

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

### Chapter 20: System, Do You Sell Clothes?

“Yes.” Mag smiled. He took a look at the neatly written stair-shaped table—the rows and columns were very orderly, and the handwriting was very clear. Then, he put down the pen. “It has nine rows and nine columns, so it’s called the  $9\times 9$  table. Amy has already learned the basics of addition and subtraction, so it won’t be very hard to learn this.”

“Then what’s that little cross in the middle?” asked Amy, pointing at the “ $\times$ ”, a little confused.

“It’s called the multiplication sign, and means the process of calculating by multiplying. It’s simpler this way,” explained Mag. He asked Amy to sit beside him and then pushed the  $9\times 9$  table towards her. “Only Father knows this  $9\times 9$  table. You only need to memorize 81 terms and learn the decimal system, and then you’ll be able to handle almost all the calculations in life.”

“Wow, Father is so incredible. Last time, Teacher Luna told Amy that I have to memorize 1,770 terms in order to learn the multiplication table; Amy has only remembered about 100.” Amy looked at Mag with great adoration. She hadn’t thought that her father not only had a good handwriting, but also knew a simpler way of calculating than Luna. She felt her father was so amazing.

Mag knew that he shouldn’t show off when he was standing on the shoulders of ancient Chinese sages, but he felt so good as he was adored by his own daughter. He smiled and pointed at the first term on the top left-hand corner. “We’ll learn the first column today. These two figures beside the times sign are factors, and the figure behind is the product—the result of the calculation…”

Mag carefully explained the constitution of the  $9\times 9$  table to Amy. She indeed had known some basics on account of Luna’s teaching; at least she knew the meaning of every figure and had some concept of addition and subtraction. There was no numeral system in this world, though, so it had taken him some time to make Amy understand the meaning of the numeral system.

The most consoling thing might be that Amy had no doubt whatsoever about Mag’s words, even if they completely tore apart what Luna had taught her. She listened to him unconditionally, and quickly accepted the concept of the multiplication under the decimal system.

“One one one, one two two...” read Amy after Mag. The little girl’s memory was pretty good; she had already memorized the first column after reading after Mag for a dozen times.

Mag struck while the iron was hot and had her read the whole 9×9 table after him to present to her a whole concept.

“But, Father, what’s the point of memorizing this?” asked Amy looking up at Mag, a little confused after reading a few times herself.

“Well, it’s very useful.” Mag smiled and pointed at the multiplication table. “Our Yangzhou fried rice is 600 copper coins each, and that is six gold coins. Grandpa Mobai has just had four plates, so it will be four six twenty-four. You can calculate the result immediately and don’t need to count your fingers. Isn’t it very easy?”

“It really is 24 gold coins!” Amy’s eyes brightened immediately. It had taken her a long while to calculate in her mind that she should charge 2,400 copper coins before, but her father had figured out the result with ease. This 9×9 table was so amazing. She said enthusiastically, “Father, I want to learn! I want to learn this 9×9 table! If I master this, I’ll truly be able to help Father.”

Mag nodded, smiling. “Okay. We’ll learn three columns today and the rest tomorrow.” When learning new things, initiative and enthusiasm were the most important, and Amy had both. Mag was certain that she would master the 9×9 table in no time.

He spent his noon helping Amy remember the 9×9 table. Nobody entered his restaurant other than Mobai. It showed how isolated this corner on the Aden Square was.

Yet, after having sold four plates of fried rice, Mag felt quite relieved; at least he didn’t have to worry that the people here wouldn’t like its taste. From Mobai’s reaction, he had known that the effect the fried rice had on the muscles had also worked on him, so maybe he would become a regular, which was very good news.

“Three four twelve, three five fifteen, three six... three six... three six... Three six is too difficult...” Amy looked up at Mag, a little upset. It was the fifth time that she had been thwarted here, tears in her eyes.

“Okay then, let’s stop here at three five fifteen. Amy baby is already very incredible. Normally, very few children can remember the first column for the first time. We’ll memorize the rest tomorrow; it’s best to do it step by step.” Mag picked up the paper and stroked Amy’s hair, smiling. It made him remember a video, which he had watched in his previous life, about a little girl crying as she tried to remember the 9×9 table. Sure enough, the same problems were always appearing at the same age.

“Really?” Amy had thought that Mag would reproach her, but when her father said that she was better than other children, her eyes brightened again.

Mag looked into Amy's eyes and nodded earnestly. "Sure. When did Father ever lie to you?"

Amy nodded. "I know. Father will never lie to Amy. I'll try my best to learn the rest tomorrow." A confident expression as well as a bright smile appeared on her face.

Mag put the 9×9 table behind the counter. It was already past lunchtime, so it was very unlikely that anyone would come. He took a look at Amy's hair which was a little messy, went to the door to turn over the "Open" sign, and locked the door from inside; then, he grabbed Amy's little hand, and said, "Come, Father will give you a bath and turn you into a clean little fairy."

"Do we have to prepare the hot water first and take the wooden barrel?" asked Amy, looking up at Mag.

Mag smilingly shook his head. "No, we have hot water coming from the pipe and a bathtub upstairs."

"Like the tap in the kitchen?" asked Amy, very surprised. The thing that her father called "tap" was very magical; fresh and sweet water would come out if it was turned; it was like magic.

Mag nodded. "Yes." Then, he took her little hand and went upstairs. Amy was just starting to know this world around her, so she only felt curious about the modern things in the house, and wasn't very confused.

Even though she was seeing the bathtub for the first time, Amy got used to it very quickly. She sat in it, fluttering her two feet and giggling as she held the white bubbles in her hands. Looking at Mag, she said happily, "Father, this bathtub is so much fun, and these bubbles have a very good and pleasant smell."

"Yes. This is the body wash for bathing, and in my hand is the shampoo for washing hair. Your hair will be clean and have a fragrant smell after being washed," said Mag, smiling. He clumsily rubbed the shampoo on Amy's hair with his hands, and said softly, "Close your eyes. You'll be very uncomfortable if it gets into your eyes."

"Okay. Amy wants to have a good smell like Father." She closed her eyes obediently.

Mag rubbed Amy's hair softly. He might be clumsy, but he was very meticulous; he carefully separated the hair that had been stuck together. Actually, Amy's hair was very smooth.

Bathing children and washing their hair was indeed not very easy. Mag's clothes were almost soaked after bathing Amy. He looked at Amy, who was in her bath towel, and her little dress aside; he became a little worried. He asked tentatively, "System, do you sell clothes?"

Thank you for reading on