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The soldiers of the Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no.

Sung by Yang Zhi.

When the sky began,
And on earth the ranges were set in place,
The Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no came into Ndlo-hlang-dleu-di,
To the Tracts of Mi-li, the Plains of Li-mo and the Golden City.

5 To fight the Ruling Race on the North side of the plain,
The Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no maintained,
Maintained a great host of horsemen,
Maintained three thousand six hundred swordsmen.

10 The horses were trained to keep in line,
The swordsmen were trained to wield their weapons.
The horses were trained until all understood,
The swordsmen were trained until all were proficient.

The companies of swordsmen wore elegant eagles' plumes,
So that retainers and soldiers might be distinguished.
15 The Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no knew the strategy,
And the companies of soldiers knew the plans.

The day would come when the Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no would lead out,
Lead out the companies of soldiers to do battle,
To fight in the midst of the Tracts of Mi-li, the Plains of Li-mo and the river
Ndu-na-yi.

20 So the Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no led out,
Led out the companies of soldiers repeatedly,
And dispatched the cavalry in waves.
The Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no led out,
Led out the companies of soldiers from the town,

25 There were three thousand six hundred on horseback,
There were seven thousand four hundred on foot.
The companies of soldiers were divided in good order,
With one thousand officers commanding them.
Thus there were ten thousand fighting soldiers.

30 The stallions, the cavalry, moving in due order,
Went clattering away to the fight,
With whirling hooves crossing the plain,
Snorting like the rushing, the thundering of a great river.

The Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no's companies of soldiers dispersed and took
cover,
35 Took cover in the rock-walled pass of the Tracts of Mi-li,
To fight at the river in the midst of the plains of Li-mo.

They waited for the companies of soldiers of the Ruling Race to arrive,
To arrive where the great host of horsemen waited,
The three thousand six hundred coming from yonder,
40 And the seven thousand four hundred men on foot.
The companies of soldiers of the Ruling Race set off,

Set off exploding fire-crackers
To strike fear into the Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no,
45 But the Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no simply laughed.

The Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no's officers gave the order,
The order for the three thousand six hundred horses to charge,
While the three thousand six hundred riders
Drew their shining swords like eagles,
50 Swinging them until the young men of the Ruling Race all fell.
The galloping of the stallions of the cavalry,
Was like the rushing, the thundering of a great river.

The seven thousand four hundred men on foot
Would slay the Ruling Race until all retreated.
55 The seven thousand four hundred men on foot
Drove back the companies of the Ruling Race's soldiers and, fighting, dispersed
them.

They crushed the Ruling Race down into the midst of the water.
They fought the Ruling Race in the rock-walled pass,
Until the blood of the Ruling Race ran knee deep,
60 And the Ruling race could fight no more.

All this was because the Ruling Race coveted,
Coveted the Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no's four-square land of Ndlo-hlang-
dieu-di,
Which could scarcely be crossed in three month's travel,
Or fully compassed in three years.

65 But the Ruling Race did not lose heart,
The Ruling Race sought some stratagem.

The Ruling Race took straw and made effigies,
Wrapping them in cotton cloth,
Made them like the companies of the Ruling Race's soldiers who should be food
for wild beasts,
70 And set them in flat boats of straight planks,
In keeled boats of twisted planks,
And brought them to the Ndu-na-yi-mo river.

The Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no stood guard for three days but there was
no movement.
While the sky remained constant,
75 The Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no realized
That these were only effigies wrapped in cotton cloth.

Then were the Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no not in the least afraid,
And for this reason the Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no relaxed.

80 Then when the guards at the foot of the plain came running to report,
That the companies of soldiers of the Ruling Race were arriving
Aboard flat boats of straight planks,
And keeled boats of twisted planks,
The Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no spoke thus,
"It is only the Ruling Race behaving like children,
85 Wrapping effigies in cotton cloth to deceive people".

The Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no's soldiers dragged,
Dragged a wine-storage jar and set it by the fire.
The wine-storage jar effervesced and filled with froth,
Making the companies of soldiers dead drunk upon their beds,
90 It scattered the burning-tasted froth,
Making the companies of soldiers dead drunk upon their pallets.

While the companies of the Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no's soldiers argued,
The companies of the Ruling Race's soldiers, like blowing sand,
Flowed right in among the soldiers of the Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no.

95 They fought the companies of the Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no's soldiers
laying them flat,
They fought the companies of the Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no's soldiers till
they fell headlong,
And the Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no could fight no more.

So the Chinese Leader Gi-yie and the Chinese Leader Diao-jiao seized,
Seized the whole of the Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no's four-square land of
Ndlo-hlang-dleu-di,
100 And the Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no wept together.

While the sky remained constant,
The clans of the Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no became.
Became ploughing oxen and pack-horses to the limit of endurance,
Became ploughing oxen and pack-horses till they were exhausted.

105 This is sung that all the descendants of the Elder Gi-vu and the Elder Gi-no may
recall,
This is sung that all the posterity may remember,
This is sung for future generations until the present.

Thus it is ended.