

A Stay-at-home Dad's Restaurant In An Alternate World –

Chapter 26: Curiosity Towards A Man

Sally felt she had walked into a sea of gourmet food, and was overwhelmed by a good taste and a warm feeling.

The eggs covering the rice were so tender; the flavorful ham, the crisp winter bamboo shoot, the sweet green pea... The taste of each ingredient was very distinct, and yet they were perfectly combined together.

She tasted shrimp; its sweet and delicious flavor spread out in her mouth. She seemed to have tasted the ocean.

Even in the Valley of the Wind, this kind of shrimp was not easy to come by. As for the shrimp that were kept alive by magic, their taste was not as good. Even she had only once had the privilege of eating shrimp this fresh when she'd gone to the shore north of the Wind Forest with her grandfather two years ago, but still, their taste had not been as fresh and tender.

Where did he get these fresh shrimp? If he had shipped them to Chaos City from the shore, the price of one shrimp would have been more than five gold coins.

One plate of fried rice has more than one shrimp, but it only sells at 600 copper coins! The owner here... he must be dumb. A flicker of confusion flew across her mind.

When she bit into the tender egg and touched the sweet rice with her tongue, she froze for an instant suddenly, and then she opened her eyes.

This taste!

It's the taste of the Spring of Life!

She was not a royal family member, but her clan was also very noble among elves, so she had been baptized in the Spring of Life several times. She had even had a small glass of water from the Spring of Life during her coming of age ceremony, so she was very familiar with and sensitive to the taste of their holy spring.

Much to her surprise, in this Chaos City, she had tasted the Spring of Life in a restaurant owned by a human! For a moment, she didn't know what to think because of this weird turn of events. She even started wondering if her homesickness had made her unable to think straight.

As she chewed on the rice, the taste of the rice and various ingredients was tickling her taste buds ceaselessly; among it, the exclusive feel of the Spring of Life was very distinct, confirming her suspicion again and again.

When she had swallowed it, a warm current spread all over her body through her meridians, rapidly dissolving her fatigue and hunger from days of travel.

It's definitely the Spring of Life!

Sally was very certain. Her senses were telling her that she should draw her bow, point the arrow at this human male, and ask him how he got his hands on the water from the Spring of Life.

However... this Yangzhou fried rice was so good that she wasn't able to make herself put down the spoon and pick up her bow!

Her family had the best cook in her entire clan. She had attended many dinner parties in the palace, and she had even tried the food cooked by the royal chef when the king of the Roth Empire came to visit the elves with his chef.

However, compared to this Yangzhou fried rice, those dishes that seemed very exquisite in appearance were very bland.

Moreover, this delicious Yangzhou fried rice was made by a human—a human male!

Take another bite?

Sally felt a devil in her heart tempting her, and she didn't want to resist it. Her spoon clattered on the plate again, and the second spoonful was already in her mouth. She closed her eyes again, tasting the flavor of every ingredient carefully.

At that instant, the holy spring and the responsibility of elves were all put aside by her; all she had in her mind was: eat, eat, eat!

She took one bite after another. Her deep-rooted manners were keeping her from gobbling down her food, but she was still eating quickly, unlike her usual self, completely forgetting about her suspicion before.

Mag watched as she ate her fried rice. He smiled. He felt proud and satisfied while looking at his customers indulging in the food he made. Perhaps it did feel good to conquer others' taste buds, even better than conquering women.

Amy was very proud too. This was her father's doing—he could make the best rainbow fried rice under the sun. Even the elf big sister had fallen in love with the taste after just one bite.

Sally finished her fried rice as if there were no one else but her in the restaurant. When she put the spoon on the plate to get another bite, she realized there was nothing left—not even one rice grain.

I have finished the entire plate? Sally froze for an instant, feeling as if she had just started. She looked at the plate that could almost reflect her face and felt a little ashamed. She hadn't been very graceful in others' presence, but the good thing was that she held back her impulse to lick the plate.

With food this good, one plate was clearly not enough for her. Sally looked up at Mag and said expectantly, "Owner, please give me seconds."

"Okay. Please wait a moment, Miss," answered Mag, smiling. He walked to the kitchen, thinking that even the graceful elves could not resist the good taste of this Yangzhou fried rice.

He had his worries, though. The rice was irrigated with the water from the Spring of Life, and if she could taste it, there might be problems.

"It's really so good," exclaimed Mobai satisfyingly. By then, he had put down his spoon. Two plates of fried rice were just enough. The weariness all over his body was nowhere to be found. He hadn't felt this comfortable for a very long time. He really felt very good.

"Dwarf grandpa Mobai, would you like two more plates?" asked Amy with anticipation.

Mobai looked at Amy's big expectant eyes and almost nodded. He waved his hands quickly. "No, two plates are just enough for my dinner today, and I can drink a little when I get back. What a wonderful day!"

"Okay. You have had two plates. Two six twelve. Twelve gold coins, please." Amy was a little disappointed, but her smile returned quickly. She jumped off her chair, walked to Mobai, and held out her two hands. "Pay your bill, please."

"You are much quicker tonight." Mobai was a little surprised. He counted 12 gold coins and put them on Amy's little hands.

Mobai arose from his chair and said to Mag in the kitchen, "See you around, Mag." Then he turned to Amy, and said, "Bye, little girl."

"See you." Mag smiled in his kitchen.

"One, two, three... Bye, dwarf grandpa Mobai." Amy was counting the coins with shining eyes. She didn't even raise her head when she answered.

"This address..." Mobai pursed his lips. *It sounds a little strange.* He smiled and walked out.

Who is this man? Sally looked at Mag who was working in the kitchen. Though she could only see his side face through the glass, she was attracted by his focus and concentration.

A grand restaurant, great fried rice, fresh shrimp, the Spring of Life... And he has a beautiful half-elf daughter. He seems normal, but how many secrets does he have?

Or, how many stories?

Sally showed her curiosity towards a man for the very first time.

Thank you for reading on

Chapter 27: Start With Your Daughter

Mag walked out with Sally's second plate of Yangzhou fried rice and put it down in front of her. "Please enjoy," he said, smiling.

Sally answered gently, "Thanks." All she could see right now was the fried rice before her. She picked up the spoon and took a bite. She was eating more slowly this time, savoring the taste of different ingredients as they mixed together inside her mouth. This fresh experience was intoxicating.

"Father, here, 12 gold coins. Amy calculated how much we should charge right away." Amy looked up at Mag with the gold coins in her hands, her face oozing with anticipation as she awaited her father's praise.

"Yes. Amy is incredible. You have applied what you've learned. The money is right. Looks like you have mastered what you've learned today." Mag smiled and stroked Amy's hair. He took the coins from her hands. *She is truly very smart.*

"Thank you, Father. Amy will study harder tomorrow." Amy nodded happily. *It turns out the 9x9 table is not very difficult, except the three six... three six... Oh, I'll leave it for tomorrow.* "Father, Amy's hungry too."

Mag nodded. "I'll make the fried rice for you." He put the money in the counter's drawer with a lock and entered the kitchen.

Amy sat down opposite Sally gently and watched as she ate gracefully. She tried to imitate her and sit properly.

Sally was so absorbed in the delicious fried rice that she didn't notice Amy until she finished her last bite. She smiled when she found that the little girl was sitting with her ankles crossed just like her.

“Big sister Sally, you look so nice when you eat,” Amy said as she saw that she had finished her meal.

“You can do it too when you grow up.” Sally nodded, smiling. She was a little surprised when she said those words. She hadn’t been very keen on the little elves back home, but now she was encouraging the little girl like a senior.

Amy nodded happily. “Thank you.” Then she asked, “Big sister Sally, have you had enough?”

Sally nodded as she put down the spoon. “Yes.” To keep her body in a good shape, she hadn’t eaten this much for a long time, but today, it couldn’t be helped.

“Well then, you have eaten two plates. Two six twelve. Twelve gold coins please.” Amy’s eyes brightened immediately. She held out her hands on the table towards Sally.

Mag was just walking out with a plate of fried rice. He wanted to smile when he watched this scene. *Looks like she does enjoy collecting money.*

“I’ll give you one dragon coin and two gold coins.” Sally took out one dragon coin and two gold coins from her purse and put them on Amy’s hand. She hesitated for an instant before she opened her hand, but on recalling the delicious food she had never eaten before, she loosened her hand immediately. *It’s definitely worth the money.*

Sally arose from her chair and picked up her bow and quiver. She looked at Mag and narrowed her eyes slightly. “I was wondering why I have tasted the Spring of Life in this Yangzhou fried rice.”

Mag shook his head, smiling. “I don’t know what you mean by that, Miss. I didn’t add any water from the Spring of Life into this fried rice.” He was telling the truth, so he was very calm. It seemed she was not an ordinary elf, though. She had tasted the Spring of Life.

Sally stared at Mag for a while, and didn’t see any nervousness in those deep eyes. She nodded, and said, “Mag, right? Your Yangzhou fried rice is very good. I will come again.” Then she turned around and left.

“Thank you.” Mag put down the plate in his hand, not feeling very alarmed. After all, he had already known he couldn’t keep a low profile when he’d decided to open this restaurant. *It’s not a secret that this rice has a taste of the Spring of Life. As long as the system’s farmlands stay safe, I wouldn’t admit anything else even if they beat me to death. Anyway, the system wouldn’t just stand by if I were beaten to death, right?*

“Your safety is not system’s responsibility,” said the system.

“I have already died once. I’ve nothing to fear,” answered Mag in his head. He put the fried rice in front of Amy.

The system did not answer at once. Eventually, it said, “You should have more regard for your life.”

“Actually, I don’t want to die that badly. Why don’t you improve my strength? Increase my strength by ten or twenty. If I could tear giant dragons apart with my bare hands, nobody would dare to come look for trouble. Then, I can focus on cooking and try to become the God of Cookery.” Mag took the system for granted.

The system was silent for a longer time. After a while, it answered, “System has no such right. Improving strength will be done by triggering and completing the relevant missions. After my assessment, I recommend you start with your daughter to improve the restaurant’s security level.”

“Amy?” Mag was taken by surprise. He glanced at Amy, who was about to take a bite of the dragon coin. Mag chuckled. *The system’s assessment should be reliable. Perhaps it was referring to the bluish violet fireball magic in the morning?*

“Father, look! Dragon coin! You said at noon that 10 gold coins equals one dragon coin, so Amy didn’t make a mistake, right?” Amy looked up at Mag. There were a small line of tooth impressions on the edge of the coin.

“No, Amy has done a very good job.” Mag nodded, smiling. He put the fireball thing on hold and took the dragon coin in his hand. It was almost the same size as the gold coin, except that it had a piece of white jade inlaid in the middle. There was a small golden dragon carved around the jade. It was a little heavier than the gold coin, and was the most valued currency on this continent.

“Amy will eat then.” After getting her praise, she took her spoon and started eating, shaking her little body slightly all the while. She was very happy.

Mag put the coins in the drawer. Seeing that no customer would come for a while, he went into the kitchen and cooked a plate of fried rice for his dinner.

After a plate of Yangzhou fried rice, Mag felt warm all over, and his fatigue had disappeared.

When Amy finished the half bowl of fried rice that Mag gave her, she put down the bowl and looked at Mag, a little worried. “Father, I ... I feel a little hot again.”

“Again?” Mag was a little anxious, but when he recalled what had happened in the morning, he said immediately, “Don’t worry, Amy. Try to remember the fireball magic this morning. Try to release the fire inside you.”

“Release it?” Amy reflected carefully. Then she lifted her arm, and a bluish violet fire suddenly appeared from her hand. The moisture in the air was immediately evaporated, as if it had burnt a hole in the air.

Originally sitting on the other side of the table, Mag fell back several steps despite himself. He watched as the fireball in Amy’s hand grew smaller and into a small one finally, his eyes full of astonishment.

He understood the system’s words suddenly.

Thank you for reading on

Chapter 28: Could You Buy Amy An Ugly Duckling?

Amy had only eaten three plates of Yangzhou fried rice since this morning, but the temperature of the fireball she could make now was much more terrifying than in the morning. Her improvement was simply incredible.

Besides, if she could improve her power by eating, then it wouldn’t be troublesome to better her skills—she just needed to eat regularly every day.

“Father, do you want to play with the fire?” Amy said smilingly as she looked at the flames dancing in her hand, like a little girl who wanted to share her toys with others.

Mag waved his hands immediately. “No, it’s too hot. Remember, Amy, do not use this fireball on others except bad guys. It’s very dangerous.” This flame was no toy at all.

“Bad guys?” Amy pondered carefully for a while. “If they don’t pay for the food they eat, then they are the bad guys, right?”

Mag nodded. “Yes. That is called ‘dine and dash’. They’re bad guys.” He hadn’t liked the ones who were always dining and dashing in his previous life, and now that he was an owner of a restaurant himself, he hated them even more.

Amy nodded solemnly. “Oh, Amy has remembered. If they don’t pay, I’ll set them on fire.”

“Well then, I’ll leave it to you to protect our restaurant.” Mag chuckled. *Such customers may actually appear. If Amy’s fireball magic could make them know fear, she might actually be able to protect this restaurant.*

After all, the system is quite reliable except when money is involved. Mag cleared the table and went into the kitchen.

Under a big tree outside the restaurant on the square, Sally was still there. She was staring at the bright restaurant, confused. *Should I report this to our contact in Chaos City, or just keep it to myself?*

But this Yangzhou fried rice is really very good. If I had money, I would eat it three times a day, but now I can only eat it every once in a while. She struggled with herself for a while, and then her mind was away on the Yangzhou fried rice she had just eaten. She could still taste the ocean in her mouth as she recalled its taste.

Whatever. I am a runaway now. I have no responsibility to worry about this kind of thing. Sally swung her arm as if trying to throw her trouble away, and then she put the bow on her back.

Maybe the owner here doesn't care about this stuff; otherwise, he wouldn't so blatantly put the water from the Spring of Life into six gold coins's worth of Yangzhou fried rice, even if the water had been diluted countless times.

"Mamy Restaurant. Such interesting father and daughter." Sally took another glance at the restaurant, and then turned around and walked towards the exit of the square.

Mag washed the dishes with the dishwasher and sat on the chair behind the counter with Amy, waiting for customers.

More people came in the evening, but they all found the fried rice expensive when they saw the menu. They shook their heads and left.

Mag wanted to hold onto them by telling them the origins of the ingredients. He wanted them to know that they were getting the better end of the deal by eating this Yangzhou fried rice.

However, as the candidate for the God of Cookery, he held back this urge. He didn't want to contradict his principles.

He had only had two customers today, but he had sold eight plates of Yangzhou fried rice, which was pretty satisfying for his first day.

At eight o'clock, after he had watched the eighth customer shake his head and leave, Mag went to the door and flipped over the "Open" sign. He turned the outside lights off and finished his first day.

"Father, we don't sell the rainbow fried rice any more today?" Amy said as she put out the fireball in her hand.

Mag nodded, smiling. "Yes, let's call it a day." He took his earnings out and counted them. In total, he had 20 gold coins, one dragon coin, and 12 copper coins. There

should be more, but 18 gold coins had been charged by the system automatically in the evening—it was the cost of the ingredients.

This was just his first day. Last night, he only had two copper coins in his pocket.

“So many gold coins!” Amy looked at the coins on the table with shining eyes. She looked up at Mag, and said, “Father, could you buy Amy an ugly duckling?”

“Sure. We’ll walk around the square in the morning and see if there is someone selling them.” Mag stroked Amy’s hair, smiling. *She is very obsessed with the roast goose. I have to take her out and try our luck tomorrow.*

Mag didn’t feel very exhausted after working a whole day. That was because the system had prepared the ingredients and covered the preliminaries. He didn’t even need to wash the dishes himself. Besides, the three plates of fried rice he had eaten relieved his weariness, making him feel even fresher.

Seeing as Amy was beginning to feel sleepy, Mag had her recite the 9×9 table she had learned at noon. She could remember all the terms before “three six”, but had to give up on remembering that one after thinking long and hard. She was really depressed.

Mag gave her an encouraging smile. “It’s all right. Amy has done a great job. You have already applied what you’ve learned today. We’ll start from “three six” tomorrow. I’m sure you’ll remember the rest.”

Amy nodded. “Amy will try hard tomorrow.”

Although Mag had to focus on the restaurant, he didn’t want to run it day and night. He made use of this leisure time and decided his opening hours. This way, he didn’t have to stay in the restaurant all day long, and his customers would know when to come. It would save a lot of trouble.

Breakfast: 7:30 am—9:00 am; lunch: 11:30 am—1:30 pm; dinner: 5:00 pm—9:00 pm. The rest of the time he was free, and he’d decided to rest a day every seven days.

“Perfect.” Mag looked at his opening hours on the paper, and said in his head, “System, can you help me add the opening hours to the signboard outside?”

“System recommends you extend the opening hours to sell more food,” answered the system.

“Being the owner of the restaurant is my job, not my whole life. I want to enjoy my life as well as my job,” Mag said calmly. He became impatient. “Do you want to help me or not? I’ll attach this paper to the signboard myself even if you don’t help.”

After a while, the system answered, “The opening hours have been added.”

“Let’s go upstairs and sleep.” Mag put the coins back in the drawer. Since the system would charge the cost of ingredients automatically, he didn’t have to worry about things like that.

Mag taught Amy how to brush her teeth and wash her face, and introduced everything in the bathroom to her. After he washed up, he picked her up and laid her on the little bed.

The little thing was already very sleepy. When she touched her soft bed, she could barely keep her eyes open.

“Good night.” Mag smiled as he stroked Amy’s hair.

“Father, don’t forget to buy me an ugly duckling. You have promised,” Amy said solemnly as she reached out to hold Mag’s finger.

Mag nodded. “I won’t. We’ll buy it tomorrow.”

“You’re the best, Father.” Amy sat up, held Mag’s face in her hands, and kissed him. Then she lay down and closed her eyes. She fell asleep in no time, mouth still murmuring, “Ugly duckling... ugly duckling... roast goose...”

Thank you for reading on

Chapter 29: Amy Will Just Let It Fall Down ...

Mag woke up at six in the morning. The night was so long without video games and movies, but he slept much better.

“System, do you sell TVs? What about PCs? Cellphones? PS4s? WiFi?” Mag asked in his head when he was brushing his teeth.

“Please take the system seriously! System does not provide non-kitchen appliances or WiFi for free!” answered the system solemnly.

“Don’t worry. I don’t have enough money even if I want to buy them.” Mag spat out the foam in his mouth. Based on the system’s reaction, those things were most likely available if he had the money, but he really had no money right now. If the WiFi was not free, he would pay for it.

Mag put Amy’s little dress that he had washed and dried yesterday on the edge of the bed. After all, it was not very decent to go out in her sleepwear.

Mag went downstairs and opened the door. The opening hours were already on the front and back side of the signboard. A screen was set at the top of the signboard to conveniently notify the number of days before his rest day; now it said six, and it would change automatically, very user-friendly.

This world also used the 24-hour clock, and had almost the same notion of time as the people on the Earth. Thanks to the efforts of the dwarf craftsmen, mechanical watches were becoming popular.

The most advanced watches were the ones driven by crystal stones. Only noblemen and wealthy people were using them, because their price was high. At least, he needed not worry that the people here didn't know the time.

There was still time before opening, so Mag went for a little jog outside his restaurant on the square. His body was so weak that he gasped for air after running a little while. At last, he managed to run for 20 minutes or so.

By then, Mobai had just opened his shop. "What're you doing so early, Mag?" Mobai asked as he looked at Mag who was still panting.

"Working out a little. You open this early, Mobai?" answered Mag, smiling. Mobai's forge and Mag's restaurant were just about one meter apart. He could hear his hammering before, but now that he had a much better house with better soundproofing, he could hear nothing at all.

Mobai nodded. "Yeah. I was just about to go to your place and eat two plates of fried rice before working." He had completely fallen in love with the Yangzhou fried rice after eating two times yesterday.

Mobai woke up this morning feeling comfortable and refreshed all over, and not tired at all. Even his waist that used to hurt when he woke up had stopped acting up.

"The restaurant opens at 7:30 am. The exact opening hours are on the signboard. There is still time. I'll go wash up and prepare," Mag said with a smile.

"Well, I'll wait here then." Mobai was taken aback. Normally the restaurants would open when customers came, but Mag had set his own opening hours.

On second thought, he found it pretty normal for Mag to have his own rules and temper. After all, he could make such delicious and magical Yangzhou fried rice.

Mag walked back to his restaurant, went upstairs, and washed up. By then, Amy had just woken up and changed into her clothes. She extended her arms and walked to Mag with half-opened eyes. "Give me a hug, Father," she said adorably as she looked up at Mag.

The little thing had just woken up, with her ahoge sticking out. Her half-opened eyes and spread arms made her so adorable that Mag couldn't refrain from stooping down and picking her up. "I'll hold you for a while. Then you will wash up yourself. We have to open now."

Amy nodded. "Okay." She only wrapped her arms around Mag's neck for a little while and then disentangled herself from him. She went to the bathroom and stood on tips of her toes to get her toothpaste and toothbrush. She turned to Mag, and said, "Don't worry about me, Father. I can take care of myself."

Mag nodded, smiling. "Right." He pretended to leave, and then took a peek through the door. The little thing was brushing well. Then he left without worry.

It was just 7:30. Mag went to open the door. Mobai was waiting outside looking at the opening hours.

"We're open. Please come in," Mag said gently with a smile.

"Thank you. Two plates of Yangzhou fried rice. I can scarcely wait," Mobai said with a laugh as he stepped inside.

Mobai had just seated himself when Amy came downstairs. "Good morning, dwarf grandpa Mobai," she said to him. Then she stroked her hair as she looked at Mag. "Father, would it be better to tie my hair up? It seems a little long."

"Tie up your hair?" Mag looked at the purple strip of cloth in Amy's hand, a little awkward. He hadn't done this kind of thing before. He had to study a little. "Wait till I have made breakfast for Grandpa Mobai, okay, Amy? I'll tie your hair up later."

Amy nodded. "Okay, Father." Amy put the hair band away and sat down meekly.

Mag finished the first plate of Yangzhou fried rice quickly, and then went to make the second one. When he walked out with Amy's fried rice, Mobai had just finished eating.

"Two plates of fried rice, that's 12 gold coins, please," Amy said solemnly as she held out her little hand. She was standing beside Mobai.

"Here, 12 gold coins. Count them, little owner." Mobai put the coins on Amy's hands with a smile. He was already accustomed to her acting all grown-up when she collected money. He rose from the table with a smile, and said to Mag, "Today's Yangzhou fried rice is very good too, Mag. You have just opened, and people rarely come here, so it must be hard, right?"

Mag nodded. "Yes. Not too many customers." It couldn't be helped. Good wine was also afraid of the thick bush.

“I’ll take my leave. Maybe I could bring two customers for you at noon. They won’t worry about the price,” Mobai said, smiling. He took a glance at Amy who was counting the coins carefully.

Mag smiled. “Thank you.” It was not a bad way to increase customers.

“My pleasure.” Mobai waved his hands expansively and left.

While Amy was eating, Mag made himself one plate too. After a plate of delicious Yangzhou fried rice, the hunger and weariness from his jogging in the morning were all gone. He felt very refreshed and vigorous.

There was no sign of any customers, and Mag’s gaze met the eyes of Amy, who was holding her hair band with expectation. Mag couldn’t make her wait anymore. He took the hair band, and unconfidently said, “Amy, I’m not very good at tying up hair.”

Amy turned to Mag, and said encouragingly, “Father, I’m sure you can do it.” She found a small mirror somewhere and looked at herself in the mirror expectantly. *Teacher Luna would tie up my hair before, but Father hasn’t done it.*

“Then I’ll get to it?” Mag was still a little nervous. He stroked Amy’s smooth hair, trying to remember how the girls wore their hair. *A ponytail should be the easiest, or a cute chignon; a braid is not bad too.*

Ten minutes later, Amy put down her mirror and turned to look at Mag as he was trying to make her hair look like a bun, sweating. She pouted unhappily, “Father, Amy will just let it fall down ...”

Thank you for reading on

Chapter 30: The Way To Deal With A Nuisance

It turned out that it required a lot of skill to tie little girls’ hair. Mag took a look at Amy’s hair that he had messed up and drew his hands back embarrassedly. “Letting it fall down looks good too,” murmured Mag.

“But Teacher Luna can do lovely braids.” Amy looked up at Mag and blinked her big eyes pitifully.

“Ahem, we’d better get ready to go. Let’s see if we can get an ugly duckling for Amy.” Mag feigned his coughing, trying to divert her attention away from the hair.

“Ugly duckling! I want an ugly duckling! Let’s go, Father!” Amy urged. She stopped worrying about her hair immediately as he had expected.

Mag combed Amy's hair neatly. Two strands were still sticking out, but he pretended they were not there. Opening hours were not over, so he had to make Amy wait. In the meantime, he helped her memorize a dozen more terms from the 9x9 table.

"I'm not sure we can find an ugly duckling. If we can't find one, we'll try our luck next time. Okay?" Mag said to Amy when he locked the door, trying to prepare her in advance.

Amy nodded obediently. "Okay. I know." She was very happy because she was going to buy an ugly duckling, and it had been a long time since her father last took her out. She could hold his big, warm hand again.

"Let's go." Mag picked up Amy's little soft hand, and he felt happy too as he looked at her smile.

Amy's unhappy expression was so heartbreaking that he couldn't help but ask, "System, do you have the experience bag for braiding hair? Like the one for Yangzhou fried rice. Do you sell it?"

He had to be a mother as well as a father, so he had to learn how to braid hair.

"Let me warn you again: do not insult the system with such questions! System does not sell any experience bags that are irrelevant to cuisine!" The system seemed a little enraged.

"I will give you 10 gold coins."

The system didn't answer.

"No? What about 30?"

Still, the system said nothing.

"100. That's my final offer. Think about it," Mag said calmly.

For a long while, the system said nothing; then, a quotation appeared in Mag's head: the experience bag for braiding hair—120 gold coins.

"Sorry, not now, I don't have enough money," Mag said regretfully as he looked at that experience bag. *Now I know the system has it, and I'll make enough money sooner or later. I'll make a hairstyle that makes Amy scream with excitement.* Mag felt much better as he thought about this.

"..." An ellipsis went across Mag's head. Mag didn't care about the system's feelings at all. *The system only cares about money.*

The Aden Square was the business center of Chaos City as well as the geographical center. The buildings that were in the shape of the crescent moon curved around the square. It was about two or three thousand kilometers from the restaurant to the other end. All kinds of strange shops could be found around the square.

Therefore, people living in Chaos City were always saying: one could buy anything here as long as it could be found on the continent and they had enough money.

Of course, it was a bit exaggerated; nonetheless, it still showed that the Aden Square was very prosperous.

They hadn't walked far when Amy tried to hide beside Mag. "Father, that black bird is very annoying," she said as she pointed at the two birdcages hanging outside a magic potion shop.

"Oh?" Mag looked in that direction with surprise. This magic potion shop was only five or six doors away from his restaurant. The owner in his memory was an old human magic caster, tall, lean, and a little hunched. He didn't talk much with others, and was only interested in teasing his two birds, teaching them strange words.

One birdcage had a black crow in it, and the other a parrot with green feathers and a red beak. They were jumping up and down in their cages. When they noticed Mag and Amy, they stopped to look at them.

"Oh... Ugly little thing, you're walking before my magnificent palace again. Now I allow you to kneel before me and kowtow three times, and I will pray that you'll look more like an elf in the future," the black crow said in a low voice as he looked disdainfully at Amy with his head held high.

"You're the ugly one. You black little bird," Amy said angrily as she clenched her little fist. She looked up at Mag, a little upset and uncertain. "Father, is Amy ugly?"

Mag shook his head and smiled. "No! Amy is very pretty. That elf big sister said the same yesterday. Don't you remember?" Then he pointed at the crow and said, "Look, that stupid bird is the one who is ugly."

There was a smile on Mag's face, but his eyes showed his spite. *Stupid crow, how dare you say that to Amy? I'm trying to boost her confidence here!* It looked like it was not the first time he made fun of Amy.

The green parrot nodded. "Yes, he's very ugly, but he boasts of his beauty every day, very annoying," she said helplessly. She sounded like a maid.

"Human, do not point your lowly finger at me. Don't think I'm afraid of you because you've gone from a cripple to a half-cripple..." the crow said as he turned to Mag.

Mag looked at Amy with a smile. "Amy, do you still remember the fireball magic you used yesterday?"

Amy nodded. "Yes." She looked at Mag, a little confused.

"The easiest way of dealing with a smart mouth is to shut his mouth. Let him have a taste of your fireball," Mag said, smiling.

However, the crow became even prouder. "That was supposed to scare me? This cage is protected by the old man's magic; besides, I myself can remember the spell of the fireball magic—"

However, before he could finish his words, a bluish violet fireball appeared in Amy's hand.

"No chant?" The crow was taken by surprise.

Amy threw the fireball out, and it enveloped the whole birdcage instantly.

"I'm not af— Help... Help me!" The magic protection outside the cage was burned away at once, and then, the steel bars were starting to melt. The bluish violet flame caught the crow immediately. He screamed in pain.

Mag was a little amazed. It was the first time that Amy had used her fireball magic on others, and she did quite well. Besides, the fireball was more powerful than he had expected, which was a good thing, of course.

Smiling, he took Amy's hand and walked on. "Remember, Amy, for guys like that, just give them a fireball."

Amy nodded vigorously. "Okay, Father." She held one of Mag's fingers and waved it merrily, feeling happy because she had taken revenge on that stupid crow who had picked on her many times. *I don't have to worry about being picked on when I go out with Father.*

"Fire! Help!" the green parrot cried in panic.

A lean old man walked out hurriedly. His face changed when he saw the burning cage, and then he chanted some spell and threw a water ball at it.

The fire was put out. A faint aroma of roasted meat permeated the air. The black featherless crow gave a shiver. He stood on the stick which was the only thing that was spared, covered his crotch with his wings, and let loose a plume of black smoke. "Holy mackerel! My precious robe is ruined..." he cried out.

Thank you for reading on

