

**ETA SIGMA PHI**  
**45<sup>th</sup> Annual Latin Prose Composition Contest (2011)**

*To be written as an examination, under supervision, within a maximum of three hours. The contestant is permitted to use an English-Latin lexicon (e.g., Cassell's) but no other helps. The only identification on the contest paper should be the contestant's pen name; please write on every other line of the paper provided.*

*The following selection comes from R. Graves' novel, I Claudius. Claudius narrates the last moments of Livia, his grandmother. This passage provides an opportunity for literal as well as free and creative expression in Latin.*

And now I have come to a turning point in my story—the death of my grandmother Livia at the age of eighty-six. She might well have lived many years longer, for she had kept her eyesight and hearing and the use of her limbs—not to mention her mind and memory—unimpaired. But recently she had suffered from repeated colds owing to some infection of the nose, and at last one of these settled on her lungs. She summoned me to her bedside at the Palace. I happened to be in Rome and came immediately. I could see that she was dying. She reminded me of my oath again. “I’ll not rest until it’s fulfilled, grandmother,” I said. When a very old woman lies dying, one’s grandmother too, one says whatever one can to please her. “But I thought Caligula was going to arrange it for you?” She did not answer for a time. Then she said, raging weakly: “He was here ten minutes ago. He stood and laughed at me. He said that I could go to Hell and stew there for ever and ever for all he cared. He said that now I was dying he had no need to keep in with me any longer, and that he did not consider himself bound by the oath, because it was forced on him. He said that he was going to be the Almighty God that has been prophesied, not I. He said ...” “That’s all right, grandmother. You’ll have the laugh of him in the end. When you’re the Queen of Heaven and he’s being slowly broken on an eternal wheel by Minos’s men in Hell ...”