

The Paurapāñcāśikā
(*The Love-Thief*)
Of
Bilhana

Poesy rendering by c l dean
Poems by c dean

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¹ These renderings have been made from the translation of Miller, Barbara Stoles.. “Bhartrihari and Bilhana (The Hermit and Tthe Love –Thief) “Penguin 1990. and Bilhana: Caurapancasika Based on the ed. by S.N. Tadpatrikar Poona : Oriental Book Agency, 1966 (Poona Oriental Series, 86)

http://fiindolo.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1_sanskr/5_poetry/2_kavya/bicaupxu.htm

Introduction

Kavi Bilhana was an 11th-century Kashmiri poet. He is known for his love poem, the *Caurapâñcâś'ikâ*.

According to legend, the Brahman Bilhana fell in love with the daughter of King Madanabhirama, Princess Yaminipurnatilaka, and had a secretive love affair. They were discovered, and Bilhana was thrown into prison. While awaiting judgement, he wrote the *Caurapâñcâś'ikâ*, a fifty-stanza love poem, not knowing whether he would be sent into exile or die on the gallows. It is unknown what fate Bilhana encountered. Nevertheless, his poem was transmitted orally around India. There are several versions, including ones from South India which had a happy ending; the Kashmiri version does not specify what the outcome was. The *Caurapâñcâś'ikâ* was first translated into a European language, French, in 1848. Subsequently it was translated several other times. Notable translations are those of Sir Edwin Arnold (London 1896) and Edward Powys Mathers (Oxford 1919) titled *Black Marigolds*. This latter version was quoted extensively by John Steinbeck in *Cannery Row*.

Bilhana is also known for writing a eulogy of the Western Chalukyan king Vikramaditya VI titled *Vikramankadevacharita*.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bilhana>

In the nineteenth century The *Caurapañcāśikā* was 'discovered' by Europeans. The first French edition, published in *The Journal Asiatique* of 1848, was based on one of the South Indian versions with a happy ending. *Sir Edwin Arnold* did very loose translation with Tennyson-like cadences (London 1896) A.B. Keith provided a literal translation² Gertrude Cloris Schwebell³, working from translations by S.N. Tadpatrikar⁴, } M. Ariel⁵ and Gerhard Gollwitze⁶ created a free verse rendering: The version best known to English readers is probably that by Barbara Stoles Miller:⁷ Or the 'free interpretation' by E. Powys Mathers⁸ entitled *Black Marigolds* <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/bilhana/bil01.htm> There is also a 2000 translation, possibly privately printed, by John T. Roberts⁹ Dawn Corrigan has done an adaption of the *Caurapañcāśikā* “Swan Song of the Thief”¹⁰

http://www.otisnebula.com/otisnebula/ON7_Dawn_Corrigan.html

² A.B. Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature* (Motilal Banarsidass, 1993), 153-158

³ Gertrude Clorius Schwebel, *The Secret Delights of Love by the pundit Bilhana* (from the Sanskrit). (The Peter Pauper Press, 1966).

⁴ *Caurapañcāśikā*, an Indian Love Lament of Bilhana Kavi, critically edited with translation and notes by S.N. Tadpatrikar, Poona, 1946. Poona Oriental Series No. 86.

⁵ Tchoranpantchcat, publié, traduit et commenté par M. Ariel. Les Cinquantes (Couplets) de TCHORA ou Histoire de Bilhana; *Journal Asiatique*, Quatrième Serie, Tome XI, p. 469-534; Paris, 1848.

⁶ German Free Version of Gerhard Gollwitzer. Des Pandit Bilhana Fünfzig Strophen von Heimlicher Liebeslust, Karl Schustek Verlag, Hanau, 2 Aufl. 1964.

⁷ Miller, Barbara Stoles. *Phantasies of Love-thief: Caurapancasika Attributed to Bilhana* (Columbia Univ. Press, 1971). And Bhartrihari and Bilhana (The Hermit and The Love –Thief) Penguin 1990.

⁸ *Black Marigolds: A free interpretation of the Caurapañcāśikā*. E. Powys Mathers, pp. 66-77 in Mark Van Doren (Ed.) *An Anthology of World Poetry* (Albert and Charles Boni, 1928). Also reissued as *Black Marigolds and Coloured Stars*. Edward Powys Mathers (Anvil Press Poetry, 2004) online at <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/bilhana/bil01.htm>

⁹ John T. Roberts, *Caurapancasika*, English and Sanskrit. The Thief, His Fifty Verses: Bilhana's *Caurapancasika*, The Northern Recension, with word by word grammatical notes and translations. (Papercraft Print, 2000). ISBN: 0-9679677-1-6 / 0967967716

¹⁰ Dawn Corrigan “Swan Song of the Thief” An adaption/rendition of Bihanas *Caurapañcāśikā* online magazine otisnebula.com 2013 http://www.otisnebula.com/otisnebula/ON7_Dawn_Corrigan.html

PREFACE

vivid images of intoxication
rapturous pictures of ecstatic illumination
luscious scenes of exhilaration
word pictures of visual stupefaction
soundscapes of exquisite reverberation
sonorous melodies
lilting moods of languorous harmonies
miniature pictures of sensuous appeal
sound textures
visual odors
rhythmic flavors to titillate the tastes
sounds images a cacophony of erotic
flavors
for the mind to feel and savor

I

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I -
she

In garlands of golden champak flowers gleaming
the lotus face of she blooming
delicate the line of down along the waist of she
eager for love the body trembling of she
when from sleep awakes she-

This magic lost somehow in the recklessness of I -
Regret I

2

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I -
she

in the new lush youth the full moon face of she
passions glow breasts swollen
the fire from loves arrows burning the body of she
The limbs I will quickly cool of she
If again I do she see

3

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I -
she

The lotus-eyed girl weary from bearing the heavy breasts of she
In my arms will I crush she

And

Like a madman to drink from the mouth of she -
a bee drinking a lotus insatiably
If again I do she see

4

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I -

She

weak with fatigue the body of she-

while on pale cheeks swarms of curls falling trying to hide the
guilt of she-

around my neck clung the soft arms of she
remember I the love of she

5

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

She

Obliquely moving in love-wakefulness the glittering long eyes of
she

in the lotus bed of passion of we

at dawn bowed low with shame the face of she

Do I remember she

6

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

She

Fevered wide-eyes from long parting

In my limbs tight will I lock she

Close the eyes of me and never leave she

If again I do she see

7

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
She

In the wild dance of the love of we
holding the reins she
with the moon luster lighting the face of she
with the trembling with passion of the body of she
delicate lush breasts bent hips heavy
in a mane of flying hair mantled dancing she
Do I remember she

8

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
She

lying in the bed of she
The perfume of musk spreading
with the oils of sandalwood mixing
the playing of the seductive eyes lashes of she
like a pair of matting birds each others bills caressing
Do I remember she

9

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

She
While in love the wine-smearred lip innocently licked she
the frail form of she
the long wanton eyes of she
the body of she rubbed golden with musk and the paste of the
saffron be
with betel nut and camphor the mouth spiced of she
Do I remember she

IO

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
 At the end
 the face of the love of I
 in shining saffron powder colored
 with sweat drops covered
 with love-weary eyes tremulous
 a moon disk
 by the demon eclipse released
 remember I

II

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
 On the night dwells the mind of I
 When the princess was awoke by the sneezing of me
 Flustered refused to say she
 "Jiva –long life!"
 But silently put she
 a golden lucky charm on the ear of she

I2

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
 The face of the love of me
 with earrings golden grazing the cheeks of she
 as in the mans position to take did she strove to be
 do I remember
 beads of thick sweat strewn like pearls
 from the work of the rhythmic swinging of she

I3

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
 The bold bent glance of she
 in pleasure the graceful stretching of the limbs of she
 do I remember
 the curve of the voluptuous breasts of she
 bared by the slipping clothes
 the lips of she bruised with marks by the teeth of me

I4

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
 Like the young leaves of the ashoka painted red the hands of the
 love of I
 ropes of pearls caressing the tips of the breasts of she
 cheeks pale refreshed by smiles hiddenly
 the wild-goose languorous gait of she
 Do I remember she

I5

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
 The mark of the nail of me
 left on the sandalwood-powdered thigh of she
 do I remember
 the cloth gold-streaked snatched by me
 when rose she
 in shame was clutched as away pulled she

I 6

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

She

with longing kohl-lined eyes

with plaited flower-heavy hair

with vermilion lips framing the pearl luster of the teeth of she

by golden bracelets the arms bounded be

in secret do I remember she

I 7

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

She

with the loosened ties of the braids of she

garlands wilted be

with smiling nectar-sweet lips

with swollen luscious breasts caressed by strands of pearls

and with looks longing

in secret do I remember she

I 8

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

She

On her brood I:

when

from lamps jeweled streaks of light the darkness broke in the

white pavilion of she

seized I then the chance secretly to stare upon she

then with fear and shame flashed the eyes of she

19

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

She

a fawn-eyed fragile girl-

with fires of love parted burning the body of she

ready for the passion of me-

she like a wild goose moving with ornaments rich bringing to me

do I remember she

20

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

She

the love of me

gently laughing be

bent by breasts heavy

in ropes of pearls dazzling be

a banner of open blossoms she

by flower-armed Love flown

high on the mountain of passion

do I remember she

21

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

She

with a hundred flatteries destroying the sense of the words of she

when in exhaustion after love trembled she

do I remember

in jumbled sounds came the words

as timidly spoke faintly whispering she

22 EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

She

remember I the eyes of she
 after love closed trembling be
 limp the slender body of she
 clothes fine and loose the hair heavy
 a goose wild in a thicket of lotuses of passion she
 Oh in my next life I will remember she
 And even when time ceases to be

23

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

She

if again I see at the days close she
 with fawn-like eyes adoring me
 and
 those breasts brimming pots of nectar offering she
 kingly pleasures will renounce I
 and
 even the highest bliss from heaven on high

24 EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

She

the amorous women on earth the ideal be
 through the beauty of the body of she-
 for tasting nectar the perfect cup in passions play be-
 wounded she by Loves flower arrows my girl be
 do I remember she

25

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

She

like wet cloth clinging to the wet clothes of me

when with the violent passion of loves fires the body burned of
she-

pitiful now she without the protection of the lover of she

with life makes mockery now she-

I'll never forget will I she

26

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

She

among beautiful women the first be

for passion an exquisitely molded vessel be

do I remember

pleading the kings daughter she

“People this fire of parting cant bear me”

27

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

knowing quickly death is closely by

leaves the gods do the thoughts of I

and

are in wonder drawn to she

What can do I

so obsessed am I

“She is the love of me

Beloved most! mine is she! “

28

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

She

trembling like frightened birds the eyes of she
 when the sentence of I was pronounced and was heard by she
 voice quavering of she
 falling tears from the eyes of she
 bowed by heavy grief the face of she
 in pain does remember I

29

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

She

the face of cant find I to rival-
 blinding is its brilliance
 the beauty of loves consort and the moon eclipsing-
 though I strain the vision of I

30

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-

She

in short separations a poison be
 ablutions of nectar in reunion be
 the sustainer of the life of me
 from the burns of love the shield for me-
 is the rich mane of a beautiful girl -
 do I remember she

31

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
 to face what she tried to do do shudder I
 and still Deaths messengers
 hard terrible hands
 from the rooms of she dragged me

32

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I
 night and day suffers the heart of I
 never the love of mines full moon face shall again see I
 with sultry beauty glowing
 that dulls the nectar of the Jasmine night-blooming

33

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
 She
 on the haunted mind of I broods
 a girl forbidden the hope of the life of I
 with rich fresh youth
 now no one enjoys
 in another life too let she be the fate of me

34

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
 the sound of bangles strike sharply the mind of I-
 when wild in the desire for the perfume of the mouth of she
 black bees swarmed to kiss the cheeks of she-
 as the fingers of she shook bees from the hair of she

35

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
 She
 in delight bristling
 when from the sweet wine of the mouth of she so drunk was I
 from drinking
 that left I a nail mark on the breast of she
 the mark treasured studied stared she-
 do I remember she

36

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
 the angered face of she
 to leave with frank impatience she
 as sullenly to me did she give the mouth of she-
 Kissed it I; violently wept she
 at the feet of she fell I
 "thy slave art I my love! Love me!" -
 do I remember she

37 EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
 with the friends of she is idling the mind of I
 the lovely limbs of she embracing dancing and bantering
 in rooms elegant lively with the play of we-
 if only the time there I could spend passing

38 EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
 She
 don't know I
 if Shivas mate she be
 or
 by Indras curse a nymph coming to earth
 or
 Lakshmi the consort of Krishna be
 To beguile the world did Brahma create she
 or
 driven by desire was he
 the perfect jewel of maidenly youth to behold was he

39
 EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
 She
 who can paint the form in the world of she
 like a creature of fantasy itself it reveals to only I
 its equal would an aspiring artist have to see-
 and begin to try only then would he

40

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
 the kohl-blackened eyes of she see me
 mouth burning ears laughter-weary
 body weaken by its own swelling breasts see me-
 if away it wastes to blame who a she he or me

41

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
 like an autumn moon clear gleaming white the luscious face of she
 could a saints pure mind charm it be-
 enraptures it the mind of me
 kiss it I will if it I find
 and lest it slip from me keep drinking will I

42

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I-
 would I give the life of me
 for loves sanctum to recover it be –
 the lotus fragrant with pollen with the semen of passion wet
 the love gods downfall it be

43

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I
 rich in signs of beauty the world be
 each others perfections passing be
 believes the heart of me
 beyond measure is that form of she

44

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I
 glides the pump body of a wild goose on the waves of the water
 stirred by she
 in a river-cove wooded in the mind of me-
 from fatigue pleading is she
 from a touch fleeting from the fine pollen of the kadamba flower
 be

45

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I
 She
 miss I the eyes roving languidly of she
 in their wanton youthful way-
 the daughter of the King a creature seemed from heaven she
 a child of celestial singers
 or
 genii
 or
 musicians
 or
 serpents
 fallen be

46

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I

She

waking from sleep forget cant I night and day-
 the waist of she made an alter by the curving form of she
 like pots swelled the breasts of she
 with nectar brimming
 the body of she shone with richly colored ornaments brightly

47

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I

She

rising the languid body of she to a golden glow
 pretending exhaustion though shame that compelled she-
 folly broken as the limbs and kisses of we
 like wild life-giving herbs wanton left she
 do I remember she

48

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I

the love-play battle with empty hands fought she
 in rising rhythms falling
 wet with hot blood red
 from marks of teeth on the lips of she
 and
 nail marks on the body of she-
 bewitched me in the bout did the tyranny of she

49

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I
endure the loss how can I
of the gift of the young mistress of I
Death only will end the pain of I
End it quickly brothers thee do beg I

50

EVEN NOW - while awaiting death I
The seas black poison avoids not Shiva
On its back the earth the tortoise bears
Insatiable submarine fires endures the ocean
the promises they make the faithful keep

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