

Living an Appearance-Emptiness Life

You know the supreme path that is free from coming and going,
And you teach the true nature of all phenomena,
While never leaving a single being out of your compassion's embrace,
Great mother, noble Tara, I bow at your feet.

Since all phenomena, outer and inner, are dependently existent mere appearances,
They have no inherent nature, they are just appearance-emptiness.
If you know how they resemble dreams and illusions,
All comings and goings will be open and relaxed.

Since appearances of friends and enemies are dependently existent,
Both are appearance-emptiness, like rainbows, and if you know this,
That is called, "meditation on illusion."
Within openness you will achieve inner peace.

A planet and a particle are equal,
An aeon and an instant are equal, the Buddha taught.
If you gain uncontrived certainty in this,
Within spaciousness, any work you do will come out alright.

When you are expert at studying your own mind
All that appears becomes your guru,
And even your enemies become friends of your Dharma practice—
E ma! What a wonderful miracle!

— *Verses composed for a student, June 24, 1998. Translated by Ari Goldfield.*