The Old Chef · Episode 1 (Free)

免费试读：Episode 1 完整正文。后续 Episode 按发布节奏陆续更新，已购用户永久免费获取。

$29 基础版 = 电子书（Episode 1 + 后续集）；$49 标准版 = 基础版 + 损耗计算表与利润分析工作簿（Excel）。

Episode 1: The Chef Who Counts Every Grain of Rice

Lao Chu has been cooking Sichuan food for 20 years.

His restaurant sits on an old street in Chengdu, the kind where the signboard paint is peeling and the wok has seen better days. But walk inside at noon, and every table is full. The aroma of chili bean paste hits you before the menu does.

"I never went to business school," Lao Chu says, wiping his hands on his apron. "I just know how to cook and how to count money."

Counting money is what he does best. Not in a greedy way — in a precise way. He can tell you exactly how much Sichuan peppercorn went into last night's Mapo Tofu, how many pork kidneys were wasted last week, and whether the cabbage from Vendor Li is 20 cents cheaper per jin than the one from Vendor Zhang.

"I've watched too many restaurants close," he says. "They have great food, but they can't control the numbers. One day you're full of customers, next day you're bankrupt because you didn't watch the rice."

That's why Lao Chu's place has survived 20 years while others came and went. He doesn't do marketing campaigns or delivery apps. He just keeps his costs tight and his food consistent.

But two years ago, something changed.

The Day He Got "Digital Officers"

Lao Chu's son came back from college with a weird idea.

"Dad, let me set up some AI for the restaurant."

"AI what?" Lao Chu frowned. "I don't need robots flipping my dishes."

"It's not for cooking. It's for counting."

"I already count."

"You count with a notebook. This counts with data. All of it. Every ingredient, every customer, every bill."

Lao Chu was skeptical. But his son insisted. "Just try it for a month. If it doesn't save you money, I'll pay for it."

So they set it up.

Five AI "digital officers" started running the restaurant's back office:

1. **The Loss Prevention Officer** — watches every ingredient to see what's being wasted

2. **The Asset Operations Officer** — tracks customers and keeps them coming back
3. **The Data Governance Officer** — makes sure the numbers are real and trustworthy
4. **The Terminal Ops Officer** — keeps the POS system running 24/7
5. **The Decision Support Officer** — looks at the big picture and gives advice

At first, Lao Chu checked every number manually. "AI this, AI that — I don't trust it unless I've verified it myself."

But after a month, something surprised him.

The Loss Prevention Officer flagged one meat SKU: bought 280 units in a month, sold only 156.

"Bullshit," Lao Chu said. "I buy exactly what I need."

Then he counted.

Sure enough — the purchase log and the sales log just didn't match. Not on purpose, just drift. A little extra here, a little extra there, and 58 units never got sold.

"I've been doing this for 20 years," Lao Chu said, "and I never caught that."

That month, that one SKU accounted for ¥1,618 of loss.

"These AI Guys Work Faster Than I Do"

Six months later, Lao Chu's restaurant looked different:

- Food waste dropped by a third
- He opened a second location using the savings
- His profit margin improved

(Figures in this book are computed from the 21-location dataset; the story is illustrative, the ratios are reproducible.)

"People ask me, 'Lao Chu, you must be working so hard with two restaurants,'" he laughs. "I tell them — I'm not working harder. I have five digital employees working for me, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They don't sleep, they don't take days off, they don't ask for raises."

He pauses, then adds:

"They're also more honest than most people I've hired."

What This Book Gives You

This isn't a story about technology. It's a story about a chef who learned that the restaurant business isn't just about cooking — it's about knowing your numbers.

Lao Chu's five digital officers aren't fancy or expensive. They're practical tools that any restaurant owner can use, whether you run a 20-seat noodle shop or a 10-location chain.

In this book, you'll learn:

- **How to find hidden food waste** before it kills your profit

- **How to turn regular customers into loyal regulars** without discount coupons
- **How to know if your books are real** (most restaurant owners don't)
- **When to open your second location** — and when you definitely shouldn't
- **How to use AI without understanding code** (Lao Chu still types with one finger)
