

Stay At home 931

Chapter 931 The Outstanding Contribution Award

Mag could feel their eyes on him, and that made him feel a little nervous.

Amy would study with the children here starting next year, so he had to watch his behavior in order not to evoke dislike. "Is it okay if we walk in?" he asked Luna in a low voice.

"Yes. Sit beside Amy. We still have to wait for other parents to come, though." She saw the box on Mag's back, but said nothing.

Mag nodded and smiled in greeting as he walked past other parents. He knew how to behave in a courteous manner because he did that every day.

They looked surprised for a moment, and then smiled back.

Amy was the disciple of two 10th-tier magic casters, and she had defended the honor of Chaos School against the challengers from the Roth Empire all by herself. These parents would try to get on Mag's good side for their children's sake, if not for their own.

"Hello, father and... mother of Amy," Daphne said. She recognized Sally, for she had eaten in Mamy Restaurant before, but by the look of it, Amy must have told her about her "new" mother.

"Hello, parents of Amy," greeted Ignatsu, who was sitting behind Amy with a blade of grass on his head.

Mag smiled at them. "Hi." Then he greeted Daphne's and Ignatsu's parents.

Mag had never seen them before, but since Amy and their children were friends, he quickly became acquainted with them.

Drue, Daphne's father, was a mercenary, like her grandfather, Guy. He was a good-natured 2nd-tier knight.

Ignatsu's father's name was Shaza. He was a demon and a magic caster. He worked for the city lord's castle, researching botanical magic. Mag could tell from his dishevelled hair and clothes that he had just gotten out of his lab.

"Nice to meet you, Mag," said Shaza. "I'd really like to show you a new battle magic spell I have just created, but this place is a little too crowded." Apparently he was a mad scientist of some sort.

Shaza's wife, Bonnie, shot him a glare that shut him up immediately. "Thank you, Mag and Sally, for inviting Ignatsu to your party," she said with a smile.

"Ignatsu and Daphne are Amy's friends, I like to have them over."

The three pairs of parents chatted away save for Sally, who seemed a little ill at ease.

Never thought I'd sit in a classroom talking about kids with other parents, Mag thought to himself. Before he knew it, his nervousness had faded away.

However, the same thing couldn't be said for Sally.

“Is it painful for elves to give birth, Aisha?” Bonnie asked out of curiosity. “I was in so much pain that I thought I was gonna die!”

“I...” How would she know? She had never given birth before! Sally suddenly found herself wishing to be anywhere but here.

Mag would have helped her out, but he had no business butting in a girl talk. Besides, he knew nothing about pregnancy or childbirth.

That was when Luna stepped up to the podium and told everybody to settle down. She saved Sally unwittingly.

The classroom fell silent. The parents sat straight as if they had become students again.

“Thank you all for coming here today. I’m Luna, homeroom teacher of this class.”

Mag found parent-teacher meetings here were more or less the same as those in his past life. Luna told the parents every student’s performance and progress. She praised most and mildly reproached some for their mischievous behavior.

Then she started handing out prizes to students who had achieved high scores on the test or made great progress. The certificates and small but elaborate prizes put a big smile on the faces of kids and their parents alike.

Nothing made a parent prouder than to hear his or her child get praised by their teacher.

Amy had nothing to do with any of this, so she just applauded.

“I wish I could get a certificate too.” Amy rested her chin on Mag’s hands—which he had placed on the table—and looked enviously at the kids holding their prizes.

“You will when you start studying under Teacher Luna,” Mag said with a smile, stroking her head.

Daphne had gotten three certificates and three notebooks. Her grades were in the top three of the class. Happiness was written all over her parents’ faces.

Parmer had gotten two certificates. Gjerj was all smiles as he held them.

Ignatsu looked worried as he had gotten nothing. Shaza looked like he couldn’t care less, but Bonnie’s face darkened.

Ignatsu raised his eyes slowly, and then hurriedly lowered his head again when he saw his mother was glowering at him. “Amy got nothing, either,” he said in a barely audible voice.

“The last award is the Outstanding Contribution Award,” Luna said, holding a certificate much larger than the ones she had handed out. “We only have one winner this year, and she is in our class.”

“The Outstanding Contribution Award?!”

“It’s a yearly award that students and faculty alike can win. Why is it given to a student in the primary section?”

Everyone in the room looked incredulous.

Chapter 932 Such a Family of Three

The Outstanding Contribution Award was only given to people who had done something that had brought great honor to Chaos School.

Such contributions mainly came from feats of honor by students or teachers who had made important discoveries.

Normally, it was won by students in the secondary section and teachers since students from the primary section were still young. Clearly, they couldn't make many outstanding contributions. However, when Luna said she was going to give this award to one of the students in her class, many people couldn't believe their ears.

How is it possible!?

Many people shared the same thought.

Amy's eyes lit up when she saw the certificate Luna was holding. "It's so big! I like it!"

The Outstanding Contribution Award... I like the sound of it, Mag thought. He didn't understand the significance of it, though.

Luna was not surprised by so many incredulous faces, because she had had the same look on her face when she first got the news. "The Outstanding Contribution Award goes to... Amy!" she announced.

They turned to look at Amy, surprised and not surprised.

If anyone could win this award, it was Amy.

Of course, there were those who didn't know that match or the importance of it. They looked at the half-elf girl, who was even younger than their own children, wondering what she had done to deserve such a high honor.

"The last certificate is mine?" Amy asked, looking up at Mag, confused.

Mag nodded. "Yes, it's yours." He was filled with pride.

"Amy defeated the challengers from the Roth Empire about a month ago," Luna continued. "After four consecutive losses, we finally had a win to be proud of. In honor of Amy's great contribution, Chaos School decided to give her this award." She smiled at Amy. "Come forward, Amy."

"Go on," Mag said, and patted her on the shoulder.

Amy jumped off her chair and headed towards Luna. She stood on tiptoes to take the certificate in her hands, but it was so big that it completely hid her head when she held it before her. She then stuck her head from behind it and gave a big smile.

They applauded loudly, especially the kids who had seen the match and considered her worthy of the award.

"Way to go, Amy!" Daphne shouted.

Ignatsu was also clapping his hands in delight.

“Amy got the biggest one,” Bonnie said, staring at her son. “If you fail to get a certificate next year, I’ll beat you and your father.”

“Wait, what? I have nothing to do with his bad grades,” protested Shaza, who was playing with a couple of beans.

“You have everything to do with his bad grades! Since you care about your stupid beans more than us, why don’t you marry them? I’m sure you’ll live a happier life ever after.”

Shaza was beaten. “Study harder, son,” he said to Ignatsu solemnly, “or our butts will be beaten to a pulp.”

“I don’t know about you, Father, but I’ve gotten used to Mother’s beating.”

“Thank you, Teacher Luna,” Amy said, and ran to Mag and Sally. “Father, Mother, look!”

Mag touched her head. “That’s my girl.”

Sally froze, but she soon got infected by Amy’s happiness. She was an obedient and adorable child. Although she wasn’t her real mother, she found it a moment of realization. As she looked at Mag smiling warmly and the happy Amy, she liked the idea of having Mag as her husband and Amy her daughter. Being such a family of three was nice.

After Mag received the most prestigious award in Chaos School, the mood in the classroom turned odd. Compared to the Outstanding Contribution Award, the other awards paled in comparison. Although the parents tried their best to appear natural, the mood turned tense when they saw the certificate in Amy’s arms.

That was when they heard a commotion coming from other classrooms. The other homeroom teachers were announcing the news of Amy winning the Outstanding Contribution Award.

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“Looks like many people are questioning our decision to give Amy that award,” the balding school administrator told Novan.

Novan laughed. “Krassu would never build a magic room here if not for her, and he’d never teach the other kids magic.”

“But many people don’t know this.”

“Yeah, and we won’t explain ourselves to them. Let them question our decision. We can give this award to whomever who want. Even the city lord’s castle and the Gray Temple can’t interfere.” Then Novan’s voice grew cold. “Tell those old farts to stop wasting money on stupid projects that benefit nobody and start doing something for the school!”

“Yes, Principal Novan,” he said hurriedly, and took his leave.

Novan sighed as he looked out his window. “That award was meant for Krassu, but he didn’t want it.”

Chapter 933 But I Can Cook

Mag felt their eyes on him—chilly, angry, and jealous eyes—but it was not his fault that his child was better than theirs.

He felt good, even better than when he got the admission letter from the university he had applied to.

Luna could sense the tension in the air. “Congratulations to the students who have been rewarded for their efforts,” she said, “and I hope everyone will study harder next semester. Next up is playtime! Some parents are working too hard to have enough time to bond with their children, and now is as good a time as any to make it up to your kids. Some parents and their children are going to perform some shows for us. Enjoy!”

They moved some tables and chairs to make room for the performers.

Their amateur performance brought bursts of laughter. The tension was eased. Other parents might be envious of Mag’s daughter, but they loved their children no matter what, so everyone loved this bonding time. The parents quickly immersed themselves in the fun and games.

“Are we going to perform Spring is Here?” Amy asked, looking up at Mag expectantly.

Sally turned to look at Mag with a hint of a smile in her eyes. She didn’t mind dancing with Mag and Amy.

“Um... I... I don’t feel like dancing today.” His good sense prevailed over impulse.

Besides, I need women’s clothes to do the dance.

“Whatever you need, I can supply,” the system said suddenly. “And I’ll give you one item of female clothing for free!”

Mag rolled his eyes. “Thank you, but no, thanks. Dance in front of everyone in women’s clothes? I’d rather die first!”

The system was really good at countering everything he said.

“Okay.” Amy looked disappointed. She turned to face Sally. “Will you dance with me, Mother?”

Sally wanted to say no, but instead she nodded.

“Thank you, Mother!” Amy said, throwing herself into Sally’s arms.

Sally smiled as she stroked her head. She was happy to be Amy’s mother, albeit for only one day.

Her fun and carefree days would be over once she got back to the Wind Forest, and Amy would never call her mother again. With this in mind, Sally’s eyes softened; so she decided to make the most of every minute she had with her.

When Mag saw Sally looking down at Amy with warm and affectionate eyes, for a moment he felt like she was her real mother.

Such a nice girl, Mag thought, and then he remembered Irina. All of a sudden his head was clear again.

The children’s performances were so cute and captivating that even Mag found them interesting.

He used to sleep through concerts, but now he was grinning like a fool while watching children perform. Maybe it's because I've gotten old.

Mag then bought an portable audio player from the system; he needed it to play Gokuraku Jodo.

"Is there anyone else who'd like to perform?" Luna asked when a show was over.

Amy raised her hand. "We'd like to perform Spring is Here, Teacher Luna, Mother and I."

Luna smiled. "Great! Let's give Amy and Sally a round of applause."

Sally stood up calmly and walked to the middle of the room with Amy as they clapped.

Everyone knew elves were excellent singers and dancers, so the room was filled with anticipation.

"This is an audio player, not a monster, so don't be alarmed, kids," Mag said as he put the portable player on the table and pushed the play button.

Cheerful drumbeats filled the room, and Amy and Sally started to dance, their bodies flexible and their moves graceful. It was such an eye-pleasing performance.

"Amy dances like a butterfly!" Daphne exclaimed as she pressed her hands to her chest, wide-eyed.

"It's so beautiful!"

Their show was on another level compared with those of other parents and children.

The audience didn't understand why that little thingy was able to produce such beautiful music.

Sally and Amy bowed and returned to their seats when they were done.

They broke into rapturous applause. Everyone was captivated by their dance.

When there was no one else who wanted to perform, Luna told them to take a break.

Some parents started handing out gifts and snacks.

The kids who received the snacks and gifts brimmed with joy. This was probably the part which they liked best.

"Did you bring something for my classmates, Father?" Amy asked with anticipation.

Mag gave a hesitant smile when he saw the bags of snacks in Amy's arms. "Um, I didn't bring anything like that, but I can cook."

Chapter 934 I Won't Eat His Beef Kebabs

Silence filled the room as Mag took the foldable grill and a bag of beef kebabs out of the cool box.

All of their expressions turned odd at the sight when Mag set up the rack.

Never once had they seen a parent bring a grill to a parent-teacher meeting. Was he preparing to grill some meat for the children on the spot?

The teachers held back their laughter. What was this going to turn into? A parent-teacher meeting turning into a barbecue?

“Um, Mr. Mag, is... is that a grill?” Luna asked hesitatingly. Although there wasn’t a problem with that, she found it odd.

Mag also realized that grilling beef kebabs was quite inappropriate, but having brought it here, it would be odd to bring it back. All he could do was bite the bullet. “Yes, Teacher Luna. I prepared some beef kebabs for the children. Can I do the grilling outside? Beef kebabs are best when eaten straight from the grill.”

“He’s really going to grill beef kebabs on the spot for the children.”

The crowd burst into laughter. That was not a request that teachers often got during a parent-teacher meeting.

“Did he misunderstand what I said in the morning?” Gjerj muttered with a strange look on his face.

“What did you say to him, honey?” Miranda asked in a whisper.

“Nothing. I just said parents typically bring some snacks and gifts for the kids. Maybe his definition of snacks is a little different. Beef kebabs, I guess?” Gjerj shrugged. “Anyway, it looks like we’re going to have a feast today!” He smiled.

“I...” Luna had never found herself in this kind of predicament before. It was unprecedented.

The school rules said nothing about prohibiting parents from grilling on campus, but then again, who in their right mind would want to grill on campus? This left Luna somewhat at a loss.

“My father’s beef kebabs are the best of the best,” Amy said proudly to other kids. “I’m sure you’ve never eaten anything half as good.”

“I want to eat beef kebabs, Mom.”

“Can I have some kebabs, Pop?”

The kids could barely hold their horses as they pictured kebabs sizzling on the grill.

“I think it’s a good idea, Teacher Luna,” said a balding teacher who taught common language. “The rules don’t say we can’t do that, so why not?”

The General Knowledge teacher nodded. “Our primary section won the Outstanding Contribution Award. It’s unprecedented.”

Luna looked at the excited kids, and then at Mag who was smiling. She hesitated a moment before nodding. “Okay. Then let’s get outside.”

“Thanks, Teacher Luna.” Then he picked up the grill and the cool box. “Give me a hand, Amy,” he called.

“Coming!” Amy frolicked over with a big smile. She got to eat her father’s cooking here, in Chaos School. It was a pleasure in life.

The classroom was located on the ground floor, so there was an empty spot in front of it. Mag set up the rack and placed all the condiments and sauces on the grill rack.

Many children and parents stuck their heads out of the windows and craned their necks to get a better look.

“All right, Amy, light them up,” Mag said, pointing at the charcoal pieces placed in the grill.

“Yes, Father.” A purple flame appeared in her palm and quickly turned into a fireball. She tossed it at the charcoal.

Whoosh! Every piece went up in flames, giving off strong and even heat.

Sally stood there watching with a smile. There was nothing she could do to help right now, but she could hand the kebabs out to the kids when they were done.

“Wow, fire magic!”

The children regarded Amy with awe and admiration. They couldn’t even imagine being able to use magic, but Amy made it look like it was nothing.

“Thanks!” Mag said to Amy. She had saved him time. Normally he would need at least several minutes to get the charcoal to the right temperature.

“It’s unhygienic to cook in the open air,” said a skinny man in expensive-looking clothes. His hair was stylish and glossy; apparently he had used a lot of wax. “And the beef can’t be fresh; it has been kept in that box for many hours already. I’ll never eat something like that.”

“Yes. We have to be careful what we put into our mouths,” said the woman sitting next to him. She was wearing a green dress, holding an extremely fat boy in her affectionate arms. “Our kid never eats street food, and we always bring our own tableware when eating out.”

Joseph nodded. “I won’t eat his kebabs, Mother.” Then he lowered his voice. “Can I have three fried chickens when we get back?”

Many people overheard Joseph parents’ conversation and grew hesitant about whether to let their children eat the meat or not.

“Unhygienic? There’s no restaurant more hygienic than Mag’s in the whole city,” Gjerj muttered in a low voice. He watched with anticipation as Mag put the kebabs on the grill.

I need to study harder, or I’ll never catch up to her, Parmer thought, sitting at the window gazing at Amy.

Luna stood there, looking in the direction of where the principal’s office was. Hopefully they won’t come down hard on me.

The kebabs were sizzling on the grill, grease slowly seeping out.

The smell of roast beef permeated the air, and it was growing stronger by the second.

“Smells so good!”

Chapter 935 Someone else always has it better. This fact has never disappointed me

The wonderful aroma of grilled beef found its way to almost every corner of the building in front of which Mag was cooking. Some students sniffed and looked around, trying to find where it came from.

“Your batch are the worst students I’ve ever had,” a bald homeroom teacher said in his classroom on the sixth floor. “A child, much younger than you, won the Outstanding Contribution Award, and now look at you, spinning books, spinning pens, courting. None of the books were written so you can spin them!”

He was one of the oldest teachers who had taught here almost all his life and was on the verge of retiring.

As one of the oldest teachers at Chaos School, no student dared to defy him, no student dared to defy him. Even the parents were listening in silence with their heads bowed because most of them had once been his students. Attending the parent-teacher meeting was like a walk down memory lane for the parents in this classroom.

However, the silent classroom began to have some stirrings.

The fragrance scratched at that itch in their hearts.

The students and parents couldn’t help but look out of the classroom. The fragrance came from outside—possibly roasted beef. However, this was Chaos School. It wasn’t meal time either, so who would be roasting beef in school? Especially during the parent-teacher meeting?

“Who’s doing the grilling? It smells great!”

“Yeah. It’s making me hungry.”

The students and parents discussed amidst murmurs, hearts filled with curiosity. They had even forgotten about the stern teacher, Hamilton, who was standing at the podium.

“Oh?” Hamilton’s gaze turned stern. People were whispering while he was speaking. This was forbidden even for parents.

He also caught a whiff of the grilled beef. His eyes lit up as his brows furrowed. He walked towards the door, mumbling, “Someone is out of his mind grilling beef on campus. And to actually make it smell so good.”

This happened across the different classrooms in the primary section. Even classes with stern teachers had walked to the corridor, much less the less stricter teachers. Students and parents crowded the corridor in an attempt to find that savoring fragrance.

“Never thought grilled beef would smell so good!”

“Is it really grilled beef? I’ve eaten grilled beef many times, but this smells different.”

“Amy’s father is so cool. It’s like he’s doing magic!”

“I want some beef kebabs, Mom.”

Now the parents in Amy's class could naturally take in the richest fragrances emitted by Mag's rack.

There were no greasy or cloyed smells, just pure fragrance. It inundated them without any rhyme or reason.

The children and parents were already enamored by the beef kebabs that Mag was flipping with deft hands. The glistening appearance made their mouths water.

The parents' worries were gone. Now, the only thought on their mind was whether they had a chance to lay their fingers on a skewer of beef kebabs, or if they were only for the children. There were quite a number of them on the rack, so they were wondering if any of them would end up theirs.

At the same time, the parents looked at Mag in a different light.

They never expected such a feat from someone they looked down upon.

The sight and smell of beef made Joseph's belly rumble. He raised his head to look at his mother—who had just stolen a furtive glance at the beef kebabs—and asked, "Can I take back what I just said, Mother?"

"I..." She glanced at his father, Bevis.

"As good as they may smell, they're not safe to eat," Bevis said gravely. "Restrain yourself, Joseph, you're highborn, don't embarrass me." He paused for a moment, and then added, "I'll buy three fried chickens for you if you don't eat the beef kebabs."

Joseph's eyes went wide. "For real?" He nodded. "Okay, I'm going to eat three chickens!"

"There!" a man called out.

The other people in the building followed his eyes and saw the grill and a man brushing sauce on the sizzling kebabs.

"Holy sh*t! That man is grilling beef during the parent-teacher meeting! He must be out of his mind!"

"I don't know if he's out of his mind, but I know I'm out of my mind. What torture! I can see the food, I can smell it, but I can get none! This is absolute torture!"

They looked wistfully at the food. There was nothing they could do to stop their mouths from watering.

"Is that Amy? The girl who won the Outstanding Contribution Award?"

"Yeah! And the man grilling meat is her father? Who is the elf girl standing beside her? Her mother?"

"Her mother is a gorgeous elf, her father is a talented cook. God, how I envy her!"

Mag put the well-cooked kebabs on the part of the grill where the heat was low. "These are for children and teachers," he called out. "Could someone please help me hand them out?"

"We'll do it." Gjerj and his wife walked over, followed by several other parents.

"Joseph is good," Bevis said when Gjerj handed one to his son.

"I... I don't want it." It was all the fat boy could do to tear his eyes away from the kebab. Fried chickens, fried chickens, fried chickens! he reminded himself over and over again.

Gjerj shrugged, and then gave it to another kid.

"They're still hot," Mag called. "Make sure you blow on them before eating." He walked over to the teachers with several kebabs. "Here, see if you like the taste."

"Thank you! I know from the smell I'll like it!" the common language teacher said, taking one in his hand and biting off a piece.

Immediately he opened his mouth as it was still too hot. He almost spat it out.

The burning sensation wore off quickly, and then he tasted the burnt flavor and the sauce. He normally detested garlic for its sharp and overwhelming flavor, but the flavor of this garlic sauce was very mellow and delicious.

As his teeth went into the meat, more flavors came out with the juices. He felt as if his taste buds were rejoicing, and he was simply unable to stop eating!

"This is incredible!" he exclaimed in wonder after he swallowed. "I've never had anything so good before!"

Judging from the cries of amazement, the kids also liked the food very much.

"Someone else always has it better. This fact has never disappointed me," a girl sighed as leaned on the rail, looking down at the kids gobbling beef kebabs.

Chapter 936 It's Delish!

The blissful looks on the children's faces spoke volumes about the taste of the kebabs.

Something delicious didn't need much description. One just needed to look at the expressions of the children.

The parents sat beside their children as they wore smiles on their faces. They looked at Mag, impressed.

Back when the children received their awards, none of them looked as happy or blissful as they did now. Mag's culinary skills was just amazing.

"She is lucky to have a husband so handsome and talented. I envy the hell out of her!" The mothers looked at their husbands, who were of an age with Mag but looked 10 years older and much fatter, and sighed. Their men didn't do anything when at home, let alone cook for them.

The mothers looked at Mag as a model husband, while the fathers regarded him with hatred. Of course Mag was ignorant of all that, absorbed as he was in grilling kebabs.

Joseph had tried again and again to keep his mouth from watering, but failed every time. He looked up at Bevis with imploring eyes.

"There is none left," Bevis said, expressionless. Anger glinted in his eyes. What the hell did he put in the meat? They have been duped. They just don't know it yet.

“You really should try it, Joseph,” said the kid sitting beside him. “It’s so good.” He slid another piece off the skewer and chewed merrily, grease running down the corner of his mouth.

Joseph sighed. There had once been a beef kebab right in front of him, but he hadn’t taken it. Only when he lost it did he feel regretful. If the heavens could give him one more chance, he would say “I want it”.

“I think the meat is fine,” said Joseph’s mother. “They are all eating it. They look at us like we’re trying to be different or something.” She could barely resist the mouth-watering smell in the air, but her husband was being too stubborn.

“All right, suit yourself, but I’ll never partake,” Bevis said after looking around and thinking for a moment.

Joseph jumped off his chair and rushed over to Gjerj, who was about to head out of the classroom with two kebabs. “Wait up, sir, please give me one!” His love handles were jiggling delightfully as he ran.

Gjerj turned around and smiled, handing a beef kebab to him.

“Thank you, sir.” After he ran back to his seat, he glanced at his father and reached his hand up reluctantly. “Here, Father, it’s tasty.”

“No, I’m good,” Bevis replied in a chilly voice, looking away.

“Go ahead and eat it, sweetheart,” his mother said with a smile, touching his head. She glanced at Bevis, helpless. Her husband was nothing if not headstrong and proud.

Joseph bit off a piece of beef and chewed, giving a blissful smile.

“Wow, this is fantastic!” Joseph said after he swallowed. “I don’t think anything can compare with this, not even fried chicken. This is out of this world!”

This roast beef must be incredible if Joseph is loving it so much, his mother thought. Fried chicken used to be his favorite. That man is professional, by the look of it, and his grill and ingredients look clean enough to me. Maybe I was wrong about him.

Joseph took a glance at Bevis again before handing the kebab to his mother. “It’s really good, Mother,” he said in a hushed voice. “Try it.”

The woman hesitated a moment, and then slid off a piece of beef.

The mouthwatering sauce on the surface of the beef and the juices of the meat flowing in her mouth instantly awakened her taste buds. She only had to chew lightly to provoke an explosion of meaty juices within her mouth, which combined with the sauce and condiments to create an incredible flavor. She felt as if a fireball had exploded in her mouth, transforming into countless smaller fireballs that were stimulating her palate.

Her eyes went wide. She was too stunned to speak.

She was born into a wealthy family in Rodu, so naturally she was no stranger to gourmet food. Nonetheless, she found herself captivated by such flavorsome beef.

Bevis cast a furtive glance at his wife, his throat bobbing up and down. It's just a beef kebab, how good can it be? It's smell is extraordinary, though. I don't think I've ever smelled such a wonderful aroma in the Ducas Restaurant. He forced himself to look away from the kebab in his son's hand. Having said those words, he absolutely couldn't eat it no matter how tantalizing it was!

"These are for the parents," Mag told Gjerj when the second batch was ready.

It was definitely good news, not only for the adults, but also for the kids because their parents could barely keep in check their urge to eat their kebab.

"Do you want some?" Gjerj asked when he walked over to Joseph's family.

Joseph's mother took one and smiled. "My husband—"

"Thanks," Bevis said, reaching for a kebab.

Looks like he has changed his mind, Gjerj thought to himself, and walked on.

Joseph and his mother looked at Bevis, confused.

"You are right," Bevis said to his wife. "I don't want people to think I'm trying to be different or I'm difficult to get along with. We're very approachable. I don't want to see my boy get shunned by his classmates because of me, so even though this meat may not be safe to eat, I'm gonna take a bite.

With that said, he picked up a beef kebab and bit at it.

"Mmm! It's delish!" he blurted out next.

Chapter 937 It's My Faul

"What's with all the hustle and bustle?" demanded Dene, the director of guidance. The commotion at the primary section had earned the attention of the administrative block.

It was not uncommon for children to get excited during parent-teacher meetings, but this noise was different; it almost sounded like someone was throwing a party.

"A parent is grilling beef kebabs in front of Teacher Luna's class," answered a teacher.

Dene raised an eyebrow. "What?! Is he out of his goddamn mind? What if he set the campus on fire?"

"Well, the campus is not on fire, but the roast beef smells so good that many children, parents, and even teachers have gone over to check it out."

Dene's face darkened. "That's not an example teachers should set for kids! Teacher Luna... The principal may think highly of her, but that doesn't mean she gets to do whatever she wants! Allowing a parent to cook in the open air? What is she thinking?!"

"The principal... has also gone there." But Dene had already walked out of the room.

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Dene arrived at the scene and was about to yell at Mag, but then he spied the principal, who was standing in front of the grill holding a beef kebab. "Kids, we need to thank Mag for offering us this

amazing food,” Novan said, smiling. “This beef kebab may look ordinary and nothing fancy, but the skills behind it are, I can assure you, the best in the whole city. Even the king of the Roth Empire didn’t get to try this at his birthday banquet, so we’re very lucky.

“By the way, Mag won the best cook award at the king’s banquet, and he owns a restaurant in the Aden Square, it’s called Mamy Restaurant. I’m sure some of you have dined there or at least heard of it.”

The parents gazed at Mag in awe, and they suddenly considered the beef kebabs in their hands as something of great value.

Bevis looked shocked. He cooked for the king?! He lowered his head in embarrassment and bit off another piece of beef.

As expected of someone who won the best cook award. This beef is heavenly!

It seems Father likes it too, Joseph thought, disappointed. Adults are so mercurial and fond of lying. They say they don’t want something when they actually do.

“I heard about his restaurant,” said Joseph’s mother. “It’s famous but really expensive, even more expensive than Ducas Restaurant. It’s full every day, though. The lines waiting outside his restaurant are insanely long.”

“I often eat at his place,” one man said.

“I can’t force anything not made by Mag down my throat after I dined there. So I eat there every day. His food is both a blessing and a curse,” said another man.

“You’re too kind, Principal Novan,” Mag said. “It’s my honor to cook for the children and the teachers. I didn’t mean to disrupt the meeting, but it seems I have, so I must apologize. I’m so sorry.”

“Dene,” Novan called out, “Mag said he disrupted the meeting. You’re the director of guidance, so I’ll leave it to you to deal with this, but first, try one of these. It’s amazing.”

Dene walked up to them with a smile. “It must be good if even you’re saying it’s amazing, Principal Novan. Okay, let me try it.”

He was smiling, but the children knew there was more to that smile than met the eye. They nicknamed him “the Smiling Tiger” behind his back because he was an outwardly kind but inwardly cruel person. They feared him even more than Principal Novan.

Luna looked anxious. The teachers called him “the Smiling Tiger” too. Even they spoke to him timidly and cautiously, and Luna didn’t think he had come for the food only.

“Here, Director Dene,” Mag said, handing the last beef kebab to him with a smile. He was ready for whatever punishment Dene wanted to inflict on him. Everyone in Amy’s class had tried at least one kebab, so he could take away his grill for all he cared.

Dene had thought it was just a normal beef kebab, but he soon found out he couldn’t have been more wrong. It was nothing like the kebabs he had eaten before, and he finished it in no time.

He gave Mag a thumbs-up. "Principal Novan was right, this is amazing! Now I know why everyone has been drawn here. The taste is really irresistible."

Everyone laughed. They were relieved that the Smiling Tiger could be open-minded too.

"But, the parent-teacher meeting is an important and serious event, and Mag disrupted it," Dene continued. His smile had died. "However, it's not his fault, or Teacher Luna's. It's my fault. I forgot to add 'no cooking on campus during the parent-teacher meeting' to the school rules."

Chapter 938 I Envy The Hell Out Of Her

The parent-teacher meeting ended on a friendly note. Sally put out the fire and cleaned everything up. Mag put the grill in that large box again, took Amy by the hand, and walked towards the school gate.

"Bye, Amy's Father!"

"Bye, Amy!"

"Have your father cook for us again, Amy!"

The kids said goodbye to Mag and Amy, and clearly they had been captivated by Mag's cooking.

"The parent-teacher meeting is so much fun. I like it!" Amy said, holding Mag's hand with her left hand and Sally's with her right.

Mag and Sally exchanged a joyful glance.

"Thank you, Sally," Mag said.

"You're welcome." She looked down at Amy and smiled. "It's been an interesting and happy experience for me too."

"I wish we could stay together forever, Big Sister Aisha."

Sally's heart ached for a moment. This life was tempting, but...

She had no answer. She only smiled and touched her hair ever so lightly.

Amy didn't catch the sadness in her eyes. "You have a beautiful smile, Big Sister Sally, you should smile more often."

Sally nodded. "I will." She had indeed smiled more today than she had in a long time.

Mag wheeled his bike out easily through a sea of carriages, making the coachmen feel envious.

Mag sat Amy on the horizontal top tube, and Sally seated herself on the back seat. "Hold tight, and off we go!" The bicycle shot off like an arrow.

Sally wrapped her arms around Mag's waist automatically without thinking.

Despite his years, Mag blushed like a boy. Sally was young and beautiful. She reminded him of the girls he had dated during his school days. Oh, the good old days!

Sally's fair cheeks reddened when she realized what she had done. She could feel his muscular body under his white shirt. She wanted to pull her hands back, but she found herself gently pressing her cheek against his broad back instead.

I met you too late. I wish I could spend more time with you, but I have to leave. I may never see you again, so let me hold you while I can. Sally closed her eyes and smiled.

When Mag returned to the restaurant, Sally got off the bicycle, as calm as if nothing had happened.

Mag lifted Amy off and wheeled the bicycle inside. It was time to prepare the ingredients for the dinner service.

"How did the meeting go?" Yabemiya asked curiously as soon as they walked inside. "Did you really pose as Amy's mother, Aisha? Did someone recognize you?"

Babla and Firis walked over to them too.

"No. Big Sister Aisha is really good at acting. She didn't blow her cover," Amy said as she scooped up Ugly Duckling, who had run to her.

"I didn't do anything, really," Sally said.

"Oh, I got the biggest certificate in my class. Come check it out!" Amy took it out of the basket, and they congratulated and praised her.

Mag went upstairs to change into his chef's uniform. When he got back down and saw such a lovely scene, his lips curved in a smile.

He went into the kitchen and saw many plates of duck meat, which had been arranged in a long row.

He could tell how much progress Firis had made just by looking at them. The pieces on the first plate were not uniform in thickness, and the skin on some pieces was damaged. Yet, the pieces on the last plate were almost exactly the same in thickness and size, and the skin on each piece was in beautiful shape.

"108 pieces, and there is no meat left on the bones. Perfect!" Mag said to Firis.

I envy the hell out of her. Mag sighed silently. I had to carve up over 5,000 ducks before I mastered the skills at the test field for the God of Cookery. But it only took her several hours and 10 ducks of practice to do the same. You can get really discouraged when you compare yourself to someone better than you.

Firis looked surprised. "So I don't need to practice anymore?"

Mag nodded. "No, you don't. From now on, you'll slice the ducks for the customers. I'm sure you can do it."

"Yes, Boss, I'll do my best."

Due to Principal Novan's promotion and Amy's winning of the Outstanding Contribution Award, Mamy Restaurant had garnered more fame, which led to a surge in the number of customers tonight.

Many parents of the kids not in Amy's class came with their families to try the dish that had been praised by both the principal and the director of guidance.

Of course, when they really came to the restaurant, families who weren't wealthy showed a hesitant look when they saw the prices. Others gave excuses of not finding anything to their liking to live. Some bought a skewer of beef kebabs for their child for take away. As for those who could afford the price, they took their seats and awaited the food to be served.

Joseph and his parents seated themselves at a table in the corner.

"Look at the price of beef kebabs," Joseph's mother said when she opened the menu. "Only 200 copper coins each. Mag is such a nice person."

Chapter 939 Bye, Sally

Mag could spend more time on cooking now that Firis had taken over the duck-slicing job.

A roasted duck could satiate 200 customers. As such, they could serve 500 customers during dinner time, and that was not including the ones that stood by the roadside eating food like beef kebabs and roujiamo.

Mag had handled his workload with no problem, but Yabemiya and Sally looked like they could use some rest.

Crap, I totally forgot to make the "we are hiring" flyer. Mag looked very worried. With Sally gone, we can't hope to run such a large business.

Mag looked at Sally who was clearing tables and realized he was still refusing to face the reality that she was leaving. He sighed. I'll put up a recruitment poster tomorrow. I'll cut the number of customers we can handle for now and raise it when I find someone suitable.

Mag didn't like the idea of having too many waitresses running about in the restaurant. He didn't like the bustle and cramped feeling. This was roughly testament of his unconventional ways.

When every customer had left and everything was spotlessly clean, Yabemiya and Babla joined arms and walked over to where Sally was standing. "Let's go back, Aisha, it's so cold."

Sally shook her head. "I have some business I need to tend to. You go on ahead." She then put her arms around them and gave them a big hug. "I'm so fortunate, having you as my friends."

They didn't know why she had suddenly gotten so emotional.

"No, we're the fortunate ones." Yabemiya smiled. "Come home soon. Don't stay out too late."

Babla gave Sally a long look before waving her hand, saying, "Bye." Sally watched as they walked into the cold, dark night.

"Why didn't you tell them you're leaving?" Mag asked.

"I don't want to make them sad." Then she turned to face Mag with a smile. "Thank you, Mag, for letting me stay here and work for you."

“I should thank you. Miss Sally. The restaurant couldn’t have gotten where it is today without you.”

Sally was taken by surprise. “How... How did you find out?”

“By accident.”

Sally smiled. “I guess I should thank you again.”

“No. I should thank you for not killing me.” Then Mag handed her a leather bag and a well-made music box. The bag was bound by a golden thread. The music box was covered by a glass dome, in which stood a half-elf girl in a purple dress.

Sally took the music box in her hand. The half-elf girl closely resembled Amy.

“A parting gift. You know how to use it, don’t you? She can do all the dances you learned here and some new dances. If she stops moving, just place the music box under the sun for half a day or so.”

Sally looked on the verge of tears. “Thank you,” she said after staring at it for a while.

“Come back whenever you want to. You can always eat here free of charge.” Mag gave her a warm smile, the same smile he had given her when she pushed the restaurant door open for the very first time.

Sally nodded. “Thank you.” She put the music box and the money in her bag. She looked around the place where she had spent most of her days after she ran away from home. She had witnessed it grow from a small business to such a large one. It was a place she loved even more than her home.

Sally turned to face Mag. “Say goodbye to Amy for me.” She smiled. “I will come back someday.”

Mag smiled back. “You know where to find us.”

“Bye, Mag.”

“Bye, Sally.” Mag stood at the door and watched her fade into the night.

“It’s so damn cold.” Mag wrapped his clothes tighter around himself. He walked inside and closed the door behind him. He then poured himself a glass of wine and downed it in one go.

“Big Sister Aisha is not coming back, is she, Father?” Amy asked when she saw Mag coming up. She was sitting at the top of the stairs, holding Ugly Duckling in her arms.

Mag walked up to her and stroked her head. “She will come back,” he said softly, “but not tomorrow.”

Amy raised her eyes. “What about the day after tomorrow?”

Mag shook his head. “But she loves you, so she’ll definitely come back to see you someday.”

Amy’s face lit up but fell again. “I didn’t tell her I love her too.”

“She knows. She is a grown-up, so she can tell that you love her.”

“Really? I will tell her I love her when I see her again.”

...

“Have you said your goodbyes to your friends?” Elliot asked Sally at the top of a mountain outside the city.

“You know I’m not good at saying goodbye,” Sally said calmly.

Elliot paused a moment. “Do you hate me, Sally?”

Sally didn’t answer. She stared off into the distance, her face reflective. “Are we bandits, Father?”

Elliot frowned. “Of course not. We’re elves, protected by the God of Life.”

Sally looked him in the eye. “But what’s the difference between what we’re doing now and what the bandits do?”

Elliot opened his mouth but made no reply.

“I hate it, so I’m going to destroy it.” With that, she turned around and left.

Chapter 940 As a system, I’ll kill you all!

“What the hell is this?!” Irina said. “Hang in there, old friend!”

The leaves of the Tree of Life had withered, and almost the whole trunk had turned black. Black smoke was coming out of the trunk, and it smelled like death.

Irina was sitting cross-legged under the tree, pale from excessive use of magic.

A twig reached down and patted weakly on her back as if telling her to leave.

“No.” Irina shook her head adamantly. “If I leave you behind and let you die, elves will be abandoned by the God of Life. I can’t let that happen. I won’t let that happen. Before Mother comes out of seclusion, it’s up to me to protect you and the Wind Forest.”

The tree creaked and groaned as if weeping.

...

Borg stood outside Irina’s cave. The black lines on his face looked even more hideous in the moonlight. There was a black mass of mist around him, constantly changing shapes, as if alive. “Soon! Soon! Tonight, I’ll make the Norland Continent bow down before my might!”

...

“No!” Helena screamed in the starry cave as she looked up at the stars which were dimming quickly as if they were hidden by clouds.

She looked grave as a big crystal ball appeared in her hand. It was shining a bright purple-golden.

“We’re doomed! This is even worse than the last war among species!”

She went white, staring in the direction where the Tree of Life was, her trembling voice echoing in the cave.

...

Black clouds appeared out of nowhere, and started gathering above the Wind Forest.

Elven elders looked up, their faces unusually grave. They could sense danger in the air, but they had no clue what was going on. One thing they knew for sure, though, and that was that something really bad was about to happen.

...

“Make me your servant, Lord of Death!” Borg shouted with his hands up above his head. “Give me your power, and I’ll give you this world!”

With a crash of thunder, a black flash of lightning shot down from the black clouds towards the Tree of Life.

“Don’t you dare touch it!” Irina shouted. A white light flew up and met the black lightning. Boom!

However, more flashes of lightning rained down, too many to count.

The Tree of Life suddenly shone a bright green as countless branches reached up and formed a thick, tightly knit shield over Irina.

Black lightning bolts struck the shield ceaselessly, snapping and charring one branch after another. Black lines had covered its whole trunk, and were now climbing along the branches as though they were alive.

The green light around the tree faded, but the shield that held above Irina remained steadfast. It did not give in at all.

Tears welled in Irina’s eyes as she watched pieces of wood fall from the sky. She stood there, magic staff clutched in her hand, but it had stopped shining.

“Come on! Come on! The world is mine!”

The trembling Borg’s eyes had turned red like a devil’s. The black mist condensed into the form of a hideous devil behind him as it looked at him covetously.

...

They must be out of their mind thinking they can touch my gold mine! As a system, I’ll kill you all!

A string of text floated across Mag’s mind, but due to the small text, it didn’t earn his notice.

Suddenly, rain came down in torrents and pierced the black clouds like countless arrows.

The black clouds vanished into thin air in a matter of seconds as though they had met their nemesis.

The thick, dark clouds vanished in a blink of an eye.

“What?!” Borg looked up, flabbergasted.

However, the black figure behind him let out a sharp, horrified cry.

When the raindrops hit Borg, it was like water splashing into boiling oil. It was a loud splatter.

Borg looked up as he let out a painful roar. The black lines that covered his face seemed to be sliced off from his skin by a blade. The pain drove him crazy.

As for the figure behind him, it kept changing forms amidst the rain's cleansing. However, it failed to avoid the rain. Like a figure made of mud, it kept reducing in size thanks to the rain until it completely dissipated.

...

"This is?" Irina looked up in surprise. The black lightning that struck at the shield vanished suddenly before turning into a downpour.

When the raindrops hit the Tree of Life, the black lines on the appeared to meet their nemesis. They were instantly obliterated. The trunk followed. The aura of death that she and the Tree of Life had been desperately fending off recently had vanished rapidly.

The Tree of Life's yellowed colors restored to their healthy green under the rain's nourishment. The broken branches were reborn. The almost bald tree grew out new sprouts as a light green glow illuminated the cave. The branches rustled gently, revealing their vitality.

"Did the God of Life save us?"

Irina was as surprised as she was relieved.

The branches swayed happily as green light enveloped the feeble Irina.

As if on cue, the rain stopped as suddenly as it had started.

Borg kneeled on the ground, drenched in blood. "Why?" he shouted up. "Why?! I was so close... My plan almost succeeded!"

"Compared to my plans, your invasion of the world counts for sh*t."

A line of text floated across Mag's mind.

"What are you on about, System?" Mag frowned and asked when he saw the ant-sized string of text flash across his mind.