

# Noodlutoxia

Zhengyuan Gao

## Part I

**Letter sent to the most powerful city of the world from the capital of the Ilkhanate, addressed to X, member of the Great Peace Agency, dated 6th September N1494.**

To the illustrious grandmaster,

Some years ago, as Your Lordship well knows, my instructor and I, in the disguise of flour merchants, headed towards the West to commit the mission of spreading our greatest ideology of Noodlarianism, building a new base of the noodle chain and joining the secular forces to noodlise the local folk food.

For so many years, I dare not forget the original heart; these missions are deeply imprinted in the trajectory of my life.

I am writing to Your Lordship concerning a gravest and mysterious event: the unstoppable fall of the Flourism states on the eastern edge of the Mediterranean sea. The savage Pilau was able to attack and capture many floury protectorates in the past twenty years. The believers of Flour near me are all in the worries of the Pilau's violence. However, I seem to sense something different. I am of the opinion that another kind of dynamic force is driving the crash, and this kind of dynamics shares many similarities with what I learned from the advanced noodlisation theory.

As Your Lordship is already aware, Pizzarianism, what we know as the Leavened Dough Guild, seem to face a crisis of overpopulation in its territory. Unlike the civilised noodlarianists, the pizzamen do not have a well-developed stirring scheme. However, I think they were practicing a manoeuvre similar to spitting out the sputum.

I beg Your Lordship to forgive my vulgarity. But this is undoubtedly the most convenient way for Your Lordship to understand this crafty plot. Like stirring up the noodles and gravy, spitting out the phlegm also utilises one's internal force and also satisfies one's desire — clearing up the throat. Imagine a mixture of saliva, sesame sauce, cud of noodles, and mucus sticking in Your Lordship's respiratory tract. Would Your Lordship swallow it, or would Your Lordship spit it out?

In the past two centuries, this mechanism has frequently been spitting out a steady stream of fanatics. Just like Your Lordship's thick phlegm on the floor — although it comes from Your Lordship's sacred body — carries the infected debris that can pollute the environment and indirectly force the pedestrian to absorb the unwanted bacteria. Wherever these fanatical pizzamen went, they caused full of devastation. Although their main bodies — what they call themselves “yeasts” — are merely peasants plus some nobles who do not have inheritance rights, they have unrivalled destructive power. This power is no less than that of the converted Noodlarianism herdsmen from the grassland and the pavement heroes of the patriarchal clan who failed the imperial examination.

Your Lordship must find it confused that such a mighty spitting force has become weaker and weaker in recent years and finally fell to the point of being ravaged by the savage Pilau. I wonder if I might be granted permission to bring some explanations to Your Lordship's confusion?

According to my observations, the decrease of the kinetic energy of the spit seems to be a part of the centuries-long ferment movement led by the Pizzarianism. The sacred movement of “Recapture the Original Land of Flour” against the Pilau may be just the camouflage for a “yeast-transporting” operation, through which the Leavened Dough Guild was able to continuously send yeastlike entities to the territory of the Unleavened Dough Union.

When the transportation finished, pizzamen heated up the sacred movement so that the “yeasts” could ferment smoothly inside the “dough.” The ancient Union had to suffer the self-inflation. The inflation impaired the existing structures. The orders of the Unleavened Dough Union now become soft and fluffy. Eventually, I think the Union is like a fully fermented “dough” that still considers itself “unleavened.”

As Pizzarianism has almost achieved its goal, it gradually stopped transporting “yeasts” to the East. I expect that the shortage of “yeasts” will finally lead to the end of the Flourism states.

In my most humble opinion, this two centuries' enduring ferment movement is a foresighted and well-executed spitting. Just like a perfect stirring, it is worthy of being praised and paid tribute to in history.

Nevertheless, I simultaneously felt a sense of crisis approaches. Although the spitting and stirring movements require different raw materials, the ultimate purposes behind these two share a surprisingly similar logic: creating endogenous destruction.

Currently, Pizzamen can use “yeasts” to ferment the unleavened “dough.” In the future, they might think of making “noodles” with the “leavened dough.” We must not allow this kind of fermented “noodles” to exist! Noodlarianism must beware of this substitute ideology.

My instructor and I decided to make further contact with Pizzarianism. We want to identify the essential operation of the spitting. Also, we will attempt to sell to the pizzamen an idea that spitting and stirring are completely two schemes: one is to stir impurities contained in the “gravy” with “noodles,” and the other is to spit out the impurities caused by the “yeasts.” By pointing out the difference, we hope to eliminate their potential intention of fermenting “noodles.” My instructor will try to meet the chairman of the Guild, and I am about to participate in the election of the eastern patriarch of the Guild. I wish Your Lordship could support our selfless missions.

May the all-powerful Lord guard us against forthcoming darkness. Let the light of Noodlarianism illuminate this dark and ignorant place.

Long live Noodlarianism!

Your Lordship’s faithful servant

M

6th day of September N1494

**Letter sent to the holiest city of the world from the capital of Yuan empire, addressed to X, member of the Leavened Dough Guild, dated 21st September 1294.**

To the respected and reverend lord,

Some years ago, in the disguise of yeast merchants, my uncle and I headed towards the East to commit the mission of spreading our greatest ideology of Pizzarianism, exploring a new hub of pizza, and joining the lay brothers and sisters to acidify and enzymise the local folk food. I drafted some of my experience in the manuscript "A Million of Noodle Recipes" in my spare time. I heard that the manuscript has reached Your Highness's hands. It was my great honour to have Your Highness's comments on this manuscript.

As Your Highness has mentioned, this work values detailed information. When I wrote the draft, my target audience was ordinary Dough practicers rather than pious pizzamen. Therefore, even though I am personally satisfied with the draft as an introductory of noodlisation theories, I found that none of this content would merit so much as a moment of Your Highness's attention.

In this letter, may Your Highness allow me to disclose a completely different perspective of Noodlarianism, a deep investigation report of the ideology?

The main body of Noodlarianism is represented by the proletariats, in other words, the ignorant majority. This is similar to what happens in the Pizzarianism terrain. However, the spectrum of the proletariats here is extremely unitary. In these remote pariah lands, the soldiers are just armed peasants; the workers are skilled peasants who want to earn extra money; the intellectuals are schooled peasants who like to educate the youth. In short, the class of proletariats merely consists of peasants or re-packaged peasants. The other professional citizens only count for a small fraction of the population.

The "nobles," including the royal members, convert themselves as noodlarianists. However, they definitely do not belong to the aristocracy defined by the Guild. In my opinion, these "nobles," are closer to the farmers. Because they have been guided by a profound farmer-oriented ideology in their lifestyles and thinkstyles. Nevertheless, these "nobles" do not completely conform to the farmers defined by the Guild either. Their knowledge often spans a substantial number of subjects. They show talents in arts, tactics, rhetoric, medicine (incl. physical fitness, poisoning, healing), and cuisine, etc., but they lack the enthusiasm to have complete mastery in any of these subjects. They are, in a sense, poly-farms.

As a macroscopic force, the class of poly-farms has tenacious vitality. They use their diversified knowledge to invent a variety of ways to fight against nomads, ranging from armed confrontation to spiritual and physical corruption. A rumour says the current Khan of the empire has also been brainwashed and stomachwashed by these poly-farms. Personally, I hold my skeptic about this canard. But his predecessor was assassinated by the noodlarianists. So the Khan must have scruples about Noodlarianism.

The constituent elements of the poly-farms seem to have never changed since the emergence of Noodlarianism: they are the qualifiers from the imperial examinations and the survivors of various stirred purges. As long as the centralised examination systems still exist and as long as the quasi-periodic stirs still eventuate the change of the dynasty, this class would be immortal.

Actually, the immortal desire is even praised as the principle of this class or perhaps of almost every noodlarianist. The spirit of noodlarianists is to pursue the continuity of the consanguinity. Their soul, their spiritual love, or even their lives are entrusted with this continuity. Therefore, independence or privacy has little meaning in such a rural mass organisation of peasants and poly-farms.

I am afraid that direct acidification is not a feasible tactic for this kind of condensed agricultural empire. Over here, most followers in the Vegetarian Association have been noodlised. Also, over here, the brothers and sisters from the Pilau and Falafel Association gradually accustom themselves to eccentric filial piety. If Pizzarianism couldn't wait to send the elite pizzamen to these pariah lands, Noodlarianism might easily homogenise our men.

That is why I shall not cease to supply Your Highness with my humble idea in the hope that even a single one of my words may advance Your Highness's intentions.

My idea, in short, is to cultivate "natural yeasts" from "noodles."

The peasants and poly-farms, although they are indispensable to society, have many weaknesses.

Their monotonous professional background makes them have poor comprehension of abstract and rigorous orders. They lack love for the ultimate in intelligence or knowledge. Their philosophy and extended proficiency in astronomy, geography, arithmetic, management, etc., mostly come from a summary or a collection of agricultural wisdom in thousands of years.

Their worship of reproductive, survival, and hedonism activities attach themselves with undistinguished exploratory souls. Even though they can construct a set of empirical models suitable for farmers, the poly-farms lack awareness and willingness to explore the unknown world. Once a complete empiricism worldview model is formed, they seem comfortable adhering to that view forever and ignoring or even covering the counterfactual facts.

Their collective happiness is defined by the consanguineous merriment rather than individual joyousness. The actual satisfaction for the individuals is completely suspended or ignored. As a compromise, the individuals are encouraged to look for superficial substitutions, making them believe in materialism or consumerism. Apart from the chases of physical stimulation, gourmet, and longevity, their individuals seem to have no motivation to discover personal happiness, and thus no incentive of examining their personal existences. As the reward system of its meritocracy is to comfort the illusory happiness of individuals, the system is fragile and unsustainable in the long term.

Their centralised industries and government can only sustain the pool of craftsmen and experts at a minimal level. Their social norm puts the desires of survival and appetite as of the utmost importance. Meanwhile, it suppresses all other desires. Except for the necessities of living and working, they do not encourage other types of productions, especially the creations that may diversify their styles of thinking and living. So there is little demand for new concepts and ideas. Also, there is no soil for cultivating the enterprising spirit: Their centralised system is rough and rigid. It cannot reasonably adapt itself to novel things, just like their stomachs cannot smoothly digest raw beef and fresh milk.

Last but not least, their stirring system inevitably enters a state of self-corrosion, which makes the progress of their civilisation go backward. This is because their centralisation system cannot maintain the continuously expanding state. The retrogression of the development process happened in some specific time window. This window ranges from several decades to hundreds of years, but no more than four hundred because the capacity of their centralisation would almost exceed the limit by the time.

Given these weaknesses, my humble idea is not to conquer this union of peasants and poly-farms by force. What we need is a bigger “centralised system”—just like our current system of controlling farmers—to direct this noodle system, allowing the members of the noodle union to live on their comfort zone, work hard, and pay our great Guild their membership fees, the tax. A closed and self-sustained terrain of “noodles” would be an ideal tax collector for the Guild.

To outsource the taxation duties, we could even take advantage of the “noodles.”

For stirring, Noodlarianism has to drive the citizens to two extreme states: the uncivilised peasants who are easy to be manipulated as they are extremely sensible and fanatical; the noodlised poly-farm who are skilful at many fields but cannot enlighten the fuzzy latency because they are extremely rational and realistic. Noodlarianism utilises its imperial examination to educate the citizens on moving towards these two extremes.

Therefore, exploiting the centralised Noodlarianism system is all about hacking their education system.

The basic logic of the imperial examination is to deform the hereditary power of the “nobles” and redistribute the opportunities based on an individual's ability. However, this is only a superficial form. The real assessment is based on how the examinees understand and accept the agricultural ethical laws. Those who approve of these agricultural ethical laws and can skilfully apply this ethical framework in necessary agricultural and social management will be included in the “noodle” category regardless of their backgrounds. Other thoughts, no matter how profound they are, will be categorised as the “gravy.” These two categories are incompatible with and hostile to each other, which generates the original force of the regression.

I might be so bold as to believe that Your Highness reaches the same conclusion as his servant. This official noodlised education system is similar to the primary education models in the Guild. However, the peasants and poly-farms believe that such a model for the immature intellectuals could also be used for training the top executives. Apparently, their vision of education only focuses on fairness but ignores diversity. I could understand this vision. Because for those farmers, the quality of crops, the weather, and geographical factors play far more crucial roles than the personality of the cultivator. Any qualified farmer is supposed to harvest similar products given the same natural factors. Therefore, they believe that anyone who passes the imperial examination can become a meritocratic “noodle.”

A peasant often chooses one literate son from many, then gathers the whole family's strength to invest in his study, hoping him to obtain a “noodle” title and its benefits. Thus, the learning goals of “noodles” are to obtain political benefits. Few have the passion for identifying the authenticity of learned knowledge.

These educated “noodles,” no matter how superb examination skills they acquired, would not be mature enough to explore in the unknown fields. The standardised examination filters out those with independent spirits and critical thoughts. But this is good news to the Guild.

The “noodles” do not understand that knowledge comes from the humans' explorations of the unknown fields. Therefore, they give up their willingness to become explorers. Our pizzamen can use the missionary torch to illuminate the knowledge that is unknown to “noodles,” guide the selective “noodles” to the direction of our interests and manifest the supremacy of Pizzarianism. By the time when some of these enlightened “noodles” manage to enter their ignorant central Agency, they

would soon figure out their inferior Agency is not able to produce the same illumination. The arrogant poly-farms of the Agency would definitely treat those enlightened “noodles” as aliens, a standard peasant attitude towards unknowns. The Agency probably would implement the ostrich policy to suppress the doubts and questions about the inferiority of their ideology. At this moment, the enlightened “noodles” would automatically convert to a “dough” that carries the “natural yeasts.” They are going to leaven the whole empire.

To speed up the fermentation, my humble suggestion is to consider some particular fields highly praised by the noodlarianists and lock their research progress in those fields. According to my observation, astronomy seems rather important to Noodlarianism. However, their methods may be less accurate than the Pilau’s. That is why the noodlarianists are making a great effort to noodlise the Pilau inhabitants within the empire. Your Highness may consider grouping some outstanding candidates with fanatical interests in strips and let them conduct further investigations on this possibility.

In the hope that my information will be useful to Your Highness, I kiss Your Highness’s hands covered in flour and submit to your grace.

Your Highness’s faithful servant

M

September 21st 1294

**Letter sent to the most divine city of the world from the capital of Ming empire, addressed to X, member of the Society of Pasta, dated September 26th, 1601.**

To my most honourable patron,

After a long silence, I am writing to Your Grace in the hope that You Grace will still have cause to bestow upon your faithful servant the attention and care that you have shown him hitherto. As Your Grace well knows, after I graduated from the renowned Université des pâtes, I headed towards the East to pursue my passion for strips, to preach the blessing of pasta, and to commit my mission of witnessing the cross-cultural cuisine, which is a part of Your Grace's grand project *Noodlutopia*.

After almost twenty years of stay in the Noodlarianism lands, a few days ago, I was permitted to live in the capital of the empire, where I should be able to further promote the progress of the project. Therefore, I am hurrying to give Your Grace an account of the project's current progress so that Your Grace can express your most wise opinion upon it and grant me the privilege of once again serving our common goals.

Your Grace may wonder, after so many years, why the number of customers in our Pasta restaurants remains at the insignificant level in this pariah state. I suspect that the leading cause of this tragedy is the sauce. We cannot find qualified cheese over here. It is hard to prepare some standard pasta sauce, such as Alfredo, Amatriciana, or Pesto.

Our main channel for obtaining cheese is through importing the products from the base of the Dairy Association in the southeastern islands. Unfortunately, this trade road is full of Tofu pirate. The Can Sect is the primary supporter of this armed smuggling gang. The Tofu Party, especially the Can, share some common interests with us in overseas trade, but they held open revolts against the current central government, an Everyone's Noodles government. Thus, the Noodlarianism navy severely cracked down on overseas trade and restricted the import of all suspicious commodities. Since the Dairy Association supplied some cannon equipment to the Tofu pirates, cheese was also included in the suspect list.

The moratorium on cheese imports lasted a long time.

I must confess to Your Grace that the nasty idea of mixing pasta with gravy often lingered in my mind under such a harsh condition. But thanks to the brothers in the eastern island country, we were finally able to break through the blockade of cheese. These shrewd and reliable pastamen sowed the seeds of the ambition around the noodlised Tofu aristocrats in the island country so that their poly-farm general, who always dreamed that the Can Sect could re-dominate the noodle lands, was successfully persuaded to attack the Ming Dynasty. This war greatly injured the vitality of the Ming's navy. Thus, our trade road can be restored.

We also benefit from a side-effect of this war. The noodlarianists were used to despise the Tofu aristocrats in the islands, even those who belonged to the noodlised Can Sect. But during this war, the Tofu aristocrats, after being enlightened by Pizzarianism, have demonstrated their abilities by defeating the Noodlarianism army. The loss of battles pressed the noodlarianists to change their arrogance and prejudice towards the pasta brothers.

On the other hand, the gravy masters among the noodlarianists start alerting to cheese. They realise that cheese, like gravy, relies on a strong flavour to attract customers. So they are now very hostile to the Dietary Association. Personally, I think gravy and cheese are natural enemies. According to my observation, all long-term gravy consumers seem to either resist the taste of cheese or suffer from indigestion of dairy products.

This is marvellous news for Pizzarianism. In the West, our great Guild faced a huge amount of protestors supported by the Dairy Association. But in the East, it is possible to keep all the "noodles" away from dairy products due to lactose intolerance. Thus, the Guild would be the only cross-cultural cuisine supplier leftover in this pariah state. The Society of Pasta could be the monopoly for shaping the contents of this cross-cultural cuisine.

Perhaps now, it is the right moment to submit the next implementation plan of Noodlutopia to Your Grace.

Within the Noodlarianism's central Agency, some members have felt the pressures from the outside world, and they initiate a campaign. Their aim is to modify the classic noodlisation laws and to produce some novel "noodles" based on a so-called *five grains theory*. We need to be cautious with the tactic of this campaign. Because similar strategies happened before, when the Agency attempted to noodlise Vegetarian Association, the Pilau and Falafel Association, and even the oriental branch of the great Guild. The peasantry noodlisations were so successful that now I can hardly restore the tracks marked by the ancient Pizzamen in this pariah empire.

I will take all the necessary precautions to avoid the glory of the great Guild being eroded again by the noodlarianists. However, before going to the details of my plan, I will bring Your Grace's attention to the foundation of Noodlarianism ideology.

The ideology of Noodlarianism emphasises the morality in human nature. Since everyone has bright and dark sides, morality encourages the light part and depresses the dark one. But most of the time, we live in the grey part, neither

completely white nor completely black. In these grey zones, morality helps us to define norms to distinguish the relative light regions. Nevertheless, these ethical norms in human society need to adapt to the changes in the living environment. Because those norms are defined by the human being, who is just a member of living species in nature. Nature always changes, although the span of such a change may surpass generations.

In this pariah empire, a moral system often lasted about four to five generations, namely 2-300 years. The stereotype of “noodle” regimes is built upon the ethical activities against the previous dynasty’s corruption, or the invasion from outsiders, or a combination of the two. When the memory of these activities fades out in generations, when the regime becomes more corrupted, or a more threatening enemy emerges, the rightness of the current regime would be weakened. Since the moral system is the foundation of “noodle” regimes, the defects in the original moral system would be magnified to impact the noodle regime.

In the deeper layer, the flawed moral system cannot carry a constantly changing society with its inherently rigid doctrine. So noodlarianists periodically stir the running processes to reset their system with some modified or “novel” moral laws.

In such a system, all the educated “noodles” are extremely submissive to authoritarian laws. The “gravy” gang is against those laws incompatible with its interests. However, due to the poorly educated background, the gang has no clear vision about how to modify the inappropriate laws. Thus, noodlarianists can fully control ideological development and supply new moral laws and ideological theory in each stir. After the stir, society can remain peaceful before the emerging issues of these laws and theories.

Given these features, my bold conjecture is that as long as “noodles” confront more profound and more stable laws that can encompass their moral beliefs, they would submit to the new ones.

Most ethical laws of Noodlarianism are inspired by the astronomical and geographical knowledge from farming experience. This knowledge constitutes the Noodlarianism worldview. Thus, Pizzarianism needs to use the laws of nature to defeat those farming experience-based laws.

Noodlarianism is confident with their ideology because those ethical laws have proven reliable through thousands of years of lives-experiments by their ancestors. However, these proofs are empirical, not logical. In other words, their “laws” are likely to be invalidated outside of their arable lands. Because these philosophical farming laws are strongly regional and sensitive to climate change. The evidence is that no matter how they toss their northern neighbours, including absorption, resistance, assimilation, and alienation, they have not yet completely noodlised the northern nomads. On the contrary, the great Guild has “fermented” the entire Eurasian nomads in a few hundred years. It can be seen as proof that our ideology is absolutely superior to Noodlarianism’s.

The centralised system of peasants and poly-farms tends to control everything, which results in crude and superficial implementations in almost every layer, especially the grassroots. Although our central council in the Guild only regulates thoughts ideologically, it effectively monitors and reviews various industries. Pizzarianism can infiltrate into deeper layers and can handle the multi-scaled structures more effectively.

Now, the great Guild just needs to demonstrate the advantage of Pizzarianism to the “noodles.” Since “noodles” submit to the authoritative scholarship. Pizzarianism needs to promote a solid candidate to grasp the most crucial chair in the authority of their ideological department.

My humble opinion is to consider the astronomy department. Astronomy encourages free souls to look upward and guides their views from the accessible world to the inaccessible one. The current understanding of astronomy in the Guild is more advanced than the Pilau’s, and for sure, it is ahead of the Noodlarianism’s. By receiving our knowledge, “noodles” would soon figure out the difference between Noodlarianism and Pizzarianism. The difference just likes the fire of the candle and the light of the stars in the night sky. Candlelight is the radiance of matter after burning, but the radiance of stars comes from the burst of energy with rigorous material organisation and order. The “noodles” will understand that the flame of Noodlarianism can only last for about 300 years, while the flame of Pizzarianism is eternal.

The chosen pizzaman or the chosen pastaman of this mission should acquire superb numerical skills to demonstrate the unquestionable advantage of Pizzarianism in predicting the movements of celestial objects. His prestige is enough to astonish all the “noodle” scholars, let them feel that their destiny can also be foreseen under his computation.

On the other hand, the chosen one should also be able to deal with the mass of “gravy.” Unlike “noodles,” the “gravy” gang can shamelessly noodlise anything. They distorted the origin of knowledge, added dust to the pure theories, or manipulated the outcomes of preceding researches. A standard Pizzarianism scholar would feel huge discomfort when staying with “gravy.” Pizzarianism needs another means to deal with “gravy.” One possibility is to drive them out of this continent in the future. For example, we can support a part of “gravy” to move its stirring base to one of our sites, i.e., forming a Sicily in the East, so that Pizzarianism can slowly dilute “gravy” and analyse its principal ingredients. For the moment, there is no available means to avoid “gravy” corrupting our knowledge.

Given this concern, I would beg Your Grace to consider a sloppy astronomer, perhaps a flawed polymath, among Your Grace's outstanding apprentices to conduct this honourable and formidable mission. The chosen one, like Adam, expelled from the Garden of Eden, will continuously enlighten the noodles with his contaminated knowledge. Year after year, his disciplined students and students of students will seize all the crucial ideological positions in the Noodlarianism's central Agency, and they will form a "dough" to spread their corrupted knowledge and punish the disagreed thoughts.

Your Grace will have a better understanding than his servant of this plan. It is nothing else but a stirring plan. Nevertheless, the stirrer in this run will carry the glory of pastamen. He will become the origin "yeast" to ferment the "dough" of "noodles." The ideology driving the stir will be the supreme leavening system. The contaminated formulas and distorted models will become the navigator leading the fools to the chaos. The data-driven peasants and poly-farms will be locked in the mathematical and logical objects which they seldom comprehend. By then, Noodlarianism will be subordinate to the great Guild like their slogan "whoever leads the stir will get the leadership!"

So, my most honourable patron, I have nothing more to say about the plan. All that remains to me is to thank Your Grace once again for your infinite generosity, and to implore Your Grace's continuing favour while I await your choice.

Your Grace's faithful servant

M

September 26th, 1601.



# Part II

## 1

Adam wakes up very late today. Last night, he, with great interest, spent a long time reading some manuscripts that the Society of Pasta banned. These manuscripts were brought secretly to him by some brothers from the Guild. Without exception, all the authors of these manuscripts are exploring forward along the research direction of the heliocentric theory. He is not so familiar with this theory. All he learned about this theory during his school was that one of the pioneer heliocentric theorists was executed in an oven. At the time, the Guild was very scared of this heretical belief because its claim — Pizza represents the sun, not the earth — was challenging the traditional metaphoric doctrine in Pizzarianism.

However, some expelled pizzamen seemed to stand by the heliocentric theory, including Adam's idol. This man dropped different sizes of pizza from the pizza tower to demonstrate his belief in the relation between gravity and velocity. Unfortunately, after dropping the pizza, he was locked by pastamen, and the Society banned his works for a long time. But now, after almost 20 years of his death, every pizzaman pursuing the degree has to learn the formula of this relation.

Adam clearly understands what does the forbidden knowledge means to the Guild. It means that the idea is as dangerous as the double-sided medical weed that can both heal a strong mind and destroy a vulnerable spirit. It means that the guild must prohibit the mass from reaching the idea and place an embargo on this powerful mental weapon to its opponents. It means that the pastamen, as weedkillers of the guild, should crash the seeds of the idea at any cost. But it also means that the vital seeds will probably survive and secretly grow somewhere else; eventually, the persevering weeds may become strong enough to counter-attack the killers' minds and enrich the Guild's armoury.

The banned heliocentric theory currently attracts generous support from the Dairy Association, just like the theory of the falling pizza before. Meanwhile, Dairy Association is one of the primary opponents of Noodlarianism. So is this all a coincidence?

Regardless of the possible political trick behind the ideological battle, Adam finds the content of the theory very promising. Although it took him a whole night to understand the basic concepts of the heliocentric theory, he has grabbed some intuition of the models. Adam found that one model from a fellow countryman describes a fascinating situation: Suppose that the earth revolves around the sun. Imagine that the sun is the centre of the pizza, and the earth's moving orbit is the pizza's edge. Every slice of the pizza looks like the area of a sector drawn by the movement of the earth and the distance from the sun. The heliocentric theory declares that the earth circles the sun once a year. If a pizza cutting process follows the same movement, the process will simply cut the pizza into 365 slices. Moreover, as one day is subdivided into 24 hours, there will be 24 smaller pieces in each slice. Then as one hour is subdivided into 60 minutes, one can cut each  $1/24$  slice into 60 smaller slices, and so on. In this way, if one continues cutting the pieces, there seems to be nothing left. However, this seemingly zero-area thing represents the infinitesimal moment in which the earth moves. And this infinitesimal moment is equivalent to our instant life. One's life is an integral of all these instant moments. So this infinitesimal thing seems to be the fundamental of its collective object. If society is a collection of beings, could the infinitesimal represents some spontaneous soul instantly emerging?

None of these manuscripts gave a clear definition of what this infinitesimal is. Adam was pondering on the definition, which made him hard to fall asleep. Staying up late is really not healthy for Adam, especially he is over 70 now.

Lying on the bed, Adam stretches a bit and then decides to get up.

## 2

When Adam first arrived in the empire's capital, he was living in a room provided by the Society of Pasta. But as he is now one of the first ministers of the imperial court, the empire offers his living place. Amongst several proposed locations, he chose the current place. This residence can satisfy his dual role: a pastaman and an imperial servant. Adam divided his residence into two parts, one is for living and official meetings, the other is a private pasta restaurant with a courtyard garden.

Adam catered to the local habits and named the pasta "western noodles." In his restaurant, the standard menu only contains noodles. The pizza dishes are provided in a separate hidden menu that is only available to western customers. The locals love his restaurant and the tastes of the noodlised pasta. Adam is proud of his invented dishes. Because some customers, especially the female customers, decided to convert to Pizzarianism after going to his restaurant, even though most of them had never tasted any pizza in their lives. They must be seduced by the charming flavours of the western noodles.

The various flavours come from the spices grown in Adam's garden. Every day, after getting up and washing, the first formal thing Adam does is to cultivate his flowers and plants in his garden.

His garden is quite compact. But it is already a luxury symbol in the Noodlarianism terrain. The emperor's garden is almost the same size as Adam's. However, it is smaller than any well-established garden Adam saw in his childhood. When Adam visited the emperor's garden, he was shocked by the random pile of rockeries, the small pool, and the unreasonable layout. Adam felt like he was standing in a potted landscape, surrounded by artificial mountains and miniature trees. Except that in a bonsai, some clay figurines would be placed, but in the emperor's garden, Adam met the real emperors.

It seems to Adam that the noodlarianists are afraid of nature. The anxiety reflects on their preferences of living in the crowded cities, distancing themselves from the wildness, and owning narrow courtyard gardens. Sometimes, such fear seems to develop a rebellious mind. The Great Peace Agency often drafts some centralised plans to transform the natural environment. Few of these transformations succeeded in the end. Still, the projects undoubtedly established the images of necessarily maintaining the centralisation against nature. An ironic image often comes up in Adam's mind: In this vast and seemingly boundless empire, the senior officers from the Agency enjoy squeezing themselves in their narrow courtyard gardens every day to appreciate the minimised rivers and mountains, the model of their "conquering" territories.

Adam despises the noodlarianists' tastes in gardening. So he designed his garden in his own way, an adventurous and experimental way. The garden sits between the restaurant and his living place. The stone paving in the garden is the same as the restaurant's interior, making the garden path a natural continuity of the restaurant. Rosemary and dill intersperse among the stones.

A few years ago, a noble lady visited Adam to consult with her job application. She applied for a very competitive position. The Barley Sect supported her main competitor. The worries made the lady suffer from insomnia. Adam mixed aromatic herbs and put them inside a mini-pizza model. He suggested the lady carrying this model all the time. Since that night, the lady was able to sleep. She gave all the credits to Adam and Pizzarianism. Later, the lady got the position, the wife of the emperor at the time. Now, she is the mother of the current emperor. She also asked Adam to make another model and gave it to her mother-in-law. Thanks to rosemary and dill, Adam found two stable patronnes.

The bush of rosemary and dill is thick enough to outline the garden path and lead the customers' attention up to the central garden. There, it sits Adam's standouts, capsicum plants, and their neighbours. From summer to autumn, Adam can harvest gorgeous fruits from these plants. According to Adam's experience, little chillies grow well when he plants tomatoes and aubergines nearby. The little reds can also protect the rosemary, dill, or basil from fungi. But somehow, they do not get along well with fennel and beans. This observation made Adam give up the idea of growing leguminous plants in his garden.

In the summer, chillies plants form magnificent flowers, some white, some purple. Together with the flowers of star jasmine and dog rose that cover the sidewall of the garden, the colourful segments add depth to this vibrant area. A variety of fragrances diffuses in the garden. Closing the eyes, Adam can easily identify his exact location by smelling the fragrance.

For those imperial concubines who were curious about Adam's restaurant but not able to depart from their living quarters, Adam sends them jasmine petals and roseberries as gifts. He instructs the ladies how to make herb tea by using these ingredients. This tea brings the ladies tranquility and peacefulness. As returns, when they share the moment with the emperors, they often put in good words for Adam and Pizzarianism.

Among all the spices, chillies are Adam's favourite. He has modest tolerance to spiciness. However, his noodlised customers, regardless of gender, are totally obsessed with this exotic flavour. Perhaps because they are accustomed to the strong gravy, their taste buds can easily adapt to the spicy food. Customers who were hostile to pasta can immediately change their attitudes once they degust these western strips covered by the chilli sauce. They have never experienced such stimulative taste before. The chillies allow Adam to conjure up his incredible cuisine.

### 3

Apart from his passion for chillies, another reason that forces Adam to take care of the garden by himself is that he is not fully confident with his servants. His servants are a group of diligent and attentive people. It's just that sometimes they are too enthusiastic to demonstrate their importance and wisdom. Once upon a time, Adam committed the laissez-faire policy to his servants, letting them take care of his valuable garden. Very quickly, the chillies became pampered. The plants overindulged in nutrients, their sizes were bulkier, but their tastes were lacklustre. If Adam didn't stop the policy, the servants would continue frequently changing the soil, excessively watering, and choosing neighbour plants according to their aesthetics; the whole garden would evolve in the direction of "noodlisation" — losing its vitality, becoming fussy and overdone.

Although Adam succeeded in shielding his garden from his servants' "attacks," he failed to protect himself. Not long ago, an old loyal servant brought his beautiful young daughter to the residence, hoping to share his workload. Adam upheld his usual frivolous style, dealing with the youth lady in a casual way without setting any sophisticated edge. Almost at the same time, various rumours about the two spread around the town. The rumours described Adam as falling in love with the girl at first sight and initiating a passionate pursuit. To investigate on the origin of the rumours, Adam did a few follow-up tests. He planned an episode and restricted the range of initial insiders. Soon the result of tests became available. If

Adam could make any positive conclusion on the result, Adam would like to think that his loyal friend and his servant fellows wanted to promote this beautiful lady's value in the marriage market. For this intention, Adam wished them success. They did. The youth lady finally found her Mr. Right.

With hindsight, Adam sniffed a strong "gravy" smell from the propaganda campaigns conducted by his servants. Since they are all imperial employees, Adam inferred that the "gravy" gang from the court set up the trap. This deduction surprised Adam. Because, unlike the usual pastamen, Adam was hoping to maintain a harmonic relation with the "gravy" gang, at least on the surface. Apparently, the gang disregarded his unleashed goodwill. Instead, it used the trap to threaten his position and ruin his influence amongst the officers and the concubines.

Adam speculates that the Agency might be planning a new stir, and his role might have been placed in its scheme. But at present, he can't figure out any exact development of this stir. So all he can do is wait for the further signal.

The last big stir Adam involved was about 40 years ago. The stir made the gigantic dynasty change its appearance almost instantly. Adam felt like participating in a botched drama in a country theatre. The show was led by a group of amateurs who did not rehearse well. Perhaps, the original script was a severe, long-lasting drama. But the actors successfully turned it into a farce. So the director had to cut the show abruptly and replace the previous amateur group with a new one. Adam found the new group still full of crappy actors. But few proficient actors were able to stay in both groups. Adam considered himself one of them.

In the script of the previous dynasty, Adam played a subordinate role. When he arrived, that empire had shown the signs of collapse. But it was Adam who successfully guided the development of the show to the ludicrously improbable situations. Because Adam, the arms supplier to the previous dynasty, did not provide proper props.

#### 4

The previous dynasty was operated by a family of noodlarianists. But after almost 200 years of operation, the family and the Agency had already accumulated numerous contradictions. So the Society grasped a good opportunity and sent a group of pastamen to the land. Adam was among them. Adam's main professional area was computation, but he had some basic astronomy and military science knowledge. The previous dynasty was planned to renovate the farming calendar, which required a lot of celestial calculations. So it released a chair position in the department of astronomy. This position was used to be offered to a noodlarianist or a noodlised member from the Pilau and Falafel Association. But since the falling pizza theory allowed Adam to provide more precise calculations on the forecast, he finally got the job.

Adam spent a few years in the department of astronomy, doing research on the farming calendar of wheat and educating his students. However, the Agency finally discovered that the falling pizza theory was contrary to the noodle theory of five grains. The Agency withdrew the support to the new calendar. But it was too late. Adam already re-packaged the theory to encompass five grains. Many students of Adam had been convinced. Even the emperor was impressed by the idea of falling five grains. So the previous dynasty insisted on popularising the new calendar,

The Agency was afraid that the new calendar would seriously impact the wheat harvest and taste, which would further jeopardise the production of noodles. So it called on the "gravy" gangs around the empire to use armed force to oppose the new calendar. The noodlised government army couldn't resist the armed gravy gangs. At that time, Adam was assigned a new mission, building cannons for the noodlised army.

Although the falling pizza theory can calculate the movements of both celestial bodies and artillery shells, building a cannon is an entirely different business. Fortunately, Adam had got the relevant materials from the Society, the literature, and the manufacturing drawings. The materials only instructed how to make cannon prototypes. But a half-century ago, those prototypes fooled massive troops of peasants in the civil war on the eastern island country. So Adam thought it was worth giving a try. Adam managed to produce dozens of outdated cannons in a mechanical way. It turned out that they were more than enough.

The court realised the power of Adam's cannons. Meanwhile, the previous dynasty needed a greater military victory to suppress criticism and doubts of the centralised power. The court requested Adam to manufacture more prototypes to act toward the emerging threat from northern Barbecurianism. The emperor even promised Adam to taste his homemade pizza once the mission was completed. However, Adam hesitated to accept this request. Adam observed that both the Guild and the Agency had shown their impatience with the previous dynasty. The guild complained that the expansion of the pizza chain was too slow, and too many celebrities preferred the pizza restaurants rather than the noodle shops caused the Agency discomfort. The previous dynasty tried to please both sides, but in the end, both were offended. Being in a dilemma of consolidating these two forces, Adam told himself that it was time to plot a move.

As a pastaman, Adam thought that he got along with the noodlarianists. For "gravy," Adam held a neutral view. He rarely intervened in "gravy's business." But he had indescribable intimacy about "noodles." Perhaps because most of his

students were “noodles.” Some, after receiving Adam’s education, considered themselves “western noodles.” The “noodles” brought fun and happiness to Adam.

On the contrary, he became being incompatible with many of his Pizzarianism peers. He couldn’t agree with the aggressive order from the Guild to expand the pizza chain. Adam often felt that the Society of Pasta confronted a conflict of interests with the Guild about the benefits of opening more pizza restaurants. There might be only a column list of pasta on the menu of a pizza restaurant, but in a noodle restaurant, noodle dishes occupy full of the menu.

As an imperial servant in the department of astronomy, Adam and his pasta fellows were newcomers. The Pilau and Falafel association had seized several permanent chairs in the department since Yuan Dynasty and had committed the self-noodlisation policy to its members since then. However, the ideological control of the department was still firmly in the hands of noodlarianists. Following the current trend, Adam would expect more noodlised orders waiting for him ahead.

If Adam accepted the request to supply more cannons, later, he would have to assist in opening more pizza restaurants to please the Guild and to continue accommodating himself to the ridiculous five grains theory. To him, neither mission deserved any further effort. So Adam kept postponing the response and seeking an alternative opportunity.

## 5

A turning point happened after the third times Adam delayed the request. One student of Adam was promoted as the commander to station at the northern border. The commander hoped Adam could send him as many “western noodles” and cannons as possible so that the commander could form a novel “western noodles” army over there. Adam guessed that it was a tactful strategy of the court, so in the future the commander would require continuing the manufacture mission. But would these ambitious students really follow the orders of the court in the future?

The task of bureaucratic “noodles” in the court is to follow the trend, to climb up the ladder. At the very beginning, Adam understood that his students were not coming to him to learn the truth but to fulfil their political ambitions. Would these “noodles” be happy with stationary defence in such a stirring era instead of looking for shortcuts climbing on their ladders? Adam trusted that his lovely and impulsive students would figure out some marvellous stirring opportunities with the advanced weapons. Adam counted on these opportunities to get rid of his nightmare missions. He admitted to sending almost all candidates with military potential to this western noodlised troop.

His students didn’t disappoint him. Within one year, a mutiny occurred in this army. The commander was dismissed. The lower-ranking officers, with the cannons, defected to the Barbecurianism. The strength between Barbecurianism and Noodlarianism completely reversed in an instant.

Some students dispatched messengers to Adam afterward, informing him of the situation in the northern steppes and inquiring about some issues on the cannons’ maintenance. Through the messages, Adam could grasp some vague ideas about the political tendency of Barbecurianism and his students’ intention of conducting such a coup d’état.

The Barbecurianism terrain was occupied by Jin Dynasty around N13th century. When Jin’s army took Song’s emperors and empresses as hostages, many noodlarianists infiltrated this terrain in the disguises of the kidnapped royal relatives. Since then, Barbecurianism gradually accepted many noodlised features. For example, cool noodles with sesame sauce and filial piety were also a part of the local culture. But this northern regime definitely preserved the traditional meat cuisine. Adam’s students thought that the Barbecurianism regime could be more beneficial to the “western noodles,” which was the reason for betraying the regime of fundamental Noodlarianism, betraying Everyone’s Noodles.

According to the descriptions, Adam understood that the Barbecurianism nomads had no specific preferences for noodles. It would be possible that Barbecurianism would treat pasta or “western noodles” the same as cool noodles. He guessed that the full meat diet of Barbecurianism probably was less dependent on “gravy” so that the pasta sauce might revive in the northern regime. At the time, the threat of Barbecurianism and “gravy” gangs made the fundamental Noodlarianism regime quickly lean on Pizzarianism, but the regime was half-hearted about pasta. While in the northern regime, pasta might have a chance of becoming a state banquet. Based on the above ideas, Adam believed that his students had made their optimal choices, for themselves, for the Society, and probably also for Adam.

Adam formally declined the cannon manufacture. Also, he stopped teaching the falling theory. He was worried about the new technologies to be leaked to gravy’s peasant army. Instead, he devoted himself to helping his students. He provided them advice, helped them to occupy the real power positions in the northern regime, especially those positions in the astronomy and military departments. Adam’s ideal situation was to create a bifurcation: Support the emperor to form a southern Pizzarianism State, and have a Barbecurianism State in the North where the pastamen and “western noodles” could reconstruct the vague ideology of nomads. In this way, the Society can bet on both ends.

Unfortunately, Adam’s plan was not fully realised. The gravy’s peasant army “miraculously” achieved consecutive victories and successfully invaded the almost unguarded empire’s capital. Adam’s friend, the young emperor of the previous dynasty, did not abdicate dignifiedly. However, the “gravy” gangs could neither support effective government functions, nor

control those gravy masters living in the capital. Not even say that their troops were simply vulnerable to the nomadic army armed with cannons. Finally, the Barbecurianism regime gained the authority of the whole Noodlarianism lands for the first time.

Adam and other pastamen were invited by Adam's students to renovate the ideology of the empire. It was the strengths of "western noodles" that lifted Adam to the current position.

## 6

The golden moment between Adam and his students has long passed. Now, Adam stands on the opposite side of his students' demands. The students wanted him to drift with the tide and continue decorating his theory of falling five grains. But Adam refused. His initial motivation for creating the falling five grains was to simplify the falling pizza theory and make his noodlised students understand the content. His simplification was a great success. The students welcomed the falling five grains theory and quickly developed various successive lemmas to support Adam's theory.

Nevertheless, Adam realised the abstract embodiment of the truth gradually lost its glory in the five grains' setting. Giving up the simple and testified relations and looking for complicated and untestable structures seemed to be the goal of many successive lemmas. These thoughts obviously guided the theory heading towards a different direction, favouring Noodlarianism centralisation rather than Pizzarianism's. Adam disparaged his own theory. But this time, his students didn't follow his advice. They continued to support the falling five grains theory. They intended to enhance its reputation, hoping that the theory would be a part of the altar. By then, nobody could defeat the theory, including the inventor himself.

Adam understood this intention. What "western noodles" believed and what they were willing to contribute were always beneficial things to their own or their consanguinities. They were eventually "noodles." They calculated the celestial motion, but they never appreciated the great beauty instantly controlling the motion. They falsified the abstract unknown, as they thought the falsification would uplift their prestige in Noodlarianism. They never devoted themselves to grasp the meanings of the unknown. They would accept a map with inaccurate information only if the central terrain of the map was controlled by the Noodlarianism. They rarely understood that this kind of intellectual compromise, covering a provable fallacy, would bring them real failure, even though the failure might not ruin their political life.

This evidence tells Adam that Noodlarianism is still the final winner of the last stir. The Barbecurianism empire is just a cover. The noodlarianists have controlled the ideology of the army and the court. The noodlarianists made Barbecurianism nomads believe that they were "invited" as the rulers of this territory by Noodlarianism. As a return, the rulers have to follow the Noodlarianism doctrines strictly.

What surprised Adam was that the nomadic noodlarianists were indeed more barbarian than those from the previous dynasty. The nomadic noodlarianists created a thousand-year-old "gravy" company whose purpose was for corrupting the Barbecurianism rulers. The company also set up very restrictive rules for "noodles," asking them to simulate an ideal world of Noodlarianism. Any truth contrary to Noodlarianism doctrines should be inaccessible in that simulated world.

In this case, Adam knows what would happen if he insisted on advocating the falling pizza theory. One student of Adam, the husband of the insomniac empress, the previous emperor, was very curious about the falling pizza theory and the pizza. The emperor was a man of ideas, but he seemed easily attracted by the gravy's smell. His taste bud was so heavily affected by the gravy food that any other food would spoil his appetite. Adam suggested the emperor stop taking gravy food for a while. Adam promised to make him a pizza in his coming 30-year-old birthday and to teach him the falling pizza theory as long as the emperor regained his gourmet taste.

Unfortunately, the emperor couldn't meet that date. The gravy food ended the emperor's digestion system. Before his death, the emperor confessed to Adam that he couldn't resist the taste of gravy. Even when the emperor converted to a vegetarian, he couldn't help eating gravy tofu. At that moment, Adam realised how deep the root of Noodlarianism was in this Barbecurianism empire.

## 7

Sitting in his garden, Adam recalled the past and forgot the time. His most important task of the day is to give his only leftover student the last lecture. The only student, probably his last student, is the current eighth years old emperor. The little one has come to Adam, but he didn't even realise it.

"How you are today, Adam?"

"Oh, Your Majesty! Please forgive my rudeness!"

"That's fine. I saw you immersed in watching these plants, so I took a casual tour around the garden. I like this al fresco style and these fruits. Look at these charming chillies. They must be very delicious."

“Yes, Your Majesty. They can be made into very delicious sauces, but they are a bit astringent when eaten raw. Because its capsaicin is too irritating, it may also cause diarrhoea. I am doing some research on improving these drawbacks. Perhaps, I need to improve their soil, to diversify the fertiliser, to treat them with pesticides...”

Instead of taking Adam’s advice, the little emperor takes one small piece and puts it in his mouth. When biting the chilli, the emperor feels a hot gas spreading rapidly in his mouth. He starts to cough. Adam quickly hands some water to the emperor. The emperor drinks the water, but the spicy sensation still stays in his mouth. His tears keep spinning in his eyes.

“I can’t handle it, Adam. This is terrifying spicy.”

“Me neither. Your Majesty. This is why I make them as a sauce. I grind and chop them into small pieces, adding vinegar, salt, and sugar to dilute the biting taste. The sauce would be less pungent.”

“I wish you present me the sauce first.” The emperor keeps breathing in fresh air, hoping to dispel the hot feeling in the mouth.

“Your Majesty, the raw materials are full of surprises. Handling the raw materials needs patience.”

Suddenly, Adam comes up with an idea. He is going to supply other “raw materials” to the little one. He is curious how the emperor is going to react to new “raw materials.” Adam decides to start his last lecture immediately, first proposing an exploratory question.

“Your Majesty, why do we study astronomy?”

The emperor is stunned for a while. He doesn't expect to be asked questions in this situation. However, he is in excellent condition today. He is ready to deal with any tough question at any time.

“Because it is the representation of the whole universe. The movement of the sun and the stars disclose the changes of the climate, of the environment, then of the human activities. By understanding the changes, people can predict and arrange all sorts of events, from the living schedule on agriculture, work and rest, to the political schedule on the dynasty change or the court’s reshuffle.” The emperor quickly adjusts himself to the study mode. He is a brilliant student.

“That’s absolutely right,” Adam says approvingly, “Your Majesty, you have already known the precise positions of the important constellations, the procedure of calculating celestial movements. You learned how to calculate the solar eclipse based on the five grains theory. You have acquired all the necessary knowledge of astronomy. This is the last lecture. Let us consider something else.”

Adam continues, “The dynasty makes astronomy inaccessible to the public because we don’t want everyone to involve in the engagements of all those important events. We convince them that all these important changes are associated with the signs from heaven. We manifest the supreme right of predicting the astronomical movement. So the successful forecasts imply that the following occurrences are under our control. As long as the regime can predict heaven, everything else should be under its control too. So the last lecture, let us consider the prediction of the heavens.”

“That sounds interesting,” the boy says.

“An object may have many signs, such as a binary sign of good and bad, a pentagonal sign of five grains, or simply a polygonal sign of many elements.

“Let us say we are particularly interested in one object, the sun. We don’t know which sign the sun would enter in the next period. Still, we can observe the relationships between the sun and many other celestial bodies. For example, whenever the sun enters the wheat sign, all the other celestial bodies have previously been to the bean signs. We can establish a wheat-sun-and-bean-others relationship. Next time, by observing the bean signs of other celestial bodies, we are able to predict the future sign of the sun. The prediction of the object relies on the available signs of its related objects.”

The boy thinks for a while, then asks, “But what if the realistic relationship is too complicated for modelling?”

“Your Majesty, this is the whole point of your existence.”

“Me?”

“Yes, Your Majesty. Inadequacy is always an issue in any centralisation system. The computational power of a centralised system is limited. So the system can only stereotype the reality as some feasible models. Those complicated relationships beyond the computational capacity of the system are attributed to the limit of the system. That’s something in Pizzarianism is called the unknown or the supreme being. Noodlarianism prefers to personify heaven as “the people.” On the basis of personification, the limit of the human beings, namely the son of heaven, is you, Your Majesty.”

Adam continues, “The son of heaven is a symbol to present the supreme force, also an ideological way of management. Through this personification, noodlarianists reduce all unknown and unexplained causes and effects to one object, an object entitled all the worship.”

“Also, all the blame,” the boy whispers, dissatisfied.

“The coin has two sides, Your Majesty.”

“Anyway, Adam, continue, please. Can I understand that the prediction is about some signs of the current objects pointing us to the future sign of the object of interest?”

“Excellent summary, Your Majesty. This is the rough idea of prediction. In fact, this is also the key idea of a centralised system. In order to predict the sign of one object, we need the information of other objects. Therefore, when one could predict all the essential objects in the system, one would control the system.”

## 8

The emperor wants to know more details. He asks, “But how do we find out the related objects. In your example, we can find so many objects that relate to the sun’s movement, such as the moon and the planets of the zodiac. Are you going to use all these objects?”

“It turns out that the movement often directly depends on very few related objects. In the analysis, we remove those unessential or unwanted relationships. Just like in a centralised government, the functions are only implemented by a few departments,” Adam explains.

“I see.”

Adam continues his explanation. “When the inter-dependence among the objects are wiped out, when we are able to integrate all the objects into one, in this extreme case, we can just focus on the unique object’s own historical information. In other words, by unifying all small objects in the system as one big object, we are able to ignore all the influences from the independent smaller ones inside the big object.”

“Only self-information of the unified object?” The boy asks.

“Yes, Your Majesty. Suppose the object moves in a cyclic manner. In that case, we can easily predict its future sign by observing its own cyclic pattern.”

“Why would this cyclic prediction be useful? It sounds like predicting the sunrise and the sunset.”

“Your Majesty, that’s because when a predictable object causes the system to change, these changes become controllable. For example, noodlarianists attach the signs of five grains to each dynasty. Because they simply want the changes of the dynasties to coincide with the observable cyclic pattern from the heavens. Now since the cause of the change is predictable, the prophecy of the system exists. The power of prophecy could easily accumulate the majority support, as the people admire the force that could waive their fears and worries about the uncertainty. The majority support endows the authority.”

The boy immediately follows the speech, “And the authority makes the society under control. I see, Adam. As the heavens are predictable, the dynastic succession is controllable. Now, I understand that maintaining the five grains structure is equivalent to safeguarding the controllable centralisation system. This is a marvellous idea, isn’t it, Adam?”

“Yes, Your Majesty. The five grains structure gives an appealing simplified description for the heavens.”

“And your falling five grains theory gives the precise relationships of all celestial bodies in such a structure. Bravo, Adam!”

“I appreciate Your Majesty’s kind words. But personally, I am still uncertain of the rightness of my work.”

“Uncertainty on those relationships?”

“Uncertainty on its predictability, in reality, Your Majesty.”

“Adam, you have invented this advanced theory. It explains the celestial movements. It completes the insufficiency of the five grains structure on celestial prediction. There is no need to worry about its predictability. Those noodlarianists who contribute to building social cycles based on the five grains structure will sooner or later become your followers. I am proud of being the student of the creator of such a theory, and I will devote myself to defending your theory, like all your other

students. We are going to create the social cycles and the waves that will make the public witness the great falling five grains theory. You can reckon on me,” the young comforts the old.

“In fact, that’s my worry.”

“Why?” The boy asks in confusion.

“Your Majesty, how much do you know about simulation?”

“Simulation is to mimic some real things.”

“Precisely. Simulation is an attempt to build up a virtually real environment. The ideological entity relies on this process to observe how the selected characteristics perform in some simulated events. The simulator generates these simulated events. The five grains theory is a simulator of Noodlarianism. It gives the key parameters for simulating the dynasty changes, the physical changes, the climate changes, and so on.”

Adam continues, “Your Majesty, the predictability in your mind is about the simulator’s prediction. For the dynasty changes, the process of this simulation is in the grasp of Noodlarianism. The predictability of the simulation simply reflects how good the Noodlarianism gauges the whole simulation. If the Agency couldn’t predict some simulated changes, then the ‘noodles’ and the ‘gravy’ would lose the confidence in performing in the forthcoming dynastic events, the simulated reality. To prevent losing the authority, the Agency has to use the most delicate simulator that can generate almost true as well as perfectly predictable images of the changes, such as organisational reshuffle, palace coups, etc.

“For this aspect, I am glad that my theory was approved to enhance the five grains’ simulator because it allows the five grains structure to record more precise measurements on the celestial movements and whatsoever the representations of these movements.

“But the completeness, as Your Majesty refers to, is all about the completion of this simulation. My theory provides almost no additional merit in explaining reality. Meanwhile, there are many competing theories, or, say, simulators. They all attempt to generate their own visions of the world. I am afraid that some of them may provide better approximations to reality than mine.” The old man finishes painting a gloomy prospect of his theory.

“How? Give me an example, Adam.” The boy seems unable to accept Adam’s explanation.

“For example, there is an eccentric idea in Pizzarianism called the heliocentric theory. It claims that heaven above us may be modelled by concentric circles where the sun should be placed in the centre.”

“How ridiculous!”

“I totally agree, Your Majesty. We all know that the earth is centre of the universe, and the centre of the earth is the terrain belonging to the son of heaven. But in Pizzarianism, most pizzamen are forbidden to enter this sacred land; they imagine this land as an unknown realm. For an unknown object, people can easily develop or construct anomalous visions. Here we confront this bizarre argument.”

“Poor Pizzarianism. Your ideology should restrict the freedom of expression on unknown objects and should stop training those pizzamen with vivid imaginations. Lacking formalism would bring in various dangers.”

“Yes, Your Majesty. The unknown comes with creation and destruction. Imagination provides the soil for these transformations. They are hard to be controlled and to be centralised. In fact, the heliocentric theory has another dangerous proposal. Instead of using discrete signs, the eccentric theory uses numerical values to describe the planets’ relative position, including the earth’s. In other words, it gives continuous expressions for describing the relationships among the objects.”

“Numerical values?!” The emperor is shocked. “Why not use commercial prices? Then lay brothers could predict the world events based on the commodity exchanges rather than the heaven movements. The decimal numbers would tarnish the conciseness of the divine expression. My rhetoric teacher taught me that all the numbers with decimals are the evil messages.”

“Assuredly, Your Majesty, any merchant charging a price with decimal digits is selling the evil product. The reason I heard of this theory is that its real world prediction of the solar eclipse may be not so different from the five grains’ one.”

“Really?” The boy is very surprised.

“It was said that the error is about fifteen minutes.”



"An error of fifteen minutes... Now I understand your worries, Adam. Such an absurd and crazy idea only has a tiny small gap with the well-established five grains theory on prediction. What a savage threat to civilisation! This idea may cause potential damage to our five grains' ideological construction," the emperor says worriedly, "Adam, you must know that the five grains also represent the five pillars in Noodlarianism politics. Do you know the exact representations of the pillars?"

"I think they stand for 'noodles', 'gravy', 'noodlised objects', 'gravified objects' ... I cannot imagine the last one," the old man answers with a shake of his head.

The boy tells the old man, "noodlarianists call them the good, the bad, the devils hidden in the good, the angels fallen in the bad, and heaven of which I am the representative. I was taught that each pillar is indispensable in the centralised political structure."

"Ah! Now, I understand." The old man seems suddenly to be enlightened. "Yes, Your Majesty!" he says, "The cycles created by the binary signs are too modest. The masses could easily detect the regular rhythm of the changes. Any chaotic cycle needs a simulator of at least three signs. With five signs, noodlarianists are able to simulate enough disorder to cover the deterministic recurrent themes. When the signs increase beyond five, the complexity caused by the interactions of these signs may become intolerable for the centralised computational agency. It is necessary to keep the number of the signs at the minimum necessary level. Thus, five is indeed the vital number for the current system."

"... What are you talking about, Adam? It sounds like a mess...." The boy seems lost in the conversation. He ignores the old man's mumblings and says, "Anyhow, now you know that we need five grains structure to represent the changes. Only five, no more, no less! This continuous scheme seems to allow any number of signs."

"Yes, Your Majesty, the changes described in a continuous manner are formed by infinitesimal entities."

"Infinitesimal?"

"Tiny small changes, they are hardly detected in the original scale of measurements but can be modelled in a smaller scale, a characterisation from a deeper structure."

"It sounds insane! It seems to call for dividing a centralised body using shadow entities hidden in the integrated structure."

"Your Majesty gave a remarkable metaphor for the scheme."

"No kidding, Adam. Pizzarianism is right. This treacherous idea should be banned."

"Absolutely," the old man says solemnly, "but rumour says that the ignorant masses cannot resist the slick idea. The infinitesimal change evokes the inhabitants in Pizzarianism territory to examine the individual essence. Perhaps, in the future, this heliocentric theory would provide a simulator to the Pizzarianism."

"That would be a disaster for the Pizzarianism. What is your opinion on this trend, Adam?"

"Your Majesty, I would suggest some selected intelligent servants start touching this theory, learning the details, figuring out the deficiency, then drafting a precautionary plan to prepare any ideological invasion...."

"Sounds reasonable but not efficient enough."

"I beg for Your Majesty's guideline."

"Close the door. Cut off the diffusion paths of this infectious nonsense. A quarantine, Adam, quarantine can be applied to the ideological battles too. Suppose that we filter out all falsifications that do not conform to the five grains' structure. Will the structure then be complete?"

"It seems so, Your Majesty."

"Then I could simulate such an ideal society in the future. It will cover up all the voices contrary to the five grains' structure, all the voices contrary to your falling five grains theory."

The old man humbly replies, "This is not my theory anymore, Your Majesty. It belongs to 'Western noodles'!"

## 9

The lecture ended early because the student's intestines were suffering the attacks of the fresh capsaicin he had just consumed. The little emperor said goodbye to Adam before his gastrointestinal system completely collapsed. Although

Adam didn't follow his original plan, he is satisfied with the content of the last lecture. He has had the emperor's attitude towards the new "raw materials."

Adam confirms to himself that supporting the current emperor is his best option. Because he realises that the emperor's position, the noodlarianists' attitude towards the unknown, provides a piece of self-consistent code written in their simulation program; because he realises that the falling five grains theory, his deplorable achievement, can possibly metamorphose into a bug in this self-consistent program. The logical violation and the bug make the current emperor be the key to locking and corrupting Noodlarianism.

Adam conceals his excitement, carefully reviews his reasoning.

The principle of social simulation is to isolate the experimental world from the real world. The objects in such a simulation should be ignorant of the purposes and operations of the simulation. The ideological entity constructs the laws for the simulation, awards the good performances, and punishes the bad ones. The operations of the simulation do not intervene the simulating process, leaving the objects and subjects alone. The laws, reflected by the public sensation of happiness and fear, motivate the simulated objects and subjects to move forward. The visual reality's aesthetic and undesirable outcomes inspire the ideological entity to modify the laws and improve their functioning. The cycles and the control of the simulation endow the ideological entity with the power of rebooting the simulation process. So the entity can try to implement different setups and parameters in a reboot.

The operator who is in charge of the simulation should be distant from the simulated world. Involving the operator in the simulation constitutes the most forbidding menace to the principle, as the role can easily intervene in the simulation, violating the principle. If the main body of the operation obsesses with the simulated mirage, there would be no incentive for modification, no encouragement for new simulation plans, no morale-boosting to guide the simulated subjects and objects depart from the old world. If that is the case, all elements in the simulation, including the operator, would be locked in a self-consistent loop.

When the emperor showed his "noodlariotic" fervour on five grains structure, his insistence on maintaining the decipherable cycles, Adam knew that the emperor unconsciously stuck himself with the simulated dynastic history, a world weaved by the Agency. On the other hand, the Noodlarianism doctrine forces the Agency to empower the emperor to administrate the simulation. A zealous player with numerous advantages of the current edition becomes the administrator of the game. Adam feels that the little player has no incentive to leave the current version of the game.

Perhaps, locking the emperor in the game is the real intention of noodlarianists. But the current situation is different from the past. Adam's falling five grains theory solidifies the current ideological structure of Noodlarianism so that the Agency is harder to witness the ideological incompleteness. The emperor is going to use this advanced fallacy to make up the deficient logical structures of Noodlarianism. The misconception of the five grains inferential power would make the Agency difficult to abandon or even modify any existing broken logical chains in Noodlarianism. In the future, this grand fallacy would reproduce hundreds of thousands of interesting delusions, thanks to the noodle scholars who have to sustain their lives with masses of myopic publications. Adam can surely infer the jeopardised consequences.

As long as the ideological dynamics of Pizzarianism are on the right track, sooner or later, the fallacy would start corrupting Noodlarianism, creating the civilised gap between these two ideologies. The gap, the unbalanced structure like the height difference between the cliff-top and the bottom, would generate the potentials of a wealth flow, a financial, material, and gnostic flow heading to the civilisation and to the order. By then, the less ordering side would have to spend more effort to prevent the national wealth loss. However, the flowing force is unstoppable; just like in a gravity field, all the objects are intended to fall. The whole "noodle" empire would irresistibly become the "tax payer" to the destination of this wealth flow, the most divine state with the best "dough."

At that point, the mission of noodlutopia should be almost fulfilled. But Adam doesn't seem to be completely satisfied with this induction. He seems to get bored with this planned vista. He is looking for something, something new and irregular, something that can stimulate the deterministic skeleton of these ripen ideologies, adding some spice to historical dynamics, like an engine of uncertainty, like a stirrer.

His sight slowly moves to the chillies in front of him. The "thousand-year-old gravy" advocates the five grains structure, decorating "noodles" and "gravy" as permanent forces in the stir, as irreplaceable ideas in maintaining the centralisation. However, this advocacy distorts the fact that "noodles" and "gravy" are just temporary consumer goods of the stir. Adam says to himself, "perhaps I can create a new force, a force casting off the yoke of Noodlarianism, or even Pizzarianism."

## Part III

In the emperor's dining hall, a group of maids and eunuchs prepare the table and arrange the dinnerware. It is not the dinner time yet. Why are these people gathering here? You may expect that the emperor has a high bar for his dining environment, so he needs a lot of people to spend a long time taking care of the place. Nevertheless, this reasonable inference is completely irrelevant to the truth.

This group is in fact full of elite agents. The tidy-up gathering in the imperial dining hall simply provides these elite agents a sufficient time interval and a dignified location to exchange daily information ahead of dinner, the most critical moment of the day.

As a servant in the dining hall, the position offers the most comfortable working environment and the minimum workload in the court. There is no political danger. Dining time is one of the best moments for the emperor. He should frequently be in a good mood. Even if the emperor is unhappy and looks for a scapegoat, most likely, he would end up with the cook who makes the terrible dish of the day.

Furthermore, many political movements were initiated from this dinner table. Each servant has collected some pieces of important information. He or she would save these treasures for the next stir.

Another (un)official welfare of the position is the right to taste the daily royal cuisine. Some servants have to taste the dishes in front of the emperor, as this is a part of their duties. The other gastronomists can examine the materials in the corridor or the backyard. Of course, these actions are of goodwill. They are hoping to share the emperor's stomach and kidney pressure.

In order to highlight the importance and necessity of this position, from time to time, some tasters had to *die* of the *poisoned* food. Most of the death scenes are directed by the Great Peace Agency. The *corpses* would later be promoted by the organisation, and would revive somewhere else. However, the real tragedies did happen due to the inefficient management inside the Agency. Still, the odds are too small to be taken seriously. After all, the Great Peace Agency is a responsible and trustworthy employer.

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"Do you know that old Adam passed away yesterday night? I guess that the emperor must be busy with his funeral for the whole day." A sophisticated lady talks to the others, while moving the dinner table about ten centimetres to the right. She considered the new position to be more harmonised with this room's layout.

"Finally, we get rid of that bloody old fart!" A middle-aged man cynically says. His actions and expressions are full of frivolousness.

"Be peaceful, Agent Monkey! Even though you are in charge of the thousand-year-old 'gravy' company, you should not let yourself behave as one of them," says the sophisticated woman.

"Thank you for your reminding, Madam Serpent!"

A masculine, handsome man politely says, "Madam Snake is right. Agent Monkey, you should be careful with your etiquette, conceal your overt expression." Then he asks the sophisticated lady, "Madam Snake, did the first minister Adam die in prison?"

"No, Agent Ox. The emperor's mother and grandmother asked the emperor to grant him a special pardon. He died in his restaurant," Madam Snake replies.

"I hope there won't be any disturbance," a young lady talks in her hysterical voice, "you remember that last year when the court sentenced Adam and his Pizzarianism fellows to death, the whole city suffered several unusual quakes and storms. Although the 'noodles' in the research department couldn't detect the clue of the cause, my instinct tells that the reason must come from those cannons. Last time, when those monsters launched shells, I felt the earthquake and saw the cloud. Unfortunately, my diligent scholars cannot replicate those cannons. It is too dangerous to let these uncontrollable giant monsters sit close to us. We should find a way to ban these monsters."

Agent Ox slowly adjusted the table night centimetres to the left, then he talks to the lady, "Lady Rabbit, let's wait for a couple of years. Our southern brothers are in the rebellion force. This time, they will persuade their leader to align with the Dairy Association. They insist on stealing the latest blueprints of the Cheese cannons. Personally, I don't think this is going to work as the same trick failed when they tried their luck to win the trust of pizzamen. But let's assume that their plan successes, then we would have new military techniques and our own artillerymen. Even if they eventually fail, we could

easily find a moral excuse to ban this uncontrollable weapon. Remember that the founding emperor of the dynasty was killed by a cannon.”

“The moral charge is a good idea. I will support it.” Lady Rabbit claps her hands, “Don’t put your hope on the southern branch. They achieved nothing except making and washing money, cooking, and civil poisoning. Their double-faced agents can only fool themselves. Their techniques, regardless of the stolen ones or the invented ones, were always full of tricks, no systematic thought, no scarce influence. The so-called ‘innovative’ techniques always vanish in a few generations.” While talking to Agent Ox, Lady Rabbit unconsciously pushes the table eight centimetres to the right.

“Those quakes and storms let the old women have a superstition on that old fart’s psychic power,” Agent Monkey slaps the table angrily, “Thanks to them, all my efforts were in vain!”

Finding that no one care his complains, Agent Monkey starts to list his efforts. “First, I sent all my gravy brothers to dig out the problems of that bloody falling theory. Then I had to square those nerds in the astronomy department to do serious research, to formalise the accusation. Next, Agent Doggy and I settled all the servants around the old fart. We even invented a daughter for him! Finally, we collected the evidence that he caused the death of the former emperor! But the superstitious women just lifted the old fart out of the trap. The investigation and bribery cost almost all of my research funds. Now they are useless!” Agent Monkey can’t calm his anger.

“That was not psychic power. My girls made the old ladies suffer from insomnia. The two were afraid of losing their sleeping patronage from Adam, so they asked the emperor to have mercy on Adam.” A young girl says casually, looking away from the angry middle-aged man.

“What?! Why did you do that, Lady Big Cat?! I thought we formed a holy alliance on persecution. I feel betrayed!” Says the furious middle-aged man.

“Since when you propose to me such a holy partnership? If there was any betrayer between us, your big mouth must be the first. Besides, that was the order from the Agency.” The girl stares at the table in front of her amusingly, still ignoring the man’s angry.

“We appreciate your efforts, Agent Monkey.” Madam Shake intends to explain, “But the Agency was worried of your indiscreet behaviour. In fact, the Agency wanted us to squeeze the valuable information out of Adam rather than execute him. But we need you to hang the curtain for us.”

“Am I the only one in the dark? Agent Doggy, did you know this hilarious order?” Agent Monkey turns angrily to a young man.

Madam Shake continues to explain, “Agent Dog was only ordered to assist you to construct Adam’s news of illicit love and the misconduct of treating five grains. With that evidence, we could send him to prison and have an inquisition into the future agenda of Pizzarianism.”

“You are all betrayers! That’s why you all ignore my informative output!”

“The informative output?” Madam Snake contemptuously says, “Do you mean Adam’s persuasion to the precedent emperor on stopping taking gravy food? Isn’t gravy the real cause of the death?”

Agent Monkey finds that no one paid any attention to his anger. So he simply gives up the pretence. “Well,” he says casually, “but the old fart shouldn’t let the emperor be aware of the truth. Because of the old fart, the previous emperor commenced investigating his food and we had to end his career ahead of schedule! I was fond of that cutie.”

“I fell in love with him too.” Madam Snake says sadly, “He had such an adorable face. But the current emperor is a devout Noodlarianism. He is going to be a great emperor.”

“That’s for sure,” says Agent Monkey, “Finally, we manage to find a pure soul from this barbarian meat-eating farm.”

“Didn’t Adam suggest the previous emperor make the selection?”

“That was the only right thing he did in his entire life.” Facing the rhetorical question from Madam Shake, Agent Monkey picked up his mask of anger again.

Agent Ox expresses his dissent, “I think that his falling five grains theory helps us a lot on integrating different minds from the non-Noodlarianism forces. Also, the ‘western noodles’ could be of great use in the future.”

Agent Dog adds, "His restaurant set up a new criterion on how to sniff around the political trend. The integration of noodlised western education and cuisine inspired me to re-organise several activities designed for the gravy scout. These materials may be helpful to train the new generations." Then he moves the table seven centimetres to the left.

"Agent Ox and Agent Dog, I don't agree with you; I think now it is time to wipe out those 'western noodles' and rubbishy western culture." Suddenly, Agent Monkey switches to a serious mode.

"My girls are keeping eyes on those 'western noodles.' The reports said that those are some decent fellows." The girl finally put her eyes on Agent Monkey.

"Decent?" Agent Monkey sticks out his tongue, "Lady Big Cat, are you sure your kitties are competent to read the mind of men? Those men are just 'noodles' disguised by some obscure western languages and skeptical symbols. I don't think their stuff is that different from gravy's witchcraft."

"Agent Monkey, you'd better treat my girls and me with more respect." Lady Tiger finally loses her temper on Agent Monkey.

"Lady Tiger, you should ignore this fool." Madam Shake mediates the two. She asks a myopic girl, "Lady Pig, you are in charge of the spirit noodlisation construction. What is your opinion on this theory?"

Lady Pig replies, "To be honest, I don't know. The colleagues in all ideological departments are confused. The theory only slightly improves the precision of the computation but completely reshapes the nonlinear relationships of five grains. This kind of dual improvement seems rare. In the past thousand years, many methods enhanced our levels of the computation, and in fact, some of them did much better than Adam's. But those methods seldom resonated with the ideological development. The departmental opinion on those methods is that they are unilateral dedications."

"Like Lady Rabbit said," Lady Pig continues, "from the research aspect, unilateral dedications have very limited purposes, being applicable in only a few fields. When the fields evolved, most of these methods lost their importance and might disappear in development. But the methods derived from Adam's theory seem to have stronger vitality, as they could be applied to many different fields."

"On the one hand, we felt Adam and his western noodles' spread their influences onto many unrecognised fields. On the other hand, the improvement of precision is so marginal that we doubt the theory could have much technical significance. I have the feeling that the genre of Adam's theory is one piece of the jigsaw puzzle. The puzzle may be composed of numerous pieces. But Adam's piece was so complete that based on that piece we couldn't sense where the other pieces were and the relationships of those missing ones. Sometimes, I even feel that Adam showed us that piece out of a practical joke! The purpose is to let the 'noodles' focus on this joke and ignore the whole story." After finishing her long statement, Lady Pig squints at the table and then moves it six centimetres to the right.

Madam Shake thinks a while, then turns to a seemingly sportive girl, "Lady Horse, you audited Adam's military class. Do you think Adam was hiding some essential pieces in the class?"

The girl answers, "I don't think he would do this on purpose. But his teaching style was so unstable. His lectures are improvisations; the contents might change at the very last minute. And he was fond of ambiguous, silly, obsolete analogies. Perhaps I missed something. But I doubt I would miss the essence. Adam stopped teaching the theory long time ago. The current version of the theory is collected and modified by 'western noodles' through some of his conversations and teaching materials. Perhaps something was missed during the collective process. But then, it couldn't explain why the whole setting was so consistent in theory while producing so many absurd conclusions in practice."

"I should say I share the same feeling with Lady Pig," Lady Horse continues, "When I studied the western noodles' models, they all looked proper and elegant. But every time we model the real military phenomena, we find out so many inconsistencies. The chaps in the military department demonstrated the inconsistencies to the 'western noodles.' Some of those 'noodles' wanted to fool around with us. Some others felt embarrassed about the results and pondered over the issues, but they didn't propose any convincing conclusion."

Lady Horse kicks the table five centimetres to the left with her foot. Then she concludes, "I am not sure whether Adam realised these inconsistencies. Perhaps he did, which explains why he stopped teaching the theory."

"If he found out the problem, why didn't he point it out? He was probably just fulfilling his duty to teach the nonsenses. Then, once he thought he had created enough irreparable ideological damages to the Noodlarianism, he stopped." Agent Monkey wants to correct Lady Horse's conclusion.

Madam Shake says impatiently, "We are talking about serious business. Could you please stop contaminating the conversion, Agent Monkey?"

“As you wish.”

Lady pig seems to remember something. She says, “I heard that when the court charged the ‘western noodles’ and the pizzamen for their ill-behaviour on treating the five grains, Adam didn’t defend himself or any of his fellows. Adam didn’t even speak a word for justifying his theory. Is that true?”

“Agent Rat, did you follow all trials of the lawsuit against Adam and the western ‘noodles’?” Madam Snake asked a man hiding in the corner.

“Yes, Madam Snake. I was there all the time. I had to carry so many lunch boxes to the prisoners. Those days were nightmares,” the man answers glibly.

“Agent Rat, could you please describe a bit what Adam did in those trials? None of us except you attended the trials. Also, all the law and justice staffs go into your administration. Did anyone report you Adam’s unusual behaviour or talks in jail?”

“Eh... the only unusual thing was ... No, in the court, Adam never spoke. His students and fellows leapt to his defence. They were arguing on very abstract concepts. I have no idea what they were talking about. But Adam looked quite indifferent towards to outcomes of all trials.”

“Regarding his daily life in jail,” Agent Rat continues, “the report said that in two years, Adam followed a very regular schedule. He usually fell asleep around 3 am, woke up around 11 am, had two meals per day, did some physical exercises and labour. He spent the rest of his time writing. Most of his work was written in strange symbols, like in cipher. He often destroyed the papers before the guard arrived.” Agent Rat secretly moves the table four centimetres to the right.

He continues, “The only readable manuscript we got was submitted to the Agency. I remember the title is ‘Ruby Tablet.’ The booklet is about how to grow chillies and make chilli sauce. It is quite funny. The man was totally obsessed with chillies. He seemed to know all the chilli merchants around the empire. I suspect that his hidden role was a chilli dealer. He told the guard that his Society shipped all those chillies from the other side of the world just to seek the proper soil to improve the quality. Who believes him. He and his Society must have grasped a lot of profits from the chilli business. In fact, they also have a monopoly on the cheese industry over here. I have to confess that their cheese is rather tasty. I doubt any dairymaid in our Agency can make a cheese of that quality.”

“Agent Rat, could you please recall some related episodes?” Madam Shake stops Agent Rat giving a full count of his cheese infatuation. It probably makes her sick to think of cheese. She asks Agent Rat, “Did he say anything about his theory?”

“Oh, his theory...” Agent Rat try to recall something. “Right... in one trial, I recall that one guy from the astronomy department, not sure he is ours or from the Pilau. The guy charged that Adam’s theory was inaccurate. As the astronomy department predicted that a solar eclipse was going to happen in two days, the guy requested the court to allow for a forecasting competition. The most precise forecast of the coming solar eclipse wins the competition.”

“That’s right,” Lady Rabbit says excitedly, “I remember last year, before the earthquakes and the storms, there was a solar eclipse. Eh.... It happened before the judgment, and Adam was sentenced to death, so Adam failed in the competition.”

“Actually... Adam won,” says Agent Rat, “There are three predictions, one made by the group from the Pilau, one made by the Noodlarianism group whose sponsor I guess was Agent Monkey, and one made by the group of pizzamen and ‘western noodles.’ Agent Monkey’s group made the worst prediction. It was one hour ahead. The Pilau’s one was half an hour ahead. The prediction based on Adam’s theory was on time...”

“Then why ....” Lady Rabbit is confused.

“Eh, Agent Monkey insisted....”

“That was just an opportunity to test the old fart’s theory,” before Agent Rat finishes, Agent Monkey says first. “If it was good, then the theory could be widely applied. Otherwise, we would abolish it immediately. Winning the competition just showed that it is useful to encompass the old fart’s theory in the five grains’ structure. But we should prevent the old fart, and those pizzamen and ‘western noodles,’ from continuing to establish metaphysical constraints on the five grains’ structure. They would attempt to guide the development of our ideology!”

“So you lost the game but denied the result. How disgusting!” With a disdainful look, Lady Tiger turns her back toward Agent Monkey.

“This is all for the good of Noodlarianism!” Agent Monkey explains, “The current ideology of Noodlarianism is weak and chaos, like a man having eaten too much junk food. This man couldn’t even finish a self-completing metabolism! We have to force him to consume the deteriorative barbecue, stimulate his gut, treat his constipation, eliminate constellation, let off

his faeces! This ideology needs a regression, regressing back to the pure state with only the clean 'noodles' and 'gravy.' The ideology could absorb the external nutrition but should eliminate the influences of those foreign junk food suppliers. This policy should last until the ideology is strong enough to complete the metabolic by itself."

"If your 'gravy' gang knew how to filter out the trash and keep the civilisation, a regression back to the pure state doesn't sound like a completely bizarre idea. But it seemed every time the gang did the opposite," says Madam Shake.

"That's because the noodles' always developed the civilisation to the bizarre directions! Their dedicated directions were always dead ends," Agent Monkey continues to explain.

"Nonsense," Lady Rabbit interrupts, "how can you foresee the ends of the directions? Your gravy guys have no patience with any series. Your guys just saw some intervals of the developments but cannot wait to conclude the trends."

"Nonsense," Agent Monkey defends, "my company has the best people of the whole empire. That's no doubt, we all agree. If the crème de la crème cannot foresee the trends, then neither can your noodle scholars!"

"We only agree that your highly-paid employees are all good at grasping the meanings of underlying orders," Lady Tiger helps Lady Rabbit to respond the defence. "But they are also rather weak at perceiving the existing orders. Otherwise, they would pass the exams and could become 'noodles.' Gravy is not the crème de la crème."

"The current existing orders are full of inferior pieces. These pieces were firstly designed by some mediocre scholars and then reinforced by their second-rate students. These 'noodles' fought to include the inferiority in the exam and hoped to engrave their sloppy materials on this ideology. We all observe that the standardised exam only manages to select mediocre people. It filters the worst but also the best! The intelligent gravy knows how to make a detour of the artificial knowledge." Agent Monkey patiently explains.

"In the past thousand years, did your intelligent company establish any new and acceptable orders?" asks Lady Horse

"The company's members were ineligible to participate in ordering! Because the privilege of ordering is only granted to the noodles!"

"That's because your guys don't know how to complement the existential structure!" While saying, Lady Tiger shifted the table three centimetres to the left.

"That's because the existential structure systematically excludes the crème noire de la crème noire!" While saying, Agent Monkey shifted the table two centimetres back to the right.

"Please, stop this endless debate. If you continue, you are going to criticise the centralised examination system," says Madam Snake.

"Perhaps juvenile Dragon could provide us some news on what are the other sects' opinions on Adam's theory." Lady Horse says and looks around, "Apart from BBQ, I am curious how Can Sect, Rice Noodles, and Barley Sect respond to the new calculation. I didn't see the little one after lunch, neither Agent Goat nor Agent Rooster. So where is the sly trinity?"

"With a high probability, they are in the kitchen, tasting the dishes of tonight," says Agent Dog.

"Well, then we shouldn't count on them. Apart from the sly trinity, do you have other thoughts of Adam's theory?" Madam Snake asks.

Lady Rabbit seems to recall something. She asks, "Regarding Adam's prediction method, did we obtain the details of the western noodles' prediction? That would be useful for developing Noodlarianism pedagogy."

"Don't worry," Agent Monkey replies. He seems to have completely forgotten the previous dispute with this lady. "Every step of the derivation was recorded. Everyone in the astronomy department nowadays has to learn that prediction method. I am a very principled person. Improving Noodlarianism is my principle."

"Agent Monkey is a master of fortifying contradicted facts. I feel that he will become an old fart like Adam." Agent Ox says firmly.

"How dare you!" Agent Monkey snaps.

"So can we say that Adam's theory works slightly better than our available ones?" While saying, Madam Shake looks at every attendant. "Perhaps Adam withdrew some secret knowledge from the current version, but by the consequences of the current setting, all look fine to me. What do you think?" Asks Madam Shake.

“Perhaps I am too anxious,” says Lady Pig, “the story from Agent Rat cannot dispel my worries about the completeness of Adam’s theory. But this may be just a groundless fear.”

“I don’t like the old fart’s stuff,” says Agent Monkey, “but if it works better, why not just copy it. In the future, we could erase the trace of the old fart, present the theory in a perfect Noodlarianism setting, no pizza, no pasta, no ‘western noodles,’ only five grains.”

Others don’t seem to have more opinions on Adam and his theory. At this time, a middle-aged man shuffles into the hall, haggard and disheveled.

“Agent Rooster. Where were you? You look terrible. You haven’t shaved your beard. What happened?” Asks Agent Monkey.

Worrying about his disguise, Agent Rooster quickly touches his chin. He finds that it was a malicious joke. He stares at Agent Monkey and angrily says, “A catastrophe is coming.”

Madam Snake feels that it is also a joke. She asks Agent Rooster with a charming smile, “What catastrophe, Agent Rooster? We were talking about Adam. Do you know he was dead? We were looking for your opinion.”

“Well, your guys’ opinions are mines,” says Agent Rooster. He stares at the position of the table, then moves it six centimetres to the left. The others seem to have no objection to the new position. The table is finally set.

When the agents leave the table, Agent Rooster adds, “The catastrophe is exactly caused by Adam.”

Everyone is concerned as soon as they hear the word of Adam.

“A storm or a quake?” Lady Rabbit asks in a worry.

Agent Rooster put his hand over his belly, slowly says, “The little one, Agent Goat and I were in the kitchen. We were looking for the dishes of tonight. A rumour said that the emperor came up with an original idea in memory of Adam. He asked the cooks to prepare a dish mixing gravy, noodles, beef, and chilli sauce.

“The cooks seemed to experiment an idea. We saw them roll-cutting chillies and beef, chopping garlic and ginger. Then the chef heated the oil in a big saucepan. He added garlic and ginger first, then beef and chilli sauce. He stir-fried until the beef pieces lost their pinkness and wrapped in chilli sauce. Then he added hot water, gravy sauce, and some wine. I don’t know which brand of the wine, but it tasted sweet. He also put star anise and some sugar. He let the water boil but turned the heat to the minimum. The whole simmering process lasted until the beef softened. It was about one hour. Then he added the chillies, adjusted the heat to the medium, and simmered until the soup became dense. At that time, an exquisite fragrance wafted all around the kitchen. Finally, the chef cooked a bowl of noodles and poured beef, chillies, and the red soup onto the noodles. The chef was satisfied with the dish and named it red-cooked beef noodle. It was so tasty that three of us quickly emptied the whole bowl.”

After listening to the description, Agent Dog asked in confusion, “So your sly trinity finished the emperor’s delicious dish of the experiment. Why is this a catastrophe?”

Agent Rooster snaps, “Because for pleasing the emperor, the stupid cooks used Adam’s premium chillies!”.

Everyone turns pale while hearing this. Obviously, they recall the emperor in those days, a whole week of fantastic diarrhoea, a whole week of flourishes, just because of one raw chilli from Adam’s garden.

“The chef was making a huge one for tonight. I am sure that every attendant in the room will not miss this dish!” While saying, Agent Rooster had a blank expression on his face as if his desire had all vanished.

“Agent Rooster. Your two companions are now .... ” asks Lady Horse.

Agent Rooster nods and says, “They are sticking around in the toilet.”

Silence reigns. Everyone immerses in the sadness for the misfortune of the fearless pioneers. Meanwhile, everyone is calculating the chance of dodging the catastrophe.

The sound of footsteps breaks the silence. The emperor is coming.

The emperor is already a teenager. His childish face has become heroism. His step is vigorous and dignified. From his facial expression and his actions, one can easily identify that this young man is with guts and his guts are ready to take up something extraordinary. In three years, the emperor is going to take up the regency from his mother and his grandmother. He is looking forward to breaking the constraints surrounding him.



The young emperor stops in front of the dining hall, sniffs hard with his nose. The delicious aroma of the meal has already diffused to the corridor. The emperor is fond of the smell. He talks to his entourage excitedly, "You are going to enjoy something extraordinary tonight! I invented a dish as a memorial to Adam. Although Adam is gone, his chillies are going to stay with us. The dish is a mixture of beef, gravy, noodles, and chilli sauce. I've ordered the cooks to prepare it as a full serving dish. So you all have the opportunity to taste it."

The crowd shouts together, "Thank Lord!" The voice is mixed of heartfelt gratitude from those who are unaware of the underlying truth and the tragic helplessness from those who peacefully wait for their destiny.

A big bowl finally arrives. The red soup, a mélange of gravy and chilli sauce, is redder than expected. The noodles float faintly in the soup. The noodles fully absorb the chilli sauce and their colour turns into salmon. On top of the soup, chillies and pieces of beef are scattered around.

The dish is now passed to the prime taster, Agent Monkey.

Agent Monkey gazes at the redness, and he feels that the redness is also gazing at him. Suddenly, an idea comes into his mind. He steadily picks one piece of beef, a piece with almost no red sauce attached, a piece uncontaminated. He put that piece in his mouth with surprising equanimity. He knows that people are anxiously waiting for his evaluation. He chews that piece as if he was enchanted with it, seemingly enjoying the fascinating taste.

After finishing the piece, Agent Monkey concludes his adventurous experience, "This is an unexpected, thrilling dish, full of excitement and stimulation. The grassland's beef is saturated with thousand-year-old gravy. The starch from the longevity noodles harmonise the spicy from Adam's chilli sauce. All these ingredients perfectly push the taste to an extreme."

The news that the dish uses Adam's chilli sauce causes a commotion in the hall. Apparently, Adam had established his chillies' reputation everywhere, except for the imperial kitchen. For a moment, the emperor looks flustered. But the young man quickly calms down. He comforts the guests, "Don't worry, the capsaicin in the chilli sauce is diluted. It is all fine." Then he insists on the previous order, passing the dish to everyone.

The followers decide to learn from Agent Monkey. The first few tasters go directly to the beef. After a while, the beef on top of the soup has been picked out. The guests have to seek the less contaminated pieces inside the red soup. To take the pick less awkward, some pretend to pick the chilli but "unintendedly" drop it, and then pick the beef. Some even increase the pick-drop-chillies iteration to multiple times. Gradually, the leftover chillies accumulate in the bowl, forming a small mountain. These loyal servants decide to leave the chilli mountain and the diarrhoea fortune to their beloved emperor.

Eventually, the bowl is presented to the emperor. The emperor frowns at the chilli mountain. But he immediately positions a piece of beef hidden underneath the mountain. He calmly picks it up and returns the bowl.

"Mother and grandmother are good friends of Adam," the emperor says, "this dish and these chillies would mean a lot to them. We should share this delicious gourmet with the old ladies." After saying this, emperor sends the dish away.

Everyone is impressed by the emperor's wise decision. The emperor is worthy of being the most loyal supporter and executor of the Noodlarianism doctrine: filial piety.

The dinner continues. The emperor doesn't let the diarrhoea threat disturb his interest. Looking at the presented officers, he finds several "western noodles" from the astronomy department. The emperor doesn't like pizzamen that much, but he feels an affinity with "western noodles," as they have studied the same Adam's materials and are part of the "noodle" family. Suddenly, the emperor has an idea.

"Ladies and gentlemen," the emperor says, "you probably don't know the last highlight in Adam's life."

Everyone stops talking and listens to the emperor's speech. The emperor continues, "Our old Adam successfully predicted a total solar eclipse a year ago." A burst of admiration emerges from the crowd. "In fact, amongst of you, some assisted Adam to finish that computation," the emperor says. The guests can't help looking around, and the "western noodles" stand proudly.

"Today, we get together to commemorate Adam. So why don't we invite these *prophets* to demonstrate that calculation again to make this activity more meaningful?" The emperor says animatedly.

People loudly applaud the idea. The "western noodle" researchers are also eager to show craftsmanship. Writing materials and datasheets are quickly presented. The researchers begin to calculate under the eyes of the host and the guests. This is an efficient and united group. In a few minutes, they finish the computation.

The result is presented to the emperor. The emperor is delighted. Not only because he is proud of the efficient group, but also because he notices a small computational error. Pointing out the error would demonstrate that the emperor is well up in these computational procedures.

The emperor kindly reminded his servants, "Your guys probably missed a term. The result is fifteen minutes earlier."

People are impressed by the fact that the emperor can discover the minutest detail. The researchers feel embarrassed. They immediately re-calculate everything. The next computation is quickly done.

However, the result remains the same. The emperor is conscious of something peculiar. He approaches the workspace, checks the calculation. He feels nothing unusual in the procedure: One just needs plug-in data. Everything looks fine, but the third result still has the same error.

The emperor becomes impatient with the repeating mistakes. Also, the guests get bored. Unfortunately, the fourth result does not vary. The emperor starts to review every step of the computation. Those are textbook steps, nothing novel. They should be all right; otherwise, the final result cannot be so approximating to the truth. But nobody can figure out where the error comes from.

Time passes little by little. The emperor cannot compromise on this small error because he had witnessed the correct calculation. On the other hand, the guests cannot leave the table because it will disgrace the emperor. It's like everyone is locked in this hall, in a dilemma.

At this time, a person breaks the deadlock.

"Your Majesty, please forgive me! The error might be due to my negligence." The voice comes from Agent Rat. He is trembling on his knees.

The emperor glares at Agent Rat and asks, "What did you do?"

Agent Rat says tremblingly, "When I brought the lunch to the first minister, he asked me to add fifteen minutes to the final result. He said he had miscalculated one infinitesimal thing. I thought it wouldn't have any serious impact, so I helped him to modify the final result. I really didn't mean to disturb the ..."

"Infinitesimal?!" The emperor barks, interrupting Agent Rat's description. As soon as the emperor finds all those present watching him, he realises that he shouldn't raise the interest in that infinitesimal thing, so he changes his tone. "Now I recall that Adam often warned me to add a small term at the end of the calculation. Yes, missing that term will cause a fifteen-minute measurement error," the emperor calmly says, "Adam probably should warn himself to include that term in his teaching."

The emperor's blame for Adam relieves everyone. People start to cite all kinds of absurd and ridiculous deeds of Adam. The atmosphere of dinner revives again.

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The emperor didn't seem to completely get out of the shadow of the infinitesimal episode. He secretly ordered an investigation into Adam's recent writings. A few days later, he got a letter. It was said that the letter was a copy of the last letter Adam sent to his family in the West. The short letter reads as follows.

*To my loved ones,*

*This chilli variety is spicy and has many seeds. It has strong vitality, can be planted on plains, dry plateaux, or wet basins. It adds strong fragrance to dishes, but I am afraid its taste is not quite suitable for our people with light tastes.*

*Please don't be upset with its incompatibility. Please cultivate this variety with great care, improve its quality and enhance its texture. One day, someone will relocate it back to the East. I am confident that by then, its flavour will dominate eastern cuisine.*

*With great gratitude,*

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