

Stay At home 2011

Chapter 2011: Life... Has To Go On

“A coachman sent you back yesterday. He said you got drunk in a tavern.” Bobby’s wife poured a glass of water for him. Her heart went out to him.

All these years, such things had been happening very often. She knew very well whom her husband had been drinking with, and although she had been nagging about it, she did not really hold it to heart.

Such a big thing happened in Rodu over the past two days. Even if she barely left the house, she still heard of the news. The family of the man who had been drinking with her husband every night was gone within a night, and that man also died in prison.

There were more guards patrolling the mansion over the past two days, and her husband was grounded in the military. For a very long time, her heart was in her mouth.

When she heard that her husband could return last night, she made a table full of food, and waited for him the entire night. In the end, a coachman drove her drunk husband back.

“Was I drunk?” Bobby stroked his head. He did not have the feeling of disgust and dizziness from a hangover. Instead, he had had a good sleep that he had never had in a long while, and he felt relaxed all over.

“You carried that bottle of wine back,” Bobby’s wife said as she pointed to a white bottle of wine on the table.

“Maotai?!” Bobby’s memories came back to him immediately when he saw the bottle of wine. He remembered his low feelings, walking at Romo Street, and entering Saipan Tavern because of the wine fragrance.

He ordered a bottle of wine that cost 2,000 copper coins. The wine was rich and fragrant. It was something he had not tasted before.

After that... he was drunk.

Because he was so drunk, he did not even remember what happened in between, how he stopped a horse-drawn carriage and gave his address, and how he even remembered to bring back half a bottle of Maotai.

He got out of bed, and shook the bottle of Maotai on the table. There was half of it left.

This made him shocked at how strong the alcohol was. Only half of a small bottle could make him dead drunk. Two to three bottles of fruit wine would never make him drunk.

“This owner is rather honest. He even let me bring the rest of the wine back.” Bobby pulled out the cork. It was still the familiar smell that struck him.

“Master, it’s getting late. Rest for a little longer. I’ll get them to make some porridge so you can have something before going to court.” Bobby’s wife secretly heaved a sigh of relief seeing that Bobby was not dispirited.

“Alright. Sorry to trouble you,” Bobby told his wife seriously as he placed the wine down.

Bobby’s wife was slightly stunned. She looked at Bobby, and her eyes went red. She smiled and nodded as she walked out.

“Life... has to go on.” Bobby stuffed the cork back on the bottle of wine, and had a resolute expression. “Senior, let me take over all your unfinished wishes. As for the fellow who harmed you and your family, I will make him pay.”

Hmm? Who am I? Where am I? Irina opened her eyes. She blinked, a little confused.

She looked around, and realized she was lying on the floor!

Did someone kick me off the bed? She sat right up, and saw the large, empty bed. There was no one on the bed at all.

Moreover, the blanket was on the floor, covering her, and the pillow sat neatly on the bed.

Drunk? She recalled taking a bottle of wine from the wine closet last night. After that, she drank a little alone, and got drunk.

On top of that, she seemed to have saved someone while she was drunk?

Or was that also a dream?

“You’re up?” The room door was open, and Mag stood at the door, looking at Irina sitting on the floor with a smile.

“Mm-hmm. Did you put me on the floor to sleep?” Irina turned to look at Mag.

“You rolled to the floor last night, so I laid the sheets on the floor for you to prevent you from rolling to the floor again.” Mag nodded with a smile.

“I, Irina, would never roll off the bed!” Irina said seriously as she blushed.

“Mm-hmm. Get up and have breakfast. I’ve made some porridge.” Mag looked at her pamperingly.

“I mean it,” Irina emphasized.

“I’ll get the kids.” Mag smiled and closed the door behind him.

“Hmph.” Irina clenched her fists. She felt that her standing in this family was challenged. However, her stomach was rumbling, so she could only force herself out from the warm sheets, change into a beautiful dress, and go downstairs for the scrumptious breakfast prepared for her.

Usually, Irina would have such a bad headache the next morning from the hangover she would have no appetite.

But now, she did not feel any pain, and even felt that her sleep quality was really good. She felt super refreshed, and was even a little hungry.

“This wine is not bad. It aids sleep,” Irina mumbled to herself as she opened the door to go downstairs.

“Did I save a human or a ghost last night?” Irina asked Mag while having her porridge.

Mag thought for a while, and said, “You can say he’s both.”

“Oh, it was that old fogey,” Irina said thoughtfully.

“They were ambushed in Sean’s mansion. I think they fell into his trap. It looks like he had noticed us,” Mag said.

“This fellow could always turn things around.” Irina frowned.

“Yes. He is rather talented in certain aspects.” Mag nodded.

Amy concentrated on finishing her bowl of porridge, and while Mag was giving her a second serving, she asked curiously, “Father, when is our tavern opening for business? I haven’t seen a single customer.”

“The tavern is only open for operation at night. We’ve already had our first customer when you were playing upstairs last night,” Mag said with a smile.

“Is that so?” Amy’s eyes widened. She thought for a while, and said, “In that case, can we continue to go out and eat all day long today?”

The little fellow changed the topic so smoothly Mag did not know how to reject her. Besides, he did not have much to do during the day. Bringing the children out to play could be considered taking a real break. Therefore, he nodded with a smile, and said, “In that case, we’ll find somewhere else to continue eating and playing.”

“Hooray!” Amy jumped off her chair, put her arms around Mag’s neck, and gave him a peck on his cheek.

Annie was also beaming with joy.

“Oh, right. We haven’t had the two fat geese we won yesterday.” Amy suddenly remembered something important. “Why don’t we come back at night to have roasted goose?”

“Alright, alright. I’ll make roasted goose for you when we come back at night,” Mag promised.

After breakfast, Mag sent breakfast to Merante and Noya before they went out to play.

“What a happy family.”

“Yeah. I saw that their tavern closed really early last night. Maybe they didn’t have a single customer. This is the real player.”

“How envious...”

The neighbors on Romo Street lamented when they saw the family of four go out.

Chapter 2012: A Crisis Is Also An Opportunity

“Grandpa, are you okay?” Noya asked worriedly as he looked at Merante, who was sitting by the bed.

Merante held the small bottle of his wine in his hand, tilted his head back, and finished the last drop of wine inside. He licked his lips, and then smacked Noya on the head. “Scoundrel! You’ve completely wasted such a good wine.”

“???” Noya was confused. His grandpa almost died, but the first thing he actually cared about was the wine?

“Where is this wine from? How dare you rascal hide such good wine from me.” Merante questioned Noya.

Seeing that Merante appeared lively and full of strength, Noya finally was assured. He smilingly said, “Boss Mag gave it to me. It’s just this small bottle.”

“It’s really just this small bottle?” Merante was still in disbelief. He reached over, and searched Noya.

“I really don’t have a single drop of alcohol on me. But Boss Mag just sent breakfast for us. Have some,” Noya said.

With the help of the bed’s frame, Merante stood up. He stretched a little, and lifted his shirt up to check his wound. The flesh had grown over the scary-looking wound, leaving only a faint red scar.

“That b*tch is really ruthless. She almost sent me to see my maker with the Holy Light. But she is formidable. She healed some of my underlying problems from back then, and could even cure such a serious wound,” Merante lamented.

“Who is she? She’s really powerful.” Noya saw Irina cast the spell yesterday, and in a drunken state on top of that. This made him utterly shocked.

“The Holy Light, combined with powerful healing magic. A 10th-tier powerhouse as young as her, I guess it would only be the elven princess,” Merante said with a smile.

“Princess Irina?” Noya was so shocked that he raised his voice. After that, he said in bewilderment, “But she’s not an elf. She’s a human.”

“Do you think we look like humans?” Merante smiled.

“You mean she was in disguise?” Noah thought for a while. After that, he had an epiphany, and said, “That’s true. Boss Mag is Master Alex, so his wife must be Princess Irina.

“But Grandpa, we were tracking the evil aura yesterday. Why did we end up getting ambushed by humans? Could those humans have already been in cahoots with the devil?”

“Maybe not. He must have known that there were troops waiting there, so he used the evil aura to lure us there on purpose so that others would do the dirty work.” Merante shook his head. He had a grave expression as he said, “It seems like we were found out. We have to be even more cautious moving forward.”

“So does he know where we are?” Noya was nervous.

“No. He only knows that we will definitely find him. That’s enough.” Merante shook his head. Smiling, he said, “Otherwise, we would have been dead last night.”

“What a sly and scary fellow.” Noya clenched his fists.

Golden Dragon Island.

Louis was standing by the road as he told Douglas seriously, “The warning letter was sent to Rodu. Currently, Andre has not given any reply yet. However, if this was as Alex said, and was the Great Old Ones’ plan, what should we do?”

Douglas said, “Andre is not a rash and stupid person. He had endured for decades, so he would not be in a rush for a moment, nor would he put himself in danger. I am more inclined to Alex’s conjecture. I’m afraid the devil is already in control of Josh, and is currently wreaking havoc everywhere, trying to incite a new racial war.”

“In that case, what should we do? Now the orcs are still very angry, and the other races have all closed off their roads in preparation for war.” Louis frowned.

“Perhaps we should take a trip to Rodu.”

“Go straight to negotiate with Andre?”

“No, to find Josh and the devil. Andre would never admit that the devil has already controlled Josh. This would only make him lose the support from his people. Therefore, we have to find Josh or force Andre to admit to this, and from then on, we come to a consensus,” Douglas said seriously.

“That works. If I am not wrong, Alex and Irina should already be in Rodu. They are the people who know the devil the best. Perhaps we could find the tracks of the devil even faster through them.” Louis nodded, and said, “Oh, right. I think Elizabeth has left Chaos City.”

“I think you Golden Dragons should not have any hopes for her. Elizabeth is a Frost Dragon.” Douglas glared at Louis.

“We’ll have to see if you really see her as one of yours. You guys have made no improvement in that aspect at all after so many years.” Louis pressed his lips together. He did not care about Douglas’s threat.

Chaos City, the Buffett Manor.

“Grandfather, the borders of the Roth Empire have been closed. Now, only the members of the Peace Alliance have the necessary travel routes open, but there are restrictions for traders to enter and exit. I’m afraid a big change is going to happen this time,” Scheer, who was standing by a frozen lake with a warmer in her arms, told Ian Buffett, who was using a thin bamboo rod to crack open the surface of the lake.

Ian remained silent for a long time. He put down the bamboo rod in his hand, and turned slowly to look at Scheer. A smile appeared on his aged face. "Wasn't this what we predicted a few years ago? It is just happening."

"But..." Scheer frowned. This was what the Buffett Family had gotten ready for years ago. It was not even the worst outcome. After all, the war had yet to break out completely. There were many races that had formed the Peace Alliance.

Of course, the races were all in a tense state before the impending war. This had caused a significant impact and threat to the core supporting asset of the Buffett Family, the Buffett Bank.

The Buffett Bank had gained significant benefits and influence by creating convenience and providing funds for the races in terms of trade.

Now that trade had stopped, and the situation was chaotic, people from different regions were swarming to the bank to withdraw their money as it would feel safer for the money to be in their pockets.

Of course, before the peace meeting, the Buffett Bank had already been prepared for it to ensure that the cash flow of the banks everywhere was sufficient so that there was no frenzy or other problems.

"We have done what we should. The situation now is not what we can control. We have to see what comes out of the fight among the races. At least the situation and outlook currently are not the worst," Ian said with a smile.

"Mm-hmm." Scheer nodded. She agreed with Ian's judgment on that.

"Let's go to the study. I want to write a letter to the goblin chief. Even if people can't travel, we must ensure that the goods can pass through smoothly via the railroad.. A time like this shows that a crisis is also an opportunity," Ian said with a smile as he stood up.

Chapter 2013: So Stupid...

Irina brought the two children out to shop, while Mag went to a few places under the excuse of buying food for them.

Rodu was not an unfamiliar city in Alex's memory.

Andre is rather nice to his subordinates and courtiers. Mag had a bag of mung bean pancakes in his hand. He looked out at the great general's mansion not far away.

Great General Blum was currently the only one with a rank lower than Grand Marshal Dominic in the military. Although he was barely a 7th-tier, he was a general with wits and brains.

In war, a general's role was not to be a vanguard. The reason Blum could rise up the ranks and be second to Dominic was that he was a sly fox.

There were already troops surrounding the general's mansion, with a soldier every 10 steps. The general mansions in Rodu had become the key target of protection due to the murder cases in the military.

Great General Blum had been traveling in and out of the palace recently. He always had 10th-tier powerhouses to protect him, whether he was on the way to court or at home.

Mag was rather familiar with Blum. After all, when Alex was in his prime, Blum was only a lowly soldier in the military.

And during the assassination on that rainy night, of the powerhouses from the military that Mag saw, the people participating in the ambush were under Blum.

He was a man supporting Sean and also one of the key people participating in getting rid of Alex back then.

All of a sudden, a horse-drawn carriage came out of the main door. A corner of the carriage's curtain was lifted up. A face with a goatee flashed past before Mag.

Tens of knights surrounded the horse-drawn carriage. Among them, the leader was a 10th-tier knight. There were other 9th-tier and 8th-tier knights as well.

Mag placed the other half of the remaining mung bean pancake into his mouth, and went around the general mansion leisurely while carrying his bag of pancakes. After that, he returned to the food street to look for Irina and the two children.

"A 10th-tier, three 9th-tiers, and more than 300 guards inside and out of the mansion. There are no blind spots in the patrol routes," Mag told Irina softly as he passed the two mung bean pancakes to the kids.

"Tonight?" Irina looked at Mag.

"Tonight." Mag nodded.

"Alright." Irina took a mung bean pancake as well.

"This mung bean... is stuck between my teeth." Amy spat out a mung bean. She looked up at Mag with frustration, and asked, "Father, isn't there a mung bean cake with soft mung beans?"

"Pah..." Irina also spat out half a mung bean. She looked at the remaining half of the pancake in her hand, and threw it into the trash can at the side without hesitation.

Mag had no idea how the shop owner managed to make the mung beans in the mung bean pancake so hard. It was indeed the worst experience to bite into a hard mung bean in a soft pastry.

"Ding! New mission, A Daughter's Request: please upgrade the mung bean pancake in this world to produce a perfect mung bean pancake! Mission reward: Amateur Patissier title and a mysterious gift pack! Mission failure: eat 50 kg of raw mung beans!

"Mung bean recipe has been issued. The host has to explore and improve the recipe!"

Just then, the system's voice rang in Mag's head.

“Huh?” Mag raised his brow. He saw the simple recipe that appeared in his mind. This system’s mission was rather... abnormal.

However, Amy’s expectant gaze made Mag take this mission without any hesitation.

Of course, he did not give in because of the punishment of eating 50 kg of raw mung beans.

“Since the ones outside are bad, why don’t we buy some mung beans back home and try to make it on our own?” Mag suggested. They were almost done shopping around this street.

“Okay, okay. Let’s make mung bean cake at home on our own.” Amy nodded her little head, and raised both hands in agreement.

Mag bought a large bag of mung beans, together with the other ingredients needed for making mung bean cake home.

The recipe for the mung bean cake was very simple. Its core was to remove the skin of the mung beans, soak them in water, and squash them into mung bean paste before adding honey, sugar, and other ingredients. After that, place the mixture into a mold, and the mung bean cake would be done.

Mag checked the recipe, and knew that the problem with the mung bean cake he bought had to be related to the process of squashing the beans. The owner had surely been careless with squashing the beans, so some of them were not squashed, and there were many mung bean skins in the pastry on top of that. That also made the texture of the pastry bad.

“Do you know how to make it?” Irina asked curiously when Mag placed the bag of mung beans down.

“A little, roughly.” Mag grabbed a handful of mung beans. The mung beans on the Norland Continent were slightly larger, around the size of soybeans. Each bean was round and smooth.

“Wow, this is fun. Can we take some to play?” Amy also found these ground mung beans interesting. She put her hands in the bag, and grabbed around, but could only grab five to six beans in a handful.

“Sure. As long as you don’t throw it around, you can play with it however you like.” Mag took out a box, and filled it with mung beans for Amy.

“Hehe. Thank you, Father.” Amy left with the box, and sat at the staircase. She placed the box by her side, and grabbed a handful of mung beans. Amy called out to Ugly Duckling, saying, “Ugly Duckling, you have to bring it back.”

“Meow~” Ugly Duckling answered lazily, as though it was not very interested.

“Grrrrr~”

Amy threw out the mung bean in her hand, and the round bean rolled around on the floor.

Ugly Duckling, which was lying around lazily, quickly pricked up its ears, and its gaze focused on the rolling mung bean immediately.

Ugly duckling crouched immediately, and slowly raised its hind legs. It wiggled its tail, and pounced right over.

Boom...

Ugly Duckling crashed right into the leg of a chair...

“Hahaha... so stupid...” Amy and Annie were rolling on the floor, laughing.

“Meow~” Ugly Duckling got up, shook its head, and called out woefully.

“Here it comes again,” Amy hinted again before throwing out another mung bean.

This time, Ugly Duckling observed carefully, and after making sure that there was no chair in the way, it pounced over happily, covering the rolling mung bean with its paws, and meowing delightedly.

“Big Sister Annie, come and play too.” Amy placed a mung bean in Annie’s hand, and threw two mung beans out.

This made Ugly Duckling busy all of a sudden.

Mag looked at the three little fellows who could have so much fun with mung beans, and smiled as he shook his head. He took out a big pot, and filled half of it with mung beans.. After that, he added water into the pot to soak the beans.

Chapter 2014: Gentleness That Can’t Be Shed

“Say, is Boss Mag really not coming back for a month?” Harrison sighed loudly as he looked at the tightly shut door in front of Mamy Restaurant.

“Didn’t you say you wanted to lose weight? Get moving in this one month when Boss Mag is not around. The lady is still waiting for you to marry her,” Gjerj said with a chuckle as he smacked Harrison’s tummy.

“Sigh. This is all gentleness that can’t be shed.” Harrison stroked his stomach and sighed helplessly.

“You don’t want to marry Miss Georgina?”

“No way!” Harrison shook his head. “I... I’ll go over there to have a pancake while I take a walk.”

The line outside Mamy Restaurant was a lot shorter, but there were more housewives and restaurant chefs with stools and notebooks outside, watching the tutorial videos seriously.

For the past few days, Mamy Restaurant was closed, but the news of its owner teaching more than 10 of its dishes for free had spread all over Chaos City.

Mamy Restaurant, as the most popular restaurant in Chaos City, was known for its prices and delicacies.

The news of the owner disclosing his recipe and having a video tutorial took many housewives who wanted to improve their culinary skills by surprise.

On top of that, the restaurant owners who had been keeping their eyes on Mamy Restaurant for a long time quickly sent their chefs to the restaurant to copy the recipes upon hearing the news.

During this period, there had been many mock Mamy Restaurants popping up in Aden Square that had garnered a lot of attention and customers through their advertising.

If they could learn the crux of just a few of the dishes, their restaurant would have their signature dishes, and they would no longer need to worry about their customer base.

“Buck up, all of you. Our goal today is to learn the braised chicken and rice. Whoever can recreate it the best will be the new head chef with more than 100,000 copper coins for your monthly salary!” one restaurant owner said passionately with his fists clenched in front of his employees.

The employees all took out their notebooks, and started staring at the screen and scribbling furiously upon hearing what their boss said.

“Boss Mag is such a generous person,” Mobai lamented as he squatted at the entrance of his blacksmith store with a bowl of white rice in his hands.

“Will this affect Boss Mag’s business when he comes back in the future?” Xixi asked worriedly. Without Boss Mag around, she was now in charge of delivering food to Mobai and Lulu.

“Nothing to worry about. These people can learn how the dishes were made, but they can never recreate the quality of Boss Mag’s food.” Mobai shook his head with a smile. “It’s just like how everyone can forge weapons, but even if I did that for another century, I would never be better than Master Rom at it, and those who want a weapon from Master Rom would never come to my blacksmith shop to ask me to make them a weapon.”

“That’s true...” Xixi nodded thoughtfully. She put the lunch box in her hands down, and said, “In that case, I’ll go and take a look to learn some culinary skills.”

Soaking the mung beans took up quite a lot of time. On top of that, as Mag was not in the test field for the God of Cookery, he was unable to fast-forward time. Therefore, Mag used the time waiting for the mung beans to prepare the two fat geese that he’d brought back for Amy yesterday. One of them went into the oven, while the other went into a pot to stew.

Amy, who had changed her playground to the entrance of the kitchen, witnessed the entire scene.

As the fragrance of the roasted goose and stewed goose wafted out from the kitchen, Amy swallowed her saliva, and said, “The big fat goose died so fragrantly...” After that, Amy glanced at Ugly Duckling.

Smack.

The mung bean that Ugly Duckling held in its mouth fell to the ground. Perhaps it was hungry for the goose in the pot, or...

The stewed goose was prepared like the braised chicken with a little tweak. Instead of potatoes, shiitake mushrooms were added.

Although the quality of the geese could not be compared to that provided by the system, they were big and fat, and there were two of them. It was enough to feed this family with a shocking appetite.

When the oven was opened, the fragrance of the roast goose wafted out. Mag took out the golden-brown roast goose, and put it aside to cool for a while.

This roast goose was not suitable to eat straight out of the oven. After it was cooled, the skin would become crispy, and it would taste better.

Mag cooked another two dishes: two greens in the simplest way with no complex seasoning needed. After a quick stir-fry, he added a dash of salt, and the dishes were ready to serve.

Mag chopped off a wing, and put it in Ugly Duckling's bowl. The little fellow had been salivating.

"The goose we won feels even tastier," Amy said as she swayed happily. She put a piece of roast goose in her mouth, and very quickly swallowed everything, including the chewed bones.

"Here, have a taste of the stewed goose. This is my first time making it. Try it." Mag put a piece of thigh meat in Irina's bowl.

Irina picked up the meat, blew on it, and put it into her mouth.

It tasted similar to the braised chicken. The tender goose meat carried a faint mushroom fragrance. The seasoning had been totally infused into the meat. It was slightly spicy, and the rank odor of the goose was removed very thoroughly. The traces of alcoholic fragrance made one fall right into it. It was a completely different experience.

"Delicious," Irina told Mag with a nod. There were numerous stars in her eyes twinkling. *This is perfect. To be able to make a dish so delicious on his first try, my man indeed!*

Mag smiled with satisfaction. He picked up a piece of goose meat and tried it.

"Stewed goose in a steel pot" was a popular dish in the northwestern region of China. His version was not as authentic, although the steel pot was there.

However, the taste was still pretty good. The fire was controlled very well. The only bad part about it was that the goose was a little too fat, so its skin was a little greasy. Mag was going to try this dish with the system's goose next time.

After lunch, the family of four cleared the table. Mag went into the kitchen, and started to remove the skins of the soaked mung beans.

The mung beans, which had been soaked for a long time, could be easily deskinning with a simple rub.

"Father, let me help too." Amy moved a little stool over. She copied Mag, and picked up a handful of mung beans from the pot. However, when she rubbed the beans in her hands, they turned into green popcorn.

"Er..." Mag looked at the perfectly popped popcorn, and was at a loss for words.

"Wow, this is incredible. Is this edible?" Amy fed Ugly Duckling the popcorn.

Ugly Duckling ate it without thinking.

Amy squatted at the side to observe Ugly Duckling for a long while. After that, she nodded thoughtfully, and said, "It's not poisonous."

"Meow, meow?"

Ugly Duckling tilted its head, and looked at Amy. It felt cheated.

Crunch, crunch, crunch.

Amy threw a popcorn into her mouth, and it crunched loudly.

"This is fragrant and crispy. Delicious." Amy's eyes lit up. She shared the remaining popcorn with everyone else, and started her popcorn operation.

Mag looked at her with a smile. This little fellow could find something to make herself happy any time.

For the entire afternoon, Mag was studying how to make mung bean pastry.

Meanwhile, Irina brought the two children out to play and watch a movie. She was completely in a holiday mood.

"Here, try this first version of chilled mung bean pastry," Mag said with a smile as he came out of the kitchen with a plate of animal-shaped mung bean pastries.

Chapter 2015: There's Probably No Chance In This Life

The seemingly simple mung bean pastry had already reached its sixth version in the afternoon.

Upon hearing Mag's call, the three turned simultaneously to look at him, and then at the mung bean pastry in his hands.

Annie and Irina appeared rather hesitant and resistant to trying, while Amy's eyes still glimmered like it would when she saw food.

"I want to have a little bear, and then the little penguin." Amy put on her disposable gloves immediately, and grabbed one animal in each hand. She stuffed the little bear mung bean pastry into her mouth, and bit its head off.

Amy's cheeks were puffed out, and her blue eyes lit up. She blinked her eyes in surprise, and said, "It's cool and icy. Very refreshing, very delicious."

Irina and Annie, who were still a little hesitant, reached out for the mung bean pastry as well.

Irina took a small bite. The previous few versions that Mag made were better than the one bought from the streets, but having too much of it was rather revolting. After having more than 10, Irina felt that she almost smelled like mung beans.

However, the mung bean pastry this time was rather special. It was chilled, but did not become hard like ice. It was just cooler.

The moment the chilled mung bean pastry went into her mouth, the sweetness also decreased by a lot. The texture was still as fine and refreshing, and the pastry would melt easily in her mouth. It tasted

denser, and was fragrant and soft, yet not sticky. It was indeed very delicious, and was not as sweet as before.

Annie also ate the pastry in small mouthfuls quickly. The smile on her face showed that she was very satisfied with the mung bean pastry as well.

“How is it? How’s the taste of the chilled mung bean pastry?” Mag asked with a smile.

“Delicious. Its texture is better, and it is no longer too sweet. This is way better than the mung bean pancake we had in the morning, and also slightly better than the previous few versions.” Irina nodded. She looked at Mag with admiration. It only took an afternoon for this dessert to see obvious changes. He was indeed a stunning talent in culinary.

“That’s great. Have it first. I’ll go back to improve it further.” Mag placed the tray down, took a piece, and tried it.

The chilled mung bean pastry was indeed better. It was no longer so sweet, but the texture was not affected. But upon meticulous tasting, Mag could still feel that there were some solid pieces.

“This is the right direction. There is an overall texture and taste, but it is still far from perfect. Looks like I have to find some time to go into the test field for the God of Cookery. There are still many places to improve on.” Mag found a lot of issues after trying a piece of the mung bean pastry, and started on another trial.

Of course, his current standard of the mung bean pastry would definitely top the sales in pastry if he was to sell it.

Because he made too many of the mung bean pastries, Mag sent some over to Merante and Noya for them as dinner.

Perfect tools.

“Boss Mag, I am very thankful to you and your wife for saving my life,” Merante said gratefully with a deep bow.

“Don’t worry about it. We have a common goal, so we should help each other out.” Mag quickly helped Merante up. He did not think that he did anything great last night.

On top of that, Merante and Noya were in danger because they were tracking Josh. Helping them was what he should do.

“I made some mung bean pastries. Have some. There are two helpings of fried rice too. Take this as your dinner.” Mag placed the lunch boxes down, and drew a circle at the corner of the room after that. He placed a circular dish down.

“This is?” Noya asked in bewilderment as he looked at the circular dish.

“This is a simple one-way teleportation portal. It can be used to teleport some items. I will be delivering the food through this teleportation portal from now on to avoid attracting too much attention by coming over frequently,” Mag explained with a smile as he finished up with the portal.

“That’s convenient,” Noya exclaimed.

“We should be continuing with our investigations, but things have to be delayed now because I’m injured,” Merante said self-reproachfully with a sigh.

“It’s alright. Now, we can confirm that Josh is in Rodu, and he already found out that we are tracking him.” Mag smiled. “If he continues to leave his evil aura for us to trace, we will only be led on by him, and will easily fall into his trap again.”

“Then what should we do? The only thing we can do now is to track the evil aura.” Noya frowned.

“Since he can set up a trap for us, we can also set up a trap to force him out, or limit the space he can move in.” Merante looked at Merante, and said, “Rest well for some time. When you’re better, you can continue with the investigations. Leave things to us for the next couple of days.”

“Alright.” Merante nodded. He did not force himself beyond his capabilities.

This was Rodu, where 10th-tier powerhouses could be gathered quickly. With his current condition, going out would be a burden on others.

Mag left and returned to the tavern. On his way back, he met Eiffie, who was carrying some takeaway food.

Initially, he thought that this woman would be avoiding him because of what happened previously. However, he did not expect her to be more thick-skinned than he imagined. When she saw him, instead of having any intention to avoid him, she went up to him with a smile, and even said coquettishly, “Yo, isn’t this Boss Hades? Why are you out alone for a walk?”

“Mm-hmm. I bought some groceries, and am now on my way back to cook for my wife and children.” Mag shook the basket in his hand. It was filled with some groceries.

As an excellent undercover, Mag would always strive to make his cover story natural and logical.

“Wow, I didn’t expect Boss Hades to be a good man who cooks.” Eiffie covered her mouth in shock. With a soft laugh, she said, “I wonder when I would have the chance to try your cooking. Your wife is really a lucky woman.”

“There’s probably no chance in this life,” Mag answered seriously.

“...” Eiffie.

“I’m home. I will not chat further with you. Goodbye, Miss Eiffie.” Miss nodded with a smile before walking into his tavern.

“Hmph...” Eiffie watched the tavern door close slowly, and stomped her feet in frustration, telling herself, “There is no man that I, Eiffie, can’t mesmerize. Just you wait, you will be mine!”

“An incapable little vixen.” Mag smiled. That amount of charm was of no effect to him at all.

The moment Mag closed the door, he met with Irina’s smiling gaze.

Mag knew that she probably saw what happened earlier, and was pleased with his self-control.

“Are you opening for business tonight?” Irina asked.

“Yes. I’ll still be opening until 9 pm.” Mag took a look at his watch. It was already 6 pm. He quickly opened the door again, and changed the wooden plaque at the door to indicate that they were open.

“That thing can wait till we close for the day..”

Chapter 2016: He Is A Good Man

“Bobby, how about we grab a drink tonight?” a mature middle-aged official said as he tapped on Bobby’s shoulder at the Ministry of Defense.

“Lord Lucien.” Bobby was a little shocked to see him as the other party was the deputy manager of the Ministry of Defense, and was someone with legitimate power.

He happened to be at home on a leave due to health reasons on the day the orcs and elves were attacked, so he managed to evade the calamity.

“Relax, let’s get a couple of drinks. After Hector’s gone, there aren’t many here who know how to drink,” Lucien said with a sad smile.

Hector was that senior of Bobby’s. Lord Lucien had drunk with them on a few occasions, and was on good terms with Bobby’s senior.

Bobby nodded, and said, “Sure. I happened to discover a new tavern at Romo Street yesterday. Their wine was the best I’ve ever tasted. I’ll bring you there to have a try.”

“Oh, there’s even a new tavern at Romo Street?” Lucien was rather surprised. The street had been getting rather desolate for the past few years, and he had not gone there to drink in a long time.

“I also went there by chance last night, and entered the tavern because of the fragrance of the wine. It was indeed a good wine that is hard to come by,” Bobby said.

“Sure. Let’s try it out.” Lucien nodded.

The two boarded Lucien’s horse-drawn carriage, and went straight to Saipan Tavern.

“Here it is.” Bobby opened the door for Lucien.

“Here?” Lucien looked at the tavern. It looked very ordinary from the outside.

“Yes.” Bobby nodded.

“Let’s check it out.” Lucien alighted the horse-drawn carriage. He wanted to have a drink.

Although he managed to avoid the changes that happened in the Ministry of Defense over these few days due to his illness, he lost many colleagues and friends. Moreover, the people started to become paranoid, and it also affected his mood.

Hector was his colleague of more than 30 years, and they were in the same batch entering the ministry. They had been drinking together frequently all these years, and he did not expect Hector to pass away so suddenly. That was indeed very difficult for him to accept.

When he walked out from the Ministry of Defense today, and chanced upon Bobby, he invited Bobby to have a drink in memory of Hector since he knew that Bobby had been drinking often with Hector. He also had a few drinks with Bobby on certain occasions, and found that they could get along rather well.

This tavern was rather quiet, or rather desolate, which was a very stark contrast to the noise and crowd in the tavern right across the street.

Bobby pushed open the door to the tavern, and there were no customers at all indeed. There was only the owner of the tavern cleaning the wine glasses behind the bar counter.

Mag looked up and recognized Bobby straight away. From Bobby's humble attitude, Mag could tell right away that the middle-aged man that came in after Bobby was way higher in rank.

On top of that, Mag could recognize Lucien very quickly. He was a deputy manager in the Ministry of Defense, and his impression was rather positive in Alex's memories.

This was someone who held the real power in the Ministry of Defense, the kind who knew many core secrets.

"Welcome," Mag said with a smile.

Lucien looked around this new tavern. The renovation was not lavish, but was comfortable enough. The warm yellow light from the oil lamp made one feel very comfortable. On top of that, the tavern was very warm, giving one the urge to take off their thick jacket upon entering.

The owner was a young man in his thirties. He looked average, and there was nothing unique about his features. He was probably the kind that would be overlooked if you threw him into a crowd. However, he looked rather kind and friendly.

A new tavern, a young owner, and only two customers. This made Lucien's expectations drop right to the bottom. It seemed like Bobby's taste was a far cry from that of Hector.

"Sir, let's take a seat there." Bobby brought Lucien to a seat near the door. He could tell the change in Lucien's expression, but he was not flustered. This tavern might look ordinary, but that was because the wine was not served yet.

"What would you like?" Mag asked with a smile.

"Sir, I had Maotai yesterday. Why don't we try a bottle of that today?" Bobby asked Lucien.

"Sure." Lucien nodded. He looked at the simple list of alcohol at the bar counter. There were only two types of alcohol: Maotai and whiskey, for 2,000 copper coins each. The price was rather high.

Other than these two types of alcohol, there were also three side dishes to go with the drinks. The prices were way lower compared to the drinks.

This drinks menu was rather pathetic.

Lucien even started questioning the speed at which Bobby's taste dropped since Hector passed away.

"A bottle of Maotai and all three side dishes," Bobby told Mag.

"Alright, please hold on for a moment." Mag nodded. He turned to enter the kitchen, and came out with the three dishes and a bottle of Maotai soon.

Lucien's gaze was attracted to the three side dishes at first. They were a plate of peanuts, the most common side dish in taverns. However, taverns would usually give the peanuts out for free, while this tavern sold it as a side dish.

The other two plates were the pig ears salad and pig tongue salad. The names of the side dishes alone made Lucien lose his appetite. He even found them disgusting.

However, when the dishes were served, the pig ears and tongue, which were sliced thinly, were covered with a layer of chili oil. The fragrance wafted over, and it actually made Lucien swallow his saliva.

Bobby had already opened up the bottle of Maotai adeptly. He opened up the red cloth, and he pulled out the cork.

The fragrance of the wine that was sealed in the bottle wafted out immediately.

"This fragrance?!" Lucien quickly turned over to look. He was rather shocked at the bottle of wine in Bobby's hands. The rich fragrance was so enticing.

Bobby poured the wine into a cup. The clear alcohol swirled a little in the crystal glass.

"Please." Bobby placed the glass gently in front of Lucien with both hands.

Lucien inched closer to take a whiff. He was still in disbelief. He looked at Bobby, and asked, "This wine... What is it?"

"Maotai. It should be a type of grain wine," Bobby said.

"Just the smell of it, and I can tell that it's a good wine. Such a pity that Hector won't be able to try it." Lucien sighed gently, and took a sip of the wine.

The wine was fine and silky, refreshing and sweet. It was so smooth as it flowed through his teeth and into his throat.

Lucien was not a heavy drinker, but he had tried many good alcohols. However, even those that were presented in the palace did not shock him as much as this wine.

The fragrance of the wine was intoxicating. In an instant, Lucien seemed to have gone back to the days when he just entered the Ministry of Defense. He was young and ambitious. He wanted to do great things. In a flash, decades passed... but nothing was the same.

After a very long time, Lucien opened his eyes. There were tears in his eyes. He finished the remaining wine in his glass in a shot.

Bobby glanced at Lucien, and did not speak. He also chugged the wine in his glass down, and silently refilled Lucien's glass.

“He was a good man. It’s such a pity that he left just like that.. This is too sudden,” Lucien said softly as he looked at the filled glass in front of him.

Chapter 2017: Josh...

Mag sat behind the bar counter as he ate his melon seeds, and listened to the two grown men reminisce about their friend while drinking.

The wine was good, and with the emotions set and the side dishes extremely good with the wine, more than half the bottle of Maotai was gone. The two started to spout nonsense in a drunken stupor, and even Andre was dissed by them.

As a pro interrogator, how could Mag miss this opportunity? He went up and sat with them.

“You... who are you? Why are you sitting with us?” Lucien was still a little cautious as he tilted his head to look at Mag.

“Here, here, here. Have another glass.” Mag helped Lucien fill his glass, and put it in his hand.

Lucien put the glass to his mouth mechanically, and chugged it down. After that, he appeared even drunker. Lucien put his arms around Mag’s shoulder, and slurred, “Wh-where was I?”

“You said that Josh came to the Ministry of Defense, and then gathered all the courtiers in His Majesty’s name,” Mag replied.

“Yes. Josh gathered all the courtiers in power at the Ministry of Defense, and then took out His Majesty’s plaque, and ordered them to deploy the border troops to attack the orcs and elves. What did we do? We just obeyed the order to treat the plaque the same as him that His Majesty set back then. We listened to Prince Josh’s orders, and gave out commands.” Lucien covered his face and held back his tears, but could not help but sob. “In the end, we, the loyal courtiers, are the ones punished for the crime, and the people dead are our families. What logic is this...”

Under Mag’s guidance, Lucien, the big boss of the Ministry of Defense, started pouring out his grievances. He spilled out all the backstory, Andre’s attitude at that time, and all the first-hand news that even Chaos City might not be able to find out.

Half an hour later, Mag went out to call Lucien’s coachman and guards in to bring the two drunk officials back.

“A day’s operation has ended once again.” Mag watched the horse-drawn carriage leave, and flipped the wooden plaque at the door. There was quite a lot of information gained today, which allowed him to have a rough understanding of the current situation in the Roth Empire’s court.

“Closed again? Are the taverns opened by rich people so boring?” Effie mumbled to herself when she saw Mag flip the wooden plaque as she sent a drunk customer out.

She wanted to experience the dry and boring life compared to her hectic hustling every day.

Eiffie sighed. "Sigh, what a pity he came too late."

"Are we setting off now?" Irina came downstairs. She had changed, and was dressed in tight black clothes that showed her perfect curves.

"Hold on." Mag went upstairs, and came down in all black as well. However, he was wearing a loose black robe and a large hat whose shadow could cover his face completely.

He then pulled his hat down.

"Hmm?" Irina looked at him, stunned.

"Familiar?" Mag asked with a smile.

"How did you do that?" Irina went up to touch his face. When Mag went upstairs, he actually disguised himself as Josh. It was a complete replica.

"I got my hands on a mask previously. After wearing it, I can change my face to become anyone," Mag explained.

"Oh..." Irina thought for a while, and asked, "Then can you become me?"

"Er..." Mag said. "Theoretically, it should not be a problem."

"Tsk, tsk. Spill it. What did you use this mask for in the past?" Irina asked him with a smile.

"I don't crossdress." Mag quickly waved his hands.

"Heh." Irina laughed. She pulled out her magic caster's staff, and said, "Let's go."

After a golden flash, the two disappeared from the tavern.

"At home?"

"Mm-hmm. In the mansion. But there's a 10th-tier knight guarding his room."

"Leave the knight to me. I'll leave Blum to you. Take care of the details. We only have three minutes."

"Go."

Two shadows flashed past the sky above the general's mansion.

"Did you see anything pass by just now?"

"Your eyes must be playing tricks on you, or did you have too much fun last night that you're too weak now?"

Two guards standing at the wall muttered to each other.

Mag and Irina split up after entering the mansion.

This mission was called: kill Blum!

Of course, his death was not Mag's goal. The key was how they were going to frame Josh.

Mag's target was the 10th-tier knight, and killing Blum would be left to Irina, the master of special effects and lighting. She would be the one presenting the large-scale horror film directed by Mag to Blum.

Mag squatted on a tree branch not far away. He watched the 10th-tier knight who was sitting upright outside the room door. He had his longsword by him, and although his eyes were closed, Mag could sense his strong powers.

Mag recognized this knight. Lear was a very powerful knight in the military. He was an upright person, and was not Blum's aide. He was probably deployed by Andre to protect Blum.

From this distance, Mag was very confident in claiming his life with his flying sword. However, such a killing style would easily make people connect it to him.

Besides, Mag did not intend to kill Lear, who was considered a rather good knight among the 10th-tier knights. It was not worth it for him to die because of a villain like Blum.

Therefore, Mag jumped right out, and walked towards Lear, who was sitting by the door. Shadows started appearing behind Mag.

These were just special effects made by light which Mag bought from the system. It was usually used on stage for special effects.

At the same time, a concave force field started rising slowly, enveloping the entire courtyard to separate it from the outside world.

The knight, who sat with his eyes closed, suddenly opened his eyes. At the same time, he quickly grabbed his longsword, and stood up slowly while watching the man in a black robe walk slowly towards him. With a grave expression, he exclaimed, "Who are you!?"

"Chi, chi." The man in a black robe let out a creepy laugh, and suddenly started dashing towards the knight.

The knight held his sword in both hands, and started rushing towards the man in a black robe. At the same time, he sent out a signal for help.

The two were only tens of meters apart, and would soon collide.

The knight held his sword in both hands, and brandished it down. A horrifying sword projection rose from the sword, tearing everything in its path.

However, the man in a black robe moved like a phantom. He dodged the longsword narrowly, and was not harmed a single bit except for a corner of his clothes being sliced off.

The knight's expression changed. He wanted to retract his longsword, but was pierced by something fiery at the back of his waist. He suddenly fell forward.

"Ah... Josh..."

Just then, a terrible cry came from the room behind.

“General!” The knight’s expression changed. He could not care about the pain in his waist, and turned back to check. Blum’s room was already ablaze, and the raging fire was quickly expanding outwards.

“Darn!” The knight pounced at the man in a black robe with his sword. The man in a black robe might seem like a phantom, but he still suffered several cuts. He suddenly darted backward, and the black robe fell off to reveal his face.

“Prince Josh!” The knight was stunned, and paused instinctively.

The man in a black robe escaped in a hurry, darting into the fire, and disappearing out of sight.

Chapter 2018: Murder, Arson, Eat Hot Pot

“Enemy attack! Put out the fire!”

Lear quickly came back to his senses. He rushed into the blazing room with his heavy sword, and used it to hit falling flaming wood away.

After the invisible force field disappeared, the guards at the general’s mansion realized that there was something amiss at this side of the mansion. They quickly rushed over with buckets of water and their weapons to put out the fire and save the general.

Not long later, Lear, with half his hair burnt, rushed out of the fire while carrying a body.

The guards all came up, and put out the fire on Lear. After that, they all looked at the general that was in Lear’s arms.

The big and burly General Blum was reduced to skin and bones. It was as though he was sucked dry. He had a horrified expression, as though he had seen something terrifying, causing his eyes to be wide open even till his death.

“Ah!”

Lear did not notice that as he was in a rush to save the general from the fire. When he finally saw the horrifying look of Blum in his arms, he got such a shock that he threw the body out.

“What?!”

“The great general is?!”

The guards all retreated quickly. When they saw the lifeless Blum, their expressions changed.

Lear quickly calmed down. He looked at Blum’s corpse with a grave expression, and said, “Put the fire out first and seal the place. Do not spread the news of this incident. I will report this to His Majesty right away.”

“Yes.” Although the guards were horrified, they quickly did what they had to to prevent the fire from spreading.

News of the murder at military generals' houses had been spreading recently, and they did not expect to find themselves in the same situation today. Thankfully, Lord Lear was around, so they managed to survive.

Lear only hurried off to the palace after watching the guards cover Blum's corpse with a sheet.

There were water-type magic casters among the guards, so the fire was under control very quickly.

"Did you hear anything just now?"

"I think I heard Lord Blum call out 'Josh'..."

"I did too. On top of that, I even heard Lord Lear call him Prince Josh."

"Could it be... that this was done by Prince Josh?"

The guards discussed the matter softly in fear and terror.

"Hush! Do not spread this around. Watch out for your heads!" a middle-aged guard chided coldly.

The expressions of the guards all changed, and they did not dare to speak further.

The fire at Great General Blum's mansion was not a small matter. The residents living nearby saw it clearly for themselves. The thought of the murder case a few days ago made them even more paranoid.

"Shocked to death?" Mag turned to ask Irina a question after watching the distant fire being put out.

"Almost. He was knocked out from the shock, and then I used a blood-sucking bat to suck out all his blood essence. It looked almost like the corpse you saw previously." Irina nodded. She looked at Mag's torn clothes, and said, "You're injured?"

"On purpose. How else could I let him see my true looks accidentally?" Mag was still wearing the mask with Josh's face. He now took down the mask with a smile.

"Now, we'll just have to see how Andre decides to settle this." Irina smiled.

"Framing him using Josh's method. I think he would be rather happy if he found out."

The powerhouses nearby were quickly gathered due to the fire at Blum's mansion. Some of them were 10th-tier knights and magic casters. When they arrived at the mansion, they were shocked to find out that Blum was dead, and when they saw his corpse, their expressions changed completely.

Such a horrifying death would inevitably make one connect it with the devil that had been terrorizing everyone.

Under the interrogation of the few big bosses, the guards even spilled out that Blum called out Josh's name before he died.

The 10th-tier knights and great magic casters all exchanged looks. They could see the fear and horror in each others' eyes, and did not probe further.

Due to the war, the Ministry of Defense had been in a chaotic situation in this period. There were rumors saying that Prince Josh stole the king's military plaque, started a war on the orcs and elves on his own, and disappeared without a trace.

The more one knew, the more frightened one would be.

If Josh was the one who killed General Blum, he would most probably be the one responsible for the murders at the several other generals' homes previously.

Murder and arson. It was the exact same method.

If it were not because of Lear today, the great general's mansion would probably have been burnt to ashes.

Besides, there was almost no complete corpse left in the previous murder cases. Lear risked his life to carry Blum's corpse out from the fire, but it was already in such a horrifying state. It was inevitable for one to associate it with the devil.

"Another fire? Could it be done by someone again?" Louis looked out at the blazing roof afar.

"It appears that there was a fight between powerhouses. Let's check it out." Douglas appeared beside Louis. He looked out at the fire with a grave expression before he took a step forward, and traveled 100 meters.

"Wait for me." Louis followed behind quickly.

The fire at the general's mansion made the entire situation at Rodu tense.

Meanwhile, the couple who committed the murder and arson were having hot pot with their two children after they returned home.

"Here, try this duck intestine."

"The beef is done too. I'll get it on my own."

Mag smiled gently and spoke very gently like a benevolent father.

Food was piling up in Amy's bowl, and she could not stop eating.

Irina was also chatting casually with Mag as she put food in Annie's bowl in a similarly relaxed manner.

"Are you full? Do you want another serving of mutton roll?" Mag asked with a smile when he saw Amy finishing all the food in her bowl.

"It's alright. Mother says that I should eat less before I sleep at night. Otherwise, I would become a little fatty." Amy put her chopsticks down and shook her head obediently.

"Mm-hmm. Alright." Mag nodded with a smile. Amy was indeed controlling herself tonight. She only ate as much food as three adults.

The two children could not sleep after having supper, so they played a while downstairs with Ugly Duckling. Mag went to the kitchen to continue experimenting on the mung bean pastry's recipe.

Mag had now mastered many culinary techniques, but none of the desserts he made was good enough. The mung bean pastry was a good direction for him to work on.

Besides, he was quite curious about the system's mysterious prize. Would it be more dessert recipes?

The two little fellows were quite fond of snacks, so they would definitely be happy if Mag could make them more delicious desserts.

[A helping of mung bean pastry with uneven sugar distribution]

[A helping of mung bean pastry with a rough texture]

[A helping of mung bean pastry that is too sticky]

The system included footnotes for Mag to know where exactly was the problem with each helping of mung bean pastry so that he could refine it.

"Father, I am very tired. Can we sleep now?" Amy rubbed her sleepy eyes as she peeked her little head into the kitchen.

[A helping of qualified mung bean pastry!]

"Ding! Congratulations on completing the mung bean pastry improvement mission! You have gained the title of elementary patissier! Awarding a big dessert gift package! Please accept your gift!"

The system's voice rang in Mag's mind almost simultaneously.

Chapter 2019: This Is The Salted Egg Yolk Pastry

After putting the children to bed, Mag returned to his room to check on the mission rewards given by the system.

He didn't really care for the title of "Junior Patissier," and only he could see it anyway. He cared more about what was in the dessert gift package.

Upon clicking open the gift package, five experience bags popped up: mung bean cake, red bean cake, milk custard, mango pancake, and salted egg yolk pastry!

Wow, it's indeed a gift package. Mag lit up his eyes. This was his first time receiving five recipes at once. It was rare for the system to be generous.

He felt that the mung bean cake and red bean cake were just ordinary, but he loved the salted egg yolk pastry. He didn't expect the system to include it in the gift package.

“Perfect. It’s rather perfect.” Mag nodded with satisfaction. He clicked on the mung bean cake’s recipe first.

The complete and detailed recipe, with the master patissiers’ experiences and techniques, swarmed into his mind instantly.

Mag opened his eyes, and mumbled to himself, “There’s indeed a huge difference between passable and perfection. The system is rarely so magnanimous.”

The more he understood, the more respectful he got. After receiving the masters’ experience, Mag immediately realized that the mung bean cake that he thought was perfect was only a substandard product.

However, with his own study experience, it would obviously be much easier to learn, so he didn’t rush to enter the test field for the God of Cookery. Instead, he clicked open the salted egg yolk pastry’s experience bag next.

“This... is simply too difficult, right?” Mag opened his eyes after a long time, his gaze was still dazed.

If the mung bean cake’s level of difficulty was 1, then the level of difficulty for the salted egg yolk pastry should be 5.

Be it the number of ingredients, complexity of the procedures, or all the different kinds of techniques, they all stunned Mag.

After all, he was still a rather new patissier who couldn’t even be considered as a novice. He could already foresee the difficulty that he was going to face.

Come on, let’s accept the challenge. Mag lay down, closed his eyes, and pushed open the door to the test field for the God of Cookery.

This was destined to be a long night for Mag.

The next morning, Mag opened his eyes, and saw four pairs of eyes again.

“You’re awake.” Irina looked at him smilingly.

“The sun is already shining down on your butt,” Amy also smilingly said.

Mag still hadn’t recovered from the salted egg yolk pastry’s nightmare. He blinked and turned to look at the alarm clock at the side of the bed.

“It’s already 11am!” Mag was slightly taken aback. This was already more than the sun shining down his butt. It was already noon.

Embarrassed, Mag sat up and put Ugly Duckling, which was sleeping on his arm, to the side, and said, “Erm. I seem to have overslept a little.”

“It’s more than a little. We couldn’t wake you up no matter how. I almost wanted to treat you.” Irina pursed her lips.

“Perhaps I’m just too tired.” Mag tried to change the topic.

His sensation of the outside world was sealed off when he was in the test field for the God of Cookery. The system wouldn't notify him if it didn't sense any threats, so he didn't hear Irina's calls at all.

"You guys must be hungry. I'll go make break— lunch for you guys." Mag got up from the bed.

"We already had breakfast. You left quite a bit of mung bean cake from last night, and there is milk in the fridge." Amy patted her tummy. "But, I am hungry again."

"Let's go downstairs. I'll make you new desserts after lunch." Mag patted Amy's head smilingly.

"New dessert?"

"Mm-hmm. I had a good sleep and a good dream. I learned it in my dream." Mag nodded.

"Are you for real? Can you learn to cook in your dreams?" Irina looked at Mag with doubt.

"You will see it later if you don't believe me. Moreover, I have improved the mung bean cake. I will let you try the real mung bean cake today." Mag walked out confidently.

Mag took a break after lunch before going into the kitchen to make the mung bean cake and salted egg yolk pastry.

The system gave him a whole new set of molds, culinary tools, and an oven after he learned the recipes.

The mung bean cake was relatively easier, but its preparation work was more complicated. Fortunately, he had already soaked some mung beans in the fridge last night. He could start making the mung bean cakes after removing the skins. It saved him plenty of waiting time.

Meanwhile, it was much more complicated to make the salted egg yolk pastry.

Irina stood at the kitchen's entrance as she watched Mag take the ingredients and condiments out from the fridge. She perplexedly asked, "When did you buy all those things? I didn't see you buy them when we went out shopping yesterday?"

Mag's hands froze in midair. She finally had suspicions about the inexhaustible ingredients that appeared in the fridge mysteriously after so long?

"Oh, I know it. You must have bought them when you went to buy the mung bean pastry." Just as Mag was trying to come with an explanation, Irina had already found a perfect excuse for him.

"Yes. It's exactly like that." Mag nodded.

The complexity of the salted egg yolk pastry stemmed from its four-layered structure. The exterior layer was also the glazed layer that engulfed the pastry skin. Their layers were created by rolling it over and over again with the rolling pin. The salted egg yolk was wrapped in red bean paste before being wrapped in the pastry skin. A layer of egg yolk glaze would be brushed over the surface, and sesame seeds would be scattered over it before putting it into the oven.

Furthermore, the pastry needed to be coated and baked trice during the baking process. The salted egg yolk pastry would be removed, coated with the egg yolk wash, and put back into the oven again three times before the golden and crispy salted egg yolk pastry was formally done.

The entire process was like an artistic performance. The two children also came to the kitchen's entrance, and watched Mag's performance. They were mesmerized.

"Father is really so formidable." Amy opened her mouth slightly with admiration in her eyes.

Annie's expression was also similar. She was also looking at Mag with a gaze full of admiration.

Irina leaned against the door frame, and looked at Mag with interest. She didn't know why, but the Mag who put down his longsword, picked up his chef's knife, and cooked quietly in the kitchen gave her a peaceful and reliable sensation. It was as if a boat that had been wandering around had finally found a harbor where it could dock.

Ding!

The oven's sound rang out.

Mag turned off the power, and opened the oven.

"Smells so good!"

A milky aroma together with the aroma of the egg pastry filled the kitchen and surged towards the kitchen's door. The eyes of the three people watching at the door all lit up.

Mag brought out a tray of salted egg yolk pastry from the oven under their stare. The golden skin had a layer of glaze with specks of sesame decorating it. It looked extremely enticing.

"This is the salted egg yolk pastry, but you can only eat it after it cools down.." Mag walked out with the salted egg yolk pastry smilingly.

Chapter 2020: Ripped Clothes

Irina, Amy, and Annie sat around the dining table, and stared at the tray of salted egg yolk pastry in the middle of the table.

The aroma of the pastry and the aroma of the milk made the three of them salivate.

Amy tilted her head, and asked Mag expectantly, "Father, when can we eat the salted egg yolk pastry?"

"We still need to wait a while. It will taste even better after it cools a little." Mag knew that the little one was already getting impatient, but the brief wait necessary in order for the salted egg yolk pastry to achieve the best texture would be very worthwhile.

"We just need to let it cool down, right?" Irina asked Mag.

"Yes."

"Then, I have a solution." Irina went into the kitchen, and made some sounds in there. Shortly after, Irina came out with a box that was carved out of ice. Its top was open, and chopsticks were used to make a support at the bottom over a plate.

Irina used the chopsticks to place a few pieces of salted egg yolk pastry into the icebox, and they cooled down rapidly.

There was no problem with physical cooling, so Mag didn't stop her.

Soon, Amy tiptoed and used her finger to gently poke at the salted egg yolk pastry in the icebox before exclaiming, "They are already cool."

Mag used the chopsticks to poke the skin of the pastry. It had already hardened. He nodded, and said, "We can eat it now."

"Father will have one first." Amy reached out to grab one salted egg yolk pastry, and passed it to Mag.

"Little Amy, you will eat it first. I will eat it later."

"No way. Father has a hard time making it. Father has to eat the first salted egg yolk pastry." Amy shook her head with conviction.

"Alright. I will eat it." Mag accepted the salted egg yolk pastry, feeling so touched. Daughters were still the best.

"Hehe." Amy smiled. She gave Annie and Irina one each before picking up the last salted egg yolk pastry, and took a big bite.

"Ah..."

"So delicious!"

"So, so, so, so satisfying!"

The slightly crispy skin was wrapped around the pastry, forming layers of crispy texture that crumbled in the mouth as soon as she bit into it. The teeth easily bit open the red bean paste and egg yolk. The exquisite texture and taste made the little one sway left and right. Her two short legs swung gently, and her face had a satisfied expression.

"Is it that delicious?" Irina looked at Amy, who was immersed in the scrumptiousness of the salted egg yolk pastry, and bit into one herself too.

"Mmm..."

A hint of disbelief appeared in Irina's eyes. Under the pastry skin was the soft red bean paste and the savory salted egg yolk that was wrapped in the very center.

Crunchy, soft, sweet, and savory. Different kinds of sensations filled the mouth.

How could one mouthful be enough!

One mouthful followed by another mouthful. The small salted egg yolk pastry all went into her stomach quickly.

She licked the pastry skin on the fingertips, and then licked her lips. She looked at Mag with satisfaction. "Not bad. It's delicious."

Erm, it was actually more than delicious. It was super delicious!

Irina had never eaten such a delicious dessert before in her life.

Be it that exquisite layered combination, that crunchy exterior and tender interior, or that innovative creation of the red bean paste wrapping around the salted egg yolk, they were all amazing.

Compared to the mung bean cake, this salted egg yolk pastry had already taken the number one spot in her heart!

Annie nibbled on the salted egg yolk pastry. Judging from her curled lips and surprised expression, she was similarly very satisfied with the salted egg yolk pastry.

Mag's lips curled up slightly. He was feeling rather satisfied with himself.

As a chef, his greatest satisfaction was receiving others' acknowledgement for the food that he had painstakingly cooked.

Furthermore, they were the people that were the closest to him and he cared the most about.

Suddenly, he felt that the dozens of days that he spent battling with the salted egg yolk pastry in the test field for the God of Cookery last night were very worthwhile.

Mag picked up the salted egg yolk pastry, and took a bite. This salted egg yolk pastry that was perfectly done in every aspect was indeed so scrumptious that it could make a grown man weep.

Even all those salted egg yolk pastries that he had eaten before could only be considered as inferior when compared to this salted egg yolk pastry.

Irina placed a few more salted egg yolk pastry into the icebox to cool down, and casually asked, "So, is the tavern going to sell desserts?"

"No. Saipan Tavern doesn't deserve them." Mag shook his head and smiled. "This salted egg yolk pastry will be reserved for the customers of Mamy Restaurant. Just take it as compensation for the time we will be away for our vacation."

"Oh, yes. You haven't cooked for that grandfather and grandson duo in the morning, and you didn't send them food for lunch, either," Irina reminded him.

"Oh dear. I have forgotten about them." Mag slapped his head. He had indeed messed up all his plans by waking up late.

He went into the kitchen to make one helping of braised chicken and rice for Merante and Noah each. After packing them up, Mag packed two salted egg yolk pastry for them too before sending the food to them via the teleportation portal.

"Grandpa, did Boss Mag forget about us?" Noah stared at the simplified teleportation portal in the corner of the room and gulped.

"As a member of the Ghost Clan, don't keep thinking about food. You look useless," Merante lectured. However, he couldn't help staring at the corner, and his stomach began to growl uncontrollably.

These two days were the most comfortable life that they had ever led. They didn't have to wander around, and their three meals were taken care of. Moreover, they were extremely delicious food.

However, today's breakfast and lunch weren't delivered on time. They actually weren't used to it.

Right then, a golden light flashed in the corner, and a takeaway box appeared.

"It's here!"

Noah jumped up from bed excitedly, and ran over to pick up the takeaway box. He placed it on the small table at the side, and opened it reverently. The rich chicken soup's aroma filled the room.

"Oh... This enticing aroma. He's indeed Boss Mag!" Noah took a deep sniff as he took out two extra-large helpings of braised chicken and rice.

"However, what are these?" Noah took out two separately plated portions of salted egg yolk pastry on the topmost layer.

"It has the aroma of an egg. Perhaps it is the baked egg of some bird?" Merante picked up a salted egg yolk pastry, and sniffed it before taking a bite.

The crunchy skin wrapped up an amazing taste. The crunchy aroma of the skin, the sweet aroma of the red bean filling, the savory aroma of the salted egg yolk... All kinds of flavors exploded in his mouth layer by layer before overlapping together, and releasing an incredible taste.

Rip!

Merante's clothes ripped and revealed his fit chest.

"Are you exaggerating?"

Noah looked at Merante's ripped clothes, and then bit into the other salted egg yolk pastry..