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Customs devised by twelve Miao clans for their protection.

Sung by Yang Zhi.

In Monkey-month or Cockerel-month,
When Chinese families and Miao families had celebrated the fifth-moon
festival,
The military commanders of the Miao families,
The Elder Gi-vu, the Elder Gi-no and Gha-sao-hmao-byu, forgathered.

5 Reports were rife of companies of soldiers ready to attack as they emerged from
the gorge,
To attack the Plains of Li-mo by the Ndu-na-yi-mo river,
At the lower border beside the water,
And to fight at the meeting of the waters on the Plains of Li-mo.

10 Now the older folk of the twelve Miao clans living in towns,
Gave instruction that their children who lived in the villages,
Must now appoint controllers to control the towns,
And craftsmen to oversee the villages.

15 If the day came when there was a call to arms,
The controller would cry out the words of calling,
Would cry out that brothers, parents, everyone would awaken.
Likewise the craftsmen would cry out like the cock crowing,
Would cry out that brothers, sisters, all would arise.

20 So the older folk lived in their families.
And married couples could choose to sleep,
But the daughters, the young women, all friends, mounted the "farm-watch",
And the sons, the young men, all friends, mounted the "rock-watch".

"Rock-watch" rations were food for those guarding the road,
"Farm-watch" rations were food for those guarding the lower border.

25 The daughters, the young women, all friends, guarded the surroundings of the
settlements,
The sons, the young men, all friends, guarded the high mountain ranges.
The daughters, the young women, all friends, prepared food in readiness,
For the sons, the young men, all friends, returning quietly to eat.

30 "You, who guard the lower border and guard the road, take care,
Fearing lest the Chinese Leader Gi-yie's companies of soldiers should come,
And evil, greedy people enter our towns,
And for fear lest the Chinese Leader Gi-yie's companies of soldiers should
arrive,
And evil, greedy people enter our villages.

Daughters, young women, all friends, and sons, young men, all friends,
If on guard you grow weary, exchange, and let me go on guard.

35 I will guard while you sleep.
For if you grow drowsy there is danger,
And if you start dreaming you must be wakened quickly.
So, you will pinch me and I will nudge you!

40 Speak in whispers, make no noise,
Speak in whispers, do not raise your voice,
For fear lest the Chinese Leader Gi-yie's companies of soldiers should destroy
us.

45 So, brothers and sisters, be of one purpose.
You, daughters, young women, behave with decorum,
And you, sons, young men, with decency,
So that should hostilities break out,
All will stand firm as a single body”.

50 The Elder Gi-vu, the Elder Gi-no and Gha-sao-hmao-byu sent,
Sent out a group of foresters,
Because there was no time for raising crops,
And no time to engage in farming.

55 It was necessary that their controller should lead them with discipline.
Standing high on the mountain range,
Without so much as a blink of the eyes,
He should make decisions with assurance ,
In all matters of importance.

60 The controller, raising his voice across the deep valley,
Cried out, and with a rustling sound the tiger was gone over the pass;
Cried out, and the roebuck sprang suddenly to their feet;
Cried out, and the deer ran to the middle of the plain.

65 So he took his stand and, crying out, directed clearly,
Where those on guard should lie in wait,
On all the hill slopes for the various wild creatures;
On the hill slopes for the roebuck and the deer;
On the hill slopes for the wild pigs, in the surroundings where they thrived.

70 So they hunted wild creatures of all kinds, the wild pigs, the deer,
And the roebuck, to enhance their strength,
But they only took them that the children might prepare well their morning and
evening meals.

70 They would hunt wild creatures of all kinds, the wild pigs, the deer,
And the roebuck, to establish their control,
But they only took them that the retainers and soldiers might prepare well their
midday meals.

The Elder Gi-vu, the Elder Gi-no and Gha-sao-hmao-byu sent,
Sent a group of road makers across the lower valley,
To clear a way through the green covering,
And to clear the dark forest laying it flat.

75 They cleared it that the children might have a smooth road to travel,
They cleared it that old people and children might not stumble.

The Elder Gi-vu, the Elder Gi-no and Gha-sao-hmao-byu
Would look back towards Nbw-sie-mi-fu-di,
For the south wind came from the Nbw-sie-mi-fu plains in the Nbw-sie-mi-fu
country,

80 Which was bounded on one side by the nine lakes of Gi-nzyu.

Then they would turn right about and look,
Look towards Cai-sie-mi-fu-di,
For the north wind came from the Cai-sie-mi-fu plains in the Cai-sie-mi-fu
country,

Which was bounded on one side by the blue lakes of Gi-nzyu.

85 Turning towards the far side of the land,
Were dark forests sighing in the wind,
For great forests were the boundary on that side.

But the twelve Miao clans had smooth roads,
Flat roads for their journey to reach this place,
90 To reach this wide plain, the plain of the river Deu-di.

Thus it is ended.