

**M431**  
**The Witch and the Miao lad.**

*Told by Yang Xiu-gong*

They tell a story that, once upon a time, a Miao lad went digging and planted millet. When the millet was ripe many birds came eating it, so every day he had to go and drive them off. One day when he was on guard, the witch's chicken came eating his millet. He chased after them until he reached the witch's house. He said, "Old lady, you must look after your chicken carefully, for every day they come eating my millet!" The witch replied, "My boy, come in and sit down and I will find you something to eat". The Miao lad went in and sat down, and the witch went and took out a bowl and said,

"Deu, deu, deu, come forth rice!  
Deu, deu, deu, come forth meat!"

At once rice and meat appeared and the witch prepared food and served it for the Miao lad to eat. At night when the witch was asleep the Miao lad went and took the witch's bowl. Having got the witch's bowl, now, what ever he wanted he could get, and whatever he wished to eat he could have.

This Miao lad with the witch's bowl had a friend who one day was going to collect firewood. He called for him and said, "Friend, come and let the two of us collect firewood together". He replied, "Come in and sit down for a smoke, then we will go". His friend said, "You there, so poor, what tobacco have you got?" He said, "I may not have any, but come in and be sociable!" His friend came in and sat down. Then he went and took that bowl he had got and said,

"Deu, deu, deu, come forth rice!  
Deu, deu, deu, come forth meat!"

He took the rice and meat, prepared and served food for his friend to eat. His friend said, "How did you get it?" He replied, "I planted some millet and when it was ripe the birds came eating it, so I went to guard it. One day the witch's chicken came to eat. I chased them off and went and told the witch to look after her chicken properly. The witch pressed me to go in, and then took out her bowl, prepared food, and served it for me to eat. I waited until she was asleep and then I took the bowl away.

Hearing this his friend went to copy him. He, too, planted millet and guarded it against the birds. One day the witch's chicken came eating it. He chased them off and reached the witch's house. The witch made food for him to eat. When night came and the witch had gone to bed, he waited until midnight, and was then going to take the witch's bowl. But the witch was not asleep, so when he went to take it, she got up and caught him. She took the bowl and said,

"Deu, deu, deu, nose grow long!"

The Miao lad's nose grew until it was trailing on the ground! He returned home, and he had to speak to his friend and get him to bring his bowl to cure his nose and put it right.