

## **Folly 84**

### Chapter 84 Wanting to Help Lu Yuanfeng

"How do you sell these cold noodles you're vending by the roadside?" the Fat Chef asked directly.

"Five wen per bowl."

Before Mu Shuangshuang came in, she observed the location of Jiu Si Xuan, which was in a relatively busy area. After entering the restaurant, she found that there were quite a few people dining here, which should be a fairly lucrative establishment.

The Fat Chef was calculating in his heart; their restaurant indeed did not have anything priced below twelve wen, whether it was sweet soup or small snacks. Therefore, the pricing for these cold noodles must definitely be higher than twelve wen.

Moreover, these cold noodles are only made in summer, so the price should be between fifteen to twenty wen, depending on the customers' reactions.

And what he would offer Mu Shuangshuang could not be less than what she earned by setting up a stall, otherwise the business wouldn't count as successful negotiations.

"Master Liu, have a sip of this young lady's juice, it's also quite nice."

The last glass of raspberry juice was handed over to the Fat Chef by Uncle Ah Fu. He took a big gulp and recalled the cold noodles he had before. The combination was just right.

"How about this: your juice and cold noodles together, ten wen per set, bring them to our restaurant once every day. I need them to be the freshest and ensure twenty-five sets each time."

Actually, twenty-five sets weren't much, especially since cold noodles are a single person's dish, maybe several were ordered per table, and twenty-five sets could be gone quickly. The reason for not ordering more was that the Fat Chef wanted to maintain exclusivity and charge premium prices.

"Every day..." Mu Shuangshuang hesitated. The village was more than ten li away, and if she made and sold fresh daily, she would be exhausted in less than half a month.

"Let's do it this way: you come every three days, but the quantity must increase. I'll need thirty sets."

Mu Shuangshuang quickly calculated in her mind. According to the Fat Chef's plan, this would only be for summer, which would be at most another two months.

One trip could earn her three hundred wen, around six taels of silver in two months.

But that's not the problem; the problem is the raspberry season only lasts for less than half a month.

"Uncle, the juice you drank is made from fresh raspberries, and there's only about half a month left in its season. Can I use other fruits for the remaining one and a half months?"

Pears and watermelons last throughout the summer, so they shouldn't be out of season.

"As long as it tastes just as good." The Fat Chef didn't make it difficult for Mu Shuangshuang because he trusted this young girl.

"If you have no objections, we can sign the contract now."

In ancient times, honesty was paramount; a written contract was almost as binding as a nailed board, and no one could back out.

Mu Shuangshuang felt the timing was right, so she spoke boldly.

"Uncle, do you need mountain game like rabbits or pheasants, or mountain goods like frogs and eels?"

I have an older brother who is a hunter. He makes a living from this, but he's too honest, not good at bargaining, and can't learn the tricks of others. If he's not busy, he can even help clean the game beautifully. Do you think...?"

The Fat Chef thought for a moment and shook his head.

"I'm sorry, young lady, it's not that I'm unwilling to help you; it's because our restaurant's supply channels are already set. I can't bypass others and find someone else."

"It's okay, I was just asking." Mu Shuangshuang quickly waved her hand. Though a bit disappointed inside, she believed that by asking around, she might find an opportunity in another restaurant.

"Master Liu, I've bought her brother's meat before; it's authentic wild game, priced fairly, and he's honest, really worth helping.

Don't you have any chef friends who might need such items?"

As soon as Ah Fu finished speaking, Mu Shuangshuang's eyes lit up. She had to admit, Uncle Ah Fu was exceptionally kind, always speaking positively on her behalf, and she would definitely thank him properly later.

"Hey, you're right. A new restaurant just opened in town, and I have a friend who's a chef there. I'll give you the address. Just say Fatty Liu referred you. If they haven't made a deal yet, it shouldn't be a problem."

The Fat Chef patted his chest in assurance, and Mu Shuangshuang knew things were almost settled.

"Thank you, Uncle Liu!"

"Thank you, Uncle Ah Fu."

"No need for thanks, let's just get the contract signed quickly."

Before signing the contract, Mu Shuangshuang shared a few more ingredients for the cold noodles with the Fat Chef. Although cold noodles are mainly mixed for eating, there are still many different flavors.

Once the contract was drafted, Mu Shuangshuang and the Fat Chef went together to find the restaurant steward, and the three of them pressed their fingerprints together, sealing the deal.

The contract was for two months, with a delivery every three days. In case of uncontrollable factors like strong winds or rain, the delivery could be postponed.

The entire contract was quite humane, but the penalty was rather painful: if breached, she had to compensate the restaurant ten times the silver, which was sixty taels.

Taking the opportunity, Mu Shuangshuang clearly outlined both sides' responsibilities to avoid future disputes that could all fall on her shoulders.

Since materials needed to be bought, Jiu Si Xuan's steward advanced Mu Shuangshuang three hundred wen as a deposit.

After the deposit, Mu Shuangshuang calculated, and found that this trip, she sold a total of twenty-seven sets of cold noodles, earning a hundred and thirty-five wen.

The juice was twenty-six sets, selling for fifty-two wen, plus thirty wen given by the Fat Chef, totaling two hundred and seventeen wen, excluding the restaurant's deposit.

Of course, she also had to deduct five wen for setting up tables, chairs, and tableware.

Even so, the two hundred and twelve wen was still a significant amount for Mu Shuangshuang, and with the restaurant's three hundred wen, she had made a substantial profit.

Judging by what she had now, she could buy some things for her family.

However, there was still a heavy burden on her shoulders—it was the division of the family. Having found a way to earn money short-term, there was no reason not to take this opportunity to split from the family.

Mu Shuangshuang knew well that her cold noodle business was becoming quite large. Who knows when Old Mrs. Mu might hear about it, or someone else with ill intentions might report it, which could turn into a troublesome situation.

So, to remove future troubles, the third branch must be split off.

Mu Shuangshuang was escorted out by Uncle Ah Fu. Because it wasn't yet mealtime, the kitchen wasn't busy, so he was willing to do this favor.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, Mu Shuangshuang planned to buy some food for Uncle Ah Fu. As she turned a corner, she happened upon several women selling pears squatting on the ground, and she quickly approached them.

"Auntie, how much are these pears?"

"Three wen per jin, they're fresh from the tree. Miss, would you like to weigh two jin to take home?"

It can only be said that fruits in ancient times weren't cheap—a jin of pears cost three wen, almost half a day's wages.

Despite this, Mu Shuangshuang gritted her teeth and decided to buy a few jin.

"Weigh me three jin, but don't short me, okay? I'll weigh it myself when I get back."