

Daily Bread | Rob Scott

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The following are the first few pages of

“Daily Bread” by Rob Scott

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Chapter 1: Daily Bread

“Tonight, on the six o’clock news, where lawmakers are potentially going to allow you to eat...” Mike Monahan read the evening headline, “A whole new dynamic on ‘Where do we eat tonight’”

“As if the topic was not already complicated enough,” Cynthia Ramos chuckled on the set, “Not just what or where but now with who!”

Mike reported, “Texas Lawmakers are soon voting on whether or not to modify the Cottage laws while the restaurant industry is fiercely fighting for the present laws not to change. If the laws were to change, you may be allowed very soon to consume meals cooked in residential kitchens and pay for the meals that lawmakers believe would generate lower cost meals through higher competition, better quality food and larger tax revenues. Sparked by the current unaffordability of restaurants, from fast-food costing \$15 a meal, to casual dining at \$25

a plate, to specialty and upscale restaurants, usually exceeding \$50 dollars a plate. Lawmakers are aiming to allow competition in the form of residential meal makers to purvey their extra helpings for a fee. This competition is expected to both drive down the cost of prepared meals and increase tax revenues for the State.”

The news faded to a video clip of a proponent of the change, “During 2026 throughout Texas increases in both inflation and unemployment caused many restaurants to become unaffordable as meal prices exceeded \$30 per plate. The ridiculous notion that Mom and Pop are not allowed to offer their extra food prepared to strangers for a fee infuriated most folks and Texas lawmakers got an earful and contemplated the modification of the Cottage Industry rules. The previous rule was that no meat products or temperature-controlled products could be sold by a Cottage Industry supplier in the State of Texas.”

As the news faded back to Mike Monahan, he reported, “In Texas, fifty-eight thousand restaurants exist and generate \$138 billion in revenues per year. They employ 1.5 million people serving about 25 million meals a day. About two meals per day per every residential unit across

Texas. Across Texas 12.85 million residential housing units exist with latent demand for 35 billion meals per year.”

The news faded to a video clip of Texas Governor Greg Abbott who was giving a speech, “To combat inflation presumably all restaurants need is a little friendly competition. In Texas, 32 million people live and could eat three squares a day and consume the meals all at someone else’s contribution be it a restaurant or a private residence and not spend a fortune doing so. The competition can reduce the price of a meal to \$5 or less per plate or generate between \$180 billion and \$300 billion in revenue per year. To capitalize upon this additional tax revenue, in 2027 Texas lawmakers passed the modified Cottage Industry rules and regulations allowing an ordinary residential home to prepare a meal and sell that meal to a random guest, with the maximum guest limit of 10 guests per day, in essence allowing a home to operate as a mini restaurant. The permits and regulations are somewhat relaxed but requires the kitchen and the bathroom to be inspected, the homeowner to be a certified food manager, sales tax must be collected, and HOA restrictions must not prohibit the activity.”

The guest limit was a largely debated topic but was made limited to keep the traffic levels low among residential areas that had limited parking and maneuverability along residential streets. To become a certified food manager, online courses were created. Now Mom and Pop could make ten extra meals every day and were allowed to sell them for whatever the market would bear so long as sales taxes were assessed and collected and forwarded to the State. Suddenly, the “Fuud” app became into existence and allowed Mom and Pop kitchens to list the meal of the day, the time of the meal to be served and the location of the meal with a price. Random people could then reserve their place at the table and the app would settle the bill payable to the host, pay the sales tax to the State and keep a small portion of the transaction as its fee. Typical meals were wholesomely prepared and offered for \$10 to \$20 per plate including non-alcoholic beverage and a dessert.

In this manner, Mom and Pop could generate after traditional tips about \$110,000.00 and according to the modified Cottage Industry law as much as \$250,000.00 was allowed to be collected by the residential location per year. To earn \$250,000.00 the residence would then

be competing against fancy restaurants charging \$100 per plate.

That evening, 60 Minutes ran their video magazine show about the plight of the poorest twenty percent of the population to secure food. Lesley Stahl reported, “According to a recent MIT Study, millions of people globally will likely spend half of their income on food by 2050 as both populations and pressure on the world’s resources grow. Jennifer Morris, a co-author of the study and principal research scientist at MIT’s Center for Sustainability Science and Strategy, the people most affected by the potential insecurity will have lower levels of income.

“Anything that’s taking up half of your income is potentially destabilizing for your entire life because it leaves so few resources for the other critical needs and basic life necessities,” Morris said in a release. “While many studies have examined resource security individually, MIT’s work tried to account for all three at the same time. This study shows that there is no single driver of future food, energy, and water insecurity,” Gi Joo Kim, a research scientist at Tulane University and co-

author of the paper, said in the release. “Income is important, but regional conditions, land use, energy systems, water availability and consumer behavior all shape the risks people face.” According to Kim, policymakers “need to consider specific combinations of factors that create vulnerability in each region.”

Lesley reported, “In some areas, the disparity will be enormous. The study’s authors cited southern Africa as an example; the poorest populations will likely spend more than fifty percent of their income on food, while the wealthiest will spend roughly five percent. The researchers, who focused their work on ‘human well-being,’ noted that different areas will have different needs and different combinations of factors. However, Morris said, the research could highlight areas of concern, showing that they differ in different parts of the world. But besides the rest of the world, here in America, the poorest 20% of households currently spend about forty percent of their income on food. The latest USDA Economic Research Service figures, based on the 2024 Consumer Expenditure Survey, show that households in the lowest income quintile (bottom 20%) spend upwards of forty percent of their income on food. In fact, the middleclass spend as much as fifteen percent, while the

richest quintile spend a little less than six percent of their income, skewed lower because their incomes are so much higher than the rest of the population incomes.”

Chapter 2: There's an App for that

As soon as the Cottage law passed, radio advertisements began to air about the Fuud app.

Instead of asking "Where should we go to dinner?" the ad announcer said "Whose house are we eating at tonight?"

Connie Burton heard about the radio advertisement by some of the women at the bingo game at the Senior Village.

One of the women said "Oh Connie, you are such a good cook, you should totally do that."

"That sounds great and all, but I can't host anyone in my studio apartment, it is too small and cluttered with all my stuff." Connie retorted.

"But what about the common areas, the dining hall, the breakfast nook in the front lobby? Those are perfect places to feed guests. Our bylaws even say that is allowed

for any Senior Village resident to have guests come over and to visit and eat in the common areas.”

“Huh, I guess I never thought about that.”

So, Connie signed up on the app because she thought it would be a really great way to achieve companionship with interesting conversation. Connie is 80 years old, a retired nurse, who lives alone and still wants to connect with people and converse in all things not elderly in nature. After a long day of checking on friends and hearing about their mundane aches and pains, sciatica, plantar fasciitis, new hips, new knees; at the Senior Village she hoped to serve a good meal and share in a different kind of conversation with a new acquaintance, perhaps someone different every night, which seemed exciting if at least attainable. She fancied a somewhat younger man, potentially full of energy and ambitions that she could live vicariously through if just for an evening of chatting. Anything different to talk about than old folk problems. If she could only be so lucky as to host a person looking for a meal and time to share it and the bonus of being willing to pay for such a provision.

Connie did not know how it was going to work. A single old woman in a studio apartment. But she logged on and

answered the questions. Where is the home located? Is it easy to access from a major highway close to a large area? “Well, yes, it is.” How many guests can you accommodate? “Well, there is a public dining room and a somewhat private breakfast nook, I suppose I can agree to both the minimum of one guest all the way up to the maximum of ten guests. Although I prefer just one guest but I will do what it takes to make this work.”

The Fuud app allows the residential meal maker to describe the location, the meal, its ingredients, nutritional data, the preparation style and all the newfangled buzzwords to attract customers to their prepared meals. The app was created by Jonathan Johnson, with the help of a disgruntled Uber programmer who was recruited by Jonathan to make something revolutionary for the food industry that was going to change everything in the way people secure prepared food. Customers of the Fuud app have the ability to search by location, price, time, ingredients, and any number of buzzwords to find a prepared meal meeting the criteria.

As Connie filled in her information about her first meal to be offered, Baked chicken and rice, she described it as a doctor might prescribe its beneficial nutrition to a prospective patient, "Tonight, we are having a comforting classic done right: succulent, slow-baked chicken and rice. We use bone-in chicken thighs, which stay incredibly juicy and tender under a perfectly crisped, golden-brown skin. As it bakes, all the rich, savory pan juices melt directly into the rice below, infusing every single grain with deep, roasted chicken flavor. It's warm, deeply satisfying, and the ultimate comfort food, served with peas and carrots cooked in and a soft drink or iced tea." The Fuud app automatically generates the nutritional benefits of the meal based on the ingredient description and posts it below the description:

Homemade chicken and rice baked with bone-in chicken thighs is an exceptional, easily digestible, and nutrient-dense meal designed to accelerate recovery and support bodily repair.

- **Immune Support & Gut Healing:** Baking the rice directly with **bone-in chicken thighs** allows the natural bone marrow, collagen, and gelatin to seep into the rice. This provides crucial amino acids like **glycine and glutamine**, which repair the gut lining and strengthen the immune system.

- **Tissue Repair & Lean Mass:** Chicken thighs deliver high-quality, easily absorbable **complete protein**. This is vital for cell regeneration, healing surgical sites or wounds, and preventing muscle wasting during periods of rest.
- **Energy Replenishment:** White or brown rice acts as a clean, easily digestible source of **complex carbohydrates**. It restores glycogen levels and provides steady, accessible energy without straining a sensitive digestive tract.
- **Bioavailable Micronutrients:** This cooking method locks in essential vitamins and minerals. Dark meat is naturally rich in **iron and zinc** (critical for red blood cell production and wound healing), as well as **B vitamins** (B6 and B12) which drive cellular energy production.

As Connie continued filling in the app, it suggests a price of \$12.00 per guest and allows her to modify it as she pleases. For her first time, she decided to stick with the suggested pricing. Next she needed to advise the number of guests she would like to serve. She only wanted to serve one but thought that might heavily diminish her chances of securing a customer. She generally made a 9 x 6 pan of chicken and rice and it usually serves about four people. So, for her first time she stated three guests maximum. Then she was prompted to choose the time of the dinner. While she

could allow the guests to come at any time day or night, assuming the meal was ready-made and just required reheating, Connie preferred to eat the meal fresh and decided that was the best kind and so 6:00 pm was chosen. When she pushed the Submit button, she felt butterflies in the pit of her stomach. She was putting herself out there and was hoping for the best.

Connie couldn't help but check her app often, awaiting the "ding" of the dinner bell announcing that she acquired a guest. Not more than fifteen minutes passed and "ding" she got a guest acceptance 6:00 pm tomorrow for chicken and rice. His name is Tom and he will see her tomorrow.

Chapter 3: Ten Seats

“Sarah, it worked!” Connie shouted at her friend as she ran down to hallway to see her. “I got a customer and he’s coming over tomorrow!”

“Oh, Connie, I am so excited for you! What are you making?”

“Baked chicken and rice!”

“Oh, you should be able to make a fortune, Connie. Ten customers a day paying \$25 a plate, 70 plates every week, that’s \$91,000 dollars and if they tip at twenty percent that’s \$110,000 dollars. You’re going to be raking it in!”

“But, Sarah, I don’t want to cook for ten people, I just want one younger man every night to carry on good conversation and to live vicariously through him. And it’s only \$12 a plate.”

“Awe, Connie, don’t sell yourself so short, you are the most talented cook, you really should do that every day and make those righteous dollars! Why don’t you want to cook for ten people? It’s just ten people. That money would be so good. Think of what the \$110,000 dollars could get you every year.

“No, I just want one good long conversation every night by someone who does not complain about pain or hips or knees or backs or cataracts. Just give me a nice young man who wants to eat and let me talk with him, that’s all I want.”

“You know what I heard? I heard there is no limit on how much you can charge the guests; you can charge a hundred dollars a plate if you want to.”

“Oh Sarah, who’s going to come to an old folks’ home and eat a meal and pay \$100 for a plate for just food? You would have to be selling something entirely else other than food!”

“Can you imagine what gorgeous young hot floozies would do to make \$100 dollars a plate?”

“You mean like serving a bologna sandwich with some mayonnaise and for dessert whip cream nipples and a blowjob?”

“Ha! Can you imagine?”

“Oh, why do I let you take me there? No! I don’t want to imagine that! I want a good wholesome conversation with a gentleman of the younger generation, to hear what they are doing and how they are learning to get by in this crazy world.”

“So, how old is your customer going to be tomorrow? Does he have a name?”

“Tom. But I can’t tell how old he is, but he has a picture. See! I can’t tell how old he is but he looks youngish, right?”

“Better hope he is not looking for buttery nipples!”

“Whip cream nipples. Whatever! I have a can in the fridge.”

“There you go, Connie! That’s the spirit! You’ll get a hundred dollars out of him with that attitude; you go get it girl!”

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