Who is Pliny writing to? Why?

Plinius is writing to his friend Tacito on what he witnessed during the eruption of Vesuvius

What and who is he writing about?

He is writing about his uncle (on his mother’s side) and his death.

Briefly describe the course of the uncle’s day. How does his day start, what does he see, what does he do, where does he go, &c?

It was the first day of September. He went to visit his sister (Pliny’s mother) at 7:00. She noted to him that there was a large cloud appearing. He then ate and read. We saw the east cloud which looked not unlike a pine tree. He then orders a libernica.

How is the volcanic cloud described? (This is now called a Plinian eruption, btw). Describe or sketch it roughly below:

The cloud is described as pinetree shaped, coming up from the ground.

Who is Rectina? Where is she and why has she written to Pliny’s uncle? ([Here again is a simple map of the area](https://i.pinimg.com/originals/f7/d1/09/f7d10960c4a367717299638dfe57b3b9.png))

Rectina is a woman, the wife of Tascus. She is in Stabiis and writes that she wants to leave by boat.

What is Pliny’s uncle’s mission, as he sees it?

Plinius’s uncle’s mission is to save/evacuate Rectina, but also a lot of people who were in the same place.

Why causes him to ‘dubitavit’ in the last sentence? What does he decide to do? What is the (now very famous) phrase with which he justifies his actions?

He doubts his survival, as now it is raining volcanic stones. He continues on to Stabia, and says “Fortune likes the strong.”