

Stay At home 51

Chapter 51: Blood Runs Hot

“La zhi roujiamo?” Habeng was a little puzzled, just like he had felt when he’d first heard the words “Yangzhou fried rice”. However, the meat ¹ in its name really intrigued him. “Two for me, Mag,” he said, a little thrilled.

“Two... for me,” Haga echoed. He, too, was pretty expectant because they both loved meat the most. To be sure, Yangzhou fried rice was good, but it only had a little meat in it.

“Sure. Please wait a second,” Mag answered, and went into the kitchen.

“Mobai, you’re always the first,” Habeng said with a smile as he sat opposite Mobai.

Mobai shook his head. “Not today. A human girl came earlier than me.”

“Good morning, little... lady,” Haga said with a smile as he looked at Amy.

Amy nodded. “Morning, Big Orc.” Then she looked at his fangs and asked curiously, “Will these get in the way when you eat?”

Haga shook his head, smiling. “I’m... used to it.”

“Mine are very even.” Amy revealed her small even teeth to him, showing off.

Haga smiled, and then he took a seat beside Habeng and waited for his meal.

After a little while, Mag came out with three roujiamos and served one to each of them.

“Smells good. This is the la zhi roujiamo you talked about? It has a lot of meat in it.” The strong meat aroma made him swallow as he held it in his hand. Inside the bag, the white bai ji bread was stuffed with lean meat and fat, which was seductively greasy.

“It sure is quite different than the Yangzhou fried rice. I’ve never smelled such a special meat aroma. It’s most appetizing,” Mobai complimented as he looked at the roujiamo in his hand. Then he finished the last bite of Yangzhou fried rice on his plate.

“I’ll try it now.” Habeng tore the bag open and ate almost half of it in one gulp.

The streaky pork which had absorbed the tasty gravy was wrapped by the sweet bai ji bread. As he chewed on it, the tasty gravy seeped into the bread and the soft yet chewy meat melted in his mouth. It was so delicious that every taste bud was dancing as their craving for meat had been greatly satisfied.

Habeng found it more surprising after he swallowed. The roujiamo was like a fireball falling down his throat, just as if he had taken a draught of wine. His blood became hot as if something inside him had been awakened.

“Roar!”

Habeng couldn't help but tilt his head back and let out a roar, which even made the table shake. It was loud.

"Yes?" Amy lifted an eyebrow and seemed a little irritated. She held out her hand.

However, Mag softly held her little hand before she could unleash her fireball. He smiled and shook his head, signalling her not to do that.

He looked at Habeng curiously, knowing that he didn't do it on purpose. The system had said that the roujiamo had a stronger effect on a wilder species.

Even he felt restless after eating it, and orcs were much wilder than humans, so it wasn't very strange that Habeng had reacted violently. He didn't know the effect it would cause, though.

Habeng's roar startled Mobai and Haga, but they had tried the Yangzhou fried rice and knew it could relieve fatigue, so they were not worried that this roujiamo would be bad for them. Instead, they were looking at Habeng with expectation, wondering what special effect it would cause.

After a roar, the hot-blooded Habeng looked toward Amy first and was relieved when he saw no fireball. "Sorry about that. I couldn't help it," he said apologetically. "Mag, this roujiamo is really good, but it made me... I feel my blood is pumping, and my strength seems to have been increased."

Mag nodded, smiling. "Yes."

As Mobai and Haga heard this, their eyes lit up. They took a bite of their roujiamos at the same time immediately.

Both were lost in its taste right away. After they swallowed, the hot blood also made them roar despite themselves.

While Mobai's sound was much lower, Haga's was louder, like Habeng's. Haga scratched his head embarrassedly. "So... Sorry," he said to Amy.

Amy nodded. "It's your first time, Big Orc. I won't mind. But it's not the first time for someone."

"Sorry. It won't happen again..." Habeng said as he nodded. Then he took another huge bite, savoring the delicious meat and bai ji bread. What an intoxicating taste! He swallowed, and this time he had learned—he covered his mouth quickly and made no sound.

Haga copied his brother and covered his mouth each time he swallowed, restraining his roar and at the same time savoring the good food.

"It's very good. Give me five more, Mag!" Habeng said to Mag as he put the bag on the table. He was a little excited, his face still red.

Now that he had finished it, he was fully aware of the effect of this roujiamo. Not only could it excite the body, but it was even able to stimulate the blood and increase the strength.

"Me... too. Five." Haga held up five fingers to Mag.

Mobai shook his head. "It's pretty good. But I feel my body can't stand this excitement anymore. This one should be enough for me." The blood was rushing inside his body. Although he got used to it quickly and even felt a little comfortable, he liked Yangzhou fried rice better as it would soothe his muscles.

"Today we only serve samples, so each person can only get up to three samples for each meal," Mag said as he shook his head, smiling. "It might need to be improved, so we'll start to sell it tomorrow officially. There'll be no limit, but since the ingredients prepared are limited, first come, first served."

He didn't want to make too many roujiamos today, because they were only samples, and the meat wasn't quite ready. It was only a warm-up for tomorrow, so he didn't care about how many he could sell, but rather how many people he could sell them to.

"It's so good, three is not enough." Habeng was a little anxious. "Mag, how much is it? I'll double the price and buy another two. What do you say?" he asked.

Chapter 52: I Highly Recommend It!

Mag took a look at the expectant Habeng and Haga and became a little hesitant. Habeng offering to pay double didn't interest him, though; he just didn't want to decrease the quantity and increase his price like a scalper.

They had really helped him a lot with the crowdfunding yesterday; otherwise, Amy wouldn't have been able to eat such a delicious roujiamo today. He thought for a moment and nodded with a smile. "The new dish came out earlier because of your money, so you can eat as many as you want today, and at the same price."

Habeng's face lit up right away. "You're a hell of a guy, Mag. Then I'll have five more, and so will my brother," he said. *Mag is truly not one of those devious human businessmen.*

Mag nodded. "Okay. Please wait a moment." Then he turned around and walked towards the kitchen.

"Little Owner, may I have the check, please?" Mobai's fatigue from staying up late last night was completely gone after a plate of Yangzhou fried rice and a la zhi roujiamo.

He felt very refreshed and comfortable after the roujiamo because his blood was now running at a higher speed.

When he put the kraft bag on the table, he noticed Amy's back on the bag. He was a little surprised, but found it quite understandable.

He might have known Mag for only a few days, but he could tell that he was a good father, and that he loved Amy with all his heart.

Amy was a motherless half-elf, but she wasn't very timid, which was quite uncommon for a hybrid. Actually, her doting father had made her brave as well as cute.

But this back may give rise to troubles, Mobai thought. No matter. Amy's fireball could terrify even Habeng, and Mag is definitely no ordinary man; he looks quite smart.

Amy walked over to Mobai. "Nine gold coins, please," she said after calculating in her head.

"Right. Take it out of my crowdfunding money," Mobai said with a smile as he rose to his feet.

Amy nodded. "Okay." Then she walked to the kitchen door and looked at her father, who was making a roujiamo. "Father, dwarf grandpa Mobai said he'll use that crowd money to pay. Is it okay?"

"Sure. That's the agreement." Mag smiled and walked out, holding two plates. Each had two roujiamos on it. The bag was more of a hindrance for Habeng and Haga, so it was better to serve them on the plate directly.

Of course, more importantly, it would save him some money this way. He could wash the dishes in the dishwasher.

"Bye, Mag," Mobai said with a smile and left.

"Mag, your food is very delicious. I don't want to go back," Habeng said to Mag as he picked up a roujiamo and took a large bite. He felt the blood rushing inside his body. It was much better than drinking wine. He was enjoying his food, and his strength was increasing at the same time. There was nothing better than that.

Mag smiled. It really felt good to be praised.

Haga nodded in agreement. His common language wasn't very good, so he gave Mag a thumbs-up.

After a little while, Conti arrived with his black donkey, accompanied by clear hoofbeats.

"Looks like I can eat the new dish today. Mag, give me one please," Conti said to Mag with a smile after he took a look at the orc brothers who were wolfing down white bread. The tantalizing meat aroma had permeated the entire restaurant.

Mag nodded, smiling. "Sure. Please wait a moment." Then he walked back into the kitchen. Conti always kept his bright smile no matter whom he was talking to.

"Good morning, little owner," Conti said to Amy with a smile as he took his usual seat.

Amy nodded. "Good morning, Smiley Knight." He was smiling all the time, like he was wearing a smiling mask.

Habeng turned back and looked at Conti. "This la zhi roujiamo is very good. Its taste is simply unbelievable!" he said as he chewed. "I highly recommend it!"

"I'll try it then." Conti became more expectant.

After a while, Mag came out, holding a kraft bag. He passed it to Conti with a smile. "Your la zhi roujiamo."

Conti took it. The little girl's back caught his attention immediately. He smiled and looked up at Mag. "Isn't this the little owner?"

Amy was leaning on the counter, a little bored, but when she heard what Conti had just said, her face lit up instantly. "Really?" she asked. Then she climbed down the chair, walked up to the table, and stood

on the tips of her toes. She saw the back of a little girl. "Father, is that Amy? Did you draw that?" she asked, surprised.

Mag nodded, smiling. "Yes. It's Amy. Nothing could represent our restaurant better than Amy," he answered as he stroked her head.

"You're amazing, Father. It's really good," Amy said happily as she rubbed her head against his hand.

The other three people gave a kind smile as they saw this. It was so emotional that it made them envious.

The back of this cute half-elf girl would surely become well-known in Chaos City.

Conti took a look at his roujiamo. The white bread was sliced open and stuffed with lean meat and fat. The name roujiamo ¹ was quite accurate. He had never seen any bread like this before. It was so unique.

He opened his mouth and took a bite. The soft and chewy bai ji bread and the soft and tender meat mixed together with the gravy. The splendid taste spread in his mouth, making him feel like he had risen to the next level.

After he swallowed, Conti also let out a deep breath despite himself. Then he realized it and smiled at the others, a little embarrassed.

To his surprise, his blood seemed to go wild shortly afterwards, and it was even wilder than after he practiced his sword for an hour in the morning. It was magical, like the Yangzhou fried rice, and regulated his body to the best shape.

"I'd like two more," Conti said as he looked up at Mag. The one in his hand was not finished.

Mag nodded. "Okay, please wait a second." He turned and went into the kitchen, feeling great.

This roujiamo's effect is a little violent, but it seems quite acceptable for now. Besides, it's fast to make and easy to take out. People can eat it anywhere. Maybe it could make the restaurant more popular.

Chapter 53: The Flying Knife Pierced And Killed Her

After they finished their meal, Haga turned his head and looked at Amy with a smile. "Little... owner, the... check. Us... two," he said as he held up two fingers.

Habeng's eyes brightened instantly. "Brother, you're going to pay for me?" He looked at Haga, surprised and happy. *Finally, he has become that old, kind big brother again.*

Haga nodded, smiling.

Amy walked over to him. "You've had 12 roujiamos, so that is... 36 gold coins. Big Orc, are you going to pay for the meal today?"

Haga nodded with a smile. "Ta... Take it out of that money."

Amy nodded. "Oh." She turned around. "No money to collect. When does this end? I want to count coins..." She sighed.

"You're indeed still my good old brother," Habeng said delightedly as he patted Haga's shoulder. *I don't care about those 18 gold coins; I'm just happy that he is my old big brother again.*

Haga nodded, smiling. He fumbled the receipt out and put it on the table. "I'm going back today. Take this receipt; it's yours now," he said in orc language.

"Mine? Wait a minute—I lent you money to buy this receipt, and you've eaten several meals with this receipt these days. Now you say it's mine? Did I buy you this breakfast, or did you buy me?" Habeng asked as he looked at Haga, a little confused. He found that his big brother's good image that he had just pictured was starting to crumble again.

Haga thought for a moment and nodded. "Consider it my treat. We used my receipt to buy it, no?"

"Well, don't mind that now." Haga waved his hand. "But why do you have to go back today? We have planned to stay here for a month. There are still many things to buy, and weapons are not ready yet. What's the rush?" he asked as he looked at his brother, puzzled.

"The Stone tribe has come looking for trouble to gold mines again. There was a small conflict the day before last; we lost two men, and a small mine was taken over by them. Father wants me back to retake it and to avenge our brothers." Haga's face became grave, his smile was gone, and for the first time, he was acting like an orc warrior.

"Those bastards have come back again. Seems they didn't learn enough last year. Brother, let me go back. I'll teach them a hard lesson." Habeng clenched his fist; his knuckles made a cracking sound, and a vein was throbbing in his forehead.

Haga shook his head. "No, you have to stay here. Weapons are crucial to us. You have to bring them home safely." Then he patted Habeng on the shoulder. "Besides, your waist was wounded last year, and you've not recovered. Don't worry about fighting right now."

"I have fully recovered. I can smash their heads with my club. Look..." Then he rose from the table and tried to prove his point.

"Father said Marcus is leading the attack this time. You can't beat him. Besides, I'll kill him myself." Haga's face was a little grim. His fist clenched, and then slowly unclenched. He patted Habeng's shoulder, lifted his club, and walked towards the door.

Habeng looked strange when he heard that name. "Then I'll go with you," he said as he looked at his brother's back.

Habeng shook his head. "No. Just stay here and buy the things we need. I'll be back in several days and eat Mag's delicious food again." Then he turned back and smiled at Amy. "Good... bye, little owner."

Amy waved her hand. "Bye, Big Orc." Then she climbed down the chair and went to whisper to her big egg.

"Damn Marcus, how dare he attack our tribe?! Bastard," Habeng said as he ground his teeth together. He watched Haga leave and resumed his seat helplessly.

A conflict between tribes? Mag took a look at Habeng. His predecessor could speak orc language since humans' territory was bordering orcs'. Most of the feats he had achieved had been from fighting orcs, so he could understand their language and speak it a little.

As for elf language, he was no stranger to it at all; otherwise, he wouldn't have married an elf princess.

Mag was a little curious, but he didn't intend to ask. He was not the kind of man who liked asking personal questions, but he would listen if they wanted to talk.

"Mag, give me a plate of Yangzhou fried rice. Maybe the good food can make me feel better," Habeng said to Mag after sitting silent for a while.

"Right. Please wait a moment," Mag said. He cooked the fried rice quickly and put it gently before Habeng.

Habeng picked up his spoon and put it down again. "Mag, if one of your best friends accidentally killed your woman, would you kill him?" Habeng asked, looking up at Mag.

Mag inclined his head slightly. "Maybe." Perhaps Haga didn't know how to deal with this kind of thing himself.

"Grace was my brother's fiancée; they grew up together. Marcus belongs to Stone tribe, and is of the same age as my brother. We didn't have our gold mines yet and Stone tribe was very close to us. Children from two tribes always played together. My brother was the chief of children from our tribe, and Marcus was the chief of their tribe's children. They often fought, and since they were well-matched in strength, they became friends after fighting a few times.

"Then we found gold mines and became rich quickly. Everything changed afterwards. Stone tribe came to ask for gold mines, and my father agreed to give them one or two small ones to help them shake off poverty, but they wanted half, including the biggest one. Of course, we would never agree, and we didn't give them the small ones, either, so conflict started and has lasted more than a decade. There have been deaths on both sides.

"During one conflict, my brother and Marcus met on the field. They were both the strongest fighters among the younger generation in their respective tribes. They had never got the better of one another, and so it was that day. However, the Stone tribe played dirty—they threw a stone knife to Marcus. Grace panicked and rushed out to help my brother. She got killed by the knife." Habeng paused a moment as he gave a sigh. "I've seen it, actually. Marcus intended to toss the knife aside and didn't see her. The flying knife pierced and killed her."

Chapter 54: Why Does It Look Nothing Like A Roast Goose?

Habeng's story was short and plain, but made the listeners feel sympathy.

"It's a sad story," Mag said softly after a while.

Habeng nodded. "Yes. I haven't seen Marcus in the Stone tribe for many years. I never thought he would attack our gold mines. This time, my brother and he might settle it once and for all," he said with a mixture of feelings. He had always followed his brother and Marcus around when he was young. Marcus

had been like a big brother to him. Now, because of the conflicts and Grace's death, they had become enemies.

"Anyway, they'll settle it sooner or later. I knew one of them would die when Grace was killed." Habeng picked up his spoon again and ate some fried rice. Then, he said not a single word more.

"Mag, may I have the check?" Conti asked as he smiled at Mag.

Mag nodded, smiling. "Sure. You've eaten three roujiamos. That is nine gold coins. I'll take it out of your receipt."

"Thank you." Conti rose from the table, took his longsword, and patted Habeng on the shoulder. "Don't worry. He'll win."

"Thank you," Habeng replied. Then, he went back to eating.

Conti took a look in the direction of the counter. Seeing that Amy didn't intend to come out and say "goodbye", he turned around and walked out, a little disappointed.

Habeng finished his fried rice and left with his club. Mag could feel his depression.

After a while, more customers came; some wanted to try the new dish when they were told of it. Its price was much lower than Yangzhou fried rice's, but it was still very expensive.

Mag had grown used to their weird sound and embarrassed look when they took the first bite. They carried on eating regardless—they couldn't resist it.

The breakfast time of one and a half hours passed swiftly. Mag walked to the door and turned over the sign. Then he cleared the plates, washed them with the dishwasher, and went to wipe tables.

"Father, come here! Is the ugly duckling going to hatch out?" Amy cried out suddenly, her voice excited and surprised.

"Really?" Mag was also a little surprised. He walked to the back of the counter and crouched down beside Amy. He heard rustling from the blanket-covered egg, only that the sound was much clearer and quicker this time, just as if the little creature was trying to get out.

"Amy, did you say something to it?" Mag asked curiously. *It seems the poor creature is very terrified. It is trying to get out.*

Amy nodded solemnly. "Yes. I encouraged it."

Mag's face became a little odd. "Then how did you encourage it?"

"Be good and come out, ugly duckling, or I'll set you on fire. I'm serious!" Amy said seriously as she clenched her little fist.

Mag couldn't help but chuckle. *What kind of encouragement was that? It was totally a threat. No wonder the little thing is clawing at the shell strenuously. It must be horror-struck.*

"Father, does it think I'm lying? Maybe that's why it doesn't come out after I said it so many times. Can I use my fire on it?" Amy asked as she looked at Mag, not knowing what to do.

It would be cooked if you set it on fire, Mag thought. Then, while Mag was thinking about how to tell Amy to be patient, the egg cracked.

They froze for an instant, and then widened their eyes to look at the egg that had a small crack in it.

“Come out quickly, ugly duckling. I know you’re ugly, but I’m pretty.” She stared at the big egg, full of expectation.

She is just like the old me. Maybe she has inherited that from me. Mag looked at his little girl. *She has a vicious tongue, and she has figured out how to do that all by herself. She is really talented.*

She was like a high-quality piece of uncut jade. He only needed to teach her a little bit. Between her cute appearance and her soft little voice, her vicious tongue would definitely choke others’ words, but they couldn’t get angry. He would feel wickedly cool.

Mag had been brought here because of his vicious tongue, so he was restraining himself now. He only criticized the system at best, and looked at this world with forgiveness and love.

Otherwise, he might be transferred to another world soon because this world and those different species offered so many things for him to criticize. He didn’t want to leave Amy’s side.

Amy was different, though. She might have a vicious tongue, but people didn’t hate her very much. They would forgive her in no time, so he didn’t have to worry about that.

Mag nodded slightly as he looked at Amy. *Looks like it’s time I taught her how to use her vicious tongue.* She had completely remembered the 9×9 table and was learning addition, subtraction, and easy multiplication of two-digit numbers under the decimal system. She should be able to master the common calculations in everyday life soon. Amy was a quick learner.

The crack in the shell extended, and one became many. It started from the top, and covered the whole egg in a short while.

Mag was also gazing at it in excitement. *What will come out? It’s an egg, and the nest was on a cliff, so it’s most likely a bird. But it’s so big, so it must be no ordinary bird. It might be some kind of monstrous bird.*

“Ugly duckling, I’ll count to three. Then I’ll set you on fire if you don’t come out,” Amy said with her big blue eyes. Her patience had worn out quickly. She held out her hand.

“Crack ...”

With a soft sound, a fluffy little head with a piece of eggshell on it stuck out from the big egg. It looked around with its half-open eyes, confused and alarmed. At last, it looked at Amy. “Meow,” it said softly.

“An orange... orange cat!!!” Mag’s eyes widened. The little creature which had a piece of eggshell on its little head was clearly an orange and white cat. Its eyes were not fully open, and there was some liquid on its fur. It studied Amy with its half-open eyes. Such a cute little creature!

“Wow, it’s so adorable!” Amy blinked in surprise. She reached out her hand to touch it, but drew it back halfway. “Father, you said the ugly duckling would become a swan when it grew up. But why does it look nothing like a roast goose?”

Chapter 55: It Must Be An Ugly Duckling

“It may not be an ugly duckling after all...” Mag said with a strange look, gazing at the orange cat meowing at Amy.

He had never seen such a weird thing before. *A cat hatched out of an egg? Darwin would rise from the dead if he heard about this.*

But maybe the oviparous cat survived the natural selection and the viviparous cat didn't. It's not entirely unlikely; after all, it's a different world.

Nine out of ten orange cats were fat, and the remaining one was very fat.

He had raised a dog and a cat in his previous life, and that cat was a very fat orange cat.

Looking at the cute cat's half open eyes and its palm-sized body, even Mag had half a mind to raise it. Hugging a cat was really pleasant.

“But it came from this ugly duckling's egg. It is an ugly duckling egg, right? Then it must be an ugly duckling.” Amy nodded her head, quite certain. Then she looked at the little cat with dislike. “You're so ugly, and have two more legs. You can't swim, can you? I'll call you Ugly Duckling from now on.”

“Maybe we can refer to it as 'Orange', or 'Little Orange', or 'Big Orange'. What do you say?” Mag was trying to persuade her to change the name because he felt sorry for this little kitten.

“No. Father, it's an ugly duckling. You can't change its name to whatever you want,” Amy said seriously as she shook her head.

“Meow.” The little orange cat shook its head in the shell, seemingly to show that it didn't like that name.

Amy nodded, smiling. “Yes. I know you like this name too, right?” She removed that piece of shell on its head and said grimly, “You will respond when I call you, Ugly Duckling. And I'll treat you well until you grow into a swan.”

Then, Amy swallowed despite herself.

The little cat became obedient immediately. “Meow,” it said, nodding.

“Okay then, let's call it Ugly Duckling...” Mag cast a sympathetic glance at the cat. *Maybe she thinks those born out of eggs are most likely ugly ducklings. Besides, it's her pet. She can call it whatever she wants.*

But it won't grow into a swan. Amy's wish of eating it will probably go up in smoke.

In fact, Mag seriously doubted that it was a normal orange cat. After all, that herb collector had found it on a cliff and reached there with a rope. It had no wings, though.

He didn't know what it would become after it grew up. Then, a cute Totoro came into his mind all of a sudden. He shook his head. *It had better not be that fat.*

It looked just like a little orange kitten right now. Maybe because it came from an egg, it looked to be one or two weeks old now. It grabbed the eggshell with two white paws, trying to get out.

Since it was too small and didn't have enough strength, it pawed for a long time and failed. Now it was looking at Amy pitifully with its sapphire eyes and meowed like a helpless child. It seemed it was already relying on Amy.

"Fine, fine. Let me help you," Amy said impatiently, but she had already reached out her hands, planning to get it out.

"Wait, Amy. We have to clean it first," Mag said quickly. He went to fetch a clean towel and helped Amy get the kitten out. They wiped it clean and wrapped it up with the towel. Only its little head was left outside. It looked at Mag and Amy innocently.

"Father, it looks so delicious!" Amy's face lit up as she watched the little cat in the towel.

"It looks like a cat roll." Mag wanted to chuckle too. They both were so cute.

Immediately, the kitten became uneasy. It tilted its head back and said, "Meow, meow!" It was trying to get out.

"Ugly Duckling, be good. I won't eat you now. Don't worry," Amy said with a smile as she stroked its little head.

The anxious cat became calm in an instant and fell asleep quickly.

"Let it sleep. We need to prepare something for it to eat," Mag said to Amy, smiling. It seemed it had used a lot of strength to get out of its egg in a hurry; it would be hungry when it woke up.

"It's a real lazy bum. It has fallen asleep after only a stroke." Amy drew back her hand with dislike. "Then what are we going to feed it? Rainbow fried rice?" she asked as she looked at Mag.

Mag shook his head. "No. Newborn ca— ugly duckling can't eat fried rice. We have to feed it sheep's milk or cow's milk. Let's go out and buy some for it." He had raised his orange cat from a little kitten, so he was very experienced.

Suddenly, Mag remembered something, and asked in his mind, "System, do you sell baby bottles?"

"System doesn't supply goods for babies," the system replied seriously.

"I don't have a lot of cash right now," Mag said calmly. "You'd better name a good price because it will be able to lick the milk from a plate after a few days. I don't really have to buy it."

"One high-quality baby bottle and you'll get a pet-bib for free. Only five gold coins!" This shining message went across Mag's head.

"Two free pet-bibs," Mag said after thinking about it.

"One high-quality baby bottle and two pet-bibs are ready in the counter. Please check," the system said, and then it disappeared immediately.

Mag opened the door and found a brand-new baby bottle and two lovely pet-bibs. They were just perfect for feeding the kitten.

He didn't want to buy milk from the system, because he didn't know whether or not it would sell ingredients that were not included in the recipes; even if it would, the milk would probably be very expensive—it might be produced by cows raised in some holy land.

He didn't have much money now, and he had to save money to buy strength, so he couldn't spend money randomly.

Amy nodded. "Okay." She put Ugly Duckling back into the basket and softly covered it with the blanket. Then she stood up and took hold of Mag's hand. She walked a few steps and turned to look in the direction of the basket, a little worried. "But, Father, what if it woke up when we went out? Would it be scared? I feel it looks on me as its mother."

Mag shook his head, smiling. "I don't think it will wake up soon," he said. *It won't take long to buy some milk. Amy is pretty smart. She knows that she has earned its trust since it saw her first.*

It's the first time that she raises a pet. Even though she said some bad things about it, I can tell she likes it very much.

Amy nodded. "Then let's go now and come back early." She took Mag's hand and walked towards the door.

Chapter 56: Is This Tofu Pudding Sweet Or Savory?

Indeed, it didn't take them long to buy a bamboo jar of sheep's milk. Mag only spent 20 copper coins on it and got another bamboo jar for free, which made him wonder if he was a little greedy. As they walked past the magic potion shop on the way back, they teased Black Coal and Green Pea again.

When they came back and opened the door, they heard the kitten's cry; it sounded a little anxious.

"Don't be afraid, Ugly Duckling. You're so ugly, so you'll be safe even if you're alone," Amy said as she slid under Mag's arm and ran towards it.

Her way of comforting it is really... different. Smiling, Mag walked in and put the milk on the counter. The little towel was a mess now, and the kitten was staring at Amy with its two paws on the edge of the basket like an abandoned child, its eyes watering—a pitiful sight.

"Okay, fine. We'll take you with us next time. You little troublemaker." Amy let out a sigh. She reached out and stroked its head, and it immediately stopped crying and narrowed its eyes, enjoying her stroking.

Mag smiled. *She is always talking about eating it, but since they live together, she will surely bond with it.*

He didn't want to tell her what she should do, because it was best if she could figure out by herself that friends and playmates were important. She had already turned Black Coal into her friend.

She said she wanted to eat it simply because she had a little obsession with roast goose, and it was nothing more than that.

Mag took the baby bottle from the counter and went into the kitchen. He put the nipple and tube into boiling water to kill the bacteria; then, he poured some milk into the clean bottle and warmed the bottle with some warm water. He dripped some on the back of his hand to test the temperature, put the lid on the jar, placed it in the fridge, and walked out with the baby bottle.

Mag crouched down beside her. "What is this, Father?" Amy asked curiously as she watched the bottle in Mag's hand. *The sheep's milk is in a transparent bottle that has a soft thingy on it. What's it for?* she thought.

"Meow." Ugly Duckling saw the bottle too. It must have smelled the milk. Its eyes were shining, and it was licking its lips. Apparently, it was starving.

"This is a baby bottle. It's for feeding babies and baby animals. Like this." Mag smiled and put the nipple to the cat's mouth. The pleasant smell of the milk and its own instinct drove it over to the nipple, and it sucked on it happily. The white sheep milk flowed from the corner of its mouth and dropped on its white hair on the chest. It really liked it.

The sugar content is relatively low in sheep's milk, and Ugly Duckling is like a one to two weeks old kitten, and it's a wild one, so it should be able to digest sheep's milk, Mag thought. *If it doesn't work, I'll buy formula from the system. It may not be very cheap, though.*

Amy's eyes brightened. "It's so interesting. Father, can I feed it?" she asked expectantly.

"Sure. But don't dirty it, because it is too small to be washed now. So, we have to wear a pet-bib around its neck." Mag handed the bottle to Amy and took out a flower-patterned bib from the counter. He had wanted to remove the bottle first and then tie the bib, but the little thing seemed to have read his mind—it sucked on the nipple tight. Mag had no choice but to make Amy lift the bottle up and then tie it on while it was still drinking.

"Well, I'll leave it to you then. This bottle of milk should be enough. I'll go prepare the ingredients for lunch," Mag said as he looked at Amy who was carefully feeding the kitten with the bottle in her two hands.

Amy nodded. "Okay. Don't worry, Father." Then she watched Ugly Duckling as it was enjoying its milk. "Is it that good?" she muttered, wondering.

It seemed like Ugly Duckling had understood her words; it nodded while suckling.

Mag went into the kitchen and washed his hands; then, he took out several pieces of meat from the fridge, cut them into large chunks, and put them in a large jar to marinate.

The meat was the most important. Last night, he had marinated enough meat for today and tomorrow, and it would be perfect by tomorrow morning. Now he had to marinate the meat for the day after tomorrow to make sure it had the best texture, and that his roujiamos' taste was consistent as well as delicious.

When Mag had finished, he went to check Amy's feeding job, and found Amy sitting on the ground, holding the bottle in her hands and suckling happily. Leaning on the edge of the basket, Ugly Duckling looked up at Mag, and then at Amy, who was drinking its milk; tears were welling up in its eyes.

You can never leave the feeding job to a little foodie. Now she has robbed the kitten of its milk... Mag made a sour smile. "Amy, why are you drinking Ugly Duckling's milk? It has nothing to drink now."

"Because I was afraid it would be too much for it, so I helped it out." She took another suck and turned to look at the kitten. "Right, Ugly Duckling?"

"Meow..." Ugly Duckling cried out reluctantly. It gave Mag a sad look and wagged its little tail.

This pet cat has no say in anything at all, Mag thought as he looked at it wagging its tail. The fat cat he had raised in his previous life would barely eat meat even if he put it near its mouth.

"Do you like sheep's milk?" Mag asked as he watched Amy drinking the milk.

Amy nodded vigorously. "Yes, I love it!" She never let the nipple out even when she spoke.

Mag nodded, smiling. "Then next time we'll buy some for you too. The calcium in it will help you grow tall." Seldom had Amy had sheep's milk before. Mag was too preoccupied with the restaurant these days to notice this.

He bought another baby bottle from the system. It couldn't be helped; after all, Amy and Ugly Duckling couldn't share one bottle. He warmed half a bottle of milk for the kitten and poured half a bottle for Amy. Looking at the two little things suckling cheerfully, Mag's heart felt warm. He had one more family member now.

Suddenly, the system's voice sounded in Mag's head. "New mission: Sell 1,000 la zhi roujiamos in 10 days. After the mission is completed, you'll be able to unlock a new recipe—tofu pudding. So far, you've sold 48."

"1,000, again! How original! System, you can do better than that!" Mag curled his lip. Actually, he had recognized the difference; he had to sell 1,000 roujiamos this time. The system had learned after his crowdfunding strategy last time.

"The reason I set this number for you is to make you popularize the restaurant as soon as possible. Don't play games with me. You have to study hard, run the restaurant carefully, and get on the right path to becoming the God of Cookery," the system said seriously.

"Fine. The mission isn't very difficult. But I'm curious—is this tofu pudding sweet or savory?" Mag asked concernedly.

Chapter 57: System, Can We Do Presales?

There were many people who preferred the sweet tofu pudding, and just as many who preferred it savory; their argument dated a long time back. There were also a few people who liked the spicy tofu pudding, but their presence was hardly noticed.

Whenever a discussion took place, the sweet tofu pudding people and the savory ones would start a holy war to decide the one authentic taste of the tofu pudding. They really hated each other.

Being a firm advocator of the savory tofu pudding, Mag would certainly choose the savory.

Sprinkle some chopped zha cai¹, papery dried shrimp, wood-ear mushrooms, and garlic onto the tender tofu pudding, and then add some soy sauce—it's heaven on earth if you can get such a bowl of hot savory tofu pudding in winter.

What the heck is sweet tofu pudding...

Mag had nothing against people who preferred the sweet tofu pudding, but he hated it when restaurants only sold the sweet tofu pudding.

Once in his previous life, he had gone to eat in a pretty famous restaurant. It had been a cold day in winter; he had wanted to eat some hot tofu pudding to warm his body, but had been told only the sweet flavor was available.

He didn't use his usual vicious tongue that time. Instead, he took a good picture of the restaurant's signboard, gave a clear indication of its location, and added a super appetizing picture of the savory tofu pudding; he then said on his microblog, "It feels really good to have a bowl of delicious savory tofu pudding in cold winter."

That was the first positive feedback he had given, and he had millions of fans. His comment even made the top searches for a few minutes.

Later he heard the owner of that restaurant added the savory flavor to the menu because many savory tofu pudding people became angry when they went there and found only the sweet flavor available. He heard that restaurant's customers had tripled after that.

However, the owner was a sweet tofu pudding person, and he lost his faith. People said that he sold his restaurant at a high price and opened a bar.

Now Mag felt it was quite reasonable for him to be transported to this world.

As a savory flavor person, of course, Mag wanted to sell the savory tofu pudding; this way, he could satisfy himself as well as make the savory tofu pudding well-known in this world.

Suddenly, Mag realized a serious problem. *Which would Amy like? The savory or the sweet flavor?* He took a look at Amy, who was holding the bottle drinking happily, and then frowned. *She might have inherited my preference. But if not... which does her mother like?*

"You will unlock both flavors," the system replied after a while.

Mag nodded. "That will be fine." Now he was a little worried that Amy would prefer the sweet flavor... But even if that was the case, he could do nothing; after all, she was his daughter. He would forgive her and those who preferred the sweet tofu pudding.

Besides, he was not a customer anymore, but an owner. If he only sold the savory flavor, those who favored the sweet tofu pudding wouldn't be very pleased.

Although tofu pudding might not exist in this world, he liked it when his customers were enjoying his food. He felt most satisfied every time he saw them smile.

Mag nodded slightly. "Right. I'll complete the mission asap." Then he hesitated for a moment, and asked tentatively, "But I want to have some savory tofu pudding now. Can we do presales this time?"

"..." A very long ellipsis went across Mag's head. "Take your mission seriously! Show some respect!" the system shouted, and its voice was almost like a roar, accompanied by some electrical noise.

"All right, all right. I hear you, loud and clear." If he could cover his ears in his head, he would have done it. He had never thought that the system had such a short temper.

Actually, he wasn't very serious about the idea of presales. Now, the most important thing was to make his restaurant well-known. Obviously, roujiamo was his best solution, since it was fast to make and easy to take out. He would focus on selling roujiamos for a few days.

Mag took a look at the two little things drinking the sheep milk happily and went into the kitchen. As he watched the milk on the cooking bench, he suddenly remembered that in his previous life, the unprocessed fresh sheep milk didn't taste very good, but his daughter and the kitten were really enjoying it. Out of curiosity, he poured himself some in a bowl and took a sip.

Mag's eyes brightened instantly. This sheep's milk was thick, tasty, and a little sour; the sourness didn't affect its taste, but instead stimulated Mag's appetite. He finished his half bowl of milk in no time, and the aftertaste of the milk remained in his mouth after he swallowed.

This sheep's milk was much better than the processed cow milk and sheep milk in his previous life. No wonder the two little things liked it that much. This world's sheep's milk was very different.

Looks like I need to buy a jar of sheep milk every day from tomorrow onwards. Mag put the lid on the jar and placed it in the fridge again. All three of them were really in need of nutrients right now. A jar of milk a day would do some good to their body.

Now that Amy had acquired a new playmate, she smiled more often now. Amy gave it a stroke after it finished eating, and it fell asleep again. She took it to its basket with dislike.

During lunch, Amy cradled Ugly Duckling in her arms. It looked up at Amy and meowed as she was eating Yangzhou fried rice. It seemed it wanted to eat it too.

"Father, can we feed it rainbow fried rice?" Amy asked as she had understood its intention.

Mag shook his head. "No. Maybe when it's bigger and has teeth." It was just a newborn kitten; it couldn't even eat baby food, let alone fried rice.

"Meow..." Ugly Duckling seemed to have understood Mag's words. It bared its several milk teeth and meowed at him.

Mag looked at its teeth with surprise. *This world's oviparous cat is truly different. It has teeth on the first day of birth.* Then he looked closely and shook his head. "The teeth are too small. You have to wait a few days."

“Meow.” Ugly Duckling lowered its head in frustration. It lay in Amy’s arms and shrugged, seeming to be a little upset.

“It’s no use getting angry. We won’t let you eat it. But if you really want to eat it...” Amy watched as Ugly Duckling raised its head slowly, and then she brought a spoon of fried rice to her mouth, smiling. “... you can watch me eat.”

Ugly Duckling burst into tears immediately. It lay in Amy’s arms, motionless and expressionless.

Mag shook his head with a smile. Just looking at them was enough to make him happy.

After lunch, Mag cleared the table and warmed two bottles of milk for them. Now, Amy didn’t have to rob Ugly Duckling of its food.

I’ll make the restaurant full of customers someday, and this impactful la zhi roujiamo is a start! Mag thought with a smile as he opened the door.

Chapter 58: A Dream That Has Been Found Again

When Mag opened his door, a young man who had been waiting outside looked up at him immediately. “Mag, I heard your restaurant has a new dish today? I was pretty busy, but I have left my shop to my employees and come here to try it,” he said expectantly. He had short, blond hair.

Mag nodded, smiling. “Yes. But it’s only a trial sale today.” This young man was called Proll Musan, aged around 28, and also owned a shop on the Aden Square. He sold fragrant incense, which was brought here from the faraway capital of the Roth Empire. His commodities had won the favor of women from many species. He had five employees, and business was good for him.

When he walked around here yesterday morning, he came across this fancy restaurant. He felt he had found his way after a plate of Yangzhou fried rice, so he ate his lunch and dinner here too. He’d also brought his two neighbors here when he’d come in the evening.

He didn’t come for breakfast this morning. Perhaps he had heard from his friends that Mag’s restaurant had launched a new dish, so he came early and waited outside.

“Then I’d like one, please. But what’s this new dish exactly?” Proll asked curiously as he walked in.

“It’s called la zhi roujiamo,” Mag replied with a smile.

La zhi roujiamo? What is it? Proll frowned. I know what rou (meat) and mo (bread) are, but they can be put together and become a dish?

He remembered that when he’d asked Mag what Yangzhou fried rice meant, the latter had only said that Yangzhou was a very beautiful place.

Looks like Mag has just named his dishes randomly. But, he is such a talented cook that he can make such delicious food, and my understanding of “good food” has been completely torn apart, Proll thought, and took a seat.

Mag nodded. "Please wait a second." He went towards the kitchen. When he walked past the counter, he saw Amy was crouching, stroking Ugly Duckling's back hair ceaselessly. *Cats are indeed very addictive, especially cute small ones. Even Amy can't resist it.*

Mag had already prepared the bai ji bread and stewed meat beforehand. He took a loaf of bread from the oven, sliced it open, stuffed the chopped meat inside, and added some gravy. Then he put it in a bag, walked out of the kitchen, and handed it to Proll. "Your la zhi roujiamo," Mag said, smiling.

Proll took it. "Smells great!" The meat aroma really intrigued him; it was more impactful than Yangzhou fried rice. He swallowed in spite of himself.

The kraft bag was clean and exquisite, with a cute half-elf's back on it. He remembered Mag had a lovely half-elf daughter, but he hadn't expected that he would use her back as a trademark. *He is very brave and interesting; a good father.*

He did business with all the species, so he knew very well the difficult position the hybrids were in.

As a businessman, Proll didn't discriminate; besides, Mag's little girl was so cute that every customer liked her. *Is she not here today?*

Proll took his mind off them and looked at the aromatic food in the bag—a whole loaf of white bread was sliced open and stuffed with appetizing meat. *So that's how it got its name. Is this meat called 'la zhi rou'?*

Wondering, Proll couldn't resist its aroma; he opened his mouth and took a bite, full of expectations.

The delicious taste practically burst out in his mouth right away. The tasty gravy stimulated his every taste bud, making him feel most satisfied. While the Yangzhou fried rice was gentle like a sweet spring, this roujiamo was much more violent, just like strong liquor. It had turned into a hot current, making his blood pumping.

"Ah!" Proll opened his eyes immediately and let out a sigh of admiration. He felt his blood pumping like he had felt when he'd first bared his heart to the girl next door. He was young, and he felt he had retrieved his vitality.

He always kept his smile while doing business with different species; he had even forgotten what a genuine smile should be like.

Now, he felt he had found the urge to smile again. The food was so delicious that it made him feel good and want to smile.

Proll took another bite, and another, and he kept his happy smile all the while. He came to this Chaos City at 17 and started as a petty worker. He crawled, cried, failed, and won. At last, he'd gained a foothold here and opened his own shop on this Aden Square. Ten years had passed; he had long forgotten what he'd looked like when he'd first come here.

Years of comfort seemed to have made him forget that he had dreamed of opening ten shops and becoming somebody when he first came here and laid his eyes on this grand, vast Aden Square.

After he finished his roujiamo, Proll looked up at Mag all of a sudden. "Mag, I think I'll open a second shop," he said, smiling.

Mag nodded with a smile. "Good for you." He didn't know why he had said that, but it seemed the roujiamo had given him strength, and he liked it.

"Please give me another one. I'm sure this blood-pumping food will be popular all over the city," Proll said with certainty.

Mag nodded. "Thank you. Please wait a moment." Then he went into the kitchen and made another one.

Slowly, Proll finished his second one. He fumbled out a purse from his clothes. "Mag, I'd like to buy five more for my employees," he said as he looked at Mag.

Mag shook his head slightly. "Today's roujiamos are only samples. Each customer can only buy three at most." The trial sale had been meant to draw some attention and make preparations for the official sale tomorrow, so he didn't make a lot.

Proll nodded. He was a businessman himself, so he could understand. "Oh, I see. I'll buy one, then. One boy's father has passed away; he is feeling a little down. Hope your food will give him some strength and cheer him up."

Mag watched as Proll walked out. He collected the gold coins on the table. Then another customer came. "Mag, a new dish has come out today, right? What's that aromatic thing in that man's hand?" he asked.

Chapter 59: Meow, Meow, Meow, Meow

Mag had prepared more than 30 loaves of bread for lunch, and they sold out in a little while. The aroma of meat really whetted many customers' appetite; they asked Mag to make some more.

However, there was nothing he could do. He had only prepared that many, so those who came first would be served first. He needed at least two hours to knead the dough and stew the meat; it was not like the Yangzhou fried rice which only took him several minutes to make a plate of.

Customers were interested in the exquisite bag too. One even said he would use it as a little money bag. They thought the drawing on the back was extremely cute. Their compliments made Amy elated.

By dinnertime, more people had heard about this and more customers came. The Yangzhou fried rice and roujiamo made them crazy. They were cooked in a unique way, but their taste was intoxicating. They had completely subverted their concept of food.

To be sure, they were expensive, but Chaos City was never short of wealthy people. They wouldn't mind spending some gold coins to treat themselves to a decent meal.

"Sorry. Today is only a trial sale, and we've sold out. We'll start serving it officially tomorrow. But since it takes time to prepare, the quantity for each meal is limited. Come back early tomorrow if you can." Mag showed the last customer out with a smile and turned over the sign. He breathed a sigh of relief. Although he had eaten Yangzhou fried rice and roujiamo, he felt a little tired after a long day.

He had sold more than 90 roujiamos today. The number of plates of Yangzhou fried rice he had sold, because of roujiamo, was a little less than before—over 50 plates. In total, he'd made more than 360 gold coins of profit today.

He needed to wake up early tomorrow to knead more dough to make more bread. He had to sell 1,000 roujiamos to unlock the tofu pudding.

Now that he was an owner of a restaurant, he decided to take no part in the conflict between the savory tofu pudding people and the sweet ones anymore.

He was a little curious, though. *Will the people here be like the people in my previous life? Will some be into the savory flavor and others the sweet flavor? Hope they can get along well. If not, maybe they would duel every day in a ring if there were one outside the restaurant.*

Amy's voice interrupted his thoughts. "Father, you must be very tired. Let me massage your shoulders," Amy said to him, holding Ugly Duckling in her arms.

"Meow, meow..." said Ugly Duckling, seeming to agree with Amy.

Mag looked at the two lovely things and then stroked Amy's head. "Don't worry. Father is not tired. Sit there and wait for me. If you feel sleepy, go wash up and sleep," he said, shaking his head.

Amy shook her head. "No. I'll wait for you today." Then she gave Ugly Duckling's head a stroke. "Right, Ugly Duckling?"

"Meow," Ugly Duckling said with a yawn. It nodded in agreement, but its unwillingness was written all over its face.

Mag nodded, smiling. "Then I'll hurry up." He cleared the plates, wiped all the tables clean, and mopped the floor. By the time he was done, a half of an hour had passed.

Amy was sitting on the long-legged chair, half-asleep, and Ugly Duckling was already out in her arms.

Mag untied his apron, hung it up, dried off his hands, and walked over to Amy. "Put it in the basket; we'll go upstairs and sleep," he said in a soft voice as he stroked Amy's hair.

Amy nodded. "Okay."

"Meow..." Ugly Duckling seemed to have heard him; it woke up and gave Mag a sullen look. Then it shook its head as it held Amy's dress with its little pink paws and didn't want to leave.

Amy shook her head. "No, Ugly Duckling. Father said you have to sleep here in your basket." Then she picked it up and held it against her chest. "Besides, you're so ugly; if I woke up and saw your face in the middle of the night, I might kick you out of the bed in fright," she said as she left the chair.

Mag couldn't help but laugh. It seemed she didn't need to be taught by him; she was born with a vicious tongue.

"Meow, meow!" said Ugly Duckling, trying to prove it was not that ugly. But Amy shoved it into the little basket and covered it with the blanket.

Then she stood up. “Ugly Duckling, go to sleep; I’ll play with you tomorrow if you behave,” she said as she waved her hand. Then she took Mag’s hand and was about to go upstairs.

“Meow, meow, meow, meow...” Ugly Duckling slipped out from under the little blanket quickly. It put its little paws on the edge of the basket and cried sadly like a deserted little cat as it watched Amy’s back.

Amy stopped her feet and glanced back at the kitten that was about to cry. “Father, it seems scared. Can we take it upstairs? I’ll try not to kick it out of the bed,” Amy asked as she looked up at Mag.

Mag took a look at the pitiful kitten and then at the expectant Amy. These two little things were so adorable that he couldn’t resist their double cuteness attack. He had no choice but to nod. “All right. Let’s take it upstairs.”

“Yes.” Amy smiled delightedly, but when she turned around, she hid her smile and picked up the kitten with a sour face. “You’re so difficult. Cover your face tonight. Don’t try to scare me.” She sighed.

“Meow, meow,” Ugly Duckling said happily. Then it positioned itself comfortably in Amy’s arms, rubbed its little head against her chest, and closed its eyes in contentment.

When they were upstairs, Amy put the sleeping kitten on one side of her little bed and carefully put its little head on the pillow. Then she went to wash up with Mag.

Mag helped Amy take a bath, bought another cute bluish violet set of sleepwear for her from the system, dried off her hair, and carried her to the little bed.

As soon as she lay down, Ugly Duckling reached out its little paws and held her arm, putting its little head against her arm too.

“You’re so heavy.” Amy pushed it away impatiently. “Good night, Father...” she said softly as she looked at Mag, yawning.

“Night.” Mag stroked her hair with a smile, and she fell asleep quickly.

Ugly Duckling approached her again in sleepiness and still wanted to hold her arm and press its face against her.

Mag shook his head, smiling. *Such a clingy little thing.* He tucked them in, turned off the light, took his sleepwear, and went to take a bath quietly.

After the bath, Mag lay on his bed comfortably. “System, I think we need something special on the menu. Whether the Yangzhou fried rice or the roujiamo, they are not exactly a main dish,” Mag said in his mind.

Chapter 60: Customers Lining Up Outside

Yangzhou fried rice was good, and so was roujiamo, but eating them every day was kind of boring.

He knew he would get access to the tofu pudding after this new mission, but he still wanted to trick the system into unlocking one or two other dishes.

“Since you didn’t take your last mission seriously and used a shortcut, you have triggered a hidden mission: get 1,000 customers to eat in the restaurant, and then you can unlock the recipe for the braised chicken and rice. You have 15 more days. Each individual will be counted as one customer. If you fail the mission, your strength will be decreased by 0.5. You have got 155 customers by now,” the system said after a while.

That means I have to get 845 different customers eating here in 15 days? Mag raised an eyebrow. It was much more difficult than selling 1,000 roujiamos. After all, some customers could eat several roujiamos each time, and there were regulars; one man might buy a dozen in a few days.

However, getting 1,000 different customers was another matter entirely. If he could do that, his restaurant would definitely be filled with customers.

Unfortunately, he had only attracted 155 customers since his business had started. If he failed this hidden mission, his strength would be decreased; that was a real problem for him.

He wasn’t worrying about business now, but about regular customers. New customers might not be able to get the food because of regulars, and that would end up with a slowdown in the new customers’ growth in number.

Eat in the restaurant are the key words. It would seem I have to control the take-out quantity. I have to get some publicity and at the same time try to meet the needs of customers, Mag thought, and his eyes lit up when he thought about the braised chicken and rice.

Braised Chicken and Rice, Lanzhou Beef Noodles, and Shaxian Delicacies were perhaps China’s three largest restaurant chains.

In his previous life, Mag had tried some authentic braised chicken and rice in several restaurants. Although, as always, he had engaged in vicious criticism, the taste had been truly excellent. The chicken had been very fresh and tender; the broth had been very tasty. After he finished eating the chicken, he had added a bowl of rice into the pot and made some delicious chicken-flavored rice.

Now that he thought about it, he found that he had been indeed too picky. His face became sour when he remembered his vicious comments. *Damn it. Even if I finish the mission and get the recipe, I have to be prepared, because I may have to spend hundreds of days in the test field.*

Everything gets a return.

Mag complained the God who had devised such a cooking standard in his mind and then fell asleep quickly.

The next morning, he was awakened by Amy’s voice. He turned on the bedside lamp, sat up, and looked towards Amy’s small bed. Amy was sitting on her bed, seeming to have just awakened too. She rubbed her sleepy eyes and looked around. “Father, where is Ugly Duckling?” she asked as she looked at Mag, confused.

Mag was surprised. *Didn’t it fall asleep on Amy’s arm?*

“Meow!” The sound was a little unhappy, and came from under the bed.

Amy and Mag looked under the bed at the same time. They didn't know when it'd got there. It was looking up at Amy sadly like a young wife that had been kicked out of bed. Its eyes looked awfully sad.

Amy laughed. "Ugly Duckling, did I kick you out of bed?" she asked merrily as she lay on her stomach on the edge of the bed.

Ugly Duckling nodded as if it had understood her words. Now it looked even more aggrieved. It lifted its little paw, seeming to ask for hugs.

Mag smiled too and felt a little sorry for it.

Amy gave a shrug. "I told you that you might be kicked out and you didn't believe me. You'd better sleep in your little basket next time." Then she looked at Mag, and asked, "Father, do we need to get up now?" She yawned.

Mag took a look at the clock—it was only 4:50. He got out of his bed, picked up the palm-sized, soft Ugly Duckling, and put it onto the little bed. "It's too early," he said with a smile, shaking his head. "You two go back to sleep. I'll prepare the ingredients."

Amy nodded. "Then I'll sleep some more." She held Ugly Duckling's head as it was trying to climb into her arms. "Ugly Duckling, don't claw at my clothes. They were newly bought by Father. If you ruin them, I won't allow you to come onto the bed again."

Ugly Duckling stopped moving immediately and nodded. "Meow..." Then it closed its eyes on the comfort of the quilt.

Amy nodded, satisfied. "Good." She lay back on the bed, closed her eyes, and fell asleep again.

Smiling, Mag tucked her in and covered the little kitten with the quilt better. Body temperature was very important to it.

Mag changed into his clothes, washed up, and went downstairs to prepare ingredients for roujiamo. This morning, he planned to make four batches of bread—64 roujiamos. He should be able to sell them out in one and a half hours of the breakfast time.

At 7 am, Mag went upstairs and woke Amy up. When she washed up, she insisted on brushing Ugly Duckling's teeth.

Mag chuckled and explained for a long time to talk her out of it. At last, she threatened it into rinsing its mouth for a few times.

Amy nodded as she was brushing her teeth. "Okay. We'll brush your teeth when they grow bigger," she said as she watched Ugly Duckling lick its lips and swallow.

Ugly Duckling stared at the little brush and foam in Amy's mouth and slowly stepped back towards the door—it was a little scared.

The sheep milk Mag had bought yesterday was already finished. He didn't have time to buy any until the breakfast time was over.

During breakfast, lying in Amy's arms, Ugly Duckling watched as Mag and Amy ate roujiamo and Yangzhou fried rice, its eyes glittering. As no one wanted to feed it, it sadly covered its eyes with its paw, trying to block the torturous sight.

Amy took a bite of her roujiamo. "Ugly Duckling, I can see your eyes through your paw. You can watch if you want, but we won't give it to you," she said as she looked down at it, smiling.

Ugly Duckling averted its eyes, removed its little paw, and looked up, expressionless.

Mag shook his head with a smile. After breakfast, he cleared the table and then opened his restaurant at half past seven.

As always, Mobai came here first, waiting outside, but behind Mobai, he found several others lining up spontaneously. Their faces lit up when Mag opened the door; several smiled, and said, "Good morning, Mag."