

exitu eius scire voluisti. Finem ergo faciam. Unum
adiciam omnia me quibus interfueram quaeque statim,
cum maxime vera memorantur, audieram persecutum.
Tu potissima excerpes. Aliud est enim epistolam aliud
historiam, aliud amico aliud omnibus scribere. Vale.

71. (XX.)

C. PLINIUS TACITO SVO Æ.

*Experience of Pliny and his mother during the eruption of
Vesuvius.*

Ais te adductum litteris quas exigenti tibi de morte 1
avunculi mei scripsi cupere cognoscere quos ego Miseni
relictus (id enim ingressus abruptam) non solum metus
verum etiam casus pertulerim. 'Quamquam animus me-
10 minisse horret, incipiam.' Profecto avunculo ipse reli- 2
quum tempus studiis (ideo enim remanseram) inpendi:
mox balineum, cena, somnus inquietus et brevis. Prae- 3
cesserat per multos dies tremor terrae minus formi-
dolosus quia Campaniae solitus. Illa vero nocte ita
15 invaluit ut non moveri omnia sed veri crederentur. In- 4
rumpit cubiculum meum mater: surgebam, invicem, si
quiesceret, excitaturus. Residimus in area domus, quae
mare a tectis modico spatio dividebat. Dubito constan- 5
tiam vocare an imprudentiam debeam; agebam enim duo-
20 devicesimum annum: posco librum Titi Livii et quasi
per otium lego atque etiam, ut coeperam, excerpō. Ecce,
amicus avunculi, qui nuper ad eum ex Hispania venerat,
ut me et matrem sedentes, me vero etiam legentem videt,
illius patientiam, securitatem meam corripit: nihil seg-
25 nius ego intentus in librum. Iam hora diei prima, et
adhuc dubius et quasi languidus dies. Iam quassatis

circumiacentibus tectis, quamquam in aperto loco, an-
7 gusto tamen, magnus et certus ruinae metus. Tum de-
mum excedere oppido visum: sequitur vulgus attonitum,
quodque in pavore simile prudentiae, alienum consilium
suo praefert ingentiue agmine abeuntis premit et in- 5
8 pellit. Egressi tecta constitimus. Multa ibi miranda,
multas formidines patimur. Nam vehicula quae produci
iusseramus, quamquam in planissimo campo, in contra-
rias partes agebantur ac ne lapidibus quidem fulta in
9 eodem vestigio quiescebant. Praeterea mare in se resor-
beri et tremore terrae quasi repelli videbamus. Certe
processerat litus multaque animalia maris siccis harenis
detinebat. Ab altero latere nubes atra et horrenda ignei
spiritus tortis vibratisque discursibus rupta in longas
flammarum figuras dehiscebat: fulguribus illae et similes 10
10 et maiores erant. Tum vero idem ille ex Hispania ami-
cus acrius et instantius 'si frater' inquit 'tuus, tuus
avunculus vivit, vult esse vos salvos: si perit, super-
stites voluit: proinde quid cessatis evadere?' Respon-
dinus non commissuros nos ut de salute illius incerti 20
11 nostrae consuleremus. Non moratus ultra, proripit se
effusque cursu periculo aufertur. Nec multo post illa
nubes descendere in terras, operire maria: cinxerat Ca-
preas et absconderat: Miseni quod procurrit abstulerat.
12 Tum mater orare, hortari, iubere quoquo modo fugerem; 25
posse enim iuvenem, se et annis et corpore gravem bene
morituram, si mihi causa mortis non fuisset. Ego con-
tra salvum me nisi una non futurum: dein manum eius
amplexus, addere gradum cogo. Paret aegre incusatque
13 se quod me moveatur. Iam cinis, adhuc tamen raris: 30
respio; densa caligo tergis imminet, quae nos tor-
rentis modo infusa terrae sequebatur. 'Deflectamus?'

ingnam, 'dum videmus ne in via strati comitantium
 turba in tenebris obteramur?' Vix consideramus, et nox, 14
 non qualis inlumis aut nubila, sed qualis in locis clausis
 lumine extincto. Audires ululatus feminarum, infantum
 5 quiritatus, clamores virorum: alii parentes, alii liberos,
 alii coniuges vocibus requirebant, vocibus noscebant:
 hi suum casum, illi suorum miserabantur: erant qui
 metu mortis mortem precarentur: multi ad deos manus 15
 tollere, plures nusquam iam deos ullos, aeternamque
 illam et novissimam noctem mundo interpretabantur.
 Nec defuerunt qui fictis mentisque terroribus vera
 pericula argerent. Aderant qui Miseni illud ruisse,
 illud ardere, falso sed credentibus, nuntiabant. Paulum 16
 reluxit; quod non dies nobis sed adveniantis ignis in-
 15 diuinum videbatur. Et ignis quidem longius substitit,
 tenebrae rursus, cinis rursus multus et gravis. Hunc
 identidem adsurgentes excohibebamus: operi aliqui
 atque etiam oblisi pondere essemus. Possem gloriari 17
 non gemitum mihi, non vocem parum fortem in tantis
 20 periculis excidisse, nisi me cum omnibus, omnia mecum
 perire misero, magno tamen mortalitatis solacio credi-
 dissem. Tandem illa caligo tenuata quasi in fumum 18,
 nebulamve discessit: mox dies vernus, sol etiam effulsit,
 luridus tamen, qualis esse, cum deficit, solet. Occursa-
 25 bant trepidantibus adhuc oculis mutata omnia, atoque
 cinere, tamquam nive, obducta. Regressi Misenum, cura- 19
 tis utrumque corporibus suspensam dubiamque noctem
 spe ac metu exegimus. Metus praeualebat: nam et tre-
 mor terrae perseverabat et plerique lymphati terrificis
 30 vaticinationibus et sua et aliena mala luctificabantur.
 Nobis tamen ne tunc quidem, quamquam et expertis 20
 periculum et expectantibus, abeundi consilium, donec

de avunculo nuntius. Haec nequaquam historia digna
 non scripturus leges et tibi, scilicet qui requisisti, inpu-
 tabis, si digna ne epistula quidem videbuntur. Vale.

72. (XXX.)

C. PLINIUS FABATO PROSOCERO SUO S.

About a country estate of Fabatus.

1 Debeamus mehercule natales tuos perinde ac nostros
 celebrare, cum laetitia nostrorum ex tuis pendeat, cuius 5
 2 diligentia et cura hic hilares, istic securi sumus. Villa
 Camilliana, quam in Campania possides, est quidem vetus-
 tate vexata; ea tamen quae sunt pretiosiora aut integra
 3 manent aut levissime laesa sunt. Attendimus ergo ut
 quam saluberrime reficiantur. Ego videoor habere multos 10
 amicos, sed huius generis cuius et tu quaeris et res exigit
 4 prope neminem. Sunt enim omnes togati et urbani: rus-
 ticorum autem praediorum administratio poscit durum
 aliquem et agrestem, cui nec labor ille gravis nec cura
 5 sordida nec tristis solitudo videatur. Tu de Rufo hones-
 tissime cogitas: fuit enim filio tuo familiaris. Quid
 tamen nobis ibi praestare possit ignoro, velle plurimum
 credo. Vale.

73. (XXXIII.)

C. PLINIUS ROMANO SUO S.

A contested will case in the Centumviral Court.

1 'Tollite cuncta' inquit 'coeptosque auferte labores.'
 Seu scribis aliquid seu legis, tolli auferri inbe et accipe 20
 orationem meam, ut illa arma, divinam (num superbius
 potui?), re vera, ut inter meas, pulchram; nam mihi satis

The *vita Plinii*, ordinarily attributed to Suetonius, says that according to some accounts, feeling himself about to be suffocated, Pliny had himself killed by a slave. But Suetonius was a friend of the younger Pliny, and would have known better.

The eruption described in this letter overwhelmed Pompeii. Some modern authorities date it three months later. See Lanciani in Harper's Class. Dict., art. *Pompeii*; Mau-Kelsey, *Pompeii*, ch. iii.

Page 86. Letter 71. This letter to Tacitus is a continuation of Ep. VI. 16.

6. *Iteris quas . . . scripsi*: the 16th of this book; the story is taken up from the sentence, *Interim Miseni ego et mater*, page 86, line 31.

8. *id . . . ingressus*: after beginning upon that topic.

9. *Quamquam animus*, etc.: Verg. *Aen.* II. 12, 13.

12. *nox*: in Silver Latin *afterward*, rather than *soon*. Note the ellipse of verb in this sentence; likewise in §§ 13, 16.

14. *quia . . . solitus*: cf. *quod frugi*, page 61, line 22, and note. *Campaniae*: dative of reference; *usual*—for *Campania*. *vero*: however.

15. *verti*: for *eventi*, simple verb for compound.

16. *surgerebam*: *I was just getting up*.

17. *area*: they went out of doors to avoid the danger of being crushed by a falling wall or roof; *area* is not the *atrium*, but a yard or court outside the house.

19. *agebam*, etc.: this sentence dates the author's birth, and indirectly helps to date that of Tacitus. See Ep. VII. 20, and notes.

21. *excerpo*: young Pliny was following his uncle's methods of work.

22. *anticus . . . ex Hispania*: Pliny the Elder had been a procurator in Spain from a time late in Nero's reign till the early part of Vespasian's.

23. *ut . . . videt*: note present tense with temporal *ut*, depending on historical present.

24. *patientiam, securitatem*: *agally . . . unconcern*. *corripit*: *chides*.

25. *hora . . . prima*: if the sun rose at 5.06 A.M. on August 24, the first hour would be from then to 6.15.

26. *laetulus*: *faint*; this adjective involves a poetic personification of *dies*. See Introduction II. § 10. *p*.

Page 87. 6. *Egressi tecta*: after getting beyond the houses;

they had already gone out of doors. *Egreddor* with the accusative is found in Caesar and Sallust, not in Cicero, but is especially common in the post-Augustan historians. See Introduction II. § 3. 2.

10. *Practerea mare*, etc.: a poetic coloring is given to this and the next two sentences by the use of verbs which suggest animate, rather than inanimate, subjects.

12. *harenis*: we should expect a preposition with this ablative of place, unless, possibly, the idea is instrumental.

13. *nubes . . . dehiscerebat*: a cloud, black and terrible, broken by quivering zigzag flashes of lightning, parted, revealing long masses of flame.

15. *fulguribus*: flashes of lightning (sheet lightning). This is an instance of the construction known as *are reuoc*, *fulguribus* being at once dative with *similes* and ablative with *matrices*,—similar to and greater than.

16. *ille ex Hispania amicus*: *ex Hispania* has the function of an adjective to *amicus*.

17. *tuns*, *tuns*: of course the first *tuns* agrees with *frater* and refers to Pliny's mother; the second agrees with *conuinculus* and refers to Pliny himself.

20. *non commissuros nos*: we would not allow ourselves. *Nos* is subject, not object, of *commissuros*.

21. *nostrae*: sc. *saluti*.

23. *descendere*: notice the historical infinitives in §§ 11, 12, 15. *Capreae*: the island of Capri, at the south of the Bay of Naples.

24. *Miseni quod procurrat*: the promontory of Misenum; *Miseni* is partitive.

25. *fugerem*: this subjunctive in dependence on *tubere*, without *ut*, is both ante-classical and post-classical.

26. *iuvenem*: the context gives a causal force,—since *I was young*. *corpore grauem*: apparently she was like her brother in figure.

29. *addere gradum*: to quicken her pace; cf. Livy III. 27. 7; XXVI. 9. 5.

Page 88. 1. *comitantium*: see note on *audientium*, page 80, line 7.

2. *et nox*: when the darkness.

4. *Audires*: you might have heard, if you had been there; B. 280. 3; A. & G. 311. a; H. 485. N. 1; Roby 1544.

5. *quiritatus*: waiting cries; derived, according to Varro, *de Ling. Lat.* V. 7, from the old appeal of the citizens, *Porro quiritales*.

'To the rescue, Quirites!' This is quoted also in Macrobius, *Sat.* II 7. 4.

6. *noscitabant*: *were trying to identify to recognize.*

10. *illam*: the word implies something well known or commonly believed. Gierig, in his note on this passage, cites a number of passages showing the common belief that the world and the gods would one day fall back into chaos and night, out of which all things issued in the beginning.

12. *Aderant qui . . . nuntiabant*: note the indicative in the relative clause, as against *precarentur*, line 8, and *angerent*, line 12. *illud ruisse, illud ardere*: *this part had fallen, that part was on fire.*

13. *falso sed credentibus*: *falsely but to believing ears* (Lewis); a curious coördination of dissimilar constructions.

15. *videbatur*: *was seen*, not 'seemed.' *longius substatit*: *stopped some distance off.*

17. *excutebamus*: *we (repeatedly) shook off*, so as not to be buried by them.

20. *nisi me, etc.*: *I might boast, if I had not believed, etc.* Pliny, of course, could not wish to survive the destruction of the universe. omnibus: *neither; the universe.*

21. *misero*: construe with *solacio*, the construction of which is probably ablativæ of 'attendant circumstance' or 'manner.' For a similar thought, cf. Sen. *Troad.* 1024, *gaudet in multos sua fata mitti.*

24. *luridus*: *murky.* *cum deficit*: *when there is an eclipse*; the noun is *defectio*.

25. *trepidantibus adhuc oculis*: a very natural hypallage; *trepidantibus* properly should refer to the persons who were still trembling, not to their eyes. *mutata*: in predicative relation to *omnibus*.

26. *tamquam nive*: the comparison need not include the point of color. *curatis utcumque corporibus*: i.e., *having bathed and eaten as well as we could.* *spe ac metu*: see note on *misero solacio*, line 21.

29. *lymphati*: *frenzied, crazed.*

Page 89. 2. *non scripturnus*: this letter does not, as the 16th does, purport to be material for Tacitus's history. Pliny's modesty about it seems exaggerated. It is a question whether he ever wrote anything finer; it is worthy, in style, of Tacitus himself.

Lord Lytton (1760), in his *Dialogues of the Dead* (No. 7), represents the elder Pliny as upbraiding his nephew for vanity and affectation in his style generally, and particularly in his conduct at the time of the eruption of Vesuvius.

Letter 72. About Fabatus, see introductory note to Ep. IV. 1.

4. *natales*: *sc. dies*; the Romans paid much attention to the celebration of anniversaries, especially the birthdays of their friends. Gifts were received and offerings made on birthdays, men sacrificing to their *genius*, women to Juno. Allusions in literature to such occasions are very frequent; e.g., Ep. III 7. 8, where Silius celebrates Vergil's birthday. *Martha VIII. 64; IX. 52; X. 24.*

5. *nostrorum*: *sc. natalium.*

6. *hic*: *here, i.e., at Pliny's home*; it is immaterial from which house he happened to be writing. *istic securi*: *free from anxiety about the condition of things at your house, or on your behalf.*

7. *Camilliana*: so called, no doubt, because it had belonged to a person called Camillus, not necessarily a famous person of that name.

8. *vexata*: *damaged.*

9. *Attendimus*: *I am seeing to it.*

10. *quam saluberrime*: *as advantageously (i.e., cheaply) as possible.* Cf. *si predictum . . . tam salubriter emerit*, page 19, line 6.

12. *togati et urbani*: the idea is the same in both words; the toga was rarely worn in the country; it was the formal garment of city life.

13. *durum*: *rough-and-ready.* (Lewis.)

15. *honestissime cogitas*: *your intentions are most creditable.*

Letter 73. About Voconius Romanus, see introductory note to Ep. I. 6.

19. *Tollite cuncta, etc.*: *Verg. Aen. VIII. 439.* These are the words of Vulcan, when, at Venus's request, he bids his Cyclopes clear away the work they have in hand for the gods and proceed to forge a suit of armor for Aeneas. The passage is, of course, an imitation of the story of the forging of arms for Achilles in *Iliad* XVIII.

22. *ut inter meas*: *considering that it is one of mine.*

Page 90. 5. *quam = postquam*; or, more precisely, we may say that *inter* has taken the place of *post*, *quam* remaining unchanged. *Livy XXI. 16. 3* is merely a case of omission of *post*.

6. *Sedebant centum et octoginta iudices*: i.e., the court of the *iudicium*; cf. Introduction, page xvi. This is a case of a will contested by a *querela inofficiosi testamenti*, because of groundless disinheritance of a natural heir; cf. Ep. V. 1, and notes.