

Culinary 17

Chapter 17 - The classmates are shocked! Would you be interested in working at Lin Ji?

Tiger Skin Chicken Feet?

Lin Xu was somewhat surprised.

He had looked at so many braised snacks before the draw. Why on earth did he draw chicken feet? But upon further thought, it seemed that at this stage, this was the only braised dish that met the restaurant's needs.

The customers' needs were for something to accompany their drinks, something that wouldn't prevent them from eating noodles afterward. Other braised dishes were either unsuitable for drinking alone or were too filling, making it impossible to eat noodles after. Only chicken feet. They were quite satisfying to gnaw on, and they didn't leave one feeling too full. One could still eat as much staple food as desired.

"Since that's the case, I'll wholesale some chicken feet tomorrow morning." Lin Xu made up his mind.

He then turned his attention back to reality and continued making noodles.

By eight o'clock in the evening, Lin Xu, drenched in sweat and his face full of apology, said to the customers, "I'm sorry, everyone. All the noodles and toppings have been sold out, and there's not much chili powder left either. If you want to eat, please come again tomorrow."

He leaned wearily against the workbench, his face covered with sweat.

The customers, seeing his condition, were quite understanding.

"Then we'll come earlier tomorrow. Take care of yourself, Boss Lin."

"Yes, take care of your health. Hire some help if you need it. Doing so much work alone is really unbearable."

"Don't prepare so much tomorrow, Boss Lin. You should rest too."

"You really need to rest. If you keep going like this, your body won't be able to take it."

Their concerns made Lin Xu feel very touched.

He said with a smile, "It's okay, I'll feel better after a short rest. You don't have to worry."

After the customers had left in twos and threes, Lin Xu cleaned up the kitchen and arranged the tables and chairs neatly. Then, carrying his wet clothes, he took the subway back to school.

Arriving at the male dormitory of the Finance Department, Lin Xu went up to the fifth floor. Just as he took out his keys to open the door of Room 504, the door of the neighboring dormitory suddenly opened. Sun Minghao, from his class, bare-chested and carrying a takeaway bag, came out, looking like he was about to throw trash out in the hallway.

Upon seeing Lin Xu, Sun Minghao asked curiously, "What have you been up to these days, Lin Xu? You're out early and back late. The cafeteria lady has been missing you; she even asked today where that handsome guy from the Finance Department had gone."

Lin Xu smiled tiredly and replied, "I've set up a small restaurant and have been busy with it during the day."

"Where is it? What's it called? Man, why didn't you say anything? Let your brothers give you some support."

Lin Xu inserted his key into the lock and said, "It's on Yingchun Street. The place is called Lin Ji's Food. But you don't need to go out of your way; everyone is busy, there's no need for formalities."

After exchanging a few pleasantries, he opened the door and went in. Now exhausted and reeking of sweat, he needed to take a quick shower and get to bed.

After Lin Xu entered his room, Sun Minghao thought that since his classmate had opened a restaurant, he should help promote it. So he took out his phone, opened the main chat group for the Finance Department, and quickly typed out a message:

"Got something to tell everyone: our classmate Lin Xu has opened a restaurant on Yingchun Street called Lin Ji's Food. If anyone is around there, remember to go support him."

No sooner had he sent the message than the lurkers in the group began to surface.

"What? Lin Xu opened a restaurant?"

"Is it that really handsome Lin Xu?"

"Damn, is this for real?"

"Yingchun Street isn't far from our company. It's called Lin Ji's Food, right? I'll see if they do delivery."

"I also live not far from Yingchun Street. I'll go take a look tomorrow."

"How did he come up with opening a restaurant? Isn't the food industry not profitable these days?"

Some classmates in the group were curious, and some were surprised. A graduate from Finance University opening a restaurant gave people the same sigh-inducing feeling as 'a Beijing University graduate selling pork.'

While everyone was chatting, a girl named Shen Jiayue suddenly posted a screenshot:

"I couldn't find Lin Ji's Food on the delivery app, so I searched it on Baidu. Then I found this: Lin Xu's Lin Ji's Food actually has its own topic on social media, with thousands of followers!"

At this, the discussion in the group became much more lively.

"When did it open? It even has a topic now."

"I thought only famous restaurants like Quanjude would have their own topics?"

"How did he pull it off?"

"He's not using his good looks to pull some fan club stunt, is he?"

Shen Jiayue continued to post screenshots:

"In the topic, no one mentions how handsome Lin Xu is. Instead, they all call him the Demon King, saying he's the biggest hurdle on their dieting journey. Everyone is praising how delicious Lin Xu's cooking is."

Then she posted a series of screenshots:

"This is a 'Clean Bowl Check-in' event initiated by customers of Lin Ji's Food, where everyone has to finish all the food in their bowl. Can you guys tell what kind of food is in there?"

The classmates in the group were all stunned.

"Fuck, with my eight years of experience eating covered rice dishes, I can't even make out what kind of food this is."

"Is Lin Xu's cooking that delicious?"

"Damn, I'm actually getting a bit hungry."

"I plan to go test Lin Xu's culinary skills tomorrow. Anyone want to join me?"

"I'll go, I want to taste it too."

"Count me in too!"

"..."

Lin Xu took a shower. He also washed the chef's uniform he had brought over and hung it on the balcony to dry.

After lying down on his comfortable bed, he picked up his phone, about to set his alarm for the next morning, when a series of notification sounds came from it. There were messages from roommates, classmates from his class, and various class group chats. Everyone was asking about his restaurant; some expressed regret, others curiosity.

After Lin Xu replied to them one by one, he noticed an update on the social media topic he followed and clicked on it.

The topic's follower count had successfully broken through one thousand, and its popularity score had also risen. Although it didn't make it into the top hundred in the region, the engagement numbers were significantly higher than before. This must be because many people were posting updates.

The topic feed was quite varied now. Lin Xu browsed through it and saw a new post by a netizen named Che Zai:

"Hahaha, tonight I was able to queue up and eat the Tomato Cubes Noodles made by Boss Lin, now I'm one of Lin Ji's boys too! The noodles are really tasty, and the customers are all so harmonious. Some customers even voluntarily help out after their meal. I love this kind of working environment. I really want to switch to working at Lin Ji, but sadly Boss Lin doesn't want me. Boo-hoo..."

Loving this kind of working environment?

Lin Xu immediately opened the private chat function. He sent Che Zai a message:

"How much is your current monthly salary?"

Che Zai must have been on his phone, as he replied in less than a minute:

"Who are you? You know it's illegal to pry into someone's privacy, right?"

Lin Xu smiled.

"I'm Lin Xu, the owner of Lin Ji's Food."

The other party immediately sent a shocked emoji:

"Ah? Boss Lin? Do I actually have a chance of being recognized? My current monthly salary is 4,500, and the department bonus is 200, making it a total of 4,700."

Lin Xu frowned.

That little?

No wonder young people these days don't want to be chefs.

Working to death all month for just that meager salary.

You'd probably earn more screwing caps on at a factory, right?

He replied:

"I currently need a kitchen assistant. The salary during the one-month probation period is 6,000. After the probation period, the salary will start at 8,000. Are you interested in working at Lin Ji?"