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WHAT TEN
YOUNG MEN DID

BY DANDIN



Translated by

ISABELLE ONIANS

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«Aho! ramaṇīyo 'yaṃ parvata|nitamba|bhāgaḥ, kāntata-
r" ēyaṃ gandha|pāṣāṇavaty upatyakā, śiśiram idam indīva-
r' |āravinda|makaranda|bindu|candrak' |ōttaraṃ gotra|vāri,
ramyo 'yam an|eka|varṇa|kusuma|mañjarī|mañjulataras ta-
ru|van' |ābhoga iti!»

a|tṛptatarayā dṛṣā bahu|bahu paśyann a|lakṣit' |ādhyārūḍha|
kṣoṇī|dhara|śikharah śoṇībhūtam utprabhābhiḥ padma|rā-
ga|sopāna|śilābhiḥ kim api nālīka|parāga|dhūsaraṃ saraḥ
samadhyagamam. tatra snātaś ca kāmś cid amṛta|svādūn bi-
sa|bhaṅgān āsvādya, aṃsa|lagna|kalhāras tāra|vartinā ken'
āpi bhīma|rūpeṇa brahma|rākṣasen' ābhipatya:

11.60 «Ko 'si? kutastyo 's' īti?»

nirbhartsayat" ābhyadhīye. nirbhayena ca mayā so 'bhya-
dhīyata:

«Saumya so 'ham asmi dvi|janmā. śatru|hastād arṇavam,
arṇavād Yavana|nāvam, Yavana|nāvaś citra|grāvāṇam enaṃ
parvata|pravaraṃ gato yadṛcchay" āsmin sarasi viśrāntaḥ.
bhadraṃ tav' ēti.»

11.63 So 'brūta:

«Na ced bravīṣi praśnān aśnāmi tvām iti.»

May" ōktam:

11.66 «Pṛcchā tāvad bhavatu! iti»

Ath' āvayor ekay" āryay" āsīt samlāpaḥ:

«Kiṃ krūraṃ?»

«strī|hṛdayaṃ.»

11.69 «Kiṃ gṛhiṇaḥ priya|hitāya?»

«dāra|guṇāḥ.»

‘Ah, how delightful is this mountain flank! How very charming this lowland with its sulfurous green and yellow stones! This mountain brook has cool water, moonlets of blue lotus nectar drops on its surface. And this forest expanse is particularly attractive, with clusters of multi-colored flowers.’

My sight was not in the least satiated, but I kept on looking all around, without noticing that I had ascended to the peak of the earth-bearing mountain. There I discovered a pool, dusky-gray with lotus pollen, and ruddy with reflections from the ruby rocks forming its steps. I bathed, tasted some lotus fibers sweet as ambrosia, and had draped some white water lilies about my shoulders when a hideous-looking brahmin demon who lived on its bank fell upon me.*

‘Who are you? Where have you come from?’ 11.60

I was interrogated with menace. Fearless, I answered him: ‘Gentle sir, I am a twice-born brahmin. Chance took me from the hand of my enemy into the ocean, from the ocean onto a Greek ship, and from the Greek ship to this superlative mountain of fabulous colored rocks, where I was resting beside this pool. Blessings be upon you.’

He said: 11.63

‘If you cannot answer my questions, I will eat you up.’

I replied:

‘Go ahead, ask!’ 11.66

Our interchange fitted into a single *arya* verse:*

‘What is cruel?’

‘The heart of a woman.’

‘What is dear and beneficial for a householder?’ 11.69

‘The virtues of a housewife.’

«Kaḥ kāmah?»

«saṅkalpaḥ.»

«Kiṃ duṣkara|sādhanam?»

«prajñā.»

11.72 Tatra Dhūminī|Gominī|Nimbavatī|Nitambavatyaḥ pra-
māṇam ity»

Upadiṣṭo mayā so 'brūta:

«Kathaya kīdrśyas tā iti!»

11.75 Atr' ōdāharam:

«Asti Trigarto nāma jana|padaḥ. tatr' āsan gṛhiṇas trayah
sphīta|sāra|dhanāḥ s'|ōdaryā Dhanaka|Dhānyaka|Dhanya-
k'|ākhyāḥ. teṣu jīvatsu na vavarṣa varṣāṇi dvādaśa Daśa|śat'|
ākṣaḥ.

Kṣīṇa|sāram sasyam, oṣadhyo vandhyāḥ, na phalavan-
to vanaspatayaḥ, klībā meghāḥ, kṣīṇa|srotasaḥ sravantyaḥ,
pañka|śeṣāṇi palvalāni, nir|nisyandāny utsa|maṇḍalāni, vi-
ralībhūtaṃ kanda|mūla|phalam, avahīnāḥ kathāḥ, galitāḥ
kalyāṇ'|ōtsava|kriyāḥ, bahulībhūtāni taskara|kulāni,

11.78 anyonyam abhakṣayan prajāḥ, paryaluṭhann itas|tato ba-
lākā|pāṇḍurāṇi nara|śiraḥ|kapālāni, paryahiṇḍanta śuṣkāḥ
kāka|maṇḍalyaḥ, śūnyībhūtāni nagara|grāma|kharvaṭa|puṭa|
bhedan'|ādīni.

Ta ete gṛha|patayaḥ sarva|dhānya|nicayam upayujy' āj'|āvi-
kaṃ gavala|gaṇam gavāṃ yūthaṃ dāsī|dāsa|janam apatyāni
jyeṣṭha|madhyama|bhārye ca kramaṇa bhakṣayitvā:

‘What is desire?’

‘Imagination.’

‘What is the means to achieve the difficult?’

‘Wisdom.’

And of these responses the respective proofs are: Dhúmini, Gómini, Nímbavati and Nitámbavati. 11.72

When I had added that, he asked:

‘Tell me, what sort of women are these?’*

Thus I related:*

11.75

‘There was a land called Tri-garta.* In that land there were three householders, full brothers, of swollen wealth and property. Their names were Dhánaka, Dhányaka and Dhanyaka—“Richard,” “Ritchie,” and “Rick.”* During their lifetime it came to pass that Indra of the thousand eyes withheld rain for twelve years.*

The grain lost its kernel, plants became sterile, trees bore no fruit, the clouds were barren, streams lost their current, pools were no more than mud, springs all around ceased to flow, bulbs, roots and fruit were scarce, communication dried up, auspicious festivals and rituals melted away, and the community of thieves multiplied.

The population fed on one another, human skulls pale as cranes rolled about hither and thither, rookeries of parched crows roamed about, and cities, villages, market towns, towns and everywhere became desolate. 11.78

The aforementioned householders first used up all their stores of grain, before consuming in turn goats and sheep, their stock of buffaloes, their herd of cows, their female and male slaves, their children, and then the wives of the eldest and the middle brother. In the end they decided:

«Kaniṣṭha|bhāryā Dhūminī śvo bhakṣaṇīy” êti.»

11.81 samakalpayan. ayaṃ kaniṣṭho Dhanyakaḥ priyāṃ svām
attum a|kṣamas tayā saha tasyām eva niśy apāsarat. mārga|
klāntāṃ c’ ôdvahan vanam jagāhe.

Sva|māṃs’|âsr̥g|apanīta|kṣut|pipāsāṃ tām nayann antare
kam api nikṛtta|pāṇi|pāda|karṇa|nāsikam avani|pṛṣṭhe viceṣ-
ṭamānaṃ puruṣam adrākṣit. tam apy ārdra’|āśayaḥ skandhen’
ôdvahan kanda|mūla|mṛga|bahule gahan’|ôddeśe yatna|raci-
ta|parṇa|śālāś ciram avasat. amuṃ ca ropita|vraṇam iṅgudī|
tail’|ādibhir āmiṣeṇa śāken’ ātma|nirviśeṣaṃ pupoṣa.

Puṣṭam ca tam udrikta|dhātum ekadā mṛg’|ānveṣaṇāya ca
prayāte Dhanyake sā Dhūminī riraṃsay” ôpātiṣṭhat. bhar-
tsit” âpi tena balāt|kāram arīramat. nivṛttaṃ ca patim uda-
k’|âbhyarthinam:

11.84 «Uddhṛtya kūpāt piba! rujati me śiraḥ śiro|roga iti.»

udañcanaṃ sarajjuṃ puraś cikṣepa. udañcantaṃ ca taṃ
kūpād apah kṣaṇāt pṛṣṭhato gatvā praṇunoda.

Taṃ ca vikalaṃ skandhen’ ôduhya deśād deś’|ântaraṃ pa-
ribhramantī pativratā|pratītiṃ lebhe bahu|vidhās ca pūjāḥ.
punar Avanti|rāj’|ānugrahād atimahatyā bhūtyā nyavasat.

“Tomorrow we will eat Dhúmini, our youngest brother’s wife.”

This youngest brother, Dhanyaka, could not bear to eat 11.81 his beloved. So that very night he fled, taking her with him. She became exhausted by the journey. With her on his shoulders they entered the forest.

He warded off her hunger and thirst with his own flesh and blood and carried her on into the jungle. There on the way he saw a man writhing on his back, his hands, feet, ears and nose all amputated.* Dhanyaka’s heart melted and he bore him too on his shoulders until they came to a place deep in the wood where there were many bulbs, roots and deer. Here he labored to construct a leaf-shelter, where they lived for a long while. Dhanyaka healed the other man’s wounds with such treatments as *ingudi* oil, and he nourished him the same as himself with meat and vegetables.

One day, when Dhanyaka had gone off to hunt for deer, Dhúmini wanted to enjoy herself and attended on the other man, now well fed and abounding in precious bodily fluids. Although he rebuffed her, she forcefully had her way. When her husband returned he asked for water, but she said:

“Draw some from the well to drink. My head is splitting 11.84 with a headache.”

With which she tossed before him bucket and rope. Then, when he was drawing water from the well, she was behind him in a moment, and pushed him in.

Dhúmini took the cripple on her shoulders and roamed from country to country. Acquiring a reputation as a *pa-ti-vrata*, a “faithful wife,” she also received every kind of

11.87 Atha pānīy' |ârthi|sârtha|jana|samāpatti|dr̥ṣṭ' |ôddhṛtam
Avantiṣu bhramantam āhâr' |ârthinaṃ bhartāram upalabhya
sā Dhūminī:

«Yena me patir vikalīkṛtaḥ sa durātm” âyam iti!»

Tasya sādhoṣ citra|vadham ajñena rājñā samādeśayāṃ ca-
kāra. Dhanyakas tu datta|paścād|bandho vadhya|bhūmiṃ
nīyamānaḥ sa|śeṣatvād âyusaḥ:

11.90 «Yo mayā vikalīkṛto 'bhimato bhikṣuḥ sa cen me pāpam
ācakṣīta yukto me daṇḍa iti.»

a|dīnam adhikṛtaṃ jagāda.

«Ko doṣa iti?»

11.93 upanīya darśite 'muṣmin sa vikalāḥ paryaśruḥ pāda|pati-
tas tasya sādhoṣ tat|sukṛtam a|satyās ca tasyās tathā|bhūtaṃ
duṣcaritam ārya|buddhir ācacakṣe. kupitena rājñā virūpi-
ta|mukhī sā duṣkṛta|kāriṇī kṛtā śvabhyaḥ pācikā. kṛtaṣ ca
Dhanyakaḥ prasāda|bhūmiḥ. tad bravīmi:

«Strī|hṛdayaṃ krūram iti.» »

Punar anuyukto Gominī|vṛtt' |ântam ākhyātavān:

11.96 «Asti Draviḍeṣu Kāñcī nāma nagarī. tasyām an|eka|koṭi|
sāraḥ śreṣṭhi|putraḥ Śakti|kumāro nām' āsīt. so 'ṣṭā|daśa|var-
ṣa|deśīyaś cintām āpede:

worship. Eventually the king of Avánti Ujjáyini granted her his favor, so that she came to live in enormous prosperity.

One day our Dhúmini caught sight of her erstwhile husband wandering through Avánti, begging for food. By chance he had been spotted and pulled out of the well by caravan traders looking for water. She accused: 11.87

“This brute is the man who disfigured my husband!”

Thereby she had the unknowing king sentence the good man to a violent death. But when Dhanyaka was being led to the execution ground, his hands bound behind his back, he boldly called to the one in charge of him, his life not over yet:

“If the beggar I am charged with having mutilated condemns me himself, then I deserve the punishment.” 11.90

The officer thought:

“What harm in checking?”

He took Dhanyaka and showed him to the cripple, who threw himself at the good man’s feet in floods of tears. Noble-minded himself, he proclaimed the good deeds the accused had done, and all the evil actions of that wicked wife. The furious king had the evildoer’s face disfigured and made her a dog-eater, an outcaste.* Dhanyaka, on the other hand, he made the object of his generosity. This is the story that prompts me to conclude: 11.93

“A woman’s heart is cruel.” ’

Questioned again, I told Gómini’s story:*

“There was in the Dravidian country a city called Kan- chi.* There lived a merchant’s son named Shakti-kumára, a multimillionaire in wealth. When he was about to turn eighteen the thought struck him: 11.96

«N' âsty a|dārāṇām an|anugūṇa|dārāṇām vā sukhaṃ nā-
ma. tat kathaṃ nu guṇavad vindeyaṃ kalatram? iti»

Atha para|pratyay'āhṛteṣu dāreṣu yādṛcchikīm saṃpattim
an|abhisamīkṣya kār'tāntiko nāma bhūtvā vāstr'ānta|pina-
ddha|śāli|prastho bhuvaṃ babhrāma.

11.99 «Lakṣaṇa|jño 'yam iti.»

amuṣmai kanyāḥ kanyāvantaḥ pradarsayāṃ babhūvuḥ.
yāṃ kāñcil lakṣaṇavatīm sa|varṇāṃ kanyāṃ dṛṣtvā sa ki-
la sma bravīti:

«Bhadre, śaknoṣi kim anena śāli|prasthena guṇavad an-
nam asmān abhyavahārayitum? iti»

11.102 So hasit'āvadhūto gṛhād gṛhaṃ praviśy' ābhramat.

Ekadā tu Śibiṣu Kāverī|tīra|pattane saha pitṛbhyāṃ avasita|
maha"rddhim avaśīrṇa|bhavana|sārāṃ dhātryā pradarsāya-
mānāṃ kāñcana virala|bhūṣaṇāṃ kumārīm dadarśa. asyāṃ
saṃsakta|cakṣuś c' ātarkayat:

«Asyāḥ khalu kanyakāyāḥ sarva ev' āvayavā n' āti|sthulā
n' āti|kṛśā n' āti|hrasvā n' āti|dirghā na vikaṭā mṛjāvantaś ca.

11.105 Rakta|tal'āṅgulī yava|matsya|kamala|kalaś'ādy|an|eka|
puṇya|lekhā|lāñchitau karau, sama|gulpha|sandhī māṃsalāv
a|śīrālau c' āṅghrī, jaṅghe c' ānu|pūrva|vṛtte, pīvar'ūru|
graste iva dur|upalakṣye jānunī, sakṛd|vibhaktaś catur|asraḥ

“There is no happiness for those who have no wife, nor for those who have the wrong sort of wife. But how am I to find a wife with qualities?”

Not expecting chance success with a wife chosen on the advice of others, he disguised himself as a fortune-teller, and with a package of rice tied up in the hem of his clothes he travelled the earth. When they saw him, all those with daughters thought:

“He has the auspicious marks.”

11.99

Hence they brought their daughters to show him. But every time he was presented with a maiden with the auspicious marks and of his caste,* he asked her, the story goes:

“Good lady, are you able to prepare for us some good food with this kilo of rice?”

Laughed at and rejected, he roamed in this fashion from house to house. 11.102

Then one day among the Shibis, in a town on the bank of the Kavéri River,* he saw a maiden with hardly any ornaments, presented to him by her nurse. She had lost not only her parents but also her great wealth, and her house and property had been dispersed. His eyes riveted on her, he considered:

“Not one of this girl’s limbs is too thick or too thin, too short or too long. They are none of them deformed but are all splendid.

Her two hands with their red, hennaed fingers and palms are bedecked with many auspicious marks such as barley-corn, fish, lotus, vase and the rest.* Her strong calves have even ankles and are free of prominent veins, her legs taper regularly, and her two knees are scarcely visible but, as it 11.105

kakundara|vibhāga|śobhī rath'āṅg'ākāra|saṁsthitaś ca ni-
tamba|bhāgaḥ, tanutaram īṣan|nimnaṁ gambhīraṁ nābhi|
maṇḍalam, vali|trayeṇa c' ālamkṛtam udaram;

urobhāga|vyāpināv unmagna|cūcukau viśāl'ārambha|śo-
bhinau payodharau, dhana|dhānya|putra|bhūyastva|cihna|
lekhā|lāñchita|tale snigdha'ōdagra|komala|nakha|mañī rjv|a-
nupūrva|vṛtta|tāmr'āṅgulī saṁnat'āṁsa|deśe saukumārya-
vatyau nimagna|parva|sandhī ca bāhu|late;

tanvī kambu|vṛtta|bandhurā ca kandharā, vṛtta|madh-
ya|vibhakta|rāg'ādham a|saṅkṣipta|cāru|cibukam āpūr-
ṇa|kaṭhina|gaṇḍa|maṇḍalam a|saṅga|tānu|vakra|nīla|sni-
gdha|bhrū|latam an|atipraudha|tila|kusuma|sadṛśa|nāsikam
a|sita|dhavala|rakta|tri|bhāga|bhāsura|madhur'ādhirā|sa-
ñcāra|manthar'āyat'ēkṣaṇam indu|śakala|sundara|lalāṭam
indra|nīla|śil"ākāra|ramy'ālaka|pañkti dvi|guṇa|kuṇḍalita|
mlāna|nālīka|nāla|lalita|lamba|śravaṇa|pāśa|yugalam ānana|
kamalam;

11.108 an|atibhaṅguro bahulaḥ paryante 'py a|kapila|rucir āyā-
mavān ek'āika|nisarga|sama|snigdha|nīlo gandha|grāhī ca
mūrdhaja|kalāpaḥ.

S" ēyam ākṛtir na vyabharati śīlam. āsajjati ca me hṛ-
dayam asyām eva. tat parīkṣy' āinām udvaheyam. a|vimṛ-

were, are swallowed up by her plump thighs. The radiant region of her hips is perfectly symmetrical and all square, and her buttocks curved like chariot wheels. The very graceful circle of her navel is deep and slightly indented, and her belly is decorated with the ideal three folds.

Her breasts are lovely, with broad beginnings, covering her whole bosom, and pert nipples. Her long slim arms with their discreet joints flow ever so softly from her sloping shoulders. Their surface is decorated with marks signifying an abundance of wealth, grain and sons. Her nails are like red jewels, glossy, long and delicate, and her fingers straight, regularly rounded and reddish.

Her slender neck is curved and undulating like a conch shell. Her face is a lotus. Her red lips pout in the middle, and her dear chin is strong and present. The globes of her cheeks are full and firm, her blue-black glistening gracefully arched eyebrows do not join, her nose is like a sesame flower in first bloom. Her eyes, deep and long, are black and white, and red in the outer corners, shining, rolling and sweetly tremulous. Her brow is lovely as the crescent moon. Her fringe of delightful locks is like sapphire gems. And the lobes of her twin beautiful ears are adorned with twice-coiled wilting lotus stalks.

Her whole head of hair was not too curled, and plentiful, 11.108
and even at the very tips not tawny in color, long, blue-black and glossy, each strand growing evenly, and sweet-smelling.

This body before me must represent also her character.*
My heart is set on this girl already. But I shall put her to the test before taking her in marriage. For it is a fact that regret

śya|kāriṇā hi niyatam anekāḥ patanty anuśaya|paraṃparā
iti.»

Snigdha|dr̥ṣṭir ācaṣṭa:

II.III «Bhadre, kaccid asti kauśalam śāli|prasthen' ânena saṃ-
pannam āhāram asmān abhyavahārayitum? iti»

Tatas tayā vṛddha|dāsī s'ākūtam ālokitā. tasya hastāt pra-
stha|mātraṃ dhānyam ādāya kva cid alind'ōddeśe su|sikta|
saṃmṛṣṭe datta|pāda|śaucam upāveśayat. sā kanyā tān gan-
dha|śālīn saṅkṣudya mātrayā viśoṣy' ātape muhur muhuḥ
parivartya sthira|samāyāṃ bhūmau nālī|pṛṣṭhena mṛdu|mṛ-
du ghaṭṭayantī tuṣair a|khaṇḍais taṇḍulān pṛthak cakāra.
jagāda ca dhātrīm:

«Mātaḥ, ebhis tuṣair arthino bhūṣaṇa|mṛjā|kriyā|kṣamaih
svarṇa|kārāḥ. tebhya imān dattvā labdhābhiḥ kākīṇībhiḥ
sthiratarāṇy an|aty|ārdrāṇi n' âti|śuṣkāṇi kāṣṭhāni, mitam|
pacāṃ sthālīm ubhe śarāve c' āhar' êti!»

II.II4 Tathā|kṛte tayā tāṃs taṇḍulān an|ati|nimn'ōttāna|vistīrṇa|
kukṣau kakubh'ōlūkhale loha|patra|veṣṭita|mukhena sama|
śarīreṇa vibhāvyaṃmāna|madhya|tānavena vyāyatena guruṇā
khādīreṇa musalena catura|lalit'ōtkṣepaṇ'|āvakṣepaṇ'|āyā-
sita|bhujam a|sakṛd aṅgulībhir uddhṛty' ôddhṛty' āvahatya
śūrpa|śodhita|kaṇa|kiṃśārukāṃs taṇḍulān a|sakṛd adbhiḥ
prakṣālya, kvathita|pañca|guṇe jale datta|cullī|pūjā prakṣi-
pat.

succeeds regret in succession for the man who acts without deliberation.”

With an affectionate look he asked:

“Good lady, do you have the skill to prepare for us a 11.111 wonderful meal from this kilo of rice?”

In response she gave the old servant woman a meaningful look. Taking the kilo of rice grain from the man’s hand, the old lady gave him water to clean his feet before inviting him to sit down on the terrace before the door, well sprinkled and swept. The girl pounded the fragrant rice a little,* and dried it in the sun, turning it over many times. Then, rubbing it ever so delicately with the back of a stalk on some firm and even ground, she separated the grains from the unbroken husks. She directed her nurse:

“Mother, the goldsmiths need these husks to polish their jewelry. Give them these and with the small change you get in return* bring some solid firewood, not too sappy and not too dry, a small clay cooking pot, and a pair of platters.”

When the old woman had done all that, the girl took a 11.114 long, heavy *khádira* wood pestle of solid body with slender middle, its face dressed in a sheet of iron, and a *kákubha* wood mortar whose belly was not too deep, but shallow and broad.* Placing those grains in the mortar, she fatigued her arms tossing the pestle up and throwing it down with graceful skill. All the time she kept separating, lifting and threshing the rice with her fingers. With a winnowing basket she sieved off dust and the noxious awn. Then she washed the grains many times with water, and, offering a small amount in sacrifice to the hearth, she threw the rice into boiling water five times its quantity.

Praślath' |âvayaveṣu prasphuratsu taṇḍuleṣu mukul' |âva-
sthām ativartamāneṣu saṅkṣipy' ânalam upahita|mukha|pi-
dhānayā sthāly" ânna|maṇḍam agālayat. darvyā c' âvagha-
ṭṭya mātrayā parivartya sama|pakveṣu siktheṣu tāṃ sthālīm
adho|mukhīm avātiṣṭhipat.

Indhanāny antaḥ|sārāny ambhasā samabhyukṣya praśa-
mit' |âgnīni kṛṣṇ' |âṅgārīkṛtya tad|arthibhyaḥ prāhiṇot:

11.117 «Ebhira labdhāḥ kākīṇīr dattvā śākaṃ ghṛtaṃ dadhi tailam
āmalakaṃ ciñcā|phalaṃ ca yathā|lābham ānay' êti!»

Tath" ânuṣṭhite ca tayā dvitrān upadaṃsān upapādyā tad|
anna|maṇḍam ārdra|vāluk" |ôpahita|nava|śar' |âvagatam ati-
mṛdunā tāla|vṛnt' |ânilena śītalīkṛtya sa|lavaṇa|sambhāraṃ
datt' |âṅgāra|dhūpa|vāsaṃ ca saṃpādyā, tad apy āmalakaṃ
ślakṣṇa|piṣṭam utpala|gandhi kṛtvā dhātṛī|mukhena snānāya
tam acodayat.

Tayā ca snāna|śuddhayā datta|tail' |āmalakaḥ krameṇa sa-
snau. snātaḥ sikta|mṛṣṭe kuṭṭime phalakam āruhya pāṇḍu|
haritasya tri|bhāga|śeṣa|lūnasya aṅgaṇa|kadali|palāśasy' ôpari
śarāva|dvayaṃ dattam ārdram abhimṛṣann atiṣṭhat.

When the grains of rice were quite flaccid all over and swelling, like closed buds no longer, she reduced the fire. She strained the scum from the boiled rice by covering the mouth of the pot with its lid.* Then, with a ladle, she knocked and stirred the rice carefully around. Once the boiled rice was evenly cooked she tipped the pot over, face downward.

The firewood that was still strong inside she sprinkled with water to extinguish its fire, thus creating black charcoal. This she dispatched to those who wanted it, telling her nurse:

“With the small change you receive for these pieces of II.117 charcoal, bring whatever vegetables, ghee, curd, oil, myrobalan and tamarind fruit you can purchase.”

After the old woman had done as she was asked, the girl prepared two or three vegetable relishes. She had poured the boiled rice scum down into a new grass cup placed on wet sand. Now she cooled it by fanning an extremely soft breeze with a palm leaf. She finished this preparation by adding salt and the fragrance from frankincense that she had placed on the coals. As for the myrobalan, she ground it finely to release the lotus perfume, and had her nurse press their guest to bathe.

The girl was clean, having already bathed. She handed Shakti-kumára oil and astringent myrobalan so he could bathe and freshen up in turn. Once he had bathed, he took his place on a wooden seat on the sprinkled and swept paved floor. He sat touching the two damp platters he had been given, placed on a quarter cut from a pale-green leaf from the plantain in the courtyard.

11.120 Sā tu tāṃ peyāṃ ev' āgre samupāharat. pītvā c' âpa-
nīt'âdhva|klamaḥ prahr̥ṣṭaḥ praklinna|sakala|gātraḥ sthito
'bhūt. tatas tasya śāly|odanasya darvī|dvayaṃ dattvā sarpir|
mātrāṃ sūpam upadamśaṃ c' ôpajahāra. imaṃ ca dadhnā
ca tri|jātak'|âvacūrṇitena surabhi|śītalābhyāṃ ca kālaśeya|
kāñjikābhyāṃ śeṣam annam abhojayat. sa|śeṣa ev' ândhasy
asāv atrpyat.

Ayācata ca pānīyam. atha nava|bhṛṅgāra|sambhṛtam a|gu-
ru|dhūpa|dhūpitam abhinava|pāṭalī|kusuma|vāsitam utphu-
ll'|ôtpala|grathita|saurabhaṃ vāri nālī|dhār'|âtmanā pātayāṃ
babhūva.

So 'pi mukh'|ôpahita|śarāveṇa hima|śīśira|kaṇa|karālit'|
âruṇāyamān'|âkṣi|pakṣmā dhāra|rav'|âbhinandita|śravaṇaḥ
sparśa|sukh'|ôdbhinna|rom'|āñca|karkaśa|kapolaḥ parima-
la|pravāl'|ôtpīḍa|phulla|ghrāṇa|randhro mādhyura|prakar-
ṣ'|āvarjita|rasan'|êndriyas tad acchaṃ pānīyam ākaṇṭhaṃ
papau.

11.123 Śiraḥ|kaṃpa|saṃjñā|vāritā ca punar apara|karaken' āca-
manam adatta kanyā. vṛddhayā tu tad|ucchiṣṭam apohya
harita|gomay'|ôpalipte kuṭṭime svam ev' ôttariya|karpaṭaṃ
vyavadhāya kṣaṇam aśeta.

First, she served him the aforementioned rice-gruel. When he had drunk it he sat there refreshed, the road's fatigue banished and his every limb rehydrated. Next, she gave him two ladles full of the good boiled rice and offered him a sauce of pure clarified butter and a relish.* Finally, she offered him the rest of the rice to eat, with curd sprinkled with the three spices (mace, cardamon and cinnamon) and with both buttermilk and sour gruel, fragrant and cool. Once he had eaten his fill there was still some food left over. II.120

He requested water. Accordingly she poured a stream of water through a tube, water that had been collected in a new pitcher and fumigated with aloe, perfumed with newly opened *pátali* red begonia flowers and infused with the scent of full-blown lotuses.

He then raised the dish to his mouth and from it drank his throat full of that clear water.* As he did so his eyelashes* looked reddish and magnified by drops cold as snow. His ears rejoiced in the singsong of the flowing water, his cheeks were rugged with horripilating down from the blissful sensation, his nostrils flared with the gushing flow of a stream of scent, and his tongue was prostrate with the heights of sweetness.

Signalled to stop by a nod of the head, the maiden then presented him with water from another small water pot to ritually rinse his mouth.* The old lady removed the leftovers, and when the pavement had been smeared with fresh green cow dung, Shakti-kumára spread out his ragged cloak and lay down for a while. II.123

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WHAT TEN YOUNG MEN DID is a coming-of-age novel from the seventh century CE. In combat and in the bedroom, ten individuals juggle virtue and vice on their heroic progress from adolescence to maturity.

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