

# I'M THE CULINARY GOD

*Chapter 6 - 006: Punch in with an Empty Bowl, Be a Good Lin Ji Boy Who Eats Well!*

"Oh my god! I'm so stuffed!"

Panda slumped on the chair, rubbing his round belly with a satisfied look, resembling a giant panda that had just eaten its fill of bamboo. He had just finished one large and one small bowl of noodles. Feeling it wasn't enough, he ordered another small bowl, planning to soothe the spiciness in his mouth. But as he ate, that small bowl of noodles also ended up in his stomach.

Based on the weight of the wet noodles, a large bowl at Lin Ji's Food contained about 200 grams of noodles, and while the smaller bowl had less, it still held 150 grams. By that calculation, Panda had just consumed three bowls of Tomato Egg Noodles—one large and two small. He had downed a whole 500 grams of noodles alone, plus the toppings for all three bowls. No wonder he felt so full.

"Why do you torture yourself like this, Panda?"

After finishing their noodles, his two companions went to the nearby convenience store, bought two bottles of beverages, and returned to sit with Panda as he let his food settle. Panda wanted a drink too, but he figured if he had one now, the noodles would expand in his stomach and surely cause it to ache terribly. So, he decided it was better to endure for now.

"You two go ahead and finish the morning's orders first," Panda instructed his companions. "If new orders come in this afternoon, we'll discuss them when I get back. I'm going to sit here a bit longer."

After they left, he took out his phone and filmed a short video of the three empty bowls in front of him. Then, he opened the short-video platform and posted an update:

"#Lin Ji's Food# Tomato Egg Hand-Pulled Noodles are too delicious! Couldn't help myself and ate three bowls. Checking in with empty bowls, being a good Lin Ji boy! [Yeah][Yeah][Yeah]"

Recently, it had become popular online to refer to fans of something as "boys" or "girls" of that thing, so Panda followed suit, branding himself a fan of Lin Ji's Food.

As noon approached, the restaurant grew busier. Not wanting to disrupt Boss Lin's business, the "Lin Ji boy" Panda, after posting his update, walked to the cashier's counter. He supported his waist with one hand and his stomach with the other, resembling a pregnant woman, and sat on a chair inside to continue digesting his food.

However, even while digesting, he wasn't idle. Whenever a customer walked in, he tirelessly recommended they try the Tomato Egg Noodles with Chili Oil.

"You have to try adding some Chili Oil; it'll send you spiraling to heaven!"

"I'm usually a very reserved eater, but today, because of the Chili Oil, I lost all restraint and ate three bowls in one go."

"Don't laugh, everyone! Try it, I promise you won't regret it."

"..."

He was quite the social butterfly; the more customers there were, the more animated he became. When someone actually tried his suggestion, he was as happy as if he'd eaten it himself. Under his influence, the enthusiasm for eating Chili Oil in the shop reached unprecedented levels. Even some people who usually didn't eat much spicy food were tempted to try it.

During the sweltering summer days, everyone's appetite tended to wane, leaving them listless and without much desire to eat. But after trying the Chili Oil, its fragrant spiciness instantly awakened their taste buds. Consequently, many customers who usually ordered a small bowl switched to a large one, and those who typically had a large bowl ordered an additional small one.

In the kitchen, Lin Xu wiped the sweat from his forehead with a towel. It wasn't even noon yet, and the lunch rush hadn't officially begun. However, after Panda's enthusiastic recommendations, over a dozen customers, feeling unsatisfied after finishing a large bowl of hand-pulled noodles, had ordered an additional small one. This sudden surge meant Lin Xu, who hadn't been overly busy, was suddenly swamped for a while, rushing to prepare these unexpected extra bowls of Tomato Egg Noodles.

"Boss, we'll have eight large bowls of Tomato Egg Hand-Pulled Noodles!"

Just as Lin Xu was about to take a breather, the group of high school students from the previous evening entered the restaurant. Compared to yesterday, there were surprisingly more of them today. The one leading the group was still the girl with the mushroom haircut. As soon as she entered, she shouted her order towards the kitchen and then began looking for seats.

Although the restaurant wasn't full, every table was occupied. The high school students had no choice but to split into smaller groups and share tables with other diners.

After the girl with the mushroom haircut found a seat and was about to take out her phone, another girl sat down beside her and asked worriedly, "Lele, if we forge a teacher's signature to get out, will they call our parents? I heard that last month someone in Class Three did that, and his parents were called in."

The girl with the mushroom haircut was named Geng Lele, and she was the central figure of their small group. Geng Lele flicked her cute mushroom haircut and said, "Stop overthinking, Xiaozhi. They only called his parents because he didn't rank in the top five of his grade. If you're in the top five, the school definitely turns a blind eye. Look at me; I've snuck out so many times, and who's ever cared?"

Zhao Xiaozhi said with a worried expression, "You're a top student, so of course, it's no problem for you. We don't have the ability to get into the top five. Forget the top five; even the top fifty is way out of our league."

Geng Lele, her slightly chubby cheeks making her look as cute as a hamster with its mouth full of food, remarked, "Then just get into the top five. How hard can it be? During the exam, just write the answers in the right places, and you're all set!"

Zhao Xiaozhi was speechless. *The joys and sorrows of humanity are not interconnected; I just think you're humblebragging.*

She was about to leave to discuss countermeasures with her other classmates when Geng Lele grabbed her arm. "Wait, Xiaozhi, don't go yet! Help me out here. Representatives from both Tsinghua University and Beijing University have approached me recently, offering admission without an entrance exam. Should I choose Tsinghua or Beijing University?"

Zhao Xiaozhi was even more speechless. *Is this really a problem someone like me, a struggling student, is qualified to consider? The best I can dream of is acing the college entrance exam enough to get into a decent university. Admission without exams? I'm sorry, but that's beyond even my wildest dreams.*

Before long, their noodles were served. The conversation between the struggling student and the top student came to a temporary halt as they began to eat.

Geng Lele, seeing others adding Chili Oil, put a little in her bowl too. The taste was indeed excellent. She ate while opening her short-video app, hoping to find something new and interesting. However, even by the time she finished her noodles, she hadn't scrolled past anything engaging—just the usual squabbles between celebrity fan groups and previews for dull variety shows.

She then tapped on the "Nearby" feed to check for local posts. Just as it opened, she saw Panda's "empty bowl check-in" post.

*Huh? You can check in like this? Then I'll do it too!*

Geng Lele aimed her phone at the empty bowl in front of her. After taking a picture, she started composing her post:

"#Lin Ji's Food# Can't get enough of these Tomato Egg Noodles! They're absolutely divine with Chili Oil! Empty bowl check-in, being a good Lin Ji girl! [Yeah][Yeah][Yeah]"

Soon after, the other high school students followed suit and posted similar updates. This collective action surprisingly gained some traction on the short-video platform, and discussions popped up in the comment sections:

"Where is Lin Ji's Food?"

"The location tag says it's on Yingchun Street."

"Hey, that's near my house! I'll go check it out later."

"Me too! If I hadn't browsed the 'Nearby' feed, I'd never have known such a shop opened close by."

"..."