

In Catilinam

CICERO

November 8, 63 B.C.E.

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1 Chapter I

1. Quo usque tandem abutere, Catilina, patientia nostra? quam diu etiam furor iste tuus nos eludet? quem ad finem sese effrenata iactabit audacia? Nihilne te nocturnum praesidium Palati, nihil urbis vigiliae, nihil
5 timor populi, nihil concursus bonorum omnium, nihil hic munitissimus habendi senatus locus, nihil horum ora voltusque moverunt? Patere tua consilia non sentis, constrictam iam horum omnium scientia teneri coniurationem tuam non vides? Quid proxima, quid superiore
10 nocte egeris, ubi fueris, quos convocaveris, quid consilii ceperis, quem nostrum ignorare arbitraris?

2. O tempora, o mores! Senatus haec intellegit. Consul videt; hic tamen vivit. Vivit? immo vero etiam in senatum venit, fit publici consilii particeps, notat
15 et designat oculis ad caedem unum quemque nostrum. Nos autem fortes viri satis facere rei publicae videmur, si istius furorem ac tela vitemus. Ad mortem te, Catilina, duci iussu consulis iam pridem oportebat, in te conferri pestem, quam tu in nos machinaris.

3. An vero vir amplissimus, P. Scipio, pontifex maximus, Ti. Gracchum mediocriter labefactantem statum rei publicae privatus interfecit; Catilinam orbem terrae
20 caede atque incendiis vastare cupientem nos consules perferemus? Nam illa nimis antiqua praetereo, quod C. Servilius Ahala Sp. Maelium novis rebus studentem manu sua occidit. Fuit, fuit ista quondam in hac re publica virtus, ut viri fortes acrioribus suppliciis civem
25 perniciosum quam acerbissimum hostem coacerent. Habemus senatus consultum in te, Catilina, vehemens et grave, non deest rei publicae consilium neque auctoritas huius ordinis; nos, nos, dico aperte, consules desumus.

Just how far, I ask, Catiline, will you misuse our tolerance? For how long still will that madness of yours make fun of us? To what end will your unbridled audacity boast of itself? Hasn't the nightly garrison on
5 the Palatine moved you, haven't the patrols of the city, hasn't the fear of the people, hasn't the agreement of all the good men, hasn't this very fortified place for holding the senate, haven't the faces and expressions of these men moved you? Do you not realise that your plans are exposed? Do you not see that your conspiracy,
10 already bound up, is being held by the knowledge of all these men? Which of us do you judge to be unaware of what you did last night, and the night before, where you have been, which men you have assembled, what plan you have adopted?

What times, what conduct! The senate knows of these things, the consul sees: yet this man lives. He lives? Or rather in truth he still comes into the senate, he is made a participant of public council, he marks
20 and notes with his eyes each one of us for the slaughter. But we, brave men, seem to do enough for the republic, should we avoid the furor and missiles of that man. You, Catiline, ought to have been led to death long ago now by order of the consul, that destruction which you are divising against us ought to have been brought on to
25 you.

But in truth, Publius Scipio, a highly distinguished man, pontifex maximus, while he was a private citizen, killed Tiberius Gracchus when he was somewhat
30 weakening the state of the republic: will we consuls put up with Catiline, wishing to lay waste to the world by means of murder and arson? For I leave out too much of those old examples, namely the fact that Gaius Servilius Ahala killed Spurius Maelius, studying the revolution, with his own hand. There was, there was once
35 such virtue in this republic that brave men repressed a destructive citizen with more harsh punishment than the worst enemy. We have an agreement of the senate against you, Catiline, strong and serious, the republic does not lack resolution nor authority of this order: we,
40 I say openly, we consuls are lacking.

2 Chapter II

4. Decrevit quondam senatus, ut L. Opimius consul videret, ne quid res publica detrimenti caperet; nox nulla intercessit; interfectus est propter quasdam seditionum suspiciones C. Gracchus, clarissimo patre, avo,
5 maioribus, occisus est cum liberis M. Fulvius consularis. Simili senatus consulto C. Mario et L. Valerio consulibus est permissa res publica; num unum diem postea L. Saturninum tribunum pl. et C. Servilium praetorem mors ac rei publicae poena remorata est? At [vero] nos
10 vicesimum iam diem patimur hebescere aciem horum auctoritatis. Habemus enim huiusce modi senatus consultum, verum inclusum in tabulis tamquam in vagina reconditum, quo ex senatus consulto confestim te interfectum esse, Catilina, convenit. Vivis, et vivis non ad
15 deponendam, sed ad confirmandam audaciam. Cupio, patres conscripti, me esse clementem, cupio in tantis rei publicae periculis me non dissolutum videri, sed iam me ipse inertiae nequitiaeque condemno.

5. Castra sunt in Italia contra populum Romanum in Etruriae faucibus conlocata, crescit in dies singulos hostium numerus; eorum autem castrorum imperatorem
20 ducemque hostium intra moenia atque adeo in senatu videtis intestinam aliquam cotidie perniciem rei publicae molientem. Si te iam, Catilina, comprehendi, si interfici iussero, credo, erit verendum mihi, ne non potius
25 hoc omnes boni serius a me quam quisquam crudelius factum esse dicat. Verum ego hoc, quod iam pridem factum esse oportuit, certa de causa nondum adducor ut faciam. Tum denique interficere, cum iam nemo tam
30 improbus, tam perditus, tam tui similis inveniri poterit, qui id non iure factum esse fateatur.

6. Quam diu quisquam erit, qui te defendere audeat, vives, et vives ita, ut vivis, multis meis et firmis praesidiis obsessus, ne commovere te contra rem publicam possis. Multorum te etiam oculi et aures non
35 sentientem, sicut adhuc fecerunt, speculabuntur atque custodient.

The Senate has decreed long ago, for Lucius Opimius, consul, to see that the republic experiences no harm: darkness obstructed nothing; Gaius Gracchus was killed on account of some suspicion of treachery,
5 descended from a very famous father, grandfather, ancestors; Marcus Fulvius, of consular rank, was killed with his children. By a similar decree of the Senate, the republic was entrusted to consuls Gaius Marius and Lucius Valerius; surely the death penalty inflicted by the state did not keep Lucius Saturninus, tribune of the
10R people, and Gaius Servilius, praetor, waiting a single day afterwards? But in contrast it is now the 20th day that we have allowed the sharp edge of the authority of these men to become blunt. For we have a decree of the senate of this kind, but it is enclosed in the records as if it is concealed in a sheath, in accordance with which
15R decree it is fitting that you, Catiline, have been killed immediately. You live, and you live not to resign but to strengthen your audacity. I wish, senators, that I be merciful, I wish that I do not seem careless in such.
20R Great dangers of the republic, but I now condemn me myself of inaction and negligence.

There is a camp in Italy aimed against the Roman people, located in the narrow passes of Etruria, the number of enemies grows day by day, but you see the
25R general of that camp and the leader of the enemy within the city walls and actually in the senate, every day devising some internal destruction of the republic. If I order you to be arrested, Catiline, if I order you to be killed, I believe, I will have to fear, I suppose, not
30R that all loyal men will say I have acted too late, but that someone will say that I have been too cruel. But I am not yet induced to do what ought to have been done long ago. Only then will you be killed, when no one so wicked, so ruined, so similar to you, will be able to be
35R found, who does not admit that it has not been done in accordance with the law.

As long as there is anyone at all that dares to defend you, you will live, but you will live in such a way, as you do now, that you live, besieged by my many strong
40R guards, so that you will be unable to move yourself against the republic. Moreover the eyes and ears of many will still be watching you unaware, just as they have done up to this point.

3 Chapter III

Etenim quid est, Catilina, quod iam amplius expectes, si neque nox tenebris obscurare coetus nefarios nec privata domus parietibus continere voces coniurationis tuae potest, si illustrantur, si erumpunt omnia? Muta
5 iam istam mentem, mihi crede, obliviscere caedis atque incendiorum. Teneris undique; luce sunt clariora nobis tua consilia omnia; quae iam mecum licet recognoscas.

7. Meministine me ante diem XII Kalendas Novembris dicere in senatu fore in armis certo die, qui dies
10 futurus esset ante diem VI Kal. Novembris, C. Manlium, audaciae satellitem atque administrum tuae? Num me fefellit, Catilina, non modo res tanta, tam atrox tamque incredibilis, verum, id quod multo magis est admirandum, dies? Dixi ego idem in senatu caedem te optumatum
15 contulisse in ante diem V Kalendas Novembris, tum cum multi principes civitatis Roma non tam sui conservandi quam tuorum consiliorum reprimendorum causa profugerunt. Num infitiri potes te illo ipso die
20 meis praesidiis, mea diligentia circumclusum commovere te contra rem publicam non potuisse, cum tu discessu ceterorum nostra tamen, qui remansissemus, caede te contentum esse dicebas?

8. Quid? cum te Praeneste Kalendis ipsis Novembribus occupaturum nocturno impetu esse confideres,
25 sensistine illam coloniam meo iussu meis praesidiis, custodiis, vigiliis esse munitam? Nihil agis, nihil moliris, nihil cogitas, quod non ego non modo audiam, sed etiam videam planeque sentiam.

And as a matter of fact what is, Catiline, what more can you expect, if neither the night can obscure your evil meetings with darkness nor can a private house contain the voices of your conspirators with its walls, if everything is lit up, if everything is bursting out?
5R Change that mind of yours already, believe me, forget about slaughter and arson. You are held from all sides; all. Your plans are clearer to use than light; which now you may review with me.

Do you remember that I said in the senate on October 21st that Gaius Manlius, the accomplice and servant of your reckless attempt would be in arms on a certain fixed day which was going to be the 27th of October? Surely, Catiline, I was not mistaken about not only such a great matter, so atrocious and unbelievable, but, much more remarkable, the day? I likewise said in the senate,
15R that you had fixed the slaughter of the nobles for the 28th of October, at a time when many leading citizens had fled from Rome not so much for the sake of saving themselves, as for suppressing your plans. Surely you cannot deny that you could not have moved against the republic on that very day, because you were shut in by my many guards, my diligence; while you were saying that you were content with the departure of the rest, with my murder, I who had remained behind.
20R 25R

Well. Although you were confident that you would seize control of the Palestrina on the very first day of November by a nocturnal attack, did you realise that the colony was fortified by my command with my guards, sentinels, and patrols? You do nothing, you labour at
30R nothing, you plan nothing, which I do not not only hear, but also see and plainly realise.

4 Chapter IV

Recognosce tandem mecum noctem illam superio-
rem; iam intelleges multo me vigilare acrius ad salu-
tem quam te ad perniciem rei publicae. Dico te priore
nocte venisse inter falcarios—non agam obscure—in M.
Laecae domum; convenisse eodem complures eiusdem
amentiae scelerisque socios. Num negare audes? quid
taces? Convincam, si negas. Video enim esse hic in
senatu quosdam, qui tecum una fuerunt.

9. O di immortales! ubinam gentium sumus? in
qua urbe vivimus? quam rem publicam habemus? Hic,
hic sunt in nostro numero, patres conscripti, in hoc
orbis terrae sanctissimo gravissimoque consilio, qui
de nostro omnium interitu, qui de huius urbis atque
adeo de orbis terrarum exitio cogitent! Hos ego video
consul et de re publica sententiam rogo et, quos ferro
trucidari oportebat, eos nondum voce volnero. Fuisti
igitur apud Laecam illa nocte, Catilina, distribuisti par-
tes Italiae, statuisti, quo quemque proficisci placeret,
delegisti, quos Romae relinqueres, quos tecum educes,
discripsisti urbis partes ad incendia, confirmasti te
ipsum iam esse exiturum, dixisti paulum tibi esse etiam
nunc morae, quod ego viverem. Reperti sunt duo equi-
tes Romani, qui te ista cura liberarent et sese illa ipsa
nocte paulo ante lucem me in meo lectulo interfecturos
esse pollicerentur.

10. Haec ego omnia vixdum etiam coetu vestro
dimisso comperi; domum meam maioribus praesidiis
munivi atque firmavi, exclusi eos, quos tu ad me salu-
tatum mane miseras, cum illi ipsi venissent, quos ego
iam multis ac summis viris ad me id temporis venturos
esse praedixeram.

Pray, review with me that night before last and
now you will understand that I am much more heavily
watchful for the safety of the republic than you are
watchful for the destruction of the republic. I say that
you, on the night before last, came in the sickle makers'
street — I will deal with you plainly — in the house of
Marcus Laeca; I say that several accomplices of your
same mad criminality came together to the same place.
You don't dare to deny it, do you? Why are you silent?
I'll prove you wrong, if you do deny it; for I see that
there are certain people in the senate who were together
with you there.

O immortal gods! Where in the world are we? In
what city do we live? What republic do we have? Here,
they are here in our number, senators, in this most
venerable and influential advisory council in the world,
who think about the death of us all, who think about the
ruin of this city and as far as the destruction of the world.
I see these men as a consul, and I ask for their opinion on
the republic, and they should have been killed by sword,
while I not yet wound them with my voice. Therefore
you were at the house of Laeca that night, Catiline; you
divided Italy into districts; you arranged where each
man would go, you picked out those who you would
leave behind at Rome, those who you would lead away
with yourself, you assigned the parts of the city for
burning, you established that you yourself would now
leave, you said that there was a short delay for you still,
because I was alive. Two Roman knights were found, to
free you from that concern of yours and they promised
that they would kill me in my bed on that very night a
little before dawn.

I found out all these things when your meeting had
scarcely been broken up; I fortified and strengthened
my home with a larger guard; I shut them out, those
whom you had sent to pay an early call, since they them-
selves had come, those very men whom I had already
foretold to many very great men that they would come
to me at that time.

5 Chapter V

Quae cum ita sint, Catilina, perge, quo coepisti, egredere aliquando ex urbe; patent portae; proficiscere. Nimum diu te imperatorem tua illa Manliana castra desiderant. Educ tecum etiam omnes tuos, si minus, quam plurimos; purga urbem. Magno me metu liberabis, dum modo inter me atque te murus intersit. Nobiscum versari iam diutius non potes; non feram, non patiar, non sinam.

11. Magna dis immortalibus habenda est atque huic ipsi Iovi Statori, antiquissimo custodi huius urbis, gratia, quod hanc tam taetram, tam horribilem tamque infestam rei publicae pestem totiens iam effugimus. Non est saepius in uno homine summa salus periclitanda rei publicae. Quamdiu mihi consuli designato, Catilina, insidiatus es, non publico me praesidio, sed privata diligentia defendi. Cum proximis comitiis consularibus me consulem in campo et competitores tuos interficere voluisti, compressi conatus tuos nefarios amicorum praesidio et copiis nullo tumultu publice concitato; denique, quotienscumque me petisti, per me tibi obstiti, quamquam videbam perniciem meam cum magna calamitate rei publicae esse coniunctam.

12. Nunc iam aperte rem publicam universam petis, templa deorum immortalium, tecta urbis, vitam omnium civium, Italiam totam ad exitium et vastitatem vocas. Quare, quoniam id, quod est primum, et quod huius imperii disciplinaeque maiorum proprium est, facere nondum audeo, faciam id, quod est ad severitatem lenius et ad communem salutem utilius. Nam si te interfici iussero, residebit in re publica reliqua coniuratorum manus; sin tu, quod te iam dudum hortor, exieris, exhaurietur ex urbe tuorum comitum magna et perniciose sentina rei publicae.

13. Quid est, Catilina? num dubitas id me imperante facere, quod iam tua sponte faciebas? Exire ex urbe iubet consul hostem. Interrogas me: num in exilium? Non iubeo, sed, si me consulis, suadeo.

Since these things are thus, Catiline, go on to where you have begun going, leave the city now at last; the gates are open: set out! For too long has that Manlian camp of yours been longing for you as a general. Lead away with you even all your men, or if not all, then as many as possible, cleanse the city. You will free me from great fear, provided only that there is a wall between me and you. You cannot live with us for any longer: I will not bear it, I will not endure it, I will not allow it.

Great thanks must be given to the immortal gods and to this Jupiter Stator himself, the most ancient guardian of this city, because we have already so often escaped this scourge, so foul, so dreadful and so hostile to the republic. The utmost safety of the republic must not be so often put at risk by one man. All the time you plotted against me, as consul elect, Catiline, I defended myself not with a public garrison but with private vigilance. When you wished to kill me as consul, and your competitors, at the last consular elections in the Campus Martii, I suppressed your nefarious attempts with the guard and resources of friends, without any official mobilisation of troops; besides, when as often as you attacked me, I thwarted you by myself, though I saw that my ruin was joined with great disaster for the republic.

Now you are already openly attacking the entire republic; you call the temples of the immortal gods, the buildings of the city, the lives of all the citizens, the whole of Italy to destruction and devastation. Therefore, seeing as I do not yet dare to do that which is first and foremost, and what is keeping with this supreme authority of the Senate and best traditions of the ancestors, I will do that which is more lenient with regard to strictness and more useful with regard to common safety. For if I order you to be killed, your band of conspirators will remain behind in the remaining republic; but if you leave, which I have been encouraging you to do for a long time, the great scum of your companions, dangerous to the republic, will be drained from the city.

What is it, Catiline? Surely you do not hesitate to do it at my command, which you were already doing of your own accord. The consul is ordering the enemy of the state to leave the city. You ask me: surely not into exile? I am not ordering you, but, if you consult me, I urge you.

6 Chapter VI

Quid est enim, Catilina, quod te iam in hac urbe delectare possit? in qua nemo est extra istam coniurationem perditorum hominum, qui te non metuat, nemo, qui non oderit. Quae nota domesticae turpitudinis non
5 inusta vitae tuae est? quod privatarum rerum dedecus non haeret in fama? quae libido ab oculis, quod facinus a manibus umquam tuis, quod flagitium a toto corpore afit? cui tu adolescentulo, quem corruptelarum inlecebris inretisses, non aut ad audaciam ferrum aut ad
10 lubidinem facem praetulisti?

14. Quid vero? nuper cum morte superioris uxoris novis nuptiis domum vacuefecisses, nonne etiam alio incredibili scelere hoc scelus cumulasti? quod ego praetermitto et facile patior sileri, ne in hac civitate tanti facinoris inmanitas aut extitisse aut non vindicata esse
15 videatur. Praetermitto ruinas fortunarum tuarum, quas omnis inpendere tibi proxumis Idibus senties; ad illa venio, quae non ad privatam ignominiam vitiorum tuorum, non ad domesticam tuam difficultatem ac turpitudinem sed ad summam rem publicam atque ad omnium nostrum vitam salutemque pertinent.

15. Potestne tibi haec lux, Catilina, aut huius caeli spiritus esse iucundus, cum scias esse horum neminem, qui nesciat te pridie Kalendas Ianuarias Lepido et Tullo consulibus stetisse in comitio cum telo, manum consulum et principum civitatis interficiendorum causa paravisse, scelerei ac furori tuo non mentem aliquam aut
20 timorem tuum sed fortunam populi Romani obstetisse? Ac iam illa omitto—neque enim sunt aut obscura aut non multa commissa postea—: quotiens tu me designatum, quotiens consulem interficere conatus es! quot ego tuas petitiones ita coniectas, ut vitari posse non viderentur, parva quadam declinatione et, ut aiunt, corpore effugi! nihil agis, nihil adsequeris, neque tamen
30 conari ac velle desistis.

16. Quotiens tibi iam extorta est ista sica de manibus, quotiens excidit casu aliquo et elapsa est! quae quidem quibus abs te initiata sacris ac devota sit, nescio, quod eam necesse putas esse in consulis corpore defigere.

For what is there, Catiline, which can now please you in this city? There is no one in it outside that conspiracy of worthless people who doesn't fear you, no one who doesn't hate you. What work of domestic turpitude has not been branded onto your life? What shame of private affairs does not cling to your reputation? What
5R lust was ever absent from your eyes, what crime was ever absent from your hands, what wickedness was ever absent from your whole body? To which mere lad did you not carry in front the sword for their recklessness or a torch for lust, whom you have ensnared with the lure of corruption?

What indeed? Lately, when you had emptied your home from the death of your former wife for your new weddings, surely you also increased this crime with another incredible act of wickedness? Because I make
15R no mention of it and allow it to be easily silenced, lest the monstrosity of such a great crime in this state seems to either have existed or have not been avenged. I pass over the collapse of your fortune, all of which you will realise are hanging over you at the next Ides; I come to those matters, not to the personal disgrace of your vices, nor your domestic difficulties and turpitude, but to concern the utmost danger to the republic and life and safety of us all.

Can this light or air of this sky be pleasing to you, Catiline, when you know there to be no one of these men, who are unaware that you stood with a weapon in the Comitium the day before the Kalends of January during the consulship of Lepidus and Tullus? That you prepared your band for the sake of killing the consuls and leading citizens of the state? That not some change of mind or fear on your part stood in the way of crime and your frenzy, but the good luck of the people of Rome? And now I leave out those things (for your offences after that are neither unknown nor few): how
30R often you tried to kill me when I was consul designate, when I was actually consul! How many of your thrusts, having been hurled in such a way, that they seem to be unable to be avoided, I evaded by a mere swerve and turn of the body, as they say! You do nothing, you achieve nothing, however you do not cease to try and wish.

How often has that dagger been wrested from your hands! How many times has it accidentally fallen and slipped somewhere! I do not know indeed to what sacred things that dagger has been initiated and offered by you, because you think that it is necessary to thrust in the body of a consul.

7 Chapter VI

Nunc vero quae tua est ista vita? Sic enim iam tecum loquar, non ut odio permotus esse videar, quo debeo, sed ut misericordia, quae tibi nulla debetur. Venisti paulo ante in senatum. Quis te ex hac tanta frequentia
5 totque tuis amicis ac necessariis salutavit? Si hoc post hominum memoriam contigit nemini, vocis expectas contumeliam, cum sis gravissimo iudicio taciturnitatis oppressus? Quid, quod adventu tuo ista subsellia vacuefacta sunt, quod omnes consulares, qui tibi persaepe
10 ad caedem constituti fuerunt, simul atque adsedisti, partem istam subselliorum nudam atque inanem reliquerunt, quo tandem animo hoc tibi ferundum putas?

17. Servi mehercule mei si me isto pacto metuerent, ut te metuunt omnes cives tui, domum meam relinquentem
15 putarem; tu tibi urbem non arbitraris? et, si me meis civibus iniuria suspectum tam graviter atque offensum viderem, carere me aspectu civium quam infestis omnium oculis conspici malletm; tu cum conscientia scelerum tuorum agnoscas odium omnium iustum et
20 iam diu tibi debitum, dubitas, quorum mentes sensusque volneras, eorum aspectum praesentiamque vitare? Si te parentes timerent atque odissent tui neque eos ulla ratione placare posses, ut opinor, ab eorum oculis aliquo concederes. Nunc te patria, quae communis est
25 parens omnium nostrum, odit ac metuit et iam diu nihil te iudicat nisi de parricidio suo cogitare; huius tu neque auctoritatem verebere nec iudicium sequere nec vim pertimesces?

18. Quae tecum, Catilina, sic agit et quodam modo tacita loquitur: 'Nullum iam aliquot annis facinus
30 exstitit nisi per te, nullum flagitium sine te; tibi uni multorum civium necesse, tibi vexatio direptioque sociorum impunita fuit ac libera; tu non solum ad neglegendas leges et quaestiones, verum etiam ad evertendas perfringendasque valuisti. Superiora illa, quamquam ferenda
35 non fuerunt, tamen, ut potui, tuli; nunc vero me totam esse in metu propter unum te, quicquid increpaverit, Catilinam timeri, nullum videri contra me consilium iniri posse, quod a tuo scelere abhorreat, non est ferendum.
40 Quam ob rem discede atque hunc mihi timorem eripe; si est verus, ne opprimar, sin falsus, ut tandem aliquando timere desinam.'

Now indeed what is that life of yours? For let me speak with you in this way now, not to seem moved by hatred, by which I ought to be, but to seem moved by pity, which is in no way owed to you. You came a little
5 beforehand into the senate. Who from this great crowd greeted you, who out of your friends and relatives? If this has happened to no one in the memory of mankind, are you waiting for their spoken abuse, since you have been overwhelmed by the very weighty judgement of silence? What of the fact that on your arrival, these
10 benches were emptied, the fact that all the men of consular rank, who were very often marked out by you for slaughter, as soon as you sat down, they left that part of the benches bare and empty, with what feelings, pray, do you think this is to be endured by you?

Good heavens, if my slaves feared me in the same way that all the citizens fear you, I could think that I must leave my home: do you not think that you must leave the city? And if I saw that I was wrongly suspected so gravely and hated by my own citizens I would
20 prefer to be deprived of the gaze of the citizens than to be looked upon by the hostile eyes of all. Do you, although you recognise with a clear knowledge of your crimes that the hatred of all is just and has been owed to you for a long time now, hesitate to avoid the gaze and presence of those whose minds and feelings you assault? If your parents feared and hated you and you couldn't please them by any means, you would be withdrawing, so I think, to some place away from their
25 eyes: now the fatherland, which is the common parent of us all, hates and fears you and for a long time now has judged that you have been thinking about nothing except its parricide: will you neither fear its authority, nor follow its judgement, nor be frightened of its force?

Your country deals with you in this way, and, though silent, it speaks with you in some way as follows: 'No crime has existed now for several years except because of you, no scandal without you; in your case alone
35 you the deaths of many citizens, in your case alone the harassment and plundering of allies was unpunished and unchecked; you were strong enough not only to ignore the laws and the courts but also to overturn and shatter them. Although they were unbearable, I put up with those former actions, as best I could: but now in truth I am totally in fear on account of you alone, that Catiline is to be feared whenever a rumour spreads, that
40 no plan against me can seem to be perpetrated which is not linked to your criminality. For this reason, leave, and take this fear from me, if this fear is real, so I won't be overwhelmed, but if it is not real, may I at long last cease to be afraid.'

8 Chapter VIII

19. Haec si tecum, ita ut dixi, patria loquatur, nonne impetrare debeat, etiamsi vim adhibere non possit? Quid, quod tu te ipse in custodiam dedisti, quod vitandae suspicionis causa ad M. Lepidum te habitare velle dixisti? A quo non receptus etiam ad me venire ausus es atque, ut domi meae te adservarem, rogasti. Cum a me quoque id responsum tulisses, me nullo modo posse isdem parietibus tuto esse tecum, qui magno in periculo essem, quod isdem moenibus contineremur, ad Q. Metellum praetorem venisti. A quo repudiatum ad sodalem tuum, virum optimum, M. Metellum, demigrasti; quem tu videlicet et ad custodiendum diligentissimum et ad suspicandum sagacissimum et ad vindicandum fortissimum fore putasti. Sed quam longe videtur a carcere atque a vinculis abesse debere, qui se ipse iam dignum custodia iudicavit?

20. Quae cum ita sint, Catilina, dubitas, si emori aequo animo non potes, abire in aliquas terras et vitam istam multis suppliciis iustis debitisque ereptam fugae solitudinique mandare? ‘Refer’ inquis ‘ad senatum’; id enim postulas et, si hic ordo sibi placere decreverit te ire in exilium, optemperatum te esse dicis. Non referam, id quod abhorret a meis moribus, et tamen faciam, ut intellegas, quid hi de te sentiant. Egredere ex urbe, Catilina, libera rem publicam metu, in exilium, si hanc vocem exspectas, proficiscere. Quid est, Catilina? ecquid attendis, ecquid animadvertis horum silentium? Patiuntur, tacent. Quid exspectas auctoritatem loquentium, quorum voluntatem tacitorum perspicis?

21. At si hoc idem huic adulescenti optimo, P. Sestio, si fortissimo viro, M. Marcello, dixissem, iam mihi consuli hoc ipso in templo iure optimo senatus vim et manus intulisset. De te autem, Catilina, cum quiescunt, probant, cum patiuntur, decernunt, cum tacent, clamant, neque hi solum, quorum tibi auctoritas est videlicet cara, vita vilissima, sed etiam illi equites Romani, honestissimi atque optimi viri, ceterique fortissimi cives, qui circumstant senatum, quorum tu et frequentiam videre et studia perspicere et voces paulo ante exaudire potuisti. Quorum ego vix abs te iam diu manus ac tela contineo, eosdem facile adducam, ut te haec, quae vastare iam pridem studes, relinquentem usque ad portas prosequantur.

If the fatherland were to speak these things with you, as I have said, surely it ought to obtain its request, even if it cannot enforce it? What about the fact that you yourself gave yourself into custody? What of the fact that for the purpose of avoiding suspicion, you were willing to live at the house of Manius Lepidus. When you weren’t received by him, you even dared to come to me, and you asked that I keep you at my house. When you also received that reply from me, namely that I in no way could be safe within the same walls (house) with you, since I was in great danger because I was in the same city as you, you came to Quintus Metellus the praetor. After you were rejected by him, you moved on to your companion, an excellent man, Marcus Metellus, whom you no doubt thought would be most diligent in guarding you and very shrewd in keeping an eye on you, and very resolute in punishing you. But how far does he seem to be owing to be absent from prison and chains, who himself has judged himself now worthy of custody?

Under these circumstances, Catiline, do you hesitate, to go off into some other lands and entrust that life of yours, snatched away from many punishments justly due, to flight and solitude (lonely exile), if you cannot die with a calm mind? ‘Refer it to the senate,’ you say; for you demand that, if this institution decrees it to be pleasing to itself (it has decided) that you go into exile, you say that you will obey it. I will not put it to the senate, because it is contrary to my principles, and yet I will make you realise, what these men feel about you. Leave the city, Catiline, free the republic from fear, set out into exile, if you are waiting for this word. What is it, Catiline? Do you pay attention to anything, do you notice anything of these silent men? They acquiesce, they are silent. Why are you waiting for the authority of them speaking, the wish of whom silent you perceive?

But if I had said this same thing to this excellent young man, Publius Sestius, if I had said it to a very brave man, Marcus Marcellus, already the senate would have laid violent hands upon me as consul in this temple with excellent justification. But because of you, Catiline, when they are resting, they are approving, when they acquiesce, they are voting, when they are silent, they are shouting, not only these men, whose authority is clearly dear to you, whose lives are very worthless, but also those Roman horsemen, the most honest and excellent men, and the rest of the very brave citizens, who stand around the senate, whose great numbers you could see, whose eagerness you could perceive, and whose voices you could hear clearly a little before. I scarcely contain the hands and missiles of those men from you for a long time now, I will easily persuade those same men to escort you leaving behind this scene, which you are long since eager to lay waste to, all the way to the gates.