

THE EPISTLES OF SENECA

esse, quod deo sat est. Qui colitur, et amatur; non
19 potest amor cum timore misceri. Rectissime ergo
facere te iudico, quod timeri a servis tuis non vis,
quod verborum castigatione uteris; verberibus muta¹
admonentur.

Non quicquid nos offendit, et laedit. Sed ad
rabiem nos² cogunt pervenire deliciae, ut quicquid
20 non ex voluntate respondit, iram evocet. Regum
nobis induimus animos. Nam illi quoque obliti et
suarum virium et inbecillitatis alienae sic excande-
scunt, sic saeviunt, quasi iniuriam acceperint, a cuius
rei periculo illos fortunae suae magnitudo tutissimos
praestat. Nec hoc ignorant, sed occasionem nocendi
captant querendo; acceperunt iniuriam ut facerent.

21 Diutius te morari nolo; non est enim tibi ex-
hortatione opus. Hoc habent inter cetera boni
mores: placent sibi, permanent. Levis est malitia,
saepe mutatur, non in melius, sed in aliud. VALE.

XLVIII.

SENECA LVCILIO SVO SALVTEM

1 Ad epistolam, quam mihi ex itinere misisti, tam
longam quam ipsum iter fuit, postea rescribam. Se-
ducere me debeo et quid suadeam circumspicere.
Nam tu quoque, qui consulis, diu an consuleres
cogitasti; quanto magis hoc mihi faciendum est,

¹ *muta* Pincianus; *multa* and *admoventur* or *admonentur*
MSS.

² *cogunt* pL; some later MSS. and Macrobius add *nos*.

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for a master. Respect means love, and love and fear cannot be mingled. So I hold that you are entirely right in not wishing to be feared by your slaves, and in lashing them merely with the tongue; only dumb animals need the thong.

That which annoys us does not necessarily injure us; but we are driven into wild rage by our luxurious lives, so that whatever does not answer our whims arouses our anger. We don the temper of kings. For they, too, forgetful alike of their own strength and of other men's weakness, grow white-hot with rage, as if they had received an injury, when they are entirely protected from danger of such injury by their exalted station. They are not unaware that this is true, but by finding fault they seize upon opportunities to do harm; they insist that they have received injuries, in order that they may inflict them.

I do not wish to delay you longer; for you need no exhortation. This, among other things, is a mark of good character: it forms its own judgments and abides by them; but badness is fickle and frequently changing, not for the better, but for something different. Farewell.

XLVIII. ON QUIBBLING AS UNWORTHY OF THE PHILOSOPHER

In answer to the letter which you wrote me while travelling,—a letter as long as the journey itself,—I shall reply later. I ought to go into retirement, and consider what sort of advice I should give you. For you yourself, who consult me, also reflected for a long time whether to do so; how much more, then, should I myself reflect, since more

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- cum longiore mora opus sit, ut solvas quaestionem quam ut proponas? Utique cum aliud tibi expediat, aliud mihi. Iterum ego tamquam Epicureus loquor?
- 2 Mihi vero idem expedit, quod tibi; aut non sum amicus, nisi quicquid agitur ad te pertinens, meum est. Consortium rerum omnium inter nos facit amicitia. Nec secundi quicquam singulis est nec adversi; in commune vivitur. Nec potest quisquam beate degere, qui se tantum intuetur, qui omnia ad utilitates suas convertit; alteri vivas oportet, si
- 3 vis tibi vivere. Haec societas diligenter et sancte observata, quae nos homines hominibus¹ miscet et iudicat aliquod esse commune ius generis humani, plurimum ad illam quoque, de qua loquebar, interiori societatem amicitiae colendam proficit. Omnia enim cum amico communia habebit, qui multa cum homine.
- 4 Hoc, Lucili virorum optime, mihi ab istis subtilibus praecipere malo, quid amico praestare debeam, quid homini, quam quot modis amicus dicatur, et homo quam multa significet. In diversum ecce sapientia et stultitia discedunt; cui accedo? In utram ire partem iubes? Illi homo pro amico est, huic amicus non est pro homine. Ille amicum sibi parat, hic se

¹ *homines hominibus* later MSS. ; *omnes hominibus* pLPb ; *omnes omnibus* Muretus.

^a The Epicureans, who reduced all goods to "utilities," could not regard a friend's advantage as identical with one's own advantage. And yet they laid great stress upon friendship as one of the chief sources of pleasure. For an attempt to reconcile these two positions see Cicero, *De Finibus*, i. 65 ff. Seneca has inadvertently used a phrase that implies a difference between a friend's interests and one's own. This leads him to reassert the Stoic view of friendship, which adopted as its motto *κοινὰ τὰ τῶν φίλων*.

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deliberation is necessary in settling than in propounding a problem! And this is particularly true when one thing is advantageous to you and another to me. Am I speaking again in the guise of an Epicurean^a? But the fact is, the same thing is advantageous to me which is advantageous to you; for I am not your friend unless whatever is at issue concerning you is my concern also. Friendship produces between us a partnership in all our interests. There is no such thing as good or bad fortune for the individual; we live in common. And no one can live happily who has regard to himself alone and transforms everything into a question of his own utility; you must live for your neighbour, if you would live for yourself. This fellowship, maintained with scrupulous care, which makes us mingle as men with our fellow-men and holds that the human race have certain rights in common, is also of great help in cherishing the more intimate fellowship which is based on friendship, concerning which I began to speak above. For he that has much in common with a fellow-man will have all things in common with a friend.

And on this point, my excellent Lucilius, I should like to have those subtle dialecticians of yours advise me how I ought to help a friend, or how a fellow-man, rather than tell me in how many ways the word "friend" is used, and how many meanings the word "man" possesses. Lo, Wisdom and Folly are taking opposite sides. Which shall I join? Which party would you have me follow? On that side, "man" is the equivalent of "friend"; on the other side, "friend" is not the equivalent of "man." The one wants a friend for his own advantage; the other wants to make himself an advantage to his

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- amico. Tu mihi verba distorques et syllabas digeris.
- 5 Scilicet nisi interrogationes vaferrimas struxero et conclusionem falsa a vero nascens mendacium adstrinxero, non potero a fugiendis petenda secernere. Pudet me; in re tam seria senes ludimus.¹
- 6 "Mus syllaba est. Mus autem caseum rodit; syllaba ergo caseum rodit." Puta nunc me istuc non posse solvere. Quod mihi ex ista inscientia² periculum inminet? Quod incommodum? Sine dubio verendum est, ne quando in muscipulo syllabas capiam aut ne quando, si neglegentior fuero, caseum liber comedat. Nisi forte illa acutior est collectio: "Mus syllaba est. Syllaba autem caseum non rodit; 7 mus ergo caseum non rodit." O pueriles ineptias! In hoc supercilia subduximus? In hoc barbam demisimus? Hoc est, quod tristes docemus et pallidi? Vis scire, quid philosophia promittat generi humano? Consilium. Alium mors vocat, alium paupertas urit, alium divitiae vel alienae torquent vel suae. Ille malam fortunam horret, hic se felicitati suae subducere cupit. Hunc homines male habent, 8 illum di. Quid mihi lusoria ista conponis? Non est iocandi locus; ad miseros advocatus es. Opem laturum te naufragis, captis, aegris, egentibus, in-

¹ After *ludimus* most MSS. give *Vale. Seneca Lucilio suo Salutem*; Hense brackets.

² *inscientia* P² and Lipsius; *scientia* pLP^{1b}.

^a The sides are given in reverse order in the two clauses: to the Stoic the terms "friend" and "man" are co-extensive; he is the friend of everybody, and his motive in friendship is to be of service; the Epicurean, however, narrows the definition of "friend" and regards him merely as an instrument to his own happiness.

^b In this paragraph Seneca exposes the folly of trying to prove a truth by means of logical tricks, and offers a caricature of those which were current among the philosophers whom he derides.

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friend.^a What *you* have to offer me is nothing but distortion of words and splitting of syllables. It is clear that unless I can devise some very tricky premisses and by false deductions tack on to them a fallacy which springs from the truth, I shall not be able to distinguish between what is desirable and what is to be avoided! I am ashamed! Old men as we are, dealing with a problem so serious, we make play of it!

“‘Mouse’ is a syllable.^b Now a mouse eats cheese; therefore, a syllable eats cheese.” Suppose now that I cannot solve this problem; see what peril hangs over my head as a result of such ignorance! What a scrape I shall be in! Without doubt I must beware, or some day I shall be catching syllables in a mousetrap, or, if I grow careless, a book may devour my cheese! Unless, perhaps, the following syllogism is shrewder still: “‘Mouse’ is a syllable. Now a syllable does not eat cheese. Therefore a mouse does not eat cheese.” What childish nonsense! Do we knit our brows over this sort of problem? Do we let our beards grow long for this reason? Is this the matter which we teach with sour and pale faces?

Would you really know what philosophy offers to humanity? Philosophy offers counsel. Death calls away one man, and poverty chafes another; a third is worried either by his neighbour’s wealth or by his own. So-and-so is afraid of bad luck; another desires to get away from his own good fortune. Some are ill-treated by men, others by the gods. Why, then, do you frame for me such games as these? It is no occasion for jest; you are retained as counsel for unhappy mankind. You have promised to help those in peril by sea, those in captivity, the

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tentae securi subiectum praestantibus caput pollicitus es. Quo diverteris? Quid agis?

Hic, cum quo ludis, timet; succurre, †quidquid laque ti res pendentium penis.^{1†} Omnes undique ad te manus tendunt, perditae vitae perituraeque auxilium aliquod implorant, in te spes opesque sunt. Rogant, ut ex tanta illos volutatione extrahas, ut disiectis et errantibus clarum veritatis lumen ostendas.

9 Dic, quid natura necessarium fecerit, quid super-
vacuum, quam faciles leges² posuerit, quam iucunda sit vita, quam expedita illas sequentibus, quam acerba et implicita eorum, qui opinioni plus quam naturae crediderunt.

Ad horum mala levanda valere lusoria ista crediderim,³ si prius docueris, quam partem eorum levatura sint. Quid istorum cupiditates demit? Quid temperat? Utinam tantum non prodessent! Nocent. Hoc tibi, cum voles, manifestissimum faciam, comminui et debilitari generosam indolem in istas argutias
10 coniectam. Pudet dicere, contra fortunam militaturis quae porrigant tela, quemadmodum illos subornent. Hac ad summum bonum itur? Per istud philosophia⁴ "sive nive" et turpes infamesque etiam ad album

¹ The passage is corrupt, but the general sense is given in the translation. Buecheler suggests *succurre, quidquid laqueist timore pendenti rumpens*.

² *faciles leges* later MSS.; *faciles* LP^{1b}; *felices* p.

³ *ad horum . . . crediderim* added by Hense as supplying the required connexion.

⁴ *philosophia* Page; *philosophiae* MSS.

^a Literally, "or if or if not," words constantly employed by the logicians and in legal instruments. For the latter cf. Cicero, *Pro Caecina*, 23. 65 *tum illud, quod dicitur, "sive nive" irrident, tum auctupia verborum et litterarum tendiculas in invidiam vocant*.

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