

M233

Song of how twelve Miao clans, fleeing, reached Nuo country.

Sung by Yang Zhi.

The eldest daughter of Byu-no,
The Yi cousin, the young woman who commanded and led the soldiers,
Heard that twelve clans of Miao had reached the border at the river Deu-di.

5 The Yi cousin was deeply concerned,
So the Yi cousin, riding her mule, an animal dappled and grey,
Commanded her companies of soldiers to run and investigate.

10 When they reached the border at the river Deu-di
The Yi cousin saw the twelve Miao clans,
With their companies of soldiers wearing,
Wearing flowing tail plumes of eagles,
Wearing tail plumes of eagles to serve as a sign.

15 They made everyone, great and small, even the old folk wear,
Wear smart head-ties, shining like new,
Wear smart head-ties, shining and bright,
Wear head-ties shining red against the hill slope,
Wear head-ties shining red against the hill side.
The head-ties they wore when repelling the Chinese Leader Gi-yie's swords
and spears.

20 The Yi cousin was surprised and alarmed
To see the twelve Miao clans' companies of soldiers waiting,
With shining spears and pointed swords in their hands.
The Yi cousin opened her mouth, opened her lips and asked,

25 "Are you the twelve Miao clans which fled,
Fled from the Tracts of Mi-li and the Plains of Li-mo?"
The twelve Miao clans heard the Yi cousin's voice,
But the retainers and soldiers of the twelve Miao clans made no response.

So the Yi cousin raised her right hand and, beckoning, said,
" We are brothers and sisters, let there be no mischief!
We are brothers and sisters, let there be no onslaught!"

30 Then the twelve Miao clans' companies of soldiers laid down,
Laid down their weapons upon the ground.
And the Yi cousin dismounted from her mule.

35 The controllers and officers of the twelve Miao clans ran forward,
The controllers and officers spoke up,
"If there are questions, speak and make them plain,
If there are decisions, speak and let us know".

The Yi cousin, turning aside, made enquiry,

Speaking her words quietly she asked,
"Are you the twelve Miao clans who fled,
Fled from the Tracts of Mi-li and Golden City?"

40 They speak of twelve Miao clans who fled from the Plains of Li-mo,
Whom the Chinese Leader Gi-yie drove away. Are you they?"

The controllers, the officers and the old folk,
Speaking their words quietly asked,
"They speak of the Yi cousin, the young woman who commands soldiers. Are
you she?"

45 The Yi cousin opened her mouth and replied,
"I am just an ordinary young woman,
But when they speak of the Yi cousin, the young woman, the fighter, it is I".

So the Yi cousin spoke truthfully to the controllers and officers,
And the controllers and officers responded in good faith.
50 Then the Yi cousin raised her voice and laughed aloud,
"There is no need to be anxious at all.

The sky is wide enough for the birds to fly,
The earth is wide enough for twelve Miao clans to choose a place to live.
There is work to be done, you have my word,
55 There are light burdens and heavy, you have my promise".

When the twelve Miao clans heard the Yi cousin speaking so plainly,
And the twelve Miao clans knew that the Yi cousin was telling the truth,
And that their controllers and officers had responded in good faith,
The twelve Miao clans' companies of soldiers laughed aloud.

60 But the old folk, great and small, spoke about Nzhi-mi-li,
About the calamity, the bitterness and the hardships,
Raising their voices to the sky,
While the tears streamed down.

The Yi cousin was sympathetic,
65 And the Yi cousin was weeping with them,
But the Yi cousin quietly wiped away her tears,
Unwilling that any of the old folk, great or small, should see.

Then the Yi cousin said,
"Wipe away your tears and dry your eyes,
70 Wipe you mouths, and wipe your noses clean.
The calamities and disasters, the bitterness and hardships,
Take them, and cast them behind you along the way".

When the next day came,
The Yi cousin brought the old folk great and small,
75 And the companies of soldiers back, and reached,
Reached the borders of the Yi cousin's grandfather, the Lord Byu-no's estates.

The Yi cousin announced,
"Twelve Miao clans have arrived as a group".

80 When grandfather, the Lord Byu-no heard,
Heard the Yi cousin say,
That twelve Miao clans had come as a group,
Grandfather, the Lord Byu-no came, and approaching,
Grandfather, the Lord Byu-no, laughed aloud.

85 When grandfather, the Lord Byu-no had seen them,
Speaking his words quietly, he asked,
Asked the Yi cousin privately,
"Are these indeed the twelve Miao clans?"

Then the Yi cousin replied,
She said, "These are indeed the twelve Miao clans".

90 The Yi cousin again extended to the twelve Miao clans,
To the old folk and the companies of soldiers, reassurance.
Raising her voice and clapping her hands the Yi cousin said,

"There is no need to be anxious at all.
There are light burdens and heavy, you have my promise,
95 For matters great or small you have my presence,
You twelve Miao clans set your hearts at rest.

Raise crops, do your farming, so pass your days and fill your time.
The sky is wide enough for the birds to fly,
And earth is wide enough for water to flow,
100 And, so far as people are concerned,
Wide enough for twelve Miao clans to choose places to dwell".

The old folk, everyone great and small,
And the companies of soldiers laughed aloud.

Grandfather, the Lord Byu-no and the Yi cousin prepared,
105 Prepared a dinner, prepared food and entertained,
Entertained the twelve Miao clans as Lord Byu-no would entertain at a
wedding.
Prepared as when the Yi cousin entertained her guests.

When the next day came,
The Yi cousin and Grandfather, Lord Byu-no came out and said,

110 "You may occupy the whole of the plain,
Facing toward the sunrise,
By the river A-na at Gi-chi-na-lu,
Behind the mountain. There you may live as you please".

115 The old folk of the twelve Miao clans chose dwelling places,
Chose them on the whole of the plain,
Facing toward the sunrise.

- Yet still the old folk were anxious and declared,
 "If you dig holes, holes in the soil and do not smoke,
 Smoke tobacco and let the vapour go into the holes,
 120 Let the smoke get down to the subsoil,
 You will not fulfil the wishes of the old folk.
- In fact the old folk, every one will be most upset.
 For as black, brackish water cannot be carried for use,
 So vapour from the soil cannot promote friendship".
 125 Having spoken, the old folk withdrew.
- When the old folk had chosen dwelling places,
 Chosen them by the Na-lu river in Gi-chi-na-lu country,
 People dug holes in the soil, but first they went and lit up.
 They smoked their tobacco, puffing out smoke which penetrated to the subsoil.
- 130 First one puff reached the hole, then three puffs,
 And finally twelve puffs of tobacco smoke,
 Puffs of tobacco smoke which went spiralling,
 Spiralling along the ground till it penetrated to the subsoil.
- Then the old folk laughed aloud,
 135 "As black water has been left on the flats and clear water carried for use,
 So the vapour from the soil will now promote friendship".
- The twelve Miao clans dwelt in the Gi-chi-na-lu country,
 Including Do-zi-go together with Die-zi-nyu,
 Ndrang-shi-njia and Ndrang-go-nghw,
 140 Sufficient for the descendants of the twelve Miao clans
 To build houses and establishments for all generations.
- While the sky remained constant,
 The hills and levels of Ngyu were renamed, "The hills and levels of the twelve
 Miao clans",
 Were renamed, "The hills and dwellings of the twelve Miao clans".
- 145 When the twelve Miao clans settled by the river A-na in Gi-chi-na-lu country,
 Hearts were peaceful as a basket is smooth within,
 Hearts were restful as a large basket is flat within.
- They came to regard Nzhi-mi-li with its roads and villages under guard as but a
 temporary home,
 And, as a reminder, made "rock watch rations", taking and eating steamed eggs.
 150 So all the twelve Miao clans lived at Gi-chi-na-lu.
- While the sky remained constant,
 They multiplied through succeeding generations,
 This growth had its origin, its beginnings at Gi-chi-na-lu,
 And this is sung that all the children may remember.
- 155 Thus it is ended.