

M221

**When the Miao lived on the Tracts of Mi-li  
and the Plains of Li-mo.**

*Sung by Tao Zi-gai.*

The Woman, the Mother, and the Man, the Father, sought a place, a land set  
within borders.

Seeking they travelled towards the south for long periods,

Seeking they travelled towards the north for years,

Thus the Woman, the Mother, and the Man, the Father, sought a place to dwell.

5 They reached that wide plain, the Tracts of Mi-li and the Plains of Li-mo.  
It was said of the wide Tracts of Mi-li and of the Plains of Li-mo,  
That one might cross them, and in nine days encounter no steep place,  
Or travel in a straight line seven days without reaching the edge of the flat land.

So the Nzhi-li plain was sufficient for the Children of the Woman, the Mother,  
and the Man, the Father, to dwell,

10 The Nzhi-li plain was sufficient for all generations of the Woman, the Mother,  
and the Man, the Father, to live.

The Nzhi-li plain was sufficient for the Children to dwell,

To dwell for nine periods of time and through nine generations.

Then the Children of the Woman, the Mother, and the Man, the Father, spread,  
Spread to fill all the land of the Nzhi-li plain,

15 Thriving, they filled the wide plain of the Tracts of Mi-li and the Plains of Li-  
mo.

The Woman, the Mother, and the Man, the Father, commanded,

Commanded the elders of their descendants to forgather.

The elders considered and discussed,

Discussed the building of a City.

20 They drove out water buffalo to drag in the stone,  
And they drove out yellow oxen to haul the timber,  
Until enough hard stone was dug and split,  
And enough joined with the ringing of hammers.

25 Felled trees were brought to erect the houses,  
And so was built the beautiful City of Gi-jiai.

It was said that the City of Gi-jiai shone bright as the sunrise,

And that it was circular like the sun's appearing.

Going and coming the young women, all friends, were like wild bees from a  
nest,

Departing from the City and returning again the young men, all friends, were  
like bees from a hive.

30 On the Nzhi-li plain the rice fields, long and flat, lay side by side,  
And the streams brought clear water, bright as the sky.  
In the fields the rice ripened fine and yellow,

While the swaying millet ripened in between the fields.

35 The Children of the Woman, the Mother, and the Man, the Father,  
Were thus as peaceful at heart as a round basket is smooth and flat within,  
Were thus as peaceful at heart as a large round basket is smooth and flat within.

While the sky remained constant,  
The Ruling Race heard all about it,  
And sent retainers and soldiers to come and look.

40 They looked at the Children's beautiful City of Gi-jiai,  
They saw the Children's crops there in the fields,  
And they saw the Children's rice,  
Fully ripened and filling the plain.

45 The tiny city of the Ruling Race could not compare with the Children's city,  
And the land, the place within their borders was in no way equal to the  
Children's four-square land.  
The difference was a cause of pain to the Ruling Race's eyes,  
The difference was a cause of pain to the Ruling Race's heart.

50 The Ruling Race grew menacing,  
Seeking some way of oppressing the Children every day,  
Seeking a cause for complaint against the Children every year.  
The Ruling Race became extremely menacing,  
For, unable to take the City of Gi-jiai and the Nzhi-li plain, they were very sore  
at heart.

Thus they deliberately presented young Chinese women to the Children as  
wives,  
55 Sending the young Chinese women to become keepers of the Children's houses.  
But should it transpire that the Children did not want the Chinese girls,  
Then the Ruling Race had found a cause for complaint against the Children,  
And for taking revenge and hostile action against them.

60 Chi and Ndlw led out the retainers and soldiers, and, in determined mood,  
returned to wait,  
To wait at the piles of boulders in the narrow valley of the river Gi-jiai.  
They crushed the Ruling Race, defeating them completely,  
So that the Ruling Race could fight no longer,  
And the Ruling Race retreated and withdrew.

65 Since the Ruling Race so greatly coveted,  
Coveted the Nzhi-li plain and the high, bright City of Gi-jiai,  
The Ruling Race was heavy hearted,  
The Ruling Race was sad at heart.

70 The Ruling Race sent out companies of retainers and soldiers each year.  
In Winter the soldiers came out,  
In Summer the soldiers came out,  
Making the lives of Chi and Ndlw's Children a misery,  
Making the existence of Chi and Ndlw's Children intolerable.

While the sky remained constant,  
 The Ruling Race twisted grass into dummies putting them in boats.  
 They twisted grass into dummies, wrapped them in cotton cloth and set them in  
 keeled boats like Chinese soldiers.

75 They twisted grass and made dummies to go out first leading the way,  
 They twisted grass and made dummies to go on ahead.

Chi and Ndlw's retainers and soldiers remained at the river to keep watch,  
 Keep watch and shoot the retainers and soldiers of the Ruling Race as they  
 clung,  
 Clung to flat boats and to keeled boats with curved timbers, boats arriving on  
 the river.

80 Now when the dummies of bean-straw and the dummies of wormwood with  
 their cloth heads appeared on the river,  
 Chi and Ndlw with their companies of soldiers shot,  
 Shot arrows, flighted with duck feathers, in a pattern of curves and hit,  
 Shot and hit the dummies of wormwood and the dummies of grass in the head.

But the dummies of wormwood and the dummies of grass did not move.  
 85 The dummies of wormwood and the dummies of grass were like,  
 Like the shadows of spirits come to deceive,  
 To deceive Chi and Ndlw and lead them astray.

Meanwhile the Ruling Race made a detour around to the other side and their  
 companies passed,  
 Passed the Nzhi-li plain and filled the City of Gi-jiai, filled it completely,  
 90 So when the companies of Chi and Ndlw's retainers and soldiers arrived back,  
 They saw the soldiers of the Ruling Race filling the City of Gi-jiai,  
 Like ants swarming everywhere.

Chi and Ndlw caused the companies of soldiers to go in.  
 They attacked the Ruling Race's soldiers from all sides, killing them as they  
 went.

95 They took and drove the Ruling Race's soldiers out of the City,  
 Killing the Ruling Race's soldiers and leaving them lying in heaps.

Like waves splashing they slashed the Ruling Race filling the market place,  
 With blood splashing up to the knees.  
 So the Ruling Race could fight no longer,  
 100 And the Ruling Race fled in retreat.

While the sky remained constant,  
 It was Monkey-year or Cockerel-year  
 That the Ruling Race came and gathered.  
 Thereafter Chi and Ndlw were fighting the Ruling Race for seventy years,

105 They could get no time of peace.  
 From Cockerel-year to Cockerel-year there was no end to the fighting.

Chi and Ndlw considered and discussed,

"Come, let us relinquish the Nzhi-li plain, that wide plain,  
For the Ruling Race to make their land their place.  
110 We have guarded the City of Gi-jiai, but for not one day has all gone well,  
We have lived in the City of Gi-jiai, but there has been no year when it has been  
good to live there".

So Chi and Ndlw fled, and taking their women and children they went,  
Went to the foot of the plain of the Yi-bang, that wide plain, and lived there.  
On the plain of the Yi-bang one might gather fruit and cotton to fill the loft,  
115 While millet and rice stood filling the plain.

It was good for the Children of Chi and Ndlw to live through all generations,  
And it was sufficient for all the Children of Chi and Ndlw to dwell.