

History's Strongest Son-In-Law - History's Strongest Son-In-Law Living With The In-Laws

Chapter 16: Marriage

Translator:

Atlas

Studios

The Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu was not within the city; it had its own manor and castle, and was about twenty over li away from Xuanwu City.

Shen Lang had only seen this palace from afar and was overwhelmed with its majestic size. However, someone of his status had no right to enter its walls.

In Xuanwu City, the Xu family was considered extremely rich and wealthy.

However, Master Xu could only step into this palace two or three times a year and would only be received by their housekeeper.

The Xu family's Residence was already sufficiently big and lavish, but it was nothing compared to the Earl's Palace.

The Earl from the Jin Family received feudal fiefdom and was completely different from those nobles who held empty statuses.

In the history of the past centuries, the Earl of Xuanwu held over five thousand square kilometers of feudal land when it was in its prime. Then, due to a political shift, the Dayan Dynasty and Yue State underwent a series of legislative changes. Thus, the feudal land that the Earl of Xuanwu ruled became considerably smaller.

Even so, the Earl of Xuanwu remained the highest authority of Xuanwu City.

The Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu spanned over a thousand mu and had its own farmland, breeding farm, orchard, winery, etc...

The castle was built on a mountain that was almost three hundred meters tall and spanned over ten thousand square meters. Its walls are taller and thicker than those of Xuanwu City. The number of guards surpassed those of Xuanwu City too.

Thus, if war broke out and Xuanwu City lost, this territory wouldn't be considered fallen.

If the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu was lost, only then would this entire region truly fall.

Right now, for the first time, Shen Lang had stepped into this palace that contained centuries of history, the grandest building of the entire Nujiang County.

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The miss of the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu, Jin Mulan, removed all her silver armor and revealed her practice attire.

She practiced martial arts all year round and was taller than the average male. Her legs were also long, toned, and seemed to be beautifully sculpted.

After shedding the practice attire made of snakeskin, Mulan stepped into the giant bath.

The most relaxing and comforting thing after leading the troops back was to take a hot bath.

When she was done, she wore a set of male practice attire and went to greet her parents.

Dressed in male attire, she appeared even more valiant, formidable, fresh, elegant, and magnificent.

"Greetings, father, greetings, mother!" Jin Mulan bowed and greeted.

The study of the Palace of the Earl was not that extravagant, but every single item in it had a history of a hundred years and was extremely exquisite.

Even the majority of the books and records here had over a hundred years of history.

The Earl of Xuanwu, Jin Zhuo, was only fifty years old this year. He had a handsome countenance and a gentle temperament, but occasionally, his gaze could be as incisive as a sword that penetrated right into the heart.

He was well-trained in martial arts and was highly skilled too. However, he didn't carry a sword with him most of the time. Instead, he had books and scrolls on his hands all year round.

He was highly esteemed, but he rarely wore extravagant clothes. Most of the time, he either wore clothing made of cotton or sackcloth.

He was also barely richly bedecked. The only extravagant item on him was the jade pendant on his waist.

"Oh, Mulan, you're home! How did the drill go this time?" the Earl of Xuanwu asked.

Jin Mulan replied, "Not bad, we didn't embarrass the Jin Family."

The Earl of Xuanwu chuckled. "If you say that it's not bad, then it must be excellent."

He had a very loving but complicated gaze when he looked at his daughter. He let out a soft sigh. "if your younger brother was a third as soldierly as you, then the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu wouldn't have to worry about not having any qualified successor... What a pity, ah..."

Jin Mulan asked, "Father, is the situation not very ideal?"

"It is terrible!" the Earl of Xuanwu replied, "the entire Dayan Dynasty is implementing new policies, and the Yue State is no exception. The Emperor's intentions are already obvious. The new and old forces will be replaced. The old aristocrats will be ripped off their military power and feudal land. During such an unstable period, the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu does not have a qualified successor. This will end the Jin Family clan's foundations of centuries. How can I face my ancestors when I've passed?"

The Earl was so angered after mentioning his son that he gritted his teeth. He was truly too unpromising!

Jin Mulan replied, "As long as I am around, the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu will not crumble."

She was not boasting when she said this. She was really the pillar of the entire Earl's Palace and was the greatest pride of her parents.

However, a daughter would ultimately have to marry someone else, ah! Jin Mulan was already twenty-two years old.

"I will not wed for the rest of my life and shall stay at home to support my younger brother to protect the Jin Family's century-old family estate." Jin Mulan added coldly, "Whoever tries to marry me is trying to end the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu! They will be the mortal enemy of our family!"

Then, the atmosphere got unusually heavy between the three of them. The Jin Family's daughter was making such a huge sacrifice for their family, and it made the couple feel extremely upset to the point that they couldn't say a word of comfort.

After a while, the Earl of Xuanwu changed the topic, "On your way

back today, your soldier had accidentally knocked and injured someone on the streets of Xuanwu City, right?"

"Yes," Jin Mulan replied.

The Earl of Xuanwu replied, "Get him treated well, give him a sum of money, and then send him home. Our family needs a good reputation, especially during a period like this."

Just at this moment, the Earl's chamberlain's voice rang out from outside the door, "Master, Doctor An requests for an audience."

"Let him in!" the Earl of Xuanwu said.

After a while, an old man entered. He was one of the three doctors of the Palace of the Earl. When Jin Mulan brought Shen Lang back to the palace, it was this An Zaishi who was in charge of treating him.

“Master.” Old Doctor An Zaishi bowed. “The young man that was hit has already regained consciousness. There are no major issues.”

Jin Mulan was stunned. Wasn’t that young man severely injured?!

“That’s good,” the Earl of Xuanwu replied, but he felt a bit surprised. Was there a need to report to him, the Earl, for something this minor? It would be more than enough to have the housekeeper handle this matter.

An Zaishi said, “When that young man woke up, he requested to seek an audience with the Earl.”

“An audience with me?” The Earl of Xuanwu was stunned. This young man was genuinely too full of himself. The officials of Xuanwu City didn’t even dare to seek an audience with him so rashly, what more an ordinary young man.

Doctor An said, “He said that he had to speak to you about an important matter. It concerns Miss’ marriage.”

When this was said, the Earl of Xuanwu couldn’t help but turn severe and begin to frown. He nodded and said, “If there are no big issues with his body, let him come and meet me.”

Shen Lang really didn’t have problems with his body; it was just some bruises that made it a little challenging for him to walk. His face was a bit pale after staying up for an entire night.

When he entered the study room, he bowed and greeted, “Student Shen Lang, offers his greetings to the Earl of Xuanwu.”

He was one of Xuanwu City’s people, and thus, the Earl of Xuanwu’s people. Therefore, he should perform his greetings by kneeling down. However, Shen Lang came from the modern earth, so naturally, he wasn’t willing to kneel down to anyone.

The Earl of Xuanwu showed a surly expression, but he didn’t put on airs, either. His gaze landed on Shen Lang’s face and was a little stunned after seeing his handsome face.

He was really an extremely beautiful young man! It was sporadic to see this sort of look amongst villagers!

“Student?” the Earl of Xuanwu asked, “What’s your scholarly honor? I know of every single one of the successful civil and military candidates in Xuanwu City, but I have never heard of the name Shen Lang.”

Shen Lang said, “I am a student from Hanshui Town College.”

Shen Lang was feeling a little embarrassed when he said this.

The education of Hanshui Town College was the equivalent to primary school education in the modern world. It was indeed a little embarrassing to speak of such an educational background, and more importantly, he didn’t even graduate from college and was chased out.

The Earl of Xuanwu furrowed his brows. “You have soft-skin and tender flesh; it’s evident that your parents doted on you greatly to let you focus on your studies, but you have not even entered the college in Xuanwu City at this age! What an ungrateful son!”

The Earl was feeling a little disdain toward Shen Lang. His son was already incredibly useless, but he was much better compared to this young man here.

When this was said, Shen Lang instantly had a favorable impression toward the Earl of Xuanwu. He could clearly feel that he had viewed everyone in Xuanwu City as his people, instantly chastising Shen Lang on behalf of his parents upon finding out that Shen Lang did not do well in his studies.

“You were knocked over by my soldiers. Is your body alright?” the Earl asked.

Shen Lang replied, “There is no major problem, just some bruises and aches.”

The Earl continued, “You said that you had an important matter to tell me concerning my daughter’s marriage. Do tell.”

Shen Lang replied, “I heard that the Zhu Family wishes to ask for your blessings and that Zhu Hongxue wishes to marry Miss Jin Mulan of the Palace of the Earl.”

This was a secret that almost no one else knew about outside of the Palace.

Instantly, the Earl’s expression changed.

The Zhu Family? The influential officials of Yue State, the in-laws of the Monarch, and the governor of Tian Nan and Ping Nan General—they all came from the Zhu Family.

The moment Jin Mulan married, who would protect the Palace of the Earl? Who would lead the troops of the Jin Family?

If someone wished to get rid of the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu at the roots, they had to break his family’s pillar.

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Chapter 17: Living with the In-Laws

After a long while, the Earl of Xuanwu finally calmed down and asked, “This matter about the Zhu Family seeking to marry is a secret, and even I am unaware of it; how did you know about this? From whose mouth did you hear it from?”

That’s right. Everyone’s gaze landed back on Shen Lang. With his lowly status, how did he find out about a big secret like this?

Shen Lang replied, “The new fiancée of the Xu family’s daughter, Zhang Pu!”

“Zhang Pu?” The Earl of Xuanwu asked, “The new leader of Xuanwu City’s guards?”

“Yes, that’s him,” Shen Lang replied, “I had married into the Xu family previously when Xu Qianqian chased me out of their house; her new fiancée, Zhang Pu, said that he wants to host their wedding as soon as possible since Zhu Hongxue wishes to seek your blessing to marry your daughter, Jin Mulan. He thought I was a moron and let it slip, but he also reminded Xu Qianqian not to leak this information.”

At this moment, the Earl’s most trusted aide went over and whispered into his ears. Clearly, he had informed the Earl of Shen Lang’s background.

In Xuanwu City, Shen Lang was a famous person.

When everyone didn’t dare to marry into the Xu family, Shen Lang stepped forward and became famous in Xuanwu City.

Everyone knew that a useless moron had become the son-in-law of the Xu family. All of Shen Lang’s history was unraveled. This included how he studied for a decade but couldn’t even complete the elementary course or how there was a problem with his IQ.

“Just two days ago, the Xu family announced that their live-in son-in-law, Shen Lang, had stolen things in their house and flirted with the female servants. Thus, he was chased out of the Xu family,” the Earl’s trusted aid said slightly loudly, intending for Shen Lang to hear it.

Upon hearing all these, the Earl of Xuanwu instantly frowned.

Whether Shen Lang stole from the Xu family or flirted with their maids was hard to tell, so the Earl didn’t buy it.

However, Shen Lang, who had studied for almost ten years and was chased home without completing elementary education, was obviously incompetent. A youngster like this was genuinely disappointing.

From the way they saw it, Shen Lang was willing to marry into the Xu family purely out of greed. The Earl absolutely couldn't stand youngsters who lazed around with greed. Thus, he had a horrible opinion of Shen Lang.

Had this been an ordinary period, he would have definitely given him a harsh teaching. However, right now, he didn't have the time to be concerned about it anymore because what Shen Lang had told him was too important, and it concerned the fate of the Earl's Palace.

He could instantly tell that what Shen Lang was saying was the truth.

The Zhang Family was the newly promoted nobles of the Yue State, and they had the Zhu Family's support.

Zhang Pu's father, Zhang Chong, had assumed the position of the governor of Nujiang County, but it was purely due to the recommendation of the governor of Tian Nan province, Zhu Rong.

Thus, it wasn't weird for Zhang Pu to know about the family secrets of the Zhu Family.

As for Zhang Pu, the Earl of Xuanwu knew about him. Even the nobles of Xuanwu City were a little shocked because of how desperate the Zhang Family was for money. The son of a governor wanted to marry the daughter of a wealthy merchant, but this daughter in question already had a live-in son-in-law once.

Earl Jin Zhuo could understand, though. The Zhang Family had risen too quickly, and their foundations were unstable. If they wished to grow stronger, they would require a large amount of money. However, everyone's eyes were on the Zhang Family, so it wasn't good for them to appear too greedy for money. Thus, they had to establish a marriage that could produce significant monetary gain.

Thus, the marriage alliance between the Zhang and Xu family was the perfect union between power and money.

"Immediately send some men to the various paths to scout. Report back immediately if you discovered money that came from the Zhu Family," ordered the Earl, "it's important to know wherever the people who are on their way from the Zhu Family are right now!"

"Yes, sir!" One of them ran out of the hall. He would personally bring men to go and scout for people from the Zhu Family.

Then, the Earl said to Shen Lang, "Young lad, I don't have a good opinion of you, but what you have told me is something of absolute importance and have done us a huge service. I will definitely reward you heavily. Say what you wish. As long as it does not go against the laws of the country and morals, then I can agree to it."

Shen Lang instantly had an even better impression of this Earl.

This person was really straightforward. The matter had yet to be verified, and he already wished to grant hefty rewards.

The Earl's intentions were evident. No matter how much money Shen Lang wished for, as long as he said a sum, and no matter what problem Shen Lang had, the Earl was willing to solve it.

In other words, the crisis Shen Lang was facing from the Xu family, the Lin family, and Tian Heng could be instantly resolved.

As long as the Earl sent someone to pass the message, these three families definitely wouldn't dare to touch even a single hair on Shen Lang.

However, this was not the only thing Shen Lang wanted.

With such a valuable bargaining chip, it would be too wasteful to exchange it for something like dealing with the Xu family and the Tian Heng crisis.

What he wanted was to take the opportunity to stay in the palace, find ways to get closer to Jin Mulan, continuously show himself to her, always emphasize his presence, and finally marry... the goddess.

Shen Lang swore that with his talents and handsome appearance, it would only take half a month at most for him to leave a deep impression on the goddess.

"I wish to stay in the palace of the Earl for a job," Shen Lang bowed and said.

He did not raise the matter about the Xu family and Tian Heng and how they were trying to harm him since there was no need to talk about it. As long as he remained in the Palace of the Earl, naturally, these two families wouldn't dare touch his family.

The Earl instantly furrowed his brows. He didn't have a good impression of Shen Lang. Forget that he was a young man who lazed around and did not study properly, most importantly, he even went to marry into the Xu family as their live-in son-in-law. This was obviously a sign of greed and an extremely unfilial act.

He felt that Shen Lang wished to stay in the Palace of the Earl purely with ill intentions. The Earl still had good judgment.

However, since he had already said it, he shall keep his promise.

Shen Lang was still young; even if he had any bad habits, it would all be corrected under the strict teachings of the Palace of the Earl.

The Earl said, "Since you wish to stay in the palace for a job, then I can agree to it, and since your report was a great contribution to us, I wouldn't make you work as a servant, but..." The Earl's tone suddenly became extremely strict. "But you're not here in my palace to enjoy life.

I will not let you laze around. Instead, I will educate you strictly. Are you able to bear the hardship?"

Bear hardship?!

"Then, let's forget it." The last thing Shen Lang wanted in this life was to bear hardship and be exhausted.

However, for the sake of the goddess, bearing hardships temporarily was still doable. Of course, it was for a few days only, any more would be impossible.

"Yes!" Shen Lang agreed instantly.

Then, the Earl went forward and squeezed Shen Lang's shoulder. Shaking his head, he said, "Your body is too weak, and you're too old to start practicing martial arts, but this is a good age to continue studying for a good future. From now on, you shall study with my son. Your parents had pampered and doted on you, but the Palace of the Earl would not. I will definitely make you someone useful."

Shen Lang couldn't help but feel stunned! Wasn't this like the high-ranking page boy in Flirting Scholar1?

"Alright, you're still injured, so go and rest first. You shall accompany the other highnesses to study tomorrow. I will send someone to inform your parents and also send some gold coins over," the Earl said, "If you have any problems, then I will resolve it as well."

"Look, big shots are just this generous."

"Yes, Earl," Shen Lang replied.

"Jin Zhong, go to the tailors and get a couple of new articles of clothing made for Shen Lang," the Earl's wife added.

"Yes," the old servant replied.

Shen Lang felt warm and fuzzy inside. The Earl and his wife were outstanding people.

"Earl, Madam, Miss, I shall take my leave." Shen Lang bowed and began to take his leave.

However, before he could step out of the door, a man came running in the hall. It was the Earl's trusted aid. He had just brought some men to scout on the current location of the Zhu Family's people, but he had come rushing back.

"Master! There's trouble!" This trusted aid knelt down and said, "Our scouts in Nujiang County had just sent pigeons to deliver the message, and a certain big shot from the Zhu family had already arrived in Nujiang County last night! They are heading in our direction!"

"What?" the Earl cried out.

“What?” Shen Lang cried mentally.

“This is bad, ah!”

He had already successfully accomplished the first step, which was to remain in the Palace of the Earl.

In the next few days, he would have to put the second step into action: to show himself, always emphasizing his presence.

Then, it would be the third step: to find a way to marry into the Palace of the Earl as their live-in son-in-law.

That’s right, living with the in-laws.

Since the current situation was straightforward, Jin Mulan absolutely wouldn’t be marrying out of the family.

However, the crucial figures of the Zhu family had already arrived in Nujiang County; he would reach the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu tonight to ask for Jin Mulan’s hand in marriage, which meant that there was no time left.

Whether showing himself or emphasizing his presence, there was not enough time for it anymore.

F*ck, not even giving me two weeks, three days, or even a single day!

This meant that Jin Mulan must get married today, and Shen Lang only had six hours left!

Otherwise, his goddess would belong to someone else. His wealth and fortune would also fly away into the horizon.

“No! The goddess is mine!”

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Chapter 18: Mulan Chooses A Husband

Translator:

Atlas

Studios

Shen Lang’s mind instantly began to work, going through many plans.

At this moment, the door before him instantly slammed shut, cutting him off outside.

This was normal because the Earl was going to discuss a private matter now. Shen Lang was still an outsider after all; he couldn't participate in the discussion.

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"Who from the Zhu Family is coming?" the Earl asked.

"Governor Zhu Rong's younger brother, the Pingnan General, Zhu Lin!" the trusted aid replied, presenting the secret message sent from the pigeon in Nujiang.

The Earl read it through with a grim expression on his face.

To think that it was General Zhu Lin. The matter was genuinely looking bad, ah!

This meant that the Zhu Family was determined to succeed!

Asking for marriage could be done openly. However, General Zhu Lin came hurrying over in secret. He intended to catch the Palace of the Earl off guard and not give them any chance to refuse.

The idea that Zhu Hongxue was marrying Jin Mulan was definitely not an ordinary marriage alliance. Its aim was to carry out a political shift.

What was the most essential thing for robbing the power and military authority of the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu? To make the palace lose their general. The Highness of the Earl of Xuanwu was a useless moron who wasn't capable of protecting his family's foundations.

The moment Jin Mulan married Zhu Hongxue, they would tear the pillar of the Palace of the Earl down into the ground. In doing so, they would snatch away the military authority of the Earl.

The Earl's wife spoke with a trembling voice, "Darling, can we refuse?"

The Earl shook his head. "We can't. The Zhu Family is a powerful figure. Outrightly refusing is the same as us having a fall out with them. Furthermore, this proposal may carry the intentions of the Monarch."

Jin Mulan said, "I will absolutely not marry. I will definitely stay in the house to guide my younger brother and to protect the Jin Family's hundred years of family establishment. Whoever wishes to snatch it away will have to step over my dead body."

The Earl sighed, and his brows furrowed tightly as he paced throughout the room.

Jin Mulan said, "Father, I can disfigure myself."

Then, she pulled out her dagger. As long as the Earl gave the order, she would slice away at her beautiful face till it's tattered.

“No!” the Earl said, “I indeed want to protect our family’s establishment, but I must first protect my own daughter from harm. Even if you are disfigured, the Zhu Family will still seek your hand in marriage, unless...”

Jin Mulan replied, “Unless I marry today, to a live-in son-in-law, and complete the marital rites before General Zhu Lin arrives, making it an absolute fact so that he will retreat and not seek my hand in marriage!”

Indeed, this was the only method now. Even an engagement wouldn’t work. After all, there was no such thing as an engagement for a son-in-law marrying into the wife’s family.

General Zhu Lin was less than two hundred li away from the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu. He would arrive tonight.

Originally, even if they looked for a son-in-law to marry into their family, the Earl of Xuanwu intended to pick carefully.

They had to be wedded tonight, which meant that they had to send out the wedding invitations before noon. In four hours, they absolutely had to decide on the son-in-law.

Looking at his beautiful and strong daughter, the Earl of Xuanwu’s heart softened as he said, “Mulan, the Zhu Family is powerful. That Zhu Hongxue also has a promising future and is a good choice for a husband. I can’t sacrifice your happiness for the sake of our family’s benefits. Why don’t you consider it for a bit?”

The Miss of the Palace of the Earl, Jin Mulan, said, “Father, it is my greatest happiness to be able to contribute to the family. Younger brother definitely would not be able to protect our ancestor’s efforts when you’ve passed. I absolutely will not marry out of the family.”

The Earl instantly felt incredibly moved, and his heart ached. Then, he picked up a brush and wrote five names on a piece of white paper.

These five people were exceptional young men and were the most suitable candidates for marrying in as their son-in-law in the Earl’s opinion.

The Earl really pitied his daughter and had already begun choosing a husband for her since three years ago. However, it wasn’t very acceptable to get someone to marry into the wife’s family, and most importantly, Jin Mulan had always been rejecting the idea of marrying too.

Now, time is pressing. The family had to make their decision fast.

The first name amongst these five husband candidates was Wang Lian.

A young talent, clearing his provincial examinations at the age of eighteen, the current registrar of Xuanwu City, and the Earl’s distant relative.

The second name was Mo Ye, a martial art prodigy in Xuanwu City. He was selected for the Martial Arts Examination at the age of sixteen and was currently practicing hard to prepare for the imperial examinations.

These two were young men with promising futures. The other three were young talents from the Palace of the Earl. They were good at martial arts or studies, and were cultivated from a young age by the Jin Family. Thus, there was no doubt on their loyalty to the Earl's Palace.

These five people were full of admiration for Jin Mulan, and they dreamt of her day and night.

To be exact, all the young men of the surrounding radius had viewed Jin Mulan as their dream lover.

"Jin Zhong, send someone to get these five men into the Palace for Mulan to pick." The Earl handed the name list over to his loyal servant.

The Earl already felt like he had let down his daughter considerably; thus, he only decided on five candidates and left the final choice up to Mulan.

"Yes, sir!" Jin Zhong cradled the name list into his chest upon receiving it and walked out of the door, sending several men to fetch the candidates.

The Earl said, "Mulan, although time is tight, Father will definitely find the best candidate for you. I'll ensure that you live in happiness for the rest of your life. These five young men are all very exceptional; you can choose carefully."

Just at this moment, Shen Lang walked in and said, "Earl, Miss Mulan, can I join the competition? I also wish to marry you!"

When this was said, everyone present was stunned. They couldn't react at all and were completely caught off guard.

Then, the Earl of Xuanwu, with all his excellent temperament, finally couldn't endure it anymore and was practically about to explode.

It was not only the Earl. The other few people present looked at Shen Lang with daggers in their eyes.

"You? Someone like you also wishes to marry the Miss of the Palace of the Earl!"

"Your looks are definitely enough, but you look so handsome that you're more suited to be a gigolo and not be carried away by your wishful thinking."

"What family are you from? A mere peasant who is so poor that you live in a thatched hut."

"Of course, one could not choose where they were born. If you're outstanding enough, the Earl could give it some consideration. To have a live-in son-in-law from a good family background was difficult, after all."

“However, Shen Lang, you should take a piss and look at yourself?”

“You studied for ten years, but you couldn’t even graduate from a college in town and was dropped out directly.”

In the modern world context, this was the equivalent of not graduating from elementary school at the age of eighteen.

“You’re born into a poor family, but you’re unable to do hard labor and laze around with your uselessness.”

“Everyone Xuanwu City knows that there’s something wrong with your brain.”

Compared to those five candidates that the Earl had listed, Shen Lang couldn’t even compare.

Those five young men were talented in literature or martial arts, while Shen Lang was entirely incompetent.

“The most unacceptable thing is, you had abandoned your parents and married into the Xu family as their live-in son-in-law for the sake of a luxurious life. Now that you’ve been chased out by the Xu family and abandoned by Xu Qianqian, you still dare to wish to marry the Miss of the Palace of the Earl?”

“What did you take my Palace of the Earl as?!”

“The daughter of the Earl of Xuanwu is worth multiple folds compared to Xu Qianqian! We’d pick carefully even if we are looking for a son-in-law to marry into our family! You’re really aiming for someone completely out of your league!”

Madam Jin went forward to soothe her husband’s back and said in a gentle voice, “Husband, don’t be angry, they say that this Shen Lang isn’t mentally developed, and he is just a child. Why should we lower ourselves to his level?”

The Earl of Xuanwu let out a long sigh.

Indeed, there really was something wrong with his brain and was merely a child. Why should the Earl be so calculative with him?

“Men, send this bum home and send ten gold coins. Remember to hand it to his parents and not him,” the Earl ordered, “then send someone else to go pick him up to study here at the palace tomorrow and teach him a thorough lesson.”

“Yes, sir!” Two soldiers stepped forward and grabbed Shen Lang’s shoulders before dragging him out.

Shen Lang said, “Miss Mulan, I believe I am more suitable than those five men to become your husband! Don’t tell me I don’t even have the right to compete?”

Jin Mulan looked over at Shen Lang and took a good look at him. "I remember now; three years ago, when I went hunting, I also accidentally knocked into you, you're fool 21..."

"Hey! Goddess! It's a little too much for you to speak like this, ah!"

That's right, no one called Shen Lang using his name in the village; they all called him fool 2 because there was still a fool 1 and was the only friend Shen Lang had at that time.

When Jin Mulan's horse accidentally injured Shen Lang, she immediately carried him and went to the village to ask about his name and address. However, everyone replied, saying he was fool 2.

The Earl's face couldn't help but twitch upon hearing the words "fool 2".

Shen Lang said, "Miss Mulan, I also wish to marry you, I definitely will not disappoint you."

Jin Mulan's gaze when she looked at Shen Lang was full of gentleness.

When she heard of Shen Lang's story three years ago and learned that he was mentally challenged, she remained full of sympathy for him and had visited him a couple of times, sending the best doctors to treat him.

All in all, Jin Mulan viewed it as if she was looking after a child. After all, Shen Lang's intelligence was like that of a child back then.

Jin Mulan was very disappointed by the mutual deception in the world of the adults but was very friendly toward the innocence of a child.

Thus, Jin Mulan looked at Shen Lang and said, "Fine, I will add your name to the list. You may compete fairly."

Others might discriminate against Shen Lang, but she wouldn't.

The Earl was about to open his mouth to interrupt, but Jin Mulan said with a smile, "Father, what are you so worried about?"

"Indeed, what am I worried about?"

"Mulan is merely being compassionate, which is why she is adding Shen Lang's name into the list of candidates. She wouldn't even choose him, so why should I have groundless fears and feel angry about it?"

"Men, send Shen Lang to the sixth study room!" The Earl ordered.

Two hours later!

The other five promising youths were brought to the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu and settled into five separate study rooms while Shen Lang was in the sixth.

None of them met and wouldn't know who their competitors were.

It was up to Jin Mulan to make her pick by observing them through a veil.

Time was tight; they had to decide on a person before noon and get married by night time. They only had two hours at most to choose one out of the six to be Jin Mulan's husband.

Jin Mulan stepped into the study room. The selection of husbands in the Palace of the Earl officially began!

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Chapter 19: Shen Lang Rises Above Others, Wins!

Translator:

Atlas

Studios

Amongst these six young men, Shen Lang was the weakest competitor; he barely had any competitive strength to speak of among them.

The seeded player was undoubtedly Wang Lian.

This distant relative of the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu, the young registrar, sat in the study room, feeling nervous, anxious, and excited.

Of course, he knew what he was here for today! He had waited for this day to come for many years.

He wasn't from Nujiang County and should have focused on studying at home to enter the court, but he came to Xuanwu Cty to be a registrar. He didn't even like this job. He only had one aim for doing so—to enjoy the benefits of a favorable position.

Of course, he knew that Jin Mulan wouldn't be marrying out of her family, and would only seek a son-in-law to marry into her family.

However, he didn't care. He was not the only son in his family. He had two older brothers, one good at martial arts, while the other was good at literature.

He was mesmerized by Jin Mulan from a young age. Furthermore, with an influential family like this, even a live-in son-in-law would enjoy endless luxury and compelling authority.

The son of the Earl was incompetent, so the ultimate power of the Palace of the Earl would definitely be placed in the hands of Jin Mulan. Then, as her husband, he would undoubtedly enjoy the highest power.

This was a feudal land of a thousand square kilometers, two private military troops, and an astronomical sum of fortune.

Thus, Wang Lian was determined to obtain the position of the husband of Jin Mulan!

Aside from Mo Ye, the Martial Arts candidate, there was no other threat.

Jin Mulan was powerful in martial arts, so what she needed was a husband who knew about literature and studies, so they would complement each other.

Wang Lian was sure that he would definitely win this competition!

Of course, he wasn't the only one who thought this way. Practically everyone else felt the same. Especially the trusted aid of the Earl. He had brought Wang Lian over personally and had treated him as the future son-in-law of the Palace of the Earl already.

Jin Mulan walked into the first study room and was separated from Wang Lian by a thin partition.

Sensing the arrival of the beauty, Wang Lian instinctively breathed heavily, feeling so nervous that he couldn't suppress it.

Soon, he would become Mulan's husband. Very soon, he would share the same pillow with this divinely beautiful princess of Xuanwu Cty.

His long-cherished wish that span for ten years would finally be fulfilled.

"Wang Lian, what can you offer me in the future?" Jin Mulan asked.

Wang Lian adjusted his agitated emotions and replied, "When we are wedded, I will go for the imperial exams. From then on, you will be in charge of the martial arts while I'll be in charge of literature; you and I shall complement each other. We will definitely bring the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu to greater heights and pass on to future generations!"

Wang Lian felt that this was what Jin Mulan desired the most.

Indeed, the prosperity of the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu was one of her greatest dreams. Meanwhile, passing the ancestral establishment for centuries was what Mulan had been chasing throughout her life.

"Many thanks, cousin," Jin Mulan said before walking out.

...

Jin Mulan went into the second room; Martial Arts Candidate Mo Ye was in there.

Mo Ye was extremely skilled in martial arts and was exceedingly calm.

When Jin Mulan stepped in, there was no change in his breathing. However, his heart rate increased a little.

His desire for Jin Mulan did not lose to Wang Lian.

He was a man of martial arts and was born in an ordinary family. He was highly skilled, but it felt like he had reached a bottleneck phase.

Thus, he needed large amounts of resources, martial arts manuals, and records. These were things that money couldn't buy, but the Jin Family, being a family with a rich history, would definitely have.

Furthermore, Jin Mulan's beauty and figure were irresistible to any man.

"Young Master Mo, if you marry into the Palace of the Earl, what can you bring me in the future?" Jin Mulan asked the same question.

Mo Ye replied, "I will go for the imperial examinations and become the number one expert in the world. I will then lead the troops of the Palace of the Earl on expeditions to make contributions so that the Jin Family will achieve higher levels of power and authority."

"Thank you, Young Master Mo." Jin Mulan stood up and left.

...

Next, she went to the third, fourth, and fifth study rooms.

She asked the same question: "If you marry into the Palace of the Earl, what can you bring me in the future?"

These three people had the same answers, and that was loyalty. They were willing to die for the sake of Miss Mulan, even if they must go through floods and tread on fire!

Since these three people had been brought up by the Palace of the Earl from a young age, their answers were simple.

...

Jin Mulan entered the last room!

Across the screen, Shen Lang sensed Jin Mulan's presence. It was that sort of delightful, feminine fragrance.

Shen Lang focused his vision and managed to see the silhouette of Jin Mulan's body through the screen.

Instantly, his heart rate began to increase.

"Shen Lang, if you marry into the Palace of the Earl, what can you bring me in the future?" Jin Mulan asked.

"What?" Shen Lang asked.

"He's really a silly fool." Jin Mulan chuckled internally, and then she asked in a gentle voice, "What is the most precious thing you can give me?"

"The virginity I had kept for forty years!" Shen Lang replied mentally, almost instinctively.

Of course, he could only say such things in his mind. Otherwise, he would be beaten to death once he said it out loud.

Then, how exactly should he answer this question?

Shen Lang could give plenty, plenty of things.

For example, he was a very good gynecologist. If she had any difficulties that are hard for her to speak of, he could help her get treated.

Meanwhile, he also knew the secret recipe to refine and smelt steel. It would allow all the metal of the Palace of the Earl to be strengthened into a whole new level, allowing the armors of the private army of the Jin Family to be even more durable while their swords would become sharper.

Maybe he could say that he had a compelling pair of eyes. He knew where to unblock when their meridians got clogged after practicing martial arts.

He could even guess how the previous five people had answered.

Wang Lian would definitely say he and Jin Mulan could complement each other in brawns and brains, allowing the Palace of the Earl to prosper and would enable the family establishment of the Jin Family to be passed down from generation to generation.

Mo Ye would definitely boast of his own martial arts, and how he could bring the troops on expeditions to make significant contributions to the Earl, allowing the Jin Family to rise to higher ranks.

As for the other three, they were brought and cultivated by the Palace of the Earl, so they would definitely say that they could offer their loyalty.

How should Shen Lang reply then? What was it that Jin Mulan desired the most?

Seeing that Shen Lang wasn't responding, Jin Mulan said, "It's alright, take your time to think and reply; there's no need to rush."

Jin Mulan's voice was extremely cold toward others, but she instinctively became gentler while speaking to Shen Lang.

It was just that she really sounded as if she was speaking to a retarded child, which only spooked him.

Shen Lang mulled over it for two minutes before coming up with an answer.

"The most precious thing I can give you is... freedom. As long as you don't go and look for other men, you can do whatever you want," Shen Lang replied.

The moment this was said, Jin Mulan became stunned. She then glared angrily at Shen Lang through the screen, resisting the urge to charge over and give him a beating.

What did he mean when he said "find other men"? "Was I such a shameless woman?"

However, she wasn't feeling that anger in her heart.

"Truly a silly fool, you don't even have any thoughts."

Then Jin Mulan walked away from the room.

Behind the screen, Shen Lang let out a gleeful grin.

If nothing went wrong, he had already won by sixty percent.

Why did Jin Mulan ask this question? She was testing to see if these six men had any ambitions!

The son of the Earl was incompetent; thus, once Earl Jin Zhuo passed away in the future, the entire Palace of the Earl would fall into the hands of Jin Mulan.

She would definitely support her brother with all her heart and mind.

However, what was it that she feared? Would her husband be ambitious? Did he desire the power within the Palace of the Earl? Would he bring harm to her brother?

Then, she would really be the sinner of the Jin Family.

A talent was a secondary criterion for her future husband. The most important thing was that he was not harboring any ambitions to prevent disaster.

Wang Lian and Mo Ye portrayed themselves to be so impressive as if they intended to manage the Palace of the Earl with Jin Mulan. Jin Mulan's worries couldn't be imagined.

Since the two of them were so impressive, why wouldn't the family just give them the position of the Earl?

Thus, Shen Lang's response could show how unambitious he was.

This was the correct answer, and the answer Jin Mulan wanted the most.

Jin Mulan returned into the hall where her father was.

The Earl and Madam were anxiously awaiting. Upon seeing her, they couldn't help but ask, "So fast?"

That's right! It didn't even take an hour, and Jin Mulan was already done selecting.

"Daughter, have you picked your husband?" the Earl asked, "if you have, I'll immediately send men to deliver the invites, and you shall get wedded tonight."

Jin Mulan replied, "I've chosen."

Madan Jin stood up and asked agitatedly, "Who is it? Wang Lian or Mo Ye?"

Jin Mulan replied, "The husband I've chosen is... Shen Lang!"

Chapter 20: Astonishing Outcome

Translator:

Atlas

Studios

"What?!"

After hearing what Jin Mulan said, the Earl became so frustrated that he started to steam with rage.

The wife of the Earl thought her ears were playing a trick on her. The servants of the Earl and the staff were also completely shocked.

"Mulan, are you insane?" said the Earl, "you didn't choose the other talented people, but you chose Shen Lang?"

Everyone looked at Jin Mulan in disbelief.

Amongst the six, Shen Lang was the worst. Not only was he worse than Wang Lian, Mo Ye, and the three talented individuals from the Palace of the Earl, but he was even worse than an ordinary person.

He was a dumb person who had low IQ, someone who could not graduate after ten years of studying. He could not even manage his own daily chores.

“Mulan, why?” asked the Earl, “Wang Lian and Mo Ye are so talented; why didn’t you choose any of them?”

Jin Mulan said, “Father, they are talented. When I asked them what they can bring me in the future, one of them said that they would support me in terms of both literal and physical skills to manage the Palace of the Earl. One of them said that his martial arts skills were extraordinary and wanted to lead the troop of the Palace of the Earl to win wars!”

When the Earl heard this, he did not make any comments.

Others thought that their response was outstanding.

Jin Mulan said, “If father is still around, then there’s no problem. However, what if you pass away and my brother took over the position of the Earl? If my husband starts to eye the ruling position of the Palace of the Earl, what should I do? What will happen to my brother?”

After saying this, the Earl fell silent, and the others around them suddenly realized what she meant.

They had to admit that Mulan made a thorough consideration and was extremely loyal to her family.

Jin Mulan said, “Shen Lang’s response was to give me freedom. He said I can do anything except for looking for other men!”

“What on earth! Does he think my daughter is someone like that?” The Earl was frustrated and said, “Mulan, I know how you feel, but... you don’t have to suffer like this. Even if you don’t choose Wang Lian or Mo Ye, you can choose the other three men from the palace.”

“No, I can’t bring them down,” said Jin Mulan, “moreover, they used to be my subordinates. We are too familiar with each other.”

The wife of the Earl said, “But Shen Lang is too inferior. You haven’t heard of the rumors about him in Xuanwu City.”

The Earl said, “He was once the son-in-law of the Xu family. After being kicked out of the house, he became our family’s son-in-law. This... our family will be so embarrassed! This is with regards to your happiness. I would rather you marry someone favored by god, like Zhu Hongxue, than sacrifice you because of our family.”

Jin Mulan said, "Shen Lang's reputation is terrible, but isn't this good since it helps to vent Sir Zhu Lin's anger? If I marry someone with a good reputation, I don't think the Zhu Family will give up like that. If I marry someone who has a terrible reputation, the Zhu Family may hate us less. After all, they would feel happy to see their enemy suffer."

This made a lot of sense. Mulan was brilliant and could read minds.

Jin Mulan continued, "I think Shen Lang is pretty good. In fact, I only have one requirement for my future husband, and that is good looks. Shen Lang is definitely first in this aspect!"

"But, but..." The wife of the Earl felt extremely uncomfortable. Her son was useless, and they had to sacrifice their daughter's happiness by making her marry someone useless. What did the Jin family do wrong to deserve this?

The Earl said, "Mulan, do you want to reconsider?"

"No, this is it," said Jin Mulan, "time is tight, father, please send out the wedding invitations now and prepare for the wedding. We have to make this wedding as grand as possible; it would be best if Sir Zhu Lin can attend the wedding after he reaches our palace." Mulan then stood up. "Father, mother, I have been leading the army these few days, and I am tired; I shall go and rest now."

Then, she bowed and left.

The Earl felt exceedingly terrible but was unable to vent his anger. He could not blame it on Shen Lang and could only vent it on his own son.

"Where's that bastard son?" roared the Earl.

"He is reading," the servant replied.

"What reading? He is still a useless fellow after more than ten years. Get him to kneel outside the door," roared the Earl, "useless fellow, if he was more useful, why will Mulan have to make such a huge sacrifice?"

"Yes!" The servant hurried over.

"Forget it, I will go myself," said the Earl, "where's the whip? I want to wallop him."

"Hubby," said the Earl's wife.

"Are you trying to stop me?" said the Earl.

"I will go with you!" replied his wife.

Meanwhile, in another reading room, a plump individual was reading with his focus on his book while feeling touched.

“As the son of the Earl, I am so hardworking. I woke up to read when the sun rose. My parents must be extremely heartened to see this and will definitely praise me for it.”

At this moment, the Earl and his wife barged in suddenly.

The son replied, “Father, mother, look at yourselves! I purposely woke up earlier to read, and both of you came over to compliment me. This is what I ought to do as a son; I should be so hardworking as the son of the Earl of Xuanwu.”

“Praise?” the Earl whipped out the whip.

Then, moans could be heard from the palace.

“Father, mother, why are you beating me? I didn’t commit any mistakes and woke up to read in the morning!”

“Do we need a reason to beat you?” said the Earl as he continued to whip.

The wife of the Earl whipped her son’s buttocks and thighs with a ruler and shouted, “Yes, do we need a reason to beat you, useless fellow?”

“Ah... ah... ah...” Their son moaned in pain, “Sister, save me, save me!”

When the results were out, Shen Lang heaved a sigh of relief!

He had finally succeeded. From a son-in-law, he became another son-in-law.

After this, he could eat and live a good and prosperous life.

What else could be better than being lazy and getting free food? Nothing!

Initially, he was in a deadend. The Xu family, the Lin family, and Tian Heng were trying to hunt him down.

Now, this crisis had been resolved.

After becoming the son-in-law of the Earl of Xuanwu, none among the Xu family, Lin family, or Tian Heng would be unafraid of laying a finger on him even though he was really timid.

“Just wait and see, witness what I, Shen Lang, meant by taking revenge!”

“I would never let Tian Heng, the Lin family, and the Xu family escape unscathed. I would take revenge one after another and make sure everyone in their family dies.”

...

The close servant of the Earl, Jin Zhong, stood in front of Shen Lang.

His face was very black and looked as though someone owed him 1000 gold coins.

Jin Zhong was born in the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu. Not only was he a servant, but he was also regarded as a family member that was most loyal to the Jin family.

Moreover, he had seen Jin Mulan grow. Now, she was forced to marry someone who was so ridiculous and stupid; how could he not be angry?

After all, he was a loyal servant, and no matter how frustrated he was, no matter how sly he was, he would be faithful. Now, although his attitude was not the best, he would not speak wrongly. Although he was emotionless, he was still respectful.

“Student Shen, please come with me.”

Then, Shen Lang walked behind him and finally reached his room after ten minutes. He only had one phrase to utter.

“This palace is f*cking huge.”

Even the wealthy families on Earth did not have such a huge mansion.

“Oh right, please send someone to my house and tell my parents to not worry about me,” said Shen Lang.

“I have already sent people over,” replied Jin Zhong coldly.

Shen Lang continued, “Can you invite my parents and brother over for the wedding tonight?”

“I will personally send people to invite them over,” said Jin Zhong before he closed the door and left. He did not want to look at Shen Lang’s face for more than a minute.

Shen Lang said, “Please hurry up, someone is trying to kill my family.”

Jin Zhong looked at Shen Lang coldly. No matter how useless Shen Lang was, he was a part of the Earl’s family; someone wanted to harm his family? Were they really that fearless to do that?

“Okay, I promise that your family members will be alright. Mister Shen, please get some rest and prepare for the wedding tonight.”

Meanwhile, within the Black Clothes Gang...

Tian Heng said coldly, "It's about time, Thirteen, send people to capture Shen Lang's family. If he hands over the formula for the dye, then kill all of them nicely. If they don't, torture them before killing them."

"Roger!" said Tian Thirteen.

Then, he left the Black Clothes Gang with more than ten other warriors and went toward Shen Lang's house.
