

The Legend of Tuked Rini as recited by Balang Pelaba in November 1986, translated into English by Monica Janowski

The beginning of the story: a rice meal

One day, in the early morning, everybody began to wake up. The sun was rising. The smoke and steam had not yet risen above the leaf roof of the house. Aruring Manapu Boong had finished preparing the rice, getting up well before dawn to cook the 'soft rice' which they liked to eat, and pack it in leaves. She gazed at a ray of light shining through the window in the roof. She decided that it was time to call her husband to eat. So she stood up and wrapped her beautiful shimmering cloth around herself. She took her many-coloured bead cap and put it on her head. She walked to the door and leant on it to look into the *tawa'* gallery of the longhouse, where the men always sat. Tuked Rini was sitting there with his brothers and cousins. He looked as though he were alight, so great was his power and his beauty.

Aruring sang out this *sedarir*, drawing on her great power, her *lalud*:

Aaa...naee... nare na ramama....

Pirud okem-okem tah moyo aré'

*Olen smuladong upé' prangiduh iring
barahriong*

*Matar iring brut apui budong budong
odong lelangim moyoh*

*Sinih tenga' ikong dulun kalong kalong
arit tisu' dua remubong*

*Tse nuba' ipi' kuh tonge aré' nok plamet
todong nok plamet tisu' uih pading
agong*

Pérek awa' lengan kading kemburong

Odong lelangim moyoh

*Sinih tenga' ikong tenga' nok narit
libong libong narit nimat tisu' dua
remubong*

Aa...

*Pirud oko' oran te moyoh are' olem
smuladan upé' prangiduh iring barah
rékan*

*Matar iring brut apui radang radang
apui radang radang*

*Tongé tse nuba' ipi' tongen nok senaro'
kuh are' nok plamet nok plamet tisu' uih*

My dear siblings, you are sitting quietly
Relatives, you are sitting warming
yourselves by the embers of the fire

You are sitting on stools gazing into the
crackling flames of the fire

Come through the hinged door carved
in circles using both hands

Here is the rice stirred and mashed
with the strength of my shoulder and
my hand, wearing my big shell bracelet

Pressing down using all the strength of
my hip and my arm wearing my
beautiful big white shell bracelet

You are sitting there on stools

Come through the hinged door carved
in circles using two hands

Siblings, you are sitting back on your
feet quietly chatting by the hot dry
embers

Gazing into the roasting hot fire

Here is a leaf bundle of well-mixed rice
which I have stirred and mashed,
wearing my big shell bracelet

pading itan

You are sitting there on stools

Odong lelangim moyoh

Tenga' ikang tenga' nok narit kuh

léwang léwang luun léwang léwang nok

renasa' tisu' dua renagang

Upe' prangiduh iring barah rékan

The door carved in complex
intertwined patterns using two hands
is open

Matar iring berut apui radang-radang

apui radang-radang

Tongé tse nuba' ipi' tongen nok senaro'

kuh aré' plamet tenen plamet tisu'

kading itan

Odong lelangim moyoh

Tenga'ékang tenga' nok narit léwang

léwang narit tisu' dua remubong

You are sitting back on your feet,
warming yourselves by the hot dry
embers

Gazing into the roasting hot fire

Here is a leaf bundle of rice mixed
thoroughly with a bamboo spoon, with
my hand wearing a shell bracelet

You are sitting there on stools

The door carved in complex
intertwining spirals using both hands
is open

With her *sedarir*, Aruring invited Toked Rini and the others to eat. 'The sun is getting high,' she said. 'I've made two potfuls of rice. Let's eat.' Toked Rini heard his wife's voice and looked up to see a young woman standing at the door. She was so beautiful and so full of *lalud* that she looked as though she were half human and half a child of the god Derayeh up in the sky, thrown down to earth. Her face was as bright as the sun in the middle of the sky and he couldn't look at her face. She too was blinded by his beauty and *lalud*. Their two eyes pierced each other like the tips of bamboos, and they had to break off their gaze. The whole world went blurry and shimmery in front of their eyes.

'Let's go and eat' said Toked Rini, 'Although it's early, we should eat at least one leaf packet of rice each.' So all of his brothers and cousins followed him into the *dalim* part of the longhouse, the inside area where meals are cooked, to sit by the hearth to eat. Aruring went first, and he admired her hair, so long and lovely; it reached right down to the wide planks of the floor. All of the people in the longhouse went to eat their morning rice, right down to the ends of the house, until there was nobody left on the *tawa'*. Aruring opened Toked Rini's leaf rice packet for him. They had lots of meat to eat with their rice – smoked porcupine, monkey, and wild pig.

Father Baru' and Mother Baru' ate breakfast with Toked Rini and his siblings. Father Baru' liked to eat a lot – he used to tell the others that they would get weak bodies if they didn't eat enough. Mother Baru' started eating a piece of porcupine, but the tail pierced her tongue. She started coughing. Father Baru' teased her: 'Don't you know that you should eat porcupine tail first?' 'Why didn't

you tell me before I started eating?' she asked. Mother Baru' and Father Baru' ate all of their shares of rice and started on Toked Rini's share, as they were still hungry. Then Mother Baru's cloth came loose and fell on the floor. 'What's wrong with you, old woman?' asks her husband. 'Why is your waist-string tied so loosely?' 'The string is rotten!' says Mother Baru'. Father Baru farted. 'Can't you hear your own fart, you silly old man?' 'It's not me, it's the string around my waist making that noise', he said. He moved around, and the planks around him creaked. 'What's wrong with you? Why do you eat so much? Are you trying to take revenge on the rice?' asked Toked Lang Ingat, another of Toked Rini's followers, who was also eating with them. Father Baru' didn't answer. He forced his way through the door to the *tawa'*, and the door splintered.

Ba'o Ké, Ke Bead, called her husband Kukud Tela'o, Deer Leg, to eat. 'I thought you were never going to call!' said he. She went to relieve herself at the doorway; and Kukud Tela'o came through the door and slipped on the wet patch, falling over her. He fell onto her back and his leg slipped down between her legs. '*Pui atan atan!*' she swore. 'I call you to eat and you step on my back and hurt me instead! Why should I bother feeding you?' Kukud Tela'o felt bad and started crying. 'If you won't feed me, I'll jump out the window onto the ground. My food is over there, anyway.' He went over to a patch of the green vegetable *tangayan* and started eating it. 'I'll just eat *tangayan*. That's the best food for me, since all I am is a deer anyway.'

Later that morning, Lang Tono, Mr. Roast, another one of Toked Rini's followers, was roasting rice using the central ribs of leaves as skewers. His friend Lang Kuang, Mr. Palm, came along and found that the palm leaf ribs Lang Tono was using were the ones which he, Lang Kuang, had gathered to make some new sections of roofing. 'Hey, you've used my leaf ribs as skewers to heat up your rice! It's difficult to get them, you know – preparing them always makes me cough! You've used them all up! You shouldn't use them to heat up rice, anyway! Anyway, if you want to do some cooking, go and get your own leaf ribs!' said Lang Kuang. Lang Tono was quite annoyed at this. 'Our ancestors used to roast food like this, so why shouldn't we, Mr. Cough-Cough?' The two started to wrestle. They couldn't be separated – it would have been easier to get lice off a pig than to separate them. Then Lang Apan, Mr. Porcupine, came along and squeezed in between them. He bent his body and his quills pierced their stomachs. Finally they came apart. 'Wherever we go, I'm always the one who makes peace between us Luun Atar people!', said Lang Apan.

The decision to go to war

Toked Rini and his siblings were getting restless, and started thinking about what to do with themselves. The sun was high by this time.

Toked Rini chanted a *sedarir*, drawing on his power, his *lalud*:

Ngan...naee....naee... na...

Dita' sagorenang ayun liang budok ayun The sun is flaming high in the sky,
liang budong dita' nah ayun atso libuh sending down bright rays

*Ko ra'ong atso nok me nadur pepid
langit lungung*

Nadur pepid langap Langit Temubong

*Mé pah aio' lawé tauh la'ih la'ud me
ngan long payud*

Dih tsélongan let lam tselong

*Let lam tsélong kuh mé nitin put umum
agong*

Mé alid ra'o lam uang tsélongan agong

*Nok mé neput suit tukar inan monong,
suit atur-atur*

*Odong kayuh iyong tse payuh iput kuh
lukuh luun da'un*

Iput kuh iah kuman bua' plok royong

*Bua' plok royong, bua' bungan noton
luun apad loping*

Luun apad meten Pa' Biring Agong

*Nekap tse lun makat nitin tau la'ih
Balang Mengiyong*

Nekap tse lun balang tukid siliotong

Nok me ngabang etuu orat dimayong

*Orat dimayong nok mé ngaba' anit tu'an
ko senayong*

*Tu'an pengaripen luun beropong
Pengaratah kulit barur lalikong*

Kulit barur iring Langit Temubong

The round sun, like a wide sunhat, is
travelling towards the far end of the
clouds in the sky

It is travelling towards the tip of the
vastness of the highest sky, the Langit
Temubong

Where shall we men go now in single
file, upstream or downstream to the
mouth of the river

I'll take my blowpipe dart quiver from
the storeroom

I'll take my blowpipe from the big
central storage place

We'll take our darts from their big
quivers

To go and blow darts to pierce the suit
birds, with their different faces, sitting
on their perches¹

With my blowpipe I have killed a
bearcat resting in its nest of leaves at
the top of the plok royong tree²

I blew a dart it as it ate the fruit of the
plok royong tree

As it sat sampling the fruit of the plok
royong tree on top of the high floating
mountain

On top of the high ridge above the
Biring Agong river³

We are looking for someone brave to
support our leader Balang Mengiyung⁴

We are looking for someone brave,
able to kill a tiger

Who will wait in ambush and mark the
place on its body where he will spear
the tiger

Who will spear the tiger and then claim
its skin to make a jacket

He will put the jacket over his chest

He will cover himself with the tiger
skin with its wavy stripes

The stripey skin covered with stripes,

¹ The term suit birds refers to enemies; this is why there is an emphasis on their having different faces.

² The term bearcats refers to an enemy.

³ According to Pun Nibu of Pa' Mada, this ridge is the Apad Dari which runs through the Kelabit Highlands from the Bario area to the Kelapang river area.

⁴ According to Pun Nibu of Pa' Mada and Aren Raja of Pa' Dalih, this brave person is Toked Rini. Balang Mengiyung is his father's name.

Dihtah odong pian kera'an betong

Nih pian ngemo kuh rang Bupu'

Lungung

just like Langit Temubong, the highest sky

That is what my heart desires most in the world

That is really what I want most in the whole universe, right up to the Gate of the Shadow at its end

After Toked Rini had recited the *sedarir*, he, Agan Pun Na'am Mitun, Lanawa Balang Tolang Kayuh Ngelungung and the others went to Toked Rini's friend and cousin Balang Katu's apartment. 'Finally! You never come to my house – I'm always the one who has to come to visit you', said Balang Katu. Everyone swarmed into Balang Katu's house, following Toked Rini. They talked about everything under the sun. Balang Katu talked so much that his saliva dripped under the house and mixed with all the rubbish; then when he breathed in it all came up into his nose, along with the pig excrement and all the other rubbish under the house!

Toked Rini finally said, 'Hey, you fellows – if we keep talking like this we'll never stop – let's get on to talking about going to war! Let's go and look for some enemies in Palaii Langit Temubung, up in the Highest Sky. Balang Katu, you've been there – your father took you, didn't he? Are there any people over there on whom we can make war?' Balang Katu pulled a long face. 'You can only talk of going to war. Don't the people in Palaii Langit eat the same as us? They are just like us, why should we make war on them? I don't know of anyone we can make war on up there, anyway.' The people of Luun Atar all agreed that they didn't know of anybody up there on whom they could make war.

But Toked Rini said, 'If I'm not wrong, my father told me that there is another Toked Rini living in Lobang Uli' Bario Langiyung, the Hole of the Moaning Wind, which is in the Batu Balang Tsok Inan Lungung, the Shadow-Making Spirit Tiger Rock⁵. He said that there are some strong men there – Sewan Balang Iat Apui Nalan, Sewan the Spirit Tiger With Breath of Walking Fire; and Siok Balang Tetam Depun, Siok the Spirit Tiger Who Distributes Smoke with his Fingers', son of Lanawa Lemulun, He Who Encompasses all People. They are so strong, he said, that they even make war on the spirits, and on Derayeh Luun Langit, the Great Spirit Above the Sky. They take heads and nobody dares to challenge them!' But Balang Katu wasn't happy. 'If we go to war in the Spirit Tiger Rock, not even our ashes will return!', he says. 'People have always said that it's just not possible to challenge the people of the Spirit Tiger Rock.' 'Let's just try, let's go and see how good they are,' said Toked Rini. 'Even if they're amazingly strong, as long as we are alive we have to try to beat them. Do they eat iron, after all? No. They eat rice like us'. 'Well, you lot can go, but I'm not going. My old lady is busy weeding the rice, and I need to help her', said Balang Katu.

⁵ The Spirit Tiger Rock turns out to be a tiger (and possibly also a man) as well as a rock; and eventually becomes a cave under the earth when pushed underground by one of Toked Rini's cousins.

Getting ready to depart for war

Everybody from Luun Atar stood up and went to their own hearths to get ready. They all packed their personal *uyut* baskets. Toked Rini was the last to pick up his *uyut*. They all left in single file for the washing area at the river bank near the house. Only Toked Rini was left in the longhouse. He walked around under the deer antler hooks on the wall, and chanted a *sedarir*, drawing again on his his power, his *lalud*:

*Ngae....ee..nareh....naramamai
Tonan pesiolong dih narih la'ih
Ngan nalan sinayong ko sinayong
lenguh ko tso menotong
Senaro' pengaripen luun beropong
Pengaratah kulit barur lalikong*

Kulit barur iring Langit Temubong

*Apen kuh dih pipe' kuh la'id binan
agong*

Binan sia' metsang nok menitut monong

Nok ngidir awa' blu lam tobong

Nawi nok otong kuh luun apad Kuyun

*Otong kuh ngan To' Mering la'ih buda'
oloh, la'ih buda' oloh
Nalap putus uar neken ba'o belu*

*Nawi retib tadim ken doo mayu, nawi
nok pidaman
Pélak keraroh pélak pengah kubil payo
nga'ah bulu*

*Nawi retib tadim ken doo mayu nawi
nok merurut leku'
Udan batuh nok merurut udan leku'
pru-pru*

Men, let's get ready to leave
Before I set off I put on my loose jacket
as bright as the baking hot sun
I have put it over my chest
I will cover it with my tiger skin jacket
with its wavy stripes
The stripey skin covered with stripes,
just like the highest sky, the Langit
Temubong
I will take my beautiful big smooth
knife sheath
My sheath so bright and red that it
lights up my face
I will tie it on to my waist, along with a
bamboo container containing valuable
blu beads
I exchanged a knife for these beads up
on top of the Kuyun mountain
I exchanged my knife with To Mering
of the white head⁶
I took in exchange blu beads broken off
his string
I exchanged a sharp knife, a beautiful
perfect knife, for those beads
A knife made using the best charcoal
and sharpened with the hard skin of a
male deer
A perfect knife so sharp that it makes
the thunder roll
My knife causes thunderclaps and
makes stone rain⁷ clatter down

⁶ According to Pun Nibu of Pa' Mada, To' Mering was believed, when Pun Nibu was young, to be the source of beads; he was said to manufacture them.

⁷ Stone rain – hail – falls when people laugh at animals or upset the balance of nature in other ways. The fact that the knife is able to cause stone rain expresses its great power, in being able to upset the balance of nature.

<i>Aa...</i>	I take my sword sheath made of tara' wood
<i>Apen kuh dih pipe' kuh la'id binan tara'</i>	I tie my shining red sword sheath on my waist, where it sits beautifully
<i>Binan sia' metsang nok mengitit mengidir awa'</i>	I exchanged a knife on the high mountain
<i>Nawi nok itong kuh luun apad dita' Itong kuh itong To' Mering la'ih oloh buda'</i>	I exchanged it with To Mering of the white head
<i>Nalap putut uar ba'o bata' nangan uar ba'o bata'</i>	I took in exchange <i>bata'</i> beads broken off his string
<i>Nawi retib tadim ken doo sira' Nawi nok merurut leku' udan dara'</i>	For my sharp shiny knife Which causes thunder to roll and blood rain ⁸ to fall
<i>Merurut udan leku' kora-kora</i>	Which causes huge thunderclaps and rain to fall

Tuked Rini tied his sword sheath on to his waist. He put on eight layers of sitting mats around his waist, eight layers of waist strings and eight layers of shields. Once he was dressed he left the *dalim*, the inner kitchen and living area in the longhouse, and squeezed through the door. He had so much war dress on that he had to force himself through, cracking the door, which split open. But this was no problem. He turned around and touched the door and his power, his *lalud*, was so great that the door mended itself. He took his blowpipe from its storage place under the roof. He stepped across the planks to the *barat* platform outside the door, and the platform shook. He put his hand over his eyes and looked at the bathing place. There were many people there waiting to leave with him for war. He jumped on to the *barat agong*, the great platform outside the house. From there he jumped on to the *batu agong* – the great stone in the river at the bathing place. 'Well, my followers, my *anak adi'*', he said 'have you made fire with your tinder, ready to go? We should leave soon.'

Balang Katu saw him leave the house, and he felt quite uncomfortable. He decided that he would join him, after all. So he followed Tuked Rini to the great stone in the river. There, he helped to get the tinder to produce a spark and they got a good fire going on the great stone at the bathing place.

Meanwhile, the lesser people, the *anak adi'*, were making their preparations too. 'Let's get our own tinder going', said Lang Kuang, Mr. Palm, to his friend Merigang. 'We are quite able to do it ourselves, we don't need to depend on those leaders. I'll do it. If you see my face turn blue, give me a hand.' So he tried and

⁸ Blood rain falls, in some versions of the story of Tuked Rini including the one told by Ngemong Raja in 1972 to Carole Rubenstein, when heroes drop down from the sky to help those battling. It seems to express the presence of power, like stone rain. Blood is associated with contact with the spirit world in pre-Christian times, when the blood of pigs and chickens was sprinkled on people who had been to cemeteries to take the dead there and on children who are being named and are crossing the final hurdle between the spirit world from which they have come and the world of the living.

tried to make the tinder catch, blowing like mad, and turning quite blue in the cheeks. All of his friends tried to help him. Kukud Tela'o, Deer Leg, accidentally knocked the tinder into the water. '*Pii lan atun*', swore Lang Kuang. 'Why did you do that? You're just a deer and you don't have fingers, so don't try to help us!' 'You asked for help, so I helped', said Kukud Tela'o. 'What shall we do now?' said Lang Kuang. 'We'll just have to depend on Toked Rini for fire.'

Travelling to the Highest Sky

The people of Luun Atar were now ready to leave. It was decided that Agan Pun Tolong Na'aum Mitun, Agan whose Bones go Straight for his Target, one of Toked Rini's close cousins, should go first, due to his reputation. He told all of the *anak adi*, the followers, to hang on to his sword sheath, like fish on a string. 'Are you all hanging on OK down there?' he asked. 'Yes, we're all here', came the answer. So he jumped off the *batu agong*, the great stone in the river, straight up into the sky.

Toked Rini looked up at the Luun Atar people, his people, flying into the sky. There were so many that they darkened the sky, hanging on to Agan Pun Tolong Na'aum Mitun's sword sheath. Then the other heroes set off, flying up into the sky: Lanawa Balang Tolang Kayuh Ngelungung, Spirit Tiger Tree Trunk with Bones of Wood who makes a Huge Shadow; Tagio Balang Pekeling Kuman, or Havoc-Causing Spirit Tiger who exchanges Food with others at Feasts; and Balang Katu, Great Spirit Tiger. They gradually flew further and further away, and finally Toked Rini himself took off. He set off like a dart, straight up into the sky. He whistled past Balang Katu.

They flew all day and all night. Finally they landed like eagles at Ra'an Ayun Langit Temubong, the Pass at the Shadow of the Highest Sky. There, they made camp. Night fell where they were up there in the middle of the sky. 'What are we going to cook?' they asked themselves. They saw a good clump of bamboo near the big waterfall, the Ruib Boong. 'Yes, my father Balang Mangiyung, Spirit Tiger whose Fame is known Far and Wide, did say that there was a clump of bamboos near the waterfall', said Toked Rini. 'Who will go and get some, so that we can use it to fetch some water? The bamboo has probably grown to be quite big by now, and the sections will be big enough to carry water.' No-one wanted to go, among the *anak adi* followers. Only the leaders, the heroes from Luun Atar, had the courage to go: in the end Agan Pun Tolong Na'am Mitun and Tagio Balang Pekeling Kuman went to get some bamboo. Because of their *lalud*, they were able to walk along the surface of the water to the clump of bamboo. When they reached the waterfall, Agan Pun Tolong Na'um Mitun saw the bamboo was growing straight up into the sky, with the tips curled right around the sun. He pulled out his knife and chopped down the base, and the bamboo fell upstream. He cut off the tips. But he saw that someone else had also cut some bamboo. He thought it must have been Tagio Balang Pekeling Kuman and he asked him, 'Why did you take more bamboo? We already have some.' 'But I didn't cut any', said Tagio Balang. Then they saw the back of another man going downstream, pulling a bamboo.

They went back to camp with their bamboo. Once back at camp Agan Pun Tolang Na'am Mitun cut the bamboo into pieces, removing all the internodes so that he had long hollow tubes. Then he told some of the *anak adi'* to go and fill the bamboo tubes. But of course the *anak adi'* found that all the water just fell out the bottom. So Agan Pun and Tagio Balang went themselves; and they had no trouble filling the tubes, because of their *lalud*. 'Oh, you leaders are so powerful; everything you do works out! Not like us!' said the others.

So they cooked their rice, and then it was night and the cicadas were calling. Agan Pun and Tagio Balang sat around smoking until the middle of the night. Toked Rini asked them if there was anything worrying them, and they told him about the fact that the day before when they were collecting bamboo there was another man who had come to collect bamboo. All the people of Luun Atar went quiet when they heard that, as though they had been strangled. They were terrified. 'Let's go no further; let's retreat!', said the *anak adi'*.

One of Toked Rini's followers, Lang Kuang – Mr. Palm – heard them talking and got up. He ran behind the fire, chasing after an animal he'd seen. He'd said that he'd seen something striped, something looking like a civet. He told the others that the old people had always said that when you saw a civet it was bad luck. 'You can't go against it, it's sure to be a bad omen', he said. 'Well, if you're scared, you go back. We don't want to take you, in that case, anyway,' said Toked Rini. 'Uoi... *ada' mate* (dead spirits),' Toked Rini swore, 'you silly people, you're all going to die bad deaths. You are so scared that you don't even dare to go into the bushes to relieve yourselves! We came up here to make war. Do the people of the Spirit Tiger Rock eat iron? No. They eat rice, like we do. If they were to eat iron, anyway, we'd just eat sand. If they were to eat stone, we'd go ahead and eat shale!' The people of Luun Atar came to their senses. They took the big log out of the fire, to put the fire out, and they made ready to leave, preparing to tackle the Spirit Tiger Rock.

The battle with the Spirit Tiger Rock

Toked Rini told them to be quiet. 'The Spirit Tiger Rock sleeps a lot,' he said 'or so they said in the past. We need to approach him quietly.' So they all set off: Agan Pun Tolang Na'am Mitun, Lanawa Balang Tolang Kayuh Ngelungung and their siblings, Tagio Balang Pekeling Kuman, Balang Katu and Toked Rini. The *anak adi'*, the followers, kept behind. They reached the pass at Ra'an Ayun Langit Temubong. There, they heard the Spirit Tiger Rock snoring; he was asleep on the pass. 'There he is,' said Toked Rini. They walked right up close to him, took hold of his leg and scrambled on to him, until he was covered with the Luun Atar people. He struggled hard and gradually the less powerful people, the *anak adi'*, were dislodged and fell to the bottom of the ravine. Gradually the Rock dislodged all the heroes too. He dislodged Toked Lang Ingat and Lanawa Balang Tolang Kayuh Ngelungung. Eventually only Toked Rini and Agan Pun Tolang Na'am Mitun were left. 'Have courage, cousin,' said Toked Rini. He succeeded in firing Agan Pun's courage up again with his words. In the end even Toked Rini was thrown off and only Agan Pun was left. The Spirit Tiger Rock ran off carrying Agan Pun across three valleys. He threw Agan Pun off but Agan Pun ran after him

on foot. Tuked Rini and Agan Pun chased him back towards the others. They shouted out to the others to stand by while they collected rattan for a trap to catch the Rock. After a bit, he came close to their trap. 'There he is!' said Balang Katu. But the Spirit Tiger Rock heard Balang Katu's voice and ran sideways, avoiding the trap. 'You idiot! Why did you shout out!' said one of the others. Tuked Rini and Balang Katu went off after the Rock.

They decided to try to trap him again. 'Here he comes!' said Balang Katu from the distance. When he arrived Agan Pun and Lanawa Balang managed to catch him with a rattan noose, but the rattan snapped and he escaped again. Agan Pun and Lanawa Balang set off after the Spirit Tiger Rock this time. 'Those silly idiots,' said Tuked Rini. 'Give me one of those strong hairs of yours to trap him with, Balang Katu'. 'Oh, I'd really rather not,' said Balang Katu. 'Just leave him alone.' But Tuked Rini insisted. 'If you don't give me one of your hairs, how are we going to capture him? If you do, we'll get him and then we'll be able to fight the people who live inside him,' said he. Finally Balang Katu presented the back of his head to Tuked Rini. Tuked Rini pulled out his knife and cut a thick piece of hair off. 'I've hardly cut any. See?' Balang Katu scowled. 'What are you talking about? You said you'd only take one hair. What do you want with all those? I've probably got none left now!'

Soon a *tsui* call came to tell them that the Spirit Tiger Rock was approaching again. He came into view running. 'It's him! Be quiet, everybody,' said Tuked Rini. The Rock ran straight towards the trap. 'It's him,' said Tuked Rini. But the Rock saw Balang Katu and ran sideways again. He took a stick and almost thwacked Balang Katu, but missed. He passed Balang Katu, who chased after him.

Agan Pun and Lanawa Balang arrived and threw Balang Katu's hairs on the ground as a trap. Then Balang Katu's *tsui* call came. 'Let's be careful, this time,' said Agan Pun and Lanawa Balang. The Spirit Tiger Rock ran into the trap, and they tied his leg. He kept struggling but Balang Katu's hair was strong; it rang like a bell when the Rock pulled on it.

Then Agan Pun Tolang Na'am Mitun leapt straight up into the sky, and down again right on top of the Spirit Tiger Rock. He drove the Rock right into the ground and buried him. 'Got you!' said Agan. 'If you hadn't shouted just now, Balang Katu, we would have had him earlier,' said Tuked Rini. 'I thought you didn't know he was coming, that's why I shouted out,' said Balang Katu.

Into the Spirit Tiger Rock

So the Luun Atar people had caught the Spirit Tiger Rock. Tuked Rini pulled out his whetstone and used it to prop open the Rock's mouth. This illuminated the inside. They peered in and spotted some people in there. So they all entered the Rock's mouth, with war in mind.

They travelled night and day for ten days, after entering the Spirit Tiger Rock's mouth, and finally landed, like eagles, on a lookout point on a hill. They sat there like *tayan* birds of prey and looked down and saw a longhouse with people living

in it, all inside the Spirit Tiger Rock. It was a beautiful house, and obviously had powerful people living in it. The top of the roof shone like silver, and there were shiny gongs hanging at each end of the house. There were obviously many, many people inside the Spirit Tiger Rock. 'Let's go down near the house' said the people of Luun Atar. So they took their shields and walked around the house. Night came. Agan Pun and Lanawa Balang offered to go into the house first. 'If you two go, you'll just join in the drinking and you won't return,' said Toked Rini 'you stay here'. But Agan Pun and Lanawa Balang insisted on going in first.

So all the others, including Toked Rini, remained under the longhouse, while Agan Pun and Lanawa Balang entered the house. They were able to do this without being seen, since they could use their *lalud* to make themselves invisible. Inside the house, there was a loud noise of talking and drinking; it was clear that the people of the Batu had just returned from war. The longhouse was led by another Toked Rini, Toked Rini lam Batu Balang – Toked Rini inside the Spirit Tiger Rock. Agan Pun saw that there were lots of people gathered at his hearth, and that there were enormous numbers of people living in the longhouse. Amongst the people of the Spirit Tiger Rock were two who were obviously particularly powerful, with great *lalud*. They were so powerful that they were wrapped in *lalud*, and could only be seen occasionally as the *lalud* flowed and flickered around them. 'If I'm not mistaken,' said Agan Pun, 'those must be the famous Sewan Balang Iat Apui Nalan, Sewan the Spirit Tiger with Breath of Walking Fire; and Siok Balang Tetum Depun anak Lanawa, Siok the Spirit Tiger who distributes Smoke with his Fingers, son of Lanawa Lemulun, He who Encompasses All'.

The people of the Spirit Tiger Rock were drinking and talking, and kept filling their gourds with *borak*, rice beer. 'Why don't we go and get some *borak* ourselves?' said Agan Pun. So he and Lanawa Balang went over and got themselves some *borak* and went to sit down to drink, again without being seen because of their own great *lalud*. They listened to the people of Spirit Tiger Rock talking. From what they were saying, they realized that it had been the people of the Rock whom the people of Luun Atar had encountered at the waterfall. 'If those people we met up at the waterfall were really so brave, why haven't they arrived here yet? We should make war on them,' said Sewan Balang Iat Apui Nalan, one of the heroes of the Spirit Tiger Rock, to his cousin Siok Balang Tekum Depun. 'Yes, why haven't Toked Rini of Luun Atar and his people got here yet? They don't generally give up easily. I wonder if Toked Rini is actually here, in fact. I saw Agan Pun up there at the waterfall, but I didn't see the others,' said Siok Balang.

The battle with the people of the Spirit Tiger Rock

The sun rose the next morning and the people from Luun Atar under the longhouse woke up. They went back to the lookout point on the nearby hill to keep watch. After a while Agan Pun jumped down near the longhouse and sent

out a loud *kit* cry⁹ on the flat ground in front of the longhouse. Agan's *kit* echoed in the distance and sent the people of the Batu into confusion. Hundreds and thousands of them fell all over the place, thrown down by the great power of Agan's *kit*.

Then the people of Luun Atar swarmed down on the people of the Spirit Tiger Rock like bees. The *anak adi*, the lesser people of Luun Atar, went into the house and started spearing the women. The women didn't fight back at all; it was like spearing baskets for pig food. Two of the *anak adi* from Luun Atar, Belawan Suit and Belawan Silung, climbed into the longhouse and even attacked the baskets for pig food, thinking they were people. 'Oh... over here, mate, over here,' one cried to the other. But then they saw that they had only been spearing baskets!

Soon all of the women living in the longhouse inside the Spirit Tiger Rock were dead. Agan Pun called out from outside the longhouse. 'You people of the Spirit Tiger Rock, are there any of you left? If so, where are you? The people of Luun Atar are here. Come down from up there in the longhouse and fight!' he said. The remaining men of the Rock heard him and looked out. They were astonished to see the huge numbers of Luun Atar people out there: there were eight rows of people on the flat ground outside the house, without the tiniest gap between them.

Now Toked Rini and Balang Katu started to get ready to fight, putting on their war dress. Toked Rini of the Spirit Tiger Rock, together with Sewan Balang and Siok Balang and the other heroes of the Rock, descended from the longhouse. 'Who are you? Where have you suddenly turned up from?' they said to the people of Luun Atar. 'What's *your* name? You should be the first to tell us who you are,' replied the people of Luun Atar. 'After all, is this our village? No! Tell us *your* names.' 'Do you really not know our names?' said Toked Rini of the Spirit Tiger Rock. 'My name is Toked Rini in the Spirit Tiger Rock. These are my brothers, Obe Balang Mopo Lemulun, Obe the Spirit Tiger Who Watches People; and Balang Katu, Great Spirit Tiger of the Spirit Tiger Rock. This is Tukid Mesip Ngilah Bodong, Smoking Fire-Maker, another of my brothers. This is Sewan Balang Iat Apui Nalan anak Lanawa, Sewan the Spirit Tiger with Breat of Walking Fire; and Siok Balang Tetum Depun, Siok the Spirit Tiger who Distributes Smoke with his Fingers, son of Lanawa Lemulun, He Who Encompasses All', he said. 'So it's you, Toked Rini of the Spirit Tiger Rock,' said Agan Pun. 'I've heard a lot about you. People talk about you a lot. You have a fine reputation.' 'Now that you know my name, tell me yours!' said Toked Rini of the Spirit Tiger Rock. 'Do you really not know who we are?' answered Agan Pun. 'I am Agan Pun Tolang Na'am Mitun, Agan whose Bones go Straight for his Target; and this is Lanawa Balang Tolang Kayuh Ngelungung, Spirit Tiger Tree Trunk with Bones of Wood who Makes a Huge Shadow. This is Toked Rini of the Luun Atar, the Flat Land, and these here are Balang Katu, Great Spirit Tiger; Tagio Balang Pekeling Kuman, Havoc-Causing Spirit Tiger who Exchanges Food with Others at Feasts; Lian Balang Olong, Lian the Spirit Tiger who Raises Many Poles at Feasts; Agan

⁹ The *kit* call is made by men when they are making war and expresses their masculinity and power.

Senayong Belawan Ngerkid Irang, Agan, of the Iron Jacket who Props up the Hill; and Iru Tepuding Luun Alid Alung, Iru Tepuding Living on Top of the Ferny Hill. There are many of us from Luun Atar that it would take you all night and all day to count us all!

'That's what people said in the past about you – that the people of Luun Atar are many. However did you get here?' said Toked Rini of the Spirit Tiger Rock. 'Where are you going? Why don't you come into the house? We have *borak* rice beer and rice in there. Come in and eat!' 'We've come to fight you! People said that there were people living in Spirit Tiger Rock, and we've come to try you out. Don't you want to fight?' said Agan Pun.

'Well, haven't you heard that the people of the Spirit Tiger Rock are as powerful as eagles? You are certainly courageous to come and fight us! Of course we are willing to fight,' said Toked Rini of the Spirit Tiger Rock.

So they went into battle. The action was so fast you could hardly see what was happening. Only Toked Rini of the Flat Land, Luun Atar, was still on the lookout point. He saw the people fighting down on the flat ground outside the longhouse. They looked like pigs attacking each other.

Toked Rini chanted a *sedarir*, again drawing on his power, his *lalud*:

Ngan...na...iii.. nareh na

*Tu'an kuh let inih nah tse dueh kit la'ih
doo inan aten*

I make a powerful and effective man's call¹⁰

*Doo ngeten kit nuang Liang Langit
Temubong*

My call fills the whole world, under the Highest Sky, the Langit Temubong It chases the children¹¹ playing around the *olong* pole¹²

Nanur anak raut kuma' pu'un olong

Tekan tabaran pu'un olong agong

The big *olong* pole which they raised for their feast

Pu'un olong agong tu'an let nginuh

They are playing around the base of the big *olong* pole

Tse dueh kit kuh la'ih doo ilah-ilah

I have a wonderful and effective *kit* call My repeated *kit* call follows them

Kit uih toma' nok merada' idah

Nanur anak raut tah kuma' pu'un taa

It chases the children playing round the base of the fence¹³

¹⁰ The *kit* is the call made by men to express their presence, and also their power. Toked Rini is using it here to encourage his followers.

¹¹ The 'children' referred to here are the people of the Spirit Tiger Rock.

¹² An *olong* is usually made of wood, although in *sekono* ' stories like this *olong* are sometimes said to be made of stone or of fire, expressing the power of those who raise them. They are raised at feasts, to express the exploits of those hosting the feast. The people living in Spirit Tiger Rock are holding a feast, and have raised an *olong* as part of this.

¹³ The fence referred to here is the barrier of stakes, often combined with a ditch, surrounding a longhouse to defend it – the whole defence system is called *beraok*.

<i>Tekan tabaran pu'un olong agong</i>	Around the big <i>olong</i> pole which they raised
<i>Menarub loang naroh kuma' tepepa</i>	Overwhelming the spawning fish ¹⁴ , bunching together in their exhaustion
<i>Kuma' tepepa loang prepepet</i>	Bunched together and hitting themselves against the rocks, to shake out their eggs
<i>Let oloh tepila loang prepesut</i>	From the black shale the fish move together to one side
<i>Dengan para' tubah pesut</i>	They are chased away by the tuba poison
<i>Let ngan para' tubah let dayeh</i>	By the tuba poison coming from upstream)
<i>Loang kenarur kuh ngan ue kusah</i>	I will string the fish on <i>kusah</i> rottan
<i>Bre kuh iah babin tsur kudah barah-barah</i>	I will give them to the sparkling red lady to carry
<i>Tsur lalidan mayun tekang lawa</i>	The well-known lady who shimmers like a rainbow
<i>Lalidan tekang barah tse opa</i>	The well-known lady like a shining rainbow, sometimes visible, sometimes not ¹⁵

Tuked Rini jumped down from the *olong*. He called out his *kit* amongst the people of the Spirit Tiger Rock and eight thousand of them fell over on the big flat area outside the longhouse. Another eight thousand fell over at the base of the hill. The people of Luun Atar, the Flat Land, and those of the Spirit Tiger Rock fought night and day. Agan Pun of Luun Atar fought Sewan Balang of the Spirit Tiger Rock and Lanawa Balang of Luun Atar fought Siok Balang. They fought as fiercely as rats. They were equally matched, and their weapons had no effect on each other: it was as if their swords were made of wood and their spears were ginger stalks. They fought for days; then they lost count of the days and started to count in months; they lost count of the months and started to count in years; they lost count of the years and started to count in thousands of years. Not a blade of grass was left on the dusty battlefield. Eventually only the marks of their toe nails showed on the bare land.

'I think it's time for new tactics,' said Sewan Balang Iat Apui Nalan, Sewan the Spirit Tiger with Breath of Walking Fire, of the Spirit Tiger Rock. He called out his own *kit* call and, using his own special powers, sent flames surging across the land. The people of Luun Atar, the Flat Land, were roasted like frogs. Tuked Rini of Luun Atar saw that there were very few of his people still alive. The *anak adi'*, his followers, were all dead. Only the heroes of Luun Atar were left: Liang Balang Olong, Lian the Spirit Tiger who Raises many Poles at Feasts; Tuked Lang Ingat;

¹⁴ The 'fish' referred to here are the people of the Spirit Tiger Rock.

¹⁵ The well-known lady referred to here is Tuked Rini's wife, Aruring Menapo Boong. She, Tuked Rini and the other heroes are said to be half the children of Deraya (one of the names of the Creator Deity in pre-Christian times, also meaning 'luck') and half the children of living people. For this reason they are only semi-visible; full spirits are not visible but are transparent or 'white' (*buda*).

Agan Senayong Belawan Ngerkid Irang, Agan of the Iron Jacket who Props up the Hill; Iru Tepuding Luun Alid Alung, Iru Tepuding Living on Top of the Ferny Hill; Balang Katu, Great Spirit Tiger; and Toked Rini's other siblings and cousins. '*Tekan tebaren oloh!*' (Chop off their heads and hang them up!) he cursed. 'Are they all dead?' He went over to consult with Agan Pun Tolang Na'am Mitun, Agan whose Bones go Straight for his Target. They wondered what to do.

The old couple in the Highest Sky intervene in the battle

Up in Luun Langit, Above the Highest Sky, the two old people Agan Tu'i Burung, Agan the Well-Known, and his wife Sina Sapudau, Mother Sapudau, sat at the Gate of the Sky, Bupu Luun Langit, idly searching for lice. Sinah Sapudau was the ancestor of the Luun Atar people, and her husband Agan Tu'i Burung was the ancestor of the people of the Spirit Tiger Rock. They noticed the battle going on. 'Look at the fighting going on down there,' said Agan Tu'i Burung. 'Hey, old woman, come over here,' he said to his wife Sinah Sapudau. 'What do you want?' said she. 'Just you come over here,' he said. He put his arm around her neck. 'Look down there. Can you see, there are some of your grandchildren and some of mine fighting each other down there. They look just like pigs fighting! Looks to me as though yours are getting the worst of the battle. I can't see them at all. My grandchildren are on top of them!' he said to her. Sinah Sapudau took a closer look. Her husband was right. The people of Luun Atar, her grandchildren, were almost all dead. She could see they weren't going to last much longer. 'If all the people of Luun Atar, the Flat Land, are going to be massacred, I'm not staying here with you. I'm going back to Luun Atar, where I came from,' she said. 'You stay here. I'm going home,' said she to her husband. And she stood up to leave. Her husband grabbed her arm to stop her going. 'Don't bother so much about them. Let them get on with their lives, and we can get on with ours,' he declared. Holding her arm, he led her back into the house. But she pulled away and jumped back on to the *barat* platform outside the house.

'*Tsui!*' she called out, 'help!' and she started wailing. Her power was so great that her call reached three other grandchildren of hers, Tama Lawa Apui Tolang Tabukuwan, Father Fire-Stem with Strong Bones; Ghia' Apui Renging Belawan, Ghia' of Ringing Fire-Iron; and Puun Balang Tolang Peribuh, Grandfather Spirit Tiger with Thousands of Bones, who all lived on the Kerayan river across the Apad Uat mountains running through the highland area. 'Where are you?' she said, 'the people of Luun Atar, the Flat Land, your cousins, are all going to be killed. They've been battling with the people of the Spirit Tiger Rock for so long that the whole area has turned into a dusty desert. There's almost no-one left!' Ghia' Apui Renging Belawan heard her calling. 'What?' he said. 'I'd better go over to Tama Lawa Apui Tolang Tabukuwan's house to tell him'. He got dressed for war and went over to Tama Lawa's house. 'Hey, Tama Lawa,' he said, 'our grandmother Sina Sapudau is calling us. I'll wait out here for you.' 'OK, I'm coming,' said Tama Lawa, and he put on his war dress and joined Ghia' Apui. Puun Balang soon turned up too.

The three of them dropped down from the sky on to the battleground inside the Spirit Tiger Rock, intent on ending the battle with victory for the Luun Atar

people. The sun hit down on the heads of the people fighting like a hammer, and sweat poured off Toked Rini Luun Atar. He chanted a *sedarir*, again drawing on his *lalud*:

<i>Ngae....nareh na ramamai</i>	
<i>Anun tsok uan idang sinih la'ih tue</i>	Who is making it so baking hot here?
<i>idang menotong</i>	
<i>Medang menotong medang turun liang</i>	Baking hot heat strikes down from the
<i>Langit Temubong</i>	Highest Sky, the Langit Temubong
<i>Maréh médang libuh bawang</i>	It strikes down and heats up the whole
	village
<i>Inan otong maréh médang bawang?</i>	Is this heat coming down to heat up the
	village coming to help us?
<i>Luting dalim gadong ritsu' lam Batu</i>	Radiating straight into the Shadow-
<i>Balang Tsok Inan Lungung</i>	Casting Spirit Tiger Rock
<i>Mayu tse lun nisir tongen let nangé aré'</i>	Maybe someone is coming to help us,
<i>kléh</i>	my brothers
<i>Liang odong nisir let liang rang Bupu'</i>	From below the Gate of the Shadow at
<i>Lungung maréh peped pior atang tse</i>	the end of the earth help is beaming
<i>otong</i>	down
<i>Atang tse otong maréh mé pepaté bunu'</i>	
<i>pengaroyong</i>	Help is coming to assist us in making
<i>Me pepaté moréh lam erat bodong</i>	war
<i>Nateneng leku' lébong lébong</i>	
	Coming to make war like constant
<i>Na'am tau étéh mlé laya' bédong</i>	flames Like thunder going round and
<i>kapong Yan bété'-bété' brat binolong</i>	round the sky
	We must not become weak and give in
<i>Brat binolong kuh ubud nato'</i>	Even though the responsibility is heavy
	we must not be like women
<i>Tah tau aré' pipék iring takong</i>	We must carry it, we mustn't be weak
	like sago trunks
<i>Nok mé naan unid Langit Temubong</i>	Siblings, we must not weaken, even if
	they drive us near the pond
<i>Apen tah lelen nah apok luun todong</i>	Which dams the Highest Sky, Langit
	Temubong
<i>Nok mariar abé temakong itsong</i>	I will take hold of my enemy's long hair
	reaching their shoulders
<i>Abé nimat ranat lam Biring Agong</i>	Pushing aside his earrings, I will cut his
	head off so that blood spurts out of his
	nose
<i>lih ngalap mapong iih ngalap molé'?</i>	I will carry his head, earrings swinging,
	to the Biring Agong river ¹⁶

¹⁶ The Biring Agong is a pseudonym used to refer to the river near the Luun Atar settlement which Toked Rini leads. According to Ribuh Balang of Bario, it is the Repudu river, which is a tributary of the Mada River, which is really meant. In *sekono*' stories like this, pseudonyms are used, supposedly to confuse possible enemies who might be listening.

Lam detsim along moyo migu'

Who will take us back to reveal what we have done?

Bawang inan okong

You men are afraid to go back alone, back to the dark below the grass roof of our longhouse

*Molé' mé lam bawang luting dalim
gadong ritsu' inih luun liu' panatar iong
Luun patar iran blu agong*

Back to our longhouse protected by stakes
To go back into our longhouse on the flat land with calm water and the big mortar To our place of the sharpening stone¹⁷, shining like the boss of a gong

Tuked Rini's relatives Agan Pun, Lanawa Balang, Balang Katu, Lemudan Balang Pekeling Kuman, Ilan Tadem Panan Ngerkid Irang and Iru Tapuding Luun Alid Alung also wondered why it had become so hot: 'It looks like we've got help in our battle in the Spirit Tiger Rock!' they said to themselves. 'Now we will be able to take lots of heads and win the battle. We have brothers and cousins to fight with us and a leader who will take us home after the battle – Tuked Rini.'

So the heroes from Luun Atar set to again with good heart, fighting side by side. Agan Pun called out to Selud Balang Derayeh Noran, Sliding Landslide-Making Spirit Tiger of the Great Spirit; and to Ada' Balang Ma'it Pelenan, Spirit Tiger with a Sore Throat, two of the heroes from Spirit Tiger Rock: 'Watch out over there! I'm coming to attack you!' He lifted his spear and Selud and Ada' Balang saw flashes reflected from it as he attacked them. He killed the two of them as though they were weak little pigs, and strung them up on his spear. Lemudan Balang Pekeling Kuman, Spirit Tiger in the Rain who Exchanges Food with Others at Feasts, another of the heroes from Luun Atar, fought by his side. The people of Luun Atar really went at the people of the Spirit Tiger Rock and they fell like trees, criss-crossing each other on the ground. Father Baru', one of Tuked Rini's followers, fought at the foot of a nearby hill, battering people so hard that their eyeballs popped out.

But then Siok Balang, one of the heroes fighting on the side of the Spirit Tiger Rock people, picked up a handful of the people from Luun Atar and jumped up high into the sky, Liang Langit. He dropped them from up there and they fell to the ground. Twice Siok swooped down on the people of Luun Atar, picked handfuls of them up and then dropped them from high up in the sky, killing them, until there were none left except the strongest and most powerful people – Tuked Rini and his close relatives. The people of Luun Atar who were left had become thin, so that their bones showed through their flesh and they walked unsteadily.

¹⁷ The place where Tuked Rini is said to have lived, Luun Atar, is said to have been at the oxbow lake near the mouth of the Pa' Mada, where there is currently a settlement called Pa' Mada. Here, there is a huge flat stone which is said to have once been Tuked Rini's sharpening stone (*batu iran*), and which appears to be part of an ancient cist grave, of which there are many in the Kelabit Highlands and surrounding area (see Plate xxx).

Something had to be done. So Lanawa Balang Tolang Kayuh Ngelungung, Spirit Tiger Tree Trunk with Bones of Wood who Makes a Huge Shadow, true to his name, turned himself into a tree and fell onto the people of the Spirit Tiger Rock. However, Sewan Balang and Siok Balang escaped. Lanawa Balang pursued them and, turning himself into a tree again, fell on them once more, trapping them. Agan Pun ran across Lanawa-tree-trunk towards the two heroes of Spirit Tiger Rock, hoping to kill them. But Sewan Balang escaped again, and he ran back along Lanawa himself.

Then Sewan Balang and Siok Balang attacked and speared Father Baru'. Agan Pun groaned when he saw that Tama Baru' had been speared, and pulled the spear out. He looked up to the sky and shouted out to Sewan Balang, saying 'Well, we've been fighting with spears and knives for a very long time; why don't we try wrestling, and see who is strongest?' 'Fine by me', said Sewan Balang. So they threw aside their weapons and wrapped their arms around each other. They grappled with each other all over the flat land near the longhouse inside the Batu Balang. They fought like tigers, for aeons. They fought on land; and then they ran into the river to fight. There, Sewan Balang pushed Agan Pun underwater. They fought all the way down the river as far as the sea, where Sewan pulled Agan Pun out of the water. But Agan Pun took his revenge on Sewan Balang. He pushed him all the way up the river and then along the river bank, right up to the source of the mighty Kerayan river and into the spring right up at the source. Then he lifted a huge boulder and blocked the spring, and sat on the boulder, trapping Sewan Balang inside. But soon afterwards the boulder moved; Sewan Balang pushed it up and away, and sprang out. He and Agan Pun set to again, wrestling on land and in the water as before. Taking a deep breath, Agan Pun swung Sewan Balang aside and they both landed on their sides on the ground. Agan rolled over and got on top. Toked Rini ran over and in a flash he'd pulled off one of his leg bangles made of rottan and had tied up Sewan Balang, sitting on top of him. But he soon felt his bottom quivering, and he saw that someone had untied the knot he'd made. 'Ooi...', he cursed, 'I'm really getting fed up with all this.'

The Great Spirit Mother intervenes

At this point they heard a lady's voice. 'What's wrong with all of you? You silly men! Why are you tying him up? Don't you realize that you are related to him?' Toked Rini recognized the voice of Sinah Purid Derayah, Great Spirit Mother, the source of all life and power, the mother of all. 'You must untie him. Hasn't anyone told you that he's your relative?' said she. Toked Rini was astonished. He stood up slowly, releasing Sewan Balang. 'My dear man,' said Sinah Purid Derayah, 'have these people of the Spirit Tiger Rock, living up in Palaii Langit Temubong, the Highest Sky, tried to poison you? Why are you making war on them? They are related to you!' 'How are they related to us?' said Toked Rini, astounded. 'Listen carefully, my dear,' said Sinah Purid Derayah. 'Sewan Balang is from your own home, Luun Atar. So is Siok Balang. They were abandoned as babies. That's why they are living inside the Spirit Tiger Rock.'

Tuked Rini was struck with emotion at hearing this. He stretched his two arms around the shoulders of his two newly-found relatives. He stroked their arms, saying 'My dear brothers, why didn't you tell me that we are related before we started fighting? Here we were making war on each other! We have suffered so much, and without reason!' Sewan Balang replied, 'Well, I did know we were related, but I was afraid that you would think that we were afraid to fight if I told you. That's why I didn't say anything'. The people of Luun Atar all embraced Sewan Balang and Siok Balang and all was well between them all.

Bringing the dead back from the spirit world

The Luun Atar heroes realized that there was nobody left alive in the longhouse in the Spirit Tiger Rock. 'Everyone is dead here! Balang Katu, why don't you use your powers to bring our people back to life?' said Tuked Rini. So they gathered together the bones of the Luun Atar people. They kept only the long bones, which belonged to their own people, and threw away the short bones, which belonged to the people of the Spirit Tiger Rock. They tested the bones, hitting them to check that they made a good ringing sound. Only those that rang clear did they keep, since they were sure that these belonged to their own people. Once they were sure that they had all the bones of their comrades from Luun Atar, Balang Katu sprinkled powerful *lalud* water on the bones. The bones bounced up and down and re-assembled themselves, attaching themselves one to another. After this they gradually grew flesh and eventually the bodies began to move. They were the bodies of the *anak adi*, the lesser people of Luun Atar, who had been slaughtered. Balang Katu spoke to his comrades, who were now conscious. 'Well, comrades, you have come back to us. You should know that we have killed all the people of the Spirit Tiger Rock. We can all go home now,' he said to them.

But their spirits were still in the land of the dead. They had planted rice there and were harvesting it, helping out in Lang Kuang's, Mr. Palm's, fields that day. 'Ooi,,... they're calling us to go back,' said Lang Kuang. 'Who's calling us?' said the others. 'What do you mean, who's calling us?' Tuked Rini of Luun Atar, of course!' said Lang Kuang. 'He says that all the people of the Spirit Tiger Rock are dead and that we should return home to Luun Atar with them.' The others were not sure that they wanted to return. 'Let's stay here,' they said. 'Why should we go back to Luun Atar? There's no point! We're better off here. Just look at the size of the rice ears here! They're as big as deer's tails! The ones in Luun Atar are only as big as my finger.' One of the others agreed. 'He's right, you know! If you plant taro roots in Luun Atar they're also much smaller than the ones here. In Luun Atar they only grow as big as a bird's head. Here, they're as big as an earthenware pot!' said he. Another of the people chimed in: 'I quite agree. If you plant bananas in Luun Atar they only grow as big as dog's teeth. The bananas I planted here have grown as big as my arm!' 'You're quite right, cousin,' said Todong Tengaok, another of the people from Luun Atar, 'we can just as easily sit around and rest here as back in Luun Atar. Let's stay here.'

But the two friends Lang Kuang and Merigang didn't agree. 'Even if Luun Atar were really such a dreadful place, it's where our ancestors were born, and we should return,' they said. They removed their harvesting baskets and threw them

down in the field. Slowly the others also removed their baskets from their waists. Lang Kuang hung his basket upside down on a stick. 'You stay there, basket,' he said. 'I'll be back for you one day, when I die properly!' He set off along the bund of the field, and the others followed him.

Balang Katu felt his ears grow cold, a sure sign that spirits were approaching. 'The spirits of our comrades are on their way back,' he told Toked Rini and the others. He sprinkled more *lalud* water on the newly formed bodies, and they stood up. Their spirits had returned to their bodies. They groped around on the ground for their knives, sheaths and spears. 'Right, let's get going,' they said. 'Where are those enemies from the Spirit Tiger Rock we were fighting?' Toked Rini explained to them that all the people of the Spirit Tiger Rock were dead. 'Ooii...', they said. 'Why didn't you at least leave us some women to spear?' 'Well, you can go into the longhouse and check if there are any people left,' said Toked Rini. So they went in and checked – but saw that everyone was indeed dead.

Return to Luun Atar, the Flat Land

All the people of Luun Atar then set off to return home. Toked Rini persuaded Siok Balang and Sewan Balang to go with them, back to the home they hadn't seen since they were babies. Two of the heroes from Pa' Kerayan who had joined them for the battle, Ghia' Agui Renging Belawan and Puun Balang Tolang Peribuh, also returned with them to Luun Atar. But Tama Lawa Apui Tolang Tabukuwan, the third hero who had joined them from Pa' Kerayan at Sinah Sapudau's request, didn't come. 'I'll join you in the future when you go off to battle,' he said.

The people of Luun Atar set off to return home from the Spirit Tiger Rock. They streamed out like water released from a padi field. As usual, the heroes of Luun Atar flew, using their *lalud*, with the *anak adi*, the lesser people, hanging on to Agan Pun's sheath, as before. They flew day and night and landed like eagles at the mouth of the Spirit Tiger Rock.

Aruring Menapoh Boong, Toked Rini's wife, was sitting chatting with Tsong Blu Agong, Balang Katu's wife, and with one of the lesser women of Luun Atar, Ba'o Ké, at the longhouse at Luun Atar. 'We'd better stop gossiping,' said Aruring. 'I think Toked Rini will be back soon.' But Ba'o Ké was enjoying talking to her and to Tsong Blu Agong. 'You always stop us from having a proper chat. How can you know that they are about to return?' But Aruring was right. Soon after this they heard an 'Ooii' sound from afar. 'There they are!' said Aruring. She and Tsong Blu Agong left Ba'o Ké and went off to welcome their husbands.

Aruring went to get some *borak* rice beer for her husband, scooping it out of the big *belanai* jar with a small gong. Ba'o Ké decided that she should also get some *borak* ready for her husband. But she didn't have any ready. She thought for a bit. Where could she get some *borak*? How about some of the water in the pig trough at the end of the longhouse? That would do! So she ran to the end of the house and scooped out some liquid from the pig trough with a gourd. She then saw Aruring and Semelo jumping up and down with joy and greeting their husbands

on the platform outside the longhouse and realized that she was late. Excited, she also jumped up and down, but she missed her step and fell down, dropping her gourd and spilling her *'borak'*. After a while she came to her senses. 'Ooii, *terongan ada'* (*terongan* spirit),' she cursed. 'Be careful, old lady!' she said to herself. She got up, picked up a dog's feeding trough this time as a container for her *'borak'*, and set off to look for some more. This time she went to the pond where the pigs bathe, and dipped her gourd into that. 'Now I've just got to find my husband,' she said to herself. 'Husband, where are you?' 'Here I am!' said he. She took the pig's trough and inserted the end of it into her husband's mouth. 'Mmm, thanks!' he said, and started sucking from the end of the trough. 'Ugh... why does this *borak* taste so muddy, old lady?' he said. 'Well, I made it soon after you left, husband,' said she, 'it's been a long time, that's why it's a bit sour.'

Aruring and Semelo were jumping up and down on the surface of the water, praising their husbands and clapping their hands, using their *lalud* to stay afloat. Ba'o Ké was jealous. 'I want to clap too!' She saw some white foam on top of the water by the riverbank, and thought it was a stone. She jumped on to it and started clapping. But of course she sank into the foam. She vanished from sight. Eventually her stomach surfaced. Aruring pulled her out of the water and turned her upside down and the water ran out of her mouth as though it were a bamboo water container. Ba'o Ké started groaning. 'Why are you so stupid, old lady?' said Aruring. 'I'm just too heavy, dear' said Ba'o Ké.

Everybody went into the longhouse. They went from one end of the house to the other, making the whole house shake. They went round the house eight times and everyone gave them *borak* and praised them. Then they all took off their wardresses and called all the people of LuunAtar to drink *borak* rice beer with them. Everyone gathered to drink at Toked Rini's house. Aruring Manapo Boong had made so much *borak* that it looked as though the deepest pond in the Kerayan river had been emptied out! After drinking at Toked Rini's place everyone went to Agan Pun's house, and then Balang Katu's. Finally they reached Sina Baru' Tutu's house. She was the mother of Sewan Balang and Siok Balang, who had returned with them from the Spirit Tiger Rock, and an emotional scene ensued when she was reunited with her two children. She was really happy to have them back, and couldn't stop stroking their arms. She still loved them very much, and had missed them a great deal.

After visiting all the people in Toked Rini's longhouse, they visited the other two longhouses at Luun Atar, whose leaders were Ilan Tadem Panan Ngerkid Irang and Iru Tapuding Luun Alid Alung. They drank so much *borak* there that everyone shone like fire.

After that everyone slept.

Aruring Manapo Boong reacts to Balang Katu's advances

The next morning Balang Katu's thoughts turned to Aruring Manapu Boong. 'When we were young,' he said to her, 'you liked me well enough. Why won't you share *borak* with me now? Never mind that you're married to Toked Rini! Please

share some *borak* with me! It would make me so happy. I have been thinking only of you!'.
Aruring looked him in the eyes and chanted a *sedarir*, drawing on her great power, her *lalud*:

Ngan...

Leba'o renging tongen uih nih

I am Leba'o, the beaded one, ringing like a bell¹⁸

Leba'o sayun tah luun pued agong

I am Leba'o sitting on the big gong, reflected in it

Luun pued agong sayun luun léno'

I am sitting on the big shiny gong, reflected in it

Uih agong belaong ngetur turu' aloh tuih

I have a huge mortar which pounds my rice by itself

Topah lam iong napalid padak tonang depun notong

There is so much chaff from my pounded rice that it looks like smoke from burning fields¹⁹

Tonang depun notong tonang laput tuka lam Biring Agong

It looks like smoke from burning fields, like clouds spreading over the Biring Agong river

Nalud ngelutut awar pa' lopong

It floats along the river and muddies the rapids

Lutut na'em depin arur mong-mong

All the little streams become muddy from it, it can't be avoided

Detsur ribid urit betik binodong

I am a beautifully tattooed woman, tattooed with the soot from damar resin With tattoo patterns laid out in the shadowy darkness

Betik uih papo lam detsim layun

I was tattooed by the light of a burning damar flame

Pépek kuh ngan élo' nateng senotong

It was hard to bear the pain

Na'um taan senotong tonang perayan Luun beropong paad perueh luun tador itsong, luun tador itsong

My body, right up to the bridge of my nose, is beautifully made and smooth

Klébong itm ko tonang angud lungung

I wear a beautiful black bark cloth, like a developing, shimmering shadow

Paad nguring peka' tah dulun mong-mong paad nguring belih tah lun liang otsong

Everyone in the whole world wants to come and possess me, even the poorest of people, because I am so precious

¹⁸ Leba'o was said by Aren Raja of Pa' Dalih and Pun Nibu of Pa' Mada to be the name of Aruring Menapo Boong when she was a young girl and to reflect the fact that she had many beads. Darin Lemulun of Pa' Dalih is able to recite a poem about Leba'o in which she pounds her rice to husk it so loudly that all the spirit animals – tigers (*balang*) and crocodiles (*bayeh*) run away because they cannot stand the sound. Leba'o is also the name of a mischievous spirit, as Rabin Bala and Pun Nibu pointed out.

¹⁹ The fields referred to here are fields cultivated using shifting cultivation, which are burnt off before being planted.

<p><i>Nguring uih ko setok awan Segong Omong, nguring uih moréh</i></p>	<p>Segong Omong has asked for me to be his wife many times</p>
<p><i>Eh... La mé rudap parong</i></p>	<p>They want to go and sleep in the attic with me But they desire me without hope</p>
<p><i>Lili kelalian Monok liang otsong</i></p>	<p>Let them crawl back into their mean shelters</p>
<p><i>Maré idah mupo pepid Bupu' Lungung</i></p>	<p>They come to look at me from as far away as the Gate of the Shadow</p>
<p><i>Maré mupo bru uih Leba'o Retong Leba'o Sayun luun pued agong, luun pued agong Paad nguring peka' tah lun mong-mong</i></p>	<p>They come again to look at me, Leba'o reflected in the big gong</p>
<p><i>Dara' uih ngan delé kaio' inah kadang malong Delé kaio' inah rawir metok liang parong</i></p>	<p>They all come to beg for me, I am so precious But I am not interested in that tall man of no consequence That man who is so tall that he reaches the attic</p>
<p><i>Metok liang parong metok liang apo kenangan polong Non nok ngelilid talun berenong</i></p>	<p>Who reaches right up to the roof made of wild sago leaves That man who wears a loincloth made of <i>berenong</i> tree bark Lang Beratong who is only good for making roofs²⁰</p>
<p><i>Nok me ngapo ruma' uih Lang Berato' Lang Beratong Ngadan Lang Padan naro' paté' omong dih todong pian Kuh ko ra'an Retong lili pian ngemu kuh rang Bupu' Lungung</i></p>	<p>I like big well-built Lang Padan, the one who makes war throughout the world²¹ You stand out like the Retong mountain pass and are the only one in the world whom I want, right up to the Gate of the Shadow</p>

Balang Katu felt very bad after hearing this. He started weeping uncontrollably. 'Even if you don't want me, Aruring,' he said, 'why do you sing such a *sedarir*? You make me so unhappy!' But he realized that Aruring Manapu Boong loved only Toked Rini.

The rice harvest

The people of Luun Atar had rested by now and they started thinking about what they should do next. 'Have you been to our fields recently, Aruring, my dear?' said Toked Rini. 'How are they getting on?'. 'I went yesterday,' said Aruring, 'and the rice is ripe and ready to be harvested. The ears are so heavy that the rice is starting to fall over.' 'Well, why don't we start harvesting tomorrow?' said Toked

²⁰ Lang Beratong here refers to Balang Katu, according to Ribuh Balang of Bario; as is usual in *sekono* ' like this, real names are not used.

²¹ Lang Padan here refers to Toked Rini, according to Ribuh Balang of Bario.

Rini. So they sent word down the longhouse that harvesting would begin the following day. 'Who are we going to help with the harvesting tomorrow?' asked the people of Luun Atar. 'We're going to help Toked Rini,' they were told. So everyone took down their big *bu'an* harvesting baskets, ready for the next day.

The following day when they reached the field belonging to Toked Rini and Aruring Manapu Boong the rice was so ripe and brown that it looked a swollen river. Everyone started work harvesting the field.

On the other side of the river there were other people harvesting: Toked Rini Luun Ape Layun, Toked Rini living On the Layun Plain, and his people. Their fields were just opposite those of Toked Rini Luun Atar and Aruring Manapo Boong. The people of Luun Atar called out in a friendly fashion to the people of Luun Ape Layun, 'Come and harvest with us!' 'You come over here!' replied the people of Luun Ape Layun, teasing them back.

Once their big harvesting baskets were full everyone went back to the longhouse to eat. After lunch, they said, 'Let's go and bathe in the river!'. The people on the other side of the river, from Luun Ape Layun, also went to bathe in the river. 'This is nice, bathing together,' they all said to each other. 'Let's get the two Toked Rinis to wrestle to see who is strongest!' So they tried to persuade them to engage in a wrestling match in the water. The two Toked Rinis were a bit reluctant. 'Are we little kids, that you ask us to play around in the water?' they said. But they were quite easily persuaded. 'OK then, my friend, why not?' they said to each other. So they started to wrestle. They were matched exactly, those two strong heroes, those two good people. The water of the Kerayan river²² got so muddy from their struggles that you wouldn't have been able to drink it. Eventually, Toked Rini of Luun Atar threw Toked Rini of Luun Ape Layun into the water. 'Eeii.. you are stronger than me,' said Toked Rini Luun Ape Layun. So they stopped wrestling and got out of the water. 'Never mind, we'll wrestle again and next time you'll probably win. No hard feelings, eh?' said Toked Rini Luun Atar. 'Oh... no hard feelings. We were only playing around, anyway!' said Toked Rini Luun Ape Layun.

By this time it was evening and everyone went home. 'Whom shall we go harvesting with tomorrow?' said the people of Luun Atar. 'Let's go and help Balang Katu!' So next morning they went to Balang Katu's field. That day the people on the other side of the river, at Luun Ape Layun, were also harvesting the fields of their own Balang Katu. After lunch the two Balang Katus wanted to try each other out, and they also decided to wrestle in the water. But as usual Balang Katu Luun Atar was slow getting started. 'So when are we going to get this wrestling match going?' said the other Balang Katu, from Luun Ape Layun. 'Just a minute, just a minute,' said Balang Katu of Luun Atar. Eventually he made his way down to the river. He looked for a stone to jump from into the river, and knocked his foot against a stone. 'Are you OK? Come on, let's start,' said Balang

²² The Kerayan is used as a pseudonym; the river referred to is really the Kelapang river, according to Ribuh Balang of Bario. This is usual in *sekono*, where real names of places are not used.

Katu of Luun Ape Layun. Finally Balang Katu of Luun Atar was ready. He made a surprise jump on top of Balang Luun of Luun Ape Layun and knocked him over. 'There you go! You can't easily beat us Luun Atar people!' said Balang Katu of Luun Atar. He dived underwater and surfaced on the other bank.

'How about exchanging identities? You put on my loincloth and I'll wear yours. Let's swap, just for tonight. You sleep over at my longhouse and I'll sleep at yours,' said Balang Katu of Luun Atar. 'Well., I'm not sure about that,' said Balang Katu of Luun Ape Layun. He looked over at Balang Katu of Luun Atar, who was putting on his loincloth, which he'd left on the other bank. Balang Katu of Luun Ape Layun was eventually persuaded to go along with the game. He slowly put on Balang Katu of Luun Atar's loincloth, and went harvesting that afternoon with the Luun Atar people.

When the people of Luun Atar gave Balang Katu of Luun Ape Layun *borak* rice beer that afternoon at the rice field, he was shy and didn't drink much. Balang Katu of Luun Atar, on the other hand, was very keen to drink lots of the *borak* offered to him by the people of Luun Ape Layun. 'You people should give me lots of *borak*, as I'm a visitor; you should always give visitors twice as much *borak* as locals!' said he to his hosts. So they gave him two gourds full of *borak*, while everyone else only got one. After they finished harvesting that evening they went back to the longhouse. There he insisted on two shares of food, and they gave them to him. Night fell, and everyone wanted to go to bed. They brought Balang Katu of Luun Ape Layun's wife, Tsong Blu Agong of Luun Ape Layun, to Balang Katu of Luun Atar. But he wasn't satisfied. 'One lady isn't enough!' he said. 'It's usual to give special visitors like me two ladies, not just one!' So they brought him both Tsong Blu Agong and a young girl, Mudan Apui Mulun, Rain of Living Fire. He lay down between them. 'How am I going to manage both of these ladies?' he asked himself. He lay down on his chest between them and put one arm over one lady and the other arm over on the other lady, and spread his legs like a frog over the two of them. But the ladies didn't like this and they pushed him off so that he fell over. They stood up and left him. So he spent the night alone.

The next morning, after eating, the people of Luun Atar went harvesting with Agan Pun Tolang Na'am Mitun, Agan Whose Bones Go Straight for His Target. The people of Luun Ape Layun on the other side of the river went harvesting with Anak Lanawa, Son of Tree Trunk, of Luun Ape Layun. And each day they went and harvested a different family's field until all the rice had been brought in.

After they'd finished harvesting, they began to think about holding the harvest festival – the feast of 'eating new rice'. 'We need to move ourselves to go hunting. We need something to eat with our rice at the feast!' they said to themselves. And so all the men went hunting and brought back lots of wild pigs for the feast.