

說唱，山東快書，孫鎮業，武松打虎 (錄音，喻京寫成漢字)

65 Oral Performance, Shandong Clappertale, Sun Zhenye, Wu Song Fights the Tiger, Yu Jing trans, revised  
VB 15 February 06

**Wu Song Fights the Tiger**  
**Shandong Clappertale performed by Sun Zhenye**  
**CD**

*Let's stop chatting*

and tell about staunch heroes instead.

*Once again let me perform the tale about the good fellow Second Brother Wu.*

That Wu Song

went home to fight at the Dongyue temple,

where the whole Li clan was beaten up by him,

and there, in his home town he did away with those five ‘tigers’ of the local despot.

This good fellow

did not feel like going through a trial and fled the place.

He lived in the manor of Lord Chai for a year,

where he got to know the good fellow from Shandong called Song Jiang.

He and Song Jiang became blood brothers,

they were as close as if they had the same father and mother.

On this certain day

Wu Song missed his home

and really wanted to go home for a visit.

He bid farewell with the two good fellows Song Jiang and Chai Jin.

He took his bundle over his shoulder

and a cudgel in his hand,

and hurried along the sloping highway,

hey—simply on his way today, longing for tomorrow!

This certain day

he reached the border of Yanggu district.

Zhangqiu town belonged to the district of Yanggu,

and to the west of Zhangqiu town there was a Jingyang Ridge.

Wu Song arrived in Zhangqiu town,

and glanced towards the north of the road.

Wu Song looked north of the road,

where the signs of different taverns were blowing in the wind.

One of them was inscribed “House of intoxication”,

on another was written “Flavour escapes the jug”,

and—hey!— in the midst of them there was a large signboard

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inscribed “Three bowls and you cannot cross the Ridge”.

Oh? Wu Song thought: What is the meaning of “Three bowls and you cannot cross the Ridge”?

Aha! Small tavern – big talk,

I, Wu Song,

was born with the love for wine,

let me go inside to have a taste of the good wine.

The good fellow Wu Song went inside

and glanced around the room:

There was a table

near the door

with two chairs on each side.

He examined the room in both directions.

Ah, a huge amount of wine jars.

This Wu Song

put his bundle on the table

and leant his cudgel against the wall.

“Waiter, bring wine!”

“Waiter, bring wine!”

“Waiter, bring wine!”

He called three times in a row but no one responded.

He called three times in a row but no one answered.

This angered the good fellow Second Brother Wu,

this angered the good fellow Wu the Second.

He slammed his hand on the table and said:

“Waiter, bring wine!”

Ah! Never mind that he yelled like this,

but good heavens,

it made the room shake all over,

“crash, bang, bang” - the dust falling down,

even the wine jars were making a ringing sound.<sup>1</sup>

The innkeeper came out to see.

“What’s happening here?”

Oh, my goodness!

How tall this big brother is!

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<sup>1</sup> Cf Zhang Dai’s description of Liu Jingting’s performance 1638.

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Look at Wu Song,  
his height is more than one staff's length,  
his two arms are full of power,  
his head is bigger than a bushel,  
his two eyes stare like bulging bells,  
his arms stretch out like ploughshares,  
his fists are like iron hammers,  
his palms are like dustpans,  
his fingers are as long as wooden sticks.

“Oh, please, Dear Sir, good fellow,

What wine would you like to drink? What food would you like to eat?  
Just give your orders and I'll serve you fast!”

Wu Song said:

“What wine do you have? What food do you have?

Please, every item on your list from the top, *tell me very carefully.*”

“Well, Dear Sir, good fellow,

well, if you want wine,  
we have ‘Champion Red’, ‘Grape Syrup’,  
then we have ‘Strong Yellow’,  
then we have ‘Falling at the Door’,  
and then we have ‘Flavour through the Bottle’.

If you want food we have beef,  
our beef is rich in taste,  
if you want solid food we have big flatbread,  
if you want something watery we have noodlesoup.”  
“Bring a lot of good wine and five pound of beef.”  
“Will do.”

The innkeeper came with two bowls of wine,  
and five pounds of beef was quickly put on the table.

This Wu Song

swallowed one bowl in a gulp,

Mmm, good!

Then he swallowed the other bowl in a gulp,

Mmm, not bad!

“Waiter!”

“Dear Sir, good fellow?”

“Bring wine!”

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“Dear Sir, good fellow, please have something to eat!

The flatbread is ready-made,

and we just have to light the fire to cook the noodles.”

“Bring wine!”

“You cannot drink any more of the wine.”

“Why?”

“At the door we have a signboard which states it clearly:

‘Three bowls and you cannot cross the Ridge’.”

“Oh? What does that mean?”

“It doesn’t mean anything else than that.

We have the Jingyang Ridge to the west.

Wow! It is a huge mountain forest.

No matter how much wine one usually can take,

if you drink three bowls of my wine,

you’ll get so drunk you tumble down already at the foot of Jingyang Ridge,

so you won’t be able to cross that ridge.

This is the meaning of ‘Three bowls and you cannot cross the Ridge’.”

“Oh!”

Wu Song said:

“Some can drink and some can’t,

I can,

so just bring more good wine.”

“Exactly! It was because you can drink

that I came with two bowls.

Normally people drink one bowl or half a bowl

and then they can’t take any more.

I still haven’t seen anyone drink one and a half bowl,

you drank up two bowls in no time,

and think this is nothing?”

“Bring wine!”

“Now I can’t under any circumstance give you more to drink.”

“Ah? I don’t owe you money, I haven’t bought anything on credit,

so why won’t you bring me more of this good wine?

If you bring wine we will forget about it,

but if you don’t, I will give you a couple of slaps.”

“I really couldn’t take that.

Not to mention a couple of slaps,

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I would be gone to my forefathers after one.”

The innkeeper brought two more bowls of wine,  
and Wu Song ate and drank up every drop.

“Bring wine!”

“You still want more to drink?!”

The innkeeper brought two more bowls of wine,  
and Wu Song drank up every drop.

“Waiter!”

“Dear Sir, good fellow!”

“Bring wine!”

“How can you still drink, can you take any more?”

This Wu Song

drank eighteen bowls in a row,  
and without noticing it, he finished five pounds of beef.

Don’t you think he could eat up all that?

He drank one bowl of wine, then ate one piece of meat,  
then drank one bowl of wine, then ate one piece of meat.

When eighteen bowls of wine were empty,  
the five pounds of beef were also gone.

In addition he ate three big flatbreads  
and gulped down two bowls of noodle soup.

“Waiter!”

“Dear Sir, good fellow.”

“How many bowls and you cannot cross the Ridge.”

“Three bowls and you cannot cross the Ridge.”

“How many did I drink?”

“You drank two bowls here, two bowls there, two bowls here, two bowls there,  
eighteen bowls altogether!”

“The upper part of my body doesn’t shake!”

“You really can drink!”

“The lower part of my body hasn’t lost control!”

“You have a great capacity!”

“How about your signboard saying ‘Three bowls and you cannot cross the Ridge?’”

“Haven’t I already placed it behind the door?”

I don’t dare to hang it up ever again.”

“Ah! Just joking,

the signboard can still hang.

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I really can drink.

Bring me the bill!”

“Exactly three silver dollars, no more, no less.”

This Wu Song

opened his bundle,

paid the bill,

tied his bundle,

put it over his shoulder,

grabbed his cudgel,

and said: “Waiter!”

“Dear Sir, good fellow!”

“See you later!”

Wu Song was about to leave

when the innkeeper pulled his clothes:

“Dear Sir, good fellow, where are you heading?”

Wu Song said:

“Today I am crossing the Jingyang Ridge.

After drinking eighteen bowls of wine

I will cross the Jingyang Ridge!”

“Dear Sir, good fellow, it’s not possible to cross the Jingyang Ridge.”

“Eh?”

This came as an unpleasant surprise to Wu Song.

“Why is it not possible to cross the Jingyang Ridge?”

“Dear Sir, good fellow, *listen carefully*:

there has appeared a fierce tiger at the Jingyang Ridge.

The tiger is the King of the Beasts.

See?! This tiger has eaten such a lot of people that not even groups of three or five dare to  
set out on the trip.

He has eaten such a lot that not even groups of eight or ten will go without arming  
themselves with swords and spears.

He has eaten such a lot that people outside the city walls have fled inside of the walls.

He has eaten such a lot that people in the small villages have fled to the larger villages.

He has eaten such a lot that the local gentry and scholars have had meetings with  
officials.

The village leaders’ eyes are brimming with tears.

The magistrate of Yanggu District ordered people to kill the tiger,  
but many of them were killed by the tiger.

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Now, in all the four counties they have put up a proclamation:

One may cross the Ridge during the three watches from ten to four o'clock.

One may only cross the Ridge during the three watches from ten to four o'clock.

Ten people makes a group.

Everyone must bring swords and spears.

If you cross the Ridge by yourself alone,  
you will definitely be killed by the tiger.

Now the time to cross has passed,  
so listen to me and stay at my tavern.”

“Heh?”

Wu Song said:

“So if I stay here at your place then I shouldn't need to worry about the tiger?”

“Dear Sir, good fellow, please, *listen carefully*:

In our town we have more than twenty young men,  
who sleep at day until the sun sets,  
and as soon as the night falls they guard all the shops in town,  
each of them carrying sword and spear.

If they hear any movement outside,  
they make a big noise, shouting and beating the gongs and drums.

This way the tiger doesn't dare to enter our town,  
so he won't injure anyone.

“Oh?!”

Wu Song said:

“You see that I have a great capacity for drinking,  
you notice that I can eat a lot,  
so if you can keep me here,  
you can earn a lot of money from me  
to buy land and build a house.”

“What kind of nonsense is this?

I spoke to you with good intentions,  
and you insult me with vicious and sarcastic remarks?

If you wish to go, then go,  
whether you feed yourself to the tiger or the wolf  
is none of my business.”

“Hey, waiter,

I am well skilled,  
and I have my cudgel,

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so if I meet the tiger, I will fight it.

If I can do away with the tiger  
and relieve the people here of this calamity,  
that would be a good thing.

Good bye!”

“Are you really leaving?!”

“What do you think!”

This Wu Song walked five *li* without stop,  
and then he started to feel hot.

“Phew, how come it’s so hot?”

He loosened his clothes and continued walking.

Eh? Wu Song turned his head to one side,  
and saw a big tree by the road.

A large piece of bark had been scraped off,  
and some lines of characters were written clearly on it.

Wu Song went closer to read.

What was written here?

Oh! It was the same as the waiter said.

Was it an evil scheme of the owners of the taverns and guesthouses?

They might wish to scare the traveling merchants passing by.

The cowards would become scared as soon as they saw it,  
and go back to stay in their township.

Heh! What tiger, what wolf?

Who cares about tigers and wolves on the mountain ridge!

Wu Song walked another three *li*.

This Wu Song

now reached the Jingyang Ridge.

Wow! What a huge forest!

Hm! Over there he saw a temple dedicated to the spirits of the mountain.

On the door of the temple there was a big proclamation glued up.

Wu Song went closer to read it.

What kind of proclamation was this?

Hey? Oh! There was for sure a fierce tiger on the Ridge.

Was there really a tiger?

It was an official proclamation of Yanggu District,  
so it must be true.

‘Oh, dear me! If I cannot do away with the tiger,



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then it will continue to kill people.

I'll bite my teeth together and march up the mountain,

let's see if the tiger can match my sword.'

Wu Song walked another half *li*

when he caught sight of a big rock beside the road.

'It is still early,

let me rest for a while.'

This Wu Song

laid his bundle on the rock

and leaned his cudgel against a tree.

Wu Song had just laid down to rest,

when, Oh, my God,

bellowing "b-r-r-r-r...", a tiger—King of the Beasts—jumped out from behind the hill.

Hey! Never mind that this tiger bellowed "b-r-r-r-r...",

but it made all the branches and leaves shake.

Wu Song was startled and jumped up.

He looked in the direction of the sound.

What's this?

Oh! Good heavens,

this fierce tiger was strong,

this tiger was six and a half feet high,

and more than eight feet long.

If it jumps eight feet forward, people are scared out of their wits,

if it moves backwards the length of one staff, people are scurrying off.

The stripes on its body run one next to the other,

after a black one comes a yellow.

Its gaping mouth—a pail of blood—is big as a dustpan,<sup>2</sup>

its two eyes stare at you like tea mugs.

On its forehead a character stands out:

three horizontal and one vertical stroke makes 'King'!

When Wu Song saw that there was in fact a tiger there,

cold sweat soaked his clothes.

"Pooh!"

The eighteen bowls of good wine,

all came out through his pores.

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<sup>2</sup> cf description of the tiger in the drumtale *Dagu*

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Nothing left,  
nothing left!

When Wu Song saw the tiger approaching,  
he said to himself:

‘Don’t become flustered,  
it doesn’t help to be afraid.

My goodness! I certainly want to see how strong this tiger is.’

When the tiger caught sight of Wu the Second,  
in its heart of hearts it felt awfully happy.

Oh! The tiger thought: ‘This guy isn’t small,  
after two meals there will still be leftovers.’

The tiger thought: ‘What an opportunity!  
After two meals I cannot eat’m up!’

After two meals it cannot eat him up,  
but what about the man, can he stand it?

This tiger,

“b-r-r-r-r...” it roared as it came forth,  
and leaped towards the good fellow Second Brother Wu.

Wu Song cried out:

“Holy terror!”

and dodged away to one side.

Since Wu Song dodged away  
the tiger hit the ground.

As the tiger did not catch the man  
it couldn’t but think:

‘Why!’ The tiger thought: ‘Where is that guy?’

When eating humans I never used to spend much energy,  
how come today is different?’

Sure! When ordinary people saw the tiger, they were terribly frightened,  
they would cover their eyes with their hands and call for mummy.

The tiger would eat to its heart’s delight,  
digging its claws into the neck of its victim : yum, yum, delicious!

The tiger took him for an ordinary man,  
how could it know that man in front was the good fellow Second Brother Wu.

As Wu Song dodged away,  
he saw the waist of the tiger raised in a bow,  
and “pooh” it swooped on him again,

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but Wu Song dodged and jumped aside once more.

This tiger,

as it wasn't able to straddle Wu the Second,

it roared “b-r-r-r-r...”,

raised its tail like a spear,

pressed its paws into the ground and let the tail sweep down on him,

aiming for the good fellow Second Brother Wu.

Wu Song made a sudden jump,

jumping more than eight feet.

Ha! This tiger—

swooping down on Second Brother Wu, it missed him,

trying to straddle Wu Song, it couldn't get at him,

sweeping him with its tail, Wu Song cleared off,

so the tiger started to feel anxious.

The tiger thought: ‘Damned!

He is spoiling my meal

and getting troublesome.

Even though Wu Song wasn't afraid,

he felt a little flustered all the same.

He grabbed his cudgel and started to beat,

but forgot that he was so high and his arms so long.

He swung the cudgel upwards and beat downwards,

“boom”, he hit the forking branch of a tree.

“Crack”, the cudgel broke in two.

In his hand was left just a short piece.

Wu Song stamped his feet in anger.

‘Hey! I told you not to be flustered, but you are.

I told you not to be flustered,

but you cannot control yourself.’

The tiger had missed him,

but now it heard the “boom” just beside its ears.

The tiger thought:

‘What's going on?

Oh, he wants to beat me up.

I am not able to eat him,

and in addition he is giving me a trashing,

this is too much,

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I'm not willing to take this!

The tiger made a sudden jump forward,  
turned round in a big circle, and aimed for the good fellow Second Brother Wu.

Wu Song saw at once  
that this time the attack would be even fiercer than before.

He said to himself: 'If I dodge again and again, I am afraid it will get at me.'

This Wu Song,

in his urgency hit upon a way out:

he drew off,

“thump, thump, thump, thump, thump, thump, thump”,  
retreating ten steps without halting.

Wu Song retreated more than ten steps,  
and so the tiger hit the ground  
about one foot from Wu Song.

When Wu Song saw this, he was delighted.

This Wu Song,

rushing forward in eight steps, he pushed it down.

His two hands grabbed around the tiger's neck,  
his two arms held it with the power of a thousand pounds.

“Humph!” He pressed the tiger down to the ground.

The tiger could not hurt him,

but felt an intolerable pressure on its neck.

‘Good gracious! How come he squeezes me even further down?’

The tiger hadn't tasted this kind of misfortune before,  
so it couldn't take it.

It planted its forepaws in the ground and said:

The tiger said: “I can't take it!”

Wu Song said: “You can't take it, but you have to!”

The tiger said: “I have to get up!”

Wu Song said: “Just you wait a bit!”

The tiger said: “It's not comfortable!”

Wu Song said: “If you were comfortable, I would be finished!”

The tiger tried to get up three times,  
but Wu Song pushed him back down three times.

Who knows how much power was in play!

This tiger,

its paws penetrated the ground with more than half a foot.

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Wu Song thought: ‘This doesn’t work!

If I press like this forever,  
and it tries to get up like this forever,  
after some time

I shall not be able to overcome him,  
and will still end up as his dinner.

Woe on me!’

When he had thought these thoughts,  
he pressed even harder with his left arm  
and freed the power of his right hand,  
and towards the tiger’s backbone  
he hammered away ruthlessly.

“Pooh! Ah!”

This tiger,

Wu Song had already smashed it into a state of great pain,  
and now it felt the backbone aching all over.

What kind of feeling was this?

It definitely hadn’t tasted this kind of misfortune before,  
and couldn’t take it.

It screamed out in pain.

The sound was really scaring.

This Wu Song

clenched his iron fist  
and beat the backbone of the tiger:

“Ah! Hey!”

“B-r-r-r-r...!”

“Ah! Hey!”

“B-r-r-r-r...!”

“Ah! Hey!”

“B-r...”

He beat it three times, thump, thump,  
and then lifted his foot, kick, kick, kick,  
kicking the tiger on its forehead.

After beating and kicking it for a while,

this tiger,

had blood flowing from its nose and eyes.

Wu Song killed this one tiger,

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and his fame spread everywhere under Heaven.

*When we have sung this far, that is reckoned as one performance,*

*but the next session,*

*about avenge for his brother, follows right after.*

Transcribed from taperecording by Yu Jing. Translated by Yu Jing and Vibeke Børdahl