

I, and let me demonstrate this with signal proof. She sold my family property, and the purchaser, now on his way to Italy, was afraid that I would later invoke the aid of the law and attempt to invalidate the sale, either during my mother's lifetime or after her death. He asked me either to confirm or to deny the sale now. Well, I asked him whether I too was part and parcel of the items for sale; even so, I would not contest it. He proffered the document, to get my signature written by this, my hand, and I signed it—and he could hardly believe his eyes. 59. I felt that I was being most remiss not to attend and support so loving a mother in her old age, but whenever I heard my friend's voice, it was a chain that bound me. Finally, even when I did come home, it was only under compulsion from him, for he swore that he would think the worse of me if I so disregarded what was right and proper.

60. Fortune, then, banished sorrow by the provision of more and bigger blessings. My troubles were small because of my many pleasures; in fact, nothing was enough to cause me distress, just as, with great champions, their mishaps seem mere nothings because of the greatness of their achievements. So let me mention my misfortunes, for good fortune can be more clearly revealed so, if there is an account of what it has overcome.

61. My slave, a mere lad, beguiled by men who are the ruin of those they lead astray, decamped, perhaps to his death, taking 1,500 staters with him. I was on the point of delivering an oration before the governor, and though my audience was greatly disturbed by the theft, I proceeded to give my declamation in my customary manner of delivery, so that I gave cause for wonder on two counts, by my ability in oratory and by enduring such a loss with equanimity. There was yet a third reason for wonder, for I refused the collection of money made from the cities who tried to repair my loss by their contributions, which exceeded the amount of money stolen.

62. So much for that and the financial loss it involved. A man of breeding would think nothing of it. However, the professor's wife began to suffer from mental illness, and he, refusing to believe that this was due to any physical ailment, tried to pin the blame on to me and, following bad example, he

too tried to have my copyist examined. Upon his wife's death, he left her grave in tears and entered the court, but even so his accusation was not presented in any legal form; his sole recourse was to have the man arrested. 63. Consequently, the roles were reversed; he tried to avoid a trial and I insisted that it be held. The governor was amused at the idea that I, having got the better of the professor, should now go to the length of procuring his wife's death; it was just as absurd as for an athlete, who had it in his power to kill his opponent, to refuse to engage and to let him go, and then to try to do away with the fellow's mother by means of magic. He did his best to escape, but the governor had him fetched by his attendants, since I maintained my stand, and gave him the alternative of proving me guilty or being found guilty himself, for the law forbade the illtreatment of anyone on baseless charges. He fell on his knees and besought that he should not be dismissed in disgrace, for his grief was to be regarded as the cause of all this, not he. 64. The governor took pity on him, and I could not blame him for it, for I could ever wish to see my enemy throwing himself on the mercy of the court, with no need for any other punishment; indeed, I will not refuse him if he wishes to become my friend, for any man who sees a sinner shamed and yet wants him done away with, is a mere brute and without the wit to realize that he is only human and may sometime perhaps be brought to such a pass himself. Not so the Bithynians in their attitude towards him: they would either get out of his way if they met him, or take good care not to meet him at all, and the fact that my assailant suffered no condign punishment caused people to inveigh against the magistrate who had given such a decision, even though he was very popular. 65. So he was crushed completely: his eloquence availed him nothing, especially as his general behaviour was held in disrepute. Hence, he had recourse to buying his pupils and spared none of the great wealth that came from his estates, but though they took all he offered, they did not entrust themselves to him. The cat was let out of the bag, and he became a laughing-stock throughout the city because of his trickery, his high hopes, and his disappointment. 66. There was only one Bithynian to take his part, a man of unquenchable

rancour in all his undertakings. He alleged that, in the gossip, the inquiries, and the ridicule that arose from these gifts, his wife's name had been bandied about too as a participant in this business and in the bribery. Into his travelling carriage he got and set off for Cappadocia, to his friend the governor, who was quite capable of obliging him by flouting the law, for these two had been students together in Athens and had done each other all kinds of good turns and probably continued to do so thereafter. Though the preparations for the Persian war, which occurred then, and other duties no less deserving of consideration ought to have induced him to stay where he was, the governor thought all important matters to be mere incidentals; so he got up and came along with bared blade, sending in advance a soldier whom I had to follow to Nicaea with seven youths whose crime was that they had not sold themselves. 67. So the people of Nicomedeia gave us up for dead, as the Athenians did those whom they sent to the Labyrinth. However, under the guidance of Fortune, my saviour was destined to be Hèracles, son of Zeus, who in a dream revealed to me what he would do and how he would quench the funeral flame; for I dreamed that a disciple of the Cynic Antisthenes mounted a great pyre in the centre of Nicaea and quenched it, and that his body prevailed over the fire. So I went on, heartened by this revelation of truth and the tidings of help. My advocates went as far as Libon, but there they went to ground and watched the outcome of the affair from afar, and when it was all over they emerged to offer their congratulations, as the Spartans did to the Athenians after the battle of Marathon. 68. Yes, that too was a labour of Hèracles, and he brought me also from out of the shadow: the cocks were crowing and the criers were crying when there came a knocking at the door and our jailer shouted to us to come down. Alcimus and I were lodged in a perfumer's shop awaiting our turn. This Alcimus, by the way, had something divine about him, I am sure; such a man could never have been sired by mortal man. Well, just before noon, that rascal of an accuser dashed in distraught and howling that Philagrius too was tarred with the same brush, an incomprehensible remark as far as we were concerned. 69. The governor left immediately, and we saw

our friends all smiles, as though at some fortunate event. Of the nature and manner of it we had not the slightest idea until one of our friends gestured to us from a distance that our enemy had fled, for the governor had suddenly been confronted with the need to maintain the law. He had made up his mind to disclose a charge of murder against me when news arrived of Philippus' tour of inspection, and he had to go off in a hurry to receive his grim overlord into his diocese: in a panic he declared that the time for favours was past and the law must prevail: he must either hand in his charge in proper form or reconcile himself to being a victim of necessity. That was the reason for the expression 'being tarred with the same brush', the inference being that he had been bribed to change his mind. 70. So my accuser went off home despondently, 'eating his heart out', while the governor, all blushes for the favour he had granted, summoned me to him, sat me down by his side in court, wiped his hand across his brow and tried to make light of his friend's remarks on the professor's behalf. He begged me not to be annoyed at my coming to him and to think of the whole incident as though it had never happened. I replied that such was my reaction even before he had begun to speak, but he asked for some guarantee of my words, namely, that I should allow him to attend an oration of mine in the heart of Nicomedeia. 'Philippus summons me, to be sure', he exclaimed, 'but let this have precedence.' 71. I consented and gave my promise, and there in Nicomedeia I was just introducing my declamation, when my accuser entered like an ill wind with that jealous rival of mine, and asserted that his oration ought to precede mine, before the governor was beguiled by the roars of applause. Though the governor was put out, I was agreeable, and so he entered, but behaved like his usual self although he spoke before an audience of but fifteen, having himself requested the withdrawal of my supporters. As soon as he saw the stage set for him, he grew dizzy and his memory failed him, and he exclaimed that I, the wizard, had not even then stopped my tricks. The governor told him to read then; he had come to judge a speech, not a test of memory. His reply was that his eyes could not do their job, either, and for the same reason. 'Then he shall take it and

read it', said the governor, pointing out the best speaker present. On hearing this, he threw aside his script and made off, filling the square with meaningless cries. 72. Next day while the crowd was assembling in the town hall, and I was exercising my voice and testing it nearby, the governor was just about to leave his headquarters, when that madman, who had fled in disgrace, came from the citadel armed against my person. I was saved by the doors of the temple of Fortune where I was seated. Even before my speech I had the governor on my side because of this mad attempt, and he made his entry well disposed towards me. When he rose to leave, he was one of my devoted admirers, and immediately he sent out letters and collected his relatives, who happened to be studying under others, and the sons of his friends, and brought them to my school, and mine alone. He attended the oration he had heard—a favour which he requested and received, and he declared that he owed an unparalleled debt of gratitude to my accuser for the chance to get to know my work: without it, he would have been so much the poorer.

73. The report of these orations and occurrences reached those from whom I had fled and who thought that by their calumnies they would make it impossible for me to live in towns or even in the tiniest villages. Could Tellus or those Argive youths, who blessed their mother by their exploit with the carriage, have had greater happiness than I? I am tempted to absolve Fortune of the charge I levelled against her for causing all this, if such are the results of putting her to the test. Melanthus too was not unlucky in his exile, since it was destined that instead of being a dweller in Messene he should be ruler of Athens.

74. My reputation had increased and countless were the tongues that praised me, though there were some who asserted that I associated with people whom Apollo would have deemed unworthy—as in his oracle he rejected the murderer of Archilochus. The sincere set about the malicious, and there followed pleas to the prefect to restore me to Constantinople. I protested that I would be behaving badly toward my hosts and I also pleaded that I should not once more be reduced to awful silence, and the prefect departed apparently with no intention