

Away with the Lotus Fairy: Chiayi man weds a goddess

嘉義男子娶「蓮花仙女」為妻



A lovelorn Chiayi man has married a goddess known as the Lotus Fairy after she appeared to him in his dreams proposing marriage. The man first visited the temple where the goddess is worshipped to help a friend express his **gratitude** to her.

The groom, surnamed Lin, is about 40 years old. When he was younger he missed out on a few opportunities to get married. Just over a year ago, he made a gift to express thanks to the goddess on behalf of a friend. Then a miracle happened. The friend had requested a favor from the goddess but he couldn't afford to pay her back. When Lin found out, he had someone make a gold crown for the Lotus Fairy. Amazingly, she began to appear in his dreams to express her thanks.

Later on, the Lotus Fairy reappeared in his dreams and affectionately told him: "You're a man of your word. I have decided to marry you." After getting permission to marry from his parents, he went to Kaohsiung to retrieve the statue of the Lotus Fairy. With his parents as witnesses, he tied the knot with the goddess. During the unconventional wedding ceremony, a local woman was invited to play the part of the Lotus Fairy and the couple even exchanged wedding rings.

Lin's mother said the wedding could be her son's **destiny**, and the family has no problem with it. In a show of respect to her "daughter-in-law," Lin's family has even listed

the Lotus Fairy's name on the family spirit tablet.

It is said that the Lotus Fairy has appeared in Lin's dreams almost every night since the marriage. Lin says that since the marriage, some **inexplicable** things have occurred. One time he caught a bad cold and had a blocked up nose. As he lay in bed half asleep, he smelled a delicate fragrance wafting by him, and seemed to hear his wife say, "Darling what's the matter?" Then she sprayed some medicine up his nose and when he woke up, the congestion had cleared up.

Interestingly, Lin, the eldest son of the family, was once introduced to a prospective bride. To everyone's surprise, his goddess "wife" got jealous and caused him some sleepless nights. She finally forgave him after much explaining.

Ruan Zhong-ren, a professor at Nanhua University's Graduate Institute of Religious Studies, said that it's more common to see marriages between people and ghosts than people and goddesses. Wang Chia-lin, head of the psychiatric department at Chiayi City's Yang Ming Hospital said Lin could be emotionally frustrated and looking for a way to end his loneliness, and that he is also very **pious**. He added that it would be wrong to treat Lin as if he were having mental problems. Instead the issue should be approached objectively. (LIBERTY TIMES, TRANSLATED BY TAIJING WU)

嘉義一名情路坎坷的男子，無意間幫友人代為酬神後，「蓮花仙女」竟闖入夢境，還譜出人神戀曲，男子最後與她結為跨界連理。

男主角林某年近四十歲，年輕時錯過不少姻緣。一年多前友人打造酬神謝禮，神奇的事發生了：當時友人有事相求蓮花仙女，但因經濟問題遲遲無法酬神，他得知後挺身相助，打造一頂金冠給蓮花仙女，未料連理幾晚，祂都出現在夢境說要謝謝他。

後來，蓮花仙女含情脈脈地對他說，「你是個重然諾的人，所以我決定以身相許」。林某徵求父母同意後，特地將蓮花仙女金身從高雄深山迎回家，日前在父母作主下，與蓮花仙女完婚；這場另類婚禮特地委請親友找一名年輕女子替代女主角，雙方還象徵性互戴婚戒。

林某的母親說，這可能是兒子的緣分，家人都接受，為表達對「媳婦」的尊重，將祂供奉在家

中同列祖先牌位。

據說「結為連理」後，仙女幾乎每天都到夢中與他相會。林某說，婚後發生了不少無法解釋的事，像有次重感冒鼻塞，半夢半醒間，一陣清香味飄過來，彷彿聽到「妻子」輕聲細語地問說，「老公，你怎麼了？」隨後，往他的鼻子噴藥，一覺醒來，鼻塞症狀竟不藥而癒。

有趣的是，林某身為長子，為了有個交代，在親友介紹下與一名女子交往，令人驚訝的是，「妻子」竟醋勁大發，讓他好幾晚都睡不好，經過幾番解釋後才獲得原諒。

南華大學宗教學研究所教授阮忠仁說，民間常見的是人鬼婚配，林姓男子娶陰神為妻則較為罕見。嘉義市陽明醫院身心醫學科主任王家麟表示，林某可能因感情失意，尋找寄託，加上對信仰虔誠，不能就此斷定他有精神問題，對此案例應客觀評估。(自由時報記者丁偉杰)



Above left: Lin poses with a statue of the Lotus Fairy in Chiayi on Aug. 10, 2010. He married the goddess in a ceremony in Chiayi earlier this month.

Above: Lin, right, and an unnamed woman who represented the Lotus Fairy at the "wedding," hold up the certificate of Lin's marriage to the Lotus Fairy, in this photo taken in Chiayi on Aug. 10, 2010.

PHOTOS: TING WEI-JIEH, LIBERTY TIMES

左上圖：八月十日，嘉義的林姓男子與蓮花仙女的神像合影。他本月稍早與仙女在嘉義完婚。

上圖：八月十日攝於嘉義的這張照片中，林姓男子（右）與代表蓮花仙女「成婚」的女子合照，手拿一紙結婚證書。照片：自由時報記者丁偉杰攝

TODAY'S WORDS

今日單字

1. gratitude /'græʔə,tud/ n.

感激 (gang3 ji1)

例：We sent a card to express our gratitude to the hospital staff. (我們寄了一張卡片向醫院人員表達感激之情。)

2. destiny /'destəni/ n.

命運 (ming4 yun4)

例：The president spoke about the destiny of the nation. (總統談及國家命運。)

3. inexplicable /,ɪnɪk'splɪkəbl/ adj.

無法解釋的 (wu2 fa2 jie3 shi4 de5)

例：For some inexplicable reason, Mike didn't attend the graduation party. (為了某些無法解釋的理由，麥克未出席畢業舞會。)

4. pious /'piəs/ adj.

虔誠的 (qian2 cheng2 de5)

例：Jerome was a pious man when he was younger. (傑洛姆年輕時是個很虔誠的人。)