

Old Miao songs about marriage. 4.

Song about entertaining the middleman and the headman.

Collected by Wang Ming-ji.

Who is entertaining a middleman?
The man, the father is entertaining a middleman.
Who is entertaining a headman?
The man, the father is entertaining a headman.

5 He is entertaining the middleman
Together with the headman,
Making them sit in the highest places, because,
Because the man, the father's livestock will be multiplied!

10 The man, the father has reserved,
Reserved the place of honour for whom?
He has reserved it for the middleman.
The man, the father has reserved,
Reserved the chief place for whom?
He has reserved it for the headman.

15 When the next day came,
The middleman and the headman called,
Called the woman, the aunt's name over and over.
The woman, the aunt took the skirts and gowns, and putting them on, went to
meet,
To meet the middleman and the headman.

20 The middleman and the headman together went and took them off,
Took them off carefully and laid them out all round.
Then the skirts of the woman, the aunt,
The woman, the aunt collected from all round and carried them away.

25 When the next day came,
The middleman and the headman called,
Called the woman, the aunt's name again and again.
The woman, the aunt took the skirts and aprons, and putting them on, went to
meet,
To meet the middleman and the headman.

30 The middleman and the headman forthwith went and took them off,
Took them off carefully and laid them out all round.
Then the aprons of the woman, the aunt,
The woman, the aunt picked up from all round and folded them away.

The women's wine jars bubbled clear,
Bubbled with the women's yeast.
35 The women's wine jars bubbled over on the ground,

Bubbled with the men's wine.
Now take a sprig of bamboo and push it,
Push it into the neck and suck,
Suck the "fat" from the women's wine jars.

40 But the women's wine jars threw,
Threw the old folk down by the fire!

So, pull the old folk aside,
Let them lie together on the ground,
Like the ridges there out of doors,
45 On the old folk's land.

Take a sprig of bamboo and push it,
Push it into the neck and suck,
Suck the "milk" from the women's wine jars.

Now the middle-aged spoke much,
50 Spoke of the woman's marriage,
But the women's wine jars threw,
Threw the middle-aged down by the fire!

So, pull the middle-aged aside,
Let them lie together on the ground,
55 Like the ridges there out of doors,
On the plains of the middle-aged.

When the next day came,
The daughter, the adult young woman rose,
Rose up and combed her hair,
60 Making her hair smooth and flowing.

When the next day came,
The daughter, the adult young woman rose,
Rose up and combed her hair,
Making her hair smooth, smooth indeed.

65 For there will come a day when the daughter, the adult young woman, like,
Like a shadow passing over the crops,
The swaying crops, will go to her marriage.

There will come a day when the daughter, the adult young woman, like,
Like a shadow passing over the harvest,
The swaying harvest will go to her marriage.