

FORUM ROMANUM: SHOW #23

De Aquis Urbis Romae

XCVII A.D.

(nonagesimo septimo anno Domini)

DCCCL A.V.C.

(octingentesimo quinquagesimo anno ab urbe condita)

I. Salutatio

Favonius: Salvete, omnes! Mihi nomen est Marcus Favonius et hoc est Forum Romanum! Quid novi est hodie? Summatim praedicam: hodie audiemus de aquae ductu. Nostra Iulia Pauli loquetur cum Curatore Aquarum ipso. Deinde cum Aulo Sereno et Scirto Agitatore ibimus ad thermas. Omnia haec—plus etiam—agentur hac editione Fori Romani. Ante omnia, autem, ecce Dictum Hodiernum!

Concerning the Waters of the city of Rome

97 A.D.

850 A.U.C.

(850 years after the founding of Rome)

I. Greeting

Favonius: Hello, everyone! My name is Marcus Favonius, and this is Forum Romanum! What's new today? I'll give a brief summary: Today we'll hear about the aqueduct. Our Julia Pauli will speak with the Curator of Waters himself. Then we'll go to the baths with Aulus Serenus and Scirtus Agitator. All these things - plus more - will take place on this edition of Forum Romanum. Before everything, though, here's the Saying of the Day.

II. Dictum Hodiernum

Lector: Hoc est dictum hodiernum: Ignorantia legis neminem excusat. (“Ignorance of the law excuses no one.”)

III. Quid novi?

Favonius: Verba notanda. Et nunc videamus quid novi sit. Hodie, Sextus Iulius Frontinus, vir clarissimus et consularis, creatus est Curator Aquarum Romae. Quibus de rebus ut plus audiamus eamus nunc ad Iuliam Pauli quae est cum ipsissimo.

IV. Persona Notanda

Iulia: Gratias, Favoni! Adsum in quodam vico Romano, stans ante unum e fontibus plurimis Romanis. Et mecum est vir illustris, Sextus Iulius Frontinus, consularis et nunc Curator Aquarum. Salve, Frontine!

II. Saying of the Day

Lector: This is the saying of the day: Ignorance of the law excuses no one.

III. What's New?

Favonius: Words to remember. And now let's see what's new. Today, Sextus Julius Frontinus, a very famous man and an ex-consul, was elected as the Curator of the Waters. To hear more about these things, let's go now to Julia Pauli who is with the very man himself.

IV. A Person to Know

Iulia: Thanks, Favonius! I'm here in a certain Roman neighborhood, standing in front of one of the many Roman fountains. And with me is a famous man, Sextus Julius Frontinus, an ex-consul and now the Curator of the Waters. Hello,

Frontinus: Salve, Iulia Pauli. Gaudeo tecum loqui hodie.

Iulia: Ante omnia, velim tibi gratulari, Frontine, quod Curator Aquarum modo creatus es.

Frontinus: Gratias tibi ago, Iulia. Inter omnia officia honoresque quos sumpsi atque perfeci, hoc officium, ut mihi videtur, maximi momenti est.

Iulia: Aqua est vita, ut aiunt.

Frontinus: Ita vero. Ignis et aqua, sine qua non potest vivere aut valere. Re vera, de abundantia aquarum Romae Gaius Plinius Secundus in *Historiae Naturalis* libris ita scripsit: "Si quis aestimaverit abundantiam aquarum in publico, balneis, piscinis, domibus, hortis, suburbanis villis...dicet nihil magis mirandum esse in toto

Frontinus!

Frontinus: Hello, Julia Pauli. I'm happy to speak with you today.

Iulia: Before everything, I'd like to congratulate you, Frontinus, because you were just chosen the Curator of Waters.

Frontinus: Thanks, Julia. Among all the duties and honors which I've taken on and completed, this duty, as it seems to me, is the most important.

Iulia: Water is life, as they say.

Frontinus: Yes. Fire and water, without which it's not possible to live or to be well. Really, concerning the abundance of waters in Rome, Gaius Pliny the Second wrote thus in his books of *Natural History*: "If anyone measures the amount of water in our community, in the baths, the pools, the homes, the gardens, the suburban

orbe terrarum.”

Iulia: Constat. Age, narra, quaeso, pauca de aquarum ductu.

Frontinus: Narrabo. Nusquam gentium praeter Urbem nostram est tanta copia aquarum profluentium—atque, medicis crede, nihil est melius ad valetudinem populi. Modo ecce illas mulieres aquam puram abs hoc fonte trahentes. Deciens centena milia hominum cotidie aqua pura Romae uti et frui possunt!

Iulia: Tibi consentio, Frontine. Mirandum est. Sed dic mihi pauca de aquarum beneficiis nostrae urbi, si licet mihi rogare?

Frontinus: Tibi dicam. Sane aquam bibimus et aqua lavamur. Aqua etiam coquimus et vestes lavamus. Atque quod ad valetudinem magis pertinet, aquae abluunt omnia purgamenta urbis. Etiam aqua oratores verbosos et ventosos

villas... he'll say that there is nothing more amazing in the whole world."

Iulia: Agreed. Go on, tell us, please, a few things about the aqueducts.

Frontinus: Will do. Nowhere in the world except for in our city is there such an abundance of flowing water - and, trust the doctors, nothing is better for the health of the people. Just look at those women carrying pure water from this fountain. 1,000,000 people are able to use and enjoy the pure water of Rome!

Iulia: I agree with you, Frontinus. It's amazing. But tell me a few things about the benefits of the waters to our city, if I may ask?

Frontinus: I'll tell you. Of course, we drink water and we are bathed with water. We also cook with water and we wash our clothes. And what pertains more to health, waters wash all the waste of the city. Also, we're able to limit

moderari possumus, nam nobis sunt clepsydrae.

Iulia: Sed nunc, si tibi non incommodum est, paulisper loquere de aquae ductu.

Frontinus: Ita faciam. Loquamur ergo de vita aquarum.

Iulia: “Vitam aquarum”?

Frontinus: Vitam aquarum; id est quod dixi.

Iulia: Ita loqueris quasi aquae sint homines. Quod nomen ergo est his aquis?

Frontinus: Deridesne me?

Iulia: Certe nolo. Age, quaeso, perge.

Frontinus: Pergam. Aquae a fontibus aut

verbose and long-winded orators, for we have water clocks.

Iulia: But now, if it's not inconvenient, tell us a little about the aqueduct?

Frontinus: I'll do it. So, let's speak about the life of the waters.

Iulia: “Life of the waters”?

Frontinus: The life of the waters; that is what I said.

Iulia: You speak thus as if waters were people. Therefore, what is the name of these waters.

Frontinus: Are you making fun of me?

Iulia: I certainly don't want to. Go on, please.

Frontinus: I'll go on. The waters originated from

flumine derivatae sunt et inde Romam ductae sunt ab uno e multis aquaeductibus, in quibus sunt Aqua Appia, Anio Vetus, Anio Novus, Aqua Claudia, et Aqua Marcia.

Iulia: Optime. Perge, quaeso, narrare de "aquarum vita."

Frontinus: Nihil magis velim. Aqua deducta est usque ad urbem, partim sub terra partim super terra. Si subterranea, oportet cuniculos agere per montes; si super terram, oportet aquam deduci ex opere arcuato – licet videre hunc aquaeductum in Hispania ex opere arcuato aut illum aquaeductum quem fecit Marcus Agrippa in Gallia.

Iulia: Mirifice! Certe haec sunt monumenta maximo usui gentibus multis!

Frontinus: Ita vero. Curator Aquarum non solum curat aquae ductum emendandum et reficiendum,

springs or a river and thence were carried to Rome by one of many aqueducts, among which are the Aqua Appia, the Old Anio, the New Anio, the Aqua Claudia, and the Aqua Marcia.

Iulia: Excellent. Please continue telling us about the "life of the waters."

Frontinus: I'd like nothing more. The water was carried all the way to the city, partly underground, partly above ground. If underground, we need to make tunnels through the mountains; if above ground, the water needs to be brought down by arched causeways - you can see this kind of aqueduct made out of arched causeways in Spain or that aqueduct which Marcus Agrippa made in Gaul.

Iulia: Amazing! These are monuments of the greatest usefulness to multitudes of people!

Frontinus: Yes indeed. The Curator of the Waters not only makes sure that the aqueduct be

sed etiam multa alia officia.

Iulia: Qualia officia?

Frontinus: Semper vigilandum est ne sit ulla contaminatio aquarum. Sunt multi ignavi autem qui in puteos aut cisternas coniciant quidquid purgamenti: olla confracta, cibum putridum, canes mortuos, quodlibet!

Iulia: Male factum.

Frontinus: Etiam cavendum est mihi ne homines scelesti ductus aquarum aut canales intercipient ut habeant agris suis aquam gratuito!

Iulia: Gratuito? Pessime! Fortasse hoc faciunt ignorantes?

Frontinus: Fortasse, sed ignorantia legis neminem excusat! Facinus hoc est et illos scelestos in flagrante delicto apprehendam—fidem

repaired and restored, but also many other duties.

Iulia: What sorts of duties.

Frontinus: I always need to be watchful lest there be some contamination of the waters. There are many foolish people who throw garbage into the wells or cisterns: broken pots, rotten food, dead dogs, whatever!

Iulia: Badly done.

Frontinus: I also need to make sure that wicked people don't intercept the aqueducts or canals so that they can have water for their fields for free!

Iulia: For free? Terrible! Maybe they do this in ignorance?

Frontinus: Maybe, but ignorance of the law excuses nobody! It's a crime and I will catch those criminals red-handed - I promise you!

tibi facio!

Iulia: Tibi credo, Frontine. Sed redeamus, quaeso, ad “vitam aquarum.”

Frontinus: Redeamus etiam. Aquae sordidae e latrinis publicis et thermis et domibus privatis collectae sunt in cloacis multis et tandem in Tiberim effudit—maior pars per Cloacam Maximam.

Iulia: Hic finis itineris aquarum est?

Frontinus: Per Cloacam Maximam, in Tiberim Flumen, et usque ad Mare Tuscum. Hic finis est aquarum itineris.

Iulia: At vero, Frontine, hic finis est loquendi nobis. Gratias plurimas tibi ago, vir optime. Cura ut valeas. Totum est, Favoni, rursus ad te!

Iulia: I believe you, Frontinus. But let's return, please, to the "life of the waters."

Frontinus: Yes, let's return. The dirty waters from the public toilets and the baths and the private homes are collected in many sewers and finally flow into the Tiber River - most of it through the Cloaca Maxima [the "Giant Sewer."]

Iulia: Is this the end of the waters' journey?

Frontinus: Through the Cloaca Maxima, into the Tiber River, and all the way to the Sea of Tuscany. This is the end of the waters' journey.

Iulia: And, Frontinus, this is the end of our conversation. Thank you very much, good man. Take care of yourself. That's all, Favonius, back to you!

V. Tempestas Hodierna ET De Ludis

Favonius: Gratias, Iulia. Et nunc ut decet hoc "spectaculum aquale," Aulus Serenus adest in thermis. Itaque, eamus nunc ad thermas!

Serenus: Gratias tibi ago, Favoni. Adsum in thermis, quo populus totus saepe convenit.

Favonius: At vero, Serene, ubi est Scirtus Agitator? Nonne tecum est?

Serenus: Mecum erat, sed nescio ubi nunc sit. Fortasse adhuc in latrina ille est, loquens cum nescioquibus de ludis circensibus et talibus rebus.

Favonius: Fortasse ita est ut dicis. Sed, dum Scirtum exspectamus, dic nobis quid tu iam feceris ibi in thermis.

Serenus: Libenter dicam. Ut mihi mos est, ego per thermas sic progressus sum: in caldarium

V. Today's Weather and Sports

Favonius: Thanks, Julia. And now as befits this "water show," Aulus Serenus is present in the baths. And so, let's go now to the baths!

Serenus: Thank you, Favonius. I'm here in the baths, where everyone frequently gathers.

Favonius: But, Serenus, where is Scirtus Agitator? Isn't he with you?

Serenus: He was with me, but I don't know where he is now. Maybe he is still in the bathroom, speaking with whomever about chariot racing and other such things.

Favonius: Perhaps it's as you say. But, while we're waiting for Scirtus, tell us what you're doing now there in the baths.

Serenus: I'll tell you freely. As is my habit, I made my way through the baths in this way: to

deinde tepidarium deinde frigidarium. Postquam vestem exui in apodyterio, ego primum in caldarium ivi ut lavarem aqua calda, deinde paulisper in tepidario moratus—sermones suaves cum amicis conferens—tandem in frigidarium ivi ut aqua frigida me submergerem. Attat, Scirtum advenientem vidi! Heus, Scirte, veni huc!

Favonius: Optime, Serene. Fortasse nunc eundem est tibi ad palaestram ut de tempestate hodierna narres. Interea autem loquemur paulisper cum Scirto.

Serenus: Fiat. Eo nunc ad palaestram.

Favonius: Heus, Scirte, adesne?

Scirtus: Avete omnes! Scirtus Agitator nominor atque vobis omnibus salutem do ab thermis ipsis.

the hot bath then to the warm bath then to the cold bath. After I took off my clothes in the changing room, I went first into the hot bath to bathe in hot water, then after hanging out for a little bit in the warm bath - having pleasant conversations with my friends - at last I went into the cold bath to dunk myself in the cold water. Hold on, I saw Scirtus coming up. Hey, Scirtus, come here!

Favonius: Excellent, Serenus. Perhaps now you should go to the playing field to tell us about today's weather. But in the meantime, let's talk a little with Scirtus.

Serenus: OK. I'm going to the playing field now.

Favonius: Hey, Scirtus, are you present?

Scirtus: Greetings, everyone! I'm Scirtus Agitator and I'm greeting you all from the baths themselves.

Favonius: Salve, Scirte! Aulus Serenus modo dicebat de more suo apud thermas. Quid ergo te iuvat agere in thermis?

Scirtus: Me iuvat ad thermas ire ut loquar cum amicis. Sermones varii nobis incidunt, in quibus sane sunt ludi circenses aut munera gladiatoria venationesque. Etiam mihi placet alea ludere et corpus exercere in palaestra. Vero, ut aiunt, “lavari, ludere, ridere: hoc est vivere!”

Favonius: Itane dicis? Ecquid est quod tibi non placet in thermis?

Scirtus: Ita vero: strepitus maximus et clamores frequentes. Semper adest quidam homo stultissimus quem iuvat canere quam maxima voce quod sonus optime in thermis resonat. Atque saepius audio homines in aquam magnis clamoribus insilientes aut aliquem hominem miserum identidem clamantem “fur, fur, aliquis vestem mihi surripuit!”

Favonius: Hi, Scirtus! Aulus Serenus was just talking about his way of doing things in the baths. So, what do you like to do in the baths?

Scirtus: I like to go to the baths to talk with my friends. Different ... among which are of course chariot races or gladiator shows and hunts. Also, I like to play dice and work out on the football field. Truly, it's like they say: "bathing, playing, laughing: this is living!"

Favonius: You say so? Is there anything which you don't like in the baths?

Scirtus: Absolutely: The loud noise and frequent shouting. There's always some idiot here who likes to sing with as loud a voice as he can because the sound resonates very well in the baths. And I very frequently hear people jumping into the water with loud shouts or some poor fellow shouting again and again "thief, thief, someone stole my clothes!"

Favonius: Ignosce mihi, Scirte, sed tempus est audire de tempestate hodierna, quam ob rem eundum est ad palaestram ubi Aulus Serenus moretur.

Serenus: Salvete, omnes. Ego nunc in palaestra sum...

Favonius: Quid negoti est, Serene? Cur animo tam demisso es?

Serenus: Nescioquis scelestus homo surripuit soleas mihi inscienti. Ambulatum est ergo per thermas pedibus nudis. Qua de causa, vae mihi, pedes acerrime cruciati sunt pavimento calidissimo (sane ob hypocaustum subterraneum).

Favonius: Pessime, Serene. Me miseret tui.

Serenus: Sed tamen, videamus quaenam sit tempestas hodie. Ut plane vides, sol lucet usque.

Favonius: Forgive me, Scirtus, but it's time to hear about today's weather, for which reason we need to go to the field where Aulus Serenus is waiting.

Serenus: Hello everyone. I am now on the ball field...

Favonius: What's the matter, Serenus? Why are you so depressed?

Serenus: Some thug stole my shoes while I wasn't looking. So, I needed to walk through the baths with bare feet. For which reason, too bad for me, my feet were really hurting on the very hot pavement (of course because of the underfloor heating system).

Favonius: Too bad, Serenus. I'm sorry.

Serenus: But, let's see what the weather is like today. As you clearly see, the sun is still shining.

Ubique est caelum serenum. Utinam plueret paulum in pedes mihi dolentes. Ut videamus quanam sit tempestas alibi in Italia, oportet fingere vobis chartam geographicam totius Italiae adesse hic. In Gallia Cisalpina, apud Mediolanum, pluit paulum. In Etruria, apud Florentiam, caelum partim serenum est. Etiam partim serenum est in Campania, apud Neapolim. In Sicilia, apud Syracusas, tamquam lapides effundit imber et fulmina saepissime micant—ut dignum est quia fulmina Iovis fabricantur a Cyclopiibus sub monte Aetna ipsa. Utinam is qui soleas meas surripuit ictu fulmine percuteretur! Vero, ut clepsydra indicat, finis loquendi faciendus mihi est. Itaque, Aulus Serenus sum atque spero caela sint vobis valde serena!

VI. Valedictio

Favonius: Gratias tibi ago, Serene. Cura ut valeas atque cura ut pedes valeant. Ut repetamus nuntios principales: Sextus Iulius Frontinus hodie

The sky is clear everywhere. I wish it would rain a little on my aching feet. To see what the weather is like elsewhere in Italy, I need to pretend for you that there's a map of all of Italy here. In Gaul on this side of the Alps, near Milan, it's raining a little. In Etruria, near Florence, the sky is partly clear. It's also partly clear in Campania, near Naples. In Sicily, near Syracuse, the rain is falling like stones and bolts of lightning are flashing very frequently - as is fitting since Jove's bolts of lightning are made by the Cyclopes under mount Aetna itself. I wish the man who stole my sandals would be struck by a bolt of lightning! But, as the water-clock indicates, I need to finish talking. And so, I'm Aulus Serenus and I hope that your skies will be very clear!

VI. Farewell

Favonius: Thanks, Serenus. Take care of yourself and take care of your feet. To review the main news: Sextus Julius Frontinus was chosen

Curator Aquarum creatus est. Totum est ad hanc editionem Fori Romani. Gratias summas agimus et vobis feliciter eveniat. Valete omnes!

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today as the Curator of the Waters. That's all for this edition of Forum Romanum. We give you much thanks and may all go well with you.

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