

----- a quotation from chairman mao -----

without armed struggle neither the proletariat, nor the people, nor the communist party would have any standing at all in china and it would be impossible for the revolution to triumph.

modern revolutionary peking opera: "taking tiger mountain by strategy"

peking, june 20 (hsinhua) -- hsinhua editor's note: under the guidance of chairman mao's brilliant document "talks at the yanan forum on literature and art" and the loving care of the party central committee, a number of model revolutionary theatrical works which shine with the brilliance of mao tsetung thought have been produced. these theatrical works are encouraging the revolutionary people to wage heroic and unyielding struggle against imperialism, revisionism and all reaction. they are brilliant fruits of china's proletarian revolution in literature and art.

during the great proletarian cultural revolution, chinese revolutionary literary and art workers, with attention and guidance from the party central committee with chairman mao as its leader and vice-chairman lin as its deputy leader, have refined and revised these model revolutionary theatrical works many times, after keenly listening to the views of the workers, peasants and soldiers. repeated and very conscientious polishing has made these theatrical works shine with an even more dazzling brilliance.

since last november, the full texts of the librettos of the modern revolutionary peking operas "taking tiger mountain by strategy" (october, 1969 stage version), "the red lantern" (may, 1970 stage version) and "shachiapang" (may, 1970 revised version) have been printed in newspapers and journals of china. they are warmly welcomed by the masses of the workers, peasants and soldiers.

the english versions of these three model revolutionary theatrical works are to be released by hsinhua for readers abroad.

following is the full text of the libretto of the modern revolutionary peking opera "taking tiger mountain by strategy":

taking tiger mountain
by strategy

(october 1969 script)

revised collectively by the "taking tiger mountain by strategy" group of the peking opera troupe of shanghai

cast

yang tzu-jung	scout platoon leader of the chinese people's liberation army (pla)
shao chien-po	pla regimental chief of staff
li yung-chi	railway worker
chang pao	hunter's daughter
shen teh-hua	pla scout platoon deputy leader
medical orderly	pla girl medical orderly
young kuo	pla guard
chung chih-cheng	pla soldier
lu hung-yeh	pla soldier
lo chang-chiang	pla soldier
other soldiers	
hunter chang	chang pao's father
mother li	li yung-chi's mother
chang ta-shan	railway worker
li yung-chi's wife	
other villagers	
vulture	bandit chieftain of tiger mountain, leader of kuomintang's "fifth peace preservation brigade of the eastern heilungkiang region"
luan ping	liaison adjutant under horse cudgel hsu, bandit chieftain of breast mountain
bandit chief of staff	
bandit chief adjutant	
bandit captain	
"terribles" and other bandits	

scene one
advancing in victory

winter, 1946. somewhere in northeast china. a forest deep in a snow-covered mountain.

(a pla pursuit-detachment in battle array, a red flag at its head, enters swiftly. the fighters execute a dance depicting their march against the wind along a snow-covered mountain trail.)

Lo: halt !
(the men form ranks.)
Lo: reporting, chief of staff. we've come to a fork in the road.
shao: we'll rest here.
Lo: right. lu hung-yeh !
lu: here.
Lo: stand guard !
lu: right. (exit.)
Lo: we'll rest here.
other soldiers: right.
(young kuo hands shao a map. shao examines it and then looks at the terrain.)
Lo: supply chief! we'll rest here.
(a voice responds: "we'll rest here!" horses neigh. the men stamp their feet to warm up and shake off the snow from their capes.)
shao: you must be tired, comrades.
soldiers: not at all.
shao: good. comrades yang tzu-jung and shen teh-hua are scouting up ahead. we've arranged to meet them here. in accordance with chairman mao's directive, "build stable base areas in the northeast", the regiment party committee sent us as a pursuit-detachment to arouse the masses in the mutanchiang area, wipe out the bandits, consolidate the rear and co-ordinate with our field army to smash the u.s.-backed kuomintang attacks. this is a task of great strategic importance. that vulture and his diehard gang have hidden themselves deep in the mountains. we've been trudging through the snow for days, but there's still no sign of them. we must display our style of continuous fighting. (decisively) "be resolute, fear no sacrifice and surmount every difficulty --"
shao and soldiers: "to win victory."
(lu hung-yeh enters.)
lu: reporting ! platoon leader yang and comrade shen are back.
(the two enter and salute.)
yang: reporting !
shao: comrade tzu-jung, you have had a hard job.
yang: we went out in disguise, according to orders, and on our way we rescued a boy -- a mute, in an isolated ravine. thanks to his father's directions, we reached a little hamlet called black dragon valley. our investigations there put us on the trail of vulture.
shao: good.

yang (sings "hsi pi yao pan" /note/)
this area is infested with bandits.
they call themselves "third regiment of the fifth peace preservation brigade."
Last night they pillaged black dragon valley.
(changes to "kuai pan")
vulture, vicious and cruel, has committed monstrous crimes.
after their pillage they fled toward chiapi valley.
it looks like they have returned to tiger mountain.
shao: we're on vulture's trail, comrades. we must press on. lo chang-chiang !
Lo: here.
shao: we'll camp at black dragon valley tonight.
Lo: right.
shao: comrade tzu-jung !
yang: here.
shao: we need more information on the enemy. take comrades shen teh-hua...
shen: here.
shao: chung chih-cheng !
chung: here.
shao: and lu hung-yeh !
lu: here !
shao: and do some more scouting.
yang: right.
shao: on your way.
(all strike dramatic pose.)

curtain

note: "hsi pi yao pan" and other similar terms in the text such as "kuai pan", "hsi pi hsiao tao pan", "hsi pi san pan", "fan erh huang tao pan", "erh huang man pan", "erh huang erh liu", "liu shui" and "hui lung" are various styles of singing in peking opera. each has its own fixed tune, structure, mode, rhythm and tempo. modern revolutionary peking opera has critically assimilated various styles of singing from traditional peking opera, with many creative improvements to suit the portrayal of proletarian heroes.

scene two
chiapi valley pillaged

dusk. the edge of the village chiapi valley. a withered tree stands slanting on one side and crags stand on either side of a gully.

(the routed bandit gang of the kuomintang "fifth peace preservation brigade" is retreating to its lair. passing by chiapi valley, vulture, the bandit chieftain, peeps at the village.)

bandit chief adjutant: on our way back this time we've made off with quite a pile, chief. this village is right on our doorstep. we ought to leave it alone.

bandit chief of staff: that's right. as the saying goes, "a rabbit doesn't foul its own hole."

vulture: to hell with it! go grab some of those paupers, the more the better. we'll put them to work building fortifications. men and women -- both will do.
bandit chief of staff (takes the hint): i get it.

(he leaves with the bandit gang for the village. the adjutant starts to go too, but vulture stops him.)

vulture: say, it must be nearly ten days since howling wolf went off to find luan ping, isn't it?

bandit chief adjutant: that's it, i'm getting worried about this too.

vulture: when we get back to tiger mountain, the first thing we'll do is to get more men to join us.

bandit chief adjutant: yes. if howling wolf can find luan ping and get his hands on horse cudgel hsu's contacts map, the whole mutanchiang area will be ours.

vulture: i hear commissioner hou is also looking all over for that map. we mustn't let him get it. never!

bandit chief adjutant: don't worry, chief. howling wolf and luan ping are sworn brothers. that map won't fly away.

vulture: you know, openly the americans are working for peace talks between the kuomintang and the communists, but actually they're moving soldiers north for chiang kai-shek. i hear chiang kai-shek has turned up in shenyang and is overseeing the fighting. they want to wipe out all the communist troops north and south of the great wall in three months. our chance has come, it seems to me.

bandit chief adjutant: that's great. when the kuomintang army arrives, you'll be made commander of all northern manchuria. first it was marshal chang, then the manchoukuo of the japanese, and now the kuomintang of chiang kai-shek. none of them could do without you. ha!
ha! ha!

vulture: ha! ha! ha!

(dogs bark in the village. vulture swaggers off with bandit chief adjutant toward the village. flames leap up and shouting is heard.)
(li yung-chi enters hurriedly, carrying a hunting rifle and some game.)

yung-chi (sings "hsi pi hsiao tao pan"):

flames leap to the sky and people shout,
(changes to "kuai pan")

mothers call to their sons, children cry for their mothers;

again the bandits burn, kill and rob,
i'll have it out with them though i die.

(bandits enter dragging villagers, young men and women bound by ropes. li yung-chi fights the bandits who are beating the young people and dragging them off.)
(yung-chi's wife is dragged on stage, followed by her mother-in-law holding her baby. bandit captain snatches the infant and throws it over the cliff. yung-chi, furious, attacks bandits desperately. his left arm is injured.)

(vulture enters and shoots at yung-chi.)

yung-chi's wife: yung-chi! (flings herself to cover him and falls dead.)

(vulture and the other bandits go off.)

yung-chi (heartbroken and enraged, gazes at his wife):
mother of my child ...

mother li (rushing over, overwhelmed with grief): daughter ...
yung-chi (sings "hsi pi kuai pan"):

disaster comes like a bolt from the blue,
fury burns in my breast;
i swear i shall avenge!

vulture!

i'll hack you to pieces for this blood debt.

(he starts to go for vulture. bandits swarm on and tie him up. he struggles with all his might.)

mother li: yung-chi!

yung-chi: mother!

(yung-chi is taken away.)

yung-chi: mother! mother!

mother li (stumbles to one knee): yung-chi!

curtain

scene three
asking about bitterness

afternoon. a remote mountain valley. in a small log cabin, bowls and chopsticks scattered on a table.

(chang pao clears the table. hunter chang looks outside.)

pao: that man and woman were rough types, dad. they finished off the bit of venison we'd just got.

chang: do you know who they are?

pao: he said he was from the chinese people's liberation army.

chang: huh! eight years ago, when the bandits dragged me away, i saw him in their lair on tiger mountain. people call him howling wolf. he's a bandit.

pao: oh!

chang: we can't stay here any longer, pao. let's get our things together at once and go to your uncle ta-shan's in chiapi valley.

pao: right. (gets some belongings together.)

chang (to himself): those two fur traders who came through here a few days ago said the communists were now in our old home helping us poor to win emancipation. i wonder if it's true.

pao: they're good men, those two. if they hadn't carried me home, i would have frozen to death in the ravine.

chang: that's true. hurry now.

pao: yes.
(chang ties a bundle. pao gets a pelt down from the wall. she sees figures moving outside the window.)

pao: somebody's coming, dad.
(chang covers pao's mouth with his hand.)

chang: hush!
(they listen attentively. yang, shen, chung and lu enter, muffled in capes and hoods which hide the red star on their caps. alertly they walk across the snow.)

yang (sings "hsi pi san pan"):
we've been tracking a suspicious pair,
but here in the mountains we've lost the trail --

shen: say, old yang, isn't this where hunter chang lives?

yang: that's right. (sings.)
let's call on the hunter again for help to solve our problem.

comrades shen and lu !

shen and lu: here.

yang: you two scout on ahead. report back here if you find anything.

shen and lu: right. (exit.)

yang: young chung ! stand guard.

chung: right. (exit.)

yang (walks up to the cabin and knocks): hey there, neighbours !

(the hunter comes out with apprehension.)

chang (examines yang): you are...

yang: don't you recognize me? i'm the fur trader who was here a few days ago.

chang: fur trader?

yang: yes.
(hearing his voice, pao runs out.)

yang (to pao): your father doesn't remember me, little brother. wasn't i the one who brought you home that day?
(pao examines him closely, is about to speak but stops, nods.)

yang (has observed and guessed the truth but doesn't let on): what a clever child !

chang (looks at yang carefully and recognizes him): ah, you're master yang.

yang: yes.

chang: that's right. and we discovered we're from the same province. come in, come in.
(they all go in.)

yang (to pao): are you feeling better now?

chang (quickly): he's a mute.

yang: yes, of course.

chang: you're a trader, but today you are in uniform. what are you, really?

yang: i'm not a trader. (throws back his hood to reveal the red star on his cap.) i'm a soldier of the chinese people's liberation army.

chang (sceptically): you too from the people's liberation army?

yang: yes. have you seen any pla men before?

chang (guardedly): no... no, never.

yang (sitting down on a wooden block): we didn't have a chance to talk much, last time. we came over from shantung province. we are battalions led by chairman mao and the communist party.

chang: but what are you doing all the way up here?

yang: fighting bandits. (picks up an axe and slams it down on the wood block.)

chang: fight bandits? can you do that?

yang (standing up): we've got a big force not far behind. our pla has won several big victories in the northeast. the whole mutanchiang area has been liberated. we've smashed most of the bandits. only vulture and his gang are left. they've fled and dug themselves in deep in this mountain forest, but we will wipe them out too, and soon.

chang (bitterly): that vulture ...

yang: old chang, vulture has devastated these parts. you two have hidden yourselves here in this forest, you must have been deeply wronged.

chang (sits down and passionately seizes the axe): ...

yang: go ahead, old chang, tell us about it.

chang (not wanting to mention the painful past): it's eight years now, why talk about it?
(throws down the axe.)

pao (bursts out): dad ! ...

chang (startled and then painfully): pao, how could you. ...

yang (with deep feeling): it's all right, child. the communist party and chairman mao will back us up. go ahead.

pao: i will, uncle, i will.
(sings "fan erh huang tao pan")
disaster struck one snowy night eight years ago,
(switches to "kuai san yen")
vulture killed grandma and carried off ma and dad;
uncle ta-shan in chiapi valley took me in,
dad escaped and came back,
but ma threw herself off a cliff and died.

oh, mother !
in the mountains we hid;
afraid i'd fall into those devils' hands,
dad dressed me as a boy and said i was mute.

(changes to "yuan pan")

we hunted in the mountains all day,
at night we thought of grandma and ma;

(changes to "to pan")

looking at the stars and the moon
we longed for the time
when the sun would shine over these mountains,
when i would be able to speak freely,
when i could dress like a girl again,
when we could collect our debt of blood;
if i only had wings i'd take my gun
and fly to the summit and kill all those wolves !

oh, dad ! (flings herself into chang's arms.)

yang (furious, sings "hsi pi yuan pan"):

young pao has accused the bandits of their crimes,
every word dipped in blood, every sound choked with tears.
they rouse me to the utmost rage;
the oppressed everywhere have blood accounts
to settle with their oppressors.
avenge the wrongs, wipe out the grievances,
an eye for an eye and blood for blood!

(switches to "liu shui")

destroy vulture, and the people will win liberation,
rise as masters and greet the sun in these deep mountains.
follow our liberator, the communist party,
and bring the land a new life,
like in our old home in shantung,
good days will be here forever.

chang (with emotion): old yang!

(chang sits down with yang. pao affectionately hands
yang a bowl of water, which he drains.)

chang: you've said what's in my heart, old yang.

but beating vulture won't be easy. his tiger mountain
stronghold is protected by nine groups of twenty-seven
forts. he can attack, he can defend, and he can slip
away. nobody can touch him.

yang: i see. they say it's very hard to get to the top of
the mountain.

chang: exactly ! there's only one path up front, and
it's very steep. besides, it's very carefully guarded.
how can anyone get up there?

yang: then how did you manage to get away that time?

chang: there's a dangerous trail down the back of the mountain
with steep cliffs and crags. no one dares to use that trail,
so it's not guarded. eight years ago, that's where i came
down. if i hadn't been lucky enough to fall on a branch,

i'd have been dashed to pieces.

yang: you've given us some very useful information. as long
as we all pull together, there's no mountain top we can't
conquer.

chang: right. we're all looking forward to that day.

(laughs) you mustn't blame me for taking you for a stranger.
a man and a woman were here a while ago. the man was for
sure a bandit, but he said he was from the pla.

pao: dad saw him eight years ago on tiger mountain. he's called
howling wolf.

yang: howling wolf, eh? what else did he talk about?

chang: he called the woman sister-in-law and said he was
the sworn brother ... of luan ping.

yang (bursts out): luan ping? (leaves his seat.)

chang (stands up): the woman must be luan ping's wife.

howling wolf had a big row with her over some map or other.

pao: a contacts map.

chang: that's right.

yang: contacts map?

(chung chih-cheng enters and goes into the cabin.)

chung: platoon leader, old shen and lu are back.

(shen and lu enter. they go into the cabin.)

shen: old yang, in the woods northeast of here we found the
body of a woman with a bloodstained glove lying beside her.
(gives glove to yang.)

lu: there was a strong blizzard and the snow had already
covered any footprints. we couldn't tell where
the murderer had gone.

yang: have you seen this glove before, old chang?

chang (examines glove): yes. it belongs to howling wolf.

yang (coming to a conclusion): he must have killed her and
snatched the contacts map. this is a complicated business,
comrades, and that luan ping we caught is mixed up with
the case. lu hung-yeh!

lu: here.

yang: we are going after the murderer. you report back to
the chief of staff and tell him i suggest we interrogate luan
ping and dig out the story of the contacts map.

lu: right. (goes out at a run.)

yang: this is urgent, old chang, we've no time to chat now.
here's a bit of food for you and pao.

(unties his ration bag and hands it to chang. shen unties his
and gives it to pao.)

chang: old yang !

shen: please take it.

pao (moved): uncles. ...

yang: goodbye for now. (turns to go.)

chang: where are you going, old yang?

yang: after howling wolf.

chang: you can't get him. he's sure to be heading for tiger

mountain. that trail has always been hard to follow,
 and in this snowstorm a stranger could never find it. come on,
 pao and i will show you the way.
 yang (touched, goes out) thank you, old chang.
 chang: let's go.
 (call strike dramatic pose.)

curtain

scene four
 drawing up a plan

early morning. black dragon valley where the detachment has
 spent the night. inside the command post, a charcoal fire
 burns bright. outside, the wind roars and heavy snow falls.
 in the background, majestic mountains and deep forests.

shao (with composure sings "erh huang tao pan"):
 icy wind howls through the woods,
 tossing branches shake the deep gully.
 (a gust blows the door open. he goes to door and looks out.)
 (sings, changing to "hui lung")
 snowflakes dance in a hazy mist,
 the mountains are mantled in silver;
 what a magnificent scene of the north!
 (he closes the door, changes to "erh huang man pan")
 beautiful our land, majestic and grand,
 how can we let ravening beasts again lay it waste?
 (changes to "yuan pan")
 the party central committee points the way,
 revolutionary flames cannot be quenched.
 bearing the hopes of the people, the pla fight north and south
 to plant the red flag all over our country.
 let the yankees and chiang gang up,
 talking sham peace while making attacks,
 fighting openly and sniping in the dark.
 let them resort to a hundred tricks,
 with justice on our side, class hatred in our hearts,
 one against ten, we'll sweep away all the reactionaries.

(yang enters.)
 yang: reporting!
 shao (recognizes his voice): old yang!
 (yang goes into room. shao rushes to greet him.)
 shao: you must have caught the murderer, eh?
 yang: we got him. we found this letter and this contacts
 map concealed in his clothes. (hands them over.)
 shao: well done!
 yang: the trails in these parts are hard to find. we must thank
 hunter chang who acted as our guide. the murderer at first

tried to pass himself off as one of our pla scouts, but
 the hunter exposed him. he admitted that he's a tiger
 mountain man named li chung-hao, better known as howling wolf.
 shao: good. that hunter has been a great help. long ago
 chairman mao told us: "the revolutionary war is a war of
 the masses; it can be waged only by mobilizing the masses
 and relying on them." without the masses we can't move a step
 yang: how true!
 hunter chang also told us of two
 trails up the mountain. i've sketched them, according
 to his description. (hands shao a sketch map.) howling
 wolf admits to the open trail going up the face of the
 mountain. he says there are no fortifications along it
 and that it's easy to climb.
 shao: hm. obviously a lie. have you made arrangements for
 the hunter and his daughter?
 yang: we left them our grain rations. they're planning to
 move to chiapi valley.
 shao: good. (looks at map and letter.) look, old yang, Luan
 ping never said anything about this contacts map.
 yang: no, he didn't. howling wolf says it shows the location
 of three hundred secret contact places of the breast mountain
 gang here in the northeast. it's something important.
 shao: Luan ping has been brought here. we'll question him
 right away and find out all about the contacts map.
 yang: i'll get Luan ping. (turns to go.)
 shao: he's your old adversary, old yang. you'd better do
 the questioning.
 yang: right.
 (shao goes into inner room.)
 yang (to the guard at the door): young chang.
 young chang: here.
 yang: bring Luan ping.
 young chang: right.
 (young kuo brings Luan ping into the room. Luan ping sees
 yang and wants to come over to greet him. yang waves him
 to a chair. Luan sits down.)
 yang: Luan ping.
 Luan: yes, sir.
 yang: how are you getting on with your confession?
 Luan: i want to come clean. i'm owning up to everything.
 yang: there's one thing you haven't mentioned yet.
 Luan: officer, i don't have a thing in the world except the
 clothes on my back.
 yang (suddenly): what about that map?
 Luan: map?
 yang: the contacts map.
 Luan (startled): oh!
 (pretending to be calm.)
 ah, let me think. ... (strikes a thoughtful pose.) ah, yes,
 yes, i remember now. they say horse cudgel hsu had a
 map of secret contacts.
 yang: they say?

Luan: don't misunderstand me, officer. horse cudgel hsu considered that map precious. i never had a chance to set eyes on it.

yang: luan ping, you should understand our policy.

Luan: i do, i do. leniency to those who confess; severity to those who resist.

yang: i'm asking you -- what was your job on breast mountain?

Luan: you know that. i was a liaison adjutant.

yang: a liaison adjutant who says he knows nothing about liaison stations and has never seen anything of the contacts map. huh! it's plain you don't want to tell the truth.

(Luan pretends to be helpless.)

yang (with sudden fury): take him out!

Kuo: get out!

Luan (leaning against the chair, panic-stricken): no, no. i ... (slaps his own face) i deserve to die for trying to fool you, officer. i'll tell you the truth now. there is a map showing horse cudgel hsu's secret contacts all over the northeast, three hundred in all. that map is now in my wife's hands. let me out, and i'll find her and get the map and give it to you. i want to make amends and earn lenient treatment. (bows.)

yang: besides those three hundred places, where else did you have contacts?

Luan: where else? tiger mountain. but for a long time vulture has been trying to get sole control of northern manchuria for himself. he and horse cudgel hsu were only friends on the surface, so i had very few dealings with him. last year vulture invited me to a hundred chickens feast to celebrate his birthday, but i didn't go.

yang (listens with attention to his confession): i want a detailed report on all your contact points. you'd better come clean.

Luan: yes, yes.

yang: take him away.

Kuo: now get out. (takes Luan out.)
(shao comes out from other room.)

yang: he's a crafty one.

shao (humorously): the craftiest fox can't escape the skilled hunter. anyhow, his story about the contacts map is the same as howling wolf's.

yang: and he also let slip a mention of the hundred chickens feast.

shao: umm.

yang: and in that letter, vulture invites him to the feast again this year. there's something queer here.

shao: i agree.

(shen teh-hua enters.)

shen: reporting!

shao: come in.

(shen goes into room.)

shen: chief of staff, the comrades are eager to attack tiger mountain. they have written requests for battle assignments.

shao: i suppose you took the lead?

shen: i ...

shao (laughs and sits down by the fire): i can understand how the comrades feel. our brother units have sealed off all the key roads and ferry points in the mutanchiang area. vulture can't get away. but he's a wily bird, hard to deal with. haven't we discussed it several times? if we sent a large force after him, it would be like trying to hit a flea with your fist. that's no good. since the task is urgent, we haven't the time to lure the bandits down the mountain and destroy them one by one. we're fighting an unusual battle. we must remember what chairman mao tells us -- strategically we should despise our enemy, but tactically we should take him seriously. comrade teh-hua, please call another democratic meeting of all comrades to talk it over in the light of the latest developments.

shen: right. (exit.)

(yang starts to leave.)

shao: old yang, what's your idea?

yang: i want to question howling wolf again and find out more about that hundred chickens feast.

shao: go ahead. i'll be waiting to hear your proposal.

yang: right. (exit.)

shao (sings "hsi pi kuai san yen"):
in the past few days we've learned much about the enemy, we've analysed carefully and pondered over our plan; tiger mountain has a system of bunkers and tunnels, so the best course is to take it by strategy. select a capable comrade to disguise as a bandit, then penetrate into the enemy's lair, and strike from without and within; who should we choose for this important job? --

(thinks.)

(changes to "yuan pan")

yang tzu-jung has all the qualifications to shoulder this load,

born of a hired-hand peasant family, with sterling qualities,

from childhood he struggled on the brink of death; burning with hatred, he found his salvation in the communist party and took the revolutionary road.

(switches to "erh liu")

he joined the army and vowed to uproot exploitation, battle-seasoned, he's distinguished himself in many hard fought campaigns.

by wits, he blew up many an enemy fort, he's entered enemy territory, killed traitors and rescued many comrades and villagers.

he's fought many a battle with the bandits here in the forest, caught luan ping and hu piao and took howling wolf as well.

if i send him on this dangerous mission alone,
i'm confident, with his heart red as fire,
a will strong as steel,
he'll surely defeat vulture.

(shen teh-hua enters. goes into the room.)

shen: chief of staff.

shao: how did your meeting go, comrade teh-hua?

shen: we analysed the situation and decided that taking it by
strategy is the only answer. we shouldn't try a direct
attack. the best way would be to get a comrade into the
enemy stronghold. ...

shao: you're right. come, let's talk it over.

(yang enters and goes into the room. shao scrutinizes
him. shen looks on in surprise.)

yang: hu piao is here to present the map. (waves his hand in
a bandit greeting.)

shao: hu piao? old yang, ha, ha, ha!

shen: old yang!

yang: ha, ha, ha! (sits down.)

shao: tell us quick, what's your idea?

yang: it seems to me, chief of staff, the best way to take
tiger mountain is by strategy.

shao: precisely.

yang: the enemy's hundred chickens feast is a good opportunity.

shao: have we found out all about it?

yang: yes. vulture celebrates his birthday on the last day
of the last month of the lunar year. he gives himself
a feast of chickens extorted from a hundred different families.
they call it the hundred chickens feast. (rises.) i suggest
we send a comrade up there in disguise to find out how
the tunnels and bunkers are laid out. then, during the
hundred chickens feast, get all the bandits in the main
hall and make them drunk. ...

shao: and the detachment springs an attack and takes it
before they know what's happening!

yang: right. chief of staff, let me have this job.

shen: the comrades also propose old yang for the job.

shao: good. comrade teh-hua (giving him the contacts map),
make a copy of this. also notify the others there will
be a party branch committee meeting later on.

shen: right. (exit.)

shao: old yang, you're going to disguise as a bandit and make
your way into the enemy's stronghold. are you sure you
can do it?

yang: there're three things in my favour.

shao: the first?

yang: horse cudgel hsu and his breast mountain gang have just been
defeated. i can go there as his cavalry adjutant hu piao,
who is in our hands. vulture has never seen him. i've
learned the bandits' secret language and won't be found out.

shao: and the second?

yang: if i present vulture with the contacts map as a gift
at our first meeting, i'll win his trust.

shao: fine!

yang: the third condition is the most important, ...

shao: the loyal heart of a pla soldier dedicated to the
party and chairman mao.

yang (from the heart): you understand me completely, chief
of staff.

shao (with deep feeling): old yang, this is no ordinary task.

yang: chief of staff! (sings "hsi pi yuan pan")

a communist always follows the party's call,
he takes the heaviest burden on himself;
he's set on smashing the chains of a thousand years
to open a freshet of endless happiness for the people.

(switches to "erh liu")

well i know there's danger ahead,
but i'm all the more set on driving forward;
no matter how thickly troubled clouds may gather,
revolutionary wisdom is bound to win.

(changes to "kuai pan")

determined as the foolish old man who removed the mountains,
i shall break through every obstacle;
the flames that blaze in my red heart
shall forge a sharp blade to kill the foe.

shao: good. you can take horse cudgel hsu's black-maned steed
and ride northeast along the trail hunter chang has pointed
out. ...

yang: and wind my way up the mountain.

shao: the detachment will go to chiapi valley, arouse the
masses and prepare for battle.
we'll wait for word from you.

yang: i'll leave a message for you in the pine grove southwest
of tiger mountain. the tree will be marked in the
agreed manner.

shao: i'll send shen teh-hua on the twenty-sixth to pick it up.

yang: i guarantee it will be there on time.

shao: good. the detachment will set out as soon as we've
heard from you. we'll strike from within and without and
destroy vulture and his gang right on tiger mountain!

yang: this is a well-thought-out plan, chief of staff. it's decided
then.

shao (grips yang's arms, very stirred. after a pause): be bold
and prudent, comrade tzu-jung.

(sings "hsi pi kuai pan")

i'm confident you can fulfil this crucial mission.
much depends on this all-important task;
we'll call a party committee meeting to approve the plan,
with our collective wisdom we'll defeat the enemy.
(yang and shao clasp hands tightly in dramatic pose.)

scene five
up the mountain

a few days later. in the foothills of tiger mountain.
a deep snowy forest. tall, straight pines reach to the sky.
sunshine filters down through the trees.

yang (sings offstage vigorously "erh huang tao pan"):
i press through the snowy forest, spirit soaring !
(yang, in disguise, enters at a gallop. he executes dances
depicting his journey through the dense forest, leaping
across a stream, mounting a ridge, dashing down a
steep slope, galloping across a distance and then looking
all around.)

(sings "hui lung")
taking in the mountains around me, i give the reins
to my high aspirations.
(switches to "man yuan pan")
let the red flag fly all over the world,
be there seas of fire and forests of knives, i'll charge
ahead.

how i wish i could order the snow to melt,
(changes to "san pan")
and usher in spring to change the world of men.
(switches to "hsi pi kuai pan")
the party gives me wisdom and courage,
risks and hardship are as naught;
to wipe out the bandits i now dress like a bandit,
and pierce their stronghold like a dagger.
i'll bury vulture in these hills, i swear,
shake the heights with my will.
with my courage the valleys fill,
at the hundred chickens feast my comrades and i
will make a shambles of the bandits' lair.

(a tiger roars in the distance. the horse is startled,
stumbles. yang reins in the horse, makes it rear,
turns and halts it. leaps from the horse. the tiger's
roar draws nearer. yang quickly leads his horse off.
re-enters, throws off his overcoat, pulls out pistol
and fires at tiger. the tiger falls dead, howling.
other shots are heard in the distance.)

yang (immediately alerted): shooting ! the bandits
must be coming down the mountain. (calmly) i've just killed
one beast, and now a whole pack comes. i'll see that
you go the same way. (bandit chief of staff shouts offstage:
"halt !" he enters with a gang of bandits.
yang puts on his overcoat, walks forward coolly and
waves his hand in a bandit greeting.)
bandit chief of staff: what road do mushrooms travel?
what's the price? /note/

(yang, head high, does not reply.)
bandit a (seeing the tiger yang has killed, cries in fear):
a tiger, tiger !
(the other bandits hastily draw back.)
yang (laughs): brave, aren't you? that tiger is dead.
bandit a (looks at the beast): a beautiful shot. right
through the head.

bandit chief of staff: did you kill it?
yang: it got in the way of my bullet.
bandit chief of staff: quite a man. which mountain are
you from? what are you doing here?
yang (taking the initiative): i suppose you fellows are from
tiger mountain?
bandit chief of staff: obviously. (realizes he has made a
slip.) where are you from?
yang: that's not for you to ask. i want to see brigadier
tsui in person. i've important business with him.
bandit chief of staff: how is it you don't know the rules of the
mountains? you're not a "liutzu". you're a "kungtzu". /note/
yang: if i were a "kungtzu", would i dare come barging into
tiger mountain?
bandit chief of staff (threateningly): "moha? moha?" /note/
(yang, his mind made up, does not reply.)

the bandits: speak up.
yang (haughtily): i'm not saying anything till i see brigadier
tsui.
bandit chief of staff (helplessly): all right then, let's
go. where's your gun?
yang: don't be scared. (tosses his pistol to bandit a.
points at the tiger and his horse.)
bandit chief of staff: carry the tiger. lead the horse.
the bandits: yes !
(yang strikes dramatic pose. then resolutely, calmly
and courageously he strides ahead.)

curtain

note: bandits' secret language.

scene six
into the bandits' lair

immediately after the previous scene. the interior of tiger
hall, a gloomy cave lit by several lamps.

(vulture sits in a chair, his lieutenants -- the "eight
terribles" -- stand on either side in a disorderly fashion.
other bandits stand at the left, near the back of the hall.
vulture signals to bandit chief of staff to summon the
newcomer.)

bandit chief of staff: chief's orders. bring "Liutzu" in.

bandits: bring "Liutzu" in!

(yang enters, head high.)

yang (sings "hsi pi kuai pan"):

though i've come alone to the tiger's den,
millions of class brothers are by my side;
let vulture spew flames ten thousand leagues high,
for the people i'll fearlessly take this monster on.

(advances and waves his hand in a bandit greeting.)

vulture (suddenly): the god of heaven shields the earthly
tiger. /note/

yang: precious pagoda represses the river sprite. /note/

terribles: "moha? moha?"

yang: speak exactly at the stroke of noon. no one has a home. /note/

vulture: why is your face so red? /note/

yang: my spirits are flourishing. /note/

vulture: why so yellow again? /note/

(the bandits press closer, sword and gun in hand.)

yang (calmly): i smeared it with wax to ward off the cold. /note/

(vulture shoots out an oil lamp with his automatic.

yang takes a pistol from bandit chief of staff. with
one shot he knocks out two oil lamps. the astonished bandits
whisper among themselves and are stopped by the terribles.)

vulture: according to you, you're one of brigadier
hsu's men?

yang: i am his cavalry adjutant, hu piao.

vulture: hu piao? since you are brigadier hsu's man,

let me ask you -- when did you join his ranks?

yang: when he was chief of police.

vulture: i hear he has a few possessions he prizes the most.

yang: there are two.

vulture: what are they?

yang: a fast horse and a sharp sword.

vulture: what does his horse look like?

yang: it has a curly coat and a black mane.

vulture: what kind of sword has he?

yang: a japanese officer's sabre.

vulture: who gave it to him?

yang: the japanese imperial army.

vulture: where was it presented?

yang: at wuholou in the city of mutanchiang.

vulture (pauses): if you really are brigadier hsu's cavalry
adjutant, why did i see only adjutant luan ping and not
you at the last meeting called by commissioner hou?

yang: i didn't rate very high with brigadier hsu.
how could i compare with someone like luan ping? he was
the one to go to all the important functions.

vulture: why have you come to tiger mountain?

yang: i want to join you, brigadier, and rise in the world.
this is the first time i've crossed your threshold,

but none of you big brothers seem to trust me. aren't
you being a bit ungallant?

vulture (laughs): we have to think of our stronghold's
safety.

terribles: ha, ha, ha, ha !

vulture: when did the breast mountain stronghold fall,
hu piao?

yang: the third day of the twelfth lunar month.

vulture: what took you so long to get here?

yang: it hasn't been easy for me to get here, brigadier.

after breast mountain was taken, i was hiding out in white
pines dale for a while.

vulture: white pines dale?

yang: in the home of luan ping's uncle.

vulture: did you see luan ping?

yang: yes.

vulture: and howling wolf?

yang: howling wolf?

vulture: uh.

yang: i don't know about him.

vulture: hu piao, you are here but why isn't luan ping with
you?

yang: luan ping?

vulture: that's right.

yang: ah, say no more about him.

vulture: what's that?

yang (looks meaningfully at other bandits): well...

(vulture signals and all the bandits except the terribles
leave.)

vulture: hu piao, what's the matter with luan ping?

yang: it's a long story.

(sings "hsi pi hsiao tao pan")

just talking about him enrages me...

vulture: what did he do?

yang (changes to "hsi pi yuan pan"):

he cares nothing for the code of our brotherhood.

vulture: how did he go back on it?

yang (sings):

we were lucky to get away when breast mountain fell,
i urged him to come with me and join your brigade on
tiger mountain.

(the terribles look at each other with satisfaction.)

vulture: is he coming?

yang (sings):

every man is free to make his own choice,
but he shouldn't have --

he shouldn't have attacked friends so viciously.

vulture: what did he say?

yang: he said. ...

vulture: what?

yang: well. ...

vulture (impatiently): out with it, old hu, be quick.
yang: he said -- (sings)
vulture has to take commissioner hou's ...
vulture: what?
yang (sings):
orders.
vulture (leaps to his feet in anger): ah !
what? i take orders from him !
terribles: rubbish, who does he think he is?
yang: that wasn't all he said.
terribles: what else?
yang (sings):
the eight terribles are a pack of worthless rats.
terribles (furious and shouting): what !
that son of a bitch.
yang (sings, switching to "hsi pi liu shui"):
he said he's a phoenix who wants a high branch to perch on,
that commissioner hou is a big tree and his roots are deep.
terribles: to hell with him.
yang (sings):
as we were speaking he produced a map --
vulture: map?
yang (sings):
a whole roll.
(vulture dances around yang covetously.)
yang (switches to "hsi pi yao pan" as he continues singing):
he was intending to take it to commissioner hou to
earn a promotion.
vulture: was it the contacts map?
yang: yes, the secret contacts map.
vulture (worried): then he's given it to commissioner hou?
yang: don't be impatient. (continues singing with a satirical
smile on his face)
pleased with himself, he grinned all over.
vulture: so exclamation
yang (sings):
and from the inside room brought out
(switches to "hsi pi liu shui")
a jar of wine.
i filled him eight bowls, one after the other,
luan ping got blind drunk.
terribles: ha, ha... he was pickled.
yang: so while he was dead drunk, i took the chance to...
vulture: yes?
yang: i...
vulture: killed the dog?
yang: i couldn't do that. we've been pals for years.
vulture: oh, oh... (changing his tone.) of course, of
course. friendship is important ! friendship
is important ! go on, old hu, go on.

yang: he had his plans, but i had my own ideas.
vulture: what did you do?
yang: i. ...
vulture: yes?
yang (sings):
i changed tunics with him while he was drunk,
then jumped on the black-maned horse, and through
the snowstorm galloped directly to tiger mountain.
vulture: you mean you've got the map, old hu?
yang (laughs lightly, changing to "hsi pi kuai pan", sings):
look, brigadier tsui,
this map here i present to you. (holds up the map.)
(standing high and looking down at the bandits, yang holds
out the map as vulture respectfully flips the dust from
his sleeves and takes it. he examines it avidly while the
terribles crowd around.)
vulture (sings "hsi pi san pan"):
the map i've thought of day and night,
today is in my hands.
(in wild joy) ha ! ha ! ha !
ha !
terribles: you're a marvel, old hu, quite a man.
yang (meaningfully): with the map in our possession, brigadier,
the mutanchiang area is ours.
vulture: right. well said. when the kuomintang army arrives,
i'll be a commanding general. and i'll make the rest of
you brigadiers and division commanders.
terribles: we rely on your beneficence, chief.
(laugh wildly.)
(yang laughs satirically.)
vulture: for what you've done for tiger mountain, old hu,
i proclaim you old ninth.
yang: thank you, chief.
vulture: we belong to the kuomintang army, you should have
a proper rank. i appoint you full colonel and deputy
regimental commander in the fifth peace preservation
brigade of the eastern heilungkiang region.
yang (going up the steps): thank you, chief, for your promotion.
(to terribles) i shall look to you brothers for help.
terribles: of course, of course.
bandit chief of staff: bring wine !
terribles: hey, bring wine !
(bandits enter with wine for all.)
bandit chief of staff: drink, everyone. drink to congratulate
old ninth.
terribles: congratulations, old ninth.
vulture: for delivering the contacts map and winning his spurs.
yang (sings with vigour "hsi pi kuai erh liu"):
to their congratulatory toast, i will drink my fill,

i shall not rest until my task is completed,
 the day is yet to come for me to show my skill,
 to write history i'll willingly shed my blood.
 (with a triumphant smile, he drains his bowl.)
 yang (vigorously): ha! ha! ha! ha!

curtain

note: bandits' secret language.

scene seven
 arousing the masses

chiapi valley. home of li yung-chi, interior and exterior
 view. noon. a snowstorm is raging.

mother li (sings "erh huang yao pan"):
 i'm ill and unwell, our grain is gone,
 i call my son, but nobody answers.
 oh the hatred of us poor, this debt of blood,
 when will it ever be redeemed?
 (chang ta-shan enters.)

ta-shan: aunt li.

mother li: it's ta-shan!

(ta-shan goes into the house.)

ta-shan: are you feeling any better today, aunt?

mother li: i was dizzier than ever when i got up this morning.

ta-shan: aunt, here are some potato roots for you. (hands them over.)

mother li (stopping him): oh, ta-shan, you shouldn't ...

ta-shan: aunt, yung-chi is away but you have us neighbours.

(ta-shan sets water on the stove to boil.

mother li takes potato roots into the inner room.

yung-chi, his chin stubbly and clothes torn,
 pushes open the door and goes into house.)

ta-shan (surprised): yung-chi!

yung-chi: ta-shan!

(mother li comes out from inner room.)

yung-chi: ma!

mother li: yung-chi! (sings "erh huang san pan")

can i be dreaming that you've returned?

it pains me to see you so battered and bruised;

how did you escape

(switches to "erh huang erh liu")
 from the tiger's den?

yung-chi (sings):

i leapt from a cliff at the back of the mountain and got
 away.

mother li (sings):

i'm overjoyed to see you but i grieve
 for my daughter-in-law and grandson.

yung-chi (sings "erh huang tao pan"):

so many crimes to avenge, so much hatred to pour out,
 every incident engraved upon my heart,
 the fury in my breast bursts into flame,
 some day i'll knife our foe to death.

(voices offstage cry: "soldiers are entering the village
 exclamation" pla fighters shouting: "don't go away,
 neighbours, we are your own people!")

ta-shan: another raid by vulture?

yung-chi: are they after me?

ta-shan: hide, quick, i'll go and look.

(pulls out a dagger and exit.)

mother li: yung-chi, you'd better hide yourself, son, do.

yung-chi: hide? where can i hide, mother? i'd rather fight it
 out. it's them or me now. i break even if i kill one of
 them, and two better still.

mother li: yung-chi, you ...

(chung chih-cheng and lu hung-yeh enter.)

lu (knocks on the door): anybody home?

yung-chi: yes. we're not all dead yet.

lu: neighbours!

chung: aunt!

(yung-chi wrenches the door open. chung and lu goes into
 house. chung closes the door behind him. mother li is
 alarmed. she moves closer to yung-chi protectingly.)

lu: don't be afraid, aunt. we're ...

yung-chi: come to the point.

lu (to yung-chi): neighbours, we're the chinese people's
 liberation army.

yung-chi (looks them over): this "army" and that "army", i've
 seen plenty. who knows what you really are!
 speak out, whatever you want. if it's money, we haven't
 got any. if it's grain, your gang has already robbed us
 clean. if it's our lives...

mother li: yung-chi!

chung: neighbours, we are worker and peasant soldiers.

we protect the people.

yung-chi: say what you want.

(mother li dizzy.)

yung-chi: ma!

lu (to chung): aunt's not well. we'll get our medic to come.

chung: right.

yung-chi: who are you trying to fool! (supports
 his mother into inner room.)

(chung signals to lu. they go out together, closing the door.)

(shao and young kuo enter.)

chung: chief of staff!

shao: how are things going?

lu: an old woman inside is sick.
shao: send for our medic. tell her to bring some grain.
lu: right. (exit.)
chung: it's really tough to do mass work here.
shao: the villagers here don't understand us. they've been fooled by the bandits before. don't you remember -- howling wolf tried to pass himself off as one of our scouts?
chung: i know that.
shao: if we don't arouse the masses, young chung, we won't be able to get a firm foothold and wipe out vulture. on the other hand, unless we destroy the bandits, the masses won't be really aroused.
chung (smiles): i realize that.
shao: go and tell our men, we must be concerned about the welfare of the masses. we must explain our party's policy patiently. we must carry out to the letter the three main rules of discipline and eight points for attention. /note/ we've got to get things moving by convincing the people through our actions.
chung: right. (turns to leave.)
shao: by the way, find out if hunter chang has arrived.
chung: right. (exit.)
(medical orderly enters.)
medical orderly: chief of staff! (hands him a sack of grain.) where's the patient?
shao (points to house): there.
medical orderly (knocks at door): hey, neighbour.
shao: our medic is here, neighbour. open the door.
(yung-chi rushes into outer room, a dagger in his hand. his mother follows, trying to stop him.)
mother li: yung-chi, you mustn't. ...
yung-chi: what do i fear? i can take them on with this.
(stabs dagger into table.)
mother li (very upset): yung-chi, i beg you.
(faints.)
yung-chi (supporting her hastily): ma ! ma !
(shao forces open the door. goes in with medical orderly and kuo. protecting his mother, yung-chi glares at shao.)
shao: give her first aid, quick !
medical orderly: right !
(shao slips off his coat and wraps it around mother li.
medical orderly helps her into inner room, followed by kuo and yung-chi. shao pours some grain into pot and sets it to boil.)
(yung-chi comes out for some water. shao goes into inner room.)
yung-chi (discovering pot of gruel, deeply moved, pensively): the people's liberation army?
(sings "erh huang san yen")
these soldiers care for us people and cure our ailments; they're considerate, kind and helpful.
but soldiers and bandits were always of the same brood,

always oppressing us.
what's happened today is certainly very strange.
can the liberators we've longed for have really arrived?
mother li (offstage): water !
(yung-chi fills a bowl with gruel. kuo emerges and takes it in. shao comes out.)
shao: your mother has come to, neighbour. don't worry.
yung-chi: ...
shao: what's your name, neighbour?
yung-chi: li yung-chi.
shao: were you born in these parts?
yung-chi: no. my family used to live in shantung province. my father worked in tsinan but after the april 12 coup he was killed by chiang kai-shek in a strike...
shao (angered and in sympathy): oh ! ... (warmly)
but how did you people get here?
yung-chi: after father died, mother brought me here to try our luck.
shao: what do you do?
yung-chi: i'm a railway worker.
shao (extremely excited): fine ! so we're all one big family.
yung-chi (looks shao over carefully): whose troops are you anyhow? what are you doing here in these mountain forests?
shao (warmly): neighbour !
(sings "erh huang yuan pan")
we're worker and peasant soldiers, come to wipe out the reactionaries and change the world. we've fought for the revolution north and south for years, with the party and chairman mao leading the way, a red star on our army caps, two red flags of the revolution on our collars. where the red flag goes dark clouds are dispersed, liberated people overthrow the landlords, the people's army shares the people's hardships, we've come to sweep tiger mountain clean.
yung-chi (his feelings bursting out like spring thunder, sings "erh huang peng pan")
our eyes are nearly worn out looking for you day and night. who would have thought that here today in the mountains you'd come to fight the bandits and free the poor. -- here before us is our own army !
(with feeling, switching to "yuan pan")
our brothers ! i shouldn't have confounded right and wrong,
i shouldn't have taken friend for foe.
i'm ashamed beyond words.
(pushes down the dagger stabbed into the table.)
for thirty years i've been sweating like a slave. feeling the welts and scars,
i can hardly suppress my rage,

i struggle in a bottomless pit.
we all have misery and wrath to pour out,
we all hate the bandits to the core.
some said our days of suffering would go on for ever,
who would have believed an iron tree could blossom,
that we would live to see this day?
(changes to "to pan")
i'll follow the party for ever and drive out those beasts,
whatever the sacrifice and danger, be it fire or water.
what do piles of peril matter?
when tiger mountain is being swept clean,
i, yung-chi, will be in the front ranks.
(shao grasps yung-chi's hand. lu calls offstage: "chief of
staff ! enters.)
lu: these villagers have come to see you, chief of staff.
(villagers swarm in, together with some soldiers.
mother li comes out, supported by medical orderly.)
villager a: superior officer. ...
a soldier: grandpa, we don't use such terms, call him commander.
shao: call me "comrade."
chung: chief of staff, this is old chang.
shao (comes forward and shakes the hunter's hand): so you're
old chang. have you come from the forest?
chang: we couldn't stay up there in the forest.
we've moved in with pao's uncle ta-shan, here.
shao (pats pao on the shoulder): a fine girl.
yung-chi: old brother chang.
chang: ah, yung-chi, our liberators are here at last.
ta-shan: commander, we're all burning with one desire --
to attack tiger mountain.
shao: our pla is winning big victories at the front, neighbours.
the mutanchiang area has been liberated.
villagers: wonderful !
shao: vulture has no place to run to now.
ta-shan: we'll smash his den !
yung-chi: give us guns, commander.
villagers: yes, give us guns, please.
yung-chi: if we have guns, there isn't a man in chiapi
valley who couldn't bring down two or three of those bandits.
shao: you'll have your weapons. but none of you have warm
winter clothes and every family is short of grain. how
can you go after the bandits in the deep forests?
villagers: what can we do then?
shao: there are plenty of medicinal herbs in chiapi
valley and lots of timber. if we get the narrow-gauge
train running again, we can ship them out and buy clothing and
grain in return.
villagers: that's right.
shao: and you can organize a militia. we'll get the train
running again and you'll have food and clothing. when we fight

vulture, you'll be all the stronger.
yung-chi: when can we start repairing the railway?
shao: we can start right now. let's all work together.
villager a: it's hard work, commander.
chung: grandpa, we fighters are all from poor families.
when we have guns in our hands, we fight; when we pick up
tools, we work.
yung-chi (steps forward and grasps shao's hand): we really
are all one family, commander. (sings "erh huang
to pan")
we mountain folk mean what we say,
our words are straight, our hearts are true,
to seize a dragon we'll go with you --
villagers (join in chorus):
under the sea.
yung-chi (sings):
to catch a tiger --
villagers (in chorus):
we'll follow you up the heights.
yung-chi (sings):
with the thunders of spring the earth will shake !
then vulture --
villagers and soldiers (sing in chorus "erh huang san pan"):
your days are numbered !
(the army and civilians form a tableau of heroes, mighty
and splendid.)

curtain

note: the three main rules of discipline are: (1) obey orders
in all your actions; (2) do not take a single needle or piece
of thread from the masses; (3) turn in everything captured.

the eight points for attention are: (1) speak politely;
(2) pay fairly for what you buy; (3) return everything you
borrow; (4) pay for anything you damage; (5) do not hit or
swear at people; (6) do not damage crops; (7) do not take
liberties with women; (8) do not ill-treat captives.

scene eight
sending out information

dawn. a clearing on top of tiger mountain. crags and forts
are visible against distant peaks covered with snow. on
right is a road leading to the foot of the mountain.

vulture: is this where old ninth usually does his exercises?
bandit chief of staff: yes.
vulture: where else has he been?
bandit chief of staff: he's been around the forts on all
our five peaks.

vulture: what you even let him inspect our nine groups of twenty-seven forts?
bandit chief of staff: he's one of us, isn't he? why not show him how strong we are?
vulture: i don't like the look of things. there's a lot of activity down below, and howling wolf still hasn't returned. none of us ever set eyes on hu piao before. why did he show up at a time like this? we've got to be careful.
(bandit chief adjutant enters from right.)
bandit chief adjutant: everything's ready as you ordered, chief.
vulture: good. put him to the test, the way i told you last night.
bandit chief adjutant: yes, sir. (exit on right.)
(vulture and bandit chief of staff, seeing somebody approaching, exit quickly on left front.)
yang (offstage sings "erh huang tao pan"):
hacking through thorns and thistles,
i battle in the heart of the enemy. (centers.)
(changes to "hui lung")
when i look into the distance and think of my comrades-in-arms, the army and the people, awaiting the signal to attack these wolves, my spirits soar.
(changes to "erh huang man pan")
the party places great hopes in me, comrades at the party committee meeting offer weighty advice, their many exhortations give me strength, their flaming hearts warm my breast.
(changes to "kuai san yen")
i must never forget to be bold and prudent,
i must succeed through courage and wits.
the party's every word is victory's guarantee,
mao tsetung thought is eternally glorious.
(changes to "yuan pan")
tiger mountain is indeed heavily fortified with forts above and tunnels below.
the leadership's decision to use strategy is right, a direct attack would mean heavy losses.
after seven days here i know the disposition well, i have the secret report concealed on my person.
now at daybreak, pretending to take a stroll, i'll send it out...
(notices something.)
why have the guards suddenly been increased? something's up.
this message --
if i don't get this message out, i'll miss the opportunity and ruin our attack plan, and let the people and party down.

(changes to "to pan")
new year's eve is fast approaching.
i mustn't hesitate,
though the grass be knives and the trees swords,
i must push on,
down to the foot of the slope.
what though the mountain be tall?
to resist the bitter cold and melt ice and snow,
i have the morning sun in my heart.
(the sun rises, filling the sky with red clouds which tinge the sharp crags.)
(offstage voices: "hurry up." "i'm coming.")
(alert, yang removes his coat and pretends to do traditional exercises. two bandit guards walk by pretending to be on patrol. they hail him.)
bandit guards: good morning, sir.
yang: morning.
(bandit guards exit, yang ends his exercises. shots ring out.)
yang: shooting!
(shouts in the distance: "charge!" "kill!" nearer voices cry: "the communists are coming!" the shooting increases.)
yang: what? can the comrades be here? (thinks, comes to swift decision.) no, not at this time. they wouldn't come before the chief of staff gets my message.
(the shooting becomes more intensive and shouts draw nearer.)
yang: that shooting doesn't sound right either.
that's another test. well, i'll top their trick with one of my own and get this message off. (fires two shots in the air. calls towards the left.)
brothers!
(four bandits enter.)
yang: the communists are here. come on, let's fight!
(the bandits rush off. vulture and bandit chief of staff enter stealthily. bandit chief adjutant comes forward.)
vulture: just a minute, old ninth.
yang (shouts to bandits offstage): stay where you are.
bandit chief of staff (in same direction): stop shooting.
(bandits shout acknowledgement of order.)
yang (to vulture): what's the matter?
vulture: it's an exercise i ordered.
yang: if you hadn't stopped me, i'd have fired this clip and got a few of them.
(vulture laughs uproariously.)
yang: why didn't you tell me you were arranging this exercise, chief? you...
vulture: don't let it bother you, old ninth. i didn't tell anybody. if you don't believe me, ask him. (points at bandit chief adjutant.)
bandit chief adjutant (pretendedly): why, i thought the communists were coming myself.

yang (chuckles with implied meaning): i wish they would.
i'm just waiting for them.
vulture: you're doing well, old ninth. (laughs.)
(bandit captain, offstage: "get a move on !"
enters, escorting another bandit who falls to the ground.)
bandit captain: "liutzu" bumped into the wall outside, chief.
vulture: what !
bandit a (trembling): we went down, under orders. far off,
we saw the narrow-gauge train running again. but before
we got to chiapi valley, we ran into some communist soldiers.
vulture: chiapi valley, eh? (suspiciously) and you're the
only one who got away?
bandit a: yes.
bandit chief adjutant: nine out of ten you were captured
by the communists and they let you go.
bandit a: no, no.
vulture (draws his gun and points it at bandit a): you
bastard !
yang (intervenes): why get excited, chief? if he really
had been a prisoner of the communists he wouldn't dare
come back.
bandit chief of staff: that's right. everyone knows how the
chief hates any man who lets the communists capture him.
vulture: humph.
yang (to bandit a): get out of here. can't you see
you're making the chief angry?
bandit chief of staff (kicks bandit a): beat it.
bandit a (softly, as he goes out): honourable ninth is
a good man.
bandit chief of staff (to bandit captain): give the order --
tighten all defences.
bandit captain: yes, sir. (exit.)
vulture (dejectedly): eh !
bandit chief of staff: i'll send some men down on a raid,
chief. that will be something to celebrate at the
hundred chickens feast.
vulture: not a bad idea, but be very careful this time.
bandit chief of staff: right. (exit.)
yang: we've nothing to worry about, with the defences we've
got on tiger mountain. but we shouldn't just sit here and
wait for them to come after us.
vulture: what do you think we should do?
yang: we ought to practise charging --
vulture: um.
yang: and get our soldiers into top shape.
vulture: that's it.
yang: then, after the hundred chickens feast, we'll
roll down into chiapi valley.
vulture (grasps yang's hand): you're smart. take command,
old ninth. put the men through some charging drills.
yang: right.

(vulture laughs and goes out with bandit chief adjutant.)
yang (softly, contemptuously): that stupid ass !
(sings "hsi pi kuai erh liu"):
foolish and cunning, vulture has played another trick,
it gives me my chance down the mountain.
comrade teh-hua,
to fetch the message, we count on you,
when the time comes to rout the bandits
at the feast, victory songs we'll sing.
(throws open his coat in dramatic pose.)

curtain

scene nine
off to the attack

morning. the day before lunar new year's eve. the
scene is the clearing outside yung-chi's house. a couplet
written on red paper is pasted on the palisade gate.
the joy of emancipation is everywhere.

(as the curtain rises, the whistle of the narrow-gauge
train is heard.)
(smiling villagers, with sacks of grain on their backs,
watch as the train sets out again, then they go off.
a villager puts down the sack of grain he carries for
yung-chi's mother.)

mother li (sings "hsi pi liu shui"):
army and people are one family, hearts linked,
happiness fills our mountain village.
a good snow falls, everyone smiles;
dividing food and clothing, we celebrate liberation.
(shao enters.)

shao: aunt !
mother li: commander !
shao: have you got enough food and things for the new year?
mother li: plenty. who would have dreamed that chiapi valley
could have such a good new year? if you pla boys hadn't
come, i don't know what we'd have done.
shao: the best is yet to come.
mother li: we owe it all to the communist party and chairman mao.
(shao puts the sack of grain on his back, ready to carry
it in for yung-chi's mother. offstage, yung-chi is drilling
the militia.)
yung-chi (offstage): one, two, three, four !
militiamen (offstage): one, two, three, four !
mother li: those militiamen are full of pep. but the ones
who will have to stay behind to guard the village are
grumbling, especially pao. she just won't hear of it.
shao: ah, that girl...

(offstage, militiamen shout: "charge, charge !"
(shao and mother li go off, talking.)
(offstage, drilling militiamen cry again: "target straight
ahead. charge, charge, charge !")
(pao backs in, with her eyes still on the drilling militia.)
pao (sings "erh huang hsiao tao pan"):
listen to the lusty shouts over the drill ground
(changes to "hui lung")
where they are busy training,
full of fight to smash the enemy.
i'm so anxious to join them
that my heart's afire.
(changes to "yuan pan")
how i long for the day
when the bandits are killed and blood debts repaid.
with deep hatred, morning and evening
i sharpen my sword and oil my gun.
on the high cliff a blizzard may blow,
storm the tigers' den -- that i dare.
why then pick on me to guard the village?
(changes to "to pan")
i must see the chief of staff at once
and tell him again what's on my mind.
my resolve is to fight on the battlefield,
for i've pledged to kill them all.
(medical orderly enters.)
medical orderly: pao !
pao: sister, put in a word for me. let's go and see
our chief of staff.
(pao rushes medical orderly along. shao comes out from
yung-chi's house.)
shao: hey, what are you two talking about?
(yung-chi enters.)
pao: uncle, let me go.
shao: well, the militia has to protect the village, too.
pao: humph, i hate that vulture to the death, i've got to
kill him with my own hands. how can you keep me
here ! i must go.
shao: but you're too young, pao.
pao: what, me too young?
medical orderly: chief of staff, pao is class-conscious and
skis well. she's a good shot, and can help me look after
the wounded. do let her go.
yung-chi: commander, this girl has been through much bitterness
and is thirsting for revenge. let her come along with us.
shao: militia leader, you feel the same way, don't you?
yung-chi: let her go.
shao: so you are all of one mind. all right, then. it's settled.
pao: hurray ! (exit, leaping for joy, followed by
medical orderly.)

yung-chi: commander, the prisoners luan ping and howling
wolf have been taken away. it looks like we're about to attac
tiger mountain, eh?
shao: impatient, aren't you?
(yung-chi grins.)
shao: how long should it take us to reach there by the
dangerous back path of the mountain at the rate we ski now?
yung-chi: it's eighty li longer than the direct approach.
i think we can do it in a day and a night at most.
shao: good. see that the militia is fully prepared.
yung-chi: i'll see to that! (exit.)
(chung and lu enter.)
lu: chief of staff, why should we be marking time here?
the comrades can all ski as fast as required...
chung: and the militia has been organized.
lu: and we've been sent reinforcements...
chung: i think we ought to set out immediately. i'm sure we
can win.
shao: comrades, we should guard against impetuosity at critical
moments.
(calmly sings "hsi pi san pan"):
wait patiently for orders --
chung: right. (goes off with lu.)
shao (sings and changes to "hsi pi yuan pan"):
although i've urged patience
i can't keep calm myself.
the day to close in on the enemy is nearing.
but there's no sign of shen returning with the message.
if anything goes wrong...
(changes to "kuai pan")
i've another idea. we mustn't miss
our chance at the hundred chickens feast.
yung-chi says there's a dangerous
trail up the back of the mountain.
surprise and courage will carry us
charging into tiger hall.
(lo shouts and enters.)
lo: shen is back, chief of staff.
(shen enters.)
shao (hurries forward): comrade teh-hua.
shen (hands the message over, panting): i'm not late, am i?
shao (takes it): no, go and get some rest.
(exit shen supported by lo.)
shao (eagerly reads message): "... a steep trail up the
back of the mountain leads directly to tiger hall...
burning pine torches will be the signal..." (excitedly)
old yang ! you're a hero !
(young kuo shouts offstage: "chief of staff !"
he enters running, followed by ta-shan and yung-chi.)
young kuo: reporting, chief of staff. when the train reached

west branch river, we found the bridge wrecked. we got out to repair it and were attacked by bandits. we drove them off...

shao: what about those two prisoners?

young kuo: howling wolf was killed by a stray bullet.

shao: and luan ping?

young kuo: he escaped while we were chasing the bandits.

shao: escaped? (aside) if he heads for tiger mountain, that'll be dangerous for comrade yang tzu-jung, and it may ruin our plan.

(turns to young kuo and yung-chi) assemble the comrades, quick.

young kuo and yung-chi: right. (exit.)

(a rail is struck, the call to fall in.)

shao: comrade ta-shan, you and old chang take over the defence of the village.

ta-shan: right.

(soldiers, militia and villagers enter.)

shao: comrades! (sings "hsi pi san pan")

the situation has suddenly changed,
our task is pressing,
every second counts.
to arms, comrades,
let's fly forward.

shao: forward march!

(dark change.)

(a snowstorm. soldiers and militia with yung-chi as their guide set out quickly, braving wind and snow.)

(at the foot of a cliff, they remove their skis. one soldier starts climbing and slips; two others mount, carrying ropes. one of them slips and tries again. they lower the ropes when they reach the top. shao and his men grasp the ropes and follow.)

(when the soldiers descend a slope, some roll down, others leap. they press onward quickly and boldly.)

curtain

scene ten

converging on the hundred chickens feast

lunar new year's eve. tiger hall.

(the curtain rises amid shouting: "bring 'liutzu' in!")

(two bandits enter with luan ping.)

luan: chief.

vulture: luan ping!

luan: yes, sir.

vulture: adjutant luan!

luan: chief.

vulture: what brings you here?

luan: i've come -- to wish you a happy birthday. ho, ho...

vulture: where did you come from?

luan: i...

vulture: humph!

luan: i...

terribles: speak!

luan: i...

terribles: out with it!

luan: i... i've come from commissioner hou.

vulture (sneers): so you've been with commissioner hou.

luan: yes.

vulture: summon old ninth!

bandit: honourable ninth, you are wanted.

(yang enters, an officer of the day sash across his chest.)

yang: everything is ready for the feast, chief.

vulture: look who's here, old ninth.

yang (startled at the sight of luan ping but controls himself instantly. taking advantage of the fact that the enemy is essentially weak, he decides on the course of action to take): oh, brother luan. why have you come here? how are you getting along? what post did commissioner hou give you? i, hu piao, congratulate you on your promotion.

terribles (mockingly): what are you now -- regimental commander? (they laugh.)

(luan is bewildered.)

vulture: what post did commissioner hou give you?

luan (recognizes yang and smiles wickedly): hu piao, my eye! no... you're mistaken...

yang (sternly): i'm mistaken, or is it you who are mistaken?

i, hu piao, was friend enough and was playing the game.

not at all like you, luan ping. i advised you to join brigadier tsui, but you tried to drag me off to commissioner hou. you can't say i wasn't playing fair. (presses on.)

answer the chief. what business brings you here?

luan (turns away from yang): chief, listen to me...

yang: look here! today is the chief's fiftieth birthday. there's no time for your nonsense.

vulture: right. come to the point. i want to know why you've come.

luan: to join your forces, chief.

vulture: oh!

yang: then why did you go seeking an appointment from commissioner hou?

(luan is confused, stumbles.)

yang: why did the commissioner send you here? the truth,
now !
terribles: out with it and quick ! why have you
come?
luan: i'm not from commissioner hou.
bandit chief of staff: that's not what the bastard said a
moment ago. he certainly changes his tune fast.
quite a bird.
(the bandits laugh uproariously.)
luan: stop laughing ! you've been fooled. he is
not hu piao. he's a communist armyman !
(terribles draw their guns and point them at yang.)
yang (calmly): ha, ha, ha ! well, so i'm a communist
armyman, since you say so. now tell the chief and the big
brothers here more about this communist armyman.
vulture: that's right. you say he is not hu piao but a
communist armyman. how did you come to know him?
luan (stammers): he... he... he...
bandits: heh.
luan: he...
yang: all this fellow can do is stammer and contradict himself.
he's up to some trick, chief.
bandit chief of staff: i'll bet he was caught by the communists,
and then released.
luan: no... no...
yang: did the communists set you free? or did they send you
here?
terribles: speak !
luan: i...
bandit chief adjutant: the communists sent you, didn't
they?
terribles: speak. be quick !
(luan stares, tongue-tied.)
yang: chief, our defences on tiger mountain are absolutely
watertight, and the communists can't get in. but now
this fellow has come. there's something fishy about this.
luan (hastily): there isn't. i swear !
yang: luan ping ! (sings "hsi pi kuai pan")
capricious, sinister fellow,
your evasiveness surely conceals tricks.
to our fortress you came, leaving your tracks
in the snow for the communists to follow.
(he walks to the steps and calls.)
captain --
(bandit captain comes forward.)
bandit captain: here.
yang (sings):
double the guard and keep a close watch,
let no one off duty without my order.

vulture: right. without old ninth's order, no one is to
leave his post.
bandit captain: yes, sir. (exit.)
(terribles nod approvingly.)
vulture (comes down from his seat, grasps luan and throws
him to the ground): you treacherous dog. first you tried
to get old ninth to go with you to commissioner hou.
now you come here to divide us and want to bring the
communists in. this is too much.
luan: he's not hu piao, chief. he's really a communist
armyman.
yang: what a snake you are, luan ping ! (strides
down the steps.) you're trying to do me in by the chief's
hand. too bad i didn't bump you off when we drank at white
pines dale.
terribles: that's right.
yang: chief, i've never let myself be pushed around by little
men. for your sake, i've offended this mad dog, so he's
attacking me viciously. if you believe that i'm a communist
armyman, then finish me off at once. if you believe
that i'm hu piao, then permit me to leave this mountain.
it's either him or me; keep him or keep me. you decide
as you please, chief. (removes his sash and tosses it
onto the ground.)
(vulture dumbfounded.)
bandits: honourable ninth mustn't leave, he mustn't leave.
terribles: chief, old ninth mustn't leave. you mustn't
leave, old ninth.
bandit chief of staff (picks up the sash and hands it to
vulture): old ninth mustn't leave, chief.
bandits: honourable ninth mustn't leave.
vulture: don't be childish, old ninth. put it on, put
it on. i'll treat you right. (laughs.)
(bandit chief of staff takes the sash from vulture and
puts it on yang.)
bandit chief of staff: put it on.
luan (realizes the situation is going against him, pleads):
chief...
vulture (brushes him aside): humph ! (returns to
his seat.)
luan: chief ! (prostrates himself before yang.)
brother hu piao !
(yang ignores him.)
luan (slaps his own face): i... i'm trash, i'm worthless.
i ought to be hanged !
yang (shouts to the assembled bandits): the hour has come.
let everyone congratulate the chief on his birthday.
bandits: get ready, everybody. congratulate the chief on
his birthday.

bandit chief of staff: it's your fiftieth birthday today,
chief. you mustn't let this cur spoil everything.

bandit chief adjutant: it will be bad luck for tiger
mountain if you don't blot out this evil star.

bandits: yes. he must be killed, killed !

Luan: big brothers, brother hu piao, chief...

(Luan kneels down before vulture.)

vulture (laughs ominously): ha ! ha !

ha !

Luan: chief, spare me !

(vulture waves his hand.)

terribles: kill him !

Luan: chief, spare me !

bandit chief adjutant: take him away.

yang: i'll do it.

Luan: honourable ninth !

(yang seizes Luan, who is paralysed with fright.)

yang (sings "hsi pi kuai pan"):

you've robbed and killed for dozens of years,
your bloody hands have committed towering crimes.
to avenge the people, in the nation's name,
i sentence you to death.

(drags him out. shots are heard. yang re-enters.)

yang: everything is ready for the celebration. allow us to offer
our respects, chief.

vulture: you're officer of the day, old ninth. you take over.

yang: brothers !

terribles: here.

yang: light the lamps in the hall, burn pine torches outside.

let's offer our best wishes on the chief's birthday.

(bandit captain enters.)

bandit captain: yes, sir. it's time for the celebration.

(exit.)

terribles: best wishes to you, chief.

(terribles and other bandits bow to vulture.)

yang (jumps on a stump): brothers, let's eat and drink our
fill. get good and drunk.

bandits: right. we'll get good and drunk.

yang: please be seated at the table, chief.

vulture: after you, brothers.

yang: it's your fiftieth birthday, chief. you must be seated
first.

terribles: yes, yes. you must be seated first, chief.

vulture: all right. let's go. (beside himself with elation.)

ha ! ha ! ha !

(vulture and other bandits leave for adjoining cave room
and begin feasting. bandit captain enters.)

yang (steps down from stump): captain !

bandit captain: here.

yang: call in the brothers on guard and let them drink their fill.

bandit captain: yes, sir. (exit.)

(bandits can be heard playing rowdy drinking games
in adjoining cave room.)

(yang returns to the stump and looks around.)

yang (sings "hsi pi kuai erh liu"):

the mountain is a blaze of lights on new year's eve,

(walks down from stump.)

this is the signal to our troops.

the hundred chickens feast has started as planned,

the bandits are drunk and befuddled.

i hope my comrades will come quickly

and smash this den of stubborn enemies.

how time drags, when i'm impatient,

why haven't the comrades arrived yet?

i long to go out and have a look.

(controls himself. changes to "yao pan")

but i must keep calm at this critical moment and guard

this secret tunnel. (points at the spot below vulture's
armchair.)

(vulture, bandit chief of staff and others enter drunk,
staggering.)

vulture: why don't you join the feast, old ninth?

everyone wants to drink to your health.

yang: today's your fiftieth birthday. it's your health we
should be drinking to. fill the chief's bowl.

(everyone drinks.)

(machine-gun shots are heard. bandits throw down their
bowls. terrible b, wounded, enters.)

terrible b: the communists have sealed off the entrance to
tiger hall with machine guns.

vulture: let's get out, brothers. hurry !

bandits: charge ! charge !

(pla men, offstage, shout: "lay down your arms and you'll
be spared!")

vulture: into the tunnel with me, old ninth, quick.

(pushes over the armchair, but yang shoves him aside.)

yang: you're not getting away !

(pla men charge in shouting: "lay down your arms and you'll
be spared !")

vulture (to yang): what? you're...

yang: a member of the chinese people's liberation army !

vulture: ah !

(vulture draws his gun. yang knocks it out of his hand.

vulture runs off. bandits follow.)

shen: old yang !

yang: there's a secret tunnel here, comrades. rescue the villager
and catch vulture alive.

(runs after vulture.)

shen: charge, comrades !

(pla men follow.)

(shen fights with a terrible. bandit chief of staff enters, raises his pistol and fires at shen, who dodges. bullet hits the terrible and kills him.)

(lo rushes in after another terrible. they fight. pao pursues a bandit. they wrestle. she subdues him. she and lo lead prisoners off.)

(yung-chi, medical orderly, soldiers and militia, with villagers the bandits had been holding captive, walk across stage and go off.)

(bandit captain enters, running. yung-chi shoots him dead. another bandit runs in and is captured by yung-chi.)

(vulture enters, followed by two bandits, fleeing wildly. yang pursues them and shoots the two bandits dead.

he and vulture lock in struggle.)

(chung and soldiers chase on bandit chief adjutant and bandits. they fight.)

(yang grabs a gun and kills several bandits.)

(shao, shen, yung-chi, medical orderly, young kuo and militia enter. they capture vulture and all the bandits.)

(pao, raging, wants to stab vulture. medical orderly holds her back.)

shao (pumps yang's hand, very moved): old yang !

yang: chief of staff !

(shao introduces yung-chi to yang. the two warmly clasp hands. dramatic pose.)

final curtain

end item

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