

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

Chapter 26: Astonishing the Four! The Good Daughter-in-law, Mulan!

Translator:

Atlas

Studios

It was impossible to describe the shock that Zhang Boyan was feeling at this moment with words.

He might not have met this Shen Lang before, but he had indeed heard of him many times. He was supposed to be a complete moron with inferior intellect.

No one present could recognize the small seal he had written, but Shen Lang could. Not only did he know its meaning, he even knew how to pronounce it.

This... this was too strange.

Yan Xiong guffawed on the side. "Teacher, he's making it up, isn't he?"

Everyone's gaze landed on Zhang Boyan.

He really wanted to deny Shen Lang's answer, claiming that it was wrong when it was actually correct.

That way, no one could do anything about him, and no one would be able to seek justice back for Shen Lang.

However, he wasn't the only person who excavated this stone tablet back then. Two other highly respected people were also with him. The meaning of this character '𠂔' was affirmed when they had analyzed the contents of the inscription together.

Thus, if he denied Shen Lang's answer before everyone today, he might be slapping his own face in the future, ah! When that happened, his reputation would crumble completely.

All for a mere Shen Lang... It was not worth taking such a huge risk.

After seeing his teacher's expression, Yan Xiong noticed that something was wrong and changed his tone, "Teacher, Shen Lang is making things up, right? He doesn't know the meaning of this character, right?"

The tone of this student was clear; he was trying to make his teacher invert the truth.

Zhang Boyan gave Yan Xiong a cold glare before laughing, "Student Shen is truly well-versed in words! To be able to recognize a character as unfamiliar as this and know how to read it. Truly the younger generations will surpass us in time, ah!"

The moment this was said, everyone present became stunned!

Shen Lang was this impressive?!

Not a single person present could recognize the character that Zhang Boyan had written! This legendary moron, Shen Lang, could understand and even read it out loud?

Wasn't he an ignorant, incompetent, and useless person?

Why was he this impressive?

Shen Lang looked at Yan Xiong and said, "Brother Yan, you had said it yourself in front of everyone, if I win, you'd slap yourself. You're a scholar, the most promising figure of Hanshui Town College, you wouldn't go back on your words, would you?"

Thus, everyone's gaze went onto Yan Xiong. Although everyone wanted to see Shen Lang being humiliated, it would also be interesting to see Scholar Yan Xiong slap his face. Who said people were inherently kind?

Had this been in private, Yan Xiong could go back on his words, but everyone's gaze was locked on his face, especially the Earl of Xuanwu. Despite his smile, his gaze was a little cold.

"Shen Lang, you win! I will remember this day!" Yan Xiong said coldly, and then he gave himself a tight slap in the face.

"Pak!"

A crisp sound rang out!

This scholar Yan Xiong sincerely hit himself with great strength. Perhaps he was hitting himself as if he was hitting Shen Lang?

Shen Lang felt thrilled after hearing the sound.

"Farewell!" Yan Xiong no longer had any face left in him to remain there, so he went away with anger.

At this moment, the Earl of Xuanwu said, "Shen Lang, you should bring Mulan to pay your respects to your parents."

"Let the banquet begin!"

With this command, they served all sorts of delicacies, and everyone returned to their seats.

It was a pity; there was one more person who didn't get to witness the scenario today.

It was the chief registrar of Xuanwu City, Wang Lian, Shen Lang's love rival.

He was the most promising candidate. After failing to be chosen as Mulan's husband, he couldn't even come and attend the wedding ceremony tonight.

Shen Lang brought Jin Mulan and headed to the courtyard to greet his parents.

"Wait!" Zhu Lin suddenly shouted.

This was a real prominent figure. If Zhu Lin wanted to make things difficult for Shen Lang, the Earl of Xuanwu would really be troubled.

Zhu Lin looked at Shen Lang and said, "Lad, you're interesting. I have remembered you."

This was not a threat, but it seemed like one. To have the attention of a prominent figure from the Zhu Family wasn't a good thing.

"Many thanks to Sir Zhu for your favor," Shen Lang bowed and said as if he didn't understand what was said.

"Hahaha..." Zhu Lin laughed.

The Earl of Xuanwu said, "Hurry and go pay your respects to your parents. Don't let the elders wait too long."

"Yes, father-in-law," Shen Lang replied.

"Shameless!" Every single youth exclaimed in unison.

"Shen Lang, you calling 'father-in-law' in such a hurry is truly shameless!"

Shen Lang's parents felt that their background and statuses were too low, so they weren't willing to appear in the hall. The Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu had prepared brocade items of clothing for them, but they were still unwilling to wear them. They only wore their own garments, which were made several years ago for the New Year; they rarely wore it, so it was still quite new.

Shen Jian, the younger brother, wanted to wear the silk garments the Palace of the Earl had given, but his father stopped him.

Both father and mother sat on their own seats with significant reservations, feeling extremely uncomfortable from head to toe. They only wished to hurry back home even if it was just a thatched hut.

Shen Wan's lungs were still inflamed, but he forced himself to not cough.

When Shen Lang brought Jin Mulan into the courtyard, he instantly knelt down and greeted, "Greetings father and mother, this son has been unfilial!"

Shen Lang's mother instantly rushed forward to help Shen Lang up, but she didn't expect Jin Mulan to also go on her knees to greet, "Your daughter-in-law greets father and mother-in-law."

Instantly, Shen Lang's entire family became stunned.

This Jin Mulan was the princess of Xuanwu City, ah! The lady of an aristocrat, ah! To kneel down and greet Shen Lang's parents, who were lowly farmers, without any unwillingness in her face...

Instantly, Shen Lang's favorable impression of her was about to escalate even further beyond.

"You shouldn't... shouldn't..." Shen Lang's mother immediately wanted to help Jin Mulan up, but upon seeing her gorgeous, porcelain-like beauty, she retracted her hands.

Since she did farm work all year round, her hands were rough and blackened. Even if they were washed, it still looked like there was dirt on it, so she didn't even dare to touch Jin Mulan.

Then, Jin Mulan got up and held the palms of Shen Lang's mother. She said in a gentle voice, "Thank you, mother-in-law."

Instantly, Shen Lang's parents looked at Jin Mulan with gentleness in their eyes.

This was a good lady. At least, she wouldn't bully Shen Lang.

"Come, let us toast to father-in-law and mother-in-law," Jin Mulan said, "father-in-law's body isn't well; is it alright if we replace it using sweet rice wine instead?"

"Yes, Yes..." Shen Lang's father said.

Jin Mulan poured wine for the two old folks. Then, she and Shen Lang paid their respects to her father-in-law and mother-in-law with a toast.

Shen Lang's parents felt a little tipsy the moment the wine entered their mouths.

Shen Jian drank the sweet rice wine impatiently. Seeing how gentle Jin Mulan was, he couldn't help but say, "Sister-in-law, you're gorgeous."

Instantly, Shen Lang's father wanted to send a slap over.

"Thank you," Jin Mulan replied gently. Then, she glanced over at Shen Lang and said, "You must have things to say to father and mother. I'll head out to entertain the guests first."

"Sure," said Shen Lang.

When Jin Mulan left, it was as if the air wholly relaxed, so his parents also eased.

Although she was extremely gentle and polite to his parents, she was still the daughter of the Palace of the Earl. Shen Lang's parents would still feel inferior when facing her no matter what.

Shen Lang said, "Father, Mother, I'm sorry. I've disappointed you."

His father and mother had always hoped that he would not marry into the wife's family, be it the Xu Family or the Palace of the Earl.

The status of a son-in-law was too low. It was just a little higher than the servants. If he couldn't get the fancy of the wife's family, he would be worse than a servant.

His parents had always hoped for Shen Lang to carry on the ancestral line. Even if he married Widow Liu from the village, at the very least, the child would be surnamed Shen. Even if he stayed in the toilet of their own house, it would be better than staying under someone else's roof.

Shen Wan cried bitterly, "My son, speak no more! You were trying to save us, save our family. It's all because father was useless and had implicated you!"

Although Shen Wan didn't know what the matter was, he could think of the reason when Tian Thirteen came to capture them in the afternoon.

Shen Wan's eyes were filled with tears as he spoke. He had a pang of tremendous guilt and reluctance to spare. He felt that if he wasn't this incompetent, his lifeblood, Shen Lang, wouldn't have to marry into a woman's family ah.

However, Shen Jian mumbled, "I think it's pretty great, sister-in-law is nice, and she's beautiful, ah! There's no one else prettier than her around! Also, Brother, could I discuss something with you?"

Shen Lang said, "Sure!"

Shen Jian said, "Since you already have a beautiful wife like sister-in-law, then could you let me have that widow Liu from the village?"

At this moment, mother could no longer endure it. She sent a slap to the back of her younger son's head.

"Dream on! In case your brother cannot stay in the Palace of the Earl anymore, he still needs to come home. We must still reserve Widow Liu for your brother. Please, she had peeped on

Shen Lang several times before. Our Shen Lang is too good looking. You can't find anyone that can compare," Mother said, "I had tested for her intentions a few days ago! Widow Liu was willing."

Speechless, Shen Jian questioned the heavens. "Father, Mother, ah! Could you be any more biased? I'm not your real son, you probably picked me up didn't you!"

Shen Lang joined his parents for the meal for a while.

"Alright, son. Father and Mother are relieved to see you safe and sound; we will head back now," Father said.

Shen Lang asked, "Father, mother, won't you stay for a night? It's already late, ah."

Father replied, "We are not used to staying in here."

Then, Shen Lang got Jin Zhong to prepare two carriages to send his parents home.

The Earl and Mulan also left the banquet and came to send them off.

"Brother, don't send us off, go to the nuptial chambers! Sister-in-law is waiting for you!" His younger brother said, "The short night of the spring season is precious!"

Shen Lang waved goodbye to his family and headed in the direction of the nuptial chambers.

Chapter 27: Shen Lang's New Realm

Translator:

Atlas

Studios

On the wedding night, Shen Lang waited in the empty room alone!

Even until the latter half of the night, Jin Mulan did not enter the room.

Of course, Shen Lang had expected this outcome, but he was still feeling a little discomposd and impatient. It was his wedding today, after all.

Just when Shen Lang was getting ready to put the lights out and sleep, Jin Mulan entered.

Upon seeing Shen Lang stand up, Jin Mulan said, "Do seat."

Shen Lang sat down.

Jin Mulan sat on the opposite side of the table.

"I have heard many rumors about you today. Some people say that you are greedy and vain, some say you are incompetent, and some even say you are dimwitted," Jin Mulan said, "but your performance tonight left me astonished and also made father very surprised."

"You flatter me," Shen Lang replied.

Jin Mulan said, "Then can you tell me, you were so muddle-headed back when you married into the Xu Family, why did you undergo such a drastic transformation tonight?"

Shen Lang replied, "I fell severely sick in the Xu Family and almost died. Then my brain seemed to have gained enlightenment, and I was no longer as stupid as before."

Jin Mulan said, "Shen Lang, there's something I must make clear to you."

Shen Lang replied, "Do tell."

Jin Mulan said, "I did not intend to marry anyone in my entire life. I was planning to give my everything to my family clan. However, due to pressure from the Zhu Family, I had no choice but to seek a husband to marry into my family."

Shen Lang already knew what the other party would say, but he did not interrupt her.

Mulan continued, "We are husband and wife in name, and this will not change for eternity. I will also not marry anyone else but forgive me, I am unable to perform the duty as your wife for the time being. I am very sorry about that."

Shen Lang wanted to smile. "I can understand."

Mulan said, "This 'for the time being,' maybe for my entire life."

Shen Lang replied, "I can still understand."

How could a prideful woman like Jin Mulan easily compromise herself to a man? Even if he was her husband on paper.

Shen Lang did not marry into the Palace of the Earl because of his feelings after all. It was purely for the sake of protecting his family and his peace.

Thus, they were even.

Of course, ultimately, he still owed Jin Mulan since her choosing him as her husband had directly resolved the life-threatening crisis of the Shen Family.

"From today on, you may move freely in the Palace of the Earl and will be given money every month. I will also be filial to your parents. You may declare yourself as my husband on all occasions. However, nothing may ever happen between the two of us for the rest of our lives, and I may die alone. Do you agree with this?" Jin Mulan said.

Shen Lang nodded and said, "I agree."

Jin Mulan said, "That's great. Then from today on, we will be husband and wife. You've suffered wrongfully, husband!"

Shen Lang shook his head. "It's still alright."

He was very calm from start to end and did not show any signs of anger.

Jin Mulan said, "Of course, I must not be too selfish. I can die a lonely death, but you still need to carry on the ancestral lineage. Come in, Xiao Bing!"

Jin Mulan summoned.

Instantly, a girl donned in a red dress entered. She was probably 18 or 19 years of age with a beautiful face and still retained some baby fats.

"Xiao Bing had grown up with me since we were young, and we are like sisters. I shall betroth her to you." Jin Mulan said, "From today on, she will spend her days with you. She will bear and raise your children."

Shen Lang became stunned. Goddess Jin Mulan was so magnanimous to be so all-rounded in her considerations.

He really didn't expect this, ah.

"Xiao Bing, I'll leave it to you," Jin Mulan said.

"Yes," Xiao Bing responded; her face flushed red.

Shen Lang said, "This... this isn't a good idea, isn't it!"

Jin Mulan replied firmly, "I cannot be too selfish. I cannot hold you up for the rest of your life."

Shen Lang said, "No, I did not suffer any wrongs, I am doing this willingly."

Jin Mulan frowned slightly. Could it be that this Shen Lang was so foolishly in love with her and was unwilling to accept any other women? Don't be like this, ah! Jin Mulan didn't wish to become a real husband and wife with Shen Lang, but she also didn't want to hold him up.

If Shen Lang was devoted to her, it would only make her feel more guilty.

"Shen Lang, listen to me." Jin Mulan said solemnly, "You really mustn't bear any fantasies of me. It is my dream to lead the army and fight battles while opening new territories for my family and the Monarch. I am extremely grateful that you like me, but please don't hold up your own happiness. I'll leave Xiao Bing to you. At least, you can answer to your parents."

Shen Lang looked at Mulan for a whole minute. Then, he said, “Since my wife is so kind and generous, then it’ll be impolite of me to refuse.”

He looked at that petite maid and said, “Xiao Bing, the sun will rise soon. Hurry, let’s not delay anymore.”

Ah!?

Jin Mulan was instantly stunned.

“My magnanimity isn’t fake, but... Shen Lang, aren’t you a little too direct? You’re not even going to conceal it by pretending to reject it?”

Shen Lang wasn’t trying to be a hypocrite. His wishes had already been fulfilled when he successfully married into the Palace of the Earl.

However, since she had already made it clear that they would be a fake husband and wife, then was Shen Lang still supposed to continue chasing her and remain chaste for her sake?

Impossible. Shen Lang had already been single for four decades. How could he be willing to be mindlessly delayed?

“Then, goodnight.” Jin Mulan left.

“Xiao Bing, it’s getting late, let us rest!” Shen Lang said.

Xiao Bing glanced at Shen Lang; her tears falling as she undid her buttons. Ultimately, her tears began to pour out ceaselessly.

“W-What does this mean?”

“Why are you making it seem like you’re about to feed yourself to the tiger and walk into a fire pit?”

“I’m so handsome, though? Which part of me is not worthy of you?”

“Xiao Bing, are you not willing to do this?” Shen Lang asked.

Xiao Bing’s eyes were completely red. She didn’t speak, but she cried harder.

Shen Lang was speechless. “Don’t tell me this girl is dissatisfied with me?”

“Bing’er, are you dissatisfied with me?” Shen Lang asked.

Xiao Bing shook her head as she cried.

Shen Lang asked, "Then what do you mean with your tears?"

Xiao Bing sobbed. "I don't know... I don't know..."

"Forget it then. You can take a horse to the water, but you cannot make him drink."

"Alright. Then go and sleep in the next room." Shen Lang sighed.

Instantly, Xiao Bing's petite frame quickly dashed out of the room.

"Wait..." Shen Lang said.

Xiao Bing stood rooted to the spot and looked at Shen Lang in fear.

Shen Lang said, "Xiao Bing, ah, I'm a very amicable person. I never force others. You'll know after you spend some time interacting with me."

"Yes." Xiao Bing nodded with her head hung low.

"However, you can't avoid something forever," Shen Lang said. "I'll give you some time to adjust, so you do some mental preparations."

Xiao Bing ran away even more quickly.

The next day, Shen Lang and Jin Mulan ate breakfast together while Xiao Bing served them from the side.

Mulan said, "Husband, I should go and greet father and mother with you today, but I won't be able to follow you home due to my military duties. Do help me bring some gifts back home later."

"Sure," said Shen Lang.

After a while, Mulan spoke again, "Husband, if you have any goals or aims in the future, you can let me know."

"I don't have any goals," Shen Lang said.

Mulan asked, "How could I possibly believe that?"

Shen Lang replied, "Then I do have a very ambitious goal."

"What?" Mulan asked.

Shen Lang said, "To crush the Xu Family and make Xu Qianqian beg before me."

“Ah...” Mulan became shocked.

“Don’t men have lofty ideals and goals? No matter how magnanimous you pretend to be, is it truly alright of you to be so outrightly vengeful?”

Mulan said, “I can understand how you feel, but this wouldn’t be easy to achieve.”

Shen Lang asked, “Even with the power of the Palace of the Earl, there’s no way to crush the Xu Family?”

Mulan said, “Because of the marriage alliance between Xu Family and Zhang Family. Zhang Pu’s father, Zhang Chong, is the governor of Nujiang County, and they have support from the Zhu Family. With the power of the Palace of the Earl, we still cannot do anything to them,”

Shen Lang asked, “Then, can I go and kill Tian Heng first?”

Mulan said, “I’m afraid not. Tian Heng is the head of the civilian army of Xuanwu City and is still under the management of the City Lord of Xuanwu City. They had just joined the Zhang Family as well. If the Palace of the Earl touched him, it would mean a falling out with the City Lord. It’ll offend the new policies since the aristocrats are not allowed to intervene in regional government affairs.”

Shen Lang said, “Isn’t the Palace of the Earl formidable? Why is it that you can’t do anything, ah?”

Mulan replied, “Well... I’m really sorry.”

Shen Lang said, “Darling, then it should be alright if I go to the Black Clothes Gang to beat Tian Heng’s face with the status of the son-in-law of the Palace of the Earl, right? Don’t tell me I cannot even do something this small? To not even be able to bully the head of the Black Clothes Gang, wouldn’t the Palace of the Earl be too useless.”

Mulan perplexedly looked at her husband. For the first time, she doubted if she had picked the wrong husband.

Seeing Shen Lang’s expectant gaze, for some reason, Mulan nodded and said, “T-That is still allowed.”

Shen Lang pushed his bowl away. “I’m full, take your time to eat. I’ll bid my leave first.”

Mulan was stunned speechless while she watched Shen Lang’s figure vanish in a flash.

“Husband, your desire for vengeance is extreme, ah. You couldn’t even wait for a while?”

Chapter 28: Revenge on Tian Heng, Shameless Pretty Boy

When Shen Lang ran out, Mulan remained in a daze for two whole minutes as she stared at his disappearing figure. Then, she continued eating her breakfast.

Beside her, a maid, Xiao Ting, said, "Miss, Young Master Shen is too petty. It'd only ruin the reputation of the Palace of the Earl."

She was tall and lanky.

The moment she said this, Mulan stopped her chopsticks as she glanced over at Xiao Ting.

She was usually kind to the servants and maids, so they were not too fearful of her.

This Xiao Ting had always been bold and vigorous in the way she did things, ensuring Mulan's life was in good order. She was considered the leader amongst the maids.

All along, everyone in the Palace of the Earl always called her Sister Xiao Ting to curry favor.

Upon noticing Mulan's gaze, Xiao Ting continued to speak, "I did not say anything wrong, ah. The Earl loves the people as if they're his sons. Our reputation is great. It's not a good thing for the Young Master to behave so impetuously. He better not bring any trouble for the Palace of the Earl."

Mulan's gaze turned cold as she commanded, "Men, come. Slap her ten times."

Instantly, an elderly maid came in and slapped Xiao Ting across the face harshly.

"Pak, pak, pak, pak..."

First, Xiao Ting couldn't believe her own ears. "The Miss would actually hit me?"

Her face hurt so much that she couldn't help but cry out in pain.

After ten solid slaps, her face became swollen and red; blood even flowed out of her nostrils.

Everyone else remained quiet out of fear as they watched.

Miss had never done anything like this. She wasn't bothered even when the maids made some jokes about her sometimes.

Mulan said, "All of you better remember this properly. Shen Lang would be your Master even if he married into the Jin household. If anyone dares to derogate your Master behind our backs, it wouldn't be as simple as ten slaps on the face."

That maid Xiao Ting was utterly shocked. The Lady of the Palace usually favored her so much, ah.

Mulan said, "Chase her out of my courtyard and send her to the embroidery room."

Only then did this tall and lanky maid began to panic. She knelt and kowtowed, "Miss, I am wrong. I will not derogate the Young Master again. Please spare me... Please spare me..." she begged.

Being slapped ten times was no big deal if there was no disfiguration. However, it would really be bad if she was sent into the embroidery room.

The servants of the Palace of the Earl also had their own hierarchy. Those who served the Lady were the higher-ups, while those in the embroidery room were lowly and had endless work.

However, no matter how she begged for mercy, it was futile. A few elderly maids dragged her out.

...

"Master, Shen Lang seeks to serve tea," Jin Zhong said.

The Earl was feeling good. Shen Lang had put up a brilliant performance yesterday, making him very pleased.

Of course, Wang Lian and Mo Ye were still much more exceptional compared to him, but Shen Lang was rumored to be a completely useless fool previously. However, with that performance yesterday, it didn't make him feel that bad.

As if he had obtained a great advantage...

When Shen Lang entered, he served tea to his father and mother-in-law respectfully.

The Earl asked, "Shen Lang, what plans do you have today?"

Shen Lang replied, "My parents had painstakingly brought me up. I'm unfamiliar with them since I'm living with my wife's family. That is why today, I wish to return home and spend time with them properly and perform my duties as their son."

The Earl replied, "Of all virtues, filial piety is most important, this is what you should do. Go ahead. Bring two gifts on my behalf for your parents as well."

"Yes," Shen Lang replied, "thank you, father-in-law."

Mother-in-law said gently, "As their daughter-in-law, Mulan should go and greet your parents together with you. However, she has military duties every day. I apologize on her behalf."

Shen Lang replied, "Mother-in-law speaks too seriously."

Both parties clearly avoided the discussion of the wedding night yesterday. They probably had their own guesses.

When Shen Lang bid farewell, the Madam said, "I think this Shen Lang isn't too bad; he is rather earnest."

After an hour, Shen Lang departed from the Palace of the Earl.

He had wanted to ride a horse, but it was too tight. Thus, he sat in a carriage with two soldiers from the Palace of the Earl as his escorts.

This could be counted as returning home in glory, right?

This luxurious carriage could compare to a Mercedes-Benz in the modern world, and he even had two calvaries escorting him.

This line up was already very flashy in Xuanwu City.

However, Shen Lang did not return home. Instead, he charged straight into Tian Heng's Black Clothes Gang territory.

"Halt. This is the civilian army camp. Who dares to intrude?"

The Black Clothes Gang's headquarters was a small castle with the flags of the civilian army hanging all over the place. Upon seeing Shen Lang's carriage, they instantly drew their bows.

"Charge!" Shen Lang said.

Those two armored soldiers from the Palace of the Earl sped up and charged right in without any hesitation.

The guards from the Black Clothes Gang on the wall were about to fire their arrows when someone quickly stopped him.

"Are you mad? If you don't wish to live, I still wish to! These are the troops from the Palace of the Earl!"

That bowman took a careful look. "Isn't that the flag from the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu?" He became instantly scared out of his wits.

They called themselves the civilian army, but they were actually a gang. If they dared to fire arrows at the soldiers of the Palace of the Earl, they were seeking their own death.

“Aren’t you going to report this to the Boss?!” The captain on the wall ordered.

Instantly, a bunch of men went dashing inside to report to Tian Heng.

“Hahaha...”

His voice could be heard before he was seen.

Tian Heng spread his arms wide open from a far distance and said with the utmost familiarity, “May I ask which honored guest from the Palace of the Earl have arrived? Excuse me for not going out to meet you! Forgive me!”

“Halt!”

Shen Lang ordered the driver to stop and stepped out of the carriage. He said lazily, “Boss Tian, how have you been, ah?”

Tian Heng felt exasperated. “It’s really you, huh, Shen Lang.”

“I really didn’t expect that you’d come and slap faces this soon when you just married into the Palace of the Earl last night.”

“You sure change faces quickly, ah, Shen Lang. A few days ago, you were so respectful, behaving like a rodent that saw a cat when you saw me, yet today, you’re behaving so haughtily.”

“You really don’t even try to conceal this parvenu nature of yours, ah.”

However, he forcibly suppressed the anger in his heart and cupped his hands. He said passionately, “How have you been, Young Master Shen. If there’s any matter, you could have just sent someone over! Why go through the trouble of making the trip yourself?”

“Look at how Tian Heng is behaving. As if we never had any feud at all and we’re good friends.”

However, Shen Lang wasn’t pleased upon hearing this.

Tian Heng had addressed him with ‘you’ without any honorifics¹.

“What do you mean? Am I of no importance in your eyes?”

Tian Heng continued, “Please, Young Master Shen, do come in for tea!”

In Tian Heng's extravagant hall, Shen Lang sipped his tea leisurely.

Tian Heng was full of disdain. "You're from a poor family and spent most of your days being poor. Do you even know how to taste tea?"

Of course, he wouldn't show it on his face.

Tian Heng said, "What's the reason for Young Master Shen's arrival today?"

Shen Lang replied, "I came because of the debt of a thousand gold coins. As humans, we should always pay our debts. Only a jerk would not pay his own debt."

Tian Heng laughed, retrieving a receipt from his chest pocket.

This was the receipt that Shen Lang wrote with his blood back then.

Tian Heng tugged on it gently, and this receipt was shredded completely, burnt in the candle flames.

"What debt of a thousand coins. I don't know anything about it. I've long forgotten about it." Tian Heng shook his hands. "There's no such thing, ah!"

Tian Heng was rather self-aware.

The debt of a thousand gold coins was erased just like this.

Shen Lang sipped his tea gently as he frowned. "Boss Tian, you were the one who owed me a thousand gold coins, ah. How could you forget about it and even destroy the receipt? What do we do now? We don't even have any evidence anymore. Other people would think that I came here to extort money from you."

When this was said, Tian Heng became stunned. He almost spat the tea in his mouth.

"The f*ck! I've been in the streets for so many years, but I've never seen anyone as shameless as you!"

"Your ability to twist facts is so much stronger than mine, ah!"

"What? Is Boss Tian not planning to return it anymore?" Shen Lang said indifferently.

"I'll return you my foot!" Tian Heng cursed mentally, wishing he could just grab his knife and turn Shen Lang into mincemeat.

But... he couldn't.

“How is that possible? Others can owe me money and not pay up, but if I owe anyone money, I definitely must return it!” Taking a deep breath, Tian Heng plastered a smile on his face and said, “Men, go fetch a thousand gold coins.”

After a while, someone came over carrying a small chest. There were a thousand gold coins inside, and it weighed about 25 kg.

“Young Master Shen, you should count,” Tian Heng said.

“You’re still saying ‘you’ instead of its courteous form?”

Shen Lang said, “Ah, we are all friends! We can forget about the interest.”

Tian Heng was about to explode. “You b*stard! Forget that you are extorting a thousand gold coins from me, you still dare to ask for its interest?”

However, Tian Heng quickly showed a smile and said, “Even among brothers, accounts should be settled without ambiguity. I ought to pay the interest.”

Then, he took out another hundred gold coins as the interest.

“Does Young Master Shen still have anything to instruct?” Tian Heng asked.

Shen Lang replied, “Where’s Tian Thirteen?”

Tian Heng asked, “Why would Young Master Shen look for him?”

Shen Lang replied, “He went to capture my parents yesterday and declared that he would kill my family! I want to break both his legs!”

Tian Heng’s eyes were really about to pop from anger.

“This is too much! He’s pushing it ah!!!”

...

Chapter 29: Regret

Translator:

Atlas

Studios

Tian Heng clenched his fist tightly, and his fingernails pressed into his palm.

He was exasperated.

“Why?”

"I, Tian Heng, trained martial arts for decades and fought for decades to achieve what I have today."

"This pretty boy was like a useless brat two days ago who could be trounced."

"Yet now, he could come up and slap my face."

"Just because he's good-looking?"

Therefore, Tian Heng had the impulse to crush Shen Lang's face almost 100 times every minute.

However, he could not do that!

Therefore, Tian Heng said, "Tian Thirteen dared to offend Mr. Shen? How dare him; when he returns, I will break his legs!"

Shen Lang frowned. "He's not in?"

"Yes, he's not in." Tian Heng smiled. "Last night, we sent him to Bailing City, and he will only return in a month or two."

"Hehe!"

How could things be so coincidental? Shen Lang did not believe it at all.

However, since Tian Heng said he was not in, Shen Lang could not possibly search the room.

"Since he's not in, then it's alright. However, when he returns, please inform me," said Shen Lang, "I will definitely break his legs. If I don't vent my anger, I will not let the matter rest!"

"Of course, of course." Tian Heng smiled apologetically.

"I will take my leave." Shen Lang left straightaway.

The warrior from the Palace of the Earl, who was following behind him, looked at the box of gold coins on the table, unsure whether he should take it away.

Shen Lang said, "Take the gold coins with you; this is what Tian Heng owed me. It is unrelated to the Palace of the Earl."

The warrior went forward, took the box of gold coins, and left with Shen Lang.

When they were about to leave, the two warriors exchanged glances. They wondered if the Lady had married the wrong guy?

His shamelessness completely ruined the reputation of the Palace of the Earl.

When Shen Lang left, Tian Heng, the leader of the Black Clothes Gang, could no longer hold it in him. He slammed the teacups that Shen Lang used out of the table.

“Come, break the chair that he sat on and burn it.”

Immediately, two warriors entered and cut the chair that Shen Lang had sat on with a knife before burning it in the kitchen.

“Foster father, you don’t have to be angry; Shen Lang, this useless brat, is so arrogant. The Earl of Xuanwu loves the masses like his children and treasures his reputation. He will definitely punish that brat. Soon, we may hear the news that Shen Lang had died in the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu.”

Tian Thirteen walked out.

Of course, he did not go to Bailing City.

Tian Heng said, “I can’t believe it; how can such a useless brat turn into a wealthy person so quickly and naturally! He even did it without any help from others.”

Of course, he knew that Shen Lang was not a useless brat, but he said it in this manner to vent his frustration.”

“He’s only a stupid guy who tries to live off the rich. He will not accomplish anything great,” Tian Thirteen sneered, “look at his shamelessness. He won’t get far in life.”

Tian Heng said, “For this time, you should not leave this place. Stay in and help with the chores. Don’t go out and show your face.”

Tian Thirteen was extraordinarily frustrated but could only nod and say, “Alright.”

However...

At this moment, Shen Lang, who had already left, quickly rushed back to their campsite.

Tian Thirteen was in shock and scurried to hide.

“No need to hide, I saw you,” Shen Lang sneered, “Tian Thirteen, you are very fast, you came back from Bailing City in the blink of an eye!”

At this moment, Tian Heng was exploding with anger. This stupid Shen Lang, not only was he shameless, but he was also sly.

He had already left but returned?

Shen Lang looked at Tian Thirteen and said, “You brought more than ten people to my house and broke in, attempting to kidnap my parents and brother. If Jin Zhong had not arrived, I wonder what would happen to them. I am only planning to break your legs; I don’t think that is asking too much!”

Tian Thirteen’s face twitched as he glared at Shen Lang.

When facing Shen Lang, it was useless to plead for mercy. Therefore, he did not have to hide his frustration and hatred.

Shen Lang said emotionlessly, “Gang Leader Tian, you said that as long as Tian Thirteen returns, you will break his legs to help me vent my frustration. What are you waiting for then!”

Tian Heng closed his eyes.

He did not want to do that.

Moreover, last night, after seeing Shen Lang and Jin Mulan’s marriage, Tian Heng, who felt a sense of crisis, instantly found a person of support.

Zhang Chong, the governor.

Of course, he talked to Zhang Pu about this.

He used 35 percent of the profits from his five gambling dens as compensation for the help of the Zhang Family.

When he agreed to this deal, his heart bled.

That was because more than 60 percent of his profits came from the gambling dens.

However, this allowed him to have the power to fend for himself when he faced the Palace of the Earl.

He did not want to completely turn against Shen Lang.

However, this bastard did not know his limits.

Instantly, Tian Heng’s expression changed. His gaze turned cold, and he slammed the table with his fist.

“Bang!”

Instantly, the sturdy wooden table was smashed into pieces.

Meanwhile, the two warriors of the Palace of the Earl whipped out their swords and stood before Shen Lang.

No matter how they felt about Shen Lang, as long as Shen Lang was in danger, they would still protect him with their lives.

“Shen Lang, don’t push it!” Tian Heng roared in frustration.

Of course, he would not break Tian Thirteen’s legs. That was not because he felt emotionally attached to Tian Thirteen but rather because this involved his reputation.

Tian Thirteen had gone to capture Shen Lang’s family since he was following Tian Heng’s instructions.

If he had broken Tian Thirteen’s legs because of the pressure from Shen Lang, then his reputation would be gone entirely. In the future, who would dare to do things for him?

His reputation would be tarnished throughout Xuanwu City.

“Gang Leader Tian Heng, you were the one who made the promise; why are you saying that I am asking for too much?” Shen Lang sneered.

Tian Heng said, “Mr. Shen, it is easy to forgive; please show mercy on others.”

Shen Lang said coldly, “Then when you saw that I was weak and wanted to kill my family along with me, did you ever think of showing mercy?”

Tian Heng stared at Shen Lang and said word by word, “You’re not genuinely powerful! You’re only exploiting your powers!” Since they had already made it clear, Tian Heng did not have to continue hiding his emotions. He said, “That’s right, you became the son-in-law of the Palace of the Earl. I won’t dare to touch you. However, you are only the live-in son-in-law, and your status is only slightly higher than a servant. You can’t mess around with me.”

Tian Thirteen said at the side, “Moreover, the Earl loved the people like his children, if you are behaving like this as the live-in son-in-law of the Palace of the Earl, I’m sure he won’t forgive you. To rebuild his family’s reputation, he would probably kill you. Just wait.”

Tian Heng said, “The Earl is someone who knows rules and manners. My power is not within the control of the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu. I am part of the civilian army of Xuanwu City and belong to the Palace of the City Lord. As long as I don’t offend the Earl, he would not do anything to me. Even if I don’t offend you, it does not mean that I am afraid of you!”

From certain aspects, Tian Heng made a lot of sense.

Now, the Yue State was running on new governance. The Earl of Xuanwu had been extremely uninvolved in matters. If the issue was not within their power to control, they would not get involved. They would not bother about regional military affairs and governance, or they would only invite trouble.

The City Lord's Palace and the Governor's Palace had eyes on them, waiting for the Palace of the Earl of Xuanwu to make a mistake.

Tian Heng said, "Shen Lang, initially, I wanted to give you a chance. Perhaps we could still be friends. However, you are taking it too far. If you don't want your reputation anymore, then don't blame me for not being nice."

Shen Lang stopped smiling and said calmly, "Gang Leader Tian Heng, let me ask you one last time, are you willing to break Tian Thirteen's legs?"

Tian Heng sneered, "If you want to do it, you can do it. Ask the warriors behind you to do it."

They wanted Shen Lang to do it?

How was that possible? With his pathetic strength, how would he be able to defeat Tian Thirteen?

Ask the warriors of the Palace of the Earl to do it?

That was even more impossible!

The two warriors would use their lives to protect Shen Lang. However, they would not listen to him and beat someone else for him.

Shen Lang looked at the two of them to test their intentions.

Both of the warriors avoided his gaze. It was apparent that Shen Lang would not be able to instruct them.

"Shen Lang, we were talking nicely, why must you stir up trouble?" Tian Heng sneered, "people embarrass themselves; it's fine."

Mulan had said that Shen Lang could slap Tian Heng and he would not fight back. In fact, he would give him his face.

However, breaking Tian Thirteen's legs was equivalent to breaking Tian Heng's shoulders. It surpassed his limits.

Therefore, Tian Heng had fallen out with him!

Shen Lang's expression tightened before he laughed.

"Gang Leader Tian Heng!"

"Mr. Shen!"

Shen Lang looked at the sky outside and said, "I think it is a little late today, I have to pay a visit to my parents, maybe tomorrow."

"What about tomorrow?" Tian Heng smiled.

Shen Lang said, "Tomorrow, I will make sure you break Tian Thirteen's legs in front of me and swallow the words that you said today."

"Hahahaha..." Tian Heng laughed loudly. "How disrespectful. You are simply a live-in son-in-law of the Palace of the Earl, stop boasting! Who do you really think you are? Trying to defeat me? Dream on!"

Shen Lang said, "Tomorrow will come quickly; we will see then. Don't be impatient."

Tian Heng said, "Alright, I will wait and see!"

Shen Lang smiled and said kindly, "See you tomorrow, gang leader Tian."

Today was nothing!

Tomorrow, Tian Heng would understand the pain and ultimately regret his actions!

Chapter 30: Return Home

Translator:

Atlas

Studios

After leaving Tian Heng's Black Clothes Gang, Shen Lang hurried back to his home.

His parents and brother had been waiting for a long time. When he was at the foot of the mountain, his mother came up to him eagerly.

"Son, how did the daughter of the Palace of the Earl treat you?" asked his mother eagerly.

Shen Lang said, "She is very nice to me."

Shen Lang's mother said, "That's heartening to hear."

The two warriors from the Palace of the Earl carried the boxes of gifts into Shen Lang's house. There were cloth, food supplies, meat, and a lot of herbs.

Mulan was a very meticulous person. She knew that Shen Lang's father and brother were injured. Hence, she prepared many types of medicine for them.

Then, Shen Lang took out 300 gold coins and passed it to his father. "This is for us to build a new house with better tiles."

His father's expression changed slightly, and he said, "Shen Lang, you are, after all, from the Palace of the Earl. It is alright for us, your parents, to enjoy some benefits thanks to you, but we definitely cannot take the money from the Palace of the Earl. We cannot let them think that you are taking the money out of the Palace of the Earl and ruin your reputation."

His father said it exceptionally indirectly. To put it more directly, he was worried that Shen Lang would be accused of being a traitor.

Shen Lang smiled. "The gold coins are not from the Palace of the Earl; I earned them."

His father said, "How?"

Shen Lang replied, "I invented a new formula for dye and sold it to a vendor in the city. In the past, I was afraid to use it. Now, since I am the son-in-law of the Palace of the Earl, I can use this money without any worries."

Shen Lang would definitely not tell his parents that he had gotten the money from Tian Heng, or they would be even more afraid to use it.

Even so, his father was still very hesitant. He had doted on Shen Lang since he was young; he really could not use his money.

Shen Lang said, "Build a huge house so that I can live in it when I return. If Mulan returns with me, we can't possibly stay in this house, right?"

After hearing that, his father made up his mind. They definitely would build a new and big house.

Although he felt that the daughter of the Earl couldn't live with them, if she were to come, he definitely had to make sure she had a place to stay in so that his son would not lose face.

"We only need less than 20 gold coins to build a big house! Why would we need 300 gold coins?" said Shen Lang's father.

To be honest, he had not even touched gold coins in his life. He had always been using bronze coins and, at the very best, silver coins.

If one went to the market to buy things with gold coins, the vendor would not be able to give them some change.

Moreover, for building a house in the countryside, even if it was a five-to-six-room house with bricks and boards of the highest quality, along with a large backyard and fence, it would not even add up to a hundred gold coins.

Shen Lang said, "The house has to be big and grand. The walls must be thick, and the fence must be high."

"Sure," said his father.

Meanwhile, Shen Jian, Shen Lang's brother, looked at Shen Lang. In the past, he was a hooligan of the lowest social class. Now, his brother became the son-in-law of the Earl. He had long wanted to leave the small village to see the outside world.

Shen Lang said, "You rest well first, once you recover, I will bring you out there. I will make sure your future is bright."

"Sure!" Shen Jian was thrilled. "Once I become powerful, I will marry Widow Liu."

His aspiration was still so noble.

Afterward, Shen Lang's mother prepared a very delicious meal, even though it was already way beyond lunch hours.

Shen Lang ate a meal happily with his family.

His mother asked the two warriors to join them, but they refused. After moving things, they waited outside the door and ate two pancakes as their lunch.

This was a sign of respect but also a sign of desolation. They were unwilling to stay close to Shen Lang's family.

Although they were willing to sacrifice themselves to protect Shen Lang, they still looked down on him. Shen Lang also had no right to give them instructions.

Of course, Shen Lang did not have any intentions to suck up to them. If they did not want to join his family for lunch, he let them be.

Even when Shen Lang's mother offered to make tea for them, Shen Lang told her not to do so. Instead, he told her to give them a cup of plain water each.

Shen Lang made a decision.

He had to find his followers. He did not need many but one or two powerful ones. At critical times, after hearing Shen Lang's instructions, they would rush over without hesitation.

Meanwhile, Shen Lang did not have to attend to things personally. He could simply send others over.

He didn't like how he had to do everything by himself.

For followers, their loyalty and usefulness were more critical than the quantity.

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Afterward, Shen Lang brewed medicine for his father. Then, he placed medicine over his brother's fractured bones and secured his leg with a new bandage.

His parents enjoyed happiness.

Their favorite elder son became so filial and knowledgeable; everything was terrific.

The sun was setting. Shen Lang officially bid farewell to his parents and headed back to the Palace of the Earl.

His mother had tears in her eyes but sent him off with all smiles.

"Shen Lang, your friend, Dumb, is injured. His injury is quite bad, so go and check on him."

Before Shen Lang left, his mother could not resist the temptation to say that.

Dumb was Shen Lang's only friend in the past. He had protected Shen Lang since he was young.

His brother, Shen Jian, fought with others to protect him. Dumb protected Shen Lang by taking the blows for him.

Shen Lang went to Dumb's house. When he passed by the Maple Leaf Village, the villagers gossiped about him.

They looked at Shen Lang with an extremely complicated gaze.

They did not expect Shen Lang, a useless man, to rise in status and become the live-in son-in-law of the Earl.

In the past, they looked down on him. However, now, he had risen in status and became a person whom the villagers admired.

They were really jealous!

However, when Shen Lang looked at them, everyone started to send smiles of flattery at him.

They were making deductions, though. Shen Lang was kicked out of the Xu Family initially, so he probably would be kicked out of the Palace of the Earl soon and return embarrassedly to his house on the mountain.

The villagers were simple people but also sly.

They were empathizing but did not want others to live such a too-good-to-be-true life.

The best would be that someone else lived a worse life than them so that they could occasionally offer help. This way, they could fulfill their benevolent aspirations and feel satisfied.

Shen Lang went past the place without any intention of stopping by to ask the villagers if they needed help.

He was not the emperor, why did he have to act benevolently?

Shen Lang was not a local. Moreover, he was handsome and was intellectually disabled in the past.

Therefore, not only did villagers look down on him, but they even bullied and isolated him.

Since he was young, many children in the village bullied him.

When that happened, Dumb would block the stones for Shen Lang with his muscular body. Once, he had blocked mud that was thrown at Shen Lang.

Dumb, like Shen Lang in the past, had a low IQ.

Rather, Dumb was like the main male character in "Forrest Gump." He was more naive and stubborn.

Since he was born, he was slightly abnormal since he was already six kilograms.

When he was born, his mother passed away due to dystocia.

Then, Dumb started to grow at an alarming rate.

Even if he did not have full meals every day, he became 2.1 meters in height when he was 18 years old and looked like a giant.

Nobody knew why he was like that. Both his parents were ordinary, but he was different from other people.

Dumb ate a lot every day, but he put in a lot of effort when working. He was able to take up three to four people's workloads. Moreover, he was extremely strong.

In summary, he was extraordinary.

Although he was very buff and had a lot of strength, Dumb was very kind and sincere. He would never pick fights with anyone.

When others beat him, he would turn around and allow others to hit his back. He never fought back.

When Shen Lang was being beaten up, he would hug Shen Lang and turn his back to let others beat him instead.

Dumb did not live a good life. Three years after his mother passed away, his father married another woman, and they gave birth to a boy.

After that, Dumb was treated like he was not their biological child. If he was not able to work for the family, he would have probably been deprived of food.

Of course, although he could work, he could not eat full meals every day. His stepmother only gave him corn porridge and limited its amount. For the most part, he was starving.

Shen Lang's mother said something happened to Dumb, so Shen Lang rushed over to his house.

Shen Lang arrived at the backyard of Dumb's house. His family background was decent. His father was a famous hunter and had the position of the leader of the Maple Leaf Village's civilian army. Therefore, they were living in a three-roomed brick house which had a fence.

"Where's Dumb?"

After entering his house, Shen Lang did not see Dumb. He only saw Dumb's stepmother and his brother.

Dumb's stepmother was stunned when she saw Shen Lang. "Dumber, why did you come?"

Then, she covered her mouth since Shen Lang was dressed luxuriously and had two warriors behind him.

"Dumb went to do some work," said Dumb's stepmother, "is there any problems, Shen Lang?"

Went to do some work? Didn't his mother say that Dumb was in trouble?

"Where is he working at; I will go and look for him," said Shen Lang, "also, I will pass you some money, make sure he gets a full meal every day, understand?"

Then, he took out a bag of money which was filled with 50 silver coins.

When Shen Lang secured his position in the Palace of the Earl, he would pick up Shen Jian and Dumb. However, Dumb still had to stay at home for some time. One-tenth of the money he gave Dumb's family was sufficient to allow Dumb to be full.

Dumb's stepmother's eyes widened and took over the money bag. She nodded with all her might and said, "Rest assured, Shen Lang, I will make sure Dumb can eat and sleep adequately. I will also feed him meat. Nevertheless, thank you for not forgetting about your friend."

While watching this, Dumb's brother felt astonished and was jealous. He sneered, "Dumb? He probably died and is thrown into a drain."

As he said that, Shen Lang's expression changed and rushed out of Dumb's house immediately.

After 15 minutes, Shen Lang met Dumb in a drain in one of the mountains.

He was emaciated and almost dying. He had blood all over his body.

A person with a 2.1-meter build had become so thin. His chest was swollen, and one could see the marks of broken bones.

However, his eyes were still filled with naivety. After seeing Shen Lang, he looked happy and shouted weakly, "Dumber, you are here? I miss you so much!"

"Yes, I am here." Shen Lang's eyes welled up with tears as he said, "What happened to you? Why are you in such a terrible state?"

Dumb said, "My brother is mischievous and messed around with a big shot on the mountain. I saved him and was beaten up severely. A few of my bones broke, and I spat out blood. Father has no money to hire a doctor to cure my injuries, so he put me here."

After hearing this, Shen Lang's tears flowed uncontrollably.

Bastards!

What merciless parents!

Dumb's brother was a terrible person. He bullied Dumb and Shen Lang every day. He either threw soil into Dumb's food or insects into Dumb's bed. Moreover, he also went to steal money or create trouble and put the blame on Dumb.

Although he treated Dumb that way, Dumb still protected him.

Now, to save his bastard brother, Dumb was injured, yet his father left him there to die.

"What bastards."

"I will definitely not let them off!"
