Thig 13.3 — Verses of the Elder Cāpā

English translation by Bhikkhuni Soma.
Source: https://suttacentral.net/thig13.3/en/soma
Source revision: da23a8afdd1be12267ecf4a0ff94af5187093702
License: CC0-1.0 — https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/

Text

Verses of the Elder Bhikkhunīs

The Chapter of the Twenties

Verses of the Elder Cāpā

“In the past I handled a staff,

now I am a deer hunter.

Desire held me back from passing over

the terrible marsh to the far shore.

Cāpā is lying there,

sure that I am captivated by our child.

I need to cut my bond with Cāpā

and go forth again.

The Great Hero will not be upset with me!

The Great Sage will not be upset with me!

Because how could a pure one with spiritual power

be overcome by anger?

I will escape from her claws!

Who would want to live trapped by claws,

that in the shape of a female capture

contemplatives who are living a life of Dhamma?”

“Come back here, Kāḷa,

enjoy sensual pleasures like you did in the past.

My family and I

are under your power.”

“Oh Cāpā, even a fraction
of what you say to me,
for an infatuated man,
would be wonderful indeed.”
“Kālā, I am like an acacia tree
flowering at the peak of a mountain,
a blossoming pomegranate,
a trumpet flower tree on an island.
My limbs are anointed in yellow sandalwood,
and I wear the best fabrics from Kāsi.
How can you go and leave me behind,
when I am so beautiful?”
“You are like a fowler
who longs to capture a bird,
but even with your attractive body
you will not capture me.”
“And this child of mine,
Kāḷā, has come into existence because of you.
How can you go and abandon me,
when I have this child?”
“The wise leave children,
relatives, and wealth.
Great heroes go forth,
like a Nāga who has cut all bonds.”
“Now this is your child,
who, with a knife or a stick,
I will knock down on the ground,
struck by grief after the loss of your child you will not go.”
“Even if you fed our child

to dogs and jackals,
not even for my own child, you wretch,
would I ever come back.”
“Alright now, venerable sir,
then where will you go, Kāḷa?
To what town or village,
to what borough or royal city?”
“In the past we had a following,
we thought we were contemplatives, but we actually were not.
We wandered from village to village,
from towns to royal cities.
But there is the Bhagavant, the Buddha,
by the River Nerañjara;
for the removal of all suffering,
he preaches the Dhamma to sentient beings.
I will go to him,
and he will become my Teacher.”
“Now bring homage
to the protector of the world, the unsurpassable one.
Keeping him to your right,
you will dedicate a gift.”
“That indeed is proper for me,
just as you say to me,
to bring your homage
to the protector of the world, the unsurpassable one.
Keeping him to my right,
I will dedicate a gift.”
From there, Kāḷa went on
to the River Nerañjara,

he saw the Self-Enlightened One,
expounding the path to the deathless.
Suffering, the origin of suffering,
and the overcoming of suffering.
and the Noble Eightfold Path
leading to the appeasement of suffering.
He paid homage at his feet,
and keeping him to his right,
announced Cāpā's dedication
and went forth into homelessness.
He obtained the three knowledges,
and completed the teaching of the Buddha.
The Elder Cāpā