

G E N E S I S   O F   A   M A N

A Drama in Miniature

of the Life of

Marcus Tullius Cicero

(January 3rd, 106 B.C., to December 7th, 43 B.C.)

by

CHARLES KAREL HAGA

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Department of Speech, Faculty of Education

The University of British Columbia  
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## ABSTRACT

Haga, Charles K., "Genesis of a Man", A Drama in Miniature of the  
Life of Marcus Tullius Cicero

The title "Genesis of a Man" for the drama of Cicero's life suggests the process of growth of the man Cicero in the course of certain stages of his life. The concept of 'Becoming' is further developed in the sequential presentations of the events during his consulship in 63, his farewell to active politics in 56, and the end of his life in 43 Before Christ.

Analogous to this development, are the themes of each of the acts.

"A Man's Deeds" is the central concept of the first act which shows Cicero's activities during the summit of his political career. The influence of traditional religion caused his forceful action at a point in time that the need arose to save the commonwealth from destruction by means of a just application of natural law.

When in the years to follow the republican form of government made way for greater centralization of power due to the formation of the first triumvirate, Cicero voluntarily withdrew from active participation in politics, but not before he had expressed his support for the new regime. He deemed his action necessary for the preservation of the state, because consensus of all parts of the body politic was the guiding principle in his political outlook, even if the main power was concentrated outside the senate. Since, however, this important legislative body had now

## ABSTRACT (continued)

assumed a subordinate role, he dedicated himself to the formulation of his concept of the ideal state in his treatise 'On the Commonwealth'. This period of Cicero's life is described in the second act as "A Man's Thoughts".

Finally, following a brief period of resumed, political activity as the undeclared, but real leader of the senate in its indignation about Mark Antony's arrogance, Cicero had to flee Rome and was planning to leave Italy. Mark Antony had made Cicero's death a condition 'sine qua non' for the formation of his triumvirate with Octavius and Lepidus. Even though Cicero's head and hands appeared in the Forum following his death, his spirit lived on in the final scene when his unfortunate, young student, Philologus, became the object of a mock trial in the market of Rome. "A Man's Spirit," or "From Death to Rebirth" thus presents itself as the final stage in this drama.

The existential quality of this drama may be realized to its fullest extent as a radio play, or, as a stage play supported by multi-media effects, such as slides projected on one or more screens during the monologues in the Prologue, in Act Two, Scenes 1 and 3, and in Act Three, Scene 1. A film version could readily portray the scenes mentioned while preserving parts or all of the spoken scenes.

In any case, adaptation of the drama in its present form to the requirements of the various performing media appears a distinct possibility.

ABSTRACT (continued)

Although the life and times of Cicero are better documented than any other period in classical antiquity, the figure of Cicero has so far not become the central theme in a similar study of his life. This is an astonishing discovery since he himself contributed so extensively by his letters and diverse works to our present knowledge of his own era.

"Genesis of a Man" is, therefore, a first attempt in this manner to put into perspective the humanness or the man-in-becomingness of this remarkable person in history.

.....  
Dr. Irwin R. Shaw,  
Assistant Professor,  
Department of Speech,  
Faculty of Education,  
University of British Columbia.

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From Death to Rebirth

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Historical Background

Whereas many of the passages in this drama are founded on historical facts and records, Cicero's own words come to mind in his defense on behalf of Archias, a teacher and philosopher.

"Many great men have concentrated their efforts on leaving statues and portraits behind for posterity. These are the pictures of bodies, not of souls. Should we not rather endeavour to hand down an image of our thinking and being, rendered in the best manner of which we are capable?" Fictional though the dialogues may be, they are intended to be authentic in spirit, if not in fact.

The construction of the three acts is based on historical information to be found in Plutarch's "Lives" (1) and in "Paulys Real-Encyclopaedie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft" (2). The latter source was particularly helpful in dating events and in supplying minute details of the households of the brothers Cicero.

The letter to Titus Pomponius Atticus (3) of Act Two, Scene 1, and Servius Sulpicius Rufus's letter to Cicero (4) of Act Three, Scene 1, are adapted versions taken from Tiro's collection of Cicero's correspondence. Although the orations to the senate by Publius Vatia Isauricus, by Gnaeus Clodianus, and by Quintus Hortensius in Act Two, Scene 2(ii), are fictional, Cicero's address is a free rendition of the summation of his actual speech (5).

With the exception of a few side remarks to Tyrannio, the outline of "On the Commonwealth" is an excerpt from the extant volumes written by Cicero (6).

With the exception of the three young students of Publius Figulus, and of the bookseller Chrysostomus, all characters mentioned by name in the play are historical figures. Romulus, founder and first king of Rome, whose history cannot be proven, was much more alive in the imagination of the Romans as a symbol of Rome's glorious beginnings than one would suspect from the description of a mere legendary figure.

## 2. Acknowledgments

George Bernard Shaw's "Caesar and Cleopatra" (7) and William Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" (8) were obvious choices in dramatic literature pertaining to this era and to the atmosphere of the time.

The use of colloquies in Act One, Scene 1, in Act Two, Scene 2(i), and in Act Three, Scene 3, was inspired by T. S. Eliot's use of choruses in his "Murder in the Cathedral" (9).

Cara Berkeley's "Some Roman Monuments in the Light of History" (10) supplied the background information on Jupiter Stator in Act One, Scenes 2a and 2b.

M. Mead (11) presented a conception of which generous use was made for the purpose of attaining a consistent and workable framework of cultural identity within which the characters of the



drama have their being. National Character studies 'attempt to delineate how the innate properties of human beings, the ideosyncratic elements in each human being, and the general and individual patterns of human maturation are integrated within a shared social tradition in such a way that certain regularities appear in the behaviour of all members of the culture which can be described as a culturally regular character.'

E. Fromm (12) concurs with Mead in his concept of the "social character". 'By social character I refer to the nucleus of the character structure which is shared by most members of the same culture in contradistinction to the individual character in which people belonging to the same culture differ from each other.'

A. H. Maslow (13), in his description of creativeness, states, specifically, the essence of a man like Cicero. In his introductory remarks, he equates Self-Actualizing creativeness with health, and he continues '...since self-actualization or health must ultimately be defined as the coming to pass of the fullest humanness, or as the "Being" of the person, it is as if Self-Actualizing creativity were almost synonymous with, or a sine qua non aspect of, or a defining characteristic of, essential humanness.' Cicero was the Roman innovator who coined the term "humanitas" or humanness!

C. Moustakas (14) in his "Creativity and Conformity" supplied the trend of thought in the theme of this drama. '...Three central, orienting concepts of self are: intrinsic nature, being, and

becoming. Intrinsic nature refers to the natural, inherent, given, unchanging potentialities, or proclivities of man, whose interest is to realize these inherent potentialities, to develop himself as fully and completely as possible. Inner nature is universally non-comparable, absolute, inviolate. Its focus, orientation, and unity in any one individual is always unique.'

'There is no such thing as a type of person (except for "useful" abstracting purposes). The experience of one's separateness as a human being represents both the necessity and the opportunity for the person to manifest basic tendencies, to develop a personality. The continuing creation of man's uniqueness is guided by values, based upon the unconscious or preconscious perceptions of our own nature, of our own "call" in life.'

Last but not least, Dr. Irwin R. Shaw, Assistant Professor, Department of Speech, the Faculty of Education, University of British Columbia, urged the writer to render Cicero's life in dramatic form, and was responsible for many improvements in its final presentation. Dr. K. Stockholder, Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of British Columbia, suggested insertion of a Prologue and several other valuable improvements. Dr. P. C. F. Guthrie, Professor, Department of Classics, University of British Columbia, also gave the writer continuous moral support and encouragement, and gave freely of his time to discuss at length the problems prevailing at this period in Roman history; this project had added interest to him as there is no evidence available that the life of Cicero has been the central theme of a

work of a similar nature. This is the more curious since a great many of his works have been preserved and more of his correspondence has been handed down to us than that of any other historical figure in classical antiquity.

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- (5) Cicero, Marcus Tullius, The Speeches, Pro Caelio - De Provinciis Consularibus - Pro Balbo, Translated by R. Gardner, Wm. Heinemann Ltd., London, 1965.
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- (13) Maslow, A. H., Toward a Psychology of Being, Second Edition, D. Van Nostrand Comp., Inc., Princeton, 1968.
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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

(in order of appearance)

Narrator

Romans, eight in number, of various walks of life

Quintus (Tullius) Cicero, praetor-elect for 62, brother of  
Marcus Cicero

Marcus (Tullius) Cicero, consul for 63, jurist, writer, orator

Publius (Nigidius) Figulus, senator, philosopher

Decimus (Iunius) Silanus, senator, consul-elect for 62, orator

Terentia, Marcus Cicero's wife

Caius (Calpurnius) Piso, senator, former consul (67)

Caius Sulpicius, praetor, new chief of police

King Romulus, legendary founder of the city of Rome

Lucius (Sergius) Catilina, senator, leader of the so-called  
"Catilinarian" rebels

Marcus (Tullius) Tiro, freedman, secretary to Marcus Cicero

Junior Members of the Senate, three young patricians

Publius (Servilius Vatia) Isauricus, senator, former consul (79)

Gnaeus (Cornelius Lentulus) Clodianus, senator, former consul (72)

Quintus Hortensius, senator, former consul (69), jurist, famous  
for his Asianic style of rhetoric

Tyrannio, Phoenician slave to Terentia, student of Aristotle's  
works

Caius Popilius (Laenas), son of a freedman, military tribune

Caius Herennius, freedman, centurion

Philologus, young Greek student of literature and philosophy with  
Marcus Cicero

Young Aulus, )  
                  )  
Young Bestius,) Students of Publius Figulus  
                  )  
Young Crispus,)

Chrysostomus, Greek freedman, owner of bookstore in Rome

PROLOGUENarrator:

Rome was a city already considered eternal, long before the early Christian church was established there. When Marcus Tullius Cicero was a young boy, his father led him through the streets of the 650 year old city, then counting about 500,000 inhabitants. Almost 40 years later, in 63 Before Christ,\* he would become its consul. By this time, the city had reached the size of about 1,000,000 people, the largest centre of the world. Its sphere of influence had replaced that of much of the Alexandrian empire of the eastern Mediterranean. Since his early childhood, Rome had expanded, notwithstanding an increasing strife between the senatorial party and the plebeians or popular party. In fact, this breach dated back to the days of the Younger Scipio and of the popular tribunate of the Gracchus brothers when Cicero's father grew up. These two factions in Rome were locked in an ever seesawing battle, now allowing the one, then the other the upper hand. A poorly developed economy and the increased influx of slaves following the many Roman conquests caused the well-known rise of armies of slaves under Spartacus, merely a few years prior to Cicero's consulship. Agrarian reform and peaceful conditions were necessary to expand a prospering commonwealth. Catilina, a degenerate Roman patrician, was the first such man to succeed in creating a considerable following among all layers of the population for the pursuit of his own unbridled pleasures and whims. Caesar's

\*All dates are Before Christ so that henceforward no reference to Christ's Birth year will be given.

connections with this man were not known, but his attitude may have been somewhat sympathetic for reasons of an opportunistic policy, that is to say, Caesar espoused the cause of the plebeians and, as such, was politically opposed to Cicero who had committed himself entirely to the patrician party. Nevertheless, Cicero wanted popular support as much as Caesar did, because he believed in "the harmony of the ranks", his political motto throughout his life. When Cicero turned out to be successful in his handling of the Catilinarian revolt, little did he expect that Appius Clodius "the Handsome One" was to continue Catilina's cause. Due to Clodius' political intrigues, Cicero was exiled from Rome in 58. Following 16 months of exile in Greece, he was called back in the most honourable fashion. Having offended Caesar already in 59 when he had been invited to lend his moral support to the formation of a triumvirate, it became obvious that, sooner or later, Cicero would have to recant his previous antagonistic position vis-à-vis Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus. This occurred in 56, a turning point in his life as portrayed in Act Two. His public support for Caesar meant for him - and for Rome - the end of the republican period. For him personally, this also meant that his activities should best be directed towards writing his ideas on society in his work "On the Commonwealth". Soon he was to add volumes on rhetoric and philosophy, particularly dating from 49 when Caesar became dictator for the first time.

Following Caesar's death in March of 44, Mark Antony was initially successful in arrogating all the powers vested in Caius



Julius Caesar. Cicero, however, was the first to attack him for the outrageous use which he, Mark Antony, made of this Julian "inheritance". Octavius, at this time, was Cicero's self-appointed student and friend who accused Mark Antony of treasonous behaviour as he himself claimed the inheritance of his uncle. Meanwhile, Brutus had soon left Italy for Greece as he was loath to start another civil war. Singlehandedly, Cicero managed to rally the senate against Antony's dictatorial aspirations by means of his fourteen Philippics. These orations, modelled after Demosthenes' speeches against Philippos, King of the Macedonians, became increasingly bitter in tone and content. In May of 43, however, the splinter factions of the senate made any guidance by this body impossible. In the meantime, Octavius opened negotiations with Antony and the rich Lepidus, leading to the formation of Rome's second triumvirate in the fall of the same year. One of Mark Antony's conditions was that Marcus Cicero and his brother were to head the list of proscriptions. Cicero had written his own death penalty with his Philippics. Octavius, according to Plutarch, is said to have pleaded for his former teacher's life for three successive days, but finally acceded to Antony's wishes.

Mark Antony's insistence on having Cicero's hands and head displayed on the Speaker's platform in Rome, signified his hatred as well as his fear of a man who - in his life - used his head, his tongue, and his hands in the formulation of his thoughts as his only weapons. It was small comfort to the Romans - and, perhaps, to us as well - to learn that Antony ordered an immediate halt in the proceedings of the remaining proscriptions. The order came too

late for Quintus Cicero. He and his little son had already been killed at Frascati. The brothers were to meet again soon, but, if they did, it was not in this life.

ACT I. - A MAN'S DEEDS

Scene 1.

The Forum of Rome on a December day in the year (63 B.C.) of the consulship of Marcus Tullius Cicero and of Caius Antonius.

A number of Romans are converging near a merchant's booth and are discussing the topic of the day.

1st Roman (worried): How can we go on living in this city, the greatest of the world, if people aren't safe walking the streets? If even senators are being attacked on their way from here, how can we who are without any protection, be sure that nothing will happen to us when we finish our business and return home?

2nd Roman (reassuring): Haven't you heard yet that Lentulus, the magistrate, has been arrested on orders of the Senate? He's been found guilty of sedition!

1st Roman (relieved somewhat, but still doubtful): Thank the gods for action at last! But what about the others, and is Catilina still in Rome?

3rd Roman (irritated): Of course not, he left several days ago. But is Lentulus the only prisoner? How can we trust his police force? He must have many fellow conspirators spread all over town.

4th Roman (calm): Patience, friends, patience. Although a consul, Cicero had to produce proof of guilt

before action could be taken against these rebels. And many of them are members of the oldest families.

5th Roman (angry): I'm fed up with talk like that. When will Cicero show himself a man at last, and show these bandits a thing or two?

4th Roman: Ah, if things were as simple as all that, we would go back to the Civil Wars of Sulla and Marius. I'm sure you wouldn't like to see Romans killing Romans again! No, no, justice is to take its course.

5th Roman: That sounds good, but meanwhile no one is sure of the future. Tomorrow we may find our businesses in ashes, and our womenfolk attacked at home in our absence!

6th Roman: Rome has survived these past 700 years, we'll pull through this crisis, too!

7th Roman: Besides, we're in good hands. Cicero is fighting the mobsters in an all-out effort. You should hear how effectively he accused them in the Senate.

5th Roman: That may be so, but what we need is someone who doesn't talk, but takes action now, and rolls up the whole band of them.

1st Roman (fearful): Hush, hush, certain ideas are better left unexpressed; that's dangerous talk! It might be better if we abandoned the subject. All these arguments are liable to worsen the situation for us. Maybe, if everyone were just pretending to ignore the whole thing...

8th Roman (indignant): ... Not on your life! That's the un-Roman thing to do. Anyway, far from quieting down the present condition, your kind would stir these rascals to greater and graver action!

4th Roman: Besides, some of you seem to forget that Cicero never shrinks from speaking up for what is right. In the courts he used to take on formidable opponents, and at one time he attacked Dictator Sulla's right-hand man, at the peril of his own life.

5th Roman: That was a long time ago, when he was a young and ambitious lawyer who had yet to make his mark in public life. He was one of these unknown young men from the country as there are thirteen to a dozen.

4th Roman: But he achieved a miracle. Here we have an example of an able, self-made man who has succeeded in penetrating the walls of conserva-

tism that protect the old-line aristocracy of a Catilina. Being a "new-man", he is still suspected of middle class envy and dislike towards the patricians in the Senate. In order to avoid even the appearance of a class struggle, he is at pains to satisfy his critics by means of the most elaborate and convincing proofs of alleged misconduct. And that, my friends, is what's happening right now.

2nd Roman: Lah-di-dah! You're all skirting the real issue. Don't you realize that we have here a typical example of a struggle for power?

5th Roman: If you're so smart, why don't you explain what it is that we haven't been able to find out ourselves?

8th Roman: It'd better be good!

2nd Roman: Well, don't you see? It's all part of a fight at the top between Caesar and Cicero. Caesar is born out of old, noble stock. He was a proven officer at the age of 18 years. He has been elected to the highest offices in the state but one, that of consul. Meanwhile, he joined the people's party. Two years ago, when he was in charge of the state's recre-

ation programme, he organized huge, but expensive games for the people. This vote-getting gimmick landed him into debt with the financial octopus Crassus who is Pompey's enemy, therefore also Cicero's enemy. Cicero, on the other hand, is of humbler birth. He became a trial lawyer who, through his success in the courts, has now achieved the highest position of consul. He has always associated himself with the aristocratic patrician party in the senate. In all respects, he has shown himself a man of moderation, in private and in public life. He has an unquestioning faith in the Great Pompey because of this man's affiliations with the patricians.

4th Roman:

Your assessment is correct, but needs expanding. When earlier this year Caesar had the agrarian bill brought up, its purpose was to exclude Pompey from the all-powerful board of its administration. Cicero, however, realized its potential danger, and killed the bill. Again in the popular assembly, a procedural bill was introduced for the election of Roman priests, this time with good success for Caesar since he was elected chief priest of the state. And, thirdly, when Caesar had successfully prosecuted senator Rabirius for an

Alleged crime of almost 40 years ago, sentence could not be passed because on the day of the final session, Metellus, a friend of Cicero's, managed to bring down the red flag at the gathering. This event precluded pronouncement of sentence for all times, and once more a seemingly well laid scheme of Caesar's was obstructed.

2nd Roman: Anyway, you understand by now what I meant. Also, it should be obvious why Catilina is bound to have a powerful ally in the heart of Rome.

7th Roman: No doubt it's true that personalities are playing a part in political life. Nevertheless, both of you have given ample evidence of two significant factors: one, that we can put our trust in a high-minded fellow citizen who at the present is our consul, and, two, that Cicero's past history guarantees that justice will be done.

8th Roman: Listen! I think the senators are leaving the building.

(The group is turning towards the crowd approaching from the other side of the Forum. A swelling noise of enthusiastic shouts is heard; throngs of people surround the senators. In the dis-



tance Lentulus is led away with his guarantor-senators, boos from the crowd are heard).

Scene 2.

An informal meeting of friends at the home of Quintus Cicero. The day's events are discussed, and the strategy for the days to come is under hot debate.

Quintus Cicero (hot): How could you be so lenient with Caius Caesar, Marcus! First of all, you allow him to act as a guarantor for the captured revolutionaries, then you give him free rein to plead a safe conduct for these scoundrels to far-away places in Italy, and you create the impression that you are so naive as to believe that these unreliable individuals can be held down! Quietly working behind the scenes, he is the greatest traitor of them all!

Marcus Cicero: There is no proof for the things you said, Quintus.

Quintus Cicero: He wants to spare Catilina's life, doesn't he? And you don't call him a traitor! What further proof do you need?

Marcus Cicero: Much more, Quintus, if proof I needed. But as things stand, Caius Caesar is innocent. As a victor in the battlefield, he has often shown the greatest clemency to the vanquished. What in your eyes appears to be his sympathy for a nefarious cause, may well be his pity

for a fellow human being who is deserted by everyone.

Publius Figulus: It seems to me that the pity you are speaking of is the reason why you were protecting Caesar with your own life when you placed yourself between him and an ugly crowd who had drawn their swords.

Quintus Cicero: Did I say "lenient"? "Reckless" is a better word. Cato's fiery indictment of the man might have cost you your life! From left and right the senators, incensed, started to crowd in on Caius Caesar, but you, with your soft heart, had to step in on his behalf!

Marcus Cicero: Obviously. After all, it's sad enough that the senate at times is used for verbal clashes and battles of the mind, let alone that physical struggles take their place. And as for his disagreement with our proposal to pass a death sentence on the prisoners, I pointed out in my speech that Caius' request for lifelong incarceration would be more cruel than death.

Decimus Silanus: In this connection, I wish to offer my sincere apologies to you, Marcus, for my mistaken belief in what Caesar stated in his counter proposal. I still can't understand how I could

be so short-sighted. Here I was, early in the morning, vigorously supporting you in your campaign for the severest action against the prisoners. Then, after hearing Caesar speak, I permitted myself to support his motion. But fortunately, Cato lashed out against him, so that I was reminded in time to take the proper stand.

Publius Figulus (smiling): We all know and honour your oratorical talents, Decimus. Allow me to suggest, however, that even the choicest selection of words of which Caius Caesar and Marcus, here, both are capable, should not detract from your faith in Marcus's cause for the good of the state...

(ENTER Terentia, in a state of extreme excitement)

Terentia: Marcus, the Good Goddess has spoken!

Marcus Cicero: My dear, what are you saying?

Terentia (still somewhat breathless): What were you discussing just now?

Marcus Cicero: The fate of the prisoners, and the well-being of the state.

Terentia (jubilant): I knew it, I knew it! I told them so!

Marcus Cicero: Quintus, have someone please prepare a cup of medicinal spirits for my upset wife.  
Now, then, Terentia...

Terentia (determined): And what did you decide? Will they be killed?

Marcus Cicero (realizing - following a short hesitation - that a direct answer is now called for): Yes, I think I may say that this was our unanimous opinion.

Terentia (with a sigh of relief): Thank you, Good Goddess.

Quintus Cicero: This will steady your nerves. (Gives her a cup of medicinal drink).

Marcus Cicero: Now, let's start from the beginning. What happened?

Terentia (takes a gulp, inhales deeply, and becomes relaxed): Everything in the ceremony was marked by propitious signs. First of all, every one of the invited Roman matrons turned up at our home as arranged. When the last of them arrived, the Vestal Virgins could at once begin with the celebration in honour of the Good Goddess. The ceremony went well and the sacrifice showed favourable signs.

Marcus Cicero (turning to his host, Caius Piso): So far, I haven't heard anything really extraordinary to excuse my wife's behaviour, Caius. Are those events so different from those during your consulship four years ago?

Caius Piso (reflecting): No, I can't say they are.

Caius Sulpicius (officious, his ego being expended by outer garments rather than by inner convictions): Well...(coughing modestly), maybe my constables are entitled to some of the credit in providing special assistance and escort of the Vestal Virgins with their sacred attributes early this afternoon. That may help to explain the speedy beginning of the ceremonies. You understand (coughing again) that in these troubled times the safety of the Virgins is of the utmost importance. You will remember how Catilina has been manipulating religious omens to his own advantage in the past. I decided, therefore, not to take any risk that his gang might interfere with the safety of the Vestal Virgins on their way to the consul's residence for this well-known religious observance.

Marcus Cicero: That was a wise decision, Caius. Also, all of us owe you a great deal for the manner in which

you have been able to furnish us with the necessary evidence against the conspirators and the five prisoners in particular. I have the greatest admiration for your handling of the police force when you had to take charge at a moment's notice after we discovered your fellow magistrate Lentulus' treasonous involvement. But (addressing Terentia) is there nothing else to report?

Terentia (smiling secretively): I never said that I had finished my report.

Marcus Cicero (irritated): Terentia, you are impossible.  
(regaining his control) Come on, we're listening.

Terentia (once again enjoying being the centre of interest):

Marcus, I told you this morning that today was going to be an eventful day. Tullia had the same premonition, and you know that your daughter and I do not agree too often.

Quintus Cicero: Good heavens, woman, come to the point!

Terentia (shrugging off the interruption): Your medicine slowed down my tongue! As I was saying, the Vestals were reading favorable signs from the sacrificial offering. When they had doused the flames and had finished the prayer of thanks,

we prepared to leave the atrium. Imagine our surprise when someone cried out, "Look, the fire is starting up again!" We all turned back. There was no doubt about it. There it was, the embers were ablaze again!

Caius Piso (amazed): I have never heard of anything so unusual!

Publius Figulus: How was this interpreted?

Terentia: I am coming to that. The Vestals were as astounded as we were. They retreated for a little while into your study, Marcus, so that they could consult one another in regards to this miracle. When they came out, they said they were unanimous in their conclusion.

Marcus Cicero: The Roman state is going to survive the internal struggles.

Terentia (disappointed): How did you know that? (regaining her sense of triumphant superiority) Yes, but there was more.

Marcus Cicero: I thought there was.

Publius Figulus: I counted on that.

Terentia: Remember when I asked you what you were discussing when I came in? Well, that was of the greatest significance. Whatever you were dis-



cussing and planning at that particular time,  
the Goddess wants you to bring about.

Marcus Cicero (nods and stares unseeingly ahead)

Decimus Silanus: We were discussing what to do with the pris-  
oners.

Terentia (stormy): I thought you said you were going to execute  
them!

Marcus Cicero (sighing): Not exactly, but it amounts to that.

Terentia (worried): What does that mean? Are you or aren't you?  
(while no answer is forthcoming immediately)  
All the women agree that you will have to take  
a firm stand, Marcus. And (smiling victo-  
riously) both Rome and yourself will earn fame  
with posterity for abiding by the Goddess's  
omen.

Marcus Cicero: Ah, but won't our opponents say that it was we  
who are directing the omens to expedite our  
cause? Fame, based on divine manifestation  
alone, is not enough.

Terentia (pressing for a definite answer): What are you going to  
do?

Marcus Cicero (firmly now): The deity has spoken. The prisoners  
will be executed.

Terentia: At last you've given a firm answer; all the women are still waiting at our home, and I can face them honourably. Not one of the traitors shall live!

(EXIT Terentia, pleased with the success of her mission)

Quintus Cicero: The road is cleared to proceed now with the extreme penalty.

Marcus Cicero: This may be so, but have you thought of the consequences? We have to remember that three of them belong to the oldest, aristocratic families, two of them belong to the famous Cornelians. Do you realize what many senators will say of me, that I, a middle-class man, am using my consular powers to get even with my superiors? They may blame this on my envy or my ambition, they may even suspect me of putting more middle-class men into the senate by decimating their ranks. Already I heard a rumor that I was setting myself up as a hanging judge of the upper class.

Publius Figulus: Aren't you over-reacting to the point of showing weakness, Marcus?

Caius Piso (also protesting): No, no, Marcus. Don't forget that

it was Quintus Catulus who as chief of the Senate today spoke on behalf of the entire body of senators when he named you the Defender of the Fatherland. An equally excellent man, Lucius Publicola, stated that you had earned the decoration of the civic crown. This distinction, usually earned for saving the life of a fellow citizen, was more than rightfully yours, he said, because you had saved Rome for all its citizens. I'm sure you remember the thundering applause you received following the speeches.

Marcus Cicero: Thank you, my dear friends, for reminding me of my obligations to my supporters and to my continued concern for Rome's well-being. However, I want to share with you all the pertinent information at my disposal. Then you will be in a better position to understand and appreciate the difficulty of the decision which I, as your consul, will have to make. What is at stake is the legality of the death penalty. For the past few months I have studied the jurisprudence on this matter. There is no Roman law on seditious intent, nor have I been able to find historic evidence applicable to our present dilemma. I have, therefore, to

rely on my experience as a jurist on the one hand, on the other, I have to attempt to interpret law as it is founded in religion, divine will, tradition, justice, and our way of life. To be specific, these are the horns of my dilemma: am I morally justified in condemning anyone to death as long as he has not thrown the state into chaos? Or, if I were not to take drastic action, do I stand condemned for exposing the citizen-body to the whims of a handful of outlaws who then will be free to kill, plunder, and destroy to their hearts' content?

Quintus Cicero: You must act now, Marcus. The time for academic reasoning is over. Your obligations to the good people of Rome leave no doubt. If we can make up our own minds, so should you!

Publius Figulus (sideways to Caius Sulpicius): Will you now tell Marcus what you mentioned to me earlier today? And let your report be a testimony for all of us here tonight!

Caius Sulpicius: In the beginning of this year of your consulship, Marcus, you had ordered a statue of the Great Jupiter. It so happened, that this morning when the prisoners in their chains were

led by my policemen across the Forum, the new statue was put in its place on the upper part of the Sacred Way.

Scene 2a. (Phaze in)

Decimus Silanus: Remember the Elder Cato's "Origin of Rome" in  
(Narrator) which he describes how Jupiter's name was invoked by Romulus on the present site of the Temple of Jupiter the Stayer? King Romulus had been swept away by the mass of his fellow Romans who were fleeing from the fiercely attacking Sabines, a year after the Romans had carried off the Sabine maidens to their city. On this spot, Romulus lifted up his hands to heaven, and exclaimed:

Romulus (enter): Oh Jupiter! It was thy omen I obeyed when here on the Palatine Hill I laid the foundations of the city. Thou, Father of gods and men, drive, I pray thee, our foes from here, and, while banning terror from Roman hearts, stay our shameful flight! Here do I vow a temple to thee, Jupiter the Stayer, as a memorial for generations to come that it was thy help that saved the city.

Narrator: Then, as though he knew that his prayer had been heard, he cried:

Romulus: Back, Romans! Jupiter, the All-Good and All-Great, commands you to take your stand and renew the battle.

Narrator: The fleeing Romans stopped, turned around, and drove their enemies back. (Phaze out, exit Romulus).

Scene 2b. (Phaze in)

Publius Figulus: One month ago, Marcus, you warned Catilina in  
(Narrator) this temple to leave the city at once, when you addressed him in these words:

Marcus Cicero (steps forward): While I employ only words, and you weapons, there should at least be the city walls between us.

Narrator: Since you didn't have the necessary proof at the time, you wanted Catilina to show his hand by joining Manlius' camp outside the city, and thus give evidence of open rebellion. Your very words were:

Marcus Cicero: Oh Catilina, continue as you have begun. At long last, leave this city. The gates are open: go. This Manlian camp of yours has been waiting long enough for you who are its strategist. You can stay no longer among us. I won't suffer your presence any longer, I won't

permit it, I won't tolerate it! We bring thanks to our immortal gods, to this very Jupiter Stator in whose temple we are, that so often we, in the commonwealth, have escaped an enemy, so foul, so horrible, so deadly!

Narrator: And while the assembled senators cried "Traitor, fiend!" after him, Catilina dashed out of the building, gnashing his teeth and muttering:

Catilina (enter): For this, I will quench the fire surrounding me by a conflagration of my own!

Narrator: That same night he stole out of the city on his way to Manlius. (Phaze out, exit of Catilina, back to the gathering at Quintus Cicero's house).

Publius Figulus: Everyone present realized the implication of the event. Jupiter Stater, the Great Stayer of enemy forces, was put in its proper place at a time when Rome had captured most of the leaders of this insurrection. A sign from the heavens has been given.

Marcus Cicero: When the gods decide, men abide. We must proceed with our original plans. My cons-

science is at peace.

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(End of Act I.)



ACT II. - A MAN'S THOUGHTS

Scene 1.

Cicero is dictating a letter to his secretary, Tiro, in his villa near Anzio, May 698 Since the Founding of Rome, or 56 years before the Christian era began.

Marcus Cicero: This will be another letter for my friend Titus.

Marcus Tiro: I'm ready for it, Marcus.

Marcus Cicero: Date it: Anzio, Ides of May of the year 698 Since the Founding of the City of Rome. From Cicero to Atticus, Greetings. What! Do you really believe that I'd rather have someone else read my writing for approval? "But then," you'd ask me, "Why do you send it to Pompey first?" For the simple reason that he had been after me to get it right away, and I didn't have an extra copy for you. "And is that all?" Well, no, I have nibbled enough at the bitter pill, and now I must swallow it, as long as you don't get the idea that I enjoyed my public retraction of my senatorial policy in regards to Pompey; that was bad enough! However, we must say goodbye to everything that is fair, straightforward, and honest. We simply cannot trust those ambitious, so-called "leaders", they have no idea what loyalty is all about. I should have relied more on my

hunches. As a matter of fact, I was almost sure that they would lead me on, and then they could get rid of me at the earliest opportunity. All the same, I made up my mind to go along with them in the political arena. I should have known better! They were the same as always, solely intent on their own self-interest. So now, thanks to you, I have come to my senses. You will no doubt react by saying, "I told you so and I hope you'll keep your mouth shut, too." Anyhow, you certainly would have warned me not to commit myself on paper! But, damn it all, I felt I had to commit myself to the triumvirs. The reason is that I wanted to cut my connections with the patricians who are continuously jealous of me. Instead, they should sympathize with me because there is no other way in which to keep the state together.

Nonetheless, I have been moderate in my praise of the leaders. "But," you'll say, "you have committed your feelings in black-and-white." True, and I shall be generous with my compliments to Caesar as long as he appreciates them, even if it costs me wry faces among those who complain that I now own a house that once belonged to the great patrician Catulus.

They claim I shouldn't have remodelled his home; I should have done the honourable thing and sold the whole property because of my alleged change of heart. The irony of it all is that I bought the place from a certain Vettius, a political nobody! But all of this is nothing compared with their hypocrisy.

Whenever I made speeches expounding the patrician point of view which was displeasing to Pompey, they were jubilant. I won't do that any more. As long as the patricians behave in this fashion, they will never regain power in the state. They do not really wish me as their friend. They leave me no choice: I have to ally myself with the two men who do have the power. You will say, "I wish you had done so long ago." I know it now, and I realize that I have been a complete ass. From my fellow senators I can no longer expect anything worthwhile. It's high time that I start thinking first of all of myself and of my own hobbies.

Marcus Tiro:

I'm glad to hear you say that. You have done more than your share for Rome's sake. And look where it's got you!

Marcus Cicero:

Well, I'll have to accept the bad of the pres-

ent along with the good of the past. Except for Titus Atticus and yourself, however, few people will be able to understand my so-called "treasonous change of heart" that has since cost me the goodwill of the patricians in the senate. Many will think that all I'm doing is to join the power group merely to suit my own private ends. They forget that any other decision on my part would amount to the senate's ruination, as Pompey and Caesar would start riding roughshod over all of the senate's counsels. (to himself) We have to keep the commonwealth together, even if it means that my image emerges as that of a senile statesman who is hanging on to his former fame and glory. My time as an active politician is pretty well a thing of the past, barring a fluke of fate. The tyranny of three - by all means, let's not forget the despotic wealth of Crassus - will keep my political activities largely nominal.

Marcus Tiro: And what did you intend doing as far as hobbies are concerned?

Marcus Cicero (waking up out of his reverie): Yes, at last I can dedicate myself to my favorite studies of the Ideal State, and, later, of the Just Law.

This is the time that I will put down my thoughts on paper. Remind me to write to Tyrannio. I would like him to bring my books from Rome and Frascati, provided of course that Terentia will let him go and that he is willing to interrupt his studies of Aristotle.

Marcus Tiro: I hope that this can be arranged. You couldn't get a better man to assist you in your research, Marcus.

Marcus Cicero: Well, then, let's first finish Atticus' letter before we take the next step.

#### Scene 2(i)

On the steps of the Senate Building are groups of senators discussing current events. One group of the younger set of patricians appears in the spotlight.

First Young Patrician: Well, it's going to be an interesting toss-up: three men to be nominated governors for four provinces!

Second Young Patrician: Some of the old guard, like Clodianus and Hortensius, would prefer to see the candidates reduced to two, leaving the four provinces to Piso and Gabinius, and none to Caius Caesar!

Third Young Patrician: Yes, but they, thank heaven, represent not all of the factions in the senate. And even they disagree!

Second Young Patrician: True, Clodianus is not quite as extreme as our slick lawyer Hortensius.

First Young Patrician: Isauricus is a moderate, and he'll probably defend Caesar's entitlement to Gaul, but that still leaves Cicero. What would he recommend?

Second Young Patrician: I don't think anyone knows his position. He's kept quite a bit to himself, of late. But then, I suppose, the recent marriage of his beloved daughter Tullia to Furius must have kept him busy, what with the arrangements and all...

First Young Patrician: And don't forget how much a high-fashion wedding costs these days!

Second Young Patrician: If he's a businessman, he'll align himself with the triumvirs; he'll have his debts paid in no time at all with Crassus' help!

Third Young Patrician: That kind of bargain is the last thing he'll consider.

Second Young Patrician: I was just joking. Everyone knows he'd

rather go broke than beg favours from that influence-peddler. As a matter of fact, he's probably disgusted with Caesar's wheeling-and-dealing tactics at Lucca where Pompey and Crassus were practically assured of becoming next year's consuls. Just imagine, those two as consuls and Caesar next year in charge of all of Gaul! Rome, no, Italy and the whole state under complete domination of the triumvirs!

Third Young Patrician: Yes, I think we all realize the implications of that power block. But - under the circumstances - what alternative would provide a better arrangement?

First Young Patrician: None, I believe we are caught in the middle of two hazards. The commonwealth will be governed either by a triumvirate that polarizes power in the hands of the strongest man, or by a divided senate where the ruling power is tossed from one warring faction to another. Therefore, he who will presently propose an acceptable manner of accommodation will not only carry the senate, but will pilot the ship of state safely through our present Scylla and Charybdis.

Scene 2(ii)

In the Senate chamber, over three hundred members are in attendance.

Publius Isauricus: ...In conclusion, senators, I move that the (Eldest ex-consul therefore, First in Seniority) former consuls Piso and Gabinius be given the governorship of Syria and Macedonia respectively, and that Caesar continue in charge of the provinces of Inner and Outer Gaul.  
(boos and hurrahs)

Gnaeus Clodianus: ...We ought to see this war against the Gauls (Second in Seniority) in its proper perspective. The mopping-up operations against the Gauls at the Atlantic sea-coast have to come to a successful end. I shall, therefore, cast my vote for Caesar as military governor of Outer Gaul and of any other province except for Inner Gaul. After all, his second command does not necessarily have to be in the adjacent territory of Inner Gaul. (boos by the Caesarean party) It is bad enough that we have to submit to a law which entitles him to the charge of two provinces at a time, (boos continue and become stronger), but it does not prescribe the distance between them. In my opinion, Caius Caesar should not be given full power over the two provinces of



Gaul jointly, since they would constitute the equivalent of a state within the state.

(Shouts of assent from the patricians, and outcries of disapproval from the Caesarean faction)

Quintus Hortensius (noted for his flowery, oratorical style):  
(Third in Seniority)

Fellow senators. How pleasant would it be for me to concur with the speakers before me. Their distinction I, then, could call mine. After all, they are noted for their past achievements during their consulship, for their attainments abroad, and for their rich fund of wisdom. As it turned out, however, they voiced divergent opinions and, consequently, left you in a quandary. How unfortunate a position I would find myself in, if I were to take the side of one, and had to oppose the other! No, senators, this will not be my lot. Instead, I find that I may appear to add to the present confusion of choices, and thus share their odious record. Indeed, it is my duty to present to this august body my modest proposal. Piso Caesoninus and Gabinius, our consuls of two years ago, are men of a political orientation which is favourable in the eyes of the major-

ity of our membership. I grant you that Gabinius did not execute your directives when he reinstituted Ptolomy as king of Egypt.

However, he has never engaged in negotiations leading to the formation of a triumvirate!

Now then, if we scrutinize Caesar's political activities, we must arrive at a different conclusion. During a meeting at Lucca, Caesar strengthened the bond of an ultra vires triumvirate between himself, Pompey, and Crassus.

(notwithstanding loud reactions from both sides of the house, he continues in a sarcastic tone) You should be well informed on this score since 200 of your number have been there, paying your respects to them in slavish homage! (boos)

The quantity of this treason is equalled by its quality. (tumult arises) As for numbers, I

would remind you of the extraordinary turnout

of 417 Senators last year when our esteemed colleague Cicero was unanimously recalled from

exile. Also, for the benefit of the greenhorns and ostriches amongst you, let me add that

Lucca was the breeding place for the new consuls. In one great caesarean operation, the

Pompey and Crasses twins were conceived ahead of schedule! (prolonged interruptions) In

summary, I move that Outer Gaul be allotted to

our faithful and competent Piso Caesoninus, Inner Gaul to Gabinius who will be safely controlled from this short distance, and that Macedonia and Syria will be in good hands with Caesar at that safe distance. (boos and applause)

Marcus Cicero (summing up his address to the senate): ...And  
(Fourth in Seniority) here then is my concluding remark. Even if I entertained feelings of animosity towards Caius Caesar, then I should - under the prevailing circumstances - first of all be mindful of the state's interest. Also, if I were a truly enlightened person, I should be above hostility. But, I have never been his enemy! On the contrary, his friendly attitude to me should dispel any idea of my wishing him harm. If, therefore, it becomes a matter of appraising Caesar, I pay tribute to a great man. If it is a matter of assessing his great merits, I first wish to receive the consensus of opinion from the Senate: if you so decide, I shall support the traditional practice of this House in its decision to confer honours upon him by extending his military command in Gaul. I consider it in the state's best interest that the war in Gaul will benefit from his continued

leadership. Speaking for myself, I will be pleased to offer my personal services in any way I can. Yes, fellow senators, I strongly urge you to accept my view. If there are some of you who collaborated with my enemy Clodius to the detriment of the res publica, I do not expect to convince them. And if there are those who are Caesar's enemies and who would want to cause a rift in the harmony between Caesar and myself, all they do is place themselves on the side of a traitor like Clodius. Their dissenting votes do not disturb me. Senators, it is now up to you.

(An overwhelming majority of the senators present rise from their seats and a thundering applause honours the speaker as he resumes his seat)

Scene 3.

In the fall of the same year, Cicero is back in Anzio where he has retreated to write his first major philosophical treatise to be known as "On the Commonwealth". In his library, he is giving an outline of his work to Tyrannio who is making notes in shorthand and who is expected to make helpful comments as a widely-read student of Greek literature.

Marcus Cicero: Service to the state, based on a sense of fulfilling one's task, has always been Rome's strength, witness the contributions by the Scipios who successfully fought Carthage, our former arch-enemy, and by men like Cato the Elder who might have enjoyed a life of tranquillity at his home in beautiful Frascati, but spent instead a life of demanding work in the Senate. It follows, therefore, that upright behaviour and religious observance as such are not the entire answer. Education, courage of one's conviction, and perseverance in the face of adversity are additional requirements to govern a res publica. These qualities constitute man's greatest virtue. In the course of my career, I have kept this high ideal in mind. During my consulship in particular, I had the memorable opportunity to test and practise my civic responsibilities. Consequently, I am

sufficiently familiar with the subject of government to present to my readers a discussion, rather than a new theory, of how to conduct the state's business. I intend doing this in the form of a conversation between some eminently qualified individuals of some three generations past. The Younger Scipio Africanus and his circle of friends seem to me ideally suited for the main characters. By way of introduction, I propose to start them off on a seemingly extraneous topic, such as a report of, and an explanation for, the phenomenon of the sun and its halo. In the ensuing discussion Socrates, the Pythagoreans, and Plato will be introduced, each with his or their views on nature and on human affairs. The favourite Greek studies of philosophy, mathematics, and astronomy, should then be projected into the sphere of civic affairs and of the commonwealth. More important, therefore, will it be to ask ourselves, why there aren't two senates in one state since we have two factions, the patricians and the plebeians, the sun and its halo in the sky. The question presents itself: what form of government do we prefer, and why? Having defined the commonwealth as the people's affair,

Scipio goes on to give a historical background of the various governments in many parts of the world. He reminds us that civil law is born out of the law of nature. Man, because of his gregarious impulses, avoids solitude, but seeks communion. Groups of human beings look for and build on an advantageous site where their dwellings and shrines take care of their physical and spiritual needs. A town or city is then created. Every community is a number of men united in this way. Every state is an organization of individuals. Every commonwealth is the people's business, that is to say that the authority in a state is based on free deliberations, and thus secures the state's permanence. Originally, this authority was bound to a specific location and was delegated to either a single person, or a select group of people, or the entire membership of the community.

Tyrannio:

This concept is indeed expounded by Aristotle in his "politics".

Marcus Cicero:

I agree with him, Tyrannio. Now, then, we find that these kinds of authority correspond with monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. For factual examples, we may refer to the rule of Cyrus, the just and wise monarch of the Persians,

to our provincials of Marseilles who are governed with a great measure of justice by a group of aristocrats, and to the Athenians, at the time when all public business was transacted democratically by the entire body of voters. I shall also dwell on the degenerative types of society, that is dictatorship, plutocracy, and mob rule. Instances of these unfortunate conditions are many, too many! A fourth type of government, however, will be best in Scipio's opinion: it is the combined rule of all three levels of society. You understand, of course, that in my proposed ideal society our existing system of dual consulship represents the royal power.

Tyrannio: Obviously. But neither Aristotle nor anyone else has ever come up with the suggestion to unite these forces! And I thought that - according to what you said yourself - you didn't intend to set up a new theory!

Marcus Cicero: What do you want me to do? Simply rehash political history, or put down my studies and experiences in a creative blend?

Tyrannio (bewildered): No, but...I need some time to digest this revolutionary approach.



Marcus Cicero: Perhaps, Tyrannio, "evolutionary" may be a better description. You see, we, Romans, too have tried all the known forms of government, and in the end, they didn't work. Sooner or later dissension arose. The cause appears to be: guidance from the top without popular participation and support, or, continuous deliberation by the people, resulting in a lack of control. And, as far as the novelty of my idea is concerned, I believe that we don't deserve to take our place under the sun unless we make a worthwhile contribution to society. The Greeks have been fertile thinkers; isn't it up to us, Romans, to prove what we are capable of doing in organizing ourselves, the more so, since we have already proved ourselves to be superior to them in this field of endeavor?

Tyrannio (with renewed respect): Yes, you are right, I am sorry I brought the matter up.

Marcus Cicero: No, you shouldn't be sorry for that! In fact, I'm grateful you did because you made me realize how necessary it will be to focus the reader's attention to the subject of the harmony of the classes, as a means to achieve the best possible government in a commonwealth.

Yet, I shall have to dwell at quite some length on each form of rule. The reason for my solution of the problem will then become apparent. The conclusion will culminate in the trinity of royal power for both consuls, limited, however, by the chief powers of government in the hands of the senate, and voluntarily supported in the popular assembly. Then, I want to look at the relationship between man and state, to what extent a just man contributes to a just society. Reason makes man superior to the animal and gives him speech, arts, and sciences. Whereas reason and speech are the fundamentals of law and society, wisdom is the study of the arts, the sciences, law, and government. The summit of human excellence, however, is reached by the man who combines scholarly tastes and practical achievement. He and his kind are the pillars of a just society, the viable form of living-together that makes the commonwealth truly the people's business.

I also propose to stress interpersonal relations in society and extend these into the field of education. Man being possessor of reason is the only animal having the gift of language. His vaguely formed concepts based

on the senses are misleading to the uneducated. Proper training makes the senses the servants of man's mind. I agree, therefore, with Plato that training of the mind takes precedence over physical education. But I differ with him, insofar as his equalitarian view of women is concerned. The best among the citizens deserve the highest positions in the state. And finally, I will describe the qualifications of the type of leader in a commonwealth. In his "Republic", Plato made use of the fictional hero Er, the Pamphylian, and his return to life. I shall conclude my work also with a dream story, but my main character will be the historical figure of the Elder Scipio manifesting himself to his son from the other side of life. The poetry of his words will have a deeper and more lasting effect on the reader than any argument I could add to the proposed format of my work. "On you alone, Africanus, the safety of the state will rest." - "All men who have saved or benefited their native land, or have enhanced its power, are assigned a special place in heaven where they may enjoy a life of eternal bliss." - "And how short-lived will be the speech even of those who speak your name." - "Excellence itself, by

its own inherent charm, must draw you towards true glory." - "Know that your true nature is divine." - "Train the soul in the noblest ways!"

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(End of Act II.)

ACT III. - A MAN'S SPIRIT

Scene 1.

On a mild, sunny December afternoon, 43 B.C., twilight is not far off. Quintus Cicero has just arisen from his carriage, Marcus relaxes in his own, after their servants had put the carriages down near a grove on the banks of the Astura River. While the brothers are talking, the slaves are exchanging banalities amongst one another at a respectful distance.

Quintus Cicero (anxious): What will happen to us if Mark Antony's soldiers find us here?

Marcus Cicero (in a quiet, but firm tone): Well, they've their orders, of course, but with Antony, you never know what those are. However, there is a better than average chance that we will reach Astura on the coast before they'll catch up with us. Once there, we'll be able to hire a boat to bring us to Brutus in Macedonia.

Quintus Cicero: That would be a good plan alright, but I have hardly any money on me. How are you set for cash?

Marcus Cicero: I've got some 800 sesterces along, which, I grant you, won't take us far.

Quintus Cicero: Eight hundred! That won't be any help! I'll just have to go back, the money is just lying there, waiting for me as I ordered it. And my son; his life isn't safe, either!

Marcus Cicero: If it wasn't for your son, I would urge you to come along to my villa in Astura where I'll be able to take up sufficient funds for the two of us.

Quintus Cicero: No, thanks! I can't leave my boy behind. I'll have to return to Frascati to take him along to a safe spot.

Marcus Cicero: Alas! We are a sorry lot, you and I. The injustice of it all is that you can not be held responsible for what I say and write.

Quintus Cicero: Look, Marcus, that is only part of the truth. My true feelings about that wretched man have been expressed in your Philippics against him better and more completely than if I had been the author. It follows, therefore, that I am guilty as much as you are.

Marcus Cicero: Thank you, Quintus. I wish, though, that we, also, could say "Old age gives me no cause for complaint," as the sophist Gorgias stated on his one hundred seventh birthday. Twenty years ago this month we were meeting at your home on the feast day of the Good Goddess during the Catilinarian crisis. Five years later you were my only company during my exile from Italy. And when I made up with Caesar in order to keep

the commonwealth together, you were ready to offer him your services as a common token of our goodwill. He gave you many honourable commissions in the field in Gaul, and you proved yourself a capable commander. So he wrote to me himself, and so I found out for myself when you were commanding my troops in Cilicia during my governorship there. On the Ides of March last year we lost our dictator, and, instead of gaining a united front in the senate, our senators - through disuse or senility - demonstrated a lack of manliness. With the sense of a predator, Mark Antony has designated time, space and life to those whom he dignified as his enemies.

Quintus Cicero: If Antony were only half as decent as Caesar, I might still have been an officer with my own legion. To die fighting, was a risk of my profession; but now, I'm already half dead as a non-combatant! And would his troops spare my son?

Marcus Cicero (producing a yellowed parchment out of his toga, and starting to read from it): "When I was told of your daughter Tullia's death, you can imagine how shocked I was, and how sad it made me. I felt it was my tragedy, too, and if I'd

been there you know I would, of course, have been at your side to express my feelings in person. Every condolence is a wretched and painful business in any case, because the relatives and friends from whom condolence is expected are just as downcast as the next of kin. Due to their own state of sadness, they are hardly capable of conveying sympathy, and - instead of being their friend's comforters - it is they who need to be comforted. All the same, I have decided to put some thoughts on paper as these occurred to me, not because they are very original, but in case your sorrow might temporarily have obscured your vision."

Quintus Cicero: Who wrote you that letter?

Marcus Cicero: My good friend Servius Sulpicius when he was in Athens as governor of Greece, two years ago. He goes on as follows: "First of all, what is so special about your personal loss that is moving you so deeply? Keep in mind how rudely fate has already treated us by taking away those things that we hold as dear as our children - our country, our good name, our position, in fact, our whole career. Could this one drop really add to our cup of woe? Isn't it so that our mind, trained in hardship, should by now be



steeled sufficiently to absorb any additional blows more readily?"

Quintus Cicero: And what blows haven't we had already!

Marcus Cicero: "Or is it because you are mourning for her sake? No doubt, it must have occurred to you, too, that - in times like ours - people are well off if they are allowed to die painlessly! And what prospect or consolation might she have been able to look forward to in this day and age? To get married to some distinguished young man? On account of your position, obviously, you would have had ample choice, provided that you could find someone reliable to take proper care of your child. Or is it, because she might have had children and seen them rise to success? Would her children, however, be able to enjoy the free use of their grandfather's inheritance, that is, would they have the opportunity to follow in your footsteps? Could they take up a political career like yours, enjoy freedom of action in public life, and, in general, live the life of a gentleman? All these promises for the future have been snatched away, their fulfillment has been rendered impossible. To lose your child, you'll say, is a personal calamity. True; but

it is worse yet to have to go on, and bear the public calamity."

Quintus Cicero: That's all very well for you and for your political career, but...

Marcus Cicero: Wait, Quintus, what follows applies to all of us and will put personal losses into their proper perspective. "There is one thought I would like to pass on to you that has been a great consolation to me. I hope it may also give you some comfort. On my return trip from Asia Minor I was sailing from Aegina towards Megara. With the Piraeus on my right, and Corinth on my left, I began to look at the lands round about me. At one time, these were all flourishing cities; now they are lying in dust and ruins. I began to think, 'What a contrast! How small are we in our self-centered resentment when someone close by, who is bound to die sooner or later anyway, dies or is killed, whereas here, from this one observation point, are visible the remains of so many cities that were razed to the ground, population and all! Come, control yourself, Servius, (I said to myself) and remember that you were born a mortal.' I assure you, I felt considerably better for that thought. Allow

yourself to visualize what I told you. Not so long ago, many outstanding men died at one and the same time with Cato, and the Roman nation sustained a crippling loss throughout the empire: are you then so distressed in the loss of the frail life of one tiny woman? Since she was mortal, she was bound to die, and, if not now, then a few years later."

Quintus Cicero (pensive): Yes, I think I understand what he is driving at...

Marcus Cicero: "Now then, take your mind off these things, and turn your thoughts to matters worthy of your place in life. She has lived as long as life had something to offer her. We were still a free people. She saw you, her father, holding office, as praetor, as consul, and as augur of Rome. She was married to young men of the first families. She experienced almost every happiness. And when the commonwealth was dying, she left this life. What possible quarrel, can you, or she herself, have with fate on this issue?" And here Servius goes on with some personal advice to me.

Quintus Cicero: Come on, Marcus, I like what he said; what else has he to say?

Marcus Cicero: All right, you asked for it. It is the hardest part to put into practice, but I admit it is the crown of the letter. Listen. (Now declaims by heart) "Finally, don't forget that you are Cicero, the man who used to give others advice. Don't be like those bad doctors who claim to be skilled practitioners, but who when they are sick themselves are desperate about their own cure! Take to heart the counsel you always give to others, and apply it to yourself. There is no sorrow that the passing of time will not diminish and soften. It is not worthy of you to let it come to this; instead, you'll find it makes more sense to meet the situation head-on. If there's any consciousness after death, you may be sure that she, with her love for you and her devotion to all of her family, does not want you to go to pieces. For the sake of your lost one, of your friends and of the others in your environment who are saddened because of your sorrow, do the right thing and give your country the benefit of your counsel and help wherever it is needed."

Quintus Cicero: He is a wise man, that Servius.

Marcus Cicero: I'm fortunate indeed, to have him as a friend!

Quintus Cicero: By the way, you weren't even reading from the letter any more; besides, it's getting dark already. Have you memorized his letter?

Marcus Cicero: Yes, I had thirty long months to do that in. And every time I threatened to lose my vision, as he put it so well, I re-read his words. I'm sure you'll believe me when I say that there have been many such occasions.

Quintus Cicero: I know there were; she was a dear girl.

Marcus Cicero (feeling warm and soft): You've said so much in so few words, Quintus.

Quintus Cicero (reciprocating his brother's mood as a matter of course): And you have consoled me already before I lost my dear little son! (after a slight pause) Well, it's getting late, I'd better be off to my little Quintus. Whatever may happen, I feel I am better able to face the future. Farewell, Marcus, may we soon meet again in Greece.

Marcus Cicero: I'm looking forward to your company wherever that may be; until we meet again, Quintus!

(They are calling their servants back. Once both litters have been lifted upon the slaves' shoulders, Quintus' litter is seen to go back from where it had come, whereas Marcus' carriage is

taken in downstream direction on the same shore of the Astura River).

Scene 2.

A small guard of soldiers under command of a military tribune and a centurion are marching the shaded lanes of fashionable Monte Circeo. Their object is the summer residence, one of several, of Marcus Cicero.

Caius Popilius, Tribune (smug): Well, it won't be long now, or we'll have Cicero trapped!

Centurion Herennius (sarcastic): You'd better!

Caius Popilius: Tut, tut, remember whom you're speaking to!

Centurion Herennius: I don't forget, particularly not my orders from Mark Antony.

Caius Popilius (quotes): "Both of you are to stay within each other's sight for the purpose of the execution of my command. My command to you, Caius Popilius Laenas, is to bring back to me in Rome the head and hands of Marcus Tullius Cicero as proof of the latter's death." (flip-pant) Our commander Antony is quite the diffident type, isn't he?

Herennius (shrugging his shoulders): He's treated me real good!

Caius Popilius: I wonder if Antony knew that at one time Cicero defended me when I was accused of killing my father.

Herennius: He did.

Caius Popilius: How do you know?

Herennius: He told me so himself.

Caius Popilius: You mean to tell me that Mark Antony is using this occasion as a test case of my loyalty?  
(incredulous) Is that it?

Herennius (indifferent): So?

Caius Popilius: I don't think I like this kind of a treatment.  
And you, with your smug air of lording it over me, although you are just a centurion...

Herennius: Watch it! ... Besides, if it wasn't for us, centurions, where would the Roman legions be!

Caius Popilius (grim and determined): Well, Mark Antony, this past history will make no difference to me!

Herennius (insolent): We'll see. (knocks on villa door. No answer. Rattles door latch, and forces door open. Enters building, while Caius Popilius with the soldiers stay outside waiting)  
(Herennius returns accompanied by a young Greek slave)

Philologus: If you continue the road down to the coast, you'll catch up with my master.



Herennius: Do you know what we want him for?

Philologus: I can guess what it is.

Caius Popilius: Doesn't that mean anything to you?

Herennius: I'll keep that Greek boy with me so that he won't play any tricks behind our backs.

Philologus: Oh sirs, I wouldn't anyway!

Herennius (cool): As long as you stay at sword's distance from me!

Caius Popilius (contemptuously pointing in Herennius' direction):  
Why did you give your master's whereabouts away to him?

Herennius: Whose side are you on? Remember your orders!

Philologus (answering Popilius): Because he asked me, and what's the use of lying?

Caius Popilius: Even a slight delay might save your master's life.

Philologus: I didn't know that there might have been a difference.

Herennius (interrupting): Come on, let's pursue Cicero down there.

Caius Popilius: What do you know?

Philologus: I learned about the Trojan War and Ulysses' wanderings, the glorious histories of Thebes, of Sparta, of Argos and of Athens. I have learned to see them through his eyes.

Caius Popilius (unbelieving): And now you are leading us straight to him?

Philologus: Someone was going to do it sooner or later, so it might as well be me.

Herennius (sarcastic): Most obliging, I'm sure.

Caius Popilius (still incredulous): What makes you such a willing tool in our hands? I can't say I trust you.

Philologus: I agree with you. I don't trust myself.

Herennius (matter-of-fact): We haven't much choice. We'll take his word for now and see if we can find Cicero farther down that path.

Philologus: You can take my word for that!

Herennius: I hope so, for your own good!

Caius Popilius: That's exactly what worries me. It all sounds too good to be true.

Philologus: In my short life, I have seen him at the pinnacle of his greatness. I was there as he taught Octavius the splendid qualities and

achievements of his uncle Caius Caesar.

Caius Popilius: But I thought Marcus and Caius were arch enemies!

Philologus: What little you know!

Herennius (triumphantly): There he is! Halt, there! (pointing at a carriage ahead while it is set down)

Marcus Cicero (pushing aside the curtain of the carriage): Ah, there you are at last. (shading his eyes with one hand) Why, is that you, Caius Popilius?

Caius Popilius: Yes, Marcus, Mark Antony sent me.

Marcus Cicero: I have one request, Caius.

Herennius (to Popilius): Are you going to do it, or shall I?

Caius Popilius: Wait, Herennius. What were you going to say, Marcus?

Marcus Cicero: Will you recommend my son Marcus' safety to Octavius for his protection? As you may know, he is for his studies in Athens and I have high hopes for his future.

Caius Popilius: I promise I'll do that, Marcus.

Marcus Cicero: Thank you. Now tell your centurion to do his duty.

Herennius: Come on, tribune, give me the order.

Caius Popilius: Herennius, you know what you came for.

Herennius (stubborn): I'm waiting for your orders.

Caius Popilius: I have never given an order to take the life of an unarmed man.

Herennius: And I have never taken a defenseless man's life.

Caius Popilius: What are we going to tell Mark Antony?

Marcus Cicero: That you did as you were told.

Herennius: But no one told us, not at this time.

Marcus Cicero: Well, then. I tell you to take my life in the proscribed manner. How are you supposed to go about it?

Herennius: We are to lop off your head and hands.

Caius Popilius (shocked): My god, how can you be so cold-blooded about it?

Marcus Cicero: So be it. I won't look at you, so my stare won't hurt you. And as for my hands, I'll seize the vertical posts to make it easier to separate them at the wrist. Now I command you to be merciful and strike a mighty blow each

time, Herennius. (pause) Thank you, oh god of gods, for the life you have granted me.

(While Herennius executes his order, Popilius is turning to Philologus who is sobbing softly)

Caius Popilius (angry): You will come along with me to Rome!

Your tears have come too late to be of any use.

Quit that snivelling drivell!

Philologus: Would you please tell me what I'm guilty of?

Caius Popilius: Yes, I will. You are responsible for his death!

Philologus: I think he has forgiven me already.

Caius Popilius: Let's wait and see what Mark Antony has to say about a slave who betrays his own master!

(Curtain)

Scene 3.

In the shade of a colonnade facing a bookstore. A sign "Closed for the day" is hanging at an angle from a column. Three young Romans, obviously of patrician background, are discussing the event of the day with mixed feelings.

A venerable man, with a grey-white beard, is occupied in finding out the whereabouts of the store owner who is nowhere to be seen at this moment. The old man is Marcus Cicero's friend and fellow philosopher, Publius Nigidius Figulus.

Young Aulus:           How can Mark Antony display head and hands of a man like Marcus Cicero!

Young Bestius:       He can and he did, didn't he?

Young Crispus:       I can see it wasn't someone close to you!

Chrysostomus:       You-hou, what's going on here? (hiccups, is obviously drunk) Why are you gathering at my doorstep? You're at the wrong address. If you wanted to put the record straight - if that were possible - go and obstruct the traffic in front of Caesar's palace!

Publius Figulus:    Ah, here is our bookseller Chrysostomus at last! But, what's the matter with you today?

Chrysostomus:       Haven't you heard? They've nailed Marcus Tullius Cicero's remains on the Speaker's platform down in the market. And I don't mind

telling you I'm a coward. I can't stand the sight of blood. And if it's the blood of a friend of mine...

Young Aulus: Did you know Marcus Cicero personally?

Chrysostomus: Of course I did. And - (lalling) begging your pardon - if all of Rome has the stomach to watch this barbaric display of my friend's remains, then there is something radically amiss in our society. The sight of it all made me vomit, and I hurried to the nearest wineshop for reinforcement.

Young Bestius: That might not be such a bad idea.

Chrysostomus: But only if you know what you're doing it for! You see, somehow I think that you, young whippersnapper, have no idea what is really going on right now...

Publius Figulus: From the mouths of babes and drunks...

Chrysostomus (still addressing Young Bestius): For instance, if it had been your head and hands hanging there, it wouldn't have made the slightest dent on me...

Young Bestius: Watch your tongue, you impudent fool!

Chrysostomus: But look, Publius, even if my store were open

and you could buy all of Cicero's works,  
that still wouldn't provide you with a life-  
size opportunity to work with a truly  
Ciceronian problem like the one presenting  
itself near the Speaker's podium.

Young Crispus (disdainfully): Couldn't we talk about something  
else than a person's severed extremities?

Chrysostomus: Don't rush me, give a man time to explain.  
You will find, not far from there, a young,  
very well educated Greek bound in a stockade,  
facing his master from a distance.

Young Aulus: Why does he have to face his poor master?

Chrysostomus: He had betrayed his master's whereabouts.

Publius Figulus: Let's go and speak to this unfortunate, young  
man.

Crispus and Aulus (shocked): Speak to him!

Publius Figulus: Have you already passed judgment on him,  
before hearing his side of the story, or even  
seeing him?

Crispus and Aulus: Well, no.... But how could he?

(Publius Figulus and his three students leave Chrysostomus day-  
dreaming in front of his bookstore, and go down into the market,  
where they soon find Philologus with his name written on the



stockade).

Publius Figulus: Young Philologus, what are you guilty of?

Philologus: Of facilitating the death of a man who knew how to live.

Young Bestius: Why don't you cut the double-talk, and say that you betrayed your master?

Publius Figulus: Stop right here! Even if he gave away the secret of his master's escape route, does that mean that he betrayed his master, or his master's secret?

Young Aulus: His master's secret, obviously.

Publius Figulus: In other words, it is quite conceivable that this young man may have given away many more secrets of his master's, without betraying his master. Would you go along with that?

The Students: Yes, that's possible.

Philologus: May I speak to you alone, master? (to Publius Figulus)

Publius Figulus: You've been doing this admirably for the past little while, so you might as well continue in the same way. Besides, so many of so little understanding take a dim view of two people communing with one another. For me, it doesn't

matter, I'm too old to be hurt. For you, hopefully, it may still matter, although your rights have been abridged most forcefully.

Philologus: I want you to know that Marcus Cicero - shortly before his death - had gone into Caesar's villa near Mount Circeo.

Publius Figulus (anticipating): Did he intend to take his own life facing Octavius' ancestral gods?

Philologus: Yes, but thank the heavens that the necessary force failed him!

Publius Figulus (pensive): Marcus would never have forgiven himself for such an emotional irrationality!

The Students: What are you blabbing about?!!?

Publius Figulus: See what I meant with speaking alone with me? You just told me another of your master's secrets, and these wilting flowers of Romanhood aren't even participating! Listen, you! Each one of you is going to ask young Philologus a probing question, and following everyone's turn, we are going to find out what the truth of the matter is.

Young Crispus: As in a court of law?

Publius Figulus: As in the true search of justice.

Young Bestius (in his best lawyer's tone): Did you, or did you not, lead the troops where they could find your master, Marcus Cicero?

Philologus: I did.

Young Bestius: Well, that settles that in a hurry for me.

Young Crispus (hesitating): Did you want them to find him?

Philologus: I don't know if I can give a straight "Yes" or "No" for an answer.

Young Crispus (disappointed): Are you so insensitive that you can't decide between a right answer and a wrong one?

Young Bestius: Or are you trying to be clever and do you want us to have pity with you instead of with your master?

Young Aulus: Let us assume that you did want the soldiers to find Cicero for humanitarian reasons. All right then, explain, if you can, what motivated you.

Philologus: I don't think you really want to know my answer.

Young Aulus: Try me!

Philologus: I hoped for a swift death.

Young Aulus: And did he get it?

Philologus: Yes, but not swift enough for my feelings.

Young Crispus: What do you mean? It wasn't your life that was at stake at the time? So, what does it matter that your feelings were hurt?

Philologus: To me, it mattered a great deal to have to see my master go through an agony of a few moments even.

Young Aulus: Why had you decided to give him away in the first place?

Philologus: That was exactly my dilemma. I knew, though, that if I didn't tell the soldiers, someone else would.

Publius Figulus: You'll have to explain everything, to the last tittle and iota, to these students!

Philologus: You see, I loved my master so much that I couldn't stand the thought of some heartless person showing Herennius the way. I knew that Marcus Cicero wanted me to be the one to tell them.

Young Crispus: That doesn't make sense!

- Philologus: I was afraid of a reaction like that.
- Young Crispus: You'd better be afraid of my reaction!
- Philologus: Oh, I am perplexed! I didn't mean that I was fearful of people reacting the way you are doing, but rather I anticipated misunderstandings to heap upon misunderstandings!
- Young Aulus: Give us a concrete example of some possible misunderstanding.
- Philologus: I couldn't have stood the sight of Marcus reminding Popilius, his arresting officer, of the record of his past services. After all, he had defended him in a case of patricide.
- Young Crispus: You mean to say that you were afraid that he might have bartered for his life.
- Philologus: The thought, I'm afraid, had occurred to me...
- Young Crispus: You despicable...
- Publius Figulus: Stop! Nobody here is to engage in a mud-slinging contest!
- Young Crispus: I knew I didn't like you, but now...
- Philologus: If you don't like me, how would you like to be in my place disliking myself?
- Young Aulus: But, how could you decide to play god and lead

the military to their prey?

Philologus: That's another burden I have to carry.

Young Aulus (smug): Your culture has a name for it: "hybris".

You were elevating yourself to a superhuman level which a subhuman individual like Mark Antony could abuse.

Publius Figulus: I believe that, by now, you have had ample opportunity to collect all the necessary data to form your judgment. What is your judgment, gentlemen?

(ENTER Chrysostomus, hiccupping louder than before)

Chrysostomus: Young gents, I brought you some liquid refreshment. After all, we were all Marcus's friends.

Publius Figulus: Give Philologus something to drink first.

Philologus (drinking): Thank you, master Figulus.

Publius Figulus: Don't mention it, Philologus. We owe you the debt of today's lesson. Gentlemen, for the last time, what is your judgment?

Young Bestius: Guilty.

Publius Figulus: Of what?

- Young Bestius: Of betraying the whereabouts of his master to the soldiery, and of, as he put it himself, facilitating his master's death.
- Young Aulus: Guilty of his cultural background of "hybris". But saying this, I find myself at a loss how to explain the legality of Mark Antony's prescription order which forfeited Marcus Cicero's life along with his worldly goods. In other words, if he, a Greek, is guilty for cultural reasons, we, Romans, are guilty for reasons of lack of culture by destroying Cicero.
- Publius Figulus: And how about you?
- Young Crispus: Guilty of some sort of insensitivity. I'm not sure that I understood everything that Philologus was trying to say. It seemed to me, however, that he tried to outguess his master's reactions, but that he wasn't really sure of anything! Now, if it is true that we have difficulty in defining our own fate and how to evaluate its merits, how much harder is this to do in the case of someone else! Why, then, step in and become responsible for his master's apprehension and death?
- Chrysostomus: Allow me, Publius, to ask your students a few simple questions.

Publius Figulus: By all means, Chrysostomus.

Chrysostomus (passing out the filled cups to the master and his three students): Would Marcus Cicero have lived at this very moment, if he had escaped from Italian soil?

The Students: Not likely, but he might have a chance if he got away to Greece, on board of a ship.

Chrysostomus: How much longer would it have been before Marcus Cicero would have been arrested and killed?

The Students: One or two months at the most.

Chrysostomus: Might Marcus Cicero have escaped death? By delaying tactics, for example?

The Students: Only for a little while, but he certainly would not have succeeded in the long run.

Chrysostomus: Did Marcus Cicero die an honourable death?

Philologus (crying): He did, a splendid death! That's where I went wrong! I had been in doubt of his strength!

Chrysostomus: Gentlemen of the jury, may I request a motion for acquittal?

The Students: I, I, I.



Philologus (smiling through his tears): Thank you, good friends.

Publius Figulus: In Rome, the harmony of the classes which Cicero has exemplified in his life has become a matter of past history, but among our little group we have, at last, attained his harmony of the ranks...

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(End)