

## *DREAMS, LIES, AND THE ROTTEN MILK OF SAMBARA*

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Myself, I am called a 'tulku' like it is something special. Good luck! I am not that kind. One way, you can say all sentient beings are a tulku—all sentient beings are somebody's reincarnation. I'm not saying all the lamas called 'tulku' are liars, though—there are some real tulkus, not just in name only; amazing tulkus, absolutely bodhisattvas, without one hair of self-grasping, just trying to benefit. They are not here because of negativity. They are just here trying to help. They don't lie to you. They don't lie to themselves, either.

Ordinary beings, we are nothing but lies. We lie to ourselves. We lie to each other. Look at yourself—do you know what you are? You say, “I am this person's son or daughter. This is my father, this is my mother. This is my husband or wife.” We think we are so smart and know something that way. But can you say you *really* know it? How do you know who is your father or your mother? Somebody told you. Just looking at your own body, your own mind, there is no father or mother there. You can't look at your body and know who your wife or your husband is. We say all these things as if they were truth—my mother, my father, my sister, my friend, my enemy. Actually, if you look at yourself, where is the proof? If you look at the other person, it is the same—there is nothing there to prove they are your daddy or mommy, your boyfriend. Nothing to prove they are your enemy or your best friend. If there is proof, show me! You have nothing! Those are all lies we make up. We think we are so smart! “I am this one. I am this way. She is that one. She is that way. This one is good. That one is bad.” Liars! How do you know that, really? Truthfully, can you say that? 100% honestly?

Sometimes we support each other's lie. Sometimes we fight. If there were something real, nobody could fight. It would just be obviously one way or one thing.

We don't know ourselves. Again we pretend something is there. Look at your dream last night. Maybe you can remember it or maybe not, but either way, it's gone. Do you know who you were in your dream? Are you this person standing here this morning or that dream person? That dream one is gone! Still you say you are that one? That's strange, isn't it? If you want to say it, though, that's okay. You won't break anything! You won't damage somebody's house or anything, whatever you want to say! But how can you say it's really true? Your dream body, your waking body—you can say anything, any lie about them. Your dream speech, waking speech, same; dream mind, waking mind. Now where did you go? Body is a lie, speech is a lie, mind is a lie? Now where is your YOU, honestly, truthfully?

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Where did your dream go? It wasn't made of material sticks and stones. There is not a big pile of your dream sticks and stones that were left somewhere when you woke up. Even if you dreamed of a giant mountain, there was no physical mountain. It was all our phenomena, made of karma. At the end of this life, it will be the same. This life's phenomena will be finished. What do we take in our suitcase to the next life? Only the karma that we made.

What is our karma? Negative. Why? Because we are self-centered. With our self-cherishing, we make our whole samsara. Sleeping, dreaming, waking, bardo, this life, next life—we create everything. Because we only have self-interest and no compassion, then we always create negative things. We always create suffering. Negative this life, negative next life. We want our self-cherishing to get success, but then when it is all wrong, we blame others. Again upside down for how many eons and eons!

Our self-cherishing is our biggest lie. If we really loved ourselves, we wouldn't want even one tiny hair of samsara's garbage suffering stuff. We would just go straight to liberation. If you really want to benefit yourself, stop the lies. That is number one. You don't need to tell everybody, “I'm stopping my lie! Look at how special!” maybe hoping they will come lick your butt. You don't need to make a big deal. Honesty, truth, those are naturally obvious. Like the difference between fresh milk and rotten milk. Instantly you know. You can smell it!

You don't need to pretend your rotten milk is fresh, or maybe try to sell it to someone, cheat someone. Our whole samsara is because we weren't honest about which one is rotten and which one is fresh. Now enough's enough. Rotten one is rotten. Fresh one is fresh. Rotten milk will ruin your delicious tea. Rotten samsara, you don't need to drink anymore and pretend to smile like it is delicious. Rotten one give up. Time for the real fresh. Real fresh milk you never got, I think. Time to get it. And not just in your hand or in your cup, but time to drink it. Fresh dharma. Fresh compassion. Fresh faith and trust. Fresh wisdom. Fresh honesty. If you want the real one, up to you.

Tashi Delek!

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