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SANCTI HILARII EPISTOLA AD ABRAM FILIAM SUAM.

(CIRCA FINEM ANNI 558 MISSA.)

Dilectissimæ filiæ ^a Abræ Hilarius in Domino salutem.

1. *Abra patris absentiam dolet.*—Accepi litteras tuas, in quibus intelligo desiderantem te mei esse: et certum (*Mss.* certe) ita habeo. Sentio enim quantum præsentia horum qui amantur optabilis sit. Et quia gravem tibi esse absentiam meam scirem, ne me forte impium esse erga te existimares, qui tam diu a te abessem: excusare tibi et profectorem meam et moras volui, ut intelligeres me non impie tibi, sed utiliter deesse. Namque cum te, filia, ut unicam, ita, quantum a me est, et unanimum habeam; vellem te pulcherrimam omnium et sanissimam vivere.

2. *Hilarius abest, ut vestem et margaritam pretiosam filiæ conquirat.*—Nuntiatum ergo mihi est, esse quemdam juvenem, habentem margaritam et vestem inæstimabilis pretii: quam si quis ab eo posset mereri, super humanas divitias et salutem et dives et salvus fieret. Ad hunc ^b his auditis profectus sum: ad quem cum per multas et longas et difficiles vias venissem, videns eum statim procidi. Adest enim tam pulcher juvenis, ut ante conspectum ejus nemo audeat consistere. Qui ubi me procidisse vidit, interrogari me jussit quid vellem, et quid rogarem: et ego respondi, audisse me de veste sua et margarita, et ob id venisse; et si eam mihi dignaretur præstare, esse mihi filiam quam vehementer diligerem, cui hanc vestem atque margaritam quærerem. Et ^c inter hæc prostratus in faciem fleo plurimum, et noctibus ac diebus ingemiscens, rogo uti audire dignaretur precem meam.

3. *Vestis hæc et margarita quanti facienda.*—Post quæ, quia bonus est juvenis et ^d melius illo nihil est, ait mihi, Nosti hanc vestem atque hanc margaritam, quam a me lacrymis rogas uti eam filiæ tuæ concedam? Et ego respondi illi, Domine, auditu cognovi de ipsis, et fide credidi: et scio quia optimæ sunt, et salus vera est hac veste uti, et hac margarita ornari. Et statim ministris suis præcepit, ut mihi et vestem hanc et margaritam ostenderent: et confestim ita fit. Ac vestem primo vidi: vidi, filia, vidi quod eloqui non possum. Numquid non sericum secundum subtilitatem ejus ^e spartum erat? Numquid candori ejus nives comparatæ non nigrescebant? Numquid aurum juxta fulgorem ejus non lividatur? Ipsa enim multicolor, et nihil prorsus comparatum ei poterat æquari. Post quam vidi margaritam: qua visa statim concidi. Non enim potuerunt oculi mei sustinere tantum ejus colorem. Nam nec cœli, nec lucis, nec maris, nec terræ species pulcritudini ejus poterat comparari.

4. *Utriusque commoda et dotes.*—Et cum prostratus jacerem, ait mihi quidam de assistentibus, Video te sollicitum et bonum patrem esse, et hanc vestem atque hanc margaritam ad filiam tuam desiderare: sed ut magis desideres, ostendo tibi quid adhuc hæc vestis atque margarita boni habeat. Vestis hæc numquam tineis comeditur, non usu atteritur, non sorde inficitur, non vi scinditur, non damno amittitur: sed semper talis qualis est permanet. Margaritæ vero hæc virtus est, ut si quis eam induerit, non ægrotet, non senescat, non moriatur. Nihil omnino in se habet, quod sit ^f noxium corpori: sed utenti ea nihil accidit, quod aut mortem afferat, aut ætatem demutat, aut impediatur sanitatem. Quod ubi audivi, filia, exanimari magis desiderio margaritæ et vestis istius cœpi: et sicut prostratus jacebam, indeficienti fletu et intenta oratione juvenem precari cœpi, dicens: Domine sancte, miserere precii meæ, et miserere sollicitudini et vitæ meæ. Si enim hanc vestem mihi et margaritam non concedis, miser futurus sum, filiamque meam ^g

viventem perditurus: ego propter hanc vestem et margaritam peregrinari volo. Scis, Domine, quia tibi non mentior.

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5. *Hilarii filiae promittuntur, modo vana ornamenta abjiciat.*—Post quam vocem meam audivit, jubet me levare; et ait mihi, moverunt me preces et lacrymæ tuæ, et bene est quod hoc credidisti. Et quia dixisti, te pro hac margarita ipsam vitam tuam velle impendere, non possum eam tibi negare: sed scire debes propositum et voluntatem meam. Vestis, quam ego dederò, talis est, ut ^h si quis voluerit veste alia colorata et serica et aurata uti, vestem meam capere non possit. Sed illi dabo eam, quæ contenta sit, non serico habitu, sed ⁱ nativis coloribus et insumptuoso textu vestiri: ita ut propter consuetudinem, purpuram ^k perangustam vestis habeat: non etiam purpura ipsa ^l diffundatur in vestem. Margarita vero, quam a me petis, naturæ ejus est, ut habere eam nemo possit, qui margaritam aliam habuerit: quia aliæ margaritæ aut de terra aut de mari sunt; mea autem, ut ipse tu vides, speciosa et pretiosa est, incomparabilis et cœlestis est, nec dignatur ibi esse ubi aliæ sunt. Non enim rebus meis convenit cum rebus hominis: quia qui veste mea et margarita utitur, in æternum sanus est; non febre exardescit, non vulnere patet, non annis demutatur, non morte dissolvitur; ^m æqualis enim semper et æternus est. Ego tamen hanc vestem et hanc margaritam meam petenti tibi dabo, ut eam filiae tuæ perferas. Sed prius scire debes quid velit filia tua. Si se hujus vestis et margaritæ meæ dignam faciat, id est, si vestes sericas et auratas et infectas habere noluerit, si omnem margaritam alteram oderit; tunc hæc quæ me rogas tibi præstabo.

6. *Filiam hortatur ut modestis utatur vestibus.*—Post quam vocem, filia, lætus exsurgo, et secretum hoc habens, hanc ad te epistolam feci: rogans te per multas lacrymas meas, ut te huic vesti et margaritæ reserves, neque miserum senem tali damno tuo ⁿ facias, si hanc vestem et hanc margaritam non habueris. Testor ^o autem tibi, filia, Deum cœli et terræ, quia nihil hac veste atque hac margarita pretiosius est; et tui juris est, ut hanc habeas. Tu modo, ^p si quando tibi vestis alia afferatur, vel serica, vel infecta, vel deaurata, dicito ei qui tibi offert: Ego vestem alteram exspecto, propter quam pater meus a me tam diu peregrinatur, quam mihi quærit, quam non possum habere si hanc habuero. Sufficit mihi lana ovis meæ, sufficit mihi color quem natura attulit, sufficit mihi textus insumptuosus: cæterum vestem illam desidero, quæ dicitur non absumi, non atteri, non scindi. At vero si tibi margarita offeratur aut suspendenda collo, aut digito coaptanda, dices ita, Non mihi impedimento sint istæ inutiles et sordidæ margaritæ: sed exspecto illam pretiosissimam, pulcherrimam et utilissimam. Credo patri meo, quia et ^q ille ei, qui hanc spondit sibi, credidit, propter quam mihi significavit se etiam mori velle: hanc exspecto, hanc desidero, quæ mihi præstabit salutem et æternitatem.

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7. *Filiæ exspectat rescriptum. Hymnus matutinus et serotinus. Abræ mater.*—Ergo, filia, subveni sollicitudini meæ, et hanc epistolam meam semper lege, et huic vesti et margaritæ te reserva. Et ipsa tu mihi, nullum interrogans, quibuslibet potes litteris rescribe, utrum vesti huic et margaritæ te reserves, ut sciam quid juveni illi respondeam: et ut si illam desideras, si exspectas, lætus possim ad te reditum cogitare. Cum autem mihi rescripseris, tunc tibi et ego quis sit hic juvenis, et qualis sit, et quid velit, et quid promittat, et quid possit, indicabo. Interim tibi hymnum matutinum et serotinum misi, ut memor mei semper sis. Tu vero si minus per ætatem hymnum et epistolam intellexeris, interroga matrem tuam, quæ optat ut te moribus suis genuerit Deo. Deus qui te genuit, hic et in æternum custodiat opto, filia desideratissima.

[a.](#) In plerisque mss. *Apræ.*

[b.](#) In uno ms. Colb. *ad hunc videndum, sine his auditis.*

[c.](#) Sic mss. At editi, *in terram prostratus facie.*

[d.](#) Exempla sancti Petri de Cultura Cenoman. *melior illo nullus est.*

[e.](#) Bad., Er. et Mir. *partem habuerat.* Lips. ex Erasmi margine, *par erat.* Novissima editio Par. *sparsum erat.* Beccensis ms. *præparatum non erat.* Ottobonius, *spartim erat.* Significat Hilarius, monstratæ sibi vestis subtilitati comparatum sericum prorsus spartum esse, ex quo scil. funes nautici et sportæ olim fiebant.

[f.](#) Editi, *obnoxium:* emendantur ex mss.

[g.](#) In uno ms. Colb. *juvenem, non viventem.*

[h.](#) Alter e mss. Colb. cum Boheriano, Ottob. et Cenom., *si qua puella: et mox solus Ottob. in veste mea capi non possit.* Huc spectat illud Cypriani de Discipl. et Habitu virginum, *Sericum et purpuram indutæ, Christum induere non possunt.* Sic Hieronymus, epist. VII ad Lætam, ubi narravit quas pœnas dederit Prætextata nobilissima, quod viro Hymetio jubente filiae Deo consecratæ habitum cultumque mutasset, concludit: *Sic ulciscitur Christus violatores templi sui, sic gemmas et pretiosissima ornamenta defendit.* Quod autem ibi de virginum cultu habet, maxime vero illud, *Habeat alias margaritas, quibus postea venditis emptura est pretiosissimum margaritum,* haud mediocriter confirmat hanc epistolam Hilarii ætatem redolere, neque ipsius stylo esse indignam. V. tract. ps. CXVIII, lit. 16, n. 16.

[i.](#) Nativos habituum colores commendant, et arte quæsitos damnant etiam alii Patres. *Neque enim,* inquit Cyprianus de Discipl. et Habitu virg. *Deus coccineas aut purpureas oves fecit, aut herbarum succis et conchyliis tingere et colorare lanas docuit.* Quod ex Tertulliano, lib. II de Cultu femin. n. 10, expressit Cyprianus.

[k.](#) Par. *purpuram per augustam vestis.* Editiones aliæ, *purpuream per augustas vestes.* Duo mss. *purpuram per angustas vestes.* Melius alii, *perangustum vestis:* ad distinctionem scil. *latioris purpuræ,* cujus meminit Tertullianus, de Pallio num. 4, unde est *clavus latus* ab eodem memoratus, n. 13 de Corona. Hieronymus vero, epist. 22, ad Eustochium depingens et carpens

quasdam virgines, quæ in publico notabiliter incedebant, inter alia ait, *purpura tantum in veste tenuis*. Nonnihil confert hic Hilarii locus ad explorandam generis illius nobilitatem.

l. Editi, *defundatur in veste*: emendantur ex scriptis.

m. Ita omnes fere mss. Editi vero, *æqualis æternis*. Codex Ottob. *æqualis enim est vestis mea et æterna*: et paulo ante *non vulnera patitur, pro non vulneri patet*.

n. Beccensis codex, *efficias*. Cenom. *conficias*. Boherianus et aliquot alii, *neque misero seni tale damnum tuum facias*. Unus Colb. *neque miserum semen tali damno tuo te facias*. Cui consentit Germ. nisi quod ab eo abest *te*.

o. Hujusmodi obtestationis exemplum legimus lib. de Synodis, num. 91, puta, *Testor Deum cœli atque terræ, me cum neutrum audissem, etc.*

p. Ita ms. Ottob. At editi, *tu modo quando tibi vestis alia affertur*.

q. Excusi, *ille qui spondit ei se credidit*: corriguntur ex ms. Boher.

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