

The Story of Domnius

262 a.d.

**The more we talk of the riches of the soul,
the more we reach for the riches
that our eyes can see.**

**If every town has a soul,
the town of Split on the shores of the Adriatic Sea
owes its soul to a student from Antioch
who falling in love with this part of the world
and these people carved his name right here for eternity.**

Salona the second half of the 3rd century

- Dommmmyyy...

- I'm coming, mum, just five more minutes.

- Get in here right away, lunch is getting cold, father is already at the table...

Domnius looked at Peter:

- I have to go home, see you tonight.

- See you.

- You're not angry that I have to go are you?

- No its not that, I'm just a bit edgy, - said Peter while leaving.

As he came into the house, father only lifted his head:

- Dommy, Dommy when will you learn? At your age you should already be thinking about what you will do in life. If you don't change nothing will become of you.

- I'll just go wash up and change, - muttered Domnius.

Old Theo stood up in anger:

- Come to the table right away. We could be together for lunch at least.

- Let him wash his hands, - said Magy.

- You can wash your hands, and you Magy see that my horses are ready for tomorrow, I am going to the harbour for supplies.

- Can I go with you, - Domnius called out.

- Curious how you hear when it doesn't concern you. Fine if you really want to go, but see that mother dresses you properly.

Theodosius was a real Antiochian nobleman, while Migdonija, Greek with Dalmatian background, was closer in spirit to the common folk. As she had relatives in Salona, they were going to visit them this year. This was a special occasion for Domnius.

No one, who once visits Dalmatia can ever say goodbye to it. People who live there are filled with some strange warmth and life there seems to slow its rhythm down even to a stopping point in some moments. Summers spent in Dalmatia are for those who want to live, that cannot fade in its beauty with time or be taken away from them.

And every boy that spent his summer in Dalmatia, as Domnius did, would pick up some of that warm Dalmatian dialect.

- This is where I'd like to spend my life, - he used to say.

He alone did not know how close to the truth he was.

Harbour was a special place for Domnius. Tradesmen, fishermen, salesmen and retailers, islanders and travellers all above would hurry in to the harbour in the morning. It was also known as the poor man's coat as even during winter the sun bathed it as to keep the poor people warm who gathered for that sole purpose. This town's belly offered all one desired. The boy's eye wondered through the displays of various goods. And in that summers morning rush of human bodies, strong scents of fruit overheating in the sun, through the tamarisk branches, he noticed a girl who with her parents, just as he did, bought supplies. He couldn't keep his eyes off of her and he succeeded in steering his father in the same direction the girl went with her parents. Suddenly the girl fell behind and Domnius found himself right in front of her. Their eyes met. She took out a white rose from a handful she carried and offered it to Domnius.

- *Helena*, - her father's voice could be heard, - hurry up, it's a long way to Brač.

Helena looked towards Domnius.

- *Helena, lets go*, - it was her mother calling her now.

A smile and a heart beat without a single word spoken. All the way to Salona he kept quiet.

He returned to the harbour many times with his father, but never again did he meet Helena.

Venancius

Peter slowly sneaked under the Domnius' bedroom window:

- Dommmmyyy... - he called Domnius in a whisper.

When that didn't work, he started knocking on the window.

- Dommmmyyy...

After a while Domnius appeared on the window:

- Why are you waking me up? You are always in some kind of a rush.

- Ivan Venancius arrived from Rome, you know, the one that preaches Christianity and performs miracles.

We've got to see that.

- The greatest miracle would be for you not to wake me up.

- Fine, you go on back to sleep.

- What's done is done, hold on for two minutes I'll go and wash.

There were still no churches in Salona, but that did not stop Venancius to gather almost all Christians at noon at the bottom of the mountain Massaron in the Prosika region.

- Where are we off to, - asked Domnius.

- To a nearby place, beneath Kozjak, - answered Peter.

As they were approaching the place they begun realising that a higher force was drawing them and that they were becoming a part of the people gathered by an unexplainable glow, going towards the answers that only faith can offer...

While listening to the speech by Ivan Venancius, Domnius looked up towards the sky and spotted three birds flying towards him.

The first bird, a pigeon, the carrier of news, landed on his left palm, the second bird a sea gull, the symbol of Dalmatia, landed on his shoulder, and the third bird, a swallow, the courier of spring, representing his soul, landed on his stretched right hand.

The three birds brought him the news that his earthly life did not belong to him alone, but to all those who would be converted into Christian religion by his preaching...

The birds flew away after the Venancius' speech.

- Dommy, lets go, its over, - Peter called out to him, - no miracle happened.

- It happened, Peter, it happened, - said Domnius looking up towards the clouds following the Lord's birds, not realising that Helena kept watching him from a distance. She alone realised what happened.

Antioch 270 a.d.

- Do you, Christians from the Theological school, think that you will convert humanity bringing your one God for all? Do you think that manhood has up till now lived in delusion and that you alone are here given by your God to offer to the philosophers of this world, who have written so many books that your followers couldn't carry them in their hands, life after death. - Pirg, Porphyrys' pupil started the debate, and continued

- Your philosophy, if it can be named so, can only be sold to the uneducated masses, who are far from books and far from reason.

Plotinus issued 54 writings 6 enneads learning from Amonius Sake, and my teacher Porphyry has written of Pythagoras, Aristotel's logic, Homer and through a hundred year old mythology gave a survey of religions, with retrospect to spiritualism and occultism, which are undoubtedly present.

And you have named all that is written paganism. We have never attacked Christianity. You are the ones who moved on us first in your explicitness of there being only one creator and one religion. The Porphyrys' reaction in the «Act against Christians» gives you through 15 books answers to all your questions.

Voices of approval could be heard in the hall.

Domnius waited for the students to quiet down, then slowly approached the platform:

- How many times did you ask yourself how it is possible that a mortal body is a host to an immortal spirit?

How many times did you search for answers in books, but you couldn't find them?

You ask yourselves why.

The answer I am offering is not complex and don't let its simplicity make you any less worthy. Many times in life the situation makes you look for something, something that has always been within your reach without you realising it, and just as you lose it do you become aware of its value.

Christianity is faith in people, it requires sacrifice, but in return it offers you true values, and, as they say in Dalmatia, «no moth can eat nor thief can steal» those values.

Christianity can offer you a view into your soul which Lord created picturing us to his image.

You feel that in every moment of your life. YOU ARE A PART OF OUR LORD, and not only a beam or a ghost in the ephemeral, as presented by Porphyry.

Take faith, hope and love and leave the earthly goods, as I have, take the path of our Lord and you will realise that when the race for belonging stops and when there is nothing material you can lose, your spiritual life which is not limited to your life time begins and you will become a part of the universe.

Silence came over that moment in time, only to give way to joyous cheers the next moment.

- If Peter was here, - thought Domnius, he would say:

-You killed their God in them.

Peter

Peter suddenly woke up, he thought he saw Domnius.

- This was more than a dream, - he said, - Dommy is probably mentioning me in Antioch. It's surprising what a philosopher our Dommy became. I'll be on my way to the harbour to see what is new.

And in the harbour, as always, a whole lot of people from everywhere, exactly what Peter enjoyed the most.

He loved that feeling of life. Unlike Domnius his life philosophy was: Live for today and have a good time, and if so the prospect of tomorrow will be just as good. Spring in the harbour, Dalmatian women in light dresses, most beautiful in the world, great barbeque meat and divine wine from the local islands, these are more than enough reasons for living. - I really need to get a job within the royal household. It would be great there for someone who doesn't like to work too hard, meaning me.

Constantius Clorus' ship was in the harbour, the Roman general on his way to Oneum stopped for lunch. Peter saw them in the tavern across the way and entered.

- This food is delicious, - he heard Constantius saying.

- We should find a cook for the ship, it looks like our cook is seriously ill and we won't be able to cope alone, and the men are unsatisfied by the food prepared by his replacements.

- This is a gift from heaven, thought Peter.

- Gentlemen, I bid you good day, and who am I, no other than Peter, and you'll wonder who Peter is?

Every child from these parts knows: A Cook, and the best at that, and, what is most important, at your disposal. When you hire me all your worries come to an end. You will, master Constantius, get colour back to your face, - Peter ended his speech addressing Constantius Clorus. Peter unfortunately did not know that Constantius was named Clorus for his pale skin. Constantius' soldiers rose in a second with swords in their hands.

- Stop, - said Constantius in laughter, - a bit of good spirit won't hurt anyone on our ship. Put your swards back for now, will draw them again, if necessary, after the first meal prepared by our new cook.

And now, - he turned to Peter, - we'll see if you are as good in the kitchen as you say you are.

- You won't regret it, sir, - Peter bowed with a smile on his face.

He ran home quickly and told his parents that he got a job and with no other than Constantius Clorus.

His mother packed him in a hurry:

- Here son, I've packed everything in this bag, take care, the sea can be as hard as hell.

- Yes mother, don't worry about a thing, have you packed grandmothers recipes as well.

- Yes I have, but will you be able to cook?

- Yes, I'll be a hit, - said Peter, kissed his mother, and once on the doorway he looked back, as though he wanted to keep the picture of his home memorised until he returns.

The ship was ready for departure and as Peter boarded, with a light northern breeze they drifted from the shore.

- *We'll be in Oneum by the evening*, - he thought.

It hasn't been an hour on the sea when a strong northerly wind started to blow getting stronger and stronger only to reach the strength of a gale-force wind. Panic started to spread along the ship.

- *My mother was right. Why did I have to go to the sea?* Peter started to whine.

- *Steersman, turn the boat towards Brač to the Povelja cove*, - he heard Constantius give the order.

The wind was blowing mercilessly, but the boat still made it to Paulia vallis, after what Peter felt relieved. He jumped from the boat to the shore and became the old Peter again:

- *Gentlemen, we have arrived to the island where best roasted lamb is prepared, with lamb tripe for hors-d'oeuvre and with it my favourite – vitalac – specially grilled lamb insides, and I hope that this wind lasts long enough for us to taste all the specialties of this island, and if you were to catch a wild boar, I will make a boar pasticada with gnocchi, and that will make you lick your fingers.*

And the wind was really persistent. Constantius went hunting with the local guides. On horseback they came to villa rustica, Roman settlements in the middle of the island of Braccia and Constantius decided upon a wild boar hunt.

- *I only have to try that «wild boar pasticada with gnocchi» and I won't regret staying on Brač.*

But the wild boar hunt, the leader of its kind is considered the hardest catch of all and Constantius soon discovered that the island vegetation gave the wild boar a great advantage. He took his spear and sword and fought through the impossibly dense evergreen underbrush when in front of him a beast appeared larger than he had ever seen.

He threw his spear instantly and hit the wild boar. He prepared his sword to finish him off, but the wild boar ran past him with all its strength and disappeared into the woods. He looked after it and started to follow its tracks.

He forgot about his guide companions and soon he realized that he was lost. Night was falling and he started to walk along the marked paths.

Suddenly he saw a glimpse of light and was going towards it when all of a sudden the wounded beast appeared before him and charged at him with all its might. The last thing he remembered was a figure of some man standing at the door of a house.

Helena

Helena sat at Constantius' bedside.

- All has passed well, it was pure luck that my father saw the wild boar in time to finish it off.

Constantius opened his eyes and the first thing he saw was Helena.

- If this is what paradise looks like, than dying isn't so bad.

In his attempt to get up Helena's arm stopped him.

- You need to rest for a while longer, the wound from the wild boar hasn't healed properly.

- How sweetly you speak those words.

- The most important thing for you now is to get some sleep, - smiled Helena and turned off the candle.

A night well slept and clean island air brought new strength into Constantius' body. He woke up and saw an appealing man rocking in a chair.

- You have saved my life, - he said.

- It wasn't hard, the wild boar was already at its end, but never mind that now, tell us who you are and where you're from. Judging by your clothes you seem to be of a wealthy status.

- My name is Constantius and I was on a boat with my crew sailing from Salona but a gale-force wind caught us and we docket at Povelja.

As the wind wasn't calming, we decided to go hunting and stayed at villa rustica in the centre of the island. Where am I now?

- In Škrip.... Scrupus, we are not far from your hosts. We will let them know where you are and they will come for you. The most important thing is that you are alive and well.

At that moment Helena entered:

- You shouldn't strain yourself. Here, I brought you something to eat a bit of soup to help you regain your strength.

Constantius decided to seem weaker than he was and he gave himself up into Helena's arms. Another day passed, and his men came for him. The first thing Peter asked about was:

- Did they feed you well?

- The service offered here was, my dear Peter, equal to the masterpieces you told us about. I would like to speak to Helena in private now.

Everyone left the room, and Constantius and Helena were left alone.

- Helena, this might be the craziest thing I'll say in all my life. We don't know each other for very long, but these days and nights you have sat by me give me strength to ask your hand in marriage.

Never before have I met anything more beautiful than you, Helena. The first time I sat my eyes on you I wished to be with you forever. I spoke with your father and he gave me his consent. Say something, Helena?

-Is a lamb fur coat good to have on a boat? asked Helena, and Constantius grabbed her around her waist. Still weak, he lifted her up and said:

-When you are with me, you won't need any lamb fur coats, your clothes will be worthy of your beauty.

Peter brought the carriage in front of the house and again his inventiveness and originality won, the carriage was decorated with all kinds of flowers and greens that could be picked at that moment. This thoughtfulness cheered up Helena and Constantius, and Peter asked in a whisper:

- Oh sir, you will probably need a cook of my qualities at your court.

- Peter, you are irreplaceable, - followed the answer. And so Peter's dream came true.

The Antioch Bishop

The year 272 brought changes to Antioch. Three synods were held against the bishop Paul of Samosata, because of his wrong preaching of Christian teachings and so he was banished from the Church. Domnius then took over the management of the Antioch diocese. His inauguration to bishop was a normal course of action as Domnius was, to all who knew him, a gentleman in its true meaning, an intellectual of sophisticated looks. He always wore beautiful suits, his hair flawlessly combed fell to his shoulders, and his brown eyes like dears glowed with warmth for every living being. But the year 274 brought news of the death of Ivan Venancius. Departure for Delminium ended tragically. Lucas, one of Domnius' teachers, turned to Domnius:

- Dalmatia has been left without Venancius we should send someone there.

- No Lucius, I am going to Dalmatia, it is my destiny. Antioch will be fine without me.

Lucius replied to that:

- Beati pedes evangelizantium pacem....

May blessed be the feet that announce peace.

- What is the situation like in Dalmatia?

- Never better, - answered Lucius, - edicts against Christians by emperor Galius lie forgotten, and the freshest edict from this year 274 by emperor Aurelius, has hardly begun its implementation. Freedom is completely enjoyed by the Church. I know that you will become a true founder of the Salonitanian church, still do not forget Dalmatia is no Antioch. Take care.

The Colony of Julia Martia Salona

Salona was a small Rome with its constitution. The population was divided into government, the senate which counted a hundred members, and the citizens. Rich road network, built for the emperor Tiberius spread into six directions towards all parts of the Roman Empire. Minerals, wood, wool and skin from the surrounding parts of the province came down into the Salonitanian factories to be manufactured.

- Salona grew stronger by the day, - thought Domnius, - and even more beautiful than I left it. I'll get settled first with Asklipia.

He knocked on the door of the beautiful home of Asklipia. The old servant that opened the door was happy to see him and started calling out for Asklipia:

- Mistress, quickly, Domnius has arrived.

Asklipia ran to the door and quietly said:

- I hardly recognise him. He changed a lot, a real gentleman.

What world can do to you, a boy grows into a man.

- Will you be staying a while Domnius?

- Just a couple of days before I settle in to the house of Venantius, - answered Domnius, already picking up a bit of, to him dear and almost forgotten, Dalmatian dialect.

- What became of Peter?

- He started as a cook on the Constantius Clorus's court, the roman governor for Dalmatia, and now he is already ordering everyone about. You know Peter, he won't get lost.

- I'll go and see him now, I can't wait.

Asklipia gave him directions of how to get to the court of Constantius and he was on his way.

He walked slowly watching the five bridges of the river Salon. The day was beautiful for a walk, and just as he was crossing one of the bridges, he heard someone calling out:

- Dommmy...

He turned around and saw Peter running toward him.

- Where have you been, what's new? - Domnius started with a Dalmatian dialect in his speech.

And as though it was yesterday that they last saw each other they smiled.

- I heard you were coming to take the place of Venantius. Poor man, he shouldn't have gone to Delminium. He had been warned.

- You can't say that, Peter. A lot has changed, faith has to reach everyone, and the word of God has to be heard. How are you?

- Divine, - said Peter, and bit his tongue instantly, - sorry divine is a bit out of line, it just came out. As you know I am with Constantius. It's a long story.

And so Peter told him how everything happened, Domnius listened to him without a blink not even when Helena was mentioned, even though that brought him back to the days of childhood, days of carelessness.

There was a lot to do now.

- Peter, lets go to the place where it all started, beneath Kozjak. Spread the word to the people that Domnius has arrived, the new bishop of Salona.

- Domnius has arrived from Antioch, - the news spread by word of mouth all across Salona.

And people went like a river towards the place underneath the mountain Massaron. A spring day in May, the smell of the yellow broom flower is in the air. The whole of Salona came to welcome Domnius, everyone wanted to squeeze his hand, news of him came all the way to Salona. To the believers his arrival meant an embrace of comfort, a shelter from a storm, a returned love.

After infinite hand shakes and greetings with known and unknown people, Domnius climbed up on to higher ground to turn to the Salonitanian people.

-There are many kinds of love in life, love for one's parents, wife, children. There are also places that get under one's skin and into one's heart forever. I have experienced such love over twenty years ago for these mountains, this sea, the sun and for you, the people living here and making these parts with your warmth the most beautiful place on earth. I wasn't born here, but as a man chooses his wife, I chose this country for my life companion.

Ivan Venancius, may his soul rest in peace, showed me the way, which I am following today, and all that I have learned to this day I will share with you.

*My home is always open to you, welcome are the poor that seek a piece of bread and a sip of wine as well as the rich who seek advice, and all that seek comfort in the faith. Domnius spoke for a long time, and Peter started to search for anyone familiar in the gathering. And searching he saw Helena with his son Constantinus listening to Domnius. Domnius spoke of Venancius, of Antioch, of Porfirius, he placed his heart and soul in front of the gathering and love could be felt in every spoken word, love that took over everyone present connecting them in faith. At the end of his speech he said:- *When I listened to Ivan Venancius over more than twenty years ago three birds came to me: a pigeon, sea gull and a swallow. Look, - he said pointing toward the birds that also came to greet him, - they are still here. Take care of them and feed them, as our Lord takes care of us. By doing good deeds, good will be brought back to you. I leave you in peace, amen.**

- Amen.

The people were slowly leaving, Helena came closer to Domnius, bowed and said:

-Welcome to Salona.

- Thank you, - answered Domnius, looked at Constantine, placed his hand on to his forehead, closed his eyes and said:

- If one day you are to become an emperor, be merciful to my people.

Helena drew back, but Domnius calmed her down with a smile:

- Don't be afraid, emperors are human, too.

Diocletian

The year 284 brought a new emperor.

The murder of emperor Numerian in Nikomedia brought Diocletian to the throne, whose life's long wish was to build a palace in this area.

Diocletian celebrated his return to Dalmatia. He took Prisca to be his wife, even though he knew she was of Christian faith. He brought in tetrarch way of ruling, with Maximian, whom he promoted to the honour of Augustus in the year 286 for two Cesars at the beginning of the new century he named Galerius and Constantine.

Galerius married the daughter of Diocletian, Valeria, and Constantine divorced Helena and for his second wife he took Maximian's stepdaughter Theodora. All of the above did not have any influence on the Christians for the time.

Diocletian was one of them, a Dalmatian, married to a Christian woman.

- Peter, what happened to Helena? - asked Domnius.

- Diocletian took her to his court. As he has no son he has always had feelings for Constantine. Constantius and he were Numerian's generals.

The boy will have all he desires there.

Priska watches him like a hawk and she loves him with all her heart. They brought him the best teachers to teach him. I'll never understand why Constantius left Helena.

- Power is sweet, my dear Peter, who knows how you would rule if you had the power.

- Me, I'd be the best ruler ever, but alas here is the best place for me.

Say! I have a great idea, you, at the position you are at, are in need of a house cook.

- And you are, let us assume, the best cook in Salona.

- You speak like a saint, I'm on my way to take my things and tonight we are turning the page regarding your daily eating habits.

Marcus Aurelius Julius

By the edict of the 24th of March of the year 303, the persecutions of Christians began. Under the influence of Maximianus and his mother Romuliana from Denmark, Galerius through his governor in Salona Marcus Aurelius Julius executed sanctions against Christians.

In the year 304 they burnt a Christian church for the first time. Helena ran to Domnius:

- *They caught Peter, George and a couple of other Christians.*

- *I don't know what they did to deserve that, I'm on my way to Marcus before something worse happens.*

When he came to Marcus or as Salonitians called him Maurelius, he saw Peter getting whipped.

- *Why Marcus, - asked Domnius.*

- *They are guilty for the death of the son of the Roman squire Dignus, your exclusivity in faith led to an argument and the death of the young man.*

- *Not true, - yelled Peter, - we were all pushed around by each other and the young man fell and hit his head on a stone it was an accident.*

Domnius suddenly felt a supernatural force entering his body and he could hear himself saying:

- *Where is the young man, take me to him.*

When they arrived to the Dignus' house, they found Febronia crying over her only son.

Domnius asked her to step aside, he knelt down on his knees, looked up towards the sky, placed his hand on the dead body and said:

- *In the name of Jesus take thy spirit once again and rise to your feet, live again here on earth.*

And when he said those words, he suddenly felt a bit tired, and he looked at the young man who opened his eyes and rose as though he had only fallen asleep. Everyone present fell to their knees, and Maurilius turned as white as a ghost and barely managed to say:

- *Let the Christians free.*

Anastasius

While passing through the streets of Salona Domnius stopped for a moment looked at a house which Asklipia was letting where a large cross was placed. That was not very wise during these times as it represented a challenge to the Maurilius' men. He knocked on the door and Anastasius opened, or as they called him Stash for short.

They knew each other since Domnius' visits to Aquileia, where Stash's family was from.

- *When did you arrive?* - Domnius asked him.

- *This morning,* - Stash answered.

- *And you placed the cross so everyone will know you are here.*

- *Everyone has their own way of showing ones faith. Mine was always very direct.*

- *Still beware, Maurilius' men can be very unpleasant,* - said Domnius, waved him goodbye and headed home.

Peter was still in bed and Helena kept changing his bandages on the wounds that he got from the whipping.

- Domnius, - Helena called out as she came to meet him, - *I heard today that Maurelius' men are getting ready to capture all of the more important Christians. I believe they will be unmerciful. Bringing Dignus' son back to life showed them how dangerous you are to them.*

Peter lifted himself up from the bed a little:

- *Why don't you visit Diocletian? He has always had understanding for the Christians. I am sure he doesn't know what is going on here. He never touched you, and all of this is Galerius and Maurelius' meddling.*

Domnius sat down, placed his hand on his forehead and seemed to wonder off from this situation and from this time in space. Then he spoke:

- *Diocletian married a Christian woman, but he never took the Christian faith. He once said:*
- *A man has to die believing in the faith he was born to. And we Christians cannot make compromises with anyone, not even Diocletian. We are proud to be Christians and we are ready to die for it, for what is life without faith? Just a short journey. We the Christians cannot stand on the side of our rulers nor can we indulge them. We have to fight for the people; we have to be their voice, for we are the people.*

He got up and continued:

- *I'm going to Rome tomorrow, I want my horses ready.*

- *Four soldiers of the emperor's body guards should go with you, Gajas, Antioch, Paulinius and Telius. They are Christians and they will protect you with their lives.*

- *Fine, Peter, even though you can't escape destiny.*

- *Helena, I'm going on a long journey, and if I don't come back take care of Constantine. I have a feeling he will bring peace to my people.*

- *Don't worry, Domnius, everything will be fine, just you hurry back.*

At dawn Domnius got out of bed and slowly sneaked out of the house so he wouldn't wake anyone up, and he started his journey.

After a while Peter woke up and when he realised Domnius was gone he ran, just as he was, undressed all the way uphill, kneeled down and called out after him with everything he had like a wounded beast:

- *Dommmmyyy....*

The Strength of Faith

On the 10th of April in the year 304 thick fog covered the ground coming down all the way to the river Sitiron. A strange silence ruled over the nature. Drawn swords, thirsty of Christian blood waited in ambush.

Domnius' procession was in the middle of the bridge when they realised that Roman soldiers surrounded them from both sides. Over a hundred Roman soldiers in a frantic rage came upon this small party of Christians. One after the other Paulinius, Telius, Antioch and Gaian fell to the ground. Domnius stood on the edge of the bridge with his arms spread high towards the sky.

Death approached him with numerous sword blades. Dozens of swords flew through Domnius' body, but it still stood untouched. At that very moment a flash of lightning and a strike of thunder tore the bridge in half and the river grew high and took with it all that stood in its way. The soldiers who stood by the bridge watched in horror as the river took the bodies away, and they saw in a blinding light which moved on the river, the figure of Domnius, as he vanished in the distance.

On that day the river Salon turned to blood, and a purple fog crawled into Salona and into the streets of Diocletian's Palace bringing Christian religion to these parts forever.

Epilogue

A long time has passed since Domnius' martyr's death.

God's hand took the lives of Maximianus, who hanged himself and whose grave has to this day been unknown, and Galerius who was taken down by the plague. On the grave of Domnius on the slopes of Massaron a white rose bush has grown.

Domnius' nephew Primus became a bishop and together with- as Domnius prophesised- the emperor Constantine, the heir of Diocletian, built an aisled basilica in the very centre of Salona, while the Christians of Scrupus built the church of St Helen, the patroness of the island of Braccia.

In time, the inhabitants of Salona moved into Diocletian's palace and they turned the mausoleum of the emperor Diocletian into a cathedral, which they later dedicated to their patron St Domnius transferring his bones and the bones of St Anastasias (St Stash) to the altars of the cathedral.

More than twenty churches inside the walls of the palace are the obvious evidence that even the greatest rulers have left, and Christians, Domnius's people have remained.

*And while sea gulls guard the sea,
and the pigeons visit the town square,
swallows every spring
bring to us the memory of St Domnius
and the festival in his honour, Sudamia begins.*

