I go into the temple and pray the old god to make me over into a boy. Alas! It is of no use. Sometimes I pray the god to help me to be good, so I can be a boy after I die, but I cannot see that he helps me any. I

still have my naughty days.

They named me Ling Te, which means "Lead along a brother," but when another baby came she was a girl, too. I heard my father say, "We are too poor to keep another girl." Mother said, "I have had such a hard time I wish I had died when I was a baby; the poor little thing had better die." She cried a great many tears. Father took the baby away, and I never saw her.

After a few years a little brother did come, and that was indeed a joyful day. I stood by and watched them tie the clothes around his little arms and legs. Day after day he lay upon the brick bed, looking toward heaven, making the back of his head so flat and nice. I brushed away the flies, and thought how proud we should all be to have him grow up and be a mandarin, and wear a button on his hat, and ride a big, black, shiny mule ! Of course, we shall find a wife for him, and then we shall have a slave at last of our own. I say, however, in my heart's center, "I will be real good to her."

When he was a month old we gave a big feast, and a barber shaved off every bit of his hair. O how pretty his little white head was! His black eyes looked as bright as buttons. They untied his body, and it was so funny to see his little hands and feet fly around! Our guests brought money in big, red envelopes, and gave him many presents, too. Grandma gave him a red cap all covered with brass images and looking glasses, because the devils get scared and run away when they see themselves in a glass. They put a chain around his neck and bracelets on his arms to keep the bad spirits away from his heart.

When I said, "Grandma, why do you put a cat's head on his shoes?" she said, "Why, you small idiot, don't you know cat's walk safely and never stumble or fall, and I wish the boy may go safely through life and always

have a smooth road like the cat's.

Soon after this, grandma bought bandages nine feet long, and I heard her say to my mother, "You must bind Ling Te's feet." Mother said, "() I dread it, for she will fuss and cry and keep us awake nights." "You must surely do it," said grandma in her stern way. "Why, how do you expect to get a mother in-law for her

if her feet are not bound?"

This scared me, for I have heard some girls say it is terrible to have a mother-in-law. I ran away. I had to come home at night. Grandma was angry, and said, "If you run away again I will send the foreign devils after you; they will dig out your eyes and your heart, and take off your skin, and take you off to America, and after you die you will be a donkey for them to ride." This scared me, of course, and she began to turn my toes under and wind the long bandages around my feet. Tighter and tighter she drew them, and when I could not bear it, and began to struggle and scream and kick, she called my father and mother to hold me. I could not sleep that night for the pain. I can never tell how my feet ached. After a few days they were so sore and lame I could not walk. Once my mother said, real soft and sweet, "Poor child," and that seemed to make me feel a little better.

Now my feet are dead and do not ache so bad, and I can walk on my toes pretty well.

Tsunhua, China. -The Little Worker,

ADDRESSES

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