

The Prince to His Nurse

'You are my mother, not my nurse!
Except for you, who feels sorry for me?
I saw that which cannot be spoken,
and desire burnt my mind from within.
Seven nymphs came down from heaven.
Among them, one had ten thousand excellences!
I will tell you about *her* beauty,
sit down, and listen attentively to me.
The sun rose blinding in the east,
I saw a blaze, and could not distinguish her features.
Lightning flashed, dazzling my eyes, and I broke all
controls and restraints!
Let me describe that beauty: the parting in her hair,
her breasts, neck, hands, feet,
toes.' [49]

Her Parting

'She had adorned her hair with her own hands.
I saw her parting, it had taken many lives.
It was filled with cool white sandal,
then lined with a necklace of pearls.
It was like a beautiful flight of cranes,
that flashes white through dense black clouds.
The flame of her parting was intensely radiant,
it broke through the dark night like a shooting star.
That sword's edge, her parting, is amazing -
when it hits you, you want to become two pieces!
That sword fell on me and I broke into ten pieces -
hands and head and feet!
Give me nectar, sprinkle it on, only then can I revive
and tell my tale! [50]

Her Hair

'Her beautiful hair was bee-coloured, black,
coiled like cobras around her sandal-scented neck.
When she opened her topknot, the day darkened,
it was suddenly the sixth night of Bhâdo~!
The curl that hung down on her cheek
was a black poisonous snake on a lotus.
Whoever sees it is stung by deadly venom.

No medicine, nor root, nor physicianⁱ can help!
From head to foot her curls hung there,
like poisonous serpents in waves upon waves.

That poison was the shears of death to me, and I fell
down in a shiver and fainted.

You have made me promise to tell you, so I will describe
her and hide nothing. [51]

Her Forehead

'Her forehead shone like the spotless moon
on the second night of the month.ⁱⁱ
It rose like the moon, and the world saw
the image of Madana, maddening God of Love.
When I saw her with my eyes, my gaze was blinded,
as if she were the radiant sun in the sky.
The drops of perspiration on her face were stars -
the moon rose along with the constellations.
It was as if I saw a flash of lightning,
I was walking, O nurse, and lost my way.
The flame of her forehead leapt up high,
I was dazzled, then could not be contained!

I saw her forehead, I was enchanted - I could not
understand anything, nurse!

My heart broke, my blood turned to water! Tell me a
remedy, mother! [52]

Her Eyebrows

'Her eyebrows were like Arjuna's bow,
they would shoot anyone at whom they looked!
I distinguish them by the virtues of the Kālakṛta poison.ⁱⁱⁱ
I never saw any bow-string, but her arrows always kill.
Where did she get the arrows of heroic Karṇa?
Steeped in poison, they were whetted on a sharp grindstone!
The way she swung her eye-brows around and shot arrows
had no salvific tantra, no magic mantra, nor any remedy.
I was the poor deer, she was the hunter -
she shot poisoned arrows and killed me dead.

Count that passionate woman's eyebrows as deadly
hunters, Paraśurāma in

the Kali age!

There is no blood, you don't see a gash, but you suffer
the lance in your heart!

Her Eyelashes

'I tell you, her eyelashes were arrows dipped in poison.
 She looked with them and laid waste many bodies.
 She has pierced every pore of my body. I am out of control,
 except to say this, and even now I can't speak!
 Her eyelashes were like the fatal line of arrows
 that were shot at Kar^a in the Bhârata war.
 It was like the story of Kar^a and Arjuna -
 I was Kar^a, she was Pârtha standing there!
 When she put mascara on her lashes, quite naturally
 the erotic and the martial rasas came together!

Fourteen heavens and hells has the earth, seven
 continents and nine regions.^{iv}

Heaven and hell have her eyelashes pierced with arrows,
 as the Brahmin does

with his amulet.

[54]

Her Eyes

'Her eyes were white, coloured red,
 like black bees settled on lotus petals.
 Restless, changeable, they did not stay still,
 like elephant pearls rolling about on a platter.
 Maddened with separation, I saw them thus,
 rising and shifting like waves in the sea.
 The eyes of that PadminĪ, that 'lotus woman',^v
 were the shining lamps of the God of Love!
 They moved about with such spontaneous abandon,
 as if supported only by the breeze.
 With whom had that deer come to wander?
 Her eyes were those of the stranded doe,
 lost at the crossroads and seeking her companions.

They were sharp, radiant, thick, restless, moveable, and
 enormous.

Nurse, those circling eyes took on great power, for me
 they were the Wheel

of Kâla!^{vi} [55]

Her Mole

'Between her eye and her ear lay a mole,
as if God had created a black bee on a lotus!
I did not see it flying there, enmeshed in scent,
for how can love's madmen have any sense?
Separation itself had become inky black, and was
put there as her mole, only to enchant the world!
That mole was the adornment of her face, and the world
could not open its enchantment, was deceived.
My heart went away along with her mole.
Look, O nurse, this body is empty!

I cannot describe the true nature of that mole. I fell
under its matchless shadow!

It troubles my heart like a dream without words. I
cannot express its pain. [56]

Her Ears

'Her ears were perfectly matched,
neither too small nor too long,
as if cast in gold and adorned with mother-of-pearl.
When they shone, lightning flashed in all directions!
They shone like molten gold in the fire.
Under them, ascetics set up their armstands,
looking at the two stars of Canopus
that had arrived there with the moon!
One was Canopus, the Agastya^{vii} of the sky,
but where had this other one come from?
When Canopus rises, the waters of the world recede,
while this one dries the ocean up in its blaze.^{viii}

I tried to stop my gaze, but it fell there, and all the
blood in my body dried up.

The sun burnt me dry and made me like mud when the
water's gone. [57]

Her Cheeks

'Not fat, nor thin, were her rounded cheeks,
as if rubbed down in molten gold!
They shone like cowrie shell polished
with the philosopher's stone,^{ix}
or like studded glass^x applied to her face.
What a stunning black bee on that white marble!
Listen, nurse, I cannot tell you her beauty.

Looking at those cheeks, I grew hot!
I roamed around, but the restlessness wouldn't go.
They shook their heads - gods, men, and serpents -
at the thought of laying their cheeks on hers.

Yogis, mendicants, and ascetics, all the sadhus and
sanyasis that exist,
when they saw that maiden's cheeks, not one had any
pride left! [58]

Her Nose

'Her nose was well proportioned and matched.
It was as if God, the Wise Creator,
had shaped it with his own hand.
Her nostrils, shapely cavities set on either side,
were dreamlike, to be grasped only in dreams.
It was thin and fine, and adorned her face -
the gods, all thirty crores, praised her nose!
They mixed vermillion and nectar to shape it.
Even he praised her who had fashioned her nose.
You may compare it to a sesamum flower.
What other simile does it justice in this world?

That discerning woman, knower of the six tastes,^{xi} knows
well how to appreciate

scents.

That fortunate one, intoxicated with sandal and citron,
was made and adorned by

God!^{xii} [59]

Her Lips

'Her lips were red, as though she had eaten *pân*,^{xiii}
or as if red dye had been mixed and applied there.
Her lips were a shining tear made by a nail,
over which she had applied nectar.
At every moment, looking at her lovely lips,
I was the ant drawn by the sweet *rasa* of nectar.
Nurse, I have never seen lips that colour,
lovely-hued coral brought and inlaid there.
She drank my blood with her lips.
Those lips of which I speak,
how did I survive them at all?

She sucked me dry with those lips, and I turned yellow
as a mango.^{xiv}

The wind of separation blows with that maid, who took my
rasa and fled! [60]

Her Four Front Teeth^{xv}

'Her four front teeth shone like diamonds in the mine.
They flashed like lightning in the dark night.
The spaces between them appeared like a woman's eyes.
They were dark as if that passionate one
had applied black kohl to her eyes.^{xvi}
They were golden lotuses, filled with black bees.^{xvii}
They were juicy pomegranate seeds
that had never been sampled by anyone!
Her teeth were gooseberries, steeped in *pān* juice.
I saw her laughing with her girlfriends.
They were neither too high nor too low,
a straight line and even, they calmed the mind.

Her four front teeth were restless and shining. I saw
them and my eyes went dark!

Telling you the pain of my separation, Nurse, my eyes
rain elephant pearls! [61]

Her Tongue

'The tongue in her mouth was so full of juice,
that when she spoke, her words sank into the heart.^{xviii}
Her words were pleasant, her voice the cuckoo's.
The others thought she was a cuckoo among them!
The stricken curlew sang its heavy affliction,
a love-story, full of juice and adornment!
She got her nectar-sweet words from *Vāsuki*.
They were cool sandal, lovely, full of juice.
In her lotus-mouth, her tongue was incomparable.
When she spoke laughing, she rained flowers!

When she laughed, I looked on and cried, all for her
sake - such a woman

goes from the hand of the man whose forehead doesn't
have the line of fate! [62]

Her Neck

'Listen, nurse, and I will describe her peerless neck!
It was turned on the lathe by the workman.

Her neck was lovely, like the peacock's,
or like a dancing pigeon's throat.
It was not too long or thin, nor was it too short.
A wise man crafted it, for it was not too thick.
When I saw it I was confused and I fainted,
as if thugs had fed me drugged sweets.
The three lines that ringed her neck
were necklaces, that she threw as nooses
to capture me. Those exquisite lines
became deadly nooses when they came to rest around my
neck. She threw
the thieves' handkerchief^{xi} around my neck, Nurse, and
robbed me of my life!

[63]

Her Arms

'Her arms were exquisite lotus stalks,
tree-branches sprouting with new leaves.
I have never seen such wrists anywhere,
with bangles ringing musically on them.
Her palms were flushed red with blood,
or had that fortunate one applied henna?
Her slender fingers were pods of green moong,
the lustre of her nails made them more lovely, not less.
People have praised the cheetah's nails,^{xx}
but that maiden's hand's nails were more handsome still!
That lovely line of nails sank into my heart, and the
wound will not heal again.
That fresh green wound grows daily in me, and troubles
me more day by day. [64]

Her Back

'Her back was made of polished conch shell,
or perhaps it was shaped in Kãmadeva's mould?
Such an exquisite shape cannot be from a mould.
God made her so perfectly, because He desired her!
When her body was exposed, her back flashed.
I looked at her back till where there were lines.
Her spine was jointed, with lines like a bamboo.
Like a minaret, was it a vehicle for demigods to reach
heaven?^{xxi}
Her black plait was a poisonous snake,

slithering up the path to her head.

He was clever, intelligent, and clear-seeing, the One who made and fashioned her.

Her Maker, Muráry, the one who needs no one, shaped her from head to foot!^{xxii}

[65]

Her Waist

'To what can I compare her slender waist?
It seemed she had borrowed it from the lion,
for it was both matchless and unjointed.
When she walked, she moved as if idling.
Her delicate waist would snap
as soon as a gust of wind touched it!
It was so thin that one hand could span it.
The wasp had taken its madness from her waist.
There was a special allurements in that maiden's sari!
I saw an immortal, extraordinary, divine-limbed!
The gods were entranced when they saw her waist,
and their attendants, and *gandharvas* and men,
and even Íiva Mahádeva was spellbound!

She does not even answer to them, but is too proud. Who am I, poor wretch?

This wretch leans his own waist back and cries: to whom should he cry

his sorrow? [66]

Her Breasts

'That woman's breasts were hard and cruel.
She seemed to be carrying, quite easily,
the lovely bumps on an elephant's head.
Coloured like lotuses, her breasts swelled, priceless.
Deceived by their tint, two black bees sat on them.
Those moving breasts, so sharp that the man
whose breast they pierce, bursts open in a second!
Out of fear of them, no one comes near -
whoever sees them dies, and very painfully!
Even missing the mark, they hit the eye.
You can beat your head but her breasts
do not come to hand at all - they turn away.

They were golden pots on the breast of that amorous woman, full of unending

juice

You could see, but not touch them, they were the head-
bumps on a maddened

elephant! [67]

Her Line of Hair

'Her line of hair was a venomous serpent,
burnt dark with separation like the river Kāḷindī!^{xxiii}
The Gaṅgā flowed between her golden mountains,
but how could the Jamunā ever flow into it?
That is the true Prayāg,^{xxiv} the confluence of rivers,
where her black braid wounds your soul!
Many have made it their inmost desire,
and many have given their heads to the saw!^{xxv}
Others have dug pits of fire to walk on -
they mortify their bodies, are quickly absorbed.

No one's inmost desire was fulfilled, and many went away
disappointed.

In my desperate hope, O nurse, I'll sacrifice my head to
the saw! [68]

Her Belly

'They churned fresh butter and formed her belly.
Her silk sari seemed to come from the South.
Her belly was so thin it appeared
as if her innards had been taken out,
or as if she only ate parched rice!
Her belly was thin, I tell you, and so clean,
as if anointed with the juice of aloes.
Once you saw her navel, you could not leave it,
like a finger buried in a golden mound.
Or was it a black bee fluttering over the water?
If it fell in, it would never be able to leave!

My soul is sinking into the pool of her navel, Nurse,
how can I lift it out?

The one whose navel shakes the soul, what else is there
to say about her? [69]

Her Legs

'Her legs were two trunks of plantain
that adorned both the worlds, now and hereafter.
Over them she wore a sari from the South.
When I saw her thighs, I could not see past them.
They shone like vermilion over gold and diamonds.
Or were her thighs made of Malabar sandal?
They were full-grown trees shorn of leaf.
When she walked, those trees flushed with blood,
as if she had applied auspicious red lac.
In my heart I wanted to put my head on the ground,
and taste with my tongue the colour where she set foot!
I understood them, so I describe her sixteen adornments.
I mistake not even one!
From her head down she had all attributes, even to
Rudra's lines on both feet! [70]

Her Complexion

'Listen, now I will tell you that woman's complexion:
her body sparkled like purest gold.
She was vermilion-coloured, a magnolia bud.
She was a nymph who flew down from Indra's heaven!
A young lotus bud that had drunk golden water -
such was the colour that God had given her!
All the flowers lent her limbs their fragrance.
The scent of the lotus wafted from her face to the bees.
She was a sexy^{xxvi} Padmini, how can I sing her virtues?
She was so beautiful, none like her in the triple world.
She was the shining moon of Íarada,^{xxvii} marked with a
deer on all sixteen digits.^{xxviii}
When her rays fed me nectar, I became the lowly *cakora*
bird,^{xxix} a beggar! [71]

Her Body

'Her whole body was neither too tall
nor too short, neither too thin nor too fat.
Harmonious and perfect, how can I sing its virtues?
It was just as one desired it, in all the right places!
God had given her all sixteen adornments,^{xxx}
nine and seven, as many as there are.
Four were white and four black,
four delicate and four heavy.
The white ones were her parting and eyes,

her four front teeth and her nails.
The black were her nipples and teeth,
her hair and the pupils of her eyes.

Her nose, lips, and waist were delicate, and her leaf-
hands exceedingly dainty.

Her cheeks, wrists, and arms - plantain trunks were not
as fine as them! [72]

The Twelve Ornaments^{xxxii}

'Twelve ornaments are renowned in the world.
I'll describe them one by one, listen to what she had on.
First, she had on a sari from the South, nicely worn,
that lovely young woman, an *apsarā* of Kāmadeva!
Her teeth sparkled from shining them,
and she had put vermilion in her parting.
There was *pān* in her mouth and kohl in her eyes.
She wore a yellow sari, dyed with safflower,
and had put sandal paste on her body -
spring had blossomed in Vrindāvana!
When she took the mirror in her hand,
her image was ashamed to face her!

She had ornaments on her head, neck, hand, waist and
feet, all the five, O nurse!

Five and seven make the twelve ornaments, I have
described them carefully. [73]

'She was lovely and steeped in adornment,
like swift Hanumān helped along by the Wind-God!^{xxxiii}
She had *pān* in her hand, exceedingly beautiful,
and was chewing some betel in her mouth.
When she had eaten it, she swallowed the red juice.
I saw the line that went past her neck to her breast!
When she walked, she moved like a wave in the sea.
She took her matchless gait from elephants and geese.
She was intelligent, full of virtues and pride,
a magic doe, divine in her limbs throughout!

I ran to fall at her feet, but she saw me coming and
flew away. When she left,

there was a shining of light and a tinkling of bells,
and I fainted dead away!' [74]

ⁱ*physician*: the term is *gāruḍa* in Hindavṛ, a 'snake-bite' physician; named after the eagle Garuḍa, the vehicle of Viṣṇu and the hereditary enemy of snakes.

ⁱⁱ*second night of the month*: the moon on the second night of the month was supposed to appear only in a crescent without spots. Hence this is a conventional comparison for anything pure and shining among the poets of the genre.

ⁱⁱⁱ*Kālakṛta poison*: a term for a deadly poison, emitted from the Ocean at the time of its churning (*sāgara-manthana*) and drunk by Īiva. Īiva arrested the poison in his neck, which turned blue, hence his epithet *Nīla-kaṭha*, 'Blue-throat'. The word used in Hindavṛ is *kāla-kuṣṭha*. The context demands a derivation from Skt. *Kālakṛta*, the deadly poison, as opposed to Skt. *kāla-kuṣṭha*, 'a myrrh', presumably not fatal.

^{iv}*seven continents and nine regions*: The nine regions refer to the Indian cosmology of the nine divisions of the earth, i.e. Bhārata, Ilāvarta, Kippuruṣa, Bhadra, Ketumāl, Hari, Hiraṇya, Ramya and Kuṣa. The seven continents are traditionally depicted as islands each surrounded by a sea of a particular fluid. Thus, Jambūdvīpa has the sea of Lavana (salt), Plakṣadvīpa, the sea of Ikṣu (sugarcane juice), Īalmalīdvīpa, the sea of Surā or Madya (liquor), Kuṣadvīpa, the sea of Ghṛta (clarified butter), Krauñcadvīpa, the sea of Dadhi (curds), Īakadvīpa, the sea of Dugdha (milk) and Puṣkaradvīpa, the sea of Jala (fresh water). Jambūdvīpa lies in the centre of all the continents and the golden mountain Meru stands in the middle of it. For a more extensive treatment of this cosmological scheme in Hindavṛ Sufi poetry, see Malik Mu'ammad Jāyasṛ, *Padmāvat*, ed. M. P. Gupta, verses 150-8. Jāyasṛ uses the convention to suggest seven stages through which the seeker must pass in order to reach the Mānasa lake, the true home of the soul.

^v*Padminṛ, that 'lotus woman'*: in terms of Sanskrit erotic theory, the best of the four classes of women. She personifies the ideal of beauty described, for instance, in the *Rati-mañjarṛ* or 'Bouquet of Passion': 'she is lotus-eyed, with small nostrils, with a pair of breasts close together, with nice hair and a slender frame; she speaks soft words and is cultured, steeped in songs and [knowledge of] musical instruments, dressed well on her entire body, the lotus-woman, the lotus-scented one.' The Sanskrit text runs: "bhavati kamalanetrā nāsikākṣudrarandhrā aviralakucayugmā cārukeṣṛ kṛṣṇāṅgṛ/ mṛduvacanasuṣṛlā gṛtavādyānuraktā sakalatanusuveṣṛ padminṛ padmagandhā." Cited in Apte, *The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 962.

^{vi}*Wheel of Kāla*: Kāla is Time in Hindavṛ, so that the Wheel of Time signifies the inexorable necessity of the passing of ages. I have chosen to leave it as Kāla in the translation because Kāla is also a name for Yama, the god of death, which is certainly one resonance (*vyaᅇngyārtha*) of the line.

^{vii}*Agastya*: 'pitcher-born', name of a reputed sage who was famous for drinking up the ocean because it had offended him, and because he wished to help the gods against a class of demons hiding in it, the Kāleyas. It is also the name of the star Canopus, of which Agastya is the regent. Canopus rises at about the end of Bhādo~, when the waters also clear and everything is fresh and clean in the season of Íarada.

^{viii}*causes the ocean to dry up*: all the readings of this line are doubtful, as some crucial letters are missing from the last phrase. There is clearly a mythological reference to Agastya's drinking up the ocean. However, it is not clear if Quætban is contrasting the heavenly Canopus's action on water with the action of the earthly beloved's earrings (as in the previous couplet).

^{ix}*philosopher's stone*: the term used here is *pārasa*, which can mean both a jeweller's touchstone as well as the alchemical philosopher's stone, said to be able to turn base metal into gold. I have preferred the latter meaning because of its suggestion of spiritual transformation.

^x*studded glass*: a reference to the jeweller's practice of setting crystal (*billaur*) and glass in foil-backed settings made in the traditional Indian way by melting pure gold (*kundan*) around the stone.

^{xi}*the six tastes*: here Quætban uses *khaᅇ-rasa*, a reference to the six flavours of food. The six tastes are pungent, sour, sweet, salty, bitter, and astringent (*kaᅇu, amla, madhura, lava^a, tikta, kaᅇāya*). K. T. Achaya notes further: 'each taste is believed to consist of a combination of some two of the five basic elements, namely, earth, water, fire, air, and ether, and these pairs have been worked out by observation of their action on the body. Thus the sweet taste, *madhura*, is made up of earth and water; it is a builder of body tissues, which are themselves formed from earth and water.' For more details about how the tastes mesh with the Ayurvedic system of bodily humours, see his *A Historical Dictionary of Indian Food*, 206.

^{xii}*That fortunate one ... God!*: this line is subject to disagreement, and my reading of the first half of the line is tentative. In the Delhi manuscript (D), these two lines have been erased and a couplet has been inscribed in the margin:

*puhupa sabai parimala kai leṣṣ bāsa birasa saba ghāni/
parimala lṣṣnha hamāreṣ dekhata puni parimala kai jāni//*
(‘After taking the fragrances from all the flowers and enjoying the scents from all the perfume stills, take some of our exquisite scent and see – what then will you know of perfume?’). Since these romances were performed in evening sessions at courts and shrines, this marginal couplet is a suggestive verse probably inserted by a performer to enhance the audience’s pleasure.

^{xiii}*pān*: betel leaf, which is often eaten and offered ceremonially in India, yields a mildly narcotic red juice that stains the lips and mouth red. In the romances of this genre, *pān*-stained lips are often represented as an erotic attribute.

^{xiv}*mango*: one of the *vyaṅgyārthas* or suggested meanings of this line is the *āmra-c`ṣitaka* or ‘sucking the mango’, listed in the *Kāma-s`tra* as a technique for fellatio. See *Kāma-s`tra* 2.9.22.

^{xv}*Her Four Front Teeth*: these are called *caukā* in Hindavṣ, and are held to be especially charming.

^{xvi}*Looking at them ...her eyes*: the text for this couplet is also defective. P gives *~atarahṣ dekhi rahai cakhu bhāmini/
janu kājara cakhu diiu so kāmini*. The second *ardhālṣ* is a reference to the cosmetic practice of blackening the teeth with a special powder (*missṣ*), which was held to make them more attractive. On the sixteen traditional adornments, the *solah siṅgār*, see note to p. above.

^{xvii}Another image normally used about the heroine’s eyes, but suggested by the alternation of dark and light involved with *missṣ*, which generally inheres in the spaces between the teeth.

^{xviii}*heart*: the word here in Hindavṣ is *cita*, which can mean heart, soul or awareness. Since the term *jṣva* is also life or soul, I distinguish them by reserving ‘life’ and ‘soul’ for *jṣva* and using ‘heart’ for *cita* and ‘mind’ for *mana*. Very occasionally it has been necessary, in the interests of using a comparable English idiom, to render *jṣva* as ‘heart’, but I have tried to be consistent to the meaning of these terms in Hindavṣ. The interlinear gloss of the Rampur *Padmāvāt* attests that *jṣva* was understood as an analogue to the Persian *jān*, ‘life’, f. 2, verse 1.1.

^{xix}*thieves’ handkerchief*: the term here is *thagaurṣ*, the thugs’ art of strangulation. I have rendered it as handkerchief because of the characteristic strategy of using a handkerchief or *r`māl* knotted with a silver rupee that was

thrown around the necks of victims. The thugs (*thag*) were worshippers of Kali who were also highway robbers and murderers active along the roads and paths of Hindustan. They were ruthlessly pursued and stamped out by the British in the 1820s, acting under instructions from the Governor-General Lord William Bentinck.

^{xx}*Cheetah's nails*: cheetah or tiger nails are regarded as especially handsome, and are often encased in gold and worn as ornaments.

^{xxi}*A minaret for demigods to reach heaven?*: this line suggests the spiritual journey, in yogic systems, up the spinal column to the inner heaven. A *bevāna* (<Skt. *vimāna*, 'vehicle') can also signify a kind of minaret.

^{xxii}*When she was finished ... her Maker, longed for her!*: The poet cleverly refers to the set-piece of the *nakh-Bikh varāna* or head-to-foot description that he is presenting in the first word of the line (*nakh-sikh*). The rest of the line, however, is doubtful. The second word can be read as *benṣ* (braid), *banṣ* (made), or *sunai* (listens), and so on. In general I have followed Plukker's reconstruction, with the exception of one word, *tarasai* for *nirāṣṣ*, which renders the line *nakhasikha banṣ nipata tarasai sirajanahāra murāri*. The last phrase refers to *Murārṣ*, the enemy of the demon *Mura*, another name for his slayer *Kṣṃā*. The first phrase is damaged in the mss., and the reading is doubtful, but I am following here P's judgement that the second word is *banṣ* rather than *benṣ* (G).

^{xxiii}*Kāliṣṣ*: another name for the river *Jamunā*, said to arise on the mountain *Kalinda*, and on whose banks *Kṣṃā* and *Rādhā* play their love-games. The poet suggests that the river is burnt to its dark colour because of separation from *Kṣṃā*, or because of the *viraha* of the cowgirls who are infatuated with *Kṣṃā*. The winding course of the river suggests the heroine's meandering *romāvalṣ*, the sexy line of hair on her navel.

^{xxiv}*Prayāg*: *Prayāg*, at the meeting of the *Gaṅgā*, *Jamunā*, and *Sarasvatṣ* rivers, is considered one of the holiest places in India. While the *Gaṅgā* and *Jamunā* are visible to the naked eye, the *Sarasvatṣ* (which flowed there two to three millennia ago) is believed to join the other two through an underground channel.

^{xxv}*saw*: At the confluence of *Prayāg*, a *saw* was supposed to be laid down for devotees on which they could sacrifice themselves as a demonstration of their devotion, or to petition for the fulfilment of a desire. This was considered a meritorious act and attracted large crowds of spectators.

Women anointed the partings of their hair with the blood of the victims, in the hope of having a long and happy marriage. Apparently the saw was destroyed by order of the Mughal emperor, Shâh Jahân.

^{xxvi} *sexy*: the term in the original is *lonṣ* (<Skt. *lâva^ya-mayṣ*), 'salty', often used to suggest 'sexy'.

^{xxvii} *Īarada*: the season of autumn that immediately follows the rains, roughly corresponding to August-September, often used as a poetic synonym for anything clear and shining. The moon of Īarada is supposed to be particularly harsh for separated lovers because of its clarity and radiance.

^{xxviii} *marked with a deer...digits*: the moon is traditionally considered to have sixteen digits, the *kalâs* or parts by which it waxes or wanes daily. It is also supposed to be marked with a deer or a rabbit; hence its epithets of *mayaᅇnka* and *ᅇaᅇâᅇnka*. The poet cleverly uses the former to suggest the magic doe, *Mirigâvatṣ*.

^{xxix} *cakora bird*: the *cakora* bird, or Greek partridge (*Perdix rufa*), is said to long for the moon without hope of its love being requited. Since an immense distance separates the bird from the moon in the sky, the image is commonly used to express the hopeless longing of the lover for the object of affection.

^{xxx} *sixteen adornments*: see p. above. In this verse the poet classifies the adornments by colour and kind to suggest *Mirigâvatṣ*'s completeness as a model of beauty.

^{xxxi} *The Twelve Ornaments*: See note to p. above. In the verse that follows, Quætban mixes up the 12 ornaments with the 16 adornments, since he actually gives us 5 ornaments and 7 adornments.

^{xxxii} *Wind-God*: Hanumân was the son of Pavana, the Wind-God. The poet suggests that someone already beautiful by birth had her loveliness further enhanced by the 16 adornments and the 12 ornaments.