

Stay At home 171

Chapter 171: Can I Have Another Bowl Of Sweet Tofu Pudding?

“Relax, buddy. You scars are still there,” his friend said, smiling.

“Bullshit! The one left by a blue-haired wolf when I went hunting for the first time 25 years ago is gone! And so is the scar made by an orc’s fang. And...” Yeoell told him with sorrow about all the scars that had disappeared.

“Don’t worry, Yeoell. You’ll get new ones.” His friend patted him on the shoulder.

“But I liked my old ones! They meant a lot to me!” Although Yeoell was already the vice-leader of an adventurer group, he always liked showing off. He really enjoyed bragging to the rookie adventurers about his scars.

His friend smiled. “So if there were another bowl of tofu pudding in front of you, would you eat it?”

Yeoell thought a moment and nodded. “Of course I would!”

“Even my birthmark is not so clear anymore!” a voice called out.

“Would you do me a favor and tell me if the pits on my face are gone?” said a second voice.

The customers had noticed that their skin had actually got better.

Yabemiya’s eyes lit up when she lifted her hands before her eyes.

She had been too busy to pay attention to the changes to her hands, but now she noticed that some of her old scars had vanished.

The scar left by a hot wok when she was seven, the scar she had got from a dog at the age of eight... All those ugly scars were either gone or fading.

If I keep eating this tofu pudding, my hands might become pretty again! Yabemiya thought to herself, excited.

She had found her life miserable as she had been a lowly worker slaving away in that dark kitchen. Others had shown her no respect, so she couldn’t have cared less about her hands.

She was getting all the love and respect here in Mamy Restaurant, and started to really live her life. It was natural for a girl to crave to be beautiful. She had been saved from her miserable life.

She blamed herself for having failed to take care of her hands every time they looked at them. She didn’t want to ruin their appetite. She didn’t want to fail her boss.

She clenched her fists. *I’m sure I’ll get rid of these scars and calluses if I have two bowls of tofu pudding every day!* She strode towards the kitchen, feeling really grateful to Mag.

It didn’t only soften their skin, it literally gave them each a facelift! Mag was also amazed even though the system had prepared him for it. He had never expected it to be this effective.

“You should have told me that this tofu pudding can work wonders, system! I should have priced it at 2,000 copper coins each!” Mag said to the system. This food was basically a magic bullet for people with scars, pits, birthmarks, etc.

“I didn’t know that it would be this effective. The test result said it was rich in protein. Maybe that mysterious microelement has powerful effect on the skin.”

“You didn’t do any animal experiments?!”

The system fell silent. At last, it said, “All the ingredients are subject to 18 different tests to ensure they are edible. Don’t worry.”

“You didn’t answer my question.”

“I don’t need to conduct experiments on animals. My tests are more accurate and scientific. The test results are much more reliable than those experiments involving animals as long as I have enough samples.”

“Maybe you’re experimenting on us right now...” Mag said. He believed the system, though. Its database and knowledge made it more than capable of testing the edibility of food.

He had to limit the selling of tofu pudding for the customers’ own safety since the system had warned him of the harm in eating too much tofu pudding.

“Can I have another bowl of sweet tofu pudding?” Krassu said with a smile, looking at the young waitress.

“I’d like a second serving of savory tofu pudding,” Urien said in his hoarse voice, putting down the spoon.

The noise in the restaurant died down. They were all staring at Yabemiya.

They had finished their tofu pudding and would like more, but they had noticed the rule on the menu.

Many people who were not very happy with how they looked were gazing at Yabemiya with great expectations.

They were thinking that Mag might not say no to the two powerful magic casters, who were also Amy’s masters.

Chapter 172: That’s So Nice Of You!

“But...” Yabemiya could feel their eyes on her. She panicked and didn’t know what to do. *They’re Amy’s masters. Should I bend the rules for them?*

“I don’t think the owner will reject their requests.”

“Yeah. After all, they’re his daughter’s masters.”

“If he’s willing to bend the rules for them, maybe we could make him sell us more too.”

They talked in whispers, waiting for the waitress’s answer. They decided that Mag would grant the two old men’s requests, so they were thinking about how to talk Mag into bending the rules for them too.

They couldn’t wait to have another serving of this tasty tofu pudding.

Maybe I should have one more bowl of this. Sally seemed ambivalent, looking down at the empty bowl before her. The sweetness of the syrup made her feel so good, and she felt her breath smelled of honey.

“Sorry, each customer is limited to one bowl, and we don’t do take-out on this one,” Mag said, putting down a plate of Yangzhou fried rice in front of Krassu, smiling. “Your Yangzhou fried rice, please enjoy.”

The customers felt astonished and disappointed. Although Mag was smiling, they could see from his expression that he would never compromise.

For an instant, Krassu froze. He looked at his fried rice, and then at Mag. *He let us eat for free in the morning, but now he won’t even allow his daughter’s master to have another bowl?*

“Don’t worry. I’ll pay for it.” He had got so addicted to the sweetness that he could hardly resist it.

Urien raised an eyebrow. *I’ve never been rejected before. Apparently, he’s not very sensible.*

Mag shook his head. “The rules are clearly stated on the menu. Hope you enjoy your meals.” He was smiling on the outside, but he was in a bad mood on the inside.

He had figured that many people would be very displeased with this new rule, but this tofu pudding was so rich in nutrients that consuming more than one bowl might be unhealthy. He would never do anything that might potentially harm his restaurant’s reputation.

Besides, he had a mission to accomplish, and the rewards were really tempting.

“Please follow the rules, Masters,” Amy said warily.

“We will. Nothing can be accomplished without rules,” Krassu replied, smiling. He spooned some rice into his mouth. “This Yangzhou fried rice is so good!”

Urien took a bite of his roujiamo. “Mmm, this roujiamo tastes great.”

The two old men had pretty much given up the hope of having another serving. They could have forced him to comply, but that would have been very inappropriate, especially before his daughter.

Nobody dared treat them like this.

Nobody but Mag. He treated them in the same manner as other customers, even though he knew very well who they were and what they were capable of.

He treats everyone equally, without discrimination. Maybe that’s a good thing. Krassu took a look at Mag, and got back to eating his food.

“Please sell me one more bowl. I really need it. I’ll pay 10 times the price. Please,” Lucia entreated, rising to her feet. She felt a little insecure as her husband had grown less affectionate. This dish was a godsend for her; she was willing to pay a ridiculously high price for it.

Mag shook his head with a smile. "I'm really sorry, Ma'am. Please come back tomorrow morning." Then he said to the system, "2,000! Come on! It's stupid not to sell her!"

"Please mind your language. Insulting me may trigger a hidden mission," the system said sulkily. "What good are the rules if nobody follows them? You are to be the God of Cookery. 2,000 copper coins is really nothing compared to your great cause."

"I'll give you 2,000 copper coins."

"That's so nice of you!" the system said happily.

"Well, I was just kidding."

"But..." said Lucia.

Mag smiled. "I hope you enjoy your meal." He turned around and walked back into the kitchen, leaving her standing there.

Lucia still hadn't recovered from her surprise. She realized for the first time that money wasn't everything.

"We'll come back here first thing in the morning, Lucia," her friend said softly, tugging at her hand. "The two old men he just rejected are both very powerful magic casters."

"Magic casters?!" Lucia's eyes went wide. She knew what these two words meant. She resumed her seat quietly.

"Mag doesn't even bend the rules for his little girl's masters. He's really a man of his word."

"I would definitely sell it to her at 10 times the price."

"Looks like we have to come back early tomorrow."

The customers chatted in whispers. They had a deeper understanding of Mag now.

Chapter 173: The Fight Between The Two Sides Had Ended, For Now

I have never expected to see her here. I was told she left Chaos City half a month ago. We have already stopped searching for her here. Fikar seated himself in a corner, stealing glances at Sally.

The news of her leaving home had found its way to Chaos City over two weeks ago. Her family was among the most powerful elven clans, so her leaving home was no small business.

On top of that, Lady Helena had recommended her to the elven queen. Sally, who had always lived in the shadow of Irina, was now a popular candidate to become the elven queen.

However, at this crucial point, she left home and went south, just as the elven princess had done.

The reward for finding her was huge. Fikar could even hear his heart pounding with excitement. Maybe he would be able to return to the Wind Forest soon.

He spooned some tofu pudding into his mouth, savoring the tasty food. He smiled. *The good food here has brought me luck!*

Krassu pushed himself to his feet and walked to the kitchen door. "Check, please." He smiled at Mag.

Mag smiled back. "That will be eight gold coins." He was grateful to them for earlier since they hadn't given him a hard time.

"I've found a magic room in the Chaos School. It's on the third floor in No. 3 building of the magic school. Take Amy there at 6:30 tomorrow morning. Also, please bring a plate of Yangzhou fried rice and some sweet tofu pudding for me."

Mag was very happy when he heard that he would teach Amy in Chaos School, since Amy could play with her friends.

Then he frowned. *I have to deliver the food for him.* He hesitated a moment, and then took the 16 gold coins from his hand. *He is Amy's master. That's the least I can do.*

Mag nodded. "Thank you. I will. Please take care of her."

Apparently, Krassu had never seen this coming. He had thought Mag wouldn't deliver the food for him. He smiled and nodded.

Mag smiled back.

After Krassu left, Urien paid his check and left as well.

The two sides were more determined now that they had tried the tofu pudding. The air was thick with hatred.

Luna and Sally put down their spoons at almost the same time, letting out a breath of satisfaction. They were both highborn ladies, but they had never eaten anything as good as this.

They were both convinced that the one they had eaten was the best, yet their good manners prevented them from making any remarks. They paid their checks.

"You're such a good girl, Amy," Luna said, stroking her head. Then she turned to Parmer and smiled.

"You're very good at math, Parmer. You are not daunted by that little setback, are you?"

"No, I'm not. Thank you, Teacher Luna." The little boy's eyes started shining with ambition.

"Come back soon, Teacher Luna. Father can cook many good foods, and there will be more new dishes," said Amy.

Luna nodded with a smile. "I will," she said, her eyes full of expectations.

The customers raised their heads in surprise when they heard what Amy had just said. They wondered if Mag could truly invent more unparalleled dishes.

They really looked forward to his new dishes.

Parbor gave the kitten back to Amy after a while since it was too heavy for him.

Later, when there were seats available for Harrison, Gjergj, and the two kids, Parmer ordered a bowl of savory tofu pudding, even though the other three ordered the sweet one. He smiled happily while eating tofu pudding and roujiamo together.

“Bye, Mushroom Bowl, Blue Fatty, Gray Fatty,” Amy said at the door, holding Ugly Duckling, waving her hand.

Parbor waved back. “Bye, big sister and fat kitty.” He torn his eyes away from the kitten unwillingly and held Gjergj’s hand.

“Later, little owner,” said Harrison and Gjergj, who was holding a box of Yangzhou fried rice in his hand.

“Why didn’t you say goodbye to me?” Parmer said, gazing at Amy with a sullen look.

“Because I haven’t figured out what to call you yet.”

“Bye!” Parmer said, and left angrily.

“Bye.” Amy went back into the restaurant, looking happy.

“Boss, how about we try this tofu pudding too?” Kil asked, looking around.

“What do we work so hard for?” asked Sargerass, looking at Kil and Monde.

“For roujiamo!” they answered instantly.

“Eat!” Sargerass said, pointing at the 15 roujiamos before them.

They were busy the whole night. After 9 PM, Mag politely turned away the customers who were too late. When the last customer left, Mag closed the door and let out a sigh of relief.

The fight between the two sides had ended, for now. It was more violent than he had expected.

“Father, we have sold 512 roujiamos, 90 plates of rainbow fried rice, and 240 bowls of tofu pudding,” Amy said happily. “Our income today is 175,480 copper coins. I have converted dragon coins and gold coins into copper coins.”

“Oh, you’re so amazing, sweetheart. You’re literally a math genius.” Mag smiled, held her in his arms, and kissed her on the head.

He was only 1,000 gold coins away from getting to buy the strength, and he had got 880 customers as of now.

The braised chicken and rice will be popular in this world, and I will probably be able to swing a sword after I get that 0.5 strength. The thought of this brought a smile to Mag’s face.

Chapter 174: It’s Perfect At Home Or On Vacation

Yabemiya looked at the father and daughter with a smile and an envious look in her eyes. "When will my father come back? Mother promised he would, but when? I've been waiting for many years..." she muttered to herself, taking the dishes into the kitchen.

Mag looked at Amy with a serious look on his face. "Amy, starting tomorrow, you will start your lessons with Krassu. Remember, you should call him 'Master Krassu' and always be courteous and respectful."

"But I like to call him Master Half-beard."

Mag shook his head. "It's rude. He might feel offended. Words can cut deeper than knives, and students ought to respect their teachers. You're their only student, so be good while attending their classes, okay?"

Amy nodded obediently. "Yes, Father. But can I call them Master Half-beard and Master Turtle after class?"

"Uh, yeah, I guess," Mag said, looking at her expectant little face. *They don't seem very bothered by their nicknames.*

Amy smiled. "Great!" She looked out the window and waved Mag's hand back and forth. "I want to watch the stars, Father."

"Okay, let's go up to the balcony. We can see clearer from there." He felt like an irresponsible father since he was always too busy to interact with Amy.

"Miya, go home if you're finished. Stay safe. Also, don't come early tomorrow morning. I have to take Amy to school, and won't be back until around 6:50."

Yabemiya nodded. "Yes, Boss. Do you want me to massage your shoulders?"

Mag shook his head with a smile. "No. Go home and get some rest."

"Good night, Sister Miya," Amy said, waving her little hand.

"Meow!" cried Ugly Duckling. It still kept its distance from her, but it had grown accustomed to her working here.

The waitress smiled. "Good night!" She felt so warm inside.

"Can we take Mushroom Fairy with us, Father?" Amy asked when they were about to go up the stairs.

"Sure." Mag went to get the music box, and ascended the third floor with Amy.

Mag had tricked the system into remodeling the second and third floor while building the restaurant. The large balcony had a white rail and non-slip gray tiles, and was situated outside of a small empty room on the third floor. Facing the Aden Square, it provided a great view.

A lamp went on the minute they opened the door. "Wow, we have such a spacious balcony!" Amy exclaimed in delight. She put Ugly Duckling on the floor and ran around happily.

Mag was also a little surprised. *This place is nice. We can grill meat and drink beer up here. The room is large enough for a grill, parasol, rocking chair, and other stuff.*

“I need a rocking chair,” he said to the system. *I wouldn't lie on the floor to watch the stars.*

“You have no right to change the restaurant. You will get two luxurious lounges for free after you upgrade it.”

“Will customers eat up here?”

“I don't think they will,” the system answered after a while.

“Exactly,” Mag said, smiling. “The second and third floor are private sections. I won't allow them to come up here. The restaurant is on the first floor, so I'm not changing the restaurant.” The system fell silent.

“Do you sell it or not? I don't have all night.”

“Sorry, I was wrong. Of course you can buy a rocking chair. I have thousands of rocking chairs for you to choose from. Some even have massage functions. They are perfect at home and on vacation!”

Mag nodded as the pictures popped up in his head. “That's more like it.”

Chapter 175: Do You Know How To Sing “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star”?

Mag chose a brown cane chair with curved metal legs. It was five gold coins, and looked quite comfortable.

“The rocking chair will be ready in five minutes. Where do you want me to put it?” the system asked.

“Here, on this balcony. Tell me when it's ready.” He didn't want to miss the opportunity to do a magic trick before Amy.

It was a cool night in early autumn, with gentle breeze.

“Father, come here! We're going to have a contest to see who can quack better. Will you be our judge?” asked Amy.

Mag was taken by surprise. *Is she trying to make a cat quack like a duck?* He gave a wry smile. “Amy, Ugly Duckling might not be a normal duck.”

“Meow! Meow!” The kitten nodded its agreement.

Amy also nodded. “I know.” Then she turned to face it. “You're a very ugly duck.”

“Meow...” Ugly Duckling cried in dismay.

Mag gave a shake of his head and smiled. *It seems she won't accept that it's actually a cat—at least not for a long time.* “Why do you want to have this contest?”

“Because it doesn't know how to quack. It won't be able to communicate with other ducks. No duck will like it.” Amy gave a worried look at the kitten and lifted its head with her little hand. “Study harder! Or no food tomorrow!” she said seriously.

“Meow!” the kitten answered quickly, looking up at Amy.

“Quack, quack, quack...” Amy said. Actually, she was doing quite well.

“Meow, meow, meow...” said Ugly Duckling.

Amy stomped her foot. “No! Listen carefully! Quack, quack, quack!”

The kitten lowered its voice in fright. “Meow, meow, meow...”

“No, you stupid duck! It’s quack, quack, quack!”

“Meow, meow, meow...”

“I will give you one last time. You’d better do it right this time! Quack! Quack! Quack!”

“Meow, meow, Quaow...”

“That’s it. You’re done. No duck will like you.” She patted Ugly Duckling on the head. Then she looked up at Mag. “It’s so stupid, Father. I don’t think it will make it to adulthood. What about...”

“Don’t worry. We’ll make sure that it grows up,” Mag said as Amy swallowed. He knew very well what was on her mind. He stroked her head.

The competition was over before it even started.

“The rocking chair is ready. When do you want it?” the system asked.

“In 30 seconds. Put it here,” Mag said, pointing to the right. He smiled at Amy. “I’ll do a magic trick for you.”

Amy’s eyes lit up. “Is it magic?”

“No. But they’re quite alike in some ways.”

“Okay!” Amy clapped her hands and looked at Mag with expectation.

“We need a chair if we want to watch the stars here, right? And preferably a chair we can lie in.”

Amy nodded. “Yes.”

“Look at here and don’t blink,” he said, pointing to the right. “Ta-da!”

Amy was staring with wide eyes, but after three seconds, nothing happened.

Mag was still extending his arm, abashed. *What the hell?! Where is that damn rocking chair?!*

“Meow!” Ugly Duckling called out behind him suddenly. Amy turned to look. “Father, look! It’s a chair!” she exclaimed in delight.

Mag turned around and found the rocking chair sitting behind him, rocking. Ugly Duckling was trying to climb into it.

“Sorry about that,” the system said apologetically. “It’s heavy. But it won’t happen again.”

Mag was furious, but he had to smile. *It did that on purpose, I'm sure. It struck back, huh?*

Mag nodded. "Yes. My magic tricks are a little rusty these days." He pushed the chair and it started rocking back and forth. It looked good.

The rocking shook the kitten off and sent it rolling on the floor. Finally, it stopped and looked around confused, not knowing what had just happened.

"You're so amazing, Father! I want to be as powerful as you are!" Amy said, looking up at Mag with adoring eyes.

"You'll be much more powerful than me after you master how to use magic." Mag smiled and stroked her hair, contented.

"Come on. Let's watch the stars." Mag got in the chair and moved over for Amy.

Amy nodded. "Okay." She climbed into the chair with effort and threw herself into Mag's arms, giggling.

"They're so beautiful," Mag said, holding Amy, rocking the chair gently.

With no clouds and no flashing neon lights, the sky was so clear and deep. The stars were shining brightly. Mag couldn't remember the last time he saw such a spectacular night sky.

"Do you know how to sing 'twinkle, twinkle, little star', Father?" Amy asked suddenly, looking up at Mag.

Chapter 176: It's Called "Spring Is Here"

Huh? Where does she know this song from? Then he saw the music box and understood. "No, I don't know this song."

"Do you want me to teach you, Father?"

"Yes!"

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star, how I wonder what you are."

Mag smiled. "You're out of tune."

Amy sat up, confused. "But Father, you just said you don't know this song."

"Uh, I know a little about this song, I guess."

Amy grinned. "Then let's sing together," she said. "Twinkle, twinkle, little star, how I wonder what you are..." she sang, clapping her hands.

She was all smiles, her two pigtails dancing, and her pointy ears looking almost transparent in the starlight. Mag sang softly, smiling all the while. Their song floated up into the quiet night.

Ugly Duckling couldn't climb into the chair. It was running around them anxiously, meowing to try to get their attention.

“Look, Father! That star is flying!” Amy said suddenly, pointing to the sky in excitement.

It was a bright star, dragging a long tail behind it, flying towards the east. “It’s a shooting star. If you make a wish to it, it will come true.”

“Really?” Amy closed her eyes, folded her hands, and prayed.

I pray that Amy will be happy every day, Mag prayed, looking at his daughter.

After a while, Amy opened her eyes slowly, excited.

“What wish did you make?” Mag asked, smiling.

“Sorry, Father. Teacher Luna said wishes won’t come true if I don’t keep them secret.”

“Okay. I’m sure your wish will come true.” Mag was grateful to Luna for her help in Amy’s education. Amy growing up into a kind kid was mostly attributed to her.

Amy nodded. “Yes. I’m sure it will.” She kissed Mag on the cheek, and leaned her head on his chest. “Father, you’ll never leave me, right?”

“No, I will never, ever leave your side,” he said, stroking her hair gently.

Amy smiled and sat up again. “You’re the best, Father. I’ll do a dance for you.”

Mag nodded. “All right.” Amy had only studied for less than a day.

Amy jumped off the chair and went to get the music box. “But, Father, what’s this dance called? I don’t understand a word of this song.”

“Um...” Mag didn’t understand Japanese himself, either. He thought for a moment, and said, “It’s called ‘spring is here’.”

Amy clapped her hands cheerfully. “I like that name! I like spring! No wonder Mushroom Fairy is so excited and happy.”

Mag smiled. “I like spring too.”

“I’ll start dancing.” Amy crouched down and tapped the screen. The music started. She had already learned how to use this music box in merely one day, though she couldn’t read many words.

Amy donned a serious face. She was standing sideways, her hands folded in front. Then she put her arms in the air and moved them around. She was dancing to the beat.

Her dance moves were not accurate or graceful, but they were definitely cute.

Mag smiled as he watched Amy dance.

She almost tripped herself up when she put her left foot behind the right. She had managed to make the dance moves much more adorable.

Her dancing was not good by any means, but it melted Mag’s heart.

Ugly Duckling was also jumping around, dancing in its own way.

When the music stopped, Amy froze in the last dance position, breathing heavily. “Father, how did I do?”

“You danced very well, even better than Mushroom Fairy.”

She has never learned how to dance before, but she has already remembered most of the dance moves after only one day. Her talent is remarkable. I’m sure she’ll master this dance in no time.

“Thank you, Father. I’ll study harder,” she said happily.

“Come on. Let’s go downstairs and take a bath. Tomorrow is a big day. You’ll be wearing new clothes.” Mag crouched down and picked her up.

“Yes, Father.” She wrapped her arms around his neck. Ugly Duckling followed them unhappily—no one paid any attention to it.

...

In the second prince’s palace, a handsome young man was talking in a refined manner with several young magic casters. They all looked at him with great admiration.

Suddenly, a middle-aged man looking like a butler hurried in and walked straight up to the young man. “My prince, a messenger from the elves,” he whispered in his ear.

Chapter 177: Dear Irina

Josh Edward gave a surprised look, but quickly shook it off. He beckoned the butler to leave. Then he stood up, holding a glass of wine in his hand. “You’re young but talented. The Magus Tower relies on you. The empire relies on you. Let’s drink to the empire!”

“To the empire!” All the magic casters rose and drained their glasses in one gulp, their eyes shining with fanatical confidence.

“It’s getting late. I’ve arranged rooms for you. I’m sure the girls there will give you a good night’s sleep.”

“Thank you, my prince.”

“You’re too kind, my prince.”

“The empire will thrive when you become the king one day, my prince.”

They all started kissing up to him.

Josh waved his hands. “I’m just the second prince. My brother, the first prince, will become the king. You should go now. Don’t make the girls wait.”

After they left, the smile on his face was replaced by a look of disgust and contempt.

The butler walked in. “My prince, the messenger is now waiting outside,” he said with his head bowed.

“Take him to the study, and don’t let anyone come near the house,” Josh said coolly. He put the glass on the table abruptly, spilling the wine.

“Yes, my prince,” the butler replied with his head lowered even more. The second prince might look respectable and decent to others, but he knew exactly what kind of a man he was.

In the quiet study, whose doors and windows had all been shut, stood the second prince, who was staring at a painting on the wall. The messenger, a tall middle-aged elf, was watching him, sweating nervously in the dim light.

The second prince was only around 30, but he was giving off such aura of authority that it made the elf feel like he was standing before his queen. He had been standing in this room for some time, but not once did the prince as much as glance at him.

“What does she want?” Josh asked drily, turning to look at another painting.

“Lady Helena wanted me to give you this letter,” the elf answered quickly, and pulled out a letter. The envelope was dark green, with vines crawling all over it. Nothing was written on it, though.

“Put it on the desk and leave,” Josh said, without looking at him.

“Yes, Prince.” He put it down carefully on the desk with both hands, took two steps back, turned around, walked out, and closed the door quietly. He breathed a long sigh of relief and wiped his forehead, his back soaked with sweat.

Josh turned around after he heard the door shut. He picked up the letter. The vines shone with a green light, and then withdrew into the envelope.

He tore it open and emptied it on the desk. A black seed and a light green piece of paper came out.

He took no notice of the seed, but picked up the paper. His brows furrowed as he read. The room was deadly quiet.

After a while, the paper started burning in his hand, and so did the envelope and the seed.

“Seems I underestimated this Snarr. He can even use such ancient magic as time magic. Alex, I knew you’re still alive!” Josh said, clenching his fist. His voice was as cold as ice, his face hideous with rage.

Suddenly, a gust of wind sent scraps of paper off his desk, making them fly randomly around his dark face.

Josh snatched a piece of paper, and then the wind stopped suddenly. The other pieces fell down quickly onto the floor.

I have to bring my plan forward. His calm expression returned, handsome and still, betraying nothing. He sat at the desk and picked up a quill. “Dear Irina, I’m sorry I haven’t written to you in a while...” he wrote.

When he was done, he put the letter in a blue envelope, on which he wrote, “To Irina.”

Then he thought for a moment, and took another piece of paper. He wrote, “Dear Lady Helena, I will help you with your plan. Please don’t forget what you have promised me.”

...

On the southwestern frontier of the Roth Empire, a young, strong, and handsome man in golden armor was sitting in the high seat in the bright command tent. He stood up and smiled, holding a bowl in his hand. "Let's drink!"

His officers held up their bowls. "Thank you, my prince."

"You're so kind to have us here, my prince!" an old man said, looking at the prince with appreciation.

A guard came in hurriedly. "Quine has come back, my prince. He has something important to tell you," he whispered in his ear.

Sean Edward's eyes went wide. He nodded, and beckoned the guard to leave. Then he smiled at his men. "Excuse me for a moment," he said, and walked out.

His smile was gone as soon as he was outside. "Send him to my tent," he said to the guard, and walked towards a big tent.

A short while later, a young man wearing a silver mask and black tights entered the tent. "I have investigated for a half year, my prince," he said quietly in a hoarse voice. "Among the several generals you had me look into, General Simon is the most suspicious. You know, he retired and went back to Rodu. After that incident, he disappeared for a while. He told me the reason for his disappearance, but I found what he said is not true."

"Simon?" Sean murmured to himself. Then a smile touched his lips. "He was Alex's right-hand man. Maybe he was involved in Alex disappearing."

Chapter 178: A Cute Little Magic Caster

Mag put Amy to bed after he bathed her and Ugly Duckling, and told her a bedtime story.

He pecked her on the forehead and smiled as Amy slept with the kitten. He found that he really loved playing with his daughter.

Mag got in bed and switched off the light, excited. *She'll have her first magic class tomorrow. Oh, she needs to wear a robe.*

Mag wanted Amy to stay by his side forever, but he couldn't give her what she needed to survive in the world. *She has to become strong to protect herself and the ones she loves.*

And I'm sure she will.

"System, I need a robe."

"I don't care what you need. I'm here to help you become the God of Cookery. I'm not your supermarket!" the system said angrily.

I thought you are... Mag thought. He didn't say it, though. "Tomorrow is Amy's big day," he said, smiling. "I need a robe that is different but not that different, conspicuous but not that conspicuous, loose but not that loose. Can you do it? Just name your price."

The system fell silent. At last, it roared, "I will give you a cubic robe that looks spherical. How about that, huh?!"

Mag raised an eyebrow. *I guess I asked for too much.* He thought for a while, and said, "Let me see the pictures."

The system didn't reply, but the pictures appeared in Mag's head anyway.

The system did have a wide range of robes. There were long robes like the ones on Krassu and Urien, short ones which would favor close combat, and cute colorful ones which looked like dresses.

"Who the hell wears Taoist robes or monk robes?! Are Taoists and monks even magic casters?!" Mag sneered.

"They are in a way, I think."

"Oh, can they make a fireball?"

Then the Taoist robes and monk robes disappeared.

Mag looked over all the pictures and picked a slim-fit bluish purple dress, a pair of black stockings, black boots, and a black-and-red cape with a hood.

Amy will definitely look cute in these. When the system said it would cost him 30 gold coins, Mag didn't even blink, and directly bought two sets. The other set was all black; she would look like a Gothic Lolita in it.

"Thank you. The clothes will be ready in five minutes," the system said cheerfully.

"Put them in the wardrobe. If you make a mistake this time, I'll never buy anything from you again," Mag warned. "Damned system," he muttered.

"Rest assured, no mistakes this time," it answered quickly, pretending it hadn't heard him curse.

Mag set the alarm for 5 AM. He took a look at Amy to make sure she didn't kick her quilt, then he turned off the light, and went to sleep.

"Father, wake up! I'm late for school," Amy called out before the alarm even went off. Mag struggled to open his sleepy eyes and saw Amy on his bed, jumping merrily. "I'm going to school!"

"Meow, meow," the kitten cried, trying to climb onto the bed. It appeared Amy had kicked it off again.

Mag was suddenly wide awake when Amy accidently stepped on his hand. He withdrew it; it was a little numb.

He took a look at the time. It was 4:50. "It's still early. You can sleep some more," he said with a wry smile as Amy danced on his bed. He could understand her excitement since today was her first day of school; he was really happy.

Amy shook her head. "No, Father. I want to wear a pretty dress; also, please do my hair!" Her face was red, and she didn't feel sleepy at all. "Where is the school?"

"You'll be studying in the Chaos School today," he answered, getting up.

Amy's mouth gaped open. "Really?"

"Yes." He touched her head and made for the wardrobe.

"Great! I can play with Daphne!" She jumped up. The shock of her landing sent the kitten off the quilt and upside down on the floor. It gave a despairing look.

Mag nodded, smiling. "Yes. After the class, you can play with your friends." Then he opened the wardrobe and turned to look at Amy mysteriously. "Guess what you'll be wearing to school today."

"A pretty dress?" Amy asked, expectant.

"A pretty robe." Mag took the dress and cape out of the wardrobe.

"Wow, they're so beautiful, Father!" Amy said, eyes shining with excitement. "Can I try them on?"

Mag nodded. "Of course." He helped Amy put them on.

The dress and cape felt comfortable. According to the system, they were fireproof to a certain extent since it had used the fireproof fabric. Yet, it still remained to be seen whether or not they could stay unharmed from Amy's fire.

The sleeves and the hem of the bluish purple dress were trimmed with lace. Amy put on the black stockings and black leather boots, and the black-and-red cape fell just below her knees. Such a cute little magic caster!

Chapter 179: Wow, They're So Cool!

Mag took two steps back and nodded as he looked at Amy. She looked cool as well as cute. This clothing combination was really eye-catching. He felt really proud of himself.

"How do I look, Father?" Amy asked, excited.

"You look wonderful!"

"I'm a magic caster!" She clenched her little fists and started running around the room happily, with Ugly Duckling running behind her.

She might become a superwoman after she masters Krassu's melee magic. Looking at the cape floating behind her, Mag smiled.

The little girl ran into the next room and checked herself in the mirror. Then she turned to Mag. "Can you do two ponytails for me today, Father?"

Mag nodded. "Sure." *It's the first time she wants me to change her hairdo; she must be really excited for school.* He quickly did two ponytails for her. The ponytails did go better with the robe.

After they washed up and brushed her teeth, Mag went downstairs to make preparations, and Amy played with the kitten in the restaurant. Although she woke up very early, she didn't look tired at all. She was a little magic caster with her cat.

Mag was kneading dough, which was the most time-consuming process among the preparations. He had to take Amy to school today, so he couldn't knead as much dough as before.

"System, I want to buy a car," Mag said suddenly. Clearly, he wanted to lose as little time on the road as possible.

"I'm afraid you can't afford it."

Mag lifted an eyebrow.

"A used Alto will do."

"I don't sell used things," the system said proudly. "Besides, I don't think a used Alto is a safe choice considering the stone-paved roads here."

Actually, the system had a point. The roads were pretty good here in Chaos City, but they were not built for cars. "How much is your cheapest off-road car?"

"Range Rover, the cheapest is 15,000 gold coins. You can upgrade it, of course. The most expensive Range Rover is only 30,000 gold coins."

"Well, you have bicycles too, right?"

The cars are too expensive!

The money I have saved is for my strength. I'd be a fool if I spent it on a vehicle, and a bigger fool if I bought such an expensive one.

He had had an expensive Range Rover in his garage, which had been the cheapest among his cars, but he had never paid a penny for any of them. Now that he had to work for every coin, he decided to spend each one cautiously.

"You can pay by installments for that most expensive Range Rover, and I can loan you money. No interest for 12 months. The down payment is only 9,000 gold coins. Also, I can offer you three times of maintenance for free. You never have to pay if the repair fee is under 10 gold coins. You won't get a better offer than this!"

"No, thanks. Show me the bikes!" Mag said without hesitation. *The system can be so annoying when big money is involved.*

"Oh, you can test drive it if you want."

"Do you sell bikes or not?!" Mag wasn't the least bit tempted. *Cars run on gas, but gas is nowhere to be found in this world. I'll have to buy it from the system, but it may sell me gas at a very high price.*

Besides, I don't want to draw too much attention by driving a metal box on the road. I don't have the power to fight my enemies. Making money is my first priority.

The system's enticement failed. It had no choice but to show Mag the pictures of bikes.

He chose a large outdated 'Forever' brand bike quickly. He tricked the system into using carbon fiber material, shock absorbers, wire control front fork, 12-speed groupset, and a removable seat at the back. He only paid 10 gold coins for it.

"Building the bike. It will be ready in five minutes. Where do you want me to put it?" the system said.

"Out front. But don't put it there until we're ready to leave. I don't want it stolen." Mag was looking at the design drawing. *It looks a bit old-fashioned, but the black color is really flattering. The black basket and black child seat are simple but cool.*

Mag was very pleased with himself. *I bought a 100 gold coins' worth of bike for only 10 gold coins!*

After breakfast, Mag bought a thermal bottle from the system for one gold coin, put some sweet tofu pudding in it, boxed up some fried rice, and walked out with Amy.

"Your bike is out front," the system said.

"Father, are we going to be late?" Amy asked worriedly, looking up at Mag. Ugly Duckling was looking around in her arms, excited.

Mag shook his head. "Don't worry. We have a bike. We'll be there in less than 10 minutes," he said, pointing to the front. The bike was rather good-looking even with the basket and child seat.

Amy turned to look. "What's this? It has two wheels. Is it a carriage? But we don't have any horses."

"It's a bike. We don't need a horse to draw it." He put the thermal bottle and the box in a bag and hung it on the handlebar. Then, he put Ugly Duckling in the basket and Amy in the child seat. "Hold on tight. We only have 15 minutes, so we have to hurry."

Amy nodded. "Yes, Father." Her eyes were shining with excitement. She didn't know what bike was, but she trusted her father.

Ugly Duckling put its two paws on the brim of the basket, looked around, and meowed curiously.

Mag got on the bike and pedalled hard. The bike started running, faster by the minute.

"Wow! We're so fast!" Amy exclaimed happily, putting up her hands. Her cape was swirling; she looked just like a little superwoman.

"Whoa, they're so cool!" Black Coal said when Mag rode passed Urien's shop.

Chapter 180: Bike VS Carriage

Between the bike, Amy's chuckle, and the black-and-red robe, they were truly an eye-catching sight.

“What’s that? Magic?”

“Maybe. It runs with only two wheels, and is so fast!”

“Isn’t that Mag and his daughter?”

Some people saw them, and started talking about the bike.

“Father, look! There is a two-wheeled vehicle running by itself!” a little boy said to a man who was buying breakfast on the street.

“Oh, really? Here, your favorite green onion bing,” the man said, clearly not taking it seriously. He touched the boy’s head with a smile and handed him the hot bing. When he turned to look, he froze. He blinked and looked again.

“What is that?” the man said, baffled.

“It’s so cool, Father. It’s even faster than our carriage,” the boy said with an envious look in his eyes.

The man gave a snort of contempt. “I don’t think so. Huang, overtake that strange vehicle!” he said to a lean old man, and got into the carriage with his son.

“Yes, sir,” answered the coachman. He cracked his whip, and the two horses leapt forward right away. People on the street hurriedly moved aside.

Ugly Duckling tumbled in the basket. Every time it tried to get up, the jolting sent it back down. Finally, it gave up helplessly.

“The bike is so much fun!” Amy waved her arms delightedly. She had never ridden a carriage or a horse before. The speed gave her a rush, making her feel very excited.

Mag smiled. The bike made by the system was very user-friendly; even he could ride it without breaking a sweat. Of course, the roujiamo and Yangzhou fried rice he had been eating were also helping.

The Aden Square was paved with 40-centimeter-long and 20-centimeter-wide green stones, laid by some of the greatest dwarven masons.

The stones were being maintained every day, so the square actually wasn’t bumpy at all, and the shock absorbers were absorbing a large part of the impact.

“Father, they’re watching us.”

“They must envy me for having such a cute daughter.”

“No. They envy me for having such a nice father!” Amy threw her arms around Mag, giggling.

“We’ve caught up with you!” the boy said elatedly, sticking his head out of the carriage window, eating his green onion bing.

“That two-wheeled thing is no match for this carriage here. I can overtake them in no time,” the coachman said proudly and confidently.

The man in the carriage also smiled, feeling really good showing off in front of his son.

Then the coachman noticed the clothes on Mag and Amy. *That's a strange robe, but she must be a genius if she's already a magic caster at such a young age. Maybe I should apologize for my offensive remarks earlier.*

Amy took a look at the ring in the boy's hand, swallowed, and turned to her father. "Father, they think they're faster than us."

Mag turned to look at the coachman, who was still smiling gloatingly. That had really stimulated his competitive spirit. "Then we should let them see what this bike can do."

They have made a mistake provoking me and my semi-pro race bike. It seems this race is inevitable. "Hey, old man, I'll race you to the gate of the Chaos School. Good luck catching up."

"Way to go, Father!" Amy clapped her hands. Then she turned to the old man. "We'll win easily."

"I've been driving for 40 years. There's no way I'll lose to you!" the old man said angrily.

His master was a middle-rank official serving the lord of Chaos City. He had managed to procure several young Vic horses, which were quite scarce. They were mild and strong, and one of the best horses to draw a carriage. Goblins used them to freight ores. They were really very fast.

"Such an interesting man," Dicus said, not unkindly.

He had had to pull a few strings when he bought the Vic horses. One of them had even won a race against his friend's racehorse.

He was a little intrigued, wondering whether that thing was truly as fast as Mag had claimed.

Mag donned his serious face. He shifted gears and pedaled harder. The bike was taking the lead again, and its speed was increasing fast. It was flying like a wind. Thus, it was a hundred meters away from the carriage in no time.

That's... impossible! Huang gaped incredulously as the bike started to disappear in his sight.

"Come on, we're losing them!" the boy called out. He slapped the carriage anxiously.

Dicus couldn't hide the surprise in his eyes. "We have already lost," he said, stroking the boy's head. He smiled as the bike disappeared around the corner. "Huang, let's go to the Chaos School."