

**Appearances as Metaphor**  
By Jigme Lingpa (1730-1785)

Ho Ho!

**Deep** in vast expanse of sky above,  
**Crimson** vultures glide with majesty,  
So too **I**, in mind-appearance vast expanse,  
**Soar** without a goal distraction-free.

**Below** in verdant gardens of the earth,  
**Fragrant** leaves of shrubs and forests dance,  
So too **I**, to grow and feed experience,  
**Train rigpa** in the sway of thought.

In **between**, in villages of human kind,  
**Ladies** ravishing will flaunt their dress.  
So too **I**, within the endless vast expanse,  
**Wear** appearances as ornaments.

To the **sound** of “Swirling waves of Kokonor”  
**Dancers** sway and clasp their partner’s waists.  
So too **I**, to mix appearances with mind,  
**Rest** in vastness, but cut to the chase.

In **courtyards** of monasteries of esteem,  
**Scholars** forge debates both day and night.  
So too **I**, untethered in simplicity,  
**Forge** this wisdom path in mundane life

On **thrones**, with silks and cushions piled high,  
**Abbots** are busy with all kinds of tasks.  
So too **I**, to capture inter-being’s throne,  
**Discern** thinking mind from rigpa’s truth.

**Inside** of hallowed mansions, grand estates  
**Landlords** keep their servants close in check.  
So too **I**, in this humble natural cave,  
**Keep** projections, concepts well subdued.

In the **snare** of ordinary household life  
**Matrons** till their fields and work the land  
So too **I**, in this natural discipline,  
**Tend** to progress as already free.

**Atop** this turquoise meadow mandala

**H**erders tend their cattle and their sheep  
So too **I**, this sheep strand of conceptual mind  
**Herd** into the heart of insight's fold.

On these **i**solated lonely narrow paths,  
**B**andits try to rob the people poor.  
So too **I**, these stubborn thoughts of hope and fear  
**L**et awareness plunder to the core.

In the **v**ast counties where ascetics roam,  
**Y**ogis fend away the dogs' attacks.  
So too **I**, at portal of the vast expanse  
**P**ounce on selfish dualistic mind.

On the **d**oorsteps of these prosperous village homes,  
**B**eloved children play their games.  
So too **I**, within this home of naturalness  
**E**njoy this *rigpa*'s fine display.

In **sams**ara, endless diversions arise.  
In **nirv**ana, poles of good and bad recede.  
This whole **m**ind has one basis, but many moods,  
**M**irrors both delusion and the truth.

These **a**ppearances arise as metaphor.  
**M**etaphors hide meanings deep within.  
If these **m**eanings find their way to declaration,  
**M**any are the ones who will not care.

But if **y**ou absorb them, you will find the truth.  
**T**hose with wisdom, you will understand.  
**I**, this scion of good lineage,  
**C**utting subtle threads of hope and fear,  
**T**ake impressions to a song of life.  
**D**welling in this lonely mountain cave,  
Free **w**ithin, I hoist the practice banner high,  
**C**hasing all phenomena's collapse.

First, these **w**ords are wondrous and peculiar chatter.  
**S**econd, this is straight authentic talk.  
**T**hird, this springs anew from wakeful mind.  
On this **p**eak that dwarfs this endless sky above,

**B**athed in radiant rays of wisdom-love,  
**I** behave just like a demoness.