

**Anonymous**  
**Latin Miracle Stories of St Nicholas**  
**BHL 6130-6176**

## Introduction

Any medieval Latin manuscript containing a hagiographical Life of St Nicholas will usually also contain a mass of miracle stories, often in variable order. This makes collation difficult.

One helpful way to handle this is to have the Latin text of all these stories in a Word document, and simply do a Ctrl-F on the Latin words on the page image. This file was created for just this purpose, in order to make this possible. It has been made available in case it is of use to others. The contents are placed in the public domain.

The file was created using the index in the *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina*. The printed Latin text of the first forty-seven of the miracle stories has been located, scanned in, and, for convenience, run through Google Translate.

The Latin texts included here are not critical editions, but rather readers' editions, and the punctuation has been improved to assist this. The source is given in each case. Where the text has been printed in modern times in the catalogues of the Bollandists, this has been used. Those texts taken from early editions required intervention, if only to punctuate them. A couple of texts were omitted by the Bollandists with a note, and these have been transcribed from manuscripts. The translations are probably not 100% accurate, but they have been read through, some obvious corrections made, and a few footnotes added. The headings are by myself.

This file contains only BHL 6130 to 6176. These are the miracle stories that take place during Nicholas' lifetime, plus those that took place after his death but before his translation to Bari. There are many more such stories in the BHL, but this is a convenient stopping point.

The task of constructing a critical text, with a professional translation and commentary, of all these pieces still remains to be done. It seems possible that it may never be done. But in the meantime this file should assist researchers.

Roger Pearse  
Ipswich  
March 2023

## Sources

These are the editions used and referred to below.

- *Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum Bibliothecae Regiae Bruxellensis*. Pars I, Codices Latini membranei, vol. 1 (1886).
- *Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum Bibliothecae Regiae Bruxellensis*. Pars I, Codices Latini membranei, vol. 2 (1889)
- *Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum Latinorum ... Bibliotheca Nationali Parisiensi*, Tomus I (1889)
- *Catalogus codicum hagiographicorum Latinorum ... Bibliotheca Nationali Parisiensi*, Tomus I (1890)
- Falconius, N.C., *S Nicolai Acta Primigenia* (1751)
- Giacomozzi, C., *Otlone di Sant'Emmerano, Vita sancti Nicolai (BHL\_6126)*. Edizione critica, traduzione e commento, diss. Trent (2017-8).
- Honorius Augustodunensis, *Speculum Ecclesia, sive sermones aliquot evangelici...*, Cologne (1531). The sermo S.Nicolai is on f.208v.
- Lippomanus, *Sanctorum Priscorum Patrum Vitae*, vol. 3 (1553)
- Mombritius, B., *Sanctuarium seu vitae sanctorum*, vol. 2 (1910 reprint).

## 8. Narrations of miracles by the living St Nicholas.

### 8.1 [BHL 6130] *Fasts While A Baby*

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 503, c. 1.

Sanctissimus Nicolaus, Myrreae civitatis archiepiscopus, ex utraque parte alta progenie editus est. Patre namque Epiphanio, matre vero Nomia, apud Patheram civitatem oriundus extitit. Qui utrique parentes, quamquam genere clari, fide tamen et spiritu clariores, hunc solum puerum suarum rerum morumque heredem a Domino petierunt: quod sancto Spiritu donante impetraverunt. Revera etenim in illo Spiritus sancti gratia redundabat, cum in cunis lacte matris abstinenciam servaret. Infans quidem et tener corpore, senex mente et spiritu habebatur, dum divina Nicolaus gratia afflatus, alienus ab omni lascivia, Christi vestigia a prima infantia sequeretur. In quo nimirum pax, fides, caritas, pietas eximia, patientia, castitas, humilitas, quae est condimentum omnium virtutum, fuere. Si itaque in sanctis suis mirabilis est Deus, in illo tamen mirabilior, si taliter dici potest, fuit, per quem tanta et inaudita miracula operari dignatus est. De quibus tam praeclaris et innumerabilibus miraculis quoddam suorum quasi primitias miraculorum Deo adjuvante enucleare disponimus.

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The most holy Nicholas, archbishop of the city of Myra, came of a high lineage on both sides. For his father was Epiphanius, and his mother was Nomia, a native of the city of Patara. Both parents, though noble in blood, yet more noble in faith and spirit, asked the Lord for this only child to be the heir of their property and manners: which they obtained by the gift of the Holy Spirit. In fact, the grace of the Holy Spirit was overflowing in him, when in his cradle he kept abstinence from his mother's milk. Indeed, the child was considered tender in body, but old in mind and spirit, while Nicholas, inspired by divine grace, alienated from all lasciviousness, followed the footsteps of Christ from his earliest childhood. In which, of course, there was peace, faith, charity, extraordinary piety, patience, chastity, and humility, which is the essence of all the virtues. If therefore God is wonderful in his saints, yet more wonderful in Him, if it may be said so, was he, through whom he deigned to work such great and unheard of miracles. With the help of God, we intend to set forth some of his miracles, so excellent and innumerable, as if first-fruits of miracles.

### 8.2 [BHL 6131] *As a Baby Stands on Feet*

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 503, c. 2.

Primo igitur die nativitatis ejus, dum nutrix ipsius balneum illi in quodam vasculo praepararet, eumque ibi deponeret, jam caelo infans erectus per se sine nutricis vel alicujus sustentaculo quasi media hora super pedes suos stetit.

O res miranda nimium, res ac praedicanda.

O puer insignis, divinus quo fuit ignis :

Quem nutrix stantem vidit Dominumque rogantem.

Quicumque titulum hunc legitis, magnum quoddam et inauditum a saeculis miraculum Nicolai Myrreorum archiepiscopi dinoscite, fratres carissimi: quoniam ipso die quo natus fuit, re vera fere unius horae spatio, ut veraci comprobatur testimonio, rectus super pedes dicitur substitisse, ac

deinde more aliorum infantium in cunis sese collocasse. Qua in re Deum semper magnificate ac Nicolaum digne honorificate.

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Therefore, on the first day of his birth, while his nurse was preparing a bath for him in a vessel, and laying him there, the infant, raised up by himself, stood on his feet for about half an hour without a nurse or any supporter.

Oh things to marvel at too much, things to be preached.

O remarkable child, divine in whom was the fire:

Whom the nurse saw standing and asking the Lord.

Whoever reads this title, know, my dear brothers, a great and unheard-of miracle of Nicholas, the archbishop of Myrrh, for on the very day he was born, in fact, in the space of about an hour, as confirmed by true testimony, he is said to have stood upright on his feet, and then that he had placed himself in the cradle after the manner of other infants. In this matter always magnify God and honor Nicholas with dignity.

### 8.3 [BHL 6132] Heals a Woman in Childhood

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 503-4, c. 3.

Aliud quoque insigne miraculum hujus sanctissimi viri sub silentio praeterire noluimus, quod in pueritia ejus Domino operante factum est. Quadam itaque die, dum solito rediret a scholis, librum in quo sancta meditabatur nulli tradens oblivioni sed in manu deferens, quandam debilem mulierculam viribus corporis destitutam et incessu etiam pedum defectam obviam habuit. Quae sanctum intuens puerum, genibus ejus obvoluta, fuis lacrimis pie exorando adjutorium ab eo poposcit. Cujus vocem audiens puer Nicolaus, motus solita pietate, manu eam tenuit et incessum reddidit sanitatique restituit. Quae mulier, tanto in se recepto miraculo, gratulabunda abiit, suoque patruo retulit haec Nicolao episcopo. Quo audito episcopus miraculo, evocans eum ad se et benigne eum manibus amplexens benedixit et sanctificando sanctificavit suisque orationibus eum commendavit Domino nostro Jesu Christo.

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We do not want to pass over in silence another remarkable miracle of this most holy man, which happened during his childhood as the Lord was working. One day, therefore, as he was returning from school as usual, not forgetting about the book on which he was meditating, but carrying it in his hand, he met a certain feeble little woman, destitute of physical strength and even unable to walk. Looking at the holy child, she wrapped herself around his knees, and with flowing tears piously implored him to help her. Hearing her voice, the boy Nicholas, moved by his usual piety, took her by the hand, returned the ability to walk, and restored her to health. This woman, having herself received such a miracle, went away giving thanks, and reported these things to his uncle, Bishop Nicholas. When the bishop had heard about the miracle, calling him to himself and kindly embracing him with his hands, he blessed him and sanctified him by sanctifying him, and with his prayers he commended him to our Lord Jesus Christ.

## 8.4 [BHL 6133] The Murdered Merchant in a Cask of Salt

From: *Catal. Brux.*, vol. 1, p. 315-6, c. 1.

Mercator quidam orationis et dilectionis causa ad sancti Nicolai ecclesiam festinans, hospitio viri cujusdam susceptus est. Qui mercatoris pecuniam intuens et affectans, noctu surrexit et hominem sopitum crudeliter jugulavit. Dehinc innocuum cadaver membratim divisit et divisum in quodam dolio occuluit et juxta vescendarum consuetudinem carnum multo sale solidavit. Perpetrato denique tantae impietatis scelere, crudelissimus hospes ad lectum suum ivit, dormivit et quievit. Nocte media clementissimus confessor Christi Nicolaus illud crudele et nefandum hospitium vehit; speciosissimus miles ingredi dignatus est et, aperto dolio, illud dilaceratum et attritum cadaver extraxit et membra membris reconcilians totum corpus reformavit, et prorsus nulla remanente cicatrice vitae reddidit. Tunc sermone pio mercatorem suum allocutus et consolatus, hominis homicidae exivit domo, et suae beatitudinis reductus et receptus est palatio.

Facto mane mercator surrexit incolumis, et domus dominum alloquens et salutans intermissi laborem itineris arripere disposuit. Ignorabat enim mortem suam quam hospes suus intulerat, et ab illata morte praesenti vitae qualiter redditus fuerat. Tunc peccator stupens et admirans, perpetratum facinus rexit et qualiter eum jugulasset, qualiterque ejus universa membra divisisset seriatim aperuit. "Ego," inquit, "te miserande jugulavi, ego tua membra universa divisi, et divisa isto in dolio scelerate occultavi. Vere magnus confessor sanctus Nicolaus, qui, tua contrita et divisa membra reformando, consolidavit et redintegrata praesenti vitae restituere potuit." Mercator ille, haec audiens et vera esse cognoscens, Deo et sancto Nicolao gratias reddidit, et quomodo sub militis specie sanctum Nicolaum viderit et audierit, stupenti nimis et admiranti hospiti suo alacriter exposuit. Mox quoque ab eo satisfactione recepta ac pace inter ipsos firmissime compacta, confoederantur hospes et mercator idem. Sicque pari devotione concurrentes simul ad ecclesiam beati Nicolai, facti sunt ibidem ipsi sancto servi perpetui.

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A certain merchant, hastening to the church of St. Nicholas for prayer and pleasure, received the hospitality of a certain man. He, on looking at and touching the merchant's money, got up in the night and cruelly strangled the sleeping man. Then he divided the innocuous corpse into parts, and hid the parts in a kind of cask, and, after the custom of meat for eating, he packed it with much salt. Finally, having committed such an impious crime, the most cruel host went to his bed, slept and rested. In the middle of the night, the most merciful confessor of Christ, Nicholas, drew aside that cruel and evil host; as a most splendid soldier he deigned to enter, and, opening the barrel, he took out the torn and bruised corpse, and restoring the limbs to the limbs, he reformed the whole body, and returned it to life without any scar remaining whatsoever. Then he addressed and consoled his merchant with a pious speech, and he left the house of the murderous man, and, restored to his bliss, he was received at the palace.

In the morning the merchant got up unharmed, and after addressing and saluting the master of the house, he made ready to take up the labour of the journey. For he was ignorant of the death which his host had brought upon him, and in what manner he had been returned from that death to the present life. Then the sinner, astonished and wondering, revealed the deed he had committed, and how he had strangled him, and disclosed how he had cut off all of his limbs in turn. "I," he said,

"miserably strangled you, I cut off all your limbs, and wickedly hid them in that barrel. Truly the great confessor, St. Nicholas, who by reforming your broken and divided members, consolidated them and was able to restore them renewed to the present life." The merchant, hearing these things and knowing them to be true, gave thanks to God and to St. Nicholas, and eagerly explained to his greatly amazed and astonished host how he saw and heard St. Nicholas under the guise of a soldier. And no sooner had he received satisfaction from him, and made peace most firmly between them, than the guest and the merchant agreed together. So, coming together with equal devotion to the church of the blessed Nicholas, they became there perpetual servants of the same saint.

## 8.5 [BHL 6134] The Poisoned Well at Arnavendensis

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 504, c. 5.

Turbae multae de Castello Arnavendensi venerunt, supplicantes sanctissimo Nicolao, uno ore postulantes simulque dicentes: "Benignissime pater, a longe quidem aquam haurimus, et in fonte quem habuimus prope infirmam mulierem et mente captam invenimus mortuam, multa spurcitia sordidato fonte. Quin etiam per noctem ibidem clamat nocturnis. Post haec nullus homo nullaque bestia hausit ex illo. Est quidem juxta nos collis vicinus ubi prisco in tempore aquae venae fuisse dinoscuntur, sed nunc abscondita est aqua per multos jam annos. Quapropter credimus per te, beatissime pater, Dei opitulante clementia ibidem tuis meritis posse exurgere aquam."

Haec illis simul petentibus, ait beatus Nicolaus: "Ecce, fratres carissimi, summa cum reverentia in manibus nostris portantes sanctum evangelium una cum venerabili cruce, certi de misericordia Dei congregati omnes perveniamus ad locum."

Cum autem ad eundem locum venissent, ilico sanctus Nicolaus fossorium apprehendit, flexisque genibus diu oravit. Finita vero oratione, in altum in nomine Domini cubitum et dimidium fodit, continuoque sufficienter emanavit abundantia aquae. Tunc omnes simul voces dederunt, laudantes atque glorificantes Dominum Jesum Christum, quia fontem aquae famulo suo Nicolao concessit. Sed ille non haec suis meritis sed populi deputavit. Ad horrendum autem et contaminatum fontem cum accessisset, audita sunt ibidem teterrima diabolica sibila et voces. His auditis, ilico Nicolaus orationem fudit. Cum autem ab omnibus dictum fuisset "Amen," mox cum fumo nigerrimo cuncti viderunt exinde exire tetrum nocturnum [sic.] laxa voce clamantem: "Minime, minime valeo alicubi aspectum ferre Nicolai."

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Many crowds came from the castle of Arnabanda,<sup>1</sup> praying to the most holy Nicholas, speaking with one mouth and saying at the same time, "Most kind father, we have drawn water for a very long time indeed, and in the spring which we had close by we found dead a sick woman who was out of her mind, and much filth in the fouled spring. Moreover there she wails at night throughout the night. After this neither man nor beast has drunk from it. There is indeed a neighbouring hill near us where it is known that there were streams of water in previous times, but these days the water has been gone for many years. For this reason we believe that through you, most blessed father, with the aid of the mercy of God, the water can flow again by your merits."

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<sup>1</sup> Giacomozzi, p.171 n.1, and p.213 n.2 identifies this place as Ἀρναβανδέων, between Myra and Plakoma, and the location of the monastery of Holy Sion. The name varies.

To those who asked these things at the same time, blessed Nicholas said, "Behold, dearest brothers, carrying the holy gospel in our hands together with the venerable cross with the greatest reverence, let us all arrive at the place, gathered together, sure of the mercy of God."

Then when they had come to the same place, St. Nicholas at once grasped the spade, and prayed on bended knees for a long time. When the prayer was finished, he dug to the depth of a cubit and a half in the name of the Lord, and immediately a sufficient abundance of water flowed out. Then they all raised their voices together, praising and glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ, because he granted a spring of water to his servant Nicholas. But he did not value these things for their own merits, but for the people. Then, when he came to the horrible and contaminated spring, there were heard there the most dreadful diabolical hissings and voices. On hearing these, Nicolaus immediately poured out a prayer. Then, when they had all said "Amen," immediately they all saw a dark figure of night surrounded by black smoke come out from thence, crying out in a weak voice: "No, no, I can't bear to look at Nicholas anywhere."

## 8.6 [BHL 6135] A Blind Man

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 504-5, c. 6.

Praeterea erat quidam amisso lumine caecus, nomine Antonius, qui cotidie sedebat ante ecclesiam nihil videns. Quem videns vir Dei Nicolaus, dixit ad eum : "Quot anni sunt ex quo amisso lumine non vides?" Mox illi isdem caecus respondit: "Domine mi, ecce jam tres anni sunt ex quo non vidi; et cuncta quae habui expendi in medicis, et nihil mihi profuit." Tunc ad eum ait beatus Nicolaus : "Cur non credidisti sanctis, ut esses sanus sine pecunia?" Respondit caecus : "Ecce, pater, doce me quid faciam, quia credo et fiducialiter totam spem meam Deo et sanctis ejus committo." Dicit ei beatus Nicolaus: "Credis modo quia possum te in virtute Dei sanare, ut lumen videas?" Respondit: "Ego credo Deo et tuis sanctis orationibus, quia potes impetrare ab omnipotente Domino quatinus a me miserrimo caecitatis tenebras auferas et lumen restituas." Eadem hora misertus beatus Nicolaus, stans oravit pro illo, tulitque oleum de lampade sancti Theodori, signumque crucis super eum faciens et oculos illius ungens, ait: "Spero in virtute Domini mei Jesu Christi quia lumen caeli adveniente die crastina propriis videbis oculis." Hisque peractis, ipsa nocte Nicolao diu orante, veniente die crastina oculi ejusdem caeci aperti sunt; et ambulabat gaudens et videns et glorificans Deum, quia per orationem famuli sui Nicolai meruit videre lumen.

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Now there was a certain man named Antonius, who, having lost the light, was blind, and who sat every day before the church, seeing nothing. Nicholas, the man of God seeing him, said to him, "How many years has it been since, having lost the light, you do not see?" Immediately the blind man answered him: "My lord, behold, it is now three years since I have seen; and all that I had was spent on doctors and didn't benefit me at all. Then blessed Nicholas said to him, "Why didn't you believe in the saints, so that you could be healthy without money?" The blind man answered: "Behold, father, teach me what to do, because I believe and confidently entrust all my hope to God and his saints." Blessed Nicholas said to him, "Do you believe that I can heal you by the power of God, so that you may see the light?" He answered: "I believe in God and in your holy prayers, because you can obtain from the Almighty Lord to take away from most wretched me the darkness of my blindness and restore the light." At the same hour, the merciful and blessed Nicholas, standing and praying for him,



took oil from the lamp of Saint Theodore, and making the sign of the cross over him and anointing his eyes, he said: "I trust in the power of my Lord Jesus Christ that in the morning you will see the light of heaven with your own eyes." And when these things were complete, after Nicholas prayed that night for a long time, on the next day the eyes of the same blind man were opened, and he walked rejoicing and seeing and glorifying God because, through the prayer of his servant Nicholas, he had deserved to see the light.

## 8.7 [BHL 6136] Three Men from Andronica

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 505, c. 7.

Igitur quodam tempore tres homines de regione Andronica venerunt ad sanctum Nicolaum, deferentes hominem ligatum, habentem spiritum immundum. Qui obnixe flagitantes, dicunt: "Quia multa certamina detulit nobis daemoniacus iste, ne ostenderemus illum tuae paternitati tuaeque mirae sanctitati." Quod audiens beatus Nicolaus, ait ad illos: "Solvite plasma Dei, quia Dominus Jesus adjuvabit eum." Aiuntque illi: "Non solvemus eum, pater sanctissime, quia fugiet et nullus inveniet illum." Dixitque Nicolaus: "Ante Dei faciem nullus fugere valet." Statimque introivit in sanctuarium et tulit oleum benedictum, eundemque in sanctae Trinitatis nomine unxit daemoniacum, et solvit eum. Dei autem nutu et Nicolai orationibus continuo exivit daemon, factusque est aeger pariter mente et corpore sanus, perrexitque viam suam glorificans Deum. Viri etiam illi, qui eum ligatum adduxerant, Deo gratias egerunt et almifico viro Nicolao.

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At a certain time, therefore, three men from the region of Andronica came to St. Nicholas, bringing a bound man who had an unclean spirit. Asking urgently, they said, "Because this demoniac brought us many struggles, for fear that we should show him to your fatherhood and your wonderful sanctity." When blessed Nicholas heard this, he said to them: "Release the image of God, so that the Lord Jesus will help him." And they said: "We will not release him, most holy father, because he will flee and no one will find him." And Nicholas said: "Before the face of God no one is able to flee." Immediately he entered the sanctuary and took the blessed oil, and with the same anointed the demoniac in the name of the Holy Trinity, and released him. Then at the beckoning of God and by the prayers of Nicholas, the demon immediately came out, and the sick man became healthy both in mind and body, and he went on his way glorifying God. The men also, who had brought him bound, gave thanks to God and to Nicholas the blessed man.

## 8.8 [BHL 6137] Another Blind Man

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 505<sup>2</sup>, c. 8.

Statim etiam alter quidam, quem caecum videre lumen fecerat beatus Nicolaus, ilico veniens pronus oravit Dei servum, dicens: "Domine pater, ecce quatuor menses sunt ex quo voluto me per terram dolentque mea interiora et est frigus in corpore meo, nec umquam valeo sedere ad meam necessitatem nec capere cibum: qui etiam cibus meus durificatur in ventre meo; pluraque expendens in medicis, nihil mihi profuit, sed in vanum perdiidi omnia mea." Ad quem Nicolaus: "Ego te tradam medico qui te ex integro sanitatem conferre potest absque pecunia." Responditque homo ille: "Et quis est qui mihi tam cito misereatur?" Dicit ei Nicolaus: "Ecce adest nobiscum." Tunc aeger audiens

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<sup>2</sup> The page number is wrongly given as p.507 in the BHL.

hoc, undique coepit aspicere, ut medicum videret. Dixitque ad eum beatus Nicolaus : “Aestimas videre qui te sanet? Ecce si ex toto corde credideris in eo medico, ego rogabo eum et sanitatem restituet corpori et animae tuae.” Mox vero alacriter aeger respondit: “Ego credo Deo vivo et tuae virtutis magnificentiae.” Tunc servus Dei Nicolaus nullam moram faciens, sed orans, signavit illum in nomine Domini dicens: “Esto sanus ab ista hora.” Deinde homo ille omni conamine Domino Deo et beato Nicolao, sanus factus, gratias agens, perrexit ad domum suam.

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Immediately another blind man, whom the blessed Nicholas had made to see the light, immediately came and prostrated himself and prayed to the servant of God, saying: “Lord, father, behold, it is four months since I travelled through the country, and my insides ache and my body is cold, and I am never able to sit at my need, nor to take food, for even my food hardens in my belly, and spending more on physicians, it availed me nothing, but I wasted all my things in vain.” To whom Nicholas said: “I will hand you over to a physician who can restore you to full health without money.” And the man answered: “And who is it that will take pity on me so quickly?” Nicholas says to him: “Behold, he is with us.” Then the patient, hearing this, began to look around to see the doctor. Blessed Nicholas said to him: “Do you care to see who heals you? Behold, if you believe with all your heart in that physician, I will ask him and he will restore health to your body and soul.” Soon, however, the patient responded with enthusiasm: “I believe in the living God and in the magnificence of your power.” Then Nicholas, the servant of God, making no delay, but praying, signed him in the name of the Lord, saying: “Be well from that hour.” Then that man, after every effort by the Lord God and the blessed Nicholas, became well, and, giving thanks, went to his house.

## 8.9 [BHL 6138] Feeds a Crowd of Clergy

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 505-6, c. 9.

Una dierum, cum essent congregati reverentissimi clerici, dicunt servo Dei Nicolao : “Hodie volumus, sanctissime pater, benedictionem accipere et laetari a te.” Ille autem claro et sereno vultu respondit eis dicens: “Voluntas Dei fiat.” Tunc post lectionem sanctae Dei Ecclesiae intraverunt clerici ad accubitale ferculum, ut simul accumberent. Famulus autem Domini, cernens clericos de suis benedictionibus refici desiderantes, ilico tulit tres oblationes et vas non magnum vini plenum, deditque ministro et ait: “Vade et appone ista clericis, ut simul laetentur.” Minister vero egit ut sibi praeceperat sanctus. Quod cum vidissent clerici, scilicet urceolum vini, turbati corde coeperunt intra se cogitare pro certo quia eis ad horam non sufficeret. Ut autem cognovit Nicolaus, gaudens laeto animo intravit ad illos, ita dicens : “Ecce, fratres, oportet me hodie propriis manibus obsequium praestare et miscere vobis, ut pariter laetificemur.” Mox vero manu sua apprehendit phialam et miscuit illis quantum voluerunt. Postquam vero laetati clerici et jucundati sunt valde, simul ad invicem dicebant: “Gloria summo Deo et laus, qui nunc tale donum famulo suo Nicolao tribuit ut nullus deinceps incredulus existat, quia per eum Dominus virtutes et miracula operaretur.”

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One day, when the most reverend clerics were assembled, they said to the servant of God Nicholas, “Today, most holy father, we would like to receive a blessing from you and be glad.” But he answered them with a clear and serene countenance, saying, “The will of God be done.” Then, after the reading of the holy Church of God, the clerics went into the reclining dinner table to recline

together. But the servant of the Lord, seeing the clerics desiring to be refreshed along with their blessings, immediately took three wafers and a modest vessel full of wine, and gave them to his servant and said, "Go and give these to the clerics, so they may rejoice together." Then his servant did as the saint had commanded him. When the clerics saw it, that is to say, the pitcher of wine, worriedly they began among themselves to think that it was certain that it would not be enough for them for an hour. But as Nicholas knew this, rejoicing with a joyful heart he went in to them, saying thus, "Behold, brethren, I must this day do duty with my own hands, and mix for you, so that we may rejoice together." Then immediately he took the bowl in his hand and mixed for them as much as they wanted. Then afterwards the clerics were very happy and delighted, and at the same time they said to each other, "Glory and praise to the most high God, who now gives such a gift to his servant Nicholas that no doubter can ever appear, because the Lord works mighty works and miracles through him.

### 8.10 [BHL 6139] Moves Unmoveable Stones

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 505-6, c. 10.

Cum pergeret beatus Nicolaus ad venerabilia loca, praemisit ministrum suum, Arthemam nomine, accersire caementarios et artifices ad construendam ecclesiam, ut inciderent lapides. Qui cum essent simul homines septuaginta, per spatium diei totum nullo modo removeere valebant lapidem unum, ut eum apte aedificarent. Protinus vero fugati [*sic.*] et conturbati, ipsum opus simul sedentes dimiserunt. Tunc in nomine Domini beatissimus Nicolaus praecinxit se, et stans cum duobus tantum eundem lapidem vertit et in loco quo voluit per dimidiam horam apte collocavit. Videntes autem qui aderant, statim proruperunt in vocem laudantes et glorificantes Dominum, qui tantas virtutes in omnibus per Nicolaum operari dignatus est ut non solum homines verum etiam lapides ei oboedirent, ad instar verborum Redemptoris dicentis : "Si habueritis fidem sicut granum sinapis, diceretis huic monti: Tollere de loco, et tollet se."

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When the blessed Nicholas was proceeding to the venerable places, he sent his servant, Arthemus by name, to gather masons and craftsmen to build the church, to cut the stones. When there were seventy men together, in the space of a whole day they could by no means move a single stone in order to build it up properly. After which, indeed, beaten and demoralised, they left the work itself and sat down together. Then, in the name of the Lord, the most blessed Nicholas girded himself, and standing with two others, he turned the same great stone, and in half an hour placed it properly in the place he wanted. And when those who were present saw it, they immediately burst out cheering, praising and glorifying the Lord, who had deigned to show such powers in all things through Nicholas, that not only men but even stones obeyed him, according to the words of the Redeemer saying: "If you had faith as a grain of mustard seed, you would say to the mountain: Move from this place, and it will move itself."

### 8.11 [BHL 6140] Helps Couple Have a Son

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 506, c. 11.

Verum quia multum est prosegui quanta et qualia per eum Dominus signa et miracula ostendere dignatus est, adhuc superest ut aliquid de sancto viro loquamur. Una dierum vir quidam et uxor ejus simul venientes projecerunt se utrique ante pedes famuli Dei Nicolai et obnixae postulantes aiebant:

“Obsecramus clementiam tuam, miserere nostri, alme pater, et consolari nos dignare ex nostra confusione quam patimur, quoniam quidem fere triginta annorum conjugium habemus et filium habere minime potuimus. Modo vero speramus atque confidimus in Deo veraciter et in tua sanctitate, venerande pater, quia per te fructum nos ferre poterimus.” Ad haec sanctus Nicolaus manus ad caelum levavit et per dimidiam fere horam obnixè oravit. Post haec manu sua accipiens oleum de lampadibus, in nomine sanctae Trinitatis eos consignavit ac dimisit. Dei autem misericordia opitulante uterque filium eodem anno ad Dei famulum adduxerunt: quem puerum vir Dei Nicolaus de sancto fonte suscepit. Quis cum benedixisset, cum gaudio ad propria remearunt; remeantes autem laetantesque glorificaverunt Deum, quia post tot annos filium habere meruerunt per intercessionem sanctissimi Nicolai.

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It is true that there is much to say about how great were the signs and miracles, and of what kind, the Lord deigned to show through him, it still remains for us to say something about the holy man. One day a certain man and his wife, arriving together, threw themselves both at the feet of the servant of God Nicholas, and imploring them, saying: "We beseech your mercy, have pity on us, kind father, and deign to rescue us from our confusion which we suffer, for indeed we have been married for almost thirty years and we could never have a son. But we truly hope and trust in God and in your holiness, reverent father, because through you we will be able to bear fruit." At this Saint Nicholas raised his hands to heaven and prayed earnestly for about half an hour. After this, taking oil from the lamps with his hand, he signed them in the name of the Holy Trinity and dismissed them. Then, with the help of the mercy of God, the pair brought a son to the servant of God in the same year, which child the man of God Nicholas received from the holy font. When he had blessed them, they returned with joy to their own homes; then returning and rejoicing, they glorified God, because after so many years they were found worthy to have a son, through the intercession of the most holy Nicholas.

## 8.12 [BHL 6141] Expels a Demon Pretending to be an Angel

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 506-7, c. 12.

Una dierum subito intravit daemon ubi orabat sanctus Nicolaus et transformatus est in angelum lucis. Continuo autem ut in eum aspexit Nicolaus, ita exorsus est: "Quis enim es tu et quare huc venisti?" Respondit daemon: "Angelus sum, et ideo veni ut videam quae operaris." Tunc intellegens Nicolaus diabolicae artis ingenium, vexillum sibi sanctae crucis imprimens ait: "Maligne, egredere citius de cella, mille formas milleque nocendi artes habens: desere me et noli moras facere." Tunc zabulus raucam vocem emittens, ait: "Quid tibi Nicolae, feci? Quid tibi facio? Vel parum saltem tecum me quiescere permitte, ut instruam et doceam te." Servus autem Domini iterum increpavit illum ut exiret. Tunc malignus clamans exiit et dixit: "Et hinc me, Nicolae, expellis. Non tamen longius a te recedam." Et disparuit coram facie sua daemon in illa hora.

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One day a demon suddenly went into where Saint Nicholas was praying and was transformed into an angel of light. Immediately Nicholas saw him and began in this way: "Who are you, indeed, and why have you come here?" The demon answered, "I am an angel, and therefore I have come to see what you are doing." Then Nicholas, understanding the trick of the devil's art, and impressing himself with

the banner of the holy cross, said: "Evil one, of a thousand forms and a thousand arts of harm, get out of the cell right now. Leave me and make no delay." Then the devil, emitting a hoarse cry, said, "What have I done to you, Nicolas? What am I doing to you? At least let me remain with you a little, that I may instruct and teach you." And the servant of the Lord again rebuked him to go out. Then the evil one came out shouting and said, "So you drive me out of here, Nicolas. But I will not go further from you." And at that moment the demon vanished before his face.

### 8.13 [BHL 6142] The Devil Enters Into A Kitchen Servant

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 507, c. 13.

Non multo post intravit ipse diabolus in coquinam et invenit unum ex ministris sancti Nicolai obsequium praestantem ad ea quae necessaria erant. Qui statim introiens in eum, coepit eum graviter vexare. Quod cum Nicolao nuntiatum fuisset, citius orando cucurrit, jamque vociferantem atque instinctu diaboli et a cogitationibus blasphemantem et aliena multa loquentem invenit. Quem cernens, coartare coepit ut exiret et ab his blasphemiiis tandem resipisceret. Tunc amplius inflammatus is quem diabolus possidebat, talia Nicolao dicebat: "Nullatenus vestra quae habetis consentio suavia, ut ego labores et fatigationes perpetiar." Vir autem Domini, cognoscens quod diabolico ore loqueretur, appropians et manus illius tenens, ita ait: "Signa te signo crucis, frater." Mox vero ut se signavit, statim ab eo exivit diabolus totus exustus atque ignitus, cunctisque videntibus per coquinae januam exiens, hejulando clamabat: "Vae, vae, quia a Nicolao superatus sum, nec umquam permittit me operari voluntates meas." Famulus autem Domini signavit se et confortavit fratres ut viriliter in Domini persisterent mandatis et ejus oboedirent praeceptis et nullo modo formidarent diaboli versutias. Praedictus autem minister, sana mente sanoque arbitrio ad se reversus, pedibus sancti Nicolai provolutus puram confessionem egit, et ulterius in eum diabolus non praevaluit.

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Not long after, the devil himself went into the kitchen, and found one of the servants of St. Nicholas in perfect obedience with what was necessary. He immediately entered into him and began to harass him severely. When Nicholas had been informed of this, he ran at once, praying, and found him already both shouting by the instigation of the devil and blaspheming from his thoughts and speaking many strange things. Seeing this, he began to force him to go out, and at last he came to his senses from these blasphemies. Then he, who was possessed by the devil, was enraged again, and said to Nicholas, "I do not consent that you have pleasures while I endure labours and fatigues." Then the man of the Lord, knowing that he was speaking with the mouth of the devil, approaching and holding his hand, said thus, "Sign yourself with the sign of the cross, brother." Then, as soon as he had signed himself, the devil immediately came out of him, all blackened and on fire, and going out through the kitchen door in the sight of all, howling, cried, "Alas, alas, for I have been overcome by Nicholas, and he never allows me to work my will." Then the servant of the Lord signed himself and strengthened the brethren to persevere manfully in the Lord's commandments and obey his precepts and in no way fear the wiles of the devil. Then the aforesaid servant, restored to himself with a sound mind and a sound will, fell at the feet of St. Nicholas, and made a full confession, and the devil prevailed no further against him.

## 8.14 [BHL 6143] Feeds a Gang of Workmen

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 507, c. 14.

Fratres carissimi, adhuc volo et aliud miraculum ad aedificationem enarrare. Quadam vero die artifices ignorante sancto viro ad operandum in loco oratorii sui venerunt. Quos cum vidisset, gavisus est, et intravit ad cellarium suum, dicens ad illum : “Ecce ad operandum, frater, artifices venerunt. Quot panes ad reficiendum habemus?” Qui tristis statim respondit: “Antea, pater, de operariis nihil dixisti. Quid ergo facere debeam nescio, quia praeter unum panem nullum habeo.” Vir autem Domini sereno vultu et mente tranquilla ait ad eum : “Noli contristari, frater, sed offer in nomine Domini ipsum panem et apponamus, ut laborantes reficiantur.” Quo oblato, orans benedixit ac fregit et laborantibus tribuit. Qui comedentes saturati sunt, numero scilicet octoginta viri. Tunc videntes se uno pane esse repletos, omnes simul gratias dederunt Deo et sancto Nicolao.

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Dear brothers, I want to narrate yet another miracle for your edification. Now one day some artisans, not knowing the holy man, came to work on the site of his oratory. When he saw them, he rejoiced, and went to his cellarer, saying to him, “Behold, the craftsmen have come to work, brother. How many loaves of bread do we have to bake?” He sadly answered at once, “Father, you said nothing earlier about the workers. I do not know what I should do, because I have no loaves of bread but one.” And the man of the Lord, with a serene countenance and a calm mind, said to him, “Do not be sad, brother, but offer that bread in the name of the Lord, and let us serve it up, so that the labourers may be refreshed.” When this had been offered, praying he blessed it and broke it and gave it to the labourers. Those who ate were filled, namely eighty men in number. Then seeing that they were filled by one loaf, they all together gave thanks to God and to St. Nicholas.

## 8.15 [BHL 6144] Heals an Atheist with a Fever

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 507-8, c. 15.

Cum sederet beatus Nicolaus ante ecclesiam Arnivendensis castelli, populum ammonens atque docens, febre quidam correptus et pedibus ejus provolutus, confitebatur clamans et dicens : “Miserere mihi, sancte Dei, et noli contra meam incredulitatem agere, ut peream in conturbationibus quas patior. Audivi enim, sanctissime pater, miracula quae facis et sanctitatem tuam a pluribus; et quia id merebantur peccata mea, induratus ne crederem, sic in memetipso dixi: «Numquam credam homini super terram.» Terribiliter igitur una nocte in somnis iter faciens, sterquilinium quoddam visum est mihi flumen esse, subitoque in illud prorupi, atque in auxilium meum te excelsa voce clamavi. Statimque ex alto manum porrexisti et a spurcitia fetoris quo retentus eram abstraxisti me. Rogo ergo et supplico tibi ut, sicut in somnis liberasti me, ita ab hac passione quam ab illa hora passus sum sanes et adjuves me.” Quod audiens beatus Nicolaus, dixit ad eum : “Esto, fili, amodo semper fidelis, quia increduli homines et infideles non evadent huic simile iudicium. Et sicut a fetoris spurcitia liberavit te Dominus, ita et ab infirmitate passionis tuae esto sanus.” Mox itaque abiit sano corpore sanaque mente, laudans Deum et famulum suum beatum Nicolaum.

When blessed Nicholas was sitting before the church of the castle of Arnabanda,<sup>3</sup> admonishing and teaching the people, a certain one seized with a fever and rolled at his feet, confessed, crying out and saying, "Have mercy on me, saint of God, and do not act against my unbelief so that I perish in the troubles which I suffer. For I have heard from many, most holy father, of the miracles which you do, and of your holiness, and because my sins deserved it, I was hardened not to believe, so I said to myself: "I will never believe in a man on earth." So one night, while traveling in fear in my dreams, I thought that a river was a kind of cesspit, and suddenly I rushed into it, and I cried out to you with a loud voice for my help. Immediately you reached out your hand from on high and pulled me away from the filthiness of the stench in which I was held fast. I therefore ask and beseech you that, just as you delivered me in my dreams, so you will heal me and help me from this illness that I have suffered since that hour. When blessed Nicholas heard this, he said to him, "My son, always be faithful, because unbelieving men and infidels will not escape from a judgment of that sort. And just as the Lord delivered you from the filthiness of the stench, so also be healed from the weakness of your illness." And soon he went away in good health in body and mind, praising God and his servant blessed Nicholas.

## 8.16 [BHL 6145] The Unclean Spirit And The Ladder

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 508, c. 16.

Post non multum vero tempus orante Nicolao cum ministro suo Artheman presbytero, ecce immundus spiritus circa mediam noctem, per scalam ascendere et descendere visus est quasi homo. Cumque eum intuerentur ambo, Artheman pavescescens timuit. Tunc ait ad eum Nicolaus : "Noli timere, frater, quia inimicus noster est diabolus, quem cernis, non homo. Consuetudo enim est illius servos Dei multis modis illudere semper." Tunc increpavit eum ut abscederet. Et signum crucis eo faciente, in ipsa hora scala simul et ascensor ejus phantasticus ab eorum facie dissiluit atque disparuit.

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Not long after, however, when Nicholas was praying with his servant, the priest Artheman, behold, an unclean spirit appeared about midnight, ascending and descending a ladder like a man. And when they were both looking at him, Artheman, scared, was frightened. Then Nicholas said to him, "Do not be afraid, brother, because our enemy is the devil, whom you see, and not a man. For it is his custom always to mock the servants of God in many ways." Then he rebuked him so that he might leave. And after he made the sign of the cross, at that very moment the ladder and its phantasmal user broke up and disappeared from their sight.

## 8.17 [BHL 6146] The Author Praises St Nicholas

In *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 508, c. 17, the Bollandists give only the opening words and a summary. The text below has been transcribed from manuscripts: A = BNF lat. 5284 f.140r-v, B = BNF lat. 5345.

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<sup>3</sup> Othlone, p.171 n.1, and p.213 n.2 identifies this place as Ἀρναβανδέων, between Myra and Plakoma, and the location of the monastery of Holy Sion. The form of the Latin name varies, here and earlier.



Angers BM 102 was not online so not consulted. Text = A except where indicated. B appears to be copied from A, as the abbreviations are mostly identical.

Gloriosa sanctorum miracula, qui ab ortu nativitatis suae fideliter domino placuerunt, quis digne, ut expedit, valet<sup>4</sup> explicare sermonibus, etiam si omnis artus hominis in linguas verterentur?<sup>5</sup> Unde diligenti studio pro posse et nosse nostro quia caritas omnia vincit brevi tractatione aperire curamus. Denique actus istius beatissimi confessoris christi nicholai, diligenter ad edificationem conscribimus: quatinus christi favente clementia pro nobis intercessor existat perpetuus. Nullo enim modo dubitamus. Sed firmiter credimus quod quicquid a domino pro nobis postulaverit, suis precibus potest obtinere, et mirabiliter impetrare. Quin etiam hoc inde presumimus quod presagio quodam et divino vaticinio declaratur. Nicholaus enim grece victoria populi nuncupatur latine. Vere inquam victoria esse dicitur: quia ubicunque eum quis invocaverit, suo auxilio et suffragio, seu ope mirifica subvenire misericorditer non desistit. O vere christi confessor mundi per climata omni laudamus praeconio. Gloria christe tibi cunctorum vita salusque. Qui terre marique per sanctos tuos tua mirabilia et virtutes mire ostendis, effugans demones et animae medicamentum assidue praestans. O vere christicola Nicholae, qui ubicunque invocaris statim adesse et velut lucerna radians pretendis virtutes. Et quemadmodum sol quaeque obscura illuminat, sic et tu beatus beati Johannis<sup>6</sup> pedissequus.

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The glorious miracles of the saints, who faithfully pleased the Lord from birth, who is able to set these forth worthily, as is expedient, even if every art of man were turned into language? Wherefore, with diligent study, to the best of our ability and knowledge,<sup>7</sup> we take care to open with a brief treatise that love conquers all things. Next we are diligently writing down for edification the acts of that most blessed confessor of Christ, Nicholas: how, by the favouring mercy of Christ, he exists for us as a perpetual intercessor. For we have no doubt about this. But we firmly believe that whatever he has asked of the Lord for us, he can obtain through his prayers, and miraculously procure. Moreover, we presume that this is made known by a certain presentiment and divine prophecy. For “Nicholas” in Greek means “the victory of the people” in Latin. Rightly, I say, it is said that he is “Victory”, because wherever any man calls upon him, he does not cease to assist mercifully with his help, and intercession, or his miraculous power. O true confessor of Christ, we praise you with all praise throughout the regions of the world. Glory be to you, O Christ, the life and salvation of everyone. You who on land and sea through your saints show forth your wonders and power in a wonderful way, driving away demons and constantly providing medicine to the soul. O truly Christ-like Nicholas, who, wherever you are called upon, are immediately present, and like a radiant lamp, put forth power. And just as the sun illuminates every darkness, so also are you, the blessed follower in the footsteps of the blessed John.

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<sup>4</sup> valet B, valeat A.

<sup>5</sup> The question mark is present in A and B.

<sup>6</sup> A, B: “Iohis”, which seems to be an abbreviation for Johannis, presumably the baptist.

<sup>7</sup> “pro posse et nosse nostro” = to the best of our ability and knowledge. See “pro posse suo” - <https://dictionary.thelaw.com/pro-posse-suo/>, and “Pro posse nostro” = to the best of our power/ability - <http://collections.shca.ed.ac.uk/items/show/74>



## 8.18 [BHL 6147] Cuts Down a Demonic Cypress Tree

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 508, c. 18.

Quodam quoque tempore a Plamitarum castello ad sanctum virum Nicolaum homines venerunt, ei supplicantes simulque dicentes : *“Reverentissime pater, deprecemur tuam sanctissimam benignitatem ut auxilium nobis conferre digneris, quia valde necessarium nobis est incidere unum magnum lignum cypressi stans juxta nostrum castellum, in quo sentimus immundum spiritum habitare, qui nobis non permittit incidere. Si posueris in eo manum tuam, credimus quia incidemus et sternemus illud.”* Tunc ait servus Dei Nicolaus : *“Eamus pariter, fratres. Fiat voluntas Domini nostri Jesu Christi.”* Cumque ad radicem arboris pervenissent, timore perculsi metuebant percutere lignum. Ad haec beatus fiducialiter intrepidus cum securi sanctam exprimens crucem, septem percussiones manu sua in arborem dedit et laborantibus in nomine Domini incidere praecepit. Deinde cum perficeretur opus, impetum arbore super homines faciente putabat daemon ut occideret multos. At ubi sanctus subito manus in arborem dedit, in alteram partem ruere fecit et ruinam ab hominibus tulit. Tunc fugiens diabolus in altum, proclamans lugendo inquit: *“Vae, vae, habitationem meam perdidit et voluntatem meam non explevi. Nunc sanctus persequitur me Nicolaus.”*

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At a certain time also men came from the castle of the Plakomites<sup>8</sup> to the holy man Nicholas, supplicating him and saying together, “Most reverently, father, we beg your most holy kindness to help us, because it is very necessary for us to cut down a large cypress tree standing near our castle, in which we feel that an unclean spirit dwells, which does not allow us to cut it down. If you put your hand on it, we believe that we will cut it down and lay it low.” Then the servant of God Nicholas said, “Let us go together, brothers. Let the will of our Lord Jesus Christ be done.” And when they had come to the root of the tree, they were overcome with fear and feared to strike the tree. At this the blessed one, faithfully intrepid, making the sign of the holy cross with his axe, gave seven blows with his hand to the tree, and commanded the labourers to cut down in the name of the Lord. Then, while the work was being done, the demon thought that he would make an attack on the men with the tree in order to kill many. But when the saint suddenly put his hands on the tree, he made it fall on the other side and took the fall away from the people. Then the devil fled to the heights, crying out in lamentation and saying: “Alas, alas, I have lost my dwelling and I have not fulfilled my will. St. Nicholas is now persecuting me!”

## 8.19 [BHL 6148] Calms A Storm While On Pilgrimage To Jerusalem

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 508-9, c. 19.

Denique tempore quodam, cupiens sanctus vir abire in sancta ac venerabilia loca, videlicet civitatem Jerusalem, suscepit secum ministros, scilicet Ammon et Artheman et Hermeum presbyteros. Cumque descenderent in Ascalona portum Adriaticum, invenerunt navem Aegyptiacam. Tunc in nomine Domini benedixit eam, et intrantes abierunt. Nocte eadem supervenit eis tempestas gravis tantoque crevit ut diffiderent mergente navi. Ecce autem flammeus ante eorum oculos apparuit

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<sup>8</sup> Giacomozzi (p.167 n.1) identifies “Plamitarum” with inhabitants of Plakoma, a village in Lycia, north of Myra. The Life of St Nicholas of Sion (BHG 1347), from which this derives has “Πλακωμιτῶν” which is transliterated «Placomitarum» by Falconius in his edition (with the Latin translation opposite) of some Greek texts by Nicolaus, including BHG 1347

diabolus, volens evertere navem. Tunc adjuravit eum beatus Nicolaus consignans navem. Illa vero hora flammeus discessit diabolus, et mare a fervore tempestatis stetit. Prae timore autem et labore minister ejus Ammon fessus cecidit, et quasi mortuus jacens in navi. Contristati sunt vero nimium qui stabant in navi. Servus autem Domini oravit, et tenens manum ejus levavit et restituit sanum atque incolumem. Tunc dixit: "Videtis virtutem Dei, fratres. Ecce in nomine Domini navigamus." Illico igitur illis congruus ventus factus est et per quinque dies sanctum Jordanem usque pervenerunt. Cum autem haec nautae vidissent, experti miraculum, glorificaverunt Deum pronique in faciem sanctum virum adoraverunt nimia veneratione, dicentes : "Ora pro nobis, sanctissime pater. In hoc cognoscimus quia per te magnas virtutes operari dignatus est Dominus." Exeuntes autem in nomine Domini de navi, per singula sancta abierunt loca, in singulisque Dominus per eum signa et virtutem suam ostendebat. Leprosos curabat, infirmos sanabat, daemones effugabat, multisque miraculis coruscabat, ita ut omnes qui eum audiebant et videbant laudarent et glorificarent Dominum, dicentes quia "vere justus et sanctus venit in regionem nostram."

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Then, at a certain time, the holy man, desiring to go to the holy and venerable places, that is to say the city of Jerusalem, took with him his servants, namely the priests Ammon, Arteman and Hermeus. And when they had landed in the Adriatic port of Ascalon, they found an Egyptian ship. Then he blessed her in the name of the Lord, and going on board, they departed. On the same night a great storm came upon them, and it increased so much that they were afraid of the sinking of the ship. Then behold, a fiery devil appeared before their eyes, wanting to overturn the ship. Then blessed Nicholas exorcised him, placing a seal on the ship. Then at that moment the devil departed in flaming fire, and the sea rested from the fury of the storm. But his servant Ammon, exhausted by fear and labour, fell down, and lay as if dead in the ship. Then those who stood in the ship were greatly grieved. But the servant of the Lord prayed, and holding his hand he lifted him up and restored him safe and sound. Then he said: "You see the power of God, brothers. Behold, we sail in the name of the Lord." Immediately, therefore, the wind became suitable for them, and in five days they came to the holy Jordan. Then, when the sailors had seen these things, having experienced a miracle, they glorified God, and prone before his face they worshiped the holy man with great reverence, saying, "Pray for us, most holy father. In this we know that the Lord was pleased to work in great power through you." Then when they came out of the ship in the name of the Lord, they went through each holy place, and in each the Lord showed his signs and power through him. He cured lepers, healed the sick, drove out demons, and performed many miracles, so that all who heard and saw him praised and glorified the Lord, saying that "a truly just and holy man has come to our country."

## 8.20 [BHL 6149] Tells of a Vision

From: *Catal. Paris.*, vol. 1, p. 509-10, c. 20.

Adhuc, dilectissimi fratres, superest ut de virtutibus et signis et miraculis quae Dominus per eum gessit vestris auribus aliquid intimare curemus. Nam ipse almificus pater suas sanctas visiones, quas ei Dominus revelare dignatus est, evidentissime manifestare dignatus est, dicens : "Quadam nocte quiescente me soporatoque in stratu meo, una cum Artheman presbytero coaetaneo meo, somnium vidi et territus sum. Apparuit mihi vir nimio pulcher decore, super niveum equum sedens, ore mellifluo loquens et dicens mihi: «Veni, famule Dei, et ostendam tibi ammirabile signum, quod

universo mundo venturum est, quia tempus metendi advenit jussu Jesu Christi Domini. Et ideo quidem missus sum ut donem tibi arma metendi. » Cumque a praefato viro ego talia audissem, tremebundus dixi ad illum : « Quis enim es tu, domine, qui mihi talia loqueris ? » At ille: « Ego vero angelus Christi sum, qui teneo falces messonis. Ipse autem me misit ad te ut tibi darem de falcibus unam, quoniam quidem tempus messonis futurum est totius mundi. Oportet itaque te arma metendi habere. Utilem quippe ministrum gerere decet.» Et cum videre vellem arma illa, apparuerunt ante me falces grandaevae miraeque magnitudinis. Territus nimis ilico excitatus a somno, post orationes et psalmodias omnia per ordinem quae videram et audieram indicavi Artheman presbytero. Quod ille audiens, cum lacrimis dixit: « O pater, quae futura sunt agnosco et quae revelare tibi dignatus est Dominus.» Igitur non post multos dies iterum mihi Nicolao hujusmodi apparuit visio. Videbam magnum et supereminens altare vestitum candido decore, et erat inclinatum dextera parte. Ad quod cum multa veniret hominum turba, accessi simul et ego cum illis ut salutarem praefatum altare. Aspiciens sursum vidi aethera patens, et conversus sum circa portam domus. Deinde apparuit mihi foris ipsius portae aqua nimis profunda atque obscura et ingens nimisque metuenda. Interea excitatus a somno prae magno timore, arcessivi Artheman presbyterum coetaneum meum, dicens : « Surge et simul demus gloriam Deo, qui talia signa, et visiones nobis ostendere dignatus est. »”

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Still, dearest brothers, it remains for us to take care to recount something to your ears about the works and signs and miracles which the Lord performed through him. For the bountiful father himself deigned to make known his holy visions, which the Lord had deigned to reveal to him, in a very clear way, saying: ‘One night, when I was resting and dozing in my bed together with my contemporary, the priest Artheman, I saw a dream and was terrified. There appeared to me a man of exceedingly beautiful beauty, sitting on a snowy horse, speaking with mellifluous lips and saying to me: "Come, servant of God, and I will show you a wonderful sign that is about to come to the whole world, because the time of reaping has come, by the command of the Lord Jesus Christ. And therefore indeed I was sent to give you the reaping equipment." And when I had heard such things from the aforesaid man, I trembled and said to him, "well who are you, sir, that speak such things to me?" And he said, "I am indeed an angel of Christ, who holds the sickle of the harvest. And He himself sent me to you to give you one of the sickles, because the harvest time of the whole world is at hand. So you need to have reaping equipment. For it is fitting that a useful minister should bear them." And when I wanted to see that equipment, there appeared before me ancient scythes of wonderful size. Greatly terrified, I at once awoke from my sleep, and after prayers and psalms, I told the priest Artheman everything in the order in which I had seen and heard it. On hearing this, he said with tears: "O father, I recognize what is to come, and which the Lord has deigned to reveal to you." Therefore, not many days later, a vision of this kind appeared again to me, Nicholas. I saw a great and lofty altar clothed with white adornment, and it was leaning on the right side. When a large crowd of people had come, I went up to it at the same time, and I together with them, to salute the aforesaid altar. Looking up, I saw on high the heavens open, and I turned around near the door of the house. Then there appeared to me, outside the very gate, a sea of water, very deep and dark and huge and very fearful. In the meantime, awakened from sleep by great fear, I called to the priest Artheman, my contemporary, saying: "Arise, and together let us give glory to God, who has deigned to show us such signs and visions."”

## 8.21 [BHL 6150] The Woman from Cyparissus

From: Falconius, p.122, "chapter XIV", with footnote: "Has lectiones, 14.15.16.17 & 18, non Johannes Diaconus, sed alius ex Actis antiquis consarcinavit cap. 30. ipso seculo decimo, vel undecimo (quod est verisimilius) qui, ad usum Ecclesiae Neapolitanae, Diaconum in lectiones redegit." – i.e. "These readings, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18, are not by John the Deacon, but were stitched on the end from some earlier Acts, ch. 30, by someone else, of the 10<sup>th</sup> or (more likely) 11<sup>th</sup> century, who arranged John's text into readings according to the usage of the Neapolitan church." The BHLMS lists 49 manuscripts of this story.

Quodam itaque tempore, advenit quadam mulier, de vico qui dicitur Cyparissus, ad sanctissimam domum Archangeli, qui vocatur Croba, ubi erat sanctus Nicolaus. Haec adtulit filium suum, quem iniquissimus daemon ita vexabat crudeliter ut etiam vestimentum, quo induebatur, dentibus laceraret. Quem projecit ad pedes sancti Nicolai, flens et dicens, "Miserere serve Dei huic misello filio meo, quia fortiter vexatur a daemonio." Pietate autem ductus, sanctus Dei famulus super eum apprehendit manum ejus, et insuper flavit in ore illius. Statimque, divina virtute et beati Nicolai meritis emundatus, immundus ab eo evanuit spiritus, sanusque ad propria, cum matre sua exsultans, reversus est.

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At a certain time, there came a certain woman, from a town called Cyparissus, to the most holy house of the Archangel, called Croba, where St. Nicholas was. She brought her son, whom the most wicked demon was tormenting so cruelly that he even tore the clothes which he was wearing with his teeth. She laid him at the feet of St. Nicholas, weeping and saying, "Have mercy on this poor son of mine, servant of God, because he is strongly tormented by a demon." But led by piety, the holy servant of God took hold of his hand over him, and, moreover, blew into his mouth. And at once, cleansed by the divine power and by the merits of the blessed Nicholas, the unclean spirit disappeared from him, and in good health he returned, rejoicing with his mother, to his home.

## 8.22 [BHL 6151] Another Woman, from Naples

From: Falconius, p.122, "chapter XV". The BHLMS lists 48 manuscripts of this story. The oldest is BNF 989 (10<sup>th</sup> c.) which reads "Necapoleos".

Rursus autem alio tempore, altera mulier, de vico Neapoleos<sup>9</sup>, ab immundo Spiritu graviter torquebatur. Quam assumens vir ejus, adduxit ad monasterium Viri Dei, ubi ipse tunc temporis morabatur<sup>10</sup>, et projecit eam ad pedes beati Nicolai, dicens, "Sancte Dei, succurre huic mulieri miserae, quae graviter torquetur a daemonio." Sanctus autem Dei Nicolaus, mox, ut orationem fudit pro ea ad Dominum, immundum ab ea pepulit Spiritum, et sana effecta, abiit in domum suam, glorificans Deum, et sanctam Sion. Hoc erat vocabulum monasterii Sancti Nicolai: id est Sancta Hierusalem.

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<sup>9</sup> Fal.: "(b) Haec sumpta est ex fine cap. 29. Sed ibi pro Neapoli est Nicapo."

<sup>10</sup> Fal.: "(c) Sic saltat foveam homo cautus. Ubi modo est, ille Myrensis Archiepiscopus Nicolaus?"

Then again, at another time, another woman, from the village of Naples,<sup>11</sup> was severely tormented by an unclean spirit. Her husband picked her up and brought her to the monastery of the Man of God, where at that time he was staying,<sup>12</sup> and laid her at the feet of blessed Nicholas, saying, "Saint of God, help this poor woman, who is severely tormented by a demon." Then Nicholas, the saint of God, immediately, as he poured out a prayer for her to the Lord, drove away the impure spirit from her, and being healed, she went to her house, glorifying God and Holy Sion. This was the name of the monastery of St. Nicholas: that is, "Holy Jerusalem".

### 8.23 [BHL 6152] The Paralytic from Sabinum

From: Falconius, p.122, "chapter XVI". The BHLMS lists 47 manuscripts of this story. BNF lat. 989 = "Sivino".

Venit quidam homo ad Sanctam Sion, nomine Nicolaus, de vico Sibino,<sup>13</sup> tempore Sancti Jejuni. Hic adduxit quendam infirmum, super animali sedentem, ad Sanctum Nicolaum, ut saluti eum pristinae redderet. Erat autem homo ille toto exsiccatus corpore, ab ea aegritudine, quae Graeco vocabulo, "paralysis", Latine vero "resolutio membrorum" dicitur. Quem in conspectu viri Dei, in terram projiciens, obsecrat dicens, "Nicolae vir Dei, pro isto misello homine interveni, quatenus per tuas sanctas orationes propitiatur ei Deus." Cujus infirmitati, plurimum vir Dei condolens Nicolaus, assumpto oleo de dominica lampade, perunxit eum. Inde autem facta super eum oratione, illico eum pristinae reddidit sanitati. Benedictioneque percepta, reversus est ad domum suam, gratias agens glorificans Deum.

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A certain man, named Nicolaus, from the town of Sabinum,<sup>14</sup> came to Holy Sion at the time of Holy Lent. Here he brought a certain sick man, sitting on an animal, to St. Nicholas, that he might restore him to his former health. Now that man was withered throughout his body, from that sickness which in the Greek word is "paralysis", but in Latin is called "the dissolution of the limbs". In the presence of the man of God, laying him on the ground, he beseeched him, saying, "Nicholas, man of God, intercede for this poor man, inasmuch as through your holy prayers God may be propitiated for him." Nicholas, the man of God, sympathizing greatly with his infirmity, took oil from the Lord's lamp and anointed him. Then, after a prayer was made over him, he immediately restored him to his former health. Having received the blessing, he returned to his house, giving thanks and glorifying God.

### 8.24 [BHL 6153] Timothy, the lunatic from Cendinum

From: Falconius, p.122, "chapter 17". Falconius accidentally numbers two chapters as "17". This is the first. The BHLMS lists 50 manuscripts of this story. BNF lat. 989 = "Cendino".

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<sup>11</sup> Fal.: "b. This is taken from the end of ch. 29 [in a different manuscript]. But there for "Neapoli" it reads "Nicapo".

<sup>12</sup> Fal.: "c. Thus a cautious man leaps over a pitfall. In what way is this about Archbishop Nicolaus of Myra?"

<sup>13</sup> Fal.: "(d) Ex eodem cap. 30. sumpta."

<sup>14</sup> Fal.: "d. Taken from the same ch. 30."

Nec multo post, quidam energumenus, de vico Cendino;<sup>15</sup> cui nomen erat Timotheus, adductus est in Monasterium Sanctae Sion, ad famulum Dei Nicolaum. Habebat enim homo ille spiritum pessimum, qui ita eum exagitabat, ut, per ligna et lapides, hinc et inde, caput suum percutiendo contunderet. Unde factum est, ut de creberrimis percussionibus, plagis horridis, caput vulneratum haberet, ita ut etiam sanies cum vermibus proflueret. Sustentatus itaque a tribus viris, perductus est, ut diximus, in Sanctam Sion, ad sanctissimum Dei famulum Nicolaum: Quem etiam orabant, ut suis eum curare precibus dignaretur. Inquiunt: “Nicolae serve Dei excelsi, conspice miseriam hominis hujus; ora pro eo ad Deum, ut possit evadere, et Christi consequi misericordiam.” Quem Sanctus Nicolaus, propriis consignans manibus; daemonium ab eo expulit, et ab omni aegritudine liberavit, et sanum et incolumem remisit ad propria: gaudens et glorificans Deum, qui hanc confessori suo, gratiam contulerat Nicolao.

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Not long after, a certain strong man, from the town of Cendinum,<sup>16</sup> whose name was Timotheus, was brought to the monastery of Holy Sion, to the servant of God Nicholas. For that man had a very bad spirit, which so agitated him, that he was bruising his head from side to side with sticks and stones. As a result he had a wounded head from the frequent knocks and terrible blows and it was oozing pus and worms. Supported therefore by three men, he was led, as we have said, to Holy Sion, to the most holy servant of God, Nicholas: whom they also begged, that he might condescend to cure him with his prayers. They said, “Nicholas, servant of God on high, behold the misery of this man; pray for him to God, that he may escape, and obtain the mercy of Christ.” St. Nicholas, sealing him with his own hands, cast out the demon from him, and freed him from all sickness, and sent him back to his own home, safe and sound, rejoicing and glorifying God, who had bestowed this favour upon his confessor, Nicholas.

## 8.25 [BHL 6154] While sick, St Nicholas heals a lunatic woman from Olcon named Eugenia

From: Falconius, p.122-3. Falconius accidentally has two “chapter 17”s; this is the second. The BHLMS lists 59 manuscripts of this story.

Cum igitur his, et aliis pluribus miraculis, ac virtutibus beatissimus floreret Nicolaus, decidit in aegritudinem, de qua, ex hac instabili luce subtractus est. Qui cum jaceret in grabatu; accessit ad eum quaedam mulier lunatica, de vico Olcon;<sup>17</sup> cujus nomen erat Eugenia. Quae eum exorabat, ut sibi conferre dignaretur sanitatis gaudia. Cujus precibus beatus Nicolaus annuens; pro ea fudit orationem ad Dominum. Deinde signavit eam: sicque sanitatem, quam optabat consequi; adipisci promeruit. Remeans ergo mulier ad propria; sana et incolumis, magnifice collaudavit Dominum Jesum Christum; qui in Sanctis suis, semper est mirabilis.

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<sup>15</sup> Fal.: “(e) Et haec ex eodem cap. 30. sumpta est. Sed pro “Cendino”, ibi est “Cedemorum”. Num proprium sit “Cendenum”?”

<sup>16</sup> Fal.: “e. And these things were taken from the same, ch. 30 [in a different manuscript]. But instead of “Cendino” this reads “Cedemorum”. Possibly the correct reading is “Cendenum”?”

<sup>17</sup> Fal.: “(f) Haec etiam ex Actis sumpta est cap. 31.”

Therefore, while the most blessed Nicholas was flourishing with these and many other miracles and virtues, he fell into an illness, because of which he was withdrawn from this unstable light. When he was lying on a pallet, a certain lunatic woman came to him, from the town of Olcon,<sup>18</sup> whose name was Eugenia. She entreated him to condescend to confer upon her the joys of health. Blessed Nicholas, assenting to her prayers, poured out a prayer for her to the Lord. Then he signed her [with the cross], and so succeeded in securing the health which she wished to obtain. The woman, therefore, returning to her own home, safe and sound, praised the Lord Jesus Christ magnificently, who is always wonderful in His Saints.

## 8.26 On the Death of St Nicholas

### Part 1 [BHL 6155]

From: Falconius, p.123-4, "chapter 18".

Cernens itaque servus Dei Nicolaus, mortis inexcusabile adesse praeceptum quam nemo mortalium praeterire praevaleret, caepit orare indesinenter, et psallere. Deprecabatur autem Dominum, et attentius, ut sanctos Angelos ad eum dirigeret, quatenus susciperent, quod eis commendatum fuerat, id est sanctam ipsius animam. Et eum intenta mentis intentione profusius oraret; respexit et vidit gloriosos patronos sanctos scilicet nuntios ad te venientes, inclinatoque capite, signo Crucis armavit se, ac deinde se in terram humiliter prostravit, ac trigesimum psalmum incaepit, dicens: "In te Domine speravi, non confundar in aeternum: in tua Justitia libera me, et eripe me. Inclina aurem tuam: accelera, ut eripias me. Esto mihi in Deum protectorem, et in locum refugii, ut salvum me facias. Quoniam firmamentum, et refugium meum es tu; et propter nomen tuum, dux mihi eris, et enutries me, et educes me de laqueo isto; quoniam tu es protector meus Domine. In manus tuas commendo spiritum meum. Redemisti me Deus veritatis." Et cum hoc dixisset, tradidit pretiosam et sanctissimam animam, in manus sanctorum Angelorum, qui ei apparuerant. Aditabant autem tunc ibi Artemas et Hermas venerabiles presbyteri, et Nicolaus Reverendissimus Archidiaconus, ministri quoque, et secundarii ipsius, quos omnes, post perceptam Eucharistiam, benedicens, deosculatus est, et sicut diximus, in pace emisit spiritum. Factum est autem, cum de hoc mundo ad coeleste regnum migravit, ut Myrea civitas, et ejus suburbana, verterentur in tristitiam clamoris, et lamentationis. Clerus itaque et ordo monasticus, patrem piissimum, se amisisse deflebant. Luctus etiam ingens et fletus maximus est exortus virorum et mulierum, quae scissis crinibus scissis vestibus laceratisque genibus (genis), praeerantes et subsequentes sancti viri exsequias, cum magno animi dolore voces lugubres et singultus amarissimos emittebant; suumque patronum tutorem ac defensorem, et patrem patriae suae, se plangebant amittere. Convenerunt igitur non solum de vicino loco multitudines populorum, diversae aetatis, variique sexus, ad ejus exsequias, verum etiam de universa Lyciae regione, qui ejus in vita, beneficia plurima ab eo consequi meruerunt. Descendit autem in Myrensem urbem, sanctae memoriae Philippus venerabilis et Dei amantissimus, urbis Phellitorum episcopus, ad sepeliendum beati viri corpus. Quod jam exanime inveniens, meruit tamen eum diligenter abluere et componere. Praefatus autem Archidiaconus Nicolaus, una cum Artema venerabili presbytero et Archimandrita, a quibus etiam palpebrae oculorum ejus clausae sunt, et gloriosa illius facies sudario est ligata. Hilarion autem venerabilis vir, una cum ipso Archidiacono, sanctum ejus feretrum, usque ad locum sepulchri, cum honore et reverentia quae merebatur, dignissime bajulavit. Ubi a supradicto Dei amabili episcopo Philippo, et patribus

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<sup>18</sup> Fal.: "(f) This is also taken from those Acts, ch. 31."

fratribusque Sancti Monasterii ipsius, nec non a cunctis, (qui de diversis partibus illuc confluerant), expletis hymnis et lectionibus, sicut mos exigebat regionis illius, et ut Sancti Patres in Regulis jusserunt, gloriose ac decenter in sepulchro suo, ab eis Sanctus Nicolaus collocatus est. Ibi itaque usque hodie, ac si vivens in corpore, miracula operatur magnifice, virtute Dei claritate circumfultus, et non solum, ubi corpus ejus quiescit humatum, verum etiam ad quascumque nationes mundi, et regionis provocatus vel arcessitus fuerit; virtutis suas indicia, mirabiliter usque in sempiternum ministrare non desinit. Dormivit autem in senectute bona, et positus est ad patres suos, servus Domini beatissimus Nicolaus Myrae civitatis episcopus, secundum ordinationem Dei, mense, qui est apud Achaeos, decimus; apud nos autem duodecimus, qui est December. Cujus exstitit dormitio in Christo, sexta feria (b), die sexta, intrante eodem mense, id est octavo Idus Decembris: tertiadecima Indictione, Imperante Christianissimo et Dei cultore Imperatore nostro Justiniano, anno trigesimo nono Imperii ejus, sub sanctissimo et beatissimo Patre nostro, Patriarcha Macario.

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Nicholas, the servant of God, seeing that there was an unavoidable command of death which no mortal could overcome, began to pray incessantly and to sing psalms. And he implored the Lord, and more attentively, that he would send the holy angels to him, in so far as they would receive what had been entrusted to them, that is, his holy soul. And he prayed profusely to Him with the intent of his mind; he looked and saw the glorious patron saints, that is, messengers, coming to you, and bowing his head, he armed himself with the sign of the Cross, and then he prostrated himself humbly on the ground, and began the Thirtieth psalm, saying: "In you Lord have I hoped, O Lord, let me never be confounded: free me in your justice, and deliver me. Incline your ear: make haste, that you may deliver me. Be my protector in God, and a place of refuge, that you may make me safe. Because you are my strength and my refuge; and for your name's sake, you will be my guide, and you will nourish me, and you will lead me out of this trap; for you are my protector, Lord. Into your hands I commend my spirit. You have redeemed me, O God of truth." And when he had said this, he delivered his precious and most holy soul into the hands of the holy angels who had appeared to him. At that time there came the venerable priests Artemas and Hermas, and Nicolas the Most Reverend Archdeacon, ministers also, and his secondaries, whom, after having received the Eucharist, he blessed and kissed them all, and, as we have said, he breathed his last in peace. And it came to pass, when he departed from this world to the heavenly kingdom, that the city of Myra, and its suburbs, were turned into the sadness of crying and lamentation. The clergy and the monastic order therefore mourned the loss of their most pious father. There was also a great mourning and great weeping of men and women, who, with torn hair, torn clothes, and torn knees, preceding and following the funeral of the holy man, with great pain of heart, uttered mournful voices and bitterest sobs; and they mourned the loss of their protector and defender, and the father of their country. Therefore multitudes of people, of different ages and sexes, assembled not only from a neighboring place, to his funeral, but also from the whole region of Lycia, who in his life had deserved to receive the greatest benefits from him. And Philip, venerable of holy memory and most loving of God, bishop of the city of the Phellites, went down to the city of Myra, to bury the body of the blessed man. Finding him already lifeless, he still deserved to be carefully washed and set in order. And the aforesaid Archdeacon Nicholas, together with the venerable priest Artemas and the Archimandrite, by whom also the eyelids of his eyes were closed, and his glorious face was bound with a cloth. And Hilarion, a venerable man, together with the archdeacon himself, fittingly carried his holy coffin to the place of the grave, with the honor and reverence which it deserved. Whereupon, by the



aforesaid Bishop Philip, beloved of God, and by the fathers and brethren of the Holy Monastery, and not only by all who had flocked thither from different parts, completed with hymns and readings, as the custom of that region demanded, and as the Holy Fathers commanded in the Rules, by them, gloriously and decently, St. Nicholas was placed in his tomb. There, therefore, even to this day, as if living in a body, he works miracles magnificently, surrounded by the power of God in the glory of God, and not only where his body rests in peace, but also to whatever nations of the world and region he has been challenged or brought to; He never ceases to minister his signs of virtue, miraculously, to eternity. And he fell asleep in a good old age, and was placed with his fathers, the most blessed servant of the Lord, Nicholas, bishop of the city of Myra, according to the ordinance of God, on the tenth of the month which is with the Achaeans; but with us the twelfth, which is December. Whose sleep existed in Christ, Friday (b), on the sixth day, entering with the same mind, that is, the eighth day of December: the thirteenth Indictment, of our most Christian and God-worshipping Emperor Justinian, in the thirty-ninth year of his Empire, under our most holy and blessed Father, Patriarch Macarius.

## Part 2 [BHL 6156]

From: Falconius, p.123-4, "chapter 18".

Positumque est sacratissimum corpus ejus, in gloriosissima domo Sanctae Sion, in dextera parte Aulae ipsius in excelso: tanti Sacerdotis humatione digna. De quo sepulchro, ut ipsi prospicere meruimus, duae fontes exoriuntur, et usque in aevum manare non delinunt. Ex uno autem meatu, a parte capitali sancti Tumuli, olei liquor lucidissimus effluit; qui in primis beneficia praestare videtur, si ex eo peruncti fuerint. Ex altero vero, qui est ad pedes ejus, delectabilis aqua prosilit atque perspicua. Quae etiam, si aegrotis in potu data fuerit, absque ambiguitate salutem corporum operatur. Gloriosorum atque invictissimorum martyrum in eadem domo Sanctae Sion reliquiae conditae sunt, quorum vocabula ista sunt: Sancti Johannis praecursoris atque baptistae, et Sancti Stephani protomartyris, nec non et inclyti martyris Theodori, beatorum quoque martyrum Sergii, et Bacchi, quos Dux Antiochus interfecit pro Christi nomine. Sanctorum etiam quadraginta martyrum, qui sub Licinio Imperatore passi sunt in Armenia minori, in civitate Sebastiae, illic reposita sunt pignora. Cum quibus omnibus, eandem Aulam optime perornat sacer, almus meritis, magnus (Nicolaus). Qui pro nobis omnibus, apud Dominum intercessor existat assiduus. Floruit autem a tempore Constantini, filii Constantini Senioris, et Helenae Reginae, usque ad tempora Justiniani Imperatoris.<sup>19</sup>

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And his most sacred body was placed in the most glorious house of Holy Sion, on the right side of the hall in a lofty place, worthy of the honor of such a priest. From which sepulchre, as we were able to see for ourselves, two fountains spring forth, and do not cease to flow down the ages. From one channel, by the head part of the holy tomb, a very clear liquid of oil flows out, which especially seems to confer blessings, if they have been anointed from it. And from the other, which is at his feet, sweet and clear water gushes forth. Which also, if given to the sick to drink, without doubt works the health of the body. The remains of the most glorious and invincible martyrs are buried in the same house of Holy Sion, whose names are as follows: Saint John the forerunner and Baptist,

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<sup>19</sup> Fal.: "(a) Breve equidem spatium! annorum *ducentorum*! A *Constantino M. ad Justinianum*. Bellus Conciliator, et melior historicus."

and Saint Stephen the protomartyr, and also the famous martyr Theodore, also the blessed martyrs Sergius and Bacchus, whom the Duke Antiochus killed in the name of Christ. Also, the relics of the forty holy martyrs who suffered under the Emperor Licinius in Armenia Minor, in the city of Sebastia, were deposited there. With all of whom by his merits the great and holy one (Nicholas) best adorns the same shrine. Who constantly stands as an intercessor for us all with the Lord. And he flourished from the time of Constantine, the son of Constantine the Elder, and Queen Helena, until the time of the Emperor Justinian.<sup>20</sup>

## 8.27 [BHL 6157] The Baby in Boiling Water

From: *Catal. Brux.*, vol. 1, p. 316, c. 2.

Ea tempestate qua beatus Nicolaus sub peregrinantis specie delitescere ratus, Myrream fugiens devenit in urbem, non suffragia divitum, non potentum palatia requisivit. Sed mulieris pauperulae puerum habentis intravit casam et hospitatus est, ea quidem intentione ut ab adventantium semotus frequentia et a majoris familiae strepitu separatus, sibi quietus intenderet ac vacaret. Salvator vero qui suo in Evangelio lucernam docuit non modio supponendam sed superponendam candelabro, fidelem suum latitare conantem extulit in sublime, et qui omnium infimus haberi nisus est, omnium in continenti caput et princeps constituitur. Nam confines episcopi ibidem congregati de idoneo eidem metropoli Lyciae vacanti providendo pastore sollicitius invigilabant, sicque prout rei gestas continet historia, revelatione divina beatus Nicolaus designatus in archipraesulem eligitur, assumitur, consecratur. Et quod dignus existeret probavit miraculum quod, dum consecraretur, perpetravit Omnipotens. Mulier siquidem quae eum hospitio susceperat, inter consecrationis ejus officia in vase balneandis infantibus apto, aqua imposita et igne supposito, filium suum infantem parvulum ut lavaretur deposuit: cogitaverat enim, ut moris habebat, assidere puero balneanti et igne lento et modico balneum temperare. Sed perstreperante rumore de beati Nicolai promotione, velocius avolat, ut inopinatum de hospite gaudium pervideret. Confirmato igitur post aliquot horarum spatia tantae solemnitatis obsequio, in se reversa mulier, filii recordata, amens et praeceps per publicum fertur, filium lamentans et plangens. Ingrediens vero domunculam, flammam per vasis latera circumquaque diffusam videt, aquam quoque fervescentem proterviter et in sublime suas ebullitiones jaculantem. Puer autem, qui pridem consumptus credebatur, ludens et cachinnans emergentes bullitiones inanibus apprehensas deprimere nitebatur. Gloriosi quippe confessoris declarari merita debuerant, nec poterant sibi paranti obsequium deesse feminae, quae immeritis etiam consuerunt adesse. Mulier ergo sagacis ingenii, perpendens miraculum, igne disperso, puero extracto, gradu concito ecclesiam repetit. Tam clero quam populo rem gestam saepius inculcando depromit, stupentibus cunctis et Deum laudantibus, qui sanctum suum mirificavit quique eis talem pastorem dedit ad laudem et gloriam suam.

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In that storm in which the blessed Nicholas, thinking to hide himself under the guise of a pilgrim, fleeing came to the city of Myra, and demanded, not the support of the rich, nor the palaces of the powerful, but entered the cottage of a poor woman with a child, and lodged there, with the intention, indeed, that, separated from a throng of visitors and from the noise of the larger family, he might concentrate on himself quiet and leisure. But the Savior, who taught in his Gospel that the

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<sup>20</sup> Fal.: "(a) A brief space indeed: two hundred years! From Constantine the Great to Justinian. Such a good calculator, and a better historian."

lamp should not be placed under a pot, but placed on top of a lampstand, lifted up on high his faithful one who was trying to hide himself, and he who endeavored to be considered the lowest of all, was made the chief and prince of all in the land. For the allied bishops assembled there were quite anxiously watching out for a suitable pastor for the vacant metropolis of Lycia, and, according to the history of the matter, the blessed Nicholas, designated by divine revelation, was chosen, adopted, and consecrated as archpriest. And that he was worthy to become this was proven by the miracle which, while he was being consecrated, the Almighty wrought. Indeed, the woman who had received him as a guest, during the services of his consecration, in a vessel suitable for bathing infants, placed water on it and fire under it, and put down her little infant son down to be washed: for she had thought, as was her custom, to sit with the child bathing it and to temper the bath with a slow and moderate fire. But at the noise of the news of the promotion of blessed Nicholas, she rushed off to see the unexpected joy of her guest. Having therefore been confirmed after a few hours' space in great solemnity, the woman regained her composure, remembered her son, and ran madly and headlong through the crowd, lamenting and weeping for her son. And on entering the little house, she saw the flame spreading through the side of the vessel and all around, and the water also boiling violently and spraying its bubbles on high. But the boy, who was believed to have been consumed long ago, was playing and laughing and trying to suppress the emerging bubbles with empty (hands). Of course the merits of the glorious confessor deserved to be made known, nor could the women, who undeservedly were also accustomed to attend, neglect the ceremony being prepared for him. Therefore the woman, of sagacious character, understanding the miracle, scattered the fire, pulled out the child, and returned to the church at a quick pace. She repeatedly emphasized the matter to both the clergy and the people, and all were amazed and praised God, who had exalted his saint and who had given them such a pastor, to his praise and glory.

## 8.28 [BHL 6158] The Three Dominicans

From: *Catal. Brux.* vol. 1, p.316, from line 37, and p.317, c. III.

Cum autem in praescripta miraculorum serie huic congrueret sicut tempore ita et loco cetera praevenire, qualibet tamen causa subjunctum ceteris, non est minori venerationi pensandum, quod constaret primo digna veneratione venerandum, quia nihil rei detrahit localis incongruitas in qua tanti patris semper est et ubique memorabilis dignitas, admiranda quoque et adoranda perseveranter sola virtutum operatrix divinitas. Cum itaque pater iste adhuc in carne pudicitiae floreret lilio, pietatis emanaret oleo, geminaeque caritatis rutilaret indicio, immo de se velut vero divinae electionis vase omnium simul effragraret condimentum virtutum: cum, inquam, commissa sibi multiplicando talenta, placabilem sibi procuraret districtum exactoris adventum, et pastoris implens ministerium, mercenarii semper repudiaret incommodum, in tantum unctio docuit eum omnia, ut, dum nonnulla absentia quasi praesentia nosceret, ipsum vere christum Domini esse nemo dubitaret.

Tribus namque clericis scholas adeuntibus, et in loco destinato obiter pernoctantibus, hospes eorum impia cupiditate caecatus sopitos noctu pueros jugulavit, corporibusque seorsum positis, sarcinas innocentium suis usibus, immo abusibus, crudelis carnifex usurpavit. O consilii divini provida dispensatio, o sapientia nullo vere indigens consiliario, quae in ipso impietatis providit opere unde pium servi sui meritum mundo voluit mirifice commendare. Non enim multa mora, et ecce pastor ille Dominici gregis vigilantissimus, consuetae sibi pietatis plaga percussus oves, quaerens quae perierant, homicidae hominis domum irrupit, hominem inhumanitatis arguit, homicidam dignis

opprobriis exprobravit, et fateri scelus quod commiserat reverentiae suae respectu quantocius coartabat. Ostensis ergo sibi mortuorum cadaveribus, cognatos sibi cognitosque pietatis gemitus uberius relaxavit et profusus pii cordis precibus tres defunctos ocus excitavit, in Christi nomine vitae reddens mortuos, cujus inspiratione praecognovit occisos. Hujus itaque occasione miraculi inolevit in clero specialis memoria beati Nicolai, perpetua quidem solemnitate celebris, sed non digna aut debita celebritate sollemnis, quia tanti patriarchae dignitas humano nequit obsequio sufficienter recoli, qui a Deo filius meruit adoptari; nec est satis laudandus a peccatoribus, qui cum Christo creditur totius seculi iudex affuturus.

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But while, in the prescribed sequence of miracles, it would be appropriate for this to precede the others at such a time and place, yet for whatever reason it is subordinated to the others, and it is not to be considered less venerated, which was consistent with the first veneration worthy of veneration, for a local inconsistency detracts nothing from the matter, in which such a great father is always and everywhere worthy of being remembered, to be admired and adored steadfastly also as the only divine agent who works miracles. When, therefore, this father still blossomed in the flesh of chastity like a lily, and emanated the scent of piety, and glowed with a sign of double charity, on the contrary from himself, as if from the true vessel of divine choice, at the same time he gave off the fragrance of every virtue: when, as I say, by multiplying the talents entrusted to him he procured for himself the peaceful arrival of an inspector in the district, and fulfilling the ministry of a shepherd, he always rejected the inconvenience of a hireling, to such an extent that the anointing taught him everything, so that, while he knew some things elsewhere as if at hand, no one doubted that he was truly the Christ of the Lord.

Now three clerics were going to college, and while passing the night in the appointed place, their host, blinded by impious greed, strangled the sleeping boys at night, and, laying the bodies apart, the cruel butcher seized upon the baggage of the innocents for his own uses, or rather, abuses. O providential dispensation of the divine counsel, O wisdom truly not needing a counsellor, which provided in the very act of impiety a way from which He intended in a wonderful way to recommend the merit of His pious servant to the world. For there was not much delay, and behold, a shepherd, most watchful of the flock of Dominic, struck by his usual pity for the sheep, seeking what had perished, broke into the house of the murderous man, accused the man of heartlessness, upbraided the murderer with worthy reproaches, and forced him through respect for his reverence to confess the crime which he had committed. When the corpses of the dead were shown to him, he cancelled the rather abundant groans of piety of their relatives and acquaintances, and with the prayers of a pious heart overflowing, quickly raised the three deceased, bringing the dead back to life in the name of Christ, through whose inspiration he foresaw that they had been killed. And so a special memorial of blessed Nicholas became usual among the clergy on the occasion of this miracle: indeed celebrated with perpetual solemnity, but not worthy or required by the fame of the solemnity, because the dignity of so great a patriarch cannot be sufficiently remembered by a human service, he who deserved to be adopted by God as a son; nor is it enough to be praised by sinners, he who is believed to be the judge of the whole world with Christ.

## 8.29 [BHL 6159] The Two Merchants

From: *Analecta Bollandiana*, vol. 4, p.202-3.

Duo mercatores consocii fuerunt, qui lustrando diversas regiones vendendo et emendo infinitam congregaverant pecuniam. Deinde repatriantes, in cujusdam noctis crepusculo in hospitio unius eorum magno sunt recepti gaudio. Nec mora, post susceptam cibi potusque receptionem fessa corpora dormitioni dederunt.

Interea antiquus ille humani generis persecutor fallaciae venenum in pectus mulieris infudit, ut domino suo consiliaretur illum socium suum clam intempesta nocte interimere, quatenus divitias utrorumque labore partas solus obtineret. Quod dum mulier perfida auribus viri primo renuentis hortando, admonendo, obsecrando saepius instillavit, instinctu antiqui serpentis voluntati suae pestiferae acquievit citissime. Igitur mitem immites, fidelem infideles sopori deditum more lupi membratim distrahunt, membra quidem in penetralibus suis occultantes, et immensam illius pecuniam in receptaculis abscondentes.

Matutinali vero tempore fama undique replevit confinia unum illorum cum gaudio reversum, alterum vero nusquam comparuisse. Uxor igitur illius, hac dira legatione suscepta, quasi amens socium mariti sui aggreditur, quaerens quo vir suus devenisset. At ille, plenus fallacia, affirmabat multimodis juramentis hesternae nocte eum cum copiosa pecunia ab hospitio suo discessisse, nec postea vidisse.

Mulier vero his verbis utpote sagittis vulnerata letiferis, ad statuam sancti Nicolai, quam adorare consueverat, recurrit, dolore dictante, in haec verba prorumpens: “Tu gemma sacerdotii, electe Dei confessor, Nicolae, cujus misericordia et pietati virum meum, me ipsam et res nostras commiseram, quare nos oblivioni dedisti? Quamobrem virum meum mihi non reddidisti? Vere nunc, si maritum meum tibi commissum mihi non reddideris, nomini tuo amodo nec gloriam conferam, nec honorem.”

Haec et his similia postquam flendo dixerat, discessit, obvians sancto Nicolao. Cui sanctus his usus est verbis: “Quid fles? cur lacrimis manas?” Cui dum mulier omnia sicut gesta erant seriatim exposuerat, a sancto Nicolao ducta est ad viri sui occisorem.

Quem electus Dei servus his aggreditur interrogationibus: “Dic mihi, miser, dic ubi sit maritus istius mulieris.” Qui postquam juramentis multimodis affirmavit socium suum in praeteritae noctis crepusculo sanum et incolumem discessisse, egregius Dei amicus, invocato Creatoris coeli et terrae nomine, occisum admonuit ut, si in receptaculis illius hospitii occultatus fuisset, responsum non denegaret. Mira res: vix sanctus sermonem finierat, cum lingua dilaniati corporis aperta voce se adesse respondit. Cujus vocem vir Domini hilari corde percipiens, membra illius dilacerata sibi praesentari jussit; et invocata summi regis majestate, anima ad corpus rediit.

Quo viso, postquam electus Dei servus omnipotenti Deo dignas persolvit gratias, erectum virum uxori reddidit, dicens: “Ecce, per Dei misericordiam virum quem mihi commendasti tibi sanum reddo.” Unde mulier laetificata gratias egit sancto Nicolao et omnipotenti Deo, cui est honor et gloria in seculorum secula.

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There were two merchant partners who, by visiting different countries and selling and buying, had amassed an infinite amount of money. Then returning home, in the twilight of a certain night they

were received with great joy in the lodgings of one of them. And without delay, after receiving the welcome of food and drink, their tired bodies gave way to sleep.

Meanwhile, that ancient persecutor of the human race poured the poison of deception into a woman's breast, to advise her lord to kill his partner secretly in the dead of night, in order that he alone may obtain the riches obtained by the labour of both. While the perfidious woman repeatedly poured into the ears of the man, who at first refused, encouraging, admonishing, and imploring, he very quickly yielded to the suggestion of the ancient serpent of his malicious will. So like wolves the faithless savage ones cut the sleeping mild faithful one to pieces, indeed hiding the limbs in their inmost places, and concealing his immense wealth in the hidden places.

But in the morning the report filled the neighbourhood from all sides that one of them had returned with joy, but that the other was nowhere to be found. His wife, therefore, receiving this terrible news, attacked her husband's companion as if mad, demanding where her husband had gone. But he, full of deceit, affirmed with many oaths that he had left his lodgings last night with a large sum of money, and that he had not seen him since.

But with these words the woman, as if she had been pierced by arrows, ran back to the statue of St. Nicholas, which she was accustomed to venerate, and, speaking with pain, burst into these words: "You jewel of the priesthood, chosen confessor of God, Nicholas, to whose mercy and piety I committed my husband, myself, and our affairs, why have you consigned us to forgetfulness? Why did you not give me back my husband? Truly now, if you do not return to me my husband who was committed to you, I will give neither glory nor honor to your name."

After she had said these and similar things, weeping, she departed, and met St. Nicholas. To whom the saint used these words: "Why do you weep? why do you shed tears?" While the woman seriously explained everything as it had happened to him, she was led by St. Nicholas to her husband's murderer.

The chosen servant of God attacked him with these questions: "Tell me, wretch, tell me where that woman's husband is." After he had affirmed by many oaths that his companion had departed safe and sound at the twilight of the previous night, the distinguished friend of God, invoking the name of the Creator of heaven and earth, commanded the murdered man, that if he was hidden in the hiding places of that lodging, he would not refuse to answer. A strange thing: scarcely had the saint finished speaking, when, with the tongue of his torn body, he answered in a clear voice that he was present. The man of God, perceiving his voice with a joyful heart, commanded that his torn limbs should be presented to him; and being invoked by the majesty of the supreme king, the soul returned to the body.

When he saw this, after the chosen servant of God had paid the due thanks to Almighty God, he restored the husband to his wife, saying: "Behold, by the mercy of God I restore to you the man whom you entrusted to me." Whereupon the woman, delighted, gave thanks to Saint Nicholas and to Almighty God, to whom be honour and glory forever and ever.

## **9. Miracles after His Death but before His Translation**

## 9.1 The Tomb of St Nicholas Exudes A Miraculous Oil

### Part 1 [BHL 6160]

From: Falconius, p.124, chapter 19.

Igitur postquam beatissimus Nicolaus, ex hoc mundo migravit ad Dominum, tumulus ille, in quo venerabile corpus ejus compositum est, olei liquore<sup>21</sup> manare non desinit, usque in hodiernum diem. Ad quem locum conveniunt undique multitudines languentium, claudorum, caecorum, aridorum, surdorum, atque mutorum, et qui vexantur ab spiritibus immundis. Qui dum de eodem sancto liquore peruncti fuerint, pristinae redduntur sanitati. Miserum me profiteor, semel, et bis ex eadem aqua poculum sumpsisse, dum ipsum tumulum Domini, pro meis piaculis interpellarem Nicolaum. Distat autem Domus Sanctae Sion, ubi requiescit idem confessor, a maenibus civitatis Myrae, quasi milliaribus tribus, ad orientalem plagam, secus viam quae ducit ad portum maris, qui dicitur Adriacium.

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Therefore, after the most blessed Nicholas departed from this world to the Lord, the tomb, in which his venerable body is buried, does not cease to be wet with liquid oil,<sup>22</sup> even to this day. To which place gather multitudes of the weary, the lame, the blind, the dried-up, the deaf, and the dumb, and those who are tormented by unclean spirits. Those who have been anointed with the same holy liquid are restored to their former health. I confess that I am miserable, that once and twice I took a cup of the same water, while I was disturbing Nicholas for my sins at the very tomb of the lord. Now the Holy House of Sion, where the same confessor rests, is distant from the walls of the city of Myra, about three miles to the east, beside the road that leads to the sea port which is called Adriacium.

### Part 2 [BHL 6161/6162]

From: Falconius, p.124, chapter 20. This continues the story in BHL 6160, but exists in two forms, which the BHL labels as BHL 6161, with ending “α” and a longer version, BHL 6162, with ending “β”. Falconius gives the BHL 6161 text, ending with “incrementum. The BHL 6162 text is printed from BNF lat 5277, in *Catal. Paris.*, vol.1. p.461-2. It is the same as BHL 6161, but with extra material, which is inserted below in square brackets [].

Quodam itaque tempore Episcopus Myrae<sup>23</sup> civitatis, cum in exilium a Praefecto destinatus fuisset; statim aquae elementum, et sancti liquoris oleum effluere cessarunt: et tamdiu hoc non usus est miraculo, quamdiu Episcopus, non est revocatus de exilio. Qui cum reversus fuisset, et Sedi propriae esset restitutus, statim ut antea, et oleum caepit ex tumulo manare, et aqua: salus praesentium infirmorum, praesidium futurorum. [O Christi mira pietas omni laude prosequenda, qui sui famuli Nicolai merita longe lateque mirabiliter declarat. O per omnia laudabilem virum, cujus meritis ab omni clade liberantur qui ex toto corde quaerunt illum.] Unde summopere considerandum est, beatissimi Fratres; quanti meriti vir iste fuerit: cui omnipotens Deus, tot et tanta beneficia contulit; ut illius laudabile nomen, quamdiu orbitas (Orbita) istius mundi volvitur, semper accipiat incrementum. [Subnixis ergo precibus eum suppliciter exoremus, ut apud Christum ejus patrociniiis

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<sup>21</sup> Fal.: “(b) Et haec a consarcinatore eodem adjecta sunt. Tu *oleum* semper nota, et *penniculum*; modo etiam *aquae poculum*.”

<sup>22</sup> Fal.: “(b) And these things (“liquid oil”) were added by the compiler to the same.”

<sup>23</sup> Fal.: “(c) Et haec sunt ab eadem manu.”

adjuvemur, qui regnat cum Patre et Spiritu sancto unus Deus aequali potestate et maiestate per omnia saecula saeculorum. Amen.]

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At a certain time, therefore, when the bishop of the city of Myra<sup>24</sup> had been sent into exile by the prefect, immediately the element of water and the holy liquid oil ceased to flow, and this miracle was not available for as long as the bishop was not recalled from exile. When he had returned, and had been restored to his own see, immediately as before, both the oil began to flow from the mound, and the water, the salvation of the present sick, the protection of those to come. [O the wonderful piety of Christ, to be followed by all praise, who wonderfully declares far and wide the merits of his servant Nicholas. O man praiseworthy in all things, by whose merits those who seek him with all their heart are delivered from every calamity.] Wherefore, dearest brethren, we must consider of how much merit this man was, to whom Almighty God bestowed so much and so many benefits, so that his praiseworthy name, as long as it circulates around the circles of this world, always receives increase. [Therefore, supported by prayer, let us humbly beseech him, that we may be helped by his protections in Christ, who reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God with equal power and majesty throughout all ages of ages. Amen.]

## 9.2 The Vandal Tax-Collector and the Icon of St Nicholas

### Prologue and Text [BHL 6163/6164]

From: Falconius, p.124-6, chapter 21. Also printed by Mombricitus, vol. 2, p.168 middle of column 2 – p.169, middle of col. 1; and also by Lippomanus, vol. 2, f.245v-46v. Both give the text without the prologue sentence, BHL 6163.

[Prologue] Restat autem adhuc, quod de eo jocunda scribere miracula dignum iudicavimus.

Cum de Africae partibus,<sup>25</sup> Guandalorum exercitus applicuisset ad Calabritidem terram, atque eandem regionem igne succenderet, reperta est ibi a quodam barbaro, in cuiusdam Christicolae domo, sancti Nicolai imago in tabula, honeste depicta, quam protinus clam in sinu plexit, et abscondit, quamvis ab eo ignoraretur omnino quid esset. Cum autem pervenisset ad eos, qui Christicolae captivos ducebant vinctos, interrogavit quoslibet eorum ex eis, “Rogo,” inquit, “ut mihi indicetis, cuius est imago haec, in hac tabulatam pulchre depicta?” et haec dicens, demonstravit eis iconem. Cum ergo eam Christiani contemplavissent, cum gemitu et lacrymis, dixerunt, “Imago haec, quam cernimus, sanctissimi Nicolai esse dicitur, qui multis miraculis et virtutibus, apud Deum, et apud homines clarus existens, manifeste se docet vivere, etiam post sepulchrum.” Cumque hoc barbarus ille, auditu percepisset, continuo eandem abscondit iconem propter suos, nemini alicui ex hoc aliquid pandens.

Cum autem reversus esset exercitus Guandalorum in Africam, cum plurimis captivis, et spoliis multis, regressus est et barbarus iste, qui Sancti Nicolai iconem habebat in domo sua. Erat autem barbarus ipse telonarius. Quadam autem die tulit ipsam iconem barbarus ille, et potuit eam ante telonium suum, ubi erant omnia quaeque habebat, aurum, argentum, vel vestes, et sic locutus est ad Iconem,

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<sup>24</sup> Fal.: “(c) And these are by the same hand.”

<sup>25</sup> Fal.: “(d) Corrafor idem, haec, ut vidimus, nupera figmenta, addere ad coronidem non omisit.”



dicens, "Nicolae habeto custodiam super teloneum istud, nam ego alibi<sup>26</sup> necesse habeo proficisci." Haec locutus imagini, discessit, apertum omnino relinquens telonium suum, ac securus inde proficiscens, quasi plurimos ibi custodes dimitteret. Cum autem, secus eundem teloneum, latrones transirent, et vidissent eum apertum, et neminem custodem ibidem, dixerunt ad invicem, ut venientes nocte eadem, diriperent omnia quaeque intrinsecus erant posita. Quod ita factum est. Nam venientes nocte, omnia abstulerunt, aurum, argentum, vel vestes, et caetera, et sic profecti sunt, sola icon de foris pendens superstes remansit.

Haec autem Dei dispensatione agebantur, ut huiusmodi occasione reperta, quis, qualisve, vel quanti meriti Nicolaus esset, apud Africanas Regiones manifeste claresceret. Veniente autem barbaro, cujus teloneum erat, reperit eum vacuum, nil omnino habentem intrinsecus, nisi ipsam Sancti Nicolai iconem. Tunc plorans, et gemens, vehementissimos emittens stridores, et torvo aspectu, conversus ad iconem, in facie beati Nicolai, quasi ad viventem hominem, et ratione utentem, haec verba, proferebat, dicens, "O Nicolae, bonum te mei telonei custodem reliqui! Quid fecisti? Redde mihi res meas, alioquin flagellis caedo te." Et cum haec diceret, accepto flagello tundeat Sancti Nicolai imaginem. Cum vero fatigatus esset, caedendo eam, dixit, "Certe in ignem te projiciam, si non reddideris causam<sup>27</sup> meam." Piissimus autem confessor, beatissimus Nicolaus, nimia miseratione ductus super iconam suam, ac si ipse flagellis caederetur, sub festinatione, ad locum accessit propius, ubi latrones cuncta dividebant, qua de illius Sarraceni telonio abstulerant.

Tunc dixit ad eos Sanctus Nicolaus, "O infelices et miseri, quid agitis? Numquid ignoratis, quoniam ego ipse ibidem eram, quando hoc malum perpetrastis? Nam oculi mei conspexerunt, quando has et illas res abstulistis." Quantitatem et numerum etiam<sup>28</sup> cunctarum rerum, quae de theloneo abstulerunt, singillatim eis exponens, addidit, dicens, "Scitote autem quoniam furtum istud quod perpetrastis, si non mihi acquieveritis ut revocetis cuncta quae tulistis, ego illud publice manifesta re curabo, nam sub mea cura, universa fuerunt posita, et ideo pro vestro scelere, ego innocens flagellis caesus sum, Credite mihi, quia nullo modo vobis parcam, si meis non acquieveritis consiliis, sed crastina die, morti vos tradere faciam." Illi autem fures, cum viderent se deprehensos, aestimantes quempiam fuisse de populo, qui eos exploravisset, nimium mente consternati, et ultra quam credi potest, vehementer exterriti, metu mortis coacti, per taetrae noctis silentia, reportaverunt omnia, et in theloneo reposuerunt.

Mane autem facto, cum venisset barbarus, et videret cunctam suam substantiam, quam amiserat, flere caepit prae gaudio, cui tale miraculum fuerat demonstratum, per Sanctum Nicolaum. Tunc apprehensam Imaginem, caepit deosculari eam, dicens, "O Sancte Nicolae, fidelis, et juste, piissime, et misericordissime Serve Dei Excelsi, quam sublimis, quam magnus, quamque praepotens factus es, proximusque et familiaris Deo, Regi immortalis, cui vivens militare non cessasti, a quo potestatem accepisse comprobaris, ut talia facere possis, qualia et mihi Gentili, ex ore insensibili patrare dignatus es! Ab ista namque die, credo in Christo Jesu Domino." Et baptizatus est ipse, vel ejus

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<sup>26</sup> Falconius marks "(sic)" against "alibi" and "eundem". Lippomann prints "alio" rather than "alibi".

<sup>27</sup> "causam" is the reading of Mom., Fal., and Lipp., BNF 196, 989, 18303, and even Wien ONB 416. Possibly OLD #14, "circumstances, position, situation, the legal situation or position."

<sup>28</sup> "Quanti autem, et numerum etiam" – Fal; "Quantitatem etiam & numerum" – BNF 989; "Quantitatem et numerum etiam" – Wien ONB 416; "quantitatem et munerum etiam" – Mom. "Quanti-|tatem & numerum etiam" – Lippoman. This looks like evidence that Falconius copied the Lippoman edition, very carelessly.

domus tota, et fecit ecclesiam in honorem Sancti Nicolai,<sup>29</sup> in qua moratus est ipse cum uxore sua, pariterque et filiis, glorificantes Dominum, et sanctum ejus Nicolaum.

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[Prologue] But it still remains to write down the joyful miracles about him that we have judged worthy.

When the army of the Vandals<sup>30</sup> from the regions of Africa had landed in the land of the Calabrians, and had set the same region on fire, there was found there by a certain barbarian, in the house of a certain Christian, an icon of St. Nicholas on a board, excellently painted, which immediately he secretly folded in half, and concealed it, although it was completely unknown to him who it was. And when he had come to those who were leading the bound Christian captives, he asked each of them, "Please tell me," he said, "whose image this is, beautifully painted on this board?" and saying these things, he showed them the icon. So when the Christians had seen it, with groans and tears they said, "This image, which we see, is said to be of the most holy Nicholas, who, by many miracles and powers, is being famous with God and men, manifestly teaches that he lives, even after the grave." And when that barbarian heard and understood this, immediately he concealed the same icon for the sake of his people, not telling anyone anything of this.

But when the army of the Vandals had returned to Africa, with many captives and many spoils, this barbarian also returned, who had the icon of St. Nicholas in his house. Now the barbarian himself was a toll-collector. And one day that barbarian took the icon, and put it in front of his toll-house, in which was everything that he had, gold, silver, or clothing, and he spoke thus to the icon, saying, "Nicolas, keep guard over this toll-house, for I have to go elsewhere." Having spoken these words to the image, he departed, leaving his toll-house entirely open, and proceeding away untroubled, as if he had dismissed most of the guards there. But when robbers had passed by the same toll-house, and saw it open, and there was no guard there, they said to one another that they should come the same night and plunder everything that was placed inside. That is what happened. For when they came in the night, they took away everything, gold, silver, or clothing, and the rest, and so they departed, leaving only the icon hanging from the outside.

Now these things happened by the dispensation of God, so that, when such an occasion occurred, it would become manifestly clear in the African regions who Nicholas was, what kind of person he was, and of how much merit he was. Now when the barbarian, whose toll-house it was, came back, he found it empty, having nothing at all inside except the icon of St. Nicholas itself. Then, crying and groaning, uttering the most violent cries, and with a grim look, he turned to the icon, in the face of blessed Nicholas, as if to a living man, and using reason, he uttered these words, saying, "O Nicholas, I left you the good guard of my toll-house! What have you done? Give me back my stuff, or I will smite you with whips." And when he had said these things, he took the whip and beat the image of St. Nicholas. Then when he was tired from striking it, he said, "I will certainly throw you into the fire if you do not restore my situation." Then the most pious confessor, the most blessed Nicholas, led by

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<sup>29</sup> Fal.: "(a) Publice in Africa, ubi erant fui Saraceni! Sustinuissent illi? Etsi adhuc, ibi reliquiae erant Ecclesiae, et paucorum Episcoporum."

<sup>30</sup> Fal.: "(d) The "scraper-together" likewise did not fail to add these late figments to his coronet, as we have seen." Another contemptuous comment by Falconius on the compiler of the legends. By "Vandals" the medieval author means, not the vanished Germanic tribe, but the Saracens, as he indicates below.

very great pity over his icon, as if he himself were being beaten with scourges, in haste came very near to the place where the robbers were dividing up everything which they had taken from the toll-house of the Saracen.

Then Saint Nicholas said to them, "O unfortunate and wretched ones, what are you doing? Do you not know that I myself was there when you committed this evil? For my eyes saw when you took away these and those things." Then he gave the amount, and also the number of all the things which they had taken from the toll-house, listing one by one to them, saying, "Now, know that this theft which you have perpetrated, if you do not submit to me and return all that you have taken, I will take care of it in a public, manifest way, for everything was placed under my care, and because of your crime, I, innocent, was beaten with whips. Believe me, because I will not spare you in any way, if you do not acquiesce to my proposals, but on the morrow, I will have you delivered up to death." But those thieves, when they saw that they had been caught, and thinking that it was some of the people who had found them out, were greatly dismayed in mind, and, greatly terrified beyond what can be believed, and compelled by the fear of death, throughout the silence of the dark night, they took back everything, and deposited it in the toll-house.

Now in the morning, when the barbarian came, and saw all his substance, which he had lost, he, to whom such a miracle had been shown by St. Nicholas, began to weep for joy. Then, seizing the image, he began to kiss it, saying, "O Saint Nicholas, faithful and just, most pious and most merciful servant of the Most High God, how sublime, how great, and how powerful you have become, and how close and familiar to God, the immortal King, for whom you have not ceased to live as a soldier, from whom you prove that you have received power, so that you can do such things as you have deigned to do to me a gentile, of an insensitive mouth! From this day, I believe in Christ Jesus the Lord." And he himself, and his whole household, were baptized, and he built a church in honor of St. Nicholas,<sup>31</sup> in which he stayed with his wife, as well as his children, glorifying the Lord and his saint Nicholas.

### Epilogue [BHL 6165, 6166]

From: Falconius, p.124-6, chapter 22; also in Mombritus and Lippomanus. A shortened version ending "confessoris piissimi non illustraverint" is BHL 6166.

Haec fuit prima occasio qua<sup>32</sup> apud Africanas regiones beatus cognitus est Nicolaus, et paulatim nomen ejus, apud barbaros succrevit, ut magnis obsequiis etiam, ab his, qui carent baptisate, frequentetur assidue. Nullus enim est, ut aestimamus, in orbe terrarum locus, tam remotus, tamque abditus, nec etiam solitudo, vel eremus, quem fama, et miracula domini Nicolai, confessoris piissimi non illustraverint.<sup>33</sup> Testes ex hoc existunt, non solum omnes provinciae Graecorum, de quibus originem duxisse comprobatur, verum etiam omne Orientale Regnum, testes etiam, et barbarorum diversae nationes, diversis linguis utentes, universam paene Africam habitantes, quae obsequium ei piae devotionis exhibent. Italiae<sup>34</sup> autem habitatores, promptis animis, quamvis moderno tempore inchoaverint, devote celebrare ejus festivitatem didicerunt, ejusque miraculis assidue jocundari,

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<sup>31</sup> Fal.: "(a) Publicly in Africa, where the Muslims were? Would they have provided for him? Although there were still remnants of the church and a few bishops."

<sup>32</sup> Fal.: "(b) Et hoc opus ejusdem manus."

<sup>33</sup> The BHL 6166 version of the same text ends here.

<sup>34</sup> Fal.: "(a) Nota attentissime ista omnia."

ecclesias plurimas, auxiliante Deo, in honorem ipsius congruere, jam et dedicare studuerunt, ut hic eum patronum et advocatum, ut in futuro, apud ipsum Mundi Condito rem, intercessorem haberent. Amen.

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This was the first occasion on which<sup>35</sup> Blessed Nicholas was known in the African countries, and little by little his name grew among the barbarians, so that he was regularly sought out with great obedience even by those who lack baptism. For there is no place, as we judge, in the whole world, so remote and so hidden, not even a wilderness, or a desert, which the fame and miracles of Lord Nicholas, the most pious confessor, have not illuminated.<sup>36</sup> There are witnesses to this, not only from all the provinces of the Greeks, from which it is confirmed that he originated, but also every Eastern kingdom, witnesses also, and different nations of barbarians, using different languages, inhabiting almost the whole of Africa, who offer him the service of pious devotion.<sup>37</sup> The inhabitants of Italy, with ready minds, although they began in modern times, learned to celebrate his festival devoutly, and to constantly rejoice in his miracles, to build many churches with the help of God in his honor, and they endeavored to dedicate them so that here he is the patron and advocate, so that in the future they might have an intercessor with the Founder of the World himself. Amen.

### 9.3a [BHL 6167] Rescues a Boy stolen by the Muslims

From: Mombritius, p.169 col. 1 med.-p.170 (this is the last section of Mombritius' text). Also Lippomanus vol.2, f.246v-248. This Latin text was first created from a scan of the Mombritius text, where the abbreviations were expanded, but the punctuation was medieval. This was manually compared with a PDF of the Lippoman text, which was too poor quality and too abbreviated to use directly. The punctuation was added from this, adding quotation marks, normalising some of the spelling, and converting "uir" to "vir", etc.; and dividing the text into paragraphs.

Sed si vestrae caritati durius non est, volo adhuc de mirabilibus beati Nicolai vobis enarrare miraculum. Beatus itaque et electus Domini nostri Jesu Christi Nicolaus episcopus, dum vitam finiret, et de hac luce migraret ad Dominum, animam eius qui illi dedit eam, ad se de hac luce recepit. Clerici namque et sacerdotes sui, dum hoc conspicerent gratias egerunt Deo, qui ita sui confessoris animam cum gloria<sup>38</sup> elevaret ad caelum. Tunc accepta aqua, ut corpus lavarent beati Nicolai, apprehenderunt linteamina sancti corporis, et expoliare coeperunt. Erat autem ibidem quidam homo nomine Cethron, et coepit rogare eosdem sacerdotes et clericos, ut ostenderent in eum misericordiam, et ut aliquid de sancti viri vestimentis sibi dari debuissent. Et dicebat eis cum lachrymis, et desiderio magno, "Ego veni benedictionem a domino meo Nicolao accipere, et concessum mihi non fuit, ut vel vitam eius conspicerem. Obsecro vos, ut vel aliquid de vestimentis eius sancti corporis mihi praebeatis, ut id habeam tantum in honorem sanctissimi domini mei." Presbyteri vero et clerici beatissimi Nicolai haec audientes, et talem petitionem et desiderium cognoscentes, dederunt ei unum de linteaminibus sanctissimi viri.

Cethron autem ut accepit vestimentum beati Nicolai cum desiderio magno, tulit lucellum novum, ubi nullus usus hominum fuit, et cum gaudio reclusit illud, et ibat laetus dicens, "Gratias tibi ago Domine,

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<sup>35</sup> Fal.: "(b) And this is the work of the same hand."

<sup>36</sup> The BHL 6166 version of the same text ends here.

<sup>37</sup> Fal.: "(a) Note all these points very carefully."

<sup>38</sup> Mom.: "cum gloria"; Lipp.: omitted.

quia de confessore tuo sanctissimo reliquias porto. Obsecro domine, ut per has beati Nicolai reliquias de lumbis meis des mihi filium.”

Reversus denique Cethron in civitatem suam quae dicitur Excoranda, ad uxorem suam, quae dicebatur Euphrosyna, coepit dicere, “Ecce reliquias beati Nicolai Archiepiscopi, quem tu desiderasti videre. Deprecemur illum, ut per suas sacras reliquias aperiat Deus vulvam tuam, et de tuis visceribus det nobis filium.” Tunc Euphrosyna repleta gaudio dicebat, “Domine tibi gloria, qui nobis peccatoribus tantam gratiam concessisti, ut de beati Nicolai haberemus reliquias,” et rogare coepit virum suum Cethron, ut ecclesiam in honore beati Nicolai construeret, ut per suas orationes adimpleret deus desiderium suum. Cuius precibus Cethron benigne favens, ecclesiam fabricare coepit foras portas civitatis in parte orientis quasi stadiis duobus. Quae dum completa fuisset, dedicavit eam Apollonius episcopus eiusdem civitatis, in honorem beati Nicolai, in qua recondidit<sup>39</sup> linteamen illud.

Tantum autem odorem coeperunt habere reliquiae vestimenti sancti viri, quod usque ad duo completa stadia locus ille splenderet miraculis, ut undecunque ibidem languentes venirent, statim Deus per beati Nicolai merita beneficia praestaret. Caecos illuminabat, surdis auditum praebebat, et qui spiritus diversis iniquitatibus habebant, sanabantur. Omnes denique gratias Deo et beatissimo Nicolao coeperunt agere, qui tanta miracula operari dignatus est in populo suo per servum suum Nicolaum. Ornavit<sup>40</sup> itaque Cethron latera muri coronis aureis, et decantabat domino Deo laudem quotidie, et dicebat, “Domine meus<sup>41</sup> piissime et misericordissime Nicolae, ego servus tuus peto, ut adimpleas desiderium meum, et depreceris pro me Dominum, ut de carne mea det mihi filium.” Cumque quotidie haec oraret, concepit Euphrosyna ex eo filium, et expleto tempore, peperit eum in sexto die mensis Decembris, et vocavit eum Adeodatum, et ad omnes dicebat gratanter, “Quia per beati Nicolai reliquias dedit mihi pius dominus hunc quem conspicitis filium.” Erat enim infans clarissimus et speciosus valde. Post haec omni anno cum laetitia magna coeperunt celebrare sollemnitatem beati Nicolai in anniversario nativitatis filii sui.

Cum autem complisset puer annos septem, venit Cethron et Euphrosyna cum filio suo, et cum his qui invitati erant, ad festivitatem beati Nicolai. Venerunt autem et Agareni, et praedati sunt omnes viros ac mulieres, inter quos etiam et puer est captus filius Cethronis. Cethron vero cum uxore sua liberatus est.<sup>42</sup> Oblito puero prae pavore et timore, venerunt in civitatem suam Excorandam. Agareni vero duxerunt captivos in Babyloniam, et dividitibus inter se captos, pervenit puer Adeodatus filius Cethronis in manum regis Marmorini. Euphrosyna vero et Cethron coeperunt filium quaerere.

Et cum non invenissent, sciderunt vestimenta sua, et capillos coeperunt evellere, et facies suas percutientes [Mom.percudentes] atque lachrymantes, mater dicebat, “Heu heu mihi, unice fili mi, quid miserae matri fili de te accidit. Ego misera cum petitione magna a domino meo Nicolao cum viro meo petivi, et ille rogavit dominum meum, et te nobis donavit. Non ideo petivimus, ut oculis nostris videremus de te talem perditionem, sed gaudium et exultationem in vita nostra de te expectavimus, et optabamus ut tu clauderes oculos nostros. Ecce nunc ego vacua sum de te fili mi. O domine meus beate Nicolae confessor christi, quia per te illum habui, tu illum mihi redde, ut videam illum antequam moriar. Per tuam sanctam intercessionem venter meus dolorem perpessus, et caput

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<sup>39</sup> Mom: recundit.

<sup>40</sup> Lipp: Oravit.

<sup>41</sup> Lipp. omits meus.

<sup>42</sup> Lipp. “et”.

meum infirmatum est. Et postquam illum filium meum ante oculos meos vidi, prae gaudio non memini pressurae, sed gaudens permansi. O sancte Nicolae miserearis miseriarum mearum, quia te sciente ego misera illum nutrivi, ego lavi, et nunc plenum est pectus meum doloribus, quia non video unicum filium meum. Sancte Nicolae obsecro, redde filium meum, ut sicut me laetam fecisti, quando illum mihi dedisti, ita et nunc quando in captivitate est destitutus, obsecro ut et certiore me ex illo facias, et reddas filium meum. Carnem non comedam, vinum non bibam, quousque filium meum non videam.” Tunc coepit Euphrosyna ieiunare et orare, et non comedebat nisi tribus in hebdomade diebus, et semper dicebat, “Beate Nicolae redde obsecro filium meum.”

Cum pervenisset autem propinquius sanctae solemnitati beatissimi Nicolai die quinto mense Decembrio, coepit dicere uxori suae Euphrosyne Cethron, “Mulier, acquiesce consiliis meis, et pergamus ad beatissimi Nicolai sollemnitatem, et quidquid dominus dederit nobis, pauperibus erogemus, et patrem nostrum sanctissimum rogemus. Forsitan sicut liberavit tres illos innocentes de laqueo mortis, et de ira Constantini imperatoris, et ad salutem adduxit, ita filium nostrum revocabit. Credo equidem quia ab illo haec mihi inspiratio venit.”<sup>43</sup>

Euphrosyna denique ubi talia audivit, commota sunt viscera eius, et coepit flare, et facere sicut vir eius praeceperat. Cumque in ecclesiam ingressa fuisset, expandit ad caelum manus suas dicens, “Domine Jesu Christe fili Dei vivi, respice in me peccatricem, exaudi me, et per merita huius beatissimi Nicolai, sicut liberasti multos viros de pelago mortis, et ad salutem adduxisti, et tres innocentes de periculo mortis, sic libera, Domine, filium meum de manu regis Agarenorum, et duc eum ad me, ut cognoscamus et credamus quia tu es qui omnia potes, et vales eripere omnes qui in te confidunt, a nexu et [Mom. “a nexu et”; Lipp. “et annexu te”] vinculo mortis liberare, et es mirabilis in sanctis tuis in sempiternum; qui vivis et regnas in saecula saeculorum Amen.”

Cumque orationem complisset, salutavit omnes, et refectionem coepit parare clericis et pauperibus, qui ad sollemnitatem venerant sanctissimi Nicolai. Sacerdotes vero et levitae simul omnes canere coeperunt horas ad laudem Domini et beati confessoris et episcopi. Post actas horas omnes se ordinantes pariter cibum coeperunt invicem sumere; et statim res mira et inaudita secuta est.

Ipsa hora qua sacerdotes cibum sumere coeperunt in sollemnitate beati Nicolai, eadem<sup>44</sup> hora Rex qui erat in Babylonia, in cuius obsequio erat infans, coepit dicere militibus suis atque magistratibus, et ducibus, “Dico vobis, beatissimi mei, quia ab hora qua natus sum usque modo, non fuit mihi unquam comedendi voluntas sicut modo est. Parate mihi cum festinatione cibum, quo vesci debeam, et mensam ponite.”

Ministri vero cum talia audissent, posuerunt mensam, et omnes pariter coeperunt cibum sumere. Coepit Rex post haec clamare, et dicere, “Poculum mihi praebete, quia velociter bibere cupio.” Tunc infans, qui erat in obsequio suo, cum talia audisset, parare scyphum, et aquam mundare coepit. Et subito commemorare inter se, coepit et dicere<sup>45</sup>, “Heu me quia expletus est annus, quo captivus veni in obsequium regis.” Et longa suspiria trahebat in sensu suo. Rex vero cum talia audisset suspiria, coepit dicere ei, “Dic mihi pro qua causa sic fortiter suspirasti.” Infans vero, tremefactus cum timore, coepit ei dicere, “Domine Rex, recordatus sum subito in mea mente, quia hodie expletus est annus, quo hic apud te captivus existo, quia pater meus et mater mea in hac die faciebant magnam sollemnitatem in ecclesia sancti Nicolai domini nostri.” Rex cum talia audisset, respondit, et dixit ei,

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<sup>43</sup> Mom. evenit; Lipp. venit.

<sup>44</sup> Lipp. adds “inquam”.

<sup>45</sup> Mom: coepit et dicere; Lipp. et dixit.

“O miselli quid vobis prodest ista cogitare, cum ego vos apud me habeo? Et quis est qui de manu mea vos tollere possit, quandiu deus noster vult facere, ut vos habere debeamus? Fer mihi bibere.”

Infans accepit scyphum ad potum parandum, et aquam in manu sua ad lavandum scyphum. Subito vir dei Nicolaus affuit, et apprehendit infantem per verticem capilli capitis sui, et reportavit, et reddidit illum matri suae. Cumque reficerentur omnes extra fores ecclesiae, viderunt illum ibidem stantem, et scyphum et aquam in manu tenentem, qui euntes interrogare caeperunt eum dicentes, “Quis es tu?” Et ille dicit, “Ego sum Adeodatus Cethronis filius.” Cum audisset haec Euphrosyna mater eius, commota sunt quippe viscera eius super eum,<sup>46</sup> coepit flaere prae gaudio, et currens amplexata est eum, et tenens collum filii sui, gaudere coepit, et dicere, “Gratias tibi ago Domine Jesu Christe fili Dei vivi, qui non me fraudasti a gratia tua, sed exaudisti filium meum, et vidi illum oculis meis, antequam me vocares de hoc saeculo, qui cum patre et spiritu sancto vivis et regnas deus per omnia saecula saeculorum. Amen.”

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But if it is not too hard for your charity,<sup>47</sup> I would still like to tell you about the miracles of the blessed Nicholas. And so the blessed and chosen bishop of our Lord Jesus Christ, Nicholas, when he came to the end of his life and migrated from this light to the Lord, from this light He took back to himself the soul of him who dedicated it to Him. Then the clergy and their priests, while they beheld this, gave thanks to God, who had thus raised with glory the soul of his confessor to heaven. Then, taking water to wash the body of blessed Nicholas, they took hold of the clothes of the holy body and began to strip it. However there was a certain man there by the name of Cethron, and he began to beg the same priests and clergy to show him compassion, and to give him some of the holy man's clothes. And he said to them with tears and great longing, "I came to receive a blessing from my master Nicholas, and it was not granted to me to even see him alive. I beg you to provide me with some of the clothes of his holy body, so that I may have something in honor of my most holy master." Then the priests and clergy of the blessed Nicholas, hearing these things, and understanding such a request and longing, gave him one of the linen garments of the most holy man.

And when Cethron had received the garment of blessed Nicholas with great longing, he took a new lamp, which no man had used, and with joy he opened it, and went away joyfully saying, "I thank you, Lord, because I am carrying the relics of your most holy confessor. I beseech you, Lord, through these relics of blessed Nicholas, to give me a son from my loins."

Then Cethron returned to his city, which is called Excoranda, and began to say to his wife, who was called Euphrosyne, "Here are the relics of the blessed Archbishop Nicholas, whom you longed to see." Let us beseech him, that, through his sacred relics God may open your womb and give us a son from your bowels. Then Euphrosyne, filled with joy, said, "Glory to you, O Lord, who has granted us sinners such grace that we should have the relics of the blessed Nicholas," and she began to ask her husband Cethron to build a church in honor of the blessed Nicholas, so that through their prayers God would fulfill their desire. Cethron, kindly favouring her prayers, began to build a church about two stadia outside the gates of the city on the east side. When this had been completed, Apollonius,

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<sup>46</sup> Lipp. adds "et".

<sup>47</sup> Thinks: "you bum."

bishop of the same city, dedicated it in honor of the blessed Nicholas, in which he put away the linen garment.

Then the relics of the saint's garment began to have such an odor, that the place shone with miracles up to two full stadia away, so that from wherever the sick came there, God would immediately bestow favours through the merits of the blessed Nicholas. He gave light to the blind, gave hearing to the deaf, and those who had spirits of various iniquities were healed. Finally, they all began to give thanks to God, - and to the blessed Nicholas -, who had deigned to work so many miracles among his people through his servant Nicholas. So Cethron decorated the sides of the wall with golden crowns, and he sang praises to the Lord God every day and said, "My most pious and most merciful Lord Nicholas, I, your servant, ask that you fulfill my desire, and beseech the Lord for me to give me a son from my flesh." And when he prayed these things every day, Euphrosyne conceived a son by him, and when the time was completed, she gave birth to him on the sixth day of the month of December, and she called him Adeodatus [= Given by God], and said to all gratefully, "Because through the relics of the blessed Nicholas, the pious Lord has given me this son whom you see." For he was a very bright and very handsome child. After this they began to celebrate every year with great joy the feast of blessed Nicholas on the anniversary of the birth of their son.

But when the boy was seven years old, Cethron and Euphrosyne came with their son, and with those who were invited, to the feast of blessed Nicholas. And the Agarenes<sup>48</sup> also came, and all the men and women were seized, among whom also the child, the son of Cethron, was captured. But Cethron was released with his wife. Forgetting the child in fear and dread, they came to their city of Exoranda. But the Agarenes led the captives to Babylonia, and dividing the captives among themselves, the boy Adeodatus, son of Cethron, fell into the hands of the King Marmorinus. Then Euphrosyne and Cethron began to look for their son.

And when they did not find him, they tore their clothes and began to pull out their hair, and striking their faces and weeping, the mother said, "Alas, alas for me, my only son, what has become of you, to the mother of an unlucky son? Wretched I, requested with a great request with my husband from my master Nicholas, and he asked my master, and he gave you to us. We did not ask that we should see such loss of you with our own eyes, but we expected joy and exultation in our lives from you, and we wanted you to close our eyes."<sup>49</sup> Behold, now I am empty of you, my son. O my lord, blessed Nicholas, confessor of Christ, because I had him through you, give him back to me, so that I may see him before I die. Through your holy intercession my womb suffered pain, and my head hurt. And after I saw my son before my eyes, because of the joy I did not remember the trouble, but I continued to rejoice. O Saint Nicholas, have pity on my miseries, because knowing you poor I nursed him, washed him, and now my heart is full of sorrows, because I do not see my only son. Saint Nicholas, I beseech you, give me back my son, that, just as you made me happy when you gave him to me, so also now, when he is held in captivity, I beg you to make me aware of him, and give me back my son. I will not eat meat, I will not drink wine, until I see my son." Then Euphrosyne began to fast and pray, and did not eat except on three days in the week, and she said always, "Blessed Nicholas, I beseech you, bring back my son."

When it had come nearer to the holy feast of the blessed Nicholas on the fifth of December, Cethron began to say to his wife Euphrosyne, "Woman, consent to my counsels, and let us proceed to the

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<sup>48</sup> Hagarenes, i.e. Muslims.

<sup>49</sup> i.e. when they died.



feast of blessed Nicholas, and whatever the Lord has given us, we will give to the poor, and we will entreat our most holy father. Perhaps, just as he delivered those three innocents from the snare of death, and from the wrath of the emperor Constantine, and brought them to salvation, so he will bring back our son. Indeed I believe that this inspiration has come to me from him."

Then, when Euphrosyne heard these things, her bowels were moved, and she began to cry, and to do as her husband had commanded. And when he had entered the church, he spread out his hands to heaven, saying, "Lord Jesus Christ, son of God, I have lived, look upon me a sinner, hear me, and through the merits of this most blessed Nicholas, just as you have delivered many men from the sea of death, and have brought them to salvation, and three innocents from the danger of death, so deliver, O Lord, my son from the hand of the king of the Agarenes, and bring him to me, that we may know and believe that you are the one who can do all things, and are able to rescue all who trust in you, to deliver them from the bondage and chain of death, and you are wonderful in your saints forever; who lives and reigns forever and ever, Amen."

And when he had finished his prayer, he greeted everyone, and began to prepare a meal for the clergy and the poor who had come to the feast of the most holy Nicholas. But the priests and deacons all began to sing the hours together in praise of the Lord and of the blessed confessor and bishop. After the appointed hours, they all arranged themselves together and began in turn to eat a meal; and immediately a strange and unheard of thing followed.

At the very hour when the priests began to eat a meal on the feast of the blessed Nicholas, at the same hour the King who was in Babylon, in whose service the child was, began to say to his soldiers and magistrates and leaders, "I say to you, my most blessed, that from the hour I was born until only, I have never had a desire to eat like I do now. Prepare for me with haste the food that I must eat, and set the table."

But when the servants heard these things, they set the table, and they all began to eat together. After this the King began to exclaim, and to say, "Give me a cup, for I desire to drink right now." Then the child, who was in his service, when he heard such things, began to prepare a cup and to clean the water. And suddenly he began to remember and to say to himself, "Woe is me, for the year is ended, in which I came as a prisoner to the king's service." And in his emotion he drew long sighs. But when the king had heard such sighs, he began to say to him, "Tell me for what reason you sighed so strongly." Then the child, trembling with fear, began to say to him, "Lord King, I suddenly remembered in my mind that today is the year that I have been a prisoner here with you, because on this day my father and my mother were celebrating a great feast in the church of Our Lord Saint Nicholas." When the king had heard such things, he answered and said to him, "O wretch, what profit is it to you to think these things, when I have you with me? And who is there that can take you out of my hand, so long as our god arranges for us to have you? Now bring me a drink."

The child took the cup to prepare the drink, and the water in his hand to wash the cup. Suddenly Nicholas, the man of God, appeared, and seized the child by the top of the hair of his head, and brought him back, and gave him back to his mother. So when they were all refreshed, outside the doors of the church, they saw him standing there, and holding a cup and water in his hand. And he said, "I am Adeodatus, son of Cethron." When his mother Euphrosyne heard this, her bowels were moved for him, she began to cry for joy, and running she embraced him, and holding her son's neck, began to rejoice, and to say, "I thank you, Lord Jesus Christ, son of the living God, who did not cheat me of your grace, but you have listened about my son and I have seen him with my own eyes, before

you called me out of this world, You who live and reign as God with the Father and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen."

### 9.3b [BHL 6168] Rescues a Boy stolen by the Muslims (alternative version)

From: *Catal.Brux.*, vol.1, p.257-60. Also found in Ms. BNF lat. 5573. BHL 6169 is the same text with a different ending.

1. Si devotionis vestrae, fratres dilectissimi, delectat affectum, volumus vobis de mirabilibus beati Nicolai miraculis mirabile quoddam enarrare miraculum, ut mirabilem Deum [in] sanctis suis de mirabilibus factis miremur gloriosum. Beatus itaque et electus Domini nostri Jesu Christi Nicolaus archiepiscopus, dum de hac luce ad Dominum mirabiliter migraturus mirabilem consummasset vitam, sanctissimam creatori suo evidenti miraculo reddidit animam. Sacerdotes autem ejus et clerici dum hoc admirando conspicerent ac conspiciendo mirarentur, Deo gratias agebant, qui tam glorioso fine gloriosam sancti sui confessoris decoraverat vitam. Tunc abluto ex more sancti viri sanctissimo corpore, lintheamina quibus vivens utebatur, multis in posterum utpote profutura, venerabiliter conservare studuerunt.

2. Aderat autem forte quidam homo, Jethron nomine, qui ad sanctum et sapientissimum virum consulendum venerat de longinqua regione. Hic cum invenisset defunctum quem quaesierat vivum, coepit cum magno maerore eosdem sacerdotes et clericos rogare, ut vel aliquid de vestimentis sancti viri per misericordiam debuisset sibi dari. Dicebat autem eis cum lacrimis et suspiriis magnis : "Ego, patres et domini, veneram a domino meo Nicolao accipere benedictionem: sed concessum mihi non fuit ut vel vivum eum conspicerem. Obsecro ergo benignitatem vestram, ut vel aliquid de vestimentis ejus sancti corporis praebeatis mihi, ut habeam de domino meo hoc tantillum in honorem ejus ac mei munimentum." Presbyteri vero et clerici haec intendentes et talem petitionem viri et desiderium amplectentes, dederunt ei unum de lintheaminibus sanctissimi viri. Jethron autem ut accepit vestimentum beati Nicolai, cum desiderio magno reclusit illud in locello novo, nulli hominum usu actuali antea usurpato. Et ibat laetus dicendo : "Gratias tibi, Domine, ago, quia de confessore tuo sanctissimo reliquias porto. Obsecro ergo, Domine, ut per has reliquias beati Nicolai, de lumbis meis mihi des filium, ad honorem tuam et gaudium meum, ac profectum publicum."

3. Reversus denique Jethron in civitatem suam, quae dicitur Excoranda, uxori suae, quae dicebatur Eufrosina, laetus coepit dicere : "Ecce reliquiae beati Nicolai archiepiscopi, quem videre desiderasti. Deprecemur ergo Deum, ut tantorum astipulatione pignorum aperiat vulvam tuam, et de tuis visceribus det nobis desideratam prolem." Tunc Eufrosina gaudio repleta dicebat: "Gloria tibi, Domine, qui nobis peccatoribus tantam gratiam concessisti, ut beati Nicolai pretiosas reliquias habere gaudeamus." Statimque rogare coepit virum suum ut ecclesiam in honorem et memoriam beati construeret Nicolai, ut per ipsius orationes adimpleret Dominus desiderium suum. Cujus precibus Jethron benigne favens, ecclesiam fabricare coepit, foras portas urbis in parte orientis quasi stadiis duobus. Quae dum completa fuisset, dedicavit eam Apollonius, episcopus ejusdem civitatis, in honorem et memoriam sancti Nicolai, recondens in ea lintheamen illud solemnem venerationem. Cum autem reliquiae sancti viri in loco collocarentur competenti, tantum de se odorem emittere coeperunt, ut usque ad duo plenarie stadia odoris nimii expanderetur fragrantia. Extunc adeo coepit ille locus miraculis splendere, ut undecumque ad eum languentes advenirent, statim per beati Nicolai merita beneficia singulis praepararet congrua, caecos scilicet illuminaret, surdis auditum praeberet, et qui spiritus diversae iniquitatis patiebantur, sanarentur. Omnes denique illius regionis

homines gratias Deo agere coeperunt, qui tam miranda mirabilia operari dignabatur in populo suo per famulum suum, beatissimum Nicolaum.

4. Ecclesia itaque supradicta a nobili viro Jethrone exacta, congruis instrumentis pleniter instructa, decoris ornamentis sufficienter ornata, servitoribus honestis sapienter ordinata, devotius et obnixius solito in ea Jethron quotidie Deum collaudabat, sanctum Nicolaum exorabat, ut hic per illum, ille propter istum Jethroni compleret desiderium suum. Haec autem eo saepius repetente, Eufrosina concepit, et, expleto pariendi tempore, octavo idus decembris peperit puerum : cui, sicut eis rei evidentia dictavit, nomen imposuerunt Adeodatum, et omnibus gratanter nomen ejus exponentes, gratulabantur dicendo : “Quia per beati Nicolai meritum dedit nobis pius Dominus hunc quem conspiciatis filium.” Erat infans clarissimus et valde speciosus. Post haec omni anno cum laetitia magna coeperunt celebrare solemnitatem sancti Nicolai in anniversario filii sui.

5. Cum vero complisset puer septem annorum cursum, convenerunt Jethron et uxor ejus cum filio suo et propinquis suis et vicinis ad festivitatem sancti Nicolai. Supervenerunt autem eis ex improvise Agareni praedatores, qui totius terrae praedam et ipsos depraedati sunt homines. Inter quos, evadentibus etiam parentibus, captus est puer Adeodatus. Agareni vero duxerunt eos in Babyloniam, et dividendo inter se captos pervenit puer Adeodatus in manum cujusdam, nomine Marmorini. Jethron vero et uxor sua cum ad civitatem confugissent et filium diu quaesitum non invenissent, vestimenta sua scindere et capillos evellere et pugnibus se caedere coeperunt; et faciem suam percutiens atque misere lacrimans mater dicebat: “Heu, heu, fili mi unice, quid misera matri de te accidit? Ego misera et vir meus cum petitione magna a domino meo beatissimo Nicolao implorando vix impetravimus quod ille pro nobis Deum rogavit, et Deus pro illo te nobis donavit. Non ad hanc perditionem, fili mi, te tanto tempore petisse speravimus, sed ad gaudium in vita nostra, et exultationem, ac possessionum nostrarum post decessum nostrum secundum Deum administrationem. Ecce nunc vacua sum de te, fili mi. O domine meus Nicolae, beate confessor Christi, quia per te illum habui, tu eum mihi redde, ut videam eum antequam moriar. Per tuam, dulcis domine, piissimam intercessionem, venter meus dolorem perpressus, et caput meum confirmatum est: ac postquam illum meos ante oculos vidi, prae gaudio pressura non memini, sed gaudetis permansi. O sanctissime Nicolae, solitis miserationibus tuis condolens esto miseriis meis, ut quas semel experta sum, experiar et secundo. Te enim miserante, ego misera illum concepi, parturivi, peperivi, lactavi, nutrivivi, educavi, et nunc gaudia qua de illo speravi, pro doloribus, heu, mutavi: quia non video filium meum unicum quem speravi successurum. Sancte Nicolae, quaeso, precor, obsecro, imploro misericordiam tuam, ut reddas mihi filium meum: ut sicut me laetificasti quando illum mihi donasti, ita nunc admirabiliter meritorum efficacia captiva captivum restituendo laetissimam me de illo facias. Carnem certe non comedam neque vinum bibam quousque filium meum videam.” Tunc coepit tribus diebus in hebdomada jejuna, et semper in oratione repetere: “Redde mihi obsecro, filium meum, sancte Nicolae.”

6. Cum autem anni volubilitas anniversaria vice solemnitatis sancti Nicolai reduxisset diem, coepit Jethron dicere uxori suae Eufrosinae : “Mulier, adquiesce consiliis meis, et pergamus ad beatissimi Nicolai solemnitatem, et de bonis quae nobis dedit Dominus bonam partem pauperibus erogemus, et patrem nostrum sanctissimum Nicolaum rogemus : forsitan sicut liberavit tres illos innocentes de laqueo mortis et de ira Constantini imperatoris, et eos saluti restituit, ita filium nostrum nobis revocabit. Credo siquidem similia nobis ab illo evenire.”

Cum haec audisset Eufrosina, commota sunt viscera ejus super viri sui vaticinio, et secundum ejus consilium ad ecclesiam perveniunt ambo. Cumque illa in ecclesia fuisset ingressa, expandens manus suas ad coelum oravit: "Domine Jesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi, respice in me et miserere mei, et exaudi me per merita beatissimi Nicolai: et sicut liberasti multos viros de pelago mortis et saluti restituisti, et tres innocentes de periculo mortis, sic libera, Domine, filium meum de manu regis Agarenorum, et redde illum nobis, ut cognoscamus et credamus quia tu es qui omnia potes et vales eripere omnes qui in te confidunt, a vinculo diaboli et periculo mortis, et es mirabilis in sanctis tuis in sempiternum, qui vivis et regnas in secula seculorum. Amen." Cumque complisset orationem humili affectu, circumstantibus refectionem coepit praeparare clericis, pauperibus et laicis, qui ad festivitatem sancti Nicolai convenerant. Tunc a sacerdotibus et levitis et reliquis clericis opere Dominico in ecclesia sancti Nicolai solemniter celebrato ac mensis appositis convivio celebri subsecuto, statim res miranda contigit, sicut rei postea probabit eventus.

7. Ipsa enim hora qua convivantes cibum sumere coeperunt in solemnitate sancti Nicolai, eadem hora rex in cujus obsequio erat infans Adeodatus, mystica fame arreptus coepit dicere militibus suis atque magistratibus et ducibus: "Dico vobis, carissimi mei, quia ex quo natus sum usque in hanc horam non fuit mihi talis voluntas comedendi, immo necessitas, qualis modo. Parate ergo mihi cum festinatione quo vesci debeam, et apponite mensam." Milites ergo cum hoc audissent, praeparatis regalibus epulis, mensam pro voto regis posuerunt, et omnes pariter cibum cum eo sumere coeperunt. Mox iterum rege potum eadem festinatione flagitante, infans Adeodatus qui erat in hujusmodi obsequio, scyphum regalem arripiens et recentarium ad illum lavandum, regi potum praeparavit. Moxque occasione diei et rei causam exultationis suae intra se rememorando, alta trahere suspiria coram rege coepit et in cogitatu suo quasi dicere: "Heu mihi hodie, quippe expletus est annus, ex quo captivus coactus servitio regi alienigenae servire compellor."

Rex vero cum hoc animadvertisset, sciscitatus tantorum suspiriorum ac gemituum causam a puero, responsum est ei ab illo pueriliter tremefacto: "Recordatus enim sum, domine, subito in mente mea, quia hodie expletus est annus quo hic apud te captivus existo, quia pater meus et mater mea in hac die solemnitatem celebrant magnam in ecclesia sancti Nicolai, domini nostri." Rex autem cum talia audisset, respondens dixit ei: "O miselle, cum ego te captum teneam, quid prodest tibi talia cogitare? Et quis est qui de manu mea te tollere possit? Omitte ergo frustra suspirare, et satage mihi potum propinare." Infante autem ad imperium regis cum scypho et recentario ad portum, erat enim proximus, lavandi causa tendente, subito sanctus Nicolaus affuit, et eum per capillos verticis capitis sui tenens, mirabiliter asportatum coram parentibus suis et convivantibus statuit.

8. Illis itaque juxta ecclesiam reficientibus, vident subito infantem coram se astantem, et scyphum ac recentarium in manibus tenentem. Cumque quisnam esset interrogassent, respondit se esse Adeodatum, Jethronis et Eufrosinae unicum filium. Audiente haec et vidente Eufrosina, matre ejus, commota sunt viscera ejus super filio suo, et ultra quam credi potest coepit flere. Et accurrens amplexata est filium suum, et tenens collum ejus insatiabiliter osculabatur eum nimio gaudio, lacrimis tamen madefacta, gaudens et dicens: "Gratias tibi ago, Domine Jesu Christe, Fili Dei vivi, gratias tibi ago quia per omnipotentem misericordiam tuam et misericordem omnipotentiam et domini mei sanctissimi Nicolai meritum et intercessionem, non fraudasti me gratia tua, sed exaudisti vocem miserae ancillae tuae, et mirabiliter reddidisti mihi filium; et video illum oculis, et teneo manibus propriis gratia tua, qui vivis et regnas per omnia secula seculorum. Amen." Cumque mutuis aspectibus, dulcibus amplexibus, osculis frequentibus lassati potius quem satiati essent mater et

filius, patre nimium gaudium virili animo dissimulante, atque inter festales convivas communi gaudio percelebrato, sciscitati sunt rei admirandae causam et ordinem. Cumque, a puero rerum quae sibi contigerant admiratione prius stupefacto, tandem respirante, liberationis suae textum intellexissent, in exclamatione laudis Dei et sanctissimi Nicolai, illius liberatoris, levaverunt voces. Et nos ergo illorum vocibus nostras non solum voces, sed et humiles preces jungamus, utpote pueri et conservi Dei et ipsius pastoris, protectoris et liberatoris nostri beatissimi Nicolai, hoc modo: Gratias tibi agimus, Domine, qui gloriosus in sanctis tuis per illos nobis mirabilia frequenter operaris.

Gratias tibi, sancte Nicolae, qui meritorum tuorum potentia ac sanctitatis quasi innata clementia, dum ista functus es vita, multos mirabilis, ex quo vero frueris aeterna gloria, plures beneficiis assuevisti laetificare mirabilioribus.

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1. If it pleases the goodwill of your devotion, dearly beloved brothers, we would like to relate a certain wonderful miracle from the wonderful miracles of the blessed Nicholas, so that we may marvel at the wonderful God who is glorious [in] his saints for his wonderful deeds. Therefore, the blessed and chosen archbishop of our Lord Jesus Christ, Nicholas, when he was about to pass away from this light to the Lord in a wonderful way, and had completed a wonderful life, he gave back his soul to his most holy creator by an evident miracle. And his priests and clerics, while they gazed in wonder at this and marveled at this, gave thanks to God, who had adorned the glorious life of their holy confessor with such a glorious end. Then, having washed the most holy body of a holy man according to the custom, they strove reverently to preserve the cloths which the living man had used, as being of use to many in posterity.

2. Now there happened to be a certain man, Jethro by name, who had come from a far country to consult the holy and most wise man. Here, when he found deceased the man whom he had been looking for alive, he began with great sorrow to beg the same priests and clerics, that even something of the holy man's clothes might be given to him out of compassion. And he said to them with tears and great sighs: "I, fathers and lords, had come to receive a blessing from my lord Nicholas: but it was not granted to me to even behold him alive. So I beg your kindness to provide me with some of the garments of his holy body, so that I may have this little thing of my master in his honour and as a protection for me." Then the priests and the clerics, considering these things, and valuing such a request and the longing of the man, gave him one of the linen clothes of the most holy man.<sup>50</sup> Then, when Jethro had received the garment of the blessed Nicholas, with great longing he put it back in a new bag, which had not previously been used by anyone for any actual purpose. And he went away happily saying: "I thank you, Lord, because I am carrying the relics of your most holy confessor." I beseech you, Lord, to give me a son from my loins through these relics of the blessed Nicholas, for your honor and my joy, and public satisfaction."

3. Now when Jethro returned to his city, which is called Excoranda, he happily began to say to his wife, who was called Euphrosyne, "Here are the relics of the blessed archbishop Nicholas, whom you wanted to see. Let us beseech God, therefore, to open your womb in confirmation of so many pledges, and to give us the desired child from your bowels." Then Euphrosyne, filled with joy, said, "Glory to you, Lord, who has granted us sinners such grace that we rejoice in having the precious

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<sup>50</sup> Jethro obtains St Nicholas' used underwear....

relics of blessed Nicholas." And immediately she began to ask her husband to build a church in honor and memory of blessed Nicholas, so that through his prayers the Lord would fulfill her desire. Jethro kindly favored her prayers, and he began to build a church, outside the gates of the city on the east side about two furlongs away. As soon as this had been completed, Apollonius, the bishop of the same city, dedicated it in honour and memory of St. Nicholas, storing in it that clothing with solemn veneration. But when the relics of the holy man were placed in a suitable place, they began to emit such a fragrance from themselves that the fragrance of such a strong odour extended for two full stadia. From then on that place began to shine with miracles to such an extent that wherever the sick came to it, immediately He [God] prepared suitable blessings for each one through the merits of blessed Nicholas, that is to say, He enlightened the blind, gave hearing to the deaf, and those who suffered from the spirits of various iniquities were healed. In short, all the people of that region began to give thanks to God, who had deigned to work such wonderful miracles among his people through his servant, the most blessed Nicholas.

4. And so the above-mentioned church was finished by the noble man Jethro, fully equipped with suitable apparatus, sufficiently decorated with beautiful ornaments, and wisely ordered by honest servants, and more devoutly and more devotedly than usual Jethro praised God every day and begged St. Nicholas, that the former through the latter might fulfill for Jethro his desire. Then, often repeating these things to him, Euphrosyne conceived, and after completing the time of pregnancy, on the eighth of December, she gave birth to a boy: to whom, just as the evidence of the matter dictated to them, they gave the name Adeodatus, and gratefully explaining his name to everyone, they congratulated themselves, saying, "For through the merit of the blessed Nicholas the pious Lord has given us this son whom you behold." He was a very bright and very handsome child. After this they began to celebrate every year with great joy the solemnity of St. Nicholas on the birthday of their son.

5. Now when the boy had completed the course of seven years, Jethro and his wife gathered together with their son and their relatives and neighbors for the festival of St. Nicholas. And there came upon them suddenly the plunderers of the Agarenes, who had plundered the whole earth, and the men themselves had been plundered. Among whom, after his parents escaped, the boy Adeodatus was captured. The Agarenes, however, led them into Babylonia, and dividing the captives among themselves, the boy Adeodatus fell into the hands of a man named Marmorinus. But when Jethro and his wife fled to the city, and did not find their son after a long search, they began to tear their clothes and pull out their hair, and to beat themselves with their fists; and the mother, striking her face and weeping piteously, said, "Alas, alas, my only son, what has become of your poor mother? I, a wretched woman, and my husband, with a great entreaty from my lord the blessed Nicholas, hardly obtained what he asked God for us, and God gave you to us because of him. It was not for this destruction, my son, that we trusted and prayed for you for such a long time, but for joy in our lives, and exultation, and the administration of our possessions after our death according to God's will. Behold now I am empty of you, my son. O my lord Nicholas, blessed confessor of Christ, because I had him through you, bring him back to me, that I may see him before I die. By your most pious intercession, sweet lord, my belly suffered pain, and my head was encouraged: and after I saw him before my eyes, from joy I did not remember the pressure, but continued to rejoice. O most holy Nicholas, be merciful to my miseries with your usual compassion, so that what I have experienced once, I may experience a second time. For you pitying me, I pitifully conceived him, bore him, bore him, nursed him, nurtured him, brought him up, and now alas I have exchanged the

joys for which I had hoped for him for sorrows: for I do not see my only son whom I hoped would come after me. St. Nicholas, I ask you, I pray you, I beseech you, I implore your mercy to give me back my son: that, just as you made me happy when you gave him to me, so now, by restoring the captive, by the marvelous efficacy of your merits, you may make me very happy about him. I will certainly not eat meat or drink wine until I see my son.” Then she began to fast three days a week, and always to repeat in prayer, "Give me back, I beseech you, my son, Saint Nicholas."

6. And when the turning of the year brought back the day of the anniversary of the feast of St. Nicholas, Jethro began to say to his wife Euphrosyne: "Woman, follow my advice, and let us proceed to the feast of the most blessed Nicholas, and, of the goods which the Lord has given us, let us give a good portion to the poor, and entreat our father the most holy Nicholas: perhaps just as he delivered those three innocents from the deadly snare and the wrath of the emperor Constantine, and restored them to safety, so he will restore our son to us. Indeed, I believe that similar things will happen to us from him."

When Euphrosyne had heard this, her bowels were moved by her husband's prediction, and according to his advice they both went to the church. And when she had entered the church, spreading her hands to heaven, she prayed: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, look upon me and have mercy on me, and hear me through the merits of the blessed Nicholas: and just as you delivered many men from the sea of death and restored them to safety, and the three innocents from the danger of death, so deliver, O Lord, my son from the hand of the king of the Agarenes, and return him to us, that we may know and believe that you are the one who can do all things and are able to rescue all who trust in you, from the devil's bond and the danger of death, and you are wonderful in your saints for ever, who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen." And when she had finished her prayer with humble emotion, she began to prepare refreshments for the clergy, the poor, and the laity, who had gathered for the feast of St. Nicholas. Then, when the Lord's work had been solemnly celebrated by the priests and the deacons and the rest of the clergy in the church of St. Nicholas, and the festive feast with the normal courses had followed after, at once a marvellous thing happened, just as the event showed later.

7. For at the very hour when the guests began to take food on the feast of St. Nicholas, at the same hour the king, on whom the child Adeodatus was in attendance, seized with a mysterious hunger, began to say to his soldiers and magistrates and leaders: "I tell you, my dearest friends, that from the time when I was born until at this hour I never had such a desire to eat like now, but only the necessity. So prepare for me quickly something to eat, and set the table." When the soldiers heard this, they prepared a royal feast, and set the table as the king wished, and they all began to partake of the food together with him. Soon afterwards again the king demanded a drink with the same haste, and the child Adeodatus, who was in this kind of service, took the royal cup and a basin<sup>51</sup> in which to wash it, and prepared the drink for the king. And soon after, the occasion of the day and of the thing, remembering within himself the cause of his [the king's] exultation on the occasion of the day and the event, began to heave deep sighs before the king, and in his thought as if to say, "Alas for me today, for a year is completed since I was compelled to serve a foreign king as a captive."

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<sup>51</sup> "recentarium" is an "ice-bucket" in Niemeyer, but the sense is clearly "basin".

But when the king noticed this, having learned from the boy the cause of so many sighs and groans, he answered him with childish trembling, "In fact I was reminded, sir, suddenly in my mind, that today the year is completed that I have been a prisoner here with you, because my father and my mother were celebrating a great solemnity on this day in the church of Saint Nicholas, our lord." And when the king had heard such things, he answered and said to her: "O poor boy, since I hold you captive, what is the use of thinking such things? And who is there that can deliver you out of my hand? So stop sighing in vain, and get ready to pour me a drink." Then when the child was, at the command of the king, with cup and basin at the door, for it was nearest, attending for the purpose of washing, suddenly Saint Nicholas appeared, and holding him by the hair of the crown of his head, he miraculously carried him away and placed him before his parents and those who were with them.

8. As they were therefore resting near the church, they suddenly saw a child standing before them, and holding a cup and a basin in his hands. And when they asked him who he was, he answered that he was Adeodatus, the only son of Jethro and Euphrosyne. Hearing these things and seeing Euphrosyne, his mother, her bowels were moved for her son, and it was beyond belief and she began to weep. And she ran and embraced her son, and holding his neck she kissed him insatiably with exceeding joy, yet wet with tears, rejoicing and saying, "I thank you, Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, I thank you that through your almighty mercy and merciful omnipotence and to the merit and intercession of my most holy master Nicholas, you did not deceive me with your grace, but you listened to the voice of your poor handmaid, and miraculously restored my son to me; and I see him with my eyes, and I hold him with my own hands though the grace of yourself, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen." And when mother and son, worn out rather than satisfied with mutual glances, sweet embraces, and frequent kisses, the father disguising the excessive joy of his manly heart, and celebrating among the festive guests with common joy, they learned the cause and order of the matter to be wondered at. And, at first stupefied with wonder of the things that had happened to him as a child, at last breathing, when they had understood the way of his deliverance, they lifted up their voices in exclamations of praise to God and to the most holy Nicholas, the deliverer. So let us also join to their voices not only our voices, but also humble prayers, as children and servants of God and of his shepherd, our protector and deliverer, blessed Nicholas, in this way: We thank you, Lord, who is glorious in your saints and through them works frequently wondrous things for us.

We thank you, Saint Nicholas, who, by the power of your merits, and by the almost innate mercy of your holiness, while you were living this life, accustomed very many to rejoice in more wonderful blessings, many quite wonderfully, from which indeed you will receive eternal glory.

### 9.3b [BHL 6169] Rescues a Boy stolen by the Muslims (alternative version, alternative ending)

Unpublished. This is the same text as BHL 6168, but with a different and longer ending. In: *Catal.Brux.*, vol.1, p.261, the editors add: *Ita expliciunt codd. Gandavenses 289 et 499* (Analect. Boll., tom. III, p. 185, 36° et p. 208, 1C°); *Bruxellensis vero paeranetice per tres fere columnas, fol. 20<sup>r</sup>-21<sup>r</sup>, laudes sanctissimi viri prosequitur.* – So end MSS Ghent 289 and 499. But in the Brussels MS the praises of the most holy man continue for almost another three columns, fol. 20r-21r. Unfortunately this is inaccessible to me.



### 9.3c [BHL 6170] Epitome of BHL 6168 and 6169

From: *Catal. Brux.*, vol. 2, p.27-28. p.16, section 31, taken from Ms. 7461. p.179-192. Various miracles from Falconius etc, including this as item d.

Fuit in partibus Italiae vir quidam, qui sanctum Nicolaum venerabatur summa devotione et diligebat summa veneratione. Vir iste infra curiam juxta palatium suum ecclesiam sancti Nicolai aedificaverat, quam devotus frequentabat, et frequentans Deo et sancto Nicolao assiduus serviebat. Accidit autem ut insidiantes piratae furarentur unicum filium hujus viri, atque ad transmarinas et peregrinas transferentes partes, venderent mercatoribus Constantinopolitanis. Crevit puer et diversis succedentibus dominis, tandem ipsi venditur Constantinopolitano imperatori. Qui vultu elegantem et bonae indolis adolescentem, et officiosissime obedientem, bene habuit, atque in suo palatio primum pincernam constituit. Interea pater orbatus dolebat et ejulabat, et sanctum Nicolaum flebilibus vocibus accusabat, et filium quem amiserat eidem confessori imputabat et improperabat. Solemnitates tamen beati Nicolai per annos singulos festiva devotione celebrabat, atque ob sancti confessoris dilectionem egenis multa dividebat et erogabat. Quodam autem anno, peractis solemnitatibus, moerens pater solus in ecclesia remansit, et juxta consuetudinem suam sanctum Nicolaum ob mortem filii sui accusare et exprobrare coepit.

Eadem hora filius ejus Constantinopoli ante imperatorem stabat, et imperatoris scyphum pretiosissimum tenebat, et pater in Italia praefatis querimoniis orabat, et orans sanctum Nicolaum accusabat. Tunc beatus Nicolaus amplius non ferens tristitiam et moerorem servi sui, adolescentem occulta vi accepit et portavit, atque uno momento sic ante orantem patrem in Italia constituit, quomodo astabat et serviebat in Graecia Constantinopolitano imperatori. Stupent ambo, sed magis filius, qui pro palatio ecclesiam et pro imperatore videbat jacentem et orantem senem. Tandem senex : "Responde mihi, adolescens : hujus ecclesiae januis clausis quomodo intrasti? Quis sis? Unde venis? Quid requirat iste scyphus, quem portas in manibus tuis?" Stupens jacebat adolescens et, arbitrans se dormire et phantastice ista cernere, penitus ignorabat quid stupenti et interroganti posset ac deberet respondere. Vir instabat et cunctantem adolescentem continuis interrogationibus perurgebat. "Ego," inquit adolescens, "quid tibi dicam nescio? At tu indica mihi ubi sit Constantinopolitanum palatium, ubi modo consistens Constantinopolitano imperatori serviebam." Miratur homo; et adolescentem diligentius intuens et paulatim quaedam vestigia amissi filii in adolescente recognoscens, instabat et orabat, et causam ex ordine confiteri adolescentem compellebat. Tunc puer captivitatem suam et captivitatis laborem seriatim exposuit, et qualiter demum ipsi Constantinopolitano serviret imperatori, indicavit. Audit senex et laetatur, et in amplexus recepti filii ruens insatiabiliter eam osculabatur. "Tu," inquit, "frater, ne formides, ne stupeas. Meus es filius, quem dominus meus, confessor Nicolaus a morte custodivit et lamentis mei desiderii condescendens reportavit." Dein fit gaudium quale exigebat praesens tempus, atque in momentaneo sancti confessoris auxilio, in aeternam laetitiam dolentis senis conversus est luctus longus et continuus. Sunt multa praesentibus aequalia aut etiam majora sancti Nicolai miracula, quibus in ejus laude paene universus exultat mundus et in ejus veneratione universi populi accenduntur.

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There was a certain man in parts of Italy who revered Saint Nicholas with the greatest devotion and loved him with the greatest veneration. This man had built the church of St. Nicholas below the

court near his palace, which he frequented devoutly, and while attending he assiduously served God and St. Nicholas. But it happened that pirates, lying in wait, stole this man's only son, and, transferring him to overseas and foreign parts, sold him to the merchants of Constantinople. The boy grew up and had several different masters in succession, and finally he was sold to the Emperor of Constantinople. A young man of elegant appearance and good character, and most dutifully obedient, he was well liked, and he was appointed first cupbearer in his palace. In the meantime the bereaved father mourned and wept, and he accused Saint Nicholas in mournful tones, and blamed and reproached the same confessor for the son whom he had lost. Nevertheless, every year he celebrated the solemnities of blessed Nicholas with festive devotion, and out of love for the holy confessor he distributed and gave much to the needy. Then one year, after the solemnities were over, the grieving father remained alone in the church, and, according to his custom, began to accuse and reproach Saint Nicholas for the death of his son.

At the same hour his son was standing before the emperor in Constantinople, and holding the emperor's most precious cup, and the father was praying in Italy with the aforesaid complaints, and while praying he was accusing Saint Nicholas. Then the blessed Nicholas, bearing no longer the sadness and sorrow of his servant, took the young man and carried him by hidden power, and in a moment he made him appear before his praying father in Italy, just as he was standing and serving the emperor in Constantinople in Greece. Both were amazed, but more so the son, who saw the church instead of the palace and the old man lying down and praying instead of the emperor. Then the old man, "Answer me, young man: how did you enter this church after the doors were closed? Who are you? Where do you come from? What is this cup for, that you carry in your hands?" The young man lay stunned, and, thinking that he was asleep and seeing these things in a dream, he was completely ignorant of what he could and should answer to the astonishment and the question. The man persisted and pressed the hesitant young man with continuous questions. "I," said the youth, "do not know what to say to you. But tell me where the palace in Constantinople is, where I was serving the emperor of Constantinople just now." The man was surprised; and looking more carefully at the youth, and gradually recognizing in the youth certain traces of the lost son, he approached and prayed, and compelled the youth to disclose the situation in an orderly way. Then the boy explained in turn his captivity and the labor of captivity, and in what way he would serve the emperor himself in Constantinople. The old man heard and rejoiced, and rushing into the embrace of his restored son, he kissed him insatiably. "You," said he, "brother, do not be afraid, do not be surprised. You are my son, whom my master, the confessor Nicholas, has saved from death and, condescending to the lamentations of my request, have brought back." Then there was joy such as the present time required, and, in the instantaneous help of the holy confessor, the long and continuous mourning of the grieving old man was turned into eternal joy. There are many miracles of St. Nicholas equal to or even greater than the present, because of which almost the whole world rejoices in his praise, and all peoples are busy in his veneration.

#### 9.4 [BHL 6171] Three Boys, One is Abducted

From: Falconius, pp.127-9, who identifies his source as MSS Vaticanus lat. 1194 and 5696, f.15-17.<sup>52</sup> He adds a long footnote indicating that the author is not John the Deacon.<sup>53</sup> At the end he adds a

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<sup>52</sup> "Ex iisdem Codicibus Membranaceis Vaticanis num. 1194. et 5696. a pag. 15. a tergo, ad 17."

<sup>53</sup> "(a) In Codice 5696, dicitur *Miraculum de tribus pueris*. Sed est falsum. Non est autem opus Johannis Diaconi, sed longe posterioris impostoris Latini, qui item clypeo *Constantini Imperatoris*,

note, saying that Mombritius gives a different version; but no such text appears to exist in Mombritius.<sup>54</sup>

1. Fratres carissimi, en adhuc aliud vobis ipsius beati Nicolai confessoris miraculum dicere volumus, ut dum ejus miraculorum recordati fuerimus, amplius Domino nostro Jesu Christo, et ipsi confessori gratias agamus.

Denique temporibus Constantini Imperatoris, fuit quaedam mulier in civitate Myrae, metropolis, nomine Constantina, quae [ut vir suus dum vixerat] cum magno studio et amore, beati Nicolai memoriam celebrare curavit. Venit itaque tempus, ut cum Dominus de corpore eum assumeret, sicut moris est humano generi hunc evenire casum, vocavit ad se conjugem suam, cum tribus suis sobolibus, et praecepit eis dicens: “Ecce ego incipio viam sempiternam: memores estote praecepti Dei, et state perfecti in mandatis ejus, ut Deus Omnipotens accrescat omnia vestra, et insuper vitam aeternam habeatis. Super autem omnia, beati confessoris Nicolai memoriam, cum summa studio celebrare praecipio, ut ipse vobis adiutor semper existat,” et his dictis, migravit ad Dominum.

Illa autem per singulos annos faciebat praeceptum viri sui. Contigit autem post aliquantos annos, dum appropinquaret festivitas ipsius confessoris, vocavit tres filios suos, et dixit illis: “Cognitum vobis sit, filii mei, quia festivitas beati Nicolai adest; praeparate vos ad ea, quae necessaria sunt, quoniam quidem dignum et justum est; ea, quae pater vester jussit, adimplere debere.” Illi autem, cum magno gaudio dixerunt: “Domina mater, quidquid nobis jusseris, in dictis vel operibus, gratanter facere parati sumus.” Erat autem inter eos frater eorum junior, nimis in aspectu pulcherrimus, qui a matre prae caeteris amabatur. Illi autem suscipientes mandatum ejus, cum summo gaudio

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suam fabulam tegere voluit. Fatue autem, quod illius tempore posuit *Saracenos, et Nicolai memoriam celebratam*. Bone lector confer cum ista illas Pseudo-Methodii, et Pseudo-Georgii, supra, et ride eas. Nec decimo seculo cognitas cuiquam, nec Diacono quoque nostro. In illis parentes pueri ambo vivunt; in hac solummodo personat mater vidua. In illis pincerna est puer; in his est pastor ovium. Mater minatur Sanctum, nisi etc. Scelestum authoris caput! In illis per *aerem, et capillos, vel equo*; hic per *ocissimum Angelum pedestrem*. Tibiae sunt impares. Mitto alia nugatoris. In illis *Mitylenae* est locus; *Lesbus*, in his *meritima ora Myrae*. Ille *Basilus* dicitur, aliis est *Georgius*: noster est anonymus, vel *Johannes*. Sed ei *Adeodati* nomen Beatillus imponit. Interim nota, dicentem matrem, quod hic casus, *nusquam legitur alii evenisse*. – a) In codex 5696, this is called the “Miracle of the Three Children”. But this is false. For it is not the work of John the Deacon, but of far later Latin imposter, who likewise wanted to hide his story under the shield of the Emperor Constantine. But it is absurd to say that at that time the Saracens, and the memory of Nicholas, were celebrated. Good reader, compare with these those of Pseudo-Methodius and Pseudo-George, above, and laugh at them. Nor was it known to anyone in the tenth century, not even to our Deacon. In those, the parents of the child are both living; in this only the widowed mother appears. In those, the boy is a cupbearer; in these he is a shepherd of sheep. The mother threatens Saint, unless etc. The wicked head of the author! In those he is returned by air, and hair, or by horse; here by a fast-moving angel on foot. The pipes are odd. I disregard other foolish things. In those, Mitylene is the location; Lesbus, in these, the most maritime shore of Myra. He [the author] is called Basil, in others it is George; ours is anonymous, or John. But to him Beatillus gives him the name of Adeodatus. Meanwhile, note that the mother says it happened, because this event is read of nowhere else.”

<sup>54</sup> “Ex aliis Codicibus, haec Mombritius tomo 2 affert, cum magna variatione. Ait maritum vivere, nec mulierum esse viduam. Viri patriam facit Caesaream, nec puerum habere alios fratres. Reliqua conferat curiosus, qui amet penitus nosse hanc fabulam.” – “Mombritius gives this text from different manuscripts in volume 2, with great variation. He says that her husband is alive, nor that the woman was a widow. He makes Caesarea the country of the man, and the child has no other brothers. Let the curious, who would like to know this story more thoroughly, compare the rest.”

perficiebant. Contigit autem pergentibus illis ad mare propter escam sacerdotum emendam, navigio Sarracenorum adveniente subito, ad ripam maris festinanter exierunt. Illi autem, nescientes de tali gente, obviam eis venerunt.

2. Cum autem agnovissent, quod gens aliena esset, caeperunt fugam nimiam petere. Denique duo majores fratres, dum fugerent, evaserunt; junior autem, suos non valens assequi fratres, a Sarracenis tentus est, quem illi alligantes, in navem miserunt, et statim exinde abierunt. Illi vero, qui evaserant, angustiati et afflicti ad matrem reversi sunt. Quae videns filios nimis afflictos, dixit eis: "Quare tristes animis video, vos filii? Dicite mihi, si quid vobis evenerit. Numquid in via aliquid vobis accidit? Ne contristemini propter aliquam rem: quoniam non licet nos, in tanta festivitate aliquam habere tristitiam." Illi autem respondentes dixerunt: "Utinam nunquam a nobis, festivitas ista vel agnita fuisset." Et mater ad eos: "Ut quid tam dura et aspera contra Deum, et nos respondetis?" At illi dixerunt: "Quia cum tres habuisses filios, amodo amplius non habebis." Ad quos illa: "Quid est, quod dicitis?" Illi autem narraverunt ei omnia, sicut eis evenerant.

Cum autem audisset mulier verba eorum, prosternens se terrae, aspergens pulverem capiti suo, caepit flere filium suum, dicens: "Heu me, quid mihi evenit peccatrici? Numquid ad rapinam filios meos misi? vel ad aliquod malum perpetrandum abire jussi? Heu me! qualis dolor, sive miseria in me orta est, qualis nunquam legitur alii evenisse?" In ipso autem luctu, et gemitu mulier in semetipsam reversa, caepit intra se cogitare dicens: "Quis alius abstulit filium meum, nisi ille, pro cuius servitio eum misi? Surgam et ibo ad Ecclesiam ejus, interpellabo eum, ut mihi meum restituat filium." Jam autem vesperascente, venit ad Ecclesiam beatissimi Nicolai confessoris, et prosternens se ante sanctum altare, cum gemitu et dolore dicebat: "Confessor Christi, et amabilis famule Dei, Nicolae, cur in me tanta mala fecisti evenire, ut filium meum dilectum, a me separares, et alienigenarum gentium esse fecisti servum? Heu me infelix; numquid aliquando aliquod contra tuam sanctitatem malum operavi? ut merito mihi talem retribueres mercedem? Miserere mei sancte Nicolae serve Christi, indulge mihi ancillae tuae; et mihi meum pupillum restitue filium, ac eum suis afflictis associa fratribus, a quibus est separatus."

3. Haec et alia multa, dum flendo, diceret. Consolari caeperunt eam parentes et vicini, dicentes: "Ut quid tam amarissime ploras? Cur non consolaris te ipsam? Recordare quomodo tres viros, subito a morte liberavit,<sup>55</sup> et multa alia miracula per ejus intercessionem facta cognovimus esse." His itaque talibus dictis amicorum, mulier tacuit; tamen per totum annum in lamentatione et angustia mansit. Revoluta autem beatissimi confessoris Christi Nicolai festivitatis anno, mulier spem suam habens in Domino, iterum suos convocans filios, dixit eis: "Filii mei, faciamus in quantum possumus ea, quae necessaria sunt in festivitate sanctissimi pastoris nostri: forsitan merebimur requiem adipisci." At illi respondentes dixerunt: "Cum filius tuus in tali re captus sit; cur iterum nobis talia precipis?" Tunc illa: "Obedite," inquit, voci meae, filii, et facite quod dico. Scitote pro quo amisi eum, quia et ipse misericors est." Et illi dixerunt: "Fac quod bonum tibi videtur." Cum ergo omnia praeparassent, non tamen quanta soliti erant, venerunt ad Ecclesiam cum parvis luminaribus. Mater se ante altare jaciens, caepit talia dicere: "O sancte Nicolae, abundantiam olei et cerae, semper ad te veniens,

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<sup>55</sup> Fal.: "(a) Si casus ejusmodi aliis pueris accidisset, qui consolantes inducuntur, ab his casibus mulierem consolarentur potius, quam a tribus viris, quos Nicolaus a morte liberasset. Num enim fingemus adhuc eodem tempore, anno, mense, die, in diversis locis, eundem casum accidisse? Nuper vidimus, matrem etiam pueri, secus dicere."

obtuli. Nunc autem jam ultra tibi datura non sum,<sup>56</sup> quia tu mihi meos filios minuisti. Et ego volo, quod tuae aulae datura devovi, minuta sint amodo. Quod si mihi meum restitues filium, ego tuae sanctae ecclesiae duplam portionem restituo. Memorare, obsecro, famuli tui, viri mei servitium, et ejus miserere filio, ut semper patris sui praecepta adimpleat, quaecumque tibi fieri jusserat.” Ista, et multa alia, cum lamentatione et fletu dicebat.

4. Interea namque infantulus in captivitate positus, pascebat oves domini sui. Dabatur ei quotidie modicum panis, et sic post oves dimittebatur abire. Semper autem recordabatur diei illius, quando ablatum a fratribus fuerat, et praestolabatur in dies, ut eum Dominus, suae patriae revocaret. In ipsa siquidem die, qua mater ejus ad beati confessoris Nicolai vigiliis iverat; post oves et ipse perrexerat. Tunc caepit intra se ipsum cogitare et dicere: "O quanta in me calamitas evenit! O quanta super me angustia volvit!" Haec cum magno dolore dicebat: "Quid ego feci, ut meis privarer fratribus? Alme Dei Nicolae suscipe preces, quas tibi pupillus devotissima mente depono, ut Dominum pro me nimis afflicto roges, quatenus me infelicem, huc sine causa conductum; ita deliberes, quemadmodum illos juvenes, jam sub ense depositos, liberari jussisti. Libera me, Christe, de opprobrio isto, cui me suppositum video; qui liberasti tres pueros de camino ignis ardentis; et filium viduae,<sup>57</sup> a vinculo mortis solvisti. Per famuli tui Nicolai preces, exaudi me, et viduae meae matriculae; salvum restitue: quia tu omnes salvas, et neminem vis perire, Trinus, et Unus Deus, qui regnas in secula cuncta. Amen.” Haec autem oratione sussusa, mater itidem postulabat. Per merita autem beati Nicolai confessoris, amborum preces ante conspectum Domini constiterunt.

5. Statim autem ante faciem pueri, apparuit juvenis nimium splendidus, quem puer prospiciens, advolutus ejus vestigiis, gratanter volebat osculari pedes ejus. Cui juvenis ait: "Surge, ne feceris, sed magis me sequere." At ille cum gaudio surgens, caepit illum assequi. Caeperunt autem tam velocissime currere, sicut nulla sub coelo reptilis, avolare potuisset. Aestimabat vero et puer, non sicut exteri homines angustiando percurrere, sed quasi invitatus ad nuptias citius properare. Juvenis itaque ante illum gradiens, quasi splendidissima stella, paulisper se longius anteferebat. Et sicut anxius homo ad fontem, ut animam suam refocillet pergere cupit, ita cupiebat ad vestigia juvenis accedere, sed eum penitus attingere non poterat. Quanto juvenis ante eum ambulabat, tanto ille gratanter eundem assequi juvenem gestiebat.

Hoc, et hujusmodi alia agentes, venerunt citius ad ecclesiam, ubi mater ejus, et fratres, obsequia beatissimi Nicolai confessoris faciebant, et ante januam ecclesiae eum posuit, dicens: "Vade in pace: scias te per merita Sancti Nicolai esse salvatum," et statim evanuit ab oculis ejus. Cumque puer talia audisset, et vidisset mirabilia in se facta; caepit considerare locum, sive ecclesiam, et sollicite conspiciere populum, ut agnosceret illum. Cumque cognovisset se in suam regionem reductum, cum magno gaudio caepit laudare Dominum, dicens: "Gratias tibi, ago, Domine Jesu Christe, quoniam cum essem in regione umbrae mortis, lux orta est mihi, et subito ostendisti in me misericordiam tuam, per beati Nicolai famuli tui merita. Tu enim mortificas, et vivificas, tu omnes salvas, et neminem vis perire. Tibi, honor et gloria, in secula seculorum. Amen." Haec autem eo orante, experunt eum agnoscere omnes, qui ibidem ante januam ecclesiae, ad obsequium beati Nicolai, convenerant, et se terrae praecipitantes, caeperunt talia dicere: "Vere iste, est puer, qui perditus

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<sup>56</sup> Fal.: "(b) Nota minas istas, et promissa."

<sup>57</sup> Fal.: "(c) Diligenter nota hanc ficti captivi pueri orationem, in qua non tinnit unquam similis suo casus."

aestimatur a matre." Cumque eum certius agnovissent, cursu rapidissimo, ad eam intus ecclesiam venerunt dicentes: "Noli domina, noli angustiari amplius, quoniam fides tua, tuum tibi salvum restituit filium, et quia angustiata pro eo nimis fuisti, modo magis exsulta, quia videre eum meruisti."

6. At illa, dum talia audisset, sicut excitata a somno, cum constantia magna, caepit sibi dicentibus taliter, respondere: "Quae dictis dicitis enixius rogit, ut mihi quam citius, demonstrare curetis." Qui cum dixissent: "Veni, et vide," ille obviam lacrymando, ad matrem suam, prae nimio gaudio ante currit. Quae eum intuita, extensis ambobus brachiis, a longe currere caepit. Statim puer, ejus advolutus vestigiis, osculari cupiebat pedes ejus. Quem mater amplexans, sicut gallinae mos est sub alas suscipere proles, ita eum suis tenebat brachiis, et osculabatur, dicens talia: "Unde modo reversa es dulcissima proles? Quis te, carissime, ad nos usque reduxit, lumen ac meae senectutis fiducia? Lumen amissum hactenus, subito in me renovatum est." Similiter autem fratres ejus, tenentes brachia sua, dulcissima ei oscula dabant, dicentes: "Reddita est nobis margarita, quam quaerebamus, datum est nobis gaudium; pro quo hactenus tristitiam habuimus, quia frater noster mortuus fuerat, et revixit, perierat, et inventus est. Et nunc amodo canemus Davidicum versum, dicentes: 'Ecce quam bonum, et quam jucundum, habitare fratres in unum.'" Tunc mater ejus gratias referebat Domino, dicens: "Gratias tibi ago, Domine Jesu Christe, quia viderunt oculi mei, quem desideravit anima mea. Et nunc Domine modo impleta est veridica promissio, quam promisisti nobis: 'Petite, et accipietis; quaerite et invenietis; pulsate, et aperietur vobis.' Et iterum: 'Amen dico vobis, quia quicquid petieritis Patrem in nomine meo, dabit vobis.' Ideo gratias agimus, et collaudamus, nomen tuum, quia sicut promisisti, ita et factum ostendisti. Quia tu es unus, et verus illorum Deus, qui te per beatum celebrant Nicolaum."

7. Caeperunt itaque omnes, qui aderant, una cum matre et filiis, unanimiter glorificare Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum, qui per suum Athletam, ubique poscentibus prodigia tanta fecisset. Expletis omnibus Missarum solemnibus, unusquisque ad propria sunt reversi. Illi autem in quadruplum, de omnibus rebus suis, per singulos annos devotissime memoriam beatissimi Nicolai confessoris, cum summo studio perficiebant, agentes gratias Domino nostro, Jesu Christo, qui cum Patre, et Spiritu vivit et regnat Deus, in omnia secula seculorum Amen.

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1. Dear brothers, we would like to tell you yet another miracle of the blessed Nicholas the confessor himself, so that while we have been reminded of his miracles, we give thanks even more to our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the confessor himself.

Now, in the time of the emperor Constantine, there was a certain woman in the city of Myra, the metropolis, named Constantina, who [as long as her husband lived] with great zeal and love, took care to celebrate the memory of the blessed Nicholas. Then came the time that, when the Lord took him up from the body, just as is normal that this fate should happen to the human race, he called his wife to him, with his three children, and instructed them, saying, "Behold, I am beginning the everlasting way: remember the commandments of God, and stand perfect in his commandments, that God Almighty may increase all your things, and that you may have eternal life in addition. Above all, I order you to celebrate the memory of the blessed confessor Nicholas with the greatest zeal, so that he may always be your helper," and having said these things, he departed to the Lord.

Then, every year, she did her husband's bidding. Then after some years it came about, when the festival of the confessor himself was approaching, she called her three sons and said to them: "Let it be known to you, my sons, that the feast of the blessed Nicholas is at hand; prepare yourselves for those things which are necessary, since it is indeed worthy and just; those things which your father commanded must be carried out." And they, with great joy, said: "Lady mother, whatever you command us, in words or deeds, we are ready joyfully to do." And there was among them their younger brother, exceedingly handsome in appearance, who was loved by his mother above all others. Then they, receiving her command, carried it out with great joy. But it happened that, while they were going to the sea to buy food for the priests, a boat of Muslims suddenly arrived, and they went out hastily to the shore of the sea. For they, not knowing about such a nation, went to meet them.

2. But when they recognized that this was a foreign nation, they began to seek excessive flight. Then the two elder brothers escaped while they were fleeing; but the younger, not being able to catch up with his brothers, was held by the Muslims, who bound him and put him into a ship, and immediately departed from thence. But those who had escaped, distressed and afflicted, returned to their mother. Seeing that the children were greatly afflicted, she said to them: "Why do I see you sad in spirit, you children? Tell me if anything has happened to you. Has anything happened to you on the way? Do not be sad because of any thing: for it is not lawful for us to have any sadness on such a festival " And they answered and said: "If only this festival had never been acknowledged by us!" Then their mother said to them: "Tell us why you are so harsh and savage against God?" But they said: "Because, once you had three sons, now you have them no more." She said to them: "What is it that you are saying?" And they told her everything as it had happened to them.

And when the woman had heard their words, prostrating herself on the ground, sprinkling dust on her head, she began to weep for her son, saying: "Alas, what is happening to me, a sinner? Have I ever sent my sons out to plunder? Or have I commanded them to go away to commit some evil? Alas! Such pain and misery has arisen in me, as it is never read of that it happened to others?" But in the middle of her grief, and with a groan, the woman returned to herself, and began to think within herself, saying: "Who else has taken my son, but he, for whose service I sent him? I will rise and go to his church, I will intercede with him to restore my son to me." Then, when it was already evening, she came to the church of the blessed Nicholas the confessor, and prostrating herself before the holy altar, with groaning and sorrow, she said: "Confessor of Christ, and beloved servant of God, Nicholas, why have you caused so much evil to happen to me, that you have separated my beloved son from me, and you have made him a slave of foreign nations? Alas, wretched me; have I ever done any evil against your sanctity, that you should deservedly repay me such a reward? Have mercy on me, Saint Nicholas, servant of Christ, have mercy on me, your handmaid; and restore to me my orphaned son, and unite him with his afflicted brothers, from whom he is separated."

3. These and many other things, while she was crying, she was saying. Her parents and neighbours began to console her, saying: "Why are you crying so bitterly? Why do you not console yourself? Remember how he delivered three men suddenly from death,<sup>58</sup> and we know that many other

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<sup>58</sup> Fal.: "(a) If such a thing had happened to other children, who are introduced as a comfort, the woman would have been comforted by these events, rather than by the three men whom Nicholas

miracles were done through his intercession." And so at these words of her friends, the woman was silent; yet she remained in lamentation and distress throughout the whole year. When the feast of the most blessed confessor of Christ, Nicholas, returned in the year, the woman, having her hope in the Lord, called her children together again, and said to them: "My children, let us do as far as we can those things which are necessary in the feast of our most holy Shepherd: perhaps we shall deserve to obtain respite." But they, answering, said: "Since your son has been taken in such a way, why do you order such things again for us?" Then she said: "Obey my voice, my children, and do what I say. Know him for whom I have lost him, because he is also merciful." And they said: "Do what seems good to you." When they had prepared everything, although not as much as they were used to, they came to the church with small lights. The mother, throwing herself before the altar, began to say these things: "O Saint Nicholas, I have offered an abundance of oil and wax, always coming to you." But now I will not give you any more,<sup>59</sup> because you have lessened my children for me. And I intend that, what I have marked out to give your church, henceforth has been lessened. But if you will restore my son to me, I will restore a double portion to your holy church. Remember, I beseech you, the service of your servant, my husband, and have mercy on his son, so that he may always fulfill his father's commandments, whatever he ordered to be done for you." These things, and many other things, she said with lamentation and weeping.

4. Now in the meantime the little child, being placed in captivity, was feeding the sheep of his master. A little bread was given to him every day, and so he was sent out to go after the sheep. But he always remembered that day when he had been taken away from his brothers, and he longed day by day for the Lord to call him back to his country. On the very day when his mother had gone to the vigil of the blessed confessor Nicholas, he himself had gone after the sheep. Then he began to think within himself and to say: "O what a calamity has befallen me! O what anguish has rolled over me!" This he said with great pain: "What have I done that I am deprived of my brothers? O Blessed of God, Nicholas, accept the prayers, which I, an orphan make to you with a most devoted heart, that you may speak to the Lord for me in my great distress, because I am wretched, brought here without cause; so may you decide, just as you ordered those young men, already placed under the sword, to be set free. Deliver me, O Christ, from this shame, for which I see myself destined, you who have delivered three children from the furnace of burning fire, and the son of a widow<sup>60</sup> from the chain of death. Through the prayers of your servant Nicholas, hear me, and restore the support of my widowed mother: for you save all, and do not want anyone to perish, Triune and One God, who reigns forever and ever. Amen." Then, after this prayer, the mother requested the same. Then, through the merits of the blessed Nicholas the confessor, the prayers of them both came before the Lord.

5. And immediately in front of the boy's face, there appeared a young man exceedingly splendid, whom the boy, seeing, falling on his knees instantly, gratefully wanted to kiss his feet. To whom the young man said: "Get up, don't do that, but instead follow me." Then he, getting up with joy, began to pursue him. Then they began to run so fast, like nothing under heaven that goes afoot had been

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had saved from death. Shall we still imagine that the same event happened at the same time, year, month, day, in different places? We have recently seen the mother of the child, too, say otherwise."

<sup>59</sup> Fal.: "(b) Note these threats and promises."

<sup>60</sup> Fal.: "Carefully note this prayer of the fictitious captive boy, in which he never mentions anything similar to his case."



able to fly away. Indeed the boy also thought that they ran, not as if the foreign men were chasing them, but as if he had been invited to hasten quickly to a wedding. So the young man, going before him, like a most brilliant star, carried himself a little farther ahead. And as an anxious man longs to go to the spring to refresh his soul, so he desired to catch up with the footsteps of the young man, but he could not reach him entirely. As fast as the young man walked before him, so fast was he gratefully eager to catch up with the same young man. Doing this, and other things of this kind, they came quickly to the church, where his mother and brothers were paying homage to the most blessed Nicholas the confessor, and he set him down before the door of the church, saying: "Go in peace: know that you are saved by the merits of Saint Nicholas," and immediately he disappeared from his eyes. And when the boy had heard such things, and had seen wonderful things done in him, he began to examine the place, or the church, and to anxiously observe the people to know who they were. And when he knew that he was returned to his own country, with great joy he began to praise the Lord, saying: "I thank you, Lord Jesus Christ, because when I was in the region of the shadow of death, light arose for me, and suddenly you showed me your mercy, through the merits of your blessed servant Nicholas. For you kill, and you give life, you save all, and you do not want anyone to perish. To you, honour and glory, forever and ever. Amen." And while he was praying these things, all who had assembled there before the door of the church, to pay homage to the blessed Nicholas, endeavoured to recognize him, and throwing themselves to the ground, they began to say such things: "Truly this is the boy who was esteemed lost by his mother." And when they had more certainly recognized him, they came to her inside the church at a very rapid pace, saying: "Do not, lady, do not be distressed any longer, for your faith has restored your son to you safe, and since you were so distressed for him, only rejoice more, because you deserved to see him."

6. But when she had heard such things, as if roused from sleep, with great constancy, she began to reply to those saying such things to her: "I beseech you more emphatically to show me what you have said as soon as possible." They said, "Come and see," and he ran to meet his mother, with tears in his eyes, in great joy. When she saw him, she stretched out both her arms and began to run from a distance. At once the boy, falling on his knees, desired to kiss her feet. His mother embraced him, as a hen receives her brood under her wings, and so she held him in her arms, and kissed him, saying thus, "Where have you just returned from, sweetest child? Who brought you, dearest, to us, O light and confidence of my old age? The light, hitherto lost, was suddenly renewed in me." Then likewise his brothers, holding his arms, gave him the sweetest kisses, saying: "The pearl which we were looking for has been returned to us, we have been given joy; for this we had hitherto been sad, because our brother had died, and has revived, had perished, and has been found. And now let us sing the Davidic verse, saying: 'Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell in unity.'" Then his mother gave thanks to the Lord, saying: "I thank you, Lord Jesus Christ, because my eyes have seen whom my soul longed for. And now, Lord, the truthful promise that you promised us has just been fulfilled: 'Ask and you shall receive; seek and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you.' And again: 'Amen I say to you, because whatever you ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you.' Therefore we give thanks, and we praise your name, because just as you promised, so you have shown it to be done. Because you are one and the true God of those who celebrate you through blessed Nicholas."

7. So all who were present, together with the mother and the children, began to glorify our Lord Jesus Christ with one accord, who through his Athlete<sup>61</sup> had done such wonders for those who were asking everywhere. Having finished all the solemnities of the Masses, each one returned to his own place. Then they fourfold, in all their affairs, every year they devoutly completed the memorial of the blessed Nicholas the confessor with the greatest zeal, giving thanks to our Lord, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

### 9.5a [BHL 6172] The Golden Vessel

From: *Analecta Bollandiana* vol. 2, p.151-3. From Ms. Namur 15 (end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century – see *Analect. Boll.* vol. 1, p.494, p.501 items 56-58; this is 58).

1. Igitur operae pretium remur, si ea quae nostris temporibus per ejus gloriosa merita gessit omnipotens Deus, brevi elogio depromamus. Cum longe lateque virtutum beatissimi Nicolai propalarentur insignia, ex diversis et semotis mundi partibus nobilium et ignobilium, divitum quoque et pauperum catervae, ad ejus venerabilia coeperunt convolare merita. Itaque vir quidam praepotens incola patriae, degens etiam trans mare quod illas suo volumine circuit nationes, secundum hujus seculi transitoriam dignitatem gazis refertus opimis multisque ditatus rerum copiis, annuatim ad ejus navigio consueverat sanctissima properare moenia, ejusque tumulum post multarum orationum fusa libamina suis honorare xeniis, sicque laetus et alacer remeare ad propria.

Quodam autem tempore secundum morem consuetum ad ejus veniens bustum, voto se constrinxit aureum vas se facturum in ejus servitio, sibique delaturum. Domum vero regressus, aurificem peritissimum accersiri jussit, et illi non modicum pretiosi obrizi libravit talentum, et quid de hoc faceret velle indicavit proprium. Artifex ergo accepto auro, illud diligentissime, prout decebat sanctum Nicolaum, operari coepit et variis gemmarum unionumque ordinibus mirifice ordinavit. In tantum itaque, in sculptura illius vasis, illi affuit pietas jam dicti praesulis, ut ipse quoque ingenium miraretur collatum opusque manuum suarum. Tandem strenuissime peracto opere, patremfamilias repetiit quodque sibi commiserat retulit integro libramine. Qui satis eximium opus admirans artificemque collaudans, qualem pro tanto opere decebat illi recompensavit talionem.

2. Verum caeca animi plectus cupiditate, et perfossus cuspide tenacis avaritiae, tanti pretii vas suis usibus deputavit retinendum, malens sibi ex eo diatim vinum propinare quam sancto Nicolao cui illud devoverat deferre. O vir egregie, dic, quaeso te, numquid gloriosus et jam coelesti gloria sublimatus et totius paradisi jocunditate insignitus Nicolaus, opum tuarum cupidus, te compulit ut illi aurea vasa promitteres? Numquid aurum tuum non manebat tibi? Quare ergo illi vovisti quod postea, poenitendo fraudulenta cupiditate, illi subtrahere conaris? Nonne scriptum audieras, quia melius est non vovere, quam post votum promissa non reddere? An psalmistam dicentem non legeras: "Vovete et reddite Domino Deo vestro?" Virum ergo te non recte profiteor. Cum enim vir dicatur a virtute, si tibi aliqua virtus inesset animi, perpenderes utique astutias versipellis inimici, qui suggerebat ut ea quae tuo patrono Nicolao devoveras, falsa avaritiae irretitus decipula auferres; dicente Salomone: "Qui dominatur animo suo, validior est expugnatore urbium." Verumtamen quia ad horam reddere noluisti quod volens vovisti, necessitate coactus et illud et alia quamplura, ut dignum fuit, sancto Nicolao persolvisti. Nunc autem ad rei gestae veniamus ordinem.

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<sup>61</sup> Ascetics were called the "athletes of God".

3. Cum itaque praefatus locuples jam dictum vas ambitiose suis delegasset obsequiis, rursus ad se convocans aurifabrum, similem prioris auri illi proferri jussit quantitatem, omnimodis obsecrans ut exinde alterum vas in servitio sancti sculperet Nicolai. Quod ille libenter annuens, auri summam secum detulit; et saepissime ut ars expostulat fundendo et tundendo, nullatenus secundum suum velle aliquod opus exinde efficere praevaluit. Rediens ergo ad memoratum virum, quod ei dederat reconsignavit; et quae sibi contigerant, retulit. Ille autem hoc audiens et in sua cupiditate permanens, decrevit illud aurum et gemmas pariter sancto Nicolao devehendum. Interea anni orbita volvente, secundum tempus quo ad sancti limina consueverat properare, scapham sibi praeparari jussit honorifice, et omnia necessaria in ea poni affluentissime. Igitur remigio remigum fultus, velis quoque tantae navigationi aptis adumbratus, Euro flante secundo, sua carbasa ventis commisit fluctivagique sali fluctibus; gubernatoreque artemonem prospere regente, una cum uxore et filio, servorum etiam plurimo famulatu, navigationem est aggressus.

4. Cum igitur per vitreos campos navigando in maris devenissent medio, nimia siti exardescente, filio suo praecepit ut ei vini propinaret haustum, cum vase jam saepissime praelibato. Tanto enim illud amplectebatur amore, ut neminem praeter se ex eo poculum vellet haurire. Expositum itaque vas ab adolescente subito e manibus ejus elapsum, corrui in mare. Cumque juvenis porrectus illud conaretur arripere brachiis, incaute prosiliens ipse etiam delapsus est in gurgite profundum maris. Navis quoque ut coeperat percurrere cursu volucris, ulterius eum inveniendi navigantibus abstulit spem. Ecce quid promeruit inepta cupido. Tum moestus et lugubris quod residuum erat navigationis peragit, et illo quo tendebat, usque pervenit.

5. Attamen pietas sancti non diu passa est tantam in eo permanere maestitiam. Denique potitus optata litoris statione, extemplo ad sancti tumulum convolvit, et aurum quod detulerat, pro vase super ejus altare posuit; sed protinus longius repulsum est, quasi cum magna vi indignationis. Quod ille cernens, ante sancti memoriam prostratus, se reum, se culpabilem clamabat, et quid egerat, qualiterve vas quod sancto Nicolao daturum se sponderat, coram omnibus intimavit, necnon et amissionem filii sui vasisque illius, lugubri lamentatione professus est. Igitur post longa orationum suspiria, voto sese astrinxit plurimam rerum suarum copiam in obsequio sancti Nicolai expositurum fore, si, suis meritis et intercessionibus, sibi suum redderet filium. At venerabilis confessor qui semper praesto adest omnibus se cum fide invocantibus, non distulit illius adesse invocationibus. Mira res. Cum idem vir sua infortunia lacrimabili querimonia defieret, et, singultu quatiente, omnibus confluentibus propalaret, repente filius ejus quem in maris medio perdiderat, quemque fluctibus absorptum, deflebat vas illud quod amiserat, manibus bajulans, insperate limina templi ingressus veniebat.

6. Quem pater illius et mater omnesque astantes considerantes, maximis exhilarati gaudiis, grates immensas Deo et suo adjutori magnifico retulerunt Nicolao. Juvenis autem clara voce referre coepit quemadmodum venerandi vultus habitum gerens, cum in mari cecidisset, ei senex apparuerit et eum ulnis sustentans usque ad litus deportaverit, et ei iter quod ducebat ad basilicam sancti Nicolai insinuaverit, et sic subito ab eo recesserit. Haec et his similia illo referente, prae magnitudine gaudii lacrimas lacrimis addentes, collaudabant clementiam sancti et incomparabilis meriti Nicolai. Sicque vota sua persolvens, et oenophorum quod pridem abstulerat reddens, gaudens et alacer cum filio proprio universoque comitatu, remeavit ad propria, laudans et glorificans Deum, qui per sanctum suum talia et tanta dignatus est patrare magnalia. Laudemus ergo et nos immensam ejusdem Dei

misericordiam, qui quotidie nobis ut meliorando proficiamus, in exemplum sanctorum suorum facta manifestat.

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1. Therefore, it would be worth our while if we set forth with a brief description what Almighty God has accomplished in our times through his glorious merits. When the signs of the virtues of the blessed Nicholas were spread far and wide, groups of the noble and the lowly, the rich and the poor, from different and remote parts of the world, began to flock to his venerable merits. And so a certain man, a powerful inhabitant of the country, living even beyond the sea which encircles those nations with its volume, filled with wealth and enriched with many things according to the transitory dignity of this age, was accustomed every year to hasten by his ship to the most holy walls, and, after pouring out the libations of many prayers, to honour his tomb with his gifts, and so to return happy and cheerful to his home.

Now one time, according to the usual custom, coming to his tomb, he made a vow that he would have a golden vessel made in his service, and bring it to himself. But when he had returned home, he ordered that the most skilled goldsmith was summoned, and he weighed out to him a full talent of pure precious gold, and told him what he wanted him to do with it. The craftsman, therefore, having received the gold, began to work it with the utmost care, and wonderfully arranged it in different rows of gems and pearls, as was fitting for Saint Nicholas. In this much, then, in the shaping of that vessel, the piety of the aforesaid nobleman abounded, so that he too marveled at the quality conferred upon it and the work of his hands. At length, having done his work most thoroughly, he returned to the father of the family, and returned in full the whole weight that he had committed to him. Admiring the excellent work and applauding the artist, he recompensed him with such a reward as was fitting for such a work.

2. But driven by the blind greediness of his soul, and pierced by the stubborn spear of avarice, he decided to retain the vessel of such great value for his own use, preferring to pour out wine for himself from it rather than send it to Saint Nicholas, to whom he had dedicated it. O extraordinary man, tell me, I beseech you, was Nicholas, the glorious and already raised to heavenly glory, and distinguished with the joy of the whole of paradise, covetous of your riches, and compel you to promise him vessels of gold? Did not your gold remain yours? Why, then, did you dedicate this to him, which afterwards, repenting from fraudulent greed, you attempted to hold back from him? Have you not heard it that it is written, that it is better not to make a vow, than not to pay having made a vow? Have you not read the psalmist, saying, "Make your vow and pay it to the Lord your God"? (Ps. 75:12) Then I don't identify you correctly as a man. For when a man is called a man of virtue, if you had any virtue of mind, you would certainly have recognised the wiles of the sly enemy, who suggested that, entangled in the snare of deceptive greed, you should carry off those things which you had devoted to your patron Nicholas; saying with Solomon: "He who rules his spirit is stronger than the conqueror of cities." (Prov. 16:32) Nevertheless, because at the time you did not want to pay what you had willingly vowed, you were compelled by necessity to pay that and many other things, as it was right, to St. Nicholas. But now we come to the order of events.

3. So, after the aforesaid rich man had presumptuously assigned the already mentioned vessel to his own service, he summoned the goldsmith to him once more, and he ordered a similar amount of gold to be brought to him, imploring him in every way to sculpt a second vessel for the service of St.

Nicholas. He willingly agreed, and he took away the sum of gold with him; but most of the time, as the art requires by casting and pounding, he was quite unable by any means to accomplish any of the work as he wanted it to be. Returning therefore to the said man, he returned what he had given him, and reported what had happened to him. But he, on hearing this, and remaining in his cupidity, decided that the gold and the gems should be brought to Saint Nicholas in the same manner. In the meantime, as the circle of the year rolled around, according to the time at which he was accustomed to hasten to the threshold of the saint, he ordered a boat to be prepared for him with honour, and everything necessary to be placed in it in the most affluent manner. Therefore, supported by a crew of oarsmen, and with sails also fitted for such a voyage, with an east wind blowing a second time, he committed his canvas to the winds and driven by the winds and the waves of salt, and with a successful pilot in charge of the ship, together with his wife and son, and a great number of servants, he set out on the voyage.

4. When, therefore, they had sailed through the plains of glass and reached the middle of the sea, burning with excessive thirst, he commanded his son to bring him a draught of wine with the vessel from which he had already often drunk. For he embraced it with so much love, that he wished no one but himself to drink from it. The vessel, therefore, which had been set up by the youth, suddenly slipped from his hands, and fell into the sea. And when the young man reached out and tried to seize it in his arms, incautiously jumping forward, he also fell into the flood of the deep sea. The ship, too, having begun to move along with the speed of a bird, took away the hope of the sailors of finding him any more. Behold what the foolish covetous man has earned! Then, gloomy and sorrowful, he completed the remainder of the voyage, and arrived where he was going.

5. However, the saint's piety did not long suffer so much sadness to remain in him. Then, having obtained the desired station on the shore, he immediately flew to the tomb of the saint, and placed the gold which he had brought instead of the vessel on his altar, but he was immediately thrown back a long way, as if with a great force of indignation. Seeing this, he prostrated himself before the memory of the saint, crying out that he was guilty, and he described before everyone what he had done, and he related with a mournful lamentation what kind of vessel he had promised that he was going to give to Saint Nicholas, as well as the loss of his son and of that vessel. Therefore, after long sighs of prayer, he bound himself with a vow that the greatest abundance of his possessions would be laid out in service to St. Nicholas, if, by his merits and intercessions, he would return his son to him. But the venerable confessor, who is always available to all who invoke him with faith, did not delay to be present to him in his invocations. A wonderful thing. When the same man was running out of his misfortunes with tearful complaint, and, shaking with sobbing was telling them to all who came together, suddenly his son, whom he had lost in the middle of the sea, and who had been swallowed up by the waves, lamenting the vessel which he had lost, with his hands flapping, arrived unexpectedly, approaching the threshold of the temple.

6. His father and mother, and all those standing by considering, were gladdened with the greatest joy, and gave immeasurable thanks to God and to his magnificent helper, Nicholas. And the young man began to tell in a clear voice how an old man with a venerable countenance appeared to him when he had fallen into the sea, and, supporting him by his forearms, carried him to the shore, and told him the way that led to the basilica of St. Nicholas, and then suddenly withdrew from him. When these and similar things were reported to him, they added tears to their tears for the greatness of their joy, and they applauded the clemency of the holy and incomparable merit of

Nicholas. Having thus fulfilled his vows, and returning the vessel which he had previously stolen, rejoicing and cheerful with his own son and the whole company, he returned to his home, praising and glorifying God, who through his saint had deigned to accomplish such excellent and such great things. Let us therefore also praise the immeasurable mercy of the same God, who daily shows us the example of his saints, so that we may progress in improving ourselves.

### 9.5b [BHL 6173] The Golden Vessel (Epitome)

From: Honorius Augustodunensis, *Speculum Ecclesia: Sermo de S. Nicolai*. Epitome of BHL 6172.

Quidam quoque praepotens vir accersito aurifice aureum vas fieri imperat, quod sancto Nicolao pro voto offerendum deputat. Quod ut artifex miro modo sculpsit, ac variis gemmis distinxit, vir ille insigne opus miratus concupivit, et suis usibus retinendum censuit. Aliudque vas ad instar prioris fieri voluit, quod pro illo sancto Nicolao deferendum disposuit. Aurifex vero summam diligentiam adhibuit, sed nullo modo secundum formam prioris insignire valuit. Ut autem opus minime processit, vir idem aurum tulit, cum uxore et filio multisque aliis navim intravit, aurum pro vase sancto Nicolao offerre cogitavit. Maxima autem pelagi parte emensa, sitit, et de aureo vase sibi male retento bibere voluit. Quod filius ejus, accipiens cui soli hoc tangere licuit, in undas lavandum tenuit. Sed de manu incauti juvenis elabatur, ipseque hoc apprehendere nisus, fluctibus maris immergitur. Quo casu, omnes nimium contristati portum attingunt, moesti basilicam sancti Nicolai introeunt. Dominus munus allatum altari imponit, sed, divinitus repulsum, longius resilit. Omnibus stupentibus, ipse per ordinem retulit qualiter vas promissum sibi retinuerit, et ob hanc causam filium cum vase in mari amiserit, istud autem sanctus accipere respuerit. Unde cum omnes laudes Deo et sancto Nicolao personarent, pater vero et mater pro reatu suo et filii amissione fletibus graviter instarent, et vota votis multiplicarent, ecce, repente juvenis cum vase incolomis advolat, qui, cunctis mirantibus, sanctum Nicolaum sibi in gurgite apparuisse, se in pelagus cadentem excepisse, ad litus illaesum detulisse, ad ecclesiam suam ducatum praeuisse narrat. Qui omnes obstupefacti iterum atque iterum laudant Deum in omnibus, qui facit mirabilia solus. Pater itaque adolescentis vas cum preciosis muneribus sancto Nicolao obtulit, ac laetus cum suis in propria rediit.

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Also a certain powerful man ordered a noted goldsmith to make a golden vessel, which he assigned to be offered to St. Nicholas in fulfilment of a vow. As the artist carved it in a wonderful manner, and set it with various gems, the man admired the remarkable work, and decided to retain it for his own uses. And he wanted another vessel to be made, just like the former, which he assigned to be taken to St. Nicholas. The goldsmith, however, used the utmost care, but in no way could he adorn it in the same way as the former. But when the work had not progressed at all, the man took the same gold, and entered the ship with his wife and son, and many others, and he thought to offer the gold to St. Nicholas instead of the vessel. But having passed through the greatest part of the ocean, he was thirsty, and he wished to drink from the golden vessel which he had wrongfully kept for himself. His son, accepting that only he was allowed to touch this, kept washing it in the waves. But it slipped from the hand of the unwary youth, and he, trying to catch it, was drowned by the waves of the sea. After this accident, they all reached the harbour in great sorrow, and sadly they entered

the basilica of St. Nicholas. The master laid the offering on the altar, but, rejected by God, it bounced off a long way. Everyone was astounded, and he recounted in order how he had retained for himself the vessel promised, and for this reason he had lost his son with the vessel at sea, and then the saint refused to accept the offering. Wherefore, when all were praising God and Saint Nicholas, while the father and mother were weeping heavily for their guilt and the loss of their son, and were multiplying their vows, behold, suddenly the young man rushed in alive with the vessel, who, to the astonishment of all, said that Saint Nicholas had appeared to him in the waters, and had taken him out while he was sinking in the sea, carried him unharmed to the shore, and had led him to his church. All of them, astonished, praised God again and again in all things, who alone does wonderful things. And so the father of the young man presented the vessel with precious gifts to St. Nicholas, and happily returned home with his family.

### 9.6a [BHL 6174] The Jew and the Staff and the Christian Swindler

From: *Analecta Bollandiana* vol. 2, p.153-6. From Ms. Namur 15 (end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century – see AB 1, p.494, p.501 items 56-58; this is 58).

1. Exitit praeterea alius vir, qui mercimoniis intentus assiduus, variis exuberabat rerum opulentiis. Sed sicut sunt nonnulli qui nonnunquam ex minimis rebus artificiose ad quaerendum divitiarum apicem conscendunt, ita quoque sunt plerique qui diutino labore acquisitas opes dilapidatorie utentes, ad infamem egestatem saepissime perveniunt. Hic itaque vir de quo nobis sermo est, fertilitate divitiarum suarum dapsiliter et prodige utens, et in posterum non praecavens, ad ultimum ad ignominiosam pervenit paupertatem. Interea necessitate cogente, verens ne succumberet mendicitati publicas, quemdam judaeum adiit qui in vicino commorabatur, quique, ut in plerisque sese habet illud hominum genus, diversis pollebat copiis, orans et prece multa deposcens ut ex suis facultatibus aliquid ei impertiendo commodaret, unde lucrando aliquomodo valeret suam penuriam relevare. Cumque ille, utpote judaeus, christiano minime fidem dando crederet, et pro thesauro commodando arrabonem sibi deferri jussisset, ille qui petebat subintulit, dicens: "Quid tibi pro arrabone donare valeam non habeo; sed si velis recipere, sanctum Nicolaum pro me tibi fidejussorem delegabo." Quod ille audiens, ut erat judaeus, non abnuit; sed sibi talia praelibanti respondit: "Nicolaum," inquit, "super quo polliceris, multis intimantibus ejusque miraculis coruscantibus, non ambigo bonum esse virum. Et quia fama volitante summi Dei eum cognovi esse fidelem, ea qua postulas sub ejus fidei pollicitatione, si ipse volueris, tibi non cunctabor commendare. Credo equidem tanta auctoritatis virum nullomodo res meas fraudulenta fide defraudaturum." Ergo cum communi utrorumque consensu, oratorium sancti expetunt Nicolai, et christianus, qui a judaeo mutuum quaerebat, tenens cornu altaris, ita eum affatus dixit: "Istud altare tibi in vadimonium trado, simulque ipsum sanctum Nicolaum pro me fidejussorem praebeo, ante cujus etiam conspectum promitto qua mihi nunc in tali angustia praestas, tibi a me esse reddenda die denominato." His igitur sponsionibus delectatus et ad domum propriam reversus, quod petebatur quaerenti contulit, auri scilicet non modicam quantitatem.

2. Domino itaque favente sibi et sancto Nicolao opitulante, ad pristinam divitiarum abundantiam rediit in brevi tempore. Cum autem diffinitum tempus advenisset, judaeus, quod praestiterat, requirere satagit, rogans ut quod commodaverat voluntarie, celeriter restauraret. At ille ejus petitioni acquiescens, quicquid rogavit, prompta voluntate annuit. Verum trium induciarum jam transcurso spatio, judaeus rediit, obnixque quod mutuum dederat, expetiit. Christianus vero immemor collati beneficii, astutia etiam deceptus diaboli, dixit omne debitum reddidisse se illi. Quod

ille audiens et ultra quam credi possit obstupescens, iterum atque iterum monebat ut quod praestiterat, redderetur sibi. E contra Christianus affirmando asserebat se cuncta quae acceperat, restituisse.

Tandem civitatis generale adeuntes "mallum", coram senioribus et iudicibus illius patriae, judaeus quae cum christiano egerat vel qua conditione illi aurum suum commodaverat, aptam protulit rationem, obsecrans ut eorum iudicio quod mutuum donaverat, sibi integre redderetur. Ille autem qui acceperat, negando respondit, quidquid exigebat illi se reassignasse integro libramine. Tunc ex consultu arbitratorum decretum est aut illi quod requirebat ad praesens reddendum fore, aut certe sacramento illi fidem facere omne quod exigebat recepisse. Ad haec judaeus : "Satis," inquit, "Nicolaum fidelem virum credo esse, sub cuius fide, quidquid defraudator defendit, videor commodasse. Attamen, si mihi iusjurandi fecerit fidem super illius altare quod in vadimonio suscepi, summam pecuniae quam repeto flocci pendo amittere. Scio enim cui aurum meum credidi, et certus sum non illum aliqua fraude posse decipi." O judaei gloriosissimam fidem, qui nondum in Christo renatus, credebatur Deum ejusque famulum Nicolaum minime posse decipi fallacibus sacramentis.

3. Quid multis moror? Constituto iterum die simul conveniunt, judaeus videlicet cum suae legis testibus et christianus cum christianis hominibus. Fecerat autem idem christianus callida machinatione concavum quoddam in manu baculi manualis, in cuius concava summitate auri quantitatem quae repetebatur posuerat. Cumque pariter ad monasterium sancti Nicolai properarent, christianus ille baculum simul cum auro interius recondito judaeo dedit, petens ut usque ad basilicam sancti Nicolai illum deferret secum, ut, dum ille baculum cum auro reciperet atque manu portaret, quia illi quod exigebat in manu dederit, sacramenti fide jurare posset. O calliditas viri praesumptiosa, qua sanctum Nicolaum insontemque decipere conabatur. Sed quia non est sapientia neque prudentia neque calliditas contra Deum, meritis sancti Nicolai quem fallacem machinabatur efficere, fallax machinatio qualiter hominibus innotuit, in subsequentibus intimabo.

4. Interea judaeus, tantae falsitatis ignarus, baculum jam dictum artificiose compositum manibus gestans, una cum christiano ad templum sancti Nicolai pervenit. Tunc miserrimus ille manum super altare ponens et pejurans, iusjurandi sacramentum intrepidus dixit, et ab altari laetus discessit. At judaeus: "Satis," inquit, "praestolabor quid vindicta de tanta falsitate mihi Nicolaus iste cui credidi, faciet." His dictis, utrique ad propria moenia recesserunt. Cumque christianus iter quod ad suam mansionem tendebat, alacris perageret, in ipso itineris medio tanto sopore depressus est ut, si ibidem non modicum quiesceret, statim exhalaret animam. Projiciens itaque se bivio, baculum quem confecerat cum auro juxta se posuit et divinitus obdormivit. Igitur cum inibi somno depressus jaceret, repente vehiculum onustum bobus trahentibus per eandem viam veniebat, et usque ad ipsum locum quo ille jacebat, pervenit. Cumque bibulci eum non possent excitare, nec in alteram partem carrum reflectere, impetu valido bobus super eum transeuntibus carrum illud quod trahebatur, per eum transivit, eumque mox exanimem reddidit, et baculum juxta eum jacentem contrivit. Tunc omnibus qui aderant, aurum quod reposuerat, apparuit, et quanta calliditate adversus judaeum usus fuerat, iudicibus et magistratibus omni populo claruit.

5. Cum ergo ad illud spectaculum undique suburbani convolarent, judaeus quoque et ipse accurrens, affuit, et aurum suum quod ille fraudator ei suis commentis denegarat, iudicibus illic astantibus recepit. Cursu itaque citato usque ad sancti Nicolai oratorium pervenit, et coram astans dixit: "Gratias tibi ago, bone Nicolae, quia fideliter mihi aurum restituisti quod in tua commisi fide.



Enimvero, quia tanta mihi immerito voluisti exhibere beneficia, neque passus es me deludi ab illo fraudatore, amodo te venerabor ut Deum, et velut summi Dei fidelissimum amicum et testem. Verum si tanta procacitatis virum resuscitando mihi tuis beneficiis ingrato virtutem tui meriti propalares, cum omni familia juris mei Deo tuo crederem, et omnes quos possem meas religionis viros ad Christianorum sectam convertere conarer." Itaque dum ad invicem de re qua acciderat, confabularentur, ecce qui mortuus fuerat, limina templi ingressus, coram altari sancti Nicolai procidit, et de his qua gesta erant, veniam impetrando, sese culpabilem reddidit, et sic ad domum suam rediit. Quod judaeus ut vidit, confestim credens Christo, cum omni domo sua se baptizari petiit, et judaismum deserens deinceps Christo sanctoque Nicolai fidelis permansit. O facilis pietas eximii confessoris, qui petitionibus viri judaei patulas aures tam facile praebuit, et quod petebatur adimplevit. Ejus itaque imploremus gratissimam clementiam pietatis totis cordium medullis, ut orationum nostrarum libamina ad aures summi deferat conditoris, qui super omnia vivit et regnat in solio regni coelestis. Amen.

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1. There was also another man, who was constantly engaged in trade, and was abundant with various material riches. But just as there are some who sometimes from the smallest things artfully ascend to seeking the pinnacle of riches, so also there are many people who, using the riches acquired by long labour extravagantly, very often come down to infamous poverty. This man, therefore, of whom we are speaking, using the fertility of his riches liberally and prodigally, and not making provision for the future, at last came to ignominious poverty. In the meantime, compelled by necessity, fearing lest he should succumb to public begging, he went to a certain Jew who lived in the neighbourhood, and who, as is the case with most of that class of men, had power from various sources, praying and supplicating much that he might lend him something from his resources, so that by making some sort of profit, he would be able to relieve his poverty. And when he, being a Jew, believed in giving little credit to a Christian, and required that a pledge should be brought to him before lending the treasure, the one who asked thrust himself forward, saying, "I do not have what I am able to give you as a pledge, but if you are willing to accept it, I will assign St Nicholas for me as a guarantor to you." Hearing this, as he was a Jew, he did not refuse, but replied to him with such preliminaries, "Nicholas," said he, "on whom you promise, I do not doubt that he is a good man, with his many associates and his glittering miracles. And because I have found him to be trustworthy from the reports that fly about of the most high God, that which you ask under the promise of his faith, if you yourself are willing, I will not hesitate to entrust to you. I believe indeed that a man of such authority would in no way defraud me of my affairs by a fraudulent promise." Therefore, with the common consent of both, they sought the oratory of St. Nicholas, and the Christian who was seeking the loan from the Jew, holding the horn of the altar, approached it in this way and said, "I deliver this altar to you as security, and at the same time I offer Saint Nicholas himself as a guarantor for me, before whose sight I also promise that what you now supply to me in such difficulty will be returned to you by me on the named day." He was therefore pleased with these commitments, and returning to his own house, brought what was asked for to the seeker, namely, a considerable quantity of gold.

2. Therefore, with the Lord favouring him and Saint Nicholas supporting him, he returned to his former abundance of riches in a short time. But when the appointed time had arrived, the Jew endeavoured to recover what he had supplied, asking him to speedily restore what he had

voluntarily lent. But he, agreeing to his request, readily agreed to whatever he asked. When three engagements had already elapsed, the Jew returned, and demanded what he had lent. But the Christian, oblivious to the favours bestowed upon him, and also deceived by the cunning of the devil, said that he had paid all his debt to him. Hearing this, and being amazed beyond belief, he warned again and again that what he had supplied should be returned to him. On the other hand, the Christian affirmed that he had restored all that he had received.

In the end, going to the general judicial assembly of the city, before the elders and judges of that country, the Jew made a ready account of what business he had with the Christian, and on what condition he had lent him his gold, entreating that, through their jurisdiction, what he had lent would be fully returned to him. But he who had received it, answered by denying, that he had given back to him everything he was demanding in full measure. Then it was decided by the counsel of the arbitrators that either what he was requiring should be handed over to him immediately, or that he should swear an oath to him on the sacrament that he had received all that he was claiming. To these the Jew: "Enough," said he, "I believe that Nicholas is a trustworthy man, under whose guarantee I seem to have lent, whatever the defrauder says. However, if he makes the pledge of an oath to me on the altar of he whom I accepted as security, I consider of no importance the sum of money that I am claiming. For I know to whom I have entrusted my gold, and I am sure that he cannot be deceived by any fraud." Oh, the most glorious faith of the Jew, who, not yet reborn in Christ, believed that God and his servant Nicholas could not at all be deceived by deceitful sacraments.

3. Why make a long story? On the appointed day they met together, the Jew with the witnesses of his law, and the Christian with the Christians. But the same Christian, by a clever device, had made a kind of hollow in the hand of a manual staff, in the hollow top of which he had placed the quantity of gold which was demanded. Then when they both hastened to the monastery of St. Nicholas, that Christian gave the staff, together with the gold stored inside, to the Jew, asking him to carry it with him as far as the basilica of St. Nicholas, so that while he was holding the staff with the gold and carrying it in his hand, because he had given him what he demanded in his hand, he could swear by the faith of the sacrament. Oh, the cunning of the presumptuous man, with which he foolishly tried to deceive Saint Nicholas. But since there is no wisdom, no prudence, no cunning against God, by the merits of St. Nicholas, whom he contrived to make into a swindler, how the deceitful plotting became known to men, I will relate in what follows.

4. In the meantime the Jew, unaware of so great a falsehood, carrying in his hands the aforementioned cunningly modified staff, arrived together with the Christian at the temple of St. Nicholas. Then the wretched one, placing his hand on the altar and swearing falsely, said the sacrament of the oath fearlessly, and departed from the altar rejoicing. But the Jew: "Enough," said he, "I wonder what vengeance this Nicholas, in whom I have trusted, will for to me for so great a falsehood." Having said this, both of them retired to their own homes. But when the Christian was making his way to his abode with vigour, in the very middle of the journey he fell into such a deep slumber that, if he had not rested there a little, he would have immediately expired. Throwing himself down at the crossroads, he placed the staff he had made of gold beside him and fell miraculously asleep. Then, as he lay there in a deep sleep, suddenly a vehicle laden with oxen came along the same road, and reached the very place where he was lying. And when the horsemen could not rouse him, nor turn the cart to the other side, the oxen passing over him by a strong impulse, the

cart which was being drawn passed over him and soon rendered him lifeless, and it broke the staff lying beside him. Then the gold which he had put there appeared to all who were present, and it became known to the judges and magistrates and to all the people with what cunning he had used it against the Jew.

5. When, therefore, the townspeople from all parts of the country flocked to that spectacle, the Jew himself also ran there, arrived, and received his gold, which the swindler had denied him by his tricks, from the judges who were standing there. So he hurried on and reached the oratory of St. Nicholas, and standing before him said: "I thank you, good Nicholas, because you have faithfully restored to me the gold which I committed to your trust. Indeed, because you wished to present me with such undeserved favours, you did not suffer me to be deceived by that swindler, from now on I will worship you as God, and as the most faithful friend and witness of the Most High God. Indeed, if by your favours you would show me the thankless power of your merit, by resurrecting a man of such impudence, I would believe in your God with all the family of my household, and I would try to convert all the men of my religion that I could to the sect of Christians." And so, while they were talking to one another about what had happened, behold, he who had died entered the threshold of the temple, fell down before the altar of St. Nicholas, and, obtaining pardon for what had been done, confessed himself guilty, and so returned to his home. When the Jew saw this, immediately believing in Christ, he asked to be baptized with all his household, and abandoning Judaism thenceforth remained faithful to Christ and St Nicholas. Oh, the easy piety of the excellent confessor, who so readily gave open ears to the requests of the Jewish man, and fulfilled what was asked. Therefore let us beseech him with all the innermost part of our hearts for his gracious mercy, that he may bring the first-fruits of our prayers to the ears of the supreme creator, who lives above all things and reigns on the throne of the heavenly kingdom. Amen.

### 9.6b [BHL 6175] The Jew and the Staff and the Christian Swindler (epitome)

From: Honorius Augustodunensis, *Speculum Ecclesia: Sermo de S. Nicolai*. Epitome of BHL 6174.

Quidam etiam locuples mercator prodige et improvide vixit, quem incuria ad ultimam egestatem perduxit. Hic petit a Iudaeo pecuniam sibi dari mutuo. Cui Iudaeus ait, si vadimonium ponat, pecuniam commodet quam petat. Ille negat se habere vadimonium, nisi forte fideiussorem velit recipere Nicolaum. Iudaeus inquit: «Audio Nicolaum esse fidelem; hunc recipio fideiussorem.» Dedit itaque Christiano homini aurum, retinens in vadimonio Nicolaum. Postquam autem ille abundantia pecuniarium excrevit, Iudaeus datam pecuniam repetit. Quem ille indutias poscit, et Iudaeus nihilominus tribus vicibus praestolando concedit. Deinde repetenti pecuniam denegat, seque reddidisse jurat. Res ante iudices ventilatur, et ut aut in praesentiarum pecuniam reddat, aut sacramento abneget lege promulgatur. Christianus itaque acceptum aurum baculo callide inclusum Iudaeo portandum tradit, cum quo omnique populi frequentia ad ecclesiam Sancti Nicolai juraturus vadit. Quo perveniens super altare jurat, quod in vadimonium posuerat se aurum reddidisse quod mutuo acceperat. Tunc vero Iudaeus: «Confido, inquit, quod me vindicabit Nicolaus.» Ille autem baculum a Iudaeo recipit, domum laetus cum suis repetit. Qui mox divina ultione multatur, quia de proximi laesione gloriabatur. In itinere quippe ingens sopor eum occupat, ut se putat animam exhalare nisi parum dormiat. Itaque collocat se dormiturus in bivio, posito juxta se baculo. Et ecce carrum onustum advenit, quod in neutram partem declinare nequit. Cumque bubulci nec clamando nec pulsando stertentem excitare valerent, super letifero somno praessum cum vehiculo transierunt, animaue excussa fraudulentum contriverunt. Qui ut aurum confracto baculo splendere viderunt,

res cunctis patuit, pro qua culpa Dei iudicio occubuit. Concurrente undique populo aurum redditur Judaeo. Qui ecclesiam cum populo intrat, laudes Deo et sancto Nicolao resonat. Deinde voto se constringit, si vita aemulo suo reddatur, ipse mox baptisate abluatur. O clementia Jesu Christi! O merita sancti Nicolai! Illis laudes canentibus homo totis membris in mortem contritus ingreditur vivus, reatum suum confitetur coram omnibus. Quo viso Judaeus, cum omni domo sua, fidei nostrae associatur. Christus Dominus ejusque fidelis famulus Nicolaus ab omnibus magnis vocibus collaudatur.

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A certain rich merchant also lived lavishly and imprudently, whose carelessness brought him to the last poverty. He asked a Jew to give him money as a loan. The Jew said to him that, if he put down security, he would lend him the money as he asked. He said that he did not have security, unless perhaps he was willing to accept Nicholas as a guarantor. The Jew said, "I hear that Nicholas is trustworthy; I accept this guarantor." So he gave gold to the Christian man, keeping Nicholas as security. But after that abundance of money grew, the Jew demanded back the money given. He asked him for a delay in repaying, and the Jew still consents, waiting for three repayments. Then he refused to return the money, and swore that he had returned it [already]. The matter was aired before the judges, and it was promulgated by law that he should either pay the money now, or be denied the sacrament. And so the Christian handed the gold received, cunningly enclosed in a staff, to the Jew to carry, and went with him and a crowd of all the people to the church of St. Nicholas to swear an oath. When he arrived at the altar, which he had given as security, he swore that he had given back the gold that he had received as a loan. But then the Jew said, "I trust that Nicholas will vindicate me." Then he received the staff from the Jew, and he returned home laughing with his family. He was immediately punished by divine retribution, because he was priding himself on his neighbour's injury. For on the journey a great drowsiness seized him, so that he thought that he would breathe out his soul unless he slept a little. And so he placed himself to sleep at the crossroads, placing the staff beside him. And behold, an laden wagon arrived, which could not turn aside in either direction. And when the cowherds were unable to rouse the snoring man either by shouting or beating, they carried on over the one held down by a lethal sleep with the vehicle, and crushed the cast-down soul and the fraudulent [staff]. When they saw that gold glittered from the broken staff, the matter was revealed to all, and for which crime he lay dead by the judgement of God. As people came together from all sides, the gold was returned to the Jew. He entered the church with the people, and praises resounded to God and St. Nicholas. Then he bound himself with an oath that, if his rival's life was restored, he himself would immediately be washed in baptism. O the mercy of Jesus Christ! O the merits of St. Nicholas! After they sang these praises, the man, with all his limbs broken in death, walked in alive, and he confessed his guilt before all. On seeing this, the Jew, with all his household, was united to our faith. Christ the Lord and his faithful servant Nicholas were praised by all with loud voices.

### 9.7 [BHL 6176] A Demon Murders a Boy

From: *Catal. Brux.*, vol. 1, p.317-9, ch.4. According to the BHLms, this text is found only in two manuscripts, Douai BP 855, and Brussels KBR 1960-1962 (3151). Neither is online, so the pages omitted by the Bollandists could not be restored. The text seems rather different in style to the rest, and perhaps rather later in date.

Quam piis impius, quam devotis invidus, quam sanctis insidiosus sit antiquus noster adversarius, ex inspectis sequentibus colligere poterit prudens intellectus. Vir quidam venerabilis vitae in Longobardorum olim habitavit regione, cujus fuit conjugalitatis socia conditionis parit ex parte sua; de qua ortum sibi filium in summam vitae gloriam summaeque felicitatis habuit jactantiam, utpote unicum possessionis suae pariter et laboris heredem, et futurae senectutis fiduciam singularem. Vir igitur iste, divinitatis cultor eximius et sanctorum Dei deprecator assiduus, omnium erat generaliter honori deditus, sed beato Nicolao privilegiata quadam devotione quasi appropriatus. Ad cujus festum festive celebrandum ritu annuo clericos convocabat; peractoque spirituali festo festum eis carnale decentissime praeparabat, et discessuris tandem singulis dona prout potuit lateralitatis conferebat. Convocatis igitur semel ex more clericis ad beati praesulis merita recolenda, mores et miracula ritu ecclesiastico retractanda, summo mane stratu suo exiit et a somno sponsam simul excitavit, ut ituri citius ad ecclesiam primam pariter et novissimam caperent servitii portionem. Expergefata autem femina, ad viri sui nutum, ut decuit, disciplinaliter erudita, immo ad domini sui Nicolai obsequium omni tempore vigilantissima : "Terribile," ait, "ausculta quod conspexi somnium, quod et nunc vigilem me mentis inopem totamque reddit in tuto trepidantem. Vidi enim lupum quemdam vehementi impetu in me irruentem, ubera mea cruentis faucibus laniantem et cruorem profluum sitientissimo gustu suscipientem." Dixerat et in dicto boni aliquid portentari sibi voverat; filium suum et cetera omnia sancti Nicolai curae commendaverat. Egressi que pede proprio ecclesiam pervenerunt, ubi in laudes sancti tota devotione, toto desiderio, summa mentis suavitate suspensi, pro se et suis preces placabiles Deo diutius obtulerunt. Vidit igitur et invidit, piis semper votis obuius, quidam satanae consentaneus, assumptoque habitu poenitentis domum eorum adiit daemon religiosus, ficta quidem alimoniam petens, sed non ficta sanctis hominum exercitiis insidiis praetendens. Porro famulis hac illac discurrentibus et convivium clericorum sparsim procurantibus, solus forsitan sedit custos domus puer, patrisfamilias filius. Qui, ad daemonem assistentem et miserrimi, ut erat, vultum praetendentem, de insolito habitu admirans, ait: "Quis enim tu es aut quo merito tantae raritatis poenitudinem exhibes? Edicito mihi unde veneris, ut accipias postea quod precaris." — "Ego," inquit hypocrita, "de longinqua regione irrediturus, reor, venio, addictus olim regi cuidam potentissimo; sed, quia uni conservo meo, pro singularitate sui honoris, in ipsum regem superbienti, consensum inconsultius exhibui, cum ipso pariter omni honore privatus, necnon exul et exheredatus sum, et nullum hactenus consecutus reconciliationis effectum. Sane, quia in ipsum tantae potestatis dominum ulcisci non potui, quotquot de suis vi vel fraude forsitan obtinui, tam multos innoxios unus interemi, ut ob hoc perennem acturus poenitentiam veniam, tamen tanti sceleris non merear affuturam. Desine ergo, desine vanis me miserum detinere sermonibus: affer potius quod poposci, ut procedam poenitendo ulterius."

Accedentis igitur parvuli manum misericordem immisericors hostis arripuit, et, sicut solet ceteros, innocentem ocus jugulavit, subjungens se non cibum carnis sed esurire semper mortem hominis. Redeuntes tandem a procuratore suo famulos quis stupor, quae confusio, quis putas dolor pro dolosa nece pervasit? Quippe nescientes quid agerent, quo se secure diverterent, quem auctorem tanti sceleris accusarent, ad unicum tandem quod habebant, planctus et moeroris refugium pariter declinabant.

Dolor quidem eorum dolor multus, sed dolor parentum dolor infinitus; quia quos damnum carnis attigit, poena propior penitus penetravit. Quis enim credat planctui pepercisse quos sic contigerat totum vitae solatium tam subito perdidisse? Accurrens namque pater iam peremptus in filio et prae dolore interno extra se factus, vultu quoque et voce incompertus, ut prae viribus pietatis virum

oblitus, excusso capite, confusa mente, demissa facie parumper avertit; et reversus demum ad mortuum, satis querulam hanc prorumpit in vocem. (*Sequuntur querelae per unam paginam.*)

Inter verba patris querula non potuit mater ventris sui dissimulare dispendia; sed ob poenam quam sensit, sensus paene nescia et prae doloris copia sui inops effecta, complosis manibus, collisis dentibus, transversis oculis, altis suspiriis prolapsa solo diutius laboravit. Tantoque gravius quod perdiderat, interius planxit, quanto prae dolore nimio non potuit indicare quod doluit. Tandem tamen vultu lugubri, voce miserabili, more muliebri, hanc prorupit ut potuit in querelam. (*Sequuntur querela matris per paginam unam.*)

Post effusas hujusmodi conjugum querimonias, facta fuit in familia districta prohibitio ne clericis invitatis eventus rei ullo panderetur indicio: quia, si secus fieret, convivii diem in moestitiae mutari noctem facile contingeret. Clericis itaque convivantibus et diem festum quam festive poterant omnimodis celebrantibus, tanto acrius conjuges doluerunt intus quanto plus laetitiae resonabat<sup>62</sup> exterius. Et hoc, ut arbitror, eis crevit ad supplicium quod ferventi intus doloris incendio planctus refrigerium scienter subtraxerunt. Videres igitur intus ipsos miserabiles mutuae compassionis alternari respectus; videres etiam per laetos vultus invitis oculis lacrimas decurrentes, furtivos quoque gemitus jocunda verba raptim interrumpentes : vehementissima quippe vis doloris modo eos sui oblitos reddidit, modo autem superabundans violenter erupit.

Sensit cito pius praesul suorum suspiria, copiosae caritatis jam transfixus lancea, qua jam olim super afflictos pia gessit viscera, assumptaque peregrini specie, ad domum venit luctus et laetitiae. Transeunte vero per convivas suos hospite, respectu facto vidit virum expectantem munus alimoniae. Etsi dolor ipsum multum alienasset a se, non tamen est oblitus misericorditer ceteris subvenire. Mendicum enim illum divitem se privatim poni provide postulantem, pium nolens revocare propositum, in interiorem introduxit thalamum ubi corpus pueri pannis jacuit secretius involutum.

Quid plura? Accessit sanctus et commovit mortuum, disparsensque postea reliquit redivivum. Redeunte tandem homine et novo hospiti quae quaesierat cibaria afferente, filium suum sibi occurrentem amplexusque pristinos offerentem habuit; virum autem quem induxerat, immotis ceteris solum non invenit. Quantum igitur gaudii et stuporis excessum mente concepit, ille melius explicare potest qui consimile aliquid in se expertus est. Cognovit illico dominum suum suo affuisse solatio, cujus ipse annuatim tenebatur obsequio. Producto siquidem in palam filio et in gremio matris incolumi collocato, in quam summam subitae admirationis gloriam materna mens repente rapta fuerit, pensari potius quam exponi, non tamen plene poterit. Tunc confusa prius respirabant pectora; tunc in laetos luctus concepta intus eruperunt gaudia: pro summa enim praegustata miseria fuit incapabilis felicitas subsecuta. Nota ergo novitate miraculi, coeperunt simul omnes magnificare sanctum Dei, et quod fuit residuum de convivio duplicato celebratur obsequio. Tunc sonabat cithara, tunc psallebant psalteria. Clerici quoque vociferabant modulatione trifaria; et, si prius habuerant sancti praesulis diem festum, duplum deinceps adjecerunt honoris annui incrementum. Benedicamus igitur et nos Deum coeli et cum cunctis viventibus confiteamur illi, qui pro Nicolai meritis tot est toties auxiliatus afflictis.

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<sup>62</sup> "*supra lin.* "vel resultabat" (= or resulted)"

How impious our ancient adversary is to the pious, how envious to the devout, how treacherous to the saints, the prudent intellect will be able to gather from the observations that follow. A certain man of venerable life once dwelt in the country of the Lombards, whose conjugal partner was of equal condition on her part; by whom he boasted of the birth of a son in the highest glory and highest happiness of his life, as the sole heir of his possessions as well as of his labours, and the single reliance of his future old age. This man, then, an excellent worshiper of the divinity and a constant supplicant of the saints of God, was generally devoted to the honour of all, but to blessed Nicholas he was, as it were, appropriated by a kind of privileged devotion. To celebrate the feast of whom he called together the clergy with an annual ceremony, and when the spiritual feast was over, he prepared a bodily feast for them in the most decent manner, and at the end of his departure he gave each of them such small gifts as he could. When, therefore, the clergy had once been summoned as usual to recall the merits of the blessed prince, and to review the manners and miracles of the ecclesiastical rite, he sprang from his bed early in the morning, and at the same time roused his bride from sleep, that they might go quickly to the church to receive the first and last portion of the service. Then the woman woke up, at the beckoning of her husband, as is fitting, trained in discipline, and indeed at all times vigilant to the obedience of her master Nicholas. "Listen," she said, "to the terrible dream I have had, which even now makes me alert, helpless in mind, and totally trembling on guard. For I saw a certain wolf rush upon me with a violent attack, gnawing at my breasts with his bloody jaws, and drinking the flow of blood with the most thirsty taste." She spoke, and in what was said, she vowed that there was something portentous of good to them, and she entrusted her son and everything else to the care of St. Nicholas. Having gone out, they reached the church on hasty foot, where, suspended in the praises of the saint with all devotion, with all longing, and with the utmost gentleness of mind, they offered for a longer time appeasing prayers to God for themselves and theirs. Then a certain accomplice of Satan saw and envied them, always hostile to pious vows, and assuming the clothes of a penitent, the religious demon went to their house, falsely indeed asking for alms, but in fact doing so as a pretext for a treacherous attack on the holy exercises of men. Moreover, with the servants running to and fro, and arranging the feast of the clergy here and there, perhaps the only keeper of the house was the boy, the son of the father of the family. He, attending the demon, showing a most miserable face as he was, marvelling at his unusual clothing, said: "Now who are you, or by what merit do you show penitence of such rarity? Tell me whence you come, that you may afterwards receive what you pray for." — "I," said the hypocrite, "I come from a distant country to which I think I am destined not to return, having once been the dedicated slave of a very powerful king; but because I was rashly joined with one of my comrades, in showing pride after the manner of the king himself for the uniqueness of his honour, with him I was deprived of all honour in the same manner, as well as exiled and disinherited, and to this day no act of reconciliation has followed. Of course, because I could not take revenge on the master of so much power, however many of his men I got hold of by force or fraud, I alone have done away with so many innocent people, that for this I will do penance forever, and still I do not deserve to be present at so great a crime. Stop, therefore, stop delaying me with empty words: instead bring me what I want, so I can proceed further in repentance."

Then the merciless enemy seized the merciful hand of the little one approaching, and, as he usually did with others, quickly strangled the innocent, subjugating himself to eat, not the bread of the flesh, but always the death of a man. When the servants returned at last from their business, what astonishment, what confusion, what sorrow do you think went through them for the treacherous

murder? Obviously not knowing what to do, where they could safely take themselves, whom they should accuse as the author of so great a crime, they were likewise avoiding the refuge of weeping and grief.

Indeed, their pain was an intense pain, but the pain of the parents was an infinite pain; because the punishment entered more deeply those touched by the loss of the flesh. For who can believe that those who thus happen to have lost so suddenly all the comforts of life are spared from weeping? For the father rushed in, already deprived of life in his son, and was beside himself because of his internal pain, his face and voice also disorganised, as if because of force he forgot the strength of piety, with shaking head, and confused mind, he turned away for a moment with a downcast face; and returning at last to the dead, he burst out with this plaintive complaint. (*A page of complaints follows*).

Amid the complaining words of the father, the mother could not conceal the loss of her stomach; but because of the suffering that she felt, feeling almost unconscious, and helpless because of the amount of her pain, she lay distressed on the ground for a long time with clasped hands, clashing teeth, crossed eyes, and prostrated with deep sighs. And what she had lost was all the more serious, and she wept inwardly, because she was unable to say that she grieved because of her such great grief. At last, however, with a gloomy countenance, and a pitiful voice, in the manner of a woman, she burst forth as she could into a complaint. (*A page of complaints by the mother follows*.)

After the outpouring of complaints of this kind from the spouses, there was made a strict prohibition in the family, that the events of the matter should not be spread to the invited clergymen, because, if it were done otherwise, it would easily happen that the day of the feast would turn into a night of sadness. With the clergy therefore convivial, and celebrating the feast day as festively as they could in every way, the spouses grieved so much more keenly inwardly, the more joy resounded outwardly. And this, I think, increased their suffering, because they knowingly withdrew the relief of tears from the burning pain inside them. You would see, then, that within themselves the wretched were alternately treated with mutual compassion; you would even see tears running down the happy faces of the unwilling eyes, and furtive moans also abruptly interrupting the jocular words: for the most intense force of pain now made them forget themselves, and now overflowing it burst forth violently.

The pious bishop soon perceived the sighs of his people, already pierced with the lance of abundant charity, where once pious bowels ached over the afflicted, and assuming the appearance of a stranger, he came to the house of mourning and joy. But the host, passing through the convivial guests, looking back, he saw a man waiting for a gift of alms. Although grief had estranged him from himself, he did not forget to help others with compassion. For he led that beggarly rich man, desiring providently that he should be kept in private, and unwilling to go back on his pious purpose, led him into the interior chamber, where the body of the child lay, more secretly wrapped in cloths.

What more is there to say? The saint came in and awakened the dead man, and disappearing left behind afterwards the revived boy. When the man returned at length and brought the food that he had sought for his new guest, he found his son running to meet him and offering an embrace as before; but, although the rest had not moved, he did not find alone the man whom he had led in.



He, therefore, who has experienced something similar in himself, can better explain how much excess of joy and amazement he conceived in his mind. He knew at once that his master had provided his solace, to whose service he himself was bound annually. Then the son was brought out in public and placed unharmed in the bosom of his mother, and the utmost glory of sudden wonder into which the mother's mind was suddenly rapt, can be more fully weighed rather than explained. Then, with confused hearts, they first took a breath; then the joys that had been conceived within in mourning broke out in happiness; for instead of the greatest misery, tasted in advance, there followed an incomprehensible happiness. So, learning of therefore the novelty of the miracle, they all began at the same time to magnify the saint of God, and what was left of the banquet was celebrated with a double service. Then the harp sounded, then the psaltery played. The clergy, too, cried out in a three-tone tune; and if previously they were keeping the feast day of the holy bishop, they afterwards added a double increase of the annual honour. Let us therefore bless the God of heaven, and confess with all living things to him who, for the merits of Nicholas, has so often helped the afflicted.

THE END