

I'M THE CULINARY GOD

Chapter 1 - 001: Acquiring a restaurant! Perfect Level lottery!

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"You have successfully reached Welcoming Spring Street. Please find No. 34 Welcoming Spring Street within 5 minutes. Upon completion, you will be rewarded with one Perfect Level noodle main dish lottery draw."

Lin Xu had just emerged from the Welcoming Spring Street subway station exit when the system's notification sounded in his mind.

Lottery? Remembering his experience last night, drawing sixty times in a game by that notorious developer without winning anything, a look of speechlessness flashed across Lin Xu's handsome face. *Hopefully, the system's lottery wouldn't be as scammy as theirs.*

He glanced at the numbering sequence on both sides of the street, then strode forward, beginning his search for shop No. 34.

「An hour earlier.」

Lin Xu had been lying on his dormitory bed, sending out résumés through job-seeking apps, when he was suddenly bound to a system called the Cooking God. After the successful binding, the system granted him three months' use of a shop. For the next three months, he could use the shop free of charge. However, after three months, if he didn't pay rent, the landlord would reclaim it. The shop was located on Welcoming Spring Street. He had hurried over by subway to see if this rewarded shop was real.

Welcoming Spring Street wasn't long, but it had a significant flow of people. Even at two o'clock in the afternoon, there was a constant stream of passersby. Lin Xu followed the street numbers and finally found shop No. 34 in the middle section of Welcoming Spring Street.

The shop was exquisitely decorated. The doors and windows were made of large panes of highly transparent glass, which, along with the aluminum composite panels on the exterior walls, gave it a very high-class appearance. Looking at the "Lin Ji's Food" sign above the door, Lin Xu felt like he was dreaming.

Just an hour ago, he had been taking advantage of the time before leaving school to send out résumés online, racking his brains for ways to become an employee at one of those big companies. Unexpectedly, an hour later, he had transformed into a restaurant owner.

Ah, fate really is unpredictable! he sighed. The books he had recently crammed, like "Guide to Slacking Off at Work," "Office Loafing Bible," and "Say No to Overwork: 99 Slacking Off Tips Not to Be Missed by Workers," were now all useless. *What a pity...*

The shop door wasn't locked. He gently pushed it open. Just as he was about to enter, the system's notification sounded again in his mind: "Having accurately located shop No. 34 within the allotted time, you've earned one Perfect Level noodle main dish lottery draw. Would you like to draw now?"

"Lottery draw!" Lin Xu silently affirmed. *He was somewhat apprehensive though.* His luck had been quite poor lately. Ever since the autumn recruitment season last year, various unexpected incidents had occurred every time he prepared for job hunting, leaving him still without a suitable job.

Soon, a circular wheel appeared in his mind, filled with the names of noodle dishes: Oil-poured Noodles, Dan Dan Noodles, Hot Dry Noodles, Shacha Noodles, Noodles With Black Bean Sauce, Yangchun noodles, Beef Noodles, Wonton Noodles, Sliced Noodles, Crab Yellow Noodles, Mutton Stew Noodles, Anhui Flat Noodles, Scallion Oil Noodles, Shandong noodles...

The dazzling array of various noodle dishes made Lin Xu involuntarily swallow. *Just looking at it made him hungry...*

As he watched, the wheel gradually began to spin, its speed increasing. A "Stop" button appeared beside it. *I can draw now!*

Lin Xu silently prayed, seeking blessings from the Jade Emperor, Tathagata, Wutian, Jesus, Ultraman, Pleasant Goat, the Boonie Bears, King Kiki, and various other deities to grant him good luck. After praying, he pressed the stop button. The wheel's speed began to decrease, eventually coming to a gentle stop.

"Congratulations to the host for obtaining the Perfect Level noodle main dish—Tomato Egg Noodles."

"This system categorizes dishes, techniques, and kitchen tools into four levels, from lowest to highest: Qualified Level, Excellent Level, Superior, and Perfect Level. Please explore the specific promotion criteria on your own."

As soon as the notification ended, a flood of experience related to Tomato Egg Noodles poured into Lin Xu's mind.

How did I end up drawing this? In his mind, the so-called Tomato Egg Noodles were nothing more than boiling some noodles and topping them with stir-fried tomato and egg. Very simple.

But only after absorbing the experience did he realize that making this noodle dish delicious was actually quite complicated and meticulous.

First, one had to make handmade noodles. This way, the texture would be chewier and smoother, and the noodle aroma more intense.

When making the topping, one first needed to blanch the tomatoes in hot water to remove their skins before dicing them. Blanching not only allowed the tomatoes to release more juice when stir-fried but also enhanced their texture.

To increase the umami and fragrance, a spoonful of specially-made chicken oil was to be drizzled over the finished topping. Under high heat, the umami from the chicken oil would infuse into the topping, making its flavor even more enticing. The chicken oil would also make the noodles smoother and more delicious.

After absorbing all the experience, Lin Xu pushed open the door and went inside, taking a look around the store. The interior adopted a neo-Chinese decorative style, with extensive use of wooden strips. Combined with warm-colored light strips and pure solid wood dining tables and chairs, it created a comfortable and warm ambiance upon entry.

In the spacious semi-open kitchen, all kinds of kitchenware and appliances were readily available. The cashier's desk also held the store's permits and licenses, all fully certified.

He estimated that, including decorations and equipment, the entire store must have cost over five hundred thousand yuan.

What a big spender! Lin Xu sighed inwardly. Compared to this luxuriously decorated restaurant, he, the owner, seemed much more destitute. He only had a few hundred yuan on him, not even enough to cover the store's petty cash.

I need to hurry up and make money!

Today at noon, the counselor had posted a notice in their group: all graduating students had to move out of the student apartments by next week, or they would be forcibly cleared out by the dormitory management office. Leaving school meant renting a place, but the cash Lin Xu had on him wasn't even enough to co-rent a place outside the sixth ring road.

He checked the time. It was 2:20 PM. There were nearly three hours until dinner time at 5 PM.

Three hours... that should be enough time to prepare, right?

Now that he had the Perfect Level recipe for Tomato Egg Noodles and a ready-made shop, Lin Xu's first thought was to make money quickly. With money, he could rent a comfortable and spacious house and, in games, draw as many times as he wanted.

After making this decision, he locked the shop door, went to the market to buy some ingredients, then changed into a chef's uniform, put on a chef's hat, and meticulously washed his hands. He began to make the dough.

The dough for handmade noodles needed to be mixed in advance and allowed to rest; this made the noodles tastier. While making the dough, he also needed to add salt and eggs in the proportion of five grams of salt and one egg per pound of flour. This would make the noodles chewier and also give them an eggy aroma.

Lin Xu used to be completely clueless about these things. However, after receiving the experience granted by the system, he performed each step quickly and proficiently, with neatness and efficiency. He moved almost like a lifelong noodle master who had spent years working around the cutting board.

「At 5 PM.」

The dough had rested properly, and the tomato and egg topping was also ready. Lin Xu took an electronic blackboard with the price list written on it and placed it by the entrance.

It read: "[Main Dish: Handmade Tomato Egg Noodles, Large bowl 28 yuan, Small bowl 25 yuan. Welcome to come in and taste!]"