

A ROMAN HOME.

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*A LETTER TO HIS FRIEND XIMINES, FROM TIRO, A SLAVE OF  
CICERO.*

DEAR XIMINES:

I AM still near the spot where my master was murdered. I am in his deserted library, and from a place so full of sacred memory, I must now write to you a long letter with the long promised grave and light particulars about this greatest of the Romans. As though you were a woman, you beg to know all about the house and the wife and the children, and even the table and the entire private life of this orator. The wish is well enough; because you can thus compare Rome with Athens. Your wish shall be gratified in part, for the cruel death of my kind master only last week renders sacred even the small things that now come up to notice or to memory.

Even this double inkstand, with black ink in one side and red ink in the other, recalls the dead, for it is the very one which my Cicero shook up when he said he must write more distinctly to his brother Quintus.

Does it seem so to you? but I have indeed been the secretary and librarian of this Roman for twenty years. You remember that when I was a mere lad in Athens and was being taught the two great languages and all letters that I might be a literary slave to some of the Athenians, Cicero, who was then in our city to study rhetoric with old Demetrius, formed quite an attachment to me, and hoped to call me some day to Rome. Twenty years have now passed since he sent for me and paid my former master a large sum for his literary slave, Tiro.

That you may know how light my bondage for these years has been, and how well qualified I am to speak about his domestic life, I must

insert an extract here from the almost daily letters which Cicero sent me when he was absent, and when I was sick at Tusculum.

“I did not imagine, dear Tiro, that I should have been so little able to bear your absence, but indeed it is almost beyond endurance. Should you embark immediately you would overtake me at Leucas. But if you are inclined to defer your voyage till your recovery shall be more confirmed, let me entreat you to be careful in selecting a safe ship, and be careful that you sail in good weather, and not without a convoy. It is true I am extremely desirous of your company, and as early as possible, but the same affection which makes me wish to see you soon, makes me wish to see you well.”

And I must add here, lest I forget it, that my master never struck men or scolded me, nor did he ever treat any of his slaves with any cruelty. Some of the Romans do indeed abuse

their servants, and one matron recently ordered one of her dressing maids put to death because she arranged badly, or made some error in the toilet of her mistress, but I never saw any such inhumanity in the house of my great master. I must insert here an extract from another letter :

“I dispatched a letter to you from this place yesterday, where I continued all day waiting for my brother, and this I write just as we are setting out, and before sunrise. If you have any regard for us, but particularly for me, show it by your care to re-establish your health. It is with great impatience I expect to meet you at Leucas; but if that cannot be, my next wish is that I may find Mario there with a letter. We all, but more particularly myself, long to see you; however, we would by no means, dear Tiro, indulge ourselves in that pleasure unless it may be consistent with your health. I can forego your assistance,

but your health, my dear Tiro, I would love to see restored, partly for your own sake—partly for mine. Farewell.”

ALYZIA Nov., 5 A. M. 703.

Such kind letters he continually wrote me, and so many, that now I have quite a number of them, and how valuable they are, since they make me feel not that I passed long years of painful servitude with such a man, but instead, long years of elevating companionship.

When coming hither, so many years ago, on reaching the harbor nearest the Formian Villa, I found on the shore quite a crowd of people and an assortment of conveyances, much like those we have at home; there were carriages for those who had furthest to go; there were litters for those who lived only a few stadia over the hills. I inquired for the house of Cicero, and was pointed to a man as being the good Roman himself. In a plain but ele-

gant litter sat my future master. In another elegant one with embroidered curtains, sat his wife Terentia Cicero, and the little daughter Tullia. These litters were resting on their wooden braces, while the sixteen slaves, whose business it was to carry them, were lounging around in the sun, almost every one of them having his hand full of ripe figs at which he was munching cheerfully. Cicero had come partly to meet me, but partly from the custom the rich families have of going to the harbor, when they see a vessel coming in. This great Roman Demosthenes seemed glad to meet me, and as we went home, I walked along-side his litter, and as the curtains were looped up, he talked all the while in a most elegant manner. He found me quite familiar with recent and old books, and at each discovery that I could speak both Latin and Greek correctly, his face brightened.

I then thought him a very homely man.

He was thin and pale, and his neck was very long. When he reached over the rail to look forward or back, his neck seemed long as that of a crane. But amid the beauty of his character, the plainness of his person passed away. Terentia seemed cold and unbending and did not so much as speak to me, but Tullia, the little daughter, called out to me to ask if I would not help her get out her lessons in Greek.

Did you know, Ximines, that the wealthy Romans do not limit themselves to one country place? In addition to a costly city residence, my master had fourteen villas for his summer or winter pleasure. Wherever an island or a harbor or a hill, especially pleased him, he bought or built a house, and several places were given him by wealthy friends, who were or might be his clients in law, or who were moved by simple friendship. Many large sums were given to this lawyer in the wills of those who had been near him in life.



Happy summers we spent sailing or journeying to and fro among these beautiful places of rest. The Tusculum Villa was the favorite of us all, and the chief of the group. It was in the border of Rome. From it we could see all the public buildings in the one direction and all the beauty of hill and vale and water and sky in another. Here were our library, our pictures, our statuary, our best gardens and fields, our fowls, geese, ducks, pheasants, peacocks and pigeons. My master's city residence was costly, and was wonderful in its ornaments and apartments, but we all loved more the resort out at Tusculum. That city home, Clodius, the consul, in the depth of malice, ordered to be razed to the ground when he banished Cicero. For days the mob and also the better people could be seen carrying off fragments or ornaments or plunder from that overthrown palace. But a change of consuls soon came and Rome recalled the exile and rebuilt our city house.

Our Tusculum villa is built much like a general's camp, the soul being in the centre, the body, the *impedimenta*, being located all around the valuable part. The main hall of villa is the soul. Here is the conversation, here the beauty, here the feast, here the art, here the whole family. All around are the shops and sleeping bunks of the servants. This villa is approached through a long lane of dwarf box. This accommodating shrub is trimmed and bent into the shapes of animals in a pretty or grotesque manner. Rampant lions and the panther so much seen in the games, the peacock and other birds are on either hand as you approach the main entrance of the house. The structure measures about a hundred feet across the front and extends back fully two hundred feet. The exterior is set apart for rooms for the artisan slaves. Our carpenter has one, our tailor one, our groom one, our cook one, and thus on until the

the family is in the midst of quite an army of these domestic troops. Like almost all the Roman houses it is built of brick, but some parts of it are lined with marble. But Rome is a brick city, the bricks being about one span square. Entering this large square by a beautiful gate, you are passed inward by the keepers, and after a few steps you come into the large hall, which is the home of the Cicero family. Marble columns support the roof, which is raised high above the head. Marble is under foot. All around one stands statuary, most of which come from Greek towns. The side walls are made of stucco, and these are exquisitely painted. To the height of a man above the floor, the colors are dark, and the figures are set ones, but above that the colors are very bright and the figures either perfect vines and flowers, or else images of human and divine ideals. In this immense room we ate and talked, and

played and laughed, and gave parties, and danced and were happy, until death entered the gate to break up this island of the blessed. In some Roman houses in the city there are steps to lead up to a second story, but this is rarely the case. The bed-chambers are recesses from the great hall and sometimes there is one sleeping berth above another, and the one who sleeps above climbs up by two pins inserted in the masonry.

At Tusculum, my master had a bed-room made for himself in the rear of the building. He had ordered deadened walls on all sides, and a window that he could darken; that when he had been up late at night he might not be disturbed by that clatter of all kinds made by the slaves, nor be awakened by the too obtrusive sunshine of the morning.

The library was a room with the walls on all sides arranged for books. Each book had its little cell, like the holes in which our pigeons

live. It was not my place to take care of the volumes, but to read them to my master and to his family and friends; and to be forever seeking for new truths or ideas or beauties for the great orator's happiness and use. He had a slave who looked after the binding and dusting and arranging of the works. Cicero would not permit a dirty cover to remain on a volume, nor a soiled label. All must be bright and cheerful, much as the good man was himself. One set of books he had such as I never saw at Athens—books full of portraits. He had seven hundred portraits of distinguished Romans. As Brutus and Cæsar had the same pictures in their libraries, I concluded and heard that there was some shop where one picture could be multiplied until all could have copies; but I have not yet found that ingenious shop.

Our library is ornamented in fine manner by paintings and statuary. Now I remember

how mad my master was, when, having ordered Atticus to buy him some good pieces in Greece, that erring friend shipped to us a lot of cupids and nymphs. My master did not want such stuff in his rooms.

Passing out of the library, one comes to the flower-garden and fish-ponds and poultry-yard. How much that great Cicero did love his geese and peacocks and chickens and pigeons! Even when he knew he must make an important speech that day, and when he was full of care about the oration, he would yet take the time in the morning to go out and see how the pigeons and pheasants were getting along. I have known him to pay a large sum for two pigeon's eggs that he heard would hatch out some rare species. In the flower-garden and among the fruit trees, the dinner and supper were often served in the summer months. I often read aloud while the family ate. I loved thus to read, for the grass under foot secured

for us such a silence that reading and hearing were more delightful.

Permit me now to rest you a little, dear Ximines, by leading you from the small to the great, for you know, dear friend, the soul is so constructed that it can find rest in going from the little to the large, or from the large to the little. Man can walk a circle with less fatigue if at times he changes his direction. Let me tell you about Cicero as a student and an orator. He was wider in his taste than our Demosthenes. You know our orator loved only matters of State, but this Roman loved all books and all things. He read everything he could find. If I found a good passage I went to him with it, perfectly assured that he would enjoy it whether it was prose or poetry, or law or religion or geography, or only a piece for exciting laughter. In one way or another, all he saw or heard or read, helped him in either his public speeches or in his

conversations. All that went into his brain came out again in some better shape. He will live in the world's fame as an orator, but I shall remember with deepest pleasure his fun and talk at home. Every evening friends came in. There were Trebatius and Hortensius and Atticus and Rufus and Brutus and Cato, and by degrees my master would become aroused, and all evening long he would pour forth jokes and anecdotes or else would quote gems from the poets. He was a mimic of manners and would keep all delighted by mimicing all the bad and eccentric speakers of the city and the clowns of the day. Grave as my master was in his public addresses, he filled some of his letters to friends and sometimes the rooms of justice and always our home, with sayings that led to much laughter and much good cheer. In all the letters he wrote to the young lawyer, Trebatius, who had gone with Cæsar on his British expedition, there were seldom



any words except those of pure humor. He expressed in one of them the opinion that his friend had gone over the sea, that he might be the greatest lawyer now living *in Britain*. In another he opines that the reason why his friend had remained carefully away from battle, could not be found in any cowardice, but it must have been in the unwillingness of a student of law to be *guilty of making an assault*. In one of the replies of Trebatius, there were signs that some former writing had been erased to leave the page blank for the letter to Cicero. In the next missile to this absent friend, Cicero expressed a wonder what could have been on that paper that could have made it less valuable than the proposed letter—he concluded that what was erased “must have been one of your own (Tribatius’) briefs.”

When Verres was upon trial for defrauding the people of Sicily, for stealing statuary and

jewels and pictures, and for assessing and collecting most unjust taxes, Hortensius defended, and Cicero prosecuted the accused. It was known to my master that Verres had sent to his attorney a valuable piece of marble—an Egyptian Sphinx. In the course of the examination of witnesses, Hortensius became angry at one of those on the side of the prosecution, and thundered out that he wanted no riddles but a plain statement of facts. Cicero said calmly, "Hortensius, you should be glad to get a supply of riddles since you have at home such a valuable sphynx." This quite upset the gravity of the crowd, and all laughed over the predicament of the distinguished Hortensius.

There was a form of literary sport which was my master's great delight—a double use of a word; a use in which the hidden import would suddenly spring up bringing always a pleasure. These double-edged words he loved

to send off to this same fun-loving Trebatius. He reminded him that the winters would be cold up in Gaul, but that his *regimentals*, when they should come, would keep out much cold; and that Cæsar would perhaps have some *hot* work for him; and that upon the whole he was not so hopeless as a soldier as he was as a lawyer. Trebatius having remained on the peaceful side of a river while Cæsar went over to fight, Cicero congratulated the friend that he had so far eliminated all ill-will from his heart that he had become unwilling to *cross* water!!!

Indeed I shall not deny that to see the house-tops covered with people and the streets densely crowded with a multitude, all silent to hear Cicero speak against the cruel Verres, or the despot Antony, was a great spectacle and one which it was my fortune often to witness, but, for some reason, my own memory will cherish most those evenings in the villas when

the jokes were so good and all were so perfectly happy. Julius Cæsar at one time determined to gather up in a little volume, all the Cicero stories and witticisms he could find, but I fear that the last five years of Cæsar's life were passed in so much war and turmoil that he never prosecuted his intention. At none of the bookstores do I find any such volume. I need no such volume, but the laughing world will.

My master spoke much like the orators we have seen and heard in Athens. He imitated and he acted as he spoke. He threw himself about from place to place on the rostrum and seemed to have in him the souls of a whole company of men. When he first began speaking in public, he was so full of action and passion that he injured his health and was compelled to leave Rome and seek peace abroad. He spoke just as do the actors in the theaters changing his face and voice to

suit each style of the changing thought and argument. He had an extreme ambition and seemed to know in youth that he was destined to be great. When he entered the law some wanted him to change his name, for Cicero meant only a vegetable. They told him it did not sound large enough. He said in reply that he would keep his father's name and make it sound honorable. He wore out his health in a few years and sailed to Greece for rest. On his return, he assumed a manner a little more quiet but it was still very full of action. But, my good friend, he was a wonderful man. I always attended him when he was to make a speech that when he came to write it out fully afterward, I could aid him if he had lost any particular thought or the structure of a sentence. I have known the lawyers opposed in a case to my master to venture no reply but to abandon their cause after Cicero had made his opening speech.

A rather amusing event took place while Cæsar was dictator, only a few years ago. A case was before Cæsar. The evidence having been all taken, Cæsar was about to give his judgment and had declared that no speeches need be made as his mind had been made up fully that the person charged was guilty. Cicero arose to make a brief voluntary plea. Cæsar said jokingly that he had not heard Cicero for so long that it would be rather pleasant to hear the good fellow speak once again. He heard him; got amazed and highly wrought up, and discharged the accused as being the most innocent man of his acquaintance.

Ah, my Ximines, let me tell you more now of the home life of the dead orator and master, more dear to me as a master than as an orator. Let me tell you briefly about the social scenes in our city house, and also in the Villa at Tusculum. One of our largest reunions of

friends was given when Cicero's only daughter Tullia had just begun to attract the attentions of Roman lovers. As soon as night had fully come the friends began to pour in. Some came by carriages, some by the popular litter. At last you could have seen gathered in the hall Julius Cæsar and his wife; Decimus Brutus and Marcus Brutus, Cato, Hortensius, Marcus Antony, Crassus, Quintus Cicero, the brother of my Marcus, Pompey and Publius, Crassus Atticus, Casca, and a hundred other such notable men. Not any less was the number of the noble women and maidens. Pomponia, the wife of Cicero's brother, came early and had begun to chat with her sister-in-law. Corelia, the daughter of Metellus Scipio, was there dressed in plain, but rich costume, for she was a woman of intellect rather than of dress. She resembled the Cornelia of Gracchi fame. The Lælia girls were present in all their style of costume and beauty of face.

In this throng were not a few of the Roman "pretty men," *homo bellus*. There were three Laelia girls and they might have stood for three graces. The talk that Cicero thought too highly of these daughters was all old time gossip. The *bellus homo* is a man wholly devoted to fashion and dress and pleasure. The number of these has greatly increased of late years. The younger men in general seem to be of this sleek and effeminate school. The sons of the great Senators and orators are for the most part idle, pretty men, who part their hair with the utmost precision and smell of all the perfumes of the South. They wear snow-white robes, and powder like women to make white their bare arms; and in the wearing of rings they equal any matron of this dying Republic. These youths gathered that night in one corner of the great hall, and with a few equally silly girls they hummed over part of Nile love songs, and lounged in the



large soft seats designed for the ladies of rank.

Most of the love songs here locate their scenes of romance and the actors in the scenes over on the Nile; not only because Cleopatra has introduced there an era of sentiment, but rather because the spirit of romance always finds its ideal land away from home, there being no witchery in things that are near. I remember that we boys at Athens sang of Roman adventure, but coming hither I found the Roman young souls locating the exploits of successful and unsuccessful love as far as possible away from all existing realities. It must belong to human nature to cover up with enchantment hills and vales and peoples that are just beyond the eye's field of vision.

At times I heard some elegant measures from some thoughtful poet, but for the most part these brainless youths sang little verses of which I may give you here a fair sample:

If you would live your life  
In the light of woman's smile  
And escape all toil and strife  
Then away to the Nile!

There my barge may float all night  
On the love-creating stream  
Where the soft and amber light  
Changes life into a dream.

My love is in the boat  
And I am by her side;  
Oh, let me ever float  
On this love-producing tide.

In Rome at all hours of the night one can hear some part of this shape of song rising up from the streets, and so fully alive is the whole city to the romance of love affairs, that even old men whistle these tunes as they plod along to work or to idleness, generally to idleness, for none but slaves pursue any toilsome occupation.

Of this trifling class was Cicero's son Marcus. At least while away in Greece at school, word often came to us that he was living in a dissipated manner and was spending much more money than had been allowed him. But not of this foolish class was the daughter Tullia.

She resembled her father in her love of learning and of wise conversation, and thus when our parties were given this beautiful girl was found talking with Cæsar or Pollio or Archias, rather than with the fops at the other end of the corridor. Had I not been only a servant, it would have been an immeasurable joy could I have sought and gained her love. As things were, I confess, my dear Ximines, my heart beat quickly with happiness when she would request me to bring her a certain volume and read for the company, at her command, some sentiment that had given her delight. My partiality, perhaps, made me admire her dress more than the magnificent toilet of Cæsar's wife or the gay attire of the Laelia daughters. On this particular evening Tullia wore over her wine-colored dress a delicately tinted pink scarf which quite enfolded her. It had a still brighter border. Her hair was heaped up rather negligently on her head,

and was held in place by a gold arrow. As she played on the harp and sang, she showed a sandal with a rim of gold all around the sole, and a perfect network of pearls covering the instep of her almost sacred foot. Add to these ornaments a golden ball which she would at times toss to some, and from which would gush forth a little cloud of perfumed dust, and you can see this loved and now wept-for Tullia. I used to wonder what the great father would have said or done had I ever taken by the hand that beautiful being, or had I ever addressed a note of affection to her. Now that both are dead I am glad that my insane love never ventured forth in formal language.

On this evening we had for the feast all the fish and fowls and fruits known to Roman or Greek, and the most elegant wines. Cicero loved glassware with quite a passion, and his engraved goblets passed freely about, filled with their nectar of Bacchus. Cæsar, the

most distinguished of our guests, ate but little, but you should have seen him eat once at our Formian house. He announced that he was intending to have a full feast, and feast he did, for he intended on rising from dinner to take an emetic, and spare himself the pain of digesting such a load of meat and fruit and wine. You know the feast-goers often do this—eat all they can, with the intention of taking, after the meal, this “emetikan.” The gluttons do it, not that they may escape distress, but that they may return and eat a second dinner the same night. They create a stomach like that of the vulture, which can load and unload almost at pleasure. For another reason Cæsar’s visit to our Formin village was remarkable, for he brought with him a thousand men, soldiers and friends. Most of them encamped in the garden, but my master had to feed all outside the environs and to entertain the important men of the number within the walls,

and they ate and drank in a most hearty manner. Next day, when the company had departed to the last man, Cicero came up to me in the library, and remarked, with a grave face: "Cæsar is indeed a very notable guest, but he is not one of those fellows to whom, on going, one says, 'Call again.'"

My master was no feasting man. There were only a few simple things he could eat. No fish or oyster could he digest, and even after all the care he took of his health he suffered all the years I was with him. He drank wine, but seldom to excess. Only one night is recalled now when he came home with his intellect clouded by wine. He had been out spending the evening with two fellow lawyers, and coming home about midnight he did not as usual come into the library, but he passed straight to his room. In the morning he mentioned, with regret, that he feared he had drunk so much the night before as to expel

his wits, for his companions had asked him for an opinion of a law point and he now felt that he had given a foolish reply. On consulting the reports I found that my master had not been very drunk after all. The question that had been raised at the neighbors was, whether an heir to an estate could bring action for damages the estate had sustained before it actually came into his possession, he being the legal heir apparent?

My dear, Xemines, I must give you rest from these small matters, by telling you now in rapid succession of four large events; I may call them the four dark days of all the long years. In their books the Egyptians and the Persians tell of days when the sun did not shine, but showed a black, sullen face; when the wild bird flew to its nest, and the cattle bellowed and groaned in the fields. Be these stories true or not, dark days came to our house. First came the divorce of the wife and

mother, Terentia. On a certain day, only five years ago, this wife and mother bade Tullia farewell, and left the home where she had been through all the period of her girlhood and middle life. I saw little reason for such a crisis in the house. I am positive that the event came so gradually that all the parties—the husband and wife and daughter, were already reconciled to it when it came really to pass. My master had had many great trials, and under them was growing old. He needed perfect peace in his home, and constant praise from all. Terentia managed badly all the money matters. She never praised in any manner her famous husband; but on the opposite, set up an opposition of feeling, if I may so speak. Cicero was himself so great that he filled the house to such a degree that there was no room for another. Tullia was full of demonstration over all her father's speeches and writings; and as she drew ever nearer her



father the mother to that degree receded. By degrees Terentia began to look away toward the house of her own father as offering her an asylum, and with the large dowry handed back to her, which she had brought Cicero in her youth, she went away from our villas forever. It is a good quality of Roman law that a man who puts aside his wife must first restore to her the dowry she brought him in her days of youth and beauty. She could not come rich and go away poor.

No sooner had our home circle recovered from this calamity than there came the greatest one that could have assailed the tender heart of my master. Tullia suddenly died. In about her twentieth year, this daughter, whom he had called the "honey sweet," took away from earth her blessed face and language.

She had been married, but yet her father's home was almost all the time cheered by her

presence; and when the word came from her sick room that the disease had become suddenly alarming, the grief of the illustrious father was most extreme. Death came very suddenly. All the deep philosophy of my master failed him. Letters from all the great men of the land came to him, bearing all forms of consolations, and some full of reproof that such a statesman should be so broken down by the death of only a daughter. But letters brought no softening of the affliction. We withdrew to our villa of Astura, because, being upon an island it offered the broken heart two blessings—security against the intrusion of man, and the presence of all the sweetness of nature. Here, in this lonely place, my master did not even desire my presence any longer, but alone, every morning, he would walk away to the woods, and would not, perhaps, until evening emerge from their sympathetic shadows. He was also alone much in his

library, and, entering it in his absence, I would find on his table outlines of monuments and forms of epitaphs. His heart, unable any longer to look forward, was thus looking back. \Life has been awfully injured when it looks only back.

The tragic fate of Cæsar soon followed to conceal the tomb of the "honey sweet daughter." All the patriots, and all the rivals of Cæsar, too, had feared that the Ides of March would see him declared King. The friends of this royal movement had pretended to find oracular dictates that only a King could conquer the Parthians. As the Ides drew near, the city became restless and suspicious in all ways at once. On the morning of the Ides we all went to the Senate. By noon Cicero and I, his servant, were in our places, anxious, but uncertain. My master knew of no conspiracy. All began to wonder that Cæsar did not come to preside, for there seemed to

be business awaiting transaction. I learned that night that Cæsar had resolved, as by mere accident, to stay at home until the much talked of Ides should have passed by. That morning his wife had told him that she had dreamed that he had come flying to her in the night, saying, "Save me!" This helped detain Cæsar. He had also gone out in the garden in the morning to note how his doves and pheasants would fly when he should feed them or call them. They came up on his left hand. This also helped him in his resolution to let that day pass by in the most possible of retirement. The conspirators, finding the day passing and that their victim would perhaps not come to the forum, made out a pressing demand for the imaginary King, and sent down a messenger to Cæsar's house, telling him that a case of importance was being argued, and that the Senate would be gratified if he would come and preside. He at once dismissed his

secret forebodings, and ordering out his litter, entered and was borne along to the assembly. To a watchman on the street he remarked pleasantly: "Ah, friend, the Ides of March have come, and have brought no trouble." "Come, but not gone," was the reply.

Seated upon his Chair of State in the Curia Pompeii, Cæsar asked that the case be at once presented. Tullius Cimber then said that he had a brother in exile whom he would now petition the Senate to recall; and while pleading for this brother he grew more and more earnest, and at the end of each sentence took a step forward as though he would lay his affectionate pleadings upon the very breast of Julius. Other Senators, too, began to speak as though the case were one of tremendous importance; and as they spoke they, too, moved gently forward. It is my own impression, dear Ximines, that they overdid their earnestness, and that Cæsar's heart suddenly

divined that the eloquence was full of something more terrible than the exile of Cimber's brother. Cæsar arose from his seat, but in an instant the dagger of Casca gleamed and came down. I heard the dead sound of the blow. In his fearful tremulousness, Casca had struck his grand victim only in the shoulder blade. Cæsar grasped the dagger, and screamed forth in a loud voice, "Casca, you villian, what means this?" While we all gazed, horror-stricken, suddenly other daggers gleamed and struck, and the great man, muttering some pathetic words which I could not catch, fell heavily upon the floor. Some relate that he said, "And thou, Brutus!" Others told me next day that when he saw Brutus raise his dagger, he said, "And my son! Brutus!" It had long been rumored that Brutus was a son of Cæsar.

In a few days after this thrilling event, my master began to say that it was a great over-

sight in the Republicans not to have slain Antony; that he was more willing to be a despot than Julius had been, and that had the conspirators invited him (Cicero) to their liberty feast, there was one dish that would not have been carried away uncarved. My master despised and feared Mark Antony. I must close this letter, dear Ximines, by telling you how this enmity soon hurried my Cicero out of life. When Antony and Octavius and Lepidus formed the second Triumvirate, and deceived the people by giving them three tyrants instead of one, each two of the Triumvirs conceded to the other the privilege of putting to death his greatest enemy. Lepidus demanded Lucius Cæsar; Octavius demanded Paulus; Antony asked the life of Cicero.

We were at the Tusculum villa. A messenger came in fearful haste, his horse almost falling from fatigue. Cicero and his brother went out to meet him, and in a few moments

came back into the great hall. Cicero said to me, calmly: "Antony has condemned me to death." My heart sunk. I was in a moment glad that Tullia had passed to the grave, which has no fresh sorrow. A group of servants were called, both boatmen and porters, and, having gotten ready the most essential things, we hurried to Astura, one of my master's villas, a few stadia away. Should we reach that point, from there we should sail for Macedonia. But there was little hope of a final escape from the wide domain of Rome. The road was literally sprinkled with our tears. When we halted, each stood with an arm around his friend, and Cicero and his brother embraced each other many times, and bade many farewells; for, in my master, friendship was as vast a thing as learning or eloquence.

We sailed from Astura, but, after a day out in rough weather, Cicero grew sick, and at the same time he felt a great longing to risk his



native land, or die upon its soil. He made our seamen sail into a harbor where we had a villa, and there we all disembarked. The porters took up the litter and bore him to our beautiful Formian house. Here we had known happy times in the past. When we had gotten into the ample hall, he said, "Let me die here, in the country I have attempted so often to save." He lay down to sleep. It was the 7th of December. In only a few moments, servants came in from remote parts of the farm, saying that horsemen were coming toward the house. The porters did not wait for the order or even the permission of Cicero, but, affectionately taking him up, they laid him in the litter, and told him they must go back to the ship. We had advanced only a hundred paces, when the assassins closed up around the baffled group. The slaves set down the litter. Cicero parted the curtains, and reaching out his head, gray with age and trouble,

he addressed one of the pursuers by name, and said: "Strike me, if you think it is right." The bloody men halted an instant. The face before them was calm and noble. The hearts conscious of guilt faltered, but only for an instant. Herrennius, who had dismounted, stepped forward, and, with a half dozen ill-aimed and cruel blows, he severed the head from the body. The body remained in the litter; the head rolled over on the earth beneath. The hands, too, were cut off and were borne to Antony, who ordered them to be fastened up in the Forum, where the lips and hands, too, had been so eloquent against kings.

My dear Ximines, I heard this matchless speaker deliver more than thirty great orations, and I have read all his books and letters, and am thus familiar with the utterances, public and private, of his great soul, but, to my memory, no words of his come now with more significance or beauty than those uttered

in the last days of his life: "I try to make my enmities transient, and my friendships eternal."

Your friend,

TIRO.

TUSCULUM VILLA, DEC., 19.

[A. U. C. 710.]