Today she had smiled what she used to smile in a year. *Turns out working can be pleasant too*, she realized.

“Bye, Sister Miya,” Amy said as she waved her little hand sleepily, holding Ugly Duckling in her arms.

“Be careful on your way home,” Mag said, smiling.

“Thank you, Boss. I will.” Yabemiya gave a serious nod and left.

Mag put the last few bowls in the kitchen cupboard. It was much easier now that he had a waitress. He had slaved away in the kitchen for a long day, but he didn’t feel tired. The legwork was indeed more tiring than cooking.

“Congratulations!” the system said. “You have accomplished the mission of selling 1,000 roujiamos in ten days and unlocked the tofu pudding. Please go to the test field within 24 hours.”

I finally did it, Mag thought. Then, a glittering experience bag appeared in his head. *Looks like I have to spend months in the test field again. Sweet and savory tofu pudding are very different.*

Mag carried the sleepy Amy and Ugly Duckling upstairs. Then he washed up and brushed his teeth. After the two little things fell asleep, he lay down on the bed, tilted his head, and glanced at the clock. It was already 10 pm. He closed his eyes and entered the test field.

Inside the experience bag, there were savory tofu pudding, sweet tofu pudding, and spicy tofu pudding. The spicy one was gray, so Mag couldn’t click it, which meant he had no right to learn it currently.

I’m an owner now, so the right thing to do is meet more customers’ needs and try to make more money. Mag smiled. He had made up his mind.

He didn’t need to consider whether or not his tofu puddings would start a war between the savory tofu pudding people and the sweet ones. He was not like the sweet tofu pudding guy who sold his highly profitable restaurant to open a bar just because his restaurant had to sell savory tofu pudding.

On the cooking bench he saw a cylindrical blender, which was of a similar size to his rice cooker. Next to the blender stood a wooden barrel and a brown earthen jar. There were two sacks of soybeans on the floor, and he found plaster, various seasonings, and all the sides he needed.

“This should be a dish easy enough to do. I may be able to leave the test field earlier than before,” Mag muttered to himself. Then the look on his face became odd when he thought of the remarks he had made about the tofu pudding in his previous life. *It may not be easy after all.*

He didn't have to soak the soybeans in the test field. He blended the beans in the blender and poured the blended soy milk over several sheets of gauze and into the barrel to strain it. Then he poured the strained soy milk into the pot and boiled it over high heat.

He dissolved the plaster with some water and poured the mixture into the earthen jar. Then he added the hot soy milk into it. After a while, the thin soy milk had magically turned into tender tofu pudding.

Mag raised an eyebrow. *Making tofu pudding is indeed very easy. Never thought I'd succeed at the first try.*

“The color is not white enough and it tastes too firm. Do it again!” the system said.

Mag took a closer look at the food. “It's really not white enough...” Clearly it was not as simple as it seemed.

As time went by, Meg had tried hundreds and thousands of times and failed.

“System, try again.” Mag put two bowls of tofu pudding on the cooking bench softly.

The one on the left was white and tender, seasoned with golden-red syrup; the one on the right was seasoned with orange-red sauce, mashed garlic, shredded zha cai, wood-ear mushrooms, and green onions.

Chapter 113: Win Over Alex, Win The War

After 50 days of practicing, Mag was finally able to make such beautiful tofu pudding. If he could go back in time, he would slap himself across the face. “Keep that tongue to yourself if you have nothing good to say!” he would tell himself.

The requirements he had made before had come back to bite him. Although he had the most perfect experience of making tofu pudding in his head and had practiced thousands of times, he wasn't very confident in passing the test.

These two bowls of tofu pudding were the best he had ever made. Both the tofu pudding and the sides were all excellent. The faint fragrance of the tofu pudding and the sauce made him swallow in spite of himself.

People who loved sweet tofu pudding would be more interested in the left one. After all, even Mag wanted to try it as he smelled the faint, agreeable fragrance.

Mag was waiting for the system's judgment, nervous and expectant.

When it came to cooking, the system was very adamant. It was one of its principles.

Mag never thought about completing his mission through other means. He wanted to pass the test fair and square.

The system paused for a while before it said, “Based on your requirements...

“1. Color: white like jade and impurity-free—achieved.

“2. Texture: tender and watery. It should melt in the mouth and have a faint fragrance—achieved.

“3. Sides: fresh and tasty. They should go great with tofu pudding—achieved.

“4. Sauce: orange-red, clear, delicious, agreeably greasy—achieved.

“You’ve met the requirements of the savory tofu pudding. Although you made no remarks about the sweet tofu pudding, according to my judgment, your sweet tofu pudding is as good as the savory one.

“Congratulations! You have mastered the sweet and savory tofu pudding. Your mission is complete.”

Mag heaved a sigh of relief and smiled with delight. All his effort had finally paid off. Now he could make some tofu pudding for Amy’s breakfast.

A bowl of savory tofu pudding and a la zhi roujiamo for breakfast—perfect!

He wanted to try it as he looked at the savory tofu pudding, but he tore his eyes away from it. “System, let me out, I have to soak the beans,” Mag said loudly.

The test field disappeared. Mag opened his eyes and rested for a while. Then he turned on his bedside lamp and looked at the time. It was already 2 am.

I still have time to make a bowl of tofu pudding for Amy. She will be surprised. Mag smiled. He got up softly, put on his clothes, and prepared to go downstairs.

“Mom? Is it you? Are you waiting for me?” Amy murmured suddenly.

Mag froze for an instant. Then he walked to Amy’s crib quietly. She was lying in bed, her lips pouting, her long eyelashes quivering. She looked surprised and aggrieved, talking in her sleep.

“But... I don’t even know your face. Can you please turn around? I just want to look at your face...” Amy’s voice became even more aggrieved. She waved her little hands as if trying to hold something.

“Amy, dad is here. I’m here,” Mag said softly, holding her hands in his big, warm hands.

Mag’s heart sank. Although he had been trying hard to give Amy all the love and warmth, it seemed that she still missed her mother. After all, she was only a four-year-old child. Other children could snuggle up in the arms of their mothers, but she didn’t even know what her mother looked like.

Ugly Duckling also woke up. It gave a soft cry and licked Amy’s arm, seeming to be worried.

“Father...” Amy murmured. She calmed down as she felt the warmth of her father’s big hand, and fell asleep peacefully.

Mag put Amy’s hands into the quilt, tucked her in, and stroked the kitten’s head. *What happened to her mother? Where is she now?* he thought, frowning. Then he looked at Amy’s face and clenched his fist. “I didn’t want to dig into Mag Alex’s past, but I think I have to try to find Amy’s mother now. Amy would be much happier if she were here. She is hiding so much in her heart. Such a thoughtful girl.”

Mag went downstairs and tried to remember the elf princess, but failed. He didn't know whether the memories had been erased by Mag Alex himself or by those people.

Mag couldn't remember her voice, her face, even her name. He only knew that she was an elven princess and Amy's mother.

It should have been against her will. Otherwise, they needed not have gone to such extraordinary lengths. Mag wrote several names on a piece of paper.

Mag Alex was a proud man. He would never have said a word if she had broken up with him out of her own will. But if they were forced to break up, then it would all make sense.

That night, he had killed two 9th-tier knights, three 9th-tier demons, and one 10th-tier magic caster, although he had been badly wounded himself. As expected of the strongest 9th-tier Griffin Rider on the whole continent!

"Mag Alex, elven princess, the empire royals, Magus Tower, elves, demons..." Mag murmured in a low voice. Those were the parties involved in that incident. Mag Alex had analyzed that before, so he could find some useful information in his memory.

It should have been the second prince who gave that order. The king of the Roth Empire had four sons. His third son's right leg was crippled, while his youngest son was only seven, so the 30-year-old first prince and the 26-year-old second prince were more likely to be the next king.

The first prince had a good relationship with the army, being a seasoned warrior. He had fought together with Mag Alex once. The army would like him to be the next king.

The second prince was talented in magic. He addressed every magic caster in the Magus Tower as master, growing up there. He claimed that he was a disciple of all the royal magic casters. He always had great respect for even normal magic casters, and thus had won their hearts.

So the first and second prince were well-matched in strength. No one knew who would win.

While they were preparing for war, Mag Alex, who had killed dragons and saved many people, overshadowed magic casters and became well-known across the whole continent.

Some had said, "Win over Alex, win the war!"

Chapter 114: A Melee Magic Caster

Mag Alex had been given many titles—dragon slayer, Griffin Knight, Imperial General. Since the first and second prince were equally matched in strength, Mag Alex could almost determine the course of the war. He had been young and had gradually become the mainstay of the imperial army, so even the king asked for his opinion.

Most people thought Mag Alex would never side with the second prince; there was no love lost between the army and the Magus Tower. The army supported the first prince, and even the marshal spoke highly of him.

Now, the first prince had a better chance at winning the throne, or so they thought.

Mag pointed his pen at the second prince, and then at the first prince. Actually, Mag Alex hadn't decided to side with either until that incident. He had found the second prince mild and the first belligerent and witless, so he hadn't wanted the first to be the next king.

After that incident, what the first prince had done really disappointed Mag Alex. He had tried to make the most of that incident, and nobody had cared a bit about his and his daughter's safety. He was indeed as cold-hearted as he had expected.

The elven queen must have been behind all this. Otherwise, no one would have dared to take Amy from the elven princess. Besides, not everyone could give orders to those high-tier elf magic casters.

As to the demons, they must have been hired to muddy the waters and take the blame. They blamed them for that incident and rounded up all the demons in Rodu for questioning. Then they were all deported from the Roth Empire. Humans and demons were at each other's throats. The lord of demons must have been furious.

The reason why Mag didn't die after all his meridians had been broken was probably because of Amy and the elven princess, who was the elven queen's only heir. The queen must have spared Mag's life for her sake.

She must be in the Wind Forest right now. I don't know what happened to her, but she should be safe unless the queen has found a better heir. Mag drew a circle around "elven princess".

Even such a strong warrior as Mag Alex had almost got himself killed. He had managed to settle here, so clearly Mag couldn't blow who he really was right now. He needed to find out what had happened to the elven princess first, and then decide whether it was safe for Amy to see her.

Mag hadn't planned to get himself in trouble looking for her until he saw Amy's sad face. He didn't want her to be so unhappy.

The little thing was very sensitive. She had asked Mag about her mother once when she was little, but Mag hadn't said a word. She never asked again after. Mag had thought she had forgotten about her mother, but obviously he was wrong. She only hid her longings in her heart.

Next rest day, I'll go to a detective agency in disguise and ask about the elves. Guess I have to try to find out everything about the elven princess again, Mag thought, looking down at the piece of paper in his hand. He put a cross on "Magus Tower", "first prince", "second prince", and "elven queen" separately. Although he wasn't in a rush to avenge Mag Alex, he didn't mind setting them up if he had a chance. He still remembered that someone had suggested killing Mag Alex and Amy that night.

I'm not interested in politics, but I'd sooner support the third prince, who is obsessed with carpentry, than see his two brothers become the king. Mag twisted his mouth, tore the paper up, put a lighted match to the pieces, and watched them burn to ashes in the trash can. Then he turned around and walked towards the kitchen.

The blender was already in place, and so was the new oven. The kitchen was so big that it didn't seem crowded even with so many cooking utensils, while the tools were not fixed, and could be put away when they were not needed.

Mag opened the fridge. The soybeans and all the ingredients needed were already inside. The system is very motivated when it comes to food.

Mag didn't worry about the price of the ingredients. He would simply sell the dish at a much higher price.

He soaked some beans in a large bowl. He had intended to make two bowls of tofu pudding for Amy and himself, but then he thought for a moment, and added some more beans in the water. After that, he turned off the light and went upstairs to sleep.

In a simple yet elegant room, Krassu was drawing something on a piece of paper attentively by the light of an oil lamp.

"Lord Krassu, are you seriously building a magic room in Chaos City?" a lean middle-aged man asked, incredulous. There was a little black tower on his chest—the Magus Tower.

"Yes. Arthur, tomorrow morning you'll go back to Rodu and ask them to bring me all the things I need. Don't forget those things I've been saving. Bring all of them to me intact," Crassus said without raising his head. He paused a moment, put down his pen, turned to Arthur, and added seriously, "And tell those old farts that if I'm one item short, I'll tear down a floor; 36 items short, and I'll tear down the whole Magus Tower."

"Yes!" Arthur said quickly, giving a serious nod. The old man got back to drawing. He had been serving Krassu for 20 years. Maybe few people remember this white-haired magic caster. He is the only one who fought a dragon in close combat—and won too.

Krassu was admitted into the tower at 18. Now, he was over 120 years old. Arthur's grandfather had served him, then his father, and now he was serving him. He had heard his stories growing up. He knew that the old man liked to live on the 18th floor not because he was the 18th best magic caster in the tower, but because he liked the number 18. He could live on the 36th floor if he liked.

100 years ago, he had been no less famous than Alex had been several years ago. The Magus Tower's quick rise in fame had been mainly on account of him.

But he's not young anymore. We travelled far to try to find a disciple for him. Never thought he'd settle here. Looks like he wants to spend the rest of his life here, Arthur thought, feeling a mixture of emotions.

"Prepare a carriage for me early in the morning. I will go to the Mamy restaurant. You may leave now," Krassu said.

"Yes, Lord Krassu," said Arthur. He went out quietly.

The old man sat alone, drawing for a long while after his servant was gone. He put down his pen and looked at the magic room design drawing on the paper. A smile appeared on his old face. He rose to his feet and walked up to the window. Above, several stars were peering through dark clouds. He sighed. "Irina said she would have a daughter and let her be my disciple," he muttered to himself. "She wanted me to build a beautiful magic room and teach her the most powerful magic. But, I'm afraid I'm too old to wait any longer. Luckily, I've found a talented little girl. But I don't know if she'll like this magic room..."

Chapter 115: Elf Princess

In a huge cave, a tall tree stood over 100 meters high, its trunk so thick that it would take a dozen men with outstretched arms to reach around it. It branched at 50 meters high, with thousands of long, thin branches hanging down, just like a weeping willow. It almost filled up the whole cave.

Each branch had countless green heart-shaped leaves gleaming in the dark, full of life. The branches swayed slightly, illuminating the cave.

Fireflies were flying amid the branches, making the cave look like a dreamland.

Under the big tree, a girl in a white dress was looking up at a firefly on a leaf, her silver hair hanging loose over her shoulder. Her skin was as white as snow, her face was exquisite like a picture, and she had a golden moon between her eyebrows. Her pointy ears were very white and thin, almost translucent. She was frowning as if musing on something.

The branches parted automatically to give her space, seemingly to show their respect and love.

"Princess Irina," a crisp voice called out from outside the cave. An elf girl in green ran into the cave. The branches seemed to be deliberately teasing her, touching her face and body. She ran over to Irina, panting heavily yet delighted.

"Bean Sprout, what brings you here?" Irina asked, her face still as she was staring at that firefly.

"Princess, you said you wouldn't call me that again..." Firis made a sour face as she looked at Irina standing under the Tree of Life. *Although the princess has given all of us odd nicknames, Bean Sprout is too ugly...*

Irina turned to her and nodded as she stared at her chest. "Okay, Bean Sprout. Your breasts grew smaller again. They'll become paltry plains at this rate."

"I'm still young. They'll grow big," Firis said with confidence as she looked down at her breasts.

Irina shook her head. "No, they won't. Mine haven't changed after I passed 18," she said, looking into her eyes.

Firis fought to keep the sadness out of her voice, but failed. "I haven't lost faith in them..." she said, biting her lip.

Irina smiled. "I'm bored, so cry if you want to."

Firis fell silent, giving a wry look. *Princess is so annoying, but I can't make myself angry at her.* Then her face lit up. "Princess, I come bearing good news from Rodu."

Irina raised her voice a little bit. "Tell me." She lifted her beautiful eyebrows and looked at Firis.

Firis knew this look. It meant the princess was serious. She said quietly, "Snarr said in his secret report that he was fairly positive that your daughter and he are still alive. He had recreated what had happened that day using his ability. He said he will tell you more when he comes back."

Irina nodded. Her face was a mask, still and betraying nothing, but her fist was clenched tight. Firis was biting her lips, and seemed hesitant. "Leave me if you have nothing else to say. I don't feel like watching you cry right now," the princess said as she waved Firis away.

"There is one other thing. Lady Helena recommended again yesterday that the queen found a new heir, and she suggested Lady Sally," Firis said with a worried look.

Irina nodded. "That old witch has finally found a nice girl. Slug always followed me around when she was little." Then her voice became chilly. "Helena seems to be in a rush to bite the dust. Apparently, she doesn't know that if I wanted her dead, nobody could stop me."

The branches started moving violently, making a whistling sound as if the tree had perceived the change in her mood.

Firis dared not say a word, her head bowed. The Tree of Life had been obeying only Irina since she was 18. She was invincible here.

Irina calmed herself down again. "Leave me," she said softly.

"Yes, Princess," Firis said, and walked quickly towards the entrance. The branches parted to let her pass. Then the stone door closed, and everything fell silent again.

Her voice broke the silence. "Amy, Mag, where are you?" All the branches reached upwards, and countless fireflies gathered together and circled around Irina like a ribbon. She stood alone under the tree, lonely.

...

Mag got up early the next day.

Amy and Ugly Duckling were still sleeping soundly. Mag gently kissed Amy on the forehead, and thought, *She would be very happy if her mother could kiss her.*

Mag stayed with her for a while before he went downstairs to prepare ingredients. Yabemiya came to work before six o'clock as yesterday.

"Good morning, Boss," Yabemiya said to Mag with a smile. She had worked a long day yesterday and got up early, but didn't look tired.

Mag nodded. "Good morning, Miya. You really don't need to come here so early." He glimpsed half a pancake in her hand.

"I'm used to waking up early, so I think I should come here and help you, but let me finish my breakfast first," Yabemiya said shyly, and hurriedly stuffed the remaining pancake into her mouth. Some got stuck in her throat in her hurry to swallow it. She coughed, and her face turned red.

"Come in and drink some water," Mag said quickly. He walked into the kitchen and poured a glass of water for Yabemiya, who was still coughing.

"Thank you," Yabemiya took the water and drank some. Moments later, she sighed with relief, and felt a little embarrassed.

“Have a rest. I don’t need your help right now, but maybe you can help me taste the new dish later,” Mag said, smiling. Considering the salary and free lunch he offered her, he was a good boss. He was thinking about raising her salary and benefits next month, when he wasn’t in need of money.

After all, the girl worked very hard. His earnings had risen by 30% yesterday, and his workload had decreased a lot. He was very lucky. He judged that she worked harder than two waitresses combined.

“Okay, thank you.” Yabemiya wanted very much to help, but she bit back the words as she watched Mag’s back. She wasn’t very confident that she could help. *Such divine food can only be made by boss.*

New dish? What is it? She looked at Mag out of curiosity. *Yangzhou fried rice and roujiamo are both very delicious. This new dish must be very good too.* She became intrigued.

Chapter 116: The Debut Of Tofu Pudding

The beans were almost well soaked. Mag put the beans in the blender and prepared some ingredients for roujiamo. He took a glance at Yabemiya. Luckily, I soaked enough beans. I’ll have her try the tofu pudding to see whether people in this world like it or not.

As he boiled the soy milk in the pot, a faint fragrance floated out of the kitchen.

Yabemiya’s eyes brightened. Such a good smell! The fragrance of soy milk reminded her of her mother. When she was little, her mother had cooked soybeans with oil and salt after soaking them overnight. The beans were sweet and delicious, and had the same fragrance as she was smelling now, but she hadn’t eaten that dish for years. The new dish is boiled soybeans? she wondered.

After the tofu pudding was ready, Mag added syrup, gravy, and various sides. He walked out of the kitchen, holding two bowls of tofu pudding, and put them before Yabemiya. “Our new dish, tofu pudding. Try it and see if you like it,” Mag said, smiling.

“Tofu pudding?” Yabemiya’s face lit up; she was watching the two white bowls. The tofu pudding was very soft, and as white as jade. It had shaken a little when Mag put it on the table, so elastic and lovely.

The left bowl had red syrup on it, and the right one was sprinkled with a lot of sides. The sweet smell of tofu pudding and syrup tickled her nose and made her swallow her saliva. She couldn’t tear her eyes away from the left one.

“The left one is sweet tofu pudding, and the right one is savory. You can try whichever you like,” Mag said. He could tell from the look on her face that she liked the sweet one.

Yabemiya’s eyes went from Mag’s face to the two bowls before her, agonizing. “But... it’s not lunchtime yet.”

Mag smiled and saw her worries. “It’s your job to try the new dish. Go ahead.”

The young waitress’s eyes lit up immediately. She had never thought that trying new dishes was also one of her duties. They both looked delicious, but apparently she preferred the left one. “Can I try the sweet one?” she asked, looking up at Mag.

Mag nodded with a smile. “Sure.” He felt a little upset, though—she had chosen the sweet one over his favorite savory one.

Yet he wasn't agitated. He was a restaurateur now. He had decided to leave the past behind and be more open-minded about other people's tastes.

Mobai only ate Yangzhou fried rice every day, while Sargerass preferred roujiamo. He had come to find it natural now that he was an owner of a restaurant.

Since he would sell the sweet tofu pudding as well as the savory one, it could be anticipated that many customers would choose the sweet one. There were no stereotypes here like those in his previous life, so he judged that people here would be more reasonable towards each other.

Yabemiya carefully held the sweet one up in two hands and put it down before her. She picked up the white spoon and scooped some from the edge slowly.

It was like steamed egg custard, only more elastic. The spoon left a white hole in the tofu pudding, and then the red syrup seeped into it. The tofu pudding covered by syrup shook slightly on her spoon, delicate like a piece of art.

Yabemiya froze for an instant. "It's so beautiful!" The pleasant smell made her bring the spoon into her mouth. The sweet, tender tofu pudding almost melted on her tongue. The strong taste of the syrup worked perfectly with the tofu pudding. Eventually, her eyes closed without her permission.

The sweet taste made her feel like she had fallen into a sea of candies, surrounded by sweet candies. She liked candies, but they had been an extravagance to her when she was growing up. More often than not, she had to go hungry, so she didn't even dare dream of this sweet feeling.

A tear dropped from her eye onto the table. A happy tear.

The tofu pudding was sweet, but not too sweet. After she swallowed, the pleasant taste lingered in her mouth. She opened her eyes and stared at the bowl in front of her. She brought another spoonful into her mouth, and another... She was eating it with mounting happiness.

"Ding!"

The spoon clattered on the bowl. She opened her eyes, and was surprised to find that she had already finished it all. The only thing left was a little syrup at the bottom of the bowl. In spite of herself, she picked up the bowl and licked it. The sweet syrup had really fascinated her.

"Do you like it?" asked Mag, expectant. He already knew the answer, though.

She nodded vigorously. "Yes! It's very good. Sweet, soft, and very delicious!" Yabemiya put down the bowl, blushing. She had licked a plate the other day, and the sweet tofu pudding today had made her lick the bowl.

She paused a moment and stroked her face. "And my face feels cool. I think my skin has become dewy."

Mag was taken aback. It's able to soften the skin? He had expected the tofu pudding to have some special effect, though. Women always craved softer skin, so they could never resist this dish if its effect was universal.

"Do you want to try this savory one?" Mag asked tentatively. Maybe she'll find herself prefer the savory one.

Yabemiya shook her head. “No. Thank you, Boss. I think the sweet tofu pudding is the best.” As far as she was concerned, the savory one was no match for such sweet happiness.

Chapter 117: It's Very Good!

Mag raised an eyebrow. *This remark sounds familiar...* A lot of people had said the similar thing on the Internet, so he had expected to hear it, but he hadn't expected Yabemiya to be the first one to say it.

Smiling, Mag shook his head. “You may find yourself wrong,” he said. *Disagreement arose already, and among us...* He didn't want to argue with his waitress. He seated himself and picked up the savory tofu pudding.

He had chosen the sides according to his taste. On top of the white, tender tofu pudding were orange-red gravy, chopped zha cai, cilantro, green onion, mashed garlic, and some sesame oil. It was still steaming.

He spooned some into his mouth. The tofu pudding was very watery and smooth, and melted with the savory gravy right away.

The fresh sides went great with tofu pudding. After he swallowed, the faint fragrance remained in his mouth.

Mag's eyes lit up. *It's even better than the bai's tofu pudding in Beijing! It's just perfect!* He quickened his hand. Three minutes later, he put down the spoon and looked at the empty bowl, satisfied. *A steaming savory tofu pudding is great for breakfast. I think a roujiamo would make it even better. Miya prefers sweet tofu pudding, and I prefer the savory one. Which one will Amy like?*

“Father, I'm hungry,” Amy said, holding Ugly Duckling in her arms. She had already come downstairs. She took a sniff, and asked curiously, “Father, have you cooked a new dish?”

“Yes. We have a new dish. Take a seat. I'll bring you some tofu pudding. Do you like it sweet or savory?” Mag asked, rising to his feet.

“Tofu pudding? Sweet or savory?” Amy didn't understand.

“Amy, the sweet one is very delicious. You'll like it,” Yabemiya suggested.

Mag lifted an eyebrow. *That's not fair! I have to think of something to describe the savory tofu pudding.*

Amy's eyes brightened. “Really? But I'm sure the savory one is very tasty too.” She turned to Mag.

“Father, can I try both?”

Mag was taken by surprise. “Sure.” Then he smiled. *I should have seen that coming. Such a little foodie! Which one will she prefer after she has tried both?*

“Thank you, Father!” Amy skipped happily over to the table, holding the little kitten. She looked at Mag with her big blue eyes. Although she didn't know what tofu pudding was, she liked anything that was cooked by her father.

After a while, Mag stepped out of the kitchen with two bowls. He put them on the table. “The left one is sweet, and the right one is savory. Which one do you like to try first?”

Yabemiya gazed at Amy expectantly. She could tell that her boss liked the savory one better, but she favored the sweet one, so naturally she hoped that Amy would like it too.

Amy waved her small hand over the dish. “Smells delicious!” she said happily.

“Meow, meow...” Ugly Duckling cried in Amy’s arms. It climbed along her arm, trying to see what was in the bowls.

Amy pushed its little head down. “Stop looking. They’re mine!”

“Meow...” Ugly Duckling gave Amy a sullen look, its sapphire eyes awfully sad.

Amy paid it no mind. Her eyes went from one bowl to the other. The tender tofu pudding was so lovely and white as if it had been made of snow. She hesitated for a moment, and pulled the savory one closer to her. She picked up the spoon.

Mag allowed himself a smile. *Atta girl! As expected of my daughter!*

Yabemiya was a little disappointed, but she hadn’t given up hope. *Amy will like the sweet one too*, she thought adamantly.

“I’ll start eating.” Amy scooped a spoonful of tofu pudding. It was shaking a little in the spoon, white, tender, elastic, and covered by orange-red gravy and chopped zha cai. After she brought the spoon into her mouth, the food melted right away. The tasty tofu pudding and delicious zha cai and gravy blended together perfectly, bringing a smile to her face.

After she swallowed, she looked up at the expectant Mag. “Father, this tofu pudding is very good. But can I have a roujiamo to go with it?”

Mag nodded. “Sure. I’ll make one for you,” he said. *Amy has the same opinion as me! She is really talented in eating.*

Is it really that good? Yabemiya wondered as she watched Amy eating happily. But when her eyes went from Amy to the sweet tofu pudding, the look on her face became determined again. *The sweet one is the best!*

Mag made two roujiamos quickly, and then made a bowl of savory tofu pudding for himself.

Amy took a bite of roujiamo, and ate a spoonful of tofu pudding. Her eyes went wide, and she gave a radiant smile. She rocked her body from side to side, looking very happy.

Ugly Duckling’s eyes followed the movements of Amy’s spoon, full of longing.

Mag smiled—Amy liked the savory tofu pudding.

A sharp knock came from the door. Mag took a look at the time. It was 7 am, so he didn’t intend to open the door.

“Mag, it’s me. I’m from Sherlock Detective Agency. I’ve got something for you,” an urgent voice called out.

Chapter 118: I Want To Try The Sweet One Too

Mag put down the roujiamo in his hand and rose to his feet to open the door. Outside stood a tall, lean man in a black long gown, his black hat almost over his eyes. He stood sideways, and said in a low voice, “May I come in?”

Mag recognized his face. He nodded and let him in, then closed the door again. The man was the owner of the private detective agency that Mag had been to the other day. Mag had hired him to investigate Krassu and Urien. His name, Sherlock, was the reason why Mag had chosen him. Mag never thought to see him so soon.

“These are the files you wanted. I don’t know what you’re planning to do, but I advise you not to mess with them,” Sherlock said, pulling a paper bag out of his clothes and handing it to Mag. He took a glance at Yabemiya and Amy, and lowered his voice. “Krassu’s file wasn’t very hard to get. It’s very detailed, and worth every coin. But I’ve only found a little about the other magic caster. Last night, I sneaked into his shop, and he burnt my hair. He is very powerful.”

Mag glanced at his burnt hair showing under his hat. The last time he saw him, he had had long curly hair, a mustache, and a wild smile, and now he was very cautious and a little pale. He must have had a rough night.

Mag nodded. “Thank you.” The bag was pretty heavy, so now he should be able to decide who was more suitable to become Amy’s master. Sherlock had done a pretty good job.

The detective nodded. “I’ll take my leave, then.” Apparently, he didn’t want to stay. Then he saw Amy, who was eating roujiamo, and paused for a moment.

It’s the adorable girl from the other day. What’s that strange cake in her hand? And what’s that white dish in the bowl? he wondered. The pleasant smell of meat and tofu pudding made him swallow. He hadn’t eaten anything yet, because he had to deliver the bag to Mag before the magic potion shop opened. His stomach rumbled at the inviting smell.

“Do you serve breakfast yet, Mag?” asked Sherlock.

Mag shook his head. “Not for another 30 minutes. Sorry.” He gave a strange smile and handed 10 gold coins to the detective. *10 gold coins is not even enough to buy two plates of Yangzhou fried rice. I feel sorry about his hair.*

Sherlock nodded. “I see. Guess I have to come back again sometime. Bye.” He took another look at the roujiamo in Amy’s hand and left.

Mag locked the door and seated himself on a chair by the door. He pulled the files out of the bag and started reading fast. He furrowed his brow, but his frown soon disappeared, replaced by a hesitant look.

Krassu’s file was indeed very detailed, including his life from when he was young to the day he arrived at Chaos City. Sherlock even knew where the old man was living right now.

He has found so much information on a royal magic caster. He truly is a professional.

Mag was relieved as he was more or less sure now that Krassu had nothing to do with that incident years before. *He is not so dangerous as long as he's not one of them.*

He had found out that Krassu knew the elven princess. *He wanted to take her on as his disciple, but somehow it didn't work out. So maybe he still likes her.*

Urien's file was much thinner. The file said that he was a very mysterious magic caster who had run his magic potion shop on the Aden Square for almost 10 years. His business was neither good nor bad. He sold various low-tier magic potions, and could provide them in large quantities, so many adventurer groups were his customers. He always kept a low profile.

Sherlock mentioned that there might be some grudge between Urien and Krassu, but he didn't go into details. Mag didn't know whether he didn't know much or was afraid of them.

Looks like Krassu is a better choice than the shadowy Urien, Mag thought as he furrowed his brow. Krassu wants to find a disciple. He is already 121. His days are numbered, so finding a disciple must be his first priority.

He was aware that Amy is a half-elf, but he hardly seemed to care. So apparently, he is very adamant. I think he is ready to deal with any problems Amy may cause him.

If he really likes Amy and won't take her to the Magus Tower...

Amy's cheerful voice interrupted his thinking. "Father, this savory tofu pudding is very tasty!" Mag put the files into the bag again. He walked over to Amy. She had already finished the roujiamo and a bowl of tofu pudding. She looked up at him, eyebrows like crescent moons from smiling.

"Do you like the savory one the most?" Mag asked with a smile, wiping the corner of her mouth clean.

Amy shook her head. "I want to try the sweet one too. I think it'll be as good as the savory one," she said as she stared at the tofu pudding with golden-red syrup, eyes shining with excitement. *I'm almost full. This sweet tofu pudding will be my dessert. I'll be in heaven.*

Mag nodded. "Okay. Try it." His little girl was a hopeless foodie, but there was nothing he could do, because she was so cute even when she asked for food! Mag pushed the bowl in front of her slowly.

Yabemiya's face lit up. She had thought that Amy might not try the sweet one, because she liked the savory one, but clearly she was wrong. *Maybe she'll like this one better.*

Amy spooned some sweet tofu pudding into her mouth. Her big blue eyes closed. The tofu pudding covered by syrup melted immediately, sweetness spreading in her mouth.

Both Mag and Yabemiya were gazing at Amy, expectant. Amy's judgment was very crucial.

Chapter 119: I'll Smash Your Head!

The restaurant became so quiet that the sound of Amy's swallowing was very clear.

Amy opened her eyes. "The sweet one is very good too," she said happily. Then she dug into it quickly.

Mag was taken by surprise. *She didn't say which one she liked better... And she is eating with the same expression of delight she wore when she ate the sweet one.*

Come to think of it, Amy looked just like this when she first ate Yangzhou fried rice and roujiamo. The intoxicated look and innocent smile on her face are making her even more adorable.

After a little while, Amy licked the bowl, and put it down reluctantly.

Smiling, Mag asked, "Which one do you like better? The savory or the sweet?"

"I like..." Amy started as Mag and Yabemiya watched her nervously. She thought a moment, and nodded. "I like them both. The savory one goes great with roujiamo, and makes it taste better. And it's better to eat the sweet one last. I feel so satisfied and so comfortable! They are both super delicious!"

Mag and Yabemiya exchanged an unhappy look. They had thought Amy would side with either of them, but Amy didn't choose sides. She liked both flavors. *If the savory tofu pudding guys were to fight the sweet tofu pudding ones, they might all treat Amy as a friend,* Mag thought.

There came a soft knock on the door. "Mag, it's me, Krassu. I need talk with you about something. Can you open the door?"

"It's half-beard grandpa!" Amy said merrily, looking to the door. "Father, can we give him a bowl of tofu pudding? I'm sure he'll like the sweet one. He is so old; I think he has no teeth to speak of. And the tofu pudding is very soft."

Mag shook his head with a smile. "We haven't started selling it officially. I'll go get the door." His feelings of hostility towards Krassu had grown weaker now that he had found out more about the old man. *He knows the elven princess. Maybe I'll find more information from him. He's a much more reliable source than detectives.*

When Mag was about to open the door, Krassu said, "Urien! Why are you here?!" His voice was thick with surprise and anger.

Apparently, the detective was right when he mentioned in his report that there might be some grudge between Urien and Krassu. *They know each other, and maybe they hate each other too,* Mag thought.

"Krassu, I've been living here for a decade. Why can't I be here?" Urien sneered. His voice was as harsh as the sound of metal rubbing together.

"Why! Why!" Black Coal echoed.

Krassu looked at the crow. "You featherless bird, one more word, and you'll be roasted," he said, giving Urien a glance from the corner of his eye. *Why is he here? For food? Or for Amy?* he wondered, irritated and worried.

Black Coal fought to keep the fear out of his voice, but failed. "I'm not afraid of you!" he said, moving closer to his master.

“Don’t take that tone with my bird,” Urien said icily, staring at Krassu with a sullen look. The air seemed to have become colder.

“I take that tone with whomever I want. I took that tone with the king when he was a prince,” Krassu came back. The air had become a little hot.

The door opened with a “ding”. The two magic casters turned to look at Mag.

“If you want to fight, fight somewhere else. I have a business to run. I don’t want to see ice or fire near my door,” Mag said as he stood between the two angry men, feeling hot and cold.

Krassu was still leaning on his tall magic staff, his white robe as clean as a whistle. Urien was wearing a black robe, a magic wand in one hand and a birdcage in the other. The bird was shivering in the corner with two leaves.

Krassu and Urien were taken by surprise. The king might not dare to say that to these two powerful magic casters if they fought in front of his palace.

They had never seen that coming.

They were shocked.

Krassu and Urien exchanged a glance. They hesitated for a moment, and drew back their auras.

“Mag...” they said at the exact same instant, and stopped, staring at each other.

“Let’s talk inside,” Mag said quickly before anything worse happened. Apparently, Urien also wanted to take Amy on as his disciple.

Krassu nodded. “Thank you.” He entered the restaurant.

Urien paused a moment, and followed him in.

Mag closed the door, and pulled down the window shade.

I can’t find a teacher for Amy from Chaos School, so maybe I should approach these two magic casters first.

Krassu’s resume was fantastic. No magic caster had beaten a dragon with a staff other than him.

Urien might not be as famous as Krassu, but he was obviously as powerful. And, it seemed he had nothing to do with the Magus Tower.

Krassu stopped his feet, and turned to look at Urien. “Urien, 20 years ago, Irina didn’t become my disciple because of you! If you want to try anything again this time, I’ll smash your head even if it’s the last thing I do!” Krassu declared seriously.

Chapter 120: He May Be Ugly, But He Can Sing!

“Heh, Krassu, do you take me for that stupid dragon? You’d better stay out of this, or I’ll freeze you again!” Urien sneered, his voice cold as ice.

Irina? The name sounded familiar to Mag. Then the realization came as he watched the two furious old men.

Mag had read in Krassu's file that he had tried to make the elven princess his disciple 20 years ago but failed. *Apparently, Urien was involved in it. And this Irina is most probably the elven princess.*

"Black Coal! Hello! Where is Green Pea?" Amy said delightedly, jumping down the chair. Ugly Duckling was eying the crow with hostility. It meowed at him, and looked like it was about to fly at him.

"She's still sleeping, that lazybones," the crow said with disdain. He took a glance at Krassu, and cowered in fright again. He had never seen such a terrifying old man oozing danger.

Amy nodded. "Oh." Then, she turned to Urien and Krassu. "Turtle Grandpa, half-beard grandpa, are you fighting? No fighting in the restaurant."

Krassu smiled, and shook his head immediately. "No, we're just talking." The look on his face was very hilarious.

Urien hesitated a moment, and managed a smile. "We're not fighting."

"Oh," Amy said, disappointed. "You can take it outside if you want to fight. Then I can watch."

The two old men didn't know what to say. She was not here to mediate; she was encouraging them to fight! Amy reminded them of a young girl who had always wanted them to fight.

"Well, what brings you here?" Mag asked, stroking Amy's hair. As much as he'd like to watch them fight too, clearly it was not the right time nor place. *They're here for Amy, or they wouldn't be so submissive.*

"Mag, I'd like to take Amy on as my disciple," Krassu said. Mag gave a frown. The old man raised a hand, and added quickly, "I know you said you wouldn't let her leave your side. I won't take her to Rodu. I'll build a magic room and teach her here. In Chaos City, no, on the whole continent, few people are better than me at teaching magic."

Mag's face lit up. *This way, Amy doesn't have to go to that Magus Tower. And he is indeed a very powerful magic caster...*

The change of Mag's expression brought a smile to Krassu's lips. Over the last few days, he had figured out that Mag's decision was crucial.

"Yeah. Few people are better than you. And it just so happens I'm one of them," Urien said slowly. He turned to Mag and smiled. "I already have a magic room. I can teach her today. He has to ship all the materials from Rodu, and it will take him a month to build it. A month in which she'll learn the basics about magic and at least three magic spells—from me. She'll win at the starting line."

Mag rubbed his chin thoughtfully. In fact, he was really happy on the inside. Two powerful magic casters were selling themselves in order to make Amy their disciple.

Krassu waved his hand. "Magic room is not very necessary in the beginning. I just need to say the word, and the Gray Temple will let me use their magic room." Then he pulled a scroll out of his clothes, and spread it out on the table. "I have designed a magic room for Amy, one of a kind on the whole continent.

It will be painted purple. And there will be a swing, wooden horse, and a lot of other amusement equipment for when she is tired from studying.”

Amy walked up to the table with the kitten in her arms and saw the swing, wooden horse, and various toys on the scroll. The purple magic room was decorated with many colorful stars, so dreamy. “Wow, that looks like fun!” Amy exclaimed in excitement.

Mag was also a little surprised to find that Krassu had gone to such great lengths to design such a great magic room.

Urien craned his head to take a glance at the drawing. “Colorful but useless,” he said with a tight look on his face. *Despicable Krassu! He used the same trick before, and now he’s using it again! This little girl is not as smart as Irina. She can’t resist those toys,* he thought, anxious.

Then he saw the birdcage, and his eyes brightened. “Amy, if you become my disciple, you can have Black Coal and Green Pea. They’ll play with you every day,” he said, smiling.

“Don’t do this to me, old man! Amy has a cat!” cried the crow, flapping in his cage.

“Meow!” Ugly Duckling bared its teeth at Black Coal. It might fly at the bird at any minute.

Black Coal became more frightened. He wasn’t very confident he could beat the little kitten.

Amy took a look at the crow with contempt, and said, “I don’t want them. Ugly Duckling is ugly, and Black Coal is uglier. Their ugly faces may make me ugly too.”

Krassu was worrying that the little girl might be tempted, so Amy’s words made him grin. “How can a bird be so ugly? Amy, if you like birds, I’ll catch a pretty peacock for you tomorrow.”

Urien looked a little abashed. His bird was indeed quite ugly, featherless with two leaves covering his embarrassing parts. His back was up against a wall. He gave a dry smile. “Black Coal may be ugly, but he can sing. Come on, sing for us.”

“Really?” Amy said, incredulous, looking at the crow.