

Wu Song Fights the Tiger (Performance version by China Peking Opera Troupe)

Scene One

(Enter Wu Song)

Wu Song: (*Singing in Xin Shui Ling*)

<31, 33 What a hard lot Heaven had in store for this hero, 31, 33>

how sad that a hero lives no better than wild grass¹!

<31, 33 Unable to raise in the world, riding the clouds and roaming through the

nine myriads of space,

floating about on thousands of waves and ripples of the stormy sea². 31, 33>

I, Wu Song!

Always <31, 33 wandering about, here today and gone tomorrow³, 31, 33>

Even nobodies could twist me around⁴. <page 2>

Yah! Look at the wine-banner with the words “Three bowls and you cannot cross the ridge”, what does that mean? Let me have a couple of drinks, and ask them. -----

Host!

Waiter: (*Backstage*) Ah-Hah!

(*Enter reciting*) <31, 33 Wine! Wine! Wine! Here! Here! Here! Want to buy on

credit? Leave! Leave! Leave! 31, 33>-----Dear guest, do you want some

wine?

Wu Song: Yes.

¹ 蒿蓬：Wild grass.

² 重：chong2, 层的意思。

³ 浪迹浮踪：到处漫游，行踪不定。

⁴ 鱼虾：小人物。

Waiter: Please, come inside.

Wu Song: Host, your wine-banner reads “Three bowls and you cannot cross the ridge”, what does that mean?

Waiter: Dear guest, it’s because the wine we brew is really good. It’s so strong that if you drink three bowls, you cannot cross the Jingyang Ridge ahead.

Wu Song: I don’t believe it. Bring the wine, let me drink thirty bowls. Bring the wine!

Waiter: How boastful! I will go and bring the wine, and you will know how it is after tasting it. -----A mug of good wine. ----- (Brings the wine) Dear guest, here is the wine. Let me pour it for you.

Wu Song: Is this the bowl?

Waiter: This is the bowl, after three bowls you will not be able to cross the ridge!

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Wu Song: (Drinks the wine) Bottom up. ----- Pour the wine!

Waiter: I’m pouring for you.

(The waiter pours the wine; Wu Song drinks it up again)

Waiter: Dear guest, what would you like to eat with the wine? (Pours the wine once more)

Wu Song: Host!

(Singing in *Zhe Gui Ling*)

<31, 33 No need to roast phoenix or cook dragons. 31, 33> (Drinks the wine)

Waiter: (Talking to himself) This guest likes to just drink the wine⁵.

⁵ 寡酒: Drinking the wine without eating.

Wu Song: Pour the wine!

Waiter: There's no more!

Wu Song: <33 How come it's already finished when I just began to drink? 33>

Waiter: Our wine mug contains only three bowls, not one drop more, and not one drop less.

Wu Song: Bah! What three or four bowls are you talking about, bring the wine, let me drink one jar of it.

Waiter: Ah? <page 4>

Wu Song: Bring the wine.

Waiter: Well, well, I'll get the wine for you. -----A jar of good wine!

(The waiter brings a wine jar to the table and opens the mud seal. While he blows the dust; Wu Song covers his face with his sleeve)

Wu Song: Stupid fellow!

Waiter: Please smell its fragrance arousing the nostrils. Let me pour it for you.

(Pours the wine) Dear guest, look at this, it's really the colour of amber.

Wu Song: Great!

(Continues *singing*) <31, 33 Wine is bubbling in the parrot cup, with a rich shine of amber. 31, 33> (Drinks the wine)

Pour the wine!

Waiter: Yes. (Pours the wine)

Wu Song: (Drinks the wine) This is indeed good wine. Pour the wine!

Waiter: Yes. (Pours the wine) Dear guest, you already drank five bowls.

Wu Song: Host!

(Continues *singing*) <31, 33 I didn't realize that five gallons of wine will sober you up, and three cups after another will work wonders. 31, 33>

(Drinks the wine) <page 5>

Pour the wine!

Waiter: Dear guest, how come you are still drinking?

Wu Song: Pour the wine!

Waiter: Well! (Pours the wine)

Wu Song: (Drinks the wine) Well!

(Continues *singing*) <31, 33 Why do you need to worry? 31, 33> (Grabs the jar, drinks directly from the jar)

Waiter: (Sees wine is spilled and dropping to the floor) Oh, my dear, it's wasted, it's wasted! What a pity, what a pity! (Quickly, he sucks up the wine with his mouth) This wine is really good; it's got a real kick!

Wu Song: Waiter, how much for the wine?

Waiter: 0,46783 silver ounces!

Wu Song: Here is the money. "Three bowls and you cannot cross the ridge", I drank a jar, see if I can cross the ridge or not!

Waiter: Dear guest, where are you heading to?

Wu Song: The Jingyang Ridge.

Waiter: Are you really crossing the Jingyang Ridge? You can't do that! There has arrived a big tiger with slanting eyes and white forehead; it has killed a lot of people. <page 6>

Isn't it like throwing your life away for nothing if you go and cross the ridge now?

Wu Song: <31, 33 Had you not brought the tiger into the conversation, I may not have wanted to leave. 31, 33> Now, since you mentioned there is a wild tiger, I'm crossing the ridge no matter what!

Waiter: You can't go! You are just serving the tiger yourself as a snack!

Wu Song: (Continues *singing*) You are just 'making trouble out of nothing'⁶,
with your sweet mouth and glib tongue.

Don't you think about fooling me,

Even though my eyes are drunken and drowsy!

Waiter: You can't go, you can't go!

(Wu Song shakes off the waiter, and *exits*)

Waiter: You can't go, oh, my dear! (The wine he drank starts to kick, he vomits)

Pooh!

(The waiter holds the wine jar, *exits* staggering)

Scene Two

⁶ 无事生非：成语。

(Enter Wu Song) <page 7>

Wu Song: (Singing in *Gu mei Jiu*)

The path is winding, the road is rough.

The wine made me drunk.

I feel the ground swaying under my feet.

Hey! The host said, there has arrived a wild tiger on Jingyang Ridge. It was

obviously a lie, how could I, Wu Song, be fooled by him! Let me get going

on my way. (Spews) Wu.....the wine starts kicking. There is a big rock,

let me take a nap, can't I! (While he is taking a nap, the tiger *enters*, he

then wakes up) Wow! The wind is so strong! The wind is so strong!

(Seeing the tiger) Ah!

(Singing in *Yan Er Luo*)

<31, 33 Watching from here—its hairy body looks strong and fierce,

My wolf-teeth cudgel of mine got broken first;

Here am I, dodging back and forth for ever,

This damned monster is flaunting its claws and baring its teeth. 31, 33>

(Continues singing in *De Sheng Ling*)

Wow! Ahem, I back off----- <page 8>

<31, 33

As I dodged, it turned round and jumped into the air,

In the twinkling of an eye it lost the track.

This is surely a man-slaughtering tiger, 31, 33>

Now we enemies are destined to meet in a narrow path.

Oh, you tiger!

<31, 33 If you want to display your prowess,

then your blows must come down with a weight of a thousand pounds. 31, 33>

I'll make you die under my fists, die under my fists.

It's dead. (Panting) Let me go down the ridge and get on my way.

(*Enter* two hunters clothed in tiger's fur, Wu Song wants to fight the tigers. A

group of hunters hurry forwards and *enter*)

The hunters: Stop!

Wu Song: (Spews) Pooh.....

The hunters: Who are you?

Wu Song: I'm a traveler. <page 9>

The hunters: This wild tiger?

Wu Song: I just killed it.

The hunters: Oh, my goodness, you killed this big beast, you are really a hero!

Wu Song: You are flattering me.

One of the hunters: May I know your name?

Wu Song: My name is Wu Song.

The hunters: Oh, my goodness, so you are the strong fellow Wu.

One of the hunters: Then strong fellow, please go with us, let people recognize you as
the tiger killing hero.

Wu Song: I do not deserve it.

The hunters: Strong fellow, please! (Carrying the tiger, *walking around the stage*⁷)

(*Singing in choir in Gu Mei Jiu*)

The damned monster was ferocious, all travelers were scared,

How many people must have died tragic deaths!

Who could have imagined that today, **<page 10>**

Heaven sent us a tiger killing hero!

Wu Song: (*Continues singing*) Everyone praises me!

It was none of my intention that I became a tiger killing hero!

The hunters: (*Continue singing*) We are not just flattering you,

so ferocious a big beast, died under your fists.

(*Exeunt all*)

-----The End-----

Translated by Feng Yining and Vibeke Børdahl

⁷ 圆场: A term in Peking opera.