

## Chapter Twelve

The five colors blind our eyes.<sup>29</sup>

The five notes deafen our ears.

The five flavors deaden our palates.

The chase and the hunt madden our hearts.

Precious goods impede our activities.

This is why sages are for the belly and not for the eye;

And so they cast off the one and take up the other.<sup>30</sup>

### Explanation

This passage promotes a lifestyle of simplicity. The first few lines discuss how an excessive amount of sensory experiences can be distracting and negative and make us not appreciate parts of life. The line about sages describes them as “for the belly and not for the eye,” meaning that they prioritize nourishment in all ways over fanciness and excessivity. Sages discard a glamorous life for a more simple one.

### Questions

What are some extravagant areas of your life, and what are areas that are more simple?

What are ways that we can adopt lives of simplicity in a materialistic world?