

## Song of Ndrao-ntlai and Hmao-chi's youngest daughter.

*Collected by Wang Ming-ji.*

- This year we may know,  
 Know that Ndrao-ntlai has made pipes and gone down to Nzhi-di.  
 But the striped tiger did no good,  
 For the striped tiger came and abducted,  
 5 Abducted Hmao-chi's youngest daughter and was gone,  
 For Ndrao-ntlai was away for nearly a year.
- The pink blossom had burst on the peach trees,  
 And on the peach trees the leaves were bright green,  
 When Ndrao-ntlai came and plucked,  
 10 Plucked a leaf from the peach tree and pressed it to his mouth,  
 Plucked a bright green leaf and blew a message,  
 "Is Hmao-chi's youngest daughter still at home?"
- Ndrao-ntlai's mother replied,  
 "Ndrao-ntlai, oh Ndrao-ntlai!  
 15 Hmao-chi's youngest daughter is not here.  
 The striped tiger abducted Hmao-chi's youngest daughter and is gone!"
- When Ndrao-ntlai came and reached his home,  
 Ndrao-ntlai sharpened his spear every night,  
 And sharpened his sword every day.
- 20 Then Ndrao-ntlai asked his mother  
 To give her old skirt to test his sword.  
 Ndrao-ntlai's mother's old skirt fell in two pieces.
- Next Ndrao-ntlai requested,  
 Ndrao-ntlai's mother's new skirt on purpose,  
 25 For Ndrao-ntlai to test his sword.  
 Ndrao-ntlai's mother's new skirt fell in three pieces.
- Then Ndrao-ntlai requested,  
 Requested his mother to kill the pig for him to eat,  
 And to cook white rice for Ndrao-ntlai to eat with it.
- 30 Ndrao-ntlai dipped up one spoonful to put in his mouth,  
 And dipped up the next, putting it into a bag.  
 He took one piece of meat to put in his mouth,  
 And took the next, putting it into the bag.
- Carrying the bag on his back,  
 35 Ndrao-ntlai followed,  
 Followed after Hmao-chi's youngest daughter.

He went and reached a place on the road.  
 Where the striped tiger had lit,  
 Lit a fire for them to warm themselves.  
 40 There was the mark where Hmao-chi's youngest daughter had been standing,  
 And a mark where the striped tiger had been sitting,  
 But the fire had gone out and was dead.

Again Ndrao-ntlai followad,  
 Followed after Hmao-chi' youngest daughter,  
 45 And reached the cliff top at Ndu-nzhi.

There too, the striped tiger had lit,  
 Lit a fire for them to warm themselves.  
 There was a mark where Hmao-chi's youngest daughter had been sitting,  
 And a mark where the striped tiger had been lying.

50 The fire had gone out and was dead,  
 Except for a tiny ember as big as a rat's eye.  
 This Ndrao-ntlai took,  
 Took the fire to have a smoke.

Sitting at the Ndu-nzhi cliff top.  
 55 Ndrao-ntlai looked all around.  
 He looked down at the dry foot of the Ndu-nzhi cliff,  
 Where Hmao-chi's youngest daughter was weaving,  
 Weaving there at the dry foot of the Ndu-nzhi cliff.

So Ndrao-ntlai cut,  
 60 Cut buds and open leaves and dropped them down to land,  
 To land upon the Miao loom of Hmao-chi's youngest daughter.

Hmao-chi's youngest daughter exclaimed,  
 "Why are the thrushes sweeping leaves,  
 Why are they sweeping buds and open leaves to land,  
 65 To land on the Miao loom of Hmao-chi's youngest daughter?"

As Ndrao-ntlai smoked he spat and it landed,  
 Landed on the Miao loom of Hmao-chi's youngest daughter.  
 Hmao-chi's youngest daughter looked all around and about,  
 Then glanced at the top of the Miao country cliff.  
 70 Where Ndrao-ntlai was seated, seated there at the top of the Miao country cliff.

Ndrao-ntlai asked Hmao-chi's youngest daughter,  
 "How does one get down, Hmao-chi's youngest daughter?"  
 Hmao-chi's youngest daughter replied,  
 "Oh, do not come, Ndrao-ntlai!"  
 75 But Ndrao-ntlai would not agree.

So Hmao-chi's youngest daughter answered.  
 "If you are going to come, go and wait,  
 Wait for tiger day when the tigers slumber,  
 And for ox day when the oxen sleep,  
 80 Then you may come Ndrao-ntlai!"

So Ndrao-ntlai returned, went back and waited,  
 Waited for tiger day when the tigers slumber,  
 And for ox day when the oxen sleep.  
 Then Ndrao-ntlai went,  
 85 Went and reached the cliff top at Ndu-nzhi.

Ndrao-ntlai looked all around and about,  
 Looked at the dry foot of the Ndu-nzhi cliff.  
 He looked and saw Hmao-chi's youngest daughter there,  
 There at the dry foot of the Ndu-nzhi cliff.

90 Then Ndrao-ntlai enquired,  
 "How does one get down, Hmao-chi's youngest daughter?"  
 Hmao-chi's youngest daughter showed Ndrao-ntlai the way to climb down,  
 And Ndrao-ntlai reached the foot of the Ndu-nzhi cliff.

Hmao chi's youngest daughter took,  
 95 Took Ndrao-ntlai and made him a shallow shelf to lie on,  
 Placed there in the cave where Hmao-chi's youngest daughter lived.  
 In the evening before midnight,  
 The striped tigers arrived.

The bigger of the striped tigers asked,  
 100 Asked Hmao-chi's youngest daughter,  
 "The sunshine has been bright,  
 But what creature's scent is it I can smell?"

Hmao-chi's youngest daughter replied,  
 "The sunshine has been bright,  
 105 And it made Hmao-chi's youngest daughter restless,  
 So Hmao-chi's youngest daughter took,  
 Took her skirts and aprons and spread them in the sun".

The other striped tiger arrived and asked,  
 "What creature's scent is it I can smell?"  
 110 Hmao-chi's youngest daughter replied,  
 "The sunshine has been bright,  
 And it made Hmao-chi's youngest daughter restless,  
 So Hmao-chi's youngest daughter has been gathering firewood".

The striped tigers came in and went to sleep.  
 115 In the evening, as midnight approached,  
 Hmao-chi's youngest daughter took a needle and pricked,  
 Pricked the striped tigers' bottoms,  
 But the striped tigers slept on quietly.

Then Ndrao-ntlai took,  
120 Took white pork together with,  
With white rice and shared it,  
Shared it for Hmao-chi's youngest daughter to eat.

Ndrao-ntlai also drew his shining sword to strike,  
To strike the striped tigers and make an end.  
125 But Hmao-chi's youngest daughter would not agree.  
Hmao-chi's youngest daughter took her skirt and apron and covered,  
Covered the striped tigers.

Ndrao-ntlai went quickly outside.  
"Hmao-chi's youngest daughter come out quickly and look!  
130 The pheasants have closed their wings and settled over there,  
Just like they used to come stealing our barley.  
A whole flock of pheasants flying to and fro have settled over there."

Hmao-chi's youngest daughter got up to go and look,  
But Ndrao-ntlai returned, went back and struck,  
135 Struck the striped tigers dead.  
Then Hmao-chi's youngest daughter returned, came back and looked.  
"Ndrao-ntlai, oh Ndrao-ntlai,  
Why have you done this Ndrao-ntlai?"

Hmao-chi's youngest daughter could not remember,  
140 Where she had come from,  
And Ndrao-ntlai could not remember,  
Where he had come from.

Ndrao-ntlai and Hmao-chi's youngest daughter took,  
Took white rice and white pork and shared it together,  
145 Then Ndrao-ntlai brought Hmao-chi's youngest daughter and they reached,  
Reached the valley of wild beans and edible roots.

Hmao-chi's youngest daughter bade Ndrao-ntlai eat,  
Eat the wild beans and the edible roots in the valley,  
And Hmao-chi's youngest daughter bade Ndrao-ntlai take,  
150 Take the sheltering black rock and shut her in,  
Shut Hmao-chi's youngest daughter in,  
That Hmao-chi's youngest daughter might sleep.

So Ndrao-ntlai ate,  
Ate the wild beans and the edible roots in the valley.  
155 Then Ndrao-ntlai went and looked,  
Hmao-chi's youngest daughter had decayed right away.

While Ndrao-ntlai returned and ate,  
Ate the wild beans and the edible roots in the valley,  
Hmao-chi's youngest daughter rose to her feet,  
160 Calling Ndrao-ntlai to go and open,  
Open the black sheltering rock,  
That Hmao-chi's youngest daughter might come out.

Ndrao-ntlai and Hmao-chi's youngest daughter came,  
Came and reached a Chinese spoon maker.  
165 Here Ndrao-ntlai became,  
Became a spoon-salesman for the Chinese.  
Hmao-chi's youngest daughter became,  
Became a woman spoon-maker for the Chinese.

So Ndrao-ntlai reached,  
170 Reached his mother and father's home.  
Now Ndrao-ntlai's mother and father were convinced,  
That the striped tiger had actually eaten Ndrao-ntlai,  
And Ndrao-ntlai's mother and father were performing,  
Performing the rituals for his spirit.

175 Raising his voice Ndrao-ntlai sang with all his might,  
And Ndrao-ntlai's mother and father commented,  
"That is exactly like Ndrao-ntlai!"  
Raising his pipes Ndrao-ntlai played with all his might,  
And Ndrao-ntlai's mother and father commented,  
180 "That is exactly like Ndrao-ntlai!"

Could this indeed be Ndrao-ntlai?  
Then Ndrao-ntlai came quickly into the house,  
And Ndrao-ntlai's mother and father were overjoyed.  
Ndrao-ntlai's mother and Ndrao-ntlai's father sent,  
185 Sent people to go and to bring,  
Bring Hmao-chi's youngest daughter home.

Ndrao-ntlai's mother and Ndrao-ntlai's father provided,  
Provided a spotted pig to be killed,  
Killed to recall the spirits of Ndrao-ntlai and Hmao-chi's youngest daughter,  
190 To recall their spirits and bring them home.

Thus it is ended.