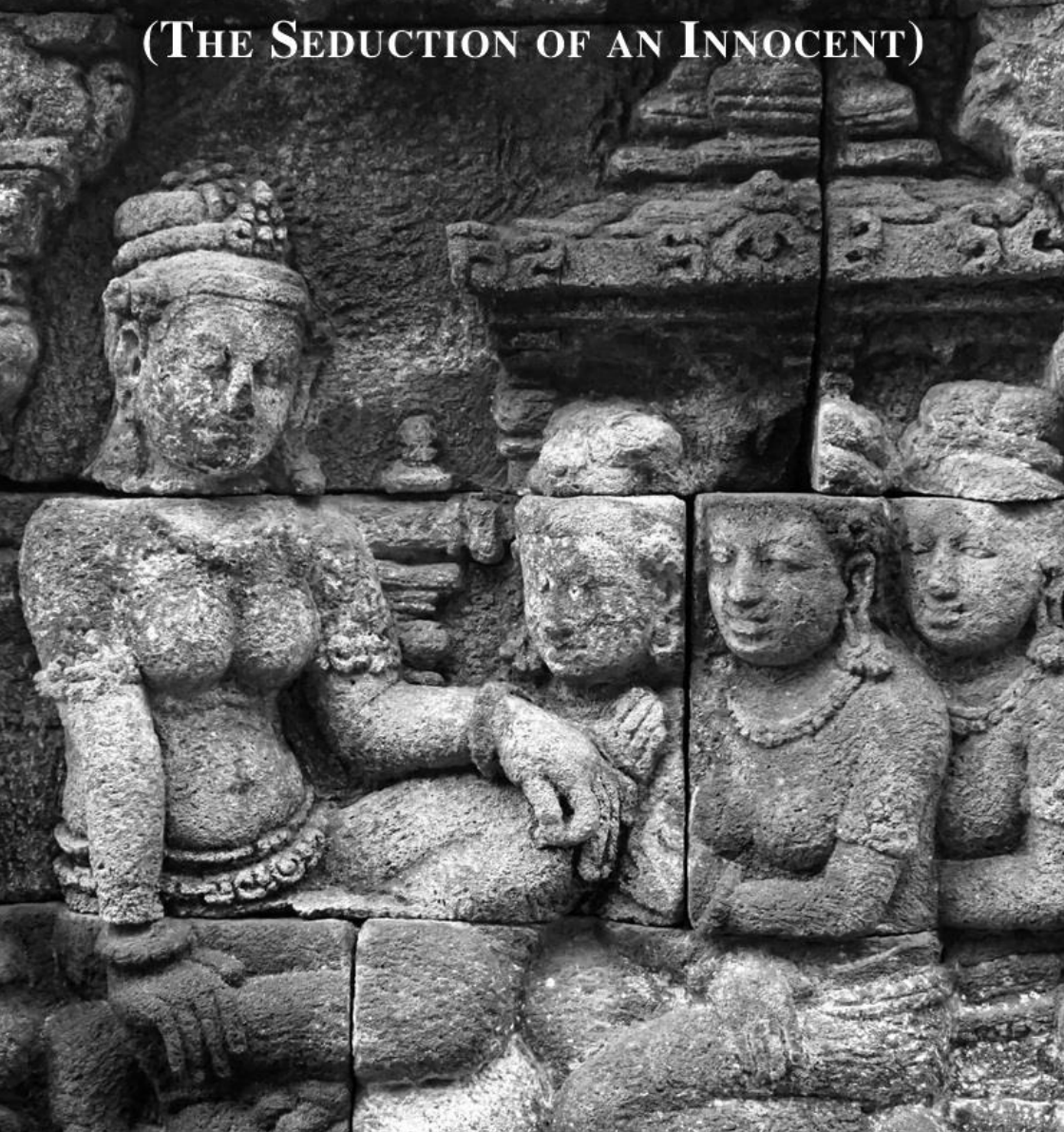


NAḶINIKĀ'S STORY

(THE SEDUCTION OF AN INNOCENT)



NAḶINIKĀJĀTAKAM, JA 526

TRANSLATED BY

ĀNANDAJOTI BHIKKHU

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(August 2010; Revised Edition, December, 2021)

Note

The story is an interesting, if highly improbable, fable: a sage lives alone in the Himālayas, there is semen in the urine he passes, and a deer who happens to eat the grass in that place gets pregnant from it. A human boy is later born to the deer and he is brought up in complete seclusion from mankind, and most importantly, from womankind.

The boy's ascetic power becomes so great that Sakka in his heaven is worried by it and causes a drought to occur in the country and blames it on the boy. He then convinces the king to send his daughter to seduce him and to break his power. The king and his daughter accept Sakka's reasoning and in good faith - and for the benefit of the country - agree to the plot.

The girl dresses up as an ascetic and while the father (the Bodhisatta) is away gathering roots and fruits in the forest, she manages to seduce the boy, who has never seen a woman before, though she does so with a completely unbelievable story.

Through their revelling the boy does indeed lose his powers, the girl then makes off, and when his father returns the boy who has become infatuated with his new friend, tells him all about it, only to be instructed and rebuked by his father, and repent his actions.

What happens next seems not to have interested the story-teller as, apart from the fate of the boy, who regains his former powers, he doesn't inform us. Once the boy had his powers back Sakka's seat must have glowed again, but whether he let it be, or stood up for a lifetime is not revealed.

It is interesting to note that this is not the only story of Isisiṅga that appears in the Jātakas, there is another, and somewhat similar, story just a few pages before, and which is referred to in our story. That is Jātaka 523, the Alambusājātaka, but there Sakka chooses a heavenly nymph to seduce the ascetic.

The outcome is the same, the sage is seduced, repents and Sakka is thwarted, but for some reason he does not seem upset, in fact he grants a boon to the seductress. The stories are, of course, in neither case, to be taken seriously, it is not in the logic of their events, but in their telling, that the story-teller has won his friends.

The story also appears in the Mahāvastu (Jones' translation pp. 139-147), but Ekaśṛṅga, as he is known there, is the Bodhisattva, and Nalinī is Yaśodharā in an earlier existence. There is a variation in the story as without his knowing it, Ekaśṛṅga is married to the girl and has to take up his responsibilities, eventually becoming the king and having 32 children.

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The story is also known to the Hindu epics the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, with many further variations. In the former Ekaśṛṅga was the chief priest when the king Dasaratha performed a sacrifice in order to gain children, and as the consequence there were born Rāma, Bhārata, and the twins Lakṣmana and Śatrughna!

Because of its sexual content the Pāli version of the story has never been translated in full before.

Ānandajoti Bhikkhu
August 2010

The Story of the Present

“*The country is dried up.*” {5.193} Now while the Teacher was living in Jeta’s Wood he told this about the seductions of a former wife. And in regard to this story, he asked the monk what was the cause of his dissatisfaction, and he said: “It is because of my former wife.”

“Monk, this one has been unbeneficial to you in the past also, and having lost the absorptions because of her, you came to a great calamity,” and after saying that he told a story about¹ the past.

The Story of the Past

In the past, when king Brahmadata was ruling in Benares, the Bodhisatta was born in a noble and wealthy brahmin family, and when he came of age he learned a craft.

Later, after going-forth in the seer’s ordination and attaining the absorptions and deep knowledges, he made his dwelling in the area of the Himālayas.²

¹ Lit: *produced, brought up, fetched*, figuratively it is used in these contexts to mean he recited or told a story about the past.

² *Himavanta* means possessed of snows; *Himālaya* means the region of snow; they both refer to the same mountainous area around the north of India.

Then at the place where the seer was urinating, one deer ate grass mixed with semen and drank the water. So much was her mind bound to him that, when she became pregnant, after going somewhere and eating the grass there, she wandered around in the neighbourhood of his hermitage.

The Great Being after examining the facts understood the reason. Afterwards she gave birth to a human boy. The Great Being brought him up with a father's love,³ and named him Isisinga, the Seer's Horn.

Now when he had come of age his father gave him the going-forth and taught him the preliminary meditation exercise.⁴ In no long time, he attained the absorptions and the deep knowledges and amused himself with the bliss of absorption, and had awful power and great resolve.

Because of the power of his virtue Sakka's dwelling place shook. Reflecting, Sakka knew the reason for it, and thinking: I will break his virtue through some means or other, for three long years he prevented rain in the whole kingdom of Kāsī, until the kingdom was as though burnt by fire.

With an unsuccessful harvest the people became oppressed by famine, and they blamed it on the impurity of the king. Then they stood at the king's window and asked: Why is this? saying: "Great king, {5.194} for

³ Lit: *with one having love for a child (or son)*.

⁴ Kasiṇa meditation is a concentration exercise on a coloured disk.

three years the sky-god hasn't rained, and the whole kingdom is dried up, people are suffering, make the sky-god rain, king.”⁵

The king established the virtuous practices and maintained the fast-day, but was still unable to make the rain fall down.

Then in the middle of the night, Sakka entered and illuminated the royal chamber, and stood in the air. The king, having seen him, asked:

“Who are you?”

“I am Sakka,”

“What have you come for?”

“Does the sky-god rain on your kingdom, great king?”

“He doesn't rain.”

“But do you know the reason for it not raining?”

“I do not know.”

“Great king, in the area of the Himālayas lives an ascetic named Isisinga who has awful power and great resolve. When the sky-god rains regularly he becomes angry and glares at the sky, therefore the sky-god does not rain.”⁶

“But now what is to be done in this case?”

“When his power is broken, the sky-god will rain.”

“But who is able to break his power?”

⁵ The word *deva* in Pāli carries a number of meanings: a *god* or *deity*, *the sky*, *a rain cloud*, *a king*. Here they are asking the King (*Deva*) to make the sky (*deva*) rain.

⁶ This is a deception of the part of Sakka, of course, and he is basically tempting the King to do what he next suggests through this false information.

“Your daughter, great king, Naḷinikā is able. After summoning her, send her to him saying: After going to such and such a place, break the ascetic’s power.”

Then, after advising the king, he returned to his own place in heaven.

The king on the following day discussed it with his ministers, and summoning his daughter, he spoke the first verse:

1. “The country is dried up, and the kingdom will be destroyed, Come, Naḷinikā, do you go and bring the brahmin for me.”⁷

Herein, *him for me*, bring that unbeneficial brahmin under your control for me, break his virtue by the power of the defilement of love.

Having heard that, she spoke the second verse:

2. “I cannot bear suffering, king, and I have no skill in roads, How will I go through a wood inhabited by elephants?”

Herein *bear suffering*, I, great king, cannot bear suffering, and I do not know the road, how will I go?

Then the king spoke two verses:

⁷ Both the King and the daughter are seen to be acting in good faith in order to save the Kingdom, so this is by no means a simple seduction story.

3. “You can go through this prosperous country with an elephant and a chariot,

And with a wooden raft - you can go like this, Naḷinikā. {5.195}

4. Go and take with you elephants, horses, soldiers and nobles,
By your beautiful form you will bring him under your control.”

Herein, *by a wooden raft* etc. means good Naḷinika, not by foot will you go, but through your own prosperous, well-fed and safe country having gone with an elephant vehicle a with a chariot vehicle, from there onwards with covered vehicles and so on in the open-air, go across the waters by a naval raft, by a wooden raft. *By your beautiful form*, having gone without being wearied, by your beautiful and fortunate form you will bring that brahmin under your control.

Thus he spoke with his daughter about what shouldn't be spoken of in order to protect his kingdom. She accepted the proposition saying: It is good.

The Seduction

Then having given her all she required, he sent her off with the ministers. The ministers took her and arrived at the borderlands and set up the camp there, and having the king's daughter taken up they entered the Himālayas with a forester who knew the path, and in the morning-time arrived near to the area of the seer's hermitage.

At that time the Bodhisatta left his son behind in the hermitage, and had himself entered the wilds looking for various kinds of fruit.

The forester approached his hermitage, and standing near that lovely place, pointed it out and spoke two verses to Naḷinikā:

5. “Marked by the sign of the plantain, surrounded by the Himālayan birch,⁸
Here is seen Isisiṅga’s delightful hermitage.

6. Here is seen the smoke of a fire,
I think it is emitted from the very powerful Isisiṅga’s sacred fire.

Herein, what is reckoned as a plantain, the flag, the sign (of that) is marked by the sign of the plantain. Surrounded by the Himālayan birch means encircled by a wood of willow trees. Reckoned means the fire is his, Isisiṅga’s, reckoned by the conflagration, which burns visibly. *I think...now...fire* means I think (it is) emitted from the fire where he worships or tends.

When the Bodhisatta entered the wilds, the ministers surrounded the hermitage and stood guard over it, then they made the king’s daughter take the guise of a seer, {5.196} fully clothed with a golden bark-robe, and decorating her with all decorations, made her take a pretty yo-yo fastened with a string, and sent her to the hermitage, while they themselves stood outside keeping guard. Amusing herself with the yo-yo she entered the end of the walking path.

At that time Isisiṅga was sitting on a stone bench at the door of the leaf-hut. Seeing her coming he rose in fear and trembling, and entering the

⁸ The *bhūrja* or *bhojpatr*, which is also known in English as the Himalayan birch or Jacquemon tree, *Betula utilis D.Don*.

leaf-hut, he stood inside. After going to the door of the leaf-hut she amused herself nearby.

The Teacher explaining the meaning further spoke three verses:

7. “Having seen her coming, adorned with jewelled earrings,
Isisiṅga fearfully entered the leaf-covered hermitage.

8. She amused herself with her yo-yo at the door of the hermitage,
Revealing her limbs, she displayed her secret parts.

9. After seeing the yogini amusing herself with the yo-yo at the leaf-
hut,

And coming forth from the hermitage, he spoke these words:

Herein, *with her yo-yo* means she amused herself with the yo-yo at the door of Isisiṅga’s hermitage. *Revealing* means showing. *Displayed her secret (parts)* means she displayed her secret and hidden limbs and also the common limbs like the mouth, hands and so on. *He said* means it seems that after standing by the leaf-hut, he thought: ‘If this is a Yakkha, after entering the leaf-hut, and grinding up my flesh he will devour me; (but if) this is not a Yakkha, it must be an ascetic.’ and after coming forth from the hermitage he spoke this verse, asking:

10. ‘Hey! What is the name of the tree such a fruit comes from?
Having thrown it afar it returns, it doesn’t go away from you.’ ”

Herein, *such [a fruit] comes from* means your delightful fruit, what tree does such a one come from? *What is the name of the*

tree means that beautiful yo-yo unseen before; thinking: it must be the fruit of a tree, he asked thus.

Then she spoke this verse about the trees:

11. “My hermitage, Holy Sir, is close to Gandhamādana,⁹
There are trees on the mountain that such a fruit comes from,
Having thrown it afar it returns, it doesn’t go away from me.” {5.197}

Herein, *close to Gandhamādana* means my hermitage is close to the Mountain Gandhamādana (in the Himālaya). *That such a fruit come from* means that such come from, the ta-element is (simply) a consonant junction (having no meaning).

Thus she spoke a falsehood.

Having faith, and thinking: This is an ascetic, he made a friendly welcome and spoke this verse:

12. “Come, good sir, eat in this hermitage,
Receive what I can give of foot-oil and food,
Please sit, good sir, here in this hermitage,
Eat, good sir, the roots and fruits.”

Herein, *this hermitage* etc. means enter, good sir, this hermitage. *Eat* means partake of whatever food is placed before you. *Foot-oil* means oil for the feet. *Food* means various kinds of sweet

⁹ The name of a mountain in the Himālayas, the exact location of which is unclear; the name means *intoxicating with its fragrance*.

fruit. *Receive* means accept. *In this hermitage*, at the time of going in is what is said.

She entered the leaf-hut and while sitting on the reed mat her golden bark-robe fell in two and her body was uncovered. The ascetic, having never before seen a woman's body, thinking: This is a wound,¹⁰ said this:

13. "What is this in between your thighs
It appears so dark and slippery,
Declare to me that which I ask about,
Why is it your genitals enter into a cavity?"

Herein, *slippery* means between the two thighs at the time they met¹¹ it was well-oiled, formed like the mouth of a cowrie. Being unendowed with the sign of beautiful, that place had the nature of a pit, (but) when held up, it had an opening formed like the mouth of a cowrie. *It appears so dark* means it seemed to be black on both sides. *Why is it your genitals enter into a cavity?* your genitals do not appear to have the form of a penis, he asks: why is it your body (part) enters into a sheath?

Then deceiving him she spoke this pair of verses:

¹⁰ ChS: *vaṇṇo*, [*this is*] *beautiful*.

¹¹ This may also mean: *at the time of intercourse*, but discussion of intercourse seems premature here.

14. “While I was roaming in the woods in search of roots and fruits,
I came across a bear, very fierce in appearance, {5.198}
He ran up and fell upon me with violence,
He pushed me down and pulled off my penis.

Herein, *struck* means she knocked against, seeing (him) approaching she hit (him) with a clod of earth is the meaning. *Running up* means running close to. *Fell with violence* means with violence he fell upon or dropped on me. *Having pushed* means then having fallen on me. *Pulled off* means having uprooted my penis with his mouth, he departed, and because of that a wound appeared in this place.

15. This wound is therefore itching and irritating,
I do not receive any comfort at any time,
You are able, good sir, to remove this itch,
When asked, dear Sir, please do this good thing for a brahmin.

This means this (analysing the compound), and because of this my wound is itching and also is an irritation, and because of that all the time I do not receive (any) bodily or mental pleasure. *Able* means able (alternative form), capable. *Good thing for a brahmin* means good sir, being asked by me do this good thing for a brahmin, carry away my suffering, this is what is said.

Believing the lies about her condition, thinking: If I can make you happy in this way, having looked at the area, he spoke the next verse:

16. “Your wound appears to be deep and red,
It is big, fresh and smells like it’s decaying,
I will make you some remedial decoction,
Like that, good sir, you will be at perfect ease.”

Herein, *red* means shining red. *Fresh* means free of rotting flesh. *Smells like it’s decaying* means a little bad-smelling. *Remedial decoction* means having got some tree-decoction, I will make some remedial decoction to you.

After that Naḷinikā spoke this verse:

17. “Not through a charm-remedy, or a remedial decoction,
Nor through medicine, holy one, will the itch go away,
Please remove the itch gently with your penis,
Like that I will come to be at perfect ease.” {5.199}

Herein, *go away* means, good and holy one, this my wound will go away neither through a charm-remedy, nor a remedial decoction, nor a flower or fruit medicine, after doing that many times before it was still not comfortable. But through rubbing gently with your organ it will not itch, therefore please remove the itch with that.

Thinking: This is the truth he speaks, not knowing that through engaging in sexual intercourse virtue is broken, and the absorptions are lost, being ignorant and having never seen a woman before, because she spoke of medicine, he engaged in sexual intercourse with her.

Then his virtue was broken and his absorptions were lost.

After having sexual intercourse two or three times, they became tired and left the leaf-hut and descended into the lake and washed themselves. Having eased his fatigue and sitting again in the leaf-hut, still thinking: This is an ascetic, he asked about her residence and spoke this verse:

18. “From here, good sir, where is your hermitage?
Do you, good sir, take delight in the wilds?
Do you have abundant roots and fruits?
Do you, good sir, not risk injury from predators?”

Herein, *where* means from here where, in what direction is the venerable’s hermitage? *Good sir*, this is a vocative.

Then Naḷinikā spoke four verses:

19. “From here straight in the northerly direction.
The river Khemā moves through the Himālayas ,
On the bank of that river is my delightful hermitage,
If you like, good sir, you can come and see my hermitage.

Herein, *northerly* means northerly (alternative form). *Khemā*, such is the name of the river. *Moves through the Himālaya* means flowing down from the Himālaya. *If you like* is a particle expressing desire.

20. Mango, sal, plum, and jambolan trees,
The cassia, and the blossoming trumpet-flower tree,
All around the bird-men sing,
If you like, good sir, you can come and see my hermitage.

The Cassia is the Golden Shower Tree. *The bird-men sing* means all around, being surrounded on all sides, with a sweet voice there is the singing of the song of the bird-men.¹²

21. There are palmyra and roots and fruits for me,
Well-endowed with beauty and good scent, {5.200}
That portion of the land is indeed well-endowed,
If you like, good sir, you can come and see my hermitage.

Palmyra and roots and fruits are there for me means there at my lovely hermitage there are palmyra trees that are endowed with beauty and good scent and so on and what are reckoned as tubers, roots and fruits.

22. Abundant roots and fruits are there,
Endowed with beauty, scent and taste,
But when hunters come to that district I say:
Do not take from here my roots and fruits.”

Abundant...are there means various and abundant fruit trees and vine tree roots are there. *Do not...from there* means very many hunters come to the area of my hermitage, and after I have collected and caused to be placed there abundant and various sweet tasting fruits and roots, after tarrying a while they carry off my roots and various fruits. They should not take my roots and various kinds of fruits from there therefore if you wish to come with me come, or if not, I will go, is what is said.

¹² CPED: *kimpurisa*, masc., a bird with a human head.

Having heard that, the ascetic, wanting to wait until his father had returned, spoke this verse:

23. “My father has gone searching for roots and fruits,
He will return here at evening time,
We both can go to your hermitage then,
After father has come back from collecting roots and fruits.”

Herein, *both can go* means after informing my father we both will go.

Because of that she thought: “Having grown up just in this monastery he doesn’t know my femininity, but his father, after seeing me, understanding, and saying: What did you do here? and hitting me with his carrying pole, will break my head. Therefore before he comes it is good for me to go, my work in coming here is finished.”

Telling him the way to come to her, she spoke the next verse: {5.201}

24. “There are many other well-disposed sages,
Royal sages, living along the road,
Please ask them about my hermitage,
They will guide you to my neighbourhood.”

Herein, *royal sages* means, my dear, I am unable to tarry a while, but there are other well-disposed royal sages and brahmin sages residing along the road who know the road to my hermitage, after informing them I will go, you must ask them, and they will lead you into my vicinity.

Then making her getaway and leaving the hermitage, she said to him: You wait (here), and she went back to the road she had arrived on with the ministers. Then after taking her back to the camp, they eventually reached Benares.

Sakka was satisfied that day and made the sky-god rain down on the whole of the kingdom, and because of that there was plenty of food in the country.

After she had left, the ascetic Isisinga's body developed a fever. Trembling he entered the leaf-hut and covered himself with his bark cloth and lay down grieving.

The Sons' Praise

After coming in the evening the Bodhisatta, not seeing his son, said: Where has he gone? And after putting down his carrying pole and entering the leaf-hut, he saw him lying there and said: Dear, what has happened? and while rubbing his back, he spoke three verses:

25. "You have not broken firewood, you have not brought the water,
You have not attended to the fire, what are you thinking of, lazy
one?"

26. Broken firewood and the sacrificial fire,
You, an ascetic, peacefully living the holy life,
Preparing my stool and setting up water -
Previously you delighted in excellence.

Herein, *broken* means collected from the wilderness. *Not attended* means not light. *Broken...* means formerly you have collected firewood during the time I was coming. *The sacrificial fire* means there is the fire and the sacrifice. *Ascetic*, an ascetic is one who warms himself at what is reckoned a fire,¹³ they prepare themselves peacefully. *Stool* means my sitting stool had been prepared. *And water* means foot-washing water had been set out. *Excellence* etc. means previously to this you greatly delighted in being the best in this hermitage.

27. But now you have not broken firewood, you have not brought the water,

You have neglected the fire, and the food is not ready,

And today you do not converse with me,

Why are you wasting away and suffering? {5.202}

No broken firewood means now, today, you have not collected firewood. *Food is not ready* means none of our roots or leaves have been boiled. *Today...with me...* means my child, today you do not converse with me. *Why are you perishing* etc. means why are you perishing or why are your mental faculties suffering, tell me what is the cause of your lying there, he asks.

After hearing his father's words, he spoke about the reason:

28. "There came here a yogi, a holy one,

Very beautiful, slender, he leads,

Neither too tall nor too short,

¹³ *Tāpasa* is derived from the verb *tapati*, which means *heating*. An ascetic is one making heat through striving in practice.

That venerable one had very black hair.

Herein, *came here* means father, he came to this hermitage. *Very beautiful* means very beautiful (parsing the compound). *Slender* mean very slender, not too thin, not too thick. *He leads* means like one lighting up the hermitage with his own bodily radiance, he leads, he fulfills. *That venerable one had very black hair* means, father, that good one had very dark black hair, and a head with very black locks and eyebrows made like polished gems, it seems.

29. Being beardless and youthful,
On his neck was something shaped like our support bowl,
With two bumps on his blessed chest,
Like resplendent golden globules.¹⁴

Being beardless means so far he had not grown a beard, being young. *Youthful* means not long having gone forth. *On his neck was (something) shaped (like) our support (bowl)* means * on his neck was set up an ornament like the alms bowl which is used for our support, referring to a string of pearls is said. *Bumps* is said in regard to her breasts. *On his blessed chest* means on his blessed chest (different form), from his (chest) is another reading. *Resplendent* means endowed with splendour; splendid is another reading, radiating is the meaning.

¹⁴ The *tinduka* (or *tiṇḍuka*) is a fruit tree. Flora and fauna describes the *tiṇḍuka* thus: *a medium-sized evergreen tree with spreading branches sometimes reaching almost to the ground, a fragrant white flower and globose fruit covered with soft red velvety hair.*

30. His face was very beautiful,
 Having ears hanging down with curled tips,
 Which glittered when that youth walked around,
 As did the well-fastened bun of locks on his head.

Very beautiful means extraordinarily beautiful. *Curled tips* is said in reference to her lion's earrings.¹⁵ *Ball* means his well-bound bun of locks, that shone, let loose a light.

31. Also he had four fastenings,
 Blue, yellow, red and white,
 Which flew about when that youth walked around,
 Like a flock of parrots in the rainy season.

Four fastenings means that he saw four ornaments made from [blue] crystal, [yellow] gold, [red] coral and [white] silver. *Which flew about* means those ornaments sounded like a flock of parrots when the gods rain down in the rainy season.

32. He does not wear a girdle made of grass,
 It is no normal covering for the ascetic, {5.203}
 It glitters, while clinging between his buttocks,
 Like flashes of lightning in the firmament.

Girdle means girdle (alternative spelling), this is indeed another reading; this is said in reference to his gold bark dress. No covering means no bark (garments). This is what is said: father, in whatever way it is made, made from grass or made from bark, we

¹⁵ According to PED (s.v. *sīha*): *a very precious earring*.

wear a bark garment, but not so he, he wears a golden bark garment.

33. Without thistles and without stalks,¹⁶
 Beneath the navel, around his waist,
 Without striking them they always play,
 Dear father, the fruit of what tree are these?

Without thistles means free from grit, free from thorns. *Around his waist* means bound to his waist. *They always play etc.* means without striking (them) they are always tinkling. *Dear father* means dear father. *The fruit of what tree are these* means that youth's string of ornaments bound to the waist, what is the name of the fruit of that tree? It is said in reference to the jewelled robe.

34. His locks are very beautiful,
 Having many sweet-smelling curls on top,
 The two sides of his head were divided in a lovely fashion,
 Oh, that my locks might be like that!

Locks is said in reference to the rolls of bound and bejewelled hair that were in the manner of a circle of locks (on his head). *Curls on top* means wavy on top. *The two sides of his head* means after making the two sides on his head, and binding his locks he divided them in a good fashion. *Like that* means my locks are not

¹⁶ Both of these words are obscure and therefore the meaning is unclear. PED (s.v. *vaṅṭa*): *avaṅṭa* (of *thana*, the breast of a woman) not on a stalk (i. e. well-formed, plump).

bound by you in the same way as that youth's locks, oh, that mine would be like that, he said making a wish.

35. But when his locks fall down,
They are endowed with a beautiful scent,
Like a blue lotus pervading the wind,
So this hermitage is perfumed by his hair.

Endowed means endowed with that condition. *Pervading the wind* means as the blue lotus pervades the wind, so this hermitage in this jungle thicket is made fragrant.

36. Even the dust of his body is very beautiful,
The dust on my body is not of such a kind,
He emits a perfume bestirred by the wind,
Like a blossoming wood at the height of the hot season.

Such a kind etc. means father, whatever dust there is on my body, it is not of such a kind as on his body, his is beautiful and sweet-smelling. *At the height of the hot season* means in the Spring time.

37. He throws the fruit of a tree upon the earth,
Having a good form, pleasant and beautiful,
Thrown it comes back to his hand,
Dear father, what sort of fruit is that?

He throws means he strikes. *What sort of fruit is that* means of which tree is that fruit?

38. His teeth are very beautiful,
 Pure, even and like noble pearls,
 They gladden the mind when uncovered,
 Does he not eat vegetables with them?

Like noble pearls means like very clean pearls. *Does he not eat vegetables with them?* means does that youth not, like us, with those teeth eat tree leaves and roots and various kinds of fruits? Our teeth are eating variegated coloured leaves is what is meant.

39. Smooth, flowing, swift and soft,
 Straight, not haughty or fickle was his speech, {5.204}
 His cry was pleasant like the sweet sound of the cuckoo,
 Stirring the heart, it surely delights my mind.

Smooth etc. means father, his speech was not rough, flowing, again and again his words were sweet, swift and soft, without forgetting, straight, not haughty, without perplexity, not fickle and with steadfastness. *(His) cry* means what is reckoned the sound of his speech when speaking, his cry, was like a charming cuckoo, having a sweet sound, very honeyed. *Surely delights* etc. means it surely delights my mind.

40. A full sound, not speaking too much,
 Surely not applied to study of the texts,
 I desire to see him again and again,
 That young man, whom I called my friend.

A full sound means a compact sound. *That young man...called* etc., that young man who was formerly called my friend (change of word order and form to explain the sentence).

41. He had a wound that was very smooth of all sides,
 Broad, well-made, looking like a wet leaf,
 With that the youth, having covered me over,
 Pressed down his open thighs with his buttocks.

He had a fissure, a wound that was smooth of all sides means father, in between that youth's thighs there was a wound, that fissure was pleasant to the touch, having an opening formed like the mouth of a cowrie, very smooth on all sides, everywhere smooth. *Broad* means great. *Well-made* means well-composed. *Looking like a wet leaf* means resembling the fully blossomed buds of a lotus flower. *Having covered* means having covered (different form), having spread over. *Pressed down* means pressed down (different form).

42. Shining, bedazzling and illuminating,
 Like flashes of lightning in the firmament.
 His soft arms had glossy down,
 His beautiful round fingers were resplendent.

Shining etc. means from that youth's body was emanating rays of a golden colour, which were gleaming, glistening and illuminating. *Arms* etc. means his arms were soft. *Had glossy down* means being endowed with down that is like gloss. *His beautiful round fingers were resplendent* means his hands had beautiful noble marks, and were endowed with round fingers, like sprouting buds, that were resplendent.

43. Having smooth limbs, and short bodily hair,
 His long fingernails were red at the tips,
 Embracing me with his soft arms,
 Beautiful, delighting, he attended to me.

Having smooth limbs means his various limbs were void of scabs and boils. *Delighting, he attended to me* means taking delight (in it) he attended to, he looked after me.

44. Like the cotton of trees, resplendent,
 Having very golden palms, round and beautiful skin,
 Having been touched by those soft hands,
 Though he has gone from here, father, they still torment me.

Like the cotton is a simile meaning soft by nature. *Having very golden palms, round and beautiful skin* means having palms like a flat mirror made of gold, round and beautiful, palms that are even all round, and beautiful skin is the meaning. *Having been touched* means having been touched by the touch of her hand, having excited my body. *(Though) he has gone from here* means looking around I see he has gone from here. *They (still) torment me* means the touch of his hands still torments me. Therefore because it is time for him to go my body became feverish, and from that I have fallen into depression.

45. He surely did not carry a pole and basket,
 He surely did not break his firewood,
 He surely did not cut down a tree with an axe,
 There were no callouses on his hands.

A pole and basket etc. means, father, that youth did not, after picking up a pole carrier, wander around. *Callouses* means wasted, this indeed is another reading.

46. A bear had caused his wound,
He said to me: please make me happy, {5.205}
What I did for him was my pleasure,
And he said: I am happy, Pious One.

Pleasure means pleasure (alternative form).

47. This rug made with creeper leaves
Is scattered all about by me and by him.
Then weary, after delighting in the water,
We ran back again to the leaf-hut.

Rug made with creeper leaves...all scattered about means father, this, your rug of creeper leaves, because of the mutual caressing, embracing and twisting around by the two of us today, is scattered like it has become entangled and confused. *We ran back again to the leaf-hut* means father, after delighting greatly, wearily leaving from the leaf-hut, entering the water, and delighting (therein), we quickly ran back again to this hut and we reentered, this is what is said.

48. Father, today we did not recite the mantras,
Nor offer the fire-sacrifice, nor the extended sacrifice,¹⁷
Nor can I eat those roots and fruits,
Until I see that holy one again.

¹⁷ SED: *yajña-tantra, n. extension of a sacrifice.*

The mantras etc. means today, because it was time for him to go, we did not recite the mantras, nor did we attend or take delight (in them). *Nor offer the fire-sacrifice, nor the extended sacrifice* means The invitation to be made to the Great Brahmā, making the sacrifice by waving the smoke of the oblation - this has not been recited by me, nor did I attend or take pleasure (in them). *Nor...those* means I will eat those roots and various kinds of fruits brought back by you.

49. For sure you will know, father,
In what place that holy one lives,
Let me go quickly to that place, father,
Do not let me die in your hermitage!

What place means in what direction.

50. The wood has beautiful blossoms, I have heard,
Resounding with birds, inhabited by flocks of birds,
Let me go quickly to that wood, father,
Before I forsake my life in this hermitage.

Wood etc. means having surrounded that youth's hermitage they abide in that wood.

The Father's Advice

After hearing the nonsense of that nonsensical child, the Great Being, knowing: His virtue will be broken by this woman, advised him with six verses:

51. “In this resplendent wood,
 Inhabited by heavenly musicians, gods and angels, {5.208}
 Where the sages are always dwelling,
 You must not become discontent.

Herein, *in this* means in this (alternative form). *Ham* is simply a particle (without meaning). *Resplendent* means illuminated with the rays of bright invocations.¹⁸ *Always* means from ancient times. *Must not become* means should not become. This is what is said: Dear, dwelling in such a wood you have become discontent, (but) you, a wise one born of a good family, should not become so, it is not worthy to become (so), is the meaning.

52. Some are friends, and then some are not,
 They have love for your relatives and friends,
 But this one is contemptible: he who does not know,
 For whom there should be devotion, or from whence he came.¹⁹

There are etc., the Great Being also included this verse (when) he spoke. Herein, this is the intention: in the world of beings there are some known as friends and some who are not, herein, there are some of those who have love for your relatives and friends. *This one is contemptible* means (like) an inferior horned animal.²⁰ *For whom (there should be) devotion* means for what reason (should there be) devotion for one having conscious love for this woman? Having arisen in an animal’s womb, and being reared in

¹⁸ *Hūya* is not found in the Pāḷi dictionaries, but see SED: *devahūya*.

¹⁹ I.e. one who does not know his lineage, which was the way to establish his status in ancient India.

²⁰ This seems to be a play on Isisinga's name, which means the Seer's Horn.

the forest, he does not know himself: from what place he came, much less (his) relatives and friends.

53. Through living together friends are connected again and again,
That friend who is not met with, through non-association is
destroyed.

Again and again means, dear, what are known as friends through living together or associating again and again are connected or combined. *That friend* etc. means that friend who is not met with, who is a person who no longer comes together (with you), through what is reckoned to be not meeting, through not living together, is destroyed or perishes.

54. If you will see this holy one again,
If you will talk with this holy one again,
Just as a successful harvest by the great waters,
So this ascetic virtue will be quickly taken away.

If etc. means therefore, dear, if you will see him again, or will talk with him, then just as a well-ripened harvest is carried off by a great flood, so will your ascetic virtue be taken away, will be carried away, this is the meaning.

55. If you will see this holy one again,
If you will talk with this holy one again,
Just as a successful harvest by the great waters,
So this power will be quickly taken away.

Power means ascetic heat.

56. There are beings, dear, living in this
World of men having different forms,
A wise man does not associate with them,
Through contact with them the holy life is destroyed.”

Having different forms means having various forms. This is what is said: Dear, in this world of men there are beings reckoned as Yakkhins who cover themselves with various forms, through the power of those forms they live to devour (men), a wise man does not associate with them. Having come into contact with such beings the holy life is destroyed, seeing (this) do not be devoured by those Yakkhins, thus he advised his child.

Having heard his father’s speech, thinking: It seems she is a Yakkhini, afraid and his mind repulsed, he made him forgive him, saying: “Father, I will not go, forgive me.”

After comforting him he said: “Come, young man, develop friendliness, compassion, gladness and equanimity, and he explained the development of the (four) spiritual states.” Having practiced in that way he again attained the absorptions and the deep knowledges.

After giving this Dhamma teaching, and showing the Truths, he made the connection and at the conclusion of the Truths that dissatisfied monk was established in the fruition of Stream-Entry.

The Buddha said: at that time Naḷinikā was his former wife, Isisinga was the dissatisfied monk, and I was the father.

Naḷinikā’s Story is Finished