

M144

The Leader Zhyu-zi-lao, a farming song.

Sung by Pan Xie.

The weather was sunny and fine,
Fine and good for the Leader Zhyu-zi-lao to clear the forest.
He cleared it for nine days right to the pond,
He cleared it truly for nine days right to the pool.

5 For twelve or thirteen days it lay in the sun,
It lay in the sun, the soft wood and the hard, till it was fully dry.

The weather was sunny and fine,
Fine and good for the Leader Zhyu-zi-lao to burn the cutting.
He burnt it off for nine days right to the pond,
10 He burnt it off truly for nine days right to the pool.

Who first produced crops?
The Leader Zhyu-zi-lao first produced crops.
The Leader Zhyu-zi-lao devoted a terrace to sowing millet,
And there the millet, the yellow millet grew up.

15 The Leader Zhyu-zi-lao devoted a terrace to planting cucumbers.
How does the cucumber grow?
The cucumber is rounded as it grows.
What is the fruit of the cucumber like?
The fruit of the cucumber resembles a small human arm.

20 The youngest daughter of the Master, the Leader Zhyu-zi-lao,
Picked cucumbers, without telling her father,
Picked cucumbers, without telling her mother.
But the striped tiger was waiting,
Waiting for the Leader Zhyu-zi-lao's youngest daughter,
25 At the edge of the crops of the Leader Zhyu-zi-lao.

Who was black at heart?
The Leader Zhyu-zi-lao was black at heart.
Who was vengeful at heart?
The Leader Zhyu-zi-lao was vengeful at heart.
30 The Leader Zhyu-zi-lao took his shining sword
And made an effigy of the striped tiger.

The Leader Zhyu-zi-lao called the folk living below,
But the folk living below simply laughed.
The folk living below carried,
35 Carried the tail of a porcupine,
And laid it on the Leader Zhyu-zi-lao's "tiger carcass",
Unbefitting the Leader Zhyu-zi-lao's "tiger carcass"

The Leader Zhyu-zi-lao called the folk living above,

40 But the folk living above simply laughed.
The folk living above carried,
Carried the tail of a dog,
And laid it on the Leader Zhyu-zi-lao's "tiger carcass",
Unbefitting the Leader Zhyu-zi-lao's "tiger carcass".

45 The Leader Zhyu-zi-lao called Lyu-jio,
Lyu-jio with a head like snow.
Now Lyu-jio took,

50 Took red fruit and black and smeared,
Smeared them on his long, flowing plait.
Then Lyu-jio carried,
Carried the long, flowing plait, a tiger's tail,
And laid it on the Leader Zhyu-zi-lao's "tiger carcass",
Befitting the Leader Zhyu-zi-lao's "tiger carcass".

55 It had ears as big as fans,
Great horns standing like pillars,
And flaming eyes as big as rice bowls.
So the Leader Zhyu-zi-lao called,
Called the elders of the people to come and look,
This was no domestic animal of theirs.

60 The Leader Zhyu-zi-lao called,
Called the elders of the people to come and joint the meat.
So the elders of the people sharpened,
Sharpened their flaying knives and came to joint the meat.

65 They came and flayed it, ripping the skin,
They came and flayed it, slashing away the skin.
They made nine separate portions,
They made nine separate parts,
Enough for the elders of the people to have for breakfast.

Thus it is ended.

The inserted lines. (See introduction).

5 Came the Spring, and the weather grew warm,
Came the Spring and the terraced fields grew lush.
Birds returned and the birds called,
Insects returned and the insects called.

10 Meanwhile the larks were flying,
Flying round and round, encompassing the sky,
Encompassing the women's fields of buckwheat,
And encompassing the men's fields of crops.

Then the young man, the son of Hmao-dlu, drove
The yellow cattle, the oxen, and ploughed upward,

Upward to the very front of the houses of Hmao-gi-zhi,
Showering with dust the women of Hmao-gi-zhi.

15 Came the Spring and the weather grew warm,
Came the Spring and the terraced fields grew lush,
Birds returned and the birds called,
Insects returned and the insects called.

20 Meanwhile the larks were flying,
Flying round and round, encompassing the plains,
Encompassing the women's fields of buckwheat,
And encompassing the men's fields of crops.

Then the young man, the son of Hmao-dlu, drove
The yellow cattle, the oxen, and ploughed upward,
Upward to the very front of the houses of Hmao-gi-zhi,
Showering with dust the elders of Hmao-gi-zhi.