

## Little Girl 61

Chapter 61: Acknowledging a Younger Brother

To avoid Huang Zhijun, Xin Lin took a smaller path in her search.

She had been looking for half a day and still hadn't found any trace of Ah Piao, making Xin Lin increasingly worried.

As the sun gradually moved westward, there was still no sign of Ah Piao.

Looking at the lush greenery that covered the hills, Xin Lin suddenly remembered something.

"Look at my forgetfulness, Ah Piao must be hiding there."

Xin Lin hastened through the woods to the downstream of the stream.

She and Ah Piao had passed a wild lotus pond on their way to find the Red Toad.

During the summer solstice, the wild lotuses were thriving, and because they were located downstream, this patch of lotus had avoided last night's calamity.

As the setting sun slanted down, the heat gradually dissipated.

Several pink lotuses the size of bowls bloomed nobly, quite captivating.

Under one of the green lotus leaves, Xin Lin spotted the trembling Ah Piao.

"Ah Piao, you're really here."

Upon seeing Ah Piao, Xin Lin felt the weight in her heart suddenly lift.

When Ah Piao saw Xin Lin, it burst into tears with a "wa."

It cried sorrowfully, its plump dumpling-like face all wrinkled up.

"I... I thought... I'd never see you again..."

Ah Piao pouted, instinctively shrank back as Xin Lin approached.

"What happened to your hand?"

Ye Lingyue noticed Ah Piao's hand at a glance. After receiving the help of the Evil Qi from the Rascal Corpse, Ah Piao's soul had become much fuller, looking no different from an ordinary child to the everyday eye.

But now, its chubby little hands were partly charred black, its bones visible as if scorched by scorching flames.

"The necklace, she had a necklace on her, very hot. I couldn't hold on to it, my hand hurts. I'm useless, can't be of any help, just a burden to you."

Ah Piao cried heartbrokenly, its little nose red and pitiful.

Xin Lin had asked it to hold on to that girl, but it feared the necklace, feeling ashamed to face Xin Lin.

Huang Zhijun's necklace?

Xin Lin had some memory of that necklace; she had taken the opportunity to empty Huang Zhijun's money pouch and the secret book when the latter was not paying attention.

The necklace around her neck was made of gold, with a pendant depicting a figure, its facial features solemn, probably some sort of deity's image.

Xin Lin spent half the day trying to take it off but couldn't, now understanding from Ah Piao's words that there was something shielding Huang Zhijun through the necklace.

"So you hid away, despairing and refusing to see me?"

Xin Lin looked at Ah Piao's charred hands and felt an indescribable sensation.

It was sour, swelling, as if it was overflowing.

Xin Lin, who was always alone, had never felt this kind of concern before.

A decision was forming in her heart.

"Ah Piao, my name is Xin Lin, and from now on, I am your sister. No matter what you do wrong, your sister will always cover for you, protect you. As long as I have a bite to eat, you will not go hungry. I will take you to Taichang Temple to help you reincarnate."

Near the water, the lotus leaves swayed.

The girl's reflection in the water, she patted her chest, making a promise.

A promise is not given lightly; a single promise lasts a lifetime.

Ah Piao stopped crying, staring blankly at Xin Lin for a moment before nodding its head.

There was a sudden sharp noise, breaking this rare moment of warmth.

Both Xin Lin and Ah Piao were startled.

"Ah Piao, did you hear anything?"

Xin Lin felt a long-forgotten sense of creepiness, she looked around, but aside from the lotus leaves swaying in the wind and the shimmering water, nothing else was there.