

# ROMA

## Tusculan Disputations

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MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

*Musean Translation*

MOUSEIA

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*Musean Translation*

Translated by Michael Berardi

MOUSEIA

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## **TRANSLATOR**

Michael Berardi

## **THE WORK**

Written 45 BCE · Philosophical dialogue

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# Contents



|                          |    |                          |    |
|--------------------------|----|--------------------------|----|
| Book 1, Chapter 1 .....  | 1  | Book 1, Chapter 31 ..... | 34 |
| Book 1, Chapter 2 .....  | 2  | Book 1, Chapter 32 ..... | 35 |
| Book 1, Chapter 3 .....  | 3  | Book 1, Chapter 33 ..... | 36 |
| Book 1, Chapter 4 .....  | 4  | Book 1, Chapter 34 ..... | 37 |
| Book 1, Chapter 5 .....  | 4  | Book 1, Chapter 35 ..... | 38 |
| Book 1, Chapter 6 .....  | 6  | Book 1, Chapter 36 ..... | 39 |
| Book 1, Chapter 7 .....  | 7  | Book 1, Chapter 37 ..... | 40 |
| Book 1, Chapter 8 .....  | 8  | Book 1, Chapter 38 ..... | 41 |
| Book 1, Chapter 9 .....  | 9  | Book 1, Chapter 39 ..... | 42 |
| Book 1, Chapter 10 ..... | 10 | Book 1, Chapter 40 ..... | 43 |
| Book 1, Chapter 11 ..... | 12 | Book 1, Chapter 41 ..... | 44 |
| Book 1, Chapter 12 ..... | 13 | Book 1, Chapter 42 ..... | 45 |
| Book 1, Chapter 13 ..... | 14 | Book 1, Chapter 43 ..... | 46 |
| Book 1, Chapter 14 ..... | 15 | Book 1, Chapter 44 ..... | 47 |
| Book 1, Chapter 15 ..... | 16 | Book 1, Chapter 45 ..... | 49 |
| Book 1, Chapter 16 ..... | 17 | Book 1, Chapter 46 ..... | 50 |
| Book 1, Chapter 17 ..... | 18 | Book 1, Chapter 47 ..... | 51 |
| Book 1, Chapter 18 ..... | 20 | Book 1, Chapter 48 ..... | 52 |
| Book 1, Chapter 19 ..... | 21 | Book 1, Chapter 49 ..... | 53 |
| Book 1, Chapter 20 ..... | 22 | Book 2, Chapter 1 .....  | 55 |
| Book 1, Chapter 21 ..... | 23 | Book 2, Chapter 2 .....  | 56 |
| Book 1, Chapter 22 ..... | 24 | Book 2, Chapter 3 .....  | 57 |
| Book 1, Chapter 23 ..... | 25 | Book 2, Chapter 4 .....  | 58 |
| Book 1, Chapter 24 ..... | 26 | Book 2, Chapter 5 .....  | 59 |
| Book 1, Chapter 25 ..... | 27 | Book 2, Chapter 6 .....  | 60 |
| Book 1, Chapter 26 ..... | 29 | Book 2, Chapter 7 .....  | 61 |
| Book 1, Chapter 27 ..... | 30 | Book 2, Chapter 8 .....  | 62 |
| Book 1, Chapter 28 ..... | 31 | Book 2, Chapter 9 .....  | 63 |
| Book 1, Chapter 29 ..... | 32 | Book 2, Chapter 10 ..... | 64 |
| Book 1, Chapter 30 ..... | 33 | Book 2, Chapter 11 ..... | 65 |

|                          |     |                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|
| Book 2, Chapter 12 ..... | 66  | Book 3, Chapter 20 ..... | 103 |
| Book 2, Chapter 13 ..... | 67  | Book 3, Chapter 21 ..... | 104 |
| Book 2, Chapter 14 ..... | 68  | Book 3, Chapter 22 ..... | 105 |
| Book 2, Chapter 15 ..... | 69  | Book 3, Chapter 23 ..... | 106 |
| Book 2, Chapter 16 ..... | 70  | Book 3, Chapter 24 ..... | 107 |
| Book 2, Chapter 17 ..... | 71  | Book 3, Chapter 25 ..... | 108 |
| Book 2, Chapter 18 ..... | 72  | Book 3, Chapter 26 ..... | 109 |
| Book 2, Chapter 19 ..... | 73  | Book 3, Chapter 27 ..... | 110 |
| Book 2, Chapter 20 ..... | 74  | Book 3, Chapter 28 ..... | 111 |
| Book 2, Chapter 21 ..... | 75  | Book 3, Chapter 29 ..... | 113 |
| Book 2, Chapter 22 ..... | 77  | Book 3, Chapter 30 ..... | 114 |
| Book 2, Chapter 23 ..... | 78  | Book 3, Chapter 31 ..... | 114 |
| Book 2, Chapter 24 ..... | 79  | Book 3, Chapter 32 ..... | 116 |
| Book 2, Chapter 25 ..... | 80  | Book 3, Chapter 33 ..... | 117 |
| Book 2, Chapter 26 ..... | 81  | Book 3, Chapter 34 ..... | 118 |
| Book 2, Chapter 27 ..... | 82  | Book 4, Chapter 1 .....  | 119 |
| Book 3, Chapter 1 .....  | 83  | Book 4, Chapter 2 .....  | 120 |
| Book 3, Chapter 2 .....  | 84  | Book 4, Chapter 3 .....  | 121 |
| Book 3, Chapter 3 .....  | 85  | Book 4, Chapter 4 .....  | 122 |
| Book 3, Chapter 4 .....  | 86  | Book 4, Chapter 5 .....  | 123 |
| Book 3, Chapter 5 .....  | 87  | Book 4, Chapter 6 .....  | 124 |
| Book 3, Chapter 6 .....  | 88  | Book 4, Chapter 7 .....  | 125 |
| Book 3, Chapter 7 .....  | 89  | Book 4, Chapter 8 .....  | 126 |
| Book 3, Chapter 8 .....  | 90  | Book 4, Chapter 9 .....  | 127 |
| Book 3, Chapter 9 .....  | 91  | Book 4, Chapter 10 ..... | 128 |
| Book 3, Chapter 10 ..... | 92  | Book 4, Chapter 11 ..... | 129 |
| Book 3, Chapter 11 ..... | 93  | Book 4, Chapter 12 ..... | 130 |
| Book 3, Chapter 12 ..... | 94  | Book 4, Chapter 13 ..... | 130 |
| Book 3, Chapter 13 ..... | 95  | Book 4, Chapter 14 ..... | 132 |
| Book 3, Chapter 14 ..... | 96  | Book 4, Chapter 15 ..... | 133 |
| Book 3, Chapter 15 ..... | 97  | Book 4, Chapter 16 ..... | 133 |
| Book 3, Chapter 16 ..... | 98  | Book 4, Chapter 17 ..... | 134 |
| Book 3, Chapter 17 ..... | 99  | Book 4, Chapter 18 ..... | 136 |
| Book 3, Chapter 18 ..... | 100 | Book 4, Chapter 19 ..... | 136 |
| Book 3, Chapter 19 ..... | 102 | Book 4, Chapter 20 ..... | 137 |

|                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Book 4, Chapter 21 ..... | 138 |
| Book 4, Chapter 22 ..... | 139 |
| Book 4, Chapter 23 ..... | 140 |
| Book 4, Chapter 24 ..... | 141 |
| Book 4, Chapter 25 ..... | 142 |
| Book 4, Chapter 26 ..... | 143 |
| Book 4, Chapter 27 ..... | 144 |
| Book 4, Chapter 28 ..... | 145 |
| Book 4, Chapter 29 ..... | 146 |
| Book 4, Chapter 30 ..... | 147 |
| Book 4, Chapter 31 ..... | 147 |
| Book 4, Chapter 32 ..... | 148 |
| Book 4, Chapter 33 ..... | 149 |
| Book 4, Chapter 34 ..... | 150 |
| Book 4, Chapter 35 ..... | 151 |
| Book 4, Chapter 36 ..... | 152 |
| Book 4, Chapter 37 ..... | 153 |
| Book 4, Chapter 38 ..... | 154 |
| Book 5, Chapter 1 .....  | 155 |
| Book 5, Chapter 2 .....  | 156 |
| Book 5, Chapter 3 .....  | 157 |
| Book 5, Chapter 4 .....  | 158 |
| Book 5, Chapter 5 .....  | 159 |
| Book 5, Chapter 6 .....  | 161 |
| Book 5, Chapter 7 .....  | 162 |
| Book 5, Chapter 8 .....  | 163 |
| Book 5, Chapter 9 .....  | 164 |
| Book 5, Chapter 10 ..... | 166 |
| Book 5, Chapter 11 ..... | 167 |
| Book 5, Chapter 12 ..... | 168 |

|                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Book 5, Chapter 13 ..... | 169 |
| Book 5, Chapter 14 ..... | 170 |
| Book 5, Chapter 15 ..... | 172 |
| Book 5, Chapter 16 ..... | 173 |
| Book 5, Chapter 17 ..... | 174 |
| Book 5, Chapter 18 ..... | 175 |
| Book 5, Chapter 19 ..... | 176 |
| Book 5, Chapter 20 ..... | 177 |
| Book 5, Chapter 21 ..... | 178 |
| Book 5, Chapter 22 ..... | 179 |
| Book 5, Chapter 23 ..... | 180 |
| Book 5, Chapter 24 ..... | 181 |
| Book 5, Chapter 25 ..... | 182 |
| Book 5, Chapter 26 ..... | 183 |
| Book 5, Chapter 27 ..... | 184 |
| Book 5, Chapter 28 ..... | 186 |
| Book 5, Chapter 29 ..... | 187 |
| Book 5, Chapter 30 ..... | 188 |
| Book 5, Chapter 31 ..... | 189 |
| Book 5, Chapter 32 ..... | 190 |
| Book 5, Chapter 33 ..... | 191 |
| Book 5, Chapter 34 ..... | 192 |
| Book 5, Chapter 35 ..... | 193 |
| Book 5, Chapter 36 ..... | 194 |
| Book 5, Chapter 37 ..... | 195 |
| Book 5, Chapter 38 ..... | 197 |
| Book 5, Chapter 39 ..... | 198 |
| Book 5, Chapter 40 ..... | 199 |
| Book 5, Chapter 41 ..... | 200 |

## Book 1, Chapter 1

- <sup>1</sup> When at last I was wholly, or at least largely, released from the labor of defending cases and my duties in the Senate, I returned, Brutus, chiefly at your urging, to those studies I had kept in my heart but set aside under the pressure of events, and took them up again after a long interruption. The theory and training of every art that leads to the right way of life are contained in the pursuit of wisdom, which is called philosophy; I therefore thought I should bring this pursuit to light in Latin literature. Not that philosophy could not be learned from Greek books and teachers; but I have always held that our people have either shown greater wisdom than the Greeks in making discoveries for themselves, or improved on what they received from them—whatever, that is, they considered worth devoting their efforts to.
- <sup>2</sup> For we certainly preserve our customs, our ways of life, and our domestic and family affairs better and with greater dignity; and our ancestors undoubtedly regulated the state with better institutions and laws. What need I say of warfare? In that field our people have been powerful through courage, but still more through discipline. Then there are the qualities they attained by nature, not by learning, in which neither Greece nor any other nation can be compared with them. What people ever possessed such dignity, such steadfastness, greatness of soul, integrity, loyalty—such outstanding virtue of every kind—as to bear comparison with our ancestors?
- <sup>3</sup> Greece surpassed us in learning and in every branch of literature; but it was easy to defeat opponents who offered no resistance. For while poets are the oldest class of learned men among the Greeks—Homer and Hesiod lived before Rome was founded, Archilochus in the reign of Romulus—we received poetry rather late. About 510 years after Rome’s foundation, Livius produced a play

in the consulship of Gaius Claudius, the son of Caecus, and Marcus Tuditanus, the year before Ennius was born. Ennius was older than Plautus and Naevius.

## Book 1, Chapter 2

Our people, then, were slow either to recognize poets or to welcome them. Admittedly, the *Origins* tells us that guests at banquets used to sing of famous men's virtues to the accompaniment of a flute. Yet the lack of honor accorded to this art is clear from a speech of Cato, in which he reproached Marcus Nobilior for taking poets to his province. As we know, Nobilior had taken Ennius to Aetolia during his consulship. The less honor poets received, therefore, the less enthusiasm there was for poetry. Yet whenever men of great gifts did emerge in this field,

- <sup>4</sup> they were fully equal to the glory of the Greeks. Do we suppose that, if Fabius, a man of the highest rank, had been praised for his painting, there would not have been many a Polyclitus and Parrhasius among us too? Honor nourishes the arts; glory fires everyone's enthusiasm for study, while pursuits disapproved of in any society always languish. The Greeks thought the highest culture lay in music for strings and voice. Thus Epaminondas, in my judgment the foremost man of Greece, is said to have played the lyre magnificently; and some years earlier Themistocles was considered rather uneducated because he declined the lyre at a banquet. Musicians therefore flourished in Greece; everyone studied music, and anyone who did not know it was thought insufficiently cultivated.
- <sup>5</sup> Geometry was held in the highest honor among them, and so no one was more distinguished than their mathematicians. We, however, confined that art to its usefulness in measurement and calculation.

## Book 1, Chapter 3

By contrast, we soon embraced the orator: at first he was not learned, but still had an aptitude for speaking; later he was learned too. For Galba, Africanus, and Laelius are said to have been men of learning, while Cato, who preceded them in age, was devoted to study; later came Lepidus, Carbo, and the Gracchi, and from then down to our own day there were men so great that we yielded little or nothing at all to the Greeks. Philosophy has lain neglected until our time, without any illumination from Latin literature. We must bring it to light and rouse it to life, so that, if we have been of some service to our fellow citizens while occupied with public affairs, we may also, if possible, serve them in our leisure.

- <sup>6</sup> We must work all the harder at this because there are said to be many Latin books already, written without due thought by excellent men, to be sure, but men insufficiently educated. It is possible to think soundly and yet be unable to express one's thoughts with elegance. But for a man to commit his thoughts to writing when he can neither arrange them nor illuminate them, nor draw the reader in with any pleasure, is an unrestrained abuse of both leisure and literature. Accordingly, these writers read their books themselves, along with their own circle; no one else touches them except those who want the same license to write allowed to themselves. So if our industry has brought us any distinction in oratory, we shall labor much more eagerly to open the springs of philosophy, from which that eloquence itself once flowed.

## Book 1, Chapter 4

- <sup>7</sup> Just as Aristotle, a man of supreme genius, knowledge, and abundant resources, was stirred by the fame of the rhetorician Isocrates to begin teaching young men to speak as well, and to unite wisdom with eloquence, so I have resolved not to abandon my former devotion to oratory while engaging in this greater and more fruitful art. For I have always considered that philosophy complete which could discuss the greatest questions richly and gracefully. I have devoted myself to this exercise with such eager [effort] that I have now even ventured to hold discussions in the Greek manner. Recently, after your departure, when several friends were with me at Tusculum, I tried what I could do in this field. In earlier days I used to practice pleading cases—no one did so longer than I—and this is now my exercise in old age. I would ask someone to state what he wished to hear discussed, and then, sitting or walking, I would argue the subject.
- <sup>8</sup> I have therefore gathered the discussions of five days—“schools,” as the Greeks call them—into as many books. The procedure was this: after the person who wished to listen had said what he thought, I would argue against him. This, as you know, is the old Socratic method of disputing another person’s opinion. Socrates thought this the easiest way to discover what was most like the truth. But to unfold our discussions more conveniently, I shall present them as though they were taking place, rather than being reported. Our opening will therefore run as follows:

## Book 1, Chapter 5

“Death seems to me an evil.”

- <sup>9</sup> “For those who are dead, or for those who must die?”

“For both.”

“Then it is a misery, since it is an evil.”

“Certainly.”

“So both those who have already met their death and those who will meet it are miserable.”

“That is how it seems to me.”

“Then no one is free from misery.”

“No one at all.”

“And indeed, if you wish to be consistent, everyone who has been or will be born is not merely miserable but miserable forever. If you called only those who must die miserable, you would certainly exempt none of the living—for everyone must die—but at least misery would end in death. But since the dead too are miserable, we are born into everlasting misery. Those who died a hundred thousand years ago must be miserable—or rather, everyone who has ever been born.”

“That is precisely what I think.”

“Tell me, please:

- 10 “Are you frightened by those tales—three-headed Cerberus in the underworld, the roaring of Cocytus, the crossing of Acheron, Tantalus ‘with the water touching his chin, dying of thirst’? Or that story of how ‘Sisyphus sweats and strains to roll his stone, yet makes not the slightest progress’? Perhaps you fear the implacable judges too, Minos and Rhadamanthus? Before them neither Lucius Crassus nor Marcus Antonius will defend you; nor, though your case will be heard by Greek judges, will you be able to retain Demosthenes. You yourself will have to plead your case before an enormous audience. Perhaps these are the things you fear, and that is why you consider death an everlasting evil.”

## Book 1, Chapter 6

“Do you think me so deranged that I believe those things exist?”

“Then you do not believe them?”

“Certainly not.”

“By Hercules, that is bad news.”

“Why, may I ask?”

“Because I could be eloquent if I were arguing against them.”

“Who could not, in a case like that? What difficulty is there in refuting these monsters of poets and painters?”

11 “And yet whole books of philosophers argue against just these things.”

“Foolishly enough. Who is so mindless as to be troubled by them?”

“Then if there are no miserable people in the underworld, there are no people in the underworld at all.”

“That is precisely what I think.”

“Where, then, are those you call miserable? What place do they inhabit? If they exist, they cannot be nowhere.”

“But I think they are nowhere.”

“Then they do not even exist?”

“Exactly so; and yet they are miserable for that very reason, because they do not exist.”

12 “I would now rather you were afraid of Cerberus than speak so thoughtlessly.”

“How so?”

“You say that the very person whose existence you deny exists. Where is your sharpness of mind? When you say that someone is miserable, you are saying that someone who does not exist does exist.”

“I am not so dull as to say that.”

“What do you say, then?”

“That Marcus Crassus, for example, is miserable because death deprived him of his great wealth; that Gnaeus Pompey is miserable because he was stripped of such glory; in short, that everyone deprived of this daylight is miserable.”

“You return to the same point. They must exist if they are miserable; but just now you denied that the dead exist. If, then, they do not exist, they cannot be anything; and so they cannot be miserable either.”

“Perhaps I am still not saying what I mean. What I consider most miserable is precisely this: not to exist after having existed.”

“What?”

- 13 “More miserable than never to have existed at all? Then those not yet born are miserable already, because they do not exist; and if we are to be miserable after death, we were miserable before we were born. I, however, do not remember being miserable before I was born. If your memory is better, I should like to know whether you recall anything about yourself.”

## Book 1, Chapter 7

“You joke as though I were saying that those who have not been born are miserable, rather than those who have died.”

“Then you say that they exist.”

“No: they are miserable because they do not exist after having existed.”

“Do you not see that you contradict yourself? What could be more contradictory than for someone who does not exist to be not merely miserable, but anything at all? When you go out through the Capena Gate and see the tombs of Calatinus, the Scipios, the Servilii, and the Metelli, do you think those men miserable?”

“Since you press me on a word, from now on I shall not say that they ‘are miserable,’ but simply ‘miserable’—precisely because they do not exist.”

“So you do not say, ‘Marcus Crassus is miserable,’ but simply, ‘Miserable Marcus Crassus?’”

“Exactly.”

“As though anything you express in that way did not necessarily either exist or not exist! Have you not even had an introduction to dialectic?”

- 14 “One of its first lessons is this: every proposition—for that is the word that occurs to me at present for the Greek ἀξίωμα, an assertion; I shall use another later if I find a better one—every proposition, then, is something either true or false. So when you say ‘Miserable Marcus Crassus,’ either you are saying ‘Crassus is miserable,’ so that it can be judged true or false, or you are saying nothing at all.”

“Come, I now concede that the dead are not miserable, since you have wrung from me the admission that those who do not exist at all cannot even be miserable. But what about us who are alive? Since we must die, are we not miserable? What pleasure can there be in life, when day and night we must think that at any moment we have to die?”

## Book 1, Chapter 8

“Do you understand, then, how much evil you have removed from the human condition?”

- 15 “How?”

“Because if death were a misery even for the dead, we would face an infinite and everlasting evil in life. As things stand, I see a finishing line: once we have run to it, there is nothing more to fear. But you seem to me to follow the view of Epicharmus, a sharp and witty man, as one would expect of a Sicilian.”

“What view? I do not know it.”

“I shall put it into Latin if I can. As you know, I am no more in the habit of speaking Greek in a Latin conversation than Latin in a Greek one.”

“And quite right too. But what is this saying of Epicharmus?”

“I do not want to die, but being dead means nothing to me.”

“Now I recognize the Greek. But since you have forced me to concede that the dead are not miserable, go on, if you can, and make me think that even having to die is no misery.”

16 “That is no difficulty at all, but I am attempting something greater.”

“How is it no difficulty? And what is this greater thing?”

“Since there is no evil after death, death itself is not an evil either: it is immediately followed by the time after death, in which you concede there is no evil. So having to die is not an evil either; it means having to reach what we acknowledge is no evil.”

“Explain that more fully, please. These thorny arguments force me to concede before they win my assent. But what is this greater thing you say you are attempting?”

“To show, if I can, not only that death is no evil, but that it is actually a good.”

“I do not ask that much, but I am eager to hear it. Even if you fail to achieve what you wish, you will still establish that death is no evil. But I shall not interrupt you at all; I would rather hear an uninterrupted discourse.”

“What if I ask you something?”

17 “Will you not answer?”

“It would be arrogant not to, but unless something makes it necessary, I would rather you did not ask.”

## Book 1, Chapter 9

“I shall oblige you and explain what you wish as well as I can. Yet I shall not speak like the Pythian Apollo, as though my words were certain and unalterable, but as one small human being among many, following probabilities by conjecture. I have no means of going beyond what seems likely to be true. Let those proclaim certainties who say that certainty can be grasped and profess themselves wise.”

“Speak as you think best; we are ready to listen.”

- 18 “First, then, we must consider what death itself is, though it seems so familiar a thing. Some think death is the soul’s departure from the body; others believe no departure occurs, but that soul and body perish together, and the soul is extinguished in the body. Among those who think the soul departs, some hold that it is dispersed at once, some that it endures a long time, others that it lasts forever. Again, there is great disagreement about what the soul itself is, where it is, and where it comes from. To some the heart itself seems to be the soul: hence Latin uses words derived from ‘heart’ for people who are senseless, deranged, or of one mind; hence too the wise Nasica, twice consul, was called Corculum, ‘Little Heart,’ and we have the line, ‘A man of outstanding heart and wisdom, shrewd Sextus Aelius.’ Empedocles thinks the soul is the blood that bathes the heart. Others have thought that a certain part of the brain holds sovereignty over the soul. Others accept neither the heart itself nor a particular part of the brain as the soul,
- 19 “but have said that the soul has its seat and dwelling in the heart, or else in the brain. Others identify the soul with breath, as our own people generally do. The language shows it: we speak of drawing one’s last breath and breathing it out, of spirited people and well-disposed souls, and of acting according to one’s soul’s desire; the very word for soul is derived from the word for breath. To Zeno the Stoic, the soul seems to be fire.”

## Book 1, Chapter 10

“Those views I have mentioned—the heart, the brain, breath, fire—are widely held; the rest belong mostly to individual thinkers. For example, some early philosophers long ago, and more recently Aristoxenus, a musician as well as a philosopher, held the soul to be a kind of tension in the body itself, like what is called *ἁρμονία*, harmony, in singing and on stringed instruments. Thus, from the nature and configuration of the whole body, various movements are aroused, like sounds in music.

- 20 “He did not stray from his own profession; yet what he said was something whose nature Plato had discussed and explained long before. Xenocrates denied that the soul had any shape or, so to speak, body; he said it was a number, whose power in nature was supreme, as Pythagoras had already held. His teacher Plato devised a threefold soul: he placed its ruling part, reason, in the head as in a citadel, and made two parts subject to it, anger and desire, assigning them separate places—anger in the chest and desire below the diaphragm.
- 21 “Dicaearchus, however, in the three books in which he presents a conversation held at Corinth among learned men, gives many speakers a voice in the first book. In the other two he introduces a certain Pherocrates, an old man from Phthia whom he says was descended from Deucalion, arguing that there is no soul at all: the whole word is meaningless, and living things are pointlessly called creatures with souls. Neither human nor beast contains a soul or breath of life; all the power by which we act or perceive is spread evenly through every living body and cannot be separated from the body, since it has no existence of its own. There is nothing but a single, uncompounded body, formed so as to live and feel through the blending of its natural constituents.
- 22 “Aristotle, far surpassing everyone—I always except Plato—in both genius and diligence, after embracing the four familiar kinds of first elements from which everything arises, believes there is a certain fifth substance from which the mind is made. For he thinks that thinking, foreseeing, learning, teaching, discovering something, remembering so many [other] things, loving, hating, desiring, fearing, feeling anguish or joy—these and similar activities cannot reside in any of those four kinds. He introduces a fifth kind, which has no name, and gives the soul itself a new name, *ἐνδελέχεια*, ‘continuous activity,’ as though it were a kind of uninterrupted and everlasting motion.”

## Book 1, Chapter 11

“Unless something happens to have escaped me, these are broadly the views about the soul. Let us leave aside Democritus, a great man, certainly, but one who makes the soul out of smooth, round particles meeting by some chance collision. For his school has nothing that a swarm of atoms cannot produce.

- 23 “Which of these views is true, some god may know; which is most like the truth is a great question. Would we rather decide between these views, then, or return to our subject?”

“I should like both, if possible, but it is difficult to combine them. So if we can be freed from the fear of death without discussing these questions, let us do that. But if freedom from that fear is impossible without settling this question about souls, let us deal with this now, if you agree, and the other matter another time.”

“I think the course I understand you to prefer is the more convenient. For reason will establish that, whichever of the views I have set out is true, death is either no evil or is, rather, a good.

- 24 “For if the soul is heart, blood, or brain, then certainly, being body, it will perish with the rest of the body. If it is breath, it will perhaps disperse; if fire, it will be extinguished; if Aristoxenus’s harmony, it will be dissolved. What need I say of Dicaearchus, who says there is no soul at all? On all these views, nothing after death can concern anyone, for sensation is lost along with life, and nothing can make any difference, one way or the other, to someone without sensation. The views of the remaining thinkers offer the hope, if that happens to please you, that souls, once they have left their bodies, can reach heaven as their own home.”

“It certainly pleases me. First I should like it to be so; and then, even if it is not, I should still like to be persuaded that it is.”

“Then what need have you of our efforts? Can we surpass Plato in eloquence? Read his book on the soul attentively: there will be nothing further to desire.”

“By Hercules, I have, and more than once. But somehow, while I read, I agree; when I put the book down and begin to think to myself about the immortality of souls, all that assent slips away.”

“Well?

25 “Do you grant that souls either remain after death or perish in death itself?”

“I do.”

“What if they remain?”

“I grant that they are happy.”

“And if they perish?”

“They are not miserable, since they do not even exist. You forced that concession from me a little while ago.”

“How, then, or why, do you say death seems an evil to you? It will either make us happy, if our souls remain, or leave us without misery, if we lose sensation.”

## Book 1, Chapter 12

26 “Then explain, if it is no trouble, first, if you can, that souls remain after death; then, if you cannot establish that—for it is difficult—you will show that death is free of every evil. For my fear is that this very thing is an evil: I do not mean being without sensation, but having to lose it.”

“For the view you wish established, we can certainly draw on the finest authorities, something that both should and usually does carry the greatest weight in any question. First comes the whole of antiquity, which perhaps saw the truth more clearly the nearer it stood to our beginning and divine descent.

“And so one conviction was rooted in those ancient people whom Ennius calls the men of old: that sensation survives death, and that on leaving life a human being is not so destroyed as to perish utterly.

- 27 “This can be understood from many things, but especially from pontifical law and the rites of burial. Men endowed with the greatest gifts would neither have observed these with such care nor have made their violation subject to such inexpiable religious penalties, unless the conviction had been fixed in their minds that death is not a destruction which removes and obliterates everything, but a kind of migration and change of life. In distinguished men and women this would ordinarily lead to heaven; in others, life was kept on earth, yet still endured.
- 28 “From this comes our people’s belief that ‘Romulus lives out his days in heaven with the gods,’ as Ennius said, accepting the tradition. From this too comes the belief among the Greeks, spreading from them to us and as far as the Ocean, that Hercules is so mighty and so readily present a god. Hence comes Liber, born of Semele, and, with equal renown in tradition, the brothers born of Tyndareus, who are said not only to have helped the Roman people to victory in battle, but also to have announced it. And what of Ino, the daughter of Cadmus? Called Leucothea by the Greeks, is she not regarded by our people as Matuta? In short, without pursuing more examples, is not almost the whole of heaven filled with the human race?”

## Book 1, Chapter 13

- 29 “If I were to search into ancient things and try to unearth from them what the writers of Greece have handed down, those very gods regarded as belonging to the highest rank would be found to have gone from here among us into heaven. Ask whose tombs are pointed out in Greece; remember, since you have been initiated, what is taught in the mysteries. Only then will you understand how widely this extends. But those early people, who had not yet learned the natural philosophy that <human beings> began to study many years later, were persuaded only of what they had come to know at nature’s prompting. They did

not grasp the reasons and causes of things. They were often moved by certain visions, chiefly at night, so that those who had departed this life seemed to them to be living.

- 30 “Now the strongest reason offered for believing that gods exist seems to be that no nation is so savage, no person anywhere so brutal, that the idea of gods has not imbued the mind. Many hold wrong beliefs about the gods—that is the usual result of corrupt custom—but everyone believes that a divine power and nature exist. Nor is this brought about by people conferring or meeting together; the belief has not been established by institutions or laws. In every matter, the agreement of all nations must be considered a law of nature. In the same way, who does not mourn the death of his loved ones primarily because he thinks them deprived of life’s blessings? Remove that belief and you will remove mourning. No one mourns for his own loss: people may feel pain and anguish, but that sorrowful lamentation and grieving weeping arise because we think the person we loved has been deprived of life’s blessings and is aware of it. We feel these things with nature as our guide, without any reasoning or teaching.”

## Book 1, Chapter 14

- 31 “The strongest evidence that nature herself silently judges souls immortal is that everyone is concerned, and profoundly concerned, about what will happen after death. ‘He plants trees to benefit another generation,’ as <Statius> says in *The Young Companions*. What can he have in view except that later generations too concern him? So a diligent farmer will plant trees whose fruit he himself will never see; shall a great man not plant laws, institutions, a commonwealth? What do the begetting of children, the perpetuation of a name, the adoption of sons, the care taken over wills, the very memorials and inscriptions on tombs signify, except that our thoughts reach into the future too?  
“What?”

- 32 “Do you doubt that we ought to take our model of nature from each nature at its best? What better nature is there in humankind than that of those who believe they were born to help, protect, and preserve humanity? Hercules went to the gods: he would never have gone had he not made that road for himself while living among men. But those stories are ancient now, consecrated by the reverence of all:”

## Book 1, Chapter 15

“What do we think the many great men killed for our commonwealth had in mind? That their names should end at the same boundary as their lives? No one would ever offer himself to death for his country without a great hope of immortality.

- 33 “Themistocles could have lived at leisure; so could Epaminondas; so, not to seek examples both ancient and foreign, could I. But somehow there is rooted in our minds a kind of foreknowledge of the ages to come, and it is in the greatest geniuses and loftiest souls that this is strongest and most clearly seen. Take it away, and who would be so mad as to live continually among labors and dangers?

- 34 “I am speaking of leading citizens. But what of poets? Do they not wish to be famous after death? Why else these lines?

“Look, citizens, upon the image of old Ennius:

“Here is the man who sang your fathers’ greatest deeds.’

“He demands the reward of glory from those whose fathers he had covered with glory. And again:

“Let no one with tears [...]’

“Why? ‘I fly alive upon the lips of men.’

“But why speak of poets? Craftsmen wish to be famous after death. Why else did Phidias include a likeness of himself on Minerva’s shield, when he was not allowed to inscribe his <name>? And do not our philosophers put their names

even on the very books they write about despising glory?

- 35 “But if universal agreement is nature’s voice, and everyone everywhere agrees that there is something which concerns those who have left this life, we too must hold the same belief. And if we think that those whose souls excel in genius or virtue perceive nature’s power most clearly, because their nature is best, then, since the best people do most to serve posterity, it is likely that there is something of which they will be aware after death.”

## Book 1, Chapter 16

- 36 “But just as nature leads us to believe that gods exist, while reason teaches us what they are like, so the agreement of all nations leads us to believe that souls endure; where they dwell and what they are like must be learned by reason. Ignorance of this fashioned the underworld and those terrors you seemed, not without cause, to despise. Since bodies fell to earth and were covered with soil, humus—hence the Latin *humari*, ‘to be buried’—people thought that the rest of the dead person’s life was spent beneath the earth. Great errors followed this belief, and poets increased them.

- 37 “A crowded theater audience, including women and children, is stirred when it hears such lofty verse:

“I am here: from Acheron I have come, with difficulty, by a deep and rugged road,

“Through caverns built of rough, overhanging rocks,

“Enormous, where the underworld’s dense darkness stands congealed.’

“So powerful was the error—though I think it has now been dispelled—that, although people knew bodies had been burned, they still imagined things taking place in the underworld that could neither occur nor be conceived without bodies. They could not grasp in their minds souls living by themselves; they

looked for some shape and figure. Hence the whole of Homer's 'Visit to the Dead'; hence the 'divinations through the dead' that my friend Appius used to perform; hence the lake of Avernus in our neighborhood,

"From which souls are summoned, covered in dim shadow, images

"Of the dead, from Acheron's deep mouth, with salt blood.'

"Yet they want these images to speak, which is impossible without a tongue, a palate, or the strength and structure of throat, chest, and lungs. They could see nothing with the mind: they referred everything to the eyes.

- 38 "But it takes great genius to call the mind away from the senses and draw thought out of its accustomed paths. I certainly believe there were others in all those centuries, but, so far as written records show, Pherecydes of Syros was the first to say that human souls are everlasting. He was ancient indeed: he lived in the reign of the king who shared my family name. His pupil Pythagoras did most to establish this belief. Coming to Italy during the reign of Tarquin the Proud, he held sway over Magna Graecia, both through [his prestige and] his teaching and also through his authority. For many centuries afterward the name of the Pythagoreans remained so powerful that no one else was thought learned."

## Book 1, Chapter 17

"But I return to the early thinkers. They did not generally give a rational account of their view, except where something could be explained through numbers or diagrams.

- 39 "Plato is said to have come to Italy to acquaint himself with the Pythagoreans, to have learned all their doctrines, and to have been the first not only to share Pythagoras's view of the eternity of souls but also to offer a reason for it. Unless you have something to say, let us pass over that reason and abandon this whole hope of immortality."

“After bringing me to the height of expectation, do you desert me? By Hercules, I would rather be wrong with Plato, whose worth in your eyes I know, and whom I admire on your testimony, than hold the truth with those other thinkers.”

<sup>40</sup> “Bravo for your courage! I myself would not be unwilling to be wrong with that very man. Do we doubt, then—? Or is this like most questions? Though certainly not in this case. For mathematicians convince us that the earth, set in the middle of the universe, occupies, in relation to the whole circuit of heaven, something like a point, which they call κέντρον, the center. Further, the four bodies that give birth to everything have this nature: as though they had divided their directions of movement among themselves, earthy and watery things are carried by their own tendency and weight at right angles toward land and sea. The remaining two elements, one fiery and the other airy, in contrast to those first two which are borne by gravity and weight toward the center of the universe, fly upward in straight lines into the heavens, either because their own nature seeks the heights or because lighter things are naturally driven back by heavier ones. These things being established, it should be clear that souls, when they leave the body, are carried aloft, whether they are made of air—that is, of breath—or of fire.

<sup>41</sup> “But if the soul is either some kind of number, a statement more subtle than clear, or that fifth substance, which lacks a name rather than an intelligible nature, these are still more unadulterated and pure, so that they rise farthest from the earth. The soul, then, is something of this kind [...] so that a mind of such vigor should not lie submerged in the heart or brain, or in Empedocles’s blood.”

## Book 1, Chapter 18

“But let us leave aside Dicaearchus and his contemporary and fellow student Aristoxenus, learned men, certainly. One seems never even to have felt pain, since he is unaware that he has a soul; the other delights so much in his music that he tries to transfer it to these questions too. We can recognize harmony from the intervals between sounds, whose varied arrangement produces many harmonies as well; but I do not see what harmony the arrangement of limbs and shape of a body can produce when it is without a soul. Learned as he is—and he is learned—let him yield these matters to his teacher Aristotle, and himself teach music. That Greek proverb gives good advice: ‘Let each practice the art he knows.’

- <sup>42</sup> “And let us utterly reject that chance collision of smooth, round, indivisible particles, which Democritus nevertheless wants to be warmed and breathable—that is, made of breath. But the soul, if it belongs to the four kinds of which all things are said to consist, is made of fiery breath, as I see Panaetius especially favors believing, and must necessarily seek the heights. Neither of these two elements has any downward tendency; both always seek the regions above. So if souls disperse, that happens far from earth; if they endure and preserve their form, it is all the more necessary that they be carried toward heaven and burst through and divide this thick, condensed air nearest the earth. For the soul is warmer, or rather more fiery, than the air I have just called thick and condensed. This can be known from the fact that our bodies, though made of the earthy kind of element, are warmed by the soul’s heat.”

## Book 1, Chapter 19

<sup>43</sup> “Moreover, the soul escapes from this air I have so often mentioned and breaks through it all the more easily because nothing is swifter than the soul; no speed can compete with its speed. If it remains uncorrupted and unchanged, it must be carried along so as to penetrate and divide this whole region of the sky where clouds, rains, and winds gather, a region damp and dark because of the earth’s exhalations.

“Once the soul has passed beyond that region and touched and recognized a nature like its own, it comes to rest among fires formed from the union of rarefied air and the sun’s tempered heat, and ceases to rise higher. For when it <has> attained a lightness and warmth like its own, it is, as it were, balanced between equal weights, and moves in no direction. Only then has it reached its natural dwelling, when it has penetrated to what is like itself. There, lacking nothing, it will be nourished and sustained by the same things that sustain and nourish the stars.

“And since the body’s torches habitually kindle us to almost every desire, and we burn all the more because we envy those who possess what we wish to possess, we shall certainly be happy when, leaving our bodies behind, we are free of both desire and rivalry.

<sup>44</sup> “What we do now, when released from cares—the wish to look at something and explore it—we shall do then with far greater freedom, devoting ourselves wholly to contemplating things and understanding them. For our minds have by nature an insatiable desire to see the truth; and the very regions we shall have reached, by making knowledge of heavenly things easier, will give us a greater desire to know them.

<sup>45</sup> “Even on earth this beauty stirred that ‘ancestral’ and ‘inherited’ philosophy, as Theophrastus calls it, kindling it with the desire for knowledge. But those will enjoy it most who, even when living on this earth surrounded by darkness, still

longed to see clearly with the mind's keen sight."

## Book 1, Chapter 20

"For if people now think they have achieved something by seeing the entrance to the Black Sea and those narrows through which passed the ship named

"Argo, because chosen men of Argos

"Sailed in her in quest of the ram's gilded fleece,'

"or by seeing those straits of Ocean 'where the rushing wave divides Europe and Libya,' what a spectacle do we think there will be when we may look upon the whole earth—its position, shape, and outline, its habitable regions, and, in contrast, those empty of all cultivation because of the force of cold or heat?

<sup>46</sup> "For even now it is not with our eyes that we discern what we see. There is no sensation in the body: rather, as not only natural philosophers teach but also physicians, who have seen these parts laid open and exposed, there are something like channels running from the soul's seat to the eyes, ears, and nostrils. Thus, when absorbed in thought or hindered by some force of illness, we often neither see nor hear, though our eyes and ears are open and sound. It is easy to understand from this that the soul sees and hears, not those parts which are, as it were, its windows—windows through which the mind can nevertheless perceive nothing unless it is present and attentive. And what of our grasping such different things with the same mind: color, taste, heat, smell, sound? The soul could never know these through five messengers unless everything were brought to it and it alone were judge of them all. Certainly these things will be discerned far more purely and clearly when the soul, free, has reached the place to which nature bears it.

<sup>47</sup> "For now, although nature has fashioned with consummate skill those openings which lead from the body to the soul, they are still in some way obstructed by bodies of dense, earthly matter. But when there is nothing except the soul, no barrier will prevent it from perceiving what each thing is like."

## Book 1, Chapter 21

“If the subject required it, we could speak at any length about the many, varied, and magnificent sights the soul will have in the heavenly regions.

48 “When I think of these, I often marvel at the arrogance of certain philosophers. They admire their knowledge of nature, give exultant thanks to its discoverer and founder, and revere him as a god. Through him, they say, they have been freed from the harshest of masters: everlasting terror and fear by day and night. What terror? What fear? What old woman is so deranged as to fear those things which you, apparently, would fear if you had not learned natural philosophy—‘Acheron’s deep precincts of Orcus, death’s pale regions clouded in darkness’? Is a philosopher not ashamed to boast that he does not fear these things and has learned they are false? From that we can understand how naturally acute such people are, since without instruction they would have believed them.

49 “And what a splendid acquisition they have made in learning that, when their hour of death comes, they will perish altogether! Grant that it is so—for I offer no resistance—what is there in that to rejoice in or boast about? Yet certainly nothing occurs to me to show why the view of Pythagoras and Plato should not be true. Even if Plato offered no reasoning—see how much I grant the man—his authority alone would overcome me. But he has offered so many reasons that he seems to have wished to persuade others and certainly to have persuaded himself.”

## Book 1, Chapter 22

- 50 “But most people struggle against this and punish souls with death as though they had condemned them on a capital charge. There is no other reason why the eternity of souls seems incredible to them except that they cannot understand or grasp in thought what a soul without a body is like. As though they understood what it is like within the body itself—its shape, size, or location! If all the parts now hidden in a living person could be seen, would the soul come into view, or is its substance so fine that it eludes the gaze?
- 51 “Let those who say they cannot understand the soul without a body consider these things: they will see what sort of soul they understand within the body itself. To me, as I examine the soul’s nature, the thought of what it is like within the body, as though in someone else’s house, seems far more difficult and obscure than the thought of what it is like when it has left and come into the open heavens, as though to its own home. Even if we cannot understand the nature of something we have never seen, we can certainly embrace in thought both god himself and the divine soul freed from the body. Dicaearchus and Aristoxenus, indeed, because understanding what the soul was or what it was like proved difficult, said there was no soul at all.
- 52 “Yet to see the soul by means of the soul itself is perhaps the greatest achievement of all. This is surely the force of Apollo’s command that everyone should know himself. For I do not believe he commands us to know our limbs, our height, or our shape. We are not bodies; nor am I, in saying these things to you, speaking to your body. When he says ‘Know yourself,’ then, he means ‘Know your soul.’ The body is, as it were, a vessel or a receptacle for the soul; whatever is done by your soul is done by you. Unless knowing the soul were divine, this command, belonging to a mind of exceptional insight, would not have been attributed to a god [namely, this ability to know oneself].

- 53 “But if the soul itself does not know what it is like, tell me, please: will it not even know that it exists, or that it moves? From this arose Plato’s argument, which Socrates explains in the *Phaedrus*, and which I set out in the sixth book of *On the Republic*.”

## Book 1, Chapter 23

“What is always in motion is eternal. But that which imparts motion to something else, and is itself moved by something external, must come to the end of life when its motion ends. Only what moves itself, therefore, since it never abandons itself, never ceases even to move. Indeed, for all other things that move, this is the source, this the first principle of motion.

- 54 “But a first principle has no origin. Everything arises from a first principle, but that principle itself cannot be born from anything else; for it would not be a first principle if it were generated from elsewhere. And if it never arises, it never perishes either. For once a first principle was extinguished, it would neither be reborn itself from another source nor create anything else from itself, since everything must arise from a first principle. It follows that the first principle of motion lies in what moves of itself. This can neither be born nor die; otherwise the whole heavens and all nature must collapse <and> come to a standstill, and find no force to set them moving by an initial impulse. Since, then, it is plain that what moves itself is eternal, who can deny that this nature has been bestowed on souls? Everything moved by an external impulse is without soul; what is alive is stirred by an inner motion of its own, for this is the soul’s distinctive nature and power. If, of all things, this alone [always]

- 55 “‘moves itself, then certainly it was not born and is eternal.’ Let all the common herd of philosophers band together—for that seems the proper name for those who differ from Plato and Socrates and their school—not only will they never explain anything so elegantly, they will not even understand how subtly this very argument has been brought to its conclusion. The soul, then, is aware of

its own movement; and in being aware of that, it is also aware that it moves by its own power, not another's, and that it can never abandon itself. From this its eternity follows—unless you have something to say against it.”

“I would readily agree not even to let any objection enter my mind: so strongly do I favor that view.”

## Book 1, Chapter 24

“Well?

<sup>56</sup> “Do you think those arguments any less weighty which show that human souls possess certain divine qualities? If I could see how these could come into being, I could also see how they might perish. For I seem able to say from what blood, bile, phlegm, bones, sinews, veins—in short, the whole structure of the limbs and the entire body—have been compounded, and how they were made. As for the soul itself, if it contained nothing except what enables us to live, I should think human life sustained by nature just as the life of a vine or tree is; for we say that these too are alive. Likewise, if the human soul had nothing beyond the impulse to seek or avoid, it would share that too with beasts.

<sup>57</sup> “But first it has memory, an unbounded memory of countless things. Plato holds that this is recollection of an earlier life. In the book entitled *Meno*, Socrates asks a young boy some questions in geometry about the measurement of a square. The boy answers as a boy would; yet the questions are so easy that, answering step by step, he reaches the same point he would have reached had he studied geometry. From this Socrates wants to establish that learning is nothing other than recollecting. He explains this point far more carefully in the conversation he held on the very day he departed this life. He shows that anyone who seems wholly untrained in every subject, by answering a skillful questioner, reveals that he is not learning those things for the first time, but recognizing them through recollection. It could not possibly be that from childhood we

had notions of so many great things implanted and, as it were, stamped upon our souls—what the Greeks call *ἐννοιαί*, ‘conceptions’—unless the soul had been active in acquiring knowledge before it entered the body.

- 58 “And since nothing existed [...] as Plato argues throughout his works—for he thinks nothing that arises and perishes truly exists, and that only what always remains as it is exists, which he calls *ἰδέα*, an ‘idea,’ and we a ‘form’—the soul could not have come to know these things while confined in the body: it brought them already known. This removes the wonder of its knowledge of so many things. The soul does not see them clearly when it has suddenly moved into so unfamiliar and troubled a dwelling; but once it has collected and refreshed itself, it recognizes them through recollection.
- 59 “Thus learning is nothing other than recollecting. But I marvel at memory in a still greater way. What is this faculty by which we remember? What power does it have, and from what source was that power born? I am not asking how great a memory Simonides is said to have had, or Theodectes, or Cineas, sent by Pyrrhus as his envoy to the Senate, or, in recent times, Charmadas, or Metrodorus of Scepsis, who lived just lately, or our own Hortensius. I am speaking of ordinary human memory, especially that of people engaged in some more demanding study or art. It is difficult to judge how great their minds are: so much do they remember.”

## Book 1, Chapter 25

- 60 “Where, then, does this discussion lead? I think we must understand what that power is and where it comes from. Certainly it does not belong to the heart, the blood, the brain, or atoms. Whether it belongs to breath or fire I do not know; unlike those thinkers, I am not ashamed to admit that I do not know what I do not know. But if I could affirm anything about any obscure subject, I would swear to this: whether the soul is breath or fire, it is divine. Tell me, I beg you:

does so great a power of memory seem to you to have been sown in the earth or compounded from it beneath this cloudy, darkened sky? If you do not see what it is, at least you see what it is like; if not even that, you certainly see how great it is.

<sup>61</sup> “Well then? Do we think there is some capacity in the soul into which, as into a vessel, the things we remember are poured? That is absurd. What bottom, what such shape can the soul be conceived to have, or what capacity so vast? Or do we think the soul receives impressions like wax, and that memory consists of traces of things stamped upon the mind? What traces can there be of words, or of the things themselves? And what immense expanse could there be to reproduce so many things?

“What?

<sup>62</sup> “What, after all, is that power which searches out hidden things, which is called invention and discovery? Does it seem to you to have been compounded from this earthly, mortal, perishable nature? Or what of the man who first gave names to everything, an act Pythagoras considered supremely wise? Or the man who brought scattered people together and called them into a shared life; or the man who confined the seemingly infinite sounds of the voice within a few letter signs; or the man who noted the courses, forward movements, and stops of the wandering stars? All were great; greater still were those who discovered crops, clothing, shelter, the refinements of life, and defenses against wild beasts. Tamed and cultivated by them, we passed from the arts of necessity to the more graceful arts. For great delight was won for the ears when the variety and nature of sounds were discovered and harmonized; and we looked up at the stars, both those fixed in particular places and those that wander in name, though not in fact. Whoever saw in his mind their revolutions and all their motions showed that his own soul resembled the soul of the one who had fashioned them in heaven.

- <sup>63</sup> “For when Archimedes enclosed in a sphere the movements of the moon, the sun, and the five wandering stars, he achieved the same thing as the god of Plato who built the universe in the *Timaeus*: a single revolution governed movements utterly different in slowness and speed. If this cannot happen in the universe without a god, neither could Archimedes have imitated those same motions in a sphere without divine genius.”

## Book 1, Chapter 26

- <sup>64</sup> “Even these more familiar and conspicuous powers seem to me to possess something divine. I cannot believe that a poet pours out a weighty, full-voiced poem without some heavenly inspiration of the mind, or that eloquence flows richly, with resonant words and abundant thoughts, without some greater power. And philosophy, the mother of all arts—what is it but, in Plato’s words, a gift of the gods, or in mine, their invention? It first taught us to worship them, then to respect the rights of human beings, founded on the fellowship of the human race, and then to practice restraint and greatness of soul. It also scattered the darkness from our minds as though from our eyes, so that we could see everything above and below, first, last, and between.
- <sup>65</sup> “To me this power, which achieves so many things of such importance, seems altogether divine. What, after all, is memory for things and words? What, again, is invention? Surely it is something greater than which nothing can be conceived even in a god. I do not suppose that the gods delight in ambrosia or nectar, or in Youth serving their cups. Nor do I listen to Homer when he says that the gods carried Ganymede away for his beauty, to serve Jupiter his drink: no just reason for doing Laomedon so great a wrong. Homer invented these stories, transferring human qualities to the gods; I would rather he had transferred divine qualities to us. And what qualities are divine? Vitality, wisdom, invention, memory. The soul, then, which ... is divine, as I say, or, as Euripides ventures to say, a god. Indeed, if a god is breath or fire, the human soul is the same.

Just as that heavenly nature contains neither earth nor moisture, the human soul is free of both. But if there is a fifth kind of substance, first proposed by Aristotle, that is the substance both of gods and of souls. Following this view, I expressed it in these very words in my Consolation:”

## Book 1, Chapter 27

<sup>66</sup> “No origin for souls can be found on earth. In souls there is nothing mixed or compounded, nothing that seems born or fashioned out of earth, nothing even moist, airy, or fiery. For none of these substances contains the power of memory, understanding, or thought, capable of retaining the past, foreseeing the future, and embracing the present. These powers alone are divine; nor will any source ever be found from which they could come to human beings except a god. The soul, then, has a distinctive nature and power, separate from these familiar, recognized substances. Thus whatever it is that feels, understands, lives, and flourishes must be heavenly and divine, and for that reason eternal. Indeed, the very god whom we conceive cannot be conceived except as a mind, unbound and free, removed from every mortal compound, perceiving and moving all things and itself endowed with everlasting motion. The human mind belongs to this same kind and nature.”

“Where, then, is that mind, and what is it like?”

<sup>67</sup> “Where is yours, and what is it like? Can you tell me? If I lack everything I should like to have for understanding it, will you deny me the use even of what I have? The soul has not the power to see itself; but, like the eye, it sees other things without seeing itself. What it does not see is its own shape, which matters least—though perhaps it sees that too, but let us leave that aside. Certainly it sees its power, insight, memory, motion, and speed. These are great, divine, everlasting things. What its features are, or where it lives, is not even a question we need to ask.”

## Book 1, Chapter 28

- <sup>68</sup> “Consider how we first see the beauty and brightness of the heavens, then the speed of their revolution, so great that we cannot conceive it; then the alternation of days and nights and the fourfold change of seasons, suited to ripening crops and tempering our bodies; and the sun, ruler and guide of them all. We see the moon marking and announcing the days, as if in a calendar, by the waxing and waning of its light; then five stars traveling in the same belt divided into twelve parts, most faithfully maintaining their courses, though their motions differ from one another; and the face of the night sky adorned with stars on every side. Then we see the globe of the earth rising from the sea, fixed in the center of the whole universe, inhabited and cultivated in two widely separated regions. One, where we live, lies  
“Under the pole, toward the seven stars, from where the shuddering  
“North wind’s shriek drives freezing snow;’  
“the other, in the south, is unknown to us: the Greeks call it the ‘opposite earth.’ The remaining regions are uninhabited,
- <sup>69</sup> “because they are either rigid with cold or scorched by heat. But here where we live, each in its season, there is no failure of  
“The sky to shine, the trees to break in leaf,  
“The gladdening vines to clothe themselves in shoots,  
“The branches to bend down with wealth of berries,  
“The fields to yield their crops, all things to flower,  
“The springs to bubble, meadows to be robed in grass.’  
“Then we see the multitude of animals, some for food, some for cultivating the fields, some for transport, some to clothe our bodies; and humanity itself, as it were the observer of heaven and worshiper of the gods, with every land and sea obedient to human needs—

- 70 “When we see these things and countless others, can we doubt that some being presides over them, either their maker, if they had a beginning, as Plato believes, or, if they have always existed, as Aristotle holds, the governor of so vast a structure and service? In the same way, although you cannot see the human mind, just as you cannot see a god, nevertheless, as you recognize a god by his works, recognize the mind’s divine power by its memory, invention, swiftness of movement, and all the beauty of virtue.”

## Book 1, Chapter 29

“Where, then, is it located? In the head, I believe, and I can give reasons for my belief. But where the soul may wait for another time: certainly it is in you. What is its nature? One peculiar to itself, I think. But suppose it is fiery, suppose it is airy: that has no bearing on our present question. Only bear this in mind: just as you recognize a god although you do not know his location or appearance, so you ought to recognize your own soul, even though you do not know its location or shape.

- 71 “In our understanding of the soul, unless we are utterly leaden in natural philosophy, we cannot doubt that souls contain nothing mixed, compounded, joined, cemented, or twofold. Since that is so, the soul certainly cannot be separated, divided, torn apart, or wrenched apart, and therefore cannot <even> perish. For perishing is, as it were, the departure, separation, and sundering of parts which before death were held together by some bond.
- “Led by these and similar arguments, Socrates neither sought an advocate at his trial for his life nor pleaded with his judges. He displayed a free defiance born of greatness of soul, not pride. On the last day of his life he spoke at length on this very subject; a few days earlier he had refused to be led out of prison, though it could easily have been done. And then, with that fatal cup all but in his hand, he spoke as though he were not being driven to death but ascending to heaven.”

## Book 1, Chapter 30

- <sup>72</sup> “For this was his belief and his argument: souls departing from the body have two paths, two different courses. Those who had defiled themselves with human vices and surrendered wholly to their desires, blinded by which they had either polluted themselves with private vices and shameful acts, or incurred inexpressible guilt by doing violence to their country, take a remote path, shut off from the company of the gods. But those who had kept themselves pure and undefiled, who had had as little contact as possible with their bodies, had always withdrawn from them, and had imitated the life of the gods while living in human bodies, find an easy road home to those from whom they came.
- <sup>73</sup> “And so he recalls the swans, sacred to Apollo not without reason, but because they seem to have received from him the gift of prophecy. Foreseeing through it the good that lies in death, they die with song and pleasure; and all good and learned people should do likewise. (Nor could anyone doubt this, were it not that when we think intently about the soul, we meet the same fate as people who, gazing hard at the failing sun, often lose their sight altogether. So the mind’s vision, turned upon itself, sometimes grows dim; and for that reason we lose our power of attentive contemplation. Thus, doubting, looking about, hesitating, fearing many dangers, as though on a raft on a boundless sea,
- <sup>74</sup> “our argument is carried along.) But these are old stories, and Greek ones. Cato, by contrast, departed from life rejoicing that he had found a reason to die. For the god who rules within us forbids us to leave this place without his command. But when the god himself has given a just reason, as he did then to Socrates and recently to Cato, and often to many others, then indeed, by heaven, the wise man will gladly pass from this darkness into that light. Yet he will not have broken his prison’s chains—the laws forbid that—but will have gone

out summoned and released by a god, as by a magistrate or some lawful authority. For the whole life of philosophers, as Socrates also says, is a preparation for death.”

## Book 1, Chapter 31

75 “What else are we doing when we draw the soul away from pleasure—that is, from the body—from property, the body’s servant and attendant, from public affairs and every occupation? What, I ask, are we doing then but calling the soul back to itself, compelling it to keep its own company, and drawing it as far as possible from the body? And to separate the soul from the body is nothing else but learning to die. So let us practice this, believe me, and part ourselves from our bodies: that is, let us grow accustomed to dying. While we are on earth this will resemble that heavenly life, and when we are freed from these chains and borne there, our souls’ journey will be less impeded. For those who have always been fettered to the body move more slowly even when released, like people who have been bound in iron for many years. Only when we have reached that place shall we truly live. For this present life is death—a theme I could lament, if I chose.”

“You lamented it quite enough in your Consolation;

76 “when I read it, there is nothing I desire more than to leave these things behind, and much more so after what I have just heard.”

“The time will come, and quickly too, whether you hold back or hurry: life flies. Death is so far from being an evil, as you thought a little while ago, that I fear there may be nothing else more certainly free of evil for a human being, nothing else more truly good—if indeed we are to become either gods ourselves or companions of the gods [...].”

“What difference does that make?”

“There are people who do not accept these views. But I shall never let you leave this conversation with any possible reason for thinking death an evil.”

“How could I, once I have learned these things?”

“You ask how you could?”

- 77 “Whole battalions of opponents are coming—not only Epicureans, whom I for my part do not despise, though somehow all the most learned men [despise them]. My own favorite, Dicaearchus, argued most vigorously against this immortality. He wrote three books called the *Lesbian Dialogues*, because the conversation takes place at Mytilene, in which he seeks to establish that souls are mortal. The Stoics, on the other hand, grant us a lease of life, as they do to crows: they say that souls will last a long time, but deny that they last forever.”

## Book 1, Chapter 32

“Would you not like to hear, then, why death is nevertheless no evil, even if that is so?”

“As you please. But no one will dislodge my belief in immortality.”

“I commend that, though we should never be too confident;

- 78 “we are often swayed by some neatly framed argument, and waver and change our minds even on clearer matters; in these there is some obscurity. So, should that happen, let us be armed.”

“Certainly; but I shall see that it does not happen.”

“Is there any reason, then, not to dismiss our friends the Stoics? I mean those who say that souls remain after leaving the body, but not forever.”

“Dismiss them indeed! They accept what is hardest of all in this question—that the soul can survive without a body—but refuse to grant what is not merely easy to believe but follows from their own concession: that, once it has endured for a long time, it should not perish.”

- 79 “Your criticism is sound: that is how the matter stands. Are we, then, to believe Panaetius when he disagrees with his beloved Plato? The man he everywhere calls divine, supremely wise, supremely holy, the Homer of philosophers—on

this one opinion, the immortality of souls, he rejects his authority. He maintains that whatever is born perishes, which no one denies; and that souls are born, as is shown by the resemblance of offspring to their parents, apparent in their dispositions as well as their bodies. He also adduces another argument: nothing can feel pain without also being capable of illness; whatever can fall ill will also perish; but souls feel pain, and therefore also perish.”

## Book 1, Chapter 33

- <sup>80</sup> “These arguments can be refuted. They reveal a failure to understand that, when we speak of the eternity of souls, we mean the mind, which is always free from every turbulent movement, not those parts in which grief, anger, and desire reside. The man against whom these arguments are directed considers those parts removed and separated from the mind. Again, resemblance is more apparent among animals, whose souls lack reason; among human beings resemblance is more evident in bodily form, and it makes a great difference to the soul itself what kind of body it inhabits. Many things arise from the body to sharpen the mind, many to dull it. Aristotle indeed says that all men of genius are melancholy, so I need not resent being somewhat slow myself. He lists many examples and, as though the point were established, explains why this happens. But if things generated in the body have so powerful an influence on the mind’s disposition—and whatever they may be, they are what produces resemblance—then resemblance supplies no compelling reason why souls must be born. I pass over cases of dissimilarity.
- <sup>81</sup> “I wish Panaetius could be here—he lived with Africanus. I would ask him which of his relatives was resembled by the grandson of Africanus’s brother: in appearance he may have resembled his father, but in his way of life he resembled all the most depraved people so closely that he easily surpassed them in

wickedness. Whom, too, did the grandson of Publius Crassus resemble, that wise and eloquent man, that foremost citizen? Or the grandsons and sons of many other illustrious men whom there is no need to name?

“But what are we doing? Have we forgotten that, after saying enough about eternity, our present purpose was to show that even if souls perished, there would still be no evil in death?”

“I remembered it well enough, but I was quite willing to let your discussion of eternity carry you away from our subject.”

## Book 1, Chapter 34

82 “I see that you are looking upward and want to move to heaven. I hope that will be our fortune. But suppose, as these men maintain, that souls do not remain after death. I see that, if this is so, we are deprived of the hope of a happier life; but what evil does that opinion bring? Suppose the soul perishes just as the body does. Is there, then, any pain or any sensation at all in the body after death? No one says so, though Epicurus accuses Democritus of it and the followers of Democritus deny the charge. No sensation therefore remains in the soul either: the soul itself no longer exists anywhere. Where, then, is the evil, since there is no third thing? Is it that the soul’s actual departure from the body is not painless? Even if I believed that, how slight a thing it would be! But I think it false: it generally happens without sensation, sometimes even with pleasure. Whatever the experience may be, the whole thing is trivial,

83 “for it happens in an instant. ‘What troubles, or rather torments, us is parting from all the good things in life.’ Consider whether ‘from the evils’ might be truer. Why should I now lament human life? I can do so truly and justly; but while trying to prevent our thinking that we shall be miserable after death, why must I make life still more miserable by bewailing it? I did that in the book in which I consoled myself as best I could. Death, then, takes us away from evils,

not from good things, if we look for the truth. Indeed, Hegesias of Cyrene argues this at such length that King Ptolemy is said to have forbidden him to discuss it in his school, because many who heard him took their own lives.

- 84 “Callimachus has an epigram on Theombrotus of Ambracia, who, he says, had suffered no misfortune but threw himself from a wall into the sea after reading Plato’s book. And the Hegesias I mentioned wrote a book called *The Man Starving Himself to Death*, in which a man who is leaving life by refusing food is urged back by his friends. Answering them, he enumerates the troubles of human life. I could do the same, though less fully than he, who thinks living is of no benefit to anyone at all. To leave others aside: is it even of benefit to me? Deprived as I am of the consolations and distinctions both of home and of public life, certainly, had I died earlier, death would have torn me from evils, not from good things.”

## Book 1, Chapter 35

- 85 “Suppose, then, a man has no troubles and has received no wound from fortune: the famous Metellus with his four sons loaded with honors, or Priam with his fifty, seventeen of them born to his lawful wife. Fortune had the same power over both, but exercised it against one. For Metellus was laid on the pyre by many sons and daughters, grandsons and granddaughters; Priam, robbed of so great a family, was killed by an enemy’s hand after fleeing to an altar. Had he died while his sons were alive and his kingdom intact,  
“With foreign might standing by,  
“Beneath carved and coffered roofs,’  
“would he, after all, have departed from good things or from evils? At the time, certainly, he would have seemed to leave good things. Yet surely his fate would have been better, and those verses would not be sung so tearfully:

“All this I saw given to the flames,

“Priam’s life torn from him by force,

“Jupiter’s altar fouled with blood.’

“As though anything better could have happened to him then than that violence! If he had died earlier, he would have escaped that outcome altogether; dying when he did, he lost the awareness of his sufferings.

- 86 “Our friend Pompey recovered when he was gravely ill at Naples. The Neapolitans put on garlands, as of course did the people of Puteoli; congratulations came from the towns in public celebrations everywhere. A decidedly foolish business, in the petty Greek manner, yet a happy one. If he had died then, would he have left good things or evils? From miseries, certainly. He would not have fought a war against his father-in-law, taken up arms unprepared, left his home, fled from Italy, or, after losing his army, fallen defenseless into the hands and swords of slaves; †his children would not have been mourned, nor all his property possessed by his conquerors. A man who, had he died then, would have died at the height of his prosperity—how many calamities, how great, how incredible, he swallowed by prolonging his life!”

## Book 1, Chapter 36

“Death offers escape from these things even if they have not happened, simply because they can happen. But people do not consider that such things can befall them: everyone hopes for the fortune of Metellus, as though the fortunate outnumbered the unfortunate, or anything in human affairs were certain, or hoping were wiser than fearing.

“But let this very point be granted, that death deprives people of good things:

- 87 “does it follow that the dead also feel the lack of life’s advantages, and that this is miserable? Surely that is what our opponents must say. But can someone who does not exist lack anything? The very word ‘lack’ is sad, because it carries this meaning: he had it, he no longer has it; he misses, seeks, needs it. These, I

think, are the troubles of one who lacks something: he lacks his eyes—hateful blindness; his children—bereavement. This holds for the living; but no dead person lacks either life’s advantages or life itself. I am speaking of the dead, who do not exist. Do we, who do exist, lack horns or wings? Would anyone say so? Certainly not. Why? Because, when you do not have something that neither your use nor your nature calls for, you do not lack it, even if you realize that you do not have it.

- 88 “We must press and insist upon this again and again, once we have established the point which, if souls are mortal, we cannot doubt: that death brings so complete an extinction that not the faintest hint of sensation remains. With this firmly and securely settled, we must examine what ‘lacking’ means, so that no error remains hidden in the word. To lack, then, means to need something you wish to have; wishing is implicit in lacking, except when the word is used in another sense, as when someone ‘lacks a fever.’ There is also another use of ‘lack’: you do not have something and are conscious of not having it, even if you bear that easily. It is not <in this sense> that we speak of lacking in death; there would be nothing to grieve over. What is meant is ‘lacking a good thing,’ which is an evil. But not even a living person lacks a good thing if he does not need it. Still, in a living person the notion can be understood: you lack a kingdom—though, strictly speaking, that cannot properly be said of you; it could be said of Tarquin after he was expelled from his kingdom. In a dead person the notion cannot even be understood. For lacking belongs to a being that feels; and a dead person has no feeling. Therefore a dead person cannot lack anything.”

## Book 1, Chapter 37

“Yet why do we need philosophy here, when we see that the matter scarcely requires it?

89 “How often not only our commanders but even entire armies have rushed to certain death! If death were something to fear, Lucius Brutus would not have fallen in battle preventing the return of the tyrant he himself had expelled. Father Decius would not have flung himself into the enemy’s weapons fighting the Latins, nor his son fighting the Etruscans, nor his grandson fighting Pyrrhus. Spain would not have seen the Scipios fall for their country in a single war, nor Cannae Paulus and Geminus, nor Venusia Marcellus, nor Litana Albinus, nor the Lucanians Gracchus. Is any of them miserable today? Not even then, after their last breath. For no one can be miserable once sensation has been destroyed.

90 “‘But to have no sensation is itself hateful.’ Hateful, if it amounted to feeling a lack. But since it is evident that nothing can exist in someone who does not himself exist, what can be hateful in someone who neither lacks nor feels anything? I have said this too often, perhaps, but only because here lies the whole source of the soul’s shrinking from the fear of death. Anyone who has clearly seen what is brighter than daylight—that, once soul and body are consumed and the whole living being destroyed in a universal extinction, the creature that once existed has become nothing—will plainly see that there is no difference between a centaur, which never existed, and King Agamemnon. He will see that Marcus Camillus now cares no more for this civil war than I cared for the capture of Rome when he was alive. Why, then, would Camillus have grieved had he thought these events would occur some three hundred and fifty years later? Why should I grieve if I thought some nation would take possession of our city ten thousand years from now? Because our love of our country is so great that we measure it not by our own awareness but by her safety.”

## Book 1, Chapter 38

“Thus the wise man is not deterred by death,

91 “which threatens him daily through the uncertainty of chance and can never be far away because life is short, from providing for his country and his own people for all time. He considers even posterity, of which he will have no awareness, to be his concern. So even one who judges the soul mortal may undertake works for eternity, not from a desire for glory, which he will not feel, but for virtue, which glory must follow, even if that is not his aim.

“But <if> the order of nature is such that our birth brings us the beginning of all things and death their end, then, just as nothing concerned us before birth, nothing will concern us after death. What evil can there be in this, when death concerns neither the living nor the dead?

92 “The latter do not exist; the former it will not touch. Those who try to make death less formidable would have it closely resemble sleep. As though anyone would wish to live ninety years on the condition that, after completing sixty, he slept through the rest! Not even his family would wish it, much less the man himself. As for Endymion, if we care to listen to fables, he fell asleep at some distant time on Latmus, a mountain in Caria, and has not yet awakened, I believe. Do you suppose, then, that he cares when the Moon is eclipsed—the Moon who is thought to have put him to sleep so that she might kiss him as he slept? How could he care, when he does not even feel? You have in sleep an image of death, and every day you assume it. Do you doubt, then, that there is no sensation in death, when you see that its likeness has no sensation?”

## Book 1, Chapter 39

93 “Away, then, with this almost old-womanish nonsense, that it is miserable to die before one’s time. What time, after all? The time appointed by nature? But nature gave us life on loan, like money, without fixing a day for repayment. What grounds have you for complaint if she calls it back when she chooses? Those were the terms on which you received it. These same people think that, if a little child dies, we should bear it calmly, and if an infant dies in the cradle,

we should not even complain. Yet nature has demanded back her gift from the infant more harshly. ‘He had not yet tasted life’s sweetness,’ someone says, ‘whereas the other already hoped for great things, and had begun to enjoy them.’ But in everything else it is thought better to obtain some portion than none. Why should life be different? Though Callimachus puts it well when he says that Priam wept far more often than Troilus. Meanwhile the good fortune of those who die in advanced age is praised.

- 94 “Why? For I think that no one could find a longer life more pleasant than they could. Surely nothing is sweeter to a human being than wisdom, and whatever else old age takes away, it certainly brings that. But what span of life is long? Or what, for a human being, is long at all? Has not old age,  
“Pursuing us from behind as we run, just now boys, just now youths,  
“Overtaken us before we knew it?”  
“Yet because we have nothing beyond it, we call this long. All such spans are called long or short in proportion to the share allotted to each creature. Aristotle says that beside the river Hypanis, which flows into the Black Sea from the European side, little creatures are born that live a single day. One that dies at the eighth hour has therefore died at an advanced age; one that dies at sunset is decrepit, particularly if the day is at the summer solstice. Compare our longest span of life with eternity: we shall be found almost as short-lived as those little creatures.”

## Book 1, Chapter 40

- 95 “Let us therefore despise all such nonsense—what milder name can I give such frivolity?—and place the whole power of living well in strength and greatness of soul, in contempt and disregard for all human circumstances, and in every virtue. As things are, the most enfeebling thoughts make us womanish, so that, if death approaches before we have attained what the Chaldean astrologers promised us, we feel robbed of some great blessings, cheated and deserted.

96 “But if expectation and longing keep our souls in suspense, tormenting and troubling us—immortal gods, how pleasant must that journey be whose end will leave no further care or anxiety! How Theramenes delights me! What a lofty spirit he has! Though we weep when we read of him, that illustrious man does not die pitiably. Thrown into prison by order of the Thirty Tyrants, he drank down the poison as though thirsty, then flung the remainder from his cup so that it rang. At the sound he smiled and said, ‘I drink this to handsome Critias,’ who had been his bitterest enemy. For the Greeks <at> their drinking parties usually name the person to whom they are about to pass the cup. This excellent man jested with his last breath, when death had already entered and possessed his breast; and he truly foretold for the man to whom he had drunk the poison that death which followed shortly afterward.

“Who would praise this great soul’s composure in the very act of dying, if he judged death an evil?

97 “For a few years later Socrates goes to the same prison and the same cup, through a crime of his judges matching the tyrants’ crime against Theramenes. What, then, is the speech that Plato represents him as making before his judges, once he has been sentenced to death?”

## Book 1, Chapter 41

“‘Great hope possesses me,’ he says, ‘judges, that being sent to death will turn out well for me. One of two things must happen: either death takes away every sensation altogether, or by dying we move from this place to another. So, if sensation is extinguished and death resembles the sleep that sometimes brings the deepest peace without even the visions of dreams—good gods, what a gain it is to die! How many days could be found preferable to such a night? If all the eternity that follows resembles it, who could be happier than I?

98 “But if the stories are true, that death is a migration to the regions inhabited by those who have departed from life, that is a far happier prospect still. To escape from men who wish to be reckoned judges, and to come before those who truly deserve that name—Minos, Rhadamanthus, Aeacus, Triptolemus—and to meet those who have lived justly <and> faithfully: can you think this an ordinary journey? What value do you set upon being allowed to converse with Orpheus, Musaeus, Homer, and Hesiod? For my part, I would gladly die many times, if that were possible, to be allowed to visit the people I speak of. And what delight I should feel at meeting Palamedes, Ajax, and the others undone by an unjust verdict! I should also test the wisdom of the great king who led the mightiest forces to Troy, and of Ulysses and Sisyphus; nor should I be condemned to death for pursuing these inquiries as I did here. You too, judges who voted to acquit me, should have no fear of death.

99 “For no evil can happen to a good man, living or dead; his interests will never be neglected by the immortal gods, nor has this happened to me by chance. Nor have I any reason to be angry with those who accused or condemned me, except that they believed they were doing me harm.’ That is how he speaks on these points; but nothing is better than his ending: ‘But now,’ he says, ‘it is time to leave this place: I to die, you to live. Which is better, the immortal gods know; I do not think any human being knows.’”

## Book 1, Chapter 42

“Certainly I would far rather have his spirit than the fortunes of all those who judged him. Yet he himself knows which is better, though he says no one but the gods knows—for he has said it already. But to the very end he keeps to his own practice of asserting nothing;

100 “let us, for our part, keep to this: we should count nothing an evil that nature has given to everyone, and should understand that, if death is an evil, it is an everlasting evil. For death appears to end a miserable life; but if death is miser-

able, there can be no end to it.

“But why do I mention Socrates or Theramenes, men outstanding for their renown in virtue and wisdom, when a certain Spartan, whose very name has not been handed down, despised death so thoroughly that he went to it, condemned by the ephors, with a cheerful, happy face? When an enemy said to him, ‘Do you despise the laws of Lycurgus?’ he answered, ‘On the contrary, I am most grateful to him for fining me a penalty I could pay without borrowing money or renewing a loan.’ A man worthy of Sparta! Such greatness of soul makes me think he was innocent when condemned. Our own city has produced countless men like him.

101 “But why name commanders and leading men, when Cato writes that legions often went eagerly to a place from which they did not expect to return? With the same spirit the Spartans died at Thermopylae, of whom Simonides wrote:

“‘Stranger, tell Sparta that you saw us lying here,

“‘Obedient to our country’s sacred laws.’

“And what does their commander Leonidas say? ‘Go forward bravely, Spartans: perhaps today we shall dine in the underworld.’ This people was brave while the laws of Lycurgus flourished. When a Persian enemy boasted in conversation, ‘The multitude of our javelins and arrows will hide the sun from you,’ one of them answered, ‘Then we shall fight in the shade.’

102 “I speak of men; but what of a Spartan woman? When she had sent her son into battle and heard that he had been killed, she said, ‘That was why I bore him: so there would be a man who would not hesitate to meet death for his country.’”

## Book 1, Chapter 43

“Granted: Spartans are brave and hardy; a state’s discipline has great power. But do we not admire Theodorus of Cyrene, a philosopher of some distinction? When King Lysimachus threatened him with crucifixion, he said, ‘Please

reserve those dreadful threats for your courtiers in purple. It makes no difference to Theodorus whether he rots on the ground or in the air.’

“This saying reminds me that I ought also to say something about burial and interment: no difficult matter, especially once we understand what was said a little earlier about the absence of sensation. Socrates’ opinion on it is clear in the book in which he dies, about which we have already said so much.

103 “After he had discussed the immortality of souls and the time for death was pressing close, Crito asked how he wished to be buried. ‘A great deal of my labor has been wasted, friends,’ he said, ‘for I have not persuaded our Crito that I shall fly away from here and leave nothing of myself behind. Still, Crito, if you can catch me, or find me anywhere, bury me as you think best. But believe me: not one of you will catch me once I have gone from here.’ Admirably said: he both gave his friend leave to act and showed that he had no concern at all about the whole question.

104 “Diogenes was harsher. He held the same view but expressed it more roughly, as a Cynic: he ordered that he be thrown out unburied. His friends asked, ‘For the birds and beasts?’ ‘Certainly not,’ he said, ‘but put a little stick beside me so that I can drive them away.’ ‘How will you do that?’ they said. ‘You will have no sensation.’ ‘Then how can being torn by wild beasts hurt me, if I feel nothing?’ Admirable, too, was Anaxagoras. When he was dying at Lampsacus, his friends asked whether, should anything happen to him, he wished to be taken home to Clazomenae. ‘There is no need,’ he said, ‘for the road to the underworld is the same length from everywhere.’ On the whole question of burial we must hold to one point: it concerns the body, whether the soul has perished or remains alive. And it is clear that, whether the soul is extinguished or has escaped, no sensation remains in the body.”

## Book 1, Chapter 44

“But error fills everything.

105 “Achilles drags Hector tied to his chariot: he thinks, I suppose, that Hector feels himself being torn apart. So Achilles believes he is taking revenge; while she mourns it as the bitterest of sorrows:

“I saw—how grievously I bore the sight—

“Hector dragged by a four-horse chariot.’

“What Hector? Or how long will that be Hector? Accius does better, and at last Achilles shows some sense:

“No, indeed: I gave his body back to Priam; Hector I took away.’

“So it was not Hector you dragged, but the body that had been Hector’s.

106 “Look, another rises from the earth to keep his mother from sleeping:

“Mother, I call to you, who ease your care, held in suspense by sleep,

“And have no pity for me: rise and bury your son—!’

“When these words are sung in low, mournful strains that spread sadness through whole theaters, it is hard not to judge the unburied miserable. ‘Before the beasts and birds—’ He fears that, if his limbs are torn, he will have less use of them; he has no fear that they may be burned.

“And do not let my half-eaten remains, with bones laid bare,

“Be foully dragged across the earth, smeared with clotted blood—’

“I do not understand what he fears, when he pours out such fine seven-and-a-half-foot verses to the pipe. We must therefore hold fast to this: nothing after death should trouble us, though many people punish their enemies even when dead. In Ennius, Thyestes utters curses in truly splendid verses: first, that Atreus should die in a shipwreck. That is harsh enough, for such a death is not without severe sensation. The rest is empty:

“Himself impaled on the highest jagged rocks, disemboweled,

“Hanging by his side, spattering the rocks with decay, gore, and black blood—’

107 “The rocks themselves will be no more devoid of all sensation than the man ‘hanging by his side,’ for whom Thyestes imagines he is wishing torment. Things that would be harsh if he felt them <are> nothing without sensation. But this is utter emptiness:

“And may he have no tomb to receive him, no harbor for his body,

“Where, human life laid down, his body may rest from troubles.’

“You see how deeply these words are steeped in error: he thinks there is a harbor for the body, and that a dead man rests in his tomb. A great fault in Pelops, not to have educated his son and taught him what deserved concern, and how far!”

## Book 1, Chapter 45

108 “But why examine individuals’ opinions when we can survey the varied errors of nations? The Egyptians embalm their dead and keep them at home; the Persians even preserve them coated in wax, so that their bodies may last as long as possible. It is the custom of the Magi not to bury the bodies of their people until wild beasts have torn them. In Hyrcania the common people keep dogs at public expense, the nobles their own dogs. We know theirs is a fine breed of dog; but each person provides, according to his means, the animals that will tear him apart, and they consider that the best burial. Chrysippus collects a great many other examples, being inquisitive about every sort of history; but some are so repulsive that speech recoils and shrinks from them. This whole subject, then, should be disregarded as it concerns ourselves, though not neglected where our families are concerned—always provided that we, the living, recognize that the bodies of the dead feel nothing.

109 “How much is owed to custom and reputation is a matter for the living to consider, but with the understanding that none of it concerns the dead.

“Yet certainly death is met with the greatest composure when a life drawing to its close can find consolation in its own achievements. No one has lived too short a time who has fully discharged the duty of perfect virtue. Many occasions in my own life have been timely for death. If only I could have died then! For there was nothing more to gain; life’s duties had been fulfilled in overflowing measure; only wars with fortune remained. So, if reason itself has too little power to make us disregard death, at least the life we have lived should make us

feel that we have lived enough and more than enough. For although sensation has departed, the dead do not lack the blessings of praise and glory that are peculiarly their own, however unaware of them they may be. For though glory has nothing in itself to make it worth seeking, it nevertheless follows virtue like a shadow.”

## Book 1, Chapter 46

110 “But if the crowd’s judgment of good people is ever <good>, that judgment deserves praise more than they deserve to be called happy on its account. Yet, however this may be taken, I cannot say that Lycurgus and Solon lack the glory of their laws and civic discipline, or Themistocles and Epaminondas that of their courage in war. Neptune will overwhelm Salamis itself before he overwhelms the memory of its victory trophy; Leuctra will be erased from Boeotia before the glory of the battle of Leuctra. Far more slowly still will fame abandon Curius, Fabricius, Calatinus, the two Scipios, the two Africani, Maximus, Marcellus, Paulus, Cato, Laelius, and countless others. Whoever has attained some likeness to them, measuring it not by popular fame but by the true praise of the good, will advance confidently toward death if circumstances require it. In death, as we have learned, there is either the highest good or no evil. Indeed, he will wish to die while his fortunes are favorable, for the height of prosperity cannot be as pleasant as its decline is painful. This seems to be the meaning of that Spartan’s remark. When Diagoras of Rhodes, a renowned Olympic victor, had seen two of his sons victorious at Olympia on a single day, the Spartan approached the old man, congratulated him,

111 “and said, ‘Die, Diagoras, for you are not going to ascend to heaven.’ The Greeks think these things great—perhaps too great—or rather thought so then. The man who said this to Diagoras considered it an immense thing for three Olympic victors to come from one household, and thought it would do him no good to linger longer in life exposed to fortune.

“For my part, I thought I had answered you sufficiently in a few words, since you had admitted that the dead experience no evil. But I pressed on to say more because this is the greatest consolation in bereavement and mourning. We should bear our own pain, incurred on our own account, with moderation, lest we seem to love only ourselves. What torments us with unbearable grief is the suspicion that those we have lost are still conscious amid the evils commonly imagined. I wished to tear that belief out of myself by the roots, and perhaps that made me speak at greater length.”

## Book 1, Chapter 47

“At greater length—you?

- 112 “Not for me. The first part of your argument made me desire to die; the second made me now willing, now indifferent. Your whole argument has certainly achieved this: I no longer count death an evil.”

“Do we still want a rhetorician’s epilogue, then? Or shall we abandon that art altogether now?”

“Certainly do not abandon an art you have always adorned, and rightly so, for, to tell the truth, it had adorned you. But what is this epilogue? Whatever it is, I am eager to hear it.”

- 113 “In the schools they commonly produce the judgments of the immortal gods concerning death. They do not invent these themselves, but take Herodotus and many others as their authorities. The first celebrated example is that of Cleobis and Biton, sons of a priestess at Argos. The story is well known. Religious law required her to be taken by carriage to a solemn, appointed sacrifice at a temple a considerable distance from the town. The draft animals were delayed; so the young men I have just named took off their clothes, anointed their bodies with oil, and came under the yoke. Thus the priestess was brought to the temple, her sons drawing the carriage. She is said to have prayed to the

goddess to reward their devotion with the greatest gift a god could give a human being. After feasting with their mother, the young men went to sleep; in the morning they were found dead.

- 114 “Trophonius and Agamedes are said to have offered a similar prayer. When they had finished building Apollo’s temple at Delphi, they worshiped the god and asked no small payment for their work and toil: nothing specific, but whatever was best for a human being. Apollo revealed that he would give it to them on the third day after that day. When it dawned, they were found dead. They say that the god had given his judgment—and that particular god, to whom the other gods had granted a prophetic power beyond their own.”

## Book 1, Chapter 48

“They also cite a little tale about Silenus. When he was captured by Midas, it is written, he gave this gift in exchange for his release: he taught the king that by far the best thing for a human being is not to be born, and the next best to die as soon as possible.

- 115 “Euripides used this thought in his *Cresphontes*:  
“We should have gathered in the house  
“To mourn whenever someone came to light,  
“Recounting human life’s manifold woes;  
“But one whose death had ended heavy labors,  
“His friends should bear away with every praise and joy.’  
“There is something similar in Crantor’s *Consolation*. He says that a certain Elysios of Terina, grieving bitterly over his son’s death, went to a place where the dead were summoned and asked the reason for so great a calamity. He received on tablets these three little verses:  
“With minds unknowing, people wander through their lives;  
“Euthynous meets death by the power of the fates.  
“To end this way was better both for him and you.’

116 “Using these and similar authorities, they establish their case by the verdicts of the immortal gods. Alcidamas, one of the most distinguished of the early rhetoricians, even wrote a praise of death, consisting of an enumeration of human evils. He lacked the arguments worked out with greater subtlety by philosophers, but not abundance of eloquence. Rhetoricians commonly consider illustrious deaths met for one’s country not only glorious but happy. They begin far back with Erechtheus, whose very daughters eagerly sought death to preserve the citizens’ lives. They <recall> Codrus, who plunged into the midst of the enemy dressed as a slave, so that he could not be recognized, as he would have been in royal attire; for an oracle had declared that Athens would be victorious if its king were killed. Nor do they pass over Menoeceus, who likewise, after an oracle was delivered, freely gave his blood for his country; <for> Iphigenia at Aulis orders that she be led to sacrifice, so that her own blood may draw forth the enemy’s. From these they come to more recent examples:”

## Book 1, Chapter 49

“Harmodius <is> on their lips, and Aristogiton; Leonidas the Spartan and Epaminondas the Theban live on in their words. They do not know our own people, whom it would be a great task to enumerate: so many are those whose glorious deaths we see to have been desirable.

“Since this is so, must we still employ great eloquence, speaking as though from a raised platform, to make people begin to desire death, or at least cease to fear it?

117 “For if that final day brings not extinction but a change of place, what could be more desirable? And if it utterly destroys and abolishes us, what is better than to fall asleep amid life’s labors, close our eyes, and be lulled into everlasting

sleep? If that is what happens, Ennius speaks better than Solon. For our own poet says, ‘Let no one honor me with tears or make my funeral a weeping.’ But that wise man says:

“Let not my death go without tears; let us leave our friends

“Grief, that they may bury us with groans.’

118 “But if anything happens to us that seems a god’s notice to depart from life, let us obey gladly and with thanks, and consider ourselves released from custody and relieved of our chains, either to return to our eternal and truly native home or to be free of all sensation and trouble. But if no notice is given, let us nevertheless be so disposed as to think that day, dreadful to others, fortunate for us, and count nothing an evil that has been established either by the immortal gods or by nature, the parent of all things. For we were not sown and created carelessly or by chance. Surely there was some power that watched over the human race, and would not have brought into being or nurtured a creature that, after draining the cup of every hardship, would then fall into the everlasting evil of death. Let us think, instead, that a harbor and refuge has been prepared for us.

119 “If only we might reach it under full sail! But if contrary winds drive us back, we must nevertheless be carried to the same place a little later. Can what is necessary for everyone be miserable for any one person? There is your epilogue, so that you may not think anything has been omitted or left unfinished.”

“Yes, and that epilogue has made me still more steadfast.”

“Excellent,” I said. “But now let us give some attention to our health. Tomorrow, and every day that we are at Tusculum, let us discuss these matters, especially those that bring relief from distress, fears, and desires—the richest fruit of all philosophy.”

## Book 2, Chapter 1

- <sup>1</sup> In Ennius, Neoptolemus says that he needs to philosophize, but only a little: he has no liking for it as a whole. For my part, Brutus, I think I need to philosophize—what better occupation can I have, especially when I have none?—but not, as he does, only a little. In philosophy it is difficult to know a little without knowing most of it or all. A few things can be selected only from many; and anyone who has grasped a few will pursue the rest with the same enthusiasm.
- <sup>2</sup> Still, in a busy life, especially a soldier's life such as Neoptolemus was then leading, even a little often does great good. It bears fruit—not fruit as rich as the whole of philosophy can yield, but enough to release us sometimes, in some measure, from desire or distress or fear. The discussion I recently held at Tusculum, for example, seemed to produce a profound disregard for death, which does a great deal to free the mind from fear. Someone who fears what cannot be avoided can never live with peace of mind. But someone who does not fear death, not merely because dying is inevitable but because death contains nothing terrible, has secured a powerful defense for a happy life.
- <sup>3</sup> I know, of course, that many people will argue eagerly against me. The only way to escape that was to write nothing at all. Even my speeches were meant to win the judgment of the multitude—eloquence is a public art, and its achievement is the approval of its listeners. Yet there were people who praised nothing unless they felt sure they could imitate it, and who set the limits of good speaking at the limits of their own hopes. Overwhelmed by a wealth of thoughts and words, they said they preferred leanness and starvation to richness and abundance. This gave rise to a species of 'Attic' speaker unknown to the very people who professed to follow it; they have now fallen silent, all but laughed out of the courts themselves.

- <sup>4</sup> What, then, should I expect now, when I see that I cannot possibly enlist the public support I once enjoyed? Philosophy is content with a few judges. She deliberately shuns the multitude, who in turn regard her with suspicion and dislike. Anyone who wishes to attack philosophy as a whole can therefore count on popular applause; and anyone who attempts to assault the school I chiefly follow can find strong reinforcements among the teachings of the other philosophers.

## Book 2, Chapter 2

I have answered the detractors of philosophy as a whole in my Hortensius; and I believe that the case for the Academy has been set out with sufficient care in the four books of my *Academica*. Yet I am so far from objecting to writings against me that I positively welcome them. Even in Greece philosophy would never have enjoyed such honor had it not flourished through the rivalries and disagreements of the most learned men.

- <sup>5</sup> I therefore urge everyone capable of doing so to wrest the distinction of this field, too, from a Greece now in decline and bring it to our city, just as our ancestors, through their zeal and industry, brought here every other distinction worth seeking. The glory of our orators has risen from humble beginnings to its height; now, as happens naturally in almost everything, it is aging and seems likely soon to dwindle to nothing. But philosophy, at least in Latin literature, is being born in our own day. Let us help it grow, and let us allow ourselves to be challenged and refuted. That is hard for those who are pledged and, as it were, consecrated to certain fixed opinions. Their bonds oblige them to defend, for consistency's sake, even positions they do not ordinarily approve. We follow what is probable and can go no further than what presents itself as likely to be true; we are ready both to refute without obstinacy and to be refuted without anger.

- <sup>6</sup> If these studies are brought over to our people, we shall not even need Greek libraries, with their boundless multitude of books produced by a multitude of writers. Many people say the same things, and so they have crammed everything with books. The same will happen among us if more people flock to these studies. But if we can, let us encourage those who have a liberal education and who philosophize with method and system, bringing elegance of expression to their reasoning as well.

## Book 2, Chapter 3

- <sup>7</sup> There is a certain class of people who wish to be called philosophers, and who are said to have written a great many books in Latin. I do not despise those books: I have never read them. But their authors themselves declare that they write without clarity, arrangement, elegance, or adornment; and I have no interest in reading that offers no pleasure. No one with even a moderate education is ignorant of what the adherents of that school say and think. Since they themselves take no pains over how they say it, I cannot see why anyone should read them except their own circle of like-minded believers.
- <sup>8</sup> Everyone reads Plato and the other Socratics, and then the thinkers who took their start from them—even readers who do not accept their views or pursue them with any particular enthusiasm. Epicurus and Metrodorus, by contrast, are scarcely picked up by anyone outside their own following. In the same way, these Latin writers are read only by those who think their doctrines sound. My own view is that whatever is committed to writing should deserve the attention of every educated reader. If I cannot fully achieve that myself, I am no less convinced that this is what ought to be done.
- <sup>9</sup> I have therefore always liked the Peripatetic and Academic practice of arguing both sides of every question, not only because there is no other way to discover what is probable in each case, but also because it provides the best possible exer-

cise in speaking. Aristotle was the first to employ it, and his followers continued it. In our own time Philo, whose lectures I often attended, established the practice of teaching the rules of rhetoric at one time and those of philosophy at another. Encouraged by my friends to adopt this practice, I spent on it what time I had available at Tusculum. After devoting the morning to speaking, as we had the day before, we went down in the afternoon to the Academy. I shall present the discussion held there not as a narrative, but in almost the very words in which our conversation and debate took place.

## Book 2, Chapter 4

As we walked, then, our conversation began something like this:

- 10 “I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed yesterday’s discussion—or rather, how much it helped me. Although I know that I have never clung too desperately to life, sometimes a certain fear and pain would intrude on my mind when I thought that one day this daylight must end for me and all life’s advantages be lost. Believe me, I have been so completely freed of that kind of trouble that I think nothing deserves less concern.”

“That is not at all surprising.

- 11 “This is what philosophy accomplishes: she heals minds, removes empty anxieties, frees us from desires, drives out fears. But her power does not have the same effect on everyone. It is strongest when it takes hold of a suitable nature. The brave are helped not only by fortune, as the old proverb says, but far more by reason, which strengthens the force of courage through what we may call its precepts. Nature clearly gave you a lofty, aspiring spirit, one that looks down on human affairs. So a discourse against death readily took root in a brave mind. But do you suppose these same arguments have any power over more than a very few even of those who discovered, discussed, and wrote them down? How rarely do we find a philosopher whose character, outlook, and way of life con-

form to the demands of reason! Who regards his teaching not as a display of knowledge but as a law for living? Who obeys himself and submits to his own decrees?

- 12 “Some are so frivolous and boastful that they would have been better off without learning; others are greedy for money, some for fame, and many are slaves to lust. Their conduct is astonishingly at odds with their discourse. I think this is utterly disgraceful. If someone professing to be a grammarian speaks bad Latin, or someone who wants to be considered a musician sings out of tune, he is all the more disgraced because he fails in the very thing he claims to know. So too a philosopher who goes wrong in his conduct is all the more disgraced because he stumbles in the duty he wishes to teach: professing the art of living, he fails at life.”

## Book 2, Chapter 5

“If things are as you say, should you not be afraid that you are adorning philosophy with a false glory? What stronger proof could there be that she does no good than the disgraceful lives of some accomplished philosophers?”

- 13 “That is no proof at all. Not every field that is cultivated bears a crop, and those lines of Accius are false:  
“‘Though good seed has been sown in poorer soil,  
“‘The grain still shines by virtue of its nature.’  
“Similarly, not every cultivated mind bears fruit. To stay with the same comparison: just as a field, however fertile, cannot be fruitful without cultivation, neither can the mind without instruction. Each is powerless without the other. Philosophy is the cultivation of the mind. She pulls vices up by the roots, prepares our minds to receive seed, and entrusts them with—sows in them, so to speak—what will yield the richest harvest when it matures. Let us go on, then, as we began. Tell me, if you will, what you want discussed.”

14 “I consider pain the greatest of all evils.”

“Greater even than dishonor?”

“I do not dare say that, and I am ashamed to have been driven from my position so quickly.”

“You should be more ashamed if you remained in it. What could be less worthy of you than to think anything worse than dishonor, disgrace, and moral ugliness? To escape them, what pain should you not merely refuse to reject, but willingly seek, undergo, and welcome?”

“That is exactly what I think. So let pain not be the supreme evil; it is certainly an evil.”

“Do you see, then, how much of your terror of pain you have shed after one brief reminder?”

15 “I certainly do, but I want more.”

“I shall try. But it is a great undertaking, and I need a mind that will not resist me.”

“You shall have that. As I did yesterday, I shall follow reason wherever it leads me.”

## Book 2, Chapter 6

“First, then, I shall speak about the weakness of many people, and the various schools of philosophy. Foremost among them in both authority and antiquity, the Socratic Aristippus did not hesitate to call pain the supreme evil. Epicurus then proved a willing pupil of this feeble, womanish doctrine. After him Hieronymus of Rhodes declared freedom from pain the supreme good, so great an evil did he consider pain. The rest, apart from Zeno, Aristo, and Pyrrho, held much the same view you expressed just now: pain is an evil, certainly, but other things are worse.

- <sup>16</sup> “So philosophy, the teacher of life, has persisted for all these centuries in a view that nature herself and a certain nobility of spirit made you reject at once: you would not call pain the supreme evil, and the mere mention of dishonor drove you from your position. What duty, what glory, what honor will seem worth winning at the cost of bodily pain to someone convinced that pain is the supreme evil? Again, what humiliation, what disgrace will he not endure to escape pain, if he has decided it is the supreme evil? And who would not be miserable, not only while suffering the severest pains, if they contain the supreme evil, but even when he knows that such suffering may befall him? And who is exempt from that possibility? It follows that no one at all can be happy.
- <sup>17</sup> “Metrodorus, indeed, considers a person perfectly happy if his body is in good order and he has the assurance that it will always remain so. But who could possibly have that assurance?”

## Book 2, Chapter 7

“Epicurus, on the other hand, says things that seem to me intended to raise a laugh. In one passage he declares that if the wise man is burned, if he is tortured—you are perhaps expecting him to say, ‘He will endure it, bear it through, never give way.’ A great tribute, by Hercules, and worthy of Hercules himself, by whom I have just sworn! But for Epicurus, that hard and rugged man, this is not enough. If the wise man is inside the bull of Phalaris, he will say, ‘How pleasant this is! How little I care about it!’ Pleasant, too? Is it not enough if it is not bitter? Even those who deny that pain is an evil do not ordinarily say that being tortured is pleasant for anyone. They call it harsh, difficult, hateful, contrary to nature, yet not an evil. But this man, who calls pain the only evil and the utmost of all evils, thinks the wise man will pronounce it pleasant.

- <sup>18</sup> “I do not ask you to describe pain in the same terms that Epicurus uses for pleasure—a sensualist, as you know. Let him say the same thing in Phalaris’s bull as he would in his own bed. I do not credit wisdom with such power over pain. If

a man bears it bravely, he has done his duty; I do not ask him to rejoice as well. It is unquestionably a grim thing, harsh, bitter, hostile to nature, difficult to endure and sustain.

“Look at Philoctetes: we must allow him his groans.

- 19 “He had seen Hercules himself on Oeta crying out under the enormity of his pain. So the arrows he had received from Hercules brought him no comfort when

“From the viper’s bite, the veins within his flesh,

“Steeped in poison, stir up hideous torments.’

“And so he cries out, seeking help, longing for death:

“Ah, who will fling me into the salt waves

“From the high summit of a rock?

“Now, now I am consumed; my life is crushed

“By the wound’s force, the ulcer’s burning heat.’

“It seems hard to say that a man forced to cry out like that is not suffering an evil, and a great one.”

## Book 2, Chapter 8

- 20 “But let us look at Hercules himself, broken by pain at the very moment he was seeking immortality through death. What cries he utters in Sophocles’ *Women of Trachis*! When Deianira had dressed him in the tunic stained with the Centaur’s blood, and it had clung to his flesh, he says:

“So many things, grievous to tell and harsh to bear,

“I labored through and suffered, body and soul!

“Neither Juno’s implacable terror

“Nor cruel Eurystheus brought so much evil on me

“As this one senseless daughter born to Oeneus.

“She caught me unawares in a Fury’s robe,

“Which clings against my side and bites and tears my flesh,

“Presses hard and drains the breath out of my lungs:  
 “Already it has sucked away my blood, all drained of color.  
 “So my body wastes away, consumed by hideous ruin;  
 “Bound fast, I perish in this woven plague.  
 “No enemy’s right hand, no earthborn  
 “Mass of Giants, no Centaur charging  
 “With his two-formed body struck these blows against me;  
 “No force of Greece, no barbarous savagery,  
 “No fierce tribe banished to the ends of earth,  
 “Where I wandered, driving out all brutality everywhere,  
 “But I, her husband, die by a woman’s hand.”

## Book 2, Chapter 9

“My son, prove to your father you deserve that name:  
 “Do not let love for your mother outweigh your dying father.  
 “Drag her here to me, with hands that honor their duty;  
 “Let me see now which of us you prize the more.

21 “Go on, be bold, my son! Weep for your father’s ruin, “Pity him: nations will weep over our misery. “Ah, that my voice should raise a maiden’s lament, “When no one ever saw me groan at any ill! “My courage, unmanned and broken, has fallen dead. “Come near, my son, stand beside me; look with pity “On your father’s mangled body, its flesh torn open! “Look, all of you; and you, begetter of the gods, “Hurl your flashing thunderbolt at me, I beg! “Now, now the whirling agonies twist and torment me; “Now the burning creeps. O hands, once victorious,

22 “O chest, O back, O knotted muscles of my arms, “Was it in your grip that once the Nemean lion “Gnashed its teeth and heaved its final breath? “Did this right hand bring peace to Lerna, killing the hideous Hydra? “Did this hand strike down the host of double-bodied creatures? “Did it fell the ravaging

beast of Erymanthus? “Did it drag out of Tartarus’s shadowed region “The three-headed hound, offspring of Hydra, and bring it up? “Did it kill the dragon with its coils on coils, “Its watchful eye guarding the tree of gold? “My victorious hand passed through many other trials, “And no one ever took the spoils of my renown.”

## Book 2, Chapter 10

“Can we despise pain, when we see Hercules himself suffering so impatiently?

23 “Let Aeschylus come forward, not merely a poet but a Pythagorean too, so tradition tells us. In his play, how does Prometheus bear the pain he suffers for the theft on Lemnos,

“From where, men say, fire was secretly

“Shared out to mortals? Skillful Prometheus

“Stole it by stealth and paid the penalty

“To Jupiter, in his final doom.’

“Paying that penalty, fastened to the Caucasus, he says:

“Children of the Titans, kindred of my blood,

“Offspring of Heaven, look on me bound and chained

“To jagged rocks, as frightened sailors, fearing

“Night, moor a ship on a sea that roars with terror.

“So Jupiter, Saturn’s son, has pinned me here,

“And Jupiter’s will enlisted Mulciber’s hands.

“Driving these wedges with cruel workmanship,

“He pierced my limbs. Transfixed by his ingenuity,

“I live in misery in this stronghold of the Furies.

24 “Now every third accursed day, “Swooping grimly down, with hooked talons tearing, “Jupiter’s attendant rends me for its savage feast. “Then, stuffed and glutted with my rich liver, “It utters a vast shriek and, flying high, “Fans my blood with its feathered tail. “But when the eaten liver swells and is renewed,

“It returns, ravenous, to its hideous feeding. “So I nourish this guardian of my mournful torment, “Which disfigures me alive in everlasting misery. “For, as you see, bound tight in Jupiter’s chains, “I cannot keep the dreadful bird away from my breast.

- 25 “So, all alone, I suffer these anguished torments, “Longing for death, seeking an end to evil; “But Jupiter’s power drives me far from dying, “And this ancient, grief-laden ruin, heaped through “Horrible ages, is rooted in my body. “From it, melted by the burning sun, fall “Drops that drip unceasingly on the rocks of Caucasus.’
- “We seem scarcely able, then, to call someone in such a condition anything but miserable; and if he is miserable, pain is certainly an evil.”

## Book 2, Chapter 11

- 26 “So far you are arguing my case. But I shall consider that later. Meanwhile, where do those verses come from? I do not recognize them.”
- “I shall tell you, by Hercules; you are right to ask. You see how much leisure I have?”
- “What of it?”
- “When you were in Athens, you often attended the philosophers’ lectures, I imagine.”
- “Yes, and gladly.”
- “Then you noticed that, although no one at that time was particularly fluent, they still interspersed their discourse with verses.”
- “Dionysius the Stoic certainly used a great many.”
- “Quite right. But he recited them as though reciting set lessons, without selection or elegance. Philo, by contrast, added †apt and well-chosen poems in the right places. And so, since I have grown fond of this sort of rhetorical exercise

for old age, I make eager use of our own poets; but wherever they have failed me—well, I have translated a good deal from the Greek, so that Latin discourse should lack no ornament in discussions of this kind.

“But do you see what harm the poets do?”

- <sup>27</sup> “They bring the bravest men before us lamenting, and soften our spirits. Then they are so delightful that we do not merely read them: we learn them by heart. When poets are added to a bad upbringing at home and a sheltered, pampered life, they cut through every sinew of courage. Plato was therefore right to banish them from the state he devised in his search for the best character and the best political order. Yet we, taught by Greece, of course, read and memorize these works from childhood, and consider this a liberal education and true learning.”

## Book 2, Chapter 12

“But why be angry with the poets?”

- <sup>28</sup> “Even teachers of virtue, philosophers, have been found to call pain the supreme evil. Yet you, young man, when you said a little while ago that this was your view, abandoned it at a word when I asked whether pain was worse even than dishonor. Ask Epicurus the same question: he will tell you that a moderate pain is a greater evil than the greatest dishonor, since dishonor itself contains no evil unless pains follow it. What pain, then, follows Epicurus when he makes this very statement, that pain is the supreme evil? I can imagine no greater dishonor in a philosopher. You have therefore given me enough in answering that dishonor seems to you a greater evil than pain. Hold fast to that alone, and you will understand how firmly pain must be resisted. We need less inquiry into whether pain is an evil than strength of mind to bear it.
- “The Stoics spin out their little syllogisms to prove that it is not an evil,

- 29 “as though the trouble concerned a word, not a reality. Why do you deceive me, Zeno? When you deny outright that what seems horrible to me is an evil, I am captivated: I long to know how something I consider utterly miserable is not even an evil. ‘Nothing is evil,’ he says, ‘except what is disgraceful and vicious.’ You return to nonsense. You do not remove what tormented me. I know pain is not wickedness; stop teaching me that. Teach me this: that it makes no difference whether I suffer pain or not. ‘No difference at all,’ he says, ‘to a happy life, which rests on virtue alone; still, pain is to be rejected.’ Why? ‘It is harsh, contrary to nature, difficult to endure, grim, hard.’”

## Book 2, Chapter 13

- 30 “What a wealth of words: to be able to describe in so many ways what we all call by the single word ‘evil’! You define pain for me, you do not remove it, when you call it harsh, contrary to nature, barely possible to bear and endure. Nor are you lying. But after boasting in words, you ought not to have surrendered in substance. ‘Provided that nothing is good except what is honorable, nothing evil except what is disgraceful—’ That is wishing, not teaching. Better and truer to say that everything nature rejects belongs among evils, and everything she welcomes among goods. Once this is established and the battle over words is put aside, what those thinkers rightly embrace—what we call honorable, right, and fitting, and sometimes include under the name of virtue—will still tower so high that everything else considered a good of body or fortune will seem tiny and insignificant. Thus no evil either, not even all evils gathered together, can compare with the evil of moral disgrace.
- 31 “So if disgrace is worse than pain, as you conceded at the outset, pain is simply nothing. So long as you think it shameful and unworthy of a man to groan, cry out, lament, be broken or crippled by pain; so long as honor, dignity, and decency stand before you, and you keep yourself in hand with your eyes upon them, pain will assuredly yield to courage and grow feeble before your resolve.

“Either there is no virtue, or all pain must be despised. Do you wish there to be practical wisdom, without which no virtue can even be conceived? What then? Will it let you act to no purpose, struggling in vain? Will self-control allow you to do anything without restraint? Can justice be honored by a man who, under the force of pain, discloses confidences, betrays his associates, abandons many duties? And what answer will you give to courage and its companions—greatness of spirit, steadfastness, endurance, indifference to human affairs?

- 32 “Will you hear ‘What a brave man!’ while you lie broken and prostrate, bewailing your fate in a pitiful voice? In such a state, no one would even call you a man. You must therefore either abandon courage or bury pain.”

## Book 2, Chapter 14

“You know, surely, that if you lose one piece of your Corinthian bronze, you may still have the rest of your furnishings safe; but if you lose one virtue—though virtue cannot be lost—if you admit you lack one, you will possess none at all?

- 33 “Can you call that Philoctetes brave, great-hearted, enduring, steadfast, indifferent to human affairs—or you—? I would rather leave you out of it. But he certainly is not brave, lying there

“In a damp-roofed cave,

“Which, echoing with cries, complaints, groans, roars,

“Though mute, sends back the mournful voices.’

“I do not deny that pain is pain—why else would courage be needed? I say that endurance can master it, if endurance exists at all. If it does not, why do we glorify philosophy, or take pride in her name? Pain pricks; let it even stab. If you are naked, offer your throat. But if you are clad in Vulcan’s armor—that is, in courage—resist. Unless you do, this guardian of your dignity will abandon and desert you.

- 34 “The laws of Crete, ordained either by Jupiter or by Minos with Jupiter’s approval, as the poets tell us, and those of Lycurgus too, train the young through exertion: hunting, running, hunger, thirst, cold, and heat. At Sparta boys are flogged at the altar so hard that ‘blood pours from deep within their flesh’—sometimes even to death, as I heard while I was there. Not one of them has ever cried out, or even groaned. What then? Can boys do this, and men not do it? Can custom achieve it, and reason not achieve it?”

## Book 2, Chapter 15

- 35 “There is some distinction between toil and pain. They are very close, certainly, but there is still a difference. Toil is the mind’s or body’s performance of a demanding work or duty; pain is a harsh disturbance in the body, unwelcome to the senses. The Greeks, whose language is richer than ours, call both by one name. Thus they call industrious people enthusiasts for pain, or rather lovers of pain; we more aptly call them hardworking. To toil is one thing, to suffer pain another. Greece, how poor you sometimes are in words, though you always think you have so many! Suffering pain, I repeat, is one thing; toiling is another. When Gaius Marius had his varicose veins cut, he suffered pain; when he led his column through intense heat, he toiled. Yet the two have a certain likeness: becoming accustomed to toil makes it easier to endure pain.
- 36 “And so those who gave Greece its forms of government wanted the bodies of the young strengthened by toil. The Spartans extended this even to women, who in other cities live in the softest luxury, ‘hidden in the shadows of walls.’ But they wanted nothing like this
- “Among the maidens of Laconia,  
“Who care more for wrestling-ground, Eurotas, sun, dust, toil,  
“And warfare than for the fertility of foreign women.’

“Pain, then, sometimes interrupts these strenuous exercises: they are shoved, struck, thrown down, they fall; and toil itself forms a kind of callus against pain.”

## Book 2, Chapter 16

37 “Now consider military service—ours, I mean, not the Spartans’, whose battle line advances to a measured beat and a flute, and who never receive an exhortation without an anapestic rhythm. First, you can see where our armies get their name, *exercitus*: from exercise. Then think of the toil, the immense toil of marching: carrying more than half a month’s provisions, carrying anything they want for their use, carrying a stake for the palisade. Our soldiers no more count shield, sword, and helmet as baggage than they count their shoulders, arms, and hands. Weapons, they say, are a soldier’s limbs. They carry them so conveniently that, when necessary, they can drop their packs and fight with their weapons as freely as with their limbs. And the legions’ training? What labor goes into that running, charging, shouting! This produces the spirit ready for wounds in battle. Bring up an untrained soldier with equal spirit:

38 “He will seem a woman. Why is there the immense difference between a new army and a veteran one that we have experienced ourselves? Recruits are generally younger, but habit teaches men to bear toil and despise wounds. Indeed, we often see wounded men being carried from the battle line: the raw, untrained soldier utters the most disgraceful wails even after a light blow. The trained veteran, made braver by that very experience, asks only for a surgeon to bandage him:

“O Patroclus, coming to you, I ask for help and for your hands,  
 “Before I meet the cruel death dealt by an enemy’s hand.  
 “[...]

“And there is no way to stop the flowing blood,  
 “If by your skill death can somehow be avoided.  
 “For the wounded fill the porticoes of Aesculapius’s sons;  
 “There is no way to get in.’  
 “This certainly is Eurypylus.’ A well-trained man!”

## Book 2, Chapter 17

- 39 “And no less well trained: where so much lamentation surrounds him, see how free of tears his answer is. He even gives a reason why he should bear it calmly:
- “Whoever plans another’s death  
 “Must know it is planned for him as well, to share an equal doom.’  
 “Patroclus will lead him away, I suppose, settle him on a bed, and bandage his wound. He would, if he were human; but I have never seen anything less so. Instead he asks what has happened:  
 “Tell me, tell me, how does the Argive cause hold up in battle?’  
 “Words cannot tell the full extent of toil  
 “Our deeds provide.’  
 “Then be quiet and bandage the wound. Even if Eurypylus could go on, Aesopus could not:  
 “Where Hector’s good fortune turned our fierce battle line [...]’  
 “And he explains the rest, in pain: so unrestrained is a brave man’s passion for military glory. Can a veteran soldier do this, then, and a learned, wise man not do it?
- 40 “He certainly can, and better by no small margin. But so far I am speaking about the habit of training, not yet about reason and wisdom. Little old women often go without food for two or three days. Deprive an athlete of food

for a single day, and he will call on Jupiter, Olympian Jupiter, the very god for whom he is training, and cry out that he cannot bear it. Great is the power of habit. Hunters spend the night in the snow on mountains; Indians let themselves be burned; boxers, battered by weighted gloves, do not even groan.

- <sup>41</sup> “But why speak of these men, to whom an Olympic victory seems like a consulship in the old days? Gladiators, men either ruined or barbarian—what blows they endure! How much rather the well-trained ones take a blow than evade it disgracefully! How often they show that nothing matters more to them than satisfying their master or the crowd! Even when exhausted by wounds, they send to their masters to ask their wishes: if they have given satisfaction, they are willing to lie down and die. What ordinary gladiator has ever groaned or changed expression? Which of them has behaved disgracefully, not only while standing, but even as he fell? Which, once down and ordered to take the sword, has drawn back his neck? Such is the power of training, practice, and habit. Can ‘a Samnite, a filthy fellow, worthy of that life and station’ achieve this, while a man born for glory allows any part of his spirit to remain so soft that he does not strengthen it through practice and reason? Some people commonly find gladiatorial shows cruel and inhuman. Perhaps they are, as they are held today. But when it was convicted criminals who fought with swords, the ears might receive many lessons, but the eyes could receive no stronger lesson against pain and death.”

## Book 2, Chapter 18

- <sup>42</sup> “I have spoken about training, habit, and practice. Come now, let us consider reason, unless you have something to say on these points.”  
“Interrupt you? I would not even wish to: your discourse leads me so strongly toward conviction.”

“Whether suffering pain is an evil or not may be left to the Stoics. With their twisted little chains of reasoning, too fine to reach our actual feelings, they try to prove that pain is not an evil. Whatever it is, I do not think it as great as it seems. I say that people are more violently disturbed by a false image and appearance of it, and that all pain is bearable.

“Where, then, shall I begin? Shall I briefly touch on the same points I made just now, so that the argument may advance further with greater ease?

- 43 “Everyone agrees—not only the educated, but the uneducated too—that bearing pain patiently belongs to brave, great-hearted, enduring men who rise above human affairs. No one has ever thought that a man who bears it in this way does not deserve praise. Is it not disgraceful, then, either to fear its approach or to fail to bear its presence, when bearing it is both demanded of the brave and praised when achieved? But consider: although all the right dispositions of the mind are called virtues, perhaps this name does not properly belong to all of them. Perhaps they were all named after the one that excelled the rest. Virtus, ‘virtue,’ takes its name from vir, ‘man’; and courage is the quality most characteristic of a man. Its two chief tasks are contempt for death and contempt for pain. We must therefore exercise these qualities if we wish to possess virtue—or rather, to be men, since virtue has borrowed its name from men.

“You may ask how, and rightly: this is the kind of medicine philosophy professes to offer.”

## Book 2, Chapter 19

- 44 “Epicurus comes forward, a man far from bad—or rather, an excellent man. He gives as much advice as his understanding allows. ‘Disregard pain,’ he says. Who says this? The very man who calls pain the supreme evil? Hardly consistent. Let us listen. ‘If pain is at its utmost,’ he says, ‘it must be brief.’ ‘Say those same words to me again!’ I do not quite understand what you call ‘utmost’ and what you call ‘brief.’ ‘Utmost: nothing can exceed it. Brief: nothing can be

brief. I despise the magnitude of a pain from which the shortness of its duration will rescue me almost before it arrives.’ But what if the pain is as great as Philoctetes’ was? ‘That certainly seems very great to me, but still not the utmost. Only his foot hurts. His eyes could hurt, his head, his sides, his lungs—everything could hurt. So it is far from the utmost pain. Consequently,’ he says, ‘long-lasting pain contains more joy than trouble.’

- 45 “Now I cannot say that so great a man has no sense, but I think he is making fun of us. I say that the utmost pain—and I call it utmost even if another is greater by ten atoms—is not necessarily brief. I could name many good men who have been tormented for years by the most severe pains of gout. But this clever fellow never fixes a limit for either magnitude or duration, so that I may know what he calls utmost in pain, brief in time. Let us therefore leave him, since he says absolutely nothing, and force the admission that remedies for pain should not be sought from someone who has called pain the greatest of all evils, however plucky he shows himself in his own intestinal cramps and painful urination. Medicine must be sought elsewhere—above all, if we seek the greatest consistency, from those who regard what is honorable as the supreme good and what is disgraceful as the supreme evil. In their presence you will certainly not dare to groan and toss about.”

## Book 2, Chapter 20

- 46 “For Virtue herself will speak to you in their voice: ‘You have seen boys at Sparta, young men at Olympia, barbarians in the arena, receiving the heaviest blows and bearing them in silence. If some pain happens to wrench at you, will you cry out like a woman, instead of bearing it steadily and calmly?’ ‘It is impossible; nature will not allow it.’ I hear you. Boys bear it, drawn by glory; others bear it from shame, many from fear. Yet we doubt whether nature permits what so many people endure in so many places? She not only permits it: she demands it. For she has nothing more excellent, nothing she seeks more

eagerly, than honor, praise, dignity, and decency. I mean these several names to express a single thing; I use several to convey it as fully as possible. What I mean is this: by far the best thing for a human being is what deserves to be sought for its own sake, what springs from virtue or resides in virtue itself, what is praiseworthy in its own right. I would sooner call this the only good than deny it is the supreme good. And as I speak of honor, so I speak in opposite terms of disgrace: nothing is so hideous, nothing so deserving of rejection, nothing so unworthy of a human being.

- 47 “If you are convinced of this—and you said at the outset that you thought dishonor a greater evil than pain—what remains is for you to command yourself. Though I hardly know how we can say that, as if we were two people, one commanding, the other obeying!”

## Book 2, Chapter 21

“Yet the expression is not foolish. The mind is divided into two parts, one sharing in reason, the other without it. When we are told to command ourselves, then, we are being told to make reason restrain recklessness. In almost everyone’s mind there is by nature something soft, abject, lowly, somehow nerveless and limp. If there were nothing else, nothing would be more repulsive than a human being. But reason stands ready, mistress and queen of all. Through its own exertion and further progress it becomes perfect virtue. A man must see to it that reason commands the part of his mind whose duty is to obey. ‘How?’ you will ask.

- 48 “As a master commands a slave, a general a soldier, or a father a son. If that part of the mind I called soft behaves disgracefully, if it gives itself up like a woman to lamentation and tears, let it be bound and held fast under the watch of friends and relatives. We often see shame break people whom no reasoning could overcome. Such people, then, must be treated like slaves, almost with chains and confinement. Those who are firmer, though still not fully strong,

must be called back by a warning, like good soldiers, to uphold their dignity. In *The Washing*, that wisest man of Greece does not lament excessively when wounded—or rather, he laments with restraint. ‘Step carefully,’ he says,

“Go with a steady effort,

“So that no jolt may seize me

“With greater pain.’

- 49 “Pacuvius does this better than Sophocles, in whose play Ulysses laments his wound most tearfully. Yet even when he groans so gently, the very people carrying the wounded man, mindful of the dignity of his character, do not hesitate to say:

“You too, Ulysses, though we see

“You badly struck, are almost too soft

“In spirit, you who have been used

“To spend your life in arms [...]’

“The discerning poet understands that the habit of bearing pain is a teacher not to be despised.

- 50 “And Ulysses, in great pain, is not without restraint:

“Hold me, hold me fast! The wound bears down;

“Uncover me! Ah, poor me: I am in torment.’

“He begins to falter, then stops at once:

“Cover me, go away now, now!

“Let me be! Your touching and shaking

“Make the savage pain worse.’

“Do you see how he has fallen silent, not because his bodily pain was soothed, but because his mind’s pain was rebuked? And so, at the end of *The Washing*, even as he is dying, he rebukes others as well:

“We should complain of hostile fortune, not lament it;

“That is a man’s duty: weeping is assigned to woman’s nature.”

## Book 2, Chapter 22

- 51 “The softer part of his mind obeyed reason as a dutiful soldier obeys a stern commander. But the man who possesses perfect wisdom—we have certainly never yet seen one, though the philosophers’ teachings describe what he would be like, if ever he should exist—that man, or rather the reason within him, complete and perfect, will command his lower part as a just father commands good sons. A nod will accomplish his wish, without labor or trouble. He will rouse himself, rise up, marshal and arm himself, to resist pain as he would an enemy. What are these weapons? Exertion, firm resolve, and an inward conversation, as he says to himself:
- 52 “Beware of anything shameful, feeble, unmanly.’ Let honorable images pass before his mind. Let Zeno of Elea stand before him, who suffered everything rather than reveal his fellow conspirators in the overthrow of a tyranny. Let him think of Anaxarchus, the follower of Democritus, who fell into the hands of Timocreon, king in Cyprus, and neither begged off nor refused any form of torture. Calanus the Indian, uneducated and barbarian, born at the foot of the Caucasus, willingly let himself be burned alive. Yet we cannot bear it if a foot aches, or a tooth—[suppose, though, the whole body aches]. It is a certain feeble, womanish opinion, the same in pleasure as in pain: when we melt and dissolve in softness under its influence, we cannot bear a bee’s sting without crying out.
- 53 “But Gaius Marius, a man of the soil, yet unmistakably a man, when he underwent the operation I mentioned earlier, first forbade them to tie him down. No one before Marius is said to have been operated on unbound. Why were others operated on unbound afterward? His example carried weight. Do you see, then, that the evil lies in opinion, not in nature? Yet Marius himself showed

that pain's bite was sharp: he did not offer his other leg. So he bore pain as a man of courage, and, as a human being, refused to bear more without compelling need.

"The whole matter, then, consists in commanding yourself. I have shown what kind of command this is. And thinking about what best befits endurance, courage, and greatness of spirit not only holds the mind in check but somehow makes the pain itself milder."

## Book 2, Chapter 23

- 54 "In battle a cowardly, timid soldier throws away his shield the moment he sees the enemy and runs as fast as he can. Because of this he sometimes perishes without even a wound, while nothing of the kind happens to the man who stands firm. So too those who cannot bear the appearance of pain fling themselves down and lie there crushed and spiritless; those who resist very often emerge victorious. There are certain similarities between mind and body. Just as loads are carried more easily when the body is braced, but crush it when it is slack, so the mind, by its own tension, repels every pressure of weight;
- 55 "But when relaxed it is so weighed down that it cannot rise. If we seek the truth, every pursuit of duty requires exertion of mind: that alone is, as it were, duty's guardian. In pain above all we must take care to do nothing abjectly, timidly, cowardly, slavishly, or like a woman. Above all we must repudiate and reject that cry of Philoctetes. A man may sometimes groan, and that rarely; wailing is not permitted even to a woman. This, surely, is the lessus, the 'wailing' that the Twelve Tables forbade at funerals.
- 56 "A brave and wise man never even groans, unless perhaps to brace himself for firmness, as runners in the stadium shout as loudly as they can. Athletes do the same in training. Boxers, even as they strike an opponent, groan while swinging

their weighted gloves—not because they are in pain or losing heart, but because pouring out the voice tenses the whole body and gives the blow greater force.”

## Book 2, Chapter 24

“What of those who want to shout more loudly? Are they content to tense the sides, throat, and tongue, from which we see the voice drawn out and poured forth? Their whole body, ‘every fingernail,’ as the saying goes, serves the effort of their voice.

<sup>57</sup> “By Hercules, I have seen Marcus Antonius touch the ground with his knee while speaking with all his strength in his own defense under the Varian law. Just as stone-hurling engines and other missile weapons launch their loads with greater force the more tightly they are strained and drawn back, so a voice, a running stride, a blow gains force from the greater exertion that propels it. Since such exertion has such power, we shall use a groan in pain if it helps to strengthen the mind. But if the groan is plaintive, feeble, abject, tearful, I would scarcely call the person who yields to it a man. Even if such groaning brought some relief, we should still consider what befits a brave, spirited man. Since it does nothing to lessen pain, why do we choose disgrace for nothing? What is more disgraceful for a man than womanish weeping?

<sup>58</sup> “And this advice about pain extends further: all things, not pain alone, must be resisted with a similar exertion of mind. Anger blazes up, lust is roused: we must retreat to the same citadel and take up the same weapons. But since we are speaking of pain, let us leave these aside.

“What helps most, then, in bearing pain calmly and composedly is to reflect with our whole heart, as the saying goes, on how honorable it is to do so. By nature, as I said before—and it must be said often—we are most eager and hungry for honor. If we catch so much as a gleam of its light, there is nothing we are not ready to bear and endure to possess it. This swift rush of the spirit

toward true glory and honor leads men to face those dangers in battle. Brave men do not feel their wounds in the fighting—or they feel them, but would rather die than be displaced even a little from their station of dignity.

- 59 “The Decii saw the glittering swords of their enemies as they rushed into their battle line. The nobility and glory of their death relieved them of all fear of wounds. Do you suppose Epaminondas groaned when he felt his life flowing out with his blood? He was leaving his country mistress of the Spartans, though he had received it in servitude. These are the consolations, these the soothing remedies for the greatest pains.”

## Book 2, Chapter 25

- 60 “You will say: what about peacetime, at home, in bed? You call me back to the philosophers, who do not often go into battle. One of them, Dionysius of Heraclea, a decidedly fickle man, had learned courage from Zeno, but pain unlearned it for him. Suffering from his kidneys, he cried out amid his howls that his former opinions about pain were false. When his fellow student Cleanthes asked what reasoning had led him away from his position, he answered: ‘Because if I had devoted only a little effort to philosophy and still could not bear pain, that would be sufficient proof that pain is an evil. But I have spent very many years in philosophy, and I cannot bear it. Therefore pain is an evil.’ They say that Cleanthes then stamped his foot and quoted a line from The Epigoni:

“Do you hear this, Amphiaraus, hidden beneath the earth?”

“He meant Zeno, whose degenerate pupil grieved him.

- 61 “Not so our Posidonius. I often saw him myself, but I shall tell the story Pompey used to relate. On coming to Rhodes as he was leaving Syria, Pompey wanted to hear Posidonius lecture. He heard that Posidonius was seriously ill, suffering intense pain in his joints, but still wanted to visit so distinguished a

philosopher. He saw and greeted him, addressed him in respectful terms, and said how sorry he was that he could not hear him. ‘But you can,’ Posidonius replied, ‘and I shall not allow bodily pain to make so great a man’s visit to me fruitless.’ Pompey said that, lying in bed, he then argued with dignity and eloquence on this very proposition, that nothing is good except what is honorable. Whenever the torches of pain seemed to be brought against him, he would often say:”

## Book 2, Chapter 26

- <sup>62</sup> “You accomplish nothing, pain! However troublesome you are, I shall never admit that you are an evil.’ Indeed, all toil that brings distinction and renown at once becomes bearable too. Do we not see that where the games called athletic contests are highly honored, those who enter them avoid no pain? Where hunting and horsemanship are admired, those who seek this praise shrink from no pain. Why speak of our own campaigns for office, our craving for honors? What flame have men not run through, those who once gathered these honors vote by vote? Africanus therefore always had Xenophon the Socratic in his hands. He especially praised Xenophon’s statement that the same toils do not weigh equally on a general and a soldier, because honor itself lightens the general’s toil.
- <sup>63</sup> “Yet the result is that among the unwise multitude the appearance of honor has power, since they cannot see honor itself. They are swayed by reputation and the judgment of the many, thinking honorable what most people praise. But even if you are in the public eye, I would not have you abide by the multitude’s judgment, or think most beautiful what it thinks so. You must use your own judgment. If you satisfy yourself by approving what is right, you will have conquered not only yourself, as I advised a little earlier, but everyone and everything.

<sup>64</sup> “Set this before yourself, then: greatness of spirit, a raising of the mind to the loftiest possible height, displayed above all in disregarding and despising pain, is the single most beautiful thing of all. It is more beautiful still if, free of an audience and without courting applause, it nevertheless delights in itself. Indeed, I think everything done without self-advertisement and without the public as witness deserves greater praise. Not that the public should be shunned: all good deeds wish to stand in the light. Still, virtue has no greater theater than conscience.”

## Book 2, Chapter 27

<sup>65</sup> “Above all, let us practice this: the endurance of pain, which I have so often said must be strengthened by the mind’s exertion, should show itself consistent in every kind of suffering. Many who have bravely received and borne wounds for the desire of victory or glory, or even to preserve their rights and freedom, cannot bear the pain of illness once they relax their effort. They had not borne the pain they found so easy through reason or wisdom, but rather through zeal and glory. Thus some savage barbarians can fight most fiercely with the sword, yet cannot face illness like men. Greeks, on the other hand, not very high-spirited but reasonably sensible by human standards, cannot face an enemy; yet these same men bear illness patiently and humanely. The Cimbri and Celtiberians exult in battle and lament in sickness. Nothing can be consistent unless it springs from a settled principle of reason.

<sup>66</sup> “But when you see that people led by zeal or opinion are not broken by pain in pursuing and attaining their aim, you ought to conclude either that pain is not an evil, or that, even if we choose to call everything harsh and contrary to nature an evil, it is still so slight that virtue overwhelms it until it disappears from sight. Reflect on this, I beg you, by day and night. This reasoning will spread wider and occupy a much greater territory than pain alone. If we do

everything to avoid disgrace and attain honor, we may despise not only the stings of pain but even the thunderbolts of fortune—especially since yesterday’s discussion has provided us with that refuge.

<sup>67</sup> “Suppose a man is sailing with pirates in pursuit, and some god says to him, ‘Throw yourself out of the ship. Someone is here to receive you: either a dolphin, as it received Arion of Methymna, or those horses of Pelops, Neptune’s horses, which are said to have drawn his chariot suspended over the waves. They will receive you and carry you wherever you wish.’ He would abandon all fear. So, when harsh and hateful pains press upon you, if they are too great to bear, you see where you may take refuge.

“This is about what I thought should be said for now. But perhaps you remain of your former opinion.”

“Not at all. I hope that in two days I have been freed from fear of the two things I most dreaded.”

“Tomorrow, then, to the water clock: that was our agreement, and I see I cannot leave this debt to you unpaid.”

“Exactly so. That in the morning, and this at the same time as today.”

“So we shall do, and attend to your excellent pursuits.”

## Book 3, Chapter 1

<sup>1</sup> What reason, Brutus, am I to give for this: although we consist of soul and body, an art has been sought out for treating and protecting the body, and its usefulness has been hallowed by attributing its discovery to the immortal gods; yet medicine for the soul was neither so eagerly desired before its discovery, nor so diligently practiced after it became known, nor so widely welcomed and approved, but has even been viewed by many with suspicion and hatred? Is it because we judge the body’s heaviness and pain with the soul, but do not feel the soul’s illness through the body? The result is that the soul passes judgment on itself precisely when the very faculty that judges is sick.

- <sup>2</sup> If nature had made us capable of looking into her and seeing her clearly, and of completing life's journey with her as our best guide, there would certainly be no need to seek out reasoning and instruction. As it is, she has given us little sparks, which we quickly extinguish, corrupted as we are by bad habits and opinions, until nature's light is nowhere visible. For the seeds of the virtues are inborn in our minds; if they were allowed to grow, nature herself would lead us to a happy life. Instead, the moment we are brought into the light and taken up in someone's arms, we find ourselves amid every kind of corruption and the deepest confusion of opinion, so that we seem almost to have drunk in error with our nurse's milk. Then, when we have been given back to our parents and afterward handed over to teachers, we are steeped in so many errors that truth yields to falsehood, and nature herself to settled opinion.

## Book 3, Chapter 2

- <sup>3</sup> Then come the poets. Making a great display of learning and wisdom, they are heard, read, learned by heart, and lodge deep within our minds. But when the people too join them, like some supreme teacher, and the whole multitude on every side agrees in favor of vice, then we are thoroughly infected by corrupt opinions and desert nature. We come to think that those who have judged nothing better for a human being, nothing more desirable or more excellent than honors, commands, and popular glory, have best understood nature's power. Every person of the finest character is drawn toward this glory; yet in seeking that true moral goodness which alone nature seeks above all, he moves in a world of utter emptiness, pursuing not a distinct likeness of virtue but a shadowy image of glory. For glory is something solid and clearly defined, not a shadow: it is the united praise of good people, the uncorrupted voice of sound judges concerning outstanding virtue. It answers virtue like an echo; and because it generally accompanies right actions, good people should not reject it.

- <sup>4</sup> But popular fame, which would pass for glory's likeness, is reckless and thoughtless, and generally praises faults and vices; by its counterfeit of moral goodness it spoils goodness's shape and beauty. Blinded in this way, people have desired things that were indeed splendid, without knowing where or what they were; some have utterly destroyed their countries, others themselves. These people, while seeking the best, go astray less through their intentions than through mistaking the road. What, then, of those driven by greed for money or lust for pleasures, whose souls are so disturbed that they are not far from madness—as happens to all the unwise? Are they to receive no treatment? Is it because the soul's illnesses do less harm than the body's, or because bodies can be cured but no medicine exists for souls?

### Book 3, Chapter 3

- <sup>5</sup> Yet the soul's diseases are both more destructive and more numerous than the body's. Indeed, bodily diseases themselves are hateful because they affect and trouble the soul; and, as Ennius says, "The sick soul is always wandering; it can neither bear nor endure, and never ceases to desire." To leave others aside, what bodily diseases could be more grievous than these two, distress and desire? And how can it be maintained that the soul cannot heal itself, when it was the soul that discovered medicine for the body? In healing bodies, the bodies themselves and nature have great power, yet not everyone who submits to treatment immediately recovers; but souls that wish to be healed and obey the precepts of the wise are healed beyond any doubt.
- <sup>6</sup> There certainly is a medicine for the soul: philosophy. We must not seek its help outside ourselves, as with bodily diseases, but must labor with all our resources and strength to become capable of healing ourselves. Still, I believe I have said enough in the Hortensius about philosophy as a whole, and how earnestly it should be sought and cultivated. Since then I have scarcely ceased either discussing or writing about the greatest questions. These books set out the discus-

sions I held with my friends at Tusculum. But since the two preceding books dealt with death and pain, the third day's discussion will furnish this third volume.

- 7 When we had gone down to our Academy, as the day was already turning toward afternoon, I asked one of those present to propose a subject for discussion. The conversation then went as follows:

## Book 3, Chapter 4

"I think the wise person is liable to distress."

"And to the other disturbances of the soul as well—fears, desires, fits of anger? These are broadly the things the Greeks call 'affections.' I could call them 'diseases,' which would translate their word literally, but would not accord with our usage. For the Greeks call pity, envy, exultation, and joy diseases—all movements of the soul that do not obey reason. We, however, would rightly call these same movements of an agitated soul 'disturbances,' I think, whereas 'diseases' would not be quite idiomatic—unless you think otherwise."

"No, I agree with your usage."

- 8 "Then do you think the wise person is liable to these?"

"I certainly do."

"Well, that glorious wisdom is not worth much, if it differs little from insanity."

"What? Do you consider every agitation of the soul insanity?"

"Not I alone. To my frequent surprise, I find that our ancestors also thought so, many centuries before Socrates, from whom all this philosophy of life and conduct flowed."

"How, exactly?"

"Because the word 'insanity' signifies sickness and disease of the mind—that is, a lack of health and an ailing soul, which they called insanity."

- <sup>9</sup> “(Philosophers call all disturbances of the soul diseases, and deny that any fool is free of these diseases. But those who are diseased are not sound, and the souls of all the unwise are diseased; therefore all the unwise are insane.) For our ancestors believed that the health of souls lay in a certain tranquility and steadiness. They called a mind deprived of these things insane, because health could no more exist in a disturbed soul than in a disturbed body.”

## Book 3, Chapter 5

- <sup>10</sup> “They showed equal insight in calling a condition of the soul without the light of the mind ‘mindlessness’ and also ‘derangement.’ This makes clear that those who gave things these names held the very view that the Stoics, taking it from Socrates, have carefully preserved: all the unwise are unsound. For a soul suffering from any disease—and, as I just said, philosophers call these disturbed movements diseases—is no sounder than a diseased body. Thus wisdom is health of soul, and folly a kind of unsoundness, which is insanity and likewise derangement. These things are marked out far better by Latin words than by Greek ones.
- <sup>11</sup> “We shall find this in many other instances too; but that is for another time. Now to the matter before us. The whole nature and character of what we are investigating is revealed by the force of the word itself. Since we must understand as sound those whose minds are troubled by no movement resembling disease, we must call those in the opposite condition unsound. Nothing, then, could be better than the familiar Latin expression by which we say that people carried away without restraint by desire or anger have ‘passed out of control’—although anger itself is a part of desire, being defined as the desire for revenge. Those described as out of control are so described because they are not under the control of the mind, to which nature has given sovereignty over the entire soul. It is not easy for me to say how the Greeks came to use their word ‘mania’; nevertheless, we distinguish the thing itself better than they do. For we separate

this insanity, which is linked to folly and has a wider reach, from frenzy. The Greeks do wish to do so, but their word is inadequate: what we call frenzy they call ‘black bile,’ as though the mind were disturbed only by black bile, and not often by violent anger, fear, or grief. It is this kind of frenzy we attribute to Athamas, Alcmaeon, Ajax, and Orestes. The Twelve Tables forbid someone in this condition to manage his own property. Accordingly, the text says not ‘if he is insane,’ but ‘if he becomes frenzied.’ For they thought that folly, though lacking steadiness—that is, soundness—could still maintain an average standard of duties and the ordinary, customary conduct of life; but frenzy, they judged, was the mind’s blindness in every respect. Although this appears more serious than insanity, it is nonetheless of such a kind that frenzy can befall the wise person, while insanity cannot. But that is another question. Let us return to our subject.”

## Book 3, Chapter 6

- 12 “You said, I believe, that you think the wise person liable to distress.”

“Yes, that is indeed my view.”

“It is certainly a humane view. We were not born from flint: there is something naturally tender and soft in our souls, which distress shakes like a storm. Nor was Crantor speaking absurdly—that man who was among the most distinguished in our Academy—when he said, ‘I entirely disagree with those who so enthusiastically praise some supposed immunity to pain, which neither can nor should exist. May I never be ill; but if I am, let me retain sensation, whether something is cut from my body or torn away. For that absence of pain comes at a heavy price: savagery in the soul, numbness in the body.’

- 13 “But let us ask whether this is the language of people who flatter our weakness and indulge our softness. Let us dare not merely to prune the branches of our miseries, but to pull up every fiber of their roots. Something may perhaps remain, so deep are the roots of folly; but only what is unavoidable will remain.

Be certain of this: unless the soul is healed, which cannot happen without philosophy, there will be no end to our miseries. Therefore, since we have begun, let us entrust ourselves to her treatment. We shall be healed if we wish. Indeed, I shall go further: I shall explain not only distress, although that comes first, but every disturbance of the soul, as I have called it, or disease, as the Greeks would have it. First, if you agree, let us proceed in the Stoic manner: they generally compress their arguments into brief conclusions. Afterward we shall range more freely, as is our practice.”

## Book 3, Chapter 7

- 14 “The courageous person is also confident—I use this word because faulty usage makes ‘overconfident’ a term of blame, though it is derived from having confidence, which deserves praise. Whoever is confident certainly does not take fright, for confidence is incompatible with fear. But anyone liable to distress is also liable to fear: the things whose presence distresses us are the very things we fear when they threaten and approach. Thus distress is opposed to courage. It is therefore reasonable that anyone liable to distress should also be liable to fear, and indeed to a broken and downcast spirit. Whoever is liable to these is liable to submit and at some point to acknowledge himself defeated. Anyone who admits these things must also admit cowardice and faintheartedness. But these do not befall the courageous person; therefore neither does distress. Yet no one is wise without being courageous; distress, then, will not befall the wise.
- 15 “Moreover, whoever is courageous must also be great in spirit; whoever is great in spirit, unconquered; whoever is unconquered must look down on human affairs and consider them beneath him. But no one can look down on things on account of which he can suffer distress. It follows that the courageous person never suffers distress. All the wise are courageous; therefore distress does not befall the wise. And just as a troubled eye is not in a proper condition to perform its function, and the other parts or the whole body fail in their duty and

function when displaced from their proper state, so a troubled soul is unfit to perform its function. The soul's function is to use reason well; and the wise person's soul is always so disposed as to make the best use of reason. Therefore it is never disturbed. But distress is a disturbance of the soul; therefore the wise person will always be free of it."

## Book 3, Chapter 8

- 16 "The same reasoning is also plausible for the temperate person. The Greeks call him 'sound-minded,' and call this virtue 'sound-mindedness,' which I usually call sometimes temperance, sometimes moderation, and occasionally even restraint. Yet perhaps this virtue may rightly be called 'worth,' a word narrower in Greek usage, where worthy people are called 'useful,' meaning useful and nothing more. Our word has a wider scope: worth includes all self-restraint and all innocence, for which Greek has no customary name, though 'harmlessness' could serve, since innocence is a disposition of the soul that harms no one. Worth embraces the other virtues too. If it were not so great a quality, if it were confined within the narrow limits most people suppose, Lucius Piso's surname 'Frugi,' meaning 'Worthy,' would never have been so highly praised.
- 17 "But since we do not ordinarily call worthy the man who deserts his post through fear, an act of cowardice, or the man who secretly fails through greed to return a deposit, an act of injustice, or the man who mismanages affairs through rashness, an act of folly, worth has embraced the three virtues of courage, justice, and practical wisdom—though this is a feature common to the virtues, since they are all linked and bound together. Let worth itself, then, be the remaining, fourth virtue. For its particular task seems to be to govern and quiet the soul's movements of appetite, and, always resisting desire, to preserve a measured steadiness in everything. Its opposing vice is called worthlessness.

- 18 “The Latin word for worth, *frugalitas*, I believe, derives from *frux*, ‘fruit,’ the earth’s finest produce; *nequitia*, ‘worthlessness,’ derives from the fact that nothing is of any use in such a person—this may perhaps be a strained derivation, but let us try it, and be thought merely to have played if it comes to nothing. For the same reason he is called a ‘good-for-nothing.’ Whoever, then, is worthy—or, if you prefer, moderate and temperate—must be steady; whoever is steady, untroubled; whoever is untroubled, free from every disturbance, and therefore from distress as well. These qualities belong to the wise person; distress, then, will be absent from the wise.”

## Book 3, Chapter 9

“Accordingly, Dionysius of Heraclea argues with some acuteness against Achilles’ complaint in Homer, which runs, I believe, like this:

“My heart swells deep within with bitter anger,

“When I recall my loss of honor and all praise.”

“Is a hand in a healthy state when it is swollen? Or is any other swollen, puffed-up limb not in a defective condition?”

- 19 “So a puffed-up, swollen soul is in a defective condition. But the wise person’s soul is always free of defect, never puffed up, never swollen; yet the angry person’s soul is in just this condition. Therefore the wise person is never angry. For if he is angry, he also feels desire: it is characteristic of the angry person to desire to inflict the greatest possible pain on the person by whom he thinks himself injured. Whoever desires this must rejoice greatly if he achieves it. The result is that he delights in another’s misfortune. Since this cannot befall the wise person, neither can anger. But if distress could befall the wise person, anger could as well; since he is free of the latter, he will be free of distress too.
- 20 “For if the wise person could fall into distress, he could also fall into pity and envy. I have not used the ambiguous word that can mean ‘being envied’ as well as ‘envying’; we may rightly form a distinct noun from ‘to envy,’ to avoid that

ambiguity. The verb derives from looking too closely at another's fortune, as in the *Melanippus*: 'Who has cast an envious eye upon my flowering children?' The construction seems bad Latin, but Accius handles it splendidly: just as we say 'see the flower,' so 'envy the flower' is more correct than 'envy at the flower.' Custom prevents us from doing this;

- <sup>21</sup> "the poet maintained his right and spoke more boldly—"

## Book 3, Chapter 10

"the same person, then, is liable both to pity and to envy. For whoever grieves at someone's adversity also grieves at someone's prosperity. Thus Theophrastus, lamenting the death of his companion Callisthenes, is tormented by Alexander's successes, and says that Callisthenes fell into the hands of a man of supreme power and supreme good fortune, who did not know how prosperity should be used. But just as pity is distress at another's adversity, so envy is distress at another's prosperity. Whoever is liable to pity, then, is also liable to envy. But the wise person is not liable to envy, and therefore not to pity either. If the wise person were accustomed to feeling distress, he would also be accustomed to pity. Distress, therefore, is absent from the wise.

- <sup>22</sup> "These are the Stoics' formulations, and their conclusions are rather tightly twisted. But at some point we must speak more expansively and fully; even so, we should chiefly use the views of those whose reasoning and judgment are most courageous and, so to speak, manly. For our friends the Peripatetics—unsurpassed in richness, learning, and weight—do not really convince me when they speak of moderate disturbances or diseases of the soul. Every evil, even a moderate one, is evil; but our aim is that there should be absolutely none in the wise person. Just as a body is not healthy even if it is only moderately sick, so this moderation in the soul falls short of health. Our people, then, were splendidly right, as in so many other things, to name trouble, anxiety, and anguish 'distress,' using a word for sickness because of their likeness to sick bodies.

- <sup>23</sup> “The Greeks use almost this very word for every disturbance of the soul: they call any turbulent movement in it an ‘affection,’ that is, a disease. We do better. For distress of soul most closely resembles bodily sickness, whereas desire does not resemble sickness, nor does immoderate joy, that exalted and exultant pleasure of the soul. Even fear, although close to distress, does not much resemble disease. But distress in the soul, like sickness in the body, has a name properly and inseparably associated with pain. We must therefore explain the origin of this pain, that is, the cause that produces distress in the soul as it produces sickness in the body. For just as physicians think that discovering the cause of a disease means discovering its cure, so, once we have found the cause of distress, we shall find the means of healing it.”

## Book 3, Chapter 11

- <sup>24</sup> “The entire cause, then, lies in opinion—not only of distress, but of all the other disturbances as well. There are four kinds of these, with numerous subdivisions. For every disturbance is a movement of the soul either devoid of reason, or scorning reason, or disobedient to reason. And since such a movement is aroused in either of two ways by an opinion concerning good or evil, the four disturbances fall into equal divisions. Two arise from an opinion concerning good. One, “‘exultant pleasure,’ “is joy carried beyond measure, produced by the opinion that some great good is present. The other, “‘desire,’ “which may properly also be called craving, is an immoderate appetite for a supposed great good, disobedient to reason.
- <sup>25</sup> “These two kinds, then, exultant pleasure and craving, are agitated by opinions about good things, as the other two, fear and distress, are by opinions about evils. Fear is the opinion that a great evil is impending, and “‘distress’ “is the opinion that a great evil is present—and indeed a fresh opinion of an evil of such a kind that anguish over it seems right: in other words, the person in pain thinks he ought to be in pain. We must resist with all our strength and

resources these disturbances, which folly unleashes and drives like so many Furies into human life, if we wish to pass in peace and quiet through the span of life we have been given.

“But we shall deal with the others another time. For now, let us drive away distress, if we can. Let that be our aim, since you said that you think it can befall the wise person, which I utterly deny. For it is something hideous, miserable, and detestable, to be fled with every effort—with sail and oar, so to speak.”

## Book 3, Chapter 12

- <sup>26</sup> “What do you think, for instance, of that man, ““Descended from Tantalus, son of Pelops, who once won ““Hippodamia from her father, King Oenomaus, in a stolen marriage?” “Why, he is Jupiter’s great-grandson. Can he be so abject, so broken? ““Do not,’ he says, ‘come near me, strangers! Stay just there, ““So that my touch or shadow may not harm the good. ““So powerful a stain of crime clings to my body.’ “Will you condemn yourself, Thyestes, and deprive yourself of daylight because of the force of another’s crime? And that son of the Sun—do you not think him unworthy of his own father’s light? ““His eyes have sunk; his body wastes to skin and bone; ““The moisture of his tears has eaten his bloodless cheeks; ““Amid his filthy face, his beard, foul and ““Unshorn, darkens his chest, rough with neglect.’ “You have added these evils yourself, most foolish Aeetes. They were not contained in what chance brought upon you. And this when the misfortune had long grown old, when the swelling of the soul had subsided—for distress, as I shall show, lies in the opinion of a recent evil. Evidently, though, you grieve from longing for your kingdom, not your daughter. You hated her, perhaps with justice; but you could not bear the loss of your kingdom. It is shameless mourning to wear yourself out with grief because you are not allowed to rule free people.

- <sup>27</sup> “Indeed, the tyrant Dionysius, expelled from Syracuse, taught boys at Corinth: so incapable was he of doing without command. But what could be more shameless than Tarquin, who made war on those who had refused to endure his arrogance? When neither the armies of Veii nor those of the Latins could restore him to his kingdom, he is said to have retired to Cumae and to have wasted away there from old age and distress.”

### Book 3, Chapter 13

“So you think this can happen to a wise person—that he can be crushed by distress, which is to say by misery? For while every disturbance is misery, distress is torture. Desire has its burning heat, exultant joy its frivolity, fear its abasement; but distress has something more grievous: wasting, torment, affliction, degradation. It tears the soul, eats it away, and utterly destroys it. Unless we strip it off and cast it away, we cannot be free from misery.

- <sup>28</sup> “This much is clear: distress arises when something has appeared to us in such a way that a great evil seems to be present and pressing upon us. Epicurus holds that the opinion of evil is by its nature distress: anyone who considers some rather serious evil, if he thinks it has happened to him, is immediately distressed. The Cyrenaics believe that distress is produced not by every evil, but by an unexpected and unforeseen evil. This certainly contributes no little to increasing distress: everything sudden seems more grievous. Hence these lines, too, are rightly praised: “When I fathered them, I knew they would die, and raised them for that fate. “And when I sent them to Troy to defend Greece, “I knew I was sending them into deadly war, not to a feast.”

## Book 3, Chapter 14

- <sup>29</sup> “This advance reflection on future evils softens the arrival of what you have long seen coming. Hence the praise for Theseus’ words in Euripides; we may, as we often do, turn them into Latin: “For I remembered what I heard from a learned man, “And pondered to myself the miseries to come: “Either a bitter death or exile’s mournful flight, “Or some great weight of evil always in my thoughts, “So that, if chance should bring some dreadful thing upon me, “No sudden care would tear me unprepared.’
- <sup>30</sup> “When Theseus says he heard this from a learned man, Euripides is speaking about himself. He had studied with Anaxagoras, who, they say, on hearing of his son’s death, remarked, ‘I knew I had fathered a mortal.’ These words show that such events are bitter for those who have not considered them beforehand. There is no doubt, then, that everything thought evil is harder to bear when unforeseen. Therefore, although this alone does not produce the greatest distress, since foresight and mental preparation are so powerful in diminishing pain, a human being should always have reflected on everything human. Surely this is that excellent and divine wisdom: to have human affairs deeply understood and thoroughly examined; to be surprised at nothing when it happens, and, before it happens, to think nothing incapable of happening. “Therefore everyone, when fortune is most favorable, should most “Reflect upon the way to bear adversity and hardship. “Returning from abroad, let him always think of dangers, losses, “A son’s wrongdoing, a wife’s death, or a daughter’s sickness; “These things are common, so none of them may ever strike the mind as new; “Whatever comes beyond expectation, count it all as gain.”

## Book 3, Chapter 15

“Since Terence has expressed this thought, borrowed from philosophy, so aptly, shall we, from whose springs it was drawn, not both express it better and hold it more steadfastly?

- 31 “Here we have that unchanging expression which Xanthippe is said to have often praised in her husband Socrates: she always saw him leave home and return with the same face. It was not the stern countenance of that elder Marcus Crassus, who, Lucilius says, laughed once in his whole life, but a tranquil and serene one: that is the account handed down to us. His expression rightly remained the same, since there was no change in the mind that shaped it. I therefore accept from the Cyrenaics these weapons against accidents and events, whose approaching assaults may be broken by long reflection beforehand. At the same time I judge that the evil lies in opinion, not in nature. For if it were in the thing itself, why would foreseen evils become lighter?
- 32 “But something more subtle can be said on these same matters, once we have examined Epicurus’ view. He holds that everyone who thinks himself amid evils must be distressed, whether those evils were foreseen and expected or have grown old. Evils, he says, neither diminish with age nor become lighter through reflection beforehand. Indeed, it is foolish to reflect on a future evil, or perhaps one that will never even come: every evil is hateful enough when it arrives. But someone who has always thought that some adversity might occur makes it an everlasting evil for himself; and if it will not even occur, he takes on a self-imposed misery to no purpose. Thus he is always in anguish, either suffering the evil or thinking of it.
- 33 “He places the relief of distress in two things: diverting the mind from thinking about trouble and recalling it to the contemplation of pleasures. For he believes that the soul can obey reason and follow where it leads. Reason therefore forbids us to look at our troubles, draws us away from bitter thoughts, and blunts

our gaze as it contemplates our miseries. When it has sounded the retreat from these, it again urges and spurs us to look at diverse pleasures and engage our whole mind with them. Through recollection of past pleasures and hope of future ones, he thinks the wise person's life is filled with these delights. I have expressed this in my own manner; Epicurus' followers use theirs. But let us consider what they say, and disregard how they say it."

## Book 3, Chapter 16

- <sup>34</sup> "To begin with, they are wrong to criticize reflection on future events. Nothing so blunts and lightens distress as the lifelong, constant thought that nothing is incapable of happening; as meditation on the human condition; as reflection on life's law and on obedience to it. This brings about not perpetual mourning, but freedom from mourning. For someone reflecting on the nature of things, on life's changes, on the weakness of humankind, does not mourn while considering them, but is then most fully performing wisdom's task. He achieves both results: in considering human affairs he enjoys philosophy's proper work, and in adversity he is healed by a threefold consolation. First, <nothing happens to him except what> he has long considered capable of happening—a thought which by itself does most to diminish and dissolve every trouble. Second, he understands that human fortunes must be borne as a human being should bear them. Finally, he sees that there is no evil except fault, and no fault when something happens that no human being could have prevented.
- <sup>35</sup> "But that recall of the mind he offers, when he diverts us from contemplating evils, amounts to nothing. When things we think evil are stabbing at us, neither ignoring them nor forgetting them lies in our power. They tear at us, harass us, prick us with goads, set fires against us, and give us no breathing space. Yet you command us to forget, which is contrary to nature, while wresting away the help for long-standing grief <which> nature has given! The medicine brought by the passage of time is certainly slow, but it is powerful nonetheless. You tell

me to think of good things and forget evils. You would be saying something, and something worthy of a great philosopher, if you understood as good the things most worthy of a human being.”

## Book 3, Chapter 17

“If Pythagoras or Socrates or Plato were to say to me:

36 “Why are you lying there, why are you grieving, why do you sink and yield to fortune? Perhaps she could tug at you and sting you; certainly she could not break your strength. Great power resides in the virtues: rouse them, if perhaps they sleep. Courage, their leader, will immediately come to your side and compel you to show such greatness of soul that you look down on everything that can happen to a human being and count it nothing. Temperance will come too, which is also moderation, and which I called worth a little earlier; it will not let you do anything shameful or worthless. Yet what is more worthless or shameful than an unmanly man? Not even justice will let you act so, though it seems to have the least scope in this matter. Still, it will tell you that you are doubly unjust: you covet what belongs to another when, born mortal, you demand the condition of the immortals; and you resent having returned what you received only for use.’

37 “What answer will you give practical wisdom, when it teaches that virtue is self-sufficient, as for living well, so also for living happily? If virtue hangs bound to things outside itself, instead of rising from itself and returning again to itself, embracing all its possessions and seeking nothing from elsewhere, I do not understand why it should seem worthy of such vehement praise in words or such ardent pursuit in fact.’—If you recall me to these good things, Epicurus, I obey, I follow, I take you yourself for my guide. I even forget evils, as you command, and all the more readily because I think they should not even be counted as evils. But you divert my thoughts to pleasures. What pleasures? Bodily ones, I suppose, or those that are considered in memory or hope on

account of the body. Is there anything else? Am I interpreting your view correctly? For these people habitually deny that we understand what Epicurus says.

- 38 “This is what he says. And that sharp little old man Zeno, the keenest of them all, used to insist on it and declare it loudly in my hearing at Athens: a happy person is one who enjoys present pleasures and trusts that he will enjoy them throughout all, or a large part, of his life without the intervention of pain; or, should pain intervene, that if intense it will be brief, and if prolonged it will contain more pleasure than evil. A person thinking this will be happy, especially when he is also content with the good things already experienced <and> fears neither death nor the gods. There you have Epicurus’ picture of the happy life, expressed in Zeno’s words, so that nothing can be denied.”

## Book 3, Chapter 18

“What, then?

- 39 “Could the prospect and contemplation of this life relieve Thyestes, or Aetes, whom I mentioned a little earlier, or Telamon, driven from his country, exiled and destitute? It was of him that people asked in astonishment: “Is this that Telamon whom glory lately raised to heaven, ““On whom men gazed, toward whose face the Greeks turned their own?”
- 40 “If anyone’s ‘spirit has collapsed along with his fortunes,’ as the same poet says, we must seek medicine from those weighty philosophers of old, not from these devotees of pleasure. What abundance of good things do they claim? Let freedom from pain indeed be the highest good—though that is not called pleasure, but we need not discuss everything now. Is this where we are to be taken to ease our mourning? Let pain indeed be the highest evil. Does someone who is not in pain, then, simply because he is free from evil, immediately enjoy the highest good?

- 41 “Why do we evade the point, Epicurus, instead of admitting that we mean the pleasure which you yourself, when you have put on a brazen face, habitually describe? Are these your words or not? In the very book that contains your whole teaching—and now I shall act as translator, so no one may think I am inventing—you say this: ‘For my part, I have no conception of that good if I remove the pleasures perceived through taste, those perceived through sexual activity, those perceived through hearing songs, and those pleasant movements perceived by the eyes from beautiful forms, or whatever other pleasures are produced in the whole person through any sense. Nor can it be said that the mind’s joy alone counts as a good. For I know the joyful mind in this way: through the hope of obtaining all the things I have mentioned above, so that our nature, possessing them, may be free of pain.’
- 42 “These are his own words, so anyone can understand what pleasure Epicurus recognizes. Then a little further on: ‘I have often asked,’ he says, ‘those called wise what they would have left among good things if they removed these, unless they wished to pour out empty sounds. I could learn nothing from them. If they wish to spout virtues and wisdoms, they will be speaking of nothing but the way to produce the pleasures I have mentioned above.’ What follows is to the same effect; the whole book, which deals with the highest good, is filled with words and views of this kind.
- 43 “Is this, then, the life to which you will recall that Telamon, to lighten his distress? And if you see one of your friends stricken with grief, will you offer him a sturgeon rather than some little book by a follower of Socrates? Will you urge him to listen to the notes of a water organ rather than Plato’s words? Will you set out bright and varied things for him to look at? Hold a little bouquet to his nose? Burn perfumes and tell him to wreath himself in garlands and roses? And if you add something else as well—then you will certainly have wiped away every trace of mourning.”

## Book 3, Chapter 19

- <sup>44</sup> “Epicurus must admit these things, or remove from his book the passages I have just rendered word for word—or rather discard the entire book, for it is packed with pleasures. We must therefore ask how to free from distress someone who speaks like this: “By Pollux, fortune fails me now more than my birth. “For I had a kingdom—so you may know from what a height, “From what wealth and circumstances, fallen fortune strikes.’ “What? Must we thrust a cup of honeyed wine upon him, or something of the sort, to stop his weeping? Look now at the other side, from the same poet: ‘From highest wealth, in need of your help, Hector.’ We must come to her aid, for she seeks assistance: “What protection can I seek or pursue? In what “Help can I now trust in exile or in flight? “Stripped of citadel and city, where can I fall, where turn? “My country’s altars no longer stand at home, but lie broken and scattered; “The shrines are burned in flame; the high walls stand scorched, “Disfigured, with their warped fir timbers—’ “You know what follows, and especially these lines: “O father, O country, O house of Priam, “Temple enclosed by a loud-sounding hinge! “I saw you, with foreign forces standing by, “With carved and paneled ceilings, “Royally furnished in gold and ivory.’
- <sup>45</sup> “What an outstanding poet, though these singers of Euphoriion despise him! He perceives that everything sudden and unexpected is harder to bear. Having therefore magnified the royal wealth that seemed destined to last forever, what does he add? “I saw all this set ablaze, “Priam robbed of life by violence, “Jupiter’s altar fouled with blood.’
- <sup>46</sup> “A magnificent song! In subject, language, and rhythms alike it is full of mourning. Let us take away her distress. How? Shall we settle her on a feather cushion, bring in a girl to play the harp, offer a sweet perfume, burn a little dish of <frangrances>, and look for something sweet to drink and eat? Are these, then, the good things by which the gravest distress is to be removed? A moment ago you

said you could not even conceive of any others. I would agree with Epicurus, then, that we ought to be recalled from grief to the thought of good things, if we agreed about what a good thing is.”

## Book 3, Chapter 20

“Someone will say, ‘What then? Do you think Epicurus intended these things, or that his views were licentious?’ Certainly not. I see that he says many austere things, many splendid things. Accordingly, as I have often said, the question concerns his intellectual acuteness, not his character. However much he scorns the pleasures he has just praised, I shall still remember what he considers the highest good. He did not merely use the word ‘pleasure,’ but explained what he meant: ‘taste,’ he says, ‘and bodily embraces and games and songs and forms that move the eyes pleasantly.’ Am I inventing this? Am I lying? I want to be refuted. For what am I working toward except that truth should be unfolded in every inquiry?

<sup>47</sup> “But he also says that pleasure does not increase once pain has been removed, and that the greatest pleasure is to feel no pain.’ Three great errors in a few words! First, he contradicts himself. Just now he could not even conceive of any good unless the senses were, so to speak, tickled by pleasure; now the greatest pleasure is freedom from pain. Could he contradict himself more? The second error is this: although there are three natural conditions—enjoyment, pain, and neither enjoyment nor pain—he thinks the first and third identical, and does not distinguish pleasure from the absence of pain. The third error he shares with certain others: although virtue is most earnestly sought, and philosophy was sought out as a means to attain it, he has separated the highest good from virtue.

<sup>48</sup> “But he often praises virtue.’ So did Gaius Gracchus defend the treasury in words, though he had made the greatest handouts and emptied it. Why should I listen to words when I can see deeds? That Lucius Piso Frugi had always spo-

ken against the grain law. Once it passed, this former consul came to receive grain. Gracchus noticed Piso standing in the assembly, and asked, in the hearing of the Roman people, how he could be consistent when he sought grain under a law he had opposed. ‘I would rather, Gracchus,’ he said, ‘that you did not take pleasure in dividing my property among everyone; but if you do, I shall claim my share.’ Did this serious and wise man fail to make clear that the Sempronian law was squandering the public inheritance? Read Gracchus’ speeches, and you will call him the treasury’s champion.

- 49 “Epicurus denies that one can live pleasantly without living virtuously. He denies that fortune has any power over the wise, prefers a simple diet to a lavish one, and denies that there is any time when the wise person is not happy. All this is worthy of a philosopher, but incompatible with pleasure. ‘He does not mean that pleasure.’ Let him mean whatever pleasure he chooses; it is certainly a pleasure in which virtue has no share. Come, if we do not understand pleasure, do we not understand pain either? I deny, then, that someone who measures the highest evil by pain has any business mentioning virtue.”

## Book 3, Chapter 21

- 50 “Some Epicureans, excellent men—for no school is less malicious—complain that I speak against Epicurus with partisan zeal. Of course: we are competing for office or rank! To me the highest good seems to lie in the soul, to him in the body; to me in virtue, to him in pleasure. And they fight, even calling on their neighbors for support—and there are plenty who immediately flock to them. For my part, I say I do not mind, and will accept whatever they decide as settled.
- 51 “What is at issue? The Punic War? Even on that subject, when Marcus Cato and Lucius Lentulus differed, there was never any quarrel between them. These men act far too angrily, especially since the view they defend is not a very spir-

ited one: they would not dare to speak for it in the Senate, in the assembly, before the army, or before the censors. But we shall deal with them another time, and in such a spirit that I shall set up no contest, but readily yield if they speak the truth. I shall only remind them that, even if it is entirely true that the wise person refers everything to the body—or, to put it more respectably, does nothing except what is advantageous, or refers everything to his own interest—since such views win no applause, they should enjoy them privately and cease speaking so grandly.”

## Book 3, Chapter 22

“The Cyrenaics’ view remains:

- 52 “they think distress arises if something happens unexpectedly. As I said above, this is certainly an important factor. I know that Chrysippus too thinks an unforeseen event strikes more violently; but this is not the whole story. Certainly the enemy’s sudden arrival causes considerably more confusion than an expected one, and a sudden storm at sea frightens sailors more violently than one foreseen; most such cases are similar. Yet if you examine carefully the nature of unexpected events, you will find only that everything sudden seems greater, and for two reasons. First, we are given no time to consider how great the events are; second, when it seems that they could have been guarded against had they been foreseen, the evil, apparently incurred through our own fault, makes the distress sharper.
- 53 “That this is so is shown by time, which as it passes brings such relief that, though the same evils remain, distress is not only softened but in most cases removed. Many Carthaginians were slaves at Rome, and Macedonians after King Perseus’ capture. When I was young, I also saw some Corinthians in the Peloponnese. All these could have uttered those same laments of Andromache: ‘I saw all this [...]’; but perhaps they had already sung them to exhaustion. For their expressions, speech, and every other movement and bearing were such

that you would have taken them for Argives or Sicyonians. The sudden sight of Corinth's ruined walls had moved me more than the Corinthians themselves, whose souls long reflection had covered with time's callus.

- 54 “We read the book Clitomachus sent to his fellow citizens in captivity to console them after Carthage's destruction. It contains a discussion by Carneades which Clitomachus says he set down in his notes. The proposition was that the wise person would, it seemed, be distressed if his country were captured, and Carneades' arguments against it are recorded. The philosopher thus applies to a present calamity a medicine of such strength as is not even wanted for an old one. If the same book had been sent to the captives some years later, it would have treated not wounds but scars. For pain diminishes gradually, step by step as time advances—not because the thing itself usually changes or can change, but because experience teaches what reason should have taught: that what seemed so great is smaller than it appeared.”

## Book 3, Chapter 23

“What need is there, then,’ someone will say, ‘for reason at all, or for that consolation we ordinarily use when we wish to lighten the pain of mourners?

- 55 “For the argument we generally have ready then is that nothing should seem unexpected. Or how will someone endure a misfortune more tolerably from learning that something of the kind must happen to human beings? This argument takes nothing away from the evil's actual magnitude; it merely adds that nothing has happened that should not have been expected.’ Yet this kind of argument is by no means powerless in consolation; indeed, I am inclined to think it the most powerful. Unexpected events, then, do not have such force that all distress arises from them. They perhaps strike harder, but they do not cause events to seem greater: the events seem greater because they are fresh, not because they are sudden.

- 56 “There are therefore two ways of discovering the truth, not only about what seems evil, but about what seems good as well. We either investigate the character and magnitude of the thing’s own nature—as we sometimes do with poverty, lightening its burden by argument and teaching how small and few are nature’s wants—or turn our speech from subtle argument to examples. Here Socrates is recalled, here Diogenes, here that line from Caecilius: ‘Wisdom is often found beneath a shabby little cloak.’ For since the force of poverty is one and the same, what reason can be given why Gaius Fabricius could endure it while others deny they can bear it?”
- 57 “This second kind, then, resembles the method of consolation which teaches that what has happened is part of human life. Such a discussion does not merely impart knowledge of humankind; it also indicates that things are bearable which others both have borne and do bear.”

## Book 3, Chapter 24

“Is poverty the subject? Many poor people who bear it patiently are recalled. Is it disregard for office? Many who have held no office are brought forward, and who are happier precisely for that reason. The lives of those who preferred private leisure to public business are praised by name; nor is that anapestic passage of the mightiest king left unmentioned, in which he praises an old man and calls him fortunate because he will reach his last day without glory and without fame.

- 58 “In the same way, examples are recalled of parents bereaved of children, and the mourning of those who take their loss harder is softened by the examples of others. Thus the endurance of others makes what has happened seem far smaller than it was judged to be. Gradually, as we reflect, it becomes clear how much opinion has falsified. This too is what Telamon’s words declare—‘When I fathered them [...]’—and Theseus—‘I pondered to myself the miseries to come’—and Anaxagoras—‘I knew I had fathered a mortal.’ For all of these,

through long reflection on human affairs, understood that they were by no means to be feared in accordance with popular opinion. Indeed, it seems to me that much the same happens to those who reflect beforehand as to those whom time heals, except that a process of reasoning heals the former, and nature herself the latter. They grasp the essential point: that the evil they supposed to be the greatest is by no means so great as to overthrow a happy life.

- 59 “What follows, then, is that an unexpected event strikes a greater blow, not—as they think—that when two people meet with equal misfortunes, only the one to whom it came unexpectedly is distressed.  
“Accordingly, some mourners are said to have taken their grief even harder when they heard of this common human condition: that we are born under a law which allows no one to remain forever free of evil.”

## Book 3, Chapter 25

“For this reason Carneades, as I see our Antiochus writes, used to criticize Chrysippus for praising these lines of Euripides:

“There is no mortal untouched by pain  
“And sickness; many must bury children  
“And father them again, and death awaits us all.  
“These things bring anguish to humankind in vain:  
“Earth must be given back to earth, and everyone’s life  
“Reaped like the crops. So Necessity commands.’

- 60 “He denied that this kind of argument had any relevance at all to relieving distress. The very fact that we had fallen under so cruel a necessity, he said, was something to grieve over. An argument recalling other people’s misfortunes was suited to consoling the malicious. To me, however, the matter seems quite otherwise. The necessity of bearing the human condition forbids us, as it were, to fight against a god and reminds us that we are human—a reflection that

greatly lightens mourning. And the list of examples is offered not to delight the malicious, but so that the mourner may think he must bear what he sees many others have borne with moderation and tranquility.

- <sup>61</sup> “For those who are collapsing and cannot hold themselves together under the weight of distress must be supported in every way. Hence Chrysippus thinks distress itself was named in Greek as though it were a dissolution of the whole person. It can be entirely uprooted once, as I said at the beginning, its cause is explained. That cause is nothing other than an opinion and judgment that a great evil is present and pressing upon us. Thus even bodily pain, whose bite is keenest, will be endured when hope of good is set before us; and a life passed honorably and splendidly brings such consolation that distress either does not touch those who have lived in this way, or mental pain pricks them only very lightly.”

## Book 3, Chapter 26

“But when, to this opinion of a great evil, another opinion is added—that we ought to be distressed at what has happened, that this is right and part of our duty—then at last that oppressive disturbance of distress is produced.

- <sup>62</sup> “From this opinion come those varied and detestable forms of mourning: filthy neglect, women’s tearing of cheeks, the beating of breast, thighs, and head. Hence that Agamemnon in Homer, and likewise in Accius, ‘again and again tearing his unshorn hair in grief.’ Bion’s joke on this was apt: the utterly foolish king tore his hair out in mourning as though baldness could relieve grief.
- <sup>63</sup> “But people do all these things because they think they ought to. Thus Aeschines attacks Demosthenes for having offered sacrificial victims on the seventh day after his daughter’s death. And with what rhetoric, what eloquence! What thoughts he gathers, what words he hurls, so that you realize a rhetorician may do anything he pleases. No one would approve his remarks unless we

had this notion implanted in our souls: all good people ought to mourn as deeply as possible for the deaths of their loved ones. Hence some people in mental pain seek solitude, as Homer says of Bellerophon: “Miserable, he wandered grieving on the Aleian fields, “Eating his own heart, avoiding the tracks of men.’ “And Niobe is represented as stone, I suppose because of her eternal silence in mourning. Hecuba, they think, is represented as changed into a dog because of a certain bitterness and rage in her soul. Others, however, often delight in speaking to solitude itself in their mourning, like that nurse in Ennius: “A longing has seized me now in my misery to tell “To heaven and earth the miseries of Medea.”

### Book 3, Chapter 27

- <sup>64</sup> “In their pain they do all these things because they think them right, proper, and owed. That they act from a kind of judgment of duty is especially clear from this: if people who wish to remain in mourning happen to have done something more natural, or spoken rather cheerfully, they call themselves back to sadness and accuse themselves of wrongdoing for having interrupted their grief. Mothers and teachers even punish children, not only with words but with blows, if they have done or said anything cheerful during mourning at home, and force them to weep. What of this? Once mourning itself has eased and it is understood that grieving achieves nothing, does the fact not show that the whole thing was voluntary?
- <sup>65</sup> “What of Terence’s ‘self-tormentor’—that is what the Greek title means? “I have decided I do my son less wrong, “Chremes, so long as I make myself miserable.’ “Here he decides to be miserable. Does anyone decide anything against his will? ‘I would think myself deserving of every evil—’ He thinks himself deserving of evil unless he is miserable. You see, then, that the evil lies in opinion, not in nature. What of those whom circumstances themselves forbid to mourn? In Homer the daily slaughter and deaths of many bring a quieting of

grief. He says: “For we see too many falling, and on every day, “For anyone to find a respite from mourning. “All the more must we commit the dead to their graves “With steadfast hearts, and end our grief with one day’s tears.’

- <sup>66</sup> “So it is in your power to cast off pain when you wish, in obedience to the needs of the moment. Or is there any moment whose demands we should not obey for the sake of laying aside care <and> distress, since this is indeed within our power? It was established that those who saw Gnaeus Pompey falling under his wounds, even amid that most bitter and miserable spectacle, feared for themselves because they saw the enemy fleet surrounding them, and did nothing then but urge on the rowers and seek safety in flight. After they reached Tyre, they began to beat their breasts and lament. Could fear drive distress out of them, then, while reason cannot drive it out of a wise man?”

## Book 3, Chapter 28

“What has greater power to make us lay down pain than the realization that it achieves nothing and has been undertaken in vain? If it can be laid down, it can also be kept from being taken up. We must therefore admit that distress is taken up by choice and judgment.

- <sup>67</sup> “This is also shown by the endurance of those who, having often suffered much, more readily bear whatever happens, and think themselves now hardened against fortune, like the man in Euripides: “If this were the first sad day to dawn on me, “And I had not sailed through such a troubled sea, “There would be cause for grief—as colts, when bridled, “Are suddenly excited by the unfamiliar touch; “But now, worn down by miseries, I have grown numb.’ “Since exhaustion from miseries makes distress lighter, we must understand that the event itself is not the cause and source of grief.

- <sup>68</sup> “Do not the greatest philosophers, who have not yet attained wisdom, understand that they are amid the greatest evil? For they are unwise, and no evil is greater than folly. Yet they do not mourn. Why? Because to this class of evils we do not attach the opinion that it is right, fair, and part of one’s duty to be distressed at not being wise. Yet we attach that very opinion to the distress which contains mourning, the greatest distress of all.
- <sup>69</sup> “Accordingly, Aristotle, criticizing earlier philosophers who thought philosophy had been perfected by their own intelligence, says they were either supremely foolish or supremely boastful. He himself, however, sees that since so much progress has been made in a few years, philosophy will soon be fully complete. Theophrastus, as he was dying, is said to have accused nature of giving stags and crows long lives, though it made no difference to them, while granting so brief a life to human beings, to whom it mattered most. If their span could have been longer, all the arts would have been perfected, and human life instructed in every branch of knowledge. He complained, then, that he was being extinguished just as he had begun to see these things. And what of the other philosophers? Do not the best and most serious of them admit that there is much they do not know, and much that they still have to learn over and over?
- <sup>70</sup> “Yet although they understand that they are stuck in the midst of folly, than which nothing is worse, they are not crushed by distress; for no opinion that pain is a duty is mixed in. What of those who do not think men should mourn? Such was Quintus Maximus when he buried his son, a former consul; such was Lucius Paulus when he lost two sons within a few days; such was Marcus Cato when his son, the praetor-elect, died; such were the others whose cases I collected in my *Consolation*.
- <sup>71</sup> “What else brought them peace but their belief that mourning and grief were not a man’s part? Thus, while others commonly surrender to distress because they think it right, these men repelled it because they thought it shameful. From this we understand that distress lies not in nature but in opinion.”

## Book 3, Chapter 29

“Against this people say: ‘Who is so mad as to grieve of his own free will?

Nature brings pain, to which even your Crantor thinks we must yield; for it presses and bears down upon us, and cannot be resisted.’ Thus that Oileus in Sophocles, who had earlier consoled Telamon for Ajax’s death, was broken when he heard of his own son’s death. Of his change of mind it is said:

“No one is endowed with wisdom so great

“That, easing others’ hardships with his words,

“He does not, when fortune turns her onslaught

“Toward him, break beneath his own sudden loss,

“Forgetting all he said and taught to others.’

“When they argue this way, they seek to establish that nature cannot possibly be resisted. Yet they also admit that people take on distress heavier than nature requires. What madness, then, is this—? Let us ask them that same question in our turn.

72 “But there are several causes for taking on pain. First is that opinion of evil: when an evil is perceived and firmly believed in, distress necessarily follows. Next, people think they gratify the dead by mourning them deeply. A certain womanish superstition is added: they think they will more readily satisfy the immortal gods if, struck by their blow, they acknowledge themselves afflicted and prostrate. Most people fail to see how contradictory these things are. They praise those who meet death calmly, but think those who bear another’s death calmly deserve blame—as though it were possible, as is often said in lovers’ talk, for someone to love another more than himself.

73 “It is splendid—and, if you ask me, right and true as well—to love those who ought to be dearest to us as much as ourselves; but to love them more is utterly impossible. Nor should we even wish in friendship that my friend should love

me more than himself, or I him more than myself. If it were so, confusion of life and of all our duties would follow.”

## Book 3, Chapter 30

“But more of this another time. For now it is enough not to ascribe our misery to the loss of friends, lest we love them more than they themselves would wish, if they have awareness—certainly more than we love ourselves. As for the claim that most people receive no relief from consolation, and the added claim that consolers themselves admit to misery when fortune turns her onslaught toward them, both can be answered. These are not defects of nature, but faults. One may denounce folly as fully as one likes. Those who find no relief invite <themselves> to misery; and those who bear their own misfortunes differently from the way they advised others to bear theirs are no more at fault than most people, who, greedy themselves, blame the greedy, or ambitious themselves, blame those hungry for glory. For it is characteristic of folly to see others’ faults and forget one’s own.

<sup>74</sup> “But surely this point above all must be made clear: since it is established that distress is removed with time, the power lies not in the days themselves, but in prolonged reflection. For if the thing is the same and the person is the same, how can the pain change at all if nothing has changed either in what causes the pain or in the person who feels it? It is prolonged reflection that there is no evil in the event, then, that heals pain, not mere duration itself.”

## Book 3, Chapter 31

“Here they offer me moderate degrees. If these are natural, what need is there of consolation? Nature herself will set the limit. But if they depend on opinion, let the opinion be removed altogether.

"I believe enough has been said to show that distress is the opinion of a present evil, an opinion which includes the belief that one ought to take on distress.

- 75 "Zeno rightly adds to this definition that the opinion of a present evil must be fresh. They interpret this word not merely to mean what happened a little earlier: as long as the supposed evil retains a certain force, flourishing and possessing a kind of greenness, so long it is called fresh. Take Artemisia, the wife of Mausolus, king of Caria, who built that famous tomb at Halicarnassus. As long as she lived, she lived in mourning, and was finally wasted away and consumed by it. For her that opinion was fresh every day; it ceases to be called fresh only when it has dried up with age.

"The duties of consolers, then, are these: to remove distress from its roots, or to quiet it, or to diminish it as much as possible, or to hold it in and not let it spread further, or to turn the mind to other things.

- 76 "Some think the consoler's one duty is to show that the supposed evil is no evil at all, as Cleanthes holds; some, that it is no great evil, as the Peripatetics; some draw us away from evils to good things, as Epicurus does; some think it enough to show that nothing unexpected has happened, <as the Cyrenaics [...]> no evil. Chrysippus, however, thinks the chief task in consolation is to remove the mourner's belief that he is performing a just and binding duty. Some also combine all these kinds of consolation, since different people are moved in different ways. Thus in my Consolation I gathered almost all of them into a single consolation: my soul was swollen, and every kind of treatment was being tried upon it. But the right moment must be chosen in diseases of the soul no less than in those of the body. So with Aeschylus' Prometheus, who, when told: "Yet I believe you know this, Prometheus: "Reason can heal anger," replied: "Yes, if one applies the medicine at the proper time, "And does not strike the wound with his hand and make it worse."

## Book 3, Chapter 32

77 “In consolation, then, the first medicine will be to teach that there is either no evil or a very small one; the second, to discuss the common condition of life, and anything particular to the mourner’s own situation; the third, that it is the height of folly to wear oneself out with grief in vain when one understands that nothing can be gained. Cleanthes, indeed, consoles the wise person, who has no need of consolation. For if you persuade a mourner that nothing is evil unless it is shameful, you will have removed not his mourning but his folly; yet this is the wrong time to teach. Nor, it seems to me, has Cleanthes sufficiently recognized that distress can sometimes be taken on precisely because of what he himself admits to be the greatest evil. For what shall we say of Socrates and Alcibiades? As we are told, Socrates persuaded him that he was worth nothing as a man, and that there was no difference between Alcibiades, born to the highest rank, and any common porter. When Alcibiades tormented himself and tearfully begged Socrates to impart virtue to him and drive out his shamefulness—what shall we say, Cleanthes? That there was no evil in the thing that distressed Alcibiades?

78 “And what are we to make of Lyco’s remarks? Diminishing distress, he says it is caused by trifling things, the disadvantages of fortune and the body, not evils of the soul. What then? Did not the thing that pained Alcibiades consist in the soul’s evils and faults? Enough has already been said about Epicurus’ consolation.”

## Book 3, Chapter 33

- 79 “Not even this is the strongest consolation, though it is common and often helpful: ‘This has not happened to you alone.’ As I said, it does help, but not always and not everyone, for some reject it. Much depends on how it is applied. We must emphasize how each of those who bore things wisely endured them, not what misfortune each suffered. Chrysippus’ consolation is the strongest in point of truth, but difficult to use in the midst of distress. It is a great task to prove to someone grieving that he grieves by his own judgment and because he thinks he ought to act so. Surely, then, just as in legal cases we do not always use the same issue—that is our term for the kinds of controversy—but adapt it to the occasion, the nature of the dispute, and the person, so in relieving distress we must consider what treatment each person can accept.
- 80 “But somehow our discussion has wandered from the subject you proposed. You asked about the wise person, to whom nothing free of shamefulness can seem evil, or can seem only so slight an evil that wisdom overwhelms it and it scarcely appears. He adds nothing by opinion to increase distress, nor does he think it right to torment himself as much as possible and wear himself out in mourning—a belief than which nothing could be more perverse. Yet reasoning has taught us, I think, even though we were not now specifically asking whether anything was evil unless it could also be called shameful, to see that whatever evil there is in distress is not natural, but incurred through voluntary judgment and mistaken opinion.
- 81 “We have treated that kind of distress which is the greatest of all, so that, once it was removed, we might consider the remedies for the others hardly worth much searching.”

## Book 3, Chapter 34

“For there are established things commonly said about poverty, and established things about a life without office or glory. There are separate, established lectures on exile, the destruction of one’s country, slavery, disability, blindness, and every misfortune commonly given the name of calamity. The Greeks divide these into individual lectures and individual books, for they are looking for work—though their discussions are full of delight.

- 82 “Yet just as physicians, by treating the whole body, heal even its smallest part if it is in pain, so philosophy, once it has removed distress as a whole, <has removed it> also when some error has arisen from any source: if poverty has bitten, disgrace has stung, exile has cast some darkness over us, or any of the things I just mentioned has occurred. Still, particular circumstances have their particular consolations, which you may hear whenever you wish. But we must return to the same source: all distress is far removed from the wise person, because it is empty, undertaken in vain, and arises not from nature but from judgment, from opinion, from a kind of invitation to grieve, once we have decided that this is what ought to be done.
- 83 “When this wholly voluntary element has been removed, that mourning distress will be taken away. A sting, however, and a certain slight contraction of the soul will remain. Let them call this natural, provided the oppressive, hideous, deadly name of distress is absent—a thing that cannot possibly coexist or, so to speak, dwell with wisdom. But the roots of distress—how numerous, how bitter they are! Once the trunk itself is overthrown, all of them must be picked out, if necessary through separate discussions. For we have this leisure left to us, such as it is. Yet all kinds of distress have one underlying character, though many names. For distress includes envy, rivalry, disparagement, pity, anguish, mourning, grief, hardship, lamentation, anxiety, pain, trouble, affliction, and despair.

- 84 “The Stoics define all these, and the words I have used refer to distinct things; they do not, as they seem to, signify the same things, but differ in some respect. Perhaps we shall treat this elsewhere. These are those fibers of the roots I spoke of at the beginning, which must all be traced and picked out, so that none can ever spring up again. A great and difficult task—who denies it? Yet what splendid thing is not also arduous? Still, philosophy professes that she will accomplish it, provided only that we accept her treatment.
- “But enough of this for now. The rest will be ready for you whenever you wish, both here and elsewhere.”

## Book 4, Chapter 1

- 1 I often marvel, Brutus, at the gifts and virtues of our countrymen in many fields, but above all in those studies that they sought out so late and brought from Greece to our city. From the city’s first beginnings, royal institutions, and in some cases laws as well, had given an almost divine ordering to the auspices, religious observances, assemblies, appeals to the people, the senate, the divisions of cavalry and infantry, and the whole military establishment. Then, once the commonwealth was freed from royal rule, there followed a marvelous advance, an incredible rush toward excellence of every kind. This, however, is not the place to discuss our ancestors’ customs and institutions or the discipline and balanced constitution of the state. I have treated these matters with sufficient care elsewhere, especially in the six books I wrote on the commonwealth.
- 2 Here, as I consider the pursuit of learning, many reasons occur to me for believing that these studies too were brought here from abroad, and were not merely sought out but preserved and cultivated. Pythagoras, a man of outstanding wisdom and renown, was almost within their sight: he lived in Italy at the very time when Lucius Brutus, the illustrious founder of your noble line, freed his country. As Pythagoras’ teaching spread far and wide, it seems to me to have penetrated our city too. This is both a plausible inference and something indi-

cated by certain surviving traces. Greece was flourishing in Italy, in mighty cities of the greatest size—the Greece called ‘Great’—and there first Pythagoras himself, and afterward the Pythagoreans, enjoyed such fame. Who could suppose that our countrymen kept their ears closed to voices of such learning?

- <sup>3</sup> Indeed, I think admiration for the Pythagoreans led later generations to regard King Numa too as a Pythagorean. They knew Pythagoras’ teaching and institutions, and had heard from their ancestors of that king’s justice and wisdom; but because of the remoteness of the past they did not know their dates or lifetimes. They therefore believed that a man of such exceptional wisdom had been a pupil of Pythagoras.

## Book 4, Chapter 2

So much for inference. Many traces of the Pythagoreans could be gathered, but we shall use only a few, since that is not our present subject. They are said to have been accustomed to convey certain teachings in a more veiled form through verse, and to lead their minds away from concentrated thought into tranquility through singing and the lyre. Cato, a most authoritative witness, says in his *Origins* that our ancestors had this custom at banquets: the guests reclining at table would take turns singing, to the flute, the praises and virtues of illustrious men. From this it is clear that melodies, with their distinct musical notes, and poems already existed then.

- <sup>4</sup> The Twelve Tables themselves, indeed, show that composing verse was already customary: they enacted a law forbidding its use to injure another person. Nor is it anything but evidence of a cultivated age that lyres provide the opening music both at the couches of the gods and at magistrates’ banquets, a practice characteristic of the school I am discussing. Even the poem of Appius Caecus, which Panaetius praises warmly in a letter to Quintus Tubero, seems

Pythagorean to me. Many features of our institutions also derive from that school. I pass them over, so that we may not seem to have learned abroad what we are thought to have discovered ourselves.

- <sup>5</sup> But to return to our subject: how many poets, and how great, arose in so short a time! And what orators! It is easy to see that our countrymen could achieve anything, once they began to wish for it.

### Book 4, Chapter 3

We shall speak of the other studies elsewhere if the need arises, as we have often done already. The pursuit of wisdom is indeed ancient among our people, yet before the age of Laelius and Scipio I find no one whom I can name. When they were young, I find that the Athenians sent Diogenes the Stoic and Carneades the Academic as ambassadors to the senate. Neither had ever taken any part in public affairs, and one was a native of Cyrene, the other of Babylon. Surely they would never have been summoned out of their schools or chosen for that duty unless some of our leading men at the time had been interested in learning. These men committed other things to writing—some the civil law, some their speeches, some the records of our ancestors—but this greatest of all arts, the discipline of living well, they pursued in their lives rather than in their books.

- <sup>6</sup> Consequently there are almost no Latin records, or at most very few, of that true and refined philosophy which originated with Socrates and has endured to this day among the Peripatetics and among the Stoics, who express the same things differently, while the Academics judge their disputes. Perhaps the reasons were the magnitude of public business and the demands on men's time; perhaps they also thought that these subjects could not win approval from the unlearned. Meanwhile, during their silence, Gaius Amafinius emerged as a writer. The publication of his books stirred the multitude to attach themselves

above all to that school, whether because it was very easy to understand, because they were invited by the flattering enticements of pleasure, or because, with nothing better published, they held to what was available.

- 7 After Amafinius, many rivals following the same doctrine wrote at length and took possession of all Italy. The very thing that is the strongest proof that these teachings lack subtlety—that they are so easily learned and win the approval of the uneducated—they regard as their doctrine’s firm foundation.

## Book 4, Chapter 4

But let everyone defend his own convictions: judgment is free. We shall hold to our practice. Bound by no laws of any single school which we must necessarily obey in philosophy, we shall always ask what is most probable in each question. We have often pursued this inquiry elsewhere, and recently with particular care at Tusculum. Having set out three days’ discussions, we now complete the fourth day in this book. When we had gone down to the lower walk, as we had done on the preceding days, the conversation proceeded as follows:

“Let anyone who wishes say what subject he would like discussed.”

- 8 “I do not think that the wise person can be free of every disturbance of the soul.”

“Yesterday’s discussion seemed to show that he could be free of distress, unless perhaps you were agreeing with me simply to suit the occasion.”

“Not at all. I found your argument thoroughly convincing.”

“So you do not think distress can affect the wise person?”

“Certainly I do not.”

“And yet, if that cannot disturb the wise person’s soul, nothing can. What could do so? Fear? But fear concerns things absent, whose presence produces distress. Remove distress, then, and fear is removed. Two disturbances remain: exuberant delight and lust. If these too have no place in the wise person, his mind will always be tranquil.”

9 “That is exactly how I understand it.”

“Which would you prefer, then? Shall we set sail at once, or do a little rowing as though we were leaving harbor?”

“What do you mean? I do not understand.”

## Book 4, Chapter 5

“When Chrysippus and the Stoics discuss disturbances of the soul, they spend much of their time classifying and defining them. Very little of their discourse is devoted to healing souls and keeping them free of turmoil. The Peripatetics, on the other hand, have much to offer for calming souls, and pass over the thorns of classification and definition. I was asking, then, whether I should spread the sails of my discourse at once, or first propel it a little way with the oars of dialectic.”

“The latter, certainly. Everything I am asking for will be more fully accomplished by combining the two.”

“That is indeed the better course;

10 “but afterward you must ask about anything that proves obscure.”

“I shall. Still, as you usually do, you will explain even these obscure matters more clearly than the Greeks explain them.”

“I shall try, certainly, but you must pay close attention, or everything may slip away if you miss a single point. Since we prefer to call what the Greeks term *πάθη*, ‘passions,’ disturbances rather than diseases, in explaining them I shall follow the ancient division of Pythagoras first and Plato afterward. They divide the soul into two parts, one sharing in reason, the other without it. In the part that shares in reason they place tranquility—that is, a calm and peaceful steadiness—and in the other the turbulent movements of anger and desire, opposed and hostile to reason.

- <sup>11</sup> “Let that, then, be our starting point. In describing these disturbances, however, let us use the Stoics’ definitions and classifications: they seem to me to handle this question with the greatest precision.”

## Book 4, Chapter 6

“Here, then, is Zeno’s definition: a disturbance—what he calls *πάθος*, ‘passion’—is a movement of the soul which turns away from right reason and is contrary to nature. Some put it more briefly: a disturbance is an excessively strong impulse. By ‘excessively strong’ they mean one that has departed too far from nature’s steadiness. They hold that the different disturbances arise from two supposed goods and two supposed evils, making four kinds: from goods, lust and delight—delight concerning present goods, lust future ones; from evils, they believe, fear and distress arise—fear concerning future evils, distress present ones. For the very things we fear when they are approaching distress us when they are upon us.

- <sup>12</sup> “Delight and lust concern a belief in goods: lust is enticed and fired into pursuit of what seems good, while delight, as though it had already gained something desired, rises in exultation. By nature everyone pursues what seems good and avoids its opposite. Consequently, as soon as the appearance of something seemingly good presents itself, nature herself impels us to obtain it. When this happens steadily and wisely, the Stoics call an impulse of this kind *βούλησις*, ‘rational wish’; let us call it volition. They hold that it exists only in the wise person, and define it thus: volition is a desire for something in accordance with reason. But an impulse stirred too violently, in opposition to reason, is lust or unbridled desire, which is found in all fools.
- <sup>13</sup> “Similarly, when we are moved by the sense that we possess some good, this happens in two ways. When the soul’s movement accords with reason and is calm and steady, it is called joy. But when the soul exults vainly and extravagantly, that may be called exuberant or excessive delight, which they define as an

irrational elevation of the soul. And since we naturally avoid evils just as we naturally seek goods, let avoidance be called caution when it accords with reason, and let this be understood to exist only in the wise person. But avoidance without reason, accompanied by abject and broken-spirited dismay, should be named fear. Fear, then, is caution turned away <from> reason.

- 14 “The wise person has no emotional reaction to a present evil; the reaction of fools is distress. They experience it in the face of supposed evils, letting their spirits sink and contract in disobedience to reason. Thus the first definition is that distress is a contraction of the soul against reason. In this way there are four disturbances but three states of steadiness, since no steady state corresponds to distress.”

## Book 4, Chapter 7

“They hold, however, that all disturbances arise through judgment and belief. Accordingly they define them more closely, to make clear not only how defective they are but also how much they lie within our power. Distress, then, is a fresh belief in a present evil, at which it seems right for the soul to sink and contract; delight is a fresh belief in a present good, at which it seems right to be elated; fear is a belief in an impending evil which seems unbearable; lust is a belief in a future good which it would be advantageous to have here and present now.

- 15 “But when I spoke of the judgments and beliefs belonging to disturbances, they do not say that disturbances consist in these alone, but also in the effects the disturbances produce. Thus distress produces a kind of painful bite; fear, a withdrawal and flight of the soul; delight, an outpouring of high spirits; lust, an unbridled appetite. The belief we have included in all the preceding definitions they understand to be a weak assent.

- <sup>16</sup> “Under each disturbance, however, several subdivisions of the same kind are placed. Under distress come enviousness—we must use a less usual word for the sake of instruction, since ‘envy’ can refer not only to the person who envies but also to the person envied—emulation, jealousy, pity, anguish, bereavement, sorrow, tribulation, pain, lamentation, anxiety, vexation, affliction, despair, and any others of the same kind. Under fear come reluctance, shame, terror, alarm, panic, dismay, confusion, dread. Under pleasure come malice rejoicing in another’s misfortune, sensory delight, vaunting, and the like. Under lust come anger, a flare of temper, hatred, enmity, discord, craving, longing, and the rest of that kind.”

## Book 4, Chapter 8

- “They define these as follows. Enviousness, they say, is distress felt because of another’s prosperity, when that prosperity does the envious person no harm.
- <sup>17</sup> “(For if someone grieves at the prosperity of a person who harms him—as Agamemnon might at Hector’s—he should not properly be called envious. But if another’s advantages do him no harm, and he still grieves that the other enjoys them, he is certainly envious.) Emulation, however, has two meanings, and the word can signify either praise or blame. The imitation of virtue is called emulation—but we are not using that sense here, since it is praiseworthy. Emulation is also distress when another possesses what one has desired but lacks oneself. Jealousy, by which I mean ζήλοτυπία, is distress because another too possesses what one has desired for oneself.
- <sup>18</sup> “Pity is distress at the misery of another who suffers undeservedly—for no one feels pity at the punishment of a parricide or traitor. Anguish is oppressive distress; bereavement, distress at the untimely death of someone dear; sorrow, tearful distress; tribulation, toilsome distress; pain, tormenting distress; lamentation, distress accompanied by wailing; anxiety, distress accompanied by brooding; vexation, enduring distress; affliction, distress accompanied by bodily suf-

fering; despair, distress without any expectation of improvement. The subdivisions of fear they define as follows: reluctance is fear of the labor that will follow,

- 19 “[...] terror is fear that shakes us—hence, just as blushing follows shame, pallor, trembling, and chattering teeth follow terror; alarm is fear of approaching evil; panic is fear that dislodges the mind, giving rise to Ennius’ words, ‘Then panic drives all wisdom from my breast, leaving me senseless’; dismay is fear that follows panic and is, as it were, its companion; confusion is fear that scatters our thoughts; dread is enduring fear.”

## Book 4, Chapter 9

- 20 “They describe the subdivisions of pleasure as follows. Malice is pleasure in another’s misfortune without any advantage to oneself; sensory delight is pleasure that soothes the soul through sweetness of sound. The pleasures of sight, touch, smell, and taste are like this pleasure of hearing: all belong to one kind, pleasures poured, as though liquefied, through the soul. Vaunting is pleasure that leaps up and carries itself with excessive arrogance.
- 21 “The subdivisions of lust are defined as follows. Anger is lust to punish someone who seems to have injured us unjustly; a flare of temper is anger coming into being, newly arisen, called *θύμωσις*, ‘an outbreak of anger,’ in Greek; hatred is entrenched anger; enmity is anger watching for the moment of revenge; discord is a more bitter anger conceived deep in the heart and soul; craving is insatiable lust; longing is lust to see someone not yet present. They make this further distinction: lust concerns things predicated of a person or persons, what dialecticians call *κατηγορήματα*, ‘predicates,’ such as having wealth or gaining office; craving concerns the things themselves, such as offices or money.

- <sup>22</sup> “They say that the source of all disturbances is intemperance: a defection of the whole mind from right reason, so completely turned from reason’s prescriptions that the soul’s impulses can in no way be governed or restrained. Just as temperance calms the impulses, brings them into obedience to right reason, and preserves the mind’s considered judgments, so its enemy, intemperance, inflames, confounds, and excites the soul’s entire condition. Consequently distress and fear and all the other disturbances are born from it.”

## Book 4, Chapter 10

“Just as diseases and illnesses arise in the body when the blood is corrupted or phlegm or bile overflows, so the turmoil of false beliefs, and their conflict with one another, rob the soul of health and trouble it with diseases.

- <sup>23</sup> “From disturbances arise, first, diseases, which they call νοσήματα, and their opposites, which involve a defective aversion and disgust toward particular things; then infirmities, called ἀρρωστήματα by the Stoics, and, likewise, their opposite aversions. The Stoics, especially Chrysippus, spend far too much labor here in comparing diseases of the soul with diseases of the body. Let us leave aside this wholly unnecessary discussion and examine what bears on the substance of the matter.
- <sup>24</sup> “Let it be understood, then, that a disturbance is always in motion, as beliefs toss about in an unstable and turbulent way. But when this feverish excitement of the soul has grown chronic and settled, as it were, into its veins and marrow, then disease and infirmity arise, along with those aversions which are the opposites of these diseases and infirmities.”

## Book 4, Chapter 11

“These conditions I describe differ in thought, but in reality they are linked, and they arise from lust and delight. When money is coveted, unless reason is immediately applied like a Socratic medicine to heal that desire, the evil spreads into the veins and clings to the inward parts. Disease and infirmity arise, which cannot be rooted out once they are chronic, and the name of this disease is avarice.

- 25 “The other diseases arise in a similar way: the desire for glory, for instance, or womanizing, if I may use that term for what the Greeks call φιλογυνία, ‘love of women.’ Other diseases and infirmities arise similarly. Their opposites are thought to arise from fear: hatred of women, such as appears in Atilius’ Woman-Hater; hatred of the entire human race, as we are told of Timon, who is called μισάνθρωπος, ‘the misanthrope’; or inhospitality. All these infirmities of the soul arise from a certain fear of the things they shun and hate.
- 26 “They define an infirmity of the soul as a strong belief, firmly lodged and deeply implanted, that something not worth seeking is highly desirable. The condition arising from aversion they define as a strong belief, firmly lodged and deeply implanted, that something not to be avoided ought to be avoided. This belief is a judgment that one knows what one does not know. Under infirmity fall such things as avarice, ambition, womanizing, obstinacy, dainty nibbling, drunkenness, a taste for delicacies, and any similar conditions. Avarice is a strong belief about money, firmly lodged and deeply implanted, that it is highly desirable; the definitions of the others of the same kind are similar.
- 27 “The definitions of aversions are of this sort: inhospitality is a strong belief, firmly lodged and deeply implanted, that a guest is greatly to be avoided. Hatred of women, such as Hippolytus’, and of the human race, such as Timon’s, are similarly defined.”

## Book 4, Chapter 12

“To come to the analogy with bodily health, and at last make use of that comparison, though more sparingly than the Stoics usually do: just as different people are more prone to different diseases—we call some people prone to colds, <others> to colic, not because they have these conditions now but because they often do—<so> some are prone to fear, others to some other disturbance. Hence we speak of anxiety in some, and call them anxious, and of irascibility in others. Irascibility differs from anger: being irascible is one thing, being angry another, just as anxiety differs from anguish. Not everyone who sometimes feels anguish is anxious, nor are anxious people always in anguish. In the same way there is a difference between drunkenness <and habitual drunkenness>, and between being a womanizer and being in love. This tendency of different people toward different diseases has a wide scope, for it extends to every disturbance.

- 28 “It appears in many vices too, but has no name of its own. People are called envious, malicious, lustful, timid, and compassionate because they <are> prone to those disturbances, not because they are always carried away by them. Let this tendency toward each particular kind be called an infirmity, by analogy with the body, provided it is understood as a tendency to become ill. In good things, however, when different people have greater aptitude for different goods, let it be called a facility; in bad things, a proclivity, to suggest a downward slide; in neutral things, let it keep the earlier name.”

## Book 4, Chapter 13

“Just as in the body there are disease, infirmity, and defect, so there are in the soul. They call a corruption of the whole body disease; disease accompanied by weakness, infirmity; and a lack of harmony among the body’s parts, producing

crooked, twisted, or misshapen limbs, a defect.

- 29 “Thus the first two, disease and infirmity, arise from a shock and disturbance to the body’s overall health, whereas a defect is evident in itself even when health is unimpaired. In the soul, however, we can distinguish disease from infirmity only in thought. Viciousness is a disposition or condition that is inconsistent and at odds with itself throughout life. Thus one kind of corruption of belief produces disease and infirmity; the other produces inconsistency and internal conflict. For not every vice involves conflicts of equal force. The disposition of people who are not far from wisdom is indeed at odds with itself so long as it remains unwise, but it is not twisted or deformed. Diseases and infirmities are parts of viciousness, but whether disturbances are also parts of it is a question.
- 30 “For vices are abiding conditions, disturbances shifting ones, so that they cannot be parts of abiding conditions. And just as the analogy with the body touches the nature of the soul in bad things, so it does in good things. The body’s chief qualities are beauty, strength, health, firmness, and speed; these exist in the soul as well. <Just as> a harmonious balance in the body, when the elements of which we consist agree with one another, is called health, so the soul is said to be healthy when its judgments and beliefs agree. This is the soul’s virtue, which some call temperance itself; others call it something that obeys temperance’s precepts and follows it, without any distinctive character of its own. But whichever it is, they hold that it exists only in the wise person. There is, however, a kind of mental health that even an unwise person may possess, when the treatment and purging of physicians remove a disturbance of the mind.
- 31 “And just as a fitting arrangement of the body’s limbs, together with a certain charm of coloring, is called beauty, so in the soul the evenness and consistency of beliefs and judgments, together with a certain firmness and stability, is called beauty, whether it follows virtue or contains virtue’s very essence. Similarly, the soul’s powers resemble the body’s strength, sinews, and effectiveness, and are

named in similar terms. The body's speed is called swiftness, and this same quality is also praised in intelligence, because the mind runs through many things in a short time."

## Book 4, Chapter 14

"Souls and bodies differ in this: a strong soul cannot be attacked by disease, while a strong body can. Bodily ailments can occur through no fault of our own, but not so the soul's, whose diseases and disturbances all arise from a rejection of reason. They therefore occur only in human beings. Animals do something similar, but they do not fall prey to disturbances.

32 "The difference between keen and dull minds is that gifted people, like Corinthian bronze acquiring verdigris, are slower to fall ill and quicker to recover; dull people are not. Nor does a gifted person's soul fall into every kind of disease and disturbance; †for few savage and monstrous disturbances can seize it; some even have, at first sight, an appearance of humanity, such as pity, distress, and fear. The soul's infirmities and diseases are thought harder to root out than those principal vices opposed to the virtues. For vices can be removed while diseases remain, since the diseases are not healed as quickly as the vices are taken away.

33 "You have now heard the Stoics' precise account of disturbances, which they call λογικά, 'logical discussions,' because they are argued with greater subtlety. Since our discourse has now sailed clear of these jagged reefs, so to speak, let us hold our course through the rest of the discussion, provided we have explained those matters clearly enough, given their obscurity."

"Quite clearly enough. If anything needs more thorough investigation, we shall ask about it another time. For now we await the sails and the voyage you were just promising."

## Book 4, Chapter 15

- <sup>34</sup> “Since, as we have said of virtue elsewhere and shall often have to say again—for most questions about life and conduct flow from virtue as their source—since, then, virtue is a steady and harmonious disposition of the soul, making those who possess it praiseworthy and itself worthy of praise in its own right and by its own nature, even apart from any advantage, from it arise honorable wishes, judgments, and actions, and all right reason. Indeed, virtue itself may be defined most briefly as right reason. Opposed to virtue is viciousness: I prefer that term to malice for what the Greeks call *κακία*, since malice names one particular vice, whereas viciousness embraces them all. From it are stirred disturbances which, as we said a little earlier, are turbulent and excited movements of the soul, turned away from reason and deeply hostile to a tranquil mind and life. They bring anxious and bitter distress, and crush and weaken souls with fear. They also inflame them with excessive appetite, which we call sometimes desire, sometimes lust—a kind of loss of self-command utterly at variance with temperance and moderation.
- <sup>35</sup> “If it ever obtains what it has coveted, it will be so carried away with excitement that ‘nothing it does is steady,’ as that character says who regards ‘excessive pleasure of the soul as the greatest error.’ The cure for these evils, then, lies in virtue alone.”

## Book 4, Chapter 16

“What can be not only more miserable but more foul and disfiguring than a person crushed by distress, weakened, and laid low? Nearest to him in misery is the person who fears some approaching evil and hangs in suspense, his spirit undone. To convey the force of this evil, the poets picture a stone hanging over

Tantalus in the underworld ‘for his crimes, his ungoverned soul, and his boastful speech.’ This is the common punishment of folly. Some terror of this kind always hangs over everyone whose mind turns away from reason.

- 36 “And just as these disturbances—distress and fear, I mean—waste the mind away, so those more cheerful ones, desire always greedily seeking something and empty excitement, that is, exuberant delight, differ little from madness. From this we understand the character of the person we call sometimes moderate, sometimes modest and temperate, sometimes steady and self-controlled. At times we choose to bring these same terms under the one heading of sound character. Unless that name embraced the virtues, the saying ‘a person of sound character does everything rightly’ would never have become so common as to rank as a proverb. Yet when the Stoics say the same thing about the wise person, their words seem too astonishing and too grand.”

## Book 4, Chapter 17

- 37 “The person, then, whoever he may be, whose moderation and steadiness give him a quiet soul at peace with itself, so that he neither wastes away in vexation nor breaks under fear, neither burns with thirsty longing for something nor dissolves in the transports of empty excitement—he is the wise person we seek, he is the happy person. Nothing in human affairs can seem to him either unbearable enough to depress his soul or joyful enough to carry it away. What in human affairs could seem great to someone who knows the whole of eternity and the immensity of the entire universe? What could seem great to the wise person, either in human pursuits or in the scant brevity of life, when his mind is always so watchful that nothing unforeseen can happen to him, nothing unexpected, nothing wholly new?

38 “He also casts such a keen eye in every direction that he always sees for himself a dwelling and a place to live without vexation and anguish, so that whatever accident fortune brings, he bears it fittingly and calmly. Whoever does this will be free not only of distress but of all the other disturbances as well. A soul free of these makes people perfectly and completely happy; that same soul, when agitated and torn away from sound and certain reason, loses not only its steadiness but its health.

“We must therefore regard as soft and enfeebled the Peripatetics’ reasoning and discourse. They say that souls must necessarily be disturbed, but prescribe a certain limit beyond which they should not go.

39 “You prescribe a limit to vice? Or is it no vice to disobey reason? Does reason fail to teach plainly enough that a thing is not good which you either desire passionately or exult arrogantly in obtaining; nor, on the other hand, is that an evil which either leaves you crushed and prostrate or, in the fear of being crushed, scarcely master of your mind? Does it not teach that all these excessively sad or excessively glad responses arise from error, and that this error, though it fades with time even in fools—so that, though the thing itself remains the same, they bear it differently when it is old than when it is new—should never so much as touch the wise person at all?

40 “Besides, what is this limit to be? Let us look for a limit to distress, on which so much labor is spent. Fannius records that Publius Rupilius grieved at his brother’s defeat in an election for the consulship. He seems, however, to have exceeded the limit, since he died on that account. He ought, then, to have borne it more moderately. But what if, while he was bearing it moderately, the death of his children had been added? ‘A new distress would have arisen, but a moderate one.’ Still, it would have been a great addition. What if severe bodily pain had then followed, or loss of property, or blindness, or exile? If fresh distress were added for each separate evil, the total would become unbearable.”

## Book 4, Chapter 18

- <sup>41</sup> “Someone who looks for a limit to vice acts like a person who thinks that, after leaping from the cliff at Leucas, he can stop himself whenever he wishes. Just as that is impossible, so an agitated and excited soul can neither restrain itself nor halt where it chooses. In general, things that become destructive as they grow are already defective at their birth.
- <sup>42</sup> “Distress and the other disturbances are certainly ruinous when they increase; therefore, as soon as they are admitted, they already contain a large measure of ruin. Once reason has been abandoned, they drive themselves onward; weakness indulges itself and is carried unawares into deep water, finding no place to stand. There is consequently no difference between approving moderate disturbances and approving moderate injustice, moderate cowardice, or moderate intemperance. Anyone who sets a limit to vices accepts a share of them. This is hateful in itself, and all the more troubling because they stand on slippery ground: once set in motion, they slide downhill and cannot possibly be checked.”

## Book 4, Chapter 19

- “What of the fact that these same Peripatetics say that the disturbances we think should be rooted out are not only natural but bestowed by nature for our benefit?
- <sup>43</sup> “Their argument runs like this. First, they praise irascibility at length, calling it the whetstone of courage. Angry people, they say, attack both the enemy and a wicked fellow citizen far more fiercely, whereas the petty reasonings of those who think, ‘It is right to fight this battle; we ought to fight for the laws, for liberty, for our country,’ are feeble. These thoughts have no force unless courage is

set ablaze by anger. Nor do they speak only of warriors. They think no command can be truly strict without some harshness of temper. Finally, they do not approve of an orator without the sting of anger, not only when prosecuting but even when defending. Even if he does not feel it, they think he should imitate it in words and gestures, so that his delivery may kindle anger in his audience. In short, they deny the name of man to anyone who does not know how to be angry, and what we call gentleness they brand with the discreditable name of sluggishness.

- 44 “Nor do they praise only this kind of lust—for anger, as I defined it just now, is lust for revenge. They say that the whole class of lust or desire was bestowed by nature for the greatest benefit, since no one can do anything splendidly unless he desires it. Themistocles used to walk abroad at night because he could not sleep, and when people asked why, he answered that Miltiades’ trophies roused him from sleep. Who has not heard of Demosthenes’ sleepless nights? He said it pained him if ever the workmen’s industry before dawn outdid his own. Finally, even the leading philosophers could never have made such progress in their studies without burning desire. We are told that Pythagoras, Democritus, and Plato traveled to the remotest lands. Wherever there was anything to learn, they thought they must go there. Do we suppose these things could have been achieved without the most ardent desire?”

## Book 4, Chapter 20

- 45 “They say that even distress, which we said must be shunned like a foul and monstrous beast, was established by nature for considerable benefit: when people have done wrong, they should feel pain at chastisement, rebuke, and disgrace. Those who bear dishonor and infamy without pain seem to have been granted impunity for their faults. It is better to be bitten by conscience. Hence

that scene Afranius drew from life: when the dissolute son cries, ‘Ah, poor me!’ the stern father answers, ‘Let him feel pain at anything, so long as he feels some pain.’

- 46 “They say the other kinds of distress are useful too: pity, for bringing help and relieving the misfortunes of people who do not deserve them; even emulation and jealousy are not useless, when one sees either that one has not obtained what another has, or that another has obtained the same as oneself. If anyone removed fear, they say, all care in living would be removed. Such care is greatest in people who fear the laws, magistrates, poverty, disgrace, death, and pain. In arguing this way, however, they admit that these feelings should be pruned back; they say they cannot and need not be torn out by the roots, and think that in almost everything the middle measure is best. When they set out these arguments, do they seem to you to be saying nothing, or something?”  
“To me they certainly seem to be saying something. So I am waiting to hear your reply.”

## Book 4, Chapter 21

“Perhaps I shall find one. But first this:

- 47 “Do you see how restrained the Academics have been? They speak plainly, and to the point: ‘The Stoics have answered the Peripatetics.’ Let them fight it out, as far as I am concerned. My only obligation is to seek out where the greatest semblance of truth may lie. What presents itself in this question, then, from which we might grasp something probable, beyond which the human mind cannot advance? The definition of disturbance, which I think Zeno rightly employed. He defines a disturbance as a movement of the soul turned away <from> reason and contrary to nature, or, more briefly, an excessively strong impulse, ‘excessively strong’ being understood as far removed from nature’s steadiness.

48 “What can I say against these definitions? Most of this belongs to people arguing wisely and acutely; those other expressions belong to rhetorical display: ‘the soul’s ardors,’ ‘the whetstones of virtue.’ Is a courageous man really incapable of courage unless he begins to rage? That is the spirit of a gladiator. Yet even among gladiators we often see composure: ‘They talk, they meet, they put a question, they make a demand,’ so that they seem peaceful rather than angry. Still, let us grant that in that profession there may be a Pacideianus of the spirit Lucilius describes:

“I shall kill him and win, if that is what you ask,’ he says,

“But I believe this is how it will be: I shall take a blow in the face

“Before I plant my sword in the thief’s belly and lungs.

“I hate the man, I fight in anger; no time seems longer

“Than while the other fits his sword to his right hand;

“So carried away am I by eagerness, by hatred of him, by rage.”

## Book 4, Chapter 22

“But in Homer we see Ajax advancing with great cheerfulness, free of this gladiatorial anger, when he is about to fight Hector to the finish.

49 “Once he had taken up his arms, his advance brought joy to his comrades and terror to his enemies. Hector himself, as Homer tells it, trembled in every fiber and regretted issuing the challenge to battle. These two spoke to one another gently and calmly before they came to blows, and did nothing in anger or frenzy even in the fighting itself. I do not think even the Torquatus who earned that surname was angry when he stripped the torque from the Gaul, nor that Marcellus was courageous at Clastidium because he was angry.

50 “As for Africanus, whom we know better because his memory is more recent, I could even swear that he was not inflamed with anger when in battle he covered Marcus Alliennius of the Paeligni with his shield and drove his sword into the enemy’s breast. About Lucius Brutus I might hesitate: perhaps his boundless

hatred of the tyrant made him attack Arruns with less restraint, for I see that both fell at close quarters, each struck by the other. Why, then, do you bring anger into this? Has courage no impulse of its own unless it begins to go mad? What of Hercules, raised to heaven by that very courage which you would make into irascibility? Do you think he was angry when he fought the Erymanthian boar or the Nemean lion? Or did Theseus seize the horns of the bull of Marathon in anger too? Consider whether courage may be entirely free of frenzy, and irascibility entirely a mark of instability.”

## Book 4, Chapter 23

- 51 “There is no courage without reason. ‘Human affairs are to be held of little account; death is to be disregarded; pain and toil are to be thought bearable.’ Once these principles have been established by judgment and conviction, courage is strong and stable—unless perhaps we suspect that whatever is done vigorously, sharply, and spiritedly is done in anger. I do not think even that Scipio, the chief pontiff who proved the Stoics’ claim that the wise person is never a private citizen, was angry with Tiberius Gracchus when he abandoned the faltering consul and, though himself a private citizen, ordered all who wished the commonwealth safe to follow him, as though he were consul.
- 52 “I do not know whether I myself have done anything courageous in public affairs. If I have, I certainly did not do it in anger. Is anything more like insanity than anger? How well Ennius called it ‘the beginning of insanity’! The complexion, voice, eyes, breathing, the loss of control in words and deeds—what share have they in sanity? What is uglier than Homer’s Achilles, or Agamemnon in their quarrel? As for Ajax, anger led him to madness and death. Courage, then, needs no anger summoned to its aid: it is sufficiently equipped, prepared, and armed in itself. By that reasoning, we might also call drunkenness

useful to courage, and even madness useful, because madmen and drunkards often act with greater violence. Ajax was always courageous, but most courageous when mad; for

“He did his greatest deed when, with the Greeks giving way,

“His hand brought the decisive work to completion.”

## Book 4, Chapter 24

“He restored the battle in his madness.

53 “Shall we therefore call madness useful? Examine the definitions of courage: you will understand that it has no need of rage. Courage, then, is ‘a disposition of the soul obedient to the highest law in enduring things’; or ‘the steadfast preservation of judgment in facing and repelling things that seem fearful’; or ‘knowledge of things fearful, their opposites, and things to be wholly disregarded, preserving a steadfast judgment about them’; or, more briefly, as Chrysippus puts it. Those earlier definitions belonged to Sphaerus, a particularly skilled definer, the Stoics think. Indeed, they are nearly all alike, though some illuminate our shared conceptions more than others. How, then, does Chrysippus put it? ‘Courage,’ he says, ‘is knowledge of things to be endured, or a disposition of the soul which, in suffering and enduring, obeys the highest law without fear.’ We may attack these men as much as we please, as Carneades used to do: I am afraid they may be the only philosophers. Which of these definitions fails to unfold the conception of courage that we all possess, hidden and wrapped within us? Once that conception is unfolded, who would look for anything further in a warrior, commander, or orator, and think they could do nothing courageously without frenzy?

54 “What of the Stoics, who say that all unwise people are insane? Do they not reason from these very things? Take away disturbances, especially irascibility, and they will seem to be speaking monstrous nonsense. As it is, their argument is that they call all fools insane in the same way that they say all mud stinks.

‘But it does not always stink.’ Stir it, and you will smell it. Likewise, an irascible person is not always angry: provoke him, and you will see him rage. And what is this warlike anger like when it comes home, with a wife, with children, with the household? Is it useful then too? Is there anything a disturbed mind can do better than a steady one? Can anyone be angry without a disturbance of mind? Our countrymen were right, then: although all vices are faults of character, since none was uglier than irascibility, they called only the irascible ‘ill-tempered.’”

## Book 4, Chapter 25

55 “An orator, however, should certainly not be angry; to imitate anger is not unbecoming. Do we seem angry to you whenever we speak with particular sharpness and force in a case? And when, after the business is finished and past, we write out our speeches, do we write them in anger? ‘Does anyone attend to this? Bind him!’ Do you suppose Aesopus ever performed that in anger, or Accius wrote it in anger? Such passages are splendidly performed—and by an orator, if he really is an orator, better than by any actor—but they are performed calmly, with a tranquil mind.

“As for praising lust, what lust could prompt that? You bring me Themistocles and Demosthenes, and add Pythagoras, Democritus, and Plato. What? Do you call intellectual pursuits lust? Even when directed toward the best things, like those you cite, these pursuits ought to be calm and tranquil. And what sort of philosophers are they who praise distress, the single most detestable thing? But Afranius put it aptly: ‘Let him feel pain at anything, so long as he feels some pain.’ Yes, but he said it of a depraved and dissolute young man, whereas our inquiry concerns a steady and wise man. Indeed, let a centurion or standard-bearer have even that anger, or others whom there is no need to name, lest we

reveal the rhetoricians' mysteries. For a person who cannot use reason may usefully act on emotion. But our inquiry, as I often insist, concerns the wise person."

## Book 4, Chapter 26

56 "But emulation, jealousy, and pity are useful too.' Why feel pity rather than bring help, if you can do so? Can we not be generous without pity? We ought not to take distress upon ourselves on account of others, but, if we can, to relieve others of distress. And what use is jealousy of another, or that defective emulation which resembles rivalry? The person who feels emulation is tormented by another's good because he himself lacks it; the jealous person is tormented by another's good because someone else has it too. How can it be right to take on distress instead of making an effort, if there is something you want to have? As for wanting to be the only one to have it, that is utter madness. "And who could rightly praise moderate evils?

57 "How can someone who has lust or desire not be lustful and desirous? Someone who has anger not be irascible? Someone who has anguish not be anxious? Someone who has fear not be timid? Do we therefore think the wise person lustful, irascible, anxious, and timid? We could speak at any length and breadth about his excellence, but most briefly in this way: wisdom is knowledge of things divine and human, and understanding of the causes of each. From this it follows that he imitates the divine and regards all human things as inferior to virtue. Did you say, then, that you thought disturbance could fall upon wisdom as upon a sea exposed to winds? What could disturb such dignity and steadiness? Something unforeseen or sudden? What of that kind could happen to someone for whom nothing that can befall a human being <has not been considered beforehand>? As for their claim that excesses should be cut back

while natural feelings are left, what can be natural if it can also be excessive? All these things arise from the roots of error, which must be torn out and extracted completely, not trimmed or lopped.”

## Book 4, Chapter 27

58 “But since I suspect that you are asking not so much about the wise person as about yourself—you think he is free of every disturbance, and you want to be—let us see how powerful are the remedies applied <by> philosophy to diseases of the soul. Certainly there is a medicine for them. Nature has not been so hostile and unfriendly to the human race as to discover so many healing things for bodies and none for souls. Indeed, she has treated souls still better in this respect: bodily remedies are applied from outside, but the soul’s health is enclosed within itself. Yet the greater and more divine their excellence, the greater the care they need. Reason, properly applied, discerns what is best; neglected, it becomes entangled in many errors.

59 “So I must now turn my entire discourse toward you. You pretend to be asking about the wise person, but perhaps you are asking about yourself.  
“There are, then, different treatments for the disturbances I have described. Not all distress is calmed by one method: the mourner needs one medicine, the person feeling pity or envy another. With all four disturbances there is also this distinction: is it better to address disturbance in general, which is a rejection of reason or an excessively strong impulse, or particular disturbances, such as fear, lust, and the rest? And should we show that the thing which occasioned distress ought not to seem distressing, or should distress about anything at all be entirely removed? If someone is distressed at being poor, for example, should you argue that poverty is not an evil, or that a person ought not to be distressed by anything? Clearly the latter is better, lest, if you fail to persuade him about

poverty, you have to concede the case for distress. But once distress has been removed by the arguments appropriate to it, which we used yesterday, even the evil of poverty is in a sense removed.”

## Book 4, Chapter 28

- 60 “Every disturbance of this sort may indeed be washed away by calming the soul, when you teach that what gives rise to delight or lust is not a good, and what gives rise to fear or distress is not an evil. Yet the sure and specific cure is to teach that the disturbances themselves are defective in their own right and contain nothing either natural or necessary. We see distress itself eased when we reproach mourners with the weakness of an unmanly soul, and praise the dignity and steadiness of those who endure human circumstances without turmoil. This can happen even to people who think those things are evils, but still believe they should be borne with an even mind. Someone thinks pleasure a good, another thinks money a good; still, the first can be drawn away from intemperance, the second from avarice. That other method of reasoning and discourse, which removes both the false belief and the distress at once, is indeed more useful, but it rarely succeeds and should not be applied to people at large.
- 61 “There are, moreover, some forms of distress which that medicine cannot possibly relieve. Suppose someone is distressed because he has no virtue, no spirit, no sense of duty, no moral goodness. His anguish is indeed caused by evils, but a different treatment must be brought to bear on him, one that all philosophers can share, even when they disagree on other matters. All ought to agree that movements of the soul turned away from right reason are defective. Thus even if the things that stir fear or distress are evils, or those that stir desire or delight are goods, the agitation itself is still defective. For we want the man we call great-souled and courageous to be steady, calm, dignified, and above all human

circumstances. No one who grieves, fears, craves, or exults can be such a man. These feelings belong to people who think human events stronger than their own souls.”

## Book 4, Chapter 29

62 “Therefore, as I said before, all philosophers have a single method of healing: we should discuss not the character of the thing that disturbs the soul, but the disturbance itself. First, then, in the case of desire, when our sole aim is to remove it, we should not ask whether what stirs lust is good or not; lust itself must be removed. Whether the highest good is the honorable, or pleasure, or the combination of the two, or those three classes of goods, even if the excessively strong impulse is toward virtue itself, everyone must use the same argument to discourage it. The whole calming of the soul, however, rests on keeping human nature in view. To make its outlines easier to discern, we must explain in our discourse the common condition and law of life.

63 “So it was not without reason that, when Euripides was presenting his Orestes, Socrates is said to have called for the first three lines to be repeated:

“No tale is so terrible to tell,

“Nor any evil brought by fate or heaven’s wrath,

“That human nature cannot bear it through endurance.’

“To persuade people that what has happened can and ought to be borne, it is useful to list those who have borne it. The calming of distress was explained both in yesterday’s discussion and in my book *Consolation*, which I wrote in the midst of grief and pain—for I was not wise. Chrysippus forbids applying a remedy to the soul’s swellings while they are still fresh; yet that is what I did, bringing force to bear upon nature so that the greatness of the pain would yield to the greatness of the medicine.”

## Book 4, Chapter 30

<sup>64</sup> “But fear is close to distress, of which we have said enough, and we must say a little about it. For fear concerns a future evil, just as distress concerns a present one. Some therefore called fear a kind of distress; others called it anticipatory vexation, since it is, as it were, the forerunner of the vexation that follows. By the same arguments, then, that enable us to bear what is upon us, we make light of what is to come. In both cases we must take care to do nothing abject, submissive, soft, unmanly, broken-spirited, or base. But although we must speak of fear’s own instability, weakness, and fickleness, it is still a great help to make light of the very things that are feared. So, whether by chance or design, it was most convenient that on the first and following day we discussed the things most feared, death and pain. If those arguments have won acceptance, we have been freed from fear in large measure.”

## Book 4, Chapter 31

“So much for belief in evils.

<sup>65</sup> “Let us now consider belief in goods, that is, delight and desire. To my mind, the entire account of disturbances of the soul rests on a single point: all are within our power, all are taken on through judgment, all are voluntary. This error must therefore be torn away, this belief removed. Just as supposed evils must be made more bearable, so things thought great and delightful must be made less exciting. Goods and evils have this in common: even if it is difficult to persuade someone that none of the things disturbing the soul should be counted either as goods or as evils, a different treatment must still be applied to each movement. One method must correct the malicious person, another the lover, another again the anxious person, another the timid.

<sup>66</sup> “It would be easy, following the most widely approved account of goods and evils, to deny that an unwise person could ever feel delight, since he could never possess any good. But we are speaking now in ordinary terms. Let the things thought good—office, wealth, pleasures, and the rest—indeed be goods; even so, exultant, exuberant delight in possessing them is shameful, just as, though laughter may be allowed, guffawing is still censured. The soul’s outpouring in delight has the same defect as its contraction in pain; desire in pursuit displays the same instability as delight in enjoyment. Just as those excessively crushed by vexation are rightly judged unstable, so are those excessively elated by delight. Since envy belongs to distress, while taking pleasure in another’s misfortunes belongs to delight, both are commonly reproved by setting their monstrous and savage character before us. And just as caution is proper but fear is not, so joy is proper but delight is not, since for the sake of instruction we distinguish delight from joy.

<sup>67</sup> “We have already said above that a contraction of the soul can never be right, but its elevation can. Hector in Naevius feels joy in one way:  
“I am glad to be praised by you, Father, a man praised himself.’  
“The character in Trabea feels it in another:  
“The procuress, soothed with silver, will watch my nod,  
“What I wish, what I desire. Coming up, I shall push the door with a finger;  
“The doors will open. When Chrysis sees me unexpectedly,  
“She will hurry joyfully to meet me, longing for my embrace,  
“And give herself to me.’  
“How splendid he thinks this, he will now tell us himself:  
“I shall outstrip Fortune herself with my good fortune.”

## Book 4, Chapter 32

<sup>68</sup> “How shameful this delight is, one need only attend carefully to see to its depths.

“And just as those who exult in delight while enjoying sexual pleasures are shameful, so those who crave them with an inflamed soul are disgraceful. Indeed, this whole thing commonly called love—and, by Hercules, I can find no other name for it—is so unstable that I see nothing I would think comparable. Caecilius considers that ‘anyone who does not think him the highest god is either a fool or ignorant of the world,’

“In whose hand it lies whom he would make mad,

“Whom wise, whom healed, whom cast into disease,

“[...]

“Whom loved in return, whom sought, whom summoned.’

69 “What a splendid reformer of life is poetry, which thinks that love, the author of disgrace and instability, should have a seat in the council of the gods! I am speaking of comedy, which would not exist at all if we did not approve of these disgraces. But what does that leader of the Argonauts say in tragedy?

“You saved me more for love than for honor.’

“What then? What fires of misery this love of Medea’s kindled! And yet in another poet she dares tell her father that she had as ‘husband the man whom Love had given, who has more power and greater sway than a father.’”

## Book 4, Chapter 33

70 “But let us allow the poets their play: in their stories we see Jupiter himself involved in this disgrace. Let us come to the philosophers, the teachers of virtue, who deny that love aims at sexual misconduct and on that point quarrel with Epicurus, who, in my opinion, is not far from the truth. What is this love of friendship? Why does no one love an ugly youth or a handsome old man? This custom seems to me to have originated in the Greek gymnasia, where loves of this kind are freely permitted. Ennius was right, then:

“Disgrace begins with baring bodies among fellow citizens.’

“Even if these lovers are chaste, as I see they can be, they are still troubled and anxious, all the more because they restrain and check themselves.

- 71 “To pass over love for women, to which nature has granted greater freedom, who can doubt what the poets mean by the rape of Ganymede, or fail to understand what Laius says and desires in Euripides? And what do the most learned men and greatest poets publish about themselves in their poems and songs? What Alcaeus, known in his own commonwealth as a courageous man, writes about love for young men! As for Anacreon, all his poetry is of love. The writings of Ibycus of Rhegium show that he burned with love more than any of them.”

## Book 4, Chapter 34

“We see that the loves of all these men are lustful; and yet we philosophers have arisen, with Plato himself as our authority—whom Dicaearchus accuses not unjustly—to lend love respectability.

- 72 “The Stoics even say that the wise person will fall in love, and define love itself as ‘an endeavor to form a friendship prompted by the appearance of beauty.’ If there is anything of that kind in the world without anxiety, without longing, without worry, without sighing, let it exist by all means: it is free of all lust, and our present discourse concerns lust. But if there is a kind of love—as there certainly is—which differs not at all, or not much, from insanity, such as that in the Woman of Leucas: ‘If indeed there is any god who cares for me’ —
- 73 “Why, all the gods ought to have been concerned with how this man could enjoy the pleasures of love! ‘Ah, unhappy me!’ Nothing could be truer. And the other man rightly asks, ‘Are you sane, lamenting wildly like this?’ So even his own people think him mad. But what tragic scenes he makes!
- “‘You, holy Apollo, bring help; and you, lord of rivers,
- “‘Neptune, I invoke, and you too, Winds!’

“He thinks he will turn the whole universe to the relief of his love. Venus alone he excludes as hostile: ‘For why should I appeal to you, Venus?’ He says that lust leaves her no care for anything else—as though he himself were not doing and saying such disgraceful things because of lust.”

74 —

## Book 4, Chapter 35

“To someone in this state, then, we must apply this treatment: show how trifling is the thing he desires, how contemptible, how utterly worthless; how easily it could be obtained from elsewhere or in another way, or disregarded altogether. Sometimes he must also be drawn away toward other pursuits, concerns, cares, and business. Finally, like patients who fail to recover, he must often be treated by a change of place.

75 “Some even think an old love should be driven out by a new one, as one nail drives out another. Above all, he <must be> reminded how great is the madness of love. Of all disturbances of the soul, there is certainly none more violent. Even if you choose not to denounce those acts themselves—I mean sexual misconduct, seductions, adulteries, and finally incest, the shamefulness of all of which deserves condemnation—even if you leave these aside, the very disturbance of the mind in love is foul in itself.

76 “For, passing over the acts of madness, how much instability there is even in those things which seem moderate:

“‘Wrongs,

“‘Suspitions, enmities, truces,

“‘War, peace again! If you demand that these uncertainties

“‘Be ordered by certain reason, you achieve no more

“‘Than if you tried to go mad reasonably.’

“Who would not be deterred by the sheer perversity of this inconstancy and changeability of mind? We must also demonstrate what is said of every disturbance: none exists except through belief, through an adopted judgment, through our will. For if love were natural, everyone would love, would love always, and would love the same thing; shame would not deter one person, reflection another, satiety another.”

## Book 4, Chapter 36

“As for anger, so long as it disturbs the soul there can be no doubt that it is insanity. Under its impulse, even brothers fall into such a quarrel:

77 “Where in all the world has any man surpassed you in shamelessness?”

“And who has surpassed you in malice?”—

“You know what follows. In alternating verses the brothers hurl the gravest insults at one another, making it easy to see that they are sons of Atreus, the man who devises a novel punishment for his brother:

“I must stir a greater mass, a greater evil,

“To beat down and crush his bitter heart.’

“Into what, then, does this mass erupt? Hear Thyestes:

“My brother himself urges me, poor wretch, to use my jaws

“To chew my children’—

“He serves up their entrails. For where can madness go that anger will not go as well? We therefore rightly say that angry people are out of control, meaning beyond the governance of judgment, reason, and mind: these ought to govern the whole soul.

78 “The people whom they are trying to attack must either be taken away from them until they collect themselves—and what is collecting oneself but gathering the scattered parts of the soul back into their proper place?—or they must be begged and entreated to postpone whatever power of revenge they have until another time, until their anger cools. Cooling certainly implies a heat of

the soul kindled against reason's will. Hence the praise given to Archytas, who, having grown very angry with his estate manager, said, 'How I would have dealt with you, if I were not angry!'"

## Book 4, Chapter 37

79 "Where, then, are those who call irascibility useful—can insanity be useful?—or natural? Can anything be in accordance with nature if it happens in defiance of reason? If anger were natural, how could one person be more irascible than another? How could lust for revenge end before revenge had been taken? Or how could anyone regret what he had done in anger? We see this in King Alexander: after killing his friend Clitus, he could scarcely refrain from taking his own life, so powerful was his remorse. Once these things are understood, who can doubt that this movement of the soul too is wholly a matter of belief and will? Who could doubt that infirmities of the soul, such as avarice and the desire for glory, arise because great value is set on the thing from which the soul's sickness comes? From this we must understand that every disturbance too rests on belief.

80 "And if confidence—that is, the soul's firm trust—is a kind of knowledge and a weighty belief that does not assent rashly, fear too is a lack of confidence in the face of expected and impending evil; and if hope is the expectation of good, the expectation of evil must be fear. Like fear, then, the other disturbances are evils. Therefore, just as steadiness belongs to knowledge, disturbance belongs to error. Those called naturally irascible, compassionate, envious, or anything of that kind have, as it were, an unhealthy constitution of soul, but they can still be cured. So we are told of Socrates: Zopyrus, who professed to discern each person's nature from his appearance, listed many vices in him before a gathering. The others laughed at him, recognizing none of these vices in Socrates. But Socrates himself came to his support, saying that he had indeed been born with those vices, but had cast them out by reason.

- 81 “Therefore, just as even someone in the best of health may seem naturally more prone to a particular disease, so different souls incline more toward different vices. As for those said to be vicious not by nature but through their own fault, their vices consist of false beliefs about good and evil things, making different people more prone to different movements and disturbances. But a chronic condition, as in the body, is harder to dislodge than an agitation: a sudden swelling of the eyes is cured more quickly than a long-standing inflammation is driven away.”

## Book 4, Chapter 38

- 82 “But now that we know the cause of disturbances, all of which arise from judgments of belief and acts of will, let this discussion come to an end. We ought to know that, once the ultimate goods and evils have been understood as far as a human being can understand them, nothing greater or more useful can be sought from philosophy than what we have discussed over these four days. Having made death a thing to disregard and pain easier to bear, we added the calming of distress, than which no evil is greater for a human being. For although every disturbance of the soul is grievous and differs little from madness, we usually speak of others who are in some disturbance of fear, delight, or desire as merely agitated and disturbed, but those who have surrendered to distress as miserable, crushed, wretched, and afflicted.
- 83 “So it seems no accident, but a deliberate proposal on your part, that we should discuss distress separately from the other disturbances: in distress lies the fountainhead and source of misery. Yet distress and the other diseases of the soul have a single cure: all are matters of belief and will, and are taken on because doing so seems right. Philosophy promises to tear out this error by the roots, as the root of all evils.

- <sup>84</sup> “Let us therefore give ourselves to philosophy to be cultivated, and allow ourselves to be healed. While these evils are lodged within us, we cannot be happy, or even sane. Either let us deny that anything is accomplished by reason—though in fact nothing can be rightly done without reason—or, since philosophy consists in the comparison of arguments, let us seek from it, if we wish to be both good and happy, every support and aid for living well and happily.”

## Book 5, Chapter 1

- <sup>1</sup> This fifth day, Brutus, will bring our Tusculan Disputations to a close. On it we discussed the doctrine that you approve above all others. Both from the book you so carefully addressed to me and from many conversations with you, I have understood how firmly you hold that virtue is sufficient in itself for a happy life. Though the many and varied torments of fortune make this difficult to prove, it is a truth whose proof deserves every effort we can give it. Nothing in the whole field of philosophy can be expressed with greater weight or grandeur.
- <sup>2</sup> For the men who first devoted themselves to philosophy were moved to set everything else aside and give themselves wholly to discovering the best condition of life. Surely it was the hope of living happily that made them lavish such care and labor on that pursuit. If they discovered virtue and brought it to perfection, and if virtue offers sufficient protection for a happy life, who would not think that their work in philosophy was nobly undertaken, and that ours is too? But if virtue is subject to the shifting uncertainties of circumstance, a slave to fortune, and lacks the strength to defend itself, I fear that our hope of happiness must rest less on confidence in virtue than on prayers.
- <sup>3</sup> For my own part, when I reflect on the disasters through which fortune has so harshly tried me, I sometimes begin to lose faith in this belief and to dread the weakness and frailty of the human race. I fear that nature, having given us fee-

ble bodies and added incurable diseases and intolerable pains, has also given us minds that both share in the body's suffering and are independently entangled in anguish and troubles of their own.

- <sup>4</sup> Yet here I rebuke myself: I am judging the strength of virtue by the weakness of others, and perhaps of myself, rather than by virtue itself. For virtue—if indeed there is such a thing, a doubt your uncle, Brutus, has removed—holds beneath it everything that can befall a human being. Looking down on these things, it scorns the accidents of human life; free from every fault, it regards nothing beyond itself as its concern. We, however, magnify every adversity: fear enlarges it before it comes, sorrow when it is present. We prefer to condemn the nature of things rather than our own error.

## Book 5, Chapter 2

- <sup>5</sup> But the cure for this fault, and for all our other vices and failings, must be sought from philosophy. Our own inclination and enthusiasm drove us into her embrace in our earliest years; now, in these most grievous disasters, battered by a mighty storm, we have fled back to the same harbor from which we once sailed. Philosophy, guide of life, seeker of virtue, banisher of vice! What could we have been without you—not merely we, but human life itself? You gave birth to cities; you called scattered human beings into a shared life. You bound them to one another first through homes, then through marriage, then through the fellowship of writing and speech. You invented laws; you taught conduct and civilization. To you we flee, from you we seek help; as we once surrendered ourselves largely to you, so now we surrender ourselves entirely, without reserve. One day lived well according to your teachings is worth more than an eternity of wrongdoing.

- <sup>6</sup> Whose resources, then, should we draw upon rather than yours? You have bestowed tranquility of life on us and taken away the terror of death. Yet philosophy is so far from receiving the praise its services to human life deserve that most people neglect it, and many even abuse it. Does anyone dare to abuse the parent of life, to stain himself with such parricide? Can anyone be so impiously ungrateful as to accuse her whom he ought to revere, even if he had been unable to understand her fully? But this error, I think, this darkness spread over uneducated minds, arises because they cannot look far enough back. They do not believe that the first people to bring order to human life were philosophers.

## Book 5, Chapter 3

- <sup>7</sup> Although we see that the pursuit itself is of the greatest antiquity, we admit that its name is recent. Yet who can deny that wisdom itself is ancient not only in substance but in name? Among the ancients it earned this most beautiful name through knowledge of things divine and human, and of the origins and causes of everything. Thus we are told that the Seven, whom the Greeks called sophoi and our people “wise men,” were both regarded and named as such; so, many centuries earlier, was Lycurgus, in whose time Homer too is said to have lived, before the founding of this city; and already in the heroic age Ulysses and Nestor were both wise and reputed wise.
- <sup>8</sup> Nor would Atlas have been handed down as supporting the sky, or Prometheus as fastened to the Caucasus, or Cepheus as a constellation with his wife, his son-in-law, and his daughter, unless their godlike knowledge of the heavens had carried their names into the distortions of legend. Following their lead, all who devoted themselves to contemplating the world were thereafter regarded and described as wise, and that name continued in use down to the age of Pythagoras. According to Heraclides of Pontus, a pupil of Plato and a man of exceptional learning, Pythagoras is said to have come to Phlius and there discussed certain subjects at length and with learning with Leon, the ruler of the

Phliasians. Leon, admiring his intelligence and eloquence, asked what art he relied on most. Pythagoras answered that he knew no art, but was a philosopher. Astonished by the unfamiliar name, Leon asked who philosophers were and how they differed from other people.

- <sup>9</sup> Pythagoras replied that human life seemed to him like the gathering held with the most splendid athletic games, where all Greece assembled. There, some men trained their bodies to seek the glory and distinction of a crown; others were drawn by the profit and gain of buying and selling. But there was another kind, the most noble of all, who sought neither applause nor profit, but came to watch and closely observed what was done and how. So too we have journeyed into this life from another life and another state of being, as people leave some city for a crowded festival: some serve glory, others money, while a rare few disregard everything else and devote themselves to contemplating the nature of things. These he called lovers of wisdom, for that is what “philosophers” means. Just as, at the games, the noblest activity was to watch without seeking any gain for oneself, so in life the contemplation and understanding of things far surpassed every other pursuit.

## Book 5, Chapter 4

- <sup>10</sup> Pythagoras did not merely invent the name: he also enlarged the subject itself. After this conversation at Phlius he came to Italy, and adorned the Greece that was called Great with the finest institutions and arts, both in private and in public life. Perhaps another occasion will come to speak of his teaching. From the earliest philosophy down to Socrates, who had studied under Archelaus, the pupil of Anaxagoras, philosophers investigated numbers and movements, the sources from which all things arise and the ends to which they return. They eagerly examined the sizes, distances, and courses of the stars, and everything in

the heavens. Socrates was the first to call philosophy down from heaven, establish it in cities, introduce it even into homes, and compel it to inquire into life and conduct, good and evil.

- 11 The many forms of his reasoning, the range of his subjects, and the greatness of his intellect, preserved and made immortal in Plato's writings, gave rise to several schools of philosophers who disagreed with one another. Of these we have chiefly followed what we believed to be Socrates' own practice: to conceal our own opinion, free others from error, and in every discussion seek what most closely resembles the truth. Carneades pursued this method with exceptional acuteness and fullness, and we too have often discussed subjects in this manner, most recently at Tusculum. I have sent you the conversations of the first four days, fully written out in the preceding books. On the fifth day we sat down in the same place, and the following proposition was put forward for discussion:

## Book 5, Chapter 5

- 12 "I do not think virtue has sufficient power to make life happy."  
"Yet, by Hercules, my friend Brutus thinks it does; and, with your permission, I put his judgment far above yours."  
"I have no doubt of it. But the question now is not how much you love him; it is the worth of the opinion I have expressed. That is what I want you to discuss."  
"You deny, then, that virtue has sufficient power to make life happy?"  
"I deny it absolutely."  
"Well, does virtue provide sufficient resources for living rightly, honorably, and praiseworthy—in short, for living well?"  
"Certainly it does."  
"Can you then refuse to call someone who lives badly unhappy, or deny that someone who, you admit, lives well is living happily?"

“Why should I not? Even under torture one can live rightly, honorably, and praiseworthily, and therefore well—provided you understand what I now mean by ‘well.’ I mean with steadfastness, dignity, wisdom, and courage.

- 13 “Even these qualities are thrown onto the rack, which a happy life cannot approach.”

“What then? Is the happy life alone, I ask you, left outside the prison’s door and threshold, while steadfastness, dignity, courage, wisdom, and the other virtues are dragged to the torturer and refuse no punishment or pain?”

“If you mean to accomplish anything, you must find some new arguments. These leave me quite unmoved, not merely because they are commonplace, but much more because, like certain light wines that lose all their strength in water, these Stoic arguments please more when tasted than when drunk. That chorus of virtues set upon the rack, for instance, presents images of such splendid dignity to our eyes that happiness seems ready to hurry toward them and determined not to let them be abandoned.

- 14 “But when you turn the mind from that painting, those personified virtues, to the actual truth, the question remains in its bare form: can anyone be happy while being tortured? Let us therefore examine that now. You need not fear that the virtues will protest and complain that happiness has deserted them. For if no virtue is without practical wisdom, practical wisdom itself sees that not all good people are happy as well. It remembers much about Marcus Atilius, Quintus Caepio, and Manius Aquilius. And, if you prefer images to actual things, practical wisdom itself holds happiness back as it tries to climb onto the rack, and declares that happiness has nothing in common with pain and torment.”

## Book 5, Chapter 6

- 15 “I readily allow you to proceed in that way, though it is unfair for you to prescribe how I am to argue. But I ask whether we think we achieved anything on the preceding days, or nothing.”

“Certainly we achieved something, and a considerable amount.”

“Well then, if that is so, this inquiry is already far advanced and almost brought to its conclusion.”

“How, exactly?”

“Because turbulent movements and agitations of the mind, roused and swept along by reckless impulse, driving all reason out, leave no room for a happy life. For how can anyone be other than unhappy who fears death or pain, one of which is often present, while the other always hangs over us? What if he also fears poverty, disgrace, and ill repute, as people generally do; or disability and blindness; or finally slavery, which has often befallen not merely individuals but powerful nations?

- 16 “Can anyone who fears these things be happy? And what of someone who not only fears their coming but actually bears and endures them? Add exile, mourning, and the loss of children: broken by these things and crushed by grief, can he be anything but utterly unhappy? Again, consider the man we see burning and raging with desire, grasping ravenously at everything with an appetite that cannot be filled, thirsting more fiercely and intensely the more freely he drinks in pleasures from every side. Would you not rightly call him utterly unhappy? And what of the man carried away by frivolity, exulting in empty joy and leaping about without restraint? Is he not the more unhappy the happier he thinks himself? As these people are unhappy, then, so those are happy whom no fears terrify, no griefs consume, no desires inflame, and no outbursts of foolish joy dissolve in enervating pleasures. Just as we understand the sea’s tranquility to mean that no breeze, not even the slightest, stirs its

waves, so we recognize the mind's quiet and peaceful state when no disturbance exists to shake it. Suppose someone considers the violence of fortune, and every human circumstance that can befall anyone, endurable, so that neither fear nor anguish touches him. Suppose also that he desires nothing and is carried away by no empty pleasure of the mind. Why should he not be happy?

- 17 “And if virtue produces these results, why should virtue not, of itself and by itself, make us happy?”

## Book 5, Chapter 7

“Certainly one of those points cannot be denied: people who fear nothing, feel no anguish, desire nothing, and are not carried away by ungoverned joy are happy. I therefore grant you that. The other point is no longer an open question: our previous discussions established that the wise person is free from every disturbance of the mind.”

“Then surely the matter is settled;

- 18 “for the inquiry seems to have reached its end.”

“Almost, certainly.”

“Yet that is the mathematicians’ practice, not the philosophers’. When geometers wish to demonstrate something, if any of their previous demonstrations bears on it, they take that as granted and proved, and explain only the point about which nothing has yet been written. Philosophers gather together everything relevant to the matter in hand, even if they have discussed it elsewhere. Otherwise, why should a Stoic say much when asked whether virtue has sufficient power to make life happy? He need only reply that he had already demonstrated that nothing is good except what is honorable; once that is proved, it follows that virtue is sufficient for a happy life. And just as this follows from that, so that follows from this: if virtue is sufficient for a happy life, nothing is good except what is honorable.

- 19 “But that is not how they proceed. They have separate books on the honorable and on the highest good; and although those establish that virtue has sufficient power to make life happy, they nevertheless treat this question separately as well. Every subject must be handled with arguments and reminders peculiar to itself—especially one of such importance. Do not suppose that philosophy has ever uttered a more glorious declaration or made a richer or greater promise. For what does it profess? Good gods! It promises that anyone who obeys its laws will always be armed against fortune, will possess within himself every resource for living well and happily, and in short will always be happy.
- 20 “But I shall see what it accomplishes; meanwhile, I value the very promise highly. Xerxes, loaded with every prize and gift of fortune, was not content with his cavalry, his infantry, his multitude of ships, or the boundless weight of his gold. He offered a reward to anyone who discovered a new pleasure—and even with that he was not content, for desire will never find an end. I wish we too could offer a reward and bring forward someone who could give us something to strengthen our belief in this.”

## Book 5, Chapter 8

- 21 “I wish so too, but I still have a small question to ask. I agree that the propositions you have stated follow from one another: just as, if only what is honorable is good, it follows that virtue produces a happy life, so, if happiness lies in virtue, nothing but virtue is good. But your friend Brutus, following Aristo and Antiochus, does not hold this view. He thinks virtue sufficient even if there is some good besides virtue.”
- “Well then?
- 22 “Do you think I am going to argue against Brutus?”
- “Yes, apparently you will. It is not for me to set limits.”

“Let us leave for another occasion the question of what is consistent with each person’s position. I have often disagreed with Antiochus on these matters, and recently with Aristo, when I stayed with him at Athens during my military command. It seemed to me that no one could be happy while suffering evils; yet the wise person could suffer evils if any bodily misfortunes or strokes of fortune were evils. They used to make the following arguments, which Antiochus has also written in several places: virtue alone can produce a happy life, but not the happiest life; most things take their names from the greater part of what they are, even when some part is missing—strength, health, wealth, honor, glory, for example, are judged by their general character, not by counting their components. In the same way, even if a happy life limps in some respect, it still retains its name through its much greater part.

- 23 “There is no great need to disentangle these arguments now, although they do not seem to me entirely consistent. For one thing, I do not understand what a happy person requires to become happier: if something is lacking, he is not even happy. As for their assertion that everything is named and judged by its greater part, there are cases where that principle holds. But since they say there are three kinds of evil, suppose someone is assailed by every evil of two kinds: everything in his fortunes is adverse, and his body is overwhelmed and exhausted by every kind of pain. Shall we say that he lacks only a little of a happy life, let alone the happiest?”

## Book 5, Chapter 9

- 24 “This is the position that Theophrastus could not sustain. Having decided that flogging, torture, agony, the destruction of one’s country, exile, and the loss of children carry great weight toward a bad and miserable life, he did not dare to speak loftily and grandly while his convictions were low and abject. Whether he was right is not the question; he was certainly consistent. I therefore dislike the practice of criticizing conclusions once you have granted the premises. This

man, the most refined and learned of all philosophers, meets with little criticism when he declares that there are three kinds of good. Yet everyone attacks him, first of all for his book on the happy life, in which he argues at length why someone under torture and in agony cannot be happy. He is even supposed to say there that happiness does not mount the wheel—a form of torture among the Greeks. In fact, he says that nowhere at all, but what he does say amounts to the same thing.

- 25 “Can I, then, after granting him that bodily pains are evils and the shipwrecks of fortune are evils, be angry when he says that not all good people are happy? For the things he counts as evils can befall every good person. The same Theophrastus is assailed in the books and lectures of all the philosophers because, in his *Callisthenes*, he praised this saying:

“Fortune rules life, not wisdom.”

“They say no philosopher ever uttered anything more feeble. Rightly so; but I cannot see how anything more consistent could have been said. If there are so many bodily goods, and so many goods outside the body dependent on chance and fortune, does it not follow that fortune, mistress of both external and bodily things, has more power than judgment?

- 26 “Or would we rather imitate Epicurus? He often says many fine things, but takes no trouble over whether his statements agree consistently with one another. He praises a frugal diet. That is worthy of a philosopher—if Socrates or Antisthenes said it, not a man who has declared pleasure the highest good. He says no one can live pleasantly unless he also lives honorably, wisely, and justly. Nothing could be weightier, nothing more worthy of philosophy—if he did not make those very words, ‘honorably, wisely, and justly,’ refer to pleasure. What could be better than his saying that fortune has little influence over the wise? But is this said by a man who declares pain not merely the greatest evil but the only evil, and who can be overwhelmed throughout his body by the sharpest pains at the very moment he boasts most loudly of defying fortune? Metrodorus says the same thing in even finer words:

- 27 “I have forestalled you, Fortune,’ he says, ‘and captured you. I have blocked every approach of yours, so that you cannot so much as breathe upon me.’ Splendid—if Aristo of Chios said it, or Zeno the Stoic, who considered nothing evil except what was shameful. But you, Metrodorus, who have lodged every good in the entrails and marrow, and have defined the highest good as consisting in a sound bodily condition and a secure expectation of its continuance—have you blocked fortune’s approaches? How? You can be stripped of that good this very moment.”

## Book 5, Chapter 10

“Yet the ignorant are captivated by these sayings, and sayings of this kind account for these men’s many followers.

- 28 “But the acute reasoner must consider not what each man says, but what his principles require him to say. Take the very proposition we have undertaken to defend in this discussion: we maintain that all good people are always happy. Who I mean by good people is clear. Those equipped and adorned with all the virtues we call both wise and good. Let us see who should be called happy.
- 29 “I consider them to be those who possess good things with no admixture of evil. When we say ‘happy,’ the only conception underlying that word is the full possession of good things with all evils excluded. Virtue cannot attain this if anything besides itself is good. For a whole crowd of evils will be present, if we regard these as evils: poverty, obscurity, low rank, loneliness, the loss of loved ones, severe bodily pains, ruined health, disability, blindness, the destruction of one’s country, exile, and finally slavery. Amid so many and such great troubles—and still more can occur—the wise person may find himself; for chance brings them, and chance can strike the wise. But if these are evils, who can guarantee that the wise person will always be happy, when he may suffer all of them at once?

- 30 “I therefore do not readily allow my friend Brutus, or our common teachers, or those great men of old—Aristotle, Speusippus, Xenocrates, and Polemo—to count what I have listed above among evils, yet at the same time declare that the wise person is always happy. If they delight in this splendid and beautiful distinction, so worthy of Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato, let them bring themselves to scorn those things whose glitter captivates them—strength, health, beauty, wealth, honors, and power—and count their opposites as nothing. Then they will be able to proclaim in the clearest voice that neither fortune’s assault, nor the crowd’s opinion, nor pain, nor poverty terrifies them; that everything they need lies within themselves; and that they count nothing beyond their own control among good things.
- 31 “But to speak in this way, as some great and lofty spirit might, while counting the same things as good and evil that the crowd does—this cannot possibly be allowed. Stirred by the glory of this doctrine, Epicurus rises up; he too, heaven help us, thinks the wise person always happy. The dignity of the claim captivates him, but he would never make it if he listened to himself. What could be less consistent than for someone to declare pain either the greatest or the only evil, and also hold that the wise person will say, ‘How delightful this is!’ while being tortured by pain? Philosophers must therefore be judged not by isolated remarks but by the continuity and consistency of their thought.”

## Book 5, Chapter 11

- 32 “You are bringing me to agree with you. But take care that your own consistency is not found wanting.”
- “How so?”
- “I recently read the fourth book of your *On Ends*. In it, while arguing against Cato, you seemed to me to be trying to show—and I approve of this—that there is no difference between Zeno and the Peripatetics except the novelty of

his words. If that is so, why, if Zeno's system consistently allows virtue sufficient power to make life happy, should the Peripatetics not be allowed to say the same? Surely we ought to consider the substance, not the words."

- 33 "You are proceeding against me with sealed documents, calling witnesses to what I once said or wrote! Deal in that way with others, who argue under laws they have laid down. We live from day to day: whatever strikes our minds as probable, we say. And so we alone are free. Nevertheless, since we were speaking a little earlier of consistency, I do not think the present question is whether Zeno and his pupil Aristo were right in holding that only what is honorable is good, but whether, if that were so, it would follow consistently that Zeno should place the whole of a happy life in virtue alone.
- 34 "So let us certainly grant Brutus that the wise person is always happy. Let him see for himself how consistent that is with his principles; surely no man deserves the glory of this doctrine more than he does. Let us, however, maintain that the wise person is also supremely happy."

## Book 5, Chapter 12

"And if Zeno of Citium, some obscure foreigner who manufactured words, seems to have slipped into the ancient philosophy, let us trace the weight of this doctrine back to Plato's authority. In Plato we often find the assertion that nothing is good except virtue. In the *Gorgias*, for example, Socrates is asked whether he does not consider Archelaus, the son of Perdiccas, happy—a man then regarded as supremely fortunate. 'I do not know,' he says;

- 35 "'for I have never spoken with him.'—'What do you mean? Can you not know otherwise?'—'Certainly not.'—'Then you cannot even say whether the Great King of Persia is happy?'—'How could I, when I do not know how well edu-

cated he is, or how good a man?’—‘What? Do you think happiness rests on that?’—‘That is precisely my view: the good are happy, the wicked unhappy.’—‘Then Archelaus is unhappy?’—‘Certainly, if he is unjust.’

- 36 “Does he not seem here to place the whole of a happy life in virtue alone? And how does the same philosopher put it in the Funeral Oration? ‘The man,’ he says, ‘for whom everything that contributes to a happy life depends on himself, rather than hanging upon others’ good or bad luck and being forced to depend and drift upon another’s fortunes, has arranged his life in the best possible way. This is the moderate man, the courageous man, the wise man. Whether other advantages come or go, and above all whether children are born or die, he will heed and obey the ancient precept: he will never rejoice or grieve excessively, because he will always place all his hope for himself within himself.’ From this fountain of Plato, sacred and majestic as it is, our whole argument will flow.”

## Book 5, Chapter 13

“Where, then, can we begin more fittingly than with nature, our common parent?

- 37 “Whatever she brought forth—not only living creatures, but also whatever sprang from the earth and rested on roots of its own—she intended to be perfect of its kind. So trees and vines, and the lower plants that cannot lift themselves far above the ground, are some of them always green, while others, stripped bare in winter, put out leaves when warmed by spring. There is none that does not flourish through an inward movement, with its own seeds enclosed within it, producing flowers or crops or berries. In each of them everything is complete, so far as lies within its own power, unless some force prevents it.

- 38 “In animals, because nature has given them sensation, her own power can be discerned even more easily. She intended some animals to swim and inhabit the waters, others to fly and enjoy the open sky; some to crawl, others to walk. Among these animals, some roam alone, others gather together; some are fierce, others tame; some live hidden and covered by earth. Each of them holds to its own function and, unable to pass into the life of a different creature, remains within nature’s law. Just as nature has given each kind of animal some special quality, which it keeps as its own and never abandons, so she has given the human being something far more excellent. Yet we should call things more excellent only where some comparison is possible, whereas the human mind, drawn from the divine intelligence, can be compared with nothing other than God himself, if it is permissible to say so.
- 39 “If this mind is cultivated, then, and its vision so tended that errors do not blind it, it becomes a perfect intelligence—that is, fully developed reason, which is the same as virtue. And if everything that lacks nothing is happy, and everything that is filled and complete in its own kind is happy, and if that is the distinctive character of virtue, then certainly everyone who possesses virtue is happy.
- “On this I agree with Brutus—that is to say, with Aristotle, Xenocrates, Speusippus, and Polemo. But I think such people are supremely happy as well.
- 40 “For what does someone who trusts in his own goods lack for a happy life? Or how can someone who does not trust in them be happy? Yet anyone who divides goods into three kinds must lack that trust.”

## Book 5, Chapter 14

“For how can he trust either in the soundness of his body or in the stability of fortune? Yet no one can be happy without a good that is stable, fixed, and enduring. Which of those goods is like that? The Spartan’s saying seems to me to apply to these people: when a merchant boasted that he had sent many ships

to every stretch of coast, the Spartan said, 'A fortune fastened to ropes is hardly to be envied.' Can there be any doubt that, if something can be lost, we must not count it among the things that make a happy life complete? Nothing on which a happy life rests must be capable of withering, dying out, or falling. For anyone who fears losing any part of these things cannot be happy.

41 "We want the happy person to be safe, impregnable, enclosed and fortified—not to feel little fear, but none. Just as we call someone innocent not because he does little harm, but because he does none, so we must count someone fearless not because he fears small things, but because he is entirely free from fear. For what else is courage but a disposition of mind that endures the encounter with danger, hardship, and pain, and is far removed from all fear? Yet this could certainly not be so unless every good consisted in moral goodness alone.

42 "And how can anyone possess that deeply desired and sought-after security—by security I now mean freedom from distress, in which a happy life consists—if a host of evils either besets him or can beset him? How can he be lofty and upright, counting everything that can befall a human being as small, as we want the wise person to be, unless he believes that everything he needs lies within himself? When Philip threatened in a letter to prevent everything the Spartans attempted, they asked whether he would also prevent them from dying. Will it not be far easier to find such a spirit in the individual we seek than in an entire city? Again, join to this courage we are discussing the self-control that governs every emotional movement: what can be lacking for happiness in someone whom courage frees from distress and fear, while self-control both draws him away from desire and prevents him from leaping with extravagant excitement? I would demonstrate that virtue produces these results, had they not been explained on the preceding days."

## Book 5, Chapter 15

<sup>43</sup> “Disturbances of the mind produce misery, while their quieting produces a happy life. These disturbances have a twofold basis: distress and fear concern supposed evils, while exultant joy and desire rest on mistaken beliefs about goods. All are at war with judgment and reason. When you see someone free, released, and liberated from these violent agitations, which are themselves so divided and at odds with one another, will you hesitate to call him happy? Yet the wise person is always in this condition; therefore the wise person is always happy.

“Moreover, every good is a cause for joy; what is a cause for joy should be proclaimed and openly displayed; what deserves that is also glorious; if glorious, certainly praiseworthy; and if praiseworthy, assuredly honorable as well.

<sup>44</sup> “Whatever is good, therefore, is honorable. But even those thinkers do not call the things they count as goods honorable. Only what is honorable, then, is good; and from this it follows that a happy life consists in moral goodness alone. We must therefore neither call nor consider things good if someone can possess them in abundance and still be utterly unhappy.

<sup>45</sup> “Can you doubt it? Suppose someone is outstanding in health, strength, and beauty, with the keenest and most unimpaired senses. Add, if you like, nimbleness and speed; give him wealth, honors, commands, power, and glory. If the man who possesses all this is unjust, unrestrained, cowardly, and dull-witted to the point of having no intelligence at all, will you hesitate to call him unhappy? What sort of goods are these, then, if someone who possesses them can be utterly unhappy? Consider whether a happy life must not, like a heap made from grains of its own kind, be composed of parts like itself. If so, happiness must be made from goods, and the only goods are honorable. If these ingredients are a mixture of unlike things, nothing honorable can be made from them. And once that is taken away, what could we understand by happiness? For

whatever is good is to be sought; whatever is to be sought must certainly be approved; whatever you approve must be regarded as welcome and acceptable, and must therefore also be accorded worth. If that is so, it must be praiseworthy. Every good, therefore, is praiseworthy; and from this it follows that only what is honorable is good.”

## Book 5, Chapter 16

46 “Unless we hold to that, we shall have to call many things good. I leave aside wealth: since anyone, however unworthy, can possess it, I do not count it among goods, for not just anyone can possess what is good. I leave aside noble birth and popular fame, raised up by the approval of fools and scoundrels. Yet we shall have to call even these trifles good: gleaming teeth, attractive eyes, a pleasing complexion, and the qualities Anticlea praises while washing Ulysses’ feet:

“Gentleness of speech, softness of body.’

“If we regard these as goods, what can be said with greater weight or grandeur by a philosopher in all his seriousness than by popular opinion and the crowd of fools?

47 “But the Stoics call “preferred” or “promoted” the very things these others call “goods.” They do indeed, but they deny that these things make a happy life complete. The others, however, think there is no happy life without them, or, if there is a happy life, they certainly deny that it is the happiest. We, on the other hand, insist on the happiest life, and that conclusion of Socrates confirms our position. For that foremost philosopher reasoned as follows: as a person’s disposition of mind is, so is the person; as the person is, so is his speech; his deeds resemble his speech, and his life resembles his deeds. But the disposition of mind in a good man is praiseworthy; therefore the good man’s life is praiseworthy, and therefore honorable, since it is praiseworthy. From this we conclude that the life of the good is happy.

- 48 “For, in the name of gods and human beings, did our earlier discussions not establish clearly enough—or were we talking merely for amusement and to pass the time?—that the wise person is always free from every agitation of mind that I call a disturbance, and that the calmest peace always dwells in his mind? Is a man who is self-controlled and steadfast, without fear, without distress, without foolish excitement, without desire, not happy? But the wise person is always like this; therefore he is always happy. Again, how can a good man fail to make what is praiseworthy the standard for everything he does and thinks? Yet he makes a happy life the standard for everything. A happy life is therefore praiseworthy; nothing without virtue is praiseworthy; therefore virtue produces a happy life.”

## Book 5, Chapter 17

- 49 “The argument can also be concluded in this way. In a miserable life there is nothing to proclaim or glory in, nor is there in a life that is neither miserable nor happy. Yet in some life there is something to proclaim, glory in, and openly display. Epaminondas says:
- “By our counsels the Spartans’ glory has been shorn.’
- “And Africanus:
- “From the rising sun above the Maeotian marshes,
- “No one can equal the deeds I have done.’
- 50 “If that is so, a happy life is something to glory in, proclaim, and openly display, for there is no other life to proclaim and openly display. Once these points are established, you understand what follows. Moreover, unless a happy life is also an honorable life, there must be something better than a happy life: they will surely admit that an honorable life is better. Thus there will be something better than a happy life. What more perverse claim could be made? Again, when

they admit that vices have sufficient power to make life miserable, must they not admit that virtue has the same power to make life happy? For contrary consequences follow from contraries.

- 51 “Here I ask what force there is in Critolaus’ famous balance. He places the goods of the mind in one pan, bodily and external goods in the other, and thinks that the pan containing the mind’s goods sinks so much lower that it outweighs earth and seas.”

## Book 5, Chapter 18

“What, then, prevents either him or Xenocrates, that most serious of philosophers, who so greatly exalts virtue and diminishes and dismisses everything else, from placing not merely a happy life but the happiest life in virtue?

- 52 “Unless this is done, the destruction of the virtues will follow. Whoever is susceptible to distress must also be susceptible to fear, for fear is the anxious expectation of future distress. Whoever is susceptible to fear is also susceptible to dread, timidity, panic, and cowardice. It follows that he may sometimes be defeated and think that Atreus’ precept does not apply to him:

“Let them so prepare themselves in life that they never know defeat.”

“But he will be defeated, as I said, and not merely defeated but enslaved. We, however, want virtue always free, always unconquered. If it is not, virtue is abolished.

- 53 “And if virtue provides sufficient resources for living well, it also provides enough for living happily. Certainly virtue is sufficient for us to live courageously; if courageously, then also with greatness of spirit, never terrified by anything and always unconquered. It follows that there is nothing to regret, nothing lacking, nothing obstructing us. Everything therefore flows freely,

completely, and prosperously—and therefore happily. But virtue has sufficient power to make us live courageously; therefore it has sufficient power to make us live happily as well.

- 54 “For just as folly, even after obtaining what it desired, never thinks it has obtained enough, so wisdom is always content with what is present, and never dissatisfied with itself.”

## Book 5, Chapter 19

“Do you think Gaius Laelius’ single consulship was comparable to Cinna’s consulships? Even that one term came with an electoral defeat—unless, when a wise and good man such as Laelius is passed over at the polls, it is the people [deprived of a good consul], rather than he [deprived of a good citizen body], who suffer rejection. But even so, which would you prefer, if you had the choice: to be consul once, like Laelius, or four times, like Cinna?

- 55 “I have no doubt what you will answer, and so I see whom I am trusting with the question. I would not ask just anyone the same thing. Someone else might perhaps reply that he preferred not merely four consulships to one, but a single day of Cinna’s life to the whole lifetimes of many distinguished men. Had Laelius touched anyone with a finger, he would have paid the penalty. Cinna, however, ordered the head of his fellow consul Gnaeus Octavius to be cut off; those of Publius Crassus and Lucius Caesar, men of the highest nobility whose virtue had been recognized at home and in war; that of Marcus Antonius, the most eloquent of all the men I have heard; and that of Gaius Caesar, in whom I think there was a model of culture, wit, charm, and grace. Was the man who killed these men happy, then? To me, on the contrary, he seems unhappy not only because he did these things, but also because he behaved in such a way that he was allowed to do them. Of course no one is allowed to do wrong; we slip into an error of speech, calling something allowable

- 56 “when a person is permitted to do it. Which time, then, was Gaius Marius happier: when he shared the glory of his victory over the Cimbri with his colleague Catulus, almost a second Laelius—for I consider the two men very much alike—or when, victorious in civil war and full of anger, he answered Catulus’ friends and relatives as they pleaded with him, not once but repeatedly, ‘Let him die’? Here the man who obeyed that impious utterance was happier than the one who gave so criminal an order. For just as it is better to suffer wrong than to inflict it, so it is better to go a little way to meet death, already approaching of itself, as Catulus did, than, as Marius did, to bury one’s six consulships beneath the death of such a man and stain the final period of one’s life.”

## Book 5, Chapter 20

- 57 “Dionysius was tyrant of Syracuse for thirty-eight years, having seized absolute power at the age of twenty-five. What a beautiful city, what a richly endowed community he held crushed in slavery! Yet we have it in writing from reliable authorities that this man was extremely temperate in his way of life, keen and energetic in conducting affairs, but at the same time malicious and unjust by nature. Consequently, anyone who looks closely at the truth must regard him as utterly unhappy. For even when he thought he could do everything, he did not attain the very things he had desired.
- 58 “Though born of good parents and respectable standing—accounts of that, admittedly, differ—and surrounded by friendships with men his own age and close connections with relatives, and though, in the Greek fashion, he also had certain young men attached to him by love, he trusted none of them. Instead he entrusted his bodily safety to slaves he had selected from wealthy households, whom he had himself freed from the name of slavery, and to certain foreign adventurers and savage barbarians. Thus, through his unjust desire to rule, he had in a sense shut himself in prison. Indeed, rather than entrust his neck to a

barber, he taught his daughters to cut hair. So royal maidens, practicing a lowly, servile trade like little barbers, trimmed their father's beard and hair. Yet when they were grown, he took even their blades away and arranged for them to singe his beard and hair with glowing walnut shells.

59 “He had two wives, Aristomache, a woman of his own city, and Doris of Locri. When he visited them at night, he first inspected and searched everything. He had surrounded his bedroom couch with a broad trench and bridged the crossing with a little wooden bridge; after closing the bedroom door, he would turn even that bridge aside. Since he did not dare stand on the ordinary platforms, he used to address the assembly from a high tower.

60 “When he wanted to play ball, which he was very fond of doing, and took off his tunic, he is said to have handed his sword to a young man he loved. A friend jokingly remarked, ‘You certainly entrust your life to him,’ and the young man smiled. Dionysius ordered them both to be killed: the one because he had pointed out a way to kill him, the other because his laughter had shown approval of the remark. Yet this deed caused him such grief that nothing in his life weighed more heavily on him: he had killed someone he had loved passionately. Thus the desires of those who lack self-control pull in opposite directions. If you yield to one, you must resist another.”

## Book 5, Chapter 21

61 “Yet this tyrant himself passed judgment on his own happiness. One of his flatterers, Damocles, was speaking of his armies, his wealth, the majesty of his rule, his abundance of every resource, and the splendor of his palace, and declared that no one had ever been happier. ‘Then, Damocles,’ he said, ‘since this life delights you, would you like to taste it yourself and try out my fortune?’ When Damocles said he would, Dionysius ordered him to be placed on a golden couch spread with a beautifully woven coverlet embroidered with magnificent

designs. He furnished several sideboards with embossed silver and gold. Then he ordered boys chosen for their exceptional beauty to stand beside the table and serve him attentively, watching for his slightest nod.

- 62 “There were perfumes and garlands; incense burned; the tables were piled with the most exquisite dishes. Damocles thought himself a fortunate man. In the midst of all this splendor, Dionysius ordered a gleaming sword to be lowered from the paneled ceiling, suspended by a horsehair, so that it hung over the happy man’s neck. Now he could neither look at those handsome attendants nor admire the finely wrought silver, nor reach out his hand to the table. Even the garlands were slipping from his head. At last he begged the tyrant to let him leave, since he no longer wished to be happy. Has Dionysius not made it plain enough that there can be no happiness for someone over whom some terror always hangs? And he was not even free to return to justice and restore liberty and their rights to his fellow citizens. As a young man, at an age too heedless to foresee the consequences, he had entangled himself in wrongdoing and committed acts that made his own safety impossible if he began to act sanely.”

## Book 5, Chapter 22

- 63 “How deeply he longed for friendships, though he dreaded their betrayal, he showed in the case of those two Pythagoreans. He had accepted one as a pledge for the other’s life, and when the other appeared at the appointed hour of death to release his guarantor, he said, ‘If only I could be enrolled as your third friend!’ How wretched it was for him to lack the companionship of friends, the sharing of daily life, any intimate conversation at all—especially since he had been educated from boyhood, trained in the liberal arts, and was passionately devoted to music! He was a tragic poet, too—how good a poet is beside the point. In this art, somehow, more than in the others, everyone finds his own work beautiful. I have yet to meet a poet—and I was a friend of Aquinius—who did not think himself the best. That is the way of it: your work delights

you, mine delights me. But to return to Dionysius: he lacked every civilized refinement and way of living. He lived with runaway slaves, criminals, and barbarians; no one who deserved freedom, or who even wished to be free, could be his friend, as he saw it.”

## Book 5, Chapter 23

“I shall not now compare this life—I can imagine nothing more hideous, wretched, or detestable—with the lives of Plato or Archytas, men of learning and consummate wisdom.

<sup>64</sup> “Instead, from that same city I shall summon a humble little man from his tracing rod and the dust in which he drew: Archimedes, who lived many years later. When I was quaestor, I tracked down his tomb, unknown to the Syracusans, who even denied that it existed. It was fenced in and overgrown on every side with brambles and thickets. I remembered some short lines of iambic verse which, I had heard, were inscribed on his monument. They said that a sphere and a cylinder had been placed at the top of the tomb.

<sup>65</sup> “As I surveyed the whole area—there is a great concentration of tombs at the Agrigentine Gates—I noticed a little column rising just above the undergrowth, with the figures of a sphere and a cylinder on it. I immediately told the Syracusans—their leading men were with me—that I thought this was the very thing I was looking for. A number of men were sent in with sickles and cleared and opened up the site.

<sup>66</sup> “When an approach had been laid open, we went up to the base facing us. The inscription was visible, though about half of it had been lost as the ends of the lines had worn away. Thus the most famous city in Greece, and once the most learned as well, would have known nothing of the monument of its own uniquely brilliant citizen had it not learned of it from a man of Arpinum. But let my argument return from its digression. Who among all those who have any

dealings at all with the Muses—that is, with humane culture and learning—would not rather be this mathematician than that tyrant? If we ask about the character and occupations of their lives, the mind of the one was nourished by exploring and working out reasoned inquiries, with the delight of discovery, the sweetest of all nourishment for the mind; the other’s was occupied with murder and injustice, in fear both day and night. Come, compare Democritus, Pythagoras, Anaxagoras: what kingdoms, what riches will you rank above their studies and their pleasures?

- 67 “For that highest good you are seeking must necessarily lie in the best part of a human being. And what is better in a human being than a keen and sound mind? We must therefore enjoy the good that belongs to it if we wish to be happy. But the mind’s good is virtue; happiness must therefore be contained in virtue. Hence everything beautiful, honorable, and illustrious is full of joy, as I said above—though I think that same point needs fuller treatment. Since it is clear that a happy life arises from joys that are lasting and complete, it follows that it arises from moral goodness.”

## Book 5, Chapter 24

- 68 “But rather than merely touch in words on what we wish to demonstrate, we must set before ourselves something like living pictures, which will draw us more powerfully toward knowledge and understanding. Let us take a man distinguished by the finest accomplishments, and for a moment form his image in our minds. First, he must possess exceptional intelligence, for virtue does not readily accompany sluggish minds; next, an ardent passion for investigating the truth. From this will spring that threefold fruit of the mind: first, knowledge of reality and the explanation of nature; second, the discrimination of things to be sought and avoided, and the principles of living well; third, the judgment of what follows from any proposition and what contradicts it, which embraces both precision in argument and truth in judgment.

<sup>69</sup> “What joy, then, must fill the wise man’s mind as it lives with these pursuits, spending its very nights with them! Think of his discerning the motions and revolutions of the entire universe: seeing the countless stars fixed in the heavens, keeping pace with the motion of the sky itself, each fastened in its appointed place; seeing seven others each follow its own course, widely separated from one another in their heights or depths, their wandering motions nevertheless marking out fixed and certain intervals in their paths. Surely it was the sight of these things that stirred the ancients and urged them to inquire further. From this arose the search for the first principles, the seeds, as it were, from which all things sprang, were generated, and took form: the origin of each kind, inanimate or living, voiceless or speaking; its life and its end; the succession and transformation of one thing into another; the source of the earth and the weights that balance it; the hollows in which the seas are held; the force of gravity that carries everything down to seek the center of the universe, which in a sphere is also its lowest point.”

## Book 5, Chapter 25

<sup>70</sup> “As the mind engages with these things and ponders them night and day, there arises the knowledge commanded by the god at Delphi: the mind comes to know itself and to feel its union with the divine mind, and from this it is filled with a joy that knows no satiety. For the very contemplation of the power and nature of the gods kindles a desire to imitate the divine eternity. The mind does not think itself confined within life’s brief span when it sees the causes of things linked one to another in a necessary chain, whose flow from eternity to eternity is nevertheless governed by reason and intelligence.

<sup>71</sup> “As he gazes at these things and looks up to them—or rather, surveys every region and quarter—with what tranquility of mind he turns again to consider human affairs, the things nearer to us! From this arises the knowledge of virtue; the kinds and divisions of the virtues burst into flower. He discovers the final

good toward which nature looks, the ultimate evil, the standard to which duties must be referred, the way of passing his life that he should choose. The investigation of these and similar matters establishes above all the point we are arguing here: that virtue is sufficient in itself for a happy life.

- 72 “Third comes the method and science of reasoning, which spreads and flows through every part of wisdom: it defines a thing, separates its kinds, links consequences, draws complete conclusions, and distinguishes truth from falsehood. Besides its immense usefulness in weighing matters, it offers above all a delight that is noble and worthy of wisdom. But these are the pursuits of leisure. Let this same wise man turn to the defense of the state. What could surpass him, when he sees that his practical wisdom safeguards the citizens’ interests, while through justice he diverts none of those benefits into his own house, and employs so many other virtues in all their variety? Add the fruits of friendship: for the learned, these include both a plan of life in harmony, almost breathing in unison, and the greatest pleasure in daily companionship and shared living. What, after all, does such a life lack that would make it happier? So many and such great joys fill it that Fortune herself must yield to it. But if delight in these goods of the mind—that is, the virtues—is happiness, and all the wise enjoy these delights to the full, we must acknowledge that all of them are happy.”

## Book 5, Chapter 26

“Even on the rack, under torture?”

- 73 “Did you think I meant on a bed of violets or roses? Is Epicurus, who has merely put on the mask of a philosopher and bestowed that title on himself, to be allowed to say—and, as things stand, I applaud him for saying it—that there is no moment when the wise man, even if he is being burned, tortured, or cut to pieces, cannot cry out, ‘How little I care for this!’? After all, he defines all evil as pain and all good as pleasure; he laughs at our moral goodness and shame, and says that we are engrossed in words, pouring out empty sounds, and that

nothing matters to us except the smooth or harsh sensations of the body. Is this man, then, whose judgment, as I said, scarcely differs from that of the beasts, to be allowed to forget his own position, to scorn Fortune when everything he calls good or evil is in Fortune's power, and to declare himself happy in the utmost agony and torture, when he has laid it down that pain is not only the greatest evil but the only one?

74 “Nor has he equipped himself with those remedies for enduring pain: firmness of mind, shame at disgrace, training and habit in endurance, the teachings of courage, a manly toughness. Instead, he says that he finds relief in the single resource of remembering past pleasures—as if someone sweltering in the heat, and scarcely able to bear its force, should choose to remember how he had once been immersed in the cool streams at my place near Arpinum. I do not see how past pleasures can soothe present evils.

75 “But since he says that the wise man is always happy, though consistency would forbid him to say it, what should those do who believe that nothing lacking moral goodness should be sought, or counted as a good? On my advice, even the Peripatetics and the Old Academy should finally stop stammering and dare to say openly, in a clear voice, that the happy life will descend into the bull of Phalaris.”

## Book 5, Chapter 27

76 “Let there be three kinds of goods, then: let us withdraw now from the snares of the Stoics, which I realize I have used more often than I usually do. By all means let there be those kinds of goods, provided that bodily and external goods lie low on the ground, called goods merely because they are to be taken, while those divine goods of the mind spread far and wide and touch the heavens. Why should I call the man who has attained them merely happy, and not supremely happy?

“Will the wise man, however, dread pain? That is the strongest opponent of this position. Against death, our own and that of those dear to us, and against distress and the other disturbances of the mind, the discussions of the preceding days seem to have armed and prepared us well enough. Pain appears to be virtue’s fiercest adversary. It brandishes blazing torches; it threatens to break down courage, greatness of spirit, and endurance.

77 “Will virtue, then, succumb to it? Will the happy life of a wise and steadfast man give way before it? Good gods, how disgraceful! Spartan boys do not groan when they are torn by the pain of the lash. At Sparta I myself have seen bands of young men fighting with incredible intensity, with fists, heels, nails, and finally teeth, dying before admitting defeat. What barbarous land is wilder or more uncultivated than India? Yet among that people, to begin with, those regarded as wise pass their lives naked and endure the snows of the Caucasus and the force of winter without pain; and when they place themselves against the flames, they burn without a groan.

78 “As for the women of India, when their husband dies they enter a contest and submit to judgment over which of them he loved most—for several women are commonly married to one man. The winner is placed on the funeral pyre with her husband, rejoicing, while her family escorts her; the defeated woman goes away in sorrow. Custom could never conquer nature, for nature is always unconquerable. But we have infected our minds with shade, luxury, idleness, softness, and inactivity; we have beguiled and weakened them with false opinions and bad habits. Who does not know the custom of the Egyptians? Their minds, steeped in perverse delusions, would undergo any torture rather than harm an ibis, an asp, a cat, a dog, or a crocodile. Even if they have harmed one unwittingly, they refuse no penalty.

79 “I speak of human beings; but what of the beasts? Do they not endure cold and hunger, their roaming runs and wanderings through mountains and forests? Do they not fight for their young so fiercely that they take wounds and fear no

charge, no blow? I pass over what the ambitious bear and suffer for office, lovers of praise for glory, those inflamed with love to satisfy desire. Life is full of examples.”

## Book 5, Chapter 28

- <sup>80</sup> “But let our argument keep within bounds and return to the point from which it turned aside. A happy life, I say, will submit to torture. It will not accompany justice, temperance, and above all courage, greatness of spirit, and endurance, only to halt at the sight of the torturer’s face; it will not remain outside the doors, at the prison’s threshold, as I said before, while all the virtues go forward to torment without a tremor of fear. What could be uglier, more misshapen, than a happy life left alone, separated from that most beautiful company? Yet this cannot possibly happen. The virtues cannot hold together without a happy life, nor can a happy life exist without the virtues.
- <sup>81</sup> “So they will not allow it to hang back; they will sweep it along with them into whatever pain and torment they themselves are led. For it is the wise man’s distinguishing mark to do nothing that could bring regret, nothing unwillingly; to do everything nobly, steadfastly, seriously, honorably; to expect nothing as certain to occur, and, when something happens, to marvel at nothing as if it had come unforeseen and new; to refer everything to his own judgment and stand by his own decisions. I certainly cannot conceive of anything happier than this.
- <sup>82</sup> “The Stoics’ conclusion is straightforward. They hold that the highest good is to accord with nature and live in harmony with it. Since this lies not only within the wise man’s duty but within his power, it must follow that a happy life is in the power of the same man who has the highest good in his power. Thus the wise man’s life is always happy.

“There you have what I consider the most courageous statements that can be made about a happy life—and, as matters now stand, unless you offer something better, the truest as well.”

## Book 5, Chapter 29

“I certainly can offer nothing better. But I would gladly ask you a favor, if it is not too much trouble. No bonds tie you to any particular school, and you gather from them all whatever most impresses you with the appearance of truth. A little while ago you seemed to urge the Peripatetics and the Old Academy to venture, freely and without reservation, to declare that the wise are always supremely happy. I should like to hear how you think they can say this consistently with their principles. For much that you have said has argued against that position and drawn its conclusions by the Stoics’ method.”

- 83 “Let us then exercise the freedom which we alone may enjoy in philosophy: our discourse passes no verdict of its own but ranges over every side, so that others can judge it on its own merits, with no authority added to it. You seem to wish us to show that, whatever the rival philosophers’ opinions about the ultimate ends, virtue still has sufficient resources for a happy life. Carneades, we are told, used to argue this very point, but as an attack on the Stoics, whom he always took the greatest pains to refute, and against whose school his genius blazed. We shall proceed peacefully—for if the Stoics have rightly determined the ultimate good, the matter is settled: the wise man must always be happy.
- 84 “But let us examine each of the remaining positions, to see whether this splendid declaration, this decree, as it were, concerning the happy life, can be reconciled with the views and teachings of them all.”

## Book 5, Chapter 30

“These, I think, are the positions about the ultimate ends that have been maintained and defended. First, four uncompounded views: nothing is good except moral goodness, as the Stoics hold; nothing except pleasure, as Epicurus holds; nothing except freedom from pain, as Hieronymus holds; nothing except the enjoyment of all, or the greatest, of nature’s primary goods, as Carneades used to argue against the Stoics.

- 85 “These, then, are the uncompounded views; the following are combinations. The Peripatetics hold that there are three kinds of goods: the greatest are those of the mind, second come those of the body, and third external goods. The Old Academy differs little from them. Dinomachus and Callipho coupled pleasure with moral goodness, while the Peripatetic Diodorus added freedom from pain to moral goodness. These are the positions that have some staying power; those of Aristo, Pyrrho, Herillus, and several others have faded away. Let us see what ground these thinkers can hold, leaving aside the Stoics, whose position I think I have sufficiently defended.

“The case of the Peripatetics has indeed been made clear, except for Theophrastus and any who have followed him in their rather feeble shuddering and shrinking from pain. The rest may do what they generally do: exalt the weight and dignity of virtue. Once they have raised it to the heavens, as eloquent men usually do at length, it is easy to crush and despise everything else by comparison. Those who say that glory must be sought even at the cost of pain cannot deny that those who have attained it are happy. For although they may be suffering certain evils, the word ‘happy’ has a wide and far-reaching scope.”

## Book 5, Chapter 31

- <sup>86</sup> “For commerce is called profitable and farming productive not if the one is always free from every loss or the other from every disaster of the weather, but if success predominates by a large margin in each. In the same way a life may rightly be called happy not only if it is full of goods on every side, but if its goods greatly outweigh the rest both in number and in importance.
- <sup>87</sup> “On their principles, then, a happy life will follow virtue even to execution and descend with it into the bull, with Aristotle, Xenocrates, Speusippus, and Polemo as its sponsors. Neither threats nor enticements will corrupt it into deserting virtue. Callipho and Diodorus will take the same position, for both embrace moral goodness in such a way that they think everything lacking it must be left far behind. The others seem to be in tighter straits, yet they too swim safely out: Epicurus, Hieronymus, and any who care to defend that abandoned ultimate end of Carneades. None of them fails to regard the mind as the judge of goods, and each trains it to be able to scorn the things that seem good or evil.
- <sup>88</sup> “For whatever you think of Epicurus’ case will apply equally to that of Hieronymus and Carneades—indeed, to all the rest. Which of them is ill prepared to face death or pain?
- “Let us begin, if you please, with the man we call soft and devoted to pleasure. Do you think a man fears death or pain when he calls the day of his death happy and, though afflicted with the greatest pains, counters those very pains by remembering and recalling his discoveries? Nor does he say these things as if he were blurting them out on the spur of the moment. His view of death is that sensation is extinguished when the living creature dissolves, and he judges that whatever lacks sensation is of no concern to us. Likewise, in pain he has firm principles to follow: he finds consolation for its intensity in its brevity, and for its duration in its mildness.

89 “How, then, are those grand talkers better placed than Epicurus against these two things that torment us most?

“And as for the other things regarded as evils, do not Epicurus and the remaining philosophers seem well enough prepared? Who does not dread poverty? And yet no philosopher does.”

## Book 5, Chapter 32

“With how little this man himself is content! No one has said more about a frugal diet. The things that breed a desire for money are the wish for ample means to meet the demands of love, ambition, and daily expenditure. Since he stands far apart from all these, why should he greatly desire money—or rather, why should he care about it at all?

90 “Could Anacharsis the Scythian think nothing of money, while our philosophers cannot? A letter of his circulates in these words: ‘Anacharsis to Hanno, greetings. My clothing is a Scythian cloak, my shoes the calluses on my soles, my bed the earth, my relish hunger. I live on milk, cheese, and meat. You may therefore visit me as a man at peace. But those gifts that have delighted you—give them to your fellow citizens or to the immortal gods.’ Almost all philosophers of every school could have been of this same mind, except those whose flawed nature turned them aside from sound reason.

91 “When a great quantity of gold and silver was being carried in a procession, Socrates said, ‘How many things I do not want!’ When envoys from Alexander brought Xenocrates fifty talents—a vast sum in those days, especially at Athens—he took them to dinner at the Academy. He set before them just enough, with no elaborate preparations. When they asked next day to whom he wished the money paid, he said, ‘What? Did you not understand from last night’s little dinner that I have no need of money?’ When he saw that they were rather downcast, he accepted thirty minas, so as not to seem to scorn the king’s generosity.

- <sup>92</sup> “But Diogenes, with the greater freedom of a Cynic, answered Alexander, who asked him to say if he needed anything: ‘For the moment, just move a little out of the sun.’ Alexander had, of course, blocked his sunlight while he was basking. Diogenes used to argue how far he surpassed the Persian king in life and fortune: he himself lacked nothing, whereas nothing would ever be enough for the king; he had no desire for the pleasures of which the king could never have his fill, while the king could never attain his own.”

## Book 5, Chapter 33

“You see, I imagine, how Epicurus divided desires into classes—not perhaps with great precision, but usefully all the same:

- <sup>93</sup> “Some are natural and necessary, some natural but not necessary, and some neither. Necessary desires can be satisfied with next to nothing, for nature’s wealth is easily obtained. The second class of desires, he thinks, is neither difficult to satisfy nor difficult to forgo. The third class, being wholly empty, and having no connection not only with necessity but even with nature, he thought should be rooted out entirely.
- <sup>94</sup> “The Epicureans discuss this subject at length, and belittle one by one the pleasures whose general kinds they do not despise, though they do not seek them in abundance. For even the sexual pleasures, about which they have so much to say, they describe as easy, common, and ready to hand. If nature requires them, they think the measure should be beauty, age, and physique, not birth, station, or rank; and they hold that abstaining from them is not at all difficult if health or duty or reputation requires it. In general, this kind of pleasure is desirable if it does no harm, but it never does any good.
- <sup>95</sup> “His whole teaching about pleasure is that pleasure in itself, simply because it is pleasure, is always desirable and to be sought; and by the same reasoning pain, simply because it is pain, is always to be avoided. The wise man will therefore

make this reckoning: he will shun a pleasure if it is going to produce greater pain, and accept a pain that produces greater pleasure. All pleasant experiences, though judged by bodily sensation, are nevertheless referred to the mind.

- <sup>96</sup> “Accordingly, the body enjoys pleasure only as long as it feels the pleasure present, whereas the mind both perceives present pleasure along with the body, foresees it as it approaches, and does not let past pleasure slip away. Thus the wise man will always have a continuous, unbroken succession of pleasures, since anticipation of pleasures hoped for is joined to the memory of those already enjoyed.”

## Book 5, Chapter 34

- <sup>97</sup> “Similar principles are also applied to food, and the splendor and expense of banquets are made little of, since nature is content with simple fare. Who does not see that appetite seasons all such things? When Darius, in flight, drank water muddled and fouled by corpses, he said he had never drunk anything more pleasant. Evidently he had never drunk when thirsty. Nor had Ptolemy ever eaten when hungry: when he was traveling through Egypt and his companions had not caught up with him, he was given coarse bread in a cottage, and nothing seemed more delicious than that bread. Socrates, they say, once kept walking briskly until evening; when someone asked why he was doing so, he replied that he was buying hunger with his walking, to make his dinner taste better.
- <sup>98</sup> “And what of the Spartans’ diet at their common messes? Do we not see what it is? When the tyrant Dionysius dined there, he said he had not enjoyed the black broth, the principal dish of the meal. The cook replied, ‘No wonder: the seasonings were missing.’ ‘What seasonings?’ he asked. ‘The exertion of hunting, sweat, running by the Eurotas, hunger, thirst. These are the things that season

the Spartans' feasts.' We can understand this not only from human custom but also from the beasts: whatever is thrown to them, provided it is not contrary to their nature, satisfies them, and they seek no more.

99 "Some entire communities, taught by custom, delight in frugality, as we said just now of the Spartans. Xenophon describes the Persian diet, saying that they eat nothing with their bread except cress. Yet even if nature desires something sweeter, how many things grow from the earth and the trees, both readily abundant and wonderfully delicious! Add the lean vigor that follows this restraint in eating; add sound health. Compare people sweating, belching, stuffed with banquets like fattened oxen:

100 "Then you will understand that those who pursue pleasure most obtain it least, and that the delight of eating lies in appetite, not in repletion."

## Book 5, Chapter 35

"Timotheus, a famous man at Athens and a leader of the state, is said to have dined with Plato and greatly enjoyed the gathering. Seeing him next day, he said, 'Your dinners are pleasant not only at the time but the day after as well.' What of the fact that we cannot even use our minds properly when we are full of food and drink? There is a splendid letter from Plato to Dion's relatives, which says approximately this: 'When I arrived there, I found nothing to like in that supposedly happy life, filled with Italian and Syracusan banquets: being stuffed twice a day, never spending a night alone, and all the other accompaniments of a life in which no one will ever become wise, much less self-controlled. What natural disposition could be so marvelously balanced?'

101 "How, then, can a life be pleasant when it lacks practical wisdom and self-control? This shows the error of Sardanapalus, that enormously wealthy king of Syria, who ordered these words to be carved on his tomb:

“These things I have: what I ate, what sated desire

“Drank deep; but those many splendid things lie left behind.’

“What else,’ says Aristotle, ‘would you inscribe on the tomb of an ox, not a king? He says he possesses in death what even while alive he possessed no longer than the time he spent enjoying it.’

- 102 “Why, then, should riches be desired? Or at what point does poverty prevent us from being happy? You have a passion, I suppose, for statues and paintings. If someone delights in these things, do not people of modest means enjoy them better than those who possess them in abundance? In our city there is an immense supply of all such things on public display. Those who own them privately do not have so many and see them only rarely, when they visit their country estates; and even then something stings them as they remember where they got them. The day would fail me if I chose to plead poverty’s case. The matter is plain, and every day nature herself reminds us how few things she needs, how small they are, how cheap.”

## Book 5, Chapter 36

“Will obscurity, then, or low birth, or even popular disfavor prevent the wise man from being happy?

- 103 “Consider whether favor with the crowd, and this glory that people seek, may bring more trouble than pleasure. Our Demosthenes was certainly rather shallow when he said he delighted in the whisper of a little woman carrying water, as women do in Greece, who murmured to another, ‘There is the famous Demosthenes.’ What could be more trivial? And yet what an orator! Evidently he had learned to speak before others, but not much to speak with himself.
- 104 “We must understand, then, that popular glory is not to be sought for its own sake, nor obscurity feared. ‘I came to Athens,’ says Democritus, ‘and no one there recognized me.’ What a steadfast and serious man, to glory in his distance

from glory! Flute players and those who play stringed instruments regulate their melodies and rhythms by their own judgment, not the crowd's; will the wise man, endowed with a far greater art, inquire not into what is truest but into what the crowd wants? Or can anything be more foolish than to despise people individually as laborers and barbarians, yet think them important when assembled? He will certainly despise our canvassing for favor and our frivolity, and reject the people's honors even when offered unasked; we, however, do not know how to despise them until we have begun to regret them. There is a passage in Heraclitus, the natural philosopher, about Hermodorus, the leading man of Ephesus:

- 105 “He says that the Ephesians should all be put to death, because when they expelled Hermodorus from their city they said, ‘Let no one among us stand above the rest; if anyone does, let him be elsewhere, among other people.’ Does not this happen among every people? Do they not hate every preeminence in virtue? What of Aristides—for I would rather produce examples from Greece than from our own history—was he not driven from his country because he was just beyond measure? From how many troubles, then, are those free who have no dealings whatever with the people! What is sweeter than leisure spent in learning? I mean the kind of learning through which we come to know the infinity of things and of nature, and, within this very universe, the heavens, the earth, and the seas.”

## Book 5, Chapter 37

“Once honor has been scorned, and money too, what remains to be feared?

- 106 “Exile, I suppose, which is reckoned among the greatest evils. If it is an evil because the people's will is hostile and embittered against us, we said a little while ago how little that will deserves our regard. But if being away from one's country is misery, the provinces are full of miserable people, very few of whom ever return to their native land.

107 “‘But exiles lose their property.’ What of it? Have we said too little about enduring poverty? Indeed, if we consider the reality rather than the disgrace of the name, how much does exile differ from lifelong travel abroad? The most celebrated philosophers spent their lives in this way: Xenocrates, Crantor, Arcesilaus, Lacydes, Aristotle, Theophrastus, Zeno, Cleanthes, Chrysippus, Antipater, Carneades, Clitomachus, Philo, Antiochus, Panaetius, Posidonius, and countless others who, once they had left, never returned home. ‘But without disgrace.’ Can exile bring disgrace on the wise man? For this whole discussion concerns the wise man, to whom such a thing could not happen justly; someone justly exiled ought not to be consoled.

108 “Finally, those who refer the objects of their pursuit in life to pleasure have the simplest principle for meeting every turn of fortune: wherever pleasure is supplied, there they can live happily. And so the words of Teucer can be adapted to every philosophical position:

“‘Home is wherever life is good.’

“When Socrates was asked what country he belonged to, he said, ‘The world’; for he regarded himself as an inhabitant and citizen of the whole world. What of Titus Albucius? Did he not philosophize at Athens in exile with perfect equanimity? Yet that very misfortune would not have befallen him if he had followed Epicurus’ rules and remained inactive in politics.

109 “For how was Epicurus, because he lived in his native city, happier than Metrodorus, who lived at Athens? Or did Plato surpass Xenocrates, or Polemo surpass Arcesilaus, in happiness? How much, indeed, should we value a state from which good and wise men are driven? Demaratus, the father of our king Tarquin, could not endure the tyrant Cypselus, and so fled from Corinth to Tarquinii, where he established his fortune and had children. Was he foolish to prefer the freedom of exile to slavery at home?”

## Book 5, Chapter 38

- 110 “Again, disturbances of the mind, anxieties, and distress are soothed by forgetting them as our thoughts are turned toward pleasure. It was not without reason, then, that Epicurus ventured to say that the wise man always has more good than evil, because he always enjoys pleasures. From this he thinks the conclusion we seek follows: the wise man is always happy.
- 111 “‘Even if he loses his sight or hearing?’ Yes, for he makes light of these losses themselves. Take first that terrible thing, blindness: what pleasures, after all, does it lack? Some even argue that the other pleasures dwell in the senses themselves, whereas what we perceive by sight involves no pleasure located in the eyes: the things we taste, smell, touch, or hear affect the very part in which we sense them. Nothing like this happens in the eyes; it is the mind that receives what we see. And the mind can find delight in many different ways even without the use of sight. I am speaking, of course, of a learned and cultivated man, for whom living means thinking. The wise man’s thought scarcely calls on the eyes to assist its investigations.
- 112 “For if night does not take away a happy life, why should a day resembling night take it away? That remark of Antipater of Cyrene is somewhat coarse, but its meaning is not absurd. When some women lamented his blindness, he said, ‘What are you doing? Do you suppose there is no pleasure in the night?’ As for the great Appius of old, who was blind for many years, we understand from his magistracies and achievements that, despite his misfortune, he failed in neither private nor public duty. We are told that the house of Gaius Drusus used to be filled with people seeking legal advice: those whose affairs were at stake could not see their own way and called on a blind man to guide them. When I was a boy, Gnaeus Aufidius, a former praetor, spoke in the Senate, stood by his friends in their deliberations, wrote a history in Greek, and saw his way in literature.”

## Book 5, Chapter 39

- 113 “Diodotus the Stoic lived in my house for many years while blind. Not only did he devote himself to philosophy even more constantly than before, play a stringed instrument in the Pythagorean manner, and have books read to him night and day—pursuits in which he had no need of eyes—but, scarcely credible as it seems, he also performed the duties of a teacher of geometry, telling his pupils in words where to begin each line and where to draw it. They say that Asclepiades, a philosopher of some standing in the Eretrian school, was asked what blindness had brought him, and replied that it had given him one more boy to accompany him. For just as even the greatest poverty would be bearable if one were allowed to do what certain Greeks do every day, so blindness could easily be borne if the aids to infirmity were available.
- 114 “After losing his sight, Democritus could not, of course, distinguish white from black; but he could distinguish good from evil, just from unjust, honorable from shameful, useful from useless, great from small. He could live happily without the variety of colors, but not without an understanding of things. Indeed, this man thought that the mind’s vision was actually hindered by the sight of the eyes; and while others often failed to see what lay before their feet, he ranged through all infinity, stopping at no boundary. Homer too is said to have been blind. Yet what we see is his painting, not his poetry: what region, what shore, what place in Greece, what aspect and form of battle, what battle line, what band of rowers, what movement of men or beasts has he not painted so vividly that he makes us see what he himself had not seen? What, then? Do we suppose that delight and pleasure of the mind were ever lacking to Homer, or to any learned man?
- 115 “If this were not so, would Anaxagoras or this same Democritus have abandoned their fields and inheritances and devoted themselves heart and soul to this divine delight in learning and inquiry? So the poets, who portray the seer

Tiresias as wise, never bring him on to bewail his blindness. But Homer, having fashioned Polyphemus as a monstrous savage, even makes him talk with his ram and praise its good fortune in being able to go where it wishes and reach what it wishes. Rightly so: the Cyclops himself was no wiser than that ram.”

## Book 5, Chapter 40

116 “As for deafness, what evil does it contain? Marcus Crassus was rather deaf, but there was something more troublesome: he was ill spoken of, though, as it seemed to me, unjustly. Our people generally do not know Greek, nor do Greeks know Latin. So each group is deaf to the speech of the other; and all of us, likewise, are certainly deaf to the languages we do not understand, which are countless. ‘But they do not hear the voice of a singer with the lyre.’ Nor do they hear the screech of a saw being sharpened, or the grunting of a pig being slaughtered, or, when they want to rest, the roar of the murmuring sea. And if songs happen to delight them, they should reflect, first, that many wise men lived happily before songs were invented, and next, that far greater pleasure can be gained from reading them than from hearing them.

117 “Then, just as a little while ago we led the blind toward the pleasures of hearing, so we may lead the deaf toward those of sight. For a man who can converse with himself will not miss another’s conversation.

“Let all these afflictions be heaped together: let the same man be deprived of both sight and hearing, and oppressed as well by the sharpest bodily pains. In the first place, these pains generally bring a person’s life to an end by themselves. But if by chance they are drawn out at length, yet torture him too violently for there to be any reason to endure them, what in the world, good gods, are we to trouble ourselves about? A harbor lies ready: death is there, a refuge of everlasting insensibility.

- 118 “When Lysimachus threatened Theodorus with death, he answered, ‘A great achievement indeed, if you have attained the power of a blister beetle!’ When Perseus begged Paulus not to lead him in his triumph, he replied, ‘That, at least, is in your own power.’ Much was said about death on the first day, when we investigated death itself, and a good deal on the next, when our subject was pain. Anyone who recalls it is in very little danger of failing to think death either desirable or, at least, not to be feared.”

## Book 5, Chapter 41

“For my part, I think we should observe in life the rule that holds at Greek drinking parties: ‘Let him drink or let him leave.’ And rightly so. A man should either share the pleasure of drinking equally with the others or leave beforehand, so that, sober himself, he does not fall victim to the violence of the drunken. In the same way, by withdrawing you may leave behind the blows of fortune that you cannot bear. Hieronymus says these very same things as Epicurus, in exactly the same words.

- 119 “But if the philosophers who hold that virtue has no worth in itself, and who call everything we describe as honorable and praiseworthy an empty thing adorned with the hollow sound of a word—if even they think the wise man is always happy, what position should philosophers descended from Socrates and Plato take? Some of them say that the goods of the mind are so preeminent that they overwhelm bodily and external goods; others do not even count these latter things as goods, but place everything in the mind.
- 120 “Carneades used to judge their dispute like an arbitrator chosen as a mark of honor. Whatever the Peripatetics called goods the Stoics regarded as advantages; yet when these things were weighed in reality, not in words, the Peripatetics assigned no more value to wealth, good health, and other things of the same kind than the Stoics did. He therefore denied that there was any ground for disagreement. So let the philosophers of the other schools see for

themselves how they can maintain this position. I am grateful, nonetheless, that in speaking of the wise man's unceasing capacity to live well, they openly profess something worthy of a philosopher's voice.

- 121 “But since we must leave in the morning, let us hold these five days of discussion in our memories. I think I shall also write them down—for how can we make better use of this leisure, such as it is?—and we shall send this second set of five books to our friend Brutus, who has not only urged us to write on philosophy but challenged us to do so. How much we shall benefit others in this work I could not readily say; but for my own bitterest griefs, and the many troubles surrounding me on every side, no other relief could be found.”