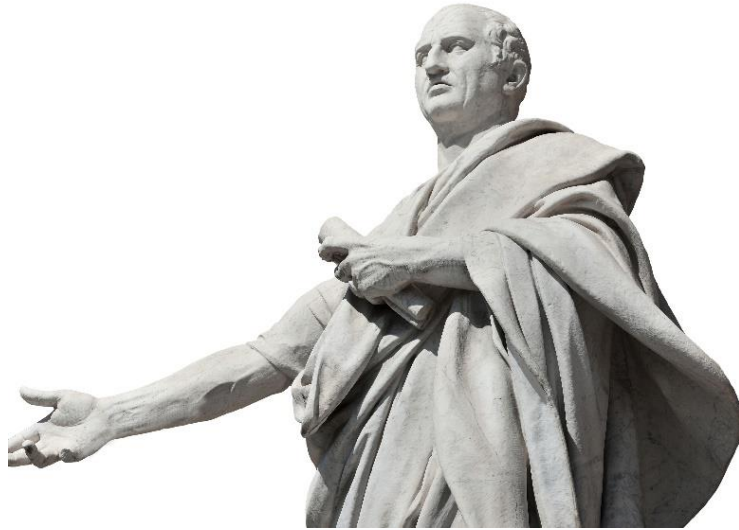


BELLARIA LXXV



CICERO *EPISTULAE* III

Introduction

In this episode we consider Cicero's life outside politics, looking at the tensions in his family, his villas and love of collecting Greek items with which to furnish them, his beloved book collection, his secretary Tiro, his attitude towards the games, and ending with the death of his dearest daughter Tullia.

NOVEMBER 68 BC

TO ATTICUS

From Rome

[*ad Att.* 1.5]

Calming a marriage

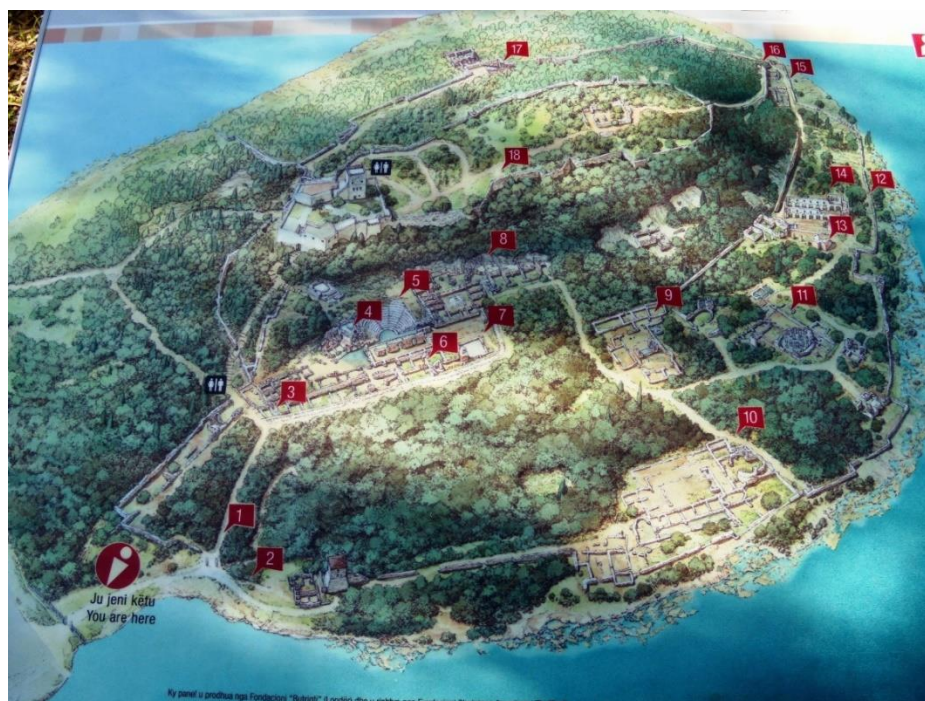


Marriage ceremony

... As to what you say in your letter about your sister Pomponia, she will herself bear me witness what pains I have taken that my brother Quintus [her husband] should show her proper affection. Thinking him somewhat inclined to be angry with her, I wrote to him in such a way as I thought would not hurt his feelings as a brother, while giving him some good advice as my junior, and remonstrating with him as being in the wrong. The result is that, from frequent letters since received from him, I feel confident that everything is as it ought and as we should wish it to be...

quod ad me scribis de sorore tua, testis erit tibi ipsa, quantae mihi curae fuerit, ut Quinti fratris animus in eam esset is, qui esse deberet. quem cum esse offensioem arbitrarer, eas litteras ad eum misi quibus et placarem ut fratrem et monerem ut minorem et obiurgarem ut errantem. itaque ex iis, quae postea saepe ab eo ad me scripta sunt, confido ita esse omnia, ut et oporteat et uelimus.

Everyday matters



Ancient Buthrotum (Butrint, Albania)

I am glad you like your purchase in Epirus [Atticus' estate at Buthrotum]. What I commissioned you to get for me, and anything you see suitable to my Tusculan villa, I should be glad if you will, as you say in your letter, procure for me, only don't put yourself to any inconvenience. The truth is, there is no other place that gives me complete rest after all my worries and hard work. I am expecting my brother Quintus every day. Terentia has a severe attack of rheumatism. She is devoted to you, to your sister, and your mother, and adds her kindest regards in a postscript. So does my darling little Tullia.

Epiroticam emptionem gaudeo tibi placere. quae tibi mandavi, et quae tu intelleges conuenire nostro Tusculano, uelim, ut scribis, cures, quod sine molestia tua facere poteris. nam nos ex omnibus molestiis et laboribus uno illo in loco conquiescimus. Quintum fratrem cotidie expectamus. Terentia magnos articulorum dolores habet. et te et sororem tuam et matrem maxime diligit salutemque tibi plurimam ascribit et Tulliola, deliciae nostrae.

c. FEBRUARY 20 67 BC

TO ATTICUS

From Rome

[*ad Att.* 1.8]

Greek collection

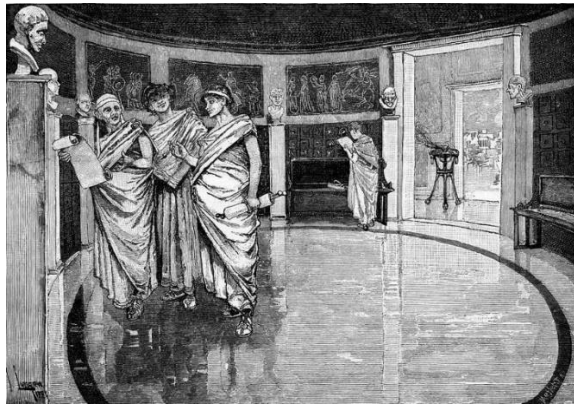


Herm of pentelic marble

I have paid L. Cincius the 20,400 sesterces written for the Megarian statues in accordance with your letter to me. As to your Hermae of Pentelic marble with bronze heads, about which you wrote to me—I have fallen in love with them on the spot. So pray send both them and the statues, and anything else that may appear to you to suit the place you know of, my passion, and your taste—as large a supply and as early as possible. Above all, anything you think appropriate to a gymnasium and terrace. I have such a passion for things of this sort that while I expect assistance from you, I must expect something like rebuke from others. If Lentulus [a chum, possibly the consul of 57 BC] has no vessel there, put them on board anyone you please. My darling little Tullia claims your present and calls on me as your security. I am resolved, however, turn down her claim rather than pay up for you.

L. Cincio HS [20,400] pro signis Megaricis, ut tu ad me scripseras, curavi. Hermae tui Pentelici cum capitibus aeneis, de quibus ad me scripsisti, iam nunc me admodum delectant. quare uelim et eos et signa et cetera, quae tibi eius loci et nostri studii et tuae elegantiae esse uidebuntur, quam plurima quam primumque mittas, et maxime quae tibi gymnasii xystique uidebuntur esse. nam in eo genere sic studio efferimur, ut abs te adiuuandi, ab aliis prope reprehendendi simus. si Lentuli nauis non erit, quo tibi placebit, imponito. Tulliola deliciolae nostrae, tuum munusculum flagitat et me ut sponsorem appellat; mi autem abiurare certius est quam dependere.

MAY 67 BC
TO ATTICUS
From Tusculum
[*ad Att.* 1.10]



Roman library

As for my statues and Heracles herms, pray put them on board, as you say in your letter, at your very earliest convenience, and anything else you light upon that may seem to you appropriate to the place you know of, especially anything you think suitable to a palaestra and gymnasium. I say this because I am sitting there as I write, so that the very place itself reminds me. Besides these, I commission you to get me some medallions to let into the walls of my little entrance-court, and two engraved stone-curbs. Mind you don't engage your library to anyone, however keen a lover you may find; for I am hoarding up my little savings expressly to secure that resource for my old age.

signa nostra et Hermeraclas, ut scribis, cum commodissime poteris, uelim imponas, et si quod aliud οἰκεῖον eius loci, quem non ignoras, reperies, et maxime quae tibi palaestrae gymnasiique uidebuntur esse. etenim ibi sedens haec ad te scribebam, ut me locus ipse admoneret. praeterea typos tibi mando, quos in tectorio atrio possim includere, et putealia sigillata duo. bibliothecam tuam caue cuiquam despondeas, quamuis acrem amatorem inueneris; nam ego omnes meas uindemiolas eo reseruo, ut illud subsidium senectuti parem.

EARLY 66 BC
TO ATTICUS
From Rome
[*ad Att.* 1.4]

I am very glad to hear what you say about the Hermathena. It is an ornament appropriate to my 'Academy' [at his villa in Tusculum] for two reasons: Hermes is a sign common to all gymnasia, Minerva specially of this particular one. So I would have you, as you say, adorn the place with the other objects also, and the more the better. The statues which you sent me before I have not yet seen. They are in my villa at Formiae, whither I am at this moment thinking of going. I shall get them all transferred to my Tusculan villa. If I find myself with more than I want there I shall begin adorning Caieta [=Formiae]. Please reserve your books, and don't despair of my being able to make them mine. If I succeed in that, I am superior to Crassus in wealth and look down on everybody's manors and pastures.

quod ad me de Hermathena scribis, per mihi gratum est. est ornamentum Academiae proprium meae, quod et Hermes commune omnium et Minerua singulare est insigne eius gymnasii. quare uelim, ut scribis, ceteris quoque rebus quam plurimis eum locum ornes. quae mihi antea signa misisti, ea non dum uidi; in Formiano sunt, quo ego nunc proficisci cogitabam. illa omnia in Tusculanum deportabo. Caietam, si quando abundare coepero, ornabo. libros tuos conserua et noli desperare eos me meos facere posse. quod si adsequor, supero Crassum diuitiis atque omnium uicos et prata contemno.

§§ By this time Cicero had returned from exile and been warned off politics by Pompey. He is now making the best of his enforced leisure. §§

APRIL-MAY 56 BC

TO ATTICUS

From Cicero's villa in Antium

[*ad Att.* 4.8]



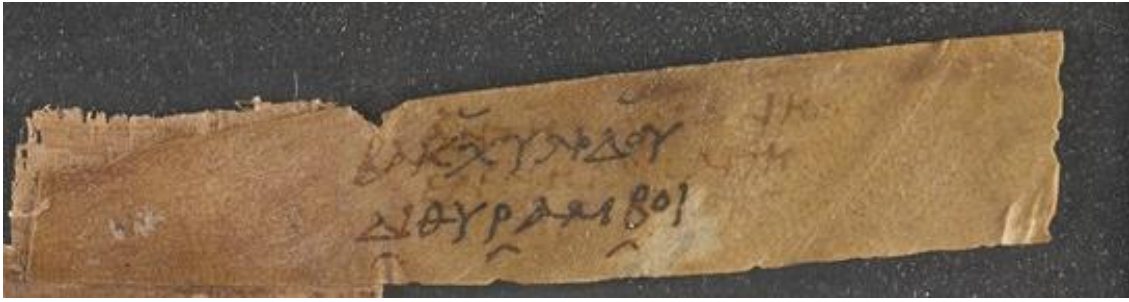
The port of Antium (Anzio)

A place for Atticus?

There were many things in your letter which pleased me, but nothing more than your 'dish of cheese and salt fish'! [A poor man's dinner] For as to what you say about the sale, 'Boast not yourself before you see the end,' I can find nothing in the way of a building for you in the neighbourhood. In the town there is something of the sort, though it is doubtful whether it is for sale, and, in fact, close to my own house. Let me tell you that Antium is the Buthrotum of Rome, just what your Buthrotum is to Corcyra. Nothing can be quieter, cooler, or prettier—'Be this mine own dear home.'

multa me in epistula tua delectarunt sed nihil magis quam patina tyrotarichi. nam de raudusculo quod scribis, μήπω μέγ' εἴπησ' πρὶν τελευτήσαντ' ἴδης. aedificati tibi in agris nihil reperio. in oppido est quiddam, de quo est dubium sitne uenale, ac proximum quidem nostris aedibus. hoc scito, Antium Buthrotum esse Romae, ut Corcyrae illud tuum (Antium). nihil quietius, nihil alsius, nihil amoenius. εἴη μοι οὗτος φίλος οἶκος.

A house with a soul



Title-slip: Bacchylides' *Dithuramboi*

Moreover, since Tyrannio has arranged my books for me, my house seems to have had a soul added to it; in which matter your Dionysius and Menophilus were of wonderful service. Nothing can be more charming than those bookcases of yours, since the title-slips have shown off the books. Good-bye. I should like you to write me word about your [troop of] gladiators, but only if they fight well; I don't want to know about them if they were failures.

postea uero, quam Tyrannio mihi libros disposuit, mens addita uidetur meis aedibus. qua quidem in re mirifica opera Dionysi et Menophili tui fuit. nihil uenustius quam illa tua pegmata, postquam mi sillybis libros inlustrarunt. uale. et scribas ad me uelim de gladiatoribus, sed ita bene si rem gerunt; non quaero, male si se gesserunt.

JUNE 56 BC

TO ATTICUS

From Antium

[*ad Att. 4.4(a)*]

Library work

It will be delightful if you come to see us here. You will find that Tyrannio has made a wonderfully good arrangement of my books, the remains of which are better than I had expected. Still, I wish you would send me a couple of your library slaves for Tyrannio to employ as gluers [glueing papyrus pages together to make a roll], and in other subordinate work, and tell them to get some fine parchment to make title-pieces, which you Greeks, I think, call *sittubai*. But all this is only if not inconvenient to you.

perbelle feceris si ad nos ueneris. offendes designationem Tyrannionis mirificam in librorum meorum bibliotheca, quorum reliquiae multo meliores sunt quam putaram. et uelim mihi mittas de tuis librariolis duos aliquos quibus Tyrannio utatur glutinatoribus, ad cetera administris, iisque imperes ut sumant membranulam ex qua indices fiant, quos uos Graeci, ut opinor, σιττύβαι appellatis. sed haec, si tibi erit commodum.

Gladiator troop



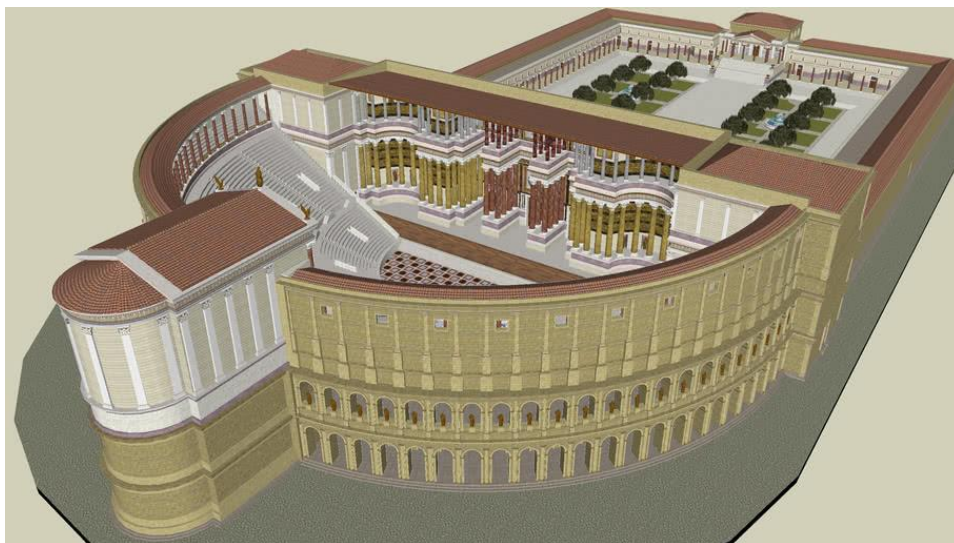
Gladiator training school

In any case, be sure you come yourself, if you can halt for a while in such a place, and persuade Pilia [Atticus' wife] to accompany you. For that is only fair, and Tullia is anxious that she should come. My word! You have purchased a fine [gladiatorial] training-school! Your gladiators, I am told, fight superbly. If you had chosen to hire them out [presumably they were not yet fully trained], you would have cleared your expenses in the last two games. But we will talk about this later on. Be sure to come, and, as you love me, see about the library slaves.

ipse uero utique fac uenias, si potes in his locis adhaerescere, et Piliam adducas. ita enim et aequum est et cupit Tullia. medius fidius ne tu emisti ludum praeclarum. gladiatores audio pugnare mirifice. si locare uoluisses, duobus his muneribus liber esses. sed haec posterius. tu fac uenias et de librariis, si me amas, agas diligenter.

AUGUST 55 BC
TO MARIUS
From Rome
[*ad fam.* 7.1]

Actors past their best



Pompey's theatre

On the whole, if you care to know, the games [put on by Pompey, to celebrate his building of Rome's first stone theatre] were most splendid, but not to your taste. I judge from my own. For, to begin with, to boost their reputation, those actors had made a come-back to the stage who I thought had left it to save their reputation. Indeed, your favourite, our friend Aesopus, gave such a display that everyone was

willing it should be his finale: on beginning to recite an oath [in the play] he lost his voice at the words 'If I knowingly deceive!' Why should I go on with the story?

omnino, si quaeris, ludi apparatissimi, sed non tui stomachi; coniecturam enim facio de meo; nam primum honoris causa in scenam redierant ii, quos ego honoris causa de scena decessisse arbitrabar; deliciae uero tuae, noster Aesopus, eiusmodi fuit, ut ei desinere per omnes homines liceret: is iurare cum coepisset, uox eum defecit in illo loco: 'si sciens fallo!'. quid tibi ego alia narrem?

Over the top

You know all about the rest of the games, which hadn't even that amount of charm which games on a moderate scale generally have: for the spectacle was so elaborate as to leave no room for cheerful enjoyment, and I think you need feel no regret at having missed it. For what is the pleasure of a train of six hundred mules in [Accius'] *Clytemnestra*, or three thousand bowls in [Naevius'] *Trojan Horse*, or the variegated display of infantry and cavalry in some battle? These things roused the popular admiration; they would have brought no delight to you.

nosti enim reliquos ludos, qui ne id quidem leporis habuerunt, quod solent mediocres ludi; apparatus enim spectatio tollebat omnem hilaritatem, quo quidem apparatu non dubito quin animo aequissimo carueris; quid enim delectationis habent sexcenti muli in Clytaemnestra aut in Equo Troiano creterrarum tria milia aut armatura uaria peditatus et equitatus in aliqua pugna? quae popularem admirationem habuerunt, delectationem tibi nullam attulissent.

Farce



But if during those days you listened to [your personal reader] Protogenes, so long at least as he read [out to you] anything rather than my speeches, surely you had far greater pleasure than any one of us. For I don't suppose you wanted to see Greek or Campanian plays, especially as you can see Campanian farces in your senate-house over there [in Pompeii], while you are so far from liking Greeks, that you generally won't even go along the Greek road to your villa. Why, again, should I suppose you to care about missing the athletes, since you disdained the gladiators? In which even Pompey himself confesses that he lost his trouble and his pains [= 'midnight oil', here referring to athletes oiling themselves].

quod si tu per eos dies operam dedisti Protogeni tuo, dummodo is tibi quiduis potius quam orationes meas legerit, ne tu haud paullo plus quam quisquam nostrum delectationis habuisti; non enim te puto Graecos aut Oscos ludos desiderasse, praesertim cum Oscos uel in senatu uestro spectare possis, Graecos ita non ames, ut ne ad uillam quidem tuam uia Graeca ire soleas. nam quid ego te athletas putem desiderare, qui gladiatores contempseris? in quibus ipse Pompeius confitetur se et operam et oleum perdidisse.

Animal hunts



There remain the two wild-beast hunts, lasting five days, magnificent—nobody denies it—and yet, what pleasure can it be to a man of refinement, when either a weak man is torn by an extremely powerful animal, or a splendid animal is transfixed by a hunting spear? Things which, after all, if worth seeing, you have often seen before; nor did I, who was present at the games, see anything the least new. The last day was that of the elephants, on which there was a great deal of astonishment on the part of the vulgar crowd, but no pleasure whatever. Indeed, there was even a certain feeling of compassion aroused by it, and a kind of belief created that that animal has something in common with mankind.

reliquae sunt uenationes binae per dies quinque, magnificae—nemo negat—, sed quae potest homini esse politico delectatio, cum aut homo imbecillus a ualentissima bestia laniatur aut praeclara bestia uenabulo transuerberatur? quae tamen, si uidenda sunt, saepe uidisti, neque nos, qui haec spectauimus, quidquam noui uidimus. extremus elephantorum dies fuit: in quo admiratio magna uulgi atque turbae, delectatio nulla exstitit; quin etiam misericordia quaedam consecuta est atque opinio eiusmodi, esse quandam illi beluae cum genere humano societatem.

MAY 51 BC
TO ATTICUS
From *Minturnae*
[ad fam 5.1]

§§ As we have already seen, relations between Cicero's son Quintus and his wife Pomponia (sister of Atticus) could become testy. Atticus had clearly suggested to Cicero that Quintus needed some paternal advice. Cicero here suggests Pomponia could do with some too. §§

Tricky lunch



We lunched at Arcanum. You know his property there. When we got there Quintus said, in the kindest manner, 'Pomponia, do you ask the ladies in; I will invite the men [farmhands and slaves]'. Nothing, as I thought, could be more courteous, and that, too, not only in the actual words, but also in his intention and the expression of face. But she, in the hearing of us all, exclaimed, 'I am a guest her myself!' The origin of that was, as I think, the fact that Statius had gone ahead of us to see to lunch. Thereupon Quintus said to me, 'There, that's what I have to put up with every day!' You will say, 'Well, what does that amount to?' A great deal; and, indeed, she had irritated even me: her answer had been given with such unnecessary acrimony, both of word and look. I concealed my annoyance.

prandimus in Arcano. nosti hunc fundum. quo ut uenimus, humanissime Quintus 'Pomponia' inquit 'tu inuita mulieres, ego uiros acciuro.' nihil potuit, mihi quidem ut uisum est, dulcius idque cum uerbis tum etiam animo ac uultu. at illa audientibus nobis 'ego ipsa sum' inquit 'hic hospita,' id autem ex eo, ut opinor, quod antecesserat Statius ut prandium nobis uideret. tum Quintus 'en' inquit mihi 'haec ego patior cotidie.' dices 'quid quaeso istuc erat?' magnum; itaque me ipsum commouerat; sic absurde et aspere uerbis uultuque responderat. dissimulaui dolens.

Bad behaviour

We all took our places at table except her. However, Quintus sent her dishes from the table, which she declined. In short, I thought I never saw anything better-tempered than my brother, or crosser than your sister: and there were many particulars which I omit that raised my bile more than they did that of Quintus himself. I then left for Aquinum.

discubuimus omnes praeter illam, cui tamen Quintus de mensa misit. illa reiecit. quid multa? nihil meo fratre lenius, nihil asperius tua sorore mihi uisum est; et multa praetereo quae tum mihi maiori stomacho quam ipsi Quinto fuerunt. ego inde Aquinum.

Breakdown in relations

[The next day] Quintus came to me and told me that she had refused to sleep with him, and when on the point of leaving, she behaved just as I had seen her. Need I say more? You may tell her herself that in my judgment she showed a marked want of kindness on that day. I have told you this story at greater length, perhaps, than was necessary, to convince you that you, too, have something to do in the way of giving her instruction and advice.

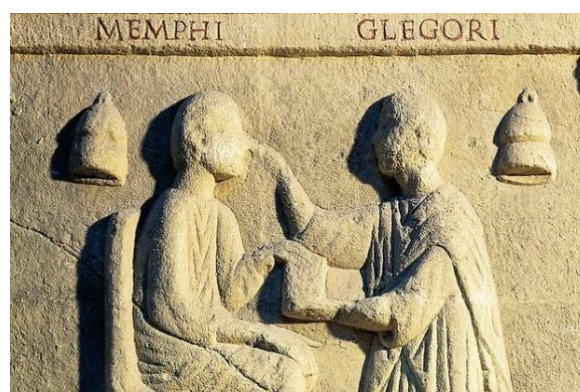
Quintus ad me postridie mane uenit mihique narrauit nec secum illam dormire uoluisse (et) cum discessura esset fuisse eius modi qualem ego uidissem. quid quaeris? uel ipsi hoc dicas licet, humanitatem ei meo iudicio illo die defuisse. haec ad te scripsi fortasse pluribus quam necesse fuit, ut uideres tuas quoque esse partis instituendi et monendi.

§§ There are many very warm letters between Cicero, his family and Marcus Tullius Tiro, his (homegrown) slave and then freedman (53 BC). He served Cicero in many different ways, especially literary and financial. He is said to have collected and published Cicero's work on his death, and to have written a four-book biography. §§



NOVEMBER 7 50 BC
TO TIRO (at Patrae)
From Leucas
[*ad fam.* 16.4]

You must look after your health



Your letter gave me varied emotions. I was much agitated by the first page, a little cheered by the second. So I am now quite clear that, until you are entirely recovered, you should not risk a journey either by sea or land. I shall see you quite soon enough, if I see you thoroughly restored to health. Yes, what you say in your letter about the doctor being well thought of; I am also told about him. Yet I am far from satisfied with his treatment. For you ought not to have had soup given you when suffering from weak digestion. However, I have written to him with great earnestness, as also to Lyso [in whose home at Patrae Tiro was staying].

uarie sum affectus tuis litteris: ualde priore pagina perturbatus, paullum altera recreatus: quare nunc quidem non dubito, quin, quoad plane ualeas, te neque nauigationi neque uiae committas: satis te mature uidero, si plane confirmatum uidero. de medico et tu bene existimari scribis et ego sic audio; sed plane curationes eius non probo; ius enim dandum tibi non fuit, quum κακοστόμαχος esses; sed tamen et ad illum scripsi accurate et ad Lysonem.

Spare no expense

To Curius [Roman businessman resident at Patrae], indeed, that most agreeable, attentive, and kindly of men, I have written at great length. Among other things I have asked him to transfer you from where you are to his own house, if you wished it. For I fear our friend Lyso is somewhat careless: first, because all Greeks are so, and secondly because, though he got a letter from me, he has sent me no answer. However, you speak well of him: you must therefore yourself decide what is best to be done. I do beg you, dear Tiro, not to spare expense in anything whatever necessary for your health. I have written to Curius to honour your draft to any amount: something, I think, ought to be paid to the doctor himself to make him more zealous.

ad Curium uero, suauissimum hominem et summi officii summaeque humanitatis, multa scripsi, in iis etiam, ut, si tibi uideretur, te ad se traferret; Lyso enim noster uereor ne negligentior sit: primum, quia omnes Graeci; deinde quod, quum a me litteras accepisset, mihi nullas remisit; sed eum tu laudas: tu igitur, quid faciendum sit, iudicabis. illud, mi Tiro, te rogo, sumptu ne parcas ulla in re, quod ad ualetudinem opus sit: scripsi ad Curium, quod dixisses, daret; medico ipsi puto aliquid dandum esse, quo sit studiosior.

All that counts to me is your safety



Your services to me are past counting—at home, in the forum, at Rome, in my province: in private and public business, in my literary studies and compositions. But there is one service you can render me that will surpass them all—gratify my hopes by appearing before me well and strong! I think, if you are recovered, you will have a most charming voyage home with the quaestor Mescinius [Cicero's quaestor in Cilicia]. He is not without culture, and is, I thought, attached to you. And while health should be your first and most careful consideration, consider also how to secure a safe voyage, dear Tiro. I wouldn't have you hurry yourself now in any way whatever. I care for nothing but your safety.

innumerabilia tua sunt in me officia, domestica forensia, urbana prouincialia, in re priuata in publica, in studiis in litteris nostris: omnia uiceris, si, ut spero, te ualidum uidero. ego puto te bellissime, si recte erit, cum quaestore Mescinio decursurum: non inhumanus est teque, ut mihi uisus est, diligit. quum ualetudini tuae diligentissime consulueris, tum, mi Tiro, consulito nauigationi: nulla in re iam te festinare uolo; nihil laboro nisi ut saluus sis.

Many people are anxious about you

Be assured, dear Tiro, that no one loves me without loving you; and though it is you and I who are most directly concerned in your recovery, yet it is an object of anxiety to many. Up to this time, in your desire never to leave me in the lurch, you have never had the opportunity of getting strong. Now there is nothing to hinder you: throw everything aside, be a slave to your body. I shall consider the amount of attention you pay to your health the measure of your regard for me. Good-bye, dear Tiro, good-bye, good-bye, and good health to you! Lepta [Cicero's chief engineer in Cilicia] and all the rest send their kind regards. Good-bye!

sic habeto, mi Tiro, neminem esse, qui me amet, quin idem te amet: quum tua et mea maxime interest te ualere, tum multis est curae. adhuc, dum mihi nullo loco deesse uis, numquam te confirmare potuisti: nunc te nihil impedit; omnia depone, corpori serui. quantam diligentiam in ualetudinem tuam contuleris, tanti me fieri a te iudicabo. uale, mi Tiro, uale, uale et salue. Lepta tibi salutem dicit et omnes.

§§ In January 45 BC Cicero's beloved daughter Tullia, after her third marriage (to Dolabella) in the summer of 50 BC, gave birth to a son in 49 BC, who died in the same year. In 46 BC, pregnant for a second time, she divorced Dolabella and in January 45 BC gave birth to a son. In the process, she too died. Cicero was absolutely devastated. The son died a few months later. In a letter to his brother Quintus (*ad Qu.* 1.3) written in 58 BC, Cicero said of her 'the most loving, modest and clever daughter, the very image of my face and speech and soul' (*qua pietate, qua modestia, quo ingenio! effigiem oris, sermonis, animi mei*). §§

Mid-March 45 BC

FROM SERVIUS SULPICIUS IN ATHENS

To Cicero (in Astura)

[*ad fam.* 4.5]



Tullia's death is a joint calamity

When I received the news of your daughter Tullia's death, I was indeed as much grieved and distressed as I was bound to be, and looked upon it as a calamity in which I shared. For, if I had been at home, I should not have failed to be at your side, and should have made my sorrow plain to you face to face. That kind of consolation involves much distress and pain, because the relations and friends, whose part it is to offer it, are themselves overcome by an equal sorrow. They cannot attempt it without many tears, so that they seem to require consolation themselves rather than to be able to afford it to others.

posteaquam mihi renuntiatum est de obitu Tulliae, filiae tuae, sane quam pro eo, ac debui, grauiter molesteque tui communemque eam calamitatem existimaui, qui, si istic affuissem, neque tibi defuissem coramque meum dolorem tibi declarassem. stsi genus hoc consolationis miserum atque acerbum est, propterea quia, per quos ea confieri debet propinquos ac familiares, ii ipsi pari molestia afficiuntur neque sine lacrimis multis id conari possunt, uti magis ipsi uideantur aliorum consolatione indigere quam aliis posse suum officium praestare ...

Is her death any worse than our country's destruction?

Still, I have decided to set down briefly for your benefit such thoughts as have occurred to my mind, not because I suppose them to be unknown to you, but because your sorrow may perhaps hinder you from being so keenly alive to them. Why is it that a private grief should agitate you so deeply? Think how fortune has hitherto dealt with us. Reflect that we have had snatched from us what ought to be no less dear to human beings than their children—country, honour, rank, every political distinction. What additional wound to your feelings could be inflicted by this particular loss? Or what heart, practised in our experience of disaster, ought not by now to have lost all sensitivity and learnt to regard everything else as of minor importance?

tamen, quae in praesentia in mentem mihi uenerunt, decreui breui ad te perscribere, non quo ea te fugere existimem, sed quod forsitan dolore impeditus minus ea perspicias. quid est, quod tanto opere te commoueat tuus dolor intestinus? cogita, quemadmodum adhuc fortuna nobiscum egerit: ea nobis erepta esse, quae hominibus non minus quam liberi cara esse debent, patriam, honestatem, dignitatem, honores omnes. hoc uno incommodo addito quid ad

dolorem adiungi potuit? aut qui non in illis rebus exercitatus animus callere iam debet atque omnia minoris existimare?

But did life have anything to offer in such times?



Is it on her account, pray, that you sorrow? How many times have you recurred to the thought—and I have often been struck with the same idea—that in times like these theirs is far from being the worst fate to whom it has been granted to exchange life for a painless death? Now what was there at such an epoch that could greatly tempt her to live? What scope, what hope, what heart's solace? That she might spend her life with some young and distinguished husband? How impossible for a man of your rank to select from the present generation of young men a son-in-law, to whose honour you might think yourself safe in trusting your child!

an illius uicem, credo, doles? quoties in eam cogitationem necesse est et tu ueneris et nos saepe incidimus, hisce temporibus non pessime cum iis esse actum, quibus sine dolore licitum est mortem cum uita commutare? quid autem fuit, quod illam hoc tempore ad uiuendum magno opere inuitare posset? quae res? quae spes? quod animi solatium? ut cum aliquo adolescente primario coniuncta aetatem gereret? licitum est tibi, credo, pro tua dignitate ex hac iuuentute generum deligere, cuius fidei liberos tuos te tuto committere putares.

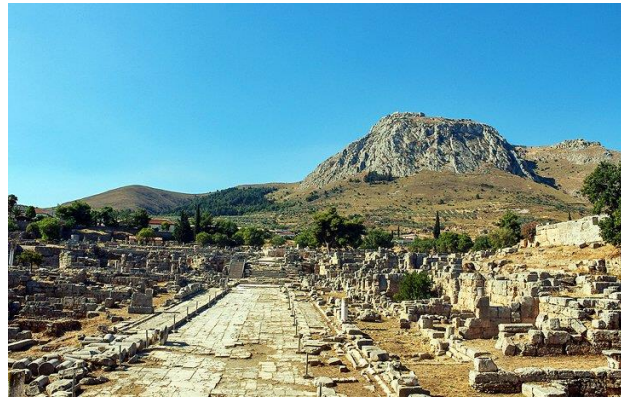
What prospect would her children have had?

Was it that she might bear children to cheer her with the sight of their vigorous youth? Who might by their own character maintain the position handed down to them by their parent, might be expected to stand for the offices in their order, might exercise their freedom in supporting their friends? What single one of these prospects has not been taken away before it was given? But, it will be said, after all it is an evil to lose one's children. Yes, it is: only it is a worse one to endure and submit to the present state of things.

an ut ea liberos ex sese pareret, quos cum florentes uideret laetaretur? qui rem a parente traditam per se tenere possent, honores ordinatim petituri essent, in re

publica, in amicorum negotiis libertate sua usuri? quid horum fuit, quod non, priusquam datum est, ademptum sit? 'at uero malum est liberos amittere.' malum: nisi hoc peius est, haec sufferre et perpeti.

Consider the ruins of the great cities of Greece



Corinth

I wish to mention to you a circumstance which gave me no common consolation on the chance of its also proving capable of diminishing your sorrow. On my voyage from Asia, as I was sailing from Aegina towards Megara, I began to survey the localities that were on every side of me. Behind me was Aegina, in front Megara, on my right Piraeus, on my left Corinth: towns which at one time were most flourishing, but now lay before my eyes in ruin and decay. I began to reflect to myself thus: 'Hmm! Do we little men feel rebellious if one of us perishes or is killed—we whose life ought to be still shorter—when the corpses of so many towns lie in helpless ruin? Will you please, Servius, restrain yourself and recollect that you are born a mortal man?' Believe me, I was no little strengthened by that reflexion.

quae res mihi non mediocrem consolationem attulerit, uolo tibi commemorare, si forte eadem res tibi dolorem minuere possit. ex Asia rediens cum ab Aegina Megaram uersus nauigarem, coepi regiones circumcirca prospicere: post me erat Aegina, ante me Megara, dextra Piraeus, sinistra Corinthus, quae oppida quodam tempore florentissima fuerunt, nunc prostrata et diruta ante oculos iacent. coepi egomet mecum sic cogitare: 'hem! nos homunculi indignamur, si quis nostrum interiit aut occisus est, quorum uita breuior esse debet, cum uno loco tot oppidum cadauera proiecta iacent? uisne tu te, Serui, cohibere et meminisse hominem te esse natum?' crede mihi, cogitatione ea non mediocriter sum confirmatus.

She was fortunate to have lived when she did

Now take the trouble, if you agree with me, to put this thought before your eyes. Not long ago all those most illustrious men perished at one blow: the empire of the Roman people suffered that huge loss: all the provinces were shaken to their foundations. If you have become the poorer by the frail spirit of one poor girl, are you agitated thus violently? If she had not died now, she would yet have had to die a few years hence, for she was mortal born. You, too, withdraw soul and thought from such things, and rather remember those which become the part you have played in life: that she lived as long as life had anything to give her; that her life outlasted that of the Republic; that she lived to see you—her own father—praetor, consul, and augur; that she married young men of the highest rank; that she had

enjoyed nearly, every possible blessing; that, when the Republic fell, she departed from life. What fault have you or she to find with fortune on this score?

hoc idem, si tibi uidetur, fac ante oculos tibi proponas: modo uno tempore tot uiri clarissimi interierunt, de imperio populi Romani tanta deminutio facta est, omnes prouinciae conquassatae sunt; in unius mulierculae animula si iactura facta est, tanto opere commoueris? quae si hoc tempore non diem suum obisset, paucis post annis tamen ei moriendum fuit, quoniam homo nata fuerat. etiam tu ab hisce rebus animum ac cogitationem tuam auoca atque ea potius reminiscere, quae digna tua persona sunt: illam, quamdiu ei opus fuerit, uixisse, una cum re publica fuisse, te, patrem suum, praetorem, consulem, augurem uidisse, adolescentibus primariis nuptam fuisse, omnibus bonis prope perfunctam esse; cum res publica occideret, uita excessisse: quid est, quod tu aut illa cum fortuna hoc nomine queri possitis?

Follow the advice you so often give to others



In fine, do not forget that you are Cicero, and a man accustomed to instruct and advise others; and do not imitate bad physicians, who in the diseases of others profess to understand the art of healing, but are unable to prescribe for themselves. Rather suggest to yourself and bring home to your own mind the very maxims which you are accustomed to impress upon others. There is no sorrow that the length of time does not diminish and soften: it is no credit to you to wait for that time to pass, and not rather anticipate that result by your own good sense. But if there is any consciousness still existing in the world below, such was her love for you and her dutiful affection for all her family, that she certainly does not wish you to act as you are acting.

denique noli te obliuisci Ciceronem esse et eum, qui aliis consueris praecipere et dare consilium, neque imitari malos medicos, qui in alienis morbis profitentur tenere se medicinae scientiam, ipsi se curare non possunt, sed potius, quae aliis praecipere soles, ea tute tibi subiice atque apud animum propone. nullus dolor est, quem non longinquitas temporis minuat ac molliat: hoc te expectare tempus tibi turpe est ac non ei rei sapientia tua te occurrere. quod si qui etiam inferis sensus est, qui illius in te amor fuit pietasque in omnes suos, hoc certe illa te facere non uult.

Recover your true self for the country's sake

Grant this to her—your lost one! Grant it to your friends and comrades who mourn with you in your sorrow! Grant it to your country, that if the need arises she may have the use of your services and advice. Finally—since we have come to such a pass in our fortunes that we must pay attention to this aspect too—do not allow anyone

to think that you are not mourning so much for your daughter as for the state of public affairs and the victory of others.

da hoc illi mortuae, da ceteris amicis ac familiaribus, qui tuo dolore maerent, da patriae, ut, si qua in re opus sit, opera et consilio tuo uti possit. denique, quoniam in eam fortunam deuenimus, ut etiam huic rei nobis seruiendum sit, noli committere, ut quisquam te putet non tam filiam quam rei publicae tempora et aliorum uictoriam lugere.

Show us that you can respond to bad fortune as you did to good

I am ashamed to say any more to you on this subject, lest I should appear to distrust your wisdom. Therefore I will only make one suggestion before bringing my letter to an end. We have seen you on many occasions bear good fortune with a noble dignity which greatly enhanced your fame: now is the time for you to convince us that you are able to bear bad fortune equally well, and that it does not appear to you to be a heavier burden than you ought to think it. I would not have this be the only one of all the virtues that you do not possess. As far as I am concerned, when I learn that your mind is more composed, I will write you an account of what is going on here, and of the condition of the province. Good-bye.

plura me ad te de hac re scribere pudet, ne uidear prudentiae tuae diffidere; quare, si hoc unum proposuero, finem faciam scribendi: uidimus aliquoties secundam pulcherrime te ferre fortunam magnamque ex ea re te laudem apisci; fac aliquando intelligamus aduersam quoque te aequae ferre posse neque id maius, quam debeat, tibi onus uideri, ne ex omnibus uirtutibus haec una tibi uideatur deesse. quod ad me attinet, cum te tranquillio rem animo esse cognoro, de iis rebus, quae hic geruntur, quemadmodumque se prouincia habeat, certio rem faciam. uale.

MARCH 8 45 BC

TO ATTICUS

From Astura

[*ad fam.* 12.14]

I console myself by writing



You wish me some relaxation of my mourning: you are kind, as usual, but you can bear me witness that I have not been wanting to myself. For not a word has been written by anyone on the subject of abating grief which I did not read at your house. But my sorrow is too much for any consolation. Moreover, I have done what certainly no one ever did before me—tried to console myself by writing a book, which I will send to you as soon as my amanuenses have made copies of it. I assure you that there is no more efficacious consolation.

quod me ab hoc maerore recreari uis, facis ut omnia; sed me mihi non defuisse tu testis es. nihil enim de maerore minuendo scriptum ab ullo est quod ego non domi tuae legerim. sed omnem consolationem uincit dolor. quin etiam feci quod profecto ante me nemo ut ipse me per litteras consolaretur. quem librum ad te mittam, si descripserint librarii. adfirmo tibi nullam consolationem esse talem.

This gives me some respite from grief

I write all day long, not that I do any good, but for a while I experience a kind of check, or, if not quite that—for the violence of my grief is overpowering—yet I get some relaxation, and I try with all my might to recover composure, not of heart, yet, if possible, of countenance. When doing that I sometimes feel myself to be doing wrong, sometimes that I shall be doing wrong if I don't.

totos dies scribo, non quo proficiam quid sed tantisper impediatur non equidem satis (uis enim urget), --sed relaxor tamen ad omniaque nitor non ad animum sed ad uultum ipsum, si queam, reficiendum idque faciens interdum mihi peccare uideo, interdum peccaturus esse nisi faciam.

But I am no longer what I was

Solitude does me some good, but it would have done me more good, if you after all had been here: and that is my only reason for quitting this place, for it does very well in such miserable circumstances. And even this suggests another cause of sorrow. For you will not be able to be to me now what you once were: everything you used to like about me is gone.

solitudo aliquid adiuuat, sed multo plus proficeret, si tu tamen interesses. quae mihi una causa est hinc discedendi; nam pro malis recte habebat. quamquam id ipsum doleo. non enim iam in me idem esse poteris. perierunt illa quae amabas.

MARCH 9 45 BC

TO ATTICUS

From Astura

[*ad Att.* 12.15]

...in this lonely place I have no one with whom to converse, and plunging into a dense and wild wood early in the day I don't leave it till evening. Next to you, I have no greater friend than solitude. In it my one and only conversation is with books. Even that is interrupted by tears, which I fight against as long as I can. But as yet I am not equal to it.

in hac solitudine careo omnium conloquio, cumque mane me in siluam abstrusi densam et asperam, non exeo inde ante uesperum. secundum te nihil est mihi amicus solitudine. in ea mihi omnis sermo est cum litteris. eum tamen interpellat fletus; cui repugno quoad possum, sed adhuc pares non sumus.

Next week: From the Ides of March to the death of Cicero