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An opaque pun: Notes on *Kāśyapaparivarta* §68

The passage §68 of the *Kāśyapaparivarta*, albeit missing in the Khotan manuscript, is quoted in the *Madhyāntavibhāga-ṭīkā* and thus reconstructible in Sanskrit. The content of the passage is a simile which likens a monk seeing all objects as void to a magician devoured by his own magical creation. Recondite as it may seem, the simile has been subject to some well-contrived interpretations in the Yogācāra tradition. Having examined the various interpretations and textual witnesses, this paper argues that all the translators and commentators, both ancient and modern, have overlooked a pun inherent in the simile, the source of which is to be sought in Middle Indic. The identification of the pun may shed some new light on the nature of the *Kāśyapaparivarta* as a so-called 'early Mahāyāna' text.