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MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

*De Amicitia* • On Friendship

*Translated by Andrew P Peabody [1887]*

## THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE DIALOGUE

**LAELIUS** Caius Laelius Sapiens, the son of Caius Laelius, who was the life-long friend of Scipio Africanus the Elder, was born B.C. 186, a little earlier in the same year with his friend Africanus the Younger. He was not undistinguished as a military commander, as was proved by his successful campaign against Viriathus, the Lusitanian chieftain, who had long held the Roman armies at bay, and had repeatedly gained signal advantages over them. He was known in the State, at first as leaning, though moderately and guardedly, to the popular side, but after the disturbances created by the Gracchi, as a strong conservative. He was a learned and accomplished man, was an elegant writer – though while the Latin tongue retained no little of its archaic rudeness – and was possessed of some reputation as an orator. Though bearing his part in public affairs, holding at intervals the offices of Tribune, Praetor, and Consul, and in his latter years attending with exemplary fidelity to such duties as belonged to him as a member of the college of Augurs, he yet loved retirement, and cultivated, so far as he was able, studious and contemplative habits. He was noted for his wise economy of time. To an idle man who said to him, ‘I have sixty years’ [*Sexaginta annos habeo*] (that is, I am sixty years old), he replied, ‘Do you mean the sixty years which you have not?’ His private life was worthy of all praise for the virtues that enriched and adorned it; and its memory was so fresh after the lapse of more than two centuries, that Seneca, who well knew the better way which he had not always strength to tread, advises his young friend Lucilius to ‘live with Laelius;’ [*Vire cum Laelio*] that is, to take his life as a model. The friendship of Laelius and the younger Scipio Africanus well deserves the commemoration which it has in this dialogue of Cicero. It began in their boyhood, and continued without interruption till Scipio’s death. Laelius served in Africa, mainly that he might not be separated from his friend. To each other’s home was as his own. They were of one mind as to public men and measures, and in all probability the more pliant nature of Laelius yielded in great measure to the stern and uncompromising adherence of Scipio to the cause of the aristocracy. While they were united in grave pursuits and weighty interests, we have the most charming pictures of their rural and seaside life together, even of their gathering shells on the shore, and of fireside frolics in which they forgot the cares of the republic, ceased to be stately old Romans, and played like children in vacation-time.

**FANNIUS** Caius Fannius Strabo in early life served with high reputation in Africa, under the younger Africanus, and afterward in Spain, in the war with Viriathus. Like his father-in-law, he was versed in the philosophy of the Stoic school, under the tuition of Panaetius. He was an orator, as were almost all the Romans who

aimed at distinction; but we have no reason to suppose that he in this respect rose above mediocrity. He wrote a history, of which Cicero speaks well, and which Sallust commends for its accuracy; but it is entirely lost, and we have no direct information even as to the ground which it covered. It seems probable, however, that it was a history either of the third of the Punic wars, or of all of them; for Plutarch quotes from him – probably from his *History* – the statement that he, Fannius, and Tiberius Gracchus were the first to mount the walls of Carthage when the city was taken.

**SCAEVOLA** Quintus Mucius Scaevola filled successively most of the important offices of the State, and was for many years, and until death, a member of the college of Augurs. He was eminent for his legal learning, and to a late and infirm old age was still consulted in questions of law, never refusing to receive clients at any moment after daylight. But while he was regarded as foremost among the jurists of his time, he professed himself less thoroughly versed in the laws relating to mortgages than two of his coevals, to whom he was wont to send those who brought cases of this class for his opinion or advice. He was remarkable for early rising, constant industry, and undeviating punctuality – at the meetings of the Senate being always the first on the ground. No man held a higher reputation than Scaevola for rigid and scrupulous integrity. It is related of him that when as a witness in court he had given testimony full, clear, strong, and of the most damnatory character against the person on trial, he protested against the conviction of the defendant on his testimony, if not corroborated, on the principle, held sacred in the Jewish law, that it would be a dangerous precedent to suffer the issue of any case to depend on the intelligence and veracity of a single witness. When, after Marius had been driven from the city, Sulla asked the Senate to declare him by their vote a public enemy, Scaevola stood in a minority of one; and when Sulla urged him to give his vote in the affirmative, his reply was: ‘Although you show me the military guard with which you have surrounded the Senate-house, although you threaten me with death, you will never induce me, for the little blood still in an old man’s veins, to pronounce Marius – who has been the preserver of the city and of Italy – an enemy.’ His daughter married Lucius Licinius Crassus, who had such reverence for his father-in-law, that, when a candidate for the consulship, he could not persuade himself in the presence of Scaevola to cringe to the people, or to adopt any of the usual humiliating methods of canvassing for the popular vote.

# DE AMICITIA MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

1 In the earliest time a boy put on the *toga virilis* when he had completed his sixteenth year, in Cicero's time pupilage ceased a year earlier and by Justinian's code the period at which it legally ceased was the commencement of the fifteenth year. The Scaevola to whom Cicero was thus taken was Quintus Mucius (Scaevola) the Augur, already named.

2 It was customary for youth in training for honorable positions in the State to attach themselves especially to men of established character and reputation, to attend them to public places, and to remain near them whenever anything was to be learned from their conversation, their legal opinions, their public harangues, or their pleas before the courts. Distinguished citizens deemed themselves honored by a retinue of such attendants. Cicero, in the *De Officiis*, says that a young man may best commend himself to the early esteem and confidence of the community by such an intimacy.

3 As Cicero says, the most eloquent of jurists, and the most learned jurist among the eloquent. He was at the same time pre-eminent for moral purity and integrity. It was he, who, as Cicero (*De Officiis*, iii. 15) relates,

insisted on paying for an estate that he bought at a much larger sum than was asked for it, because its price had been fixed far below its actual value.

4 Latin, *hemicyclo*, perhaps, a semi-circular seat.

5 The quarrel arose from the zealous espousal of the Marian faction by Sulpicius, who resorted to arms, in order to effect the incorporation of the new citizens from without the city among the previously existing tribes. Hence a series of tumults and conflicts, in one of which a son of Pompeius lost his life.

1. *Q. Mucius augur multa narrare de C. Laelio socero suo memoriter et iucunde solebat nec dubitare illum in omni sermone appellare sapientem; ego autem a patre ita eram deductus ad Scaevolam sumpta virili toga, ut, quo ad possem et liceret, a senis latere numquam discederem; itaque multa ab eo prudenter disputata, multa etiam breviter et commode dicta memoriae mandabam fierique studebam eius prudentia doctior. Quo mortuo me ad pontificem Scaevolam contuli, quem unum nostrae civitatis et ingenio et iustitia praestantissimum audeo dicere. Sed de hoc alias; nunc redeo ad augurem.*

2. *Cum saepe multa, tum memini domi in hemicyclo sedentem, ut solebat, cum et ego essem una et pauci admodum familiares, in eum sermonem illum incidere, qui tunc forte multis erat in ore. Meministi enim profecto, Attice, et eo magis, quod P. Sulpicio utebare multum, cum is tribunus pl.[plebis] capitali odio a Q. Pompeio, qui tum erat consul, dissideret, quocum coniunctissime et amantissime vixerat, quanta esset hominum vel admiratio vel querela.*

3. *Itaque tum Scaevola cum in eam ipsam mentionem incidisset, exposuit nobis sermonem Laeli de amicitia habitum ab illo secum et cum altero genero, C. Fannio M. f. [Marci filio], paucis diebus post mortem Africani. Eius disputationis sententias memoriae mandavi, quas hoc libro exposui arbitrato meo; quasi enim ipsos induxi loquentes, ne 'inquam' et 'inquit' saepius interponeretur, atque ut tamquam a praesentibus coram haberi sermo videretur.*

# FRIENDSHIP TITUS POMPONIUS ATTICUS

1 **Q**UINTUS MUTIUS THE AVGVR  
USED TO REPEAT FROM MEMORY AND IN  
THE MOST PLEASANT WAY MANY OF THE  
SAYINGS OF HIS FATHER-IN-LAW CAIUS  
LAELIUS NEVER HESITATING TO APPLY TO  
HIM IN ALL THAT HE SAID HIS SURNAME

of The Wise. When I first put on the robe of manhood<sup>1</sup> my father took me to Scaevola and so commended me to his kind offices, that thenceforward, so far as was possible and fitting I kept my place at the old man's side.<sup>2</sup> I thus laid up in my memory many of his elaborate discussions of important subjects, as well as many of his utterances that had both brevity and point, and my endeavor was to grow more learned by his wisdom. After his death I stood in a similar relation to the high-priest Scaevola,<sup>3</sup> whom I venture to call the foremost man of our city both in ability and in uprightness. But of him I will speak elsewhere. I return to the Augur.

2 While I recall many similar occasions, I remember in particular that at a certain time when I and a few of his more intimate associates were sitting with him in the semicircular apartment<sup>4</sup> in his house where he was wont to receive his friends, the conversation turned on a subject about which almost every one was then talking, and which you, Atticus, certainly recollect, as you were much in the society of Publius Sulpicius; namely, the intense hatred with which Sulpicius, when Tribune of the people, opposed Quintus Pompeius, then Consul,<sup>5</sup> with whom he had lived in the closest and most loving union – a subject of general surprise and regret.

3 Having incidentally mentioned this affair, Scaevola proceeded to give us the substance of a conversation on friendship, which Laelius had with him and his other son-in-law, Caius Fannius, the son of Marcus, a few days after the death of Africanus. I committed to memory the sentiments expressed in that discussion, and I bring them out in the book which I now send you. I have put them into the form of a dialogue, to avoid the too frequent repetition of 'said I' and 'says he,' and that the discussion may seem as if it were held in the hearing of those who read it.

1. Cicero introduces the dialogue

4. *Cum enim saepe mecum ageres, ut de amicitia scriberem aliquid, digna mihi res cum omnium cognitione, tum nostra familiaritate visa est. Itaque feci non invitus, ut prodessem multis rogatu tuo. Sed ut in Catone Maiore, qui est scriptus ad te de senectute, Catonem induxi senem disputantem, quia nulla videbatur aptior persona, quae de illa aetate loqueretur, quam eius, qui et diutissime senex fuisset et in ipsa senecture praeter ceteros floruisset, sic, cum accepissemus a patribus maxime memorabilem C. Laeli et P. Scipionis familiaritatem fuisse, idonea mihi Laeli persona visa est, quae de amicitia ea ipsa disserteret, quae disputata ab eo meminisset Scaevola. Genus autem hoc sermonum positum in hominum veterum auctoritate, et eorum inlustrum, plus nescio quo pacto videtur habere gravitatis; itaque ipse mea legens sic adficio interdum, ut Catonem, non me loqui existimem.*

5. *Sed ut tum ad senem senex de senectute, sic hoc libro ad amicum amicissimus scripsi de amicitia. Tum est Cato locutus, quo erat nemo fere senior temporibus illis, nemo prudentior; nunc Laelius et sapiens (sic enim est habitus) et amicitiae gloria excellens de amicitia loquetur. Tu velim a me animum parumper avertas, Laelium loqui ipsum putes. C. Fannius et Q. Mucius ad socerum veniunt post mortem Africani; ab his sermo oritur, respondet Laelius, cuius tota disputatio est de amicitia, quam legens te ipse cognosces.*

11. 6. FANNIUS. *Sunt ista, Laeli; nec enim melior vir fuit Africano quisquam nec clarior. Sed existimare debes omnium oculos in te esse coniectos unum; te sapientem et appellant et existimant. Tribuebatur hoc modo M. Catoni, scimus L. Acilium apud patres nostros appellatum esse sapientem, sed uterque alio quodam modo, Acilius, quia prudens esse in iure civili putabatur, Cato, quia multarum rerum usum habebat; multa eius et in senatu et in foro vel privsa prudenter vel acta constanter vel responsa acute ferebantur; propterea quasi cognomen iam habebat in senectute sapientis.*

7. *Te autem alio quodam modo non solum natura et moribus, verum etiam studio et doctrina esse sapientem, nec sicut vulgus, sed ut eruditi solent appellare sapientem, qualem*

1 In the Latin we have here two remarkable series of assonances, rhythmical to the ear, and though translatable in sense not so in euphony. 'Ut tum senex ad senem de senectute, sic hoc libro ad amicum amicissimus, de amicitia scripsi.'

2 The reference is to what Laelius is supposed to have said already. The dialogue, as given here, is made to commence in the midst of a conversation.

3 The first Roman known to have borne the surname of Sapiens. He was one of the earliest of the juriconsults who took pupils.

4 While you, indeed, have often urged me to write something about friendship, the subject seems to me one of universal interest, and at the same time specially appropriate to our intimacy. I have therefore been very ready to seek the profit of many by complying with your request. But as in the *Cato Major*, the work on Old Age inscribed to you, I introduced the old man Cato as leading the discussion, because there seemed to be no other person better fitted to talk about old age than one who had been an aged man so long, and in his age had been so exceptionally vigorous, so, as we had heard from our fathers of the peculiarly memorable intimacy of Caius Laelius and Publius Scipio, it appeared appropriate to put into the mouth of Laelius what Scaevola remembered as having been said by him when friendship was the subject in hand. Moreover, this method of treatment, resting on the authority of men of an earlier generation, and illustrious in their time, seems somehow to be of specially commanding influence on the reader's mind. Thus, as I read my own book on Old Age, I am sometimes so affected that I feel as if not I, but Cato, were talking.

5 But as I then wrote as an old man to an old man about old age, so in this book I write as the most loving of friends to a friend about friendship.<sup>1</sup> Then Cato was the chief speaker, than whom there was in his time scarcely any one older, and no one his superior in intellect, now Laelius shall hold the first place, both as a wise man (for so he was regarded), and as excelling in all that can do honor to friendship. I want you for the while to turn your mind away from me, and to imagine that it is Laelius who is speaking. Caius Fannius and Quintus Mucius come to their father-in-law after the death of Africanus. They commence the conversation, Laelius answers them. In reading all that he says about friendship, you will recognize the picture of your own friendship for me.

6 FANNIUS: It is as you say,<sup>2</sup> Laelius, for there never was a better man, or one more justly renowned, than Africanus, But you ought to bear it in mind that the eyes of all are turned upon you at this time, for they both call you and think you wise. This distinction has been latterly given to Cato, and you know that in the days of our fathers Lucius Atilius<sup>3</sup> was in like manner surnamed The Wise, but both of them were so called for other reasons than those which have given you this name – Atilius, for his reputation as an adept in municipal law, Cato, for the versatility of his endowments for there were reported to his honor many measures wisely planned and vigorously carried through in the Senate, and many cases skillfully defended in the courts, so that in his old age The Wise was generally applied to him as a surname.

7 But you are regarded as wise on somewhat different grounds, not only for your disposition and your moral worth, but also for your knowledge and learning, and not in the estimation of the common people, but in that of men of advanced culture, you

11. *The Dialogue begins: Reputation of Laelius for wisdom. The curiosity to know how he bore the death of Scipio.*

*in reliqua Graecia neminem (nam qui septem appellantur, eos, qui ista subtilius quaerunt, in numero sapientium non habent), Athenis unum accepimus, et eum quidem etiam Apollinis oraculo sapientissimum iudicatum; hanc esse in te sapientiam existumant, ut omnia tua in te posita esse ducas humanosque casus virtute inferiores putes. Itaque ex me quaerunt, credo ex hoc item Scaevola, quonam pacto mortem Africani feras, eoque magis, quod proximis Nonis cum in hortos D. Bruti auguris commentandi causa, ut adsolet, venissemus, tu non adfuisti, qui diligentissime semper illum diem et illud munus solitus esses obire.*

8. SCAEVOLA. *Quaerunt quidem, C. Laeli, multi, ut est a Fannio dictum, sed ego id respondeo, quod animum adverti, te dolorem, quem acceperis cum summi viri, tum amicissimi morte, ferre moderate nec potuisse non commoveri nec fuisse id humanitatis tuae; quod autem Nonis in conlegio nostro non adfuisses, valetudinem respondeo causam, non maestitiam fuisse.*

LAELIUS. *Recte tu quidem, Scaevola, et vere; nec enim ab isto officio, quod semper usurpavi, cum valerem, abduci incommodo meo debui, nec ullo casu arbitror hoc constanti homini posse contingere, ut ulla intermissio fiat officii.*

9. *Tu autem, Fanni, quod mihi tantum tribui dicis, quantum ego nec adgnosco nec postulo, facis amice; sed, ut mihi videris, non recte iudicas de Catone; aut enim nemo, quod quidem magis credo, aut, si quisquam, ille sapiens fuit. Quo modo, ut alia omittam, mortem filli tulit! memineram Paulum, videram Galum, sed hi in pueris Cato in perfecto et spectato viro.*

10. *Quam ob rem cave Catoni anteponas ne istum quidem ipsum, quem Apollo, ut ais, sapientissimum iudicavit; huius enim facta, illius dicta laudantur. De me autem, ut iam cum utroque loquar, sic habetote:*

III. *Ego si Scipionis desiderio me moveri negem, quam id recte faciam, viderint sapientes; sed certe mentiar. Moveor enim tali amico orbatus, qualis, ut arbitror, nemo umquam erit, ut confirmare possum, nemo certe fuit; sed non*

are deemed wise in a sense in which there is reason to suppose that in Greece – where those who look into these things most discriminatingly do not reckon the seven who bear the name as on the list of wise men – no one was so regarded except the man in Athens whom the oracle of Apollo designated as the wisest of men.<sup>1</sup> In fine, you are thought to be wise in this sense, that you regard all that appertains to your happiness as within your own soul, and consider the calamities to which man is liable as of no consequence in comparison with virtue. I am therefore asked, and so, I believe, is Scaevola, who is now with us, how you bear the death of Africanus; and the question is put to us the more eagerly, because on the fifth day of the month next following,<sup>2</sup> when we met, as usual, in the garden of Decimus Brutus the Augur, to discuss our official business, you were absent, though it was your habit always on that day to give your most careful attendance to the duties of your office.

8 SCAEVOLA: As Fannius says, Caius Laelius, many have asked me this question. But I answered in accordance with what I have seen, that you were bearing with due moderation your sorrow for the death of this your most intimate friend, though you, with your kindly nature, could not fail to be moved by it; but that your absence from the monthly meeting of the Augurs was due to illness, not to grief.

9 LAELIUS: You were in the right, Scaevola, and spoke the truth; for it was not fitting, had I been in good health, for me to be detained by my own sad feeling from this duty, which I have never failed to discharge; nor do I think that a man of firm mind can be so affected by any calamity as to neglect his duty.

10 It is, indeed, friendly in you, Fannius, to tell me that better things are said of me than I feel worthy of or desire to have said; but it seems to me that you underrate Cato. For either there never was a wise man (and so I am inclined to think), or if there has been such a man, Cato deserves the name. To omit other things, how nobly did he bear his son's death! I remembered Paulus,<sup>3</sup> I had seen Gallus,<sup>4</sup> in their bereavements. But they lost boys; Cato, a man in his prime and respected by all.<sup>5</sup>

Beware how you place in higher esteem than Cato even the man whom Apollo, as you say, pronounced superlatively wise; for it is the deeds of Cato, the sayings of Socrates, that are held in honor. Thus far in reply to Fannius. As regards myself, I will now answer both of you.

Were I to deny that I feel the loss of Scipio, while I leave it to those who profess themselves wise in such matters to say whether I ought to feel it, I certainly should be uttering a falsehood. I do indeed feel my bereavement of such a friend as I do not expect ever to have again, and as I am sure I never had beside. But I need

III. *Laelius grounds of consolation in his bereavement*

1 Socrates

2 Latin, *proximis nonis*. The nones, the ninth day before the ides, fell on the fifth of the month, except in March, May, July, and October, when the ides were two days later. We have elsewhere intimation that the Augurs held a meeting for business on the nones of each month.

3 Paulus Aemilius, who lost two sons, one a few days before, the other shortly after, the triumph decreed to him for the conquest of the Macedonian King Perseus.

4 Gaius Sulpicius Gallus, mentioned as an astronomer by Cicero, *De Officiis*, i. 6, and *De Senectute*, 14.

5 The younger Cato had won fame as a soldier and distinguished eminence as a jurist. At the time of his death he was praetor elect.

- 1 He left the army in Africa BC 147 for home to offer himself as a candidate for the aedileship, for which he had just reached the legal age of thirty seven; but such accounts of his ability efficiency, and courage had preceded him and followed him from the army, that he was chosen Consul, virtually by popular acclamation.
- 2 The war in Spain had been continued for several years, with frequent disaster and disgrace to the Roman army, when Scipio, BC 134, was chosen Consul with a special view to this war, which he closed by the capture and destruction of Numantia, in connection with which, it must he confessed, his record is rather that of a relentless and sanguinary enemy than of a generous and placable antagonist.
- 3 He was the son of Paulus Aemilius, and the adopted son of Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus. His mother, divorced for no assignable reason, was left very poor, and her son, on the death of the widow of his adopting father, gave her the entire patrimony that came into his possession.
- 4 After his mother's death, law and custom authorized him to resume what he had given her, but he bestowed it on his sisters, thus affording them the means of living comfortably and respectably.
- 5 The *De Senectute*
- 6 He retired to his bed, apparently in perfect health, and was found dead in the morning – as was rumored, with marks of violence on his neck. His wife was Sempronia, the sister of the Gracchi whose agrarian schemes he had vehemently opposed. She was suspected of having at least given admission to the assassin, and even her mother, the Cornelia who has been regarded as unparalleled among Roman women for the virtues appertaining to a wife and mother, did not escape the charge of complicity. Her son Caius was also among those suspected, but the more probable opinion is that Papirius Carbo was alone answerable for the crime. Carbo had been Scipio's most bitter enemy and had endeavoured to inflame the people against him as their enemy.
- 7 Scipio had at that session of the senate proposed a measure in the utmost degree offensive to Caius Gracchus and his party. The law of Tiberius Gracchus would have disposed, at the hands of the commissioners appointed under it, of large tracts of land belonging to the Italian allies. Scipio's plan provided

that such lands should be taken out of the jurisdiction of the commissioners, and that matters relating to them should be adjudged by a different board to be specially appointed – a measure which would have been a virtual abrogation of the agrarian law. On this account he had his honorable escort home, and on this account, in all probability, he was murdered.

- 8 The reference here is of course to the Epicureans. This school of philosophy had grown very rapidly, and numbered many disciples when this essay was written; but in the time of Laelius it had but recently invaded Rome, and Amfanius, who must have been his contemporary, was the earliest Roman writer who expounded its doctrine
- 9 This is sound reasoning as these rites were annually renewed and consisted in great part of the invocation of ancestors – a custom which could not have originated if those ancestors were supposed to be utterly dead. This passage may remind the reader of the answer of Jesus Christ to the Sadducees, who denied that the Pentateuch contained any intimation of immortality. He quotes the passage in which God is represented as saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,' and adds, 'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living,' implying that ancestors whom the writer of that record supposed to be dead could not have been thus mentioned.

- 10 'Magna Graecia' - the name given to the cluster of Greek colonies that were scattered thick along the shore of Southern Italy. At Croton in Magna Graecia Pythagoras established his school and the colonies were the chief seat and seminary of his philosophy which taught the immortality of the soul.

*egeo medicina, me ipse consolor, et maxime illo solacio, quod eo errore careo, quo amicorum decessu plerique angi solent. Nihil mali accidisse Scipioni puto, mihi accidit, si quid accidit; suis autem incommodis graviter angi non amicum sed se ipsum amanti est.*

11. *Cum illo vero quis neget actum esse praeclare? Nisi enim, quod ille minime putabat, immortalitatem optare vellet, quid non adeptus est, quod homini fas esset optare? qui summam spem civium, quam de eo iam puero habuerant, continuo adulescens incredibili virtute superavit, qui consulatum petivit numquam, factus consul est bis, primum ante tempus, iterum sibi suo tempore, rei publicae paene sero, qui duabus urbibus eversis inimicissimis huic imperio non modo praesentia, verum etiam futura bella delevit. Quid dicam de moribus facillimis, de pietate in matrem, liberalitate in sorores, bonitate in suos, iustitia in omnes? nota sunt vobis. Quam autem civitati carus fuerit, maerore funeris indicatum est. Quid igitur hunc paucorum annorum accessio iuvare potuisset? Senectus enim quamvis non sit gravis, ut memini Catonem anno ante, quam est mortuus, mecum et cum Scipione disserere, tamen aufert eam viriditatem, in qua etiam nunc erat Scipio.*

12. *Quam ob rem vita quidem talis fuit vel fortuna vel gloria, ut nihil posset accedere, moriendi autem sensum celeritas abstulit; quo de genere mortis difficile dictu est, quid homines suspicentur, videtis; hoc vere tamen licet dicere, P. Scipioni ex multis diebus, quos in vita celeberrimos laetissimosque viderit, illum diem clarissimum fuisse, quom senatu dimisso domum reductus ad vesperum est a patribus conscriptis, populo Romano, sociis et Latinis, pridie quam excessit e vita, ut ex tam alto dignitatis gradu ad superos videatur deos potius quam ad inferos pervenisse.*

IV. 13. *Neque enim adsentior iis, qui haec nuper disserere coeperunt, cum corporibus simul animos interire atque omnia morte deleri; plus apud me antiquorum auctoritas valet, vel nostrorum maiorum, qui mortuis tam religiosa iura tribuerunt, quod non fecissent profecto, si nihil ad eos pertinere arbitrentur, vel eorum, qui in hac terra fuerunt magnamque Graeciam, quae nunc quidem deleta est, tum florebat, institutis et praeceptis suis erudierunt, vel eius, qui Apollinis oraculo sapientissimus est iudicatus, qui non tum hoc, tum illud, ut in plerisque, sed idem semper, animos hominum*

no comfort from without, I console myself, and, chief of all, I find comfort in my freedom from the apprehension that oppresses most men when their friends die, for I do not think that any evil has befallen Scipio. If evil has befallen, it is to me. But to be severely afflicted by one's own misfortunes is the token of self-love, not of friendship.

As for him, indeed who can deny that the issue has been to his pre-eminent glory? Unless he had wished – what never entered into his mind – an endless life on earth what was there within human desire that did not accrue to the man who in his very earliest youth by his incredible ability and prowess surpassed the highest expectations that all had formed of his boyhood, who never sought the consulship, yet was made consul twice, the first time before the legal age,<sup>1</sup> the second time in due season as to himself, but almost too late for his country,<sup>2</sup> who by the overthrow of two cities implacably hostile to the Roman empire put a period, not only to the wars that were but to wars that else must have been? What shall I say of the singular affability of his manners, of his filial piety to his mother,<sup>3</sup> of his generosity to his sisters,<sup>4</sup> of his integrity in his relations with all men? How dear he was to the community was shown by the grief at his funeral. What benefit, then, could he have derived from a few more years? For, although old age be not burdensome – as I remember that Cato, the year before he died, maintained in a conversation with me and Scipio,<sup>5</sup> – it yet impairs the fresh vigor which Scipio had not begun to lose.

Thus his life was such that nothing either in fortune or in fame could be added to it, while the suddenness of his death must have taken away the pain of dying. Of the mode of his death it is hard to speak with certainty, you are aware what suspicions are abroad.<sup>6</sup> But this may be said with truth that of the many days of surpassing fame and happiness which Publius Scipio saw in his lifetime, the most glorious was the day before his death when on the adjournment of the Senate he was escorted home by the Conscript Fathers, the Roman people, the men of Latium and the allies,<sup>7</sup> – so that from so high a grade of honor he seems to have passed on into the assembly of the gods rather than to have gone down into the underworld.

For I am far from agreeing with those who have of late promulgated the opinion that the soul perishes with the body and that death blots out the whole being.<sup>8</sup> I on the other hand attach superior value to the authority of the ancients whether that of our ancestors who established religious rites for the dead which they certainly would not have done if they had thought the dead wholly unconcerned in such observances<sup>9</sup> or that of the former Greek colonists in this country who by their schools and teaching made Southern Italy<sup>10</sup> – now in its decline, then flourishing – a seat of learning, or that of him whom the oracle of Apollo pronounced the wisest of men who said not one thing today, another to-morrow, as many do, but the same thing always, maintaining that the souls

iv. He expresses his faith in immortality. Desires perpetual memory of the friendship between himself and Scipio

*esse divinos, iisque, cum ex corpore excessissent, reditum in caelum patere, optimoque et iustissimo cuique expeditissimum.*

14. *Quod idem Scipioni videbatur, qui quidem, quasi praesagiret, perpaucis ante mortem diebus, cum et Philus et Manlius adesset et alii plures, tuque etiam, Scaevola, mecum venisses, triduum disseruit de re publica; cuius disputationis fuit extremum fere de immortalitate animorum, quae se in quiete per visum ex Africano audisse dicebat. Id si ita est, ut optumi cuiusque animus in morte facillime evolet tamquam e custodia vinculisque corporis, cui censemur cursum ad deos faciliorem fuisse quam Scipioni? Quocirca maerere hoc eius eventu vereor ne invidi magis quam amici sit. Sin autem illa veriora, ut idem interitus sit animorum et corporum nec ullus sensus maneat, ut nihil boni est in morte, sic certe nihil mali; sensu enim amisso fit idem, quasi natus non esset omnino, quem tamen esse natum et nos gaudemus et haec civitas, dum erit, laetabitur.*

15. *Quam ob rem cum illo quidem, ut supra dixi, actum optime est, mecum incommodius, quem fuerat aequius, ut prius introieram, sic prius exire de vita. Sed tamen recordatione nostrae amicitiae sic fruor, ut beate vixisse videar, quia cum Scipione vixerim, quocum mihi coniuncta cura de publica re et de privata fuit, quocum et domus fuit et militia communis et, id in quo est omnis vis amicitiae, voluntatum, studiorum, sententiarum summa consensio. Itaque non tam ista me sapientiae, quam modo Fannius commemoravit, fama delectat, falsa praesertim, quam quod amicitiae nostrae memoriam spero sempiternam fore, idque eo mihi magis est cordi, quod ex omnibus saeculis vix tria aut quattuor nominantur paria amicorum; quo in genere sperare videor Scipionis et Laeli amicitiam notam posteritati fore.*

16. FANNIUS. *Istuc quidem, Laeli, ita necesse est. Sed quoniam amicitiae mentionem fecisti et sumus otiosi, pergratum mihi feceris, spero item Scaevolae, si, quem ad modum soles de ceteris rebus, quom ex te quaeruntur, sic de amicitia disputaris quid sentias, qualem existumes, quae praecepta des.*

SCAEVOLA. *Mihi vero erit gratum; atque id ipsum cum tecum agere conarer, Fannius antevortit. Quam ob rem utrique nostrum gratum admodum feceris.*

<sup>1</sup> The *De Republica* consists of dialogues on three successive days in Scipio's garden, and Scipio is the chief speaker. The work was supposed to be irrecoverably lost, with the exception of this *Dream of Scipio* and a few fragments, but considerable portions of it were discovered in a palimpsest in 1822. *The Dream of Scipio* will be found in the latter part of this volume.

<sup>2</sup> Laelius went with Scipio on the campaign which resulted in the destruction of Carthage.

<sup>3</sup> Those referred to probably Theseus and Peirithous, Achilles and Patroclus, Orestes and Pylades, Damon and Phintius – all but the last, perhaps the last also, mythical.

of men are divine, and that when they go out from the body, the return to heaven is open to them, and direct and easy in proportion to their integrity and excellence.

This was also the opinion of Scipio, who seemed prescient of the event so near, when, a very short time before his death, he discoursed for three successive days about the republic in the presence of Philus, Manilius, and several others – you, Scaevola, having gone with me to the conferences – and near the close of the discussion he told us what he said that he had heard from Africanus in a vision during sleep.<sup>1</sup> If it is true that the soul of every man of surpassing excellence takes flight, as it were, from the custody and bondage of the body, to whom can we imagine the way to the gods more easy than to Scipio? I therefore fear to mourn for this his departure, lest in such grief there be more of envy than of friendship. But if truth incline to the opinion that soul and body have the same end, and that there is no remaining consciousness, then, as there is nothing good in death, there certainly is nothing of evil. For if consciousness be lost, the case is the same with Scipio as if he had never been born, though that he was born I have so ample reason to rejoice, and this city will be glad so long as it shall stand

Thus in either event, with him, as I have said, all has issued well, though with great discomfort for me, who more fittingly, as I entered into life before him ought to have left it before him. But I so enjoy the memory of our friendship, that I seem to have owed the happiness of my life to my having lived with Scipio, with whom I was united in the care of public interests and of private affairs, who was my companion at home and served by my side in the army<sup>2</sup> and with whom – and therein lies the special virtue of friendship – I was in perfect harmony of purpose, taste, and sentiment. Thus I am now not so much delighted by the reputation for wisdom of which Fannius has just spoken, especially as I do not deserve it, as by the hope that our friendship will live in eternal remembrance, and this I have the more at heart because from all ages scarce three or four pairs of friends are on record,<sup>3</sup> on which list I cannot but hope that the friendship of Scipio and Laelius will be known to posterity.

FANNIUS: It cannot fail, Laelius, to be as you desire. But since you have made mention of friendship, and we are at leisure, you will confer on me a very great favor, and, I trust, on Scaevola too, if, as you are wont to do on other subjects when your opinion is asked, you will discourse to us on friendship, and tell us what you think about it, in what estimation you hold it, and what rules you would give for it.

SCAEVOLA: This will indeed be very gratifying to me, and had not Fannius anticipated me, I was about to make the same request. You thus will bestow a great kindness on both of us.

v. 17. LAELIUS. *Ego vero non gravarer, si mihi ipse confiderem; nam et praeclara res est et sumus, ut dixit Fannius, otiosi. Sed quis ego sum aut quae est in me facultas? Doctorum est ista consuetudo, eaque Graecorum, ut iis ponatur, de quo disputent quamvis subito; magnum opus est egetque exercitatione non parva. Quam ob rem, quae disputari de amicitia possunt, ab eis censeo petatis, qui ista profitentur; ego vos hortari tantum possum, ut amicitiam omnibus rebus humanis anteponas; nihil est enim tam naturae aptum, tam conveniens ad res vel secundas vel adversas.*

18. *Sed hoc primum sentio, nisi in bonis amicitiam esse non posse; neque id ad vivum reseco, ut illi, qui haec subtilius disserunt, fortasse vere, sed ad communem utilitatem parum; negant enim quemquam esse virum bonum nisi sapientem. Sit ita sane; sed eam sapientiam interpretantur, quam adhuc mortalis nemo est consecutus, nos autem ea, quae sunt in usu vitaeque communi, non ea, quae finguntur aut optantur, spectare debemus. Numquam ego dicam C. Fabricium, M. Curium, Ti. Coruncanium, quos sapientes nostri maiores iudicabant, ad istorum normam fuisse sapientes. Quare sibi habeant sapientiae nomen et invidiosum et obscurum, concedant, ut viri boni fuerint. Ne id quidem facient, negabunt id nisi sapienti posse concedi.*

19. *Agamus igitur pingui, ut aiunt, Minerva. Qui ita se gerunt, ita vivunt, ut eorum probetur fides, integritas, aequitas, liberalitas, nec sit in eis ulla cupiditas, libido, audacia, sintque magna constantia, ut ii fuerunt, modo quos nominavi, hos viros bonos, ut habiti sunt, sic etiam appellandos putemus, quia sequantur, quantum homines possunt, naturam optimam bene vivendi ducem. Sic enim mihi perspicere videor, ita natos esse nos, ut inter omnes esset societas quaedam, maior autem, ut quisque proxime accederet. Itaque cives potiores quam peregrini, propinqui quam alieni; cum his enim amicitiam natura ipsa peperit; sed ea non satis habet firmitatis. Namque hoc praestat amicitia propinquitati, quod ex propinquitate benevolentia tolli potest, ex amicitia non potest; sublata enim benevolentia amicitiae nomen tollitur, propinquitatis manet.*

20. *Quanta autem vis amicitiae sit, ex hoc intellegi maxime potest, quod ex infinita societate generis humani, quam conciliavit ipsa natura, ita contracta res est et adducta in angustum, ut omnis caritas aut inter duos aut inter paucos iungeretur.*

1 This was the boast and pride of the Greek sophists.

2 Latin. *Neque ut ad ilium reseco*, literally, nor in this matter do I cut to the quick.

3 The Stoics of the more rigid type, who maintained that the wise man alone is good, but denied that the truly wise man had yet made his appearance on the earth.

4 Latin *agamus igitur piagui* (ut aiunt) *Minerva*, that is with a less refined, a grosser wisdom more nearly conformed to the sound, if somewhat crass, common-sense of the majority.

17

LAELIUS: I certainly would not hesitate, if I had confidence in my own powers; for the subject is one of the highest importance, and, as Fannius says, we are at leisure. It is the custom of philosophers, especially among the Greeks, to have subjects assigned to them, which they discuss even without premeditation.<sup>1</sup> This is a great accomplishment, and requires no small amount of exercise. I therefore think that you ought to seek the treatment of friendship by those who profess this art. I can only advise you to prefer friendship to all things else within human attainment, inasmuch as nothing beside is so well fitted to nature – so well adapted to our needs whether in prosperous or in adverse circumstances.

18 But I consider this as a first principle – that friendship can exist only between good men. In thus saying, I would not be so rigid in definition<sup>2</sup> as those who establish specially subtle distinctions,<sup>3</sup> with literal truth it may be, but with little benefit to the common mind; for they will not admit that any man who is not wise is a good man. This may indeed be true. But they understand by wisdom a state which no mortal has yet attained; while we ought to look at those qualities which are to be found in actual exercise and in common life, not at those which exist only in fancy or in aspiration. Caius Fabricius, Manius Curius, Tiberius Coruncianus, wise as they were in the judgment of our fathers, I will consent not to call wise by the standard of these philosophers. Let them keep for themselves the name of wisdom, which is invidious and of doubtful meaning, if they will only admit that these may have been good men. But they will not grant even this; they insist on denying the name of good to any but the wise.

19 I therefore adopt the standard of common sense.<sup>4</sup> Those who integrity, equity, and kindness win approval, who are entirely free from avarice, lust and the infirmities of a hasty temper, and in whom there is perfect consistency of character, in fine men like those whom I have named while they are regarded as good, ought to be so called, because to the utmost of human capacity they follow Nature who is the best guide in living well. Indeed, it seems to me thoroughly evident that there should be a certain measure of fellowship among all, but more intimate the nearer we approach one another. Thus this feeling has more power between fellow-citizens than toward foreigners, between kindred than between those of different families. Toward our kindred, Nature herself produces a certain kind of friendship. But this lacks strength, and indeed friendship in its full sense, has precedence of kinship in this particular, that good-will may be taken away from kinship, not from friendship, for when good will is removed, friendship loses its name, while that of kinship remains.

20 How great is the force of friendship we may best understand from this – that out of the boundless society of the human race which Nature has constituted, the sense of fellowship is so contracted and narrowed that the whole power of loving is bestowed on the union of two or a very few friends.

v. True friendship can exist only among good men.

VI. Est enim amicitia nihil aliud nisi omnium divinarum humanarumque rerum cum benevolentia et caritate consensio; qua quidem haud scio an excepta sapientia nihil melius homini sit a dis immortalibus datum. Divitias alii praeponunt, bonam alii valetudinem, alii potentiam, alii honores, multi etiam voluptates. Beluarum hoc quidem extremum, illa autem superiora caduca et incerta, posita non tam in consiliis nostris quam in fortunae temeritate. Qui autem in virtute summum bonum ponunt, praeclare illi quidem, sed haec ipsa virtus amicitiam et gignit et continet, nec sine virtute amicitia esse ullo pacto potest.

21. *Iam virtutem ex consuetudine vitae sermonisque nostri interpretemur nec eam, ut quidam docti, verborum magnificentia metiamur virosque bonos eos, qui habentur, numeremus, Paulos, Catones, Galos, Scipiones, Philos; his communis vita contenta est; eos autem omittamus, qui omnino nusquam reperiuntur.*

22. *Talis igitur inter viros amicitia tantas opportunitates habet, quantas vix queo dicere. Principio qui potest esse vita 'vitalis', ut ait Ennius, quae non in amici mutua benevolentia conquiescat? Quid dulcius quam habere, quicum omnia audeas sic loqui ut tecum? Qui esset tantus fructus in prosperis rebus, nisi haberes, qui illis aequae ac tu ipse gauderet? adversas vero ferre difficile esset sine eo, qui illas gravius etiam quam tu ferret. Denique ceterae res, quae expetuntur, opportunae sunt singulae rebus fere singulis, divitiae, ut utare, opes, ut colare, honores, ut laudare, voluptates, ut gaudeas, valetudo, ut dolore careas et muneribus fungare corporis; amicitia res plurimas continet; quoquo te verteris, praesto est, nullo loco excluditur, numquam intempestiva, numquam molesta est; itaque non aqua, non igni, ut aiunt, locis pluribus utimur quam amicitia. Neque ego nunc de vulgari aut de mediocri, quae tamen ipsa et delectat et prodest, sed de vera et perfecta loquor, qualis eorum, qui pauci nominantur, fuit. Nam et secundas res splendidiore facit amicitia et adversas partiens communicansque leviores.*

VII. 23. *Quomque plurimas et maximas commoditates amicitia contineat, tum illa nimirum praestat omnibus, quod bonam spem praelucet in posterum nec debilitari animos aut cadere patitur. Verum enim amicum qui intuetur, tamquam exemplar aliquod intuetur sui. Quocirca et absentes adsunt et egentes abundant et inbecilli valent et, quod difficilius*

1 It may be doubted whether this close conformity of opinion and feeling is essential, or even favorable to friendship. The amicable comparison and collision of thought and sentiment are certainly consistent with, and often conducive to the most friendly intimacy. Friends are not infrequently the complements, rather than the likeness, of each other. Cicero and Atticus were as close friends as Scipio and Laelius; but they were at many points exceedingly unlike. Atticus had the tact and skill in worldly matters, which Cicero lacked. Atticus kept aloof from public affairs while Cicero was unhappy whenever he could not imagine himself as taking a leading part in them. Atticus was an Epicurean, and Cicero never lost an opportunity of attacking the Epicurean philosophy.

Friendship is nothing else than entire fellow feeling as to all things human and divine with mutual good-will and affection;<sup>1</sup> and I doubt whether anything better than this, wisdom alone excepted, has been given to, man by the immortal gods. Some prefer riches to it, some, sound health, some, power, some, posts of honor, many, even sensual gratification. This last properly belongs to beasts, the others are precarious and uncertain, dependent not on our own choice so much as on the caprice of Fortune. Those, indeed, who regard virtue as the supreme good are entirely in the right, but it is virtue itself that produces and sustains friendship, not without virtue can friendship by any possibility exist.

In saying this, however I would interpret virtue in accordance with our habits of speech and of life, not defining it, as some philosophers do, by high-sounding words, but numbering on the list of good men those who are commonly so regarded – the Pauli, the Catos, the Galli, the Scipios, the Philo Mankind in general are content with these. Let us then leave out of the account such good men as are nowhere to be found.

Among such good men as there really are, friendship has more advantages than I can easily name. In the first, place, as Ennius says: 'How can life be worth living, if devoid of the calm trust reposed by friend in friend? What sweeter joy than in the kindred soul, Whose converse differs not from self-communion?' How could you have full enjoyment of prosperity, unless with one whose pleasure in it was equal to your own? Nor would it be easy to bear adversity, unless with the sympathy of one on whom it rested more heavily than on your own soul. Then, too, other objects of desire are, in general, adapted, each to some specific purpose – wealth, that you may use it; power, that you may receive the homage of those around you; posts of honor, that you may obtain reputation; sensual gratification, that you may live in pleasure; health, that you may be free from pain, and may have full exercise of your bodily powers and faculties. But friendship combines the largest number of utilities. Wherever you turn, it is at hand. No place shuts it out. It is never unseasonable, never annoying. Thus, as the proverb says, 'You cannot put water or fire to more uses than friendship serves.' I am not now speaking of the common and moderate type of friendship, which yet yields both pleasure and profit, but, of true and perfect friendship, like that which existed in the few instances that are held in special remembrance. Such friendship at once enhances the lustre of prosperity, and by dividing and sharing adversity lessens its burden.

Moreover, while friendship comprises the greatest number and variety of beneficent offices, it certainly has this special prerogative, that it lights up a good hope for the time to come, and thus preserves the minds that it sustains from imbecility or prostration in misfortune. For he, indeed, who looks into the face of a friend beholds, as it were, a copy of himself. Thus the absent are present, and the poor are rich, and the weak are strong, and – what seems

VI. Friendship defined.

VII. Benefits derived from friendship

1 Literally, 'what is harder to say'.

2 The sense of this sentence is somewhat overlaid by the rhetoric; yet it undoubtedly means that an absent friend is esteemed and honored in the person of the friend who not only loves him, but is regarded as representing him; that a poor friend enjoys the prosperity of his rich friend as if it were his own; that a weak friend feels his feebleness energized by the friend who in need will fight his battles for him; and that no man is suffered to lapse from the kind and reverent remembrances of those who see his likeness in the friend who keeps his memory green.

3 Empedocles. Only a few fragments of his great poem are extant. His theory seems like a poetical version of Newton's law of universal gravitation. The analogy between physical attraction and the mutual attraction of congenial minds and souls has its record in the French word *aimant*, denoting 'loadstone' or 'magnet'.

4 Or 'host'; for the word *hospes* may have either meaning. It denotes not the fact of giving or receiving hospitality, but the permanent and sacred relation established between host and guest. This relation has lost much of its character in modern civilization, and I doubt whether it has a name in any modern European language.

5 Among the many and conflicting legends about Orestes is that which seems to have been the theme of the lost tragedy of Pacuvius. Orestes, after avenging on his mother and her paramour the murder of his father, in order to expiate the guilt of matricide, was directed by the Delphian oracle to go to Tauris, and to steal and transport to Athens an image of Artemis that had fallen from heaven. His friend Pylades accompanied him on this expedition. They were seized by Thoas the king, and Orestes, as the principal offender, was to be sacrificed to

Artemis. His sister, Iphigenia, priestess of Artemis, contrived their escape, and the three arrived safe at Athens with the sacred image.

6 Carneades, when on an embassy to Rome, for the entertainment of his Roman hosts, on one day delivered a discourse in behalf of justice as the true policy for the State, and on the next day delivered an equally subtle and eloquent discourse maintaining the opposite thesis. In the third book of the *De Republica* Philus is made the 'devil's advocate,' and has assigned to him the championship of what we are wont to call a Machiavellian policy, and, in general, of the morally wrong as the politically right. He is represented as taking the part reluctantly, saying that one consents to soil his hands in order to find gold, and he professes to give the substance of the famous discourse of Carneades. Laelius answers him, and, so far as we can judge from the fragments of his reply that are extant, with the preponderance of reason, which Cicero intended should incline on the better side. There was perhaps a sublatent irony in making Philus play this part; for he was an eminently upright man. Valerius Maximus eulogizes him for his rigid integrity and impartiality, and relates that when at the expiration of his consulship he was sent to take command of the army against Numantia, he chose for his lieutenants Metellus and Pompeius, both his intensely bitter enemies, but the men best fitted for the service.

*dictu est, mortui vivunt; tantus eos honos, memoria, desiderium prosequitur amicorum. Ex quo illorum beata mors videtur, horum vita laudabilis. Quodsi exemeris ex rerum natura benevolentiae coniunctionem, nec domus ulla nec urbs stare poterit, ne agri quidem cultus permanebit. Id si minus intellegitur, quanta vis amicitiae concordiaeque sit, ex dissensionibus atque ex discordiis perspici potest. Quae enim domus tam stabilis, quae tam firma civitas est, quae non odiis et discidiis funditus possit everti? Ex quo, quantum boni sit in amicitia, iudicari potest.*

24. *Agrigentinum quidem doctum quendam virum carminibus Graecis vaticinatum ferunt, quae in rerum natura totoque mundo constarent, quaeque moverentur, ea contrahere amicitiam, dissipare discordiam. Atque hoc quidem omnes mortales et intellegunt et re probant. Itaque, si quando aliquod officium extitit amici in periculis aut adeundis aut communicandis, quis est, qui id non maximis efferat laudibus? Qui clamores tota cavea nuper in hospitis et amici mei M. Pacuvi nova fabula! cum ignorante rege, uter Orestes esset, Pylades Orestem se esse diceret, ut pro illo necaretur, Orestes autem, ita ut erat, Orestem se esse perseveraret. Stantes plaudebant in re ficta; quid arbitramur in vera facturos fuisse? Facile indicabat ipsa natura vim suam, cum homines, quod facere ipsi non possent, id recte fieri in altero iudicarent.*

*Hactenus mihi videor de amicitia quid sentirem potuisse dicere; si quae praeterea sunt (credo autem esse multa), ab iis, si videbitur, qui ista disputant, quaeritote.*

25. FANNIUS. *Nos autem a te potius; quamquam etiam ab istis saepe quaesivi et audivi non invitum equidem; sed aliud quoddam filum orationis tuae.*

SCAEVOLA. *Tum magis id diceres, Fanni, si nuper in hortis Scipionis, cum est de re publica disputatum, adfuisses. Qualis tum patronus iustitiae fuit contra accuratam orationem Philii!*

FANNIUS. *Facile id quidem fuit, iustitiam iustissimo viro defendere.*

SCAEVOLA. *Quid? amicitiam nonne facile*

24

25

stranger still<sup>1</sup> – the dead are alive, such is the honor, the enduring remembrance, the longing love, with which the dying are followed by the living; so that the death of the dying seems happy, the life of the living full of praise.<sup>2</sup> But if from the condition of human life you were to exclude all kindly union, no house, no city, could stand, nor, indeed, could the tillage of the field survive. If it is not perfectly understood what virtue there is in friendship and concord, it may be learned from dissension and discord. For what house is so stable, what state so firm, that it cannot be utterly overturned by hatred and strife? Hence it may be ascertained how much good there is in friendship.

It is said that a certain philosopher of Agrigentum<sup>3</sup> sang in Greek verse that it is friendship that draws together and discord that parts all things which subsist in harmony, and which have their various movements in nature and in the whole universe. The worth and power of friendship, too, all mortals understand, and attest by their approval in actual instances. Thus, if there comes into conspicuous notice an occasion on which a friend incurs or shares the perils of his friend, who can fail to extol the deed with the highest praise? What shouts filled the whole theatre at the performance of the new play of my guest<sup>4</sup> and friend Marcus Pacuvius, when – the king not knowing which of the two was Orestes – Pylades said that he was Orestes, while Orestes persisted in asserting that he was, as in fact he was, Orestes!<sup>5</sup> The whole assembly rose in applause at this mere fictitious representation. What may we suppose that they would have done, had the same thing occurred in real life? In that case Nature herself displayed her power, when men recognized that as rightly done by another, which they would not have had the courage to do themselves. Thus far, to the utmost of my ability as it seems to me, I have given you my sentiments concerning friendship. If there is more to be said, as I think that there is, endeavor to obtain it, if you see fit, of those who are wont to discuss such subjects.

FANNIUS: But we would rather have it from you. Although I have often consulted those philosophers also, and have listened to them not unwillingly, yet the thread of your discourse differs somewhat from that of theirs.

SCAEVOLA: You would say so all the more, Fannius, had you been present in Scipio's garden at that discussion about the republic, and heard what an advocate of justice he showed himself in answer to the elaborate speech of Philus.<sup>6</sup>

FANNIUS: It was indeed easy for the man pre-eminently just to defend justice.

SCAEVOLA: As to friendship, then, is not its defence easy

*ei, qui ob eam summa fide constantia  
iustitiaque servatam maxumam gloriam  
ceperit?*

VIII. 26. LAELIUS. *Vim hoc quidem est adferre.  
Quid enim refert, qua me ratione cogatis? Cogitis  
certe. Studiis enim generorum, praesertim in re  
bona, cum difficile est, tum ne aequum quidem  
obsistere.*

*Saepissime igitur mihi de amicitia cogitanti  
maxime illud considerandum videri solet, utrum  
propter inbecillitatem atque inopiam desiderata  
sit amicitia, ut dandis recipiendisque meritis quod  
quisque minus per se ipse posset, id acciperet ab  
alio vicissimque redderet, an esset hoc quidem  
proprium amicitiae, sed antiquior et pulchrior et  
magis a natura ipsa profecta alia causa. Amor  
enim, ex quo amicitia nominata est, princeps est  
ad benevolentiam coniungendam. Nam utilitates  
quidem etiam ab iis percipiuntur saepe, qui  
simulatione amicitiae coluntur et observantur  
temporis causa, in amicitia autem nihil fictum est,  
nihil simulatum et, quidquid est, id est verum et  
voluntarium.*

27. *Quapropter a natura mihi videtur potius  
quam ab indigentia orta amicitia, adplicatione  
magis animi cum quodam sensu amandi quam  
cogitatione, quantum illa res utilitatis esset  
habitura. Quod quidem quale sit, etiam in bestiis  
quibusdam animadverti potest, quae ex se natos  
ita amant ad quoddam tempus et ab eis ita  
amantur, ut facile earum sensus appareat. Quod  
in homine multo est evidentius, primum ex ea  
caritate, quae est inter natos et parentes, quae  
dirimi nisi detestabili scelere non potest; deinde  
cum similis sensus extitit amoris, si aliquem nacti  
sumus, cuius cum moribus et natura congruamus,  
quod in eo quasi lumen aliquod probitatis et  
virtutis perspicere videamur.*

28. *Nihil est enim virtute amabilius, nihil, quod  
magis adliciat ad diligendum, quippe cum propter  
virtutem et probitatem etiam eos, quos numquam  
vidimus, quodam modo diligamus. Quis est, qui  
C. Fabrici, M'. Curi non cum caritate aliqua  
benevola memoriam usurpet, quos numquam  
viderit? Quis autem est, qui Tarquinius  
Superbum, qui Sp. Cassium, Sp. Maelium non  
oderit? Cum duobus ducibus de imperio in Italia  
est decertatum, Pyrrho et Hannibale; ab altero  
propter probitatem eius non nimis alienos animos  
habemus, alterum propter crudelitatem semper  
haec civitas oderit.*

IX. 29. *Quodsi tanta vis probitatis est, ut eam  
vel in eis, quos numquam vidimus, vel, quod  
maius est, in hoste etiam diligamus, quid*

for him who has won the highest celebrity on the ground  
of friendship maintained with pre-eminent faithfulness,  
consistency, and probity?

LAELIUS: This is, indeed, the employing of force; for what matters  
the way in which you compel me? You at any rate do compel me;  
for it is both hard and unfair not to comply with the wishes of one's  
sons-in-law, especially in a case that merits favorable consideration.

In reflecting, then, very frequently on friendship, the foremost  
question that is wont to present itself is, whether friendship is  
craved on account of conscious infirmity and need, so that in  
bestowing and receiving the kind offices that belong to it each  
may have that done for him by the other which he is least able to  
do for himself, reciprocating services in like manner; or whether,  
though this relation of mutual benefit is the property, of friendship  
it has yet another cause; more sacred and more noble, and derived  
more genuinely from the very nature of man. Love, which in our  
language gives name to friendship,<sup>1</sup> bears a chief part in unions of  
mutual benefit; for a revenue of service is levied even on those who  
are cherished in pretended friendship, and are treated with regard  
from interested motives. But in friendship there is nothing feigned,  
nothing pretended, and whatever there is in it is both genuine and  
spontaneous.

Friendship, therefore, springs from nature rather than from need  
– from an inclination of the mind with a certain consciousness of  
love rather than from calculation of the benefit to be derived from  
it. Its real quality may be discerned even in some classes of animals,  
which up to a certain time so love their offspring, and are so loved  
by them, that the mutual feeling is plainly seen – a feeling which  
is much more clearly manifest in man, first, in the affection which  
exists between children and parents, and which can be dissolved  
only by atrocious guilt; and in the next place, in the springing up  
of a like feeling of love, when we find some one of manners and  
character congenial with our own, who becomes dear to us because  
we seem to see in him an illustrious example of probity and virtue

For there is nothing more lovable than virtue – nothing which  
more surely wins affectionate regard, insomuch that on the score  
of virtue and probity we love even those whom we have never seen.  
Who is there that does not recall the memory of Caius Fabricius, of  
Manius Curius, of Tiberius Coruncanras, whom he never saw, with  
some good measure of kindly feeling? On the other hand, who is  
there that can fail to hate Tarquinius Superbus, Spurius Cassius,  
Spurius Maelius? Our dominion in Italy was at stake in wars under  
two commanders, Pyrrhus and Hannibal. On account of the good  
faith of the one, we hold him in no unfriendly remembrance;<sup>2</sup> the  
other because of his cruelty our people must always hate.<sup>3</sup>

But if good faith has such attractive power that we love it in  
those whom we have never seen, or – what means still more – in  
an enemy, what wonder is it if the minds of men are moved to

VIII. Friendship  
founded not on  
need, but on  
nature.

IX. Friendship  
and utility.

1 Amor – amicitia.

2 Pyrrhus, after the only victory that  
he obtained over the Romans,  
treated his prisoners with signal hu-  
manity, and restored them without  
ransom. See *De Officiis*, i. 12

3 It may be doubted whether Hanni-  
bal deserved the reproach here im-  
plied. The Roman historians ascribe  
to him acts of cruelty no worse than  
their own generals were charge-  
able with: while nothing of the kind  
is related by either Polybius, or  
Plutarch. It is certain that after the  
battle of Cannae he checked the  
needless slaughter of the Roman  
fugitives, and Livy relates several  
instances in which he paid funeral  
honors, to distinguished Romans  
slain in battle. The intense hostility  
of the Romans to Carthage may  
have led to an unfair estimate of the  
great general's character, and to the  
invention or exaggeration of reports  
to his discredit.

26

27

28

29

*mirum est, si animi hominum moveantur, cum eorum, quibuscum usu coniuncti esse possunt, virtutem et bonitatem perspicere videantur? Quamquam confirmatur amor et beneficio accepto et studio perspecto et consuetudine adiuncta, quibus rebus ad illum primum motum animi et amoris adhibitis admirabilis quaedam exardescit benevolentiae magnitudo. Quam si qui putant ab inbecillitate proficisci, ut sit, per quem adsequatur, quod quisque desideret, humilem sane relinquunt et minime generosum, ut ita dicam, ortum amicitiae, quam ex inopia atque indigentia natam volunt. Quod si ita esset, ut quisque minimum esse in se arbitraretur, ita ad amicitiam esset aptissimus; quod longe secus est.*

30. *Ut enim quisque sibi plurimum confidit, et ut quisque maxime virtute et sapientia sic munitus est, ut nullo egeat suaque omnia in se ipso posita iudicet, ita in amicitias expetendis colendisque maxime excellit. Quid Enim? Africanus indigens mei? Minime hercule! ac ne ego quidem illius; sed ego admiratione quadam virtutis eius, ille vicissim opinione fortasse non nulla, quam de meis moribus habebat, me dilexit; auxit benevolentiam consuetudo. Sed quamquam utilitates multae et magnae consecutae sunt, non sunt tamen ab earum spe causae diligendi profectae.*

31. *Ut enim benefici liberalesque sumus, non ut exigamus gratiam (neque enim beneficium faeneramur, sed natura propensi ad liberalitatem sumus), sic amicitiam non spe mercedis adducti, sed quod omnis eius fructus in ipso amore inest, expetendam putamus.*

32. *Ab his, qui pecudum ritu ad voluptatem omnia referunt, longe dissentiunt, nec mirum; nihil enim altum, nihil magnificum ac divinum suspicere possunt, qui suas omnes cogitationes abiecerunt in rem tam humilem tamque contemptam. Quam ob rem hos quidem ab hoc sermone removeamus, ipsi autem intellegamus natura gigni sensum diligendi et benevolentiae caritatem facta significatione probitatis. Quam qui adpetiverunt, adplicant se et propius admovent, ut et usu eius, quem diligere coeperunt, fruantur et moribus sintque pares in amore et aequales propensioresque ad bene merendum quam ad reposcendum, atque haec inter eos sit honesta certatio. Sic et utilitates ex amicitia maximae capientur, et erit eius ortus a natura quam ab inbecillitate gravior et verior. Nam si utilitas amicitias conglutinaret, eadem commutata dissolveret; sed quia natura mutari non potest, idcirco verae amicitiae sempiternae sunt. Ortum quidem amicitiae videtis, nisi quid ad haec forte vultis.*

30

31

32

affection when they behold the virtue and goodness of those with whom they can become intimately united? Love is, indeed, strengthened by favors received, by witnessing assiduity in one's service, and by habitual intercourse; and when these are added to the first impulse of the mind toward love, there flames forth a marvellously rich glow of affectionate feeling. If there are any who think that this proceeds from conscious weakness and the desire to have some person through whom one can obtain what he lacks, they assign, indeed, to friendship a mean and utterly ignoble origin, born, as they would have it, of poverty and neediness. If this were true, then the less of resource one was conscious of having in himself, the better fitted would he be for friendship.

The contrary is the case; for the more confidence a man has in himself, and the more thoroughly he is fortified by virtue and wisdom, so that he is in need of no one, and regards all that concerns him as in his own keeping, the more noteworthy is he for the friendships which he seeks and cherishes. What? Did Africanus need me? Not in the least by Hercules. As little did I need him. But I was drawn to him by admiration of his virtue while he, in turn, loved me, perhaps from some favorable estimate of my character, and intimacy increased our mutual affection. But though utilities many and great resulted from our friendship, the cause of our mutual love did not proceed from the hope of what it might bring.

For as we are beneficent and generous, not in order to exact kindnesses in return (for we do not put our kind offices to interest), but are by nature inclined to be generous, so, in my opinion, friendship is not to be sought for its wages, but because its revenue consists entirely in the love which it implies.

Those, however, who, after the manner of beasts, refer everything to pleasure,<sup>1</sup> think very differently. Nor is it wonderful that they do, for men who have degraded all their thoughts to so mean and contemptible an end can rise to the contemplation of nothing lofty, nothing magnificent and divine. We may, therefore, leave them out of this discussion. But let us have it well understood that the feeling of love and the endearments of mutual affection spring from nature, in case there is a well-established assurance of moral worth in the person thus loved. Those who desire to become friends approach each other, and enter into relation with each other, that each may enjoy the society and the character of him whom he has begun to love, and they are equal in love, and on either side are more inclined to bestow obligations than to claim a return, so that in this matter there is an honorable rivalry between them. Thus will the greatest benefits be derived from friendship, and it will have a more solid and genuine foundation as tracing its origin to nature than if it proceeded from human weakness. For if it were utility that cemented friendships, an altered aspect of utility would dissolve them. But because nature cannot be changed, therefore true friendships are eternal. This may suffice for the origin of friendship, unless you have, perchance, some objection to what I have said.

<sup>1</sup> The Epicureans

FANNIUS. *Tu vero perge, Laeli; pro hoc enim, qui minor est natu, meo iure respondeo.*

SCAEVOLA. *Recte tu quidem. Quam ob rem audiamus.*

X. 33. LAELIUS. *Audite vero, optumi viri, ea, quae saepissime inter me et Scipionem de amicitia disserebantur. Quamquam ille quidem nihil difficilius esse dicebat, quam amicitiam usque ad extremum vitae diem permanere. Nam, vel ut non idem expediret, incidere saepe, vel ut de re publica non idem sentiretur; mutari etiam mores hominum saepe dicebat, alias adversis rebus, alias aetate ingravescente. Atque earum rerum exemplum ex similitudine capiebat ineuntis aetatis, quod summi puerorum amores saepe una cum praetexta toga ponerentur;*

34. *Sin autem ad adulescentiam perduxissent, dirimi tamen interdum contentione vel uxoriae condicionis vel commodi alicuius, quod idem adipisci uterque non posset. Quodsi qui longius in amicitia provecti essent, tamen saepe labefactari, si in honoris contentionem incidissent; pestem enim nullam maiorem esse amicitiae quam in plerisque pecuniae cupiditatem, in optimis quibusque honoris certamen et gloriae; ex quo inimicitias maximas saepe inter amicissimos exstitisse.*

35. *Magna etiam discidia et plerumque iusta nasci, cum aliquid ab amicis, quod rectum non esset, postularetur, ut aut libidinis ministri aut adiutores essent ad iniuriam; quod qui recusarent, quamvis honeste id facerent, ius tamen amicitiae deserere arguerentur ab iis, quibus obsequi nollent. Illos autem, qui quidvis ab amico auderent postulare, postulatione ipsa profiteri omnia se amici causa esse facturos. Eorum querela inveterata non modo familiaritates exstingui solere, sed odia etiam gigni sempiternia. Haec ita multa quasi fata inpendere amicitiae, ut omnia subterfugere non modo sapientiae, sed etiam felicitatis diceret sibi videri.*

XI. 36. *Quam ob rem id primum videamus, si placet, quatenus amor in amicitia progredi debeat. Numne, si Coriolanus habuit amicos, ferre contra patriam arma illi cum Coriolano debuerunt? num Vecellinum amici regnum adpetentum, num Maelium debuerunt iuvare?*

37. *Tib. quidem Gracchum rem publicam vexantem a Q. Tuberone aequalibusque amicis derelictum videbamus. At C. Blossius Cumanus, hospes familiae vestrae, Scaevola, quom ad me, quod aderam Laenati et Rupilio consulibus in consilio, deprecatum venisset, hanc, ut sibi ignoscerem, causam adferebat, quod tanti Tib. Gracchum fecisset, ut, quidquid ille vellet, sibi*

FANNIUS: Go on, Laelius. I answer by the right of seniority for Scaevola who is younger than I am.

SCAEVOLA: I am of the same mind with you. Let us then, hear farther.

LAELIUS: Hear then, my excellent friends the substance of the frequent discussions on friendship between Scipio and me. He indeed, said that nothing is more difficult than for friendship to last through life; for friends happen to have conflicting interests, or different political opinions. Then, again, as he often said, characters change, sometimes under adverse conditions, sometimes with growing years. He cited also the analogy of what takes place in early youth, the most ardent loves of boyhood being often laid aside with its robe.

But if friendships last on into opening manhood, they are not infrequently broken up by rivalry in quest of a wife, or in the pursuit of some advantage which only one can obtain.<sup>1</sup> Then, if friendships are of longer duration, they yet, as Scipio said, are liable to be undermined by competition for office; and indeed there is nothing more fatal to friendship than, in very many cases, the greed of gain, and among some of the best of men the contest for place and fame, which has often engendered the most intense enmity between those who had been the closest friends.

Strong and generally just aversion, also, springs up when anything morally wrong is required of a friend; as when he is asked to aid in the gratification of impure desire, or to render his assistance in some unrighteous act – in which case those who refuse, although their conduct is highly honorable, are yet charged by the persons whom they will not serve with being false to the claims of friendship, while those who dare to make such a demand of a friend profess, by the very demand, that they are ready to do anything and everything for a friend's sake. By such quarrels, not only are old intimacies often dissolved, but undying hatreds generated. So many of these perils hang like so many fates over friendship, that to escape them all seemed to Scipio, as he said, to indicate not wisdom alone, but equally a rare felicity of fortune.

Let us then, first, if you please, consider how far the love of friends ought to go. If Coriolanus had friends, ought they to have helped him in fighting against his country, or should the friends of Viscellinus<sup>2</sup> or those of Spurius Maelius<sup>3</sup> have aided them in the endeavor to usurp regal power?

We saw, indeed, Tiberius Gracchus, when he was disturbing the peace of the State, deserted by Quintus Tubero and others with whom he had been on terms of intimacy. But Caius Blossius, of Cumae, the guest,<sup>4</sup> Scaevola, of your family, coming to me, when I was in conference with the Consuls Laenas and Rupilius, to implore pardon, urged the plea that he held Tiberius Gracchus in so dear esteem that he felt bound to do whatever he desired. I then asked

x. Causes for the separation of friends.

xI. How far love for friends may go.

<sup>1</sup> Had Cicero not been personating Laelius, who died long before the quarrel occurred, he would undoubtedly have cited the case of Servilius Caepio and Livius Diusus. They married each other's sisters, and were united in the closest intimacy, and seemingly in the dearest mutual love; but as rivals in bidding for a ring at an auction-sale they had their first quarrel, which grew into intense mutual hatred, led almost to a civil war between their respective partisans, and bore no small part in starting the series of dissensions which issued in the Social War, and the destruction of not far from three hundred thousand lives. I refer to this in a note, because it must have been fresh in Cicero's memory, and had annotation been the habit of his time, he would most assuredly have given it the place which I now give it.<sup>2</sup> Spurius Cassius Viscellinus, the author of the earliest agrarian law, passed, but never carried into execution. He was condemned to death – probably a victim to the rancorous opposition of the patrician order, of which he was regarded as a recreant member by virtue of his advocacy of the rights or just claims of the plebs. Cicero in early life was by no means so hostile to the principle underlying the agrarian laws, and to the memory of the Gracchi, as he was after he had reached the highest offices in the gift of the people.

<sup>3</sup> Maelius, of the equestrian order, but of popularity with the 'plebs' by selling corn at a low price, and giving away large quantities of it, in a time of famine. He was charged with seeking kingly power, and, on account of his alleged movements with that purpose, Cincinnatus was appointed dictator, and Maelius, resisting a summons to his tribunal, was killed by Ahala, his master of the horse. There seems to have been little evidence of his actual guilt.

<sup>4</sup> Hospes, guest, host, or both.

*faciendum putaret. Tum ego: 'Etiamne, si te in Capitolium faces ferre vellet?' 'Numquam,' inquit, 'voluisset id quidem; sed si voluisset, paruissem.' Videtis, quam nefaria vox! Et hercule ita fecit vel plus etiam, quam dixit; non enim paruit ille Ti. Gracchi temeritati, sed praefuit, nec se comitem illius furoris, sed ducem praebuit. Itaque hac amentia quaestione nova perterritus in Asiam profugit, ad hostes se contulit, poenas rei publicae graves iustasque persolvit. Nulla est igitur excusatio peccati, si amici causa peccaveris; nam cum conciliatrix amicitiae virtutis opinio fuerit, difficile est amicitiam manere, si a virtute defeceris.*

38. *Quodsi rectum statuerimus vel concedere amicis, quidquid velint, vel inpetrare ab iis, quidquid velimus, perfecta quidem sapientia si simus, nihil habeat res vitii; sed loquimur de iis amicis, qui ante oculos sunt, quos vidimus aut de quibus memoria accepimus, quos novit vita communis. Ex hoc numero nobis exempla sumenda sunt, et eorum quidem maxime, qui ad sapientiam proxume accedunt.*

39. *Videmus Papum Aemilium Luscino familiarem fuisse (sic a patribus accepimus), bis una consules, collegas in censura; tum et cum iis et inter se coniunctissimos fuisse M'. Curium, Ti. Coruncanium memoriae proditum est. Igitur ne suspicari quidem possumus quemquam horum ab amico quippiam contendisse, quod contra fidem, contra ius iurandum, contra rem publicam esset. Nam hoc quidem in talibus viris quid adtinet dicere, si contendisset, impetraturum non fuisse? cum illi sanctissimi viri fuerint, aequae autem nefas sit tale aliquid et facere rogatum et rogare. At vero Tib. Gracchum sequebantur C. Carbo, C. Cato, et minime tum quidem C. frater nunc idem acerrimus.*

XII. 40. *Haec igitur lex in amicitia sancitur, ut neque rogemus res turpes nec faciamus rogati. Turpis enim excusatio est et minime accipienda cum in ceteris peccatis, tum si quis contra rem publicam se amici causa fecisse fateatur. Etenim eo loco, Fanni et Scaevola, locati sumus, ut nos longe prospicere oporteat futuros casus rei publicae. Deflexit iam aliquantum de spatia curriculoque consuetudo maiorum.*

41. *Tib. Gracchus regnum occupare conatus est, vel regnavit is quidem paucos menses. Num quid simile populus Romanus audierat aut viderat? Hunc etiam post mortem secuti amici et propinqui quid in P. Scipione effecerint, sine lacrimis non*

<sup>1</sup> He took refuge with Aristonicus, King of Pergamum, then at war with Rome; and when Aristonicus was conquered, Blossius committed suicide for fear of being captured by the Roman army.

<sup>2</sup> 'Now', that is, at the time at which this dialogue has its assumed date, immediately after Scipio's death. At that time Caius Gracchus was acting as a commissioner under his brother's agrarian law, most zealously.

him, 'Even if he had wanted you to set fire to the Capitol, would you have done it?' He replied, 'He never would have made such a request.' 'But if he had?' said I. 'I would have obeyed him,' was the answer. And, by Hercules, he did as he said, or even more; for he did not so much yield obedience to the audacious schemes of Tiberius Gracchus, as he was foremost in them; he was not so much the companion of his madness, as its leader. Therefore, in consequence of this folly, alarmed by the appointment of special judges for his trial, he fled to Asia, entered the service of our enemies, and finally met the heavy and just punishment for his disloyalty to his country.<sup>1</sup> It is, then, no excuse for wrong-doing that you do wrong for the sake of a friend. Indeed, since it may have been a belief in your virtue that has made one your friend, it is hard for friendship to last if you fall away from virtue.

But if we should determine either to concede to friends whatever they may ask, or to exact from them whatever we may desire, we and they must be endowed with perfect wisdom, in order for our friendship to be blameless. We are speaking, however, of such friends as we have before our eyes, or as we have seen or have known by report – of such as are found in common life. It is from these that we must take our examples, especially from such of them as make the nearest approach to perfect wisdom.

We have learned from our fathers that Papus Aemilius was very intimate with Caius Luscinius, they having twice been consuls together, as well as colleagues in the censorship; and it is said also that Manius Curius and Tiberius Coruncanius lived in the closest friendship both with them and with each other. Now we cannot suspect that either of these men would have asked of one of his friends anything inconsistent with good faith, or with an engagement sanctioned by oath, or with his duty to the State. Indeed, to what purpose is it to say that among such men if one had asked anything wrong, he would not have obtained it? For they were men of the most sacred integrity; while to ask anything wrong of a friend and to do it when asked are alike tokens of deep depravity. But Caius Carbo and Caius Cato were the followers of Tiberius Gracchus, as was his brother Caius, at first with little ardor, but now.<sup>2</sup>

As to friendship, then, let this law be enacted, that we neither ask of a friend what is wrong, nor do what is wrong at a friend's request. The plea that it was for a friend's sake is a base apology – one that should never be admitted with regard to other forms of guilt, and certainly not as to crimes against the State. We, indeed, Fannius and Scaevola, are so situated that we ought to look far in advance for the perils that our country may incur. Already has our public policy deviated somewhat from the method and course of our ancestors.

Tiberius Gracchus attempted to exercise supreme power; nay, he really reigned for a few months. What like this had the Roman people ever heard or seen before? What, after his death, the friends and kindred who followed him did in their revenge on Publius

XII. *Wrong never to be done at a friend's request.*

1 Publius Cornelius Scipio Nasica, who took the lead of the Senate in the assassination of Tiberius Gracchus, and incurred such popular odium that he could not safely stay in Rome. He was sent on a fictitious mission to Asia to get him out of the way of the people, and not daring to return, wandered with no settled habitation till his death at Pergamum not long before the assumed date of this dialogue.

2 Carbo succeeded Tiberius Gracchus on the commission for carrying the agrarian law into execution, and was shortly afterward chosen Tribune. He then proposed a law, permitting a tribune to be re-elected for an indefinite number of years. This law was vehemently opposed by Scipio Africanus the Younger, and if he was really killed by Carbo, it was probably on account of his hostility to Carbo's ambitious schemes.

3 The reference undoubtedly here is to the Papirian law which had just been passed before the assumed date of this dialogue, having been proposed and carried through by (Caius 'Papirius') Carbo. By this law the use of the ballot was established in all matters of popular legislation.

4 By which magistrates were to be chosen by ballot.

5 By which the judges were to be chosen by ballot. With reference to the use of the ballot the parties in Rome were prototypes of like parties in England. The voice of the people was for the ballot, on the ground that it made suffrage free, as it could not be when employers or patrons could dictate to their dependents and make them suffer for failure to vote in favor of their own candidates or measures. The aristocratic party opposed the ballot as fatal to their controlling influence, which many sincere patriots, like Cicero, regarded as essential to the public safety, while patrician demagogues, intriguers, and office-seekers made it subservient to their own selfish or partisan interests.

6 No one of his own fellow-countrymen.

7 If the story of Coriolanus be not a myth, as Niebuhr supposes it to be, his suicide forms no part of the story as Livy tells it. The suicide of Themistocles is related as a supposition, not as an established fact. If he died of poison, as was said, it may have been administered by a rival in the favor of Artaxerxes.

8 This is a virtual repetition of the law of friendship announced at the beginning of the previous section, and Cicero probably so intended it. He states the rule, then demonstrates its validity, then repeats it in an almost identical form, implying what the mathematician expresses when he puts at the end of a demonstration 'Quod erat demonstrandum.'

queo dicere. Nam Carbonem, quocumque modo potuimus, propter recentem poenam Tib. Gracchi sustinuimus; de C. Gracchi autem tribunatu quid expectem, non lubet augurari. Serpit deinde res, quae proclivis ad perniciem, cum semel coepit, labitur. Videtis, in tabella iam ante quanta sit facta labe, primo Gabinia lege, biennio autem post Cassia. Videre iam videor populum a senatu disiunctum, multitudinis arbitrio res maximas agi. Plures enim discent, quem ad modum haec fiant, quam quem ad modum iis resistatur.

42. Quorsum haec? Quia sine sociis nemo quicquam tale conatur. Praecipendum est igitur bonis, ut, si in eius modi amicitias ignari casu aliquo inciderint, ne existiment ita se alligatos, ut ab amicis in magna aliqua re publica peccantibus non discedant; improbis autem poena statuenda est, nec vero minor iis, qui secuti erunt alterum, quam iis, qui ipsi fuerint impietatis duces. Quis clarior in Graecia Themistocle, quis potentior? Qui cum imperator bello Persico servitute Graeciam liberavisset propterque invidiam in exilium expulsus esset, ingratae patriae iniuriam non tulit, quam ferre debuit, fecit idem, quod XX annis ante apud nos fecerat Coriolanus. His adiutor contra patriam inventus est nemo; itaque mortem sibi uterque conscivit.

43. Quare talis inproborum consensus non modo excusatione amicitiae tegenda non est, sed potius supplicio omni vindicanda est, ut ne quis concessum putet amicum vel bellum patriae inferentem sequi; quod quidem, ut res ire coepit, haud scio an aliquando futurum sit. Mihi autem non minori curae est, qualis res publica post mortem meam futura, quam qualis hodie sit.

XIII. 44. Haec igitur prima lex amicitiae sancitur, ut ab amicis honesta petamus, amicorum causa honesta faciamus, ne exspectemus quidem, dum rogemur; studium semper adsit, cunctatio absit; consilium vero dare audeamus libere. Plurimum in amicitia amicorum bene suadentium valeat auctoritas, eaque et adhibeatur ad monendum non modo aperte, sed etiam acriter, si res postulabit, et adhibitae pareatur.

45. Nam quibusdam, quos audio sapientes habitos in Graecia, placuisse opinor mirabilia quaedam (sed nihil est, quod illi non persequantur argutiis): partim fugiendas esse nimias amicitias, ne necesse sit unum sollicitum esse pro pluribus; satis superque esse sibi suarum cuique rerum, alienis nimis implicari molestum esse;

Scipio<sup>1</sup> I cannot say without tears. We put up with Carbo<sup>2</sup> as well as we could in consideration of the recent punishment of Tiberius Gracchus; but I am in no mood to predict what is to be expected from the tribuneship of Caius Gracchus. Meanwhile the evil is creeping upon us, from its very beginning fraught with threats of ruin. Before recent events,<sup>3</sup> you perceive how much degeneracy was indicated in the legalization of the ballot, first by Gabinian,<sup>4</sup> then two years later by the Cassian law.<sup>5</sup> I seem already to see the people utterly alienated from the Senate, and the most important affairs determined by the will of the multitude; for more persons will learn how these things are brought about than how they may be resisted.

To what purpose am I saying this? Because no one makes such attempts without associates. It is therefore to be enjoined on good men that they must not think themselves so bound that they cannot renounce their friends when they are guilty of crimes against the State. But punishment must be inflicted on all who are implicated in such guilt – on those who follow, no less than on those who lead. Who in Greece was more renowned than Themistocles? Who had greater influence than he had? When as commander in the Persian war he had freed Greece from bondage, and for envy of his fame was driven into exile, he did not bear as he ought the ill treatment of his ungrateful country. He did what Coriolanus had done with us twenty years before. Neither of these men found any helper against his country;<sup>6</sup> they therefore both committed suicide.<sup>7</sup>

Association with depraved men for such an end is not, then, to be shielded by the plea of friendship, but rather to be avenged by punishment of the utmost severity, so that no one may ever think himself authorized to follow a friend to the extent of making war upon his country – an extremity which, indeed, considering the course that our public affairs have begun to take, may, for aught I know, be reached at some future time. I speak thus because I feel no less concern for the fortunes of the State after my death than as to its present condition.

Let this, then, be enacted as the first law of friendship, that we demand of friends only what is right, and that we do for the sake of friends only what is right.<sup>8</sup> This understood, let us not wait to be asked. Let there be constant assiduity and no loitering in a friend's service. Let us also dare to give advice freely; for in friendship the authority of friends who give good counsel may be of the greatest value. Let admonition be administered, too, not only in plain terms, but even with severity, if need be, and let heed be given to such admonition.

On this subject some things that appear to me strange have, as I am told, been maintained by certain Greeks who are accounted as philosophers, and are so skilled in sophistry that there is nothing which they cannot seem to prove. Some of them hold that very intimate friendships are to be avoided; that there is no need that one feel solicitude for others; that it is enough and more than enough to take care of your own concerns, and annoying to be

XIII. Theories that degrade friendship.

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