



CHALLENGE FROM A WISE DEMONESS

Obeisance to all Gurus

Once Milarepa stayed in Nya Non [for a short period]. The people there besought him to remain but he would not consent, and, in compliance with his Guru's order, went to Riwo Balnbar and practiced meditation in a cave near Linba. To the right of his seat there was a cleft in the rock. Late one night, Milarepa heard a cracking sound from the crevice. He got up from his seat and looked around. But as he saw nothing, he thought it must be an illusion, and so returned to his bed-seat. Suddenly, a great beam of light shone out from the crevice. In the midst of the light appeared a red man on a black deer led by a beautiful woman. The man gave Milarepa a blow with his elbow accompanied by a suffocating wind, and then disappeared. The woman became a red bitch, who immediately caught Milarepa by the foot. Milarepa realized that this was an apparition conjured by (the she-demon) Draug Srin Mo, so he sang the following song to her:

I make obeisance to Marpa, the gracious one.

*You, malignant Draug Srin Mo of Linba Draug,
you sinful female ghost*

*Appearing in a vicious conjured form,
In your contempt you come looking for a
chance [to harm me].*

*I do not deceive in tuneful song:
·I sing only honest words and truth.*

*In the midst of the blue sky,
The blessing of moon and sun brings affluence.*

*From the marvelous Palace of Heaven
shines the ray of light
By which all sentient beings are illumined and seen.
[I pray] the planet Chamju will not rival
The sun and moon as they circle the Four
Continents.*

*In the Eastern Quarter, on the top of Snow Mountain,
Darsen Gharma, the snow lioness, brings prosperity;
She is the queen of beasts,
And never eats spoiled meat.
When she appears on the horizon
Do not afflict her with a storm!*

*In the South, amid the forest trees,
The mountain tigress, Dagmo Ridra, brings prosperity;
She is the champion of all wild beasts,
gallant and invincible.
When she walks on a narrow and dangerous path,
Do not ambush her in a hunter's trap!*

*In the West, in the Ma Pam ocean, blue and vast,
The Dogar Nya [White-bellied Fish] brings
prosperity;
She is the supreme dancer of the water-element,
In a marvelous way she rolls her eyes.
When she seeks delicious food,
Do not harm her with a fish-hook!*

*In the North, above the wide Red Rock,
Shajageubo, the great vulture brings prosperity;
She is the queen of birds.
Wondrous indeed, she never takes the
lives of others.
When she seeks food on the top of the
three mountains,
Do not trap her in a net!*

*In the cave of Linba where the vultures live,
I, Milarepa, bring prosperity.
I aim at my own and others' welfare,
Renouncing a worldly life.
With an enlightened mind,
I strive for Buddhahood in one lifetime.
Diligent and undistracted I practice Dharma.
Draug Srin Mo, pray do not afflict me!
Pray hearken to this song with five
parables and six meanings,
The song with rhythm, the song like a golden string.*

*Pitiable Draug Srin Mo! Do you understand me?
To commit evil Karma is a heavy sin.
Should you not take heed of this sinful Karma?
Should you not control your harmful thoughts
and vicious heart?
If you do not realize that all things are
merely of the mind,
The endless apparitions of Nhamdog will
never cease.
If one realizes not that the Mind-Essence is void,
How can one dispel the spirit of evil?
You sinful demon hag! Do not afflict me!
Harm me not, and return to your own abode!*

Instantaneously she disappeared. However, still holding his foot, she replied to Milarepa:

*Oh, you gifted son of the Dharma,
The one alone who has courage and fortitude,
The yogi who treads the Path of the Cemetery,
The saintly Buddhist who follows the ascetic way,
Your song is the Buddha's teaching,
More precious than gold.
To exchange gold for brass is shameful.
Should I not atone for the sins I have committed,
All that I have ever said will be a lie.*

*For an answer to the Song of Karma
Which you have just sung to me,*

Hearken closely to my allegories.

*In the midst of the blue sky,
Shines the light of sun and moon
Through which prosperity to earth is brought.*

*As you have just said,
Rays from the Measureless Palace of the Gods
Dispel the darkness in the Four Continents,
While moon and sun circle the Islands Four,
With ease they give out beams of light;
Were they not dazzled by their glowing rays,
How could Rahu afflict them?*

*In the East, where towers the crystal snow mountain,
Darsen Charmo brings prosperity;
She is the queen of beasts;
She commands them as her servants.
When she appeared on the horizon,
The hurricanes and storms would not have
afflicted her
Had she not become too proud and arrogant.*

*In the South, amid the dense forest trees,
The mountain tigress brings prosperity;
Champion is she of all the beasts.
With pride she boasts of conquests with her claws;
When she comes close to a narrow and dangerous path,
She shows off her pride with great hauteur.
Were she not flaunting her delusive stripes and smiles,
The hunter's trap would never catch her.*

*In the Western Quarter, in the depth of the blue ocean,
The White-bellied Fish brings prosperity;
She is the dancer in the water element.
She claims to be the seer of great gods.
Because of her gluttony, she searches for
delicious food.
Had she not used her illusive body*

*To search for human food,
How could the fish-hook harm her?*

*In the North, above the wide Red Rock,
The vulture, queen of birds, brings prosperity.
She is the Deva of birds, who dwells among
the trees.*

*She proudly claims that she disposes of all the birds.
When she searches for blood and flesh to eat,
She flies over the three mountains.
If she swooped not at her prey,
How could the bird net catch her?*

*In the vulture-dwelling Rock, you,
Milarepa, bring prosperity.
You claim that you are doing good, both
for yourself and others.
With the flowering of the perfect Bodhi-Heart,
attentively you meditate;
Your ambition is, in one life, to become Buddha.
Your hope is to save sentient beings in the
Six Realms.
When you were engrossed in the practice of
meditation,
The powerful force of your habitual-thoughts
arose,
It stirred your Self-mind and aroused delusory
discriminations.
If in your mind the discriminating thought,
"Enemy," had ne'er arisen,
How could I, Draug Srin Mo, afflict you?*

*You should know that from one's mind alone
Comes the evil of habitual-thinking.
What is the use of my following your guidance
If you have not realized the Mind of Suchness?
You had better go your own way, while I go mine.*

*He who does not realize the mind's voidness,
Can never be exempted from the influence of evil.
If one knows the Self-mind by oneself,
All obstacles and difficulties become one's aids.
Even I, Draug Srin Mo, will then gladly be
his servant.
You, Milarepa, still have wrong ideas,
You have yet to pierce into the Self-mind's nature,
You have yet to penetrate to illusion's root.*

When Draug Srin Mo finished her singing, Milarepa was much impressed with her cleverness. He appeared to be very pleased [and somewhat surprised] to hear such expressions from a demoness, and, in answer to her, replied with a song, "The Eight Parables of Thinking":

*Yes! Yes! What you have said is true, true indeed.
Oh! You vicious Draug Srin Mo,
It is hard to find words truer than these.
Although I have traveled far and wide,
Never have I heard a song so beautiful.
Even should one hundred great scholars assemble here,
No better illustration could they give.
You, a specter, have sung good words;
They are like a rod of gold,
Which strikes into my very heart.
Thus the Heart-air, the Dharma-clinging
are dispelled;
The darkness of my ignorant blindness is
thus illumined;
The white lotus of wisdom blossoms thus;
The lamp which brightens self-awareness
is lit;
And mindfulness of awareness is fully liberated.

[In observing that] this mindfulness is liberated
I stare upward at the great blue sky,
I realize completely the empty nature of being;
Of palpable existence,
No anxiety or fear have I.*

*When I look at the sun and moon
I realize their nakedness, the radiance of
Mind-Essence;
Of distraction and drowsiness, no fear have I.*

*When I gaze at the top of the mountains,
I clearly realize the immutable Samadhi;
Of change and flow I have no fear.*

*When I look down at the flowing river,
I fully realize the running nature of all flux;
Of the wrong view of Non-cause, I have no
fear or misgiving.*

*When I contemplate the rainbow-like [illusions of existence]
I clearly realize the identity of Form and Voidness;
Of the nihilistic and realistic wrong-views
I have no fear.*

*When I see the shadows and the moon-in-water,
I fully realize the self-radiance of Non-clinging;
Of subjective and objective thoughts,
I have no fear.*

*When I look inwardly to the self-aware mind,
I clearly see the light of the inner lamp;
Of ignorant blindness, I have no fear.*

*When I hear what you, sinful spirit, have sung,
I fully realize the nature of self-awareness;
Of the obstacles and difficulties, I have no fear.*

*You, specter, are indeed eloquent in speech!
Do you really understand the nature of mind
as you have said?
Look at the ugly birth of a hag-specter which
you have merited!*

*You do nothing but vicious and evil deeds.
This is caused by your Dharma-ignorance and disregard of morality.
You should heed more diligently*

*The evils and sufferings of Samsara.
You should thoroughly renounce the Ten
Evil Actions.
A yogi, lion-like, I have neither fear nor panic.
You, sinful demon, should not think my
joking words are true.
I was only making fun of you.
Oh spirit! You have mocked me this evening!
But may we follow the legend of the Buddha
and the Five Demons,
And may the perfect Bodhi-Mind arise in you!
With your pure vow, combined with my compassion,
May you become one of my disciples in the
future life.*

Moved by his reply, a full faith in the Jetsun blossomed in Draug Srin Mo's heart. She released Milarepa's foot and sang with a sweet voice:

*It is by virtue of the stock of Merits
That you, oh gifted Yogi,
Are able to practice the Dharma
And remain alone within this mountain solitude!
Your merciful eyes keep watch o'er all beings
in compassion!*

*I follow the Lineage of Bedma Tutrin
And have heard the rosary of precious
words in the holy Dharma.
Though I have listened to much preaching,
And attended great congregations,
Still my craving and clinging are excessive.*

*I lead to goodness those who observe the Dharma;
I show the right Path to gifted Buddhists.*

*Although my intention is friendly and my motive good,
Food must be sought to support this depraved body.*

*I roam the earth in this evil form,
Desiring blood and flesh for food.*

*I enter into the soul of whomsoever I encounter;
I incite the hearts of maidens, pretty and
charming;
I madden with lust the blood of young men,
strong and handsome.
With my eyes, I amuse myself watching all
the dramas;
With my mind, I instigate cravings in all nations;
With my body I incite people to excitement
and restlessness.*

*My home is at Linba,
My residence is in the Rock.*

*These are the things I do,
This is my sincere reply and honest
self-confession.
These are the words of greeting for our meeting,*

*This is the evidence of my faith in you,
and of my offerings.
Singing this song of honesty,
Let us be inspired and happy.*

Milarepa thought, "This demon's earnest inquiry must be well answered, and her pride subdued." He then sang:

*Hearken, hearken closely, you depraved hag.
The Guru is good, but the disciple is bad.
Those who have only heard and read the
teaching of the Dharma,
Merely grasp at words.
They do not understand the real Dharma.
Eloquent and convincing as their words may sound,
There is neither use nor value in them.*

*Deceitful sayings and empty talk help not
In cleansing the defilements of one's mind.*

*Because of your evil habit-propensities
formed in the past,
And your vicious doings in the present,
You have violated the Precepts and your Vows.
By force of these transgressions,
You were born as a lower form of woman.
Your body wanders in the wretched haunts
of cannibals;
Your talk is self-cheating and deceiving;
Your mind is saturated with thoughts of
afflicting others.*

*It was because of your disregard of the Law of Karma,
That an ugly body in an inferior birth was taken,
Should you think now upon the vices of Samsara,
You would confess your guilt, and promise to
do good.*

*Like a lion, I do not fear;
Like an elephant, I have no anxiety;
Like a madman, I have no pretension and no hope.
I tell you the honest truth.
To make trouble and afflict me
Will only bring more sorrow on yourself.*

*Make a vow toward the pure Dharma.
Make a wish to be my disciple in the future.
Oh, you confused, depraved hag,
Think on these words with care!*

Draug Srin Mo now appeared visibly as before, and with honesty she sang:

*Of the Holy Buddhas of the Three Times,
The Buddha Vajradhara is the chief;
He also is the Lord of the wondrous Doctrine.
The arising of Bodhi-Mind is indeed remarkable.*

*You may call me a depraved hag, but I do have great Merits.
True understanding arose when I heard your warning.*

*At first I swore to obey my Guru's instructions,
I studied and learned the holy Dharma.
But then I indulged myself, committing evil deeds.
With vicious passions burning wildly,
unbearably in my heart,
I was born in the ugly form of a she-demon.
I meant to help all sentient beings,
But again and again the results were evil.*

*You came, great Yogi, at the beginning of last year;
Staying alone in the cave, you meditated in
solitude.
Sometimes I like you, but sometimes I do not!
It is because I like you that I came tonight;
It is because I do not, that I seized your foot.
I now repent this evil deed.*

*Hereafter, this wretched hag will renounce
her wrong-doings;
With all her heart she will practice the Dharma;
She will serve Buddhism as best she can.
From now on, with the cool shade of the
tree of grace,
Please protect her from the Five Poisonous
Cravings*

*I, the depraved woman with ugly form, take refuge in you,
And rely on the instructions you have given.
I herewith renounce my malicious intentions.
From now until the time I achieve Buddhahood,
I swear to protect the yogis, and befriend
.all who meditate.
I will serve and assist the followers
Of the Doctrine, the observers of the Precepts.
To advanced yogis and the Dharma, I shall be
an honest servant.*

Thereupon, Draug Srin Mo swore before Milarepa that in the future she would never harm anyone. She also took an oath to protect all who meditate. In order to guide Draug Srin Mo. Milarepa then sang:

*I am the venerable one who has renounced Samsara;
I am the noble son of my Guru;
In me are stored the precious teachings;
A Buddhist with great sincerity and devotion am I.*

*I am the yogi who perceives the essence of being;
I am like a mother to all sentient beings;
I am a man who has courage and perseverance,
The holder of the spirit of Gautama Buddha,
The master of the Heart-aspiring-to-Bodhi.*

*I am the one who always adheres to kindness;
With great compassion I have subdued all
evil thoughts.
I am the one who stays in the cave of Linba,
Who practices meditation without distraction.*

*Do you think you are happy now? You confused,
wretched hag!
If you have not found happiness, it is your own fault.
Beware! Your clinging-to-Ego is greater than yourself;
Pay heed! Your emotions are stronger than yourself.*

*Oh, specter, your vicious will is far wickeder than yourself;
Your habitual-thought is more characteristic than yourself;
Your ceaseless mental activity is more frantic than yourself!*

*To maintain the existence of a ghost,
Only brings about mischief;
To understand the non-existence of a ghost
Is the way of Buddha;
To know that ghost and Reality are one
Is the way to Liberation.
Knowing that the ghosts are all one's parents
Is the right understanding;
Realizing that the ghost itself is Self-mind
Is glory supreme.*

*You will be emancipated from all fetters
If you realize the truth that I have stated;
This is my instruction to you, demoness!*

*To become my disciple you must observe the precepts.
Violate not the rules of Vajrayana,
Debase not the great Compassion,
Afflict not the body, word, and mind of Buddhists.
If you ever violate these rules.
You can be assured of plummeting to
the Vajra Hell!
Recite these important rules three times;
Remember their meaning and practice them.*

*Let us now make a wish, and may the boon
come quickly to you!
With the peerless Bodhi-Heart, inconceivably
great, may you have great happiness.
In your future life,
May you then become my chief disciple,
Oh, woman of Dorje Semba.*

After Draug Srin Mo had taken the oath before the Jetsun, she made obeisances to him and also circumambulated him many times. She swore that thereafter she would obey all his orders. Then she disappeared like a rainbow, vanishing into the sky.

In the meantime, the day was dawning, and the sun shone. After a while Draug Srin Mo returned, bringing with her brothers, sisters, and a retinue, all with handsome faces and dressed in their best, to see the Jetsun. They made many offerings to him.

Draug Srin Mo said to Milarepa, "I am a sinful ghost. Forced by evil Karma, I was caught in a low form of birth; driven by evil habitual-thoughts, I influenced others, also, to become evil. I pray you to forgive me. Evil intention made me do you mischief. I entreat you to forgive me for what I have done. Hereafter I will obey your orders strictly and try to be your honest servant. Be gracious, and tell us of the supreme Truth that you have realized." In making this request Draug Srin Mo sang:

*Oh, thou! Thou (great one)! The son of great heroes!
Having amassed numerous merits,
You have become a gifted person;
Belonging to a distinguished Succession,*

You are endowed with Waves of Grace.

*You are the one who meditates with great perseverance,
Who with endurance stays alone,
Who industriously practices the deep teachings.
To you there are no devils and no obstacles!*

*Through realizing the microcosm of the
inner Channels and Pranas,
You can work great miracles.*

*We and you are in harmonious relationship.
Our pure wishes in previous lives brought
about our meeting.
Though I have met numerous accomplished saints,
Only through you have I received grace and guidance.
I, a hag-specter, speak with sincerity!*

*The expedient truth of Hinayana may be illusive;
It is indeed hard to subdue the passions
due to Karma!
One may talk eloquently about the Dharma,
But talk is of no avail when suffering
and misery come.
That kind of Guru who strays from the Dharma,
Will not help himself, and merely incurs hatred.*

*You! The Incarnation Body of Buddha
in the Three Times,
Realize the immutable truth of Dharmata.
With the inner teaching, you practice the
quintessence of Dharma.*

*In this blessed place where grew the Ultimate
Enlightenment,
We, Draug Srin Mo and her retinue,
Pray you to elucidate for us the teaching
of the Innermost Secret.
Pray! Grant us the secret words of Vajrayana,*

*the truth of the Ultimate;
Pray! Teach us the great illuminating Wisdom,
Pray! Grant us the radiance of the Light!*

*By hearing the immutable Truth, the profound
Secret Doctrine,
One will not fall into the lower path.
By practicing the teaching of the Secret Doctrine,
One will not wander in Samsara's paths.
Without hiding and concealment,
We pray you to unfold to us the Truth complete.*

Milarepa then said, "From what I can see now, not all of you are able to practice the highest teaching of the immutable Truth. If you insist on learning the Inner Teaching you must swear with your life and pledge a solemn oath."

Thereupon, Draug Srin Mo swore an oath that henceforth she would follow all the orders of the Jetsun, and that she would serve and assist all Buddhists. In answer to her questions, Milarepa sang a song, "The Immutable and Real Dharma on the Twenty-seven Vanishments":

*To the secret Buddha with a human body,
To the incomparable Translator, Marpa,
my father Guru,
At your feet I bow, oh Gracious One!*

*I am not a singer who wishes to display his art,
But you, specter, entreat me to sing and sing again.
Today I will sing to you of the Ultimate Truth.*

*Thunder, lightning, and the clouds,
Arising as they do out of the sky,
Vanish and recede back into it.*

*The rainbow, fog, and mist,
Arising as they do from the firmament,
Vanish and recede back into it.*

*Honey, fruit, and crops grow out of the earth;
All vanish and recede back into it.*

*Flowers, leaves, and forests,
Arising as they do out of the earth,
Vanish and return back into it once more.*

*The ripple, tide, and flux,
Arising as they do from the great ocean,
Also vanish and into it return.*

*Habitual-thinking, clingings, and desires,
Arising as they do from the Alaya Consciousness,
All vanish and return to the Alaya.*

*Self-awareness, self-illumination, and self-liberation,
Arising as they do from the Mind-Essence,
All vanish and dissolve back into the mind.*

*Non-arising, Non-extinction, and Non-description,
Arise from the Dharmata
And all return to it again.*

*Phantasms, hallucinations, and visions of demons,
All are produced from Yoga,
And all go back and vanish into it again.*

*Should one cling to the reality of visions,
He would be confused in his meditation.*

*If he knew not that all obstacles
Reveal the Void, the manifestation of Mind,
He would be misled in his meditation.
The very root of all confusion
Also comes out of the mind.*

*He who realizes the nature of that mind,
Sees the great Illumination without coming
and going.*

*Observing the nature of all outer forms,
He realizes that they are but illusory visions
of mind.*

He sees also the identity of the Void and Form.

*Moreover, to meditate is an illusory thought;
Not to meditate is illusory, too.
It is the same whether or not you meditate.*

*Discrimination of "the two" is the
source of all wrong views.
From the ultimate viewpoint there is no
view whatsoever.
This is the nature of Mind.
The teaching of observation of
The Dharma-nature is illustrated through
the simile of space.
You, Draug Srin Mo, should look into the
meaning of beyond-thoughts;
You should enter the non-distracted realm
in meditation;
You should act naturally and spontaneously,
Ever conscious of the Essence.*

*Beyond words is the Accomplishment, free
from hope and fear.
I have no time to sing for fun, chatting with
empty words.
Oh, spirit! Think of the auspicious Dharma.
Ask little, do not raise so many questions;
But be relaxed and sit at ease!*

*I sing as you requested;
These are my mad words.
If you can practice them,
You will eat the food of Great Bliss
when hungry,
And drink the Nectar when thirsty.
Then you can help yogis by your actions.*

Whereupon Draug Srin Mo and her retinue were overwhelmed with devotion for the Jetsun, making obeisances and circumambulating him many times. They cried, "Revered One, we are indeed deeply grateful to you!" and disappeared like a rainbow, vanishing into the sky.

From then on, they obeyed the orders of Milarepa; they served yogis, never afflicting them, and became their good friends.

This is the story of [Milarepa's meeting with] Draug Srin Mo at the cave of Linba.