

Translations of readings

The Complete Latin Course

Ch 1 Myth, legend and history

1. I sing of arms and a man.
2. The Trojans founded the city of Rome.
3. They inflame the sky with shouting.
4. She let go the reins sliding helplessly to the ground.
5. Lavinia is your wife.
6. Ascanius was not yet ready for power.
7. He himself (Ascanius) founded another new city beneath the Alban hills.
8. Romulus appoints a hundred senators.
9. The Sabines came with their children and wives.
10. Kings held the city of Rome from the beginning.

Ch 2 The Republic

1. With what presumption do you summon the senators?
2. He shows the murdered Servius to his mistress.
3. Be quiet, Lucretia. I am Sextus Tarquinius; there is a knife in (my) hand.
4. There are traces of another man, Collatinus, in your bed.
5. Tarquinius Superbus ruled for twenty-five years. Then two consuls were appointed.
6. ...and he (Porsenna) pressed the city with a huge blockade.
7. ...if it had not been for one man, Horatius Cocles.
8. Cloelia swam across the Tiber and returned everyone safe to their relatives.
9. The children of the consul stood tied to a stake.
10. Lucius Sextus was the first from the plebeians to be appointed consul.

Ch 3 Carthage

1. The war was the most memorable of all.
2. On the ninth day he came to the summit of the Alps.
3. Hannibal shows Italy to the/his soldiers.
4. There was a stampede of people into the forum amid great panic and din.
5. Hannibal remains in the mountains.
6. So many thousands of Romans were lying (on the ground), infantry and cavalry everywhere.
7. One man recovered the situation for us by delaying.
8. You are now laying the foundations of towering Carthage?
9. But the queen (who can deceive a lover?) had an early sense of his deception.
10. I beg you, if there is still any place for entreaties, change your mind.
11. Stop distressing both me and you with your complaints. It is not my choice I make for Italy.

12. I neither keep you nor challenge what you say. Go, make for Italy with (the help of) the winds, seek the lands across the waves.
13. Dido was wandering in a large wood.
14. She (Dido) fled back showing no friendship.

Ch 4 Greece

1. The Macedonian war took the place of the Carthaginian peace.
2. Pyrrhus, king of the Epirotes, came into Italy so that he might bring help to the people of Tarentum.
3. After the herald's voice had been heard, there was joy.
4. Civilization, literature and even crops were discovered first of all in Greece.
5. Hannibal, a fugitive from his own country, had come to Antiochus.
6. Greece, once captured, herself captivated her wild conqueror and brought the arts to rustic Latium.
7. These days I hear too many people praising and admiring the ornaments of Corinth and Athens.
8. The Roman people never had a great number of writers.
9. They will fashion living faces from marble.
10. ... and to impose (your) way of life on (a foundation of) peace, to spare the conquered and subdue the proud.
11. But there are in that number many good, learned and scrupulous men, and also shameless, uneducated and frivolous ones.
12. He weeps if he has seen the tears of a friend, but he does not grieve... If you say 'I am hot', he sweats.
13. Laocoön ablaze (with passion) runs down from the top of the citadel and from afar (cries): 'O wretched citizens, why such madness? Whatever that is, I fear Greeks even (when) bearing gifts.'

Ch 5 New factions and old families

1. (Tiberius) Gracchus was killed in the Capitol by aristocrats and was thrown unburied into the river among others who had been killed in the same rebellion.
2. Gaius Gracchus was put to flight and killed by the consul Lucius Opimius.
3. And I did not study Greek literature: I wasn't sufficiently interested to learn it.
4. They despise my new status, and I despise their worthlessness.
5. They say I am vulgar with unrefined ways because I deck out a dinner party with too little elegance.
6. ... because I do not have portraits and because high rank is new to me.
7. In the triumph of Marius, Jugurtha was led with two sons before his (Marius') chariot and was killed in prison.
8. The Italian peoples revolted: the Picentes, Vestini, Marsi, Paeligni, Marrucini, Samnites and Lucani.
9. The commander Sulla defeated the Samnites in battle.
10. On the information of his own slave, Sulpicius was dragged back from the villa and killed. The slave, so that he might have the reward promised to an informer, was freed and because of his crime he was thrown down from the (Tarpeian) Rock.

Ch 6 The Republic under strain

1. At first ambition rather than greed exercised the minds of men.

2. At first there grew a love of money, then of power. Greed ruined trust, honesty and other good practices.
3. We can bear neither our vices nor the remedies.
4. At this time we are considering defending Catiline, our fellow candidate. We have the judges we wanted through the utmost goodwill of the prosecutor.
5. All the ordinary people, with their eagerness for political change, approved of Catiline's initiatives.
6. In the meantime he was not quiet, but prepared to ambush Cicero by all means.
7. What times! What moral standards! The senate understands these things, the consul sees them; and yet this man lives. Lives? Why, he even comes into the senate. Here, they are here in our midst, senators.
How many times have you (Catiline) tried to kill me, the consul!
8. I set the Republic free. I saved the life of every citizen by the punishment of five crazed and desperate men.
9. With me at the helm of the Republic, did not weapons of war give way to the toga?
10. Caesar reconciled Marcus Crassus to Pompey; Crassus had been a longstanding enemy since the consulship, which together they had managed in extreme disagreement. And he (Caesar) entered a pact with both men.
11. I expected some congratulation in your letter.

Ch 7 Friends and enemies

1. And now in the place of Cornelia, Caesar took Pompeia (as wife), the daughter of Quintus Pompeius and granddaughter of Sulla.
2. Caesar appealed for Cicero's evidence and made sure that the payments were not made to Curius.
3. Clodius was arrested at Caesar's house dressed as a woman.
4. Caesar, when asked why he had divorced his wife, said 'for the reason that my people ought to be as free from suspicion as from the crime'.
5. Clodius is hostile to us. Pompey reassures (me) that Clodius will do nothing against me. It is dangerous for me to believe (it). I am preparing myself for resistance.
6. Pompey tells us not to worry about Clodius.
7. ... not in the consulship of Caesar and Bibulus but of Julius and Caesar.
8. For a long time now Publius Clodius was striving in vain to make the switch from the patricians to the plebeians (and) Caesar transferred (him).
9. Caesar took as his wife Calpurnia, Piso's daughter, and betrothed his own (daughter) Julia to Gnaeus Pompeius.
10. And so with the support of his son-in-law and father-in-law, he chose Gaul from the entire supply of provinces.
11. Caesar was the first of the Romans to attack the Germans who live across the Rhine: having built a bridge (*lit.* with a bridge having been built) he inflicted very great disasters upon them (*lit.* afflicted them with ...). He also attacked the unknown Britons.
12. If only I may see that day when I may give thanks to you because you have compelled me to live!
13. But still, if we have all the tribunes of the people, if we have Lentulus as supportive as he seems, if indeed we also have Pompey and Caesar, not all hope has gone.

Ch 8 Civil War

1. The whole issue for us in this case, judges, is with Clodia, a woman not only noble but also notorious. About her I shall say nothing except for the purpose of having the charge thrown out.
2. ... with the husband of that woman—I meant to say brother; I always make a mistake here.
3. ... with her whom everyone always thought was the friend of everyone rather than anyone's enemy.
4. What unjust death, indeed, can be committed against a cut-throat and a robber?
5. Clodius was unencumbered, on horseback, with no carriage, with no baggage, with no Greek companions, as was his custom, and without his wife, which was almost never.
6. Caesar stopped briefly and turned to his companions: 'Even now,' he said, 'we can go back; but if we cross the little bridge, everything will have to be resolved by armed conflict.'
7. First and foremost I seek from you that I may see you, that I may be able to benefit from your advice, influence, position and support of all kinds.
8. Nothing is dearer to me than the Republic.
9. What is more becoming for a good man and for a good citizen than to be far from political quarrels?
10. Caesar having crossed into Macedonia put Pompey to flight at the battle of Pharsalus and pursued him as he fled to Alexandria.
11. The victor entrusted the kingdom of Egypt to Cleopatra and to her younger brother.
12. Only you could restrain your raging husband on that side and on this side your father.

Ch 9 The Ides of March

1. Indeed he showed unusual moderation and mercy both in his government and especially at his victory in the civil war.
2. He loved Servilia the mother of Marcus Brutus.
3. And he also loved queens, but especially Cleopatra, whom he allowed to call a son born (to them) by his name.
4. Thus he was stabbed with twenty-three blows, with only one groan at the first thrust, without a word said; although some have recorded that he said to the onrushing Marcus Brutus: 'And you my child?'
5. The conspirators had intended (lit. the intention for the conspirators had been...) to drag the body of the killed man into the Tiber, confiscate his property and cancel his directives. But they decided against it through fear of the consul Mark Antony and of Lepidus the Master of the Horse.
6. The people marched immediately from the funeral towards the homes of Brutus and Cassius with torches. After being driven back with difficulty, they killed Helvius Cinna because of a confusion of his name, and carried his head around impaled on a spear.
7. At the end of the document Caesar even adopted Gaius Octavius into his family and name.
8. My dear Atticus, I fear that the Ides of March have given us nothing but a hurrah.

9. Then Brutus, with many listening, (including) Servilia, Tertulla and Porcia, asked what I recommended.
10. I will remove the business of the corn supply from the decree of the senate.
11. For all that I certainly want to keep the friendship of Antony, and I shall write to him.
12. In my youth I defended the Republic, and now, an old man, I'll not abandon it. I scorned the swords of Catiline: I shall not fear yours.

Ch 10 A woman in politics

1. The boy Caesar is outstanding.
2. Octavius (Octavian) may call Cicero his father, refer everything (to him), and praise and thank (him), nevertheless his words will be opposite to his actions.
3. Antony compelled the centurions to come to him; and before his feet and the feet of his wife, whom the eminent general had brought with him to the army, he had their throats cut.
4. The enemies of Antony were wanting to rob Fulvia of all her property, and were even preparing to kill her children. Atticus supported Antony's people as they made their escape from the city.
5. The people appointed me triumvir for the administration of the Republic.
6. Thus the head (of Cicero) was brought back to Antony and on his order positioned between his two hands on the speaker's platform. Scarcely could men look without tears at the body-parts of the citizen who had been butchered.
7. Caesar (i.e. Octavian) took as his wife Claudia, the stepdaughter of Antony, the daughter of Fulvia by Clodius, a girl barely marriageable. And once animosity had arisen with his mother-in-law Fulvia, he dismissed her untouched and still a virgin.
8. The rest of the prisoners, when they were brought forward in chains, saluted the general Antony with due respect but this man (Octavian) they reviled to his face with the foulest abuse.
9. He (Octavian) held the good will of neither the veterans nor the owners.
10. Caesar took advantage of his courage and good fortune, and captured Perugia. He dismissed Antony unharmed, but there were atrocities inflicted upon the people of Perugia more through the anger of the soldiers than at the wish of the general.
11. On the Ides of March three hundred men were sacrificed in the manner of sacrificial animals at the altar constructed in honour of Divine Julius.
12. Afterwards, the arrival of Antony in Italy and the preparation of Caesar against him held a fear of war; but peace was agreed near Brundisium.
13. Antony took as wife Octavia, the sister of Caesar.

Ch 11 Politics and marriage

1. Immediately he took Livia Drusilla (as wife) away from her marriage to Tiberius Nero, even though she was pregnant, and he loved her and cherished her above all (others) for the rest of his life.
2. I have pacified the sea from pirates. In that war, of the slaves who had fled from their owners and taken arms against the Republic, around 30,000 were captured and these I handed over to their owners for punishment to be exacted.
3. Caesar was victorious in the naval battle at Actium.
4. On this side is Augustus Caesar leading the Italians into war, together with the senators and the people, with the household gods and the great gods.

5. He (Antony) brings with him Egypt and the military strength of the East and remote Bactra, and there follows—an abomination—his Egyptian wife.
6. Nevertheless he (Octavian) allowed all Antony's friends to go to him, and among the others Sosius and Domitius who at that time were still consuls.
7. Cleopatra is the first to take flight. Antony preferred to be the companion of the fleeing queen rather than his own fighting army.
8. Then in the next year, having followed the queen and Antony to Alexandria, he (Octavian) applied the finishing touches to the civil wars.
9. He drove Antony, who was proposing belated terms of peace, to death and he inspected the corpse.
10. He even brought in serpent charmers to Cleopatra, whom he greatly wanted preserved for a triumphal procession, (in the hope that) these people might suck out the poison, because she was thought to have perished at the bite of an asp.
11. Caesarion, whom Cleopatra proclaimed to have conceived by (Julius) Caesar, was dragged back from his (attempted) escape and he (Octavian) had him put to death.
12. She (Cleopatra) demanded as the price of her obscene marriage (i.e. to Antony) the walls of Rome and senators made subject to her own domains.
13. Before this it was wrong to bring forth the Caecuban wine from ancestral cellars, while the queen plotted mad destruction upon the Capitol and death for the empire.
14. She (Cleopatra) dared to gaze on her fallen palace with a calm expression, brave to handle the bitter serpents so that she might drink the last drop of their dismal poison throughout her body, more defiant after resolving to die: to be sure she cheated the savage Liburnians of being led, stripped of her rank, in a proud triumphal procession, no humbled woman she.

Ch 12 The sweetness of peace

1. I transferred the Republic from my power to the authority of the senate and of the Roman people. In return for this service of mine I was named Augustus by decree of the senate.
2. The armed forces of Lepidus and Antony passed into (the hands of) Augustus, who under the title of 'princeps' took charge of all things that had been exhausted by the civil wars. He won over everyone with the sweetness of peace.
3. In the twentieth year the civil wars came to an end, peace was recovered, potency was restored to the laws, authority to the courts, and dignity to the senate. Cultivation returned to the fields, and respect for sacred rites, and safety for the people.
4. I banished into exile those men who murdered my parent.
5. I did not accept the dictatorship, (which was) offered to me by both the people and by the senate.
6. I re-introduced many precedents of our ancestors and I myself passed to posterity examples of many things for imitation.
7. He restored sacred shrines (which had) collapsed with age or been damaged by fire; and these and the other (temples) he decorated with the most lavish gifts.
8. The city which was liable to flooding and fires he (Augustus) improved to such an extent that with justification he boasted he was leaving the city in marble which he had inherited in brick.
9. Not even his friends deny that he (Augustus) practised adultery.
10. He (Augustus) investigated the plans of opponents through each one's wife.
11. He himself administered justice constantly, sometimes into the night.

12. He decimated the troops if any had given way from their position, and fed them with barley.
13. A decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be put on record.
14. Augustus, because Thallus had received five hundred denarii in return for a disclosed letter, broke his legs.
15. I forced the Parthians to return to me the arms and standards of three Roman armies and to seek as supplicants the friendship of the Roman people.
16. Quintilus Varus, give back the legions!
17. I added Egypt to the empire of the Roman people.
18. Embassies of kings were often sent to me from India.
19. Augustus had control over the Republic at first with Antony and Lepidus, then for nearly twelve years just with Antony, and lastly by himself for forty-four years.
20. ... while Augustus was healthy in years and maintained himself, his house and the peace.
21. Sooner will the human race fade away from the world than will Cicero.

Ch 13 Dissenting voices

1. The naughty sodomites are well suited, Mamurra and lustful Caesar.
2. On the same day Catullus apologized Caesar invited him for dinner.
3. ... he should be praised, honoured, raised up/thrown out.
4. Augustus will be considered a god here and now, once the Britons and threatening Persians have been added to the empire.
5. And in her torn cloak walks gleeful Discord, whom Bellona follows with a bloodstained whip.
6. Although two indiscretions ruined me, a poem and a blunder, the offence of one of the two actions I am obliged not to mention.
7. When she rises, you will rise; for as long as she sits, you will sit; waste time at the bidding of your mistress.
8. So, since I can be a part of your sacred triumph, conqueror, refrain from wasting your powers on me! Consider the successful campaigns of your kinsman, Caesar: he protects the conquered with the hand with which he conquered them.
9. Already the day loomed on which Caesar had ordered me to leave the limits of furthest Italy.
10. Mark Antony related that his (Octavian's) adoption had been won on account of his uncle's lust.
11. The successes or misfortunes of the ancient Roman people were/ have been related by distinguished writers.
12. The deeds of Tiberius, of Gaius, of Claudius and of Nero were falsely recorded, because of fear while they were in their prime and after they had died with the ill-feelings that followed. Because of that it is my intention to record a few things about Augustus, and afterwards the reign of Tiberius and the rest, without anger and favour, the motives of which I do not have.
13. The first crime of the new reign was the murder of Postumus Agrippa.
14. Germanicus, you ordered the narrow streets to widen, and what recently had been a narrow track has become a road. The barber, barman, cook and butcher keep to their own thresholds. Now Rome is Rome. Not long ago it was a supermarket.
15. He (the robber) stands opposite and orders a halt. Obedience is the only option; for what do you do when a madman confronts you—and at the same time he is stronger? 'Where do you come from? Either say or take a kicking.'

Ch 14 Songs and suppers

1. Longstanding and weary clients depart from porches and drop their desires, although hope of a dinner stays with a man for a very long time; now the wretches must buy their cabbage and firewood.
2. When after being summoned does the server of warm and cold water turn up? To be sure he thinks it demeaning to obey an old client and (is resentful) because you ask for something and because you recline while he stands.
3. But soft white (bread) made with soft white flour is kept for the boss.
4. What is still more serious, Paulus, is that your doorkeeper says to me worn out after a thousand toils that you are not at home.
5. No one attends you yourself, but for something from you. Once friendship was sought, now it's your cash; if lonely old men change their wills, the caller will be off to another threshold.
6. This morning I accidentally greeted you by your real name, Caecilianus, and did not say 'Sir'. Do you want to know how much such licence is costing me? That has taken from me a hundred coins.
7. Your age, Caesar, both brought back rich crops to the fields and restored to our temple of Jupiter the standards torn down from the insolent doorposts of the Parthians.
8. I shall fear neither insurrection nor death by violence while Caesar is in charge of the world.
9. I sing of arms and a man, who first from the lands of Troy by fate a fugitive came to Italy and the Lavinian shores.
10. At that moment as he (Tarquitus) was pleading in vain and preparing to say much, he (Aeneas) severs his head on to the ground, and rolling the warm trunk forwards says these words from above with a hateful heart: 'Now lie there, you fearsome fellow.'
11. This is the man whom you quite often hear being promised to you, this is Augustus Caesar, offspring of a god, who will create a golden age again in Latium throughout the plains once ruled by Saturn.
12. There at that point, with these words said, Anchises accompanies his son and the Sibyl together, and sends them out through the the gate of ivory. Aeneas cuts a path to his ships and rejoins his comrades.
13. Alas, pitiable boy, if in any way you may break the harsh fates, you will be Marcellus.
14. There is not any force able to restrain Evander, but he comes into the middle of the throng. The bier is put down and he sinks over Pallas. He clings to him, weeping and groaning.

Ch 15 Tales of love

1. Who but either a soldier or lover will endure the chills of the night and the snow mixed with heavy rain?
2. The god hid the broad earth with darkness spread over it, and snaffled her escape and raped her.
3. By chance the lad had become separated from his faithful band of comrades and had said: 'Who is here?' and 'Is here' had replied Echo.

4. He admires all the things for which he himself to be admired: without realizing, he desires himself and the one who cherishes is the very one cherished, and while he seeks he is sought—equally he kindles the fire and burns with it.
5. For why make a pretence? Or for what greater things do I keep myself? Has he groaned at my tears? Has he turned his gaze (towards me)?
6. Come my Lesbia, let's live, let's love, and not give tuppence for all the chatter of excessively strict old men.
7. He seems to me to be equal to a god, that fellow there; he surpasses the gods, if I may say it.
8. My girl says that she prefers to marry no one other than me, not even if Jupiter himself should ask her.
9. Caelius, our Lesbia, that Lesbia, that Lesbia, the one woman Catullus loved more than himself and all his people, nowadays picks off descendants of highminded Remus at crossroads and in alleys.
10. Why do I not send you my books, Pontilianus? In case, Pontilianus, you send me yours.
11. Then by the same token they may as well accuse Catullus, because he used the name Lesbia instead of Clodia.
12. It was early, and I desired to see if she was sleeping alone: and indeed there was Cynthia alone in bed. I was taken aback: she never seemed more beautiful to me, not even when she was in her purple outfit.
13. Here I see enslavement and mistress ready for me. Now, as for me, farewell that liberty of my fathers.
14. What will you do to an enemy, you who shut out a lover in this way? The time of night is passing; remove the bar from the doorpost!
15. 'Did you suppose, Etruscan, you were hunting wild beasts in the woods?'
16. Acca, dear friend, thus far I have been in control. Now this bitter wound is the end of me. All around grows dark with shadows.

Ch 16 Women: warriors, drunks and literary critics

1. Is there any mistress you can put up with, when so many ropes are in tact, when dizzily high windows lie open, when the Aemilian Bridge offers itself in your neighbourhood?
2. Here at night they put down their litters, here they piss and fill the statue of the goddess with jets of spray, and take it in turns to ride her, and cavort, no man there, and then they go away to their homes. Once the daylight is back you walk in the piss of your wife on your way to see important friends.
3. Yet more troublesome is that woman who once she has begun to recline at table gushes over Virgil and finds excuses for doomed Dido. The teachers duck, the professors are seen off, and not one of the lot of them can get a word in.
4. Because Antonius (Antony) fucked Glaphyra, Fulvia has decided on this punishment for me, that I should fuck her too. Me, fuck Fulvia? What if Manius were to beg me to sodomize him? Would I do it? I think not – if I've any sense. 'Fuck me, or let's fight' she says. You forget my prick is dearer to me than life itself. Let the trumpets sound (for battle)!
5. Father: How many times have I pointed out to you that you should humour your husband, not observe what he does, where he goes or what he gets up to.
Daughter: But I tell you he is away making love to the whore next-door.
Father: Clearly he has good sense, and I'll warrant he will love her even more because of that interference of yours.

Daughter: And he drinks there.

Father: Will he drink any less on your account? Since he keeps you in gold and fine clothes and furnishes you properly with maids and provisions, it is better, woman, to keep a balanced view.

6. Yet I want to hear the reason why women have got themselves all worked up and have charged out into the open, barely keeping themselves from the forum and from the assembly. Once they start to be our equals, in no time they'll be our superiors.

7. Do you want to impose this competition on your wives, Romans, that rich women want to have what no other can (have); and that poor women, so as not to be despised for this very reason, are stretched beyond their means?

8. You will not allow the mother of your household to have a purple cloak, and your horse will be decked out more showily than your wife will be dressed.

9. Learn what (kind of) attention improves the face, girls. And in what way your beauty is to be preserved. Yet it is nothing to be ashamed of: you should make it your business to please, seeing as our age has well-groomed men.

Ch 17 Family ties

1. Do you want to see the Tarquinian kings, the proud spirit of avenging Brutus, and the *fascēs* which he accepted? This man will first receive the power of consul and the harsh axes, and on behalf of the glorious Republic as father will summon his sons plotting rebellion to (face) the (death-)penalty.

2. Veturia, the mother of Coriolanus, and Volumnia, carrying two small sons, were going into the camp of the enemy. When they reached the camp and it was brought to Coriolanus' attention that a large crowd of women was present, he was at first much more stubborn against their female tears. Then one of his attendants happened to recognize Veturia in the midst of the other women: 'Unless my eyes deceive me,' he said, 'your mother, wife and children are here.'

3. Why does your personal grief disturb you so? Look at what has been taken from us – things which ought to be no less dear to people than their children – the state, our honour, prestige and all public offices. But for sure it is bad to lose children. Bad, yes; except suffering and enduring these (losses) is worse.

4. I am afflicted by grief, yet I do not grieve beyond measure; thus it seems sad to me that their fruitfulness has taken away most honourable girls in their first flowering.

5. He had spoken, and they bathed their faces with streaming tears, as much he who was giving the instructions as she to whom the instructions were being given.

6. Nero was adopted by Claudius in the eleventh year of his life.

7. The poison pervaded all his limbs in such a way that his voice and breath were taken at the same time. After a brief silence, the jollity of dinner was resumed. Most people were inclined to forgive the crime, putting it down to long-standing feuds of the brothers and a kingdom that could not be shared.

8. 'What use is it to yield so much to frantic grief, sweet husband? These things do not happen without the will of the gods; it is not right for you to take Creusa from here as your companion, nor does that ruler of Olympus on high allow it.'

9. The mother revives the ash and sleeping embers, adding the night to her duties, and puts the maids to work by lamplight with the time-consuming wool, so that she can keep the bed of her husband chaste and bring up her small sons.

10. In his early youth Agricola would have drunk too deeply from philosophy's cup – beyond what was acceptable for a Roman and a senator – had not the good sense of his mother restrained his inflamed and burning spirit.

11. His mother directed him away from philosophy, warning that it was counter-productive for one about to be emperor.

Ch 18 Slavery

1. You say that the hare has not been cooked and you call for the whip. Rufus, you prefer to cut up the cook than the hare.

2. 'Set up the cross for the slave.'

'On what charge has the slave deserved punishment? Who is present as witness? Who accused him? Hear him. No delay is ever long when it comes to the death of a human being.'

'So, you idiot, is a slave a human being? He has done nothing? So be it. This I want and thus I command. My whim may serve as procedure.'

And so she bosses her husband.

3. In this animal the Roman knight Vedius Pollio found ways of demonstrating his cruelty, plunging condemned slaves into pools of them (lampreys).

4. It is more profitable to cultivate difficult terrain with hired hands than with slaves.

5. In fact the worst part of a bad slave is his tongue.

6. Libanus: Oh yes, you'll carry me today if indeed you hope to take this silver.

Argyrippus: *I will carry you?*

Libanus: See any other way you'll take this money?

Argyrippus: By god I'm done for. If it is right indeed and proper for a master to give a ride to a slave, get aboard.

Libanus: Here's how those toffs are tamed.

7. For sure, decide against punishment. But then what defence will a man's rank afford him, when it failed the city prefect? Whom will a handful of slaves protect, when four hundred have not protected Pedanius Secundus?

8. Then Caesar rebuked the people by edict, and he lined with military guards the whole route along which the condemned were led to (face their) punishment.

9. Any slave whatsoever who goes out of doors without his owner's bidding will get a hundred lashes.

10. Our reader Sositheus, a pleasant boy, had died, and it had moved me more than the death of a slave seemed due.

11. Nothing arouses and stimulates affection as much as the fear of loss.

12. At that time freedmen first began to perform military service

13. 'Why,' he said, 'do you think I am a pack-animal or a ship that transports stone? I have contracted the duties of a man, not of a horse. I am no less a free man than yourselves, even if my father did leave me a pauper.' And not content with his abuse he then lifted one foot higher (than the other) and simultaneously filled the road with an obscene noise and smell.

14. 'I serve the same to everyone; for I am inviting them for dinner, not for their status branding.'

— 'Even freedmen?'

'Even they; for at that time I consider them table-companions, not freedmen.'

— 'It must cost you a lot,' he said.

'Not at all.'

— 'How can it be?'

'Because, of course, my freedmen do not drink the same as I do, but I drink the same as the freedmen.'

Ch 19 Education

1. And indeed nowadays once a baby is born it is entrusted to some little Greek maid, and one or another of all the slaves is recruited to assist her, very often (someone) entirely worthless and unsuited to any serious task. Immediately, tender and impressionable minds are tainted by the fanciful stories and misconceptions of these people; and no one in the entire household cares a jot what he either says or does in the presence of the little master.
2. Mouse is a syllable. Now a mouse nibbles cheese; a syllable, therefore, nibbles cheese. There is concern that, if I am too careless, a book may gobble up the cheese.
3. I kissed the most worthy boy, not because of his looks, but because of his virtue; he can do division, he reads a book at sight.
4. Let another be taught whom he may envy; from time to time let there be competition, and not infrequently let him think himself successful; he should also be encouraged with rewards, which that age-group welcomes.
5. Recently, when I was in my hometown, the young son of my fellow-citizen came to greet me. 'Are you studying?' I say to this lad, and he replied 'Yes.'
'Where?'
'Mediolanum.'
'Why not here?' And his father (for he was also there with him and had himself brought the boy) said: 'Because we have no teachers here.'
6. We neighbours do not ask for sleep all night long: for to be awake is neither here nor there, but to lie awake the whole night is no joke. Dismiss your students. Are you willing, you chatterbox, to receive as much as you are paid to make this din—to shut up?
7. But you (parents) impose your harsh conditions: that the standards of correct speech be met by the teacher, that he read the histories, that he know all the authors like the back of his hand.
8. 'You should attend to these matters,' he says, 'And when the year has turned its circle, accept the (same) gold which the people demand for their champion.'
9. Are you composing something (in the style of) Sophocles? Make sure that the work appears.
10. She has my books, reads them repeatedly, and even learns them by heart.
11. He did not want to send me to Flavus' school, where great boys born from great centurions went, but dared to take his son to Rome.
12. Moreover, I have begun to declaim Greek with Cassius; but my Latin training I wish to have with Bruttius.
13. I seek from you that a clerk may be sent to me as quickly as possible, preferably indeed a Greek; for it will relieve me of much of the tedium in writing out notes.

Ch 20 Life at work

1. In those days senators were in the fields.
2. That was considered sufficient for the transport of produce from their estates. All business seemed unbecoming to the senators.
3. But why do we have an aedile worth three figs, who prefers a coin for himself to (looking after) our lives. And so he sits delighted at home, and gets more cash in a day than the next man has (as) an inheritance. Now I know from where he has bagged a thousand gold pieces. But if we had any balls, he would not be so smug.
4. Now if an enterprise is small it should be considered demeaning; but if large and expansive, it is not to be disparaged. Of all things, however, from which a living is

made, nothing is better than agriculture, nothing more fruitful, nothing sweeter, nothing more worthy of a free man.

5. 'Raising livestock well.'
'What second?'
'Raising livestock well enough.'
'What third?'
'Raising livestock badly.'
'And fourth?'
'Arable farming.'

And when his questioner had asked 'What of money-lending?' then Cato replied 'What about killing a man?'

6. For neither old men nor boys easily endure the difficulty of footpaths and the steepness and unevenness of mountains.
7. Teacher, professor, surveyor, painter, masseur, soothsayer, tight-rope artist, doctor, sorcerer – the hungry Greek chappie is a proper know-all.
8. As the praetor was complaining, he had Hylas, the pantomime artist, beaten with whips in the atrium of his own home, with everyone watching.
9. (Greek doctors) have conspired to murder all foreigners with their treatment. They also call us foreigners! I have forbidden you to have anything to do with them.
10. I was feeling off-colour: but in no time you made a visit to me, Symmachus, with a hundred students in tow. A hundred hands chilled by the north wind fingered me: I did not have a fever, Symmachus. I do now.

Ch 21 Life at leisure

1. Now if I do not practise law myself, I have nonetheless learned literature for use at home. And lest you think me disdainful of studies, I have two libraries, one Greek, the other Latin.
2. I mean to say, what pleasure do six hundred mules bring in *Clytaemnestra*?
3. I am putting on the *Mother-in-law* again for you, which I was never allowed to perform to silence: thus did misfortune overwhelm it.
4. A foul shower soaks his face, and streams of blood spurt from the torn veins of his mutilated head.
5. What pleasure can there be for a person of refinement when a feeble man is torn to pieces by a very powerful beast or a magnificent animal skewered with a spear?
6. Indeed nothing is so damaging to good behaviour as sitting idly at some show.
7. Because he has committed murder, he has deserved to suffer this; but what have *you* done, poor man, to deserve to watch it? 'Kill! Whip! Burn! Why does he run on to the blade so timidly? Why doesn't he kill more boldly? Why doesn't he die more willingly?' The show has an interval: 'In the meantime let people have their throats cut, so that at least *something* is happening.'
8. Titus has a female chariot-fighter and the steward of Glyco, who was caught pleasuring his mistress. Glyco, the cheapskate, has given his steward to the beasts. What did the slave do wrong, who was forced to do it? But a man who cannot beat his donkey, beats the saddle.
9. What good has that man done for us? He produced gladiators worth tuppence, already decrepit, who, had you blown on them, would have collapsed; I have seen better animal-fighters before now.
10. He did not pick up a ball again once it had touched the ground, but a slave provided another for those playing.

11. I am surprised that so many thousands of men in such a childish fashion want again and again to see galloping horses and men standing on chariots. If however they were attracted either by the speed of the horses or by the skill of the men, there would be some justification. As it is they support a rag, they love a rag, and if on the track itself and in the middle of the race this colour is swapped with that one or that one with this, their enthusiasm and support will switch, and they will suddenly abandon those drivers and horses whose names they are yelling.
12. These days I most gladly devote my free time to literature, which time others waste in the most idle pursuits. Farewell.
13. You invite no one, Cotta, unless you take a wash with them; and only the baths provide you with a dinner guest. I used to wonder why you had never invited me, Cotta: now I know that naked I displeased you.

Ch 22 *Fugit irreparabile tempus*

1. But time is escaping meanwhile, irretrievable time is escaping.
2. Happy is he who, like the ancient race of mortals, is far from (the world of) business and works his father's land with his oxen, free from all mortgage payments; it pleases him to lie down, now under an old oak tree, now on the clinging grass.
3. The first age was brought forth golden, which without any enforcer, of its own free will, without a law, cultivated trust and uprightness. Punishment and fear were absent.
4. Decency and truth and trust fled. In their place crept deceit, trickery and treachery, and violence, and the pernicious desire for gain.
5. A guest was not safe from his host, nor father-in-law from his son-in-law, and affection too among brothers was rare. A husband longed for the death of his wife, she of her husband; dreadful stepmothers mixed ghastly poisons, and a son inquired into the years of his father before due time: piety was flattened.
6. The fates and the good gods have given nothing greater or better to the world than this man, and nor will they give it, even if the times were to return to their former gold(en state).
7. Filthy money first brought in foreign ways, and soft riches corrupted the times with shameful extravagance.
8. I'll be quick to make plain which race is now most popular with our well-to-do—those I avoid especially—and shame will not stop me. Fellow Romans, I cannot put up with the Greek City. And yet how small the proportion of these dregs are proper Greeks? For a long time now the Syrian Orontes has flowed into the Tiber and brought with it its language and ways, and oriental harps with the piper, and also their native drums, and girls bidden to stand for sale at the circus.
9. For a while the deadly superstition was checked, but then broke out again, not only in Judaea, the source of this evil, but also in Rome where from every corner all things sleaze-ridden or shameful ooze together and come into vogue.
10. 'I have done no harm to the Jews, as you well know. For if I have caused harm, or have done anything deserving the death penalty, I do not refuse to die. But indeed if there is nothing in those things which these men accuse me of, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar.' Then Festus, having spoken with his council, replied: 'You have appealed to Caesar? To Caesar you will go.'

Ch 23 On the edge of the world

1. It is a fact that all Britons stain themselves with woad, which produces a sky-blue colour, and with this appearance are more frightening in battle; their hair is grown long and they shave all parts of their body except their head and upper lip. They share their wives with each other, in groups of ten or twelve, especially brothers with brothers and parents with offspring; but those who are born from these groups are considered to be the children of those to whose home each girl was first taken.
2. On that island there is neither any scrap of silver nor any prospect of profit except from slaves.
3. The sky is murky with constant rain and mists; the harshness of cold is absent.
4. I had horses, men, arms, wealth: why is it surprising if I was unwilling to lose these things? Just because you want to rule over everyone does it follow that everyone should welcome their slavery?
5. The Druids uttered terrible prayers with their hands raised to the sky and by the novelty of their appearance struck (fear into) the soldiers.
6. Prasutagus, king of the Iceni, well-known for his longstanding wealth, had named Caesar as an heir along with his two daughters, thinking that by such compliance his kingdom and home would be safe from harm.
7. First his wife Boudicca was beaten and his daughters raped; and each and every chieftain of the Iceni was stripped of his ancestral property, as if the Romans had received the entire region as a gift, and the kinsmen of the king were treated like slaves.
8. Under a woman's leadership (for they do not discriminate between the sexes in matters of authority) they all took up arms.
9. Boudicca, carrying her daughters before her in the chariot, declared that it was indeed customary for Britons to go to war under the leadership of women; in that battle (she said) it was a matter of victory or death; that was the outcome for a woman: the men might live and be slaves (if they so wished).
10. Every time I consider our pressing circumstances and the reasons for war, strong is my feeling that this day and your shared desire will be the beginning of liberty for all Britain.
11. The (our) remote position itself and the protection of our reputation has to this day defended us (living) on the edge of the world and of liberty.
12. Where they (the Romans) make a desert they call it peace.
13. If there is a place for the spirits of the just, and if, as wise men think, great souls do not perish with the body, may you rest peacefully.
14. Those who recently rejected the Roman language wanted to be fluent. There was a gradual decline to the allurements of vices, to colonnades, baths and the sophistication of dinner-parties. That was called civilization by the foolish, when (although) it was a part of their enslavement.

Ch 24 Gods and spirits

1. 'Dido is on fire with love, and has taken the madness through her bones. So let us guide this people as one under the same auspices. Let her serve a Phrygian husband and entrust her Tyrians to you as a dowry.'
2. Thus Venus proceeded in reply: 'Who would be foolish to reject such things or choose to compete with you in war?'
3. 'You are his wife and it is right for you to sound out his view by asking. Proceed; I shall follow.' Then Queen Juno replied as follows: 'Leave that task with me'.

4. She finished speaking, and slipping her snow-white arms this way and that she wraps the hesitating man in a soft embrace. Then suddenly he felt the familiar spark.
5. Immediately the Lemnian god opened the ivory doors and let in the gods: there those (two) lay in their shaming bondage – and one of the gods, who were much tickled, wished he could be so ashamed. The gods burst out laughing, and for a long time this story was best known in all heaven.
6. While Proserpina was playing in the grove and picking either violets or white lilies, and while with girlish eagerness she was filling her baskets and her bosom and striving to outdo her companions in picking (the flowers), virtually in the same moment was seen, desired and snatched by Dis.
7. He (Jupiter) alone rules the divine and mortal throngs with impartial authority.
8. The huntsman stays under a cold Jupiter (sky), forgetful of his tender wife.
9. There is a hallway at the first opening of the entrance to Hades. Here have Grief and vengeful Worries placed their beds; here live Diseases that make you pale, and gloomy Old Age, and Fear and evil-counselling Hunger and disgraceful Need, shapes terrible to see, and Death and Toil.
10. Straightway Rumour sets off through the great cities of Libya, Rumour, than whom there is not any other swifter evil.
11. He (Numa Pompilius) appointed a priest devoted to Jupiter and provided him with a special robe and royal curule chair. In addition to him Numa added two priests, one for Mars, the other for Quirinus (Romulus), and he selected the virgins for Vesta.
12. The descent to Avernus is easy. Night and day the door of gloomy Dis lies open; but to retrace your step and escape to the air above, this is the task, this the struggle.
13. And with a groan his life (soul) flees resentfully to the shades below.
14. For if that last day brings not extinction but a change of abode, what is more desirable? But if it brings the end, completely and utterly, what is better than to fall asleep in the middle of life's toils?
15. For sure thus does fear grip all mortals, namely that they see many things happening on earth and in the sky, the causes of which events they are unable to account for with any rational explanation; so they imagine them to be the work of gods.
16. 'Oh dear!' he said. 'I think I am becoming a god.'

Ch 25 Rough justice

1. Fortuna (Fortune) is cheerful in her cruel work and, fixed on amusing herself with her high-handed teasing, switches her fickle favours, now kind to me, now to another.
2. Fortuna (Fortune) does not listen to us wretches or care for our tears. And implacable she actually laughs at our groans which she has caused.
3. We will endure losses, distress, humiliations, overseas postings, bereavements and divorces – things which do not overwhelm a wise man, even if they all were to come together.
4. Fortuna (Fortune), we make you a goddess and place you in heaven.
5. For those seeking a lot, a lot is lacking.
6. You should not inquire – it's not right to know – what end the gods have given to me or to you, Leuconoë, nor should you be trying Babylonian numbers. How much better to take whatever comes, whether Jupiter has granted more winters or this is the last, which now wears out the Etruscan sea on opposing rocks. Be wise, decant the

wine and trim your long-term ambition to a brief span. Even as we speak, the unkind hour has slipped away: enjoy the moment, and trust as little as possible in tomorrow.

7. In folly we aspire to the sky itself and through our wickedness do not allow Jove to lay aside his wrathful bolts.

8. This is the place of shadows, of sleep and sleep-bringing night: it is against divine law to carry living bodies in the boat of the Styx.

9. A tower of iron rises into the air, and Tisiphone sits there her bloody robe tucked up and wide-awake she guards the doorway both night and day. From here groans were heard and cruel whippings resounded, and then the clanking of iron and dragged chains.

10. From all sides they surround him and with their muzzles sunk in his flesh they tear apart the master in the shape of a deer—which he is not—and it is said that the anger of quiver-carrying Diana was only appeased when his life was ended with many many wounds.

11. He struggles to tear open the knots with his hands, his ribbons spattered with gore and black poison, and in the same moment he raises horrendous cries to the stars: just like the bellowing of a wounded bull when it has fled the altar and shaken off the ill-aimed axe from its neck.

12. O spring of Bandusia, brighter than crystal, deserving sweet wine and flowers, tomorrow you will be presented with a young kid, whose forehead, swollen with first (signs of) horns, foretells mating and jousts. In vain: this offspring of the playful herd is to colour your cool streams with its red blood.

Ch 26 Christianity

1. So to get rid of the rumour, Nero created scapegoats, and with very far-fetched punishments afflicted those whom, hated for their crimes, people called Christians. Christ, the founder of that name, had been put to death by order of Pontius Pilate, the procurator, when Tiberius was emperor.

2. ‘Master, we know that you speak and teach rightly: is it permitted for us to give tribute to Caesar or not?’ But cautious of their trick he said to them: ‘Why do you test me? Show me a denarius: whose likeness and inscription does it have?’

Answering, they said: ‘Caesar’s.’ And he said to them: ‘So return to Caesar what is Caesar’s: and what is God’s to God.’ And they, in the presence of the people, were unable to find fault with his argument: and amazed at his response, they fell silent.

3. Each man posts one doorkeeper for his home, and because he is a human being he is quite sufficient: but those people (i.e. pagans) have placed three gods there, Forculus for the gate, Cardea for the hinge and Limentinus for the threshold. So it was that Forculus could not guard the hinge and the threshold at the same time.

4. And again I say to you: it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

5. And so Maria, when she had come to where Jesus was, seeing him, fell at his feet and said to him, ‘Master, if you had been here, my brother would not be dead.’ Then Jesus, when he saw her weeping and the Jews weeping who had come with her, groaned deeply within his spirit and became upset, and said ‘Where have you placed him?’. They say to him ‘Master, come and see.’ And Jesus wept. Then the Jews said: ‘See how he loved him’.

6. As for those brought before me on the charge of being Christians, I followed this procedure: I asked them in person whether they were Christians. Those who (freely) admitted I asked a second and third time, and threatened them with the death-penalty.

If they persisted I had them taken away and executed. For I was in no doubt that certainly their stubbornness and inflexible obstinacy should be punished.

7. I believed it necessary to extract what was the truth from two maidservants who were called deaconesses—and that through torture. But I found nothing other than a depraved and excessive superstition.

8. They are not to be sought out; but if they were to be charged and convicted, they are to be punished.

9. ‘Surely then God cannot do evil?’

—‘Indeed not,’ I say.

‘Then,’ she says, ‘evil is nothing, since he cannot do it, and there is nothing he cannot do.’

—‘Are you teasing me,’ I say, ‘weaving an inextricable labyrinth with arguments?’

10. These people should be brought to trial not by angry accusers but rather by kindly and pitying ones, as the sick are taken to the doctor.

11. Therefore just as goodness itself is the reward for good people, so wickedness itself is punishment for the wicked.

12. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are not three gods but one.

13. When interrogated as to where I stood I replied that I was a Christian, and he who sat in judgement said ‘You are lying, you are a Ciceronian not a Christian; where your treasure is, there also is your soul.’

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